

THE GADARA-REGION-PROJECT: PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE SONDAGE ON TALL ZAR'A (2001-2002) AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF LATE BRONZE AGE GADARA

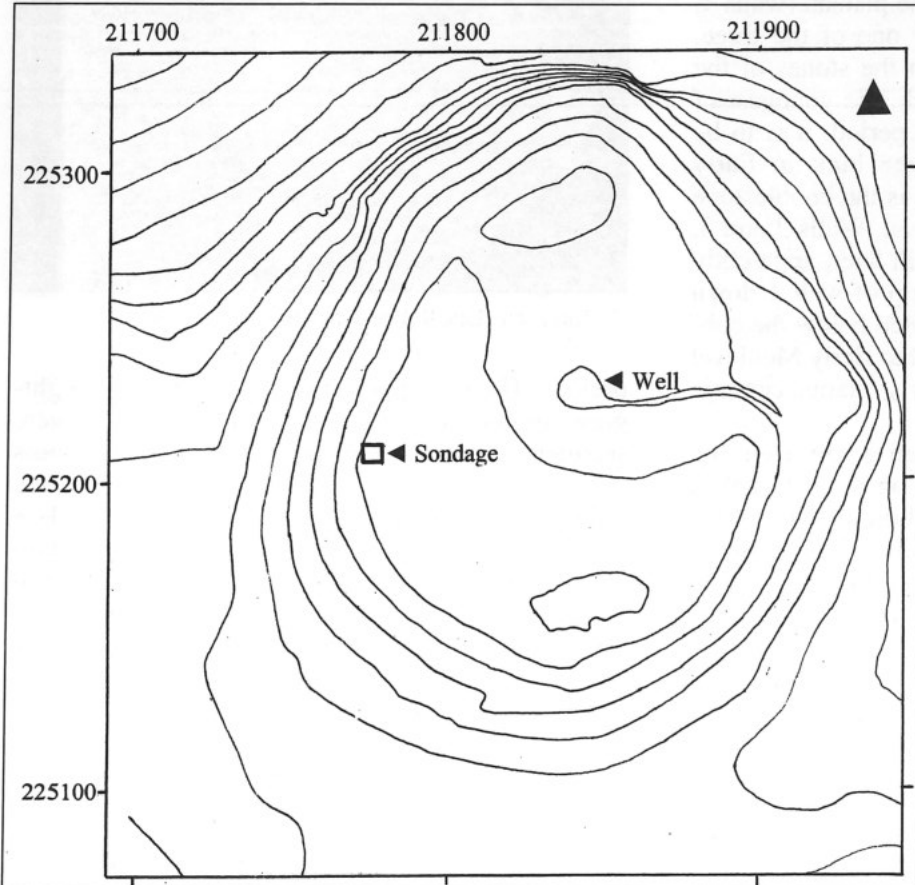
Jan Dijkstra, Meindert Dijkstra and Karel J.H. Vriezen

I- The Sondage (2001-2002)

The "Gadara-Region-Project" commenced with a survey of Tall Zar'a (map ref. 21185/22520) in the Wādī al-'Arab by the team of the Institute of Biblical Archaeology, University of Wuppertal (Germany) in September-October 2001 (Vieweger 2002: 157-177). After that, excavations on the site started with a sondage carried out by the team of the Theological Faculty, University of Utrecht (Netherlands), from 21 October to 1 November

2001 (field 1) and from 19 to 31 October 2002 (fields 1 and 2).¹

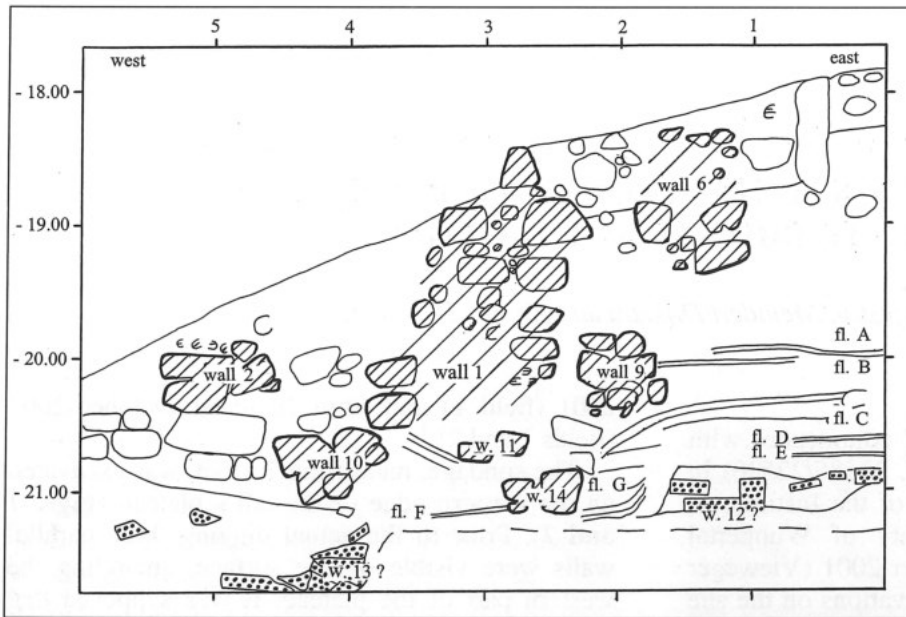
The sondage, measuring 7 x 6m, was excavated on the western edge of the tall's plateau (Figs. 1 and 2). Prior to the actual digging three parallel walls were visible on the surface, encircling the western part of the plateau. It was supposed that they might be the remains of an ancient defence line and therefore the sondage was laid out as to make a cross section of these walls. Then, it soon



1. Plan of Tall Zar'a with location of the sondage 2001-2002.

1. Participants in the team were in 2001: Erik Terwan and Karel J.H. Vriezen; in 2002: Jan Dijkstra, Meindert Dijkstra, Evert van Rooijen, Peter Vreeken, Karel J.H. Vriezen and Max G.L. van de Wiel. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the Director General of Antiquities, Dr. Fawwaz al-

Khaysheh, and the representatives Amjad Bataineh and Ibrahim Zubi, as well as the team of the German Protestant Institute for the Archaeology of the Holy Land in 'Ammān, for their generous aid, and Dr. Gerrit van der Kooij, who advised us in the dating of the excavated pottery.

