

TAYBEH, BAAL-HAZOR, AND A FAILED HUNT FOR BAAL: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF TELL ASUR

ROBERT D. MILLER II

millerb@cua.edu

The Catholic University of America

University of Pretoria

Washington, USA

Summary: Taybeh, Baal-Hazor, and a Failed Hunt for Baal: Archaeological Survey of Tell Asur

In the winter of 2017, a site survey was undertaken of Tell Asur, ancient Baal Hazor in the West Bank, for which this article is the full publication. Although it failed to discover a cultic site of Baal, its Byzantine finds form an important contribution to the archaeological portrait of the area in the Byzantine period.

Keywords: Baal-Hazor – Taybeh – Baal – Byzantine Palestine

Resumen: Taybeh, Baal-Hazor y una búsqueda infructuosa de Baal: Prospección arqueológica de Tell Asur

Este artículo es la publicación completa de la prospección arqueológica llevada a cabo en el sitio de Tell Asur, antigua Ball Hazor en Cisjordania, durante el invierno de 2017. A pesar de no haber descubierto un sitio de culto a Baal, los hallazgos bizantinos significan una importante contribución al cuadro arqueológico general del área durante este período.

Palabras clave: Baal-Hazor – Taybeh – Baal – Palestina bizantina

This article presents the results of an archaeological site survey of Tell Asur (M.R. 177.153), ancient Baal-Hazor, located fifteen kilometers northeast of Ramallah in the West Bank. The survey was undertaken in

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January-February 2017 with a permit from the Palestinian Department of Antiquities.¹

SITE SELECTION: THE HUNT FOR BAAL

The present author has argued elsewhere that many Levantine shrines of St. George or Khidr overlay ancient shrines of Phoenician Baalshamin or Canaanite Baal.² The Christian town of Taybeh in the West Bank (M.R. 17845.15130) has a long association with St. George. Next to the Orthodox church of St. George is a 4th-century mosaic, and behind the Melkite church of St. George are the remains of a late 5th-century basilica.³ Remains of another Crusader church are at the site called El-Khader, M.R. 1788.1511.

While there is “Georgic” cultic continuity back to the Byzantine period, there are Iron I and II remains, mostly on the western slope of the village hill. There are Iron I and II remains, mostly on the western slope of the village hill.⁴ Some Persian and Hellenistic occupation has been found,⁵ but nothing to indicate any cultic activity.

2 Sam 13:23, however, refers to a Baal-Hazor near Ephraim, that is, Ephraim-Taybeh.⁶ This would be the Hazor of Neh 11:33.⁷ But where is this place? Older scholarship equated it with a “Tell Asur.”⁸ This cannot be the same as Khirbet Asur (Arsur) near to Bir Nebala (Albrecht Alt’s suggestion),⁹ which is too far west in Benjamin. Taybeh

¹ Survey team was the present author, Eric Wagner CR, and William N. Miller. Financial support came from a research grant from the Graduate School of the Catholic University of America, and research facilities were provided by the Albright Institute for Archaeological Research. Pottery analysis was by the surveyors, and bone analysis by William Miller. Pottery was drawn by Conn Herriott. All finds from the survey were delivered to the Palestinian Department of Antiquities in Ramallah.

² Miller 2018.

³ Schneider 1931: 21.

⁴ Finkelstein, Lederman, and Bunimovitz 1997: 368–369; Finkelstein 1986: 160, 180.

⁵ Finkelstein, Lederman, and Bunimovitz 1997: 587–590.

⁶ Unless Kallai is correct to translate this as “Baal-Hazor *within* Ephraim;” Kallai 1971: 191–206.

⁷ The term “Hazor” in Baal-Hazor means “court” or “dwelling place” (*BDB*).

⁸ Schneider 1931: 22.

⁹ Alt 1928: 12–16.

is the closest pre-Mamluk site, and so *could be* Baal Hazor. Deir Jarir, just to the north, has only Mamluk occupation and later.¹⁰ Finkelstein and Bunimovitz note only one ancient site northwest of this, at M.R. 17845.15300—a single building with Hellenistic and Byzantine occupation.¹¹ Otherwise their survey, the most comprehensive of the area, shows a huge zone empty of sites covering the entire area north of Route 449 and west of the road to Kafr Malik, east of Route 4568 to Mazraa esh-Sharqiya. Thus *ISBE* 1.380 and *GTTOT*, 775 state that no such place as Tell Asur exists.

Albright identified Baal-Hazor (and Ephraim of 2 Samuel 13) with Khirbet Marjameh.¹² This site, properly Tell Marjama or Ain es-Samiya (M.R. 1816.1554) is a small valley oasis, covering 40 dunams.¹³ Iron I pottery was found over an area of 30 dunams,¹⁴ although no buildings existed on the site until the 10th century BCE.¹⁵ Marjameh was not inhabited in the Roman period and cannot be itself New Testament Ephraim.¹⁶ Tell Marjama, however, seems more likely to have been Baal-Shalishah of 2 Kgs 4:42.¹⁷ This corresponds to the proximity of the associated Gilgal of 2 Kings 4:38, which should be near to Bethel.¹⁸

Yigal Levin, who identifies the Ephraim of 2 Samuel with Ephrathah, but accepts the latter's usual location near to Bethlehem, puts Baal Hazor at modern El-Khader, southwest of Bethlehem.¹⁹ Levin's rationale is twofold. First, he argues that "Baal" in all Baal-theophoric toponyms in the Central Hill Country refer not to Baal-Hadad but to Yahweh, largely based on 2 Samuel 5 where Baal-Perizim

¹⁰ Greenberg and Keinan 2009: 57.

