A Matter of Interpretation: On Methodology and the Archaeology of the United Monarchy

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Abstract

This paper re-examines the methodological framework for archaeological interpretation that has been commonly used by the major voices in the debate concerning the archaeological record of the Iron Age IIA and the related historicity of the biblical United Monarchy. It is contended here that this framework suffers from critical problems that undermine its applicability to an ancient Near Eastern polity, primarily its anachronistic sociological assumptions concerning how authority was legitimated in the native social context of ancient Israel, and how power was therefore conceived of and understood by such a polity's constituents. It is argued, therefore, that this is an undesirable framework to use for understanding the archaeological record of the tenth century B.C.E. Instead, this paper both describes a different understanding of authority more appropriate to ancient Israel and the wider Near East, and demonstrates the significant impact of such an understanding on the archaeological evaluation of the Iron Age IIA and the historicity of the United Monarchy.

Introduction

In 1995, and again in 1996, Israel Finkelstein argued that the conventional dating of the Iron Age IIA was incorrect and proposed that the period be re-dated (Finkelstein 1995, 1996). Whereas the Iron Age IIA had until then generally been understood to have covered the period from ca. 1000 to 925 B.C.E., Finkelstein maintained that in fact it only started near the close of the tenth century and ended at or near the end of the ninth. He dubbed this new dating the "Low Chronology." After challenging Finkelstein's initial arguments in 1997, Amihai Mazar,[1] who was to become his main opponent, proposed his own chronology for the Iron IIA

[1] Amihai Mazar is hereafter referred to as A. Mazar, and Eilat Mazar as E. Mazar.

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in 2001 (A. Mazar 1997; A. Mazar and Carmi 2001). His "Modified Conventional Chronology" placed its beginning ca. 980 B.C.E. and its end at about the same time as Finkelstein had.

The significance of these differences in chronology was not just the dates themselves but their implications for the study of the history of ancient Israel, specifically the period commonly known as the United Monarchy, i.e., the reigns of David and Solomon. If historical, their reigns are placed in the wider chronology of the ancient Near East in the tenth century B.C.E., i.e., within the Iron Age IIA according to the traditional chronology. Clear indications of a well-developed state recovered from Iron IIA strata appeared to verify the biblical description found in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, at least as commonly understood by archaeologists. Most notable were the impressive and architecturally similar Iron IIA cities uncovered at Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer, three sites listed in Solomon's building program in 1 Kgs 9:15. Whereas A. Mazar regards the biblical description to have essential veracity according to his chronology, Finkelstein has demonstrated how this veracity is undermined when his chronology is adopted, as it pushes such archaeological indicators later than the period of David's or Solomon's rule. Since its beginning, this debate has come to incorporate a myriad of complex issues, topics, and disciplines across biblical studies and Syro-Palestinian archaeology, ranging from historiography to Northwest Semitic epigraphy. One of the most central of these topics, the archaeology of Jerusalem in the tenth century B.C.E. and its relationship to the biblical text, is used below as a case study for the argument of this paper.

The Methodology of Archaeological Interpretation

The aim of this paper is not to discuss the many ebbs and flows of the debate itself;[2] rather, it is to look below the surface to discuss matters of methodology and theory. While practitioners like A. Mazar and Finkelstein may disagree in their evaluations of the evidence and their overall historical understanding of this period, they both subscribe, if in an unspoken way, to the same basic interpretative framework engendered by what this paper will refer to as the "functionalist approach." Although all archaeologists must and do work from within a particular interpretative framework, there is a lack of explicit reflection on or justification for the approach itself by those who implicitly follow it. As shall be discussed below, the functionalist approach is both anachronistic and inapplicable to the native form and nature of ancient Israelite society.

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[2] For a recent summary, see Thomas 2016.