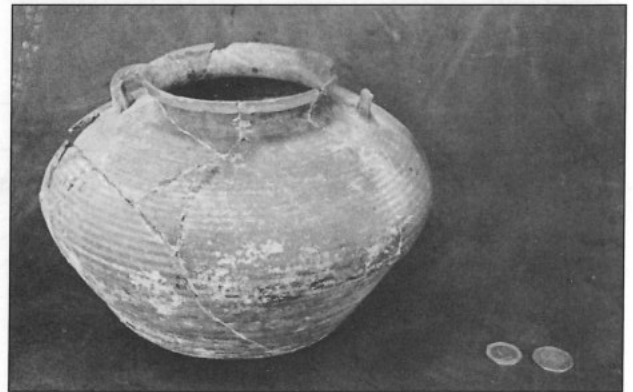


2. Tall Zar'a: northern section of the sondage 2001-2002.

appeared that these walls had not been part of an ancient settlement, but that they had been built as terrace walls along the edge of the plateau (walls 1, 2 and 3). Wall 1 is the earliest one of the three. From the ceramic finds between the stones of the wall and in the foundation trench, the youngest of which date to the Early Islamic period, it is to be concluded that the wall has been built in Early Medieval times or later, as well as the cobblestone floor inside the wall on the plateau. Walls 2 and 3, situated more to the West are built later, apparently when the soil moved over the top of wall 1 down hill. An older wall (wall 6), situated below the cobblestone floor, may also be dated to Early Medieval times or later, because of the Early Islamic ceramic finds connected to it.

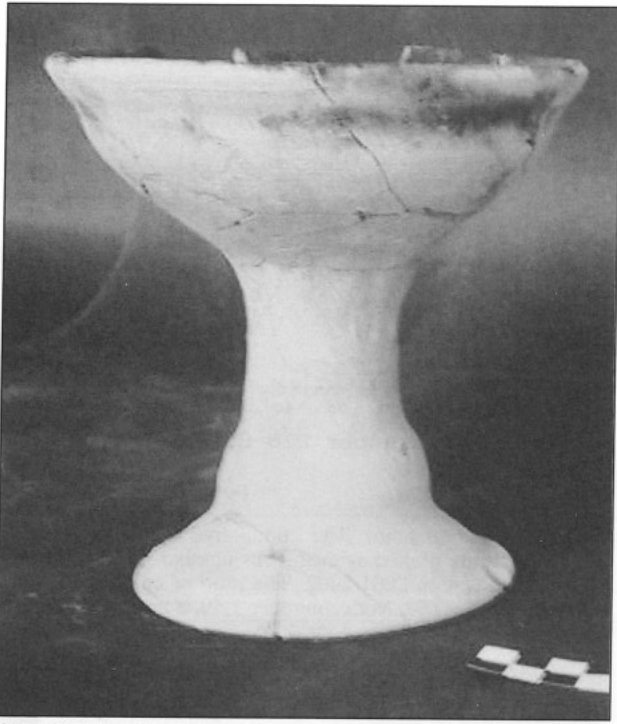
The foundation trench for wall 2 had been dug into a yellowish sandy deposit on a hard packed loamy floor, which was bounded on the North by a wall. On this floor the remains of two bread ovens were found (*tannūr*; Ø 76cm and 48cm), each set on a small cobblestone floor. The wall of one of these ovens still stood up to height of 0.36 m and inside were the remains of a Late Roman/Early Byzantine cooking pot (Fig. 3), apparently once placed into the hot ashes in the oven after the baking of bread had been completed.

The foundation trench for wall 1 had been dug through a 1.50m thick deposit with Roman-Early Islamic finds down into the layers of the Iron Age. The Iron Age stratum is ca. 1.30m thick and consists of six successive floors (fl. A-F). These floors could be studied properly in the NE-quarter of the sondage, as in the remaining part of the sondage they were largely destroyed by digging in various



3. Tall Zar'a: Late Roman/Early Byzantine cooking pot.

periods. The two upper floors (A and B) were light-grey coloured and ca. 0.04m thick and they were separated by a 0.02-0.08 thick deposit. These floors were bounded on the south and the west by a ca. 0.56m wide wall of boulders and cobbles (walls 8 and 9). By the finds on these floors and in the collapse of the walls, they may be dated to the IA IIa-b periods (Fig. 4). Circa. 0.40m below a floor (fl. C) was found in which there were two ash pits (Ø 0.55 and 0.75m) and in one of them was the remains of a Late Bronze/Early Iron Age cooking pot (Fig. 5). On this floor there was a ca. 0.04-0.12m thick deposit, on which was a 0.04-0.06m thick layer of ash. Circa. 0.15m below floor C, a light-grey coloured 0.02m thick floor with ash pits was found (fl. D), that was bounded on the south and west by wall 11 (w. 11); to its west a 0.5m wide annex is located with floor D1 and wall 10. Circa. 0.1m beneath, another light-grey coloured, ca. 0.02m thick floor (floor E; Fig. 6) was excavated, on which was found a large millstone and five ash



4. Tall Zar'a: Iron Age II chalice.



5. Tall Zar'a: Late Bronze/Early Iron Age cooking pot.



6. Tall Zar'a: sondage 2001-2002, Early Iron Age house, floor E.

pits. In the centre of the northern side of the field are the remains of wall 14 (w. 14); the foundation trench on its eastern side is covered with floor G; on its western side the light-grey coloured, ca.

0.02m thick floor (fl. F) is on a lower level. The floors C, D, D1, E, F and G and walls 10, 11 and 14 may be dated to Iron Age I by their finds.

Floor F, and probably also floor E, sealed a large pit, that extended in the major area of the field. In this pit, besides ceramic finds of Iron Age I, many sherds dating to the Late Bronze Age I-II and some dating to the Middle Bronze Age IIc were found. This pit, that in some places is even more than one meter deep under the level of floor F, has been dug in a thick deposit of yellowish loamy soil and cut through a 0.90m wide, north-south mudbrick wall 13 (w. 13). In the south section of the sondage, this wall may be seen standing 0.70m high on a foundation of two layers of boulders and cobbles (**Fig. 7**), and the loamy soil is deposited over the remains of this wall. In the sondage's north section a debris of mudbricks can be seen, that may have belonged to wall 13. Also in the N-E area of the sondage a debris of mudbricks was excavated, that may have come from a wall (wall 12?). It is reasonable to suppose that the thick deposit of loamy soil in which the mudbricks and wall 13 are found, does date to the Late Bronze Age, because in the lower part of this deposit reached by the sondage only ceramics from the



7. Tall Zar'a: southern section of the sondage 2001-2002, mudbrick wall (wall 13).

Middle Bronze Age IIc and Late Bronze Age I-II are found.

