

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE BRONZE AGE LEVANT

The Levant – modern Lebanon, southern Syria, Jordan, Israel and Palestine – is one of the most intensively excavated regions of the world. This richly documented and illustrated survey offers a state-of-the-art description of the formative phase of Levantine societies, as they perfected the Mediterranean village economy and began to interact with neighboring civilizations in Egypt and Syria, on the way to establishing their first towns and city-state polities. Citing numerous finds and interpretive approaches, the author offers a new narrative of social and cultural development, emulation, resistance and change, illustrating how Levantine communities translated broader movements of the Near Eastern and Mediterranean Bronze Age – the emergence of states, international trade, elite networks and imperial ambitions – into a uniquely Levantine idiom.

Raphael Greenberg is Associate Professor of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University. Specializing in the study of early urban formations, economies and institutions, he currently heads the Tel Bet Yerah excavations near the Sea of Galilee and is co-founder of Emek Shaveh – a non-profit that monitors the political role of archaeology in Jerusalem and beyond.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-11146-2 — The Archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant
Raphael Greenberg
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY

SERIES EDITOR

NORMAN YOFFEE, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

EDITORIAL BOARD

CORISANDE FENWICK, INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY,
 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

STEPHEN SHENNAN, INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY,
 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

CARLA SINOPOLI, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

TOM DILLEHAY, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

TIM PAUKETAT, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA-
 CHAMPAIGN

DAVID WENGROW, INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY,
 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

The Cambridge World Archaeology series is addressed to students and professional archaeologists, and to academics in related disciplines. Most volumes present a survey of the archaeology of a region of the world, providing an up-to-date account of research and integrating recent findings with new concerns of interpretation. While the focus is on a specific region, broader cultural trends are discussed and the implications of regional findings for cross-cultural interpretations considered. The authors also bring anthropological and historical expertise to bear on archaeological problems and show how both new data and changing intellectual trends in archaeology shape inferences about the past. More recently, the series has expanded to include thematic volumes.

RECENT BOOKS IN THE SERIES

ANTONIO SAGONA, *The Archaeology of the Caucasus*

D.T. POTTS, *The Archaeology of Elam*

ROBIN CONINGHAM AND RUTH YOUNG, *The Archaeology of South Asia*

CLAUDIA SAGONA, *The Archaeology of Malta*

FRANCES F. BERDAN, *Aztec Archaeology and Ethnohistory*

PETER MAGEE, *The Archaeology of Prehistoric Arabia*

KOJI MIZOGUCHI, *The Archaeology of Japan*

MIKE SMITH, *The Archaeology of Australia's Deserts*

A. BERNARD KNAPP, *The Archaeology of Cyprus*

LI LIU AND XINGCAN CHEN, *The Archaeology of China*

STEPHEN D. HOUSTON AND TAKESHI INOMATA, *The Classic Maya*

PHILIP L. KOHL, *The Making of Bronze Age Eurasia*

LAWRENCE BARHAM AND PETER MITCHELL, *The First Africans*

ROBIN DENNELL, *The Palaeolithic Settlement of Asia*

CHRISTOPHER POOL, *Olmec Archaeology and Early Mesoamerica*

SAMUEL M. WILSON, *The Archaeology of the Caribbean*

RICHARD BRADLEY, *The Prehistory of Britain*

LUDMILA KORYAKOVA AND ANDREJ EPIMAKHOV, *The Urals and
Western Siberia in the Bronze and Iron Ages*
DAVID WENGROW, *The Archaeology of Early Egypt*
PAUL RAINBIRD, *The Archaeology of Micronesia*
PETER M.M.G. AKKERMANS AND GLENN M. SCHWARTZ, *The
Archaeology of Syria*
TIMOTHY INSOLL, *The Archaeology of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa*

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF
THE BRONZE AGE LEVANT

*From Urban Origins to the Demise of City-States,
3700–1000 BCE*

RAPHAEL GREENBERG

Tel Aviv University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107111462

DOI: 10.1017/9781316275993

© Cambridge University Press 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International, Ltd., Padstow, Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Greenberg, Raphael, author.

