Israel's Kin Across the Jordan: A Social History of the Ammonites in the Iron Age II (1000–500 BCE)

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANET *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton, 1969.

BHS *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia.* Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1983.

CAD *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. Chicago, 1956–.

CAI *A Corpus of Ammonite Inscriptions*. W. E. Aufrecht. Lewiston, NY, 1989.

COS *The Context of Scripture*. Edited by W. W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997–2002.

DH Deuteronomistic History

ET Versification of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament according to English Translations.

HALOT *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. Study ed. 2 vols. Leiden, 2001.

KAI *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften.* H. Donner and W. Röllig. 2nd ed. Wiesdbaden, 1966–1969.

LCL Loeb Classical Library

LXX Septuagint. The collective name for the Greek versions of the Old Testament.

MT Masoretic Text. The traditional text of the Hebrew Bible as represented in *BHS*.

OAN Oracles Against the Nations.

TDOT *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H.-J. Fabry. Translated by J. T. Willis. 15 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–2006.

WSS *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals.* N. Avigad and B. Sass. Jerusalem, 1997.

Abbreviations of Biblical Books

Gen	Genesis
Exod	Exodus
Lev	Leviticus
Num	Numbers
Deut	Deuteronomy
Josh	Joshua
Judg	Judges
Ruth	Ruth
1–2 Sam	1–2 Samuel
1–2 Kgs	1–2 Kings
1–2 Chr	1–2 Chronicles
Ezra	Ezra

Neh	Nehemiah
Esth	Esther
Job	Job
Ps/Pss	Psalm/s
Prov	Proverbs
Eccl	Ecclesiates
Song	Song of Songs
Isa	Isaiah
Jer	Jeremiah
Lam	Lamentations
Ezek	Ezekiel
Dan	Daniel
Hos	Hosea
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obad	Obadiah
Jonah	Jonah
Mic	Micah
Nah	Nahum
Hab	Habakkuk
Zeph	Zephaniah
Hag	Haggai
Zech	Zechariah
Mal	Malachi

Apochryphal/Deuterocanonical Books

Jdt	Judith
1–2 Macc	1–2 Maccabees

Works of Flavius Josephus

Ag. Ap.	*Against Apion*
Ant.	*Jewish Antiquities*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Ammonites, or literally "the sons of Ammon," are best known from the biblical story of Abraham's nephew Lot in Gen 19. After fleeing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot settled in the hills with his daughters. Fearing that they would not preserve the family line because there were no men around, the daughters concoct a plan to get their father drunk and have sex with him. This they did successfully twice and both daughters became pregnant. The daughters eventually gave birth to two boys who became the ancestors of two Transjordanian peoples. The first boy was called Moab and became the ancestor of the Moabites, and the second was called ben-ʿAmmi and became the ancestor of the *bĕnê ʿammôn*, "the sons of Ammon" or "Ammonites."

While the biblical narratives cast Ammonite genealogical origins back into the hoary past, the extant sources for Ammonite history date to the first millennium, and especially to the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods (ca. 750–500 BCE). During this time of two hundred and fifty years, the societies of the southern Levant underwent significant changes; some were destroyed, while others were opened up to new opportunities and influences that would alter their societal trajectory. The Ammonites were no exception. While their history extends back earlier than the late eighth through sixth centuries BCE, the archaeological and epigraphic evidence points to significant economic, political, and social changes during this time. The present study focuses on

this period in an effort to understand and explain these changes in light of imperial practice. By designating it a social history, the author means a mode of investigation that has as "its expressed desire to examine and reveal the interplay among economics, politics, and culture" within their historical contexts and using all available intellectual tools (Smith 2003: 165–6).

After introducing the Ammonites, this chapter reviews major contributions to the history of the Ammonites. It will become visible that the lines of scholarly interpretation are influenced in important ways by the assumptions the scholars make about biblical texts and what historical data they might preserve. It will also become visible that more recent scholarly contributions explicitly recognize the small scale of Ammonite society and the importance of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires in Ammonite history. The chapter then clarifies the use of key terms in this dissertation and provides an overview of its contents.

1.1 The Ammonites: Who they are and Where they Lived

"Ammonite" is an English gentilic form that refers to a group of people who lived in and around the modern city of Amman, Jordan, and most clearly attested from the late eighth through sixth centuries BCE. The fullest attested form of their name is "the sons/children of Ammon," which is rendered in a local inscription dated to about 600 BCE as *bn ʿmn* (*CAI*, no. 78:2, 3), and in the Hebrew Bible as *bĕnê ʿammôn*. Neo-Assyrian inscriptions from the late eighth and seventh centuries BCE most consistently render the name using the Assyrian word *bīt*, "house" followed by some form of *am-ma-na*, "Amman" depending on context. The designation in Assyrian literally means "the house of Amman," an indication that the Assyrians perceived the Ammonites to be organized under some kind of dynastic rule. The consonance between the three

sources—local epigraphic, Hebrew Bible, and Neo-Assyrian inscriptions—underscores that when speaking about the Ammonites, one is speaking of a *sociopolitical group*, and not simply a place. This study will therefore focus on the group. However, sociopolitical groups inhabit a particular space and this space plays an important element in the history of the group. While it is not possible to delimit precisely Ammonite territory, they were centered in and around the modern city of Amman (see Chapter 2 and Appendix A for a map). The dual reality of a sociopolitical group in a particular territory leads to different ways of referring to the Ammonites, and the present study will not attempt to define their use too rigidly. Generally, this study uses "the Ammonites" as the operative designation, but even in the biblical sources and in some Assyrian texts one finds references to "Ammon." This seems to reflect the reality that the Ammonites were more than just a group of people; they lived in a certain area and had an existence permanent enough that the area and the people could be referred to together as Ammon. Thus, while preferring "the Ammonites," this study also regularly uses "Ammon" as shorthand for the same sociopolitical reality. When referring to the geographic space, this study prefers the term "Amman Plateau."

1.2 Research on Ammonite History

1.2.1 Nelson Glueck

Beginning in the 1930's, Nelson Glueck surveyed most of the area that is encompassed by the present-day Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Much of his energy focused on Moab and Edom (Glueck 1934, 1935), but he also surveyed the area around Amman and to the north (Glueck 1939, 1951). Glueck's survey reports name and describe a large number of sites and enable him to propose a broad outline of the settlement of the country from the Neolithic to the Roman Period and beyond.

Glueck's view of Ammonite society largely follows his views on Moabite and Edomite society reported in his survey publications (Glueck 1934, 1935) as well as his popular synthesis of Transjordanian archaeology (Glueck 1970).[1] In his view, the peoples of Transjordan—Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and the biblical Amorites—moved in to the area at the end of the fourteenth century or beginning of the thirteenth century. Before these Semitic peoples arrived, the area had been occupied for about six hundred years by semi-nomadic peoples. The newly arrived Semites either drove the nomads out or absorbed them and subsequently established a settled civilization that flourished between the thirteenth and sixth centuries (Glueck 1939: 268–9; 1970: 157–161).[2] A quote from his popular synthesis is representative of the position he developed concerning the Iron Age societies of the Transjordan:

> The main period of their development extended between the thirteenth and the sixth centuries B. C.[3] They became highly advanced, strongly organized, internally well integrated kingdoms. The land was dotted with well built stone villages and towns. The borders of their kingdoms, which can now be accurately fixed, were fortified by strong fortresses, built usually on eminences and commanding a view of each other. Their agriculture was intensive, their pottery well-made, their commerce sensibly ordered, their literature in all probability of no mean order, if one may draw inferences from the inscription of Mesha or the background of the Book of

[1] The earlier version of this book (Glueck 1940) received a few updates in the 1970 version, but contains mostly the same text.

[2] This interpretation also appears in various forms throughout his discussion of specific sites in each of his survey volumes. On Ammon one can also consult the preliminary form of his survey (Glueck 1937b).

[3] In his earlier publications, Glueck states that the height of the Transjordanian polities was the thirteenth through *eighth* centuries BCE and that they began to decline in the eighth century, only to reach their final demise in the sixth century (Glueck 1934: 82–3; Glueck 1935: 138–9; Glueck 1939: 269; Glueck 1940: 128). This was based on his understanding of the pottery he collected but also on his understanding of the history of the region. In his survey reports on Moab and Edom he mentions Israelite, Judean, Assyrian, and Babylonian aggression as degrading and eventually destroying these two polities (Glueck 1934: 82–3; Glueck 1935: 138–9). The ensuing years of archaeological discovery called for a modification of his views, which to his credit, he amended.

> Job. The wealth of these kingdoms, even under Assyrian domination, may be judged from the tribute paid to Esarhaddon. . . . The character and quality of these kingdoms was, in a word, very real, however scant the literary remains and memory of their existence have chanced to be (Glueck 1970: 161).

Key to Glueck's assessment of the material remains was his understanding that the societies that created them were well-developed and centralized. Given the limited amount of evidence available to Glueck, it becomes clear that the main lines of evidence pointing to "well-developed" societies were (in no order of importance): 1) pottery of similar type and quality to that in the Cisjordan; 2) the various megalithic stone structures he found throughout the area; 3) the biblical narratives (Glueck 1934, 1935, 1939; 1970: 138–91).

The pottery he picked up during surveys allowed him to date many of the structures he documented. When he found Iron Age pottery, he frequently dated the structures broadly to what he called the Iron Age I (ca. 1200–900 BCE) and the Iron Age II (ca. 900–600 BCE).[4] The quality of the pottery indicated to him that the inhabitants of the Transjordan had the same technological knowledge and skills of those in the Cisjordan and so must be on an equal societal plane (Glueck 1939: 266; 1970: 179–81).

Glueck's broad dating of the Iron Age pottery led him to conclude that many of the megalithic structures he located were built in the Iron Age I (e.g., Glueck 1939: 156–7). In many instances he also concluded that these structures had a specifically military function: to protect the borders of Ammon and the other Transjordanian polities from threats (Glueck 1939: 166–7, 246–7; 1970: 161–73). The building and

[4] The dating system he used changed somewhat as time went on. In his surveys and first edition of *The Other Side of the Jordan* (Glueck 1940), he referred to the Iron Age I and II as Early Iron Age I and II, with slightly different dates.

maintenance of such fortresses was seen as a sign of an advanced civilization (Glueck 1939: 163).

Underlying much of Glueck's interpretation of the material remains are references to the Hebrew Bible. Occasionally, he mentions the late date at which biblical texts were compiled, but this is characteristically overshadowed by an implicit understanding that the biblical texts accurately preserve historical data that antedate their writing by many centuries (e.g., Glueck 1939: 242–51; 1970: 138–9, 153). This becomes especially clear when he discusses the narrative in Num 20–21 and Deut 2 about the Israelite journey through Transjordan as well as the story of Jephthah's war against the Ammonites (Judg 12). The details of the narratives have two implications for Glueck's interpretation. First, because the biblical narrative portrays the Transjordanian peoples as organized and established polities when the Israelites journeyed through Transjordan, Ammon, Moab, and Edom must all have become kingdoms *before* Israel and Judah (Glueck 1939: 269; 1970: 154, 171–3).[5] Second, the geopolitical boundaries mentioned in the biblical narratives matched well with the locations of many of the megalithic buildings he located with Iron Age pottery. This led him to the conclusion that many of these buildings were fortresses that the Transjordanian kingdoms built to defend their borders (Glueck 1939: 243–4, 247–8; 1940: 128, 134, 139–40).[6]

[5] Glueck, like other scholars of the period accepted the essential historicity of the Exodus and dated it to the thirteenth century BCE (Glueck 1940: 146).

[6] This position is somewhat tempered in the 1970 edition of his popular work (e.g. Glueck 1970: 161–2, 167). This tempering is especially noticeable when he speaks about the megalithic round towers in and around Amman, which he had initially taken to be Iron Age (Glueck 1940: 147), but later had to accept that some or all of them dated later (Glueck 1970: 181).

1.2.2 George Landes

George M. Landes was the first scholar to investigate Ammonite history in its own right. In 1956, he completed his doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins under the tutelege of W. F. Albright. Landes' dissertation entitled *A History of the Ammonites* (Landes 1956) was never published, but two published articles summarize much of his work (Landes 1961, 1962). Landes' work relied significantly on Glueck's surveys, which were still the most extensive synthesis of Jordanian archaeology available. What he added to the conversation was his understanding of Semitic philology and a synthesis of finds from tombs that were excavated after Glueck's work. He was also responsible for creating a flowing historical narrative that placed Ammonite history within a broader geopolitical context.

The origins of the Ammonites, according to Landes, lay in the movement of peoples in the fourteenth–thirteenth centuries. The Ammonites, perhaps associated with Amorite populations, moved into the Transjordan and dispossessed the inhabitants they found there. The Ammonites conquered the inhabitants known from the Bible as the *zamzummîm*, a strong and tall people known elsewhere in the Bible as Rephaim (Deut 2:19–21). So, like the biblical Israelites, the Ammonites moved into the southern Levant, conquered the inhabitants and lived in a specific territory (Landes 1956: 18–35; 1962: 109–10). As for the origin of the Ammonite name ("the sons of Ammon"), Landes saw this as a clan or ancestor name emanating from a northern onomastic tradition, visible for example, at Ugarit (Landes 1956: 4–12; 1961: 67; 1962: 109).

Following Glueck, Landes stated that sedentary population began earlier in the Transjordan than in the Cisjordan (Landes 1956: 98, 161–2 n. 5; cf. Glueck 1937a: 29). Landes connected this to the biblical narratives about Israel's journey through the

Transjordan before conquering the Promised Land (e.g., Num 20:17–21; Num 21:24; Num 23–24). Since the Ammonites were there already when the Israelites arrived, they had obviously settled earlier than the Israelites.

As for the development of political organization, Landes thought that the Ammonites were the latest group to consolidate: the Amorites, Moabites, and Edomites coalescing into polities earlier (Landes 1956: 118–22; 1962: 110). Nonetheless, he reconstructed an Ammonite "state" in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BCE, primarily on the basis of passages in the book of Judges and 1 Sam that portray the Ammonites as a military adversary of the Israelites (e.g., Judg 3:13; 10–12; 1 Sam 14:47; 10:27–11:11). He also relied on Glueck's dating of the large round (*malfûf*) towers in and around the Amman Citadel to the thirteenth century. The organization needed for military fortification implied to Landes that Ammon had become a "state" (Landes 1956: 69–78; 1962: 110).[7]

Following Landes' narrative, the Ammonites became vassals to David and Solomon in the tenth century only to regain their independence sometime in the ninth century. During this time, the Ammonites probably benefitted from the trade opportunities created by Davidic control of the region (Landes 1956: 145–59; 1962: 110–11). From the breakup of the biblical Davidic kingdom until the onset of Neo-Assyrian rule in the second half of the eighth century, the Ammonites alternated between periods of autonomy and subservience to Israel, Judah, and the Arameans (Landes 1956: 227–52; 1962: 111).

[7] Although not part of his discussion of Ammon's origins and early political development, Landes suggests later that the Arabian caravan trade was probably functioning by the eleventh century and that the Ammonites were likely to have been involved (Landes 1956: 155).

The Neo-Assyrian Period saw the height of development in Ammon. This conclusion was relatively new since Glueck's early publications, which Landes followed, dated the apex of Transjordanian society to the thirteenth through eighth centuries (see footnote 3 above).[8] The main reasons for Landes' shift in emphasis was the discovery and excavation of several tomb groups in Amman that contained assemblages containing remains datable to the Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian periods. These tombs began to make clear that Neo-Assyrian domination had some positive effects on the economy of Ammon and especially so for the elite. Vassalage to the Assyrians enabled the Ammonites to participate fully in the Arabian caravan trade, and may have enabled them to expand their territorial control towards the Jordan River, especially since Israel and Aram-Damascus had been provincialized by the Assyrians (Landes 1956: 262–295; 1961; 1962: 111–12).

For Landes, the Ammonites' decline and fall began with the decline and fall of Neo-Assyrian control of the Levant in the last third of the seventh century. This allowed Arab tribes to roam freely and threaten areas along the edge of the desert like Ammon. With the coming of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the Ammonites may have become imperial subjects (cf. 2 Kgs 24:2). Whatever accord may have existed soon came unraveled as the Ammonites and the other polities of the southern Levant rebelled against Babylon (Landes 1956: 310, 314–19; 1962: 112). A punitive campaign against the Ammonites (and perhaps others) probably ensued. Landes points to Josephus, *Ant.* 10.9.7 as evidence of such a campaign as well as to Glueck's surveys, which concluded

[8] A peculiarity of Landes' dissertation is that at one place he states Glueck's view that Transjordanian society reached its height between the thirteenth and eighth centuries (Landes 1956: 117), but later identifies the Neo-Assyrian Period as the apex of societal development in Ammon (Landes 1956: 252; cf. Landes 1961; Landes 1962: 111–14). One can only guess that these views would have been reconciled had the dissertation been published. The two articles he wrote do not contain this curious discrepancy.

there was a settlement gap between the mid-sixth and third centuries BCE. The depopulation was perhaps the result of Neo-Babylonian deportations of rebels. In the place of the Ammonites, Arab nomads moved into the area and destroyed what remained of Ammonite political structures (Landes 1956: 320; 1962: 112–13).

This early period of scholarship on the Ammonites as represented by Glueck and Landes has several important characteristics some of which will see significant modification in later research. Most important is the dominant use of the biblical narratives—their details and chronology—in reconstructing a history of the Transjordan. Reliance on the biblical narratives characterized nearly all levels of interpretation in this period. Specifically, it is noticeable in their understanding of Ammonite origins amongst an invading Semitic population (similar to the Israelite Exodus but associated with the Amorites) in the Late Bronze Age. Likewise, the hypothesis of an early organization of a state in the Iron Age I and the claim that many of the megalithic buildings found in the area were built in the thirteenth or twelfth century as part of a fortification system were also rooted in a credulous view of the biblical narratives.

The emphasis on biblical narratives was the product of a very limited amount of archaeological evidence and of the penchant of biblical scholars following the Albrightian paradigm that assumed the antiquity and historical reliability of much of the biblical narrative. As this study will discuss, there is now a larger and better understood set of archaeological remains and advances in biblical scholarship that make extracting historical data from biblical narratives a more dubious enterprise. The ways that the new evidence and shifts in scholarship have played out in the interpretation of Ammonite history has been uneven and will be discussed in the following pages.

1.2.3 Ulrich Hübner

In his work, *Die Ammoniter: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte, Kultur und Religion eines transjordanischen Volkes im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, Ulrich Hübner charted a different track than Glueck and Landes. Taking advantage of more recent epigraphic and archaeological finds, and connecting them with a critical stance towards the biblical materials, Hübner arrived at a more nuanced picture of Ammonite history. Unlike Glueck and Landes, Hübner argues that biblical texts provide no reliable historical data with which to reconstruct Ammonite history in the Late Bronze Age (Hübner 1992: 163–4). Likewise, the few biblical texts reporting conflicts between the Ammonites and the Israelite leaders Jephthah and Saul (Judg 10:6–12:7; 1 Sam 1:1–11), preserve little of historical value except minor disputes between what he calls pre-state tribal societies[9] (Hübner 1992: 167–70). As a result, his reconstruction of the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I is dependent on the available archaeological evidence. According to Hübner, the evidence shows a small-scale version of the city-state system that was more prominent in the Cisjordanian highlands and coastal areas. Following the collapse of the Late Bronze Age, imported items became rare, but at the same time the small-scale village oriented sector of society grew. Hübner sees finds no evidence that the new settlers came to the area from outside as the archaeology highlights continuity and shows no evidence for foreign intrusions. Therefore, no invading Semites need be posited to explain the settling population (Hübner 1992: 159–67). Furthermore, because Hübner does not think the biblical texts contain reliable historical information about this period, there is no basis for the assertion that the Ammonites had a king and developed politically before the Israelites. In fact, it should be seen in exactly the

[9] "vorstaatlichen Tribalgesellschaften" (Hübner 1992: 168).

opposite way; Ammonite political formation was the result of Israelite pressure. If a *melek*, "king" existed in Iron I Ammon, it was not like the Iron IIB–C kingdoms of the southern Levant, but a tribal chiefdom (Hübner 1992: 236–7).

While critical of the Bible's portrayal of the wars of David against the Ammonites, Hübner cautiously accepts the idea that they became vassals to Israel during the United Monarchy (Hübner 1992: 170–6). Hübner suggests that this subjugation is what initiated the development of the Ammonite state, development which only begins to be visible in the ninth century after the end of the United Monarchy (Hübner 1992: 177, 180–1). During the ninth century and first part of the eighth century, Ammon developed further because of its niche existence along the border of Israel to the north and west, Moab to the south, and the nomads of the desert to the east (Hübner 1992: 184–6). It is during this time that Ammon achieved statehood, attended by a king, his administrative officials, and social stratification (Hübner 1992: 245).

In the late eighth century, the Ammonites became vassals to the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Because of their loyalty to the Assyrian overlords, a significant level of Assyrian influence is noticeable in the material culture. Their loyalty also led to relative economic prosperity and stability brought about by Assyrian protection (Hübner 1992: 192–6). The Neo-Babylonian Period brought with it significant turmoil amongst the small states of the southern Levant and the Ammonites were no exception to this. They were drawn into the intrigue and plans of Judah that are portrayed in the Hebrew Bible, and their territory was eventually subjugated and turned into a province sometime after Judah, perhaps in 582 BCE as indicated by Josephus (Hübner 1992: 198–206).

Hübner's work benefitted greatly from the increasing number of epigraphic and archaeological finds as well as reassessments of the archaeological record that appeared after Glueck's and Landes' work. This material points to the ninth, but especially the eighth century and later as a time of significant change in Ammon (see below Chapters 2 and 3), and thus Hübner emphasizes that period as an important stage in Ammonite political development. Hübner combined this new evidence with a more critical evaluation of the biblical texts, an evaluation that led him to dismiss as largely unhistorical the biblical texts that portray the Ammonites as part of Israel's earlier history. This difference in his interpretation, compared to the early phase of scholarship, shows how one's approach to the biblical texts can significantly alter one's understanding of Ammonite history. The contributions discussed in the next section underline this again, and illustrate how one's approach to the biblical texts can shape the models and conclusions that one reaches.[10]

1.2.4 Madaba Plains Project

Three scholars associated with the Madaba Plains Project, a long-term multi-site archaeological project in central Jordan, have contributed important studies on the history of the Ammonites. Øystein S. LaBianca and Randall W. Younker's jointly authored study (LaBianca and Younker 1995) and two of Younker's studies (Younker 1999b, 2003) focus on clarifying how and why the Ammonites emerged as a polity in the Iron Age I. They see the development of these polities in Iron Age Transjordan as a process linked to cycles of sedentarization and food system intensification, which are in turn shaped ecologically by the amount of rainfall; the northern part of Transjordan

[10] Dion recently penned a sketch of Ammonite history as part of the publications of the excavations at Tall Jawa (Dion 2003). In its main lines, it proposes an interpretation of Ammonite society much like Hübner's.

receives a more reliable annual rainfall, while the rainfall in the south is far less and unpredictable (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 402–3, 406–8). The formation of what they identify as Iron Age tribal kingdoms, LaBianca and Younker argue, began with the collapse of the Late Bronze Age that disrupted the economic networks in which the Transjordan was tied. The loss of this trade stimulated local farmers and craftsmen to fill the void of goods that previously were obtained through trade, and the process of agricultural intensification began. In addition, refugees from the lowlands of adjacent Cisjordan were probably assimilated into Transjordanian society in the Iron Age I. The absorption of this population led to a wider trade network and markets for textiles and agricultural goods, a move that led to further agricultural intensification. Finally, the arrival of the Philistines on the coast in the Iron Age I (ca. 1200 BCE) threatened the settled Cisjordanian population (the Israelites) who organized militarily under a king in response. Israel's own territorial ambitions soon caused the same response in the Transjordan (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 410–11; Younker 1999b: 206–9; 2003: 168–70). Key to their argument is the idea that sedentarization and the labor investment in agriculture created social inertia preventing a move back towards nomadism when external pressure was applied. Instead, the highlanders of Cis- and Transjordan had an independent economic foundation that enabled them to resist. And resist they did by forming tribal kingdoms of their own (Younker 1999b: 206–9; 2003: 168–70).

LaBianca and Younker define tribalism as "strong in-group loyalty based on variously fluid notions of common unilineal descent" (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 403). As such, tribes and tribalism are a cultural resource rather than a stage in an evolutionary trajectory. As they see it, this cultural resource has been a stable part of the history of the region from the Late Bronze Age up to the twentieth century CE

(LaBianca and Younker 1995: 403–5; Younker 1997: 238–9). Their argument for seeing tribes as the constitutive element of social organization appears to be based in part on ethnographic evidence from more recent history (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 405). However, Younker argues that literary traditions from the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 19:36–38; 25:19–34; 36) and the Mesha Stele, where various kinship groups seem to be mentioned, combined with the appearance of pillared houses, multiple-burial tombs, and broad-scale material cultural homogeneity that cross-cuts the Cis- and Transjordan, point to tribal social structure (Younker 1997: 242–5).

LaBianca and Younker are careful to note that the Transjordanian kingdoms of Ammon, Moab, and Edom lack features that would classify them as "true states." Such features include: 1) a high level of social complexity; 2) a diminished role for kinship; 3) a separate religious and political authority; 4) a standing army; 5) a significant percentage of the population in urban centers; 6) a pronounced settlement hierarchy; and 7) ethnic plurality and social difference (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 409; Younker 1997: 238). Thus, while tribal kingdoms may display some features associated with the states formed in Mesopotamia or Egypt (e.g., fortifications, monumental art and inscriptions, roads, cities, etc.), they lack the scale and centralized control that characterize these larger counterparts (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 409–10; Younker 1997: 239–42, 246).

While LaBianca and Younker's studies focus on the early part of Ammonite history, Larry G. Herr has contributed studies focusing on the last stages (Herr 1995, 1999).[11] In these articles, Herr focuses his attention on the administrative buildings

[11] Herr has also published a synthesis of the archaeology of the southern Levant in the Iron Age II (Herr 1997a), and coauthored a similar type of synthesis of the Transjordan in the Iron Age (Herr and Najjar 2001).

uncovered at Tall al-ʿUmayri and the associated growth of agriculturally oriented settlement in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. In brief, Herr argues that Ammonite political independence came to an end when Nebuchadnezzar subjugated the Ammonites in 582 BCE (here he relies on Josephus, *Ant.* 10.9.7). The region around ʿUmayri subsequently developed as a wine-producing region in order to pay tribute to the Babylonian overlord (Herr 1995: 124; 1999: 232). While this was the end of the independent polity of Ammon, Ammon continued as an administrative unit on into the Persian Period. Persian provincial status is indicated by the late sixth or early fifth century stamped jar handles found at ʿUmayri that are inscribed with *ʿmn*, "Ammon." These stamps seem to parallel the well-known *yh*(*w*)*d*, "Yehud" stamps from the Persian Period province of Judah (Herr 1995: 124–5; 1999: 233–4). Thus, according to Herr, Ammonite political independence was lost, but the Ammonites and much of their culture continued on (Herr 1999: 234–5).[12]

The interpretation of Ammonite history put forward by these three scholars brings a unique focus on the archaeology and has served to reorient the terminology scholars use to describe Ammonite society. Their terminology of "tribal kingdom" or "supra-tribal polity" enables them to qualify the scale and complexity of Ammonite society in a way that early studies of Glueck and Landes did not. Noticeable in LaBianca and Younker's reconstruction of the emergence of an Ammonite polity, which they see occurring in the Iron Age I, is a more credulous posture toward biblical narratives portraying early Israel's encounters with the Ammonites (Gen 19:38; Num 21:24–26;

[12] Lipschits' article on Ammon (Lipschits 2004) largely follows Herr's analysis, while adding some additional comparative observations based on his work in Judah.

Deut 2:19; Judg 11; Younker 1999b: 205, 207; 2003: 168–9).[13] If Hübner's work highlights the small-scale of Ammonite society and the questioning of biblical stories about the early history of the Ammonites, LaBianca and Younker's work keeps the scale small and provides a new framework within which to reinsert the same biblical texts.[14]

1.3 The Present Approach

The approach of this study to Ammonite history has several features. First, it focuses on the archaeological and epigraphic evidence as the two available primary sources. Although not the first study placing importance on archaeology and epigraphy, the prioritization of the data available from these sources is increasingly possible because of the greater number of excavations occurring on the Amman Plateau. Second, this study understands the biblical texts mentioning the Ammonites as secondary and not primary sources. That is to say, most of the biblical texts that mention the Ammonites were composed or brought to their final form after the events they portray would have occurred and thus do not have the same status as primary sources. The exception to this rule might be some parts of the book of Jeremiah. This critical approach is most akin to that of Hübner's history reviewed above. Third, it focuses considerable energy on the role that the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires played in stimulating economic, social, and political changes that are visible in the archaeological, epigraphic, and biblical sources. As part of the imperial focus, this study looks to the cross-cultural study of empires to help explicate the transformative role the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires had in changes in Ammonite society. Fourth,

[13] Although not explicitly referencing these passages, LaBianca and Younker's jointly written article assumes the storyline in their reconstruction (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 410–11).

[14] Lipiński recently authored a sketch of the Ammonites (Lipiński 2006: 295–318). It is not a linear history of the Ammonites, however, but rather a collection of philological and historical observations.

this study underscores the active role that local power brokers played in societal change. To a significant degree, the local power brokers were agents of change that funneled imperial power into local garb. Fifth, as the scholars associated with the Madaba Plains Project underline, the present work recognizes the importance of scale in discussing the history of a society that sits on the edge of a desert in the southern Levant. Scale thus informs the terminology used and the assessment of the importance of change to the local inhabitants. The result is a history that refocuses the scholarly discussion squarely on the late eighth through sixth centuries BCE as the key period of Ammonite sociopolitical and economic development, and on the social location of that development.

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1 Polity and State

At the outset, it seems advisable to define a few important terms that are used in the rest of the study. First, the sticky term "state" and the related "state formation." Unfortunately, the literature on the history of the southern Levant bandies these terms about on a regular basis.[15] In the present writer's view, one can use these terms to speak of the political formations of the southern Levant in the Iron Age if explicitly defined and applied with the societal scale in view. However, the practice adopted here is to speak of polities rather than states because the term "state" tends to imply larger scale and complexity than is actually attested in the inland regions of the southern Levant, and especially in the Transjordan. This study adopts the terms "polity" and "polity formation" as general descriptors of political organization without implied correlates

[15] Fortunately, a number of scholars have attempted to address the issue using a variety of approaches, some of which retain the terms state and state formation and others which replace it. E.g., Bienkowski 2009; Gottwald 2001; Master 2001; Routledge 2000; Routledge 2004; Schloen 2001; Steen and Smelik 2007; Younker 1997.

such as bureaucratic administration or monopoly on power. The present study thus uses "polity" to indicate a society organized with some form of functioning government. Furthermore, this study does not focus on identifying precisely when one can speak of a polity emerging on the Amman Plateau, but rather focuses on the level of sociopolitical complexity through time. So, for example, while this study finds very little evidence for significant political integration or complexity in the Iron Age I–IIA, there is no reason to deny that there was some level of political organization, even if only at the town level. This low-level of political organization can thus serve as the backdrop with which to view the changes taking place in the Iron IIB and IIC.

1.4.2 Core and Periphery

This study uses the terms "core" and "periphery" in discussing the relationship between the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires and the areas outside their immediate control. These terms are derived from the scholarly discourse on the world-system connected with Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). While Wallerstein used the concepts of core and periphery to explain how the modern capitalist world came to be, a number of scholars have adapted them for discussions of pre-capitalist societies (Algaze 2005; Chase-Dunn and Anderson 2005; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1991, 1997; Rowlands, Larsen, and Kristiansen 1987; Stein 1999). This study derives its use of the terms from the latter set of discussions, without however entering into the debates about precise definitions and application. The terms core and periphery are used here to designate the spatial relationship between the Ammonites and the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires as well as the differences in political, military, and economic power between them. Thus, Ammon is peripheral because it is on the far edge of existing empires, and because the empires dominate the relationship politically,

militarily, and economically. This aspect of domination in core/periphery relations is what Chase-Dunn and Hall call "core/periphery hierarchy" (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 36).[16]

For the present study, the focus of world-system analysis on analyzing change systemically is useful for orienting the level of analysis. As Chase-Dunn and Hall write, "changes in organization are not endogenous to individual societies. Rather they are a consequence of complex interactions among local, regional, societal, and global processes" (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 1). As this study will discuss in more detail, such an emphasis is crucial for highlighting the relationship between imperial rule and local changes in the southern Levant.

1.5 Plan of Study

Following the introduction, Chapters 2 through 4 survey the available sources for the Iron Age history of the Ammonites with an eye towards diachronic change. Chapter 2 surveys the archaeological remains from the Amman Plateau, highlighting the partial and scattered evidence from the Iron Age I–IIA (ca. 1200–900 BCE), and the much more robust evidence from Iron Age IIB–C (ca. 900–500 BCE). Chapter 3 surveys the epigraphic evidence for the Ammonites, which includes Neo-Assyrian royal and administrative documents as well as Ammonite inscriptions of various types (monuments, ostraca, seals). Chapters 2 and 3 show that the main evidence for Ammonite history clusters in the late eighth through sixth centuries BCE and indicates a significant transition from the Iron Age IIA to the Iron Age IIB–C.

[16] It is also arguable that the Ammonites, like the other small polities of the southern Levant, could be characterized as a semiperiphery that mediates the relationship between Near Eastern empires (e.g., Egypt and Assyria) or between Near Eastern empires and a more distant periphery (e.g., Assyria and Arabia; cf. Routledge 1996: 374–382). I do not take up these finer distinctions here.

Chapter 4 surveys the biblical and post-biblical textual evidence for the Iron Age history of the Ammonites. It problematizes these texts as sources for Ammonite social history based on the chronological separation of most of them from the events they report, and because of their tendency to create portraits of outsiders according to insider perceptions. The chapter finds that these texts are not a relevant source for Ammonite history before the late seventh century BCE. Information that is more reliable can be discerned for the late seventh and sixth centuries in the roughly contemporary sources from the Hebrew Bible.

Chapter 5 orients the main interpretive discussion of chapters 6 and 7 by investigating what is known about how the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires administered and interacted with Syro-Palestine. The discussion examines their imperial practices in four intertwined areas—politics and administration, economy, military, and ideology—in order to understand the new context into which the Ammonites were drawn. While military incursions are the most obvious practice of these empires, the evidence also illustrates the cultural and economic pressures and opportunities that the Ammonites faced in their bid for survival.

Chapter 6 examines Ammon's economy diachronically and shows how the late eighth through sixth centuries were a key period of growth and change. Taking into account the role of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires, the chapter examines the evidence for agropastoral production, craft production, and management. It also assesses Ammon's role in long-distance trade that extended from the Arabian Peninsula to much of the ancient Near East, and how the local elites took advantage of it to increase their own status and power.

Chapter 7 examines the changes that took place among the Ammonites during Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian rule. To set the context, it first discusses Ammonite society in the Iron Age I through the mid-eighth century BCE. It then moves on to discuss the changes in Ammonite society in the late eighth–sixth centuries BCE. This part of the chapter looks to recent investigations of empires and their role in stimulating changes in societies that exist in their periphery. The discussion of change is broken into four parts, social and political complexity, settlement intensity and complexity, economic changes, and religious changes.

The conclusion draws together the lines of evidence and interpretation in a final diachronic summary of Ammonite social history. It also provides a final opportunity to explain the role of the empire and local elite in shaping Ammon's societal trajectory. The study concludes with an excursus on the epigraphic and archaeological evidence for Neo-Babylonian political and administrative control of the Levant.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE AMMAN PLATEAU

This chapter surveys the archaeological remains from the region around Amman, Jordan, referred to hereafter as the Amman Plateau. The chapter begins with a brief survey of the geography, environment, and natural resources, then considers briefly the Iron Age I remains in order to set the context for the discussion of the Iron Age II. The more extensive discussion of the Iron Age II proceeds by considering the main excavated settlement mounds or *tells*, then tombs, other smaller sites, survey results, and important artifacts. The aim of this chapter is to lay out as clearly as possible the changes taking place on the Amman Plateau through the course of the Iron Age II. The interpretation of the archaeology in terms of societal development appears in the main interpretive chapters six and seven.

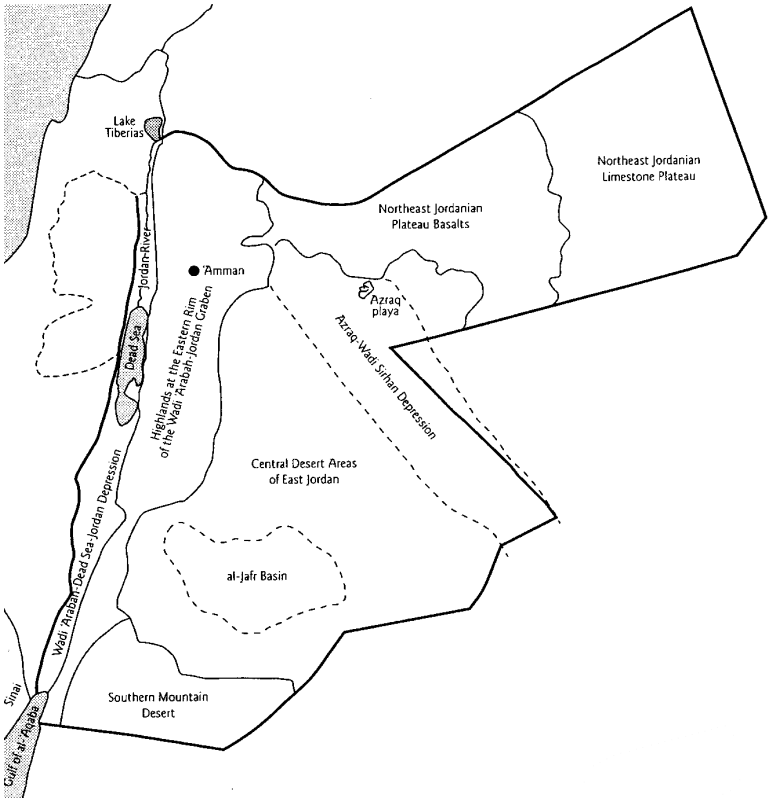
2.1 The Land[17]

2.1.1 Geography

The present state of evidence does not allow a precise delineation of socio-political boundaries of the Iron Age Ammonites. Nevertheless, available textual and archaeological evidence from the late eighth century on suggests a core area focused on what is now the modern city of Amman, Jordan and radiating outward to various extents depending on the geopolitical circumstances (MacDonald 2000: 157–70). This core Ammonite region lies within the highlands bounded on the east by the Northeastern Desert, the Azraq-Wadi Sirḥan Depression, and the Central Desert. The

[17] A map with site names appears at the end of this study.

descent to the Jordan Valley bounds it on the west (Map 2.1; Bender 1974: 6–11), the latter being part of a larger fault system running from Syria down to eastern Africa (MacDonald 2000: 27). The traditional and natural boundary of the Ammonites to the north is the Wadi az-Zarqa (biblical Jabbok). There is no natural boundary to the south, but a political boundary (however imprecise) may have existed somewhere north of Madaba in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE (Daviau 1997; Herr 1999: 221–2). The identification of this core area is a rough measure of the region inhabited by the ancient Ammonites, but does not imply that they necessarily controlled the whole area at all times.



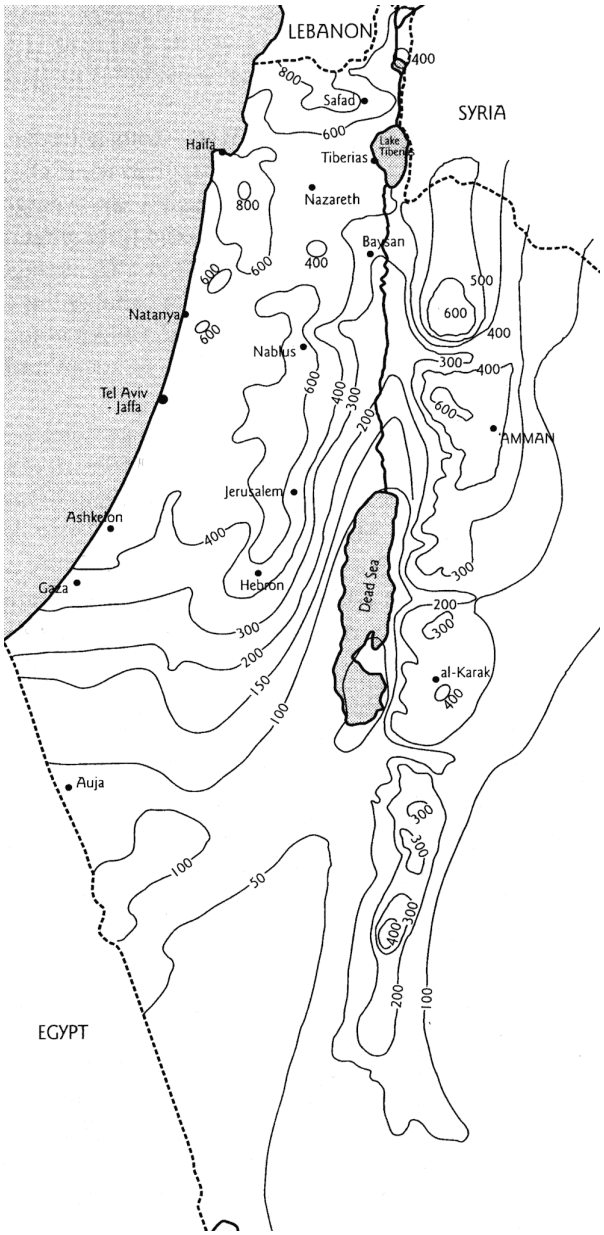
Map 2.1—Major Geomorphological Units of Jordan from MacDonald 2000: 24, fig. 2.

2.1.2 Environment and Natural Resources

Much of this region falls with the 300 mm isohyet (Map 2.2; Bender 1974: 11; MacDonald 2000: 31) and thus within the area where dry farming is possible (Issar

1995: 351). Several lines of evidence, including Dead Sea levels, Mediterranean Sea levels, pollen studies, and tree ring studies indicate that from about 1000 BCE to the turn of the era, a climate that was slightly drier than the previous period prevailed in the southern Levant and was similar to the present day climate (Frumkin et al. 1991; and see MacDonald 2000: 33–4 with literature).[18] While such a climate provided enough rainfall for successful dry-farming in average years, obtaining water for drinking, stock watering, and irrigating vegetable gardens is another problem altogether. Naturally occurring springs do exist, but most of these are in wadi bottoms and thus not always easily exploitable (Lacelle 1986b: 64). In the plateau area especially, wells were not practical because the aquifers are very deep below the surface (150 m or more) and thus not easily accessible for the ancients (Lacelle 1986b: 70).

[18] One may also consult the studies in the Hesban 2 volume (LaBianca and Lacelle 1986), especially chapters two and seven, for further discussion of the environment and reconstruction of the paleoenvironment.

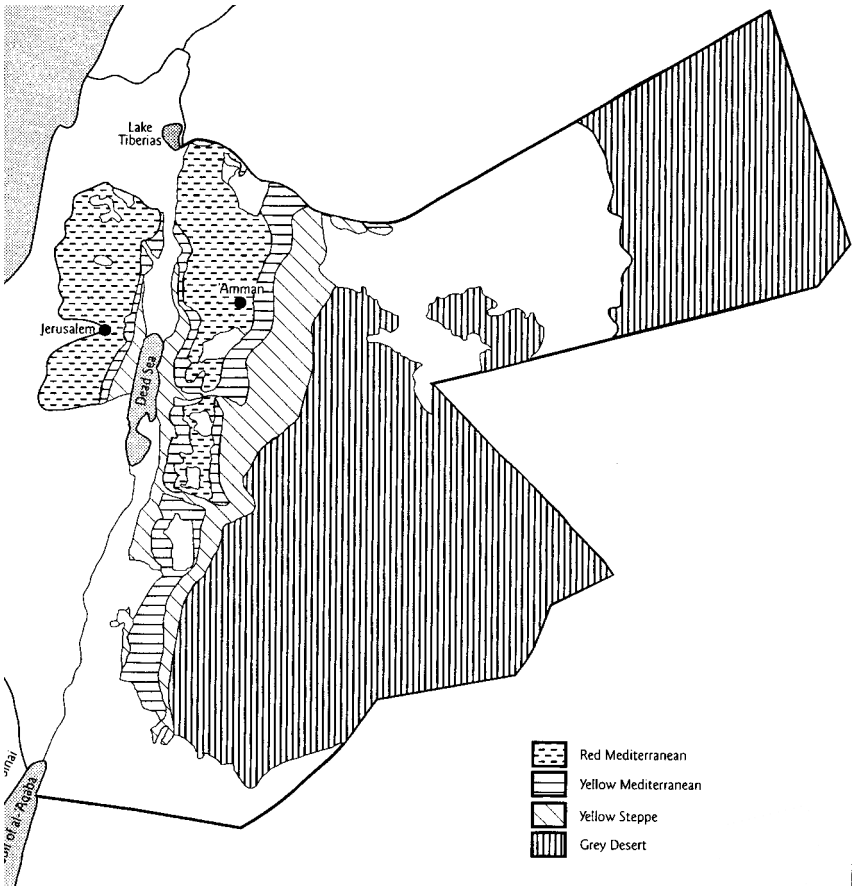


Map 2.2—Rainfall Map from MacDonald 2000: 32, fig. 4.

Despite the challenges in obtaining water, the archaeological record indicates that humans inhabited the area for thousands of years. Humans employed several technologies in order to deal with this problem, including cisterns, terraces, damming, and other means of diverting water for human use. Terracing is a particularly important technology because it helps slow runoff and capture water in the soil while at the same

time expanding available arable land (LaBianca 1990: 149). The surveys and excavations of the region discussed in this chapter provide ample evidence for each of these technologies, indicating both the need for and ability to invest in what are often labor-intensive endeavors.

Together with rainfall and water management practices, the other major factor affecting horticultural and agricultural efforts is the type of soil. The main soil type in the region surrounding Amman, to the south, west, and north is Red Mediterranean soil (Map 2.3). Further to the west in the descent to the Jordan River Valley and to the east of Amman are zones of Yellow Mediterranean soil (Map 2.3). Red Mediterranean soil retains water well, has a decent supply of nutrients needed to support plant life and is located in topographies that are reasonably accessible to humans (Lacelle 1986a: 53–7). Red Mediterranean soil is suitable for many crops, including grains, vegetables, and fruits in flat areas, as well as grapes, olives, and forestry-related products in hilly areas (Bender 1974: 189). Yellow Mediterranean soil is similar in composition to its red counterpart; however, its coarseness means that it does not retain water as well. Furthermore, due to its topographic location and consequent seepage, Yellow Mediterranean soil can be high in lime and salt, and low in nutrients needed for plants (Lacelle 1986a: 53). Nevertheless, Yellow Mediterranean soil can support grain and other crops if enough water is available. It is also suitable for grazing (Bender 1974: 189; Lacelle 1986a: 57).



Map 2.3—Soil Distribution in Jordan from MacDonald 2000: 35, fig. 5.

Other natural resources in the region of Ammon are somewhat limited. The ubiquitous rock outcroppings, mostly different types of limestone, were and are used for buildings of all types (Bender 1974: 172–3). Limestone is also a key component in the production of lime for plaster. Evidence for the production of lime comes from some thirty-five to forty sites in the hinterland of ʿUmayri that have been classified as limekilns (Christopherson 1991: 344). Though most of these seem to date to the Roman and Byzantine eras (Christopherson 1991: 349–51), the use of plaster in cisterns and reservoirs, such as the one found in the Iron Age strata at Ḥesban, suggests that some may have been in use during the Iron Age. The question of the extent of lime

production and use must remain open since most of the cisterns and kilns are difficult to date due to a lack of stratified remains.

Good quality clay usable for pottery production is available about 17 km west-northwest of Amman near modern Mahis (Bender 1974: 168). To what extent this was exploited in antiquity is not known. Likewise, other resources such as the salts of the Dead Sea and the Azraq Oasis, bitumen, and some metallic and non-metallic ores are available (Bender 1974: 146–72), but it is not known whether the ancients exploited them to any significant extent in the Iron Age. One source of iron ore is known at Mugharet al-Wardeh, about 4 km north of Tall adh-Dhahab, a site along Wadi az-Zarqa (Bender 1974: 157–8; Coughenour 1976). Some iron pieces and iron slag were noted in the survey of Tall adh-Dhahab al-Garbi without any clear chronological context (Gordon and Villiers 1983: 284–5). More recently, however, the discovery of iron smelting operations at the nearby site of Tall Hammeh provides the first glimpse of iron production in ancient Jordan, which the excavators date to the eighth century (Veldhuijzen and Steen 1999). The scale of production and the extent to which the ore deposits were exploited remains to be seen; nevertheless, Tall Hammeh's location on Wadi az-Zarqa provides it with access to an important transportation corridor through which iron ingots or finished goods could be sent to the Amman Plateau or north and south through the Jordan Valley.

2.2 Chronology

The chronological framework used herein follows the recent survey of the archaeology of Transjordan by Herr and Najjar (2001). Their chronology follows in essential outline the traditional divisions employed in discussions of Cisjordan. The debate surrounding the Low Chronology for Cisjordan (summarized conveniently in

Grabbe 2007: 12–16) has not significantly affected discussions of the Transjordanian chronology because the Transjordanian pottery sequence is still not solidly established and because of a dearth of remains datable to the tenth century. The Low Chronology debate does, however, occasionally affect the interpretation of archaeological finds and is brought into the discussion where appropriate.

Archaeological Period	Dates
Late Bronze Age/Iron Age I Transition	Late 13th–Early 12th c. BCE
Iron Age I	1200–1000 BCE
Iron Age IIA	1000–900 BCE
Iron Age IIB	900–700 BCE
Iron Age IIC	700–500 BCE

Table 2.1—Transjordanian Chronology following Herr and Najjar 2001.

2.3 Iron Age I—Twelfth through Eleventh Centuries

Where Iron Age I remains are extant on the Amman Plateau, they show a significant level of continuity with the preceding Late Bronze Age (hereafter LBA). The most significant finds come from the LBA/Iron I transition period at Tall al-ʿUmayri. The small 1.5 ha site contained several houses, including a four-room house, and had an extensive fortification system that included a dry moat, a rampart held in place by a retaining wall, and a set of casemate walls at the top. This fortification system was then destroyed sometime in the twelfth century as evidenced by a massive destruction layer up to 2.0 m thick (Clark 1997: 62–85; 2002: 51–100, 113). The succeeding two strata date to the end of the Iron I and consist of a few partially exposed buildings (Herr 2008: 1850; Herr and Clark 2007: 125–6)

Other sites with evidence for occupation in the Iron I also point to continuity with the LBA. Possible Iron I pottery from the Amman Citadel (Zayadine 1973: 30) suggests occupational continuity with the LBA. At Tall Ṣafuṭ, the LBA town and perimeter wall appear to have continued in use in the Iron I (Wimmer 1987b: 165;

1997: 449). The town of Saḥab expanded beyond the confines of the LBA fortification walls. Likewise, some domestic buildings that date to the Iron I were uncovered (Ibrahim 1972: 35–36; 1974; 1997: 450–1). Scanty remains from Tall Ḥesban from the LBA/Iron I transition and from the Iron I proper (Strata 21–19) consist of pottery, a trench hewn from the bedrock (unknown function), and a cistern (Ray 2001: 75–99). Several other sites provide possible evidence for LBA/Iron I transition and Iron I habitation. These include Tall Jawa (Daviau 2003: 468–9 [Stratum X pottery]), Khirbat al-Hajjar (Thompson 1972: 62 [walls from pre-tower phase]), Rujm al-Malfuf South (Thompson 1973: 48, 51 [pottery not necessarily associated with architecture]), Khirbat Umm ad-Dananir and Rujm al-Ḥenu East (McGovern 1986: 8–13 [pottery and possible structures]).

Tombs from the region that have Iron I remains usually contain LBA remains, demonstrating again the continuity between these periods. These tombs include the Jabal Nuzha Tomb in Amman (Dajani 1966b; LBA–Iron I), Saḥab Tomb C (Dajani 1970; fourteenth–ninth centuries), and the tomb in Cave A4 on Jabal al-Hawayah in the Baqʿah Valley (McGovern 1986: 53–61; Iron I). Additionally, the remains from Saḥab Area C, Tomb 1 were dated by the excavator to the twelfth century (Ibrahim 1972: 31–2).

Surveys of the area indicate a growth in the number of sites during the Iron I.[19] The number of sites increased from fifteen in the LBA to sixty-nine in the Iron I (according to the count of Younker 2003: 155 table 1, cf. 156 figs. 1–2).[20] Larger sites

[19] For bibliography and further discussion of the surveys, see § 2.6.3.12.

[20] See Ray (Ray 2001: 111–114) for a convenient summary of the results of the surveys for the Iron I.

among those surveyed appear in Table 2.2. All of the larger survey sites with evidence for occupation in the Iron I also have evidence for Iron II occupation.

Site Name	Ḥesban Survey #
Khirbat al-ʾAl	7
Umm al-Qanafid	29
Umm el-ʿAmad	102
Umm el-Basatin (Umm el-Hanafish)	103

Table 2.2—Tells from the Ḥesban Survey with probable occupation in the Iron I

2.4 Iron Age IIA—Tenth Century

In his 1983 synthesis of the archaeology of Transjordan, Dornemann summarized the Iron Age in Jordan as having material remains down to the tenth century, after which there was a gap in significant evidence down to the seventh century (Dornemann 1983: 166). Excavations since then have furnished some data for the tenth through eighth centuries; however, there is still very little material that is clearly attributable to the tenth century from anywhere in Jordan, much less the Amman Plateau (Herr and Najjar 2001: 329–331). The available evidence is presented here.

2.4.1 Sites

2.4.1.1 Amman Citadel

Judging from the scattered remains uncovered by excavations on the Amman Citadel, the Iron Age town probably covered the Acropolis and second plateau (see Figure 2.1),[21] an area of 20 ha or more (Dornemann 1997: 99). Soundings conducted in 1969 at the Amman Citadel (Area II) found some walls and a possible gate along the outside edge of the Citadel. These were probably defensive and that had undergone some modifications over time. According to the pottery found, Dornemann dated the

[21] The third plateau (or fourth terrace in the terminology of Humbert and Zayadine 1992), has not been excavated because it is covered by modern houses.

walls to the tenth–ninth centuries (Dornemann 1983: 90–2, 170–2, figs. 5–7).[22] In addition, the torso of a human figurine was found on the surface at the Amman Citadel. The details visible on it depict a female holding a round disk, which is probably a tambourine (Dornemann 1983: 129–31, fig. 89:3). Holland discussed a similar type of figurine from Amman in his unpublished dissertation (Holland 1975: pl. 10.6; as cited in Dabrowski 2009: 61). Both fit into a group of figurines dating between the eleventh and early ninth centuries BCE (Dornemann 1983: 131; cf. Dabrowski 2009: 61). Excavations on the lower terrace (second plateau) likewise found some possible tenth to ninth century pottery in several ashy layers not associated with architecture (Zayadine 1973: 30).

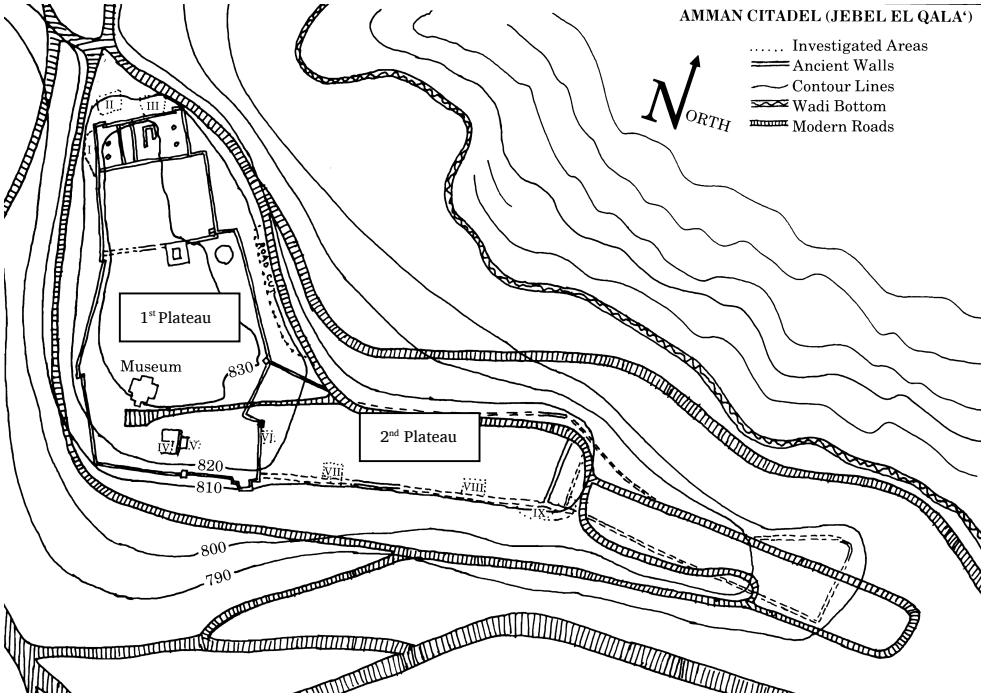


Figure 2.1—Plan of Amman Citadel after Dornemann 1983: 197.

[22] There is also a tunnel attached to an underground chamber that begins inside the defensive walls uncovered in this sounding. Unfortunately, the tunnel and chamber were cleared at an earlier time and none of the material was kept except a collection of sculptures that date to the eighth through sixth centuries on stylistic grounds (Dornemann 1983: 90 n. 1; Zayadine 1989).

2.4.1.2 Tall Ḥesban Stratum 18

Ray dates Ḥesban Stratum 18 to about 1050–925 BCE based on pottery (Ray 2001: 53). Very few remains are securely dated to this stratum; however, one subterranean room with cobbled floor (perhaps a basement), and seventy-one artifacts from dump loci were uncovered (Ray 2001: 100–106). The artifacts "include fifty-five spindle whorls and fragments of whorls, four pottery discs, three stone weights, one muller, one stone bowl, one [stone] door socket, one sling stone, one bead, one [carnelian] inset of a ring, two [anepigraphic] seals, and one figurine" (Ray 2001: 106). The figurine is similar in style to the two that were found in Amman mentioned above, and Dabrowski dates it to the end of the eleventh century or beginning of the tenth (Dabrowski 2009: 61–3). The assemblage is thus largely domestic in character with a few indications of economic activity that may have gone beyond the local scene.

The largest and most significant structure that may date to this stratum is a reservoir cut in the bedrock with a header-stretcher wall of ashlar masonry on one side. The reservoir is approximately 17.5 m x 17.5 m x 7.0 m deep. It was originally attributed to the Stratum 17 and dated to the ninth through seventh centuries based primarily on one sherd excavated from the ashlar wall that Sauer dated to the Iron Age IIB (Sauer 1994: 241). All fill material excavated from the reservoir itself dated to the Iron IIC at the earliest (Sauer 1994: 242). Sauer, however, refined his argument and suggested the construction of the reservoir may date to the tenth century (1994: 241–44; cf. Ray 2001: 99, 107). Sauer's dating is based on four sherds excavated from the ashlar wall that lack wheel burnishing, a characteristic that Sauer asserts predates the ninth century (Sauer 1994: 242). Furthermore, Sauer argues that some walls and fill behind the ashlar wall may have been foundational work to support the ashlar wall.

Since this material contained Iron Age I pottery and a few pieces of Iron Age IIA pottery, it may be that the area was prepared for the reservoir in the Iron Age IIA, while reusing Iron Age I walls and debris (Sauer 1994: 243). Sauer goes on to speculate that the good quality ashlar masonry wall dates to the time when Solomon used Phoenician craftsmen for his own public works (Sauer 1994: 243). Finally, Ray suggests a parallel to the masonry in the Megiddo VA-IVB water system, which suggests a tenth century date to him as well (Ray 2001: 99, 107).[23]

The attempt to date the reservoir based on an architectural parallel to Megiddo VA-IVB is just as likely as a parallel to the ashlar masonry found at Samaria, which dates to the ninth century. Likewise, the Low Chronology debate affects the parallel to the Megiddo VA-IVB water system, since Megiddo VA-IVB may also date to the ninth century. The late date of the assemblage excavated from the fill of the reservoir is also problematic, and may suggest a construction date in the Iron IIC. Whatever the date, its construction under "royal auspices" (Ray 2001: 99, 107) is not transparent, and given the limited knowledge of the rest of the Amman Plateau, cannot yet be asserted with any confidence.

2.4.1.3 Tall Jawa Strata X–IX

It is possible that the Iron I settlement of Stratum X continued into the tenth century as the pottery, especially the collared-rim pithoi, appears to have experienced a long, slow development (Daviau 2003: 468–9). It is also possible that some of the remains from Tall Jawa Stratum IX date to the tenth century BCE, but the pottery

[23] See also the survey of the Ḥesban area that yielded very little for the tenth century BCE (Ibach 1987).

chronology is not yet refined enough to determine this with a reasonable degree of certainty. For the remains of this stratum, see § 2.5.1.4 below.

2.4.1.4 Tall al-ʿUmayri Stratum 9

There is very little evidence for occupation at Iron IIA ʿUmayri. Thus far, the remains from Stratum 9 consist only of a few pieces of slipped and hand-burnished pottery (Herr 2002: 17; Herr and Clark 2007: 126). Also, a floor from the preceding Field H sanctuary may have been used during this period (Herr and Clark 2009: 90).

2.4.1.5 Survey Sites

The Ḥesban Survey recorded a number of tells to the south of Amman. These have yet to be excavated, but have surface evidence for occupation during the Iron II in the form of pottery, and hence may have been occupied in the Iron IIA. These appear in Table 2.3. The extent and nature of that occupation will remain for excavations to detail, but the size of the mounds suggests that some at least were towns[24] during this period.

Site Name	Ḥesban Survey #
Khirbat al-ʾAl	7
Umm al-Qanafid	29
Umm el-ʿAmad	102
Umm el-Basatin (Umm el-Hanafish)	103

Table 2.3—Tells from the Ḥesban Survey with probable occupation in the Iron IIA

2.4.2 Tombs

2.4.2.1 Amman Tomb E—Jabal Jofeh ash-Sharqi

One small terra-cotta shrine from Ammon Tomb E on Jabal Jofeh ash-Sharqi was found when this intact tomb was excavated. The shrine is a small clay box (17 x 15 cm on the base and 18 cm tall) with one open side and four knobs for legs. The outside is

[24] "Town" is used here to designate a settlement consisting of a cluster of houses and other associated structures and usually surrounded by a wall.

decorated with some lines of color only (Dajani 1966a: 41–2, pl. I, fig. 1 and IV:130). The rest of the material from the tomb is eighth century or later; however, Dornemann dates the shrine to the tenth or ninth centuries based on parallels (Dornemann 1983: 143).

2.4.2.2 Amman—Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb—Jabal al-Qusur

A tomb with some remains possibly dating to the tenth century came to light about 1 km northeast of the Amman Citadel on Jabal al-Qusur near the Raghdan Royal Palace.[25] Dajani originally excavated this site in 1966, a fact mentioned in a brief note (Amman 1966). Notes about the excavation and some of the material excavated were lost after the premature death of Dajani (Yassine 1975: 57). Yassine describes the cave in which the remains were found as "cistern-like," measuring 145 cm deep, 5.5 m long, and 4.5 m wide. The main finds were five anthropoid pottery coffins that are cylindrical and range from 175 cm to 210 cm long and taper from 45 cm at the bottom to 65 cm at the top. Two of the coffins have modeled features rather than features formed through the application of extra clay (see Figure 2.2). These features include almond shaped eyes, small lips, big ears, and arms modeled and hanging straight down on the side of the coffin. Two of the coffins have no decoration other than handles, while the last one is fragmentary. Each coffin contained two or three skeletons and there were the remains of at least thirty other skeletons in the tomb. In addition, there were pottery vessels, bronze bowls, lamps, and a cylinder seal supposedly found in the tomb (Yassine 1975: 57–8), and the original note about the excavation mentions six large burial jars in addition to the anthropoid coffins (Amman 1966). Neither the burial jars, nor cultural

[25] This tomb is designated as Amman Tomb G by Dornemann 1983: 49.

assemblage were published, although Dornemann mentions parallels for some of the pottery (Dornemann 1983: 50).[26]

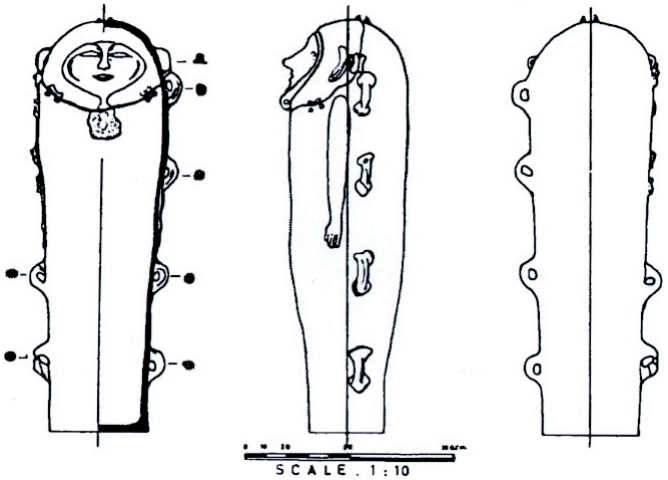


Figure 2.2—Drawing of Anthropoid Coffin from Yassine 1975: 64 fig. 2.

Yassine studied the anthropoid coffins from this tomb and concluded that the two with modeled features (his Type II) were typologically similar to the lid found in Saḥab Tomb A (Albright 1932) and date best to the tenth–ninth centuries (Yassine 1975: 58–61). The modeled features on these recall Egyptian artistic conventions though with local adaptations (Dornemann 1983: 146–9; Yassine 1975: 62). Yassine dated the other two intact coffins, which do not have modeled features, very broadly to the tenth–seventh centuries (Yassine 1975: 60–1, his Type III).

Despite the fragmentary nature of the publication of this tomb, the use of anthropoid coffins points to Egyptian burial practices introduced to Syro-Palestine in the Late Bronze Age (Bloch-Smith 1992: 33–5; Gonen 1992: 29–30). The anthropoid coffins found in Cisjordan date to the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age I, and are thought to represent burials of Egyptians residing in Syro-Palestine, perhaps as part of garrisons (Bloch-Smith 1992: 34–5; Gonen 1992: 29–30). Whether the same is true for the

[26] The confused nature of the publication seems to have led Bloch-Smith to treat the Raghdan Royal Palace/Jabal al-Qusur tomb as separate entities (Bloch-Smith 1992: 160, 186).

Transjordanian exemplars is unclear when one takes into account their later date and the lack of associated artifacts. The metal bowls and cylinder seal that were mentioned for this tomb were never published and so cannot be brought into the present analysis. Gonen, however, mentions bronze objects as part of strongly Egypt-oriented assemblages that accompany many of the anthropoid coffins found in Cisjordan (Gonen 1992: 29). One might surmise something similar in this case, but without an analysis of the bronze bowls, it is not possible to know. The long period of use of the tomb, based on the dating of the pottery to the tenth to seventh centuries (Yassine 1975: 58), does suggest that the tomb was used for local inhabitants at some point. Unfortunately, the present state of evidence does not reveal whether the pottery was specifically associated with the anthropoid coffins when they were interred, and so notions about whether locals or foreigners were buried in the coffins will remain speculative.

2.4.2.3 Saḥab Tombs A and C

At the site of Saḥab, about 11 km southeast of Amman, two tombs uncovered may contain remains from the tenth century. Local residents found Saḥab Tomb A in 1929 and disturbed the tomb before it could be excavated. The tomb itself is cistern-like and contained a few pieces of pottery that Albright dated to about 900 BCE (Albright 1932: 295–297). In addition, this tomb contained one anthropoid coffin, which the locals broke while looking for treasure. The lid/head piece was the only part of the coffin that survived intact (see Figure 2.3). It has modeled features like those from the Raghdan Royal Palace (Yassine's Type II) and probably dates similarly to the tenth–ninth centuries (Yassine 1975: 58–61). Some of the handles form the ears and part of the Osirian beard, and the eyes are almond shaped. The body of the coffin, as reconstructed from pieces that were left, was cylindrical with a flat back (Albright

1932: 297, 305). Parallels with earlier material from Beth-shean, Tell el-Farah (south) and Egypt, suggested to Albright that the Palestinian models are imitations of the Egyptian prototype (Albright 1932: 306; cf. Bloch-Smith 1992: 33–5; Gonen 1992: 29–30). As with the discussion of the Raghdan Royal Palace anthropoid coffins, the lack of any associated mortuary goods makes it impossible to know whether this coffin represents a foreign or local burial.

Figure 2.3—Anthropoid coffin lid, Saḥab Tomb A after Albright 1932: pl. XII:2.

Saḥab Tomb C is another rock-cut tomb that was located accidentally. The tomb has a chimney-like structure that may indeed have functioned as a chimney before its use as a tomb, and has rock-cut benches along two sides (Dajani 1970: 29). Based on the pottery, including imported Mycenaean wares, Dajani concluded that the tomb was in use from the fourteenth century to the end of the ninth century (Dajani 1970: 31). A variety of other objects were found, including ostrich eggs, various metal objects (blades, fibulae [pins for holding clothing or cloaks at the shoulder], arrowheads, bracelets, anklets, various other rings, kohl sticks, pendants), and stone vessels (Dajani 1970: 34). In addition, an oval Egyptian stamp seal dating to the nineteenth dynasty (1295–1186 BCE), a copper finger ring seal (unknown date), and a copper stamp seal (unknown date) also came from the tomb (Horn 1971). The existence of these tombs

suggests that the site of Saḥab was likewise settled during this period, as is assumed by Ibrahim (1989: 519).

2.4.3 Imported Items

A variety of items not available locally found their way to the Amman Plateau as raw materials or finished goods. In some cases, it is not possible specify the origin of a particular item. Since, however, the materials that come from the Amman Plateau are reasonably well-known, one can often say with confidence that raw materials were not local. This section, and those included in the discussion of the Iron IIB and IIC, provide as complete a list as possible of imported raw materials and finished goods.

2.4.3.1 Shells

It is possible that marine shells found in Amman Tomb E (Dajani 1966a: Pl. 3, fig. 5:49–52) may date to the Iron IIA given the presence of a clay shrine in this assemblage that may date to the Iron IIA (§ 2.4.2.1 above). The rest of the assemblage, however, dates to the eighth century or later, and so a date after the Iron IIA is likely. No other non-local materials are known from this period.

2.4.4 Summary

Interpretation of the remains from the Iron Age IIA on the Amman Plateau must be tentative because of the lack of significant, well-stratified finds. The small bits of fortifications uncovered at the Amman Citadel indicate only that some part of the site was fortified during this period. The tomb material suggests continuity of tomb use into this period from the Iron Age I and on into the following Iron Age IIB. If the anthropoid coffins from the Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb and the lid from Saḥab Tomb A are correctly dated to this period, it appears that a burial practice, appearing originally during the Late Bronze Age Egyptian dominance of the Levant, continued into the post-

colonial period. Whether they represent local or foreign burials cannot be determined at this time.

The scanty architectural remains and humble assemblage of artifacts from the Amman Plateau do not point to significant political or social complexity or centralization. Some elite traditions continued from the earlier periods, while cooperative efforts to build defensive walls and possibly a large water system suggest intrasite organization without providing significant evidence for intersite hierarchy.

2.5 Iron Age IIB—Ninth through Eighth Centuries

2.5.1 Sites

2.5.1.1 Amman Citadel

The Amman Citadel has yielded a small number of finds from the Iron Age IIB. Some pottery from the Amman Citadel as well as some possible walls, a possible gate, and a tunnel may date to the Iron IIB (Dornemann 1983: 89–90, 170–2). A sounding and excavations on the lower terrace (second plateau; Figure 2.1 above) uncovered occupation layers below the Iron Age IIC buildings. These levels were covered with significant debris and evidence for burning. They probably date to the Iron IIB and provide evidence for a destruction (Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 258–60; Zayadine 1973). A few unpublished volute (e.g., "proto-aeolic" or "proto-ionic") capitals have been found at the Amman Citadel (Drinkard n.d.).[27] Following Shiloh's typology (Shiloh 1979: 17–20), Amman capital A-2 fits well with Type A found at Megiddo (Strata VA–IVB and IVA; roughly ninth century BCE) and at Samaria (Strata I-II; ninth–eighth centuries BCE). Amman A-1 parallels those found in Moab at ʿAin Sara and Mudaybiʿ

[27] G. Schumacher identified the first volute capitals at Megiddo in 1903 and they have continued to show up at various sites in Israel, including Tel Dan, Hazor, Megiddo, Samaria, Jerusalem, and Ramat Rahel, and in the Jordan at ʿAin Sara/Karak and Mudaybiʿ (Drinkard n.d.).

(Drinkard n.d.; cf. Drinkard 1997; Negueruela 1982). This latter group of capitals does not fit precisely with Shiloh's typology, and thus Drinkard has created type F, which predominates in the Transjordan (Drinkard n.d.). Excavators dated the level in which they found the capitals at Mudaybiʿ to the mid-eighth century based on pottery and radiocarbon dating (Drinkard n.d.).

2.5.1.2 Tall Ḥesban Stratum 17

Stratum 17 is known through material found in dumps or wash from later activity. No architecture is known from this stratum unless the reservoir discussed above (§ 2.4.1.2) dates to this time. Otherwise, it would appear that Ḥesban was in decline during this period. Apart from pottery, only twelve objects come from this stratum. These objects included eight spindle whorls and a spindle rest, a limestone weight, a bronze finger ring, an obsidian bead, and the possible remains of an animal figurine (Ray 2001: 123).

2.5.1.3 Tall Jalul

Tall Jalul is one of the largest tells on the Amman Plateau at ca. 7.5 ha (Younker 2007: 129) and promises to provide greater information about this period. Excavations, which began on the site in 1992, have uncovered a ninth-century flagstone paved ramp that goes up to the city gate where remnants of a gatehouse still exist. A rebuilding of the ramp and several buildings indicates occupation in the eighth century BCE as well. Additionally, excavators found a stamp seal with an ibex on it in the gatehouse (Younker 2007: 132).

2.5.1.4 Tall Jawa Strata IX–VIII

At Tall Jawa, significant remains have been found that indicate an active settlement in the Iron IIB. The Early Iron II[28] Stratum IX is known from a solid wall with offsets and insets that surrounds the tell, a retaining wall and possible glacis, as well as passageways, a tower, and guardroom (Daviau 2003: 49–57). A large building (B102) with orthogonal planning was also found in this stratum (Daviau 2003: 125–30). The orthogonal plan along with the regularity of wall thickness and construction attest to a high level of planning on the part of those who constructed it (Daviau 2003: 119–25). The solid wall and associated structures point to a need for security and the human resources necessary to build it.

Stratum IX does not appear to have been destroyed as the solid wall was reused in the Middle Iron II Stratum VIIIB as the outer wall of a casemate system of defense (Daviau 2003: 66–84). The same casemate system continued in use in Stratum VIIIA with some modifications and repairs (Daviau 2003: 85–92). The Middle Iron II Strata VIIIB and VIIIA are also attested by the construction of a number of new buildings. These strata appear to be the high point of the settlement and are marked by the introduction of red slipped and burnished pottery, a pottery type known in Cisjordan and dated at Dor to about 850 BCE (Daviau 2003: 471–73).[29] Daviau notes, however, that it is not clear when this potting tradition took hold in Transjordan and so it can

[28] This is Daviau's terminology. She divides the Iron II strata into Early, Middle, and Late Iron II and is generally reticent to assign precise dates because pottery sequences in Transjordan have not yet been refined enough to make such arguments. Generally, her Early Iron Age II (Stratum IX) seems to mean sometime in the tenth or ninth centuries BCE, Middle Iron Age II (Strata VIIIB–A) sometime in the ninth and eighth centuries BCE, and Late Iron Age II (Strata VIIB–A) sometime in the seventh or sixth centuries BCE (Daviau 2003: 469–479). These designations are roughly the same as the Iron IIA, IIB, and IIC terminology employed in this study.

[29] On the dating of red slipped and burnished pottery at Dor, Daviau cites Gilboa 2001: 1347.

only be used as a general chronological indicator (Daviau 2003: 474). It is also not clear whether Stratum VIIIA was destroyed or went out of use, though the inward (uphill) collapse of one section of the outer wall of the casemate system may point to an attack (Daviau 2003: 92).

2.5.1.5 Tall Ṣafut

The excavator reports some pottery in a destruction layer (Wimmer 1987a: 281) as well as an Iron IIB casemate wall (Wimmer 1989: 514).

2.5.1.6 Saḥab

The pillared building described for the Iron IIC may have existed in the Iron IIB as well (Ibrahim 1987: 79). See description below in § 2.6.1.6.

2.5.1.7 Tall al-ʿUmayri Stratum 8

The 2008 season at ʿUmayri found a house in Field A that dates to the Iron IIB (late ninth–eighth or early seventh century). Excavations exposed three rooms of the house with walls preserved up to a meter in height. Remains of sanctuary from Field H may also have continued into this period from previous strata (Herr and Clark 2009: 90).

2.5.1.8 Survey Sites

The Ḥesban Survey recorded a number of tells to the south of Amman. These have yet to be excavated, but have surface evidence for occupation during the Iron II in the form of pottery, and hence may have been occupied in the Iron IIB. These appear in Table 2.4. The extent and nature of that occupation will remain for excavations to detail, but the size of the mounds suggests that some at least were towns during this period.

Site Name	Ḥesban Survey #
Khirbat al-ʾAl	7
Umm al-Qanafid	29
Umm el-ʿAmad	102
Umm el-Basatin (Umm el-Hanafish)	103
el-Yaduda	143

Table 2.4—Tells from the Ḥesban Survey with probable occupation in the Iron IIB

2.5.2 Tombs

2.5.2.1 Amman—Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb—Jabal al-Qusur

Two of the clay coffins from the Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb, Yassine's Type III, may have been used during the Iron IIB (Yassine 1975: 60–1), as may the anthropoid coffins with modeled features discussed above (found in this tomb and in Saḥab Tomb A).

2.5.2.2 Amman Tombs B and C

The remains from Amman Tombs B and C probably date to the end of the Iron IIB and continue into the Iron IIC. For discussion, see §§ 2.6.2.2 and 2.6.2.3 below.

2.5.2.3 Amman Tomb D—Amman Citadel

Amman Tomb D is a cave found on the north slope of the Amman Citadel. The tomb was cleared before the contents were analyzed at the Department of Antiquities and only a few pieces of pottery were published (Harding 1951). Based on the pottery, Harding dated the tomb group to the eighth century (Harding 1951: 37). Dornemann dates it earlier, from the ninth to first third of the eighth century (Dornemann 1983: 63).

2.5.2.4 Amman Tomb E—Jabal Jofeh ash-Sharqi

A clay shrine found in the Amman Tomb E (Jabal Jofeh ash-Sharqi) could date to the tenth or ninth centuries BCE (see § 2.4.2.1 above).

2.5.2.5 Saḥab Tomb B

Saḥab Tomb B sits on the edge of the Iron Age mound and was found undisturbed. It is a roughly square rock-cut cave about 7.5 m on a side. The objects included a circular decorated limestone palette, shells with blue pigment in them, metal objects including anklets, fibulae, earrings, arrowheads, a knife handle, some iron points, and a crystal bead. Among the 161 pottery vessels there were nine small pointed bottles and fragments of three or four more (Harding 1948). Harding dated the tomb to the eighth to seventh centuries (Harding 1948: 96). Dornemann extended the early end of the range into the ninth century (Dornemann 1983: 63).

2.5.3 Sculpture

Abou Assaf (1980: 76) dates a group of seven sculptures (1980: 21–5 nos. I–VII, tafeln I–V) from the Amman area to 800–730 BCE. This set includes a male-female[30] pair of statuettes from Khirbat al-Hajjar that were found with Iron II sherds during modern construction (Ibrahim 1971). Also included are a statuette found near the Amman Citadel (Barnett 1951: 34 sculpture A, pl. X), a male head found in a wadi near Amman, and three other male heads of unknown provenance (Horn 1973: 176 nos. 2, 3, 5, 6). In addition, Zayadine dates a torso found during more recent excavations at the Amman Citadel to the eighth century (Zayadine 1989: pl. LI). Artistic influences visible in this group come mostly from the Syrian and Assyrian context, although as is the case with the sculptures discussed under the Iron IIC, the execution of the carving is done in a local way (Dornemann 1983: 156–9, 162; Zayadine 1991: 49–51).[31]

[30] Dornemann notes that it is not certain the smaller statuette is a female, as the facial features and hands are damaged, and the hair could be worn by a male (Dornemann 1983: 157 n. 2).

[31] See Appendix B for a list of the sculptures and brief description.

2.5.4 Imports

2.5.4.1 Alabaster

Alabaster, a fine-grained gypsum, was used for small containers and ornamental carvings. There are known sources of alabaster in Egypt (Bailey 2000), and a particular variety, called *gišnugallu* in Akkadian sources, is found at Mt. Muli in Turkey and Mt. Amanus in Lebanon (*CAD* G: 105–6; Parpola and Porter 2001: maps 1, 8). Amman Tomb C had a rectangular alabaster palette that may date to the Iron IIB or IIC based on the associated assemblage (Harding 1951: 40, pl. XIV:44). The handle and base of a single alabaster jug were found in two different buildings (B300 and B700) at Tall Jawa (Daviau 2002: 122). Building 300 is the earlier of the two and is part of Stratum VIII (Daviau 2003: 208–85), which dates to the Iron IIB and may represent the earliest phase of the use of this vessel.

2.5.4.2 Ivory

The ancients obtained ivory from the tusks of African and Asiatic elephants, wild boar tusks, and hippopotamus teeth (Wapnish 1997a: 335). In the Levant, ivory was probably obtained from African elephants, both in Africa and from some which seem to have roamed in Syria until about the eighth century BCE, as well as hippopotamus teeth (Liebowitz 1997: 341). Since a specialist may not always examine possible ivory objects, some finds reported as ivory may actually be bone. At Tall Jawa, a bone or ivory spindle whorl comes from the Stratum VIII Building 113 (Daviau 2002: 188), which dates to the Iron IIB.

2.5.4.3 Shells

Excavators have found a number of marine shells on the Amman Plateau, most of which appear to have been used as pendants or beads (Daviau 2002: 27–30, 38–41;

Herr and Platt 2002: 381). Fifteen marine shells come from Tall Jawa Stratum VIII (Reese 2002b: 282–4, table 4A). Amman Tombs C and E, and Saḥab Tomb B yielded a number of shells that may date to the Iron IIB based on the dating of the tomb assemblage to the Iron IIB (Dajani 1966a: Pl. 3, fig. 5:49–52; Harding 1948: 94; 1951: 40, pl. XIV:46).

2.5.4.4 Metals

Excavations have uncovered metal artifacts regularly, if not always in large quantities. Tombs provide the largest caches of metal objects, but other excavations have uncovered examples as well. The metals attested are gold, silver, bronze, copper, iron, and lead. These metals occur as earrings, finger rings, bracelets, fibulae, arrowheads and various types of blades, needles, tweezers, kohl sticks, mirrors, bowls, strainers, bottles, incense burners, weights, and unidentified fragments. As noted in the discussion of natural resources, there is one source of iron close to the Amman Plateau (Mugharet al-Wardeh) and it was probably exploited in the Iron Age. This may account for the iron objects, but there are no known sources of gold, silver, lead, or the constituent elements of bronze (tin and copper) on the Amman Plateau. This means, of course, that merchants had to bring these materials, whether raw or finished, to the area from elsewhere, even if one cannot at present specify precisely whence they came.[32] The one caveat about these metal objects is that where the style of the object suggests a foreign prototype, it is still often impossible to know whether it was imported as a finished good or made locally according to foreign styles. In either case, the metals themselves are imports.

[32] Sourcing studies in the future could help clarify origins.

Appendix D lists metal objects from sites on the Amman Plateau following a functional typology (e.g., Daviau 2002). For most of the items detailed in Appendix D, their wide geographic and chronological distribution precludes identifying centers of production and distribution or assembling a fine-tuned chronology with any degree of certainty. This is true for the fibulae[33] as well as for most other items of jewelry and other small metal items such as kohl sticks, tweezers, needles, blades, and arrowheads.[34] The various metal rings and bracelets found in Amman Tombs C and E, as well as Saḥab Tomb B may have come to the Amman Plateau during the Iron IIB, although it is also possible that they arrived during the following Iron IIC. Some of the metal objects from Tall Jawa listed in Appendix D may likewise date to the Iron IIB.

2.5.5 Summary

The extant remains of the Iron IIB provide a little more evidence than for the Iron IIA. The site of Tall Jawa gives the fullest picture of a settlement in the area

[33] Ray (Ray 2006: 83) calls fibulae and other items of jewelry "Cypriot jewelry." This is probably incorrect. The fibulae were, in the early twentieth century, thought to have come from Cyprus, and while this is true for some fibulae found in the Levant at the end of the second millennium BCE, the first millennium is rather different. Stronach argued some time ago that beginning in the eighth century BCE and later, fibulae have a broad geographic range and developed locally in multiple overlapping ways (Stronach 1959: 185). Those found in the Amman tombs are of the Near Eastern types Stronach describes, many of which had long lives beginning in the eighth century BCE and continuing in some cases past the change of the era (Stronach 1959: 185–201; see also Daviau 2002: 43–6; Yassine 1984: 97–100). In the end, the ability to assign a date to any particular fibula is usually dependent on the date of the assemblage with which it is associated. More to the point, because they are so widespread, they do not indicate direction of trade, but rather a cultural *koine* mediated over long periods of time by social and economic interaction. It is possible that some fibula found in the Levant from the Persian Period did come from Cyprus, though these are mostly found at Levantine coastal sites (Stern 2001: 530). Perhaps this is what Ray had in mind; however, the items he cites from Amman Plateau fit well into Stronach's "Near Eastern Types" (Stronach 1959: 185–203) and this typology is still generally accepted (Platt 1989: 356–8; Platt 1991: 256; Platt 2000: 212; Platt 2002: 163; Yassine 1984: 99).