¹¹ Finkelstein, Lederman, and Bunimovitz 1997: 592.

¹² Albright 1923: 36–40.

¹³ Finkelstein 1986: 132; Mazar 1982: 167–178.

¹⁴ Mazar 1992: 174–193.

¹⁵ Dever 1986: 36.

¹⁶ Keinan, Abado, and West 2015: 222. They claim the nearby site of Kh. el-Bayadir was "Late Khirbet Marjameh" and without providing any archaeological support claim that Marjameh was therefore "inhabited continuously until the Crusader period."

¹⁷ Edelman 2009: 226.

¹⁸ Wagenaar 2007: 35–42.

¹⁹ Levin 2011: 215.

means “The Lord [Yahweh] has broken through,” and a view that true Baalism only entered Israel and Judah in the 9th century.²⁰ 2 Samuel 5, however, is a strained etiological attempt to provide an orthodox origin for a blatantly Baalistic place-name,²¹ and the latter claim seems unsupported in the light of Baal imagery in early poetry like Exodus 15 and Psalm 18 and images of Baal-as-Seth on 13th-century cylinder seals from Tell el-Ajjul (Rockefeller Museum 35.4011), from Tell es-Safi (Gath), and from Tell el-Fara South,²² and on a 7th-century seal from Tell Akko.²³ Levin’s second, more specific reason for placing Baal-Hazor at modern El-Khader is his interpretation of the second term in Baal-Hazor deriving from Hezron, the clan of David (1 Chron 2:9) and in the context of 2 Sam 13:23, of Absalom.²⁴ Nothing in 2 Samuel 13 suggests Absalom’s sheep shearing feast was held in his home territory, however—if Hezron could be localized at all, since it includes both the Calebites and the Jerahmeelites, two large sections of Judah (1 Chron 2:18-33). The genealogy of Hezron is much confused in any case.²⁵ The association of Levin’s candidate for Baal-Hazor with El-Khader is intriguing for my purposes, but 1994 excavations by Yuval Baruch and Ibrahim Abu Ammar found nothing older than the Persian period.²⁶

There is a Tell Asur, however, known to British historians as the site of a major battle in World War I.²⁷ Tell Asur is the highest point on Jebel el-Asur, also known as Har Hatzor.²⁸ It is 1 km north of Taybeh and dominates the Taybeh skyline (see **Fig. 32**).²⁹ Moreover, it is the furthest south location from which one can see Mount Hermon.³⁰ The only reason the Finkelstein/Bunimovitz survey shows no remains is

²⁰ Levin 2007: 17–34.

²¹ Smith 2002: 79.

²² Schroer 2011: nos. 895, 896, 899.

²³ Cornelius 1994: pl.50.

²⁴ Levin forthcoming.

²⁵ Mariottini 1992: 194.

²⁶ Caspi and Neu-Sokol 2009: 89, 93.

²⁷ Macmunn 1930: 312–315.

²⁸ Strobel 1989: 177.

²⁹ Medebielle 1993: 2; Dalman 2013: 1.2.641.

³⁰ Macmunn 1930: 315.

that the site is now occupied by the Baal Khatsor military base, the main Early Warning System station for the Israeli Air Force (**Fig. 21**). They were simply unable to survey a site that probably shows an extensive occupational history.

METHODOLOGY

Although the top of Tell Asur is an Israeli military base, the lower portions of the mountain are not, and in the southeast slopes, the land is designated Area B, under Palestinian civil administration. The science of tell erosion suggests that significant evidence of a site's occupational history will be visible in erosional debris.³¹ Note that material from Tell el-Ful extends down the lower eastern slope all the way into the Wadi Zimri.³²

The goal of the survey was to obtain a chronological profile of Tell Asur. Surface survey by "intensive collection" or "total surface pick-up" has been widely employed "to generate sets of artifact samples amenable to ... functional hypothesis testing."³³ The method employed at Tell Asur was "Non-Exclusive, Comprehensive, Deployed Surface Survey."³⁴ Because the material sought is erosional debris,³⁵ the area was divided into three strips running down-slope and walked north to south and then backtracked south to north (**Fig. 2**). Each transect strip or zone began at the northern edge of Area B. Zone 1 began at Highway 449 and extended west; its width varies as it ended at a single longitudinal line. Zone 2 was a fenced and inhabited area 19 m wide, and therefore not surveyed. Zone 3 began 15 m west of the end of Zone 1 and extended west to the edge of Area B (**Fig. 17**). All diagnostic sherds (rims, handles, bases, painted or glazed body sherds) and all bone objects were collected. Additionally, all sherds from cisterns and walls were collected.

³¹ Rapp Jr. 1996: 125; Rosen 1986: 27–30.

³² Gibson 1996: 9*–23*.

³³ Goodyear, House, and Ackerly 1979: 77.

³⁴ King 2003: 16–17.