TITLE: The archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant : from urban origins to the demise of city-states, 3700–1000 BCE / Raphael Greenberg.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge University Press, 2019. | Series: Cambridge world archaeology | Includes bibliographical references.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2019013843 | ISBN 9781107111462 (hardback) | ISBN 9781107529137 (pbk.)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Bronze age—Middle East. | Excavations (Archaeology)—Middle East. | Cities and towns, Ancient—Middle East. | Urbanization—Middle East—History—To 1500.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC GN778.32.N4 G74 2020 | DDC 939.4—dc 3

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019013843>

ISBN 978-1-107-11146-2 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

To Adi, Ofer and Ayal

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-11146-2 — The Archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant
Raphael Greenberg
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>List of Illustrations</i> | <i>page xi</i> |
| <i>Preface</i> | xvii |
| 1 Introduction | I |
| 2 Villages and the Growth of Social Power in the Early Bronze I | 24 |
| 3 Urbanism and Its Demise in the Early Bronze II and III | 70 |
| 4 The Intermediate Bronze Age: Entering the Orbit of Syria | 136 |
| 5 Villages, Manors and Integrated City-States of the Middle Bronze Age | 180 |
| 6 The Late Bronze Age: Under Egypt's Heel | 272 |
| 7 Conclusion: The Legacy of the Bronze Age Levant | 354 |
| <i>Bibliography</i> | 359 |
| <i>Index</i> | 409 |

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-11146-2 — The Archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant
Raphael Greenberg
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1.1 | Map of the Levant | <i>page 5</i> |
| 1.2 | The first systematic excavation at a Bronze Age site in the Levant: Tell el-Hesi, 1892 | 9 |
| 2.1 | Map of sites mentioned in this chapter | 27 |
| 2.2 | Partial site plans of (a) Yiftah'el and (b) Sidon Dakerman, and (c) artist's reconstruction of the curvilinear houses of Tel Te'o | 31 |
| 2.3 | EB IA pottery: (a–d) southern types, (e–j) northern types | 33 |
| 2.4 | EB IA flint and stone artifacts: (a) Canaanite blades, (b) tabular scraper, (c) basalt whorl, (d) bowl and (e) potter's wheel | 38 |
| 2.5 | Reconstruction of shaft-tomb burial at EB IA Bab edh-Dhra' | 41 |
| 2.6 | Plan of the "Stratum C1" buildings at Tel Erani | 44 |
| 2.7 | Plans of the EB IB village at Palmahim Quarry (superimposed on ovoid structures of the EB IA) and H. 'Illin Tahtit | 46 |
| 2.8 | The large EB IB building at Tel Bet Shean, Area M, with figures standing on pillar bases | 47 |
| 2.9 | The EB IB temples at Megiddo: left, the Stratum J3 temple and courtyard; right, reconstructed plan of the Stratum J4 Great Temple that succeeded it | 49 |
| 2.10 | Selected incised drawings from the Megiddo picture pavement, showing a feline straddling a headless human corpse, the figure of a ruler with headdress and spear, a supplicant and a bull | 49 |
| 2.11 | A bilobate EB IB tomb at Azor | 50 |
| 2.12 | Representations of the EB I traction complex: a donkey bearing panniers from a tomb at Azor and a plowing scene on a stamp seal from Tel Kitan | 51 |
| 2.13 | Selected EB IB pottery from Tel Kitan | 53 |
| 2.14 | The Tell es-Sakan EB IB mudbrick fortification lines, visible to the right of and beneath the standing figure | 59 |
| 2.15 | Incised serekh of Namer on an imported Egyptian jar found at Arad | 61 |
| 2.16 | The late EB IB destruction at Tell Abu al-Kharaz | 65 |
| 3.1 | Map of sites mentioned in this chapter | 73 |
| 3.2 | Tel Bet Yerah: a locally manufactured ceramic jug featuring a group of Egyptian signs incised after firing (left), and a fragment of an Egyptian relief-decorated siltstone palette or bowl (right) | 74 |