[34] For parallels to these objects and the occasional chronological indicator see Daviau 2002: 41–7; Muhly and Muhly 1989; Platt 1989; Platt 1991; Platt 2000; Platt 2002; Yassine 1984: 85–102. Occasionally, an object is distinctive enough that it may be possible to assign a relatively narrow date range. This is perhaps the case with a pair of earrings found at ʿUmayri that have a parallel in a seventh century context at Tel Miqne-Ekron (Platt 2002: 163, fig. 7.5:64–65).

complete with defensive walls and well-planned domestic structures. Tall Jalul also holds promise for providing a clearer picture of this period. The tombs again provide evidence for continuity from the preceding Iron IIA and especially with the following Iron IIC. While the remains from the Iron IIB do not yet yield a clear picture of the level of social and political complexity or centralization, the outlines of a set of elite objects appears. This set of objects, which includes decorative architecture (volute capitals) and a local tradition of statuary, will become larger and more coherent in the Iron IIC.

2.6 Iron Age IIC—Seventh through Sixth Centuries

2.6.1 Sites

2.6.1.1 Amman Citadel

Excavations conducted on the upper terrace (first plateau) of the Amman Citadel just outside the Roman Temple uncovered a building dating to the seventh–sixth century BCE. The exposed portion of the building consists of an east-west wall 21.3 m long and a north-south wall 6 m long. A wall found in another square may continue the north-south wall, bringing its length to about 19 m. The walls, which are made of an irregular collection of large and small stones, have a preserved height of 1.2–1.9 m and width of 0.7–1.0 m. The plaster floor stands on top of an earth and stone layer used to create a level surface above the bedrock. There is no evidence for partition walls in the exposed part of the building, which points to a rather large (public?) room. The building seems to have gone out of use rather than having been destroyed. Finds include much Iron IIC pottery, a partially legible ostracon, two figurine heads, beads, spindle whorls, and some shells (Momani et al. 1997: 160–70). The size of the building and its location under the Roman temple may suggest a temple (Momani et al. 1997: 164), however, the relatively crude construction of the walls and rather mundane

collection of pottery and domestic objects do not support a cultic interpretation. Despite the lack of certainty about the function of the building, it provides good evidence for the occupation of the upper terrace during the Iron IIC.

Excavations on the lower terrace (second plateau) of the Amman Citadel uncovered walls and buildings dating to the seventh and sixth centuries (Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 247–60; Zayadine, Humbert, and Mohammed 1989: 362). The most important finds from the Franco-Jordanian excavations were part of a building with a beaten earth "courtyard" measuring about 10 m in width and extending more than 15 m in length (Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 249; cf. Zayadine, Humbert, and Mohammed 1989: 362), a bathroom with a stone toilet and drain, and some storage rooms (Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 253–4, pls. XIb, XII, XIVa). As will be discussed below, these elements suggest parallels to Assyrian open-court architectural style. The excavators date these to ca. 700 BCE based on pottery. In addition, the double-faced female heads (discussed in § 2.6.6 below) were found close to this area in 1968 after slabs covering a Hellenistic period channel were removed (Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 255–8; Zayadine 1973: 27). The sculptures were built into the walls of the channel, apparently having been reused from an earlier period (Zayadine 1973: 27–8).

2.6.1.2 Tall Ḥesban Stratum 16

Ḥesban Stratum 16 represents the Iron IIC (700–500 BCE) occupation, extending also into the Persian Period. Evidence from this stratum includes several walls, a replastered cistern, some silos, and pottery (Ray 2001: 126–49), as well as three seals (Eggler and Keel 2006: 168–71, nos. 2, 5, 6), six ostraca, and three inscribed sherds (Cross 2003a; for discussion see Chapter 3).

2.6.1.3 Tall Jalul

The seventh–sixth century is represented at Jalul by a tripartite building, a pillared house, a grave underneath the courtyard of the house, and a number of small finds. The small finds include animal and human figurines, a deity figurine (Younker 2007: 132–3), as well as an inscribed seal attributed to the seventh century (Younker 1999a), and an ostracon dated to the sixth century (Gane 2008).

2.6.1.4 Tall Jawa Strata VIIB–VIIA

The Late Iron II strata of Tall Jawa, VIIB (ca. seventh century BCE) and VIIA (ca. sixth century BCE), continue from the earlier settlement without any detectable violent destruction. Stratum VIIB witnesses a different style of construction in buildings 800 and 700, two rather large buildings (ca. 230 m^2 and 190 m^2 respectively) with some parallels in Neo-Assyrian domestic architecture (Daviau 2001a: 219–23).[35] These buildings appear to be domestic and point to a rather high status existence for some residents of Jawa (Daviau 2003: 292).[36] The final end of Tall Jawa is not precisely datable; the settlement seems to have gone out of use in the Persian Period. Settlement into the Persian Period is indicated by a late Iron IIC or Persian Period burial. This burial is dated based on a fibula with parallels in the sixth–fourth centuries BCE (Daviau 2003: 93), and a Greek coin dated to 449 BCE (Daviau 2002: 89). The limited nature of this evidence would suggest a small settlement during the Persian Period.

2.6.1.5 Tall Ṣafut

During the Iron IIC (and perhaps a bit earlier), a lower city wall was constructed and settlement expanded outside the walls. A variety of buildings and parts of buildings

[35] See § 2.6.8.1 for discussion.

[36] The relative status of these buildings finds confirmation in the presence of stamp seals; one seal was found in each building (Daviau 2002: 87–8).

were exposed as well as a lot of food processing equipment (mortars, pestles, grinding stones), some metal objects, a scarab stamp seal with Assyrian style iconography, Assyrian type bottles, a Neo-Babylonian seal impression, a riderless horse, and painted figurine heads (Wimmer 1987b: 166–72; 1997: 449). The evidence indicates that the Iron IIC period was the high point in settlement for Ṣafuṭ. Its position along a main route from the Amman Plateau to the area north of Wadi az-Zarqa may have made it a strategic site for monitoring and controlling traffic through the region.

2.6.1.6 Saḥab

The Iron IIC settlement appears to have been a smaller, but better planned town than its Iron I counterpart. Excavations uncovered a large building (ca. 19 m x 10 m) in Area B with nearly orthogonal layout (Ibrahim 1975: 71, figs. 1–2). The largest room (7.5 m x 4 m) used four stone pillars to hold up the roof. This building is one of a handful of pillared buildings so far found in the Transjordan. Objects on the floor of this room were largely domestic in nature including seeds, grinding stones and a figurine-like piece of basalt (Ibrahim 1975: 72). Another room of the complex contained two pottery alabastra, loom weights, a spindle whorl, a bronze fibula, a miniature stone table, a pottery tripod bowl, and various stone grinding and polishing tools (Ibrahim 1975: 73). The pottery alabastra and the Black Burnished Bowl (Ibrahim 1975: Pl. XXXII:1, 3), along with the other pottery from the area, highlight the Iron IIC date of this building complex (Ibrahim 1975: 73–4). Ibrahim suggests an industrial function to this building because of the loom weights and grinding stones (Ibrahim 1975: 82; 1997: 451–2).

2.6.1.7 Tall al-ʿUmayri Strata 7–6

After a hiatus in significant settlement since the Iron Age I, a new phase of settlement began at ʿUmayri in the sixth century BCE. Most prominent in this period is a complex of three buildings, the whole measuring 15 m x 25 m, that was built in the sixth century and continued in use into the fifth century. The complex uses stone walls 0.80–1.30 m thick, giving it a fortified feel (Lawlor 1989, 1991, 1997, 2000, 2002). Sixteen seals and sealings come from this complex or surface layers associated with it, including those belonging to the Persian province of Ammon (similar to the Yehud seals found in Judah), and a seal belonging to an official of king Baʿalyašaʿ (equated with Baʿalis mentioned in Jer 40:14).[37] Also of interest is a pointed bottle found in Building C that has parallels with bottles found in the Amman tombs (Lawlor 1997: 44, fig. 3.15:1). The number of seals and the heavy walls that bespeak more than a domestic setting indicate to the excavators that this complex had an administrative function (Herr and Clark 2007: 126; cf. Herr 1995). Note, however, that twenty spindle whorls, four loom weights, and six weaving spatulas came from the same complex, and thus complicate the assertion of a simple administrative function for the building (Lawlor 1997: 51). Despite the presence of the large complex, the settled area of the mound continued to be small (ca. 1.5 ha) and lacked fortifications (Herr 2002: 18).

A water system at the northern base of Tall al-ʿUmayri shows use going back to the Early Bronze Age, but has minimal extant remains until the Iron IIC. Its dominant period of construction and use was the Byzantine Period (Fisher 1997: 176–7). The Iron IIC remains include some walls, a plastered installation, and some cobbled surfaces that

[37] For full publication and discussion of the seals with bibliography see Eggler, Herr and Root 2002: nos. 5, 11, 13, 17, 22, 26, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 42, 44, 50, 75. The same information with further pictures is also presented in Eggler and Keel 2006: nos. 4, 9, 11, 15, 20, 24, 27, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 81, 45, 69. On Eggler et al. no. 5, see *CAI*, no. 139.

probably helped to channel water into the system as well as keep dirt out (Fisher 1997: 178–80).

2.6.1.8 Temple at Rujm al-Kursi

The site of Rujm al-Kursi lies about 10 km to the west of the Amman Citadel on the edge of the modern city of Amman. The major remains excavated thus far have been Byzantine or Umayyad in date (Hübner 2009: 146). Although it has not been excavated yet, the contours of an Iron IIC temple are visible (Figure 2.4).

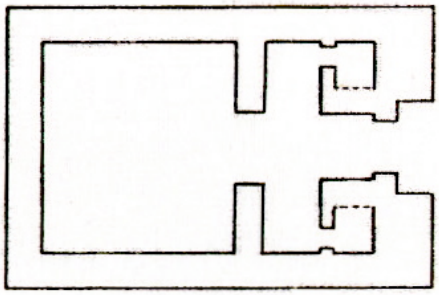


Figure 2.4—Sketch plan of the al-Kursi temple from Hübner 2009: 147 abb. 2.

The outer dimensions of the structure are approximately 18.7 m x 12.6 m with walls 1.5–1.6 m thick. The walls on either side of the entrance are 2.6 m thick. On either side of the entrance, there is a smoothed, nearly cubical block of limestone measuring slightly less than 1 m per side. On the front face of each block there is a relief presenting a lunar crescent standing on a table supported by a pillar. The crescents lack the tassels typical of the lunar crescent of Sîn of Harran (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5—Sketches of lunar crescent reliefs on the al-Kursi temple from Hübner 2009: 150 abb. 5.

The location of these reliefs at the entrance to the temple suggests it may have been a temple to a moon god.[38] Compared with other representations of crescents in Syro-Palestine, the reliefs probably date to the seventh century; a more secure dating must wait for full publication. If the temple does date to the seventh century, it furnishes evidence for the development of the region under Neo-Assyrian rule, and may provide evidence for the local adoption of the worship of Sîn of Harran, or at least the use of a symbol very much like his (Hübner 2009).

2.6.1.9 Survey Sites

The Ḥesban Survey recorded a number of tells to the south of Amman. These have yet to be excavated, but have surface evidence for occupation during the Iron II in the form of pottery, and hence may have been occupied in the Iron IIC. These appear in Table 2.5. The extent and nature of that occupation will remain for excavations to detail, but the size of the mounds suggest that some at least were towns during this period.

Site Name	Ḥesban Survey #
Khirbat al-ʾAl	7
Umm al-Qanafid	29
Masuh	100
Umm el-ʿAmad	102
Umm el-Basatin (Umm el-Hanafish)	103
el-Yaduda	143

Table 2.5—Tells from the Ḥesban Survey with probable occupation in the Iron IIC

2.6.2 Tombs

Most of the Iron Age tombs in the region of Amman come from this period or continue into it from the eighth century. Among these are Amman Tombs A, B, C, E, F,

[38] Cf. the name *yrḥʿzr*, "Moon is help" on one of the statues discussed in § 2.6.6 below.

the Adoni-nur tomb, the Raghdan Royal Palace tomb, the Umm Udayna tomb, and the tomb from Meqabelein.[39]

2.6.2.1 Amman Tomb A—Jabal Jofeh

Amman Tomb A is about 1 km to the south of the Amman Citadel on Jabal Jofeh and was found during foundation work for a modern building. The tomb was looted in antiquity and damaged by quarrying work in the Roman Period. There is a low bench and little "cupboard like recesses" in the eastern end of the tomb. Only a few human bone fragments were found. There was, however, a mass of animal bones, including knuckles (astragali?) in the tomb. Objects recovered from the tomb include an ivory seal that dates to the seventh century (*CAI*, no. 38; cf. Driver 1945), two bronze earrings, and a horse and rider figurine (Harding 1945). Noticeable among the pottery finds were a carinated bowl (Harding 1945: 70, no. 7, pl. XVII:7) that looks much like Persian style drinking bowls made of bronze (Henschel-Simon 1945: 75), two small pointed bottles (Harding 1945: 71, nos. 21, 22, pl. XVII:22) that have parallels with Assyrian bottle types (Henschel-Simon 1945: 77; Routledge 1997: 34), and an imitation alabastron (Harding 1945: 72, no. 38). Henschel-Simon dates the tomb based on the pottery to the eighth to seventh centuries, though prefers a seventh century date (Henschel-Simon 1945: 80). Dornemann dates the tomb from the seventh to the last quarter of the sixth century (Dornemann 1983: 63).

2.6.2.2 Amman Tomb B—Jabal Jofeh

Amman Tomb B was situated on the hill below Amman Tomb A. It was probably a cave at one point, but was found as a recess in the rock (perhaps destroyed by

[39] Amman Tomb D may also date to the this period (Harding 1951), although Dornemann places it in the ninth–eighth centuries (Dornemann 1983: 49, 63).

quarrying). At the opposite end of the recess were two Roman sarcophagi. The finds include, among other items, a rectangular marble palette, a decorated circular limestone kohl palette, a pottery bull rhyton with strainer spout, and eleven small pointed bottles similar to those found in Tomb A (Harding 1945). Henschel-Simon dated the tomb to the eighth to seventh centuries, though prefers a seventh century date (Henschel-Simon 1945: 80). Dornemann dates Tomb B from the eighth to mid-seventh century (Dornemann 1983: 63).

2.6.2.3 Amman Tomb C—Jabal al-Jedid

The contents of an Iron II tomb appeared during modern construction close to a quarried out cave about 2 km west of the Amman Citadel. The tomb was robbed in pre-Roman times and the disturbed Iron II contents were subsequently covered by Roman and Byzantine material. Objects include an alabaster palette, a limestone palette, Mediterranean shells, bronze fibulae, fragments of bronze and iron bracelets, rings, and earrings, a decorated sherd, and a pottery figurine. The figurine is unique, having its face painted with a beard, but also having female breasts and holding its bulging (pregnant?) stomach. The figurine also has four spirals on its head somewhat reminiscent of volute capitals. The blending of male and female attributes led Harding to designate this a hermaphrodite deity. Three small pointed bottles were among the assemblage of pottery (Harding 1951). The tomb dates from the eighth century to the first half of the seventh century (Harding 1951: 37; Dornemann 1983: 63).

2.6.2.4 Amman Tomb E—Jabal Jofeh ash-Sharqi

Modern stonecutters found Amman Tomb E less than a kilometer southeast of the Amman Citadel. The contents of this tomb include metal objects (bracelets, rings, a nail, and a bronze mirror), marble polishing stones, beads, shells, and a clay shrine with

painted line decorations (Dajani 1966a: 41–2, and see pls. I, III, VI, VII).[40] The initial note about the tomb also listed a molded female figurine head (Maʾayeh 1960: 114, pl. III:2). Pottery included some 150 vessels, amongst which were about ten pointed bottles (Dajani 1966a: 41–6). Maʾayeh initially dated the tomb to about 800 BCE (Maʾayeh 1960: 114), while Dajani dated it to the last half of the seventh century (Dajani 1966a: 46–7). Dornemann dated it to the mid-eighth to mid-seventh centuries (Dornemann 1983: 63). While the contents clearly cluster around an eighth to seventh century date, the presence of the pottery shrine, which probably dates to the tenth or ninth century BCE (see § 2.4.2.1 above), and the bronze mirror, which may date as late as the Persian Period (Dajani 1966a: 41; Routledge 1997: 36), suggest that this tomb may have been in use for four hundred years.

2.6.2.5 Amman Tomb F

This tomb sat near the later Roman Theater in Amman (ca. half of a kilometer south of the Amman Citadel) and became known when the foundation of the Roman Theater was cleared. This tomb was largely disturbed when found and is unpublished, although Dornemann discusses and publishes some of the contents. Besides the pottery, the tomb contained a collection of figurines including a painted horse, a camel (?), three male figurine heads with pointed and painted headgear, one painted female figurine head, one tambourine from a "tambourine lady," three female terra-cotta head molds, and two other terra-cotta molds (Dornemann 1983: 47 n. 3, 132–42, figs. 84–8). Dornemann dates the tomb from the mid-seventh to late sixth centuries (Dornemann 1983: 63).

[40] The system of numbering the photographs and drawings is not transparent and there appear to be some items that are represented in both photos and drawings, but there is no way of telling for sure.

2.6.2.6 Amman—Adoni-nur Tomb

The Adoni-nur tomb was located on the southern slope of the Amman Citadel. When the Department of Antiquities located the cave, a family was living in it and the contents of the tomb were found dumped outside of the cave on a rock ledge. The objects include eleven seals,[41] one of which carries the inscription, "Adoni-nur servant of Amminadab" (*CAI*, no. 40). Given the use of the word *ʿbd*, "servant" as a title for a king's official, scholars have taken this to be the seal of an Ammonite official of a seventh century BCE Ammonite king known from the Ammonite Tall Siran Bottle (*CAI*, no. 78) and Assurbanipal's inscriptions (see discussion in § 3.4.4.1). A large collection of metal objects of silver, bronze, and iron include finger rings, earrings, bracelets, fibulae, arrowheads, knife blades, a pin/nail, bowl fragments, and a vase fragment. The assemblage also includes a gold (or perhaps electrum) fibula (Harding 1953: 55–6, pl. VII). Other items include a glass vase fragment (cf. the blue and yellow vase at Meqabelein), beads, and fragments of alabaster vases (Harding 1953: 56–7). Notable among the pottery recovered are several items with Mesopotamian prototypes including four bowls similar to Assyrian Palace Ware (Harding 1953: 57–8 nos. 70, 75, 76, 88), three handleless jars (Harding 1953: 58 nos. 88–90), eight pointed bottles (Harding 1953: 62 nos. 94–99A), one large cylindrical jar (Harding 1953: 64 no. 118) and pieces of three bath-tub coffins (Harding 1953: 59–60 nos. 47–9).[42] The pottery and objects recovered from this important tomb indicate a wealthy family that was in the service of the Ammonite king. The pottery, but especially the seal of Adoni-nur, demonstrate the

[41] Four of the seals are conoid, four are scaraboid, one is of uneven shape, one is fragmentary, one is oval and mounted on a silver finger ring (Harding 1953: 51–5, pl. VI:1–11).

[42] On the parallels to Mesopotamian pottery see conveniently Tufnell 1953.

seventh century date of this tomb, though it may have continued in use beyond that (Dornemann 1983: 63; Harding 1953: 49; Tufnell 1953).

2.6.2.7 Amman—Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb—Jabal al-Qusur

The use of this tomb may have continued into the seventh century as suggested by the pottery. For details, see § 2.4.2.2 above.

2.6.2.8 Abu Nseir Tombs

The site of Abu Nseir sits about 15 km north northwest of Amman, overlooking the Baqʿah valley and the Amman-Jerash highway. Amongst the finds from the two tombs were several bracelets, earrings, a perforated shell, a scarab, and pointed bottles. The pottery from the first tomb dated to the same time as that from a small excavation performed on a nearby tower, roughly the eighth to seventh centuries. The second, undisturbed tomb had Iron Age (undistinguished in the publication) and Mamluk pottery in it (Abu Ghanimeh 1984).

2.6.2.9 Khilda Tombs 1 and 2

The site of Khilda is about 10 km northwest of the Amman Citadel. The contents of two tombs became known during modern building activities. The tombs lie close to two towers that appear also to date to the Iron Age. Tomb 1 is a rock-cut tomb about 3 m in diameter, the exact location of Tomb 2 is not known, but the owner of the property handed over the finds. Pottery found in Tomb 1 includes three pointed bottles, a *lekythos,* and a pottery alabastron. Tomb 2 contained two alabaster bottles and a number of bronze objects including fibulae, bracelets, an armlet, finger rings, earrings, a strainer, and three bowls. Additionally, the excavators recovered two conoid chalcedony seals with Mesopotamian style scenes. Based on the pottery, seals, and bronze objects, these tombs date to the seventh to fifth centuries (Yassine 1988).

2.6.2.10 Meqabelein Tomb

An Iron IIC tomb in Meqabelein, a village about 6 km southwest of the Amman Citadel, came to light when the Department of Antiquities examined a Roman tomb. The Iron IIC tomb was about 3 m square with rock-cut benches on three sides. Objects of bronze, silver, and iron included fibulae, kohl sticks, bracelets, anklets, earrings, a small bell, a finger ring inlaid with glass, an arrowhead, a knife handle, a knife, and various other fragments. There was also a bronze carinated bowl, a strainer, and a mirror that have clear parallels with Mesopotamian and Persian artifacts. There were two seals, one was an anepigraphic eight-sided chalcedony seal in a bronze swivel mount depicting a worshiper standing before what may be Marduk and Nabu symbols with a crescent moon above. The other seal was a limestone cylinder seal on a bronze loop that shows a figure holding caprids in each hand. In addition there was a black and white opaque glass kohl tube of alabastron form, a small blue and yellow opaque glass *amphoriskos*, two horse and rider figurines with painted decoration, a small alabastron, a white limestone saucer, two rectangular palettes (one limestone, one alabaster), and beads made of semi-precious stones. Pottery finds included four handleless jars of Mesopotamian style (Cf. Adoni-nur tomb), five imitation alabastra, and two pointed bottles (Harding 1950). Harding dated the tomb to the seventh to early sixth centuries based on the pottery and imitation alabastra (Harding 1950: 44–5). Dornemann dates it slightly later to the late seventh to last quarter of the sixth century (Dornemann 1983: 63). The bronze mirror and strainer may push this date into the fifth century (see Appendix E), as do also the glass kohl tube of alabastron shape and *amphoriskos* (see Appendix C).

2.6.2.11 Saḥab Tomb B

Some objects from Saḥab Tomb B may date to the Iron IIC given the date of the assemblage to from the ninth to the seventh century (§ 2.5.2.5 above). Notable are the nine small pointed bottles and fragments of three or four more (Harding 1948: 95, nos. 31–7, 42–3).

2.6.2.12 Umm Udayna Tomb

Umm Udayna is about 6 km west of the Amman Citadel. The tomb became known during bulldozing for a modern building. This rock-cut tomb is about 8.5 m by 5.5 m with a rock-cut bench on one side. Objects of bronze, silver, and iron include fibulae, bracelets, anklets, rings, earrings, kohl sticks, swords, daggers, arrowheads, and a nail. Other items of bronze include five bowls, two juglets, one ladle, three strainers, and a caryatid censer. In addition, the contents included shells, beads, a number of scarabs, one of which included an inscription that is possibly Ammonite (*CAI*, no. 124a), a dark blue glass alabastron, a dark blue, light blue, and yellow glass *aryballos* (see Appendix B), and three black Attic *lekythoi* (Abu Taleb 1985; Hadidi 1987; Khalil 1986). The contents of the tomb suggest use from the eighth to fifth centuries BCE (Abu Taleb 1985: 21; Khalil 1986: 109).

2.6.3 Towers and Farmsteads

2.6.3.1 Jabal al-Akhdar

Excavators unearthed a rectangular building before modern construction on Jabal al-Akhdar, about 2 km southwest of the Amman Citadel. This hill stands at the intersection of east-west and north-south roads. Among the ruins was a building with external measurements of 16 m x 13 m. Some walls stood to a height of 3 m. The walls were made of large rough blocks of stone, and according to the drawing, were laid in

two parallel rows. Inside the building, there is a central area with five rooms on one side and three on the other. Some doors within the building allowed access from the central area to the side rooms. Pottery sherds found in the southern part of the building date to the eighth to seventh centuries. Later use and perhaps modifications were attested by a silver coin from Tyre dating to 126 BCE, Nabatean pottery, a Herodian lamp, and Roman pottery dating to the third century BCE. Outside the tower, an irregular wall 1.1 m wide surrounds the area, but is said to date to a later phase of the building's use (Zayadine 1985).

2.6.3.2 ad-Dreijat

Excavation of ad-Dreijat (Madaba Plains Project Survey Site 126 = Ḥesban Survey Site 135 = Fohrer 1961: 60, site D) took place during the 1989 excavation season at ʿUmayri as part of the hinterland survey project. The site consists of a rectangular structure with exterior walls 2.5 m thick built of large chert boulders, a cistern 15.5 m deep, and a nearby cave. No Iron IIC living surfaces were found, but pottery found on the bedrock and in small pockets, suggests that the walls come from the Iron IIC and may have served as a fortress or fortified farmstead. The building continued in use into the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Ayyubid/Mamluk periods (Herr 2008: 1843–4; Herr et al. 1991a).

2.6.3.3 Khirbat al-Hajjar

Khirbat al-Hajjar is about 10.5 km southwest of the Amman Citadel. The site sat on a tell. The top of the mound commands a good line of site in all directions except west (Thompson 1972: 48; 1977: 27). Excavations on the site uncovered an outer defensive wall system nearly 3.5 m thick and a round tower on the top of the mound, 11.7 m in diameter with walls 1.8 m thick. The outer face of the tower had traces of

plaster on it and inside the tower were several partition walls. The pottery indicates that the defensive system and tower were built and found their main period of use in the seventh and sixth centuries. Finds of Iron I pottery show that the site was occupied at an earlier stage as well. Finds at the site include metal pins, fibulae, a javelin point, a Tyrian coin (ca. 400 BCE), a metal seal, three anepigraphic stone seals, figurine fragments, oven fragments, and other miscellaneous items. (Thompson 1972: 65–72, pls. IV:2, V:1, VI:2, VII:1-2, VIII:2, XI). Likewise, a male and female set of statues were found below the tell during modern construction activity (Ibrahim 1971).

2.6.3.4 Rujm al-Ḥenu West

Rujm al-Ḥenu West (Baqʿah Valley Site 2) lies about 17.5 km north northeast of the Amman Citadel. Excavations at the site revealed a large rectangular building measuring 46 x 44 m, with a circular tower in one corner. The exposed walls consisted of two lines of fieldstone, in the same manner as most of the so-called towers around Amman (McGovern 1983: 110). Iron IIC/Persian pottery predominated in this building, indicating that is essentially a one period site (Clark 1983; McGovern 1983: 112, 127–37). Across the wadi to the south, another site, called Rujm al-Ḥawi (Baqʿah Valley Site 5) went unexcavated. However, Iron IIC/Persian sherds and wall lines visible from the surface indicate a building nearly identical in shape and size to Rujm al-Ḥenu West (McGovern 1983: 112–3). The two sites, having a prominent position on either side of the Wadi Umm ad-Dananir, could have functioned as defensive posts for controlling communication along what must have been a main road from Amman and north to the area of Jerash and Damascus (McGovern 1986: 6).

2.6.3.5 Khilda Fortress A

The site of Khilda Fortress A is about 10 km northwest of the Amman Citadel (cf. Tombs 1 and 2, § 2.6.2.9 above). The structure is 45 m x 34 m with thick outer walls, has a number of internal divisions, and apparently an open courtyard in the middle (Yassine 1988: 18 and fig. 2). Brief soundings at the site by J. Sauer found pottery dating to the seventh century (as cited by Yassine 1988: 17 and n. 7). The size of the structure and number of other smaller structures in the area suggested to Yassine that Khilda Fortress A may have served as an administrative site in the Iron IIC (Yassine 1988: 18).

2.6.3.6 Rujm al-Malfuf North

Rujm al-Malfuf North is about 2.75 km west of the Amman Citadel on Jabal Amman. The site consists of a round tower with diameter of 20.15 m and 2.3 m thick walls constructed of large blocks of stone two layers thick. Attached to the tower was a rectangular structure that measured 27 m x 28 m. The walls were founded on bedrock and had a plaster layer on the outer face that may have sealed the structure and helped with drainage. Underneath the floor of the tower, a small area used corbelled rocks to hold up floor slabs. Similar corbelling was visible higher up the walls of the tower, suggesting the existence of a second story. Excavations turned up Roman pottery and a Roman coin dated to 276–282 BCE. Accumulation of debris suggests that there was probably only one period of construction and use, unless the buildings were thoroughly cleaned at some point before being reused (Boraas 1971). The pottery finds undermined earlier suggestions, such as that of Glueck (1939: 165–7), that this site was originally occupied in the Iron Age (Boraas 1971: 43–5). Later, unpublished work on Rujm al-

Malfuf North suggests that the lowest levels date to the sixth–fifth centuries (Yassine 1988: 17, 22 n. 6).

2.6.3.7 Rujm al-Malfuf South

Rujm al-Malfuf South was located on the southwestern side of Jabal Amman, not far from the Amman Citadel. Excavation there revealed a round tower that was 13 m in diameter and made of large unhewn blocks of stone. Some internal walls were visible, as was a corbelled cavity in the floor 0.7 m by 1.85 m. Likewise, remnants of plaster were found on the outside surface of the tower. Pottery from the excavation included Iron I and Byzantine pottery, though Iron II pottery from the seventh and sixth centuries dominated. Therefore, Thompson dated the foundation and main use of the tower to the seventh and sixth centuries, while simply noting that there was an Iron I presence and later Byzantine reuse of the structure (Thompson 1973).

2.6.3.8 Rujm al-Mekheizin

Rujm al-Mekheizin lies northeast of the Amman Citadel on the property of the Theodore Schneller School. The remains consist of a square structure, 12.2 m x 12.25 m, with walls 1.5 m thick and some internal partitions. The burnt remains of what was probably roofing material, along with two roof rollers, were found inside the structure. The pottery was of a seventh to sixth century date and included one pointed bottle. The only other object found was a piece of metal that was too corroded to be identified. A number of other walls of unknown function located outside the tower may have been additions in the Ottoman or Mamluk periods. Thompson notes the presence of two similar structures in the area, one to the southeast and one to the northwest (Thompson 1984).

2.6.3.9 Abu Nseir

The site of Abu Nseir overlooks the Baqʿah Valley. Abu Ghanimeh documented the foundations for two square towers and excavated one square next to the western structure. Based on the pottery found in the excavations, he dates the tower to the eighth to seventh centuries (Abu Ghanimeh 1984: 305). Associated with the towers were two tombs dated to the Iron Age and Mamluk periods (§ 2.6.2.8 above). There was also a winepress with large square basins (5 x 5 m), which Abu Ghanimeh dated to the Byzantine period based on pottery (Abu Ghanimeh 1984: 305).[43]

2.6.3.10 Khirbat Salameh

Khirbat Salameh lies about 9 km northwest of the Amman Citadel. The main architectural feature on the site is a square building 23.5 m on a side dated to the Roman/Byzantine period (Bikai 1993: 522; Lenzen and McQuitty 1987: 203). The Iron IIC or Persian remains consist of debris containing potsherds from the sixth or fifth centuries that lie underneath a wall on a terrace lower than the level of the Roman/Byzantine building (Lenzen and McQuitty 1987: 203; cf. Lenzen and McQuitty 1984), and walls found in one square under the Roman/Byzantine building (Bikai 1993: 521). These walls are oriented differently than those that are above them (Bikai 1993: 521). The data published from this excavation for the Iron IIC suggest only that the site

[43] The report does not specify where the pottery that the excavator used to date the winepress came from. It appears that the winepress was visible and not in real need of excavation. Since the basins are dug out of the bedrock, they may have been used in earlier periods, but it is impossible to say for sure. The excavator did not publish a plan of the towers. The excavator did publish the pottery, but the publication does not separate the pottery from the tombs and that from the tower, so it is not possible to draw conclusions about activities based on the distribution of the pottery. The use of this site for agricultural purposes in the Neo-Assyrian period is possible, but the brevity of the publication does not provide a good contextual interpretation. If the winepress was datable to an earlier period, one could make a stronger case for the agricultural function. Still, since the site overlooks the Baqʿah Valley, one of the most fertile areas in the region, an agricultural function is certainly not out of the question.

was used at some point during the sixth and/or fifth centuries for agricultural purposes.[44]

2.6.3.11 Rujm Selim

In the 1987 excavation season at Tall al-ʿUmayri, a hinterland survey team conducted a limited excavation at the site of Rujm Selim (regional survey site MPP 34). The site includes two cisterns, a tower-like structure (9 m x 9 m) partitioned into four rooms, several cupmarks, and quarry marks in the vicinity (Geraty, Herr, and LaBianca 1988: 226). The excavators dated Phase 6 to the late Iron II and include in this phase the tower, the plaster on the tower,[45] and perhaps the cutting and plastering of the lower cistern. The excavators dated Phase 5 to the late Iron II/early Persian Period and included the reuse of the tower, the addition of the perimeter wall, a courtyard paved with cobbles, as well as a plastered installation of unknown function. The excavators report a trilobate (Scythian) arrowhead found inside the perimeter wall. Two ceramic loom weights, a spindle whorl, and sherds of a Persian water jug were found inside the tower and were also attributed to Phase 5 (Geraty, Herr, and LaBianca 1988: 226). The remains suggest that the occupants of the site used the tower as a habitation or work area. The site continued in use in the Hellenistic/Roman and Ottoman periods with some apparent breaks in between (Geraty, Herr, and LaBianca 1988: 226). Based on the association of the building with cisterns, cupmarks, and location near arable land, the excavators argue that Rujm Selim was most likely a "large agricultural complex" in the

[44] Bikai's otherwise informed discussion of the function of towers in the Amman region (Bikai 1993: 521) is odd in that it seems to assume that Khirbat Salameh is a part of the evidence for these structures, even though he dates the square building to the Roman/Byzantine period. His interpretation of the site as having been used for agriculture in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods, while possible, has nothing to do with the Roman/Byzantine structure, the so-called "tower" that seems to have motivated his discussion.

[45] The report does not specify whether the plaster is on the inside or outside.

hinterland of Tall al-ʿUmayri (Geraty, Herr, and LaBianca 1988: 228; cf. also the description of the site in Boling 1989: 150).

2.6.3.12 Survey Results

Surveys of parts of the Amman Plateau include the Archaeological Survey of Greater Amman (Abu Dayyah et al. 1991), the Umm ad-Dananir Survey (McGovern 1986: 7–17), the Telul edh Dhahab Survey (Gordon and Villiers 1983), the er-Rumman Survey (Gordon and Knauf 1987), the survey around the King Talal Dam on the Zarqa (Yassine et al. 1988), the Wadi az-Zarqa/Wadi aḍ-Ḍulayl Survey (Palumbo et al. 1996), the Hesban Survey (Ibach 1987), the Madaba Plains Projects surveys (Boling 1989; Christopherson 1997; Geraty, Herr, LaBianca, Battenfield et al. 1989: 165–75), and the Saḥab Survey (Gustavson-Gaube and Ibrahim 1986). In an earlier stage of research, a number of German scholars carried out a series of investigations to locate so-called Ammonite border fortresses (Fohrer 1961; Gese 1958; Graf Reventlow 1963; Hentschke 1960). The Ḥesban and ʿUmayri surveys have also revisited a number of these sites. These relied in part on early surveys of the area by Glueck (1939) and de Vaux (1938). These early surveys are still useful for their descriptions of sites, but the pottery datings have been significantly revised since then (Sauer 1986; cf. Finkelstein 1998: 128–30).

In aggregate, the surveys record close to three hundred sites of various sizes (Ray 2001: 151–4), many of which fall into the categories of towers and farmsteads. They normally consist of combinations of small towers, cisterns, terrace walls, and bedrock cupmarks (small depressions carved in the bedrock), and they consistently

show high points in settlement density in the Iron II, Roman, Byzantine, and Umayyad periods.[46]

The key limitation of these surveys for the present purpose is that the pottery readings are very general, often indicating simply Iron Age II.[47] With this limitation in mind, however, the upward trend in site growth during the Iron Age II is clear, although exactly how many of the sites were founded then cannot be stated for sure.[48] When one takes the evidence from excavated sites into account, such as the towers and farmsteads described in § 2.6.3 above, the Iron IIC dating of many of these small sites becomes more likely. Excavations carried out at Rujm Selim and ad-Dreijat, for example, have shown sixth–fifth century dates for these structures (§§ 2.6.3.2 and 2.6.3.11 above). This, combined with the sixth century founding of ʿUmayri Stratum 7, has led to the hypothesis that the small sites surrounding the ʿUmayri-Ḥesban region were all developed around the same time (Herr 1995; Herr and Clark 2007: 126). A similar argument could be made for sites close to the Amman Citadel, though beginning perhaps earlier in the period (Kletter 1991; Ray 2001: 153).[49] The surveys of the region thus fit well with the evidence from excavations, which show that the Iron IIC saw the greatest extent of settlement and material cultural development in the Iron Age.

2.6.3.13 Discussion

The group of round and rectilinear structures discussed in this section is unified in three main ways: their rough chronological contemporaneity; their construction from

[46] Surveys of adjacent regions show a similar height in settlement in the Iron II, e.g., Ibrahim, Sauer and Yassine 1976; Yassine, Sauer and Ibrahim 1988.

[47] See Finkelstein (Finkelstein 1998) for a deeper critique.

[48] For a comprehensive list of sites from the surveys see Ray 2001: 150–4. See also Younker (Younker 2003: 154–8) for an interpretation of the settlement data from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron IIB.

[49] For geopolitical interpretation of these changes in the sixth century see Lipschits 2004.

large unhewn blocks of locally available stone, often two layers thick; and their siting outside of the main towns of the region. When it comes to identifying function, however, the unity of this group of sites begins to break down. The shape, size, and topographical situation of these structures suggest a diversity of possible overlapping functions that are not easily distinguished by the archaeologist or historian.

The main difference in shape is that between the rectilinear structures (frequently called *qasr*) and the round structures (frequently called *rujm*). The reasons for the differences in shape are unclear and the two shapes occur together, such as those at Rujm al-Ḥenu West (and the duplicate at Rujm al-Ḥawi), Rujm al-Malfuf North, and perhaps Khirbat al-Hajjar. The size range is substantial for both round and rectilinear structures. Outer dimensions of the rectilinear structures range from 3–5 m per side to 40–50 m on a side, while the round structures have of a range of 5–29 m in diameter (Kletter 1991: 37, table 1).

The placement of these sites is the strongest argument in favor of a diversity of functions. Some, such as Jabal al-Akhdar, Khirbat al-Hajjar, Rujm al-Ḥenu West (and the duplicate at Rujm al-Ḥawi), Khilda Fortress A, Rujm al-Malfuf North and South, and perhaps Abu Nseir, may have had military and/or economic functions in controlling and defending main routes through the area. One could infer such a function by their relative isolation on hills overlooking thoroughfares. Other sites, such as ad-Dreijat and Rujm Selim have a good view of arable land, but rather indefensible positions. This latter situation is very common at other such sites in the area (Kletter 1991: 39;

Younker 1989). For these sites, which do not appear to have significant military value, an agricultural interpretation is most likely.[50]

In an earlier stage of scholarship, the larger, especially round, specimens were regarded as "border forts" (*Grenzfestungen*) guarding Ammonite lands against invasion (Glueck 1939: 166–7, 246–7; 1970: 161–73). A group of German scholars solidified this by locating and mapping a set of sites to the west of Amman that appeared to form a defensive border line (Fohrer 1961; Gese 1958; Graf Reventlow 1963; Hentschke 1960).[51] Most scholars followed this interpretation until the 1970s, when archaeologists first began excavating these structures, and the evidence for date and function began to shape a reevaluation of the strictly military function of these sites.

Kletter's work, which remains the closest study of the material, posits three main functional categories for these structures: forts, agricultural facilities, and settlements (Kletter 1991: 39–41).[52] He does not attempt, however, to assign the known structures to these categories. Instead, he makes the general argument that some of them may be forts based on dominant location and view (Kletter 1991: 39, 41). As for agricultural facilities, he compares the smaller of these structures to *noterot*, "stone huts," from the Hellenistic and later periods in Judah and Samaria. These buildings are made of fieldstones with thick walls, stone slab, or arched roof, and reach up to 8 m in height and no more than 5 m in diameter (Kletter 1991: 39–40). Study of these has shown that workers used these for dwelling and storage of tools during harvest times (Kletter 1991:

[50] Other sites that are susceptible to interpretation as agricultural complexes or farmsteads include at least seventeen of the regional survey sites from the Madaba Plains Project (Younker 1991: 338).

[51] For a brief summary and discussion, see Kletter (Kletter 1991: 34) and MacDonald (MacDonald 2000: 162).

[52] Other studies also acknowledge the multipurpose function of these sites, e.g., Najjar 1999: 103–6; Thompson 2000: 488; Younker 1989.

40). Other sites, which are too large to be classified as *noterot*, and whose position lacks military value, should be classified as settlements (Kletter 1991: 41–3).

At present, Kletter's survey of the material is the most thorough explanation for the megalithic structures around Amman, but further study is required to develop a functional classification of individual sites. What is perhaps most important about these sites is their appearance beginning in the Neo-Assyrian Period. This spate of building expands the picture of transformation to patterns of settlement, food production, and defense. These changing patterns may point to broader societal changes as well, a topic taken up in chapters six and seven.

2.6.4 Black Burnished Bowls

The Iron IIC saw the rise of a distinct type of pottery decoration on the Amman Plateau, the use of black-slip and burnishing, or Black Burnished Bowls (BBBs). They appear in a variety of forms but these are almost entirely limited to bowls and plates (Daviau and Graham 2009: 43–7; Herr 2006: 526), which is to say, items related specifically to food consumption. These vessels are finely levigated, thick-walled, slipped, generally burnished on inside and out, and fired in a reduced oxygen environment that gives them their characteristic black or dark gray color (Daviau and Graham 2009: 50–3; Herr 2006: 526). The local development of the BBBs beginning in the seventh century may be related to the introduction of the fast wheel, technology enabling higher firing temperature, and an interest in imitating Assyrian pottery styles (Daviau 2001a: 237; Daviau and Graham 2009: 56; Herr 2006: 540). In the latter case, the style was developed locally into a common ware (Herr 2006: 540).

What makes the BBBs unique is the heavy concentration of them on the Amman Plateau (Daviau and Graham 2009: 53–4; Dornemann 1983: 107–10; Herr 2006: 526).[53] At the nearby sites of Madaba and Mudayna ath-Thamad, only a few sherds have been found, even though these sites are within a few kilometers of Tall Jalul and there are no significant topographical features intervening (Daviau and Dion 2007: 305; Daviau and Graham 2009: 54; Herr 2006: 525). A few examples of similarly black-slipped and burnished pottery have appeared in Edom at Tawilan, Busayra, and Ghrareh (Daviau and Graham 2009: 54). Isolated examples have appeared at Hazor (Stratum V), Samaria, Tel Batash, Tel-Miqne-Ekron, Ashdod (Stratum VII), and Tell Beit Mirsim (Daviau and Graham 2009: 54–5).[54] Given that they are isolated finds, the examples outside the Amman Plateau may simply be items of trade (Daviau and Graham 2009: 55).[55] Other specimens of black-slipped and burnished pottery appear in Cyprus, Syria, and Assyria from the Late Bronze Age through the Iron II (Daviau and Graham 2009: 55–6), showing that the reduced oxygen firing was not isolated to the Amman Plateau. The extent of the use of black-burnished treatment on the Amman Plateau, however, sets it apart.

2.6.5 Weights

Stones are identified as scale weights based on their size, parallels, and in some cases the reality that no other plausible function for them can be posited (Daviau 2002: 90). Five uninscribed stones identified as scale weights were found at Tall Jawa (Daviau

[53] BBBs have been found in the Baqʿah Valley, Ṣafuṭ, Amman, Tall Jawa, ʿUmayri, Ḥesban, Jalul, Tall al-Mazar, Dayr ʿAlla, Tall Nimrin and various other sites in the vicinity of Amman (Daviau and Graham 2009: 53–4; Herr 2006: 525).

[54] Aaron Brody (personal communication) mentions that there is a BBB also at Nasbeh.

[55] The example from Tel Batash is probably the closest parallel to those found in Ammon. It was examined by Herr (Herr 2006: 525).

2002: 90). One is 250 g (22 shekels?)[56], two are 90 g (8 shekels [Strata VII, seventh and sixth c.),[57] one is 50 g (4 shekels?)[58], and the weight of the last is not given.[59] From ʿUmayri, a number of weights of various types have been published, though without weight measurements. Among these, possible candidates for scale weights may be objects number 1202 (Platt 1991: 253, fig. 10.36), and numbers 1615, 1645 (Herr and Platt 2002: 368, fig. 16.12). All of these are uninscribed, and the last two at least have flattened bottoms similar to the Judean weights. The excavators note that they do not seem to have any consistent weight pattern (Herr and Platt 2002: 368), though the diameters of the last two (2.5 cm and 1.5 cm) make them good candidates. Ray classifies three stone objects (Object nos. 2439, 0245, 1396) and one lead object (Object no. 0805) as weights, but he provides no measurements or further description (Ray 2001: 200–2).[60] *CAI*, no. 54c is a black iron weight of 5.5505 g labeled with the letters *bqʿ* "Beqaʿ." Its weight is close to the average Beqa weight in Judah, which according to Kletter is 6.003 g (Kletter 1998: 76, fig. 10). This unprovenanced item may be Ammonite based on paleography. One possible textual reference to one of the heavier

[56] Object TJ 920, locus B24:11 in room 215 of building 200, Stratum VIII, ca. eighth century.

[57] Object TJ 1485, locus A93:16 was perhaps material from the upper story of building 800. In any case, it was above the remains from the building and perhaps from Stratum VII, seventh–sixth centuries. Object TJ 1639, locus A83:16 was in room 807 of building 800 and in Stratum VIIA, dating to the sixth century (cf. Daviau 2003: 314).

[58] Object TJ 2201, locus C27:66 on the floor of central room 804 in building 800. This room is in Stratum VIIA, sixth century (Daviau 2003: 319). The floor was covered with pottery and various stone food preparation tools, looms weights, and ovens. 50 g is well beyond the heaviest Judean four shekel weights. For a summary of Judean weight system see Kletter 1998: fig. 10. The average mass of a Judean shekel is 11.33 g, with some variance. For the range of variance see again Kletter 1998: fig. 12.

[59] Object TJ 1126, locus C27:48 in a living surface from building 800, perhaps from an upper story, perhaps Stratum VII, seventh–sixth centuries. In the better-known Judean system, a twenty-two shekel weight is not known. The last four mentioned weights all come from loci in or above building 800, which is a large, high status house (Daviau 2003: 292; cf. Daviau 2001a).

[60] *CAI*, no. 105a is a rectangular bronze weight that was purchased on the antiquities market in Jerusalem and was originally published as Ammonite based on paleography. Other scholars have suggested that it is Phoenician or Aramaic.

weight designations is found in Ḥesban Ostracon A2 (*CAI* no. 94), which seems to refer to a talent of figs using the abbreviation *k* for *kkr* ("talent") and a single downward stroke (Cross 2003a: 80).[61]

The paucity of weights from the Amman Plateau makes it difficult to know whether there was a clear and widely used system of measurements in place. Evidence from the Moabite site of Khirbat al-Mudayna ath-Thamad helps clarify this to some degree. Recent excavations have uncovered three weights, two of which are inscribed. These were found in building 200 (late seventh–early sixth century), which appears to have been used for industrial purposes, perhaps wool processing, as discussed above. The smallest weight (MT 679) is dome shaped limestone and is inscribed with the hieratic numeral 10 on the top of the weight. Both the mass (4.698 g) and inscription on this weight fit well within the 10 gerah series of Judean weights described by Kletter, and so it is possible that it originally came from Judah (Daviau and Dion 2002: 39–40; Kletter 1998: 71, 232, fig. 37.9). The second inscribed weight (MT 687) has the inscription *šlšn* ("thirty") in Aramaic or Moabite script,[62] and by its mass of 16.316 g, it could well be a thirty gerah weight if one uses a 1 gerah mass of 0.55 g, although it would be the first of this type. The third weight (MT702) is the largest at 34.064 g and is uninscribed. Again using a 1 gerah mass of 0.55g, this weight may be a 60 gerah weight (Daviau and Dion 2002: 39–40).[63] Together with the weights from the Amman

[61] The Neo-Assyrian text K 1295 (Fales and Postgate 1995: 30, no. 33.) mentions the Ammonites delivering two minas of gold. It is not clear whether this means that vassals used the Mesopotamian weighing system to measure what they sent as tribute, or whether what they sent was simply weighed when it arrived.

[62] The nunation at the end precludes the inscription being Hebrew, Phoenician, or Ammonite (Daviau and Dion 2002: 39).

[63] Kletter lists a few Judean inscribed weights found in the Transjordan, which he considers to be "foreign" objects probably arriving by trade (Kletter 1998: 52–8, figs. 6–7). If he is right, it is possible that they could have played a functional role in the Transjordan, where the weighing system, on present evidence, is not significantly different.

Plateau, these weights suggest that the Transjordanian approach to weighing was similar to that of Judah. Perhaps the small number of finds and irregularity in the weights reflect a less standardized system in the Transjordan.

2.6.6 Sculpture

Abou Assaf dates a group of ten sculptures (1980: 25–31 nos. VIII–XVII, Tafeln V–X) to 730–690 BCE (1980: 76). This set includes the statue of *yrḥʿzr*, a badly damaged statuette torso, a male head, and a statuette missing the head, all of which were found near the Amman Citadel (Abou Assaf 1980: nos. IX–XI, XVII; Barnett 1951: 34–6 sculptures B, D; Maʾayeh 1960). Also included in this set are a head of unknown provenance (Abou Assaf 1980: no. VIII), a statuette attached to a back pillar from ʿArjan (Abou Assaf 1980: no. XII; Khairi 1970), and four worn heads from Abu ʿAlanda (Abou Assaf 1980: nos. XIII–XVI).[64] As with the sculptures discussed earlier, a variety of influences are visible in these sculptures, especially Syrian artistic trends (Dornemann 1983: 156–9; Zayadine 1991: 49–50). Egyptian conventions stand out in numbers VIII, XII, XVII, especially in the use of the back pillar of number XII (Abou Assaf 1980: 58; Dornemann 1983: 154–5; Zayadine 1991: 50).

Abou Assaf dates another group of seven sculptures (1980: 31–4 nos. XVIII–XXIV, Tafeln XI–XVI) to 690–580 BCE (1980: 76). To these one can add three more published by ʿAmr (1990: 114–6 nos. 1, 3, 4). This set includes a head from Abu ʿAlanda (Horn 1973: 177 no. 7), a head of unknown provenance (Horn 1973: 176 no. 4), four heads purchased in Amman (ʿAmr 1990: 114–6 nos. 1, 3, 4; Horn 1973: 177 no. 8), and four double-faced female heads found during excavations on the Amman Citadel

[64] Horn (Horn 1973) and Ibrahim (Ibrahim 1971) report that twelve or thirteen sculptures were found at Abu ʿAlanda, but only five are published in Abou Assaf (Abou Assaf 1980: nos. XIII–XVI, and XVIII). Horn also published a picture of Abou Assaf's number XVIII (Horn 1973: pl XX:7).

(Zayadine 1973: 27–8, 33–5).[65] Again, a variety of artistic influences from Egypt, Syria, and probably Phoenicia are visible in the sculptures, highlighting the way that the local artists adapted diverse artistic conventions for their own purposes (ʿAmr 1990: 116–7; Dornemann 1983: 156–7, 159–60; Prag 1987; Zayadine 1991: 49–51).

Notable among this group of sculptures are the four double-faced female heads, which came to light when a Hellenistic channel on the Amman Citadel was uncovered and these sculptures were found built into the sides of the channel (Zayadine 1973: 27). The four heads are of similar but not identical execution. Each head has two faces back-to-back and thick cords of hair that fall even with the bottom of the neck. A decorated band goes over the forehead and holds the hair in place, while a tight necklace with holes for inlays decorates the neck. The large ears have carved earrings and stick out to the side, carved into the thick strands of hair. The eyes also had inlays, some of which are preserved. The mouths rise slightly to form a smile. There are small holes on the top (ca. 3.5 cm) and bottom (ca. 2 cm) of the heads (Zayadine 1973: 34–5, pls. XXI–XXIII).[66] On the backs of the preserved eye inlays, there are single carved letters, which apparently played a role in assembly. The stylistic features point most strongly to Syrian or Syro-Phoenician origins and have their best parallels among ivory work, such as that found at Nimrud (Dornemann 1983: 160; Zayadine 1991: 51; Prag 1987).

The holes in the top and bottom of the heads suggest an architectural function similar to the Hathor-headed capitals known from Egypt (Dornemann 1983: 160–1; cf. Abou Assaf 1980: 83; Zayadine 1973: 34) or as part of a “woman at the window” scene

[65] The paleography of the letters on the backs of the eye inlays suggests a very general date between 800 and 600 BCE, but most probably in the first half of the seventh century (Bordreuil 1973: 39).

[66] Photographs of these heads are also included in Abou Assaf (Abou Assaf 1980: Tafeln XII–XVI) and Dornemann (Dornemann 1983: figs. 93–4).

with palmette balusters beneath the heads (Prag 1987: 123–5). Their find spot near what appears to be an Iron Age IIC courtyard suggests that these heads may have adorned it or the building of which it was a part (see § 2.6.1 above), although this is a matter of speculation. In this respect, not only are the double-faced heads examples of sculptural tradition, but also of architectural tradition.

Along similar lines, the many heads that are represented in this sculptural collection may have been attached to statues (Dornemann 1983: 163), forming near life- size images. The torso found near the Amman Citadel (Abou Assaf 1980: no. X; Barnett 1951: 36 sculpture D) emphasizes this possibility since there is a hole in the torso where a neck could fit. Where precisely all of these heads and statues were displayed or stored is the real mystery, since all of them come from secondary contexts or their provenance is unknown. A sacred context is possible, inasmuch as some of the sculptures may represent deities or could have been votives offered at a shrine or temple.

The collection of twenty sculptures dating to the Iron IIC—along with the eight from the Iron IIB—testifies to an active group of artisans in the area, who adapted and integrated the artistic conventions of surrounding areas. Dornemann characterizes the situation well: “The manner in which influences from the surrounding areas are combined on the Amman sculptures is often unique but it is not carried through consistently and integrated into a definite style, as was done in Phoenicia” (Dornemann 1983: 162).

2.6.7 Imported Items

2.6.7.1 Alabaster

An alabaster bottle in the typical alabastron shape—a small, elongated, narrow-necked flask—and a small rectangular palette (probably for cosmetics) come from the tomb at Meqabelein (Harding 1950: 47, pl. XV:13, 15) and both fit well in the sixth century. Amman Tomb C had a rectangular alabaster palette that may date to the Iron IIB or IIC based on the associated assemblage (Harding 1951: 40, pl. XIV:44). Khilda Tomb 2 yielded two alabastron shaped alabaster bottles common to the Persian Period as well as a small alabaster bowl probably used for cosmetics. This type is found elsewhere in Iron II and Persian contexts (Yassine 1988: 14, 20, figs. 5:3–5; cf. Stern 2001: 528). Further, the fragment of an alabaster cup was recovered at Ḥesban in the mostly Iron IIC/Persian Period fill found in the reservoir (Ray 2001: 145, pl. 6.20),[67] and a fragment of an alabaster vessel appeared in a Persian Period stratum at ʿUmayri (Herr and Platt 2002: 374, fig. 16.16:1849).[68] The alabastron shaped vessels typically held perfumes or unguents as did a variety of other small vessels (Dayagi-Mendels 1989: 29; Stern 2001: 527), and could have been used for cosmetic, votive, or mortuary purposes.

2.6.7.2 Ivory

Harding found an ivory seal in Amman Tomb A (Driver 1945; Harding 1945: 68, pl. XVIII:42) and dates it to the seventh century (Eggler and Keel 2006: 8–9, no. 1). An unidentified bone or ivory tube comes from Stratum VII at Tall Jawa, (Daviau 2002:

[67] This cup was part of the reservoir fill, some of which may date to the Hellenistic Period, however, most of the pottery dates to the Iron IIC/Persian.

[68] Two alabastron shaped bottles were found in the Umm Udayna tomb, but the description does not indicate whether they are made of alabaster or some other material (Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 17:1–2). Another alabastron of "poor quality stone" that comes from the Adoni-nur tomb is perhaps an imitation (Harding 1953: 56, no. 45) as is another alabastron from Khilda Tomb 1 (Yassine 1988: 14, 19, fig. 4:6).

210). From the Amman Citadel comes a decorated ivory cosmetic palette that the excavator dates generally to the Iron Age (Koutsoukou 1997: 147). Naturally, this piece could date to earlier periods as well. A few other ivory fragments were also found on the Amman Citadel (Humbert, Zayadine, and Najjar 1989: 252). Two pieces of ivory inlay come from the mostly Iron IIC/Persian Period fill in the Ḥesban reservoir (Ray 2001: 145, pl. 6.22).

2.6.7.3 Shells

Marine shells, especially the decorated and undecorated *Tridacna* (giant clam) shells coming from the Red Sea are elite imports. The *Tridacna* shells probably served as dishes for eating or application of cosmetics (Daviau 2002: 47–8; Reese 2002b: 280).[69] Three published *Tridacna* come from the Amman Plateau. A polished and pigmented example comes from the Amman Citadel. This exemplar also has two "eyes" drilled and inlaid with glass and pigmented yellow. One of these "eyes" is visible at the point of the shell in the left-hand picture in Figure 2.6. The excavators report it as coming from an Iron II context, hence it could also be earlier than the Iron IIC (Koutsoukou 1997: 147–

[69] Most of the *Tridacna* date to the seventh and sixth centuries BCE based on associated pottery, though a few date earlier or later (Reese 2002a: 454–8). Some of the published *Tridacna* have engraved anthropomorphic or theriomorphic designs, with the head frequently engraved on the umbo (a protrusion on one edge of the shell). Others have evidence of pigment and glass inlay (Reese 2002a: 456–7). Given that the largest concentrations of *Tridacna* shells, along with other types of shells, have been found at the Edomite sites of Busayra, Tawilan, Ghrara, and Umm al-Biyara (Reese 2002a), Routledge and Crowell have argued that Edom was probably involved in distributing these items if not also in decorating them (Crowell 2004: 225–30; Routledge 1997: 37–8). From Edom, they were traded to the rest of the ancient Near East. Decorated examples come from Assur, Susa, Tel-Miqne-Ekron, Tell el-Farʾah (South), Tell Arad, Jerusalem, Shechem, Amman, Alalakh, Tell Sekin, Byblos, along with two unprovenanced exemplars (Reese 2002a: 456–7). Apart from the Edomite sites, undecorated *Tridacna* have been found at Wadi Tbeik (in the Negev), Kadesh-barnea, Tel Masos, Tell Jemmeh, Tall Jawa (South), Jerusalem, Tel Miqne-Ekron, Tell Taʾannak, and Ras Shamra (Reese 2002a: 457–8). For photographs, drawings, descriptions, and additional finds see Reese and Sease 1993; Reese and Sease 2004.

8).[70] A complete unmodified *Tridacna* and a *Tridacna* body fragment come from Stratum VII at Tall Jawa, dating to the late eighth–seventh century (Daviau 2002: 48, fig. 2.26:1; Reese 2002b: 279, fig. 4.1:3).

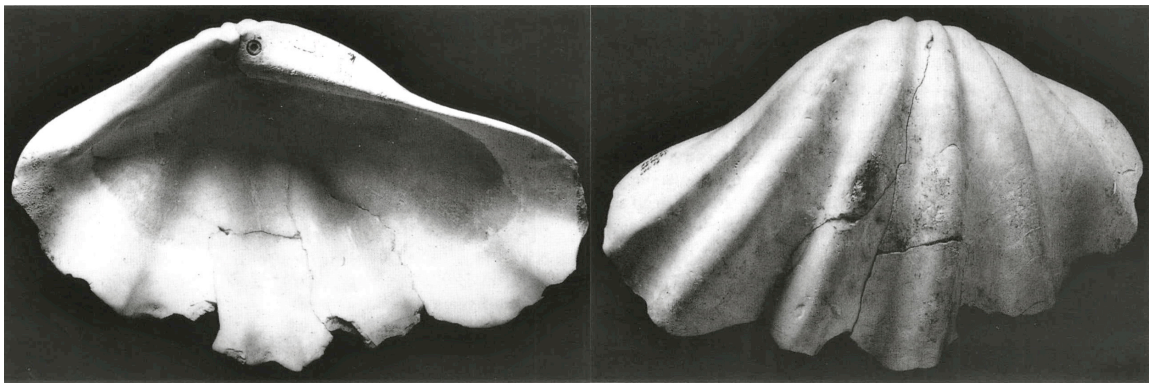


Figure 2.6—*Tridacna* found at the Amman Citadel from Koutsoukou 1997: 147–8.

Excavators have found other types of marine shells on the Amman Plateau, which as stated earlier, appear to have been used as pendants or beads (Daviau 2002: 27–30, 38–41; Herr and Platt 2002: 381). The Amman vicinity tombs (Amman C, E, Umm Udayna) and Saḥab B have also yielded a variety of shells possibly dating to the Iron IIC based on the dating of the tomb assemblages (Dajani 1966a: Pl. 3, fig. 5:49–52; Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 12:1–3; Harding 1948: 94; 1951: 40, pl. XIV:46). In addition to the *Tridacna* shells found at Tall Jawa, an additional thirteen marine shells come from Stratum VII (Reese 2002b: 284–5, table 4A).

2.6.7.4 Glass

Several small glass vessels come from Iron IIC contexts (Appendix C), again found in tombs, and as with the alabastra, probably held costly liquids use for cosmetic, votive, and mortuary purposes (Grose 1989: 109). Two glass bottles come from the

[70] There is one other engraved *Tridacna* said to come from the Amman Citadel and mentioned first in Zayadine 1986: 19 n. 25; as cited in Reese 2002a: 456. It has not otherwise been published.

tomb at Meqabelein. One of these is an alabastron-shaped bottle with zigzag decoration along most of its length. It appears to be made of black and white opaque glass (Harding 1950: 46, Pl. XV:11). The second is an *amphoriskos* made of blue, light blue, and yellow glass (Harding 1950: 46, Pl. XIII:3). An *amphoriskos* and alabastron of similar blue, light blue, and yellow glass coloring come from the Umm Udayna tomb (Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 18:4–5). A rim piece of another *amphoriskos* that appears to be made of black and white glass comes from the Adoni-nur tomb (Harding 1953: 56, pl. VII:42). In Grose's typology, all of these fit into Group I of Mediterranean core-formed bottles, and fall into particular classes that date from the late sixth to early fifth centuries BCE (Grose 1989: 130). Although it was once argued that the glass bottles of Mediterranean Group I were made in Egypt or Phoenicia, the number of vessels from Aegean contexts as well as the closeness of their forms to Greek pottery, controvert this theory (Grose 1989: 110). These bottles, and possibly their contents, were thus imports from the Aegean. While the number of these vessels found on the Amman Plateau is small, it does indicate a flow of trade from the coast. Most of these items are late in date, especially the vessels from the tomb at Meqabelein, which Harden argues come from the Persian Period (Harden 1981: 162).[71]

2.6.7.5 Semi-precious Stones

The use of semi-precious stones for seals and beads provides evidence for long-distance trade inasmuch as they point to diverse points of origin. Although one cannot trace the precise routes and mechanisms by which these stones found their way to the Amman Plateau, they probably came by multi-stage processes with several middlemen.

[71] Other glass objects, especially beads, have been found. For these see Daviau 2002: 37 (Jawa); Hadidi 1987: 120 fig. 12:10 (Umm Udayna); Harding 1950: 45, pl. XV:3 (Meqabelein); Yassine 1988: 21–2, figs. 8:3–4 (Khilda 2).

Some of them, especially stones used for the seals, arrived as raw materials, which Ammonite craftsmen then worked according to their own skills and their clients' specifications. Among the seals and beads found in Ammon are agate, chalcedony, carnelian, lapis lazuli, obsidian, onyx, jasper, amethyst, opal, and sardonyx.[72] These represent movement of goods throughout much of the ancient Near East (Hübner 1992: 233 with literature), undoubtedly brought along on caravans and ships with other goods.

2.6.7.6 Metals

While the metal jewelry and other small metal artifacts are not easily dated, most of the items listed in Appendix D come from assemblages dated to the Iron IIC. A number of bronze items listed in Appendix E are of chronological value. These include bowls, strainers, ladles, piriform bottles, mirrors, cosmetic box, and censers, coming from the tombs. These objects reflect a pattern of use that began in the Neo-Assyrian Period, but became common in the Levant during the Persian Period (Stern 2001: 345–6, 525). Several of the bronze bowls found in the tombs (Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, Khilda Tomb 2, Umm Udayna) are shallow and have a sharp carination. These may date to the Neo-Assyrian Period, perhaps in the latter part of that period (Routledge 1997: 36; cf. Stern 2001: 345; Stern 1982: 144–6). However, most of the bowls, strainers, ladles, and piriform bottles from the Amman Plateau date to the Persian Period (Hadidi 1987: 101; Stern 2001: 525–6; cf. Routledge 1997: 36) and as an assemblage should be seen as

[72] Finds of stone beads and seals are relatively common, especially in burials, but in other contexts as well. For examples see Daviau 2002: 35–6 (Jawa); Hadidi 1987: 120 fig. 12:9 (Umm Udayna); Harding 1950: 45–6, pls. XII:2, XV:3, 9, 10 (Meqabelein); Harding 1953: 51–55, pls. VI:1–11, VII:1, 3, 4, 6 (Adoni-nur); Herr and Platt 2002: 380, fig. 16.22:1785; Platt 1991: 260, figs. 10.80–81, 84 (ʿUmaryi); Ray 2001: 123, pl. 6.4 (this may be earlier than 8th c.), 145, pl. 6.21 (Ḥesban); Yassine 1988: 21–2, figs. 8:3–4 (Khilda 2); cf. Hübner 1992: 233. For the seals see *CAI* and Eggler and Keel 2006.

wine sets (Moorey 1980). The bronze mirrors were also most common in the Persian Period (Hadidi 1987: 101; Stern 2001: 527). Likewise the bronze caryatid censer and cosmetic box from the Umm Udayna tomb date best to the fifth century BCE (Hadidi 1987: 101; Khalil 1986: 109). No firm answer concerning the provenance of these bronzes is possible (Stern 2001: 526), but it is not local.

2.6.7.7 Imported pottery

Three vessels from Jawa are probably imports dating to the Neo-Assyrian period (Daviau 2001a: 231, fig. 8:3; 2001b: 216). Excavations on the Amman Citadel turned up fourteen Cypriot sherds and four Phoenician sherds (Momani et al. 1997: 166). A number of Greek ceramic vessels have been found on the Amman Plateau. From the Umm Udayna tomb come three black Attic *lekythoi* (Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 18:1–3). An additional *lekythos* comes from Khilda Tomb 1, though it is somewhat worn (Yassine 1988: 14, 19, fig. 4:5). These pieces are best dated to the mid-fifth century BCE (Yassine 1988: 14; cf. Stern 2001: 519). Two Attic sherds that come from ʿUmayri most likely date to the fifth century, though the sherds are too small to allow a more precise dating (Waldbaum 1991).[73] Furthermore, a piece of an early Greek amphora comes from an Iron IIC context on the Amman Citadel (Momani et al. 1997: 166). In addition, the body of an Egyptian New Year's Flask (common during the seventh and sixth centuries) comes from a cave near one of the ʿUmayri hinterland sites (Herr 1991: 242, fig. 12.112:15; 1999: 225).

[73] A sherd of "Attic black glazed ware" became known in the excavations at Rujm al-Malfuf, but is not illustrated in the publication (Thompson 1973: 50).

2.6.7.8 Coins

At Tall Jawa, one Greek *tetradrachm* coin dating to 449 BCE comes from a debris layer above a plaster floor of a Stratum VIII casemate room. It dates to a time when the main occupation of the site had already been abandoned (Daviau 2002: 89). Excavators have found coins at ʿUmayri, but these generally come from topsoil loci from periods following abandonment (Herr and Platt 2002: 381; Miller 1991; Platt 1991: 252; 2002: 163). Excavations at ʿUmayri did find an Athenian *tetradrachm* west of the administrative complex, which the excavators take as evidence that this complex continued into the Persian period (Herr, Clark, Geraty, and LaBianca 2000: 37), a point also shown by the pottery. One Tyrian bronze coin comes from Khirbat al-Hajjar and dates to about 400 BCE (Thompson 1972: 8, pls. IV:2, VII:2).

2.6.7.9 Other Imported Objects

A faience Bes figurine comes from the Stratum 15 fill of the Ḥesban reservoir and may date to the Iron IIC, indicating contact with Egypt (Ray 2001: 138, pl 6.10). A bone from a stone bass probably caught in the Mediterranean Sea also comes from the Ḥesban reservoir fill and may highlight trade with coastal areas (Ray 2001: 145).

2.6.7.10 Incense Burners

Others objects that may provide evidence for long-distance trade are artifacts used for burning incense. These include a bronze caryatid censer (fifth century BCE) and a four-legged limestone incense burner (eighth–seventh centuries BCE) from the tomb at Umm Udayna (Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 14:6; Khalil 1986). Tripod cups (perforated and unperforated), which are a regular part of tomb and domestic assemblages, may have been used for burning incense, although many of these show no

evidence of soot or other substance indicative of burning (Daviau 2001b: 205–8).[74] In any case, while these objects provide some evidence for burning incense, there is at present no evidence that the incense burnt was myrrh or frankincense; these are so expensive as to be prohibitive except for the wealthiest and for large temples. The very wealthy tomb at Umm Udayna, which included the censer and limestone burner, would be the type of place one might expect to find evidence of such compounds. There are, however, indigenous plants from which perfumes and fumigants can be derived (Crawford 1986: 80), and so without chemical testing, one cannot be sure that the incense burned was imported.[75]

2.6.7.11 Summary of Imports

In aggregate, the assemblage of imported artifacts and raw materials highlights the geographic extent of trade, from Egypt, to the Aegean, to Mesopotamia and beyond. Furthermore, it indicates that goods reached Ammon both from the coast (Greek vessels, coins, fish, perhaps the alabaster artifacts and some of the metals) as well as from inland routes (some of the metals, *Tridacna* and other Red Sea shells). While it is not possible to date securely all of the items discussed (e.g., semi-precious stones, ivory, jewelry), those that are datable with some precision (the bronze artifacts, glass vessels, Greek pottery, Assyrian Palace Ware, alabaster artifacts, *Tridacna* shells, and coins) indicate an active long-distance trade from the seventh century down to the fifth century at least. In other words, as far as the material evidence goes, trade continued through the Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian periods. Given what appears to

[74] Cf. the three limestone altars found at Moabite site of Khirbat al-Mudayna ath-Thamad (ca. 800–700 BCE), at least two of which soot stains (Daviau and Steiner 2000: 8–14; Dion and Daviau 2000).

[75] As Crawford notes, although certain plants *can* be used in certain ways, this is not proof that they actually were (Crawford 1986: 79).

be the height of datable imports in the sixth and fifth centuries, one might conclude that the Amman Plateau reached its commercial apex during the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods. This impression should be tempered, however, because many of the metal objects (fibulae, jewelry, etc.) do not have precise dates, and the local pottery in some of the tombs indicates use throughout the Iron IIC and into the Persian Period.

2.6.8 Items Showing Possible Assyrian Influence

2.6.8.1 Open-court Architecture

Two sites from the Amman Plateau indicate the possible appropriation of Assyrian open-court architectural style. First, the excavations at Tall Jawa uncovered two buildings that are similar to Assyrian open-court style (Figure 2.7). These buildings (700 and 800) were built at the same time as the gate complex in Stratum VII (late eighth–seventh century BCE). Finds from these two buildings were largely domestic in nature with the exception of seals found in both buildings and an ostracon in building 800. The size of the buildings may indicate a special function or simply wealthy residents. Building 800 measures 13.50 x 16.50 m (though slightly irregular) and building 700 measures 12.20 x 16.00 m and both buildings have stairs leading to a second story (Daviau 2001a: 216–18, 22). Several aspects of these buildings point to connections with Assyrian "open-court" style. Specifically, these buildings are detached from the fortification wall and are generally rectangular. They have well-built walls that are strong enough to hold an upper story, a central hall with rooms on three (B700) or four sides (B800), a small side entrance, and (in B800) a corridor along the central hall with rooms off of it (Daviau 2001a: 220).

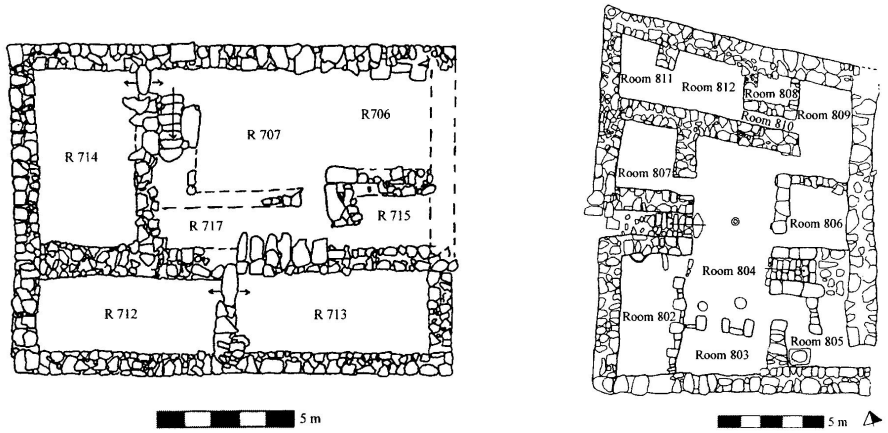
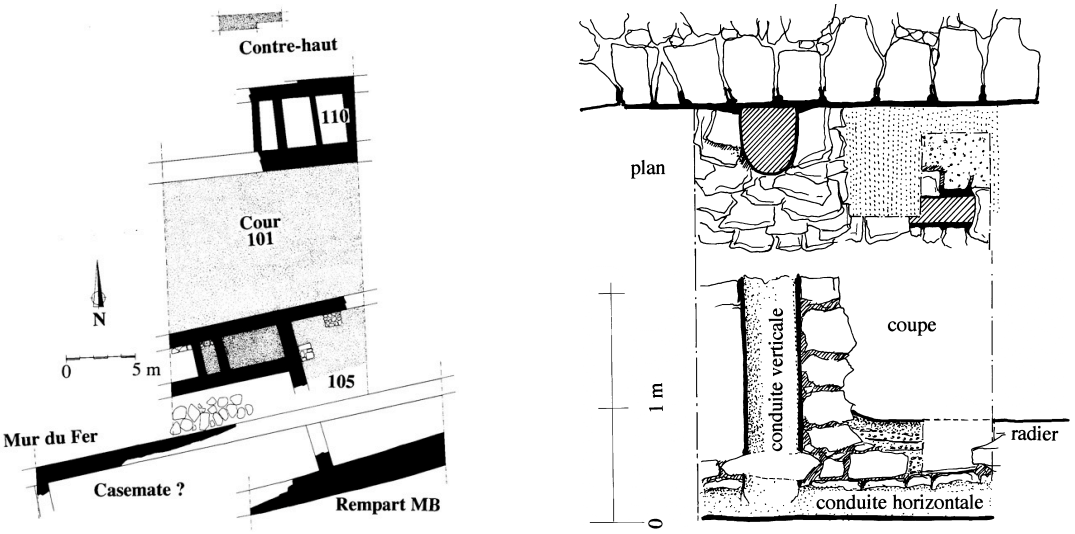


Figure 2.7—Jawa Buildings 700 and 800 from Daviau 2001a: 219–220, figs. 2 and 3.

However, some differences led Daviau to argue that closer parallels to the Tall Jawa buildings can be found in houses at Assur. In particular, the generally rectangular plan of the open-court style was compromised based on space limitations and in some houses in Assur there were stairs leading to a roof or upper story as in buildings 700 and 800 from Tall Jawa (Daviau 2001a: 221–2 with parallels). These buildings do not, in all likelihood, represent actual Assyrian presence, as the finds on the floors contained no specifically Assyrian artifacts that would necessitate such a conclusion (Daviau 2001a: 222). The layout, however, suggests some connection to open-court style.

Second, § 2.6.1.1 above described the partially excavated remains of a large building on the second plateau of the Amman Citadel that had a large court with plastered floor, storage rooms along the outside, and a stone toilet. While the exposure of the building is limited, enough is extant to see parallels with the palatial building in Area C at Busayra. The Busayra building also has a large plastered-floor “reception” room (Bienkowski 2002: 162–3), a bathroom with a stone toilet and possible drain, and a bathtub (Bienkowski 2002: 166–7). In addition to the general resemblance of the remnants of these buildings to open-court style, the presence of toilets with drain

systems (Figure 2.8), and plastered "reception" rooms find clear analogies with Neo-Assyrian palaces and residences, which also have these elements (Bienkowski 2002: 199; Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 258).[76]



A B

Figure 2.8—Assyrian Style Architecture from the Amman Citadel: (A) Possible Open-court Building with Central Court (Cour 101) and side rooms from Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 250, fig. 12; (B) Assyrian Style Toilet from Humbert and Zayadine 1992: 251, fig. 13.

2.6.8.2 Assyrian Style Pottery

A small corpus of pottery from the Amman Plateau has parallels with Assyrian pottery. Most examples come from the tombs around the Amman Citadel, with a few examples coming from Tall Jawa and ʿUmayri. The main types include carinated bowls and pointed jars. Another pottery form, pointed "carrot" bottles, are sometimes thought to represent Assyrian prototypes, and are discussed below. Seven carinated pottery fine ware bowls are known from the Amman Plateau and are listed in Table 2.6. Another item found at Tall Jawa, although not a bowl, fits conceptually with this group. It is a

[76] Cf. the details of similar Assyrian buildings in Turner 1970. See especially the discussion of the bathrooms (Turner 1970: 190–4). In addition, the Area C complex and Area A "temple" at Busayra appear to have been built on artificial podia used both to create a level building surface and to raise the building higher than surrounding buildings (Bienkowski 2002: 64–66, 94, 156–7). The podium (*Akk. tamlû*) has parallels at Lachish strata IV, III and I, and at Megiddo stratum III buildings 1052 and 1369 and in Syrian cities (Bienkowski 2002: 94, 199). For a general discussion and overview of the Busayra material see Crowell 2004: 235–45.

chalice, but has a similar carination and decoration as some of the bowls. Each of these items has parallels to Assyrian fine wares (frequently called "Assyrian Palace Ware"), with some also having parallels to metal objects of the same basic form.[77]

Site, Catalog #	Image (Figure in this study)	Reference
Amman Tomb A, 7	Shallow, carinated bowl (Figure 2.9:A7)	(Dornemann 1983: 51, fig. 33:29)
Amman Tomb A, 8	Shallow, carinated bowl (Figure 2.9:A8)	(Dornemann 1983: 51, fig. 33:30)
Amman Tomb A, 18	Small bowl (not shown)	(Dornemann 1983: 51, fig. 33:9)
Adoni-nur, 88	Bowl imitating metal (not shown)	(Dornemann 1983: 51, fig. 33:10)
Tall Jawa, V869	Shallow, carinated bowl (Figure 2.9:B1)	(Daviau 2001a: 225, fig. 5.1)
Tall Jawa, V870	Deep, carinated bowl (Figure 2.9:B2)	(Daviau 2001a: 225, fig. 5.2)
Tall Jawa, V215	Bowl imitating metal (Figure 2.9:C:1)	(Daviau 2001a: 225, fig. 6.1)
Tall Jawa, V870	Chalice imitating metal (Figure 2.9:C:2)	(Daviau 2001a: 225, fig. 6.2)

Table 2.6—Carinated Vessels from the Amman Plateau Imitating Assyrian Fine Wares

A number of jars found in the Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, and Amman A tombs have parallels with Mesopotamian styles. These are listed in Table 2.1. These items have parallels at Nineveh, Nippur, Assur, Babylon, Warka, and Nimrud, from the eighth and seventh centuries (Dornemann 1983: 55–6), and in the case of the handleless jars, have parallels in metals (e.g., Oates 1959: pl. XXXIV).

Site, Catalog #	Image	Bibliography
Meqabelein, 44–47	Handleless Jars (not shown)	(Dornemann 1983: 55–6, figs. 40:1–4)
Adoni-nur, 89–90	Handleless Jars (Figure 2.9:D)	(Dornemann 1983: 55–6, figs. 40:5–6)
Adoni-nur, 119	Pointed based, two-handled jar (Figure 2.9:E119)	(Dornemann 1983: 56, fig. 40:15)
Amman A, 23	Pointed based, two-handled jar (not shown)	(Dornemann 1983: 56, fig. 40:14)
Adoni-nur, 118	Two-handled jar (Figure 2.9:E118)	(Dornemann 1983: 56, fig. 40:17)

Table 2.7—Jars from the Amman Plateau Imitating Assyrian Fine Wares

[77] On the relationship between carinated pottery bowls and their metal counterparts, see Adachi 1997.

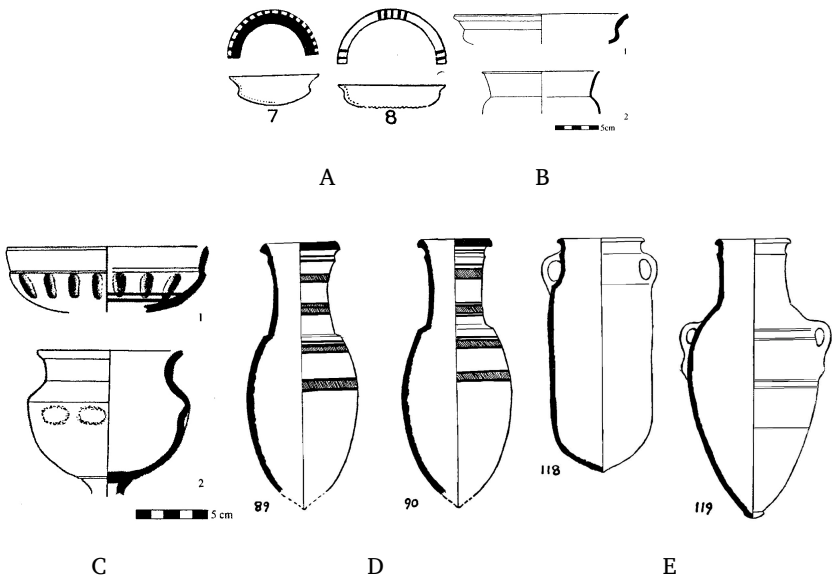


Figure 2.9—Assyrian Style Pottery from Ammon; (A) Carinated Bowls from Harding 1945: 70, figs. 7–8; (B) Carinated Bowls from Daviau 2001a: 226, fig. 5; (C) Carinated bowl and chalice from Daviau 2001a: 227, fig. 6; (D) Handleless Jars from Harding 1953: fig. 22:89–90; (E) Pointed Jars from Harding 1953: fig. 23:118–119.

The quality of these items, their context in wealthy tomb groups or in large domestic settings at Tall Jawa, indicates their use by wealthy individuals. Their resonance with imperial styles suggests that the elite of Ammon adapted these styles for their own use. Whether these items also indicate diffusion of values associated with drinking and feasting (Routledge 1997: 36) is more difficult to say. Moreover, as recently argued, these vessels represent a slow process of influence that took place largely in the seventh century, sometime after the Neo-Assyrian empire had gained control of the southern Levant (Naʾaman and Thareani-Sussely 2006), and not an immediate cultural assimilation.

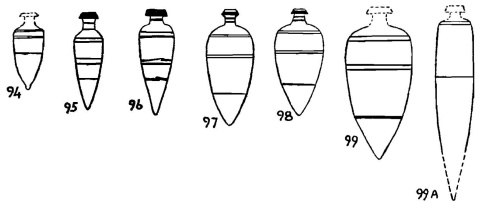


Figure 2.10—Pointed “Carrot” Bottles from Adoni-nur Tomb. From Harding 1953: fig. 22:94–99A.

The small, pointed (carrot shaped) bottles found chiefly in the Amman district tombs are also sometimes thought to be the product of Assyrian inspiration. Dornemann collected and discussed most of these (Dornemann 1983: 54–5, pl. 39:1–41). Other examples appeared in excavations at ʿUmayri (Lawlor 1997: 44, fig. 3.15:1) and Jawa (Daviau 2001a: 226) Amiran (1970: 296), Routledge (1997: 34) and Stern (2001: 36) maintain that these derive from Assyrian style. Henschel-Simon mentions a parallel at Nineveh (Henschel-Simon 1945: 77), but does not make a firm conclusion on the matter. In her discussion of a similar bottle at Nimrud (Oates 1959: no. 90), Oates comments that, "A number of painted bottles of type 90 have been found at Nimrud, but they are not common; it is quite possible that they and their valuable contents were imported [i.e., to Assyria]" (Oates 1959: 144). Since the largest concentration of these bottles yet known come from Ammonite tombs, it is difficult to determine whether they are in fact inspired by Assyrian prototypes (cf. Daviau 2001a: 226). However, given their size, one can suggest that they may have held some liquid, such as a perfume or unguent (Oates 1959: 134, 144 no. 90; Routledge 1997: 34) that could be used in mortuary rites among other things.

2.6.9 Summary

The Amman Plateau saw its most significant growth and changes of the Iron Age in the Iron IIC. Quantitatively, the growth and change is visible in the sheer volume of material available. There are more towns, more tombs, more small outlying sites (towers, forts, farmsteads), more examples of domestic architecture, more examples of sculpture and decorative architectural objects, and more imported and elite items. A qualitative difference in the material from the Iron IIC is also visible in several ways.

