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EGYPTIAN TEMPLES IN CANAAN AND SINAI

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Egyptologists like Dr. Miriam Lichtheim, who are living in Israel, have a certain advantage: their profession can be combined with the study of their country. The impact of Egypt on her Asiatic neighbour has been the subject of a vast amount of works. The topic of this paper too, has been dealt with on various occasions (Alt 1944; Helck 1971: 444f.; Givon 1978; Weinstein 1981: 19f.), but a detailed and comprehensive discussion at full length has so far been missing. It is therefore my aim to collect all the available material³ and to discuss it, as well as to attempt an interpretation of the results.

The Egyptian character of a temple can be established by textual references to construction and worship. Some texts may contain circumstantial information, which has then to be weighed thoroughly. Material remains could either belong to Egyptian buildings on foreign soil, or to local edifices with Egyptian architectural influence. Both kinds must be strictly separated. Egyptian influence can affect construction methods and design. Single architectural elements, like, for instance, columns, may be Egyptian or Egyptianizing, without changing the Canaanite character of a temple. On the other hand, the temples in Egypt are characterized by a peculiar connection between cultic conceptions and architecture. The room arrangement and the decorative programme, principles like axuality and gradually decreasing room height and illumination - these all determine the frame for proper cult practice.

The question of cult is - problematic as it may be - crucial for deciding whether a temple was Egyptian or not. Only a sanctuary where Egyptian architecture was predominant and/or Egyptian worship can be traced, should be termed an "Egyptian temple".

1 A very abridged version of this paper is forthcoming in German: Ägyptische Tempel in Kanaan und im Sinai, *Heilig Land-Jahrbuch des Deutschen Evangelischen Instituts*, 1, 1988 (in prep.).

2 For most valuable advice and friendly help I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Sarah Israelit-Groll, Prof. Amnon Ben-Tor, Prof. August Strobel, Mr Aren Maeir, Dr. Benjamin Sass, Dr. Orly Goldwasser, and especially to Ms Deborah Sweeney for the considerable effort to improve the English of this paper.

³ Since it is not impossible that some information may have been overlooked, I shall be most grateful for all advice!

1 Archaeological Evidence

1.1 Serabit el-Khadem

Excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie in 1905 (Petrie 1906). In 1935 reinvestigated by J. Černý, who edited the numerous and important inscriptions together with A.H. Gardiner and T.E. Peet (*Inscr. I,II*). Between 1968 and 1978 the site was studied by a team from Tel Aviv-University led by R. Giveon (Beit-Arieh 1978,1984; the new material is to be published in a supplementary volume to *Inscr.*).

Turquoise⁴ was the magnet that attracted the Egyptians for many centuries to the mountainous region of Southern Sinai. We know about their interest there from the IIIrd Dyn. on (Beit-Arieh 1984: 41). From the Old Kingdom there is plenty of evidence for Egyptian mining activities in Maghara, not far from Serabit el-Khadem (Beit-Arieh 1984: 46).

In the XIIth Dyn. Serabit el-Khadem became the new mining centre for the expeditions, and the line of kings, who left their traces there, extends up to Ramses VI (LÄ s.v. Serabit el-Chadim, 867).

Apart from a nearby small Ghassulian (Chalcolithic) miners' settlement (Beit-Arieh 1984: 35), nothing suggests any presence of locals at the site previous to the Egyptian expeditions, but then Semitic workers must have participated in these activities (Beit-Arieh 1984: 48).

At first sight the plan of the temple looks like an uncomplicated string of rooms and courts, lined up one behind the other, leading to two rock-hewn caves. But the functions of the various elements are unclear. Petrie's designations are based on superficial and subjective material and don't contribute to their understanding. In a very important article published recently by R. Ventura in Hebrew (Ventura 1987)⁵, a number of serious problems and contradictions regarding the common understanding of the plan and its development are pointed out for the first time. No solutions are given ("New ideas are already being examined, but it will take more time and research in situ until final conclusions will be reached." Ventura 1987: 651), but one of the observations suggests that not all of the complex was sacred and large parts may have had profane functions (Ventura 1987: 651f.).

The sanctuary must apparently be located in the rearmost part - the larger one of the two caves (T; cf. PLATE I,1). The wall inscriptions there are of private context (*Inscr.* nos. 83,94), therefore Giveon

suggested that this "Cave of Hathor" was originally planned as the tomb of an Egyptian official⁶, while at the same time, during the XIIth Dyn., the adjacent "Cave of Sopdu" (which has in fact nothing to do with this god, LÄ s.v. Sopdu: 1108) served as the sanctuary. The tomb was, however, never used as such, and instead the cult was transferred there (Giveon 1974: 103, Giveon 1978: 778). It remains open, why for all that the inscriptions have never been altered.

Each cave had an ante-room and an entrance-court in front (S,R;V,W). This small complex was approached by an alley of inscribed stelae, just north of the later constructions. The so-called "Shrine of the Kings"(BB) was integrated in this approach. According to Ventura its reliefs connect it especially with Ptah, whose presence at Serabit is certainly founded on his patronage of work and craftsmanship (Ventura 1987: 649f.).

Significant building activities were again undertaken by Thutmose III and Hatshepsut. Besides the intriguing room Z, whose function is completely obscure, they erected the edifice consisting of room L, court M and the pylon in front⁷. This created a remarkable constellation of two structures one opposite the other, with a third one (Z) in between. When the long line of rooms from K to C was added to the west of L by the kings Amenophis II, Thutmose IV and Amenophis III, the whole complex was again entered from the west, and the L-M-pylon-structure, now part of this string, actually passed through in the wrong direction.

It is not clear, when the joining parts N-Q and X-Y were added. The names of Ramses II, Ramses IV and Ramses VI appear on the walls, but they could refer to reconstruction works of already existing structures. After Amenophis III had surrounded the whole complex by a crude temenos-wall, two more rooms were added in the XIXth Dyn. (A,B). (For a detailed description cf. Ventura 1987 against LÄ s.v. Serabit el-Chadim and Petrie 1906: 72-95).

It is not the aim of this paper to deal with these questions at full length. At that, the purely Egyptian character of the architecture is out of doubt. The continuous extension of the complex is typical for Egyptian temples functioning for a long range of time - in this case seven centuries.

As to the nature of the cult, Petrie wanted to understand it as Semitic, and saw in the goddess of the temple, the "Lady of Turquoise", Ashtarothe or Ishtar (Astarte; Petrie 1906: 186-193). Černý, however, has shown that this is not acceptable: "Summing up the whole of the material we may

⁴ The Egyptian word for turquoise, *mḥk3.t*, was frequently mistranslated as 'malachite', the raw material for copper. This original translation has recently been supported again by Iversen 1984 (against Loret 1928, Lucas 1962: 401, *Inscr.* II : 10f.)!

⁵ Dr. Ventura has kindly informed me that an article about this topic in English is going to appear in *Israel Exploration Journal*.

⁶ Egyptian burials outside Egypt must have been extremely exceptional cases. The importance of a proper Egyptian burial is dramatically expressed in the story of the roughly contemporary adventures of Sinuhe.

⁷ The observation that this pylon is related to the construction west of it and has its outer façade to the east, and not the opposite, is a central point in Ventura's article. The pylon is asymmetrical to the rooms east of it, but in perfect harmony with M and N. These are known to have been built by Thutmose III, who would then have covered his pylon, had the west side been its front (*Inscr.* II : 38)! Two stelae were erected west of the pylon with their inscriptions facing eastward (*Inscr.* nos. 175,176). The west side of the pylon bears the relief of an offering scene, which fits to an inner side (*Inscr.* nos. 194,269). On the other hand, a block with the scene 'Pharaoh smites his enemies' was found and could be assigned to the eastern side (Giveon 1978: 58).

confidently assert that there is no evidence at Serabit to show that the ritual of the temple differed in any way from that usual in Egypt itself. Among the large mass of inscriptional evidence from the private stelae and the religious texts and representations on the temple walls there is no hint that the worship of the gods in this remote spot differed in any way from that customary in the home land." (*Inscr. II*: 50f.)

According to the unequivocal testimony of the inscriptions and finds, the goddess of Serabit el-Khadem was the Egyptian Hathor. She was represented there in anthropomorphic form, on column capitals human-headed with cow ears, and as a cow (Giveon 1974: 102). The cave which functioned as her sanctuary (be it T or U), is "a miniature shrine of a type well known in Egypt" (Giveon 1978: 63). A cult cave may generally be regarded as "unegyptian", but in connection with Hathor, it is indeed well known. I am referring to the West-Theban tradition figuring the Hathor-cow coming out of a mountain. She was venerated there in caves, both natural and artificial (Naville 1901; Naville 1907: 63-67, XXVII). By placing the goddess in the mountain, the mining workers may also have related her to their own working conditions in the mines.

Since the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions from Serabit el-Khadem refer to a "Baalat", one is reminded of Hathor's identity with "Baalat, Lady of Byblos" (cf. 1.8.1). In Serabit we can assume that the Semitic workers, who joined the Egyptian activities, addressed the goddess in a form familiar to them and called her Baalat.

There are, however, also examples of Semites addressing her as Hathor (Giveon 1981). This could hardly be conceivable, had the "Lady of Turquoise" been a local goddess with the Egyptians' reference to her as Hathor being secondary. When they came to the place, they found it to be properly connected with Hathor, who was already known to them as "Lady of Foreign Lands". Thus, she became connected with the "Turquoise Land", turquoise, and precious materials from remote places in general (Giveon 1978; Stadelmann 1967: 2 n.2).

Only to Hathor can a cult be verified at Serabit el-Khadem. Other gods, who are frequently mentioned in the inscriptions, are Soped (Sopdu), known as "Lord of Foreign Lands" and "Lord of the East" (*LÄ. s.v. Serabit el-Chadim*, 867; *Inscr. II*: 42), Ptah (*LÄ. s.v. Serabit el-Chadim*, 867), Thot, who can also bear the epithet "Lord of Foreign Lands" (*LÄ. s.v. Serabit el-Chadim*, 867; *Inscr. II*: 43), and the deified IIIrd Dyn.-king Snofru (for his deification and occurrence at Serabit cf. Ventura 1985; *LÄ. s.v. Serabit el-Chadim*, 867). Finally it seems that Ramses IV referred to a certain part, which he added or restored (P, Q or R, Ventura 1987: 651) as his *ḥw.t nt ḥḥ n-rnp.wt*⁸ (*LÄ. s.v. Serabit el-Chadim*, 866; Helck 1971: 444; *Inscr. II*: 189, no. 276). The link between the Hathor cult and the royal mortuary cult points again to Theban tradition (*LÄ. s.v. Totentempel III*, 710).

⁸ "This expression, which was once thought to have been used only for mortuary temples, was, in fact, applied to any temple in which the cult of the king was observed, even if the temple was dedicated, in the first instance, to the chief god of the area." (Spencer 1984: 26)

1.2 Timna

Excavated by Beno Rothenberg in 1969, 1974 and 1979 (Rothenberg 1972, 1983/84).

