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Three linen textiles discovered in the Ramon I rock shelter, in the Makhtesh Ramon, date to *c.* 3000 BCE, the Early Bronze Age II, based on direct dating on the textiles and their excavation contexts. In addition to adding important and rare technological data on early textile manufacture, the contexts, in a rock shelter used for animal stabling, indicate long-distance trade in linen, penetrating into the pastoral societies of the Negev.

- 140 BRENT DAVIS, AREN M. MAEIR and LOUISE A. HITCHCOCK: Disentangling Entangled Objects: Iron Age Inscriptions from Philistia as a Reflection of Cultural Processes

In recent years, the need has arisen for more complex interpretive frameworks for understanding the character of ancient intercultural connections. In many cases, such interconnections cannot be explained through simplistic notions such as ‘migration’, ‘colonization,’ ‘internal development’, or ‘acculturation’. The transformation of Philistine culture during the Iron Age is such a case: previous, all-too simplistic, explanations have insufficiently elucidated the complex nature of the cultural processes evident in the archaeological and historical record. Recently, two of the present authors have argued for the use of a transcultural ‘entangled’ perspective, whereby a complex process of multivalent negotiations and interactions between groups of different origins, as well as an appropriation of foreign, local and hybridized objects within these groups, progressively changes this culture of the southern coastal plain of Israel. Such processes are evident in the inscriptions from Iron Age Philistia, which occur in a variety of media, scripts and contexts. In this paper, we scrutinize how these different factors inform the function and symbolic significance of this (still rather limited) corpus of inscriptions.

- 167 JOE UZIEL, ESTHER ESHEL and NAHSHON SZANTON: A Late Iron Age Inscribed Sherd from the City of David

Along the lower eastern slope of the City of David, Jerusalem, a thick layer of late Iron Age debris, likely dating to the destruction of the city in 586 BCE, has been extensively excavated, overlying and burying the earlier fortifications surrounding the Gihon Spring. This layer, labelled Str. 7, yielded many seventh-century BCE finds, including lamps, figurines, pottery and a sherd of a bowl inscribed with a personal name. This paper deals with the inscription and the possibilities of its reading.

- 179 K. LAWSON YOUNGER, JR.: The Assyrian Economic Impact on the Southern Levant in the Light of Recent Study

In light of recent discussions concerning the impact of the Neo-Assyrian Empire in the Levant, this article investigates the growth and development of that empire's complex political, ideological and economic policies and practices. Based on this data, it seeks to evaluate recent scholarly proposals concerning Assyria's negative economic impacts in order to obtain a more comprehensive and balanced understanding.

- 205 DANIEL VAINSTUB and PETER FABIAN: An Idumean Ostrakon from Horvat Nahal Yatir

The ostrakon published here was found in a stronghold of the Persian period in the northern Negev. The language of the ostrakon is Aramaic, and it is related contextually to a large corpus of ostraca believed to come from, or are related to, Khirbet el-Kôm, a site identified by many as biblical Maqqedah, a name recorded in the present ostrakon. The ostrakon is a receipt for a large quantity of barley that Zaydi'el son of Qos'any, most probably a resident of our site, deposited in the storehouse of Maqqedah.

- 214 AMIHAI MAZAR and IDO WACHTEL: Hurvat 'Eres: A Fourth-Century BCE Fortress West of Jerusalem

Hurvat 'Eres is a small fort located on a high ridge in the Judaeen Hills, north of Kiryat Ye'arim. The paper includes a report on a small-scale excavation conducted by the authors at this site. The square fortress includes a large open space, rooms on the east and south and a protruding tower on the west. It was probably used for a short time in the fourth century BCE as part of a network of fortresses in the province of Yehud. The meager finds from the excavations include mainly pottery sherds. An exceptional find is a rare bronze fibula of a Balkan/Italian type. The architecture, pottery, date and significance of this fortress for the research of the Persian period are discussed in this paper.

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