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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PICTURE
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IN ANCIENT PALESTINE

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PICTURE OF IRON AGE RELIGIONS IN ANCIENT PALESTINE*

What kind of picture can we piece together from archaeology of the religions of the main population groups inhabiting Palestine in the Iron Age? These groups would be the Philistines, the Phoenicians, the Israelites, and the Judahites. The main source of information will naturally be sanctuaries, cult objects, and figurines recovered from different kinds of archaeological exploration.

Like most historians, the Syro-Palestinian historian mainly has two kinds of material available to reconstruct the past: 1) existing literary sources, and 2) archaeological remains. While the latter can include inscriptions or other textual items found at a site, the bulk of the material is usually "mute". The archaeological material can thus be characterized as a "pseudo-language", to use an expression from A. Moles.¹ It tells us something about the material culture and also reflects something of the spiritual life of the society. City planning, house types, public and private buildings, roads and streets, and all the objects found in or close to these places are expressions of a society's sophistication. It is quite clear that we will not be able to penetrate fully the meaning of a religion and its content from archaeological remains. The religious system which regulated the lives of these ancient societies escapes us. From the form and style of idols, for instance, we can get glimpses of a society's conceptions of their deities' actions or functions. We can also perhaps retrieve information on some liturgies or religious laws and customs from some finds, such as liver omens. A complete understanding, however, is beyond our reach.

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We are faced, nonetheless, with the problem of relating material to its proper religious setting. Does it come from the society's official religion, from popular religion, or from some kind of private religious form? A. L. Oppenheim has doubted our ability to know anything about any form of ancient Mesopotamian religion from recovered textual material. He thinks that the texts were written mainly by priestly experts and that they are speculative literary constructions.²

Oppenheim's characterization of official texts as "priestly speculations"³ and his refusal to accept them as official documents illustrates the potential problem modern man can create when evaluating ancient religion in terms of modern categories. He is assuming that the texts represent private theological speculations, which presumes the existence of private personal religion.⁴ However, private religion did not exist as modern man conceives of it. We can talk about private religion in connection with house gods and family rites. Common man's ideas about religion were, as far as can be determined, not a problem nor an ideal. Rather his religious concepts were more or less influenced by the religious ideology and system of his society. When we deal with a society's religion in the ancient Near East, it is the religion of the collective: the state, nation, city, village, clan. Religion permeated ancient life. It provided the groundwork for the society's ideals, norms, and values, so that everyday life was acted out within a religious framework. For instance, the king of a nation was the vice-roy of his national and supreme god, who was the real owner of the nation, as well as the creator and organizer of life. Liturgies, hymns, and sacrificial lists are official cultic expressions of a society's religious principles, and not merely private priestly speculations. One should also remember that writing was a privileged skill learned by a class of trained scribes who were used in official capacities. The majority of written documents will, therefore, reflect official records, and not in the first place the thoughts of the common man.

Archaeological finds can inform us of the religious life of a now-dead culture. It can illuminate textual evidence by corroborating, supplementing, or correcting it. At times it can yield completely contradictory data which forces us to reject the textual evidence in its favor and draw a new picture.⁵ It thus represents a crucial source of information which needs to be used in conjunction with textual material in order to develop the most objective model possible for ancient culture and thought. Because of the tendentious picture

given by the biblical writers, archaeological finds become very important for trying to reconstruct the culture of ancient Palestine. As I stated, I will be focusing my discussion mainly on the information archaeology provides on ancient Palestinian religions. Since the data available are rather limited, my results will be incomplete and rather sketchy.

The Philistines represent an intrusive element in Palestine. They appear to have become the ruling classes, mainly military, among the peoples of the coastal area of southern Palestine. It has been maintained that the excavations at Tell Ashdod reveal that there were no major changes in house types of the common people between the pre-Philistine and the Philistine eras.⁶ Cult objects such as bowls, cult stands, *kermoi*, figurines, etc., indicate that they continued to worship according to their old customs during the first hundred years after they settled on the coast. Most of these objects are in Aegean styles. However, more and more local traditions are to be found in the artifacts which may show that they have been open to the influences of the country, and after ca. 1000 B.C. the Philistines seem to have been more or less assimilated into the Palestinian culture of the coastal area.⁷

The names of the Philistine deities known from the Old Testament may demonstrate this. We have no indication of the names of the gods they worshipped at the time of their arrival. The biblical texts report that they worshipped the gods Dagan (Dagon in Judg. 16:23, 1 Sam. 5:2 ff.) and Baal-Zebub (2 Kgs. 1:1 ff.). Dagan was a native Syro-Palestinian deity, so like all peoples settling in Palestine, the Philistines accepted the supremacy of the local gods, the owners of the land, and they probably identified their old gods with some of them. The many female figurines which have been found in and around Ashdod,⁸ for example, indicate the worship of a goddess — probably the mother goddess. Of special interest is the so-called Ashdoda, a figurine in the form of a seated or enthroned woman, decorated in Philistine style.⁹ This type of figurine is also known from the Mycenaean world, especially from Mycenaean tombs.¹⁰ M. Dothan sees this "Ashdoda" as "the first archaeological evidence of a deity among the Philistines other than the Canaanite deities known from the biblical sources."¹¹ If she represents "the great mother" goddess of the Greek world, she was probably identified at an early date with the Canaanite Asherah, and in later times with Atargatis, as mentioned, for instance, in 2 Macc. 12:26.

From Megiddo comes a Philistine metal jug with a stariner spout. Its decorations (in the Myc. III C:1 tradition) also show some Palestinian influences.

In the bottom row of the "picture band" is a "processional scene" depicting, *inter alia*, a "lyre player standing erect..., a lion, a gazelle, a horse, a tree..., and two fish." The row above shows a lyre, a dog, and also a bird. In the upper row one should notice two fish, and a "crab and a scorpion".¹² This jug with its decoration has been compared with a seal from Tarsus, the assumption being that in both objects we should be confronted with motifs from the Orpheus legend.¹³ However, even if this legend is from a later time,¹⁴ both Orpheus, the bird and the lyre motifs are known from ancient times. For instance, the bird and the lyre occur in Mycenaean art, and the lyre and the lyre player are found in the glyptics of Hittite Anatolia and of Syria-Palestine, as in reliefs from Zincirli and Karatepe.¹⁵ Because we do not really know the religion of the Philistines, the meaning of these motifs on the Megiddo jug — and on other vessels as well — cannot tell us too much. It is possible that they could all have had religious connotations, as, for instance, the dove which in the ancient Near East was a divine and royal symbol¹⁶ and could be associated with the goddess of love.¹⁷

A Philistine temple complex has been uncovered at Tell Qasîle which has yielded some cylindrical fenestrated "cult stands". They were found on a platform in the corner of the small sanctuary on the other side of the western wall of the temple (str. XI and X). These stands are painted in Philistine geometric design. The rims of the stands apparently held small offering bowls. One of these bowls that has been found had a duck's head attached to it. The presence of the bowls suggests that the stands were not used as incense burners, as has been maintained so often. They were perhaps used both as decorative pedestals¹⁸ and as stands for receiving gifts.

A Philistine brick temple has been found at Ashdod, area D, dating from the 8th cent. B.C. It consists of an L-shaped main hall with two adjacent rooms on the NW side. At the south end of the main hall, a brick altar was attached to the east wall of the room. It measures 1 m² and is ca. 70 cm high. Nearby were found many human and animal figurines, pottery vessels, and *kernoi* which were probably used for libations. The same kind of figurines and pottery was found in pits nearby. Some of the figurines could possibly have been *kernoi* decorations.¹⁹ Two offering tables and some human figurines were also found in area G.²⁰ One of the temple figurines represents a woman playing the harp or lyre. It illustrates the role of this kind of music in the cult. This motif is also often used in the Old Testament and occurs in art work at several other sites in Palestine, including Kuntillet^c Ajrud, which will be discussed

later. What role these figurines could actually have played in the cult is impossible to say.

Another point about Philistine religion which we should notice in this connection is contained in the story of their return of the Ark of Yahweh in 1 Sam. 6:1 ff. Because it caused plagues spread by mice among the Philistines after its capture at the battle of Ebenezer, they decided to return it to its homeland, accompanied by guilt offerings of "five golden tumors and five golden mice" (1 Sam. 6:4). From this one may conclude that the mouse played a certain role in Philistine religion.

Of the many animal figurines found in excavations in Palestine, there are very few mice. This may be due to two facts: 1) this animal has not generally been considered an appropriate figurine form and thus has not been included as a figurine category, and 2) since most figurines recovered are damaged or broken, the recognition of a little mouse figurine would be difficult. There is one figurine which is clearly in the form of a mouse. It is from Beth-Shemesh, stratum II, room 375.²¹ The material culture of Beth-Shemesh does not unequivocally indicate that the city was Judahite, and this mouse figurine may indicate that the cult of the people of Beth-Shemesh may have been influenced by the Philistines. The previous stratum III contained much Philistine pottery, so the city must have been dominated by the Philistines during the 11th century B.C., even though this does not mean that the whole population must have been Philistine.²² The following stratum IIa, dated to ca. 1000-950 B.C., was quite different in layout, and Philistine pottery was almost non-existent. However, this pottery was also dying out within Philistia proper.²³ Without knowing which group of people settled in stratum IIa at Beth-Shemesh, one cannot do more than cautiously suggest that some indigenous people built the new city and that they through the growth of the kingdom of David finally became Israelite subjects. The story of the Ark indicates that it was not at home in the city of Beth-Shemesh. It is therefore the men of the city sent messages to the people of the Gibeonite(!) city of Kiriath-Jearim to come and get the Ark, 1 Sam. 6:21. Yahweh's symbol, thus, belonged in Gibeonite territory.