The situation in Timna is very similar to Serabit el-Khadem. Egyptian working expeditions, who came here to exploit copper mines, erected a sanctuary. But Timna was occupied later than Serabit el-Khadem and for a much shorter period. The first king whose traces have been found in the temple was Sethos I^{9,10}, followed by Ramses II, Merneptah, Sethos II, Tausret, Ramses III, Ramses IV, Ramses V.

The site had been occupied in the Chalcolithic Period (stratum V), and was then deserted for two millennia. - After the Egyptian presence (strata IV and III), a Semitic cult was installed in the new temple (stratum II). In the 1st century AD the site was occupied for the last time.

The sanctuary consisted in its first phase (str. IV) of a court, 9 x 7 m, built against a gigantic vertical sandstone formation, known today as "Solomon's Pillars". A shrine, 2.7 x 1.7 m, was built against this natural rear wall, with a niche carved in the rock above it, and two pillars with Hathor-capitals supporting architraves. Egyptian incense altars and two offering tables of sandstone were found in this level.

This structure was destroyed, possibly during the reign of Sethos II and rebuilt under Ramses III (str. III; PLATE I,2), reusing the old elements. The court was enlarged (9 x 9 m) and laid out with a white floor of crushed debris. An earthquake destroyed the temple, and it seems that it was then temporarily abandoned.

When it was rebuilt again (str. II), it was significantly changed. Representations of Hathor and Egyptian inscriptions were effaced, a row of masseboth was erected (partly composed of broken Egyptian elements), and a stone bench installed. The place may have been roofed by a tent. The most intriguing find was a gilded copper snake. Rothenberg concludes: "There are convincing reasons to relate this tent-sanctuary to the Midianites..." (Rothenberg 1972: 151).

The finds from strata II, III, and IV number about 10,000 objects. Egyptian vessels of pottery, stone and alabaster, faience and glass objects, scarabs and seals, a stone sphinx, statuettes of cats, parts of sistra and menat-counterweights, and of course the two Hathor-pillars and numerous fragments of Hathor as a human-headed goddess with cow ears, leave no doubt about the Egyptian character of the temple and its obvious dedication to Hathor.

⁹ The evidence for Sethos I (Giveon 1969) was doubted by Schulman (Schulman 1976: 126 n.2; Rothenberg 1983/84: 93 n.39, however *ibid.* 104 n.57), but in 1984 restoration works revealed an additional faience fragment with a pair of his cartouches (Avner 1984).

¹⁰ A fragment of a building block shows traces of a cartouche of a Thutmose king. K.A. Kitchen suggests therefore tentatively to understand stratum IV as a Thutmose chapel (Kitchen 1976; cf. Rothenberg 1972: pl. 76). Schulman seems to contest this too and suggests Ramses II as an alternative reading (according to Leclant 1979: 402f.).

Although the separation of the finds from strata II to IV must have been somewhat problematic (Rothenberg 1972: 152), there was enough evidence for Rothenberg to declare that "In Timna, according to the evidence in the temple, the Midianites and the Amalekites, the indigenous inhabitants of the area, seem to have become some kind of 'partners' not only at work, but also in the worship of Hathor." (Rothenberg 1972: 183) This corresponds well to the Canaanite participation in the Serabit el-Khadem activities.

The architecture of Timna too can in principle be compared to the very core of the temple at Serabit el-Khadem - the small cave U ("of Sopdu") with a two-columned portico and a small court in front. But whereas there more and more structures had been added, Timna was never significantly enlarged. Its simplicity actually hardly permits to call it a temple; it was no more than a rather simple chapel, a rock-shrine, to Hathor.

Another remarkable parallel is the fact that Hathor was in Timna called "Lady of Turquoise"! A title like "Lady of Copper", as one would expect, never occurs. This must have been a fixed epithet to the goddess that proved good at Serabit and was taken over by the Timna expeditions, who found themselves in a very similar situation (Givon 1978: 67).

1.3 Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir)

1.3.1 Fosse Temple

Excavated by James L. Starkey and Lankester Harding in 1934-38 (Tufnell 1940).

This temple is extraordinary in that it was not erected in the city area on top of the mound, but down in the fosse (north-western corner) that had surrounded the mound during the MB-period. The fosse had fallen into disuse, and the temple was founded on its fill (Tufnell 1940: 20). O. Tufnell therefore wrote that it served a subsidiary cult only, "tolerated by the authorities and attracting many devotees of the poorer class. The center of the official cult, whether of Egyptian or local design, is probably to be found in the mound itself." (Tufnell 1940: 10)

The first structure dates to LB I, during which period Thutmose III brought Palestine under Egyptian domination (Tufnell 1940: 20f., 24). It consisted of a Knickachse-type¹¹ sanctuary (10 x 5 m), with two stone bases for columns in the main room and two adjoining rooms to the north and west. In the

¹¹ According to common practise I use the German termini technici as they can be found e.g. in Wright 1971: 18f.

middle of the southern room was a shrine made of mud with three projections. Its location was never changed in the following building phases.

After the demolition of structure I, the temple was rebuilt on a new plan, perhaps under Amenophis III (Tufnell 1940: 22,24) and lasted through the following Amarna Period (LB II).

Common features to phases II and III were rows of benches in the cella for placing offerings, three niches in the east wall, stone bases for wooden pillars, and numerous favissae, filled with pottery, jewellery and animal bones. The sanctuary in phase II was a four-columned square cella (10 x 10 m), the shrine made of stone, with an entrance chamber to the north and an adjoining room to the south with mud benches and one of stone, similar to the shrine in the cella (Ottosson 1980: 86).

The third structure (PLATE I,3), lasting until the reign of Merneptah or Ramses III (LB III/IA I; Tufnell 1940: 23f.), preserved this plan, but added a second adjoining room in the south. The shrine was enlarged and plastered over. This temple was burnt down during the destruction of the whole city.

The temple was literally stuffed with pottery, many lamps and other small objects, among which Egyptian imports and stylistic influence were predominant. On the shrine were found ivory-, alabaster-, faience- and glass-objects, jewellery, scarabs and seals. Influence from the Aegean, Northern Syria and Mesopotamia was represented as well, and such a conglomerate of imported objects of different origin is a most typical feature for Canaanite temples of this period.

There is no evidence at all that the cult was any other than local-Canaanite. Figurines of bronze and pottery and possibly a primitive Phoenician inscription on a vase may tentatively suggest a dedication to the local deities Reshef and Elath (Tufnell 1940: 24f.).

From the architectural point of view, it was argued that the four-columned square hall of phase II is typical for Amarna houses, and that the room arrangement of phase III forms a typical Egyptian three-room-group (Wright 1985: 236, fig. 33). The general reservations against the Amarna model will be discussed later (1.7). And what is called the Egyptian three-room-group seems to me such a basic architectural outline, that it would hardly require Egyptian know-how for such a plan to turn out elsewhere. Indeed, the same pattern does occur again in Tel Kition (temple level III), where it seems to predate the Egyptian conquest (Eisenberg 1977: 80). Other examples are found in Northern Syria (e.g. Tell Khwayra, Alalakh, Mari; Wright 1985: 240).

Ottosson's conclusion that the Fosse Temple was actually a potter's work shop, shall not be withheld (Ottosson 1980: 90ff.). He was particularly struck by the "tremendous abundance of vessels and sherds", but a great amount of objects was also found in the Timna sanctuary. And his interpretation lacks an explanation for all the ivory, alabaster, faience, glass and metal objects.

Thus, we find that the architectural evidence does not imply an Egyptian connection. What can be said about the cult hints at a typical Canaanite temple.

1.3.2 Mound Temple

Excavated by David Ussishkin in 1975-77 (Ussishkin 1978). (Starkey already hit the structure in a trial trench in 1937, but could not recognize its significance [Ussishkin 1978: 10].)

The renewed excavations in the acropolis area brought to light above the MB-palace (stratum VIII) a structure which is too badly preserved for defining its function (stratum VII). Above it, this edifice was found (stratum VI), lying under the Iron Age palace and partly covered by it.

It was built of bricks on stone foundations as a langräumige, probably tripartite structure with antechamber, main hall and cella. It extends on the slope with the ascent eastward in the direction of the cella (PLATE I,4). To the north were subsidiary units - rooms and open courts. The main room contained two column bases. A well hewn stone slab staircase, flanked by diagonal stone parapets and two wooden columns, which may have supported a canopy, led up to the cella, which is itself badly preserved. It might have contained a column.¹²

Three small octagonal columns with square capitals (PLATE II,1), connected by "pilasters" to the eastern wall of the main hall, probably ca. 170 cm high, could be understood as an Egyptian feature (Ussishkin 1978: 14f., 25; Clarke, Engelbach 1930: 136f.; cf. also 1.6).

From out of stratigraphic context comes the segment of an "Egyptian-style" column (PLATE II,4), found already by Starkey (Ussishkin 1978: 22). It shows the grooved bonds, which lead on the top part of Egyptian column shafts over to the capital.

Plenty of Egyptian objects were found: alabaster objects, faience, beads, pendants, a scarab, etc. Among the pottery was also Mycenaean ware. A thin gold sheet shows a Canaanite goddess, nude, standing on a horse, with "Hathor-curls" and two lotus flowers in each hand (Ussishkin 1978: 21, pl. 8).

Ussishkin sums up the evidence and states: "It seems reasonable clear that the edifice was a temple, but it should be emphasized that this conclusion is based solely on circumstantial evidence; theoretically the building could have had a secular function." (Ussishkin 1978: 11) If it is a temple, it may appear very similar to the Beth Shean temples (VII and VI), which will be discussed in 1.7 (Ussishkin 1978: 24f.). For a cult to an Egyptian deity there is no evidence whatsoever.

¹²For an alternative interpretation of the plan cf. Kempinski 1978.

1.4 Jerusalem¹³

A small number of objects, which came to light north of the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem, when the Dominicans excavated the Byzantine Basilica of St. Stephanus, are related in a very concise abstract by G. Barkay to "a possible Egyptian temple located on the main road from Jerusalem northwards" and tentatively dated to the XIXth Dyn. (Barkay 1980).

The article unfortunately does not provide sufficient bibliography, but through the kindness and friendly help of Richard Beaud, O.P. and Jean-Baptiste Humbert, O.P. of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem, I was able to see almost all of the objects in question.

A marble plate, which has been interpreted as an Egyptian libation altar (by C. Mommert?), looks typically Byzantine. Already L.H. Vincent wrote about this interpretation: "Force est bien de sourire de l' 'autel de libation égyptien' (sic!) rêvé par M. Mommert" (Vincent, Abel 1926: 775 n.1, fig. 323). The "offering table with three sunken compartments made of limestone" is in Vincent's publication a "coffret reliquaire" from the basilica (Vincent, Abel 1926: 797, fig. 341).

Positively Egyptian are a small serpentine statuette, found in 1975, two alabaster vessels (all unpublished), and a small fragment of a funerary stela (Scheil 1892, he published the short inscription reversed. Published also, erroneously but better, in James 1966 [cf. Beth Shean, sic!]: fig. 98,2; 99,3). None of these objects provide, however, any indications for a temple.