| | | |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3.3 | EB II fortifications and gates: top, the south gate and town wall at Tel Bareqet; bottom left, reconstructed gate of Tell el-Far'ah (North); bottom right, the EB II fortifications at Tel Yarmuth | 78 |
| 3.4 | General plans of Arad (top, inset – temple precinct), Labwe (bottom left) and Tell el-Far'ah (North) (bottom right) | 80 |
| 3.5 | A paved street in the south part of Tel Bet Yerah, flanked by houses (Bar-Adon excavations of 1951) | 82 |
| 3.6 | Left, reconstructed house compound at Arad and model house or temple from Arad; right, house plans at Tel Bet Yerah | 83 |
| 3.7 | Left, map showing Lower Cretaceous outcrops in relation to sites with high proportions (at least 50 percent of non-cooking wares) of South Levantine Metallic ware; right, approximate distribution of South Levantine Metallic ware and Golan cooking pots | 87 |
| 3.8 | Metallic ware types and globular Golan cooking pot (middle row) | 89 |
| 3.9 | Arad-type pottery from southern Sinai compared with vessels from Arad; at right, a house compound from the southern Sinai site of Sheikh 'Awad | 90 |
| 3.10 | Houses and associated pits and installations at Tell Numayra | 100 |
| 3.11 | The upper town of Kh. ez-Zeraqun; note blocked posterns in the town wall and the partial blockage of the gate | 102 |
| 3.12 | Late EB III Wall C at Tel Bet Yerah (Bar-Adon excavations of 1952), looking east | 103 |
| 3.13 | Plan of Yarmuth Palace B1 and the adjacent houses | 106 |
| 3.14 | The Megiddo temple complex in late EB III | 108 |
| 3.15 | Plan of the Circles Building and plaza at Tel Bet Yerah | 110 |
| 3.16 | Reconstruction of EB III charnel house at Bab edh-Dhra' | 112 |
| 3.17 | Large EB III platter, krater and pithos from Tel Yarmuth | 114 |
| 3.18 | (a) Ivory bull's head, (b) lion-shaped vessel and (c) mother-and-child figurine from Tel Bet Yerah | 115 |
| 3.19 | Cylinder seals and impressions from (a) Tell es-Safi and (b, c) Tell Fadous-Kfarabida | 117 |
| 3.20 | Khirbet Kerak ware from Tel Bet Yerah: (a) bowl, (b) jar, (c, d) kraters, (e) decorated lid and (f) andiron | 118 |
| 3.21 | Khirbet Kerak ware: (a) figurines, (b) wheel model and (c) miniature bowl | 120 |
| 3.22 | Plan of Early Bronze III structures at Tell Fadous-Kfarabida; at right, a bone scale beam | 125 |
| 3.23 | Early Bronze III pottery from Tell Arqa | 126 |
| 4.1 | Map of sites mentioned in this chapter | 143 |
| 4.2 | Tell-avoidance in the IBA: (a) the location of settlements in relation to Tel Yarmuth, (b) Tell ed-Duweir/Lachish and (c) the walled precinct of EBA Bab edh-Dhra' | 146 |
| 4.3 | EB IV houses at Tell Arqa | 147 |
| 4.4 | Block-plans of Shaar Hagolan and Tell Um Hammad in the IBA, and an independent, modular house-unit, with its ceramic assemblage, in Nahal Refa'im | 149 |
| 4.5 | The "gateway" in Area C at Kh. Iskandar | 152 |

