

# THERE IS NO MIDDLE BRONZE GLACIS AT TALL ŞĀFŪṬ: AN EXAMINATION OF THE MIDDLE BRONZE III REMAINS

*Owen Chesnut*

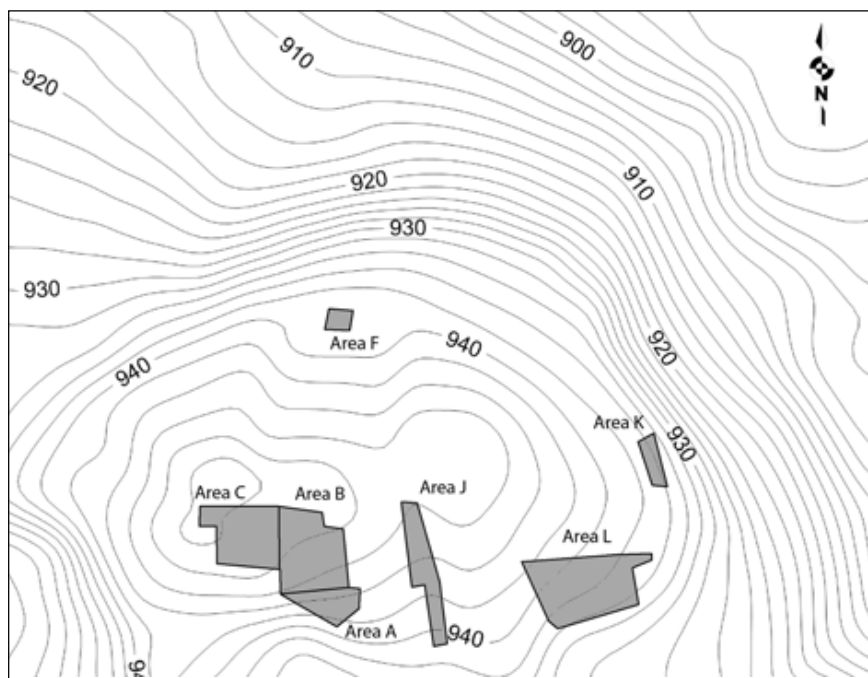
## Introduction

The site of Tall Şāfūṭ is located 12 km. north of Amman in Jordan. It was excavated by Donald Wimmer over the course of 10 seasons between 1982 and 2001 (Wimmer 1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1994, and 1997a). Wimmer was Professor of Religious Studies at Seton Hall University, and was studying at the American Center for Oriental Research in Amman when he was asked to lead a salvage excavation at Şāfūṭ under the auspices of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. In the first season of 1982, Wimmer excavated in Areas A, B, C, D, and E. Throughout the course of 10 seasons Areas A-L (omitting I) were excavated (**Fig. 1**). He discovered enough significant remains that the site was saved and he continued digging over the course of 10 total seasons.

The main periods represented at the site are the MB III, the LB II, Iron Age I, Iron Age II B, Iron Age IIC/Persian period, and Roman/Byzantine periods. Significant amounts of pottery and artifacts were found at the site, as well as large architectural structures, making Şāfūṭ one of the most important Bronze and Iron Age sites in Jordan. Şāfūṭ is mentioned most frequently because of its Middle Bronze Age “glacis” (see below). This article will examine the legitimacy of that claim and discuss other possible Middle Bronze Age remains that were discovered at the site.

## Prior Research

Roland De Vaux (1938: 418) was one of the first archaeologists to report sherds from the site dating to the “Bronze I and Bronze II” periods



1. New Topographic Site Map of Tall Şāfūṭ.

(although, he would later rethink this position after discussing it with Glueck). Rudolph Dornemann visited the site in 1969 and noted finding “Middle Bronze II sherds, mostly of the hard grey ware with orange-pink slip” (1983: 19). After sherding the site, James Sauer, reported that the slopes “were dripping with” Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age sherds (personal communication Wimmer; see Sauer 1986: 6).

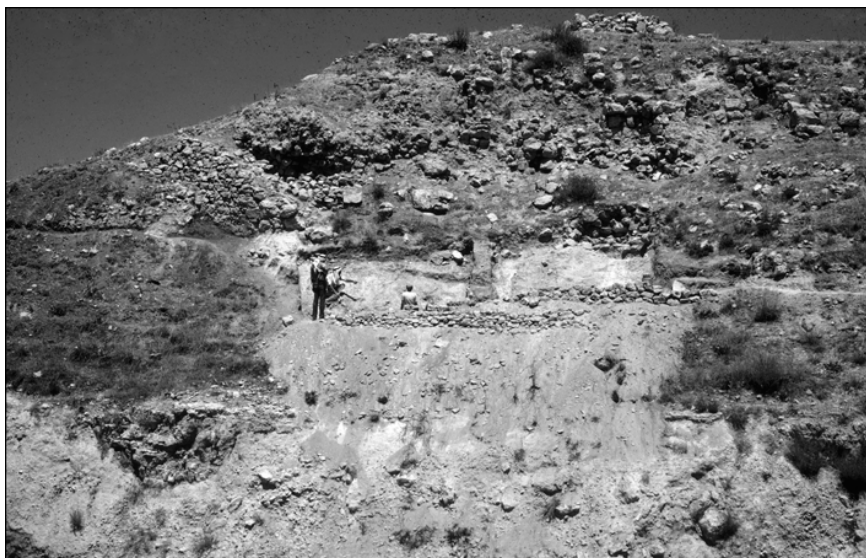
Professor Wimmer (1987b) also reported on the discovery of Middle Bronze Age sherds at Şāfūt in his preliminary report on the 1982–1985 excavation seasons. In his discussion of the glacis, he mentioned that only Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age pottery was found in the layers immediately above the glacis (Wimmer 1987b: 165). He surmised that Middle Bronze Age remains might underlie much of the later Late Bronze Age and Iron Age remains. Wimmer would later attempt to find these remains in 2001 by digging below the late Iron Age buildings in Squares B4, C3, and C7 (per the season report written for the DoA).

### The Discovery and Excavation of the Glacis

As mentioned above, the majority of Middle Bronze Age sherds were discovered in Area D. It is in this area that a “glacis” was reported and it is this feature that has been most widely reported in connection with Şāfūt. In 1953, construction of a new road from Jarash to Na’ur destroyed part of the northern slope of Şāfūt. In this destroyed section, Ma’ayeh (1960a) re-

ported that the bulldozers revealed “a sloping plastered ‘glacis’ revetment, resting on natural rock, and crowned by a wall. The glacis was constructed of different layers of sand, *huwwar*, and earth, beaten into a kind of *terre pisée*.” This report is a textbook description of a typical MB III rampart (Burke 2008: 51 notes that the term “*terre pisée*” was often misused in the literature describing rampart construction). In subsequent years, this information was cited by various scholars as evidence for Middle Bronze Age occupation at Şāfūt (Ottoson 1969; Zayadin 1973; Weippert 1979; Dornemann 1983; Sauer 1986 and Mazar 1990). In 1982, Wimmer laid out Squares D1 and D2 in the middle of what remained of the supposed glacis on the south side of the tall (Figs. 2 and 3). These squares were placed in a saddle slightly below the remains of a wall emerging out of the tall and curving towards the east. Unfortunately, these squares were not placed directly against the wall, for fear of destabilizing it. Had they done so the relationship between the glacis and the fortification might have been better understood.

