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REVELATIONS FROM MEGIDDO

The Newsletter of The Megiddo Expedition

Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger: Rostock - Megiddo Connection

The excavation of Palace 6000 in Area L is part of a project backed by the German Israeli Foundation for Research and Development with Michael Niemann from Rostock University as head of the German contingency - see Revelations No. 3.)

There are 1000 good reasons to take part in archaeological excavations in Israel. For students and professors from Rostock there are 1002 reasons. No. 1001 is Ernst Sellin; No. 1002 is Carl Watzinger.

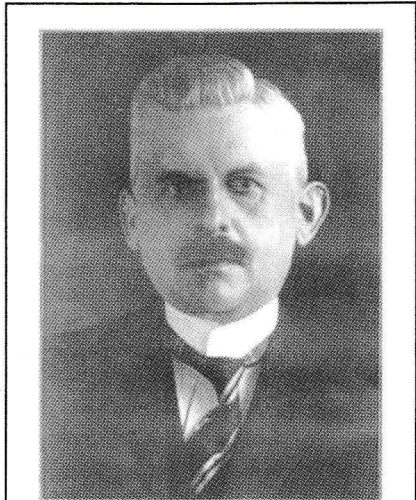
Ernst Sellin was born in 1867 a few miles away from Rostock. He studied theology, but soon archaeology began to gain his interest. While he was on his first chair for Old Testament in Vienna (since 1897) he already was planning excavations in Palestine.

Sellin managed to interest the German Oriental Society in Berlin in his project. After strenuous journeys and negotiations with the Turkish authorities over a license for archaeological work, he was finally permitted to begin the first excavation by a German Theologian (1902-1904) at Taanach near Megiddo. Sellin's only scientific assistant at Taanach in 1902 was Gottlieb Schumacher who started to dig at Megiddo on his own in 1903.

After finishing his archaeological work in Taanach, Sellin received permission to dig at Tell Dotan, but



then he abandoned this encounter. In 1906, Sellin planned to do archaeological research at Tell ed-Duweir (Lachish) but later the authorities withdrew permission. So in 1907 he began excavation in Jericho under the auspices of the German Oriental Society.



Ernst Sellin

Ernst Sellin

Sellin was not an archaeologist. Critics tried to accuse him of nonprofessional work. It was G.E. Wright who brought his work - under the circumstances of Sellin's times - into more positive regard. Sellin's strength was a flexible and innovative intellect coupled with the effort to connect biblical scholarship and archaeology, which was a completely new endeavor for Germany. Sellin had difficulty finding competent partners for excavations in Palestine who had both biblical and archaeological

backgrounds. Apart from H. Thiersch there was only one classical archaeologist who was competent and willing to join Sellin: Carl Watzinger, the future publisher of the finds from Schumacher's excavations at Megiddo.

Carl Watzinger had studied classical archaeology and philology, and had achieved major results in different fields: Hellenistic art, Hellenistic vase paintings and monuments of Palestine, Syria and Cyprus. He wrote a doctoral thesis on southern Italian vase paintings (1899).



Carl Watzinger

Carl Watzinger

In 1903 he worked as an assistant for Berlin's museums. On behalf of the German Oriental Society he published the wooden sarcophagi from the excavations in Abusir, Egypt. His second doctoral thesis dealt with Greek wooden sarcophagi from the times of Alexander the Great (1905).

Watzinger came from Berlin to Rostock in 1905 as a Professor for Classical Archaeology. From September 1907 to January 1908, Watzinger worked in the Galilee. In a letter of January 6, 1908 the government of Mecklenburg's grand duke allowed Watzinger a special

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The Megiddo Expedition operates under the auspices of Tel Aviv University. Senior American partner: Pennsylvania State University. Consortium member institutions: Universities of California, and Vanderbilt University (USA) and Rostock (Germany).



Megiddo Expedition Directors: Israel Finkelstein, Baruch Halpern and David Ussishkin. Excavation Directors: Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin. Head of Academic Program and Consortium Coordinator: Baruch Halpern.

Rostock – Megiddo, from Page 1

vacation to participate in Sellin's excavation at Jericho.