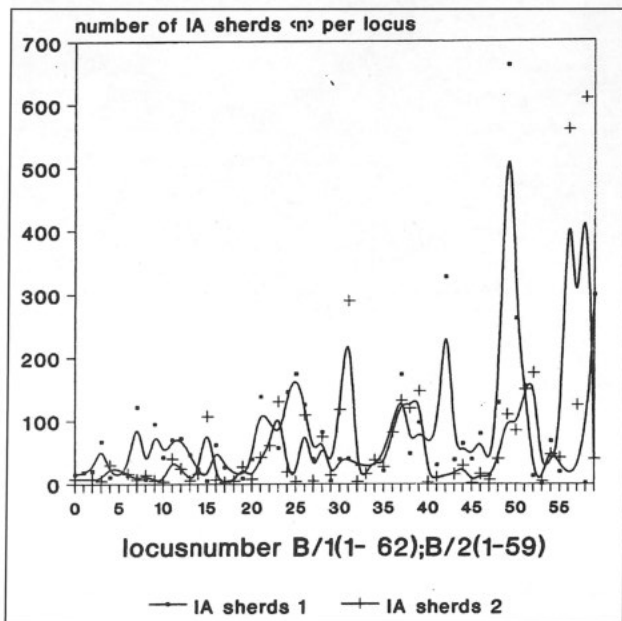
Preliminary Conclusion

It is supposed that this part of the tall has become deserted in the course of Iron Age II. There are no traces of any destruction. Perhaps there may be a connection to the deportation of the population by Tiglath-Pileser after 732BC as it seems to be the case elsewhere in southern Syria. Probably after this event, there were no new settlers in the following centuries, as in the sondage there were no ceramics found from Iron Age IIc or the so-called Assyrian period.
(Karel Vriezen)

II- Sherds Do Have Their Number

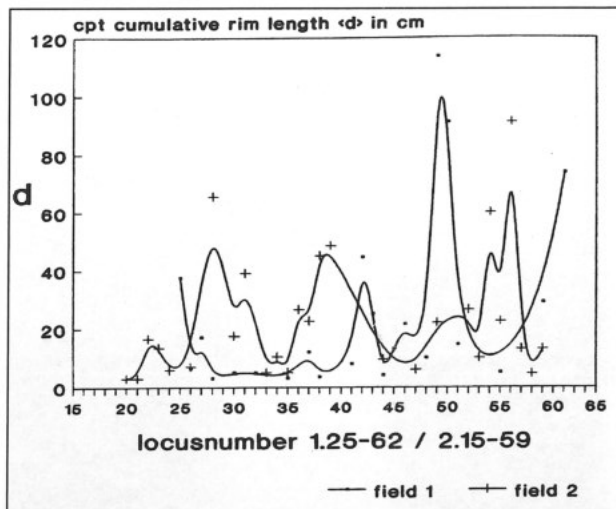
Introduction

This section of the report is an archaeometric study on site related cookingpot types based on cooking pot sherds from the remains of an Early Iron Age house in Tall Zar'a (TZ). Statistical analysis from sherds is a standard procedure in archaeology. Generally in these analyses the total yield of potsherds per field and per locus is studied. The rich find of cooking pot sherds in TZ was quite surprising (see **Figs. 8 and 9**). Cooking pot sherds,



8. Frequency diagram of Iron Age (IA) sherds field 1 and field 2/ Tall Zar'a (TZ). Number of total IA sherds plotted per locus.

2. See Franken and Kalsbeek, 1969: 119-126. See also Dornemann, 1983: 145-161, with Sequences I and II. Franken argued in his report of Dayr 'Allā, that a careful study of morphological and mineral composition of sherds can offer a better insight in the typology of current ceramic Iron Age repertoires locally, but also detect influences and differ-



9. Cooking pot diagram. The cumulative length of the rim fragments are plotted against locus number. Data from Tall Zar'a excavation 2001/2002. The ratio of cpt sherds vs IA sherds is 15- 20%. Notice number 1.49, a large pit, exceeds with 40 %.

as compared to other IA sherds, may be easily recognised by form, hardness, temper and characteristics of firing. The intriguing question is, whether the disappearance of one or more cooking pots may be defined by some form of relationship? The process of the disappearance of ceramic fragments from an archaeological site can be described by a mathematical model. However, finding the right parameters determining the process is difficult.

It may be clear, that a thorough measurement of sherd features² is useful, i.e. height and length of the rim sherds; their diameter from sherd curvature; the cumulative length of the rim as an indirect size of the circumference, and the estimated surface area of all body sherds excavated per locus. A theoretical approximation of the surface area of the average cooking pot by calculating the surface area of an open spherical body³ [= ca 0,22m²] is also helpful to estimate the original surface area of a series of cooking pots.

The data of TZ were matched afterwards with the results of H.J. Franken from Dayr 'Allā (DA) and with the studies of R.H. Dornemann. The cooking pot sherds under discussion date from the end of Late Bronze until and including the Early Iron Age (13th-10th century BC).

In Search of the Mathematics Behind the Ceramics By means of a graphical program⁴ correlations

ences outside the excavated region.

3. The surface area is calculated with the formula of an open spherical segment: $O = \pi * (h^2_{cpt} + \rho^2_{cpt})$; $h_{cpt} = 2\rho / 1,75$
4. With the help of computer software Harvard Graphics 2.3, Copyright 1990, Software Publishing Company USA.

have been made between the various cooking pot parameters. To my surprise a correlation was disclosed between the total surface area of the excavated cooking pot fragments and the number of non-matching cooking pot rim sherds per locus. The scattergram showed a non-linear pattern which could be approached at best by an exponential curve (Fig. 10). This curve is to be considered as representing the mean cooking pot form/type characteristics for Tall Zar'a and is described by the formula:

$$(1) a-x = ((h_r * 2\pi\rho) / 4) * e^{c*0,22*(n)}$$

in which $\langle a-x \rangle$ indicates the recovered surface area of rim and body sherds ($\langle a \rangle$ the original surface area of all the pots and $\langle x \rangle$ what has disappeared); $\langle (h_r * 2\pi\rho) / 4 \rangle$ is a field constant with the dimension cm^2 [$\langle h_r \rangle$ is the rim height in cm and $\langle 2\pi\rho \rangle$ is the rim circumference in cm]; $\langle c*0,22 \rangle$ is the assumed body surface of a mean cooking pot in m^2 ; the value $\langle c \rangle$ depends of the spread of rim diameters of cooking pots known in archaeological studies (\emptyset 18-50cm) and is varying between 0,7-1,4 / m^2 (for this study 1,0 / m^2), and $\langle n \rangle$ is the number of non-matching rim fragments. Notice that both field constants express standard cooking pot properties: the rim⁵ — and body — surface area of an average sized cooking pot. When $\langle c * 0,22 \rangle$ is multiplied with $\langle n \rangle$ an estimate can be made of the total surface area of an

initial number of cooking pots for a specific locus at $\langle t_0 \rangle$.