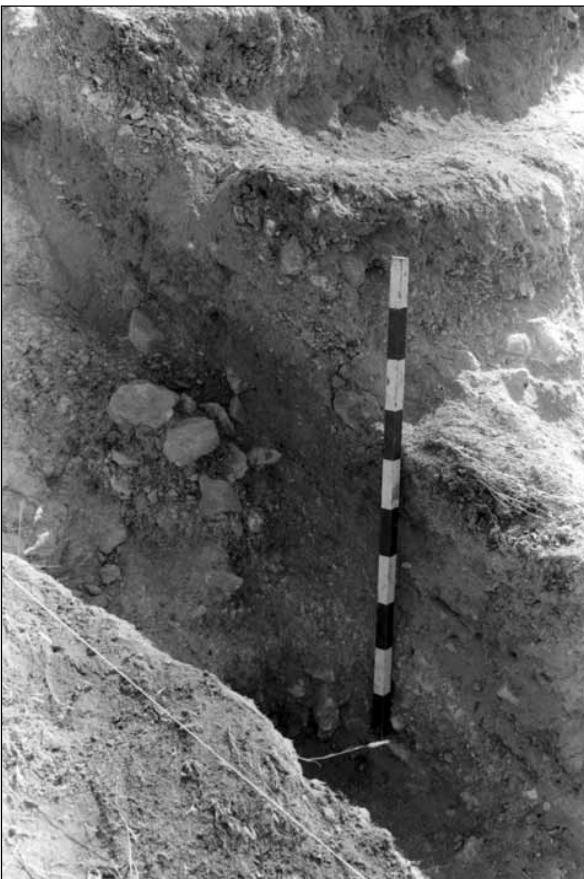
Five loci were excavated in Square D1, including Locus D1.5, which was bedrock. Locus D1.1 was topsoil and revealed Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, and Iron Age II sherds. Beneath this locus, a 1.0 m wide test trench (Fig. 4) was excavated along the west balk in order to reach the purported glacis; however, no loci were designated for the dirt removed, causing the putative glacis itself to be desig-



2. View of Area D and the Top of Şāfūt.



3. Squares D1 and D2.



4. Test Trench in Square D1.

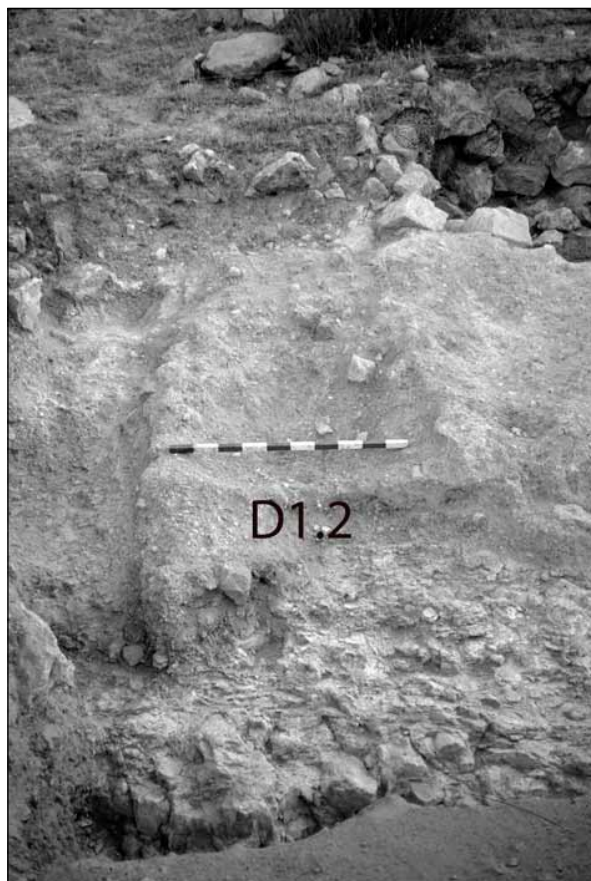
nated as Locus D1.2. Locus D1.3 was located in the northern part of the square and consisted of compact soil and limestone wall stones, collapsed from the perimeter wall directly north of the square. Locus D1.4 was made up of loose gray soil and was located throughout the square

directly above the glaxis. Four Middle Bronze Age sherds were found without locus numbers (only pail and sherd numbers), but most likely come from this locus based on the excavators' mention of the large amount of Middle Bronze Age and Late Age Bronze sherds recovered here. Square D2 was located directly to the east of Square D1. In Square D2, five loci were excavated, the contents of which corresponded nicely with what was found in Square D1: Locus D2.1 corresponds with Locus D1.1 in that it contained topsoil; two Middle Bronze Age sherds were found in this locus. Locus D2.2 corresponds with Locus D1.4 in that it contained loose gray soil and was located above the "glaxis"; the majority of Middle Bronze Age sherds found come from this locus. Locus D2.3 corresponds with Locus D1.2, which is the glaxis. Locus D2.4 corresponds with Locus D1.3, which contained the perimeter wall collapse. Finally, Locus D2.5 corresponds with Locus D1.5, which was bedrock.

#### **To Glaxis, or Not Glaxis: That is the Question**

The loci designated as the "glaxis" are D1.2 (Munsell Reading 2.5Y 7/4 pale yellow – 10YR 8.2 white) and D2.3. In Squares D1 and D2, this supposed glaxis was exposed over both squares, except in the southwestern corner of Square D2, where bedrock was exposed below the gray soil and along the northern balk of both squares where wall collapse had accumulated. The glaxis was purportedly 45 degrees, which is well above the average of a manmade glaxis (Burke

2008: 50, Table 5). The square supervisors and area supervisor all described the makeup of the “glacis” differently, making it difficult to determine the actual material. In Locus D1.2 it was described as “[a] very compact clay layer,” “a limestone cap” and “a natural structure” (Safut Area D Notebook 1982). The square supervisors also noted that this locus was naturally slippery, was somewhat “stepped,” and was embedded with large rocks (Fig. 5). In Locus D2.3 the glacis was described as “a limestone matrix deposit. It is compacted clay (*huwwar*) and pebbles (approx. pea sized)” (Safut Area D Notebook 1982). The supervisors also mentioned that the glacis appeared to be natural because there was no evidence of occupation above or beneath it (i.e. flat lying sherds), and that under the wall



5. Bedrock with Natural Accumulation on Top.

tumble (Locus D2.4) there was soft, fine soil and the bedrock, a fact which seems to confirm that the glacis is natural.