It was not until October 1908 that Sellin was appointed to the chair of Old Testament at Rostock University. Some scholars assume that Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger met for the first time in Rostock. This is not true. Their cooperation is bound to have started prior to this date, due to their common connection with the German Oriental Society. Rostock constituted just a short common period of activity for Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger. Both taught together from 1908 until 1909 in Rostock and excavated in Jericho. Afterwards their ways separated.

Watzinger was appointed in 1909 to the chair of Classical Archaeology at Giessen and in 1916 at Tübingen. Watzinger worked successfully for 32 years in Tübingen. It was in 1929 that Watzinger published the Schumacher finds from Megiddo. Unfortunately, he was so involved in his own projects, that he didn't have time to work with anyone else.

The collaboration of Sellin and Watzinger was harmonious and constructive in their few years together at Rostock and Jericho. Sellin took a teaching position in 1913 at Kiel and then in 1921 at Berlin. He headed the excavations at Tel Balatah, the site of biblical Shechem, in 1913-1914 and

Megiddo 2000: June 11 to July 28. For the first session of 3 weeks, you should arrive on Saturday, June 10 and leave on Friday June 30. For the second session of 4 weeks, you should arrive on Saturday, July 1 and leave on Friday, July 28.

Major Changes: (1). The work week will be Sun. - Thurs. instead of Mon. - Fri. (2). We will not be staying at Kibbutz Megiddo, but at Kibbutz Mizra. The accommodations are superior and can support a larger operation. Both the Salvage dig team and the Survey team stayed there on a trial basis and enjoyed it immensely.

If you have questions or just want more information, contact Norma Franklin at franklin@post.tau.ac.il or Lynne Koppeser at: Jewish Studies Program, Pennsylvania State Univ., 103 Weaver Building, University Park, PA 16802, USA. You can see the Megiddo excavation on PSU's web site: www3.la.psu.edu/jst/welcome.htm On-line registration will soon be available at: www.digmegiddo.com

1926-1927. Then in 1928, because of archaeological and methodological problems, the German Archaeological Institute assigned Gabriel Welter instead of Sellin as director for the Shechem excavation. Welter was a good classical archaeologist but he had less talent for thorough publication of his finds. The cooperation with Sellin proved to be problematic because of Welter's poor commitment to the archaeological work at Shechem. He was occupied at various other sites in Greece at the same time.

In the opinion of W.F. Albright, true excavational work in Palestine began with Sellin's excavation in Jericho and G. A. Reisner's work in Samaria. Ernst Sellin's achievement can be seen most of all in his pioneering of the integration of archaeology into biblical scholarship. He had started this important approach in Vienna. But Rostock brought him into constructive association with Carl Watzinger and created a common peak of their careers with the excavation at Jericho.

The tradition of Ernst Sellin will be honored in Rostock by the publication of his biography by Ulrich Palmer in the year 2000. Sellin and his cooperation with Watzinger in Rostock formed one of the impulses for the Old Testament Institute at Rostock University to restart archaeological research after decades of delay. In 1995 it began in the region of Zorah and Eshtaol. Later (1996), it continued in the Galilee, and since 1998 at Megiddo in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University. The main interest of the participants from Rostock is in the analysis of Megiddo's role as both a royal and a regional center during the times of Israel's emergence as a state.

H. Michael Niemann
(in cooperation with Ulf Harder)

Megiddo III: the 1992-1996 Seasons.

This two-volume report (some 650 pages!) can be ordered from the Friends of the Institute of Archaeology, Publications Section, Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, P.O. Box 39040, Tel Aviv 69978, Israel. Of course, the computer literate can order through the web site at: www.tau.ac.il/~archpubs/index/html

Megiddo III Progress Report

The final report of the first four years of the renewed excavations at Tel Megiddo, *Megiddo III: The 1992-1996 Seasons*, is steadily nearing publication.

All 24 chapters have received final approval of Expedition Directors Israel Finkelstein, Baruch Halpern and David Ussishkin and have arrived on the table of the Manuscript and Production Editor. The text is being edited for language usage and adherence to the format of the Tel Aviv University Monograph Series, while plates, plans and photographs are undergoing final checks and modifications. We anticipate that the volume will be published by the beginning of 2000.

