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Matthew R. Whincop

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**Pots, People, and Politics:
A Reconsideration of the Role of Ceramics in
Reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant**

Matthew R. Whincop

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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.

29 February, 2008

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13 NOV 2008

Volume One of Two



For Katherine, if not for you...

*I wish that I were not among this last, fifth race of men,
but either dead already or had afterwards been born;
for this race now is **iron** indeed, and never, night or morn,
will leave off from their suffering, worn down by toil and woe*

Hesiod, *Works and Days* 174-177

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Abstract

Pots, People, and Politics: A Reconsideration of the Role of Ceramics in Reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant

Matthew R WHINCOP

This thesis aims to reconsider current reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant and the role that ceramics studies have played in these interpretations. This study begins with an assessment of the use of the historical narrative in current interpretations. This historical interpretative framework has produced a broad perspective on Iron Age society, at the expense of localised behaviours. For this reason, the present study attempts to engage with Iron Age material culture, more specifically pottery, and consider its role within past societies beyond the broad socio-political histories depicted in texts.

This study presents a regional ceramic typology for the Iron Age (including the Persian period) and undertakes an analysis of the distribution patterns of this typology across the Northern Levant. An alternative interpretation of the ceramic data is offered, before being compared with the current historical model. This alternative reconstruction focuses on theories of practice, and foodways, whilst appreciating the dynamic manner by which material culture is used to constantly negotiate and consolidate social structures. This thesis will determine the compatibility of archaeology and text, and make some final recommendations for their correlation.

Declaration

This thesis conforms to the prescribed word length for doctoral degrees.

This thesis is the result of my own work. None of the material presented here has previously been submitted by the author for a degree at Durham University or at any other university. Material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases have been indicated.

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List of Maps

Not all ceramic distribution maps were included in Volume II of this thesis; only those considered key to the discussion of Chapters 7, 8, and 9. The complete and exhaustive collection is included on the appended CD. The maps on the CD are coded by colour according to period:

large green points	= Iron I presence
medium red points	= Iron II
small blue points	= Iron III
tiny yellow points	= Persian period

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Map 2: Northern Levant with sites used in present study

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Map 4: Sites from study area with Iron II contexts

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List of Abbreviations

ASOR	American Schools of Oriental Research
AUB	American University in Beirut
BMB	<i>Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth</i>
CA	Correspondence Analysis
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
CBRL	Council for British Research in the Levant
DGA	Director General of Antiquities, Lebanon
DGAM	Director General of Antiquities and Museums, Syria
IA-NL	Iron Age Northern Levant
IA-SL	Iron Age Southern Levant
OI	Oriental Institute, Chicago University
PEF	Palestine Exploration Fund
PEFQS	Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement
SAR	Syrian Arab Republic

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The intrinsic cultural homogeneity of the entire area [of the Northern Levant] is none the less clear and stands in marked contrast to the surrounding areas (Bunnens 2000a, 18).

1.1 Genesis of the Present Study

The present study is, by and large, a development arising from the author's Masters Research on the Iron II pottery from Tell Nebi Mend. In the process of placing the Tell Nebi Mend pottery within its regional context it had become apparent that there were a number of different "regional" influences present in the material. In particular, the Tell Nebi Mend cooking-pots resembled those from the coast, while the large pithoi were linked to the interior. Furthermore, another "inland" form, the Red-Slip pedestal-platter experienced a locally-restricted distribution (Whincop 2007, Fig. 12). The diversity evident at Tell Nebi Mend was difficult to reconcile with the conventional history of the period, which emphasised a bipartite political structure of the Northern Levant; i.e. Phoenicians on the coast, Aramaeans inland. Published studies of Iron Age pottery only seemed to confirm the historical narrative's division of the region (e.g. Lehmann 1998, Fig. 14A-B; Mazzone 1991-1992, Fig. 3).

The Iron Age pottery from Tell Nebi Mend implied that the two-region model did not explain all aspects of material cultural patterning. Within this model, the historical narrative was the main explanation given for the different cultural distribution patterns; archaeologists tended to describe the patterns and then invoke the historical narrative for "explanation". Ceramic regionalisation, however, is not an explanation of social behaviour, simply its description, and a poor one. The two-region model implied a political and cultural homogeneity within the two broad regions. This was not evident at Tell Nebi Mend. This raises the question of whether Tell Nebi Mend was unique or whether such complex ceramic patterning might be a



more widespread feature. The distribution of Iron Age pottery, therefore, warranted further investigation.

1.2 Aims of the Present Study

The primary aim of the present study is to give ceramic material culture of the Northern Levant “voice”. This is aimed at testing whether the discord between the material culture and the historical narrative, as witnessed at Tell Nebi Mend, is symptomatic of much broader interpretative problems. To ascertain whether the two provide harmonious or conflicting reconstructions of Iron Age society, this thesis will undertake a review of current interpretations and present a region-wide study of ceramics; the results of both projects will ultimately be compared. Hence, there are a number of tasks to be undertaken:

1. The first task will be to demonstrate how the historical narrative has been used to determine interpretations of the archaeology. This task will involve an assessment of conventional reconstructions of Iron Age society in the Northern Levant. To address these issues, the role that the historical narrative has played in defining archaeological reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant will be explored and current archaeological definitions of the Iron Age will be challenged. While conventional reconstructions will be critiqued through an appeal to the archaeology, they will also be questioned on theoretical grounds. Central to this task is the recognition of alternative approaches to material culture, against which current practices can be measured.
2. The second task is the meaningful ordering of the data. The aim is to develop a comprehensive and reliable ceramic typology for the Iron Age of the Northern Levant, in order that a systematic comparative study of material culture can be undertaken. It is important that the categories by which material culture will be measured and analysed are consistent and meaningful. This will be achieved through the collection and categorisation of large quantities of Iron Age ceramic data from the study area.

3. The third task is essentially one of identification and description. It involves the identification of both broad and specific patterns in the distribution of Iron Age pottery across the Northern Levant. If the broad historical patterns are to be transcended, it is important that the information collected is interrogated in a thorough and systematic fashion. This task aims only to describe these trends in order to avoid imposing preconceived interpretations onto the archaeology.
4. The fourth task is one of comparison. Its aim is to determine whether the observed ceramic culture patterning of the Iron Age and the historical narrative are compatible. This will involve the explanation of any patterns in the data from a perspective that emphasises the role of material culture in the shaping of society, rather than as a reflection of socio-political processes. Hence, the interpretation of the archaeology will not be based upon the historical interpretative framework. The different levels of the resulting interpretation will then be compared with the historical narrative to determine whether there is any correlation between the two.

The conclusions of this study will provide an important platform from which future research can consider more meaningful interpretations of the archaeological data.

1.3 Structure of the Present Study

As explained above, this thesis is comprised of four sections.

Section I provides the background for the study as a whole by investigating the historical framework behind current reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant. This section is comprised of three chapters. **Chapter 2** demonstrates that current reconstructions of Iron Age society bear little resemblance to the archaeology. It explores and challenges key concepts behind current interpretations and, in doing so, highlights their fragile foundations. A key component of this exercise will be to demonstrate how the historical narrative has been used to overdetermine interpretations of the archaeology; thus highlighting the subordinate role of the latter within current reconstructions of Iron Age society. Chapter 2 will

also explore the role that European perspectives on the Near East played in the “entrenchment” of the historical narrative as the dominant interpretative framework. **Chapter 3** explores the impact of the historical interpretive framework on archaeological *practice* in the Northern Levant. This will take the form of a review of Iron Age excavations from within the study area, and an assessment of the methods used and conclusions drawn. While this exercise will emphasise the conclusions of Chapter 2, it will also lead into the discussion of **Chapter 4**, which focuses on the study of Iron Age pottery in the Levant. More specifically, Chapter 4 explores the recurring themes in ceramic studies in the Near East and why these might be questioned on theoretical grounds. Emphasis will be given to the manner by which the historical narrative has penetrated an understanding of material culture. This will be followed by a brief review of ceramic studies in other areas of archaeology, and how these demonstrate alternative ways for understanding the relationship between people, society, and material culture. Chapter 4 concludes by addressing the implications that these alternative methods have for archaeological practice in the Levant.

Section II will present an overview of the data collected and collated for use in the present study. It consists of two chapters. **Chapter 5** recounts the means for the collection and ordering of the ceramic data, and ends with a brief overview of the main general trends. Also central to an understanding of the dataset is an appreciation of how the data was conceptualised, categorised, and manipulated ready for analysis. Hence, Chapter 5 will discuss the computer applications used to store the data, and the structure of the data within those programs. A key consideration of this chapter is the imperfect nature of the data, requiring the present study to rely upon presence/absence information. **Chapter 6** presents the ceramic typology used throughout this thesis and discusses any trends in distribution, decoration, and form, which are immediately apparent within the data. This chapter has a three-tiered structure: presenting the ceramic forms first according to functional categories, second by CLASS, and finally by sub-CLASS. The manner by which this typology was constructed is also discussed.

Section III consists of two chapters and is concerned with the analysis of the ceramic data. **Chapter 7** contains the exploratory analysis of the data. A number of

different analytical techniques will be used to explore the development over space and time of different variables in the data; i.e. context type, geography, decoration, and vessel function and form. The results of these simple comparisons and filtered searches will be presented in visual form. **Chapter 8** will continue the exploration of the data through the use of two multivariate analytical techniques well-suited to dealing with presence/absence data. Correspondence Analysis will investigate comparisons between different sub-sets of data based on associations within those sub-sets. Cluster Analysis will be employed to find similarities and dissimilarities between ceramic categories. The results of both techniques will be presented as charts and any patterns will be discussed. The results of Chapters 7 and 8 will be used to inform the final interpretation of the ceramic data.

Section IV consists of **Chapter 9**, which will discuss the socio-cultural implications of patterns detected in the data. This chapter will present an interpretation of the ceramic data that is not derived from an historical framework. Instead, the author aims to describe the significant patterns in the data and offer socio-cultural explanations for these phenomena, whilst still appreciating the dynamic role that material culture played in the construction of social identities. The aim is to transcend the limitations in the data and allow the archaeology to confirm or challenge the conventional histories of the Iron Age Northern Levant. Consequently, Chapter 9 will present an alternative reconstruction for material culture patterning than those derived from the historical narrative, whilst also considering the historical implications of an alternate interpretation of the data.

1.4 Key Definitions in the Present Study

Before continuing, it is necessary to clarify a few terms that will be encountered throughout the present study. The term “Northern Levant” has been used to designate the northern half of the eastern Mediterranean, an area incorporating the Lebanese Republic; the western half of the Syrian Arab Republic, and the Hatay of the Turkish Republic. The term “Southern Levant” pertains to the southern half of the eastern Mediterranean, and includes the modern nations of Israel, Palestine, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The geographical extent of the present study does not map perfectly onto either of these regions, and does not correspond with any modern

borders. Instead, the study area was generously conceived so patterns in the data could establish their own boundaries (**Map 2**).

The way in which the term “Iron Age” is used throughout the present study is in keeping with its conventional use. Hence, the use of the term encompasses two meanings: it designates a broad period of time following the conventional Late Bronze Age; and describes the material culture complex of this period. While Chapter 2 demonstrates that conventional definitions of the “Iron Age” are problematic, the abandonment of the term here might render discussion unnecessarily complicated for the reader.

SECTION ONE

Current Theory, Method and Practice in Reconstruction of the Iron Age Northern Levant

CHAPTER TWO

The Imposition of Predetermined Frameworks onto the Archaeological Record

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to “set the scene” for a reconsideration of the ceramic data. If the current reconstructions of Iron Age Northern Levant (hereafter IA-NL) are accurate reflections of the archaeology, then there is no need to progress any further – but they are not. This chapter will demonstrate that the archaeology bears little resemblance to current histories of the IA-NL. To this end, it will challenge some of the basic interpretative concepts behind archaeological reconstructions of the Iron Age Levant and demonstrate the fragility of current definitions/interpretations and how they are often due to historiographic accident, European pre-conceptions, and an unquestioned reliance on the historical narrative. At the heart of the matter is the way the historical narrative has overdetermined interpretations of the archaeology. In other words, the archaeology has not been used to determine the framework, but is instead simply employed to support pre-existing historical narrative frameworks.

Part of the problem lies in the lack of meaningful units of analysis, which is explored in Section 2. Terms like “Iron Age” and “Syria” appear to be both vague and inappropriate for a study of material culture from this period. Section 3 discusses the material culture with the view to isolating a more meaningful and appropriate means for defining this period. It shows that current chronological definitions of the IA-NL, which are presumed to be based on the archaeological record, are not reliable. Sections 4 and 5 then explore some specific examples of how the historical narrative has directly and indirectly impacted the archaeology of the IA-NL. In particular, Section 5 focuses on the significant impact that the biblically-inspired chronology of Iron Age Southern Levant (hereafter IA-SL) has had on interpretations across the eastern Mediterranean. The fault lies not in the text itself but in the particular view of

textual histories that has informed archaeological interpretation. Section 6 explores some of the biases and prejudices inherent in a European approach to the historical narrative of the ancient Near East. The chapter will then conclude with a summary of the assumptions upon which the IA-NL chronology rests.

By highlighting the weak foundations upon which reconstructions of the IA-NL are based, it will be demonstrated that histories of the Iron Age are not immutable, but rather ideas formed within the framework of particular temporal, socio-political and intellectual contexts. By showing that the historical narrative is the means for understanding the archaeology of this region, this chapter is an essential precursor to alternative interpretations of the IA-NL archaeology.

2.2 Arbitrary Units of Analysis

The aim of this section is to demonstrate that the archaeological record has not been used to construct an appropriate interpretative framework in the Northern Levant. Instead, archaeologists rely on terms that hold little intrinsic meaning for the material record of the IA-NL. Indeed, there are a number of important concepts that are treated as self-evident and accepted with no, or very little, discussion. When brought under closer scrutiny, however, terms such as “Iron Age” and “Syria” lose much of their clarity and reveal subtle biases (Bunnens 2000a, 3-4). Neither “Syria” nor “Iron Age”, as currently envisaged, appears to be a meaningful unit of analysis. This section briefly explores the manner by which these categories, which are full of hidden meaning, have been clumsily applied to, or rather, imposed onto the archaeology of the IA-NL; i.e. the archaeology has not been used to construct the interpretative framework. As a result, the conventional reconstructions of the IA-NL do not fit the archaeological data.

2.2.1 Syria: Land Without Borders

The term “Syria” is commonly used to define a geographic region, yet its precise meaning varies significantly throughout the literature (cf. Buccellati 1967, 11-12; Bunnens 2000a, 3; Klengel 2000a, n. 1). Moreover, a number of uses of the term are unclear (see the titles of the following examples, none of which define the use of the

term: Albright 1934; 1935; 1936; Albright & Glueck 1937; Hogarth 1914b; Mallowan 1937; McEwan 1937; Olmstead 1931; Woolley 1914-1916; 1927). Indeed, because “Syria” does not have a well-defined meaning (except as a modern nation state), it is invested with new meaning every time it is used and, therefore, embodies any number of meanings. An appeal to the origins of the term does not clarify the situation. Etymological studies on the origin of the word “Syria” have proved inconclusive (cf. Frye 1992; Lapointe 1970; Tvedtnes 1981). The original use of “Syria” has been credited to Greek authors of the eighth century BCE (e.g. Herodotus *Histories* I.105, II.116, III.5), but its meaning in these texts is not clear. According to Frey (1992), the Greeks used “Syria” interchangeably with “Assyria”, which indicates that it did not incorporate a well-defined notion (Bunnens 2000a, 4). Hence, we do not know whether the Greeks used the term to represent a cultural zone, an ethnic group, a well-defined geographic area, or a loosely-unified region. The lack of political unity and cultural cohesion in the eastern Mediterranean during this period only compounds the ambiguity (Chavalas 1992, 1; Klengel 1992, 17-18; S. Smith 1942, 88). Furthermore, no convenient term known from Near Eastern epigraphic evidence is available for the archaeologist when dealing with the Northern Levant. “Syria” is essentially a foreign term and, therefore, one that encompasses an external perspective. We do not know how the ancient inhabitants of the IA-NL referred to themselves or to their region. Whatever the Greeks imagined the term to mean, it is unlikely that it accurately reflects the local reality. This raises the question of whether “Syria” (whatever that means) is a meaningful category of study.

The use of the term “Syria” by archaeologists to define an ancient land is problematic. Not only is it an ill-defined and ambiguous term but Said (1978, 1-6, *passim*) has argued that the use of external terms such as this embody expressions of power and dominance. For Said (1978, 197, *passim*) this practice is deeply rooted in Orientalist rhetoric, which he suggests incorporates a desire, conscious or not, to disavow the region’s inhabitants of their past and present identities. But despite the vague meaning and possibly Orientalist nature, its archaeological use is rarely questioned. The present study instead uses the term “Northern Levant” to denote a loosely defined geographical region; an area that is roughly equivalent to the Republic of Lebanon, the western half of the Syrian Arab Republic, the northern reaches of the modern nation of Israel, and those regions of the Republic of Turkey

that lie south of the Taurus Mountains (**Map 1**). The loose definition is appropriate for two reasons: first, the eastern Mediterranean during the Iron Age held boundaries that were flexible and constantly changing; and second, it allows the archaeological record to define its own cultural borders through patterns in the data.

2.2.2 Iron Age: An Imported *Pre*-history

The present study concerns itself with the Iron Age, a period formally classified as the most advanced stage in tool-making technology (Trigger 1989, 73-79). The term “Iron Age” is widely used throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and has come to incorporate a number of meanings beyond its original metallurgical intention; it now holds chronological, cultural, and ceramic associations (Finkelstein 1996c, 107-108). In its original use, however, “Iron Age” was part of a paradigm developed for the classification of artefacts from Scandinavian *pre*history, a period generally devoid of textual data (Bahn 1996, 89; Daniel 1967, 90-109; Maisels 1993, 19; Schnapp 1996, 301; Trigger 1989, 73-79). The paradigm was an effective tool for classifying and ordering broad periods of time from the archaeological record alone.

Before periodisations in the Levant used the European technological-evolutionary framework, chronologies were constructed according to “ethnic” categories; such as Amorite, Jewish, Semitic and Israelite, for the IA-SL (Finkelstein 1996c, 104; Silberman 1993c, 547), and Syro-Hittite/Late-Hittite (Braidwood 1937, 6; Krogman 1949, Tab. I; Woolley 1921a; 1952), Syrian (Weiss 1985), Phoenician (Buhl 1983, 110; Riis 1970, 12, 127), Aramaean (e.g. Pezard 1931; Seton Williams 1961, 70, 75), and Assyrian (Hachmann and Kuschke 1966, 124) for the IA-NL. While such terms should be rejected because they assume a direct correlation between ethnicity and material culture, they were abandoned for another reason. The terminology was too disparate; the variation in terminology prevented inter-site comparison of material culture, which made a systematic regional study impossible (Finkelstein 1996c, 104). An attempt was made to systematise the terminology at a meeting in Jerusalem in 1922, when the European Three-Age System was formally adopted as the local periodisations (*PEFQS* 1923, 54-55), though there are indications that “Iron Age” was already being used (Phythian Adams 1923, 66). The scheme, however, was only

widely accepted following the publication of Albright's (1933; 1938; 1941-1943) Tell Beit Mirsim stratigraphy.

While "Iron Age" loosely corresponds to a period associated with the manufacture of iron tools, the use of the term in the Southern Levant was concerned with its ability to easily distinguish the Israelite period from that of the Canaanite Bronze Age (e.g. Aharoni 1978, 153; M. Dothan 1985, *passim*). The twelfth and eleventh centuries BCE, which were conventionally associated with the settlement of the Israelite tribes, needed to be included within the Iron Age so that the cultural connection between the Israelite settlement and the Davidic Kingdom could be maintained (Finkelstein 1996c, 120). Furthermore, biblical references to the iron working capacity of the Philistines (I Samuel 13:19), who were believed to have settled in the region at the same time as the Israelite tribes, appeared to suggest that the migrating "Sea Peoples" were responsible for the introduction of iron-working technology in the Levant (Aharoni 1978, 156; Dothan 1982, 20; Drews 1993, 73; Ingholt 1942, 472; Lebeau 1983, 21; G.E. Wright 1939). Hence, scholars were able to justify the inclusion of the late second millennium BCE within the period associated with the use of iron. In essence, the inclusion of these two centuries within the Iron Age was not decided on archaeological grounds but on historical considerations.

A paradigm that was originally concerned with the *pre*-historic periods of Europe had come to categorise Levantine history. Despite "Iron Age" representing artefactual categories, the prehistoric paradigm was applied through historical data signalling a clear departure from the Three-Age System in everything but terminology. Only recently has this clumsy application of the paradigm been called into question (Finkelstein 1996c; Strange 2000).

The use of the term "Iron Age", as it was envisioned in the Southern Levant, was eventually, much later, adopted in the Northern Levant, (Mesopotamian and Egyptian archaeology never adopted the Three-Age paradigm). The majority of early-twentieth century CE publications concerned with the IA-NL made no, or only infrequent use of the term (e.g. Braidwood 1937; Fugmann 1958; McEwan 1937, 8; Pezard 1931, 34; Riis 1948, 203-204; Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931a; Thureau-Dangin and Dunand 1936a; von Luschan 1902; Woolley 1914, 88; 1938a, 3; 1939b; 1952,

234-235). When “Iron Age” did appear in these studies, it was only in reference to South Levantine excavations, and was rarely used to describe the IA-NL site being excavated. For instance, Pezard (1931, 34) used “*âge du fer*” in reference to other sites, but preferred the use of ethnonyms for his Tell Nebi Mend sequence (e.g. *niveau syro-phénicien; niveau syro-hitite*). It was not until the second half of the twentieth century CE that “Iron Age” was commonly used (e.g. S.V. Chapman 1972; Hachmann 1966, Abb. 24-25; Moorey, 1975, 108; Poppa 1978; Pritchard 1968; 1975; Saidah 1966; 1977; Thalmann 1978b, 71-89, Figs 46-47). While this survey is not exhaustive, and earlier isolated uses of the term in the Northern Levant are probable, the key point is that the term did not pass into common usage until three to four decades after it was adopted in the Southern Levant, and when it did, it was a direct appeal to the South Levantine concept of Iron Age chronology. Hence, the use of “Iron Age” in the Northern Levant holds little relevance to patterns demonstrable in the archaeological record.

2.2.3 Summary

We have seen from the above discussion that the term “Iron Age Syria” is not a meaningful unit of analysis. As an archaeological concept, “Syria” is ill-defined, encompasses no single meaning, and is used in a varied and vague manner. On the other hand, “Iron Age” derives from an artefact based European prehistoric paradigm that has been clumsily applied to the Southern Levant through historical data and imposed onto the archaeological record of the Northern Levant. Both terms also embody deeper political overtones; primarily for modern populations attempting to reclaim their cultural heritage and establish their own collective identity (Ben Yehuda 1995; 2002; S. Jones 1997, 9; Kletter 2006, 316; Whitlam 1996, 15). However, it is difficult to avoid the identity politics of modern nation states in the region, where the past is often used in highly creative ways to establish continuity between the past, present, and future (Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 195; Silberman 1995, 261; Trigger 1984, 358).

The current study has generally avoided using the value-laden term “Syria”, instead opting for the equally vague “Northern Levant” as defined above (§2.2.1). For ease of discussion, “Iron Age” is used throughout, but without carrying any of the

metallurgical or absolute chronological implications that the term might usually encompass. Hence, the use of the term Iron I refers to a particular cultural horizon conventionally associated with that period.

2.3 Key Elements in Current Archaeological Definitions of the Iron Age Northern Levant

The term “Iron Age” came to be used in the Northern Levant through a reliance on the chronology of the Southern Levant, where the distinction between Bronze and Iron Age was not determined according to the archaeology, but for religious (biblical accuracy) and political (Jewish appeal for legitimacy) reasons (Whitelam 1996, *passim*). The key issue was to separate the history of the ancient Canaanites from that of the Israelites (as depicted in the biblical narrative), whilst maintaining a link between early Israelite history and the United Monarchy. The archaeology was only consulted to “prove” the already established framework (e.g. Solomonic Megiddo - §2.5.4.3). As a result, the Iron Age of the Northern Levant bears little resemblance to the archaeological record. The historical narrative suggests a number of distinctions between the Bronze Age and Iron Age, which have been assumed to be evident in the archaeology. If one were to consult a standard text on the archaeology of the eastern Mediterranean, a number of phenomena are suggested as indicative of the early Iron Age (e.g. Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360-361).

- “Sea Peoples” migration
- new ethnic populations
- break in material culture
- change in political-systems
- the development of the alphabet
- emergence of private enterprise
- the cremation of the dead
- new monumental style of architecture
- iron as a working metal
- use of domesticated camel caravans

Closer scrutiny of the archaeology reveals that these phenomena cannot be considered indicative of the early Iron Age; some are clearly a continuation of Late Bronze Age developments while others can only be associated with the later Iron Age. The following section explores each of these topics in turn.

2.3.1 “Sea Peoples” Migration

Around the close of the thirteenth century BCE, when conventional chronologies place the transition of the Late Bronze and Iron Ages (e.g. Buhl 1992, 34; Fugmann 1958, 267; Mazzoni 1990a), the whole eastern Mediterranean world experienced a period of political and economic instability (Liverani 1987, 69-70). Known as the “Crisis Years”, it was during this period that the political systems of the Bronze Age suffered decline and collapse (Klengel 2000a; Ward and Joukowsky 1992). The appearance of “Sea Peoples” in Egyptian texts at around this time has led many scholars to connect the two phenomena (Betancourt 2000, 297; Dothan 1982, 1-13; Lipinski 2000a, 25; Thomas 1967, 65), attributing the collapse of Bronze Age society to the invasion of the “Sea Peoples” (Kuhrt 1995, 386). Indeed, conventional histories tend to emphasise the role of violent migration as the primary cause of collapse (e.g. Courbin 1990b, 503; Klengel 2000a, 23; Lipinski 2000b, 125; Mazzoni 2000a, 31; Pritchard 1968, 99; Woolley 1921a, 48; 1948). Widespread destruction, therefore, became a convenient archaeological indicator for the beginning of the Iron Age (e.g. Badre 2006, 93; Hamilton 1934, 77; Ingholt 1942, 472). The textual bases for the “violent migration” theory mainly derive from Egypt: the inscriptions of Merneptah in the Temple of Karnak at Luxor, the texts of Ramesses III in his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu, and the Papyrus Harris I (Kuhrt 1995, 384-393). Together these texts detail “wars” against a confederation of “Sea Peoples” (Drews 1993, 48-61).

The development of the “violent migration” theory coincided with the discovery of destruction levels at a number of sites across the eastern Mediterranean, most of which appeared to coincide with the late-second millennium BCE (*ibid*). The “violent migration” theory also implies that the populations of the Iron Age Levant, at least within the coastal centres, were of a different ethno-political nature to those of the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Fugmann 1958, 275). In particular, the Iron Age population was considered a derivative of the Late Bronze Age Aegean cultures (Bell 2006, 15). This has in turn led to great emphasis being placed on the apparent Aegean origin of early Iron Age cultural elements; such as cremation or sub-Mycenaean pottery (e.g. Dothan 1982, 94, 219, 252; 1998; Dothan and Dothan 1992, 159-170; Killebrew 2005, 14; cf. Sherratt 1998, 293).

Despite the frequency by which the “Sea Peoples” migration theory has been linked to various destruction levels, the correlation is not straightforward. The “violent migration” theory ignores the strong cultural continuity between the two periods (§2.3.3), something that is unlikely to occur with the large-scale settlement of a new population. Instead, attention is given to archaeologically attestable destruction; however one expects that to manifest itself (§2.4.3). For instance, a significant number of Levantine sites have evidence of destruction at the end of the Bronze Age (e.g. Ras Ibn Hani), but many of these sites attest to continuity in material culture despite the destruction levels; Alalakh and Ugarit are obvious exceptions. Along the Lebanese coast, where the effects of invasion by sea would be most acutely felt, continuity in settlement occupation is markedly well-attested (Blaylock 1999, 265; Courbin 1990b, 503; Riis 1970, 40; S. Smith 1942, 90). In fact, the coastal sites of southern Lebanon bear little evidence of destruction (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 361; Anderson 1988, 424; Bell 2006, 12; Bikai 1978b, 14-15, 56, 73-75; S. Smith 1942, 90). The archaeological record does not directly support the violent ‘Sea Peoples’ invasion theory; which begs the question – without the “Sea Peoples” texts, would people be searching for twelfth century BCE destruction levels? Furthermore, attributing destruction levels to the “Sea Peoples” is in many cases an example of circular reasoning; the identification of early Iron Age strata relies on the presence of a “Sea Peoples” destruction layer, which has been used to support the accuracy of the “violent migration” narrative (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, 88; Riis 1970, 40, 126).

The thesis that a great migration of the “Sea Peoples” occurred around 1200 BCE is supposedly based on Egyptian texts of Merneptah and Ramesses III, yet the inscriptions themselves make no direct claim for migration. Hence, we might conclude that the hypothesis is based not on the Egyptian texts but on a particular interpretation of them (Drews 1993, 48-61). The earliest of the three texts comes from the eastern wall of the main Karnak Temple, and commemorates the great victory of Merneptah over Libyan invaders and their allies in the Nile Delta. It reads:

Beginning of the victory which his majesty achieved in the land of Libya..., *Ekwesh, Teresh, Luka, Sherden, Sheklesh*, Northerners coming from all lands (Breasted 1906a, no. 574)

When this inscription was first read in the nineteenth century CE, Egyptologists identified the Libyan allies with regions of the northern Mediterranean: the *Luka* were identified with Lycia, the *Ekwesh* with Achaea, the *Teresh* with Tyrrhenia, *Sheklesh* with Sicily, and the *Sherden* with Sardinia (Drews 1993, 49-50; Kuhrt 1995, 386-393). There is no indication in the text, however, that any of the “northern” contingents, however they are identified, were migrating. On the contrary, a latter part of this text lists very low numbers of casualties amongst the Libyan king’s auxiliaries (compared to actual Libyan casualties), suggesting that they were instead mercenary contingents (Kuhrt 1995, 387; Maspero 1896, 432; Schachermeyr 1982, 41-43). There is nothing here to suggest a violent mass migration of northern Mediterranean groups.

The second temple inscription comes from Ramesses III’s mortuary temple at Medinet Habu, where the text accompanies large reliefs depicting Ramesses’ “War” with the “Sea Peoples”. Before discussing the text, it is worth noting the context of this account. The Medinet Habu temple contains inscriptions and reliefs commemorating every victory with which Ramesses III could conceivably be credited (Drews 1993, 50). Some of these are obviously not true claims of victory, but literary devices for linking this king with those that came before; Ramesses clearly borrows a number of victories from earlier kings (e.g. Ramesses II’s victory over the Hittites – *ibid*). For Baines (1996, 347-351) the creation of monuments like Medinet Habu was more about maintaining the “Great Tradition” of propaganda, than recording an accurate history of events. Baines (1996, 363-371) also suggests that it is the reliefs concerned with foreigners that are usually the most propagandistic. This is a particularly important point if we also accept his (Baines *ibid*, 363) thesis that the Egyptian New Kingdom Temple was a model representation of the cosmos. In this model, the temple’s interior was associated with the king, Egypt and order while its exterior depicted the king’s dominion over the foreign, chaotic world. Viewed from this perspective, the Medinet Habu portrayal of the “Sea Peoples” as foreign ethnic groups is characteristic of an Egyptian concern with the rejection and control (through classification) of the non-Egyptian world (Baines 1996, 377). Such a device would also recall the expulsion of the foreign Hyksos rulers from Egypt, who were demonised long after their disappearance (Baines 1996, 378, n. 129). Hence, the Medinet Habu reliefs may not record specific events, but

rather an ideological statement of dominance and control, aimed at the consolidation of Egyptian identity.

Having established the ideological and propagandistic context, we may begin to explore the Medinet Habu text. The particular paragraph thought to attest to the violent migration of “Sea Peoples” is the following:

The foreign countries made a *conspiracy* in their islands (*rww*). All at once the lands removed and scattered in the fray. No land could stand before their arms, from Hatti, Kode, Carchemish, Arzawa, and Alashiya on, being cut off *at [one time]*. A camp [was set up] in one place in Amor. They desolated its people, and its land was like that which has never come into being. They were coming forward toward Egypt, while the flame was prepared before them. Their confederation was the *Peleset*, *Tjeker*, *Sheklesh*, *Denyen*, and *Weshesh*, lands united. They laid their hands upon the lands as far as the circuit of the earth, their hearts confident and trusting; “Our plans will succeed!” (Wilson 1969a, 262 – emphasis his)

The basis for this theory rests on a single sentence within this paragraph, and more specifically one word within this sentence. The word *rww* is usually translated as ‘islands’ or ‘isles’ (Edgerton and Wilson 1936, Pl. 37-39), implying that the foreigners originally derived from islands. However, Nibbi (1975, 48, 65) has demonstrated that this word is also frequently used to refer to continental coasts. When this reading of *rww* is combined with the fact that the *peleset* and *tjeker* were frequently referred to as “Asiatics” in Egyptian texts (Edgerton and Wilson 1936, Pl. 31, 43, 44, 46), there is no reason to locate their lands outside of the eastern Mediterranean. Hence, the Medinet Habu text may be recounting a conflict between Egypt and her immediate Levantine neighbours.

The third and final Egyptian text dealing with the “Sea Peoples” is Papyrus Harris I.

I extended all the frontiers of Egypt and overthrew those who had attacked them from their lands. I slew the Denyen in their islands, while the Tjeker and the Philistines were made ashes. The Sherden and the Weshesh of the Sea were made nonexistent, captured altogether and brought in captivity to Egypt like the sands of the shore. I settled them in strongholds, bound in my name. Their military classes were as numerous as hundred-thousands. I assigned portions for them all with clothing and provisions from the treasuries and granaries ... (Wilson 1969f, 262)

According to Kuhrt (1995, 389) and Van Seters (1997, 177) the text of the Papyrus Harris was composed primarily to illustrate the piety and virtue of Ramesses III. For this purpose, the king is depicted as the bringer of peace and conqueror of Egypt's traditional foes. Key to an understanding of this text is an awareness that it was written during a period of political turmoil (Ramesses III had just died) by Ramesses' son, Ramesses IV, to legitimise his claim to the throne (Van Seters 1997, 177-178; J.A. Wilson 1969f, 262, n.18). The historical survey of Ramesses III's "great achievements" is highly-selective and is not presented in any chronological order. Van Seters (*ibid*) suggests that rather than accepting the historicity of this document, it can be understood as an ideological statement regarding the legitimacy of the royal line. To expound a history of the eastern Mediterranean from this text demonstrates a lack of sensitivity to the kind of history Ramesses IV was trying to write.

The Egyptian texts, while seemingly factual, are not sufficiently reliable to form the keystone of a historical reconstruction. They do not directly attest to a migration, violent or not, at the end of the Late Bronze Age; the role of the "Sea Peoples" has been over-emphasised (Bauer 1998, 151). Consequently, alternate explanations for the Egyptian "Sea Peoples" texts have been presented by an increasing number of scholars (Bauer 1998; Drews 1993; Sherratt 1998, 292-293). Probably the most convincing theory is that of Sherratt (1998, 292-293), who has suggested that the "Sea Peoples" concept does not represent a specific group but rather the emergence of decentralised trading following a regional economic crisis. Accordingly, Sherratt (*ibid*) suggests that the Egyptians texts can be read as their efforts to explain the crisis in terms of their own world view; the vague geographical locations in the text may indicate the decentralised nature of this maritime phenomenon, which was probably a difficult concept for highly centralised Egyptian society to understand.

2.3.2 New Ethnic Populations

As we have already seen, the beginning of the Iron Age is conventionally associated with widespread upheaval and political crisis. While the "Sea Peoples" are often cited as the main component within a massive movement of people, the appearance of other ethnically-distinct peoples have also been associated with the "Crisis Years" (Albright 1975, 516-517; Bunnens 1999, 605; Caubet 1992; Klengel 1992, 181;

Sader 1992, 161; 2000; Schwartz 1989, Thomas 1967, 68); the few that concern a study of the IA-NL are the “Aramaeans”, “Phoenicians”, and “Neo-Hittites”. The identification of new Iron Age ethnic-groups is based on the recognition of seemingly new languages in the archaeological record of the early Iron Age, which also happens to coincide with the abandonment of languages associated with the use of cuneiform. The apparent change in written language has led some scholars to emphasize a break in cultural traditions and equate this with the immigration and settlement of a new ethnic population (Albright 1975, 529-536; Eidem and Ackermann 1999, 315; Klengel 1992, 187; Lipinski 2000a, 25; Peckham 2001, 19, 21; Sader 2000, 64-68). There are three concerns with this approach: first, the correlation between language and identity is over-simplistic; second, the association of written language with that being spoken is presumptuous, and third, these languages and ethnonyms are not new to the Iron Age.

The equation of a newly visible language with a new population is, for a number of reasons, an over-simplistic view of the relationship between language and identity (S. Jones 1997, 106-110). Language does not always play a role in the construction of group identity (cf. S. Schwartz 1995, 3; Sherratt 2003a, 231-233). According to Sherratt (*ibid*), the Greeks were the first to elevate language into a major focus of ethnic identity; no such ethnic affiliations are known from the early Iron Age of the Northern Levant. Instead, many sites show evidence of multiple language use (Aro 2003, 282; Bryce 2003, 124; Bunnens 1999, 614; 2006, 97; Klengel 1992, 187, 193; 2000a, 27; Lipinski 2000a, 234-235, 239; Melchert 2003a, 2-3). At Zincirli, for instance, the local rulers bore Luwian as well as Aramaean names and used both languages in their inscriptions (Bordreuil 1993, 254; Dalley 2000, 80). Written language is not a good indicator of ethnicity.

Furthermore, written language is not always the same language as that being spoken: e.g. Akkadian was used for record-keeping across a vast region during the Bronze Age alongside local literary traditions (Liverani 1990, 14). While alphabetic writing is the physical representation of speech and, therefore, closely related to spoken language, it does not necessarily represent the earliest occurrence of the language being spoken. For instance, Aramaic is generally associated with the Iron Age, but a number of Aramaic personal names are evident within the Bronze Age archives of

Mari, Alalakh, and Ugarit (Malamat 1973, 134). The visibility of a language is not directly linked to the speaking of that language, but is instead affected by the writing systems and media employed (Sherratt 2003a, 232-233). Writing is not something that people automatically embrace just because they have become aware of the possibility and have encountered the technology (*ibid*). The cultural conditions have to be right; in other words, it is more a cultural choice than an ethnic indicator (Bunnens 1999, 614-615). In the early Iron Age, alphabetic scripts were widely adopted because there was a perceived need; possibly to differentiate the new sub-elites from Bronze Age elites, or to facilitate mercantile activity (cf. Riis 1970, 174; Sherratt 2003a, 230). It is important to remember that a large percentage of the Iron Age hieroglyphic Luwian texts were inscriptions detailing the exploits of Iron Age rulers, and were inscribed on stone for posterity (Klengel 1992, 187). Such texts were written down for very specific reasons; the choice of written language entails reasons beyond an expression of personal speech (Bryce 2003, 125; Melchert 2003b, 13). Ultimately, the archaeological record is unable to confirm the appearance or disappearance of language, but can only plot the archaeological *visibility* of that language.

Despite the Aramaic and Luwian languages generally being associated with the Iron Age, there is evidence to suggest that they were known in the Late Bronze Age. For instance, the first documented appearance of the Aramaic language in written form occurs in the Iron I period (Aramaic names are known from Late Bronze Age Ugarit – Gröndahl 1967, 10-202), yet there are much earlier references (fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BCE) to nomadic people known as Aramaeans (Bunnens 1999, 606, 610-611; Lipinski 2000a, 45-50; 2000b, 132; O’Callaghan 1948, 95; Salvensen 1998, 139). The appearance of Aramaic does not coincide with the appearance of the Aramaeans, however they were identified (Klengel 2000a, 26). In addition, Hieroglyphic Luwian was already in use in the Northern Levant during the Late Bronze Age (Bryce 2003, 84-88). The Phoenician language appears to be directly related to Late Bronze Age Canaanite, suggesting it was not a completely new development within the Iron Age (Isserlin 1982, 804).

2.3.3 Break in Material Culture

Reconstructions of the IA-NL are largely influenced by South Levantine chronology, where the biblical narrative equates the beginning of the Iron Age with changes in population associated with the “Sea Peoples” and the settlement of the Israelite tribes (Aharoni 1978, 153). Thus, conventional chronologies across the Levant place significant emphasis on change (Ben Ami 2001, 160; Buhl 1992, 34; Sader 2000, 61), but there were also significant continuities between the Bronze and Iron Ages (Fritz 2000, 507; Mazar 1992, 296; Mazzone 2000a, 31-33; 2000d, 1043). Many aspects of early Iron Age material culture are very similar to those from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Tell Afis - Bonatz 1993, 134-135; **Table 2.1**). In particular, there is little change evident across the conventional Bronze-Iron Age transition in ceramic culture, domestic architectural traditions, or metallurgical technology.

Table 2.1: Summary of LB/Iron Transition in the Northern Levant

Site	LB	Destr.	Iron I	Cont.	Reference
Tille Hoyuk	T	T	T	T	Summers 1993, 3
Jerablus	T	T	T	T	Hawkins 1974, 70
Tell Rifa’at	T	T	T	T	Seton-Williams 1961, 75, 82
Alalakh	T	T	Ψ	-	Woolley 1955, 398
Ras al Bassit	T	T	T	T	Courbin 1983, 122
Ugarit	T	T	Ψ	-	Yon 1992
Ras Ibn Hani	T	T	T	T	Badre 1983, 206
Tell Sukas	T	T	T	T	Lund 1986, 41, 188
Tell Kazel	T	T	T	T	Badre 2006, 93
Tell Afis	T	T	T	T	Venturi 1998a, 135
Hama	T	Ψ	T	T	Fugmann 1958, 267
Sarepta	T	Ψ	T	T	Anderson 1988, 380, 390
Tyre	T	Ψ	T	T	Bikai 1978b, 73
Kamid el Loz	T	Ψ	T	T	Hachmann 1989, 35, 44, 52-54
Tell Keisan	T	T	T	T	Dever 1997a, 278
Tell Abu Hawam	T	T	T	T	Hamilton 1935, 66
Tel Dan	T	Ψ	T	T	Biran 1994, 126
Hazor	T	T	T	Ψ	Ben Ami 2001, 160
Megiddo	T	Ψ	T	T	Lamon and Shipton 1939, 7 Finkelstein <i>et al.</i> 2006, 848
Pella	T	T	T	T	Smith and Potts 1992, 83
Tel Rehov	T	Ψ	T	T	Mazar 1999a, 38

Legend: T = present; Ψ = not evident

While this continuity is often remarked upon by excavators, it is rarely used to inform their interpretation. For instance, Fugmann (1958, 267, 274) remarks on the architectural continuity between Hama Strata G and F, with no observable difference

or interruption evident in the archaeological record, yet he still associates Stratum F with the settlement of a new “Sea Peoples” population.

2.3.4 Change in Political-Systems

Associated with the “Crisis Years” is a general acceptance of a collapse of Late Bronze Age culture and, in particular, the political structures of that period (Hallo 1992, 1-3). As a result, archaeological discussions of the Bronze-Iron Age transition have emphasised the disappearance of the Late Bronze Age palaces and ruling elites, and the development in the private sector of activities that were once palace-controlled, such as writing and trade (e.g. Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 361; Hallo 1992, 3; Liverani 1987, 69; Sader 1992, 158). The archaeology, however, is not in total agreement with this interpretation. While some sites do provide evidence for the destruction of large, palace-like buildings (e.g. Ugarit, Alalakh, Ras Ibn Hani – Margueron 1985, 152-155), there are sites that instead testify to political continuity. The clearest example of this is the city of Carchemish (modern Jerablus), where a large elite complex survived the Late Bronze Age “crisis” and persisted well into the Iron Age (Klengel 1992, 182-183).

Following its conquest by the Hittites (c. 1350 BCE), Carchemish was a seat of the Hittite royal family and an administrative control point for the Hittites in the Northern Levant. When Carchemish survived the collapse of the Hittite empire, it retained its dynasty of local rulers with ties to the Hittite royal house, ties that were not only maintained in the Iron Age, but *emphasised* (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360; Klengel 1992, 193). The Carchemish rulers maintained forms of architecture, monumental art, and iconography that were closely related to those of the Hittite empire (Bunnens 1999, 612). Just as significant, however, is the fact that Iron Age Carchemish maintained a dynastic political structure. The names of the Iron Age dynasts emulated the names of Hittite kings, which included the use of the titles ‘Great King’ and ‘Hero’, previously the exclusive privilege of Hittite kings (Caubet 2003, 18; Hawkins 1988, 104-108; Klengel 2000a, 27). Foreign powers even referred to Carchemish as the “land of the Hittites” (e.g. Tiglath-Pileser I - Grayson 1991a, texts A.0.87.1, A.0.87.2, A.0.87.3, A.0.87.4, A.0.87.12). The Carchemish dynasts claimed to be direct descendants of true Hittite imperial power, and their dynastic

succession was supported by the site's distinctively Hittite artistic iconography and royal titles. According to Woolley (1914, 98), the practice of cremation, evident in the Yunus cemetery, was maintained in an effort to mirror the Hittite tradition of cremating kings. Even the language used in declarations of dynastic legitimacy (hieroglyphic Luwian) is an indigenous Anatolian construction dating back to the Hittite empire (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360; Klengel 1992, 193; Woolley 1913, 97). Despite whatever the inscriptions of Ramesses III say about the destruction of Carchemish by the "Sea Peoples" (J.A. Wilson 1969a, 262; Woolley 1952, 226, 235), there is clearly a direct link between the Bronze Age and Iron Age political structure at Carchemish (Hawkins 1974, 70; 1982, 372).

In addition to the survival of the political structures at Carchemish, the names of the so-called "Aramaean" kingdoms of the early Iron Age (e.g. *bit Agusi* = house of Agusi) imply a tribal structure; i.e. a political system centred on familial ties or dynasties (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 367; Sader 1992, 159-160). Furthermore, the sites on the southern Lebanese coast appear to have suffered little disruption to their trading activities across the Bronze-Iron Age transition (Bell 2006, 95-100). While Albright (1975, 518-519) assumed that these sites were destroyed by the "Sea Peoples" but were the first to recover, Bell (2006, *passim*) has recently demonstrated that this region thrived during the "Crisis Years". There appears to be little reason to believe that the political structure of the early Iron Age along the Lebanese coast was substantially any different to that of the Late Bronze Age. In the end, the collapse of a palace-based economy and political administration is evident at a few North Levantine sites (e.g. Alalakh, Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani) – the "Sea Peoples" invasion model has effectively over-determined the interpretation of the archaeology.

2.3.5 The Development of the Alphabet

The adoption of the alphabetic-script is conventionally dated to the beginning of the Iron Age and connected to the collapse of Late Bronze Age society (e.g. Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360-361). This argument implies that the alphabet was simply filling the lacuna left by the abandonment of palatial scribal traditions, a void partly due to the disappearance of the elite patrons of the scribes, and partly to the diplomatic language of Akkadian no longer being necessary (Hawkins 1982, 381;

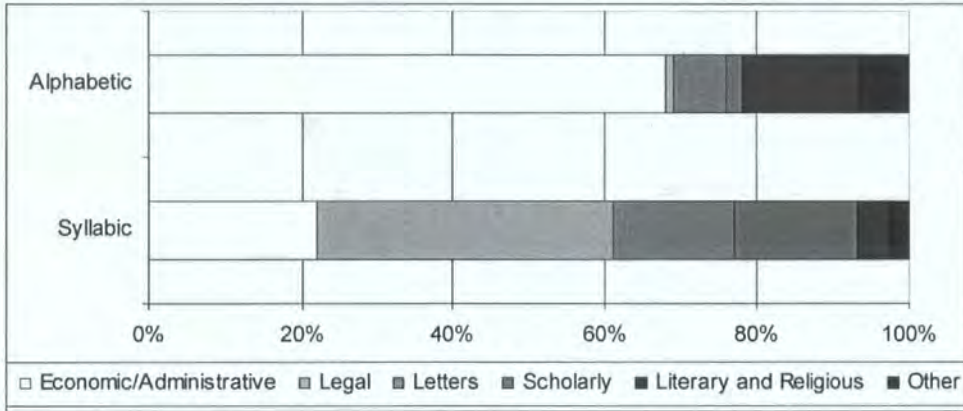
Sader 1992, *passim*). While many scholars would agree that the long established cuneiform writing systems largely disappeared from the Levant around the time of the “Crisis Years”, none of the above models have addressed the seemingly magical appearance of a fully developed alphabetic writing system.

An explanation for the development of the alphabet instead lies in the archaeological record of the Late Bronze Age (Isserlin 1982). The rich textual record of Late Bronze Age Ugarit contains around 1800 syllabically written texts (Akkadian, Sumerian, Hittite, and Hurrian) and more than 1900 texts of alphabetic Ugaritic (Bordreuil and Pardee 1989; Schloen 2001, 206). About 130 tablets have also been found at the neighbouring palatial centre of Late Bronze Age Ras Ibn Hani, most of which are written in alphabetic Ugaritic (Bordreuil and Caquot 1979; Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 29; Bounni *et al.* 1998, 91). In fact, alphabetic texts have been recovered from a number of Late Bronze Age contexts throughout the eastern Mediterranean (Albright 1964b; Hillers 1964; Isserlin 1982, 799-804; Millard 1976; Pritchard 1975, 102ff; Riis 1970, 174). While Ugarit’s archival record confirms that the alphabetic script pre-dates the Iron Age (it appears as early as the fourteenth century BCE – Isserlin 1982, 802; Szyner 1975), it also demonstrates that the two script types (syllabic and alphabetic) co-existed. Clearly, the alphabet is not an Iron Age innovation, but is based upon a principle already present in the mid-second millennium BCE.

From an analysis of subject matter contained within the syllabic and alphabetic texts of Ugarit, Schloen (2001, 206) has demonstrated that alphabetic scripts were primarily used at this site to record economic transactions (**Chart 2.1**). This simplified script, which was essentially cuneiform shorthand, appears to have developed as a means for facilitating mercantile intercourse. Those merchants operating outside the realm of palatially-administered trade (§2.3.6) did not have access to a scribal resource, and consequently employed whatever form of written communication that was available to them. The development of the alphabet appears to be linked to entrepreneurial trade; if so this would explain the marked increase in the use of alphabetic scripts in the period following the disappearance of the Late Bronze Age palatial scribes (Bell 2006, 17-19). These developments may also explain the presence of a wooden diptych on the Ulu Burun ship at a time when

Akkadian cuneiform was still the “official” language of trade (Bass 1987, 731; Bass *et al.* 1989, Fig. 19). Papasavvas (2003) has suggested that styli found in Late Cypriot urban centres attest to the use of similar waxed wooden tablets as a writing medium.

Chart 2.1: Constituents of Ugarit’s Alphabetic and Syllabic Texts



(After Schloen 2001, 206 n.3)

In contrast to the comparative richness of the Late Bronze Age textual record, the early Iron Age is poorly represented. As a result, some scholars have come to consider the early Iron Age as a type of “dark age” (cf. Klengel 1992, 181; 2000a, 21; Lipinski 2000b, 125; Liverani 1987, 71; Pitard 1987, 81; Venturi 2000c). However, the problem is not one of loss of literacy, but the loss of archaeological visibility of literacy, possibly due to the use of perishable writing materials (Dornemann 2003a, 7; Klengel 1992, 181; 2000a, 25). Free from the cumbersome but durable methods of cuneiform, alphabetic writing could be used on a number of media, some of which - papyrus, wax on wood, leather – are not able to survive the climate of the eastern Mediterranean well (Anastasio *et al.* 2004, 18).

2.3.6 Emergence of Private Enterprise

Another innovation often associated with the beginning of the Iron Age is the development of private enterprise. For instance, Liverani (1997b, 562) has argued that Iron Age merchants, who were formerly palace-dependent, were acting for themselves for the first time. In this model, trade had shifted from being an administered process during the Late Bronze Age to an entrepreneurial one in the Iron Age (Liverani 1987, 72; 2003, 128-133). Sherratt and Sherratt (1991, *passim*;

1993, *passim*) viewed this process as one of privatisation as the people involved in trade changed from being state-controlled to private merchants. There is evidence within the Ugarit archives, however, to suggest that a significant level of trade was undertaken outside of palace controls during the Late Bronze Age (Bell 2006, 19). In fact, the Late Bronze Age texts discuss private enterprise at Ugarit in some detail, with even the names of prosperous individual entrepreneurs known; e.g. Rapanu, Yabninu, Urtenu (Bell 2006, 65-67). Heltzer (1969, 35; 1976; 1978; 1982; 1996) has concluded from this that both administered and entrepreneurial trade were present in Late Bronze Age Ugarit, with both sectors operating alongside each other.

Sherratt (2003b, 48-50) has also suggested that a number of Levantine coastal cities were already operating outside of palatial controls before the “Crisis Years”. In particular, the Lebanese coast had been operating free from Egyptian imperial demands since the death of Ramesses II, and by the beginning of the twelfth century BCE had been functioning independently for some decades (*ibid*). At the time of crisis, these cities of southern Lebanon escaped destruction and were able to quickly prosper following Ugarit’s demise (Bell 2006, 92; Klengel 2000a, 24; Peckham 2001, 21). At the close of the Bronze Age, those communities with a more decentralised mercantile mechanism were able to continue doing what they were already doing at the end of the Late Bronze Age. This is evident in the continuity of trade between the merchants of Phoenicia and Cyprus, both of which had a long history of engagement in maritime trade (Bell 2006, 95-100; Bikai 1983; 1987; Gilboa and Sharon 2003, 51-55). Private enterprise is not a new phenomenon in the Iron Age, but it does appear to intensify in this period. Free from the competition and monopolising control of the palace economy, the entrepreneurial spirit that was already present in the Late Bronze Age developed and flourished in the Iron Age (Liverani 2003, 128).

2.3.7 Cremation of the Dead

For many scholars, the cremation of the dead in the Levant is unique to the Iron Age, having been introduced from the Aegean by the invading “Sea Peoples” (e.g. Barnett 1975, 14; Buhl 1992, 34; Culican 1973, 67; Ingholt 1942, 472; Johns 1938, 121). To suggest that a change in burial practices equates to a new population is simplistic,

when other explanations are possible; for example, economy of space and hygiene (cf. Doumet-Serhal 2004b, 73; Courbin 1993a, 104). Indeed, under closer scrutiny the evidence does not support the “Sea Peoples” hypothesis. Contrary to conventional thought (e.g. Doumet-Serhal 2004b, 72-73), there is evidence to suggest that cremation was practiced during the Late Bronze Age at Ugarit, Alalakh, Sukas, Carchemish and Hama, and was, therefore, known in the Levant prior to possible “Sea Peoples” contact (Bienkowski 1982, 80-82; Courbin 1993a, 104-109; Gilmour 1995, 167; Mazzoni 2000a, 35; Prausnitz 1982, 35-36; Riis 1948, 192-203; 1961, 140-141; Woolley 1914, 98; 1952, 225; 1955, 201-203). Furthermore, cremation was not an exclusively Bronze Age Aegean rite, as suggested by some scholars (e.g. Fugmann 1958, 275; Ingholt 1942, 472), but was practised widely in Bronze Age Anatolia also (Courbin 1993a, 104; Gaal 1976). In fact, cremation only became the dominant Aegean burial rite in the early Iron Age (Dickinson 2006, 184-195). Moreover, the earliest documented examples of Iron Age cremation in the Levant were not from the coast, as would be expected with a “Sea Peoples” introduction, but were encountered across the inland Northern Levant at sites such as Carchemish, Hama, and Tell Halaf (Mazzoni 2000a, 35). While cremation was the distinctive burial practice on the coast in the Iron II period: e.g. Tyre al Bass, Tell Rachidieh, Tambourit, Khalde, Ras al Bassit, and Akhziv (Doumet-Serhal 2004b, 73; E. Mazar 2001, 10; Saidah 1966; 1977), it never became the sole burial practice there; pit, chamber and tomb inhumations continued to be used alongside cremation for much of the Iron Age. From the above discussion, there is little reason to perpetuate the association of cremation with the invading “Sea Peoples” or even as being representative of the Iron Age Levant. Instead, cremation bears witness to the native character of the Iron Age population.

2.3.8 New Monumental Art and Architecture

The distinctive style of monumental art and architecture of inland Northern Levant is often considered characteristic of the Iron Age, frequently cited as evidence for the presence of “Neo-Hittites” or “Aramaeans” (e.g. Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 367; Albright 1975, 526-529). However, this style displays clear continuity with Bronze Age Imperial Hittite art (Abou Assaf 1985, 347-350; Aro 2003, 298-307; Klenegl 1992, 193; Kohlmeyer 2000, 8-11; Mellink 1974). Heavily fortified sites

such as Zincirli, Carchemish, Tell Halaf, Ain Dara, Tell Ta'yinat, Aleppo, and Hama, among others, with their monumental gateways and large public buildings (palaces, temples) are often lavishly decorated with an artistic style that draws heavily on the conventions and motifs of Late Bronze Age Imperial Hittite art (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 367; Akurgal 1962, 127-130; Mazzoni 2001, 101; *contra* Fugmann 1958, 268). The use of guardian figures (lions, sphinxes) at gates, carved orthostats lining the base of walls, and specific iconographic details are all typical of earlier Anatolian traditions (Mellink 1974; Aro 2003, 307-337; Mazzoni 2000d, 1044-1045). While this Hittite-derivative style borrowed heavily from Bronze Age traditions, its appearance across inland Northern Levant is only documented during the Iron Age, though the chronology is debated.

The chronology of “Neo-Hittite” art was first outlined by Akurgal (1962; cf. Orthmann 1971) who discerned three separate phases in stylistic development (**Table 2.2**). The first phase is defined as the “Traditional Style” (or “Early Neo-Hittite Phase”), which he concluded was the perpetuation of “Hittite art which flowered during the second millennium in Anatolia and north Syria” (Akurgal 1962, 127-130). This first phase is represented principally by sculptures at Malatya and Carchemish and has been dated by Akurgal to 1050-850 BCE. The second phase is that of the “Slight Assyrian Style” (or “Middle Neo-Hittite Phase”), which Akurgal dated to 850-745 BCE and is characterised by the first appearance of Assyrian motifs within what is still essentially a “Hittite” style (Akurgal 1962, 130-133). This phase is represented at Carchemish and Zincirli. The third phase is the “Strong Assyrian Style” (or “Late Neo-Hittite Phase”), during which the traditional Hittite element is swamped by Assyrian influence (Akurgal 1962, 133-136). This phase is dated by Akurgal to 745-700 BCE and is discernible in the gate lions of Zincirli and Sakçe Gözü.

Table 2.2: Stylistic Sequence of Neo-Hittite Monumental Art

Phase	BCE	Style
Early Neo-Hittite	1050-850	Traditional Style
Middle Neo-Hittite	850-745	Slight Assyrian Style
Late Neo-Hittite	745-700	Strong Assyrian Style

(After Akurgal 1962, 127-136)

Akurgal's sequence is based mainly on art-historical grounds. While it outlines the development of different stylistic elements within "Neo Hittite" art, the absolute dates are based on excavations with inadequate stratigraphy: any reliance on Carchemish or Zincirli stratigraphy, for example, completely undermines his results (see §§3.20, 3.47). Ignoring absolute chronology, Akurgal's sequence does demonstrate that the early Iron Age populations of inland Northern Levant maintained a strong cultural link with the stylistic traditions of Bronze Age Anatolia. "Neo-Hittite" art might indeed be considered a true Iron Age phenomenon for the Northern Levant. It appears that current reconstructions of the Iron Age, which emphasise the political history of the region, correlate well with the political monuments of material culture.

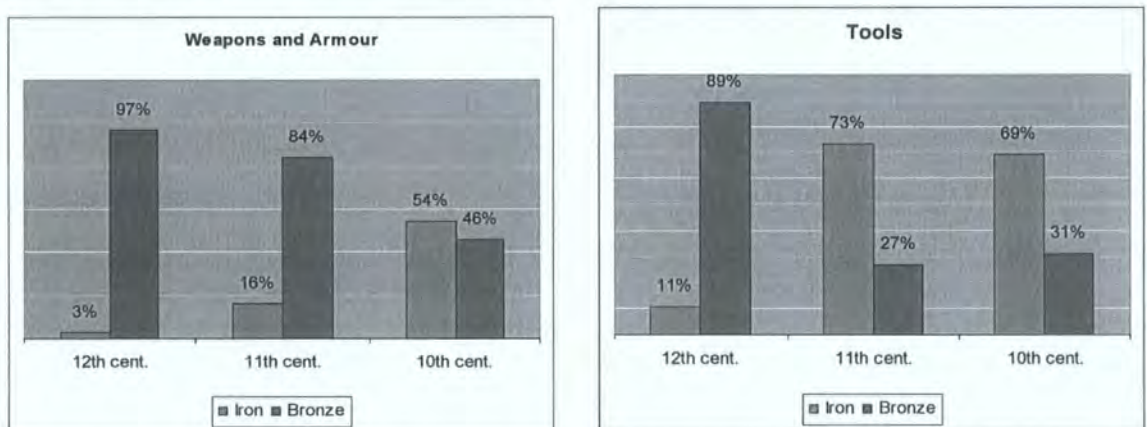
2.3.9 Iron as a Working Metal

Implicit in the use of the Three-Age System is an acceptance of its inherent structure; in other words, an acceptance that each of the periods is distinct and defined by characteristic developments in metallurgical skill. The term "Iron Age" implies, therefore, that the manufacture of tools and weapons was no longer being undertaken primarily with bronze but had been replaced by iron (Schnapp 1996, 300-301). However, Waldbaum (1978, 17-23; 1980) has demonstrated that the adoption of iron as a working metal does not coincide with the conventional beginning of the Iron Age. The use of the term "Iron Age" to define the early Iron Age is, accordingly, misleading as the traditional terminology does not fit the contemporary data.

Iron was known and used as a metal in the Bronze Age (Muhly 1980, 34-36), but it was insufficiently understood so as to make it durable for use. The soft low-carbon form of iron, which Wertime (1980, 2) suggests was an unintentional but inevitable by-product of copper- and lead-smelting, was mainly used for jewellery manufacture during the third and second millennia BCE, when it was considered a precious metal (Sherratt 1990, 811). Bronze Age texts make frequent reference to the exchange of small iron objects between monarchs and the use and storage of iron objects reserved for ceremonial and ritual use (Muhly 1980, 49-50). This explains why most Bronze Age iron artefacts tend to be associated with elite display and ceremony (Waldbaum 1980, 80-81).

The coming of iron was not a sudden event; nor was its transformation from precious material into working metal. Waldbaum (1980, 83) and Snodgrass (1980a, *passim*) have both suggested that a transitional period of around 200-300 years preceded the adoption of iron for utilitarian purposes. During this transition, bronze continued to be used for utilitarian purposes until iron was viewed, first, as a supplement to and, eventually, as an acceptable substitute for bronze (Snodgrass 1980a, 337). Utilitarian iron artefacts, which were present in the early Iron Age but greatly outnumbered by bronze equivalents, do not appear in any real consistency across the eastern Mediterranean until around the tenth century BCE, at least two centuries after the conventional beginning of the Iron Age (Waldbaum 1978, 17-23, Tab. IV.1; 1980, 82; 1999). An unfortunate drawback with Waldbaum's theory was that her dating analysis relied on problematic stratigraphic sequences (e.g. Hama – Waldbaum 1978, 14, 44-46). Nevertheless, absolute dates were not needed for Waldbaum to adequately demonstrate that developments in ferrous technology cannot be linked to the conventional beginning of the Iron Age. The relative percentage of early Iron Age bronze and iron weapons and tools, as compiled by Waldbaum (1978, Chart IV.14a-b), are compared in **Chart 2.2**.

Chart 2.2: Comparative Importance of Iron and Bronze in Iron I Period



(After Waldbaum 1978, Chart IV.14a-b)

Metallurgical evidence demonstrates that bronze continued to be the preferred utilitarian metal until the end of the Iron I period, though the transition did not end the use of bronze altogether. That bronze and iron were used together is attested in the account by the Assyrian king, Assurnasirpal II (883-856 BCE) of his difficult passage across Mt Kashiari: “with axes of iron and with picks of bronze, I hewed a

path...” (Winter 1988, 194). There is also significant evidence confirming the presence of thriving bronze-working industries across the Levant throughout most of the Iron Age (Biran 1994, 147; Falsone 1988; Tubb 1988; Winter 1988). Despite carburised iron’s suitability for tool and weapon manufacture, bronze remained better suited for certain, more specialist types of objects, mainly those produced by casting or the working of metal sheet (Philip *et al.* 2003, 91).

Though Waldbaum (1978, 17-23) has demonstrated that iron only became a key material for the manufacture of tools and weapons toward the end of the Iron I period, conventional archaeology continues to associate its appearance with the beginning of the Iron Age (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360; Klengel 1992, 187). These models usually emphasise the terminal *effect* that innovation in ferrous technology had on Late Bronze Age society (see Drews 1993, 73-76). Iron is sometimes considered a primary catalyst in the collapse of the palace-economies for one of two reasons: either the availability of this new ‘democratic’ metal removed a significant component of the economy from the hands of the elite, and thus broke its monopoly; or the Late Bronze Age palaces suffered directly at the hands of invaders armed with stronger iron weaponry.

According to Snodgrass (1980a, 348), the “Crisis Years” resulted in widespread disruption of trade, which meant bronze-working quickly became unviable. Sources of iron though were abundant, which Snodgrass (*ibid*) suggests made iron generally cheaper, resulting in a wider availability of iron implements. Within Snodgrass’ model, control of access to metal tools no longer rested solely in the hands of the elite, which had a terminal effect on palace-based economies. This theory has since been discredited. For instance, Waldbaum (1978, Chart IV.14a) has demonstrated that bronze artefacts continue to appear in significant numbers throughout the early Iron Age, long after the “Crisis Years”. In addition, Bell (2006, 95-102, 105-106) has recently highlighted the fact that not all avenues of trade were disrupted, with Cyprus and Phoenicia continuing to trade bronze objects throughout the Late Bronze Age-Iron Age transition. An alternative model is that of Sherratt (1994a, 61; 2000, 83) who has argued that developments in ferrous technology came about not because of a bronze shortage, or lack of supply, but because there was too much bronze in circulation. According to Sherratt (*ibid*), merchants were simply looking for new

commodities to trade. It is also worth noting that despite the abundance of iron ore, the forging of iron objects is a labour intensive operation, while in comparison bronze allows for multiple castings with much less effort (Moorey 1994, 271-273; Tylecote 1980, 209). Hence, iron, like bronze, requires some level of infrastructure, and is, therefore, not as *democratic* as widely suggested (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 360; Klengel 1992, 187; Stone and Zimansky 1999, 35). This is reflected in the cost of iron continuing to be greater than bronze well into the Iron Age, which would have prevented iron from penetrating the lower strata of society (Haarer 2001, 264-265; cf. Moorey 1994, 263). As we have observed, the current chronology of the “Iron Age” does not correlate perfectly with the widespread adoption of iron for tool and weapon manufacture.

2.3.10 Use of Domesticated Camel Caravans

Another technological innovation associated with the beginning of the Iron Age is the use of domesticated camels for long-distance overland trade (Cline 2003, 364; Klengel 2000a, 24). Retsö (1991) has demonstrated that the camel was instrumental in the establishment of the trans-Arabian incense trade while re-invigorating the local mercantile economies. Though generally speaking this is true, the date for this phenomenon is much debated (Artzy 1994, 134-135; Finkelstein 1988b, 246-247; Liverani 1997b, 561; Retsö 1991; Wapnish 1984). Although it is often assumed that the large leap in the number of domesticated camels occurred in the early Iron I period, evidence confirms that numbers increased dramatically in the Levant only in the late Iron II period (Hakker-Orion 1984, 209-210; Wapnish 1984; Wilkens 1998).

According to his reading of the biblical accounts, Albright (1949, 206-207) suggested that camels did not enter the history of the eastern Mediterranean until the eleventh century BCE. While archaeologists have often sought to discredit Albright’s theory (e.g. Artzy 1994, 134; Ripinsky 1975), there is little evidence to attribute an earlier advent of the domesticated camel; actually, the opposite seems true. Artistic representations in the third and second millennia BCE, as well as the appearance of camel bones in second millennium BCE archaeological deposits, are not particularly relevant, since they may represent wild camels (Bulliet 1990, 58-65). Indeed, the domestication process of the camel was a long and gradual process, probably taking

some centuries, during which there would have been degrees of domestication (*ibid*, 37, 60-64). Bulliet (*ibid*) has suggested that early in the domestication process camels would have been used for meat, milk, leather, and dung, but were unlikely to have been used with a harness, suggesting that the earliest domesticates in the Southern Levant were probably not ridden (Hakkar-Orien 1984). Trying to date the appearance of domesticated camels in the Levant, however, is difficult, and their use as pack animals even more so. Restö (1991, 199, 205) suggests that there is simply no direct evidence to indicate that the animal was used for transport before about 900 BCE. Zarins (1978), on the other hand, suggests that unequivocal evidence for domestication of camels does not exist before 500 BCE.

The earliest examples of camel faunal material found in the Levant derive from deposits in the Negev (Har Sa'ad, Kadesh Barnea, and Ar'oer) and Gaza strip (Tell Jemmeh) (Hakker-Orion 1984, 210; Wapnish 1984), and have been dated to the tenth century BCE. While Artzy (1994, 135) and Bell (2006, 103) both cite Wapnish's study of the faunal assemblage from Tell Jemmeh as evidence of Late Bronze Age camel trade, Wapnish (1984, 171) herself clearly states that "the find locations make it unlikely that any [camel bones] ... pre-date 1100 BCE". Artzy and Bell also appear to miss the high incidence of butchering marks on the camel bones, suggesting that these animals were primarily used for meat, rather than transportation (Wapnish 1984, 174). This use is mirrored in the camel remains from Tell Afis, where the majority of the Iron Age examples bear butchering marks (Wilkens 1998, 434, 441).

The earliest depictions of camels involved in transportation came from first millennium BCE Assyria and inland Northern Levant (Bulliet 1990, 75-86). The appearance of camels on the Black Obelisk of Shalmeneser is problematic, not least because they are depicted as exotic animals, suggesting they were still rare at this time (Wapnish 1984, 180). Domesticated camels with harnesses are also depicted on the Balawat gates (Bulliet 1990, 75), and camels being ridden appear in the art of Tell Halaf and Carchemish (Bulliet 1990, 82; Hogarth 1914a, 186, Pls B16b, B50).

Current evidence for the earliest use of the domesticated camel is not clear. Whilst it is difficult to identify faunal remains of a domesticated camel, this evidence, if found, would not confirm an animal's use in overland trade in the early Iron Age.

2.3.11 Summary

The key elements in the current definition of the Iron Age have been discussed above and have been found to bear little resemblance to the archaeology. Instead, the distinctiveness of this period has been overdetermined by the established historical narrative. If the narrative is de-emphasised and focus given to various aspects of material culture, we might no longer consider the current Late Bronze-Iron I division as a significant cultural boundary. The metallurgical evidence, ceramics, domestic architecture, burial practices, mercantile activity, and written language all confirm strong continuity of culture and population. The archaeology suggests that the early Iron Age is more appropriately understood as a sub-Late Bronze Age.

2.4 Text as Interpretative Framework

The historical narrative has been used to over-determine the archaeology of the IA-NL, which has resulted in an Iron Age history that is a history of kings, conflicts and peoples – a kind of quasi-politico-military history – elaborated from the archaeological record, in which short-term events are considered more significant than long-term processes (Liverani 1994; Sherratt 1998, 292). These historical “facts” are then used to expound wider generalisations about the past, extrapolating histories of complete societies in spite of the fragmentary, biased record. It seems that the archaeology is used often as a means for authenticating and informing the already-established historical narrative. In the Northern Levant, classical literature and Assyrian palace inscriptions have had the most significant influence on interpretations of the archaeology.

2.4.1 Conventional Histories of the Iron Age Northern Levant

The following paragraphs will briefly explore the prominence given to the historical narrative in four standard “archaeological-histories” of the Iron Age. This simple exercise was directed toward identifying which assertions in these books make no, or little reference to archaeology, and to what extent the archaeology is discussed at all. While none of the four books is solely focused on the Iron Age, each devotes at least one whole chapter to the topic. The texts are: Klengel’s (1992) *Syria: 3000 to 300 B.C. A Handbook of Political History*; Van De Mierop’s (2004) *A History of the*

Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC; Akkermans and Schwartz's (2003) *The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca. 16,000-300 BC)*; and Kuhrt's (1995) *The Ancient Near East c. 3000-330 BC*.

In his political handbook of Syria, Klengel states that “the scanty epigraphic material offers no reliable basis for a political history of the [early Iron Age]” (Klengel 1992, 182), yet he accepts the 1200 BCE date for the start of the Iron Age (*ibid*, 181). For the twelfth and eleventh centuries BCE, Klengel focuses on the marauding “Sea Peoples” and “Aramaeans”, and their associated, archaeologically-attested destruction levels (pp. 182-183). He also discusses the role of iron for tools and the use of camels in the transportation of goods (*ibid*, 186-187), which he suggests is “evidenced by texts and archaeological artifacts” (*ibid*, 187) though fails to reference any actual archaeology for these two developments. Similarly, Klengel’s treatment of the Iron II period is focused on the geographical distribution of the different ethnic elements, as divined from the texts, and on the military history of Assyrian armies and anti-Assyrian coalitions. Klengel (*ibid*, 187) once again mentions the paucity of the epigraphic evidence, which was the result of writing on perishable material, but he does not seem concerned about the bias that his reliance on the many political stelae and palace inscriptions might produce; after all, he states in the introduction that the “special concern of this handbook is political history in a restricted sense... [the] social and economic background of these relations cannot be treated *in extenso*” (*ibid*, 15). Furthermore, Klengel does not evaluate the historical reliability of any of the texts. As a result, Klengel’s history of Iron Age “Syria” is essentially a history of kings, battles, and ethnic states, with only occasional reference to archaeological evidence.

In his overview of Near Eastern history, van de Mieroop (2004) does not use the term “Iron Age”, but instead deals with the first millennium BCE under the title of “Empires”, which immediately emphasises the fact that this is essentially a political history. Van de Mieroop does not attempt to write a history of the early Iron Age, instead summarising the twelfth and eleventh centuries BCE in just a few paragraphs, his reason being a lack of sufficient textual material (*ibid*, 189). He betrays his heavy reliance on the textual material, indeed, there appears to be no attempt to engage with the archaeological record beyond verification purposes. Like Klengel, van de

Mieroop has outlined the history of Iron Age “Syria” as one of kings, battles, and ethnic states, with very occasional reference to archaeological evidence. It is interesting to note van de Mieroop (*ibid*, 210) critiques the “Hebrew Bible as a historical source”, but does not extend his enquiry to other categories of text.

Akkermans and Schwartz’s (2003) book is the only one claiming to be a survey of the archaeology of “Syria”, yet Schwartz’s (*ibid*, 360-397) chapter on the Iron Age still demonstrates the central role of the historical narrative for the interpretation of the archaeological record. For instance, the main component of his 40–page chapter consists of a 28-page (*ibid*, 366-394) political history, only drawing on archaeological evidence to highlight the veracity of his narrative. In particular, monumental-art, architecture, and urban-planning feature prominently because their “elite” character closely corresponds with the political history being advocated; something with which ceramics or burial practices might not correlate (*ibid*, 366ff. *passim*). Within this lengthy treatise he discusses the archaeological evidence for the “Luwian-Aramaeans states” (*ibid*, 366-377), the “Neo-Assyrian empire” (*ibid*, 377-386), the “Phoenicians and Greeks on the Syrian Coast” (*ibid*, 386-388), and the “Neo-Babylonians and Achaemenid Persians” (*ibid*, 389-394); these section-headers highlight his emphasis on the historical narrative and acceptance of archaeological cultures as “politico-ethnic” units. While the “archaeology” is discussed by Schwartz, there remains a heavy reliance on the historical narrative to structure the archaeological material.

Kuhrt’s (1995) history of the Ancient Near East devotes a whole volume to the Iron Age, though she refrains from using this term. Instead, Kuhrt entitles this section “Political Transformation and the Great Empires”, which illustrates the fact that this, too, is essentially a political history. Furthermore, Kuhrt’s section-headers (e.g. ‘sea-peoples’; Aramaeans; Phoenicians) betray a reliance on a historical narrative that is derived from ancient texts and presents archaeological cultures as homogenous political units with a distinct ethno-linguistic character (note her frequent use of ‘state’ to define these past cultures). But while Kuhrt relied on ethno-political terms to define her discussion of the Iron Age, this cannot be said of her discussion of the previous period, which made frequent use of the term “Late Bronze Age” (Kuhrt 1995, section 8c). Kuhrt’s history also uses conventional dates for her discussion;

dates derived from the historical narrative; e.g. her discussion of the Levant ends in 720 BCE with the Assyrian “destruction” of Hama (§2.4.3).

We have seen above that the historical narrative has played a central role in reconstructions of the IA-NL. This interpretative method derives from the nineteenth century CE German historiographic tradition which believed that objective truth was an obtainable goal within historical studies (Breisach 1983, 232-234; Ranke 1885, vii). The resulting emphasis on the study of texts became a search for factual, and objective Truth (Clarke 2004, 9-10). This search for Truth coincided with a European climate of awakened nationalism; hence history was enlisted to help define national identities and search for cultural origins (Breisach 1983, 229; Iggers 1995). As a result, the German historiographic tradition came to be characterised by an emphasis on text, nation-states, and the study of origins (Bentley 1999, 36-42; Breisach 1983, 228-267). Since the aim of history, as envisaged by this tradition, was to establish concrete evidence about the past, texts were scanned for the few useful facts while the rest of the narrative was discarded as unimportant (Fay 1998, 1; Frantzen 1990, 110). Historical documents were thus “mined” for information; i.e. facts that could then be used to expound wider generalisations about the past (Kepecs 1997a, 193). As a result, histories of entire societies, cultural units, or even civilisations were constructed from a few surviving fragments (e.g. Phoenician culture was defined according to Homer’s references to Phoenician merchants and craftsmen).

2.4.2 The Influence of Classical Texts

While the biblical text has greatly influenced archaeology in the Southern Levant (§2.5), classical texts have had a much more direct impact on reconstructions of the Northern Levant (Klengel 1992, 17). In particular, the identification of many Iron Age sites, peoples, and political and economic structures derives from, or is influenced by, in one way or another, classical texts. This is particularly evident amongst the sites of the Mediterranean coast (e.g. Ras al-Bassit, Tell Kazel, Tyre, Sidon, Sarepta), where the classical and Near Eastern worlds are believed to have come in contact. Ever since Johansen (1923) and Poulsen (1912) insisted that the Phoenicians were important intermediaries between the ancient Near East and the classical world, the IA-NL has been an important area of study for archaeologists

interested in following the evolutionary development of European and Greek culture (Gelin 2004, 58-63; Riis 1970, 8-10). This ensured that the classical narrative became intricately connected to Near Eastern history, as demonstrated in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3: Examples of Classical Texts Influencing Archaeological Interpretations for the Northern Levant Iron Age

Site	Text	Interpretation	Reference
al Mina	Herodotus, III 91	Identification	Woolley 1938a, 28-30
Ras al Bassit	Herodotus, III 91; Strabo VXI 2.8	Site name - Posideion	Boardman 1990, 170
Tell Sukas	Herodotus, III 19.3 Herodotus, V 104-116	Nabonidus destruction End of Greek presence	Riis 1970, 58-59
Tell Kazel	Strabo VXI 2.12 Pliny V 20.17	Site name - Simyra	Bounni 1997, 275
Byblos	Strabo VIII	Origin of name	Frost 2004, 343
Beirut	Excavated to understand	absence from texts	Khalifeh 1997b, 294
Sidon	Homer <i>Il</i> 23.742-744 Homer <i>Il</i> 6.289-292	Phoenician city Traders/Craftsmen	Pritchard 1975, 17
Sarepta	Pseudo-Scylax Lycophron	Site name	Pritchard 1975, 7-9 Khalifeh 1997a, 488
Tyre	Herodotus I 2.1; 2.44 Josephus IX 286-287	Phoenician city Tyrian Fleet	Riis 1970, 138 Pritchard 1975, 19

Herodotus = *Histories*; Homer *Od* = *Odyssey*; Homer *Il* = *Iliad*; Strabo = *Geography*; Josephus = *Antiquities*; Pliny = *Natural History*

Classical literature has various genres of text, including some that are more overtly poetical, mythical, or allegorical than historical. Nevertheless, the genre of epic, which might be considered closely related to myth, is widely accepted as holding some kernels of historical truth (e.g. Kirk 1975, 820-821). For many years, most of what archaeology knew of “Phoenician” political history, merchant activity and craftsmanship derived from Homer’s *Iliad* (6.288ff; 23.740ff) and *Odyssey* (4.614-619; 13.256-286; 14.287-315; 15.403-484). In the absence of contemporary Phoenician historical texts, scholars of the Near East “mined” Homer’s few depictions of the Phoenicians for historical value that might illuminate the archaeological record (Muhly 1970, 20-21; Winter 1995, 248-249). Indeed, the whole Phoenician civilisation was constructed from external references and presented as a well-defined and unified “nation” of merchant traders and skilled craftsmen (e.g. Kuhrt 1995, 405-407). Little appeal was made to the archaeology. Winter (1995, 261), however, has demonstrated that Homer’s “Phoenicians” are foremost a literary device for contrasting the noble character Odysseus with the treacherous character of the deceitful Phoenicians (see West 1988, 170). Homer’s

“Phoenicians” may not accurately depict any real population of the eastern Mediterranean. For this reason, equating the population of the Levantine coast with Homer’s “Phoenicians” is presumptuous.

Once the “Sea Peoples” migration model is set aside, and the continuity in the material culture is emphasised, it is difficult to define a “Phoenician” population: at what point did the so-called “Canaanite” population become “Phoenician”? (Sherratt 1998, 307). This point is complicated by the fact that scholars have accepted that both words, “Canaan” and “Phoenicia” encompass the same meaning; i.e. being associated with “red-purple dye” (Albright 1975, 520; Moscati 1988, 24; Muhly 1970, 26-28). Moreover, the culture of the Mediterranean coast of the first millennium BCE cannot be defined politically. The general area was not organised as a unified polity but as a series of only-sometimes-confederated city-states (Sherratt 2005a, 35). Yet scholars pursue studies of “Phoenician” society as if it was a well-defined and homogenous entity (e.g. Aubet 2004b; Aubet *et al.* 1998-1999; Bunnens 1979; Culican 1959; 1970; Falsone 1988; Gubel 1994; Haggi 2006; E. Mazar 2000; 2001; 2004; Moscati 1973; Peckham 2001; Winter 1976). Finally, the term “Phoenician” is a Greek term; we do not know if the local population used this term, or if they maintained the use of *cna’ani* (Moscati 1973, 21-22; Muhly 1970, 26-28; Sherratt 1998, 307; 2005a, 35-36). It is unclear from the Greek texts whether such a term denotes a people, culture, specific region, mercantile class, or even ideological concept; the term “Phoenician” cannot define a material culture.

2.4.3 Assyrian Political Histories

Since archaeological work began on the Iron Age capital cities and palaces of Assyria, textual sources relating to the Northern Levant have increased at an exceptional rate; so much so, that the publication of texts has been slow, though this is beginning to change (e.g. Helsinki’s State Archives of Assyria Project – Parpola 1987; Toronto’s Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia series – Grayson 1996). Nevertheless, Assyrian texts have been especially influential within the writing of North Levantine history (van de Mieroop 2004, 211). The conquest and annexation of the Levant was recounted in many royal inscriptions, the most prominent being those of Ashurnasirpal II (ruled 883-859 BCE), Shalmeneser III (858-824 BCE),

Tiglath-Pileser III (ruled 745-727 BCE), and Sargon II (ruled 722-706 BCE) (Grayson 1991a; 1996; Luckenbill 1926; 1927). Assyrian interaction with the Levant was primarily through conquest; therefore, Levantine history has been linked to Assyrian military history and the supposed archaeological manifestation of military campaigns – destruction layers (*cf.* Hawkins 1982, 377; Zuckerman 2007a, 3). Indeed, the correlation of Iron Age “destruction” levels with ninth to seventh century BCE campaigns of Assyrian kings has become a common means for imposing an external historical chronology upon Levantine archaeology. **Table 2.4** shows that Assyrian “destruction” levels have come to underpin much of the region’s Iron Age chronological structure and shape archaeological interpretation. Yet the validity of associating a layer of ash in the archaeological record with a historical military campaign is rarely assessed. Despite its common occurrence, the correlation is not straightforward (e.g. Forsberg 1995; Whincop 2007, 186; Zuckerman 2007a, 3; 2007b).

Table 2.4: Summary of Assyrian “Destruction levels” of the Levant

Context	BCE	Ruler	Reference
Tille Höyük		Tiglath-Pileser I	Summers 1993, 11
Tell Ahmar	856	Shalmeneser III	Bunnens 1990a, 5
Tell Sukas H2	850	Shalmeneser III	Riis 1960, 123-124
Zincirli	9 th		Ussishkin 1968, 189
Tell Afis VIII	738?	Tiglath-Pileser III	Cecchini 1998, 296
Tell Arqa 10	738	Tiglath-Pileser III	Thalman 1983, 217-218
Tel Dan II	732	Tiglath-Pileser III	Biran 2002, Table 1.1
Hazor V	732	Tiglath-Pileser III	Ben Tor 1997, 112-113
Megiddo IVA	732	Tiglath-Pileser III	Finkelstein <i>et al.</i> 2006, 856-857
Beth Shan IV	732	Tiglath-Pileser III	Mazar 2001, 289
Tel Rehov 3	732	Tiglath-Pileser III	Mazar 1999a, 30
Samaria VII	722	Sargon II	Mazar 1992, 406
Tell Rifa’at IIB	720	Sargon II	Matthers 1981b, 416
Hama E	720	Sargon II	Ingholt 1942, 472
Tell Kazel I-9	720	Sargon II	Capet and Gubel 2000, 433
Tell Keisan 5	720	Sargon II	Briend and Humbert 1980, 27
Al Mina VIII	720	Sargon II	du Plat Taylor 1959, 87
Al Mina VII	720	Sargon II	Boardman 1980, 44
Carchemish	717	Sargon II	Woolley 1914, 94
Lachish III	701	Sennacherib	Mazar 1992, 432
Al Mina VIII	700	Sennacherib	Riis 1960, 123-125
Al Mina VII	696	Sennacherib	Riis 1970, 159
Tarsus	696	Sennacherib	Coldstream 1968, 385
Zincirli	676	Esarhaddon	Lehmann 1996, 273-274
Tell Sukas	677/671	Esarhaddon	Abou Assaf 1997b, 91

The conflagration of Hama Stratum E (hereafter Hama E) has had a profound impact on the chronological framework of the IA-NL, and it set the precedent for other similar interpretations. The tell of Hama was excavated in the 1930s by Danish archaeologists who exposed a large Iron Age elite-building complex that lay in ruin; the burning was so intense that part of the basalt architecture had melted (Buhl 1992, 35). On historical considerations, the destruction of this complex was attributed to Sargon II (Hawkins 1972-1975, 70; Ingholt 1942, 472); by claiming dominion over the prince and people of the Hamath province, Sargon had supposedly alluded to his destruction of the city of Hama, an event that was assumed to have coincided with his specified destruction of another Hamath city, Qarqar, in 720 BCE. Hence, Hama E was dated to 720 BC. It followed that the pottery found within the Hama E buildings could also be dated to the eighth century BCE (Fugmann 1958, 269). As a result, Red-Slip pedestal platters and monochrome-painted shallow bowls have become the hallmark of eighth century BCE material culture in the Northern Levant (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 363). The date was also particularly important for Greek chronology, because it provided a date for two Greek *skyphoi* found within the Hama E complex (Francis and Vickers 1985; Hannestad 1996, 48). The Hama E “destruction” date was important to a great many scholars, which might explain its almost universal acceptance (Buhl 1992, 35; Coldstream 2003, 248; Mazzoni 2000a, 55; cf. Francis and Vickers 1985, 131;). Indeed, the reasoning behind the Hama E date has led to a number of other “destruction” levels being attributed to Assyrian insurgence (e.g. Makinson 2005, Tab. 2; Moorey 1980, 4; **Table 2.4**). Scholars who accept the historical correlation of the Hama E destruction rarely provide the specific textual source for Sargon’s claims, as if the event is incontestable fact (e.g. Barnett 1963, 81; Gallagher 1999, 155; Otzen 1979, 252). For this reason, it has been particularly difficult for the current author to isolate the specific basis for the interpretation. Nevertheless, the conventional view that written and archaeological evidence provides a reliable and useful date for the destruction of Hama in 720 BCE appears to be based on two assumptions, which will be discussed below; the first deriving from textual sources, and the second from the archaeological record.

The first assumption is that textual sources make it clear or at least probable, that the city of Hama was physically destroyed by the Assyrian army in 720 BCE in connection with the destruction of Qarqar, located on the northern edge of the

Hamath polity, 65 km north of Hama. The main text recounting this campaign is Sargon's *Annals* inscribed on stone slabs and the walls of his palace at Khorsabad/Dûr-Sharrukîn (Lie 1929). The key text occurs in lines 33-37 of the so-called *Display Inscription*:

Ia'ubidi from Hamath, a commoner without claim to the throne, a cursed Hittite, schemed to become king of Hamath, induced the cities Arvad, Simirra, Damascus and Samaria to desert me, made them collaborate and fitted out an army. I called up the masses of the soldiers of Ashur and besieged him and his warriors in Qarqar, his favourite city. I conquered (it) and burnt (it). Himself I flayed; the rebels I killed in their cities and established (again) peace and harmony (J.A. Wilson 1969d, 285 using the translation of Luckenbill 1927, §55).¹

In this text Sargon does not lay direct claim to the destruction of the city of Hamath. Sargon simply boasts of destroying the royal city of Qarqar and killing the king of Hamath (Grayson 1996, 23-24; Hawkins 1982, 417). In later texts Sargon claims to be the “plunderer of the princes of Carchemish, Hamath, ...” (Luckenbill 1927, §92); the one “who blotted out the princes of Hamath, Carchemish...” (*ibid*, §99); the “flayer of Ia'ubidi of Hamath” (*ibid*, §125); the one who “carried off the people of Hamath” (*ibid*); the “uprooter of Hamath” (*ibid*, §137), and the one who “smashed like a flood-storm the country of Hamath (A-ma-at-tu) in its entire [extent]” (J.A. Wilson 1969d, 284; Luckenbill 1927, §183, 186). Again Sargon does not explicitly claim or recount the destruction of the city of Hama, and no other published Sargonid references to Hamath or Ia'ubidi detail the destruction of this city (e.g. Gadd 1954, ND 3411 line 22). Klengel (1992, 226, n. 198) mentions a stele that Sargon had erected at Hama commemorating his victory at Qarqar, though it seems unlikely Sargon would have erected a stele in front of a destroyed city, especially one “speaking” to the inhabitants of the city. A stele is also known from Tell Acharneh, near Hama, but the fragmentary text of this monument reveals little regarding its intended purpose/audience (Frame 2006, 67). Reade (1976) has concluded that the destruction of Hama was not depicted within the narrative art of Sargon's palace at Khorsabad.

¹ While this English translation is 80 years old, there appears to be no modern English revisions of it. Current Assyrian archive translation projects have yet to include all of Sargon II's *Annals* in their publications. While there is some concern over the use of such an old translation, Luckenbill's work is still cited in late-twentieth century publications; e.g. Klengel 1992, 220.

In addition to the inconclusive content, there is some debate regarding the historical veracity of the *Annals* (Tadmor 1958; 1997). Because Assyrian texts primarily recount Assyrian military conquest of foreign lands, it is reasonable to assume that they contain a number of literary devices emphasising Assyrian power and dominion. Indeed, many texts clearly focus on the Assyrian king's subjugation of other kings (or princes), peoples, and lands, presenting this as an idealised concept of dominion over the whole world (Tadmor 1997, *passim*). If we accept that the language used within the Assyrian texts has strong ideological undertones, then it follows that these texts are likely to represent a skewed record of actual events. This is also indicated in the confusing and often contradictory order of events contained within the many *Annals* of Khorsabad and the fragmentary prisms of Nineveh, which led Tadmor (1958, 22-26) to suggest that the *Annals* follow an artificial scheme rather than a strictly historical one. Along similar lines, Gadd (1954, 173, 184) has suggested that the inscribed prisms of Sargon II found at Nimrud are arranged in an order that disregards chronology, but which instead emphasises geography.

The second assumption behind the Hama E date of 720 BCE is that the archaeologically-attested burning of the Hama E complex is the result of Assyrian military conquest. When the Hama E complex was excavated, it was found to be covered by a widespread deposit of burnt debris, but there has been no archaeological material published that directly links this conflagration with Assyrian conquest or, indeed, any conquest. One could expect some Assyrian weaponry or armour, or physical damage to the city fortifications to be evident, as was the case at Lachish (Ussishkin 1982; 1990b – for examples of remains of warfare in the archaeological record see Stronach 1997, 317-322; Yon 1992, 117). Following the Hama E conflagration, the majority of the site appears to have been abandoned; a loss of population that appears to reflect the Assyrian policy of mass deportation (cf. Buhl 1992, 35; Fugmann 1958, 264-265, 278). However, in addition to the deportation of people from Hamath, Sargon II claims to have settled 6300 Assyrians there, suggesting that the archaeological record would not be characterised by a lack of population, but rather a change in one (Luckenbill 1927, 100ff, §183; Oded 1979, 45). Furthermore, there are serious concerns over the stratigraphic integrity of the Hama excavations (Thuesen 1988, 11; §3.18). On the current archaeological

evidence, other causes for the conflagration, such as earthquake, accidental burning, revolt, civil war, or local feuds, cannot be precluded.

Neither text nor archaeology confirms the Assyrian destruction of Hama E. First, the written evidence provides no account of, or claim for, the actual destruction and burning of this city. Surely, the conquest of such an important city as Hamath would have been celebrated in glorious detail by Sargon, but there is no such account. Second, nothing associated with the “destruction” layer can confirm either Assyrian involvement, or even military destruction. The Assyrian interpretation appears to have been favoured because it was the only military power considered strong enough to destroy such an impressive and well-fortified citadel. All that can be stated is that the large Hama E complex was destroyed by a massive conflagration, the causes of which are currently unclear. The Hama E date can no longer be treated as established fact, which has important implications for the chronology of the IA-NL (Mazzoni 1990a; 2000a; 2000b). Hence, Syrian chronology is less secure than many assume.

The fact that neither text nor archaeology confirm the Sargonid destruction of Hama E does not, of course, exclude the possibility that the Hama E destruction date is correct. However, on current historical and archaeological evidence, the common view that Hama E was destroyed by the Assyrians led by Sargon II and that this destruction has been archaeologically identified should be treated with caution. The small archive of texts recovered from the Hama E complex does not clarify the events surrounding the city’s destruction, only compounding the problem (Hawkins 1972-1975, 70). This archaeological and historical “rethink” is not unique; Forsberg (1995) has demonstrated the need to revise similar Assyrian destruction dates at Samaria and Tarsus, while Zuckerman (2007a, 3) has recently questioned the “violent destruction” theory for Canaanite Hazor. Indeed, a question mark should be raised over all archaeological “destructions” that are based only on the historical narrative.

2.4.4 Text as Artefact

Far from being independent, objective accounts of actual events, ancient texts were written for a particular purpose, one that can rarely be said to incorporate a desire to

provide an accurate record of events (Liverani 1990, 23-26). For instance, Assyrian palace inscriptions focused on display and self-aggrandisement and are as much ideological as historical (Tadmor 1981). With ancient texts, archaeologists are dealing with a world of rhetoric, propaganda and myth-making, wherein abstract truth probably did not exist (Van Seters 1997, 2-6). Moreover, ancient texts often have a formal structure, specific patterns, and recurrent motifs which may appear as “fact” to the modern investigator, but are more concerned with maintaining protocol. Since ancient authors may not have had history (as we understand it) as the aim of their writings, it is important to consider the factors that may actually have shaped their work. Ancient documents need to be understood in terms of function; who was the intended audience and what was the desired effect upon that audience? For example, a royal inscription will depict events differently from royal correspondence; one is aimed at an internal audience, while the other at an external target group (Liverani 1990, 25-26). It is easy to accept that the same event may be narrated in a different way by two different people, but it is not always understood that it will be told differently depending on the audience; this is rarely allowed for in archaeological interpretation (cf. Bauer 1998; Sherratt 1998, 292, 307; Stager 1995, 340-341).

While the social context of ancient authors (i.e. the context in which the text was originally conceived) is clearly an important consideration in the construction of ancient histories (Bentley 1999, 127-148; Faust 2006, 6; Silberman 1998b, 268), archaeologists have also come to recognise that documentary sources are excavated artefacts (Morris 2000, 25-29; Morrison and Lycett 1997; Thurston 1997; Zettler 1996); and as such need to be considered within their archaeological context (Zettler 1996, 83). Archaeologists routinely consider material culture in light of multiple contexts (cultural, depositional) – historical data must be similarly evaluated, moving from internal considerations of text to the survival of these documents within an archaeological context (*ibid*). Understanding texts within their context also requires an appreciation of archaeological sampling: which elements of ancient societies kept written records? What kind of information was deemed important enough to record? What type of materials were texts recorded upon?

Texts were written for particular reasons, at particular times, by particular people, in particular contexts and, for this reason, are not transparent sources of historical fact. Hence, it is no longer possible to scan historical narratives for the few useful ‘facts’ that provide the basis for a generalised modern account, since any such ‘facts’ are so embedded in the narrative that they cannot be separated. Instead, texts construct rather than reflect, and invent rather than discover, history. Using text as the basis for a generalised history of the Levant, and then linking that history to the archaeological record via vague historical inference is a misguided pursuit.

2.5 Biblical Influence on North Levantine Chronology

2.5.1 Introduction

During the second half of the twentieth century CE, archaeologists working on the IA-NL found themselves at a disadvantage; the earlier focus on monumental art and architecture had resulted in a dearth of comparative ceramic material (Eidem and Ackerman 1999, 309; Eidem and Putt 1994, 8; Jamieson 2000, 263; Matthers 1981b, 415; Moorey 1980, 4). This problem was accentuated by the fact that the few Iron Age ceramic assemblages available for study were mostly non-standard assemblages; the Yunus cemetery at Jerablus consisted of only grave goods (Woolley 1939b), while the appropriate levels at al Mina contained concentrations of imported pottery (Boardman 1959). Consequently, comparative material was sought in other regions, especially from the abundant ceramic typologies of the Southern Levant (**Table 2.5**). Ceramic comparison was primarily undertaken for chronological purposes. Amongst other problems, this required the archaeology of the Northern Levant to align itself with the biblically-inspired, chronological framework of the Southern Levant. The adoption of “Southern” chronology meant that the Northern Levant effectively lost its own identity; the entire Levant was henceforth treated as a single region, as evident in the use of the term “Syria-Palestine” (e.g. Dever 1992; Liverani 1983; Perrot 1979).

Table 2.5: Comparison of North Levantine Pottery with South Levantine Pottery

Northern Levant	Southern Levant	Reference
Tell Abou Danne II d	Hazor VIII-V Megiddo IV-III Samaria IV-V Tell Keisan 7-6	Lebeau 1983, 24
Tell Abou Danne II c	Hazor IV Megiddo III-II Samaria VI-VII Tell Keisan 5-4	Lebeau 1983, 24
Tell Afis VII	Gezer XIV Hazor X-VII Megiddo Tombs Tell Keisan 9a-c	Venturi 1998a, 128-130 Cecchini 1998, 277
Tell Afis VIII	Gezer VIA Hazor ? Megiddo ? Tell Keisan 5	Cecchini 1998, 284-285
Tell Afis IX	Gezer VIA-VA Hazor VI-VA Samaria VII Tell Keisan 4	Cecchini 1998, 286-287
Hama E	Beth Shemesh IIa Hazor IX-IV Lachish III Megiddo VIA Samaria ? Tell Beit Mirsim A	Riis & Buhl 1990, <i>passim</i> 168-170, (refs to Amiran 1969)
Al Mina VIII	Hazor IX-X Megiddo III Samaria VII-VIII	du Plat Taylor 1959, 81
Al Mina VII-VI	Hazor X Megiddo III-II	du Plat Taylor 1959, 82
Tyre XIV-XIII	Hazor XII Megiddo VI Tell Abu Hawam IV	Bikai 1978b, 66
Tyre XII-X	Tell Abu Hawam III	Bikai 1978b, 66
Tyre III-II	Ashdod 3 Hazor VI-V Samaria V-VI	Bikai 1978b, 66
Tyre I	Hazor IV	Bikai 1978b, 66

After Bikai 1978b; Cecchini 1998; Lebeau 1983; Mazzoni 1998a; du Plat Taylor 1959; Riis and Buhl 1990; Venturi 1998a.

While pottery from the IA-NL was defined according to pottery from the Southern Levant, a number of “Northern” contexts also looked to Cyprus and Greece for comparative purposes. Hence, many Northern Levant dates are based on the cross-

referencing of pottery with Greece, Cyprus, and/or the Southern Levant. Despite comparison with different regions, the results were the same because the ceramic chronologies of the eastern Mediterranean all derived their dates from the Southern Levant (see Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 40).

2.5.2 Cypriot Chronology

Cyprus played a pivotal role in the archaeology and chronology of the eastern Mediterranean; its central position and strong trade contacts contributed to its role as a point of cross-reference for different regions. In particular, Cypriot pottery was exported to many areas of the eastern Mediterranean during the second and first millennia BCE. As a result, Cypriot pottery has been recovered from a number of Levantine contexts, where its form and style is used to secure absolute dates. For the Iron Age, reference is usually made to the chronological framework of Gjerstad (1948, 421-427), and occasionally to Birmingham's (1963) revision of Gjerstad's scheme, both of which are presented in **Table 2.6**.

Table 2.6: Comparison of Cypriot Iron Age Chronology

Gjerstad 1948		Birmingham 1963	
Terminology	BCE	Terminology	BCE
Cypro-Geometric I	1050-950	Early Iron	1050-900
Cypro-Geometric II	950-850		
Cypro-Geometric III	850-700	Middle Iron I	900-725
Cypro-Archaic I	700-600	Middle Iron II	725-600
Cypro Archaic II	600-475		
Cypro-Classical I	475-400	Late Iron	600-325
Cypro-Classical I	400-325		

(After Gjerstad 1948, 421-427; Birmingham 1963, 39)

Gjerstad's (1948) chronological division of the Cypriot Iron Age was the first undertaken for Cyprus. It was determined at a time before stratified Iron Age sites in Cyprus had been excavated, and was instead based on the abundant tomb material (Birmingham 1963, 23). In the absence of stratigraphy, statistical analysis of the tomb material provided Gjerstad with his typological sequence of ceramic forms. The tomb groups, however, were largely lacking in absolute dating evidence, and Gjerstad (1948, 184-185) had to turn to external, non-Cypriot data to secure his sequence. For this purpose, Gjerstad (*ibid*, 242-257) turned to the chronology of the Southern Levant, which he believed to be the most secure. Through the presence of

Cypriot pottery in the Southern Levant, Gjerstad linked his chronological sequence to those contexts he deemed “reliable” (Desborough 1957, 216; Hanfmann 1951, 426-427). The accuracy of Gjerstad’s scheme was thus dependent on three factors: the correct identification of pottery development within Cyprus; the correct attribution of sherds in the Southern Levant as Cypriot; and the reliability of IA-SL chronology.

Following the publication of his scheme in 1948, Gjerstad’s absolute dates aroused considerable criticism. A number of archaeologists called for extensive modifications to the Cypriot chronology, though they, too, based their revisions on the IA-SL chronology (e.g. Albright 1950, 175, n. 51; 1953, 22; Desborough 1957, 216-217; Hanfmann 1951, 425; B. Mazar 1951, 24; McFadden 1954, 136; du Plat Taylor 1959, 63, 89; Swift 1958, 159-161; Van Beek 1951, 26-27; 1955, 37-38). The main challenge to Gjerstad’s scheme, however, was that of Birmingham (1963) who was trying to account for the growing amount of Cypriot material found in Levantine contexts. Since Gjerstad’s publication, excavations at Samaria, Megiddo (IVA-III), Al Mina (X-VIII), Tell Abu Hawam (III), Tell Qasile (VIII-VII) and Hazor (VIII-V) had all provided good amounts of Cypriot pottery from stratified deposits (*ibid*). It was apparent to Birmingham that the increase in material was accompanied by growing discord between the two datasets. Gjerstad (1953) argued against the revision of his dates based on the new Levantine data, but Gjerstad’s absolute dates for the Cypriot Iron Age were based on Levantine sites; hence he could not argue against the Levant dates without undermining his own chronology. But Birmingham (1963, 23, 39-40) was calling for more than a revision of dates, recognising that Gjerstad’s actual sequence was in need of revision; i.e. the tomb material needed reordering. According to Birmingham’s research, Gjerstad’s typological sequence of Cypriot pottery was inaccurate when tested against sites in the Levant. Birmingham (*ibid*, 15, 39) instead proposed a new scheme that incorporated minor revisions to the ceramic sequence and absolute dates, while also introducing to Cyprus the “Iron Age” terminology used in the Southern Levant (**Table 2.6**). Birmingham’s scheme, nonetheless, remained as dependent on the South Levantine data as Gjerstad’s. What she failed to accomplish was that a complete revision of the pottery sequence needed to be based on well-stratified, independently-dated Cypriot non-mortuary contexts (*ibid*, 15).

While the reliability of IA-SL chronology has recently been called into question (Finkelstein 1996a; Whitelam 1996; Whiting 2007a; Wightman 1990a), the implications of this for Cypriot chronology appear to have been overlooked. Instead, in a reversal of roles, Cypriot chronology, as defined by Gjerstad or Birmingham, has been used to help refine Levantine chronology (e.g. Badre 1998, 83; Bikai 1978b, 66; Gilboa and Sharon 2003, 65-67). There is an element of circularity to this practice. Nevertheless, Cypriot imports continue to be used for assigning absolute dates to excavated contexts; consequently, a number of North Levantine contexts are dated via reference to a Cypriot chronology that is derived from unreliable South Levantine dates (e.g. Badre 1998, 79-83; Bonatz 1998, 219; Doumet 1982, 133; Doumet-Serhal 2006, 21-25; Hamilton 1934, 75; Saidah 1966, 86-87; 1977, 144).

2.5.3 Greek Chronology

As with Cypriot pottery, Greek imported pottery frequently appears in Levantine contexts. The distinctive decoration of these vessels has ensured that Greek pottery is rarely missed; nor is its apparent chronological value ignored (e.g. Coldstream 2003; Coldstream and Mazar 2003; Doumet-Serhal 2006, 20-21, fig. 27; Lebeau 1983, 21-26; Mazar 2004; Yasur-Landau 2004). Then again, the absolute dating of Greek pottery is problematic. Internal evidence is limited to dates given by classical historians writing about events that occurred centuries before their own time (e.g. Thucydides – Coldstream 1968, 302-327; Desborough 1957, 217-219). External evidence is based on the appearance of Greek imported pottery in Levantine contexts. While some scholars have questioned the traditional chronology for Greek pottery and tried to lower the dates, the proposed dates were also based on South Levantine chronology (e.g. Gilboa and Sharon 2003, 67-72; Waldbaum and Magness 1997, 23).

The absolute chronology of Greek pottery is based on the presence of a few pieces of sub-Protogeometric and Geometric pottery in the Levant, usually from contexts that were poorly-defined and historically-dated (Coldstream 1968, 302-311; Cook 1972, 262; Desborough 1952, 293-295). For example, the accepted date for the destruction of Hama E provided scholars with a *terminus ante quem* for the Greek pottery contained therein, though none of the Greek sherds were found in a primary context

(Francis and Vickers 1985, 131-134; Fugmann 1958, Figs 310(7B23); 344(L941); Riis 1948, 114; 1965, 80 n. 5-6; 1970, 154-156; Riis and Buhl 1990, 184, Fig. 84). To complicate matters further, a number of Levantine sites also rely on the presence of Greek pottery to date their stratigraphic sequences (e.g. Bikai 1978a, 66; Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 44-45).

Riis (1960, 123-125) has also suggested that the dating of Greek pottery can be established according to negative evidence. Riis (1960, 123-125; cf. du Plat Taylor 1959, 91; S. Smith 1942, 94ff) maintains the absence of Assyrian activity in the Levant during the late ninth and early eighth centuries BCE (due to trouble with the Urartians in the north) was a favourable time for the arrival of Greek traders. This historical correlation was then used to date the earliest appearance of Greek pottery in the region (e.g. Tell Sukas, al Mina). However, Riis fails to demonstrate that Assyrian presence did sufficiently disrupt commercial activity in other periods.

2.5.4 The Role of the Biblical Text in Iron Age Chronology

As we have seen above, Greek and Cypriot Iron Age chronologies have not been established through scientific means but are based on ceramic comparison with sites from the Levant. In fact, the chronology of the eastern Mediterranean is a network of ceramic correlations that can be traced back to only a handful of supposedly reliable contexts. In the Northern Levant, the one date considered “reliable” is the destruction of Hama E by Sargon II (§2.4.3). For the IA-SL, Finkelstein (1996a, 179-182; cf. 2005) has suggested that there are five chronological “anchors” that underpin the conventional chronology: the presence of Philistine pottery; evidence of Shishak’s campaign in the Southern Levant; the attribution of Megiddo VA-IVB to Solomon; the construction and destruction of Jezreel; and evidence of Assyrian-conquest (e.g. Ussishkin 1982; 1990b). Each of these archaeological “events” is discussed below, with the exception of Assyrian-conquests, discussed above).