Scheil informs that the excavations of the basilica revealed also "des chapiteaux de style égyptien (lotiformes?)" (Scheil 1892: 116). One of those is retraceable (PLATE II,6). It somehow found its way into a flowerbed near the adjoining Garden Tomb. It cannot be properly investigated in its present position, but it seems to fit to Byzantine "Kapitelle mit vollen Blättern" (Kautzsch 1936: 210), and I cannot find comparable Egyptian examples.

About the last item that is left from those listed by Barkay, "a dressed red stone", I could not find out anything.¹⁴

It can certainly be concluded that these objects are far from indicating an Egyptian temple north of Jerusalem.

¹³ In the last century a French traveller suggested that the Egyptian style monument called "the tomb of Pharaoh's daughter" in Jerusalem was an Egyptian temple, erected by King Solomon for his Egyptian wife (de Saulcy 1854: 220f.). The dating of the rock-hewn monolith is today disputed (Israelite Period or Hellenistic), but not its being a tomb! (Most extensive reference: Ussishkin 1986: 47-63)

¹⁴ Provided that it is not identical with the upper part of a small male Egyptianizing statue of red stone, which I was shown. Nothing could be said to me about its provenience.

1.5 Ai (et-Tell)

Excavated by Judith Marquet-Krause in 1934 (Marquet-Krause 1949).

The Acropolis Temple in Ai is (apart from Byblos) by far the earliest case of alleged Egyptian involvement in a Canaanite temple. We are dealing with the Early Bronze Age, a period plagued by uncertainty in chronology and ongoing scholarly disputes. Considerable disagreement prevails about the extent and nature of the Egyptian interest in Palestine during the three EB-periods. Any evidence we can gain is therefore the more significant, but also problematic to interpret.

The structure in area D was at first termed "palais" by the excavator. Its true function was first understood by Albright (Albright 1956: 76). It seems, however, that in its last phase (according to Callaway in EB IIIB, Callaway 1964) it was indeed turned into a residence, and the cult transferred to the Sanctuary in area A (Callaway 1972).

It consisted of a Breitraum-cella - a pillared hall, 20 x 6.6 m - possibly a side and a rear room, and a surrounding narrow corridor or ambulatory on three sides. To the east an entrance hall or porch can be assumed. (PLATE I,11)

The following features are cited to suggest an Egyptian connection (Callaway 1978: 52f.):

- impressive construction with brick-sized stones laid in mud-mortar, without a rubble core, faced with plaster and possibly painted;
- raised-top pillar bases, worked with copper saws (PLATE II,7);
- a group of alabaster vessels with cultic significance, found among other pottery and stone vessels in the Sanctuary A, but, as has been convincingly shown, they were transferred there from the Acropolis Temple, when the latter was turned into a residence (Amiran 1970).

J.A. Callaway, who resumed the excavations at Ai, believes that "Egypt did control Ai in some kind of political or economic relationship" and sees there her "imperialistic base" for strategic and economic interests in Canaan in EB IIIA (Callaway 1978: 47)¹⁵ Without entering the ongoing discussion, it must be pointed out that other scholars deny any contacts between Egypt and Palestine during EB III (not Lebanon-Syria; Ben-Tor 1982)! If the masonry techniques of the Acropolis Temple are indeed based on Egyptian models, it cannot predate EB III, because large scale stone building is introduced there with Djoser's pyramid complex.

Although there are no exact parallels - the Djoser temenos wall is dressed with fine panelled masonry of white Tura limestone, whereas plaster, like in the mastaba of Hesy, covers bricks, not a stone wall, and was painted according to mortuary practise (which can hardly be taken as peculiar);

¹⁵ Aside from the Acropolis Temple, including the vessels found in Sanctuary A, his only other evidence for Egyptian involvement in Ai would be the sophisticated engineering of a water reservoir. This however "cannot be proved at this time, because there are no other reservoirs known in Canaan in EB IIIA, nor are parallels to be found in Egypt." (Callaway 1978: 53)

and the column bases in Djoser's complex, which may be worked in the same technique as the pier bases in Ai, are never rectangular (Callaway 1978: 52f.; for the cutting technique cf. Clarke, Engelbach 1930: 131ff.); but still the idea of petrifying brick architecture originates at Saqqara, and the building methods of the Acropolis Temple are obviously exceptional among contemporary structures in Canaan (for the only comparable example cf. the "Hypostyle Temple" in Byblos, 1.8.1). On the other hand, its plan fits perfectly into the typical scheme for Canaanite temples of EB I and II (Amiran 1972: 9f.).

The Egyptian alabaster vessels are dated by R. Amiran to EB II (Amiran 1970). One of them imitates a Canaanite jar, another one has the form of a goat-skin tube. A comparable example is known only from Abydos. But it is this peculiar vessel which Amiran suggests to connect with the myth of Dumuzi, and to associate this deity with all EB temples of this architectural type (Amiran 1972). This is of course speculation, but it is equally clear that the presence of Egyptian objects in a Canaanite temple alone does not imply an Egyptian cult. Imported objects are in later times a very common feature of Canaanite temples.

Tempting as all these "Egyptian features" may be, they remain at least problematic. They do, certainly, not prove that the temple was built by Egyptian hands, nor that its cult was different from that of other Canaanite temples.

1.6 Shechem (Tell Balata) ¹⁶

Excavated by Ernst Sellin in 1926 (Sellin 1926: 309-311; Sellin 1927: 206-207; G.E. Wright 1965).

The main temple in Shechem was built in MB IIC (during the Second Intermediate Period; phase 1a), occasionally reconstructed in a very similar way (1b), and in LB I rebuilt on a somewhat different outline (2).

It was a very massive structure, a Langraum-cella with a twin-towered façade (PLATE I,5). This is a well known Canaanite building type, a fortress temple or "Migdol" (LÄ s.v. Migdol). According to D. Milson the plan was designed in standard Mesopotamian cubits (Milson 1987). The cult centered around masseboth, which were erected in front of the temple. It is assigned to Baal Berith (EAE IV, 1091f.).

¹⁶ In a remarkable and rather daring article G.R.H. Wright constructs an ancient Egyptian cult at Shechem as the basis of the local Joseph tradition (Wright 1983)!

In the first phase a single stone column stood in the entrance hall, i.e. between the two towers. The three fluted fragments shown on Sellin's photographs (Sellin 1926: Tf. 41 A,B; PLATE II,2 shows two of them joined together; the pieces have unfortunately disappeared;) may well belong to this column, since they have been found in the court in front of the temple; their stratigraphic context can, unfortunately, not be reconstructed (G.R.H. Wright 1965: 70). As G.R.H. Wright has shown, they can only be compared to the "Fluted (channelled, or cannellated) Column of Egypt, which flourished in the Middle Kingdom and apparently went out of use during the New Kingdom" (i.e. the so called "Proto-Doric Column"; G.R.H. Wright 1965: 71).

These fragments cannot be identical with those four (plus a plain one), which can today be seen at the site (G.R.H. Wright 1965: 68f.; PLATE II,3)¹⁷ These are polygonal with 16 facets¹⁸ (as opposed to 12 flutes, as far as can be deduced from the photographs), the concavity of which is so minimal, that they would not appear as clearly as flutes like on Sellin's photographs. "Eine durch eine Rille abgesetzte Krönung" (Sellin 1926: 313) is on Sellin's picture (Tf. 41 B) definitely different from the "crown" on Wright 1965: XX B. Moreover, the measurements are incompatible. Sellin's Tf. 41 B shows two joined fragments, the smaller one of which has about one-third the height of the lower part - as opposed to 37 cm for the shortest against 70 cm for the longest of the faceted fragments (G.R.H. Wright 1965: 69). It remains, thus, entirely obscure how these faceted fragments were related to the temple. Should they be connected with the six column bases in the cella (five of which have been found; "Auch die Säulen selbst waren verschwunden; aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach waren sie... aus Holz" Sellin 1926: 310f.)?¹⁹

What is important is that in their polygonal design, these fragments are just as Egyptian as the Fluted Column (Clarke, Engelbach 1930: 136-140). As a variation with "slight ridges between successive facets" demonstrates (Clarke, Engelbach 1930: 138, fig. 149), the distinction between facets and flutes is not clear-cut anyhow.

We have here an Egyptian architectural detail in a Canaanite temple with definitely local architecture and obviously local cult - a clear warning against overestimating the sporadic occurrence of foreign elements in temple architecture!

1.7 Beth Shean (Tell el-Husn)

Excavated by Alan Rowe in 1925/26 (Rowe 1930, 1940).

Beth Shean was during the late New Kingdom an Egyptian garrison town in Northern Palestine. One should therefore expect a strong Egyptian impact on this place.

Rowe related the temples he found there, in four almost consecutive strata on always the same place, to Thutmose III (str. IX), Amenophis III (str. VII), Sethos I (str. VI), and the two of stratum V first to Ramses II, later to Ramses III. Since his dating had to be revised, these assignments bear no historical support. According to Albright (Albright 1938), the dating has to be lowered:

IX: 14th century (Amarna-Age); VII: 13th century (Ramses II); VI: end of 13th and 12th centuries (Ramses III); V: 12th to 10th centuries (cf. also Fitzgerald 1940: 81; Wright 1941: 485).

Recent excavations by the Hebrew University (Yadin, Geva 1986) yielded evidence that what should be called stratum VIB (first half of 12th cent.) was violently destroyed, implying the end of the Egyptian presence! An independent stratum VIA above it covered the second half of the 12th century and the first half of the 11th century. This was followed by VB, second half of 11th cent., and VA, 10th cent. up to Sheshonq.²⁰

IX - The so called "Mekal Temple" has no particularly Egyptian elements. It appears as a compound of courts and precincts around a Langraum-cella. The southern part has been explained as a palace (Ottosson 1980: 64ff.).

Among the Egyptian objects was the Mekal stela, depicting Egyptian veneration of the local god (cf. 3.1).

The remains of str. VIII were too scanty to reveal the function of the structure.

VII - (PLATE I,6) This Langraum consisted of two southern entrance rooms or courts, both opening into a Breitraum-cella, from which a staircase led up to the adyton, with a small storeroom (?) on its side. In the cella were surrounding benches on three sides, a brick altar in front of the staircase, and two column bases.

Under the adyton objects with the names of Amenophis III and Hatshepsut were found. Other finds included different types of pottery, Egyptian designed objects, alabaster, faience, etc., and an Egyptian style stela depicting probably "Astarte of the Two Horns" (Ashtoreth Qarnayim) from the adyton (cf. 3.1).

VI - (PLATE I,7) After the destruction of stratum VII, the temple was rebuilt on similar outlines (Ottosson 1980: 44). In addition to the entrance room or inner court there was an outer court west of it, which opened, to the north, into a larger open area. The adyton with its altar, the staircase leading up

²⁰ For different datings, as well as for a detailed description of the temples, cf. Thompson 1970: 8-49.

