

Moza during the 10th–9th Centuries BCE: The Results of Excavation Seasons 1993, 2002, and 2003 and their Reflection in a Wider Judahite Context

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This paper is dedicated to the memory of Shlomo Bunimovitz, a teacher, a mentor, a colleague and a friend who left us untimely.

Abstract

The paper discusses the finds of the Late Bronze Age, the Iron Age I/IIA, and the Iron Age IIA from the excavations at Moza during the years 1993, 2002, and 2003. The site is discussed in its historical framework, relating to Shishak's campaign to Palestine, as well as in its wider Judahite archaeological context during those periods.

KEYWORDS: Moza/Motza, Iron Age, 10th–9th centuries BCE, Judah, Judean Hills, Shoshenq I/Shishak

1. Introduction

Tel Moza is located in the Judean Hills ca. 5 km west of Jerusalem, on the southern slope of a spur where the modern settlement of Mevasseret Ziyon stands today. Nahal Moza/Arza is located to the west of the spur, while Nahal Soreq passes to

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the east and south of the site, as did the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway until two years ago, when a new route was delineated on the site itself and was the cause for the extended piecemeal rescue excavations between 1993 and 2014.

The neighborhood of Moza 'Illit lies to the west of the site and that of Ramat Moza to its southeast. The site is ca. 600 m above sea level and in its immediate vicinity are two springs: Upper and Lower 'En Moza. The site extends over an area of 10–15 dunams and is covered by a series of agricultural terraces that have protected the earlier remains beneath them. The Arab village of Qaluniya was situated on this spur until 1948. Noteworthy among the village buildings that are preserved in their entirety is the summer residence of the Mufti of Jerusalem, located very close to our Area B.

Moza is first mentioned in the book of Joshua as a city in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin (Josh 18:6). The identification of the site is important in plotting the border between Judah and Benjamin in this region (Fig. 1), to the west of Jerusalem (Aharoni et al. 2002: 62, Map 73). One of the sons of Caleb is called Moza (1 Chr 2:46), and Moza is the name of the head of the clans of Benjamin who is related to Zimri (1 Chr 8:36–37, 9:42). In the Book of Joshua, the name of the site is written with the letter מ, while in the other references the place name ends with נ. The meaning of the latter variation of the name Moza is “source of water.” The Arabic name of the tell is Khirbet Mizzah, leading most of the scholars to identify it with the biblical settlement (Vincent and Abel 1932: 284; Abel 1938: 392). Others have identified the biblical settlement with Khirbet Beit Mizza (H. ha-Moza), located in modern Mevasseret Ziyyon, slightly to the north (Clermont-Ganneau 1899: 479; Kallai-Kleinmann 1953: 112, No. 29). However, in light of Nehemiah Tzori's surveys during 1963 in the vicinity of the village of Qaluniya, where Iron Age pottery sherds were found, as well as the results of Ora Negbi's excavation in Iron Age burial caves between Mevasseret Yerushalayim and the remains of the village of Qaluniya (Negbi 1970), scholars were able to identify with certainty the site at Qaluniya (Kallai 1968; Aharoni 1979: 356). In view of the prolonged recent excavations here, there is no doubt that biblical Moza is to be identified with Qaluniya.

The confluence of Nahal Soreq and Nahal Moza possesses great agricultural potential, with fertile soil and an excellent topographic location that overlooks the nearby arable plots, while numerous abundant water sources exist in the vicinity. These features resulted in intensive settlement of the area beginning in the Early Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) period (Shalem 1928; Eisenberg and Sklar-Parnes 2005; Bar-Yosef pers. comm.). During the years 2016–2020 new

