

A DATED ASSEMBLAGE OF THE LATE 13th CENTURY B.C.E. FROM THE EGYPTIAN RESIDENCY AT APHEK

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Previous publications of the inscriptions found in the Egyptian Governor's Residency were followed by a description of the archaeological context (Kochavi 1978a; 1978b; 1981). With the publication of the letter from Ugarit (Owen 1981; Singer 1983) and the conclusion of the excavation of the Residency, it seems appropriate to present a representative selection of the pottery assemblage and to reassess its archaeological context. Such a study is of great significance, since the letter from Ugarit provides an absolute date for the archaeological assemblage, of which it forms an integral part. The date of 1230 B.C.E. (low Egyptian chronology) for the Aphek assemblage may be further used as a basis for determining the absolute chronology of contemporary strata at other sites. A brief attempt at such a comparative study will also be presented here.

Stratigraphy of the acropolis

The Egyptian Governor's Residency crowns the summit of the acropolis (Area X) of Aphek, situated in the northwestern corner of the site (Fig. 1). The structure has already been described in reports dealing mainly with the inscribed material. A detailed analysis of its stratigraphic position on the acropolis is presented below.

Five superimposed palaces have so far been uncovered in Area X on the acropolis (Table 1), of which the earliest (Palace I) is dated to the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age IIA (Strata X18-X17), contemporary with the city wall of Stratum BV in nearby Area B (Kochavi, Beck and Gophna 1979:132). Palace II is the later MB IIA palace of Area A, Stratum A XIV (Kochavi and Beck 1976). During the 1983-1984 seasons a sounding under the foundations of Stratum X18 (Palace I) was carried to a depth of three metres (Stratum X19). Only layers of MB IIA fill were found throughout the sounding (although fragmentary walls began to appear in Stratum X20). Although the evidence is confined to the northernmost sector of the acropolis, it supports our assumption that a huge platform was erected there at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age IIA in preparation for the erection of the first palace on the acropolis. (For the time being, the location of the Early Bronze Age acropolis remains unknown.)

Palace III of the Middle Bronze Age IIB (Strata X16-X15) seem to have been the most prominent in this series of public buildings. It was destroyed in a conflagration somewhere around the middle of the 15th century.¹ In Stratum X14 of the Late Bronze Age I, a royal edifice (Palace IV), carried on the MB II tradition of the acropolis. The Egyptian Governor's Residency of Stratum X12 (Palace VI) was built over the southwestern corner of the palace of

1 Weinstein (1981:5) is under the impression that we assign the destruction of this palace to the 15th century B.C.E., but this is erroneous.

TABLE 1. STRATIFICATION OF AREA X ON THE ACROPOLIS OF TEL APHEK

<i>Stratum</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Principal finds</i>
X1	Late Arab	18th–19th c. C.E.	Village of 'Auja.
X2	Ottoman	17th c. C.E.	Fort of Biñar-başı, 2nd phase.
X3	Ottoman	Built 1574 C.E.	Fort of Biñar-başı, 1st phase.
X4	Early Roman (Herodian)	9 B.C.E. to 67 C.E.	Private houses of Antipatris.
X5	Late Hellenistic (Hasmonean)	2nd c. B.C.E.	Fort and well of Pegai.
X6	Iron Age II	8th c. B.C.E.	Private houses.
X7	Iron Age II	9th c. B.C.E.	Private houses.
X8	Iron Age II	10th c. B.C.E.	Stone-lined silos.
X9	Iron Age I	11th c. B.C.E.	Private houses; Philistine pottery.
X10	Iron Age I	12th c. B.C.E.	Pits and ash layer; Philistine pottery.
X11	Late Bronze II/Iron Age I	ca. 1200 B.C.E.	Two residential quarters.
X12	Late Bronze Age II	Destroyed 1230 B.C.E.	Palace VI (Egyptian governor's Residency).
X13	Late Bronze Age II	14th–13th c. B.C.E.	Palace V (new palace, with changed orientation).
X14	Late Bronze Age I	15th–14th c. B.C.E.	Palace IV.
X15	Middle Bronze Age IIB	Destroyed mid-16th c. B.C.E.	Palace III, 2nd phase.
X16	Middle Bronze Age IIB	18th–17th c. B.C.E.	Palace III, 1st phase.*
X17	Middle Bronze Age IIA	20th–19th c. B.C.E.	Palace I, 2nd phase.
X18	Middle Bronze Age IIA	20th–19th c. B.C.E.	Palace I, 1st phase.
X19	Middle Bronze Age IIA	20th c. B.C.E.	MB IIA fill.
X20	Middle Bronze Age IIA	20th c. B.C.E.	Fragmentary walls.