¹⁷ Wright's statement, "However, the photographs and the general continuity in location seem to make it clear that one and the same group of material is in question" (G.R.H. Wright 1965: 69) is inconceivable to me.

¹⁸ Against Wright, I verified, at the originals, for all 4 pieces the same number.

¹⁹ The capital where Sellin saw "die ägyptische steil aufragende Doppelvolute" (Sellin 1926: 311, Tf. 39 B), has no similarity with any Egyptian capital design. It rather resembles a "rude Aeolic type capital" and "can have no connection with the typological study of these fluted column fragments." (G.R.H. Wright 1965: 69 n.9)

to it, and the altar in front of the staircase lay, now, in the middle axis of the temple. On both sides of the adyton were small store rooms (?). Among the objects from the adyton, were the figurine of a Canaanite goddess (gilded copper, ca. 10 cm; Rowe 1940: XXXV 10, LI A6) and the coloured stone figure of a hawk (Rowe 1940: 17, XXXV 8, LI A4).

There were, again, benches and two column bases in the cella. Two papyriform capitals, which were found just north of the temple, probably belonged to these columns (and perhaps also to those of level VII; Rowe 1940: 16, XXVI 20; PLATE II,5). Fragments of cornices, which Rowe related to stratum V, may also originate in this level, since they were found together with the capitals (James 1966: 17, fig. 95,4).

A door lintel plus two jambs from limestone with a hieroglyphic inscription of the commander Ramses-User-Khepesh, with the royal names of Ramses III (James 1966: fig. 92,93) are often connected to the temple. They were all found about 30 m away from it and may just as well come from the luxurious Egyptian-style house, which could have served as the commander's residence (Ward in James 1966: 161-163, 167-169). Indeed, none of the numerous inscribed stone fragments were found in the temple. "This suggests that the inscribed pieces were not for the most part used in the temple proper." (James 1966: 5). As Ward has shown, the religious contents of many of them do not contradict their use in private construction (Ward in James 1966: 163).

V - Rowe found in this stratum two temples close together, and related them to the temples of Ashtoreth and Dagon that are mentioned in the Bible (1 Sam 31:10; 1 Chr 10:10; Rowe 1940: 23,31). The northern temple is a Langraum with eccentric entrance and four columns. The southern one resembles a Four-Room-House. Ottosson believes that the latter was a palace and relates the cult objects, which were found there, to stratum VI (Ottosson 1980: 70ff.). These include an Egyptian style stela to the goddess Antit (Anat; cf. 3.1).

The temples of strata VI and VII have been reconstructed by Rowe on the basis of certain parallels with some minor sanctuaries in Tell el-Amarna. The chapels there do, indeed, sometimes consist of an anteroom, a court with benches²¹, and eventually two columns on the elevated, usually tripartite sanctuary, to which steps lead up (Peet, Wooley 1923: 92-108, 133f., XXIV-XXVII, XLI, XLII; Kemp 1984: 14-39; Kemp 1987: 30-36; PLATE I,8 shows chapel 525 as an example).

These chapels have in their turn been compared to a group of small temples clustered around the workmen's village of Deir el-Medinah (Kemp 1984: 30ff.). Among these, "chapel G" comes closest to the Beth Shean plans (PLATE I,9; the steps leading directly to the naos, not to an elevated part in front of it; the columns standing in front of the elevation, in the "salle hypostyle", not on it; Bruyère 1952: pl. I,VI compare against other examples Bruyère 1948: pl. 1-3).

This comparison can serve as a general example of how to evaluate architectural analogies. One has to distinguish between complex features of mainly functional nature, and those which can indicate

specific characteristics peculiar to a certain architectural tradition. There is nothing surprising, if the holiest part of a temple is elevated, and steps leading up will then be self evident. Neither is there anything particular in a pair of columns supporting the roof of a room. - On the other hand, the plan of chapel G exhibits the axiality that is most typical for Egyptian temple architecture: a long-drawn line of symmetrical courts and rooms, with a dominant middle axis leading gradually to the holiest part. The Beth Shean temples VII and VI lack this essential characteristic; they are rather square, and had to be entered round the corner. - Another indicative feature is the typical Egyptian door ground plan with recesses for the fringes. Especially the door installation to the sanctuary was not incidental at all, since the proper concealment of the cult statue was of great significance. In Beth Shean the doors were worked without attention to the Egyptian model.

What makes the Deir el-Medinah chapels comparable to the Beth Shean temples are superficial similarities. More essential features do not recur there.

Returning to Amarna, one has to bear in mind, that this was for Egypt an exceptional phenomenon in every respect! The spiritual concepts that underlay its physical features were but a passing episode. On the other hand there are hardly any other sites left where urban architecture is preserved. Leaving the Deir el-Medinah analogies aside, it is therefore difficult to say, how far Amarna architecture was based on older patterns and if and how it continued to exist later on. One should be very careful when drawing parallels on Amarna models, and it is, in my opinion, impossible to reach any safe conclusions based on such comparisons.

R. Givon goes as far as to invert the possible influence, and relates the relevant buildings in Amarna to Canaanite prototypes (Givon 1978: 25).

Amarna lay some decades behind, when the stratum VII-temple was built, and more than a century, when it was rebuilt (VI).

Ottosson argues that the cella must have been roofed like the adyton, because the mud-brick installations could not have withstood the climate (Ottosson 1980: 44). This contradicts Rowe's reconstructions, but the main chapel at Amarna was also completely roofed (Kemp 1987: 32). Busink reconstructs the temples in a local, Canaanite style, incorporating some Egyptian elements (Busink 1970: 411ff., fig. 109,113). This seems to me the preferable solution.

As for the four-columned Langraum of stratum V, it is true that a four-columned square hall is typical for Amarna houses. But it would definitely drive comparisons too far, would one relate every room with four columns to the Egyptian example, the more if the room is rectangular rather than square.

The cult in the Beth Shean temples was assigned by Rowe to the Canaanite deities Mekal and Astarte (Ashtoreth). He called the stratum IX-temple, where he found the Mekal stela, "Mekal temple" (Rowe 1930: 10ff.). About temple VII he wrote: "One of the deities of the temple of Amenophis III was undoubtedly the goddess 'Ashtoreth of the Two Horns'... No doubt the god of the temple was still Mekal..." (Rowe 1930: 19,21), and about temple VI, "... and was doubtless dedicated to Mekal (?),

²¹ Which are unknown in the large "classical" Egyptian temples

and also to Ashtoreth..." (Rowe 1930: 24). He assigned the stratum V-temples, with regard to his early chronology, first to Reshef or Reshef-Seth (= Mekal), resp. Antit-Ashtoreth, and after the "Philistine conquest" to Dagon and Ashtoreth (Rowe 1940: 23,31).

There can hardly be any doubt that the gods of all these temples were indeed Canaanite. The Egyptians, who were living in Beth Shean, worshipped them, as their stelae demonstrate. Direct evidence for their participation in the cult is provided by four model bread offerings, made of clay and stamped with the word *imny.t*, which denotes a permanent offering ("dauerndes Opfer, ständige Opfergabe", *Wb.* I, 83). They were all found close to the stratum VI-temple (James 1966: fig. 105).

An important conclusion can perhaps be drawn from an Egyptian cylinder seal, which was found in the southern temple of stratum V (an heirloom from the earlier temple?). Ramses II is shown shooting arrows to a target (copper ingot), with two captives tied to its pole. Opposite, is standing a Canaanite god (Rowe 1940: XXXVIII,3). R. Stadelmann interprets this scene as a Canaanite-Syrian ritual of the destruction of enemies under the guidance of Reshef-Mekal (Stadelmann 1967: 74f.; cf. II Kgs 13:14ff.). A remarkable adoption of local symbolic conceptions - and if it is true, as Stadelmann assumes, that the seal was given to the temple, a hint of the Egyptian respect for the Canaanite cult there!

1.8 Byblos (Gebeil)²²

Finds from Byblos confirm the deeply rooted and outstanding relationship between Egypt and this Levantine town from the IIIrd Dyn. on. The kings of the Old Kingdom sent votive offerings to the main temple. From the Middle Kingdom there is evidence that Byblos was not even regarded as a foreign possession, but rather as an Egyptian town! Her rulers carried the title of an Egyptian mayor (*ḥ3ty-ꜥ*), instead of *ḥq3-ḥ3s.wt* (*LÄ* I, 890; Helck 1971: 246). From the XVIIIth and XIXth Dyn. some fragments of Egyptian architecture have been revealed (Montet 1928; Dunand 1939/58; for a revised dating: Stadelmann 1967: 6f. n.2), e.g. two blocks with the cartouche of Thutmose III (see 2.3) and a monumental door-frame of Ramses II (Dunand 1939: XXVII, nos. 1317,1318,1320). Towards the end of the New Kingdom, the situation changed drastically (cf. Zeker-Baal's rude and self-reliant handling of Wenamun), and the last find directly connected with Egypt is the base of a statue of Osorkon II, XXIInd Dyn. (Dunand 1939: no. 1741).

²² The abundant evidence for Egyptian architectural influence in Phoenicia has been collected and intensively studied by Wagner 1980. The main body belongs to the Persian and Hellenistic Periods.

1.8.1 Baalat Gebal Temple

Excavated by Pierre Montet from 1921 to 1924 and then by Maurice Dunand (Montet 1928; Dunand 1939/58).

What Montet reservedly interpreted as an "Egyptian Temple" plus a "Syrian Temple" was the uppermost stratum of the temple complex of the Goddess of Byblos, founded in the Early Bronze Age and in use up to the Roman Period! Since the excavators did not establish a clear stratigraphy, the different building phases are extremely difficult to understand. Only recently a remarkable attempt to clarify the earliest strata has been made by M. Saghih (Saghih 1983).

She labelled the structure following "bâtiment XVII" and corresponding to EB III (resp. the IIIrd and IVth Dyn.) "Hypostyle Temple", on the basis of her "hypothetical reconstruction" of a hypostyle hall as its outstanding feature (Saghih 1983: 42,106,130, pl. XII; PLATE I,10).

Most interesting is the masonry of this building: "hammer-dressed stones laid horizontally in imitation of brick-bonding". Brick construction is completely unknown in Byblos, and this masonry is "certainly foreign to the Byblite stone technique" (Saghih 1983: 125f.). Indeed, the only known building where a very similar technique was used, is the Akropolis Temple at Ai (from the same period! cf. 1.5; Saghih 1983: 120,130). The possible Egyptian background of this masonry has been discussed there. Its very appearance at Byblos can support this connection.

The following structure, from the Vth/VIth Dyn., "bâtiment XL", was a much more complex compound. Its two façades are related by Saghih to the valley temples of the Vth Dyn., especially Sahure with - like in Byblos - one façade to the east and one to the south (Saghih 1983: 121,131, pl. XIV-XVI). This seems to me a little far-fetched, since it suggests itself that a valley temple should have access from the river as well as from the land side. The motive for the second entrance-façade at Byblos need not have anything to do with that.