At the core of the functionalist approach to archaeological interpretation is the assumption that the presumed or interpreted function of archaeological remains dictates their form. In other words, the archaeological record is assumed to be a physical manifestation of the functions and structures of the society at hand, and so by extension a reflection of that society's form and—in the case of a state—its degree of development. This pertains to all elements of the archaeological record, from monumental buildings down to small finds; all are taken as materially indicative of their role in society. Therefore it is assumed, for example, that the presence of extensive and impressive remains of "public" buildings and similar infrastructure at relevant sites indicates a well-developed government capable of large-scale exploitation and control of resources and population. Conversely, if no such remains appear in the archaeological record, their absence proves the absence of such a government.[3]

Concomitant with this focus on the material aspects of the archaeological record, the functionalist approach assumes a typically evolutionist view of state formation, in which polities are understood to have progressed linearly through distinct stages, namely, "tribe," "chieftainship," and "state," with their respective identifying criteria. One point of contention therefore concerns which of these stages ancient Israel of the tenth century B.C.E. was in (Master 2001: 123). Finkelstein has consistently relegated it to the status of something less than a fully formed state, although his terminology has been inconsistent (Kletter 2004: 13–19).

Deeper even than the functionalist approach's treatment of the material aspects of the United Monarchy's putative archaeological correlates are its particular assumptions concerning how authority was understood and how it operated in ancient polities such as Israel, especially its legitimacy in the minds of its constituents and its manifestations within society. On this subject, we turn to David Schloen, who, in *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol*, undertook a broad-ranging study of the native understanding of society in the ancient Near East (Schloen 2001; see also Schloen 2003). Schloen pays particular, though not

[3] More broadly, the functionalist approach in archaeology is typified by a focus on the function of an element within society and its functional relationship to other elements. This interrelatedness leads to the assumption that a change in one element will reverberate throughout society. Thus, material and economic functions tend to be the focus (Jameson 1999). At least in the case of the archaeological study of ancient Israel, the functionalist approach tends to lack sufficient regard for how the native cognitive understanding of society and its form should impact the evaluation of such material factors, especially where their placement in a broader historical context is concerned.

exclusive, attention to Ugarit and its explanatory potential due to the wealth of evidence it provides. As Schloen explains, excavations at Ugarit have revealed extensive evidence regarding its social world and royal administration, including evidence of household organization, the architecture and planning of domestic areas of the city, and the famous cache of cuneiform texts, which together provide a window into local economics, social structure, and the relationship between the Ugaritic kingdom and its people.

Schloen's own theoretical-methodological approach to the sociology of the ancient Near East, which he presents in exhaustive fashion, has at its core the thought of the early German sociologist and philosopher Max Weber, especially Weber's three ideal types of legitimation of authority. The ideal type that can be seen underlying the functionalist approach is what Weber termed "legal-rational." The source of legal-rational authority—the place where its exercise is legitimated—is depersonalized and abstract, something that is independent of those who exercise the authority and those governed by that authority. It is held to be rational in that it is accepted and ascribed to as valid and consensual; it is order that is not personified, but rather transcends those subject to or empowered by it. The exercise of power, including the monopoly on coercive violence, takes place within parameters and limits defined externally to its constituents, typically expressed in enacted public, technical legal codes. Legal-rational authority forms the basis of modern bureaucratic government and commercial organization; in such a legal-rational society, government and private enterprises are administered by professionals who gain their positions through technical competence and exercise their roles and responsibilities according to defined rules and procedures. Ideally, they do not operate according to purely personal and familial loyalties, for doing so would go against the depersonalized, objectivized grain of such a conception of authority. Instead, they are loyal to an externalized abstraction, typically the state (Weber 1978: 215–17). Thus do the civil servants of a modern Western bureaucracy continue serving when there is a change of government, for it is to the state itself that they are loyal, rather than to political leaders, whether elected or appointed, who come and go.

A bureaucracy does not obtain its authority from or operate in a personal or kin-based system, that is to say, the private sphere, and the material means by which it functions are not derived from the private means of any office holder (Weber 1978: 218–21). Therefore it must both manifest and represent itself by way of a separate public sphere; hence the need for what archaeologists commonly term "public buildings." This term typically denotes physical structures that are both produced by and practically facilitate bureaucratic organs of political control

and economic regulation that exist apart from the private world of familial and other interpersonal social relationships and their internal economic interactions (Schloen 2001: 66–67; Weber 1978: 217–26, 956–1005). So by its very nature, the assumption that the polity under consideration, in this case the United Monarchy, was a legal-rational society directly engenders the functionalist approach's preoccupation with material aspects of the archaeological record of the Iron Age IIA, for indeed a legal-rational society is dependent on its own corporeality within the public sphere to exercise power and thereby exist as a structure of authority. Thus material factors naturally become the primary criteria by which to judge whether or not a "state" may be discerned in the archaeological record of the tenth century B.C.E. Hence Finkelstein's argument that the downdating of the Iron IIA strata and associated "public" architecture at Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer should strip the reigns of David and Solomon of any claim to be designated a state.