* Palace II (MB IIA) is located in Area A, Stratum AXIV.

Stratum X13 (Palace V) according to the same orientation and reusing some of its walls. Its plan, however, indicates that it was more of a compact fortified residency than a spacious palace. It was the final public building to be erected on the acropolis of Aphek. From Stratum X11 onwards the area was occupied by private dwellings, installations, silos etc. (Pl. 5:1). The long history of the Bronze Age acropolis of Aphek came to an end around 1230 B.C.E.

The Egyptian Governor's Residency

The Residency (Building 1104) was a square structure that extended over an area of about 400 sq. m. and was probably two — or even three — storeys high (Pl. 5:2). It was approached by a stone-paved path; at its entrance there was a monolithic trough for watering the visitors' horses. Access to the building was by either of two doorways, the eastern being the main one. It led to a vestibule that might have served as a guardroom. From here one could either proceed directly to the rooms and halls on the ground floor or turn right towards the stairway leading to the upper floors. The secondary entrance led directly to the stairway. The ground floor had three small rooms and two long halls. The vestibule and rooms were paved with

with all their contents and the roof as well, fell to the ground floor creating a heap of debris several metres deep. This mound of carbonized wooden beams, painted plaster fragments, building stones and burnt bricks remained on the acropolis for almost three millennia until its upper accumulations were levelled off by the builders of the Ottoman fort in 1572 C.E. The 2-m. high heap of debris is thus a sealed locus consisting of the collapsed material coming from the upper storeys of the palace (see Pl. 6:1). Thick layers of red burnt-brick material that was washed down from the palace debris were found all over Area X.

Among the objects embedded in this debris are large storage vessels, which were concentrated in the ground-floor halls. The eating and serving vessels, including many Egyptian bowls, as well as the various inscriptions, undoubtedly came from the domestic quarters above. The many vessels that could be reconstructed from sherds coming from levels in the debris far apart from each other testify that the collapse of the upper storeys was a sudden catastrophe that occurred in the wake of the fire that destroyed the Residency. The letter from Ugarit was unearthed in the northwestern corner of Hall 1721, about 1 m. above its floor, embedded in the debris of the domestic storeys above. It was found together with an Egyptian faience necklace, a duck-headed hairpin (for a similar one at Kamid el-Loz, see Hachmann 1983:90, 92), as well as a second clay tablet inscribed with only a few cuneiform signs. The varied nature of these objects gives a picture of current domestic and official activity, and we may safely assume that these articles, as well as the pottery found in the debris, were all in use at the time the residency was set to the torch.

Two winepresses, both about the same size, were unearthed some 25 m. northwest of the Residency (Pl. 6:2). The treading platforms (each about 6 m. sq.) were made of plastered stone. Seven steps led to the receiving vats, each with a capacity of about 3500 litres. These were stone-lined and plastered as well. The entire area was covered with a layer of burnt-brick material that had been washed down from the debris of Palace VI. The Canaanite storage jars found in the receiving vats were also of the type common in the Residency. A heap of grape-stones found about 1 m. south of the Residency provides further evidence of the wine-processing activities carried out under the supervision of the palace overseer.

About 200 m. south of the Residency a stone-lined tomb contemporary with the palace was found in Area G cut into the slope of the mound. It contained eight skeletons and 64 burial offerings, including local and imported wares, a dagger, a bronze mirror and copper rings mounted with scarabs. Although its pottery (for photograph, see Kochavi 1981:81) resembles that of the Residency, the imported Cypriote and Mycenaean vessels are more abundant, whereas the Egyptian bowls that are so common in the Residency (see below) are represented by only one specimen in the tomb.

The pottery assemblage from the Residency

Bowls

The bowls found in the Residency were of two kinds, Egyptian (Fig. 2:1-3) and local (Fig. 3:1-4).

The Egyptian bowls are made of reddish clay mixed with straw, signs of which are visible on the surface in the form of negative imprints. The bowl of Fig. 2:1 finds parallels in Nagel's type X (Nagel 1938), that of Fig. 2:3 in Nagel's type II (*ibid.*: Pl. I) and that of Fig. 2:2 in his type XI. There are also fragments of a "duck-bowl," Nagel's type XIII, as well as a cup similar to

Nagel's type VI, and bowls of type XIV. Although both the shapes and fabric of the Aphek bowls find good parallels with the Egyptian specimens, their source should be finally determined by laboratory analysis.