The depicted graph stands for a population of cooking pots, ever in use at the site on $\langle t_0 \rangle$. Of course there will be some difference in form and size of cooking pots (standard deviation), but the averaged curve of the graph shows an exponential path and definitely not a straight line. The empirical formula can be connected with the theoretical formula of fractional disappearance $\langle k \rangle$ which defined the transfer in units of time $\langle t \rangle$ of substances $\langle a \rangle$ from one compartment to another by an accidental loss or a continued process of decay:

$$(2) x = a (1 - e^{-k*t}) \text{ or } a-x = a * e^{-k*t}$$

in which $\langle k \rangle$ is the disappearance constant and $\langle t \rangle$ elapsed time in years. The factor $\langle a-x \rangle$ and $\langle a \rangle$ have been mentioned before.

When formula (1) and (2) are substituted the value of $\langle k \rangle$ can be calculated:

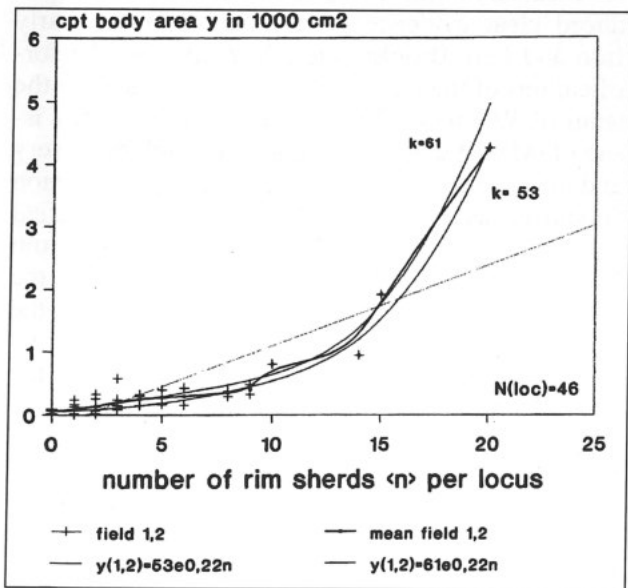
$$(3) k = [(\ln n - c*0,22*n) - \ln (h_r * \rho) / 2(h^2 + \rho^2)] / t$$

As far as Tall Zar'a is concerned the values $\langle h_r \rangle$ and $\langle \rho \rangle$ are ca. 2cm and 17cm; the average height $\langle h \rangle$ of the pot is ca. 20cm and $\langle t \rangle$ is 3100 ± 150 years (= 1250-950BC), based on dating and typology of the Iron Age sherds of TZ. The value of $\langle k \rangle$ only depends of $\langle n \rangle$ and is varying from $0,78 - 1,42 E-3 / y$ with a mean value of $1,1 \pm 0,3 E-3 / y$. There is some fluctuation with a factor 2 or less, which is not fully understood. Obviously a higher number of rim fragments $\langle n \rangle$ means lower values of the disappearance constant! Evidently the rate of dissipation slows down when a greater number of cooking pots have to be considered on the site (locus). The occurrence of a straight line in the scattergram should have resulted in a more constant value of $\langle k \rangle$ of roughly: $1,0 E-3 / y$. By modifying formula (2) a Cooking Pot Recovery Index (CPRI) can be calculated:

$$(4) CPRI = 100 * (a-x) / a = 100 * e^{-k*t} = e^{4,6 - k*t} (\%)$$

The mean recovered mass of cooking pots is ca. 5% (varying between 1,6 and 9% depending on the amount of non-matching rim fragments).

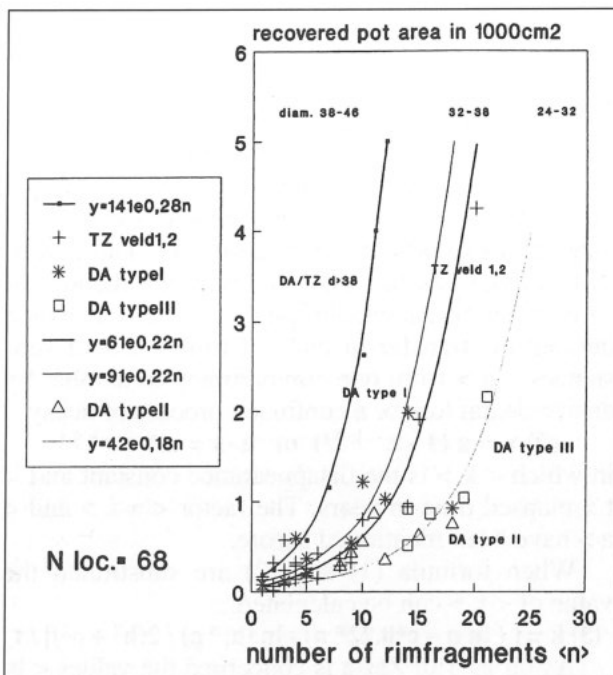
When drawing the empirical formula (1) for different values of the cooking pot diameter (34 ± 16cm), of the mean cooking pot surface area (0,22 ± 0,6m²), of the height of the rim (1-4cm) and of the number not matching rim fragments per locus, a range of simulation graphs arise (Fig. 11) called a matrix. The curves of this matrix feature a decline of diameter and surface area of the cooking pots from the left to the right. They have also a steeper slope on the left. This matrix can be used as a reference in order to compare the cooking pot sherds/



10. Relation of recovered cooking pot wall areas to the number of non matching rim sherds. The best fit of the observed data is an exponential curve: $y = a-x = [(h_r * 2\pi\rho) / 4] e^{c*0,22*n}$. The values of the field constant $\langle k_{1,2} \rangle$ [$(h_r * 2\pi\rho) / 4$] are 53-61 cm^2 respectively. For comparison a linear trend is included.

5. With emphasis on the rim. In this context the bottom of the cooking pot is not taken into account, often the weakest

link in the life of the pot.



11. Comparison of the Tall Zar'a data with the Dayr 'Allā data (Franken 1969). Cooking pot surface areas are related to locus numbers of both sites. The calculated curves form a matrix of simulation curves based on different values of cpt. diameter, rim height and mean calculated areas of cooking pot sizes. Data of DA type I/II are in close agreement with TZ field 1 and 2.

surface areas of different sites with each other by projecting the data into the simulation matrix. This exercise has been executed by comparison of cooking pot finds from the Tall Zar'a sondage (field 1, 2) with those of the Dayr 'Allā excavations of 1960-1967⁶. As for Tall Zar'a and Dayr 'Allā three cooking pot types can be identified. Franken mentioned three types: DA type I= Iron Age I a-b, DA type II= Iron Age Ib and DA type III= Iron Age Ib. The curve of the cooking pot finds of TZ field 1,2 coincides almost with that of DA type I/ type II (Dayr 'Allā: phase A-L), from which it may be obvious: TZ field 1,2 cooking pots stands for Iron Age I / I a-b⁷. The curvatures of DA type II (small)/ DA type III coincides with the curve belonging to small cooking pots surface areas (0,18 cm²). Finally, a small number of data of large cooking pots is visible at the left of graph 4 for both TZ and DA (> 0,28m² with Ø 46cm), this is probably the remains of Late Bronze II cooking pots.