2.5.4.1 Philistine Pottery

The chronology of the Iron I period in the Southern Levant is generally based on the presence of distinctive pottery styles that have come to be associated with the biblical Philistines (Finkelstein 1996a, 180; Mazar 1988; Sharon 2001; Singer 1985; Stager

1995). Initially, the Philistines were associated with a distinctive type of bichrome pottery that was found in the coastal plain of the Southern Levant, an area that the biblical narrative had associated with the Philistines (Sharon 2001, *passim*). The Aegean-related forms and relative chronology of the pottery seemed to confirm the “Philistine” label (Faust 2006, 139; Killebrew 2005, 14). Moreover, the appearance of this pottery in the remains of an Egyptian residency at Tell al Far’ah (Petrie 1930) gave credence to a reading of the Papyrus Harris that depicted the *peleset* as Egyptian mercenaries (§2.3.1). Hence, this bichrome pottery became an indicator of “Philistine” presence, whilst simultaneously confirming the historical association of the *peleset* with the “Philistines”. However, the whole scheme was turned on its end when the excavations at Ashdod revealed locally-made “Mycenaean IIIC:1b” monochrome pottery underneath the “Philistine” bichrome (Dothan 1982, 36-42). This earlier style was both Aegean inspired and the supposed pre-cursor to the “Philistine” bichrome, hence the latter could no longer be associated with “Philistine” settlement. Furthermore, similar monochrome pottery was attested in coastal areas considerably further north, but not within any of the Egyptian garrison sites; i.e. this monochrome style could not be exclusively associated with “Philistine” settlement (Sherratt 2005a, 33). While scholars have concluded from this that “Philistine” settlement in the Southern Levant was a two-phase process (each phase associated with a ceramic style) it also highlighted the problem with a literal reading of the Egyptian texts - the ceramic evidence did not appear to support the reality of Ramesses III’s *peleset* mercenaries. In the end scholars were presented with a choice; either accept the *peleset*”Philistine” equation *or* the identification of the “Philistines” with a specific ceramic style, but not both – the two have proved to be mutually-exclusive (Finkelstein 2005, 31-32; 2007, 521; Sherratt 2005a, 34).

The above discussion highlights only one inconsistency with the “Philistine” pottery interpretation. There are also theoretical grounds for rejecting an identification of a specific people-group on the presence of pottery styles; such an approach has been widely discredited (§4.3). Furthermore, archaeologists should be extremely cautious in interpreting changes in ceramic traditions as reflections of historical events and demographic transformations (Adams 1968; 1979).

2.5.4.2 Shishak/Shoshenq I

Another key archaeological date is Pharaoh Shoshenq I's campaign to the Southern Levant. Conventionally dated to either 926/925 BCE or 918/917 BCE (e.g. B. Mazar 1957), the event has also been placed in the mid-tenth century BCE (e.g. Finkelstein 2002, 110; Shortland 2005, 44). Regardless of which chronological scheme is proposed, archaeologists tend to agree that Shoshenq's raid is the most reliable event for archaeological chronologies (usually associated with a destruction layer), since it is documented by both Egyptian (Karnak) and biblical texts (Åhlström 1993; Finkelstein 1996a; 2002; Mazar 1992, 373; 1997b, 157; B. Mazar 1957; Na'aman 1985; 1992, 81). Shoshenq's campaign is important for Iron Age specialists because it helps date tenth century BCE strata, whilst also confirming the accuracy of the biblical account. While scholars might debate the specific date of the campaign, it is generally accepted as both historically- and archaeologically-attested fact. This approach, however, does gloss over assumptions that have the potential to undermine the absolute chronology of the IA-SL.

The first assumption is that Shoshenq's campaign to the Southern Levant can be associated with archaeological remains; i.e. "destruction levels". The campaign was recorded in an inscription at Karnak in the Nile Valley that included a topographic list of 154 places in the Levant, (Finkelstein 2002, 109-111). A lot depends upon scholars' ability to link place names listed on this inscription with those of actual sites. Nevertheless, a number of archaeological "destruction" levels have been accepted as resulting from this campaign, and the accompanying ceramic assemblages dated to the tenth century BCE (K.A. Wilson 2005, 2). For instance, ash layers sealing Tell Abu Hawam III (Hamilton 1935, 67), Megiddo VA-IVB (Lamon & Shipton 1939, 61), Taanach IIB (Rast 1978, 26-27) and Arad XII (Aharoni 1978, 245; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004, 229; B. Mazar 1957, 64; Na'aman 1985; cf. Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006, 18-21) have all been directly linked to Shoshenq's campaign. The association of a historically-attested military campaign with ash layers in the archaeological record certainly seems to oversimplify the relationship between history and archaeology. Furthermore, the manner by which destruction levels are attributed to historical campaigns appears arbitrary; for instance, there were two destruction levels at Megiddo (Strata VIA and VA-IVB), yet the later was attributed to Shoshenq's campaign because it "fitted" with its "Solomonic" date

(Finkelstein 1996a, 180; Harrison 2004c, 107-108; Mazar 1997b, 157; Watzinger 1929, 56-59).

A second assumption is that Shoshenq's campaign can be decisively dated. The seemingly impressive agreement between the biblical and Egyptian dates is, according to Shortland (2005, 44) and Hughes (1990, 192), the result of Egyptian chronology having been manipulated, consciously or unconsciously, to fit biblical chronology. Hence, New Kingdom chronology has, to some degree, been based on the biblical date for Shoshenq's invasion (e.g. Hornung 1964, 24-29; cf. Kitchen 1991; 2003, 121-124; 2007, §§8-9, 166-167). The dates of this campaign are by no means secure; therefore the use of Egyptian chronology for dating Palestinian destruction layers to Shoshenq's Palestine campaign introduces a real danger of circularity. Also, it has not been conclusively proven that Shoshenq's campaign, recorded only fragmentarily on Egyptian reliefs (J.A. Wilson 1969b), can be equated with biblical references (*I Kings 14:25; II Chronicles 12:2-9*) to the destruction of Jerusalem by an Egyptian king called Shishak (cf. Finkelstein 2002, 110; P. James *et al.* 1991, 229-231; Schreiber 2003, 85-89; cf. Shortland 2005, 44).

A third assumption is that the Egyptian inscription relating to the campaign is, or was ever designed to be, an accurate history. The details of the campaign are not explicitly mentioned in the Egyptian text (K.A. Wilson 2005, 64). Discussions of Shoshenq's campaign address a number of issues (its purpose, the exact route of the armies, the order in which the cities were conquered within the topographical list) but rarely is the actual historicity of the text considered (Aharoni 1978, 200-203; Ahituv 1984; Ahlström 1993; Finkelstein 2002; B. Mazar 1957; K.A. Wilson 2005, 1-14; www.reshafim.org.il/ed/egypt/shoshenqi.htm). Scholars have tended to assume what they instead should be demonstrating; that the campaign actually happened as recorded. Moreover, it may not be appropriate to try and link place names in the list with actual destructions because the account is simply an itinerary (J.A. Wilson 1969b, 263; K.A. Wilson 2005, 64). The general style of Shoshenq's inscription is derivative, and draws heavily on earlier Egyptian campaign reliefs; much of the content is stereotypical, and appears to re-use old formulae and phrases in an attempt to copy the military records of the great pharaohs centuries earlier (*ibid*). This raises doubt as to its reliability as a historical account of the campaign at all. K.A. Wilson

(*ibid*) has recently demonstrated that itinerary lists are a genre with a specific purpose and are generally not concerned with history. Wilson (*ibid*) points to the Karnak relief scene of the campaign, and notes that it does not portray a specific battle: no town is besieged and no fighting is taking place around the king. Instead Shoshenq is shown in the process of smiting a mixed group of people from foreign lands. The absence of the depiction of a specific battle and the presence of foreigners gives a non-historical and idealised character to the relief. Interpretation should, therefore, view the relief as a depiction of the pharaoh defeating the inhabitants of all foreign lands not as historical fact – as idealized concept. According to K.A. Wilson (*ibid*), the topographical list should be understood in the same manner.

While Shoshenq's campaign is a key archaeological date for the IA-SL, recent scholarship, as outlined above, has demonstrated that it is inadvisable to use this event for chronological purposes. Nevertheless, archaeologists continue to accept the historicity of Shoshenq's inscriptions (e.g. Finkelstein and Piasezky 2006). Moreover, scholars declare Shoshenq as legitimate proof for biblical accuracy, but ignore the diversity of population presented in the text which is at odds with the biblical picture of a monolithic Israelite state (cf. Aharoni 1978, 192; Liverani 2005b, *passim*).

2.5.4.3 Solomonic Megiddo

Probably the most important chronological “anchor” is the attribution of Megiddo Stratum VA-IVB to Solomon and the tenth century BCE. This is important because the recognition of material remains of the United Monarchy, a seminal period in the construction of the Hebrew people as a nation, was seen as an important means for authenticating modern Israel's claim for legitimacy (Faust 2006, 170ff; Kletter 2006, *passim*; Whitelam 1996, *passim*).

The Solomonic identification of Megiddo VA-IVB was based on a form of public architecture (large fortifications with a six-chamber gate) that appeared to fit the biblical description of Solomon's building program (I Kings 9:15²) (Guy 1931, 44-48; Lamon and Shipton 1939, 59; cf. Mazar 1997b, 159). When the same stratum at

Megiddo also revealed a long pillared building (interpreted as stables), which the excavators equated with the Solomonic chariot forces mentioned in the biblical account (I Kings 4:26³), the Solomonic nature of Megiddo VA-IVB appeared to be confirmed. When similar fortifications and gates were excavated in Hazor X and Gezer VIII (two cities mentioned alongside Megiddo in I Kings 9:15), the six-chamber gate became a hallmark of Solomonic archaeology (Aharoni 1978, 192-239; Barkay 1992, 306-308; Mazar 1992, 380-387; Yadin 1970, 66). While other chronological tools were employed to support the Solomonic interpretation (e.g. the Shoshenq stele from Megiddo), the crux of the argument rested on the references of I Kings 9:15 (Yadin 1970, 67), a text that does not detail the nature of Solomon's building program (Finkelstein 1996a, 178). The recent discovery of six-chamber gates in contexts that clearly post-date the tenth century BCE undermines the exclusively-Solomonic association of these features (Herzog 1992, 272-274). Furthermore, there is no extra-biblical evidence confirming the historicity of King Solomon, not least his building program at these sites. The identification of Solomonic Megiddo was based on biblical testimony (Finkelstein 1996a, 178-179). Instead, if biblical accuracy is not assumed, the evidence does not seem, in my opinion, to support the tenth century BCE date of Megiddo VA-IVB (or any conventional tenth century BCE stratum).

As mentioned above, the Shoshenq stele from Megiddo was used to support the Solomonic interpretation of Stratum IV. However, this stele was not found in a context that can be directly associated with the Solomonic stratum, or indeed any—instead it was found within the spoil heap of the German excavation (Finkelstein 1996a, 178; Lamon and Shipton 1939, 61). Moreover, the fragmentary nature of the stele's inscription means it cannot be determined what exactly the stele commemorated (K.A. Wilson 2005, 71); the stele mentions Pharaoh Shoshenq's name and little else. Ussishkin's (1990a, 71) suggestion that the mere presence of a stele signifies conquest should be rejected, since stelae probably better reflect dominion rather than conquest (K.A. Wilson 2005, 72-73). Hence, the Shoshenq

² “Here is the account of the forced labor King Solomon conscripted to build the Lord's temple, his own palace, the supporting terraces, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer.”

³ “Solomon had four thousand stalls for chariot horses, and twelve thousand horses.”

stele from Megiddo cannot be conclusively connected to one specific level in the archaeology of the site.

Since its original excavation, the Megiddo stratigraphy has undergone a number of revisions, alterations and corrections (e.g. Aharoni 1972; Albright 1941-43, 18; Ussishkin 1990a; G. E. Wright 1950; Yadin 1960; 1970), yet the association of Megiddo VA-IVB with Solomon has persisted. Growing criticism of this interpretation in recent years (Davies 1992; Finkelstein 1996a, 178-179; Liverani 2005b, *passim*; Whiting 2007a, 27; Wightman 1990a) has resulted in a widespread debate over absolute dates for the Iron Age of the Southern Levant (Ben Tor 2000; Ben Tor and Ben Ami 1998; Dever 1997b; 2000; 2003; Finkelstein 1996a; 1996c; 1998c; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2003a; 2003b; 2006; Gal 2003; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2006; Mazar 1997b; 2000; 2004; 2005; Strange 2000).

2.5.4.4 Dating of Jezreel

Finkelstein's fourth chronological "anchor" is the dating of the site of Jezreel, located near Megiddo. Jezreel is mentioned several times in biblical texts, two of which were of particular interest to the excavators (Williamson 1991). The first (1 Kings 21) makes reference to the "palace" of King Ahab at Jezreel, while the second (2 Kings 9-10; recounted in Hosea 1:4) makes a vague reference to the destruction of Jezreel during Jehu's *coup d'état*. The biblical texts suggested there was a large ninth century BCE palatial structure at Jezreel that was destroyed by Jehu, and therefore implying the presence of a ninth century BCE ceramic assemblage (Na'aman 1997, 125-127). Indeed, the large casemate enclosure found at the site was interpreted as the ninth century BCE "Palace of Ahab" (Ussishkin and Woodhead 1992, 53). While this correlation was seen as an important means for confirming biblical accuracy, it was also an attempt at resolving some of the concerns over absolute chronology for the IA-SL (Ussishkin and Woodhead 1992, 153). The interpretation is not based on the archaeology but on an expectation of how the biblical narrative would manifest itself in the archaeological record; this is despite Williamson's (1991, 89) assertion that it is inadvisable to draw conclusions from biblical references to Iron Age Jezreel. Nevertheless, Finkelstein (1996a, 183) accepted Jezreel "as an extremely important chronological clue". He came to this conclusion because he found it difficult to

understand the large casemate enclosure at Jezreel in any other light than that depicted in the biblical narrative (*ibid*). Hence, Finkelstein accepted the ninth century BCE date, and in doing so committed the same error he had earlier condemned – an interpretation solely from biblical testimony (*ibid*, 179).⁴

In addition to the fact that Jezreel's ninth century BCE date was not obtained via systematic and scientific method, there is some contradiction and confusion in the evidence. In particular, Zimhoni (1997a, 25-26) considered the ceramic material as comparable with that from Megiddo VA-IVB, which was dated on biblical testimony to the tenth century BCE, yet the biblical texts for Jezreel suggest a ninth century BCE date - clearly both interpretations cannot be right; or the pottery is not reliable for chronological purposes. Either Jezreel dates to the tenth century BCE, Megiddo VA-IVB belongs in the ninth century BCE, or the biblical narrative cannot be considered a reliable chronological witness. Furthermore, there were significant practical concerns with the excavation of Jezreel: the site was greatly disturbed, the recording of *loci* was haphazard and inconsistent, and the strategy was heavily influenced by expected biblical connections (Whiting *personal communication*; Zimhoni 1992, 57-58, 61; 1997c, 89). The date of the Iron Age casemate enclosure at Jezreel is archaeologically unsupported and, therefore, of little benefit for the chronology of the IA-SL.

2.5.4.5 Scientific Dating Techniques

With the growing criticism of the established chronological framework in the Southern Levant, archaeologists have begun to implement more scientific dating techniques (e.g. Bruins *et al.* 2003; 2005; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2003a; 2003b; 2006; Mazar and Carmi 2001). But this is a conspicuously late development within Near Eastern Iron Age archaeology compared to other archaeological disciplines. While the importance of a sequence of scientifically-determined absolute dates cannot be underestimated, a number of recent radiocarbon programs have simply incorporated radiocarbon data into existing traditional frameworks: little attempt has been made to grapple with the complex methodological problems concerning the

⁴ Finkelstein's acceptance of the ninth century BCE date for Jezreel over the tenth century BCE for Megiddo VA-IVB is probably a product of his "Low" chronology debate, which is an attempt to lower the Iron Age chronology by 50-80 years. See Finkelstein 1999a; 1999b; 2005.

way chronological information is used to interpret the archaeological record (e.g. Mazar *et al.* 2005; Bruins *et al.* 2005). For instance, Mazar (*et al.* 2005, 193, 253) states *passim* that the radiocarbon dates from Tel Rehov “fit” the conventional chronologies, and concludes his paper by linking the Rehov Stratum V “destruction” with Shoshenq’s raid. Mazar (*ibid.*, 254) also links his radiocarbon dates with biblical events without demonstrating the historical veracity of the biblical account. The chronology alone appears to be the motivation, as if this would support the historical narrative.

The historical narrative is still employed as the key interpretive framework for the IA-SL, despite the application of scientific dating techniques. The so-called precision dating is instead being used to slot the archaeological record into the historical framework; resulting dates are not used to construct an alternative, more-meaningful framework from the archaeological record (Whiting 2007b). As a result, the chronology of the IA-SL remains structured according to biblical testimony. This inability to break-away from existing methodologies is the reason the results of radiocarbon dating in the Southern Levant have been inconclusive: advocates of the “High Chronology” (Bruins *et al.* 2003a; 203b; 2005; Mazar and Carmi 2001) and of the “Low Chronology” (Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; 2006) have both interpreted the same results as supporting each of their views. Indeed, Sherratt (2005b, 119) has alternatively called for “chronological flexibility” within the Iron Age, as the scientific dating techniques now being employed are evidently unable to give the chronological clarity originally expected.

2.5.4.6 Summary and Implications

Amongst the many textual sources that have influenced Near Eastern Iron Age archaeology, the biblical text holds a significant place. No other document has contributed so profoundly to excavation techniques, sampling methodologies and interpretative frameworks as the Hebrew Bible. In particular, the influence of the biblical narrative is present across the eastern Mediterranean from the wholesale adoption of South Levantine chronology; this despite significant geographical, cultural and historical differences between these regions. The above discussion has demonstrated that reconstructions of the IA-SL are not very sensitive to the

archaeological record, but force the archaeology into a pre-determined framework of established biblical history. The recent chronology debate has avoided addressing the fundamental interpretative framework but has focused only on providing a temporally more-precise correlation between the biblical narrative and the archaeology. Nevertheless, the debate in the Southern Levant has important implications for the re-writing of Israel's history (Liverani 2005b, 308-323; Whitelam 1996; Whiting 2007a). For instance, by lowering the dates of conventional tenth century BCE strata, Finkelstein's (2005, 39) "Low Chronology" revokes the glorious past of the United Monarchy and undermines biblical veracity; the first Israelite nation-state is instead found in the Northern Kingdom of the Omride Dynasty.

The High/Low chronology debate in the Southern Levant also has important implications for the IA-NL. If the dates for the ceramic assemblages are lowered by 50-80 years, as Finkelstein (2005, 39) suggests, this would have a flow-on effect throughout the entire eastern Mediterranean, not least within the Northern Levant. The "Low Chronology" would effectively extend the Iron I period, and the persistence of the sub-Late Bronze Age cultural complex, whilst significantly shortening the Iron II period; widely-accepted as the floruit of IA-NL culture. But regardless of "High" or "Low" in the Southern Levant, the IA-NL chronology is in need of revision, primarily in the provision of a chronological framework independent of other regional chronologies (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 13; Cichocki 2000, 64-65). A good, well-controlled sampling program for charcoal and short-life carbonised organic matter during excavation is a simple, yet effective means for providing scientific data to supplement and inform the archaeological record.

2.6 Near Eastern Archaeology as a Product of Western Ideas

Reconstructions of the IA-NL have been formed within the framework of particular temporal, socio-political, and intellectual contexts (Silberman 1993c, 546). The following section explores how European ideas, assumptions, and priorities have framed discussions of the ancient Near East. This is particularly clear for the Southern Levant, where European views were influenced by a biblical perspective of

the “Holy Land” formed through centuries of pilgrimage and crusades (Grabois 1988, 66; Silberman 1982, 8; Whiting 2007a, 5-7; Wilken 1992, 102). The European image of the Northern Levant, however, was derived primarily from other foci.

Post-medieval Europe considered itself to be the most morally and intellectually advanced culture in the world; a view intricately connected to the belief that Europe was heir to the superior form of culture developed by the Greeks and Romans (Maisels 1999, 5; McCall 1998, 183). As a result, Renaissance Europe became obsessed with the classical world (Lowenthal 1985, 75-80; Trigger 1989, 35). Accordingly, classical texts were seen as a cultural guide for all manner of study: politics, philosophy, art, literature, and the ancient Near East (*ibid*). This perspective imposed a classically-inspired map onto the modern landscape of the Northern Levant, despite the formulaic and stereotypical views presented by the classical authors (see Said 1978, 56-58 for a brief discussion of a few classical authors). The archaeological identification of sites mentioned in classical literature, therefore, became an important motivation for the study of the Northern Levant: e.g. Ras al Bassit was excavated because it was identified with classical Posidaion (Courbin 1990b, *passim*); the excavation of Tell Kazel sought to confirm its identification with classical Sumur (Badre 1990a, 14).

Linked to Europe’s classical view of the past was a desire to illustrate the superiority of Greek culture and progression of human civilisation (Jenkins 1992, 56-74; Reade 1987, 48; Waterfield 1963, 138). This was clearly evident in the evolutionary theory of art, which suggested that a line could be drawn linking the most primitive attempts at art with that of the Greeks, whose Parthenon sculptures were considered the absolute pinnacle of artistic tradition (McCall 1998, 198). As a result, the artistic traditions of the ancient Near East were only understood relative to the Greek model and were thus considered primitive (e.g. Canby 1985; Ingholt 1942, 474). Western archaeological literature tended to portray the Northern Levant as a land of origins and early civilisation, but one that fell off the main trajectory at some point, when the “torch” of civilisation passed to Greece (Bahrani 2000, 6).

By emphasising the transmission of “civilisation” from the Levant to Greece, European scholars effectively dispossessed the modern population of its past

(Bahrani 2000, 6; Shank and Tilley 1987a, 195). This was achieved through the perpetuation of apolitical geographical terms that held no relevance for the modern inhabitants of the Levant; e.g. “Mesopotamia”, “Assyria”, “Phoenicia”, “Levant”, “Syria” (Bahrani 1998; 2000, 7; Lowenthal 1985 Wengrow 2006). Designations like “Holy Land”, “Levant”, “Near East”, and “Middle East”, also betrayed a Eurocentric conception of the world (McCall 1998, 211; Whitelam 1996, 40). In other words, the archaeology of the Northern Levant was conceived, performed and interpreted via a distinctly Western European perspective; what Said (1978, 1) has called an “Orientalist” perspective. Indeed, recent research has demonstrated the strong vein of Orientalist thought in archaeological work across the region (Bahrani 1998, 2000; Kohl 1989; Larsen 1987a; 1989; Liverani 1999; 2005a). But for Said, Orientalism was not only about Europe trying to make sense of the “Orient” (Said 1978, 166), it was about control. Indeed, Said (1996, 28) suggests that the naming of the land also implies *control* of that land. Hence, the archaeological “map” of the Northern Levant has been seen to have played a role in the conceptualisation and control of European colonial territories (Bahrani 1998, 171; Liverani 1994; Trigger 1984, 360-363).

During the French Mandate period, French colonial interests ensured the persistence of the European Orientalist perspective; Islamic archaeology, which was more closely aligned with the modern population, was relatively ignored (Strika 2000, 1583). Furthermore, the antiquities departments of Syria and Lebanon were administered not by the French Mandate authority but by French national academic and government bodies based in France; such as the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*, the *Musées Nationaux*, the *Ministère de l’Instruction Publique*, and the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* (Chevalier 2002, 308-309; Matthiae 1981, 32). With the establishment of the *Services des Antiquités* and the enactment of laws protecting a recognised list of ancient sites, the tells and ruins of the Northern Levant acquired a legal status that superseded any local meaning they might have possessed; the link between the indigenous population and the region’s history was completely fractured (Gelin 2004, 28).

In the post-colonial period, European interpretative models have persisted. Avowedly nationalist in outlook, indigenous archaeology’s rejection of terms such as “Near East” or “Orient” also confirms a strong anti-Orientalist perspective. Despite the

rejection, archaeological practice remains squarely rooted in European traditions; those archaeologists trained during the colonial period were taught according to the European interpretative models (Bahrani 2000, 6; Masry 1981, 239; Matthiae 1981, 31-32). This is one of the ironies of the post-colonial situation; i.e. the colonial discourse has shaped the nationalist discourses which have grown up in opposition to colonial control. Nevertheless, indigenous archaeology has sought to reclaim its past through the promotion of the Northern Levant as a land of origins; emphasising its role in the universal development of humanity (i.e. the shift from hunter-gathers to sedentary farming communities, or the development of the alphabet; see www.syriatourism.org).

From the above discussion, it is clear that a number of deeply-embedded European traditions have had an impact, positive or negative, on the practice of Iron Age archaeology in the Northern Levant. The multiple threads of biblical and classical traditions, as well as Orientalist, Colonialist and Nationalist perspectives, have all played important roles in shaping the intellectual climate within which the discipline has developed. The result is an archaeological paradigm that has emphasised European images of the Levant.

2.7 Reassessing Chronologies of Iron Age Northern Levant

The above discussion has highlighted the fact that current reconstructions of the IA-NL are inadequate. The undue prominence given to the historical narrative has resulted in an interpretation of the archaeology that only vaguely resembles the archaeological record. Furthermore, the ascription of “absolute” dates to the material culture is often based on circular reasoning and unreliable correlations between the archaeology and the historical narrative. In fact, the foundations are remarkably weak, and the basis for maintaining the current paradigm, therefore problematic.

2.7.1 The Beginning of the Iron Age

Conventional archaeological practice dates the beginning of the Iron Age to around 1200 BCE in the eastern Mediterranean. This interpretation is based upon the conventional dating of the political crisis that was responsible for the collapse of the

Late Bronze Age palace-economies. While the cause of this crisis is a much-debated topic (cf. Liverani 1987; McClellan 1992; Sader 1992; Sherratt 1998, 292-293), its date is widely accepted. However, neither the date nor cause for this crisis appears to be connected with the development and adoption of new iron technology; a phenomenon generally meant to define the “Iron Age” (§2.2.2). Indeed, many of the conventional archaeological indicators for the Iron Age are not characteristic of this period. For instance, the development of the alphabet and private enterprise are Late Bronze Age innovations, while the domestication of the camel and adoption of iron as “working metal” come some centuries later (§2.3). Furthermore, the material culture of the Iron I period is similar to that of the Late Bronze Age, at least not to warrant the assigning of a new period. Any fixing of the Bronze/Iron Age division should acknowledge the ceramic continuity between the conventional Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages (Mazzoni 2000d, 1043; R. H. Smith and Potts 1992, 83).

The “Crisis Years” are generally associated with economic and political decline and/or collapse, followed by a period of stunted development (e.g. Burdajewicz 1990, 1-23). This 300 year period of recovery has been called a “dark age” (Morris 2000, 33; Muhly 1992, 20-21); a theory supposedly supported by a general lack of surviving textual and cultural material from the early Iron Age (Klengel 1992, 182). The construction of a “dark age” has encouraged some scholars to try to redefine relevant chronologies. For instance, James (*et al.* 1991) accounts for the apparent gap in material culture by lowering the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition by 300 years. However, in doing so, James also removed a large block of archaeological material (e.g. all ceramic material conventionally dated to the Iron I period is effectively ignored and lost). Instead of simply removing the 300 year gap from chronologies, an alternative approach would be to try explaining the apparent gap in occupation. For instance, the “dark age” theory emphasises the apparent lack in textual evidence, but this could be the result of archaeological sampling and changes to writing traditions. The apparent lack in textual evidence is really only the loss of archaeologically-visible texts.

The sweeping manner by which James applies his “Low Chronology” suggests that a “dark age” has been proposed for every site in the Mediterranean, but this is not the case. A number of sites display clear evidence of occupation between the

conventional Late Bronze Age and Iron II period (e.g. Tell Afis Phase VII; Megiddo VI). The author believes this is the main fault with the “dark age” theory; not all sites display an occupation gap for the period in question. Instead, I would suggest that the “dark age” has been artificially created by a widespread inability to recognise early Iron Age material culture. This is probably due to the fact that material culture of the conventional Iron I period is not easily discernible from that of the Late Bronze Age (Anderson 1988, 390). This may also explain the lack of Iron I data from recent surveys around Hama (Bartl *personal communication*), Tell Mishrife (Morandi Bonacossi *personal communication*), and Homs (Philip *et al.* 2005, 40). Consequently, if Iron I pottery was mistakenly attributed to the Late Bronze Age, a gap in occupation would be apparent. For example, at Carchemish Woolley (1952, 235) assigned the Amarna pottery to the Late Bronze Age and the Yunus pottery to the Iron II period, yet he comments that there is no abandonment of the site discernible in the stratigraphy between these two ceramic styles. Moreover, the city architecture displays close links with Hittite Imperial art, suggesting no gap in occupation during the early Iron Age. Accordingly, while James (1987; *et al.* 1996, 318) saw this as a reason for lowering the chronology by 300 years, I would suggest that it only indicates Woolley’s inability to identify Iron I pottery from within the Amarna-styled assemblage. Hawkins (1976-1980, 434) might agree: “It could be that further excavation of the site of Carchemish might produce archaeological and even textual material to bridge the historical gap, and evidence of continuity rather than destruction.”

The archaeological evidence supports neither the “dark age” theory, in the sense of an occupational gap, nor James’ (*et al.* 1991) “Low Chronology”. However, the current chronological framework is inadequate. Current terminology emphasises change between the conventional Late Bronze and Iron Ages that is not evident in the archaeological evidence of the Northern Levant. Instead, continuities in material culture invite the extension of the Late Bronze Age to include what is currently called the Iron I period (Anderson 1988, 390).

2.7.2 Sub-dividing the Iron Age

Assigning an absolute date to the Iron I-II transition has also proven difficult. As a result, there is significant variation amongst the chronological periodisations for the IA-NL (Cecchini and Mazzoni 1998; Jamieson 2000; Lebeau 1983; Makinson 2005; Mazzoni 1990a; 2000a; Moorey 1980 – see **Table 2.7** at end of chapter). While archaeologists are unlikely to declare that Iron Age chronology is finalised and definite, most agree that: the Iron Age began in the twelfth century BCE; the Iron I-II transition corresponded with the advent of Red-Slip pottery in the Northern Levant; the Iron II-III transition coincided with Neo-Assyrian ascendancy in the region.

The most widely-accepted periodisation of the IA-NL is that of Stefania Mazzoni (2000a; 2001), who has identified a number of phases within the conventional Iron Age marked by rapid change in material culture. Foremost of these changes is the appearance of burnished Red-Slip pottery. According to Mazzoni (1990a, 79), the advent of this distinctive ceramic style coincided with a decrease in monochrome painted pottery and an improvement and standardisation in firing and throwing technologies (see also Cecchini 1998, 277; *contra* Fugmann 1958, 267-268). Mazzoni (2000a, 41-42; 2000d, 1050) has tried to date this transition to the end of the tenth century BCE by the presence of Greek pottery in Iron I contexts at Tell Afis (Bonatz 1998; Mazzoni 2000a, 41-42) and an appeal to Braemer's (1986, 222, 246) Red-Slip chronology; but neither of these chronological "tools" can provide a secure date. Braemer's Red-Slip sequence dates derive from the Ras al Bassit stratigraphy which has never been published and cannot be truly assessed, and the dating of Greek imported pottery is based on circular reasoning (§2.5.3). While Mazzoni (2000a, 41-42; 2001, 101) admits that her dating of the Iron I-II transition cannot, on present evidence, be defended archaeologically, her scheme accepts the fundamental construction of the Iron Age chronological framework present in the Southern Levant: namely, that the Iron I period does belong within the Iron Age (Mazzoni 2000a). In the end, the chronological date for the Iron I/II transition is not established independently in Syria, but is a "derivative" of South Levantine chronology.

As already discussed above, a key date for the IA-NL is the 720 BCE destruction of Hama (§2.4.3). This event is usually associated with a break in Iron Age cultural traditions, and has become the hallmark of the Iron II-III transition (e.g. Matthers

1981b, 415; Mazzoni 2000a). But the change in material culture associated with the end of the conventional Iron II period is connected with the Assyrian conquest only because the latter is considered significant enough to bring cultural change. There is little direct evidence to link the two. Indeed, some archaeologists have suggested that there is insufficient cultural change to warrant the assigning of a new, distinct sub-period (e.g. Lebeau 1983, 21).

2.7.3 The End of the Iron Age

The absolute dates for the Iron Age rely on historical data; the end of the Iron Age is no different. Following conventions in South Levantine archaeology (e.g. Aharoni 1978, xviii), many scholars use the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire as a terminal date for the Iron Age (e.g. Jamieson 2000; Makinson 2005; Mazzoni 2000a; Moorey 1980). However, Lebeau (1983, Fig. 6, 22) and Lehmann (1996, Tab. 4.9) have proposed the inclusion of the Persian period, preferring to see the end of Iron Age culture (however that is defined) with the arrival of Alexander's Hellenism in the fourth century BCE (Hachmann 1983, 186 is alone in including both the Persian and Hellenistic periods in the Iron Age). Whether the Persian period is included in the Iron Age or not, Lebeau (1983), Lehmann (1996, Tab. 4.8) and Mazzoni (1990b) have each identified a significant break in material culture between the Iron III period and the following, so-called Persian period (Lehmann 1996, 86-87). However, the argument for attributing this mid-sixth century break in culture to the growth of the Persian Empire is based on unconvincing premise; i.e. Persian ascendancy is expected to have a significant effect on material culture. Once again, the absolute date for this transition is not based on scientific data. Regardless of which date/event is preferred as the end of the Iron Age, it is clear that significant historical events have provided the impetus for assigning absolute dates (Bunnens 2000a, 19).

2.8 Concluding Summary

This chapter has explored some of the key assumptions behind conventional interpretations of the IA-NL. It has demonstrated that such reconstructions derive from the historical narrative, as derived from ancient texts and understood by

archaeologists working within their own modern intellectual environments. In contrast, the archaeological record has played only a minor role.

Historical sources have been, and remain, central to interpretations of material culture proposed by archaeologists working on the IA-NL. By implication this approach assumes a direct link between historical events and the archaeological record, as if every significant event had an immediate and lasting effect on material culture. As a result, archaeological reconstructions have tended to emphasise change (e.g. conquest, migration). However, if the archaeology is emphasised over historical events, an archaeological account of the IA-NL might look significantly different. For instance, there is significant evidence to suggest that the material culture of the early “Iron Age” was largely a continuation of the Late Bronze Age, and that rapid cultural change only occurred toward the end of the Iron I period. This cultural “rethink” has implications for the use of terms such as “Phoenician”, “Aramaean” and “Sea Peoples”. It would also remove the chronological anchorage of destruction layers (e.g. “Sea Peoples”), which would open the way for under-utilised scientific dating methods. Moreover, historical events could no longer be used to “explain” cultural change; for instance, the Aegean influences of the migrating “Sea Peoples” would be de-emphasised, which would encourage an exploration of cultural diversity.

This chapter has also highlighted the fact that archaeologists are products of their environment. Hence, the emphasis on the historical narrative reveals a deeply-embedded European view of texts and their historical primacy. The adoption, conscious or not, of deeply-embedded European traditions has also resulted in an archaeological paradigm that has emphasised a particular view of the Levant; a view that is value-laden and to some extent political in nature.

Despite the flawed nature of the current dataset, archaeology can access an understanding of Iron Age society. The historical narrative, on the other hand, provides a somewhat more generalised reconstruction of past communities. This thesis will not argue for the abandonment of history; it instead suggests that the historical narrative is not the whole story. A close engagement with both archaeology and text will present a reconstruction of the Iron Age Northern Levant that accounts

for the complex and diverse nature of ancient communities. But while the “limited” dataset used for this study will be given “voice”, better data would “speak volumes”. Hence, the present study has implications for the future study of ceramics in the Levant. More systematic and thorough recording of ceramics, combined with a transparency of sampling strategies, quantified data will become available and a more detailed investigation of Iron Age communities in the Northern Levant will be possible.

The conclusion that historical texts do not provide a single, “factual” history of the Iron Age has important implications for archaeology. Since such histories have formed the main interpretative framework for the archaeology of the IA-NL, current approaches to interpreting material culture (e.g. pottery) need to be reconsidered (**Chapter 4**). To do so it is important first to survey specific cases of archaeological practice in the Northern Levant to isolate the manner by which material culture is being interpreted; this is explored in the following chapter.

Table 2.7: Comparative periodisations for Iron Age Syria

BCE	Mazzoni 1990a	Mazzoni 2000a	Makinson 2005	Jamieson 2000	Lebeau 1983	Moorey 1980	Woolley 1914	Hachmann 1983	Haines 1971	
1200	Iron IA	Iron IA-C	LB II	Iron I	Iron I	Early Iron	Late Hittite	Ältere Eisenzeit	Amuq N Iron I (1200-1000)	
1150			Iron I (1150-1000)							Iron I (12 th -10 th)
1100										
1050	Iron IB	Iron II	Iron IIA (1000-900)	Iron II	Iron II	Middle Iron	Mittlere Eisenzeit	Amuq O Iron II		
1000			Iron IIB (900-750)						Iron III (750-600)	
950	Iron IIA	Iron III		Iron III (9 th -8 th)	Iron IIIA	Late Iron	Late Hittite	(1100-718)		Amuq P (1000-500)
900			Iron IIB						Iron III	
850	Iron IIB	Iron III		Iron III (9 th -8 th)	Iron IIIA	Achaemenid	Persian (605-4 th)	(800-500) Jüngere EZ (500-0)		
800			Iron IIB						Iron III	Iron III (9 th -8 th)
750	Iron IIB	Iron III		Iron III (9 th -8 th)	Iron IIIA	Achaemenid	Persian (605-4 th)	(800-500) Jüngere EZ (500-0)		
700			Iron IIB						Iron III	Iron III (9 th -8 th)
650	Iron IIB	Iron III		Iron III (9 th -8 th)	Iron IIIA	Achaemenid	Persian (605-4 th)	(800-500) Jüngere EZ (500-0)		
600			Iron IIB						Iron III	Iron III (9 th -8 th)
550	Achaemenid	Achaemenid (586-330)		Achaemenid (600-330)	Achaemenid	Iron IIIB	Achaemenid	Persian (605-4 th)		
350			Achaemenid						Achaemenid (586-330)	Achaemenid (600-330)

CHAPTER THREE

Critical Review of Iron Age Excavations

Chapter 2 has shown that current reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant are not the result of an engagement with material culture but the imposition of a pre-established interpretative framework onto the archaeological record. This emphasis on the historical narrative has had a direct impact on archaeological practice in the Northern Levant. The aim of this chapter is to explore the excavation, recording, interpretation, and publication of North Levantine Iron Age sites through a critique of chronological and historical conclusions from each site. Apart from presenting a history of research, the objective is to reveal recurring themes and assumptions within this field of research. While this exercise will reveal the limitations of current reconstructions of the Iron Age Northern Levant, it is also an important tool for identifying where to direct possible future research.

The following critique is directed toward all “systematic” excavation of Iron Age sites in the Northern Levant and northern areas of the Southern Levant (i.e. sites from which Iron Age pottery was studied in the course of this thesis). Consequently, it will include a number of excavations that could hardly qualify as “systematic” in their approaches, as well as a number of more meticulous investigations. The results, however, are generally the same; the historical narrative has been imposed onto the archaeology.

3.1 Abou Danne, Tell (Syria)

3.1.1 Summary of Excavations

The main strategy of research at Tell Abou Danne was to illuminate the Iron Age of the Aleppo area, a period poorly represented by ceramic material at the time of excavation (Tefnin 1983, 141). To this end, a large sondage was begun on the northern edge of the mound; this was expected to reveal a complete stratigraphic history of the site; the earliest occupational deposits dated to the beginning of the third millennium BCE (*ibid*). An Early Bronze Age casemate wall was exposed in

Area B, on the western slope of the tell. Area A, situated on the south-east corner of the acropolis, revealed the Iron Age occupation of the site, though no cohesive architectural plans were immediately evident.

3.1.2 Critique

At the time of publication, Lebeau's (1983) study of the Tell Abou Danne ceramics was one of the first typologies for the inland regions of the Northern Levant (cf. Riis 1948; Woolley 1939b). Consequently, Lebeau could only compare the Tell Abou Danne assemblage with pottery from the Southern Levant, where ceramic typologies were abundant. For instance, Tell Abou Danne level IId was considered contemporary with Samaria IV-V, Megiddo IV-III, Hazor VIII-V, Hama E, Amuq Ob-c, al Mina X-VIII, Tell Arqa 10B-D, Sarepta D, Tyre X-IV and Tell Keisan 7-6, while level IIc was considered contemporary with Samaria VI-VII, Megiddo III-II, Hazor IV, Amuq Od, al Mina VI-IV, Tell Arqa 9C, Sarepta C, and Tell Keisan 5-4 (Lebeau 1983, 24). While the far-reaching comparisons suggest that Lebeau was hoping to position Tell Abou Danne within the greater narrative of the eastern Mediterranean, his main focus was chronology. Through his comparison with South Levantine sites and dating of the imported pottery present at Tell Abou Danne (*ibid.*, 21-26), Lebeau proposed a chronology of the site that differed from Tefnin's (1980b) by as much as two centuries (**Table 3.1**). Lebeau's publication, however, was solely concerned with ceramic data, and did not consider small finds or architecture at all (Lebeau 1983, 18), which may account for some lack of harmony. Nevertheless, it is Lebeau's ceramic chronology that is more widely accepted over Tefnin's (e.g. Makinson 2005, Tab. 2, p. 486).

Table 3.1: Comparative Stratigraphy of Iron Age Tell Abou Danne

Level	Tefnin 1980b	Lebeau 1983
I Ib (A4)	400-200/150 BCE	6 th & 5 th cent. BCE
I Ic (A5)	500-400 BCE	7 th cent. BCE
I Id (A6)	650-500 BCE	875-750/700 BCE

(After Lehmann 1996, 99)

Lebeau's ceramic study, however, has been criticised in recent years (Lehmann 1996, 99). Not only does Lebeau's comparative analysis include a number of distant parallels, he includes comparative material without any critique of excavation

method (e.g. Megiddo, Hazor, Hama). The result is a chronology that relies upon a number of problematic sequences and unsupported dating schemes. The use of Greek imports to support his proposed sequence makes no further contribution, since Greek dates are based on the same Southern Levant data upon which Lebeau (1983, 134-135) also relied.

3.2 Abu Hawam, Tell (Israel)

3.2.1 Summary of Excavations

The British Mandatory Department of Antiquities began systematic excavations in 1932 in response to unhindered looting at the site. Work progressed quickly and a sequence of five main architectural phases (strata) belonging to the Late Bronze and Iron Ages were identified. The earliest stratum revealed large orthostat walls that were laid directly onto low sand dunes, suggesting that the settlement was founded during the latter stages of the Late Bronze Age. The material of this stratum (V) bears strong Cypriot affinities (Hamilton 1934, 75). The occupation of the town seems to have continued without serious interruption into the early Iron Age (Stratum IV), with the pottery of the two strata merging into one another almost imperceptibly (Hamilton 1935, 66). The two are distinguished by the thin layer of ash separating the architecture. A violent conflagration, which Hamilton (1934, 77) places within the twelfth century BCE and attributes to the “Sea Peoples”, splits Stratum IV.

A small ash layer also separated Strata IV and III, with the foundations of the latter being placed directly on the ashes of the former, though Hamilton does not appear to have attributed this ash layer to any historical conquest. Stratum III yielded significant architectural remains of buildings and a city-wall, the quality of which Hamilton (1935, 6) considered “not remarkable either for stability or design”. The Stratum III pottery holds clear parallels with pottery from the mid-Levantine coast, as one would expect considering its proximity. Stratum III was also sealed by a layer of ash. This ash layer and the clear discontinuity between Strata III and II – in both alignment and construction – implied a break in habitation of the site; a break that Hamilton attributes to the violent campaign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak (Shoshenq I?), which is conventionally dated to the tenth century BCE (§2.5.4.2).

The large amount of late Iron Age-Persian pottery in Stratum II suggested to Hamilton (1934, 77) a lengthy abandonment of the site before significant re-occupation in the late sixth century BCE; Stratum II bore a coherent plan of a large portion of the site (Hamilton 1935, Pls I, III).

Table 3.2: Summary of Tell Abu Hawam strata

Str.	Period	Date	Pottery
I	Mixed topsoil	Hellenistic/Roman	Mixed
II	Graeco-Persian	Late 6 th - early 4 th cent.	Greek glazed Basket-handled
<i>destruction by Shishak</i>			
III	Iron Age I - II	1100-925 BCE	Red-Slip Black-on-Red Bichrome painted
IVb	Early Iron Age	1195-1000 BCE	No Late Bronze No Late Helladic Bichrome painted
<i>destruction by "Sea Peoples"</i>			
IVa	LB-Iron trans	1230-1195 BCE	Late Helladic III Bichrome painted
V	Late Bronze Age	1400-1230 BCE	Late Helladic III Cypriot LB

(After Hamilton 1935, 66)

Since the 1930s, two further excavation projects have returned to the site. The French-Israeli project of the 1980s reinitiated excavation at Tell Abu Hawam with the primary goal of reassessing Hamilton's much-maligned stratigraphic sequence (B. Mazar 1951; Van Beek 1951; 1955). In 2001, a salvage project, led by Michal Artzy (2007), returned to the site and excavated Persian and Late Bronze Age material from the north-eastern edge of the tell.

3.2.2 Critique

There are a number of problems plaguing Hamilton's Tell Abu Hawam chronology. First, there was a conspicuous absence of what Hamilton (1935, 67) considered "datable" material at Tell Abu Hawam; two scarabs and a bead bearing the cartouche of Amenophis III were the only examples discussed. Second, Hamilton's interpretive method was strongly influenced by the historical record and his chronology was constructed to fit the historical data. Hamilton (*ibid*) imposed absolute dates upon the site by associating arbitrarily-chosen ash deposits with historically-attested military

campaigns (e.g. Shishak; “Sea Peoples”) (§2.3.1; §2.5.4.2). Third, Hamilton (*ibid*, 8) apparently held a limited understanding of Iron Age material culture; his proposal for a lengthy abandonment of the site (between the ninth and sixth century BCE) was based on the absence of what he considered to be characteristic “Israelite” pottery. Hamilton did not consider possible influences on material culture outside those depicted in the biblical account. Finally, Hamilton’s practical method has come under close scrutiny (Artzy 2007, 357-358; Balensi *et al.* 1993). When archaeologists returned to the site, the aim was not only to refine Hamilton’s absolute dating but also to evaluate and correct his proposed stratigraphic sequence (Balensi 1985, *passim*).

The exposure in 1984 of “Middle Iron Age” material led archaeologists to question the validity of Hamilton’s proposed abandonment (between Strata III and II) and, consequently, his whole chronological scheme (*ibid*). But while the revised sequence redefined the site’s strata, the absolute dates continued to be derived from the historical narrative (Table 3.3). While not explicitly named, the historical conquests of the “Sea Peoples” and Shishak (Aramaean conquest has also been suggested – Negev 1972, 10) were primary chronological anchors for Balensi’s (*et al.* 1993) sequence. Moreover, the ash layers associated with these events were different to those used by Hamilton (e.g. Balensi associated the “Sea Peoples” with the ash layer between Stratum V and Stratum IV, while Hamilton preferred the ash layer within Stratum IV). There are a number of ash layers within the Tell Abu Hawam sequence, but which was used for chronological purposes was an arbitrary decision.

Table 3.3: Revised Chronology, Tell Abu Hawam

Revised	Original	Period	Cent. BCE
IIA-B	II	Persian	Fifth-fourth
IIIA-B	None	Iron II	Tenth – eighth
	<i>destruction</i>	-	<i>Late tenth</i>
IVA-B	IVb-III	Iron I	Eleventh – tenth
	<i>destruction</i>	-	<i>c. 1200</i>
VA-C	IVa	LB	Fifteenth-twelfth
VI	V	MB	Sixteenth-fifteenth

(After Balensi *et al.* 1993)

Balensi’s sequence was able to draw on a much larger corpus of Iron Age pottery than Hamilton and, as a result, possibly represents a more accurate ceramic sequence

at Tell Abu Hawam, though Balensi's lack of publication prevents confirmation. Balensi also had at her disposal much-improved ceramic theory, but employed an interpretative framework unchanged from that of Hamilton fifty years earlier. The result is an absolute chronology for the site that is based on arbitrary associations of archaeology with history. Balensi's chronology is ultimately just a revision of Hamilton's conclusions, rather than a complete reworking of the site's chronology.

While Artzy (2007) has published limited results of the recent salvage project, the preliminary results appear to support Hamilton's dates for Stratum V; i.e. Late Bronze Age. However, Artzy's (*ibid*, 362-364) chronology is based primarily on ceramic evidence; e.g. Mycenaean and Cypriot imports. The Stratum V remains were directly overlaid with Stratum II material, which indicates a very limited Iron Age occupation (Strata IV-III) at Tell Abu Hawam (*ibid*, 365). There is still much work to be done before the Tell Abu Hawam sequence is clarified.

3.3 Afis, Tell (Syria)

3.3.1 Summary of Excavations

The first excavation of Tell Afis was undertaken as part of the Tell Mardikh/Ebla project, with a trench excavated on the acropolis (Matthiae 1979; 1985). An earlier survey of the tell's surface by Albright yielded significant amounts of Iron Age pottery, which seemed to confirm its identification with ancient Hazrek (Mazzoni 1998b, 8). An investigative probe revealed the remains of a sizeable but badly preserved *bit hilani* palace and densely packed domestic units, all of which suggested an extensively occupied Iron Age settlement (*ibid*).

A joint project (Universities of Pisa, Bologna and Roma-La Sapienza) returned to the site in 1986 intending to classify and define the phases of the Iron Age ceramic sequence (Cecchini and Mazzoni 1998, 1). The investigations in Area D of the southern Lower City successfully provided an uninterrupted sequence of occupation for the eighth and seventh centuries BCE (*ibid*; Mazzoni 1988a; 1998b, 23). Area B, along the northern slope of the lower mound, explored the Iron Age outer city-wall (Virgilio 2005). The discovery of other segments of the city-wall in Areas B and M (opened in 2000) and of the foundations of a largely dismantled gate helped confirm the extent of the site (*ibid*; Del Vesco 2002).

In addition to trenches on the lower mound, work was undertaken on the acropolis. A return to Area A, on the western side of the acropolis (where Matthiae's excavations uncovered the palace), revealed fragmentary mud-brick architecture from the Iron II and Iron III periods (D'Amore 2002; 2005; Soldi 2005). In 1988 Area E₁ was opened on the western slope of the acropolis with the aim of obtaining a complete stratigraphic history of the site; twenty-six levels have been exposed so far, dating from the Late Chalcolithic through to the Iron Age, when Tell Afis reached its greatest size (Mazzoni 1998a; Venturi 1998a). Importantly, the sequence also included the elusive and poorly-understood Iron I period (Mazzoni 1998b, 17; Venturi 1998a, 124). Excavation in Area E₁ also revealed a Late Bronze II 'Residency' and "Pillared Building" and the fortification of both the Middle Bronze and Late Chalcolithic periods.

Table 3.4: Location of Tell Afis Trenches

Area	Location
A	W area of acropolis
B	N slope of lower mound
C	S slope of acropolis
D	S area of lower mound
E	W slope of acropolis
F	N outer city wall
G	E summit of tell
H	NW edge of lower mound
J	S edge of acropolis
L	SE edge of acropolis
M	NW area of tell
N	E side of acropolis

In Area G, on the eastern summit of the acropolis, the 1992 discovery of a large sunken courtyard persuaded the excavators to intensify work there. The perimeter of the enigmatic Iron II courtyard was originally surrounded by mud-brick walls eight metres high, the collapse of which effectively buried the whole square (Cecchini 2000a, Fig. 1; Mazzoni 1998b, 21). The almost complete Iron Age sequence from Area G, with its abundance of Red-Slip, provided an important comparison with the purely domestic material from Area D (Cecchini 1998; Oggiano 1997, 186). Areas L and N on the acropolis also yielded a significant amount of Iron Age material (Cecchini 2002; 2005; D'Amore 1998a; Magazzu 2002).

Table 3.5: Relative Chronology of Tell Afis Excavation Areas

c. BCE	Phases	Strata	Area E		Area G			Area D
			E ₁	E ₂	East	Central	North	
1300	LB II	Afis VI	10					
1200			9c					
1150			9b					
			9a					
1100	IA IA		8					
1050		Afis VII						
1000			7					
	IA IB		6					
950								
			5	5	5			
900	IA IC		4	4	4			
			3	3	3			
850	IA IIA		2		2			8
			1					
800		Afis VIII						7 6
	IA IIB			2				
750				1	1	8b		5 4
						8a	5	3
700						↑	↑	
						↓	↓	2
650								
	IA III	Afis IX						1
600						↓	↓	
						1	1	
550								

(After Mazzoni and Cecchini eds 1998, 4)

3.3.2 Critique

Like other sites bearing evidence of both the Late Bronze and Iron I periods, Tell Afis Area E₁ bears witness to remarkable ceramic continuity across the two periods (Oggiano 1997, 186; Venturi 1998a, 135-136). Yet despite such remarkable continuity, the two periods are considered by the excavators as distinct, a conclusion based upon the conflagration of an important building (*ibid*, 134). The Late Bronze II period is represented by Levels 10-9c, which are characterised by the so-called “Residency” that was destroyed by fire. This “destruction” was followed by a lengthy period of sporadic occupation (Level 9b), before Levels 9a-8 witnessed a full

reoccupation of the site in what is interpreted as the early Iron Age. While Venturi (*ibid*, 134-137) suggested that the idea of a total regional collapse as a result of an invasion by “Sea Peoples” is not a good explanation for events across inland Northern Levant, he did look to “the widespread crisis at the end of the thirteenth century BC” (*ibid*, 135) as the key chronological indicator for the “destruction” of the Tell Afis “Residency”. The supposed turmoil surrounding these *historical* events, whether at the hands of invading “Sea Peoples” or advancing “Aramaean” tribes, influenced the dating of the Tell Afis Bronze-Iron Age transition (Mazzoni 2000a, 31). The appearance in Level 9b of Aegean-style Monochrome vessels alongside the local pottery tradition appears to steel Venturi’s resolve regarding population movement and a late thirteenth century BCE date (Venturi 1998a, 135). If the assumption of “invading peoples” or “settling tribes” is removed, there is a lack of conclusive evidence to firmly date the beginning of the Iron Age at Tell Afis (Bonatz 1998, 219; Venturi 1998a, 135). Indeed, Venturi (1998a, 134) laments the general lack of imported wares because it “prevents the establishment of a firm date”. Even those ceramic vessels that are presented as imports, which Bonatz (1998, 219) considers unusual for a site so far removed from the coast, have not been conclusively proven to be non-local. Dornemann (*personal communication*), for instance, believes the sub-Mycenaean painted wares to be part of the early Iron Age local traditions. Furthermore, when Venturi (1998a, 135) does discuss the chronological value of certain ceramic types, he fails to provide a reference to support the dates (e.g. the bell-shaped bowl with antithetical spiral design; the evolution of Kamid el Loz cooking-pot types). In the author’s opinion, there is no firm chronological anchor for the early Iron Age assemblage at Tell Afis.

The specific dating of the Iron I–II transition is also problematic. Level 2 in Area E₁ witnessed a marked decrease in painted pottery, which give way to Red-Slip and “Orange Simple Wares” associated with the Iron II period (Mazzoni 1998a, 169; Oggiano 1997, 186). This shift in ceramic horizon is also marked by a remodelling of the town’s defensive system and expansion of the Lower City (*ibid*). While the occurrence of this cultural transformation is not disputed here, the assigning of a date to this “event” by comparison with South Levantine sites is problematic (Mazzoni 1998a, 169). Comparison is also made with the similar assemblage of Levels 6-4 in Area D in the Lower City of Tell Afis, which is dated to the eighth and seventh

century BCE by the presence of four sherds of imported pottery (Mazzoni 1998a, 169; Oggiano 1997, 287). The Area D date is confirmed on historical considerations; that the corresponding expansion of the Lower City accords well with the situation described in the stele of Zakkur, which describes Hazrek as prosperous and strong enough to defend itself against the coalition of Damascus (Mazzoni 1998b, 7-8). Dating the Area E₁ Level 2 pottery on comparison with the Area D assemblage ignores the differences in the nature of these assemblages – Area D bore evidence of purely domestic contexts while the acropolis assumes association with higher status deposits. The lack of storage jars in Area E₁ and the difference in cooking-pots between the two areas is probably more to do with the difference in assemblage function than any chronological implications (Mazzoni 1998a, 169). The key factor in assigning the mid-ninth century BCE date for the Iron I-II transition derives from Braemer's (1986, 222) date for the appearance of Red-Slip (Cecchini 1998, 277; Degli Esposti 1998, 231; Mazzoni 1990a). Further external support is gained by reference to Hazor, which, putting its remoteness aside, is not without its own stratigraphic and chronological problems (Mazzoni 1998a, 169). The same transition is also witnessed in other areas of excavation on the acropolis, though these, too, make reference to the appearance of Red-Slip and comparative South Levantine assemblages as though their chronological positions were fixed (Cecchini 1998, 296; Degli Esposti 1998, 231). In the end, the assignment of a mid-ninth century BCE date for the Iron I-II transition is not based directly on the archaeological data, and Mazzoni (2000a, 41) herself admits the date cannot be defended archaeologically.

Like previous transitional periods, the shift from the Iron II to Iron III horizon was assigned an absolute date based on ceramic parallels and historical correlations. The large sunken courtyard of Area G (the '*batiment mysterieux*' of Cecchini 2000a) was filled with the debris of the structure's large walls. While there is little evidence to determine exactly how the walls collapsed, the excavators see the likely catalyst for this event as the marauding Assyrian army (Cecchini 1998, 296). This interpretation is based on the inclusion of Hazrek, identified with Tell Afis (Amadasi 2001; 2005; Dion 1997, 139-143; Lipinski 2000a, 255-258; Mazzoni 2005b, 12-13), within the sphere of Tiglath-Pileser III's empire (738 BCE), and correlates with the slightly later destruction of Hama attributed to Sargon II (720 BCE).

Tell Afis boasts one of the few complete ceramic sequences for the IA-NL, as well as the most extensively published to date. One cannot overestimate the influence that the Tell Afis sequence holds within the discipline (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 363). The periodisation of the Iron Age as encountered, or at least interpreted, at Tell Afis has become the keystone of Iron Age archaeology. However, under close scrutiny, the foundations for this chronological framework are not secure. Correlation with distant sites, combined with an over-reliance on general historical trends and specific historical events, and the uncritical use of imported pottery, warrants caution.

3.4 Ahmar, Tell (Syria)

3.4.1 Summary of Excavations

A French expedition made a sounding at Tell Ahmar in 1928, and went on to conduct more extensive excavations of the tell in the subsequent three years (E. Dhorme 1938). Near the summit of the tell, excavation revealed the plan of a large palace that the excavators assigned to the Assyrian period (eighth and seventh centuries BCE) on the evidence of two large stelae of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (680-669 BCE) found therein (Thureau-Dangin and Dunand 1936b, Pls XII, XIII). The Assyrian palace was only partially preserved, but still resembled the plan of the palace at Arslan Tash (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 382-383). The Tell Ahmar palace is also renowned for its beautiful wall paintings, which were more than the purely-ornamental friezes from Arslan Tash but were rich figurative compositions (Strommenger 1985b, 330). The paintings are considered to be purely Assyrian in composition and execution, with no traces of local influence, leading to the conclusion that by the eighth century BCE Tell Ahmar was part of the Assyrian heartland (*ibid*).

By the close of French excavations, a number of periods were attested at the site; Ubaid, Early Bronze IV, Iron Age I, II and III (“Assyrian”), Persian (burials), Hellenistic, Islamic and modern. The Early Bronze IV remains included *l’hypogee* of Thureau-Dangin and Dunand (1936a, 96-108), a large underground chamber tomb that yielded an abundance (over one thousand) of ceramic and bronze artefacts

(Thureau-Dangin and Dunand 1936a, figs 28-32). No Iron Age pottery was published from the French expedition (Jamieson 2005, 749).

Fifty-eight years later, when Melbourne University returned to excavate the site, the archaeological landscape had changed dramatically. The river, which had flowed past the very foot of the tell during the 1920s (Thureau-Dangin 1929, 185), had shifted some hundred metres to the south (Bunnens 1990a; 2006, 5). Furthermore, the tell had become heavily occupied by the modern village of Tell Ahmar and the Lower City had been intensively bulldozed to optimize agricultural production - the outer city-wall was all but destroyed (Bunnens 1990a, 3). But as much as the site had changed, it would soon undergo more extensive and permanent damage; the construction of the Tishrin Dam downstream would completely inundate the site - this being the reason for a return to the site (*ibid*, 1). The aims of the new project were threefold: to isolate a complete stratigraphic sequence for the site; to study the interaction between the Assyrian and local cultures; and to study the urban layout of the Iron Age settlement (Roobaert and Bunnens 1999, 163). The Iron Age of Tel Ahmar was of primary concern.

Regarding a complete stratigraphic sequence for the site, the earliest material excavated by the renewed expedition belongs to the Early Bronze Age (early third millennium BCE), when Tell Ahmar was a small village (Jamieson 1990, 25-26). The previously excavated “Hypogeum” bore witness to an increase in importance by the mid third millennium BCE. The Middle and Late Bronze Age were also identified in the sondage on the south-east corner of the tell, though the latter was heavily disturbed by construction dated to the Iron Age when the settlement took on regional significance (Bunnens *personal communication*). However, the renewed excavations have yet to isolate any definite pre-Assyrian Iron Age material. In contrast, there is an abundance of Assyrian material; ceramic, architectural, artistic (Roobaert and Bunnens 1999, 171ff). A significant corpus of Assyrian pottery has been recovered from the renewed excavations, the bulk of which was excavated from domestic contexts in Area C in the Middle City. Smaller samples derive from Areas D, E and F, also located off the main tell. Pottery from Area C has been dated to the seventh century BCE and, according to Jamieson (1999, 287), holds close parallels to the Assyrian pottery from Fort Shalmeneser at Nimrud, published by Oates (1959).

Table 3.6: Stratigraphy of Tell Ahmar Area C

Stratum	Period	Date
1	Roman	
2A-B	Iron III	1 st half sixth century BCE
2C	Iron III	2 nd half seventh century BCE
3		

(After Jamieson 2000, 264-269)

Excavation at Tell Ahmar has been supplemented by a short archaeological reconnaissance of the Lower City (Green and Hausleiter 2000). The majority of the unstratified pottery collected from the fields has been dated to the Iron II period. Once again, no pre-Assyrian Iron Age material was identified.

3.4.2 Critique

Much has been written about the Iron Age at Tell Ahmar (Bunnens 1990a, 3; 1999; 2000a; Jamieson 1999; 2000; Thureau-Dangin and Dunand 1936a, 134). Discussion on the early Iron Age has centred on whether the early Iron Age inhabitants of Tell Ahmar were Aramaeans or Luwians. The site is widely recognised as the capital of the small “Syro-Hittite” kingdom of Masuwari (Hawkins 1983), before being transformed into the headquarters of the “Aramaean” state of Bit-Adini, and then becoming the Assyrian Kar-Shalmeneser of the eighth and seventh centuries BCE (G. Schwartz 1989, 278). Ussishkin (1971), on the other hand, has reversed the sequence- he prefers to see the early Iron Age site as Aramaean before becoming “Syro-Hittite” about a century before Assyrian conquest. While the matter remains unresolved, Hawkins (1980; 1983) has suggested an alternative interpretation: that Tell Ahmar was a small kingdom of Hittite (Luwian) descent that was under regional authority of an Aramaean tribal leader. This, according to Hawkins (*ibid*), explains the “Syro-Hittite” character of the local art and the mention of Tell Ahmar as part of the Aramaean coalition against the Assyrians.

Discussion over the ethnic affiliation of the inhabitants ignores the problems associated with equating people and pots (§4.3). Furthermore, the renewed excavations are yet to isolate any definite early first millennium BCE archaeological deposits. A few sculptural pieces reminiscent of those from nearby Carchemish and bearing hieroglyphic Luwian and/or alphabetic Aramaic inscriptions may indicate

that the site was occupied during the early Iron Age, but the items are isolated finds and not always found on the actual site (Bunnens 2006; Hawkins 1980; L.W. King 1909; Roobaert 1990). The claim of French archaeologists to have uncovered pre-Assyrian Iron Age levels has not been supported by current research (Thureau-Dangin and Dunand 1936a, 84-96), though the absence of Iron Age pottery within the French publication did little to support the claim. There are suggestions that the original excavators may have “misread” Late Bronze Age material as belonging to the early Iron Age (Roobaert and Bunnens 1999, 167). Thureau-Dangin and Dunand’s (1936a, 84-96) “Aramaeans” levels appear to have been so-designated simply because they lay under the Assyrian palace. Excavation has provided no extra-historical evidence for the occupation of Tell Ahmar during the early Iron Age. It seems that the historical narrative alone has driven the discussion on this period, which may account for the pre-occupation with the ethnicity of the inhabitants.

The abundant Assyrian pottery and architecture at Tell Ahmar has been exposed in all areas of the site; Tell Ahmar apparently reached the zenith of its size and influence as the Assyrian Kar-Shalmeneser. There is little doubt regarding the Assyrian nature of the material during this phase, but the absolute dates for these levels are less certain. While the two stelae found within the palace complex are attributed to seventh century BCE Esarhaddon, the construction of this building is dated to the eighth century BCE on historical grounds (Lipinski 2000a, 185). However, without archaeological evidence for early Iron Age settlement, and the relative position of the Assyrian palace to that settlement, the prescribed dating scheme is speculative. The cross-comparison of Area C pottery (Jamieson 1999, 287) with that from Nimrud (Oates 1959), even if relevant, is unable to provide refinement of the sequence.

The chronological and interpretative framework at Tell Ahmar places a strong emphasis on the historical narrative. This is evident in both the early French expedition to the site and the current project. Textual finds are prominent within publications (e.g. Bunnens 2006), leading to a strong ethno-centric interpretation of the material culture, and a relative silencing of the archaeology.

3.5 Ain Dara (Syria)

3.5.1 Summary of Excavations

While the site of Ain Dara was known for many years, it was not until the discovery of a monumental basalt lion in 1955 that excavation was considered (Abou Assaf 1997a). The following year excavation began and four more “unfinished” lions were uncovered on the acropolis from an unfinished monumental gate complex. Excavation also revealed a large city-wall surrounding the city which contained the significant remains of a large “Syro-Hittite” temple (Abou Assaf 1990). In contrast to similar buildings at Tell Halaf (Guzana), Zinjirli (Sam’al), Tell Ta’yinat, and Sakçe Gözü, all of which were internally decorated, the *outer* wall of the Ain Dara temple was heavily-decorated with animal (lions and sphinxes) sculptures (*ibid*, Abb. 16-17). The two step-like thresholds leading in to the temple bore three large footprints; the outer threshold bearing a pair of imprints, while the inner threshold preserved an image of only the left foot (Abou Assaf 1990, Tf. 11). Once the disused temple fell into disrepair, the later Iron Age population (Levels 6 and 5) reused the dressed stone, in particular the large stone lions (Abou Assaf 1985, 347-350).

Table 3.7: Ain Dara Acropolis Stratigraphy

Level	Period	Dates	Comments
1	Seljuk	1100–1400 CE	Restricted to Acropolis
2	Byzantine	969-1075 CE	City-wall; significant occupation
3	Abbasid Ummayyad	640-969 CE	Similar to level 2
<i>hiatus</i> -----			1 metre debris layer
4	Seleucid	330–75 BCE	Seleucid coins, eastern sigillata
5	Persian	530–330 BCE	Achaemenid horsemen figurines
6	Iron III	7 th –6 th cent. BCE	Poorly preserved, Attic wares
7	Iron II	10 th –9 th cent. BCE	Temple and Lion Orthostats

(After Abou Assaf 1990, 1-10)

Though initially the objective of the project was to reveal the nature of occupation of the whole site throughout all periods (early seasons excavated the northern gate of the lower city), the focus of the Syrian expedition quickly shifted to the temple and its ornate orthostats and sculpture (Stone and Zimansky 1999, 2). Indeed, scholarly interest in the site rarely extends beyond a discussion of the temple’s artistic style and date (e.g. Abou Assaf 1997a; Orthmann 1971, 198). An obvious exception to the fascination with the temple was the American project at the site; Stone and Zimansky

(1999, 1-7) recognised that the temple, as impressive as it was, did not stand in isolation but was erected in a substantial population centre overlooking a large thriving community. Consequently, the Americans focused their fieldwork on the lower town. The first season (1982) was devoted to understanding what periods were represented in the lower city, with excavation and surface survey producing material from the Late Bronze, Iron I, Iron II and Hellenistic periods (*ibid*, 6). During 1983 and 1984 more extensive excavation was undertaken in the north-eastern area of the lower mound with the aim of investigating the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition. After only two seasons of excavation, when the Late Bronze Age levels were being exposed, the American expedition was brought to an abrupt halt (*ibid*).

3.5.2 Critique

Despite evidence for much earlier occupation being found, the priorities of the Syrian expedition to Ain Dara were centred on the Iron Age levels of the citadel and the impressive temple found therein. A specific date for the temple, however, has not been resolved from excavation. The temple’s embellishments were executed in a style that clearly owed much to the artistic traditions of the Hittite Empire, most unambiguously in the row of mountain god and demon figures that extended across the innermost courtyard (Seirafi *et al.* 1965, Pl. ix a-b). To some scholars, Ain Dara is a clear example of Orthmann’s (1971, 136-138) “Late Hittite I” artistic style associated with the early Iron Age (Seirafi *et al.* 1965, 19). Abou Assaf (1990, 39-41), however, argued that three stylistic phases were evident in the building, and presented a chronological sequence spanning six centuries (**Table 3.8**). Phase I is dated to the last quarter of the second millennium via comparison with a temple from Hazor that has conventionally been dated to the thirteenth century BCE (Abou Assaf 1990, 39): issues of remoteness aside, absolute dates for the sequence at Hazor are unreliable (§3.19).

Table 3.8: ‘Ain Dara Temple - Stylistic Phasing

Phase	BCE	Parallels
I	1300-1000	Hazor
II	1000-900	Carchemish
III	900-740	Arslan Tash, Zincirli, Carchemish, Sakçe Gözü, Tell Halaf

(After Abou Assaf 1990, 39-41)

Temple Phases II and III are dated to Orthmann's (1971, 136-138) "Late Hittite I/II" and "Late Hittite II/III", respectively, based on the relative presence of Assyrian motifs within the ornamentation (Abou Assaf 1990, 40-41). Orthmann (1971, 136-138) does not agree with Abou Assaf's phasing. However, even a consensus that the 'Ain Dara sculptures are of "Late Hittite I" style would not provide a precise date for the temple's use; none of the parallels cited by Abou Assaf are stratigraphically reliable (e.g. Arslan Tash, Carchemish, Zincirli). Furthermore, there is little consensus over the dates of Orthmann's scheme (§2.3.8). There is also some confusion regarding the relationship between the sculptures and the temple building: there are indications that the adornments were never finished (lions in varying degrees of completeness), and signs of rebuilding and discard (Abou Assaf 1990, 61). Moreover, some reliefs were found in secondary contexts (*ibid*, 61, Tf. 51). Indeed, the stratigraphy surrounding the temple is complex, compounded by the fact that the temple stood exposed for some time after it was abandoned (Abou Assaf 1990, 10; Stone and Zimansky 1999, 3). Any possibility of further examination of stratigraphic connection between the temple and its surroundings, however, has been eliminated by a large trench dug around the building for the construction of a protecting roof (*ibid*).

3.6 Akhziv (Israel)

3.6.1 Summary of Excavations

Prior to the commencement of archaeological work at the site, looting was rampant amongst the ancient tombs of Akhziv. Consequently, the first excavations focused solely on recording and protecting the cemeteries (Dayagi-Mendels 2002, 2; E. Mazar 2001, 9). Work on the tell was restricted to only two seasons of excavation by Prausnitz in 1963 and 1964 (Prausnitz 1963; 1965). Nevertheless, Prausnitz' work on the northern part of the city-mound revealed Middle Bronze fortifications, which were in ruin by the end of the Late Bronze Age, and significant Iron Age deposits (Dayagi-Mendels 2002, 1-2). It was clear from both the tell and the cemeteries that the settlement enjoyed its greatest expansion (c. 8 ha.) during the Iron Age (*ibid*). Publication of the Iron Age material has focused on the cemeteries and the accompanying assemblages of decorated pottery (*ibid*).

The tombs recorded by Ben Dor in the southern and eastern cemeteries were mostly shaft-tombs with a single rock-cut chamber (Dayagi-Mendels 2002, 3-4). The later excavations uncovered additional grave types: round-graves, pit-graves, cist-tombs, and jar-burials (E. Mazar 2001, 10). The area to the north of the site also yielded a cremation cemetery (*ibid*, 157). One particular tomb in the southern group (TC4), which was a chamber tomb built of rough stones, contained the remains of approximately 50 individuals (men, women and children), most of which were secondary burials, and abundant pottery. While this may be evidence for this tomb's continued use over a long period of time involving very specific funerary rituals (dining with the dead, mixing the remains of the dead), Mazar (2001, 157) saw this as the relocation of an earlier northern cemetery, which was cleared for cremation use.

Table 3.9: Phases of Akhziv Cemeteries

BCE	Southern Tombs	Northern	Eastern
end 11 th	Cist – rough stones		Not Used
end 11 th – early 10 th	Chamber – rough stones		
10 th	Chamber – ashlar		
9 th	Shaft	Cremation	Rock Cut Tombs
8 th			
7 th			
6 th			
5 th			

(After E. Mazar 2001, 159)

The large ashlar-built chamber-tomb in the northern cemetery bears witness to four phases of use extending from the tenth through to the mid-sixth century BCE (**Table 3.10**). The long period of continuous use and extensive collection of ceramics from the Lebanese coast, led to its interpretation as a “Phoenician Family Tomb”.

Table 3.10: Akhziv “Phoenician Family Tomb” Phases

Phase	Date
1	10 th – early 9 th cent.
2	Mix of phases 1 and 3
3	Late 9 th – 7 th cent.
4	Late 7 th – mid 6 th cent.

(After E. Mazar 2004, 21-23)

3.6.2 Critique

A large corpus of ceramics has been published from the cemeteries, but there is some concern regarding the presentation of the material. While Dayagi-Mendels (2002, 2) recounts the significant difficulties encountered in the study and publication of the material from Ben Dor's excavations (the long period that elapsed since excavation; inadequate methods of recording, incomplete surveying of tombs which can no longer be located; and the damage caused by human and natural activities), it is not surprising to read Mazar's (2001, 4) criticism of the Dayagi-Mendels publication. Apparently, inconsistencies in Ben Dor's records led to Dayagi-Mendels assigning Cypriot White-Painted barrel jugs to wrong tomb assemblages (E. Mazar 2001, 10). Moreover, the aim of Dayagi-Mendels' (2002, 2) publication was the presentation of the rich repertory of pottery – chronology was not an important consideration.

Mazar (2001, 75) attributes the cist-tombs of the southern cemetery to the Sherden of the "Sea Peoples" based on similarities between the four Akhziv cist-tombs and examples from Tel Zeror and Tel Far'ah(S). The finds from the 32 cist-tombs at Tell Far'ah(S) were attributed by Petrie (1930, 11-12) to the "Philistines", which then provided a date within the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE. By attributing the Akhziv tombs to a "Sea Peoples" group, Mazar was also suggesting an early Iron Age date. The association of "Sea Peoples" with a specific material culture is controversial within today's archaeological climate (§2.5.4.1). However, once the assumption of a "Philistine" identity is removed from Petrie's interpretation, the chronology for this tomb type is lost.

The Akhziv shaft-tombs were dated on ceramic parallels and the presence of datable scarabs, though the heirloom factor associated with scarabs was not taken into account (E. Mazar 2001, 77-146). The dates for other Akhziv tomb types, including the "Phoenician Family Tomb", rely on the presence of datable ceramic data and architectural parallels (E. Mazar 2004, 21-23). Hence, Mazar's chronological framework ignores the many inherent problems with current Iron Age chronology.

3.7 Aleppo (Syria)

3.7.1 Summary of Excavations

Several soundings were made on the Aleppo Citadel following World War I (Baurin 1923; Dussaud 1931; 1934, 300ff.; Ploix de Rotrou 1931a; 1932b), recovering various basalt and limestone slabs with inscriptions and geometric decoration, most of which have close parallels to orthostats from the 'Ain Dara temple (Gonnella *et al.* 2005, Figs 86, 87; Ploix de Rotrou 1932a). A number of basalt lion orthostats also came to light but have since been lost or damaged (Shaath 1996, Fig. 63). An early Iron Age relief depicting two winged genii was recovered and now resides in the forecourt of the National Museum of Aleppo (G. Miller 1958, Fig. 69; Orthmann 1971, 54; van Loon 1995). Very little was ever published regarding any of these finds, and the pottery from these early expeditions has been lost.

In 1995, a Syro-German project returned to Aleppo for the purpose of investigating “the pre-Hellenistic layers on the citadel of Aleppo” (Khayyata and Kohlmeyer 2000, 733). The location for the renewed work took into account the find-spots for the Iron Age orthostats, as well as the restricting nature of the significant (both in size and importance) Islamic overburden. It is little wonder, therefore, that the new trenches reopened Ploix de Rotrou’s old sounding (*ibid.*, 734). The various basalt and limestone slabs exposed in the 1930s turned out to be part of an ancient wall, one which belonged to a large building with a floor plan not unlike the Iron Age temple at 'Ain Dara (*ibid.*, 734-735). The main component of the plan was a double wall of orthostats surrounding what appeared to be an elongated *cella*. Furthermore, the interior wall is decorated with a long series of divine and mythical reliefs, in a typical “Syro-Hittite” compositional style, similar to Zincirli and Carchemish (*ibid.*, 736-737). More importantly, the reliefs were *in situ*.

3.7.2 Critique

The Syro-German project has brought the presence of significant Iron Age occupation on the tell beyond doubt, but dating the temple more precisely has been problematic. Surprisingly, no pottery was collected/reported throughout the recent excavations, which in turn raises concerns over the collection of faunal and botanical samples, which are so important for scientific dating and analysis (Kohlmeyer

personal communication). Like other “Syro-Hittite” projects (e.g. Ain Dara, Carchemish, Zincirli, Tell Halaf), the reliefs were the primary concern of the project (Khayyata and Kohlmeyer 2000; Kohlmeyer 2000). As a result, the only means available to date the temple is the unreliable analysis of artistic style. While there exist chronological schemes for the development of “Syro-Hittite” architecture and art, there is much controversy surrounding the accuracy of the sequence and absolute dates (§2.3.8). Hence, architectural and artistic styles were unable to provide a solution. Dating the epigraphic style of the Luwian inscriptions is reportedly being undertaken, though as yet no results have been published; they have been assigned a preliminary eleventh century BCE date based on conventional dating of the associated reliefs. This important temple would be an opportunity for modern scientific methods to help interpret and independently date material from the early Iron Age, but it appears this opportunity has not been taken.

3.8 Amuq Plain (Turkey)

3.8.1 Summary of Excavations

Between 1932 and 1938 the Oriental Institute (hereafter OI) of the University of Chicago undertook a survey of 178 mound sites throughout the Amuq Plain, including the adjacent Afrin and Kara Su Valleys (Braidwood 1937, 1). The survey lacked a comparative local ceramic sequence, one that could only be obtained through the excavation of carefully selected sites. While the result of this project was a long ceramic sequence for the Northern Levant, its primary design was for the prospection of archaeological sites, more specifically (as the project name “Syro-Hittite Expedition” suggests) the search for monumental Syro-Hittite architecture (Breasted 1933; McEwan 1937, 8; Yener 2000a, 1801; Yener *et al.* 2000a, 163).

The first site excavated within the OI Amuq Project was Chatal Höyük (Braidwood 1937, 37 - AS 167), located on the River Afrin in the north-east of the plain. In keeping with the original scope of the project, excavation here focused on the Iron Age strata (Albright 1935, 146). The second site excavated within the project was Tell Judeideh (Braidwood 1937, 37 - AS 176), which yielded an almost complete stratigraphic sequence from the Byzantine period back to the sixth millennium BCE and provided the main framework for the Amuq sequence (Braidwood 1937, 4-8).

Table 3.11: Correlation of OI Iron Age Excavations in Amuq Plain

Amuq Phase	Description	Dates	Tell Judeideh	Chatal Höyük	Tell Ta'yinat
U	Medieval Arab			I	
T	Byzantine			I	
S	Early Christian		I	?	
R	Roman		II	II	
Q	Hellenistic	300-64 BC	III	II	?
P	Syro-Hellenic	500-300 BC	III	II	?
O	Syro-Hittite	1000-500 BC	IV	III	I
N	Levanto-Helladic IV (Sub-Mycenaean)	1200-1000 BC	V	IV	II
M	Levanto-Mycenaean	1600-1200 BC	VI	V	
L	Qatna affinities	1800-1600 BC	VII		
K	Hama affinities	2000-1800 BC	VIII		
J	Chalciform pot series	2400-2000 BC	IX		
I	Smearred-wash pot series	2600-2400 BC	X		
H	Red-Black burnished pots (Early Dynastic affinities)	3100-2600 BC	XI		
G	Jemdet Nasr affinities	3500-3100 BC	XII		
F	Uruk affinities	4000-3500 BC	XIII		
E	Ubaid affinities	4500-4000 BC	?		
D	Derived Halaf and earliest Obeid affinities	4500 BC	?		
C	Developed primitive and true Halaf affinities	5000-4500 BC	XIV		
B	Developed primitive and first painted wares, etc...	pre-5000 BC	XIV		
A	Primitive burnished ware	?	XIV		

(After Haines 1971, 1; Cf. Braidwood 1937, 6-7; McEwan 1937, 10-11)

Following the initial focus of the project, excavations were extended in 1935 to include a site that had already provided evidence of important “Syro-Hittite” architecture (Albright 1936, 165; Haines 1971, 37). Tell Ta’yinat (Braidwood 1937, 33 - AS 126) incorporated a large low-lying mound surrounded by an extensive (c. 35 ha) Lower City (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, 171). Excavations focused on the “West Central Area” of the upper mound, with additional areas opened on the tell edge and Lower City, resulting in large horizontal exposures of (at least) five Iron Age “Building Periods” (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, Fig. 7.3; Haines 1971, 64-66). The significant corpus of “Syro-Hittite” architectural elements exposed includes *bit-hilani* buildings (palaces?), a *megaron* temple, a palatial structure of Assyrian provincial style, and massive city walls and gates (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, Figs 7.2-3).

Table 3.12: Tell Ta'yinat Building Phases (OI excavations)

Phase	Buildings	BCE
First	XIII (<i>hilani</i>); XIV <i>levelling</i>	875-825
Second	I & IV (2 <i>hilani</i>); II (<i>megaron</i>); VI; Gate XII <i>Ta'yinat greatest extent (35 ha)</i>	825-720
Third	IX (Assyrian palace); VI levelled	720-680
Fourth	I rebuilt; II abandoned	7 th cent.
Fifth	X; fragmentary	6 th cent.

(After Haines 1971, 64-66; cf. Harrison 2001a, 125-126)

Soundings under the Iron Age levels at Tell Ta'yinat revealed Early Bronze Age material, indicating a lengthy abandonment (a millennium?) of the site between the two periods (Harrison *et al.* 2004, 122). According to Woolley (1955, 398; also Yener 2005, 3), nearby Alalakh was occupied from the close of the Early Bronze Age until its destruction at the end of the Late Bronze Age, when political power in the region shifted back to Tell Ta'yinat.

The Oriental Institute excavations were prematurely terminated by the hostilities following withdrawal of the French Mandate and the creation of the Republic of Hatay, but were resumed in 1995 after a hiatus of fifty-seven years. The first four seasons of the Amuq Valley Regional Projects (AVRP) were devoted to a geo-archaeological study and surface survey of the basin area. In addition, salvage excavations were undertaken at a number of sites heavily damaged by modern farming, all of which exposed levels that pre-dated the Iron Age (e.g. Tell Kurdu AS94, Tell Atchana AS136). In co-operation with the AVRP, the University of Toronto has, in recent years, returned to Tell Ta'yinat to undertake an extensive surface and geo-magnetic survey of the site (1999-2002), as well as reinstate excavation of the upper mound in 2004 (Batiuk *et al.* 2005). Whilst it is still too early for the results of these seasons to be available, some preliminary reports have appeared in Turkish publications (e.g. Harrison *et al.* 2004; 2005; 2006).

3.8.2 Critique

Since the Braidwoods' (1960) publication of the prehistoric phases, the Amuq sequence has become a standard reference point for chronologies of the eastern Mediterranean despite the conspicuous lack of published Iron Age ceramics (Batiuk

et al. 2005, 171; Yener *et al.* 2000a, 165). According to the established sequence, Phases N-O relate to the Iron Age (Haines 1971, 1-2). The earliest of the three, Phase N is characterised by an abundance of painted ceramics, specifically Mycenaean III C:1. This phase was dated by Haines (*ibid*) to the beginning of the Iron I period based on the Aegean appearance of the painted designs; the sub-Mycenaean period was conventionally dated to the end of the second millennium BCE (McEwan 1937, 10). The Phase N-O transition is associated with a marked decrease in painted wares and the advent of Red-Slip which characterised the Amuq O period (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, 172; Haines 1971, 1, 64; Swift 1958, 124-126). Hence, the Phase N-O transition was assigned a tenth century BCE date on the presence of Red-Slip in Tell Ta'yinat Building Phase 1.

Drawing primarily on artifactual data from Tell Judeideh, Chatal Höyük and Tell Ta'yinat, Swift (1958, 139-141) proposed subdividing the Amuq Phase O into four stages, each coinciding with changes in surface treatment. Greek imports (which were abundant at Tell Ta'yinat during Amuq O - Boardman 1990, 174) and key historical events provided Swift with absolute dates (**Table 3.13**), though neither are particularly reliable (§2.5.3). Amuq P was dated via comparison with Nayrab and the Deve Höyük II cemetery; two poorly recorded and published sites that are conventionally dated to the sixth century BCE.

Table 3.13: Swift's Division of Amuq Phase O

Phase	Period	BCE	Surface	Imports
Oa	Iron IB	950-900	Hand burnish	
Ob	Iron IIA	900-800	Hand and wheel burnish	
Oc	Iron IIB	800-725	Wheel burnish	Attic Geometric
Od	Iron III	725-550	Wheel burnish	Corinthian Black-Figure Assyrian 'Palace Ware'

(After Swift 1958, 139-141, Tab. 11)

The structural remains at Tell Ta'yinat have been dated on the presence of Red-Slip to Phase O of the broader Amuq sequence, which is based on the Tell Judeideh sequence. The Judeideh sequence, however, has only been published as a generalised chronology and final publication of the pottery is still awaited (Braidwood 1937, 4-8). Relying on this sequence, which was "based on field observations only" (*ibid*, 4), remains problematic. More than 100 epigraphic finds at Tell Ta'yinat have also been

used to establish dates for the building periods. For instance, one Luwian text refers to *Halpa^{pa}-runta-a-s(a)*, possibly the same ruler who is listed as having paid tribute to Shalmeneser III in the mid-ninth century BCE (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, 173). Most of the Luwian inscriptions were found in the fill or foundation trenches of structures dating to the Second Building Period (Gelb 1939, 39-40; Haines 1971, 66); while this might place them stratigraphically in the First Building Period, the secondary contexts are not reliable. Nevertheless, they appear to indicate a ninth century date for the First Building Period (Haines 1971, 66; Harrison *et al.* 2004, 122-123). The Third Building Period was assigned to the late-eighth/early seventh century BCE, based on the presence of an inscribed Aramaic sherd from a floor deposit. This, in turn, suggested that the Second Building Period belonged to the eighth century BCE (Harrison 2001a, 129). The Fourth and Fifth Building Periods were dated to the sixth and seventh centuries BCE, respectively (*ibid.*). The current excavators have suggested that the site offers an opportunity to correlate archaeological remains with the historical record, but an independent means for dating the Amuq sequence needs to first be established (Batiuk *et al.* 2005, 172).

3.9 Arqa, Tell (Lebanon)

3.9.1 Summary of Excavations

During his nineteenth century *Mission to Phénicie*, Renan (1864) recognised the importance of Tell Arqa but did not excavate the site. In fact, the site was not the subject of serious archaeological prospection until Thalmann and Will's expedition began in 1972. This French project managed seven seasons of excavation in the following decade before work was postponed during the Lebanese civil war. Work finally recommenced in 1992 and has continued unabated (Thalmann 2006a, 2-3).

Tell Arqa has revealed evidence of sporadic occupation dating back to the sixth millennium BCE, with the earliest period of prosperity associated with the Early Bronze IV (**Table 3.14**). The Middle Bronze I is characterised by a warrior's tomb and large pottery workshop, and the Middle Bronze II by a large fortification wall (Thalmann 2006a, 44-45, 56). Following the urban prosperity of the Middle Bronze Age, Tell Arqa was little more than a small village for much of the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages (Chaaya 2000, 215ff).

Table 3.14: Stratigraphic sequence of Tell Arqa

Phase	Period	Level
A	Mamelouk	1
		2
B	Crusader	3
		4
C	Early Islamic	
D	Byzantine	5
		6
E	Roman Empire	
F	Hellenistic	7
		8
G	Iron III	9
H	Iron II	10
J	Iron I	
K	Late Bronze II-III	11
L	Late Bronze I	12
M	Middle Bronze II	13
N	Middle Bronze I	14
P	Early Bronze IV	15
		16
R	Early Bronze III	17

(After Thalmann 2006a, Fig. 3)

The Iron II period (Level 10) was characterised by a sanctuary and evidence of a cremation necropolis (*ibid*). Thalmann identified four main architectural sub-phases within Level 10 (**Table 3.15**). The Level 10 ceramics are essentially local forms; fine wares and imports are both rare (Chaaya 2000). Instead, the period is characterised by a large quantity of standardised amphorae, some of which bear a painted *lmk* inscription (Thalmann 1978b, Fig. 23). There is a clear break in ceramic traditions between Levels 10 and 9, with the latter being less standardised.

Table 3.15: Summary of Iron Age levels at Tell Arqa

Level	Period	Notes
10F	Iron II	Much fill
10E	Iron II	Inferior level, habitation
10CD	Iron II	Rampart constructed; houses re-used
10AB	Iron II	Superior level, funerary structures
<i>destruction layer attributed to Assyrian conquest (738 BCE)</i>		
9	Iron III	Poor architecture; many pits

(After Thalmann 1978a, 69)

3.9.2 Critique

The excavations at Tell Arqa are particularly important for the study of the IA-NL. The site is one of only a few Lebanese sites that have produced a significant amount of Iron Age pottery from mortuary and non-mortuary contexts alike (*ibid*, 71-89). This is also contrasted with the high number of Lebanese excavations that have uncovered poorly stratified mortuary contexts (S.V. Chapman 1972). When non-mortuary contexts have been encountered, they have been either excavated with poor stratigraphic control or with minimal exposure (e.g. Byblos, Bikai's Tyre trench – **Table 3.16**). The lack of a well-controlled stratigraphic sequence is keenly felt within the discipline, though Tell Arqa has published only minimal amounts of Iron Age pottery as yet.

Table 3.16: Summary of Archaeological Contexts on mid-Levantine littoral

Akhziv	Mortuary
Khirbet Silm	Mortuary
Tell Rachidieh	Mortuary
Tyre - Bikai	Limited exposure
Tyre - Chéhab	Mixed deposits
Tyre Al-Bass	Mortuary
Sidon	Limited exposure
Joya	Mortuary
Qraye	Mortuary
Qasmieh	Mortuary
Tambourit	Mortuary
Khalde	Mortuary
Byblos	Poor stratigraphy
Beirut	Limited Exposure

The Iron Age levels at Tell Arqa were dated by a single historical reference; an ash layer sealing Level 10 dated by Thalmann (1983, 217-218) and Chaaya (2000, 215) to the 738 BCE campaign of Tiglath-Pileser III. The evidence for this correlation is not archaeological, but historical. More objective and less circular means have not been employed, which is disappointing considering the potential this site holds for understanding mortuary and non-mortuary contexts. While an epigraphic study into the *lmlk* scripts has returned a mid-eighth century BCE date for the amphorae concerned, the results are not yet published (Thalmann *personal communication*).

3.10 Arslan Tash (Syria)

3.10.1 Summary of Excavations

A number of stone bas reliefs were removed from the site of Arslan Tash in the late nineteenth century and taken to the Istanbul Museum (Strommenger 1985a). A French expedition excavated the site from 1927 to 1929 exposing a number of Iron Age levels that have been dated between the ninth and fourth century BCE (*ibid*; Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931a; 1931b). In particular, the French exposed a large Iron Age palace, temple, small residential building (*bâtiment aux ivoires*), and city-wall (Strommenger 1985a). Three gates in the wall were guarded by large basalt lions, which have been dated on stylistic grounds to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (744-727 BCE) (*ibid*). The lions are considered examples of the less-grandiose Assyrian provincial style (F. Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931b, Pls III-VI). The palace follows a typical Assyrian plan, with courtyard, reception rooms, and an inner court for the royal family (Turner 1968, Pl. XVII). In a few rooms the excavators found the remains of horizontal friezes set two metres above the floor. The entrance to the Assyrian temple was protected by two large bull statues with inscriptions stating that Tiglath-Pileser III was lord of this temple of Ishtar (Strommenger 1985a, 330-332). A small building to the east of the palace was called ‘*le bâtiment aux ivoires*’ after the discovery of a hoard of ivories therein.

3.10.2 Critique

The publication of the Arslan Tash excavations did not include any ceramic material, plausibly because none was collected or recorded (Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931a; 1931b). Instead, the French archaeologists focused on a broad exposure of the site’s elite architecture and a study of the “provincial” Assyrian art. The exact manner by which the remains were dated is not clear, though Assyrian “history” appears to have played an important part. Once dated, the sculptures were arranged in a chronological sequence aimed at revealing the development of Assyrian art over time, which could then be used as a chronological tool. The final result, however, was a chronological sequence that was self-referencing. While Arslan Tash provides an important insight into Assyrian architecture and urban planning, very little information regarding the wider Iron Age can be gleaned from the confusing and inadequate excavation volumes (Thureau-Dangin *et al.* 1931a; 1931b).

3.11 ‘Athlit (Israel)

3.11.1 Summary of Excavations

Rock-hewn shaft-graves belonging to the Iron Age were exposed during excavation of the medieval seaport at ‘Athlit in the 1920s (Johns 1932, 41). Though containing mainly Persian period material, the graves would have been used over a long period of time for they contained artefacts that the excavators dated between the ninth and fourth century BCE (*ibid*). Furthermore, the cemetery was greatly disturbed and partially destroyed by the medieval builders who, themselves, remarked on strange artefacts and “a coinage unknown to us today” (*ibid*). No early Iron Age graves were found intact, nor any pots found complete, yet some fragments of Black-on-Red (*ibid*, 63, 82, 104), Red-Slip (*ibid*, 63, 84, 100) and Bichrome (*ibid*, 100) bear witness to the presence of an early Iron Age cemetery.

In all, fourteen chamber tombs were cleared during excavation (L7, L12, L13, L14, L16, L19, L20, L21, L21b, L22, L23, L24, L34, L35), incorporating over one hundred burials. Common material within the tombs included pottery, jewellery, and weapons (*ibid*, 49). While the cemetery suffered significant damage at the hands of the medieval castle-builders, most of the disturbance at the site has been attributed to the original users of the cemetery. Johns (*ibid*, 42-43) suggests that at certain, indeterminate intervals, tombs were re-opened for subsequent burials, which would disturb and mix all previous deposits. Furthermore, once a burial chamber was full or had collapsed, “burials were made in the shaft” (*ibid*, 58). Hence, some tombs displayed evidence of continued use spanning a number of centuries.

In 1932, the limits of the excavation were extended inland to include the medieval town. It was then that the remains of an ancient settlement were exposed, the earliest of which, according to Johns (1938, 137), pointed to a foundation within the seventh century BCE. Evidence for Iron Age occupation is somewhat limited and is represented by a few sherds of Black-on-Red, Red-Slip and Iron Age cooking-pots (Johns 1934, 149-151).

In addition to the Persian period shaft tombs, Johns (1938, 135-137) also exposed a small Iron Age cremation cemetery to the south-east of the tell. Situated on a sandstone ridge overlooking the promontory, the cremation cemetery contained at

least eighteen simple cremation burials, one grave with cremated remains in a cinerary urn, and a single inhumation burial (*ibid.*, 124). Johns (*ibid.*, 134-135) attributed the inhumation burial to the Persian period, though a number of mixed use cemeteries (inhumation and cremation) have since been excavated (e.g. Tell Rachidieh) suggesting that the two might have been contemporaneous. The cremation cemetery was dated by Johns (*ibid.*) to the seventh century BCE.

3.11.2 Critique

Considering the long period of use, the dating of individual burials within the “Persian” cemetery is particularly problematic. The excavator had to rely on superposition of materials, a difficult task considering the high level of disturbance. For instance, sherds from a single Red-Figure lekythos (Johns 1932, Pl. XXII.307) were found in the fill of three neighbouring shafts (L21, L21b, L23), while two coins, centuries apart in date, were found within centimetres of each other. As a result, the Persian cemetery cannot be precisely dated.

The cremation cemetery was dated by Johns (1938, 134) to the seventh century BCE on a review of the pottery and the presence of a single Egyptian steatite scarab. Haggi (2006, 48), on the other hand, contended that many of the vessels are indicative of a ninth-eighth century BCE date, suggesting a slightly earlier beginning for cremation at ‘Athlit. Haggi’s (2006, 48-49) argument was based on the presence of similar pottery at other cremation sites along the coast. However, Haggi’s comparison with Akhziv, al Mina, and Khalde was made with no assessment of their chronologies; none could be considered reliable.

Recent underwater excavations have dated the artificial harbour to the late-ninth or early-eighth century BCE, based on radiocarbon testing of a number of wood samples (Haggi 2006, 52). This suggests that the harbour was constructed at least 100 years earlier than the seventh century BCE date that Johns (1938, 137) proposed for the settlement’s foundation. The dates from the harbour, though, are essentially the dates for the felling of the timber, which conceivably could have occurred many years before their use in construction. Regardless, dating the harbour does not help date the cremation cemetery; Haggi’s criticism of Johns’ chronology appears to be based on her dating of the harbour. The chronology of ‘Athlit remains unresolved.



3.12 Beirut (Lebanon)

3.12.1 Summary of Excavations

Over the past century a number of excavations have explored Beirut's past, but the urban cover hindered progress; the tell had for centuries been covered by a large Crusader Castle. Widespread destruction and urban renewal associated with the Lebanese Civil War, however, has provided an opportunity to explore previously inaccessible areas (Badre 1997b, 1-45). Beginning in 1993, the Beirut Central District Archaeology Project (BCD) initiated the excavation of over 100 areas across Beirut, involving fourteen different foreign and local institutions.

Table 3.17: Summary of Published BCD Excavation Areas

Area	Location	Institution	Periods
Bey 001	S of Martyrs' Sq.	Lebanese University	H, RB
Bey 002	N of Martyrs' Sq.	IFAPO, Beirut	P, H, RB
Bey 003	Tell	AUB Museum	EB thru H
Bey 004	'Zone des Eglises'	Lebanese University	H, RB
Bey 006	Souks Area	AUB	H, RB
Bey 007	Souks Area	AUB/ACRE	LB, H, RB
Bey 008	Medieval Rampart	University of Amsterdam	H, RB
Bey 009	Banco di Roma	UNESCO/ DGA	RB
Bey 010	NE Souks Area	Université Libanaise	P, H, RB
Bey 011	Souks Area	Leiden University	H, RB
Bey 013	E edge of tell	Université Libanaise	LB thru H
Bey 020	E edge of tell	University of Tubingen AUB	LB thru H
Bey 024	'Place Debbas'	A-L Universität Freiburg Freie Universität Berlin	RB
Bey 027	S of Martyrs' Sq.	Université de Nice	EB, H, RB
Bey 045	SE of Souks Area	AUB/ACRE	H, RB
Bey 048	Martyrs' Sq.	IFAPO l'Université de Nice	H, RB
Bey 069	SW of Bey 027	Charles Univesity, Czech	H, RB

Key: EB=Early Bronze; LB=Late Bronze; P=Persian; H=Hellenistic; RB=Roman/Byz.

Prior to the BCD project, little was known about Iron Age Beirut – the few Iron Age discoveries were restricted to the Persian period (Finkbeiner and Sader 1997, 118). While the majority of BCD areas revealed an extensive classical and medieval city plan, the Bronze and Iron Age remains were exposed in only a few areas associated with the tell (**Table 3.17** - Curvers and Stuart 1997, 176; 1998-1999).

Excavation of the tell was undertaken for the purpose of answering the absence of Iron Age material (Badre 1997b, 12). The earliest human settlement on the tell dated to the Early Bronze III period, though architecturally the remains were fragmentary (Badre 1997b, 20). The Middle Bronze Age settlement is better represented, with its large defensive wall, monumental gateway and urban architecture. Of particular note is the Middle Bronze Age “silo” containing a small hoard of Middle Bronze Age material reminiscent of the “*dépôt d’offrandes*” of the Obelisks Temple at Byblos (Badre 1997b, 40); the architectural remains associated with this material have since been interpreted as the remains of a temple (Badre 2000a; Badre 2001-2002, 5-9). Sometime around the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age, the fortifications of Beirut were renewed by the construction of a glacis, a feature that continued to be used and renewed well into the Iron Age and Persian period. The Late Bronze Age is represented by a rock-cut chamber and a significant amount of local and imported pottery overlying the first phase of the glacis (Badre 1998, 73-79). The Late Bronze Age gate of the city, the outer gate, and stairway entrance to the upper city have also been preserved (Badre 1997b; Curvers 2001-2002; Curvers and Stuart 1997; Finkbeiner and Sader 1997; Karam 1997). A second, larger glacis (glacis II) is constructed sometime around the Bronze-Iron Age transition (Badre 1998, 79). This enormous mound of earth, which was heaped up in front of and above the earlier glacis and coated with unhewn stones, was exposed in a few excavation areas; Bey 032 (Curvers and Stuart 1997, 178-180), Bey 013 (Karam 1997), and Bey 020 (Finkbeiner 2001-2002, Finkbeiner and Sader 1997), both to the east (Curvers 2001-2002, Fig. 1). Overlying this glacis were various Iron Age occupational and destruction deposits, all containing significant amounts of pottery (Badre 1998). Sealing the burning and collapse levels of the last glacis, a large complete building was exposed. This building, with its well-dressed limestone blocks and series of storage rooms, forms part of a casemate wall protecting the Iron Age settlement (Badre 1997b, 76, Fig. 40b). The preliminary synthesis suggested that Iron Age Beirut consisted of a stronghold and Lower City surrounding the ancient harbour, with cemeteries to the south and west and an industrial area to the south-west (Curvers 2001-2002, Fig. 6). The Persian settlement of the fifth and fourth centuries was much more extensive and covers large areas of the promontory to the west and south of the tell (Curvers and Stuart 2004, 252; Finkbeiner 2001-2002, 29-30; Marquis 2004, 272).

On the whole, Bronze Age Beirut followed the general development of the region, namely the building of palaces, temples, and city-walls, all meant to express and protect the power and wealth that resided with the settlement's elite. The Amarna letters depict *biruta* as a city actively involved in trade relations of the eastern Mediterranean. Beirut's role in the Iron Age, however, seems to have diminished somewhat, as it is overshadowed by the prosperity of its neighbours; Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos.

Table 3.18: Stratigraphy Beirut tell

Period	Bey 003
EB	Fragmentary remains
MB	Fortification wall Monumental gate Urban settlement
MB-LB	Silo Foundation deposit Well glacis I
LB	4 ash lenses on glacis Rock-cut chamber
LB-Iron	glacis II
Iron Age	Ash layers Collapse Casemate wall
Persian	glacis continues Urban area expands S & W

(After Badre 1997b)

3.12.2 Critique

According to Badre (1998), the dates for Beirut's Late Bronze and Iron Age strata were based on ceramic data. The *terminus ante quem* date for the large Iron Age glacis II was established on ceramic data collected from the three destruction layers covering this feature (*ibid*, 79). The two earliest destruction deposits did not contain any imported material, and the local ceramic horizon was dated by the absence of Red-Slip (Badre 1997b, 32; 1998, 79). The third and final destruction level, however, was characterised by the appearance of local Red-Slip and imported pottery, primarily Cypriot Archaic I (*ibid*, 79). The following Iron Age phase, Badre's (1998, 80-81) "level of abandonment", was rich in ceramic material, but only the imported pottery was considered in detail: Badre offered a relatively precise provisional date

for this level (750-700 BCE). The final Iron Age phase, with its complete seven-room house plan and casemate wall, was again dated by Badre (1998, 82-83) on ceramic evidence: the local storage jars (which have a very wide distribution across the eastern Mediterranean and are not “local”), Red-Slip, and imported material suggested a mid-seventh century BCE date. It seems that despite her call to date local pottery by more independent means, such as radiocarbon, Badre (1998, 83) is unable to move her chronological framework beyond a reliance on Cypriot imports (§2.5.2).

3.13 Beth Shan, Tel (Israel)

3.13.1 Summary of Excavations

The American expedition to Beth Shan (1921-1933) was the first large scale excavation in the Southern Levant following World War I. The early seasons encountered mainly Medieval and Byzantine levels, and it was not until the third season of excavation (1923) that Iron Age deposits were reached. Three strata were attributed to the Iron Age (VI-IV) by the American archaeologists. Strata VI-IV incorporated a number of public buildings, including the so-called “Egyptian governor’s residence”, temples of Ashtaroth and Dagan, and the Stratum V administrative complex (Mazar 1993a, 216). Later seasons worked mainly in the Middle and Early Bronze Age levels. A number of tombs were discovered to the north of the site and were considered contemporary with Strata VII and VI (Mazar 1993a, 218; Oren 1973). Eleven tombs yielded anthropoid coffins of Egyptian tradition, though many archaeologists connect these with “Sea Peoples” (Mazar 1993a, 218; Wright 1959; *contra* Oren 1973, 142). The identification is complicated by the fact that the tombs were constructed in the Middle Bronze Age and were in secondary use when the anthropoid coffins were placed therein.

A team from Hebrew University initiated further work on the tell in 1983, with the aim of clarifying the early Iron Age sequence (Geva 1971). For the directors Yadin and Geva (1986, 1), Beth Shan held special importance for the study of early Israelite history. Consequently, they were primarily interested in the excavation of Strata VI-V, conventionally associated with the settlement of the Israelite tribes and the foundation of the United Monarchy (*ibid*).

A second Israeli expedition from Hebrew University, led by Mazar, returned to the site in 1989 and renewed investigation of the early Iron Age back to Early Bronze Age settlements (Mazar and Mullins 2006, 10-14). Despite opening eight trenches across the mound, Iron Age material was isolated in only Area S (Iron I) on the south-eastern area of the summit, and Area P (Iron II) on the western edge of the summit (*ibid*, Tables 1.1, 1.2). Apparently, the American excavations had removed the majority of the Iron Age deposits (Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2006, 173). Areas G and L, on the other hand, held evidence for Byzantine levels directly overlying Middle Bronze Age material; i.e. no Iron Age (Mazar 2006, 32). While this phenomenon is evidence for Byzantine builders clearing the top of the mound, Mazar (2001, 290-292) suggested it was evidence for the parochial nature of Beth Shan during the Late Bronze and Iron Ages.

Table 3.19: Correlation of Beth Shan strata

Period	American	Yadin/Geva	Mazar
Early Mediaeval	I		
Byzantine	II		
Roman	III		
Iron IIB	IV		P6-P7
Iron IIA	V-upper		P9-P8
Iron IB	V-lower	1-2	S1/P10
Iron IB	VI-upper	3	S2
Iron IA	VI-lower	4	S3
?	VII		
LB IIB	VIII		
LB IIA	IX		R1
LB IB	IX		R2
LB IA			R3
?	XA		R4
MB II	XB		R5
MB I	XI		R6
?	XII		R7
EB	XVI		
Chalcolithic	XVII		
Neolithic	XVIII		

(After Mazar 1993a, 215)

3.13.2 Critique

Despite considerable undertaking, the published results of the American excavations were disappointing: the Iron Age pottery and Northern Cemetery were published after a lengthy interval; only a small portion of material was included; the

architectural plans, being schematic, are largely incomprehensible; the relationship between architectural features is not always clear; and the ceramic material from some of the strata appears mixed (James 1966, 3, 21, 30, Fig. 73; Oren 1973). Consequently, the stratigraphic and chronological conclusions of James (1966) have been largely rejected and a call for re-examination issued; the primary point of contention was the dating of Strata V and IV (Geva 1971; Mazar 1993a, 219).

The monumental buildings of Stratum V-upper were destroyed and covered by a layer of ash, dated to the late-ninth century BCE by the American archaeologists (James 1966, 44). This was based on James' (*ibid*, 132, 154) eighth century BCE dating of Stratum IV, which relied on ceramic comparisons with Samaria and Megiddo, two sites not without their own stratigraphic problems (§2.5.4.3). Stratum IV was also sealed by an ash layer associated with the destruction of Beth Shan, attributed to Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 BCE (Mazar 2001, 289). Geva (1971, 7) pointed out that many of the ceramic forms that James used for comparison were poor chronological tools; some bowl forms experienced a long period of use at Megiddo and Samaria, and were not indicative of the eighth century BCE. Geva (1971, 9) instead suggested a seventh century BCE date for Stratum IV, subsequently implying that the Assyrian conquest had to be shifted to the Stratum V ash layer. But, Geva's (*ibid*) dates also relied on comparisons with Samaria and Megiddo, where a heavily fortified city was supposedly destroyed by the Assyrians and followed by the reconstruction of a more-modest city. This pattern was accepted because it correlated with how Geva *expected* an Assyrian conquest to manifest itself archaeologically; i.e. monumental, prosperous city attracted Assyrian interest, leading to destruction, and followed by a poorer habitation of the site. In the end, there was no direct archaeological evidence to support the chronology of either James or Geva.