An Alternative Framework: Tradition and Patrimonialism

Schloen's extensive analysis reveals, however, that it was not legal-rational authority that defined ancient Near Eastern society, but rather traditional authority, a Weberian ideal type opposite in many respects to the legal-rational type. In this, Schloen inherited a Weberian approach to Israel of the Iron I period, introduced by his teacher Lawrence Stager (1985).

Traditional authority, as its name suggests, legitimates the exercise of power by adherence to an accepted notion of the inherent and eternal right to wield that power. Authority in this sense does not need to be rationalized, as it is understood by its subjects to be the right of the person in which it is invested by tradition from time immemorial. Traditional authority is therefore subjective in that the personal whim and judgment of whoever legitimately wields power is the basis for its exercise, as opposed to the objective and depersonalized equivalent in the case of legal-rational authority. In the same way as they are granted authority by the acceptance of tradition by those over whom it is exercised, the wielders are themselves bound in their actions only by tradition and custom. There is no other objective technical order by which their authority is defined—only their own subjective judgment (Weber 1978: 226–41, 1006–69).

As per the title of Schloen's aforementioned volume, the tradition at the center of ancient Near Eastern society is the concept of the "house of the father," which structures society in the practical, factual sense of everyday life and serves as the core mediating symbol by which society is understood by its native constituents.

This concept and its terminology define the interrelationships of power of a society's constituents and the way those relationships are understood and legitimated. In the ancient Near East, therefore, the "house of the father" directed the legitimation and practical operation of power along interpersonal lines, with each person, male or female, existing in a relationship of dominance according to the principle that a father has authority over those in relation to him as his sons, daughters, and servants, whether in the biological or symbolic sense. Society was thus patriarchal in its underlying nature, while its form, governed by the idea of the "house of the father," was patrimonial, with familial relationships directing matters of everyday life, especially the division and ownership of land, as well as traditional obligations between the patriarch and his subordinates (Schloen 2001).

As the society of an ancient Near Eastern kingdom was thus bound together at its local and non-local levels by these patriarchal and patrimonial kinship structures, the king was to be understood as simply the father of the one great household that was his kingdom—i.e., he was the father of the nation. He thus existed in this familial, patrimonial relationship with his own immediate household, both his biological relations and non-biological relations who fulfilled roles important in his administration. Such non-biological relations were understood as his household servants in the same sense as those of any household, be they sharecroppers, squires, or handmaidens. The king himself existed in the same patrimonial father-son/master-servant relationship to the "household" of his national deity or deities.

As noted above, for Schloen the clearest demonstration of this societal model is to be found at Ugarit. It is also seen in the biblical description of the United Monarchy, especially in terms of how personal and familial relationships define the organization of David's and Solomon's courts and royal administration (Stager 2003; 2 Samuel 8, 20; 1 Kings 4).[4] Solomon's district system (1 Kgs 4:7–19) is an excellent example of such patrimonial connections. Created expressly for the purpose of the agricultural subsistence of Solomon's household, the district system, with its prefects, was overseen for him by Azariah son of Nathan (1 Kgs 4:5), an official with a close personal connection to the king: Azariah was the son of either David's prophet-confidant or David's son and Solomon's brother (2 Sam 5:14, 7:2), if they are not in fact one and the same. Overt personal ties to the king are also found among the district prefects, the son of Abinadab at Dor being the prime

[4] The patrimonial form of administration under David and Solomon, especially as represented in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, will be a major subject in a more extensive forthcoming study by the present author on the patrimonial nature of the United Monarchy.

example (1 Kgs 4:11). Probably the son of David's brother and thus Solomon's cousin (1 Sam 17:13), he, like the prefect of Naphtali (1 Kgs 4:15), was married to Solomon's daughter. Marriage to one's father's brother's daughter was the ideal historical marriage pattern in Middle Eastern kinship society and in the Hebrew Bible (Schloen 2001: 120).

