

INTRODUCTION¹

A large Phoenician settlement existed throughout the Iron Age and the Persian period at Tel Achziv. The tel is situated on the northern coast of Israel, 15km north of Acre and 25km south of Tyre, in southern Phoenicia. This monograph deals with the southern cemetery of Achziv, which in Arabic is called *Minet E-Zib* (the port of Achziv), and also known by the name *Buqbaq* (Figs. 1-2; Photos 1-7).²

The southern cemetery is on a sandstone (kurkar) ridge and covered by sand dunes. It is near the seashore, half a kilometer south of Tel Achziv, on the southern side of the Sha'al River. The presently silted-up mouth of the river served as an entrance for ships into their safe harbor along the eastern side of the Tel (Raban 1984). Although this cemetery spreads over many dunams, its exact size is uncertain. On the west the cemetery is bordered by the sea and on the north by the Sha'al River. Its southern and eastern limits are unknown.

Imanuel Ben-Dor conducted the first archaeological excavation at the southern cemetery in 1941, on behalf of the British Mandatory Government's Department of Antiquities. The excavation began when it became known that villagers from the area were looting the site (Prausnitz 1993). A report on the excavations conducted by E. Ben Dor at the southern and eastern cemeteries of Achziv in the years 1941-1944 has been published very recently (see end of Introduction).

Moshe Prausnitz continued excavations at the site on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities in the years 1958, 1960 and 1980 (see: Prausnitz 1959, 1960a, 1960b, 1962, 1969, 1970, 1982). From 1963 to 1964 he also conducted small-scale excavations on the tel on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities and the Oriental Institute of the University of Rome (Prausnitz 1963, 1965).

From 1988 to 1990, excavations continued in the southern cemetery of Achziv on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem by the author.³