Yadin's expedition to Beth Shan focused only on the early Iron Age, with the hope of clarifying the site's role in the establishment of an Israelite nation-state (Mazar 1993a, 215; Yadin and Geva 1986, 1). Indeed, Israeli nationalist sentiment was a significant driving force for much of Yadin's archaeological method and practice, leaving many of his conclusions influenced by uncritical use of the biblical record (Kletter 2006, 316). For instance, the "destruction" of Stratum V-lower was dated to the late-tenth century BCE because of parallels with Megiddo VA-IVB, which Yadin

interpreted as being conquered by Shishak in 926 BCE (Yadin and Geva 1986, 7). Yadin and Geva's short campaign excavated only a small area and revealed very little architecture. Hence, the few conclusions that were offered were extrapolated from small amounts of data.

Not long after Yadin and Geva's campaign, a third expedition was undertaken to Beth Shan. Amongst the objectives for this campaign was a desire to know the ethnic identity of those buried in the anthropoid coffins from the Northern Cemetery, and whether there was "any evidence for the presence of Philistines or other Sea Peoples at Beth Shan" (Mazar 1993b, 202). It is clear from such statements that the results of the latest expedition too were influenced by the historical narrative. Indeed, preliminary results have emphasised historical interpretations; David's tenth century BCE conquest, and the Assyrian destruction in 732 BCE (Mazar 1993a, 221; 2001, 289). Furthermore, the destruction of Area S Level 1 was interpreted as either belonging to the United Monarchy or Omride period; as if the history of the site cannot be considered outside of biblical history (Mazar 2006, 32).

3.14 Byblos (Lebanon)

3.14.1 Summary of Excavations

Investigations started at Byblos as long ago as 1860 when Renan (1864) began his study of ancient Phoenicia. Renan relocated ancient Byblos from its description in classical sources and made several soundings (even though the site was largely occupied by a modern village) (Joukowsky 1997, 391).

The first large scale excavation of the site was undertaken by the Egyptologist Montet, who had been attracted to the site by reports of Egyptian inscriptions and mythological legends. Montet's excavation focused on the so-called "tombs of the kings", where he found a decorated sarcophagus that has since been linked to Ahiiram, King of Byblos (Montet 1929, Pls 128-141). Once again, however, the overlying village restricted progress and Montet left after just five seasons. In 1926 Montet's former assistant, Maurice Dunand returned to the site for further excavation. This time, however, excavation was unhindered by land ownership disputes: the enlightened Director of Antiquities, the Emir Maurice Chéhab had resolved problems of private ownership and secured a large portion of the site for the

explicit purpose of archaeological investigation (Joukowsky 1997, 391). Dunand would continue to excavate at Byblos for nearly 50 years, exposing evidence of almost continuous occupation of the site since the Neolithic (Dunand 1973).

Located off the tell, to the immediate east of the monumental Achaemenid fortress, “Necropolis K” yielded a significant amount of Middle and Late Bronze Age material (Dunand 1973, 75). The small amounts of locally made Black-on-Red and Bichrome wares (Salles 1980, Pl. VIII.1-5) imply some continuation of use into the early first millennium BCE, though Salles (1980, 20-21) considers the necropolis was unused from the end of the Late Bronze Age until the Hellenistic period.

Despite the long history of French works at the site, and the many periods exposed, little has ever come to light regarding the Iron Age (Jidejian 1971, 57-59; Pritchard 1978, 10-11). In many areas of the site, the classical periods were directly superimposed upon Bronze Age levels (Dunand 1939a, 64, 79).

3.14.2 Critique

The publication of Montet’s expedition to Byblos (*Byblos et l’Égypte*, Montet 1928; 1929) is primarily a catalogue of finds; no attempt was made to relate them to the architecture or stratigraphy. The results of Dunand’s expedition seem little better. In an effort to record precisely the geometrical location of each object and architectural feature across the whole site, Dunand covered the entire headland with a grid of ten metre squares (though not all grid units were of uniform size!), with each square being dug by means of rigid horizontal layers (*levées*) 0.20 metres thick (Dunand 1973, 100). As logical as this method seemed to Dunand, it imposed an artificial stratigraphy onto the site and completely ignored the depositional formation of the site. Byblian stratigraphy, therefore, should be disregarded and all excavated material treated as unstratified. Without the provision of a meaningful stratigraphic sequence the objects are only isolated finds, and cannot be related to each other. Furthermore, despite nearly 50 years working at Byblos, Dunand’s publication is disappointing. To date only five volumes have been published (Dunand 1939a; 1939b; 1950; 1954; Cauvin 1968; see Lehmann 2002a, 122), with each presenting the objects in catalogue form with reference to their grid square and horizontal level. Dunand’s reports require a certain level of “re-excavation” to be of any value.

Chatal Hoyük (Turkey) - see 3.8 Amuq

3.15 Dan, Tel (Israel)

3.15.1 Summary of Excavations

Late in 1963, Yeivin conducted a brief exploratory excavation and uncovered remains from the Early and Middle Bronze and Iron Ages (Biran 1996c, 1). More extensive and permanent work began in 1966 when the site was threatened by military construction. The Tel Dan excavation has since become the longest ongoing excavation in Israel, continuing to this day (Biran 1994, 7).

The earliest Iron Age occupation was Dan VI, which was characterised by meagre architectural remains and stone-lined silo pits (Biran 1994, 126-128). Dan VI pottery was characterised by storage vessels and cooking-pots, all of which displayed strong continuity with Bronze Age ceramic traditions (*ibid*, 126), though there were no longer strong Cypro-Aegean influences evident (*ibid*, 128). Biran (*ibid*) interpreted the Dan VI “collared-rim” pithoi as representative of Israelite settlement, more specifically the tribe of Dan, which was conventionally dated to the early-twelfth century BCE. Hence, the ash layer upon which Dan VI was built was accepted as confirmation of the biblical account of Dan’s conquest of Canaanite Laish (Judges 18:27). Also belonging to the Iron Age, Dan V was encountered in all areas of the site and was characterised by more permanent settlement (stone-walls, plaster-floors, metallurgical activity). This stratum was sealed by a thick ash and rubble deposit, which Biran (*ibid*, 132) presumed to be evidence of destruction. While the rich ceramic assemblage of Dan V was a continuation of Dan VI culture, there was a marked shift towards smaller vessels (jugs, juglets, bowls, chalices, flasks, pyxides). Dan V pottery was used by Biran (*ibid*, 138, 141) to date the “destruction” to the mid-eleventh century BCE.

Despite the supposed destruction of Dan V, there was significant cultural continuity into Dan IV: the ceramic horizon was similar except for a decrease in large pithoi (*ibid*, 142). Dan IV had two sub-phases, the second of which (IVA) witnessed the appearance of Red-Slip, Bichrome and Black-on-Red pottery. Dan IV, and the remainder of the Iron Age, was dated on a combination of ceramic and historical data.

Table 3.20: Tel Dan Iron Age Chronology

Strata	Period	BCE
I	Iron II	late 8 th –early 6 th
<i>Assyrian conquest</i>		732 BCE
II	Iron II	mid 8 th
III	Iron II	9 th –early 8 th
IVA	Iron II	2 nd half 10 th –early 9 th
IVB	Iron I/II	2 nd half 11 th –1 st half 10 th
<i>ash layer = destruction?</i>		
V	Iron I	12 th –1 st half 11 th
VI	Iron I	12 th
<i>ash layer – destruction by tribe of Dan</i>		
VII	LB II	14 th –13 th

(After Biran 2002, Table 1.1)

The Dan excavations also yielded evidence of “public” precincts. On the southern slopes of the mound (Area A), two phases of Iron Age fortifications were exposed (Dan IV and III), complete with a large “piazza” and gate (Biran 1994, 235-254). It was there, in 1993, that a stele written in Aramaic was discovered in a secondary context (*ibid*, 275-278). The text of this monument included the phrase “*byt dwd*” (house of David), the first extra-biblical reference to King David (Biran 2002, 6). Also uncovered in Area A were three successive buildings associated with the Iron Age *hussot* (“piazza”), all of which belonged to the Iron II ceramic horizon (Biran 1994; 235-254; 1999). On the northern side of the mound a “sacred precinct” was exposed, the main feature being the large *bamah*, or high place (Biran 1982; 1994, 159-234). Also found in association with this structure was a horned altar and three storerooms full of decorated jugs, bowls and pithoi.

3.15.2 Critique

According to Biran (1994, 128) the destruction of the Late Bronze Age settlement at Dan was attributable to the Israelite tribe of Dan. This interpretation ignores the strong continuity of culture that persisted between Dan VII and VI. Instead, the appearance of “collared-rim” pithoi suggested to Biran (1989a) the settlement of the Israelites. While these vessels have traditionally been associated with the Israelites (Albright 1937, 25; Biran 1989a; 1993; Esse 1992), recent finds of “collared-rim” pithoi outside conventional Israelite areas (e.g. Tel Nami – Artzy 1994) has brought

the association into question (London 2003, 148-149). The archaeology does not suggest the presence of a new population in Dan VI. In a reversal of this methodology, Biran (1994, 125) accepts the Dan V-IV continuity as representing no change in population, despite the presence of a “destruction” level in-between. Clearly, the biblical narrative was the key interpretative tool that Biran used to decipher Dan, as he himself indicates:

When we began the rescue excavation of Tel Dan, we wondered whether archaeological evidence would introduce a new objective element into the discussion [on when the tribe of Dan conquered and settled Laish], and help resolve the issue. A datable conflagration layer could, for example, relate to the account in Judges 18:27 if taken literally... We hoped for tangible evidence from the excavation to determine a date for the settlement of the tribe. (Biran 1994, 125).

The circularity of this approach is obvious: Biran hopes to find a datable destruction to support the biblical narrative, but the means he uses for dating that destruction is the biblical narrative - support for the Bible rests within the Bible. Disregard the biblical reference, and the destruction of Dan VI cannot be dated. Furthermore, the presentation of the material from the sacred precinct makes almost no reference to the site’s strata, but simply refers to the phases via biblical reference: e.g. time of Jereboam I, the Assyrian conflagration level, etc... (Biran 1994, 159-233). It is not clear from the publications exactly how the sacred precinct was dated, but it does appear to be based on *likely* correlations with the biblical narrative.

In addition to the two “destruction” layers already mentioned (Dan VII and V), Biran (1994, 260) identified another Iron Age “destruction”. A thick layer of ash sealing Dan II was attributed to the Assyrian campaigns of 732 BCE. Once again, interpretation was based on the historical narrative.

3.16 Deve Höyük (Turkey)

3.16.1 Summary of Excavations

The “more important” artefacts from Deve Höyük were purchased directly from the looters of the site, and in competition with the dealers of Aleppo (Moorey 1980, 3-4). Woolley and Lawrence were occasionally present to observe the looting, and did make some effort to record the general context of the burials, but the material was

being removed so quickly that they were able to make little more than passing observations (*ibid*). From the information at hand, Woolley (1914-1916, 116) was able to classify the pottery and objects into two distinct periods, both associated with mortuary remains. The earlier material appears to represent an Iron Age cremation cemetery (c. eighth or seventh century BCE), while the second phase is associated with a Persian inhumation cemetery (Moorey 1975; 1980, 4-10). Woolley and Lawrence were greatly interested in the Persian period material, at the expense of the cremation cemetery.

3.16.2 Critique

Considering how little information was available to Woolley, his conclusions, however tenuous, are admirable. The mixed nature of the material and the unscientific manner by which it was “excavated” means that Deve Höyük holds poor implications for the chronology of the region. The broad dates that Woolley (1914-1916, 127) does offer are based on Greek imports which provide unreliable dates (§2.5.3).

3.17 Ghassil, Tell el- (Lebanon)

3.17.1 Summary of Excavations

In 1956, the American University of Beirut began excavating Tell el-Ghassil, which was the first systematic excavation within the Beqa' Valley (Baramki 1961, 1964, 1966). The first four seasons focused on Area I, which uncovered the remains of a large temple complex. The next three seasons added Areas II and III; two habitation areas to the west and north-west of the temple (Joukowsky 1972, 42). During the 1970s excavation focused on Area III (Doumet-Serhal 1996, Fig. 7). While isolated, unstratified finds from the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age were found, it is only the Middle Bronze Age through to the Iron Age that were represented by stratified occupational deposits (Joukowsky 1972, vii).

One of the key objectives of this project was to study the development of the ceramic industry at the site throughout the millennium and a half of stratified occupation (*ibid*). A limited corpus of Iron I pottery was found in Area III (Levels 7-4/5) and Area I (Level 5). Joukowsky (*ibid*, 218-221) identified strong parallels for this

material in the Southern Levant, especially within the Iron I levels of Hazor and Megiddo. For the Iron II period, Tell el-Ghassil is the Beqa' Valley's sole representative: Areas III/II (Levels 4-1) and Area I (Levels 4-1). The Iron II pottery was compared with Sarepta and Tyre, with some parallels in cemetery I at Hama and Amuq O (*ibid*). Once again the closest parallels were with the Southern Levant, at Hazor and Megiddo; the principal indicators being cooking-pots, storage jars, Red-Slip bowls, and jugs (Marfoe 1998, 218).

3.17.2 Critique

The chronological framework at Tell el-Ghassil was constructed from "a thorough study of architectural deposits, pottery and other objects" (Joukowsky 1972, 197). In other words, absolute dates were assigned by comparison with other assemblages, with some effort being made to distinguish between misleading or debated chronologies and more-reliable stratified deposits. The site's affinity with the Southern Levant meant the closest parallels lay with the hotly-debated chronologies of Hazor, Megiddo and Samaria (§3.19; §3.28). Consequently, the chronology of Tell al Ghassil does not stand alone, and cannot be used for further chronological comparisons.

3.18 Hama (Syria)

3.18.1 Summary of Excavations

The tell of Hama was excavated in the 1930s by a Danish expedition. A large area of the mound was exposed and a sequence recorded that runs from as early as the Neolithic (Hama M) through to the Medieval Period (Hama A) (Buhl 1992). The remains of the Iron Age were discovered in Hama F and E. While the remains of Hama F were only fragmentary, Hama E contained a large "Royal Quarter" on the southeast part of the mound (Buhl 1992, Fig. HAM 01; Fugmann 1958, Fig. 185). The excavators equated this Iron II complex with the Aramaeans (Ingholt 1942, 472). This complex incorporated a towered gate (*Batiment I*), "palaces" (II and V), temple (III) and the enigmatic *Batiment IV*, originally interpreted by Ingholt (1940, 91) as a harem, then later as an official's residence (Ingholt 1942, 472), and afterwards by Fugmann (1958, 237-245) and Buhl (1992, 35) as a small gate, and by Ussishkin (1966) as a temple. These four buildings surrounded a large, open central-space with

a small sanctuary (Fugmann 1958, Pl. Ib). The architecture borrows many features from the “Syro-Hittite” tradition, the most obvious being the basalt lion orthostats (Fugmann 1958, 267-268). The use of these elite buildings ceased with a massive conflagration. As a result, this “destruction” level was dated to the 720 BCE campaign of Sargon II (Ingholt 1942, 472; §2.4.3). Despite the fact this interpretation has not been conclusively proven, the date of Hama E has influenced regional Iron Age chronology (e.g. Francis and Vickers 1985, 131).

Table 3.21: Correlation of Hama phases

Cem.	Tell	Features	BCE
I	F2		1200-1075
II	F1		1075-925
III	E2	Building I, II, III & V	925-800
IV	E1	Restore I-III, V	800-720
		<i>Assyrian destruction</i>	720
-	Area 10	Assyrian garrison	Ca. 715
		<i>Hiatus</i>	

(After Fugmann 1958, 275-277; Riis 1948)

In addition to excavations on the tell, smaller excavations throughout the courtyards and houses of the modern town surrounding the tell recovered more than 1100 cinerary urns (Riis 1948, 1-26). Grave goods were also abundant, though not particularly “rich” – of note is the ivory goblet with ram handle (Riis 1948, Fig. 230). This large cemetery was divided into four distinct phases of use throughout the Iron I and Iron II periods (Riis 1948, 202).

3.18.2 Critique

Fugmann’s (1958) publication of the Hama architecture makes it clear that the dating of the Hama strata relied on the historical narrative for this period:

Tandis qu’il n’a pas été possible de fixer avec certitude la date de la construction des différents bâtiments sur la base de la documentation qui nous a été fournie ici, il n’y a pas de doute que la destruction définitive de la citadelle a eu lieu en 720 BCE pour punir la ville de sa résistance contre Sargon II. (Fugmann 1958, 269)

(While it was not possible to fix with certainty the date of the construction of the various buildings on the basis of documentation, there is no doubt that the final destruction of the citadel took place in 720 BCE to punish the town for its resistance against Sargon II - translation mine)

Throughout his discussion of the Hama chronology, Fugmann (1958, 267-269) used a number of terms that suggested a cautionary approach to the material (e.g. *vraisemblablement*, *semblent*, *peut-être* and *environ*). One date that Fugmann considered to be beyond doubt was the Hama E “destruction”; however the date for this archaeological “event” is far from secure (§2.4.3). The final chronology was essentially an exercise in historical best-fit, despite apparent inconsistencies. For instance, by the start of the eighth century BCE, Hama was considerably weakened by ongoing Assyrian aggression, yet the king of Hamath and Lu’ash was strong enough to repel an attack by a local coalition including the kings of Damascus and Zincirli (as depicted in the Zakkur Stele found at Tell Afis – Klengel 1992, 210-215).

Another important date at Hama was that associated with the beginning of the Iron Age. Despite being unable to observe any difference in architectural traditions between Strata G (Late Bronze Age) and F (Iron Age), Fugmann (1958, 267, 274) believed, “*sans aucun doute*” (another definite term!), that Hama had been conquered c. 1200 BCE. Hama was supposedly settled by a new entity; one that was characterised by the use of iron weapons and tools, fibulae, painted ceramics, and the practice of cremation (Fugmann 1958, 275). Indeed, the appearance of what Ingholt (1942, 472) considered an essentially Aegean burial rite (cremation) confirmed for him the association of Hama F with the arrival of “Sea Peoples” and thus an early twelfth century BCE date. These conclusions are problematic. First, cremation is known in the Levant during the Late Bronze Age (§2.3.7). Second, painted ceramics, while present in Hama F, were much more common in Hama G and E. Third, while fibulae are associated with the Iron Age, they were not associated with the adoption of iron for utilitarian items; iron had been used for ornamental reasons since the third millennium BCE (Muhly 1980, 34-36). Finally, the presence of iron weapons and tools in Hama F is less significant than what Fugmann (1958, 275) suggests: while 25 weapons and tools were recovered from twelfth and eleventh century BCE contexts, they were swamped by the presence of bronze weapons and tools (Waldbaum 1978, 27-28, 44, Figs IV.3-4; Tab. IV.4). Moreover, the presence of iron tools and weapons in Hama F is exceptional; no other North Levantine site has produced significant examples. In the end, Fugmann and Ingholt dated the Hama G-F transition to 1200 BCE based on the historical narrative, and then proceeded to superimpose the evidence onto their interpretation.

In addition to assumptive correlations between historical and archaeological data, there is evidence of circular reasoning behind Hama's chronology. The presence of Cypriot and Greek imports in the Hama cemeteries were used to date the cemetery periods (Riis 1948, 114-115), though these same vessels were used to confirm the Cypriot and Greek chronologies (§2.5.2; §2.5.3). Consequently, there is no archaeological evidence to support the Hama chronology. There is also some doubt regarding practical aspects of excavation and recording at Hama (Dornemann 1997, 467): for instance, finds were sometimes recorded weekly, leaving much of the material without accurate contextual data (Thuesen 1988, 11).

3.19 Hazor (Israel)

3.19.1 Summary of Excavations

Garstang's short-lived work at Hazor included soundings on both the tell and lower mound, but his results were never published in detail (Ben Tor 1993a, 595). In 1955, work was recommenced on the lower and upper mounds where Yadin revealed the existence of 21 strata spanning 3000 years (Ben Tor 1997, 108). The lower mound revealed no evidence of Iron Age occupation and was completely destroyed or abandoned by the end of the Bronze Age (Yadin 1975, 129-145; cf. Zuckerman 2007a, 17, 23). In contrast, the upper mound which, according to Yadin (1975) and Ben Tor (1993a, 600), was also destroyed at the end of the Bronze Age preserved Iron Age occupation (Strata XII-III). Yadin dated this sequence by isolating key historical events within the archaeological record: e.g. the end of the Late Bronze Age is identified according to the presence of the "Israelite" destruction of the Canaanite city and dated on the presence of imported Mycenaean pottery (Ben Ami 2001, 148-150; Ben Tor 1993a, 600; Zuckerman 2007b, 621).

Ben Tor, one of Yadin's former area supervisors, returned to the site in 1990 with two primary objectives; to examine and reassess Yadin's stratigraphy and chronology, and to confront any problems left unresolved by the previous expedition (Ben Tor 1997, 110; Ben Tor and Ben Ami 1998, 2-3). Only preliminary reports have been published to date (e.g. Ben Ami 2001; 2006; Ben Tor 2004, 230).

Table 3.22: Stratigraphy of Iron Age Hazor

Str.	Period	Suggested Dates
II	Persian	4 th cent. BCE
III	Iron III	7 th
IV	Iron II	8 th
	<i>destruction</i>	732 BCE
V	Iron II	8 th
VI	Iron II	8 th
	<i>destruction</i>	810 BCE
VII	Iron II	9 th
VIII	Iron II	9 th
	<i>destruction</i>	880 BCE
IX	Iron I	Late-10 th /early-9 th
X	Iron I	Mid-10 th
XI	Iron I	11 th
XII	Iron I	12 th
	<i>destruction</i>	

(After Ben Tor 1993a, 606; 1997, 112)

3.19.2 Critique

Since Yadin's (1975, 143; *et al.* 1958, xix) self-proclaimed objective in excavation was the authentication of the biblical account, it is little wonder that he fulfilled his goal. According to Yadin (1975, 145), the thick ash deposit sealing the final phase of the impressive Late Bronze Age city was clear evidence for the violent destruction of Canaanite Hazor as depicted in the biblical text (Joshua 11) (cf. Ben Ami 2001, 148-150; Ben Tor 1993a, 603; Zuckerman 2007a). Yadin believed that the meagre Iron I re-occupation (Strata XII-XI) reflected a seasonal settlement for a semi-nomadic population, whom he identified with invading Israelites (Ben Ami 2001, 151). This historical correlation also provided Yadin with the absolute dates for the beginning of the Iron Age. There are, however, problems with Yadin's interpretation. First, Yadin's theory ignores significant continuity in material culture across the Bronze-Iron Age transition, which suggested no change in population. Second, Yadin's reasoning is circular – the archaeological record is used to support the biblical narrative, yet it is the biblical narrative that is used to interpret and date the archaeological record. Finally, Zuckerman (2007a, 17, 23) has pointed out that the Late Bronze Age destruction deposits were isolated and indicative of only a partial destruction of the site. Zuckerman (*ibid*) has instead suggested that the destruction of Canaanite Hazor was only an end product of a long, drawn-out process of social and

economic decline, and bears little resemblance to a mighty conquest as depicted in the biblical narrative.

In addition to the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition, Yadin distinguished three Iron Age “destruction” layers which he believed was caused by enemy conquest: Stratum IX by Ben-Hadad of Aram; Stratum VII by another Aramaean campaign under the leadership of Hazael; and Stratum VA by Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria (Ben Tor 1993a, 601; 1997, 112-113). By isolating the archaeological occurrence of historical events, Yadin (*et al.* 1960, xxii) was also assigning absolute dates to his stratigraphic sequence. For confirmation, Yadin drew upon comparative ceramic and architectural data from other sites, but his cross-referencing did not include an appraisal of those sites’ chronology. Of particular interest for Yadin was the six-chambered gate and casemate wall of Megiddo IV which had been attributed to Solomon and appeared to confirm the date of a similar gate and fortification at Hazor (Ben Tor 1993a, 601). However, the Solomonic interpretation of Megiddo has come under heavy fire in recent years (Finkelstein 1996a; 1996b; 1999a; 2000; Whitlam 1996; Whiting 2007a). Indeed, the Megiddo excavators relied on the very same biblical passage (1 Kings 9:15), as vague as it is, which Yadin employed at Hazor (§2.5.4.3).

His methodology aside, Yadin’s practice of archaeology has also come under scrutiny. In a comparison between architectural and ceramic material, Ben Tor (1997) has identified a lack of correlation between the two datasets, bringing Yadin’s whole chronological sequence into question.

Despite shortcomings in Yadin’s method and practice, the excavations at Hazor have significantly influenced contemporary Israeli archaeology, both through the dispersal of Yadin-trained archaeologists (i.e. A. Ben Tor, I. Dunayevsky, T. and M. Dothan, Y. Aharoni), and by way of the conclusions reached there. Yadin’s interpretation was widely-accepted and today remains an oft-celebrated correlation between biblical history and archaeology (e.g. Aharoni 1978, 178).

While the renewed excavations at Hazor began in 1990, a definitive interpretation of the site’s Iron Age history has yet to be produced. Nevertheless, a few conclusions have been offered by way of preliminary remarks. Ben Tor and Ben Ami (1998, 2) are aware of the special significance the site holds for the chronology debate in the

Southern Levant, yet appear to have focused on a verification of Yadin's conclusions. For instance, Ben Tor and Ben Ami (1998, 3-4) isolated a tenth century BCE architectural phase (Stratum IXa), based on the established dates of the surrounding strata. The underlying level was dated to the twelfth and eleventh centuries BCE because it contained pits that were widely equated with the settlement of the Israelite tribes, while the overlying levels were associated with the Stratum VIII (ninth century BCE) pillared building. The excavators appear to offer confirmation for Yadin's tenth century BCE chronology via an appeal to Yadin's chronology which, in turn, was dated via reference to the Solomonic six-chamber gateway. Once the current excavators confirmed the tenth century BCE date, the resulting chronology was used to confirm other anchor points in Yadin's chronology; i.e. the 880 BCE destruction of Stratum IX by the Aramaeans (Ben Tor and Ben Ami 1998, 11). The renewed excavations, however, have confirmed Yadin's conclusions (Ben Tor and Ben Ami 1998, 29).

3.20 Jerablus (Carchemish), Kefrik, Merj Khamis (Turkey)

3.20.1 Summary of Excavations

In 1876, the architect A. E. Henderson was the first to excavate the extensive ruins at Jerablus, undertaking the work on behalf of the British Museum while he was Consul at Aleppo (Hogarth 1909, 171). Six years prior, George Smith had also visited the site and reported a fine "Hittite" sculpture (Winstone 1990, 26-7). Henderson's brief expedition recovered a small group of *in situ* monuments (Hogarth 1909, 171). These four orthostats, carved with Hittite-looking figures and motifs, were reminiscent of the "Hittite" monuments exposed at Zincirli, where they were part of a ceremonial approach to a large *hilani* palace. The abundance of the "Hittite" monuments at Zincirli was incentive enough for the British Museum to initiate a return to the site in 1911 for a more intensive excavation. Hogarth's first season was noted for its confusion, squabbling, and paucity of finds, as well as bringing the ownership of the mound into question (Winstone 1990, 26-32). The situation improved only marginally with a change of director: Woolley and Lawrence waged battles with their workers and servants, their German neighbours, and the local Turkish officials (*ibid*).

Evidence from the Jerablus mound bears witness to occupation that extends back into the Neolithic (Hawkins 1976-1980, 435). It was during the Late Bronze Age, however, that the city became an important centre of the Hittite Empire, before reaching its apogee in the Iron Age. The British expedition uncovered substantial remains of the Iron Age at Jerablus, including defensive structures, temples, palaces, a monumental processional way, and numerous basalt statues and reliefs with Luwian hieroglyphic inscriptions (see Woolley 1921a; 1952).

The Iron Age pottery from Jerablus (Carchemish) and associated cemeteries is characterised by painted kraters and urns. The majority of these vessels, which show an astonishing variety of decoration, were used as cinerary urns in the Yunus cemetery (Woolley 1939b). Decorative motifs were usually geometric in form; the few bird and animal motifs are reminiscent of late Iron Age Phrygian designs (cf. Akurgal 1955, Figs. 1-9; Woolley 1952, 234ff). Red-Slip bowls and trefoil-lip jugs were also prominent (*ibid*). The main Iron Age cemetery was the Yunus cremation cemetery to the immediate north of the site, where an Islamic cemetery left very little room for excavation. Nevertheless, the scattered sherds of Iron Age pottery drew attention to the presence of over 150 Iron Age graves (Woolley 1939b, 13). Another contemporary cemetery was also identified outside the west gate of the outer city-wall, but it lay beyond the expedition permit. According to Woolley (1939b, 14), the Yunus cinerary urns were almost always “of a uniform general type, differing from one another only in such details as whether they [had] handles or no handles, ring bases or flat bottoms”. The cinerary urns were also covered by either an upturned bath or upturned pot (bowl or krater), presumably to prevent the infiltration of soil.

An additional two Iron Age cemeteries were identified in the vicinity of Jerablus. Little has been recorded regarding the specific context of these sites, but they appear to closely parallel the Yunus material (Moorey 1980, 146). The first is a cremation “tomb group” from Kefrik, a small village 15 km west of Jerablus (*ibid*). This tomb was not systematically investigated and the material only assigned a general Iron Age date, though Moorey (*ibid*) suggests it is remarkably similar to the Deve Höyük cremation cemetery. The second, Merj Khamis, is a small cemetery 6 km to the north that was excavated as part of the British Expedition (Woolley 1939b, 12), though the results were disappointing. By the time the British team began work, over 30 Iron

Age burials had been plundered (*ibid*). Woolley and Lawrence excavated eight intact graves, of which only one produced a complete vessel. It was clear from what did remain, however, that this was another cremation cemetery of the Iron Age, more or less contemporary with Deve Höyük I and the Yunus cemetery (Woolley 1939b, 20).

3.20.2 Critique

The publication of Carchemish, which was completed a number of years after excavation, focused on the architecture and sculptural remains of the site (Woolley 1921a; 1952). Little attention was given to the pottery and small finds, and the inadequately published stratigraphy appears poorly understood (Hawkins 1976-1980, 435). The published plans of the site are neither thorough nor cohesive; the British project evidently lacked the architectural experience of other projects; when Gertrude Bell visited Carchemish, fresh from an admiring visit to the German projects at Babylon and Assur, she accused her compatriots of “prehistoric methods” (Winstone 1990, 33). But it appears that archaeological method and practice may not have been of primary concern for Woolley and Lawrence; a number of theories still circulate suggesting the British presence at Jerablus was primarily for military purposes (Winstone 1990, 48, 56).

When Hogarth and Woolley excavated the site, they were particularly interested in finding archaeological evidence confirming “Hittite” presence in the area (Woolley 1952, 227). To this end, Woolley accepted Hogarth’s preliminary dating of the site and tried to associate a number of reliefs with the Late Bronze Age. For instance, the reliefs of the “Water Gate” were assigned to the “Middle Hittite Period”, “not later in date than the thirteenth century B.C., and, perhaps, considerably earlier than that” (Woolley 1921a, 110). Later scholarship has firmly disagreed, as summarised by Mallowan:

The chronology and sequence dating of the rich series of sculptures discovered at Carchemish remains a problem, even after 60 years of investigation, but it is generally recognised that Leonard Woolley exaggerated the antiquity of some of the orthostats and it is no longer possible to assign any of them to the second millennium B.C. On the contrary, many critics will now support Frankfort’s view that none of this particular series of sculptures could have been executed without an awareness of Neo-Assyrian art (Mallowan 1972, 63).

In the end, the site's stratigraphy and architectural sequence has been brought into question and cannot be relied upon to aid interpretation of the site's material culture.

Woolley also perceived two distinct ceramic phases associated with the Iron Age city; the styles were named after their two type sites, Amarna and Yunus. The Yunus pottery was associated with the construction of the temple complex and was dated by Woolley (1952, 167-175) to the "Late Hittite Period", or Iron Age. The Amarna style was dated to the Late Bronze Age, via reference to the "Sea Peoples" destruction of Carchemish mentioned in Egyptian texts (J.A. Wilson 1969a, 262; Woolley 1952, 226, 235). Working from the historical narrative, which emphasised change between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages, Woolley (1952, 235) then placed the main cultural break (the shift from Amarna to Yunus pottery) around 1200 BCE, though he did admit that the two ceramic styles overlapped. Clearly, Woolley's interpretation of the Carchemish pottery was influenced by the historical narrative rather than a close analysis of the site's stratigraphy.

3.21 Jezreel, Tel (Israel)

3.21.1 Summary of Excavations

The earliest excavations at Tel Jezreel, ignoring those inadvertently undertaken by an over-keen construction company, were two seasons of salvage work undertaken by the Israeli Department of Antiquities (Yogev 1988-1989). While it is clear that Iron Age remains were reached, little else regarding this campaign is known. The brief publication discussed only a few Iron Age sherds; notably a Judean handle stamped with royal *lmlk* impression (*ibid*). The site of Jezreel was associated with the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and it was for this reason that work recommenced in 1990 (Ussishkin and Woodhead 1992, 11; Williamson 1991). The new project was undertaken jointly by the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.

The main feature of the Iron Age strata at Tel Jezreel was the large, rectangular casemate enclosure (c. 145 x 250 m) with fortified gates, corner towers and excavated moat (Ussishkin and Woodhead 1997, Fig. 4). The walls were founded on bedrock suggesting the site was established in the Iron Age, though small amounts of Bronze Age pottery were located in the construction fills of the walls (Zimhoni

1997b, 29). In addition to the predominantly Iron Age pottery, very small amounts of Persian material were also present, though greatly disturbed by later construction.

3.21.2 Critique

The interpretation of Jezreel is critiqued in §2.5.4.4.

Judeideh, Tell (Turkey) - see 3.8 Amuq

3.22 Jurn Kabir, Tell (Syria)

3.22.1 Summary of Excavations

Work at Tell Jurn Kabir was part of the Tishrin Dam salvage project; chosen because of its known Iron Age material (Eidem and Putt 1999, 193). Excavation was aimed at supplementing earlier excavations in the region that had focused on monumental art and architecture to the detriment of ceramics; sites like Jerablus, Tell Ahmar and Arslan Tash (Eidem and Putt 1994; Eidem and Ackermann 1999, 309). Two additional Iron Age sites were excavated (Tell Qadahiye and Sandaliye) with the material from both sites similar to that of Tell Jurn Kabir (Eidem and Putt 1999, 193).

Phase IV represents the earliest occupation at Tell Jurn Kabir, but is only present on the higher part of the mound and consists of flimsy architectural remains. The few sherds found in this layer are similar to those from Phase III which covers the entire site (Eidem and Putt 1999, 194). The main feature of Phase III is a round enclosure wall surrounding the tell's summit (*ibid*, Fig. 2). The Phase III settlement was abandoned, and the site denuded, before the more ambitious construction schemes of Phase II were begun (*ibid*, 194-195). During Phase II, the foundations for two large buildings were laid on the acropolis, but were never fully completed (Eidem and Ackermann 1999, Fig. 2): Building II bears no traces of any superstructure, while the *bit hilani* Building I was partially back-filled with mud-brick. The casemate enclosure was rebuilt in Phase I, when a mud-brick fort-like structure was erected on top of Building II; the "fort" contained large quantities of "Neo-Assyrian" pottery.

Table 3.23: Tell Jurn Kabir Stratigraphic Phasing

Phase	Features	BCE	Ceramics
I	'Fort'	7 th century	Group C Neo-Assyrian
II	Ambitious/unfinished Buildings <i>abandonment</i>	9 th -8 th centuries	Group B
III	Large enclosure wall	11 th -10 th centuries	Group A
IV	Flimsy architecture	? - oldest	Little pottery

(After Eidem and Ackermann 1999)

Three Iron Age ceramic assemblages were identified at Tell Jurn Kabir. Assemblage C includes many Assyrian ceramic forms that are well-represented at other sites dated to the seventh and sixth centuries BCE (e.g. Tell Ahmar). Assemblage B was dated to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE based on parallels with Iron II levels at Tell Abou Danne, Hama and Tell Afis. Assemblage A, dated to the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE, was previously poorly represented in the Northern Levant.

3.22.2 Critique

The few published reports on Tell Jurn Kabir indicate that the stratigraphic sequence was assigned only broad dates. While the pottery holds parallels with the Northern Levant, no definitive chronology exists for the region. Tell Jurn Kabir pottery was compared with that from contexts no more secure than its own. While Eidem (1999a, 153) lamented that the historical framework for the region was poorly documented, he, too, used the historical narrative to date the sequence. For instance, Assemblage C, with its "Assyrian" cups and bottles, was consigned to the Iron Age III because it correlated with a strong Assyrian presence along the Euphrates (Eidem 1999a, 153; Eidem and Putt 1999, 195). A series of radiocarbon samples from Tell Jurn Kabir was analysed, but did not yield a coherent chronological scheme (Eidem and Putt 1999, 196).

3.23 Kamid el Loz (Lebanon)

3.23.1 Summary of Excavations

The first major excavation of Kamid el Loz began in 1963 under the direction of two German professors, R. Hachmann and A. Kuschke (Hachmann and Kuschke 1966, 7). The initial goal of the project was to investigate the pre-Hellenistic settlement of the entire Beqa' Valley; consequently, survey was a primary focus (Kuschke 1966; 1978; Marfoe 1995; 1998). Though Kuschke withdrew after only two years, Hachmann continued at the site until the invasion by Israel in 1982. Unfortunately, the close of excavations was followed by the illicit looting and destruction of the site. Bulldozers proceeded to turn the site upside-down in search of "treasure", destroying much of the early Iron Age deposits (Seeden 1989). It was not until 1997 that archaeological work could be resumed at the site, once again by a German team.

The period best-represented in Hachmann's (1989, 54-68) excavation was the Late Bronze Age, when an elite building complex crowned the site (**Table 3.24**). Within this complex lay a large Late Bronze Age temple, located next to a palace. The palace, however, could not be fully excavated as much of it lay under the modern cemetery. The 1973 campaign also exposed elements of another elite building, the so-called "*Schatzhaus*", or "Treasury", though the building was not really a treasury but received its name from the vast collection of objects found there (treasure house?); over 600 in total (Hachmann 1989, 97). The so-called "treasure" was really a rich collection of grave goods from burials placed within the building. The richness of the grave goods and the close proximity of the "*Schatzhaus*" to the palace were indicative of elite burials. When children were identified amongst the burials, Hachmann (1989, 37) concluded that these were "royal tombs" (i.e. inherited status). There is a strong Egyptian influence in the objects from these burials.

Three Iron Age building phases were distinguished on the tell, all of which were dated to the Iron I period (Hachmann 1989, 35). These were separated from the earlier elite buildings by an alluvial and sedimentary level, which suggested a period of abandonment (*ibid*). In comparison with the Late Bronze Age structures, the early Iron Age settlement was characterised by what Hachmann (1989, 54) called rural architecture. After the early Iron Age, Kamid el Loz was abandoned until the Persian period; excavation revealed part of a Persian cemetery that had been dug into early

Iron Age levels (Hachmann 1970b, 136). Excavation of the Persian cemetery uncovered a total of 94 graves, their use dated between the mid-fifth and early-fourth century BCE (Poppa 1978, 70). The Persian period settlement was not located.

Table 3.24: Hachmann's stratigraphy of Kamid el Loz

Phase	Level	Temple	Palace	Period	
1	1			Iron Age I	
	2				
	3				
2	4				
	5				
	6				
3	7				
	8				
4	9	T1	P1	LB I-IIB	
	10		P2		
5	11a	T2	P3		
	11b				
	11c				
	11/12	T3			P4
	12a				P5
	12b				
	13a				
13b					
13c					
6	14	T4			MB IIB

(After Hachmann 1989, 44)

Excavation at Kamid el Loz was resumed in 1997 under the direction of Heinz (2004; *et al.* 2001, 2004). Unlike the previous project, Heinz was interested in the entire site (not just the tell) and expanded the excavation areas to include the Hellenistic and Roman settlements. In 2002 work resumed on the Late Bronze Age palace and temple areas, yielding evidence of occupation back to the Early Bronze Age. Work on the pre-Roman levels of Area S on the east slope of the tell (Heinz *et al.* 2004, Fig. 3) documented evidence for the Iron Age; an Iron II residential area and a fortifying wall of the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition (Heinz *et al.* 2004, 102-105).

3.23.2 Critique

It had been decided beforehand that the excavation of Kamid el Loz by the Saarbrücken expedition was not to follow the “*Deutsche Bauschule*” method of

excavation, which focused on broad exposure of the architecture. Instead, Hachmann (1989, 27) envisaged the excavation at Kamid el Loz “as an ongoing discussion of the essence of culture-history and the character of cultural and historical processes”. While excavation technique was based on the Wheeler-Kenyon method, Hachmann’s interpretative emphasis was on broad cultural phases. The mixed method probably contributed to the discrepancies between his and Heinz’s interpretation. For instance, Hachmann (1989, 52) concluded that Kamid el Loz was a small unfortified rural settlement in the early Iron Age, yet Heinz (2004, 579-581) exposed a large fortification-wall from this period. Moreover, Heinz found evidence for Iron II occupation on the mound, contradicting Hachmann’s conclusion that Iron Age occupation was limited to the Iron I period. Heinz’s (*et al.* 2004, 103) means for dating her sequence, however, was based on pottery comparison with the debated Beth Shan sequence. A more objective, scientific method of dating needs to be applied before a definite sequence can be proposed for the Kamid el Loz Iron Age.

3.24 Kazel, Tell (Syria)

3.24.1 Summary of Excavations

Tell Kazel was surveyed in 1956, followed by limited excavation in the 1960s (Badre 1990a, 13). Preliminary results include a chronological sequence from the Middle Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period; the Persian period and Late Bronze Age were considered the most significant (Dunand and Saliby 1957; Dunand *et al.* 1964).

After an interval of 23 years, a joint Syro-Lebanese project resumed work in 1985; the purpose was to train Lebanese archaeologists unable to excavate in Lebanon due to civil war (Seeden 1990, 5). Four trenches were opened across the mound, three of which (Areas I, II and IV) yielded significant evidence for Iron Age occupation (excavation in Area III exposed mixed deposits and was quickly abandoned).

Expectations were that Area I, on the western half of the acropolis, would provide a complete stratigraphic sequence of the site (Badre 1990a, 14). Excavation recovered evidence for occupation from the Mamluk period back to the Late Bronze Age.

Table 3.25: Tell Kazel Area I stratigraphy

Str.	Period
1-1b	Islamic Medieval
2	Byzantine
3	Hellenistic
4	Late Persian
5	Early Persian/Iron III
6-13	Iron II
14	Iron I-II transition
15-16	Iron I

(After Badre 1990b)

Area II, on the tell's south-east corner, exposed a Hellenistic cemetery with Iron Age occupation underneath. Work continued here until it reached Late Bronze Age levels.

Table 3.26: Tell Kazel Area II stratigraphy

Str.	Period
1-2	Hellenistic-Roman cemetery
3	Iron III: pits
4	Iron II: pits and rural habitation
5	Iron I: occupation revival, solid mud-brick architecture <i>ash layer</i>
6a	Iron – LB transition: poor architectural remains
6b	Iron – LB transition: <i>residence de luxe</i>
7	Late Bronze (14 th century BCE)

(After Capet 2003, 117)

Area IV, on the western side of the tell, was intended to clarify the stratigraphy of the earlier excavation (Badre and Gubel 1999-2000, 136). What was uncovered, however, was a series of Late Bronze and early Iron Age structures that have been interpreted as a temple complex (*ibid*, 136-198). The cultic interpretation was based on the floor plan (5 x 15 m *cella*) and objects found therein (Badre 2000a, 39-42).

Table 3.27: Tell Kazel Area IV (temple) stratigraphy

Str.	Period	Comments
1-2	Mixed - Topsoil <i>area abandoned</i>	No Iron II - little Iron III
3	Iron I	Revival of <i>cella</i>
4	Iron I <i>70 cm ash 'destruction' deposit</i>	Poorly defined <i>cella</i>
5	Late Bronze II	Two-room temple
6	Late Bronze Age	Earliest <i>cella</i> , poorly defined

(After Badre and Gubel 1999-2000)

3.24.2 Critique

Apart from training, the objectives of the Lebanese excavations were focused on historical considerations: to test the identification of Tell Kazel with historical Simyra, and to illuminate the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition in light of understanding the invasion of the “Sea Peoples” (Badre 1990a, 14). The widespread ash layer overlying Late Bronze Age levels was interpreted as evidence for destruction by the “Sea Peoples” (Badre 2006, 93; Badre and Gubel 1999-2000, 127). This interpretation is based on the proximity of an ash layer to the Late Bronze Age levels. Furthermore, the Iron Age population of Tell Kazel was considered a derivative of the “Sea Peoples” due to the presence of the ash layer and Aegean-style pottery (Badre 1990a, 14; 2006, 93; Badre *et al.* 2005, 16, 36). Within the Iron Age sequence, the most significant date was the “destruction” of Simyra by Sargon II, which was associated with the ash layer of Area I Level 9 (Capet and Gubel 2000, 433). Clearly, the historical narrative was an important tool for understanding the archaeology at Tell Kazel.

3.25 Keisan, Tell (Israel)

3.25.1 Summary of Excavations

Garstang excavated the southeast slope of Tell Keisan in 1935 with a view to obtaining a complete stratigraphic sequence of the mound. Sixteen levels were recorded, extending from the Early Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period (Seton-Williams 1980, 382). After only two seasons the outbreak of war brought the project to a close. The results were published by Seton-Williams (1980) as a minor appendix to the monograph from the large-scale French expedition; with only a cursory discussion of stratigraphy and a total of four plates of ceramics. Nothing else has been published regarding the British project.

Table 3.28: Stratigraphy of Tell Keisan - British Expedition

Level	Period	Remains
I	Early Hellenistic	Rubble floor, plaster
II	Persian/Hellenistic	Plaster floor
III	Iron I	Floor and masonry wall
IV	Iron I	Floor and masonry wall
V	Iron I	Rubble floor
VI	Iron I	Plaster floor with pottery sherds
VII	LB-Iron I	Earth and lime floor
VIII	LB-Iron I	Rubble floor
IX	LB-Iron I	Possible floor?
X	LB-Iron I	Floor and kiln
XI	Late Bronze	Occupation level
XII	Late Bronze	Floor and wall
XIII	Late Bronze	Floor and masonry wall
XIV	Late Bronze	Floor and masonry wall
XV	Middle Bronze I & II	Great stone fortification wall

(After Seton-Williams 1980, 382; cf. Briend and Humbert 1980, Tab. 1)

The French expedition confirmed that settlement on the tell began sometime during the Early Bronze Age and continued into the Hellenistic period, though the French concentrated their efforts on the Late Bronze and Iron Ages (Humbert 1993, 862-864). While the Late Bronze Age city was poorly attested by Garstang, the French delineated an important Late Bronze-Iron Age transitional horizon (British Strata X-VII) characterised by Egyptian imports and Mycenaean IIIC pottery (Humbert 1993, 864). A large amount of carbonised material was found covering the final Late Bronze Age level, which the French associated with violent destruction by the “Sea Peoples” (Humbert 1993, 864). The Iron I levels (French Strata 12-9) at Tell Keisan are exceptionally thick (c. 3 m), and are culturally similar to Late Bronze Age traditions (Seton-Williams 1980, 385). A significant cultural break followed the “destruction” of Stratum 9, ushering in the poor and sporadic architecture of an impoverished Iron II settlement (Strata 8-6). The Iron I-II transition was dated by Briend and Humbert (1980, 27) to the beginning of the tenth century BCE, while Assyrian Palace-Ware was used to date Strata 5-4 to the seventh century BCE. The presence of Ionic and Rhodian imports of the sixth to second centuries BCE was the indication of Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Table 3.29: Stratigraphy of Tell Keisan - French Expedition

Period	Level	Dates	Structures	Ceramics
Persian	3a	450-380	Much destruction	Greek imports
	3b	580-450	Houses with reinforced corners	Ionian & Cypro-Archaic II imports
Iron IIC	4a	<i>destruction</i> 600-580	Houses with silos	Basket-handle amphorae
	4b	<i>destruction</i> 650-600	Large dry-brick constructions	Phoenician traditions
	5	720-650	Much destruction	Assyrian types (little Southern influence)
Iron IIB	6	<i>abandoned</i> 850-800	Occupation continues but short	Little material, reduced occupation End of Bichrome
	7	900-850	Occupation continues	
Iron IIA	8a	980-900	Modest reoccupation, then more significant	Black-on-Red
	8b			
	8c			
Iron IB	9a	<i>destruction</i> 980	Declining house repair	Pithoi & 'Philistine Bichrome' Appearance of Bichrome Continuation of 10a
	9b	1075-1050	Ashlar-masonry	
	9c			
Iron IA	10a	1100-1075	Modest occupation Dry-brick houses	'Philistine' & Mycenaean
	10b			
	11	<i>destruction?</i> ?-1100	Massive construction	No material
	12			

(After Briend and Humbert 1980, Tab. I, p. 27)

3.25.2 Critique

The construction and interpretation of the Iron Age sequence at Tell Keisan relied upon a number of assumptions: the literal reading of the ancient historical sources; the acceptance of conventional chronologies derived from the historical narrative; and uncritical comparisons with regional sequences that are less than secure. The result is a stratigraphic sequence that derives from the historical narrative, rather than archaeological investigation. Possibly aware of this, the excavators admit that the chronology is difficult to fix with any precision and, consequently, is prone to revision (Briend and Humbert 1980, 189, 229).

The end of the Late Bronze Age at Tell Keisan was dated according to conventional history. Despite strong cultural continuity across the Strata 13-12 transition, the French excavators declared Stratum 12 marked the settlement of a new population (Dever 1997a, 278). Archaeologically there is very little reason to support this change in population; conventional chronologies emphasise change at this point (Dever 1997a). The presence of a “destruction” layer between the Late Bronze and Iron Age strata was a beacon for those looking for datable contexts. The presence of “Philistine” Bichrome pottery and locally-made Mycenaean IIC vessels was accepted as archaeological confirmation for the presence of a new Aegean population associated with the “Sea Peoples” (Humbert 1993, 864-866). In contrast, the abundant Aegean influences evident in the Late Bronze Age (Stratum 13) were not linked to a new population. The historical narrative was also used to construct the chronological sequence for the rest of the Iron Age (e.g. Assyrian influence in the mid-eighth century BCE; conquest of the Akkar in 643 BCE – Humbert 1993, 866).

Additionally, the Tell Keisan stratigraphy was dated via comparison with other sites. While Briend and Humbert (1980, 177, 214) insisted that only secure regional sequences were used for comparison, a critical review of those sites would have invited caution. Comparison was also made with conventional Cypriot chronology, though it is not clear whether Gjerstad’s or Birmingham’s scheme was used (Humbert 1993, 867 - §2.5.2). Consequently, the Tell Keisan sequence relied on problematic Levantine dates and is ultimately not secure.

3.26 Khalde (Lebanon)

3.26.1 Summary of Excavations

Ruins of a Roman-Byzantine settlement have been known at Khalde since the nineteenth century, but it was not until 1960 that earlier material was identified (Saidah 1966, 53). It was during the measurement of the classical mosaics, being threatened by modern construction, that Kalayan uncovered a small collection of Iron Age pottery. Understanding the importance of finding *in situ* Iron Age pottery, a salvage excavation was organised (*ibid*). The ensuing excavation uncovered an extensive Iron Age cemetery. Archaeologists exposed two different types of burial at Khalde, inhumation and cremation. The funerary remains of 422 inhumations were

exposed, with the body usually placed directly on the ground between two rows of stones and surrounded by Iron Age pottery (Badre 1997a). Two cremation burials were also found in cinerary urns (Courbin 1993a, 105; Saidah 1966, 66-67). Two distinct phases of use were discerned within the mortuary material, which the excavator called Levels III and IV (Saidah 1966, 90). The earlier level (IV) was dated to the tenth and ninth centuries BCE, while Level III was assigned an eighth century BCE date (S.V. Chapman 1972, 181; Pritchard 1978, 33; Saidah 1966, 90; 1969, 130).

Table 3.30: Phases of Khalde Cemetery

Level	Tombs	BCE
III	1, 2, 3, 4, 121	10 th & 9 th cent.
IV	21, 22, 23, 165, 166, 167	8 th cent.

(After Saidah 1966, 90)

In addition to the Iron Age cemetery, excavation also revealed evidence of settlement in the Late Bronze Age and Late Chalcolithic periods (Saidah 1969, 130), though the material consisted of isolated, secondary finds.

3.26.2 Critique

The Khalde publication was not an extensive undertaking. The few preliminary reports that appeared were little more than a catalogue of finds, with very little contextual information provided for the tombs (e.g. Saidah 1966). Furthermore, the dating of the cemetery's two phases was apparently based on three Egyptian scarabs (Saidah 1966, Nos 3, 35, 36); the mortuary context of scarabs, however, makes their value for precise dating questionable. No ceramic typology was presented, and very few parallels were discussed. The Red-Slip jugs of Phase III were dated by comparison with Gjerstad's Cypriot chronology, the al Mina material, Megiddo, Hazor, and Athlit (Saidah 1966, 86-87): none of which can boast a securely dated sequence. Similarly, Phase IV is compared with Megiddo, Tell Abu Hawam, and Cyprus (Saidah 1966, 88-89). The proposed chronology for Khalde is not based on solid reasoning and independent data and can, therefore, only offer a broad indication.

3.27 Mastuma, Tell (Syria)

3.27.1 Summary of Excavations

A Japanese project began excavations at Tell Mastuma in 1980. The director, Egami, approached the site with two primary goals: to understand the complete stratigraphic sequence of the site; to understand the extent and nature of the Iron Age settlement crowning the tell (Egami and Masuda 1982, 26; Egami 1988, 51). The North Trench, situated at the highest point on the site, was excavated down to bedrock and revealed fourteen occupational levels, which were classified into three main periods: the Early Bronze IV (A), Middle Bronze (B) and Iron Ages (C) (Egami 1988, 51 - **Table 3.31**).

Table 3.31: Stratigraphy of North Trench, Tell Mastuma

Level	Phase	Period	Comparative
I	A	Iron Age	Hama E Mardikh VB
II III IV V	B	Middle Bronze I-II	Hama H Mardikh III
VI VII VIII IX X XI XII XIII XIV	C	Early Bronze IV A-B	Hama J Mardikh IIB

(After Egami 1988)

In the Central Area a large trench exposed the layout of the Iron Age city, revealing domestic buildings transected by a large street running along the edge of the tell (Wakita *et al.* 1995, Fig. 4; 2000, Fig. 4). “[B]uildings situated on the outside perimeter of the street were constructed as if longitudinal walls had radiated from the centre of the *tell*, while the walls within the street perimeter area oriented east to west” (Egami 1988, 52); the perimeter buildings had formed a defensive barrier for the upper mound. The extensive work in this area also helped refine the Iron Age stratigraphy; a revised chronology, which recognised some Persian material above Level I, was offered in 1995 (Wakita *et al.* 1995, 2 –**Table 3.32**). The Iron Age was subsequently split into three sub-phases, the lowest belonging to the Iron I.

Table 3.32: Stratigraphy of Central Trench, Tell Mastuma

Levels	Period	BCE
O	Persian	6 th –4 th cent
I-1	Iron II/III	9 th –6 th cent.
I-2		
I-3	Iron I	12 th –10 th cent.

(After Wakita *et al.* 1995, 2)

Excavation at Tell Mastuma was undertaken in unison with a regional survey of the site's environs (Egami 1983). The survey identified few Iron Age sites that were not already known (e.g. Tell Afis, Tell Tuqan) (Egami and Masuda 1984, 34, Pl. 1).

3.27.2 Critique

In the course of excavation, 4000 sq. m. of the Iron II settlement was exposed; i.e. about 40% of its total size (Wakita *et al.* 2000, 538). All of the buildings exposed were domestic in nature. Prior to this, domestic architecture of the IA-NL was a largely unexplored phenomenon (Braemer 1982 has a lack of Northern Levant data). Excavation of major sites had until then focused on the elite buildings of important regional centres (e.g. Zincirli, Hama, Tell Ahmar, Carchemish), or simply omitted information on domestic structures. The study of the Tell Mastuma domestic architecture was a significant achievement, made all the more remarkable considering the scarcity of comparable data (see Haines 1971).

In addition to a general lack of domestic parallels, little Iron Age pottery for the Aleppo region had been published. Unfortunately, the study of the Mastuma pottery was slow in coming; what would have been an important initiative for the study of the region's ceramics has been pre-empted by the publication of a number of comparable assemblages (e.g. Tell Afis). Moreover, the Tell Mastuma sequence was not securely dated; imported pottery was used to allocate absolute dates for the Iron Age settlement. Level I-1 was dated on the evidence of just two vessels (Wakita *et al.* 2000, 552): the first was a Cypriot-White-Painted III juglet dated according to Gjerstad's (1948) Cypriot chronology; the second was a "Phoenician" Red-Slip jug dated according to Lehmann's (1998) Assemblages 1 and 2 dates. Level I-2 was dated via two imported Greek *skyphoi*. However, Cypriot and Greek ceramics are not reliable chronological tools (§2.5.2; §2.5.3).

The dating of Level I-3 to the Iron I period is also problematic. Only nine ceramic vessels from this level were published (Egami and Masuda 1984, Pls. 6.7; 7.3; 8.2-4, 9, 13-14; Wakita *et al.* 1995, Fig. 7.9), none of which are characteristic of the Iron I period. Instead, the presence of a hole-mouth cooking-pot and deep pithoi with heavy rolled rims suggest a date in the Iron II period. The identification of an Iron I level was based on an increase in painted pottery compared to Level I-2, though statistics have not been published (Wakita *et al.* 1995, 19).

While the excavation of Tell Mastuma held much promise for the study of smaller, less important aspects of Iron Age life, the results have only appeared sporadically. Despite significant contributions to our understanding of domestic architecture, the ceramic material has not been published in any detail, and the Iron Age sequence was only dated on comparison with regional chronologies and itself cannot be relied upon.

3.28 Megiddo (Israel)

3.28.1 Summary of Excavations

Megiddo was first excavated by a German expedition, led by Schumacher, at the beginning of the twentieth century. In just three seasons, the tell was surveyed, a topographic map produced, and a 20 metre trench was excavated from north to south through the centre of the tell (Ussishkin 1997, 461). The publication of Schumacher's (1908) excavations has been widely criticised (e.g. Whiting 2007a, 27).

Excavation recommenced in 1925 with the OI commencing what was then the largest excavation in the Southern Levant (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a, 1). By the end of the campaign, some 14 years later, an almost continuous occupational sequence, from the Pre-Pottery Neolithic to the Persian period, had been compiled for the site (Aharoni *et al.* 1993, 1023). In the process, significant deposits of Iron Age occupation were exposed, including a palace, extensive fortifications, large gate complex and other enigmatic public buildings. Among the most important (and controversial) Iron Age structures are those that were associated with Solomon (e.g. "stables", six-chamber gate), and became celebrated cases for the archaeological authentication of the biblical text (e.g. Aharoni 1978, 197). The early seasons also

uncovered a considerable number of Bronze Age rock-cut tombs to the immediate east and south of the tell, some of which were dated to the Iron Age (Guy 1938, 159-160).

Table 3.33: Summary of OI Megiddo Sequence - Later Periods

Strata	BCE	Period	Character
I	600-350	Persian	Destroyed by Necho Domestic "Solomonic" Fragmentary, new orientation Destroyed by David Fragmentary, domestic
II	650-600	Iron III (Iron IIC)	
III	780-650	Iron III (Iron IIC)	
IV	1000-800	Iron II	
VA	1050-1000	Iron I	
VB			
VIA	1150-1100	early Iron I	
VIB			
VII	1350-1150	Late Bronze II	
VIII	1350-1150	Late Bronze I	

(After Loud 1948, 5)

A third expedition to Megiddo was undertaken by Yadin during the 1960s and 1970s. Having discovered a fortification system at Hazor similar to that from Megiddo, Yadin (1975, 207) sought to unravel the problems with Megiddo's tenth century BCE (Solomonic) stratigraphy. Yadin (1960, 64) hoped to find an indisputable example of Solomonic architecture, though the majority of his results remain unpublished and difficult to assess (Yadin 1972).

Table 3.34: Iron Age Megiddo - Correlation of 'OI' and Tel Aviv Strata

<i>Tel Aviv Excavations</i>		<i>OI Project</i>
	H3/H4	IVA
	H5	VA-IVB
		VB
F5		VIA
F6		VIB
		VIIA

(After Finkelstein *et al.* 2000, Table 11.1; Finkelstein *et al.* 2006)

The fourth expedition to Megiddo has been underway since 1992, when Finkelstein and Ussishkin initiated the Tel Aviv University Megiddo Expedition with three primary objectives: to resume excavation in previously dug areas intending to clarify stratigraphical problems; to open new areas for excavation using modern

archaeological technique; to supplement excavation with a comprehensive survey of the western Jezreel Valley, thus placing the site within its wider cultural context (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a, 5). To this end, five areas (F, G, H, J and K) were begun, with three yielding significant Iron Age deposits (Areas F, H and K) (**Table 3.34**).

3.28.2 Critique

The stratigraphy of Iron Age Megiddo is the focus of fierce scholarly dispute. This is due for some to the importance that these strata hold for modern Israel's claim to the land, and for the archaeological dating of Iron Age sequences across the eastern Mediterranean (§2.5). Consequently, the debate has maintained a high-profile and the issues well-known (for a review of current positions see Finkelstein 2005; Mazar 2005). Hence, the critique presented here is brief.

The stratigraphic phasing of Megiddo by the OI expedition was based on architectural remains (Loud 1948, 1). In fact, the original goal of the expedition was to expose each stratum in its entirety, in the hope that it would produce a complete and exhaustive history of occupation. Limited funding, however, necessitated the use of a large sondage trench for many periods, resulting in the insufficient exposure of architecture for the chosen stratigraphic method (*ibid*). Buildings and structures from the same stratum but different trenches could not be interrelated with one another. Furthermore, no attempt was made to understand the development of material culture over time. No ceramic typology was prepared, and each publication was intended to be “no more than a catalogue of the architecture and artefacts recovered” (Loud 1948, vii). Insufficiencies in method and practice were compounded by the frequent change of project director, who was expected to manage the large scale excavation and prepare publication proofs simultaneously (Esse and Harrison 2004, 3-5). Consequently, publication was slow and the application of archaeological practice inconsistent. In addition, new directors often revised the interpretation of previous directors (e.g. the Stratum III city gate was originally attributed to Stratum IV; Lamon 1948, 46).

The material culture from Strata VIA and VIB maintained a number of cultural conventions that had their origins in the Late Bronze Age, suggesting continuity of a Canaanite population (Lamon and Shipton 1939, 7). Rapid change in material culture

was witnessed in Stratum VB, which followed the “destruction” of the “Canaanite” Stratum VIA. Hence, the excavators attributed the “destruction” of Megiddo VIA to the campaigns of David as recounted in the biblical narrative. This interpretation, however, was not based on the archaeology but on the archaeology’s *apparent* confirmation of the biblical narrative; a circular argument. There was no reason to associate the Megiddo VIA “destruction” with David, except for a desire to link the biblical narrative with the archaeological data. Yadin (Aharoni *et al.* 1993, 1016) dated Stratum VB to the early-tenth century BCE. According to Yadin (1970), the cultural break between Strata VIA and VB signalled the beginning of the Israelite occupation of Megiddo. Stratum VA-IVB was then dated by its stratigraphic position above the early Israelite occupation (VB) and below the “Solomonic” buildings of Megiddo IVA (Franklin 2006, 95; Lamon & Shipton 1939, 59).

The attribution of Megiddo VA-IVB to Solomon was based on biblical references and circular reasoning (§2.5.4.3). The key chronological tool was the tenth century BCE Shoshenq stele, despite its insecure context (Lamon & Shipton 1939, 61). Another example of the historical narrative being used to overdetermine the archaeology is with Strata II, where an ash layer was attributed to the military campaign of Pharaoh Necho (c. 605 BCE), despite no archaeological evidence for the correlation (*ibid.*, 87). Consequently, Stratum I was dated to after Necho’s campaign but before the Hellenistic period; i.e. the Persian Period.

The dates for the Megiddo Iron Age strata were based on historical correlations that had no direct archaeological support (e.g. Lamon and Shipton 1939, 87). The interpretation of the poorly-defined and confused stratigraphic sequence was inconsistent. Nevertheless, Megiddo features prominently within Iron Age chronologies of the eastern Mediterranean.

3.29 Mina, al (Turkey)

3.29.1 Summary of Excavations

Woolley’s (1938a, 6; 1948) excavation of al Mina uncovered a series of occupational phases that he dated to the eighth century BCE and later. Although little architecture was discernible in the heavily-eroded tell, the site produced an uncharacteristically rich assemblage of Greek pottery (Woolley 1938a). The abundance of Geometric

pottery was accepted as an indication of a Greek “colony”, or *apoikia* (Boardman 1959; Riis 1970, 159), which in turn helped to explain the strong “Orientalising” nature of eighth century BCE Greek art (Niemeier 2001, 12-16). Woolley, however, was not able to locate the residential area of al Mina and preferred to interpret the exposed architecture as the remains of successive warehouses attached to a thriving trading post (du Plat Taylor 1959, 91).

Table 3.35: Original al Mina stratigraphy

Level	Dates	Ceramics
X-IX	750-700	Greek Sub-Geometric
VIII	700-675	Cypriot
VII	675-650	Cypriot & Rhodian Greek
VI-V	650-550	Rhodian “Orientalising”
<i>hiatus - clearing of site</i>		
IV	520-430	Black-figure; Red-figure

(After Woolley 1938a, 16ff)

Few architectural elements were identified in the earliest levels at al Mina (Woolley 1938a, 12). Level X, which rested on virgin soil, included an abundance of imported Geometric and sub-Geometric pottery (*ibid*, 16). While it was difficult to isolate architectural features belonging to Level IX, there was a noticeable shift in the ceramic horizon; the pottery was primarily of Cypriot influence, with few Greek imports (*ibid*). Change in ceramic culture between Levels IX and VIII was associated with the violent conquest of the site, either by the Assyrians (du Plat Taylor 1959, 87) or Asia Minor invaders (Woolley 1938a, 17-18). While Level VII witnessed another slight shift in ceramic horizon, it represented the reconstruction and continuation of Level VIII buildings (*ibid*, 18). The “destruction” of Level VII was linked to the Assyrian campaign to Tarsus in 696 BCE (Riis 1970, 159). Level VI was a replacement of the decayed Level VII buildings, but the two ceramic assemblages were difficult to separate. Level V was a continuation of Level VI, and coincided with the appearance of true Corinthian wares and the disappearance of Cypriot imports.

3.29.2 Critique

The absolute dating of the al Mina sequence is problematic. While a number of scholars have revised Woolley’s chronology (e.g. du Plat Taylor 1959; Robertson 1940; S. Smith 1942), there remains no single definitive scheme for the site. Much of

the debate arises over the earlier levels (X-V) and the dating of specific imported pottery styles (Woolley 1938a, 16ff). For instance, the foundation of Level X is associated with the presence of Sub-Geometric pottery, but the resulting dates for this style greatly vary: 750 BCE (Woolley 1938a, 16); 825 BCE (du Plat Taylor 1959, 85-86, 91-92), 800 BCE (S. Smith 1942, 91).

Table 3.36: Smith's revised al Mina stratigraphy

Level	Dates BCE	Imported Material
X	800?-760?	Sub-Geometric
IX-VIII	760?-680?	Cycladic. 'Early-Proto-Attic'
VII-V	680?-580?	Cycladic. Rhodian A. Proto-Corinthian
	<i>hiatus?</i>	
IV	520?-430	Black-figure, Red-figure.
III	430-375	Bell-kraters. Calyx-kraters
II	375-312	Macedonian, Seleucid, Ptolemaic coins

(After S. Smith 1942, 91)

At the time of both Woolley's (1938a) and Smith's (1942) publications the Iron Age chronology of Greece and Cyprus had not been systematised. In fact, scholars had held some hope that the al Mina sequence would establish a more definitive dating of Greek pottery (du Plat Taylor 1959, 62), the same pottery that was invariably used to date the al Mina sequence. We might wonder how Woolley and Smith arrived at their absolute dates, other than arbitrarily. Furthermore, du Plat Taylor's (1959) discussion of Levantine parallels for the al Mina Red-Slip and Bichrome wares introduced further circularity into the problem, since Gjerstad's Cypriot chronology was based on the same Levantine contexts (§2.5.2).

Table 3.37: du Plat Taylor's revised al Mina stratigraphy

Level	BCE
X-VIII	825-720
	<i>Assyrian destruction c. 720</i>
VII	Late 8 th cent.
VI-V	7 th cent

(After du Plat Taylor 1959, 85-86, 91-92)

Although an exact number is not known (the material has been dispersed throughout various collections), a minimum figure of c. 820 items of Greek provenance has been suggested by Boardman (1990, 172). This number, while according to Boardman (1990, 175) is a conservative estimate, leaves al Mina with the most significant

presence of Greek pottery in the region. Although neighbouring sites also produced collections of Greek pottery, their numbers constituted less than 5% of their overall ceramic corpus: at al Mina the figure was closer to 50% (though sampling strategies might account for the significant difference). Al Mina and its hinterland clearly had an exceptional record of Greek imports in the Geometric period (Levels X-VIII). However, this does not automatically indicate the presence of a Greek colony (as has been suggested – e.g. Boardman 1959), rather just very fluent Greek trade (Boardman, 1980, 42-43, 66-67). Indeed, Woolley (1938a, 11) regarded Levels X-VII as essentially the same town, and one that had no specific Greek character. It is more natural to compare al Mina's irregular houses and small blind alleys with those of neighbouring Ras Shamra/Ugarit (Lund 1986, Fig. 160; Riis 1970, Fig. 57; Schaeffer 1938, Fig. 2), than Greece. Al Mina was at home amongst the local traditions of the Northern Levant coast.

The destruction of Level VIII at al Mina was attributed to the later-eight century BCE, the period of Assyrian campaigning in the region. Hence, the “destruction” of al Mina VIII (du Plat Taylor 1959, 87; Riis 1960, 123-125) and VII (Riis 1970, 159) were attributed to Assyrian conquest. In the end, the interpretation of al Mina was undertaken through a historical interpretative framework, and assigned precise dates in an inconsistent and unreliable manner.

3.30 Mishrifeh, Tell (Syria)

3.30.1 Summary of Excavations

During the French Mandate, du Mesnil du Buisson investigated seven large excavation areas across Tell Mishrife (du Mesnil du Buisson 1926; 1927a; 1927b; 1928; 1930; 1935). The greatest exposure was on the northern part of the acropolis where a large Bronze Age palace, with an internal temple and high-place, was revealed (al Maqdissi *et al.* 2002a, 10). Excavation ceased after four seasons because of issues with land ownership (*ibid*); a modern village covered part of the site. Following the re-settlement of the village in the 1980s, the DGAM resumed excavations in 1994 by opening six trenches across the site: the Iron Age II and the Late, Middle and Early Bronze Ages were attested (*ibid*, 11). In 1999, project was enlarged to include Italian and German teams, with the overall aim being to

reconstruct “the history, cultural relations, and natural environment of this significant urban centre of Inner Syria” (*ibid*). A number of areas were opened (and re-opened) across the site. Level II of Area C, situated on the western slope of the central mound, exposed a large building, identified as an “Aramaeian” palace and dated to the eighth century BCE (al Maqdissi 2003, 225-235; al Maqdissi and Badawi 2002).

Table 3.38: Summary of Tell Mishrifeh Phases

Period	Area			
	C	G/H	J	K
Modern	I	1-4		0-1
<i>hiatus</i>				
Iron III			1-4	
Iron II	II	5	5-9	2-3
Iron I		6		4-9
<i>hiatus</i>				
Late Bronze	III	7		10-13
Middle Bronze	IV	8-9	10-16	
Early Bronze		10		

(After al Maqdissi *et al.* 2002b)

Areas G and H were located within the western and eastern (respectively) parts of the extensive Bronze Age palace, and were intended to re-evaluate du Mesnil du Buisson’s plan (Novák and Pfälzner 2002, 65-69). The two areas revealed a small Iron Age re-occupation of the palace area following its abandonment in the Late Bronze Age (Barro 2002, 119). Situated on the acropolis, Area J was aimed at producing a complete stratigraphic history of the site (Morandi Bonacossi 2002, 123). Periods exposed include the Middle Bronze Age, Iron Age II-III and modern, with a considerable hiatus in occupation corresponding to the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages (*ibid*). Area K was located in the northern Lower City, where the large Building 1 (Levels K8-4) was used for metallurgical, culinary, weaving, cultic, and domestic activities during the late Iron I (Luciani 2002, 167).

In 2003, the German team at Tell Mishrifeh, while excavating the Bronze Age palace, discovered an in-tact royal tomb within its foundations (www.qatna.org/en-index.html). This spectacular, once-in-a-lifetime find has since raised the profile of the site, and is set to greatly increase our understanding of ancient mortuary practice and belief systems of the Late Bronze Age.

3.30.2 Critique

The results from du Mesnil du Buisson's excavation are sporadic and unreliable, to say the least. His preliminary reports are difficult to follow, the pottery is only summarily presented, and no stratigraphy is apparent. The broad exposure of monumental architecture (e.g. the large Bronze Age palace) appears to have been an important motivation (du Mesnil du Buisson 1926, 311; 1927b, 298).

In the recent project, the Iron Age sequence of Area C (Level II) was dated to the late-eighth century BCE based on ceramic data. According to al Maqdissi and Badawi (2002, 34-35), the pottery from Level II was characteristic of local inland production of the Iron IIB period. While the pottery closely parallels that from Hama E, Tell Afis VIII, Tell Abou Danne IId-c, and Tell Mastuma I, the dates for these assemblages derived from one historical event – Sargon's destruction of Hama in 720 BCE (§2.4.3). The Hama E comparison also led al Maqdissi (2003) to label the Iron II palace as "Aramaean", despite the fact that Qatna is not mentioned in known Iron Age texts. The association of this building with an ethnic identity exemplifies the much-maligned culture-history paradigm (§4.3).

In Area J, the Iron Age sequence was divided into nine phases, broadly dated to the mid-ninth to early-seventh centuries BCE (Morandi Bonacossi 2002, 124-128, 141). The dates for this sequence were also based on Hama and Tell Afis parallels; despite the presence of Cypriot imports, Morandi-Bonacossi (*ibid*) resisted the use of the debated Cypriote chronology to refine the dates. The Area K sequence is also only broadly dated to the Iron I and Iron II periods, with no effort being made in publication to date these levels more precisely; though Bronze Age levels from the same area have been dated according to Cypriot imports (Luciani 2002, 151). The Italian branch of the Qatna project has applied only a cautious dating scheme for the Iron Age as they await scientific results.

3.31 Nayrab (Syria)

3.31.1 Summary of Excavations

Two seasons of excavation at Nayrab in Aleppo yielded finds from the Iron Age and Late Antiquity. The most significant finds (two funerary stelae with Aramaic

inscriptions) (**Figure 64**), however, were looted in 1891; the French project was a response to the damage being caused by illicit digging and encroaching dwellings.

The majority of the Iron Age material from Nayrab derives from a cemetery used during the late Iron Age, as suggested by a corpus of twenty-five Neo-Babylonian tablets (Abel and Barrois 1928, 187; P. Dhorme 1927). A remarkable variety of burial-type were attested, suggesting a period of use longer than the tablets suggest. Within one published plan (Abel and Barrois 1928, Pl. LII) five different types of inhumation are discernible: sarcophagus (Nos S1, 53); single pithos (Nos 12, 29); double-pithos (Nos 58, 67, 70); pit covered with torpedo-amphorae (Nos 4, 19, 40, 64, 68; see also Carriere & Barrois 1927, Fig. 3); and simple pit burial.

3.31.2 Critique

While the two preliminary reports do not provide a clear picture of the specific contexts, the few published section-drawings and plans offer some basic information on the stratigraphy. For instance, some section-drawings depict significant height (and time?) differences between certain burials, which might indicate an extended period of use for the cemetery (e.g. Carriere & Barrois 1927, Pls 33 & 34). Although the excavators dated some tomb groups to the Iron I period, no explanation was given as to how these dates were determined; possibly only because they predated the context of the Neo-Babylonian tablets (Abel and Barrois 1928, 187; Carrière and Barrois 1927, 129). Underneath the burials, the vestiges of mud-brick buildings testified to older installations, but they were left uninvestigated. The Nayrab chronology is confused and problematic.

3.32 Nebi Mend, Tell (Syria)

3.32.1 Summary of Excavations

The French expedition of Pézard initiated the first full-scale excavations of Tell Nebi Mend in the early 1920's (Pézard 1922; 1931). Following his death in 1923, the project was brought to an abrupt close. Nevertheless, in just two seasons, Pézard's legion of workmen had cut an enormous sondage into the tell's north-east corner; a feature clearly discernible on satellite imagery (Whincop 2007, Fig. 2).

A second expedition to the site was initiated in 1975 by University College London. The UCL-Tell Nebi Mend project was directed towards providing a reliably excavated stratigraphic sequence for the Northwest Levant (Parr 1983), but the renewed excavations were hindered by a modern village and cemetery. As a result, trenches were situated within “Pézard’s Cutting” and atop terraces on the tell’s northeast corner (Mathias and Parr 1989, Fig. 2).

3.32.2 Critique

Pézard’s (1931) large sondage was excavated the depth of the site with the aim of revealing a complete stratigraphic record of the site; Pézard established occupation throughout the second and first millennia BCE (*ibid*). No coherent plans were produced, however, nor were any detailed stratigraphic records kept by Pézard. Furthermore, broad phases were labelled according to historical ethnonyms (e.g. *niveau syro-phénicien*; *niveau syro-hitite*) and no absolute dates were imposed on the ill-defined sequence. Of the abundant ceramics and objects recovered, the stele of Seti I was the only item published in any detail (Pézard 1931, 18-22). A ceramic typology was not established and inter-site comparisons not undertaken. The fact that the final publication was prepared posthumously contributed to the confusion. Considering the limited area of excavation, disappointing publication and unspectacular results, it is not surprising that interest in the site waned. Only preliminary reports have been published from the UCL project; the author is involved in the final report for the Iron Age levels of Trench V.

3.33 Pella (Jordan)

3.33.1 Summary of Excavations

Apart from some preliminary expeditions to Pella in the 1950s and 1960s (Funk and Richardson 1958; R.H. Smith 1973), focused investigation of the site began in 1985. This American-Australian expedition recovered post-Iron Age material across most of the site, though Iron Age appeared in only Areas III and VIII (McNicoll *et al.* 1982a, 14). The earlier seasons (1979-1981) dated the Iron Age phases according to pottery form and ware (McNicoll *et al.* 1982a, 63). Radiocarbon samples were collected but the results never published (McNicoll 1982a, 15).

Table 3.39: Pella Iron Age phases 1979-1985

Area		BCE	Period
VIII	III		
9	I	1200-1000	Iron IA
8-7			Iron I
6	O	1000-900	Iron I-IIA
5			Iron IIA
			Iron IIC

(After R. H. Smith and Potts 1992)

According to Smith and Potts (1992, 83), Pella was destroyed during the Late Bronze Age, followed by lengthy abandonment and resettlement in the Iron I period. The Late Bronze-Iron Age transition was not marked by a distinctive break in material culture: architecturally or ceramically (*ibid*). The quality of architecture for the Iron Age was poor, suggestive of Iron Age Pella being only of secondary importance.

Following the dissolution of the American-Australian partnership in 1985, Sydney University continued excavation (Bourke 1997). New areas were opened, and Iron Age occupation was identified in four trenches (III, IV, XXIII, XXXII), including the exposure of a large Iron Age “Fortress Temple” built directly atop an even larger Bronze Age equivalent (Bourke *et al.* 2003, 344-353).

3.33.2 Critique

Despite comments regarding limited parallels for the Iron Age pottery at Pella (R. H. Smith and Potts 1992, 85), close parallels are evident at Beth Shan and Tel Rehov (Bourke *pers. comm.*): in particular, the cooking-wares, cult-stands, and storage jars. This earlier comment was due to a general lack in Iron Age ceramic material from the limited exposure of Iron Age deposits. The Sydney expedition has since recovered Iron I and Iron II pottery, leading to a re-interpretation of the Late Bronze and Iron Age history of the site (Table 3.40).

In particular, Phase Ia of Area III, which was originally dated to the Iron I period because it post-dated a major destruction level (“Sea Peoples” according to Potts *et al.* 1988, 136), has been reassigned to the Late Bronze Age by Bourke (1997, 113). However, Bourke’s reasoning is no different; he simply chose a different “destruction” layer for the Late Bronze Age collapse. In the end, the Late Bronze and

Iron Age levels at Pella were interpreted according to “destruction” best-fit (Bourke *et al.* 2003, 344-353).

Table 3.40: Pella Archaeological Horizons as Adjusted Post-1985

Stratum	Period	Excavation Area	Dates
I	Mameluke/Ottoman	IV, XXIII	AD 1500-1600
II	Ayyubid/Mameluke	III, IV, XVII, XXIII	AD 1200-1400
III	Abbasid	XXIX, XXIII	AD 750-1050
IV	Umayyad	III, IV, XXIII	AD 660-750
V	Byzantine	III, IV, XXII, XXXIV	AD 320-660
VI	Roman	III, IV, XXIII, XXXIV	60 BC-AD 320
VII	Hellenistic	III, IV, XXIII, XXVII	200-60 BC
VIII	Late Iron	III, IV, XXIII, XXXII	1000-600 BC
IX	Early Iron	III, IV, XXIII, XXXII	1200-1000 BC
X	Late Bronze Age	III, IV, XXXIV	1500-1200 BC
XI	Middle Bronze Age	III, IV, XXVIII	2000-1500 BC
XII	Early Bronze Age	III, IV, XXXII, XXXIV	3500-2000 BC
XIII	Chalcolithic	IV, XIV, XXXII	4500-3500 BC
XIV	Pottery Neolithic	IV, XXXII	5500-4500 BC
XV	Aceramic Neolithic	IV	-6500 BC

(After Bourke 1997, Tab. 1)

Only preliminary reports have been published from the Sydney project, with little Iron Age pottery presented in detail. While more recent campaigns have extended the archaeological investigation to include faunal and floral analyses, scientific analysis is broadly restricted to the description of what varieties of animal and plant are present in the archaeological context (Bourke *et al.* 1994, 1998, 2003).

3.34 Qarqur, Tell (Syria)

3.34.1 Summary of Excavations

Tell Qarqur was first excavated during the 1980s (Lundquist 1983). Work exposed Iron Age layers across the mound, including a large gateway on the southern slope (Dornemann 2003a, 10). The gate sealed deposits associated with Bronze Age city-walls. Following only two seasons of excavation, work was stopped, and a break of nine years passed before Dornemann resumed investigations. The primary objectives for the renewed excavations were fourfold: the development of the site’s settlement sequence; the size and nature of the settlement in different periods; the acquisition of a good sample of cultural materials; the collection of as complete a record as possible of palaeo-zoological and palaeo-botanical remains (*ibid.*, 3).

The renewed excavations made prudent use of earlier trenches, with work continuing on the Area A gate, exposing an internal street running north to the tell (*ibid*, 10-29). Though the gate was expected to be part of fortifications, no attached casemate wall was found (*ibid*, 20). Earlier excavations, however, revealed a portion of an Iron Age casemate wall in Area C, located on the western acropolis (*ibid*). Dornemann suspects the gateway might lead to an Iron Age citadel complex, like those at Hama (Fugmann 1958, Fig. 186), Tell Ta'yinat (Haines 1971, Pl. 109) and Zincirli (Koldewey 1898, Tf. 28), though there has not yet been any direct evidence for this. The Iron II period is well-represented; in addition to the Area A gateway, contemporary material has been excavated in Areas B, C, D and E, spanning both the upper and lower tells (Dornemann 2003a, 29). The stratigraphic sequence in Area B, on the eastern acropolis, provided an especially good sequence of Iron II pottery. The presence of Iron II pottery in the lower mound implies that Tell Qarqur was a large city in that period. Iron I material is also well-represented, though the architecture is fragmentary (*ibid*, 59). Apart from the important Iron Age settlement, Tell Qarqur boasts a long history of occupation.

Table 3.41: Summary of Tell Qarqur Stratigraphy

Stratum	Period
1	Mamluk
2	Ayyubid
3	Early Islamic
4	Byzantine
5	Roman
6	Hellenistic
7	Persian
8	Iron II
9	Iron I
10	Late Bronze
11	Middle Bronze II
12	End Early Bronze IV
13	Early Bronze IVB
14	Early Bronze IVA
15	Early Bronze III
16	Early Bronze II
17	Early Bronze I
18	Uruk
19	Chalcolithic
20	Neolithic

(After Dornemann 2003a, 10)

3.34.2 Critique

Iron II pottery is abundant at Tell Qarqur, and is characterised by Red-Slip platters and bowls (*ibid*, 41-47). Dornemann (*ibid*, 7), who has studied the OI Amuq sequence, suggested that pottery from Tell Ta'yinat's First and Second Building Phases closely parallels that from the Tell Qarqur gateway. In Area B, levels were reached that appear to belong to the early development of Red-Slip, tentatively dated by Dornemann (1999, 139) to the early-tenth century BCE (late Iron I). While some of the early Red-Slip forms continue into the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, they generally boast slips that are dark-brown and reddish-brown in colour, and only sometimes burnished. Dornemann (*ibid*) suggests these early slips are characteristic of Amuq Phase Oa, as defined by Swift (1958). This led Dornemann (2003a, 43) to conclude, although tentatively, that the tenth century BCE was an Iron I-II transitional period at Tell Qarqur, and one which he terms the Iron IC. The tenth century BCE pottery at Tell Qarqur has the potential to refine the internal divisions of the Iron Age in the Northern Levant. There was also a limited amount of Persian period pottery recovered, though the Iron III period is not represented (Dornemann's lack of an Iron III periodisation may complicate this point – *pers. comm*).

Despite 14 seasons of excavation at Tell Qarqur, few conclusions have been published. Indeed, Dornemann displays a level of measured caution that is uncustomary within the discipline. The introductory material in Tell Qarqur's lengthy preliminary reports ask many questions, none of which are decisively dealt with in the paper (Dornemann 1999; 2003a). But while some might view this cautious approach as a negative trait, it is clear that Dornemann is asking all the right questions. Obviously understanding the problems with the current periodisations, there appears to be an earnest desire on Dornemann's part to contribute something meaningful to the discipline, something the current data from Tell Qarqur is unable to do, as yet.

3.35 Rachidieh, Tell (Lebanon)

3.35.1 Summary of Excavations

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the curator of the Imperial Museum of Constantinople, Macridi-Bey, excavated the eastern slope of Tell Rachidieh where

the weak growth of mulberry trees implied the presence of significant sub-surface structures (Macridi Bey 1904a, 564-571). Indeed, seven tombs were excavated, yielding numerous cinerary urns belonging to the Iron Age (Pierre Bikai 1992b, 29). When French soldiers discovered four more tombs in 1942, Maurice Chéhab of the Lebanese Department of Antiquities returned for two seasons of excavation (BMB 1942-1943, 86). By 1943, over 100 cinerary urns had been recovered from Tell Rachidieh, but few made it into publication. In 1974, a salvage project returned to the site to excavate five more Iron Age tombs; these constitute the main corpus of published material to date (Doumet 1982; Doumet-Serhal 2004b, 72). According to Doumet-Serhal (*ibid*), cremation was the rule at Tell Rachidieh; nearly all the jars contained cremated human remains. However, Tell Rachidieh was not a true cremation *tophet*, like Tyre-al Bass, but the site of cremation-burials within an inhumation context (tomb).

3.35.2 Critique

Of the five tombs excavated in 1974, only two have been dated. Tomb IV was dated to the second quarter of the eighth century BCE based on the presence of Cypro-Geometric III and Cypro-Archaic I styles (Doumet 1982, 133). Other parallels discussed by Doumet (1982, 109-113) offered a wide-range of apparently contradictory dates. In the end, Doumet relied on Gjerstad's established chronology for Cyprus without any critical appraisal of its value (§2.5.2). Tomb V was dated to the fifth century BCE, based on comparisons with Lapp's Persian assemblage from Ta'anach (Doumet 1982, 135). Stratigraphic problems aside, Lapp's (1970) chronology was based on the conventional (but unreliable) dating of a Greek *kylix* and *lekythos* (§2.5.3).

Five kraters from Tell Rachidieh bore inscriptions epigraphically datable (Bordreuil 1982; 2004), though the context of three kraters is not known. The remaining two kraters were both recovered from Tomb IV, but the dates provided by the epigraphic evidence are not in accord with each other, or with Doumet's dates (Bordreuil 1982). In the end, a great many vessels recovered from Tell Rachidieh were removed with little or no attention given to context. While those that derive from the five tombs excavated in 1974 can be related to one another spatially, they are without secure

absolute dates. The Tell Rachidieh assemblage can contribute little to the chronology of the Iron Age.

3.36 Ras al Bassit (Syria)

3.36.1 Summary of Excavations

Excavation at Ras al Bassit has revealed a virtually uninterrupted occupation of the site from the Late Bronze Age to the Arab conquest of the seventh century AD (Courbin 1986). In the Late Bronze Age, Bassit was little more than an outpost of the great mercantile capital Ugarit. Towards the end of the Late Bronze Age the site was partly abandoned and burnt; an event associated by the excavator (Courbin 1990b, 503) with the arrival of the “Sea Peoples”. But, unlike Ugarit, which remained abandoned, Bassit was immediately reoccupied (Courbin 1983, 119).

Table 3.42: Stratigraphy of Ras al Bassit tell - Iron Age

Phase	Date	Period	Comments
1	11 th cent.	Early Iron I	Poor architecture
2	Cypro-Geometric I (11 th – 10 th cent.)	Iron IB	Permanent structures
3		Iron IIA	
4	Late 9 th cent.	Iron IIB	Incoherent domestic plans
4b	Mid 8 th cent.		Large walls
5	2 nd half 8 th cent.		Thick fortification wall
6	1 st half of 7 th cent.	Iron III	Dense population
7	2 nd half of 7 th cent.		Large ‘weaving’ building
8	1 st half of 6 th cent.		Increase in Greek imports
9	2 nd half of 6 th cent.		Strong Greek ‘presence’

(After Courbin 1986)

The modest structures of Phase 1 were again destroyed and replaced, but by larger houses (Courbin 1986, *passim*). The next two building phases (3 and 4) were characterised by a straight fortification wall of two metres width. By the next phase (5), characterised by a rampart, Greek imports were appearing, though the local pottery traditions still dominated (Perreault 1986, 149-150). By Phase 9 Greek imports began to equal that of the local products, which Courbin (1986, 196ff; 1974) suggests is indicative of the actual presence of Greeks at Bassit, living alongside the local population. The pottery from the tell included a good collection of burnished Red-Slip vessels (140 vessels of complete and incomplete profile), which Braemer

(1986) used to define the development of this surface treatment in the Northern Levant (Courbin 1986, 190).

Mortuary contexts were also attested at Bassit in two different areas: in the necropolis south-west of the tell; and on the tell itself (Courbin 1993a, 7). The necropolis, where 53 rock-cut chamber-tombs were excavated, was characterised by the exclusive use of cremation (Courbin 1990b, 507; 1993a, 115). The cremation burials, comparatively richer than the few *intramural* tombs, contained local and Cypriot pottery. Greek pottery, while abundant within the settlement, was completely absent from the necropolis (Courbin 1983, 120). The *intramural* burials, wherein the bodies were inserted into torpedo-amphorae, were relatively poor. The cremation burials were associated with bag-shaped amphorae (Courbin 1986 192). There appears to be a strong link between the necropolis at Ras al Bassit and the settlement that is not reflected in similar mixed-use cemeteries (e.g. Khalde, Tell Sukas; Courbin 1993a, 7). It is worth noting that the excavations at al Mina recovered no Iron Age tombs.

3.36.2 Critique

The French began excavating Ras al Bassit in the hope of understanding local elements of north-eastern Mediterranean culture (Courbin 1983, 119). Courbin's (1976, 63) focus on Greek influence at the site (Lagarce and Lagarce 2000, 140) and frequent use of Greco-centric terms (e.g. *l'époque 'archaïque'*), however, ensured that the local culture was viewed from an Aegean perspective (Courbin 1990b). Despite best intentions, the local elements of material culture were rarely discussed; instead the literature focused on Greek and Cypriot pottery (Courbin 1982a; 1990a; 1990b; 1993b). Indeed, Courbin discusses the same imported vessel again and again (e.g. Courbin 1973, Fig. 15; 1986, Fig. 24; 1993a, Pl. 15.2a). In contrast, the tell's local ceramic sequence has not been published in detail, with only Braemer's (1986) study of the Red-Slip pottery appearing (**Table 3.43**).

Courbin's preoccupation with the imported pottery resulted in a chronology dependent upon the unreliable chronologies of Cyprus and Greece. Moreover, Courbin (1986, 190; 1993a, 115) has not stated which Cypriot chronology he followed: Gjerstad and Birmingham differ significantly (§2.5.2). In a separate, but

related point, the absence of Greek pottery in the necropolis argues against Courbin's (1983, 120) permanent Greek settlement at Bassit.

Braemer's (1986) study of the Red-Slip pottery is the most exhaustive presentation of non-imported material from the tell. But while he isolated eight phases in the ware's development, Braemer's dates are without firm grounding. His comparison with other eastern Mediterranean sites was not a reliable chronological tool. Braemer's Red-Slip chronology is of particular importance for the Northern Levant (e.g. Cecchini 1998, 277; Mazzoni 1990a, 79), but the dates are unreliable.

Table 3.43: Chronology for Ras al Bassit Red-Slip

Period	Date	Assemb.
Iron IIA	800	A
Iron IIB	700	B
		C
		D
Iron III	650	E
	600	F
		G
	550	
	500	H

(After Braemer 1986, 246)

3.37 Ras Ibn Hani (Syria)

3.37.1 Summary of Excavations

Prior to excavation, there was general consensus that Ras Ibn Hani was founded in the Late Bronze Age by the king of Ugarit (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, 7-8). Hence, the aim of the Franco-Syrian project was twofold: to explore the reasons for the king of Ugarit building a city on the Ras Ibn Hani peninsula (*ibid*); to determine why Ras Ibn Hani was re-occupied in the Iron Age following destruction, when Ugarit was not (Courbin 1990b, 503). Excavation identified four main periods – Byzantine, Hellenistic (Bounni *et al.* 1981, 229-254), Iron Age, and the highly-anticipated Late Bronze Age (Bounni *et al.* 1976a, 237; 1998, 7-8).

Excavation began on the tell's south-east corner, the highest point of the site, with expectations of uncovering elite architectural remains: indeed, a large Late Bronze Age elite complex was exposed (Bounni *et al.* 1998, 3-4). However, the excavation of this "South Palace" was stopped for three reasons: the overburden of later periods hindered progress; exploration of the Late Bronze Age deposits would have destroyed the rare Iron I deposits (*ibid*); the walls of the palace were significantly disturbed (Bounni *et al.* 1978, 241-242). As a result, excavation shifted to the "North Palace", which was more readily accessible (Lagarce & Lagarce 1992). The "North Palace" was covered by a thick ash deposit, attributed by the excavators to a destruction of the site by the "Sea Peoples" (based on the presence of Mycenaean IIC pottery above the ash layer) (Bounni *et al.* 1978, 246, Fig. 28; 1979, 245; 1981, 254-271). A small archive of 130 tablets was found within the palaces, many of which were written in alphabetic Ugaritic (Bordreuil and Caquot 1979; Bordreuil and Pardee 1995, 29; Bounni *et al.* 1998, 91). The Iron Age strata have not been published in detail.

3.37.2 Critique

The published chronology for the excavated strata at Ras Ibn Hani was primarily interpreted by appeal to the historical narrative. In particular, the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition was dated to 1200 BCE based on the conventional dates for the "Sea Peoples" invasion (Bounni *et al.* 1998, 88). This interpretation assumed that the burning of the "North Palace" could be attributed to the "Sea Peoples", though the historicity of this "event" is not secure (§2.3.1). Furthermore, the destruction of the "North Palace" was not representative for the whole site; the "South Palace" witnessed only a partial fire following a period of abandonment (Bounni *et al.* 1998, 86). There was also remarkable cultural continuity (and therefore population) across the Late Bronze and early Iron Age strata, suggesting that the Myc. IIC pottery was not the result of a new Aegean population (Badre 1983, 206).

Dates for the Ras Ibn Hani chronology were also sought through Cypriot imports; Cypriot White-Slip III was used to date the "North Palace" destruction (Bounni *et al.* 1998, 85). A reliance on Cypriot chronology, however, is neither an independent nor reliable chronological tool (§2.5.2). Furthermore, the ceramic evidence for the last phase of the "North Palace" was extremely fragmentary. Comparatively little Iron

Age pottery has been published (Bounni *et al.* 1976a, 239, 242-245; 1978, 233-311; 1979, 245; 1981, 254-271), except for Cypriot imports of supposed chronological value (Bounni *et al.* 1978, 243). To further complicate matters, most of the Iron Age material comes from ill-defined contexts (Buhl 1983, 118; Lehmann 1996, 199).

3.38 Rehov, Tel (Israel)

3.38.1 Summary of Excavations

When in 1996 Mazar (1999a, 7ff) shifted his Jordan Valley Expedition from Beth Shan to Tel Rehov, he opened excavation areas across the lower (**Table 3.44**) and upper mounds (**Table 3.45**).

Table 3.44: Correlation of Tel Rehov lower mound strata

Period	BCE	Area D	Area C	Area E	Area F
Iron II	10 th /9 th cent.		1a	1a	1
Iron II	10 th /9 th cent.		1b	1b	2
Iron II	10 th cent.	1	2		3
Iron I/II	11 th /10 th cent.	2	3		4

(After Mazar 1999a, 9)

At least five Iron Age phases were isolated across the upper mound. Area B, on the northern slope of the upper mound, revealed the Iron Age fortifications of the acropolis.

Table 3.45: Stratigraphy of Tel Rehov acropolis

Area A	Area B	Main Features
1	1	Islamic remains, burials
2a		Assyrian period burial
2b	2	Post-732 BCE destruction
3	3	Construction of city wall
4	4	Pre-city wall settlement
5	5?	Late 9 th – early 8 th centuries BCE
	6?	Late 9 th – early 8 th centuries BCE

(After Mazar 1999a, 30)

Preliminary results indicate that Tel Rehov was at its greatest extent during the Late Bronze and early Iron Age, before significantly reducing in size by the Iron IIB period; indeed Mazar (2001, 292) has concluded that Tel Rehov was the main Canaanite city-state in the Beth Shan Valley during the second millennium BCE. According to the ceramic horizon at Tel Rehov, Canaanite traditions continue into

the Iron I, but change dramatically in the Iron II period when the painted tradition gives way to Red-Slip (Mazar 1999a, 38).

3.38.2 Critique

The excavation and interpretation of Tel Rehov has become a key point of contention in the on-going chronology debate in the Southern Levant (cf. Bruins *et al.* 2003a; 2003b; Finkelstein 2004; 2005; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2003a; 2003b, 2003c; 2006; Coldstream and Mazar 2003; Mazar 2000, 2004, 2005; Mazar and Carmi 2001). In summarising the chronology debate, Mazar suggests that only the tenth century BCE is in question; “At the two ends of the debated period stand incontrovertible well-dated assemblages” (Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 41). Yet, these “well-dated assemblages” are dated according to the historical narrative: i.e. Egyptian presence in the Southern Levant in the eleventh century BCE; ninth century BCE pottery from biblical Jezreel; Assyrian military campaigns in the late eighth century BCE.

According to the publications of Mazar and various co-authors (see above paragraph), Tel Rehov has made two significant contributions to the chronology debate: precise scientific dating and relative dating with Greek chronology (*ibid.*, 43ff). However, the radiocarbon sampling program from Tel Rehov has not proved decisive. The resulting dates have not been able to provide the hoped-for temporal clarity (cf. Bruins *et al.* 2003a; 2003b; Finkelstein 2004; Finkelstein and Piasezky 2003a; 2003b; 2003c; Mazar and Carmi 2001, 1337-1339). Furthermore, the dates are being used to support a history of the site that is derived from the historical narrative. For instance, the destruction of Stratum V is associated with the tenth century BCE campaign of Shishak, the destruction of Stratum IV with events following the end of the Omride Dynasty between 840-830 BCE (Jehu’s revolt, Shalmeneser III’s invasion, Aramaean wars), and Stratum III with the 732 BCE campaign of Tiglath-Pileser III (Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 31, 42). Ultimately, Tel Rehov has the historical narrative at the centre of its “Ladder of Time” (Mazar *et al.* 2005).

The excavations at Tel Rehov have produced 11 sherds of imported Greek pottery (Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 32-36; Mazar 2004, 24-25). While the importance of

this pottery is implied by the singular treatment given, exactly why it is important has not been discussed. One might expect that the scientific dating program from Tel Rehov may have been used to refine Greek chronology, but Mazar preferred to use the Greek pottery to confirm and refine the “already established” dates from Tel Rehov (Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 44-45); a practice characterised by circular argument (§2.5.3). “The Significance of the Greek sherds at Tel Rehov” appears to be that it confirms the site’s overall importance (*ibid*, 45-46). In other words, Tel Rehov is important because it has evidence of Greek imports. Contrary to Mazar’s acceptance of Greek chronology, Coldstream (2003, 251-252) has recently called on the Tel Rehov sequence to help refine Greek chronology; though he does tend to emphasise sites with historically-attested “destruction” levels (*ibid*, 255). Hence, Greek chronology ultimately rests upon the ability of archaeologists to date Iron Age strata according to the historical narrative.

3.39 Rifa’at, Tell (Syria)

3.39.1 Summary of Excavations

With only two short accounts in an obscure eastern European newspaper, the Czechoslovakian project to Tell Rifa’at is not well-known (Seton-Williams 1961, 68). In these articles, Hrozný discussed a large (23 x 30 m) Iron Age palace that incorporated “Syro-Hittite” architectural elements, but was only broadly dated to the first millennium BCE. No pottery from this palace was recorded.

British interest was drawn to Tell Rifa’at during the 1953 River Qoueiq (Seton-Williams 1961, 68). When excavation commenced in 1956, the British expedition exposed an interrupted occupational sequence stretching from the Roman period back to the Chalcolithic. Iron Age occupation was associated with Phase II, which contained three sub-phases (Seton-Williams 1961, 80-82; 1967, 19-21).

3.39.2 Critique

The Iron Age levels from the British expedition were assigned absolute dates on two considerations: historical data and relative stratigraphic position. Once the phases of the occupational sequence were defined, Seton-Williams (1961; 1967, 16-17) then attributed each assemblage to an ethnic group: e.g. Assyrians were associated with

the presence of “Palace Ware” (Table 3.46). By associating the historically-attested people-groups with assemblages, Seton-Williams (1961, *passim*) was able to apply historical dates to the corresponding levels. The history of the site as portrayed in the historical narrative was considered unproblematic.

Table 3.46: Tell Rifa’at stratigraphic phasing

Phase	Description	Date
I	a) Roman	1 st –4 th cent. CE
	b) Hellenistic	4 th –1 st cent. BCE
	c) Persian	6 th –5 th cent. BCE
II	a) Neo-Babylonian	7 th –6 th cent. BCE
	b) Assyrian/Aramaean	9 th –7 th cent. BCE
	c) Aramaean	10 th –9 th cent. BCE
III	a) Aramaean Settlement	14 th –12 th cent. BCE
	b) Pre-Aramaean	?
IV	a) Early – Middle Bronze	2300–2000 BCE
	b) Early Bronze	3 rd mill. BCE
V	Chalcolithic	5 th –4 th mill. BCE

(After Seton-Williams 1967, 16-17)

The Rifa’at sequence was refined through an analysis of ceramic parallels. For instance, the pottery from two Iron Age ash layers (G1-6; M6-9b) was considered comparable to that from Hama E; hence Matthers (1981b, 416) and Seton-Williams (1961, 82) interpreted the two Rifa’at ash layers as late-eighth century BCE Assyrian destructions. Seton-Williams (1967, 20) was, however, open to an alternate historical destruction – the Neo-Babylonian conquest of Carchemish in 605 BCE. Cypriot and Greek imports were considered important chronological tools (Seton-Williams 1967, 19), despite both being unreliable (§2.5).

Additionally, there are indications that archaeological practice and stratigraphic control were not adequately maintained by the British project. This is particularly evident in the earliest Iron Age level; Phase IIc was labelled “Aramaean” by Seton-Williams (1967, 19) because it contained pottery comparable to Hama E. However, the “Aramaean” pottery was accompanied by a small collection of Mycenaean sherds; in other words, Late Bronze Age pottery was found alongside Iron II pottery. While the Mycenaean sherds may well be examples of misclassified Iron I sub-Mycenaean pottery, this does not solve the problem. Could Red-Slip appear at Tell Rifa’at significantly earlier than at other sites (cf. Braemer 1986)? Maybe sub-Mycenaean forms were used at Tell Rifa’at significantly longer than at other sites?

Most likely, the stratigraphy was mixed and the “Mycenaean” sherds were intrusive. To complicate matters further, the closest parallel for the “Aramaean” East Gate was the Late Bronze Age “Palace Gate” at Alalakh (Woolley 1939a, 238-239, Pl. XLIV).

3.40 Sarepta (Lebanon)

3.40.1 Summary of Excavations

In the 1920s, pottery from a Late Bronze Age tomb near the village of Sarafand was taken to the AUB Museum. Three years later the director of the museum (Ingholt) visited the site and produced a plan of the tomb (Baramki 1958). In 1968, a further 40 rock-cut tombs were found to the north of the village. Although all but three had been completely robbed, the contents of those not plundered indicated to Saidah (1969, 134-137) a date sometime in the sixth or fifth century BCE (Culican 1970, 15-16).

In 1969, looking for an Iron Age settlement within “Phoenicia”, Pritchard (1978, 3-14) began excavation of the small tell near Sarafand. Two trenches were opened on the acropolis: Soundings X (875 m²) and Y (100 m²) (Anderson 1988, 33). Sounding X exposed substantial remains of a major pottery workshop and textile-dyeing industry, though the stratigraphy was disturbed by later building activity (Pritchard 1978, 74).

Table 3.47: Sarepta Area X Chronology

Period	Absolute Dates
V	c. 1275-1150
VI	c. 1150-1025
VII	c. 1025-800
VIII	c. 800-350

(After Khalifeh 1988, 11-58)

Sounding Y produced a less disturbed sequence from the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. Stratum G was dated to the end of the Late Bronze Age on close parallels with Tyre XV (cf. Anderson 1988, 385; Bikai 1978b, Pls 42-43). However, Anderson (1988, 380, 390) noted the remarkable cultural continuity from Stratum G into the early Iron Age. Stratum F was dated to the early Iron Age on comparisons with Tyre XIV. The transition into Stratum E was again gradual, with the dates based on Megiddo VI

parallels (Anderson 1988, 395). The break from the Late Bronze Age cultural horizon finally came with the close of Stratum E; Stratum D was considered markedly different in both architectural and ceramic data, though the stratigraphy shows no evidence of destruction or abandonment. Stratum D (considered equivalent to Tyre XIII-VIII) marked a new era, one that Anderson (1988, 396) and Pritchard (1978) associated with the “Phoenicians”. Distinctive characteristics include the use of ashlar masonry, Trefoil-Lip and Mushroom-Lip jugs, and Bichrome and Red-Slip pottery. Neckless storage jars and a particular type of Persian lamp were used to date Stratum B to the sixth or fifth century BCE.

Table 3.48: Sarepta Area Y Chronology

Stratum	Dates BCE	Comments
G	ca. 1320/1290-1200/1190	Ceramic continuity
F	ca. 1200/1190-1150/1125	
E	ca. 1150/1125-1050/1025	
<i>distinct break in material culture</i>		
D	ca. 1025/1000-850-825	Bichrome and Red-Slip
C	ca. 850/825-650	
B	6 th -5 th cent.	Badly disturbed

(After Anderson 1988, 423)

3.40.2 Critique

The primary means for dating the Iron Age strata at Sarepta were the sequences from Tyre and Megiddo, both of which have their own chronological problems (§3.28.2; §3.46.2). Since the chronological tools used in the Sarepta publications are open to revision, the dates for the Iron Age sequence are tentative. Indeed, Anderson (1988, 423) concedes that the dating of the Late Bronze and Iron Age strata “represent a hypothetical framework which is subject to clarification, supplementation, and even modification”. While a number of C¹⁴ samples were collected from Sounding X, only those that derived from pre-Iron Age levels were analyzed (Khalifeh 1988, 102, 113; Pritchard 1978, 123). Even if Iron Age samples were tested, the mixed nature of Sounding X stratigraphy would nullify the results.

3.41 Sheikh Hassan, Tell (Syria)

3.41.1 Summary of Excavations

Excavation at Tell Sheikh Hassan began as part of the Tabqa Dam salvage project. Work started under Syrian direction in the early 1970s, when a Byzantine Basilica was exposed beside the tell (Schneider 1999a, 325). In 1976, Cauvin uncovered the extensive remains of an aceramic Neolithic settlement on the eroded western edge of the tell (*ibid*). In 1981, Orthmann sunk a sondage through the tell and identified several occupational levels belonging to the Uruk Period (*ibid*). Very little from these projects was published. A French-German co-operative project returned to the site in 1984 for the purpose of excavating the entire mound (*ibid*). By this time, the rising waters of the dam were causing irreparable damage to the edges of the tell.