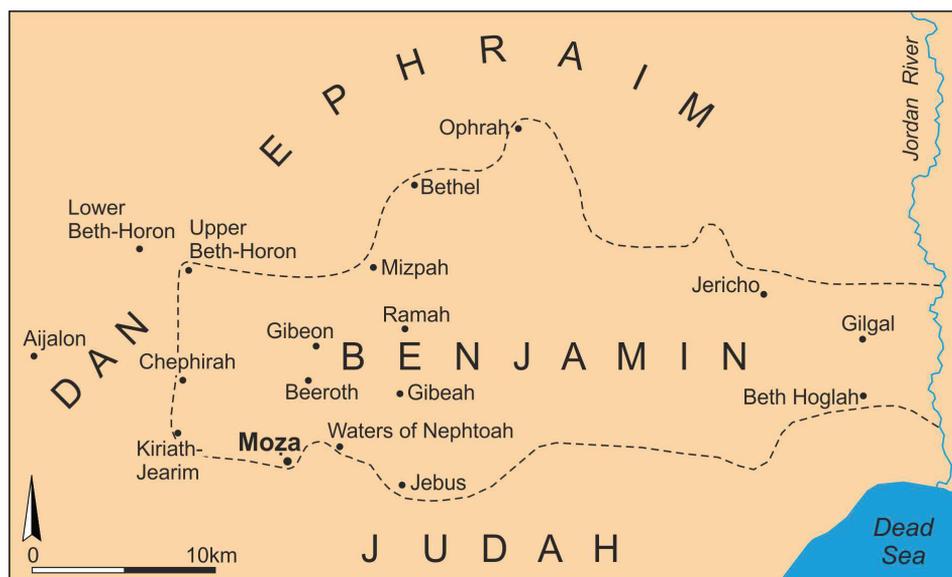


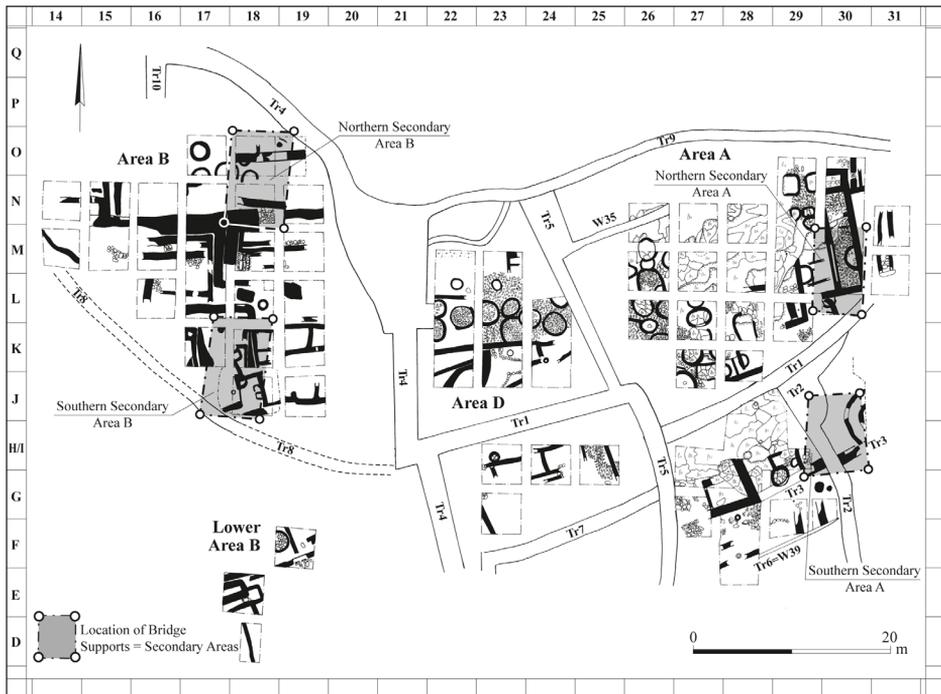
Fig. 1. The border of the tribe of Benjamin and its neighbors .

excavations in this area have revealed intensive occupation of this period around Moza (Khalaily et al. 2020).

At the beginning of the 1990s a new route in the Moza area for Highway No. 1 between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv was introduced. The new route was planned to run directly on top of the archaeological site on the spur of Moza, and as a result a rescue excavation was carried out (Greenhut and De Groot 2009). In the first season in 1993 the excavation area was delimited by the planned course of the new road. Within this framework the excavation was divided into four different areas separated by the lines of the agricultural terraces that cross the site (Fig. 2). The excavation in 1993 reached a depth of 1.0–1.5 m and was excavated from the surface level to the Iron Age II strata. Following the results of the first season it became clear that a salvage excavation was necessary for the bridge's uprights, and hence four secondary excavation areas were opened, two in Area A and two in Area B, all of which were excavated down to bedrock. Thirteen strata in total were identified in the excavations.

Table 1. The stratigraphic sequence of Tel Moza.

Stratum	Period	Date
I	Ottoman and later	16th–20th centuries CE
Ib	Post-Byzantine	Later than the Byzantine period
II	Late Byzantine	6th–7th centuries CE
III	Hellenistic	2nd century BCE
IV	Iron Age IIB	7th–beginning of 6th century BCE
V	Iron Age IIB	8th century BCE
VI	Iron Age IIA	9th century BCE
VII	Iron Age IIA	10th century BCE
VIII	MB IIB	18th–16th centuries BCE
IX	EB IA	38th–34th centuries BCE
X	PN	6th millennium BCE
XI	Late PPNB	7th millennium BCE
XII	Middle PPNB	8th millennium BCE
XIII	Early PPNB	9th millennium BCE

**Fig. 2.** Schematic plan of Areas A, B, and D and the location of the planned uprights for the bridge (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:11, Plan 2.1, courtesy of the IAA).

2. The Late Bronze Age

The few remains from the Late Bronze Age, mainly pottery finds retrieved from unsealed and unclear contexts, e.g., from unsealed fills above Middle Bronze Age floors in Area A, from fills, topsoil and a pit in Area B, and from silos in Area D, had no association with any architectural component, and thus it was not possible to attribute them to any particular stratum. However, these finds are significant for the understanding of this period in this part of the country in this specific period, since evidence for this period in the Central Hill Country is very scarce and comes mainly from tombs, like those excavated in the hills surrounding Jerusalem (Dominus Flevit on the Mount of Olives: Saller 1964: 168–169, 196–197; Nahalat Ahim: Maisler 1932–1933; Amiran 1960), as well as in a rock-hewn pit at Armon Ha-Natziv (the “Government House” ridge: Baramki 1935). In the City of David, stratified remains from the Late Bronze Age are attested from at least six different locations in the excavations of Kenyon and Shiloh, though from fragmentary structures found on or near the bedrock (Cahill 2003: 28). Pottery from the Late Bronze Age was also found in the earth accumulations under the Large Stone Structure in the excavations of E. Mazar (E. Mazar 2009: 32). Meager remains from this period were reported at Gibeon, evidenced by Late Bronze Age pottery sherds retrieved only from tombs (Pritchard 1993: 512), at Chephirah, where pottery of the Late Bronze Age has been collected (Garstang 1931: 166, 369), and at Kiriath-Jearim (Deir el-Azar), where according to Francis Cooke “the slopes of the hill were strewn with pottery, most of it dating partly from the Late Bronze Age, and some from the Early Iron” (Cooke 1923: 115). Four other different field studies at this site, including the recent 2017 excavation, confirmed that the site was inhabited during the Late Bronze Age (Finkelstein et al. 2018: 40–41; see also McKinny et al. 2018).

Any additional archaeological data originating from a habitation site, such as Moza, contributes significantly to the understanding of the settlement pattern in this part of the country during this time span.

