

MIDDLE BRONZE AGE TOMBS AT KEFAR SZOLD AND GINOSAR

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(pp. 13-39)

Some eighteen years ago a number of tombs were discovered near Ginosar, which had been in use during both the MB II A and MB II B periods. Among the grave goods were vessels combining characteristic features of both periods. Subsequently tombs were found near Kefar Szold containing similar vessels. Excavations at both sites were carried out on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities, at Ginosar during the spring of 1956 by Dr. Ora Negbi and the writer, and at Kefar Szold in two short seasons in 1965 and 1966, by the writer.

KEFAR SZOLD

The site, at which no other archaeological remains have come to light, is a low hill known as Tel Kalil (map ref. 2111 2888). The pottery was found partly inside a natural cave and partly scattered over the adjoining slope. Both had been greatly disturbed by porcupine tunnelling. Another grave was found some 5 m. north-west of the cave, in which there were disarticulated bones and a skull, in addition to the funerary offerings (Pl. II: 1). Some 1.50 m. east of the skeletal

remains was a single-course wall, alongside of which most of the vessels were found (Pl. II: 2).

Contents. — Distinctive in a variegated assemblage is a specific type of piriform juglet. Usually burnished and frequently decorated, the characteristic features include a ring base, ovoid body, double or triple handle, narrow neck and out-curving "candlestick" rim with a marked neck ridge below (Fig. 1: 1, 4, 6, 7; Pl. III: 5, 8). This ridge below the rim would appear to be a vestige of the collarette-rim juglets in MB II A (See Fig. 5: 9). Juglets similar to those from Kefar Szold have been found in Syria,⁶ Lebanon⁷ and North Palestine and they can be considered as forming a distinct ceramic group, transitional between MB II A and B. The painted juglets are decorated on the shoulder with a series of concentric circles or with groups of horizontal lines (Fig. 1: 6-7), as are similar juglets from Hazor, Ginosar (Figs. 5:10; 14:2, 3, 5), the Sidon region,¹³ Sin el-Fil¹⁴ and elsewhere.¹⁵ These motifs are common on vessels of various kinds in MB II A,¹⁶ including on collarette-rim juglets, on which

the filled triangle motif (cf. Fig. 1:8) also occurs.¹⁷

The assemblage includes other forms of piriform and dipper juglets (Fig. 1:11–14); a shoulder-handled juglet (Fig. 1:9; P1. III:4); an early tall cylindrical juglet (Fig. 1:10); sherds from dark red-slipped and burnished jugs with wide candlestick rim and shoulder handle (Fig. 1:16); a jug with punched rim, ovoid body and rounded base (Fig. 1:18; P1. III:9); almost-complete storage jars and fragments of others, mostly with combed decoration on the shoulder (Fig. 2:1–8; P1. IV:1–2) and a number of large jars (Fig. 3:1–4).

The large deep bowls (Fig. 3:6–8; P1. IV:6) are excellently fired and burnished. Similar light-coloured bowls occur in tomb groups together with piriform juglets with neck ridge below the rim at Ginosar (Fig. 16:7; P1. VIII:6), Assawir (unpublished) and Sin el-Fil.²² There are also many small deep bowls of burnished metallic ware, most of which have a wide globular body, an out-turned rim and ring or disk base (Fig. 3:11–15). Similar bowls occur together with piriform juglets with neck ridge below the rim at Hazor, Ginosar (Fig. 7:4–12), Tell el-Far'ah (N),²⁴ Jericho,²⁵ Sin el-Fil²⁶ and in tombs in the Sidon region;²⁷ large bowls with flattened inturned rim, burnished on the outside (Fig. 4:2–6); a bowl with four knob handles round the rim, representing a transitional stage between the MB II A bowls with knob handles projecting from a raised band below the rim and the MB II B bowls on which there are vestigial knob handles round the rim. Similar bowls occur together with piriform juglets with neck ridge below the rim at Hazor and Sin el-Fil.³⁰ There are also straight-sided cooking pots of coarse handmade ware with flat base and raised thumb-indented band below the rim (Fig. 4:7, 9; P1. IV:8–9) and sherds from pots with mat impressions on the base which may also have been used for cooking (P1. IV:10).