³⁵ Flannery and Sabloff 2009: 52.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

If the pottery assemblage from the survey is indicative of occupation, the apex of activity on the site was Late Roman and Byzantine. The profiles of Zones One and Three were not significantly different, with these two periods predominating in both, although Zone 1 more Byzantine than Late Roman: eight sherds Byzantine and two Late Roman. Zone 3 had four Late Roman sherds (one possibly Roman: TA17-3.6; **Fig. 13**) and three Byzantine. There is no evidence of later occupation on the site except for a single Ottoman sherd (TA17-1.8; **Figs. 6, 27**). The cultural sequence of Tel Asur may have included earlier phases. There were two or three Roman sherds, one Hellenistic (TA17-1.18), and three Early Iron Age (TA17-1.2, TA17-1.10, TA17-3.10). TA17-3.5, identified by Gitin as a Late Bronze Age form (**Fig. 12**),³⁶ should also be Early Iron Age as it is identical to ovoid storage jars from 11th-century Tel Miqne stratum VC.

Nevertheless, the scarcity of pre-Roman pottery suggests either that Baal-Hazor was not a Phoenician or Canaanite cultic site, or that Tell Asur is not Baal-Hazor.

One structure was discovered on the south slope of Tel Asur (**Figs. 3, 18, 19**). The nature and dating of this structure are indeterminate. The largest stone of this structure measured 0.74m x 0.99m x 0.12m.

There was a cistern in Zone 3 north-northeast of the structure and cuts into the bedrock adjacent to the structure, probably for quarrying of stone (**Fig. 20**).

The only bone found from the site was a pig phalange (**Fig. 22**, see below). Since the occupants of Deir Jarir are Muslim and there has been no Christian community on the site since antiquity, this is either a domestic pig bone from the Byzantine (or earlier) period or a wild boar. Since measurements of domestic vs. wild pigs are based on archaeological populations and not single specimens, and primarily on cranial (especially teeth) measurements, it is impossible to tell which.

³⁶ Gitin 2015: sec. 1.1.16.7.

Nevertheless, by the Byzantine period one would not expect wild boars to have been very common outside the Jordan Valley and Galilee, so we tentatively identify it as an ancient domestic pig bone.

DETAILED RESULTS

Nearly all of the finds from the survey were pottery. As there was little distinction between the sherds recovered from the two zones, they are here discussed together in chronological order.

Iron I sherds include TA17–1.2 (**Fig. 24**), TA17–1.10, and TA17–3.10. These are presented in the appendix, but unfortunately none have clear associations from other sites. TA17–3.5 is non-curving rim from a wheel-made, heavily-fired ovoid store jar without surface treatment. Parallels include Ekron 9/1 fig.5.82:10 from Tel Miquestrum VC, as well as from Tel Qasile.³⁷

One piece has been identified as Hellenistic. TA17–1.18 is the incurving rim of a heavily-fired, wheel-made cup with reddish yellow slip (**Fig. 10**). There are similar pieces from Persian and Hellenistic Dor and Akko.³⁸

There are multiple Roman and Late Roman pieces. The earliest of these is TA17–3.6, the rim of a 44cm-diameter basin with an applied external lip and incised hachuring. Although the unfinished surface texture is very fine, this is not as fine as a Jerusalem Rouletted Bowl, which it otherwise resembles.³⁹ There are similar basins from Roman Fezzan, Libya.⁴⁰ TA17–1.7 is a 22cm-diameter fine bowl with grooved rim (**Figs. 5, 26**). Comparable forms are Yoqneam 8415/3 and Kefar Hananiah Form IA.⁴¹ TA17–3.15 may be a krater (**Figs. 14, 31**), 52cm in diameter, red-slipped, as Yoqneam 8183/5.⁴² Several Late Roman

³⁷ Mazar 1983: 48.3.

³⁸ Guz-Zilberstein and Stern 1995: fig. 6.1 #36.

³⁹ Magness 1993: fig. 5.10–11; Wightman 1989; Ariel and De Groot 1992: fig. 5.8; Geva, Amit, and Arensburg 2010: figs. 1.6, 1.7.

⁴⁰ Mori 2013.

⁴¹ Ben-Tor *et al.* 1996: 70.

⁴² Ben-Tor *et al.* 1996: 68.

sherds were from amphora: TA17–1.6, TA17–3.2, and possibly TA17–3.11 (**Fig. 25**). TA17–1.6 is a table amphora with button base (Yoqneam 110473), while TA17–3.2 (**Fig. 11**) and likely also TA17–3.11 are Yoqneam form 110456 table amphora.⁴³

The majority of ceramic finds were Byzantine. These can be discussed by form.

Several sherds are from Byzantine jars. TA17–1.1 is a Palestinian Baggy Jar (**Figs. 4, 23**), Caesarea form 1037.⁴⁴ TA17–1.12 is a Tall Gaza Jar (**Fig. 8**), Caesarea form 1180.⁴⁵ The other jars are TA17–1.11 (**Figs. 7, 28**), a heavily-fired, wheel-made jar with outcurving rim (Yoqneam form 8417/1) and TA17–3.8 (**Fig. 29**), with flared rim, yellowish red slip, and tooled burnishing (Caesarea form 752).⁴⁶

Byzantine sherd TA17–1.13 is a cooking pot, 9cm in diameter, with a thumbprint decoration on the rim (**Fig. 9**). Its form is Yoqneam 2144/1 or Jalamah Form 8.⁴⁷ TA17–1.15 is a Byzantine jug, erect rim and light red slip, Caesarea form 514.⁴⁸ TA17–1.20 is the button base of a yellowish red slipped bowl with tooled decoration, Caesarea form 1.384.⁴⁹

The sole late piece is foot base from a Gaza Ware table jar or water jug, 6cm diameter, equivalent to examples from Yoqneam.⁵⁰

One bone was discovered, a phalanx of *Sus scrofa* (**Fig. 22**). The length was 4.37cm, distal width 1.35cm, distal height 0.97cm, proximal width 1.42cm, and proximal height 1.50cm. The epiphysial plate on the proximal end of the phalanx shows complete fusion with only slight hint of epiphysial line, indicating that the pig was advanced in age.