3. The Iron Age I/IIA

Stratum VII at Moza was discerned in the southern secondary area and comprised primarily a flagstone pavement with installations resting upon it, all of which were destroyed in a severe conflagration (Figs. 3–4). The pavement, severed on its eastern side by a robber’s trench or disturbance, was made up of variously sized stone slabs, 5–6 cm thick, hewn from tabular rock. A stone mortar (2112),

perforated at its base, was incorporated in the pavement and a round installation (2093), lined with sherds, was dug into the pavement. An oval installation (2102), built of stone and paved with small stones, was uncovered nearby. The wall of the installation was built of a single row of stones preserved to a height of four courses. The base of the installation lay at an elevation 0.10 m higher than the mortar next to it and probably belongs to a later phase in this stratum. To the east of the pavement was a very dark (brownish-black) beaten-earth floor (2084); it too was covered by the burnt layer. A stone mortar (2095), surrounded by two standing flat stones on its southern and western sides, was found on the earthen floor, and east of the mortar was a semicircular installation built of medium-sized fieldstones (2104). Wall 215, oriented northwest-southeast and constructed of two rows of medium-sized stones with two well-fitted faces, was exposed between the stone pavement and the beaten-earth floor. As it was built upon the beaten-earth floor, it must postdate the floor, at least technically, and should probably be ascribed to the same phase as the oval installation (2102).

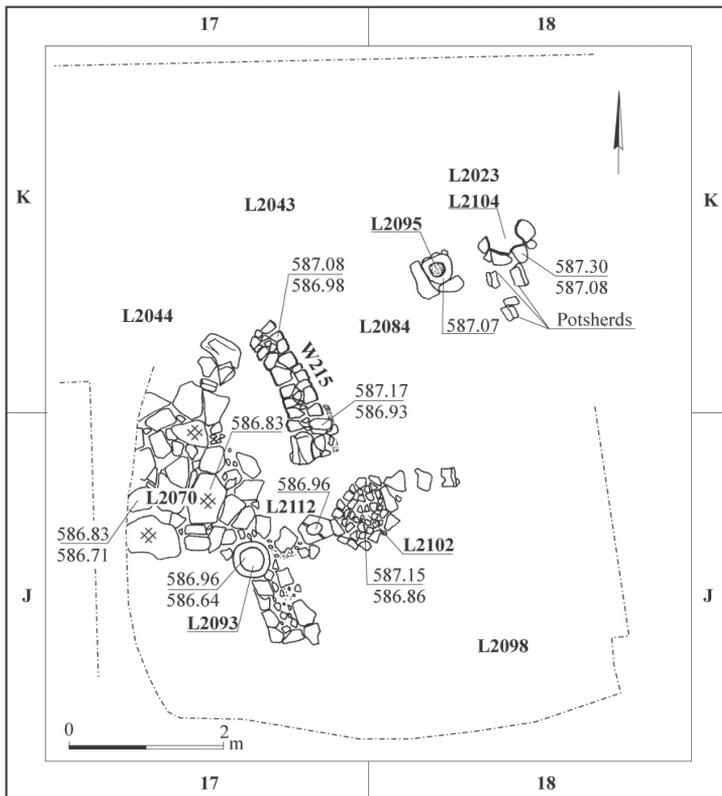


Fig. 3. Area B, the southern secondary area: plan of Stratum VII (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:43, Plan 2.10, courtesy of the IAA).



Fig. 4. Area B, Stratum VII: flagstone pavement (L2070) and W215 near it, looking south (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:44, Fig. 2.39, courtesy of the IAA).

The most prominent element of this stratum was the massive burnt layer (0.30 m thick) in the middle of the excavated area. This layer covered both the stone slab pavement in the west and the beaten-earth floor in the east, as well as Wall 215, which separated the two floors. The texture of this layer indicated a high combustion temperature and included burnt stones, fired clay that had fused, burnt plaster, and pieces of a collapsed ceiling that ranged in color from orange-red to brown-black. An ashy layer overlay the burnt layer.

Meager finds were encountered in this stratum (Fig. 5). A cooking krater (Fig. 5:5), made in the Late Bronze Age tradition (Edelstein, Milevski, and Auran 1998: 47, Fig. 4.10:5), was found in situ on the beaten-earth floor. It has a close parallel in Stratum VII at Beer Sheba, attributed to the 11th or beginning of the 10th century BCE (Brandfon 1984: 47, Fig. 21:12). A pyxis (Fig. 5:6), found in situ together with the cooking krater described above, is a well-known form in Late Bronze Age and Iron Age contexts that appears until the 10th century BCE, after which it becomes rare (Mazar 1985: 77–88; Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001: 132). The example that appears here belongs to Type PX, according to Mazar's typology from Tell Qasile (Mazar 1985: Fig. 27:21) and has numerous parallels from Tell en-Naşbeh (Wampler 1947: 47–49, Pl. 74:1688–1711) and from a tomb at the foot of Tel Gibeon (Dajani 1953: 68, 73, Pl. IX:32–37). Two bowls were discovered in installations 2093 and 2102 on or connected to the flagstone pavement. The first bowl (Fig. 5:1) is a carinated bowl with a straight rim, for which there are

parallels at Khirbet Raddana (Lederman 1999: 90, Fig. 8:7) dating from the 11th century BCE and in Stratum VI at Beer Sheva (Brandfon 1984: 53, Fig. 26:13) from the 10th century BCE. The second bowl (Fig. 5:2) is rounded with a simple rim, similar to a bowl from Stratum VI at Beer Sheva (Brandfon 1984: 54, Fig. 26:18). Also found above the earth-beaten floor is a bowl with an S-shaped profile (Fig. 5:7), a type known for instance from Stratum 15 at the City of David, dating from the 11th century BCE (De Groot and Ariel 2000: 93, Fig. 13:5). The interior of the disc base of a bowl or krater (Fig. 5:4) exhibits irregular hand burnish, typical of the Iron Age IIA. Three cooking pots, characterized by an everted triangular and pointed rim (Fig. 5:9–11), were recovered from the fill of the burnt layer (L2043, L2098). This type of rim is the continuation of a Late Bronze Age tradition typical of the early part of the Iron Age I. Close Iron Age I parallels are found at Giloh (Mazar 1981: 20–23, Fig. 7) and inside the “Stepped Stone Structure” at the City of David (Cahill 2003: 44–53, Fig. 1.9a).