Other artifacts include a fragmentary ribbed spear-head of a type widely used throughout MB II (Fig. 4:10; P1. III:10) and a scarab decorated with a scroll design (Fig. 4:13; P1. IV:7) which is closely paralleled by a design on a seal from Tell el-Far'ah (S).³⁴

Reviewing the material, it is seen that the vessels are distinctly transitional in character, being later than the typical MB II A forms, yet still retaining something of the ceramic traditions current in that period. At the same time they exhibit features characteristic of later forms which become fully developed during MB II B.

GINOSAR

A number of graves in the form of shallow pits dug in the soft *nari* rock were discovered cut into the steep slope of the north bank above Naḥal Zalmon (Wadi Rubediyeh), near Ghuweir Abu Shusha (map ref. 1979 2509). Tombs 2/3 and 4 had been dug close to one another, while Tomb 1 was some 100 m. to the south-east. Tomb 5, which was stone-lined, was near Tomb 1.

Tomb 5. — The contents included sherds of flat-based jars, a fragmentary teapot, a folded ledge-handle, a tanged javelin (Fig. 4:11), skull fragments and scattered bones. The finds and the single burial date the tomb to MB I.

Tombs 1–4. Unlike the Kefar Szold assemblage, which can be assigned to a single phase within MB II, the tombs at Ginosar were used over a considerable length of time for a large number of burials, as can be inferred from the quantities of grave goods and the number of skulls and bones found in them.

Tomb 1 (P1. V:1). — Two periods of use can be distinguished: MB II A and the transitional phase between MB II A and MB II B. The MB II A material comprises a red-burnished jug with double handle and deep candlestick rim (Fig. 5:3; P1. VI:2); a piriform collarette-rim juglet (Fig. 5:9; P1. VI:

13); a small trefoil-mouthed jug with combed decoration on the lower body (Fig. 6: 4); a wide, deep bowl with knob handles attached to a raised band below the rim (Fig. 7: 3; P1. VIII: 3); a storage jar with thickened rim, shoulder combing, a sack-like body and belly handles (Fig. 6: 1; P1. VI: 16); a bronze spear-head with raised mid-rib (Fig. 7: 14; P1. IX: 5);³⁸ and a narrow socketed bronze axe (Fig. 7: 15; P1. IX: 2). The remaining vessels (Figs. 5–7) can be assigned to the transitional phase between MB II A and B, with counterparts in the Kefar Szold assemblage. Among them the following are worthy of note: juglets with candlestick rim and neck ridge below (Fig. 5: 7, 8, 10; Pls. VI: 7, VII: 3; cf. Fig. 1: 2, 4, 7); a juglet with thickened rim, short neck and handle from immediately below the rim (Fig. 5: 6; P1. VI: 9; cf. Fig. 1: 5); jugs with candlestick rim (Fig. 5: 1–2; P1. VI: 18) which are transitional between the earlier (Fig. 5: 3) and the later forms (Fig. 15: 8); small deep bowls with rounded shoulder, out-turned rim and ring or disk base, some burnished and one decorated with painted bands round the body (Fig. 7: 4–13; P1. VIII: 5; cf. Fig. 3: 9–16, 19). Among the remaining vessels, also transitional between MB II A and B, the following are of interest: a jug with flat everted candlestick rim, ring base and triple shoulder handle, decorated with horizontal bands of combing combined with red paint (Fig. 5: 4; P1. VI: 1) which has parallels in the tombs near Sidon;³⁹ two dipper juglet with unusually straight necks (Fig. 6: 6–7); and a large bowl with ridged rim (Fig. 7: 2) which recalls the MB II A bowls with raised bands below the rim, but whose ring base is characteristic of this type of bowl in MB II B. The remaining bowls (Figs. 5: 12–15, 7: 1; P1. VIII: 2) have a slight disk base recalling the low but marked disk base of this type of bowl in MB II A, on many of which there is a red wash over the rim. The lack of red paint on the rim of our bowls likewise indicates that they are transitional.

Conspicuous by their absence are vessels usually found in advanced MB II B contexts, such as squat cylindrical juglets, button-handled juglets, flaring carinated bowls with marked narrow shoulder, pedestal vases and alabaster and faience vessels.