Another comparison is made by Saghih between the priests' lodgings at Giza (Khentkaus tomb) and the northern rooms of "bâtiment XL", provided that these had indeed such a function (Saghih 1983: 121).

Certainly egyptianizing, is a cornice with uraeus-frieze (Saghih 1983: 121,131, pl. IX-3, XVI; today in the Beirut Museum on top of the Ramses portal [cf. supra], where it doesn't belong), which is dated by Saghih with some reservation before the end of the Old Kingdom, and thus related to this stratum. The same piece has however also been dated to the first half of the 5th century B.C. (Wagner 1980: 47 no. 43)! The uraei are not on top of the cornice, but carved in it - according to the well attested tendency of the Phoenicians to alter and modify foreign elements (Wagner 1980: 178).

From then on, the Baalat Gebal Temple assumed a typical Byblite/Canaanite plan (Saghieh 1980: 125). It seems that it remained virtually unchanged until Roman times! Only from the Persian Period do we know about some restoration work under Yakhomilk (incorporating egyptianizing features, Wagner 1980: 16-26).

Even more interesting than its architecture is the cultic side of this main temple of Byblos. We know with certainty that it was dedicated to the "Lady of Byblos", "Baalat Gebal", and that this goddess was identified with the Egyptian Hathor.²³ Numerous votive offerings, including golden Hathor masks, testify to this from the earliest times (Wein, Opificius 1963: 14). Even in Egypt Hathor appeared as "Lady of Byblos" (earliest reference: CT I, 262b; *LÄ* I, 889f. n.9; cf. also 2.2). And still in the Persian Period, on the Yakhomilk stela, Baalat is depicted in a purely Egyptian manner, identical with Hathor (Wein, Opificius 1963: Tf. 41; Montet 1928: 41ff., fig. 54).

It is unclear, whether this "Lady of Byblos" was originally the local Baalat and secondarily, though very early, identified by arriving Egyptians with Hathor, or if they brought Hathor from Egypt, who was then addressed by locals with a familiar name (discussed by Stadelmann 1967: 11). But aside from the Hypostyle Temple (the reconstruction of which is too uncertain to allow definite conclusions, but if it is correct, it could have been an Egyptian building), the Baalat Gebal Temple was never an Egyptian temple, and its cult must certainly have been local.

1.8.2 Reshef Temple

Excavated by M. Dunand 1933-38 (Dunand 1939/58).

The older structure, dating to the Early Bronze Age, was termed "temple en L" by Dunand on account of its outline. Nothing there suggests Egyptian influence, besides the presence of an "obelisk" in the cella, and a second one in the front court. These "obelisks" became a dominant feature in the MB-rebuilding, which is therefore called the "Obelisk Temple". They are at some length discussed by Wagner 1980: 112-117. He states that only the smaller part of the standing stones in the court of the Obelisk Temple have actually the form of obelisks (one of them with a hieroglyphic inscription). Another "true" obelisk stood outside any temple in a small street (Wagner 1980: 114 n.20; Dunand 1958: XXXVI-1).

The community with the irregularly hewn stones lets one think about masseboth, rather than

²³ Who also appears at other remote places supplying raw materials, like Sinai, Timna, Punt (Stadelmann 1967: 2ff.).

Egyptian solar conceptions (like Wein, Opificius 1963: 23f.). And this is also Wagner's interpretation. Although their form may be taken from small obelisks flanking Old Kingdom tomb entrances, their function has nothing to do with Egyptian obelisks: "Die phönizischen Obelisksen unterscheiden sich in ihrer Bedeutung wesentlich von den ägyptischen: Sie sind im Zusammenhang mit den in Phönizien und Palästina weit verbreiteten kultischen Steinmalen - den Betylen oder Masseben - zu sehen, die verschiedene Funktionen und unterschiedliche Formen haben und z.B. als Kultidole, Grabsteine oder Votivmale verwendet werden." (Wagner 1980: 116)

The "obelisk", rather betyl, in the cella of the "temple en L" was just as well such a typical cult object (Wagner 1980: 191), and not related to the sun-sanctuary of Ne-user-Re (as suggested by Parrot, Chéhab, Moscati 1977: 47f.).

1.8.3 "Enceinte sacrée II"

Excavated by M. Dunand 1933-38 (Dunand 1939/58).

Besides the two large temples for Baalat and Reshef, there were three or four small sanctuaries in the city (Wein, Opificius 1963: 22). One of them, from the Middle Bronze Age, contains two column bases (Dunand 1958: 653f., XIV-1; PLATE II,8), which Wagner relates to Egyptian examples from the Old and Middle Kingdoms (Sahure, Unas, Mentuhotep - Wagner 1980: 108 n.31[on p. 187], pl. 8,2). However, these are all flat. The Byblos examples look different, because they are higher, but the principle may be the same.²⁴

"Ob demnach der ägyptische Einfluß in diesem Heiligtum ein bedeutendes Ausmaß erreicht, läßt sich jedoch nicht entscheiden, denn Schaft und Kapitell müssen nicht ägyptisierend geprägt gewesen sein." (Wagner 1980: 108)

²⁴ In Jecquier's 4-base-type scheme (Jecquier 1924: 174) they could be classified between the first type (straight cut sides but flat) and the second (high but rounded sides).

PLATE I

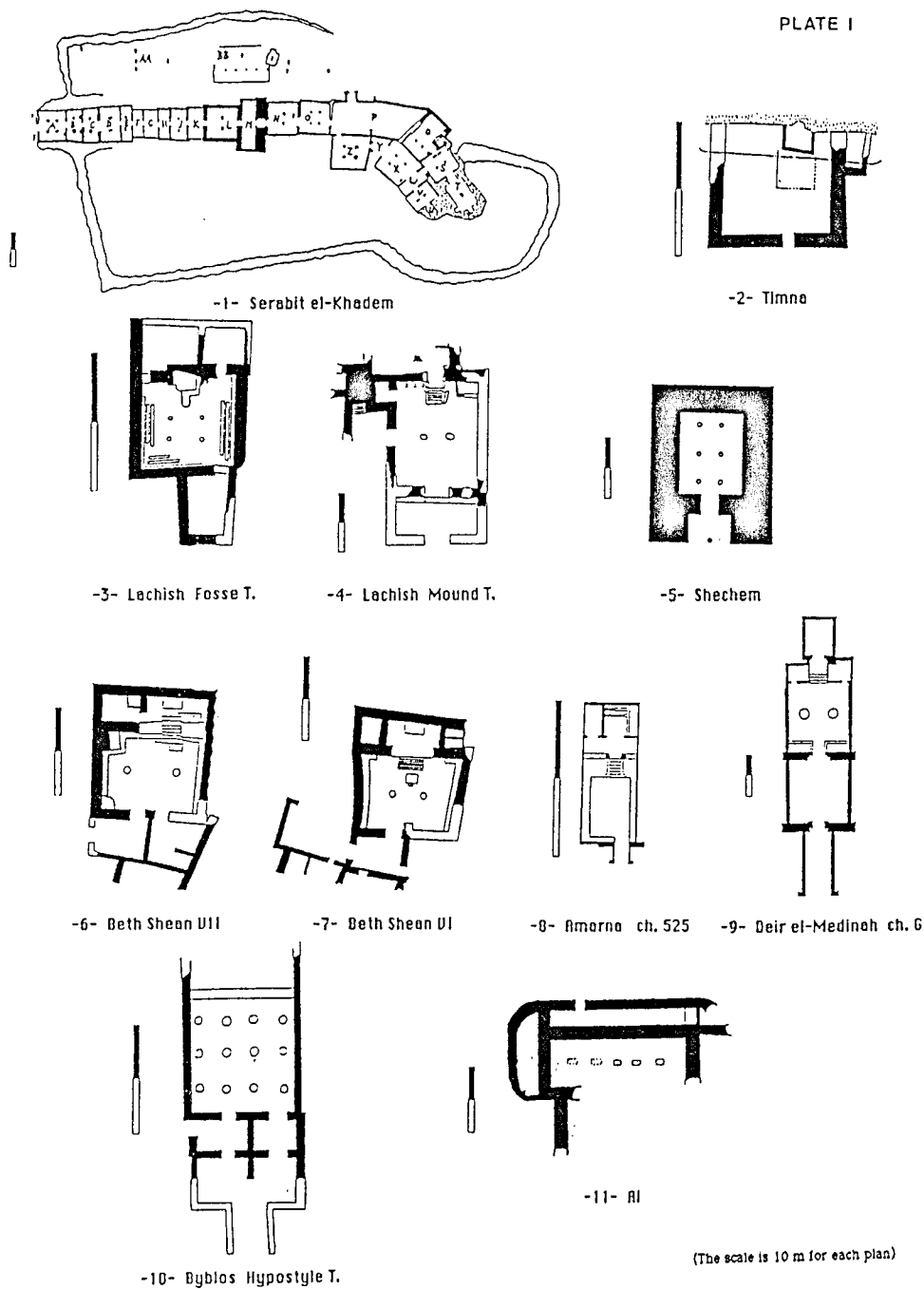
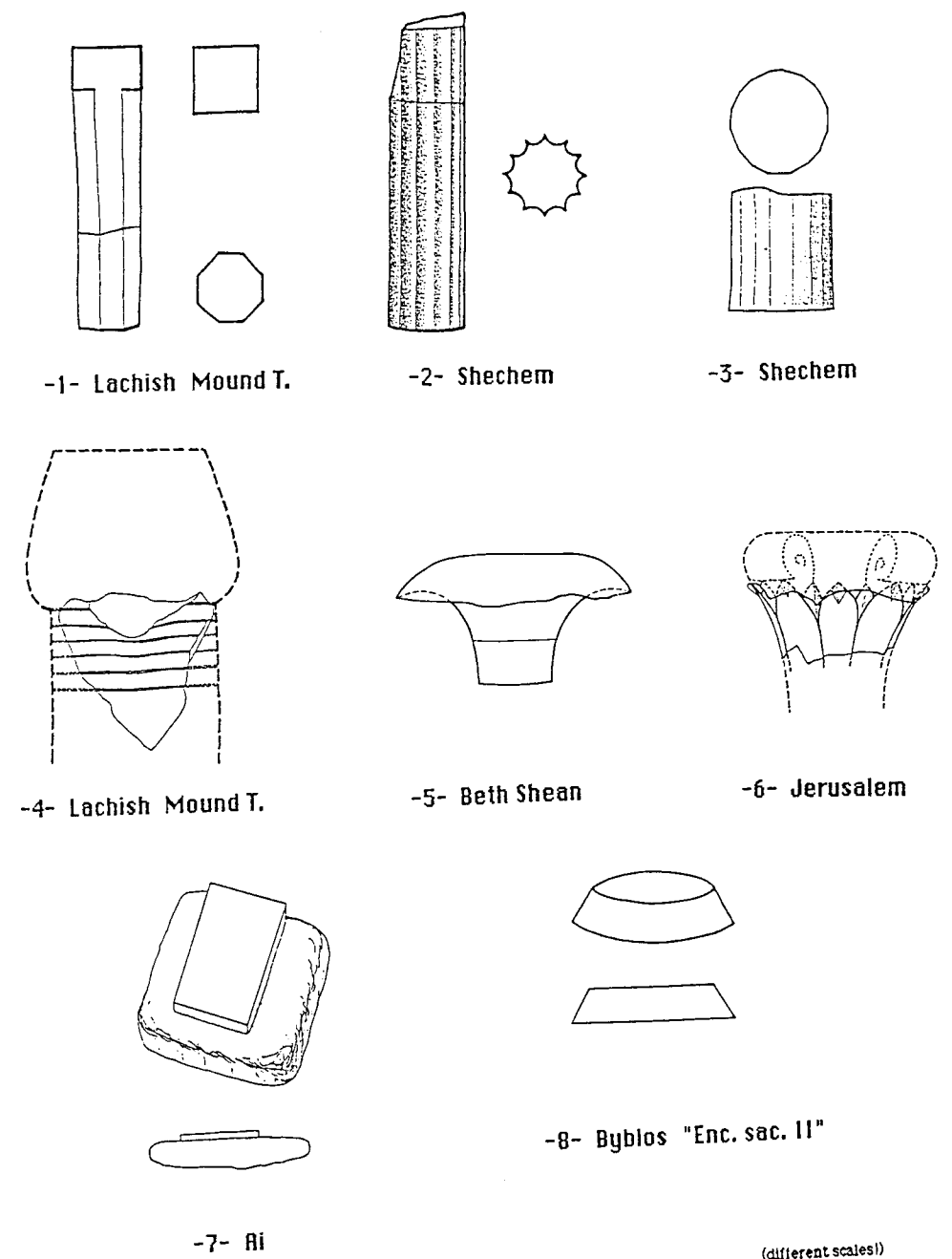