The ceramic finds from the floor and the burnt layer above it are in the Late Bronze Age tradition but include the appearance of new shapes that find parallels mainly in strata conventionally dated to the 11th–10th centuries BCE in a number of sites. Based on the C14 dates of the destruction level (see below), together with the ceramic evidence, we suggest dating Stratum VII at Moza to the 10th century BCE. Basically, one of the main questions that should be asked is “To what culture does the material of this stratum belong? Is it Iron I or Iron IIA?” The pottery found here seems to belong mainly to the Iron Age I, but there are also elements, like the bowls and the base with irregular hand burnish, that are characteristic of the Iron Age IIA.

One of the most important questions that arises from the excavations at Moza is the date of the destruction of Stratum VII. According to the meager ceramic finds that were sealed by the burnt destruction layer, Stratum VII should be dated to the 11th–10th centuries BCE. C14 analyses performed on four carbon samples retrieved from the burnt layer (L2043) range between 1220 and 900 BCE. Boaretto summarizes the results as follows: “If one can assume that the four samples from stratum VII represent a single event, then their chronological spread (12th–10th centuries) can be attributed to the old wood effect. The youngest sample of the four (RTT 4586, 1040–900 BCE) would then represent the *Terminus Post Quem* for the stratum. Therefore, the date of L2043 and its cultural horizon probably falls within the 10th century” (Boaretto 2009: 211).

Thus, we can reasonably assume that the carbon derived from these samples belongs to wood that was used in the construction of the building in which it was

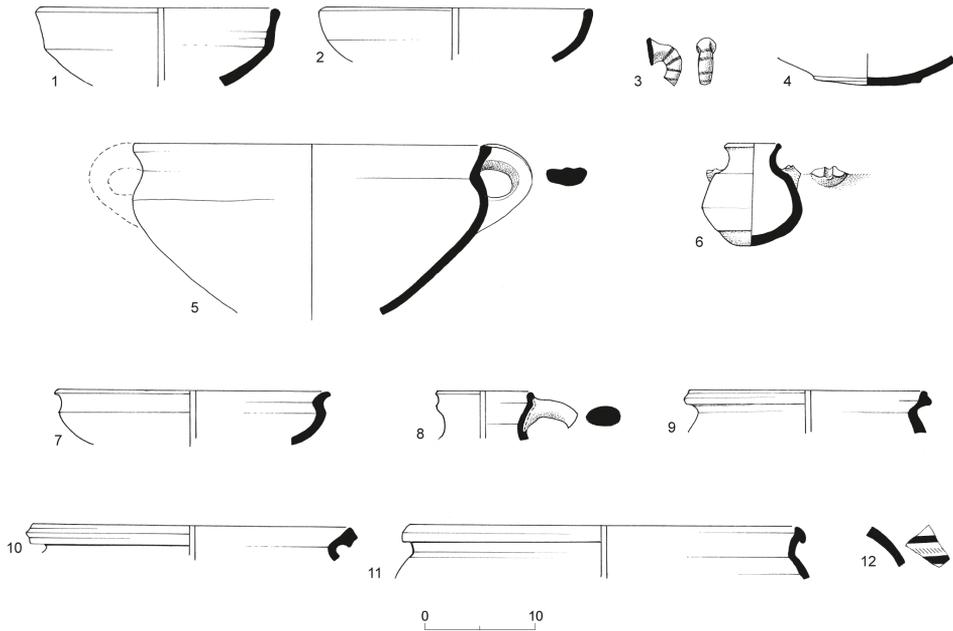


Fig. 5. Stratum VII pottery from Area B, the southern secondary area (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:72, Fig. 3.6, courtesy of the IAA).

No.	Locus	Basket	Vessel	Description
1	2093	33286	Bowl	Pinkish clay; small white grits; white slip on interior; wheel burnish on interior and exterior
2	2102	33164	Bowl	Pinkish clay; many small white grits
3	2122	33459	Handle	Pinkish clay; many small white grits; white slip on exterior, black bands across handle
4	2093	33286	Bowl/krater	Reddish-brown clay; medium and large white grits; hand burnish on interior
5	2084	33047	Cooking krater	Reddish-brown clay; many small, and large white grits
6	2084	33170	Pyxis	Pinkish clay; small white grits; soot remnants on part of exterior
7	2023	32113/1	Bowl	Buff clay; small white grits; white slip on interior and exterior
8	2043	32958/4	Jug	Pinkish clay; many small white grits
9	2043	32958/3	Cooking pot	Pinkish clay; few large white grits
10	2043	32856	Cooking pot	Reddish-brown clay; small and medium white grits
11	2098	33201/4	Cooking pot	Brown clay; many medium and large white and gray grits
12	2043	32958/1	Decorated sherd	Buff clay; many small white grits; white slip with black and brown decoration on exterior

found. The radiocarbon results represent the dates that the trees were felled, years or decades prior to the destruction of the building. In addition, it is interesting that the radiocarbon analysis of samples from the following Stratum VI (L2083) provided a date of 910–800 BCE (Boaretto 2009: 211), indicating that Stratum VII should be earlier than this time span.