Architecturally, one can point to the probable open-court structure on the Amman Citadel as an example of monumental architecture. The well-constructed temple at Rujm al-Kursi and Khilda fortress A (possibly also open-court style) provide further examples of monumental (public) architecture. Likewise, the orthogonal buildings at ʿUmayri and Tall Jawa, both of which contained a number of seals, point to wealthier individuals who played a role in some type of administrative activities. While buildings with orthogonal planning are not completely new (cf. building B102 at Iron IIB Jawa), the outlines of administrative activities, and the spaces used for them, are becoming more obvious.

The Iron IIC also witnessed the growth of an assemblage of elite, high-status, and costly objects that represents the concentration of wealth and status in and around the Amman Citadel. This elite assemblage indicates the local development of sculptural traditions, with its corresponding development of artisanship; the interest and means to acquire costly goods through long-distance trade networks; and the adoption and adaptation of imperial and regional elite styles. Whereas the archaeological remains from the Iron IIA and IIB may provide some glimpses of social differentiation, the assemblage of elite objects from the Iron IIC represents an accumulation of markers of social differentiation that point to real social stratification. One might also infer a corresponding political reality from this material given the clustering of the elite assemblage around the Amman Citadel. In other words, the heavy clustering of elite objects around the Amman Citadel points to a local center of power. These objects, however, do not point to a high level of centralization. The objects (apart from inscriptions and texts discussed in the following chapters) that most suggest a level of

regional integration are the BBBs, but precisely what type of integration they suggest will wait for later chapters.

At the same time, the growth in the number of sites and the corresponding growth in sedentary population and the amount of land used for agriculture, point to another social process. Whatever the reasons are for this process of sedentarization, it represents an important shift in subsistence strategies. Its occurrence at the same time as the evidence for social stratification invites the question: How are the two related? The archaeology cannot answer this question alone and hence chapter seven will examine it again after a review of the epigraphic and other textual sources.

CHAPTER 3

EPIGRAPHIC SOURCES FOR AMMONITE HISTORY

This chapter examines available epigraphic texts that mention the Ammonites or in other ways bear on the history of the Ammonites. As will become evident from the discussion, texts that mention Ammon or the Ammonites by name appear first in the ninth century BCE and become more common, though still rare, beginning in the late eighth century BCE as the Neo-Assyrian Empire expanded into the southern Levant. The growing body of epigraphs that we can plausibly call "Ammonite" is also an important source of information and begins to appear in archaeological finds during the late ninth or early eighth century BCE.

3.1 Egyptian Inscriptions

Egyptian epigraphic evidence mentioning the Ammonites is non-existent. A few lists from Egyptian campaigns in the second millennium and from Sheshonq's 925 BCE campaign provide possible evidence for some toponyms generally thought to be in the region we associate with the Ammonites (Kitchen 1992). The clearest toponymic references come from the list of cities that Shoshenq I attacked on his campaign of 925 BCE. Of these, rows II and V list the names of several sites east of the Jordan River including Mahanaim, Penuel, Hadashat, probably Succoth, and Adamah (Kitchen 1992: 29). Those that have been identified with archaeological sites are along the Wadi az-Zarqa/Jabbok not far from the center of Ammon. If the Ammonites were organized as a coherent sociopolitical group to any extent at the time, this campaign is likely to have

affected them, but the state of the epigraphic evidence does not offer help in this matter.

3.2 Neo-Assyrian Inscriptions

It is with the development of the Neo-Assyrian Empire that the Ammonites first step onto the stage of history in Shalmaneser III's (858–823 BCE) Kurkh Monolith. However, it is with Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE), who subjugated the whole of the Levant and brought the Neo-Assyrian Empire to its classic form, that the Ammonites will take their place as a loyal Assyrian client. From the thousands of Neo-Assyrian texts that archaeologists have recovered, a handful help to situate Ammon within the workings of this, the first major ancient Near Eastern empire.

3.1.1 The Ammonites in Shalmaneser III's Kurkh Monolith?

The earliest possible reference to Ammon is found in Shalmaneser III's Kurkh Monolith Inscription (Grayson 1996: 11–24, A.0.102.2). In his description of his sixth campaign (853 BCE), Shalmaneser describes his attack on the lands of Irhuleni of Hamath. Shalmaneser captured four of Irhuleni's cities before being met by a Levantine military coalition. Before describing how he defeated this coalition, he lists those who participated in it and the forces that they contributed. The list runs as follows:

> 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, (and) 20,000 troops of Hadad-ezer (Adad-idri), the Damascene; 700 chariots, 700 cavalry, (and) 10,000 troops of Irḫulēnu, the Ḫamatite; 2,000 chariots (and) 10,000 troops of Ahab (Aḫabbu), the Israelite (Sirʾalāia); 500 troops of Byblos; 1,000 troops of Egypt; 10 chariots (and) 10,000 troops of the land of Irqanatu; 200 troops of Matinu-baʾal of the city Arvad; 200 troops of the land of Usanātu; 30 chariots (and) [N],000 troops of Adunu-baʾal of the land Šianu; 1,000 camels of Gindibu of the Arabs; [N] hundred troops of Baʾasa, the man of Bīt Ruḫubi, the Ammonite (Grayson 1996: 23, A.0.102.2 ii 90–95).

In line 95, the name ^{m}*ba-ʾa-sa* DUMU *ru-ḫu-bi* ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* appears. From an early point in the interpretation of the passage, this was thought to refer to an Ammonite force. The name could thus be translated as "Baʿašaʾ,[78] son of Ruḫubi, the Ammonite," and would be the earliest extrabiblical reference to an Ammonite ruler (Hübner 1992: 183 n. 16; Naʾaman 1976: 98 n. 20, both with literature). This view still has its adherents (Galil 2002: 42; Kuan 1995: 32–3; Naʾaman 1976: 98 n. 20; Rendsburg 1991; Yamada 2000: 159–61; Younger 2007: 261), but has not gone without criticism by scholars who argue that it refers to a king from an area in the Anti-Lebanon mountains (Cogan 1984: 259; Cross 2003a: 74 n. 26; Dion 2003: 482–3; Forrer 1932; Hübner 1992: 183; Lipiński 1999; Weippert 1987: 98). The lines of evidence do not lead to a decisive conclusion, but do slightly favor the conclusion that this does refer to an Ammonite military contingent at the battle of Qarqar.

Scholars in favor of the view that this refers to a king from the Anti-Lebanon mountains argue that all other known references to the Ammonites in cuneiform texts geminate the 'm' in the writing (Forrer 1932) and include either *bīt*, "house of" or *ba-an*, "son(s) of" before the "Ammon" or "Ammonite" (Cogan 1984: 259; Hübner 1992: 183).[79] They further support this by pointing to other Neo-Assyrian texts that mention ^{kur}*am-ma-na-na*[80] and ^{šad}*am-ma-na-na*[81] (Forrer 1932; cf. Weippert 1987: 98). As Cogan shows, these references pair Ammanana with the Lebanon and distinguish it from Mt. Amanus, making the Anti-Lebanon range the most suitable location (Cogan 1984: 256–

[78] On the correspondence between cuneiform *ba-ʾa-sa* and the Northwest Semitic name see Rendsburg (Rendsburg 1991: 60) and Lipiński (Lipiński 1999). It appears in Israelite names (e.g., 1 Kgs 15:16) and Ammonite names (*CAI,* no. 80:6).

[79] E.g., ^{m}*sa-ni-pu* ^{uru}*bīt am-ma-na-a-a,* "Šanipu the Bīt-Ammonite" in Tiglath-pileser III's inscriptions (Tadmor 1994: 170–1, Summ. 7:r. 10′).

[80] Tadmor 1994: 60–1, Ann. 19*:6; 152–3, Summ. 6:23; 172–3, Summ. 7:r. 26′.

[81] Luckenbill 1924: 107, E1, vi:56; 121, I1, line 45.

8).[82] The identification is also supported by the occurrence of Amanah (*ʾămānâ*; a spelling that fits with ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a*) in Song 4:8 and 2 Kgs 5:12 (Qere), a place located in the Anti-Lebanon mountains west and south of Damascus (Cogan 1984: 255–6).

However, the orthographic evidence is neutral, that is, it does not favor one side of the argument or another. Rendsburg demonstrates that the lack of geminated 'm' in ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* is just as problematic for an identification with the Anti-Lebanon, which is also consistently written with geminated 'm' (Rendsburg 1991: 58). The other point, that the lack of *bīt* preceding ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* is atypical of references to Ammon is likewise deficient. Nearly all references to the Ammonites do have either *bīt*, or in one case *ba-an* (see § 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below); however, one occurrence has simply ^{uru}*am-ma-a-*[*na*] (Fales and Postgate 1995: 4, K 4834 col. ii:12; § 3.2.3 below). Moreover, the same thing happens for several other places mentioned in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions (Rendsburg 1991: 59). Furthermore, as it appears in Shalmaneser's Kurkh Monolith, ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* has only one 'na,' which fits with the biblical evidence, but not the cuneiform evidence for the Anti-Lebanon, which has ^{kur}*am-ma-na-na*.[83] Therefore, the orthographic evidence is essentially ambiguous and cannot solve the problem.

One aspect of Shalmaneser III's Kurkh Monolith that may point to a solution is that it mentions twelve kings in the alliance but lists only eleven. Following Weidner (cited in Michel 1947: 70 n. 13), Yamada argues that the double qualification of Baʿašaʾ, namely DUMU *ru-ḫu-bi* and ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* is the key to a solution. According to Yamada,

[82] In addition to these references, Cogan also notes a reference to ^{šad}*am-mu-un* in Sargon II's annals (Lie 1929: 36–7, line 228), which he argues also likely refers to Ammananu (Cogan 1984: 258). Ammanana also appears in two Neo-Babylonian texts. BM 35382, the Nabonidus Chronicle, mentions ^{kur}*am-ma-na-nu* $ša_2$*-di-i* "Ammananu mountain" in a somewhat broken context from Nabonidus' third year (Grayson 1975: 105, Chron. 7 i 11). One also finds a reference to ^{uru}*am-ma-na-nu* in CT 46, no. 48, which was reedited in Lambert 1968/69.

[83] This led Naʾaman to reject the identification of ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* with Ammanana (Naʾaman 1976: 98 n. 20).

the list of names originally drawn up for inclusion on the stele included twelve names, but when the text was cut on the stele, the scribe or stone cutter accidentally omitted the name and other details of the final member of the force. The original list would have included Baʿašaʾ of Beth-Rehob and the forces of an unknown king of the Ammonites (Yamada 2000: 159–61).[84] This solution makes good sense of the double designation for Baʿašaʾ and solves the numerical problem. It also fits well with biblical texts that know of a Beth-Rehob in the area of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains.[85] Likewise, once the two qualifiers are separated, there is no reason for concluding that ^{kur}*a-ma-na-*

[84] The Kurkh Monolith is well-known for containing a rather large number of mistakes, including some ten in the section covering the Battle of Qarqar (Grayson 1996: 11; Tadmor 1961: 144–5).

[85] At least two Rehobs are known from the Bible; one of these is listed among the tribal allotment of Asher (Josh 19:28, 30; 21:31; Judg 1:31) and though its precise location is not known, it is probably located in the plain of Acco (Aharoni 1979: 234–4). More important are the references to David's defeat of the army of *hădadʿezer ben-rĕḥōb melek ṣôbâ*, "Hadadezer, son of Rehob, the king of Zobah" (2 Sam 8:3, 12). Also important is David's conflict with the Ammonites in which they hire *ʾăram bêt-rĕḥôb wĕʾăram ṣôbāʾ*, "Aram of Beth-Rehob and Aram of Zobah" (2 Sam 10:6; cf. the Lucianic recension of the LXX for 1 Sam 14:47). In both cases, Rehob is associated with Aramaean enemies, that is, enemies to the north and not along the coast. Furthermore, Judg 18:28 mentions the Danites building a city *bāʿēmeq ʾăšer lĕbêt-rĕḥôb*, "in the valley which is in the direction of Beth-Rehob," and Num 13:21 presents Israelite spies as going from the wilderness of Zin in the south *ʿad rĕḥōb lĕbōʾ ḥămāt*, "unto Rehob at the entrance of (or simply, of Lebo) Hamath." Though not precise in their localization, the latter two verses know of a toponym Rehob/Beth-Rehob—perhaps doubling as a polity name—somewhere between Dan and Hamath, roughly the same area as the Anti-Lebanon mountains. It is only a small step to identify the biblical Rehob/Beth-Rehob with DUMU *ru-ḫu-bi* given the Neo-Assyrian practice of describing "kingdoms" with either *bīt*-X, "house of X" or DUMU-X, "son of X." These ways of describing polities are freely interchangeable, even within the inscriptions of a single Neo-Assyrian monarch as a look at Parpola's listing shows (Parpola 1970: 75–92). The free interchangeability in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions between DUMU-X and *bīt*-X suggests that the biblical texts may reflect the same practice. The biblical texts appear to refer to one place in variable ways including *ben-rĕḥōb* (2 Sam 8:3, 12), *bêt-rĕḥôb* (Judg 18:28; 2 Sam 10:6), and *rĕḥōb* (Num 13:21). It is not completely certain that all four of these references refer to the same place; nonetheless the geographic information we can gather from their contexts favors that conclusion. It seems likely then that the biblical texts record three different ways of referring to this place, indicating that the biblical texts follow a similar practice to that of the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions of representing kingdoms using words for "son" (*ben*) or "house" (*bêt*), and in a few instances using the unmodified name as in *rĕḥōb* (Num 13:21). The same phenomenon is known in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, but not coming from within the inscriptions of a single monarch. So, Shalmaneser III's and Adad-nirari III's texts both have ^{kur}Abdadani, while Tiglath-pileser III's inscriptions mention DUMU Abdadani and *bīt*-Abdadani. The parallel practice for indicating political association and the striking resemblance between DUMU *ru-ḫu-bi* and the biblical *ben/bêt rĕḥōb*, argues in favor of identifying them.

a-a refers to the Anti-Lebanon mountains rather than the Ammonites because we otherwise do not hear of a polity associated with Ammanana in other Neo-Assyrian or biblical sources (Yamada 2000: 161; Younger 2007: 261).[86] Therefore, the present author concludes cautiously with Yamada that ^{m}*ba-ʾa-sa* DUMU *ru-ḫu-bi* ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a* probably refers to two forces, one led by Baʿašaʾ of Beth-Rehob, and a contingent from the Ammonites whose leader is not known.

3.1.2 The Ammonites in Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions from Tiglath-pileser III to Assurbanipal

Between the battle of Qarqar in 853 BCE and Tiglath-pileser III's campaign to the Levant in 734 BCE, the Ammonites do not appear in any known Neo-Assyrian inscriptions. This is not especially surprising since the time between Shalmaneser III's reign (858–823 BCE) and that of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE) was a time of relative weakness in Assyria. The expansion of the Neo-Assyrian empire under Tiglath-pileser III led to the rapid incorporation of much of the ancient Near East as either provinces or vassals. Most of the southern Levantine polities, with the exception of Damascus and Israel, acquiesced to Assyria and became vassals. So one hears of ^{m}*sa-ni-pu* ^{uru}*bīt am-ma-na-a-a*, "Šanipu of the House of Ammon" paying tribute (*madattu*) to Tiglath-pileser III in 734 BCE along with the other Transjordanian polities of Moab and Edom (Tadmor 1994: 170–1, Summ. 7:r. 10′).[87]

[86] Younger thinks that twelve is probably a round number and so sees no need to separate Baʿašaʾ's designations. He still thinks that it refers to the Ammonites since *a-ma-na-a-a* is not used anywhere else for a polity Younger 2007: 261. The general geographic grouping of the last three participants, Gindibu the Arab, Baʿašaʾ of Beth-Rehob, and the lost man of the Ammonites, may strengthen the link with Ammon (Rendsburg 1991: 60; Yamada 2000: 161). Rendsburg's attempt to see a special link between the Arabs and the Ammonites is possible, but difficult to sustain given the meager evidence, which is mostly onomastic (Rendsburg 1991: 61).

[87] For a discussion of the date the southern-Levantine kings brought tribute, see Tadmor Tadmor 1994: 268.

Despite the campaigns of Shalmaneser V (726–722 BCE) and Sargon II (721–705 BCE) to the southern Levant in the intervening years, the Ammonites do not appear again in royal inscriptions until Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BCE. In his third campaign, Sennacherib (704–681 BCE) lists five Phoenician kings and ^{m}*pu-du-ilu* ^{kur}*bīt* ^{m}*am-ma-na-a-a*, "B/Puduil[88] of the House of Ammon," along with the kings of Moab and Edom as bringing *ta-mar-ta-šú-nu ka-bit-tu*, "their heavy *tamartu* gifts/tribute" to him for the fourth time (Frahm 1997: 53, lines 36–38; Luckenbill 1924: 30, H2, ii:50–60). From the way Ammon, Moab, and Edom appear, it does not seem that they participated in the rebellions of Sidon, Ashkelon, Ekron, and Judah. Rather, they promptly presented their payments as they had been doing since the beginning of Sennacherib's reign in 704 BCE.

Under Esarhaddon (680–669 BCE), ^{m}*pu-du-il šar bīt am-ma-na*, "B/Puduil king of the House of Ammon" appears alongside twenty-one other Levantine rulers, who around 673 BCE provided supplies for the palace that Esarhaddon was building in Nineveh (Borger 1956: 60–1, V 54–VI 1; Cogan 2008: 133). During the reign of Assurbanipal (668–627 BCE), the Ammonites appear twice in royal inscriptions. The first time, ^{m}*am-mi-na-ad-bi šar* ^{kur}*bīt am-ma-na*, "Amminadab king of the House of Ammon" appears in a list of southern Levantine rulers who provide troops for Assurbanipal's campaign against Egypt in 667 BCE (Borger 1996: 18–19, 212, C II 37–67; Streck 1916: 138–41, C I 23–51). The second instance is in Assurbanipal's Rassam Cylinder, which mentions ^{uru}*bīt* ^{m}*am-ma-ni* "the House of Ammon" as one of the places that Assurbanipal fought against the Qedarite Arabs in 645 BCE (Borger 1996: 61–2, 246, A VII 82–124; Streck 1916: 64–7, VII 82–124). Though this text provides no

[88] The cuneiform sign for *pu* can also be read as *bu*.

additional information at this point, it is possible that as a vassal Ammon provided material support to the Neo-Assyrian forces in the form of food, manpower, intelligence, and assistance in navigating the area.

3.1.3 The Ammonites in Neo-Assyrian Administrative Documents

A large number of extant Neo-Assyrian administrative documents[89] illuminate the operations of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Among these, there are four clear references to the Ammonites. Two of these texts record the receipt of tribute from southern Levantine clients including Ammon (ND 2765, K 1295). ND 2765 (=Nimrud Letter 16; Parpola 1987: 92–3, no. 110; Saggs 2001: 219–21) is a letter probably dating to Tiglath-pileser III's or Sargon II's reign (ca. 740–705 BCE). An Assyrian official wrote it to the Assyrian king to inform him of a group of emissaries (*ṣērāni*) arriving at Calah to deliver *madattu*, "tribute" of an unspecified type (rev. 33–38). The *ṣērāni* came from Egypt, Gaza, Judah, Moab, and ^{kur}*ba-an am-ma-na-a-a*, "the son(s) of Ammon" (rev. 36). Some of the other southern Levantine polities—Edom, Ashdod, and Ekron—appear in a damaged portion of the same text and probably brought tribute as well (rev. 41–2).[90] K 1295, which dates sometime between Sargon II's and Esarhaddon's reigns (721–669

[89] The designation "administrative document" here covers letters, lists, receipts, etc., that bear on the operations of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

[90] A similar appearance of the Ammonites in ND 10078 (=IM 64238) is suggested by Deller, who states that ND 10078 and ND 2765 share six place names in common including ban-Ammon (Deller 1985: 329). Following this suggestion, Timm reconstructed line 14 as [. . . ^{kur}*Ba-an*]-⌜*am-ma*⌝-[*n*]*a-a-a* Timm 1989: 339 n. 7. In the *editio princeps*, Dalley and Postgate read the line as [ ] ⌜*bi*⌝ x x⌝-*a-a* (Dalley and Postgate 1984: 246). The reading of Deller and Timm remains a possibility and if correct provides another mention of the Ammonites in a wine list or list of foreign envoys arriving in Nimrud. Dalley and Postgate date the text to after Tiglath-pileser III's annexation of lower Egypt in 734 BCE or in connection with Sargon II's conquests in 720 or 713–712 BCE (Dalley and Postgate 1984: 247). Naʾaman (Naʾaman 1976: 98 n. 20) suggested that the Ammonites were mentioned in ND 6212 rev. 16 (Kinnier-Wilson 1972: 133, Pl. 12:16 no. 4). Kinnier-Wilson reads the text ^{k}*[^{ur}D]a ?-ni-i ša bit-a-nim.* Naʾaman wants to read it as ^{m}*[^{ât}B]a!-ni-i ša bīt A-nim.* As Hübner notes, getting Ammon out of this text is very difficult when one looks at the handcopy in Kinnier-Wilson (Hübner 1992: 187 n. 127).

BCE), lists amounts of gold and silver received from ^{kur}*bīt am-man-a-a*, "the house of Ammon," Moab, Judah, and Byblos (Fales and Postgate 1995: 30, no. 33).

ADD 1110+ dates to the time of Sargon II (721–705 BCE) and lists gold and silver rings given to emissaries from client states who brought tribute to Assyria (Postgate 1974: 337–42). This type of gifting was part of the larger strategy of imperial relations with vassals that reinforced the personal bonds between the king and his vassals (Postgate 1974: 127–8).[91] One section of the inscription included below lists gold and silver rings given to a group from Ammon (Postgate 1974: 337, A.i.4′–10′).

4′	2 HAR GI SIG	2 rings, gold, small,
5′	^{m}*pa-du-ú*-DINGIR	Padû-il,
6′	É-*am-man-a-a*	the man of Bīt-amman;
7′	*ša* 1 LÚ HAR UD TAB.TAB.MEŠ	per 1 man a ring, silver, ¾
8′	*ša* 1 ″ ″ SIG	per 1 man ditto, ditto, small,
9′	*a-na* ÌR.MEŠ-*šú ša* KI-*šú*	for his servants who were with him,
10′	PAP KUR *am-man-a-a*	Total — the Amman men.

This text mentions ^{m}*pa-du-ú-ilu bīt am-man-a-a*, "Paduil of the House of Ammon," as receiving two gold rings (lines 4′–6′). His servants who were with him received silver rings (lines 7′–9′). Line 10′ lists the gentilic ^{kur}*am-man-a-a*, "Ammonite" to end the section. It is likely that the Paduil mentioned here is the king of the Ammonites, an idea favored by the occurrence of a king by this name in the inscriptions of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon discussed in § 3.2.2.

Finally, K 4384, which probably comes from the reign of Assurbanipal (668–627 BCE), is a list of toponyms of unknown function (Fales and Postgate 1995: xiii–xiv, 4–6, no. 1). In this list, one finds ^{uru}*am-ma-a-*[*na*], "Ammon" listed after ^{uru}*u$_2$-du-u-mu*, "Edom" (col. ii:11–12). Fales and Postgate liken it to a lexical list because for a number

[91] Foreign delegations were also fed at the expense of the state as various ration lists indicate (Postgate 1974). See also Kinnier-Wilson on the feeding of foreign delegations (Kinnier-Wilson 1972: 91–3).

of the more well known areas, two or more historical spellings are given (Fales and Postgate 1995: xiv). Whatever the exact function, the list does coincide with the extent of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, but should not be pressed to mean that all the entries are somehow part of the provincial system (Hübner 1992: 195 n. 167).

3.1.4 Summary and Conclusion

There are to date ten Neo-Assyrian inscriptions that mention Ammon or the Ammonites. These are summarized in the list below. Hereafter, this study will refer to these with the abbreviation "NAT, no." and the number from the list.

1. ^{kur}*a-ma-na-a-a*—Battle of Qarqar against Shalmaneser III, 853 BCE (Grayson 1996: 23, A.0.102.2 ii 95).
2. ^{m}*sa-ni-pu* ^{uru}*bīt am-ma-na-a-a*—Payment of tribute to Tiglath-pileser III, ca. 734 BCE (Tadmor 1994: 170, Summ. 7:r. 10′).
3. ^{m}*bu-du-ilu* ^{kur}*bīt* ^{m}*am-ma-na-a-a*—Payment of tribute to Sennacherib, 701 BCE (Frahm 1997: 53, line 37; Luckenbill 1924: 30, H2 ii 55).
4. ^{m}*pu-du-il šar bīt am-ma-na*—Building supplies for Esarhaddon, 673 BCE (Borger 1956: 60, V 62).
5. ^{m}*am-mi-na-ad-bi šar* ^{kur}*bīt am-ma-na*—Provision of troops for Assurbanipal, 667 BCE (Borger 1996: 19, 212, C II 48).
6. ^{uru}*bīt* ^{m}*am-ma-ni*—Place where Assurbanipal fought with Qedarite Arabs, 645 BCE (Borger 1996: 61, 246, A VII 110).
7. ^{kur}*ba-an am-ma-na-a-a*—Letter listing clients paying tribute, ca. 740–705 BCE (Saggs 2001: 219, ND 2765 rev. 36).
8. ^{kur}*bīt am-man-a-a*—Receipt of tribute from the time of Sargon II and Esarhaddon, 721–669 BCE (Fales and Postgate 1995: 30, K 1295:2).
9. ^{m}*pa-du-ú-ilu bīt am-man-a-a* and ^{kur}*am-man-a-a*—Gifts to foreign delegations, ca. 721–705 BCE (Postgate 1974: 337, ADD 1110 + A.i.5′–6′).
10. ^{uru}*am-ma-a-*[*na*]—Toponym list perhaps from Assurbanipal's reign, 668–627 BCE (Fales and Postgate 1995: 4, K 4834:ii.12).

The handful of references to the Ammonites in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions probably begins with the appearance of an unnamed Ammonite king at the battle of Qarqar in 853 BCE. The Ammonites appear again when Tiglath-pileser III brings the

southern Levant firmly under his control beginning in 734 BCE. From then on, the Ammonites appear in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions as loyal vassals, paying tribute, providing building supplies, and lending military support.

Almost all of the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions mentioned designate Ammon as *bīt* Ammon, "House of Ammon" (#'s 2–6, 8, 9). One text refers to Ammon as *ba-an* Ammon, "son(s) of Ammon" (#7), apparently a transliteration of the Northwest Semitic *bn* or *bny* "son(s) of" into syllabic writing. In one other case, Ammon is modified only by the determinative for a city or town URU (#10). This toponym list focuses on places and does not mention any rulers, so the lack of *bīt* or *ba-an* is probably not significant. The Neo-Assyrian inscriptions are thus rather unified in seeing Ammon as a "house" or as "sons of." This comports well with the evidence from the Tall Siran Bottle (*CAI,* no. 78) and perhaps from the Amman Theater Inscription (*CAI,* no. 58), which represent Ammon as *bn ʿmn*, "the sons of Ammon." It also fits well with the biblical evidence, which most frequently refers to the Ammonites as *bĕnê ʿAmmôn*, "the sons of Ammon" (Hübner 1992: 243–4). These ways of naming a people or dynasty are rather common in the first millennium BCE, especially among the Aramaean tribes. The second part of the expression, the X in *bīt*-X, can represent either the founder or most vigorous ruler of a dynasty (Routledge 2004: 126). For those polities or peoples that are designated as "sons of," it is possible that this represents the eponymous ancestor of a tribe (Routledge 2004: 126), and in the case of Ammon this appears to be the most likely case (Hübner 1992: 244).

3.3 Neo-Babylonian Inscriptions

Lipiński recently suggested that a text from the reign of Nabonidus contains a reference to a rebellion in Ammon that Nabonidus crushed on his way down to Tayma.

The relevant portion of the text reproduced here follows Schaudig (2001: 592–3, IV 29–30): *šá* ÙG^{meš} *a-ši-bi* ^{uru}*am-ma-na-nu* [x x x-*š*]*ú-nu* SAG.DU^{meš}-*šú-nu ú-bat-tíq-ma*, "He [Nabonidus] cut off the […] and heads of the people who lived in Amananu." The basic meaning of this portion of the text is not in question; the question is what ^{uru}*am-ma-na-nu* refers to. The seemingly obvious answer is that it refers to Amananu, a place in the Anti-Lebanon (Beaulieu 1989: 168). However, Lipiński argues that the use of the determinative URU does not fit with other references to Amananu that use KUR (Lipiński 2006: 315 n. 112). According to Lipiński, the *-anu* ending on the form can be accounted for by the phenomenon of nunation. Nunation, the addition of an extra 'n' to the end of a word, is common in proper names in Classical Arabic and North Arabian and, according to Lipiński, is operative here as well (Lipiński 2006: 315 n. 112).

Lipiński's position, however, does not square with the cuneiform evidence. First, the use of determinatives is fluid in Neo-Babylonian texts (Schaudig 2001: 231–2) as it is in Neo-Assyrian texts. As Schaudig points out, even the well-known Mt. Amanus appears with the determinative URU (Schaudig 2001: 231). Second, there are no unambiguous references to Ammon or the Ammonites in cuneiform texts that contain the nunation proposed by Lipiński (see above §§ 3.2.1–3.2.3). Based on these two points, Lipiński's proposal appears to be an appeal to the exceptional, and as such is unlikely.

3.4 Ammonite Epigraphic Evidence[92]

Since the discovery of the Amman Citadel Inscription in 1961 (Horn 1967–8), the analysis of Ammonite inscriptions has taken on a life of its own. That discovery, and others such as the Ḥesban Ostraca, began to make possible the reclassification of unprovenanced seals that had been classified as Hebrew, Phoenician, or Aramaic (Aufrecht 1999a: 163). The process of reclassification continues until the present (*CAI*; Aufrecht 1999a) and is being augmented each year by seals found in controlled excavations (e.g., Daviau 2002: 85–9; Eggler, Herr, and Root 2002; Eggler and Keel 2006). One thing that is clear about the corpus of Ammonite inscriptions is that most come from the late eighth to sixth centuries, coinciding with the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. The process of discovery and analysis has shed light on the language, script, and onomastics, and has begun to illuminate iconographic elements as well. Likewise, as a corpus, they provide clues to Ammonite social history.

This section discusses the extant inscriptions that have been classified as Ammonite according to the medium upon which they are written, noting areas of debate and potentially important implications that may be drawn from them. Seals are treated separately, even though they are technically inscribed on stone, because their form and function differ significantly from other inscriptions on stone and because of the number of unprovenanced items. The study goes on to examine the language, script, and onomasticon. It concludes by interacting with recent contributions to the study of

[92] Aufrecht has continued to add inscriptions to *CAI* since the first edition appeared in 1989 and a second edition is planned. *CAI* nos. 1–148 are in the original edition. Numbers up through 214 are summarized in the Appendix to Aufrecht's contribution to *Ancient Ammon* Aufrecht 1999a: 177–181. Aufrecht has kindly given me access to his further listing, presently up through 243, which will appear in the second edition of the corpus.

literacy and writing in assessing the sociopolitical implications that one may draw from the corpus of Ammonite inscriptions.[93]

3.1.5 Inscriptions on Stone[94]

3.1.5.1 Amman Citadel Inscription

The Amman Citadel Inscription (*CAI*, no. 59) was discovered in 1961 in the remains of Iron Age fortifications on the southwest crest of the Amman Citadel. The stone is a roughly rectangular piece of white limestone, 26 cm at its greatest height and 19.4 cm at its greatest width. The stone was reworked for later use and hence the beginnings and ends of every line are lost, and the total number of original lines is unknown (Horn 1969: 2–4). Eight lines of partially readable text are preserved in Aramaic script, though the text, by virtue of its provenance is designated as Ammonite. The inscription is dated paleographically between the mid-ninth and early eighth centuries BCE (Cross 2003b; Sass 2005: 83–4). Originally part of a larger inscription, this piece may have commemorated a building project at the Amman Citadel, though the full details of the text are not reconstructable from the preserved lines. The is important because of the linguistic evidence it adds to the understanding of Ammonite language, the evidence it provides for the beginnings of an Ammonite tradition of writing, and what may be the earliest epigraphic occurrence of the deity Milkom (*CAI*, no. 59:1). If it is a display inscription of some sort, it also provides evidence for the

[93] This study does not include a discussion of the Deir ʿAlla Plaster Text because of the significant lack of consensus concerning the language and script. On this see the volume edited by Hoftijzer and van der Kooij (Hoftijzer and Kooij 1991), Hackett (Hackett 1984), and the *editio princeps* (Hoftijzer and Kooij 1976). It is also not clear whether Deir ʿAlla was ever controlled by the Ammonites. For discussion with ample bibliography see Hübner 1992: 42–4. On the archaeology see van der Kooij and Ibrahim (Kooij and Ibrahim 1989) and the recent volume edited by Steiner and van der Steen (Steiner and Steen 2008).

[94] The female double-faced heads found on the Amman Citadel were found with eye inlays that have single letters carved on the back, probably to help in positioning them. These are not treated here. On these, see *CAI*, no. 73.

early end of the development of elite artifacts. Moreover, as is now well established, this inscription highlights the Aramaic ancestry of the Ammonite script (Cross 2003b: 95; 2003d: 101).

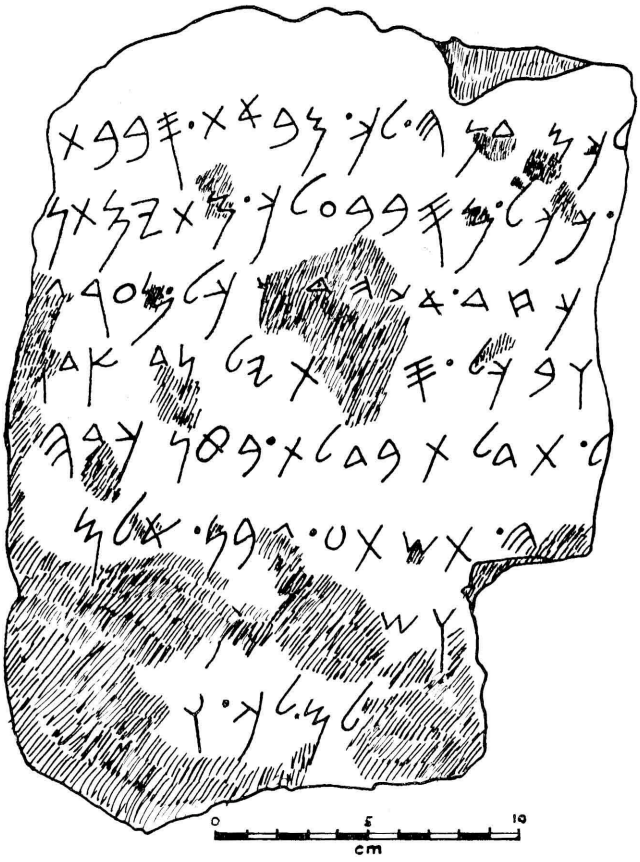


Figure 3.1—Drawing of the Amman Citadel Inscription from Horn 1969: 5 fig. 2.

3.1.5.2 Amman Statue Inscription

The Amman Statue Inscription or Statue of Yeraḥʿazar (*CAI*, no. 43) was found with three other pieces of statuary in 1951 outside the Roman city wall on the north end of the Amman Citadel. The pieces were found as a homeowner cleared soil from his courtyard. As a result, no sound archaeological context is available. The statue is carved from limestone and stands 45 cm high. In addition to the carved features, traces of red paint remained on the body and garments (Barnett 1951: 34–5, and pl. XI). The pedestal base on which the statue sits is 8 cm high and on the front bears this partially

preserved two line inscription:]*šwyrḥʿzr* /]*kr br šnb*, "]*šw* Yaraḥʿazar /]*kr* son of Šanib." The script is either Aramaic or Ammonite and dated paleographically to the late eighth or seventh century BCE (*CAI*, p. 108). The use of the Aramaic word *br*, "son" (*CAI*, no. 43:2) suggests that the language is Aramaic. Of potential importance is the grandfather mentioned in line 2. Scholars read the end of line 2 in different ways (see discussion in *CAI*); however, it is common to read the grandfather's name as either *šnb* or *šnp*. This may provide an identification with ^{m}*sa-ni-pu* ^{uru}*bīt am-ma-na-a-a*, "Šanipu of the House of Ammon" who paid tribute to Tiglath-pileser III in 734 BCE (Tadmor 1994: 170–1, Summ. 7:r. 10′; and above § 3.2.2). If this identification is correct, it could confirm the paleographic dating of this statue and would mean that it includes the names of Šanipu's son and grandson, though whether they were kings too, one cannot say.

Figure 3.2—Drawing of the Amman Statue from Routledge 2004: 181 fig. 8.10:A.

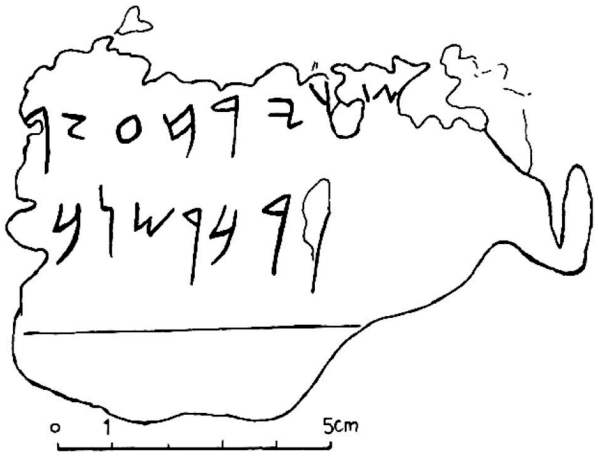


Figure 3.3—Drawing of the Amman Statue Inscription from Zayadine 1974: 133 fig. 3.

3.1.5.3 Amman Theater Inscription

The Amman Theater Inscription (*CAI*, no. 58) was found in excavations on the west side of the Roman Theater in Amman. It is a small roughly triangular piece of black basalt, 26 cm at its widest and between 17 cm and 5 cm in height (Dajani 1967–8: 65). There are two partially readable lines: . . .]*bʿl.ʾbnh*[. . . /. . .]*bn.ʿš*[. . ., ". . .]Baʿal. I shall build[. . . /. . .]son of *ʿš*[. . ." It is dated paleographically to about 600 BCE (*CAI*, p. 152). Originally part of a larger (monumental?) inscription, one can now say little positive about its place or function.

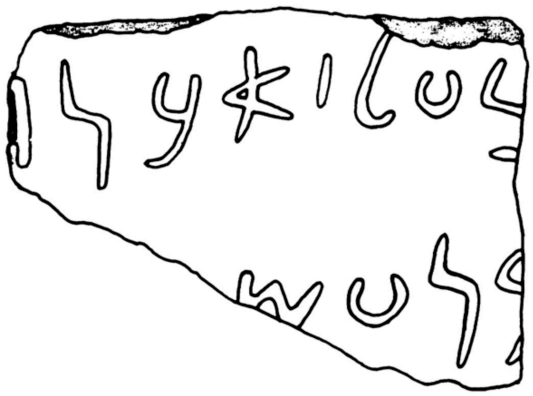


Figure 3.4—The Amman Theater Inscription from Fulco 1979: 37 fig. 1.

3.1.6 Inscriptions on Metal

3.1.6.1 Tall Siran Bottle

In 1972, excavations on the campus of the University of Jordan uncovered a small bronze colored bottle 0.70 m below the modern surface near bedrock. Pottery in the square came from the Ayyubid/Mamluk through to the Hellenistic Period and the sixth and seventh centuries of the Iron Age. The bottle, now called the Tall Siran Bottle, is 10 cm long and made of copper, lead, and tin. It had a lid that was attached to the top by a pin that went through the neck of the bottle. When the bottle was opened, barley, wheat, some weed seeds, and small bits of lead and copper that may have been remnants of a disintegrated object were found inside (Zayadine and Thompson 1973: 115–8). The inscription has eight lines of fully preserved text in Ammonite script, dated paleographically to about 600 BCE, a date that likewise fits with the shape of the bottle. The text is either a votive/commemorative text or a poem (*CAI*, p. 207). In lines 1–3, three Ammonite kings appear: 1) *ʿmndb mlk bn ʿmn* 2) *bn hṣlʾl.mlk bn ʿmn* 3) *bn ʿmndb mlk bn ʿmn*, "1) ʿAmmīnadab king of the Ammonites, 2) the son of Haṣṣilʾil king of the Ammonites, 3) the son of ʿAmmīnadab, king of the Ammonites." Scholars have equated the last of these (i.e., the grandfather) with ^{m}*am-mi-na-ad-bi šar* ^{kur}*bīt am-ma-na*, "ʿAmminadab king of the House of Ammon" found in NAT, no. 5 (§ 3.2.2), who appears in a list of southern Levantine rulers who provided troops for Assurbanipal's campaign against Egypt in 667 BCE. Two Ammonite seals appear to mention the grandfather as well. *CAI*, no. 17, which is dated to the seventh century on paleographic grounds, bears the inscription, *lʾdnplṭ / ʿbd ʿmndb*, "(Belonging) to ʾAdōnīpalṭ servant of ʿAmmīnadab" and may well refer to the grandfather or, less likely, the grandson mentioned on the Tall Siran Bottle. Likewise, *CAI*, no. 40, which reads, *lʾdnnr. ʿ/bd ʿmndb*, "(Belonging) to

ʾAdōnīnūr servant of ʿAmmīnadab," is also dated to the seventh century on paleographic grounds and may refer to the grandfather appearing in line 3 of the Tall Siran Bottle. Another notable aspect of the inscription is the use of *bn ʿmn*, "sons of Ammon" to describe the Ammonites. As noted in § 3.2.4, this designation is also reflected in the Hebrew Bible as *bĕnê ʿAmmôn*, "the sons of Ammon" and in the Neo-Assyrian texts as either *bīt* Ammon, "House of Ammon" or as *ba-an* Ammon, "son(s) of Ammon."

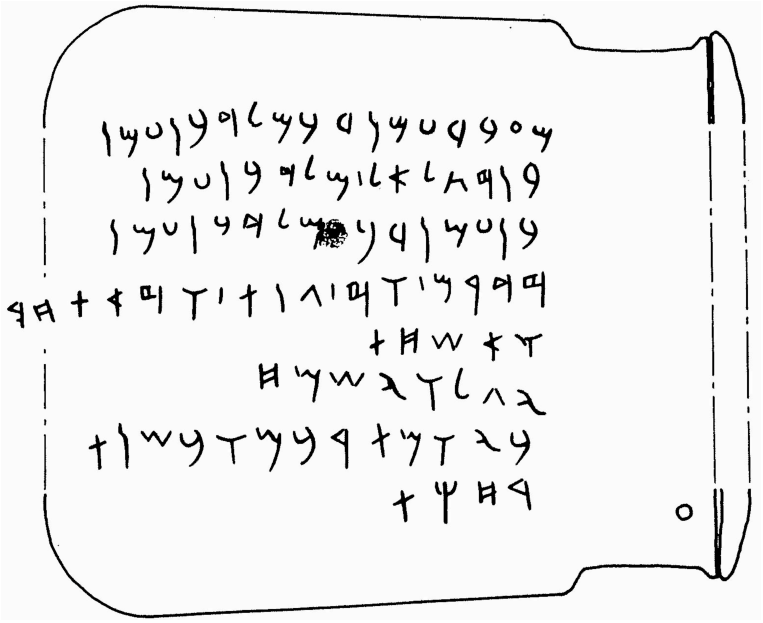


Figure 3.5—Drawing of the Tall Siran Bottle from Zayadine and Thompson 1973: 120 fig. 1.

3.1.6.2 Umm Udayna Bowl

In 1982, salvage excavations of the Umm Udayna tomb west of modern Amman uncovered a rich assemblage that dates from the eighth to fourth centuries BCE (Hadidi 1987: 101). Among the artifacts was a bronze bowl bearing an inscription on the underside of the lip. The inscription dates paleographically to the late seventh or early sixth century BCE and reads, *lʾlšmr* [*b*]*n ʾl*[ʿ]*zr*, "(Belonging) to ʾIlšamar [s]on of ʾIl[ʿ]azar." The inscription was identified as Ammonite based on paleography,

onomastics, and language and has been dated by scholars to the seventh or early sixth centuries (*CAI*, no. 148; Zayadine and Bordreuil 1986).

3.1.6.3 Weights

Two metal weights, both purchased on the antiquities market, may bear Ammonite inscriptions. One, made of black iron, bears the inscription, *bqʿ*, "Beqa" (= half-shekel), and weighs 5.5505 g, or a half-shekel (*CAI*, no. 54c). The other weight is a bronze rectangular weight bearing the inscription *lmgn*, "(Belonging) to Magan" and dating perhaps to the seventh century BCE (*CAI*, no. 105a). In both cases, other attributions are possible, especially the latter, which could be Phoenician or Aramaic.

3.1.7 Inscriptions on Pottery

The use of potsherds as a medium for writing is a well-known phenomenon in the ancient Near East and excavations in the region around Amman have uncovered a number of ostraca, showing that this medium was in use in Ammon. In addition, an ostracon found in Nimrud and originally published as Aramaic has been interpreted by a number of scholars as being written in Ammonite script and/or containing Ammonite names (*CAI*, no. 47). Table 1 lists the ink-on-pottery ostraca found to date in relative chronological order and with descriptive categorization.[95] The dates given are from *CAI*, which in turn summarizes scholarly discussions; they must be seen as approximations only.

[95] The following abbreviations pertain to Table 3.1: paleo = paleographic; arch = archaeological. A number of incised pottery sherds containing names or letters have been uncovered from the Amman Citadel, Ḥesban, Saḥab, as-Saʿidiyeh, and Umm ad-Dananir. For these see *CAI* (note on p. xviii; nos. 77, 81, 150, 232) and Hübner 1992: 38–8, 41. Most of these date to the seventh or sixth centuries.

Name	Type	Dating (how dated)	CAI#
Nimrud Ostracon[96]	Name list	8th –7th c. BCE (paleo)	47
Amman Citadel Ostracon	Unidentified	End of 7th c. BCE (paleo)	—
al-ʿUmayri Ostracon II	Name list	End of 7th–beginning of 6th c. BCE (arch)	211
Ḥesban A1 (IV)[97]	Distribution list	ca. 600 BCE (paleo)	80
Jawa Ostracon	Distribution list?	Ca. 600 BCE (paleo, arch)	—
Ḥesban A2 (XI)	List	ca. 575 BCE (paleo)	94
al-Mazar III	Epistle	ca. first half of 6th c. BCE (paleo, arch)	144
Ḥesban A3 (XII)	Distribution list or receipt	ca. 550–525 BCE (paleo)	137
Ḥesban A4 (II)	List	ca. 525 BCE (paleo)	76
Ḥesban A5 (I)	Distribution list or receipt	ca. end of 6th c. BCE (paleo)	65
Ḥesban A6	Name list	ca. end of 6th c. BCE (paleo)	238
Jalul I	Distribution list or receipt	6th c. BCE (paleo, arch)	243
al-Mazar IV	Unidentified[98]	6th c. BCE (arch)	145
al-Mazar V	Unidentified	6th c. BCE (arch)	146
al-Mazar VII	Name list	5th c. BCE (arch, paleo)	147

Table 3.1—Ammonite Ostraca

Like other ostraca from the ancient world, the ostraca listed here are largely of an administrative or economic character and thereby concerned with mostly mundane matters. They are a rich source for onomastic evidence, providing some data about commodities, and information about the use of numbers and measurements. In the case of the Ḥesban ostraca especially, they also provide a window into the evolution of the local script, which if used judiciously, may yield insights into imperial influence on the practice of writing.

[96] As the name implies, this ostracon was found in Nimrud. It was initially published as an Aramaic ostracon, but onomastic and paleographic considerations caused some scholars to suggest it contained Ammonite names and may have been written in Ammonite script (see *CAI*, no. 47 for discussion).

[97] The Ḥesban ostraca were renumbered by Cross in his final publication (Cross 2003a; Cross 2009). The number in the parentheses represents the original order in which they were published by Cross as they were discovered.

[98] al-Mazar IV and V show evidence of multiple lines of text, however, they were severely damaged in a fire such that they are almost completely illegible (Yassine and Teixidor 1986: 48).

3.1.7.1 Amman Citadel Ostracon

This fragmentary ostracon comes from deposits that accumulated in the abandonment phase of the Iron IIC building located under the Roman Temple on the Amman Citadel. Only one word is reconstructable reading either *hnsw* ("dare" or "they dared") or *hnss* ("the standard bearer"). Dion dates the ostracon paleographically to just before 600 BCE (Momani et al. 1997: 166).

3.1.7.2 Ḥesban Ostraca

Six ostraca written in ink (A1–A6 = *CAI*, nos. 80, 94, 137, 76, 65, 238) were found in excavations at Tall Ḥesban between 1968 and 1978. All were found in Iron IIC/Persian archaeological contexts or in the fill cleared from the Iron Age reservoir. Cross (Cross 2003a, 2009) dated all of them paleographically between about 600 BCE and the end of the sixth century.[99] The dating of these ostraca has not been seriously challenged (cf. *CAI*; Israel 1997; Lemaire 1992: 562), though Hübner has challenged their identification as Ammonite (Hübner 1988; 1992: 32 n. 67).

In his analysis of the ostraca written in ink, Cross worked out a typological progression based on comparison of the script of A1, A2, and A3 with the DAPT, the Amman Theater Inscription, the Amman Statue Inscription, the Tall Siran Bottle, the Tall al-Mazar ostraca, the eyes from the double-faced heads, and various seals. This comparision led him to the conclusion that A1, A2, and A3 were written in Ammonite cursive. The changes in the letter shapes between these three pointed to chronological development from about 600 BCE to about 550–525 BCE (Cross 2003a: 71–85). The

[99] Cross 2003a; Cross 2009 are the same final publication of the ostraca with the exception that Graffito A9 is not included in the 2009 publication. The 2003 publication is preferable because it includes both drawings and photographs, whereas the 2009 publication includes only drawings. Therefore, this discussion refers simply to the 2003 publication. The archaeological context of the two letter inscription Cross designates as Graffito A9 is not mentioned. Cross assigns a paleographic date in the fifth century (Cross 2003a: 93). Graffito A9 is inexplicably not included in the 2009 version of the publication.

script of the other three ostraca written in ink, A4, A5, and A6, Cross identified as Aramaic. As for language, Cross suggested that A4 used Aramaic language, and that A5 used Canaanite/Ammonite (Cross 2003a: 85–93). He did not designate the language for A6, though the occurrence of the Canaanite/Ammonite *bn*, "son" rather than Aramaic *br* for the same word, may suggest that the language is of the Canaanite/Ammonite branch. The apparent chronological development of the script found on the ostraca from Ḥesban led Cross to a broader historical reconstruction in which the Ammonite cursive script was gradually replaced by the Aramaic script of the Persian chancellery near the end of the sixth century, as seems to be the case also in Edom and Judah (Cross 2003a: 78).

Hübner questioned the designation of the Ḥesban ostraca as Ammonite on several grounds. His critique applies especially to A1–A3, which Cross argued were written in Ammonite script. Hübner questioned Cross's method of comparing scripts across media (stone, metal, pottery) and their associated writing instruments (Hübner 1988: 69), and argued that Ammonite grammar and name formation are not distinguishable from Moabite (Hübner 1988: 70–1). He also asked whether the isoglosses posited as distinguishing Ammonite from Moabite are valid given that the main Moabite inscription of any length is the Mesha Stele dating to the mid-ninth century BCE (Hübner 1992: 32 n. 67). The two isoglosses cited by Cross—masculine plural absolute endings in *–m* (A2, lines 3–4 = *CAI*, no. 94:3–4) versus*–n* in the Mesha Stele, and the use of the relative particle *ʾš* (A1, line 6 = *CAI*, no. 80:6) versus *ʾšr* in the Mesha Stele (Cross 2003a: 94)—are suspect according to Hübner because of the chronological difference. There is still no new information about the masculine plural ending. However, an inscribed incense altar from the first half of the eighth century

BCE found at the Moabite site of Khirbat al-Mudayna ath-Thamad shows that Moabite may also have used the relative particle *ʾš* (Dion and Daviau 2000: 5–7; Yun 2005: 751), thus partly undermining Cross's contention.

The heart of Hübner's argument is based on an analysis of biblical references to Ḥesban being a Moabite city from the ninth century on, providing a geographical basis to the argument that the Ḥesban ostraca ought to be designated Moabite (Hübner 1988: 72). This part of his argument is dependent on geographic information extracted from the Hebrew Bible, which is susceptible to critique, but is also problematic given that the identification of Tall Ḥesban with biblical Heshbon is not certain. As a result, Hübner's argument has not been accepted by Cross (Cross 2003a: 93–4), nor by other epigraphers (Aḥituv 2008: 370; Israel 1997: 106; Lemaire 1992: 562).

Ḥesban A1 (Figure 3.6) provides a good illustration of the kind of information available from this small collection of ostraca. This ostracon, which dates to about 600 BCE has eleven lines of mostly preserved text. It appears to be a distribution list although a receipt is not ruled out. Among the items disbursed are small animals (*ṣʾn*), gum (*nkʾt*), grain (*ʾkl*), a cow (*ʾrḥ*), silver, wine, and wheat germ/fine flour (*lbbt*). In line four, the person mentioned (for whom only the first letter of his name survives) is designated as *mʾlt*, apparently indicating that he was from Elath, a site located at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba (Cross 2003a: 73).

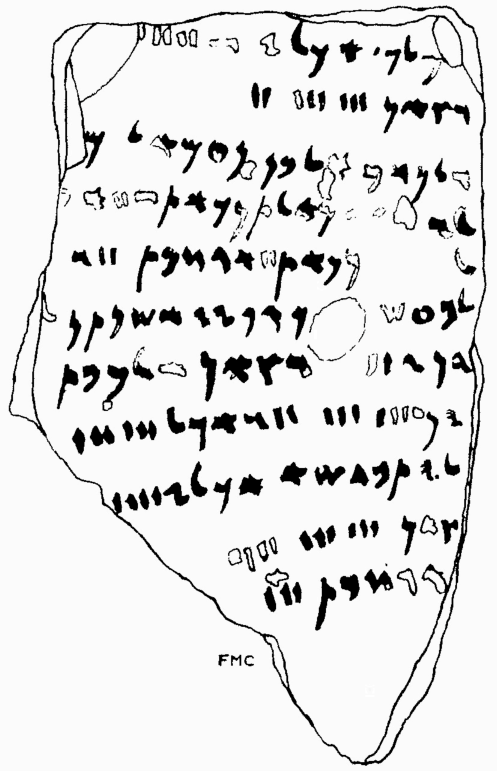


Figure 3.6—Ḥesban Ostracon A1 from Cross 2003a: 72 fig. 6.1.

1) [*l*]*mlk.ʾkl* 20 + 10 + 5 [	1) [To the] king: 35 (jars) of grain [
2) *wṣwn* 8	2) and 8 sheep and goats;
3) *wlndbʾl bn nʿmʾl mn*	3) and to Nadab'il son of Naʿam'il from. . . .]
4) *lz*[ ] *mʾlt nkʾt* 10 + 2 *ʾk*[*l*	4) To *z*[ ] from 'Ilat: 12 (measures) of gum; gr[ain .]
5) *l*[ ] *nkʾt* 2 *ʾrḥ bt* 2 *w*[	5) To [:] 2 (measures) of gum; a two-year old cow and [.]
6) *lbʿš*[ʾ] *ksp* 20 + 20 *ʾš ntn l*[	6) To Baʿša[']: 40 (pieces) of silver which he gave to [;]
7) *yn* 20 + 2 *wṣʾn* 10 *lbbt*	7) 22 (jugs) of wine; and 10 sheep and goats; fine flour [;]
8) *yn* 8 *wʾkl* 6	8) 8 (jugs) of wine; and 6 (jars) of grain.
9) *lytb dšʾ ʾkl* 20 + 4	9) To Yatîb: hay; 24 (jars) of grain;
10) *ṣʾn* 9	10) 9 sheep and goats;
11) *ʾrḥ bt* 3	11) a three-year-old cow.

3.1.7.3 Tall Jalul Ostracon 1

Jalul Ostracon 1 was discovered in 2007 near an Iron II/Persian Period wall during cleanup of interseasonal debris. The ostracon contains six lines of essentially complete text. Where intact, each of the first five lines consists of a hieratic number, followed by a name, another hieratic number, and then a symbol that may represent a

measure. After a blank line, line six has a single name that may be the name of the scribe. The list format of the text suggests it is some type of tally or receipt list of taxes, distributions, or the like. Gane dated the ostracon paleographically to the sixth century and designated the script as Ammonite based on comparisons with the Ḥesban ostraca, especially A1–A3 (Gane 2008; *CAI*, no. 243).

3.1.7.4 Tall Jawa Ostracon

Excavations at Tall Jawa recovered a small ostracon from the Stratum VII building 800, which dates to the seventh and sixth centuries. The upper right hand corner of the text appears to be missing. The ostracon contains three lines of poorly preserved text that suggest a paleographic dating to about 600 BCE. The remnants of the text may record the distribution of wheat and maybe a liquid. The language may be Aramaic since the word for wheat, *ḥṭn* seems to be a plural ending in a nun (Dion 2002).

3.1.7.5 Tall al-Mazar Ostraca

Three ostraca (III, IV, V = *CAI*, nos. 144–146) found on floor 101 in Area L at Tall al-Mazar have been identified paleographically as Ammonite. They are dated to the sixth century based on both the paleography and the pottery on the floor of room, which dates to the early sixth century. The building complex was destroyed by fire and as a result ostraca IV and V are nearly illegible. Ostracon III has five mostly preserved lines of text on the convex side of the sherd and two words are preserved on the concave side. The contents of this ostracon indicate that it was a letter concerning some type of barley loan (Yassine and Teixidor 1986: 47–8; cf. *CAI*, no. 144). A fourth ostracon (VII = *CAI*, no. 147) came from a mixed locus containing Persian and Hellenistic wares. The text has nine partial lines all containing names. Yassine and

Teixidor dated it to the fifth century BCE based on the archaeological context and the paleography of the Aramaic script (Yassine and Teixidor 1986: 48–9). Based on the onomastics, particularly *mlkmyt*, "May Milkom come" in line 1, which contains the name of the deity known from the Bible and other Ammonite inscriptions, Aufrecht and Aḥituv suggest an Ammonite identification (Aḥituv 2008; *CAI*, no. 147).

Figure 3.7—al-Mazar Ostracon III from Aḥituv 2008: 380.

Convex side[100]

1) *ʾmr . plṭ ʾmr lʾḥh . lʿbdʾ*[*l*]	1) Utterance of Palṭ : say to his brother, to ʿAbdaʾ[il]
2) *šlm ʾt wʿt šʿ<r>rt ʾtn*[	2) are you well? As for barley, I shall give [
3)]*lk šʿrt . lšbt . kʿr*[*bn*]	3)] to you barley to remain as a ple[dge]
4) *wʿt tn . lplṭ ʾ*[*ḥk*]	4) and now give to Palṭ [your] bro[ther]
5)] *yšb bʾ*[	5)] he dwells in ʾ[

3.1.7.6 Tall al-ʿUmayri Ostracon II

Tall al-ʿUmayri Ostracon II (*CAI*, no. 211) was found in 1989 in a Late Iron II fill in a pit north of what the excavators term the "Ammonite Citadel." The ostracon has five lines of badly abraded text. What can be reconstructed are names perhaps including a mention of "the king" (line 1). Line 1 also contains the preposition *ʾl*, "to," which may

[100] Text and translation follow *CAI*, no. 144. In *CAI*, Aufrecht uses word dividers consistently throughout this ostracon. The photos provided in Yassine and Teixidor do show some word dividers, and thus they may have been used throughout, but they are difficult to see. The place of word dividers therefore follows Aḥituv 2008: 379–80. The concave side is nearly obliterated and thus not represented here.

be part of the opening of a letter. Sanders dates it to the mid-sixth century paleographically (Sanders 1997).

3.1.7.7 Nimrud Ostracon

The Nimrud Ostracon (ND 6231; *CAI*, no. 47) was found at Nimrud (ancient Kalhu) in 1957 during the excavations of "Fort Shalmaneser." Excavators found the ostracon in a mixed layer of ash and debris 20 cm above the last occupation level of the Assyrian building that was destroyed in 612 BCE. The ostracon has three columns of writing, two on the convex side and one on the concave side. All three columns are name lists and are nearly complete with the exception of a small break on the upper right corner of the convex side in which one name may be lost. Most of the names in the list include both the name and patronym of the individual. The patronym is preceded by the "Canaanite" *bn*, "son of" rather than the Aramaic equivalent *br* (Segal 1957: 139–40). The lists on either side appear to be written in two different hands. Segal identified the script as Aramaic of the seventh century, a date that fits well with the archaeological evidence. However, he noted that the use of *bn* preceding the patronym suggests that the people listed were of Phoenician or Palestinian origin (Segal 1957: 143–4). As for the function of the lists, one can only surmise that it was some type of ration list or list of laborers. The room where it was found contained many large jars that may have contained wine, perhaps lending support to its identification as a ration list (Segal 1957: 145).

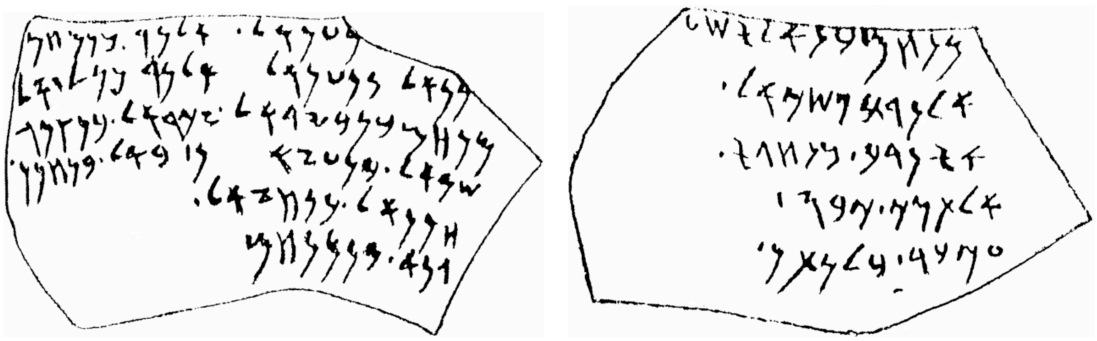


Figure 3.8—Drawing of the Nimrud Ostracon Obverse (left), Reverse (right) from Aḥituv 2008: 385.

Since the publication of this ostracon, scholars have suggested various identifications of the names including, Phoenician, Israelite, and Ammonite. Hübner lays out clearly the various views on this matter (1992: 36; cf. *CAI*, no. 47); several of these are worth commenting on here. Around the same time, Naveh (1979–1980) and Bordreuil (1979) published studies of this ostracon calling attention to the similarities of the names on it with those known from Ammonite inscriptions. Naveh's study, which is the strongest statement in favor of identifying this ostracon as Ammonite, noted the combination of Aramaic or Aramaic-like script, Canaanite *bn*, "son of," and the preponderance of names using El as the theophoric element (Naveh 1979–1980: 170). Just such a combination of elements seems to be true of many inscriptions found in the region around Amman. Naveh suggests that the scribe and individuals listed may have been conscripted by the Assyrians as soldiers or as laborers. In support of the laborer thesis, he notes that the second to last name on the concave side appears to be followed by the professional term *kbs*, which is most likely a participle meaning "fuller, launderer" (Naveh 1979–1980: 171). Puech's article follows Naveh's line of thinking, though he dates the script to the seventh century (Puech 1985: 12–13). Zadok, though not commenting on the script, supports the identification of the names as Ammonite

(Zadok 1997: 452–3). Aḥituv also supports this view, though unexpectedly dates the ostracon to the sixth century (Aḥituv 2008: 384).

Bordreuil's article takes the conversation in a slightly different direction. While noting the correspondence between the names on the Nimrud Ostracon and those from Ammonite inscriptions, he states that it is not possible to demonstrate that all the names on the Nimrud Ostracon are Ammonite. One might, in his estimation, speak of a mixed list (Bordreuil 1979: 317). Becking took this one step further by tabulating parallels between names on the Nimrud Ostracon and in inscriptions from other Northwest Semitic inscriptions. Becking's table shows convincingly that there are parallels for many of these names in the various branches of the Northwest Semitic world (Becking 1988: 62). This, he argues, fits well with what we know of the Assyrian policy of mixing subjugated populations and means that one cannot speak of the Nimrud Ostracon as containing exclusively Ammonite names (Becking 1988: 61, 66–7; cf. Hübner 1992: 37).

The views of Naveh, Puech, Zadok, and Aḥituv are attractive inasmuch as they make it possible to know something about Ammonites in a foreign land. However, the arguments of Bordreuil and Becking make such a tight argument unlikely and, in the opinion of the present writer, rule out speaking of this ostracon as Ammonite even though it probably contains names of some Ammonite men. One hears of the conscription of Ammonite soldiers and probably laborers in NAT, nos. 4 and 5 (above § 3.1.2), so the discovery of Ammonite names in Nimrud would not be surprising.

3.1.8 Seals and Bullae

Seals and bullae (seal impressions) present special problems to the interpreter in large measure because so many of them are purchased on the antiquities market and thus have no archaeological context. Most of the Ammonite seals fall into this category

and have been classified as Ammonite based on paleographic, linguistic, or onomastic grounds, though find spot is naturally of significant help when available (Aufrecht 1999a: 167–71).[101] Nevertheless, as the number of seals, bullae, and other inscriptions coming from controlled excavations increases, the level of confidence in isolating traits that reliably identify Ammonite inscriptions similarly grows. Presently, there are over two hundred seals or bullae for which scholars have suggested an Ammonite identification (see *CAI*; Aufrecht 1999a: 165–6, 177–81). Of these, many are purely epigraphic, having no iconographic elements (Hübner 1993: 134–5).

The original place of production of seals can also pose a problem, especially in the case of anepigraphic seals (those without inscriptions). The general criterion is that Levantine seals are typically scaraboid, that is round, oval, or lenticular in shape (Hübner 1993: 134; Ornan 1993: 53). In the case of seals identified as Ammonite, over ninety-five percent are of these shapes. This is in contrast to the tendency in Mesopotamia for cylinder or conoid seals, which also tend to use Aramaic legends (Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 367, 374; Ornan 1993: 52–3). In those cases where cylinder or conoid seals appear in Ammonite territory, it is likely that these were imported and/or used by persons of Mesopotamian or Aramean origin and so the data that we can derive from them is less likely to be representative of the indigenous population.

Assigning dates to seals is problematic because of the frequent lack of archaeological context, but archaeological context does not always solve the problem. Even when a seal is found in controlled excavations, it may not date to the time of the archaeological stratum in which it is found since seals may be handed down within a

[101] Iconography can be a criterion in theory, but Ammonite iconography is not significantly different from its neighbors as to make it a determining factor.

family before finally making thei way into the archaeological record. In theory, scholars attempt to date seals and bullae by considering the archaeological context (if any), paleography, iconography, and occasionally onomastics in order to arrive at a range of dates. In practice however, paleography—the study of how writing changes over time—is often the determining factor in any given dating. With these constraints on the chronology of seals in mind, it is clear that the large majority of seals date between the late eighth and seventh centuries BCE, with a smaller but still substantial number continuing into the sixth century BCE. Although Ammonite seals and bullae are not entirely limited to the late eighth through sixth centuries BCE, the number that fall within these dates show that the increase in seal production and use coincides with the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires.

3.1.8.1 Seals of Titled Men

Table 3.2 lists men bearing titles as known from Ammonite seals. With the exception of "the goldsmith" (*CAI*, no. 27) and "the healer" (*CAI*, no. 214), most of these people are likely to have been employed by the royal court. The *ʿbd*, "servant" type in particular are not infrequently servants of the king (Cross 2003c: 103), though *CAI*, no. 38a may not follow this pattern.[102]

Title	Inscription	Date	Certainty	*CAI*#
mlk	*bʿlyš*[ʿ] / *mlk* / *b*[ ]*n* — (Belonging to) Baʿlyašūʿ king [of the Ammonites][103]	early 6th c.	Probable	212
	lbrkʾl hmlk — (Belonging) to Barakʾil the king	early 7th c.	Probable	213
mzkr	*lplṭy bn / mʾš hm/zkr* — (Belonging) to Palṭay son of Maʾiš the herald	late 8th c.	Possible	124a
nss	*lšwḫr. / hnss* — (Belonging) to Šawḥir the standard-bearer	ca. 600	Ammonite	68
nʿr	*lʿbdʾ n/ʿr ʾlrm* — (Belonging) to ʿAbdaʾ steward of ʾIlram	7th c.	Possible	53
	lbṭš / nʿr brkʾl — (Belonging) to bṭš steward of Barakʾil	late 7th c.	Ammonite	54
spr	*lḥṭy.sp/r ʾdnr* — (Belonging) to ḥṭy (the) scribe of ʾAdnūr	7th c.	Ammonite	139

[102] For discussion of *CAI*, nos. 17 and 40, see my discussion of the Tall Siran Bottle in § 3.1.5.

[103] The readings of many of the letters on this seal are uncertain. The word *mlk* is clear.

Title	Inscription	Date	Certainty	*CAI#*
	lʾlyr/m hsp/r — (Belonging) to ʾIlyaram the scribe	ca. 700	Possible	209
ʿbd	*lbydʾl.ʿbd pdʾl* — (Belonging) to Bayadʾil servant of Padōʾil (repeated on other side)	ca. 700	Ammonite	13
	lʾdnplṭ / ʿbd ʿmndb — (Belonging) to Adōnīpalṭ servant of ʿAmmīnadab	mid-7th c.	Ammonite	17
	lbʿzrʾl / ʿbd hbʿl — (Belonging) to Baʿzarʾil servant of the master	7th–6th c.	Possible	38a
	lʾdnnr. ʿ/bd ʿmndb — (Belonging) to ʾAdōnīnūr servant of ʿAmmīnadab	mid-7th c.	Ammonite	40
	lmnḥm bn smk / ʿbd mlk — (Belonging) to Manaḥḥim son of Samak, servant of (the) king	mid-7th c.	Probable forgery	102
	lmlkmʾwr /ʿb/d bʿlyšʿ — (Belonging) to Milkōmʾawr servant of Baʿlyašūʿ	ca. 600	Ammonite	129
ṣrp	*lnṣrʾl / hṣrp* — (Belonging) to Naṣarʾil the goldsmith	late 8th–7th c.	Probable	27
rpʾ	*ʾdnʿz . / hrpʾ* — (Belonging) to ʾAdoniʿuz, the healer.	end of 8th c.	Probable	214

Table 3.2—Titled Men on Ammonite Seals[104]

CAI, no. 13, which belonged to the servant of Padōʾil has been dated on paleographic grounds to around 700 BCE. This name fits well with three of the Neo-Assyrian texts I discussed above. NAT, nos. 3 and 4 attest an Ammonite king *pu/bu-du-il* paying tribute to Sennacherib in 701 BCE and providing building supplies to Esarhaddon in 673 BCE. NAT, no. 9, which dates right around the same time, mentions *pa-du-ú-ilu* of Ammon, though it does not call him king. However, his position as the leader of a group from Ammon receiving state gifts from Assyria indicates that we are probably talking about the same person. It is probable then that all four of these texts refer to the same person, Padōʾil, who was king of the Ammonites in the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE (Cross 2003c).

[104] Items are listed alphabetically by title/designation. Transliteration, translation, dating, and assignment of certainty as to whether it is an Ammonite seal or not all follow *CAI*. In the certainty category, Aufrecht assigns three levels of certainty (Ammonite, probably Ammonite, possibly Ammonite) plus the category of probable forgery. For the reasoning behind this see *CAI*, Introduction and Appendix I. The mark / indicates the end of one line and beginning of a new line.

CAI, no. 129 is a bulla found in topsoil above the "Ammonite Citadel" at ʿUmayri. The script is dated paleographically to about 600 BCE (Herr 1985: 170; Hübner 1992: 86–7; Lemaire 1986: 321). The name on the bulla reads, *lmlkmʾwr /ʿb/d bʿlyšʿ*, "(Belonging) to Milkōmʾawr servant of Baʿlyašūʿ," and thus appears to have belonged to an Ammonite official. The Baʿlyašūʿ named on the bulla has been widely identified with Baalis, king of the Ammonites mentioned in Jer. 40:14 (*CAI* ; Becking 1993; Herr 1985: 172). According to the biblical text, Baalis supported the Judean Ishmael in his assassination of Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed ruler of Judah. The seal thus provides a synchronism with the events portrayed in the biblical text of Jeremiah and most likely indicates the name of a late Ammonite king. Another recently published, but unprovenanced seal may contain the name of this king (*CAI*, no 213; Deutsch and Heltzer 1999: 53–7). It is unfortunately badly broken with only the word *mlk*, "king" being clear, so we cannot be sure it is the same person (Becking 1999: 13–17).

3.1.8.2 Seals of Women

A small number of Ammonite or possibly Ammonite seals contain the names of women. Table 3.3 lists these, according to their designation and like Table 3.2, provides an estimation of the certainty that they are Ammonite.

Title	Inscription	Date	Certainty	*CAI#*
ʾmh	*lʿlyh ʾ/mt. ḥnnʾl* — (Belonging) to ʿAlyah maidservant of Ḥananʾil	7th c.	Ammonite	36
	lʿnmwt ʾ/mt dblbs — (Belonging) to ʿAnamawt maidservant of *dblbs*	7th–6th c.	Ammonite	44
ʾšh	*lʾḥtmlk ʾšt yšʿ* — (Belonging) to ʾAḥatmalk wife of Yišiʿ	8th–7th c.	Possible	2a
	lmnḥmt / ʾšt gdmlk — (Belonging) to Menaḥemat wife of Gadmalk	8th c.	Possible	8c
	lʿlyh ʾ/št ḥnnʾl — (Belonging) to ʿAlyah wife of Ḥananʾil	–	Possible	235
bt	*lʾlšgb / bt ʾlšmʿ* — (Belonging) to ʾIlšagab daughter of ʾIlšamaʿ	7th c.	Ammonite	9
	lʾbyḥy / bt / ynḥm — (Belonging) to ʾAbyaḥay daughter of	7th c.	Ammonite	23

Title	Inscription	Date	Certainty	*CAI#*
	Yanaḥḥim			
	lʾldšʾ / bt šlmt — (Belonging) to ʾIldašaʾ daughter of Šalōmat	–	Possible	31a
	btʾšm — (Belonging to) Batʾešem	8th c.	Possible	71b
	lḥmywsʾ / bt smṭ — (Belonging) to *mywsʾ* daughter of *smṭ*	7th or 5th c.	Probable	117
	lʿlʾ b/t ʾmr — (Belonging) to ʿAlaʾ daughter of ʾAmar	8th–7th c.	Probable	121
	lʾbyḥy / bt ʿzyʾ — (Belonging) to ʾAbyaḥay daughter of ʿUzzīyaʾ	7th–6th c.	Ammonite	126
	lʾbʿdn bt sdd — (Belonging) to ʾAbīʿadan daughter of *sdd*	7th–6th c.	Probable	152
	lʾbršʾ / bt bʿlntn — (Belonging) to *ʾbršʾ* daughter of Baʿlnatan	7th c.	Possible	175
	lḥtʿzt / bt / ʾlšmʿ — (Belonging) to *ḥtʿzt* daughter of ʾIlšamaʿ	7th c.	Possible	178
	lʾḥtʾb / bt ʾblʾ — (Belonging) to ʾAḥatʾab daughter of *ʾblʾ*	7th c.	Possible	182
	lʾyʾ / hl bt / ḥlq / ʾ — (Belonging) to ʾAyʾōhel daughter of Ḥalqaʾ	late 8th–7th c.	Probable	204
	lḥmdn bt / yrmʾl — (Belonging) to Ḥamdan, daughter of Yaramʾil	ca. 700	Probable	215

Table 3.3—Women on Ammonite Seals[105]

The first two seals in Table 3.3 designate the women with the construct form of *ʾmh*, which ranges in meaning from "slave," "maidservant," "unfree woman," (ˆHALOT 1:61; Kessler 2002) or even "wife" (*DNSWI* 1:70–1). It is also possible that the designation *ʾmh* could be the functional equivalent of *ʿbd*, "servant" (above § 3.4.4.1) which is often used of officials (*WSS*, p. 31; Marsman 2003: 653). This was the interpretation of Albright, who saw in these two seals "officials or other magnates" similar to those found on Mesopotamian seals (Albright 1953: 4).[106] However, there are no unambiguous examples of the use of *ʾmh* to refer to an official and thus no way of distinguishing between the two possible uses.

The prime possibility for the use of *ʾmh* to refer to a female official is a Hebrew seal that reads: *lšlmyt ʾmt ʾlntn pḥ*[*wʾ*], "(Belonging) to Shelomith maidservant of Elnatan the gov[ernor]" (Avigad 1976: 11). This unprovenanced seal is thought to have come

[105] *CAI*, no. 9a is possibly Ammonite but more likely Hebrew. *CAI*, no. 143a is possibly Ammonite, but the text is difficult to read to the extent that it is not even clear whether this is the seal of a woman.

[106] Albright also argued that these seals showed the "superior relative position of women in the land of Ammon, which was strongly influenced by nomadic practice," and pointed to the queens of the Arabs that one hears about in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions (Albright 1953: 5).

from the Jerusalem area and was possibly found together with one other seal and a hoard of bullae, all of which date to the late sixth century based on their paleography (Avigad 1976: 1–2, 17). The main argument in favor of Shelomith being an official of some sort is her association with Elnatan, who holds the title of governor (Avigad 1976: 13). The insoluble problem is that it is just as likely that she is Elnatan's wife as it is that she is a functionary of some sort.

Another Hebrew inscription from Silwan near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem contains the term *ʾmh*. The inscription, which dates paleographically to around 700 BCE (Avigad 1953: 150), marks the tomb of an official (whose name is abraded) designated as *ʾšr ʿl hbyt*, "who is over the house," that is, an important royal official (Avigad 1953: 143–5). The three line inscription goes on to mention that the official's bones and those of his *ʾmh* are buried therein (line 2). In this case, the burial of the *ʾmh* with this official suggests that his *ʾmh* is his wife and not another official (Avigad 1953: 145–6; Marsman 2003: 654).

Based on the available evidence then, the status of the women designated as *ʾmh* on *CAI*, nos. 36 and 44 must remain an open question. It is possible that they had roles as high-ranking servants of a king or another elite male, but it is likewise possible that they were wives of these men. In either case, it is clear that they were women of some means.

The rest of the women in the list are designated by the construct of *ʾšh*, "wife" or *bt*, "daughter," and are presumably the wives or daughters of wealthy individuals.[107] Whether these women used their seals in a formal circumstance (e.g., sealing letters)

[107] For a review of these designations known from Hebrew seals, see Marsman 2003: 644–52.

one cannot say for sure because we do not have bullae or jar handle impressions that show their use. However, the recent publication of seven Hebrew bullae and the seal with which they were made makes it possible that levantine women did use their seals for more than ornamental or amuletic purposes. The bullae and seal are unprovenanced and are dated paleographically to the late eighth or early seventh century BCE. The inscription on these bullae and the seal reads: *ʿlʾ / ʾšt / šlm*, "ʿAlaʾ wife of Šallum" (Deutsch 2003a: 72–4; 2003b: 61–3). The key point is that the seal was used for sealing documents or other items.[108] While this does not prove that the women known from the Ammonite seals participated in letter writing, administration, or other activities that a seal would facilitate, it suggests it as a distinct possibility.

The few Ammonite seals with female names indicate the status of these women who were able to procure small but meaningful markers of status and authority. The high social position of these women was probably mediated through the men to whom these women were related as Marsman shows for Ugarit, Israel, Judah, and the Jews of Elephantine (Marsman 2003). Although the present evidence does not allow one to detail the roles these elite Ammonite women may have played, their participation in correspondence, administration, and business might be inferred based on the evidence collected by Marsman (2003). Once again, the available evidence focuses attention on the upper layers of Ammonite society, where the most concentrated societal changes took place.

[108] There are imprints on the back of the bullae from the material to which they were attached (Deutsch 2003a: 72; Deutsch 2003b: 61).

3.1.8.3 Seal of Mannu-ki-ʾInurta

One seal that may highlight interaction between Ammon and the larger imperial context is that of Mannu-ki-ʾInurta (Avigad 1965: 222–8; *CAI*, no. 55; *WSS*, no. 805). This unprovenanced seal is of the conoid type typical of Mesopotamian stamp seals and made of grey chalcedony. What is unique is that it combines Mesopotamian and West-Semitic decorative elements—seventh century BCE inscription written in Aramaic or Ammonite script and the putative Ammonite deity Milkom (Avigad 1965: 222–3; *WSS*, no. 805). The script and appearance of the deity name Milkom have elicited the theory that the owner was either an Assyrian residing in Ammon who worshipped the local deity, or was a person of Ammonite descent who ended up in Mesopotamia as a deportee, soldier, merchant, or laborer (Avigad 1965: 222–7; Becking 1993: 17 n. 12; Hübner 1992: 88; Naʾaman and Zadok 1988: 45–6 n. 51; *WSS*, no. 805).[109]

3.1.8.4 Persian Provincial Seal Impressions

Excavations at al-ʿUmayri have recovered five stamped impressions on jar handles, and in one case on a rim, all written in Aramaic script dating to the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century BCE (*CAI*, nos. 171, 172, 236, 237, 241). The impressions appear to have been made by at least three different seals. *CAI*, nos. 171, 172, which both read *šbʾ / ʿmn*, "Šubaʾ / ʿAmmon," may have been made by the same seal. *CAI*, nos. 236, 237, which both read *ʿmn / ʿyʾ*, "ʿAmmon / ʿAyaʾ," appear to be from the same seal. The most recently discovered impression, *CAI*, no. 241, bears the inscription *ʾlṣr / ʿmn*, "ʾIlṣūr / ʿAmmon." The impressions are of particular importance because they bear a close resemblance to the better known *yh(w)d* impressions from

[109] Cf. *CAI*, no. 56; *WSS*, no. 876

Judah, which played a role in the administration of the Achaemenid Persian province of Judah. These impressions then, point to provincial administration of a Persian province in Ammon (Herr 1999: 233–4), and thus to the end of an independent Ammonite polity.

3.1.8.5 Iconography of the Seals and Bullae

Ammonite iconography is not unique. All of the motifs come from the iconographic repertoire common to the southern Levant. They can only be understood in light of the broader trends of southern Levantine glyptic art in the Neo-Assyrian period (Hübner 1993: 148–9). Of these trends, the most important are the shift away from solar imagery to astral and lunar imagery (Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 295), an emphasis on the symbols of the deities rather than anthropomorphic representations (Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 305; Ornan 1993: 71), and an aniconic trend that was less pronounced in Ammon (Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 354–61).

The range of motifs on the iconographic seals demonstrates a significant level of Mesopotamian inspiration. Among these motifs we may mention a representation of Gula (Hübner 1993: 160 fig. 31) and the symbols of Marduk and Nabu (Hübner 1993: 160 figs. 29, 30). *Mischwesen* including striding winged sphinx (*CAI*, nos. 84, 85), winged, lion-headed beast (*CAI*, no. 108), a winged beast (ugallu?; *CAI*, no. 17), and a winged bull-man (*CAI*, no. 41; Ornan 1993: 57 fig. 8). Also noticeable are the star of Ishtar (*CAI*, no. 1), the moon crescent of Sîn (*CAI*, nos. 1, 17; Hübner 1993: 159 fig. 21), and a sun or moon disk (*CAI*, nos. 17, 132; Hübner 1993: 159 figs. 21, 28).

On a regional level, the use of the four-winged scarab beetle may indicate Israelite influence on Ammon. This image seems to have been characteristic of Israel before its destruction by Sargon II, and to some extent of Judah (Hübner 1993: 140). The supposition that the four-winged scarab beetle was a state or national symbol of the

Ammonites is possible (Younker 1985), but is not confirmed by other seals of "civil servants" from Ammon, which have different iconography or are aniconic altogether (Hübner 1993: 140). Locally, one motif that is well represented in Ammon is that of a striding steer (*CAI*, nos. 1, 3, 5, 13, 30, 132; Hübner 1993: 158 fig. 15), a motif that is particularly at home on Transjordanian and Aramaic seals of the period (Hübner 1993: 137).

3.1.9 Language

The main studies of Ammonite language have concluded unanimously that Ammonite is part of the Northwest Semitic family of languages most closely related to Phoenician and its southern dialects (Hebrew, Moabite, Edomite) in contrast to Aramaic (CAI, pp. xii–xvi; Aufrecht 1999a: 170–1; Garr 1985: 223–32; Israel 1979; Jackson 1983a; Sivan 1982). The strongest case for placing Ammonite with Phoenician is established by Garr, who shows that Ammonite is the closest of the southern dialects to Phoenician based on shared linguistic innovations (Garr 1985: 228). Garr also demonstrates that Ammonite shares no linguistic innovations exclusively with Old Aramaic (Garr 1985: 232). While Garr's study focuses mainly on phonological and morphological data (cf. Israel 1979: 144–9; Sivan 1982: 222–34), lexical data also generally confirm this view (Israel 1979: 150–3; Jackson 1983a: 143; Sivan 1982: 221). Specifically we can point to the use of *bn* "son," *bt* "daughter," *ntn* "give," as well as word-pairs similar to those of Hebrew and Ugaritic (Israel 1979: 150–2) and in general the formation of personal names, which is similar to that of Phoenician and Hebrew (Jackson 1983b; O'Connor 1987; Sivan 1982: 221). The affinity of Ammonite with Phoenician was probably fostered by trade connections.