There are a few further important differences between the legal-rational bureaucratic society assumed in the functionalist approach and the traditional patrimonialism of Schloen's approach. A putative ancient Near Eastern kingdom such as the United Monarchy did not distinguish between a public sphere and a private sphere as a legal-rational bureaucratic society does, for the kingdom and society were subsumed within the single overarching house of which the king was the father. In such a society, individuals do not partake of two separate worlds whereby their family life and its associated loyalties are separate from those they owe the depersonalized state. With the household as fact and symbol, their role in the household is itself but an undistinguished part of their role within the kingdom. The administration of the kingdom is nothing but the management of a household, even if the king's fatherly powers and responsibilities are on a much grander scale (Schloen 2001: 51, 64–68).

Thus, the notion of a separate, professional bureaucracy is alien to a patrimonial society. The role that bureaucrats fill within separate agencies dedicated solely to the administration of a polity is instead fulfilled as part of the daily functions of household management within the king's immediate household and those of his biological and symbolic subordinates, such as those of David and Solomon noted above. As Schloen explains, ancient Near Eastern households, urban and rural, were primarily dedicated to subsistence agriculture. Other activities, be they specialized crafts or royal service, were avocational rather than vocational, and supported by the agricultural subsistence provided by an individual's household (Schloen 2001: 101, 335–42). For practical reasons, not every architectural structure in ancient Israel or the wider Near East was expressly domestic, that is to say, an actual house. It is fruitless, however, to search for "public" buildings as understood by the functionalist approach in the archaeological record of a traditional patrimonial kingdom. Though buildings such as storehouses or city fortifications played a role in community life and had a significance beyond each individual household, to characterize them as "public" is to use a misnomer in a world where there was no separate public sphere of life and no bureaucracy facilitated by such buildings.

As discussed by Daniel Master, another student of Stager's, a traditional patrimonial society in the Weberian mold such as ancient Israel cannot be so easily

shoehorned into the evolutionist view of state formation and one of its particular stages of development. The evolutionist view of state formation, as Master explains, is uncomfortable with kinship remaining the central structuring element of a society as it transitions into a state, and presumes that becoming a state will fundamentally alter the relationship between kinship ties and overall authority; in fact, it assumes, the state will replace kinship in this role. In the classical evolutionist understanding, the state is seen as transcending kin-based social organization by grafting onto it a structure of authority that supports the rule of a dominant class that gained prestige through the control and redistribution of resources. Thus, the evolutionist idea of the state requires a distinct material development: the creation of an apparatus of power separate from that of the kinship system, namely, the public sphere with its distinguishable material manifestations of administration discussed above (Master 2001: 123–28).

Master and Schloen understand the relationship between those attributes of a society that are the focus of the evolutionist view and state formation quite differently. Whereas the evolutionist view sees a process of linear, unidirectional development in which a society crosses defined thresholds to progress from one stage to the next, observation of Middle Eastern tribal societies indicates that social change should be visualized as a continuum. Ancient patrimonial societies such as ancient Israel, like their modern regional equivalents, could move back and forth between different degrees of centralization and complexity depending on historical conditions, and they could do so quite rapidly. Such a society would vacillate between what the evolutionist view would define as a "tribe," "chieftainship," and "state" while still maintaining kinship as its central structuring principle, and without needing to be fitted into any of these categories by way of defined traits. Social organization, complexity, and centralization in this sense are a matter of shades of gray as opposed to the black-and-white, strictly demarcated, unidirectional evolutionist approach to state formation (Master 2001: 127–31; Schloen 2001: 71–72, 113–14, 136).[5]

[5] It is true that aspects of Schloen's approach have met with criticism, the most serious being that found in Routledge 2004. Space unfortunately does not permit a discussion here, but suffice it to say that no critique has yet demonstrated any critical flaw that would require seeking an alternative model for the native understanding of ancient Near Eastern society. These critiques will also be discussed in the present author's forthcoming study.

Applying Patrimonialism to the United Monarchy

Master observes that "modern state-formation theories view societies as systems ... Societies that are similar in key variables are then considered similar in many other ways as well" (Master 2001: 124). Here Master has picked up on perhaps the most fundamental and critical problem with the functionalist approach. As the discussion below of Jerusalem and approaches to its early Iron Age archaeology seeks to demonstrate, this assumption that the similarity in purely material variables indicates a broader similarity between states as overall systems ignores what may be termed the "human factor." To assume that an ancient polity such as Israel may be evaluated by drawing on familiar characteristics of modern society ignores the vital question of how that polity and its structures of authority were conceived of within the minds of its constituents.