Despite the thick accumulation of material at the site, very few periods were attested: Islamic, Byzantine, Roman, Hellenistic, Iron Age and the Uruk Period (Schneider 1999a, 325). The Iron Age settlement was characterised by a large building (*Bau A*) on the acropolis, originally interpreted as a temple (Boese 1995: 37); but later a *bit-hilani* palace (Boese 1986-1987, 71; 1995: 221). Due to the lack of finds within *Bau A*, Boese (1986-1987, 71) refrained from assigning absolute dates. This building had close parallels with Zincirli (Margueron 1979, Figs 9-11). At Sheikh Hassan, as at Zincirli, the massive mud brick walls were founded on solid stones, but unlike Zincirli, no orthostats or sculpture were found much to the dismay of the site's excavators (Boese 1988-1989, 164).

Table 3.49: Tell Sheikh Hassan levels

Level	Period
Ib	Islamic cemetery
1	Late Roman-Byzantine
2	Hellenistic
3	Iron Age
4-22	Late Uruk Ubaid?

(After Boese 1986-1987)

The Iron Age pottery from Tell Sheikh Hassan was characterised by “local” and “Assyrianising” forms, but no Red-Slip. The so-called “local” forms were broadly dated to the eight to fifth centuries BCE, based on parallels with Tell Jurn Kabir and

Tille Höyük (Schneider 1999a, 330). The “Assyrianising” forms were also dated to a similar period, with the forms paralleled far and wide (Schneider 1999b, 351-361).

3.41.2 Critique

Few Iron Age sites have been systematically excavated along the Syrian Euphrates, hence the excavation of Tell Sheikh Hassan was an important opportunity to fill a conspicuous hole in the Iron Age landscape. Unfortunately, the excavation of the Iron Age levels focused upon a single building. No domestic structures were excavated, and little pottery was found in a secure stratigraphic context. Furthermore, no independent scientific method was employed to try and refine the date of this building, and the settlement within which it no doubt stood.

3.42 Shiyukh Fawqani, Tell (Syria)

3.42.1 Summary of Excavations

The site of Tell Shiyukh Fawqani was excavated by a joint French-Italian mission as part of the Tishrin Dam salvage project. The primary objective was to investigate the principal periods of occupation of the site (Bachelot 1999, 143; Luciani 2005, 719). Five different areas were excavated, uncovering a stratigraphic sequence running from the Late Uruk to the Islamic period (Bachelot and Fales 2005; Luciani 2000).

Table 3.50 Tell Shiyukh Fawqani Phases

Phase	Period
I	Late Uruk
II	Early Bronze Age I
III	Early Bronze Age IV
IV	Middle Bronze Age I
V	Middle Bronze Age II
VI	Late Bronze Age I
VII	Late Bronze Age II
VIII	Iron Age I
IX	Iron Age II-III
X	Achaemenid
XI	Hellenistic
XII	Roman
XIII	Early Medieval
XIV	Late Medieval
XV	Modern

(After Bachelot and Fales 2005, XLII)

Area D isolated late Uruk and Early Bronze Age material, while Area E exposed Late Bronze Age levels. The Iron Age was encountered in the remaining three areas: F, G and H (Bachelot 1999, Fig. 1). Area F was opened to investigate the area where an Aramaic ostrakon had been discovered in the 1994 season (Makinson 2005). Excavation worked through Islamic graves, Byzantine stone-walls, and classical levels before exposing Iron Age II deposits, and a small textual archive (Fales *et al.* 2005; Makinson 2005). By 1997, 139 textual fragments had been recovered.

Area G was located on the tell's east flank where archaeological deposits lay exposed through agricultural plundering of soil (Luciani 2005, 719). Amongst the pre-classical deposits was a group of inhumation burials (11 in total) dated to the Iron III and Persian periods (sixth and fifth centuries BCE). The investigation of these graves was considered particularly important because no other local late Iron Age inhumation cemeteries had been systematically excavated (e.g. Deve Höyük, Nayrab – *ibid*). The simple-pit burials and specific grave goods were similar to those of Deve Höyük (Luciani 2000, 803). Underneath the Persian graves, a sizeable architectural complex was exposed, dated to the Iron II and Iron III periods. Within this complex a collection of six rooms bore evidence of domestic and industrial (metallurgical) activities (Luciani 2005, 722-759).

Table 3.51: Tell Shiyukh Fawqani Area G Iron Age Strata

Level	Phase	BCE	Comments
1	X	6 th –5 th cent	Inhumation cemetery
2	IX	Late 7 th –early 6 th cent	Fragmentary architecture
3		8 th & 7 th cent	Non-domestic buildings

(After Bachelot 1999)

Area H, which was situated 50 metres from the tell, also contained Iron Age burials, though these were human cremations held within cinerary jars. Like with the Yunus cemetery at Carchemish, this cremation cemetery was situated on the outer fringe of the Iron Age settlement (Bachelot 1999, 151; al Bahloul *et al.* 2005, 997).

3.42.2 Critique

The results of the excavations at Tell Shiyukh Fawqani are contained in two large volumes, totalling over 1000 pages. In spite of the apparent enormity of the results, a significant percentage of the publication is accounted for by ceramic catalogues.

Indeed, Makinson's (2005) 35 plates of the Area F Period IX pottery are preceded by only three pages of discussion. While Makinson cites comparative material for most of the illustrations, there is no real analysis of what it all means (nor is there any critical appraisal of sequences he uses for comparison). Rather, the ceramic sequence is tied into a historical account of the site. This is evident in Makinson's (2005, 455-456, Tab. 2) periodisation, where he suggests that the Iron II-III transition coincided with the arrival of Tiglath-Pileser III on the Euphrates in 744 BCE. He also dated the Iron I-II transition to coincide with the end of Middle-Assyrian influence in the area (c. 1000 BCE). The final chronology was also based on negative evidence: the absence of Middle Assyrian pottery marked the beginning of Period IX, while the absence of Neo-Assyrian pottery marked its end. Hence, Makinson (2005, 457) suggested that Period IX fell somewhere between the tenth and eighth century BCE.

Areas G and H were only dated very generally. While typological comparisons for the Area H cremation cemetery were closest at Deve Höyük I and Yunus, there were also clear parallels at Hama, in the Amuq (Oa-b) and on Cyprus (CG I-III). The absence of seventh century BCE Assyrian pottery was deemed a *terminus post quem*, and the cremation cemetery was assigned a pre-seventh century BCE date (tenth to eighth centuries BCE). Al Bahloul *et al.* (2005, 1015) believed the broad dates were "due to the limited numbers of [artefacts]". A similar problem was encountered amongst the relatively poor inhumation burials of Area G, where grave goods were neither abundant nor considered chronologically distinct (Luciani 2005, 807). While some objects suggested a date within the Persian period, Luciani (*ibid*) admits that many were not characteristic of this period. Furthermore, there was a distinct lack of imported material in Area G graves (e.g. Greek imports, which were present at Deve Höyük and Kamid el Loz), though the absence might depend on factors other than chronology, such as geography, economy, or status (Luciani 2005, 982). While a radiocarbon sampling program was undertaken at Tell Shiyukh Fawqani, the results were not integrated into the final conclusions (Saliège and Pessin 2005).

3.43 Sidon (Lebanon)

3.43.1 Summary of Excavations

Sidon has witnessed extensive archaeological excavation and exploration over the course of the past century. The earliest discovery of significance was the royal necropolis of Ayaa in 1887, where numerous marble sarcophagi were uncovered (Meurdac and Albanèse 1938; 1939). Another important find was the large Temple to Eshmun, the Phoenician god of healing (Contenau 1920, 1923, 1924; Dunand 1926; 1965; 1983; Macridi-Bey 1904b; Stucky 2000; 2004). “Systematic” excavation, however, did not begin until 1963 when the Department of Antiquities invited Dunand to begin a large scale project (Dunand 1965, 1966b, 1967b) at Sidon.

In the late 1960s an extensive necropolis was discovered during building operations south of Sidon where a few hundred tomb groups were recovered from the sand-dunes belonging to one of three distinct periods: classical burials within clay sarcophagi; Iron Age stone tombs; and Late Bronze Age graves laid in the sand (Culican 1975, 145; Saidah 1969, 122). One of the Iron Age tombs was been published as “Tomb 26” (Culican 1975).

A glance at the voluminous publication of work at Sidon reveals the prominence of work on “Greater Sidon”, but little work on the oldest occupational area – the tell of “Little Sidon” – where dense occupation has until recently prevented exploration. In 1998, however, the Lebanese government purchased land within the heart of the city and granted permission for the British Museum to undertake the first truly systematic, in-depth excavation of the tell (www.sidonexcavation.org). After seven seasons the British Museum Project (BMP) has identified a continuous ceramic sequence from the early-third millennium to the late-second millennium BCE; i.e. the entire Bronze Age (Doumet-Serhal 1998-1999; 2004d, 107). The Middle Bronze Age burials contained strong Cretan influences (Doumet-Serhal 2004d, 112-119; 2004e; 2004f; 2004g; MacGillivray 2004) while the Late Bronze Age pottery was characterised by Mycenaean imports. The main architectural discovery for the Late Bronze Age was the “sunken” basement, which was destroyed by a fierce conflagration and provided good charcoal samples for radiocarbon testing. One specific sample returned a calibrated date of \pm 1390-1120 BCE (Doumet-Serhal 2004d, 119). The long uninterrupted Bronze Age sequence and volume of material,

especially imports, reflects the prominence of Sidon within the textual records. Iron Age Sidon has also been identified in recent years, but is yet to be published in detail (Doumet-Serhal 2004d, 108-121; 2006). While late Iron Age architecture has been isolated, no coherent features were discerned from the early Iron Age (Doumet-Serhal 2006, 5).

3.43.2 Critique

The earliest excavations at Sidon concentrated on the classical settlement, especially its temples, monuments, and art. The methodology and publication of these early missions lacked an understanding of stratigraphy and rarely made any attempt to relate published material to contexts.

Renewed excavations at Sidon have brought with them an important opportunity to apply modern archaeological techniques to an important, but poorly understood site. A number of scientific methods have been employed at Sidon; e.g. core samples were taken from the harbour and analysed (biological, granulometric and radiocarbon) (www.sidonexcavation.org). Despite these scientific methods, a less-secure means has been used to date the Iron Age strata. Architecture in Trench 28 was dated by the presence of Attic wares to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, despite the presence of earlier Iron Age forms (Doumet-Serhal 2006, 2-4, 10). These dates ignored the mixed nature of the material, and accepted the chronology of Greece as secure, which it is not. Furthermore, the Greek pottery appeared to “outrank” the local forms indicating an earlier date.

Cypriot and Aegean imports were used to date the earlier Iron Age assemblage to the Cypro-Geometric III period (Doumet-Serhal 2006, 25). The scientific methods, proved so useful for analyses of the harbour and the burnt Late Bronze Age building, were passed over for the older, more familiar (but less reliable) practice of ceramic comparison. Doumet-Serhal (2006, 25) admits that there is still much work to be done on the Iron Age of Sidon.

3.44 Sukas, Tell (Syria)

3.44.1 Summary of Excavations

In 1934, Forrer made two soundings at Tell Sukas (Riis 1970, 7). The published results revealed a long occupational history of the site, with particularly close links to Classical Greece (*ibid*). Following World War II, the Syrian authorities invited Riis to choose a site for excavation; he chose Tell Sukas because of the interesting questions that Forrer's soundings posed, especially regarding the interaction between the Levant and Aegean. More specifically, Riis (1970, 10) hoped that excavations at Sukas would link two previous Carlsberg Expeditions; firstly Rhodes (1901-1914) and then Hama (1931-1938). Riis' (*ibid*) three aims were: (a) to contribute towards a safer chronology of the Iron Age culture in Phoenicia, i.e. c. 1200-500 BCE; (b) to elucidate the relations between the Near East and Greece during the same period, thus checking the current Greek chronology; and (c) to supplement Danish archaeological collections.

Riis positioned a trench in the centre of the mound with the intent of securing an occupational history of the site; a sequence that extended from the sixth millennium BCE through to the medieval period (Phases N to A in **Table 3.52**). The Iron Age was attributed to Phases H and G. The early Iron Age (H2) bears remarkable cultural continuity with the Late Bronze Age (J), despite an ash layer separating the two (Lund 1986, 41, 188). Phase H1 was assigned to the Iron II period. A significant break in material culture came with Phase G, characterised by an increase in Greek imports.

An open air sanctuary was exposed near the Southern Harbour and dated to the Late Bronze Age on ceramic parallels with Cyprus (cf. Jensen 1996; Riis 1979, 6-7, 33; 1996, 5-6). The ceramic assemblage was dominated by small vessels; amphoriskoi, juglets, chalices, and bowls, most of which held evidence of liquids and some burning of fruit, grain and pulses (Jensen 1996).

Table 3.52: Summary of Tell Sukas Stratigraphy

Phase	Description	BCE
A	Later Middle Ages to Modern Times	
B	Crusaders' Period	
C	Byzantine Period	
D	Roman Period	
	<i>hiatus</i>	
E	Late Hellenistic Period	140- 69
F	Neo-Phoenician Period	c.380-140
	<i>hiatus</i>	
G	Period of Greek Community	
	G1 Phase 3	552-498
	G2 Phase 2	588-552
	G3 Phase 1	677/1-588
H	Early Iron Age	
	H1 Phoenician (Iron Age II) (Greek Settlement)	850-677/1
	<i>Assyrian destruction 850 BCE</i>	
	H2 Phoenician (Iron Age I)	1170-850
	<i>Sea Peoples destruction</i>	
J	Late Bronze Age	1600-1170
K	Middle Bronze Age	2000-1600
L	Early Bronze Age	
M	Chalcolithic Period	
N	Neolithic Period	

(After Riis 1970, 12, 127; Buhl 1983, 110; **emphasis** mine)

3.44.2 Critique

Because the Late Bronze Age (Phase J) settlement at Sukas held evidence of significant burning, the excavators linked this to the “Sea Peoples” and dated the destruction to c. 1170 BCE (Riis 1970, 40, 126). This interpretation ignored the architectural and ceramic record, which testified to continuity of culture (Lund 1986, 41, 188). Instead, the “destruction” was seen as representing a new population that was identified with the Iron Age Phoenicians. Clearly, the assignment of Phase J to the Late Bronze Age was based on the presumed “Sea Peoples” destruction layer (Riis 1970, 21, 24-26) – a case of the historical narrative being used to inform the stratigraphic sequence.

The chronological conclusions for Phase H are also confused: Phase H1 was dated to the Iron Age, despite finds of a Mycenaean female figurine, Ugaritic (fourteenth

century BCE) cylinder seal, and large number of Late Bronze Age pottery sherds (Riis 1970, 36). The material from Phases J and H appears to have been mixed, as Buhl (1983, 110-126) has suggested. The end of Phase H was dated by Riis (1970, 58) to the seventh century BCE on historical considerations; Esarhaddon campaigned in the region in 677 and 671 BCE. Riis (*ibid*) assumed that this campaign would manifest itself archaeologically and subsequently searched for a “destruction” layer of best fit.

A “Greek” sanctuary was exposed in Phase G (Riis 1970, 52, Figs 18, 23, 31, 33), leading some scholars to accept an actual Greek presence within the community here. For example, Riis (1970, 129) saw Sukas G as “a Phoenician town with a strong, at times very strong Greek element”. Phase G was divided into three sub-phases, with the divisions determined according to the historical narrative: the Phase G3-G2 transition is dated to the Egyptian Pharaoh Apries’ attack on Phoenicia in 588 BCE (Riis 1970, 58-59); Phase G2-G1 is associated with the campaign of Nabonidus in 552 BCE (mentioned in Herodotus, *History III* 19.3); the end of Phase G is equated with Greek defeat in the eastern Mediterranean in 498 BCE (also mentioned in Herodotus, *History V* 104, 108-116). No evidence was presented that justified these interpretations, though they highlight Riis’ emphasis on the link between Tell Sukas and classical history.

The interpretation of the Iron Age strata at Tell Sukas was primarily dependent on historical data. However, the results and their presentation are confusing. For instance, Buhl’s typology (1983) is difficult to reconcile with the catalogue in the same volume. Certain types are introduced in the catalogue as deriving from the Late Bronze and early Iron Age, yet the listed examples often extend from Persian or post-Iron Age contexts; indeed rarely does a form’s parallel match the chronological context proposed by the excavators (e.g. the rounded base jug – Buhl 1983, 33; ring base jug – Buhl 1983, 31; splayed foot jug – Buhl 1983, 35; and ring base bowl – Buhl 1983, 37-39). One must conclude that the stratigraphy at Sukas was either mixed or not accurately recorded. Indeed, Buhl (1983, 110) confirms that “most of the pottery consisted of the remains of storage jars originating from elsewhere and used as filling material”, leading us to conclude that during excavation no distinction was made between occupational (primary) contexts and fill (secondary) deposits. As

a result, residual pottery probably tainted the Sukas sequence. This problem is further accentuated by a typology based on base forms, due to a lack of rim sherds (Buhl 1983, 6). There was also a heavy reliance on Cypro-Aegean imports for dating the various occupational phases (Buhl 1983, 124); while this in itself means the Sukas chronology is unreliable (§2.5), it is also at odds with the original objective of the project “to confirm current Greek dating” (Riis 1970, 10).

Ta’yinat, Tell (Turkey) - see 3.8 Amuq

3.45 Tille Höyük (Turkey)

3.45.1 Summary of Excavations

Tille Höyük was excavated by the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara from 1979 to its flooding by the Ataturk Dam in 1990 (Blaylock 1999, 263). Surface pottery suggested that occupation started as early as the fourth millennium BCE, but large-scale excavation was restricted to the medieval, classical and Iron Age levels (*ibid*). A sondage excavated in later seasons also exposed the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition (Summers 1993, 3). The strategy of the expedition was to examine architecture over as great an area as possible and to recover sufficient ceramic material *in situ* for a reliable sequence of pottery to be constructed (Blaylock 1999, 263). Prior to the salvage projects of the 1970s and 1980s, very little pottery was known for this area, especially the Iron Age. Because the ability to recognise the material was initially quite limited, only reliable contexts, such as sealed pits and floor levels with complete vessels, were given full weight.

The architecture of the Late Bronze Age at Tille is characterised by public architecture: i.e. a large city-wall and gateway (*ibid*, 265). This level was destroyed by fire, dated by dendrochronology to the late-twelfth century BCE (Kuniholm *et al.* 1993). There was demonstrable continuity in ceramics between the Late Bronze Age and the earliest Iron Age levels (Blaylock 1999, 265; Summers 1993, 3). The Iron Age revealed ten distinct architectural phases (**Table 3.53**). The architectural remains of Level I consisted of large stone buildings, the foundations of which cut the burnt remains of the Late Bronze Age (Blaylock 1999, 266). The ceramic horizon was characterised by chaff-tempered coarse-wares and painted pottery (*ibid*). The technique and motifs of the painted decoration were reminiscent of the material from

Hama (Riis and Buhl 1990, Figs 64, 67, 81), Tell Afis (Mazzoni 1992b, Figs 10, 11) and Tell Rifa'at (Seton-Williams 1961, Pl. 39). The character of pottery from Levels I-III was considered homogenous and uniform, with a sharp change in the nature of the material between Levels III and IV (Blaylock 1999, 267).

Table 3.53: Stratigraphy of Tille Höyük Iron Age

Level	Period	Date
X	'Persian'	6 th -5 th centuries BCE
IX	?	7 th or 6 th century BCE
VIII	'Assyrian'	8 th century BCE
VII	?	9 th -8 th centuries BCE
VI	(Poorly preserved)	
V	Iron II	9 th century BCE
IV	('Neo Hittite')	
III		
II	Iron I	11 th -10 th centuries BCE
I		

(After Blaylock 1999)

Levels IV and V contained extensive plans of buildings that were considered rural in character (*ibid*, 267). While chaff-tempering continued from level III, other wares dominated. One of the more distinctive types is the hand-made burnished cooking-pot with ribbed or incised decoration. Levels IV and V also contained the distinctive "Ribbed Ware" known from rescue excavations in the Keban - a rare connection to the north (*ibid*). Otherwise, when parallels existed, the complexion was overwhelmingly "North Syrian" and "North Mesopotamian". Cypro-Aegean pottery was rare (*ibid*, 265).

Levels VI and VII were largely destroyed by later terracing. Level VIII was characterised by a well-planned complex of structures within a defensive perimeter wall, built around a large courtyard of pebble-paving in chequerboard design, comparable to that from Tell Ahmar (Roobaert and Bunnens 1999, Fig. 13). The Level VIII pottery was characterised by "Assyrian" fine carinated-cups, dimpled-cups, jars and bottles (Blaylock 1999, 269). The nearest parallels were from northern Iraq.

Level X, the last Iron Age level, contained well-preserved architecture, with walls preserved to a height of 2 metres. The material, while not typically 'Persian', was reminiscent of Persian period pottery from the Levant.

3.45.2 Critique

It is not easy to assess the conclusions of the Tille Höyük excavations, primarily because it is difficult to determine what exactly was concluded. The stratigraphy is presented as a very general, relative sequence, with only occasional attempts to date the levels more precisely; e.g. dendrochronological sampling from the burnt Late Bronze Age gateway (Blaylock 1999, 253-264; Summers 1993, 13, 55). While the continuity of culture across the Late Bronze-Iron Age transition discouraged theories of absolute conquest, the “destruction” layer was still attributed to a foreign entity, in this case Tiglath-Pileser I (Summers 1993, 11). This identification was based on the dendrochronology, but also on the historical narrative. While dendrochronology was used to date the Late Bronze Age destruction, the dating for the Iron Age sequence relied on arbitrary estimates of building life and correlations with historical data (Blaylock 1999, 263-264).

3.46 Tyre (Lebanon)

3.46.1 Summary of Excavations

Archaeological work at Tyre has a long and interesting history, much too long to fully recount here (see Pierre Bikai 1992b). Of the many excavations, the most significant, at least with regards to size, was Chéhab’s “City excavation”, though the classical overburden prevented much earlier material being reached (Coldstream and Bikai 1988, 36). In later years, Iron Age ceramics were recovered in abundance, indicating that an “important sector of the Phoenician city had been found” (*ibid*). Patricia Bikai, produced the type series for Chéhab’s pre-classical material. The mixed nature of the material, however, prevented a meaningful typological sequence being constructed. It was for this reason that Bikai in 1973-1974 opened a small trench into the pre-classical levels (*ibid*).

In 1990, during the Lebanese Civil War, some stones with Phoenician inscriptions and painted pots were looted in the al Bass district of eastern Tyre, an area originally on the mainland when Tyre was an island (Seeden 1991). Upon closer inspection, the stelae and cinerary urns appeared to be the remains of an Iron Age cremation cemetery, or *tophet* (Sader 1991; Seeden 1991). Until this discovery, the Iron Age necropolis of Tyre was believed to have existed 5 km south of the site, at Tell

Rachidieh, where a number of Iron Age tombs had been excavated (Bikai and Bikai 1987, 76). In 1997, agricultural digging in the al Bass area brought more pottery and stelae to light. The ensuing salvage expedition eventually excavated over 80 Iron Age cremation burials. The density of burials at al Bass suggested to Aubet (2004a, 19), the project director, that this was the Phoenician city's primary cemetery.

3.46.2 Critique

Bikai (1978b, 3) presented an almost continuous record of ceramic development from the Roman-Byzantine period back to the third millennium BCE. The absolute dates for this sequence were reliant on Cypro-Aegean imports. According to Bikai (1978b, 64, 75), the very high percentage of imported wares and comparative material found at Tyre made it possible to arrive at an absolute chronology of the strata. For the Late Bronze and Iron Ages, Bikai relied on the Cypriot chronologies of Åström (1972) and Birmingham (1963), respectively.

Table 3.54: Stratigraphy of Bikai's Sounding at Tyre

Stratum	BCE	Description
I	700	Iron II-III transition
III-II	740-700	
V-IV	760-740	
VII-VI	800-760	
IX-VIII	850-800	Iron II
X	850	Iron I-II transition
XI	925-850	Iron I
XII	1000-925	
XIII	1070-1000	
XIV	1200-1070	LB-Iron transition
XV	1375-1200	LBII
XVI	1415-1375	LB

(After Bikai 1978b, 68).

Tyre XIV was dated before the mid-eleventh century BCE on the absence of Cypriot White-Painted pottery. While some Levantine parallels for Tyre XIV were known (Hazor XII; Megiddo VI), the lack of Cypro-Geometric I convinced Bikai of a Cypriot Bronze Age date. The paradox of Tyre XIV falling within both the Late Bronze Age (on Cyprus) and the Iron Age (in the Levant) is difficult to reconcile with current histories of the region, and symptomatic of the cultural continuity between the two periods (§2.3.3).

With the first appearance of “White-Painted” pottery, Tyre XIII was dated to the beginning of the Cypriot Iron Age; mid-eleventh century BCE. At the other end of the spectrum, Tyre I was dated to the late-eighth century BCE based on Cypriot Period V wares and parallels with Hazor IV. With these two dates supposedly confirmed, Bikai (1978b, 66) was left a period of only three-and-a-half centuries to fit thirteen Iron Age strata, which implied a very dynamic and unsettled history of occupation at Tyre; something not evident in the historical narrative. The high number of strata may be due to the small size of the test trench, which would have made the identification of architectural phasing difficult. Further chronological definition is provided by comparison with Birmingham’s (1963) Cypriot chronology, and the Tyre IX appearance of Greek pendant semi-circle *skyphoi* (Åström 1972; Boardman 1959, 163; Coldstream 1968, 152-154). The closest Levantine parallels were recorded at Tell Abu Hawam, Megiddo and Hazor, three sites with notoriously complicated and ambiguous chronologies.

According to Aubet (2004b, 465), five distinct periods of development are discernible within the Tyre-al Bass cremation cemetery, with the bulk of the burials dated to the Iron II period (*ibid*, 458 – **Table 3.55**). No Iron I in-tact burials were discovered, but isolated pottery bears witness to the earliest phase (Núñez 2004b, 352)

Table 3.55: Tyre-al Bass Phases

Phase	Date
I	1100-850
II	850-775
III	775-750
IV	750-700
V	700-600

(After Aubet 2004b, 465)

While the means for dating the Tyre-al Bass sequence were not made explicit, Aubet (2004b, Fig. 312) appears to base her findings on Bikai’s (1978b) Tyre sequence, and Bikai’s (1987) sequence of “Phoenician” pottery on Cyprus (**Table 3.56**). As a result, the absolute dates are based on the much-debated Cypriot chronology (§2.5.2).

Table 3.56: Tyre-al Bass Comparative Chronology

BCE	Tyre Bikai 1978b	Phoenician Cyprus Bikai 1987	Tyre al Bass Aubet 2004b
1200			
	XIV		
1100			
	XIII		Period I
1000			
	XII	Kouklia Horizon	
900			
	XI		
	X		
	IX		
800			
	VIII	Salamis Horizon	Period II
	VII-VI		
	V-IV		Period III
700			
	III-II	Kition Horizon	Period IV
	I	Amathus Horizon	Period V
600			

(After Aubet 2004b, Fig. 312)

Aubet (2004b, Appendix A) also undertook a small program of radiocarbon dating, but included only four results in her publication as confirmation for the sequence dates. Moreover, only one of the resulting two-sigma values was accepted as accurate because it alone agreed with Aubet's (2004b, 469) chronology. Rather than refine her chronological sequencing, Aubet simply dismissed the data. In the end, the ceramic typology was the main means for dating the Tyre-al Bass sequence; radiocarbon samples were designed only to confirm the already established sequence.

3.47 Zincirli (Turkey)

3.47.1 Summary of Excavations

Zincirli was excavated by the German Oriental Society in the late nineteenth century, under the direction of von Luschan (Lehmann 1996, 272-273). The five campaigns revealed a heavily fortified acropolis that was surrounded by an extensive Lower City (which remains unexcavated) and an enormous double fortification wall with three gates and 100 evenly spaced bastion towers (Wartke 2005). A number of building phases were discernible in the architecture, though the sequence and dates

are still debated. Nevertheless, Zincirli is a celebrated example of “Syro-Hittite” architecture, with its collection of richly decorated orthostats and architectural statuary (Akurgal 1962, 130-133).

Table 3.57: Summary of Zincirli Building Phases

Phase	
V	Befunde, alter als das Ende des 8 Jahrhunderts <i>destruction of eighth century buildings – 676 BCE</i>
IV	Hilani 3, Hilani 4, Gebaude J, Gebaude K, Gebaude L, Hof M, Gebaude P, Hof R
III	Hilani 1, Hilani 2, Burgmauer mit Balkenrost, Inneres Burgtor, Ausseres Burgtor, Kasematten
II	Oberer Palast, Burgmauer über der Mauer mit Balkenrost
I	Spätachamenidische und hellenistische Befunde

(After Lehmann 1996, 274)

3.47.2 Critique

The work at Zincirli is an early example of the “*deutsche Bauschule*” method, which emphasised the broad exposure and careful documentation of elite architectural units (Lehmann 1996, 272-273). This is why the site-plan includes *bit hilani* palaces, gates and fortification walls, but no domestic structures (Humann 1898, Tfn 28-29). This approach also ignored the process of debris layers, which prevented a true stratigraphic record of the site (Andrae 1943, 38; Naumann 1971, 418-419). Furthermore, the Zincirli excavations paid little attention to pottery – none-what-so-ever for stratigraphic purposes. The result is a fairly complete picture of the layout of the city that has been difficult to date accurately (cf. Busink 1970, 540; Koldewey 1898; Landsberger 1948, 8-82; Lehmann 1996, 272-273; Naumann 1971, 418-425; Oelmann 1921; Ussishkin 1968; Wachsmuth 1923-1924). In addition to the poor stratigraphic method employed at Zincirli, the series of final publications display a clear pre-occupation with the history and art of the elite structures (Koldewey 1898; von Luschan 1902). The one volume devoted to the small finds (Andrae 1943), presents only those ceramics that are regarded as holding high artistic appeal, and presents them in a brief and unsystematic fashion.

3.48 Concluding summary

A number of recurring themes are evident in the above survey of Iron Age archaeology in the Northern Levant. These themes can be loosely grouped according to one of two categories: archaeological practice or archaeological interpretation.

The above survey has demonstrated that excavation practice in the Northern Levant in the early-twentieth century was directed toward the broad exposure of elite monuments and architecture (e.g. Arslan Tash, Carchemish, Zincirli), as understanding of tell stratigraphy developed, excavation technique became more systematic in its approach. However, not all “systematic” approaches were sensitive to tell stratigraphy (e.g. Dunand imposed a uniform but artificial stratigraphy onto Byblos) or were accompanied by adequate methodology (e.g. the Hama excavations have been widely criticised for poor stratigraphic control). Furthermore, the excavation of Iron Age sites remained largely concerned with the monumental and significant (e.g. Tell Ta’yinat, Ain Dara, Aleppo citadel). Nevertheless, focus had shifted from broad horizontal exposures to the individual tell strata and the various “episodes” of history represented therein; Iron Age archaeology was seeking the illumination of the historical narrative (e.g. Tell Nebi Mend and the Battle of Kadesh; the Greek “Orientalising” period at al Mina; the Assyrian destruction of Hama). While in recent years the stratigraphic excavation of a site has been largely undertaken with higher levels of care and precision (an exception is the recent Aleppo citadel excavations, which have focused on temple architecture), the underlying interest in an illumination of the historical record has persisted (e.g. Greek presence at Tell Sukas; Assyrian destruction of Tell Shiyukh Fawqani).

This chapter has also shown that there are persistent chronological and ethnic undercurrents in the interpretation of most Iron Age sites, both of which primarily derive from a reliance on the historical narrative. Due to the early focus on elite architecture, other elements of North Levantine Iron Age material culture were poorly understood. This has resulted in an appeal to, and subsequent reliance upon other regions for chronological definition; i.e. imported material culture (usually pottery) was given prominence in site interpretations (e.g. al Mina; Ras al Bassit, Tyre). Furthermore, interpretations focused on the ethnic identity of a site’s population as derived from the historical narrative (e.g. al Mina, Tell Ahmar, Tell

Sukas). The means for explaining changes in material culture, therefore, was associated with the contact, interaction, or movement of different populations (e.g. Aegean style pottery at early Iron Age Tell Kazel; the practice of cremation in Hama F). Regardless of how carefully and meticulously some sites had been excavated, the interpretation has been characterised by a reliance on the historical narrative.

What is common to the majority of the excavations surveyed above is an under appreciation of how ceramic material can inform reconstructions of Iron Age society outside of the historical narrative, something that is explored in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

Approaches to Iron Age Pottery from the Northern Levant

4.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have demonstrated the widespread application of text/s in the interpretation of the archaeology of the IA-NL, which has resulted in reconstructions of past societies that lack a perspective on human behaviour and archaeological residues. Part of the problem lies with the view of material culture as a reflection of “history” as depicted in the historical narrative; as reflecting peoples and events.

This chapter explores past analyses of Iron Age pottery in the Levant with the aim of highlighting the key assumptions behind current approaches. Emphasis will be given to previous interpretations and why these might be questioned on theoretical grounds. Following this, it will be shown that there are alternative ways of understanding the relationship between people, social constructs, and material culture. While the typo-chronological approach has its place, and has been instrumental in contributing to our initial knowledge of Iron Age material culture, there are many fruitful avenues of analysis that have not been explored due to a reliance on the historical narrative. This chapter will conclude with a brief look at developments in ceramic studies in other areas of archaeological research and the implications these might have for excavation techniques and methodologies across the Levant.

4.2 Analysis of Iron Age Ceramics in the Levant

4.2.1 Introduction

As was shown throughout Chapter 2, the historical narrative has overdetermined reconstructions of the IA-NL. Texts, however, provide a specific view of a specific past; their use as an interpretative framework for all material culture associated with

the Iron Age in the Levant is problematic. Material culture will have been used by many different people, at different times, in different places, for different reasons; we cannot assume that all material culture held the same meaning in all these different contexts. Material culture, therefore, represents different pasts, not just the one imparted by the historical narrative (Whiting 2007a, 77). To impose a particular historical perspective of “what happened” onto material culture is to conflate the world in the text and the world as lived by human beings in all its diversity. As a result, the lives of the people in the IA-NL have been largely subsumed by the historical narrative. In other words, through the identification of “historical” events in material culture, the “whole story” of that narrative has been imposed onto material culture. Since the “total” history of the IA-NL is already (perceived to be) known from the historical narrative, material culture is rarely analysed to its full potential. Instead, analysis tends to focus on classification (which historical “culture”?) and chronology (when in “history”?).

The following discussion will outline some general themes in the study of pottery from the IA-NL. For this purpose, two case-studies are presented, followed by a discussion of the underlying principles and assumptions inherent in these approaches. Each case-study is essentially a review of a particular scholar’s work on the ceramics of this period. It is the work of Stefania Mazzoni and Gunnar Lehmann that has contributed most to our current understanding of region-wide ceramic development for the IA-NL, and will therefore be reviewed here (see Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 361-366).

4.2.2 Case Studies

4.2.2.1 Stefania Mazzoni

Early excavations of Iron Age sites in the Northern Levant focused first and foremost on elite art and architecture, much to the detriment of pottery (e.g. Arslan Tash; Carchemish; Tell Halaf). As a result, when scholarly interest in the Iron Age was reignited in the 1970s and 1980s, very little was known regarding ceramic style, distribution, and development. But rather than lament the lack of a coherent and reliable ceramic typology for the first millennium BCE, Mazzoni (1988a; 1990a; 1991-1992; 2000a) set about constructing a periodisation for the Iron Age based on

her meticulously-constructed stratigraphic sequence from Tell Afis. But while her ceramic sequence is a good example of thorough method, Mazzoni’s cultural and chronological interpretation of her sequence is less innovative.

As already discussed, the correlation of historical narrative with the archaeological record is difficult and problematic (**Chapter 2**). Nevertheless, specific political events and broad regional narratives are a central feature of Mazzoni’s Iron Age periodisation. For instance, the Iron I period is considered distinct from the Late Bronze Age not on consideration of material culture (Mazzoni is aware there is strong continuity – 2000a, 31; 2000d, 1043-1044), but on the historically-derived political crisis and the expected effect this would have on material culture. Instead, if the archaeology is emphasised over the historical narrative, there is very little reason to separate the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages (Venturi 1998a, 135). In fact, general historic trends have helped Mazzoni characterise each of the main divisions in her scheme (summarised in **Table 4.1**).

Table 4.1: Mazzoni’s Ethno-Historical Periodisation of the Iron Age

Period	c. BCE	Culture Trends	Historical Correlation
Iron IA	1200–1000	Recovery	Aftermath of political crisis
Iron IB	1000–950	Re-urbanisation	Levant-wide political stability
Iron IC	950–early 9 th	Monumentality	Syro-Hittite political prosperity
Iron IIA	early–late 9 th	New Trends	Phoenician and Aramaean expansion
Iron IIB	late 9 th –720	Regionalisation	Coalition facing Assyrian ascendancy

(After Mazzoni 2000a, *passim*)

Mazzoni’s interpretation of the Iron I period is dependent on the historical narrative. For instance, in her discussions on the Iron I ceramic material Mazzoni (2000a, 31-33; 2000c, 147) often emphasises its Aegean character, the result of either trade or cultural exchange. However, in comparison to the Late Bronze Age, when imports were common, the Iron I period bears minimal Aegean affinities (e.g. Bikai 1978b, 66). So why does the strong Aegean influence of the Late Bronze Age not encourage an Aegean interpretation of the mid-second millennium BCE, while the Iron I period, with its relatively diluted Aegean style, is considered Aegean in nature? It seems that the “Sea People” migration theory (from the Aegean region) is a significant contributor to this interpretation; and Mazzoni is not alone on this front (Badre 1983,

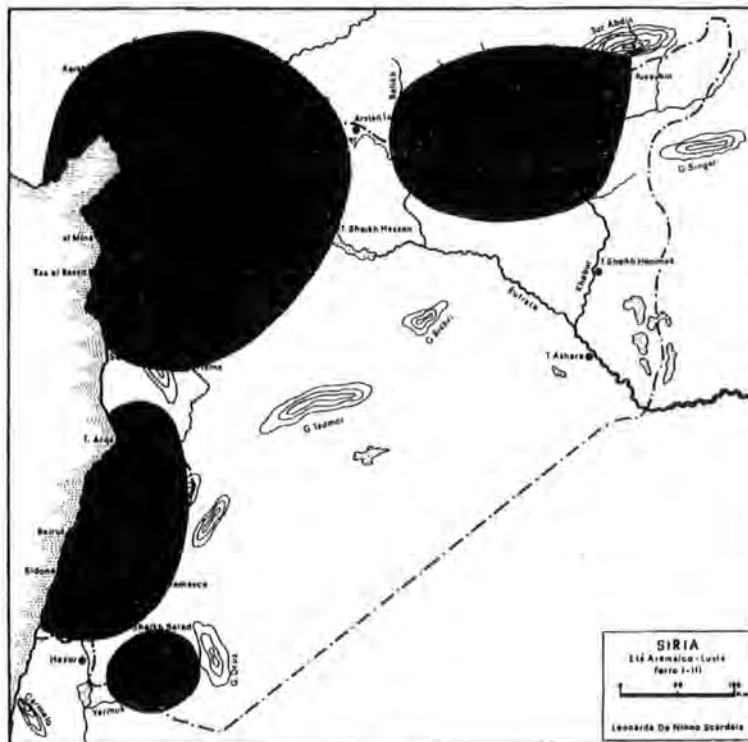
204, n.3-6; Bell 2006, 15; Bonatz 1993, 138; Dikaios 1969, 272ff; Dothan 1982, 98-106; Karageorghis 1985, 271ff; A. Mazar 1988; Muhly 1984, 52ff). The archaeology is in fact “over-determined” by a particular interpretation of history. Invoking the Aegean explanation is inadequate, and is really just a coverall to avoid dissecting the complexity of the Iron I period in the Northern Levant.

According to Mazzoni (2000a), her periodisation of the IA-NL is not based on only one element of material culture, but is derived from “A Cross-Cultural Perspective”. In other words, Mazzoni’s (2000a, Table 2, p. 58; 2000d, *passim*) scheme derived information from not just the pottery; i.e. monumental art and architecture, settlement patterns, and urban-planning. But herein lies part of the problem, Mazzoni (see 1997a; 2000d, Tab.1, Figs 1-20) has tended to emphasise the monuments and inscriptions of the “Syro-Hittite” tradition (e.g. lion statues), which are essentially political monuments that correlate well with the historical narrative (§2.3.8). Mazzoni’s “political” periodisation, as defined by “historically-sensitive” elements of culture, was used to help refine the Tell Afis stratigraphic and ceramic sequence.

Tell Afis remains one of the most-extensively published Iron Age ceramic sequences from the Northern Levant, yet it has been published in only a general catalogue form. No typology has been published for the site and comparative parallels are only infrequently and inconsistently cited (see references in bibliography by Cecchini, D’Amore, Mazzoni, Oggiano, Venturi amongst others). The Tell Afis ceramic sequence also relied on the presence of imported pottery for absolute dates; for example, Late Helladic IIC1b and Cypriot White-Painted sherds were used to date the early Iron Age levels (Bonatz 1998; Mazzoni 2000a, 33; 2000d, 1050). Furthermore, Mazzoni (2000c, 147) also accepts the presence of imported pottery as an indicator of trade contact and economic prosperity; how these vessels were viewed, accepted, and used outside of their “homeland” is not explored. Indeed, the “meaning” and use of material culture does feature strongly in Mazzoni’s interpretation. Material culture is either “local” or foreign, and therefore only indicative of cultural interaction; trade being the principal means for cultural diffusion (Mazzoni 2000a, 36, 45). For example, the diffusion of Red-Slip surface treatment is associated with “Phoenician” trade (*ibid*, 41). In this way, Mazzoni (2000c, 147-148) is arguing for the correlation between the development of regional

ceramic provinces and the formation of political and economic systems (**Figure 4.1**). While we cannot disagree entirely – large-scale socio-political transformations would likely have some resonance within the distribution of ceramic styles – there are problems in suggesting that this is the only explanation (A.T. Smith 2001, 370). There is no consideration of other contexts or mechanisms by which the appropriation of material culture might have taken place, or even that ceramic provinces might be the product of modern frameworks. In the end, Mazzoni’s proposed chronology, as opposed to the relative stratigraphic sequence, is based on a political history and draws only marginally on ceramic data.

Figure 4.1: Mazzoni’s Iron Age Ceramic Provinces



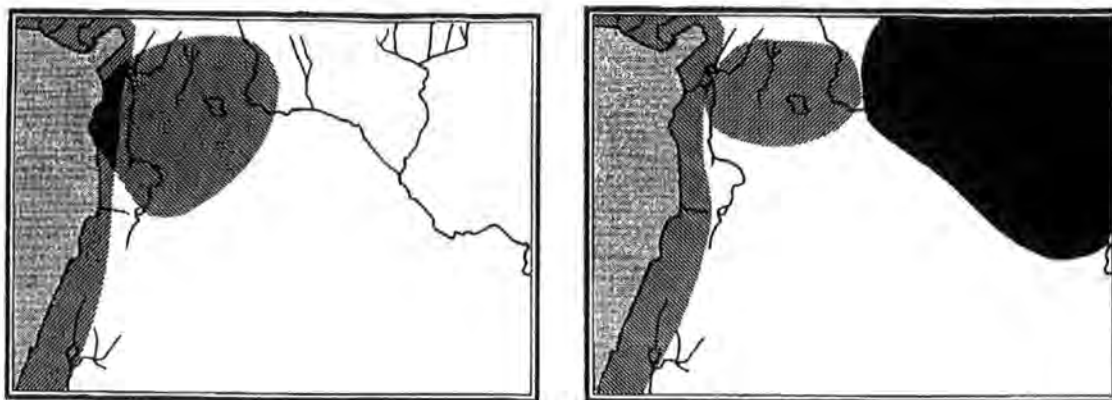
(After Mazzoni 1991-1992, Fig. 3)

4.2.2.2 Gunnar Lehmann

The presentation of an extensive ceramic typology for the Northern Levant is credited to the doctoral research of Gunnar Lehmann (1996; 1998), who explored the development and distribution of local pottery production in the later Iron Age (eighth to fourth centuries BCE). Lehmann’s (1998, 7) aim was to present an “archaeological periodisation system... based only on an analysis of the material record”, which could then be related to the historical record, only after the internal consistency of the

archaeological data was assured. From the incomplete and somewhat selective corpus of published ceramic data, Lehmann was able to identify eight discrete ceramic assemblages, for each of which he plotted the chronological distribution geographically. In particular, Lehmann identified two broad ceramic regions within his first four assemblages; there was a clear distinction between pottery assemblages from coastal sites and those from inland sites (**Figure 2**).

Figure 4.2: Distribution of Lehmann's Assemblages 1-2 (left) and 3-4 (right)



(After Lehmann 1998, Fig. 14A-B)

Lehmann's coastal/inland dichotomy (**Figure 4.2**) is comparable to the large ceramic regions evident in Mazzoni's early work, and indeed evident within the present study (cf. **Chart 8.1** and **Chart 8.4**). But while Lehmann's work represents a watershed for the study of Iron Age pottery in the Northern Levant, it expends too little effort in trying to understand the reasons for the large ceramic regions. Lehmann (1996, Abb. 4.4-4.7; 1998, Fig. 14) simply presents the ceramic regions as highly-bounded, geographically-discrete entities, and describes them as products of socio-political and economic developments (1998, 31). For instance:

“Their [Assemblages 3 and 4] distribution reflects major developments in the political geography of Syria and Lebanon. The Phoenician seaports were the main economic centres during the seventh century BC. In inland Syria there were very few provincial cities with Greek imports. The main road from the coast into inland Syria seems to have led through Al Mina and up the Orontes into northern Syria. The distribution of local pottery still follows older Iron Age traditions. There was a large field of interaction along the coast, reflecting the long-distance sea trade”
Lehmann (1998, 29).

Ceramic regionalisation is not an explanation of distribution, only a description. Moreover, this diffusionist perspective ignores the effect that non-political and non-economic cultural factors might have had on material culture patterning. Instead, ceramic regions are associated with socio-political histories, which are then equated with homogenous socio-political polities; i.e. “Aramaeans” inland, “Syro-Hittites” in the north, “Phoenicians” on the coast. But Lehmann was aware of this pitfall:

“The late Iron Age and Persian period in Syria and Lebanon have never been dealt with in a comprehensive archaeological study. As a result, the periodization system, even of the archaeological record, reflects historical events rather than internal developments of the material record itself. Often, ethnic or political terms like “Neo-Assyrian,” “Neo-Babylonian,” “Persian,” or “Achaemenid” are used to date the changes and developments of archaeological finds. Too often the material record is related in a somewhat naive way to known historical events” (Lehmann 1998, 7)

Despite the above statement, Lehmann’s study perpetuated a number of assumptions within the existing interpretative framework. Lehmann (1998, 9) states that the “pottery of Assemblage 1 comprises the vessels of the Aramaean and Phoenician kingdoms before their destruction by the Assyrians” and supports this statement by an appeal to Gjerstad’s (1948) and Birmingham’s (1963) Cypriot chronologies, as well as the Middle- and Late-Geometric pottery from Greece (Lehmann 1998, 13). He then makes “a connection between the destruction levels of Tell Rifa’at and Hama with the campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III against Arpad in 740 BC and of Sargon II in 720 BC” (*ibid*) and calls on comparative pottery from the Southern Levant to “point to a date in the eighth century BCE” (*ibid*).

While Lehmann’s (1996, 86-92) eight assemblages were derived from the internal structure of his ceramic data, the absolute dates were not. By using the existing chronological framework, with all its inherent circularity (§2.5.1), Lehmann was undermining his own results and, therefore, negating its value for dating material from other sites. Furthermore, Lehmann was authenticating the existing interpretative framework, wherein the archaeology is overdetermined by an historical interpretative framework (§2.4).

4.2.3 Analysis of Iron Age Ceramics in the Northern Levant

Despite the recency of Mazzone's and Lehmann's publications, the means for studying pottery from the IA-NL is based on the culture-historical approach that was standard practice in the early-twentieth century (Faust 2006, 11; Whiting 2007a, 26). The use of this paradigm in the Northern Levant was due to the adoption of the chronology, and accompanying methodology, used in the Southern Levant, where the culture-history paradigm characterised the first pottery studies (§2.5). Albright (1933; 1938; 1941-1943) and Wright (1937) were amongst the first to use pottery to disentangle tell strata. These two scholars produced the first comprehensive pottery studies that could be used by other scholars to date their sites (Whiting 2007a, 26). As a result, these typologies were relied upon to provide structure and coherency for the archaeology of the Levant.

An underlying principle behind the culture-history paradigm was that pottery held an inherent chronological value (Whiting 2007a, 78). While this chronological emphasis could help order a site's stratigraphy through time, the historical focus of early-twentieth century archaeology meant that changes in material culture were then equated with specific historical episodes as depicted in texts. Furthermore, these archaeologically-attested events, which were also linked to an ethnic group, became the cultural manifestations of ethnicity (Jones 1997, 19, 25). In other words, the pottery from a specific stratum within a site's stratigraphy represented a specific time and a specific ethnic group as gleaned from the historical texts (Shennan 1997, 217).

In addition, the European evolutionary view of progress and civilisation emphasised the historical link between the ancient Aegean and the Near East (§2.6). By implication, the linking of the material culture of these two regions was also assumed (Whiting 2007a, 78). But because culture had come to represent ethnicity, the cultural link between the Aegean and the Near East (i.e. evolutionary progress from one culture to the other) could only be established through a model that emphasised cultural diffusion by the movement of population. Hence, the archaeological appearance of new material culture was reduced to the introduction of a new ethnic group (e.g. the Philistines were associated with an Aegean-style pottery of the early Iron Age – Killebrew 2005, 14). Moreover, this link drew the eastern Mediterranean into a single cultural sphere, one where material culture was seen as a universal

phenomenon and could be represented by a master ceramic sequence (Orton *et al.* 1993, 34). There was no apparent reason why pottery from spatially-distant regions could not be compared.

The typological study of pottery, as understood and practiced by Albright and Wright, was quickly institutionalised within the archaeology of the Southern Levant, but was a significantly later practice in the Northern Levant. Scholars working in the Northern Levant drew chronological inferences for local ceramic assemblages through direct comparison with South Levantine typologies (§2.5), but the creation of local typologies was not common practice until the 1980s (e.g. Bikai 1978b; Riis 1948; Woolley 1939b). Pottery in the Northern Levant was dated by comparison with the Southern Levant and given a local “flavour” by appeal to the historical narrative (e.g. “Phoenician” – Culican 1970; 1982; “Aramaean” – Seton-Williams 1961; 1967). By comparing ceramic assemblages with those of the Southern Levant, the culture-history paradigm as developed by Albright and Wright was introduced into the Northern Levant. Archaeologists working in the Northern Levant came to believe that precise pottery analysis allowed a site to be dated, assigned to a particular ethnic group, and thus be made to reveal history (e.g. Culican 1970; Fugmann 1958, 264).

While the culture-historical approach has its place, and has become instrumental in contributing to our knowledge of Iron Age ceramics, it is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, pots can tell us little about people in any genetic or ethnic sense. According to ethnographic research, identity is negotiated in such a subjective and dynamic manner that it is difficult to define an individual’s ethnicity (Barth 1969, 9-11; Goodby 1998, 161; S. Jones 1997, 51-55; Sherratt 1998, 294; 2005a, *passim*). Instead, ethnic identity tends to be entangled in the definer’s own political preoccupations (Sherratt 2005a, 27). It is because ethnicity is such a vague and value-laden concept, that it cannot be used to define the physical or textual record. We should instead read textually-derived ethnonyms through the eyes of the people who created the texts (*ibid*, 36). Furthermore, archaeologists should not expect to find cultural indicators for clearly defined ethnic groups in the IA-NL because well-defined homogenous ethnic identities simply did not exist. Nevertheless, this modern conceptualisation of “ethnic identity” continues to influence archaeological method in the Northern Levant, where ethnonyms such as “Phoenician”, “Aramaean” and

“Syro-Hittite” are used to describe and define ceramic cultures. For example, Aubet (2004b) published the Iron Age cemetery at Tyre al Bass as a “Phoenician Cemetery”; al Maqdissi (2003, Abb. 13) has referred to the large pithoi from Tell Mishrife as “Aramaean” vessels; Doumet-Serhal (1992-1993) plotted “Phoenician” expansion across the Mediterranean through the distribution of certain ceramic forms.

Within the culture-historical paradigm the idea of “ethnicity” has been equated with the idea of national identity (Sherratt 2005a, 27). That ancient cultural-groups are seen as highly-bounded, geographically-discrete entities is problematic. Scholars have widely renounced the idea of a past world invariably made up of distinct, relatively homogenous nation-states (e.g. Jones 1997, 16-17; Sherratt 2005a, 27), yet there remains a tendency to present distributive regions of archaeological cultures as past abstractions of modern nation-states (e.g. United Monarchy – Liverani 2005b, 308-323; Whitelam 1996, 122-175; “Syro-Hittite/Aramaean” states – Hawkins 1982, Map 14, p.374; Lipinski 2000a, 77ff). As a result, traditional cultural-historians seek to understand ceramic distribution across space in terms of *regionalisation*, where the boundaries between ceramic *regions* and cultural (ethnic/nation-state) groups were seen as coterminous (**Figures 4.1; 4.2**).

There is another concern with this focus; in defining ceramic regions, archaeologists have tended to categorise pottery as either “local” or “foreign”, whereas any “foreign” elements are viewed as evidence for economic or political interaction (e.g. the so-called “Aegean” element in early Iron Age pottery of the Northern Levant – cf. Mazzoni 2000a, 33-34; Sherratt 1998, 292ff; 2005a, 33-35). Hence, conventional histories of the ancient Near East have emphasised ethnic geography; plotting the ebb-and-flow, interaction and integration, of different cultural groups across space as evident in the diffusion of different ceramic elements (e.g. Bunnens 1995; 1999; Lipinski 2000b; Na’aman 1995). For instance, the presence of Greek imports has been widely used to plot mercantile interaction between the Aegean and Near East, with arguments often focusing on the actual presence of Greeks in the Near East (Boardman 1959; 2002; Courbin 1990a; 1990b; 1993b; Riis 1970, 129; Waldbaum 1994; 1997). The defining of ceramic regions, however, has prevented the full development of an *explanation* of social processes and behaviours behind material

culture patterning. Such an approach ignores diversity and local variations in cultural behaviour and material culture, and instead focuses on broad, regional patterns. What is missing is an account of the social production of certain spatial distributions; i.e. what is it that generates regional ceramic patterns? Critical to such an undertaking is an account of the monitoring of social boundaries, across which certain material culture items move while others do not (see Bowser 2000; Dietler and Herbich 1998; Goodby 1998; Stark 1998; Stark *et al.* 2000).

As in the Southern Levant, the study of Iron Age pottery in the Northern Levant placed a disproportionate emphasis on the chronological value of pottery (e.g. Lebeau 1983, 24). The means for determining the chronological value of specific pottery styles, however, relied on an archaeologist's ability to place that ceramic horizon, as it was stratigraphically-defined, within history. In other words, a ceramic vessel's chronological value was dependent upon the historical narrative; in practice this was usually achieved through the correlation of archaeological strata with specific historical events. For example, Seton-Williams (1961, 82) interpreted the appearance of Red-Slip pedestal platters (characteristic of Hama E) in Tell Rifa'at Level IIc as evidence for a date in the late-eighth century BCE. The end result was a ceramic chronology that was treated as independent and absolute, but which was intricately connected to, and completely dependent upon, the historical narrative.

The emphasis on ceramics as chronological and cultural indicators has also meant that individual components of an assemblage have been emphasised over an understanding of the entire assemblage as a whole. For example, the ceramic sequence from the tell of Ras al Bassit has not been published in detail, yet the Greek imported pottery has appeared in numerous publications; Courbin (1986, 196ff) has suggested that these are indicative of Greek presence at the site (i.e. an ethnic indicator). The only local pottery from Ras al Bassit that has been published is the assemblage of Red-Slip Ware that Braemer (1986) studied for the development of this surface treatment in the Northern Levant (i.e. a chronological indicator). In the end, the Ras al Bassit pottery was not studied as a functional assemblage, only for its chronological and/or cultural value. This focus on individual components also results in a de-emphasis of variability within and between assemblages.

To conclude, it is clear that, from the above survey of Mazzone's and Lehmann's work, current interpretations of the ceramic record for the IA-NL are based on the approaches used in culture-historical archaeology, with a superficial grafting-on of processual/diffusionist theory. This approach is matched by an apparent unwillingness to engage with the archaeological record in all its messy diversity, and investigate the complex relationship between people, social structures, and material culture. The superficial unity of prescribed cultural units, as well as the focus on ethnic groups such as "Phoenicians" and "Aramaean", has distracted scholarly attention from the existence of significant diversity and complex patterning within the material culture of the IA-NL.

4.3 The Study of Pottery Beyond the Eastern Mediterranean

While cultural-history remains important to archaeological research on the IA-NL, other branches of archaeology have made significant progress in appreciating the complex relationship between people and material culture. The following discussion will explore the manner in which pottery is used outside the eastern Mediterranean to provide a more dynamic interpretation of the archaeology. By outlining what is being done in other areas of the globe, the possibilities of what can be done in the Northern Levant will be emphasised, whilst also implying what is not being done. In particular, the study of pottery in British and North American archaeology has been significantly influenced by interpretative methodologies based on an awareness of diverse social practices (e.g. Barrett 1994; Bowser 2000; Dobres and Hoffman 1999a; Dobres and Robb 2000).

4.3.1 Developments in the Approach to Material Culture

The culture-historical concern with chronology and ethnic groups was largely abandoned in European and North American archaeology in the 1960's, when the "New Archaeology" shifted emphasis from static description to explanation of social processes and change (Binford 1962; 1972). The study of pottery, therefore, sought the explanation of economic and social mechanisms such as trade and exchange, ceramic technology, and vessel function (Orton *et al.* 1993, 23-35; Whiting 2007a,

78-79). But in prioritising a search for social process, processual archaeology had imposed a rigid functionalist conceptualisation of culture as a universal adaptive mechanism (Shanks and Tilley 1987b, 94). As a result, human agency was subordinated to environmental determinism, within which people were depicted as culturally-determined automatons (Jones 1997, 117). In the end, functionalist approaches were unable to account for cultural diversity or social change.

In *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (1984) Giddens argued that society is created and maintained through the actions of knowledgeable human agents, whose actions are in turn constrained by patterns of behaviour learnt and deemed appropriate within that society. Giddens (1984, xxiii) was emphasising the human capacity to understand their actions as social agents, instead of merely as cultural puppets. He argued that people create the conditions and structures in which they live and that their actions are meaningful within that given context. Furthermore, the building of social structures is an ongoing and recursive process that is never really complete, but ongoing and always “in process” (Dobres and Hoffman 1999b, 3; Hodder 1987, 6). In other words, social agents are socially-embedded people interacting between the structures in which they exist and, paradoxically, which they create (see Dobres 2000, 4; Dobres and Robb 2000). Giddens’s theory of *Structuration* therefore appreciates the way in which social structures are both the medium and outcome of their production through human action. Or as Geertz (1973, 93) has phrased this point, “all these categories of evidence are the remains of models *for* reality as well as models *of* reality”.

Like Giddens, Bourdieu (1977) proposed a theory of “practice” in which social agents were both structuring and structured. Unlike Giddens, however, who did not identify specific arenas of social discourse, Bourdieu (1977, 89) emphasised that an individual’s awareness of their own social context is both socially and *materially* defined. For Bourdieu, inhabited space is the locale where understanding is generated – a concept he calls *habitus* – which is dependent on an individual’s understanding of social context, as experienced through the same individual’s senses. As such, the physicality of the human body and the world is a primary reference point; material culture therefore has no single, objective meaning. Instead material culture is imbued with many meanings, dependent upon the many discourses into which it is drawn,

since meaning only exists in the moment of human agency (Bourdieu 1984, xiii, 1, 170).

In 1997, Ian Morris (1997, 3) sought a return of archaeology to culture-history; not the culture-history as archaeologists had perceived it (Morris 2000, 19), but the New Culture History that had come to recognise both material culture and text as human responses to social events, usually in an effort to reshape those events for individual benefit (Brumfiel 2000, 249; Hunt 1989, 7-9; S. Jones 1997, 125-126; Morris 1997, 8). The ancient Greeks themselves make it clear in their writings that they saw material culture as being just as potent a medium in the construction of identity as the spoken word (Morris 1997, 11). Hence, Morris (*ibid*) concluded that all aspects of material culture can be viewed as symbolically constructing and contesting social categories. But taking cultural history seriously means thinking on all three temporal levels described by Braudel (1972, 21; 1980, 25-54): geographical time (*long durée*), social time, and human time. Archaeologists, until recently, had virtually ignored human time, which Barrett (1994, 47) suggested was due to the way archaeologists thought of “individuals... as given, pre-existing the material consequences of their actions.” Instead, we should “move away from asking what kinds of people made these conditions?”, to an understanding of what the possibilities were of being human within those material and historical conditions (Barrett 1994, 4-5). In other words, objects may have had different meanings for different people (Morris 1992, 17-18).

Aggregate approaches to material culture interpretation are too simplistic, because they fail to recognise the importance of subjective, knowledgeable agency. However, individuals who made, used or witnessed material culture did not necessarily understand it in the same way. Hence, the relationship between people, material culture and social structures is not static and cannot be deduced easily. A single historical reality cannot be determined because *it* never existed (Barrett 1994, 169, 171). As a result, context is vital to the interpretation of material culture as archaeologists seek to understand the fluid meaning ascribed to objects within a specific social context, as represented by the material realities within which objects are found. This approach has obvious implications for excavation strategy, recording and publication. Furthermore, it means each assemblage should be considered as a whole, and not just key components of these assemblages studied in isolation.

4.3.2 Implications for the Study of North Levantine Pottery

A socially-embedded agency approach to the study of pottery has been successfully applied to archaeological ceramics from various sites and regions across Europe and the Americas in recent years (e.g. Bowser 2000; Dobres 1999; Goodby 1998). Although pottery is considered an important and informative element of material culture in Levantine archaeology, the study of Iron Age pottery from the Northern Levant remains directed towards chronology, ethnicity, and cultural diffusion. The developments in ceramic studies in European and American archaeology since the 1960s highlight a number of methodological and analytical issues that have not been addressed in ceramic studies of the IA-NL. In particular, there are a number of practicalities preventing a more dynamic interpretation of pottery.

One of the most crucial issues that has not been addressed in the study of IA-NL pottery is the manner by which ceramic typologies are created. Typologies are fundamental in creating order out of ceramic data, but the nature of this “order” is rarely considered (Whiting 2007a, 78-79). The typology is seen as a “natural” component of material culture rather than the result of both ancient and modern behaviours (Sørensen 1997, 182). From where do the ceramic categories derive? Archaeologists appear to be unaware of the relationship between a modern typology and the social reality that the ceramic vessels emerged from in the past. This is especially the case for the archaeology of the IA-NL, where the lack of understanding of archaeological processes due to the reliance on textual sources means that different pottery types are simply regarded as type fossils for particular chronological periods and ethnic groups (§4.2.3). Furthermore, the categorisation of pottery appears to assess the similarity between objects as if the similarity itself was *the* meaning behind material culture patterning. However, the aim of a typology is not to understand similarity or dissimilarity, but to measure where similarity stops and dissimilarity begins.

Another important area in need of address is the description of ceramic fabrics. The fabric of pottery is rarely considered in published reports of IA-NL excavations. To take a recent example, Núñez’s (2004b) typology for the Iron Age cremation cemetery at Tyre-al Bass includes detailed discussions of surface treatment, decoration, shape, and parallels, but makes no mention of the vessel fabrics (see also

Schreiber 2003). The few reports that do discuss fabric do so in a summary manner; they simply state a general colour (e.g. orange – see Cecchini 1998 sherd descriptions opposite her figures) or generic term (e.g. common-ware, cooking-pot-ware – see Mazzone 1998a, 166-169) without compiling a ware series with detailed description (see Whincop 2007, Tab. 1). This tends to emphasise general similarities and negate any subtle differences in fabric within and between sites. Instead, a discussion of fabric should include a systematic investigation and recording of *all* its constituents; i.e. paste (colour, density, particle size), inclusions (type, colour, size, roundedness, concentration, sorting), firing technology, and surface treatment. Fabric analysis is crucial to the study of trade-patterns, raw material sources, production methods, technological constraints, and vessel function (Orton *et al.* 1993, 132-135). The lack of fabric analyses means the study of pottery can rarely move beyond description. While a small number of petrographic investigations of IA-NL pottery have been undertaken in recent years, the results are usually centred on vessel origins for the purpose of plotting cultural and population diffusion (Lagarce and Lagarce 2000), rather than for the identification of socio-technological behaviours. Hence, even when more progressive and scientific methods are adopted, they are made to fit existing methodologies, and are not used to challenge traditional frameworks.

There also seems to be an unawareness that the social and cultural context of pottery is essential to understanding a vessel's significance. The meaning of material culture is neither coincidental nor inherently objective, but constantly changing according to context. It is therefore only possible to understand the meaning of pottery in conjunction with an awareness of immediate context. The publication of IA-NL pottery rarely includes a systematic description of contexts; usually only the "significant" finds (vessels or architecture) warrant a detailed reconstruction of loci. For example, the majority of pottery from the Hama E "royal quarter" was simply assigned to a building, while the find-spot of the two Greek *skyphoi* sherds were recounted in detail (Riis 1965, 80. n.5-6). A fresh concern with context is likely to highlight the dynamic meanings behind ceramic production, function, use, consumption, and discard. Furthermore, since social boundaries are abstractions and ideological constructs, recognised differently and for different reasons by different people, an understanding of the social and cultural context of pottery can begin to highlight elements of group identity (Goodby 1998, 161; Stark 1998).

Though fabric, context, and typologies might be considered elementary components of archaeological ceramic analysis, work on the IA-NL has continued to rely on static description. The publication of Iron Age ceramics is often unsystematic, and cursory, with only an arbitrary selection of “important” or “significant” finds making it into publication, usually without explanation of selection procedure (e.g. Courbin 1990a; 1993b). Quantification of the complete assemblage is rarely included (e.g. Anderson 1988; Bikai 1978b), and comprehensive typologies are only recent phenomena (e.g. Núñez 2004b). The excavation and publication practices in the Northern Levant have meant that the spatial and functional analysis of ceramic assemblages is virtually impossible.

4.4 Conclusions

Traditional interpretations of pottery from the IA-NL owe less to close consideration of the data than to the tenacity of a disciplinary tradition that has continued to employ rather simplistic concepts regarding the meaning of material culture. The direct correlation of peoples and events in the historical narrative with material culture has resulted in a paradigm for pottery analysis that emphasises only the ethnic and chronological value of pottery. Hence, typo-chronological analyses of Iron Age pottery predominate.

Establishing meaningful reconstructions of the Iron Age requires careful stratigraphic and typological study of the archaeological record. Iron Age reconstructions based on the historical narrative provide only one particular perspective on “history”, a perspective that cannot be affirmed until the archaeological data is sufficiently interrogated so as to extract a framework that can be used with confidence. The ubiquity and dynamic nature of pottery implies that this is one of the most important resources for telling us about the lives of the people who used it, but to a large extent the potential is untapped. The solution is for archaeologists to actually engage with material culture in all its messy, contradictory reality, and seek explanations for cultural traits outside of the historical narrative.

While pottery was indeed chronologically sensitive and likely to reflect elements of cultural identity, ceramics were also an active agent in the negotiation of social

structures. To this end, new models of cultural change should emphasise the active role of pottery as social agent. Such an approach warrants a close engagement with *all* elements of material culture, rather than a superficial analysis of isolated categories of “significant” artefacts. Practically speaking, this means that archaeologists need to investigate the cultural context of all ceramic categories, and understand the complexities within a ceramic assemblage as a whole.

The overall aim of the present study was to undertake an analysis of the current flawed ceramic dataset to highlight the potential of alternative approaches to the study of Iron Age pottery for the Northern Levant. The intention was to demonstrate the value and potential of interpretations not based on the historical narrative. While no analytical method can be considered “perfect”, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 have shown that traditional interpretations of the archaeology are problematic and add very little to the historical narrative. So although imperfect, it is intended that the methods employed for the study of pottery throughout this thesis will demonstrate that new insights are possible even using the current unsatisfactory data.

SECTION TWO

Presentation of Iron Age Ceramic Data

CHAPTER FIVE

Form and Nature of the Ceramic Data

5.1 Introduction

In recent years, pottery has come to represent the key artifactual material for the archaeological investigation of the IA-NL. But considering the importance attributed to this artefact class, and expenditure of resources in its study and publication, it is surprising that pottery is presented in such a cursory manner. Pottery is one of the most important resources for telling us about the lives of the people who used it, but to a large extent the potential is ignored. The means for studying pottery has changed little since the first ceramic typologies were created for the Southern Levant early last century. Consequently, the study of Iron Age pottery has tended to focus on its chronological and cultural value. Closely intertwined with this approach is a view of pottery simply as the passive products of society; the details of the societies within which these vessels played an important part have largely been ignored. In other words, it has been the material itself, not the manner by which it was produced, consumed, and discarded that has been the focus of archaeological enquiry.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the nature of the ceramic data that was investigated in the present study; an account of how the ceramic data was conceived, collected, classified, and stored. It is designed to provide the “background” for the later analyses. A brief overview of the electronic database is also presented, so as to help the reader envisage various weights and biases in the data. The charts presented throughout this chapter provide only broad summaries of a few categories; the author feels the need to stress that these are not intended to present an analysis of the data, which is undertaken in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8. A central theme in this chapter is that the level of detail originally desired for this study was not available, either because published data was insufficient or the collection of new data was limited. Hence, the current study became an exercise in testing the limits of the current dataset.

5.2 Collection of Data

We have seen from Chapter 2 that the Northern Levant was not a well-defined cultural entity during the Iron Age (§2.2.1). From the outset, the present study sought to avoid imposing rigid borders onto the data. For this reason, a study-area was proposed that was significantly larger than the modern borders of Lebanon and Syria, in order for the ceramic data to reveal its own borders and limitations (**Maps 1 and 2**). The original aim of the study was to visit ceramic archives from between 10 and 15 sites that had produced significant assemblages of Iron Age pottery within the study area. These key sites were to provide detailed information that could then be extrapolated for a broader perspective.

Archive visits were initially envisaged as the primary means for data collection for this study. It was hoped that an analysis of fabric, surface treatment, technology, colour, and shape could be undertaken firsthand and the detailed data be collated into a single database. Access to ceramic archives, however, proved to be a complicated and inconsistent process. Determining where each site's ceramic assemblage was stored was rarely straightforward. The pottery from a number of sites had been lost (e.g. Aleppo citadel; the tell at Akhziv) or broadly dispersed (e.g. Byblos; Deve Höyük; al Mina); while at other sites much of the pottery was discarded (e.g. Arslan Tash). Moreover, identified ceramic archives were not always available for firsthand study – usually due to time constraints, concerns over academic property, limited access, or lack of an appropriate contact. As a result, the number of archives available for study was significantly smaller than originally envisaged. The first few archive visits in 2004 only seemed to confirm the need for a change in strategy; during these visits access to material varied greatly from a cursory “talk through” the fabrics and forms, to an “open store-room” policy (e.g. the Hama material in the National Museum in Copenhagen), and sharing of unpublished typologies and data (e.g. Pella; Tell Arqa). It was clear that the data to be obtained from archive visits and first-hand study of pottery was likely to be greatly varied in quantity and quality. The current study would instead have to rely largely on published data; rendering a meaningful study of fabric and technology impossible.

The revised strategy was to identify Iron Age excavations in the study area that had published ceramic assemblages (54 sites in total). Data collection, therefore, took the form of obtaining all publications of ceramic material from those excavations. Nevertheless, site and archive visits remained an important means for supplementing the published data. Unpublished data was obtained for Tell Ahmar, Tell Ta'yinat, Tell Qarqur, Hama, Tell Nebi Mend, Tell Mishrife, Tell Arqa, Tel Dan, Hazor, Megiddo, Beth Shan, Tel Rehov, and Pella (the author is grateful to the Project Directors and excavation staff from each of these excavations). The resulting ceramic database is reliant on the minimal level of information present in publications; i.e. decoration and shape. Furthermore, data analysis had to be based on presence/absence alone as published ceramics rarely included sufficient data to allow a quantified investigation.

5.3 The Ordering of Data

From the published and unpublished ceramic catalogues, photocopies of 12,000 Iron Age vessels were collected from the study area, with each site, context and publication reference noted on the back. Before the ceramic material could be collated and analysed, however, it was important to categorise and assess the data.

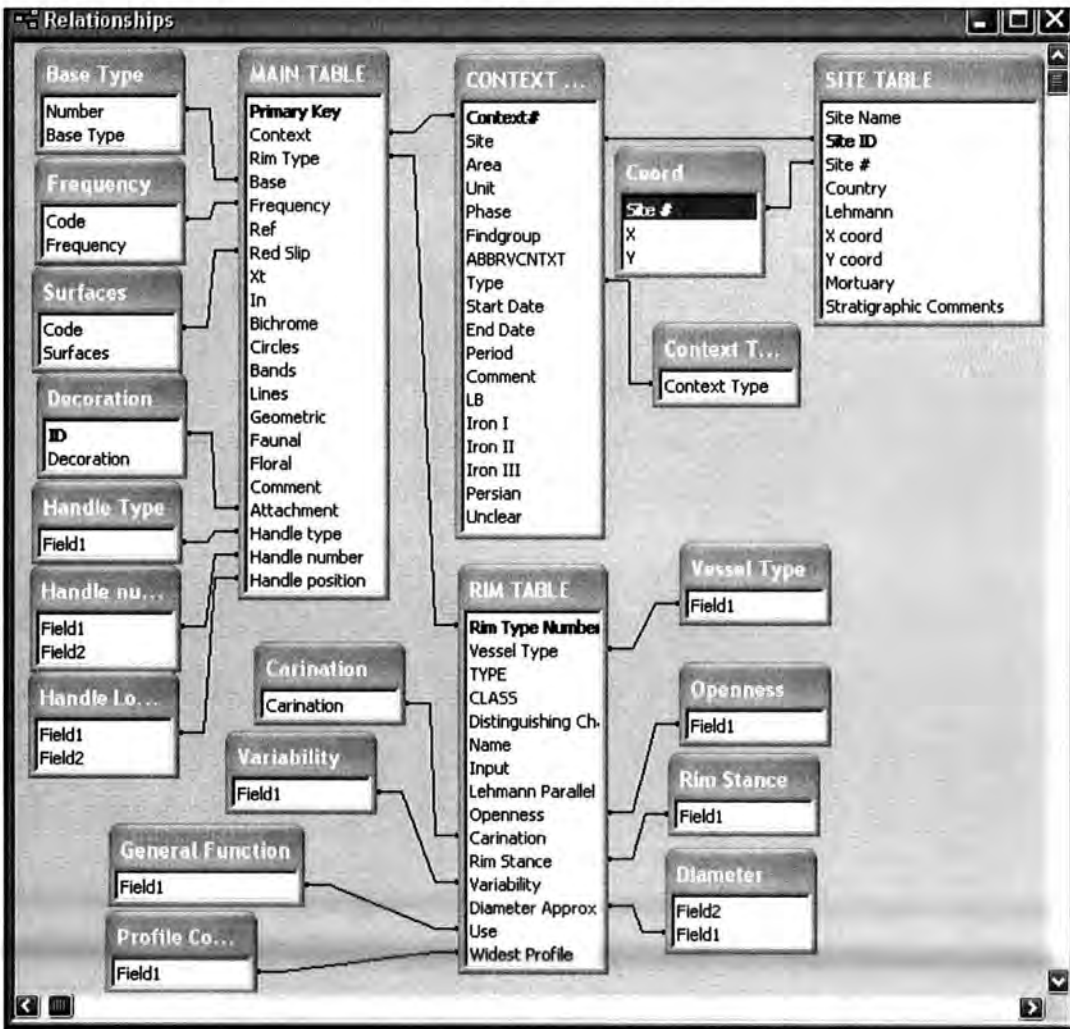
The first task of categorising the data involved the construction of a ceramic typology for the entire dataset, the practicalities of which are discussed in Chapter 6. Suffice to say here that no existing typologies were imposed on to the data. Rather, the ceramic material was categorised according to overall profile (e.g. hole-mouth cooking-pot), followed by more-subtle variations in form (e.g. bevelled lip, thickened lip). While the end result has parallels with Lehmann's (1996) typology, it is not directly influenced by either his methods or conclusions. The second task of assessing the data was concerned with the reliability of "contexts". For this purpose, a critical review was undertaken for each site in the study area (**Chapter 3**). It was important that unstratified (e.g. Byblos, Nayrab) and temporally inconclusive (e.g. Khirbet Silm; Tell Rachidieh Tomb II) contexts had minimal influence in determining patterns. Once the typology was constructed and the stratigraphic survey complete, the 12,000 ceramic vessels were ready for entry into an electronic database

that would aid spatial and temporal analysis. For this purpose, an MS Access database was constructed, the structure of which is outlined below.

5.3.1 MS Access Database

In constructing an electronic database for this type of data there were a number of variables that had to be considered. In particular, the database needed to incorporate different levels of contextual, temporal, and typological information, whilst also allowing for each individual vessel's distinctiveness. To this end an MS Access database was created by linking four primary tables; SITE TABLE, CONTEXT TABLE, RIM TABLE, and MAIN TABLE (included on appended CD). **Figure 5.1** visually depicts the relationships of the four primary tables and as well as the many "look-up" tables.

Figure 5.1: Screenshot of relationships in MS Access database



The SITE TABLE contains base level information for each site; name and geographic co-ordinates being the most important. The co-ordinates, which were important for the production of distribution maps in ARCGIS, were not derived from any “official” source (as many sites do not appear on “official” maps), but were approximated from maps in excavation reports. The SITE TABLE contains 54 different sites, linked to over 600 contexts in the CONTEXT TABLE.

The CONTEXT TABLE contains information relevant to each individual context within the database. Each entry represents either a whole site (e.g. Joya), a broad occupational phase (e.g. Megiddo VIA), or a specific Area and Level (e.g. Tell Afis Area E₁ Level 9c); the level of detail was determined by publication. This table is linked to the MAIN TABLE via the unique “Context#”, as depicted in **Figure 5.1**. Another key field was the context “Type” field, which recorded the nature of each context; i.e. mortuary or settlement. The Yes/No “check-boxes” for the different periods were the means for recording a context’s chronological value.

The RIM TABLE contains details of the ceramic typology. Rim and general profile characteristics are described according to terms chosen from linked “look-up” tables (**Figure 5.1**). The RIM TABLE contains 264 entries representing 193 final CLASSES. The base form and overall decoration were not included in the RIM TABLE as these were not always considered characteristic of a vessel’s CLASS.

Figure 5.2: Screenshot of MAIN TABLE (design view)

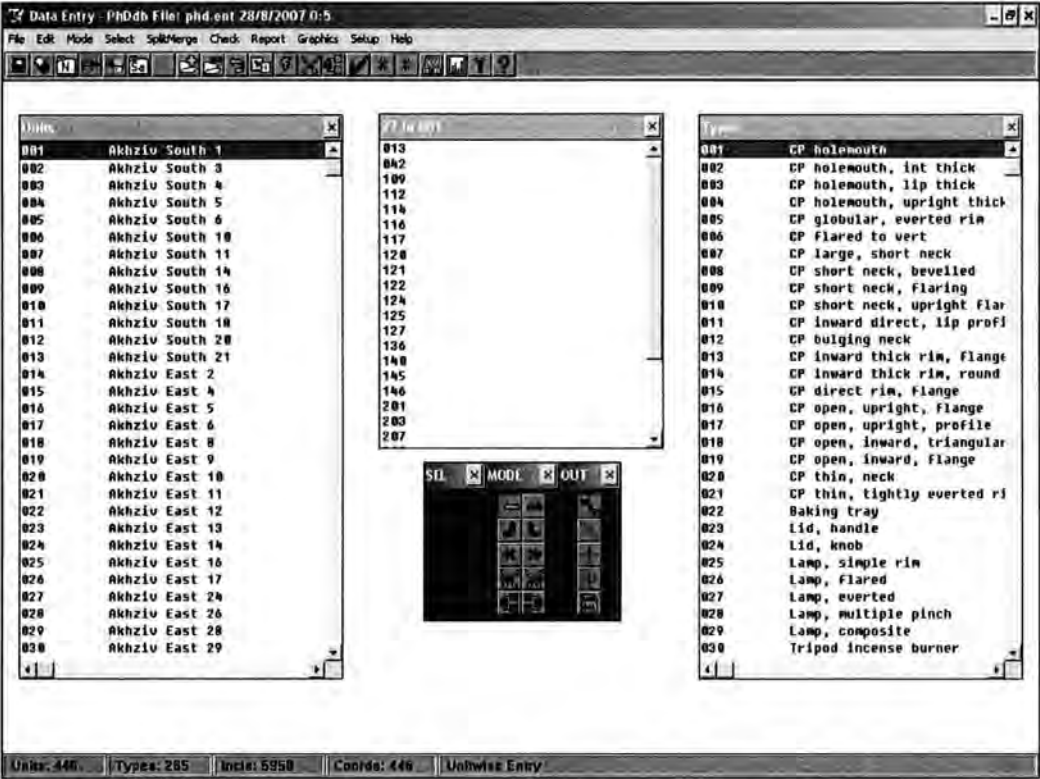
Field Name	Data Type	Description
Primary Key	AutoNumber	
Context	Number	Linked to CONTEXT TABLE
Rim Type	Number	Linked to RIM TABLE
Base	Text	Linked to Base Type table
Frequency	Number	1=Present; 2=common
Ref	Text	Publication reference
Red Slip	Number	Which surface, if any?
Xt	Yes/No	Exterior Paint
In	Yes/No	Interior Paint
Bichrome	Yes/No	If No then paint is monochrome
Circles	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Bands	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Lines	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Geometric	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Faunal	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Floral	Yes/No	Type of painted motif
Comment	Text	
Attachment	Number	Functional/ decorative alterations
Handle type	Text	
Handle number	Number	None, one, two, or more
Handle position	Number	Where on the vessel?

The MAIN TABLE is where other tables come together to represent the presence of a ceramic incident. Each entry represents a combination of CLASS, decoration, base, and attachment. Hence, each entry could represent a single vessel or group of like-vessels, as long as all constituent parts were the same; the “Frequency” field represents only presence or common presence, rather than actual numbers. In the end, 12,000 pots (not all could be assigned to a CLASS) were represented by c. 8000 incidents. Each of the MAIN TABLE fields is briefly described in **Figure 5.2**.

5.3.2 WinBASP

To aid analysis of the data (**Chapters 7 & 8**), the dataset was also entered into the Bonn Archaeological Statistics Package (WinBASP v. 5.43). This program was used to undertake Seriation (§7.2), Correspondence Analysis (§8.2) and Cluster Analysis (§8.3). Without going into detail here, **Figure 5.3** depicts WinBASP data-entry screen.

Figure 5.3: Screenshot of WinBASP data-entry screen



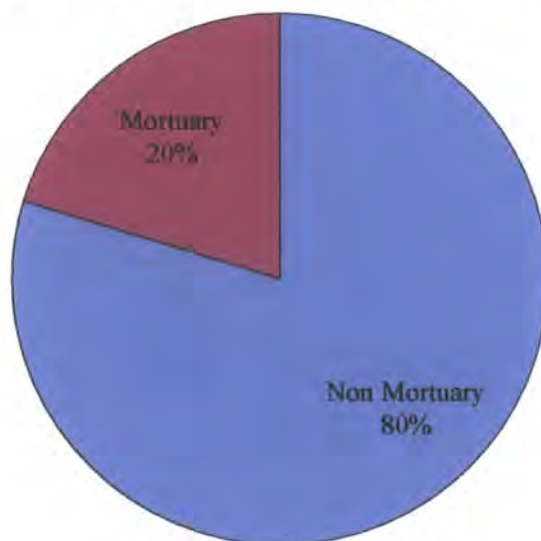
The “window” on the left contains the contexts (or “Units”), while the “window” on the right contains each ceramic CLASS (or “Type”). The middle “window” lists the incidents; either of Types in Units, or Units in Types. While WinBASP contains a

facility for importing data, version 5.43 was unable to read MS Access files. Consequently, the entire database was entered manually into WinBASP.

5.4 The Data

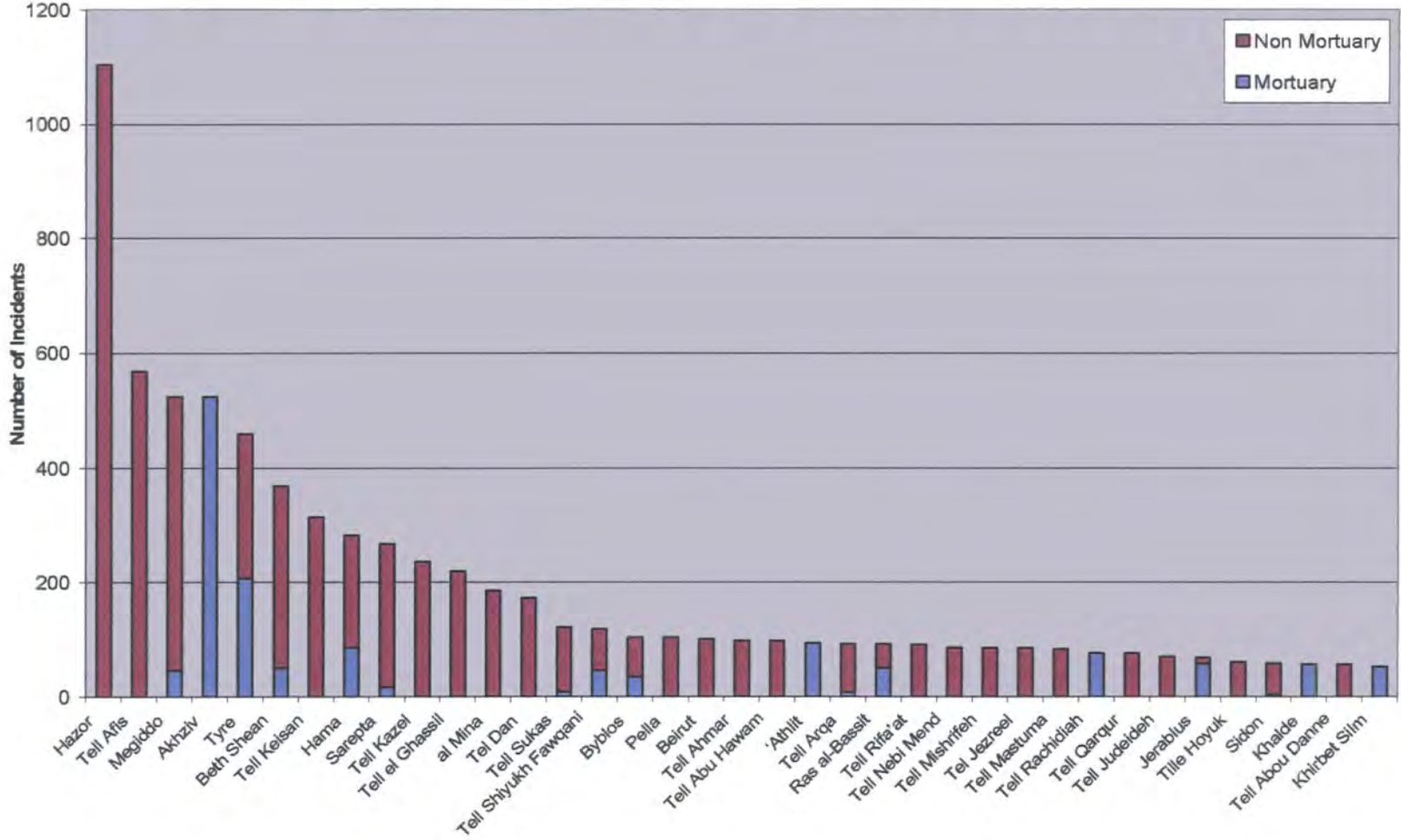
The collection, classification, and collation of the dataset was a significant undertaking within the scope of this thesis. The complete dataset is presented in **Appendix B**, arranged according to CLASS, and **Appendix C**, arranged according to context. The dataset consists of c. 8000 different incidents representing c. 12,000 vessels across c. 600 different contexts from 54 different sites. The database represents vessels from mortuary and non-mortuary contexts alike, though mortuary contexts represent only one fifth of all contexts (**Chart 5.1**).

Chart 5.1: Proportion of database incidents - context type



Though the majority of Iron Age contexts in Lebanon were mortuary contexts, many of these sites produced comparatively small amounts of pottery. This is clearly shown in **Chart 5.2** below, which depicts the number of incidents per site. This chart also highlights the large contribution to the database made by sites in the Southern Levant, with five of the seven largest assemblages coming from sites in this area. In sharp contrast, the inland Northern Levant has only two large assemblages amongst the ten biggest (i.e. Tell Afis and Hama). This confirms the general lack of knowledge regarding Iron Age pottery across the Northern Levant.

Chart 5.2: Number of database incidents according to site and distinguished by context type



Unfortunately, a chart that includes 54 sites on one axis is difficult to present clearly, therefore sites with less than 50 incidents were not included in **Chart 5.2**; these are, in decreasing order, Tell Ta'yinat, Joya, Kamid el Loz, Tell Sheikh Hassan, Tell Jum Kabir, Ain Dara, Zincirli, Ras Ibn Hani, Deve Höyük, Chatal Höyük, Qraye, Nayrab, Tel Rehov, Kefrik, Qasmieh, and Tambourit. Together these sites accounted for only 133 mortuary incidents, and 264 non-mortuary incidents; or less than 0.5% of the entire database.

To further illustrate the nature of the database, each of the 54 sites were attributed to one of four broad regions; inland Southern Levant, inland Northern Levant, the Mediterranean coast, and the Beqa' Valley. These somewhat arbitrary regions were designed only to loosely group the data to identify any broad spatial bias in the data. The two Beqa' Valley sites were grouped separately because it was not clear to which "region" they belong. Two pie-charts were produced; the first (**Chart 5.3**) represents the percentage of sites in the database according to region, while the second (**Chart 5.4**) depicts the percentage of database incidents according to region.

Chart 5.3: Percentage of sites in database – broad region

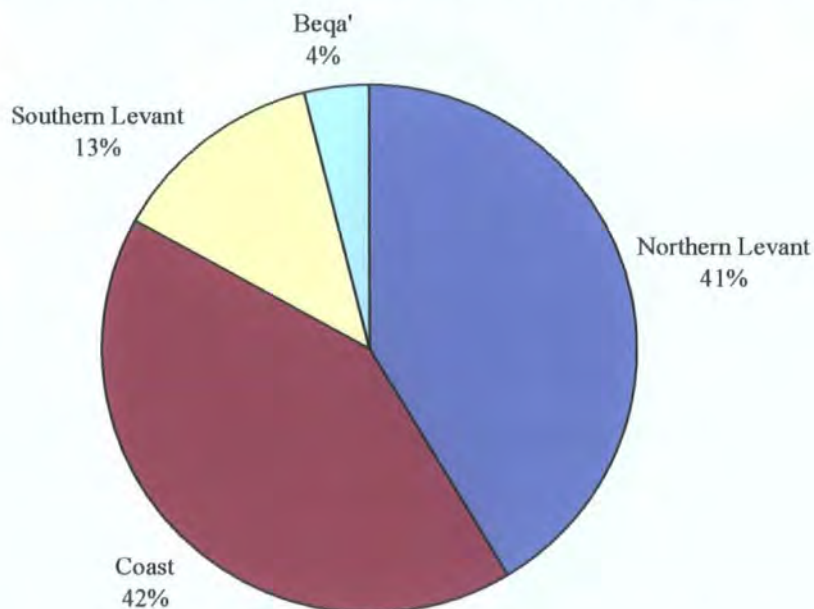
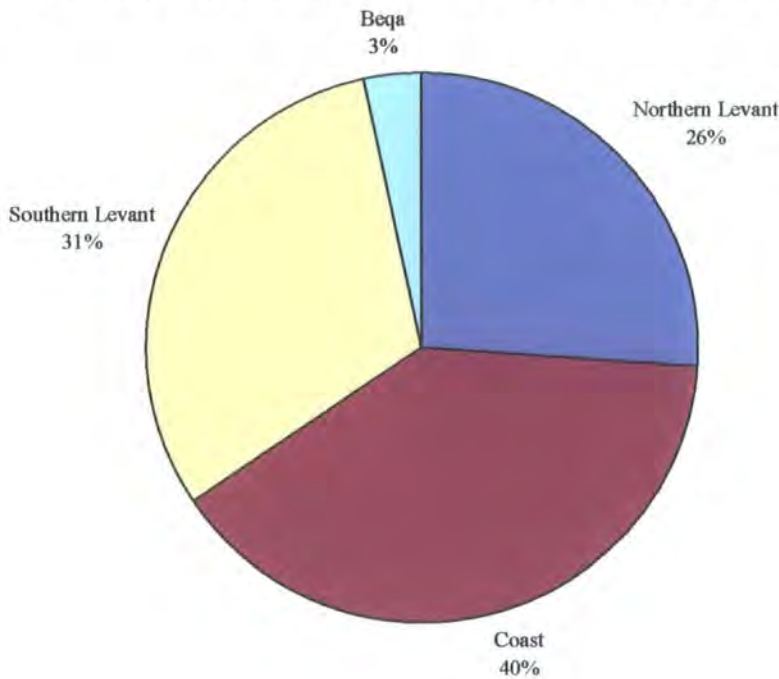


Chart 5.3 illustrates a clear predominance of North Levantine and coastal sites within the database; as one might expect from a study of inland and coastal Northern Levant. However, when compared to **Chart 5.4**, the small amount of Southern

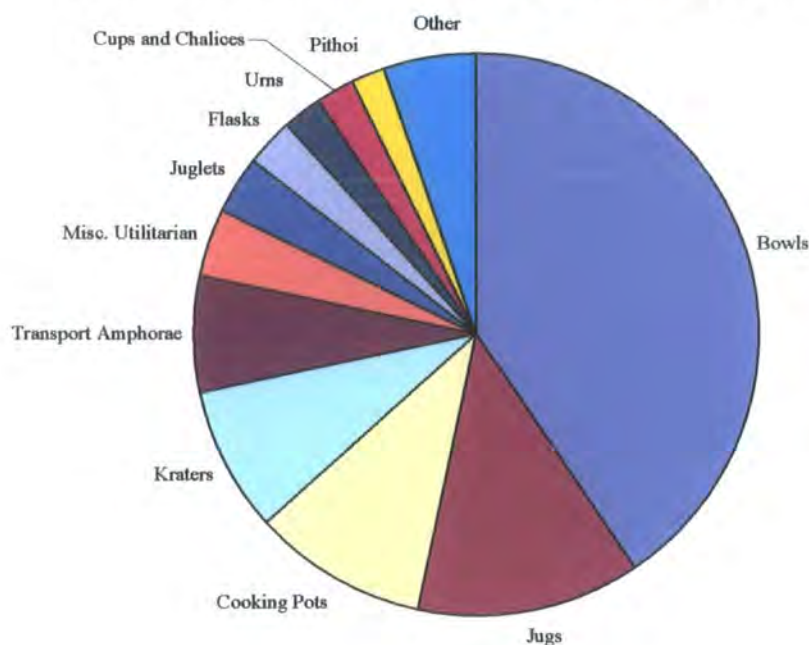
Levantine sites contributed a disproportionately high percentage of incidence data, which reflects much more extensive publications for this region. The coastal and Beqa' regions contributed a number of incidents roughly equivalent to their representation, while inland Northern Levant was poorly represented. These charts demonstrate the presence of a geographic bias in the data, one that was largely unavoidable because of the infrequent and only partial publication of ceramics from the IA-NL.

Chart 5.4: Percentage of incidents in database – broad region



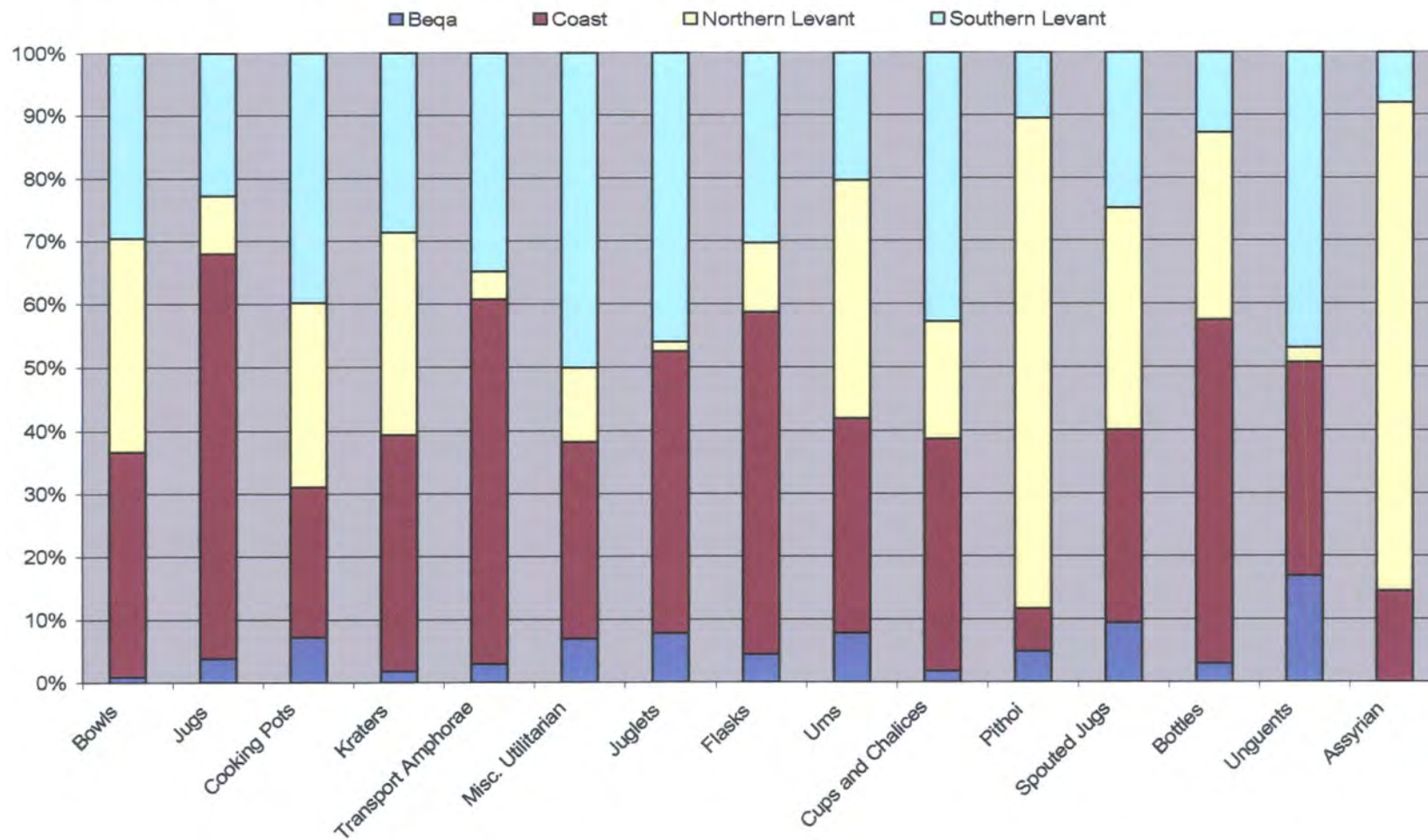
The above charts presented an overview of the units (site contexts) within the database; a brief overview of the ceramic forms is presented below. **Chart 5.5** depicts the percentage of incidents within the database according to vessel function, using categories outlined in the typology (**Chapter 6**). What is immediately obvious from this chart is that bowls constitute a significantly large percentage (c. 40%) of all incident data. To make **Chart 5.5** easier to read, the four functional categories with the lowest representation (i.e. Assyrian forms; bottles, Unguents, Spouted vessels) were grouped together to form the “Other” category.

Chart 5.5: Percentage of incidents in database - vessel function



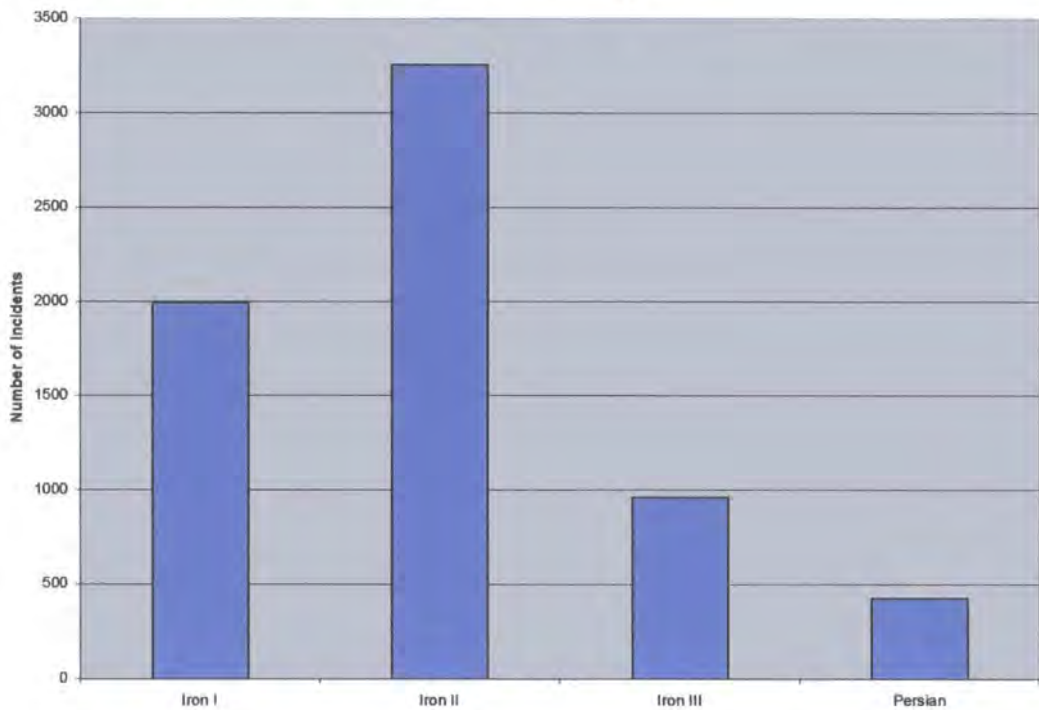
The trends in **Chart 5.5** are generally self-explanatory. However, this same data becomes particularly interesting when regional divisions are introduced. Consequently, **Chart 5.6** (overleaf) depicts the percentage of each functional category according to region. For example, it shows that less than 1% of all bowls derived from Beqa' Valley contexts, 36% from coastal contexts, 34% from the Northern Levant, and 29% from the Southern Levant. There are a few points worthy of brief comment here, but the majority of patterns are discussed at length in **Chapter 7** and **Chapter 8**. The fact that the vast majority of jugs were found along the Mediterranean coast is all the more significant considering jugs are the second-most common functional category in the database. The pouring of liquids with ceramic jugs appears to have been an important element in coastal society, a point emphasised by the predominance of bottles, juglets and flasks in this same region. Transport amphorae were also concentrated on the coast. Pithoi, on the other hand, were predominantly found across the inland Northern Levant. Kraters, cooking-pots, and urns have a presence in each region roughly equivalent to the proportion of incident data for each region (cf. **Chart 5.4** and **Chart 5.6**).

Chart 5.6: Percentage of functional categories according to region



In addition to the regional bias in the data, there is an apparent temporal one also. To demonstrate this point, all “secure” and well-defined contexts associated with each period were isolated. **Chart 5.7** depicts the number of incidents according to period as derived from period-specific contexts, while **Chart 5.8** displays the number of sites represented by “secure” contexts within each period.

Chart 5.7: Number of database incidents - period



What is immediately evident from **Chart 5.7** is that the vast majority of “temporally-secure” incidents in the database derive from the Iron II period. This is directly related to the fact that Iron II contexts were definitively identified at more sites in the study area, as shown in **Chart 5.8** and **Maps 3-6**. The number of Iron I incidents is also directly proportional to the number of sites with “secure” Iron I contexts. The Iron III and Persian periods, however, have significantly less representation in the database, despite a reasonable number of sites with “secure” Iron III and Persian period contexts. To view this from a slightly different perspective, “secure” Iron I contexts were identified at 25 sites in the study area, accounting for 1995 database incidents; i.e. an average of 80 incidents per site. The Iron II period was similarly represented with 79 incidents per site. In comparison, the Iron III and Persian periods were under-represented, with 45 and 20 incidents per site, respectively.

Chart 5.8: Number of sites with “secure period” assemblages

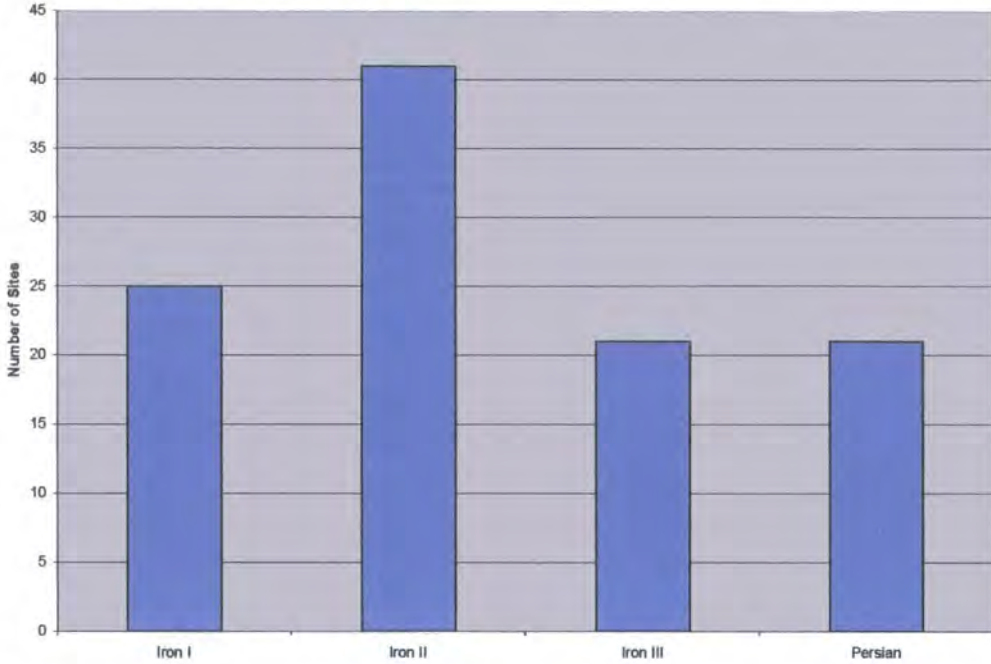
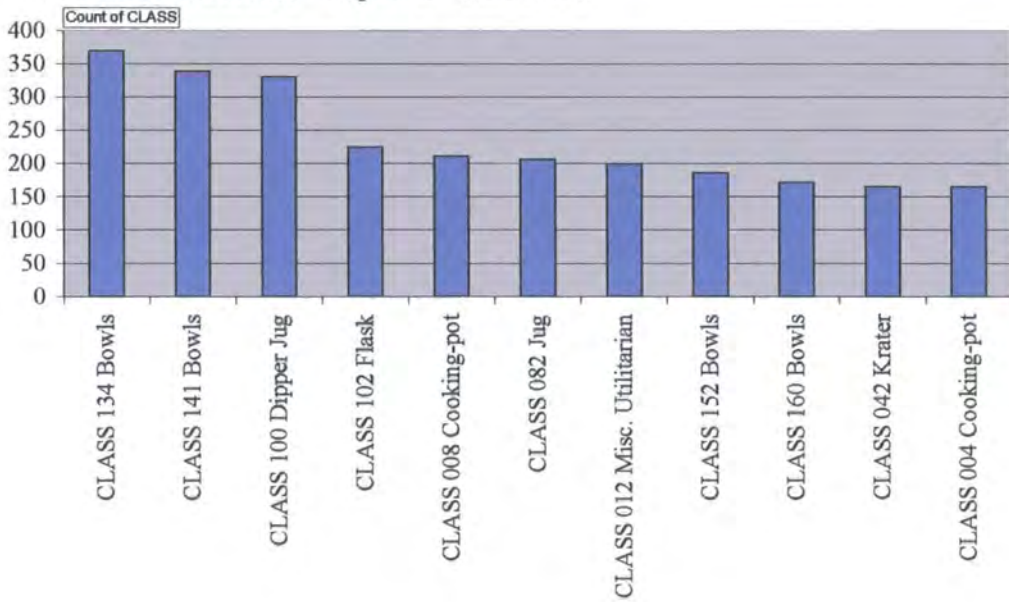


Chart 5.9 presents an overview of the most frequently encountered ceramic CLASSES within the database. Most of the bowl CLASSES within this chart are well-distributed across the study area. On the contrary, the pouring and cooking forms were generally restricted to the coastal and Southern Levant zones (e.g. CLASS 082 jug; CLASS 042 kraters).

Chart 5.9: Database “Top Ten” CLASSES



The above collection of charts was intended as a visual introduction to the nature and weight of the data. The evident patterns raised some interesting questions and helped direct later investigation within the database, as well as help explain apparent trends in the data. These charts also highlighted the potential insight that unconventional approaches can bring to the study of Iron Age ceramics.

5.5 Limitations in the Data

While the excavation of Iron Age strata has intensified in the Northern Levant, publication remains sporadic and inconsistent. Hence, the dataset used for the present study had a number of unavoidable limitations. Firstly, for both the published and unpublished pottery, quantitative data were insufficient. The criterion by which archaeologists collected, discarded and published the pottery was rarely known, though one may assume that these criteria were rarely the same. As a result, the typology recorded only the presence or absence of a particular CLASS within a particular context, however that was defined. Secondly, contextual data was not always sufficient. While the dataset within this study was originally intended to provide quantified contextual data, it was soon evident that this could not be satisfactorily completed. Such an approach required ceramic assemblages to have been excavated and published to a very high standard, which was clearly not the case. Moreover, the misapplication, or misunderstanding, of the stratigraphic method resulted in a number of ill-defined contexts; these contexts were included in the dataset and noted as “Unstratified”. Finally, independent/absolute chronological data is invariably missing. This research was never intended for chronological purposes: the sequence is outlined to serve as a relative chronological framework only. So as to avoid circular reasoning, the cross-dating of local assemblages with extra-regional sequences (via Greek and Cypriot imports) was not attempted.