However, scholars have also documented indications of contact with other languages including Aramaic, Arabian, and Assyrian. For the most part, these are contained within the onomasticon (Jackson 1983b; O'Connor 1987). An admixture of Aramaic features or "Aramaisms" occur in the use of *br*, "son" on the Amman Statue Inscription (*CAI*, no. 43:4), and on a seal that reads: *lzkʾ br mlkmʿz*, "(Belonging) to Zakaʾ son of Milkomʿuz" (*CAI*, no.136). Likewise, the use of the root *ʿbd* "to do, work" that appears in the noun *mʿbd*, "produce" in the Tell Siran Bottle Inscription also suggests Aramaic influence (*CAI*, no. 78:1; Yun 2005: 763). It is also possible that an Aramaic feature is visible in the preservation of the long form of the prefixed verbal conjugation in the Amman Citadel Inscription (Yun 2005: 752). If this is the case, it occurs in the earliest extant inscription and so may not hold true for later inscriptions. The existence of such finds warns against rigid classification of the written dialect represented in Ammonite inscriptions. It is probably best to view the written dialect preserved in these inscription, as well as the other Transjordanian dialects, as coming from the Canaanite family but existing on a spectrum that features non-Canaanite influences and local idiosyncrasies (Parker 2002: 47).

3.1.10 Script

There are two major positions on the identification of the script used in Ammon during the Iron Age. On the one hand, Naveh (1970: 280; 1971: 28; 1987: 107–10; 1994) has argued that the script found on Ammonite inscriptions is Aramaic from beginning to end. He acknowledges that there are some idiosyncrasies in the way the Ammonite scribes write the script (Naveh 1987: 110), but maintains that it was always Aramaic script.

The other view, developed by Cross (1969b, 1973b, 1975, 1976, 1986, 2003b, 2003d, 2003a), and Herr (1978: 55–7; 1980: 21–6; 1998: 63), holds that the script used in Ammon was a "national" Ammonite script that branched off of its parent Aramaic script sometime in the middle of the eighth century BCE. In the seventh and sixth centuries, it developed independently and more slowly than the Aramaic script. Near the end of the sixth century, the Ammonite script began to show Aramaic influence again under the Persian Empire. By the end of the sixth century, Ammon, like Moab, Edom, and Judah, used the Aramaic chancellery script of the Persian Empire.

These two perspectives introduce some chronological problems to the discussion. First, Cross argues that the Deir ʿAlla Plaster Text (hereafter DAPT) is the first exemplar of Ammonite script and should be dated to ca. 700 BCE based on the divergences he sees in the script from the Aramaic series (Cross 2003d: 101; 2003a: 70). Cross is able to account for the "archaisms" in the DAPT by positing a break with the standard Aramaic series that continued to develop more rapidly (Cross 2003a: 101). On the other hand, Naveh sees the DAPT as part of the Aramaic series, in which case the "archaisms" are not really archaisms, but part of an earlier form of Aramaic (Naveh 1987: 107–10). For Naveh then, the DAPT should be dated to the middle of the eighth century or earlier (Naveh 1987: 109) and is not Ammonite.[110]

The Tell Siran Bottle Inscription (*CAI*, no. 78) poses another potential problem. Cross has dated the Tell Siran Bottle Inscription to ca. 600 BCE based on paleography (Cross 2003d: 101). With this in mind, Cross originally reconstructed a series of

[110] Though the archaeological context has been clarified since the initial discovery, the analysis of the material culture is not refined enough to specify more closely than between the ninth and eighth centuries (Ibrahim and Kooij 1991). Ibrahim and van der Kooij do note that there is no evidence for Assyrian contact at Deir ʿAlla; however, it is not possible to know what kind of time lag may have existed between Tiglath-pileser III's subjugation of the region and the material appearance of Assyrian presence (Ibrahim and Kooij 1991: 27).

Ammonite kings that included three Amminadabs (Cross 2003d: 102), in large measure because the period of time seemed too long between the Amminadabs mentioned on the Tall Siran Bottle and the mention of an Amminadab in Assurbanipal's annals from 667 BCE (NAT, no. 5). On the other hand, since Naveh argues that the script used in Ammon was always Aramaic, he allows for the Tall Siran Bottle Inscription to be earlier, and hence the first Amminadab mentioned should be thought of as the one from whom Assurbanipal received tribute (Naveh 1987: 110–11).[111]

As the first example shows, the disagreement over the dating of the DAPT could have broader implications such as whether the Ammonites in some way controlled the Deir ʿAlla region or otherwise influenced it. However, this is one of the more dramatic effects of the disagreement. As the second example shows, the disagreement can alter views on the dating of an individual text, but does not shift our understanding of the Ammonites significantly. Such problems with dates are commonly the case with the inscriptions discussed here, and simply mean that one has to work with a broader range of dates than one might like.

To some extent, these two views diverge based on the use of apparently different definitions of the term "national script." Cross and Herr do not explicitly define what they mean by national script, but if one were to surmise from their works, the term refers to the specific characteristics resulting from the development of a script by a particular political entity. Naveh defines it as follows: "The term national script can be applied to those scribal traditions which developed independently without any significant foreign influence" (Naveh 1987: 109). It is not entirely clear what he means

[111] As it is, it appears that Cross modified his view about the number of Amminadabs without altering his view about the date of the Tall Siran Bottle. It appears that he simply lengthened the amount of time allowed for each reign (Cross 2003a: 76 n. 42).

by “foreign influence” because he does not elaborate on it, but one may guess that he is speaking of the development of scripts in politically independent areas; even he thinks that the Hebrew script developed from the Phoenician script (Naveh 1987: 65–6).

If this reconstruction of these scholars’ views is correct,[112] the one critical point is whether the Ammonites (who borrowed the Aramaic script), or the Moabites and Edomites (who putatively borrowed the Hebrew script) effected a development of the script significant enough to warrant speaking of separate scripts. Put another way, should one speak of Ammonite script or simply Aramaic script written in Ammonite style or with Ammonite idiosyncrasies? Since a clear and widely accepted definition of the term national script has not yet been forthcoming, the classificatory problem is presently insoluble.

Despite the classificatory problem, the similarity of the script of epigraphs attributed to the Ammonites with that of the Aramaic script suggests some further points of interest. First, as G. van der Kooij has argued, there is a technological reason for the similarity of the Ammonite script, the DAPT, and Aramaic, namely a large angle between the line of writing and the width of the pen-brush (Kooij 1987: 107–13; 1991: 253–4). This angle is shared by Aramaic-like scripts over against Phoenician, Hebrew, Moabite, and Edomite, all of which have much smaller angles (Kooij 1991: 253). The recognition of a shared technology is important because technologies are human inventions and are transmitted through social mechanisms. According to van der Kooij, the script adopted in Ammon is the result of cultural relations with areas to the north where Aramaic script was used (Kooij 1991: 254).

[112] It must be acknowledged again that neither side of the argument spends significant time defining or defending their understand of the term “national script” in any significant way, so this is my own reading between the lines.

The present author would go further to suggest that the transmission of the Aramaic script to Ammon was probably mediated through political relations between Ammon and Damascus. The logic behind this is twofold. First, the earliest inscription plausibly attributed to the Ammonites is the Amman Citadel Inscription, which was written in the second half of the ninth century or beginning of the eighth in Aramaic script (§ 3.4.1.1). The appearance of this inscription coincides roughly with a period of Damascene political power that began with the ambitious Hazael of Aram-Damascus (on which see Dion 1997: 191–204; Pitard 1987: 145–52).[113]

Second, recent studies suggest that the initial source for standardized styles of writing in the Iron Age II Levant should be sought in the efforts of (emerging) polities to harness writing for their own administrative and ideological purposes (Rollston 2006: 68; Sanders 2004; cf. Carr 2008).[114] Such efforts imply a scribal curriculum that accounts for the consistencies in morphology, orthography, spatial relationships, and other writing conventions (Rollston 2006; Sanders 2009: 126–30). If the standardization visible in writing is attributable to the development of curricula under the aegis of different political centers, it seems likely that the adoption of the Aramaic script in Ammon is related to exchange facilitated by political relations between Ammon and Aram-Damascus.[115]

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[113] For an examination of the sources for the history of Aram-Damascus with very limited conclusions see Hafþórsson 2006. In two articles Naʾaman argues that by the time Tiglath-pileser III destroyed and provincialized Damascus in 732 BCE, Damascus had control of the area from Damascus south to the east side of the Jordan river north of the Dead Sea and east to the border of Ammon (Naʾaman 1995a: 104–5; Naʾaman 1995b).

[114] In his book, Sanders develops a paradigm slightly different from his earlier article. He argues that the development of a well defined system of Hebrew writing was the result of "craft scribalism," that is, a sort of guild structure that was at least semi-independent of the political powers (Sanders 2009: 130–6).

[115] The mixture of Aramaic linguistic features in the Ammonite language (§ 3.4.5) and the evidence for Aramean artistic influence noted in Chapter 2, reinforce the impression of a

The apparent use of the Hebrew script in the ninth century Mesha Stele or Moabite Stone (Naveh 1987: 65–6; Sass 2005: 87–8) suggests a similar transmission of scribal curriculum connected to Israelite dominance over Moab.[116] In this case, there is evidence of formal political relations because the Mesha Stele celebrates King Mesha's successful rebellion against Israel, who had subjugated Moab in the previous generation (cf. 2 Kgs 3). It therefore seems likely that the scribal curriculum adopted in Moab, which was the less socially and politically developed entity, was a result of the political relations with the more developed Israel (Carr 2008: 121–2).

Based on these two main lines of evidence, the adoption of the Aramaic script among the Ammonites was most likely predicated on political relations with Aram-Damascus, though cultural relations beyond politics may also have played a role. After the liquidation of Damascus in the late eighth century at the hands of Tiglath-pileser III, the Ammonites continued to use and develop the script and scribal curriculum received from Aram-Damascus. If the process of local use and development from the late eighth through sixth centuries is in view, labeling it a national script seems appropriate. However, this writer prefers the term "regional script" because it is not laden with the baggage of the word "national," which may conjure up the modern nation-state. Moreover, it can encompass the use of the script for various non-political purposes such as personal seals, dedicatory inscriptions (though these may be used in the political and

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cultural connection between the Ammonites and the Arameans. However, most of this evidence comes from later than the ninth century.

[116] It must be admitted, however, that the Mesha Stele is the earliest exemplar of Hebrew script and so the assumption that the scribal curriculum came from Israel is based on the recognition of more complex social and political development in Israel at this time than is otherwise evidenced in Moab. Sass states that Moab got both the concept of monumentality and the script from Israel (Sass 2005: 88).

private sphere), and in various crafts (e.g., the letters on the eye inlays of the female double-faced heads; *CAI*, no. 73).

3.1.11 Onomastics

Though relatively limited, the Ammonite onomasticon shows a full range of name types and elements. As with the analysis of the Ammonite language, Ammonite names are broadly similar to those of the other Northwest Semitic languages (Jackson 1983b: 508; cf. O'Connor 1987). A few foreign names appear (e.g., *psmy*, *CAI*, 65 no. 4:2; *mngʾnrt*, *CAI*, no. 55) as well as theophoric endings that refer to deities typically thought of as foreign, such as Bes, Nanay, Inurta, Qos, Yahweh (Aufrecht 1999b: 156–7). Simply put, these names provide one more bit of evidence of external contact.

In addition to giving a sense of external contact, the onomasticon is helpful in understanding Ammonite religion. Attested theophoric elements are Adon, ʿAddin, ʿAli, ʿAnat, Ašima, ʿAštart,[117] Baal, Bes, Dagon, Gad, Adad, Inurta, El, Milkom, Mot, Nanay, Ner, Qos, Rimmon, Šamaš, Ṣid, Yahweh, Yam, Yeraḥ (Aufrecht 1999b: 156–7).[118] As often noted, El names predominate in the Ammonite onomasticon. Statistically speaking, of the 279 personal names extant from Ammonite texts,[119] 186 are El names, 38 are hypocoristic, and 55 occurrences account for the other deities mentioned. Of the non-El names, six use Milkom as the theophoric element (*CAI*, nos. 1b, 55, 129, 127, 136, 147:1:1).[120] Regarding the 38 hypocoristic names, one could argue that these too

[117] Reconstructed from *ʿš*[xx]*t* (*CAI,* no. 56:4)

[118] Some may be epithets such as Adon or Rimmon, while others such as Gad (*mlkmgd*, "Milkom is good fortune"; *CAI*, no. 127) may be common nouns.

[119] Using Aufrecht's collection of these names as a guide (Aufrecht 1999b: 156–7).

[120] In another three cases, Milkom appears on seals as one blessing the seal owner. Thus, *CAI*, no. 55, "Seal of Mannu-kī-Inurta, blessed of Milkom"; *CAI*, no. 57, "Seal of *ngʾdt*, blessed of Milkom; *CAI*, no. 61, "Seal of *ngʾnrt*, blessed of Milkom." All of these may have belonged to the same person (note the foreign name), but the authenticity of the latter two has been called into question (*CAI*, no. 159, 167).

should be El names since most of them have corresponding El names in the corpus. For example, the name *tmkʾ* occurs once (*CAI*, no. 85), and the name *tmkʾl* occurs eleven times (*CAI*, nos.1b, 3, 14, 26, 76:3:1, 84, 86, 113, 132, 149, 165). However, even if the hypocoristic names refer to another deity, El names account for two-thirds of all Ammonite names. Though opinions vary as to the meaning of the number of El names (Daviau and Dion 1994; Lemaire 1994a: 143; Tigay 1987: 171, 187 n. 66), the most likely option in this author's opinion is that El worship continued unabated in Iron II northern Transjordan (i.e., Ammon and at Deir ʿAlla).

3.1.12 Summary and Conclusion

As a corpus, Ammonite inscriptions demonstrate the linguistic, religious, iconographic, and technological affinity of the Ammonites with the rest of the West Semitic sphere. Script, iconography, and a few linguistic elements point to ongoing contact with their Aramean neighbors. The Ammonite inscriptions also provide us with a number of synchronisms between Ammonite history, the Neo-Assyrian Empire, and the Bible. While there are still many holes in the record, these synchronisms provide some chronological pegs for Ammonite history.

The importance of the Ammonite inscriptions also goes beyond their details. As a corpus, this small but growing set of inscriptions shows that writing in Ammon paralleled the trend in textual production in much of the rest of the Iron Age II Levant. The trend begins in the late ninth and early eighth centuries with the appearance of monumental royal inscriptions on stone presumably intended for display. This includes the Tell Fahkariyeh statue, the Bar-Hadad inscription, the Zakkur inscription, the Kilamuwa inscription from Samʾal, the Tel Dan inscription, the Mesha Stele, and the Amman Citadel inscription among others. As Naʾaman has argued, the spate of local

monumental inscriptions at this time is conspicuous and should be seen as the adoption of the Neo-Assyrian penchant for setting up stelae to memorialize military victories and other achievements, only now with a distinctly local flavor (Naʾaman 2000b: 93–5; Sanders 2009: 120–2).

The exact reasons why the various groups of the Levant decided to adopt the practice of setting up monumental inscriptions at this time are not entirely clear. Nonetheless, these inscriptions appear at a time of growing social and political complexity wherein local power brokers had an interest in consolidating and extending their power, not least in the interest of repelling Assyrian incursions and occasional aggression by their neighbors. Thus, the local power brokers of the Levant enlisted writing and the Neo-Assyrian monumental form in a bid to consolidate and extend their power through a symbolic communicative act that both expressed and attempted to create reality (Routledge 2000; Sanders 2008: 107; 2009: 124; Whisenant 2008: 250). The appearance of these monumental inscriptions evinces efforts to create and consolidate new forms of power, power configured according to local logic but with imperial precedents.

As time progressed, writing for other purposes appeared, illustrating the extension of writing from overt displays of power to the prosaic affairs of administration (most of the ostraca), religious devotion (Tall Siran Bottle, perhaps some seals), ownership (Umm Udayna bowl, seals and bullae), displays of personal prestige (perhaps the Amman Statue Inscription, seals), letter writing (al-Mazar Ostracon III), and labeling (perhaps the iron Beqa weight if it is Ammonite; § 3.4.2.3). Although the number of inscriptions is still small, the breadth of genre and use indicates an expanded access to writing and the will to use it. In addition to the use of writing by the king and

his attendants, there was a cohort of wealthier individuals that had the means and the will to commission the production of seals and other items such as the Amman Statue and Umm Udayna bowl for their own ends. Of particular note is the trend in seal production that begins at the end of the eighth century BCE and continues into the sixth century. Contact with Mesopotamian artistic tradition that appears in the iconography of the Ammonite seals parallels other items showing Mesopotamian inspiration and emphasizes a readiness on the part of the local elite to adopt and adapt aspects of the international elite culture of their day.

Thus, when one takes the focus off the individual artifacts, one gets a glimpse of the social reality underlying them, namely an elite or wealthy sector of society with a newfound ability to consume and display items that bespeak their status and authority. When considered from this perspective, it is not surprising that this local expansion of writing occurred at the same time as other societal developments and incorporation in to an imperial world-system. The connection between these will be explored in chapter 7.[121]

[121] Jessica Whisenant provides a good survey of the uses of writing and the connection to social and political development in Israel, Judah, and the Transjordan (Whisenant 2008: 182–345).

CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL AND POSTBIBLICAL SOURCES FOR AMMONITE HISTORY

For the history of Ammon, the biblical texts are, at first blush, a promising source. Most prominently, the biblical texts contain accounts of battles between Ammon and Israel and Judah; but other bits of information on Ammonite religion and geographic boundaries also occur. This chapter assesses the biblical texts in order to determine what one can reasonably say from them about the history of the Ammonites. The approach in this task is twofold. First, an attempt is made to evaluate the date and purpose of the texts. Second, the study evaluates the historical value of the texts for the period represented in the text and, where possible, for time in which they were written. As a matter of method, the evaluation of the historical value of biblical texts depends significantly on the availability of independent witnesses that can confirm or disconfirm particular details or at least make particular details more or less probable.

4.1 Post-exilic Historiography

4.1.1 Chronicles

The issue of the authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, whether the same or separate authors wrote them, need not detain us here.[122] The ways in which the Ammonites appear in these works are different and hence analyzed separately. The difference in the way the Ammonites appear is based on differences in the story that the texts narrate. In Chronicles, the Ammonites appear almost completely in military

[122] For discussion see Blenkinsopp 1988; Japhet 1993; Klein 2006; Knoppers 2004; Min 2004; Williamson 1987.

accounts. On the other hand, the Ammonites appear in Ezra-Nehemiah in relation to the adversarial relationship between Nehemiah and Tobiah the Ammonite, as well as the problem of mixed marriages.

The date of composition of Chronicles is probably to be sought around the end of the fourth century BCE, based on the works it seems to know and those later works that allude to it, as well as a collection of other indicators including the lack of Hellenistic influence (Japhet 1993: 23–8; Klein 2006: 13–6; Knoppers 2004: 101–17). The long chronological separation of the Chronicler from the periods he purports to write about should insert a question mark into any assessment of Chronicles' historical value. The Chronicler probably did use sources other than the material we know from the Hebrew Bible (such as the Deuteronomistic History [hereafter DH]) and in some cases he indicates the name of the source (Japhet 1993: 18–23; Knoppers 2004: 118–28). However, as Japhet remarks, it is not really a debated question whether or not the Chronicler used extra-biblical sources, but rather "the nature, origin and reliability of these sources which remain problematic" (Japhet 1993: 19).

4.1.1.1 The Ammonites in Chronicles

In Chronicles, the first reference to an Ammonite is in the record of David's mighty men that mentions Zelek the Ammonite (1 Chr 11:39). In 1 Chr 18, David subdues all the nations in the region including the Ammonites, Moab, and Edom, and dedicates the gold, silver, and bronze that he had extracted from them to Yahweh (1 Chr 18:11). 1 Chr 19 contains the story of the Ammonite king, Hanun son of Nahash, who offended David by rejecting his condolences at the death of Hanun's father.[123] As in the 2 Sam 10 parallel, Hanun hires Arameans to fight David, but both the Arameans and

[123] This story parallels 2 Sam 10 closely.

Ammonites are defeated. 1 Chr 20:1–3 is a compressed parallel to 2 Sam 11–12, with the major difference that the Chronicler excises everything having to do with Bathsheba. The account also leaves out Joab's request for David to come and finish the siege of Rabbah (i.e., the main Ammonite town, probably the Amman Citadel) and David's response (2 Sam 12:27–29). Otherwise, the account is essentially the same. David defeats Rabbah, takes the crown of the Ammonite king (or the deity Milkom), uses the people for forced labor, and takes the rest of the Ammonite cities. The Chronicler does not mention Solomon's foreign wives, who included Ammonite women (cf. 1 Kgs 11:1–8); however, he does mention Rehoboam's Ammonite mother Naamah (2 Chr 12:13||1 Kgs 14:21, 31).

The next reference to the Ammonites comes in 2 Chr 20:1–30 during the reign of the Judean king Jehoshaphat (874–850 BCE). Here, the Ammonites, Moabites, and apparently Edomites ('Seir' in vv. 10, 22) turn out to fight Jehoshaphat. However, after an appeal to God for help, the spirit of Yahweh came upon a certain Jahaziel, who assures Jehoshaphat that God will fight for the Judeans. The next day, God caused the Ammonites, Moabites and the people of Mt. Seir to fight against each other (vv. 22–23), and all Judah had to do was pick up the spoils (vv. 24–25). During the reign of the Judean king Joash (837–800 BCE), who eventually became a "bad" king, Aram came to destroy Judah and in the process wounded Joash (2 Chr 24:23–25). Then, two servants of foreign origin, an Ammonite and a Moabite, killed him in a conspiracy.[124] Next, one reads of the Judean king Uzziah (783–742 BCE), who was successful in war and to

[124] 2 Chr 24:26 uses the feminine form of the gentilic, apparently indicating the mothers of the two conspirators. This may be related to the *āt* ending on Shimeath in 2 Kgs 12:21, which can be taken as a feminine ending. However, as Japhet (Japhet 1993: 853) notes, this ending does occur in the names of males as well. The parallel in 2 Kgs 12:22 does not include the ethnic designations.

whom the Ammonites paid tribute (2 Chr 26:8). The next Judean king Jotham (751–736 BCE) defeated the king of the Ammonites, who subsequently paid Jotham one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand cors of wheat, and ten thousand (probably cors) of barley as tribute for three years (2 Chr 27:5).

The references to the Ammonites in Chronicles, after the accounts of David and Rehoboam, have no parallels in Kings.[125] Chronicles indicates the same patterns of interaction for the United Monarchy as does the DH. During the so-called Divided Monarchy, the Ammonites appear as an independent polity during the reigns of the Judean kings Jehoshaphat and Joash, rather than a vassal or subject kingdom as was the case in the stories about the United Monarchy. During the reigns of the Judean kings Uzziah and Jotham (conventionally dated to the eighth century), Judah conquers and makes the Ammonites her vassal intermittently.

4.1.1.2 Historical Value of the Chronicler's Portrayal of the Ammonites

The Chronicler's depiction of interaction between the Ammonites and the United Monarchy clearly follows the DH, and those texts are discussed below. On the other hand, since the Chronicler's material about the Ammonites in the ninth and eighth centuries has no parallel in the DH, one needs to consider their historical value. It is clear that one of the Chronicler's methods of presenting the past is to portray a rather strict correlation between good deeds and reward/blessing, and between bad deeds and punishment (Japhet 1993: 44–5; 2000: 164). This tendency might explain the appearance of the Ammonites in accounts portraying events of the ninth and eighth

[125] The possible exception being the parallel between 2 Chr 24:26 and 2 Kgs 12:22. At least in terms of the extant textual evidence, there is nothing to suggest that 2 Kgs 12:22 ever included the ethnic designation of Joash's servants. This may be a case where the Chronicler's pattern of having bad kings being harassed by foreigners, has prompted him to insert an ethnic designation to fulfill that pattern.

centuries inasmuch as the Ammonites appear in the story to highlight the blessing of this or that Judean king in the defeat of his enemies.

In the case of Jehoshaphat's (874–850 BCE) battle against Moab and the Ammonites (2 Chr 20:1–30), one is faced with an episode that is completely absent in 2 Kings. The question then is why would the Chronicler include a battle that was not otherwise necessary for explaining the good and bad things that Jehoshaphat is said to have done in 2 Kings? This absence, along with a generally high-level of "geographic logic" (Japhet 1993: 783), may point to a source behind this story made up of short reports upon which the Chronicler built a larger edifice (Japhet 1993: 782–4). If in fact there is an event that underlies this particular account, there are only a few details of itinerary and combatants. Much of the rest of the narrative is dialogue of one sort or another, or indications of acts of piety. The war could possibly be associated with the rebellion of Mesha of Moab, which is recorded in 2 Kgs 3 following the death of Ahab (Japhet 1993: 786). Second Chronicles does not explicitly mention Mesha's rebellion, perhaps because Mesha's rebellion focused primarily on Israel, not Judah (2 Kgs 3:5; Mesha Stele, lines 5–7). Nonetheless, 2 Kgs 3:7–12 says that Jehoshaphat went with Joram. Moreover, a number of elements—the attack from the south (2 Kgs 3:8; 2 Chr 20:2), the involvement of the Edomites (2 Kgs 3:9; 2 Chr 20:22–3), the prophetic prediction of success (2 Kgs 3:15–19; 2 Chr 20:15–17), and the miraculous resolution the following day (2 Kgs 3:20–25; 2 Chr 20:20–23)—suggest that the Chronicler reworked the material from 2 Kgs 3 into an account about Moab and the Ammonites. If this is correct, the case for seeing 2 Chr 20 as a reworking of Mesha's rebellion against Joram is strengthened. The general background of this account (i.e., a Moabite-Israelite conflict) makes the basic outline of the hostility possible in and of itself, but whether

Ammon was also involved as 2 Chr 20 asserts is less certain, especially since the earlier account in 2 Kgs 3 does not include Ammon.

The assassination of Joash (837–800 BCE) in 2 Chr 24:23–27 and the larger account in which it is set are clearly related to the account in 2 Kgs 12:17–21, but have been significantly reworked. In relation to the assassination, two changes are significant. First, 2 Chr 24:25 provides a reason for the assassination where none exists in 2 Kgs 12. The reason given is that Joash was involved with the murder of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest (2 Chr 24:25). This reasoning is most likely provided by the Chronicler as a way of punishing Joash in a fitting way for the murder of Zechariah (Japhet 1993: 854). Second, the Chronicler has identified the ethnic origin of the conspirators, a point 2 Kgs 12 leaves silent. The precise reason for indicating the ethnic origin of the conspirators is not clear. Japhet thinks this may stem from the Chronicler's use of his sources (Japhet 1993: 854). However, one also wonders whether these ethnic designations were invented to highlight Yahweh's use of foreigners to punish his people. Nonetheless, the text provides no indication that this assassination was anything other than internal Judean politics. That is, there is nothing to suggest that the Ammonites were in anyway involved. Whatever the case, it is a reasonable possibility that there were foreigners in Joash's court. If in fact this was the case, it indicates some exchange between these two southern Levantine polities in the late eighth century BCE.

The military exploits of Uzziah (783–742 BCE) recorded in 2 Chr 26:6–15 have no parallel in the short account of Uzziah/Azariah in 2 Kgs 15:1–7. What one can notice about this expansion of material is that it uses typical Chronistic language and provides the reward necessary for Uzziah's faithfulness in the first part of his reign (Japhet 1993: 876–7). Likewise, the Chronicler provides Uzziah's leprosy mentioned in 2 Kgs 15:5,

with a story explaining it as a punishment for cultic impropriety (2 Chr 26:16–21). The theologically driven nature of this material should be cause for serious questioning of its historical value. The present author is inclined to see the reference to the Ammonites as a creation of the Chronicler to aid in portraying the first part of Uzziah's reign as a success because of his faithfulness to Yahweh. Beyond this, one should also note that the geographic focus found in 2 Chr 26:7 (west and south) coupled with the LXX reading of v. 8 as referring to the Μιναῖοι (Heb. *hammĕʿûnîm*) as in v. 7, suggest that the inclusion of the Ammonites in this passage may be a scribal error.[126] In either case, there is little to recommend this passage as containing historically reliable information about tribute paid to Uzziah by the Ammonites.

In many ways, the presentation of Jotham (751–736 BCE) in 2 Chr 27 follows 2 Kgs 15:32–38, with the main exceptions that the Chronicler omits the note about Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Aram coming against Judah (2 Kgs 15:37), and adds material about Jotham's building and wars (2 Chr 27:3b–6). One can account for the excision of the note about Pekah and Rezin by appealing to the idea that nothing in Jotham's reign called for such a "punishment." The reason for the addition of the material in vv. 3b–6 may also be found in the Chronicler's historiographic method. In this case, Jotham, who is given a relatively positive evaluation in 2 Chr 27:2, needs a reward for his good deeds. As for the note in v. 5, that Jotham conquered the Ammonites and extracted tribute from them for three years, the details are mundane; the passage does not appeal to direct divine intervention. In this regard, the scenario has a "realistic" feel that leads Japhet to accept the basic historicity of the account (Japhet 1993: 892). Nevertheless,

[126] In the Hebrew, the closeness of *hāʿammônîm*, "the Ammonites" to *hammĕʿûnîm*, "The Meunites" is clear. Especially in an unpointed text, the difference is simply the metathesis of two letters.

one may seriously question the historicity of the account based on the geopolitics of the day. Israel and Aram were the power players in the region until Tiglath-pileser III dispatched them in 732 BCE. Thus, one may question whether a king of Judah would have had the ability to gain control over the Ammonites. Overall, though the subjugation of the Ammonites to Judah during this period is not entirely impossible, it seems unlikely. On the other hand, if the Chronicler has retained a genuine piece of historical data, it preserves a fleeting glimpse of local geopolitics just before Neo-Assyrian domination of the region.

In summary, the Chronicler's references to the Ammonites provide a minimal amount of historically relevant information. The most promising piece of information comes from the account of Jehoshaphat, which places him squarely in the middle of Mesha's pursuit of independence. In this account, the Ammonites' alliance with Moab has a certain logic to it because it would be in the Ammonite interest to be free of Cisjordanian power. Second in potential importance is the account of Jotham's subjugation of the Ammonites in the second half of the eighth century. Though as this writer noted, there are real reasons for doubting the historical value of this account, it may point to a local tradition of suzerain-vassal relationships that reproduces on a smaller scale the types of relationships that were commonplace throughout the broader international scene and that the accounts of David and Solomon portrayed earlier.

4.1.2 Ezra-Nehemiah

The events described in Ezra-Nehemiah cover a period of some 150 years (ca. 539–beginning of the fourth century BCE) and the final edition was probably written sometime in the fourth century (Grabbe 2004: 72). The composite nature of the text,

the nature of the sources, and the chronological problems inherent in such a compilation have been discussed much and need not detain this discussion.[127]

4.1.2.1 The Ammonites in Ezra-Nehemiah

After having returned to Jerusalem, the leaders of the community of returned deportees (*haggôlâ*) came to Ezra and reported that the people, the priests, and Levites had intermarried with the *ʿammê hâʾărāṣôt* "peoples of the land" (Ezra 9:1–2). Among these were the Ammonites.[128] This problem was resolved by an investigation to see who had married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:7–44), and then by sending these women and their children away (Ezra 10:3, 44 [following the LXX]). The next one reads of the Ammonites is in Neh 2:10, where one is introduced to Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite (*hāʿebed hāʿammōnî*) and Sanballat the Horonite,[129] who are not pleased that Nehemiah has come to the area to help the returnees in Jerusalem. Throughout the rest of the book of Nehemiah, Tobiah and Sanballat, along with other groups, oppose the building of the walls of Jerusalem and accuse Nehemiah of planning a revolt (Neh 2:19;

[127] On these matters see Blenkinsopp 1988: 41–53; Grabbe 2004: 72–85; Grabbe 1998; Williamson 1987: 37–47.

[128] The list of peoples here goes as follows: The Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites. This list is interesting because it basically follows the lists of these peoples found elsewhere (e.g., Exod 3:8; Deut 7:1; etc.) with the exception of the Girgashites and Hivites. However, the present list includes the Ammonites, Moabites, and Egyptians, who are not elsewhere attested in such lists. The only list that comes close is that of the foreign women that Solomon married, which includes: Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites (1 Kgs 11:1). Does this represent a change in outlook about the Ammonites and Moab?

[129] Tobiah's name is Yahwistic, but this does not mean he is Judean or Israelite. The grammar of the phrase "Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite" indicates that he is not "the Ammonite servant," but that he is Ammonite in some sense (ethnic or political). *hāʿebed* appears to be a title, perhaps referring to his status as a provincial governor. Sanballat is apparently the governor of Samaria that one hears of in the Elephantine papyri. It is possible that both of these people were of Israelite of Judean origin or thought of themselves in that way. At least this would fit well with Neh 2:20, which claims that they have no share in Jerusalem. Ezra 2:59–63 (paralleled by Neh 7:61–65) indicates that a number of people returned from Babylon but were not able to prove their Israelite heritage. Among these are descendants of Tobiah. Whether this is the same Tobiah or not is not clear.

6:6–7). From the presentation of events in Nehemiah, it appears that Tobiah and Sanballat had some influence in Jerusalem. In Neh 6:10–13, Nehemiah discovers that Sanballat and Tobiah hired Shemaiah, son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel[130] to prophesy in order to intimidate Nehemiah. Later, after the walls of Jerusalem were dedicated (Neh 12:27–47), one reads that the "scroll of Moses" was read aloud and they came across the passage from Deut 23:3–6. This passage prohibits an Ammonite or Moabite from entering the assembly of God because they did not meet the Israelites with food or water in their journey from Egypt and because they hired Balaam against Israel (Neh 13:1–2). Immediately following this one reads that Eliashib the priest had prepared a room for Tobiah in the Temple while Nehemiah was back in Mesopotamia (Neh 13:4–7). Nehemiah, in accordance with Deut 23:3–6, then cleanses the room of Tobiah's furniture (Neh 13:8–9). Finally, in Neh 13:23–29, the issue of intermarriage is raised again when Nehemiah sees mixed marriages between Jews and Ashdodites, Ammonites, and Moabites (Neh 13:23). Here, Nehemiah alludes to the prohibition against mixed marriages from Deut 7:3–5 and cites the example of Solomon, who was led astray by foreign women (Neh 13:25–26). Furthermore, Nehemiah chases away the grandson of Eliashib the high priest because he had become the son-in-law of Sanballat (Neh 13:28). Apparently, even if Sanballat was from Samaria, marriage to his children was still considered out of the question.

4.1.2.2 The Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah for the History of the Ammonites

The main question of relevance to the Ammonites in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah is who was "Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite"? Of secondary concern is what Ezra-Nehemiah might have to say about the relationship between the Judeans and the

[130] Cf. Ezra 2:60 (parallel in Neh 7:62).

Ammonites in the Persian period. Concerning the main question, one needs to consider the portrayal of Tobiah. In looking at this question, one is confronted with several textual Tobiahs, and it is not entirely clear if they are the same person or are separate individuals.

The name "Tobiah" appears in a number of places in the narrative of Nehemiah. One first encounters him as *ṭôbîyâ hāʿebed hāʿammōnî* "Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite" in Neh 2:10. There he appears alongside Sanballat the Horonite; both of them appear disturbed by Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem "to seek the good of the sons of Israel." The same Tobiah is found alongside Sanballat and Geshem the Arab as one of Nehemiah's adversaries in rebuilding Jerusalem (Neh 2:19; 3:35 [ET 4:3]; 4:1 [ET 4:7]; 6:1, 12, 14).[131] The name Tobiah also occurs in Neh 6:17, 19; 13:4, 5, 7, 8. In these verses, Tobiah's name is not qualified by "the Ammonite" or "the servant, the Ammonite." Furthermore, he is represented as having significant connections with the *ḥōrê yĕhûdâ* "the nobles of Judah," who had ongoing correspondence with him. The text does not specify where he was located, but only that letters were sent back and forth. The text says that many in Judah were under some kind of oath to him (Neh 6:18). Though the precise content of this oath is not revealed, some kind of patron-client relationship may be possible (Edelman 2006b: 578). This oath is grounded on family relationships created by marriage. His father-in-law may have been a chief priest (Neh 12:3), and his son's father-in-law appears to have been in another priestly line (Neh 3:30; 12:16). Later in Neh 13, one reads of Eliashib the priest who gave Tobiah a room

[131] He is designated differently in these verses. In 2:10, 19 he is called "Tobiah the Ammonite, the servant." In Neh 3:35 [ET 4:3] he is called "Tobiah the Ammonite." In Neh 4:1 [ET 4:7]; 6:1, 12, 14 he is called simply Tobiah. In all these cases he is either with Sanballat or Sanballat and Geshem. In Neh 4:1 [ET 4:7] Tobiah is mentioned alongside Sanballat, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites.

in the temple courts (Neh 13:4–7) and how Nehemiah emptied the room and purified it (13:8–9). In addition, one also reads of the descendants of Tobiah who were not able to prove their descent from "Israel" (Neh 7:61–62//Ezra 2:59–60), and of a Tobiah who, along with two others, gave gold and silver to make a crown for Joshua son of Jehozadak (Zech 6:10–14).

The question then is whether all of these references point to one person or whether there were multiple Tobiahs. Edelman has recently reviewed the biblical texts and the relevant historical background and argues that the Tobiah represented in Neh 6:17, 19; 13:4, 5, 7, 8 was a wealthy member of the *gôlâ* community that had returned to Jerusalem. Because of his wealth, many people looked to him for assistance (Edelman 2006b: 577–82). Edelman argues that the other texts that portray Tobiah as one of Nehemiah's adversaries along with Sanballat and Geshem were actually later additions to the text by someone wanting to critique the third century BCE Tobiah who gave his name to the powerful Tobiad family residing in the Transjordan.[132] The scribe, finding a Tobiah in the text, added him in as part of the opposition to Nehemiah (Edelman 2006b: 583). The designation "Ammonite" is reasonable because he lived in that general region in the Transjordan (Edelman 2006b: 582). This technique of critique by cipher is similar to the way in which the book of Daniel critiques Antiochus IV Epiphanes under the guise of Nebuchadnezzar (Edelman 2006b: 583). Moreover, it is possible, argues Edelman, that the later scribe intended to create a "trio of bad-guy characters" similar to Solomon's adversaries Hadad, Rezon, and Jeroboam (1 Kgs 11; Edelman 2006b).

[132] This Tobiah appears in the Zenon papyri, which indicate that he was a military commander under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BCE) stationed in the citadel of Ammon (Edelman 2006b: 574). It is this third century Tobiah to whom the estate at ʿIraq al-Amir probably belonged (Edelman 2006b: 575–6).

Overall, Edelman's argument is well made and quite plausible. However, the references to Tobiah in Neh 6:17–19 indicate that: 1) he was at odds with Nehemiah ("Tobiah sent letters [to Jerusalem] to intimidate me" v. 19); and 2) he did not normally reside in Jerusalem (hence the need to send letters). The point is that this Tobiah, who seems to have been a wealthy returnee, seems to be opposed to Nehemiah's work just as is "Tobiah the Ammonite" and so this makes one wonder whether in fact they were not the same person. If not, then on the literary level at least, there are two Tobiahs, both of whom resided outside of Jerusalem and were opposed to Nehemiah.

Extra-biblical evidence sheds only indirect light on the matter. One does hear of Sanballat and his sons Delaiah and Shelemiah from Elephantine papyrus 30 (Cowley 1923: 108–119) dated to 407 BCE. There, Sanballat bears the title *pḥt šmryn*, "governor of Samaria." In Nehemiah, Sanballat is called the *haḥōrōnî,* "the Horonite," perhaps designating his association/origin in Ephraimite Beth-Horon.[133] Whatever the case, the book of Nehemiah does not apply the title *peḥâ* to Sanballat. There is no conclusive evidence for a Geshem as a governor of Arabia in the fifth century (Edelman 2006b: 572–4). Likewise for Tobiah, there are no instances of his name in extra-biblical texts indicating his existence in the fifth century (Edelman 2006b: 574). Based on the silence of the extra-biblical material, it is correct to say that at present there is no evidence to corroborate the existence of a fifth century "Tobiah the Ammonite."

The *ʿmn*, "Ammon" stamped jar handles found at Tall al-ʿUmayri discussed in Chapter 3 add to the relevant data, suggesting that Ammon was a Persian province. Herr, followed by Lipschits, has argued that these represent the same basic class of seal

[133] This could also be a gentilic refering to the Hauron in north Transjordan.

as the *yh(w)d* seals found in the region of Jerusalem and should be seen as having the same administrative function (Herr 1992; 1999: 233–4; Lipschits 2004: 40–1). Though not completely certain, it is likely that such a conclusion is in fact correct (see cautiously Grabbe 2004: 164). This is an important piece of the puzzle because one can plausibly infer the existence of some type of administrative capacity at this time in the Amman Plateau.

Returning for a moment to Sanballat, the book of Nehemiah calls him "Sanballat the Horonite" and in other places simply "Sanballat," whereas the letter from Elephantine includes his title *pḥt šmryn*, "governor of Samaria." It is possible that the book of Nehemiah intentionally downplays the actual authority of Sanballat in order to bolster the authority of Nehemiah. If this is the case, it is also possible that the author applied the same strategy to Tobiah and Geshem the Arab. The result on the literary level is that Nehemiah is opposed by foreigners more so than by Persian-appointed governors from the surrounding regions. For Sanballat and Tobiah, the addition of the gentilic "Horonite" and "Ammonite,"[134] whether really indicating ethnic origin or not, has become a way to make them the "Other," who have no authority in Jerusalem. If this is the case, then one can admit that it is possible that Tobiah was some sort of official whose home base was the region of Ammon (whether or not he was descended from people living in that area).

The above discussion illustrates the problems inherent in determining the scenario that best explains the biblical text and the extra-biblical data. Edelman's conclusions hinge on the silence of the extra-biblical data concerning a Tobiah in the

[134] The precise meaning of the designation of Tobiah as "the servant" is not clear. Was it a governmental title? Was it meant to denigrate him? As Edelman notes, the term has a broad range of meaning (Edelman 2005: 34), which are difficult to sort out with so little known about him.

fifth century and on a literary technique known from other texts. The possibility that is proposed here tentatively accepts the existence of "Tobiah the Ammonite" on analogy with the way "Sanballat the Horonite" is portrayed. In addition, there are still more proposals.[135] The problems with understanding this relatively minor character are considerable on both the literary and historical levels and this extends especially to the designation "the Ammonite." He may have been a Judean labeled as "Ammonite" to disenfranchise him, he may have been a Judean who had some administrative capacity in the Transjordan, he may have been a Judean with an Ammonite parent, or he may have been a governor of the province of Ammon. Whatever the case may be, none of the possibilities are more compelling than the others. In the end, any reconstruction of who Tobiah the Ammonite may have been faces significant problems because of the lack of data. Moreover, even if one accepts one scenario as the most plausible, the present state of the evidence provides very little evidence that alters our present state of knowledge of the Amman Plateau.

Finally, does Ezra-Nehemiah tell us anything significant about the relations between the Persian provinces of Yehud and Ammon? On this matter, there is actually little to be said. Clearly, the issue of intermarriage with foreigners, including Ammonites, is one of the central concerns of the book. One may infer from this that there was some level of intermarriage during the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods. However, this is not especially surprising and does not give us a great amount of data to work with. In fact, it is possible that Nehemiah exaggerates the assertion of intermarriage in keeping with the strong push for the construction of a "pure" (*gôlâ*-based) Israel based solely on genealogy. How well this represents reality on the ground

[135] For these, consult the discussion and bibliography in Edelman 2005; Edelman 2006b.

is difficult to say. What one can say is that from the perspective of the author of Ezra-Nehemiah (regardless of when he wrote), the Ammonites and other foreigners posed a threat to his (and perhaps his community's) ability to be "Israel." Unfortunately, this tells us more about Yehud and its intellectual climate than it does about the Ammonites.

4.2 Exilic and Post-exilic Prophetic Writings

4.2.1 Amos

Scholarship on Amos has generally accepted at face value the superscription in Amos 1:1, which indicates that an eighth century BCE shepherd from Tekoa is the author of the book by his name (Barton 1980; Paul 1991).[136] Of course, scholars make exceptions for material in the book that may have derived from a later point in time, but generally maintain the eighth century character of the book. In consequence, attempts to assess the events behind the text have focused largely on the eighth century (Barton 1980: 25–35).[137]

The date of the book of Amos as a whole, including the date of the oracles against the nations (OAN), however, has been recently reevaluated (Radine 2010). Based on his analysis of the text of Amos, Radine argues that the OAN (Amos 1:3–2:5), excluding the oracle against Israel (2:6–16), were added to the book of Amos in the late exilic period, ca. 553–538 BCE (Radine 2010: 21, 170–83). He grounds his argument on three main notions. First, that the OAN focusing on foreign countries and that against Judah (Amos 1:3–2:5) are more similar in composition than that against Israel (2:6–16)

[136] Both of these authors essentially assume this and give little time to discussing it as an issue.

[137] Barton attempts to identify possible historical circumstances to which the text of Amos refers but having offered a number of proposals, admits that, "there is no hope of dating the events Amos refers to with anything approaching certainty" (Barton 1980: 35).

and should be seen as a literary unit (Radine 2010: 18–22).[138] Second, the mention of Judah's rejection of the *tôrat yhwh* in Amos 2:4 and the implied destruction of Judah (2:5) best fit a post-586 BCE date (Radine 2010: 15–7). Third, based on his analysis of the genre of Amos, he has argued that the book of Amos is a "literary-predictive text," which is to say that it reflects on past events by means of "predictions," what is otherwise called *vaticinium ex eventu* (Radine 2010: 80–129).[139] In addition, he also notes that OAN in other prophetic books date to the late seventh century or later (Radine 2010: 172). Thus, the OAN of Amos 1:3–2:5 are most likely part of an exilic literary tradition, added to an earlier Amos tradition, that reflects on the destruction of the area in the form of predictive oracles.

The oracle against the Ammonites in 1:13–15 accuses them of ripping open pregnant women[140] in Gilead (v. 13) "in order to make broad/enlarge their territory" (*lĕmaʿan harḥîb ʾet-gĕbûlām*). The thrust of the accusation is clear enough—atrocities committed in order to expand borders—however, there is no way to pin this down to a specific incident. Rather, if a late exilic date is accepted, one can see this as a move the Ammonites made at Judah's expense during the Neo-Babylonian period. The destruction of Rabbah (Amman Citadel) "predicted" in 1:14 is often connected to the Babylonian destruction of the Ammonites and Moab as recorded in Josephus, *Ant.* 10.9.7; however, the discussion of this passage below will show that Josephus is completely dependent on Jeremiah and thus is not an independent source of historical information. It is

[138] Paul has made an extensive case for the literary unity of the OAN in Amos (Paul 1991: 7–27).

[139] Barton's work assumes this model throughout except that he sees the events being from the eighth century (Barton 1980: 25).

[140] On the military background of such acts, see Paul 1991: 68.

possible, however, that this oracle relates to Nabonidus' journey to Tayma, in the course of which he destroyed Edom (Crowell 2007).

Amos 1:15 indicates that "their king[141] shall go into exile, he and his officials together." Other rulers are said to be exiled or killed (Amos 1:5; 2:3), and there is no reason to doubt that in varying situations imperial powers did kill and/or deport elites including the king. Perhaps this is a reference to the fate of king Baalis/ Baalyašaʿ. This king is mentioned in Jer 40:14 and known from a seal found at Tall al-ʿUmayri that dates to the sixth century (Eggler, Herr, and Root 2002: 238–40 no. 5; Eggler and Keel 2006: 312–3 no. 4, with bibliography). Of course, one cannot be sure that Amos is referring to this event and this king, and the extent of archaeological investigation to date does not provide a conclusive answer to this matter one way or the other. In particular, excavations of the Amman Citadel, while indicating occupation in the Iron IIC/Persian Period, have not uncovered significant evidence of destruction layers. Where there is any kind of evidence, the sites that were reviewed in Chapter 2 indicate a smooth transition into the Persian Period and a slow end. The exception to this comes from Tall al-Mazar, where the "palace-fort" of Stratum III was destroyed by fire in the first half of the sixth century. This destruction has been attributed to Nebuchadnezzar's supposed campaign to the area in 582/1 BCE (McCreery and Yassine 1997: 443), though other assailants such as the Arab tribes are also a possibility.

Overall, if the assumption that the OAN in the book of Amos are *vaticinium ex eventu* is accepted, then these oracles may be reliable sources of historical data because

[141] Some Greek translations of Amos take the consonants *mlkm* (here "their king") to represent the Ammonite deity Milkom. This may have been a simple confusion or may have been related to a similar expression in Jer 49:3, where the parallel in the oracle against Moab (Jer 48:7) uses the Moabite deity Chemosh. In the context of Amos where the focus is on rulers, the reading of Milkom is less likely (Paul 1991: 70–1; Puech 1977). See also Puech 1999, for discussion of the evidence on Milkom.

they have the clarity of hindsight. With these cautions in mind, the most likely background for Amos 1:13–15 is a Babylonian military operation in the sixth century, although it is not possible to pinpoint a date. Just as important as the background for Amos' OAN is the conclusion that the OAN appear consistently in late seventh century and sixth century prophetic works. As this study will suggest below, the OAN in Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel can all be viewed as dating to sixth century and all understood as "literary predictive" texts or *vaticinium ex eventu*.

4.2.2 Jeremiah

Attempts to date the whole of the book of Jeremiah run into various problems, not least of which are the different textual traditions that exist for the book, especially those of the MT and LXX. Whether one follows the traditional idea that Jeremiah is substantially the author of the book by his name (Holladay 1989)[142] or focuses on how little we know about the complicated history of composition (Carroll 1986: 65–82), one's assessment of the historicity of an individual unit must, as usual, depend on external data where it is available.

The book of Jeremiah presents us with two kinds of texts, narratives about specific events in which the Ammonites are in some way involved (Jer 27:1–15; 40:7–41:15) and an OAN denouncing the Ammonites (Jer 49:1–6). Each of these poses different problems and is addressed individually. In Jer 27:1–15, one hears of a meeting in Jerusalem of envoys from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, Tyre, and Sidon. One can infer from the text that the meeting was convened to contemplate revolt against Babylon. Holladay sets the date at 594 BCE, which must be supplied from 28:1 because

[142] Holladay assumes throughout that the prophet Jeremiah was the source for the book, written of course with the help of Baruch. He does admit to later additions (Holladay 1989: 24).

27:1 seems to be corrupt (Holladay 1989: 31, 112).[143] Assuming for the moment the historicity of the event and the correct reconstruction of the MT, it may have coincided with and taken advantage of the distraction caused a rebellion Nebuchadnezzar had to quell in Babylon in his tenth year (Holladay 1989: 118; Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 21–22).

For the purposes of this study one may simply ask, is it likely that the Ammonites would have participated at some point in revolts against Babylon, or more precisely, in talks of whether to revolt or not? In this respect, there is no reason to think that the Ammonites and other polities in the area would not have participated in such talks at some point; their economies and societies were at stake. Did they, however, participate in talks with Zedekiah before he rebelled? The nature of the event and the times in which it is said to have happened pose no major problems and so this writer is inclined to see it as a plausible report. However, there is no independent evidence to corroborate a meeting in anticipation of Zedekiah's rebellion, and so this picture must remain only a possibility.[144]

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[143] The MT has *bĕrēʾšît mamleket yĕhôyāqīm* "at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim." The LXX omits this verse. A few Hebrew manuscripts, the Syriac, and the Arabic have "Zedekiah" instead of Jehoiakim. There is no manuscript evidence to suggest anything other than the date formula in the MT except the LXX, which omits the whole verse. Thus, one must realize that the MT places this meeting at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. Jer 27:3, 12 include Zedekiah's name, however, and should probably be seen as correct and thus warranting emendation of 27:1 in accordance with vv. 3, 12. One might also see here an attempt to create a continuous story of separate traditions. Both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah are said to have rebelled against Babylon (2 Kgs 24:1, 20).

[144] The Babylonian Chronicles do mention Nebuchadnezzar's siege of "the city of Judah" in 597 BCE (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 11–13). The section of the chronicles that presumably recorded the siege of Jerusalem ending in 586/7 BCE is not preserved and so it is not known whether it mentioned any collaborators. Carroll notes further that the text of Jeremiah here and elsewhere seem to blend 597 BCE and 586 BCE in a number of places such that the historical course of events is not always easy to disentangle (Carroll 1986: 482–3, 530). Moreover, the idea that Jeremiah prophesied to a variety of nations may be a construct based on Jeremiah's status as a "prophet to the nations" (Jer 1:5; Carroll 1986: 531). Even if one rejects the notion that Jeremiah was actually involved, the plausibility that such a meeting took place is not diminished.

In Jer 40:11 one hears of Judeans who have fled to the Transjordan because of Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Judah in 586 BCE. While there is no evidence to confirm or disconfirm this piece of information, there is little reason to doubt that people fled the military onslaught for the surrounding areas. What type of reception they received cannot be determined from the text.

The material in Jer 40:13–41:18[145] tells of the assassination of Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed governor of Judah, by "Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama from the royal seed," with the aid of the Ammonite king Baalis. The idea that the Ammonites would aid a Judean in assassinating a Babylonian governor is predicated on continuing Ammonite resistance to Babylonian control of the area. This is not impossible, especially if the meeting described in Jer 27 actually happened. However, in this case, there is some extra-biblical evidence to help in our assessment. The Ammonite king Baalis/Baalyašaʿ (Jer 40:14) is now known from a seal found at Tall al-ʿUmayri (Eggler, Herr, and Root 2002: 238–40 no. 5; Eggler and Keel 2006: 312–3 no. 4), and discussed in Chapter 3. His existence, at least, is established. That a local king thinking about rebellion would have been interested in securing allies in the rest of the region by whatever means possible seems likely and could have prompted him to get involved in Judean affairs.

Finally, within the section of OAN in Jer 46–51, Jer 49:1–6 focuses on the Ammonites. This oracle cites as the main complaint that Ammon (and her god Milkom[146]) has taken possession of Gad (v. 1) and that this will be avenged (vv. 2–5). Stereotypical language takes up much of the oracle and is not especially useful for

[145] A considerably shorter version of this is found in 2 Kgs 25:25–6.

[146] The MT has *malkām*, "their king," which may be a corruption of *milkōm*, the name of an Ammonite deity. The LXX has μελχὸλ, which appears to represent the deity's name.

historical purposes. The precise origin of the OAN still eludes us (Carroll 1986: 751); however, the discussion of Amos revealed that it is possible to see the OAN as a literary predictive genre common to the sixth century and thus reflections on events after they occurred. That they are *vaticinium ex eventu* is clear from the inclusion of an oracle against Damascus (Jer 49:23–27), which the Assyrians destroyed in the eighth century. Thus, Jeremiah's oracle against the Ammonites is most likely a composition of the late sixth century, and may reflect the destruction of the Ammonites by the Babylonians, even if a date for this is not forthcoming.

As for the context of the Ammonite acquisition of Gadite lands in the Transjordan, one can only hazard a guess. Nonetheless, with Judah suffering major blows in 597 and 586 BCE, it would not be at all surprising for the Judeans to lose control of what may have been only nominally theirs to begin with. The mention of Heshbon in this oracle raises the question of which polity it belonged to, Ammon or Moab? The inclusion of Heshbon in the oracle against Ammon suggests that the author saw Heshbon as being under Ammonite auspices. Can we say that these oracles reflect two different times and circumstances, one in which Moab had control of Heshbon and one in which Ammon controlled it? Or is something else altogether going on? A consideration of these verses may suggest a solution. In Jer 48:2, Heshbon appears as the site at which "they planned evil against her [i.e., Moab]." Assuming a Babylonian context for the oracle, this suggests that Heshbon was the staging site for Babylonian armies as they invaded Moab. Likewise, in 48:45, Heshbon is not the object of destruction, but the place from which fire has gone out to destroy Moab. Again, seeing Heshbon as the staging point for Babylonian attacks makes good sense in this context.[147]

[147] On this see Van Seters 1994: 400–1 and references there.

The only problematic verse for the interpretation that Heshbon itself was not the object of Babylonian aggression against Moab is Jer 48:34. This verse seems to be an adaptation of Isa 15:4–6, which places Heshbon in the control of Moab at the time of Assyrian invasion in the eighth or seventh centuries. In fact, much of Jer 48:34–38 is a selective adaptation of material from Isaiah's oracle against Moab in Isa 15–16. Its "secondary"[148] quality here does not mean it is completely out of place, for it is certainly in keeping with the general tone of Jer 48. However, one may ask whether the eighth or seventh century historical context for this material is out place here. In particular, can these verses bear the burden of interpreting Heshbon as part of Moabite territory in the sixth century? A conclusion on this matter is not easy to reach. Finds of Black Burnished Bowls (BBBs) at Heshbon may indicate Ammonite control in the Iron IIC/Persian Period (Herr 2006). We may also wonder whether Heshbon had a status independent of Ammon and Moab considering its location on the periphery of what is normally considered to be the geographic extent of these two polities. Whatever the case may be it is not necessary to read in Jer 48 and 49 as a precise delineation of the changing status of ancient boundaries in the sixth century.[149] Moreover, since none of the references to Heshbon in Jer 48 unequivocally indicate Heshbon's status as Moabite in the sixth century, its inclusion in the oracle against Ammon in Jer 49 may indicate Ammonite claims over it. It is also possible that this reflects Heshbon's marginal status and fluctuating political circumstances. The nature of the reference, however, precludes certainty.

[148] This material is only "secondary" in that it has been used before. However, the creative adaptation of the material in this context indicates that the scribe is in fact more than simply a copier of tradition. Rather, he is a maker of new tradition from the old.

[149] This is the approach taken by Vyhmeister (Vyhmeister 1989: 9), where he posits that these references mean that Jer 49 was composed shortly after Jer 48.

4.2.3 Ezekiel

Scholars working on Ezekiel generally accept a sixth century BCE setting for the writing of the book (Block 1997: 9–12; Greenberg 1983: 12–17; Joyce 2007: 3–5), though recently this has been questioned (for references see Joyce 2007: 4). Critical scholars accept the notion that there were later additions to Ezekiel, though the extent of such additions is debated (Joyce 2007: 7–16). For this investigation, it is sufficient to recognize that the Babylonian period provides the implied historical backdrop for much of the narrative and prophetic utterances in the work. One's ability to say something positive about potential historical data is as always dependent on whether it can be confirmed by extra-biblical data.

Ezekiel 21:23–28 [ET 18–23] portrays the king of Babylon as choosing which way he will go, to Jerusalem or to Rabbah of the Ammonites (Amman Citadel). By divination, he chooses Jerusalem, a surprise to the Judeans. After an oracle against the "wicked prince of Israel" (21:29–32 [ET 24–27]), there is an oracle about the Ammonites in 21:33–37 [ET 28–32]. This portion of the text poses a number of problems that have pushed scholars to question whether in fact the oracle is about the Ammonites (Greenberg 1997: 435–6). As important as these arguments are for the text of Ezekiel, one may note that even if the verses are taken at face value as referring to the Ammonites, they tell us little more than that Babylon was a threat to them.

Similar to Amos, and Jeremiah, Ezekiel includes the Ammonites in a section of OAN (Ezek 25–32), and again one is dealing with a sixth century literary predictive text. The OAN about the Ammonites in Ezek 25:1–7 denounces the Ammonites for gloating over the destruction and deportation of the "land (*ʾadmat*) of Israel" and the "house of Judah" (25:3, 6). Consequently, Ezekiel "predicts" the Ammonites'

destruction at the hands of "the sons of the east" (i.e., probably Arab tribes coming from the desert; cf. Isa 11:14) and plundering by "the nations" (v. 7). One cannot say for sure whether these verses refer to a particular incident known to the author or whether they are of a more general nature. What one can say is that on this point the prophetic imagination is realistic because the threat of Arab nomads from the east is known from Assurbanipal's annals (Streck 1916: 64–5, Rassam Cylinder, vii:110) and the Babylonian chronicles (Wiseman 1956: 70–1, B.M. 21946: rev. 9–10).

4.2.4 Zephaniah

The traditional dating of Zephaniah to the reign of Josiah (640–609 BCE) is based on the superscription in Zeph 1:1 and has been accepted by many scholars (Christensen 1984; Roberts 1991: 163; Sweeney 2003: 14–18). It is possible, however, that the Zephaniah's OAN (Zeph 2:4–15) was composed in the exilic period when the destruction of the nations mentioned in the OAN had already occurred, and thus serve to persuade the audience that Zephaniah's other predictions would be fulfilled (Ben Zvi 1991: 305; Berlin 1994: 40).

The very short OAN in Zech 2:8–11 lumps the Ammonites and Moab together and accuses them of "taunting" and "reviling" Yahweh's people, and perhaps more specifically of "boasting against their [Judah's] territory" (Zeph 2:8). However, the passage provides no precise information about the nature or extent of such advances on territory claimed by Judeans. Perhaps one can see this against the background of a Josianic program which sought to restore the twelve tribe ideal under a Davidic king (Sweeney 2003: 18). However, the accusation is posed in stereotypical language (cf. Isa 16:6; Jer 48:26, 29–30, 42; Ezek 35:13; Obad 12) that makes establishing a specific historical context a moot point (Ryou 1995: 233, 316). The OAN in Zephaniah are

probably, like the other OAN, literary-predictive prophecies formulated after the events. In this case, the reflection on the destruction of the Ammonites would represent a view formulated sometime in the second half of the sixth century after Ammon's independent political existence had been destroyed.

4.2.5 Summary

The OAN concerning the Ammonites as well as Moab, Edom, and the coastal polities, display the intra-regional tensions of the Babylonian period. In general, while the events that the prophets mention or allude to sometimes fit what is known of the historical context, there is rarely specific independent evidence that can confirm these events. The most promising bit of extra-biblical evidence is the seal mentioning king Baalis/Baalyaša found at Tall al-ʿUmayri. This may inform the background to Amos' OAN about the Ammonites and may help us in understanding the intra-regional dynamics on the cusp of Zedekiah's rebellion and in its aftermath. Again, though certainty is not attainable, the picture in Jeremiah of envoys coming to Jerusalem to discuss rebellion and later the Ammonite aid given to Ishmael, Gedaliah's assassin, are plausible and fit the historical context. If nothing else, one may see in the prophetic material how Judah's relationship with the Ammonites was perceived by some Judean elites in the turbulent days before and after its demise under Babylon. Finally, since the OAN are most likely *vaticinium ex eventu*, that is literary-predictive texts created after the event, they argue in favor of a Babylonian destruction of the Ammonites along with most of the rest of small polities of the southern Levant.

4.3 Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History

Recent discussions of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History (DH) have highlighted the divergent views that characterize the study of this corpus (Geoghegan

2006; Römer 2005; Römer and Pury 2000).[150] The divergences extend to every major question: the date(s) of composition, purpose, whether to speak of an author(s) or redactors, geographic location(s) of those responsible for producing the work, use of sources, the relationship between Deuteronomy and the books of Judges–2 Kings, the relationship of the DH to Genesis–Numbers, etc. Some of the only points of consensus are that Deuteronomy–2 Kings is a unified composition of some sort (Römer and Pury 2000: 13–9)—though a few scholars have raised questions about that (see Geoghegan 2006: 114)—and that its final edition was written post-586 BCE. Notwithstanding the number of different approaches, Römer and de Pury venture a "compromise" position that argues that the beginning of deuteronomistic literary activity should be located in the time of Josiah, with versions of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Kings, and perhaps parts of Samuel (Römer 2005: 41–3; Römer and Pury 2000: 95–7). These accounts were then organized and added to in the exilic period to create what we now know as the DH (Römer 2005: 43; Römer and Pury 2000: 96–7). The compromise in this position is that it does not propose an entire DH for the time of the Judean king Josiah (640–609 BCE) as in the case of the classic two-stage formation posited by Cross (1973a: 274–89), but a composition of limited extent. Nevertheless this literature was propaganda to bolster Josiah's legitimacy by portraying him as a true successor to his prototype, David, as well as to bolster the legitimacy of his expansionist policies (Römer 2005: 43; Römer and Pury 2000: 96). On the other hand, this position recognizes the pervasive influence of the events of 586 BCE on the way the DH constructs the past. In fact, the events of

[150] One may also wish to consult the collection of essays found in Knoppers and McConville 2000. This work collects a number of classic essays that give a sense of the development of scholarship on the Deuteronomistic History.

586 BCE gave ultimate impetus for assembling and constructing the DH more or less as it exists now (Römer 2005: 42; Römer and Pury 2000: 136).

Geoghegan has also recently argued for a Josianic edition of the DH based on the distribution of the etiological phrase "until this day," which appears in connection with deuteronomistic redactional material found in every major section of the DH (Geoghegan 2006: 123). His determination that the items to which this phrase refers are connected predominantly with Judah around the time of Josiah (Geoghegan 2006: 62–4, 94–5), leads him to posit a rather extensive DH (essentially Deuteronomy–2 Kings 23) that was created in the seventh century BCE (Geoghegan 2006: 122–23). Geoghegan's work is not without its weaknesses, chief among which is the possibility that an author could use the phrase "until this day" as a rhetorical device even though he does not have access to the item referenced.[151] Nonetheless, it provides a reassessment of an important literary device that spans the DH, and lends further strength to the idea of a Josianic edition.

Thus, there is a consensus that some form of a first edition of the DH was produced around the time of Josiah and that this was then completed post-586.[152] Our knowledge of Judah in the Neo-Assyrian Period supports this conclusion in a general way. The epigraphic evidence of seals, bullae, ostraca, and archaeological excavations highlight the shift in Judah towards increased bureaucracy and centralization (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 270, 280–1; Stern 2001: 130–200) that may have provided the conditions necessary for textual production. All of this notwithstanding, we should highlight the inferential nature of such conclusions and the heavy reliance on

[151] On the weaknesses of Geoghegan's work, see the review of his work by Willis 2008.

[152] Against the notion of editions see Van Seters 1983), who argues that the DH was composed by one author with only some later additions.

the biblical texts (especially 2 Kgs 22–23) for constructing such a view (Grabbe 2007: 204–7). Thus, production of the DH (or some part thereof) in the Josianic period is a working hypothesis that needs ongoing reevaluation.

4.3.1 The Book of Deuteronomy

The first appearance of the Ammonites in Deuteronomy is in the account of the Israelite journey through the Transjordan (Deut 2–3). There, one hears that Yahweh had dispossessed the ancient inhabitants of the region, the Zamzummim or Rephaim, so that the Ammonites could settle there. Since Yahweh had settled the Ammonites, the Israelites are told not to bother them (Deut 2:19–21). Here also, the Ammonites are considered descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew (Deut 2:19; cf. Gen 19:38). As the narrative proceeds, one hears that the Israelites followed directions and did not bother the Ammonites (Deut 2:37). The land allotments were given and the boundary of the Ammonites at the Jabbok is mentioned (Deut 3:16; repeated in Josh 12:2). The next occurrence of the Ammonites in Deuteronomy is found in Deut 23:4 [ET v. 3]. Here, one finds the prohibition against Ammonites and Moabites from being part of the assembly of Yahweh until the tenth generation (or simply "forever" depending on one's understanding of the text). The reasoning behind this is related to the Israelite journey through the Transjordan, when the Ammonites and Moabites did not give the Israelites food or water, but instead hired the prophet Balaam to curse Israel (Deut 23:5–6 [ET vv. 4–5]). Thus, the Israelites are told not to seek peace or good for the Ammonites or Moabites (Deut 23:7 [ET v. 6]). The text mentions the Ammonites again in the allotment of land to the Israelite tribes; in particular, the Gadites receive Jazer, Gilead, and "half the land of the Ammonites unto Aroer, which is before Rabbah" (*ḥăṣî ʾereṣ bĕnê ʿammôn ʿad-ʿărôʿēr ʾăšer ʿal-pĕnê rabbâ*). Although elsewhere the idea of Israelites

having taken land from the Ammonites is denied (especially Deut 2:37 and Judg 11:19–23), this verse indicates that the Gadites took some of the Ammonite lands.

4.3.1.1 The Israelite Journey through the Transjordan[153]

The literary framework of the book of Deuteronomy (roughly Deut 1:1–4:40; 31–34) is an addition that helps integrate the laws of Deuteronomy into the DH (Mayes 1981: 41–7). It is thus the work of deuteronomistic editors/authors from the exilic period. Thus, the Israelite journey through the Transjordan recounted in 2:1–3:11 is a product of the sixth century BCE.

The Ammonites do not figure prominently in the narrative of the Israelite journey through the Transjordan. Nonetheless, these traditions have a bearing on how the Transjordan and the Ammonites were perceived in the exilic period. There are three main texts that review Israel's passage through the Transjordan before the conquest of the Cisjordanian lands: Num 20:14–21:35; Deut 2:1–3:11; Judg 11:13–27.[154] Among other things, these texts recount the defeat of the Amorite kings, Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan.[155] Despite the fact that there are three accounts, there is clearly only one tradition, and one needs to determine what that tradition is before assessing its possible historical value. Thus, a question of prime importance is the relationship between these three texts.

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[153] Many scholars have weighed in on many issues relating to the presentation of the Israelite journey through the Transjordan in the biblical texts. Recently, Dozeman (Dozeman 2002) has traced the trajectory of scholarship on this tradition. Other scholars who have weighed in on various aspects of these passages other than the main ones dealt with here are Boling 1988, Fistill 2007, Smelik 1984; Smelik 1999, and Weippert 1979.

[154] In addition, Num 22–25 relates the stories of Balaam and the Baal-peor incident. Though these texts may contain some historical information, they contain little of anything that is useful in reconstructing Ammonite history.

[155] Judg 11 recounts only the conquest of Sihon because that narrative is relevant to the argument in that particular text.

4.3.1.1.1 Van Seters

The most thorough study of the relationship between these texts has been that of Van Seters, who in a series of publications has argued for the priority of the account in Deut 2–3 (Van Seters 1972, 1980; 1994: 383–404). In these publications, Van Seters has argued that Num 20:14–21:35 is a conflation of the accounts given in Deut 2:1–3:11 and Judg 11:13–22. His attempt to show this is primarily a work of literary criticism based on a close comparison of the texts. He begins by stating that Deut 2:1–3:11 is clearly unified and though it may contain some later additions, it is impossible to be sure about them (Van Seters 1994: 384–5). In contrast, Num 20–21 has all the markings of a compiled text including citations of other sources. For Num 20:14–21, the confrontation with Edom, the conflated state of the text is visible in a number of ways. First, he notes that Num 20:17 seems to bring together the language of Num 21:22[156] and Deut 2:27 (Van Seters 1994: 388). As the following display of the verses shows, there are verbal parallels between all three verses.[157] However, Num 20:17 and 21:22 share exclusively the ideas of not passing through a field or vineyard, not drinking well water, and not doing this "until we cross over your border." On the other hand, Num 20:17 and Deut 2:27 share exclusively the idea of not turning right or left. These verbal parallels strongly suggest that Num 20:17 has conflated Num 21:22 and Deut 2:27 (Van Seters 1994: 388).

> Num 20:17 ***Let*** us ***pass through your land****. We will not pass through field or vineyard and we will not drink well water.*
> (On) ***the*** *royal* ***road*** *we* ***will go***. We **will not turn right or left** *until we cross over your border*.

[156] Van Seters wrote that Num 20:17 is close to Num 21:21, but this appears to have been a typographical error. As is demonstrated in his parallel texts, Num 20:17 is paralleled by 21:22.

[157] In these verses, the parallels between Num 20:17 and 21:22 appear with *italics*, and parallels between all three with **boldface.**

> Num 21:22 ***Let*** **me** ***pass through your land****. We will not* turn aside into *field or vineyard. We will not drink well water.* **On** ***the*** *royal* ***road*** *we* ***will go*** *until we cross over your border.*
>
> Deut 2:27 **Let me pass through your land. On the road**[158] I **will go.** I **will not turn right or left.**

In addition, Num 20:19 and Deut 2:28, though the verbatim parallels are not as strong, share the idea of payment for water (and in the case of Deut, food). Taken with the above parallels, this only adds to the sense that Num 20:14–21 utilized Deut 2 as a source. That Num 20:14–21 conflates these two texts is only strengthened by what seems to be a broader compiling or conflating tendency of this text. One can see this method at work in the alternation of dialogue partners (king of Edom and Moses [Num 20:14–17], Edom and Israel [20:18–20]), which may point to a conflation of Deut 2 that mentions Edom or the descendants of Esau, with Judges 11 that focuses on the king of Edom (Van Seters 1994: 389). Finally, following S. Mittmann, Van Seters argues that Num 20:14–16a is probably dependent on the "credo" of Deut 26:5–9 (Van Seters 1994: 389–90). Taken together, Van Seters argues that the author of Num 20:14–21 used several other texts in compiling the account, including Deut 2 and Judg 11 (Van Seters 1994: 390).[159]

Moving on to the conquest of Sihon (Num 21:21–31; Deut 2:24–37; Judg 11:13–27), Van Seters continues his argument that the Numbers account is a conflation of Deuteronomy and Judges. He points to the following items as evidence (Van Seters 1994: 394–8):

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[158] MT has *badderek badderek*, "on the road, on the road," which is probably a dittography. A better reading is simply *badderek*, "on the road" or *badderek hammelek*, "on the royal road."

[159] From this point, Van Seters goes on to propose a sequence in which he thinks the texts were composed, specifically, Deut 2–Judg 11–Num 20 (Van Seters 1994: 390–3).

1. In Num 21:21, Israel is the subject of sending messengers, whereas in Num 20:14 and 21:32, Moses is the subject. It appears that Numbers followed the Judges account, which uses Israel because it fits with the dispute between Israel and Ammon.
2. Num 21:21, calls Sihon "king of the Amorites" even though Numbers does not employ the same ideology found in Deuteronomy in which "Amorite" designates the indigenous population to be exterminated. This seems to have been taken from Judg 11:19 where Sihon is called "king of the Amorites" in order to make clear in that context that he was not Ammonite or Moabite.
3. The concern for the border of Ammon in Num 21:24 seems to follow Judg 11:22, where the Ammonite border is a specific issue. Ammon is not otherwise a player in Numbers, so why mention it?
4. Num 21:25a mentions "all these cities" even though the text does not mention these cities previously. That is to say, the Numbers text uses a demonstrative pronoun without specifying the antecedent. This probably was taken from Deut 2:34–6 that mentions towns from Aroer to Gilead.
5. Num 21:25 and 31 report settlement in Amorite lands before the campaigns against Jazer and Og are complete. Both in Judg 11 and Deut 3:12–17, the reports of settlement follow all the action. In Judg 11:26, where only the Sihon account is mentioned, we find the report that Israel settled "in Heshbon and its settlements" just as in Num 21:25. Van Seters argues that Numbers has brought over the settlement report from Judg 11 and instead of placing it at the end of the Og narrative, kept it with Sihon.

Van Seters concludes his argument that Numbers conflates the accounts of Deuteronomy and Judges by noting: 1) that almost the whole of the Numbers battle account can be found in Deuteronomy; and 2) that wherever Numbers differs from Deuteronomy it differs in the same way as Judges differs from Deuteronomy (Van Seters 1994: 398). Since Deut 2 and Judg 11 are essentially unified accounts that fit their contexts well, and since the Numbers text consistently shows evidence of compilation, the Sihon account in Numbers should be seen as a conflation of Deuteronomy and Judges.

The song of Heshbon in Num 21:27–30 as well as the other poetic snippets in 21:14–15, 17–18 continue to show the compiled nature of Num 20–21. However, these are lacking from Deuteronomy and Judges, so the question as to the date of the sources must be explored independently of Deuteronomy and Judges. There is no way of

assessing the date of the poems in 21:14–15 and 17–18 because there are no copies of them in other biblical literature. However, for Num 21:27–30, there is a parallel text from Jer 48:45–6 with which to compare it. Since Num 21:27 presents this poem as coming from the *mōšĕlîm* "ballad singers," the question becomes, did the Yahwist take this from Jeremiah or are both texts dependent on some other text no longer available? On this point, Van Seters argues that the most likely scenario is that Numbers is dependent on Jeremiah. His argument stands on three main insights. First, the song is in the form of a dirge that functions as one of the OAN. The context Jer 48 in a collection of OAN makes this clear (Van Seters 1994: 400). Second, this form falls under the rubric of *māšāl*, "song, saying" and thus the composer of such a form can be considered a *mōšēl*, "ballad singer." Therefore, the indication in Num 21:27 that the poem came from the *mōšĕlîm* indicates an origin in a collection of poetic taunts such as the OAN found in Isa 13–19 and Jer 46–51 (Van Seters 1994: 400). Third, since the parallel in Jer 48:45–6 is situated in the middle of other poetic taunts and fits quite well, there is no reason to think that it was taken from another source. Therefore, the most plausible scenario is that Numbers is dependent on Jeremiah (Van Seters 1994: 401). This, of course, is in keeping with both the citation of the *mōšĕlîm* in Num 21:27 as well as the compiled nature of Num 20–21 as a whole.

Finally, Van Seters argues that the defeat of Og of Bashan in Num 21:33–35, while considered by most commentators to be the insertion of a Deuteronomistic redactor, who changed the text very little, should be seen as the work of the Yahwist. He sees the Yahwist's work in the conflation of the reports of the defeat of Sihon and Og (Deut 2:33b; 3:3b) in Num 21:35, which preserves elements of both reports from Deuteronomy (Van Seters 1994: 403). Finally, the notice that Israel put Og to the ban in

Deut 3:4–7 was left out of Num 21:35 in the same way the Yahwist left it out of the Sihon account in Num 21:24. Thus, argues Van Seters, the Og account in Num 21:33–5 is not from a deuteronomistic redactor, but rather from the Yahwist, who altered the Og account from Deuteronomy 3:1–7 to fit the ideological constraints of Numbers (Van Seters 1994: 403).[160]

In summary, Van Seters sees the account of the journey through the Transjordan as originating in the exilic period. Because he sees Judg 11 as dependent on Deut 2 and Num 20–21 as dependent on Deut 2–3 and Judg 11, he sees the Numbers account dating to some point later in the exilic period. For Van Seters, the lateness of these texts, combined with the fact that archaeological investigation has arrived at an Iron IIC/Persian Period founding of Heshbon, suggests that there is little chance that these texts transmit any reliable information about the Late Bronze Age (Van Seters 1972: 197; 1994: 404). Van Seters' work on these passages, and in general his work on the Yahwist (Van Seters 1992, 1994) overturns the assumption of the conventional documentary hypothesis that takes the Yahwist or J source to be the earliest of the sources. Other scholars working from within the documentary hypothesis have assessed the relationship of these texts rather differently.

4.3.1.1.2 Bartlett

In his earlier works, Bartlett, working within the documentary hypothesis, argued for early dates of the Sihon and Og narratives, sometime in the tenth through eighth centuries, and in some cases with traditions extending back even farther (see Dozeman 2002: 183–4 for summary). In his more recent investigations on Edom, he has

[160] The author of Numbers had only one account to work from (Deut 3:1–7). Judges 11 does not contain a story about Og.

modified his position by admitting that the tradition about Edom rebuffing the Israelites in Num 20:14–21 belongs to the late monarchic period (roughly the second half of the eighth and seventh centuries) when there was significant enmity between Judah and Edom. Moreover, it is at this time when Edom first became a monarchic state, when one can speak of a "King's Highway," and when Edomite territory extends into the Negev near Kadesh, and when Edom had an army ready for battle (Bartlett 1989: 92; 1995: 17–18). Though he registers some ambivalence towards determining whether Num 20:14–21 is dependent on Deut 2:1–8 or vice versa, he does note the difference in tone between the texts. The Numbers text presents Edom as hostile, while Deut 2:1–8 presents Edom as passive. In his view, this may reflect the historical situations of the writers, with Num 20:14–21 originating in the late monarchic period when significant hostility existed, and Deut 2:1–8 originating in the post-exilic period when Edom was no longer a hostile enemy (Bartlett 1989: 92–3; 1995: 18–21).[161] Because of the later date and ideological nature, Bartlett concludes that "they contribute virtually nothing to our knowledge of the land of Edom in the thirteenth–twelfth centuries BCE" (Bartlett 1989: 93).

4.3.1.1.3 Weinfeld

In contrast to Van Seters' and Barlett's late dates for these texts, especially Num 20–21, and the negative assessment of their value for reconstructing the history of the Late Bronze Age, Weinfeld (1991) and Levine (2000) argue for an earlier date for parts of Numbers. More significantly, they see some of the traditions as having a reality in the ancient past. Weinfeld focuses his discussion of the journey through the Transjordan on

[161] Bartlett comments that the two views may have originated in approximately the same period, but from two different theological views (Bartlett 1995: 20–1). See also his earlier critique of Van Seters, in which he argues that the account of the conquest of Sihon in Num 21:21–35 is not dependent on Deut 2:24–3:11 or Judge 11:19–26 (Bartlett 1978).

an investigation into the way the text presents the borders of the Promised Land. Weinfeld argues that the pre-deuteronomic sources as conventionally defined do not envision the Transjordan as part of the Promised Land, and so crossing the Jordan is seen as the entrance into the Land. This material reflects the borders of the Egyptian province of Canaan that resulted from the Egyptian–Hittite treaty of the thirteenth century BCE (Weinfeld 1991: 173–5). Thus, these texts, and in particular Num 21, reflect ancient historical reality at least as far as the borders go (Weinfeld 1991: 175). Weinfeld does not spend time here delineating dates for Num 20–21, but he does seem to think this material comes from before the seventh century because it does not see the Transjordan as part of the Promised Land.[162] The idea that the Transjordan was part of the Promised land is for Weinfeld related to the time of Hezekiah or Josiah (late eighth and seventh centuries) in which the ideological formation of the notion of expansion was fixed in the literary tradition (Weinfeld 1991: 177). In Deut 2–3, this becomes visible in the words *hāḥēl rāš* "Begin to possess" (Deut 2:24; cf. 2:31), which indicate that crossing the Arnon is seen as the beginning of the conquest of the Promised Land (Weinfeld 1991: 175–6). This is also why the ban must be applied to Sihon and Og (Deut 2:34–35; 3:6–7; Weinfeld 1991: 176), because their territory is included in the Promised Land. Weinfeld clearly thinks that the change in representation of the borders of the Promised Land has chronological value in dating the texts. However, he does not explicate which details he thinks are historical or not. Nonetheless, one can infer from his notes that he assumes Sihon was a historical person from the Late Bronze Age, who ruled a city in the general region of Heshbon, even if that site was on a different site

[162] The account in Num 21 does, of course, relate the taking of Sihon and Og's land, but Weinfeld argues that this was an accident and that the special pleading that Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh have to do to get this land alloted to them (Num 32), shows that it was not thought of as part of the Land (Weinfeld 1991: 174).

than the one to which the modern name is attached (Weinfeld 1991: 171). In general, his notes indicate that he sees the texts in Num 20–21 and Deut 2–3 as retaining reliable historical memory.

4.3.1.1.4 Levine

In his work on Numbers, Levine argues in a general way that Deut 2–3 is dependent on Num 20:14–21 and 21:4–35, with the exception of the conquest of Og, which because of its "unusual resemblance to Deuteronomy 3:1–3, may, indeed, be based on the Deuteronomist" (Levine 2000: 128). The author of Deut 2–3 created a systematic account based on the earlier JE narratives (Levine 2000: 128). Levine sees Num 20–21 as reflecting eighth century BCE or later conflict with Edom due to their expansion into the Negev (Levine 2000: 38, 128). As for Num 21, he sees the primary purpose of this chapter as legitimating Israelite dominance of the Transjordan in the ninth century BCE because it was during that time that the Omrides and Arameans gained significant control of the Transjordan (Levine 2000: 40). The Heshbon ballad (Num 21:27–30) also comes from this period and reflects an Israelite conquest of Moab. The mention of Sihon in v. 29b is probably a later interpolation that helped to create a literary prehistory for the site (Levine 2000: 118). By casting Heshbon as an Amorite city from the Late Bronze Age that Israel defeated, the JE historiographer shows that Moab has no right to the city because Israel took it from the Amorites (Levine 2000: 123). Thus, for Levine the ninth century Israelite hegemony over parts of the Transjordan and the eventual reaction against this by Mesha, provide the best historical

context for the story in Num 21:21–30, including the Heshbon ballad (Levine 2000: 126–33).[163]

4.3.1.1.5 Discussion and Conclusions

The review of how Bartlett, Weinfeld, and Levine have dealt with the journey through the Transjordan highlights the other pieces of evidence one might point to in trying to date these texts. However, the possibilities they point to are largely not compelling because they assert them without accounting for the present state of the text or providing reliable historical data. In this respect, Van Seters' argument, whatever weaknesses it may have, has the advantage of separating textual transmission and historical background for the purpose of analysis. Such an approach has allowed him to argue convincingly for the priority of Deut 2–3 on the literary level, and it is this determination that will serve as the point of departure in this study.

Let us first ask the question of whether these sixth century BCE texts contain any reliable historical data about a Late Bronze Age Israelite journey through the Transjordan. There are a number of general and specific arguments that lead to a negative conclusion on this question. The general trend of scholarship on early Israelite

[163] Having concluded that the material in Num 21 is essentially ninth century BCE, Levine spends a considerable amount of time arguing for a possible Amorite presence in the area in the early Iron I period (Levine 2000: 114–23). He concludes, "Recent archaeological activity, especially at Tell el-'Umeiri, confirms the existence of at least one heavily fortified city in the general Heshbon area in the early twelfth century B.C.E., and encourages the search for more of the same. The words of the Heshbon Ballad about a fortified Amorite capital at Heshbon are geographically imprecise, to be sure [because no significant remains have been found at Heshbon from Iron I], but they are not unrealistic for the early Iron I period in the Moabite Tableland. It is historically possible, therefore, that an Amorite kingdom or city-state flourished ephemerally in North Moab during the early Iron I period, and that it was ultimately replaced by the Gadites and other Israelites who settled the area. Whether or not there was a war with the Amorites, or whether their settlement came to its end in another way, is unclear" (Levine 2000: 123). Apparently, Levine felt compelled to discuss the possibility of an Amorite presence in the area because of the mention of Sihon and Og, but considering his own conclusion that Num 21 is from the ninth century BCE or later, it is not clear why such a possibility is important or relevant.

history has indicated that the biblical picture of the Exodus, conquest, and settlement, though perhaps containing some historical memories, does not preserve an accurate picture of the situation on the ground (Finkelstein 2007b; Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 48–122; Grabbe 2007: 118–9; Mazar 2007b; Miller and Hayes 2006: 51–9). Beyond these trends in assessing the history of Israel, a number of specific items point to the same conclusion for the history of the Transjordan as presented in the biblical texts.