It should also be noted that the Area D supervisor Jennifer Groot (1983: 2) understood this “glacis” to be artificial, a plaster coat to keep the bedrock from eroding (although at times she called it a “compacted gravel and *huwwar* surface” and “sterile *huwwar*”). Groot dated the glacis to the Middle Bronze Age based on the similarities between this “plaster” layer and similar features of the glacis found at Jericho, Taanach, and Tell Dan (Groot 1983: 3; cf. Pennells 1983: 58). However, these three glacis are each made from different materials: the Jericho glacis out of mudbrick and *huwwar* plaster (Kenyon 1981; Marchetti 1998), the Ta’anach glacis out of clay and *huwwar* limestone (Lapp 1964, 1967), and the Tell Dan glacis out of crushed travertine (Biran 1994: 59-63). Also, the glacis at all three sites were constructed on earthen ramparts, making the parallels to Šafūt even less accurate. The presence of a glacis, as noted by Burke (2008: 11), is not sufficient to date fortifications to the MB III.

From the excavations carried out in Area D, it is clear that the “glacis revetment” that Ma’ayeh wrote did not exist. He mistook the natural bedrock stratigraphy along with the layers of deposition and crowning wall for a traditional Middle Bronze Age fortification. However, the excavations did reveal some kind of material on the bedrock, considered natural by Wimmer and the square supervisors, but artificial by the area supervisor. Several factors indicate that this formation of *huwwar*/compact clay/plaster is most likely natural. The strongest clues are the rocks that were protruding out of the layer, the stepped nature of the material, and the seeming disconnect between this formation and the fortification wall since the wall collapse in both squares was on top of fine soil and covering bedrock. As a whole, these factors indicate that this material is in fact a natural accumulation of friable limestone above the bedrock.<sup>1</sup>

1. It should be noted that this theory was essentially Wimmer’s interpretation as well: “There is no question that the bedrock was cut in antiquity as a foundation for the crowning wall, and that the composition of the inclined place agreed with the earlier description, except that no certain signs of plaster appeared. It could have weathered away, or have been removed by the 1950s

construction...It should be noted that the crowning wall, as it was called, is curved, and that the segment on the west has its counterpart on the east as is evident in a pre-excavation slide. Excavation produces only Middle/Late Bronze Age pottery in the layers immediately above the glacis itself which proved to be sterile.” (Wimmer 1987a: 279).



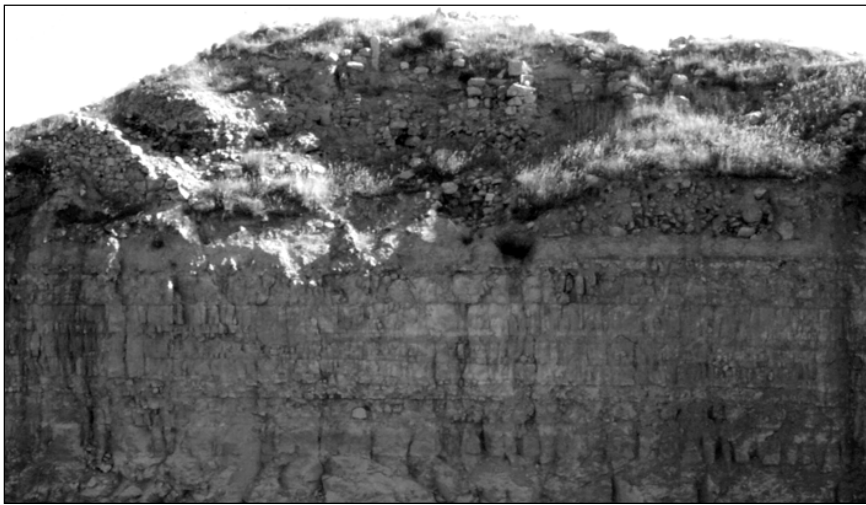
Although what was called the “glacis” in Area D was a natural formation, there remains a small possibility for a man-made glacis at Şāfūt. Nelson Glueck (1939: 191) observed that the western and southern slopes of Şāfūt were more gradual in descent, and it is these two sides of the tall that would require a glacis for added protection. Unfortunately, the construction and expansion of the Amman-Jarash highway has eliminated the possibility for further research on the southern side (**Fig. 6**), but it would still be possible to excavate on the western side of the tall. It is now clear that what has been cited time and again in the literature as a Middle Bronze

Age glacis is in fact a natural formation however the question of a glacis at Şāfūt will not be completely answered until this excavation can be carried out.

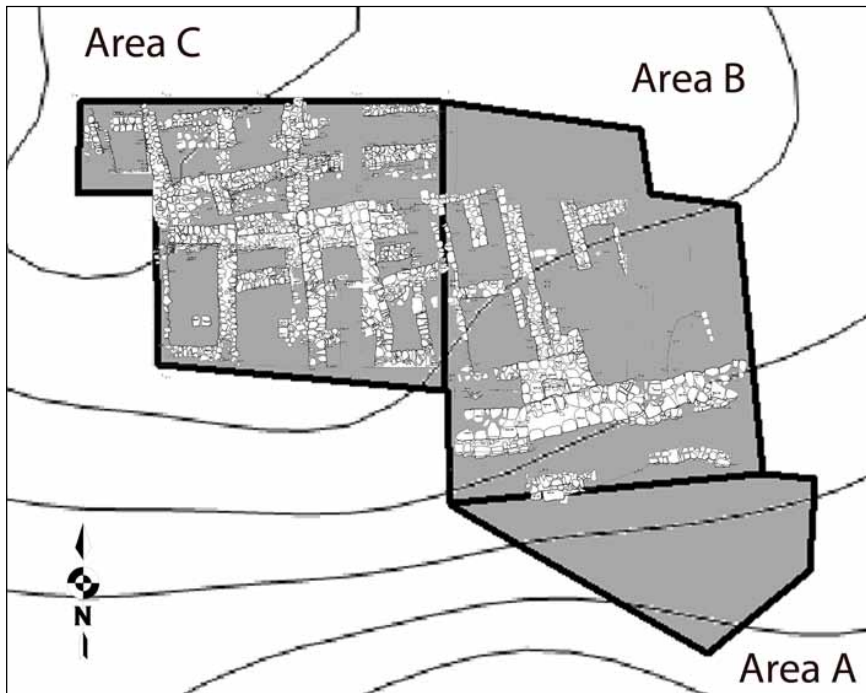
### **Possible Middle Bronze Age Architectural Features**

#### *City Wall*

In the 1982 season, Middle Bronze Age remains were also found in Square B2. Middle Bronze Age sherds were reported by Wimmer in the loci contiguous to the “foundation trench” outside the city wall in Square B2 (**Fig. 7**), although he dated the wall to the Late Bronze