An enormous amount of work has been invested in the preparation of the multifarious aspects of such a volume. Judith Dekel has been drawing the plans; Rachel Paletta, Yafit Wiener and Miri Cook restored the pottery, while Ada Peri, Rodika Pinhas, Yosef Kapelian and Joëlle Finkelstein have drawn it and prepared the plates; Rodika Pinhas has drawn the small finds; Pavel Shrago and Nikolai Adani prepared the photographs; and Jared Miller is acting as the manuscript editor of the volume. Once all the elements have received approval of the Directors and are placed on the editor's desk, they will be integrated camera-ready into the text, and finally, sent to Graphit Press Ltd. in Jerusalem for printing.

Some of the most exciting results have already been briefly forecasted in preceding issues of *Revelations from Megiddo*: the bullae bearing a griffin who wears the Egyptian double crown, and the massive Early Bronze temenos walls of Area J (both in *Revelations* No. 1); the local Egyptianized pottery assemblage discovered in the Early Bronze temple compound, and the rich hoard of sacrificial animal remains from the same EB compound (*Revelations* No. 2); and a summary of the 1998 season (*Revelations* No. 3).

Jared Miller

Update: *Megiddo III* was sent to the printer in October.

Amarna Tablets from Megiddo

Petrography Confirms Their Origin

In 1887, Egyptian farmers discovered a large number of clay cuneiform tablets at the ancient site of Tell el-Amarna, the location of Akhetaten, the capital of Egypt during the reign of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten). The archive consisted of about 380 clay tablets, most of which were written in Akkadian cuneiform, including 7 from Megiddo. The documents formed part of the royal correspondence of three Pharaohs: Amenophis III, Amenophis IV and Tutankhamon. The Amarna tablets have supplied exciting and vital information about the political and cultural interaction between Egypt, Canaan and the rest of the Ancient Near East during the Amarna Period (ca. 1375-1325 BCE). The nature of Egyptian influence in Canaan during the period is still the subject of lively debate, due in part to the complexity of the archaeological record, which comes mainly from the 13-12th centuries. The archaeological and the historical data point to the existence of an Egyptian administrative system in Canaan, controlling satellite city-states, which maintained a limited degree of autonomy. Though the textual information has been extracted from the documents, no attempt has been made to systematically investigate the source of the tablets based on their raw material, i.e. the clay itself. This investigation is essential for the reconstruction of the system of Canaanite city-states in the Late Bronze Age.

Ancient Near Eastern cuneiform archives contain numerous tablets of unknown origin. In cases where the name of the sender or his domicile is missing or when the location of the city is not clearly established, scholars can only hope to find some paleographic, linguistic, or thematic clues to the origin of a tablet. The investigation of the provenance of tablets through the examination of their clay seems to be a promising complementary approach. Using both petrographic and elemental analysis, the authors investigated most of the archive, including those tablets assigned to Megiddo.

Various techniques are employed for analyzing the composition of pottery and other ceramic artifacts. Basically they can be divided into *physical* and *chemical* methods. Physical methods identify the minerals

in the clay and temper and define the texture and fabric of the sherd. Chemical methods use diverse analytical techniques to measure concentrations of chemical elements. *Petrography* is the most commonly used physical method in pottery analyses, whereas Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA) is the most common chemical method.

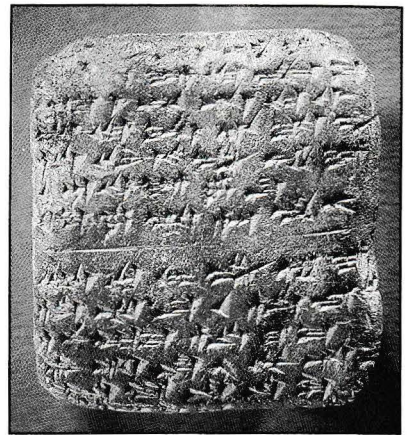
Naturally, every analytical method has its advantages and limitations. If the primary goal is to assign provenance, for example, the quality of interpretation depends heavily on the availability and quality of comparative materials. Best results are achieved by combining several methods. In pottery provenance studies, petrography is applied to a large number of items, and the results are used to select samples for chemical analyses. This approach, however, is less relevant for the study of clay tablets, where the number of the examined items is limited and each item poses unique questions. For example, tablets might have been produced from different clay types than pottery vessels, even within a single site. In such cases, the composition of the tablet is not likely to match any known clay source used for the production of ceramic vessels. In fact, our study of the Amarna tablets indeed revealed several such cases.

