

BOOK REVIEWS

Aharoni, Yohanan. *The Archaeology of the Land of Israel*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982. Trans. from Hebrew by Anson Rainey. xx + 344 pp. \$27.50/\$18.95.

I consider this to be the best intermediate level textbook on the archaeology of the land of Israel currently available. W. F. Albright's *Archaeology of Palestine* is now out of print. K. Kenyon's *Archaeology of the Holy Land* is not as readable or as broad and up-to-date as Aharoni's work. For beginners I would still recommend K. Schoville's *Biblical Archaeology in Focus*; but after finishing that volume, the progressing student should turn to Aharoni's work. (I have been informed that a multi-authored volume on this subject is in preparation, but since it is not available yet, the foregoing recommendation stands.)

Aharoni's text follows the customary chronological outline of the subject, beginning with the Paleolithic period and extending down to the end of the Iron Age with the fall of Judah to Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. A little over 100 pages of text are spent on the Israelite period, and about the same amount is devoted to the preceding Canaanite period. The first 50 pages, which treat the earlier periods, can be considered introductory in nature. They lead into the archaeological periods, which receive justifiably greater stress.

Within each archaeological period treated, a relatively wide spectrum of sites, artifacts, architecture, and interpretations is dealt with. Two dozen pottery plates are scattered throughout the volume, illustrating the development of ceramic typology through the different archaeological periods. Some 80 maps, top plans, and line drawings illustrate the different subjects treated, and these are supplemented by 50 photographs, all collected in one section near the end of the volume. As far as the technical layout is concerned, the major drawbacks of the book—the lack of footnote references and an absence of an index of topics—hamper its usefulness as a reference tool.

At the outset, the reader will notice that the terminology employed for the standard archaeological periods is not that of the customary Bronze and Iron Ages. These have been replaced by the terms "Canaanite" and "Israelite." This procedure creates a problem for Transjordan, where one should refer to a parallel site as, e.g., "Moabite I" or "Moabite II." I also find somewhat jarring the anachronism of referring to Canaanites in the third millennium B.C. as living in "Eretz Israel." (When that terminology

is used, it should be used consistently. Yet, the cover title refers to the "Land of Israel," while the body of the text employs the terminology "Eretz Israel.")

Terminology aside, there are more substantive issues involved at points of dispute in this book. As is to be expected, Aharoni has devoted a fair amount of text to special issues in which he himself was involved. One of these discusses whether the new Early Iron Age of "Israelite" villages which spread over the hills of Galilee and elsewhere was contemporaneous with the end of the Late Bronze Age (LB) or only followed after it. The author holds that they were contemporary, while his principal protagonist, Yigael Yadin, held that they were only successive. Aharoni's interpretation (pp. 160-161) appears definitely preferable in this instance, since some late LB pottery has now been found at some of these sites.

Aharoni does not fare quite so well in his dispute with Yadin about the Iron-II gate and wall at Megiddo. Both he and Yadin agree that the four-entry-way gate there is Solomonic and dates to the tenth century, but Aharoni holds that a solid wall there belongs with this gate, while Yadin's opinion is that a casemate wall belongs with it. It seems to me that too much space has been devoted by Aharoni to this discussion (pp. 201-205) in a textbook of this type. The merits of the case are difficult to judge without consulting the more detailed reports or possibly even making a personal field examination.

However, in whatever way the technical archaeological argument is settled, Aharoni's historical reconstruction from it seems strained: "According to this stratigraphic analysis, which can hardly be cast in doubt in the light of numerous data from Megiddo, it is reasonable to assume that the city suffered some destruction between the reigns of David and Solomon. Is such a thing possible, since there is no information about an event such as that? One must beware of the paucity of source material available and the selectivity of biblical historiography . . ." (p. 209).

On the other hand, Aharoni's position on the date of the destruction of Lachish III, 701 over against Albright's 597, continues to be strengthened by further research and the results of ongoing excavations.

While this book provides an excellent archaeological picture of the settlement because of the author's own field research in that area, its archaeological treatment of the Conquest is very thin. The reason for this is that Aharoni has subscribed to the Alt-Noth view that the "conquest" was a process of infiltration and settlement by the Israelite tribes, rather than seeing it commence with a series of military campaigns directed by Joshua. In this connection, the brief dismissal of the archaeological problems of LB Jericho seems quite sketchy (pp. 177-178).

As is to be expected, occasional errors of fact or unlikely interpretations crop up in a work of this type. The high number of burials estimated for

the cemetery at Bab edh-Dhra is based upon Paul Lapp's earlier work, and it has been revised downwards by the current excavators (p. 54). The area of Early Bronze (EB) Ai is overestimated (p. 59) on the assumption that the town occupied all of the territory inside the walls at the foot of the hill. Aharoni's EB IV (p. 71) and the EB IV which is becoming the more popular term for Albright's Middle Bronze (MB) I are two different things, which contributes to confusion in terminology. Ai was destroyed earlier in EB than the rest of the sites listed on p. 80 (cf. p. 71).

W. G. Dever's excavation of an MB I (= EB IV) site in the Negev-Sinai region has shown that the stone circles of such sites were more in the nature of dwellings than Aharoni admits (p. 86). The Hyksos Dynasty of Egypt was the 15th Dynasty, not the 16th (pp. 99, 105). The author's identification of Tell Masos with biblical Hormah (p. 103) is debatable if not dubious. The reference to Fig. 40 on p. 136 should be transposed to follow the preceding sentence in order to make sense. There is a typographical error on p. 140, where "Stratum X" of Megiddo, supposedly destroyed by Thutmose III, should read "Stratum IX." The proposed connection of the Iron-I well at Beersheba with Abraham (p. 168) rests upon a misinterpretation of what the biblical text requires.

Excavations now begun at Tell Miqne have shown that the site was occupied prior to Iron I, contrary to what Aharoni has written on p. 187 (based on old survey work). On p. 214, the author objects to the use of the term "Proto-Aeolic" for a certain type of pillar capital, but Fig. 67 on the next page is labelled with this same term. "Beersheba V" comes from David's "time," not David's "region" (p. 218). Aharoni assumes that the biblical text refers to a temple at Beersheba (p. 229), when the text is not that explicit. The reference to Fig. 82 at the bottom of p. 253 is a typographical error.

These quibbles over matters of detail do not detract in any significant way from the excellence of the overall comprehensive treatment of the subject matter provided in this book. For what it sets out to accomplish, this is the best publication on the subject currently available. Our thanks are also due to its translator for making this material available to an English-reading audience.

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Binns, E. Randall. *The Archaeology of the Mind: Modern Man in Search of His Roots*. Cambridge, Eng.: Heffers Printers, 1982. 602 pp. £10.

This monumental study, the fruit of many years of research and travel, compares both modern psychological insights and ancient mythology with