6. View of Where Area D Used to be After Road Construction.



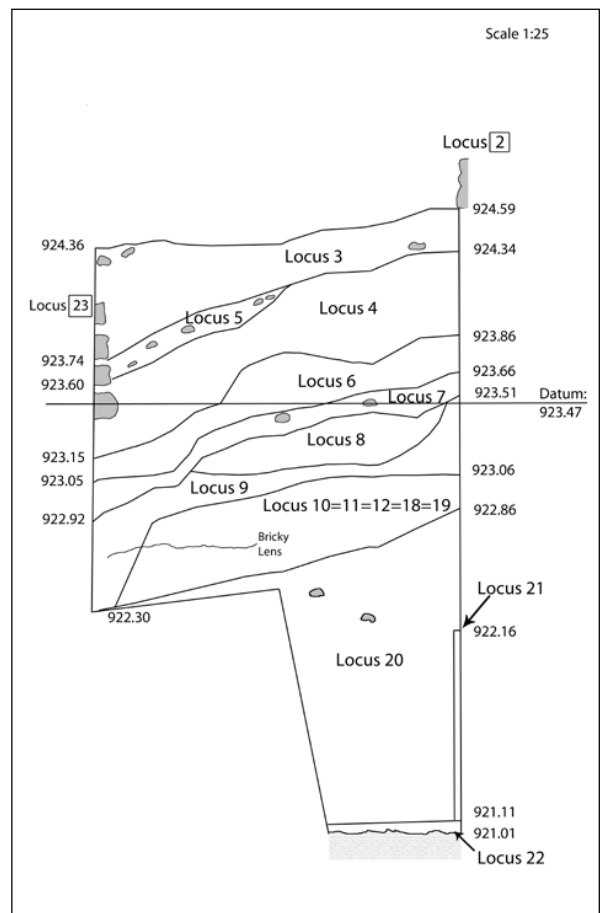
7. Area B With Possible MB III City Wall and Tower.

Age (1987b: 165). Several sherds were drawn, but they are forms that could date either to the Middle Bronze Age or to the Late Bronze Age.

A more thorough discussion of the construction of the wall and the loci located outside of it in Square B2 must be carried out to assess Wimmer's Late Bronze Age date of this structure.<sup>2</sup> As is well known, it is not proper procedure to date a wall based on material excavated on its exterior. It can be assumed that this area in Squares B1-3 was located outside of the city in all time periods prior to the Iron Age IIB, as Bronze Age and Iron Age I sherds have been found, but no architectural features. Architectural remains in Area A date to the Iron IIB and later. However, since Wimmer (1987a: 280) did not excavate to a sufficient depth inside of this wall, his assessment of its construction date to the Late Bronze Age, based on the sherds in the lowest levels of Square B2 located above virgin soil and bedrock must be closely examined.

It might be true that there are more Late Bronze Age sherds in the deepest loci in Square B2 (**Fig. 8**). However, a quantitative analysis cannot be carried out since not all sherds from these loci could be located, and there are still Iron Age II sherds mixed in with these loci. Iron Age II sherds are located in Loci 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22.<sup>3</sup> These loci are the deepest strata reached in this square, located on top of bedrock. Loci 18 and 19 (and perhaps Loci 12 and 17, see previous footnote) all consist of occupational debris, perhaps discarded over the city wall (Safut Area B Notebook 1982). These loci consist of patches of ash, charred material, and different color soil all intermingled together. According to the excavators, these loci are the last to be found above virgin soil or, a "non-occupational level. No sherds. No bones." (Safut Area B Notebook 1982).

There is, however, at least one Iron Age II sherd from Locus 20, a locus which was supposed by the excavators to be sterile.<sup>4</sup> This locus is essentially made up of topsoil and consisted of thick, dark brown, clayey soil, as can clearly



8. B2 Loci Next to City Wall.

be seen in the picture of the west balk. If Loci 21 and 22 do not actually refer to Loci 12 and 17, then the Iron Age sherds from these loci as well as that from Locus 20 are located in sterile strata—a "foundation trench" and a "bedrock cap," respectively. Locus 21, the "foundation trench," consisted of "bright yellow, white limestone-like material adhering to the face of N wall... extending outward from the wall to a width of .07m and a deepness [sic] of circa 0.50 m" (Safut Area B Notebook 1982).

It should be noted that a foundation trench, by definition, should not be sterile unless it is dug into virgin soil, and even then should consist of soil and remains from the time period of construction, not of the limestone-like mate-

2. The perimeter wall continues from Squares B1 through B3; however, excavations carried out in these two squares did not approach the depth that was excavated in Square B2 and so cannot speak to its founding date.  
3. It is possible that Loci 21 and 22 are actually the pail numbers of Loci 12 and 17, since sherds have been la-

beled with locus numbers 25 and 26, which do not exist and probably refer to the pail numbers.

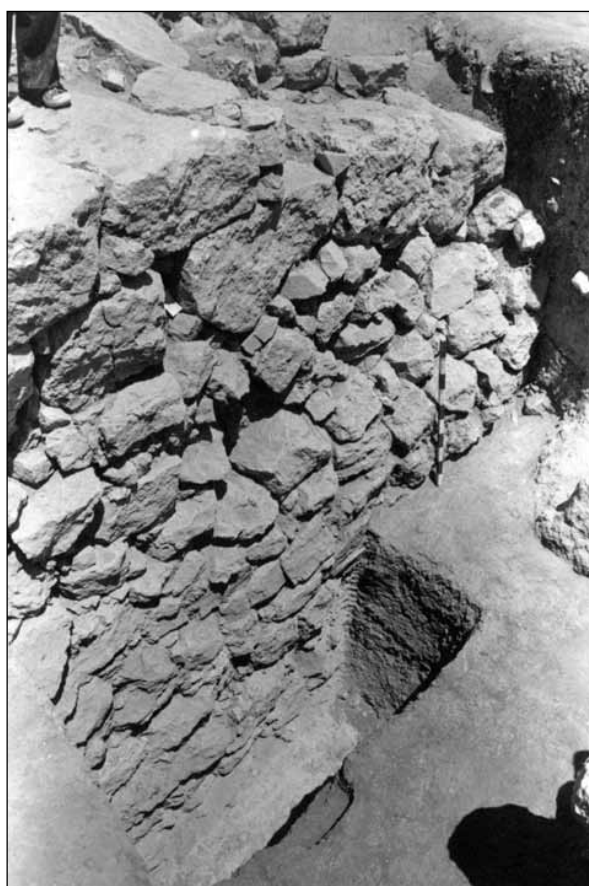
4. This locus number is not the product of a discrepancy with the pail number because pail number 20 never existed, according to the excavation notebook.