The most common type of local bowl has rounded walls and a substantial disc base, sometimes concave, and a rim that slants inwards, at times internally thickened (Fig. 3:3-4). There are many parallels to this type of bowl in Late Bronze Age II strata, for example at Lachish (*Lachish II*: Pl. XL:93-94, Temple III; see also the rims in Pl. XLI:108-109), Gezer (*Gezer 1974*: Pl. 23:21-22, 24) and Hazor (*Hazor II*: Pl. CXXVIII:20, 22, 24).

The bowl of Fig. 3:2 is an example of a smaller and deeper type with rounded walls. The rim is either plain (as in *Lachish II*: Pl. XLII:143-144) or thickened on the outside, as in our specimen. These locally made bowls are not slipped or painted.

The large open S-profiled bowl (Fig. 3:1) is painted red on the rim and has a cross design inside. Each arm of the cross consists of alternating straight and wavy lines. The cross is bounded by a circle composed of two lines running around the circumference parallel to the rim. A series of short strokes were painted on the rim at the points where the arms of the cross join the surrounding circle.

Designs composed of straight and wavy lines are most common on Late Bronze Age bowls, kraters, chalices, goblets, jugs and pilgrim flasks (e.g., *Lachish II*: Pl. XXXVII: 27, 31; XLVI: 217; XLVIII:241-243, 246-247, etc.). S-profiled bowls decorated on the interior with palm trees or straight-and-wavy line bands make their first appearance by the end of the Late Bronze Age, e.g., at Megiddo stratum VIIB (*Megiddo II*: Pl. 95:13), Lachish Temple III (*Lachish II*: Pl. LXI:125; XLII:140; see also No. 117 with sharper carination of the rim).

Among the dozens of bowls coming from the Residency, there were no carinated bowls in the Middle Bronze Age IIB tradition. The same phenomenon has been observed in the last Fosse temple of Lachish, at Ashdod Stratum XIV and Tell Beit Mirsim Stratum C, all dated to the 13th century, and only a few examples were published from Gezer Stratum XV (*Gezer 1974*: Pl. 24:9-10, sherds) and Megiddo Stratum VIIB (*Megiddo II*: Pl. 65:14-15), dated to the same century. This also indicates that the end of Stratum XIII (=1a) at Hazor, with its considerable quantities of these carinated bowls, which was dated by Yadin (1972:108) to the second third of the 13th century, occurred at its beginning. At all of the above sites the carinated bowls are most characteristic of strata of the 15th-14th centuries. At Aphek a cult installation of early Late Bronze date was found with more than a hundred bowls in it in 1984. Among these were many carinated bowls, confirming our previous conclusion (Beck and Kochavi 1983:50) that their appearance and absence in LB assemblages should be regarded as a chronological indicator.

Kraters, cooking-pots, lamps and flasks

The kraters (Fig. 3:6) and cooking-pots (Fig. 3:5) of the Residency are those usually found in 13th century contexts. The appearance of oil lamps with splayed rim (Fig. 3:7) together with those with plain rim (Fig. 3:8) is, again, indicative of the last phase of the Late Bronze Age (e.g., *Lachish II*: Pl. XLV, Temple III).

Most of the pilgrim flasks, either painted or unpainted, were of the type of Fig. 4:1, 3, as known from various sites (e.g., *Hazor II*: Pl. CXXX:8-13). There was only one large pilgrim flask decorated with black and red design (Fig. 4:3). It is a well fired vessel with highly

FIGURE 2. EGYPTIAN, CYPRIOTE AND MYCENAEAN POTTERY FROM THE RESIDENCY

No.	Type	Reg. No.	Locus	Description
1	Bowl	37254/1	3827	Reddish-yellow (grey); grits and straw, medium firing.
2	Bowl	27308/1	1726	Red; many grits and straw; good firing.
3	Bowl	27550/1	1726	Reddish-brown (black); grits; very good firing.
4	Small jar	39580/2	1721	Brickish red (dark grey); grits; good firing.
5	Amphoriskos	33675/1	1721	Brown; many grits; very good firing; white slip, vertical burnish.
6	"Milk bowl"	5514/1	1178	Brickish red; grits; good firing; cream slip, brown decoration.
7	Cup	27606/1	2753	Reddish-brown (grey); good firing; red decoration.
8	Stirrup jar	27362/1	2753	Yellowish-pink; grits; very good firing; cream slip brown decoration.

burnished light-coloured slip. Large pilgrim flasks are known from Megiddo Stratum VIIA (*Megiddo II*: Pl. 70:9) with monochrome design formed by straight and wavy lines emanating from the inner concentric circles, a design similar to that of the S-profiled bowl of Fig. 3:1 (see, e.g., *Lachish II*: Pl. LIV: 349, Temple III, with concentric circles, or *Lachish IV*: Pl. 84:956).