⁴³ Avissar *et al.* 2005: 46–47.

⁴⁴ Patrich 2008: 88, 179.

⁴⁵ Patrich 2008: 97, 185.

⁴⁶ Ben-Tor *et al.* 1996: 73; Patrich 2008: 65, 163.

⁴⁷ Ben-Tor *et al.* 1966: 72; Dauphin 1998.

⁴⁸ Patrich 2008: 150.

⁴⁹ Patrich 2008.

⁵⁰ Ben-Tor *et al.* 1996.

Tel Asur falls into the ancient geobotanical region of the Bethel Hills.⁵¹ Rendzina soil, and to an unknown extent Terra Rosa and Mediterranean Brown Forest soils, the altitude, and rainfall 400–500mm suggest the standing vegetation in antiquity was a blend of the common Mixed Tabor Oak Forest and a Middle Sparse Garrigue Scrub Mattoral. This means that Mt. Tabor Oak and Balsam would have been common only where rainfall was the highest, otherwise, the stand would have been cypress, terebinth varieties, myrrh, asphodel, gladiolus, thyme, lavender, and rosemary. The economy, likely equaled out to half horticulture and half crops-horticulture of wine and olives and farming of lentils, alfalfa, garbanzo and fava beans (note cereal-producing tools at Khirbet Raddanah). Additionally, Khirbet Raddanah's excavations found caprovid bones in every household. Grazing of cattle and goats would have been a dominant economic strategy, as it is today.

The closest sources of water to Tell Asur are the Wadi Musa 1000m away or a spring 1500m to the southeast at Ein esh-Shamiya.⁵²

SIGNIFICANCE

The survey was unable to provide any support for a pre-Roman sanctuary to any deity at Tell Asur. Primary occupation was Late Roman and Byzantine. Given the range of forms—bowls, amphora, jars, cooking pots, jugs, and kraters—there must have been some settlement on the upper southern slope or summit. This is important because there is no record of any Byzantine site at Tell Asur. The nearest Byzantine occupation is at Apharaema (Taybeh) and at Tell Marjame / Ein Samiyya (M.R. 1816.15535).⁵³

⁵¹ Miller 2003: 289–310.

⁵² *Survey of Palestine, 1:20,000 series* (1942), vol. 1, sheet 17–15 “Silwad.”

⁵³ Tsafir 1994: 180, 221.

APPENDIX

In previous publications, the present author has questioned the entire typological method of Syro-Palestinian archaeology, its crude and clumsy “Q-Analysis,” or tabletop associations between similar objects.⁵⁴ Noting that an increasing number of Mesopotamian and Egyptian archaeologists, and most anthropologists in the world, argue statistical “R-Analysis” is preferable, that quantifiable factors should be used to classify objects, I have argued classification into types ought not be based on site-to-site comparison intended to show consistency of characteristic styles, the range of variation, and historical relevance, but might be a process of discovering combinations of attributes favored by the makers of artifacts themselves, not arbitrary attributes chosen by the archaeologist.⁵⁵

For this reason, the survey of Tell Asur employed a recording system pioneered in the 1996 Research Excavations at Khirbet Birzeit, sponsored by Birzeit University, for which the present author was pottery manager. By including as much quantifiable data as possible, it is hoped that more objectivity can be reached.⁵⁶ For the pottery recorded in what follows, “Form” refers to the kind of vessel, using the accepted terminology for Syro-Palestinian archaeology. In order to avoid the mixture of functional and morphological designations inherent in these, however,⁵⁷ forms are defined following Prudence Rice’s *Pottery Analysis*.⁵⁸ Thus, a **jar** has a wide mouth, a neck narrower than its shoulders, and a height greater than its diameter. A **bowl** is an open or closed mouth vessel with height less than diameter but greater than 1/3 of diameter, and which may have no shoulder carination and its mouth

⁵⁴ Miller 2010: 182–183; cf. Taylor 1948; Spaulding 1982: 11; Brown 1982: 177; Shepard 1965: 101.

⁵⁵ Also Deetz 1968: 31, 37; Cowgill 1982: 40; Voorrips 1982: 118; Whallon 1982: 127; Brown 1982: 179–180; Shepard 1965: 102, 225. The entire history of this debate is surveyed in A. Wylie (2002: 43–51).

⁵⁶ Taylor 1948: 153; Deetz 1968: 32; O’Brien and Lyman 2002: 42.

⁵⁷ Binford 1965: 203–210; Taylor 1948: 114.