9. Western Balk in Square B2, Showing Lack of Foundation Trench.

rial described above.<sup>5</sup> The 1982 pictures (**Fig. 9**) of the western balk reveal no evidence of a foundation trench. However, it is probable that this limestone-like material was some kind of mortar applied to the first four rows of the wall. This difference in treatment could indicate not a foundation trench but the foundation levels of the wall. These Iron Age II sherds were most likely mislabeled with the pail numbers and are actually from Loci 12 and 17. However, this probability does not detract from the fact that Iron Age II sherds were found in the lowest levels above virgin soil abutting the perimeter wall in Locus B2.2.

Now the discussion will turn from the pottery associated with the wall to the wall itself. The perimeter wall was exposed in Squares B1-B3 over an extent of 15 m in length. The wall is approximately 2.0 m wide, and in Square B2 a probe showed that it stood approximately 4.0 m in height (**Fig. 10**). The upper two courses of the wall consist of large, rough-hewn, rectangular stones, as large as 1.08 m x 0.60 m x 0.40 m. The course directly below the large stones of the top two rows consists of haphazardly arranged, irregularly-sized stones. The remainder of the wall down to bedrock consists of stones which are approximately 0.35 m x 0.25 m in size and



10. Extent of City Wall in Square B2.

5. Since this wall was apparently constructed on bedrock in virgin soil, there is really no need for a foundation

trench (Netzer 1992: 18).

are arranged in a more orderly fashion. There are 12 total courses of the wall exposed in Square B2. In Squares B1 and B3, it is unclear how many courses there are because a stone “skin” wall was laid against the actual perimeter wall (**Fig. 11**), beginning at the third (haphazard) course of stones and sloping slightly outward as it continues down. It is unclear if this “skin” wall continues down to bedrock or if it stops at a certain point, indicating the surface in the period in which it was constructed.

The wall evidences three (and possibly four) building phases, but, unfortunately, none can be accurately dated. Phase 1 consists of the first nine rows of stones, making up the foundation (four rows) and subsequent structure (five rows)



11. Skin Wall in Square B1.

of the wall. It is likely that this phase dates to the Middle Bronze Age: The latest sherds found in the fill outside the wall date to this period, and even though only a couple such sherds exist, the construction of this wall is of high enough quality to tip the scale in this direction instead of to the LB II.

Phase 2 consists of the wall “skin” (Locus B1.11) located in Squares B1 and B3, but strangely absent in Square B2. It begins just below the tenth row of stones and continues down over several courses. However, it is not certain whether the skin wall contained more courses and has simply eroded or was never constructed that high. Also, it is unclear how far the skin wall continues, because Squares B1 and B3 were not excavated to the base of the wall.<sup>6</sup> This phase possibly dates to the LB II and coincides with the occupation levels located within the wall. Alternatively it might date to another period. There is insufficient data to be able to state its date confidently, but a date in the Late Bronze Age is most probable given the quality of the construction and the lack of this style earlier in the Middle Bronze Age or later in the Iron Age II.

Phase 3 consists of the top two courses of Wall B2.2 and the terrace wall (Locus B2.23) (**Fig. 12**) to the south of the main wall and located in Squares B1-B3.<sup>7</sup> The terrace wall is built on top of Locus B2.7, which runs up and abuts the perimeter wall at the tenth course. The only pottery from this locus was drawn by William Glanzman (head archaeologist for the first five season of the project), but, unfortunately, a date cannot be determined from the drawings and his notes do not include dates. However, based on the high quality of the stones making up the top two courses and their similarity to stones found in perimeter walls in Areas F and L, it is likely that this phase should be dated to the late Iron Age.

6. A Middle Bronze Age sherd was found in Locus B1.13, which is located approximately halfway down the perimeter wall, consisting of fill.

7. There is also a tenth row that has not been mentioned. The excavators considered this course a separate phase that was constructed “hurriedly by persons not skilled...thrown up from the ruins of the original wall” (Safut Area B Notebook 1982). They thought that this course and the terrace wall were constructed from the

same fallen stones from the original wall, fallen perhaps due to an earthquake. It is possible that this tenth course should be designated a separate phase; however, after looking at pictures of the wall, a clear phase could not be distinguished. Perhaps, at the very least, this row could be designated as Phase 2.5 since it was most likely added at some point between the construction of the skin wall and the last two courses of the perimeter wall.





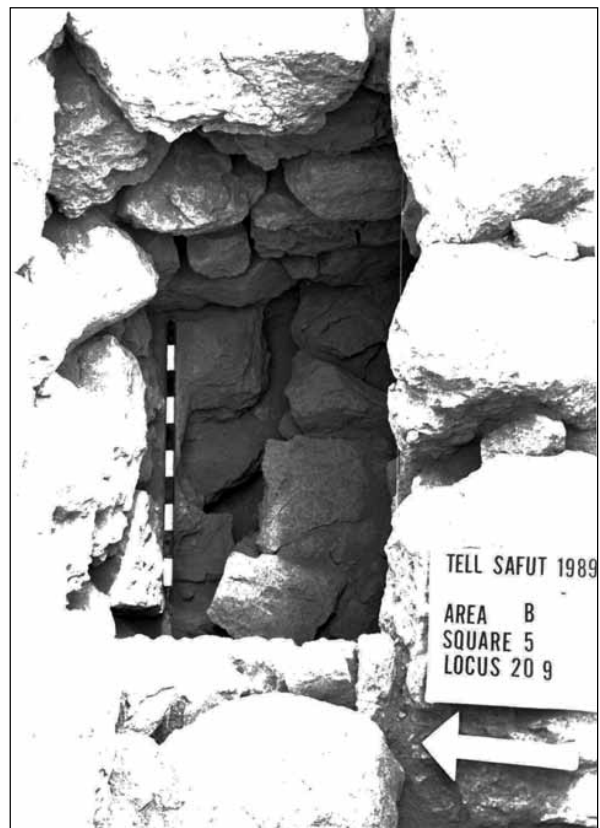
12. Terrace Wall in Square B2.

#### *Perimeter Fortification Tower*

In 1989, the south and west balks of Square B5 were excavated and what was previously called “the western stone structure” in 1983 (Safut Area B Notebook 1983) was further examined and was revealed to be a tower (see **Fig. 7**) abutting the perimeter wall (Locus B2.2). The first several loci consisted of balk removal and included one Middle Bronze Age sherd (in Locus 203), along with sherds from the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age. Unfortunately, excavation of these loci was very poorly recorded. It is clear that the excavation team was excavating the tower, but at least one of the loci called a wall (Locus 206) appears to not actually be a wall. Apparently, Locus 205 consisted of soil excavated from the south balk. It then became clear that there was a hole in the center of this stone structure, making it a tower.