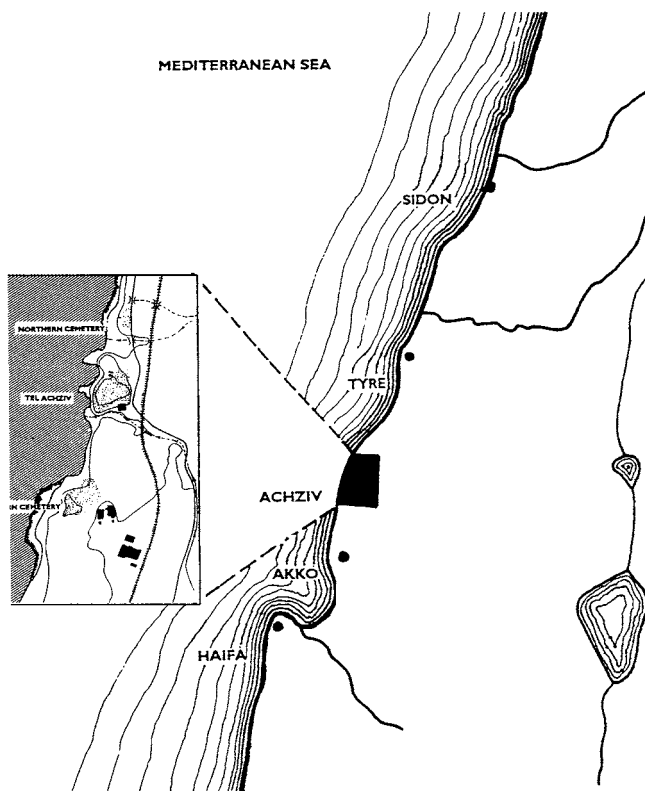


Fig. 1. Achziv on the northern coast of Israel

3 The excavations were funded by Mr. Jerome L. Joss of California, by the National Geographic Society, and by Mr. Leon Levy. Prof. Patricia Smith from the Hadassah School for Dental Medicine of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem conducted the anthropological research. The archaeologists were: Tamar Shabi, Jonathan Nadelman, Shlomit Atzmon, Shoshana Israeli, and Ditza Shmuel. Margalit Hayosh and Sylvia Zis were registrars. Wolf Shliecher, David Silverman, Neomi Gal and Sylvia Owen acted as photographers. The architect was Wolf Shliecher. The Israeli Army Engineering Corps and the residents of Nahariyah supplied tremendous help, especially Eitan Moller, Roni Briller and Cobi Volf. Further collaborators: Ruth Rivak and Ora Mazar (pottery restoration); Shifra Izenshtein, Margaret Ichelberg and Dalit Weinblat- Krauss (drawing of pottery and finds); Eilat Mazar (photography of finds); Wolf Shliecher and David Milson (final plans); Yiftah Shalev, Noam Adler and Orit Peleg (assisted in the final preparations of the report). Yiftah Shalev also prepared the final plates. David Milson edited the final manuscript. I would like to thank all of them for their diligence.

1 I would especially like to thank Prof. Maria Eugenia Aubet for enabling this publication and for her encouragement and friendship.

2 All dates are Before the Common Era, (BCE) unless stated otherwise.

The excavations revealed built tombs, rock-cut shaft tombs, round graves, pit graves, burials in pottery vessels and cremation burials. In spite of evidence of looting there was a large amount of evidence to be gained from the tombs concerning their architecture, burial goods, and burial cult.

In this monograph each tomb from the author's excavations will be discussed individually, in light of the following four categories:

1. *Surroundings of the tomb*: topographic location and its relation to other tombs, possible cult activity and finds.

2. *Tomb-plan*: architectural characteristics.

3. *Excavation process*: stratigraphy, location of the finds relative to each other, special elements such as stone-circles, etc.

4. *Finds*: figurines, jewelry, weapons, working tools, seals, amulets, etc.

This monograph is divided into five chapters. The first four chapters deal with different types of tombs and burials. The first chapter concerns built tombs, which appear as both cist tombs and chamber tombs. In chapter two shaft tombs are divided into five sub-types. Chapter three deals with three types of graves, which are smaller than tombs and usually for individuals. Cremation burials are discussed in chapter four. All tombs excavated by the author are numbered according to the excavation areas (for example, T.A.1= Tomb no. 1 in area A).

The report on Ben Dor's excavations by M. Dayagi-Mendels (*The Akhziv Cemeteries, The Ben Dor Excavations, 1941-1944*. Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) Reports, No. 15. Jerusalem, 2002) also includes an appendix by F. M. Cross on the stellae, and an appendix by O. Keel on the scarabs of Achziv.

Upon first glance at the volume, it is clear that the author did not pay sufficient heed to the extensive accounts left by the excavator. Such inadequate research leads to conclusions that are simply wrong, and which affect the entire understanding of the Phoenician family tombs. A more thorough review of the volume will be published in the near future, and will clarify its erroneous sections for the benefit of research on the subject.

The complete excavation report by Ben-Dor served as a basis for my doctorate work, which was completed in 1997. Accordingly it is possible for me to identify the claims in Dayagi-Mendels' volume that have no foundation in these excavation reports. For example, upon careful examination of Ben-Dor's report on the eastern cemetery (ZR), no trace is found of the Cypriot import