The Stratum VII pottery finds, together with the radiocarbon dates, suggest that this stratum was destroyed by Shoshenq I during his campaign to the Land of Israel in ca. 925 BCE. Thus, in our opinion, the destruction of Stratum VII can be attributed to Shoshenq I for three reasons:

1. The results of the C₁₄ analyses indicate the age of the wood from which the samples were taken falls within the 11th–10th centuries BCE.
2. This is the only destruction level that is evident in the site's thirteen strata, which range from PPNB until the Ottoman period. If this burnt layer was the result of a natural phenomenon (earthquake, local fire, etc.), one would expect other events of this kind to have occurred during the site's existence. No such evidence is manifested in the archaeological record, further corroborating the supposition that the destruction of Stratum VII is the result of a military campaign.
3. The biblical account maintains that while Shoshenq subdued Jerusalem without a battle (1 Kgs 14:25–28; 2 Chr 12:1–12), he did conquer the fortified cities of Judah along the way (2 Chr 12:4). According to the account depicted on the wall of the Temple of Amon in Karnak (Simons 1937: 95–102), he assaulted, among other places, Beth Horon (No. 24) and Gibeon (No. 23), whose identities are certain and are located in the center of Benjamin. Toponym No. 25 reads *Q-D-T-M*, identified by Mazar (Mazar 1957: 60–61) and followed by Aharoni (Aharoni 1979: 325–326, n. 11) with Kiriath-Jearim. Mazar and Aharoni argued that the Egyptian scribe confused the hieratic *R* with *D*, so that the original form would be *Q-R-T-M*. In contrast to Kiriath-Jearim, which like Moza is located on the border between Judah and Benjamin, the other two toponyms are located well within Benjamin. Gibeon is situated some only 6 km north of Moza. There are other toponyms in the list (No. 57=Zemaraim, No. 58=Migdal, and No. 59=[Ha]laz?) that are almost certainly located in Benjamin. For the identification of Site No. 57 in the Land of Benjamin, see Ahituv 1984: 204; Finkelstein 2002: 122–123. Site No 58 is identified with Migdal-'Eder of Gen 35:21 south of the tombstone of Rachel, on the Benjaminite border at Zelzah and near Ramah on the road between Bethel and Bethlehem (Ahituv 1984:

141). The toponym of Site No. 59 is reconstructed by Na'aman in different ways, including Luz (Na'aman 1992: 80), which was the first name of Bethel (Gen 28:19), or [Ha]laz?, whose location has been proposed in the southern part of Mount Efrayim or in the northern part of the Land of Benjamin (Na'aman 1998: 255–256). These sites join Gibeon, Beth Horon, and Kiriath-Jearim, whose identities are certain. In the course of Barkay's salvage excavations in 1995–1996, Kiriath-Jearim revealed remains of the Iron Age I, represented only by indicative sherds with no archaeological phases noted in the excavation, and a partially excavated large building that appeared to Barkay to have been constructed in either the Iron Age IIA or, more likely, the Iron Age IIB (McKinny et al. 2018: 39). The upper floor of the building was found beneath a sealed collapse and produced several loci with indicative Iron Age IIB pottery and a large number of slingstones, suggesting that the devastation of the later phase of this building should be attributed to Sennacherib's campaign against Judah and Hezekiah in 701 BCE (McKinny et al. 2018: 39–40). The earlier phase, however, may be related to the Iron Age IIA (i.e., the 10th–9th centuries BCE), but this must await further analysis (McKinny et al. 2018: 40).

Moza was almost certainly within the limited area along the central ridge of the Land of Benjamin where the campaign of Shoshenq I was concentrated, as evidenced by the topographic inscription engraved in the Temple at Karnak. If the proposed reconstruction is correct, it is possible that Moza was part of the same territorial entity that included Gibeon, Bet Horon, Kiriath-Jearim, and Zemaraim, as well as scores of other sites of various sizes (Finkelstein and Magen 1993: 448–449, Map 5). This entity may have threatened Egyptian interests in the region and may have been the reason that the Egyptian army entered the Central Hills, an area it would have preferred to avoid (Na'aman 1998: 274; Finkelstein 2002: 122–123). According to Finkelstein, this entity was a strong North Israelite entity that developed to the north of Jerusalem. He also suggested that Shoshenq I's campaign was a meaningful (though not the only) datum that closes the Iron Age I and ushers in the Iron Age II (Finkelstein 2002).

Moza was probably one of the few settlements that resisted the Egyptian army and was consequently destroyed. Similarly to the reconstructed scenario according to which settlements in the center and north of Palestine recovered (Mazar 1957: 59; Na'aman 1998: 276), the settlement at Moza recovered as manifested in Stratum VI, which appears directly above the destruction level that sealed Stratum VII and, based on the ceramic evidence as well as the C14 results, dates from the 9th century BCE.

4. Discussion

The period represented by Stratum VII, the 11th–10th century BCE, was little known from sites in the Judean Hills and in the Jerusalem area during the time we excavated and worked on the publication of our excavation results (Maeir 2000). Before and during the decade of our excavations at Moza, there were numerous discussions on the date of the “Stepped Stone Structure” at the City of David. Cahill, in her study of the pottery retrieved by Shiloh, dated the construction of the structure to the transition between the LB II and the Iron Age I, concluding that “the latest possible date for the ceramic assemblage recovered from the rampart’s underlying fills is the early Iron Age I, approximately the twelfth century BCE” (Cahill 2003: 53). She also argued that the stepped mantle, the rubble core, and the interlocking substructural stone terraces at the base of the “Stepped Stone Structure” are contemporaneous and should be identified as component parts of a single structure (Cahill 2003: 53). According to Cahill, soil fills found covering the stepped rampart contain pottery and artifacts that span the Iron Age I and that the two most extensively excavated Iron Age structures, the four-room “House of Ahiel” and the “Burnt Room House,” were both built on top of the “Stepped Stone Structure” early in the Iron Age II. This was based on the pottery found on the earliest floor surface in the “Burnt Room House” as well as in the “House of Ahiel,” both ascribed to Stratum 14 of Shiloh’s stratigraphic sequence (Cahill 2003: 56–61, Figs. 1.13a, 1.13b).