Approaching an ancient Near Eastern society and kingdom as Schloen does, using Weberian ideal types to extrapolate the native understanding of authority and social structure, calls for a renewed and detailed look at that society's linguistic self-expression, both its unwritten symbolic expression and its written texts. It is by way of these symbols and texts that archaeologists may gain insight into the intra-social communication in which a society's structure is formed and expressed, the "shared language" by which "human society is constituted" (Schloen 2003: 287).

That said, the texts from Ugarit have the advantage of clear archaeological contexts related to their discovery, something the Hebrew Bible does not. Indeed, the formation and dating of the Deuteronomistic History, which includes the books of Samuel and Kings, are among the most intractable problems in biblical studies, with far more literature than can be reviewed here. Questions of formation and dating are no less important for lack of a scholarly consensus, but if one wishes to assign a relatively late date to the narratives of David and Solomon, new, equally complex issues then arise concerning earlier oral or written sources that may have been available to those later authors.

For his part, Finkelstein tends to dismiss the historical veracity of these narratives as a later ideological retrojection of an idealized golden age in the late Judean monarchy (e.g., Finkelstein 2007: 115). Baruch Halpern (2001), on the other hand, is led by his informed discussion of both textual and archaeological evidence to date these narratives in the opposite direction to Finkelstein. Finkelstein is certainly not incorrect in stressing how these narratives might have been understood in the later monarchy and the influence on their present form. However, to assume a reified but ultimately only *theoretical* late date for these narratives when assessing their possible relation to the historical reality of the tenth century B.C.E. is to

effectively "put the cart before the horse," viewing the evidence in such a way that any indications supporting an earlier date and historical context may be regrettably muted. The text cannot speak for itself because circular reasoning will not allow it. It is better then to first appreciate all the evidence and arguments, including those put forward here, so that they may contribute to discussions of redaction, dating, and historicity with their full efficacy.

With both the material/archaeological and linguistic record in hand, it becomes possible to draw a picture of an ancient society and its internal phenomena in their historical and sociological context, as completely as we can given limitations of or gaps in that record. This is the aim of the following discussion of tenth-century Jerusalem and its relation to the biblical United Monarchy. By using both primary archaeological and textual sources and a secondary examination of them in the scholarly literature, this discussion will produce a historical picture of Jerusalem and its role within the kingdom of David and Solomon, especially in terms of how its material form related to and was understood in its native patrimonial context. In doing so, the discussion seeks to demonstrate how this approach differs significantly from the foregoing evaluations of Jerusalem that follow the functionalist approach.

Jerusalem

The oldest part of Jerusalem sits on a spur that runs roughly southward from Herod's Temple Mount, the traditional location of Solomon's Temple. This spur and its continuation under the Mount form the eastern hill of Jerusalem. The spur is traditionally equated with and known as עיר דוד ("the City of David"), first mentioned in 2 Samuel 5; David captures מצדת ציון ("the Fortress of Zion") and renames it after himself when he comes to Jerusalem and makes it his capital. The chapter then goes on to describe David building "around from the Millo and inwards," as well as King Hiram of Tyre's diplomatic gift of a house built with cedar by his Phoenician craftsmen (2 Sam 5:9, 11). Solomon's work in Jerusalem is much more extensive; 1 Kings 6–8 describes the construction of the Temple and royal palace, again with expert Tyrian assistance, followed by the construction of the palace of Pharaoh's daughter in 1 Kings 9. Further construction activity relating to the wall of Jerusalem and the City of David, as well as the Millo again, is mentioned in 1 Kings 9 and 11. In addition, Solomon is purported to have derived wealth from trade on the Red Sea (1 Kgs 9:26–28; 10:11, 22) and from tribute received from subject nations (1 Kgs 4:21). A rich description of the exotic goods

that came to him, some of them through the Arabian caravan trade, is furnished in the context of the Queen of Sheba story (1 Kings 10).

From a surface reading, the biblical text clearly wishes to give the impression that in the tenth century B.C.E. Jerusalem was a city of significant wealth and impressive construction. Of course, this then raises the archaeological question of whether or not these properties should have been revealed in the archaeological exploration of Jerusalem. In short, the evidence from over a century of excavation in Jerusalem has by no means revealed this picture to be unambiguously verified, as the evidence relating to the Iron IIA is sparse, but as is discussed below, the archaeological situation is much more complicated.