In Aegean culture, the cult of the mouse was connected with the god of pestilence. There is a connection between the god Apollo and the mouse, Apollon Smintheus,²⁴ who had a cult center in the city of Hamaxitos in southwestern Troas. In Greek σμίνθος means "field-mouse", and this word can refer to the pest god or be his symbol.²⁵ According to legend, mice played a role in the

founding of Hamaxitos, which legend also claims was populated by the Teukroi (Teucrians). These were supposed to have travelled there from Crete. W. F. Albright has identified these Teucrians with the Sea-peoples Tjekker.²⁶

Since the Bible considers Crete to be the homeland of the Philistines (Caph-tor in Am. 9:7, Jer. 47:4),²⁷ the role of mice in their cult is plausible. The religious use of mice could have spread via the Philistines to other peoples of southern Palestine, including Judahites. Isa. 2:20 f., 65:3 f., and 66:17 accuse the people of Judah of having used mice in the sacrificial meals in assemblies in the "gardens" or in tombs and "secret places". This suggests their role in the occult. The eating of mice is not allowed, according to Lev. 11:29. Like most prohibitive laws, this one probably originated as a reaction against a common custom.

The next question is: What do we know about Phoenician religion in the Iron Age period? Unfortunately, archaeology has been of little help in expanding our knowledge in this area. The Iron Age layers at Tyre and Sidon are inaccessible because modern buildings make it almost impossible to dig there.²⁸ Our main sources for reconstructing Phoenician religion are inscriptional material, some artifacts such as stelae and ivories, and a temple excavated at Šarafand (biblical Zarephath; Sarepta in the King James Version).

Various inscriptions have provided us with the names of some Phoenician gods, including Melqart, Ba^Cal Shamem, Ba^Cal Sidon, Ba^Cal Hammon, Ba^Cal Addir, Ashtarte, Tanit, Milkashtart, etc. Ba^Cal Shamem is the highest god at Byblos. He is also known from Larnaka in Cyprus. He is one of the witnessing gods by whom the king of Tyre, Ba^Calu, swore his oath when he contracted a treaty with Esarhaddon of Assyria.²⁹ Other Phoenician gods mentioned in this treaty are Ba^Cal Šapuna, Baiti-ilê, Ba^Cal-malagê, Melqart, Astartu, and Iasumunu (Eshmun) of Sidon. From the Karatepe inscription we know of the gods šmš^Clm (cf. Ugar. špš^Clm) and from Arshlan Tash a fly-goddess ^Cpt' (𐤎𐤏𐤕𐤕?). The Karatepe inscription also mentions the 𐤎𐤏𐤕 𐤓𐤕𐤕, "the yearly sacrifice" (III:1), which also occurs in 1 Sam. 1:21 and 2:19 as 𐤓𐤕𐤕 𐤓𐤕𐤕. One should also mention the well-known phrase 𐤕𐤓 𐤕𐤓 𐤕𐤓 (Karatepe III:18) with its parallel in Gen. 14:19 mentioning El ^CElyon as the ruler (owner) of heaven and earth.³⁰ Finally, a deity Ba^Cal lbnm is mentioned in an inscription from Limassol, Cyprus,³¹ dating from ca. 750 B.C.³²

A stela from Amrit (9th-8th c. B.C.) with a deity standing on a lion shows both Egyptian and Assyrian features. The deity, however, resembles the Ugaritic

Baal.³³ This stela may be representative of the religious art of the Phoenicians being influenced from different areas.

An alabaster relief showing a sphinx with the Egyptian double crown has been found at Aradus. The "podium" the sphinx is lying on "has Egyptianizing mouldings and bulls".³⁴

These two examples certainly show something about the culture of Phoenicia. Whether we then have to count with, for instance, influences in religious customs and liturgical performances (including hymns) is an unsolvable problem as long as we do not have any textual material which could be compared with Egyptian and Ugaritic texts. However, the concepts of the divine beings may not have been too different considering the geographic closeness and cultural contacts with the coastal area of Syria north of Phoenicia proper, and also considering that Phoenicia had for a long time been very much influenced by Egypt. For instance Ba^calat (Ashtarte) of Byblos had been identified since the days of the Old Kingdom with the goddess Hathor.

Unfortunately no Phoenician temples dating from the Iron Age other than the temple at Şarafand/Sarepta have been excavated to date. This temple which spanned two strata dated to the 8th-7th c. B.C., has yielded evidence that the Phoenicians worshipped the goddess Tanit, a goddess mainly known from the Punic sites. The lowest level, shrine I, has been called "the shrine of Tanit-Ashtart" because an inscription to her was found in the yard or room adjacent to the north side of the temple.³⁵ It is written on an ivory plate measuring 3 x 5 cm, and contains a reference to an idol, *sm̄l*, which "Shillem, son of Mapa^cal, son of ^cIzai made for Tanit-Ashtart". This inscription provides evidence that the goddess Tanit was already identified with Ashtarte, or was another name for her, in 8th century Phoenicia.³⁶

Other finds from Sarepta include amulets of Egyptian gods and a sphinx throne.³⁷ The presence of Egyptian objects is not surprising, however, remembering the old contacts Phoenicia has had with Egypt. Concerning the ivory object, it should be mentioned that Sarepta is one of the few places where the same kind of carved ivory has been found as is known from Nimrud, Khorsabad, Arshlan Tash, and Samaria.³⁸ The motifs, such as sphinxes and cherubs (for instance cherubim thrones³⁹), the cow suckling a calf, etc., are so well-known that there is no need to go deeper into the problem here. Concerning the ivories from Samaria it is not known whether they were made by local people or by Phoenician craftsmen. Taking into consideration Tyre's close contacts with

Israel during the Omri dynasty and its newly built capital Samaria, the latter alternative seems more probable.

Since the temple of Solomon usually has been seen to have been built in a Syro-Phoenician style, the Sarepta temple is of some comparative interest. The long-room temple with a porch is a common style in Syria, and examples dating from the Bronze Age are also known from Palestine.⁴⁰ Although it is probable that this temple type was also common in Phoenicia, we do not have any examples to date. The Sarepta temple has one long room without any porch. This and the adjacent room in the NW cannot provide corroborating material for the assumed Phoenician origin of the Solomonic temple architecture.

The last group of Palestinian peoples to be considered is a joint one, comprised of the Israelites and Judahites. Although both groups worshipped a form of Yahweh as their national deity, their independent histories, except for their brief union under David and Solomon, suggests that the traditions of each should be studied separately. Archaeological material is especially critical for evaluating the religious practices of these two peoples, because the Old Testament writers have tried to impose an idealized, monotheistic worship of Yahweh on the monarchic period, though this never existed at that time. Finds from digs provide us with a glimpse of the actual religious situation during the Iron Age periods.

Before beginning the discussion it is necessary to clarify the relationship between "Canaanite" and "Israelite-Judahite" culture. I will not be distinguishing the two because in my opinion they represent a direct historical continuum. Judah and Israel did not borrow a foreign "Canaanite" culture. They represent states which emerged out of the Canaanite cultural milieu with Canaanite populations in the early Iron Age period. Thus, "Canaanite" culture is part of their native heritage and not a borrowed form.

About 1200 B.C. the central hill country saw a great increase in settlements. As I have maintained elsewhere,⁴¹ this increase was due to the movement of peoples from the Canaanite areas north, south, and west into the hills in order to begin a new life free from taxes, corvee labor, military service, and destruction due to war. Peoples probably also entered this area from the east. One could perhaps label these highland settlers "pioneers". Archaeological remains from some of the earliest settlements show that the houses were built in the same style as those in the coastal areas, for instance (Tell Qasîle), and the material culture is thoroughly Canaanite. These are the people who became the citizens of the states of Israel and Judah.

These various groups and clans would have had their own individual traditions and life-styles. However, they would have shared a common worship of the Canaanite pantheon and its gods such as El, Baal, and Asherah, among others, because these were the gods of the country. The Semitic rule was that you worshipped the gods of the country where you lived because they were the owners and rulers of the land. After the formation of the states of Israel and Judah, the new national religions of Yahwism would also have been embraced, alongside the continued, older forms of religious practices. The latter were not supplanted or necessarily suppressed by the official cults, and evidence for their continued presence and importance is revealed by archaeological finds.