Furthermore, combining the previous archaeological research of the City of David with the recent archaeological work on the eastern slope of the City of David by Eilat Mazar (performed after our excavations and published mainly after our final report had appeared), the construction of both the monumental structure known as the “Stepped Stone Structure” and the “Large Stone Structure” that lies on top of it should be dated to the end of the Iron Age I (early 10th century BCE) and they continued, though with some changes, to function during the Iron Age IIA (the 10th–9th centuries BCE), forming a single architectural unit (E. Mazar 2009). Based on the pottery and radiocarbon dates from her excavation within the “Large Stone Structure,” Mazar claims that the most appropriate time range for the construction of this building, as well as for the “Stepped Stone Structure,” which is part of the same unit, is no earlier than the end of the Iron Age I or beginning of the Iron Age IIA, ca. 1000 BCE (E. Mazar 2009: 53, 64). The dating of this complex to the Iron Age I was accepted by other scholars too (A. Mazar 2006: 269–270; Faust 2010: 123). This dating corresponds well with A. Mazar’s

chronological scheme, according to which the first quarter of the 10th century BCE is to be included within the final phase of the Iron Age I (Mazar 2005: 21, 23, Tab. 2.2), and of course also with Finkelstein's lower chronology according to which most of the 10th century should be ascribed to the Iron Age I. This unit reflects a very impressive architectural plan, unparalleled in its dimensions, magnitude, and complexity, and is above all a testament to the power of the ruling authority behind the endeavor, representing political hegemony throughout the region.

Other sites to the north and northwest of Jerusalem, all in the territory of Benjamin, should be dated to this time span as well. The sites are Betin, et-Tell, Khirbet Raddana, Khirbet ed-Dawwara, Tell en-Nasbeh, Khirbet Bir el-Hammam, el-Gib, Tell el-Ful, and Har Nof (Sergi 2017: 7, Fig. 3). It seems therefore that the area around Jerusalem, mainly to its north and northwest, was densely inhabited during the Iron Age I–IIA. Moza fits very well within the settlement pattern of the period, and it seems reasonable that Jerusalem was the central site ruling this territory during the 11th–10th centuries BCE, although it was not destroyed by Shoshenq. Recently, Sergi has suggested that Jerusalem, with its “Stepped Stone Structure,” reflects the emergence of Judah as a territorial-political entity between Jerusalem and Benjamin (Sergi 2017: 11–12, 16, *contra* Finkelstein 2018). Moza seems to be part of this entity, based on the archaeological results from Stratum VII.

In addition, the fortified complex discovered in the eastern reaches of the Ophel of Jerusalem should be mentioned. This complex has been exposed in stages, starting with Warren's excavations in 1867. According to E. Mazar, the complex comprises five principal components: the gatehouse complex, which itself was composed of the four-chambered gatehouse, the Large Tower, and the outer gatehouse; a fortification that might be a casemate wall; the Royal Structure; the Straight Wall; and the Extra Tower (E. Mazar 2011). The earliest floor in the Royal Structure is dated by its pottery, which includes a single black juglet, to the late 10th century BCE (E. Mazar 2009: 147). This gives the date for the construction of the building. This date also corresponds well with the date (1050–900 BCE) of a frog scaraboid found in the sifting of the material from the building's floor (E. Mazar 2011: 111). In the refuse thrown out from the Royal Structure which piled up at the foot of its outer wall, excavations in 2009–2010 revealed pottery dated to the second half of the 10th century BCE (E. Mazar 2011: 122). During the renewed excavations of 2009–2013, an area immediately east of the previous area was excavated and a preliminary layout of the Ophel's earliest structures was proposed; it is divided into three successive phases, all dating from

the 10th century BCE (E. Mazar 2015: 461–464, Plan III.1.1). All in all, it appears that the construction of the fortification line in the Ophel should be dated to the Iron Age IIA (10th–9th centuries BCE), as reflected by the cooking pots typical of various phases of the structures integrated into the fortification line (E. Mazar 2015: 463, Fig. III.1.1).

The next stratum at Moza (Stratum VI) was exposed in two locations in Area B: in the northern part of the excavation area and in the southern secondary area (Figs. 6–7). The remains of this stratum, discovered in the southern secondary area above the burnt layer that sealed Stratum VII, included part of a building (L2083) comprising W207, W210, and W209 and containing various installations (and hence dubbed the “Installation Building”). A semicircular installation (L2054) was situated in the corner between W207 and W210, and three installations were arranged in a row along W209.

In the northern part of Area B a series of silos, first discerned in the 1993 season, was found very close to the surface. Silo 414 contained fragments of pottery vessels dating from the MB II and the Iron Age IIA, the latest finds probably associated with the period when the silo went out of use. For this reason, the suggested date for the silos in this part of the excavation is the early part of the Iron Age II (9th century BCE). Furthermore, the pottery discovered in a soil fill inside the “Installation Building” is characteristic of the 9th century BCE.