The Problem of Taphonomic Disturbance at the City of David

The question of what should or may be uncovered is always necessary to ask of a site with an occupational history as long and complex as that of Jerusalem, because there is always a need to consider the potential disturbance of earlier remains and the resultant changes in expectations and interpretations. Regardless of what the City of David was like in the tenth century B.C.E., it is worth asking whether this reality is now recoverable. Finkelstein has recognized that the Temple Mount poses a significant issue in that it constitutes a significant area adjacent to the City of David that cannot be investigated (Finkelstein, Koch, and Lipschits 2011). This particular thorn in the side of the archaeology of Jerusalem should not be underestimated, as the Temple Mount not only covers a large area but makes reconstructing the extent and geography of the pre-Roman cityscape nigh impossible. Nevertheless, Finkelstein rejects the notion that later building activity has destroyed or obscured tenth-century remains, as significant remains from the Middle Bronze Age and Iron IIB have been excavated there. Therefore he concludes from the minimal remains discovered from the Iron IIA that Jerusalem was "no more than a small, remote highlands village, and not the exquisitely decorated capital of a great empire." Note though, that his view is directly related to his Low Chronology dating of some monumental structures discussed below (Finkelstein 2007: 112–13).[6]

Cahill exemplifies the opposite view, noting that excavations have revealed significant disruption due to later building activity; these disruptions, combined with the fact that some of the most important areas are unavailable for excavation, form a major impediment to reconstruction of the early occupation of the City of

[6] For the large Middle Bronze defensive system around the Gihon spring, see Reich and Shukron 1999; Reich, Shukron, and Lernau 2007; Reich 2011.

David. Cahill does not believe that the evidence for occupation is significantly different for any period from the Early Bronze Age until the later Iron Age; it is only then that occupational evidence increases. Even for the Middle Bronze, Cahill notes that there is minimal evidence of the occupants who used the large defensive tower complex mentioned above and the associated Middle Bronze wall sitting above it on the slope (Cahill 2003: 75–79). Na'aman has also highlighted the problem of disruption by later building activity, noting that there is also little evidence at present of Late Bronze Jerusalem, even though the correspondence of King Abdi-Heba found in the Amarna archive would seem to indicate that a functioning settlement was to be found there at that time (Na'aman 1996).

Monumental Construction

Immediately south of the Ophel, located between the Temple Mount and the City of David proper, is the highest part of the City of David as it exists now. Excavations by Macalister and Duncan, Kenyon, and Shiloh uncovered an artificial stone rampart on the eastern side of this area uphill from the Gihon spring, composed of a series of stepped terraces. These terraces are made of stone-walled boxes with an earthen fill above a lower layer of boulders. Rubble above the boxes connects them to a stone mantle that ascends the hillside from east to west in a series of steps (Cahill 2003: 34). There is significant disagreement over both the process of construction and the dating of these features. Cahill argues that the terraces and the stone mantle were built as one structure, in order to serve as a supporting rampart for the space immediately above it atop the hill, around the time of the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron I on the basis on the pottery recovered from the elements below the stone mantle; essentially the same view is held by A. Mazar (Cahill 2003: 34–54; A. Mazar 2007: 125). Steiner sees two separate phases, with the terraces built in the early Iron I followed by the stone mantle in the early Iron II period (Steiner 2001; 2003: 351–61). Finkelstein adheres to a similar view, although he dates the stone mantle to the ninth century B.C.E. based on the Low Chronology (Finkelstein 2001: 106). The Stepped Stone Structure is often associated with the "Millo" mentioned above.

The Large Stone Structure, containing Iron IIA pottery and built on an accumulation of earth containing Iron I pottery, was uncovered beginning in 2005 in excavations directed by E. Mazar. E. Mazar has stated quite openly that she believes this structure dates from the tenth century B.C.E. and is the palace of King David described in 2 Sam 5:11 (E. Mazar 2006, 2009). Finkelstein has

challenged her dating of the structure. Initially he questioned the unity of the walls as a single structure, arguing that parts of them may be Hellenistic; more recently he has argued that Iron IIA pottery was found in the earthen layer upon which the walls were built, giving it a much later date as per his chronology. He has further criticized what he sees as a naive and outdated approach to biblical scholarship and its interaction with archaeology as expressed in the direct linking of archaeological finds to biblical verses (Finkelstein et al. 2007). A. Mazar and Faust regard the earth accumulation containing Iron I pottery as having accumulated *around* the structure rather than the structure having been built *into* it, and given their subsequent dating of the structure to the Iron I, both have proposed that it be identified with the pre-Davidic מצדת ציון ("Fortress of Zion") that David captures in 2 Sam 5:7 (A. Mazar 2010: 45; Faust 2010: 127–28).