5.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has presented an overview of the ceramic data that is investigated in the following chapters. Though originally conceived as an investigation of fabric and surface treatment technologies in the IA-NL, the limited nature of available data shifted the focus of this study onto distribution patterns of pottery shape. The above

discussion recounted the means by which the revised data was collected and entered into MS Access and WinBASP databases; the primary tools for later analyses. This allows for an understanding of how the data is structured and the different types of parameters imposed onto the data. Section 5.4 also provided a cursory glimpse of the data so as to reveal the general form of the final dataset; which categories dominate, which sites are under-represented, which regions were over-represented. In addition, the different regional weights in the data emphasise the need for a study such as this; the pottery of the IA-NL is generally under-represented and poorly-understood.

CHAPTER SIX

Typological Patterns in the Data

6.1 Introduction

A necessary part of any regional ceramic study is to establish meaningful categories of data that can produce patterns whilst allowing for significant diversity to exist within and across categories. It is not just similarity and dissimilarity that are interesting but also where the similarity ends and dissimilarity begins. Consequently, the ceramic typology that was to be used in the current study needed to be flexible and allow for variations in the data. If typological criteria were too rigid, then diversity would be lost as vessels were “shoe-horned” into static categories. As a result, the typology presented below, and illustrated in **Figures 1-54**, includes significant variation within some categories. This can be contrasted with Lehmann’s (1996) typology, which consisted of over 500 Forms for only the later part of the Iron Age. This was the result of too many variables being used to define typological categories.

The practicalities of creating the below typology were time-consuming, but important in allowing the data to reveal meaningful categories. The initial exercise was to obtain a ceramic drawing for every known Iron Age vessel from the study area. This included the photocopying of numerous excavation reports, the drawing of ceramics first-hand, and the receipt of unpublished ceramic catalogues and typologies from a number of project directors. Whenever possible the Iron Age site was visited by the author, so that ceramic categories could be studied and discussed with excavation staff (§5.2). The final result was a collection of ceramic drawings and notes for over 15,000 individual vessels. Each vessel had its site and context details (as available) written on the back. This large corpus of illustrations was then divided according to sixteen broad categories, primarily derived from functional considerations: cooking-pots; miscellaneous utilitarian; transport-amphorae; pithoi; kraters; urns/storage-amphorae; spouted-amphorae; jugs; juglets; flasks; unguents; spouted-jugs; bottles; Assyrian bottles and cups; cups and chalices; and bowls. These

broad categories were then simply laid out before the author and general similarities in shape were slowly grouped together into a CLASS (e.g. CLASS 001; 002; 003). Variations in lip-shape, base or decoration were not always considered significant enough to warrant category distinction. When there was persistent variation within a CLASS, additional sub-classes were created (e.g. CLASS 001a; 001b; 001c). The final typology contains 193 CLASSES, which consists of 264 different forms. Only once the typology was created were vessels, and their accompanying contextual information, entered into an Access database, where note was taken of base type, surface treatment, decoration and any other functional attachments.

This chapter presents the typology and any apparent trends within each CLASS or sub-CLASS by discussing, as systematically as possible, a number of specific points. The presence/absence nature of the data prevented a true statistical treatment of these trends; instead terms such as “rare”, “known”, “common” or “typical” are used to relay degrees of “quantification”. If no base, surface or attachment information is available, then these categories are omitted. Reference is also made to figures and key distribution maps found in **Volume II**; the complete collection of distribution maps can be found on the appended CD (**CD/Distribution Maps/***).

Description: The CLASS is described briefly (key forms are noted in **bold**)

Distinction: Distinguishing factors between any Sub-CLASSES are presented here

Bases: Base forms are listed, with the most-abundant or typical presented in **bold**.

Surfaces: Decorative techniques are outlined

Attachments: The nature and position of functional attachments; e.g. spouts, handles

Distribution: When and where the CLASS appeared is briefly outlined, with the most-abundant period/s presented in **bold**.

Parallels: When possible, the current typology links CLASSES to Lehman’s (1996) typology for the Late Iron Age of Syria and Lebanon. Modern geographic terms are used here to help describe smaller areas of the Northern Levant.

Comments: Any additional comments not covered by the above categories.

6.2 COOKING-POTS

6.2.1 CLASS 001 (Hole-mouth cooking-pots) (Maps 07; 08)

The distinctive feature of the hole-mouth cooking-pot is its lack of a neck; the mouth is a simple opening, formed by an in-turning rim. The widest point of the spherical body is the waist. The four sub-classes included here bear different lips. Despite a few late Iron I examples, hole-mouth cooking-pots are the predominant cooking-pot form throughout inland Northern Levant during the Iron II and Iron III periods.

6.2.1.1 CLASS 001a (Figure 1)

Distinction: Unthickened lip with bevelled edge

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Occasional pressed band under rim

Attachments: Some flat-strap handles under rim

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II/Iron III** (inland Northern Levant); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 438; 449

Comments: Earliest examples extend from late Iron I contexts. Atypical examples (upright and less-pronounced curve) are known from Hazor (Ben Tor *et al.* 1997, Photo III.35) and Tyre (Bikai 1978b, 50, CP 2).

6.2.1.2 CLASS 001b (Figure 1)

Distinction: Internally thickened lip

Attachments: Flat-strap handles below rim are common

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (inland Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 440

Comments: One coastal example known from Tell Arqa.

6.2.1.3 CLASS 001c (Figure 1)

Distinction: Internally and externally thickened lip

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (inland Northern Levant); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 439

Comments: One coastal example known from Tell Arqa.

6.2.1.4 CLASS 001d (Figure 1)

Distinction: Almost upright rim, deeper and less-hemispherical form

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (Tell Afis and Tell Mastuma only)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 441

Comments: Possible local variant.

6.2.2 CLASS 002 (Figure 2)

Description: Hemispherical profile with short-everted rim.

Distribution: **Iron II** (No pattern discernible); Iron III

Comments: The lack of discernible pattern in distribution implies poor definition. Vessels of similar form with painted decoration or Red-Slip are known, and are not included within the database (e.g. Badre 1997b, Fig. 34a.8, 11; Blaylock 1999, Fig. 11.16; Cecchini 1998, Fig. 35.5; Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 70.13). The Nayrab example was the receptacle for an infant burial. **POOR TYPE**

6.2.3 CLASS 003 (Not Illustrated)

Description: The CLASS 003 cooking pot is characterised by an inward rim with a simple lip that flares up toward the vertical.

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III (not well-defined)

Comments: CLASS 003 appears to be poorly-defined.

6.2.4 CLASS 004 (Short-neck cooking-pots) (Maps 09; 10)

The distinctive feature of CLASS 004 is the short flaring neck. These vessels are widest at the lower waist and subtly rounded base, which gives a sagging appearance. The four sub-classes are differentiated by the treatment of the lip.

6.2.4.1 CLASS 004a (Figure 2)

Distinction: Large cooking-pot with flaring rim and externally thickened, rounded lip

Bases: **Round**

Attachments: Two handles between rim and shoulder, oval in section

Distribution: **Iron II** (Lebanon, north of Southern Levant); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 445

Comments: Four examples derive from mortuary contexts on the Lebanese coast.

6.2.4.2 CLASS 004b (Figure 2)

Distinction: Short-neck with triangular or bevelled lip exterior

Attachments: Two handles oval in section connected to rim

Distribution: Iron I (Inland Syria; Lebanon, Palestine coast); **Iron II** (Lebanon and Palestine coast); Iron III (Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 450

Comments: Some examples derive from mortuary contexts.

6.2.4.3 CLASS 004c (Figure 3)

Distinction: Short flaring neck with rounded lip profile

Attachments: Two handles commonly connect rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (well-spread); **Iron II** (Lebanon); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 454; 455; 457

Comments: The few examples from inland Northern Levant bear uncharacteristically tight flare; otherwise distribution is reasonably well-defined.

6.2.4.4 CLASS 004d (Figure 3)

Distinction: Short flaring neck, thin lip with slight external depression

Attachments: Handles round in section

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (Lebanon, northern Palestine); Iron III

6.2.5 CLASS 005 (Figure 3)

Description: Characterised by an inwardly direct rim with depressed lip exterior.

Attachments: Two handles connecting the rim and shoulder are common

Distribution: **Iron I; Iron II**; Iron III (poorly defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 444

6.2.6 CLASS 006 (Figure 3; Map 011)

Description: These cooking-pots are characterised by short, bulging necks

Attachments: Handles connect the shoulder and rim, but vary in number: two are standard, though one-handled and unhandled examples are known.

Distribution: **Iron I** (southern Lebanon, northern Palestine); **Iron II** (Iron I pattern plus Homs Basin area); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 448; 453

6.2.7 CLASS 007 (Map 12)

The CLASS 007 cooking-pot is characterised by an inwardly direct rim with heavily thickened and rounded lip. The two sub-classes are differentiated by the presence or absence of a lip depression.

6.2.7.1 CLASS 007a (Figure 4)

Distinction: Inwardly direct rim with an externally thickened and depressed lip, occasionally protruding to form a flange

Attachments: Two ovoid handles connect the rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (southern Lebanon, northern Palestine, Beqa' and Orontes Valleys); Iron III (northern Palestine)

6.2.7.2 CLASS 007b (Figure 4)

Distinction: Inwardly direct rim with thickened lip exterior, round in profile.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Some examples of decorated or slipped surfaces

Attachments: Handles are common.

Distribution: No patterns discernible

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 147; 446; 451

Comments: The mixed data do not characterise a well-defined CLASS and may include other vessel categories.

6.2.8 CLASS 008 (Open cooking-pot) (Maps 13;14)

CLASS 008 cooking-pots are characterised by open, shallow profiles with round base and a near vertical rim that commonly bears a flange of varying size. The pots are generally wider than they are high, leaving the interior open and unrestricted. While handles are a common feature on cooking pots, only 20% of CLASS 008 cooking-pots bear direct evidence for the presence of handles. Five sub-classes are included within CLASS 008 and are differentiated on flange length and rim stance. CLASS 008 are considered by Ben Ami (2001) to be characteristic of the Palestinian Iron I and early Iron II period.

6.2.8.1 CLASS 008a (Figure 4)

Distinction: Flanged cooking-pot rims with open-stance but too fragmentary to be otherwise classified.

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron III

Additional comments: Not a cohesive category

6.2.8.2 CLASS 008b (Figure 4)

Distinction: Inwardly oblique rim with external flange

Attachments: Two oval handles occasionally connect rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (southern Beqa' Valley; northern Palestine)

6.2.8.3 CLASS 008c (Figure 5)

Distinction: Upright rim with external flange

Bases: **Round**; Flat

Attachments: Handles are rare

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (southern Beqa' Valley; northern Palestine)

Comments: Almost identical distribution between CLASSES 008b and 008c suggests that the distinction between an upright and inward rim is arbitrary.

6.2.8.4 CLASS 008d (Figure 5)

Distinction: Upright rim with triangular lip exterior

Attachments: Handles are rarely evident

Distribution: **Iron I** (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Tell Kazel; Tell el Ghassil); Iron III (Tell Keisan)

Comments: Cooking-pot rims from Iron I contexts at Ain Dara resemble the CLASS 008d rims (Stone & Zimansky 1999, Fig. 70.200, 203), but the fragments are too small to confirm the identification.

6.2.8.5 CLASS 008e (Figure 5)

Distinction: Inwardly oblique rim with triangular lip exterior

Bases: **Round**; Flat

Attachments: Handles are rarely evident

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine)

6.2.9 CLASS 009 (Thin-walled cooking-pot with everted rim)

The CLASS 009 cooking pot with everted rim is characterised by the uniformly thin vessel walls that suggest wheel manufacture; this has also meant few full profiles are extant. Strap handles are commonly attached to the rim. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the relative tightness of the neck and lip stance.

6.2.9.1 CLASS 009a (Figure 6)

Distinction: Upright short neck, often externally thickened with triangular edge

Attachments: Two strap handles connect rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron III; **Persian** (North Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 458; 459

Comments: Three Iron II examples are known from Abou Danne, though they are probably residual; Lebeau (1983, 350) cannot offer any further eighth century BCE parallels (the Tyre parallel cited by Lebeau is a CLASS 004b rim).

6.2.9.2 CLASS 009b (Figure 6)

Distinction: Restricted neck with tightly-everted rim

Distribution: Late Iron Age

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 442; 443

Comments: No complete profile is evident. Small dataset.

6.2.10 CLASS 010 (Baking tray) (Figure 6)

Description: General form is a very wide and shallow plate with rounded base.

Surfaces: A large percentage of baking trays have a heavily scored and pocked underside. When turned upside down, as they were presumably used, over a fire, the rough surface would help keep food in place during cooking, and, more importantly, aid its removal – similar baking trays are still used by Bedouin to cook pancake shaped bread (Buhl 1983, 117).

Attachments: Unhandled examples are more common than handled. When present, handles are horizontally aligned along the rim edge.

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (primarily northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 437

6.3 MISCELLANEOUS UTILITARIAN

6.3.1 CLASS 011 (Lids)

While many different bowl-like vessels were used as lids in the ancient world (e.g. Núñez 2004a, Figs 100, 105, 106), the lids included within CLASS 011 are those that have no other apparent purpose. The two sub-classes are not extensively represented.

6.3.1.1 CLASS 011a (Figure 6)

Distinction: Characterised by upside-down shallow-bowl topped by a handle

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare (Tyre); fenestration is known (Tyre)

Attachments: Megiddo example has three handles.

Distribution: Only evident at Tyre and Megiddo

6.3.1.2 CLASS 011b (Figure 6)

Distinction: Characterised by deep dome with knob-like peak.

Attachments: A few examples bear additional small knobs and pierced lugs

Distribution: Iron II (found at only three sites in the study area)

6.3.2 CLASS 012 (Pinched Lamps) (Maps 15; 16)

CLASS 012 is characterised by lamps with a pinched lip, within which a wick would be placed and lit. The form is essentially that of a small, shallow bowl with one or more sides pinched together. Four sub-classes are distinguished according to the treatment of the lip, though bases also vary accordingly. CLASS 012 lamps are well represented throughout the Iron Age, but are particularly abundant during the Iron I and Iron II periods.

6.3.2.1 CLASS 012a (Figure 6)

Distinction: Outwardly oblique rim and unthickened lip.

Bases: **Round**; Flat; Disc

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Beqa' Valley; Mediterranean coast); Iron II (primarily northern Palestine)

Comments: CLASS 012a is already present at a number of sites during the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.61.70-76; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 135.1-6, 9-11; 1961, Pl. 267.1-8).

6.3.2.2 CLASS 012b (Figure 6)

Distinction: Slightly flaring, unthickened lip

Bases: Disc (Iron I); **Round**; Flat (Iron II)

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 423

6.3.2.3 CLASS 012c (Figure 6)

Distinction: Short everted lip

Bases: **Flat**; **Round**; Disc

Distribution: **Iron I** (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); **Iron II** (same as Iron I plus inland Syria); Iron III/Persian (primarily coastal)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 424; 425; 427; 429

Comments: The flattened bases are common in the Iron III and Persian periods, while disc and rounded bases are preferred during the early Iron Age. CLASS 012c is known from some Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 135.7-8, 12).

6.3.2.4 CLASS 012d (Figure 7)

Distinction: Multiple-pinched lip

Bases: Round; **Pedestal**

Surfaces: Two examples of Red-Slip are known

Distribution: Never abundant; distribution not well defined

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 422

6.3.3 CLASS 013 (Composite lamp) (Figure 7)

Description: The composite lamp is characterised by a small conical bowl fixed within a shallow bowl. Two separate rims are discernible, though neither is pinched.

Bases: **Round**; Flat

Surfaces: Three examples of Red-Slip are known from Megiddo

Attachments: An example from Tel Dan, which has a handle reaching from one side of the dish to the other (Biran 1994, Fig. 212), is atypical.

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III

Comments: CLASS 013 is known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 146.8-13; 1961, Pl. 275.20).

6.3.4 CLASS 014 (Tripod incense burner) (Figure 7)

Description: The tripod incense burner is a small, perforated vessel with tripod base.

Bases: Ring; Tripod

Surfaces: Red-Slip and painted decoration are known: the chevron design is known only from the Beqa' Valley.

Attachments: A large percentage bears a single vertical handle attached to the rim.

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (inland sites of northern Palestine and Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 466

Comments: The tripod incense burner tends to extend from contexts that have also yielded a significant quantity of cooking pots.

6.3.5 CLASS 015 (Pot-stands) (Figure 7)

Description: Pot-stands are characterised by an open-ended cylinder

Surfaces: Painted decoration is known; fenestration and/or plastic decoration is rare.

Attachments: Two examples of multiple vertical handles are known.

Distribution: Difficult to assess; Iron I; **Iron II** (inland regions, not Beqa' Valley); Iron III

Comments: The cylindrical pot-stand has a long history in the Bronze Age of the ancient Near East and is notoriously difficult to classify.

6.4 TRANSPORT AMPHORAE

6.4.1 CLASS 016 (Oval amphorae with neck) (Maps 17; 18)

The CLASS 016 amphora is characterised by an overall ovoid form, short neck and two handles on the curving shoulders. Three sub-classes are distinguished by slight differences in overall shape. These amphorae recall elements of the Late Bronze Age ceramic horizon (e.g. Badre & Gubel 1999-2000, Fig. 32; Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.30.6; Capet 2003, Fig. 6.a-b).

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 380

6.4.1.1 CLASS 016a (Figure 8)

Distinction: Symmetrical oval form with short neck and simple upright lip

Bases: Round; Round-thickened

Surfaces: Monochrome is known; Red-Slip is rare

Attachments: Two vertical handles on the shoulder are characteristic

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; coastal regions)

6.4.1.2 CLASS 016b (Figure 8)

Distinction: Slightly top-heavy shape, widest at the shoulder.

Bases: Round; Round-thickened

Surfaces: Four painted examples date from Iron I contexts.

Attachments: Two vertical handles on the shoulder are characteristic

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; coastal regions)

6.4.1.3 CLASS 016c (Figure 8)

Distinction: Slightly bottom-heavy form, widest below the two handles.

Bases: Round; Round-thickened

Surfaces: Two examples of painted decoration.

Attachments: Two vertical handles on the shoulder are characteristic

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; coastal regions)

6.4.2 CLASS 017 (Figure 8)

Description: Squat, barrel-shaped amphora with carinated shoulders and distinct neck with externally thickened lip.

Bases: **Round**; Round-thickened

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles attached at point of carination.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (inland northern Palestine)

6.4.3 CLASS 018 (Figure 8; Map 19)

Description: Bag-shaped amphora (low waist) with softly carinated shoulder.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Bichrome is rare; Monochrome examples from Tell Arqa bear a *lmlk* inscription.

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Beqa' Valley; coastal regions); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 318; 382; 402; 403; 409; 411

6.4.4 CLASS 019 (Figure 8; Map 20)

Description: Bag-shaped amphora with carinated shoulder and long everted rim.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Painted bands and lines are common; two Red-Slip examples

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles on carinated shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Beqa' Valley; coastal regions); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 379

6.4.5 CLASS 020 (Figure 8)

Description: Medium-sized amphora with carinated shoulders and pointed base.

Bases: **Point**

Surfaces: One painted example from Tell Keisan

Attachments: Two small handles on carinated shoulder

Distribution: Never particularly abundant (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 377; 406

6.4.6 CLASS 021 (Figure 8)

Description: Small amphora with carinated shoulder, long, narrow neck and roundly pointed base.

Bases: **Point**

Surfaces: Painted decoration is not common

Attachments: Two relatively large handles on carinated shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (mainly coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 376

Comments: Derives from some mortuary contexts in Iron II period.

6.4.7 CLASS 022 (Figure 8)

Description: Small round amphora.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and geometric patterns are common

Attachments: Two handles on the rounded waist

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; Beqa' Valley; coastal regions)

Comments: CLASS 022 recalls Late Bronze Age forms (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Figs 2.30.4, 10; 2.56.24; Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 86.1, 8, 9; 1960, Pl. 143.12).

6.4.8 CLASS 023 (Figure 9)

Description: “Heavy bag”-shaped amphorae with carinated shoulder and pointed base.

Bases: **Point**; Point-thickened

Attachments: Two handles on carinated shoulders

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III; **Persian** (northern Palestine; al Mina)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 393; 399; 404

6.4.9 CLASS 024 (Hourglass amphorae) (Maps 21; 22)

The distinctive feature of CLASS 024 amphorae is the elongated hourglass form with pointed base; the thin waist is narrower than the shoulders and lower body, resulting in a long sinuous profile. Two sub-classes are distinguished on shape and relative length.

6.4.9.1 CLASS 024a (Figure 9)

Distinction: Accentuated hourglass profile with wide “hips” and well-pointed base.

Bases: **Point**

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles just under the carinated shoulders

Distribution: Iron II; **Iron III**; **Persian** (northern Palestine; coastal Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 383; 384

Comments: Some mortuary (inhumation?) association in Iron III and Persian periods.

6.4.9.2 CLASS 024b (Figure 9)

Distinction: Elongated hourglass profile with subtle “hips” and pointed base.

Bases: **Point**

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles just under the carinated shoulders

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); **Iron III** (coastal Levant); **Persian**

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 385; 386; 387; 397; 398

Comments: Some mortuary (inhumation?) association in Iron III and Persian periods.

6.4.10 CLASS 025 (Figure 9; Map 23)

Description: Angular amphorae with very wide “hips” and long pointed base.

Bases: **Point**

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles on or below the carinated shoulders

Distribution: **Iron III**; **Persian** (Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 394; 395; 396

Comments: Strong presence in inhumation contexts of northern Palestine

6.4.11 CLASS 026 (Figure 9; Map 24)

Description: Top-heavy amphorae with tapering body and wide, carinated shoulders.

Bases: Point; Point-thickened

Attachments: Two handles immediately under carinated shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; coastal Lebanon); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 388; 389; 390; 391; 392

Comments: Some Iron III examples known from Syrian coast and Amuq.

6.4.12 CLASS 027 (Figure 9; Maps 25; 26)

Description: Basket-handled amphora

Bases: Flat-thickened; Point-thickened

Attachments: Two thick basket-handles on sloping shoulders

Distribution: Iron III; **Persian** (Levant coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 421

6.4.13 CLASS 028 (Figure 9; Maps 27; 28)

Description: Long and thin body with low, diagonal shoulders

Bases: Round; **Point**

Attachments: One or two handles below shoulder; unhandled examples rare.

Distribution: Iron II (inland Syria; northern Palestine); **Iron III** (inland and coastal Syria); Persian (Levant coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 414; 417; 418; 420

6.4.14 CLASS 029 (*Amphoriskoi*) (Figure 9)

Description: Small torpedo-shaped *amphoriskos* with pointed base

Bases: **Point**; Point-thickened

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome bands are common; Red-Slip is rare

Attachments: Two handles on or below shoulder

Distribution: Never abundant (limited to northern Palestine; coastal Lebanon)

6.4.14 CLASS 030 (Ampullae) (Figure 9)

Description: Small flask-like amphora with “nipple” base

Bases: Nipple; Round

Surfaces: One example of Monochrome bands from Byblos

Attachments: Two handles (vertical or horizontal) on top of shoulder

Distribution: Poorly-represented (present at only three sites)

6.5 PITHOI

6.5.1 CLASS 031 (“Galilean” pithoi) (Figure 10)

Description: Large teardrop-shaped pithos with diagonal shoulders and flared rim.

Bases: Round; Point

Surfaces: Examples of rope impressions and pressed-ridge decoration.

Attachments: Two handles on shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Beqa’ Valley); Iron II

Comments: TYPE 031 is known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 88.11). Termed “Galilean Pithos” by Biran (1994, 130) because it was first identified at Tuleil in the Upper Galilee (Amiran 1970, Pl. 77.1).

6.5.2 CLASS 032 (“Phoenician” pithoi) (Figure 10)

Description: Large teardrop-shaped pithos with upright neck and heavy rolled rim.

Bases: Point-solid

Distribution: Only two examples

Comments: The limited numbers suggest CLASS 032 is not indicative of Phoenician trade, as suggested by Biran (1994, 137).

6.5.3 CLASS 033 (Figure 11)

Description: Wide pithos with distinct upright neck and long solid pointed base.

Bases: Point-solid

Surfaces: Pressed-ridge and plastic bands are common.

Attachments: One example from Jerablus has two vertical handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 364

Comments: Broadly similar to the “Phoenician” pithos, this CLASS incorporates a shorter height-to-width ratio, and a more open form.

6.5.4 CLASS 034 (Collared-rim pithoi) (Figure 11)

Description: Top heavy pithos with rounded base and collared rim.

Bases: Round

Surfaces: Rope impressions are known.

Attachments: Two handles under shoulders

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine)

Comments: Within Palestinian archaeology, the “collared-rim” pithos is associated with the settlement of the biblical Israelites during the early Iron Age, a correlation that is not supported by the archaeological record (Biran 1989a; Dever 1995b; Esse 1992; Finkelstein 1988). Recent finds of pithoi outside of traditional “Israelite” contexts has brought this interpretation into question (Artzy 1994; London 2003, 148-149).

6.5.5 CLASS 035 (Figure 12)

Description: Short pithos with wide waist and terminating in a heavy rolled rim.

Bases: Point-thickened; Disc-thick; Round; Ring

Surfaces: Incised lines, plastic bands, and pressed-ridge are all evident

Distribution: Iron I (not well-defined)

6.5.6 CLASS 036 (Figure 12)

Description: Large, open pithos with upright, heavy rolled rim

Bases: Flat; Flat-thickened; Point; Point-thickened; Round; Ring

Surfaces: Plastic bands and pressed ridge common

Attachments: Two examples bear handles

Distribution: **Iron I** (Northern Levant); Iron II; Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 368; 369

6.5.7 CLASS 037 (“Aramaean” pithoi) (Maps 29; 30)

The “Aramaean” pithos is characterised by a relatively narrow and deep form; what Mazzoni has termed “cigar-shaped”. Base varies from flat, thickened flat, point, solid point, and thickened point. Handles are rare, suggesting these pithoi were not meant to be handled or transported; their sheer weight also argues against any form of movement. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the stance and roundness of the lip. Associated with inland Syria, al Maqdissi (2003, Fig. 13) has called these “Aramaean” pithoi.

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 363; 371

6.5.7.1 CLASS 037a (Figure 13; Map 29)

Distinction: Inwardly direct rim with angular lip interior.

Surfaces: Finger impressions, rope impressions, and pressed ridge are common.

Distribution: **Iron I** (inland Syria); Iron II

Comments: Few full profiles are known; possible early Iron Age form.

6.5.7.2 CLASS 037b (Figure 13; Map 30)

Distinction: Close to upright rim with rounded lip profile.

Bases: Point; Point-solid; Point-thickened; Flat

Surfaces: Finger impressions, rope impressions, and pressed ridge are common.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (inland Northern Levant)

Comments: Possible Iron II variation of CLASS 037.

6.6 KRATERS

6.6.1 CLASS 038 (Krater with s-curve rim) (Map 31)

CLASS 038 is characterised by an open form, lack of handles, and sinuous s-curved rim. The two sub-classes are distinguished by size.

6.6.1.1 CLASS 038a (Figure 14)

Distinction: Large handle-less krater with upright s-curve rim.

Bases: **Ring**; Disc

Surfaces: Six examples of Red-Slip on interior surface.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron II

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 354; 355

6.6.1.2 CLASS 038b (Figure 14)

Distinction: Small handle-less krater with upright s-curve rim

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Bichrome are rare

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine); Iron II

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 356

6.6.2 CLASS 039 (Figure 14)

Description: Krater with inward, direct rim and softly carinated shoulder.

Bases: **Ring**; Looped

Surfaces: Only Iron II examples are decorated.

Attachments: Two handles connecting rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); Iron II

Comments: Similarly profiled vessels are known at Jerablus, but are atypical: looped base, low handles, large size (Woolley 1939b, Pls 14.d; 22.K1, K18).

6.6.3 CLASS 040 (Bulging krater with upright rim) (Map 32)

The distinctive feature of the CLASS 040 krater is its bulging shoulder and relatively long, upright rim. The three sub-classes are distinguished on the curve and depth of profile, and character of the handles.

6.6.3.1 CLASS 040a (Figure 15)

Distinction: Medium-sized krater with carinated waist and upright rim.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Exterior surface usually painted with geometric designs. Two Red-Slip examples are known from the Iron II period.

Attachments: Two or more handles connect the rim and shoulder.

Distribution: **Iron I** (inland Northern Levant); Iron II

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 194

6.6.3.2 CLASS 040b (Figure 15)

Distinction: Medium-sized krater with rounded waist and upright rim.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is known from Iron I contexts. One Bichrome example derives from Iron II Hazor.

Attachments: Two handles on shoulder

Distribution: Not well-defined

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 131

6.6.3.3 CLASS 040c (Figure 15)

Distinction: Medium-sized krater with carinated waist and horizontal handles.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome is rare.

Attachments: Two horizontal handles on shoulder.

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; (poorly-defined).

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 207

Comments: The profile bears some resemblance to Cypriot-White-Painted kraters of the early Iron Age (e.g. Anderson 1988, Pl. 32.2).

6.6.4 CLASS 041 (Large open krater)

The CLASS 041 krater is characterised by its open form, no handles, and large size.

The two sub-classes are distinguished by lip profile.

6.6.4.1 CLASS 041a (Figure 16)

Distinction: Large krater with heavy rolled rim.

Bases: **Flat**

Distribution: Iron I (poorly-defined)

6.6.4.2 CLASS 041b (Figure 16)

Distinction: Large krater with short everted rim.

Bases: **Ring**

Distribution: Iron I (only two sites)

6.6.5 CLASS 042 (Figure 17; Maps 43; 44)

Description: Deep krater with bulging waist, wide neck, upright rim, and square lip.

Bases: Iron I (**Ring**); Iron II (**Ring**; **Pinched-ring**)

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome is common; Red-Slip is rare.

Attachments: Two handles connect the rim and shoulder.

Distribution: Iron I (northern coastal regions); **Iron II** (western half of the Northern Levant); Iron III (coastal regions); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 202; 206

Comments: CLASS 042 is one of the most abundant within the study area. CLASS 042 kraters are known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.54.14, 16). The majority of these kraters derive from mortuary contexts, usually as containers for cremated human remains in southern Lebanon.

Table 6.1: Frequency of CLASS 042 components

Period	Base	Mono	Bichr.	Band	Circ.	Slip	Comment
Iron I 28	Ring (18)	8	5	13	0	0	Coastal
	Pinched ring (2)	2	0	2	0	0	-
	Unknown (8)	1	2	3	0	1	-
Iron II/III 103	Ring (45)	23	19	38	7	1	N Pal. / S. Leb.
	Pinched ring (40)	17	14	30	0	1	Leb. mortuary
	Unknown (18)	13	6	15	4	1	Coastal

6.6.6 CLASS 043 (Figure 18)

Description: Deep krater with bulging waist, very square lip and horizontal handles.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is rare.

Attachments: Two horizontal handles loop up from shoulder to ledge on square lip.

Distribution: Persian (Syrian coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 208

6.6.7 CLASS 044 (Figure 19)

Description: Medium-sized krater with relatively closed form of CLASS 042 profile.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome bands are common; Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Two handles connect bulging shoulder and lower neck.

Distribution: Iron II (north Levantine coast; northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 361

6.6.8 CLASS 045 (Figure 19)

Description: Straight neck krater with two small handles on bulging shoulder.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are characteristic; more complex designs are known.

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles, either horizontal or vertical.

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (mainly cremation contexts of northern Palestine/southern Lebanon coast)

6.6.9 CLASS 046 (Figure 20)

Description: Short, painted krater with spherical body and short everted rim.

Bases: **Ring**; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are characteristic, but geometric patterns and circles are also known. Four Black-on-Red examples are known.

Attachments: Two handles are common, but vary from horizontal to vertical, and are positioned on either shoulder or rounded waist. All vertical handle derive from the Tyre Al-Bass cemetery. One example bears more than two handles.

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (only four coastal sites)

6.6.10 CLASS 047 (Figure 21; Map 35)

Description: Oval krater with incurving rim and painted decoration.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring; Looped

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands and lines are common.

Attachments: Some horizontal handles are known.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (mainly mortuary contexts of northern Palestine and southern Lebanese coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form Z14

6.6.11 CLASS 048 (Deep Barrel Krater)

The distinctive feature of this CLASS is its deep, barrel-like form and slightly closing rim. The two sib-classes are distinguished by the lip stance. While the majority of this CLASS is found in northern Palestine during the Iron I and Iron II periods, a few examples from West Syria are also known.

6.6.11.1 CLASS 048a (Figure 21)

Distinction: Deep, barrel-shaped krater with incurving rim and thickened lip.

Bases: **Ring**; Looped (Megiddo)

Surfaces: Decoration is not common; Hama produced one Red-Slip example and one painted with geometric and faunal scenes.

Attachments: Two or more handles are usually found on or just below the rim.

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III (not well-defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 374

6.6.11.2 CLASS 048b (Figure 21)

Distinction: Deep, barrel-shaped krater with inwardly direct rim.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome geometric patterns are not common. Red-Slip is known only from Hama and Hazor.

Attachments: Two or more handles connect rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (non-coastal sites from Hazor to Hama); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 195; 199

6.6.12 CLASS 049 (Figure 22)

Description: Short, rounded krater with in-turning rim

Bases: **Ring**; Looped

Surfaces: Red-Slip is the most common decorative technique.

Attachments: Two or more vertical handles connect rim and shoulder. Horizontal handles are rare.

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II (Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 193

6.6.13 CLASS 050 (Figure 22)

Description: Heavily-decorated krater with deep, rounded form and inwardly direct, thickened rim.

Bases: High-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric designs with some floral and faunal motifs.

Attachments: Two handles are located on either the shoulder or rim.

Distribution: Iron II/III (Euphrates region mortuary contexts)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 188

6.6.14 CLASS 051 (Figure 23)

Description: Deep krater with upright rim and handles below the rim.

Bases: Round

Surfaces: Red-Slip appears characteristic

Attachments: Two handles below rim

Distribution: Only two examples known

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 198; 200

6.6.15 CLASS 052 (Figure 23)

Description: Deep, straight-sided krater with looped base.

Bases: **Looped**

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric patterns only at Jerablus

Attachments: Two handles are common, but positioning varies.

Distribution: Iron II (Euphrates)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 189

6.6.16 CLASS 053 (Small deep krater) (Map 36)

This CLASS is characterised by its small size and relatively open, but deep form. The three sub-classes are distinguished according to the depth of the form, and/or base.

6.6.16.1 CLASS 053a (Figure 24)

Distinction: Small krater with looped base.

Bases: Looped

Attachments: Two handles on waist

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (one example from Deve Höyük)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 190

6.6.16.2 CLASS 053b (Figure 24; Map 36)

Distinction: Small krater with relatively deep form.

Bases: Disc; Ring; Round

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome geometric designs are common. Bichrome decoration is used in conjunction with one handle.

Attachments: Two, one or no handles are common; usually positioned below the rim.

Distribution: **Iron I**; Iron II; Iron III (mainly inland Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 138; 191; 192; 362

Comments: Ring bases are typical for single-handled examples (usually decorated). Round bases are common amongst unhandled examples (usually undecorated). A few similarly-profiled kraters are known from northern Palestine and southern Lebanon, but are atypically angular in profile (e.g. Briend & Humbert 1980, Pl. 45.1; Lamon and Shipton 1939, Fig. 10.43) or extremely thick in section (e.g. S.V. Chapman 1972, Fig. 22.82; Lamon & Shipton 1939, Fig. 11.53).

6.6.16.3 CLASS 053c (Figure 24)

Distinction: Short krater with relatively open form.

Bases: **Ring; Disc**

Attachments: Two handles attached to rim

Distribution: Small dataset

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 197

6.6.17 CLASS 054 (Figure 24)

Description: Open krater with s-shaped, flaring rim.

Bases: **Ring**; **Flat**; Looped

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Bichrome are evident in post-Iron I contexts; Monochrome decoration is more prevalent in the Iron I period.

Attachments: Two handles are known

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (coastal regions; Orontes, Beqa' and Jordan Valleys); Iron III (inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 61; 203; 209; 447

Comments: Late Bronze Age parallels (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1976a, Fig. 27.3; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 124.12). **POOR CLASS.**

6.6.18 CLASS 055 (Figure 24)

Description: Open, handleless krater with bulging waist and thickened rim.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip only evident at Tel Jezreel

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 201; 204

6.6.19 CLASS 056 (Not Illustrated)

Description: Krater rims with thickened exterior (**rims only**)

Distribution: **Iron I** (Northern Levant); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III (inland Syria)

6.7 STORAGE AMPHORAE AND URNS

6.7.1 CLASS 057 (Short-neck urns/amphorae) (Map 37)

CLASS 057 is characterised by a closed urn with low, rounded waist and long, wide neck. The five sub-classes are distinguished by the number and position of any handles. Bases are also variable (ring, flat, disc), though the ring base is the most common.

6.7.1.1 CLASS 057a (Figure 25)

Distinction: Handleless urn with rounded waist and long neck.

Bases: **Ring**; Flat; Disc

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric decoration is typical

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (primarily inland Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 313

Comments: Large percentage of these vessels extends from mortuary contexts.

6.7.1.2 CLASS 057b (Figure 25; Map 37)

Distinction: High-handled urn with rounded waist and long neck

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and geometric designs are common in Iron I; Red-Slip and Bichrome is common in Iron II.

Attachments: Two handles connecting rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Syria; northern Palestine); Iron III (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 321

Comments: During the Iron I period, north Syrian examples are all painted with Monochrome bands and simple geometric decorations, while examples from northern Palestine are undecorated. In the Iron II period, the “southern” examples are usually decorated with Bichrome or Red-Slip.

6.7.1.3 CLASS 057c (Figure 26)

Distinction: Low-handled urn with rounded waist and long neck

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric designs are common; some faunal and floral motifs

Attachments: Two handles connect lower neck and shoulder.

Distribution: Iron I (poorly-defined); **Iron II** (northern Levant); Iron III (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 317; 360; 378

Comments: Strong mortuary association during the Iron II period.

6.7.1.4 CLASS 057d (Figure 26)

Distinction: Many-handled urn with rounded waist and long neck

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Painted decoration is standard

Attachments: More than two handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (not well-defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 319

6.7.1.5 CLASS 057e (Figure 26)

Distinction: Horizontal-handled urn with rounded waist and long neck

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is typical

Attachments: Two horizontal handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (Hama only); Iron II

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 314

6.7.2 CLASS 058 (Greek-style amphorae) (Figure 27; Map 38)

Description: Long-handled amphora with heavily painted, rounded body and very long and relatively narrow neck

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric decoration, with thick bands and floral motifs are common.

Attachments: Two long handles connect the neck and low shoulder

Distribution: Iron III; (Syrian coast; Amuq); **Persian** (Syrian coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 359

Comments: These vessels are regarded by Lehmann (1996, Pls 60-61) as Greek in nature.

6.7.3 CLASS 059 (Figure 27)

Description: Double-handled amphora with round base and simple flaring rim.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is rare

Attachments: Two handles connect rim and shoulder.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (West Syria; Beqa' Valley); Iron III

Comments: CLASS 059 is similar in form to CLASS 068, which bears only one handle: the two forms are often found together.

6.7.4 CLASS 060 (Figure 28)

Description: Amphora with long, diagonal shoulders and carinated waist.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is common on Iron I examples; Red-Slip is known from one Iron II example.

Attachments: Two or more handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II (not well-defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 320

Comments: The few examples identified display significant variability; in the height of the carination, size of the vessel, and decoration.

6.7.5 CLASS 061 (Figure 28)

Description: Small amphora with two handles and very long neck

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Two Iron II Red-Slip examples; one Iron I Monochrome

Attachments: Two handles on shoulder or waist

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (Jordan, Beqa' and Orontes Valleys)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 318

Comments: Small dataset.

6.7.6 CLASS 062 (Figure 29; Map 39)

Description: Tall, painted amphora with long upright neck and square lip.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome geometric pattern is standard

Attachments: Two horizontal handles on shoulder are common; some vertical handles are known.

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (coastal mortuary contexts)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 315

6.7.7 CLASS 063 (Figure 29)

Description: Tall, slender urn with rounded base and flaring neck.

Bases: Round

Distribution: Evident at only one site

Comments: While there are some similarities with Late Bronze Age jars at Hazor (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 122.1-6), and a possible Iron I period amphora from

Megiddo (Harrison 2004b, Pl. 13.9), no further Iron Age parallels have been identified. Both examples derive from mortuary contexts.

6.7.8 CLASS 064 (Figure 29)

Description: Long, cylindrical storage jar with simple flaring lip.

Bases: **Round**

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 352; 370

6.7.9 CLASS 065 (Figure 30)

Description: Small urn with bulging, angular body, narrow neck and short flaring lip.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip

Distribution: Only one vessel known.

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 256

6.8 SPOUTED AMPHORAE

6.8.1 CLASS 066 (Figure 30)

Description: Medium-sized amphora with spout (CLASS 060 profile)

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and lines are typical; Red-Slip and Bichrome are rare.

Attachments: Two handles on shoulders; spout between handles

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine)

6.8.2 CLASS 067 (Figure 30)

Description: Amphora with rounded body, short neck and wheel-turned spout

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Monochrome decoration are rare

Attachments: Three vertical handles connect neck and shoulder; wheel-turned spout in position of fourth handle

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine); Iron III; Persian

6.9 JUGS

6.9.1 CLASS 068 (Figure 31)

Description: Undecorated jug with flaring neck and rounded base.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome is rare

Attachments: One handle connecting shoulder with either rim or neck.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (inland regions); Iron III/Persian (Jezreel Valley)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 333; 334; 335

Comments: Similar to CLASS 059 double-handled amphora; the two often appear together. Three handle-less examples from Hama are atypically decorated with Monochrome bands.

6.9.2 CLASS 069 (Figure 31)

Description: Large, wide-shouldered jug with flattened base.

Bases: **Flat**

Attachments: One handle connects the shoulder and rim

Distribution: Iron I (Tell Kazel)

6.9.3 CLASS 070 (Figure 32)

Description: Large, thin-walled jug with everted neck and flattened base

Bases: Flat

Surfaces: Bichrome bands are common

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 344

Comments: Two handle-less vessels with similar profile are not included in dataset (Courbin 1993a, Fig. 12.1(1076); Lamon & Shipton 1939, Fig. 10.47).

6.9.4 CLASS 071 (Map 40)

The CLASS 071 jug is characterised by a low, rounded waist and relatively wide neck. The two sub-classes are distinguished on the position of the handle.

6.9.4.1 CLASS 071a (Figure 32)

Distinction: High-handled jug with rounded waist and wide neck.

Bases: **Ring**; Flat; Disc

Surfaces: Undecorated surfaces are typical, but Monochrome and Bichrome are well-attested. Red-Slip and Black-on-Red are rare.

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (primarily northern Palestine); Iron II; Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 337; 338; 339

Comments: The profile is known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.57.34, 38; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 133.1-3)

6.9.4.2 CLASS 071b (Figure 32)

Distinction: Low-handled jug with rounded waist and wide neck.

Bases: **Ring**; Flat

Surfaces: Monochrome and Red-Slip are known, but not typical.

Attachments: One handle connects shoulder and neck

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (mainly northern Palestine); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 282

Comments: The profile is known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.57.37; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 133.4-6).

6.9.5 CLASS 072 (Figure 32)

Description: Human-faced jug.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Human face applied in plastic decoration

Attachments: One handle on shoulder

Distribution: small dataset

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 283

Comments: The handle is located on the opposite side of the jug from the face, which suggests the face is meant to be viewed by someone other than the person holding the jug.

6.9.6 CLASS 073 (Figure 33)

Description: Unslipped trefoil-lip jug with rounded waist

Bases: **Ring**; **Pinched-ring**; Disc; Flat; Round

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome are known

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 298

Comments: There is some association of CLASS 073 jugs with mortuary contexts.

6.9.7 CLASS 074 (Figure 33)

Description: Medium-sized jug with rounded waist and relatively wide, short neck.

Bases: Low-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome geometric patterns are rare

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (mainly Lebanon); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 336; 343; 347

Comments: More than half of these jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.8 CLASS 075 (Figure 33)

Description: Medium-sized jug with rounded waist and relatively wide, long neck.

Bases: Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Megiddo examples are Red-Slip; Beth Shan examples are mostly undecorated.

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (mainly Jezreel Valley)

6.9.9 CLASS 076 (Figure 33)

Description: Medium-sized jug with ovoid body and long thin neck.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands are common; Red-Slip and Bichrome are rare.

Attachments: One handle connects the lower neck and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 248

6.9.10 CLASS 077 (Figure 33; Map 41)

Description: Painted spherical jug with long neck and distinct base.

Bases: **Ring; Disc**

Surfaces: Handle and sphere decorated with Monochrome or Bichrome circles, lines and horizontal bands. Five Black-on-Red examples are known.

Attachments: One tightly-curved handle connects lower neck and shoulder.

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanese coast); Iron III (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 260; 263

Comments: The majority of CLASS 077 jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.11 CLASS 078 (Figure 34; Map 42)

Description: Painted spherical jug with flaring neck and rounded base.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Handle and sphere decorated with Bichrome circles, bands and simple geometric patterns; Monochrome, Red-Slip and Black-on-Red are rare.

Attachments: One handle connects shoulder and lower neck.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanon; Orontes Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 261

Comments: “Inland” sites are more commonly decorated in Monochrome, while coastal sites used Bichrome. Around one quarter of CLASS 078 jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.12 CLASS 079 (Figure 34)

Description: Small decorated jug with round base and long flaring neck.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Decoration is common, but the technique varies (Bichrome; Monochrome; Red-Slip).

Attachments: One handle connects the shoulder with either rim or neck.

Distribution: Iron II (coastal region of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon)

Comments: Primarily found in mortuary contexts.

6.9.13 CLASS 080 (Barrel jug) (Figure 34; Map 43)

Description: Barrel-shaped, painted jug with thin, flaring neck.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome, Bichrome, Red-Slip, Black-on-Red, Cypriot-White-Slip are all attested

Attachments: One handle connects the barrel shoulder and lower neck.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (western half of Northern Levant); Iron III (north Syrian coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 261

6.9.14 CLASS 081 (Figure 34; Map 44)

Description: Decorated spherical jug with long thin neck and trefoil rim.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring; Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Black-on-Red is characteristic; Monochrome and Bichrome also common. Decoration incorporates concentric circles painted on the spherical body and horizontal bands across the upper body and neck.

Attachments: One double- or single-strap handle connects the shoulder and rim

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (Jezreel and Litani Valleys); Iron III/Persian (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 296

6.9.15 CLASS 082 (Red-Slip trefoil jugs) (Map 45)

The CLASS 082 jugs is characterised by Red-Slip and a pinched trefoil lip. Considered a hallmark of Phoenician culture, these distinct jug types are reminiscent of Late Bronze Age *oinochoai* well-attested at Ras Shamra (*Ugarit Recent 2-3/1450-1200 BCE*) and Tell Sukas (Period J), both located on the Syrian coast (see Riis *et al.* 1996, 35-37; Fig. 24 Class VI). The five sub-classes are distinguished by neck profile.

6.9.15.1 CLASS 082a (Figure 35)

Distinction: Red-Slip trefoil jug with inwardly tapering neck.

Bases: Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Attachments: Double- or single-strap handle connects shoulder and lip

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II/Iron III** (mainly coastal regions of Lebanon and northern Palestine; a few Amuq examples);

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 302; 307

Comments: The imprecise dating/long period of use at the Akhziv and Tyre Al Bass cemeteries prevents a precise dating. Most CLASS 082a jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.15.2 CLASS 082b (Figure 35)

Distinction: Red-Slip trefoil jug with piriform body and long flaring neck

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; Monochrome and Bichrome jugs of same profile are known from Khirbet Silm

Attachments: Double- or single-strap handle connects shoulder and lip

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III (coastal)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 299; 300; 305

Comments: The majority of CLASS 082b jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.15.3 CLASS 082c (Figure 35)

Distinction: Small Red-Slip trefoil jug with piriform body and short flaring neck

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; Monochrome and Black-on-Red are rare.

Attachments: One handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 297; 303; 304

Comments: Around half of these jugs were found in mortuary contexts of two sites.

6.9.15.4 CLASS 082d (Figure 35)

Distinction: Red-Slip trefoil jug with globular body and short, everted neck

Bases: Flat; Disc; Round; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Attachments: One handle connects the shoulder and lip

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; Hama); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 342

Comments: CLASS 082d is primarily found in mortuary contexts.

6.9.15.5 CLASS 082e (Figure 35)

Distinction: Red-Slip trefoil jug with sinuous profile and flaring neck.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; Monochrome and Bichrome are known in Iron I period.

Attachments: One handle connects shoulder and rim.

Distribution: Iron I (Jezreel Valley); **Iron II** (southern Lebanon); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 262; 280; 301; 306

Comments: Undecorated jugs with similar profiles are known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.57.29-30). Less than half of the dataset is associated with mortuary contexts.

6.9.16 CLASS 083 (Figure 36)

Description: Thin-walled, spherical jug with thin, flaring neck.

Bases: Flat

Attachments: One handle connects the shoulder with either the rim or neck

Distribution: Small dataset

6.9.17 CLASS 084 (Figure 36; Map 46)

Description: Small decorated jugs with spherical body and neck-ridge

Bases: **Disc; Flat; Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome, Bichrome, Black-on-Red and Red-Slip are all common.

Motifs include bands and concentric circles.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (Northern Levant); Iron III

Comments: This jug form is considered by Doumet-Serhal (1993-1994) to be a fossil-type for plotting Phoenician expansion throughout the Mediterranean. CLASS 084 is associated with only a few mortuary contexts.

6.9.18 CLASS 085 (Mushroom-lip jugs) (Map 47)

The CLASS 085 jug is characterised by a globular body, and narrow neck that ends in a flaring “mushroom-lip. The two sub-classes are distinguished by body shape.

6.9.18.1 CLASS 085a (Figure 36)

Distinction: Mushroom-lip jug with oval body.

Bases: Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Upper neck area is usually decorated with Monochrome or Bichrome bands

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck.

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (coasts of Lebanon and northern Palestine)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 233; 236; 237; 240

Comments: Over two thirds of these jugs derive from mortuary contexts.

6.9.18.2 CLASS 085b (Figure 36)

Distinction: Mushroom-lip jug with round body.

Bases: Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Upper neck area is usually decorated with Bichrome bands

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck.

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanon; Syrian coast); **Iron III** (Levant coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 234; 235; 239

Comments: A large percentage of CLASS 085b derive from the Tyre Al Bass and Akhziv cemeteries.

6.9.19 CLASS 086 (Figure 36; Map 48)

Description: Square jug with carinated shoulders and flaring ‘mushroom lip’.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Painted bands are rare.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III

6.9.20 CLASS 087 (Figure 36; Map 49)

Description: Red-Slip mushroom-lip jug with uncarinated square form.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip; Black-on-Red is rare

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); **Iron III** (coastal Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 238; 241

Comments: CLASS 087 holds some mortuary association, though a large percentage derives from one cemetery.

6.9.21 CLASS 088 (Figure 37; Map 50)

Description: Globular jug with sinuous profile and flaring lip.

Bases: **Ring**; Disc

Surfaces: Decorative schemes vary; Black-on-Red, Red-Slip, Monochrome and Bichrome. Motifs are rarely more complicated than horizontal bands.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 243; 244

Comments: Some mortuary association within this class.

6.9.22 CLASS 089 (Figure 37)

Description: Small oval jug with flaring ridge-neck.

Bases: Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are known.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III (Lebanese coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 252

Comments: Small dataset. Possible mortuary association.

6.9.23 CLASS 090 (Short-necked globular jugs) (Map 51)

The CLASS 090 jug is characterised by a globular body, and short, narrowing neck that ends in small rolled-lip. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the length of the neck.

6.9.23.1 CLASS 090a (Figure 37)

Distinction: Short-globular jug with ridge-neck.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands on upper neck are typical. Red-Slip and Black-on-Red are rare.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and neck-ridge

Distribution: **Iron II** (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 247; 250

Comments: Over half of these jugs are associated with mortuary contexts.

6.9.23.2 CLASS 090b (Figure 37)

Distinction: Globular jug with very short neck and rolled lip.

Bases: **Pinched-ring**; Round

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are common; Red-Slip is rare.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and under rim

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (northern Palestine; southern Lebanese coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 250; 255

6.9.24 CLASS 091 (Figure 37)

Description: Square-shouldered jug with straight sides and short neck.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Decoration is rare.

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and neck

Distribution: **Iron II** (Jordan and Beqa' Valleys); Iron III (northern Palestine; North Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 257; 258

6.9.25 CLASS 092 (Figure 37; Map 52)

Description: Small globular jug with narrow neck and thick flaring lip.

Bases: Flat; Ring; Pinched-ring

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and neck

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (coast of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 251; 253; 281

6.9.26 CLASS 093

The CLASS 093 jug is characterised by a bulging form, slanting shoulders and very narrow, rolled-out neck. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the relative width of the jug.

6.9.26.1 CLASS 093a (Figure 38)

Distinction: Thin-walled, bulging jug with curves slowly into thin, flaring neck.

Bases: Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and geometric patterns occasional.

Attachments: The handle connects shoulder and neck

Distribution: Iron III; Persian (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 267; 268; 270; 271

6.9.26.2 CLASS 093b (Figure 38)

Distinction: Very wide, bulging jug with narrow, short neck.

Bases: **Ring**

Attachments: The handle connects lower shoulder and rim

Distribution: Persian (Deve Höyük)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 279

6.9.27 CLASS 094 (Figure 38)

Description: Tall and narrow jug with narrow rim.

Bases: Flat; Disc; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Attachments: The handle connects shoulder and neck

Distribution: **Persian** (North Levantine coast; Deve Höyük)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 229

6.9.28 CLASS 095 (Figure 38; Map 53)

Description: Jug with rounded body curving into long, thin neck and upright lip.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome geometric designs are known.

Attachments: The handle loops between shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: Iron III; **Persian** (Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 246; 269; 274

6.9.29 CLASS 096 (Figure 38)

Description: Piriform jug with distinct painted design.

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration on handles and upper half – concentric circles, bands, wavy lines

Attachments: The handle loops between lower neck and waist; two additional horizontal handles on the waist

Distribution: Iron II/III (Deve Höyük)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 282

6.9.30 CLASS 097 (Figure 38)

Description: Thin-walled jug with rounded body, straight neck and stepped-out lip.

Bases: Ring; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome, Bichrome, and Red-Slip are known

Attachments: Thin handle connects lower neck and shoulder

Distribution: **Iron II** (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 245

6.9.31 CLASS 098 (Figure 38; Map 54)

Description: Small jug with disc base and narrow neck ending in thickened lip.

Bases: Disc

Surfaces: Generally undecorated; Monochrome bands are known

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects neck and shoulder

Distribution: Persian (northern Palestine)

6.9.32 CLASS 099 (Figure 38)

Description: Squat decorated jug with round base and short neck.

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration – geometric, floral

Attachments: The tightly-curved handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Persian (Deve Höyük)

6.10 JUGLETS

6.10.1 CLASS 100 (Dipper juglet) (Maps 55; 56)

The distinctive feature of the CLASS 100 dipper juglet is its small size, round base, single handle and teardrop shape. The five sub-classes are distinguished by variations in form.

6.10.1.1 CLASS 100a (Figure 39)

Distinction: Elongated dipper juglet.

Bases: Round; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Attachments: Handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (Jezreel Valley); Iron III; Persian (Syrian coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 218; 219

6.10.1.2 CLASS 100b (Figure 39)

Distinction: Dipper juglet with open-mouth

Bases: Round; Nipple

Surfaces: Decoration is not characteristic, but Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Handle loops between lip and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; Syrian coast); Iron III (North Levantine coast); Persian (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 210; 211; 212; 213; 217

Comments: Trefoil-pinched lips are common in the Iron I. Little mortuary association.

6.10.1.3 CLASS 100c (Figure 39)

Distinction: Dipper juglet with tight flaring neck

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Decoration is not characteristic, but Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Small, tightly-curved handle attached under rim

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 214; 215

6.10.1.4 CLASS 100d (Figure 39)

Distinction: Dipper juglet with long narrow neck

Bases: Disc; Flat; Round; Nipple

Surfaces: Decoration is not characteristic, but Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Small, tightly-curved handle attached under rim

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (northern Palestine)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 216

6.10.1.5 CLASS 100e (Figure 39)

Distinction: Dipper juglet with ridge-neck and flaring rim

Bases: **Round**; Nipple

Surfaces: Decoration is not characteristic, but Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Small handle connects lower neck and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II (only three sites)

6.11 FLASKS

6.11.1 CLASS 101 (Figure 39)

Description: Round flask with distinct base and short flaring neck.

Bases: Flat; Ring

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles connect shoulder and lower neck

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II (inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 472

Comments: Possibly associated with mortuary practices.

6.11.2 CLASS 102 (Pilgrim flasks) (Maps 57; 58)

Pilgrim flasks are characterised by a lentoid body shape with round base and flaring neck. Painted decoration usually emphasises the lentoid shape. The more complex flask forms (e.g. CLASS 102e) incorporate more complex decorative schemes. The five sub-classes are distinguished by variations in decoration, handles, and rim.

6.11.2.1 CLASS 102a (Figure 39)

Distinction: Painted standard pilgrim flask

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome circles and bands are standard.

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles connect shoulder and neck; set parallel to flask's thinnest plane.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; south Lebanese cemeteries); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 309

Comments: Painted pilgrim flasks are known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Figs 2.59.54-55; 2.60.56-59, 61-67; 2.85.100-101, 103; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 130.10-13; 1961, Pl. 293.1). Around 40% of these flasks were recovered from contexts with clear mortuary associations.

6.11.2.2 CLASS 102b (Figure 39)

Distinction: Unpainted standard pilgrim flask

Surfaces: Decoration is not characteristic, but Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles connect shoulder and neck; set parallel to flask's thinnest plane.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; North Levantine coast); Iron III (coastal regions); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 309; 311

Comments: Unpainted pilgrim flasks are known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Figs 2.59.53; 2.60.60; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 130.8-9). Around one third of these flasks were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.11.2.3 CLASS 102c (Figure 39)

Distinction: Single-handled pilgrim flask.

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome circles are common.

Attachments: Tightly-curved handle connects shoulder and neck; set perpendicular to flask's thinnest plane.

Distribution: **Iron I**; Iron II (not well-defined)

6.11.2.4 CLASS 102d (Figure 39)

Distinction: Wide-mouthed pilgrim flask

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is common; Red-Slip is also known.

Attachments: Two tightly-curved handles connect shoulder and neck.

Distribution: Iron I (two sites only)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 310

Comments: All decorated examples derive from the site of Megiddo.

6.11.2.5 CLASS 102e (Figure 40)

Distinction: Spoon-mouthed pilgrim flask

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands, lines, geometric patterns, and circles.

Attachments: Two pierced lugs on shoulders

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); Iron II

6.12 UNGUENT CONTAINERS

6.12.1 CLASS 103 (Pyxides) (Map 59)

Pyxides are characterised by squat forms with low carinated waist, short neck and diagonal shoulder. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the form of the handles on the shoulder. Iron Age alabaster vessels with a similar profile are also known (e.g. James 1966, Fig. 66.13), but are not included here. Iron Age pyxides are rarely associated with mortuary contexts.

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 348

6.12.1.1 CLASS 103a (Figure 40)

Distinction: Small pyxis with two pierced lugs.

Bases: Flat; Disc; Round

Surfaces: Decoration is not common, but Monochrome bands and lines are known.

Attachments: Two pierced lugs on shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon; Syrian coast); Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Comments: CLASS 103a is closely related to vessels from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 86.3).

6.12.1.2 CLASS 103b (Figure 40)

Distinction: Small pyxis with two horizontal strap-handles

Bases: **Flat**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and lines are common; Bichrome is also known.

Attachments: Two horizontal strap handles on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; Lebanon; Syrian coast); Iron II (southern Lebanese coast; northern Palestine)

Comments: The one Red-Slip example bears an atypical ring base. CLASS 103b is closely related to vessels from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.83.88-92).

6.12.2 CLASS 104 (Small “Stirrup Jars”) (Figure 40; Map 60)

Description: Small spouted “Stirrup Jar”

Bases: Flat; Disc; Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and lines are common; Bichrome is known.

Attachments: Small spout on shoulder; two “stirrups” connect shoulder and lip

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon; southern Syrian coast); Iron II

Comments: The stirrup jar is known from a number of Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.84.93-99; Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 152.5; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 137.6-12).

6.13 SPOUTED JUGS

6.13.1 CLASS 105 (Figure 40)

Description: Bulging juglet with tightly-flaring neck and small round spout.

Bases: Disc; **Flat**; **Round**; Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome is common; Bichrome and Red-Slip are rare.

Attachments: Handles connecting rim and shoulder are common; small spout on shoulder or waist.

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (inland Northern Levant); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 284; 285; 308

6.13.2 CLASS 106 (Figure 40)

Description: Bulging juglet with tightly-flaring neck and strainer.

Bases: **Ring**; **Pinched-ring**; Flat; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Bichrome and Monochrome are known.

Attachments: Handle connects rim and shoulder; small strainer on shoulder.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Beqa' Valley); Iron II (extends to inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 291; 292; 293

6.13.3 CLASS 107 (Beer-jugs) (Map 61)

CLASS 107 jugs are characterised by a tall, narrow neck set atop a globular body that boasts a long strainer/spout. The two sub-classes are differentiated by the form of the spout.

6.13.3.1 CLASS 107a (Figure 41)

Distinction: Beer-jug with pipe-like spout

Bases: Ring; Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip, Monochrome, and Bichrome all evident

Attachments: Handle connects shoulder and neck; spout extends diagonally from shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 287; 288

Comments: Red-Slip only derives from southern Lebanese mortuary contexts.

6.13.3.2 CLASS 107b (Figure 41; Map 61)

Distinction: Beer-jug with long strainer

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Bichrome bands, lines, and geometric patterns common.

Attachments: Handle connects shoulder and neck; strainer extends diagonally from shoulder

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 289; 290

Comments: These jugs are associated with southern Lebanese mortuary contexts.

6.13.4 CLASS 108 (Figure 41)

Description: Small, perforated strainer bowl with rounded base

Bases: Round

Surfaces: Decoration is rare

Attachments: Handle on rim common at Megiddo.

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (northern Palestine; inland Syria)

Comments: The form has close parallels with metal artefacts recovered from the region (e.g. Harrison 2004, Pl. 33.6-7).

6.13.5 CLASS 109 (Figure 41)

Description: Small basket-handled jar with spout

Bases: **Ring**; Flat

Surfaces: Bichrome bands and lines are rare.

Attachments: Single basket-handle on rim; small spout or strainer on shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (Jezreel Valley; Lebanon); Iron II; Iron III

Comments: One basket-handled jar from Tell el-Ghassil is clearly not spouted, while on a few other examples it is unclear whether a spout was present (e.g. Briand & Humbert 1980, Pl. 61.18; Harrison 2004b, Pl. 17.3; Lebeau 1983, Pl. 144.1).

6.13.6 CLASS 110 (Askos) (Figure 41)

Description: Askos

Bases: Round; Pinched-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known.

Attachments: Handle connects spout and shoulder; spout on shoulder; spout occasionally bears trefoil-pinched lip

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (widespread)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 462

Comments: CLASS 110 possibly holds some mortuary association.

6.13.7 CLASS 111 (Zoomorphic vessel) (Figure 42; Map 62)

Description: Spouted zoomorphic vessel

Bases: **Foot**; Looped

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome geometric patterns common

Attachments: Wheel-turned spout on animal's back; handle linking back and spout; zoomorphic spout

Distribution: Iron I (southern Lebanon; northern Palestine); Iron II (widespread)

Comments: The animal represented varies and is often ambiguous; a ram and bull are two possible representations. Spouted zoomorphic vessels are known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 152.12; 1961, Pl. 277.3).

6.13.8 CLASS 112 (Figure 42)

Description: Large urn-shaped jug with spout

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Bichrome bands, lines, circles, and geometric patterns

Attachments: Handle connects rim and shoulder; spout on shoulder by handle

Distribution: Not well-represented

Comments: Small dataset

6.14 BOTTLES

6.14.1 CLASS 113 (Figure 42)

Description: Large decorated bottle with short, flaring rim.

Bases: Pinched-ring; Flat

Surfaces: Monochrome bands

Distribution: Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 322

Comments: Small dataset

6.14.2 CLASS 114 (Figure 42)

Description: Small bottle with narrow base and piriform body – no rims survive

Bases: Disc; Ring

Surfaces: Monochrome bands

Distribution: Lebanese coast

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 272

Comments: Small dataset

6.14.3 CLASS 115 (Figure 42)

Description: Elongated bottle with solid pedestal base.

Bases: Pedestal-solid

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (Tell Kazel); **Persian** (northern Palestine)

6.14.4 CLASS 116 (Figure 42)

Description: Long, thin bottle with pointed base

Bases: **Point**

Attachments: One handle on shoulder; trefoil lips are known

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon); **Iron II** (southern Lebanese cemeteries)

Comments: CLASS 116 is known from a number of Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 152.6; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pls 120.1-9; 131.1-23; 1961, Pl. 281.4-11).

6.14.5 CLASS 117 (Alabastron) (Figure 42)

Description: Ceramic “alabastron”; handle-less, bottom-heavy bottle

Bases: **Round**

Attachments: Two small lugs on shoulder are common

Distribution: Persian (mortuary contexts of Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 220; 506

Comments: CLASS 117 is similar to a number of Persian alabaster vessels made from alabaster-stone (e.g. Johns 1932, Fig. 19; Poppa 1978, Gr. 2.17; 76.38; Woolley 1938b, Fig. 19.1), particularly the small “lugs”. Much of the literature does not describe vessels of CLASS 117 profile; hence, some may well be alabaster vessels.

6.14.6 CLASS 118 (Figure 43)

Description: Torpedo-shaped bottle with pointed base and long curving neck.

Bases: **Point**

Distribution: **Iron I**; **Iron II**; **Iron III**; Persian (inland Northern Levant)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 332

6.14.7 CLASS 119 (Figure 43)

Description: Small torpedo-shaped bottle with bulging waist and short neck

Bases: **Point**; **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are known; Glaze (al Mina) and Red-Slip (Tyre) are rare.

Distribution: **Iron II**; **Iron III** (northern Palestine; north Syria); Persian (northern Palestine)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 222; 223; 224; 225

Comments: CLASS 119 holds little association with mortuary contexts.

6.14.8 CLASS 120 (Figure 43)

Description: Small, decorated bottle with wide base and narrow neck.

Bases: Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Monochrome bands are characteristic; Black-on-Red is rare

Attachments:

Distribution: Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 221

6.15 ASSYRIAN BOTTLES AND CUPS

6.15.1 CLASS 121 (Maps 63; 64)

CLASS 121 incorporates vessels of varying form, united by the consideration of originating in Assyria. While these vessels do appear outside of northern Iraq, the closer to northern Iraq the higher the concentration of these vessels becomes. Within the study area, CLASS 121 vessels are primarily found across inland regions, except the Beqa' Valley. The six sub-classes are distinguished according to form.

6.15.1.1 CLASS 121a (Figure 43)

Distinction: Undecorated spherical bottle with very short, rolled-out rim.

Bases: **Round**

Distribution: Iron III (only three sites in study area)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 264; 265

Comments: CLASS 121a is found in abundance at sites east of the Euphrates; such as Tell Halaf (von Oppenheim 1962, Pl. 66.93) and Nimrud (Oates 1959, Pl. XXXVIII.81, 83-85).

6.15.1.2 CLASS 121b (Figure 43)

Distinction: Round bodied bottle with carinated neck and flaring neck

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Etched "collar"

Distribution: Iron III (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 266

Comments: CLASS 121b is found at sites east of the Euphrates; such as Tell Halaf (von Oppenheim 1962, Pl. 66.91) and Nimrud (Oates 1959, Pl. XXXVIII.97).

6.15.1.3 CLASS 121c (Figure 43)

Distinction: Pointed bottle with short flaring neck and significantly dimpled surfaces

Bases: **Point**

Surfaces: Characteristic dimpled surface of Palace-Ware

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (northern Syrian)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 329

Comments: The origin of the Palace-Ware bottles and cups is conventionally located in northern Iraq (Oates 1959, Pl. XXXVII.60-67).

6.15.1.4 CLASS 121d (Figure 43)

Distinction: Long bottle with pointed base, slightly bulging shoulders, and a wide upright neck.

Bases: **Point**; Point-thickened

Distribution: Iron II; **Iron III** (northern Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 323; 328; 330; 351

Comments: CLASS 121d is also found east of the Euphrates at Tell Halaf (von Oppenheim 1962, Pl. 66.96).

6.15.1.5 CLASS 121e (Figure 43)

Distinction: Small, thin-walled cup with carinated shoulder and flaring rim.

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: Iron II (inland Syria); **Iron III** (widespread); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 97; 98; 119; 326; 327

Comments: CLASS 121e is also found east of the Euphrates, at Nimrud (Oates 1959, Pl. XXXVII.59) and at Tell Halaf (von Oppenheim 1962, Pl. 66.84).

6.15.1.6 CLASS 121f (Figure 43)

Distinction: Cup with sinuous profile and flaring lip.

Bases: **Point**

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III (northern Palestine coast; north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 324; 325

Comments: CLASS 121f is also found east of the Euphrates at Nimrud (Oates 1959, Pl. XXXVII.78-79) and at Tell Halaf (von Oppenheim 1962, Pl. 66.83).

6.16 CUPS AND CHALICES

6.16.1 CLASS 122 (Figure 44)

Description: Cup with large looping handles

Attachments: Two handles loop from belly to rim

Comments: Small dataset. The validity of CLASS 122 is brought into question considering that the only two adherents bear different bases, one is decorated and the other not, and they appear to belong to two different periods.

6.16.2 CLASS 123 (Figure 44)

Description: One-handled cup with carinated belly and upright rim.

Bases: Ring; Flat; Disc; Round

Surfaces: Monochrome is known; Bichrome is rare

Attachments: Handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I (Jezreel Valley; West Syria); Iron II; Iron III

Comments: The form is known from Late Bronze Age contexts of northern Palestine (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.58.39-42; Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 134.9-11).

6.16.3 CLASS 124 (Figure 44)

Description: One-handled cup with well-rounded belly and upright rim.

Bases: **Round**

Attachments: Handle connects rim and shoulder

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III; Persian (not well-defined)

Comments: One Black-on-Red example with trefoil lip is known from Byblos (Homsy 2003, Pl. 4d).

6.16.4 CLASS 125 (Figure 44)

Description: Short one-handled cup with a strainer/spout

Bases: Ring

Attachments: Handle attached to rim; strainer positioned on, or under belly

Distribution: Iron II

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 294

Comments: Small dataset

6.16.5 CLASS 126 (Figure 44)

Description: Small one-handed cup with tripod base

Bases: **Tripod**

Surfaces: Monochrome bands are rare

Attachments: Handle attached to rim

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II**; Iron III (mainly northern Palestine)

Comments: Small dataset. The shape of this cup is often very similar to the “tripod incense burner” (CLASS 014), and is only distinguished by a lack of holes.

6.16.6 CLASS 127 (Figure 44)

Description: Wishbone-handled cup with ring base.

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Black-Slip are rare

Attachments: Wishbone-handle attached under rim

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron II

Comments: The majority of examples derive from contexts that are linked to the Late Bronze Age, and are well-attested in that period (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.66.79; Bikai 1978b, Pl. 42.3). The majority of CLASS 127 was recovered from contexts with clear mortuary associations.

6.16.7 CLASS 128 (Figure 44)

Description: Angular “thistle-shaped” vase

Bases: Ring; Disc

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and Bichrome geometric patterns are known

Attachments: Rim attached to rim is rare (only on Bichrome examples); shoulder lugs (Jerablus) are rare

Distribution: **Iron I**; Iron II (not well defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 139; 140; 349

6.16.8 CLASS 129 (Figure 44)

Description: Tall, footed “thistle-shaped” vase

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and lines, and Red-Slip are known.

Distribution: **Iron I** (mainly Megiddo); Iron II; Iron III; Persian

Comments: CLASS 129 is known from a few Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 118.28-29; 1961, Pl. 273.7-10).

6.16.9 CLASS 130 (Figure 44)

Description: Pedestal goblet.

Bases: Pedestal

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III; Persian (not well-defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 125

6.16.10 CLASS 131 (Map 65)

The distinctive feature of the CLASS 131 chalice is its shallow bowl mounted on a tall, pedestal base. The three variants are distinguished on the form of the pedestal. Similar chalices are known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Schaeffer 1949, 269, Fig. 115; Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pls 90.14; 91.18, 21; 1960, Pls 118.21-22; 129.18-19; 1961, Pls 273.1, 4-6; 280.3-4).

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 178

6.16.10.1 CLASS 131a (Figure 44)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl chalice with high flaring pedestal base.

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Painted interiors are known.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; coastal Syria); **Iron II** (Lebanon)

6.16.10.2 CLASS 131b (Figure 44)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl chalice with stepped-pedestal base

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare (only in Iron I southern Levant)

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon)

6.16.10.3 CLASS 131c (Figure 45)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl chalice with fenestrated pedestal base.

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Fenestrated triangles and Monochrome bands

Distribution: Iron I Megiddo

Comments: Small dataset

6.16.11 CLASS 132 (Figure 45)

Description: “Thorned” chalice

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Monochrome bands or Red-Slip are common; Black-on-Red is rare

Attachments: Individual horn-like pendants or disk-like ridge positioned under rim

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II/Iron III** (north Syria; southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 179; 180

Comments: Most examples are fragmentary

6.16.12 CLASS 133 (Figure 45)

Description: Shallow-bowl for use on pot-stand

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Attachments: Horn-like pendants are known

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (northern Palestine)

6.17 BOWLS

6.17.1 CLASS 134 (S-curve bowls) (Map 66)

CLASS 134 is characterised by bowls with distinctive s-curve rim. The five sub-classes are distinguished by vessel-depth, lip-angle, and rim stance. CLASS 134 is known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 159.5, 8), but is considered a hallmark of the Iron I in northern Palestine (Ben Ami 2001, 160). Red-Slip examples do not appear in inland Syria until the Iron III period, despite appearing along the coast and in northern Palestine during the Iron I and Iron II periods.

6.17.1.1 CLASS 134a (Figure 46)

Distinction: Deep s-curve bowl

Bases: **Ring**; Flat; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Attachments: Handle attached to rim is rare

Distribution: **Iron I** (well spread); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III (north Syria; northern Palestine coast)

Comments: Despite “deep” being used here, the form is still wider than it is deep.

6.17.1.2 CLASS 134b (Figure 46; Map 66)

Distinction: Shallow s-curve bowl

Bases: **Disc**; Ring; Flat

Surfaces: Internal painted bands are rare; Red-Slip is known

Distribution: **Iron I/II** (northern Palestine; Syria); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 20; 21; 40; 134

Comments: Generally missing from Lebanon. CLASS 134b is not associated with mortuary practices.

6.17.1.3 CLASS 134c (Figure 46)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl with direct rim and s-curve lip

Bases: Disc; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Monochrome is rare

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III (two sites)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 41

6.17.1.4 CLASS 134d (Figure 46)

Distinction: Small-bowl with short, everted lip (**Primarily rims**)

Bases: Disc; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Monochrome or Bichrome bands are rare.

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 17; 83; 157; 158

Comments: This sub-class also includes a number of bowls that have a large hole bored through the base, indicative of a funnel; these are only known from Hama and Tell Mishrife in the Iron II period.

6.17.1.5 CLASS 134e (Figure 46)

Distinction: Medium-sized s-curve bowl with bevelled lip-interior.

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; west Syria); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Syria); Iron III (inland Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 19; 64; 70

6.17.2 CLASS 135 (Figure 46)

Description: Carinated wide-bowl with upright rim and long-everted lip.

Bases: Ring; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Attachments: Two handles connect rim and carination

Distribution: Iron III; Persian (not well-defined)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 205

Comments: Small dataset. While a bowl from Iron II Hazor (Yadin *et al.* 1960, Pl. 98.43) is generally similar in profile, it lacks the long everted lip.

6.17.3 CLASS 136 (Figure 46)

Description: Large-bowl with heavy, everted lip

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: Iron III (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 53

Comments: Small dataset.

6.17.4 CLASS 137 (Figure 47)

Description: Everted bowl rim with grooved upper-lip.

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 181; 182; 183

6.17.5 CLASS 138 (Figure 47)

Description: Large-bowl with high-ring base and external flange under rim.

Bases: High-ring

Surfaces: One example of etched design

Distribution: Iron III/Persian (Euphrates)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 44

Comments: Possible mortuary association.

6.17.6 CLASS 139 (Figure 47)

Description: Medium-sized bowl with small external flange under rim.

Bases: **Ring**; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Attachments: Short bone-shaped lugs on the rim are common with Red-Slip

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (northern Palestine/inland Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 55; 99; 100; 101

Comments: Red-Slip is particularly well-represented at Hazor during the Iron II period and at Tell Afis during the Iron III period.

6.17.7 CLASS 140 (Figure 47)

Description: Shallow-bowl with incurving rim.

Bases: Disc; Low-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Attachments: Bone-shaped lugs are known (usually at Hazor)

Distribution: Iron II (only three sites)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 33

Comments: Small dataset.

6.17.8 CLASS 141 (Maps 67; 68)

CLASS 141 is characterised by a medium-sized bowl with concave sides and an upright, slightly thickened rim. The four sub-classes are distinguished by the shape of the thickened-lip.

6.17.8.1 CLASS 141a (Figure 47)

Distinction: Externally thickened lip with tooling underneath.

Bases: **Disc**; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Painted decoration is rare (all from coast)

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); **Iron II** (Northern Levant); **Iron III** (inland Syria; northern Palestine coast); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 46; 49; 56; 103; 146

6.17.8.2 CLASS 141b (Figure 47)

Distinction: Externally thickened lip with depression underneath

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Monochrome is rare

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II/Iron III** (inland Syria; northern Palestine); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 124

6.17.8.3 CLASS 141c (Figure 47)

Distinction: Externally rounded lip

Bases: **Disc**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Painted decoration is rare

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (Northern Levant); **Iron III** (north Syria; northern Palestine coast); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 48; 50; 52; 59; 62; 66; 133

Comments: Red-Slip appears in northern Palestine during the Iron I and Iron II periods, and common in Syria during the Iron III period.

6.17.8.4 CLASS 141d (Figure 47)

Distinction: Externally and internally rounded lip

Bases: Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Attachments:

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine); **Iron II** (inland northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 67; 68

Comments: There is a distinct absence of coastal examples.

6.17.9 CLASS 142 (Figure 47)

Description: Small or medium-sized bowl with down-turned everted lip.

Bases: **Flat**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III/Persian (coastal sites)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 45; 65

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.10 CLASS 143 (Figure 48)

Description: Bowl with externally-thickened lip that is flattened on top.

Bases: **Flat**

Surfaces: Bichrome bands and lines on interior are rare; Red-Slip is common

Attachments:

Distribution: **Iron I** (mainly inland regions); **Iron II** (Northern Levant); **Iron III** (mainly coastal regions); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 73

6.17.11 CLASS 144 (Maps 69; 70)

The distinctive feature of a CLASS 144 bowl is the upright rim with short, triangular lip. Handles are rare and when present are in the form of a bone-shaped lug attached to the rim. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the presence or absence of a sharp carination below the rim.

6.17.11.1 CLASS 144a (Figure 48; Map 69)

Distinction: Deep sub-class with outwardly direct rim

Bases: **Disc**; Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 120; 121

Comments: Some mortuary association.

6.17.11.2 CLASS 144b (Figure 48; Map 70)

Distinction: Shallow sub-class with carination under rim

Bases: **Disc**; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; Painted decoration is rare

Distribution: **Iron II** (northern Palestine; North Levantine coast); **Iron III** (North Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 84; 86; 88

Comments: CLASS 144b holds little association with mortuary contexts.

6.17.12 CLASS 145 (Maps 71; 72)

CLASS 145 is characterised by a shallow bowl with outwardly direct rim and an everted, thickened rim. The two sub-classes are differentiated by the angle of the thickened lip. Many of the CLASS 145 bowls were recovered from mortuary contexts, where they were used as lids for CLASS 042 cinerary urns.

6.17.12.1 CLASS 145a (Figure 48; Map 71)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl with downwardly-everted thickened lip.

Bases: **Flat; Disc**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (coastal regions); Persian (northern Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 28; 29; 30; 32; 36; 37; 84d; 148

Comments: Few inland examples known. Strong mortuary association.

6.17.12.2 CLASS 145b (Figure 48; Map 72)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl with upwardly-everted thickened lip.

Bases: **Flat; Disc**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 26; 27; 31

Comments: Strong mortuary association.

6.17.13 CLASS 146 (Figure 48)

Description: Small-bowl with inverted and everted lip

Bases: Disc

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 43

Comments: Only one bowl identified

6.17.14 CLASS 147 (Figure 48)

Description: Bowl with long everted lip and depressed “gutter”.

Bases: Ring

Distribution: North Syria

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 177

Comments: Small dataset. CLASS 147 derives only from unstratified contexts and cannot be dated, though Lehmann (1966, Pl. 29) dated it to the Persian period.

6.17.15 CLASS 148 (Figure 48)

Description: Shallow-bowl with long, sinuous flaring rim

Bases: Disc; Low-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common at Iron II Hazor and Iron III al Mina; Painted decoration is rare.

Distribution: Iron II (Hazor); Iron III (north Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 149; 150; 151

Comments: Examples from northern Palestine/southern Lebanon tend to bear much shorter lips. A bowl from the earlier Deve Höyük cemetery is decorated with a fience glaze, a technique also present at Al Mina (Peltenberg 1969).

6.17.16 CLASS 149 (Figure 48)

Description: Bowl with sinuous, flaring rim and very thin lip.

Bases: Disc; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Bichrome are rare.

Attachments:

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II/**Iron III** (inland northern Levant); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 116; 117; 118

6.17.17 CLASS 150 (Figure 48)

Description: Shallow-bowl with direct, very thin lip.

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Distribution: Iron II/Iron III (widespread)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 57; 75a

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.18 CLASS 151 (Figure 49)

Description: Shallow-bowl with outwardly-oblique, but everted sides.

Bases: **Flat**; **Disc**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Painted decoration is rare

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron II/Iron III (Levantine coast); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 75b; 76

Comments: Around one third of these bowls were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.19 CLASS 152 (Figure 49)

Description: Medium-sized bowl with carinated sides and direct rim.

Bases: **Ring**; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Painted decoration is rare

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (most of study area); Iron III (northern Palestine; north Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 58; 109; 110; 111; 113; 114

Comments: During the Iron I period, Red-Slip is restricted to northern Palestine and southern coast of Lebanon, while in the Iron II period includes sites of the Syrian coast. Only in the Iron III period is Red-Slip well distributed across inland Syria.

6.17.20 CLASS 153 (Figure 49)

Description: Shallow-bowl with horizontal sides and vertically tapering lip.

Bases: **Disc**; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; Hama); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 81; 82; 130

6.17.21 CLASS 154 (Figure 49)

Description: Carinated small-bowl with flat base, diagonal sides and upright lip.

Bases: **Flat**

Surfaces: Monochrome interior bands are known; Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: **Iron I**/Iron II (northern Palestine); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 107

Comments: Around one third of TYPE 219 bowls came from mortuary contexts.

6.17.22 CLASS 155 (Figure 49; Map 73)

Description: Thin-walled shallow-bowl with carinated sides and direct lip.

Bases: **Round**; Flat; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical (reserve-slip on base is common); Black-on-Red is rare

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; Hama); **Iron II/Iron III** (northern Palestine; north Syria) Persian (northern Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 78; 80

Comments: The extra attention to decorating what would be the rounded base suggests that these bowls doubled as lids, possibly in conjunction with burial urns; around one third of CLASS 155 bowls were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.23 CLASS 156 (Figure 49)

Description: Thin-walled small-bowl with carinated sides and near-upright lip

Bases: Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip (with reserve-slip base) is common

Distribution: Iron II (northern Palestine; southern Lebanese coast); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 79

Comments: The majority of CLASS 156 bowls derives from mortuary contexts.

6.17.24 CLASS 157 (Figure 49; Map 74)

Description: Small hemispherical bowl with upright rim

Bases: Round; Disc; Flat; Low-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Painted bands are known

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; Lebanon); Iron II (northern Palestine; Lebanon; north Syria); Iron III (north Syria; northern Palestine coast); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 144; 145a

6.17.25 CLASS 158

CLASS 158 is characterised by a small, conical bowl. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the presence/absence of handles inside the bowl. The CLASS 158 profile appears to have its origins in the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 159.3-4).

6.17.25.1 CLASS 158a (Figure 49)

Distinction: Small conical bowl

Bases: Flat; Disc; Low-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (northern Palestine; Lebanon); Iron III

Comments: One quarter of these bowls were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.25.2 CLASS 158b (Figure 49)

Distinction: Small conical bowl with internal handle

Bases: Flat

Attachments: Internal handles

Distribution: Iron I (two sites)

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.26 CLASS 159 (Figure 50)

Description: Bowl with tri-looped base

Bases: Looped

Surfaces: Bichrome geometric design rare; Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (widespread)

6.17.27 CLASS 160 (Maps 75; 76)

CLASS 160 is characterised by a small hemispherical bowl with incurving rim. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the severity of curve in the rim.

6.17.27.1 CLASS 160a (Figure 50; Map 75)

Description: Small hemispherical bowl with gently incurving rim

Bases: Flat; Disc; Round

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Painted decoration is known

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon; west Syria) **Iron II** (most of study area); Iron III (North Levantine coast); Persian (northern Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 145b

Comments: Amongst the Red-Slip examples, a few Iron II bowls also employ the reserve-slip technique. One quarter of CLASS 160a were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.27.2 CLASS 160b (Figure 50; Map 76)

Description: Small hemispherical bowl with tightly incurving rim

Bases: Flat; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Monochrome or Bichrome bands generally limited to Tyre

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; Orontes Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 127; 128; 129

Comments: Around one fifth of CLASS 160b was recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.28 CLASS 161 (Figure 50)

Description: Medium-bowl with incurved rim and internally bevelled lip

Bases: **Flat; Disc**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Painted decoration is rare

Attachments: Horizontal bone-shaped lugs are rare

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (northern Palestine; Lebanon; Orontes Syria); Iron III (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 47; 60

Comments: Horizontal bone-shaped lugs are generally limited to Lebanese Iron I contexts. CLASS 161 holds no association with mortuary practice.

6.17.29 CLASS 162 (Figure 50; Maps 77; 78)

Description: Decorated shallow-bowl with sides that curve upright

Bases: **Ring; Disc**; Flat

Surfaces: Internal Monochrome and Bichrome (post-Iron I) bands are common; Painted decoration is generally limited to coastal examples; Red-Slip is known

Attachments: Short horizontal handles under rim are common

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; coastal Lebanon; west inland Syria); Iron III (north Syria; coast of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 51; 106; 153; 156

Comments: The CLASS 162 form is known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Fig. 2.85.105). Less than 20% of CLASS 162 derives from mortuary contexts.

6.17.30 CLASS 163 (Figure 50)

Description: Deep hemispherical decorated bowl

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome designs are typical (bands, lines, geometric patterns, circles, fauna, flora); Black-on-Red and Cypriot-White-Slip are known

Attachments: Horizontal handles under rim

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; south Lebanese coast); Iron III (coastal regions)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 154

Comments: Similar bowl forms are known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 91.26).

6.17.31 CLASS 164 (Figure 51)

Description: Shallow-bowl with up-turned sides and flat base.

Bases: **Flat; Disc**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands are known; Red-Slip is rare

Distribution: **Iron I** (coast of southern Lebanon and northern Palestine); **Iron II** (primarily northern Palestine; southern Lebanon); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 7; 23; 175

Comments: CLASS 164 is similar to Late Bronze Age forms (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 152.7). Less than one quarter of CLASS 164 was recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.32 CLASS 165 (Maps 79; 80)

CLASS 165 is characterised by a shallow-bowl with an upturned rim, unthickened lip and ring base. The two sub-classes are distinguished according to height of the ring base.

6.17.32.1 CLASS 165a (Figure 51; Map 79)

Description: Low ring base shallow-bowl

Bases: **Ring**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare; Monochrome bands and lines are known

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (most of study area); Iron III (north Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 2

Comments: Less than 10% of these bowls were recovered from mortuary contexts.

6.17.32.2 CLASS 165b (Figure 51; Map 80)

Description: High-ring base shallow-bowl

Bases: High-ring

Surfaces: Monochrome designs are common on bowl interior; Red-Slip is rare.

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (only three sites)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 3; 8; 9

Comments: Significant component of Hama assemblages

6.17.33 CLASS 166 (“Hama fruit-stand”) (Figure 51; Map 81)

Description: Pedestal platter (“Hama fruit-stand”)

Bases: Pedestal

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; undecorated are known

Distribution: **Iron II**/Iron III (inland west Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 4; 5

Comments: The pedestal base is the most distinctive feature of these vessels, and is thrown separately before being attached. The ratio between platter diameter and base diameter is c. 3:1. Two coastal vessels recall the general form of the Hama ‘fruit-

stand', but are deeper vessels, with thicker sections and flaring bases (Buhl 1996, Fig. 29.XIII A 3 3400/1; S.V. Chapman 1972, Fig. 28.154).

6.17.34 CLASS 167 (Tripod bowl) (Figure 51)

Description: Shallow-bowl with tripod base

Bases: Tripod

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (Orontes Syria; inland northern Palestine); Iron III (north Syria; northern Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 185; 186; 187

Comments: The distinct is replicating the ubiquitous basalt mortars of the ancient Near East (see Culican 1970, 14-16; Lehmann 1996, Pl. 92(Form 500); Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 73.11). CLASS 167 is rarely associated with mortuary contexts.

6.17.35 CLASS 168 (Figure 51; Map 82)

Description: Shallow-bowl with outwardly direct rim and flattened lip

Bases: Ring; Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Monochrome bands are rare; Red-Slip is known.

Distribution: **Iron I/II** (most of study area); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 1; 2

6.17.36 CLASS 169 (Figure 51)

Description: Shallow-bowl with rolled-out lip.

Bases: Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Distribution: **Iron I** (inland Syria); **Iron II** (inland Syria; northern Palestine); Iron III (north Syria)

Comments: This simple profile is similar to Late Bronze Age forms (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 152.4).

6.17.37 CLASS 170 (Figure 52)

Description: Shallow-bowl with internally-thickened lip (**Primarily Rims**)

Bases: Disc

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome bands and Red-Slip are all known.

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; west Syria); **Iron II** (most of the study area); **Iron III** (north Syria; coast of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 16; 22

Comments: **POOR TYPE**

6.17.38 CLASS 171 (Figure 52)

Description: Shallow-bowl with ribbed surface (**Primarily Rims**)

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Etched bands

Distribution: **Iron II** (widespread); **Iron III/Persian** (northern Palestine coast)

Comments: **POOR TYPE**

6.17.39 CLASS 172

CLASS 172 is characterised by a shallow-bowl with sharply-bent profile and upright rim. The two sub-classes are distinguished by the sharpness of the bend.

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 6; 39; 85; 104; 105; 115; 155

6.17.39.1 CLASS 172a (Figure 52)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl with carination and upright rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Bases: Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known; Monochrome and Bichrome bands are rare

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II/Iron III** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; west Syria)

Comments: The CLASS 172a form is known from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1998, Fig. 159.14; Johns 1938, Fig. 13.2). **POOR TYPE**

6.17.39.2 CLASS 172b (Figure 52)

Distinction: Shallow-bowl with tightly-bent rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Bases: Disc; Flat

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Monochrome and Bichrome bands are known

Attachments: Horizontal lugs and handles are occasionally evident.

Distribution: **Iron I** (primarily northern Palestine and southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (most of study area); **Iron III** (north Syria; northern Palestine); **Persian**

Comments: **POOR TYPE**

6.17.40 CLASS 173 (Figure 52)

Description: Very shallow platter with up-turned and tapering lip (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Distribution: **Iron II/Iron III** (inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 4

Comments: Likely pedestal platter. A rim from the Tyre Al Bass cemetery is the only example of a possible pedestal platter beyond inland Syria, and is the only example from a mortuary context.

6.17.41 CLASS 174 (Figure 52)

Description: Shallow-bowl with up-turned rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome bands are common; Red-Slip is common

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Beqa' and Orontes Valleys); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; southern Lebanon; inland Syria); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 34

Comments: CLASS 174 includes a few shallow-bowls with slipped interior and pendant semi-circles painted on the exterior; some of these bowls have been published as East Cycladic, or Euboean, imports (e.g. Bikai 1978b, Pls. 11.20; 22.5-6; 24.5, pp. 53; Courbin 1982a, Fig 4; see Desborough 1952, 118, Pl. 12). **POOR TYPE**

6.17.42 CLASS 175 (Figure 52)

Description: Bowl with direct rim and flattened lip (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III; Persian

Comments: **POOR TYPE**

6.17.43 CLASS 176 (Figure 52)

Description: Shallow-bowl with direct rim and flattened lip (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Monochrome bands are known

Distribution: **Iron I/Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 1?

Comments: These rims are reminiscent of Late Bronze Age forms (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1976a, Fig. 27.4). **POOR TYPE**

6.17.44 CLASS 177 (Figure 52)

Description: Large, heavy plate with rounded rim

Surfaces: Red-Slip is known

Distribution: Iron II (inland Syria)

6.17.45 CLASS 178 (Figure 52)

Description: Small but thick plate

Bases: Flat

Surfaces: Black-on-Red is rare

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III (widespread)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 132; 137

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.46 CLASS 179 (Figure 52; Map 83)

Description: Small bowl with direct sides and bevelled lip.

Bases: **Flat; Disc**

Surfaces: Monochrome or Bichrome bands on interior are common; Red-Slip is known

Distribution: Iron I (coast of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon); **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Lebanese coast; inland Syria); Iron III (coast of northern Palestine and southern Lebanon)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 10; 11; 12; 13; 132

Comments: CLASS 179 is associated with mortuary contexts.

6.17.47 CLASS 180 (Figure 52; Map 84)

Description: Shallow-bowl with tapering lip and flat base

Bases: **Flat**

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; Black-on-Red is rare

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; Homs Basin); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 78b

Comments: CLASS 180 is not commonly associated with mortuary contexts.

6.17.48 CLASS 181 (Figure 53)

Description: Thin-walled shallow bowl

Bases: Round

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II** (northern Palestine; inland Syria); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 78b?

6.17.49 CLASS 182

CLASS 182 is characterised by a small, fine-bowl with unthickened lip. The three sub-classes are distinguished by the curve and stance of the rim. The general absence of CLASS 182 bowls from Lebanon is due to their low association with mortuary contexts.

6.17.49.1 CLASS 182a (Figure 53)

Distinction: Fine-bowl with outwardly direct rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; painted decoration is rare

Attachments: One handle is attached to rim on very few inland Syrian bowls

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (most of study area but Lebanon); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 143; 184

6.17.49.2 CLASS 182b (Figure 53)

Distinction: Fine-bowl with curving sides (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical; painted decoration is rare

Distribution: Iron I (northern Palestine; west Syria); **Iron II** (Euphrates; Orontes; northern Palestine); Iron III (north Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 18; 42

6.17.49.3 CLASS 182c (Figure 53)

Distinction: Fine-bowl with upright rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome bands are common; Red-Slip is common

Distribution: Iron I/**Iron II** (inland Syria; northern Palestine); Iron III; Persian

6.17.50 CLASS 183 (Figure 53)

Description: Fine-bowl with flaring rim (**Primarily Rims**)

Surfaces: Monochrome and Bichrome bands are known; Red-Slip is common

Distribution: Iron I (west Syria); **Iron II** (west Syria; northern Palestine); Iron III

Comments: CLASS 183 holds little association with mortuary contexts.

6.17.51 CLASS 184 (Figure 53; Map 85)

Description: Wide, carinated fine-bowl

Bases: Round; Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common; painted decoration is rare

Attachments: One handle on rim is known; horizontal handle is rare

Distribution: **Iron I** (northern Palestine; Lebanon, north Syria); **Iron II** (most of study area); Iron III; Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 89c; 92; 94

Comments: The CLASS 184 form has its roots in the Late Bronze Age (e.g. Ben Dov 2002, Figs 2.29.7; 54.5-7; Yadin *et al.* 1961, Pl. 272.1-16). The CLASS 184 profile has been connected with Assyrian bowl forms (e.g. Adachi 1997), but these bowls are widespread before the rise of Assyrian influence west of the Euphrates.

6.17.52 CLASS 185 (Figure 53)

Description: Fine-bowl with sharp-carination and horizontal burnishing

Bases: Low-ring

Surfaces: Burnished lines

Attachments: Horizontal handles under rim

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (Hama and Tell Nebi Mend)

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.53 CLASS 186 (Figure 53)

Description: Narrow fine-bowl with sharp carination

Bases: Disc

Surfaces: Monochrome painted bands

Distribution: Iron I (Tell Afis and Tell Rifa'at)

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.54 CLASS 187 (Figure 53; Map 86)

Description: Fine-bowl with long-flaring rim

Bases: **Round**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is rare; Red-Slip is known

Attachments: Horizontal handles under rim are known on Iron I examples

Distribution: Iron I (west Syria); **Iron II** (inland Syria); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 96; 123

Comments: CLASS 187 holds little, if any, association with mortuary contexts.

6.17.55 CLASS 188 (Figure 53; Maps 87; 88)

Description: “Sub-Mycenaean” s-curve small-bowl

Bases: **Ring;** Flat; Disc; Round

Surfaces: Monochrome bands and lines are typical; painted circles are known; Bichrome decoration is known; Red-Slip is known; Black-on-Red is known

Attachments: Horizontal handles on shoulder are common

Distribution: **Iron I** (most of the study area); **Iron II** (not Euphrates); Iron III

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 96

Comments: A number of similarly profiled and decorated bowls are known from Late Bronze Age contexts (e.g. Bounni *et al.* 1978, Fig. 28.1; Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 87.7; 1961, Pl. 273.11-12), when Mycenaean imports were frequently encountered along the Levantine coast. CLASS 188 bowls are often referred to as Late Helladic IIIC in style (Koehl 1985, No. 193), but are likely local in manufacture. The odd Mycenaean import might be included here (e.g. Anderson 1988, Pl. 30.10).

6.17.56 CLASS 189 (Figure 54)

Description: Fine-bowl with bent shoulder and inwardly direct rim

Bases: Round; Ring; Disc

Surfaces: Red-Slip is common in Iron II period

Distribution: Iron I/Iron II (inland Syria; northern Palestine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 91; 95

6.17.57 CLASS 190 (Figure 54)

Description: Fine-bowl with bulging, carinated profile and upright rim

Bases: Round

Surfaces: Red-Slip is typical

Distribution: Iron II (Orontes Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 89a; 89b

Comments: Considering the nature of the sites from which examples have been recovered, it seems likely CLASS 190 is associated with elite contexts.

6.17.58 CLASS 191 (*Skyphos*) (Figure 54; Map 89)

Description: Wide *skyphos* with carinated, flaring rim

Bases: **Ring; Flat**

Surfaces: Monochrome decoration is typical

Attachments: Two horizontal handles under shoulder carination

Distribution: Iron I; **Iron II/Iron III** (coastal Levant; Orontes Syria); Persian

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 152

Comments: The “pendant semi-circles” motif is widely considered indicative of imported Euboean *skyphoi* (Descœudres and Kearsley 1983, 44-46); a provenience that has been scientifically tested (Popham *et al.* 1983). Other less-distinct decorative schemes are also evident, and again are evidence for importation from the Greek world during the Proto-Geometric period (Descœudres and Kearsley 1983).

6.17.59 CLASS 192 (Figure 54)

Description: Medium-sized, deep-bowl with flaring rim

Bases: Ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip is rare

Attachments: Two handles under rim are known

Distribution: Iron I; Iron II; Iron III (west inland Syria)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Form 122

Comments: Small dataset

6.17.60 CLASS 193 (Figure 54; Map 90)

Description: Shallow-bowl with flat base and heavily thickened lip

Bases: **Flat**; Disc; Low-ring

Surfaces: Red-Slip and Monochrome are rare

Distribution: Iron II; Iron III; **Persian** (north Syria; Levantine coast)

Parallels: Lehmann 1996, Forms 159-163; 165; 167-173.

SECTION THREE

Analysis of Iron Age Ceramic Data

CHAPTER SEVEN

Exploratory Data Analysis

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore some of the variables within the ceramic database (**Chapters 5 and 6**); such as context type, geographic location, decoration, and vessel function and form. More specifically, these elements are investigated in order to reveal their change over time and space. However, listing the different ceramic variables for each of the 54 different sites seemed an arduous task. Hence, the definition of more manageable categories of time and space was an important part of the process.

The exploratory data analysis within this chapter was undertaken largely using MS Access and Excel, and WinBASP v. 5.43. The data was originally compiled and entered into the main MS Access database, as described in **Chapter 5**, from where it was imported into MS Excel for ease of analysis. Excel pivot-tables and pivot-table charts were used to filter the data and explore any perceivable or conceivable patterns. Many avenues were explored, and not all were rewarded with interesting patterns; nevertheless, important insight into the structure and patterning of the data was gained from positive and negative outcomes. This chapter only presents lines of enquiry that were seen as providing appropriate background for the interpretation contained within **Chapter 9**.

It was important that the following analyses never lost sight of the fact that the database is comprised of incidence data. The different charts and tables discuss percentages only with regard to incidents in the database, rather than actual numbers of vessels. This is why the exploratory data analysis concentrates on multivariate analyses; by which different categories are compared with each other according to a common measurement. Absolute numbers and percentages are only used to illustrate the different trends.

7.2 Temporal Analysis

In order to understand many of the distribution patterns evident in this chapter, it was important to identify meaningful temporal categories. Contexts that were chronologically imprecise or unreliable were removed for the analyses within this section, so as not to influence the results. For example, to plot the development of Red-Slip throughout the Iron Age, only single-period contexts were used; contexts that could fall into more than one sub-period were ignored. Unfortunately, many of the assemblages within the database have derived from contexts of poor or vague provenience, rendering the database much smaller than originally hoped.

The “period-specific” data was used to determine which CLASSES could be considered “abundant” within each period. While the number of incidents of each CLASS was an important consideration, only those that appeared at four or more sites during a single period were considered “abundant”; a CLASS that was well-represented but present at only one or two sites was not included in the results. In other words, only those CLASSES that appeared repeatedly in Iron I contexts were considered representative of the Iron I period. The results are presented in **Table 7.1** and **Table 7.2**.

Table 7.1: “Abundant” CLASSES in Iron I and Iron II periods

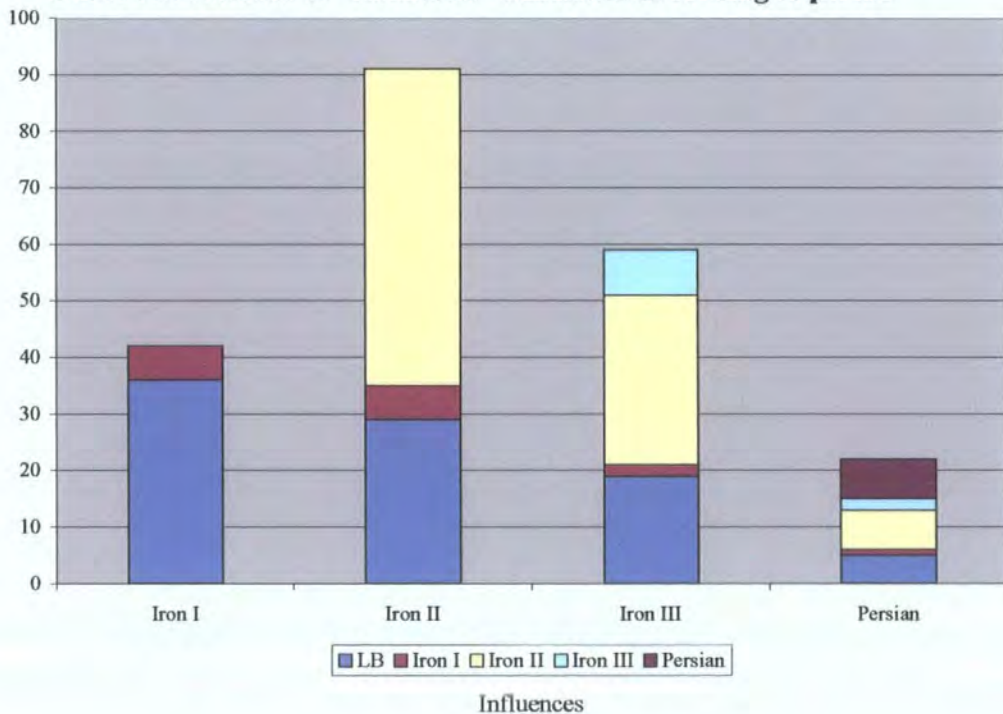
Iron I CLASSES		Iron II CLASSES
4, 6, 8	Cooking-pots	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
12, 13	Lamps/burners	12, 13, 14
16, 21, 22, 26	Transport Amphorae	16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 26, 28
31, 34, 35, 37	Pithoi	37
38, 40, 42, 53	Kraters	38, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 53
57	Urns/Amphorae	57, 59, 62, 64
71, 73, 78, 80	Jugs	68, 71, 73, 74, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 97
100	Dipper Juglets	100
102	Flasks	102
103, 104, 105, 107	Spouted	103, 105, 106, 107, 111
116	Bottles	119
123, 131	Cups/Chalices	131, 132
134, 157, 158, 160, 161, 164, 165a, 168, 184, 187, 188	Bowls	134, 139, 141, 143, 144, 145, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 179, 180, 181, 184, 187, 188, 189, 191, 193

Table 7.2: “Abundant” CLASSES in Iron III and Persian periods

Iron III CLASSES		Persian CLASSES
1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10	Cooking-pots	1, 6, 9
12	Lamps/burners	12
18, 24, 26, 27, 28	Trans. Amph.	18, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28
37	Pithoi	
42, 49, 53	Kraters	
57, 62	Urns/Amphorae	58
73, 77, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 90, 91	Jugs	73, 93, 95, 98
100	Dipper Juglets	100
102	Flasks	
119, 120	Bottles	117
134, 139, 141, 143, 144, 145, 148, 151, 152, 153, 155, 157, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 167, 168, 179, 183, 184, 187, 188, 191, 193	Bowls	134, 141, 160, 162, 193

The ceramic CLASSES considered typical of the Iron I period were also compared with the Late Bronze Age ceramic assemblages from Tell Bazi, Ras Ibn Hani, Tell Afis, Tell Kazel, Tell Arqa, Sarepta, Tyre, Dan, and Hazor (Anderson 1988; Badre & Gubel 1999-2000; Ben Dov 2002; Bikai 1978b; Bounni *et al.* 1998; Mazzoni 2002e; Otto 2006; Thalmann 2006b; Yadin *et al.* 1958; 1960). **Table 7.1** and **Table 7.2** are summarised in **Chart 7.1**, which presents the persistence of ceramic traditions throughout the Iron Age (the legend refers to the influences of different periods).

Chart 7.1: Number of “abundant” CLASSES according to period



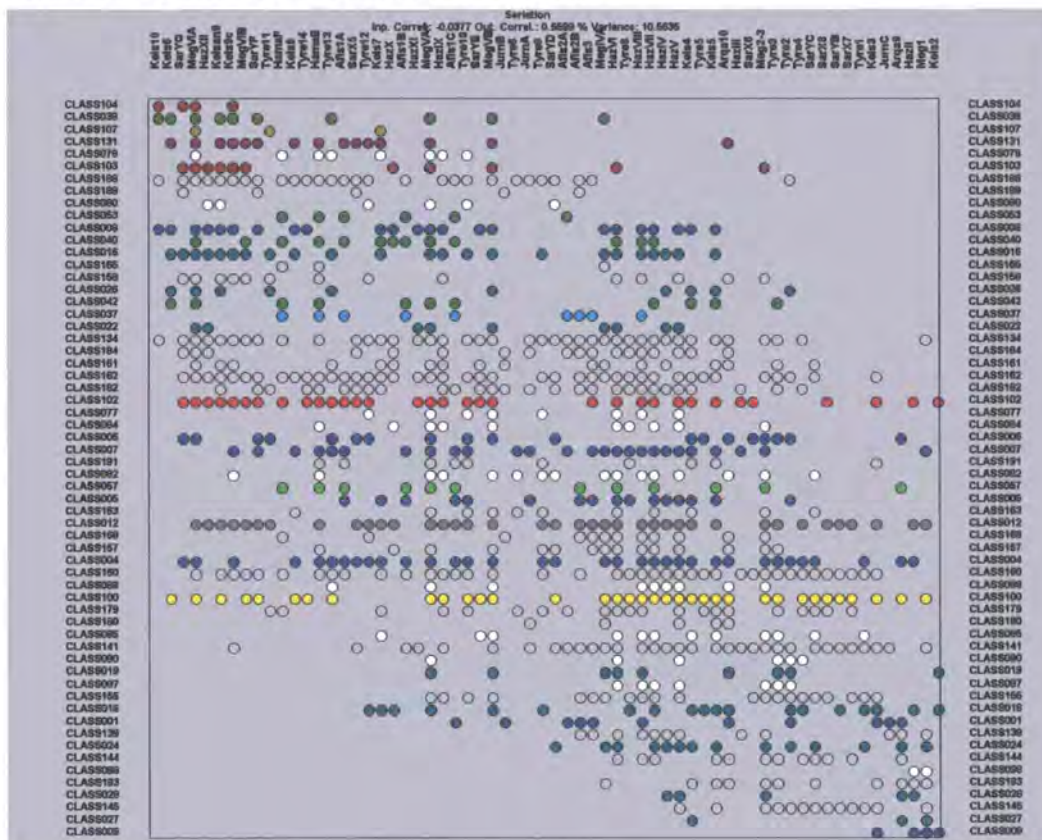
Of the 42 typical Iron I CLASSES, 36 (or 86%) were identified in Late Bronze Age contexts (**Appendix D**). In other words, much of the Iron I ceramic repertoire drew upon Late Bronze Age ceramic traditions. This is in sharp contrast to the Iron II period, when less than 40% of typical Iron II CLASSES were consistently found in Iron I contexts. While many of the typical Iron I forms were present in the Iron II period, there is a marked increase in new ceramic forms in the latter. **Chart 7.1** demonstrates the strong ceramic link between the Late Bronze Age and the Iron I period, with only minimal ceramic change evident in the Iron I period. In contrast, the Iron II period is depicted as a time of rapid ceramic change, yet it still retained a large percentage of earlier ceramic traditions. The Iron III and Persian periods witnessed little change among existing ceramic traditions.