⁵⁸ Rice 1987: 213, 216; Shepard 1965: 224–225; O’Brien and Lyman 2002: 42.

may or may not be narrower than its shoulders. A **cooking pot** is a vessel used for preparing food, usually with heavy grits. A **platter** has a height less than 1/5 its diameter, an unrestricted orifice, low walls, and a broad, flattish base. **Jugs** are small or medium sized vessels with handle(s) from either shoulder to rim or shoulder to neck, wide mouth, and neck narrower than shoulder.

Surface Texture and Construction are defined quantitatively. The former refers to the size of inclusions of sand, limestone, grog, &c: **course** meaning 2–1mm, **medium** 1–0.5mm, **fine** 0.5–0.25mm, and **very fine** 0.25–0mm.⁵⁹ Construction records **few** as below 15%, **some** 15–50%, **many** 30–50%, and **very many** above 50%.

Firing is also quantified, in that it is based on the Munsell Soil Color code for the core as indication of the extent carbon properties have been reduced.⁶⁰ **Heavily fired** means no core—carbon reduction is complete. **Moderately fired** means core Munsell N5/N6/N7. **Lightly fired** means N4 core. Finally, the photograph numbers are those encoded as Dublin Core metadata with files uploaded to the Levantine Ceramics Project (<https://www.levantineceramics.org/>).

TA17–1.1

Palestinian Baggy Jar, Byzantine

Rim diameter 11cm; body thickness 0.87cm

Erect rim

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand inclusions, fine texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/4

Photos 2683, 2684

Associations: Caesarea 1037

⁵⁹ Rice 1987: 413.

⁶⁰ Cf. Shepard 2002: 107.

TA17-1.2

Iron I jar

Body diameter 34cm; body thickness 0.87cm

Handmade, heavily fired, some sand inclusions, medium texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/1 slip

Photo 2687

TA17-1.3

Unknown form and period

Body thickness 0.71cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand and ceramic inclusions, medium texture

Exterior surface color 10YR 7/4; interior slip 7.5YR

Ridge decoration on body

TA 17-1.4

Unknown form and period, rounded oblong handle

Heavily fired, few sand and limestone inclusions, fine texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/4

TA17-1.5

Byzantine footed bowl or krater

Base diameter 10cm; body thickness 0.71cm

Footed base

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand and limestone inclusions, very fine texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/4

TA17-1.6

Late Roman table amphora

Base diameter 6 cm; body thickness 0.48cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand inclusions, fine texture

Button base

Surface color 7.5YR 7/4

Photos: 2671, 2670

Associations: Tel Yoqneam 110473

TA17–1.7

Late Roman bowl

Rim diameter 22cm; body thickness 0.64cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, some sand, limestone, and ceramic inclusions, fine texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/3

Grooved, erect rim

Photos 2681, 2682

Associations: Tel Yoqneam 8415/3; Kefar Hananiah Form IA

TA17–1.8

Ottoman Gaza Ware table jar or water jug

Base diameter 6cm; body thickness 0.56cm

Footed base

Wheel made, heavily fired, no inclusions, very fine texture

Surface color Gley 2 4/106

Photos 2677, 2675, 2674

Associations: Tel Yoqneam 1

TA17–1.9

Roman period-blond handle of unknown vessel

Handmade, heavily fired, soft, many sand inclusions, very fine texture

Surface color 10R 5/8

White painted decoration on handle

TA17–1.10

Iron I body sherd of unknown vessel

Body thickness 1.19cm

Handmade, moderately fired, some sand, limestone, ceramic inclusions, medium surface texture

Surface color 5YR 8/4 slip; body color 5YR 7/2

TA17–1.11

Byzantine Jar

Outcurving rim

Rim diameter 14cm; body thickness 0.64cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand inclusions, fine surface texture
Surface color 7.5YR 7/4
Photos 2672, 2673
Associations: Yoqneam 8417/1

TA17-1.12

Byzantine Tall Gaza Jar
Rim diameter 9 cm, body thickness 0.48cm
Erect rim
Wheel made, moderately fired, some limestone and sand inclusions,
coarse surface texture
Surface color 7.5YR 6/8; core color 7.5YR 5/2
Associations: Caesarea 1180

TA17-1.13

Byzantine cooking pot
Rim diameter 9cm
Heavily fired, few sand and limestone inclusions, fine surface texture
Surface color 2.5YR 5/8
Erect, upturned rim
Thumb imprint on rim
Associations: Yoqneam 2144/1; Jalame Form 8

TA17-1.14

Flat base of Platter
Body thickness 0.32cm
Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand, limestone, and grog inclusions,
coarse surface texture
Surface color 2.5YR 6/6 slip; body color 2.5YR 4/1
Ridge decoration

TA17-1.15

Byzantine jug
Rim diameter 10cm; body thickness 0.48cm
Erect rim

Wheel made, heavily fired, some sand, limestone, ceramic inclusions, medium surface texture

Surface color 2.5YR light red slip; body 5YR 6/4

Associations: Caesarea 514

TA17–1.16

Byzantine jar

Rim diameter 25cm

Collared rim

Wheel made, heavily fired, no inclusions

Surface color 5YR 7/6

Hatching decoration perpendicular to collar

TA17–1.17

Flat handle of unknown vessel, period unknown

Handmade, heavily fired, some limestone and ceramic inclusions, fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 6/6

TA17–1.18

Hellenistic cup

Rim diameter 13cm; body thickness 0.95cm

Incurving rim

Wheel made, heavily fired, few inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/4 slip; body color 7.5R 7/2