Beginning with the northern kingdom, Israel, ostracon no. 41 from Samaria with the phrase *g^elyw*, "the calf (of) Yahweh", "the Yahweh-calf",⁴² gives us an insight into how the Israelites conceived of their national deity. This ostracon should be compared with Hos. 8:5 f., where the prophet mentions "thy calf, Oh Samaria" (cf. 13:2). This expression is usually understood to be a reference to Baal. The phrase *g^elyw*⁴³ shows, however, that Yahweh was also worshipped in tauromorph form. Bull imagery is well-established for Yahweh, as it is for both El and Baal. Hosea's "calf of Samaria", Jeroboam's reference to Yahweh's being a bull at the festival at Bethel (1 Kgs. 12:28), and the bull statues at the state sanctuaries of Bethel and Dan (1 Kgs. 12) can all be seen as reflections of an old northern Yahwistic tradition which conceived of Yahweh as a bull.⁴⁴ The selective Judean traditions of the Old Testament have presented this old northern tradition as an innovative act of apostasy by the "renegade" Northern Kingdom. From the religio-political viewpoint of the traditions, this kingdom should never have existed. It was a break-away from Yahweh of Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty. It is thus not at all astonishing that the writers do not give us any detailed information about the religious role of the Israelite capital, Samaria. It is in harmony with their program that Samaria should not be given any leading position as a center of Yahweh worship because for them only Jerusalem could play such a role.

Like other capitals, Samaria must have been the center of the nation's religious administration. Religion was one of the duties of the royal administration.⁴⁵ One could explain this phenomenon as being a logical expression of the idea that the god was the owner of the nation and its territory, and the king his vice-regent. Administratively, this ownership is established by placing military and cultic personnel throughout the country. When new areas were

conquered and added to the country, fortresses and fortified cities were built as part of the administration's program to incorporate the new land. Government officials were stationed as military and cultic personnel in order to stabilize the new areas and "to teach" the people the way of life of their new nation.

The effect this process of "Israelitization" had on an incorporated city's religion may be seen from the site of Tell Qasîle, just north of Tel Aviv. The excavator, A. Mazar, has concluded that stratum IX represents Israelite occupation. It follows a stratum which clearly represents Philistine occupation. Because the material culture shows no major changes, Mazar has maintained that the population of the "Israelite" stratum IX probably "did not change to any serious extent, and the local traditions were kept".⁴⁶ This conclusion is borne out by the history of the city's temple. The Philistine temple from str. X was rebuilt in str. IX without any alterations in design. Its layout is similar to the so-called Fosse temple at Tell ed-Duweir (LB period). If Mazar is correct in assigning str. IX to Israelite occupation, it is clear that this city must have been incorporated into the state in the usual way. The population did not change. Civil servants and priests would have been sent from Jerusalem to instruct the new citizens in their new nation's civil and religious laws. Yahweh-worship would have been instituted in the rebuilt temple, possibly alongside the continued worship of Philistine gods.

Of the many objects found in Palestine one should mention an anthropomorphic representation of either Yahweh or Baal. It is a figurine found at Hazor, str. XI, and dated to early Iron I. It represents a seated god with outstretched arms, the right one being somewhat higher than the left. The figurine was found in a jar deposited ca. 20 cm under a sanctuary floor in an undisturbed layer. It thus can be interpreted as a foundation deposit. If Y. Yadin is right, this stratum at Hazor represented an early Israelite settlement. If so, the god figurine can be seen as a representation of Yahweh or Baal, the two main gods of the Israelites in early times.⁴⁷

Evidence for sun-worship in Israel has also been uncovered at Hazor. A terracotta head of an animal with a sun disc and a cross on its forehead was found in str. IXB.⁴⁸ It is not quite clear whether this is a stylized head of a bull or a horse.⁴⁹ In light of the many horse heads in the same style with the same kind of disc and cross on the forehead which have been found in Jerusalem, for example, one may see the Hazor animal head as that of a horse.

The "triangle" between the eyes is probably the blaze and the ears do not give the impression of being horns. Since str. IXB is dated to the 9th cent. B.C., this horse's head indicates that the religion of Israel during the time of Omri and Ahab included sun worship.⁵⁰ The cultic tradition of the Late Bronze Age has, thus, continued at this place.⁵¹

Of special interest are the remains of pigs which have been found in excavations in Palestine. The pig appears to have been a sacred animal in the cultural heritage of the Israelites and the Judahites.⁵² The law prohibiting the eating of pork in Lev. 11:7 and Deut. 14:8 should be seen as an attempt to prevent the people from participating in the cult associated with the pig. It is not clear which deity is associated with this sacred animal. In the Hellenistic-Roman period the swine was associated with the Ashtarte-Adonis cult.⁵³ Bones of pigs, astragali, have been found in both Bronze and Iron Age levels at different Palestinian sites. At Tell el-Balaṭa (ancient Shechem), four astragali were found in a jar in a 10th century cultic structure.⁵⁴ Several ossuary pits on the western slope of Tell ed-Duweir in Judah contained nearly 1500 bodies, which were covered with layers of animal bones of which many were pig astragali.⁵⁵

Two pig skeletons were found at Hazor in the open space of Area B, south of the citadel. They date from Hazor's last days as an Israelite city, ca. 732 B.C. (str. VA).⁵⁶ The skeletal remains of one pig indicate that it had been partially consumed. Y. Yadin has proposed that the Assyrians had eaten the pig "celebrating their triumph".⁵⁷

Since the flesh of the pig was not consumed completely, it would be more logical to assume that the defenders of the city, the Israelites, did not have time to end their meal. Yadin may have avoided this more obvious deduction because of the biblical prohibition against eating pork. The poor defenders would have needed to eat some food too, in order to have strength to continue their defence. As the victors, the Assyrians would have had enough time to finish their meal. It is also unlikely that they would have eaten among the ruins of the city after a successful siege. Had they found some pigs and other animals, they would certainly have taken them back to their camp for consumption. Their meals were not eaten on the battle ground, but in camp. The most plausible explanation for the pig's condition is that some Israelites had cooked it as a meal, but were attacked before they could finish eating.

One could ask whether it was common to eat pork at this time in Israel, or whether the war situation was so severe that food shortages forced people to

eat an otherwise avoided food. We have no way of knowing the exact answer in this case. An analysis of these two skeletons has shown that they are from domestic animals.⁵⁸ This suggests that the people at Hazor had started to domesticate the pig and use it for food. It supports my theory that the Israelites rather than the Assyrians ate the partially consumed pig. On the other hand, this pig cannot be used as an example of the presence of some pig cult at Hazor. Be that as it may, the command against eating pork must be seen as a later invention or as a command at home in Judah rather than Israel, which was then retrojected back into time. The passages from Isa. 65:3 f. and 66:17 which refer to worship of mice also state that the people of Judah were eating the pig in some cultic connection.⁵⁹ For the prophet, this cultic custom was an abomination.

The excavations at Tell Dan have uncovered a large platform, 18 x 7 m, which was enclosed by a framing wall of ashlar stones cut in the Phoenician-Israelite technique of the 10-9th cent. B.C. The excavator, A. Biran, sees this platform as the *bāmāh* (wrongly translated "high place") which served as the podium for Jeroboam's bull idol (1 Kgs. 12:28 f.).⁶⁰ Close to this platform was an olive press, which may indicate that olive oil did not only play an important role in rituals but that, among other things, making olive oil was part of a temple's business activities. Cult stands, bowls, and other vessels found show Phoenician and Cypriot features. A figurine in the form of a monkey seated at the feet of a man or a deity was found in a jar in a basin SW of the platform. What religious ideas should be connected with this find is not known.

The first platform was destroyed in the beginning of the 9th cent. B.C. When it was rebuilt, it was extended to 19 x 18 m, and surrounded by a courtyard of crushed limestone whose largest space extended ca. 26 m south of the platform. Nearby a horned altar was uncovered. In this third stage, the platform had 14 steps leading up from the yard. These have been attributed to Jeroboam II.⁶¹

It is certainly right to attribute cultic significance to this structure, but it is probably wrong to label it a *bāmāh*. It is clear from 2 Kgs. 23:19 that this term designates a sanctuary. This text states that Josiah of Judah destroyed all the *bēt bāmôt* in the cities of Israel which the kings of Israel had built. The temple of Bethel which Josiah also burned is called a *bāmāh* in 2 Kgs. 23:15. According to 2 Kgs. 18:4, king Hezekiah "removed" the *bāmôt* of Judah. They may have been abandoned or they may have been eliminated from use as sanctuaries of the official Yahweh religion.⁶²

Because Dan was close to Phoenician territory, located on the trade route from Tyre to Damascus, perhaps some Phoenician inspiration should be sought for the use and form of this platform.⁶³ This is said with the proviso that the *temenos* platforms shown on Phoenician coins are an old phenomenon. There have not been any Iron Age *temenos* platforms uncovered from Phoenicia as yet. Realizing, however, that cultic traditions were very conservative and long-lived, it is possible to see the *temenos* platforms of the Persian and Greco-Roman periods as part of a tradition of great antiquity.⁶⁴ The Solomonic temple platform may be an indication of the age of the phenomenon.⁶⁵ The Dan platform may represent a stepped altar (cf. the EB-MB round stepped altar of Megiddo) or a platform which held an altar and perhaps also Yahweh's image, the well-known "bull of Dan". If there was a temple in the city, it may have been located close by. It has not so far been found.