The strong continuity of ceramic culture across the conventional Bronze/Iron Age transition has important implications for the way we might view early Iron Age societies. Since early Iron Age pottery is very similar to that of the Late Bronze Age, it attests to continuity of manufacturing traditions and thus probably also population, and therefore to an early Iron Age society based on that of the Late Bronze Age (Mazzoni 2000d; 2001; Caubet 1992; Peckham 2001, 20-21). Continuity of population also implies that no significant (limited in scale or impact) migration of “Sea Peoples” or other new entities took place (§2.3.2). Therefore, the term Iron I is misleading; this period appears to have been more closely aligned with Late Bronze Age culture than with that of the later Iron Age; the early Iron Age of the Northern Levant is essentially a sub-Late Bronze Age. The traditional historical narrative cannot adequately explain such changes.

While **Chart 7.1** is interesting, not every “abundant” CLASS can be considered characteristic of a period. For example, CLASS 134 bowls are “abundant” throughout the Iron Age and are therefore a poor representation of any single sub-period. To help isolate which CLASSES could be considered temporally-sensitive (or characteristic of a single period) a seriation was undertaken using WinBASP version 5.43 for Windows (the Seriation matrices presented below are difficult to read in detail, and are included on the appended CD for closer inspection). The first seriation was performed using only stratified sites with good-sized assemblages, preferably with a long Iron Age sequence. The key site for the inland Northern

Levant was Tell Afis, with its well-published ceramic assemblage covering the length of the Iron Age; other sites used were Tell Keisan, Hazor, Tyre, Megiddo, Sarepta, Hama, and Tell Jurn Kabir. The first seriation included the “abundant” ceramic CLASSES from **Table 7.1** and **Table 7.2**. While the resulting seriation matrix is crowded, a diagonal “curve” is discernible (**Seriation 1**).

Seriation 1 (CD/SERIATION/SERIATION1)

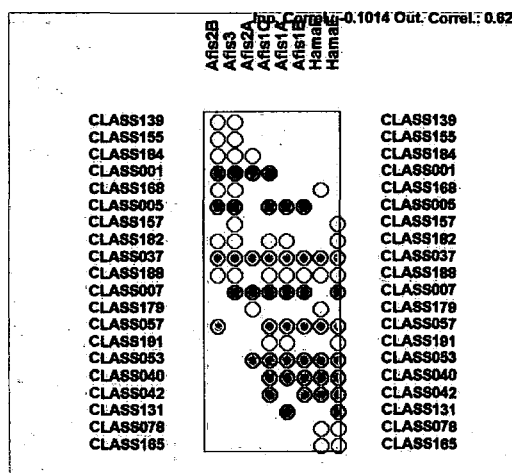


Despite limitations in the data, some temporal ordering is present. The progression of time can be read in **Seriation 1** from left to right, and top to bottom (i.e. the most recent contexts and forms are in the bottom right of the matrix, while the older examples are found in the top left). While there is much confusion within the centre of the matrix, the two extremities show good chronological distinction. The sequential ordering of the horizontal axis does not perfectly reflect stratigraphic succession from left to right, but this can be expected considering the high level of residuality within tell contexts. Nevertheless, there is a general grouping of “early” contexts to the right, and “later” contexts to the left. The colours within each matrix represent different ceramic functional categories as presented below.

While there is some general chronological order evident amongst the contexts, there remains some confusion regarding specific sequencing. For instance the Megiddo sequence adheres to its published order (VIB, VIA, VB, etc...), while the Keisan and Tyre phasing are slightly mixed. For this reason, some additional seriations were performed on further restricted datasets.

The above seriation revealed an interesting relationship between the Hama and Tell Afis assemblages; namely that while Tell Afis followed good stratigraphic order, the two main Hama strata were reversed and were *both* considered comparable with the Tell Afis Iron I assemblages. For this reason, the next seriation included only these two sites.

Seriation3 (CD/SERIATION/SERIATION3)

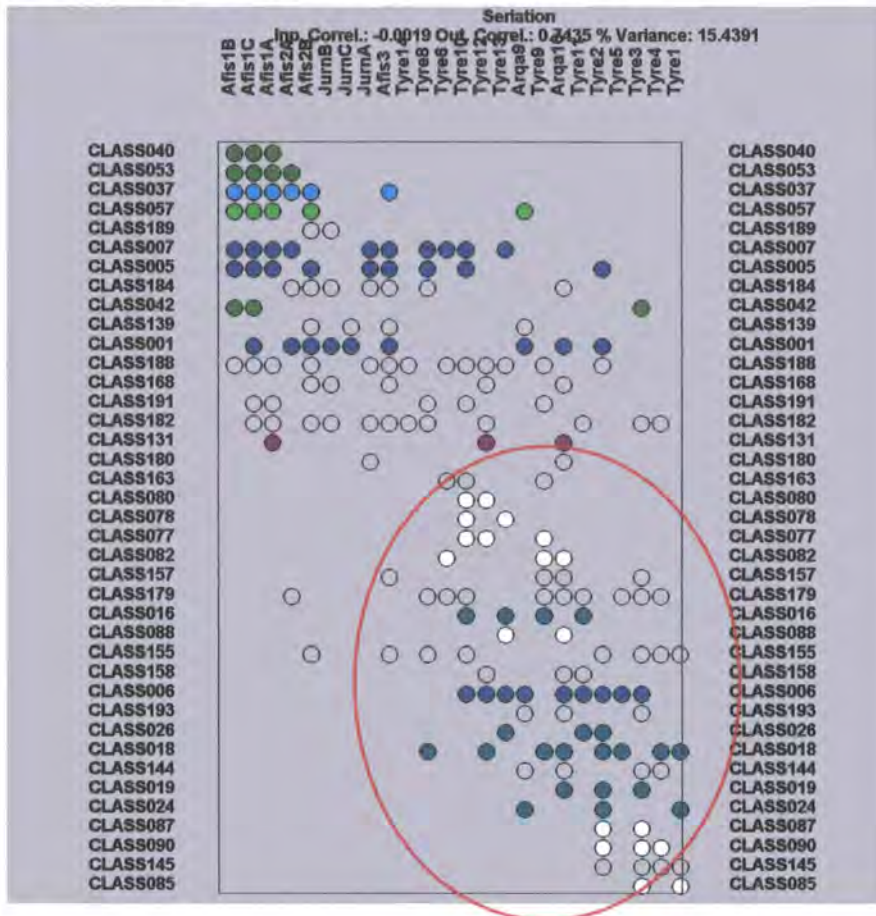


Seriation 3 confirms the Tell Afis sequence, though slightly altered in order. The order of the Hama E and F assemblages are again reversed and, more importantly, are positioned before the Tell Afis Iron I assemblages. This persistent pattern (also **Seriation 2**) seems to imply that the current interpretation of the Hama

E pottery as a clear Iron IIB assemblage is problematic. Either the material is mixed, and contains a high level of earlier Iron Age pottery, or Hama E has been incorrectly dated to the Iron IIB period. The ceramic data appears to confirm the need for caution regarding the assumed Assyrian destruction of Hama E (§2.4.3). Of course, not all patterns evident in a seriation are strictly chronological; the difference between the Hama and Tell Afis assemblages may instead be due to regional variations (there is some 70 km between the sites). The possibility of variation due to geographic positioning was explored further. Hence, **Seriation 4** included four geographically-distant Northern Levant sites; Tell Afis, Tyre, Tell Jurn Kabir, and Tell Arqa. A good “curve” is again present, but the two inland sites are grouped separate to the two coastal sites. This matrix seems to indicate that geographic

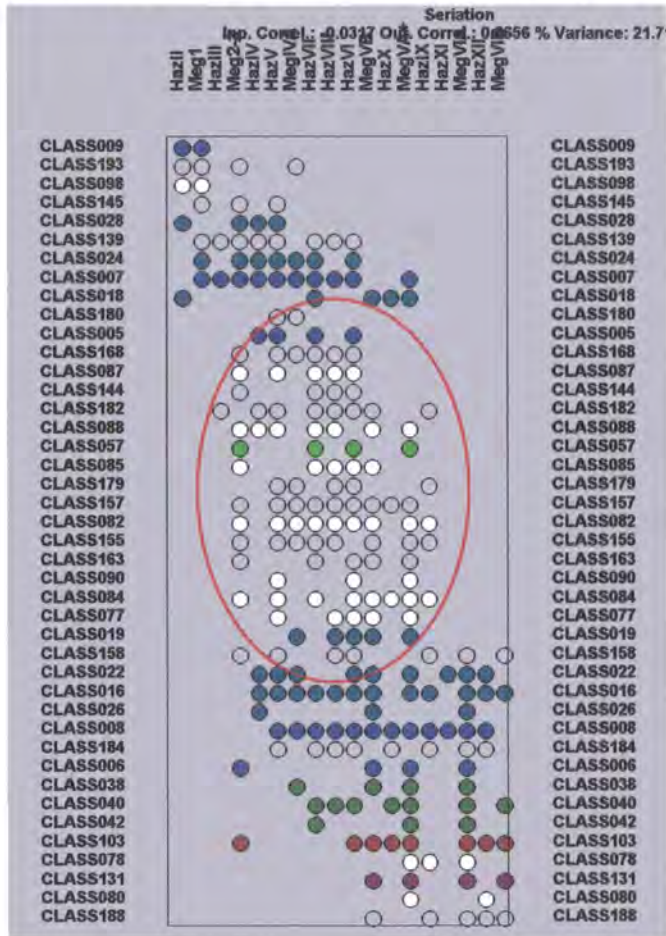
position was an important consideration; note the relatively tight “curve” in the lower half of the matrix (red). Nevertheless, there is some order within the two groups. For instance, the position of the Tell Jurn Kabir assemblages amidst those from Tell Afis confirms the published chronology for this site: a short life-span in the late-Iron II and Iron III periods. The results appear to confirm the coastal-inland distinction.

Seriation 4 (CD/SERIATION/SERIATION4)



A fifth and final seriation was undertaken on the Hazor and Megiddo assemblages for comparative purposes. **Seriation 5** again shows good order in the data, with each site’s sequence following a general order. Furthermore, there are a few vessel categories that are good chronological indicators; kraters, chalices/cups, and unguent containers are primarily early phenomena. **Seriation 5** also shows a large cluster of Iron II forms in the middle of the matrix (red) that had no Iron I precedents, confirming the Iron II period experienced rapid ceramic change (**Chart 7.1**).

Seriation 5 (CD/SERIATION/SERIATION5)



The seriation analyses above have demonstrated that there is some general chronological ordering in the database, despite the many limitations in using presence/absence data. In addition, there appears to be some vessel forms that might be considered good chronological indicators. Finally, it is worth reiterating that not all the patterns in the matrices reflect chronological order, and might instead be the result of different cultural and/or

geographic factors. Nevertheless, **Seriation 4** appears to confirm that the Northern Levant is split into at least two different regions; coastal and inland. Geographic distribution and ceramic regionalisation will be explored further throughout this and the following chapters.

7.3 Spatial Analysis

The extensive geographical areas used in **Chapter 5 (Charts 5.3 and 5.4)** were considered too broad for an analysis of spatial distribution. Hence, nine smaller geographic zones were created for use throughout the remainder of this study. Though essentially arbitrary categories, these nine zones were based on geographic considerations. They are defined below in **Table 7.3** and depicted in **Map 91**.

Table 7.3: Local ceramic zones

Zone	Approx. Modern Equiv.	Sites
1	Syrian Coast	Al Mina; Ras al Bassit; Ras Ibn Hani; Tel Sukas; Tell Kazel; Tell Arqa
2	Lebanese Coast	Byblos; Beirut; Khalde; Sidon; Tambourit; Qraye; Qasmieh; Joya; Khirbet Silm; Tyre; Tell Rachidieh; Sarepta
3	Beqa' Valley	Tell el Ghassil; Kamid el Loz
4	Jezreel Valley	Pella; Tel Rehov; Beth Shan; Tel Jezreel; Megiddo
5	Northern Palestine	Tel Dan; Hazor
6	Palestinian Coast	Akhziv; Tell Keisan; Tell Abu Hawam; Athlit
7	Orontes Syria	Tell Nebi Mend; Tell Mishrife; Hama; Tell Qarqur; Tell Mastuma; Tell Afis
8	North-west Syria (Amuq)	Deve Höyük; Tell Rifa'at; Zincirli; 'Ain Dara; Nayrab; Tell Abou Danne; Tell Judeideh; Tell Ta'yinat; Chatal Höyük
9	Euphrates Syria	Tille Höyük; Jerablus; Kefrik; Tell Shiyukh Fawqani; Tell Ahmar; Tell Jurn Kabir; Tell Sheikh Hassan

Before exploring each of these zones in more detail, it was deemed important to understand any geographical weighting within the data. **Chart 7.2** below depicts the percentage of database incidents according to these nine zones. Apart from confirming the bias towards the Southern Levant evident in **Chapter 5**, it shows the limited nature of the data from the inland Northern Levant; only Orontes Syria is well represented. Furthermore, despite only two sites representing the Northern Palestine zone, it is the most abundantly attested. The Beqa' Valley, on the other hand, is also represented by only two sites, but accounts for a much smaller percentage of incidents. North-west Syria and the Euphrates, however, are represented by significantly more sites, but only marginally more incidents. The full publication of the OI Amuq sequence would help correct this imbalance.

Chart 7.2: Percentage of database incidents - zone

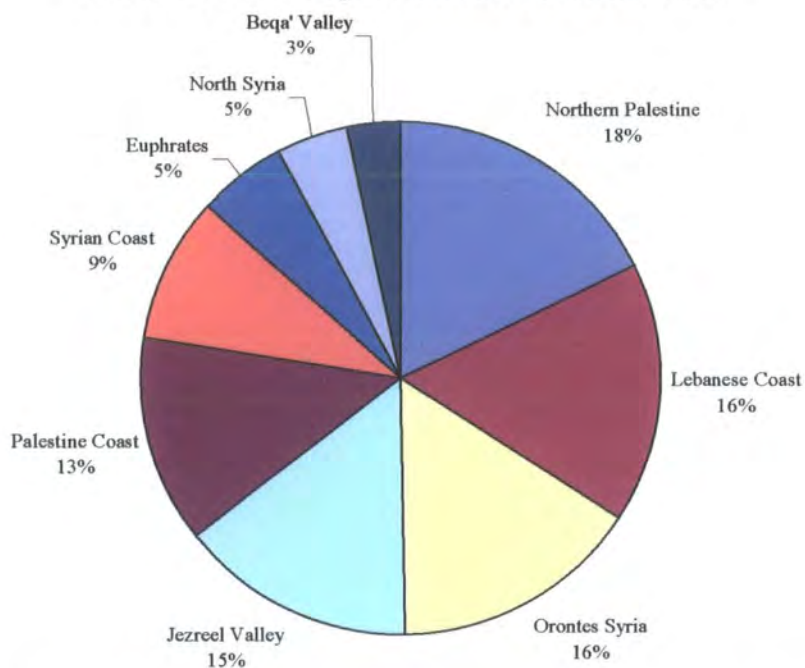
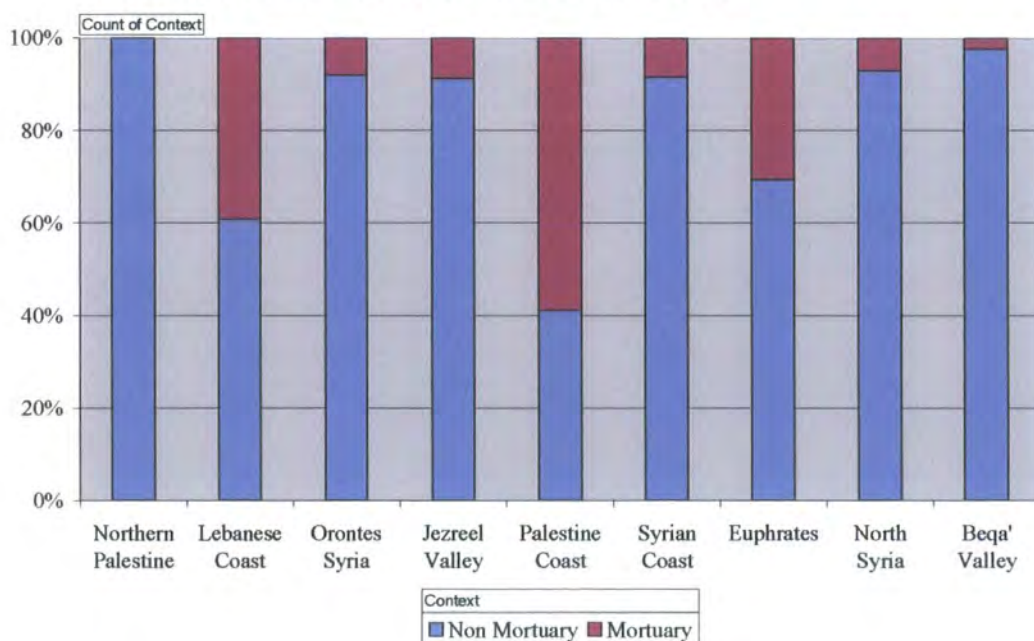


Chart 7.3 shows that despite an overall bias in the database toward settlement assemblages, the Palestine and Lebanese Coasts show a strong mortuary component; there is a distinct lack of reliable, stratified settlement contexts from these two zones. The mortuary bias amongst coastal zones may account for the two-region model discussed above (§4.2.2.2).

Chart 7.3: Database incidents – zoned context type



Ceramic trends in each of the nine zones are discussed below in order of overall size (**Chart 7.2**), from largest to smallest. **Chart 7.4** shows bowls as the most common functional category in Northern Palestine, followed by cooking-pots. The most abundant forms are CLASS 134, 141, and 152 bowls (amongst the most abundant – **Chart 5.9**), and CLASS 007 and 008 cooking-pots (**Chart 7.5**).

Chart 7.4: Northern Palestine incidents - functional category

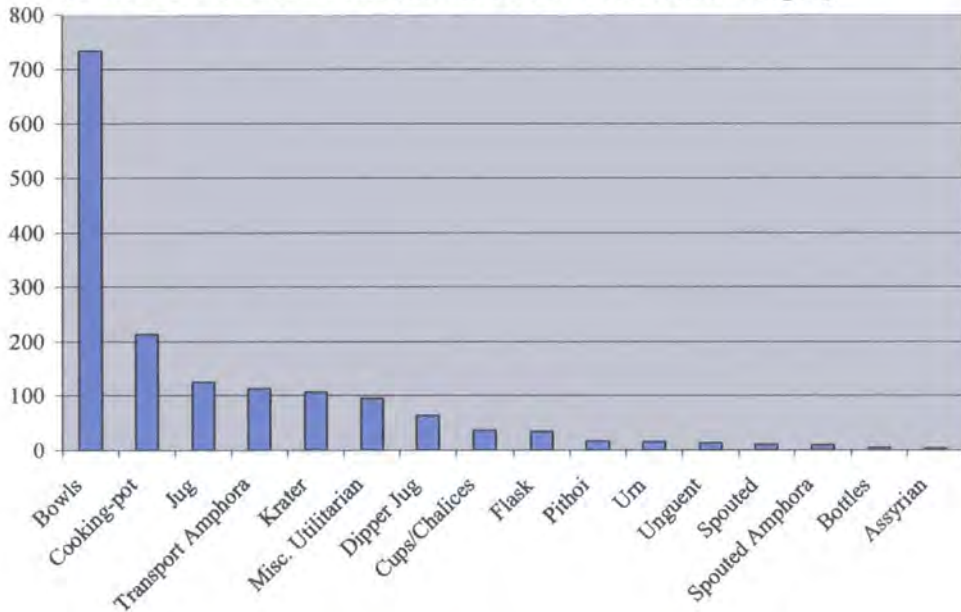


Chart 7.5: Northern Palestine incidents – ceramic CLASS

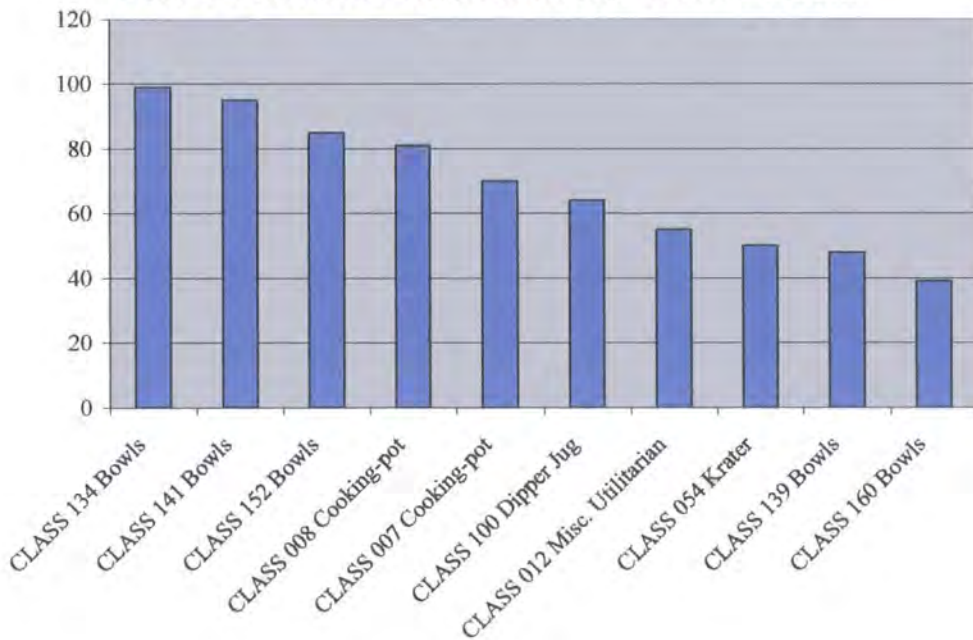


Chart 7.6 shows that the most abundant categories on the Lebanese Coast are bowls, followed by an abundance of jugs and kraters. The two most abundant individual forms, however, are not bowls, but CLASS 042 kraters and CLASS 082 jugs. Nevertheless, five of the ten most abundant CLASSES are bowls (**Chart 7.7**); the other five are associated with the storing or pouring of liquids.

Chart 7.6: Lebanese Coast incidents - functional category

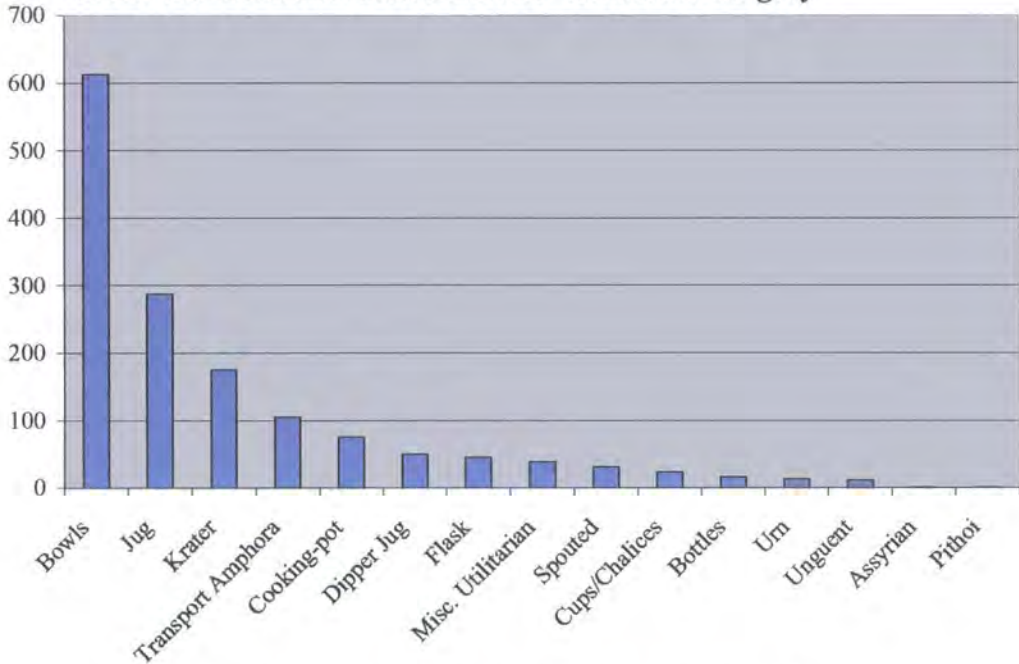


Chart 7.7: Lebanese Coast incidents - ceramic CLASS

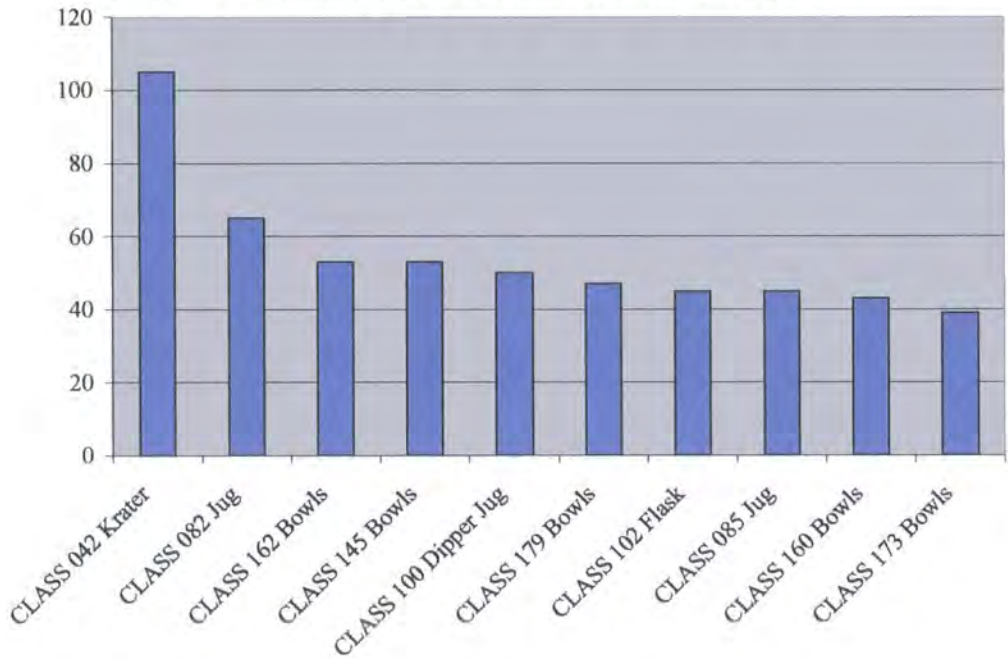


Chart 7.8 shows that bowls are the most abundant category for Orontes Syria, followed by cooking-pots, kraters, and pithoi. Indeed, CLASS 037 pithoi and CLASS 001 cooking-pots are the two most abundant forms; CLASS 057 is also well-attested (**Chart 7.9**). Bowls account for the majority of other abundant forms (i.e. CLASSES 134 and 141); small carinated bowls are also well-attested (CLASSES 182 and 188).

Chart 7.8: Orontes Syria incidents - functional category

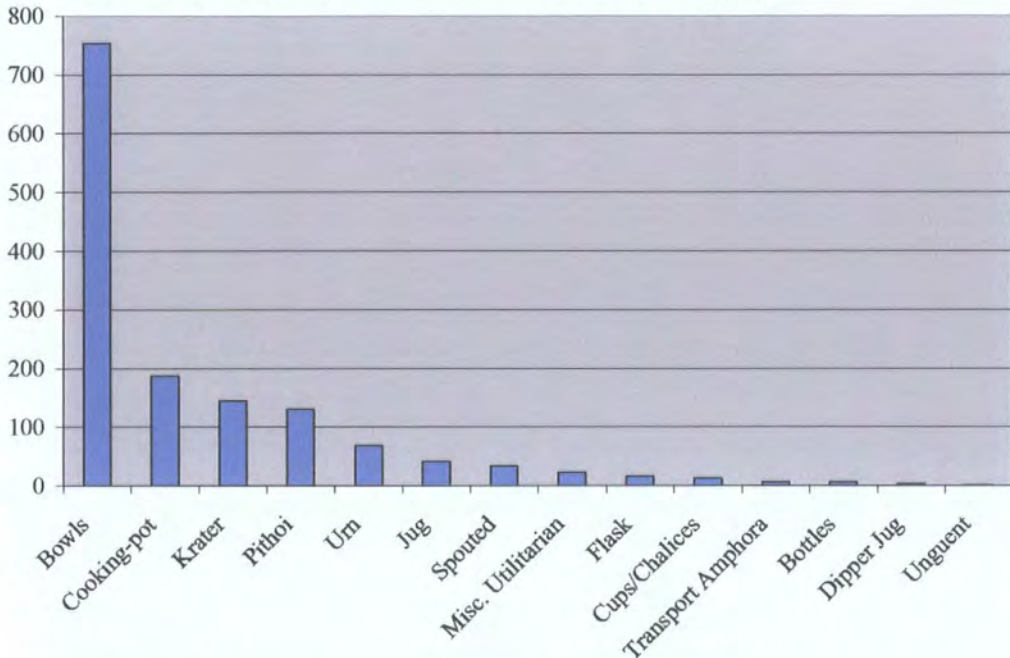


Chart 7.9: Orontes Syria incidents - ceramic CLASS

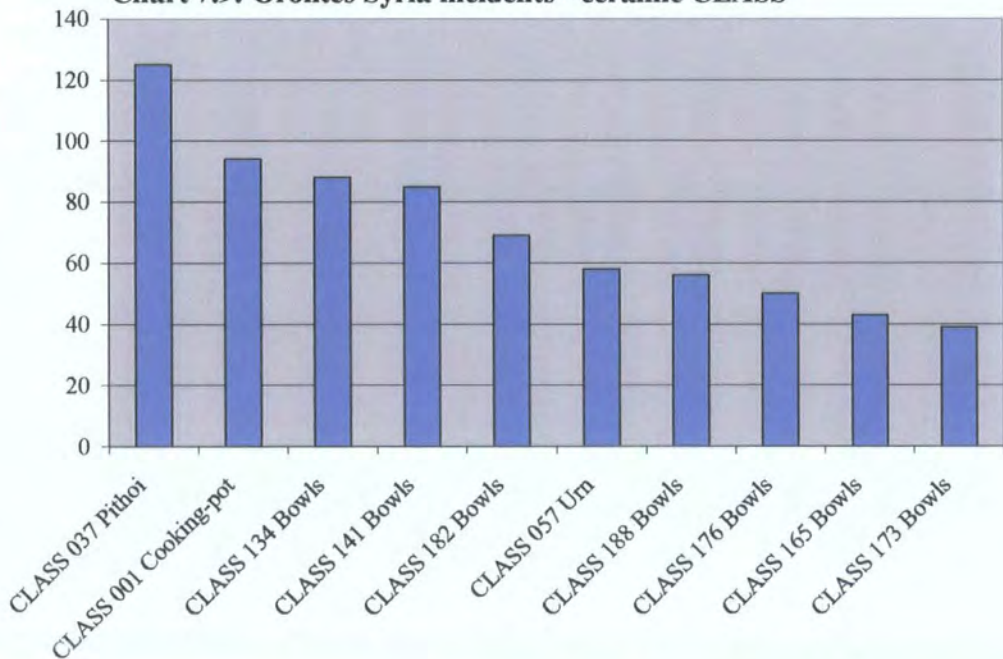


Chart 7.10 shows that bowls are the most abundant category for the Jezreel Valley, followed by cooking-pots, jugs and kraters. The most abundant forms are the CLASS 100 dipper juglet, CLASS 134 and 152 bowls, CLASS 008 cooking-pot, and flasks (**Chart 7.11**).

Chart 7.10: Jezreel Valley incidents - functional category

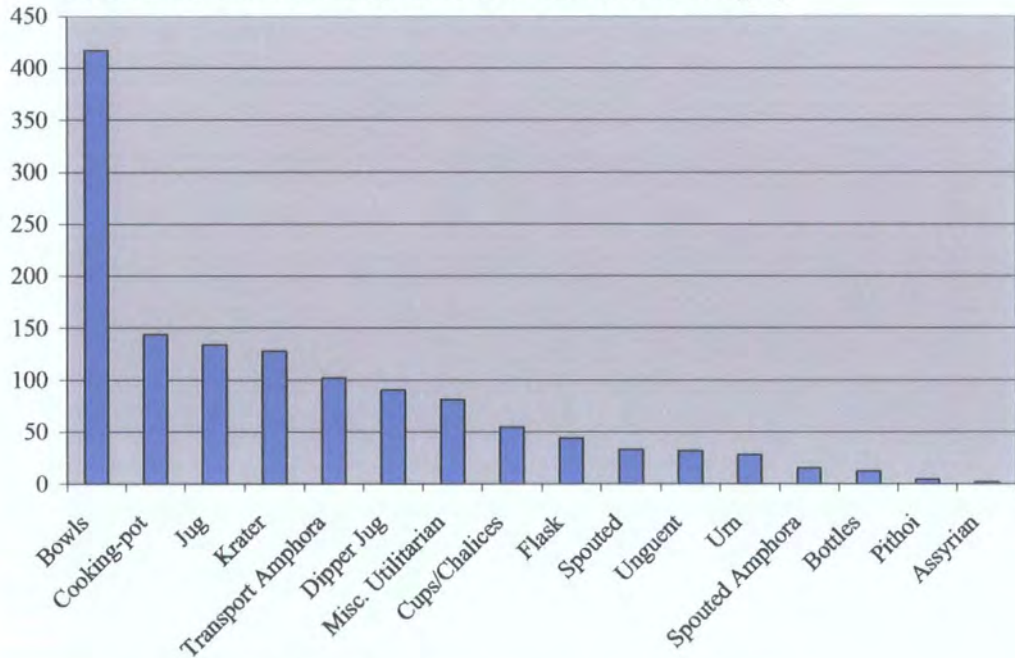


Chart 7.11: Jezreel Valley incidents – ceramic CLASS

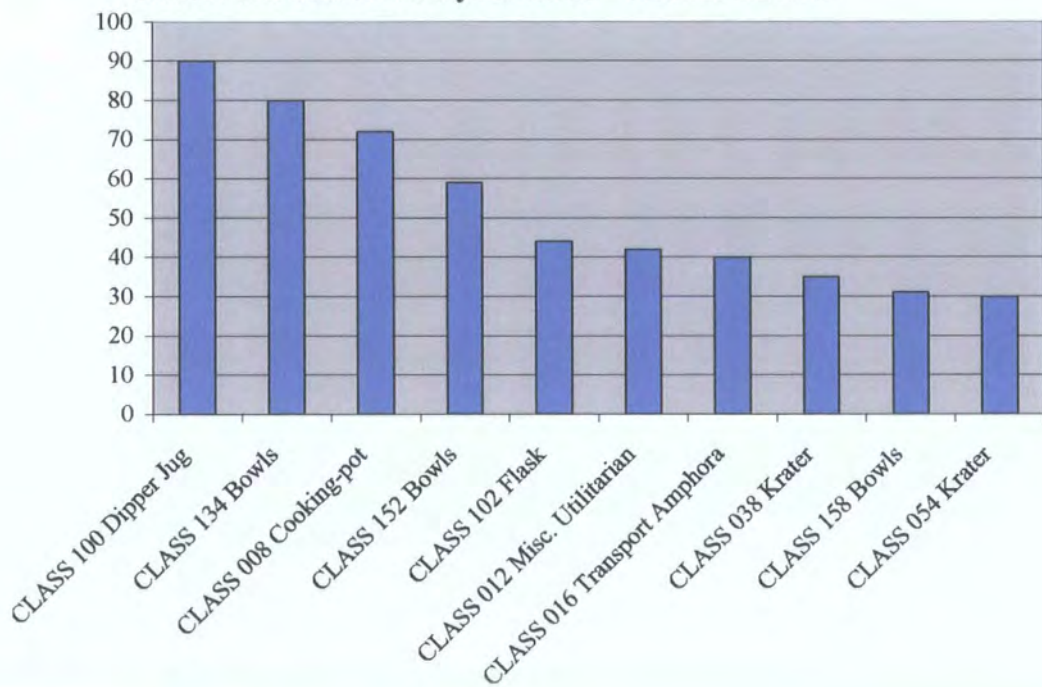


Chart 7.12 shows that bowls and jugs are both roughly equal as the most abundant on the Palestine coast, followed by transport amphorae. The four most abundant forms are all associated with the pouring of liquids; CLASS 082 and 085 jugs, CLASS 100 dipper jugs, and CLASS 102 flasks (**Chart 7.13**). CLASS 024 and 025 transport amphorae are also well attested.

Chart 7.12: Palestine Coast incidents - functional category

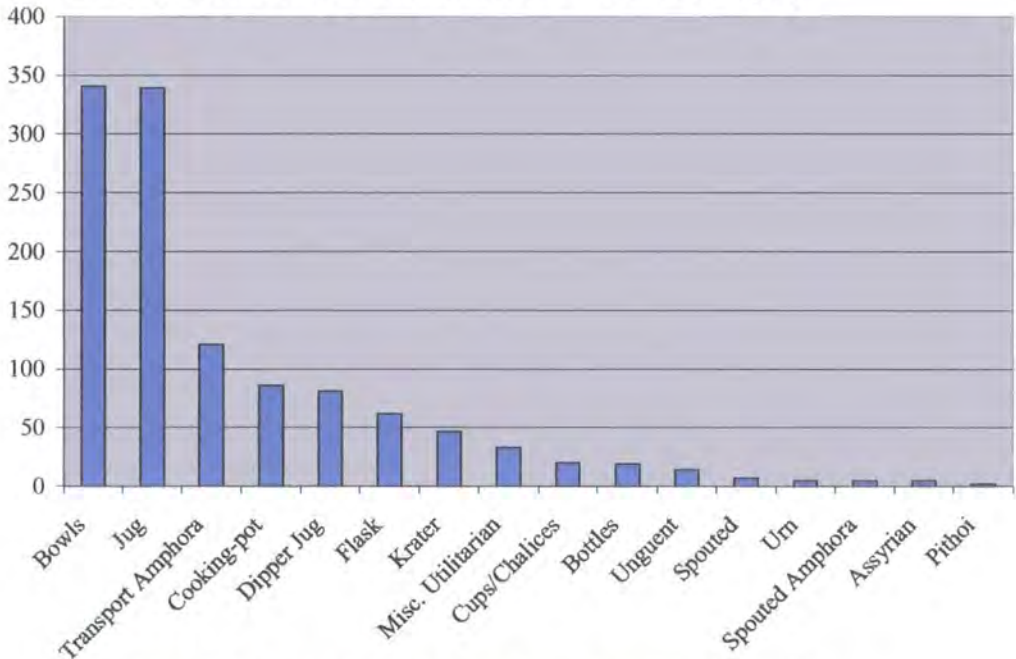


Chart 7.13: Palestine Coast incidents – ceramic CLASS

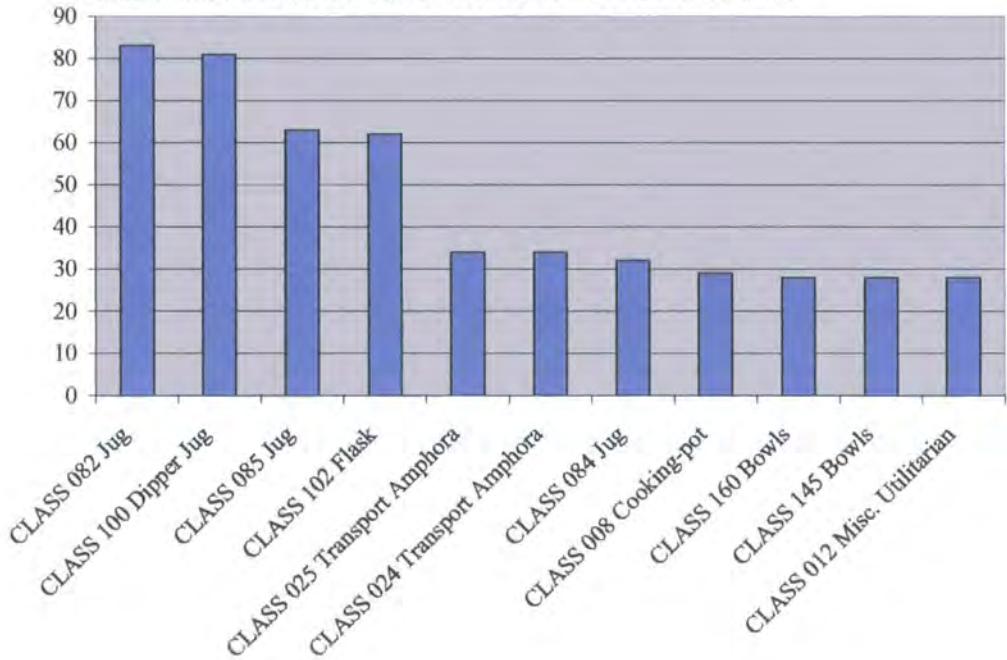


Chart 7.14 shows the abundance of bowls on the Syrian coast, with transport amphorae next, followed by jugs and kraters. CLASS 042 kraters and CLASS 188 bowls are the most abundant forms (**Chart 7.15**). Also well-attested are CLASS 016 and 018 transport amphorae and CLASS 144, 134, and 191 bowls.

Chart 7.14: Syrian Coast incidents - functional category

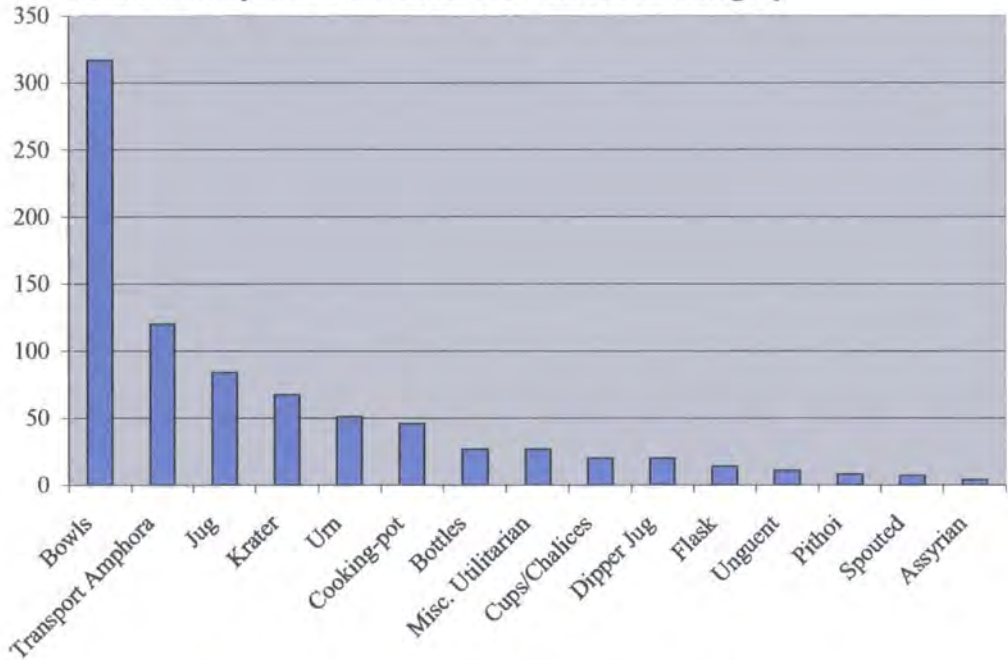


Chart 7.15: Syrian Coast incidents – ceramic CLASS

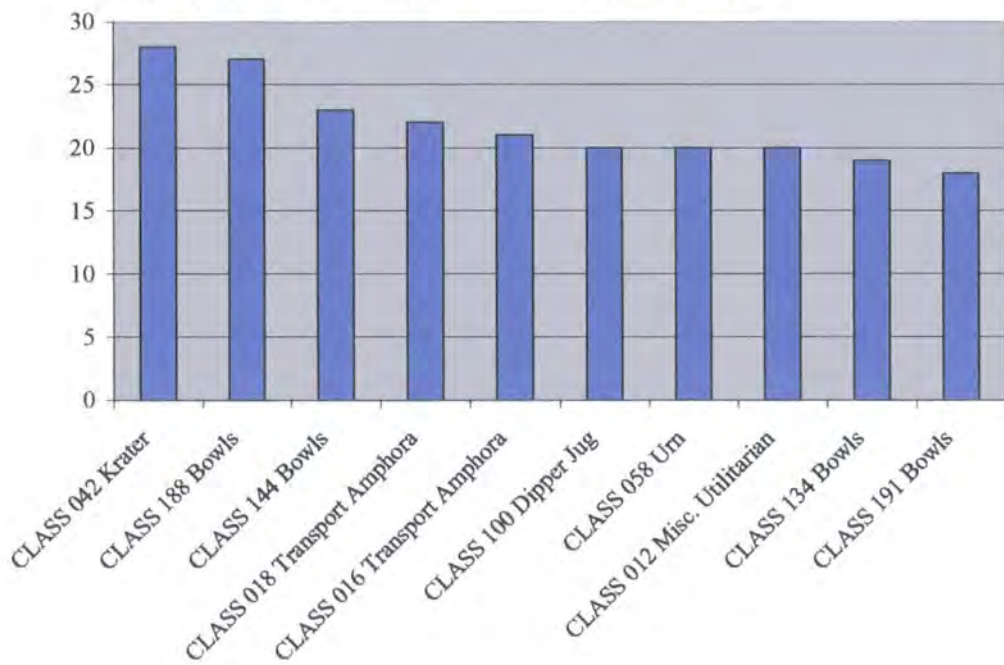


Chart 7.16 shows the by-now familiar pattern of inland Northern Levant regions, with bowls, kraters, and cooking-pots the most abundant categories. It is also significant that the relatively rare Assyrian forms are well-represented in this zone. The most abundant forms are CLASS 134 and 141 bowls, CLASS 121 “Assyrian” cups and bottles, and CLASS 001 cooking-pots (**Chart 7.17**).

Chart 7.16: Euphrates incidents - functional category

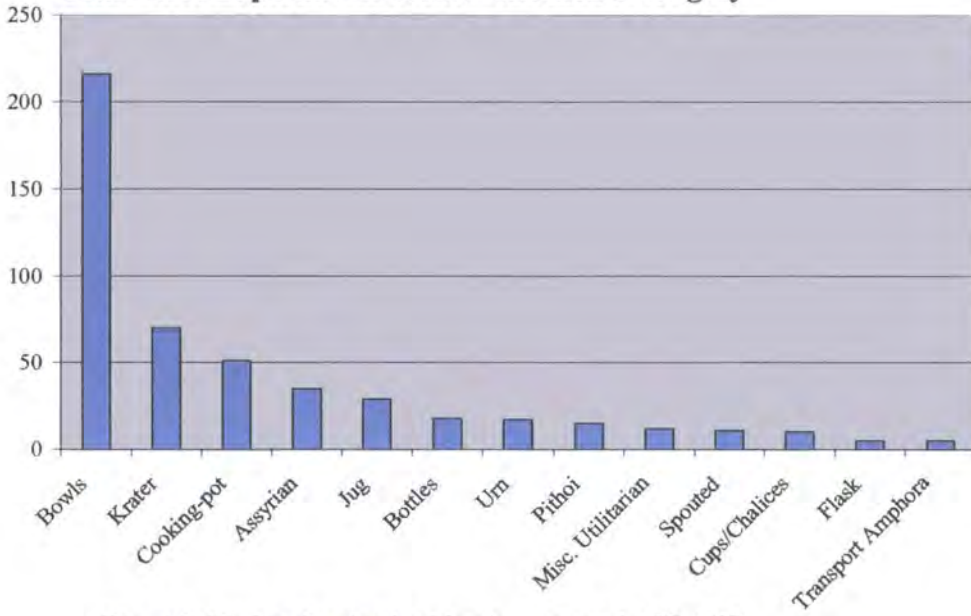


Chart 7.17: Euphrates incidents – ceramic CLASS

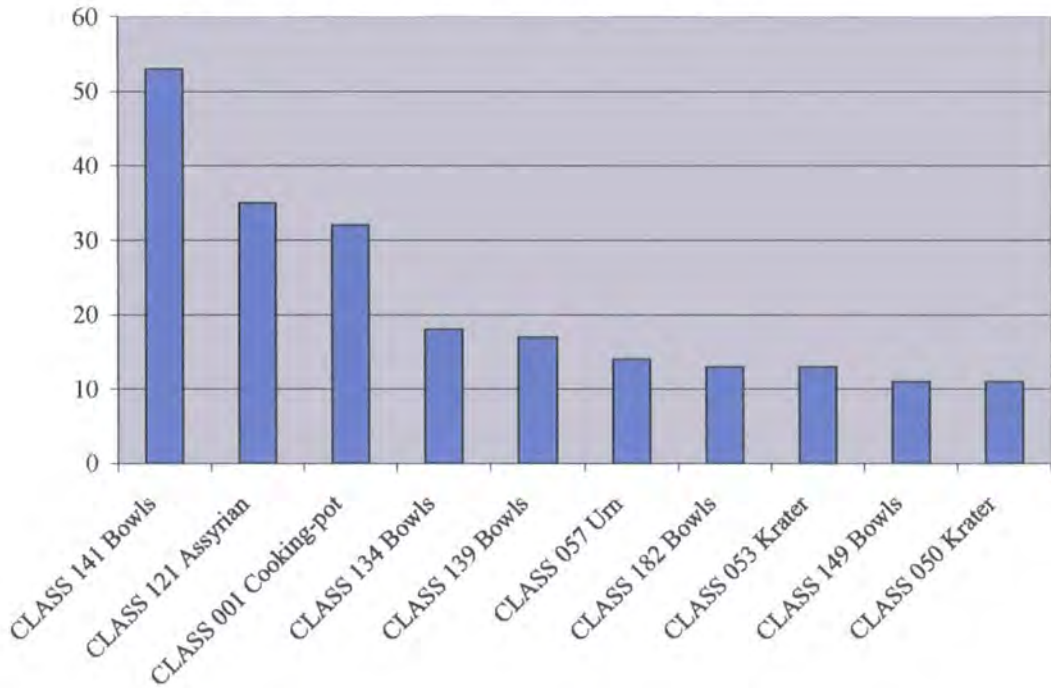


Chart 7.18 shows the standard abundance of bowls in the North-west Syria zone. There is a significant differentiation between the number of bowl incidents and the next most common category, cooking-pots. Once again the CLASS 134 and 141 bowls are amongst the most abundant forms, along with CLASS 001 cooking-pots and CLASS 037 pithoi (**Chart 7.19**). However, no single form is dominant; possibly due to the limited dataset for this zone.

Chart 7.18: North-west Syria incidents - functional category

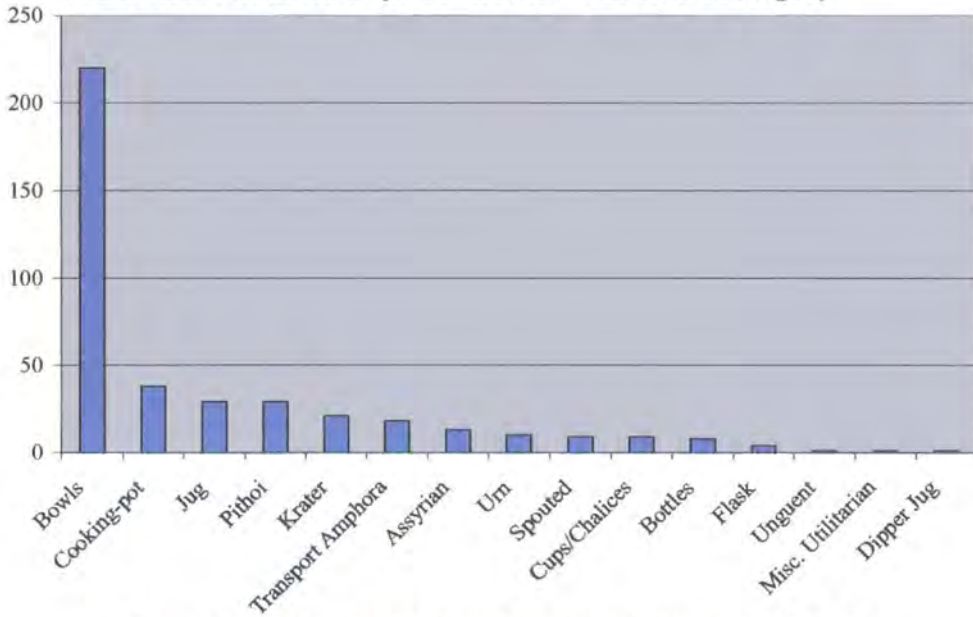


Chart 7.19: North-west Syria incidents – ceramic CLASS

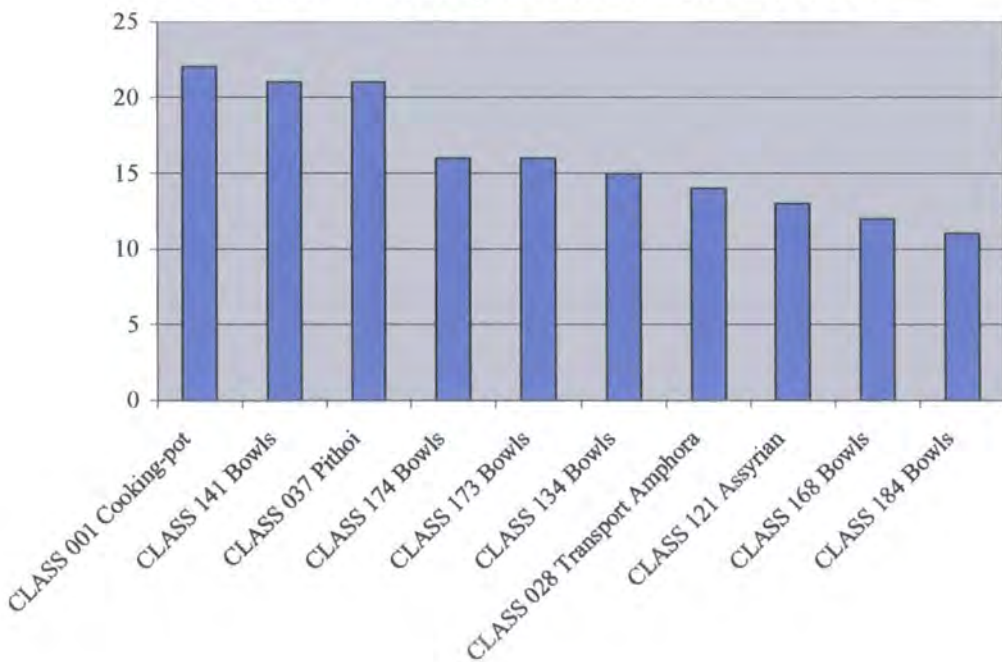


Chart 7.20 shows that the Beqa' Valley is the only regional zone that is not dominated by bowls. Instead, bowls are the third most abundant category, behind cooking-pots and jugs. The CLASS 004 cooking-pot is clearly the most dominant form, but the results from this zone warrant caution. The pottery from Kamid el Loz has been published sporadically, leaving only one site (Tell el Ghassil) to characterise the data.

Chart 7.20: Beqa' Valley incidents - functional category

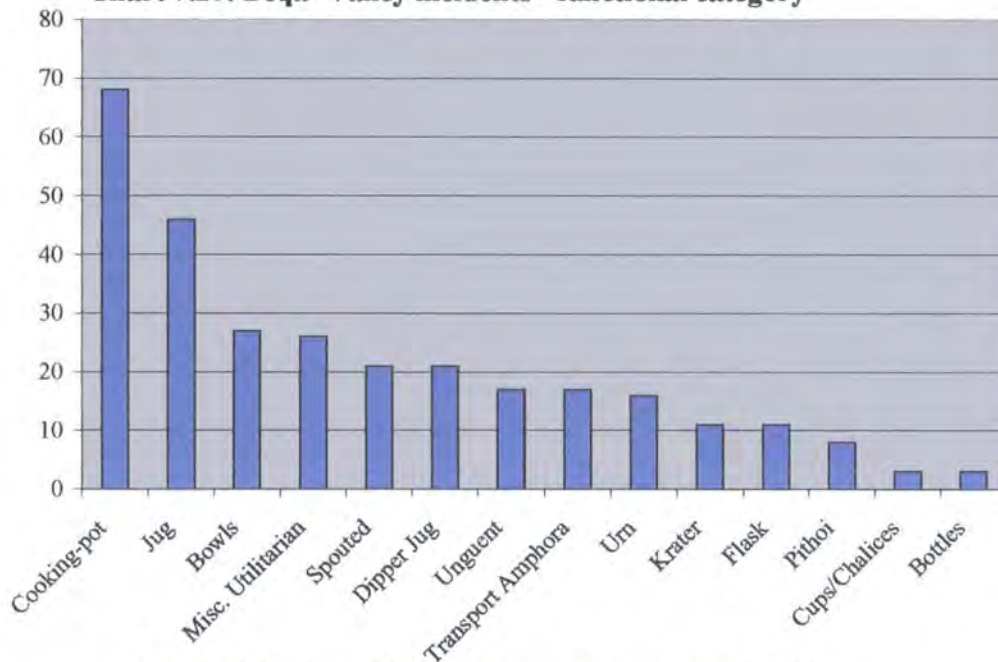
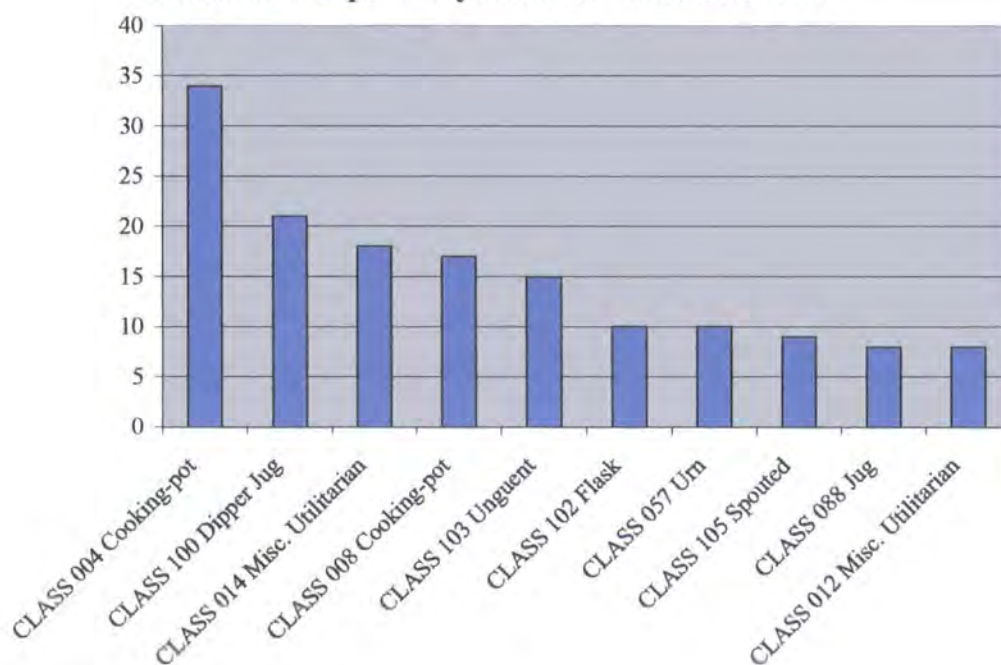


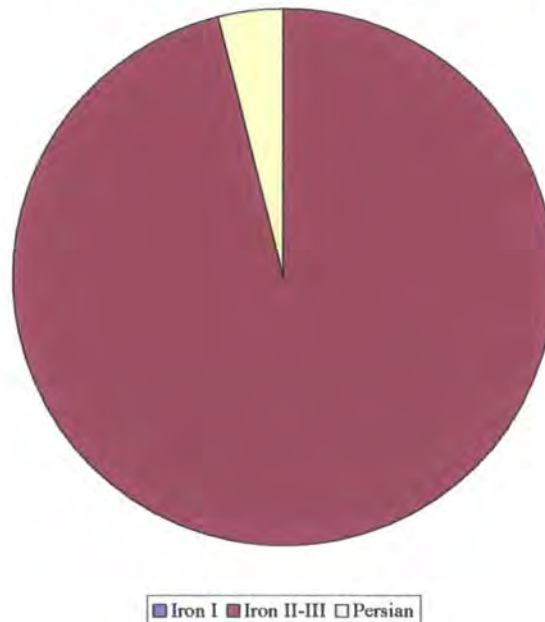
Chart 7.21: Beqa' Valley incidents – ceramic CLASS



7.4 Functional Analysis

As discussed in **Chapter 5**, there has been an emphasis on broad ceramic regions in the Northern Levant, wherein the coast is generally considered distinct from the interior (**Figures 5.1; 5.2**). What was not clear from these studies, however, was whether this distinction was in vessel form, or in functional requirements. For this reason, the functional categories presented in **Chapter 6** were applied to the database and any possible regional biases are explored below. Please note that a number of contexts dated as Iron II-III are included in the pie-charts, but were not considered specific enough to plot change over time in the zone bar-charts.

Chart 7.22: “Assyrian” vessels - period



“Assyrian” vessels were most frequently encountered in the Iron II-III period (**Chart 7.22**), and were primarily encountered across the inland Northern Levant, though they were conspicuously absent from the Orontes zone (**Chart 7.23**). Both of these trends are as we would expect from a functional category that is historically associated with an Iron II-III eastern phenomenon. However, these vessels are known from two Persian period contexts (post-Assyrian collapse!). While these vessels might be the result of mixed deposits, residuality, or poor stratigraphic control, their presence in the Persian period highlights the need for caution when using the historical narrative for the interpretation of material culture.

Chart 7.23: “Assyrian” vessel incidents - zones

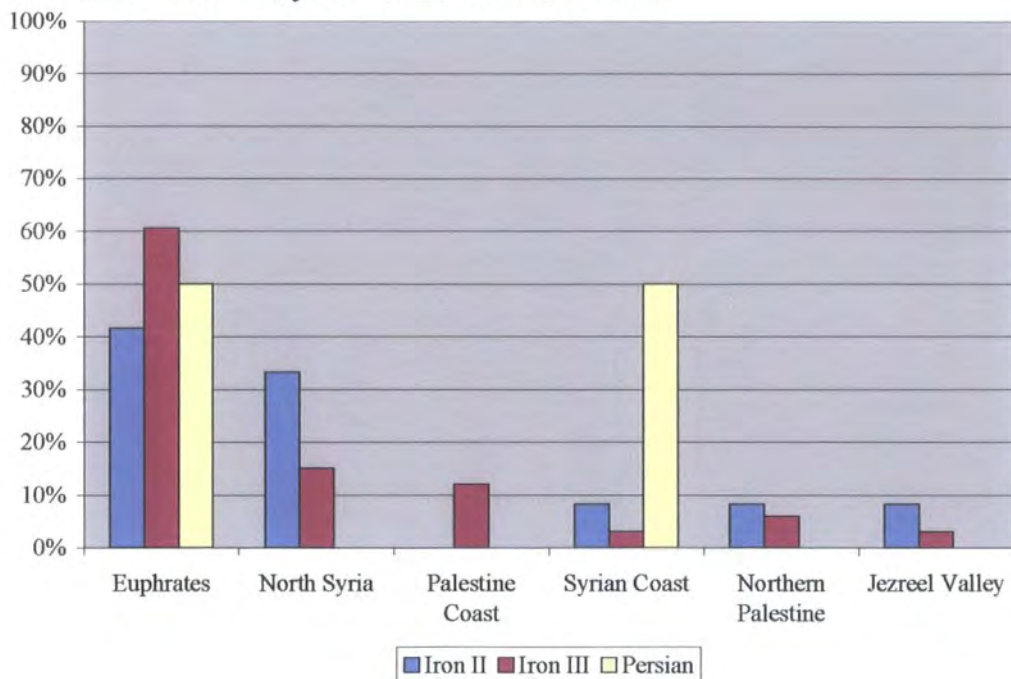


Chart 7.24: Bottles - period

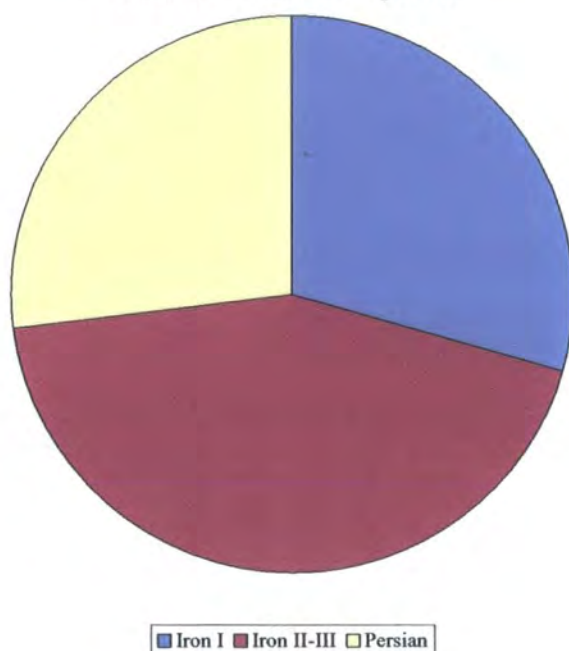


Chart 7.24 shows that the presence of bottles in the database was evenly spread throughout the Iron Age and Persian period. There also appeared to be a lack of any distinct patterns in the regional distribution of bottles (**Chart 7.25**).

Chart 7.25: Bottle incidents - zones

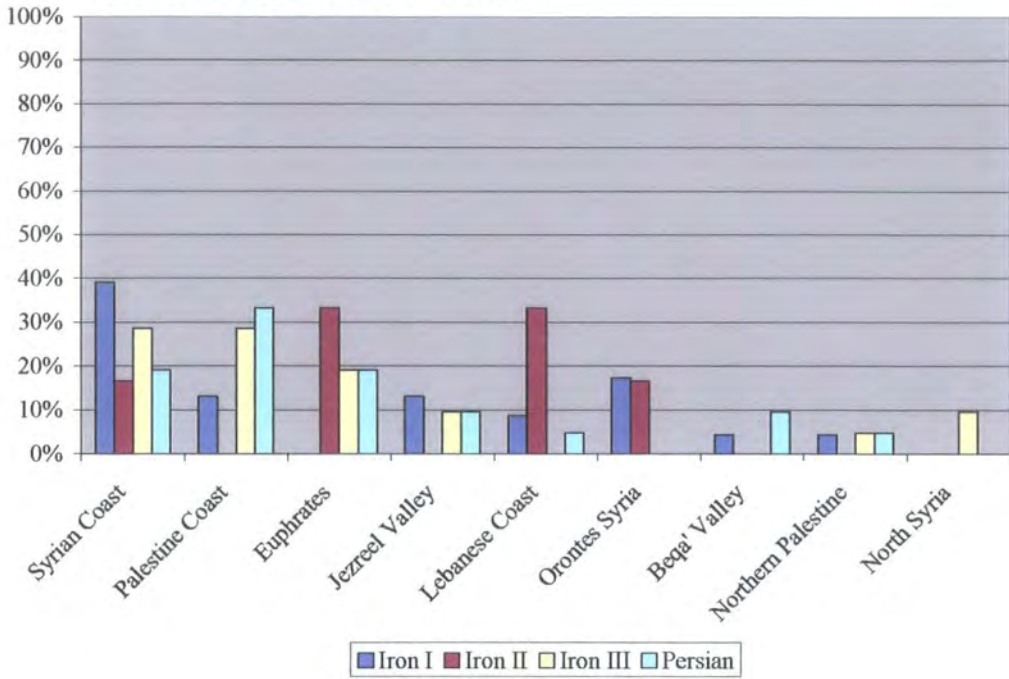
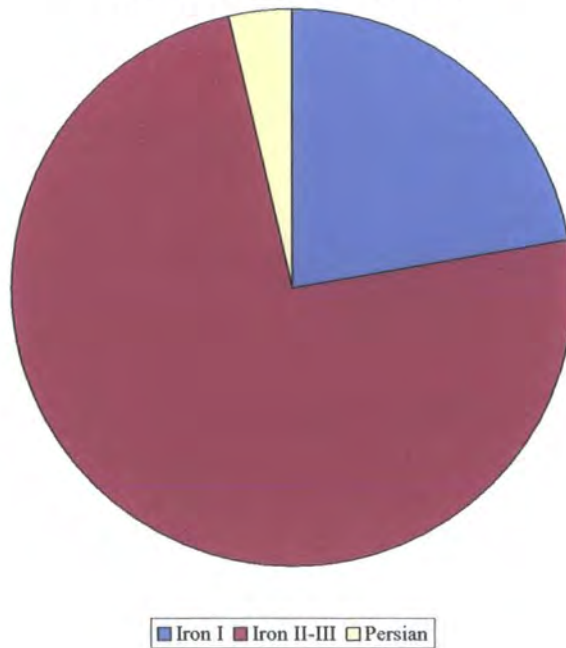


Chart 7.26: Bowls - period



Bowls are the most common category within the database (Chart 5.5). Chart 7.26 shows that bowls were most frequently encountered during the Iron II-III period; less so in the Iron I period. Bowls were well-spread across the study area (except the Beqa' Valley with its limited dataset), with no particular concentration discernible (Chart 7.27).

Chart 7.27: Bowl incidents - zones

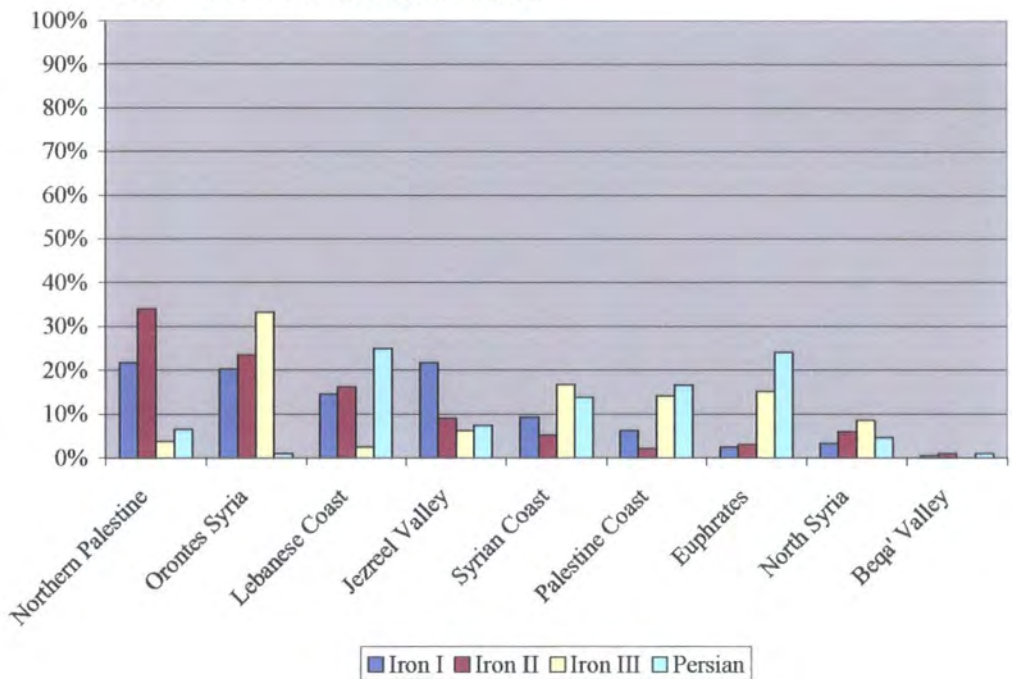
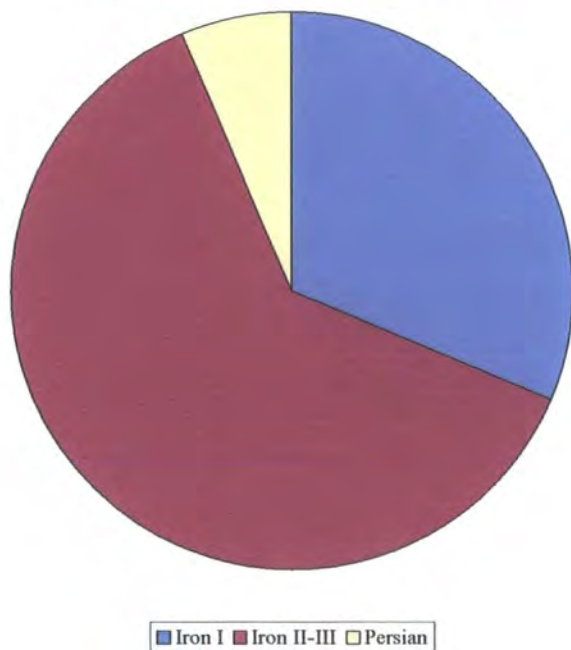


Chart 7.28: Cooking-pots - period



Charts 7.28 and 7.29 show cooking-pots were well-spread across the study area in most periods, with no particular concentration discernible. Patterns within this category might be evident in the distribution of individual ceramic CLASSES.

Chart 7.29: Cooking-pot incidents - zones

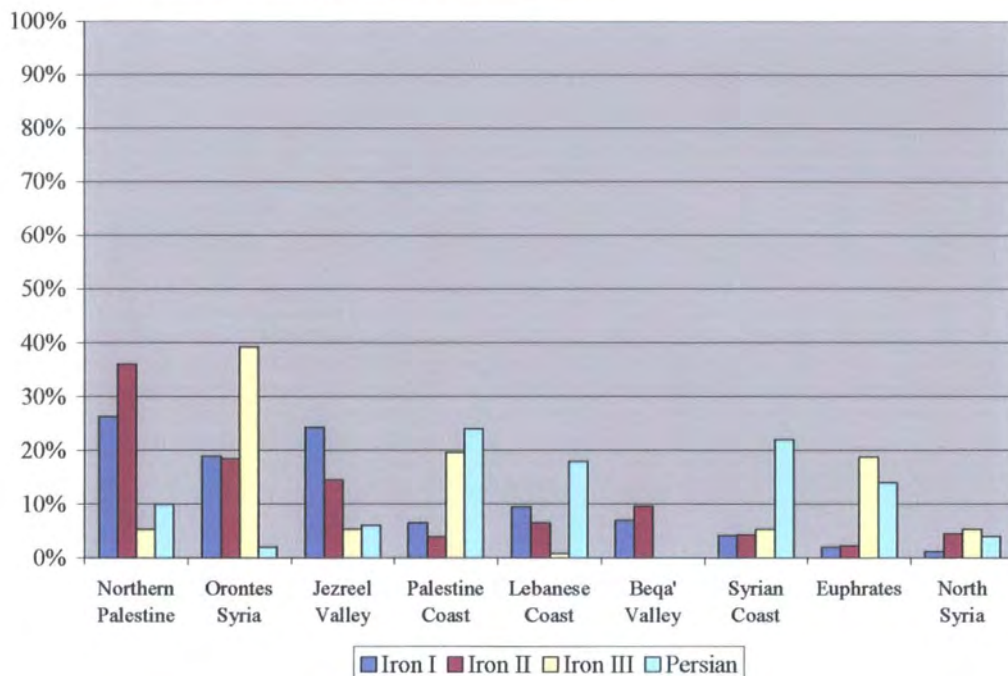
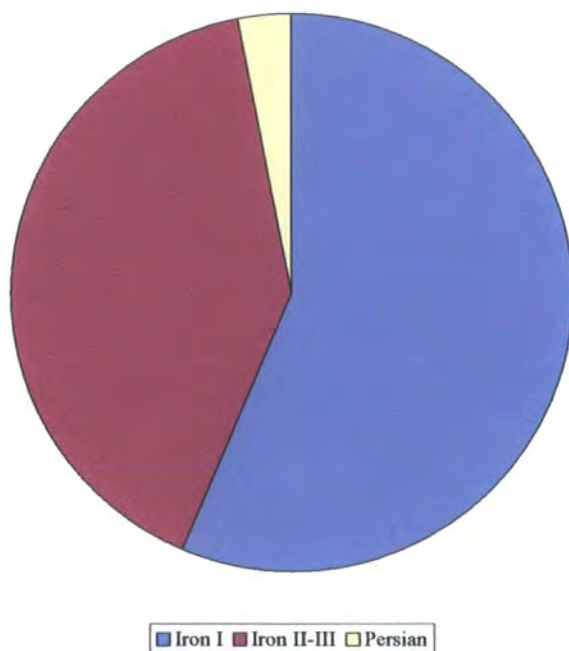


Chart 7.30: Cups and Chalice - period



Cups and chalices were well-represented in the Iron I period (**Chart 7.30**), but were rarely encountered in the zones of the inland Northern Levant (**Chart 7.31**).

Chart 7.31: Cup/chalice incidents - zones

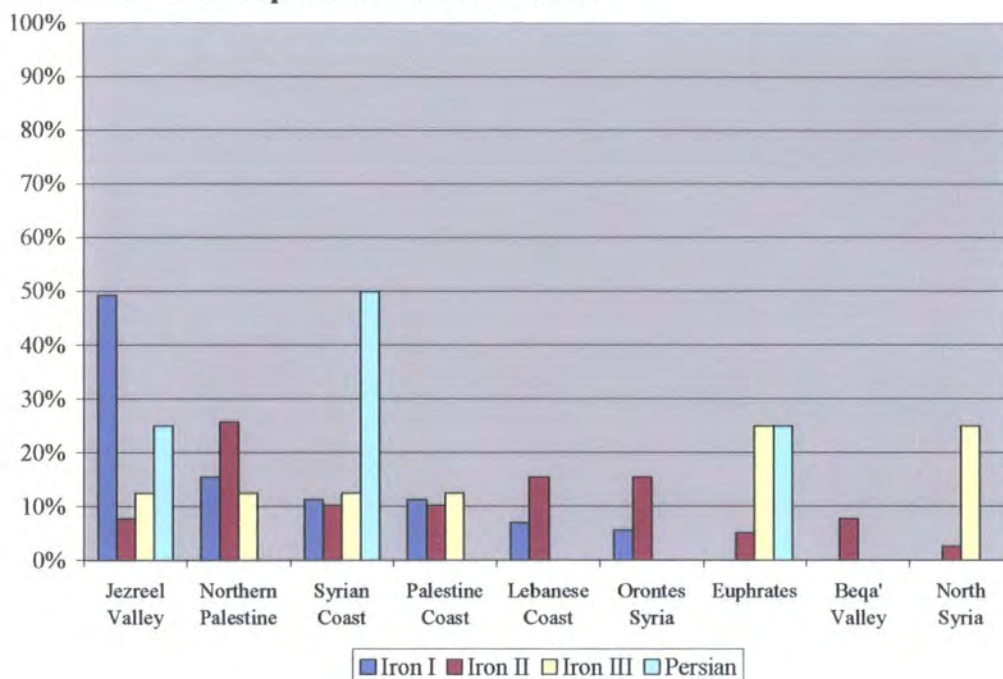
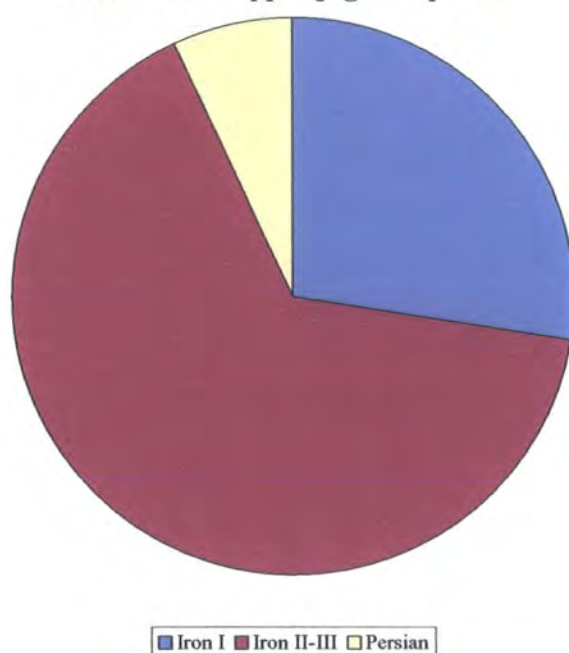


Chart 7.32: Dipper juglets - period



Dipper juglets were well-represented during the Iron I and Iron II/III periods (**Chart 7.32**), and were primarily encountered in the zones of the coast and Southern Levant (**Chart 7.33**). Dipper juglets were not encountered in the Euphrates and North Syria zones, and only occasionally along the Orontes.

Chart 7.33: Dipper juglet incidents - zones

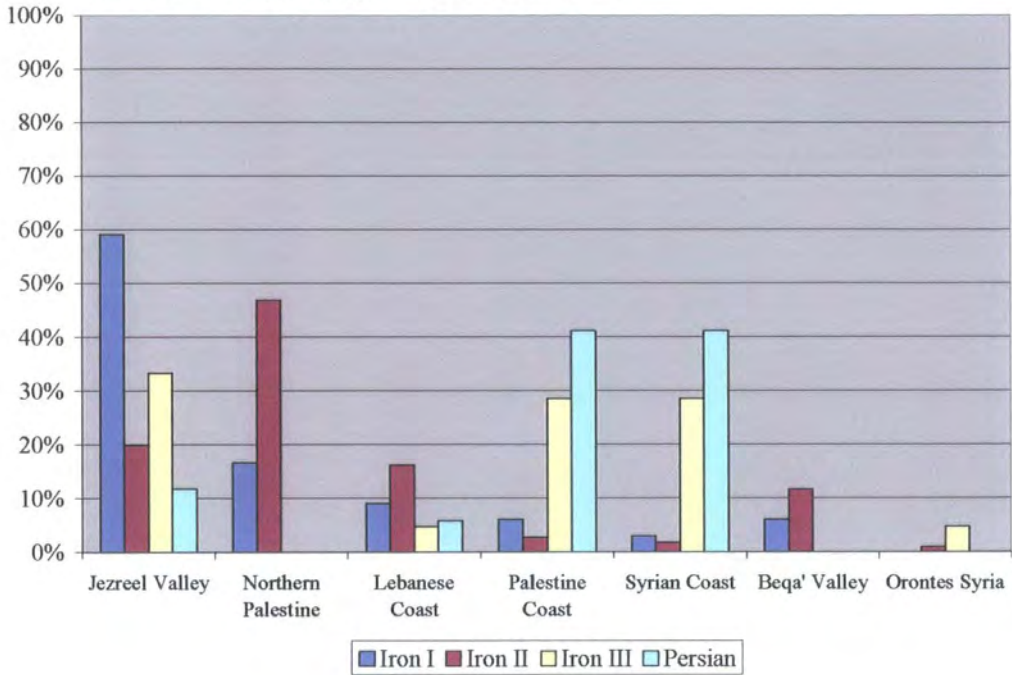
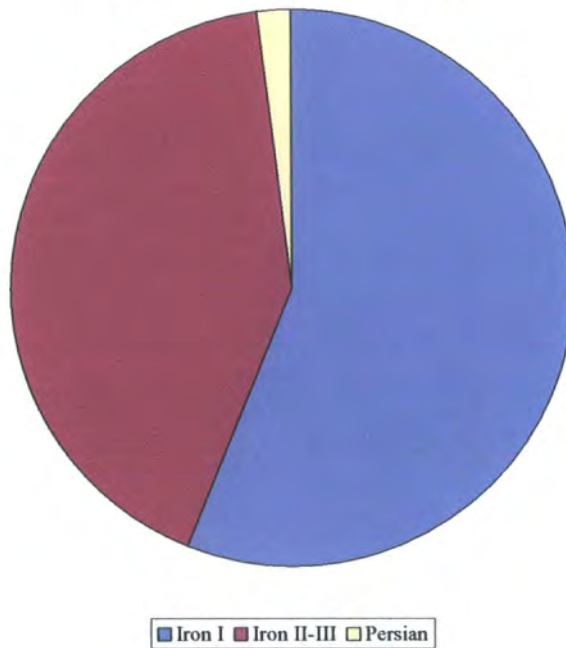


Chart 7.34: Flasks - period



Flasks were commonly encountered in Iron I contexts (**Chart 7.34**), when they were well spread across the coastal and Southern Levant zones (**Chart 7.35**). The absence of flasks from the Palestine coast during the Iron II period might be due to the general lack of reliable Iron II contexts from this region.

Chart 7.35: Flask incidents - zones

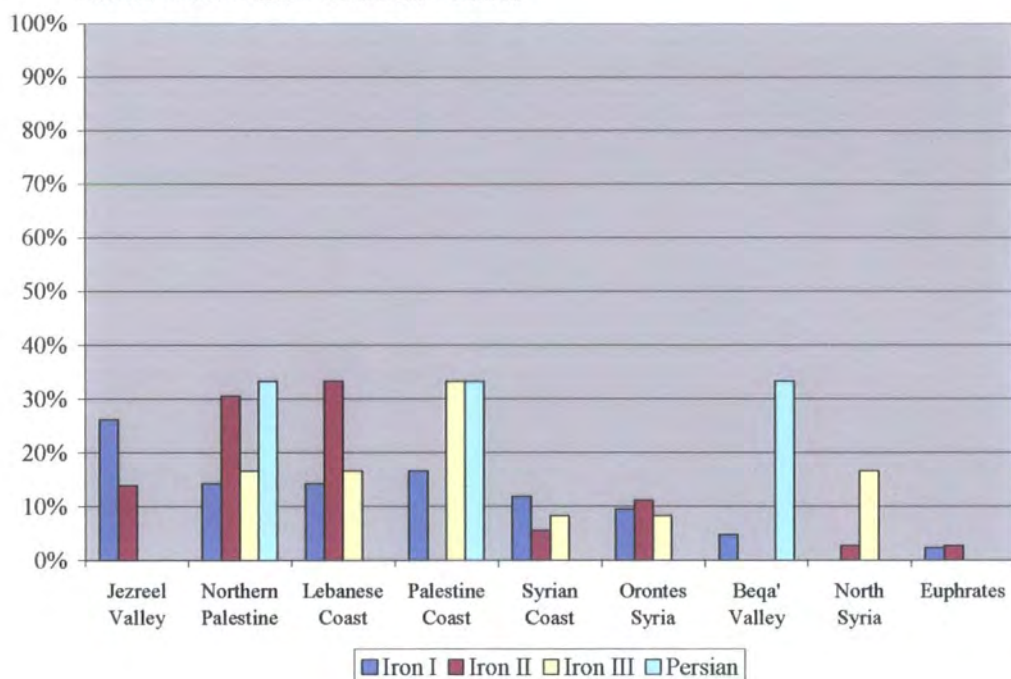
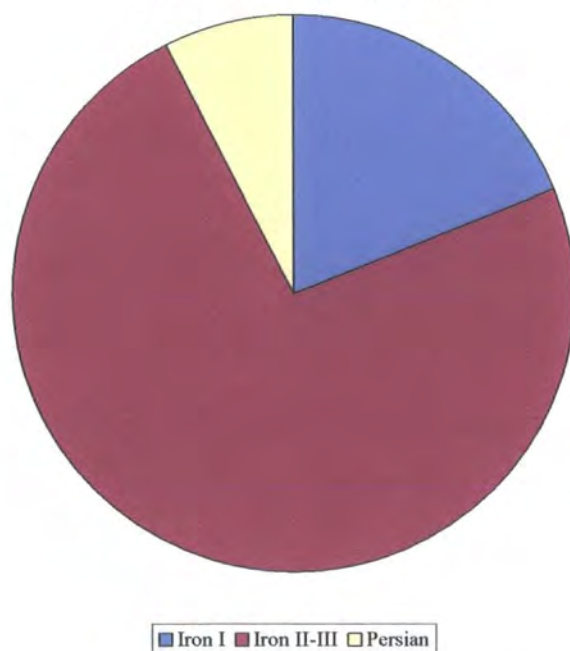


Chart 7.36: Jugs - period



Jugs are the second most common category within the database (**Chart 5.5**), particularly in the Iron II-III periods (**Chart 7.36**), when they were concentrated on the Lebanese coast, Northern Palestine, and Syrian coast (**Chart 7.37**). Jugs were relatively rare across the inland Northern Levant.

Chart 7.37: Jug incidents - zones

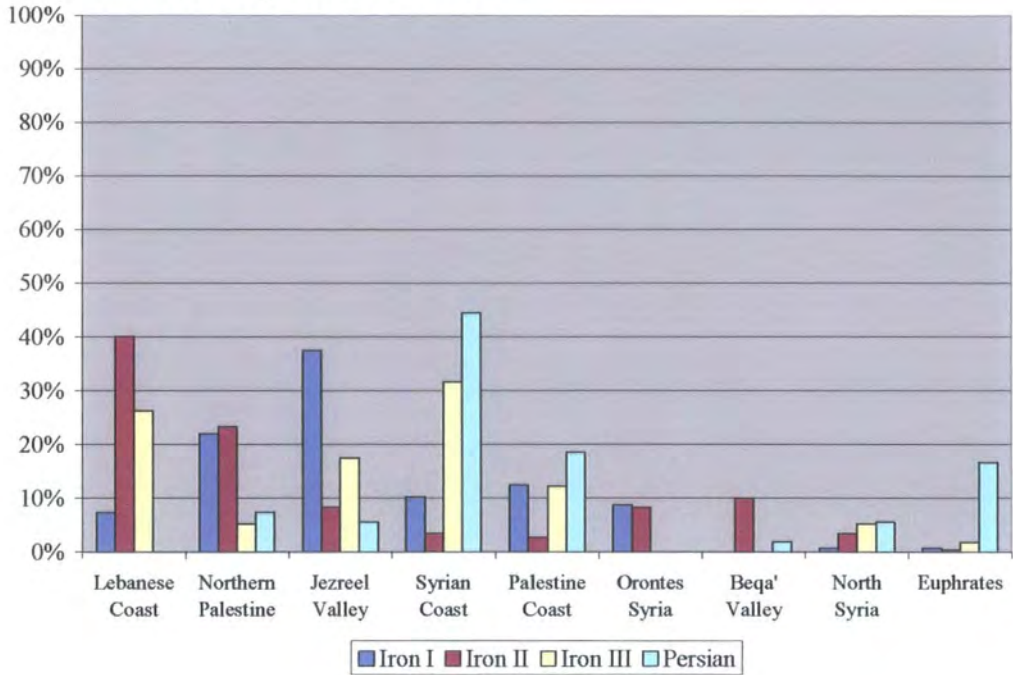
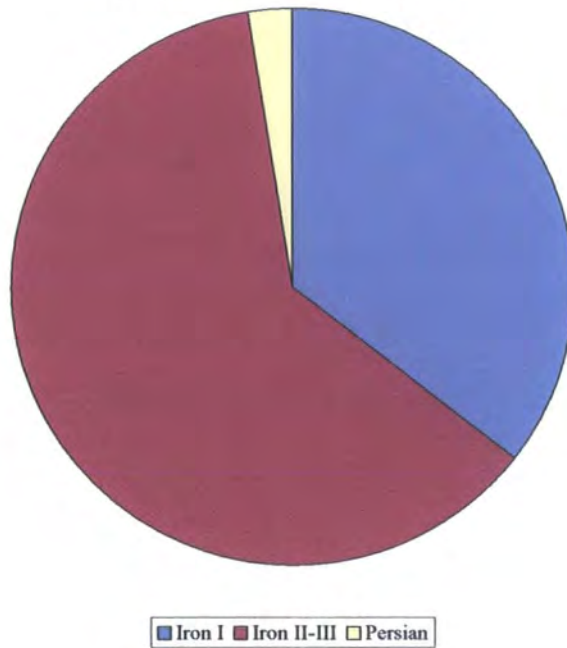


Chart 7.38: Kraters - period



Kraters were encountered throughout the Iron I and Iron II/III periods, but were relatively rare in the Persian period (**Chart 7.38**). Kraters were well-spread across the different zones, though the low incidents in North Syria and Beqa' Valley may be as much to do with the limited published data from these areas (**Chart 7.39**).

Chart 7.39: Krater incidents - zones

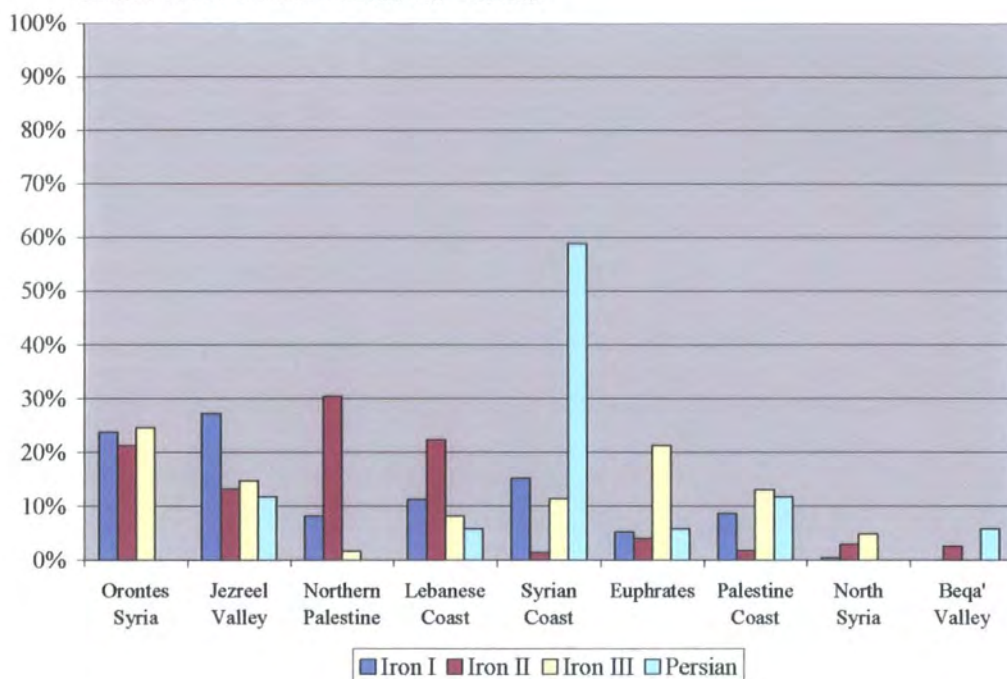
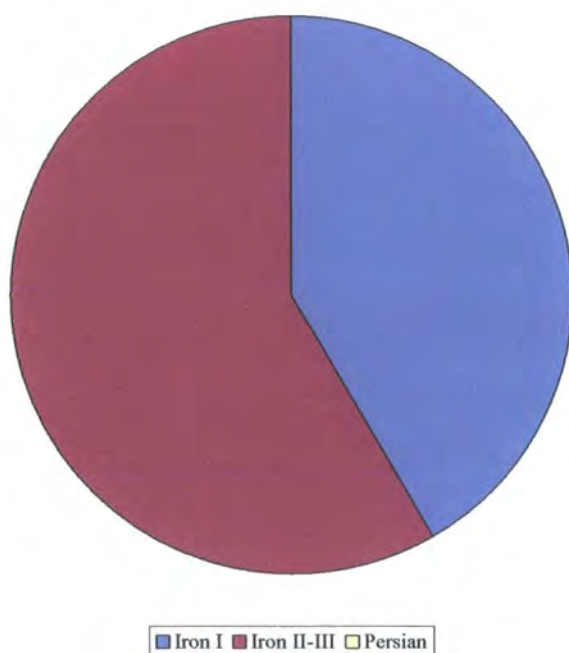


Chart 7.40: Pithoi - period



No pithoi were identified from Persian period contexts (**Chart 7.40**). One of the more regionally-restricted categories, pithoi were rare in coastal sites, especially after the Iron I period (**Chart 7.41**). The majority of pithoi were found across the inland Northern Levant (**Maps 29; 30**).

Chart 7.41: Pithos incidents - zones

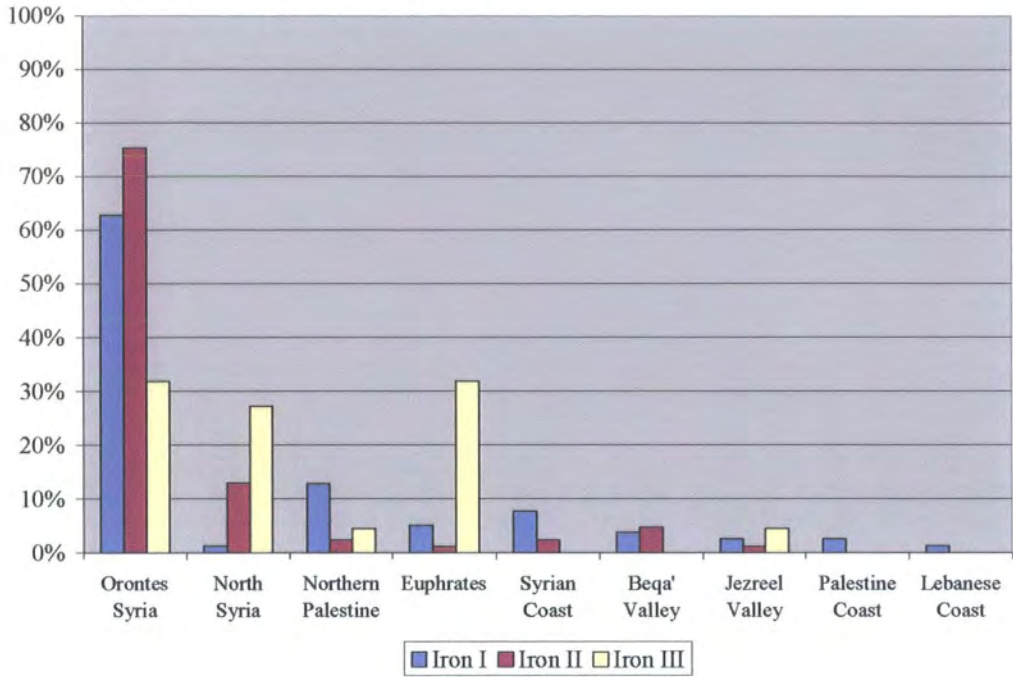


Chart 7.42: Spouted vessels - period

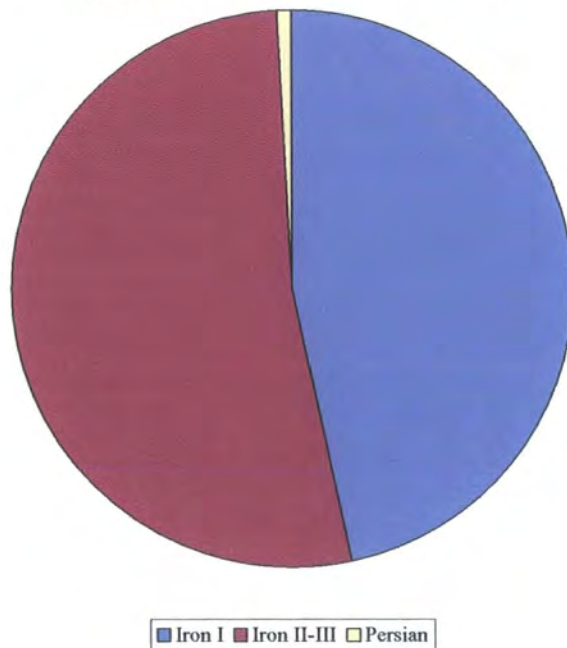


Chart 7.42 shows a large amount of spouted vessels were found in Iron I and Iron II-III period contexts, while they were rare in the Persian period. The distribution of spouted vessels is sporadic and no pattern discernible in the category as a whole (**Chart 7.43**).

Chart 7.43: Spouted vessel incidents - zones

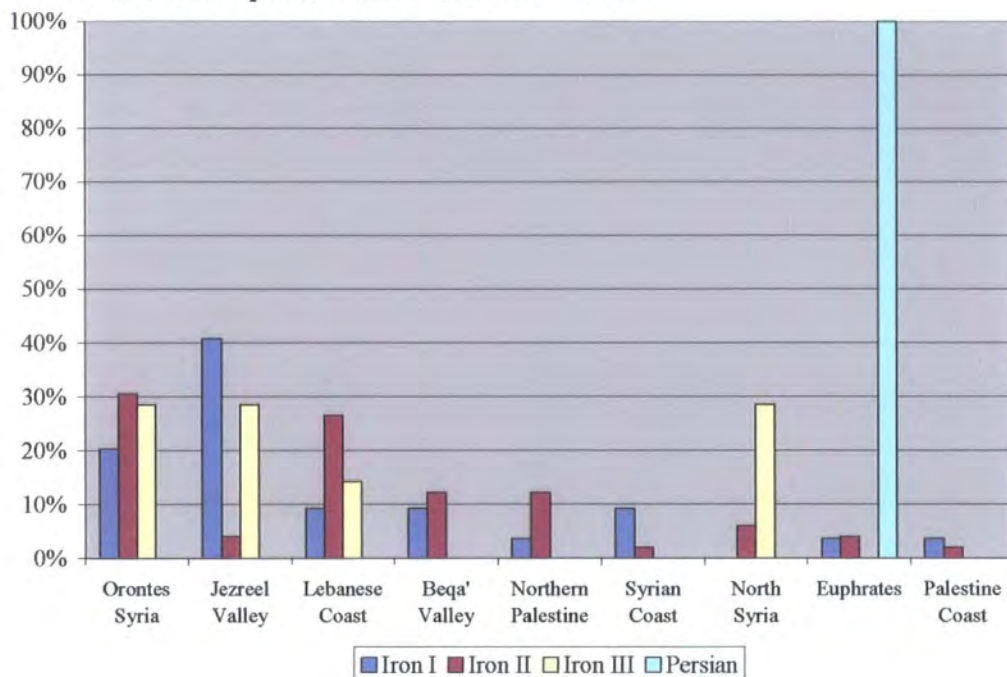
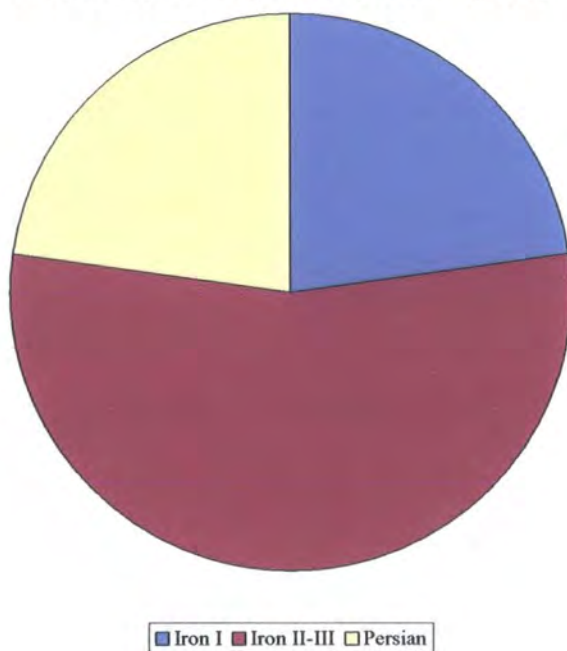


Chart 7.44: Transport amphorae - period



Transport amphorae were present throughout the Iron Age (**Chart 7.44**) Transport amphorae were primarily encountered in the coastal and Southern Levant zones (**Chart 7.45; Maps 17-28**). The inland Northern Levant is poorly represented in all periods, but especially so in the early Iron Age.

Chart 7.45: Transport amphora incidents - zones

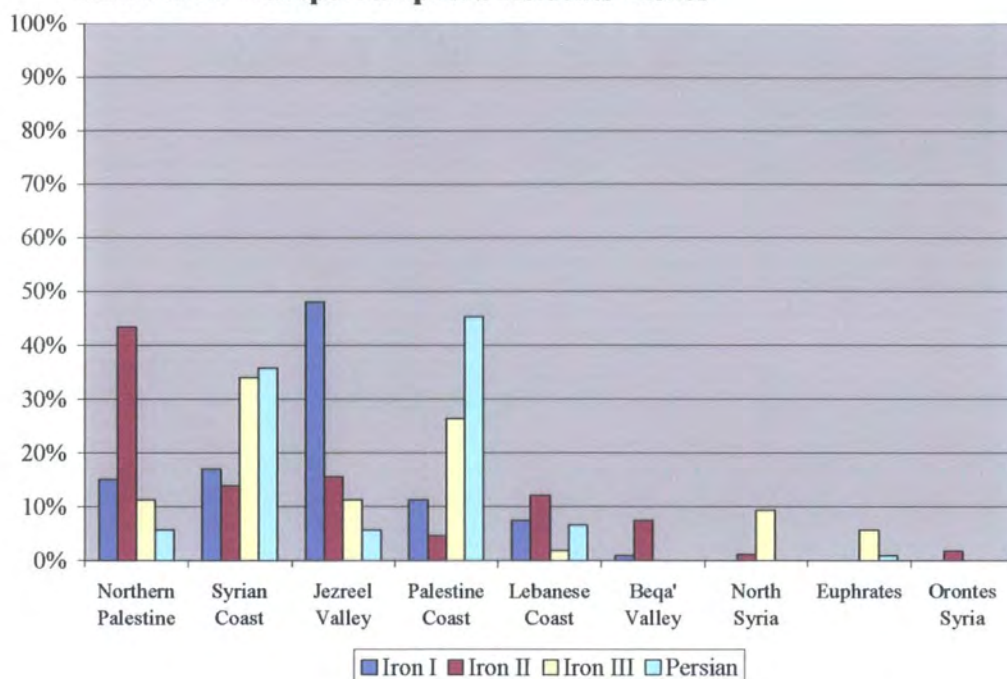
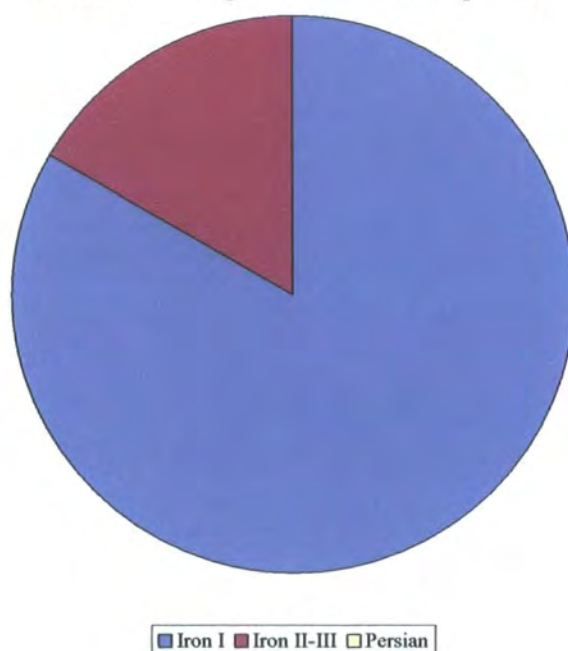


Chart 7.46: Unguent containers - period



Unguent containers were generally encountered in the Iron I period (Chart 7.46), and were not evident in inland zones of the Northern Levant (Chart 7.47; Maps 59; 60).