PLATE II

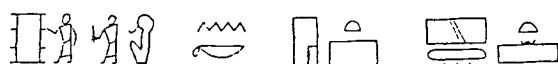


2 Textual Evidence

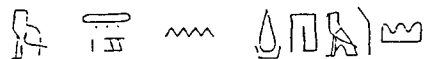
2.1 Papyrus Harris I

Papyrus Harris I (B.M. 10053; facsimile: Birch 1876; hieroglyphic transcription: Erichsen 1933), a testament-like document for Ramses III, contains two passages of interest for our topic:

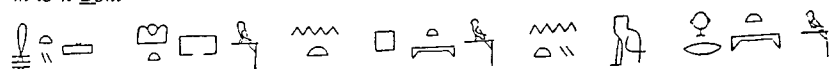
2.1.1 Gaza



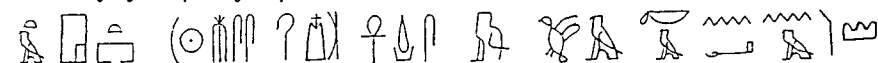
qd.i n.k Ø-*hw.t* št3.t



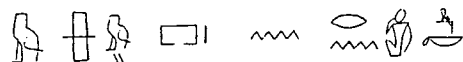
m-t3 n-D3hi



(m-)²⁵mity 3_h.t nt-p.t nty m-*hr.t*



(m-)²⁵t3-*hw.t* (R^c-mss *hq3-lwnw*) | C.w.s. m-p3-(n-)Kⁿcⁿ



m²⁵-imy-pr n-rn.k



msy.i sšmw.k (m- 1)wr²⁶htp m-*hnw.f* ²⁷



(m-²⁵)Imn n-(R^c-mss *hq3-lwnw*) | C.w.s.

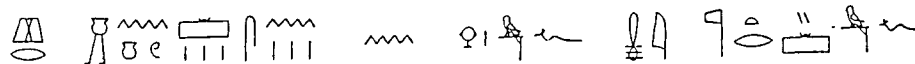
²⁵ The use of "m of predication" fits, here, to all the phrases describing the temple and the statue. Note the omission of the "m of place" (however: m-*imy-pr*) as opposed to the "m of place".

²⁶ wr does not function any more as a simple adjective in Late Egyptian. It seems to me that the sense is that the cult image was a monumental rather than a portable one, considering the following *htp m-*hnw.f**. wr can, of course, also be understood as "great, august" (Wb I, 327, cf. "I. Eigentlich" - "II. Übertragen"), or taken as determinative to sšmw, although it appears after the personal suffix.

²⁷ The *f* can only refer to the temple t3-*hw.t* although this is feminine; it is used here as the Late Egyptian neutral pronoun.



iw²⁸n.f² h3s.tyw nw-Rtnw



hr-in.w.sn n-*hr.f*²⁹mi-ntry.f

I built for you a mysterious house in the land of Djahy,
(as) an image of the horizon of heaven, which is in the sky,
(as) "The Temple of Ramses III in Gaza",
as a bequest for your name³⁰

I created your statue
(as) a big one³¹resting therein³²
(as) "Amun of Ramses III"³³

It is according to its²⁹ being divine
that the foreigners of Retenu are coming to it
with their tributes to its²⁹ front.

The term *hw.t* št3.t has been rendered as "château difficile d'accès" by P. Grandet (Grandet 1983: 110), taking *hw.t* as a fortress complex comprising a temple. I can see no reason to "admettre que le terme *hw.t* désigne ici bien plus qu' un simple temple, comme il est d'usage de le faire pour le Nouvel-Empire" (Grandet 1983: 110), apart from Grandet's hypothetical construction of a similar case in Nubia (pHarris 8,13; Grandet 1983: 108f.). Neither would I support his identification of this establishment with the str.

²⁸ Emphatic s_dm.f

²⁹ It is out of the question that the Canaanites might have taken their gifts before the cult image. This was concealed in the holy of holies and unattainable for ordinary mortals. The text clearly refers to these conceptions. The *f* can, therefore, not refer to sšmw, but must again aim at the temple as a whole, like in m-*hnw.f* (previous page n.27). Both ntry and hr are attested in such a use (Wb. II, 363,15; Wb. III,127,5). The idea is, that the locals approached the temple and handed in their tributes in front of it.

³⁰ Or: "... . It is 'The Temple of Ramses III in Gaza' as a bequest for your name." - as a uni-membral nominal sentence A-Ø (Groll 1967: 12ff.), which would be grammatically preferable, but disturb the sequence of m-clauses.

³¹ cf. previous page n.26

³² cf. previous page n.27

³³ Or: "... . It is 'Amun of Ramses III'" The construction is, this way or the other, certainly parallel to n.3

V-complex of Beth Shean (Grandet 1983: 111f.). It has been shown above (1.7) that this stratum postdates Ramses III and lacks Egyptian impact. On the other hand, nothing at all hints to a dedication of the preceding str. VI-temple to Amun.

The generally accepted identification of *p3-Kn^cn* with Gaza need not be doubted (*LÄ* s.v. *Gasa*; Helck 1971: 275f., 304). The expression should, to be sure, be translated as "the one (meaning "the city") of Canaan", and rendered *p3-(n-)Kn^cn*.^{34, 35}

This designation, as opposed to the Semitic name (*Gdt rn.f H3rw*, Annals of Thutmosis III, *Urk.* IV, 648), proclaims the prominent role of this town for the Egyptian province of Canaan. Gaza must have been the Gate to Asia for the Egyptians, due to her geographical position at the end of the 'Way of Horus'. It must, consequently, have been closely tied to Egypt, and functioned as the administrative centre, the capital, of the province (Helck 1971: 304). The scanty archaeological evidence from early Gaza is due to the very limited excavations there (*EAE* II, 108-117).

The language of pHarris underlines this central importance of Gaza by subduing her to imperialistic conceptions. The appellation of the temple, "The Temple of Ramses III in Gaza", stresses the cultic presence of the sovereign, and the name of the cult image, "Amun of Ramses III", connects him with the King of Gods, the god of the empire.³⁶ Most significant is the stress that is laid on the definite article in the designation of the temple. At this stage of the language its use emphasizes the singularity, the outstanding importance of this temple - as if there were no others worth mentioning!³⁷

No doubt is left about the purely Egyptian character of this temple. Its statue was a *sšmw*, a term that emphasizes the secrecy characterizing Egyptian cult images (Ockinga 1984: 41ff.) and being especially attributive for Amun. It is explicitly assured that it was permanently hidden inside (*hṭp m-hnw.f*; and not perhaps used for processions). The designation *hw.t št3.t* may also refer to this secrecy. Accordingly, the architecture must have been Egyptian as well: *mity šh.t* may hint at the conception of the pylon symbolizing the horizon (cf. the hieroglyph *šh.t*), and this phrase may describe the exterior appearance of the temple.

Most interesting is the claim that the local population acknowledged the significance of the temple, and delivered their gifts, or rather taxes imposed on them, to it. The erection of a temple was, of course, also a source of income for the institution of the Amun-temple at Karnak (*imy-pr n-rn.k*). This is the only known case, where such tributes were explicitly paid at a local Egyptian temple. In the following, it will be seen that this was not necessarily the usual procedure.

³⁴ This paradigm can appear identical in form with the definite article, (Groll 1984: 45f.).

³⁵ Not excluding the possibility that *p3-Kn^cn* can also refer to the country (Grandet 1983: 111 n.22) - then simply "the Canaan".

³⁶ The combination of royal- and Amun-cult occurs in the Theban mortuary temples of the New Kingdom (*LÄ* s.v. Totentempel III, 706f.).

³⁷ Note that *hw.t št3.t* is undefined and refers only to the architectural type of the edifice.

2.1.2 diversa

pHarris 11,11 mentions among the benefits for the Temple of Karnak nine cities of *H3rw* and *K3š* (*i.di pr- 3 w.s. r-pr it.f špsy Imn-R^c nisw-ntr.w Mw.t Hnsw ntr.w nb.w W3s.t m-imy-pr.w r-nhh d.t*; the summary at the end has only "9 cities of *H3rw*", 68a,2).

This has been interpreted as if Egyptian temples had been established in these towns (Mazar 1960: 205; Alt 1944: 221ff.; contra: Helck 1971: 444). If this had been the case, the papyrus would certainly not have failed to declare this explicitly and proudly. Such attributions were a purely economic matter, as is attested by the parallel case of three Asiatic towns, which Thutmosis III assigned to Amun: "... damit sie Abgaben für den Jahresbedarf an das Gottesopfer meines Vaters Amun leisten" (*Urk.* IV, 744,3-8). Therefore, this passage allows only the conclusion that the Amun-temple of Karnak profited from the tax income of these towns, just as from the people, cattle, land and materials, which are listed together with them. The following will be concerned with possible evidence for such payments.

2.2 Hieratic tax material - Tel Sera' (Tell esh-Shari'a)

The fortified complex from the 13th century at this Negev site was not a temple, but apparently the residence of the local governor (Oren, Netzer 1974). Its similarity with the XIXth Dyn. Egyptian residence at nearby Tell el-Far'a South suggests that it was an Egyptian edifice too. G.R.H. Wright sees, there, "an Egyptian style of design with Amarna echoes" (Wright 1985: 473). I include it here, because it contained, in the excavator's words, "some sort of sanctuary" (*EAE* IV, 1066). This assumption is based on Egyptian style pottery and imported objects, as well as animal bones, found in rooms and refuse pits, and resembling finds from the Fosse Temple at Lachish.