The significant architectural remains of Stratum VI attest that there was no settlement hiatus during the Iron Age IIA at the site. This, of course, is also expressed by the results of the excavations at the site during the 2012–2013 seasons (Kisilevitz et al. 2014). Nor does the settlement appear to have been diminished during the transition between Stratum VII and Stratum VI, in contradiction to Finkelstein’s scenario of the consequences of Shoshenq’s campaign (Finkelstein 2002). Although the density and extent of the settlement of this stratum are unknown, we originally assumed, based on the results of the 1993, 2002, and 2003 excavation seasons, that the Stratum VI settlement was similar in nature to the previous stratum (VII), possibly comprising a farmstead or small complex of buildings situated alongside the road that ascended to Jerusalem (Greenhut and De Groot 2009: 218–219). The new excavations (2012–2013) revealed the surprising result of a settlement with a large, rich temple complex dating from the late 10th/early 9th centuries BCE (Kisilevitz 2015; Kisilevitz and Lipschits 2020). The interpretation of these finds will be dealt with elsewhere by Kisilevitz, but it will suffice here to conclude that the architectural plan of the “Installation Building” exposed in our excavation also attests to the existence of a permanent

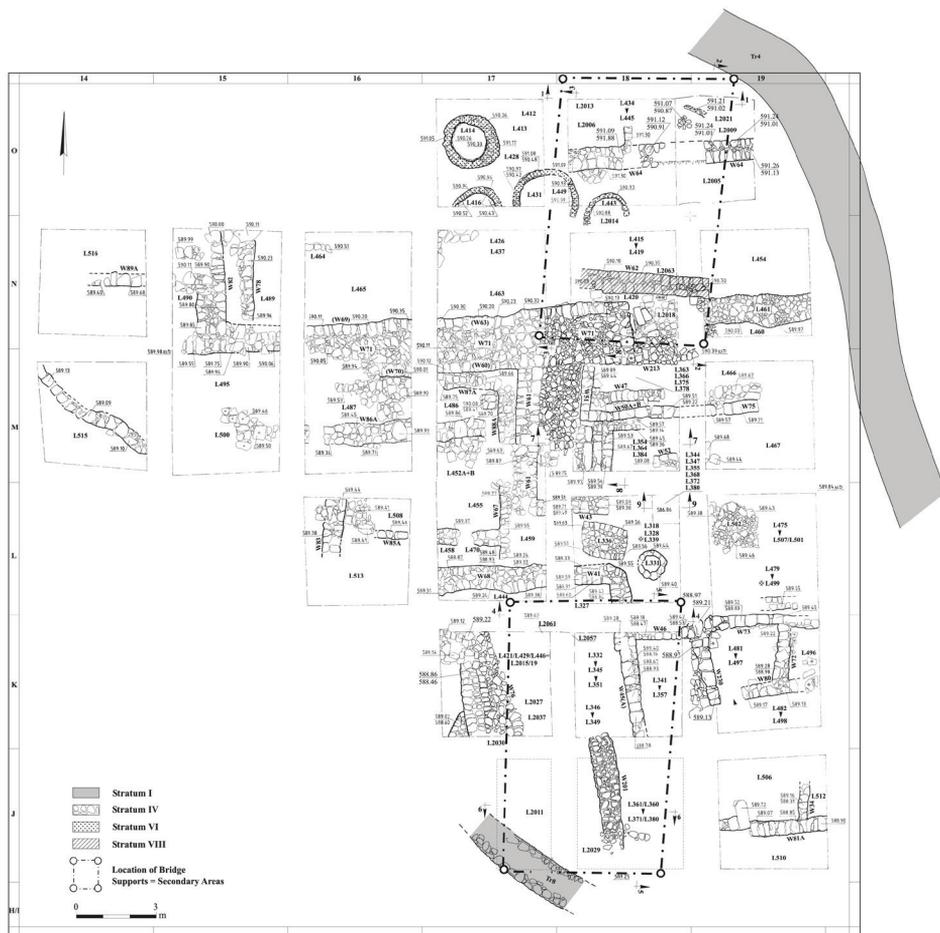


Fig. 6. Area B: plan (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:38–39, Plan 2.6, courtesy of the IAA).

occupation, which was based, among other things, on agriculture. The faunal assemblage reveals that most of the domesticated animals were sheep and goat (seven of the minimum number of eight individuals; Sadeh 2009: 201, Table 10.12), which demonstrates that grazing was a principal component in the subsistence of the residents.

One should also mention the fortification of Tell en-Naṣbeh with an inset-offset solid wall traditionally dated to the early 9th century BCE (McCown 1947: 117; Zorn 1993: 110), thus becoming a highland stronghold at the northern end of the Benjamin Plateau at this time (Sergi 2017: 10–12). Sergi interprets this as a reflection of a political formation during which the establishment of Jerusalem's political hegemony over the Benjamin Plateau required the marking of the border