White Painted Barrel juglet, dated to the 10th c. BCE. This fact is important in forming a general picture of the typological and chronological development of the family tombs in the Iron Age Achziv cemeteries, a picture indicating that the eastern cemetery went into use only at the end of the 10th c. - beginning of the 9th c. BCE, when the northern cemetery at Achziv was converted for use exclusively as a cremation burial site. Surprisingly, the White Painted Barrel juglet appears in Dayagi-Mendels' publication (under type CP9) as an artifact from tomb XVII in the eastern cemetery (ZR), even though, as mentioned above, Ben-Dor's report does not include such a vessel as coming from anywhere in the eastern cemetery. Rather, the vessel is reported by Ben-Dor as coming from tomb XVII in the southern cemetery (Z); it does not appear in Dayagi-Mendels' description of that tomb. It can be assumed that a confusion of the names of the eastern and southern cemeteries led to this mistake, which has caused a major disruption in the proper dating of the tombs' typology. Furthermore, the pottery from tomb XVII of the southern cemetery (Z) at Achziv, including the appearance of the White Painted Barrel juglet there, was published by Culican in 1982 (W. Culican, *The Repertoire of Phoenician Pottery*. In H.G. Niemeyer (ed), *Phöniizier Im Westen*, Mainz am Rhein, 1982:45-82) but the article is not mentioned at all by Dayagi-Mendels in this context, even though it appears in the bibliography and was known to the author.

The same type of White Painted Barrel juglet appears in Dayagi-Mendels in tomb X of the southern cemetery (Z). Tomb X is a developed type of tomb that includes beds, and dates at the very earliest to the end of the 9th c., but is characteristic of the 8th - 7th c. BCE. The existence of this kind of juglet in a tomb with such beds necessitates an unreasonably early date for this kind of tomb, undermining the family tomb typologies which until now have been integrated well into the full chronology of the Iron Age. Indeed, in the excavator's report the juglet does not appear in Tomb X of the southern cemetery (Z), rather in tomb XI, as number 37. An incorrect marking on the artifact itself records it as coming from tomb X, as number 37, but such a mistake would certainly have been detected upon a careful study of the excavation report, given the fact that this kind of juglet pre-dates by 100 years the use of shaft tombs with beds.

Therefore, the publication of Dayagi-Mendels should be used with caution until a more detailed criticism, which precisely outlines the errors of the volume, is published.