Chart 7.47: Unguent container incidents - zones

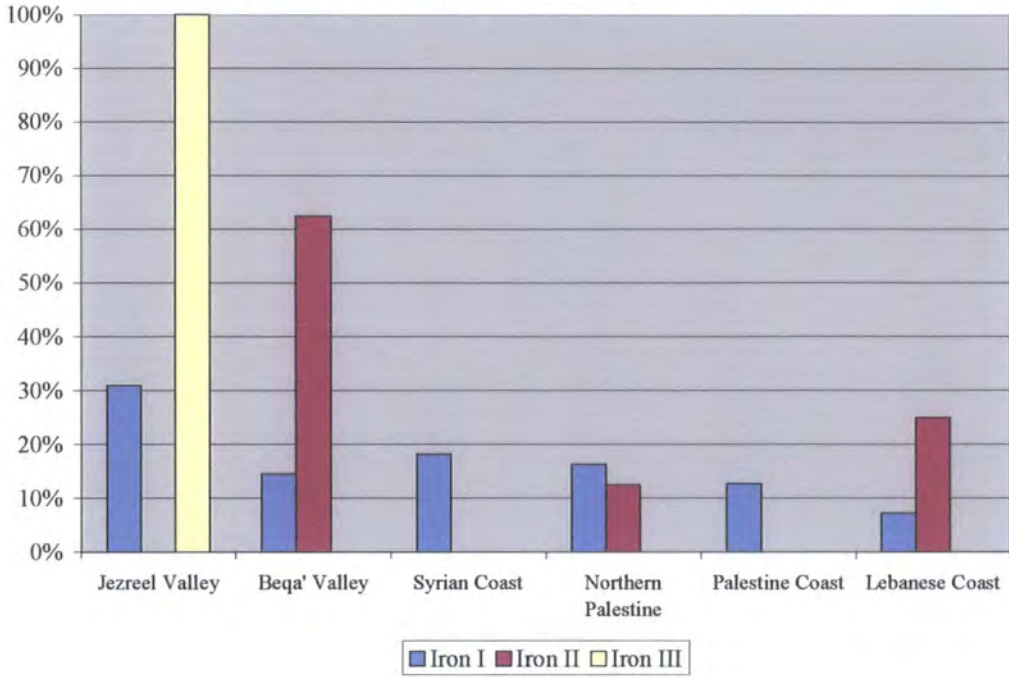
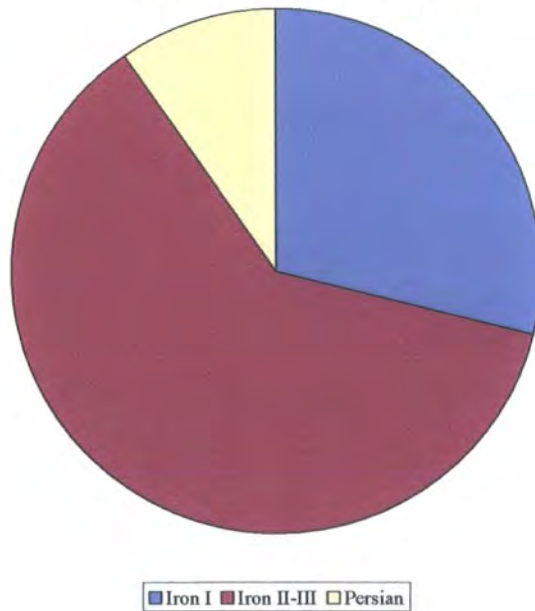
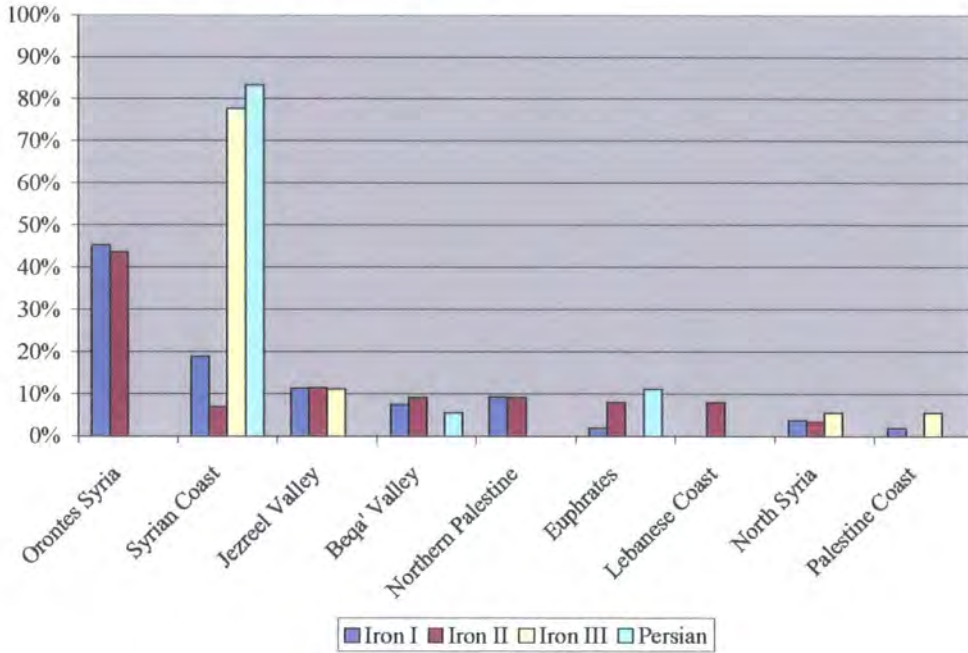


Chart 7.48: Urns - period



Urns were most abundant during the Iron II/III period, but were still well-attested in the Iron I and Persian periods (**Chart 7.48**). The majority of urns during the Iron I and Iron II periods derive from the inland Northern Levant, while during the subsequent Iron III and Persian periods were concentrated on the coast of the Northern Levant (**Chart 7.49**).

Chart 7.49: Urn incidents - zones



Many of the above analyses revealed very little information regarding the functional character of different zones. Nevertheless, there appears to be a distinction in some categories between the inland Northern Levant (e.g. pithoi), and the coastal regions and the Southern Levant (e.g. transport amphorae, jugs, unguent containers). These results appear to confirm the two large regions encountered in Mazzoni's and Lehmann's work.

7.5 Mortuary Analysis

Chart 5.1 presented the overall ratio of mortuary versus non-mortuary contexts within the database as 1:4; in other words, there are four non-mortuary incidents in the database for every one mortuary incident. **Chart 7.50** depicts the general breakdown of all mortuary incidents according to geographic zones and type of mortuary contexts. The Palestine and Lebanese coasts represent the vast majority of all mortuary incidents, with inhumation the general rule for the former, and cremation for the latter. Cremation was the sole form of mortuary incident amongst the Orontes sites, and represents a large proportion of the Syrian Coast and Euphrates incidents. Inhumation was the rule amongst the Jezreel Valley and Palestine coast sites. The high number of incidents from the Palestine coast may be related to the

nature of inhumation burials and the fact that they are easy to identify (tombs are hard to miss). In contrast, the nature of cremation burials might make these contexts more difficult to identify. Many of the cremation burials on the Lebanese coast were placed inside tombs (e.g. Tell Rachidieh), hence the high representation for this zone.

Chart 7.50: Database incidents within mortuary contexts - zones

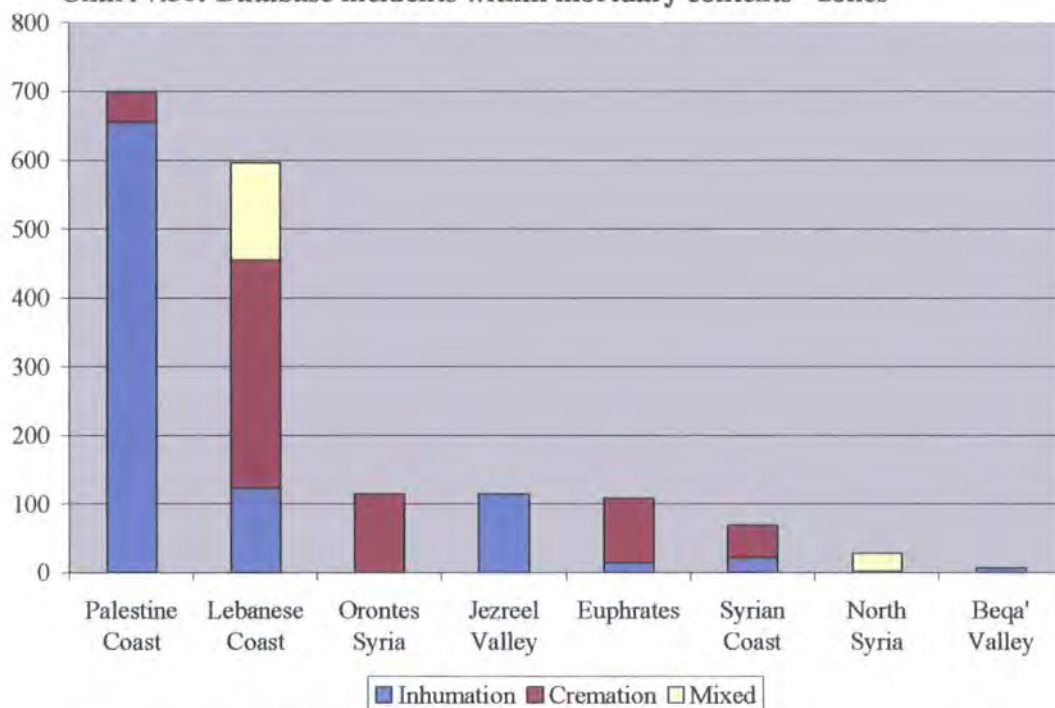


Chart 7.51 to Chart 7.53 below plot the development of different mortuary types (inhumation and cremation) throughout the Iron Age. **Chart 7.51** presents a distinction between inland Northern Levant and coastal/Southern Levant regions in Iron I mortuary behaviour. In this period, cremation was only identified in the inland Northern Levant, while inhumation was known from the Southern Levant and Lebanese Coast.

Chart 7.51: Database incidents from Iron I mortuary contexts

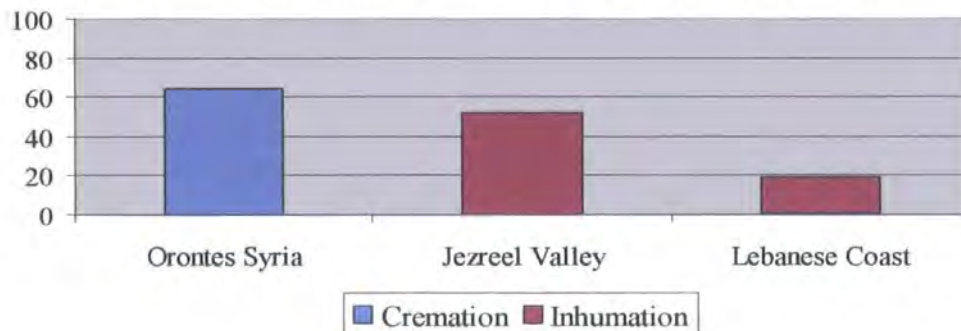


Chart 7.52 presents the Iron II and Iron III periods together because many mortuary contexts could not be conclusively dated.

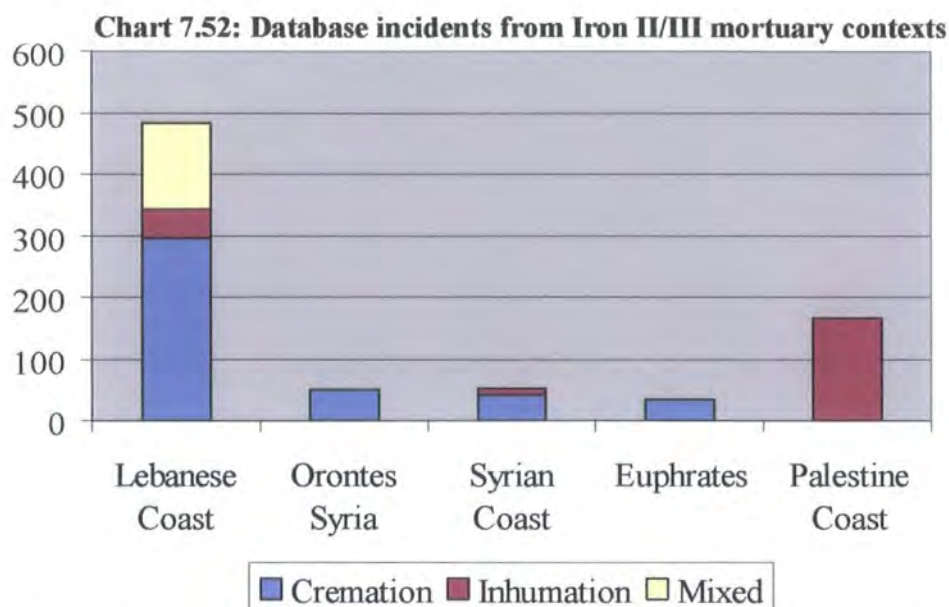
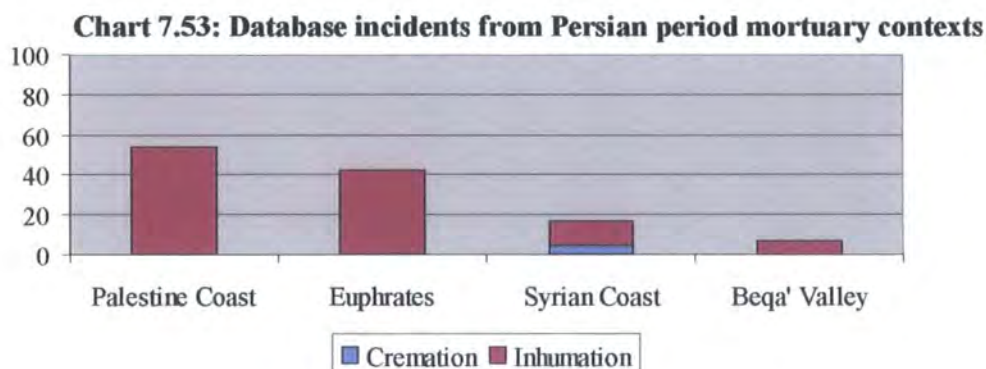
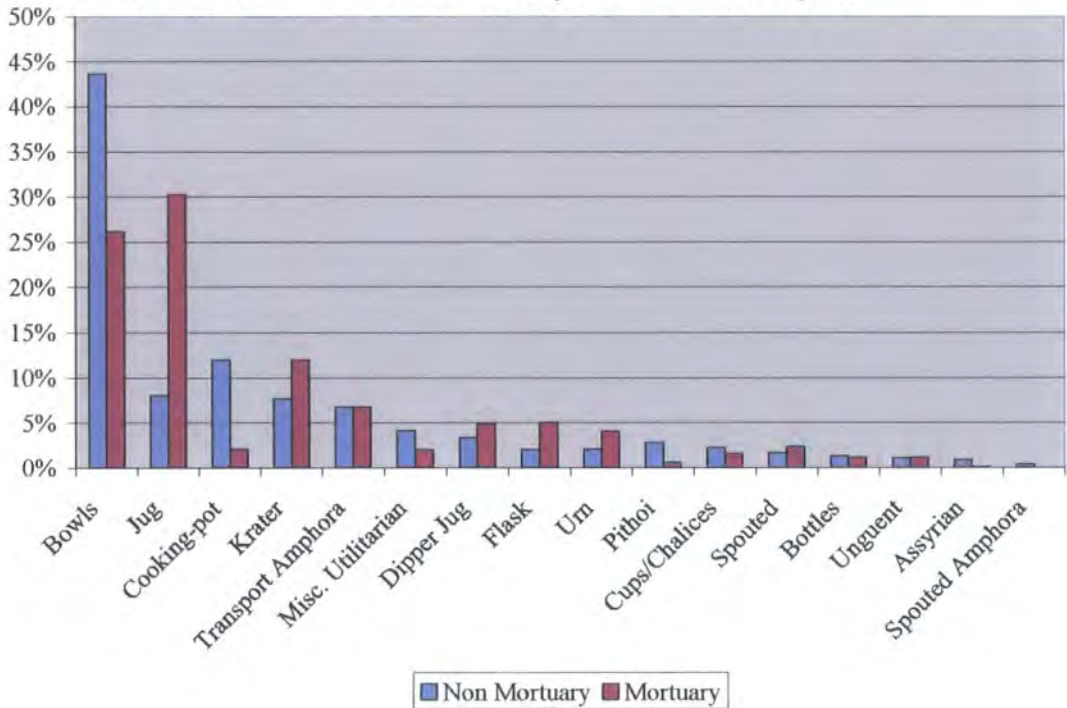


Chart 7.52 indicates that for the Iron II-III period cremation remained the rule for the inland Northern Levant, while only inhumation was evident for the Southern Levant. In contrast, cremation and inhumation were both attested along the coast. In particular, the Lebanese coast experienced both a sharp increase in mortuary incidents and a change in mortuary behaviour. During the Iron I period, this region was characterised by inhumation, but cremation became the predominant burial type in the subsequent Iron II/III period (“mixed” denotes mortuary assemblages that held inconclusive evidence for cremation). **Chart 7.53** clearly shows that inhumation was the main mortuary rite during the Persian period.



Since 20% of the database represented mortuary incidents, it seemed worth exploring any possible differences between mortuary and non-mortuary ceramic assemblages. To this end, **Chart 7.54** below presents the percentage of different functional categories for each of the two context types. As already indicated (**Chart 5.5**), bowls accounted for a large percentage of the database; but while bowls represented the most frequent non-mortuary incident (c. 44%), they were the second-most common mortuary incident. Instead, jugs (c. 30%) accounted for more mortuary incidents than any other category, followed by bowls (c. 26%) and kraters (12%). Moreover, flasks, dipper juglets, and urns, were also associated with mortuary contexts. In contrast, cooking-pots, pithoi, and miscellaneous utilitarian vessels were all associated with non-mortuary contexts. Interestingly, transport amphorae were equally represented by the two different context types.

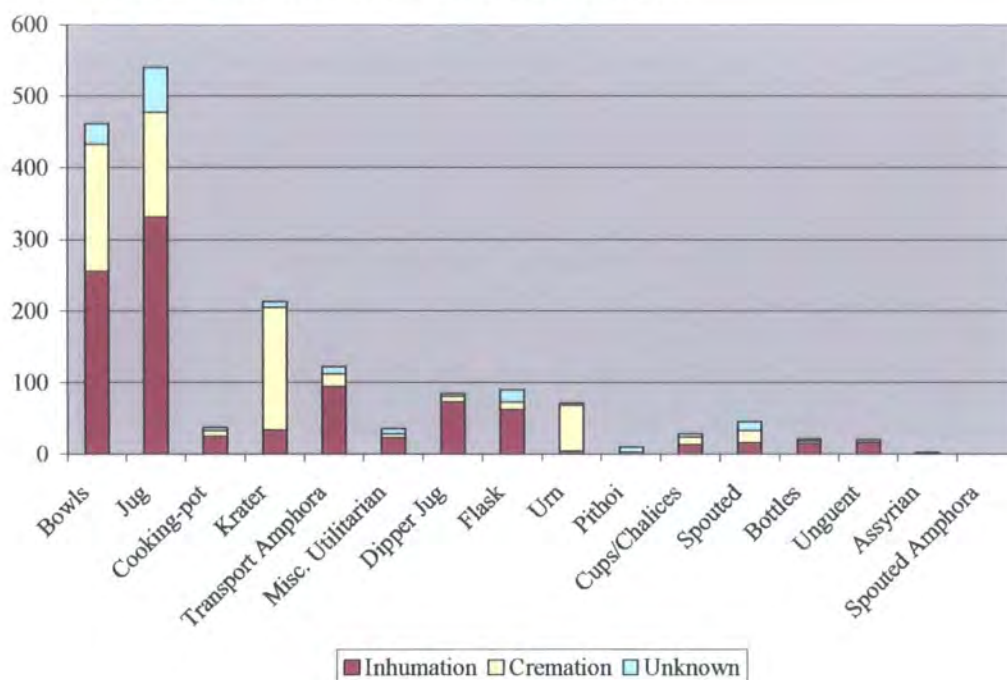
Chart 7.54: Function within mortuary and non-mortuary datasets



To concentrate on the nature of mortuary assemblages, the non-mortuary incidents were removed from **Chart 7.54** and differences in mortuary contexts were included. The vertical (y) axis was also exchanged for incident counts. The results are presented in **Chart 7.55**, which confirms that bowls, jugs and kraters were the most abundant components within mortuary contexts, followed by transport amphorae,

flasks, dipper juglets, and urns. However, cremation and inhumation contexts appear to be different in nature. For instance, cremation contexts show a marked preference for jugs, bowls, kraters, and urns, while inhumation is better represented by jugs, bowls, transport amphorae, dipper juglets, and flasks.

Chart 7.55: Function within mortuary contexts



The four most frequent functional categories evident in cremation contexts were bowls, jugs, kraters, and urns (**Chart 7.55**). **Chart 7.56** presents the distribution of these four functional categories within cremation contexts of the Iron II-III periods, when cremation was at its most abundant. Probably the most striking trend in this chart is the preference for urns in the Northern Levant, while the Lebanese coast is dominated by kraters. This trend seems to suggest that different vessel forms were used as cinerary containers according to regional traditions.

Chart 7.56: Function within Iron II-III cremation contexts

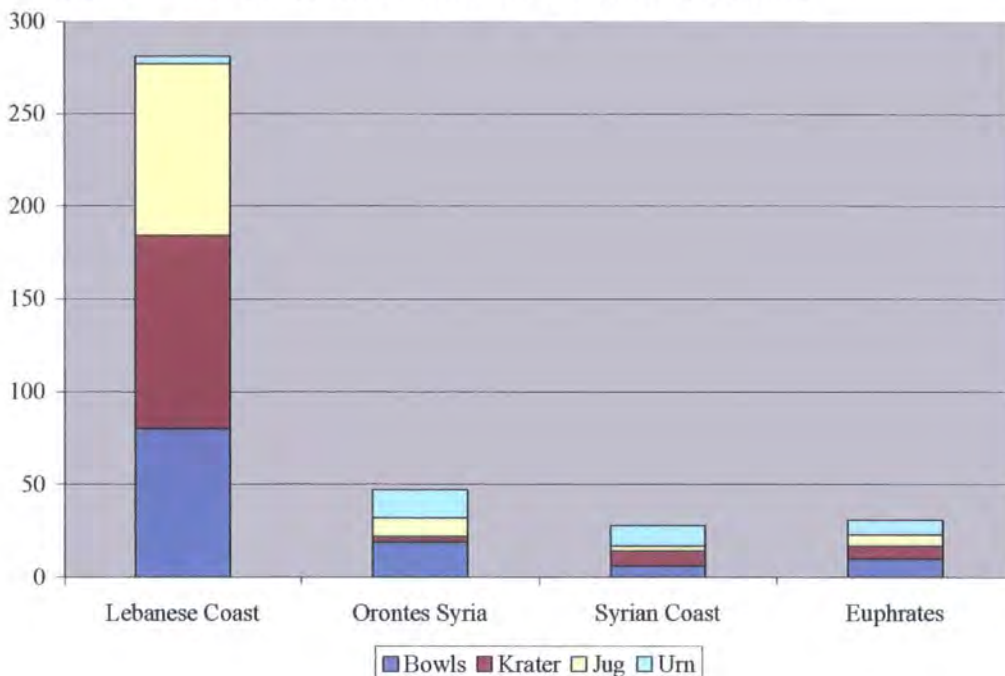
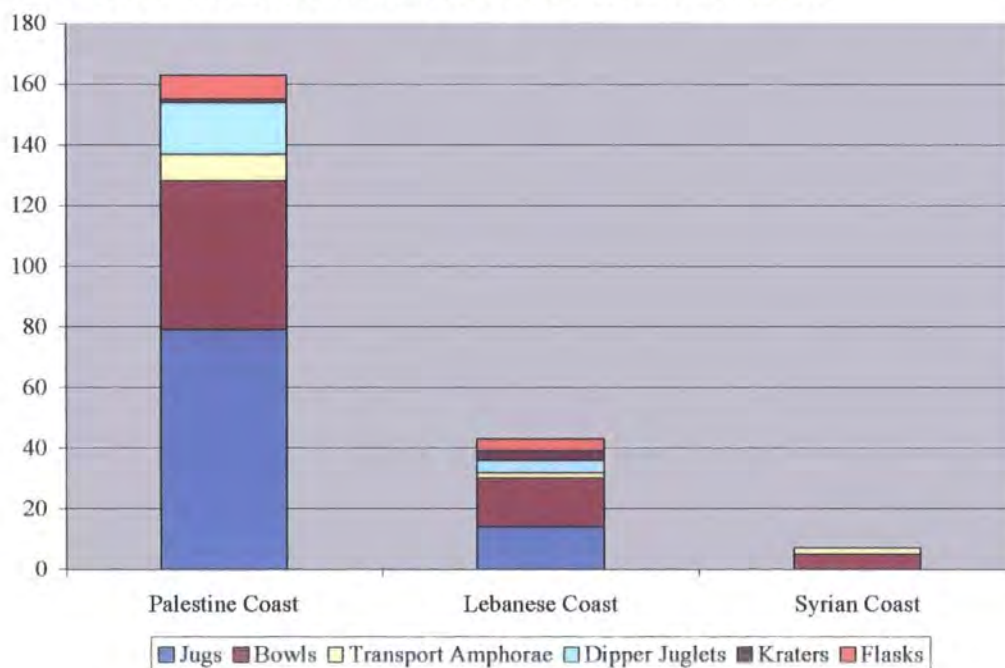


Chart 7.57 presents the inhumation equivalent of the above; it displays the six most common functional categories in inhumation contexts for the Iron II-III periods, but shows little regional variation – inhumation was restricted to the coast in this period.

Chart 7.57: Function within Iron II-III inhumation contexts



The following analyses explore three different regional patterns in mortuary behaviour, presenting the most common vessel forms for each category during the Iron II-III period.

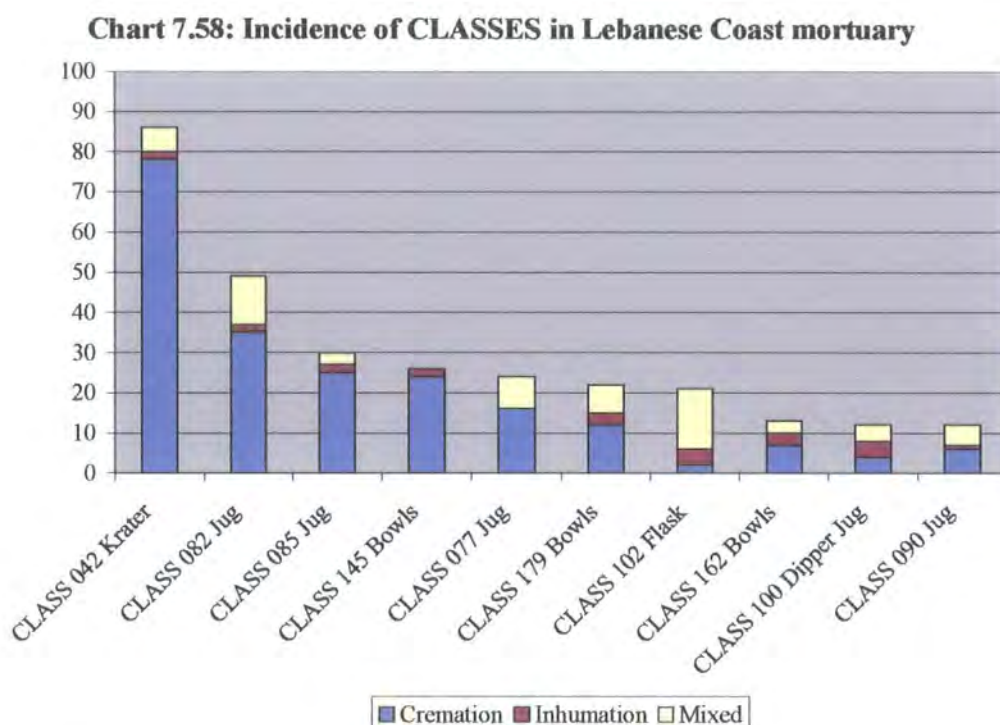


Chart 7.58 presents the most common CLASSES within mortuary contexts of the Lebanese coast. These “top ten” CLASSES correspond well with the distinctive cluster in **Dendrogram 8.8** (red) and confirms the presence of a rigid repertoire of pottery within coastal cremation contexts. The results from the Palestine coastal inhumation contexts (**Chart 7.59**) and inland Northern Levant cremation contexts (**Chart 7.60**) present a less-distinctive pattern. The coastal inhumation contexts were well-represented by some of the same vessels as in coastal cremation (e.g. CLASS 190 jug; CLASS 145 bowl), but with much greater variety (**Chart 7.59**). In contrast with the coastal cremation, the inhumation contexts did not contain many kraters. The inland cremation contexts show a clear preference for urns over kraters; no other vessel forms were well represented (**Chart 7.60**). Hence, the coastal and inland cremation contexts were characterised by different cinerary containers; kraters on the coast and urns inland, though there are exceptions.

Chart 7.59: Incidence of CLASSES in Palestine coast inhumation

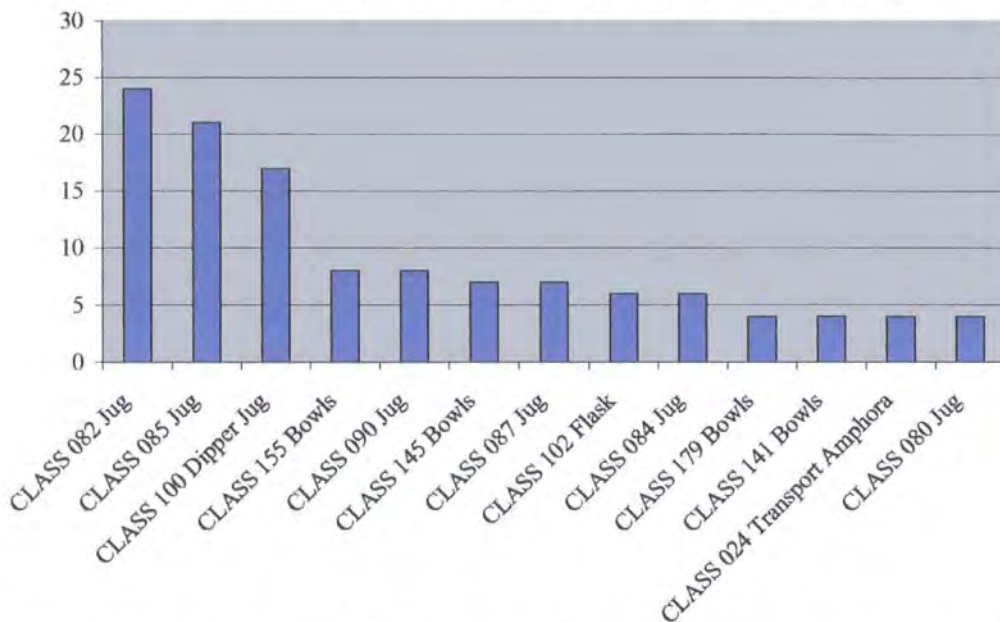
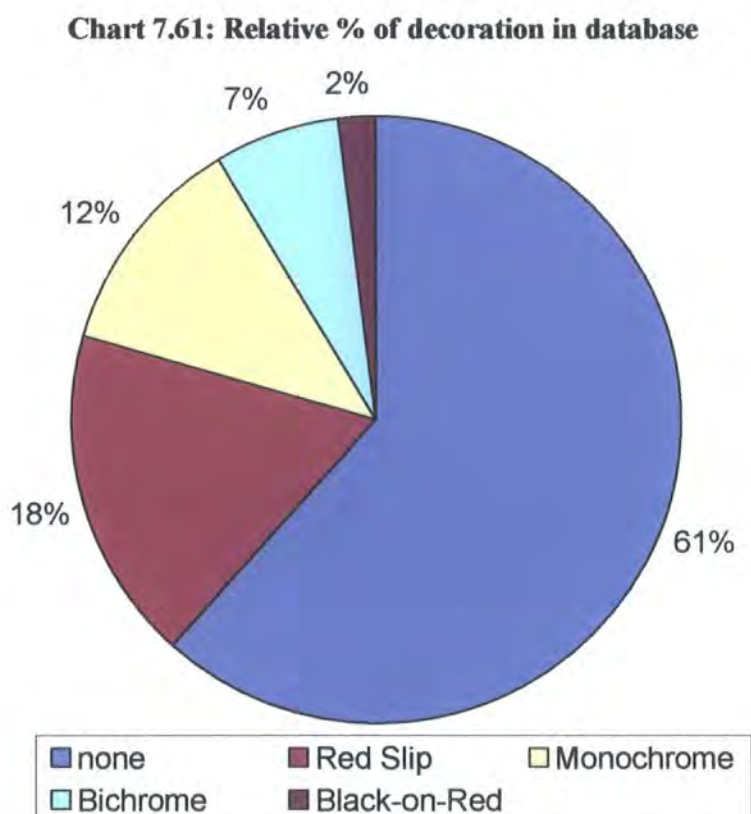


Chart 7.60: Incidence of CLASSES from inland Northern Levant mortuary



7.6 Decoration Analysis

An important element within the database was the recording of different decorative techniques; the most common four are discussed in this section – Red-Slip, Bichrome (also known as “Phoenician Bichrome” and distinct from so-called “Philistine Bichrome”), Monochrome, and Black-on-Red. **Chart 7.61** shows the percentage of different decorative techniques within the ceramic database. It demonstrates that the vast majority of pottery within this study had no recorded evidence of paint or slip decoration, or none was noted in publication. Red-Slip is the most common decorative scheme, followed by Monochrome, Bichrome, and Black-on-Red.



The predominance of Red-Slip is probably due to the fact that this is the dominant decorative technique during the Iron II period, from whence the majority of the database derives (**Chart 5.7**). To confirm this supposition, the dataset was categorised according to periods, the results of which are presented in **Chart 7.62**. This exercise was also a convenient means of plotting the development of the different decorative techniques over time.

Chart 7.62 Relative % of decorative techniques - period

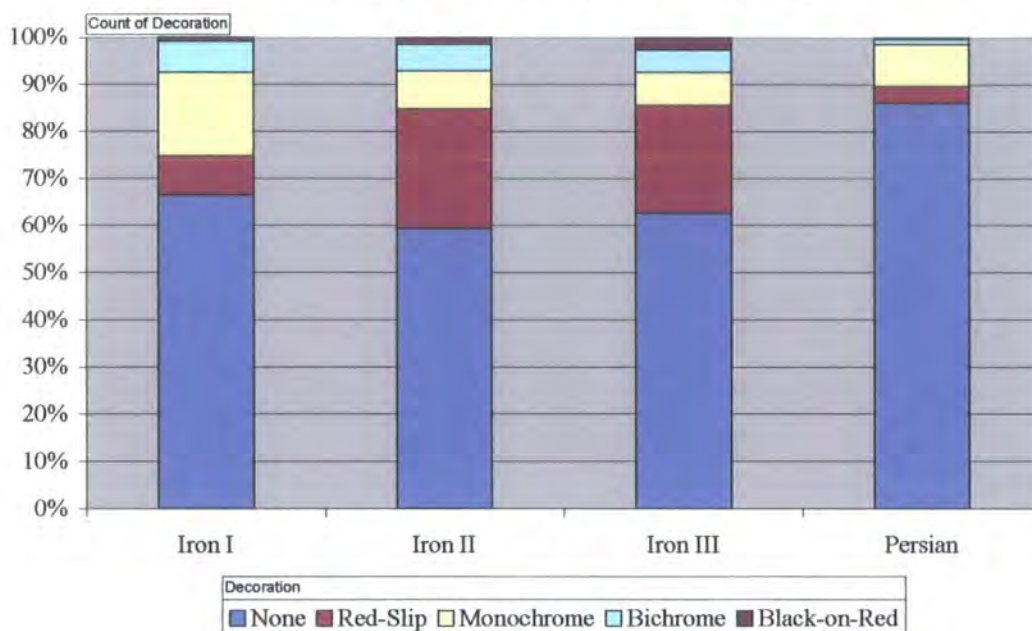


Chart 7.62 again confirms that a large percentage of pottery in the database was not decorated. However, there is also a marked shift from Monochrome decoration in the Iron I period, to Red-Slip decoration in the Iron II and Iron III periods. Very little decoration is evident in the Persian period, though there appears to be some tendency back to Monochrome decoration. The percentage of “Phoenician” Bichrome in the Iron I period is surprising, as this particular decoration technique is usually associated with the shift away from Monochrome, though the use of broad periods in this chart might be masking such a shift.

While the above chart plots a somewhat simplistic development of decoration over time, there was also likely to be regional variation within the trends. By categorising the decoration data according to the nine geographic zones discussed above (§7.3), different regional models for the use of Red-Slip, Monochrome, Bichrome, and Black-on-Red were developed – one chart for each. Each separate chart represents a different Iron Age sub-period. The four charts are pivot-table charts, hence the different geographic zones and decorative techniques are ordered according to their representation in each period, from greatest to least. Take note of the change in legend between the Iron I and Iron II charts.

Chart 7.63: Iron I decoration - zones

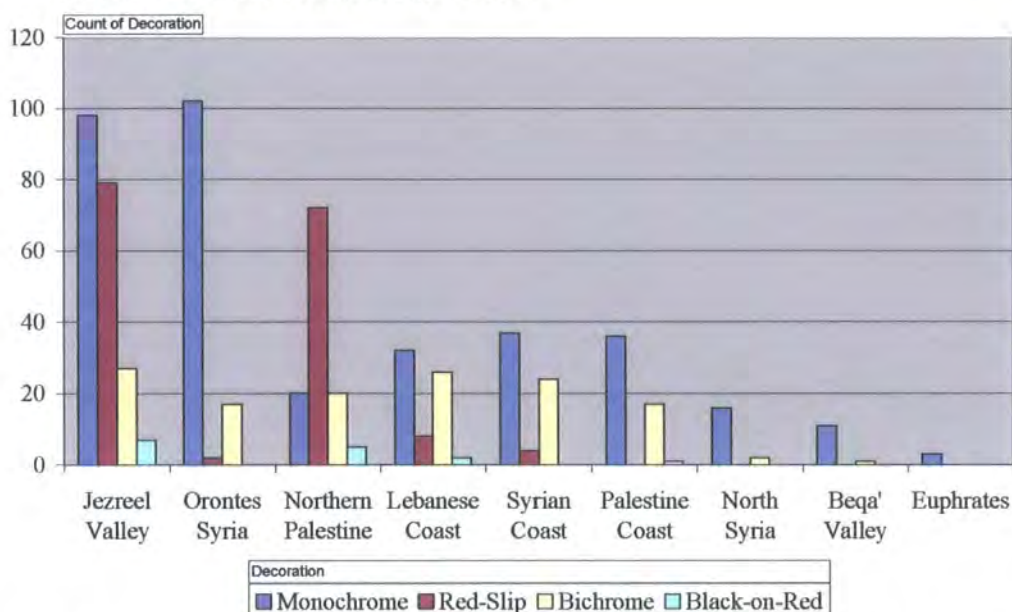


Chart 7.63 presents the number of incidents of Iron I decoration according to region. Monochrome is the predominant decorative technique overall. Red-Slip is primarily restricted to inland regions of the Southern Levant, with only a few examples known from the coast; Red-Slip was virtually absent from inland Northern Levant. Bichrome decoration is consistently represented in most areas, but not in inland Northern Levant.

Chart 7.64 presents the number of incidents of Iron II decoration according to region. Red-Slip is now the most abundant decorative technique. While it remained well-attested in the Southern Levant, Red-Slip rose in use along the Northern Levant coast and the Orontes. The Beqa' and Euphrates Valleys, and the Southern Levant coast are poorly represented. It is interesting to note that Monochrome remained an important feature of the Lebanese coast and the Orontes during this period, despite the rise in Red-Slip. In contrast, the use of Monochrome in inland Southern Levant was significantly impacted by Red-Slip. As common as Monochrome and Red-Slip were along the Lebanese Coast, Bichrome was the most abundantly evident. The huge Red-Slip “spike” for Northern Palestine is probably over-represented by the large assemblage from Hazor (**Chart 5.2**).

Chart 7.64: Iron II decoration - zones

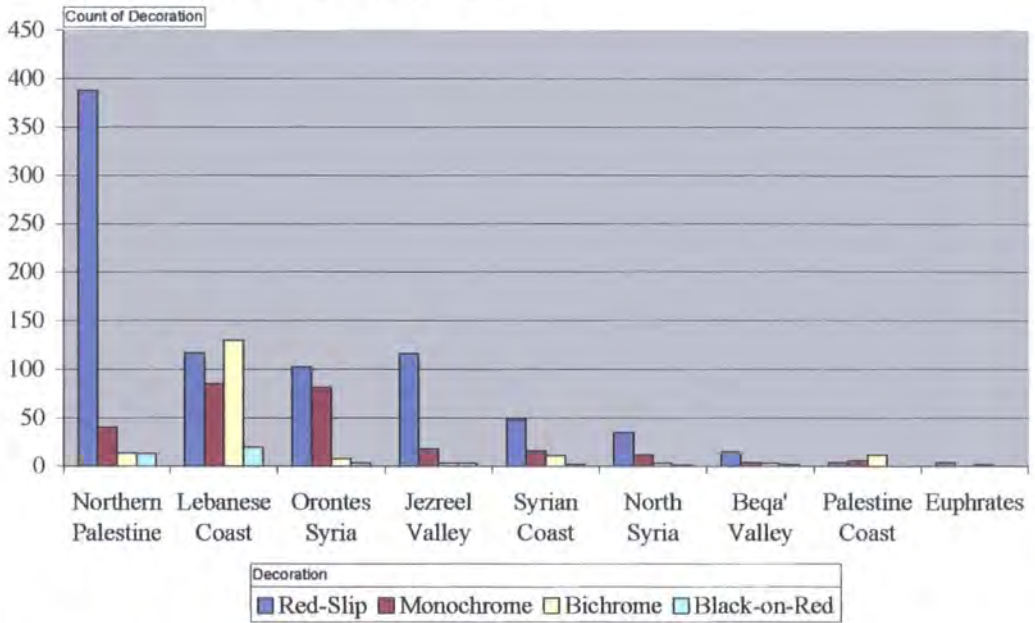


Chart 7.65 presents the number of incidents of Iron III decoration. In this period, Red-Slip was the primary decorative technique for the Northern Levant. In Orontes Syria, for instance, Red-Slip was the main decorative technique. While Red-Slip was the most common on the Syrian and Palestine coasts, Monochrome, Bichrome, and Black-on-Red were all well-attested. Despite the marked preference for Red-Slip in all regions, the actual number of incidents is much reduced; hence drawing firm conclusions from this data is not advised.

Chart 7.65: Iron III decoration - zones

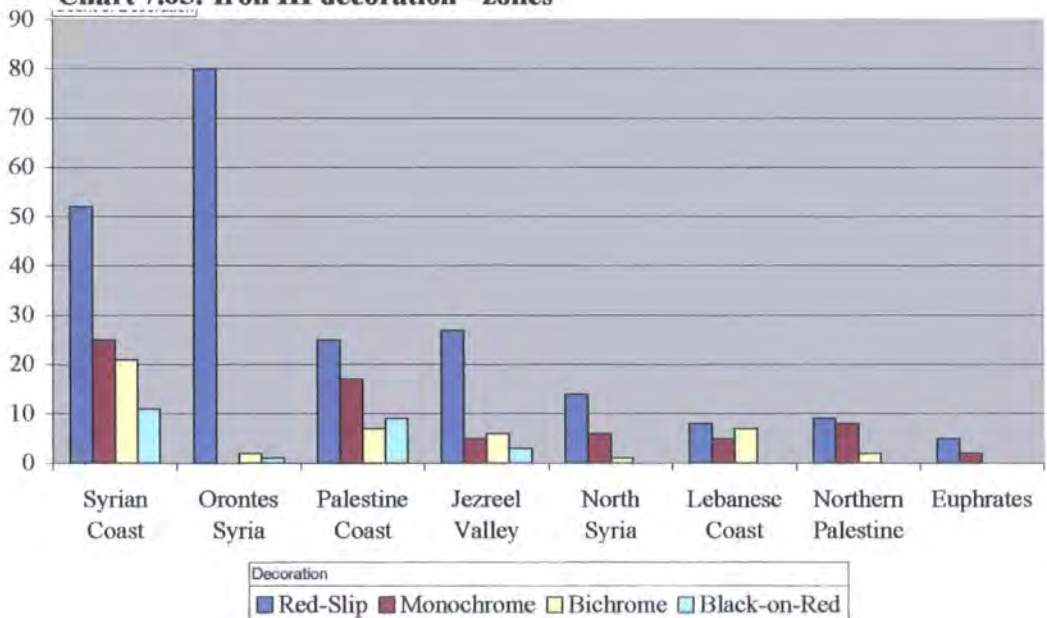


Chart 7.66: Persian period decoration - zones

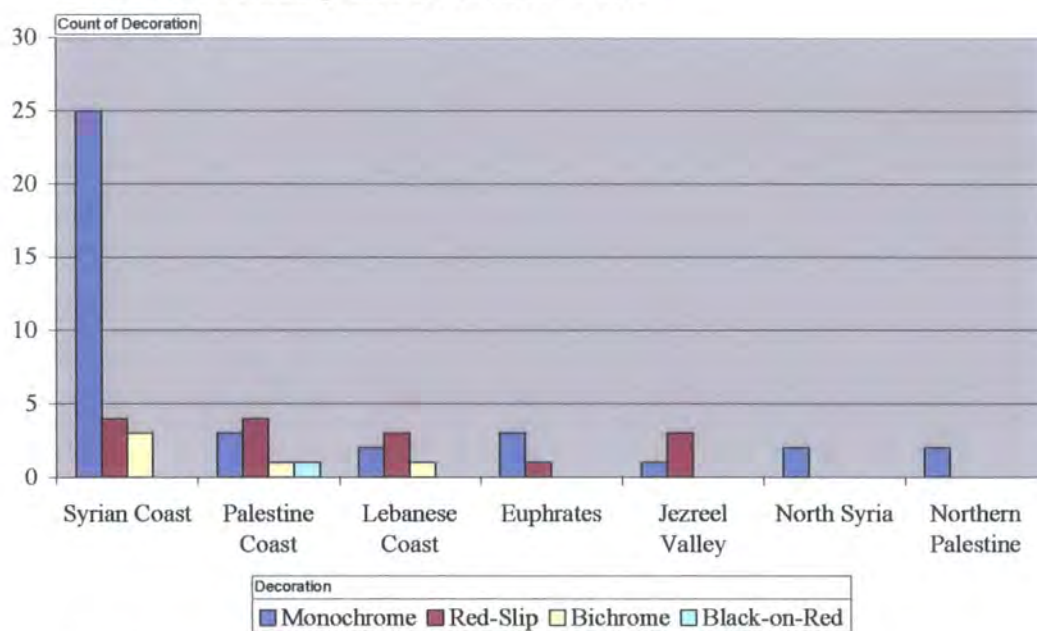


Chart 7.66 presents the number of incidents of Persian period decoration according to region. In this period decoration was generally limited to the coast. Monochrome was once again the main decorative scheme on the Syrian Coast, but over 85% of all Persian period vessels were undecorated (**Chart 7.62**). The number of incidents for each period was particularly low, except for the Syrian coast.

In addition to regional variations over time, the decoration of pottery was likely to be related to vessel function. Hence, the relationship between the four key decorative techniques and ceramic function was investigated, and is presented in **Charts 7.67-7.71**. These charts incorporate the general functional categories outlined in the Chapter 6 Typology. **Chart 7.67** presents the relative percentage of ceramic functional categories attested by each decorative technique. It is probably too “busy” to understand fully; nevertheless, it is included because it demonstrates that both Red-Slip and Black-on-Red (which we might consider a derivative of Red-Slip) were primarily represented by bowls and jugs. In contrast, the two painted traditions were represented by a greater diversity of ceramic functions. Monochrome and Bichrome were evident on bowls, jugs, kraters, flasks, urns, spouted vessels, and transport amphorae.

Chart 7.67: Decorative technique - function

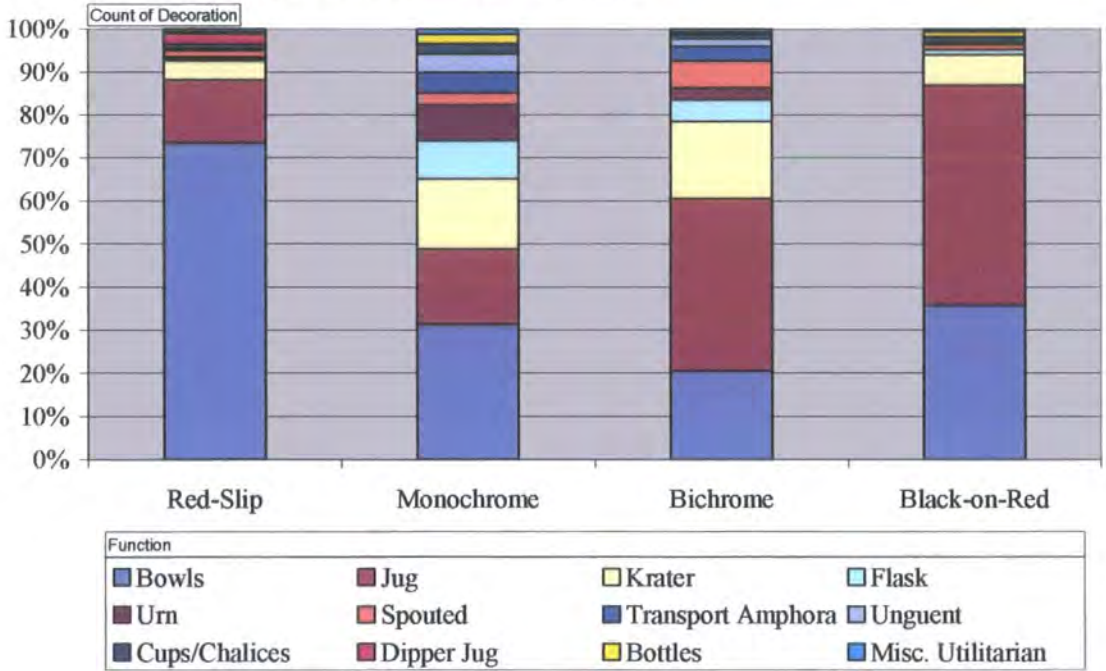


Chart 7.68 presents the same data as above but in the opposite relationship. In other words, it depicts ceramic function according to decoration. The vertical (y) axis has also changed from measuring percentage to incidents. The different functional categories are arranged from most to least on the horizontal (x) axis.

Chart 7.68: Incidents of ceramic function - decoration

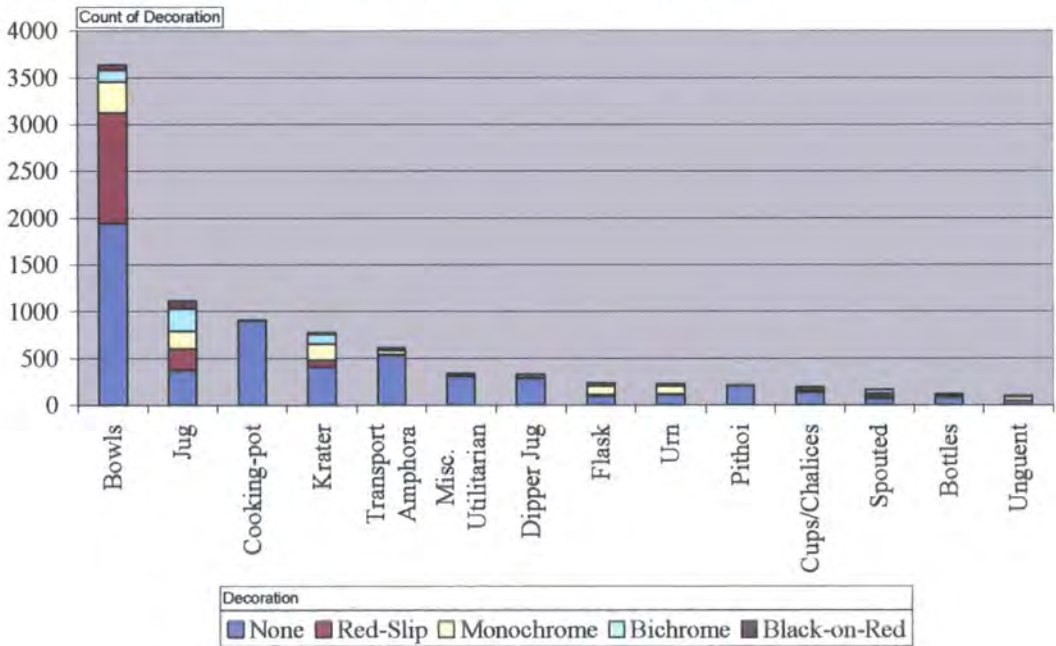


Chart 7.68 emphasises the large proportion of the database represented by decorated bowls. Indeed, decoration constitutes a significant component of all bowls, jugs, and kraters (and to a lesser extent flasks and urns). In contrast, some categories have little decorative representation; e.g. cooking-pots, pithoi. Consequently, the exploration of the use of decoration on bowls, jugs, and kraters was undertaken.

Chart 7.69 indicates that during the Iron I and Persian periods the majority of bowls were undecorated. During the Iron II and Iron III periods, however, it seems that Red-Slip bowls were almost as common as undecorated bowls. Monochrome bowls were generally restricted to the Iron I period.

Chart 7.69: Bowl decoration - period

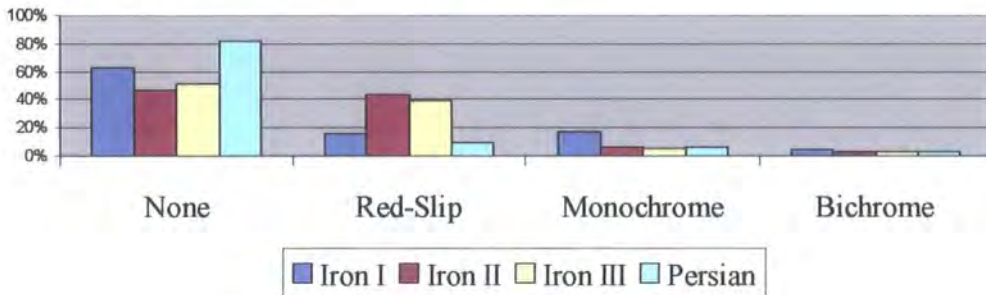


Chart 7.70 indicates that the decoration of jugs largely follows a different pattern to that of bowls. In particular, Bichrome was the most common decorative technique overall. Red-Slip was roughly equivalent to Bichrome and Monochrome during the Iron II and Iron III periods, but was poorly represented in other times. Apparently, painted decoration was a significant factor in jug presentation. Furthermore, jugs were more often decorated than not.

Chart 7.70: Jug decoration - period

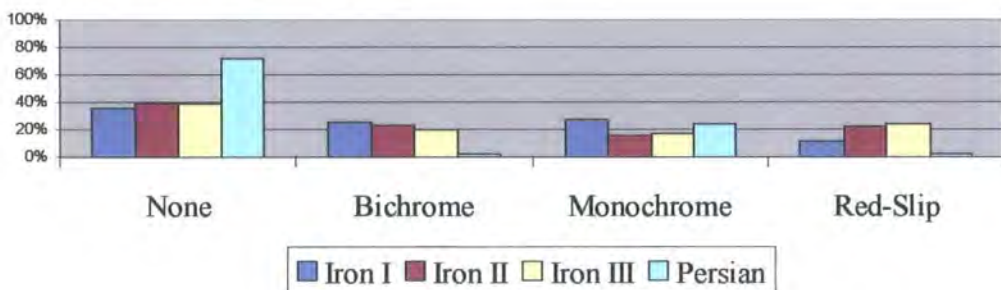


Chart 7.71: Krater decoration - period

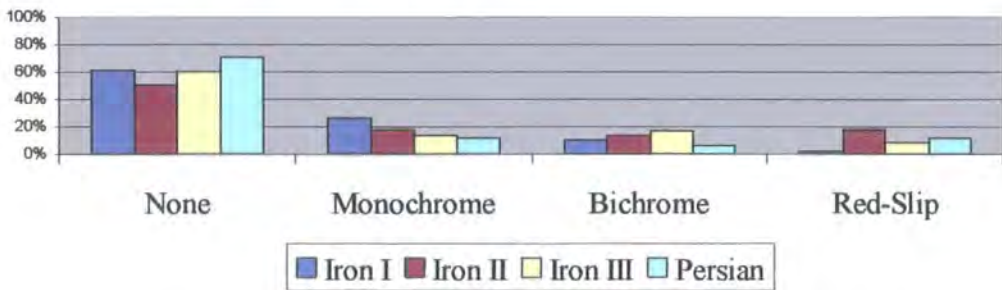
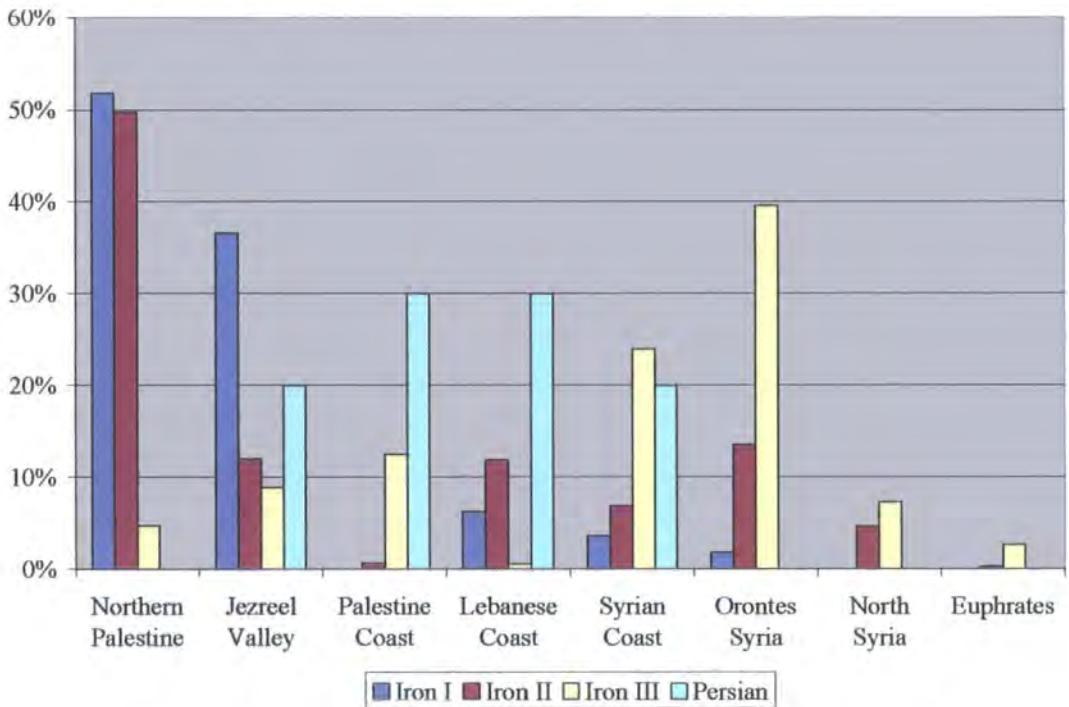


Chart 7.71 indicates that the decoration of kraters was primarily restricted to painted decoration, though Red-Slip was relatively common during the Iron II period.

Red-Slip decoration was apparently an important aspect of Iron Age bowls (**Charts 7.67-7.69**). For this reason, **Chart 7.72** explores the regional development of Red-Slip bowls throughout the Iron Age. The different geographic zones are arranged in the chart along the horizontal axis; i.e. moving from left to right the zones followed a geographic progression from inland Southern Levant to the Mediterranean coast and northwards, before moving inland again in the Northern Levant.

Chart 7.72: Regional development of Red-Slip bowls



The resulting chart shows that Red-Slip bowls were present in the Southern Levant during the Iron I (cf. A. Mazar 1998). A similar pattern is evident in the Iron II period, though the Northern Levant was beginning to be much-better represented. The Iron III period, however, marks a reversal of the earlier pattern, with the concentration of Red-Slip bowls centring on the Syrian coast and the Orontes, and tapering off southwards and northwards (the Lebanese coast is an exception). Red-Slip bowls during the Persian period are centred on the coastal regions. While these patterns are remarkably clear in **Chart 7.72**, explaining them is much more difficult; something that is attempted in **Chapter 9**.

7.7 Summary

The exploratory data analysis undertaken within this chapter has demonstrated that even with the present flawed data broad patterns are evident. However, there are also more subtle patterns in the data, patterns that appear to hold no single organising principle. There are many different patterns in the data that cross-cut the conventional broad regions; patterns within and between CLASS, function, period, decoration, and mortuary behaviour. This evident diversity cannot be obviously linked to ethnic or political units. Instead, the ceramic data depicts a high level of complexity within cultural behaviour for the IA-Northern Levant; complexity that will be analysed further in **Chapter 8**.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Multivariate Data Analysis

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the investigation of the ceramic database using two multivariate analysis techniques, both of which are widely accepted as appropriate for incidence (presence/absence) data (Baxter 2003, 140). The first technique is that of Correspondence Analysis which, broadly speaking, compares assemblages based on the association of ceramic types. The second technique, Cluster Analysis, focuses on similarities between categories, which in this case are ceramic CLASSES. The results of the two techniques are presented visually. In the case of Correspondence Analysis, the output is a chart (or plot) that positions assemblages in multi-dimensional space. Cluster Analysis, on the other hand, produces a dendrogram that emphasises clustering of data (i.e. assemblages). Each technique and its output are described in the relevant sections. It is intended that these two techniques will reveal some of the more subtle patterns in the data that **Chapter 7** might have missed.

8.2 Correspondence Analysis

8.2.1 Introduction

Despite the great effort and resource expended on its study, Iron Age pottery is rarely discussed beyond its supposed chronological and cultural value. However, ceramic assemblages are likely to be the product of many different influences: chronology and geography are obvious factors, but others may be present, i.e. status, function, cultural boundaries, consumption, distribution mechanisms, the ways in which the material enters the archaeological record, and any number of unknown factors. Current method and practice, and publication standards conspire to “rob” the ceramic record of its true value. Correspondence Analysis (hereafter CA) is an analytical technique available for the systematic comparison of archaeological assemblages, based on the premise that regularly occurring patterns of associations are likely to

reflect patterns of social activity and behaviour. It is an exploratory data-analytic technique which produces a graphic view of the relationship between ceramic assemblages (Shennan 1997, 308-327). Through the comparison of ceramic assemblages from sites of different types, dates, and regions recurrent patterns emerge in the data; patterns that may have very little to do with chronological or geographical factors. Despite the potential, CA has not been fully exploited in Near Eastern archaeology.

8.2.2 The Technique

For the purpose of aiding comparison, data can be expressed as a table where the rows represent contexts (or units), the columns represent vessel types, and their interconnected cells represent the occurrence (incidence) of each type per context (Baxter 2003, 137). CA is a descriptive technique designed to reveal patterns within such a table and identify associations between rows and columns (Shennan 1997, 308-341). The technique works by converting the values of each row or column to percentages of the total value of that row or column. The CA results are presented as two graphs; the row plot and the column plot. The intersection of the axes in each plot represents the average profile within the data (Shennan 1997, 321). In the row plot, contexts with relatively similar assemblages will appear in the same area of the plot, while in the column plot, associated ceramic categories will appear in the same area of the plot. In other words, the row plot displays relationships between contexts, while the column plot displays relationships between ceramic categories. A ceramic category is deemed to characterise certain contexts when they appear in similar areas of superimposed plots (Baxter 2003, 138-139). CA also weights the different categories according to the number of incidents; contexts with more incidents are given more weight than those with very few incidents, and vice versa for the different ceramic categories. Single incident categories, however, are excluded from the analysis. In addition to the graphic output, CA also produces statistical tables that indicate how well the plots represent the data. Inertia is the term used for describing how much variation in the data is explained by each axis in the plot; this value is noted under each chart. A plot is considered a good representation of the data if the combined inertia of the two axes (also called components) forms a high percentage of the total inertia.

8.2.3 Analysis

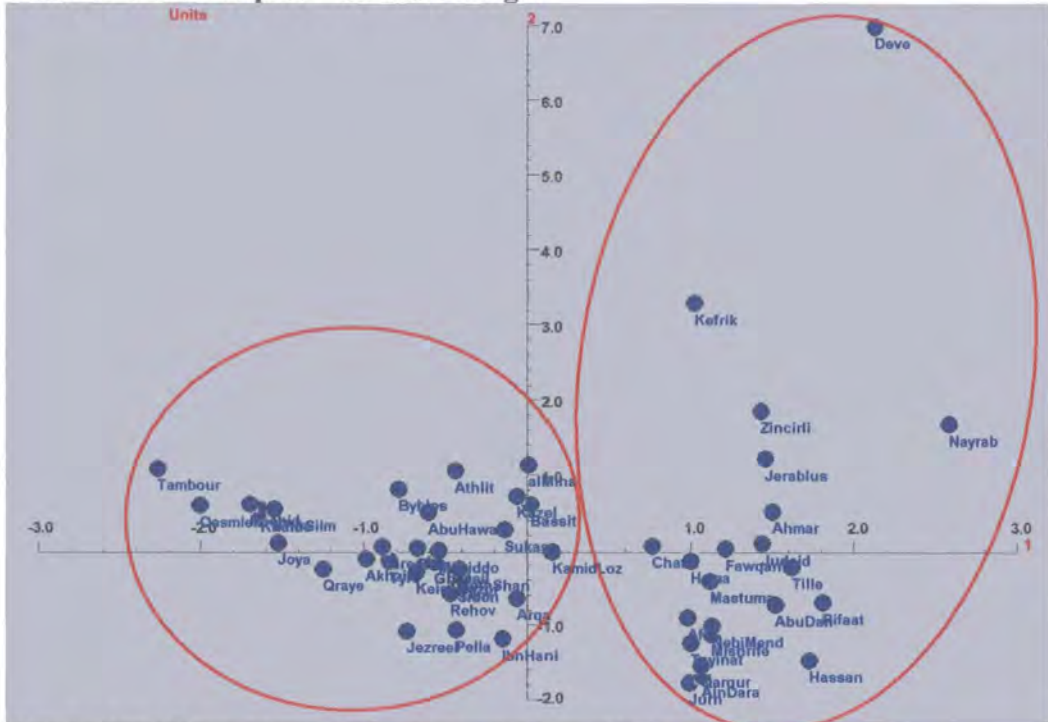
All CA calculations and plot productions were undertaken with the Bonn Archaeological Statistics Package (WinBasp) version 5.43 for Windows; as a result, all table and matrix data are not included here, as they can only be viewed using the WinBasp program (a screen-shot is presented in **Figure 5.3**). Each CA plot is also included on the appended CD; the file name is noted beneath each plot.

8.2.3.1 Broad Patterns

In emphasising the historical narrative, Near Eastern archaeologists have largely ignored the more localised patterns of cultural behaviour. With this in mind, the approach adopted below is one that moves from the general to the more particular, successively focussing the analyses around more narrowly-defined data categories. The aim is for the broad dominating influences, which may mask other more specific patterns, to be isolated and their effects noted, helping to reveal those patterns produced by less dominant factors. An understanding of the broader patterns will also direct the more specifically targeted analyses.

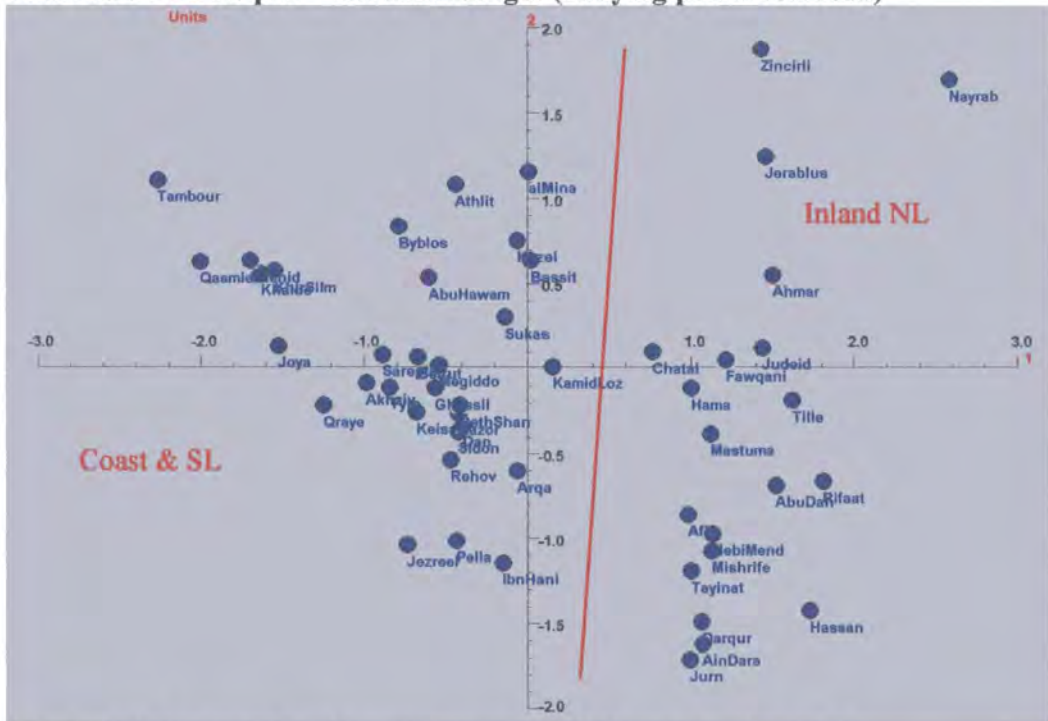
The first CA examines broad patterns in the data. To this end, each site's assemblage, regardless of stratigraphy, was treated as a single unit; in other words, no chronological or spatial divisions were maintained. It was hoped this would negate any chronological patterns, and reveal other influences. This would also allow more meaningful comparison with "unstratified" assemblages (e.g. Joya). The CA results are presented in **Chart 8.1**. This row-plot depicts two distinct groups of assemblages (as indicated). Under closer scrutiny, these two groups are defined geographically: the right-side cluster derives from inland Northern Levant while the left-side cluster represents the rest of the study area (coastal regions and the Southern Levant). These two broad geographic categories mirror a similar distinction in Lehmann's (1996, Fig. 4.4) research on the late Iron Age pottery of Syria and Lebanon; Lehmann makes no effort to either explain these "regions" or isolate more localised patterns (§4.2.2.2). Two assemblages to the top of the plot (i.e. Deve, Kefrik) are affecting the scale of the plot. Hence, the same CA results are presented in **Chart 8.2** with the two outlying assemblages removed. This second chart maintains the geographical distinction whilst highlighting some smaller clusters.

Chart 8.1: CA row plot – site assemblages



CD: /biplots/Chart801.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 9.6%; comp. 2 – 6.0%)

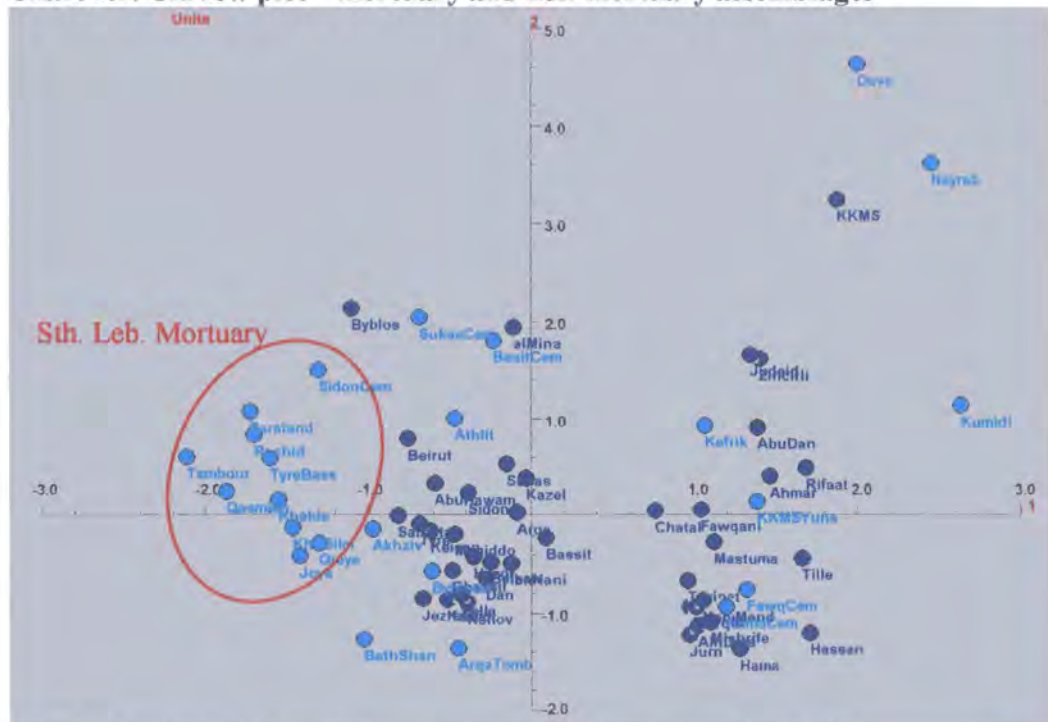
Chart 8.2: CA row plot – site assemblages (outlying points removed)



CD: /biplots/Chart802.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 9.6%; comp. 2 – 6.0%)

While the above analysis highlights the very general effect that a site's geographical location has upon the make-up of a site's assemblage, it masks other variables within the data. For instance, it is reasonable to assume that mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages would contain different functional elements. To this end, the next CA incorporates context type (mortuary versus non-mortuary) into the consideration of a site's assemblage: in other words, the pottery from mortuary contexts at a particular site is treated as a separate assemblage to the pottery from settlement contexts at the same site. The two context types are represented in **Chart 8.3** by two different colours: turquoise denoting mortuary assemblages; blue denoting non-mortuary assemblages. The resulting CA plot maintains the broad dichotomy (right side = inland Syria; left side = coastal and southern areas) present in the first two charts while highlighting another trend in the data; mortuary assemblages are largely distinct from non-mortuary assemblages.

Chart 8.3: CA row plot – mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages



CD: /biplots/Chart803.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 8.1%; comp. 2 – 5.2%)

Legend

Blue •	Non-mortuary	Turquoise •	Mortuary
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Chart 8.3 confirms that the nature of the archaeological context has a significant influence on the composition of an assemblage. This is particularly evident in the cluster of southern Lebanese mortuary assemblages. The distinct cluster in the far left of the plot is well removed from non-mortuary contexts of the same and nearby regions. The mortuary/non-mortuary distinction is not as pronounced amongst the mortuary assemblages of inland Northern Levant. Nevertheless, **Chart 8.3** confirms that the mortuary assemblages of inland Northern Levant are clearly separate from the coastal mortuary assemblages. Evidently the collection of ceramics used in mortuary practices of inland Northern Levant is markedly different to those from coastal mortuary contexts, though the difference may be partly explained by chronology and/or mortuary technique (cremation/inhumation). This is particularly important regarding the development of cremation in the Northern Levant, which conventionally is attributed to Aegean immigrants. The above chart suggests that the mortuary assemblages of the Northern Levant may have developed along a separate trajectory from that of the coastal regions. The mortuary-specific CAs undertaken below reveal some of the patterns in mortuary behaviour across the different geographic zones.

8.2.3.2 Localised Geography

Before mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages were explored in more detail, the effect of geographic location on an assemblage was explored further. To this end, sites across the study area were divided according to the nine local geographic zones presented in **Table 7.3** and depicted in **Map 91**: i.e. Syrian coast, Lebanese coast, Beqa' Valley, Jezreel Valley, Northern Palestine, Palestinian coast, Orontes Syria, North-west Syria, and the Euphrates Valley. While these zones were based on geographic factors, their boundaries were assigned in an arbitrary (but apparently meaningful) fashion. These zones covered smaller areas than the two broad regions already evident in the data with the aim of identifying any localised geographic influences in the data. The data categories used for this CA were the same as those in **Chart 8.3**, but with each zone represented by the different colours used in **Map 91**. The distinction between mortuary and settlement assemblages was not maintained in the colour coding. While **Chart 8.4** maintains the broad regional trends, there are also smaller clusters that roughly coincide with the nine local zones. The grouping of assemblages according to colour within each broad region is significant; apparently

the two broad regions are not homogenous but incorporate a patchwork of smaller, localised patterns. Because conventional interpretations of the IA-NL have emphasised the broad politico-historical regions, the more dynamic and subtle variations in local cultural behaviour are not considered. Clearly, politico-historical interpretations provide only a superficial understanding of Iron Age society. The fact that the colours in **Chart 8.4** largely cluster together suggests that the nine zones are, generally speaking, valid categories. This does not, however, suggest that all vessel forms strictly adhere to these local zones; rather it is the specific correspondence of many forms that characterise these assemblages. Some pottery forms will adhere to the general patterns, while others will crosscut them. A few specific trends evident in the chart are discussed below.

Chart 8.4: CA row plot – geographic zones



CD: /biplots/Chart804.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 8.1%; comp. 2 – 5.2%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Bega' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

Despite its geographic proximity to Orontes Syria (yellow), the Beqa' Valley (turquoise) is more closely aligned with Northern Palestine (green) and the Jezreel Valley (dark green). Also, Tell Nebi Mend's assemblage falls firmly within Orontes Syria (yellow) on the chart, despite its geographical proximity to the Beqa' Valley. This is possibly due to the limited occupation of the Beqa' Valley throughout much of the Iron Age (Marfoe 1998, 225). The Palestinian Coast (white) is also more closely aligned with Lebanese (teal) and Syrian (blue) coastal settlement assemblages, than those from Northern Palestine (green), and the Jezreel Valley (dark green). The clustering of Lebanese mortuary contexts away from the non-mortuary Lebanese assemblages is significant; mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages in this zone are distinct. Al Mina's assemblage, which is exclusively non-mortuary, is comparable to mortuary assemblages from the Syrian Coast. This is possibly due to the high level of imported pottery recovered at al Mina. The common wares from al Mina have not been published and are not, therefore included in this study, but their absence may have "created" an assemblage artificially high in prestige items. The cluster of Orontes Syrian sites is particularly well-defined, while the North-west Syrian and Euphrates zones are much wider spread. One wonders whether the variability associated with the wider spread is the result of early excavation techniques and poor publication.

There are four outlying points in the right of **Chart 8.4**; three of these represent mortuary assemblages, two of which have been dated to the Persian period. The position of the Kamid el Loz Persian cemetery assemblage (Kumidi) is a conspicuous anomaly. The position of the Carchemish assemblage (KKMS) within the vicinity of these two points is possibly due to the limited publication of the Carchemish non-mortuary ceramics; indeed none of the four outlying assemblages are represented by a good-sized, well-published ceramic corpus.

8.2.3.3 General Chronological Factors

Geography is a significant factor in the makeup of an assemblage, as is chronology. Indeed these two variables, time and space, are conventional explanations for material-culture patterning. Hence, the next CA investigates broad chronological patterns in the data. To this end, site assemblages were divided according to period,

with each period represented by a specific colour. As with most chronological studies, however, the results of the analysis are directly dependent on the standard of the original publications. While the chronology of the IA-NL is unsecured, errors in absolute chronology will not affect the CA results as it is the relative chronology of each assemblage that is important. Poor stratigraphic control, though, would affect the results. **Chart 8.5** presents the CA row plot for comparison of assemblages across time. While the plot is particularly crowded in places (adding labels would compound this problem), there is a clear progression in time from the bottom of the plot in the direction of the arrow. Admittedly the progression is not always a sharp change, but nor is the transition from one period to the next. During the Iron I and Iron II periods the cluster of assemblages is much tighter than during the Iron III and Persian periods. What this pattern means is difficult to determine with any certainty, but it appears to indicate greater variation in assemblages in the later Iron Age. This might indicate changes in production methods, or poorer quality data for this period.

Chart 8.5: CA row plot – period assemblages (mortuary/non-mortuary)



CD: /biplots/Chart805.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 7.8%; comp. 2 – 6.2%)

Legend

Burgundy •	Iron I	Red •	Iron I-II
Yellow •	Iron II	Green •	Iron II-III
Dark Blue •	Iron III	Blue •	Iron III-Persian
White •	Persian	Grey ◦	Undated

8.2.3.4 Mortuary Assemblages

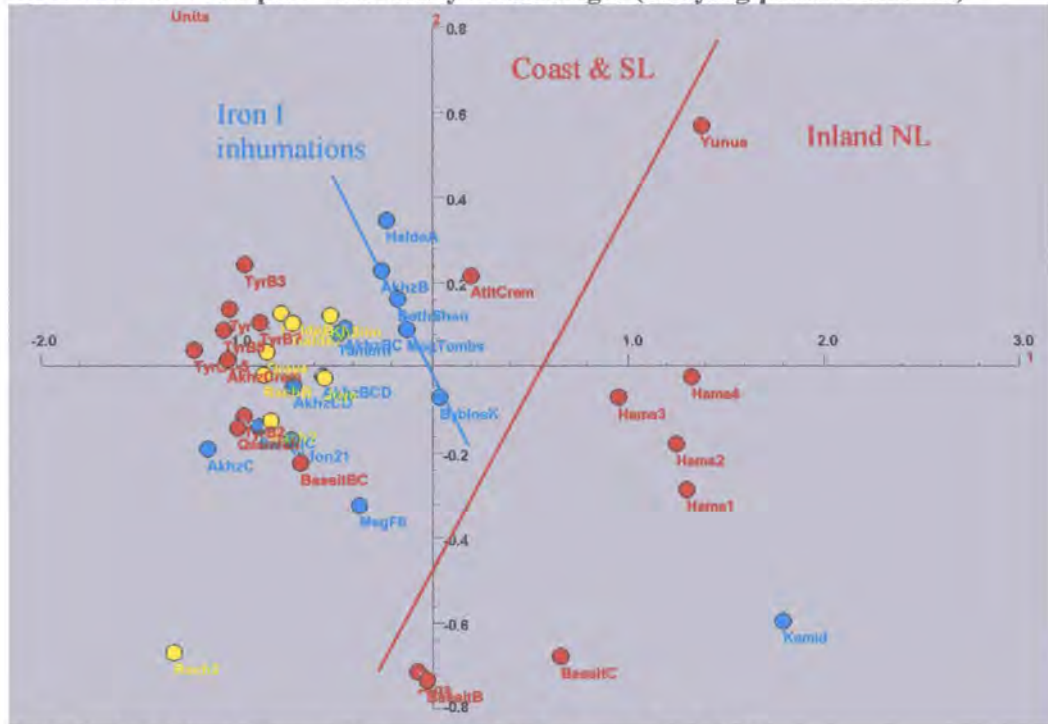
Charts 8.3 and **8.4** suggest a distinction existed between mortuary and settlement assemblages. For this reason, this section explores associations within mortuary contexts (non-mortuary contexts were removed from the dataset). When available, the nature of mortuary practice was noted; either inhumation, cremation, or the mixed use of the two. Unfortunately, many mortuary assemblages were not recovered in a systematic fashion, leaving their context a point of conjecture. These assemblages have been presented as they are described in the publications. The following analyses also incorporated a basic level of chronological information, with the hope of isolating change across time. This was achieved with distinction being made, when possible, between the sub-divisions of the Iron Age; viz. Iron I, Iron II, Iron III, and Persian period. Because the chronological conclusions for many sites are without firm foundation (**Chapter 3**), the CA results were expected to isolate only general chronological trends in the data.

Chart 8.6 presents the row plot for mortuary assemblages with distinction between inhumation, cremation, and mixed-use assemblages established through the use of colour (blue, red and yellow, respectively). Chronological data is also evident in the label for each assemblage; the suffix A, B, C, and D represents the Iron I, II, III and Persian periods, respectively. Five outlying points on the far right of the plot were removed so as to enhance the clarity of the main group of data: two of the outliers were Persian period inhumation assemblages of North-west Syria, while the other three were cremation assemblages from the Euphrates (none of which derive from well-published excavations). With outliers removed, a number of patterns are evident. Probably the most obvious pattern is the by-now familiar grouping of inland Northern Levant assemblages (to the right) away from all other areas (to the left). Indeed, the geographic interpretation of this plot seems compelling.

Cremation assemblages are located in different areas of the plot dependent upon geographic location. The implication is that cremation practices of inland Northern Levant (to the right of the y-axis) and of the coast (to the left) used distinctly different ceramic assemblages. Furthermore, the inland Northern Levant cremation assemblages have an “internal” geographic ordering. Starting at the Yunus cemetery at the top and following a half horseshoe shape down through the mortuary

assemblages of Hama, Ras al Bassit and Tell Arqa, there is a geographical procession from inland toward the coast. The fluctuating position of Ras al Bassit on the plot appears to indicate a shifting of cultural influences upon the population of Ras al Bassit as a result of its geographic location between inland Northern Levant and the southern coast.

Chart 8.6: CA row plot – mortuary assemblages (outlying points removed)



CD: /biplots/Chart806.wmf (comp. 1 – 7.7%; comp. 2 – 6.2%)

Legend

Red •	Cremation	Turquoise •	Inhumation
Yellow •	Mixed or unclear mortuary practice		

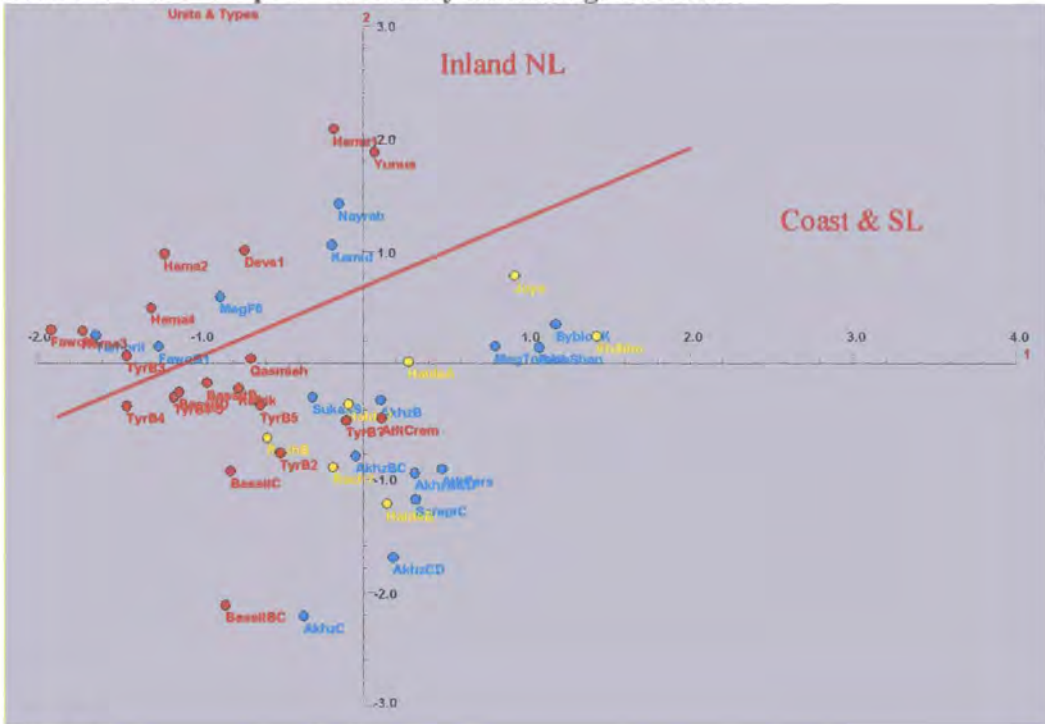
While geographical factors influence the results, the nature of mortuary practice is also important, as is evident on the left side of the plot. For instance, there is a clustering of inhumation assemblages conventionally dated to the early Iron Age (i.e. Megiddo tombs, Beth Shan Northern Cemetery, Byblos Necropolis K; Khalde A; the earliest use of Akhziv dated to the very beginning of the Iron II period). This Iron I inhumation group (marked by blue line) is removed from later inhumations. During the Iron II and Iron III periods, however, the inhumation assemblages of the Phoenician coast are positioned close to mixed use cemeteries.

Cremation contexts are located together in the far left of **Chart 8.6**. Though only three sites are represented, they are geographically limited to the Phoenician coast. The assemblages used within these cemeteries differ most significantly from those present in cremation cemeteries of inland Northern Levant (right side of plot), but also from the early Iron Age inhumation group. Tyre-al Bass is the main example of cremation on the coast for much of the Iron Age. Despite the extended period of use at Tyre-al Bass there is little change evident in the assemblage. It may be that the form of cremation ritual used rigidly dictated the use of specific ceramic vessels. The four phases of the Hama cemetery display a similar (but slightly looser) grouping over time, which suggests that cremation ritual there also prescribed a very specific ceramic assemblage. So, despite obvious differences in the make-up of cremation assemblages at Tyre-al Bass and Hama, the two sites seem to agree on one point; that cremation ritual required the use of an assemblage of ceramic vessels that was culturally prescribed by the fact that cremation was being undertaken. The two sites simply differ in the specifics of vessel and ritualised behaviour.

Mixed-use mortuary contexts can take the form of cremation and inhumation being attested alongside each other, or the use of cremation within a chamber tomb, as is attested at Tell Rachidieh and Ras al Bassit. Not surprisingly, mixed-use assemblages in **Chart 8.6** (yellow) are plotted between the inhumation (blue) and cremation (red) groups. The mixed-use assemblages of Joya and Khirbet Silm are plotted close to inhumation assemblages of the Iron II and Iron III periods, suggesting that cremation played only a minor part in the use of these cemeteries; though neither of these assemblages was systematically excavated.

The above charts have demonstrated that geography and chronology had a significant influence on mortuary assemblages, as did the nature of the mortuary practice. It is also possible to explore the general types of activity that mortuary ritual might entail. By grouping ceramic types into broad functional categories, simplistic models of mortuary behaviour will become evident. **Charts 8.7** and **8.8** show the row and column plots for mortuary assemblage functions (outlying points removed). **Chart 8.7** depicts similarity in function between different mortuary assemblages (e.g. Megiddo and Beth Shan). **Chart 8.8** presents the relationship between functional categories within mortuary assemblages.

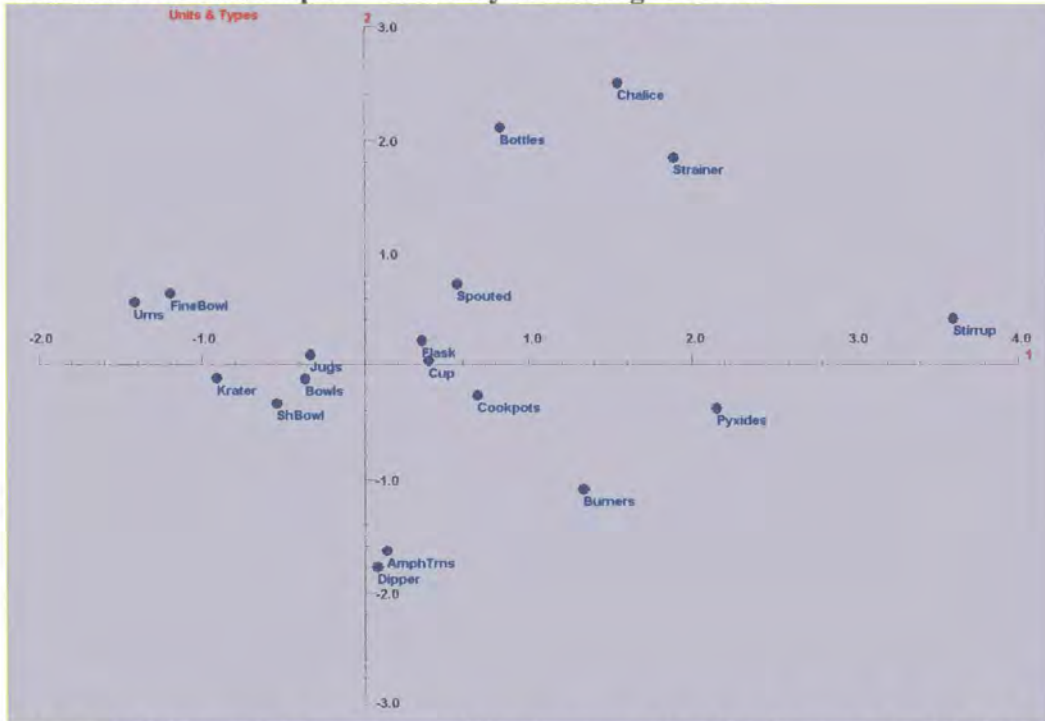
Chart 8.7: CA row plot – mortuary assemblage function



Legend



Chart 8.8: CA column plot – mortuary assemblage function

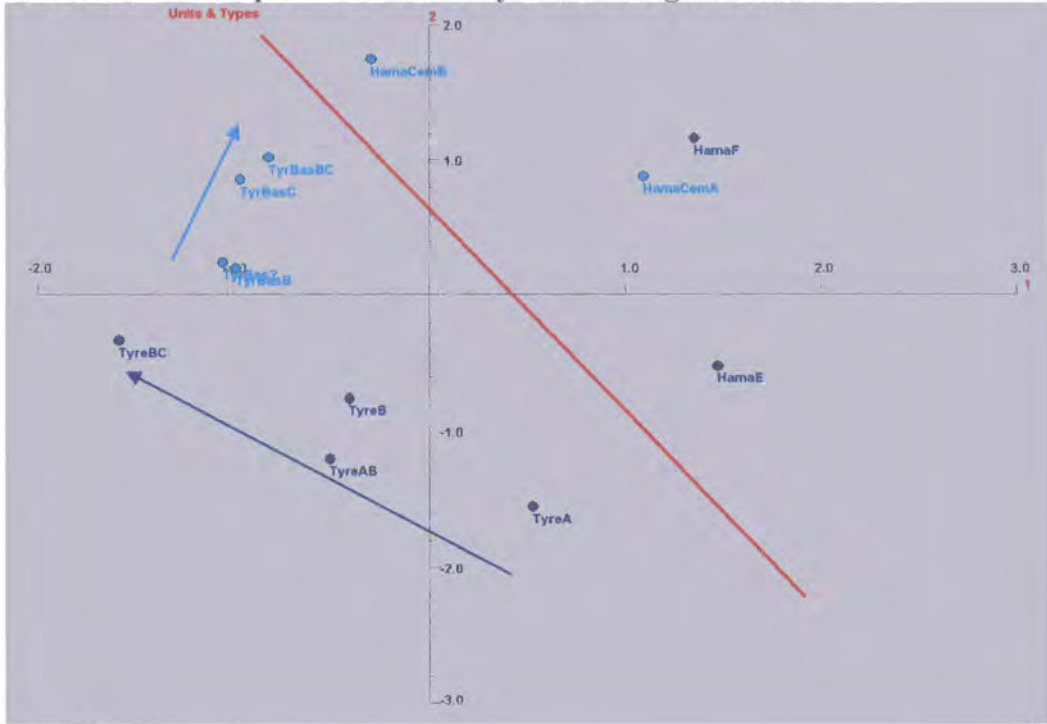


CD: /biplots/Chart807; Chart808.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 15.4%; comp. 2 – 12.3%)

Chart 8.7 maintains the inland/coastal dichotomy (red line) with a comparatively less emphatic division. In other words, material culture may be clearly different between these regions (as depicted in **Chart 8.6**), but the functional differences are less distinct. In **Chart 8.7** cremation assemblages are generally positioned to the left of the y-axis, with inland Northern Levant sites in general located above the x-axis and coastal/southern sites located below. The fact that these assemblages are no longer at opposite ends of the plot implies that, despite variation in specific types of vessels being used, the broad functional categories are similar. Apparently the function of cremation assemblages and, therefore, cremation behaviour, is broadly similar across the study area. Nevertheless, there are some differences. A comparison of the row and column plots reveals Hama's preference for urns and fine bowls, while Tyre-al Bass displays a closer link with kraters, bowls, shallow bowls and jugs. The Yunus cemetery is not associated with any specific functional categories, despite a published typology characterised by kraters (Woolley 1939b). But apart from highlighting the limitations of presence/absence data, these results emphasise the variability of functional categories present in the Yunus cemetery. It is particularly interesting that kraters in **Chart 8.8** are plotted near bowls and jugs: kraters have long been associated with the mixing of wine with water at banquets (Buhl 1983, 126), and their association with bowls and jugs suggest that drinking and/or pouring wine (or the implication of wine drinking equipment) was an important component of cremation ritual, especially within the coastal cremation sites. Patterns are less obvious amongst the inhumation assemblages: of interest is the association of the Akhziv shaft tombs with transport amphorae and dipper juglets. Once again, the early Iron Age inhumation cemeteries of Beth Shan, Megiddo, Byblos, and Khalde are loosely grouped together, but are now joined by the Joya and Khirbet Silm mixed-use assemblages.

Chart 8.9 explores the effects of time on cremation assemblages. Unfortunately, the majority of cremation assemblages are without reliable chronological data: only at Tyre-al Bass and Hama were archaeologists able to isolate specific periods of use within the cemeteries. While the absolute dates for these two cremation cemeteries are not based on reliable evidence, it is the relative phasing that is important for this CA. The Hama and Tyre non-mortuary assemblages are also included, in order to emphasize the difference between mortuary and non-mortuary contexts.

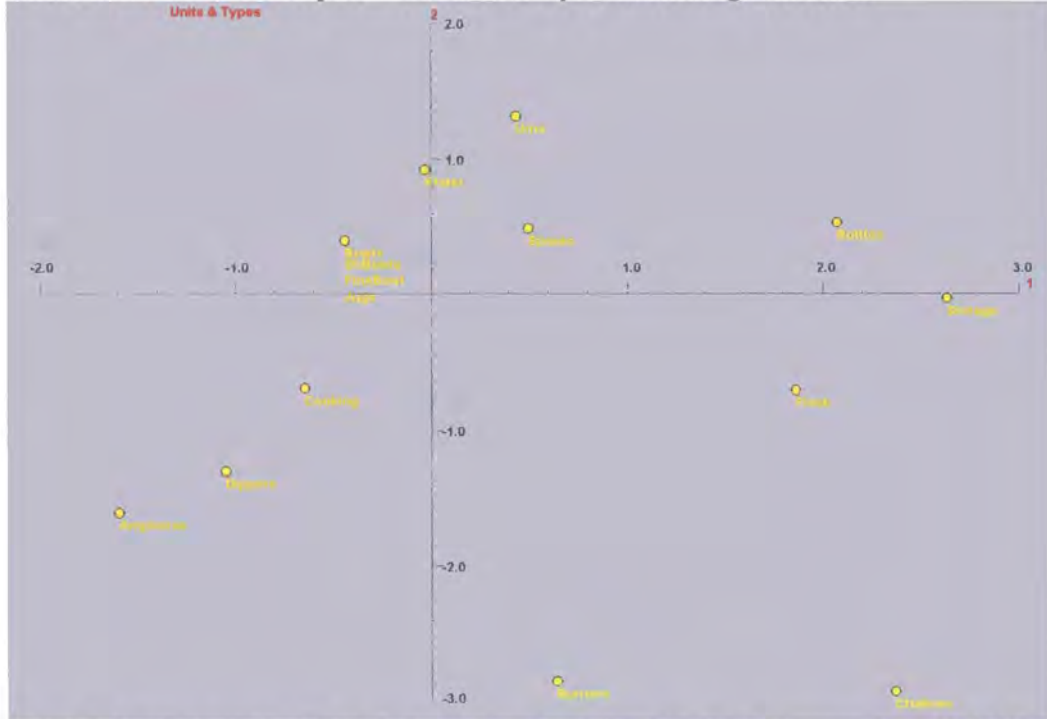
Chart 8.9: CA row plot – Hama and Tyre assemblage function



Legend



Chart 8.10: CA column plot – Hama and Tyre assemblage function



CD: /biplots/Chart809; Chart810.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 33.5%; comp. 2 – 23.6%)

Chart 8.9 implies that a variety of factors have a direct influence on the functional components of an assemblage, and possibly social behaviour. Three of these factors are particularly prominent: context type, geography, and chronology. *Context type*: there is a clear division between mortuary and non-mortuary function in **Chart 8.9**. With the exception of Hama F, non-mortuary assemblages lie below the x-axis, while mortuary assemblages are found above it. *Geography*: there is a clear distinction between the functions of the Hama assemblages (right of red line), and those of Tyre (left). *Chronology*: the ordering of the Tyre non-mortuary assemblages follows a clear chronological progression leftwards (dark blue arrow). The mortuary assemblages are also affected by time, moving upwards away from the non-mortuary assemblages (turquoise arrow). The implication is that cremation assemblages became functionally more distinct from non-mortuary assemblages with time. It is possible that, during the early Iron Age, cremation ritual used ceramic vessels that were functionally similar to everyday vessels. This point is supported by the proximity of Hama F to the Hama Iron I cemetery, though the limited Hama F sample (Fugmann 1958, Fig. 165) warrants caution here.

A few functional trends in **Charts 8.9** and **8.10** are also worth noting: the Tyre-al Bass cremation assemblages are characterised by a distinct combination of jugs, bowls and kraters, while the Hama cremation assemblages are more closely aligned to urns. The Hama cremation cemeteries also contain some jugs and kraters, but they are represented only as a small proportion of the ceramic material, unlike at Tyre-al Bass where jugs and kraters were important. If quantified (abundance) data, rather than presence/absence (incidence) data was analysed, the resulting CA plot would possibly emphasise the differences between these two sites even further.

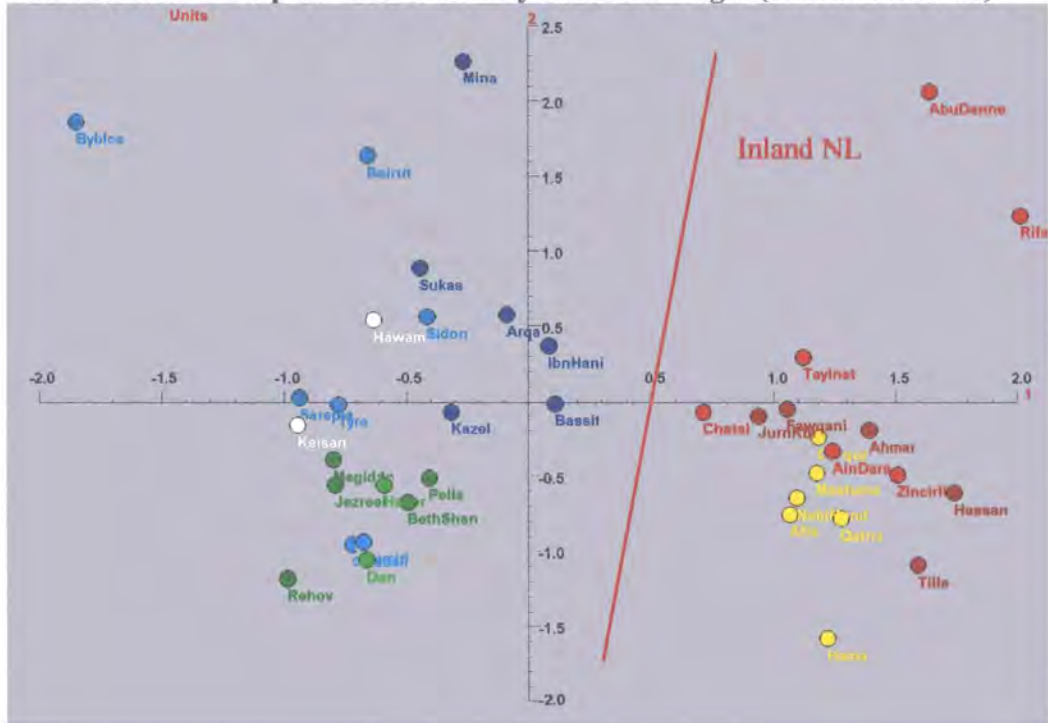
8.2.3.5 Non-Mortuary Assemblages

Following the investigation of mortuary assemblages, the non-mortuary data underwent a series of CA. For this purpose, mortuary data was removed from the database. The non-mortuary data was much more abundant than mortuary and, to avoid getting lost in the detail, was split into smaller, more manageable categories; namely assemblages defined by geography, period, function, and context type.

8.2.3.5.1 General Trends

Chart 8.11 below presents the results of a CA on non-mortuary site assemblages with no chronological, functional, or contextual divisions imposed upon the data: geographic location is indicated through the use of colour. While the resulting pattern resembles that of **Chart 8.4**, the nine geographic zones are better defined here due to the removal of the mortuary data. The main division between inland Northern Levant and the coast and Southern Levant is maintained (red line).

Chart 8.11: CA row plot – non-mortuary site assemblages (outliers removed)



CD: /biplots/Chart811.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 10.2%; comp. 2 – 7.1%)

Legend

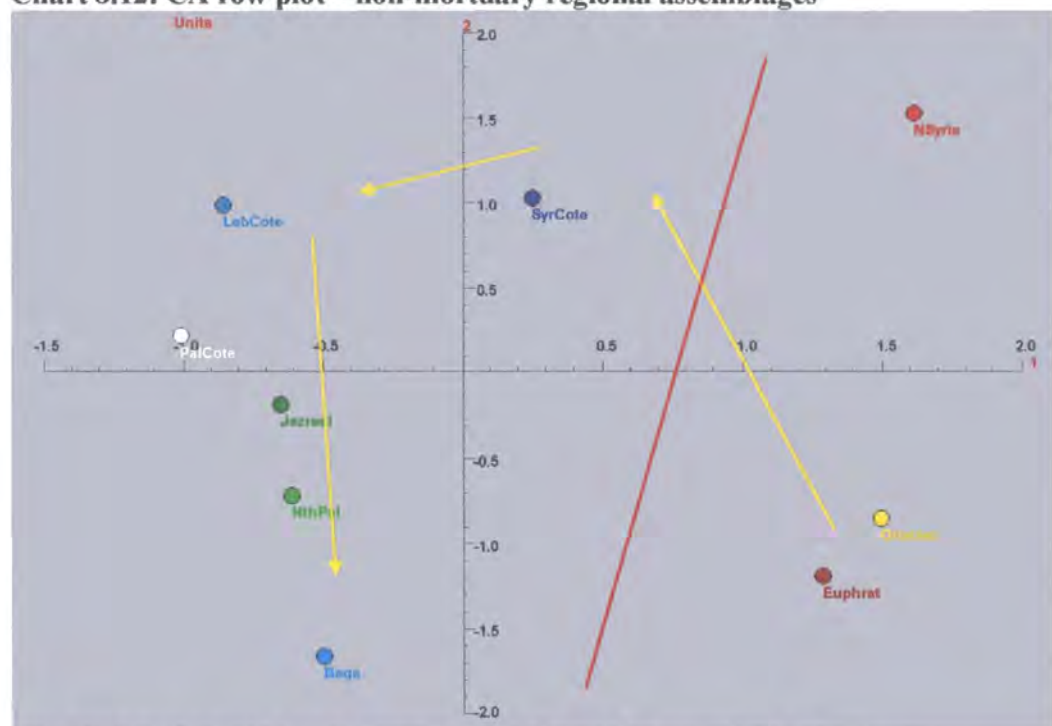
Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

Well-defined clustering in this CA plot has highlighted the geographic ordering of the assemblages. Not only is each of the nine geographic zones reasonably clear but there appears to be some level of geographical progression across these zones. Starting with Orontes Syria, it is possible to trace an arc in the plot northwards toward the Syrian Euphrates, across North-west Syria to the Syrian coast, down the

Lebanese then Palestinian coasts, to the Jezreel Valley, Northern Palestine and finally the Beqa' Valley. This pattern is significant, as it confirms that the inland Northern Levant was culturally a very different entity to the inland Southern Levant and the Beqa' Valley, despite possible overland links.

In an effort to further illuminate this broad regional progression, **Chart 8.12** groups non-mortuary site assemblages together into nine regional assemblages, according to the nine geographic zones used throughout this study. The plotted results clearly confirm the geographic interpretation. The geographic progression evident in **Chart 8.11** is maintained in **Chart 8.12** (yellow arrows), as is the main division between the inland Northern Levant and the coastal/southern zones (red line).

Chart 8.12: CA row plot – non-mortuary regional assemblages



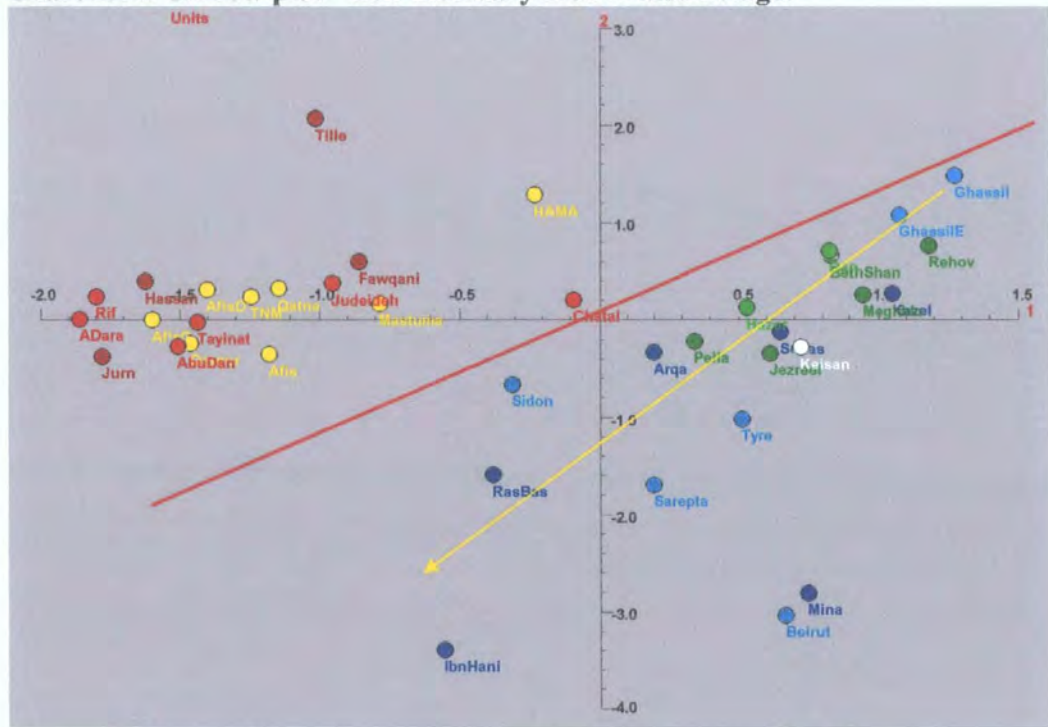
CD: /biplots/Chart812.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 35.3%; comp. 2 – 22%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

Chart 8.14 plots the CA results of Iron II non-mortuary assemblages. Once again, the results are characterised by the clustering of nine local geographic zones, though the coastal assemblages are wider spread than other zones. The inland Northern Levant is tightly clustered on the left side of the plot, and the inland Southern Levant on the right: coastal assemblages are again the link between the two, but the inland Northern Levant group is more removed from the coastal assemblages than the inland Southern Levant group. Hence, the main division in the data separates the inland Northern Levant assemblages from all others. **Chart 8.14** confirms Lehmann's (1996, Abb. 4.4) dual distribution (coastal and inland) of Iron II pottery (Assemblages 1 and 2) in the Northern Levant. However, there are more localised clusters in the data suggesting that the inland/coastal region model might mask some of the more localised cultural patterns. For instance, the Orontes Syria (yellow) assemblages are tightly clustered, implying a well-defined localised cultural profile.