One more installation at Tell Dan needs to be mentioned. At the entrance of the city gate of the Israelite period a structure of ashlar stones has been found. Three column bases were uncovered on its sides, and a bench stood nearby. The column bases may have supported a canopy or a similar structure. A. Biran assumes that this kind of structure was used by the king for administrative purposes (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:10), or was used in connection with a deity.⁶⁶ If the structure housed a deity statue, it might be an illustration of the *bāmāh* on the left side of the city gate (at Beer-Sheba?) mentioned in 2 Kgs. 23:8.

The phenomenon of a cult place in the city gate complex is also known from Cyprus. A city gate from the pre-Phoenician period has been excavated at Kition which has a temple on each side of the gate.⁶⁷ The location of a sanctuary immediately inside the gate or at the entrance of the gate might reflect the custom that the god had to bless your entering as well as your departure. Is this practice mentioned in Ps. 121:8, a *ma^calot* psalm? "Yahweh guard your going out and your entering, from now and forever."

Turning to Judah, the many figurines found in the soil of Palestine from the Bronze through the Iron Age, among other things, are very important for drawing a picture of the religion of the kingdom of Judah. We know from the textual material that the Judahites and the Israelites used idols in their worship. Ezek. 44:10 f. is a clear indication that both the Levites and the population at large worshipped not only Yahweh, but also several other gods in idol-forms. Ezek. 8:10 and 12 inform us that the people of Judah had many gods. The first verse, 8:10, says, namely, that all the gods of the "house of Israel" were

depicted on the walls of the temple. Gideon and Micah made ephods, idols. Nehuṣtan, the copper serpent, was in the temple of Yahweh until king Hezekiah terminated his worship. The most well-known idol together with the bulls of Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 12:28) is probably the bull of Exodus 32, the golden calf that Aaron, the high-priest, made. Prophetic polemics against the many idols of Judah testify to their place in the cult. Concerning Ezek. 8:10,12 one may maintain that the prophet certainly did not invent what he is said to have seen. Like most visions, his is built on reality and therefore tells us something about the religion of his time. These pictures on the temple walls may be representations of the gods of the divine assembly, known in Hebrew as the *qēhal/sōd qēdōšîm*, *bēnē 'ēlîm*, or *šēbā'ôt*.⁶⁸ These terms are equivalent to the Akkadian *puḫur ilānī*, and to the Ugaritic *pḫr (bn) 'lm*.

Like Yahweh in the north, the southern Yahweh also appears to have been represented as a bull. This is evidenced by a royal palace seal impression found at Ramat Rachel, south of Jerusalem. It probably dates from the end of the Iron II period.⁶⁹ The stamp features a bull figurine with a sun disc between his horns. Such symbols usually represent a solar deity. Since Yahweh, like most Semitic gods, was identified with the bull in various texts, and since this bull seal is from a royal palace of Judah, one can only conclude that it represents Yahweh, the main god of the kingdom. The sun disc between the bull's horns makes identification with the fertility god Baal impossible.

The site of Arad in the Negeb has yielded valuable information about the official state cult in Judah. This fortress with temple complex was built as part of the Judean administration's program to incorporate the southern Negeb area into the state. Arad lay in a part of Negeb which traditionally had been part of Edom. This region first came under the crown of Judah with king David. During Solomon's reign, trade via the Negeb to the Gulf of Aqaba was of vital importance. The Arad fortress should probably be seen as part of the royal administration's program for securing the Gulf of Aqaba trade routes.

The Arad temple can be seen as a *bēt mamlākāh*,⁷⁰ a temple belonging to the national administration. Three *maššēbôt*, stelae, were found in the cult niche of the temple. Even though two of the stelae were found built into the wall of the "holy of holies" (i.e. the cult niche), they were probably used in a different way in an earlier period.⁷¹ The most obvious use of *maššēbôt* in a cult niche would be as representatives of deities. The Arad temple could thus preserve information about Judahite religion which the Old Testament textual material has ignored or suppressed.⁷² In its original function, the cult niche

appears to have contained representations of three deities, possibly Yahweh, Baal and Asherah. These three gods were also worshipped in the temple of Solomon, 2 Kgs. 23:4. Thus, the official gods of the kingdom were represented in this national sanctuary which was part of the royal administration.

One may maintain that the Arad temple is a good example of Judah's "Canaanite" religious heritage. The closest parallel to this is the Late Bronze Age sanctuary at Hazor, area C. It contains a seated god and ten stelae in a half circle.⁷³ The stelae may represent attendant deities which comprise the divine assembly.

From Tell Beit Mirsim in southern Judah comes a most interesting lion statue,⁷⁴ probably part of a base for an idol (9th cent. B.C.). The lion is sculptured in a reclining position. It is 53.5 cm long, 18.5 cm wide, and its height is 24.1 cm. The statue is in a relatively poor condition, "as practically every protruding feature was chipped off". One should note that the lion's tail rests on its back, as is the case with the lion figures of the Tell Ta^Cyinat double lion base,⁷⁵ and not on the side of the lion. Because of the fact that the right side of the lion is cut straight, R. Amiran thinks that the statue is one of two of a lion-base. It should, thus, be a parallel phenomenon to those of Tell Ta^Cyinat, Carchemish, and Zincirli, also from the 9th cent. B.C.⁷⁶ The base from Tell Beit Mirsim should, however, have been square to its form because of the straight form of the lion's right side,⁷⁷ rather than a round one, as in the Carchemish and Ta^Cyinat bases.

From Tell Beit Mirsim also comes a libation tray with three lion heads on its rim, or one should rather say that the whole rim seems to be formed by three lions because their legs are also sculptured on the rim.⁷⁸

These two artifacts are of a certain interest because of their lion symbolism which is not uncommon in the ancient Near East. The lion is associated with gods and kings. In the glyptic art we find them standing on lion bases, like Ishtar of Arbela, or on lions, like the above mentioned stela from Amrit. Their thrones could also be supported by lions, or their platform on which the throne was placed could have lion feet.⁷⁹ As textual evidence one could in this connection refer to the ivory throne of Solomon. This is described in 1 Kgs. 10:19 in the following words: "The throne had six steps, and at the back of the throne was a calf's head, and arms at either side of the seat, and two lions were standing beside the arms."⁸⁰

These two finds from a place which was not a capital cannot be explained in

any other way than that the city (whatever its name) had a temple or sanctuary in which these objects had their original place.⁸¹ The lion figures must be seen as being representative for the official religion of Judah in the 9th century B.C. They also show that the idea of "Mosaic" commands against idols should be seen as a later phenomenon. I do not believe that the "village population in Judah peripheral to the great centers"⁸² would have carved elaborate deity statues on lion bases resembling a Syrian tradition. Rather the population of the villages made idols of bulls and other fertility symbols, but not in the first place of the "Reichsgott" and his symbol, the lion. It should also be emphasized that Tell Beit Mirsim cannot be called a village. The excavations show a fortified town.⁸³ The symbol of the national god would thus indicate that a sanctuary belonging to the official, national religion existed in this city.

The phenomenon of a lion base for a deity statue may be the answer to the debated term אראל found in both the Old Testament and in the Mesha inscription. Å. W. Sjöberg⁸⁴ has stated that this word is not the same as the Akkadian *arallu* which refers to the underworld, or the mountain of the underworld.⁸⁵ The term אראל may refer to such a lion base⁸⁶ for an idol which we just have discussed. If so, the אראל of the Mesha inscription (lines 12 ff.) refers to a lion-based deity statue.⁸⁷ The Mesha inscription, thus, tells us about two Israelite sanctuaries in Transjordan, those of Nebo and ^cAṭarot. According to lines 12 f., Mesha conquered these cities and dragged the אראל of ^cAṭarot's god *dwd*⁸⁸ before Chemosh, the main god of Moab. He also dragged/consecrated the vessels(?) of Yahweh of Nebo to his god. The information about Benaiah smiting to pieces the two אראל of Moab, 2 Sam. 23:20, would now be understandable. With the postament of the god lying in pieces, the "power" of the deity was destroyed.

In this connection one should also notice the occurrence of ארום in an inscription from Kition, Cyprus, from the 4th century B.C. According to Donner and Röllig it is possible to see ארום as a dual form of a word related to the Hebrew ארי. It could, thus, refer to the two lion figures of a deity postament (KAI 32:3).