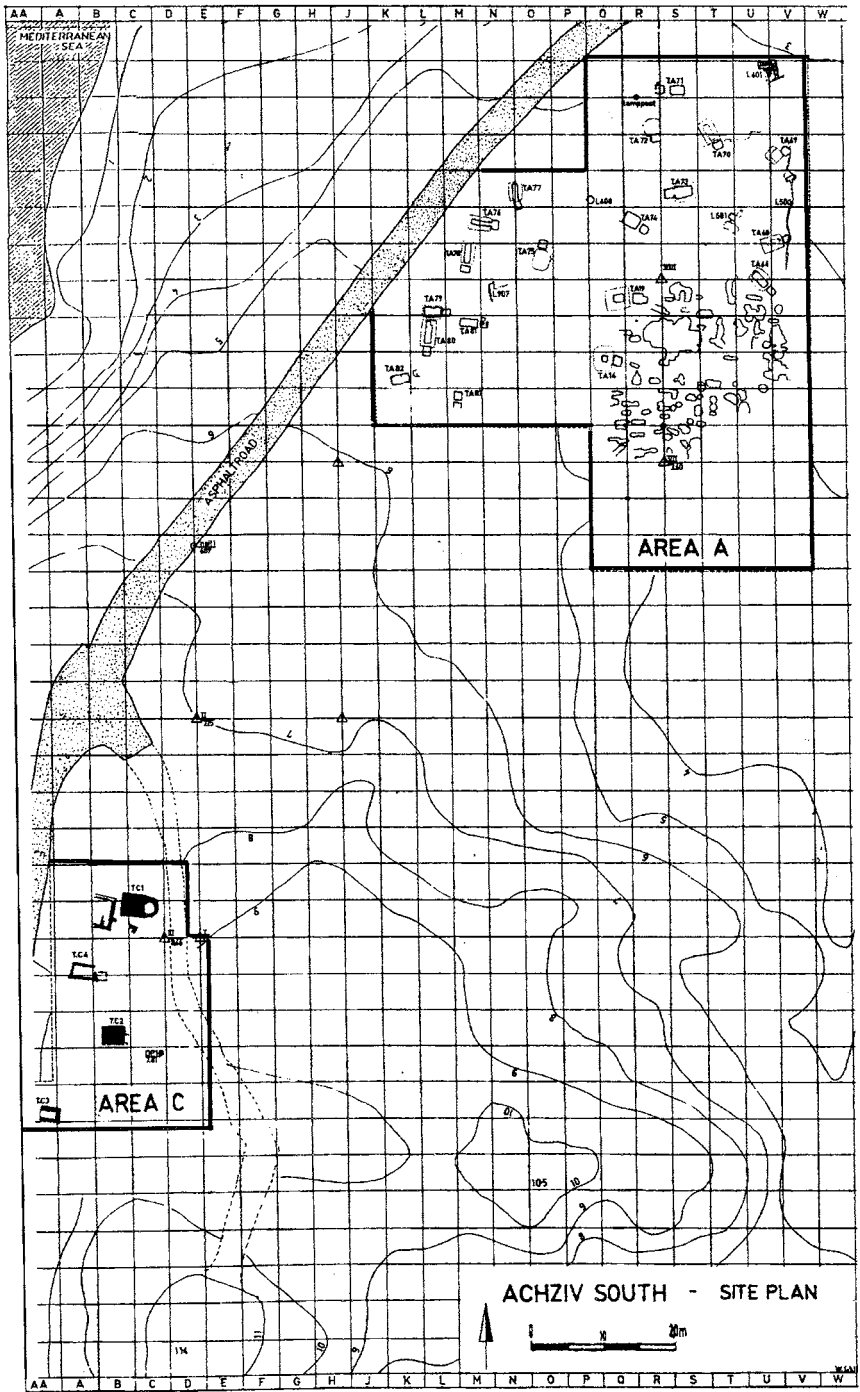


Fig. 2. Excavation areas A and C in the southern cemetery



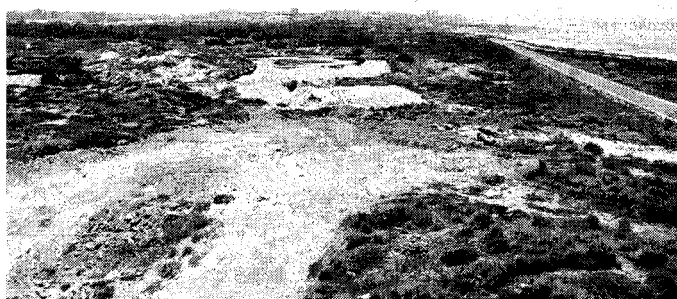
Photo 1. Members of the expedition in 1988: Standing from left to right: Sohshana Israeli, volunteer, Paul Davis, Muki Zehavi, Amram, Yonatan Nadelman, Eilat Mazar, Wolf Schliecher, Ditza Shumuel, volunteer. Sitting: Sylvia Owen and Tamar Shabi.



Photo 2. Members of the expedition in 1989: Back row from left: Wolf Schliecher, Sylvia Zis (with Nadia Zis-Schliecher), Nir Zinger. Front row from left: Tamar Shabi, Yonatan Nadelman, Eilat Mazar. Sitting: Shlomit Atzmon.



Photo 3. Members of the expedition in 1990: Back row: Guy Cohen, Maydva Mazar-Kovalyo (on ladder), Wolf Schliecher, Yoni Rand, David Silverman, Smadar Atzmon, Adi Ziv, Margalit Hayosh. Middle row: Eilat Mazar, Tamar Shabi, Sylvia Krapiwko. Sitting: Volunteer, Shlomit Atzmon.



Photos 4-5. Tel Achziv and the outlet of Sha'al river, looking north (4); the city of Naharia 1 km. from the site, looking south (5)



Photos 6-7. Aerial photograph of the southern cemetery in 1956, the outlet of Sha'al river and the southern edge of Tel Achziv, looking north (6); The southern cemetery, looking northeast (7)