Conclusions

Quantities of cooking pot sherds sometimes contain more information than is obvious at first

sight. Counting and measuring is a typical archaeometric approach, which sometimes offers interesting insights into the history and coherence of sherds. As Dornemann argued in his survey (Dornemann 1983: 145-161 with Sequences I and II), there is a substantial need of certain uniformity in classifying different ceramic Transjordanian repertoires. This mathematical use of data may be a start to promote such uniform classification. Working out mathematical models for other ceramic forms like bowls, juglets and storage jars can be a further step in defining the proportions of the various ceramic types within ceramic repertoires. This would eventually refine the chronological devices suggested by H.J. Franken (Franken and Steiner 1990: 67-75). By comparing discoveries from other archaeological sites like this, specific mathematical methods can be controlled and improved. Then an adequate instrument may be developed to contribute to preliminary outcome about the nature and period of discovered cooking pot repertoires. (Jan Dijkstra)

III- Tall Zar'a = Gadara in the Context of the Late Bronze Age.

Canaan as an Egyptian Province During the New Kingdom

The survey in the Wādī al-'Arab of the site of Tall Zar'a and its environment and the first seasons of excavation (2001-2004) at the tall itself produced clear evidence of occupation in the Early Iron and Late Bronze Ages. In particular, the fortifications of the Late Bronze Age excavated by the team of Wuppertal University (see also in this issue of ADAJ) deserve attention. Though discovery and investigations just have started, the question should be asked whether this significant fortified city from the second half of the 2nd millennium BC, situated along a route which leads from the Jordan Valley through the Wādī al-'Arab to the Transjordanian plateau, plays a role in the historical sources of the period. The road through the Wādī al-'Arab provided for an easy approach to southern Syria passing the fords in the Yarmūk estuary at Tall ash-Shihāb or Dar'ā.

During the larger part of the Late Bronze Period the southern areas of the Levant — usually known as Canaan and in Egyptian sources subsumed under names such as Lower-Rethenu or Khuru — were more or less a colony if not a province of the New Kingdom. Biblical tradition preserves a memory of this in grouping Canaan together with

6. Data taken from Franken and Kalsbeek 1969: 119-126.

7. This statement is based on the DA dating as well as the pre-

liminary results of the TZ dating.

Egypt, Nubia and Punt (Gen.10:7). In a series of campaigns which took them repeatedly to Qadesh at the Orontes and farther, the pharaohs Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II secured the area south of the line between Tyre and Damascus (Upe) and, with varying fortunes, this situation of occupation was maintained until and including Ramesses III of the 20th Dynasty and perhaps even after him.

The extensive topographical lists of Tuthmosis III and, presumably also those of Amenophis II show in slightly different versions a system of itineraries and military bases, which lie concentrated in the coastal area of northern Palestine, around the Lake Kinneret and Southern Syria between the Yarmūk estuary and Damascus (Upe). Though not every detail of their systematics is transparent, it may be observed that it was intended to be in control of the approaches to the borderlands of northern Canaan and southern Syria. There we find the majority of bases securing Egyptian rule in the area of the Levant.

It is far from certain whether Tuthmosis III or one of his successors, despite the propaganda of their war inscriptions, adorned or not with topographical lists featuring subdued countries and conquered cities, ever controlled for a longer period Upper-Rethenu or Northern Syria. It is evident that they showed their presence there at irregular intervals and even collected tribute from the princes of Amurru, Ugarit and other Syrian kingdoms. It does not infer however, that they set up an administration supported by military bases and fortresses as they did in Northern Sinai and Lower-Rethenu/ Canaan. The campaigns of Horemheb, which took him from Byblos to Kargemish in order to quell the political revolts in the Levant in the aftermath of the Amarna Period, achieved lasting success in Syria either⁸.

Gadara During the 19th Dynasty

Sethi I - as co-regent of his aged father Ramesses I, the actual successor of Horemheb — continued these political and military ambitions in his own first year as sole ruler. We find depicted on the eastern side of the North Wall of the Great Hall or Hypostyle in the Temple of Amun at Karnak a splendid summary of this campaign. The attack on and con-

quest of the city of Yanu'am illustrated here, corresponds with the campaign as described and commemorated on the larger stela of Year 1 discovered at the site of ancient Beth-Shean (Tall al-Ḥuṣn):

On this day one came to speak to His Majesty: "The wretched foe who is in the town of Hammat has gathered many people around him in order to seize the town of Beth-Shean. He made a pact with them of Pahil (Pella) and does not allow the prince of Rehob to go outside." Thereupon His Majesty sent from his first army the division of 'Amun, the Mighty Archer' to the town of Hammat, from his first army the division of 'Re, Plentiful of Courage' to the town of Beth-Shean and from his first army the division of 'Seth, the Strong Archer' to the town of Yanu'am. Not a day had passed or they were overthrown by the glory of His Majesty...

One has the impression that Sethi I used this local conflict as a pretext to reinstate the military base of Beth-Shean and to restore order in surrounding areas. He interfered apparently in a local war between the rulers of Hammat and Pahil (Pella) on the one hand and those of Beth-Shean and Rehob (*Tel Rehov*) on the other, presumably a conflict about the control of the fords in the Jordan River, more in particular the road, which runs through the Valley of Beth-Shean, and after crossing the Jordan River, leads to the plateau of Transjordan and southern Syria.

Sethi I did not provide for half measures. Though the inscriptions are rhetorical and ostentatious, it may be assumed that they also offer some basic insights in his sound military strategy. After securing the coastal approach, the first army apparently composed of three divisions, divided itself in three task forces, one of which is left as a garrison at Beth-Shean⁹ whereas the other two secured the roads and borders to the north on both sides of the Lake of Kinneret and the River Jordan. Though Yanu'am is often mentioned in the inscriptions and especially in topographical lists of the New Kingdom, the site of this town has as yet not been identified conclusively. Because of associations with known cities in southern Syria and Lebanon, a localization in the northern outskirts of the Jordan Valley or elsewhere in southern Lebanon appears to be the best option (Fig. 13)¹⁰.

8. His campaign was probably related to the revolts in this area against the Hittite rule ca. 1315 BC, see the bowl of Sen-nefer, Conrad 1985: 540-541; Redford 1992: 177.

9. The renovation of Beth-Shean in Level VI during which the alleged temple of Sethi I was modified and received a closed shrine among other Egyptian facets, was probably related to this historical events. The temple was now dedicated to Re-Haracht. The ca. 44cm high limestone Horus bird could refer to this god venerated in the restored naos,

see W. Zwickel 1994: 186-191.