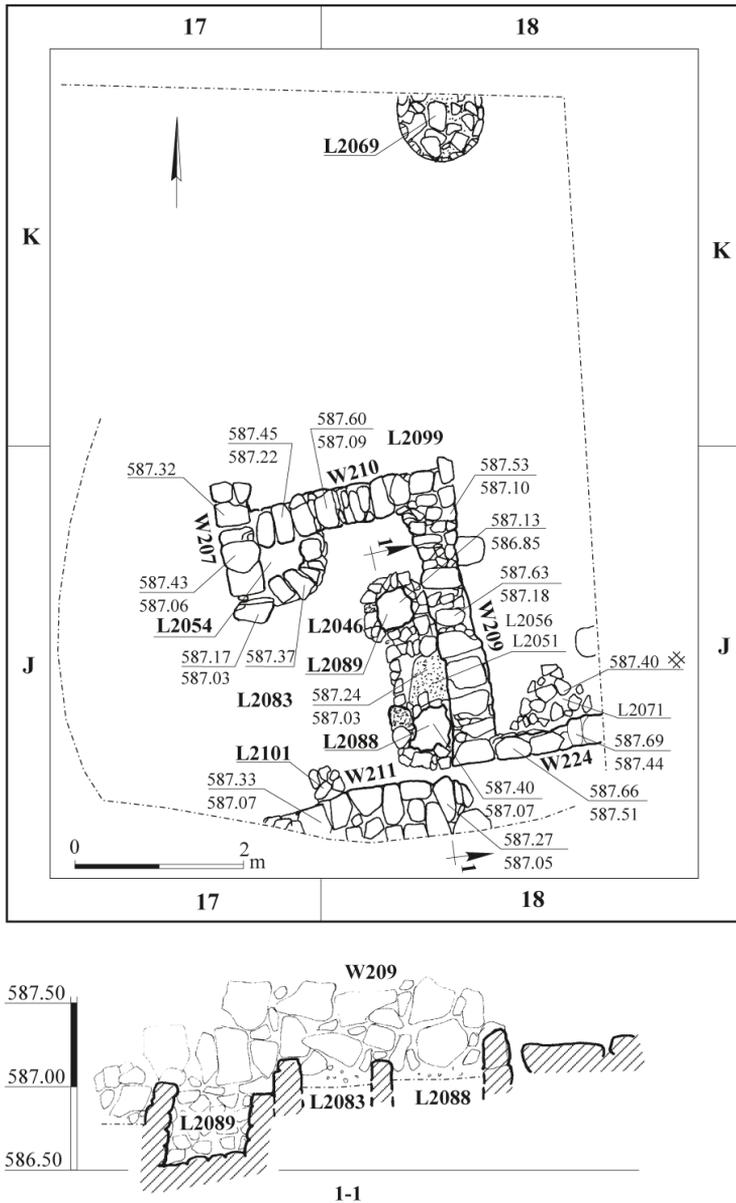


Fig. 7. Area B, the southern secondary area: plan of Stratum VI (Greenhut & De Groot 2009:46, Plan 2.11, courtesy of the IAA).

vis-à-vis the Kingdom of Israel (Sergi 2017: 16). Moza may have had an important part in this scenario.

To this might be added the results of the excavations of the various expeditions to Tel Beth-Shemesh. Level 3 of the renewed excavations, which is equivalent to Stratum IIA in the excavations of Grant and Wright, contained a series of public

buildings that, in the opinion of the co-directors of the renewed excavations at the site, were established during the second half of the 10th century and the beginning of the 9th century BCE (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2017: 32). The plan of the site in this level highlights the markers of central government that suddenly appeared at the site (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2017: 33, Fig. 3). Bet-Shemesh is one of the precursors of a new wave of settlement in the Iron Age IIA in the Shephelah. At Lachish, Level V marks the renewal of unfortified settlement at the site by a new people bearing a new material culture, arriving there as part of the process of the crystallization of the Judean kingdom (Ussishkin 2004: 76–77). Recently, however, a city wall ascribed to Level V was excavated at the site, showing that the site was fortified during this phase (Garfinkel 2019; contra Ussishkin 2019, who contests the ascription of this wall to Level V). Other such cases are the settlement of the mid-10th century at Tel Zayit, with its abecedary in the Judahite inland script tradition (Tappy 2017: 164–170); Tell Bet Mirsim Stratum B3 of the 10th century BCE (Albright 1932: 74; Albright 1943: 36–38) with its casemate wall (Albright 1943: 12, 37); Tel Eton with remains from this period in Area C and down the slope in Area B, showing that the settlement expanded significantly in comparison to that of the Iron Age I (Faust 2017: 27) as well as the massive fortification in Area D dated to the Iron Age IIA, probably already in the 10th century BCE – a settlement that is ascribed to the Kingdom of Israel/Judah (Faust and Katz 2015: 92–93; Faust 2017: 27); Azeka, where the excavators could not determine whether the finds are from the early or late Iron Age IIA (Lipschits, Gadot, and Oeming 2017: 14); Tel Burna, where the summit was enclosed by a casemate wall forming a stronghold (Shai 2017: 47–48) that is dated to the 9th century BCE (Shai et al. 2012) or perhaps even earlier (Shai et al. 2019: 91); and Tel Harasim, where scattered remains of an unfortified settlement, apparently dating from the end of the 10th century, were found in Area D (Givon 2008: 1767; see, however, Shai's objection to this dating: Shai 2000: 90–91). All of these sites show signs of renewed settlement in this period (the second half of the 10th and beginning of the 9th century BCE), some of them fortified as part of the process by which the area was integrated into Judah (Faust 2013; 2014; 2017: 27–28). It appears that the young monarchy emerging in the hill country had to establish its presence in the Shephelah and consolidate its hold on its border.

To sum up, based on the results of the rescue excavations at the site, it should be concluded that Moza thrived in the Iron Age IIA, during the second half of the 10th century BCE (Stratum VII), and the 9th century (Stratum VI). Stratum VII,

however, may have already existed at the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 10th century BCE, as evidenced by the pottery and the C14 dates.

It seems clear that the chain of events at Moza corresponds to the development of Jerusalem in this particular time span, as shown by the results of the recent excavations, as well as the results of modern analyses of older excavations in the capital. The data retrieved in the excavations of Moza add to our understanding of the existence and scale of the settlement in the countryside around Jerusalem in the early days of the Kingdom of Judah. It is hoped that additional excavations in the area around Jerusalem will enhance our understanding of the relationship between the capital and its countryside and the archaeology and history of the early days of the monarchy.

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