Photos 2657, 2658

Associations: Similar Persian and Hellenistic pieces from Dor and Akko (see above)

TA17–1.19

Outcurving rim from unknown vessel, unknown period

Rim diameter 19cm; body thickness 0.7cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few ceramic and sand inclusions, fine surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/4

TA17-1.20

Byzantine bowl

Button base

Body thickness 0.55cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few ceramic and limestone inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 6/6 slip; body color 5YR 7/3

Tooling decoration on base

Associations: Caesarea 1.384

TA17-3.1

Roman rounded handle

Handmade, lightly fired, few inclusions, rough surface, very fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 4/6; core color Gley 1 N4

TA17-3.2

Late Roman table amphora base

Base diameter 4cm; body thickness 0.48cm

Button base

Wheel made, heavily fired, many limestone and sand inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 10YR 7/3 (rough)

Photos: 2671, 2670

Associations: Tel Yoqneam 110456

TA17-3.3

Oblong handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Partial technique, heavily fired, some limestone inclusions, coarse surface texture

Surface color 5YR 6/6 (rough)

TA17-3.4

Rim of unknown vessel, period unknown

Erect rim, rim diameter 30cm; body thickness 0.48cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, many limestone, ceramic, and organic inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/7 (rough); core color 7.5YR 7/6

TA17-3.5

Late Bronze Age ovoid storage jar rim

Erect rim, rim diameter 9cm; body thickness 0.64cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand inclusions, fine surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/4 (rough)

Associations: Gitin vol. 1, #1.1.16.7

TA17-3.6

(Late) Roman bowl

Applied external lip on rim

Rim diameter 44cm; body thickness 0.64cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 2.5YR 4/6

Incised hatching decoration

Photos: 2689, 2688

Associations: See above for Jerusalem and Fazzan parallels

TA17-3.7

Byzantine body sherd of unknown vessel

Body thickness 0.48cm

Wheel made, moderately fired, some limestone inclusions, fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 7/8; slip 5YR 8/3; core color Gley 1 6/N

Combing design on body

TA17-3.8

Byzantine jar

Flared rim

Rim diameter 12cm; body thickness 2.92cm

Wheel made, few sand inclusions, coarse surface texture

Surface color 5YR 5/6 slip, burnish and tooling on neck

Photos: 2685, 2686

Associations: Caesarea 752

TA17-3.9

Cooking pot body sherd, unknown period—burn marks on body

Body thickness 0.95–1.27cm

Handmade, heavily fired, very many ceramic, organic, and sand inclusions, coarse surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/3; core color 7.5YR 7/3

TA17-3.10

Iron I body sherd of unknown vessel

Body thickness 1.25cm

Handmade, heavily fired, some limestone and sand inclusions, coarse surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 6/4

TA17-3.11

Late Roman table amphora rim

Erect rim with ridge

Unable to measure rim diameter

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand and limestone inclusions, medium surface texture

Surface color 2.5YR 6/6 slip; body color 10YR 6/3

Associations: Yoqneam 110456

TA17-3.12

Jug(?) handle, unknown period

Ovoid (vertically) handle

Many limestone inclusions, very fine surface texture, moderately fired

Surface color (rough) 5YR 6/3

Burned after breakage

TA17–3.13 Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Flat handle

Handmade, heavily fired, some limestone and sand inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 6/6 slip; body color 5YR 6/2

TA17–3.14

Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Flat handle

Handmade, heavily fired, many limestone, ceramic, and organic inclusions, medium surface texture

Surface color (rough) 5YR 6/6

TA17–3.15

Late Roman krater

Ridged rim

Rim diameter 52cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, few sand and limestone inclusions, medium surface texture

Surface color 2.5YR 6/8 slip; body color 7.5YR 6/4

Photos: 2678

Associations: Yoqneam 8183/5

TA17–3.16

Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Flat handle

Handmade, moderately fired, few limestone inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 2.5YR 5/8 slip; core color Gley1 5/N

TA17–3.17

Handle of jar or jug, unknown period

Ovoid handle

Moderately fired, some sand inclusions, coarse surface texture

Surface color 7/5YR 6/4 (possibly slip); core color 7.5YR 6/1

TA17-3.18

Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Oblong handle

Handmade, heavily fired, some limestone, ceramic, and organic inclusions, fine surface texture

Surface color 7.5YR 7/6

Finger impression on outer surface of handle

TA17-3.19

Byzantine body sherd

Wheel made, heavily fired, few or no inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color (glaze or organic paint) Gley 1 3/N; interior color (slip)

Gley 1 4/N

TA17-3.20

Possibly a modern body sherd (20th–21st century)

Body thickness 0.64cm

Wheel made, heavily fired, no inclusions, very porous (air pockets)

Surface color (wash) 2.5YR 8/1; body color 2.5Y 6.4

TA17-3.21

Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Flat handle

Handmade, heavily fired, some limestone and ceramic inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 7/6

TA17-3.22

Handle of unknown vessel, unknown period

Flat handle

Partial technique, heavily fired, few limestone inclusions, very fine surface texture