Storage jars

The prevalent type has a thickened rim, ovoid body tapering towards a narrow stump base and two loop handles on the shoulder (Fig. 5:2-3). Similar jars are known from Gezer, Stratum XV (*Gezer 1974*: Pl. 23:1, 3), Lachish, Class D (*Lachish IV*: Pl. 8:1018, 1021). It is significant that at Aphek the Class D variants with four handles (*ibid.*: No. 1020), as well as those with carinated shoulder (*ibid.*: No. 1019), were not found. Although at Lachish the four jars were classified as the same type, chronologically Nos. 1019 and 1020 fall out of the range of the Aphek assemblage: No. 1019 comes from a tomb dated by Tufnell to 1425-1275 B.C.E. while No. 1020 is dated by her to the last quarter of the 13th century. The latter type with four handles is found at Lachish only in Level VI (see Ussishkin 1983: Fig. 16:17), thus limiting its range to the first half of the 12th century.

Of special interest is the collared-rim pithos (Fig. 5:1) found on the floor of Hall 1731 together with many other storage vessels. Another complete collared-rim pithos was found in Stratum XI. The appearance of this type of jar in a well-dated context is important evidence. It is the typical collared-rim jar of the central hill country, found mainly in Samaria, Judah and the Gilead, with sporadic occurrences to the north of the Jezreel Valley, e.g., at Tell Dan (Biran 1980:176). It is completely absent from the Beth-shan valley and from Lachish and its vicinity (see Mazar 1980:38). Ibrahim's opinion (1978:122) concerning the LB II pithoi from Hazor and the storage jars from Stratum V, which he regards as related to the collared-rim type, are untenable, since there is no similarity whatsoever between the Hazor jars and the collared-rim type. In Late Bronze Age Megiddo (Stratum VIIIB, the *temenos* of the temple) the collared-rim jar already began to appear (*Megiddo II*: Pl. 64:2). Eleven collared-rim jars were used for infant burials in the Late Bronze Age cemetery of Tel Zeror (*Tel Zeror III*:71; Pl. LVI). The presence of this jar in the Residency at Aphek is further evidence that the