Tomb 2/3 (P1. V: 2). — The whole assemblage falls within the MB II B period, the range and large number of vessels indicating that the tomb was in use for a considerable period of time.⁴² Among the funerary offerings are many piriform juglets, mostly with button base (Figs. 7–15) and while a few decorated examples occur (Fig. 8: 21–22; P1. VII: 5), their shape is quite unlike that of the transitional type described above. Among the Tell el-Yahudieh juglets (Fig. 8: 16–20; P1. VII: 7–10), No. 18 should be noted for its pricked pattern combined with incised triangles and double circles. No. 19 (P1. VII: 7) is of red ware without burnish, while a tiny juglet is acorn-shaped (Fig. 4: 8). The presence of cylindrical juglets with either a wide or a squat body and sloping shoulder (Figs. 9: 1–8 and 13: 14–15) is a further indication that the tomb was in use during the advanced MB II B period, while the two decorated cylindrical juglets (Figs. 9: 8 and 13: 15) are close in style to those from LB I contexts. Most of the dipper juglets have a pointed base (Figs. 8: 2–4 and 13: 12) and there is also a jug of similar shape (Fig. 8: 5; P1. VI: 10). In the assemblage are a variety of bowls, including wide bowls with thickened rim and disk or ring base (Fig. 9: 9–16; P1. VIII: 1–2); deep-necked bowls with flaring rim and pronounced shoulder (Fig. 10: 3–10); flaring carinated bowls with narrow shoulder, many with high ring base (Figs. 10: 11–19 and 13: 16; P1. VIII: 7–9) and others with tall upper neck and trumpet foot (Figs. 10: 20–23 and 13: 17–19). The tomb also contained an exceptionally large carinated bowl (Fig. 9: 17; P1. VIII: 12); two goblets with wide necks made of thin metallic ware (Fig. 10: 24–25; P1. VIII: 10); a late type of cooking pot (Fig. 11: 1), but none of the straight-sided

variety; and several lamps (Figs. 11: 3-12 and 13: 20; P1. VI: 14-15), which had been placed round the skulls. Other finds included a faience vase and alabastrons (Fig. 11: 13-16; P1. X: 4-5); fragments of bone inlay (Figs. 11: 17-22 and 13: 21-22); faience, carnelian and bone beads (P1. X: 3); a number of scarabs (P1. X: 6; pp. 40-42) and a plain amethyst scaraboid set in a silver ring (Fig. 13: 11). The bronze objects included: ribbed spear-heads (Fig. 11: 23-24; P1. IX: 7-8), on one of which the impression of the thread used to bind it to the shaft is still visible; two narrow socketed axes (Fig. 12: 1-2; P1. IX: 1, 3); sword blades (Fig. 12: 3-5; P1. IX: 12, 14); a veined arrow-head bearing the impression of the thread tying it to the shaft (Fig. 13: 23; P1. IX: 10); a knife blade (Fig. 12: 6; P1. X: 1); and several toggle pins (Fig. 13: 1-8; P1. X: 2).⁴⁵ The assemblage is characteristic of the advanced MB II B period, the range of shapes pointing to the tomb having been in use in successive phases, while the specifically transitional forms, such as are found in the Kefar Szold assemblage, are not represented.

Tomb 4 (P1. V: 3-4) — Evidence for the earlier use of the tomb is provided by the vessels resembling those from Kefar Szold, which can be assigned to the intermediate phase between MB II A and B. These include: piriform juglets with neck ridge below the rim (Fig. 14: 7-8);⁵⁰ decorated juglets with candlestick rim and wide neck ridge below, triple handle and ring base (Fig. 14: 1-3, 5, 9; P1. VII: 1, 2, 4, 6; cf. Figs. 1: 6-7 and 5: 10); a tall cylindrical juglet with disk base (Fig. 16: 2; cf. Fig. 1: 10); a dipper juglet with rounded body (Fig. 15: 3; cf. Fig. 1: 14); jugs with candlestick rim and double or triple handle (Fig. 15: 5-7; cf. P1. VI: 18; Fig. 5: 1-2); small deep bowls (Fig. 16: 9-11; cf. Figs. 3: 5, 9-16; 7: 9-11), some of which are red-slipped, combed and burnished; a large globular bowl with rolled everted rim, high neck and ring base, made of whitish ware, cream slipped and burnished (Fig. 16: 7; P1.