Petrography has the advantage of being independent, so that when a reference pottery database is unavailable, the results can be interpreted based on detailed geological maps. So, although petrography does not have the accuracy of chemical analyses, it is independent of incomplete, poorly selected, or unevenly spread databases and reference groups. For this and other reasons, petrography was selected as the primary method for our research on the Amarna tablets.

Megiddo is first mentioned in the textual sources concerning the campaign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmose III (see "Thutmose III and the 'Aruna Pass Survey'" in *Revelations* No. 2). Following the Thutmose III victory, Megiddo recovered during the Amarna Period, at which time it became an Egyptian center. From an economic point of view, Megiddo dominated one of the richest areas of the country, a fact that is reflected in the size and wealth of its palaces and

temple. A large number of Egyptian artifacts have been uncovered in Stratum VIIA from the 12th century.

Megiddo must have included an Akkadian scribal school in the Amarna Age. A fragment of a tablet containing the Epic of Gilgamesh was found at Megiddo, which indicates that Akkadian was taught in its scribal curriculum (literary compositions of this kind were used only in schools). Further, the Amarna tablets from Megiddo are marked by the quality of the clay and the excellent handwriting.



Tablet EA 365 from Biridiya, ruler of Megiddo.

Seven tablets from Megiddo were preserved in the Amarna correspondence (EA 242-247, 365; see Moran, W. 1992. *The Amarna Letters*), together with another letter said to have been sent from Megiddo (EA 248).

Biridiya, the ruler of Megiddo (Magidda in his letters to the Pharaoh), played the difficult and dangerous game of local *Realpolitik*, in which the rulers of the various city-states vied with one another for territory, property and status, while simultaneously attempting to maintain the Pharaoh's confidence in their loyalty to the Egyptian Empire which governed them all. To emphasize his steadfastness, Biridiya opened his correspondence with the standard formulaic vassal greeting, "Say to the king, my lord and my Sun: I prostrate myself at the feet of the king, my lord and my Sun, 7 times and 7 times" (e.g. EA 242), and he is careful to send Pharaoh his tribute of oxen, sheep, goats and birds. He also provides the Pharaoh corvée workers, a duty, he is quick to emphasize, which only he among all his neighbors regularly fulfills (EA 365). Biridiya's chief local nemesis seems to have been Lab'ayu, the ruler of nearby Shechem, who, according to Biridiya (EA 244),

See *Amarna Tablets*, Page 4

Megiddo 99: Area N

besieged Maggida, thus preventing the population from leaving or entering, disturbing the harvest, and causing a plague. Biridiya portrays his defense of his city as the protection of "Magidda, the city of the king, my lord," and pleads with Pharaoh to take notice of his plight and send him a 100-man Egyptian garrison to protect him and Magidda. A later letter (EA 245) tells of Lab'ayu's capture and slaying. Since the Pharaoh had wanted Lab'ayu alive, he had been entrusted to Surata, the ruler of Acco. Instead of shipping him to Egypt, as he had promised Biridiya, Surata ransomed him, a trick that greatly displeased the Pharaoh. But Biridiya claims to have had an alibi: he had sped off to save Lab'ayu (a little hard to believe, considering Biridiya's enmity for Lab'ayu), but during the action Biridiya's horse was struck by an arrow, forcing him to mount up behind Yašdata, the ruler of Ta'anach. But, before Biridiya and Yašdata could reach Lab'ayu and his captors, he had been killed.

EA 248, authored by Yašdata — who humbly calls himself "the dirt at the feet of the king" — is unique, since its author has taken refuge with Biridiya at Magidda, because, "everything the king, my lord, gave to his servant, the men of Ta'anach have made off with; they have slaughtered my oxen and driven me away." It appears Yašdata was hardly the Richelieu of Canaanite *Realpolitik*.