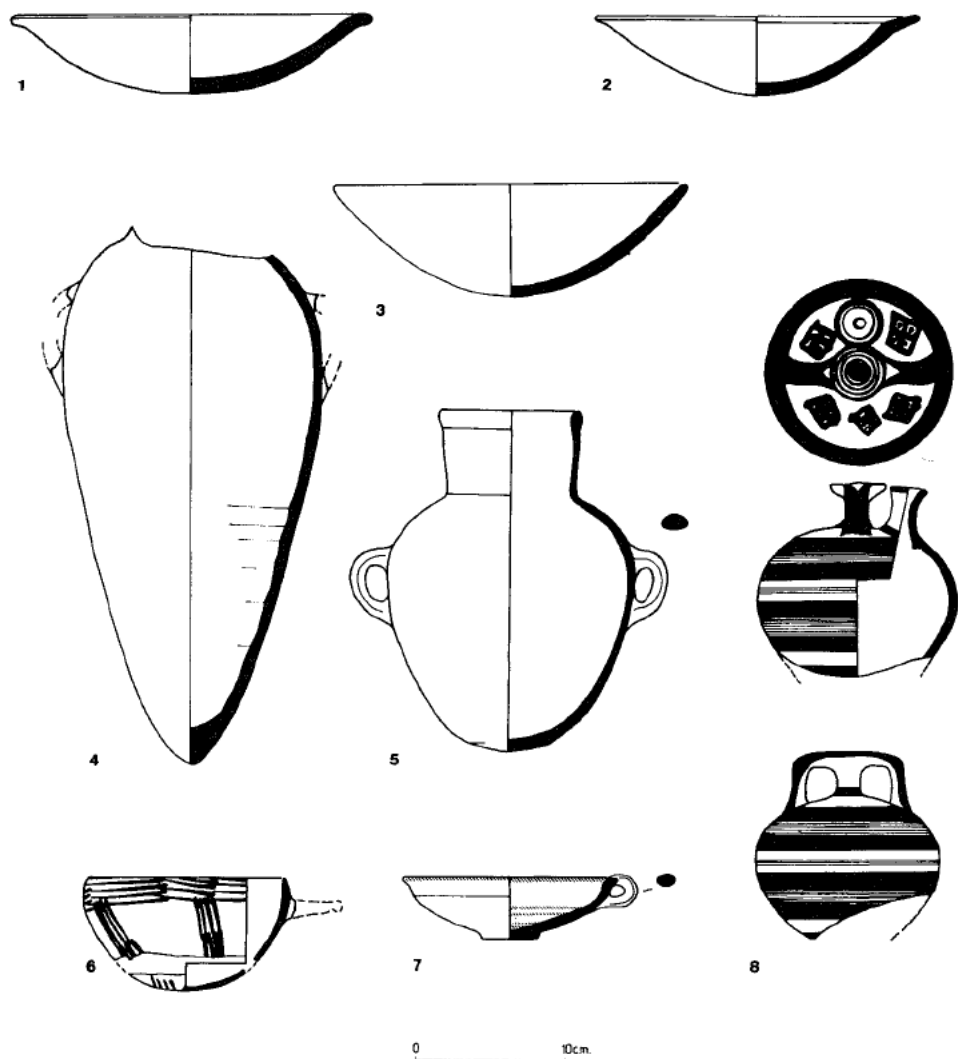


Fig. 2

collared-rim jar, which became the predominant type of storage vessel during the 12th century B.C.E., had its incipient stage in the 13th century.

Imported pottery

Three types of imported vessels were found: Egyptian, Mycenaean and Cypriote, as well as local imitations of the latter two.

Egyptian. In addition to the bowls discussed above, there was a large storage jar; restoration of its lower part is uncertain, but it seems to have been less bulbous and much taller than the usual type. There was also a small brick-red jar with pointed base (Fig. 2:4) and a white burnished amphoriskos (Fig. 2:5).

Mycenaean. The stirrup jar (Fig. 2:8) finds its closest analogy in Tomb IV at Minet el-Beida

FIGURE 3. LOCAL POTTERY FROM THE RESIDENCY

No.	Type	Reg. No.	Locus	Description
1	Bowl	8935/1	1731	Reddish-brown; grits; good firing; red decoration.
2	Bowl	33612/2	1721	Light grey (light brownish grey); good firing; white slip.
3	Bowl	27474/1	2753	Reddish-brown (grey); grits; good firing.
4	Bowl	5804/1	1724	Brownish-pink (grey); grits; medium firing.
5	Cooking-pot	27699/1	2731	Brownish (grey); many grits.
6	Krater	37221/3	3827	Yellowish-brown; grits; good firing.
7	Lamp	37284/1	3827	Reddish-yellow (light reddish-brown); grits, good firing.
8	Lamp	27055/1	1731	Yellowish-brown (grey); grits; good firing.

of "Ugarit Récent II or III" (*Ugaritica II*: Pl. 57:24). The cup (Fig. 2:7) has parallels in Hazor, Stratum 1B (*Hazor II*: Pl. CXXXVII:1-2) and Tell Abu Hawam Stratum V (*TAH*:38, No. 235). More numerous were the Mycenaean vessels and imitations from Tomb 1200 in Area G.

Cypriote. Three almost complete "milk bowls" were the only Cypriote vessels found in the Residency, although Tomb 1200 yielded several vessels of Base-Ring ware. It should be noted that the "milk bowls" were all decorated with the simple linear design and not with the more common ladder pattern (Fig. 2:6). Local imitations of Cypriote Base-Ring jugs ("bilbil") were also found (Fig. 4:2).

It is of interest that whereas less than 5% of the imported pottery came from the Residency, more than 25% of the vessels in contemporary Tomb 1200 were imported. The preference for imported, luxurious wares as tomb offerings is also known at other sites.

Clay figurines

Two clay figurines were found. One of them is of the common "Astarte" type and the other is a fragment depicting a female holding or suckling two babies, a most unusual representation.

Comparative pottery assemblages from the end of the Late Bronze Age

Late Bronze Age assemblages are usually dated according to typological changes in the imported Mycenaean pottery at a site. But since imports of Mycenaean IIIB ware are found throughout the entire 13th century in the Levant, it is only the analysis of typological and quantitative changes in the *local* pottery of this century that will enable us to distinguish between early and late assemblages. The well-dated pottery from the Egyptian Residency of Aphek is a welcome aid in establishing the absolute chronology of these assemblages.

The pottery assemblages closest to that of Stratum X12 at Aphek, which dates to ca. 1230 B.C.E., include: Gezer Stratum XV, Ashdod Stratum XIV, Tell Beit Mirsim Stratum C2 and Megiddo Stratum VIIB. One can add to this list Beth-shan Stratum VII, which in spite of the scanty amount of material, Kenyon (1973) dated to the 13th century. At Lachish, the pottery of Aphek X12 is close to that of Fosse Temple III and Level VII of the tell rather than to Level VI (Ussishkin 1983:169-170; Figs. 15-16; Pls. 23:2; 26:1). The assemblage of Tell Abu Hawam