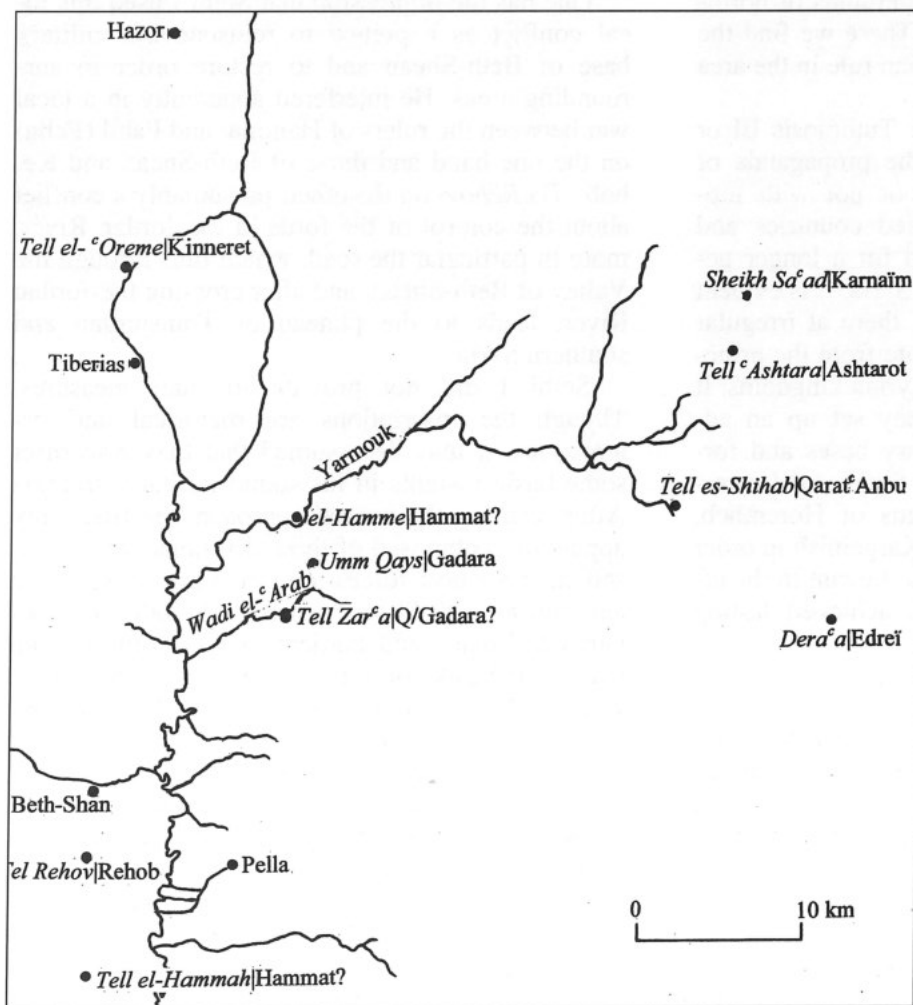
10. See among others Albright, AASOR 6 (1925-26): 18-23; Redford 1992: 181, but also the doubts expressed by Ahituv 1984: 199-200 no. 620 *pace* the identification with tall an-na'am about 20km north of Beth-Shean (Noth 1971: 27) or with nearby Tall al-'Ubaydiyya (Aharoni *et al.* 1979: 443). Our map acknowledges the different possibilities of locating Yanu'am in the southern Lebanon.

Tuthmosis III took perhaps the same road on his way north, setting up the stela, of which a fragment was discovered in Kinneret 'Tall al-'Oreme' (Albright and Rowe 1928: 286-287, Plate XXIX: 2).

Because according to the larger Beth-Shean stela of Sethi I, the immediate threat came from the other side of the Jordan, was a matter of course that one of the divisions — actually the Amun-division — was sent against Hammat and Pahil. A direct though silent witness that Sethi pacified cities in the Yarmūk estuary, is the stela found at Tall ash-Shihāb (Porter and Moss 1927: VII, 383; Kitchen 1969: I,17). Unfortunately only the upper part survived on which Sethi I is shown in front of Amun-Re, Lord of Heaven, Lord of the Two Lands and the goddess Muth. The scene resembles strongly the similar scene of Sethi I before Re-Harachte on

the larger Beth-Shean stela. Its dedication to Amun-Re' is no coincidence, if one realizes that the larger Beth-Shean stela is devoted to Re-Harachte. It is obvious that the different stelae relate to the different military operations of the divisions in Sethi Ist's army. The action of the Amun-division in the Yarmūk area between Pahil/Fa'il (Pella) and Tall ash-Shihāb brings us perhaps also close to Tall Zar'a. Even more if we may identify this Hammat with the site of al-Hammah in the lower Yarmūk Valley as others have done before us, a town just north of Umm Qays/Gadara, the Hammath-Gader from later Jewish sources and the Ammatha of Byzantine and Arab tradition¹¹.

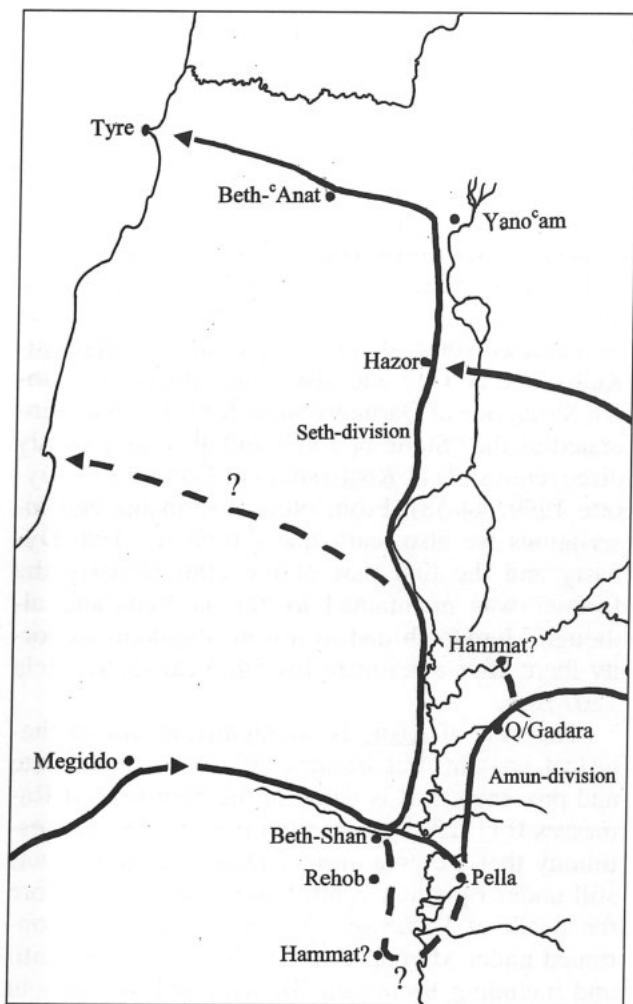
In Search of Tall Zar'a in the Egyptian Topography (Figs. 12 and 13)