Locus 206 was next excavated and is called a stone and mudbrick “wall,” although it appears to be only two or three rows of stones/mudbricks. The excavation notes at times refer to this locus as “stone wall and mudbrick wall,” as well as “hard soil with rocks and mudbricks” (Safut Area B Notebook 1989). Two Middle Bronze Age sherds and several Late Bronze Age sherds were found in these loci. Under the mudbrick “wall” is a wall made of stone--again, just three stones in a row with soil underneath. However, in the season summary, these “walls” are no longer on top of each other, but the mudbrick “wall” (Locus 206) is to the north of the stone

“wall” (Locus 207) and they are separated by soil horizontally rather than vertically. It seems, however, that both of these “walls” are under the walls of the tower (**Fig. 13**). The excavator suggests that these walls are from an earlier Middle Bronze Age or Late Bronze Age layer,



13. Lower Walls Running Under the Tower in Square B5.

and pottery from these loci date to these periods.

It is hard to say when this tower was built. The tower appears to have been in use during the Late Bronze Age II period, because the bronze seated deity figurine and Late Bronze Age chalice were found on a floor running up against it. However, the tower likely dates to the Middle Bronze Age because, in seasons subsequent to 1989, it was revealed that Wall 10 of the Late Bronze Age sanctuary actually abuts the walls of the tower (**Fig. 14**), indicating that the tower had to have been built earlier than the walls of the sanctuary. Another factor in favor of a MB III date is the construction-style of the tower. According to Burke (2008: 64) rectilinear towers were occasionally attached secondarily to the interior of the town wall instead of to the exterior, such as at Megiddo Stratum XIII.

### Pottery Discussion

There are 24 Middle Bronze Age sherds from Şāfūt housed at Andrews University, and 31 that were found in storage in Jordan. Many more were documented in pottery readings, and some were reported as having been drawn, but no other drawings could be definitively dated to this time period. 33 of these Middle Bronze Age sherds were recovered from the 1982 season, five from 1983, three from 1989, and fourteen from 2001. 10 sherds were recovered in Area C, 15 from Area B, and 30 from Area D. Following is a discussion of the Middle Bronze Age pottery from Şāfūt with an accompanying plate

(**Fig. 15**) of representative forms taken from the loci discussed in this article.

### Rim Forms

Overall, the Middle Bronze sherds represent 18 platter bowls (and one bowl base), 12 carinated bowls, nine jugs, six juglets, three jars, two storage jars, two cooking pots, and one krater. Even though the amount of pottery is small, there is a wide representation of forms.

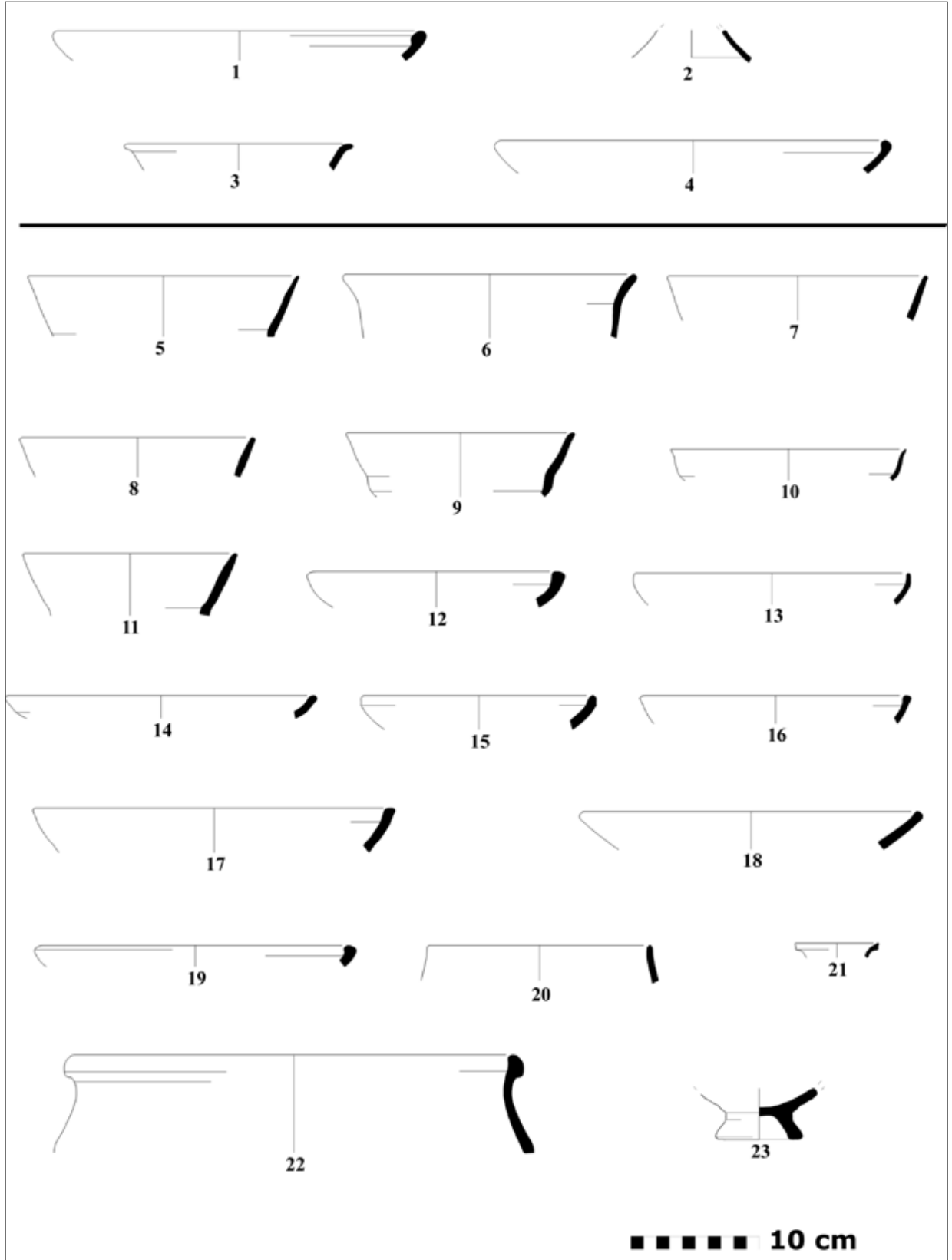
**Bowls:** The 18 platter bowls fit into three general rim types. Eight were variations of the simple, slightly upturned or squared rims (see **Fig. 15.17**). The other two forms are very similar; the first can be described as slightly inverted and triangular (see **Fig. 15.4**), and the second as thickened and rounded (see **Fig. 15.13**). The bowl base found (**Fig. 15.23**) is a high ring base. The twelve carinated bowls all have open, diagonally everted rims (see **Fig. 15.9**).