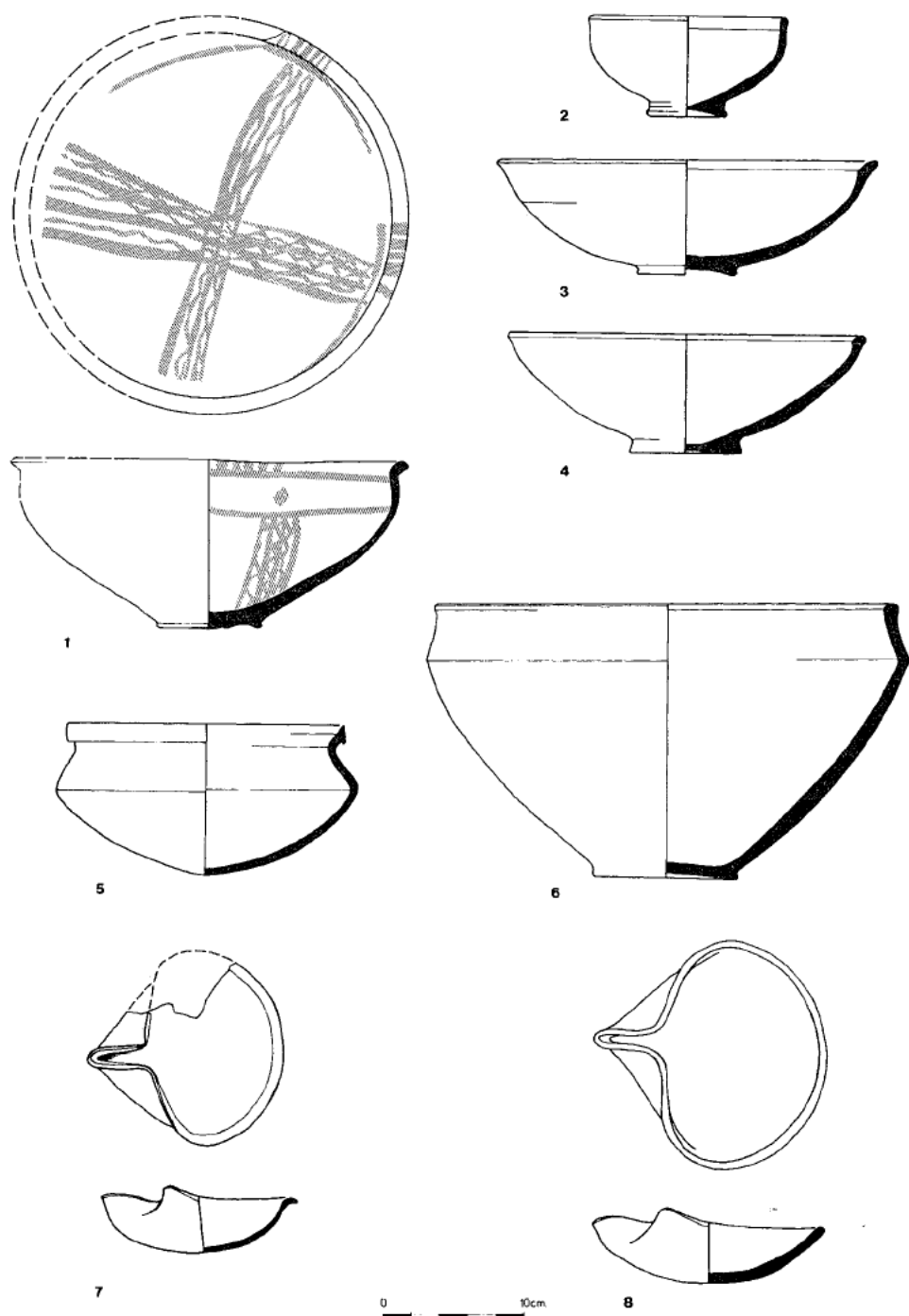


Fig. 3

FIGURE 4. FLASKS AND JUGS FROM THE RESIDENCY

No.	Type	Reg. No.	Locus	Description
1	Flask	52021/1	1731	Reddish-yellow; good firing; reddish-brown decoration.
2	Jug	8946/1	1731	Orange-grey (grey); medium firing; red decoration.
3	Flask	33536/1	1721	Reddish-yellow (grey); many grits; good firing.

Stratum V (upper) also resembles that of Aphek Stratum X12. Interestingly enough, both sites were destroyed by fire at the same time, and similar square buildings, of a type exclusive to these two sites, were found above the destruction level in Aphek Stratum X11 and Tell Abu Hawam Stratum IV (lower).