12. Map: toponyms and identifications.

11. See, for instance A. Rowe 1930: 25-26, fig 4. Unfortunately, the archaeological evidence as far as known is not immediately in favour of such an identification. Glueck (1932) and Albright (1929) noted remains of an Early/Middle Bronze inhabitation, supported by later excavations of the synagogue and the Roman-Byzantine hot bath installations (Sukenik 1932; Hirshfeld and Solar 1979-1986),

but no Late Bronze occupation of the site has been attested so far. A majority of scholars identifies this pharaonic Hammat with Tall al-Hammah, 16km south of Beth-Shean (Albright 1925-26; Zori 1977; Gophna and Porath, Survey 1967-68; Cahill and Tarler 1984; Ahituv 1984: 113, although he identifies Thutmosis III hamatu (I:16a,c I:16b, V:3) with Hammath-Gader on the Yarmūk River.



13. Map: military campaign in the first year of Sethi I.

The starting point for our quest to find a suitable candidate for Tall Zar'a was the friezes with scenes which Sethi I had drawn and sculptured on the North Wall of the Great Hypostyle in the Temple of Karnak. In these vividly illustrated inscriptions about his first campaign, we find depicted next to Yanu'am a partly destroyed town *qa-dú-rù*¹², more precisely called the city *qa-dú-rù m p3 t3 n ha-an-má* 'Qaduru in the land of Hanma'. If in the lower scenes on the wall the battle with the Shasu-bedouins in Sinai and then the as-

sault on Pi-Canaan (= Gaza) along the Mediterranean coast has been depicted, it seems obvious to conclude that also the higher frieze of scenes was similarly South — North orientated, that is: the town between the cedar woods and Yanucam lies further to the North or East. Helck identified the town with the predecessor of Umm Qays/Gadara (Helck 1962: 202-203), but if our observation is correct, the site should be located more to the north in a wooded area like Yanu'am. Beyond the submissive chiefs of the Lebanon, some are cutting trees for the pharaoh, perhaps cedars for the bark of Amun¹³. Perhaps, the same city is also mentioned in the lists of Ramesses II in the Luxor Temple, among a series of toponyms, of which Tahsi (biblical Tahash, Amarna Tahši) is well known¹⁴. If so, this implies also a locality for Yanu'am in the Lebanon area.

In all probability however, there is also a differently spelled toponym *qa/gá-da-ra* attested in the lists of Sethi I on the same North Wall; in any case, in one of the two versions found on either side of the entrance¹⁵. Analysis of these lists shows that they are composed of several groups of toponyms. The core of the lists consists of the four towns which Sethi I mentioned in his first Beth-Shean stela (see quotation above). In the minor lists in the Abydos Temple they occur even on top of the lists! A separate group is the list of coastal cities, which runs from Accre to Tyre and Usu = inner Tyre. This is in consonance with the strategy of Sethi I, who after the reconquest of Yanucam and Qaduru/Qadruru, apparently by means of the Seth-division approaching from the inland of Lebanon, secured the coastal area from Accre to Tyre. In memory of these martial exploits he also left a stela at Tyre¹⁶. In the light of this grouping, it seems a matter of course to assume that the lists continue with towns in the inlands of southern Syria where the Amun-division was sent. About Beth-Anat scholarly opinions differ. The majority of scholars locate it in northern Canaan/southern Lebanon (later the highlands of Galilee), with Yanu'am and Tyre forming a kind of northern borderline established after the

12. My system of transcription of Egyptian group writing follows with some slight modifications that of Hoch 1994: 506-512.

13. ANET 3, 254c; Kitchen 1969- I, 13, 8-9.

14. Ahituv 1984: 187; see for this toponym Kitchen 1969- II, 177, 23-27 and 178, 1-5 if it be accepted that the rendering *qa-ad-rú-rù** is correct. In this case, it is perhaps variant of the same name. The centre of the cartouche however, is damaged and a rendering *qa-dú-rù* also plausible. If the variant *qadruru** for *qaduru** exists one could think of a derivate from קדר 'to be black'; also a relation with קטר cannot be excluded, compare the Semitic loan *qa-da-rù-tá* 'incense' (Sivan-Kochavi 1992: 85; Hoch 1994, 305 No.

440). Semitic toponyms with קטר are possible, see Qitron=Qata(r)t in Zebulon (Judges 1:30, Joshua 19:15). Martin Noth suggested identification with Kafr Qatra (Noth 1971: 31-32; Helck 1962: 203).

15. The rendering is accepted by Simons 1937, 140 (in the form *q-d-[<w>-r]*); Helck 1962: 202-203 (as *ga-da-ra*); Kitchen 1969- I, 29-32. Because in both lists the name is damaged, *qa-dú-ra* in stead of *qa-da-ra* cannot be excluded.

16. Unfortunately, an only partially preserved, mainly rhetorical stela, see Chéhab 1969: 32, Pl VIII 3; Kitchen 1969- I, 117.

first campaign.

The other toponyms, as far as related to Canaan and the Levant, were presumably on the other side of Lake Kinneret closing the provisional border at Hazor from the East. Among the toponyms on the eastside of Lake Kinneret, *Qarat ʿanbu** has been identified with *Tall ash-Shihāb* in the Yarmūk Valley. This equation of *Qarat ʿanbu** and *ʿēnu ʿa-nabi** (the *Heni Anabi* of the Amarna letter EA 256: 26) as the site, where Sethi I or more likely his Amun-division set up the stela for Amun-Re, has been broadly accepted, though not conclusively proven. Perhaps, this town was the farthest point of this punitive expedition and from there made the Amun-division the pincer movement into the direction of Hazor. This might explain why a city such as Astartu stayed out of sight during this first campaign. It is not simply begging the question as to whether the Late Bronze pharaonic Qa/Gádara in the region of the Yarmūk in one way or another is related to later Hellenistic-Roman-Byzantine Gadara/Umm Qays. This more recent city however, has no clear vestiges of occupation before the Hellenistic Period. The largest tell in the vicinity where occupational levels from the Early Bronze Age until and including the first part of Iron Period II are attested, is Tall Zar'a. The question whether Tall Zar'a could have been ancient Q/Gadara started to force itself on us, but a definitive answer should await more evidence. It implies for instance, that the inhabitants transferred the name of the old city to the new city of Gadara in Hellenistic times¹⁸.