Kuntillet ^cAjrud in the Sinai, ca. 50 km south of Kadesh-Barnea, is another important find spot which seems to have been a Judahite administrative outpost. The date of ca. 800 B.C. which the excavator Z. Meshel has assigned to the site, places its operation during the reign of Uzziah. Under this king, Judah's borders were extended to new limits, and the Negeb and areas further

south needed to be protected and settled. Kuntillet ^CAjrud would represent a military and religious government outpost.⁸⁹ The religious objects uncovered at the site should then be understood as expressions of Judahite religion, even if the outpost's shrine may have been used at times by Israelite and perhaps Phoenician mercenaries or traders passing through on their routes.⁹⁰

A set of inscriptions and pictures were found in what has been called "the cult room". This room, measuring 3 x 4 m, contained jars on benches, and cultic paraphernalia such as a stone altar, stands, and pottery vessels, were found on the floor. While too much cannot be made from this, the finds are reminiscent of the Sennacherib relief which depicts the people of Lachish and cultic vessels being brought out of the captured city.⁹¹ Even if Lachish is not to be equated with modern Tell ed-Duweir, the relief still shows us that Judahite cities had cult places.

The jars on the benches may have been offerings and tithes which were deposited there to be collected by officials. It is possible that this type of benchroom existed at other sites. This would explain why comparatively few temples have been found in Iron Age Palestine. Perhaps a separate temple building was not deemed necessary at every location where taxes and tithes were to be paid to the state and its god. Another example of a benchroom which has been labeled a sanctuary has been uncovered at Tell ed-Duweir.⁹²

Meshel has maintained that Kuntillet ^CAjrud shows northern influences and that there is a strong Phoenician impact on the artifacts and the inscriptions.⁹³ Since Palestine had been influenced culturally by Phoenicia from at least the time of the United Monarchy, this statement is not surprising. I think, however, that Phoenician "style" can be seen to have become an integral element of Palestinian art by 800 B.C., which had been taken over and made part of the regular local style. The ivories from Samaria, Bethlehem, and Tell ed-Duweir tend to confirm my point. I suggest that we label the style of painting at ^CAjrud "Palestinian". The drawings depicting a woman (goddess) seated on a chair playing a lyre, the calf sucking the cow, the tree of life flanked by ibexes, and the feathered Bes are all done in a style fairly common in Palestine.⁹⁴ The calf sucking the cow is known also from Beida (cf. Nimrud).⁹⁵ Egyptian motifs and style are common in southern Palestine, since this region had been influenced more or less directly by Egypt since the last Bronze Age. If one remembers that Phoenicia had had close connections with Egypt since the time of the Old Kingdom, one may consider the art of Palestine to have

been more or less Egyptianized, either directly from Egypt or indirectly via Phoenicia. Again, however, there is no need to distinguish the Israelite or Judahite art tradition from a Phoenicio-Palestinian one. The latter was part of the former's cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, the very important inscriptions found at ^CAjrud have not been published *in toto*, so a discussion of their features is difficult. I cannot fully analyze Meshel's contention that they mainly show Phoenician features⁹⁶ without access to the texts themselves. Since however, the site was probably a Judahite administrative center, it would be logical to expect the writings to be in a south Palestinian style. I do not think the writing on the one bowl which has been reproduced by Meshel⁹⁷ can be termed Phoenician. The *dalet* (𐤀) is that used on Hebrew seals of the 9th-8th centuries B.C.,⁹⁸ but not like that on Phoenician seals of the same period. The *kap*, the *lamed*, the *nun*, and the *bet* are in the 8th century Hebrew style.⁹⁹ Whether the other texts are different is yet to be learned.

The text which has caused the most consternation and discussion is the following:

<i>yhwš šmrm w'šrth</i>	Yahweh of Samaria and his Asherah
<i>yhwš tmm w'šrth</i>	Yahweh of Teman and his Asherah

J. A. Emerton has proposed that these phrases may indicate the existence of another non-Jerusalemite Yahweh tradition.¹⁰⁰ This is quite true and natural, as I pointed out many years ago on the basis of the biblical texts.¹⁰¹ The northern kingdom's official Yahweh cult, for instance, went its own way. It could not follow the religion of another nation because the religious system is part of the nation's identity. The god is the owner of the country; he is a territorial god.¹⁰² Yahweh of Jerusalem could not be the god of the northern kingdom of Israel. With this in mind, one may assume that this ^CAjrud text was scribbled by a person from the northern kingdom who visited the southern outpost. Perhaps he was somewhat polemically inclined since he wrote "Yahweh of Teman" alongside the Yahweh of his homeland. Maybe he was trying to emphasize his belief that the northern Yahweh was t h e Yahweh of old tradition, the one who came from the south, from the Edomite area here called Teman, cf. Am. 1:12; Ez. 25:13. Biblical traditions record Yahweh's association with the south. In Deut. 33:2, he comes from Seir, Paran, and Sinai; in Judg. 5:4, from Edom and Seir, and in Hab. 3:3, Eloah dawns from Teman and Paran. Eloah is used here for Yahweh. The writer of the ^CAjrud inscription may have known these traditions, which seem to have influenced his intentions. On his visit

to a Judahite fortress-like site, perhaps on business, he may have used the opportunity to express the idea that the northern tradition of Yahwism was the right one. The controversy which existed on the political level may be mirrored in this northerner's scribblings about the true kingdom of Yahweh.

In commenting on the inscription, Meshel expresses his astonishment that Yahweh had a consort and calls it a "blasphemous phenomenon".¹⁰³ Emerton rightly concludes that Asherah was a goddess worshipped by the Israelites and Judahites, but thinks that the word here and in many other places refers to a wooden object representing the goddess Asherah, rather than the deity herself.¹⁰⁴ Meshel maintains that the travellers who "stopped at this desert religious center and its few inhabitants were not all dedicated to the pure monotheistic principles espoused by the Hebrew prophets of their day". They mixed their religious beliefs with "pagan" phenomena.¹⁰⁵ The Hebrew prophets were, however, not the official spokesmen of the religions of Israel and Judah, as Meshel has assumed. Meshel has judged the religions from the viewpoint of the later writer's tendentious and propagandistic idea of what kind of religion the pre-exilic people should have had. The religion which the biblical writer embraced cannot be the basis for a scholarly interpretation of what really went on. The Yahwism of the writers did not exist in the time we are concerned about. Here we only can state that the finds from ^CAjrud clearly show us that the goddess Asherah was part of the Israelite-Judahite religion, which could already have been ascertained from her place in the temple cult in Jerusalem alongside Yahweh and Baal. In my opinion, the archaeological finds from Kuntillet ^CAjrud have corrected the picture of the religion which has been presented by the OT writers.¹⁰⁶

Another important phenomenon to mention is the approx. one hundred fragments of textiles which have been found at Kuntillet ^CAjrud. Most of the fragments are of linen, but there are also some of wool. Loom weights and remains of wood, probably the loom, have also been found.¹⁰⁷ All these finds may tell us that some textile industry was connected with this place, which is not uncommon for a cultic place. A parallel is, of course, the Solomonic temple of Jerusalem in which the women wove garments, ¹⁰⁸ בתי, for the goddess Asherah, according to 2 Kgs. 23:7. Finding that also at Kuntillet ^CAjrud Yahweh is associated with the same goddess, Asherah, one could draw the conclusion that the textile industry at ^CAjrud had the same purpose as that of the temple of Jerusalem.¹⁰⁹

The many Ashtarte, anthropomorphic, tauromorph and other figurines which have been found in the soil of Palestine may illustrate how scholarly interpretation has misrepresented the religions of Israel and Judah. E. F. Sukenik, for example, comments that the figurines were common "in spite of the attacks of the prophets".¹¹⁰ Y. Aharoni expresses his surprise in finding "Ashtarte figurines" in the royal palace of Ramat Rachel south of Jerusalem, and he too, refers to the objections by the prophets.¹¹¹ Since these figurines were found in a royal palace, one cannot maintain, as Aharoni has, that they are expressions of popular religion. They must have been used as expressions of the official, national cult. We should also remember that the prophets were not the spokesmen of the official religion, so their criticisms do not represent official positions.

These kinds of figurines have been found in great amounts in almost all strata dating from the period of the Israelite and Judahite monarchies. The cave which K. M. Kenyon found in Jerusalem (square A XXVI, cave 1) turned up 84 animal and human figurines. Miss Kenyon postulated that the cave was a *favis-sa* for a nearby building she believed to be a sanctuary.¹¹² The small building located on a slope with other constructions does not appear to have been a sanctuary. No cult object was found inside, and the two pillars in the middle of the room were probably roof supports rather than *maṣṣēbôt*. The cave pottery "consists largely of ordinary domestic vessels" from around 700 B.C.,¹¹³ so there is no indication that the cave deposit had religious significance.