In comparing the pottery dated to the mid-13th century at Hazor (Stratum 1a/XIII), a different picture emerges. In these strata the carinated bowls in the Middle Bronze Age II tradition are almost ubiquitous, in contrast to their absence in the final Late Bronze Age strata at Aphek, Ashdod and Tell Beit Mirsim and their rarity at Gezer and Megiddo. The possibility that their absence at Aphek is a local phenomenon was ruled out after they were found in earlier LB strata in Area X (see above). Therefore, the destruction of Hazor Stratum 1a/XIII must have occurred rather early in the 13th century B.C.E.² The same observation was made by Tufnell (1961) and Kenyon (1973:538). Kenyon, evaluating the date of the private buildings of Stratum 1a in Area C, writes: "They may extend into the thirteenth century, since a little very late Mycenaean IIIA2 or very early IIIB pottery was found. *They need not extend beyond the first quarter of the century*, for the excavators made it clear that the town of this period was short lived, and *the pottery found certainly is not as late as that of Lachish Temple III*" (italics ours — P.B. and M.K.).

Conclusions

The comparative study of the assemblages coming from strata assigned to the 13th century B.C.E. enables us to suggest a more precise date based on the Aphek assemblage that is dated by the letter from Ugarit found in its destruction level. When the final phase of the Canaanite culture is examined at each site, a picture of a rather long process emerges. Hazor Stratum 1a/XIII should be among the earliest sites destroyed at the beginning of the 13th century, whereas Megiddo, Beth-shan and Lachish continued to exist under Egyptian domination until the middle of the 12th century B.C.E. (Lachish and Beth-shan under Ramses III) and even later (Megiddo Stratum VIIA, through the reign of Ramses VI).³

2 For the bearing of this issue upon the quick military conquest as described in the book of Joshua, see, e.g., Yadin 1960:76.

3 For a preliminary synthesis of the historical conclusions to be drawn from these archaeological data, see Kochavi 1985 and a detailed treatment in the forthcoming *AASOR*.