List of Illustrations

xiii

| | | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 4.6 | Plan of Har Yeroham | 153 |
| 4.7 | The IBA drinking repertoire in several workshop traditions: (a) black wheelmade ware, (b) northern Jordan Valley, (c) middle Jordan Valley and (d) Judean hills/Negev Highlands | 155 |
| 4.8 | “Terminal EBA” pottery from Tel Bet Yerah, Period E (left), and IBA pottery from Sha’ar Hagolan (right) | 156 |
| 4.9 | Three types of Negev Highlands settlements: (a) Be’er Resisim, (b) Nahal Nizzana and (c) Be’er Ratav | 160 |
| 4.10 | Y. Goren’s analysis of the provenience of IBA pottery from six Negev Highlands sites | 162 |
| 4.11 | Stone molds for copper axes and ingots and copper ingots from the earlier phase of Kh. Hamra Ifdan | 163 |
| 4.12 | Type A individualizing tombs at Ramat Hanadiv and Jericho; Type B collective tombs at Hazorea’ and Jericho | 169 |
| 4.13 | The ‘Ain Samiya goblet | 175 |
| 5.1 | Modeled radiocarbon dates for (a) the start of the MB I at Tel Hayyat, (b, c) the transition to MB II at Tell el-Ifshar and Burak, (d) the transition to late MB II at Tell ed-Dab’a and (e, f) the final MB II at Kabri and Jericho | 183 |
| 5.2 | Map of MB I–II sites mentioned in this chapter | 191 |
| 5.3 | The MB I–II sequence of shrines at Tell el-Hayyat | 195 |
| 5.4 | Tel Bet Yerah: an MB I potter’s kiln (left), locally produced Syrian-style pottery, and two decorated Tell el-Yahudiya juglets from graves | 196 |
| 5.5 | “Warrior burials”: Tomb A/II-p/14-18 L 468 at Tell ed-Dab’a, interior, with male interment and associated weapons; exterior, with female servant and donkey burial; below, Grave 13 at Gesher, with duckbill axe, socketed spearhead and early MB I pots | 199 |
| 5.6 | Byblos: offerings from the sacred precinct, including a decorated gold dagger and fenestrated axe, a boat model and silver goblets; below, cast bronze figurines from the Nahariyya shrine | 202 |
| 5.7 | Tell el-Ifshar: imported Egyptian jar, Levantine Painted pottery and an onion-shaped jar | 205 |
| 5.8 | Coastal red-slipped and polished MB I pottery | 206 |
| 5.9 | Plan of Afeq and its manor houses | 210 |
| 5.10 | Ashqelon: the MB I gate, a section through the rampart, and the topography of the ancient site | 213 |
| 5.11 | Tel Dan: aerial view of the rampart city prior to the excavations (left), and the arched mudbrick city gate during excavation (right) | 216 |
| 5.12 | Plan of the fortified estate at Tell el-Burak | 218 |
| 5.13 | Wall paintings at Tell el-Burak | 218 |
| 5.14 | An Egyptian clay sealing from Ashqelon | 220 |
| 5.15 | Proto-Sinaitic dedicatory inscriptions from Serabit el-Khadim in western Sinai: the inscription on the statue base includes a dedication to the patron goddess (<i>b’t</i>) of the mines, while the stela mentions the West Asian master miner (<i>rb nqbmm</i>) who dedicated it | 223 |
| 5.16 | MB II fine wares | 227 |