**Jugs, Juglets, and Jars:** The six jug rims belong to four different types--three are different variations of everted, thickened rims, with one being everted, triangular, one being upturned, and the other being flaring, simple. Two of the juglet sherds have rims, the first (see **Fig. 15.21**) having an everted, triangular rim and the other form being upright and slightly turned in. The three jar sherds are all body sherds with the same painted decoration on them (wavy lines between straight lines, see **Fig. 16**), but are from different loci and squares.

**Kraters and Cooking Pots:** The krater (**Fig.**



14. MB III Tower with LB IIB Wall Abutting It.

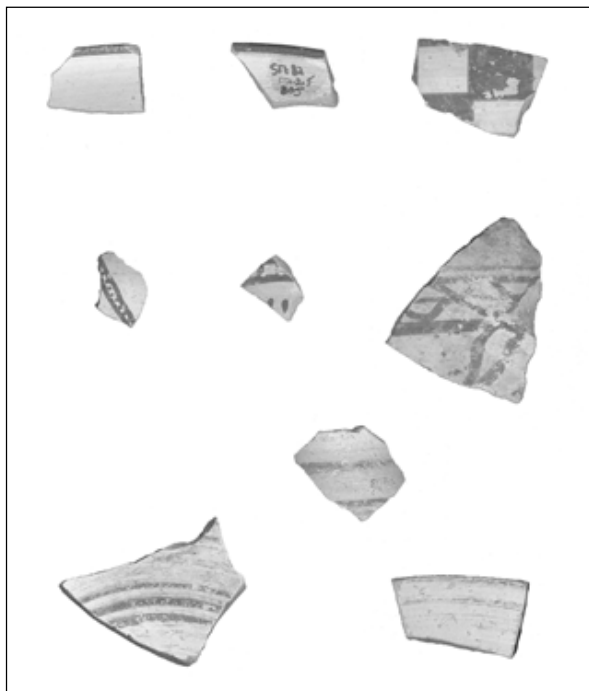


15. MB III Pottery from Tall SS.

No	Type	Sq	Loc	Pail	Reg	Exterior	Core	Interior	Manu	Ext	Color	Int
1	Platter Bowl	B1	13	3		7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 6/0 Gray	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	W	SL	7.5YR 8/2 Pinkish White	SH
2	Jug	B2	25	1	84	10YR 8/4 Yellow	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	W			
3	Carinated Bowl	B5	203	9	7	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	W	WBH	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	WBH SH
4	Platter Bowl	B5	206	11	1	10YR 8/4 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/4 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/4 Very Pale Brown	W			
5	Carinated Bowl	D1	1	6	427	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	W	WBL SH	10YR 8/2 White	WBL SH
6	Carinated Bowl	D1	2	26		10YR 6/2 Light Brownish Gray	10YR 6/2 Light Brownish Gray	10YR 6/2 Light Brownish Gray	W	SH	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	SH
7	Carinated Bowl	D2	2	5	771	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 6/3 Light Brown	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	W	SL	10YR 8/1 White	
8	Carinated Bowl	D2	2	5	799	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 5/1 Gray	10YR 7/2 Light Gray	W			
9	Carinated Bowl	D2	2	5	749	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	W	SL	10YR 8/2 White	SL
10	Carinated Bowl	D2	2	5	311	10YR 7/2 Light Gray	10YR 7/2 Light Gray	10YR 7/2 Light Gray	W	WBH SH	10YR 8/2 White	WBH SH
12	Carinated Bowl	D2	2	6	393	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	W	WBH SH	10YR 8/2 White	WBH SH
13	Platter Bowl	D2	1	2	549	10YR 7/1 Light Gray	10YR 7/1 Light Gray	10YR 7/1 Light Gray	W	WBH	10YR 7/1 Light Gray	WBM
14	Platter Bowl	D2	2	5	805		5YR 7/4 Pink		W	SM	7.5YR 8/1 White	SM
15	Platter Bowl	D2	2	5	742	5YR 7/6 Reddish Yellow	2.5YR 6/8 Light Red	2.5YR 6/6 Light Red	W	S	5YR 8/3 Pink	
16	Platter Bowl	D2	2	5	304	7.5YR 7/3 Pink	7.5YR 7/3 Pink	7.5YR 7/3 Pink	W	WBM SM	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	WBM SM
17	Platter Bowl	D2	2	5	755	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown	W	WBH SH	10YR 8/2 White	WBH SH
18	Platter Bowl	D2	2	3	621	5YR 8/4 Pink	7.5YR 7/0 Light Gray	5YR 8/4 Pink	W	WBM SH	7.5YR 8/2 Pinkish White	WBH SM
19	Platter Bowl	D2	2	5	768	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	W	WBH SH	10YR 8/2 White	WBH SH
20	Biconical Jug	D2	2	5	765	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	7.5YR 7/4 Pink	W	SL	10YR 8/2 White	SL
21	Juglet	D1	3	30		10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	W			
22	Krater	D2	2	7	916	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	10YR 6/2 Light Brownish Gray	10YR 8/3 Very Pale Brown	W			
23	Bowl (Base)	D2	2	3	625	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	7.5YR 8/3 Pink	W			