Most important, however, are short hieratic inscriptions on four partially complete bowls (plus one ostrakon and several small sherds) from around the end of the XIXth and beginning of the XXth Dyn. (published by O. Goldwasser 1984). In spite of their fragmentary condition, it seems clear that they are of administrative nature. They seem to register large amounts of grain. Some contain a date.³⁸

Since inscribed vessels can usually be interpreted as votive offerings, in Egypt as well as in Canaan, Goldwasser concludes that these bowls, while recording incoming tax payments from the local

³⁸ Some sherds from Lachish may be comparable, Goldwasser 1984: 85.

population, were offered to an "Egyptian religious institution", to which these taxes must have been directed (Goldwasser 1984: 84-86). She suggests that "This religious 'institution' may have been merely a cult object, a statue or tabernacle, housed in a local temple.... Hence the fact that a 'proper' Egyptian temple structure has not yet been found in Canaan should not disturb us, since such cult objects could have stood in any Canaanite temple, thereby converting it into an Egyptian religious institution." (Goldwasser 1984: 86)

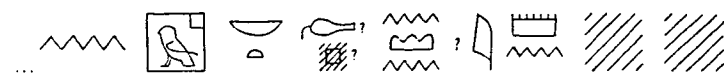
I find it difficult to visualize Egyptian cult performed on a foreign architectural stage. Egyptian cult was thoroughly defined in its forms and its symbols, and tightly embedded in the architectural frame. Equally problematic would be an Egyptian cult image placed in a Canaanite temple as the object of local-style veneration.³⁹

Actually, there is no need to look for an Egyptian religious institution at Tel Sera'. Referring back to the Asiatic possessions of the Amun-temple of Karnak (2.1.2), the Tel Sera' material can be compared, and taken as evidence for such payments to temple institutions in Egypt. Since a regnal year of Ramses III is most probably mentioned there, it may even be plausible that the payers, presumably one or more city-states in the area of Tel Sera', were among those 9 cities.

If the taxed grain was indeed used for the sustenance of the Egyptian military and administrative personnel in Canaan (Goldwasser 1984: 86), then the suggested purpose of the votive bowls may have been that of "vouchers", which were meant to be actually sent to the temple in Egypt, substituting there the receipt of the payments.

2.3 Statue of Minmesu - Byblos and Gaza

Min-msw, an architect of Thutmose III, enumerates on his large seated statue a list of temples where he directed the work (*iw rdi.n hm.f m-hr.i r-hrp k3.w(t) m-r.w-pr.w nw ntr.w nb.w*). The sites are listed in geographical order, from his home town Medamud northwards. After Tell Belamun, near the Mediterranean coast, follows a temple to "Hathor, Lady of Byblos", and right afterwards a temple to Amun, whose location has unfortunately broken away. (Drioton 1927: 52-56, line 22; *Urk* IV, 1443,20)



... n-Hw.t-Hr nb.t-Kpn n-Imn [...]

³⁹ As distinguished from local participation in Egyptian temple practice (cf. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1.1).

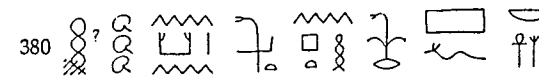
If we accept the apparently uncertain reading *Kpn*, then this will be the only undebatable evidence for an Egyptian temple at Byblos. In 1.8 it has been ascertained that the temple for the "Lady of Byblos" was of local design and was not essentially changed during the period in question. But two blocks, each bearing the cartouche of Thutmose III (*Dhwtj-ms nfr-hpr*), have also been hinted at (1.8). One of them was already found prior to the excavations northeast of the ancient town and immediately heralded as a relic of "the Egyptian temple at Byblos" (Wooley 1921, Montet 1928: 249, CLII; cf. Helck 1971: 444; for the second block: Dunand 1958: no. 13439, pl. CLV). Since no other evidence that could be connected with Minmesu's temple has come to light, we know nothing about its appearance and precise location.

Helck suggested to locate the following Amun-temple, the last one in Minmesu's list, at Gaza (Helck 1971: 444). Apparently the geographical order seems contradictory. But considering the conception of Byblos as an Egyptian town, not a foreign territory, it could be interpreted as the last (northernmost) of the Egyptian towns in the list, to be followed by the foreign, occupied city of Gaza. An Egyptian temple north of Byblos would hardly be conceivable, and in 2.1.1 an Amun-temple in Gaza has been verified for Ramses III. Minmesu's information could be taken as evidence for an XVIIIth Dyn. predecessor of the Ramesside temple.

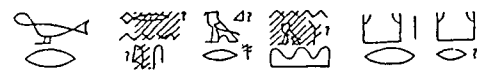
2.4 Kurkur ivories - Ashqelon

Among the numerous ivory objects discovered in the palace of 12th century Megiddo, were 3 plaques (one of them broken into several fragments), which probably decorated a box or the like. (Wilson in Loud 1939: 12f., pl. 63, nos. 379-382)

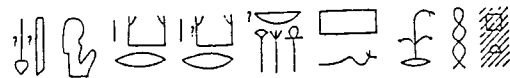
I read the text (well in accordance with Wilson) as follows (nos. 380 and 382 from the originals, 379 and 381 from the photographs in Loud):



... h^c.w n-k3 n-šm^c(y).t n-Plh rsy-inb.f nb-^cn^h-t3.wy



wr^c3 n-Isqrn Krkr

379 

... [Pt]h rsy-inb.f nb-nh-t3.wy Krkr m3(.t)-hrw

381 ...t w^c iqr 3h.t n-nb.f.st r^c-nb šm^c(y)[.t] n-Pt[h]

[rsy-inb.f nb-nh-t3.wy]

382 [w]r^c3 n-Isqrn Krkr m3(.t)-[hrw]



Taken together, the three pieces give with a fair degree of certainty the following titles plus name:

"the singer (fem.⁴⁰) of Ptah,
South-of-His-Wall,
Lord of Life-of-the-Two-Lands⁴¹
(and/of?) the Great Prince of Ashqelon,
Kurkur, justified of voice"

It has been suggested that wr^c3 n-Isqrn should be understood as another, previously unknown epithet of Ptah, in addition to rsy-inb.f and nb-nh-t3.wy, both of which relate the god to Memphis. This would then hint to a veneration of Ptah in that Canaanite town (Giveon 1978: 23; Wilson in ANET 263 and in Loud 1939: 12f.; Alt 1944: 219f.). There are, however, strong objections against this interpretation. The excavations at

⁴⁰ The sex is less doubtful than stated by Wilson (Wilson in Loud 1939: 13). The .t in šm^cy.t appears clearly enough in no. 380. The name-determinative in 379, a simplified sitting person, has the diachritic dot above that differs in Hieratic the sitting woman from the corresponding male sign. The simplification of many signs here is reminiscent of Hieratic.

⁴¹ Written with the lily and papyrus symbols. A designation of Memphis (Sandman-Holmberg 1946: 214f.).

Ashqelon are too limited in extent for argumentation (EAE I, 121-130; new excavations are in progress); but there are no hints at all, from any archaeological or textual material, for Ptah in Palestine. Moreover, the title wr^c3 denotes the secular chief of a foreign city-state and is unknown as a divine epithet (Wb. I, 329). Plaque no. 379 omits it, showing that it stands separate from the Ptah-titles, rather than constituting a part of them.

Consequently, it has been pointed out that Kurkur might have been at first a singer of the Memphite Ptah, and later for the ruler of Ashqelon (Helck 1971: 444; Weinstein 1981: 19). A parallel case - an Egyptian singer (hsy.t) serving the Prince of Byblos - is known from the report of Wenamun (2,68). This interpretation relates the genitival possession of šm^cy.t to both Ptah rsy-inb.f nb-nh-t3.wy (indir. genitive) and wr^c3 n-Isqrn (dir. genitive), while the two relationships would be diachronic. A slightly alternative suggestion would be to take the whole of šm^cy.t... t3.wy as nomen rectum and wr^c3 n-Isqrn as nomen regens. In other words, the servant of the ruler of Ashqelon was a "singer of Ptah, South-of-His-Wall, Lord of Life-of-the-Two-Lands", and this designation must have had more the function of a title, rather than describing the precise nature of Kurkur's occupation, in the light of the above mentioned unlikelihood of a Ptah cult at Ashqelon. Apparently the Canaanite Kurkur⁴² was trained in Memphis as a singer, and became, with the title she gained there, eventually employed at the court of Ashqelon.

Whether this was her home town or Megiddo, and why the plaques were found there, is difficult to answer and not relevant to the topic.

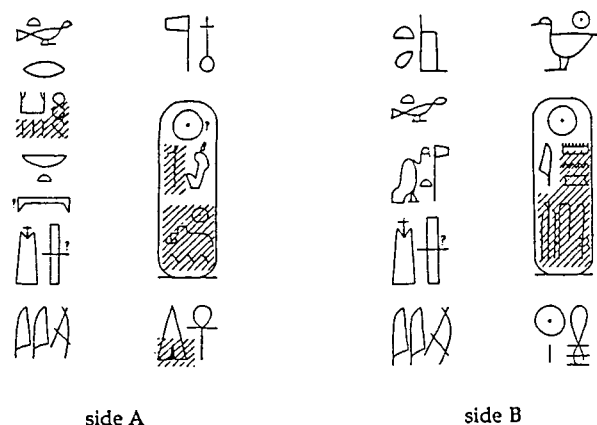
2.5 Foundation plaque - Apheq

A small faience tablet (3.8 x 2.4 x 0.9 cm) from Apheq with names and epithets of (probably) Ramses II and the goddess Isis is cited by R. Giveon as possible evidence for an Egyptian temple there (Giveon 1978B; Giveon 1978: 26f.).

The ink inscription is partly very badly preserved, and has faded even more since its discovery. Having compared the photographs in Giveon 1978B: pl. 52,2,3 with the original⁴³, I read:

⁴² The name is unEgyptian, and, accordingly, written in group writing (for the vocalization cf. Helck 1971: 559). Prof. Groll has directed my attention to the same name appearing in the Bible (I Kgs 5:11; I Chr 2:6) as "Calcol" כַּלְכֹּל, a "member of the guild of dance musicians" (Thus the correct translation of beney mahol, G. Wigoder 1986: s.v. Mahol)!

⁴³ For which I am indebted to Prof. Moshe Kochavi and Ms Esther Yadin.





A: *nfr nfr ([wsr]-M3^c.t-R^c [stp-n-R^c]) l di cⁿh*
mry wr.t-ḥk3[.w] nb.t-p.t imy(.t)-Iwn(.t)

"The Good God ([*wsr*]-M3^c.t-R^c [stp-n-R^c]) l, given life,
 beloved of the one Great-of-Magic, Lady of the sky, the one in Dendera (?)"