First, it is only in the Iron Age II from perhaps the ninth century on that there is significant political development in the Transjordan. This is the case for Edom, for which the eighth century is the probable initial period of significant political development (Bienkowski 2001b; Crowell 2004; Knauf 1992). Edom had a continued life in the Persian province of Idumea (Stern 2001: 457–8). The earliest date for Moab being a significantly organized polity is the ninth century, attested especially by the Mesha Stele (Routledge 2004: 133–183). Moab also continued to exist down to the Babylonian period, though it does not seem to have been a significant entity after the mid-sixth century BCE (Routledge 2004: 210–12). Ammonite political and social development (as traced in Chapter 7), seems to have started in the ninth and eighth centuries and continued down into the sixth and probably fifth centuries.

Second, archaeological excavations at the site of Ḥesban have uncovered no remains from the Late Bronze Age and little from Iron I (Ray 2001: 75–110),[164] but have uncovered a flourishing settlement in the Iron IIC/Persian Period (700–500 BCE,

[164] Ḥesban Stratum 18 has a large reservoir, but few other remains besides pottery dates given as 1050–925 BCE; Ray 2001: 5, 99–107. This could represent a significant settlement, but it is difficult to say much positive about the nature of the rest of this stratum. The evidence from Ḥesban clearly points to the Iron IIC (Stratum 16) as the major Iron Age phase with which the biblical authors would have been familiar.

Stratum 16; Ray 2001: 126–37). While it is true that site names do sometimes shift over time,[165] the dates for this site fit neatly with the date of the Heshbon song, which following Van Seters, has its origin in the OAN in Jer 48:45–46. Thus, while the Mesha Stele and the Omride rule over the area north of the Arnon provide a possible historical background for the Sihon story, the archaeological evidence of Ḥesban and the dating of the biblical texts point on independent grounds to a later period, perhaps the sixth century. Likewise, beyond the accounts of Sihon and Og in the biblical texts, which certainly have ideological reasons for including non-Ammonite and non-Moabite enemies, there is no material evidence for Amorite occupation or rule in the Transjordan.[166]

Third, the account in Deuteronomy indicates that Og was the last of the legendary Rephaim (Deut 3:11). This mythic aspect of the version in Deuteronomy (note also the similar statements about the Rephaim from whom the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites took their land; Deut 2:10–12, 20–23), points to the nature of Judean historiography that does not distinguish between the modern categories of myth

[165] Levine mentions the phenomenon of the drift of toponyms over time as an argument for seeing Sihon and the conquest of Heshbon as having a historical core (Levine 2000: 117–120). He suggests Tall al-ʿUmayri, which has significant fortifications in the Iron I, as the possible site of an Iron I Heshbon. It is of course possible, but the late date of the text, the good fit of this date with the archaeological remains at Ḥesban, and the ideologically determined nature of the references to Amorites, make it unlikely that the Sihon story has a historical core. It may have a realistic geographic background coming from the sixth century, but this says nothing about the historicity of Sihon.

[166] Levine's argument for the possibility of Amorite presence in this area is based on Mendenhall's argument that "Amorites" from the Syrian kingdom of Amurru, which was destroyed in the early Iron Age, migrated to the area and established themselves as local rulers (Mendenhall 1992: 201). Such a scenario is possible, but the only reason for positing it is that this text mentions it—even though it probably dates to the sixth century BCE.

and history. On this point, Knauf argues that Og might have originated as an underworld deity (Knauf 1990: 135–6).[167]

Taken together, the scholarly trend in discussions of the early history of Israel and the additional points adduced here, argue strongly for the view that Deut 2–3 and the passages likely dependent on it (Judg 11; Num 20–21), contain little that is of historical value for the Late Bronze or Iron Age I. If they do somehow retain historical tidbits from this early period, there is at present no clear way to extract them. Overall, with the composition of Deut 2–3 in the sixth century and the determination that Judg 11 and Num 20–21 are dependent on it, it is most probable that the sixth century is the best period in which to place the origin of all the traditions involved.[168]

4.3.1.2 Deuteronomy 23:4–7 [ET 23:3–6]

Deuteronomy 23:2–9 [ET 23:1–8] lists people who are not allowed to enter the *qĕhal yhwh*, "the assembly of YHWH" because of some abnormality. The first to be excluded are those whose genitals are in some way mutilated (23:2), then follows the *mamzēr* who is excluded to the tenth generation. Precisely what the word *mamzēr* denotes is not entirely clear. The LXX translates this as ἐκ πόρνης "[born] from a prostitute." This is possible, and Christensen argues that this should be related to the law concerning "holy prostitution found in Deut 23:18–19 [ET 17–18] (Christensen 2002: 536). Along these lines, Christensen (following Craigie), suggests that the noun should be seen as a hiphil participle of *nzr* "to consecrate" being formed as follows: *manzēr* > *mamzēr* (2002: 536). The only other place this word is used in the Hebrew

[167] Knauf argues that Sihon is probably the historicization of a tribe from the region of a mountain (Jabal) of the same name in the northern part of the Moabite plateau, which sometime in the eighth century founded Ḥesban (Knauf 1990: 138–42).

[168] One might be able to find evidence for the geography of the sixth century, but this would assume that the biblical authors' knowledge of this area was accurate, an assumption that has been significantly challenged by Miller 1989a.

Bible is Zech 9:6, where it is said that *mamzēr* shall dwell in Ashdod. In this case the LXX translates *mamzēr* as ἀλλογενεῖς "foreigners."[169] Whatever the precise meaning of *mamzēr,* the juxtapositioning of this with the law against Ammonite and Moabite entrance into the assembly of Yahweh, including the repetition of "even until the tenth generation" (vv. 3b, 4b [ET 2b, 3b]), makes it tempting to see a connection between this and the story of Lot and his daughters in Gen 19. However, as Mayes notes, had the writer known of Gen 19, it seems rather likely that he would have referenced it explicitly (Mayes 1981: 316). This may be reason to see the incestuous story of Lot and his daughters in Gen 19 as based on Deut 23:2–9, which would be one more instance of the Yahwist working with material from Deuteronomy.

The basis for this prohibition is rooted in the failure of the Ammonites and Moab to meet Israel with food and water when the Israelites came up out of Egypt and because they hired Balaam to curse the Israelites (vv. 5–6 [ET 4–5]).[170] As Mayes has argued convincingly, the law against Ammonites and Moabites entering the assembly of Yahweh seems to have been the subject of some additions later on in an attempt to explain the reasoning behind the law (Mayes 1981: 316). The assertion that Moab and the Ammonites did not supply food and water plays on the silence on this matter

[169] The precise origin and meaning of this Hebrew noun is obscure. Besides that proposed by Christensen, it could be a *maqtil* formation from the root *mzr*, but *mzr* I "to spread out" (*HALOT* 1: 566) is a conjectured root based on a participle that occurs as a hapax legomenon and *mzr* II is given as derived from our word here and *māzôr* I meaning "sore, ucler, boil" (*HALOT* 1: 565). Talmudic understanding of the word interpreted it to relate to connections forbidden in the Torah (Jastrow 2005 [1903]: 794). It is tempting to see the root as a secondary formation from *zār* "foreign, strange" for which the normal verbal root is *zwr*. However, this is not easily demonstrated.

[170] The Ammonites are not otherwise implicated in the Balaam incident in Num 22–24, nor are the Ammonites or Moab said to have denied food and water to Israel in any of the accounts of the journey through the Transjordan. Deut 2:29, in fact, indicates that the Edomites and Moabites did give food and water to the Israelites. Moreover, Edom, Moab, and Sihon are the only ones that the are explicitly connected with a request for food and water, never the Ammonites (Deut 2:6, 28, 29: Num 20:19; 21:22). Finally, the story of Balaam (Num 22–24) implicates only Moab.

concerning the Ammonites in the traditions about the Israelite journey through the Transjordan, and ignores the statement in Deut 2:29 that says Moab provided material support. Moreover, the insertion in v. 5b [ET 4b] that indicates Moab hired Balaam is awkward because the verb "to hire" in the MT is third masculine singular, matching the tradition in Num 22–24 that has only Moab doing this, while in v. 5a [ET 4a] it uses the third masculine plural to refer to Moab and the Ammonites.[171]

The final sentence in v. 7 [ET 6] reads *lōʾ tidrōš šĕlōmām wĕṭōbātām kāl yāmêkā lĕʿôlām* "You shall not seek their welfare or their good all the days of your life, forever." Hillers proposes that this implies a treaty because Akkadian treaties use the exactly equivalent words *ṭūbtu u sulummû* to describe the relationship (Hillers 1964), and commentators have followed this line of thought (Christensen 2002: 537; Mayes 1981: 317). The idea then is that the Israelites are prohibited from making friendship treaties with the Ammonites and Moabites. This whole treatment of the Ammonites and Moabites stands in contrast to vv. 8–9 [ET 7–8] where the Israelites are told not to "abhor" (*tʿb*) the Edomites and Egyptians. The idea that Edom is *ʾāḥîkā*, "your brother" may be a technical word for treaty partners (Mayes 1981: 317) and thus presupposes the equal status of Edom and Judah/Israel.

The aim of the prohibition against Ammonites and Moabites entering the assembly of Yahweh, that is the assembly of "fully enfranchised male citizens (Mayes 1981: 315; cf. Christensen 2002: 537–8), may well have been to prohibit offspring of

[171] A miniscule manuscript of the LXX and the Vulgate contain the third plural here. However, the MT and the rest of the LXX evidence points to the singular, arguing in favor of this being the best reading. The texts that change it to a plural can be accounted for based on attempts at harmonization.

mixed marriages from gaining power in the assembly.[172] Such a move is likely connected with attempts to construct a narrow version of "Israelite" identity as the books of Ezra-Nehemiah do.

4.3.2 The Deuteronomistic History—Joshua–2 Kings

One first meets the Ammonites in the DH in the account of the judge Ehud, who frees the Israelites from Eglon of Moab. The Ammonites are mentioned at the beginning of this account as having allied themselves with Eglon (Judg 3:13), but the rest of the story proceeds without mentioning them again. Jephthah the Gileadite judge also encounters the Ammonites (Judg 11), to whom Yahweh had given the Israelites for worshipping foreign gods (Judg 10:6–9). Not only did the Ammonites oppress the Israelites in the Transjordan, but they also crossed the Jordan to fight the Israelites there (Judg 10:8–9). In the course of time, Jephthah becomes the leader and he confronts the unnamed king of the Ammonites who is waging war against Gilead. It is clear from this narrative that the issue is territorial and Jephthah reuses the story about the journey through the Transjordan to demonstrate that the land the Ammonites are trying to take was really Amorite land that Yahweh gave to Israel (Judg 11:19–23). Thus, the Ammonites should be content with what their god gave them (Judg 11:24). The Ammonites do not accept the story and so Jephthah fights them, takes twenty towns and subjugates the Ammonites (Judg 11:33).

It is not until 1 Sam 11:1–11[173] that one again hears of the Ammonites. In this case, Nahash the Ammonite is oppressing the Gadites and Reubenites and eventually

[172] That this may refer to mixed marriages and not only "pure" Ammonites, is supported by the application of this law in Neh 3:1–3, where upon hearing this law, or one like it, the people are said to have separated all the *ʿēreb* from Israel. The noun seems to carry the idea of the verbal root, *ʿrb* II, which has to do with mixing or combining (*HALOT* 1: 877). Thus, it is not just that they got rid of foreigners, though that seems to be part of it, but that they also removed those who had mixed "Israelite" and foreign descent (cf. Neh 13:23–7 and also Ezra 9–10).

besieges the town of Jabesh. Without hope, the people of Jabesh send to Israel for help. Saul, in the inauguration of his leadership, musters Israel and Judah and delivers Jabesh from the Ammonites. The Ammonites are mentioned once again in a list of those peoples Saul had fought against on behalf of Israel (1 Sam 14:47). Later, once David has become king, we hear the story of Hanun, the son of Nahash the Ammonite, who rebels against David (2 Sam 10:1–5). In this passage, David indicates that Nahash, Hanun's father, had done *ḥesed*, "loyalty, kindness" with him (2 Sam 10:2). Perhaps this verse portrays a formal relationship of vassalage initiated early when David had subjected the region (2 Sam 8:12), and broken at the time of the change of power. In any case, the Ammonites hire Arameans and others to help them in their defense. Upon hearing this, David sends out Joab and the army (2 Sam 10:6–8). Joab defeats the coalition and returns to Jerusalem (2 Sam 10:9–14). The narrative continues in 2 Sam 11, where the siege of Rabbah of the Ammonites becomes the scene for the execution of Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba's husband. Following this and Nathan's denunciation of David in 2 Sam 12, one finds Joab again fighting Rabbah (2 Sam 12:26). Close to the end of the siege, Joab summons David to finish the task, for if David does not, Joab indicates that "my name will be called upon it" (2 Sam 12:28), perhaps meaning it will become his possession. David arrives, captures the city, takes the crown of their king,[174] takes spoils, and puts the people to work at forced labor (2 Sam 12:29–31). Later, when David flees Jerusalem due to the rebellion of Absalom, one hears of Shobi, the son of

[173] To the MT, one might add a section of material from 4QSam[a] col. 10, lines 6–9. For a discussion of how the 4QSam[a] text fits with the MT, see Cross 1983. However, Dion makes a strong argument that the extra material in 4QSam[a] is actually a midrashic expansion (Dion 2003: 496 n. 27; Rofé 1982). While 1 Sam 11:1–11 in the MT does not use the title "king" for Nahash, this title is found in 1 Sam 12:12, which sees the aggression of Nahash, king of the Ammonites, as the proximate reason why Israel asked for a king.

[174] MT has *malkām* "Their king." One Hebrew manuscript has *mlkh*, "its king" and LXX recensions of Origen and Lucian interpret it as a name, i.e., that of the god Milkom.

Nahash,[175] as giving David and his men food (2 Sam 17:27–29).[176] Furthermore, one of David's valiant warriors was a certain Zelek the Ammonite (2 Sam 23:37).

Solomon is said to have had many foreign wives, including Ammonite women (1 Kgs 11:1). These women caused him to worship other gods and build *bāmôt*, "high places" for them, including one for Milkom of the Ammonites (1 Kgs 11:4–8, 33). The deuteronomist sees this as a violation of Deut 7:3–4, the law against intermarriage. Continuing in this vein, the text records the mother of Solomon's son Rehoboam as Naamah the Ammonitess (1 Kgs 14:21, 31). What is interesting is that from here, one next hears about the Ammonites in 2 Kgs 23:13 in relation to the *bāmâ* that was built for Milkom by Solomon, and which Josiah then destroyed. Finally, in 2 Kgs 24:2, which indicates that after Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, Yahweh sent "Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against him." Thus, at least in terms of the inner biblical chronology, no Ammonites are mentioned for some three hundred years, from the United Monarchy almost all the way to the Babylonian destruction of Judah.

4.3.2.1 The Jephthah Narrative (Judg 10:6–12:7)

The discussion of the historicity of the biblical description of the journey through the Transjordan arrived at a largely negative conclusion. Now, the Jephthah

[175] Apparently, Shobi is another son of Nahash (other than the rebellious Hanun), who remained loyal to David. If one decides that the narratives are historical, Shobi may have been another son of Nahash, who was placed on the throne by David after the rebellion of Hanun. If this is the case, Shobi is here doing what a vassal should do, namely provide for his sovereign in time of war.

[176] The notice just before this indicates that Absalom replaced Joab with his cousin Amasa (2 Sam 17:25). Both Amasa and Joab are said to be grandsons of Nahash, Amasa by his daughter Abigal and Joab by his daughter Zeruiah (v. 25). It is possible then that the text indicates intermarriage here between David and Nahash. Some LXX manuscripts read "Jesse," a relationship also made in 1 Chr 2:16–17. In this case, the military commanders are not related to the Ammonite king, but rather as cousins via David's sisters.

narrative reuses that story to depict a territorial struggle between Israel (basically the Gileadites) and the Ammonites. Neither the deuteronomistic introduction (Judg 10:6–18) nor the negotiations that reiterate the story of the journey through the Transjordan (Judg 11:12–28) are reliable historical witnesses. Both are exilic at the earliest, and the negotiations are clearly dependent on the material from Deut 2:26–37, which it was concluded above, can tell us little of historical value for this early period. The notion in 11:12, 14, and 28 that the Ammonites had a king at this time cannot be sustained. The details of the war (Judg 10:17–18; 11:4, 32–33) are sparse and provide little of historical value for any period. Exceptions to this may be the toponyms mentioned in 11:33, but as Dion notes, these sites cannot as yet be identified with any confidence (Dion 2003: 495; MacDonald 2000: 165–8).[177] Even if one accepts the idea that the text preserves the memory of a real warrior who fought the Ammonites before the United Monarchy existed, the actual gain of information would be small. The account may indicate a later period of conflict closer to the time of writing, but the details of the narrative provide little by way of chronological or historical markers that could help us date possible events.

4.3.2.2 Saul and the Ammonites (1 Sam 1:1–11)

Recent work on the history of Israel has suggested that the Saul presented in the biblical narrative may be a real historical reference to a chieftain in the central hill country (Miller and Hayes 2006: 135–45). Developments in the archaeological picture of the region suggest the growth of Gibeah as a higher level site and correspond to the

[177] Cf. Naʾaman (Naʾaman 1995a; Naʾaman 1995b), where he restores Minnith and Abel-keramim in two Assyrian texts and attempts to show that northern Transjordan was in Damascene hands when Tiglath-pileser III attacked the region. Naʾaman does not correlate his findings with this passage, but it is interesting to note the parallel geographic references. Further study may help clarify whether this correlation is meaningful or accidental.

interpretation of this site as Saul's home base (Miller 2005: 118). However, the possible existence of a tribal chieftain named Saul does not establish the historicity of the various accounts about him. In the present case, one may question the historical value of the story because it appears to have been created as the second part of a ritual sequence in which a king elect must prove his valor as a warrior before actually taking up his kingship as he does in 1 Sam 11:14–15 (Edelman 1984). Other aspects of the story, including the large number of troops mustered (1 Sam 11:8) and the idea that Nahash the Ammonite would allow the people of Jabesh-gilead seven days to send for help (1 Sam 11:3) also undermine its credibility. Thus, while Saul and his adversary Nahash may have been historical figures, the work of the author to fit this material into a preconceived literary form undermines one's ability to distinguish what facets of the story may be real historical incidents. As with the passages from Deut 2–3 and Judg 11, 1 Sam 11:1–11 recognizes or asserts an Israelite/Judahite claim to territory in the Transjordan, and as such may represent some later period of conflict.

4.3.2.3 David, Solomon, Josiah, and the Ammonites

Though there is a general consensus that a David did exist, it is also quite clear that most scholars working on the subject see the biblical texts as embellishing the stories about him to greater or lesser extent (Grabbe 2007: 121–2; Finkelstein 2007a; Mazar 2007c; Miller and Hayes 2006: 159–84). For present purposes, the question is whether it is plausible that a warlord of the relatively small Cisjordanian highlands subdued all the surrounding peoples, including the Ammonites.

The account of David subduing all the nations around him in 2 Sam 8 is in its present placement meant to highlight the blessing that David had just received from Yahweh in the preceding chapter. The use of military victory to show Yahweh's blessing

on an individual is a rather common motif attested in Joshua and Judges, and points to the possibility that the authors of such texts are not as interested in history as they are in following a literary topos. Moreover, the rather sweeping range of what David conquered—from the Aramean polities of Damascus and Zobah in the north, to the Philistine coast, to the whole of Transjordan—appears idealized and less than likely. On the whole then, though David's existence as a warlord in the Judean highlands may well retain a historical memory, it is at present difficult to corroborate the assertion of Ammonite vassalage to Judah in the tenth century, much less the specifics of the battle accounts in 2 Sam 10–12.

The notion of ongoing relations between Judah and the Ammonites seems to have lodged in the memory of the biblical writers as attested by the story about Shobi, the son of Nahash, who gives David and his men food (2 Sam 17:27–29). The relationship continues, at least on the literary level, with one of David's valiant warriors being Ammonite (2 Sam 23:37), and Solomon having Ammonite wives (1 Kgs 11:1), one of whom was Rehoboam's mother (1 Kgs 14:21, 31). Such accounts are possible given ancient diplomatic practices that included marriage, but Solomon's reign is so idealized in the biblical text that it is difficult to be sure one way or the other (Miller and Hayes 2006: 186–7, 197).

On the narrative level, whatever one makes of the issues of historicity, David and Solomon's interactions with the Ammonites (and other groups) set the stage for Josiah's reforms in 2 Kgs 22–23. David of course is the "good" king who subdues all the surrounding groups and who apparently avoids corruption from outside religious influences. On the other hand, Solomon's attachment to foreign women eventually corrupted him ("his heart turned away from Yahweh," 1 Kgs 11:9). This attachment

then led him to build *bāmôt* for their deities, specifically Astarte of the Sidonians, Chemosh of the Moabites, and Milkom of the Ammonites (1 Kgs 11:4–8, 33). These deities are the ones that the DH singles out as having *bāmôt* that Solomon built and that Josiah tore down (2 Kgs 23:13). This narrative scheme, setting up Josiah to become the second David and reverse the downhill slide that Solomon began, calls into question the historical value of the accounts of Ammonite interaction with David and Solomon, because they were written in order to set up the later reversal in the time of Josiah. Thus, in the end, while there may be some historical memory of Ammonite interactions with David and Solomon, one must consider the very real possibility that the deuteronomistic historian wrote about them as one way of creating a "historical background" for Josiah's reforms.

4.3.2.4 2 Kings 24:2

Finally, in 2 Kgs 24:1 one reads that Jehoiakim, the king of Judah (609–598 BCE), became Nebuchadnezzar's "servant" for three years before rebelling. This rebellion occurred in Nebuchadnezzar's year five or six when he was preoccupied with other matters. In 2 Kgs 24:2, one reads that "Yahweh[178] sent out against him [Jehoiakim] Babylonian troops, Aramean troops, Moabite troops, Ammonites troops; he sent them against Judah in order to destroy it according to the word of Yahweh, which he spoke by the hand of his servants the prophets." There is no way to corroborate this account; the Babylonian Chronicles do not mention Nebuchadnezzar's use of auxiliary troops in his siege of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar's year seven (Grayson 1975: 102,

[178] The LXX omits "Yahweh" and so presents Nebuchadnezzar as the subject of the sending out of the troops. The ideology that Yahweh would send destructive forces is not out of place in the account and is probably to be preferred since removing Yahweh as the subject makes Jehoiakim the immediate antecedent of the third masculine singular verb (Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 306).

Chron. 5:11–13). One might also suggest that the theme of Yahweh punishing wicked kings by sending adversaries makes this verse historically suspect. In favor of the historical reliability of v. 2 is the attested use of garrisons and auxiliary troops conscripted from local populations in the Neo-Babylonian Empire (Chapter 5). The use of such troops would be connected to loyalty oaths that, like their Neo-Assyrian counterparts, required vassals to assist the empire militarily. The Ammonites' vassalage to Nebuchadnezzar was probably recognized officially in one of Nebuchadnezzar's first six campaigns (605/5–599/8 BCE). One hears explicitly concerning the campaign of his first full year (604/3 BCE) that, "All the kings of Hattu came into his presence and he received their vast tribute" (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5:17). Thus, one may say that the historical background comports well with the outlines of the biblical text, indicating that it might contain genuine information about Ammonite military cooperation with Babylon.

4.4 The Yahwist—Genesis 19:30–38

As discussed above in the examination of the Israelite journey through Transjordan, the Yahwist's account in Num 20–21 is dependent on Deuteronomy and thus post-dates it. Likewise, the Yahwist's account of Abraham's nephew Lot and the settlement of his descendants in the Transjordan in Gen 19:30–38 dates to the same time. In the story, Lot escapes the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with his two daughters and settles in the hills. Afraid that they may never have children because there are no men around, Lot's daughters get him drunk, have sex with him, and eventually give birth to the eponymous ancestors of Moab and the Ammonites. As with much of the genealogical material in Genesis, the story of Lot and his daughters explains by genealogy and itinerary how Israel's neighbors came to be (Van Seters

1992: 202–4). Moreover, since genealogy was one of the metaphors available for articulating relationships between groups, the Lot narrative establishes the relative cultural closeness of the Ammonites and Moabites to Judah and Israel, at least as perceived by the author. The same sense of cultural closeness is represented in Deut 2, the only other place in the Hebrew Bible where Lot is mentioned other than in Gen 11–19 and a brief mention in Ps 83:8.[179] Deuteronomy 2:9 and 19 designate the Moabites and Ammonites as "sons of Lot" and indicate that Yahweh has dispossessed the ancient Rephaim and has given the Moabites and Ammonites their land. This is the reason why the Israelites were not to bother the Moabites or Ammonites (Deut 2:10–11, 20–21). Similarly, Yahweh commanded the Israelites not to bother the "sons of Esau" (=Edom) because Yahweh has dispossessed the Rephaim and given them their land (Deut 2:5, 12, 22). The invocation of a close genealogical relationship and of Yahweh's action on behalf of the Ammonites, Moab, and Edom, serves as the grounds for *not* dispossessing them and *not* applying to them the *ḥerem*, or ritual slaughter (contrast the treatment of Sihon and Og; Deut 2:24–3:11). Thus, despite the animosity represented between the Ammonites, Israel, and Judah in other texts, Gen 19:30–38 constitutes a recognition of cultural relatedness sometime in the exilic or post-exilic periods.[180]

[179] In Ps 83:8, the "children of Lot" may be understood as a poetic parallel to the peoples mentioned in vv. 6–7, which include Edom, Ishmael, Moab, Hagrites, Byblos, Ammon, and Amalek, or they may have been thought of as a separate entity altogether.

[180] It is true that Gen 19 is not entirely flattering to the Ammonites and Moab. Not only do they descend from incestuous relations, but also on the larger narrative level, Yahweh has chosen Abraham and not Lot. It is to Abraham that Yahweh promises the Land after he parts ways with Lot (Gen 13:14–17). It is Abraham who saves Lot from captivity to Chedarlaomer and his allies (Gen 14:1–16), and who pleads with Yahweh to save the righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah where Lot lives (Gen 18:16–33). On the matter of the Yahwist's view of the Ammonites, Heard has recently argued that the ambiguity in the narrative points to the one thing that is not ambiguous: the destinies of Abraham and Lot and their descendants are and must be separate (Heard 2001: 172–4). Heard sees this against the background of Persian period Yehud in which the elite group of returnees was attempting to assert their rightful claim to the land because they were in fact descendants of the inhabitants to whom Yahweh gave the land.

4.5 Other Biblical and Deuterocanonical Texts

A few other texts in the Hebrew Bible mention Ammon, including Ps 83:7 and Dan 11:41, as well as a number of references in the deuterocanonical books of Judith and 1 and 2 Maccabees. The references to Ammon in Dan 11:41 and those in the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees were all written in and deal with the second century BCE, and are thus not relevant for the present study. Psalm 83 on the other hand, could date to the pre-exilic, exilic, or post-exilic period (Hossfeld and Zenger 2005: 340–1) and might contribute something to an understanding of the Ammonites. The psalm lists Ammon alongside Edom, the Ishmaelites, Moab, the Hagrites, Gebal (Byblos), Amalek, Philistia, Tyre, and Assyria as conspiring against "Israel" to plot her end (vv. 5–9 [ET vv. 4–8]). The psalmist then calls for God to destroy them (vv. 10–19 [ET vv. 9–18]). While one might search for a particular historical setting when all these nations fought against Israel or Judah, it is more likely that the list of nations is a symbolic representation of "Israel's" enemies rather than a reference to any specific instance (Hossfeld and Zenger 2005: 342). There is thus little one can glean about Iron Age Ammon from this psalm.

The book of Judith was written in the second or first century BCE (Moore 1985: 67) and tells the story of how the Israelite woman Judith single-handedly kills the Assyrian general Holofernes and thus brings an end to the Assyrian siege of the tiny Israelite town of Bethuliah. The Ammonites figure in the story in two ways. One of the Ammonite leaders named Achior informs the Assyrians how they will not be able to defeat the Israelites unless the Israelites sin against their god. For this pronouncement, Holofernes promises to kill him, but in the end, Achior is vindicated (Jdt 5–6, 14:5–10). The Ammonite army also appears in the story, having been recruited to help the

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Moreover, he goes on to say that this was in part the result of the Persians saying that the returnees were *the* Jews (Heard 2001: 8–22).

Assyrians in their siege (Jdt 7:17–18). While the story of Judith is widely recognized as one of the most humorous and interesting of the deuterocanonical books, it is also full of historical errors. Of special note is that Nebuchadnezzar is portrayed as the king of Assyria (Jdt 1:1). The historical errors make it clear the author was out to tell a good story and not concerned about accurately portraying past events (Moore 1985: 38–49). Therefore, the details concerning the Ammonites in this work cannot be taken as reliable reflections of any real event occurring in the Iron Age.

4.6 Josephus, Antiquities 10.9.7

Scholars addressing the history of the southern Levant in the Neo-Babylonian Period frequently refer to Josephus, *Ant.* 10.9.7 as possible evidence for a Babylonian attack on the Ammonites and Moabites in the year 582 BCE.[181] Many scholars who cite it qualify their citation in one way or another, especially with regard to the campaign against Egypt (*Ant.* 10.182). The main objection there is that Josephus states that Nebuchadnezzar killed the Pharaoh and replaced him, an act which is impossible for 582 since Pharaoh Hophra reigned from 589 to 570 BCE (e.g., Bright 1981: 352; Lindsay 1976: 28; Miller and Hayes 2006: 486). Few scholars challenge the whole of the account directly.[182] This section examines the passage in order to assess where Josephus got his information and whether one can consider it an independent historical source.

[181] Ahlström 1993: 808; Barstad 1996: 57–8; Bienkowski 2001a: 269; Bright 1981: 352; Ephʿal 1984: 178; Herr 1995: 124; Herr 1999: 232; Herr 2002: 18; Hübner 1992: 202, 205; Katzenstein 1997: 335–9; Lemaire 1994b: 13; Lindsay 1976: 27–9; Lipschits 2004: 40; Lipschits 2005: 67; Lundbom 2004b: 533; Miller 1989b: 26; Miller and Hayes 2006: 486; Noth 1960: 293–4; Spalinger 1977: 236. Several works in which one might expect a reference to this passage, leave it out (e.g., Grabbe 2004; Grabbe 2007 and Liverani 2005).

[182] Routledge cites it, but offers other possible scenarios for Moab's decline that he seems to prefer (Routledge 2004: 210–12). Even though he cites it as possible evidence, Bright offers the strongest critique when he states, "Since Josephus has Nebuchadnezzar on this campaign invade Egypt, kill the Pharaoh, and remove Jews there to Babylon (all incorrect), one hesitates to trust his account" (Bright 1981: 352 n. 25).

To anticipate, this author's contention is that Josephus creatively built his account of Nebuchadnezzar's 582 BCE campaign from the text of Jeremiah, and as such, provides no independent witness to such a campaign.

4.6.1 Josephus and the Text of Jeremiah

Defining the relationship between Josephus' account and the parallel material in Jeremiah is important for evaluating the historical value of Josephus' narrative. Begg's analysis of Josephus' sources and the compositional strategy of *Ant.* 10.9.1–10.9.7 underscores Josephus' dependence on Jer 40–52 at many points. Josephus' compositional strategies in this narrative include adding to/expanding, compressing, rearranging, adapting/modifying, retouching characterizations, and specifying matters that his source or sources leave to inference. It will become clear in what follows that *Ant.* 10.9.7 is no exception to the rule.

Antiquities 10.9.7 appears at the end of a narrative that describes the events transpiring after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. In the sections preceding 10.9.7, Josephus summarizes the narrative he found in Jeremiah 39:11–41:18 with a few modifications, expansions, and the like.[183] The Babylonians appoint a non-royal Judean named Gedaliah to govern the land. A man named Ishmael, who was apparently of the royal line, takes refuge with the king of the Ammonites. Eventually he and his men assassinate Gedaliah and kill others in the city of Mizpah, including Chaldeans (Babylonians) who were stationed there. Ishmael takes captives and heads for Ammon. However, a group of Judean military personnel led by Joannes overtakes Ishmael and releases his captives, but Ishmael and some of his men escape to Ammon. Afraid of

[183] For analysis of this section of material consult Begg 2000: 599–613 and Begg and Spilsbury 2005: 256–62.

Babylonian reprisals for the bloodshed, Joannes and his men decide to make their way to Egypt (*Ant.* 10.9.1–5). Next, Josephus compresses into a few short paragraphs (10.9.6) the biblical narrative found in Jer 42:1–43:7. This narrative describes a request to Jeremiah to consult God and ascertain whether the Judeans should flee to Egypt (Jer 42:1–6), Jeremiah's negative answer (Jer 42:7–22), and Joannes' decision to go anyway and take an unwilling Jeremiah with him (Jer 43:1–7).

Josephus continues the story in 10.9.7, which he structures using a prediction and fulfillment scheme. The prediction runs as follows:

> [**180**] But, when they came there [i.e., the Judeans arrived in Egypt], the Deity revealed to the prophet [i.e., Jeremiah] that the king of Babylonia was about to march against the Egyptians, and He bade the prophet to foretell to the people that Egypt would be taken and that the Babylonian king would kill some of them and would take the rest captive and carry them off to Babylon (*Ant.* 10.9.7 [Marcus, LCL]).

Josephus builds the prediction (10.180) on Jeremiah chapters 43 and 44. In these chapters, Jeremiah delivers an oracle predicting that Nebuchadnezzar will invade Egypt and that the Judeans who fled there will be destroyed (Jer 43:8–44:30). The people respond negatively to this (Jer 44:15–19) and Jeremiah parries by saying that their negative response is just what brought judgment on Judah in the first place. He then reiterates the destruction that will come upon them (Jer 44:20–28). As a sign to the Judeans, Jeremiah says that Yahweh is going to give Pharaoh Hophra (Apries) into the hands of his enemies just as he gave Zedekiah of Judah into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 44:29–30). Josephus' technique here is to compress the extended oracle about the invasion of Egypt down to its essence: an invasion by the king of Babylon that would result in Judean deportations.

Now one comes to the fulfillment section of our passage (§§ 181–2),[184] and the nub of the problem. The text reads:

> [**181**] And so it happened; for in the fifth year after the sacking of Jerusalem, which was the twenty-third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar marched against Coele-Syria and, after occupying it, made war both on the Moabites and the Ammanites. [**182**] Then, after making these nations subject to him, he invaded Egypt in order to subdue it, and, having killed the king who was then reigning and appointed another, he again took captive the Jews who were in the country and carried them to Babylon (*Ant.* 10.9.7 [Marcus, LCL]).

Josephus, who followed Jeremiah's text closely until this point, was faced with a non-narrative section of text that does not indicate the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Judeans in Egypt would be punished. Instead, Josephus faced a series of oracles composed mostly in verse and concluded with a historical appendix. The first of these is a brief oracle to Jeremiah's scribe Baruch (Jer 45). After this, Jer 46–51 consists of a series of "oracles against the nations" (OAN) that proclaim the destruction of Egypt

[184] Nebuchadnezzar's march to Coele-Syria in Josephus' telling of this campaign provides the circumstances in which Nebuchadnezzar then subdued the Moabites and Ammonites. Josephus writes, *strateuei nabouchodonosoros epi tēn koilēn surian kai kataschōn autēn epolemēse kai mōabitais kai ammanitais. poēsamenos de upēkoa tauta ta ethnē enebalen eis tēn aigupton*, "Nebuchadnezzar marched against Coele-Syria, and occupying it, he made war upon both the Moabites and the Ammonites. Then, making these nations subject/obedient, he invaded Egypt . . ." Josephus' narrative at least does not have to mean that he subdued the whole of Coele-Syria, but that while occupying it (note the participle) he made war on the Moabites and Ammonites. A study of the use of Coele-Syria in Greek sources shows that the referant of Coele-Syria changes over time and from author to author. Generally, however, it included the inland areas of Damascus, Samaria, and areas east of the Jordan River Smith 1992. This conclusion comports with Josephus' usage of the term. One important example appears in *Ag. Ap.* 1.133, where Josephus summarizes part of an account from Berosus by refering to Egypt, Syria, Phoenicia, and Arabia. Josephus then quotes the text he just summarized and there one finds Berosus speaking of Egypt, Coele-Syria, and Phoenicia (*Ag. Ap.* 1.135). This suggests the basic identity of Coele-Syria with Syria and Arabia, or in other words, non-coastal areas, perhaps excluding Samaria. In *Ant.* 1.206, Josephus retells the story of Gen 19, in which Lot's daughters give birth to the eponymous ancestors of the Moabites and the Ammonites, and then includes them both as people of Coele-Syria. It seems likely then that the campaign Josephus envisions is one in which Nebuchadnezzar's presence in Coele-Syria is the prerequisite, upon which he subdues a portion of it, *viz.*, the Moabites and the Ammonites. Thus, Josephus' narrative need not mean that Nebuchadnezzar campaigned against the whole region.

(46), the Philistines (47), Moab (48), the Ammonites (49:1–6), Edom (49:7–22), Damascus (49:23–27), Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor (49:28–33), Elam (49:34–39), and Babylon (50–51). Of these OAN, only the first oracle against Egypt (46:1–12), the one against the Philistines (Jer 47), and those against Babylon (50–1) have any kind of date formula associated with them. The final chapter of the book, Jeremiah 52, is a historical appendix that repeats information known from elsewhere (2 Kgs 24:18–25:30 and Jer 19:1–10) about Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem. It concludes with three verses that summarize the Babylonian deportations from Judah (52:28–30), and a note on king Jehoiachin's release from prison in Babylon (paralleled nearly verbatim in 2 Kgs 25:27–30). The question then is: If the text of Jeremiah does not include a fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy to the Judeans in Egypt, how did Josephus come up with his narrative? A few items in Josephus' and Jeremiah's texts suggest a solution.

First, the date: Josephus states that the Babylonian campaign took place "in the fifth year after the sacking of Jerusalem, which was the twenty-third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" (*Ant.* 10.9.7 §181 [Marcus, LCL]). The most obvious source for the date is Jer 52:30, which is part of the list of Babylonian deportations carried out in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh (598/7), eighteenth (587/6),[185] and twenty-third years (582/1). The text of Jer 52:29–30a reads, "in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, he deported 832 people from Jerusalem; in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, deported 745 Judeans."[186] No other known text, biblical or otherwise, mentions Babylonian military activity in the Levant in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year. Since Josephus has followed the text of Jeremiah

[185] On the discrepancy between the eighteenth year here and the ninteenth year mentioned in 2 Kgs 25:8, see Lundbom 2004b: 533.

[186] Josephus is dealing with the MT tradition, as the LXX does not contain this summary of deportations.

up until now, it stands to reason that he got his date from the biblical text (Katzenstein 1997: 336 n. 218).

This conclusion is strengthened by Josephus' statement that the campaign took place in the fifth year after Jerusalem's destruction (*Ant.* 10.181). The dates given in Jer 52:29–30 specify Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth and twenty-third years as two of the instances that Judeans were deported.[187] The difference, of course, is five years. This is crucial because only a few verses earlier in Jer 52:12–16, and its parallel in 2 Kgs 25:8–12, the Temple is said to have been destroyed and Judeans deported in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year. Josephus' explicit reference to the difference in years between the destruction of Jerusalem and the campaign he is concerned with, makes his use of Jer 52:30 as the source of his date very likely.[188]

This accounts for the date, but how to account for a campaign when Jer 52:30 only reports the deportation of 745 Judeans by Nebuchadnezzar's captain Nebuzaradan. The answer to this lies in the fact that such a deportation makes the most sense in the context of a military campaign. Given how laconic Jer 52:30 is, Josephus could easily draw the conclusion that there was more to this event than simply a deportation of 745 Judeans.

Next, the inclusion of the Moabites and the Ammonites in Josephus' account of Nebuchadnezzar's campaign needs explanation. Both Jeremiah and Josephus state that Gedaliah's assassin Ishmael had the support of the king of the Ammonites (Jer 40:14;

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[187] Although the text of Jeremiah 52:29–30 does not say that the eighteenth year was the year when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, it seems to imply this when it states that the people deported in that year were from Jerusalem (v. 29). Furthermore, in *Ag. Ap.* 1.154 Josephus refers explicitly to the eighteenth year as the year that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple and adds that this information comes from "our books."

[188] He probably picked up on this as a reasonable date for a post-586 BCE campaign that he could use for his prediction and fulfillment scheme (Begg 2000: 617).

41:10; *Ant.* 10.164, 174). Furthermore, Jer 41:18 and *Ant.* 10.175 portray the Judeans as scared of Babylonian reprisals for the assassination of a Babylonian appointee. It would be a simple step in creating a narrative to infer that the Babylonians would attack the Ammonites because of their collusion in the assassination. Not surprisingly, a variety of scholars make this inference exactly.[189] This would account for the Ammonites.

One can account for the extension of the attack to the Moabites by the regular pairing of the Moabites and Ammonites in Josephus' writings. Consider the following examples in addition to the present occurrence:

1. Ant. 1.206—Retells the story of Gen 19, where Lot's daughters give birth to the eponymous ancestors of Moab and Ammon.
2. Ant. 6.90—A retelling of how God delivered the Israelites from Egypt and then subdued their enemies, first the Assyrians, then the Ammonites and Moabites, and finally the Philistines.
3. Ant. 6.129—Saul is said to have subjugated the Ammonites, Moabites, Philistines, Idumeans, Amalekites, and Soba.
4. Ant. 9.7—The Moabites, Ammonites, and Arabs appear as enemies of the Judean king Jehoshaphat.
5. Ant. 11.19—The people in Syria, Phoenicia, Amman, Moab, and Samaria write a letter to Cyrus in order to hinder the Jews from rebuilding Jerusalem.

As these examples illustrate, the Ammonites and Moabites (or in reverse order) appear together alongside various other groupings. They also appear separately, but never appear without each other in lists, which is the situation we have here. Perhaps their genealogical relation makes this pairing natural, but whatever the reason, the pairing of

[189] Herr 1995: 124; Herr 1999: 232; Lindsay 1976: 27–8; Lundbom 2004b: 533; Miller and Hayes 2006: 486.

the two peoples, especially as enemies of Judah, may account for the inclusion of the Moabites where one would not otherwise expect them.[190]

If collusion in the assassination of Gedaliah is the motive for including the Ammonites in Nebuchadnezzar's campaign, the OAN in Jer 46–51 may have provided the inspiration. These oracles proclaim the destruction of Judah's enemies including Moab (48) and the Ammonites (49:1–6), both of which are the objects of *undated* oracles. The position of these oracles following the prophecies that the Judeans would be punished in Egypt (Jer 42–44), makes it likely that the OAN are the inspiration behind Josephus' narrative fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy.[191] That is to say, Josephus took these oracles as indicating the assured destruction of the nations mentioned therein. As a result, it was a matter of simple inference to portray them as the objects of a Babylonian attack.

One can make a similar case for Egypt. In addition to Jeremiah's prophecy in 43:8–13, which foretells Nebuchadnezzar attacking Egypt, two OAN against Egypt appear in Jer 46. The first oracle against Egypt in Jer 46:2–12 contains a superscript that dates it to when Necho met Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish in 605 BCE (v. 2). Josephus was aware of this event and its relative date, as is clear from his description in *Ant.* 10.5.2. It seems unlikely that he would have turned to this for constructing the

[190] The reasons for not including other nations mentioned in the OAN can be specified in some cases while not in others. The superscription to the oracle against the Philistine (Jer 47) implies that Egypt was the aggressor, despite the reference to the waters "rising out of the north" in 47:2 that points to an aggressor from the north such as Babylon. The exclusion of Edom is not clear given the undated oracle in Jer 49:7–22, other than that Edom was not connected in any way with the assassination of Gedaliah. Damascus (Jer 49:23–27), and Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor (Jer 49:28–33) may both have been considered part of Coele-Syria and hence not otherwise noted. The exclusion of Elam (Jer 49:34–39) is explicable in terms of the orientation of the campaign to the Levant rather than to the east of Babylon. The exclusion of Babylon (Jer 50–51) is self-explanatory.

[191] Begg 2000: 617 n. 63; Begg and Spilsbury 2005: 264 n. 742; Marcus, Josephus, VI, 259 n. a.

present narrative. Jeremiah 46:13, however, introduces another oracle against Egypt with, "The word that Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the coming of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, to smite the land of Egypt." In the following verse (v. 14), there is a specific injunction for the cities of Migdol, Tahpanhes, and Memphis to be ready for battle. These are significant because Tahpanhes is the city to which Jeremiah was forcibly taken (Jer 43:7), and it is mentioned alongside Memphis and Migdol as one of the three cities in which Judeans were living in Egypt (Jer 44:1). The mention of these cities at the beginning of the second oracle against Egypt (Jer 46:13–26) makes the connection between a post-586 BCE Babylonian invasion of Egypt and the deportation of Judeans from those Egyptian cities a matter of simple inference. The line of thought would proceed more or less as follows: 1) Jeremiah (according to Josephus' construction) predicted a deportation of Jews from Egypt. 2) Jews had settled in Tahpanhes, Memphis, and Migdol. 3) The oracle against Egypt in Jer 46:13–26 indicates that Nebuchadnezzar will attack Tahpanhes, Memphis and Migdol. 4) Ergo, Nebuchadnezzar's attack against Egypt would result in the deportation of Judeans who had settled there, fulfilling the prophecy. Additionally, because the second oracle against Egypt in Jer 46:13–26 has no date attached to it, Josephus could easily connect the details that follow to nearly any campaign, including one of his own making.

Furthermore, Josephus states that Nebuchadnezzar killed the Egyptian king and replaced him with another (10.182). There is no precise statement in Jeremiah indicating that Nebuchadnezzar killed and replaced an Egyptian king. However, in Jeremiah's response to the Judeans in Egypt, he says that the Judeans will have a sign that what he has predicted will come true (Jer 44:29). The sign will be that Yahweh will "give Pharaoh Hophra (Apries), king of Eygpt, into the hand of his enemies and

into the hand of those seeking his life, just as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life" (Jer 44:30). Josephus' notice of Pharaoh's replacement appears to be what Begg and Spilsbury term "an implicit realization of Jer 44:30" (2005: 264, n. 744). Moreover, Jer 44:30 states that what will happen to Hophra is parallel to what happened to Zedekiah whom Nebuchadnezzar deposed. And what happened to Zedekiah? Nebuchadnezzar deported him and replaced him with a governor of local descent (Gedaliah), a matter about which Josephus knew (*Ant.* 9.155). It is only a matter of slight inference to suggest that the deposition of Hophra led to his replacement.

4.6.2 Other Possible Sources

It has been argued thus far that Josephus' account of a campaign in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year is explicable in terms of the information available from the book of Jeremiah and in terms of Josephus' literary method. It is also possible that Josephus used other sources for this narrative as he does elsewhere in his work (cf. Marcus, *Josephus*, VI, 259, n. a).[192] As an example, in *Ag. Ap.* 1.128–133,[193] Josephus describes what Berosus, the Chaldean historian, writes about Nebuchadnezzar, and then quotes him in *Ag. Ap.* 1.134–141. What is noticeable in Josephus' quotation of Berosus is the summarizing quality of the description. Cited here is part of Josephus' quotation of Berosus:

> His father, Nabopalassar, hearing of the defection of the satrap in charge of Egypt, Coele-Syria, and Phoenicia, and being himself unequal to the fatigues of a campaign,

[192] Lemaire thinks that Josephus based his account on Berosus (cf. *Ant.* 10.219), who probably based his account on a Babylonian Chronicle (Lemaire 1994b: 31). While possible, there is just no way to know. However, Berosus' account cited in Josephus is rather generalized and does not betray dependence on a detailed year-by-year text such as the Babylonian Chronicles.

[193] Much of this parallels *Ant.* 10.219–228.

> committed part of his army to his son Nabuchodonosor, still in the prime of his life, and sent him against the rebel. Nabuchodonosor engaged and defeated the latter in a pitched battle and replaced the district under Babylonian rule. Meanwhile, as it happened, his father Nabopalassar sickened and died in the city of Babylon, after a reign of twenty-one years. Being informed ere long of his father's death, Nabuchodonosor settled the affairs of Egypt and the other countries. The prisoners—Jews, Phoenicians, Syrians, and those of Egyptian nationality—were consigned to some of his friends, with orders to conduct them to Babylonia, along with the heavy troops and the rest of the spoils; while he himself, with a small escort, pushed across the desert to Babylon (*Ag. Ap.* 1.134–137 [Thackeray, LCL]).

In this section, Berosus is not interested in giving a blow-by-blow account of Nebuchadnezzar's reign and has apparently condensed the military activity of Nebuchadnezzar from his battle against Necho II (610–595 BCE), who is probably the "satrap" mentioned here (Begg and Spilsbury 2005: 290–1 n. 948), down to his campaigns against Judah (598/7 or 587/6 BCE).[194] If one did not know of this history from other sources, one would infer based on this citation of Berosus, that Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt and promptly subjugated all of Syro-Palestine when in fact this only began in 605 BCE at the battle of Carchemish. Josephus' summary of Berosus highlights his adaptive use of his sources. Referring to Berosus' account cited above Josephus writes:

> In his narrative of the actions of this monarch [i.e., Nabopolassar, CWT] he [i.e., Berosus, CWT] relates how he sent his son Nabuchodonosor with a large army to Egypt and to our country, on hearing that these people had revolted, and how he defeated them all, burnt the temple at Jerusalem, dislodged and transported our entire population to Babylon, with the result that the city lay desolate for seventy years until the time of Cyrus, king of Persian. He adds that the Babylonian monarch conquered

[194] Begg and Spilsbury discuss Josephus' use of Berosus, including the possibility that Josephus has altered Berosus' text when citing him (Begg and Spilsbury 2005: 290–1 n. 948).

> Egypt, Syria, Phoenicia, and Arabia, his exploits surpassing those of all previous kings of Chaldaea and Babylon (*Ag. Ap.* 1.132–133 [Thackeray, LCL]).

To judge from Josephus' quotation of Berosus, Josephus appears to summarize the same passage he quotes. In his summary, Josephus makes the compression of events more visible than Berosus by adding a reference to the burning of the temple (586 BCE). Thus, Josephus' summary of Berosus covers at least the years 605–586 BCE and is equally if not more compressed. Furthermore, the other ancient authors Josephus cites after his quotation of Berosus (*Ag. Ap.* 1.143–144) provide little evidence of the level of precision that these authors had of Babylonian history. One later quotation from "the Phoenician record" (*Ag. Ap.* 1.156–158) shows that Josephus had access to records having a reasonably high level of detail for a particular city, in this case, Tyre. However, if the passages that Josephus cites from Berosus are any indication, the narratives about Babylonian history available to Josephus were nearly as generalized as his own narrative. If Josephus did base his telling of Nebuchadnezzar's campaign in his twenty-third year on Berosus, it appears that what is relevant is Berosus' mention of military action against Egypt and Coele-Syria along with the taking of prisoners to Babylonia (*Ag. Ap.* 1.135–138). Yet, there is no reason to believe that Berosus' account included mention of the Moabites and Ammonites. For these, Josephus' most likely source is Jeremiah's OAN.

One matter that Josephus' quotation of Berosus may help clarify is the problem that Hophra reigned from 589 to 570 BCE. Obviously, this means that Nebuchadnezzar did not kill and replace him in 582 BCE. Berosus' account shows evidence for temporal telescoping. He portrays crown prince Nebuchadnezzar encountering a rebellious enemy in the Levant (i.e., Necho of Egypt) while his father Nabopolassar was still alive and

then subduing the Levant and deporting people, including Judeans, to Babylonia (*Ag. Ap.* 1.134–137). The known dates for these events, stretching from the battle of Carchemish in 605 BCE, to at least 598/7, or more probably 586/7 BCE, show that Berosus covers probably twenty years or more in his presentation. It would appear that Josephus has done the same thing by compiling his narrative from a set of undated OAN and then assigning the account a date using the date from Jer 52:30. If this is the case, one can conclude that Josephus created a realistic narrative fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies by following practices common to other ancient historiography.

4.6.3 Summary

This discussion of *Ant.* 10.9.7 has attempted to demonstrate Josephus' dependence on the text of Jeremiah for his construction of a campaign against the Moabites, Ammonites, and Egypt in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar. The key points are: 1) Josephus' use of the date from Jer 52:30; 2) Ammonite involvement in the assassination of Gedaliah and pairing with Moab; and 3) inference from undated oracles against Egypt, Moab, and the Ammonites following the prophecies that the Judeans would be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in Egypt. Taking these narrative elements together with Josephus' interest in creating a complete narrative cycle, it appears that Josephus constructed a narrative fulfillment by creating a Babylonian campaign that comports with the undated OAN and uses Jer 52:30 as its chronological benchmark.

If this conclusion is correct, Josephus' account is not an independent witness to these events, but is dependent on the less-than-straightforward material in Jeremiah. As a result, any dating of the political demise of the Ammonites, and by extension the Moabites, is completely dependent on Jeremiah's undated OAN and on any relevant

archaeological or epigraphic evidence, of which there is yet nothing that provides a high level of chronological resolution.

4.7 Conclusions

The investigation of the biblical and post-biblical sources in this chapter focused significantly on dating the biblical texts and evaluating what historical data they may preserve. The results of the attempt to date the biblical texts mentioning the Ammonites highlight the number of texts whose composition or editing took place in the late seventh century BCE or later. In fact, while dating of biblical texts is surely problematic, this study shows that there is good reason to conclude that none of the texts discussed here pre-date the late seventh century, and that most come from the sixth—fifth centuries or later.

As for the evaluation of the historical value of these texts, this study found significant reasons to doubt that the portrayal of the Ammonites, from the birth of their eponymous ancestor in Gen 19 to the United Monarchy, contained reliable historical data. On the other hand, the biblical texts help clarify Ammon's status vis-à-vis Babylon in the late seventh and sixth centuries. 2 Kgs 24:2 may indicate that the Ammonites were a vassal to Babylon around 600 BCE. Jeremiah 27 and the account of Gedaliah's assassination in Jer 40:13–41:18 on the other hand, probably show that in the early sixth century the Ammonites chose to oppose Babylon and Babylonian policy in the southern Levant. The OAN found in Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah were not found to contain much specific data about the Ammonites. Nonetheless, the determination that they are *vaticinium ex eventu* prophecy indicates that the prophetic authors or editors were well aware of the subjugation of the Ammonites by the Babylonians. They do not provide, however, a secure date for that event. Josephus'

narrative, built as it was on Jeremiah's undated oracles, was an attempt to put a date on this event.

The material in Ezra-Nehemiah, while not providing information about the Iron Age Ammonites, suggests animosity between the post-exilic leaders in Yehud and the Ammonites. This animosity during an important period of identity formation may help account for the insertion of the Ammonites as one of the "natural" enemies of Israel and Judah in the portrayals of the Judges, Saul, and the United Monarchy. The Hellenistic texts of Daniel, 1 and 2 Maccabees and Judith display a mixed tradition of presenting the Ammonites, sometimes as good, sometimes not.

Ironically, the Persian Period text of Chronicles may be the one text that preserves some scraps of evidence for the Ammonites in the ninth and eighth centuries BCE. Although this study found ideological motivations (reward and punishment) at work in the inclusion of the Ammonites, the portrayal of these texts fits reasonably well with what is known of the period. In particular, the dominance of the Cisjordanian polities (Israel and Judah) over the Transjordan is known from the ninth century Mesha Stele. However the ideological shaping of the text means that one cannot rely on these texts for data about the Iron Age.

CHAPTER 5

NEO-ASSYRIAN AND NEO-BABYLON IMPERIALISM

Chapters 2–4 highlight how the late eighth through sixth century BCE was an important period of change on the Amman Plateau. Not coincidentally, this period also saw the southern Levant incorporated into the Neo-Assyrian Empire and later the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The co-occurrence of local changes with imperial rule raises questions as to the relation of the two. How did Neo-Assyrian and then Neo-Babylonian imperial rule affect the Ammonites? In seeking the answer to this question, this chapter examines the practices that the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires used to manage their vassals and provinces and explores the Ammonite role within them. In so doing, this chapter provides the political and historical background for the discussion of the Ammonite economy (Chapter 6) and changes in Ammonite society (Chapter 7).

5.1 Neo-Assyrian Imperial Practice

After a period of decline, the emergence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire began with the reign of Assur-dan II (934–912 BCE), who set out to re-conquer old Assyrian holdings in Upper Mesopotamia. His successors, Adad-nirari II (911–891 BCE) and Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884 BCE), continued this activity into the early ninth century, thereby gaining a strong hold on Upper Mesopotamia, without, however, establishing a foothold west of the Euphrates. Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BCE) and Shalmaneser III (858–823 BCE), continued to strengthen Assyria's hold in the north and east and maintained control of areas in the west to the Euphrates. Following their reigns was a

period of relative weakness (823–745 BCE) without new conquests (Kuhrt 1995: 478–93; Van De Mieroop 2007b: 238–45). With the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE), the Neo-Assyrian Empire began to take its classic shape. Tiglath-pileser III and his successors launched a series of campaigns that would bring the whole of the ancient Near East under their control, either as provinces or as vassals (Kuhrt 1995: 493–501; Van De Mieroop 2007b: 247–58). It was not until more than a century later that Neo-Assyrian power gave way to the Neo-Babylonian Empire. For the Ammonites, who became vassals to Tiglath-pileser III in 734 BCE (NAT, no. 2), this meant new responsibilities to the Assyrian overlord, a new political infrastructure to navigate, and new economic opportunities.

5.1.1 Military

The Neo-Assyrian Empire, like other empires, used military force to obtain the territories, goods, and cooperation it wanted. The Assyrians used siege warfare effectively, but also employed other military means of control. Among these, we can mention the use of garrisons (*šūlûtu*) in places the Assyrians had conquered and needed to control. For example, in Sennacherib's seventh campaign, he defeated Elamite forces and placed garrisons in the cities the Elamites had previously controlled (Luckenbill 1924: 39, H2 iv 59). Small contingents of troops were also placed with royal officials in peripheral areas as Nimrud Letter 12 (ND 2715) indicates. In lines 38–42, the Assyrian official Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur tells the Assyrian king how he deployed royal troops as well as Shiyanean troops he had at his disposal (Saggs 2001: 156–7). It seems reasonable to suggest that such troop contingents would have accompanied royal officials in the provinces and any who might be embedded with vassal states (Naʾaman 2001: 272, 275).

In order to augment their military forces, the Assyrians conscripted men from the provinces (Postgate 1974: 59–60) as well as from vassals. This is indicated for the Ammonites by NAT, no. 5. Conscription replenished the military ranks and could provide quick military buildup for operations like Assurbanipal's campaign to Egypt in 667 BCE. The Nimrud Ostracon discussed in Chapter 3 may indicate that some of the Ammonite troops conscripted by Assurbanipal ended up in Assyria permanently.

5.1.1.1 Deportation

The Neo-Assyrian Empire also practiced deportation as an effective means for controlling populations and filling labor needs. From what we know, the Assyrians practiced two-way deportations, that is, removing people from a particular area and often replacing them with people from a different part of the empire. Deported populations were also often dispersed in several areas of the empire rather than being settled en bloc (Oded 1979: 18–32). This type of deportation and mixing of populations was an effective way of degrading nationalistic sentiment and precluding further uprisings while at the same time providing the Assyrians with skilled and unskilled labor, military personnel, and a population suitable for establishing and developing strategic parts of the empire (Oded 1979: 41–74).

5.1.2 Politics and Administration

5.1.2.1 Provinces and Vassals

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was organized into two types of administrative regions. First, there were provinces, centered on a provincial capital with an Assyrian governor (*šaknu* or *bēl pīḫati*, the latter often abbreviated *pīḫatu*), who oversaw all aspects of the administration of the province. This included taxes, upkeep of the road system, provisioning for the military, and all other aspects of coordination with the

imperial core (Grayson 1995: 959–68; Machinist 1992; Pečírková 1977: 213). As fully incorporated lands, provinces were called *māt Aššur*, "the Land of Assur," the area under direct control (Postgate 1992: 251–2).[195]

Second, there were vassal lands with local rulers who were subject to the sovereign Assyrian king and thereby bore *nīr Aššur*, "the yoke of Assur" (Postgate 1992: 252–5). These areas and their rulers were normally subject to *adê* oaths that stipulated loyalty to the Assyrian king and his dynasty. These loyalties also required coordination of foreign policy, approval for local changes of ruler, provision of laborers and supplies for building projects, and aid to the Assyrian army in the form of intelligence, supplies, and troops (Machinist 1992: 70; Parker 2001: 250–1; for texts see Parpola and Watanabe 1988). Vassals delivered *biltu* and *maddattu/mandattu*, collectively "tribute," on an annual basis to the palace from whence it was distributed to the royal court. Tribute was payment made directly to the king of Assyria and thus distinguished from the other supplies that vassals provided. The delivery of tribute was likely combined with a renewal of the vassal's *adê* oaths and thus served as a central act of ongoing loyalty (Postgate 1974: 121–7). Subjects of the Assyrian king, including vassals, also paid *nāmartu* (Babylonian *tāmartu*). Although the word *nāmartu* has its origin in free-will gifts, it came to cover these and compulsory gifts to the king of various kinds, perhaps paid yearly along with the tribute (Postgate 1974: 154–5).

In return for their submission and faithful remittance of tribute, vassals retained a level of autonomy with which to govern their lands. In addition, they were incorporated into an empire-wide elite class that was bound to the Assyrian monarch

[195] This constitutes the "territorial" end of the Territorial-Hegemonic model proposed by D'Altroy (D'Altroy 1992: 19–24) and corresponds to a relatively high investment in control.

through ritual during the annual tribute trip to Assyria (Postgate 1974: 123). Such an arrangement on the imperial periphery minimized Assyrian investment of time, personnel, and finances in building infrastructure in vassal areas, while still offering many of the advantages of territorial control, including buffers against enemies and access to local resources.[196]

Although some homogeneity existed in the practice of Neo-Assyrian rule, there was a significant degree of variation from region to region depending on the types of resources available and the strategic significance of the area (Gitin 1997; Parker 2003; cf. Jankowska 1969). Moreover, the development of the empire took time and was not executed systematically (Grayson 1995: 962–3; Naʾaman 1995a: 109).[197] This was especially the case in the transformation of vassal polities into provinces, a change that generally took place when a vassal rebelled and had to be subdued militarily (Machinist 1992: 70). Such subjugation was often attended by deportations that provided the empire with a steady flow of skilled and unskilled labor and disrupted the ability to organize in rebellion again (Kuhrt 1995: 533; Oded 1979). However, the practice of turning rebellious vassal lands into provinces had exceptions, especially in the southern Levant, where the Assyrian monarchs often retained indigenous leadership even after a rebellion (Machinist 1992: 76; cf. Elat 1975). In some cases a hybrid situation seems to

[196] On this continuum, the vassal status that the Ammonites experienced falls under "hegemonic control," a form of control that uses indigenous political structures, rather than imperial personnel and governmental structures, to govern the area for the empire (D'Altroy 1992: 19; Parker 2001: 250–1). This mode of control uses a variety of economic, military, social, ritual, and ideological methods, both positive and negative, to control the vassal (D'Altroy 1992: 209; Morkot 2001: 239; Sinopoli 2001a: 454; Smith and Montiel 2001: 249). Such an approach to controlling subjugated areas is cost-effective because it entails very little investment on the part of the empire (Sinopoli 2001a: 445; cf. Van De Mieroop 2007a: 112–9).

[197] From a comparative perspective, Sinopoli states, "Incorporated provinces and unincorporated zones and communities are seldom neatly organized in space and are often best conceived as a complex and shifting mosaic of discontinuous and variously organized territories, cultural traditions, and populations" (Sinopoli 2001a: 448).

have existed as with Ashdod, which Sargon II conquered in 712 BCE. After conquering it, Sargon deported part of the population, imported people from elsewhere, and reorganized it under a governor (Fuchs 1994: 134–5, lines 251–5; Cogan 2008: 94). Later, however, we hear of Mitinti, king of Ashdod, in Sennacherib's inscriptions (Frahm 1997: 53, line 37; Cogan 2008: 114), and of Aḥimilki, king of Ashdod, in the list of kings Esarhaddon forced to bring supplies to Nineveh (Borger 1956: 60, line 62; Cogan 2008: 133). Furthermore, the eponym of 669 BCE was ^{md}*šamaš-kāšid-aya-bi* [ ]-*kìn as-du*-[ ] (Millard 1994: 52), perhaps restorable as *Šamaš-kāšid-ayabi* [*ša*]*kin asdu*[*du*], the governor of Ashdod (Cogan 2008: 167), though this must remain tentative. Naʾaman has suggested that this was accidental and the result of partially fulfilled plans of Sargon II that were not continued by his successor Sennacherib (Naʾaman 1979: 71–2 n. 7). However, given a similar situation in the Delta region of Egypt (Naʾaman 1979: 71, n. 7, and see below), such a hybrid situation though infrequently attested may highlight Assyrian pragmatism concerning the rule of conquered territories. If having a local king rule alongside an Assyrian governor helped to maintain order, there was no reason to get rid of the local political mechanisms altogether. Whatever the sequence of events at Ashdod, the available data suggests that Neo-Assyrian kings did not provincialize the entire empire mechanically, but as part of a flexible system of controlling peripheral areas.

5.1.2.2 Imperial Officials

One way that the Assyrians monitored and maintained control over subjugated lands was through the use of various kinds of military personnel, diplomats, tax collectors, and other officials. A glimpse of the work of an Assyrian official is seen in the letters of Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur, an Assyrian official probably stationed in Tyre sometime

during the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II (744–705 BCE). Excavations at Nimrud recovered a number of letters that demonstrate that he was of relatively high rank, though his title is unknown.[198]

In Nimrud Letter 98, Qurdi-Aššur-[lāmur] writes a brief note mentioning the names of four fugitives whom he is sending to the king (perhaps Tiglath-pileser III). This illustrates the role of Assyrian officials in extradition and monitoring of activities that might undermine Assyrian authority. In Nimrud Letter 14, he writes to tell the king about an attack by Gidirites on the Transjordanian land of Moab. If he was stationed on the coast, this information suggests the reach of his responsibilities, even if he is only passing on information he has received from elsewhere. In Nimrud Letter 13, he tells about how a cultic object was cut down in a Sidonian shrine, and how he stopped it from being brought into Tyre. Such an incident highlights Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur's role in maintaining peace and discouraging local violence.

The most informative letter is Nimrud Letter 12 (ND 2715), probably written around 734 (Van Buylaere 2002: 1022). The letter responds to queries from the king of Assyria about how Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur handled some local situations. In the first case, he responds to what seems to be an accusation that he acted too quickly with the inhabitants of the coastal city of Kaspuna (lines 30–1). He responds to the effect that he

[198] In all, it is possible to attribute eight letters to him. Nimrud Letters 12 (ND 2715) and 13 (ND 2686) were clearly written by him (Saggs 2001: 154–8). Nimrud Letters 14 (ND 2773), and 98 (ND 2477), as well as ND 2662 and ND 2716 appear to contain a shortened version of his name or are broken such that only Qurdi-Aššur is visible (Saggs 2001: 153–4, 158–61, 272). In the fragmentary Nimrud Letter 21 (ND 2430), the name is missing, but the content and style suggest that the author may have been Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur (Saggs 2001: 152–3; Van Buylaere 2002: 1022). In Nimrud Letter 69 (ND 2370), Saggs originally published it reading the name Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur, but emended it in the most recent edition of the documents so as to read Qurdi-ili-lāmur (Saggs 2001: 164–6). However, Van Buylaere (Van Buylaere 2002: 1022) argues that it is probably the same person. Even if Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur did not write them all, they are still useful for understanding the kinds of matters for which Assyrian officials were responsible.

had received no letter concerning how to treat them and so had to act to the best of his abilities (lines 32–4). On another matter, Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur says that he intended to do some building in Kaspuna, but stopped the operations and appointed twenty "soldiers of the king" as well as thirty Shiyanaean soldiers to guard it (lines 35–43). Furthermore, he did not place families in Kaspuna as he was supposed to because there was a problem with the water that was making people sick. Once the water supply issue was resolved, he states that he would bring the people into Kaspuna (lines 43–9). This part of the letter illustrates some of the responsibilities an Assyrian official may have had in the development of the area under his control. We do not know why he was supposed to build up Kaspuna and place people in it, but given the economic importance of the area, it would not be surprising to find the Assyrians building an Assyrian town with deportees (or the forced settlement of local populations) and soldiers as a counterweight to the maritime cities of Sidon and Tyre.

As another example of how Assyrian monarchs used officials, one may look to Esarhaddon's exploits in Egypt. In the wake of his campaign against the Cushite king Tirhakah in 671 BCE, Esarhaddon states that he appointed over Egypt, $\text{lugal}^{\text{meš}}$ $^{\text{lú}}\text{nam}^{\text{meš}}$ $^{\text{lú}}\text{gar}^{nu.\text{meš}}$ $^{\text{lú}}$*rá*b-$\text{gur}_7^{\text{meš}}$ $^{\text{lú}}$*qi-pa-a-ni* $^{\text{lú}}$*šá-pi-ri*, "kings, governors, commanders, port officials, overseers, managers" (Borger 1956: 99, r. 47–8; Cogan 2008: 138). If one can judge from the list of people with Egyptian names, which Assurbanipal states that his father installed (Borger 1996: 20–1, Rassam Cylinder i 90–109, 213; Streck 1916: 10–11; Cogan 2008: 151), Esarhaddon divided the area up between local kinglets. The goal seems to have been to fragment local political power by spreading it among a number of petty rulers. Within this system of local rulers, Esarhaddon placed various Assyrian officials to watch over the military situation and administer trade.

The functions of these officials have considerable overlap, especially the *pīḫatu* (^{lú}nam)*, šaknu* (^{lú}gar^{nu}), and *šāpiru*, all of whom can rule and administer lands under Assyrian control (*CAD* P/12: 360–9*; CAD* Š/17.1: 180–92, 453–8). The *rab kāri* "port inspector" oversaw trading stations and could collect taxes and tribute as noted earlier. The role of the *qīpu* seems to have been to monitor Assyrian vassal rulers. For example, Tiglath-pileser III installed a *qīpu* over Samsi, "the queen of the Arabs" after having defeated her in 733 BCE (Tadmor 1994: 140–143, Summ. 4:19′–26′). In this case, the text does not specify exactly what was the *qīpu*'s role, but one might surmise that such an official could monitor Samsi's activities and report any problems to the king. More instructive is a section from Esarhaddon's treaty with Baal of Tyre (Borger 1956: 107–9; Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 24–7, no. 5). There, though lines III r. 6′–10′ are broken, it appears that the *qīpu* must be present when the elders of Tyre convene. Lines III r. 11′–14′ are clearer and specify that the *qīpu* must be present when Baal opened letters from Esarhaddon. Presumably, these arrangements were meant to ensure that the Tyrians were not plotting to rebel and that the Tyrian king would deal properly with any demands made in the imperial correspondence.

The function of Assyrian officials and personnel in foreign lands is well illustrated in Assurbanipal's first campaign against Egypt in 667 BCE (Borger 1996: 17–24, 212–5, Rassam Cylinder i 52–ii 27; Streck 1916: 6–15; Cogan 2008: 150–2). After Assurbanipal assumed the Assyrian throne, the Cushite Tirhakah marched up and took Memphis from the local kings (*šarrāni*) and officials (*qīpāni;* lines i 57–8) whom Esarhaddon had installed. The kings and officials sent a courier to inform Assurbanipal of the situation (line i 62). Assurbanipal then took his army to Egypt, drove Tirhakah out of Memphis, and re-established the *šarrāni, pīḫāti, qīpāni*, "kings, governors, and

officials" (line i 110). Shortly after Assurbanipal's campaign to Egypt, some of the kings that Assurbanipal had reinstalled contacted Tirhakah in an effort to make peace and join forces against Assyria. However, Assurbanipal's personnel (*ša rēšāni*) intercepted the messengers and quashed the rebellion before it happened (lines i 118–ii 7). After catching the rebels and having brought them back to Nineveh, Assurbanipal reinstated one of them, Necho, and sent him back with some Assyrian officials to provide military support (line ii 15), and no doubt, to keep an eye on Necho's activities.

5.1.3 Economy

The Neo-Assyrian Empire extracted wealth from lands under its dominion in several ways. Tribute, whether annual or that collected from defeated rebels, was extracted from peripheral areas in the form of silver, gold, textiles and other high status items (Elat 1981: 245; Jankowska 1969: 254–65; Postgate 1974: 122–3). In-kind payments of bulky items such as food may have figured into the supplying of the Assyrian army in its campaigns (Postgate 1974: 122), but high-value items receive the most attention in tribute lists. Tribute was occasionally paid in livestock, but none of the areas of the southern Levant paid in such a way. The one exception is the acquisition of camels (dromedaries) as tribute from the Arab tribes (Jankowska 1969). Even in the case of copper produced in Edom, it does not appear that the Assyrians were interested in directly controlling it or importing it. They had copper sources closer to the homeland for their own use (Crowell 2004: 204; Muhly 1995: 1501–6) and could easily tax Edomite copper at its entry point to the world market on the Philistine coast.

The Neo-Assyrian Empire also extracted wealth through tax (*miksu*) levied on trade at maritime ports and other trading stations (*kāru*, pl. *karrānu*) by a tax collector (*mākisu*). This taxation activity was sometimes administered at a "customs house" (*bīt*

kāri; *CAD* 8/K: 237–8) overseen by a port official (*rabi kāri*; *CAD* 8/K: 239). The regulation of the *karrānu*—existing and newly established—helped insure a regular flow of wealth into the Assyrian coffers. In the western part of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the *karrānu* we know about were on the coast, though the term applied equally to inland sites such as *Kār-Šulmānu-ašarēd* "Port[199] of Shalmaneser" (Til Barsip) or *Kār-Sîn-aḫḫē-erība* "Port of Sennacherib" (Ḫarḫar).

Several texts illustrate Assyrian interest in such establishments along the Mediterranean. In the years 734–730 BCE, Tiglath-pileser III campaigned in the Levant, bringing the east Mediterranean coastal and inland areas under his control. In the description of his dealings with Gaza, Tiglath-pileser III says that Gaza's ruler Hanunu fled to Egypt but that he reinstalled Hanunu and set up or reopened a *bīt kāri ša māt Aš-šur*^{ki}, "an Assyrian emporium" (Tadmor 1994: 140–1, Summ. 4:14′, 188–9, Summ. 9:r. 16). Unfortunately, the text breaks off just as it mentions something of Hanunu's that Tiglath-pileser uses to make, or changes into, the *bīt kāri*. Despite the lacuna, the establishment of a *bīt kāri* at this early stage of Assyrian rule in the southern Levant signals the importance of economic control and extraction. As a port, Gaza is near the outlet of the Beer-sheba Valley through which inland caravan trade could come, and was also strategically located between the Levant and Egypt (Naʾaman 1979: 85). On both counts, this made Gaza and the surrounding area important to the Neo-Assyrian Empire for its economic and military potential.[200]

[199] One might translate this more loosely as "emporium."

[200] This is probably the reason for the number of sites in that region that the Assyrians appear to have built (Naʾaman 1979: 81–5; Naʾaman 1995a: 111–3). Only a dozen or so years later, near the beginning of his reign (ca. 720 BCE), Sargon II campaigned in the southern Levant to put down rebellion. In the description of his pursuits, Sargon mentions having "opened the sealed harbor (*kāru*) of Egypt," (Tadmor 1958: 34, Fragment D IV:46). If properly reconstructed, this seems to be a reference to a port somewhere along the southwestern coast of the Levant. It

Nimrud Letter 12 (= ND 2715; Saggs 2001: 155–8) highlights some of the powers of Assyrian officials in controlling and taxing trade. One of the concerns of this letter was to address trade taxation. Located somewhere in or near Tyre, Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur, the author of the letter, wrote that the Tyrians had open access to the *karrānu*, "ports," and the *bīt karrāni*, "customhouses," to which they could bring the lumber they cut in the mountains (lines 5–9). He imposed tax on the lumber through a tax collector whom he appointed over the ports (lines 10–14a). He also appointed a tax collector to administer the ports of neighboring Sidon, but the Sidonians chased the tax collector away and only allowed him in after a show of military force. Furthermore, with the tax collector in place in Sidon, Qurdi-Aššur-lāmur prohibited the Sidonians from shipping lumber to the Egyptians or Philistines (lines 14b–29). He does not indicate the reasoning for this prohibition, but limiting the timber that Egypt and Philistia had available for building may have been aimed at restricting their ability to build boats or other projects.

Inscriptions from the time of Esarhaddon offer a perspective on the role that regulating trade played during his reign. Esarhaddon's treaty with Baal of Tyre is one of these (Borger 1956: 107–9; Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 24–7, no. 5). Lines r. iii 15′–17′ specify that Esarhaddon shall own any of Baal's ships that may wreck off the Philistine coast. Sailors of wrecked ships had to be returned to their lands unharmed. Going on, lines r. iii 18′–30′ indicate that Esarhaddon gave Baal rights to use the ports and roads that gave access to the coastal areas of Akko, Dor, Philistia, Byblos, and the Lebanon. These lines also specify the terms under which Baal's ships might operate in

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was perhaps a port such as the one that Tiglath-pileser III established when he subjugated Hanunu of Gaza. Wherever precisely this *kāru* was (see Edelman 2006c: 221–2 for the literature on locating it), Sargon's attention to it underscores the value that the Neo-Assyrian empire placed on taxing and regulating trade.

these ports. Thereafter, the text becomes fragmentary; however, it appears to specify the payment of taxes at the ports as well as a prohibition against harming ships and their crews. As an instrument of diplomacy, this treaty reveals the Assyrian concern for a well-oiled commercial region on the Mediterranean coast and the way that they hoped to achieve this by using local rulers.

Another illustration of Neo-Assyrian economic regulation comes from an official named Itti-Šamaš-balaṭu, who resided on the northern Phoenician coast and administered the area during Esarhaddon's reign and perhaps on into Assurbanipal's reign (Luukko and Van Buylaere 2002: XIX, Table 1, note on text no. 126). He wrote to tell the king about Ikkilû, the king of Arvad,[201] who was interfering with the trade in the region (Luukko and Van Buylaere 2002: 113–14, no. 127; cf. no. 128). Ikkilû stopped boats from going to "the *kāru* of the king, my lord" (line 16), killed anyone who went to "the Assyrian *kāru*,"[202] and then stole their boats (lines 20–1). The letter makes clear that Ikkilû's exploits were well coordinated with another man who moved between Phoenicia and Assyria in order to uncover information that would be useful in their operations (lines e. 24–27). Moreover, Itti-Šamaš-balaṭu was so scared by Ikkilû's power that he requested a transfer back to Assyria (lines r. 18–22; cf. no. 128:r. 13′–s. 2). The willingness to tamper with trade as seen in this letter and in Nimrud Letter 12 discussed above, illustrates the contested nature of the coastal region, related particularly to its economic value. Assyria wanted to capitalize on the trade moving through the area and established ports there, but local rulers also wanted to capitalize on the trade. What is

[201] On Ikkilû and his relations with Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal see Tenney 2000.

[202] "The *kāru* of the king" and "the Assyrian *kāru*" may be the same port, but are in any case both controlled by the Assyrians.

striking is that despite the military power of Assyria, Ikkilû saw the potential for gain and was willing to risk military reprisals to get it.[203]

In a recent article, Naʾaman (2001). argues that the economic policies and practices just discussed point to a programmatic approach to controlling Neo-Assyrian vassals and ensuring a continuous flow of wealth to the core In brief, according to Naʾaman, the Neo-Assyrian Empire established ports and administrative centers near—sometimes in competition with—capital cities of vassal states. In his estimation, this includes sites along the coast at places like Tyre and Gaza, as well as at inland sites such as Ramat Raḥel near Jerusalem, Busayra in Edom, and even at Tell el-Kheleifeh at the Gulf of Eilat (Naʾaman 2001: 260–70). A small number of Neo-Assyrian officials (perhaps *qīpus*) would be present and might be assisted by local residents. This policy of control and economic interference is what would eventually lead many of the Neo-Assyrian vassal states in the Levant to rebel (Naʾaman 2001: 270–5).

Naʾaman's thesis agrees well with the Neo-Assyrian documents discussed here and shows how multiple aspects of imperial control converge around economic issues. In particular, Naʾaman's study underscores the importance of controlling trade and creating a continuous flow of wealth to the core. Moreover, the handling of these issues was a constant site of friction between the empire and its vassals. If not managed with the appropriate level of demands and threat of force, these issues often led to rebellion.

Some Neo-Assyrian inscriptions may provide a sense of the value of the goods passing through the area under Neo-Assyrian control. The tribute that Adad-nirari III

[203] Though we do not know the exact dates of these activities, it is perhaps such problems that led to Esarhaddon's destruction of Sidon in 677/76 BCE and the establishment of Kār-Esarhaddon nearby (Borger 1956: 48, Nin. A II:65–82; Cogan 2008: 132–3).

(810–783 BCE) says he took from Mari of Damascus (according to the Calah Stone Slab) is worth citing:

> 2,300 talents of silver, 20 talents of gold, 3,000 talents of bronze, 5,000 talents of iron, linen garments with multi-coloured trim, an ivory bed, a couch with inlaid ivory, his property (and) possessions without number . . . (A.0.104.8, Grayson 1996: 213; cf. *COS* 2.114G: 276).[204]

If one considers just the amount of gold and silver, the value of these items is extraordinary. Twenty talents of gold equals roughly 1500 lbs of gold, and 2300 talents of silver equals roughly 173,000 lbs.[205] The account of Sennacherib's tribute taken from Hezekiah of Judah also highlights the quantity and type of goods available to the petty kings of the Levant. The Rassam Cylinder reads:

> He, Hezekiah . . . he sent me after my departure to Nineveh, my royal city, . . . 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, choice antimony, large blocks of carnelian, beds (inlaid) with ivory, armchairs (inlaid) with ivory, elephant hides, ivory, ebony-wood, boxwood, multicolored garments, garments of linen, wool (dyed) red-purple and blue-purple, vessels of copper, iron, bronze and tin, chariots, siege shields, lances, armor, daggers for the belt, bows and arrows, countless trappings and implements of war, together with his daughters, his palace women, his male and female singers. He (also) dispatched his messenger to deliver tribute and do obeisance. (*COS* 2.119B: 303)[206]

Again, the amounts of gold and silver are very high, but the other items mentioned are also significant in that they come from all over the ancient Near East.

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[204] There are some discrepancies between this report of the tribute taken from Mari of Damascus and that of two other texts of Adad-nirari III (see Grayson 1996: 209–12, A.0.104.6–7). For discussion, see Holladay 2006: 323–4.

[205] Using an 8:1 gold to silver value ratio, Holladay calculates the combined value of the gold and silver in US dollars as around $115,000,000 (Holladay 2006: 324–325, table 2). If adjusted for 2011 gold and silver prices, the value goes up significantly. Holladay (Holladay 2006: 321–2) adopts the 8:1 ratio from the discussion of Powell 1999: 20.

[206] Taken from the Rassam Cylinder lines 56–58. For text see Frahm (Frahm 1997: 55) and Luckenbill (Luckenbill 1924: 60).

How realistic the quantifications given in these inscriptions are is an important question. De Odorico's study (1995) shows that evaluating numbers given in royal inscriptions is not a straightforward task. The original reason for the composition of the numbers, whether they are "round" or "exact," the purpose of the inscription, and other factors all need to be taken into account. Rounding and inflation of numbers, among other techniques, are practices that are not easily "undone" to allow access to the reality behind the numbers (De Odorico 1995: 70–96). In particular, high round numbers are common in the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and may represent a general magnitude or "intentionally indefinite reality" (De Odorico 1995: 5). Moreover, booty taken in military campaigns is especially subject to inflation and the use of high numbers (De Odorico 1995: 12), and in some cases may be fabricated because the literary context called for a quantification (De Odorico 1995: 84, 86). The accuracy of these numbers therefore, must remain open problems for research rather than *prima facie* evidence reflecting historical reality. However, in their enumeration of commodities, the inscriptions provide a sense of the types of commodities that trade could bring to a petty state as well as the kinds of items in which the Assyrians were interested.

5.1.4 Imperial Ideology

Underlying the system of provinces and vassals was an ideological system that legitimated Assyrian rule and integrated vassal rulers and their gods into what Bedford calls a "symbolic universe" (Bedford 2009: 60). At its simplest, the Assyrian king was seen as the agent of the divine world engaged in a process of ordering the earthly world in a way that reflected the divine preeminence of the god Aššur (Bedford 2009: 48–55). This ideology was expressed in the loyalty oaths sworn by vassals that invoked both the

Assyrian and local gods such that when a vassal rebelled, the Assyrian king was obliged to impose order by punishing the rebel (Bedford 2009: 54–5). The removal of cult statues from rebellious territories highlights this notion by portraying local deities as abandoning their people because of their evil (Cogan 1974: 9–21). By applying such an ideology to the relationship between the Assyrian king and his vassals, the Assyrians created a new elite identity in which vassals could participate (Bedford 2009: 60–1) and developed one more tool for their imperial ends.

5.2 Power Transition in the Levant in the Late Seventh Century

The ebbing tide of Assyrian power in the Levant and the rise of the 26th Saite Dynasty in Egypt form the background for an understanding of Babylonian domination. Although Assyria's final appearance on the stage of history is in battle against the Babylonians at Harran in 609/8 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 545),[207] evidence for active Assyrian rule in the west disappears around 640 (Vanderhooft 1999: 64–8), though perhaps it continued on until the end of Assurbanipal's reign in 627 BCE (Naʾaman 1991: 38–40).