Color	Decor	Fire	Parallels	Time Period
7.5YR 8/2 Pinkish White		U	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig 121.7; Jericho Tomb A/D: Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 154.2,3; Shechem MBIIC: Seger 1974: Fig 5.4	MBIII-LBIA
	Pa 2.5YR 4/4 Reddish Brown	O	CWIII: Fischer 2006: decoration similar	MBIII-LBIB
10YR 8/2 White		O	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig. 121.4; Pella Tomb 20: McNicoll et al 1982: Plate 114.9; Umayri 15: MPP2 1991: Fig. 5.12.5	MBIII
		O	Dothan XII: Master <i>et al.</i> 2005: Fig. 7.12.1; Megiddo XI: Loud 1948: Pl. 37.26; Shiloh VIII: Finkelstein <i>et al.</i> 1993: Fig. 6.10.2, 3	MBII-III
10YR 8/2 White		O	Umayri 15: MPP5 2002: Fig. 4.9.26; Shechem XVIIIIs: Cole 1984: Plate 14 BnB.1d; Deir Alla IV: Fischer ed. 2006: Chap. 3 Fig. 9.3	MBII-III
10YR 7/3 Very Pale Brown		O	Abu al-Kharaz IV/2: Fischer 2006: Fig. 42.6; Umayri 15: MPP2 1991: Fig. 5.12.15	MBIII
		U	Umayri 15: MPP5 2002: Fig. 4.9.26; Shechem XVIIIIs: Cole 1984: Plate 14 BnB.1d; Deir Alla IV: Fischer ed. 2006: Chap. 3 Fig. 9.3	MBII-III
	Pa 7.5YR 6/2 Pinkish Gray	O	Deir Alla IV: Fischer ed. 2006: Chap. 3 Fig. 9.3; Umayri 15: MPP5 2002: Fig. 4.9.26; Megiddo XII-IX: Loud 1948: Pl. 36.21	MBII-III
10YR 8/2 White		O	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig. 112. 4, 6, 7; Umayri 15: MPP5 2002: Fig. 4.9.22	MBIII-LBIA
10YR 8/2 White		O	Pella Tomb 20: McNicoll et al 1982: Plate 114.1; Abu al-Kharaz IV/1: Fischer 2006: Fig. 29.7	MBIII
10YR 8/2 White		O	Umayri 15: MPP5 2002: Fig. 4.9.26; Shechem XVIIIIs: Cole 1984: Plate 14 BnB.1d; Deir Alla IV: Fischer ed. 2006: Chap. 3 Fig. 9.3	MBII-III
10YR 7/1 Light Gray		R	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig 121.7; Jericho Tomb A/D: Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 154.2,3; Shechem MBIIC: Seger 1974: Fig 5.4	MBIII-LBIA
7.5YR 8/1 White	PaR 10R 4/4 Weak Red	O	CW: Hazor XVI: Yadin 1960: Pl. CIX.8; Jericho H.xxxii-xxxiii: Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 105.23	MBIII
	Pa 2.5YR 5/6 Red	O	Tananir: Boling 1975: Plate 1.6; Jericho H.xlvia: Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 107.19	MBIII
7.5YR 8/3 Pink	PaR 5YR 5/3 Reddish Brown	U	Abu al-Kharaz VII: Fischer 2006: Fig. 156.1; Amman Citadel MB Tomb: Najjar 1991: Fig. 8.2; Megiddo XIII-XI: Loud 1948: Pl. 37.18	MBIII-LBIB
10YR 8/2 White		O	Amman Citadel MB Tomb: Najjar 1991: Fig. 7.4; Amman MB Tomb: Harding and Isserlin 1953: Fig. 6.14; Pella IV: McNicoll et al 1982: Pl. 119.13	MBIII
7.5YR 8/2 Pinkish White		U	Amman Citadel Tomb: Najjar 1991: Fig. 7.1; Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig. 111.3, 4	MBIII-LBIA
10YR 8/2 White		O	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig 121.7; Jericho Tomb A/D: Kenyon and Holland 1982: Fig. 154.2,3; Shechem MBIIC: Seger 1974: Fig 5.4	MBIII-LBIA
10YR 8/2 White		O	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Fig 249.1; Amman Citadel MB Tomb: Najjar 1991: Fig. 9.9	MBIII-LBIA
		O	Umayri 15: MPP2 1991: Figure 5.12.5; Baqah Valley Cave A2: McGovern 1986: Fig. 18.6	MBIII-LBIA
		U	Abu al-Kharaz V: Fischer 2006: Figure 54.5 similar form to MBIII cooking pots but not ware	LBIA
		U	Abu al-Kharaz IV/2: Fischer 2006: Fig. 101.1; Amman Citadel MB Tomb: Najjar 1991: Fig. 10.12; Amman Tomb: Harding and Isserlin 1953: Fig. 6.10	MBIII





16. Chocolate on White Pottery from Tall Šāfūt.

**15.22** rim is very similar to a Middle Bronze Age cooking pot rim, being everted and almost triangular; however, the ware is much different than a typical Middle Bronze Age cooking pot. The two cooking pot rims were everted, triangular and out-turned, simple.

#### *Decoration Analysis*

16 of the sherds (29%) can be classified as some version of Chocolate-on-White ware (CW) (**Fig. 16**), and another nine sherds have paint on them but do not fit the classification requirements for CW (Fischer 1999). These numbers indicate that 45% of the Middle Bronze Age assemblage from Šāfūt is decorated and can be considered fine ware. However, since sherds from the earlier seasons were only kept selectively, no definitive statements can be made on the frequency of decorated wares in the overall assemblage.

#### **Parallels and Time Period**

The ceramic assemblage described here best fits in the MB III. Based on parallels, some of the sherds can date from the MB II through the LB IA. Since all sherds were found in fill layers or layers that cannot be associated with any architecture, it is difficult to narrow the chrono-

logical range. However, the majority of sherds do have parallels in the MB III. The ceramic assemblage, especially the painted wares, is best compared to Phases IV/1 - V at Tall Abū al-Kharaz (Fischer 2006), which date to the MB III-LB IA (17<sup>th</sup> - mid-16<sup>th</sup> centuries BC).

There are several sherds from Šāfūt that fit in Fischer's Chocolate-on-White typological groups (Fischer 1999, 2006): 13 sherds fit Fischer's Chocolate-on-White I and/or II (CWI/II) (Fischer 2006: 264-6). Chocolate-on-White I and II is characterized by monochrome decorations with a white slip and burnish, and by popularity of the chequer and ladder pattern (SFT01. B4.313.31 is a good example of the chequer design, see **Fig. 16**). Three sherds belong to Fischer's Chocolate-on-White Bichrome (CWB) (Fischer 2006: 264). Chocolate-on-White Bichrome is characterized by chocolate-brown and black decorations and wheel burnishing (see **Fig. 16**). However, no bowls were found in the Tall Abū al-Kharaz assembly, bringing the designation of these two bowl sherds as CWB into question. There is also one sherd that could be Chocolate-on-White III (CWIII) (Fischer 2006: 266). Chocolate-on-White III has a much thinner slip than the earlier CWI and CWII, but it is still burnished, unlike other Late Bronze painted forms. Other sites in Jordan with numerous parallels to the Šāfūt assemblage include Tall al-'Umayrī (phases dating to the MB III, see Herr *et al.* 2002), Dayr 'Allā (Stratum IV dating to the late MB III; see Fischer, Bourke, and Van der Kooij 2006), and Amman (tombs found in the city dating to the MB III; see Harding and Isserlin 1953, Najjar 1991). Sites in Israel and Palestine where a number of parallels were found include Dothan (Master *et al.* 2008), Jericho (Kenyon and Holland 1982), Megiddo (Loud 1948), and Shechem (Seger 1974; Cole 1984).

#### **Summary**

Šāfūt is most often cited in the archaeological literature due to its Middle Bronze Age "glacis", however what was thought to be a Middle Bronze Age "glacis" was actually a natural formation. Despite the fact that there is no "glacis revetment" at Šāfūt, there are other remains from the Middle Bronze Age. The acropolis perimeter wall and associated tower in Square B4 most

likely date to the Middle Bronze Age. During four seasons of excavation, sherds were found dating approximately to Middle Bronze Age III. Over 45% of the sherds were Chocolate-on-White and painted wares. Unfortunately, the loci in which they were found consisted of fill that were not associated with any architectural features. Nevertheless, the quality of these sherds hints at the potential occupation levels yet to be discovered. These remains indicate that despite its lack of a Middle Bronze Age glacis Tall Šāfūt should still be included in the discussion of the Middle Bronze Age III in Jordan.

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