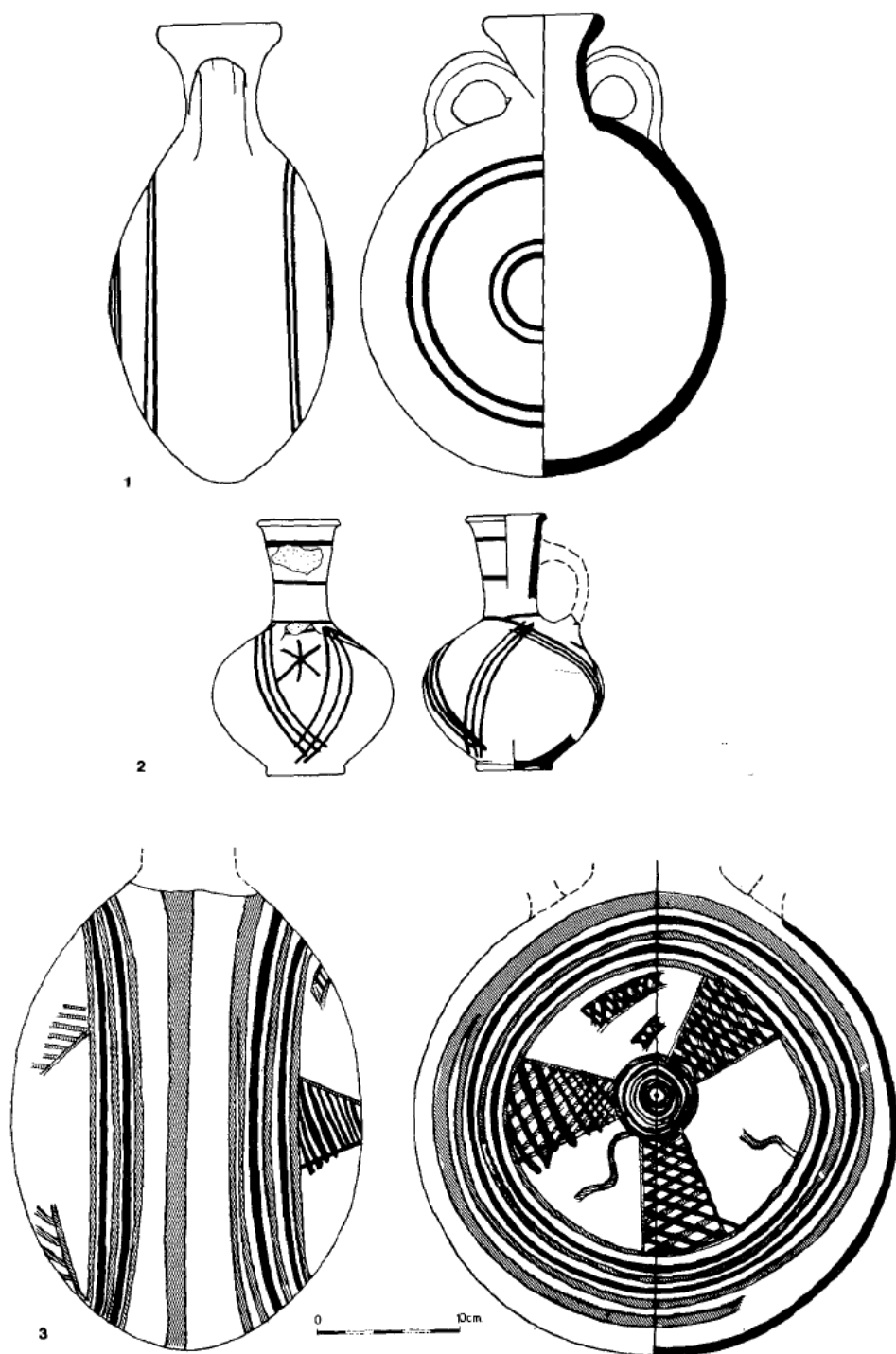


Fig. 4

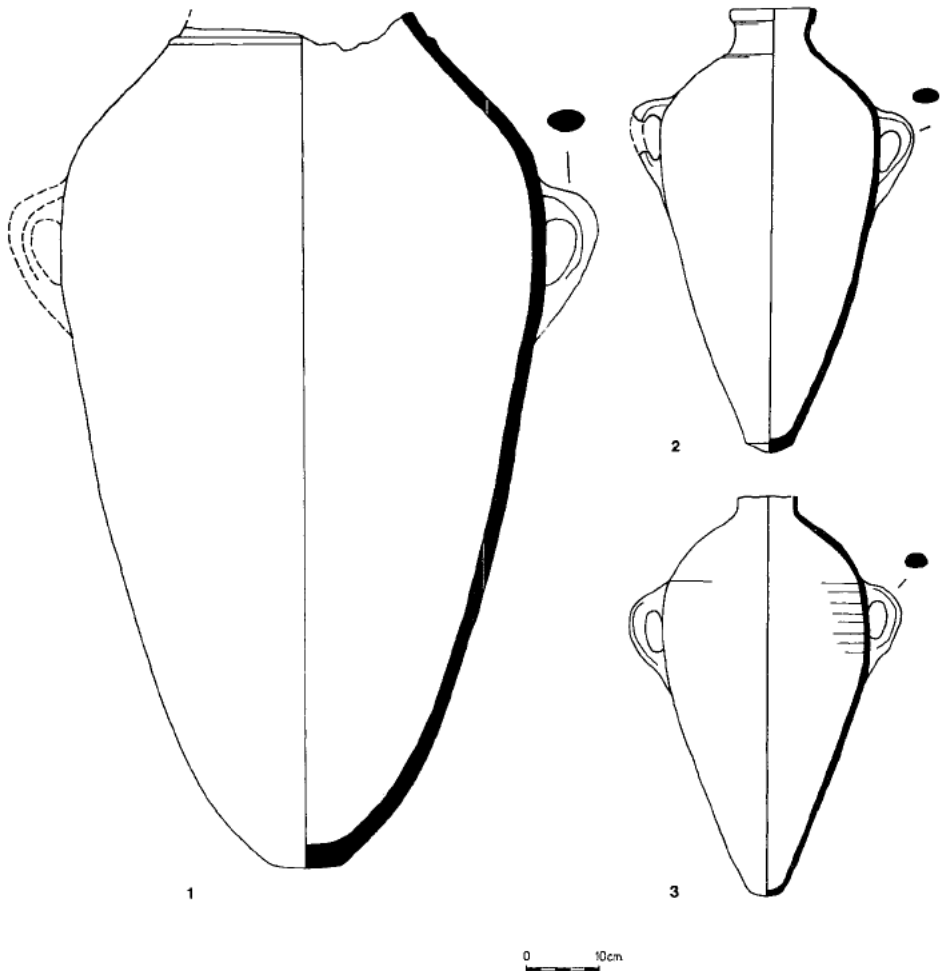


Fig. 5

FIGURE 5. STORAGE JARS FROM THE RESIDENCY

No.	Type	Reg. No.	Locus	Description
1	Pithos	8917/1	1731	Light brown (grey); grits; good firing.
2	Storage jar	51005/2	1721	Pinkish (pinkish-grey); grits; good firing.
3	Storage jar	8296/1	1130	Brown (yellow); good firing.

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