Chart 8.14: CA row plot – non-mortuary Iron II assemblages



CD: /biplots/Chart814.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 10.7%; comp. 2 – 7.7%)

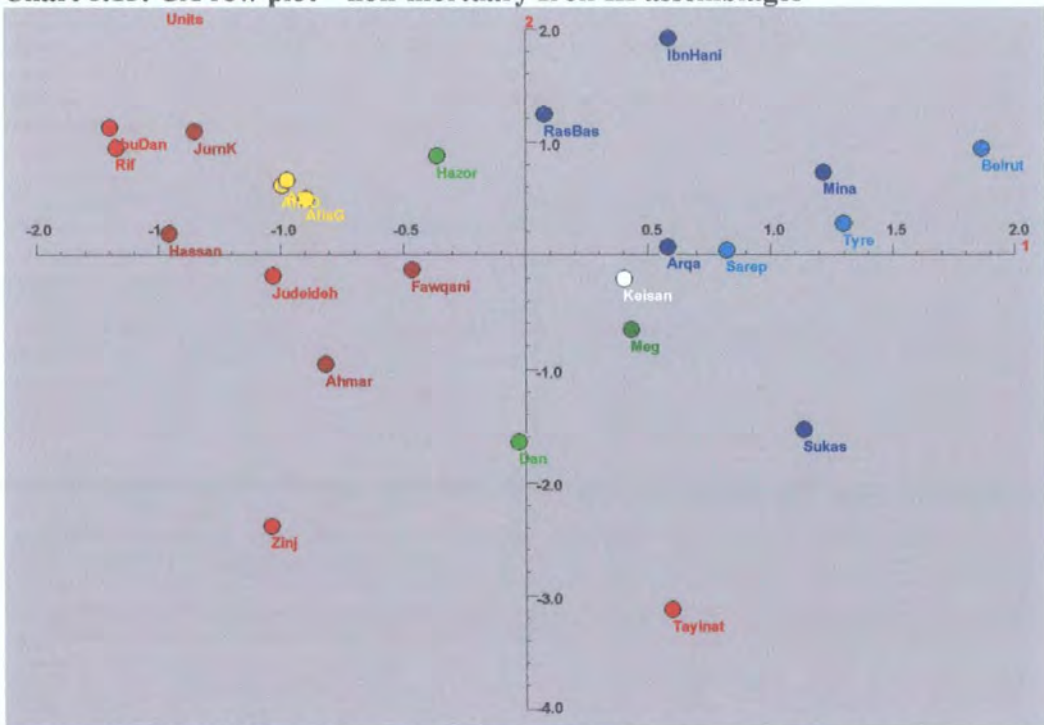
Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

Chart 8.14 contains evidence for geographic ordering of the data. Generally speaking, the right side of the plot, if read right to left (yellow arrow), progresses geographically through the Beqa' Valley, Northern Palestine, Jezreel Valley, and the Palestinian and Lebanese coasts. While it is impossible to explain all patterns in the data, it is clear that **Chart 8.14** is influenced by geographic factors.

Chart 8.15 displays the CA results for Iron III non-mortuary assemblages; it presents a distinct change from earlier periods. Despite fewer assemblages representing the coast and Southern Levant, the most obvious change is the position of the Southern Levant assemblages between those from the inland Northern Levant and the coast: for the first time in the Iron Age, the pottery of the inland Northern Levant was more closely comparable to the Southern Levant than the coast. This change is significant, as it appears to signal changes in pottery production and distribution systems.

Chart 8.15: CA row plot – non-mortuary Iron III assemblages



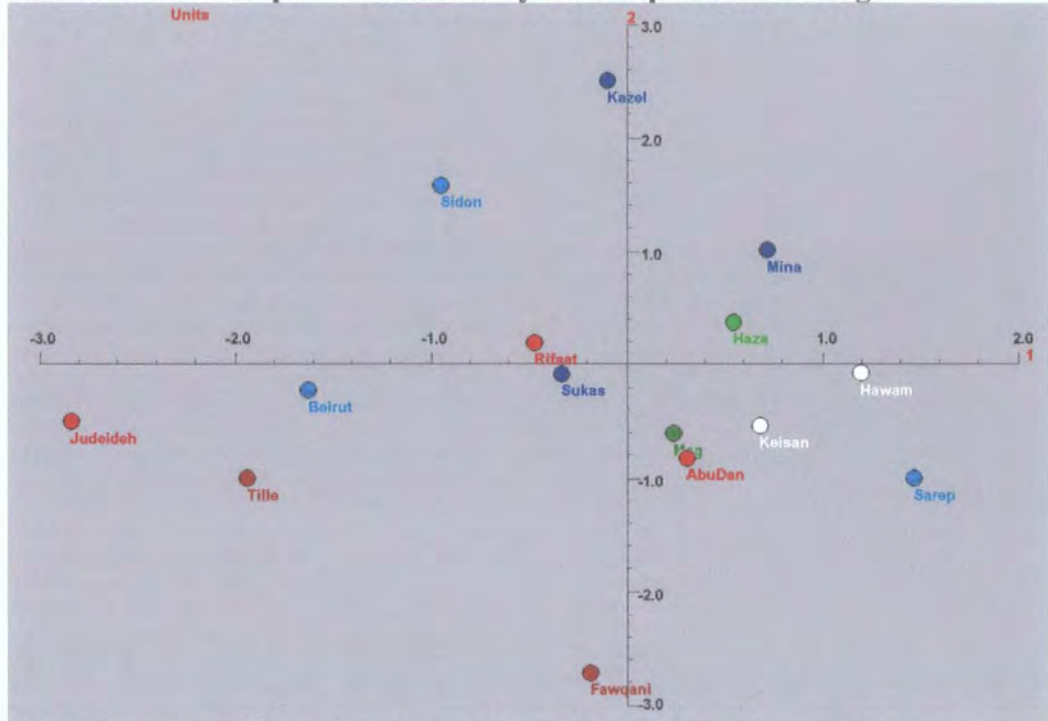
CD: /biplots/Chart815.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 11.6%; comp. 2 – 8.5%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

Chart 8.16 displays the CA results for all Persian period non-mortuary assemblages, though these are conspicuously few. Indeed, the CA plot is characterised by a lack of discernible patterns. The geographical location of a site during the Persian period appears to have minimal effect on ceramic culture.

Chart 8.16: CA row plot – non-mortuary Persian period assemblages



CD: /biplots/Chart816.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 16.4%; comp. 2 – 14.7%)

Legend

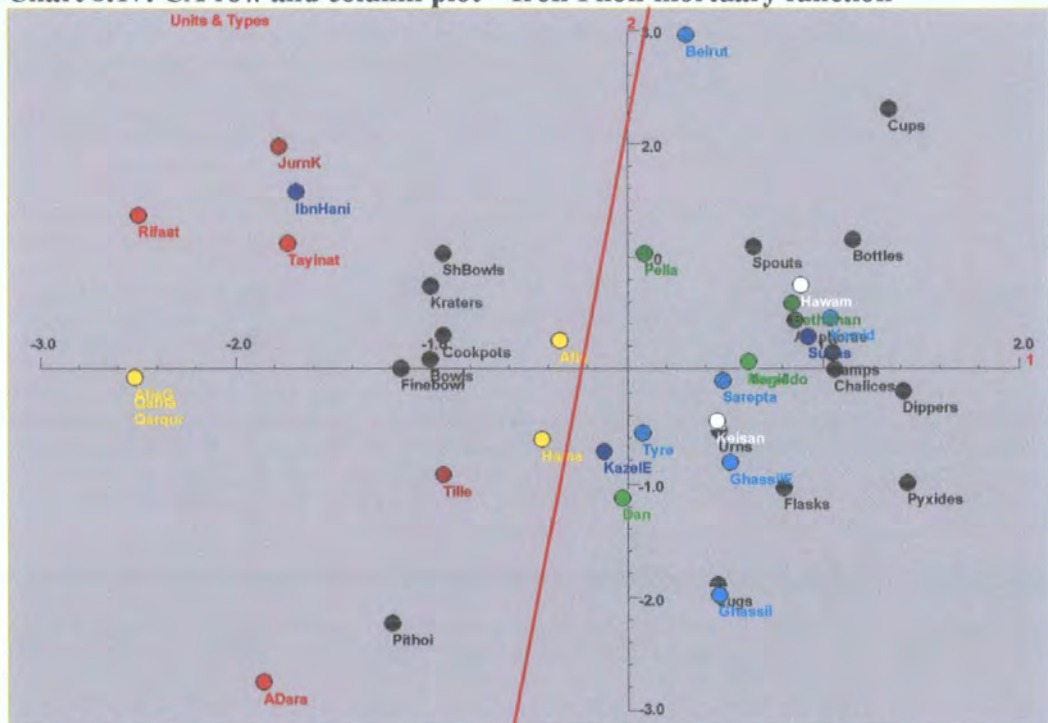
Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezeel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria		

The Persian period as defined in this study is roughly equivalent to Lehmann's (1996, 87) Assemblages 5-8 (his *Eisenzeit III*). Within his distribution analysis for this period, Lehmann (1996, Abb. 4.6-7) identified a complex series of five overlapping areas of diffusion, yet the data for this period is both unreliable and incomplete. For any patterns in this data to be isolated, a number of generous extrapolations are needed. Furthermore, Lehmann does not appear to make any concession for possible differences between mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages in the Persian period.

8.2.3.5.3 Period Specific Function

The above discussion has demonstrated that geography and chronology were significant influences on non-mortuary assemblages. By grouping ceramic types into broad functional categories, this section investigated patterns in function that could be monitored across time and space. To this end, the next four analyses (each Iron Age sub-period) introduced functional categories into the CA data. The resulting row and column plots are superimposed for each period. When a site assemblage is positioned near a functional category, a correlation between the two is evident; i.e. the functional category is a significant component of the corresponding assemblage. **Chart 8.17** displays the CA results for Iron I non-mortuary assemblages according to function.

Chart 8.17: CA row and column plot – Iron I non-mortuary function



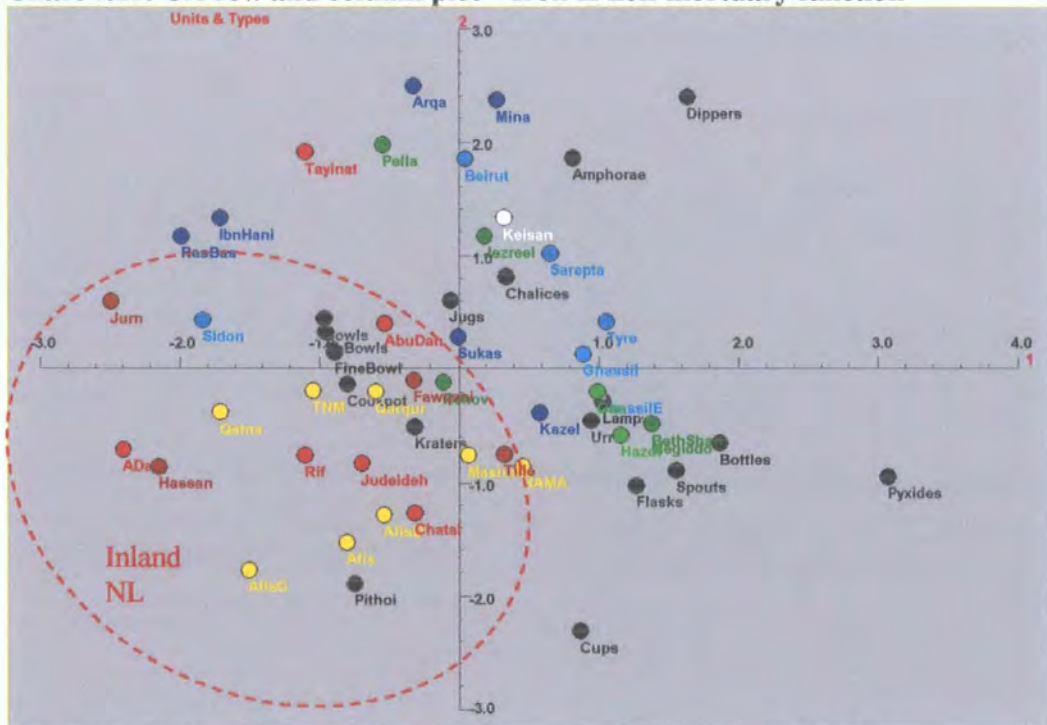
CD: /biplots/Chart817.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 34.4%; comp. 2 – 14.8%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria	Black	Functional Category

Apart from the by-now familiar distinction between the inland Northern Levant (red line - Ras Ibn Hani is an exception) and other zones, **Chart 8.17** is difficult to interpret. Nevertheless, there appears to be a tight grouping of functional categories to the left of the y-axis; this group consists of shallow bowls, kraters, cooking-pots, bowls, and fine bowls. No site assemblages, however, are particularly close to this group. In contrast, the assemblages from the coast and Southern Levant are characterised by a wide variety of functional categories (i.e. transport amphorae, lamps, chalices, dipper juglets, pyxides, bottles, urns, flasks, and spouted vessels), while the inland Northern Levant assemblages are characterised by pithoi. Jugs are only a peripheral category. These patterns raise some interesting questions. What were the sites of the inland Northern Levant using for pouring liquids if not ceramic jugs? Were the possession and/or use of valuable liquids/oils not important amongst the inland communities of the IA-NL? What did coastal sites use if not pithoi?

Chart 8.18: CA row and column plot – Iron II non-mortuary function



CD: /biplots/Chart818.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 20.9%; comp. 2 – 16.1%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria	Black	Functional Category

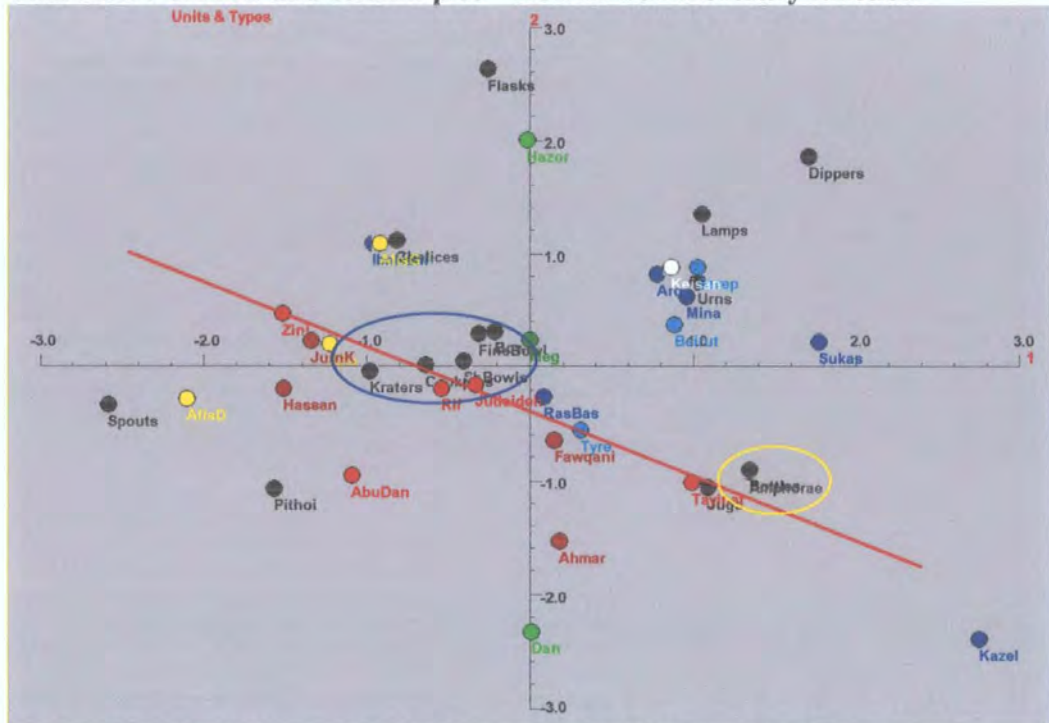
Chart 8.18 displays the CA results for Iron II non-mortuary assemblages characterised by function. Once again the most obvious pattern is the distinction between the inland Northern Levant and all other zones (red line). The majority of assemblages are again positioned around a core functional group, the nature of which has changed little from the main Iron I functional group. Shallow bowls, bowls, fine bowls, cooking pots, and kraters continue to characterise this cluster, though kraters are slightly further removed than previously. In addition to the core functions, the Southern Levant and coastal assemblages are characterised by several functional categories (bottles, urns, lamps, cups, flasks, spouted vessels, pyxides, dipper juglets, amphorae). Some assemblages from the inland Northern Levant are positioned so close to the core group that they are probably only characterised by these functions, while other inland Northern Levant assemblages are associated with pithoi. The conspicuous shift in the position of jugs from the Iron I periphery to near the Iron II core implies that jugs were a more important functional component of Iron II society than Iron I, though less so across inland Northern Levant.

Chart 8.19 displays the CA results for Iron III non-mortuary assemblages according to function. While the ever-present distinction between inland Northern Levant and other areas (red line) is roughly maintained, for the first time in the Iron Age the distinction is not a marked one (see also **Chart 8.15**). For instance, the Tyre assemblage is plotted close to the inland Northern Levant assemblages. Moreover, the Dan assemblage is positioned with the inland Northern Levant group, suggesting a link between Northern Palestine and the inland Northern Levant: unfortunately no Iron III assemblages are known from the Beqa' Valley or the Damascus region, which has prevented exploring this connection further. The Syrian Coastal assemblages are, as usual, well spread across the plot, suggesting the area was not a cohesive cultural unit but one affected by local traditions. In other words, pottery was used in a broadly different manner between coastal sites; though the general lack of non-mortuary data from much of the coast may also account for the diversity.

When the row and column plot are compared, the majority of assemblages are positioned around a core functional group, the nature of which has changed little from the Iron I period. In the Iron III period, the core group of functional elements again includes bowls, shallow bowls, fine bowls, cooking pots, and kraters (blue

circle). This group is positioned closer to the intersection of the two axes than previously, suggesting it represents the average functional profile. In other words, a large percentage of Iron III assemblages are characterised, at least initially, by these functional elements. Pithoi continue to be associated with inland assemblages, but transport amphorae no longer characterise only coastal assemblages (yellow circle).

Chart 8.19: CA row and column plot – Iron III non-mortuary function



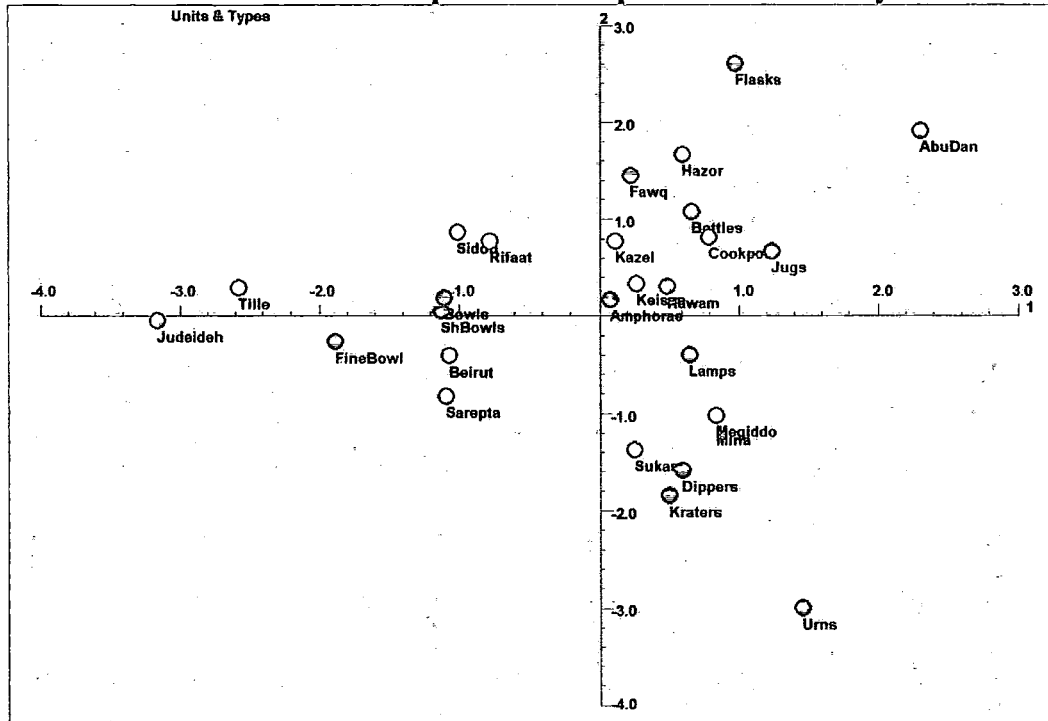
CD: /biplots/Chart819.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 21.1%; comp. 2 – 16.5%)

Legend

Blue •	Syrian Coast	Teal •	Lebanese Coast
Turquoise •	Beqa' Valley	Dark Green •	Jezreel Valley
Green •	Northern Palestine	White •	Palestinian Coast
Yellow •	Orontes Syria	Red •	North Syria
Burgundy •	Euphrates Syria	Black	Function Category

Chart 8.20 displays the CA results for Persian period non-mortuary assemblages characterised by function. No geographical pattern is discernible, despite most regions being represented. However, **Chart 8.20** depicts a marked change in the relationships between the functional categories – no core functional group is evident. Positioned close to the average profile, amphorae alone appear characteristic for this period. The lack of discernible meaning within these plots appears to indicate an insufficient dataset for this period.

Chart 8.20: CA row and column plot – Persian period non-mortuary function



CD: /biplots/Chart820.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 26%; comp. 2 – 20.1%)

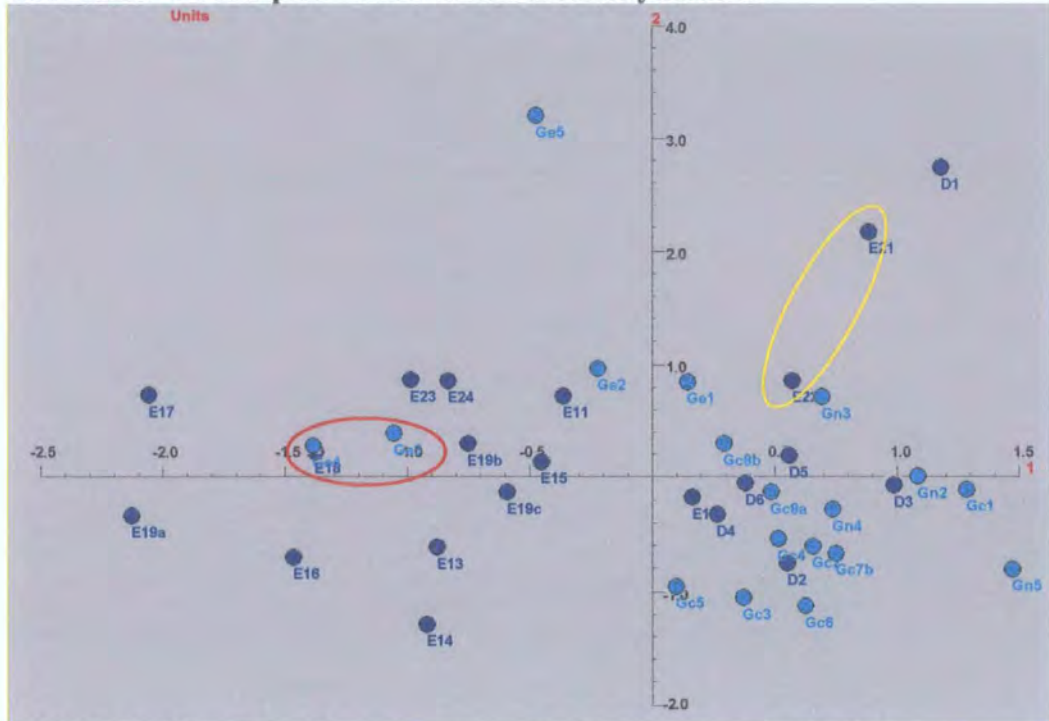
Legend

Blue °	Site Assemblages	Black °	Function Category
--------	------------------	---------	-------------------

8.2.3.5.4 Type of Non-Mortuary Context: Tell Afis

Throughout the above CA study, non-mortuary assemblages have occasionally been split according to differences in context type: elite, domestic, and non-specific mortuary assemblages were expected to be represented differently by the ceramic record. Hence, it was deemed worthwhile to explore these differences further. Unfortunately, only one site has yielded significant evidence for all three context types. As a result, the following CA will focus on the non-mortuary assemblages of Tell Afis, located within the Orontes Syria zone. Comparison of the three main excavation areas of Tell Afis hoped to determine what, if any, differences existed between what the excavators had interpreted as domestic (Area D), elite (Area G), and non-specific (Area E) settlement contexts. **Chart 8.21** distinguishes context type on basis of colour.

Chart 8.21: CA row plot – Tell Afis non-mortuary contexts



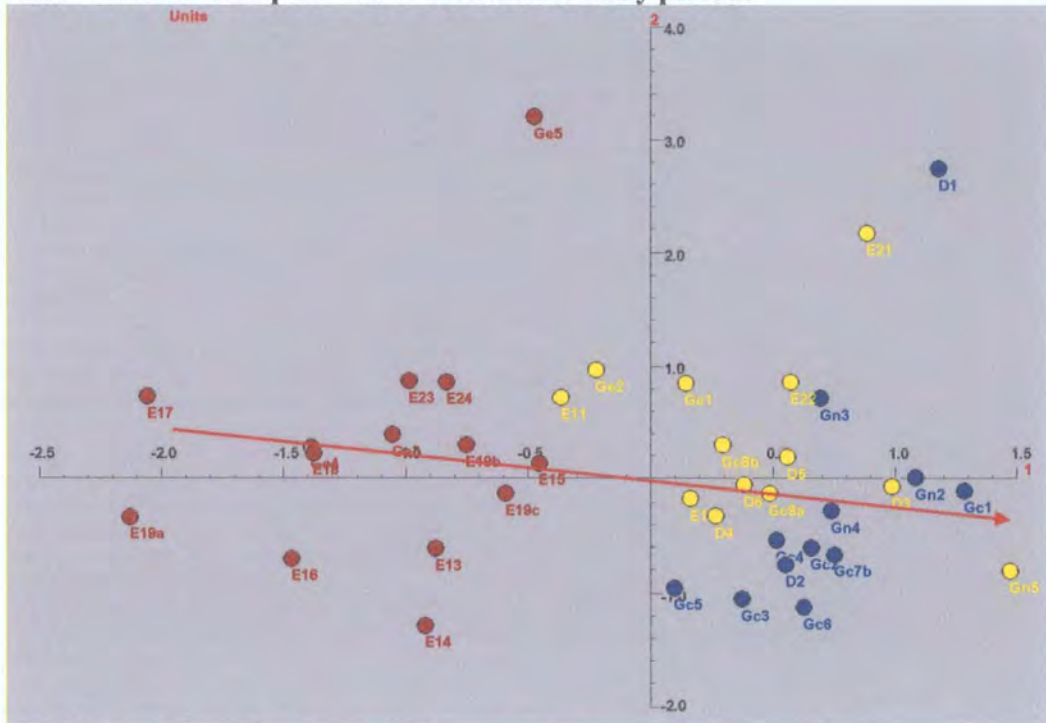
CD: /biplots/Chart821.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 14.8%; comp. 2 – 9.5%)

Legend

Blue •	Domestic	Teal •	Elite
Dark Blue •	Non-specific		

At first glance **Chart 8.21** indicates that there is a general distinction between the three settlement types exposed at Tell Afis. The left of the plot is dominated by non-specific contexts, while the right side is mainly occupied by the elite and domestic contexts. Despite the general trends, a few elite assemblages appear on the left of the plot (red circle), and a few non-specific assemblages are located to the right (yellow circle). “Anomalies” aside, the CA plot suggests that non-mortuary context type is an important factor on assemblages; but this is illusory, the pattern is best explained by chronological factors. This is clearly shown in **Chart 8.22** which ignores context type and codes the assemblages by period. The left hand side is clearly associated with the Iron I period, while the right hand side includes assemblages from the Iron II and Iron III periods; the assemblages that were previously considered problematic are now explained. The plot depicts chronological progression from left to right (red arrow); the non-mortuary assemblages at Tell Afis are determined more by chronological factors than context type. Whether this is true for all non-mortuary site data has not been demonstrated, as no suitable data is available.

Chart 8.22: CA row plot – Tell Afis non-mortuary periods



CD: /biplots/Chart822.wmf (inertia: comp. 1 – 14.8%; comp. 2 – 9.5%)

Legend

Burgundy •	Iron I	Yellow •	Iron II
Dark Blue •	Iron III		

8.2.4 Summary of CA Trends

The above CAs have explored the relationship between different assemblages and have highlighted a number of influences on ceramic assemblages; geography, chronology, function, and context-type (e.g. mortuary and non-mortuary). They have confirmed the presence of a clear division between the coastal and inland regions of the IA-NL, but have also highlighted significant local patterns in the data. Clearly the identification of broad ceramic regions is valid, but somewhat superficial. While CA does not explain the localised patterns, it does identify changes in the patterns over time which can inform interpretation. Clearly, time and space have an impact on material culture: or more accurately, a number of ceramic patterns can be defined according to geographic and chronological constraints. A vessel's function also has an effect; it seems there were geographic differences in the functional “make-up” of ceramic assemblages. For instance, the pouring and mixing of wine were important amongst coastal mortuary assemblages, but less so in the inland Northern Levant.

A final pattern evident in the CA results is associated with the nature of context. In particular, there is a clear distinction between mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages. In addition, there are different patterns within the mortuary contexts according to type of burial; inhumation, cremation, and mixed-use all follow slightly different trajectories. A distinction within non-mortuary contexts, however, is less marked, with no apparent difference between elite and domestic contexts, though this observation is based on the evidence from only one site.

8.3 Cluster Analysis

Cluster Analysis is a generic term for a wide range of methods used to discover homogenous groups or clusters in data. The method expresses the relationships between individual components by measuring the level of similarity and dissimilarity between the components; in this case, ceramic CLASS. Depending upon the nature of the data, the analyst specifies an appropriate algorithm that will group components on the basis of their similarity, or more appropriately their dissimilarity (Baxter 2003, 90-104). There are many ways of specifying the means for measuring dissimilarity, hence many different ways in which a Cluster Analysis might be carried out. The following Cluster Analyses utilise Jaccard's Similarity Coefficient, which is a hierarchical clustering method and is appropriate for binary (presence/absence) data. Without reviewing the entire mathematical structure of this calculation principle, or algorithm, it is sufficient to note that Jaccard's Similarity Coefficient disregards negative matches; i.e. mutual absence is not indicative of similarity (for a more detailed discussion of this principle see Baxter 2003, 94; Shennan 1997, 228-234).

8.3.1 The Technique

The aim of Cluster Analysis is to derive a partition, or a sequence of partitions, of a set of objects based on their similarities to one another, so that objects clustered into the same group can be considered similar in presence. The resulting clustering procedure can be conveniently represented in the form of a tree diagram or *dendrogram*. Interpreting the resulting dendrogram, however, can be confusing. The interpretation of the following *dendrograms* presented below is in no way considered exhaustive, and restricted to patterns of obvious significance. The socio-cultural

implications of the different clusters within the *dendrograms* are discussed in **Chapter 9**. All Cluster Analysis calculations and dendrogram creation were undertaken with the Bonn Archaeological Statistics Package (WinBasp) version 5.43 for Windows using Jaccard's Similarity Coefficient.

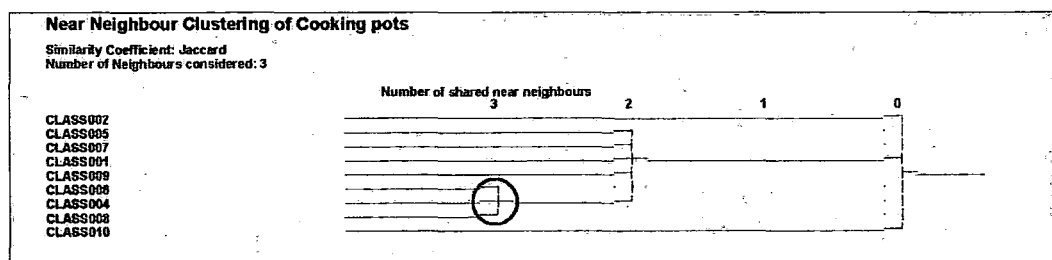
8.3.2 Analysis

Cluster Analysis was considered an attractive analytical tool within this study because its focus on single ceramic categories complements that of Correspondence Analysis which explores the relationship between collections of units or types (whole assemblages). Unfortunately, the multivariate nature of the dataset resulted in a single *dendrogram* that was large and unmanageable. For this purpose, the dataset was split into more manageable components, and a *dendrogram* produced for each sub-set. As a result, the following discussion begins with an analysis of the main ceramic functional categories (i.e. cooking pots; amphorae; pithoi; urns; kraters; jugs; bottles; bowls) before investigating the relationships across these categories within mortuary and non-mortuary contexts.

8.3.2.1 Cooking-pots

The cooking-pot dendrogram indicates that there is not much clustering of cooking-pot classes. There are two outliers in the data, CLASSES 010 (baking trays) and 002, and only one small group: CLASSES 004, 006, and 008 derive from the Southern Levant and coastal Lebanon (**Maps 10; 11; 13; 14**). This single group, however, is only one neighbour removed from most other cooking-pot classes, and is, therefore, not overly distinct. The general lack of clustering implies that within the majority of contexts one cooking-pot class was used, rather than a collection of classes. This does not, however, infer any geographic limits on each class.

Dendrogram 8.1: Cooking-pot Cluster Analysis

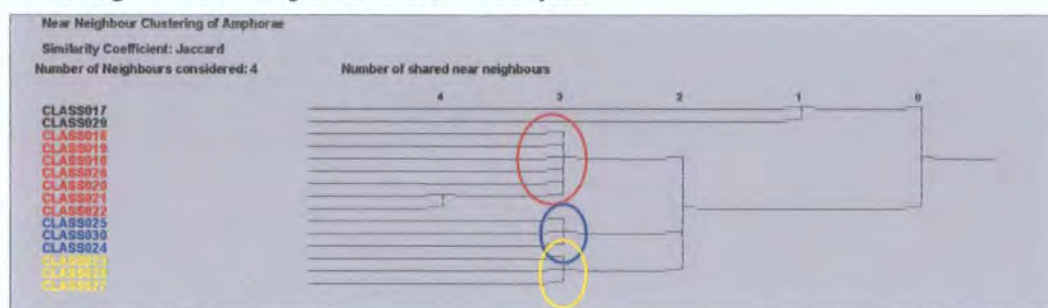


CD/clusters/cooking

8.3.2.2 Transport Amphorae

The amphora dendrogram suggests that there are three main groups in the data with two outliers (CLASSES 017 and 029). The red group is also the broadest, incorporating CLASSES 016, 018, 019, 020, 021, 022, and 026. This group occurs across the study area except inland Northern Levant (**Maps 17-20**). The small subgroup of CLASSES 021 and 022 implies there is little reason to distinguish between these two similar forms in the dataset. The blue group consists of CLASSES 024, 025, and 030, which are also generally restricted to coastal areas but appear mainly in the Iron II-III periods (**Maps 21; 22**). The few amphorae known from the inland Northern Levant are associated with the yellow cluster characterised by CLASSES 023, 027 and 028 (**Maps 27; 28**).

Dendrogram 8.2: Amphora Cluster Analysis



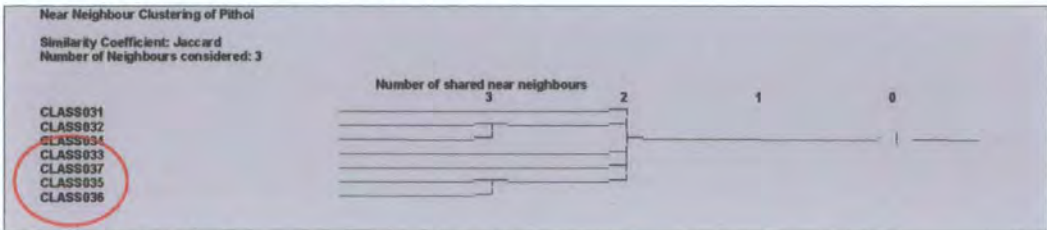
CD/clusters/amphorae

The majority of amphora CLASSES occur in the Southern Levant and coastal regions, but not the inland Northern Levant. It is interesting to note that of the few amphorae known from inland Northern Levant, the most commonly encountered are elongated in form and undecorated (e.g. CLASSES 024 and 028). What is the significance of this? Are these vessels easier to carry overland?

8.3.2.3 Pithoi

The pithos dendrogram suggests little clustering of pithos classes. Apart from two small groups (032 and 034 – from the early IA-SL; 035 and 036 from the early IA-NL), each CLASS is as similar to the other pithoi classes as they are dissimilar. Nevertheless, the CLASSES in the top of the dendrogram are generally associated with the inland Southern Levant, while the lower CLASSES are associated with the Northern Levant (circled).

Dendrogram 8.3: Pithos Cluster Analysis

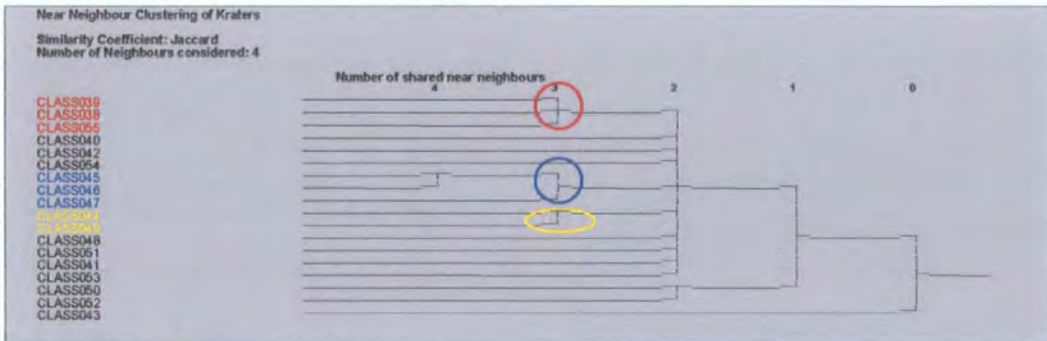


CD/clusters/pithoi

8.3.2.4 Kraters

The krater dendrogram suggests that there is minimal clustering of krater classes. There are three outliers in the data; CLASS 043 is a late Iron Age krater, while CLASSES 050 and 052, grouped together, are unique to the Jerablus region. Nevertheless there are three small groups in the data. The first (red) group consists of CLASSES 038, 039, and 055, generally associated with the Southern Levant (e.g. **Map 31**). The second (blue) group consists of CLASSES 045, 046, and 047 and derives primarily from Lebanese mortuary contexts (e.g. **Map 35**). CLASSES 044 and 049 form a small third (yellow) group.

Dendrogram 8.4: Krater Cluster Analysis



CD/clusters/kraters

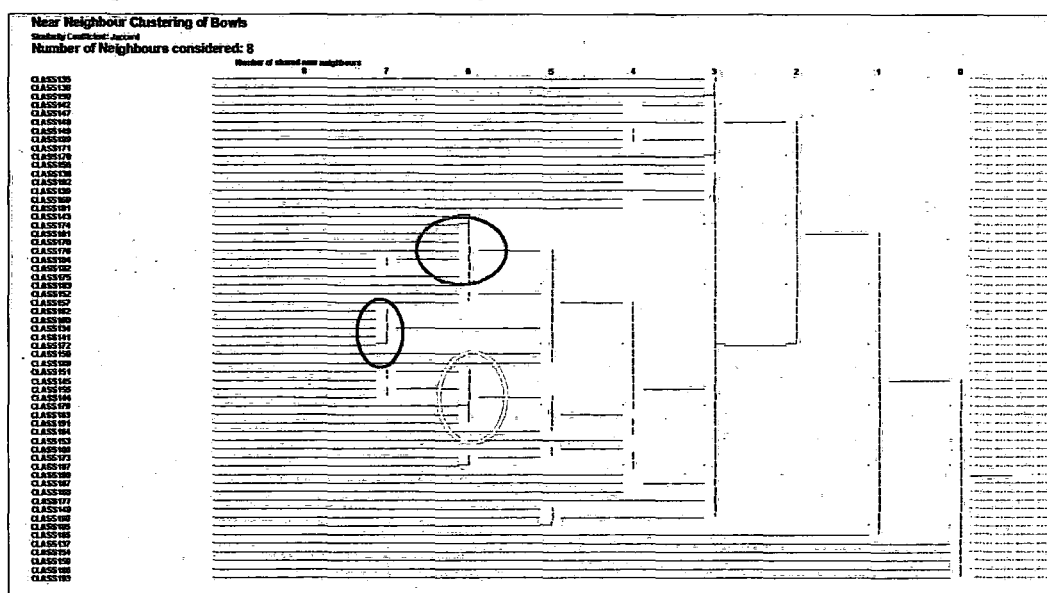
8.3.2.5 Urns

The urn dendrogram has two outliers; CLASSES 063 and 065 occur at only one mortuary site each. The remaining urns appear to be characterised by two small clusters (058 and 062 - red; 060 and 061 - blue) and two separate CLASSES (057; 059). No pattern is immediately discernible in the urn category, possibly due to their limited number throughout the study area (**Chart 5.5**).

8.3.2.7 Bowls

The dendrogram for bowls is both large and confusing and is reproduced here only to demonstrate the main groupings; the reader is referred to the appended CD for a more detailed inspection. While the large dendrogram makes bowl analysis difficult, a few clusters are apparent. The red group consists of CLASSES 143, 161, 170, 174, 175, 176, 182, 183, and 184, primarily shallow bowl rims and fine bowl rims. The blue group consists of CLASSES 134, 141, 160, 162, and 172, the most abundant bowls within the study (**Chart 5.9**). It seems that their over abundance has created an artificial cluster. Finally, the yellow group consists of CLASSES 144, 145, 151, 155, 163, 179, and 191, and largely derives from coastal mortuary assemblages (e.g. **Maps 69-73; 83; 89**).

Dendrogram 8.7: Bowl Cluster Analysis



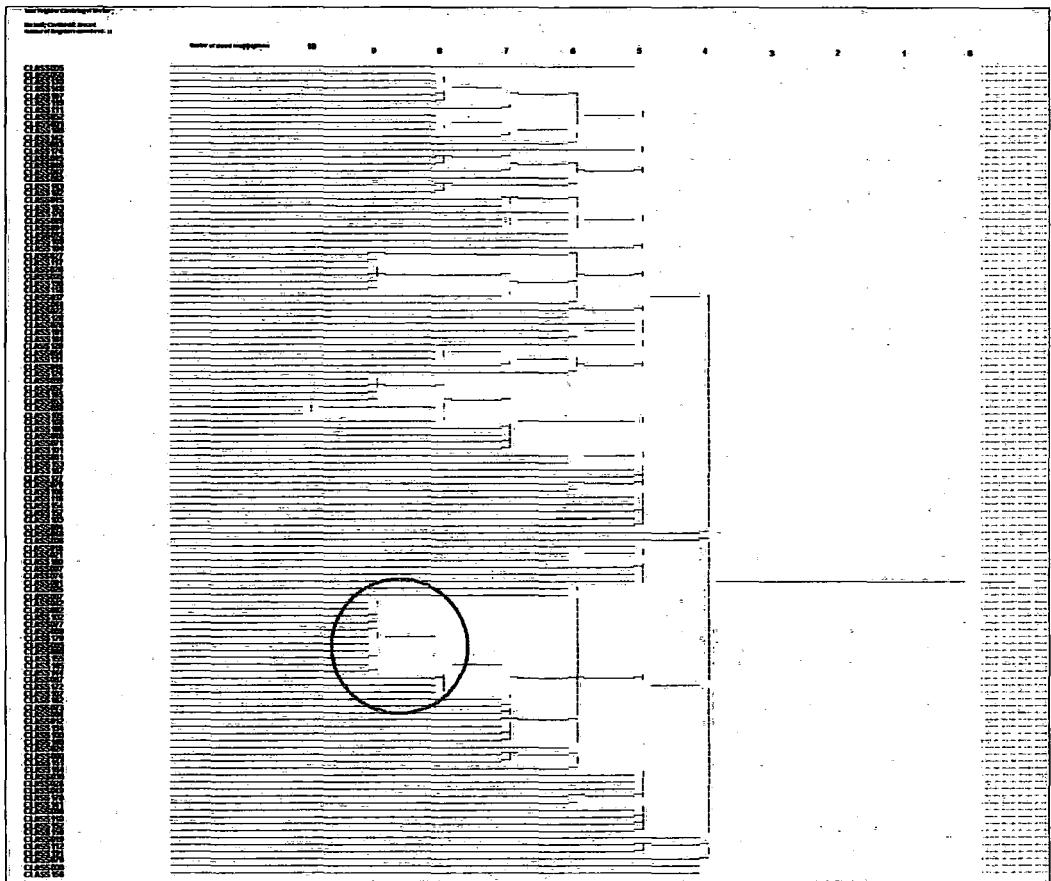
CD/clusters/bowls

8.3.2.8 Mortuary and Non-Mortuary

The segmentation of the data above greatly eased dendrogram analysis, but it also prevented an understanding of clusters across functional classes. In other words, by only comparing pithoi with pithoi, the relationship of pithoi with other categories, e.g. bowls or amphorae, was not explored. For this purpose, Cluster Analyses were undertaken for mortuary and settlement contexts. The size and complexity of the two resulting dendrograms argued against their inclusion here, though the mortuary dendrogram is included over the page (both dendrograms are included on the

appended CD - /clusters/mortuary; */settlement). The complexity of these dendrograms also meant that the relationships were difficult to decipher. Nevertheless, the mortuary dendrogram presents one well-defined cluster of ceramic vessels, all of which are characteristic of coastal mortuary contexts (**Chart 7.58**). This group consists of the CLASS 042 krater, CLASS 077, 082, 085, 088, 090 jugs, CLASS 102 flasks, and CLASS 144, 145, 155, and 179 bowls. An equivalent assemblage is not evident amongst inland or settlement contexts. This implies that mortuary ritual on the coast rigidly prescribed a “set” of ceramic vessels.

Dendrogram 8.8: Mortuary Assemblage Cluster Analysis



8.4 Summary

This chapter has employed two statistical techniques designed to visually depict the multivariate ceramic relationships in the large database created for the present study. The first technique, Correspondence Analysis, explored the relationship between different assemblages, different contexts, and between assemblages and contexts.

The second, Cluster Analysis, presented the relationship only between specific ceramic forms. While Correspondence Analysis and Cluster Analysis are complementary statistical techniques for the investigation of incidence data, they do have limitations. On the one hand, the CA plots are appropriate for isolating only general trends in the data, and cannot be used to draw specific inferences: there is a danger of over-interpretation.¹ Cluster Analysis, on the other hand, can produce more specific relationships in the data, but with such a large dataset as is being negotiated here, the high level of detail tends to obscure the more general patterns. In other words, there is a danger of not being able to ‘see the forest for the trees’. Consequently, the results outlined in this chapter were used in conjunction with the exploratory data analysis in **Chapter 7** to inform and direct the interpretation presented in **Chapter 9**.

¹ The author would like to express his gratitude to Prof. Mike Baxter and Dr Andrew Millard for their comments and guidance with regard to the above CA results and their interpretation.

SECTION FOUR

An Alternative Reconstruction for the Iron Age Northern Levant

CHAPTER NINE

Ceramics and Identity in the Iron Age of Syria

Material culture and pottery provide not an exclusive but certainly an important clue for understanding economic trends and social behaviour...Ecological, economic and social frontiers were an essential feature of this scenery; their changes and alterations over the long term resulted in a fluctuation of regional patterning which had an effect on pottery production and distribution (Mazzoni 2000c, 139).

9.1 Introduction

Section I of the current study (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) has highlighted a number of problems associated with the idea that the distribution of Iron Age pottery was, to a large extent, determined by two “historical” factors; ethnicity and chronology. Furthermore, an almost exclusive focus on artefact typology in recent ceramic studies has meant that intra-regional variability has not been considered an important research question. The aim of this chapter is to offer alternative explanations for material culture patterning other than that extracted from the historical narrative. These explanations are based on subtle similarities and dissimilarities in the data that were observed and explored throughout Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

As discussed in Chapter 4, material culture is a dynamic medium by which social agents are potentially able to negotiate, uphold and challenge a multitude of different social identities, both individual and collective. Material culture can be viewed and used differently according to context, social convention, and individual choice. Chapters 2 and 3 have demonstrated that current interpretations of the IA-NL do not adequately explore the multi-faceted social dynamics that run much deeper than politico-ethnic concerns. The following discussion aims to transcend description by considering elements of social life evident in the production, function, use, and discard of ceramic culture. These potential explanations are presented without an appeal to the historical narrative.

9.2 Categories of Use

9.2.1 Introduction

A pot's appearance and structure is never dependent on isolated typological choices, but on precise technological responses to its functional or stylistic requirements. Indeed the overall form can be said to be determined by its designed purpose, whether practical and/or symbolic (Orton *et al.* 1993, 28, 217). Hence, elements of shape, fabric, and surface treatment are indicative of certain functions: closed vessels restrict exposure; open vessels display the contents; cooking-pot fabrics need to withstand thermal shock; polished surfaces reduce permeability; and decorative surfaces imply some level of symbolic importance (Faust 2002, 56-60). For this reason, the following discussion is structured according to function and the implied use of the different functional categories.

9.2.2 Transport and Trade

There is a distinct concentration of transport amphorae along the Mediterranean coast and inland Southern Levant (**Charts 7.4; 7.6; 7.10; 7.12 7.14**), a pattern that changes little throughout the Iron Age (**Chart 7.45**). This concentration is in stark contrast to the general absence of these vessels across the inland Northern Levant (**Charts 7.8; 7.16; 7.18; 7.20**). But rather than explain this pattern as an indicator of ethnicity or ceramic regionalisation, it appears to be a direct result of the nature of use of these vessels. In other words, it is their use within maritime trade networks, for which they are intended, that determines the coastal concentration. This is to some degree also affected by geographical factors. The inland Northern Levant was not directly involved in maritime trade because it was not directly linked to the sea, and consequently had little need for transport amphorae; the imposing Jebel Anasariya was an effective barrier between the interior and the coast. The northern areas of the Southern Levant, on the other hand, had reasonably direct access to the Palestine coast via the Jezreel Valley, as indicated by the presence of Cypriot and Greek imported pottery throughout the Iron Age (Clairmont 1955; 1956-1957; Coldstream and Mazar 2003; Fantalkin 2001; Mazar 2004; Waldbaum 1994; Wriedt-Sorenson 1997). However, geography is not the only factor.

Despite the natural barriers between the inland Northern Levant and the coast, few archaeologists would suggest that no trade was undertaken between these two regions. It is, therefore, worth considering what type of products were transported inland, and why these goods were apparently not transported in amphorae. Was it simply that the shape and size of most transport amphorae were not conducive to overland transportation? Or were these amphorae used to transport specific products and goods that were not transported inland? The few transport amphorae evident across inland Northern Levant are usually of a narrow, elongated form (e.g. CLASS 028 – see **Chart 7.19; Maps 27; 28**), which was presumably easier to secure upon a pack animal than the wider, larger and heavier amphorae associated with coastal trade. Indeed, when animals are depicted in Assyrian reliefs carrying goods from the Northern Levant (usually in the form of tribute or plunder), they take the form of bales or packaging, rather than ceramic vessels (King 1915, Pl. XXIII; Parpola 1987, Fig. 32). Similarly, wine or oil, which was commonly transported in amphorae within maritime contexts, is depicted as being transported by people carrying what appear to be animal-skin bladders (Parpola 1987, Fig. 2, 12). Maybe the same products were being transported inland, but within a different container; one that might be less-visible in the archaeological record. Different containers, however, might indicate a different origin for the transported goods, possibly inland from the coast; i.e. a local primary producer of these goods. Alternatively, these products may have originated from the coastal centres, but the size and nature of most transport amphorae prohibited their long distance use with pack animals. Whichever interpretation seems more likely, the distribution of transport amphorae may be as much the result of geography or economy, as the indicator of political identity.

While geography might offer an explanation for the distribution of transport amphorae, it does at times appear simplistic. For instance, explaining the presence of transport amphorae in the Jezreel Valley only as the result of geography misses the strong cultural link that this region had with the coast in other ceramic categories (**Charts 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 8.4; §9.2.5.3**). So the question remains: why was the inland Southern Levant more closely connected with the mid-Levant coast (traditionally referred to as “Phoenicia”), while the inland Northern Levant was not? Is it just a question of geography? Or was there a social “condition” that meant the communities of the inland Southern Levant were more closely aligned with a

Mediterranean lifestyle and its trappings; a way of life that might have been formed through geographic proximity but which had come to represent something more meaningful? This may be reflected in the particularly strong presence of Cypriot and Mycenaean imported pottery in the Jezreel Valley during the Late Bronze Age (Amiran 1969, 172-186).

The use of transport amphorae was not restricted to actual transportation; a number of inhumation burials from the Levant coast also produced these vessels (§9.2.6.2).

9.2.3 Storage

Pithoi were generally restricted to inland contexts of the Northern Levant (**Charts 7.41; 8.18**). In particular, the cigar-shaped “Aramaean” pithos (CLASS 037) was characteristic of the Iron II and Iron III periods for this area (**Maps 29; 30**). The distribution of this functional category is in sharp contrast with the concentration of transport amphorae along the coast (§9.2.2). Broadly speaking, these two categories appear to confirm the inland/coastal dichotomy (Stager’s “Port Power” model? – Stager 2001) that frequently appears in literature on the Iron Age. The few coastal pithoi evident in the database primarily dated to the early Iron Age (**Chart 7.41**). This seems to indicate that the division between inland and coast was less rigid in the Iron I period than in the Iron II period, when the division was stark (cf. **Charts 8.13; 8.18**). These vessels are so large and heavy that they were probably intended only for storage, and not transportation (*contra* Artzy 1994). Indeed, the Balawat gates carry a depiction of Assyrian soldiers transporting a CLASS 037 pithos upon a flat-bed cart and requiring the attention of at least 13 men (Dion 1997, Fig. 19; **Figure 56b**). The fact that many pithoi have been found fixed within the remains of large buildings also argues against their use for transport (Fugmann 1958, Fig. 299). Nevertheless, Late Bronze Age Cypriot pithoi were found on the Ulu Burun shipwreck suggesting that, at least in this period, these vessels were involved in trade (Webb and Frankel 1994, 18). Archaeological investigations throughout the eastern Mediterranean have suggested that pithoi were used for the storage of dry goods (pulses, grains), as well as fruits, oils, wine, water, and preserved (salted) goods (Christakis 1999, 2). Their permanence might also explain the conservative nature of CLASS 037, existing relatively unchanged throughout much of the Iron Age. Their vast size and

permanent placement prevented them from being handled, and rarely needed replacing (*contra* King 1915, Pl. VII). There is also the possibility that such large vessels would have been left *in situ* in abandoned buildings, and later reused.

The fact that these vessels were “hidden” within storage magazines and not handled suggests that they were unlikely to embody significant symbolic messages. Nevertheless, the manipulation and storage of foodstuffs is a social process, and one within which identities and social structures are negotiated (Webb and Frankel 1994, 18-20). The abundance of CLASS 037 pithoi during the Iron II and Iron III periods is significant, not least because it coincided with the use of food and foodways for the negotiation of social identity (§9.2.5). Considering their large size, it is interesting to note that pithoi were rarely encountered in mortuary contexts of the Northern Levant; we might expect them to be ample coffins/cinerary urns (Iron I pithos burials have been excavated at Tel Nami – Killebrew 2005, Fig. 3.12). This lack of mortuary association may be due to their significance in food control strategies, or simply because inhumation was not used in the inland Northern Levant where these vessels are most abundant.

The distribution of the most abundant pithos form within the study area (CLASS 037) is intriguing; these vessels were found only in inland regions of the Northern Levant, stretching from Ain Dara in the north to Tel Dan in the south (**Maps 29; 30**). Pithoi were rare on the coast (**Chart 7.41**). But why were pithoi virtually absent from the coast? Or, to rephrase the question; why did the coastal communities not use pithoi to store large quantities of agricultural products? Is it that they had no need for the storage of agricultural produce? Part of the reason may again be attributable to geographic factors. The Orontes region, for instance, is famous for its abundantly fertile soil, and is today still called the “bread-basket” of Syria. In marked contrast, the coastal regions are desperately short of arable land and are, therefore, less likely to produce significant agricultural surpluses requiring storage. But does this explain why people stored produce? Could the difference between coast and interior be because of cultural differences; one society produced foodstuffs that needed storage, the other imported what was needed. While the coast had a constant influx of different goods, the interior may have been less “connected” to trade networks and instead was required to store local products. This would also explain the presence of

pithoi in areas that were poorly represented by transport amphorae. Of course, the lack of pithoi along the coast does not preclude the use of other storage vessels there; kraters or transport amphorae might have been used for storage, or instead they may have used vessels that are less “visible” in the archaeological record (e.g. wooden barrels, cloth sacks, basketry). Alternatively, if pithoi represent surplus produce, then they may also reflect a certain level of centralised authority that may not be evident amongst coastal societies (i.e. private control of goods – see Webb and Frankel 1994).

Regardless of how we interpret the concentration of transport amphorae on the coast and pithoi across the interior, it is clear that there are a number of different factors influencing their distribution; few of which could be said to reflect ethnic or political identity (§9.4).

9.2.4 Domestic Appliances

Cooking-pots were identified across all zones within the study area (**Chart 7.29**). Many of the different cooking-pot CLASSES experienced a distinct spatial and temporal distribution (the more informative patterns are those for CLASSES 001, 005, 006, 007, 008, and 009). Following the patterning evident in **Seriation 2**, the earliest of these forms is the CLASS 008 open cooking-pot, which was distributed across the inland and coastal regions of the Southern Levant during the Iron I period (**Maps 13; 14**). CLASS 006 and 007 were also found in the Iron I period but, according to the seriation matrix, appear to be slightly later phenomena. CLASS 006 was primarily restricted to the Southern Levant and Lebanon during the Iron I and Iron II periods (**Map 11**). CLASS 007 was also present in both periods, but experienced a broad distribution across much of the study area (**Map 12**). The seriation matrix indicates that CLASS 005 has few early occurrences, but was mainly present in the Iron I and Iron II periods, when it was mostly distributed along the interior of the study area. Probably one of the most distinctive cooking-pot forms in the present study is the CLASS 001 hole-mouth cooking-pot, which is an Iron II-III component of the inland Northern Levant (**Maps 7; 8**). **Seriation 2** clearly confirms that CLASS 009 is a late Iron Age cooking-pot. The above review of cooking-pot distributions illustrates the high level of complexity and diversity within the ceramic

record of the Iron Age. These many different patterns rarely map onto the broad regions depicted in the historical narrative. Instead, they cut across each other and imply that historical interpretations are superficial.

Cooking-pots are often considered a mundane and unimportant component of most ceramic assemblages, yet they too reflect a variety of social behaviours: culinary practice and cuisine; unostentatious declarations of identity; and socio-technological choice of domestic potters, to name just a few. In contrast to pithoi, cooking-pots experience harsh treatment (fire, hot liquids, hurried handling, suspension) and break often; therefore, they need replacing regularly, making them highly sensitive to change. This temporal sensitivity appears to be evident in the earlier seriation analysis. This may explain why there are a number of small but distinct cooking-pot distributions across the study area. One interpretation is that these smaller distributions reflect regional differences in diet and/or cuisine. For instance, the more open cooking-pots of the Southern Levant would allow for greater evaporation of liquids during cooking than their hole-mouth counterparts from inland Northern Levant, while short-necked, flanged cooking-pots were possibly used in conjunction with lids, restricting evaporation even further. As a result, the different cooking-pots may represent different degrees of “wetness” of cooked food, or different types of food requiring different cooking techniques. Access to specific produce, or local tastes and convention may have played an important role in cooking-pot design.

While visible vessels might be seen as holding deliberate symbolic meaning for the definition of social identity (see §9.2.5), the same may be true of the less conspicuous cooking-pots. As much as conspicuous vessels embody self-ascription, domestic production of pottery and/or use of inconspicuous vessels may well embody unintentional, or even intentional, statements of affiliation (Bowser 2000, 231*ff*). Hence, cooking-pots can embody a wide range of social identities, from the subversive to the blatant. For many domestic potters, the only available means for self-expression may have been the form of cooking-pots they produced and/or used.

In addition to cooking-pots, lamps are another often-ignored category of domestic vessel. The predominant lamp category within this study is the pinched-lip lamp (CLASS 012 – **Maps 15; 16**) which is associated with the burning of oil. Pinched-lip

lamps were common throughout the Southern Levant and coastal regions during the Iron I and Iron II periods. They were, however, rare amongst sites of the North Syria and Euphrates zones, but present in Iron II contexts of Orontes Syria. The “northern” absence may reflect different traditions regarding the substance being burnt; i.e. sheep fat would not require the same vessels that the burning of olive oil demands. Additionally, the distribution of CLASS 012 lamps might represent areas with sufficient olive production to make the burning of olive oil viable and, therefore, may be related to climate and farming methods. Alternatively, the use of pinched-lip lamps may be of long-standing tradition with its origins in earlier oil-burning practices (Amiran 1969, Pl. 59).

9.2.5 Conspicuous Consumption

Transport amphorae, pithoi, and cooking-pots are all considered to be generally utilitarian in purpose (i.e. they are designed for specific practical functions). Consequently, painted decoration and Red-Slips were virtually absent within these categories; surfaces were only minimally treated, and fabrics tended to be more coarse than fine (**Charts 7.67; 7.68**). Vessel function encompasses much more than the practical, however, and may include various forms of intentional symbolism associated with specific vessels (MacClancy 1992, 5). From sociological research into the symbolic power of food (cf. Levi-Strauss 1970, Douglas 1975), it is clear that the manipulation of food and drink (procurement, distribution, consumption) is a moral process through which ideologies and social relations are articulated, upheld or transformed. Food is, therefore, both a *product* of society and very much its *agent*, as certain cuisines and culinary behaviours *actively* define individual and social identities (Sørensen 2000, 8). Hence, the consumption of food and drink is closely intertwined with the creation and negotiation of social identity, as too are the accoutrements for their preparation, service, presentation, and consumption. Eating and drinking are also acts of consumption, wherein the significance of the symbolism is incorporated into the body (embodied) or bodies of the individual/s and group (Hamilakis 1999).

The nature of table-wares is that they are visible and, consequently, a potential tool for impressing meaning upon guests within a banqueting and/or feasting context, or

even day-to-day consumption. The potency of dining and drinking symbolism is evident in the frequency by which kings and rulers are depicted in banqueting scenes upon political monuments (see Adachi 1997). Ceramic serving vessels hold deliberate symbolic meaning that communicates particular statements about the host or owner. Such a statement is essentially a declaration of identity, whether economic (wealth), cultural (belonging), ethnic (kin-based belonging), or something completely different. But the symbolic meaning is not only in the appearance of the vessel, it is also in the association this vessel has within the culinary context; with which foods it is associated, how and when it is used, and what it represents, all contribute to its symbolic message. For instance, most burnished Red-Slip vessels appear to mimic expensive bronze equivalents (**Table 9.1**); and while the ceramic counterparts would be less expensive and remain unaffected by recycling strategies, they could have held a similar symbolic significance as the original bronze vessels. Red-Slip vessels appear to be indicative of emulation strategies, wherein the sub-elites sought to acquire social significance through the emulation of distinct elite behaviours.

Since pottery can be used as an agent of social change, ceramic style is affected by tensions between all forms of social categories being negotiated: i.e. male/female, culture/nature, public/private, sacred/profane, belonging/separateness, young/old, single/married, wealthy/poor, free/enslaved, dependent/independent. As the symbolism associated with these high-visibility vessels changes, so too do the vessels themselves. Hence, the decorated pottery associated with the ostentatious display and conspicuous consumption of food and drink is particularly sensitive to change.

As already intimated, conspicuous consumption encompasses a variety of formal and informal behaviours, many of which are unlikely to manifest themselves archaeologically. Two particular forms of display that are attested, and particularly pertinent to this study of Iron Age ceramics from the Northern Levant, are the serving and consumption of food, and the pouring and drinking of liquids (usually wine).

9.2.5.1 Serving of Food

The present study has defined and investigated a wide variety of bowl forms from the IA-NL. The large number of different bowl forms has made it particularly difficult to identify trends; for this reason, only the obvious, general, and most significant trends are presented here. Nevertheless, the very diversity of bowl forms is interesting in itself; especially considering their abundance across inland regions, and somewhat restricted repertoire on the coast.

Within the **Iron I** period, the majority of serving bowls in the Northern Levant are undecorated (**Charts 7.69; 7.72**); forms are generally quite simple and sinuous in profile, with carinations and attachments kept to a minimum (e.g. CLASS 134). In the Southern Levant, however, Iron I bowls could be either undecorated or bear a Red-Slip. If the consumption of food is indeed an important medium for conspicuous symbolism, which it can be, the communities of Iron I Northern Levant made little use of food consumption and culinary behaviour for the negotiation of social identity; i.e. there was little emphasis on the presentation and consumption of food within the ceramic record. In contrast, the use of Red-Slip in the Iron I Southern Levant (**Chart 7.72**) suggests that these communities understood, at least to some degree, the symbolic value of food presentation. This Iron I pattern might change if either the chronology debate in the Southern Levant “re-dates” the Iron I Red-Slip bowls, or the Hama E assemblage proves to be earlier (see discussion following **Chart 7.72**).

During the **Iron II** period, the Southern Levant continued to use Red-Slip serving bowls (**Chart 7.72**). Throughout the inland Northern Levant (not the Euphrates zone) there was a distinct shift in serving wares in this period – bowls became generally much shallower, with larger diameters and higher bases, and were more frequently decorated: Monochrome shallow bowls (CLASS 165 – **Maps 79; 80**) and Red-Slip platters (CLASS 166 – **Map 81**) were characteristic. The Iron II communities of inland Northern Levant west of the Euphrates appear to have placed emphasis on food consumption as an arena for the display or affirmation of social identities and or relationships; it is for this reason that the majority of open vessels (bowls) are decorated in some manner (**Chart 7.72**). The presence of pedestal platters (CLASS 166), used to elevate some foods above others in certain situations, suggests that

some foods held symbolic priority (Sørensen 2000, 112). Likewise, the internal decoration of Monochrome shallow bowls implies that it is the inside of these pots, and their contents, that were meant to be seen. Moreover, shallow, open vessels would not have held great quantities of food; instead they appear to be used for the service of dry foods in a manner that emphasises display, reflecting a high-value foodstuff – however that might be measured. But how does this come about? Red-Slip bowls appear to be a substitute for bronze vessels; the colour, burnish, some shapes, and occasional attachments all suggest a mimicry – for instance, the bone-shaped lug primarily appears on Red-Slip vessels and is remarkably similar to bronze clasps (cf. Matthäus 1985, Tf. 25; Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. 71.15-16). This notion of substitution might explain the general lack of Red-Slip bowls along the Euphrates; either the symbolic use of food manifested itself differently there, or conspicuous consumption was restricted to non-ceramic elements of material culture, such as bronze bowls or basketry.

On the Northern Levant coast, however, serving bowls were few during the Iron II period, generally smaller than those from inland, with minimal decoration. The majority of Red-Slip bowls on the coast were small, thin-walled, shallow bowls that might have been part of drinking sets (**Charts 7.64; 7.67; 7.69; 7.72**) – generally speaking, the smaller the bowl, the more likely it was decorated. The scarcity of serving wares from coastal non-mortuary contexts, however, is significantly affected by archaeological sampling, with very few non-mortuary contexts excavated and sufficiently published.

During the **Iron III** period, the general trends discussed above changed little, though Red-Slip becomes even more abundant throughout all areas of the Northern Levant except the Euphrates (**Chart 7.64; 7.65; 7.72**). The lack of significant change is in contradiction to most periodisations of the Iron Age, which emphasise change in material culture due to Assyrian annexation of the west, as extracted from the historical narrative (§2.7.2). There is a general lack of serving wares during the **Persian period**, which could suggest that either our archaeological sampling is incomplete, or the Northern Levant communities served food in vessels that are not archaeologically attestable; e.g. basketry, wooden or metal bowls. Nevertheless, there is also the possibility that Persian period communities no longer considered

food presentation and banqueting an important means for the negotiation of social categories. The exploratory data analysis suggested a general increase in undecorated bowls during the Persian period, though the dataset is small (**Chart 7.62**). On the other hand, this change in ceramics may reflect a change in political structures. If there were new ways of marking “eliteness”, the ceramic emulation of elite behaviours might also have altered.

9.2.5.2 Drinking

In addition to the conspicuous manipulation of food, the drinking of alcohol is a potent means by which social structures (i.e. identity, power) can be negotiated and enforced (Douglas 1987, 8-12). Alcohol is particularly effective because of its intoxicating and, therefore, liminal qualities (Hamilakis 1999, 40). But drinking is not exclusively a functional adaptation that serves the community by holding it together; it can also incorporate elements of exploitation, competition, coercion, and resistance (Parker-Pearson 2000, 10-11, 27). The power of drinking rituals, acquired through the elements of communal consumption, generosity, embodied pleasure, and intoxication, can transform, mask, or legitimise other less pleasant and more serious forms of power (Bourdieu 1977, 411). In other words, while the serving and consumption of food may embody significant symbolism, drinking alcohol might be considered a more powerful medium because of its “extra dimension”.

9.2.5.2.1 Iron I – Aegean Influence

Much has been written regarding the appearance of Mycenaean-style (sub-Mycenaean) ceramics in the early Iron Age of the Levant. Studies of Northern Levant Iron I pottery have emphasized its Aegean affiliations (e.g. Mazzoni 2000a; 2000c), presenting these influences as either the product of economic exchange, or cultural diffusion through commercial contacts or migration (cf. Badre 1983; Knapp 1998; Larsen 1987b; Sherratt 1998b; Sherratt and Sherratt 1991; 1998). Such approaches are grounded in concepts of production and exchange, rather than in contrasting patterns of consumption and the cultural consequences of international commerce (see Steel 1998; 2002; van Wijngaarden 1999; 2002). An alternative approach (to those of ethnic movement and trade models) prioritises the transmission of esoteric knowledge surrounding the use of intrusive pottery styles. These elements

allow for the element of human agency and choice, and explore changing styles in the context of internal social transformations. The extent to which one culture adopts elements from another and the mode of adoption is dependent on the role that the adopted elements play within the recipient society (Steel 2002, 27). In ceramic studies, little attention has been paid to the role of the consumer, the various contexts in which the consumption of imported pottery took place and the ways in which such pottery was incorporated into the material culture of the recipient societies.

The so-called “Aegean” repertory from the Iron I period in the Northern Levant does not include all forms of ceramic vessels. Particularly noticeable is the general dearth of forms associated with the preparation of food. Instead, “Aegean” influence is evident in a repertory of vessel forms that, during the Late Bronze Age, were associated with drinking (cups – CLASS 188, jugs, juglets, flasks – CLASS 102, kraters for mixing wine – CLASS 052, chalices) and/or funerary activities (pyxides – CLASS 103, and stirrup jars – CLASS 104, for the storage of precious oils and scented unguents – see §9.2.6.1 below) (van Wijngaarden 2002, 13-15).

Imported Late Bronze Age Aegean pottery has been found at over 100 sites in the Levant (Hankey 1967; 1993, 105-107) and appears to have played an important role in drinking and funerary rituals (van Wijngaarden 2002). During the Iron I period, however, the Aegean-styled vessels were primarily of local manufacture (Badre 1983; Dornemann *pers. comm.*; *contra* Bonatz 1998) and are found in significantly lower quantities. Nevertheless, the style and form of the Iron I vessels resemble the Late Bronze Age imports, when Aegean patterns of wine consumption were prominent. Hence, the early Iron Age “Aegean” influence might be best understood as a continuation of local Late Bronze Age culture, expressed differently (local manufacture) so as to adapt to a new reality (lack of access to Mycenaean production).

That the Late Bronze Age Cypro-Aegean imports were associated with drinking or funerary activities is important because it implies that local populations exercised considerable discrimination in the choices they made as to the adoption of specific elements of foreign material culture. This has led some scholars (e.g. Knapp 1998, 202-204; Sherratt 1994b; Steel 2002) to propose a syncretic model of acculturation,

where a cross-cultural drinking behaviour was adopted widely by Late Bronze Age elites of the eastern Mediterranean. Did Aegean drinking sets accompany shipments of wine? Once incorporated into the local setting, imported vessels would then have acquired new uses and/or meanings according to the values of the recipient culture (Howes 1996, 5; Steel 2002, 26). For instance, Mycenaean pottery was closely integrated to local patterns of consumption at Ugarit, where Aegean patterns of wine consumption formed an integral component within the centuries-old *marzeah* ritual, a kind of mourning ritual involving drinking and music (Carter 1995, 300ff; Yon 1987; Yon *et al.* 2000). Indeed, ritual drinking appears to have become an important component of mortuary display in many areas of the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean (Carter 1995; Steel 1998, 290). Hence, the Iron I production is thought to represent a continuation of Late Bronze Age traditions, and *not* new Aegean links (*contra* van Wijngaarden 1999, 22).

Considering the cultural continuity evident in the eastern Mediterranean (§2.3.3), there is little reason to suggest that the meaning of drinking paraphernalia and their use changed between the Late Bronze Age and Iron I period. Generally speaking, the Aegean-style pottery of the Iron I period is a continuation of Late Bronze Age drinking behaviours. The general dearth of Iron I mortuary contexts from Lebanon, where drinking sets were so prominent during the Iron II and Iron III periods, prevents a fuller investigation into the meaning ascribed to Aegean-style drinking paraphernalia within funerary customs. A number of large kraters came from Iron I cremation cemeteries from inland Northern Levant, but these burials generally lacked the accompanying jugs and small cups. While this might suggest that the krater had taken on a different significance within Iron I mortuary contexts, it may instead indicate that mortuary drinking rituals continued, but were undertaken using bronze drinking vessels (Steel 2002; 2004).

9.2.5.2.2 Iron II-III – Red-Slip

The beginning of the Iron II period in the Northern Levant is conventionally associated with the disappearance of Aegean-style pottery and the advent of Red-Slip (§2.7.2; Chart 7.62). This decorative technique was not present within all ceramic categories, but was generally limited to vessel forms associated with the drinking of

wine or the serving of food (§9.2.5.1). Apart from the many small, Red-Slip fine-bowls with round bases that are known across inland Northern Levant (most likely cups), the majority of Red-Slip drinking forms derive from mortuary contexts (**Chart 7.54**). Jugs and kraters were rare in Iron II and Iron III settlement (non-mortuary) contexts of the Northern Levant (**Chart 7.37**). Once again this introduces the question of what category of artefact might instead have performed the function of pouring and/or mixing of wine. Possibly bronze jugs and bronze kraters were used? A number of scholars have suggested that Red-Slip is a substitute for bronze, with its burnished sheen and bright colour mimicking that of bronze vessels (e.g. Braemer 1986; Holladay 1990; Mazzoni 2000a; Steel 2002; 2004). **Table 9.1** lists a number of ceramic forms that have clear bronze parallels.

Table 9.1: Possible Bronze/Ceramic Substitutes

CLASS	Form	Bronze Ref	Context
012	Pinched lip lamps	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 81-83 Gershuny 1985, Pl. 13.133-136	LB-Iron Cyprus LB-Iron Israel/Jordan
042	Krater	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 68	LB Cyprus
082	Trefoil jug	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 71	Iron Age Cyprus
085	Mushroom lip jug	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 70.533	Iron Age Cyprus
107	Beer jug	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 73.552	Iron Age Cyprus
108	Strainers	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 78-80	LB-Iron Cyprus
127	Cup	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 47.454-455	LB Cyprus
144	Small Bowl	Matthäus 1980, Tf. 50.430	Bronze Age Aegean
155	Cup	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 17.298-302	Iron Age Cyprus
157/182	Cup	Matthäus 1980, Tf. 49.414-417 Gershuny Pl. 1-2 Matthäus 1985, Tf. 1-16	Bronze Age Aegean LB-Iron Israel/Jordan LB-Iron Cyprus
160	Bowl	Gershuny 1985, Pl. 2.28 Matthäus 1985, Tf. 18.308-311	LB-Iron Jordan LB-Iron Cyprus
184	Carinated cup	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 31.421-422	Iron Age Cyprus
185	Carinated cup	Matthäus 1980, Tf. 52.445	Bronze Age Aegean
191	Skyphos	Matthäus 1985, Tf. 49.460-464	Iron Age Cyprus

Within mortuary contexts Red-Slip drinking-sets are much more common and complete (§7.5). Hence, it might be argued that ritual drinking activity within a settlement context could have been associated with metal artefacts, but that within a funerary context the society sought a ceramic substitute rather than remove large quantities of metal vessels from circulation (Steel 2002; 2004). The apparent mimicking of metal vessels may indicate that metal artefacts were too valuable to be taken out of circulation by deposition within a mortuary context. Nevertheless,

epigraphic and iconographic evidence detail the rich collection of metal vessels used by Northern Levant communities of the Iron II period: texts and reliefs depict booty taken by victorious Assyrian kings that included large numbers of bronze and other metal vessels (e.g. Budge 1914, Pl. XX.b; King 1915, Pls XIV, XXVI-XVIII, XXXI-XXXIV; Smith 1938, Pl. XLVII; Yamada 2000, 225-272).

9.2.5.2.3 Iron II-Persian Period – Greek Imported Pottery

Greek pottery was an important commodity of the Iron II to Persian period for the Northern Levant (Bonatz 1993; Collombier 1987; Crielaard 1999a; 1999b). Like with the earlier Aegean-styled pottery, these imports were dominated by drinking wares: i.e. two handled *skyphoi* (CLASS 191); amphorae decorated with vine-leaves (CLASS 058); square-handled kraters (CLASS 043) (Crielaard 1999b, 281). Were these vessels replacing the old Aegean styles? The importance of these vessels has been over-emphasised in a number of publications (e.g. Riis 1970), usually with regard to their chronological value (§2.5.3). Their functional significance, however, is often over-looked. These Greek wine-drinking sets might represent the importation of ceramic vessels as products, or the importation of the Greek-style of wine-drinking (*symposia*). Regardless, these vessels are indicative of an importance given to the drinking of wine. The low numbers of such imports (except at al Mina) argue for their specialised and symbolic use by elites, those who might have had access to Greek wine-shipments. Indeed, these vessels were probably more than just an attractive drinking cup, or Greek style of drinking, but may have come to imply the drinking of actual Greek wine, and the status and symbolism that accompanied it.

9.2.5.3 Unguent Containers

As already discussed (§9.2.5.2.1), the so-called “Aegean” ceramic repertory of the Iron I period of the Northern Levant was restricted to wine drinking sets and to small, spouted vessels (CLASS 103 - pyxides, CLASS 104 - “stirrup jars”) which, during the Late Bronze Age, were associated with the storage of precious oils and scented unguents (Hamilakis 1996; Steel 2002, 43). The Iron Age examples appear to have been remnants of the Late Bronze Age fascination with Aegean styles and products (Steel 2002, 32). While these small vessels were primarily found in non-mortuary contexts dating from the Iron I period (**Seriation 1; Charts 7.46; 7.47**),

possibly due to a lack of Iron I mortuary contexts on the Mediterranean coast, in the Late Bronze Age unguents were clearly related to funerary ritual. At Late Bronze Age Tell el-Ajjul, for instance, the Mycenaean “stirrup jar” was found foremost in mortuary contexts (Steel 1998, 294-295; 2002, Figs 5-6), which reflects its original use as a common funerary gift in indigenous Late Bronze Age Aegean contexts (Mountjoy 1993, 127).

During the Bronze Age, perfumed oils were used in the Aegean to anoint the deceased and, therefore, played a central role in funerary ritual (Hamilakis 1999, 47, 49). Epigraphic and archaeological evidence suggests that the treatment of the body with oil or libations was also an integral element of funerary ceremonies at Late Bronze Age Ugarit (Ginsberg 1969b, 154; Kinet 1981; Salles 1995, 176; van Wijngaarden 2002, 71) and possibly Cyprus (Keswani 1989, 59-60). In the IA-NL, however, the ceramic record indicates that “stirrup jars” and pyxides were only rarely being used within funerary ritual, signalling a change in the symbolism and/or functional use of these vessels (**Charts 7.54; 7.55**). It is commonly accepted that the Late Bronze Age circulation of “stirrup jars” reflects the trade of Mycenaean perfumed oil (Baker 2006, 1; Steel 2002, 39), which has led to the conclusion that these vessels were closely associated with their contents. The fact that these Mycenaean-styled vessels were being made locally in the Iron Age might be indicative of limited access to the associated oils and unguents. Nevertheless, these vessels may have still symbolised the exotic products without having to actually hold them. Their importance as signifier had probably equalled the importance of the signified, so much so that the contents were no longer necessary for the desired message to be conveyed; i.e. the Aegean style was symbolic of wealth and luxury (van Wijngaarden 2002, 71-72). As a result, their original use appears to have been largely forgotten in the IA-NL. In the IA-SL, however, where pyxides and “stirrup jars” *are* found in inhumation contexts (**Charts 7.50; 7.51**), the anointing of the body with unguents and perfumed oils continued to be an important element in funerary ritual (Dayagi Mendels 1993, 130). The change in use of these vessels across the Northern Levant may be indicative of the form of burial being used. For instance, cremation was the dominant mortuary ritual in the IA-NL, which would have left no body available for anointing (**Chart 7.50 7.51; 7.52**). The northern regions of the Southern Levant instead used inhumation wherein the body could still be treated.

During the Iron II and Iron III periods in the Northern Levant, perfumed oils and unguents appear to have been associated with small jugs (e.g. CLASS 084) and bottles (e.g. CLASS 119), though once again they were only occasionally associated with mortuary contexts (**Charts 7.54; 7.55**).

9.2.6 Mortuary Assemblages

One fifth of all incidents in the database within this study derive from mortuary contexts (**Chart 5.1**), with a particularly large portion of these being located within the Palestine and Lebanese coasts (**Chart 7.50**). Despite the wide variety of mortuary assemblages within the present study, archaeologists have consistently interpreted the ceramic “grave goods” as passively reflecting different aspects of essentially two phenomena; first, as the treasured possessions of the dead intended for their use in the afterlife; second, as faithful reflections of the status of the dead person according to a regular system of rules (e.g. Aubet 2004b, 449ff; Baker 2006, 1; Doumet 1982; Doumet-Serhal 2003a; Keswani 2004, 6-7; Saidah 1966; 1977; see Campbell 1995, 29-30). While these approaches might attempt to isolate the symbolic meaning of material culture, they ignore the active role that mortuary assemblages play within the realm of the *living*, incorporating statements of those who use the burial of a group member consciously or subconsciously to proclaim their own social identity and place within society (Morris 1987, 38-42; Parker Pearson 2000, 3). From this perspective, the goods are viewed as carrying current social significance and not only as products for the deceased or reflections of social organisation. Mortuary assemblages, therefore, are likely to embody a whole complex of ideas about social structures (Morris 1987, 38-39), often not coherently formulated and even potentially contradictory.

When working with mortuary data, it should be remembered that mortuary assemblages may only represent a portion of the population, and that it is possible a section of the community was socially excluded from using archaeologically detectable types of burial (Dickinson 2006, 174-175; Morris 2000, xxviii; *contra* Snodgrass 1980b, 21). Furthermore, the “grave” itself preserves only the material residue of burials rather than the totality of rituals associated with the funeral (Hall 1997, 130; Parker Pearson 2000, 5). Rituals of mourning, funerary procession, actual

burial, secondary rituals around the deceased, and the observances at the grave on later occasions, could all well have offered a better field for making social distinctions than the grave's layout and contents. The location of the burial in relation to the inhabited landscape and to other graves may also have held considerable significance (Dickinson 2006, 178).

9.2.6.1 Drinking within Mortuary Contexts

Within mortuary contexts of the IA-NL, there is a clear emphasis on ceramic forms associated with wine drinking (e.g. kraters, jugs, and small bowls). During the Iron I period, few mortuary assemblages have been identified (**Chart 7.51**). Nevertheless, there is a clear difference in the early Iron Age between the cremation cemeteries of inland Northern Levant (e.g. Jerablus, Hama) and the inhumation cemeteries of the coast (e.g. Khalde, Akhziv).

At Jerablus and Hama the emphasis was on kraters and urns, both of which were used to contain the cremated remains of the deceased. Both forms were also associated with wine drinking; the krater for mixing, the urn for storing. These cinerary containers were usually decorated in a mix of Monochrome motifs that find parallels within Aegean (e.g. wavy line – *cf.* Bonatz 1993, 134-135; Buhl 1983, Fig. 16.281; Dikaios 1969, Pls 69.40; 76.11-13, 15, 17) and/or Anatolian contexts (e.g. full-pointed stag – *cf.* Akurgal 1955, Figs 1-9; Fugmann 1958, Fig. 188(5A842); Woolley 1939b, Pl. 13.11). What is most interesting, however, is the general lack of other wine-drinking equipment within the ceramic repertory; jugs, juglets, flasks, and cups are rare amongst the mortuary assemblages from both sites (**Appendix C**). There are many possible explanations. Did these communities use drinking sets made from materials other than pottery? Was wine drinking not an important component of funerary ritual at these sites? Wine-drinking sets simply may have not been deposited in cremation burials because of cultural or economic reasons. Regardless, this is in sharp contrast with the Iron II and Iron III cremation contexts of the coast, where wine-drinking sets were an important consideration. Had the kraters and urns, like the “stirrup jars” and pyxides on the coast, taken on a symbolic importance different to their original purpose?

No Iron I cremation cemeteries are known from the coastal regions (**Chart 7.51**; though Tell Sukas has published evidence of Late Bronze Age cremation – Riis 1961, 140-141). Instead, inhumation was the rule at Khalde and Akhziv, where small liquid containers/pourers (“pilgrim” flasks and dipper juglets) and serving bowls were found in abundance during the Iron I period (**Appendix C**). Hence, the emphasis was apparently on both wine *and* food. Funerary meals are known in the Levant from epigraphic and pictorial evidence from throughout the Bronze Age (Pinnock 1994, 21-24; Pl. VI-IX). Ugarit’s archives make frequent mention of the *marzeah*, a kind of ancestral mourning ritual involving drinking and music, as well as food (Carter 1995, 300ff; Ginsberg 1969a; 1969b; Healey 1995, 189-190). The *marzeah* was a long-established tradition in the Levant, evident from the Late Bronze Age to the late Iron Age and into the Roman period (Carter 1995, 303-304). These funerary meals were not only associated with the burial event, but were periodically “re-enacted” as a means for remembering and connecting with the deceased. The locale of the ritual is not clear, but the high concentration of serving-bowls and dipper juglets in single burial contexts at Akhziv suggests it was undertaken near or in the tomb/burial, with the accoutrements of the meal being deposited with the deceased. The symbolism of these rituals is also not clear. Was the funerary meal considered a form of nourishment for the living and departed, wherein the link between the two could be emphasised? Funerary stele from Nayrab and Zincirli depict the deceased partaking of the funerary meal (**Figures 55; 56a**). Or was it a mnemonic device for refreshing memories of the dead within the minds of the living? (Chesson 2007, 122). Nevertheless, the communal nature of these secondary rituals, and the frequency of their repetition would have provided community members with ample opportunities to assert, negotiate, or undermine different social structures, some of which may have had little real relevance to the deceased. In other words, the deceased continued to act as social agent within the community of the *living*, long after their departure from that community.

During the Iron II and Iron III periods, there is little discernible change within the cremation assemblages of inland Northern Levant. Within the inhumation assemblages of the Northern Levant coast, however, the Iron II period witnessed an increase in jugs, kraters, cups, flasks, and bowls, all indicating a continued emphasis on the role of wine *and* food in inhumation ritual (**Chart 7.57**), and the occasional

appearance of small unguent jugs and bottles. In addition to this continuity of earlier patterns, mortuary ritual of the Northern Levant coast took on a new character. During the Iron II period, cremation and mixed-use cemeteries appeared on the Mediterranean coast (**Chart 7.52**). With the advent of cremation came a distinct ceramic assemblage indicative of drinking activities (**Charts 7.56; 7.58**). This “funerary kit”, as Baker (2006) would term it, is greatly standardised and rigidly adhered to within cremation contexts from the Lebanese coast. The “funerary kit” is clearly visible in the Cluster Analysis dendrogram for mortuary assemblages (**Dendrogram 8.8; CD/clusters/mortuary**). The distinct “funerary kit” was comprised of Red-Slip and undecorated vessels that appear to be mimicking bronze drinking sets (Dayagi-Mendels 1999, 59); essentially kraters, trefoil-lip jugs, mushroom-lip jugs, and cups (**Chart 7.58**). Moreover, few of the “funerary kit” forms commonly appear in non-mortuary contexts; it seems that they were almost exclusively for the purpose of funerary ritual. This is an important point. It implies that the bronze drinking-sets were too important or expensive to remove from circulation and use, instead each burial was provided with a ceramic equivalent. Hence, cremation ritual was replicating the symbolic importance of drinking wine with bronze vessels, but through the use of a much more readily available medium, pottery. As a result, a greater portion of the community was able to be associated with this elite symbolism. The rigid standardisation of the “funerary kit” suggests that each individual received equal funerary treatment, as though something other than persona, rank, or status was being conveyed (Baker 2006). Drinking within cremation ritual was not just an important consideration along the Lebanese coast, it was essential. This also implies that cremation ritual was predictable, and important for the maintenance and negotiation of social structures (Baker 2006, 5). In contrast to inhumation burials, cremation ritual was apparently a single event; the ceramic assemblage bears little evidence for secondary rituals associated with funerary meals (*ibid*, 7). Nevertheless, cremation ritual may have been a long, drawn-out affair entailing the preparation of the body, actual cremation, deposit of cremated remains, drinking rituals, deposit of “funerary kit”, and sealing of the grave. Despite the lack of secondary rituals, there was clearly enough opportunity within cremation ritual to transfer the “life” of the deceased (as it was deemed it should be remembered, or forgotten) into the communal consciousness (Chesson 2007, 109-110). The presence

of funerary stelae by the burial would have served as a mnemonic aid for this communal memory (Gras *et al.* 1991; Sader 1991).

This drinking “funerary kit” is also apparent in inhumation and mixed-use cemeteries of the same period, but in these contexts the “funerary kit” appears amongst a wider variety of vessel forms (**Chart 7.59**). Ceramic assemblages from coastal inhumation contexts and inland Northern Levant cremation cemeteries, therefore, attest to a more varied ritual, one that was open to individual interpretation.

“Funerary kits” were also known from the Bronze Age Levant (though different in detail), when food, drink and, unguents were important components of mortuary ritual (Baker 2006, 1). In fact, elite drinking associated with a cult of the dead appears in various forms amongst a number of Bronze Age cultures; Anatolia, the Levant, Egypt, the Aegean. It seems that the drinking “funerary kit” of the Iron Age is essentially an extension of earlier traditions. The population was apparently employing well-organised and time-honoured funerary traditions that were prescribed by social convention, ensuring it was a medium for the negotiation of existing social structures.

9.2.6.2 Storage in Mortuary Contexts

Despite the strong emphasis on drinking in mortuary ritual of the IA-NL, there is another, separate ceramic category that, while not common, appears with some regularity within inhumation and mixed-use mortuary contexts. The presence of transport amphorae in mortuary contexts of the Iron II and Iron III periods is primarily attested on the Mediterranean coast (**Charts 7.57; 7.59**), while in the Persian period they are found across most of the Northern Levant (**Chart 7.53**). There is a clear typological distinction between amphorae included within inhumation burials and those found associated with mixed-use contexts (cremation burials laid inside a tomb). In the case of inhumations, torpedo amphorae (CLASSES 024; 025; 026) tend to accompany the deceased, while at sites like Ras al Bassit (a mixed-use cemetery) bag-shaped amphorae (CLASSES 018 and 019) were used to inter the remains of the deceased. The ideological significance of such a distinction is not clear, though it may simply be that torpedo amphorae were too small to hold

adult remains (Courbin 1993a, 13). If this is the case, we might then wonder why torpedo-amphorae were included within inhumations at all. It seems likely that the inclusion of amphorae with the deceased held some symbolic significance; provisions for the afterlife, gifts for the gods, representation of the journey to the next world.

9.2.7 “Assyrian” Wares

Much has been written regarding the presence of “Assyrian Palace-Ware” vessels in the Levant (e.g. Gilboa 1996; Hestrin and Stern 1973; Jamieson 1999; Schneider 1999b; Van Beek 1987). The small cups and bottles labelled as “Assyrian” in the present study (**Chapter 6**) may not all be true “Assyrian” imports but might include local imitations of these forms. Indeed, the imitation of “Assyrian Palace-Ware” is well-documented in the Southern Levant, though their date is debated – either eighth or seventh century BCE (Na’aman and Thareani-Sussely 2006). These ceramic forms were primarily encountered in the late Iron II to Iron III periods (**Chart 7.22; Maps 63; 64**). The earliest examples are concentrated in the north-east of the study area, though a few examples also derive from the northern areas of the Southern Levant (**Chart 7.23**). Dating the appearance of “Assyrian” vessels is difficult, however, since their presence at many sites has been taken as evidence of Assyrian ascendancy, which many scholars have also associated with the Iron III period (§2.7.2). Hence, stating that these vessels come from Iron III contexts is a circular argument. Surprisingly, no “Assyrian” vessels were recovered from the Orontes Syria, Beqa’ Valley, and Lebanese coast zones (**Chart 7.23**). This is at odds with the historical narrative, which depicts a strong Assyrian presence in the Hamath province during the eighth century BCE (§2.4.3). Furthermore, the two Persian period examples (**Chart 7.22**) suggest these vessels may have continued to be used well after the historical conquest of Nineveh and the end of the Assyrian Empire (Kuhne 2002; Oates and Oates 2001, 257ff).

Within their original context in Assyria, “Palace-Ware” cups and bottles were associated with royal or elite drinking rituals (Adachi 1997; Oates and Oates 2001, Figs 23; 84; 158). Hence, the presence of these and similar vessels (imitations) in the Levant might reflect their use for the emulation of elite drinking behaviour.

9.3 Complexity and Diversity in Iron Age Northern Levant

Current reconstructions of the ceramic record for the IA-NL seem inadequate. Through an emphasis on chronology, ethnic identity and geographic patterning, archaeologists have ignored the significant diversity and complexity within the archaeology. The historical narrative has essentially “overdetermined” the archaeology (§9.4). As the patterning of ceramics indicates, social identities clearly run much deeper than current political/ethnic interpretations allow. Indeed, cultural connections occur on many different levels; economic, domestic, ritual, communal, geographic, technological, symbolic, ideological, etc. This implies that we must think in terms not of a homogenous Iron Age “culture” but of an Iron Age world that encompassed the coexistence of diverse communities and lifestyles. Rather than resist the complexity within the archaeological record, an approach that views material culture as a multi-faceted, dynamic agent of social construction (ideological view of individual and communal identity), not as a passive reflection of social organisation (hierarchical communal relationship), should reveal the manner by which pottery was drawn upon in the construction of a range of social identities.

Pottery is ultimately a cultural resource that can be actively employed within a range of social strategies for the construction, expression, and negotiation of social identities. Highlighting the role of agency and seeing the activities of daily life as social practice has important implications for our understanding of the IA-NL. The complex and multi-dimensional character of material culture undermines the idea that pottery directly reflects the ethnicity of peoples, historical events, and social processes. Moreover, the dynamic agency of material culture implies that it is not used arbitrarily but is appropriated to mark a range of specific identities. This concept of appropriation is particularly pertinent to understanding Aegean stylistic elements within the Iron I ceramic horizon – by no means a homogenous phenomenon.

9.3.1 Iron I

Much of the Iron I pottery investigated within the present study consists of forms that were largely based on the Late Bronze Age ceramic repertory (§2.3.3.1). While many of these forms followed their earlier uses, a number took on new meaning (e.g.

pyxides) as they were used within different types of contexts. It was also noted above that the majority of painted vessels in the Iron I period employed a number of Aegean-stylistic elements within their form and decoration. These Aegean-styled vessels consisted overwhelmingly of vessels that, during the Late Bronze Age, were associated with the preparation and consumption of wine. There appears to be a specific choice in the Late Bronze Age of certain vessels for this social activity. The local communities of the Northern Levant apparently exercised a degree of discernment in the adoption of material culture. The catalyst for change, therefore, was not external, as current reconstructions suggest, but internal: specific ceramic forms were selected for specific socio-cultural reasons. It would seem that the drinking of wine with the aid of Aegean-styled implements was very important in the construction of identity during the late second millennium BCE. Hence, any symbolism associated with Aegean-style drinking paraphernalia in the Iron I period was probably derived from the Late Bronze Age perception of imported Mycenaean drinking-sets and the manner in which they were used for elite display. This confirms the earlier conclusion that the Iron I period was essentially a sub-Late Bronze Age (§2.7.1).

In contrast to the decorated drinking wares, serving bowls of the Iron I period of the Northern Levant were inconspicuous. Yet, undecorated serving wares still do not imply a passive role in social discourse; the daily meal, its preparation, presentation, and consumption, can be seen as one of the key areas in which familial structures manifest themselves and are consolidated (Douglas 1975). The presence of decorated Iron I bowls from the Southern Levant implies a greater symbolic importance associated with the presentation of food in those communities (unless of course the current chronology debate re-assigns these Red-Slip bowls to the Iron II period).

Cooking-pots from the Iron I period experienced wide distributions (relative to the Iron II period) of only a few forms. The CLASS 008 cooking-pot was the most-restricted in distribution, being limited to the northern areas of the Southern Levant. Other cooking-pots, however, covered much of the Northern Levant. Transport amphorae and pithoi of the early Iron Age experienced starkly different geographic concentrations, though slightly less-well defined than in the Iron II-III periods.

Amongst the mortuary contexts of the Iron I period two patterns are discernible: food and drink were both important within the inhumation assemblages of the coast; while the cremation assemblages of inland Northern Levant were less well-defined. Apparently, the coastal emphasis on funerary meals was a continuation of Late Bronze Age funerary traditions. Interestingly, the small unguent containers, common amongst Late Bronze Age mortuary assemblages, lost their funerary association in the Iron I period. Though still resembling their original Aegean forms, the small “stirrup jars” and pyxides had been appropriated for non-mortuary purposes. Inland cremation assemblages contained some Aegean elements associated with drinking rituals (e.g. kraters and urns), but jugs and cups were generally missing from most burials. Hence, if drinking was important here, it was undertaken with non-ceramic drinking implements, or the burial of such implements was not important.

9.3.2 Iron II and Iron III Periods

The Iron II-III period across inland Northern Levant is associated with the advent of Red-Slip vessels (§2.7.2), the majority of which were either small drinking cups, or were associated with the serving and presentation of food. Hence, meals had become a dominant forum for the reproduction and negotiation of social structures. The lack of decorated jugs and other wine-drinking paraphernalia in the inland Northern Levant indicates that drinking rituals were either unimportant there, or being enacted with the use of bronze drinking sets, as the Red-Slip cups might imply. The presence of Assyrian forms in the Iron III period in the north-eastern areas of the study area might further indicate that elite emulation was being undertaken, but through the use of a number of different meaningful tools, only some of which were pottery.

It is within the context of this period, when food became an important social agent across inland Northern Levant, that we might also understand the presence of pithoi in these areas; the accumulation, storage, and control of food was just as important a symbol as its consumption. Also, cooking-pots took on more regionally distinct/localised forms during this period, with more forms attested and smaller, well-defined distribution patterns evident. Food appears to have become an important social agent at many different levels; acquisition, storage, manipulation, allocation, preparation, cooking, presentation, serving, and consumption.

In contrast to the inland Northern Levant, the coast regions produced numerous complete ceramic drinking-sets with kraters, jugs, and cups, though many of these drinking-sets came from mortuary contexts (which for the first time include cremation and mixed-use burials). These vessels predominantly bore Red-Slip, which again appears to be mimicking bronze drinking vessels. The implication is that bronze drinking sets were being used within settlement contexts, but within mortuary contexts less-expensive ceramic drinking-sets were employed. Nevertheless, the frequency by which drinking sets were found within mortuary contexts implies that drinking was an important social tool. Indeed, the ceramic assemblages found within coastal cremations are highly standardised, implying the presence of a standardised funerary ritual within which the living community could negotiate a prescribed range of social identities. In contrast, the inland cremation assemblages were more varied and imply a less “prescribed” funerary ritual/event.

In short, the Iron II and Iron III periods of inland Syria are associated with a greater variety in local cooking wares, an increase in symbolism within serving wares, and an increase in imported Greek, Cypriot, and Assyrian vessels. All of these changes imply that a greater range of ceramic tools were now being used, which points to important changes in cuisine and how a meal would be cooked, served, presented, eaten, enacted, and “embodied”. The greater distinction between methods of cooking and the new emphasis on serving – in other words the new style(s) of eating – represent a distinct shift in social structures and the way these were being negotiated.

9.3.3 Persian Period

While geographic factors of the earlier periods continued to be felt in the Persian period, there was a distinct change in the ceramic record; ceramic vessels became plainer implying that food and drink were less important social tools. While bowls constitute a high percentage of Persian period assemblages, they tended to be undecorated, suggesting a more mundane, domestic arena for the symbolism of food and meals, possibly associated with private/domestic identities (**Charts 7.62; 7.69**). Small juglets and bottles, of previously unseen forms, were also an important element in this period, implying that perfumed oils and unguents once again became important (cf **Charts 5.7; 7.24**). In sharp contrast to the Iron II-III periods, a lack of

ceramic drinking wares implies that drinking was a less important social activity in the Persian period, or that these activities were being undertaken solely through non-ceramic means. Alternatively, a change in drinking behaviours away from elite emulation might signal a loss of visible elites to emulate.

There is also significant change in mortuary practices in the Persian period, as cremation was largely abandoned in preference for inhumation. Within the inhumation cemeteries, amphorae were becoming increasingly common, as too were small unguent bottles and juglets, as well as undecorated serving bowls (**Chart 7.53**). There is little distinction between mortuary and non-mortuary assemblages in the Persian period. Nevertheless, the mortuary emphasis was apparently on food consumption (funerary meal) and the anointing of the deceased. Within this context, funerary ritual was a periodically enacted remembrance of the deceased.

9.3.4 Summary

The ceramic evidence of the Iron I period suggests that communal identity was being negotiated within the arena of wine drinking, while food appears to be reserved for the construction of individual and familial identities. Mortuary practice of the Mediterranean coast was exclusively inhumation, while inland Northern Levant was characterised by cremation. During the Iron II-III period there was a distinct shift across inland Northern Levant toward the importance of food (presentation and consumption) in the negotiation of identity, while on the coast cremation burials were intricately connected to wine drinking rituals and inhumation burials were associated with occasional funerary meals. Cremation continued to be the predominant, though more-variable, burial rite across inland Northern Levant. The Persian period saw a return to inhumation practices and an apparent abandonment of ceramic drinking sets; food too becomes less important within a social context. The ceramic record of the Persian period apparently places little emphasis on communal identities.

9.4 Historical Considerations

The above discussion has avoided referencing conventional political histories of the period precisely because the patterns in the archaeological record were interrogated as evidence for social behaviour rather than historical processes. But how does the present study compare with historical interpretations? Are there any connections between the above ceramic patterns and the historical narrative?

Some of the ceramic patterns described above roughly follow the broad regional patterns evident in the historical narrative. For instance, during the Iron II period large storage pithoi were generally restricted to the inland regions while transport amphorae were found concentrated along the coast. These two distributions appear to coincide with the conventional placement of Phoenician merchants on the coast and Aramaean tribal-states across the inland regions. This two-region model has been confirmed in the research of Mazzoni (§4.2.2.1) and Lehmann (§4.2.2.2), and is largely confirmed in the Correspondence Analysis above (e.g. **Chart 8.1**). Nevertheless, this model seems to provide a somewhat generalised explanation of material culture patterning.

Despite the apparent homogeneity of the two broad regional units, there is significant complexity in the ceramic record of the Iron Age. A number of subtleties in the data suggest the presence of a diverse range of behaviours and intricate knowledge systems that cut across traditional boundaries. These patterns are evident in the well-defined distribution of Iron Age cooking-pots, as well as the broad distributions of kraters and bowls, amongst other forms. This diversity was also evident in the Correspondence Analysis of Chapter 8, which confirmed the presence of well-defined, localised patterns within the broader regional patterns (**Chart 8.4**). The Correspondence Analysis also revealed different tightly-clustered groups of sites according to different mortuary behaviour, none of which coincide with general historical patterns (**Chart 8.6**). Furthermore, the inland distribution of the “Aramaean” pithos includes the Beqa’ Valley and Tel Dan, areas outside the traditional “Aramaean” polities. Under closer scrutiny, the broad socio-political units conventionally derived from the historical narrative do not adequately explain the level of complexity and diversity evident in the ceramic record of the IA-NL. It

seems that the conventional historical narrative has *overdetermined* interpretations of the archaeological record. In other words, material culture patterning appeared to be the result of broad historico-political processes, but may well be the result of a combination of less apparent effects. As a result, other possible factors have been largely overlooked as explanations for material culture patterning. Furthermore, an unconventional 'reading' of the historical texts may instead reveal a level of social complexity akin to that depicted in the archaeological record.

9.5 Summary and Implications

The aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate some of the potential of alternate approaches for the study of pottery from the IA-NL. Approaching pottery from a people-centred perspective has highlighted the role of agency and the social practices that shape the activities of daily life as causal factors in material culture variability. Conventional interpretations sought only to explain material culture variability as the results of geographic, ethnic, and/or chronological factors. These have provided only crude descriptions of the data. The implication of this alternative view means that material culture patterning can no longer be viewed as the *result* of poorly-defined external causes: instead, pottery was appropriated by communities for specific purposes. This approach has highlighted the existence of significant complexity and diversity in the ceramic record of the IA-NL and the varying means by which social identity was being negotiated through material culture. Consequently, conventional reconstructions have been shown to be highly questionable. This chapter has offered an alternative approach with the potential for the archaeology of the IA-NL to be viewed from completely new perspectives. The conclusions drawn above have demonstrated the value of approaching existing archaeological data from a less-conventional perspective.

CHAPTER TEN

Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to interrogate the archaeology of the Iron Age Northern Levant without relying upon existing historical preconceptions. It was hoped that this approach would then assess the compatibility of these two records, archaeology and text. Foremost, there was a desire to identify patterns in the archaeological record aside from conventional historical interpretations. For this purpose, the first section undertook a deconstruction of current reconstructions and an assessment of the applicability of the historical interpretative framework for archaeological research. This exercise revealed the fragile foundations of Iron Age chronology and highlighted a number of key research issues for this period; the dating of the Hama destruction, the appearance of Red-Slip pottery in the Northern Levant, the linking of early Iron Age Aegean-style pottery with the “Sea Peoples”. Part of the problem appears to lie in the lack of a universal definition of the Iron Age Northern Levant based on archaeological evidence. Instead, definitions have been derived from the historical narrative, which has resulted in an archaeological method and practice that views material culture largely as the product of assumed historical processes. An alternative perspective was needed.

While the first section of this thesis concluded that a reassessment of the archaeology was needed, the second section set-out the parameters for this exercise. This involved the creation of a comprehensive ceramic database for the Iron Age. Hence, a region-wide typology was constructed, and the dataset categorised accordingly. However, the compiling of the database highlighted a number of limitations with the available data. Foremost was the lack of quantified data for the majority of published pottery. Consequently, a statistical analysis of the data became a much more difficult task, one that had to rely upon presence/absence information.

The third section of this thesis identified and described the many patterns in the ceramic data. A number of analytical techniques were used for this purpose; some

that systematically sought specific relationships between categories of data (e.g. Correspondence Analysis), and others that isolated more general trends (Chapter 7). The combined result was an interrogation of the archaeology on both a micro and macro level to allow the patterning in the data to inform the interpretation presented in the fourth section.

The fourth section of this thesis discussed the patterns in the ceramic data and their implications for an alternative reconstruction of the Iron Age Northern Levant. More specifically, a number of patterns in the data cross-cut the broader ceramic regions depicted in the historical narrative. This demonstrated that current reconstructions of the Iron Age are largely overdetermined by the historical narrative. While the historical narrative has been considered the ostensible cause behind material culture patterning, it has been shown that ceramic trends are the combined result of a wide range of different causes, few of which can be considered wholly the product of broad socio-political events.

This thesis has highlighted a number of key issues in need of address for the future study of the Iron Age of the Northern Levant. We might consider the most important of these is a secure chronology. At the moment, the periodisations and site sequences of the Northern Levant are largely reliant on political histories and inter-regional pottery comparison. What is needed is closer engagement with material culture in all its messy diversity, as advocated throughout this study, combined with programs of reliable scientific dating programs for all excavations. Only through a more systematic ordering of site data will a reliable regional sequence become available. This should also be accompanied by a revision of the existing structures and the identification of assumptions upon which the current chronology rests. Probably the most important, and therefore urgent, Iron Age sequence in need of thorough revision is that of Hama. The present study has highlighted sufficient reason to doubt the attribution of the Hama E destruction to Sargon II, and has identified some evidence that seems to indicate the “royal quarter” might date considerably earlier than the eighth century BCE. If Hama E was revised, this would have a flow on effect for other important issues; the advent of Red-Slip, the length of the Iron I “dark age”, and Greek chronology – to name only a few.

The continued use of the term “Iron I” to denote what is essentially a Sub-Late Bronze Age material culture is problematic. I propose that in due course the Iron I period be given a more meaningful terminology: i.e. Late Bronze Age III or Sub-Late Bronze Age. This revision does not ignore material culture, as in James’ (*et al.* 1991) scheme, but proposes a chronological framework that better represents it. By extending the Late Bronze Age, the beginning of the “Iron Age” would shift to when iron became the preferred working metal (**Table 10.1**).

Table 10.1: Comparison of Chronologies for Bronze-Iron Age Transition

Ceramic Material	James (<i>et al.</i> 1991)	Proposed revision
Late Bronze (1600-1200)	Late Bronze (1600-950)	Late Bronze
Iron I (1200-950)	Ignored	Sub-Late Bronze
Iron II (950-720)	Iron I (950-720)	Iron I

This thesis is presented as a platform from which future research can consider more meaningful interpretations of the archaeological data and the study of the Iron Age Northern Levant can find its own local and individual “voice”.