The greatest amount of figurines have been found in Jerusalem, which gives us an insight into the religious affairs of the Judahite capital which is quite different from that presented in the textual material and its scholarly interpretation. According to A. T. Holland's investigation,¹¹⁴ as of 1975, 597 clay figurines had been recovered from Jerusalem. Of these, 258 are animals (mostly bovine), 199 are horses and riders, and 119 are so-called pillar figurines. This is far more than from any other site in Palestine. Samaria has a total of 159, Bethel (if it is Beitin) only 28, Shechem 22, Hazor 44, and Dan only 2 — a pillar figurine and a bull. The Jerusalemites' preoccupation with figurines of nude women, bulls, and horses seems to have been quite pronounced.¹¹⁵ The bull figurines may be symbols of both Yahweh and Baal. The female figurines probably represent Asherah, a goddess who was also worshipped in the Temple of Jerusalem (as the Queen of Heaven).¹¹⁶

The many horse figurines with sun discs on their foreheads,¹¹⁷ dating mainly from the 8th-7th centuries, have usually been seen as Canaanite or foreign

phenomena infiltrating Judah.¹¹⁸ There are textual indications, however, that Yahweh was associated with horses in his capacity as a solar deity. In Ps. 84:12 he is called *šemeš* "sun".¹¹⁹ Hab. 3:8 mentions that Yahweh "mounts his horses" and in Hab. 2:15, he treads the sea with his horses. These passages depict the creator god who has solar characteristics (cf. Hab. 3:4) as the warrior god subduing his enemies the waters, the sea, and the rivers, which are all synonyms for the powers of chaos. The horse figurines with the sun discs on their foreheads which have been found in Jerusalem can be seen to represent Yahweh's horses.

2 Kings 23:11 indicates that horses were part of the official cult of Judah. It reports that king Josiah took away "the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun from the entrance of the temple of Yahweh to the chamber of Nathan-melek" and also burned the chariots of the sun. This verse is not discussing cult objects belonging to some form of popular cult.¹²⁰ The kings of Judah had dedicated these horses to Yahweh's temple. This means that they were expressions of the official cult of Yahweh in the kingdom of Judah. 2 Kings 23:11 is also clear evidence that these horses were part of an old Jerusalemite Yahweh tradition. They cannot be seen as innovations of king Manasseh, as is common practice. The kings of Judah had made these horses for the sun.

The concentration of horse figurines in Jerusalem may suggest that Yahweh's official state worship as a solar deity was especially strong in the nation's capital and perhaps stronger than in Samaria. A great many of the Jerusalemites were probably government employees in some capacity, and as such, would have been more involved with the established official religion than with any so-called popular religion. They may also have looked upon themselves as representatives of Judahite culture and its religion. At least they would have been more in touch with these phenomena than non-Jerusalemites. The attitude of the Jerusalemites, therefore, cannot be disassociated completely from that of the upper and ruling classes.

As a fitting conclusion to my discussion of Israelite and Judahite religion, I offer you an observation that A. T. Holland has made about female figurines. "The coiffured wig-type of moulded head for the pillar-bodied 'Astarte' type figurines with arms supporting their breasts" were probably made "locally within the Judean hill country".¹²¹ These figurines of local origin demonstrate the type of religious customs the Judeans had, and reveal that the "conservative" tradition to be found in Judah is quite different from the one

most OT scholars discuss.¹²² All these figures, and especially the ones of bulls, throw a new light on the religions of Judah and Israel. The OT writers have heavily criticized the northern kingdom of Israel for its bull worship and its fertility cult, but the amount of bull and Ashtarte figures found in Judah as compared with Israel speaks a different language. In this case, the "historiography" of the OT is very tendentious. It has turned things virtually upside-down. The archaeological finds have corrected the picture of the Israelite and Judahite religions which the texts have given us.

N O T E S

- 1 *Théorie des Objects*, Paris 1972, apud C. - A. Moberg, "Archaeology and Religion: What Can We Know?", *Temenos* 13/77, pp. 98 ff.
- 2 *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*, Chicago 1964, p. 175.
- 3 *Op. cit.*, p. 180.
- 4 For a critique of Oppenheim on this, see my review in *Journal of Religion* 46/66, pp. 72 f.
- 5 An example of this would be the finds from Kuntillet ^CAjrud from ca. 800 B.C. which will be treated below.
- 6 Cf. A. H. Jones, "The Philistines and their Hearth: Their Journey to the Levant", *JNES* 31/72, p. 347.
- 7 T. Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture*, New Haven & London 1982, pp. 289 ff.
- 8 R. Hachlili, "Figurines and Kernoi", in M. Dothan, *Ashdod II-III, The Second and Third Seasons of Excavations 1963, 1965*, (CAtiqot, Engl. Series IX-X), Jerusalem 1971, pp. 128 ff.
- 9 Hachlili, pp. 129 f. For the Mycenaean figurines, see G. Mylonas, "Seated and Multiple Figurines in the National Museum of Athens", *The Aegean and the Near East. Studies Presented to Hetty Goldman*, New York 1965, pp. 110 ff. Since we learn very little from the OT texts, it is impossible to find out in what ways the Canaanite gods were influenced by the newcomers or vice versa.
- 10 R. Hachlili, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
- 11 M. Dothan, *Ashdod II-III*, p. 21.
- 12 T. Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture*, p. 150.
- 13 H. Goldman, *Excavations at Gözlü Kale: Tarsus II*, Princeton 1956, pp. 235 ff., and figs. 344:35, 400:35.
- 14 See the discussion in T. Dothan, *The Philistines*, pp. 152 f.
- 15 Cf. O. R. Gurney, *Some Aspects of Hittite Religion* (Schweich Lectures 1976), Oxford 1977, plates VII-VIII. The woman playing the lyre and the bird motif (dove?) occur on a fresco on the northeastern wall of the throne room at Pylos, M. B. Lang, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia II*, Philadelphia 1969, p. 194 and plates 125 f. For Mesopotamia, see F. W.

- Galpin, *The Music of the Sumerians*, 1937, and especially the golden lyre from Ur, ANEP, fig. 193.
- 16 Cf. B. S. J. Isserlin, "Psalm 68 verse 14: an Archaeological Gloss", *PEQ* 103/71, pp. 5 ff.
- 17 Cf. M. Pope, *Song of Songs. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible 7C), Garden City, N.Y., 1977, pp. 399 f.
- 18 See A. Mazar, "Qasile, Tell", *EAEHL* IV, p. 971.
- 19 M. Dothan, "Ashdod. Preliminary Report on the Excavations 1962/63", *IEJ* 14/64, pp. 85 f., and M. Dothan & N. D. Freedman, *Ashdod I. First Season of Excavations 1962* (Atiqot VII), Jerusalem 1967, pp. 132 f. The *kernoi* are not of Palestinian origin, but point to the Aegean World.
- 20 Cf. M. Dothan, *Ashdod II-III*, pp. 136 ff. Consult also R. Hachlili in *Ashdod II-III*, pp. 128 ff.
- 21 See Elihu Grant, *Rumeileh being Ain Shems Excavations (Palestine)*, Part III, Haverford 1934, Pl. XXIV and fig. 4, no. 417, and see also p. 68.
- 22 G. E. Wright maintains that the city was under the "political and economic domination of the Philistines, despite its Israelite population", "Beth-Shemesh", *EAEHL* I, Jerusalem 1975, p. 252. He does not give any support for his claim that the population was Israelite. When we do not know, it might be best to suggest that it was indigenous.
- 23 K. M. Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land*, New York & Washington 1970, pp. 252 ff.
- 24 The mouse could also be associated with the cult of Asklepios, who has been seen to represent an aspect of Apollo as "the procreative Apollo" or the "effulgent Apollo". See, for instance, C. Kerényi, *Asklepios. Archaetypal Image of the Physician's Existence*, tr. by R. Manheim (Bollingen Series LXV,3), New York 1959, p. 29.
- 25 Cf. J. Oestrup, "Smintheus", *Orientalische Studien Th. Nöldeke z. 70. Geburtstag*, tome II, Giessen 1906, pp. 865 ff. According to Oestrup Baal-Zebub in 2 Kgs. 1:2 could be seen as the Lord of flies and mice.
- 26 *CAH* II:2, p. 508. Cf. also A. Strobel, *Die spätbronzezeitliche Seevölkersturm* (BZAW 145), Berlin 1976, p. 115, Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* II, Baltimore 1966, p. 66.
- 27 For Caphtor still being Crete, see M. Astour's rev. of J. Strange ("Caphtor/Keftiu: A New Investigation", Leiden 1980) in *JAOS* 102/82, pp. 395 f.
- 28 J. B. Pritchard, *Recovering Sarepta. A Phoenician City*, Princeton 1978, pp. 10 f.
- 29 D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* II, Chicago 1927, p. 29, 587, cf. J. B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, Suppl., Princeton 1969, p. 534.
- 30 As to קנה, see P. Katz, "The Meaning of the Root קנה", *JSS* 5/54, pp. 126 ff., G. W. Ahlström, *Aspects of Syncretism in Israelite Religion*, Lund 1963, p. 74.
- 31 The phrase 𐤏𐤍𐤁𐤏 which occurs on a stela from Borj-Jedid in Tunisia (KAI 81) is probably from Carthage's later pre-Roman period. It was found in an unstratified context. The *blbm* could refer to the goddess as coming from Lebanon, but it may equally well refer to the hill (of chalk) where the temple could have been built, thus Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, p. 99.