Surface color 5YR 5/4

FIGURES

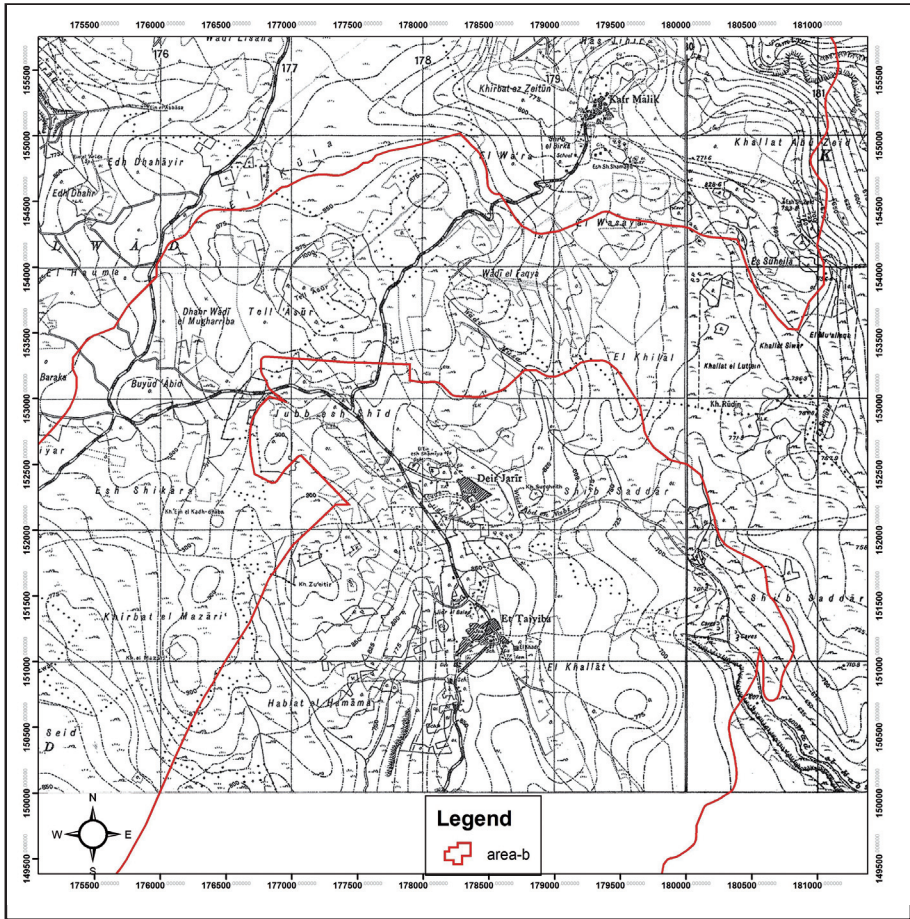


Fig. 1.
Map of Tell Asur. Survey of Palestine, 1:20,000 series (1942),
vol. 1, sheet 17-15 “Silwad.”

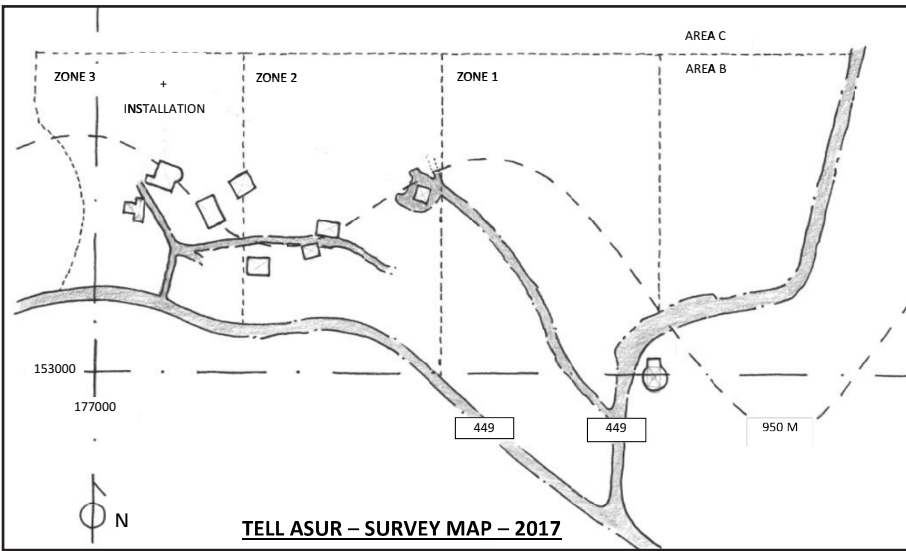


Fig. 2.
Plan of Survey Area. Drawing by Eric Wagner.

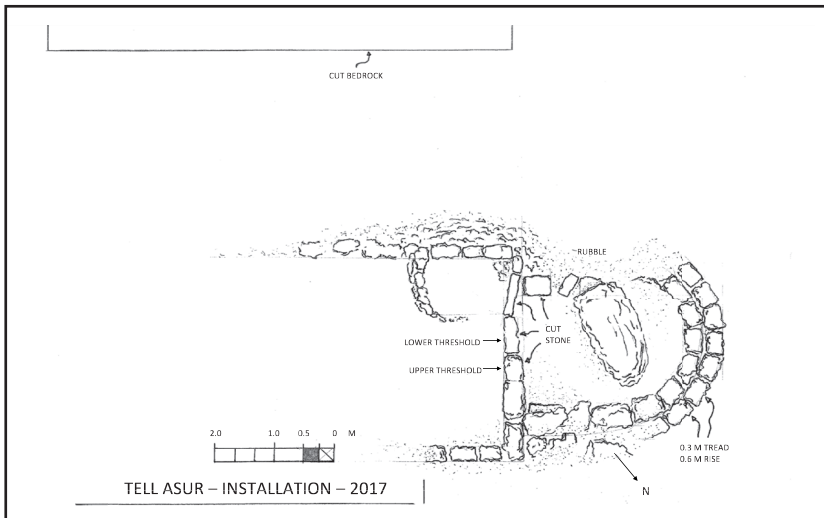


Fig. 3.
Plan of Structure in Zone 3. Drawing by Eric Wagner.