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 5.17 | Two sculpted ceramic libation vessels in the Tell el-Yahudiya technique: a head-cup from Jericho and a zoomorphic trick vessel from Tur'an | 228 |
| 5.18 | Topographic plan of Tel Hazor, with MBA cultic compounds indicated in Areas H, F and A | 229 |
| 5.19 | Aerial view of the upper city MBA cult area; the "Southern Temple" at top right and the stela field and associated installations at bottom left | 231 |
| 5.20 | Smashed jars in the wine cellar of the Tel Kabri palatial estate | 235 |
| 5.21 | The location and catchments of MB II Jerusalem and nearby villages; the large site of Battir falls outside the map, about 2 kilometers west of the Walajeh shrine | 239 |
| 5.22 | General plan of the Nahal Refa'im site in the MBA (block plans) and IBA (in outline); below, plans of Houses 2720 (left) and 300 (right) | 240 |
| 5.23 | Composite plans of Tell el-Ajjul (left) and Tell el-Najila (right) | 246 |
| 5.24 | Tomb 498 at Kabri, top view (left) and final disposition of finds near the doorway (right) | 257 |
| 5.25 | Wooden objects from MB II tombs at Jericho: a three-legged table (left), a bowl and two decorated boxes | 259 |
| 5.26 | MB II bone inlays from Tell Beit Mirsim, Tell el-Ajjul and el-Jisr | 260 |
| 5.27 | Locally produced MB II scarabs from Barqai and Tell el-Ajjul, and a hematite cylinder seal ("green jasper" type) from Tell Beit Mirsim | 261 |
| 6.1 | Map of sites mentioned in this chapter | 273 |
| 6.2 | Pottery at the MB-LB transition: (a, b) Wheelmade Bichrome goblet and jug, (c) transitional MB-LB cooking pot and (d, e) Chocolate-on-White jug and mixing bowl | 277 |
| 6.3 | LB IA shrines at Bet Shean and Lachish | 279 |
| 6.4 | Locally produced Egyptian-type "flowerpots" from the early phase of the Egyptian presence at Jaffa and the reconstructed façade of the Ramesside portal | 290 |
| 6.5 | Egypt in Bet Shean: (a) plan of Level VI (Hebrew University excavations), (b) reconstruction of Building 1500, (c) relative quantities of Egyptian and local pottery in Level VI houses, (d) locally made Egyptian pottery and (e) an anthropoid coffin with "grotesque" features, from the northern cemetery | 294 |
| 6.6 | The Kamid el-Loz "Treasury": plan and selected finds – stone bowl and amphora, bronze sword and fire-pan, inlaid game-box, terracotta chariot model and duck-shaped ivory cosmetic vessel | 303 |
| 6.7 | Egyptian knickknacks from the Tell el-Far'ah cemetery | 304 |
| 6.8 | A pithos burial at Tell es-Sa'idiya | 305 |
| 6.9 | The miner's shrine at Timna and the rock stela above it, from the days of Ramesses III | 308 |
| 6.10 | Left, a bronze plaque from LB I Hazor depicting a local dignitary; right, the LB II statue of the reigning storm-god Ba'al, found in the acropolis ceremonial complex | 311 |

List of Illustrations

xv

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 6.11 | Plan of the Hazor acropolis ceremonial palace or temple; below, the palace destruction layer (left) and the monolithic podium in the ceremonial stairway leading from the lower city | 313 |
| 6.12 | Hazor: above, Area C shrine and general plan, showing its location at the rear of the domestic quarter; below, general view of the Area H tower temple (looking southwest), detail of offering table and reconstruction | 315 |
| 6.13 | Three categories of Megiddo ivories: bodily care (top row), power (middle strips) and leisure (bottom) | 319 |
| 6.14 | Bet Shemesh: finds from the fourteenth-century palace: a Cypriot juglet, bronze arrowheads and straw-tip, a commemorative scarab of Amenhotep III, a plaque figurine and two Minoan cups | 323 |
| 6.15 | The Lachish Stratum VI acropolis temple and a drawing of a gold plaque found in the temple, showing a nude goddess astride a war-horse. | 325 |
| 6.16 | (a) Plan and isometric view of the shrine at Deir ‘Alla cella, (b) ceramic cult vessels and (c) inscribed clay plaques and faience vessel bearing the name of Tawosret | 327 |
| 6.17 | Akko, Persian Garden: Tomb No. 3 and selected finds from the cemetery, including a bronze mirror, a trident, tongs and a sword, Cypriot Base-Ring I–II jugs and White Slip II bowls, an Egyptian ring and merchants’ weights | 333 |
| 6.18 | Mycenean pottery from a built tomb at Tel Dan | 337 |
| 6.19 | A biconical jug/amphora from Tel Yin’am and a jug from Tel el-Far‘ah (South), bearing characteristic decorative panels that show horned animals and palm trees | 348 |

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-11146-2 — The Archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant
Raphael Greenberg
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