At roughly the same time, Egypt, under the proactive king Psammetichus I (664–610 BCE), began to grow in power and influence in the Levant. There is only a small amount of evidence for Egyptian hegemony over the southern Levant, but what is available indicates Egypt's concentration on the coastal region from Philistia up to the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Arvad (Lipschits 2005: 28–9; Vanderhooft 1999: 70–81). The area was of both economic and strategic importance, and the Egyptians took measures to insure their control, including the use of mercenaries and military expeditions (Lipschits 2005: 25–7; cf. Vanderhooft 1999: 78–80). Moreover, it seems clear that Egypt engaged in formalized diplomatic arrangements with the petty states of

[207] For the Chronicle text see Grayson Grayson 1975: 96, Chron. 3:66–76.

the region. This is indicated by Pharaoh Necho's replacement of Jehoahaz with Eliakim/Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 23:31–5), and the Saqqarah/Adon papyrus (Porten 1981; *COS* 3:132–4), a letter from a Levantine vassal calling for Egypt's help against a king of Babylon (most likely Nebuchadnezzar).[208]

What is not clear is whether all the coastal cities or the Transjordanian states also had formalized diplomatic ties with Egypt. Likewise, we have no evidence from the Assyrian provinces in the Levant. Did Assyrian garrisons or officials remain in these places until 609 BCE? Or were forces and personnel recalled at some point to help in the fight against the Babylonians? The deafening silence from the Assyrian provinces in the Levant suggests that they did not play a significant military role in the transition of power. Some of the Philistine and Phoenician city-states appear to have "reverted" back to kingships (Vanderhooft 1999: 97–8). These, along with Judah, the Ammonites, Moab, and Edom would be targets for Babylonian military and diplomatic efforts to secure local support against Egypt. When Nebuchadnezzar finally made his way to the Levant to lay claim to an empire, Egypt was his main opponent and had apparently been successful in wooing some of the small states in the region to its side. This geopolitical reality would define Nebuchadnezzar's career in many ways, as well as Neo-Babylonian imperial practice in the Levant.

5.3 Neo-Babylonian Imperial Practice

The death of Assurbanipal and Kandalanu the king of Babylonia (if he was a different person than Assurbanipal) in 627 BCE paved the way for a new Babylonian revolt against Assyria. Nabopolassar (626–605 BCE) took the Babylonian throne in 626

[208] Miller and Hayes (Miller and Hayes 2006: 451) suggest that Jer 2:16–8, 36–7 may also indicate some type of formal diplomatic relation between Egypt and Judah. Egypt plays a prominent role in Biblical texts such as Jeremiah for those contemplating rebellion against Babylon.

BCE and through a protracted war with Assyria was eventually able to gain independence and turn to the offensive. By 609/8 BCE, Nabopolassar managed to oust the Assyrian rulers and dismantle their royal cities. In 605, crown prince Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562 BCE) campaigned against the Egyptians at Carchemish. After returning to Babylon to be coronated king, he returned to the Levant in 604 to establish control there and weed out Egyptian control. He continued to campaign in the west down to 567 BCE in order to put down frequent rebellions and to attempt to gain control of Egypt (Kuhrt 1995: 589–93). The last king of Babylon, Nabonidus (555–539 BCE), faced major political problems, not least of which was the rise of Persian power to the east. His grip on the kingship seems to have slipped in the latter part of his reign such that the Persians did not have a difficult time taking Babylon in battle (Kuhrt 1995: 598; Van De Mieroop 2007b: 280–1).

Any discussion of the Neo-Babylonian Empire must grapple with the relatively small number of texts providing information about the empire. Likewise, defining the archaeology of the Neo-Babylonian Period in the Levant is difficult if for no other reason than the brevity of Neo-Babylonian rule. In this matter, the author agrees with Lipschits that the Neo-Babylonian Empire is not wholly comparable to the Neo-Assyrian Empire (Lipschits 2005: 186–7). The Neo-Assyrian Empire began in the ninth century with expansion and development of administrative mechanisms. Thus, when Tiglath-pileser III began in earnest to conquer the Levant around 734 BCE, the process of consolidating newly conquered areas was a matter of applying an already developed system. On the other hand, the Neo-Babylonian Empire really was a new entity arriving on the scene at the end of the seventh century without an already established system for governing peripheral areas. Imperial expansion really began in 605 with the ousting of

Egypt, and in 604 BCE with the submission of the kings of Ḫatti; this says nothing about imperial consolidation.

Judging from what is known of Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns, there was ongoing unrest in the Levant and it is thus not clear when Nebuchadnezzar had consolidated the empire. Perhaps the empire was consolidated by the mid-sixth century after the destruction of Judah (586 BCE), the siege of Tyre had ended ca. 572 BCE (Ephʿal 2003: 185–7; Zawadzki 2003), Ammon and Moab were subjugated (date unknown), and Edom met its fate at the hands of Nabonidus around 551 BCE (Crowell 2007). However, the slim evidentiary basis for such a statement precludes certainty in assigning a date. Discussion of the Neo-Babylonian Empire and comparison of it with other empires must consider this reality. Time is critical for the development of imperial control as well as for the visibility of that control in textual and material sources.

5.3.1 Military

As with the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the Neo-Babylonian Empire used military force when necessary. Likewise, the Neo-Babylonian Empire also used garrisons to secure locations they had wrested from enemy hands. In his nineteenth year, Nabopolassar conquered a city on the Euphrates river called Kimuhu and stationed a garrison (*šūlûtu*) there (Grayson 1975: 98, Chron. 4:15). In the following year, Egypt laid siege to Kimuhu and overcame the garrison in four months, after which Nabopolassar returned to push the Egyptians out (Grayson 1975: 98, Chron. 4:16–23). A similar situation occurred a few years earlier at Harran, where Nabopolassar, in his sixteenth year, had stationed a garrison after capturing it from Assyrian hands (Grayson 1975: 95–6, Chron. 3:63–72). Whether the Babylonians also placed small contingents with officials in the periphery is not well established, but the appointment of Gedaliah

by the Babylonians in Mizpah and his assassination is instructive. In the account, the text states that along with Gedaliah and his Judean supporters, the assassins killed "the Chaldeans who were found there, the men of war" (Jer 41:3; cf. 2 Kgs 25:25). If this account is reliable,[209] the laconic reference indicates that Nebuchadnezzar left a small group of soldiers and perhaps other officials to assist Gedaliah, and no doubt, to keep an eye on him. The group was probably small, for the account states that the assassin Ishmael had only ten men with him (Jer 41:1).

The Neo-Babylonian Empire also appears to have used conscripts or auxiliary troops from vassals in its military operations. Nabonidus' Harran Stele II, 6–10 indicates that the people of Akkad and Ḫatti-land participated in his campaign against Arabia (Gadd 1958: 60, H2 II, 6–10; Schaudig 2001: 491, 1 II 6–10). As Gadd observes, the invasion of Arabia and the placement of colonies or garrisons in the cities he conquered would have required a large force. It appears that this force was partly composed of soldiers from the Levant (Gadd 1958: 85–6).

Second Kings 24:2 points in a similar direction. After noting Jehoiakim's rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, the text states, "Yahweh[210] sent against him (Jehoiakim) bands of Chaldeans, bands of Arameans, bands of Moabites, and bands of Ammonites. He sent them against Judah to destroy him/it according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke by his servants the prophets." Although the ideology of the author of this text portrays the military encounter as instigated by Yahweh, it is clear

[209] The discussion of Jeremiah in Chapter 4 suggests that this is probably a reliable datum.

[210] The Greek (LXX) does not contain "Yahweh." If this be the better reading, the verse would read: "He sent against him (Jehoiakim) bands of Chaldeans, bands of Arameans, bands of Moabites, and bands of Ammonites. He sent them against Judah to destroy him/it according to the word of Yahweh that he spoke by his servants the prophets." "He" could then refer to Nebuchadnezzar.

that Nebuchadnezzar sent these forces (Lipschits 2005: 52–3; Liverani 2005: 185; Miller and Hayes 2006: 467). The use of auxiliary troops in this manner was the quickest way to respond to a rebellion and perhaps avert the large investment in a siege. The text, by its reference to Chaldean forces, also seems to suggest that there were Chaldean (i.e., Babylonian) forces stationed somewhere in the area that could respond quickly to such situations. Later, when Nebuchadnezzar arrived, "his servants," most likely the very same troops, were already laying siege to Jerusalem, indicating that the raids were not sufficient to deter the Judeans from all-out revolt. However, by the time Nebuchadnezzar arrived, it seems that he had only to accept king Jehoiachin's capitulation (2 Kgs 24:10–11; Lipschits 2005: 53).

5.3.1.1 Deportation

Neo-Babylonian deportation practice is one area in which Neo-Babylonian imperial practices differed significantly from that of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. In contrast to the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the Neo-Babylonian Empire practiced one-way deportations (Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 327; Lipschits 2005: 48; Liverani 2005: 194–5; Vanderhooft 1999: 110–12). Neo-Babylonian royal inscriptions say surprisingly little about the practice, though a few possible glimpses show up. In the account of Nabopolassar's capture of Kimuhu, it is possible to reconstruct the word *šallatu*, "booty, captives" at the beginning of line 15 and understand it as a deportation that was followed by the stationing of a garrison (Grayson 1975: 98, Chron. 4:15). This is, however, not certain. In two instances, the Babylonian Chronicles explicitly mention Nebuchadnezzar capturing a city, namely Ashkelon (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5 obv. 18–19) and Jerusalem (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 12–13). Only in the case of Ashkelon does the Babylonian Chronicle mention plundering, designated by the words

ḫubtu and *šallatu*. Both words can refer to goods or prisoners (*CAD* Ḫ: 215–6; Š/1: 248–52), so it is not clear whether some distinction existed between them. Perhaps the Babylonians took both goods and prisoners. At minimum, Aga king of Ashkelon shows up in ration lists from Babylon, so it is clear that the king was brought to Babylon (Weidner 1939: 928).

Neo-Babylonian administrative and economic texts are useful for understanding the outcome of deportations and complement the information available in the royal inscriptions by providing evidence of military operations not otherwise known (Ephʿal 1978: 82). Onomastic and toponymic evidence available from texts from Nippur, Sippar, Uruk, and cities in and around Babylon has been examined in detail by Zadok (Zadok 1979a, 1978a, 1979b, 1978b), Ephʿal (1978), Joannès (Joannès 1982, 1987), Joannès and Lemaire (1994b), and Pearce (2006). These texts indicate the presence of various groups of people and individuals from Anatolia, the Levant, Egypt, Iran, and India (Ephʿal 1978: 80–3; Zadok 1979b). Not all of these arrived as prisoners of war; however, it is clear that deported populations were brought to Babylonia (Nippur, Sippar, Uruk, etc.) and settled in towns and cities as groups. Hence, one hears of town names in Babylonia such as Tyre, Hamath, Ashkelon, Gaza, and Judah all apparently named after the cities from which the deportees came (Ephʿal 1978: 80–1; Joannès and Lemaire 1999; Pearce 2006: 401–2; Joannès 1982; Zadok 1978a). These texts indicate that in contrast to Neo-Assyrian practice the Babylonians made no great effort to mix peoples from different regions in order to break down national or ethnic identity (Ephʿal 1978: 83). The aggregation of deportees in Babylonia, and our knowledge of Nebuchadnezzar's building projects, point to efforts to rebuild the region following the destructive wars with Assyria (Ephʿal 1978: 81–2).

5.3.2 Politics and Administration

Until recently scholarly discussion of the Neo-Babylonian Empire assumed that there was a relatively smooth and unbroken succession of imperial rule between the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. Thus, the Babylonians inherited the provinces and administrative structures that the Assyrians left behind (Vanderhooft 1999: 90; 2003: 237, both with literature). Vanderhooft's study demonstrates how slim the foundation of evidence is upon which such notions are built. In contrast, Vanderhooft argues that Neo-Babylonian texts do not define a set of provinces in the Levant. The Neo-Babylonian texts do mention kings of specific Phoenician and Philistine cities that were previously part of the Assyrian provincial system, suggesting that in the transition between Assyrian and Babylonian power, some of the provinces in the Levant had reverted to local rule (Vanderhooft 1999: 90–104; 2003: 237–48).

The evidence for Neo-Babylonian imperial practice is not as abundant as that from the Neo-Assyrian Empire and requires closer scrutiny than is necessary in the present context. Thus, the author has included at the end of this project an examination of the textual and archaeological evidence that bears on the question of Babylonian imperial practice in the Levant (Excursus 1). The results of that study are included here in condensed form.

5.3.2.1 Provinces and Vassals

There is very little explicit evidence for Neo-Babylonian provinces in the Levant. Two texts from the Ebabbar temple in Sippar that date to 586 BCE indicate the presence of a (*bēl*) *pīḫatu* in Arpad, but tell us nothing about his role (Joannès 1994). The Etemenanki Cylinder indicates an administrative division between kings, *pīḫatu*s, and

šakkanakkus,[211] but does not define the division of the territories (Vanderhooft 1999: 38–9; Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46, 4:22–25). The Babylonian Chronicles mention a *pīḫat* ^{kur}*Ḫamat*[*u*], "the district/province of the land of Hamath" (Grayson 1975: 99, Chron. 5:6), but it is not clear whether this was a formally constituted province or simply a designation for the area near Hamath (Vanderhooft 1999: 98). The Adad-guppi Stele envisions an organized empire that includes in col. III, 18–23: gìr.nitá^{meš} *ul-tu* [*pa-aṭ*] ^{kur}*mi-ṣir tam-tì e-l*[*i-ti*], "*šakkanakkus* from the border of Egypt of the Upper Sea [i.e., the Mediterranean]" (Gadd 1958: 52; Schaudig 2001: 509). These texts then suggest some type of Neo-Babylonian political organization in the Levant, but it is not possible on present evidence to give a clear picture of the geographic boundaries of the administrative units.

An examination of evidence related to Judah shows that it is very difficult to make a firm conclusion about Judah's status after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BCE. There is relative agreement about the continued existence of life in Judah, with its center now in Benjamin, and led initially by an imperially appointed local ruler (see Excursus 1). Some possible evidence for the presence of Babylonians comes from a votive ringlet (Horowitz, Oshima, and Sanders 2006: 110), incised ostracon (Zorn 2003: 436–7, fig. 20), and the "bathtub coffins" from Naṣbeh (Zorn 1993: 216). If the chronological parameters on these artifacts are correct, they may indicate Neo-Babylonian presence in the area, possibly related to the administration of the region. The *m(w)ṣh* jar handles indicate some level of administrative control or appropriation of local agricultural goods (Avigad 1958, 1972; Cross 1969c; Edelman 2006a; Graham

[211] Both *pīḫatu*, and *šakkanakku* are some type of governor or ruler. Though their titles differ, their functions probably overlapped considerably (Frame 1992: 225–7).

1984; Lipschits 2005: 151; Stern 1982: 209; 2001: 338; Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes 1994). Even if Judah did not carry a provincial designation, the evidence suggests that imperial involvement in the administration of this area is likely. If one accepts this conclusion, it lends more plausibility to the conclusion that the Neo-Babylonian texts, despite their generalized character, point to a system of territorial division that included regions ruled directly by Babylonian officials.

Extant texts show that Babylon encountered and maintained relationships with local kings in the Levant. General references to kings in Ḫatti appear in the Etemenanki Cylinder (Vanderhooft 1999: 38–9) and the Babylonian Chronicles (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5 obv. 17).[212] The Istanbul Prism, dated to Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year, mentions the kings of Tyre, Gaza, Sidon, Arvad, and Ashdod (Unger 1931: 286, no. 26 v:23–27; *ANET*, 307–8). Furthermore, the Babylonian Chronicles imply that there was a set of kings in the Levant who regularly delivered tribute, or at least when the Babylonian army showed up.

The failure of a vassal to meet his obligations frequently resulted in punitive campaigns as the destruction of Ashkelon shows. However, rebellion did not always lead to the dissolution of the local political infrastructure. The siege of Jerusalem and replacement of Jehoiachin with Zedekiah in 597 BCE (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 11–13; 2 Kgs 24:10–17; 2 Chr 36:9–10) demonstrates that retaining local vassals on the periphery of the empire was sometimes a viable arrangement. A similar situation seems to have existed in Tyre, where the ruling dynasty continued to rule down to about 563

[212] Though the lines in year ten are partially broken, the same scenario of kings appearing before Nebuchadnezzar is possible to reconstruct as did Wiseman 1956: 73, line 24.

BCE despite the earlier siege that ended in 572 BCE (Josephus, Ag. Ap. 1.20.143, 1.21.156–159; Zawadzki 2003: 278–9).

Unlike the clear evidence for treaties, oaths, and diplomatic trips to the imperial core from the Neo-Assyrian Empire, Neo-Babylonian diplomatic practices governing vassals are not well attested; the available evidence is reviewed here.[213] The Babylonian Chronicles do record the delivery of tribute, as was the case in 604 BCE when the Levantine kings, except Ashkelon, formally recognized Nebuchadnezzar's rule over the area (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5 obv. 17). The Babylonian Chronicles, however, do not state whether the delivery of tribute included formal oaths. Nonetheless, the replacement of the Judean king Jehoiachin in Nebuchadnezzar's year seven suggests that there was an expectation that rulers who had submitted in the delivery of tribute would continue to cooperate with Babylon or face reprisals. It seems but a small step to infer that there were formal diplomatic ties between Nebuchadnezzar and rulers who had delivered tribute.

It might be possible to read the campaign against the Arabs in Nebuchadnezzar's sixth year against this background. In the account of his raids against the Arabs, the Babylonian Chronicles call the goods that are extracted from the Arabs *maddattu* (Grayson 1975: 101, Chron. 5 rev. 10). The term *maddattu*, "tribute" normally implies some type of obligation that needs to be met (*CAD* M/1, 13–16), and thus one might infer that the Arabs had previously submitted and having withheld tribute were subject to a militarily enforced exaction. However, given the imperial overlord's perceived right

[213] Vanderhooft reviews the meager evidence for Neo-Babylonian treaties (Vanderhooft 1999: 165, n. 162).

to extract wealth from others, the Babylonian Chronicles may use language implying obligation even if such obligations had not formerly existed.

Other Neo-Babylonian evidence for diplomatic relations with vassal kings and governors comes from the Etemenanki Cylinder, Istanbul Prism, and the Adad-guppi Stele. The Etemenanki Cylinder and Istanbul Prism both indicate that vassal kings and governors from the Levant were responsible for coordinating and sending supplies and laborers to Babylon to help with building projects (Unger 1931: 286, no. 26 v:23–27; Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46, cols. 3–4). The Istanbul Prism mentions kings from Tyre, Gaza, Sidon, Arvad, and Ashdod before the text breaks off. Had the text been fully preserved it might have mentioned the inland vassal states of Judah, Ammon, Moab, and Edom as subject to this obligation as well. The Adad-guppi Stele records how Nabonidus gathered the elite of the empire to mourn the death of his mother Adad-guppi (Gadd 1958: 52; Schaudig 2001: 509, col. III, 18–23). All of this suggests ongoing involvement of the foreign elite and Neo-Babylonian officials abroad with events at the imperial core.

Several biblical texts imply the use of treaties and oaths. Ezekiel 17 dwells on Nebuchadnezzar's replacement of the Judean king Jehoiachin with Zedekiah and then Zedekiah's subsequent rebellion. The first part of the chapter is in the form of a parable (vv. 1–10) and is followed by a narrative interpretation (vv. 11–21) and a coda that evokes the beginning (vv. 22–24). The narrative portion recalls Zedekiah's installation as king[214] and how Nebuchadnezzar "made a treaty (*bĕrît*) with him and put him under oath (*ʾālâ*)" (v. 13), against which he rebelled by calling on Egypt for help (v. 15). In vv.

[214] Ezek 17:16 uses the hiphil of *mlk*, "to cause to reign as king." Cf. 2 Kgs 24:17. 2 Kgs 25:2 explicitly calls him *melek*, "king."

19–20, Zedekiah's rebellion is portrayed as despising Yahweh's oath and breaking Yahweh's treaty, indicating that Zedekiah's treaty with Nebuchadnezzar was solemnized by invoking the Judean god, Yahweh, who also acted as the enforcer of the treaty. Ezekiel's portrayal of the diplomatic situation resembles to some degree what we know of Neo-Assyrian practice, including the invocation of imperial and local deities in oaths (Laato 1992: 160–1; Parpola and Watanabe 1988). Certainly, it would not be unprecedented for Nebuchadnezzar to use such a diplomatic mechanism and thus interpreters tend to accept Ezekiel's portrayal with varying degrees of reservation (Greenberg 1983: 314, 321–2; Joyce 2007: 137; Tsevat 1959; Vanderhooft 1999: 164–7; Zimmerli 1979: 364–6).

Along similar lines, 2 Chr 36:13 states that Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, *ʾăšer hišbîʿô bēʾlōhîm*, "who made him swear by gods/God" (2 Chr. 36:13). Regardless of whether the word *ʾĕlōhîm* should be translated as "gods" or "God," the point is clear: the Chronicler envisioned Nebuchadnezzar making Zedekiah swear an oath of some sort. The result of this addition to the text of 2 Kgs 24:20 is a heightening of the narrative focus on defying the God of Israel as the final and ultimate act leading to Jerusalem's destruction (Japhet 1993: 1070; Johnstone 1997: 270). Given the highly theological character of the addition, one wonders whether it can be trusted as representing a historical reality or is simply the Chronicler's creation. Moreover, the Chronicler may have borrowed this idea from Ezek 17 and thus is probably not an independent source of information (Greenberg 1983: 315, 322; Japhet 1993: 1070).

Other biblical passages use the language of "servant" and "serving" to describe the relationship between Judah and Babylon. For example, in 2 Kgs 24:1 the text states that the Judean king Jehoiakim became Nebuchadnezzar's *ʿebed*, "servant" for three

years before rebelling. The servant language is standard vassal-patron language in the ancient Near East, and the verbs *šwb*, "turn" and *mrd*, "to rebel," imply that there was some type of arrangement that Jehoiakim disregarded, perhaps involving payment of tribute or the like (cf. Cogan and Tadmor 1988: 306). The Babylonians may have controlled the succession or replacement of Jehoiakim by Jehoiachin, although the biblical texts are not so clear on this point.[215] Clearer is the appointment of Zedekiah as king in place of Jehoiachin in 2 Kgs 24:17 (cf. 2 Chr 36:10). The text states that, "the king of Babylon caused Mattaniah his [Jehoiachin's] uncle to reign as king (*yamlēk*) instead of him. He changed his name to Zedekiah." The Babylonian Chronicles also mention this event (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 12–13), thus attesting to the practice of meddling in foreign courts. Some nine years later, Zedekiah also rebelled (*mrd*) against Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kgs 24:20).

Similar ideas also appear throughout the book of Jeremiah in much of his counsel to submit to Babylon. In Jer 27, for example, the verb *ʿbd*, "to serve" appears repeatedly in Jeremiah's counsel to the foreign envoys in Jerusalem to submit themselves to Babylonian rule (vv. 6–9, 11–14, 17). Likewise, they are to put their necks under Nebuchadnezzar's *ʿōl*, "yoke" (vv. 8, 11, 12) for if they do not, they will be destroyed (vv. 8, 13). The author already mentioned the political use of *ʿbd*, "to serve." Here, the idea of wearing the imperial yoke is strikingly like the terminology that the Neo-Assyrian empire used to describe vassalage, that is, bearing *nīr Aššur*, "the yoke of Assur," and perhaps points to a formal system of oaths and treaties.[216] The problem is

[215] In 2 Kgs 24:5–12, the writer seems to indicate that Jehoiakim died and was buried in Jerusalem, and that his son Jehoiachin bore the brunt of the Babylonian siege. In contrast, 2 Chr 36:5–10 indicates that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took Jehoiakim to Babylon and only later sent to have Jehoiachin brought to Babylon.

[216] For a discussion of the "yoke" as an idiom for domination, see *TDOT* 11:72–6.

that one cannot really get behind the text to know whether this is a historically accurate notion or a later imposition on the narrative. The events widely recognized as underlying those that the text portrays probably took place in 597 BCE, or more likely, in 594–3 BCE (Holladay 1989: 114; Lundbom 2004a: 308–9). In Gedaliah's speech to those gathering to him at Mizpah after the destruction of Jerusalem, he encourages them that if they serve (*ʿbd*) the king of Babylon, they will be able to stay in the land (Jer 40:10). Gedaliah's language is similar to that of Deuteronomy and to other parts of the book of Jeremiah (cf. Jer 29:5–7; Lundbom 2004b: 112), suggesting its origin with the writer of the book rather than with Gedaliah. However, the basic notion of serving the imperial lord fits the political context well, though one cannot specify the precise nature of the arrangements between Gedaliah and Nebuchadnezzar.

One passage from the book of Jeremiah may point to diplomatic visits to Babylon. Jeremiah 51:59 reads, "The word that Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, when he went with (*ʾet*) Zedekiah king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign." Thus the verse as the MT records portrays Zedekiah going to Babylon in his fourth year (ca. 594/3 BCE). The LXX differs and has *para sedekiou* "from Zedekiah" indicating that Zedekiah did not make the journey. At present, a decisive argument for one text over the other has not yet gained scholarly consensus (Lundbom 2004b: 506). Whichever text one prefers, the passage may point to some kind of diplomatic visit. The context unfortunately does not shed any light on this matter. One would guess, however, that the empire would be interested in collecting as much information about the periphery as possible, and this may have been one instance.

The Neo-Babylonian and biblical texts provide only an outline of Neo-Babylonian diplomatic practices. Nonetheless, the conclusion that Babylon used treaties and oaths, and required diplomatic visits from foreign courts is likely. Whether treaties and oaths were formalized in writing as with Neo-Assyrian treaties, one cannot say. Likewise, it is not apparent whether regular trips to Babylon to deliver tribute and gifts were required. The glimpses one gets of Neo-Babylonian diplomacy fit well with the pattern known from the Neo-Assyrian Empire, suggesting an active and ongoing diplomatic engagement with vassals.

5.3.2.2 Imperial Officials

The textual evidence indicates that the Neo-Babylonian Empire did use officials in the administration of the western part of the empire. In particular, the Etemenanki Cylinder (Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46, 4:22–25) and the Adad-guppi Stele (Gadd 1958: 52; Schaudig 2001: 509) mention *šakkanakkus*. The Etemenanki Cylinder (Vanderhooft 1999: 38–9), texts from the Ebbabar Temple (Joannès 1994), and perhaps the Adon Papyrus (Porten 1981: 36, line 9) mention (*bēl*) *pīḫatu* officials. With the exception of the *pīḫatu* of Arpad (Joannès 1994), the place where these officials served is unknown. Moreover, the texts do not provide the kind of information that would enable us to specify their authority or responsibilities. It is not clear whether a *šakkanakku* was significantly different from a *pīḫatu*,[217] and whether or not they were local officials appointed by the Babylonians, or Babylonians installed in the area. The biblical stories about Gedaliah suggest that in certain cases, Babylon appointed

[217] Frame (Frame 1992: 225–7) discusses the titles for governors as they relate to Babylonia, showing the considerable amount of overlap.

indigenous leaders over conquered territories.[218] What title he bore, if any, we do not know.

5.3.3 Economy

The functioning of the Neo-Babylonian imperial economy is still not well known, but enough evidence remains to show that it was of vital interest to Neo-Babylonian kings. Ezekiel 27, which is one part of a set of oracles against Tyre (Ezek 26–28), illustrates the extent of trade and commodities traded. There is general agreement that this passage concerning Tyre's economic power was composed not long before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE, though there is some debate (Corral 2002: 167–8, 177–8; Block 1998: 53; Diakonoff 1992: 170; Greenberg 1997: 568–9; Liverani 1991: 79; Zimmerli 1983: 71). The prose portion of the text (vv. 12–25) lists Tyre's trading partners and the goods they provide. The picture one gains from this list is that Tyre maintained extensive trade contacts from Spain (Tartessus; v. 12) to Arabia (vv. 20–22) and beyond. Traded goods included metals, dyes, wool, linen, grain, oil, wine, honey, balm, animals, spices, semi-precious stones, ivory, ebony, and slaves.[219] The text provides us with a glimpse of the extent of trade, both maritime and overland, that existed near the beginning of the sixth century BCE.

Oppenheim provides another illustration of economic activity during the Nabonidus' reign in his classic essay on overland trade (Oppenheim 1967). He examines two administrative texts from Uruk dated to 551 and 550 BCE that highlight the products arriving in Babylonia from Egypt, Asia Minor, and Syria. These include copper,

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[218] Josephus' mention of the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar in *Ag. Ap.* 1.156–158, details a series of kings and "judges," who ruled over Tyre after the siege, and indicates that Babylon had some say in who these were.

[219] For discussion of the terminology for geographic regions and commodities, see Block 1998: 68–82; Diakonoff 1992; Greenberg 1997: 553–61; Liverani 1991; Zimmerli 1983.

tin, iron, dye, dyed wool, other fabrics, alum, honey, white wine, spices, juniper resin, a lapis-like material, and some type of "strong box" (Oppenheim 1967: 238). The texts show that the transport and distribution was undertaken by private traders or corporations (Oppenheim 1967: 239–40). While the texts do not provide information about governmental practices regarding imports, they do underscore a lively trade with the northern and western reaches of the empire. If the dyes and dyed wools are any indication, Phoenicia continued to play an active role in exchange at this late period of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

One can illustrate Neo-Babylonian interest in the wealth available within imperial lands in several ways. On the idealized level, Neo-Babylonian texts articulate the idea that tribute should flow regularly to Babylon (Beaulieu 1989: 144–5; Vanderhooft 1999: 41–6). This idealized vision is concretized in the Babylon Stele of Nabonidus (Beaulieu 1989: 20–22, no. 1; Schaudig 2001: 514–529, no. 3.3a). This stele was found in the royal palace in Babylon and may date to the first year of Nabonidus' reign (Beaulieu 1989: 22), though Schaudig prefers a date in Nabonidus' thirteenth year (Schaudig 2001: 515). The stele recounts the events leading up to Nabonidus' reign, from the desecration of Babylon by Sennacherib to Nabonidus' dreams confirming his kingship. It then goes on to recount Nabonidus' offerings and endowments given to various temples and how he was entrusted with the rebuilding of the Eḫulḫul. In col. IX 11′–22′, the inscription lists metals and other goods that Nabonidus gave to the gods during the New Year's festival of his first year (text from Schaudig 2001: 521).

> 11′) 100 gun 21 ma.na 12′) kù < + babbar > 5 gun 17 ma.na
> 13′) kù.gi *e-li* ⌜*kad*$_4$⌝*-re-e* 14′) *ša kal*^{l}(gur) mu.1.kam 15′) *šá ina šu-ken-né-e* 16′) *i-na i-pat mat-ti-tan* 17′) *ḫi-ṣi-ib* kur^{meš} 18′) *er-bi kal da-ad-me* 19′) *ku-bu-ut-te-e* lugal^{meš} 20′) *bu-še-e šá-ad-lu-ti* 21′) *ša* nun ^{d}amar.utu 22′) *i-qí-pa-an-ni*

> 11′) (I brought to the gods) 100 talents and 21 minas 12′) of silver, 5 talents and 17 minas 13′) of gold, in addition to the gifts 14′) of every year 15′) that come from submission gifts, 16′) from the tribute of all lands, 17′) the produce of the mountains, 18′) the income of the whole inhabited world, 19′) the rich gifts of kings, 20′) the vast possessions 21′) with which Prince Marduk 22′) entrusted me.

The text, written as it was to highlight Nabonidus' piety, may well present an idealized picture of his reign and the goods that he is devoting to the gods, and so should not be pushed too far. Moreover, the text uses overlapping terminology and redundancy to make a point. Nonetheless, the vocabulary used (*kadrû*, "gift," *šukênu/šukinnû*, "submission gift," *kubuttû*, "rich gift," *iptu*, "tribute" [≈*biltu*]) points to tributary relationships. Moreover, the idea of annual receipt of at least some of these goods (line 14), suggests a regularized relationship between the Neo-Babylonian Empire and its vassals. It is difficult to know how idealized this picture is, and hence how realistic is an annual delivery of tribute. One might consider that by this time the Neo-Babylonian Empire had existed for some fifty years, and would have moved, at this stage in its imperial life, towards regularizing relationships with vassal lands.

The ideal of regularized delivery of tribute and whatever reality underlies it was complemented, at least in the early reign of Nebuchadnezzar, by forcible extraction of tribute. For seven of the first eleven years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (including his accession year), the Babylonian Chronicles record campaigns to the Levant in which he collected tribute and on occasion subjugated and plundered an unruly state. The Babylonian Chronicles do not specify the type or amount of tribute, but one may assume it was largely metals and high-value goods such as colored wool. Only in his sixth year (599/8 BCE), when Nebuchadnezzar sent his forces into the desert against the Arabs, are there any specifics about booty. There the Chronicle states that Babylonian

forces plundered "plundered extensively the possessions, animals, and gods of the numerous Arabs" (Grayson 1975: 101, Chron. 5 rev. 10). The necessity of extracting wealth through what almost seem to be annual tax collection tours might suggest that other methods of extraction, such as the use of *karrāni*, "ports" and officials, were not yet solidly in place.

On another level, two events suggest Neo-Babylonian attempts to be directly involved in controlling trade. With the economic power and reach of Tyre in mind, one might view Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Tyre as an attempt to control or regulate one of the great merchant cities of the ancient world. This siege is mentioned in Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 1.156–158, which supposedly comes from "the Phoenician record." In *Ant.* 10.228, a mention of the same siege is attributed to Philostratus' History of India and Phoenicia. The text from *Ag. Ap.* 1.156–158 reads:

> Under King Ithobal, Nabuchodonosor besieged Tyre for thirteen years. The next king, Baal, reigned ten years. After him judges were appointed and held office as follows: Eknibal, son of Baslech, two months; Chelbes, son of Abdaeus, ten months; Abbar the high-priest, three months; Myttyn and Gerastratus, son of Abdelimus, six years; after them Balator was king for one year. On his death his subjects sent to Babylon and fetched from there Merbal, who reigned four years; and on his death they sent for his brother Hirom, who reigned twenty years. It was in his reign that Cyrus became monarch of Persia (Thackeray, LCL).

While a number of questions remain concerning this event, especially the date of the beginning and end of the siege, reviews of the evidence—Josephus, Ezekiel, cuneiform administrative texts—indicate that Babylon did most likely besiege Tyre sometime during Nebuchadnezzar's reign (Corral 2002: 57–65; Katzenstein 1997: 324–37; Zawadzki 2003), and perhaps even twice (Zawadzki 2003: 279*). It is important to

remember that the subjugation of the polities of the Levant usually resulted from their failure to submit or pay tribute. In this respect, the siege of Tyre ought to be viewed with the economy in mind. Tyre and other coastal cities had broad access to many of the most lucrative markets of the day. The Babylonians were interested in tapping into the wealth available through such trade, and this text suggests that it was a long-term interest including manipulation of the Tyrian court. The siege and control of Tyre may thus be seen as one part of the economic consolidation of the Neo-Babylonian Empire that provided Babylon with access to Mediterranean goods and some counterweight to Egypt's maritime trading power.[220]

One can interpret Nabonidus' campaign to Arabia in a similar light. In Beaulieu's view, the main motivation for this campaign was Babylonian interest in controlling the wealth coming out of the Arabian Peninsula. By conquering and setting up a secondary capital in Tayma, Nabonidus could control the main overland trade routes coming out of Arabia and the significant wealth that they could generate. Such a move is in fact not a historical anomaly, as the Neo-Assyrian, Persian, and Macedonian empires all showed interest in controlling this part of the world (Beaulieu 1989: 180–3). If correctly interpreted by Beaulieu, this was the last and boldest Neo-Babylonian move of economic consolidation. It would seem that Nabonidus was no longer content to deal with various middlemen interrupting the flow of goods out of Arabia and taking their share of the profits, and so he moved to a more direct territorial model of control.

One possible example of Neo-Babylonian directed development in the periphery might be found in Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem. Graham argues that several

[220] Katzenstein and Corral emphasize the military over the economic motivation for besieging Tyre. Although implicitly acknowledging Tyre's economic importance, they argue that the siege of Tyre was meant to avoid having an enemy on the Babylonian flank when they decided to invade Egypt (Corral 2002: 63; Katzenstein 1997: 329–30, 335).

biblical passages point to a managed system of agricultural production in Judah. The key verse reads, “The captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land as vinedressers and fieldworkers” (2 Kgs 25:12; parallel in Jer 52:16). Graham notes that the phrase “vinedressers and fieldworkers” usually refers to people recruited as forced labor for the royal court (Graham 1984: 55). He also notes Josephus’ comment that Nebuzaradan (or perhaps Gedaliah; the text has “he”) commanded those left behind to cultivate the soil and thereby “pay their fixed tribute to the king” (*Ant.* 10.155 [Marcus, LCL]). Graham then puts these together with the evidence for wine production in sixth century Benjamin in order to argue that Nebuchadnezzar instituted a policy of agricultural development aimed at producing exports of wine, oil, and perhaps balm for Babylon (Graham 1984).

Graham’s argument is viable inasmuch as empires are always interested in extracting wealth from those they dominate. However, the assumption that wine and oil would be exported to Babylon from the southern Levant is unlikely given the costs of overland transport and the availability of these products closer to riverine transport in the upper parts of Mesopotamia. In addition, Josephus’ report appears to be his own elaboration of Gedaliah’s instructions found in Jer 40:9–10 (Begg and Spilsbury 2005: 256–7 n. 640), and thus can hardly be taken as an accurate reflection of Babylonian policy.

Graham also mentions perfume or balm exports from En-Gedi as a possible development after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem (Graham 1984: 56-7). Excavations carried out at En-Gedi discovered a set of installations alongside one of the streets in Stratum V (dated ca. 630–582 BCE by the excavator), which the excavator connected with the later reputation of the site for balm production and interpreted as

evidence for perfume production (Mazar and Barag 1993: 401; Stern 1997: 222). This interpretation remains only a possibility since the later reputation of the site cannot easily be mapped back on the installations with otherwise unknown functions.

Graham's instinct to look for Neo-Babylonian tribute requirements is reasonable given the general interest of empires in tribute and the evidence for tribute discussed above. However, his case for a specifically agricultural component to the tribute seems unlikely unless it was stored and used for local Babylonian officials and/or troops. Tribute requirements, if they existed, would have been in the form of metals and high-value goods as they always were. Perfume is perhaps one possibility, but as stated, the evidence is at present not overwhelming.[221]

5.3.4 Imperial Ideology

Vanderhooft traces the trajectory of Neo-Babylonian royal ideology and finds that it differs in significant ways from Neo-Assyrian royal ideology. In particular, he notes a preference for a specifically Babylonian titulary that harkens back to Hammurapi in the Old Babylonian Period and Nebuchadnezzar I (1126–1105 BCE). These titles emphasize the king's piety, justice, and care for the land and its temples, while avoiding the militaristic tone of Neo-Assyrian titulary (Vanderhooft 1999: 16–23). Notable in this regard is the avoidance of the very common epithets from the Neo-Assyrian Period: *šarru rabû*, "great king," *šarru dannu*, "mighty king," *šar kiššati*, "king of the universe," and *šar kibrāt erbetti*, "king of the four corners." While Nabopolassar uses *šarru dannu* three times, only Nabonidus uses these together in what appears to be an attempt to imitate the Assyrian king Assurbanipal (Vanderhooft 1999: 21–2).

[221] Barstad's work echoes much of Graham's argument, although his discussion of Judah's integration into the Neo-Babylonian economy is rather general (Barstad 1996: 65–74).

Surveying the changes that take place in Neo-Babylonian royal ideology, Vanderhooft shows that royal ideology in Nabopolassar's reign (626–605 BCE) is focused on the king's rule of Babylon and provisioning of the cult (Vanderhooft 1999: 23–32). It makes no "self-conscious claims that the Babylonians saw themselves either as imperial rulers or as heirs of Assyria's empire" (Vanderhooft 1999: 32). Some changes are noticeable in Nebuchadnezzar II's (604–562 BCE) inscriptions, which include the notion of ruling "all lands." In contrast to Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, however, they do not refer to conquest, but to the gods giving (*nadānu*) the lands to Nebuchadnezzar so that he can rebuild temples and provision them (Vanderhooft 1999: 35–41). His conquests and plundering notwithstanding, Nebuchadnezzar is portrayed as a benefactor, protector, just ruler, one who gathers the peoples for good (*ṭābiš*), and whose movement of tribute to Babylon is appropriate given that Babylon is perceived as the center of the world (Vanderhooft 1999: 41–6).

Neo-Babylonian royal ideology changed during the reign of Nabonidus, especially as his reign progressed and he exalted Sîn of Harran above Marduk. Beginning around the time of his stay in Arabia, Nabonidus' inscriptions recast him in the image of the Neo-Assyrian king Assurbanipal by introducing various Assyrian idioms. The reasons behind this change in ideology are not well understood. Vanderhooft speculates that the change may be related to an attempt by Nabonidus to regularize relations with the periphery, a move that may have warranted a stronger projection of imperial rule (Vanderhooft 1999: 51–9).

Although Vanderhooft's explanation of the changes in Nabonidus' inscriptions is a guess, it fits well with the process of imperial consolidation. The first priority for Babylon was to rebuild the core. As this goal was reached, a greater focus on ruling the

periphery developed with a corresponding ideology that could be projected on vassals much as the case had been in the Neo-Assyrian period. If something like this process is close to reality, it is possible that the developing ideology of rule was exported to Babylon's vassals in order to bring them into Babylon's "symbolic universe" much as Assyria had done. The present state of the evidence means that this must remain only a possibility.

5.3.5 Concluding Thoughts on Neo-Babylonian Imperialism

This discussion of the Neo-Babylonian Empire began by emphasizing the brevity of the regime and the difficulties that that poses for tracking its practices and development. Now, having discussed Neo-Babylonian imperial practice, the brevity should be emphasized again. The length of the Neo-Babylonian Empire's existence is extremely short, especially when looking for archaeological remnants of activity.

As the first ruler of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, Nebuchadnezzar was engaged in a *new act of imperial formation*. He may have "inherited" some aspects of his empire (e.g., political boundaries in the Levant), but whatever imperial infrastructure was left over from Assyria and Egypt, he had to retool for his new empire. The process of creating the Neo-Babylonian Empire had a clear destructive element; cities were destroyed and peoples were deported. It is this destruction, especially of urban centers, along with a lack of major evidence for urban recovery, that most strongly points to what Lipschits calls a "policy of minimum intervention" (Lipschits 2005: 48). This view of Neo-Babylonian imperial practice considers that Babylon aimed at deracinating Egypt's economic and military tentacles from the Levant as well as destroying and dismantling recalcitrant vassals. Likewise, on this view, Babylon was interested in siphoning off material wealth, building supplies, and a labor force for the immediate

benefit of Babylon, while leaving the Levant in economic and demographic decline and with little administration (Lipschits 2005: 48, 68–9; Liverani 2005: 194–5; Naʾaman 2000a: 42–3; Vanderhooft 1999: 110–12; 2003: 256).

This characterization fits the evidence well, at least for the first half of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. However, the glimpses one gets of administration, diplomacy, troop garrisons, and economic continuity ought to be viewed as a part of the process of consolidation. This is to say that the destruction at the beginning of the process should not be seen as the characterizing feature of the whole process. Neo-Babylonian imperialism continued to expand and develop as Nebuchadnezzar tried to gain control of Tyre and as Nabonidus gained direct control over trade routes moving through Arabia. If Persia had not so quickly overtaken Babylon, Neo-Babylonian imperial practice might well have developed into something more visible in the material cultural (tablets, administrative structures, etc.) as a rationally organized system of exploitation.

5.4 The Ammonites in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Empires

This chapter has attempted to elucidate the means that the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires used to control the territories that they conquered or those that became subject to them in the course of time. The Ammonites fell within this sphere of imperial control and became subject to the practices outlined here. The evidence for the Ammonites' role in the Neo-Assyrian Empire is reasonably clear because of the Neo-Assyrian texts that mention them. The Ammonites became vassals around 734 BCE and faithfully paid their tribute thereafter. They also contributed building supplies for Esarhaddon and troops for Assurbanipal's army and had to accept a watchful eye on their handling of trade. Perhaps there was an Assyrian *qīpu* official placed in or near the Amman Plateau to keep watch over Ammonite activities. The seal of Mannu-ki-ʾInurta

discussed in Chapter 3 may indicate just such a person. It is possible that this Mesopotamian style conoid seal with an Assyrian name and blessing by the Ammonite deity Milkom comes from an Assyrian official whose job it was to oversee trade running through the Amman Plateau. While it is impossible to know for sure whether Mannu-ki-ʾInurta was such an official among the Ammonites, it would not be surprising to find that the Neo-Assyrian Empire had worked its tentacles in to watch out for Assyrian interests.

The Assyrians also strengthened their grip on their vassals through an ideology that emphasized the vassals' subservience. At the same time, the ideology and practice of dealing with vassals could stimulate the formation of elite identities and allegiances that would further Assyria's extractive ends. At least one Ammonite ruler made his way to Assyria and received gifts in return (NAT, no. 9). While the rest of the details of his trip are not known, it seems likely that such diplomatic exchanges fostered allegiances as well as an elite cultural milieu that the Ammonite rulers could then use to project their status and power at home.

The direct evidence for the Ammonites' role in the relatively short and turbulent years of the Neo-Babylonian Empire is minimal. However, in the early years of Nebuchadnezzar, when Judah and a number of the coastal polities rebelled and thence brought the Babylonian army to the Levant, one hears almost nothing of the Ammonites, except that they may have cooperated with the Babylonians in attacking the rebellious Judean king Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 24:2). Later, however, the Ammonites appear to have been involved in plots against Babylon (Jer 27) and later still against the Babylonian-appointed governor in Judah (Jer 41). What accounts for such a change in orientation is not known, but perhaps it was Nebuchadnezzar's aggressive approach to

maintaining order. In any case, whatever bonds the Neo-Babylonian Empire attempted to create with her vassals seem not to have taken hold.

When and how the Ammonites' independent political status ended remains an open question. The dominant idea that Nebuchadnezzar subjugated the Ammonites and Moab in 582 BCE was based on Josephus' account in *Ant.* 10.9.7, which the present study has shown to be unreliable. The oracles against the nations in Jer 49:1–6, Ezek 25:1–7, Amos 1:13–14, and Zeph 2:8–11, if viewed as *vaticinium ex eventu* prophecy, provide indications of the destruction of the Ammonites, but give few details and no dates. Two pieces of information may provide some help. First, the *ʿmn*, "Ammon" sealings found on jar handles at ʿUmayri suggest that Ammon had become a province by the Persian Period. Presently there is no evidence to suggest this change took place in the Persian Period; it probably occurred in the Neo-Babylonian Period and was then inherited by the Persians. Second, an inscription carved on a rock face at as-Selaʿ in southern Jordan was recently discovered. The inscription is located along the "King's Highway," 50 km north of Petra 30 m up a sheer rock face. The relief is 3 m wide by 2 m high and has an image of a person facing left with pointed hat, staff that reaches the ground, and an upraised hand. Three symbols are in front of him, presumably a crescent moon, then a winged sun disk, and finally a seven-pointed star or rayed sun. The inscription is mostly illegible because of erosion, but the combination of a few readable signs and the iconography suggest that this was from Nabonidus (Dalley and Goguel 1997: 172–4). The working assumption is that Nabonidus had it carved perhaps on his way down to Tayma, when he probably went through Edom (Dalley and Goguel 1997: 174). In a recent study of the inscription and the history of Edom, Crowell argues for a date of Nabonidus' travel through Edom in 551 BCE, at which time Nabonidus also

probably destroyed the nearby site of Buṣayra and brought an end to the Iron Age polity of Edom (Crowell 2007). Although one cannot be sure, this event provides a reasonable context for the demise of Ammon. Nabonidus, in an effort to control fully trade routes with Arabia, conquered and annexed the Transjordan, gaining full control over the north-south trade routes. The end of the independent Ammonite polity at the hands of Nabonidus was not the end of life on the Amman Plateau. In fact, Chapters 2–4 show that life continued, only under a new political arrangement.

CHAPTER 6

THE ECONOMY OF THE AMMAN PLATEAU

The economy of the Amman Plateau provides an important profile of the changes occurring in the Iron Age.[222] As the preceding chapters indicate, the late eighth through sixth centuries attest to significant changes, many of which relate to the economy. Furthermore, these changes coincide temporally with the expansion of and eventual incorporation into the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. Control over economic resources was a crucial concern for the local elite because economic resources were a source social power and figured importantly into relations with their imperial overlords. In their role as imperial vassals, the economy provided the basis from which the local elite paid tribute and supported imperial expeditions in their area. In their role as local rulers, the economy provided them with the staples necessary to support a royal court (however small) as well as the means to acquire locally crafted elite goods and exotic foreign imports. This chapter therefore investigates the economy of the Amman Plateau in order to understand the role of the economic changes in societal change, and especially elite attempts to manipulate it. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of

[222] The only scholar to discuss the Ammonite economy synthetically is Hübner in his chapter on Ammonite economy and society (Hübner 1992: 229–36). This section summarizes the state of information when he wrote concerning crops grown, animals used, imported items, and the growth in the Iron IIC/Persian Period of agricultural output, which he saw as enabling the purchase of imported goods. A few other publications comment on particular aspects of the Ammonite economy, but do not attempt a comprehensive analysis (Herr 1995; Herr 1999; Ray 2006). The most extensive publication is that of LaBianca (LaBianca 1990), whose food-system approach to the material from Ḥesban led him to consider a broad range of factors in analyzing food-system intensification and abatement cycles over several thousand years. As one part of the economy, his analysis of the Ḥesban food system provides some broad indicators of economic activity.

the ubiquitous role of agropastoralism throughout the Iron Age, and the economy of the Iron I–IIB before moving on to reconstruct the Ammonite economy from the late eighth century to the end of the sixth.

6.1 Agropastoralism: A Universal Feature of the Economy

In antiquity and up until the twentieth century CE, humans inhabiting the relatively marginal environment of the Amman Plateau survived by combining animal and plant husbandry in varying degrees. Studies of nineteenth and twentieth century CE tribes in Jordan show that pastoralism (even of the migratory type) and raising of crops are frequently pursued by groups as parts of a single subsistence strategy (LaBianca 1990: 75–106; Steen 2004: 102–31). These same studies show that the precise configuration of animal husbandry and farming varies through time and depends on a variety of conditions, including political and economic developments, population, and relations between different groups. Thus, while the circumstances under which the Amman Plateau population carried out their pursuits changed through time, agropastoralism remained the economic foundation on which all other human pursuits were dependent.

Our knowledge of plants and animals utilized during the Iron Age comes from bones and carbonized seeds found in excavations as well as from texts. The evidence has been summarized and discussed in several of the volumes from the Ḥesban project (Gilliland 1986: 126–7 fig. 7.1, 134 table 7.2; LaBianca 1990: 145–54; Ray 2001: 124, 147–50) and in Hübner's discussion of Ammon's economy (Hübner 1992: 229–231). Plants attested in the archaeological record that have a known dietary function are wheat, barley, oats, lentils, sweat pea, bitter vetch, grapes, olives, dates, pomegranate, pigweed, and mallow. Plants or plant products known from Ḥesban Ostracon A1 (*CAI*

no. 80) are grain (*ʾkl*), gum (*nkʾt*), wine (*yn*), wheat germ or some wheat product (*lbbt*; Cross, 2003a: 74), grass/hay (*dšʾ*). Ḥesban Ostracon A2 (*CAI* no. 94) records figs (*tʾn*). The Tall Siran Bottle Inscription (*CAI* no. 78) mentions a vineyard (*hkrm*; it may be a collective, "vineyards") and probably gardens (*hgnt*). One should also note with Hübner (1992: 229 n. 4) that the story of Jephthah mentions a place in Ammon called Abel-keramim (lit. "brook of vineyards"; Judg 11:33).

Animal bones attested in the archaeological record include cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, camels, horses, and donkeys, as well as bones from wild animals such as Fallow Deer and wild sheep/goat (LaBianca 1990: 153; Ray 2001: Appendix C). Ḥesban Ostracon A1 (*CAI* no. 80) mentions cows (*ʾrḥ*) and Ḥesban Ostracon A2 (*CAI* no. 94) may refer to some kind of work animal (*bʿrm*; Cross, 2003a: 80). Some animals are also represented on seals and as zoomorphic figurines (*CAI* Appendix III; Hübner 1992: 230–1 nn. 9–15).

6.2 Iron Age I–IIA: Low Intensity Agropastoralism

The Iron I–IIA saw a small growth in sedentary settlement that would continue into the following Iron IIB–C. The small-scale of this settlement focused on a few tells and a few outlying sites. A few items from excavations indicate occasional contact with areas beyond the Amman Plateau (metals, Egyptian stamp seal, shells), but overall, international trade was at a low ebb. The small scale of sedentary settlement and relative insularity suggest that the Iron I–IIA was marked by a relatively low intensity economic system characterized by the combined production of grains and care for livestock, both of which were consumed locally.

6.3 Early Iron Age IIB (ca. 900–750 BCE): First Signs of Economic Growth

The early part of the Iron IIB saw the expansion of sedentary settlement on tells and in outlying sites. The number of imported items begins to increase during this period, including alabaster, ivory, shells, and metals, though some of these may date to the following period. This points to the creation of new trading networks and contacts beyond the local scene probably associated with the Ammonites' stronger neighbors Israel and Damascus, as well as the expanding Neo-Assyrian Empire. This period also saw the appearance of local artisans responsible for the production of stone sculptures, monumental inscriptions, seal cutting, and probably metal work. As Chapter 7 will show, these developments in the economy parallel sociopolitical changes, indicating that Ammonite society was experiencing an integrated societal transformation, one that would intensify and expand in the following period.

6.4 Late Iron IIB–Iron IIC (ca. 750–500 BCE): Economic Growth and Incorporation into the "Global" Economy

6.4.1 Pastoral Production

The use of animals and animal products is implied by the faunal remains recovered in excavations as well as references to animals in the few ostraca that have been found. Sheep and goat bones form the single largest group of animal bones at Ḥesban, constituting 88.43 percent of all animal bones found. Following these in number are cattle (7.51 percent), equids (1.13 percent), camels (0.92 percent), chickens (0.75 percent), pigs (0.33 percent), fish (0.03 percent), and wild species (0.92 percent; Ray 2001: 149 table 6.2, Appendix C). Thus, sheep and goats appear to have been the predominant species raised, probably because of the products they provide (wool, milk, meat) and because grazing land suitable for sheep and goats is readily available. The use of wool for clothing is clear based on weaving related finds such as spindles, spindle

whorls, and loom weights, which we discuss below under craft production. That sheep and goats were bred in the region seems likely given their relatively large numbers. The presence of a relatively large percentage of cattle is probably to be attributed to their use as draught animals for plowing as well as for their milk. They were probably bred on a small-scale locally for use on the farmsteads. The small number of equids and camels suggests that they were not actively bred at Ḥesban, but may have been obtained from elsewhere and used as work animals or held for their prestige.

6.4.2 Agricultural Production

The overview of excavations and surveys in Chapter 2 charted the growth in the number of sites attributable to the seventh–fifth centuries BCE. Many of these sites were small and pointed to agricultural pursuits as evidenced by their association with arable land, wine and oil presses, field towers, and terraces. The overall picture is one of an increasing sedentary population with a growing capacity for and investment in the technologies and facilities needed for producing and processing grains, grapes, olives, and other fruits and vegetables. This section considers further the character of the agricultural side of the growth in sedentary population.

The excavations and survey work conducted by the teams at Tall Ḥesban and Tall al-ʿUmayri have contributed significantly to the understanding of cycles of growth and contraction in agricultural production (Geraty, Herr, LaBianca, and Younker 1989; Herr, Clark, Geraty, Younker et al. 2000; Herr et al. 2002; Herr et al. 1991b; Herr et al. 1997; LaBianca 1990). This research grew out of the work of Øystein LaBianca, who saw the study of human activities related to food procurement, what he calls a “food system,” as a tool for integrating various lines of evidence that point to oscillations in settlement and food procurement and use strategies at Tall Ḥesban and its vicinity

(LaBianca 1990). As a part of the area focused on in this study, the Ḥesban region illustrates growth that is detectable across the Amman Plateau.

In his study of food procurement and use, LaBianca chose five parameters that are possible to analyze archaeologically (LaBianca 1990: 12–13). In summary these are:

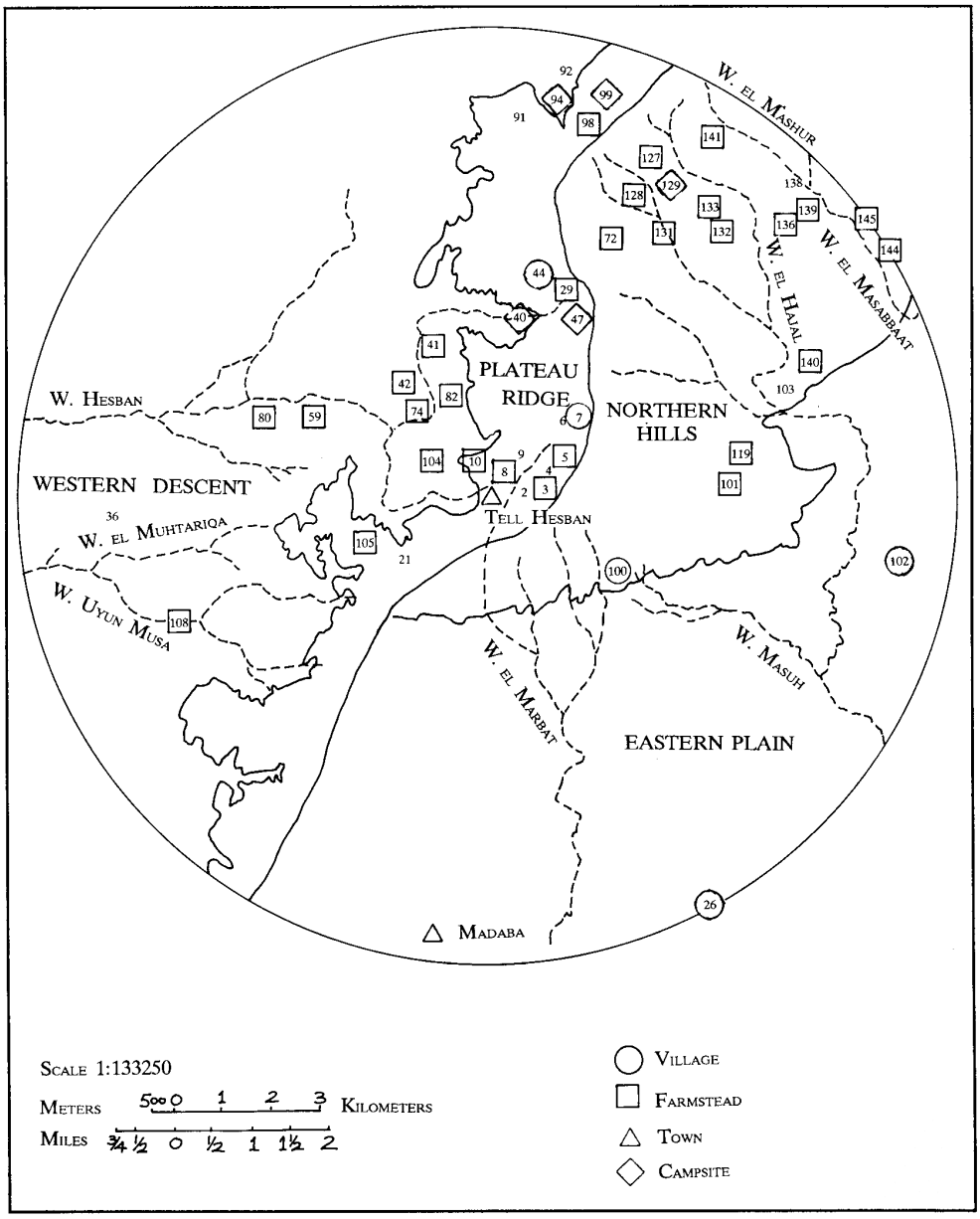
1. Environmental conditions measured by plant and animal remains
2. Settlement conditions, both permanent and ephemeral
3. Land use conditions, including use of plants and animals, water, soil, and settlement
4. Operational conditions, including food storage, water management, food processing, markets, and roads
5. Diet, as measured by plant and animal remains, human skeletal remains, and food residue

Using these parameters to focus his investigation, LaBianca charted periods of growth and contraction in the settlement and food procurement and use strategies from the Late Bronze Age up through the nineteenth century CE. Within this scheme, the Iron Age was a period of growth that reached its peak in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE in the Ḥesban area.[223]

First, as noted in Chapter 2, there is no significant evidence to suggest that the environmental conditions changed during the Iron Age (LaBianca 1990: 140–1). The most notable trend is in the settlement pattern in which there is an increase in the number of sites from this period (LaBianca 1990: 141–5). Settlement increases are particularly strong in the hills north of Ḥesban and the plateau ridge where the most rain falls. Some settlement also took place in the eastern plain and in the wadis of the western descent where the annual rainfall is less reliable (see Map 6.1). This points to

[223] At the time LaBianca wrote, the pottery corpus from Ḥesban was thought to date to the seventh and sixth centuries BCE. The excavations at Tall al-ʿUmayri have modified this and now indicate that the pottery corpus from these two sites and the associated outlying agricultural sites most likely date to the sixth and fifth centuries BCE (Herr 1995; Herr 1997b: 244–6).

extra efforts to reclaim and extend agricultural production, even at the risk of some crop failure due to rainfall shortage.[224]



Map 6.1—Ḥesban area settlement map in the Iron II from LaBianca 1990: 144, fig. 5.4.

At the same time there is an increase in the number of sites, there appears to be a decrease in the percentage of cattle bones found at Ḥesban from 22.2% in the Iron I to

[224] Such efforts to expand the amount of arable land are characteristic of periods of prosperity in Cis- and Transjordan (Finkelstein 1998: 131).

14.3% in the Iron IIC. There was also a corresponding increase in the percentage of sheep, goat, and pig bones from 85.6% in the Iron I to 96.1% in the Iron IIC. Though the bone sample is relatively small,[225] LaBianca suggests that this may reflect a movement away from cattle-raising as a primary food strategy to an increase in crop production. In his view, the smaller number of cattle bones would indicate that fewer cattle were being raised for food (LaBianca 1990: 145–6).

Changes in the operational conditions are the signature change of this period. LaBianca notes the increase in the number of farmsteads and farm towers (See Figs. 5.3 and 5.4), pointing to a greater amount of cultivated land (LaBianca 1990: 146–8). The increasing number of cisterns (at 7 of 25 sites in Iron I and 25 of 51 sites in Iron II), and especially the massive cistern (7 m deep x 17 m square) in Stratum 17 at Ḥesban, point to a high level of labor investment to insure the water supply. Likewise, the numerous terraces found throughout the project area attest to labor invested to conserve soil and moisture. Many of the cisterns and terraces are difficult to date because of regular reuse, even until today. However, the association of these works with Iron Age buildings suggests that at least some of them were originally built in the Iron Age (LaBianca 1990: 148–51).

Very little evidence for food processing was uncovered. Only four food-processing implements (grinding stones) were found at Ḥesban and they all came from Iron I contexts. No tabuns/ovens or millstones were located either. Several caves were found that could have been used for storage (see § 6.4.3 below), and pottery vessels were probably used for storage as well. The survey also located a number of rock-cut

[225] Total animal bones from the Iron I is 652, while the total from the Iron IIC is 1,790 (LaBianca 1990: 145, table 5.1).

winepresses (site nos. 1, 3, 10, 29, 137)[226] indicating investment in viticulture (LaBianca 1990: 151).[227]

As this review highlights, LaBianca's synthesis of the archaeological materials reveals growth in Ḥesban's regional agricultural capacity in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. Significantly, the settlement, land use, and operational conditions are most in evidence in the archaeological record and point to this conclusion. Above all it is the evidence for a growing sedentary population tied to a significant investment of labor involved in building terraces, cisterns, field towers, and winepresses that bears this out. In addition, one must recall that, especially in the case of viticulture, there is a huge initial investment of time and land because it can take four years or more for a new vineyard to produce a significant crop (Walsh 2000: 128). The evidence for the environment and dietary conditions plays a secondary role in this assessment. There is no strong evidence for a significant change in the environment. Likewise, the sample of animal bones is not large enough to make firm conclusions about diet.

The picture of a growing number of agricultural sites and the corresponding increased capacity for agricultural output in the area around Ḥesban can more or less be replicated for the adjacent region around Tall al-ʿUmayri, where similar research has

[226] For description and photos see Ibach 1987. As with the terraces and cisterns, it is difficult to date the winepresses because there are no stratified remains; however, pottery from adjacent sites suggests the possibility that some at least were constructed during the Iron Age.

[227] LaBianca says that the survey located "remains of wine/olive presses" and then lists the sites noted above. In Ibach (Ibach 1987), these are all listed as winepresses with the exception of site 1, which is described as having "2 grape/olive presses" (Ibach 1987: 10). The single photo of a press for site 1 is labeled "A winepress" (Ibach 1987: 43, pl. 2.6). As far as this author understands, the technologies for processing grapes and olives are different, so the generic description of an installation as a "press" or as a "wine/olive press" is not entirely accurate. At least as far as Ibach's report goes, only one olive press is mentioned in an Iron Age context and that is at site 1, but no picture is provided. Altogether, the Ḥesban survey notes winepresses at site nos. 1 (perhaps two of them), 3, 10, 29, 137 (two or three), 139, 147 for a total of eight to ten winepresses. For a full discussion of wine and olive presses, their typology and chronology in the region of Samaria, see Dar 1986.

been pursued. The regional survey of the ʿUmayri region has located the remains of farmsteads, field towers, winepresses, terraces, and cisterns in similar proportion to that of the Ḥesban region. In fact, the two regions are part of one larger region located largely on the Amman Plateau and as such show continuity in agricultural pursuits. Moving from the Ḥesban-ʿUmayri region to the north and east, the data are less firm since the published survey work from that area has less detail. Nevertheless, the overall pattern is relatively clear: a few larger towns (Amman Citadel, Jawa, Jalul, Ṣafuṭ, Saḥab) and a large number of small sites having one or two main built features such as a field tower or other building, cup holes, a winepress, or terrace walls, and nearly always in proximity to arable land.[228] Of course, there is no way of knowing whether all of the small sites were founded and in use at the same time. Moreover, some sites, such as isolated field towers, may have been used only seasonally. Nonetheless, one can say with considerable confidence that the agricultural output of the Amman Plateau reached a peak in the seventh–fifth centuries BCE.

6.4.3 Storage Facilities

Storage facilities are important for understanding how the agricultural sector of the economy functioned because they have the potential to provide information about scale and distribution. Other than the large cisterns found at Ḥesban and at the Amman Citadel, and the well at Tall al-ʿUmayri discussed in Chapter 2, evidence for large-scale storage of food is sparse. Sixteen unplastered "silos" were found at Ḥesban cut into bedrock. The mouths of these structures were on average 0.43 m in diameter, with an average depth of 1.97 m and average internal diameter of 1.88 m (Mitchel 1992: 21,

[228] For a recent listing of sites throughout the Amman Plateau, see Ray 2001: 151–4; Ray 2006: 85–6 n. 1.

table 2.1). Mitchel notes that only one of the structures (D.2:77) contained stratified remains and these dated to the Hellenistic Period (Mitchel 1992: 23). Parallels from sites west of the Jordan River suggest that this type of structure has a long history of use from at least the Iron Age I though the Hellenistic Period. Mitchel and Ray both suggest that they may have been used in the Iron IIC (Mitchel 1992: 26; Ray 2001: 137, 142), and Mitchel notes that the lack of earlier remains may be due to cleaning at each stage (Mitchel 1992: 25). These structures were probably used to store grain, as some of the remains suggest (Mitchel 1992: 26), though Ray emphasizes parallels with structures at el-Jib/Gibeon that Pritchard argued were used for wine storage (Ray 2001: 142; cf. Mitchel 1992: 24–5).[229] Unfortunately, the lack of reliable dates for the structures means that any conclusions about their use in the Iron IIC must remain tentative.

An unplastered stone lined pit of oval shape (ca. 1.35 m x 1.00 m) that dates early in the Persian Period was discovered in Field A at ʿUmayri (Locus 7K71:11). Excavations proceeded to 2.80 m in depth, where a harder level of occupational debris was reached (Lawlor 1991: 39). The base of the pit lies on top of other occupational debris, suggesting it was not used as a well. Further excavations showed that it was probably partially above ground (Lawlor 1997: 30). Flotation samples found no evidence of plants that would suggest grain storage and no restorable vessels that would suggest wine storage. One suggestion is that it was used for cold storage (Lawlor 1991: 40). However, the function of this installation remains enigmatic. Another stone-lined structure was uncovered in Field B (Locus 7K90:12), dating to the Iron IIC/Persian

[229] These were most likely not used for water storage because they were not plastered and water will leech out through the limestone as a test at Gibeon demonstrated (Mitchel 1992: 24).

Period (Clark 2002: 100), but no measurements have been reported. The basements in the administrative buildings at ʿUmayri (Herr 2002: 17) could have been used for some type of storage, although there were very few finds on the floor to suggest any function at all (Herr 2002: 17).

No other storage structures are mentioned at Tall Jawa or other tells. This lack of large-scale food storage structures, which is paralleled in Israel and Judah (Holladay 2009: 214; McNutt 1999: 154), suggests at least two things. First, there does not appear to have been large-scale social storage of the sort that was more common in Mesopotamia and Egypt for redistribution or for risk mitigation in case of drought or disaster. This implies that if there were any redistributive activities taking place in Ammon, they were on a small scale or were not in-kind. Second, the most likely conclusion is that storage existed on the domestic level in small household facilities, such as ceramics or baskets, throughout the region.

6.5 Craft Production of Elite Items

Beginning in the eighth century and gaining real momentum in the seventh and sixth centuries, a noticeable tradition of stone sculpture, seal cutting, and probably metal work[230] provides evidence for the development of a small group of local artisans. The items they produced adapted styles and iconography known from outside the Amman Plateau. The stone sculptures, which are perhaps the most striking feature of Ammonite artisanship, illustrate an important point about the production of elite items in Ammon: while demonstrating considerable skill in stone carving, they exhibit very little standardization. While certain elements, such as the atef crown, are repeated on

[230] It is impossible to know whether the jewelry, blades, and other small metal objects were fabricated locally or whether they were imported because the styles are too broadly attested in the southern Levant. It seems likely though that some of them were fabricated locally.

many of the sculptures, the proportions (Daviau and Dion 1994: 165, table 1:1) and execution vary considerably. This is readily apparent also in the double-faced female heads found on the Amman Citadel. Though clearly meant to replicate one figure repeatedly, each head and each face vary in execution. The script used on seals may be the exception to this pattern given their relatively stable forms. The lack of consistent execution of artistic elements may represent the limited training and practice of the Ammonite artisans, which would not be surprising given the marginal location of the Amman Plateau with reference to major centers of elite culture such as Mesopotamia and Egypt.[231] Nonetheless, they point to a small segment of the Ammonite economy focused specifically on the desires of the wealthy.

6.6 Trade Routes and Long-distance Trade

6.6.1 Trade Routes

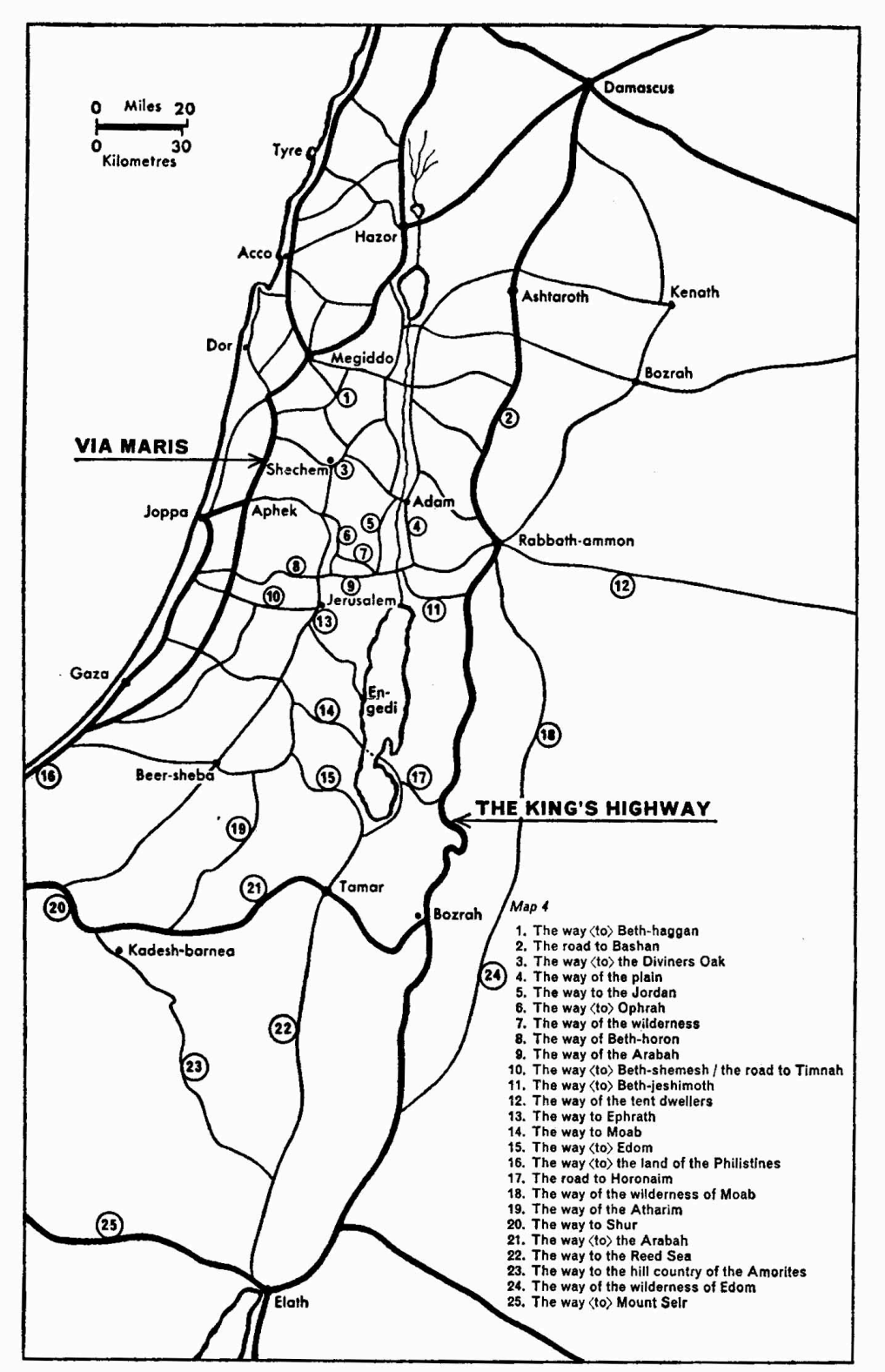
Knowledge of pre-Roman roads in ancient Jordan can be derived from topography, ancient texts, and rarely, archaeological evidence. A major reason for this is that pre-Roman roads in ancient Jordan were simply dirt tracks for which no significant evidence survives, or at least none that archaeologists working in the region have yet investigated.[232] However, there is a general consensus that north-south travel in ancient Jordan was possible by three main tracks (Map 6.2 and Map 6.3). These are the so-called "King's Highway," the "Desert Highway," and a route coming from Dumah in the south via the Wadi Sirḥan depression (Aharoni 1979; for a good description of

[231] It is also possible that variation was a product of an interest in individuality rather than lack of technical abilitie.

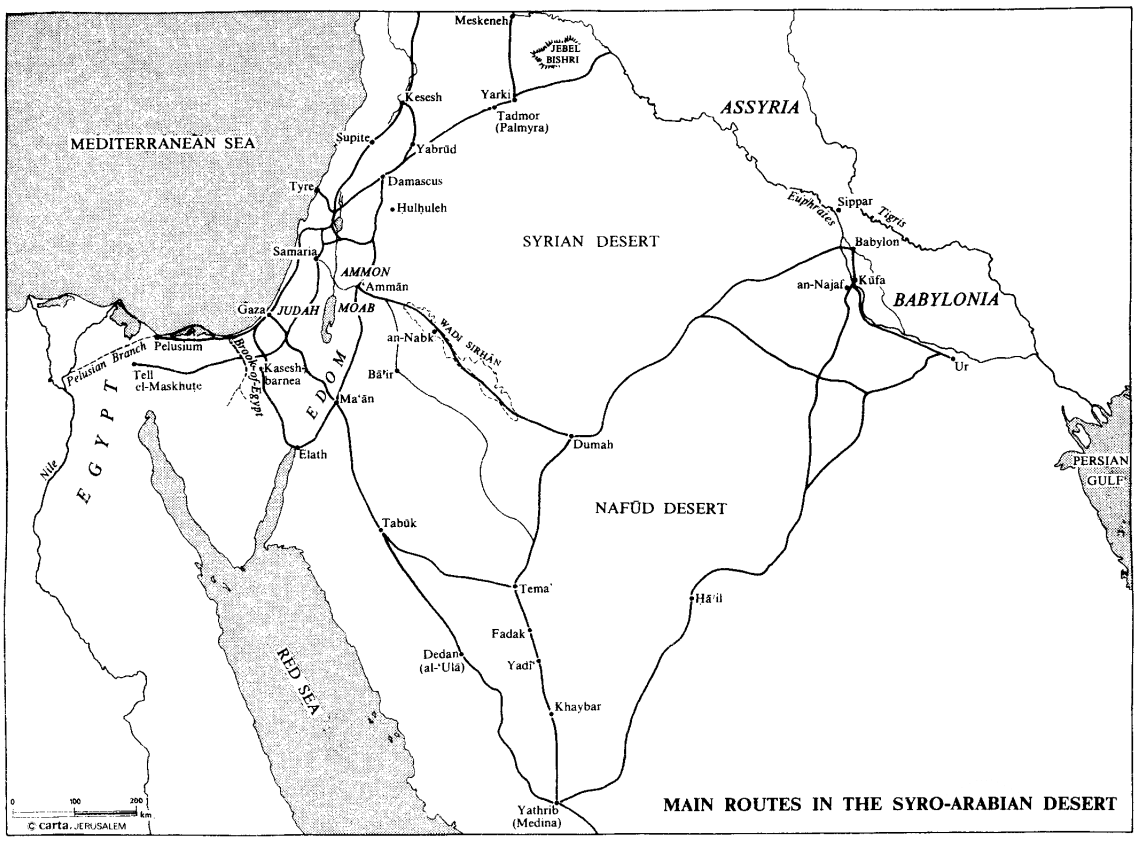
[232] Wilkinson (Wilkinson 2003) provides a typology of roads and corresponding archaeological evidence that could be applied to Jordan.

the Wadi Sirḥan, see Baly 1974: 243–4).[233] Traveling northward, all three routes meet at the Amman Plateau and from there head north, most likely through the Baqʿah Valley. From there, travelers could either cross Wadi az-Zarqa and head north for Damascus (Ray 2006: 80) or they could follow Wadi az-Zarqa westwards to Deir ʿAlla and from there north to Pella and across the Jordan River to the Beth-shean Valley and the coast (Steen 2004: 39, 274). Other paths also likely existed, such as the east-west track from Jerusalem to the Amman Citadel (Aharoni 1979: 59). Roads follow wadis because they provide the easiest paths to traverse. The location of the Amman Citadel towards the eastern edge of the plateau provided its inhabitants with good agricultural land and in a good position to control trade moving along all three of the north-south routes and within reach of east-west routes as well.

[233] This is perhaps what Judg 8:11 calls *derek haššĕkûnê bāʾăhālîm miqqedem lĕnobaḥ wĕyāgbāhâ* "the way of the tent-dwellers to the east of Nobah and Jogbehah" (Aharoni 1979: 62).



Map 6.2—Roads in the Southern Levant from Aharoni 1979: 44, map 3.



Map 6.3—Trade Routes in the Ancient Near East and Northern Arabia from Ephʿal 1984: 241.

6.6.2 Long-distance Trade

6.6.2.1 Modes of Transportation

Long-distance trade is dependent on and limited by modes of transportation. Near navigable water, boats are the most efficient mode of transport, while in inland areas such as Ammon and the Arabian desert, pack animals, especially the dromedary (one hump camel) are necessary. By the first millennium, both donkeys, which were used at least since the third millennium (Maraqten 1996: 215), and dromedaries, which were domesticated by the end of the Late Bronze (Wapnish 1997b: 408) were in use. In the first millennium, the use of camels opened the way for extensive long-distance overland trade between Arabia and all points to the north because of their ability to go for several days without water. Evidence for camels comes from excavations, where camel bones begin to appear in increasing numbers in the first millennium, as well as in

Neo-Assyrian texts mentioning camels used for military transport and in caravans (Holladay 2006: 313–316; Wapnish 1997b: 408).

6.6.2.2 Commodities

The products available from the caravans include aromatics, such as myrrh and frankincense, which grow only in Arabia and east Africa, gold, silver, bronze, tin, copper, elephant hides, ivory and other exotic woods, gems, special stones such as alabaster, dyed wools and various other elite finished goods and exotic objects (Holladay 2006: 319, fig. 3; Edzard and Ephʿal 1980: 421). Imported goods have been found in excavations throughout the ancient Near East, and texts complement these finds with further details. For example, a mid-eighth century BCE text written by Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur, a governor of Sūḫu (mid-Euphrates area), provides a glimpse into the goods a caravan returning from the Mediterranean coast could carry. He reports his seizure of the caravan of people from Tema and Šaba as follows:

> I captured one hundred of them alive. I captured their two hundred camels, together with their loads — blue-purple wool, ... wool, iron, <*pappar*> *dilû*-stones, every kind of merchandise. I took abundant booty from them and brought it into the land of Sūḫu (S.0.1002.2:iv 35′–38′ Frame 1995: 300).[234]

Neo-Assyrian reports of booty taken from subjugated foes are also useful in this regard because they tend to highlight the metals and exotic goods that local kings had hoarded and must have obtained by long-distance trade. The most detailed account is that of the booty that Sennacherib extracted from Hezekiah in 701 BCE. The account from the Rassam Cylinder reads:

> He, Hezekiah . . . he sent me after my departure to Nineveh, my royal city, . . . 30 talents of gold, 800 talents

[234] Another translation can be found in *COS* 2.115B: 282.

> of silver, choice antimony, large blocks of carnelian, beds (inlaid) with ivory, armchairs (inlaid) with ivory, elephant hides, ivory, ebony-wood, boxwood, multicolored garments, garments of linen, wool (dyed) red-purple and blue-purple, vessels of copper, iron, bronze and tin, chariots, siege shields, lances, armor, daggers for the belt, bows and arrows, countless trappings and implements of war, together with his daughters, his palace women, his male and female singers. He (also) dispatched his messenger to deliver tribute and do obeisance (*COS* 2.119B: 303).[235]

This account underscores the access that an inland polity like Judah had to caravan trade, in this case moving through the Judean Negev to the Philistine coast as also attested by finds in the Beersheba-Arad Valley (Finkelstein 1992).

6.6.2.3 Caravan Organization and Operating Conditions

Textual evidence scattered over several millennia indicates that the size of caravans varied significantly, but that two hundred camels is common (Holladay 2006: 320; Maraqten 1996: 215). Donkeys, mules, and mounted horseman also generally accompanied camel caravans, the latter serving as a security detail (Maraqten 1996: 215). The organization and travel of caravans of this size involved a lot of planning and preparation, from securing guides and supplies, to charting the course and choosing the season, to obtaining and preparing goods for travel (Maraqten 1996: 215–6). Perhaps most important, however, were the measures taken to secure safe passage for caravans, which were under constant threat of being raided by nomadic groups (Maraqten 1996: 221–9) as well as by settled populations (Holladay 2006: 319–21). The caravan itself, a collective effort to reach a destination safely, is a partial solution to the problem, as was the invocation of various deities for protection (Maraqten 1996: 216, 220–1).

[235] Taken from the Rassam Cylinder lines 56–58. For text see Frahm (Frahm 1997: 55) and Luckenbill (Luckenbill 1924: 60).

Taxes, tolls, and protection money were commonly paid to secure safe passage. Such payments were made to all parties necessary, whether sedentary or nomadic (Edzard and Ephʿal 1980: 421–2; Maraqten 1996: 218). In her description of nineteenth century CE Jordan, van der Steen notes just such a practice. There, locally ascendant tribes collected a type of protection money called *khawa* (literally, "brotherhood") from travelers and caravans in return for safe passage through their territory. As one passed from the territory of one tribe to the next, one was again forced to pay *khawa* or risk plundering and looting of all valuables (Steen 2004: 115–116). In addition, locals could obtain some wealth and goods by servicing the needs of the caravans, including the provision of food, water, and other supplies (Bienkowski and Steen 2001: 32; Holladay 2006: 328; Maraqten 1996: 229–33).

The taxes and tolls imposed on caravans could provide a significant level of income for local elites. The ethnographic evidence from the nineteenth century CE Jordan mentioned above illustrates just how such exactions of protection money worked. For the ancient world, one barometer for evaluating the amount of wealth inland polities were able to extract from commercial traffic moving through their territories is the amount of gold and silver that the Assyrians took as tribute. Chapter 5 examined this matter and concluded that while there are reasons to doubt the enormous quantities of metal the Assyrians claim to have taken as tribute, there is no reason to doubt that local rulers extracted as much as they could from trade moving through their territory.