VIII: 6; cf. Fig. 3: 6-7);⁵¹ a similarly profiled small deep bowl of burnished pink ware painted with purple bands (Fig. 16: 8; P1. VIII: 4; cf. Fig. 7: 13);⁵² a sherd from a straight-sided cooking pot with raised plastic band below the rim (Fig. 4: 12; cf. Fig. 4: 9) and wide bowls with inturned rim and disk base (Fig. 16: 4-5; cf. Fig. 5: 11-12). Among the weapons, the leaf-shaped socketed spear-head (Fig. 18: 1; P1. IX: 4) belongs to the earlier use of the tomb (cf. Fig. 7: 14).

Outstanding in this group are the decorated juglets with deep neck ridge below the candlestick rim (Fig. 14), made of whitish ware, slipped and burnished, the upper part of the body being decorated with a geometrical motif or a series of spirals or concentric circles painted in purplish-brown. No. 5 is unique in that schematic figures of ibexes and a bird are introduced between the spirals (P1. VII: 1-2; cf. Fig. 1: 8 with schematic fish between the triangles).

The remaining vessels in the tomb can be assigned to MB II B. Among them the following are worthy of note: a white metallic ware jug with candlestick rim, shoulder handle with three buttons, narrow shoulder, wide lower body and high disk base (Fig. 15: 8; P1. VI: 4) which is similar to a jug from Hazor (*Hazor I*, P1. CXX: 1-2); a trefoil-mouth jug with double handle, wide neck, globular body and flat base (Fig. 15: 1; P1. VI: 5) which is similar to a jug from Megiddo;⁵⁴ a squat wide-necked jug with trefoil mouth and ring base (Fig. 15: 2; P1. VI: 12), common in MB II B, including at Megiddo,⁵⁵ Jericho⁵⁶ and Hazor (*Hazor I*, P1. CIII: 15); a cylindrical juglet with button on the upper handle (Fig. 16: 3; P1. VI: 11); carinated bowls (Fig. 16: 12-16; P1. VIII: 11); four large storage jars and one smaller one (Fig. 17; P1. VI: 17) which had been placed in a cave recess adjoining the tomb and close to the tomb's edge (P1. V: 3). Of special interest is a Cypriote jug in the White Painted III-IV Pendent Line style,⁶¹ decorated in brown with groups of vertical lines alternating with

thicker wavy lines (Fig. 15:9; Pl. VI:3). Similar jugs have been found in Syria and Palestine, the closest parallels occurring in a tomb in the Sidon region⁶² and at Ugarit.⁶³ The weapons found in the tomb can likewise be assigned to the later period of its use (Fig. 18: 2-7; Pl. IX: 6, 9, 13; cf. Fig. 11: 24).

Unlike the Tomb 1 assemblage, Tomb 4 contains no MB II A material; at the same time the later MB II B forms found in Tomb 2/3 are not represented, while the presence in it of the imported Middle Cypriote II jug confirms its use until the middle of the period.⁶⁵

SUMMARY

A careful study of the material from Kefar Szold and of the pottery of a similar type found in Tombs 1 and 4 at Ginosar makes it possible to isolate a transitional phase in the ceramic development of the north,⁷¹ characterized by features linking it both with MB II A and MB II B. For this phase, which was probably not of long duration, a date from somewhat before 1800 to 1780 B. C. E. is proposed. Further, since similar ceramic types have been found at other northern sites as

well as on the Syro-Lebanese coast, it seems logical to regard such assemblages as part of a single material culture. A vessel which can be considered as the hallmark of this transitional phase is the piriform juglet with neck ridge below a candlestick rim and especially the decorated juglet, frequently made of a whitish fabric and characterized by distinctive features which cause it to stand out among many other intermediate types combining characteristics of MB II A on the one hand and MB II B on the other.*

THE SCARABS FROM GINOSAR

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(pp. 40-42)

A group of 12 Egyptian scarabs is described (Pl. X:6; Fig. 1). Half of them (Fig. 1:1-6) come from the excavation proper, the others were recovered from the debris near the burial caves. All of them are of well-known types of the Hyksos period. Two scarabs (5, 6) with plain bases are made of amethyst.

* Cf. table on p. 39.