Gadara in Later Egyptian Texts

Gadara is not mentioned anywhere else in the lists of Sethi I. Neither on the Qurneh-sphinx from the Mortuary Temple of Sethi I, nor in the Abydos Temple, but this is perhaps due to the fragmentary state of these lists. From the reign of Ramesses II we possess quite a number of topographical lists, but they are for the greater part fragmentary and in some cases Semitic names have been replaced by

new Nubian toponyms. For our investigation they offer little additional information. The first series of Sethi I: Pahil, Hammat, Beth-Shean and Yanu'am extended with the coastal cities and an occasional Transjordanian town (*Qarat ʿAnbu*) were taken over by Ramesses II. It is certain that Ramesses II was able to consolidate and even to expand the territories conquered by Sethi I before and after the Battle of Qadesh (1274 BC). Not only did he set up his own stelae at Beth-Shean, but he also erected some along the coastal road (*Nahr al-Kelb*), one at Tyre and also some others in southern Syria, one at Qarnaim/Shaykh Sa'ad (later venerated as the "Stone of Job") and also the recently discovered stela at *Kiswe* south of Damascus (Yoyotte 1999: 44-58). From other documents and inscriptions we also learn that during the 19th Dynasty and the first part of the 20th Dynasty the frontier was maintained as far as Yanu'am, although Merenptah had to restore Egyptian authority there after a revolt in his 5th Year (Israël-stela 1207 BC).

The stela of *Kiswe* is not significant for its rhetorical content, but because of its particular date and provenance. It is dated in the 56th year of Ramesses II (1223 BC). As such it is an eloquent testimony that the area around Damascus (Upe) was still under Egyptian control about ten years before the death of Ramesses II, a situation to be continued under Merenptah¹⁹ and his successors until and including Ramesses III, who had to admit in his 8th year (1176 BC) that the enemy took hold of former Amurru. He was forced to fall back to the military base at Beth-Shean which was renovated by him and became the seat of the Egyptian governor²⁰. But before this beginning of the end of Egyptian rule in Canaan, there is evidence that the Ramessides had a number of other advanced bases and fortresses in the area supporting Egyptian administration (e.g. Megiddo, Jaffa, Tyre, Yanu'am and even in Upe).

Finally, we mention in support of our identification of *Tall Zar'a* as Gadara, a relevant passage

17. Ahituv 1984: 127; Kitchen 1992: 26. The town is also attested under Ramesses II (List XXIII+XXIV no 41, pAnast I, 22:4).
18. It is well known that such transfers of names took place, in particular if the new city replaced the old one at a short distance (e.a. Beth-Shean), but *Tall Zar'a* is located in the valley and Gadara is ca. 5km to the north on the ridge between the *Wādī al-'Arab* and the Yarmūk Valley. An interesting example of such a wandering toponym over a larger distance is Late Bronze-Early Hellenistic Paphos on Cyprus. It became Palaipaphos after foundation of the new harbour town Nea Paphos, 15km to the west of ancient Paphos and nowadays known as Paphos instead of the ancient centre of the Paphian Kingdom. Another question

still to be answered is, how this name of Gadara(a) was kept alive during the occupational gap of four centuries from Iron II to Hellenistic times.

19. P. Anastasi III 1, 9-10; 7,10-11 mentions a certain Amenem-opet as royal overseer in the foreign lands from Sile to Upe. Further, there is a town called 'Town of Merenptah Hotep-Maat-Re in land of Aram' where an overseer of the stables, Pa-Mer-Khetem, son of Ani was staying (pAn III 5, 4ff), but who returned carrying letters of commander Pa-Re-em-heb (ANET 3, 258-9). It is suggestive to identify this town with the town called 'Rameses-Meri-Amun in Upe', which is mentioned in the diplomatic correspondence of Ramesses II with the Hittite Court.

from the 'Satirical Letter' written by Hori to Amenemopet, a literary document dating from the beginning of the 12th century BC²¹. The author embarks in pAnast I:21, 2 on another subject describing a kind of itinerary. He leads us along Byblos, Beirut, Sidon, Sarepta, passes the river Litani, mentions Usu, that is inner-Tyre, and to Tyre-harbour on the sea-shore. At Accre he turns inland. From what follows it is evident that he moves into the direction of the River Jordan and the other side of the Jordan. After mentioning the road branching off to Hazor, he continues his way to Hammat. This may be either the Hammat south of Beth-Shean or a Hammat on the other side of the Jordan. After Hammat there is the remarkable sequence *há-má-ta da-ga-ra (det) da-ga-ar-'i-ir (det)* (usually read as Hamat, Dagan and Dagan-el). I wonder whether the strange sequence Dagan and Dagan-el contains a dittography and I suggest therefore a slight correction interchanging the first two groups of *da-ga-ra* restoring the sequence *há-má-ta ga!-da!-ra*. This name is comparable to the well known topographical combination Hammath-Gader from the Talmud and Midrash in order to distinguish this Hammath from others. But even if we should read here two separate names, it is probable that Hammat on the Yarmūk is meant, followed by nearby Gadara and the still unknown town of Dagan-el, as the author calls it, the parade-ground of every *ma-hir* (kind of soldier), suggesting that we deal here with an important military approach.

Conclusion

In conclusion it may be observed that in spite of the fact that the author of the Satirical Letter mentioned a road branching off to Hazor, he continued to describe the road to Syria passing the River Jordan below the Lake Kinneret through the Valley of Beth-Shean and only from there turned northwards into Syria. It could imply that the author was familiar with a military road passing by Gadara (eventually Hammat Gadara) to the area north of the Yarmūk, which he describes in the next paragraph (22.2). Gadara, which appears on the map of the ancient Near East in the reign of Sethi I (ca 1293 BC), is known until the beginning of the Early Iron Period (pAnast I:21.2). In all probability, this town may be located at the site of Tall Zar'a as the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age predecessor of the more recent Gadara/Umm Qays

(Meindert Dijkstra)

Jan Dijkstra,
Meindert Dijkstra
Karel J.H. Vriezen
Faculteit Godgeleerdheid
Universiteit Utrecht
P.O.Box 80105
3508 TC Utrecht
The Netherlands

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20. See ANET 3: 262. If the title "Lord of the Jubilee" found on one of the limestone doorposts discovered at Beth-Shean applies to Ramesses III, it may be assumed that Egyptian rule of northern Canaan lasted even until the second part of the 12th century BC; see for the rather late col-

lapse of Egyptian rule and administration in Canaan, I Finkelstein 1995: 213-239.

21. Fischer-Elfert 1986; other translations J.A. Wilson, ANET 3: 475-479; Allen 2002: 3, 9-14; Wente 1990: 98-110.

2. Jahrtausend v. Chr. (Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 5). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
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