The Megiddo tablets are distinguished by their bright whitish color, a departure from the darker shades of tablets from other Canaanite cities. Petrographic examinations of the Megiddo tablets confirm that, mineralogically, these letters were written on marl that was likely collected near Megiddo. Chemical analysis indicates that the Megiddo tablets are unique in their elemental composition. In the case of the tablets from Megiddo, the petrography served largely to confirm their provenance, since the content of the text makes obvious that their origin was Megiddo.

**Yuval Goren, Israel Finkelstein,
Nadav Na'aman**

Revelations from Megiddo is published by the Megiddo Expedition. Editors-in-Chief: Israel Finkelstein, Baruch Halpern and David Ussishkin. Editor: Michele Burns.

In July of 1999 a small salvage excavation was carried out in front of the exit from the water tunnel. The excavation was instigated by the National Parks Authority in order to extend the parking lot, in preparation for the year 2000. Jennifer Peersmann coordinated the excavation, assisted by Susan Brannon. Technical assistance was provided by Robert Deutsch with the pottery reading, Norma Franklin with interpretation and Natalie Messika with the plans.

In the first week five squares were opened and excavated down to the floors of the archaeological strata using 20 hired workers. Several layers of terraces were revealed on which stood an unusual rectangular stone structure. This structure consisted of several phases and was dated to the mid-15th century. Next to it an unusual glass scepter was found.

Since the archaeological remains were too extensive for a one-week excavation, a second week was required. This was financed by the Megiddo Expedition and a cry for volunteers was made to help salvage these impressive remains. By chance several team members of the Megiddo Expedition were in the country. With their help we were able to excavate down to virgin soil by the end of the second week.

Area N contained several layers of terraces which appear to be a pathway towards the spring. What may be a tomb or a shrine was constructed on these terraces. The surprising element was the lack of any EB remains.

Thanks to Michele Burns, Valdemar Lemke, Mario Martin, Assaf Natif, and Yitzhak Zahavy, the remains of the area were properly excavated and recorded. With their help, we were able to understand the occupation of the MB and LB I strata at the northwestern foot

of the tell. Together we were able to make the 1999 salvage operation a success and had a lot of fun doing it.

Jennifer Peersmann

The Gossip Corner

Gunnar Lehmann and his wife have a new son, Matan.

The newest member of the Eric and Diane Harris Cline family is Joshua Bela Harris Cline. He was born on July 13, weighs 6 lbs., 1 oz. and is 18 inches long. He was born "en caul" (still in his sac), which has various superstitions connected with it, most of them good.

Director David Ussishkin is taking a sabbatical this year to finish the report on the Lachish excavation.

Benny Sass is also on sabbatical.

Directors Baruch Halpern and Israel Finkelstein have returned to their respective universities after their sabbaticals. Israel has been doing a world lecture tour on Megiddo: last November he started from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, then to San Moritz to speak to the European Governors of TAU, and then spoke to over 500 people at the Louvre in Paris. He later lectured at Rostock in Germany, and Freiburg and Bern in Switzerland. In May, he spoke in Copenhagen, in Lund and Upsala in Sweden, in Helsinki, Finland and Oslo, Norway.

The "Pet Sherd" was repossessed by the team members during the Survey. Where will it turn up next?

Congratulations to David Ilan who has finished his PhD and now has a position on the staff at TAU.

Congratulations to Yuval Gadot who has finished his MA.

Asaf Yasur-Landau is in Greece at the American School of Classical Studies doing PhD studies. He participated in excavations at Miletus this summer.

Robert Deutsch has published two more books. He is the co-editor of *Michael*, a Festschrift in honor of Prof. Michael Heltzer. The other is the English version of *Messages from the Past*, which was his MA thesis on Hebrew bullae.

We bid farewell to Jared Miller as he moves on to PhD studies in Germany after completing his work on *Megiddo III* and his MA. Michele Burns has taken over the editing of *Revelations from Megiddo*.

Megiddo in Cyberspace

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