Some confirmation of high rates of taxation comes from a customs account found at Elephantine in Egypt dated to 475 BCE.[236] Though it pertains to maritime trade in Egypt, it provides us with a glimpse of ancient economic practice that is valuable at least in terms of presenting possibilities. The account reports that different ships were taxed at different rates. Ionian ships were taxed at about twenty percent, while Phoenician ships paid around ten percent of the value of their goods. An additional smaller tax, which seems to have been a harbor tax, was levied on most vessels, and an oil tax of unknown rate was levied on a particular type of vessel (Yardeni 1994: 70). This customs account indicates only what these vessels paid at one particular destination. While ships may stop at as few ports as possible to avoid taxation multiple times, it is more difficult for caravans to avoid multiple stopping points because of the limitations imposed on them by water supply and the available routes. At eighteenth century BCE Mari, a group of texts record toll assessments on boats floating down the Euphrates. The going rate there, at least for wine cargo, was about ten percent (Powell 1995: 110). Though the Mari texts come from a considerably earlier period, and the text from Elephantine a somewhat later period, and though both relate to riverine traffic, they give some sense of the possible rate of taxes on long distance trade items. They make Holladay's proposal of total payments of twenty to twenty-five percent seem reasonable, though some latitude must be allowed for variations in local conditions. The amount that any one polity or group could extract from the caravans was dependent on their geographic position with respect to the trade routes, and likely, their coercive power. Given the position and strength of a polity such as Damascus, it would not be

[236] This customs account was erased and a copy of Aḥiqar was written over it. It is not known where it was originally drawn up.

surprising to find that they would extract the highest rate possible. Perhaps the main limiting factor on what Damascus or another polity could impose is the potential that exorbitant taxes may have to deflect trade along other routes. So, for example, caravans coming north from Arabia could potentially pass through Edom and the Judean Negev and head for Gaza on the Mediterranean coast if they thought it was safer and they could make a larger profit. In this respect, competition for the least costly routes is likely to have been a factor in keeping such taxation from inflating indefinitely. In addition, one must also consider the changes in political stability that came with local wars and imperial military responses to rebellion, and how they may have affected caravan traffic.[237]

In conclusion, the risk of attack in desert areas where governments or tribal authorities lost or were unable to maintain their hold effectively, and the necessity of paying taxes and tolls in territories controlled by a particular group, were two major limiting factors on the ability of caravans to turn a profit. On any given expedition, caravan leaders must balance the risk of entering areas where raiders were known to roam against the amount of money that had to be paid in each territory through which they passed. These pressures no doubt led to a variety of strategies on the part of caravaneers, including the use of smuggling routes and remote routes far from sedentary populations (Holladay 2006: 321, 327; Maraqten 1996: 221).

6.6.3 Textual Evidence for Ammon's Participation in Long-distance Trade

Given Ammon's position along the major north-south trade routes, one would expect the Ammonite rulers to take full advantage of opportunities that such traffic

[237] Especially important are the Neo-Babylonian reprisals against the Philistine coast at the end of the seventh century that appear to have brought much of the trade activity on the coast and in the Negev to an end (Finkelstein 1992: 165–6).

afforded. Unfortunately, there are no documents written by local scribes that provide details of taxes and tolls collected, or for that matter much of anything about caravan traffic. Goods mentioned in Ammonite ostraca (see § 6.1 above) are all products that could have been produced locally or in the immediately adjacent regions. Thus, they do not provide concrete evidence for participation in long-distance trade. A few inscriptions do mention regions at a good distance from the Amman Plateau and hence provide possible confirmation of long-distance interactions. Ḥesban Ostracon A1 includes a partially visible personal name followed by *mʾlt* "from Elath" (*CAI*, no. 80:4) and appears to designate whence the person came.[238] An unprovenanced stamp seal identified as Ammonite reads as follows: *ʾbndb š ndr lʿš<tr>t bṣdn tbrkh* "Abinadab who[239] has vowed to ʿAš<tar>te in Sidon, may she bless him" (*CAI* no. 56). The seal appears to be votive and may have been left at a temple in Sidon, but this remains uncertain because its origin is unknown. Assuming for the moment that the owner or person who offered the item as a votive was in fact from the Amman Plateau, it provides evidence for travel, and hence possibly trade, between the Amman Plateau and the coast.

More important for assessing how the Ammonites may have profited from caravan trade moving through their borders are the Neo-Assyrian texts recording tribute and booty taken from Levantine polities. Two texts in particular are illuminating for their detail, both of which were mentioned above. The tribute that Adad-nirari III (810–

[238] The line reads: *lz*[ ] *mʾlt nkʾt 10+2 ʾrkʾ*[*l*]. "To Z[ ] from Elath: 12 (measures) of gum; (x jars) of grain [ ]" (Cross 2003a: 71). One could suggest that *mʾlt* refers to the origin of the *nkʾt* "gum", but this is made less likely by the following line, which mentions *nkʾt* with no reference to Elath.

[239] Or "what."

783 BCE) says he took from Mari of Damascus (according the Calah Stone Slab) is worth citing again:

> 2,300 talents of silver, 20 talents of gold, 3,000 talents of bronze, 5,000 talents of iron, linen garments with multi-coloured trim, an ivory bed, a couch with inlaid ivory, his property (and) possessions without number . . . (A.0.104.8, Grayson 1996: 213; cf. *COS* 2.114G: 276).

Even more descriptive is the tribute that Sennacherib says he took from Hezekiah of Judah in 701 BCE (cited in § 6.6.2.2 above). Of particular importance are the large quantities of precious metals (30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver) and list of exotic goods. In both cases, it is clear that these kings had access to trade bringing metal and other goods from all over the ancient world.[240] The large quantity of metal suggests that these kings were hoarding them.

While there are no extant texts that single out and describe spot tribute that the Ammonites paid, three of the texts reviewed in Chapter 2 mention the Ammonites in lists of tributary kings, thus providing some indication of the items available to the Ammonite king. In Summary Inscription 7:r. 7′–13′, Tiglath-Pileser III lists tribute he received around 734 BCE from twenty-three Levantine rulers including the ruler of the Ammonites. The tribute included:

> Gold, silver, lead, iron, tin, multi-colored garments, linen garments, the garments of the lands, wool (dyed) red-purple, [all kinds of] costly articles, produce of the sea (and) dry land, the commodities of their countries, royal treasures, horses (and) mules broken to the yo[ke . . .] (Tadmor 1994: 170–1).

[240] The quantities in these texts are not good indicators of what annual tribute would have been because both Mari and Hezekiah had rebelled against Assyria and in both cases the tribute was given only after Assyrian troops laid siege to their cities. Furthermore, there are reasons to doubt the quantities enumerated in the Neo-Assyrian texts, as discussed in Chapter 5. The metal mentioned suggests that the kings of the small Levantine polities hoarded it. Holladay (Holladay 2006: 313), citing Munro (Munro 1972), labels this economic strategy, "bullionism." The basic goal of this strategy was to keep silver and gold flowing into the state coffers.

Although one cannot separate out which of these items the Ammonites contributed, one can say that most of the named items do *not* come from the Amman Plateau. The exceptions to this may be wool supplied by the pastoral communities; horses and mules that could have been raised on the Amman Plateau; and possibly some iron. Nevertheless, as the tribute from Mari of Damascus and Hezekiah of Judah reveal Levantine rulers obtained materials from abroad and hoarded them. Clearly then, many of the items taken as tribute came from sources outside of the Levant, especially the metals, a fact that exposes these rulers' access to caravan and maritime trade. As is more clear in the case of Hezekiah's tribute, where metal vessels and weaponry appear, local artisans turned some of the raw materials into finished goods of various sorts, and in so doing added value to them.

Esarhaddon boasted that around 673 BCE he caused twenty-two kings, including the king of the Ammonites, to bring supplies to Nineveh for building his palace. Among these he lists:

> "big logs, long beams (and) thin boards from cedar and pine trees, products of the Sirara and Lebanon (*Lab-na-na*) mountains, which had grown for a long time into tall and strong timber, (also) from their quarries (lit.: place of creation) in the mountains, statues of protective deities (lit.: of Lamassû and Shêdu) made of a š n a n –stone, statues of (female) *abzaztu*, thresholds, slabs of limestone, a š n a n -stone, of large- and small-grained breccia, of *alallu*-stone, (and) of g i . r i n . ḫ i . li . ba -stone" (Pritchard 1969: 291).[241]

Here the link with long-distance trade is less apparent, though some of the stones may have been imported and finished locally.

[241] For text see Thompson 1931: 25–6, lines 74–80.

In the administrative text K 1295 dating to sometime at the end of the eighth or first half of the seventh century BCE (Fales and Postgate 1995: 30, no. 33), the Ammonites are noted as having delivered two minas of gold. Moab, on the other hand, delivered one mina of gold, Judah delivered ten minas of silver, and what Byblos sent is lost in a break. At about 1.134 kg (ca. 2.5 lbs), the Ammonite gift of 2 minas of gold would be worth about $35,716.22 in May 2009 USD, Moab's would be worth about $17,858.11 USD, and Judah's would worth about $22,321.41 USD.[242] Unfortunately, the occasion for the gift is not known, so whether it reflects a regular payment or a one-time gift is not clear.

Despite the lack of texts referring solely to products given by the Ammonites to the Neo-Assyrian or Neo-Babylonian empires, the available texts indicate that the Ammonites had access to long-distance trade and probably gained significant profits from it. When taken in concert with the imported items discussed in Chapter 2, one gains a picture of the active engagement of the Ammonites with growing international trade networks.

6.6.4 Exports

As the discussion of natural resources in Chapter 2 indicates, the Amman Plateau has little access to high-value natural resources that were suitable for export. The main exception to this may be iron from the region just north of Wadi az-Zarqa, but our

[242] The closing price of gold per troy ounce (=31.10374768 g) on 29 May 2009 was $979.60 USD. Taking a mina to be ca. 567 g, as the case appears to have been in Judah (Kletter 1998: 107), two minas is about 1.134 kg, which equals about 36.46 troy ounces. 36.46 x 979.60 = $35,716.22. For Moab, one mina equals roughly 18.23 troy ounces. 18.23 x 979.60 = $17,858.11. Using an 8:1 gold to silver ratio (Powell 1999: 20) that is probably more characteristic of the Assyrian economy, the value of 1 troy ounce of silver would be worth $122.45 USD. Thus, the value of Judah's ten minas of silver (5.67 kg ≈182.29 troy ounces) would be worth $22,321.41 USD. The higher the gold to silver ratio that one assumes, the value of Judah's gift will be correspondingly less.

knowledge of the level of exploitation of this resource in antiquity is minimal, although growing. Products from the Dead Sea, such as salt and bitumen, were available for exploitation, but there is no evidence to indicate that they actually were exploited in this period. At present, there is no evidence to suggest that raw materials were imported in order to produce exportable finished goods, as may be the case with the production of engraved *Tridacna* shells in Edom. Likewise, there is little to suggest that Ammonite pottery was exported. Thus, the possibility that remains is of exports derived from agriculture or animal husbandry.

6.6.4.1 Agricultural Products

In his synthesis of Ammonite history, Hübner states that the surplus production of agriculture and livestock during the Iron II Period sped up importation of foreign goods (Hübner 1992: 231). What seems to be behind this statement, though he does not elaborate, is that a surplus of agricultural goods and livestock would enable exchange for other commodities. Along slightly different lines, Larry Herr has suggested that the ʿUmayri-Ḥesban region was developed in the Babylonian period specifically for paying tribute to Babylon (Herr 1995; 1999: 232; 2002: 18; followed by Lipschits 2004: 45). Although this second interpretation focuses on tribute, the two share the assumption that agricultural produce was or could be commodified.[243]

Both of these propositions are based largely on one clear trend evident in the archaeology of the region: the peak in settlement during the Iron IIC. As discussed earlier, this increase in settlement is indicated by small farmsteads that dot the land. Associated with most of these farmsteads are terraces, cisterns, winepresses, and field walls, suggesting a significant investment of energy in techniques aimed at land

[243] The second part of Hübner's argument concerning livestock is addressed below.

reclamation and moisture maximization. The question one may ask is, were these efforts meant to meet the needs of the local population only, or was this an attempt to produce a surplus that could be used for export?

To be clear, the present writer is picking up on Hübner's and Herr's statements because they fit into a clear line of thinking that scholars use to explain a similar phenomenon in Judah. One can call it the "commodification theory" and its basic outline is as follows:

1. Biblical and Assyrian texts indicate that Judah paid enormous amounts of metal to Assyria as tribute.
2. Judah does not have metal sources within her own territory.
3. Judah does have access to wine and oil.
4. There is an increase in rural sedentary population or "farmsteads."
5. Therefore, the increase in settlement was meant to produce surplus wine and/or oil to gain metal and other high-value goods to meet the external need or opportunity.[244]

The question one may ask is, did this intensification of the food system meet the needs of the local population only, or was some of the produce meant for export? In answering this question, we should note first that the main cash crops known to this part of the ancient world were olive oil and wine. Concerning olive oil, we have already seen that evidence for olives has been found in the form of carbonized seeds, and yet very few olive presses have been located in surveys.[245] The ubiquitous "cupmarks" (small depressions in bedrock) found in surveys all over the region may well have been used for pressing small amounts of olive oil for domestic consumption, among other uses (Ahlström 1978: 45; Younker 1995: 685). However, these cupmarks provide no evidence for large-scale olive oil production for export. On the other hand, surveys have

[244] This has been expressed in a variety of ways, not all with the precise logic used in this simplification (Byrne 2003: 20; Elat 1981: 248; Faust and Weiss 2005; Hopkins 1996: 138; Hopkins 1997: 29; McNutt 1999: 162; Olivier 1994: 92–4).

[245] One is listed at Ḥesban Survey site 1.

located a number of winepresses that point to a larger capacity for producing wine.[246] The question then is, do the remnants of wine production activities suggest a wine industry intended for export? The ability to draw such a conclusion is dependent on an evaluation of the scale of production and the breadth of distribution.

An evaluation of the scale of wine production is dependent on two main factors: 1) contemporaneity of the winepresses; 2) winepress size and estimated output. Concerning number one, the archaeology constrains any assessment of contemporaneity. First, winepresses were normally cut into the bedrock and could then be used for long periods with no stratigraphic accumulation. One's ability to date their use is dependent on pottery found in associated structures or the area in general. As Appendix F underscores, the winepresses are with few exceptions found at sites with long histories of use and thus one cannot be sure whether or not any individual press was built or in active use during any particular period. Furthermore, even if all the winepresses were in use during the seventh through fifth centuries, this is some two or three hundred years for which chronological distinctions are not possible. This should caution against drawing a conclusion based on the appearance of contemporaneity. Second, none of the surveys consistently provides measurements of the winepresses that would allow for estimates of output. Together these limiting factors make it difficult to assess the scale of wine production on anything but a relative scale compared to other periods.[247]

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[246] There are eight to ten winepresses included in the Ḥesban survey (sites 1 [perhaps two], 3, 10, 29, 137 [two or three], 139, 147) and twelve or thirteen winepresses found by the ʿUmayri survey (sites 60, 74, 85 [two], 101, 102 [two], 120 [three], 125 [two] and possibly another at 83). Two other remains described each simply as a "press" were located in the Archaeological Survey of Greater Amman sites 53-39.8 and 59-33.3.

[247] The associated problem of where the wine was stored before export might be solved by allowing for a distributed system of storage that used caves, walled farmsteads, and perhaps

One runs into a different problem when considering the breadth of distribution of wine. If one assumes that wine from the Ḥesban-ʿUmayri region was being exported, one might expect to find evidence for this in the form of pottery outside of the Amman Plateau. In fact, no such finds have been reported.[248] Thus, there are significant limiting factors with the body of evidence that make it difficult to assess whether wine was exported. It may have been, but one cannot state this with any degree of confidence. Of course, farmers or administrators may have traded wine with caravaneers or nomadic elements and perhaps even with neighboring areas like Moab, but evidence is lacking for that as well.

Continuing on this subject, one should also consider whether agricultural products such as wine or oil could be transported overland for long distances. One important source for information about long-distance trade is the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions that report tribute exactions. What these indicate is that wine, oil, and grains were not a regular part of tribute payments (Jankowska 1969: 254–65; Liverani 1992: 158; Yamada 2000: 270–1). In cases where wine was paid as tribute, it comes from northern Mesopotamia, in general from places with access to water transport (Liverani 1992: fig. 22; Yamada 2000: map 6-F). One reason for the lack of tribute paid in agricultural goods from the southern Levant is that Mesopotamia had land suitable for the production of wine (Jankowska 1969: 257, fig. 2; Oppenheim 1967: 44).

Beyond the location of good agricultural land closer to Mesopotamia, the profits available from exports are quickly diminished by the cost of transporting foodstuffs

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the basements in the buildings of the administrative complex at ʿUmayri. As discussed earlier, there is little evidence of mass storage facilities on the Amman Plateau.

[248] This may not be surprising given that determining the provenance of storage jars is dependent on chemical analysis of the ceramic fabric or some identifying marks such as sealings. On the other hand, the lack of evidence might be a good indication that Ammon did not export wine.

overland for any significant distance (Holladay 2005; see especially Clark and Haswell 1970: 196–7, table XLVII, 274).[249] If the Assyrians did not see fit to transport, or force their vassals to transport, agricultural products by land from the southern Levant to the Assyrian heartland, it would be surprising to find long-distance overland transport of such items where the producer and caravaneer had to bear the cost and subsequent loss of profit. The export of wine or olive oil from the Amman Plateau to Egypt, or anywhere else in the Mediterranean, would suffer the same loss of profit because of the cost of transporting the goods overland and then by water. This is especially so since wine and oil were grown successfully along the Mediterranean coast. The one possibility for the export of wine is to the Arabs living in the Syro-Arabian desert. This would have entailed fewer transport costs for the producer, if the Arabs came and obtained it themselves, but the state of the evidence allows one to say little positive about such a supposition.

Taken together, the limits of the evidence about the scale of wine production on the Amman Plateau and its distribution, as well as the improbability of long-distance overland trade of agricultural products, make it unlikely that the Ammonites exported wine on a significant scale. Instead, grapes and wine were most likely used for local

[249] Powell provides an informative example from eighteenth century trade between Carchemish and Mari (Powell 1995: 108–9), where the cost of transport by boat may reach up to 15–25% of the total cost for the approximately 500 mile river trip. Other documentation also notes toll rates for wine cargoes that are roughly 10% of the value of the cargo, paid either in kind or in silver (Powell 1995: 110). The value of crops Powell cites from Middle Bronze Age Hittite texts is also of interest. There, one shekel of silver could buy 2 *parīsu* of wine, 3 *parīsu* of emmer wheat, and 6 *parīsu* of barley (Powell 1995: 117, table 9.1), that is to say, wine is not much more valuable than other agricultural products. Wine seems to have become more common in Assyria during the Neo-Assyrian Empire, but this is probably related to wine production in northwestern Iran, or southeastern Turkey (Powell 1995: 119), still generally within reach of water transport on the Tigris.

consumption.[250] This conclusion rules out as improbable the interpretation of Hübner that agricultural surplus sped up imports, and that proposed by Herr that the Ḥesban–ʿUmayri region was developed in order to pay tribute to Babylon after Babylon had subjugated the Ammonites.[251] The Ammonites were not shipping wine to Babylon as tribute. Any tribute they would have sent would be in the usual forms: gold, silver, bronze, dyed wools, textiles, horses, camels, and other high-value, low-bulk items.

It is possible that some agricultural products were sent to *local* Assyrian, Babylonian, or Persian officials. From what is known of these empires, provinces paid taxes to support local governors. Ammon may have been a province under Babylon (Lipschits 2004), and was almost certainly a Persian province as the *ʿmn*, "Ammon" stamps found at ʿUmayri indicate (Herr 1999: 233–4). Thus, it would be reasonable to say that the agricultural development of the Ḥesban–ʿUmayri area in the sixth and fifth centuries may have supported Persian (and perhaps Babylonian) administration there. However, there is no clear evidence indicating the presence of anything but indigenous officials. If there were Persian officials in the area, they were probably co-opted local elites who would have used a small amount of the total available wine.

6.6.4.2 Wool and Textiles

The Neo-Assyrian inscriptions cited above mention various kinds of wool and textiles, although Ammon is not singled out as a source. Given the prominence of wool and textiles in tribute lists alongside metals and other preciosities, it is clear that these

[250] The circumstance under which wine exportation may have been economically feasible is if the Ammonites produce a special, high quality variety of wine not available elsewhere. Again, the sources provide no such clues.

[251] This interpretation is also rendered unlikely because it relies on the narrative in Josephus, *Ant.* 10.9.7. The discussion of this passage in Chapter 4 showed that Josephus constructed this event by connecting Jeremiah's undated oracle against the Ammonites (Jer 49:1–6) with the date formula in Jer 52:30 in order to complete a prediction-fulfillment scheme that the book of Jeremiah leaves incomplete.

were highly valued commodities well worth the attention of the empire. Comparative evidence from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries CE also confirms the generally high value of wool compared to other commodities (Clark and Haswell 1970: 274).[252] Thus, the value of wool and textiles is high enough to warrant long-distance overland trade, and it then becomes a question of whether there is evidence to suggest that the Ammonites focused on the production of wool and textiles for export.

The osteological remains from Ḥesban show that sheep represent a major part of the faunal assemblage. The other prerequisite for raising sheep, pasturage, is readily available on the Amman Plateau. The technologies necessary for textile production were also readily available on the Amman Plateau as indicated by finds of loom weights at Ḥesban, Jawa, and ʿUmayri, as well as spindle whorls found regularly in excavations. The evidence thus suggests domestic level production of textiles; no industrial textile production areas have yet been found. Nonetheless, domestic level production of textiles is common in the ancient world because it allowed women to multi-task while caring for young children (Barber 1994: 29–33). Furthermore, while specialization and industrial production of textiles is known to have produced large quantities of textiles (Barber 1994: 207–31), domestic production also has the potential to yield relatively high quantities. In the Aztec Empire, part of the tribute the Triple Alliance required from its subjects was paid in textiles. The quantities were quite large and as far as is known the textiles were produced domestically rather than in industrial workshops (Berdan 1987). It was thus possible for the Ammonites to produce (probably wool) textiles for export or tribute without specialized workshops.

[252] Taking wheat as a standard against which to measure the value of other products in agricultural societies, giving it the numerical value of 1.0, Clark and Haswell indicate greasy basis wool (i.e., sheared wool before it has been cleaned of dirt and other debris) as having a value of 11.9. This compares to wine at 0.9 and oils at 3.0 (Clark and Haswell 1970: 274).

Recent finds at the site of Khirbat al-Mudayna ath-Thamad are suggestive even though it is not thought to have been politically allied with the Ammonites (Daviau 1997). There, in a relatively small, fortified town (ca. 2 ha), several upper story rooms of the gatehouse and building 200 have remains that point to textile production. The finds include: large stone basins; many loom weights (>60); possible remains of looms (rooms 201, 206); a non-domestic pottery assemblage; stone tools including a large saddle quern with loaf shaped millstone weighing 28 kg; and remnants of textiles. Together these suggest an activity area that goes beyond production of textiles for domestic use (Daviau et al. 2006: 257–9; Daviau and Dion 2002: 32–8, 46). The location of these items in the gatehouse and in a building that by all accounts does not appear to be a home only strengthen this idea.[253] Remnants of red and black stain on a stone mortar and stone pounder (Daviau and Dion 2002: 37) as well as pieces of red mineral found in room 201 (Daviau et al. 2006: 258) may suggest processing of dye in which the stone basins may have played a role.[254] These finds, if related to processing of wool or textile manufacture, illustrate how such a dyeing industry may have looked locally. Given Mudayna's proximity to the Amman Plateau, similar operations might yet be found in Ammon. While there is not yet enough evidence to be certain about Ammonite textile production for export, it remains and important possibility.

6.6.4.3 Horses, Donkeys, Mules, and Camels

One of the texts discussed in Chapter 3 mentions the Ammonites as bringing tribute to Assyria of an unspecified type and quantity along with Egypt, Gaza, Judah,

[253] No oven was found in this rather large building, thus confirming the non-domestic nature of the building.

[254] The one dye readily available in the regions of Ammon and Moab is red ochre. This naturally occurring ferrous mineral can be found in the Red Mediterranean soils in the area. Thanks to Jack Holladay for pointing this out (personal communication, 17 April 2009).

and Moab (ND 2765, lines 34–8, Saggs 2001: 219–220). In the broken lines, preceding and following, other emissaries, including one from the city of Gaza, are said to have brought horses. Though the lacunae in the text preclude certainty, it is possible to suggest that the Ammonites also sent horses. Tiglath-pileser III's Summary Inscription 7:r. 13′ also mentions that a number of the southern Levantine peoples, including the Ammonites, sent horses and mules as tribute (Tadmor 1994: 170–1). Whether this means that the Ammonites bred horses and mules for export, or were forced to send their own working horses as tribute cannot be demonstrated. Some evidence for Ammonite breeding of horses may come from horse, and horse and rider figurines found in excavations (Dabrowski 1997: 337–8; Daviau 2002: 70, 73–9; Dornemann 1983: 140–2, figs. 86:5–7, 9; Ray 2001: 200–1, 203, object nos. 1576, 1681, 1793).[255] Likewise, a number of seals include horses in their iconography (*CAI*, Appendix III). Admittedly, this evidence is partial and problematic and so one should not make too much of it. If the Ammonites did send horses, donkeys, or mules, one should at this point prefer the more banal interpretation that these came from their own holdings, not an operation focused on breeding and exporting. Perhaps further excavations and publications of faunal analyses will clarify this matter.[256] Likewise, though camel bones and one figurine that may be a camel came to light in excavations (Dornemann 1983: 142, fig. 86:10; Ray 2001: 211–17), these probably indicate the use of camels by the

[255] From strata earlier or later than Iron IIC/Persian come some other examples (Dabrowski 1997: 338; Herr and Platt 2002: 393, 397, figs. 16.37–8; Platt 2002: 166, fig. 7.9:142). Ray reports one horse bone in the materials from Ḥesban Stratum 15 (16 Fill), which may in fact be later than the Iron IIC/Persian Period (Ray 2001: 217). Five donkey bones were found in Ḥesban Stratum 16 Ray 2001: 211–3 and thirty-eight were found in Ḥesban Stratum 15 (Ray 2001: 213–7). Camel bones are actually more common in the Iron IIC/Persian period strata at Ḥesban than horses (Ray 2001: 211–7). Thus, we should exercise some restraint from making too bold of conclusions in the case of horses. Faunal summaries from other sites are yet to be forthcoming and will perhaps clarify this picture.

[256] For further bibliography see Hübner 1992: 230, nn. 11–12.

Ammonites rather than breeding. Camel breeding was generally the domain of the peoples inhabiting the Zagros mountains and of the Arab tribes dwelling in the Syro-Arabian and Sinai deserts (Ephʿal 1984: 5; Jankowska 1969: 268; Wapnish 1997b: 408).

The search for possible Ammonite exports shows that there is little firm evidence at present to suggest that the Ammonites exported goods in any appreciable way during the seventh through fifth centuries. This includes wine, which though promising at first glance, proves to be indeterminate when one recognizes the lack of clear archaeological evidence for large-scale pressing and considers the costs of long-distance overland trade. Likewise, the evidence for stockbreeding is minimal. The main possibilities for exportable goods are wool and textiles for which some industrial scale evidence has turned up slightly to the south of the Amman Plateau at Khirbat al-Mudayna.

6.6.5 Summary and Conclusions from the Examination of Trade Routes and Long-distance Trade

The examination of trade routes and long-distance trade clarifies the Ammonites' role in long-distance trade networks that were revitalized with the renewed expansion of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and continued to expand thereafter. One can distill the discussion into the following main points:

1. Neo-Assyrian texts clearly record the Ammonites as one of several polities sending valuable goods and metals as tribute.
2. The position of the Amman Plateau astride major north-south trade routes provided her with the opportunity to supply caravans moving through the area as well as to extract taxes and tolls from them. It was argued that taxes and tolls could bring in a substantial level of income.
3. The discussion of imports in Chapter 2 showed that the seventh through fifth centuries saw the height of imports into the area. The largest share of these imports come from wealthy tombs in the immediate vicinity of the Amman Citadel. Not surprisingly, this demonstrates that long-distance trade concentrated mostly on luxury goods, whose use was largely confined to the elite sector of society.
4. The discussion of possible exports argued that it is unlikely that the growth in agricultural capacity was related to export of wine or oil. Rather wool and

> textiles are the most likely candidates for export based on their value and on the solid evidence for sheep in the faunal record. However, there is yet little indication in any of our sources for production on anything but the domestic level.

Together, these items indicate that the strategic position of the Amman Plateau may have been the Ammonites' most crucial resource in their attempts to engage with international trade. It provided important opportunities to extract taxes and tolls as well as access to elite goods.

6.7 Weights, Measures, and Money

Although the evidence for weighing practices from the Amman Plateau is rather meager (see Chapter 2), when added to the stronger evidence of weights from Mudayna, it becomes clear that a system of weighing small quantities was in use in the region and probably had known increments. Such small weights probably measured valuable materials, such as incense, gold, silver, tin, and bronze. The evidence from these weights suggests that however the weight system was configured, it probably worked with values similar to the better-known system in Judah.

One can glean evidence for measuring practices from a few of the Ammonite ostraca. Ḥesban Ostracon A1 (*CAI*, no. 80) records what are probably disbursements (Cross 2003a: 75) by using unexpressed measures for grain, gum (*nkʾt*), and wine. Ḥesban Ostracon A3 (*CAI*, no. 137) and A5 (*CAI*, no. 65), and Jalul Ostracon 1 (*CAI*, no. 243) are lists of names that include numbers at the beginning (Jalul 1) or end of each line (Ḥesban A3, A5), indicating a quantity of some unstated product. The numerals employed on these ostraca are in Hieratic script (adopted from Egypt) similar to ostraca known from Judah such as those from Arad.[257] Again, though the quantity of evidence is

[257] For a summary of the Hieratic numerals in Ammonite inscriptions, see *CAI* Appendix IV. For the Arad Inscriptions see Aharoni 1981. These are Hieratic and not "Aramean" as Kletter (Kletter 1998: 110, 144) suggests. It is true that the Ammonite script developed from the

small, it reveals a set of known quantities (be they jars, sacks, or weight) that the local population used to order its economic affairs.[258]

Together with weighing and measuring practices, money forms an integral part of many ancient economies. One's assessment of whether money exists or not in any particular period depends on how one defines it. If one defines money as coinage, then in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods, no money existed.[259] However, "money" may indicate more than a medium (coins), including any object or substance used to carry out a variety of economic activities, including debt fulfillment, payment of taxes, acquisition of other goods, building up storable wealth, and serving as a standard of value (Powell 1996: 227). If one follows the latter notion of money, then it certainly did exist pre-coinage.[260] Substances regularly used as money in the latter sense were metals (gold, silver, bronze, tin, copper, lead) and food items, especially barley, but other items could be used as well (Powell 1996: 227–8). The evidence for the use of money by the Ammonites is slim; however, Ḥesban Ostracon A1, line 6 (*CAI*, no. 80) records the disbursement of forty pieces of silver.[261] While the measurement is unknown, it seems reasonable to suppose that it is a weight value, perhaps gerahs or shekels. This bit of evidence, though rather small, suggests two things. First, silver

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Aramaic scripts, but the numerals are written in Hieratic. Neither Jackson's dissertation (Jackson 1980) nor the published version (Jackson 1983a) indicates this as Kletter suggests. Naveh's history of the alphabet also does not indicate that the Ammonites used Aramaic numerals as Kletter asserts (Naveh 1987: 105–1). The exception to writing numerals in Hieratic are the cases where numbers are marked by a series of lines, much as we would record a tally.

[258] What level of standardization existed for the measures and whether it may have been centrally dictated, one simply cannot say, but one would expect at least a modicum of standardization or generally agreed upon quantities to facilitate transactions, even if only for local exchange.

[259] Kletter takes this view in his remarks about money in eighth and seventh century Judah (Kletter 1998: 144), even while at the same time discussing the weighing of metals.

[260] On the definition of money see Bongenaar 1999; Powell 1996. For further discussion of money, see Balmuth 2001; Powell 1999; Radner 1999b.

[261] Written with *ksp*, "silver" followed by the hieratic numeral for "twenty" written twice.

played some role in the economy of the Amman Plateau, even though it may not have been extensive. Second, the unstated weight or value of the silver suggests a known quantity, which is probably small and fits within a known series of weights for which there are only a few indicators. The weights discussed in Chapter 2 also point to small amounts of valuable substances, among which one would precious metals.

Based on these bits of evidence, the use of money among the Ammonites is relatively secure. The level of monetization—how broadly money was used within society—and the level of standardization, is difficult to determine because of the paucity of evidence. However, given the social location of most of the metal objects that we have surveyed (i.e., in wealthy tombs), one would expect the exchange of metals among the elite and in relation to long-distance trade of high-value items. Furthermore, metals figured into tribute payments as the texts surveyed here demonstrate. On the subsistence level, most people likely ate what they produced and acquired needed items such as iron implements for farming through various means including barter and using a low-value money such as barley.[262] This overlapping of systems of exchange is common in the ancient world and even in our own (Powell 1996: 228).

6.8 Management Practices

The discussion of Ammonite inscriptions shows that some of the ostraca appear to be distribution lists or receipts. This is most clear in the case of Ḥesban Ostracon A1 (*CAI*, no. 80), where personal names are preceded by a *lamed* ("to" or "for") and followed by amounts of wine, livestock, grain, and other items distributed. The precise function of each list is not always possible to discern; however one can categorize them

[262] Interestingly, biblical texts make frequent references to purchases and payments in amounts of silver rather than say in barley (Holladay 2009: esp. 216).

as distribution lists/receipts (Ḥesban A1, A3, A5, Jalul 1) and possible inventories (Ḥesban A2, A4). The function of the name lists (al-Mazar VII, ʿUmayri, Ḥesban A6) is difficult to know, though they may have served as notations of receipt or disbursement as well. Overall, the Ammonite ostraca are comparable to the non-epistolary ostraca found at Arad both in date (ca. 600 BCE or later) and in notation (Aharoni 1981: 9, e.g., nos. 22, 31, 33, etc.). Whatever the function of these ostraca, they are part of a set of scribal practices that demonstrate an interest in accounting. Given the social location of writing in the ancient world within an elite milieu, one should see these as evidence for management of resources by local elite, whether directly commissioned by the royal court or not. The disbursement and/or receipt of agricultural produce points to some level of redistribution within the larger setting of a subsistence economy where those who grew the food also ate it. The lack of large-scale storage indicates that such redistribution occurred on a very small scale, perhaps to meet the needs of the royal court and other small groups of people who were not directly engaged in food production and were thus not self-sufficient.

The discussion of seals bearing names of titled men in Chapter 2 and more fully in Chapter 7, may point to managerial practices. Although the precise role people holding these titles played cannot be clearly delineated, some of them such as the *ʿbd*, "servant" or *nʿr*, "steward," or *spr*, "scribe" may have overseen some aspects of the economy. Also of importance are the five *ʿmn*, "Ammon" seals that indicate provincial administration in the Persian Period (Herr 1999: 233–4). Although post-dating the decline of the independent Ammonite polity, they point to attempts to organize and account for Ammonite agricultural products. Thus, as with weights and measures, the

evidence for management is small, but suggests attempts by the elite to control some aspects of the economy.

6.9 Conclusion

The discussion of the economy of the Amman Plateau attempted to understand the different parts of the economy and the way that they articulated with the broader network of trade and exchange stimulated by the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. The main points of the discussion are summarized here.

1. Growth in settlement and investment in land reclamation and development for agricultural purposes was an important characteristic of the Iron IIC. This includes the farmsteads, field towers, plastered cisterns, terraces, winepresses, and the planting of crops such as grape vines that have a relatively large initial investment. This may have occurred first in the region around the Amman Citadel and extended or shifted to the ʿUmayri-Ḥesban region beginning in the sixth century and continuing into the fifth. The agricultural produce was most likely used locally, with a small amount going to support the ruler and his attendants. It may also have served to provide for imperial officials and soldiers who came through the area. Agricultural products were most likely not exported to any significant degree.
2. Imported goods and materials from Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Africa, Arabia, Egypt, and the Aegean, most prominently in tombs, highlight a small elite segment of the economy. These items, along with items showing foreign artistic features or having foreign prototypes (discussed in Chapter 2), make it very clear that the Amman Plateau was one part of a far-reaching trade network that linked together much of the ancient world. Ammonite participation in these networks was facilitated by Ammon's strategic position astride main north-south trade routes.
3. The Ammonites played two possible roles within these broad trading networks. First, if the Ammonites exported anything, it was probably wool and/or textiles since these have a high enough value to warrant long-distance overland trade. Second, major sources of revenue for the Ammonite elite were taxes and tolls levied on caravan traffic going in both directions. Caravan traffic also supplied opportunities for the locals to sell some of their agricultural goods. The protection of caravans and the continued smooth operation of trade networks was also in the interest of the imperial powers who benefited greatly from international trade.
4. The use of weights and measures was part of routine economic activity. The extant examples indicate that the weights and measures used in Ammon are similar to the better-known examples from Judah. The small size of the weights points to transactions involving small amounts of precious materials, perhaps metals, incense, or spices, and also point to the use of "money."

5. A small amount of evidence is available for accounting/management practices in the form of a few ostraca and seals of titled men who may have played a role in management. This shows that the economy of the Amman Plateau was not centralized or centrally controlled to any significant degree.
6. There was a small number of officials, who along with the king and perhaps military, were probably not self-sufficient and thus depended on the agricultural products of others. Given the lack of large-scale storage facilities, appropriation of agricultural goods was probably achieved through taxation or other modes of extraction.

When one considers these points as a set, it becomes clear that there are essentially two sectors of the economy, the royal and local (Steiner 2001: 329) or in other terms, the rural and circumscribed sector as distinct, or in opposition to, the "urban" and market centered sector (Hopkins 1996: 124; followed by McNutt 1999: 154).[263] The rural sector was largely concerned with agricultural and pastoral activities necessary for living. The rural sector may have engaged in the production of wool or textile production for export, but the evidence does not yet make this a strong possibility. On the other hand, the elite sector, made up of a small group of non-self-sufficient officials, elites, and the king, lived off the produce of the rural sector, though they appear to have exercised little power in the organization and implementation of argopastoral pursuits. The greatest opportunity for the elites to gain wealth and the exotic foreign goods they were interested in was through imposing taxes and tolls on long-distance trade moving through their lands. One must recognize, however, the small-scale of this enterprise; in terms of the total economy of the Amman Plateau, it represented the agenda and benefit of a very small population.

Finally, it is notable that the changes visible in the economy of the Amman Plateau correspond temporally with the onset of imperial rule and it remains to try to understand why. While Chapter 7 will take up this more fully, one may say

[263] One may add a third sector, namely, empire (Bedford 2005: 66).

preliminarily that the Neo-Assyrian Empire and its successors were interested in the wealth that international trade could bring and thereby played a major role in stimulating it. This brought areas, such as the Amman Plateau, into broadening trade networks because of their geography. It was this geographic position that would enable a few emerging elites to accrue status and power and work the system in their own favor.

CHAPTER 7

SOCIETAL CHANGE IN THE IRON AGE

One thing that is clear from the review of archaeological and textual sources is that the Amman Plateau was inhabited well before the Ammonites emerged onto the stage of history and well before the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Similarly, there are scraps of evidence that suggest Ammonite political formation began *before* the arrival of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Therefore, this chapter first explores the social and political origins of the Ammonites in the centuries leading up to Assyrian domination of the southern Levant. The discussion of this earlier period brings into relief the continuities as well as shifts that take place in the following period. The chapter then moves on to consider the changes that came about during the late eighth through sixth centuries because of the pressures and opportunities of being incorporated into the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. Before entering that discussion, however, this chapter considers current models of sociopolitical organization as an important springboard to the discussion of the social and political change on the Amman Plateau.

7.1 The Sociopolitical Organization of the Amman Plateau Population

Recent discussions of sociopolitical organization in Iron Age Transjordan focus on the flexible role of tribalism in fluctuations between small social groups and larger supra-tribal polities (Bienkowski 2009; Bienkowski and Steen 2001; Knauf 1992; Knauf-Belleri 1995; LaBianca 1999; LaBianca and Younker 1995; Steen 2004; Steen and Smelik 2007; Younker 1997, 1999b, 2003). Typically, the movement towards a supra-

tribal polity comes in response to military pressures and/or economic opportunities (Bienkowski 2009: 18; Knauf 1992: 49–51; Knauf-Belleri 1995: 108–9; LaBianca and Younker 1995: 405–11; Steen and Smelik 2007: 152-3; Younker 1997: 246; 1999b: 206–9; 2003: 169–70).

Several definitions of tribe or tribalism have emerged from these studies, but at its most basic, the tribal model holds that Iron Age sociopolitical organization was rooted in kinship, which provided the metaphors and mechanisms through which groups could aggregate or disaggregate (Bienkowski 2009: 17; LaBianca 1999: 20; LaBianca and Younker 1995: 403; Steen and Smelik 2007: 150; cf. Steen 2004: 126–9; 2006: 28; 2009: 105). Citation of three definitions will serve to illustrate the basic ideas.

LaBianca and Younker define tribalism as, "strong in-group loyalty based on variously fluid notions of common unilineal descent" (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 403; cf. LaBianca 1999: 20). Van der Steen and Smelik's definition of a tribal society is the following:

> 1. A segmentary social structure based on an accepted unilineal lineage system. This is mostly (but not necessarily) patrilineal and consists of clans or families bonded by a system of sodalities or social networks that crosscut the clan system. The different clans may recognize one communal apical ancestor. This system does not so much represent actual kinship and descent relations, but is regularly reconstructed and manipulated for social and political purposes with the consent of the members.
>
> 2. Leadership of the tribe is maintained through a combination of ascribed and achieved qualities. In most studies the emphasis is on achieved qualities, and the leader is depicted as a 'first among equals'. Other studies have pointed out however, that

leadership is at least partly hereditary, within the leading family or clan of the tribe.

3. Social interaction within and between tribes is strongly determined by the concept of 'honour' (Steen and Smelik 2007: 150).

Finally, Bienkowski offers a definition that responds to Routledge's critique that the tribal model is grounded outside of history in a set of environmental conditions and the possibilities latent in genealogy (Routledge 2004: 116–9). Bienkowski argues that the idea of tribe "is an ideological term denoting a particular form of social identity" (Bienkowski 2009: 17). Thus, like other forms of identity, tribal affiliation is socially constructed and reconstructed, defined and redefined within a constantly shifting set of historical circumstances. Bienkowski goes on to propose the following relational definition of tribe that builds on Ingold's study (Ingold 2000):

> "A sociopolitical system which enables effective negotiations within a constantly shifting network of relationships with people portrayed as interrelated and with territory, creating a sense of belonging and identity" (Bienkowski 2009: 17).

The evidence for tribal social structure in Iron Age Transjordan is of two kinds: archaeological and textual. Archaeologically, finds of pillared houses that are thought to represent family units (e.g., at Jalul, Saḥab, and ʿUmayri) and multiple-burial tombs argue in favor of social organization of family groups (Younker 1997: 243–4). Furthermore, as Younker notes, regions that incorporate multiple less complex societies tend to have a relatively homogeneous material culture that crosscuts geographic and political boundaries. In the case of the southern Levant, such items include collared-rim pithoi, pillared houses, and pillar figurines (Younker 1997: 244–5). Finally, the relative lack of site hierarchy in the Transjordan argues in favor of heterarchical or

counterpoised power that is typically associated with tribal organization (Bienkowski 2009: 20–1).[264]

Textual evidence from the ninth century BCE and on points to an organizational structure centered on kinship. The evidence includes the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions mentioning dynastic houses, thus indicating the use of family metaphors for political organization. Likewise, the Tall Siran Bottle and NAT, no. 7 mention the "sons of Ammon," showing that Ammonite society in the Iron IIC was perceived from the outside and the inside as organized around a kinship metaphor. Also, the Mesha Inscription, which manipulates kinship for political purposes (Steen and Smelik 2007), provides an example of kinship organization just to the south of the Amman Plateau during the Iron Age II.[265] Finally, the Hebrew Bible, with its various references to tribes including "the sons of Ammon," regularly represents southern Levantine society along tribal lines.

In addition to the archaeological and textual evidence, ethnographic studies (Steen 2006, 2009) and those inspired by such studies (Bienkowski and Steen 2001; Steen 2004; Steen and Smelik 2007) reveal the explanatory power of the tribal model. In particular, van der Steen's studies of nineteenth century Ottoman Palestine (Steen 2006, 2009) demonstrate some of the ways tribes can be mobilized to form strong sociopolitical units that even empires cannot fully control. Additionally, in providing concrete examples, these studies aid in understanding the dynamics of small-scale sociopolitical activity in marginal environments and the traces this might leave in the archaeological and textual record.

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[264] The present author would add to this that there is a lack of evidence for tight integration or centralization at any time in the Iron Age of Transjordan. The Iron IIC provides a few signs of integration, such as the BBBs and script, but even these do not suggest a strong centralization.

[265] Though see Routledge's understanding of the Mesha Stele, which focuses on segmentation (Routledge 2000; Routledge 2004: 133–53).

The remainder of this chapter assumes the tribal model of sociopolitical organization and invokes it where useful in explaining the data. At the same time, the author recognizes that there are other models available for discussing sociopolitical organization and change and in particular the topic of state formation. Two of the most prominent models are the Patrimonial State Model that builds on Max Weber's understanding of patrimonialism (Master 2001; Schloen 2001; Stager 1985), and Routledge's hegemonic model that builds on the political writings of Antonio Gramsci (Routledge 2004). Both of these models offer incisive observations on certain aspects of the processes of sociopolitical structures and change that the southern Levant witnessed in the Iron Age II. In fact, the debt of the present work to Routledge's explanations of the sociopolitical importance of specific categories of archaeological evidence will become obvious in the discussion below. Nevertheless, the author has reservations about both models and hence does not employ them in their totality. The Patrimonial State Model is, at least as represented in Master's and Schloen's work (Master 2001; Schloen 2001), too rigid and essentializing, not allowing enough latitude for the messiness of human existence. Routledge's hegemonic model, on the other hand, is by his own account true for Moab, but not necessarily for other polities of the southern Levant (Routledge 2004: 151–2). In what follows then, the present author employs the Tribal Model, not because it explains everything, but because it makes much of the data intelligible as a whole and because it helps keep the scale of Ammonite social and political changes at the forefront of the discussion.

7.2 Iron Age I: Sedentarizing Local Tribes

7.2.1 Sources

- Sites with architecture: Khirbat al-Ḥajjar (walls), Ḥesban (trench, cistern), Ṣafuṭ (town wall), and Saḥab (domestic buildings, town walls), ʿUmayri (domestic buildings, fortifications).
- Sites with pottery: Amman Citadel, Jawa, Rujm al-Malfuf South, Khirbat Umm ad-Dananir and Rujm al-Ḥenu East (possible structures)
- Tombs: Jabal Nuzha Tomb, Saḥab Tomb C, Saḥab Area C, Tomb 1, Cave A4 on Jabal al-Hawayah
- Survey Sites
- Gen 19:30–38; Num 20:14–21:35; Deut 2:1–3:11; Judg 10:6–12:7 (Jephthah); 1 Sam 1:1–11 (Saul)

7.2.2 Synthesis

The disruption of the Late Bronze Age political and economic system that connected the Amman Plateau into the broader Levantine world left its denizens in a new situation. Perhaps to fill the economic void created by the collapse of the trading system, or because of the diminished threat of Egyptian intrusions and demands (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 410; Younker 1999b: 203–4; 2003: 167), or for other reasons beyond the limits of the evidence, people began a slow process of settlement. The process of settlement had the potential to engender conflicts as various groups laid claim to particular pieces of land. Such local conflicts probably account for the destruction of the twelfth century fortifications at ʿUmayri (Steen 2004: 305–6) and encouraged the continued use of fortification walls elsewhere such as at Saḥab and Ṣafuṭ.

The source of the newly settling population is most likely local. LBA Egyptian texts mention Shasu in Transjordan and highlight the nomadic or pastoralist subsistence strategies of some of the Transjordanian population—an unsurprising finding given the marginal nature of the Transjordanian environment. The strongest, though still meager, evidence for the origins of this population comes from the Iron I archaeological remains

from tombs and from sites such as the Amman Citadel, ʿUmayri. Ṣafuṭ, and Saḥab. These underscore continuity with the preceding LBA and the following Iron II, suggesting that the population of the area underwent no great changes or influx of newcomers. The number of sites, and thus the size of the sedentary population, did grow in the Iron I, and so it is possible that some of the newly settling population came from outside the region (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 410). However, the material remains show no traces of foreign intrusions (cf. Dion 2003: 493) and thus these settlers probably came from the local non-sedentary population (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 406; Younker 1999b: 206).[266]

The increase in the number of settlements points to changes in the percentage of sedentary population and in food production strategies. The existence of several larger sites amidst the otherwise undifferentiated sites of the period may point to mild processes of social differentiation. The well-equipped tombs, which date to the same period, also point to the presence of wealthier individuals and families and thus similar social processes. Whether the presence of a larger sedentary population, site hierarchy, and mild social differentiation was attended by political development is less than clear.

LaBianca and Younker argue for the development of supra-tribal polities in the Transjordan in the Iron I. They argue that the arrival of the Philistines on the Mediterranean coast around 1200 BCE caused the Israelites to appoint a king in the eleventh century, which in turn caused the Transjordanian population to coalesce into supra-tribal polities to defend themselves (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 410–11;

[266] On the phenomenon of sedentarization, see LaBianca 1990. The idea that settlers in the Iron I were essentially local (i.e., not intruding from somewhere else) is concluded for much of the Levant, for example, Bienkowski 1992; Bienkowski 2009: 20; Finkelstein 1988; Joffe 2002: 437; Miller and Hayes 2006: 50–1; Sader 2000: 62–8; Stager 1998: 141–2. For recent reviews of the evidence in Israel and Judah, see Finkelstein 2007c; Grabbe 2007: 65–122; Mazar 2007a.

Younker 1999b: 207–8; 2003: 169). However, their reconstruction is, in part, dependent on the biblical accounts of pre-monarchic Israelite encounters with the Ammonites (Gen 19:30–38; Num 20:14–21:35; Deut 2:1–3:11; Judg 10:6–12:7; 1 Sam 1:1–11). These accounts are late reflections on the hoary past and provide little evidence that they reliably preserve ancient historical material. The account of Jephthah in Judg 10:6–12:7, for example, offers a late presentation of geopolitical claims, and so the mention of an Ammonite *melek*, "king" is most likely not reliable. Even if one could speak confidently that there was a *melek* of the Ammonites in the Iron I, this would not alter the picture presented here. The Hebrew word *melek* has a broad semantic meaning and does not imply a specific system of political control other than a one-man rule (*TDOT* 8:354–5).[267] Saul's encounter with the Ammonites in 1 Sam 1:1–11 may preserve some historical memory, and if it does, illustrates the kind of tribal skirmishes that occurred from time to time. It provides a possible indication of the Ammonite tribe in the Transjordan and the only possible scrap of information for Ammonite military activity at this early stage. Whether it provides evidence for durable supra-tribal political organization among the Ammonites at this early stage, must remain an open question.

7.3 Iron Age IIA: Sedentarizing Tribes Continued

7.3.1 Sources

- Sites with architecture: Amman Citadel ([fortification?] walls), Ḥesban (basement, possible reservoir)
- Sites with pottery: Jawa, ʿUmayri
- Tombs: Amman Tomb E, Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb, Saḥab Tombs A and C
- Survey Sites
- Epigraphs: Shoshenq I list
- Biblical texts: 2 Sam 8:12||1 Chron 18:11; 2 Sam 10–12||1 Chron 19:1–20:3; 2 Sam 17:27–29; 2 Sam 23:37||1 Chron 11:39; 1 Kgs 11:1–8, 33; 1 Kgs 14:21, 31||2 Chron 12:13

[267] Cf. Athamina's discussion of the use of the word *malik* amongst pre-Islamic Arabian tribes (Athamina 1998).

7.3.2 Synthesis

The Iron Age IIA on the Amman Plateau continues the very modest finds of the Iron Age I, providing very little additional material evidence for social or political change or complexity. Settlement may have continued to increase, but the surveys cannot yet distinguish clearly Iron IIA sites from what follows. The almost complete lack of imported items suggests that there were few significant trade connections with other regions. Perhaps the most striking finds are the anthropoid coffins from the Raghdan Royal Palace Tomb and Saḥab Tomb A, which if correctly dated, may point to elite burial traditions during the tenth century. The Amman Citadel probably functioned as a local center of power alongside Saḥab and Ṣafuṭ, which may have continued as fortified towns during this period. Other than these finds and the possible growth in the number of sites during this period, the remains give no significant indications that anything has changed from the Iron I. In this respect, the Iron IIA continues the small-scale, relatively isolated, agropastoral and tribally organized society of the Iron I.

The biblical texts that present David and Solomon's interactions with the Ammonites do not alter the picture available from the archaeology. Chapter 4 concluded that the literary environment of the stories about David suggests that the conquest of the Ammonites is most likely a seventh or sixth century literary creation. Nevertheless, if the Ammonites were subject to a Judean warlord such as David, the picture one should conjure in the imagination is of the Ammonite tribal leader or leaders giving their allegiance to David, which might require military cooperation and the payment of protection money. No great social stratification or political complexity need be implied, nor is their evidence for it.

The small quantity and unexceptional nature of the information about the Amman Plateau during the Iron IIA fits comfortably within what we know of this period otherwise. As with the Iron I, the powers of Egypt and Mesopotamia had very little contact with the Levant, and especially the southern Levant. Egypt was experiencing an insular period partly because of political fragmentation (Taylor 2000: 330–1). Assyria's period of political decline, on the other hand, ended with the reign of Assur-dan II (934–912 BCE), who set out to re-conquer old Assyrian holdings in Upper Mesopotamia. His successors, Adad-nirari II (911–891 BCE) and Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884 BCE), continued this activity into the early ninth century, thereby gaining a stronghold in Upper Mesopotamia, without, however establishing a foothold west of the Euphrates (Kuhrt 1995: 478–83). The Levant, and especially the southern portion, was thus relatively insulated from imperial incursions and demands, permitting local groups to continue their lives relatively undisturbed by imperial endeavors.[268]

7.4 Early Iron Age IIB (ca. 900–750 BCE): Emergent Sociopolitical Complexity

7.4.1 Sources

- Sites with architecture: Amman Citadel (possible defensive walls, possible gate and tunnel, volute capitals), Ḥesban (possible reservoir), Jalul (entrance ramp

[268] The Iron IIA was not, however, a static period for areas west of the Euphrates. The Phoenician city-states and Neo-Hittite city-states appear to have survived the Late Bronze Age collapse and continu into the tenth century (Kuhrt 1995: 401–17). Arameans in the Upper Euphrates region, known from eleventh and tenth century Assyrian texts, appear to have settled and begun a process of political formation (Kuhrt 1995: 393–8; Sader 2000). On the other hand, the picture in the southern Levant during the Iron IIA continues to be problematic because of the sparseness of material cultural remains as well as their contested nature. The material remains of the cities of Philistia are also minimal. Ashkelon reveals nothing significant from this period (Stager 2008: 1584), Tel Miqne (Ekron) has a small upper city with streets and some buildings (Dothan and Gitin 2008: 1955). Ashdod may be the exception, as excavations indicate a thriving fortified town (Dever 1997: 219). The monumental architecture that was once ascribed to Solomon in the late tenth century in Israel and Judah is now very much contested because of the Low Chronology debate (Finkelstein 2007a; Grabbe 2007: 12–6; Mazar 2007c) and so cannot be cited confidently as evidence for sociopolitical developments in the Iron IIA. Thus, like much of the rest of the southern Levant, the Amman Plateau reflects only small changes during this period, giving no significant signs of social and political development.

and gate), Jawa (offset-inset city wall, domestic buildings), ʿUmayri (domestic building) Saḥab (possible house)
- Sites with pottery: Ṣafuṭ
- Tombs: Raghdan Royal Palace (anthropoid and clay coffins), Amman Tombs D, E (with possible remains), Saḥab B
- Survey Sites
- Sculptures
- Imports: alabaster, ivory, marine shells, and metals
- Epigraphs: Possible reference to Ammonites at Battle of Qarqar in 853 (=NAT, no. 1); Amman Citadel Inscription, few possible seals
- Biblical texts: 2 Chron 20:1–30; 24: 23–25;[269] 26:8

7.4.2 Synthesis

Although still limited, the ninth and first half of the eighth century evidence a greater level of change and increasing complexity than the twelfth–tenth centuries. The markers of wealth and power become visible in tombs clustered around the Amman Citadel and at Saḥab, revealing the first indications of an elite stratum of society focused on central sites, as well as expanding trade relations. Elite products, including royal inscriptions (Amman Citadel Inscription), volute capitals, sculptures, and monumental structures such as gate complexes and water systems, tell a story of new ways of representing power, new desires for exotic goods, the development of local artisanship in stone carving, and the use of writing for purposes of display (Amman Citadel Inscription).

There are a number of possible reasons for these changes, one of which is the need for security to protect local interests against regional powers such as Israel and Damascus (similar to Moab Steen and Smelik 2007: 152). Likewise, the resurgence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire presented the renewed danger of imperial encroachment. This alarmed the peoples of the southern Levant enough to enable them to put aside the infighting in order to fight their common imperial enemy (Joffe 2002: 446). The need

[269] This is paralleled in 2 Kgs 12:22, although 2 Kgs does not include the ethnic designation “Ammonite.”

for local military leadership, even when only ad hoc in nature, provided some members of the Amman Plateau population the opportunity to gain a following and create a local base of power that they could later convert into more enduring power.[270] Another factor in the changes taking place was the growth of interregional trade, including trade coming from Arabia, which provided access to new sources of wealth (Joffe 2002: 447) that could be concentrated in the hands of those with power. The ability to obtain exotic goods and control their flow and social access to them provided the emerging elite with newfound symbols of status that could be joined to other forms of power such as military might. The settlement picture may also have played a role in the increasing social and political complexity. The increasing size of the sedentary population, with the concomitant investment in agricultural facilities, created an independent economic foundation that prevented a move back towards non-sedentary forms of life, and provided the basic resources needed to resist military pressures (Younker 1999b: 207; 2003: 169).[271]

Finally, with the slow accumulation of power, wealth, and status that accrued to the emerging elite, they looked to their dominant neighbors—Israel, Damascus, and Assyria—for visible representations that could both represent and constitute their power. This issued into a group of elite items—royal inscriptions, volute capitals, sculptures, and monumental structures—what Joffe calls an "international ruling style" (Joffe 2002: 453). In a similar vein, Routledge regards these items as a coherent group of "kingly things" that take part in a "global" grammar of rule known throughout the

[270] On this see van der Steen's striking ethnographic case studies of tribalism and tribal leaders in Ottoman Palestine (Steen 2006; Steen 2009). The story of king David also comes to mind here as one whose military prowess eventually turned into enduring power. This applies regardless of what one thinks of the historicity of the story.

[271] Younker's remarks, however, focus on the Iron I, for which his construction rests too heavily on late biblical historiography.

ancient Near East and replicated locally. They represent rule (or in his words, hegemony), but also play an active role in constructing that rule by reinscribing the reality and ideology of domination over and over in the experience of the ruled (Routledge 2004: 154–83).

In Chapter 4, the present writer expressed hesitation about the historical reliability of the Chronicler's mentioning of the Ammonites because they appear in places that fit conveniently with the Chronicler's ideology of punishment and reward. It is also the case, however, that the various battles that the Chronicler mentions do not contradict anything from the other available sources of information. In fact, what they show is the internecine struggles of tiny powers fighting for regional control and influence. In this regard, whether historically reliable or not, these texts capture something of the inter-polity tension that probably developed as the elites of each region sought to expand and consolidate their power.

7.5 Late Iron IIB–Iron IIC (ca. 750–500 BCE): Changes on the Edge of Empire

Areas incorporated into an empire may experience a variety of interconnected changes depending on an array of contextual factors. These can include economic, technological, social, political, religious, dietary, and material cultural changes, to name a few. Some changes may result directly from imperial practices, while others may be the by-products of two-way interactions between local and "global" or imperial traditions (Sinopoli 2001a: 445; cf. LaBianca 2006; LaBianca 2007; LaBianca and Walker 2007).[272] The discussion of the sources for Ammonite history in Chapters 2–4

[272] Matthews provides a useful outline of changes in his discussion of empires. There he identifies specific characteristics such as "political control of periphery" or "control of peripheral populations" and suggests archaeological and textual correlates that one might expect as the material remnants of the practices associated with these characteristics (Matthews 2003: 128–31, table 5.1).

shows how the mid-eighth through sixth century BCE was an important period of change among the Ammonites. The co-occurrence of these changes and the imposition of imperial rule suggests that they are related. To explore the relationship between imperial domination and the changes visible in Ammon, the remainder of this chapter uses recent studies of empires as a guide to understanding and explaining them. It focuses on four major areas: social and political complexity, settlement intensity and complexity, economic changes, and religious changes (following Crowell 2004: 266; D'Altroy 1992). Before moving on to the main discussion of this section, however, it is important to note that by focusing on the effects of empires, this discussion does not imply that all changes are the result of interactions with empire. Some changes during this period may be understood along other lines, such as the development of Phoenician trade or the result of regional military and political encounters. The intent is to shine a spotlight on what is the most significant motor of change in the ancient Near East at this time: the expansion of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires over most of the Fertile Crescent and beyond.

7.5.1 Sources

- Sites with architecture: Amman Citadel (possible defensive walls, possible gate and tunnel), Ḥesban (possible reservoir), Jalul (tripartite building, pillared house), Jawa (city wall, large domestic buildings), ʿUmayri (domestic building) Saḥab (pillared building), Ṣafuṭ (city wall, houses)
- Tombs: Amman Tombs A, B, C, E, F, Adoni-nur, Raghdan Royal Palace (anthropoid and clay coffins possible), Abu Nseir, Khilda 1 and 2, Meqabelein, Saḥab B (possible remains), Umm Udayna
- Survey Sites
- Sculptures
- Imports: alabaster, ivory, marine shells, glass, semi-precious stones, metals, pottery
- Epigraphs: NAT, nos. 2–10; Amman Statue Inscription, Amman Theater Inscription, Tall Siran Bottle, Umm Udayna Bowl, Ostraca, Seals
- Biblical texts: 2 Chr 27:5; Jer 27:1–15; 40:13–41:18; 49:1–6; Ezek 25:1–7; Amos 1:13–15; Zeph 2:8–10

7.5.2 Social and Political Complexity

The kinds of economic changes visible on the Amman Plateau are often associated with increased social ranking and the creation or expansion of a local elite (Hastorf and D'Altroy 2001: 13; Sinopoli 2001a: 454; 2001b: 197–8). Likewise, the interaction of empires and peripheral regions can create or cause changes in political groups (Matthews 2003: 147; Tapper 1990: 52). As Matthews notes, Urartu's existence as a developed political entity is inextricably linked with Assyrian imperialism (Matthews 2003: 147). The creation or intensification of elites and political change may become visible in the material culture through the appearance of imported elite goods or of objects that emulate elite imperial styles (Matthews 2003: 143–4).

7.5.2.1 Elite Appropriations of Symbols of Status, Power, and Authority

As with many of the small polities of the southern Levant, the Ammonites became vassals of the Neo-Assyrian Empire because of Tiglath-pileser III's vigorous expansion in the second half of the eighth century. This meant that the rulers of the Ammonites were under obligation to promote and protect Assyrian interests by sending tribute, helping with intelligence, and contributing to military expeditions. It also meant that the Ammonite elite had to negotiate their existence between the empire and those over whom they ruled, satisfying imperial demands and securing their authority over the local population. In the latter role, the Ammonite elite already had available visible representations with which to legitimate and perpetuate their increasing power, such as monumental inscriptions, volute capitals, statuary, and the like (§ 7.4 above). This set of items had broad currency throughout the small polities of the Levant in the Iron Age IIB. However, the onset of imperial rule brought an imperial set of material

representations of power, status, and authority that the Ammonite elite could appropriate for their own ends.

Recent studies of elite incorporation of foreign or imperial items into a local culture emphasize the agency of the local elite in choosing which items to adopt or adapt, and the value of these items for articulating and advancing their own status and advantage (Dietler 2010: 55–74; 1998; Hunter 2001; Marcus 1989: 55, 62; 1996: 43–53, 76–7; Routledge 1997: 38–9; Schortman and Urban 1998: 111; Woolf 1997). Although it is not always possible to say with certainty that a particular cultural borrowing reflects the projection of status or legitimation of power and authority, the aggregation of several different categories of such items in closely related contexts argues in favor of such an interpretation. The main categories for which the prestige value of foreign inspired items seems clear are: architecture, drinking vessels made of pottery and metal, and iconography.

The main example of architecture is the open-court architecture visible in the buildings at Tall Jawa and on the Amman Citadel. Given its elite use in Assyria, the appropriation of the architectural plan at the central Ammonite site and in wealthy houses in an Ammonite town is not surprising. Moreover, the contexts in which it is found elsewhere, such as at Busayra in Edom, suggests that local elites recognized and adapted open-court architectural form to meet their own needs to project status and power. One might also mention the use of Assyrian fine ware styles and metal bowls from Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian times. The quality of the artifacts bespeaks their elite nature, as do their find spots in wealthy contexts—tombs or large domestic complexes at Jawa. These artifacts represent specific social practices of drinking and feasting that can be converted into prestige and power (Dietler 1998;

Dietler and Hayden 2001; Hunter 2001). Finally, Mesopotamian stylistic features in the iconography of the stamp seals, on some of the sculptures, and on the reliefs of the Rujm al-Kursi temple, reflect the interest of local elites in the symbols and culture of their overlords. In her discussion of Neo-Assyrian style cylinder seals at Hasanlu, Marcus argues that the Neo-Assyrian style cylinder seals were probably not used for sealing, but solely as ornamentation that identified the status and power of the owner (Marcus 1989: 62; 1996: 49–50, with literature). A similar situation for Ammonite glyptic that appropriates Mesopotamian motifs seems likely.

Each of these items, while forging links to the imperial regime, also reflects local adaption such that there are no pristine examples of "pure" Mesopotamian style or manufacture. The possible examples of open-court architecture are constrained by locally available materials and space. The Assyrian style pottery fine wares are, as far as is known, made of local clays[273] and do not always replicate the dimensions of their Assyrian counterparts. The iconography of the seals, while using some Mesopotamian motifs, appears on scaraboid stamp seals rather than cylinder seals. The sculptures contain mixed influences going beyond that of Assyrian art, while the reliefs on the Rujm al-Kursi temple replicate the standard of Sîn of Harran, without the typical tassels. These appropriations underscore the creative use of these items in ways that resonate with already existing local practices, rather than completely replacing them.

What does not appear in the archaeological record is also revealing. The archaeology of the Amman Plateau preserves only a select group of artifacts that fit within already meaningful practices such as drinking (cf. Hunter 2001: 298–303). The

[273] Engstrom (Engstrom 2004) provides a test case for such wares at Tell el-Hesi. Petrographic analysis shows that the specimens of such fine wares were made from local clays.

Ammonite elite did not adopt all of the accoutrements of the imperial elite. It is exactly at this point where the mediating role of the local elite between empire and local context becomes apparent. The Ammonite elite had to legitimate their power to their own populations, and they adapted the imperial representations of status and power in meaningful ways to communicate within the local context.

7.5.2.2 Consumption of Luxury Goods

Similar to the appropriation of imperial symbols of status and power that visibly mark the elite, the increasing number of imported items found in Iron IIC contexts points to the interest in these items as well as the means to procure them from international trade. The high concentration of these items in wealthy tombs centered on the Amman Citadel suggests socially limited access. Appearing, as they do, alongside other markers of status and power, items such as ivory, metals, and *Tridacna* shells strengthen the impression that one is dealing with social elites, but also underscores the concentration of wealth and the symbols of status and power in the hands of a few families and individuals largely situated near the Amman Citadel.

7.5.2.3 King and Administration

The evidence for social stratification found in elite goods parallels evidence in the domain of politics. When Tiglath-pileser III subdued the southern Levant (ca. 734 BCE), he encountered rulers of the small polities that existed there. Like many of the other polities in the area, the Ammonite ruler, Šanip of the House of Ammon, paid tribute (NAT, no. 2). As far as the evidence goes, it appears that the Ammonite rulers following Šanipu remained loyal to the Assyrians. What is interesting is that in Tiglath-pileser III's inscription, and in the other Neo-Assyrian inscriptions from the late eighth century that mention an Ammonite ruler, there is no indication of the ruler's title (NAT,

nos. 3, 9). They only list the name of the ruler and the place he is from, "the house of Ammon." However, in the first third of the seventh century, Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal refer to two Ammonite rulers as *šarru*, "king" of the house of Ammon (NAT, nos. 4, 5). While the number of references is too small to be certain, the change is suggestive, perhaps pointing to a changing view of the position of the Ammonite rulers in the Assyrian view. Whether this signals any significant changes on the ground among the Ammonites is another matter.

The Ammonite epigraphic evidence also does not contain a secure reference to an Ammonite king until about 600 BCE with the find of the Tall Siran Bottle. This bottle lists a series of Ammonite kings that stretches back to the first half of the seventh century, all entitled *melek* (§ 3.4.2.1).[274] Chronologically, this meshes in an interesting and suggestive way with the Assyrian texts, although it may be entirely coincidental given the ninth century Mesha Stele's assertion that Mesha is *melek*, "king" of Moab (line 1). In any case, it is clear that there was some type of main ruler, which as far as the evidence goes, seems to have been hereditary as indicated by the three generations of kings listed on the Tall Siran Bottle.

The extent of the ruler's administrative apparatus is not entirely transparent, but it is clear that he had a small cadre of officials that served in different capacities. The clearest examples are from seals that use the title *ʿebed*, "servant." Two of the six of these seals listed in Table 3.2 come from secure archaeological contexts (*CAI*, nos. 40, 129) and two more of unknown provenance are likely Ammonite, given the onomastics

[274] Two unprovenanced seals that may be Ammonite designate the owner of the seal as *mlk*, "king," thereby furnishing further evidence for the self-perception of political position. *CAI*, no. 212 (early sixth century) is badly damaged, but may be reconstructed to contain a reference to the Baalyaša^{ʿ} known from a bulla found at ^{ʿ}Umayri (*CAI*, no. 129). *CAI*, no. 213 (early seventh century) reads: *lbrk^{ʾ}l hmlk* — (Belonging) to Barak^{ʾ}il the king. It is considered Ammonite based on palaeography.

and paleography (*CAI*, nos. 13, 17). Other titles possibly linked with an Ammonite governmental apparatus are: *hmzkr*, "the herald" (*CAI*, no. 124a), *hnss*, "the standard bearer" (*CAI*, no. 68), *nʿr*, "young man," "steward" (*CAI*, nos. 53, 54), and (*h*)*spr*, "(the) scribe" (*CAI*, nos. 139, 209). The difficulty, however, is that it is not clear whether these titled men were attached to the king or whether they were attached to other wealthy individuals. The titles *nʿr* and *spr* are important in this respect. Wealthy individuals could have a *nʿr* who managed some aspect of the household (Avigad and Sass 1997: 29–30). Likewise, the *spr* or "scribes" could also practice their trade apart from the king. *CAI*, no. 139, *lḥṭy.sp/r ʾdnr* — (Belonging) to *ḥṭy* (the) scribe of ʾAdnur, may represent a scribe employed by a wealthy family (perhaps that of ʾAdoni-nur known from the Amman Citadel tomb named for him).[275] Thus, the seals provide limited evidence for people with specialized skills or positions, some of whom may have served the king, while others may have been attached to wealthy individuals.

The small amount of information from the biblical texts fits comfortably with the picture available from the epigraphic evidence. In 2 Chr 27:5, one hears of the defeat of an Ammonite king by Jotham of Judah (751–736 BCE). In Chapter 2, the present author noted serious questions about the reliability of this information; however, in terms of political organization under a king, it fits the other available evidence. The rest of the relevant biblical texts are of sixth century date, and again fit with the epigraphic data. An Ammonite king appears in Jer 27:3 and 40:14, and a king and "his officials" (*śārāyw*) are mentioned in Amos 1:15. Beyond mentioning a king or officials, these late texts point towards the territorial ambitions of the Ammonite elite

[275] It is possible that the name ʾAdnur includes the double use of the letter 'n' and so should be understood as ʾAdoni-nur known from *CAI*, no. 40.

(Jer 49:1; Amos 1:13; Zeph 2:8) and their willingness to meddle in international affairs (Jer 27: 1–7; 40:13–41:18).

The ostraca reviewed in Chapter 3 provide late and limited data for administrative practice. They do demonstrate an interest in keeping track of disbursements, and they highlight the relatively consistent use and development of script. What is difficult to extrapolate from the Ammonite ostraca is whether they indicate anything about the exercise or centralization of political power. Nearly all of them come from the small towns of the Amman Plateau rather than the Amman Citadel. Furthermore, as a corpus, they provide very few indications of connection to a central authority. The main exceptions are the reference to the king in Ḥesban A1 (*CAI*, no. 80:1) and a possible mention of the king in ʿUmayri Ostracon II (*CAI*, no. 211:1). Two lines of reasoning may strengthen the notion that these ostraca point to a loose form of centralization. The first is that they all use a recognizable script, whose development was most likely connected with the political development in the southern Levant (see § 3.4.6). The second is that one might argue that record keeping scattered throughout the towns of the region represents the central authority's interest in managing outlying sites. Even if one grants these two lines of reasoning, it would be difficult to conclude that there was more than a loose administrative integration of the Amman Plateau. Of course, the possibility that papyrus played a role in written communication is likely and may provide further evidence for centralized administration. Given the weak indications for centralization, it seems likely that such evidence would not greatly alter this impression, though new finds may nuance it further. Finally, it is worth emphasizing

that the earliest of the ostraca found in the area[276] dates to the end of the seventh century, one hundred years or more after the inception of Neo-Assyrian domination. Thus, whatever centralization the ostraca may suggest is a latecomer to Ammonite political development.

7.5.3 Settlement Intensity and Complexity

Incorporation into an empire is often associated with changes in settlement patterns that are dependent on local factors and imperial interest in the area (Matthews 2003: 143–5; Smith and Montiel 2001: 247, 249). These may include changes in settlement intensification related to agricultural production, creation of regional centers, changes in the type of crops cultivated, land management and reclamation practices, land tenure, storage practices, and specialization (Matthews 2003: 143–5). Where specialization is present, a subsequent dependence on exchange to acquire necessary food and supplies may ensue (Morrison 2001: 273). The imperial or local elite may encourage concentration of sedentary population because, as Schortman and Urban write, it "reduces costs of supervising 'dependents,' collecting tribute, distributing goods and services, and exacting sanctions. Population concentration also undercuts the ability of subordinate elites to compete effectively with paramounts for commoner labor and surpluses" (Schortman and Urban 1994: 405; see also Köksal 2006).

A striking example of such changes took place along the upper Tigris River in southeastern Turkey. There, in an area under direct Neo-Assyrian control, the settlement system and pottery traditions underwent relatively rapid changes between the ninth and seventh centuries BCE because of an Assyrian program of resettlement

[276] That is, excluding the Nimrud Ostracon, which dates to the eighth–seventh century, but comes from Assyria.

and development. The main settlement shift was from fortified settlements on high ground to unfortified settlements in lowlands together with a shift from local pottery to the use of standardized pottery clearly related to imperial pottery types (Parker 2001: 266–70; 2003: 529–48). Other recent work has shown that a similar settlement picture exists for much of the upper region of Mesopotamia, from the Neo-Assyrian royal cities of Nimrud, Assur, and Nineveh, all the way to the Euphrates (Wilkinson et al. 2005). Moreover, similar types of settlement and cultural changes may be seen in areas under the rule of the Inka Empire (Hastorf and D'Altroy 2001: 5; D'Altroy 1992: chaps. 4 and 9). In these cases, there was a shift from fortified settlements on high ground to unfortified settlements in lowlands together with a shift from local pottery to the use of standardized pottery clearly related to imperial pottery types.

On the Amman Plateau, settlement changes are visible from the Iron IIB to the Iron IIC. The tells occupied in the Iron IIB (Amman Citadel, Jalul, Jawa, Ṣafuṭ, Saḥab, ʿUmayri, and possibly Ḥesban) continued into the Iron IIC, with some showing evidence for expansion and better planning (e.g., Ḥesban, Ṣafuṭ, Saḥab, ʿUmayri). The number of tells known from surveys increased by one from the Iron IIB to Iron IIC (see Table 2.4Table 2.5). The size of the occupation on tells in the region during each period is not well established for each site. For example, although Saḥab is relatively large at 50 ha, the Iron II occupation probably did not cover the whole tell. Nonetheless, the crude measure of visible area may still provide a sense of population centers: Amman Citadel (ca. 20 ha), Ḥesban (ca. 20 ha), Jalul (7.5 ha), Jawa (ca. 2 ha), Ṣafuṭ (ca. 4.5), Saḥab (ca. 50 ha), ʿUmayri (1.5 ha). Among the tells, the Amman Citadel holds a special place, if not for being the largest mound, then for being a cultural center of gravity. Nearly all of the wealthy tombs from Amman Plateau, with their imports, cluster on or near the

Citadel, as do elite architecture, inscriptions of all types, and sculptures. The Amman Citadel is thus a centrally located, fortified town whose elite inhabitants drew to themselves multiple symbols of elite status and power.

Also important is the growth of small farmsteads and associated agricultural facilities (terraces, cisterns, presses) during the Iron IIC. The number of sites increased from about one hundred in the Iron IIA–B (Younker 2003: 157) to about three hundred in the Iron IIC (Ray 2001: 151–4). The shift represented a greater emphasis on agricultural pursuits, even into more marginally productive ecological niches (Ray 2001: 153), and included an investment in physical capital, such as terraces and presses, which enabled the long-term productive use of the land and its products. The clustering of these sites around the tells may also reflect a two-stage process of settlement if Lipschits' historical reconstruction is correct. The first would be site expansion radiating outward from the Amman Citadel during the Neo-Assyrian domination (Kletter 1991; Lipschits 2004), with a second stage of expansion under Neo-Babylonian domination radiating outward from the Ḥesban-ʿUmayri region (Herr 1995, 1999; Lipschits 2004). Lipschits relates this to the subjugation of the Ammonites by Nebuchadnezar in 582 BCE, and the development of a new site of provincial administration at ʿUmayri. As the discussion in Chapter 4 indicates, however, the reconstruction of such events is uncertain and remains problematic. Whether such a two-stage process is correct, the expansion of agricultural sites suggests that the Amman Plateau continued to experience a dynamic settlement scene throughout the Iron IIC.

The reasons behind these settlement changes are difficult to parse. LaBianca's study of cycles of sedentarization and nomadization in the area (1990) correlates the major periods of sedentarization with imperial rule and discusses the trends in

subsistence strategies. However, it was not within the scope of his study to consider the causes for each major period. The lack of longer texts that might give clues to the causes of these local processes is a major problem; nonetheless, it is possible to propose several causes that likely worked together to produce the new settlement picture. The Neo-Assyrian Empire had an interest in increasing the productivity of lands under its control. This is clear for the core areas around the capital cities as well as for provinces extending to the Euphrates (Wilkinson et al. 2005: 40–4). As Radner shows, efforts to make the land productive through canal projects and the redistribution of human populations were very important to Neo-Assyrian kings (Radner 2000: 235–41). What shape this interest took for the inland polities of the southern Levant is not clear given that most agricultural goods were not likely to be shipped across land from the southern Levant to the Assyrian heartland. Certainly, however, the Assyrians were interested in supplies for their armies when on campaign, and so would have been interested in the vassals' agricultural capacity. It was also in the interests of the Ammonite elite to encourage or coerce an increased level of settlement in order to ensure a steady supply of food for their own use. Beyond food supplies, the empire and the local elites had an interest in a larger sedentary population because they are generally easier to control (Köksal 2006). Thus, given what the local and imperial elite had to gain, their active involvement in promoting increased settlement is highly likely.[277]

7.5.4 Economic Changes

Incorporation into an empire is often attended by economic changes. These changes may be related to the demand for tribute and other material support by the

[277] It is also possible to see in the increasing settlement individual incentive to acquire the productive capacity of a particular tract of land. The relative stability and safety of the so-called *pax Assyriaca* might also have played a part. What role these might have played is not discernable from the evidence.

empire (Sinopoli 2001a: 456). In areas that are dependent on agricultural products and animal husbandry for subsistence, the demand for tribute may entail the development of markets and "monetization"[278] (D'Altroy and Earle 1985: 188; Sinopoli 2001a: 456). Such developments may result from the need to pay tribute in high-value items (such as metals) linked with a productive base focused on agricultural and pastoralism. By one means or another, these natural products must be converted into items suitable for payment as tribute (Morrison 2001: 267; Sinopoli 2001a: 456). For example, in the Vijayanagara Empire in India, rice obligations were paid in-kind, but obligations on other grains and garden produce obligations were paid in cash. This meant that farmers who did not produce rice, had to exchange their produce in a market in order to obtain the necessary cash. Thus, a system of exchange and taxation was created that worked in in-kind payments, cash, and various ritual complexes such as feasting (Morrison 2001: 267). The need to trade in order to acquire "money" or high-value goods may also necessitate the intensification of local production in order to create the surplus necessary for exchange and paying tribute (Matthews 2003: 144; Sinopoli 2001a: 456). On the other hand, empires may choose to intensify production of various goods actively through the movement of populations, forced labor, and creation of an infrastructure to support the intensification (D'Altroy 2001: 210).

The most obvious change related to the economy of the Amman Plateau is that of settlement intensification. The increased number of small agriculturally oriented sites means there was a greater capacity for agricultural output. This could fit well with the comparative evidence that suggests that local production was intensified in order to

[278] By "monetization" I mean the use of precious metals or other high-value items as a means of exchanging or valuing other items. This is what D'Altroy and Earle call "wealth finance" (D'Altroy and Earle 1985).

facilitate trade and/or pay tribute. As Chapter 6 argued, however, it is unlikely that agricultural goods from Ammon were used to pay tribute or traded as exports. They may have played a role in supplying caravans, but it is not clear that this role would have necessitated the kind of settlement growth documented on the Amman Plateau. It is probably the case that the economic aspects of this settlement are connected more to the needs of the local elites than to imperial demands.

The number of imported items visible in excavations is perhaps the next most obvious aspect of change in the economy and it shows that the expanding trade networks of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires reached well into the marginal areas of the southern Levant. Similarly, the textual evidence shows that the Ammonites had access to silver and gold and in some cases measured it in small pieces (e.g., *CAI*, no. 80:6). The textual evidence thus indicates a small level of monetization. The evidence for weights and measures and management practices is likewise small, but indicates change from the previous periods.

In sum, the evidence for economic changes related specifically to imperial domination is small when one takes agriculture out of the picture. Nevertheless, one can pinpoint the visible changes among the elite who had access to imports and gained from taxes and tolls on caravans moving through the region. Thus, rather than a massive reorganization of the economy to meet the demands of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires, the local economy catered to the interests of the local elite. In this regard, the most important influence of the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires on Ammon's economy was the way in which they stimulated long-distance trade networks through which the local elite could acquire the exotic goods they desired.

7.5.5 Religious Changes

As with the other areas discussed above, incorporation into an empire can stimulate changes in local religion. In some cases, religious change was an explicit part of the imperial agenda (Jennings 2003; Sinopoli 2001a: 444). For example, an empire may target specific aspects of the local religion in order to dismantle resistance, while leaving other areas alone (Jennings 2003). In other cases, while religion may have figured into the exercise of domination, the empire did not actively promote religious change. In the latter case, local populations sometimes adapted aspects of imperial religion resulting in hybrid beliefs, representations, or practices (Evans 1998: 345–8; Webster 2001; Wells 1998: 324–6). It is also the case that the realm of religion is a prime sphere in which local elites can ground their status and authority by associating themselves with elite symbols and controlling certain aspects of the divine-human relations (Grijalvo 2005; Schortman and Urban 1994: 410–11).

As discussed in Chapter 5, Assyrian state religion had a place for foreign gods within the symbolic system as lesser counterparts to the god Aššur. Cult statues of foreign lands could be removed when vassals rebelled as a sign that the god had abandoned his people. They could be repatriated when the Assyrians were willing. Beyond this, however, it does not appear that the Assyrians actively meddled with local religions (Cogan 1974, 1993). But the local elites may have.

Evidence for religious changes among the Ammonites comes in two forms: iconography and onomastics. The Mesopotamian-inspired elements in the iconography have already been examined in Chapter 3 and in the discussion of the iconography of the Rujm al-Kursi temple in Chapter 2. They key here is, as earlier in this discussion, to recognize the social location of these borrowings on elite personal items (seals), and in

public architecture (al-Kursi temple). Precisely what these borrowings represent in the realm of beliefs is not easy to determine.[279] However, they could certainly represent one more attempt by the local elite to connect themselves with symbols of status and power. Beyond iconography, the Ammonite onomasticon contains occurrences of the two Mesopotamian gods Nanay (*CAI*, no. 65:5) and ʾInurta (*CAI*, no. 55), and the Egyptian god Bes (*CAI*, no. 44), but the bearers of these names could be foreigners, and so they are not clear evidence for local changes.

More significant than the appearance of foreign iconographic and onomastic elements is the possible impact that Mesopotamian imperialism may have had on the local religion as it seems to have had with Judah. In Judah, the pressures of Mesopotamian imperialism and perhaps some local social developments brought about a movement towards a monolatrous strain of religion that would eventually issue into something approximating monotheism. This movement, however, began with the patron or dynastic deity of the ruling house, Yahweh (Smith 2001: 157–66).

The main evidence for such a change among the Ammonites is the analogy with Judah and the Ammonite onomasticon. The Hebrew Bible portrays the peoples surrounding Judah as each having a particular deity that appears roughly parallel to Yahweh in Judah. So, for example, in 2 Kgs 23:13, which discusses a period of "reform" in Judean religion, one hears of cult sites that king Solomon had built "for Ashtoreth (Astarte) the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milkom the abomination of the Ammonites." One might guess then that Milkom was the Ammonite dynastic god and may have become the object of monolatry.

[279] One might guess that the moon crescent of Sîn (*CAI*, nos. 1, 17; Hübner 1993: 159 fig. 21; and the Rujm al-Kursi temple reliefs) could easily be understood to represent the local moon god Yaraḥ.

When it comes to the Ammonite onomasticon, however, Milkom takes a back seat to the god El, who appears in the overwhelming majority of Ammonite names (Chapter 3) including the names of known Ammonite kings (Padoʾil [NAT, nos. 3, 4, 9; *CAI*, no. 13] and Haṣṣilʾil [Tall Siran Bottle, *CAI*, no. 78:2]).[280] This situation has led to two main proposals concerning the relationship between Milkom and El among the Ammonites. Both are based on a comparison with biblical scholarship's reconstruction of the history of Yahweh in Judah that sees Yahweh, who was originally a second-tier deity, come to be identified with and replace the fatherly head of the pantheon El (Smith 2001: 47–53).[281] Thus, the many "El" names in the Hebrew Bible, including that of IsraEL, were transformed not by changing them to Yahweh names, but by the merging of El and Yahweh in a process where "el" came to be used as a generic word for "god" as it had at other times and places.