PREFACE

The first to broach the possibility of writing this study were David Wengrow and Norman Yoffee, who encouraged me to submit a proposal to the Cambridge World Archaeology editorial board. I am grateful to them for the initiative, and to the board for their comments and encouragement at the very first stages of what was clearly an ambitious challenge. The main body of my work was structured around a three-year series of undergraduate seminars, each devoted to one of the three main divisions of the book – Early, Middle and Late Bronze. To the many students who participated in this seminar go my thanks for asking new questions, following leads and for generally serving as a sounding-board for half-baked ideas. David Ilan, Uri Davidovich, Felix Höflmayer and an anonymous reviewer offered valuable comments on parts or the whole of the manuscript. Many others are to be thanked for their moral and intellectual support and for discussion of various facets of the work: the postgraduate staff of the Bet Yerah Archaeological Project – Sarit Paz, Mark Iserlis, Yael Rotem, Hai Ashkenazi and Alon Arad – and Shlomo Bunimovitz, Matt Adams, Yuval Yekutieli, Raz Kletter, Mario Martin, Dafna Langutt, Mel Kennedy, Yorke Rowan, Morag Kersel, Jack Green, Giulio Palumbi, Elisabetta Boaretto, Hermann Genz, Meredith Chesson, Dana Behrman, Gideon Solimany and whomever I happened to bump into during my long hours at the Albright Institute and Rockefeller (IAA) libraries (where I am indebted to Silvia Krapiwko and Aryeh Rochman for countless cups of coffee and conversation). Susan Pollock was a kind host for a brief but productive stint at the Institute of Near Eastern Archaeology, Freie Universität, in 2016, and Sarah Fairman and Matt Adams invited me to a research associateship at the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, providing a quiet and congenial venue for the final stages of writing.

The arduous task of preparing illustrations was aided by the Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology graphic artists Itamar Ben-Ezra and Naama Earon, and the list of colleagues who provided me with images and permissions for publication is long: Matt Adams, Uzi Avner, Amnon Ben-Tor, Eliot

Braun, Aaron Burke, Meredith Chesson, Eric Cline, Emanuel Eisenberg, Patricia Fall, Peter Fischer, Yossi Garfinkel, Hermann Genz, Jack Green, Gordon Hamilton, Ze'ev Herzog, Felix Höflmayer, Sabine Hornung, David Ilan, Jens Kamlah, Tom Levy, Aren Maeir, Ezra Marcus, Mario Martin, Daniel Master, Amihai Mazar, Pierre de Miroschedji, Sarit Paz, Suzanne Richard, Yael Rotem, Naama Scheftelowitz, Helga Seeden, Margreet Steiner, the late J.-P. Thalmann, David Ussishkin, Yuval Yekutieli, the Austrian Institute of Archaeology, the Council for British Research in the Levant, the Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, the Palestine Exploration Fund, the Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology and, especially, Yael Barschak and the Israel Antiquities Authority. Beatrice Rehl, Mark Fox, Shaheer Husanne and Stephanie Sakson expertly saw the volume through to publication.

There is little that is original in this study: my intellectual debt thus extends as far back as the beginnings of Levantine archaeology and as wide as the scholarly community that sustains it. Nonetheless, if I were to identify the crucibles in which my approach and understanding of Bronze Age archaeology was shaped, it would have to include the excavations in which I participated as an under- and post-graduate student (ancient Jerusalem with Yigal Shiloh, Deir el-Balah with Trude Dothan, Tel Batash with Ami Mazar and Tell Qasis with Amnon Ben-Tor), my first publication project (working up the EBA strata of Tel Dan under Avraham Biran) and my first proper job (editing the publications of colleagues at the Israel Department of Antiquities under the guidance of Ayala Sussman). The community of scholars that has coalesced around the study of the Early Bronze Age, founded at the Emmaus meeting convened by Pierre de Miroschedji in 1986, and sustained through countless ICAANE and ARCANE workshops, has also had a marked impact on my work, along with the Kura–Araxes devotees in the Caucasus and scattered across four continents, whom I have come to know and appreciate through our work at Tel Bet Yerah. Whatever is sound and trustworthy in this volume comes from the work of these and many others; its lacunae, misrepresentations and interpretive excesses are all my own.

In these days of online libraries and information fatigue, much of our work takes place at home, battling the distractions of a task-laden screen. I should therefore end with apologies and gratitude to those who had to endure me at home, listen to endless complaints (and verbal abuse of electronic devices, slow connections and incaltrant websites) and offer moral support, even as they were engaged in their own productive labors: Hannah, Jacek and Thomas, and, if only sporadically, Adi, Ofer and Ayal.

The simplified transliteration of place names in this volume follows varying regional conventions and common usage.