- 32 For the names of the Phoenician deities, see Donner and Röllig, *KAI*, texts 1 ff.
- 33 *ANEP*, fig. 486, cf. S. Moscati, *The World of the Phoenicians*, New York & Washington (1968), 1970, p. 54 and pl. 13.
- 34 Moscati, p. 56; see also pl. 7.
- 35 J. B. Pritchard, *Recovering Sarepta*, pp. 131 ff., and see fig. 127, cf. also M. Ottosson, "Sarepta under fenicisk tid", *SEA* 45/80, pp. 40-49.
- 36 Cf. S. Moscati, *The World of the Phoenicians*, pp. 137 ff. F. O. Hvidberg-Hansen identifies Tanit with ^cAnath. He considers Ashtarte and ^cAnath to be two related goddesses who merged into one in Hellenistic time and became Atargatis. He argues that Tanit and Ashtarte are both mentioned on the same stela from Carthage, but as different goddesses receiving sacrifices, *La Déesse TNT*, Copenhagen 1979, pp. 51 ff. Since there is no epigraphic evidence from Carthage before the 6th cent. B.C., one may conclude that the separation of Tanit and Ashtarte into two different goddesses is a later phenomenon. For Tanit in Phoenicia, cf. M. Dothan, "A Sign of Tanit from Tel ^cAkko", *IEJ* 24/74, pp. 43-49. See also the discussion in M. L. Barré, *The God-List in the Treaty Between Hannibal and Philip V of Macedonia. A Study in Light of the Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Tradition*, Baltimore & London 1983, pp. 58 ff.
- 37 Pritchard, *op. cit.*, pp. 140 ff.
- 38 Pritchard, p. 143. For a discussion on different styles of ivories, see Irene J. Winter, "Is there a South Syrian Style of Ivory Carving in the Early First Millennium B.C.?", *Iraq* 43/81, pp. 101-130.
- 39 For Phoenician cherubim thrones, see H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes", *Syria* 36/59, pp. 38 ff. Consult also O. Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst* (Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 84/85), Stuttgart 1977, pp. 15 ff.
- 40 See, for instance, M. Ottosson, *Temple and Cult Places in Palestine* (Boreas 12), Uppsala 1980.
- 41 G. W. Ahlström, "Another Moses Tradition", *JNES* 39/80, pp. 65 ff.
- 42 Cf. D. Diringer, *Le iscrizioni antico-ebraiche palestinesi*, Florence 1934, pp. 66 f., J. C. L. Gibson, *Syrian Semitic Inscriptions I*, Oxford (1971), 1973, p. 10.
- 43 H. Schrader, *Der verborgene Gott*, Stuttgart 1949, p. 28, cf. J. P. Brown, "The Sacrificial Cult and its Critique in Greek and Hebrew", *JSS* 24/79, pp. 159 ff., and 25/80, pp. 1 ff.
- 44 R. Dussaud, "Cultes cananéens aux sources du Jordain d'après les textes de Ras Shamra", *Syria* 17/36, pp. 283 ff. Cf. E. Nielsen, *Shechem*, Copenhagen 1955, p. 277, Ahlström, *Psalm 89*, Lund 1959, pp. 93 f. From a psychological point of view one may maintain that it would have been impossible for Jeroboam to proclaim that the bull statue was Yahweh if the people had never known him as such before.
- 45 G. W. Ahlström, *Royal Administration and National Religion in Ancient Palestine* (Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East I), Leiden 1982. One cannot therefore draw the conclusion that Samaria was without religious importance for the nation of Israel, as H. Tadmor has done, "On the History of Samaria in the Biblical Period", *Eretz Shomron* (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1972, pp. 67 ff.
- 46 "Excavations at Tell Qasîle, 1973-1974", *IEJ* 25/75, p. 88. See also *id.*, *Excavations at Tell Qasîle, I: The Philistine Sanctuary. Architecture and Cult Objects* (Qedem 12), Jerusalem 1980, pp. 75 f.

- 47 Cf. my article, "An Israelite God Figurine from Hazor", *Orientalia Suecana* XIX-XX, 1970-71, pp. 54-62.
- 48 Y. Yadin, *Hazor. The Discovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible*, New York 1975, pp. 188 f., cf. *Hazor* III-IV, p. CLXXVI:24.
- 49 Yadin counts with both possibilities, *Hazor*, 1975, p. 189.
- 50 This terracotta head should, according to Yadin (*Hazor*, 1975, pp. 145 f., n. 1), represent the god Hadad. Since the head was found in an Israelite stratum, a more logical conclusion would be that it represents a horse of Yahweh, showing us that Yahweh also had solar characteristics.
- 51 Cf. the incense altar from area H, stratum Ia, Y. Yadin, *Hazor. The Head of all those Kingdoms, Joshua 11:10* (Schweich Lectures 1970), London 1972, Pl. XIX.
- 52 See, for instance, A. Rohr von Sauer, "The Cultic role of the Pig in Ancient Times", *In Memoriam Paul Kahle*, ed. by M. Black and G. Fohrer (BZAW 103), Berlin 1968, pp. 202 ff.
- 53 Lucian, *De Dea Syria*, LIV.
- 54 J. A. Callaway, "The Fifth Campaign at Balaṭah (Shechem)", *BASOR* 180/65, p. 11, cf. P. W. Lapp, *The Tale of the Tell*, ed. by Nancy Lapp, Pittsburg 1975, p. 98.
- 55 These astragali were of the domesticated pig, see O. Tufnell, *Lachish* III, London 1953, pp. 62 f., 187, D. M. Bate in *Lachish* III, p. 410 f., and G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, Philadelphia & London (1957), 1966, p. 171.
- 56 Y. Yadin *et al.*, *Hazor* II, Jerusalem 1960, p. 50, cf. pl. CLXXIII.
- 57 Yadin, *Hazor. The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel*, pp. 181 f.
- 58 S. Angress in Y. Yadin *et al.*, *Hazor* II, pp. 166-172. O. Tufnell notes that "curiously enough, the domestic pig is best represented in the deposits" at Tell ed-Duweir, *Lachish* III, p. 63. For domesticated pigs at MBII Tirzah, see M. D. Fowler, "Cultic Continuity at Tirzah?", *PEQ* 113/81, pp. 27 ff.
- 59 For the dog and pig in Isa. 66:3 f., see J. M. Sasson, "Isaiah LXVI 3-4a", *VT* 26/76, pp. 199 ff.
- 60 See A. Biran, "Tel Dan Five Years Later", *BA* 43/80, pp. 168 ff. He understood the olive press to be a "cult installation" for some sort of water libation rites. He did not think that it was an olive press, even though some typical stone weights for the press beam were found, "The Discoveries at Tel Dan", *IEJ* 30/80, pp. 91 ff., fig. 5 and pl. 8.
- 61 A. Biran, *BA* 43/80, pp. 168 ff.
- 62 Ahlström, *Royal Administration*, pp. 66 ff. For the *bāmāh* problem, consult W. B. Barrick, *The Word BMH in the Old Testament* (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago), 1977, and also his "What do we really know about 'High Places'?", *SEA* 45/80, pp. 50-57.
- 63 For Phoenician religious influences at Dan, see also F. F. Hvidberg, *Weeping and Laughter in the Old Testament*, Leiden & Copenhagen 1962, pp. 84 f.
- 64 For temple platforms in Phoenicia in the Persian period, see M. Dunand, "Byblos, Sidon, Jerusalem. Monuments apparentés des temps achéménides", *SVT* 17/69, pp. 64 ff.
- 65 Cf. K. M. Kenyon, "New Evidence on Solomon's Temple", *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*, tome XLVI, fasc. 9, Beyrouth 1970, pp. 139 ff. The