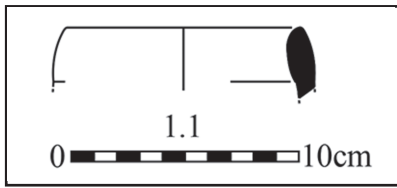


Fig. 4.

TA17-1.1. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

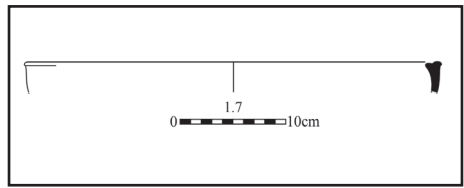


Fig. 5.

TA17-1.7. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

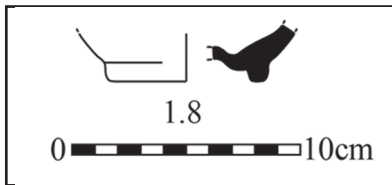


Fig. 6.

TA17-1.8. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

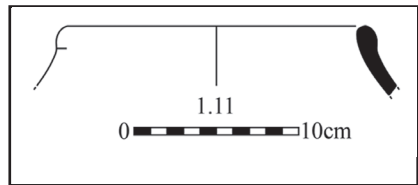


Fig. 7.

TA17-1.11. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

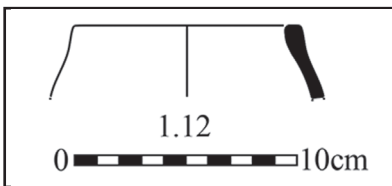


Fig. 8.

TA17-1.12. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

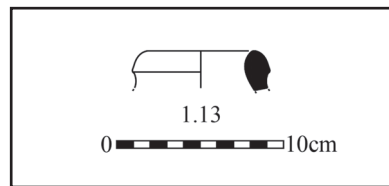


Fig. 9.

TA17-1.13. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

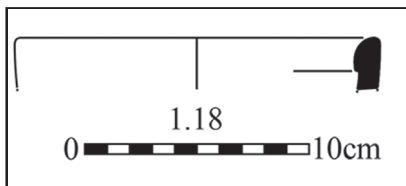


Fig. 10.

TA17-1.18. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

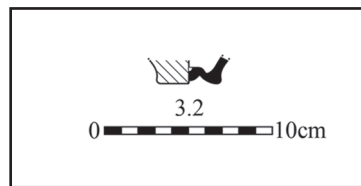


Fig. 11.

TA17-3.2. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

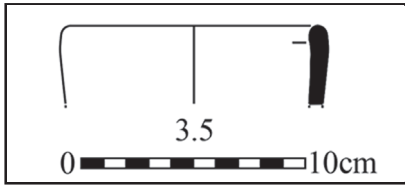


Fig. 12.

TA17-3.5. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

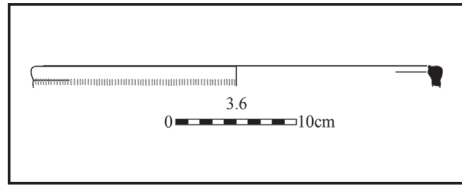


Fig. 13.

TA17-3.6. Drawing by Conn Herriott.

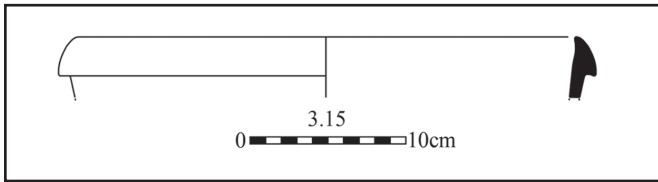


Fig. 14.

TA17-3.15. Drawing by Conn Herriott.



Fig. 15.

Retaining Walls, Zone 1.

Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 16.
Retaining Walls, Zone 1
Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 17.
Zone 3, South. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 18.
Structure in Zone 3.
Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 19.
Structure in Zone 3.
Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 20.
Cut in bedrock at structure.
Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 21.
Aerial photo of Tell Asur. ©2011 Google—Imagery ©2011 DigitalGlobe,
Cnes/Spot Image, GeoEye. Map data ©2011 Mapa GISrael.



Fig. 22.
Pig bone. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 23.
TA17-1.1. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 24.

TA17-1.2. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 25.

TA17-1.6 and 3.2. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 26.
TA17-1.7. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 27.
TA17-1.8. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 28.
TA17-1.11. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 29.
TA17-3.8. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 30.
TA17-3.9. Photo by Robert Miller



Fig. 31.
TA17-3.15. Photo by Robert Miller.



Fig. 32.

Tell Asur seen from Taybeh. Photo by Robert Miller.

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