[280] The preponderance of El names in the onomasticon appears to be paralleled in the iconography. A number of the sculptures discussed in Chapter 2, as well as clay heads found on the Amman Plateau, wear the Egyptian atef crown (ʿAmr 1990; Abou Assaf 1980; Daviau and Dion 1994). In their study, Daviau and Dion argue convincingly that the atef crown typically represents a deity in the Levantine world, and that one of the deities represented was El (Daviau and Dion 1994: 160–1). Taken in combination with the preponderance of El names and the roughly contemporaneous attestation of El in the plaster texts at Deir ʿAlla, they argue that all of these probably represent El, the chief god of the Ammonites (Daviau and Dion 1994: 164). Abou Assaf also argues that these represent the chief god of the Ammonites, but identifies him as Milkom (Abou Assaf 1980: 78). ʿAmr argues that they represent humans (ʿAmr 1990: 116–17), but he assumes an unmediated Egyptian influence which seems unlikely in the eighth–sixth centuries BCE considering Egypt's relative inactivity in the Levant except in the coastal areas at the end of the seventh and beginning of the sixth century. Daviau and Dion's argument assumes a more likely diffusion of the artistic motifs mediated by the coastal cultures. Furthermore, these heads may be seen as part of a sequence, beginning in the ninth century BCE with the clay head from Tall Jawa that Daviau and Dion publish (Daviau and Dion 1994: 163), and continuing down into the seventh century (Abou Assaf 1980: 71).

[281] One should note in passing that the arguments that Baʿal was in some sense replacing ʾEl at Ugarit are not at all conclusive. This is built strictly on the material from the Baʿal cycle in which it is asserted that ʾEl seems distant and weak in the face of the upstart Baʿal. As L'Heureux argues, this appears to be built on the Judeo-Christian assumption that the highest god should be omnipotent. However, it is not clear that such a concept was operative in the ancient world, much less in the Ugaritic mythology (L'Heureux 1979: 4–5).

One of the proposals is that Milkom was indeed the god of the Ammonites, the head of the pantheon, who was or had slowly absorbed aspects of El just as had Yahweh in Israel and Judah (Lemaire 1994a: 143). The other proposal suggests that El was in fact the head of the Ammonite pantheon and that Milkom was an epithet, or a way of speaking of El (Tigay 1987: 171, 187 n. 66). The logic behind this latter suggestion is that *mlkm* contains the letters for the word "king" (*melek*) and may have something to do with royalty.

The question is whether the same or similar processes were operative among the Ammonites as in Judah. This question is difficult to answer because of the lack of longer historiographic and mythological texts such as those available for Judah in the Hebrew Bible. Nonetheless, part of what brought about the changes in Judah was the pressure related to being incorporated into the Neo-Assyrian Empire. The assertion of Assyrian might, and especially the triumphant ideology that the Assyrian god Aššur had enabled them to conquer foreign lands, was met with the local exaltation of the Judean patron god Yahweh to a higher, perhaps universal status (Smith 2001: 165). The difference for Ammon is that unlike the Judeans, who rebelled against their imperial overlords on a number of occasions, the Ammonites appear to have been obedient subjects of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and, at least for a time, of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. If one were to infer something from this different political and military trajectory, one might guess that there was less of a local ideological response to Mesopotamian imperial ideology and thus that El and Milkom remained as independent deities. If such an inference is correct, one might suppose that the biblical authors were focused on creating a polemic that clearly demarcated Yahwistic orthodoxy from the surrounding religions. Including El in such a polemic would be counterproductive because, at least as far as the evidence

goes, El worship of one sort or another was accepted in Israel and Judah, or better, had been absorbed into Yahwistic practice. Thus, one might say that the biblical authors' focus on Milkom was a rhetorical trick intended to differentiate Judean religion from Ammonite religion.

In the end, there is not sufficient evidence to trace a trajectory for the Ammonite pantheon under imperial rule. Ammonite religion probably played a role in elite identity formation, in manipulating local social and political factions, and in negotiating resistance or capitulation to the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires. As a powerful piece of the human ideological landscape, the elite surely would have taken advantage of it, but a clearer understanding of it must await further discoveries.

7.6 Conclusion—Tribes, Empires, and Scale of Change

As much of the discussion in this chapter and dissertation has shown, there is a distinct trajectory of developing complexity among the Ammonites of the Iron Age. From a small number of towns, outlying sites, little evidence for international contact, and few indications of class or status differences, Ammon developed a more diverse settlement picture, became integrated into the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian imperial economies, and developed an elite culture with regional and international connections. Yet, when one considers the evidence from a quantitative perspective, it becomes clear that the evidence for such changes pale in scale to that from imperial cores in Assyria and Babylonia. While such a conclusion may seem obvious, it is worth stating. The scale of change and the meaning of these changes need to be interpreted through the appropriate lens. In this regard, LaBianca and Younker's observation about the Transjordanian polities of the Iron Age is important. They state that the Ammonites, Moab, and Edom lacked the features of what are classically called "states." The features

they lacked include: 1) a high level of social complexity; 2) a diminished role for kinship; 3) a separate religious and political authority; 4) a standing army; 5) a significant percentage of the population in urban centers; 6) a pronounced settlement hierarchy; and 7) ethnic plurality and social difference (LaBianca and Younker 1995: 409; Younker 1997: 238). This author would only add that what evidence there is for these items is in large measure late and explicable as secondary phenomena related first to regional powers such as Israel and Damascus, and secondly to the social, political, economic, and ideological world that the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires brought with them. Recalling Ammon's small scale and secondary existence brings to the fore once again the marginal place Ammon occupied both environmentally and geopolitically. Nonetheless, recognizing the marginality of the Ammonites makes the transformation under imperial rule that much more striking. It is the synergy between empire and the sons of Ammon that allows one to speak meaningfully of Ammonite history.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The beginning of this study drew attention to five features that shape its approach and focus. Briefly, they are the following:

1. Prioritizing archaeological and epigraphic material as sources for Ammonite history.
2. Viewing biblical texts as secondary sources and problematizing their use based on their chronological distance from many of the events they portray and their literary nature.
3. The transformative role of empires in changes of peripheral societies.
4. The active role of the local elite in societal changes.
5. Attention to matters of scale.

The results of this approach led to some important conclusions about the history of the Ammonites and refinements in scholarly understandings of the nature and causes of societal change. This chapter reiterates the important conclusions reached in the analysis of the sources and provides an overview of the course of Iron Age Ammonite social history.

8.1 Review of Sources

While still limited and leaving many questions unanswered, the archaeology of the Amman Plateau is the major source available for Ammonite history. The excavations and surveys completed to date show that the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods were crucial in the development of sociopolitical complexity and economic growth. Although this study chose to focus on the Iron Age, when Ammon had an independent existence, the archaeology demonstrates that this complexity and

economic growth did not come to an abrupt end with the demise of the independent Ammonite polity, but continued into the Persian Period.

The epigraphic evidence, both Assyrian and Ammonite, tells a very similar story to that of the archaeology. There are a few indications of emerging sociopolitical complexity in the ninth century and first half of the eighth century, but the bulk of the epigraphic material dates to the late eighth–sixth centuries, the period of imperial domination. A few additional inscriptions date to the Persian Period, again attesting that while Ammon had ceased to exist as an independent polity, the society continued. The epigraphic evidence likewise provides a chronological skeleton for Ammonite history, supplying the names of several Ammonite rulers and their contacts with the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

The archaeological and epigraphic sources remind us of the small scale of Ammonite society and the nature of the visible changes. Even at the height of its complexity in the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods, Ammonite sociopolitical organization shows few signs of centralization, a developed bureaucracy, or significantly developed level of administrative capacity. More than likely, the tribal base upon which Ammonite sociopolitical organization had been built remained intact even while the elites attempted to manipulate it for their own advantage.

The most significant variation of this research from other interpretations of Ammon comes from different approaches to the Bible. This study argued that all the biblical texts mentioning the Ammonites were redacted or written in the late seventh century BCE at the earliest, with most coming from the sixth century and later. Taken together with the genre and ideological shape of these texts, their relevance for pre-Neo-Babylonian times is doubtful. This evaluation of the biblical texts is the greatest

break from earlier scholarship on the Ammonites, with the exception of Hübner's and Dion's studies (Dion 2003; Hübner 1992). The major effect of this evaluation of biblical texts is to make interpretation of Ammonite history before the late seventh century much more dependent on the archaeology and epigraphy.

8.2 Iron Age I–IIA (1200–900 BCE)

The only reliable data for this period comes from archaeology. There is no epigraphic evidence available for this period. As for the possible data in biblical texts, one cannot reliably extract it from the contexts in which it is presently set. This was an insular period with very little evidence for contact with areas outside the Amman Plateau. A modest growth in the number of sites points to the slow settlement of a small part of the local non-sedentary population. The reasons for this settlement are not clear. Perhaps local households or tribes saw an opportunity to increase the stability of their food supply and settled to take advantage of agricultural lands. The largest sector of the population probably remained non-sedentary. A few well-equipped tombs and a number of larger towns seem to indicate mild social differentiation. An open question is whether the Ammonites were the locally ascendant tribe at this time, or whether they were just one among a number of tribes with power over different areas and different resources.

8.3 Early Iron IIB (ca. 900–750 BCE)

The ninth and first half of the eighth century is the first period in which there are signs of a sociopolitical complexity that might extend beyond the town level. There was probably some increase in settlement during this period, but the surveys do not allow significant enough chronological precision to say exactly how many new sites appeared. Likewise, the information one might gain from the Chronicler's presentation of Israelite and Judean history is complicated by the theologically driven nature of the

work. The Ammonites appear largely in places where “bad” kings need punishment and “good” kings need military success to show Yahweh’s approval for them.

Key for understanding the emergence of sociopolitical complexity during this period is the probable reference to Ammonite participation at the Battle of Qarqar in 853. While questions remain about Ammonite participation in this military effort, one may cautiously conclude that in the ninth century, the Ammonites coalesced under a military ruler to defend themselves against imperial encroachment. Whether such rule was an ad hoc measure to repel the expanding Neo-Assyrian Empire, or whether it was of a more durable nature, one cannot say for sure. However, the Amman Citadel Inscription, which dates to the end of the ninth or early eighth century, points in the direction of a ruler working towards legitimating his power. In these two cases, the Battle of Qarqar and the Amman Citadel Inscription, one can begin to see the impact of Neo-Assyrian imperialism on the Ammonites. In the first instance, the resurgent empire spurred on military resistance and organization, even if only on an ad hoc basis. In the second instance, it is possible that the Ammonites adopted the Assyrian practice of setting up display inscriptions, but adapted it for the legitimation of local power.

As the period progressed, the emerging Ammonite elite probably moved to control the growing flow of international trade through the area. They also moved to consolidate their power by adopting a set of internationally recognizable styles and objects that both projected and helped constitute their power locally. The evidence also makes it clear that the elite clustered in and around the Amman Citadel and at other sites like Jalul, Jawa, and Saḥab. Although these fortified towns of the Amman Plateau are not cities like those known in Mesopotamia or Egypt, they do reflect processes of social differentiation less visible in the preceding period. The remains of these sites,

including fortifications, monumental gates, and water systems, point to a significant coordination of labor at the town level. Thus, while the glimpses of sociopolitical complexity and connection with international trade are still small in this period, the outlines of a sociopolitical and economic trajectory appears that will become more prominent in the following period.

8.4 Late Iron IIB–IIC (ca. 750–500 BCE)

It was in this period when Mesopotamian empires entered and ruled the Levant that the Ammonite polity reached the height of its sociopolitical complexity and economic growth. The available sources reflect this in both their number and diversity. Assyrian texts mention rulers and kings of Ammon, and they offer tribute. There are servants of the kings, there are symbols of elite status and clustering of these around the Amman Citadel. There are more types of imports and greater quantities. There are more towns and more outlying sites. Closer to the end of this period, there are biblical texts that appear to contain reliable information about Ammon and its resistance to Babylon. One might say that it was *because* the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian empires ruled the Levant that the Ammonite polity reached the height of its sociopolitical complexity and economic growth.

The expansion of Neo-Assyrian rule in the Levant under Tiglath-pileser III (730s) forced the small polities of the Levant to decide whether or not to resist. The Ammonites submitted and became subject to Assyria and, for the moment, escaped provincialization. For the Assyrians, co-option of local political, economic, and military infrastructure enabled them to gain the benefits of controlling an area without investing much of their own resources. As vassals, the Ammonites had to watch out for Assyrian interests and provide material support when the Assyrian army campaigned in the area.

One of the main interests of the empire was the uninterrupted flow of goods to the imperial core. They placed imperial officials in strategic places in attempts to control and tax trade. Perhaps the seal of Mannu-kī-ʾInurta was the property of an official placed in Ammon for just such a purpose. One can only guess what role the Ammonites played in regard to trade, but providing safe passage for and taxing caravan traffic are the two most likely options for an area whose geography is its main resource. Some of the revenue made its way to the empire in the form of tribute and gifts. Nonetheless, the growth of international trade networks and the ability of the Ammonite rulers to control the trade routes running through the Amman Plateau meant a major source of revenue and access to valuable goods, including especially metals. The access to such goods added fuel to the desire for exotic items; their acquisition only encouraged social stratification and the growth of political power.

The coercive aspects of the Neo-Assyrian Empire seem to have had a counterpart in diplomatic relations that attempted to bring vassal rulers into the ideological orbit of the great king of Assyria. In part, this was achieved through treaties that were sealed with oaths to the gods and the threat of force. It was also achieved through more subtle measures. Occasional trips by the Ammonite leadership to the imperial capital (in one extant case, a king) gave the empire opportunities to "educate" its vassal about its power and authority. It was also a way to create a bond with the vassal through the mutual exchange of gifts. This more subtle aspect of Neo-Assyrian imperialism helps explain the appearance of Assyrian architectural, iconographic, and ceramic styles in Ammon. The local rulers existed in two worlds and had to negotiate both worlds in order to remain in power. Identification with the empire and other vassal elite through an internationally recognizable elite culture provided the Ammonite elite a way to

become something more than Ammonite. At the same time, they appropriated this elite culture in order to enhance their power in the local context.

The growth in settlement during this period shows that societal change reached the non-elite too. The extent to which the local elite encouraged or enforced settlement is not known. It was in the elites' interest to have a productive hinterland that could support them and supply the Assyrian army on the occasions it was in the area. A settled population is also easier to control and helps secure the area. Beyond how the elite may have used the non-elite, the process of settlement meant a new way of life for previously nomadic or semi-nomadic people. It meant learning the technologies necessary for dry farming and building more permanent homes and securing a water supply. It also likely meant being subject to the elite who most probably extracted agricultural and pastoral goods from the rural sector in order to meet their needs.

The growth in power and wealth of the Ammonite elite, however, had limits. There are some indications of administrative activity, but most of this occurs at the town level and provides little evidence for economic or administration centralization at the regional level. This is where a focus on scale becomes important. While this period saw the height of sociopolitical complexity, complexity was limited to a small elite stratum of society while the rest of the population continued their subsistence level life. There is no evidence that the stratification, growth in power, or growth in economic advantage disembedded rule from tribal or kinship organization. The sons of Ammon were the locally ascendant tribe, but remained a tribe.

The record of rebellions against the Neo-Assyrian Empire demonstrates that Assyrian domination was oppressive to many of the small southern Levantine polities. However, the marginal geographic position and small size of Ammon meant that

rebellion was not likely to succeed. Rather than push back against imperial powers, the local elite combined their sociopolitical and economic power to enhance their position locally. This policy worked well under the Neo-Assyrian Empire, but with its decline and the rise of Babylon, things changed. The Babylonian Chronicles indicate that most of the kings of the Levant submitted to Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of his reign. The biblical texts, which become more reliable in the late seventh and sixth century, suggest that the Ammonites did not find Neo-Babylonian rule acceptable. Eventually Ammon met the end of its independent political history when the Babylonians turned it into a province, perhaps when Nabonidus made his way down to Tayma. Though it has not been a major focus of this study, the archaeology does not indicate any major break in culture in the sixth century. Instead, the number of sites continued to grow, and the imports continued to flow into Ammon. This suggests that whatever the Babylonians may have done in provincializing Ammon, the sociopolitical and economic infrastructure were not significantly dismantled. Ammon had another life as a province.

EXCURSUS

EVIDENCE FOR NEO-BABYLONIAN IMPERIAL PRACTICE

Since the evidence for Neo-Babylonian administrative and political practice is not as clear as that from the Neo-Assyrian Empire, this excursus provides an overview of the available evidence. First, it summarizes the relevant Neo-Babylonian texts that are mentioned only briefly in Chapter 5.[282] It then considers Judah as a case study since it benefits from the additional information available from biblical texts and archaeological research.

The Etemenanki Cylinder

Two building inscriptions from Babylon, the Etemenanki Cylinder and the Istanbul prism, provide a few indications about the status of the west in the first decade or so of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The Etemenanki Cylinder[283] commemorates the building of Marduk's ziggurat in Babylon. Langdon dates this inscription near the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (600–593 BCE) based on a knowledge of the sequence in which Nebuchadnezzar built or rebuilt various parts of Babylon (Langdon 1905: 8, 21–2). Vanderhooft, however, argues that Langdon's method of dating is flawed and cannot be relied upon for a serious diachronic evaluation (Vanderhooft 1999: 34). The text describes how Nebuchadnezzar called people subject to him to help

[282] Vanderhooft's studies of this material provide philological details and analysis that this study will not go into because they do not directly affect the contours of the argument (Vanderhooft 1999: 90–104; Vanderhooft 2003: 237–48). Those interested in the details can consult Vanderhooft's work.

[283] For the text, see Langdon 1912: 144–9, Nbk. 17. The preferred text is that of Weissbach (Wetzel and Weissbach 1938). See discussion of this text, including some unpublished material in Vanderhooft 1999: 36–9, 90–2.

in the building of Etemenanki. In one section of the inscription, the geographical range of those whom Nebuchadnezzar coerced to come to Babylon is very broad and generalized, including areas from the Upper to Lower Seas, that is, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf (Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46 3:32–44). In the following section, the text provides the names of the places that were forced to provide supplies or workmen. The named places are largely in Babylonia, but then the picture widens to include *šarrāni ša Eber-Nā*[*ri*] *pīḫatā*⌜*tim*⌝ *ša māt Ḫattim,* "the kings of Eber-Nāri, the governors of Ḫatti" (Vanderhooft 1999: 38–9).[284] A few lines later another summary appears that includes the "kings of the Upper Sea" and the *šakkanakkē māt ḫattim nibirti* ^{nāru}*puratti ana erēb šamši,* "the governors/rulers of the land of Ḫatti across the Euphrates towards the sunset (i.e., west)" (Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46, 4:22–25). Together, these few lines suggest some type of division of the Levant between kings and some other type of ruler or official. The precise division into territories, the difference between a *pīḫatu* and a *šakkanakku,*[285] and their specific roles are not possible to discern. Furthermore, the semantic range and use of the term *šakkanakku* is broad enough to inhibit one's ability to define it as a Babylonian appointed provincial official without contextual warrant (cf. *CAD* Š/1, 170–176). It stands to reason that some of these were Neo-Babylonian provincial officials, perhaps especially those designated as *pīḫatu,* but their duties and powers are unknown, beyond sending materials and personnel to Babylon for building projects (Vanderhooft 1999: 92).

[284] Vanderhooft's text follows that of Weissbach (Wetzel and Weissbach 1938: 46 4:9–11) with some additions from the unpublished text in the Harvard Semitic Museum (HSM 890.3.1).

[285] Frame (Frame 1992: 225–7) discusses the titles for governors as they relate to Babylonia, showing the considerable amount of overlap.

The Istanbul Prism

The Istanbul Prism is a building inscription dated to Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year (598/7 BCE; see Vanderhooft 1999: 34 n. 119) that commemorates the building of a palace in Babylon. Among other things, there is a list of officials and kings from various parts of the empire. At the end of the preserved text, the kings of Tyre, Gaza, Sidon, Arvad, and Ashdod are mentioned (Unger 1931: 286, no. 26 v:23–27; *ANET*, 307–8). The precise function of the list is not known, but Vanderhooft argues persuasively that as a building inscription it is a close parallel to the Etemenanki Cylinder, including its geographic progression. It should therefore be seen as listing those people who were in one way or another responsible for coordinating or providing corvée labor, funding, and materials for Nebuchadnezzar's palace (Vanderhooft 1999: 92–7). This shows that in Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year the Phoenician and Philistine cities were mostly under the control of local kings.[286] It is important to note, however, that all the extant names are those of coastal cities for which independent or semi-independent status is a regular occurrence from the Neo-Assyrian down to the Persian Period.

The Babylonian Chronicles

The Babylonian Chronicles provide very little information on administration because they focus on military expeditions. Two lines use *pīḫat* X, "province, district of X" to refer to places the Babylonians attacked. The first seems to refer to Urartu, although the text is broken (Grayson 1975: 97, Chron. 4:11), and the second mentions the *pi-ḫat* ^{kur}*Ḫa-ma-a-t*[*ú*], "the province/district of the land of Hamath" (Grayson 1975:

[286] It seems possible, though Vanderhooft's argument is convincing, that the list at the end of this text may be kings who had been deported to Babylon. It is known that foreign kings were provided for in Babylon (Weidner 1939) and that deported communities were settled in the area around Babylon in places named for their homelands (above § 5.4.1.1).

99, Chron. 5:6). However, the Babylonian Chronicles seem to use *pīḫatu* in a generalized way that does not suggest formally provincialized territories (Vanderhooft 1999: 98).[287] In this case, translating the phrase as "the region of Hamath" may be appropriate.

Some officials are known from the Babylonian Chronicles including those that follow, none of which come from the Levant (Vanderhooft 1999: 102):

1. Second year of Nadin of Babylon (=sixteenth year of Tiglath-pileser III, 731 BCE): (Nabû)-šuma-ukīn *bēl pīḫati*, "governor," of or near Babylon (Grayson 1975: 72, Chron. 1 i 16)
2. First year of Esarhaddon (680 BCE): (Nabû)-zēr-kitti-lišir *šakin māt tâmtim,* "governor of the Sealand," close to the Persian Gulf (Grayson 1975: 82, Chron. 1 iii 39)
3. First year of Esarhaddon (680 BCE): The *šandabakku*, "mayor" of Nippur (Grayson 1975: 82, Chron. 1 iii 43)
4. Tenth year of Nabonidus (546 BCE): The *šakin māti ina Uruk*^{k}[^{i}], "the governor of Uruk" (Grayson 1975: 108, Chron. 7 ii 22)
5. Seventeenth year of Nabonidus (539 BCE): Ugbaru the ^{lú}NAM (*pīḫatu*) ^{kur}*Gu-ti-um*, "governor of Guti" (Grayson 1975: 109, Chron. 7 iii 15).

The first three in the list appear before the Neo-Babylonian Empire existed. The fourth is clearly in the southern Mesopotamian city of Uruk. The fifth is located somewhere in the Zagros mountains. The last two indicate the persistence of the *šaknu* title from the Neo-Assyrian Empire into the Neo-Babylonian Empire, but do not provide any help in understanding Babylonian rule in the Levant.

The Babylonian Chronicles do provide some information about vassals during Nebuchadnezzar's reign. In large measure, they attest to Nebuchadnezzar's extraction of *biltu kabittu*, "heavy tribute" or *maddattu*, "tribute" from his vassals through nearly annual military tours of the Levant. The entry for Nebuchadnezzar's first year (604 BCE)

[287] Lipschits (Lipschits 2005: 65 n. 100) mentions an unpublished translation of the Babylonian Chronicles available to him from Naʾaman, in which Naʾaman reconstructs "governors" (presumably *šakkanakkū* or *pīḫātu*) in B.M. 21946 rev. 23 (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5; Wiseman 1956: 73). While the proposal is reasonable, the text is broken away at this point and so the proposed reconstruction must remain tentative.

provides a bit more commentary than other years. After it reports Nebuchadnezzar's triumphant marching around, the text states that all the kings of Ḫatti came before Nebuchadnezzar and he received their heavy tribute (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5 obv. 17).[288] The exception for that year is Ashkelon, which apparently did not submit and was summarily captured and destroyed (Grayson 1975: 100, Chron. 5 obv. 18–20). Nebuchadnezzar's seventh year records his campaign against Judah. There the Chronicle notes that Nebuchadnezzar captured the "city of Judah" (i.e., Jerusalem), appointed (*iṗteqid*) a new king, and took his heavy tribute before returning to Babylon. These two different rebellions show that Nebuchadnezzar took a variable approach to rebellious vassals, in some cases simply destroying them (Ashkelon), and in others replacing the king (Judah).

The Adad-guppi Stele

The Adad-guppi Stele is one of four stelae, all of which likely graced entrances to the temple of Sîn in Harran, and which were found in secondary use as building material for the stairway and threshold to an Islamic mosque. Between the four stelae there are two inscriptions each having two exemplars. Landsberger published the first stele (H1, A), frequently called the Adad-guppi Stele because it is told from the perspective of Adad-guppi, Nabonidus' mother (Landsberger 1947). Gadd published a second exemplar with the same inscription (H1, B), along with two copies of Nabonidus' Harran Stele (H2, A and B) that provide a retelling of Nabonidus' reign with a focus on his eventual rebuilding of Sîn's temple, É-ḫul-ḫul (Gadd 1958). Schaudig has recently re-edited all four of them (Schaudig 2001: 487–513, nos. 3.1 and 3.2). Together the

[288] Though the lines in year ten are partially broken, the same scenario of kings appearing before Nebuchadnezzar is possible to reconstruct as did Wiseman 1956: 73, line 24.

texts aim to legitimize Nabonidus' reign by emphasizing Sîn's beneficent choice of him as well the success in rebuilding E-ḫul-ḫul and bringing the gods back into it. The texts date to the last couple of years of Nabonidus' reign, perhaps around 540 BCE (Schaudig 2001: 487, 501).

The Adad-guppi Stele (Gadd 1958: 46–53, H1; Schaudig 2001: 500–13, no. 3.2) preserves three columns. The first two columns, written in first person from Adad-guppi's perspective, draw attention to: 1) her devotion to Sîn throughout her long life; 2) how Sîn called Nabonidus for the kingship of Babylonia; 3) how Nabonidus would rebuild É-ḫul-ḫul and return the deities Sîn, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna to it; and 4) how she devoted Nabonidus to the gods' care (Gadd 1958: 46–51; Schaudig 2001: 502–7). After a break, col. III resumes with a report of Adad-guppi's death, Nabonidus' care for her interment and an elaborate mourning (Gadd 1958: 51–3; Schaudig 2001: 507–10). Of interest in the latter part of the account is the claim in col. III, 18–23 that Nabonidus brought people from around the empire, including gìr.nitá^{meš} *ul-tu* [*pa-aṭ*] ^{kur}*mi-ṣir tam-tì e-l*[*i-ti*], "*šakkanakku*s from [the border of] Egypt of the Upper Sea [i.e., the Mediterranean]" in order to mourn Adad-Guppi's death (Gadd 1958: 52; Schaudig 2001: 509). Like the Etemenanki Cylinder, this inscription covers the empire in rather sweeping form. The mention of *šakkanakku*s "governors/rulers" as coming from the whole empire, even from "the border Egypt," provides some evidence for an organized administration of the whole empire by the time of Nabonidus' reign. Again, however, the ambiguity in the use of the term *šakkanakku* does not allow one to say for sure whether these were Babylonian appointed provincial governors, some lesser type of Babylonian official, or even Babylonian appointed officials of local extraction.

Texts from the Ebabbar Temple in Sippar

Joannès recently highlighted two administrative texts from the Ebabbar temple in Sippar that date to Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year (586 BCE; Joannès 1994). The first text (*Nbk* 74) is a list of sheep and cows stabled at the temple. Here appears a two-year-old cow "of the governor (*pīḫatu*) of the city of Arpad" (rev. 3′–4′). The second text (*CT* 56, 439) is also an administrative list concerning sheep and cows. Lines 12–13 mention one cow "which is an offering of the governor (*bēl pīḫatu*) of Arpad" (Joannès 1994: 22). These texts are a relatively straightforward witness to a Babylonian appointed provincial official in Arpad. Neither text includes the official's name, so there is no way to know whether he was of local or Babylonian stock.

Other Texts from Nippur, Sippar, and Uruk

In two articles, Joannès discussed another set of tablets, recovered from Nippur, Sippar, and Uruk, which in the past were cited as evidence for a Babylonian official at Phoenician Tyre (Joannès 1982, 1987). All of them are economic tablets listing the recruitment of personnel, purchase of food and animals, and provisions for soldiers. Most of the texts end with a list of witnesses to the transactions. All of them, except one that is damaged, are dated between the 31st and 42nd years of Nebuchadnezzar (574–565 BCE). Among these texts one hears of a place designated as ^{uru}*ṣurru*, "the city (of) Ṣurru/Tyre." In one of the texts (Joannès 1982: 37–8, no. 5), one of the witnesses is Enlil-šāpik-zēri the *šandabakku* (Joannès 1982: 39, no. 5:12). Unger and others argued that he was a Babylonian appointed official at Phoenician Tyre (Joannès 1982: 35; Unger 1926; Vanderhooft 1999: 100, with literature). However, Joannès argues convincingly that this is most unlikely. First, the title of *šandabakku* is not a title of a provincial official, but of an official in Nippur. Second, the context of the finds and the

occurrence of high officials of the Eanna temple in Uruk as witnesses to the transactions militate against a Phoenician context. Third, some of the reconstructed readings that Unger used to make his case are not supported by the texts.[289] Fourth, even in the case of Joannès' text no. 1, which was written before the capture of Tyre in 573/2 BCE, the witnesses include five members of the cultic personnel of Nippur, who were not likely to have been in Phoenician Tyre at the same time (Joannès 1982: 39–40).

Another one of the texts mentions Milki-eṭēri the *bēl pīḫatu*, "governor" of Kidiš (Joannès 1982: 37, no. 4:3, 7). This was also taken as an indication that there was a provincial governor in Qadesh, a city on the Orontes River (Unger 1926: 316–7; Vanderhooft 1999: 101–2, with literature). However, the same basic arguments hold for this as for the other texts. That is, it might well be a name of town in Babylonia. In support of this argument, Vanderhooft adduces another text written at Kidiš, which details the purchase of a slave who is to be delivered to Nippur, suggesting that Kidiš is not far from Nippur (Vanderhooft 1999: 102). These texts, therefore, do not provide solid evidence for Babylonian appointed officials in the Levant. They do, however, make good sense in the context of Nebuchadnezzar's policy of deporting rebel populations and settling them in Babylonia in order to rebuild the area that was damaged from the wars with Assyria (Ephʿal 1978: 81–2; Joannès 1987: 150).[290]

The Saqqarah/Adon Papyrus

The Saqqarah Papyrus, also frequently called the Adon Papyrus, was found in excavations at Saqqarah in 1942 inside a jar that also contained Egyptian and Greek

[289] Joannès rebuts these reconstructions individually (Joannès 1982: 40, n. 1).

[290] Zawadzki published two more texts from the Ebabbar archive that mention Tyre, probably Phoenician Tyre, and may provide evidence for a campaign against that city in 564–563 BCE (Zawadzki 2003). In any case, these new texts do not provide evidence for imperial officials at Phoenician Tyre.

papyri. It preserves a quarter or half of a letter in Aramaic. The papyrus does not have a date formula attached but most likely dates to 604 or 603 BCE, or less likely to 598/7 BCE, all during the reign of Necho II (610–595 BCE). The papyrus contains a plea to Pharaoh from king Adon—probably a Philistine king—for military aid in the face of a Babylonian onslaught (Porten 1981). The letter is fragmentary, but it is complete enough to know that the sender of the letter (Adon) calls himself "your servant" (lines 1, 6) and invokes his own loyalty (lines 7–8). Together these indicate a formal diplomatic relationship with Egypt (*COS* 3:132; Porten, 1981: 39). The last line (9) mentions a *pḥh bmtʾ*, "governor in the land," but the first part of the sentence is lost in the gap in line 8. The Aramaic word *pḥh* is cognate with the Akkadian *pīḫatu* meaning "province, district" or as a short form for *bēl pīḫatu*, "provincial governor." Thus, specifically what is stated about this "governor" is lost, and one is left to speculate about whether this refers to a Babylonian appointee or someone else (cf. *COS* 3:133 n. 19).

Summary

There is very little explicit evidence for provinces in the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The texts from the Ebabbar temple indicate the presence of a (*bēl*) *pīḫatu* in Arpad, but indicate little about his role. The Etemenanki Cylinder indicates an administrative division between kings, *pīḫatus*, and *šakkanakkus*, but does not define the division of the territories. The Babylonian Chronicles mention a *pi-ḫat* ^{kur}*Ḫa-ma-a-t*[*ú*], "the district/province of the land of Hamath," but as noted, it is not clear whether this was a formally constituted province or simply a designation for the area near Hamath. The Adad-guppi Stele envisions an organized empire with *šakkanakkus* and other types of rulers spread from the Persian Gulf to the border of Egypt on the Mediterranean Sea.

The textual evidence indicates that the Neo-Babylonian Empire did use officials in the administration of the western part of the empire. In particular, the texts mention *šakkanakku* (Etemenanki, Harran Stele) and (*bēl*) *pīḫatu* officials (Etemenanki, Ebabbar Temple Texts, and perhaps the Adon Papyrus). With the exception of the *pīḫatu* of Arpad, the locations where these officials served is unknown. Moreover, the texts do not provide the kind of information that would enable one to specify their authority or responsibilities. It is not even clear whether or not a *šakkanakku* was significantly different from a *pīḫatu*, and whether or not they were local officials appointed by the Babylonians, or Babylonians installed in the area.

The Case of Judah

The material reviewed thus far provides some information about Neo-Babylonian administration of the periphery, although the information does not provide many geographically specific indications that allow one to understand the administrative geography in detail. The study of Judah may provide some additional evidence for Neo-Babylonian administrative practices because of the level of study scholars have devoted to it.

In three places, the biblical writers recount how Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah over Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. His status is stated in 2 Kgs 25:22, and in Jer 40:5, 7, 11, and 41:2. In 2 Kgs 25:22, the text reads, *wayyapqēd ʿălêhem ʾet-gĕdalyāhû ben-ʾăḥîqām ben-šāpān*, "and [Nebuchadnezzar] appointed over them [the people remaining in Judah] Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan." The same basic statement is repeated in Jer 40:5, 7, 11 and 41:2, the only differences being that in Jer 40:5 the text states that Gedaliah was appointed *bĕʿārê yĕhûdâ*, "in the cities of Judah," while in 40:7 and 41:2 the text states that he was

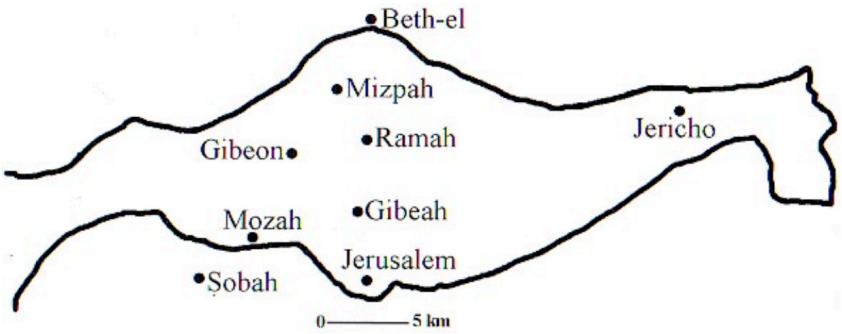
appointed *bāʾāreṣ*, "in the land." The problem is that these texts do not explicate precisely what Gedaliah's or Judah's status or title was after 586 BCE. Was he a governor of a newly formed Babylonian province or something else?

The difference in language used to describe the appointment of Gedaliah (hiphil of *pqd*, "to appoint") and the earlier replacement of the Judean king Jehoiachin with king Zedekiah (hiphil of *mlk*, "to cause to be king;" 2 Kgs 24:17; 2 Chr 36:10), suggests that the biblical authors saw a difference between the two acts. Zedekiah was made king in the place of an earlier king, while Gedaliah replaced a king, but was not a king himself (Machinist 1992: 79). In Gedaliah's words to the Judeans who come to him in Mizpah, he says, *waʾănî hinĕnî yōšēb bammiṣpâ laʿămōd lipnê hakkaśdîm ʾăšer yābōʾû ʾēlênû*, "As for me, I am dwelling in Mizpah in order to stand before the Chaldeans who will come to us" (Jer 40:10). This description of his role, particularly the notion of "standing before" and its parallels to other stories about appointed officials in the Hebrew Bible, suggests a formalized mediatorial relationship with the Babylonians (Lipschits 2005: 89).

A number of scholars hold the view that Gedaliah was a Babylonian governor over a newly formed Babylonian province (e.g., Ahlström 1993: 799; Graham 1984; Lipschits 2005: 88–126, 149–54, 237–58; Naʾaman 2000a) and it is frequently assumed in the scholarly literature without further elaboration. Besides the biblical texts just cited, scholars advance several other lines of evidence in support of the provincialization theory. The first of these is an argument from continuity, stating that the Persian province of Yehud continues the Neo-Babylonian system. The decree of Cyrus, in particular, does not address provincial status, but rather assumes it, suggesting that Judah did not undergo a change in political status under the Persians, but rather

had been provincialized under Babylon (Lipschits 2005: 124–5, 172–4; Naʾaman 2000a: 42).

A second strand of evidence comes from archaeological and epigraphic evidence. As is well known, the most dramatic impact of Neo-Babylonian imperial consolidation of the region was the destruction of many walled cities and towns and a subsequent shrinkage of settlement (Stern 2001: 312–33). However, archaeological research suggests that the demographic decline in Judah centered on cities and towns, while rural areas appear less affected. As is now well established, the area of Benjamin, the north Judean highlands (minus Jerusalem) shows a significant degree of settlement and material cultural continuity throughout this period (Barstad 1996: 47–50; Lipschits 2005: 237–49; Stern 2001: 321–3, 327–31; Vanderhooft 1999: 106–7).[291] The continuity of settlement in the Benjamin region is especially noticeable at sites such as Tell en-Naṣbeh/Mizpah, which the biblical texts state was Gedaliah's center (Map 1).



Map E.1—Area of Benjamin after Zorn 2003: 414 fig. 1.

Along with relative demographic continuity in the region of Benjamin, archaeological remains at Tell en-Naṣbeh suggest administrative activity and perhaps the presence of Babylonians. The architectural changes at Naṣbeh from Stratum 3 (Iron Age II) to Stratum 2, which begins in the sixth century and continues into the Persian

[291] A similar demographic continuity is noticeable in Ammon as discussed in chapter 2. In Ammon, however, there is yet no evidence for destruction.

Period, may point to a shift in site use in the sixth century. The construction of Stratum 2 began with a filling and leveling of the site with no signs of burning or violent destruction. The rather dense layout of buildings in Stratum 3 gave way to a more open internal city layout with fewer buildings in Stratum 2. The buildings in Stratum 2 continue the use of three or four rooms; however, the new buildings are on average one and a half to two times bigger than those from Stratum 3. They are also more likely to have stone paved floors, and monolithic stone pillars, and the walls are frequently constructed two rows thick compared to the typical one row construction of Stratum 3 (Zorn 2003: 419–29). The changes in the construction of Stratum 2, while not proving the administrative character of the site, do suggest a wealthier stratum of society by the size and quality of construction.

Several artifacts provide potential clues to the use of the site. The first is a cuneiform inscription found on the remains of a ringlet that may date to the Neo-Babylonian Period.[292] The location of the find is unknown and so stratigraphic dating is not possible. The ringlet fragment preserves a dedicatory inscription using Neo-Babylonian script that reads: ". . .]-yada, his very own son, for the well-being of his life dedi[cated . . ." (Horowitz, Oshima, and Sanders 2006: 110). The use of the Neo-Babylonian script on this ringlet is possible evidence for a Babylonian presence at Naṣbeh, where Gedaliah ruled after the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25). However, because the Neo-Babylonian script had a long history of use between the Neo-Assyrian Period into the Persian, Horowitz and Oshima counsel caution in using this as evidence for Babylonian administration (Horowitz, Oshima, and Sanders 2006: 23).

[292] This inscription is the only cuneiform inscription found in the southern Levant that can reasonably be dated to the Neo-Babylonian Period.

An incised ostracon was excavated from a cistern at Naṣbeh with a mixed assemblage. This ostracon preserves the letters]*nmrsrṣ*⌜*r*⌝. The final letter is only partially visible, but plausibly reconstructed as a *resh*. What may have been on either end of the name, one can only guess. Zorn suggests that the writing preserves a Mesopotamian name written in Hebrew script and that it can be translated as [*be*]*n mār-šarri-uṣur*, "[so]n of 'protect-the-crown-prince'" (Zorn 2003: 436–7, fig. 20). If correctly interpreted, this ostracon provides evidence for a person with a typical Mesopotamian name at Naṣbeh. The lack of stratigraphic dating, however, means that it cannot be ascribed with certainty to the Neo-Babylonian Period.

The so-called bathtub coffins found at Naṣbeh may also indicate the presence of Babylonians at the site. At least one, and perhaps three fragments of large bathtub shaped ceramic containers were found at Naṣbeh in excavations during the 1920s. The largest piece is a rim fragment, found within the city in room 79, and has a vertical wall, 5 cm thick rim, and rope-like decoration that was made with finger impressions 5 cm below the rim (Zorn 1993: 216; see Figure E.1 below for example). This fragment, and possibly some of the others, is part of a burial tradition originating in Mesopotamia that goes back to the second millennium and continues in use past the Persian Period.

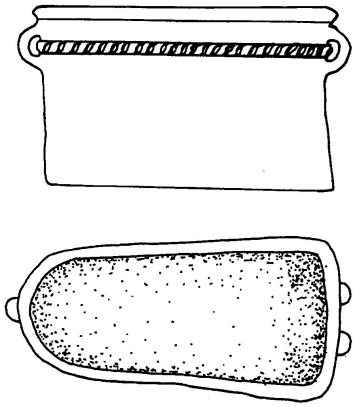


Figure E.1—Drawing of Bathtub Coffin from Tall al-Mazar after Routledge 1997: 36 fig. 4.

In Mesopotamia, bathtub coffins found *in situ* were buried under the floor in domestic contexts (Zorn 1993: 220–1). In the southern Levant, bathtub coffin style burial begins to appear with the onset of Neo-Assyrian hegemony over the area and examples have been found at Tell Abu Hawam, Amman, Dothan, Tell el-Farʿah, Tel Halif, Jerusalem, Manahat, Tell el-Mazar, Megiddo, Tell el-Qitaf, and Shechem. The closest typological parallels to the Tell en-Naṣbeh finds come from Dothan, Tell el-Farʿah, Tell el-Mazar, Megiddo, and Shechem and were found in contexts that date to the late eighth century or later. In addition, the finds at Tell en-Naṣbeh, like those at Tell Abu Hawam, Dothan, Tell el-Farʿah, and Megiddo come from intramural contexts (Zorn 1993: 218–9), whereas Judean practice was to bury the dead in rock-cut caves outside the town (Bloch-Smith 1992: 55–9, 138–9). Zorn argues that the coffin from Tell en-Naṣbeh most likely fits in the sixth century Stratum 2 and probably represents the regional administrative center under Gedaliah. His proposed dating, together with the intramural location, and the biblical accounts which mention Chaldean troops who were stationed with Gedaliah, suggest that these bathtub coffins may have contained the remains of Babylonians stationed in the region after the destruction of Jerusalem (Zorn 1993: 221–2).

A set of stamped jar handles found predominantly at Naṣbeh may point to the administration of agricultural activity in the area. The forty-two jar handles found to date bear either a one-line inscription (*mṣh*) or a two-line inscription with vowel letter (*mw/ṣh*; see Figure E.2). They have been recovered from an area roughly co-terminus with the tribal land of Benjamin north of Jerusalem (Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes 1994:

161–3).[293] A few fall outside this area, but as Lipschits argues, the distribution fits well the areas that show demographic continuity after the destruction of Jerusalem (Lipschits 2005: 151). Analysis of these stamp impressions suggests that they date to the sixth century on paleographic and archaeological grounds. They were made from a minimum of six different stamps. Furthermore, the pottery was made locally from the Mozah clay formation, which runs along a north-south axis to the west of Jerusalem, curving eastward north of Jerusalem to encompass much of the Benjamin region (Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes 1994: 166–182).[294]

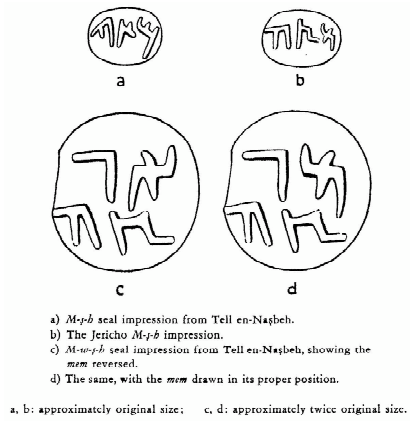


Figure E.2—Drawings of *m(w)ṣh* impressions from Avigad 1958: 115 fig. 1.

In his important study, Avigad offered three main interpretations of these seal impressions: 1) the town of *m(w)ṣh* served as a collection center for in-kind taxes; 2) the impressions were used by "local authorities as a kind of trade mark for a Mozah product" that was eventually taxed; 3) *m(w)ṣh* was a "crown-estate, the incomes from

[293] Thirty of the impressions come from Tell en-Naṣbeh. Others were found at: el-Jib/Gibeon(4), Jericho (2), Jerusalem (4), Ramat Raḥel (1), Belmont Castle (1). For distribution and discussion of the archaeological contexts see Zorn, Yellin and Hayes 1994: 166–9.

[294] Vanderhooft questions the certainty of dating the *m(w)ṣh* impressions to the Neo-Babylonian Period, saying that one cannot rule out the Persian Period (Vanderhooft 1999: 108). The Persian Period is a possibility, but present consensus on the matter makes the Neo-Babylonian Period the most likely (Graham 1984; Lipschits 1999; Lipschits 2005: 149–54; Stern 2001: 338; Zorn, Yellin and Hayes 1994: 182–3). For a review of the material culture of Benjamin in this period including that of Mizpah and Gibeon, see Lipschits 2005: 237–49.

which went to the Persian satrap," perhaps at Mizpah (cf. Neh 3:7; Avigad 1958: 118–9).[295] Avigad seems to favor option 3 in his original article (Avigad 1958: 119). In his later article he seems to favor option 2 when he states that the stamps were, "probably official stamps used by the local authorities as a kind of trade-mark for a Moṣah product, such as wine or oil, which was supplied in stamped jars and eventually made liable to local taxes" (Avigad 1972: 7). The two possibilities are, of course, not mutually exclusive. Cross essentially follows option 2 (Cross 1969c: 22–3). Stern combines options 2 and 3, stating that the impressions were "trademarks" for wine produced at tax exempt royal estates among which is Moṣah (Stern 1982: 209; 2001: 338). Graham follows option 2 when he argues that the impressions mark the place where the wine was produced. He seems to combine this with option 3 when he goes on to argue that the Babylonians deliberately developed an economic policy implemented through a local governor whereby some of the produce of these "estates" was exported to Babylon (Graham 1984: 57). Zorn et al. basically follow option 3, indicating that the jars contained product from the village of *m(w)ṣh*, which is a governmental estate (Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes 1994: 183). Lipschits combines options 1 and 3, concluding that, "the place where the pottery vessels were manufactured and the impressions were made was apparently a crown estate that supplied agricultural products to the governor who resided in Mizpah" (Lipschits 2005: 151).

Edelman's study takes a slightly different trajectory by arguing that Moṣah was not so much a crown estate as it was a central processing center. She emphasizes the location of Moṣah near the southwestern edge of the new district of Benjamin, close to

[295] Avigad thought that they were from the Persian Period, though the study of Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes (Zorn, Yellin and Hayes 1994) shows that the Neo-Babylonian Period is the most likely period for these impressions.

the Shephelah. There, many orchards and vineyards were producing but lacked tending because of the recent Babylonian invasion. As she envisions it, what could be gathered from the region was brought to Moṣah, then processed and shipped through the small district to support the new government headed at first by Gedaliah at Naṣbeh/Mizpah (Edelman 2006a: 667–71). These stamps, Edelman argues, should be associated with the new Judean government because they follow in a Judean royal stamp tradition beginning in the late eighth century with the *lmlk* stamps, and continuing with the rosette stamps, these *m(w)ṣh* stamps, early Persian stamps with a lion, and then the *yh(w)d* stamps (Edelman 2006a: 663).

Finally, the economist Morris Silver includes these impressions in a broader discussion of stamp impressions where he argues that they mark the place where the goods were produced and point to a system of "private enterprise" (Silver 1983: 29–34). Although Avigad sees the impressions as related to "mercantile activity" (Avigad 1972: 9), no one else has picked up on this strictly economic interpretation, preferring instead to connect them with governmental activities, whether of the local Judean governor or of the imperial overlord.

Another set of jar handle inscriptions sometimes attributed to the Neo-Babylonian period comes from el-Jib (Gibeon). This group of fifty-six handles was recovered in 1956 and 1957 from an unstratified fill in the great pool at el-Jib. A variety of pottery from the Iron II as well as a number of *lmlk* seals were also found in the fill (Pritchard 1959: 12). These jar handles are incised, rather than stamped, and as two partially preserved vessels show, the inscription begins on one handle and then continues on the handle on the opposite side of the jar (Pritchard 1959: Figs. 1:1, 2:32). The typical inscription contains *gbʿn gdr* plus one or two personal names. *Gbʿn* is the

Hebrew name of the town "Gibeon," and Pritchard argues that *gdr* refers to a walled area or vineyard plot, and the personal names would appear to indicate the person(s) to whom the plot belonged (Pritchard 1959: 9–10, 16). As for the function of the bottles, Pritchard noted the rather narrow necks of the jars and how perfectly a pottery funnel they found seemed to fit into the jars. The narrow neck and funnel point to a liquid, probably wine. Moreover, the excavations also found clay stoppers that fit the jars well (Pritchard 1959: 15–16, fig. 12:1–3). All of this led Pritchard to suggest that the jars were filled with wine and exported to the surrounding areas. The names on the jars served as a sort of "return address" for the empty jars (Pritchard 1959: 16).

The el-Jib incised jar handles are often connected in terms of function to the *m(w)ṣh* impressions. Avigad made this connection elegantly when he published a jar handle very similar to those from el-Jib with the exception that the incised inscription reads *hmṣh šʿl* "(the) Moṣah Šuʿal" (Avigad 1972: 5–9). This jar handle is very similar to those from el-Jib in that the inscription is incised and has the same sequence of town name plus personal name. Furthermore, the inscription contains the same place name as the *m(w)ṣh* stamp impressions. Avigad's conclusion, accepted by many scholars, is that the el-Jib/Gibeon incised jar handles, the *hmṣh šʿl* handle, and the *m(w)ṣh* stamp impressions are all related to the manufacture of wine in the Benjamin region (Avigad 1972: 7–9; Graham 1984: 56; Lipschits 2005: 151; Stern 1982: 209; 2001: 338; Zorn, Yellin, and Hayes 1994: 183).[296] Avigad sees the el-Jib/Gibeon handles and the *hmṣh šʿl*

[296] Lipschits states, "it appears that Gibeon was the location of wine production for the army and the Babylonian bureaucracy stationed in the country; it was not a crown estate" (Lipschits 2005: 151). Here he cites his own paper in support of this conclusion (Lipschits 1999: 172–6), but a look at that paper shows only a review of the archaeology of Gibeon with no argumentation for this conclusion. He does suggest that Gibeon played a role in the administration of the Benjamin region as one of the two major sites along with Mizpah, which housed the administrative center (Lipschits 1999: 179). Gibeon continued as a wine producing

handle as representatives of a slightly older tradition of wine-making in Benjamin, with the *m(w)ṣh* stamp impressions continuing that tradition (Avigad 1972: 7). On the other hand, Lipschits sees the *m(w)ṣh* and el-Jib jar handles as essentially contemporaneous in the Neo-Babylonian period but serving different centers. He sees Naṣbeh as an administrative center and el-Jib as military quarters, though he offers little by way of reasoning for this distinction (Lipschits 2005: 151).

Edelman, however, rightly calls attention to the problematic dating of these incised handles, with ranges from the late eighth to sixth centuries. She also argues that the non-uniform incising of the place name plus personal name, rather than standardized stamping suggests that the *Gbʿn* handles more likely reflect private trade (Edelman 2006a: 663). Following Edelman's reasoning, this author does not think that these jar handles can contribute to the discussion about Neo-Babylonian policy in Judah at present. If they are to play a part in the discussion, a firmer consensus about their date and function is needed.

The *m(w)ṣh* jar handles from Benjamin thus indicate economic activity most likely dated to the Neo-Babylonian Period. As my discussion shows, scholars working on the material often associate this economic activity with Gedaliah's appointment by the Babylonians at Mizpah. With the exception of Morris Silver, all of the interpreters mentioned relate these to governmental administration of agricultural production. Though scholars still express reservations about a Neo-Babylonian date for these inscriptions (Vanderhooft 1999: 108), the most comprehensive studies suggest a mid-sixth century date as the most probable (Lipschits 2005: 149–54; Zorn, Yellin, and

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center of economic importance and may have grown in the Neo-Babylonian Period (Lipschits 1999: 179).

Hayes 1994). Thus the consensus, even if fragile, sees these as evidence for the economic management of the area as part of an imperially sanctioned government. For those holding to the provincialization theory, these inscriptions illustrate Neo-Babylonian provincial government.[297]

The demographic continuity in Benjamin, the significant rebuilding of Tell en-Naṣbeh Stratum 2, the votive ringlet, the ostracon with a possible Mesopotamian name, the intramural bathtub coffins, the *m(w)ṣh* jar handles, and the biblical descriptions of Gedaliah's appointment at Mizpah, together argue in favor of the theory that Judah was reorganized after 586 under a local government centered at Mizpah. Moreover, the strength of the "provincialization" theory is the way that the straightforward reading of the biblical narratives converges with the archaeological evidence. Nonetheless, it is susceptible to critique. First, Gedaliah's official status is in the end, unknown, and better left as an open question. In fact, the present writer does not think his title is especially important for understanding his function, at least insofar as our sources allow understanding. Second, demographic continuity in no way forces the conclusion that Judah was provincialized. Third, the existence of the *m(w)ṣh* impressions does not have to mean anything beyond local exchange with two nodes at Mizpah and Gibeon. Fourth, the dating of the votive ringlet, the ostracon, and the bathtub coffins is not entirely secure. However, if one leaves Gedaliah's official designation open, these lines of evidence converge in a convincing way.

[297] A comparison of the date and distribution of the Persian Period *yhwd* provincial seals with those of the *m(w)ṣh* impressions points to an administrative shift from Mizpah to Jerusalem, a shift that meshes well with the return of Judean exiles and permission to rebuild Jerusalem (Lipschits 2005: 174–81). The potential parallel between these two sets of inscriptions is another argument in favor of the *m(w)ṣh* impressions being related to provincial government.

Against the view that Babylon turned Judah into a province, Vanderhooft advances five points. First, as the review of Neo-Babylonian texts indicates, the location of only one *pīḫatu* in the Levant is known for sure, and he was located in Arpad. Local kings ruled the rest of the coast and there is no clear indication that the Babylonians actively created provinces. Second, Gedaliah is a local nobleman and there are few precedents for an imperial official being a local noble even in the preceding Neo-Assyrian Period. Third, there is no indication that Gedaliah was replaced with another governor after he was assassinated. Fourth, if Judah was provincialized, it left no discernable mark on the biblical historiographers. Fifth and finally, the relatively large amount of destruction, few material remains of Babylonian presence, and a general economic decline in the region, do not point to a Neo-Babylonian attempt to organize Judah as a province (Vanderhooft 1999: 105–10).

Vanderhooft's argument is important for highlighting how little is known, but it is largely a negative argument. He is right that the specific locations of Babylonian provincial officials in the Levant (except Arpad) remain unknown, but the Neo-Babylonian texts do indicate that Neo-Babylonian officials were in the Levant, they just do not indicate where. In Sack's view, with which this author tends to agree, Vanderhooft is trying to make too strong an argument from too small an amount of evidence (Sack 2003). Second, Vanderhooft is again correct that there are few instances of local nobles being installed as imperial governors, though some hybrid situations do seem to have existed under Assyrian control (Lipschits 2005: 91).[298] As for his third

[298] Vanderhooft acknowledges the possibility that *hdysʿy* of the Tell Fakhariyeh inscription (Abou Assaf, Bordreuil and Millard 1982; KAI no. 309; COS, 2:153–4), may be a local elite figure. He rightly notes that while the personal name Had-yisʿī/Hadad-yisʿī (*hdysʿy*) is Aramaic, the patronym Šamaš-nūrī (in the Aramaic script, *ssnwry*) is Assyrian and so the

point, the main biblical source for Gedaliah's tenure, namely the book of Jeremiah, records very little of anything after Gedaliah's assassination, except the flight of the Judeans to Egypt to avoid Babylonian reprisals. Whoever wrote the account may have gone with those who went to Egypt (supposing the authenticity of the account) or may simply not have had any other sources. As for the fourth argument, it is not clear why provincialization should leave a mark on the historiographers, and as he notes, provincialization in the Persian Period left no mark either (Vanderhooft 1999: 106). The same critique that applied to Lipschits' notion that demographic continuity means there was a province applies to Vanderhooft's fifth argument, only in an inverse manner; lack of development and economic activity does not necessarily imply the lack of a province.

From yet another view, Miller and Hayes argue that Gedaliah was appointed as a replacement *king* for Zedekiah. They base their argument on three lines of evidence. First, the text does not apply a title to Gedaliah. This may be because the editors of Kings did not wish to reveal that a non-Davidic king had been on the throne.[299] Second, two references in Jer 41 mention "the king," which Miller and Hayes interpret as referring to Gedaliah. Jeremiah 41:10 refers to the "daughters of the king" at Mizpah, which they suggest would not be the daughters of the deported king Jehoiachin because they would have been deported as well. Jeremiah 41:1 mentions Ishmael (Gedaliah's eventual assassin) as an officer of the king, whom they interpret to be Gedaliah. Third,

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situation is not so clear cut (Vanderhooft 1999: 105, n. 178). See also the philological discussion of both names in Abou Assaf, Bordreuil and Millard 1982.

[299] Perhaps the difference in the Hebrew does illustrate a perceptual or ideological difference on the part of the authors that denied Gedaliah his full status as king. Interestingly, in describing Nebuchadnezzar's change of king in Judah from Jehoiachin to Zedekiah, the Babylonian Chronicle states: *šarra šá* ⌜*libbi*⌝*-šú ina lìb-bi ip-te-qid*, "A king of his chosing within it (i.e., Jerusalem) he appointed" (Grayson 1975: 102, Chron. 5 rev. 13). Whereas in 2 Kgs 24:17 and 2 Chr 36:10, the biblical text uses the hiphil of *mlk*, the Babylonian Chronicle uses *paqādum*, which parallels well the meaning of the hiphil of Hebrew *pqd* (*CAD* P, 120–1; *HALOT*, 957).

a military commander named Jaazaniah the Maacathite is said to join Gedaliah (2 Kgs 25:23; Jer 40:8). A seal (*WSS*, no. 8), which might be from this person, was found in a late Roman tomb at Tell en-Naṣbeh and reads, *lyʾznyhw / ʿbd hmlk*, "Belonging to Jaazaniah, servant of the king." Clearly this person was a royal official and Miller and Hayes suggest that "the king" whom he served may have been Gedaliah (Miller and Hayes 2006: 483).

The arguments of Miller and Hayes are qualified throughout by "possible," "probable," "one could presume," and other such statements. Although their honest qualification of their arguments is admirable, the string of possibilities does not inspire a high level of confidence that their view is likely. The notion that there was an ideological suppression of Gedaliah's title of king is possible, but such an ideological bent would need to be established more thoroughly. As for the references to "the king" in Jeremiah, the first verse they mention (41:10) states: "And Ishmael took captive all of the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the daughters of the king, and all the people who remained at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guards entrusted to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam." It is possible that this refers to Gedaliah, but there is no reason to assume that the author, who so scrupulously omitted Gedaliah's title elsewhere, would accidentally include a reference to him as king. In addition, there is no reason to think that the "daughters of the king" were not included with those whom Nebuzaradan had left in Gedaliah's hands. There would be no reason to mention the daughters of the king if they were Gedaliah's daughters, because they would be under Gedaliah's care by default. The other reference to the king found in Jer 41:1 provides weak support for their theory. It reads, "In the seventh month, Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, from the royal seed, and the chief men of the king, and ten

men with him, came to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam at Mizpah." The key part of the verse in the MT has, *wĕrabê hammelek*, literally, "and the chief men of the king," adds a group of people to Ishmael's party. Miller and Hayes translate this phrase as, "one of the chief officers of the king" (Miller and Hayes 2006: 483), but the grammar of the conjunctive *waw* will not bear this meaning. Perhaps they have something else in mind, but they do not make this clear and there is nothing obvious in the manuscript traditions to suggest this reading.[300] Finally, the seal of Jaazaniah comes from a late Roman tomb so its date will remain unknown[301] as will any indication of whence it originally came. To suggest that the king mentioned on it was Gedaliah is no more than a guess. It is just as likely that this Jaazaniah was a royal official under Zedekiah (or even Jehoiachin), who made his way to Mizpah sometime after the destruction of Jerusalem. Overall, the proposal of Miller and Hayes has little to recommend it.

The proposals surveyed here point to the ambiguity of the evidence for Judah's provincialization as it presently stands. It also points to terminological problems, especially concerning the term "province." Oddly enough, none of the discussions proposes a definition for this term. Naʾaman's arguments focus on Judah's provincial *status* in the Neo-Babylonian period: it is either a province or it is not (Naʾaman 2000a). He does not indicate what provincial status meant for the inhabitants in terms of the functioning of the province. Graham, Lipschits, and Barstad focus on the role of the Benjamin region in paying taxes or tribute (Graham 1984; Lipschits 2005: 49, 151; Barstad 1996: 70–4), and perhaps providing troops and provisions during Babylonian military campaigns to the area (Lipschits 2005: 49). Their perspective is thus more

[300] The LXX (= 48:1) omits this clause and in the MT it does not appear in v. 2, which only mentions Gedaliah and "the ten men who were with him." Likewise, the parallel passage in 2 Kgs 25:25 does not include this clause. *BHS* cites no other variants.

[301] Avigad and Sass date it paleographically to ca. 600 BCE (*WSS*, no. 8).

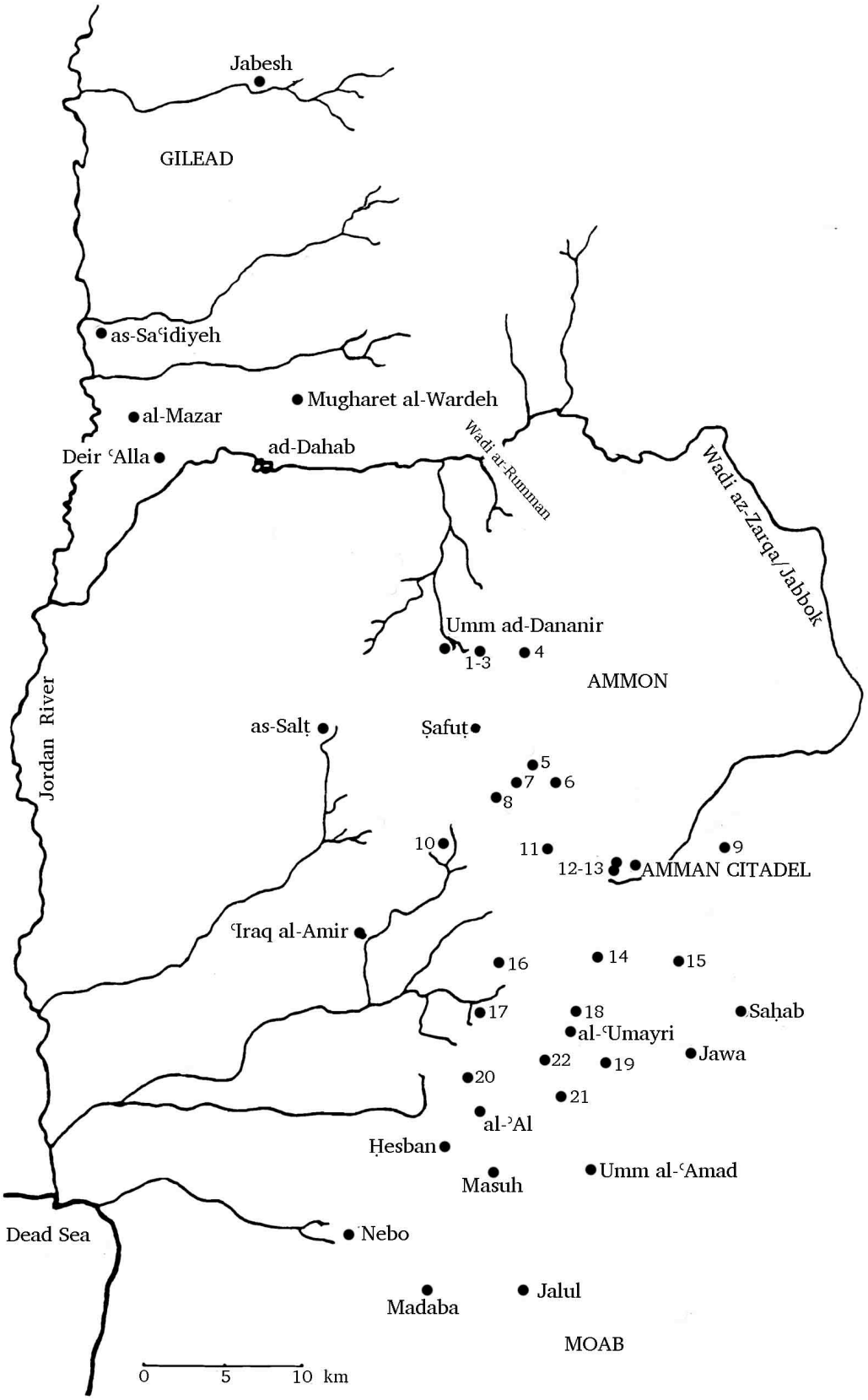
functionally focused. On the other hand, the lack of significant evidence for Neo-Babylonian investment in the area, together with a significant level of destruction led Vanderhooft to frame the question this way: “This evidence for a massive disjunction can hardly sustain the argument that the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar implemented a rational economic policy for exploiting a provincialized Judah” (Vanderhooft 1999: 106). In arguing this, he seeks to counter the arguments of Graham and Barstad, but at the same time implies, perhaps unconsciously, that one can only have a province when the empire has “a rational economic policy for exploiting” the area. In this, he may have the Neo-Assyrian Empire in the back of his mind.

To be fair to these scholars, it was not their purpose to fully describe every aspect of provinces in the Neo-Babylonian Empire; however, their differing foci make constructive discussion of Judah’s historical trajectory difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, the relative lack of consensus on Judah’s status under Babylon after 586 BCE disguises the significant amount of agreement concerning the arrangements made for governing the area. There is broad consensus that the narrative about the Gedaliah's appointment by the Babylonians and the general circumstances of his tenure have a real historical basis. This is demonstrated by the lack of discussion on this point, showing that most scholars assume the basic historicity of Gedaliah’s appointment; it is the details of his status and function that are disputed. Thus, whether Judah became a province with an indigenous imperially appointed governor, a non-provincialized peripheral land with a Babylonian appointed local noble, or a severely diminished vassal kingdom with a new capital and a Babylonian appointed vassal king from a non-royal line is not so crucial. In any case, there is no way to resolve the terminological dispute because the Neo-

Babylonian inscriptions do not provide the level of detail needed to answer the question. The question as such should be dropped until there is more concrete evidence.

While Judah's official status remains unknown, what one can say is that Judah's demographic center shifted north to the Benjamin region, where archaeological, epigraphic, and biblical evidence suggest a center of administration, however small scale it may have been. If the biblical texts in Jeremiah are at all accurate, they indicate that a Babylonian appointed non-Davidic ruler governed this center. Taking one's lead from the Neo-Babylonian texts, one would expect that whatever Judah's official status after 586 BCE, she was still responsible for providing craftsmen for projects in Babylonia, soldiers and supplies for the imperial army when it showed up in the area, and probably some level of tribute. To the degree that this picture is accurate, it shows that Neo-Babylonian practice was not completely destructive. It continued the use of local leadership and probably the obligations that vassal kings normally bore, even if Judah was no longer a kingdom.

APPENDIX A—MAP OF AMMON ADAPTED FROM HÜBNER 1992: 331.



Key to Numbered sites:

1–3) Rujm al-Ḥawi, Rujm al-Ḥenu East and West
4) Abu Nṣeir
5) Tall Siran
6) ʿArjan
7) Kh. Salameh
8) Khilda
9) Rujm al-Mukheizin
10) Rujm al-Kursi
11) Umm Udayna
12–13) Rujm al-Malfuf N and S
14) Meqabelein
15) Abu Alanda
16) Kh. al-Hajjar
17) Naʿur
18) Rujm Selim
19) al-Yadudeh
20) Umm al-Qanafid
21) Umm al-Basatin (Umm al-Hanafish)
22) ad-Dreijat

APPENDIX B—SCULPTURES FROM THE AMMAN PLATEAU[302]

#	Findspot	Description	Dating	Bibliography
I	Kh. al-Hajjar Found during modern construction	Male statuette on pedestal (51 cm tall). Yellowish limestone. Atef crown, beard, right arm at side, left bent across stomach, long garment, feet exposed, few facial features intact	800–730	(Ibrahim 1971; Abou Assaf 1980; Zayadine 1991: pl. 41)
II	Kh. al-Hajjar Found during modern construction	Female statuette on pedestal (46 cm tall). Yellowish limestone. Hair in cords, arms bent over stomach, long garment with tassels, feet exposed.	800–730	(Ibrahim 1971; Abou Assaf 1980; Zayadine 1991: pl. 42)
III	Amman Citadel	Male statuette on pedestal (81 cm tall). Grey stone. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth, right arm at side, left bent across stomach, long garment, few facial features intact.	800–730	(Abou Assaf 1980; Barnett 1951: 34 sculpture A, pl. X; Dornemann 1983: pl. 91:1; Zayadine 1991: pl. 39; Horn 1973: 175–6 no. 1, pl. XVII:1)
IV	Unknown	Male head (38.5 cm tall). Limestone. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth, eye inlay missing, face damaged.	800–730	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: pl. 90:4; Horn 1973: 176–7 no. 6, pl. XIX:6)
V	Unknown, purchased in Amman	Male head (37 cm tall). Limestone. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth.	800–730	(Abou Assaf 1980; Horn 1973: 176 no. 5, pl. XIX:5)
VI	Unknown	Male head (24 cm tall). Limestone. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth.	800–730	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: pl. 91:2; Horn 1973: 176 no. 3, pl. XVIII:3)
VII	In wadi near Amman	Male head (43.5 cm tall). Badly eroded basalt. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth.	800–730	(Abou Assaf 1980; Horn 1973: 176 no. 2, pl. XVII:2)
VIII	Unknown	Male head (22.4 cm tall). Hair in cords, no beard visible, straight mouth, eye inlay missiing.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: pl. 90:2)
IX	Amman Citadel	Male statuette (46 cm tall). Limestone. Hair in corkscrew curls and held with band, beard, slight smile, right arm at side, left bent across stomach holding a lotus, long garment, eye inlay missing, inscription of yrḥʿzr on base.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Barnett 1951: 34–6 sculpture B, pl. XI; Dornemann 1983: pl. 92:3; Zayadine 1991: pl. 38)
X	Amman Citadel	Statuette torso (33 cm tall). Limestone. Badly damaged though some of the decoration of the garment is visible.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Barnett 1951: 36 sculpture D, pl. XIII; Dornemann 1983: pl. 92:2)

[302] Roman numerals in left column are from Abou Assaf 1980.

#	Findspot	Description	Dating	Bibliography
XI	Amman Citadel	Statuette missing the head (35 cm tall). Limestone. Right arm at side holding something unidentifiable, left bent across stomach holding a lotus, long garment.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: pl. 92:4; Maʾayeh 1960: 114–15, pl. IV:1)
XII	ʿArajan	Statuette (44 cm tall). Limestone. Attached to pillar behind. Hair in small round curls, no beard, both hands at sides with holes in them, upper body bare, short skirt.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: 90:1; Khairi 1970; Zayadine 1991: pl. 44)
XIII	Abu ʿAlanda	Male head (26 cm tall). Limestone. No headdress, badly eroded.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980)
XIV	Abu ʿAlanda	Male head (26 cm tall). Limestone. Badly eroded.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980)
XV	Abu ʿAlanda	Head (25 cm tall). Limestone. Badly eroded and cracked.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980)
XVI	Abu ʿAlanda	Head (20 cm tall). Limestone. Extremely eroded, almost no features visible.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980)
XVII	Amman Citadel	Male head (20 cm tall). Limestone. Hair in concentric rings of tufts, beard in small tufts, slight smile.	730–690	(Abou Assaf 1980; Barnett 1951: 36 sculpture C, pl. XII; Dornemann 1983: pl. 90:3; Zayadine 1991: pl. 43)
XVIII	Abu ʿAlanda	Male head (32.5 cm tall). Limestone. Atef crown, long Osirian beard with chin bare, straight mouth, eye inlay missing.	690–580	(Abou Assaf 1980; Horn 1973: 177 no. 7, pl. XX:7; ʿAmr 1990: no. 2)
XIX	Unknown	Male head (25 cm tall). Steatite. Atef crown, beard, straight mouth.	690–580	(Abou Assaf 1980; Dornemann 1983: pl. 91:3; Horn 1973: 176 no. 4, pl. XVII:4; Zayadine 1991: pl. 40)
XX	Purchased in Amman	Male head (11.3 cm tall). Limestone. Head preserved from eyes up. Atef crown.	690–580	(Abou Assaf 1980; Horn 1973: 177 no. 8, pl. XX:8)
XXI–XXIV	Amman Citadel	Female double-faced heads (26–27.9 cm tall). Limestone. Thick cords of hair that fall even with the bottom of the neck, decorated band holds hair back, tight necklace with holes for inlay, large ears, carved earrings, eye inlay preserved in a few cases. Small holes on top and bottom (2–4 cm in diameter).	690–580	(Zayadine 1973: 27–8, 33–35, pls. XXI–XXIII; also Dornemann 1983: figs. 93–4; 1991: pl. 45)
Zayadine	Amman	Torso of a statuette (no	8th(?)	(Zayadine 1989: pl. LI)

#	Findspot	Description	Dating	Bibliography
	Citadel	measurements). Right arm at side, left arm bent (?), long hair ending in curls on back		
ʿAmr 1	Purchased in Amman	Male head . Limestone. Atef crown, no beard, straight mouth, eye inlays, chin sticks out, nose damaged.	7th–6th	(ʿAmr 1990: no. 1, taf. 7:A)
ʿAmr 3	Purchased in Amman	Head of female. Undecorated wig or helmet, soft features, small smile	7th–6th	(ʿAmr 1990: no. 3, taf. 8:A)
ʿAmr 4	Purchased in Amman	Head of plaque-like female. Atef crown, with hair falling behind ears, big ears, necklace. Piece either unfinished or meant to be an orthostat	7th–6th	(ʿAmr 1990: no. 4, taf. 8:B)

APPENDIX C—GLASS VESSELS FROM AMMAN PLATEAU TOMBS

Vessel	Type Following Grose 1989	Site and Date	Original Publication
Alabastron: Glass appears black and white with a zigzag design.	Group I (cf. Grose 1989: 110–11).[303]	Meqabelein Tomb 5th c. BCE	(Harding 1950: 46, pl. XV:11)
Amphoriskos: Dark blue with light blue and yellow decoration.	Group I, Class I:B (cf. Grose 1989: 112, 144–5, nos. 97–98, 99–103).	Meqabelein Tomb Late 6th–5th c. BCE	(Harding 1950: 46, pl. XII:3)
Amphoriskos: Rim piece with handle. Black and white glass (perhaps discolored).	Group I, Class I:A?[304] (cf. Grose 1989: 111–12, 143, nos. 94–95).	Adoni-nur Tomb Late 6th–5th c. BCE	(Harding 1953: 56, pl. VII:42)
Alabastron: Dark blue with single wavy yellow line around middle	Group I, Class I:B?[305] (cf. Grose 1989: 111–12)	Umm Udayna Tomb Late 6th–5th c. BCE	(Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 18:4).
Amphoriskos: Dark blue with light blue and yellow decoration.	Group I, Class I:B (cf. Grose 1989: 112, 144–5, nos. 97–98, 99–103).	Umm Udayna Tomb Late 6th–5th c. BCE	(Hadidi 1987: 120, fig. 18:5).

[303] The form of this bottle is irregular. For discussion see Harden 1981: 161–2. He argues that this and the following bottle, along with many of the contents of the tomb could easily date to the Persian Period.

[304] The small black and white picture of this *amphoriskos*, as well as the description by Harding make the class identification tentative. For discussion of this particular piece see Harden 1981: 161–2.

[305] Grose does not cite precise parallels for the decoration on this vessel, but see two very close examples in Harden 1981: 73, pl. X:147–8.

APPENDIX D—METAL OBJECTS FROM THE AMMAN PLATEAU[306]

Class and Subtype	Metal	Sites
Jewelry		
Earrings	Silver	Tombs: Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, Umm Udayna Tells: Jawa
	Bronze	Tombs: Amman A, E, Khilda 2, Meqabelein, Saḥab B Tells: Jawa, ʿUmayri
	Unknown	Tombs: Abu Nseir, Saḥab B,
Finger rings	Silver	Tombs: Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, Umm Udayna
	Bronze	Tombs: Adoni-nur, Amman A, C, Khilda 2, Umm Udayna Tells: Ḥesban, Jawa, ʿUmayri, Hajjar
	Iron	Tells: ʿUmayri
Bracelets Anklets Armlets	Silver	Tombs: Adoni-nur
	Bronze	Tombs: Amman A, C, Khilda 2, Meqabelein, Saḥab B, Umm Udayna
	Iron	Tombs: Amman C
	Unknown	Tombs: Abu Nseir
Fibulae	Gold	Tombs: Adoni-Nur[307]
	Silver	Tombs: Saḥab B
	Bronze	Tombs: Adoni-nur, Amman C, Khilda 2, Meqabelein, Saḥab B, Umm Udayna Tells: Ḥesban, Jawa, ʿUmayri, Hajjar
	Unknown	Tells: Hajjar
Buttons	Bronze	Tells: Ḥesban
Cosmetic Related Artifacts		
Kohl Stick	Bronze	Tombs: al-Mazar (6), Meqabelein (4), Umm Udayna (4) Tells: ʿUmayri
Mirror	Bronze	Tombs: Amman E (1), Meqabelein (1), Umm Udayna (4)
Cosmetic Box	Bronze	Tombs: Umm Udayna (1)
Artifacts Related to Food and Drink		
Bowl	Bronze	Tombs: Adoni-nur (2), Khilda 2 (3), Meqabelein (2 or

[306] This appendix does not detail the bibliography of each item because of the sheer number of objects. Items referred to can be found in the primary publications for each site, for which one may consult the body of Chapter 2.

[307] This piece may be electrum, that is, a combination of gold and silver (Harding 1953: 56, no. 41).

Class and Subtype	Metal	Sites
		more), Raghdan Palace (lost), Umm Udayna (5)
Piriform Bottle[308]	Bronze	Tombs: Umm Udayna (2)
Laddle	Bronze	Tombs: Umm Udayna (1)
Strainer	Bronze	Tombs: Khilda 2 (1), Meqabelein (1), Umm Udayna (3)
High Status or Cultic Artifacts		
Caryatid Censer	Bronze	Tombs: Umm Udayna (1)
Arrowheads, Blades, Nails, Needles, Weights, and other Implements		
	Bronze	Tombs: Adoni-nur (1 arrowhead) Tells: Ḥesban, Jawa, ʿUmayri, Hajjar
	Iron	Tombs: Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, Saḥab B, Umm Udayna Tells: Ḥesban, Jawa, ʿUmayri
	Copper	Tells: Ḥesban
	Lead	Tells: Ḥesban
	Unknown	Tells: Hajjar

[308] Or "situla." On the use of these see Moorey 1980: 186. For finds of these items, he refers to Schaeffer (Schaeffer 1935: 150, fig. 7g) and Abel and Barrois (Abel and Barrois 1928: 198, fig. 4a, b).

APPENDIX E—DATABLE BRONZES FROM THE AMMAN PLATEAU

Object	Location	Date
Bowls: Shallow, sharp carination	Adoni-nur, Meqabelein, Khilda 2, Udayna	Late Neo-Assyrian (Routledge 1997: 36; cf. Stern 2001: 345–6).
Bowls: Deep and gentle carination	Khilda 2, Udayna	Persian (Routledge 1997: 36; Stern 2001: 525).
Bowls: Decorated with a floral pattern	Khilda 2, Udayna	Persian (Routledge 1997: 36; Stern 2001: 525).
Strainers	Meqabelein, Udayna	Sixth and fifth centuries (Yassine 1984: 79). Hadidi dates these to the 5th century (Hadidi 1987: 101). Cf. Routledge (1997: 36) and Stern (2001: 526).
Ladle	Udayna	Fifth century (Hadidi 1987: 101; cf. Routledge 1997: 36; Stern 2001: 526).
Piriform Bottle	Udayna	(Hadidi 1987: 101) dates these to the fifth century. Cf. Routledge (1997: 36)
Mirror	Meqabelein, Udayna, Amman Tomb E	Fifth century (Hadidi 1987: 101). Cf. Routledge (1997: 36) and Stern (2001: 527).[309]
Cosmetic Box	Udayna	Fifth century (Hadidi 1987: 101; cf. Routledge 1997: 36).
Caryatid Censer	Udayna	Fifth century based on clothing style of figure (Khalil 1986: 109; cf. Routledge 1997: 36).

[309] Routledge 1997: 35, lists a mirror handle in the tomb at Jabal Jofeh, however the publication of the tomb (Harding 1945) does not list such an item.

APPENDIX F—SURVEY SITES WITH WINEPRESSES[310]

Site Number	Remains	Pottery Readings
ASGA 53-39.8	Tower, tombs, press, basins	Preh, I2, PR[sic!][311]
ASGA 59-33.3	Tombs, cisterns, press, cave	I2
HS 1	On a natural hill; 27 tombs, 2 grape/olive presses, 4 cisterns, several caves, nearby tombs and a reservoir	poss I1, I2, I2/P, ER, LR, Byz dom, poss Um, AM, poss mod
HS 3	On ridge; 6 cisterns, winepress, poss barrel vaulted cistern, robbed-out sarcophagus	few I2/P, few ER, Byz dom, few AM
HS 10	On large hill; caves, winepresses, dolmens	EB, I bods, I2/P, ER, LR, Byz, Um, AM, 1 Otto pipe, poss Mod
HS 29	On a hill; architecture, arches, vaulted rooves,?? cave, cistern, winepress	UD, I1, I2, I2/P, Hel, ER, R, poss LR, Byz, AM, Otto, Mod
HS 137	On low hill surrounded by farmland; architectural fragments, 2 wine presses, a small cistern or storage cave. Fohrer also reported a rectangular building, a circular winepress, a cistern	prob I1, I bods, ER, EByz dom
HS 139	Ruined buildings standing to about 2 m, plastered walls painted on inside, cisterns, caves, a large tank with steps leading into it, winepress	1 EB4B, I2/P, Hel, Byz, Um
HS 147	On high hill; tower 14 x 14 m at least 5 courses high, interior rooms roofed with stone slabs, poss perimeter wall of about 90 x 75 m, small winepress, cistern	I1A–B, I2/P, ER, few Byz
MPP 60	Cisterns, caves, a rectilinear structure, a winepress, poss ancient road, a stone watering trough	few I bods, ER, LR, Byz dom, 1 Mod bod
MPP 74	On a hill; rect. structure 5.30 x 4.10 m, caves/cisterns, cupmarks, field walls, terraces, small tower 3 x 5 m near a bedrock winepress	EB, I2, R, Byz dom
MPP 83	On the spur of a hill; a square structure (4.50 x 4.50 m), poss winepress, large collapsed cistern, cupmarks, a terrace wall	I bods, I2
MPP 85	On crest of a ridge; an agricultural complex consisting of a square structure (6 x 6 m), 2 winepresses, cupmarks, a cave/cistern, quarrying	I2/P dom, few Byz
MPP 101	Agricultural complex; wall lines, quarry with 10 cut stones, rect. structure with large foundation stones, a cistern, caves/tombs, a winepress, 7 cupmarks	I2, Byz
MPP 102	Agricultural complex; sq. structure (3 x 3 m), terraces, large winepress with vats and channels, small winepress, a cistern, 2 caves/tombs, caves, cupmarks, poss field walls, and a second rect.	few I bods, Byz, Mod

[310] Abbreviations: Preh = prehistoric; EB = Early Bronze; I = Iron Age; I1 = Iron Age I; I2 = Iron Age II; I2/P = Iron Age II/Persian; Hel = Hellenistic; R = Roman; ER = Early Roman; LR = Late Roman; Byz = Byzantine; EByz = Early Byzantine; Um = Umayyad; AM = Ayyubid/Mamluk; Otto = Ottoman; Mod = Modern; UD = undefined; bods = body sherds, which are less reliably datable; dom = dominant.

[311] Probably either Early Roman or Late Roman.

Site Number	Remains	Pottery Readings
	structure	
MPP 120	On slopes of a hill; poss a farmstead, 3 winepresses, walls, terrace walls, quarrying, a cistern	poss EB, I bods, R, Um, AM
MPP 125	High on a W. slope; wall frags, 2 cisterns, 2 winepresses, quarrying	I2/P, R, Byz, Mod

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