B: *s3-R^c (R^c-[ms-sw mry]-Imn) l mi-R^c*
mry Is.t wr.t mw.t-nfr imy(.t)-Iwn(.t)

"Son of Ra (R^c-[ms-sw mry]-Imn) l, like Ra,
 beloved of Isis the Great, mother of the god, the one in Dendera (?)"

The sign *iwn* has been recognized by Giveon only on side B, not on side A (where he suggests , which gives no sense here). The plaque seems to me showing the same group clearly enough on both sides. The first sign has the shape of a cross. The only sign coming close and giving good sense here, is  - as shortened writing for the fem. nisbe *imy.t*. *iwn* forms a number of place names in Egypt, namely: *Iwnw* - Heliopolis; *Iwn.t* - Dendera; *Iwny* - Hermonthis; *Iwny.t* - Esna; *Iwnw šm^cy.t* - Hermonthis and Thebes. (Wb. I, 54) Of all these places, Dendera is the one most closely connected with Isis. Giveon refers to a tradition locating her birthplace at the site of a temple to her, and, more generally, to her closeness to Hathor (Giveon 1978B: 189).

In the light of Weinstein's statement: "On Egyptian foundation deposit objects the town that is named in the inscription is always the one in which, or close to which the foundation deposit was located" (Weinstein 1981: 20), I conclude, therefore, with him that this object cannot refer to an Egyptian temple at Apheq.

This leaves us with the question how it came to be discovered at this Canaanite town. Egyptian presence there is well attested. Excavations have brought to light an Egyptian palatial building, which was destroyed in the second half of the 13th century (Beck, Kochavi 1983; Kochavi 1981: 75-86). The faience tablet was, however, found in a 10th century silo, which penetrated through the underlying strata into this palace. It can, therefore, not be excluded that the tablet came to Apheq well after the time of Ramses II. Did it ever fulfill its purpose as deposit for an Isis temple at Dendera? In Apheq it might have been used in some ceremonial context, for which it was, however, not intended originally. But on the other hand, I can see no reason why it should not have been brought there as a "keepsake, curio or the like", in spite of its lack of "intrinsic beauty or value" (Giveon 1978B: 189). Giveon himself remarks, "It is worn smooth at its edge and corners, as if from secondary use." (Giveon 1978B: 188)

2.6 Seals of priests ⁴⁴

R. Giveon lists seven scarab seals, which were found in Israel, as possible evidence for Egyptian cult in Canaan (Giveon 1978: 24). The particulars are not altogether free of inaccuracies. The title *it-nfr* belongs to royal seals of the XIIIth Dyn., introducing the king's father, not a priest (cf. Tufnell 1984: pls. LIVf.). Priestly titles that can be found are *wr-m3w*, *imy-r ḥw.t-nfr*, and, on an additional piece (Giveon 1976: no.12), *w^cb^c3*. Only two pieces specify the deity (Nekhet, Giveon 1978: no.4, [not 3!]; Sobek, Giveon 1976: no.12; Giveon's reading of his no.1 ["in the temple of Ptah in Thebes"] is entirely unfounded). None of the seals contains a place name; one (no.12) may be related to the Fayum, the home of the crocodile god Sobek (Giveon 1976: 132).

The opinion that these seals and others with the titles of officials, dating to the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period reflect an Egyptian administration of Palestine, is today seriously doubted. Those seals include the highest ranks of Egyptian officials, which one can certainly not expect in the provincial administration. Military titles on the other hand, are entirely missing. Since they all come from MB II B/C-tombs in Palestine, it seems most probable that their context is secondary and that they originate from robbed tombs in Egypt. (On this discussion cf. e.g. Weinstein 1975: 9f., n.74f.; Martin in Tufnell 1984: 147)

⁴⁴ I owe much gratitude to Ms Daphna Ben-Tor for friendly help and much useful information on the subject.

3 Interpretation

About twenty cases of alleged Egyptian temples have been investigated, ranging from the beginning of the Old Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom. It turned out that most of the textual evidence may have been simply misunderstood. Some of those temples are to all intents and purposes Canaanite ones; others display some Egyptian influence in architecture, and/or interest in the local style cult. Nowhere in Palestine has an edifice been found which displays the typical architecture of New Kingdom temples in Egypt.

As a matter of fact, only at four places there existed without any doubt what can be termed Egyptian temples, with Egyptian architecture and Egyptian gods: Serabit el-Khadem, Timna, Gaza and Byblos.

The first two are out of the Canaanite cultural sphere proper. With regard to the centuries long Egyptian presence in Palestine, especially during the periods of extensive political dominion, this is a stunning result. Why did the pharaohs, while stuffing another occupied country, Nubia, with temples, leave the Asiatic province culticly almost untouched?

3.1 Egyptian cult outside Egypt

Nubia, although a foreign country, lies in the Nile Valley. It presented to the Egyptians well known, familiar conditions - an extension of their cosmos, where their spiritual world could feel at home.

The situation is utterly different in the north-eastern neighbouring countries. The mountainous, partly desert, partly rainy areas were a truly foreign world, where Egyptian ideas, and Egyptian gods, could hardly be domiciled. In deserted areas, Egyptian gods had to take over such inhospitable places, when Egyptians had to stay there to acquire raw materials which were in demand. But in principle, this was not the world of Egyptian deities. They were confined to the Nile Valley, sometimes even to the more or less limited areas of their origin.

"So kommt es, daß der Reisende zu den Gottheiten desjenigen Gebietes betet, in dem er sich gerade befindet, daß der Expeditionsleiter sich in den Schutz von Gottheiten stellt, die für die Wüstenpfade und die Bergwerke oder Steinbrüche der Wüste zuständig sind; die Gottheiten seiner Heimatstadt können ihm in der Ferne wenig nützen. Daraus erklärt sich auch die Bedeutung, die nubische, asiatische und libysche Götter für den Ägypter gewinnen, der die Grenzen seines Landes überschreitet." (Hornung 1973: 160)

Hence, it is natural that we find Egyptians in Palestine addressing the local gods. There is the Mekal stela from Beth Shean stratum IX with the Egyptian builder *Imn-m-ipt* and his son *P3-R^c-m-hb* adoring "Mekal, the God of Beth Shean" (Rowe 1930: 14f., pl. 33; Rowe 1940: iv [frontispiece]); *ANEP* 487; Thompson 1970: 50-77). A very similar piece comes from as far as Ugarit, showing the scribe and overseer of the treasury Mamy adoring Baal-Saphon (*ANEP* 485). Again from Beth Shean, are a stela of the (male) singer *Nht* adoring "Antit, Queen of heaven, mistress of all the gods" (probably str. VI; Rowe 1930: 32, pl. 50,2), and an unfinished one with a woman adoring a goddess with a horned crown, presumably "Astarte of the Two Horns" (Ashtoreth Qarnayim; str. VII; Rowe 1930: pl. 48,2; *ANEP* 475).

Obviously, Egyptians felt nothing odd about frequenting Canaanite temples and presenting offerings to those foreign gods who were regarded competent for a certain place. They never thought about forcing the local population to forsake their gods in exchange for Egyptian ones, by closing their temples and erecting Egyptian ones instead, or placing an Egyptian cult image into a local temple where it didn't belong. This attitude is attested as well for the highest level of the official administration, by sporadic finds such as the cylinder seal from Beth Shean (cf. 1.7), where the Egyptian king is represented in the company of foreign gods (Stadelmann 1967: 136).

But, simultaneously, the New Kingdom pharaohs erected monumental victory stelae, like the three from Beth Shean (Sethos I, *ANEP* 320, Rowe 1930: pl. 41, and Rowe 1930: pl. 42-44; Ramses II, *ANEP* 321), where the prominent gods of Egypt appear. Here lies, in my eyes, the key for an explanation of the exceptional case of Gaza: The administrative centre was destined to represent the supremacy of the Egyptian Empire. This was symbolized by the presence and veneration of the national god Amun in close connection with the King. The description of the Ramses III-temple in pHarris expresses the underlying ideology clearly (2.1.1). The status of the provincial capital both demanded and admitted this exceptional case, whereas elsewhere in the province it was enough for the purpose of symbolism to spread out stelae commemorating the Egyptian supremacy.

If so, then the Thutmose III-temple in Byblos must be explained by the concept of Byblos as an Egyptian town (cf. 1.8). This was reflected not only in the administrative status, but also on the religious level. As opposed to all other Asiatic cities, there was an ancient cultic link to Egypt, and in Egyptian eyes Hathor did always belong there. While the Byblites worshipped their goddess in their own manner, Thutmose III could erect her an Egyptian-style temple. We cannot tell whether it still existed when Wenamun came to Byblos several centuries later, after the rupture of relations. The self confident prince (*wr* !) is reported only "making offering to his gods" (1,38), and in his speech he places Seth (= Baal) next to Amun (2,19). But he welcomes the idea to erect a memorial stela for Amun-Ra (2,55-2,60), and Egyptians are still living in Byblos, like his butler *Pn-Imn* (2,45f.) and the singer *Tnt-niw.t* (2,69). Wenamun stayed there for more than a year, but he had a travel-statue "Amun-of-the-Road" as a divine companion with him (1,34) and did not have to enter any temple.

3.2 Conclusions

The singular cases of true Egyptian temples have been explained: Gaza and Byblos having both a peculiar status; Serabit el-Khadem and Timna erected by isolated teams of Egyptian workers at unsettled, far off sites. As a rule, it can be stated that the Egyptians had **no** motives for erecting temples in Canaan by and for themselves. There is no need, therefore, to force any pretended evidence into that direction. Although some of the evidence is admittedly indecisive, it is eventually the existence of an Egyptian temple that requires an explanation, not its absence.

For summarizing the results, the following table can be compiled:

Site:	Architecture:	Cult:
Serabit el-Khadem	Egyptian	Egyptian (Hathor) participation of locals
Timna	Egyptian	Egyptian (Hathor) participation of locals
Beth Shean IX	local	local (Mekal?) participation of Egyptians
VII, VI	local with Egyptian elements	local (Mekal, Astarte?) participation of Egyptians
V	local	local (Reshef/Dagon, Astarte?)
Lachish Fosse T.	local	local (Reshef, Elath?)
Mound T.	local with Egyptian elements	local (?)
Ai	local plan, Egyptian techniques	local (?)
Shechem	local with a single Egyptian element	local (Baal-Berith?)

Byblos		
Hypostyle T.	Egyptian techniques	local (Baalat Gebal)
bât. XL	local with an egypti- anizing element (?)	local (Baalat Gebal)
Reshef T.	local	local (Reshef?)
Enc. sacr.	Egyptian element (?)	local (?)
Thutm. III-T. (Min-mesu)	Egyptian	Egyptian (Hathor)
Gaza	Egyptian	Egyptian (Amun)

The Jerusalem objects lack any convincing evidence; Egyptian temple possessions in Canaan, such as indicated by pHarris and the Tel Sera' bowls, do not postulate local Egyptian temples; the Kurkur ivories probably don't indicate an Egyptian cult at Ashqelon; the Apheq plaque refers to a temple in Egypt; the seals do not seem to refer to priests serving in Palestine.

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