- Platform at Dan seems to be too small to have held a temple and courtyard with an altar, as the Solomonic platform did.
- 66 "Tel Dan", *BA* 37/74, pp. 45 f. One should note, however, that the text in 1 Kgs. 22:10 refers to a threshing floor where thrones had been placed.
- 67 V. Karageorghis, Jennifer Webb, Stella Lubsen-Admiraal, "Kition, Cyprus. Excavations in 1976, 1977", *Journal of Field Archaeology* 5/78, pp. 105 ff. We could also refer to the temple on the other side of the western wall of the MB Northwest Gate at Shechem, see W. G. Dever, "The MBIIC Stratification in the Northwest Gate Area at Shechem", *BASOR* 216/74, pp. 31 ff., and fig. 2.
- 68 For the divine assembly, see my book *Psalm 89*, pp. 57 ff., and my article "Heaven on Earth — at Hazor and Arad", in *Religious Syncretism in Antiquity*, ed. by B. A. Pearson, Missoula, Montana, 1975, pp. 79 f. Cf. also G. Westphal, *צבא השמים*, *Orientalische Studien, Festschrift Th. Nöldeke II*, 2nd ed., edited by C. Bezold, Giessen 1906, pp. 719-28.
- 69 See Y. Aharoni, "Excavations at Ramat Rahel", *BA* 24/61, pp. 106 f., and fig. 9.
- 70 Cf. Amos 7:13.
- 71 Aharoni, "Arad: Its Inscriptions and Temple", *BA* 31/68, p. 19.
- 72 Cf. my article "Heaven on Earth — at Hazor and Arad", pp. 80 ff. for further comments.
- 73 See Y. Yadin *et al.*, *Hazor I*, Jerusalem 1958, Pl. XXIX.
- 74 R. Amiran, "The Lion Statue and the Libation Tray from Tell Beit Mirsim", *BASOR* 222/76, p. 31.
- 75 R. C. Haynes, *Excavations in the Plain of Antioch, II: The Structural Remains of the Later Phases* (OIP 95), Chicago 1971, pp. 53 ff., pls. 80 f.
- 76 Cf. *ANEP*, fig. 530, and D. Ussishkin, "A Neo-Hittite Base from Cyprus", *Archaeology* 25/72, pp. 304 f.
- 77 R. Amiran, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
- 78 Amiran, pp. 32 ff. Here one could also compare with a shallow bowl of stone (now in the Reber Collection, Lausanne) with four lion heads on the rim, see H. Th. Bossert, *Altsyrien* (Die ältesten Kulturen des Mittelmeerkreises III), Tübingen 1951, figs. no. 763:1,2.
- 79 Cf. *ANEP*, figs. 522 and 518, see also figs. 486, 470-474.
- 80 1 Chr. 28:5 and 29:33 state that Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh. This could mean that Solomon, as the "divine" king at certain occasions — as his enthronement — was seated on Yahweh's throne in the temple, cf. Ps. 110:1.
- 81 W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*, Garden City, N.Y., 1968, pp. 194 f., R. Amiran, *BASOR* 222/76, p. 39.
- 82 Amiran, p. 39.
- 83 Cf. Albright, *EAEHL* I, Jerusalem 1975, pp. 171 ff.
- 84 "Israelitisk religion", (rev. article of H. Ringgren, *Israelitische Religion*, 1963), *SEA* 28-29/1963-64, p. 147.
- 85 W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, s.v.
- 86 E. Ullendorf renders "lion-figure", "The Moabite Stone", *Documents from*

Old Testament Times, ed. by D. W. Thomas, London 1958, p. 198.

- 87 The term ארמל would then be a defective spelling of ארמל, so J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* I, pp. 79 f., ארמל being the lion. If this is right, ארמל would be a podium for a deity statue. The use of 'ari'el in Isa. 29:1 f., as referring to Jerusalem would then be understood as Jerusalem being a deity podium.
- 88 For Dod as a deity name, see, among others, S. R. Driver, *Notes on the Hebrew text of the Books of Samuel*, Oxford 1890, p. XCI, Donner and Röllig, *KAI* II, p. 175, Ahlström, *Royal Administration*, p. 14 (with lit.).
- 89 "Did Yahweh have a Consort?", *The New Religious Inscriptions from Sinai*, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 5/79, pp. 33 f.
- 90 Darrell Lance has advocated that ^CAjrud was a pilgrimage station *en route* to Mt. Sinai (private communication). While this is possible, it is a less likely explanation for the site's function. We do not know exactly where Mt. Sinai was located and neither do we know about any pilgrimages to this place as being commonly made by Israelites and Judahites. As far as we know, Sinai was not even the goal of Jewish pilgrims in the intertestamental period. "Mt. Sinai" as a pilgrimage site is a Christian innovation. The present tradition for its location in the southern part of the Sinai peninsula is no older than the 4th cent. A.D. Even if 1 Kgs. 19:1 ff. is a tradition about Elijah's journey to the divine mountain of Horeb, it is not proof that pilgrimages were undertaken by the peoples of Israel and Judah.
- 91 Y. Aharoni, "The Trial Excavations of the 'Solar Shrine' at Lachish", *IEJ* 18/68, pp. 157 ff.
- 92 Its location is close to the Hellenistic temple, the so-called Solar Shrine. See Aharoni, *Lachish V: The Sanctuary*, pp. 26 ff., and D. Ussishkin, "Excavations at Tel Lachish - 1973-1977", *Tel Aviv* 5/78, p. 92.
- 93 "Kuntillet ^CAjrud. An Israelite Religious center in Northern Sinai", *Expedition* 20:4, 1978, pp. 50 ff.
- 94 Cf. E. Stern, "New Type of Phoenician Style Decorated Pottery Vases from Palestine", *PEQ* 110/78, pp. 11 ff.
- 95 Chrystal-M. Bennett, "Excavations at Buseirah, Southern Jordan, 1973: Third Preliminary Report", *Levant* 7/75, p. 14.
- 96 Z. Meshel, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 5/79, pp. 27 ff.
- 97 Meshel, p. 33.
- 98 This form of *dalet* also occurs on the Mesha stone.
- 99 Consult L. G. Herr, *The Scripts of Ancient Northwest Semitic Seals*, Missoula, Montana 1978. Cf. J. Naveh, *Early History of the Alphabet. An Introduction to West Semitic Epigraphy and Palaeography*, Jerusalem & Leiden, 1982, p. 66.
- 100 "New Light on Israelite Religion: The Implications of the Inscriptions from Kuntillet ^CAjrud", *ZAW* 94/82, pp. 2-20.
- 101 "Some Remarks on Prophets and Cult", *Transitions in Biblical Scholarship*, ed. by J. C. Rylaarsdam, Chicago 1968, pp. 117 f.
- 102 See the discussion in my book, *Royal Administration and National Religion in Ancient Palestine*, pp. 2 ff.
- 103 *Biblical Archaeology Review* 5/79, p. 31.

- 104 *ZAW* 94/82, p. 18, and consult Ahlström, *Aspects of Syncretism in Israelite Religion*, pp. 50 ff.
- 105 *Biblical Archaeology Review* 5/79, p. 27. He also characterizes Baal and Asherah as "pagan" deities, even though they were both worshipped in the official temple at Jerusalem, which, of course, makes them Israelite deities. Methodologically, the word "pagan" should not be applied to OT religious phenomena. It has no specific religious or devaluative meaning before the time of the early Church.
- 106 From an investigation of the textual material, I concluded many years ago that Asherah was an Israelite goddess, *Aspects of Syncretism*, pp. 50 ff. As to the supposed reading of the name Asherah in the tomb inscription of Khirbet el-Qôm, see S. Mittmann, "Die Grabinschrift des Sängers Uriahu", *ZDPV* 97/81, pp. 139 ff.
- 107 See Z. Meshel, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 5/79, p. 34, and *Kuntillet ^CAjrud: A Religious Centre from the Time of the Judean Monarchy on the Border of Sinai* (Israel Museum Catalogue 175), Jerusalem 1978.
- 108 For גַּרְמַת "garment", read by the LXX^L as στολάς, cf. H. Gressmann, "Josia und das Deuteronomium", *ZAW* 42/24, pp. 325 f., and J. Gray, *I & II Kings*, Philadelphia (1964), 1970, p. 730.
- 109 Discussing industrial activities at holy places L. E. Stager and S. R. Wolff mention not only these linen from ^CAjrud but also the many loom-weights and spindle whorls found in store-jars close to the "Cultic Structure" at Ta^Canak, "Production and Commerce in Temple Courtyards: An Olive Press in the Sacred Precinct at Tel Dan", *BASOR* 243/81, p. 98. Cf. P. W. Lapp, "The 1968 Excavations at Tell Ta^Cannek", *BASOR* 195/69, p. 47. Loom-weights have also been found in a cultic area at Megiddo (10th century B.C.), see Lapp, "Taanach by the Waters of Megiddo", *BA* 30/67, p. 25.
- 110 See J. W. Crofoot, K. M. Kenyon, and E. L. Sukenik, *The Buildings at Samaria*, London 1942, p. 22.
- 111 "Excavations at Ramat Raḥel", *BA* 24/61, pp. 98 ff., 107, and *Excavations at Ramat Raḥel. Seasons 1959 and 1960*, Rome 1962, pp. 41 f.
- 112 *Digging up Jerusalem*, New York & Washington 1974, pp. 137 f. Cf. T. A. Holland, "A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines, with Special Reference to Jerusalem: Cave 1", *Levant* 9/77, p. 136.
- 113 Holland, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
- 114 Holland, pp. 121-155. Holland sees these figurines as an "outward expression" of popular religion without telling us how he came to that conclusion, p. 134.
- 115 Recent excavations through 1980 have increased the number of figurines found in Jerusalem by about 500 more (Y. Shiloh, oral communication).
- 116 Cf. Ahlström, *Aspects of Syncretism*, pp. 50 ff.
- 117 K. M. Kenyon, *Digging up Jerusalem*, pp. 141 ff.
- 118 So also Kenyon, p. 142.
- 119 For the solar characteristics of Yahweh, see Ahlström, *Psalms* 89, pp. 85 ff.
- 120 It is almost impossible to give a picture of popular cult(s) in Jerusalem, a city which was a capital and thus one may assume that most of the inhabitants were mainly influenced by the official religion of the state.
- 121 *Levant* 9/77, p. 131.

- 122 J. Bright, for instance, talks about a "stable cultic tradition" which he thinks preserved an old pure Yahwistic faith, *A History of Israel*, 2nd ed., Philadelphia 1972, p. 277 (3rd ed. 1981, p. 279).