Aside from the Stepped and Large Stone Structures, which most agree existed by at least the tenth century B.C.E., significant remains that are potentially datable to the period of the United Monarchy or Iron IIA have proved either elusive or ambiguous in the areas available for exploration in Jerusalem. In addition to a building from the very end of the Iron IIA that abuts the Middle Bronze fortifications (Uziel and Szanton 2015), some ruins of late Iron IIA construction have been uncovered in the limited number of places that Iron Age levels have been reached in the Givati parking lot excavations on the northwestern side of the City of David ridge. However, the excavator is skeptical about the likelihood of discovering any Iron IIA defenses there, and believes they must have been further upslope, if they existed at all (Ben-Ami 2014; see also Ben-Ami 2013). Yigal Shiloh's excavation on the eastern slope also produced minimal surviving Iron IIA architecture (De Groot and Bernick-Greenberg 2012). The results of E. Mazar's further extensive investigations in the City of David and the Ophel are only now beginning to be published fully (E. Mazar 2015a, 2015b), and though welcome, they are unlikely to resolve the difference of opinion over Jerusalem in the early Iron Age.

Functionalist Approaches to the Jerusalem of the United Monarchy

Functionalist assumptions seem to pervade discussions of Jerusalem in this period, both in terms of how the archaeological remains are judged on their own merits and in terms of how they are related to the biblical text. To begin with Finkelstein, a direct quote is rather illustrative: "[O]ver a century of archaeological explorations in Jerusalem—the capital of the glamorous biblical United Monarchy—has failed to reveal evidence for any meaningful tenth century building activity … [T]enth-

century Jerusalem—the city of the time of David and Solomon—was no more than a small, remote highlands village, and not the exquisitely decorated capital of a great empire" (Finkelstein 2007: 112–13).

This thinking fits quite neatly into the definition of the functionalist approach to archaeological interpretation presented above. Finkelstein assumes first and foremost that the capital of the state that he sees in the biblical texts of the United Monarchy needs both to have had, and to be shown to have had, monumental structures. Finkelstein presumes that such a state would naturally have needed a capital conspicuous for its size and its impressive public architecture, therefore presuming by logical extension that a lack of demonstrability of such a capital in the archaeological record inherently undercuts the potential historicity of the United Monarchy. The question is why Finkelstein should require Jerusalem to have been a capital with archaeologically demonstrable signs of wealth and impressive public building projects, for he is not explicit about his underlying argument.

The implication seems to be that he is working from the functionalist assumption that a state that exercised the territorial control, degree of administration, and power to utilize resources that he sees in the biblical United Monarchy would have required a high degree of material development. He seems to have in mind a degree of material development that would reflect the state's ability to marshal sufficient resources to produce infrastructure, as well as a material culture that both facilitated and symbolically reflected the state's power and the complexity of the systems by which that power was maintained.

The methodological question of whether or not such presumptions are appropriate for the time and place under scrutiny seems not to have been addressed. What results is an anachronistic assumption that a specialist, bureaucratic mode of governance, i.e., legal-rational authority, was operative. When A. Mazar's position is examined, the same assumptions are seen to be at work despite the different reading of the archaeological evidence for the nature of Jerusalem during the time of the United Monarchy. He comments initially: "The evaluation of Jerusalem as a city in the tenth to ninth centuries is crucial for defining state formation in Judah—if there was no capital, there likely was no kingdom" (A. Mazar 2007: 125).

However, because he prefers to date both the Large and Stepped Stone Structures to the time of the United Monarchy and accepts that poor preservation explains the lack of other remains attributable to the tenth century B.C.E., he states that these two structures are "a clear indication that Jerusalem was much more than a small village; in fact it contained the largest-known structure of the time in

the region and thus could easily serve as a power base for a central authority" (A. Mazar 2007: 127).

What kind of authority that was and on what sociological basis it exercised power or was legitimated is not discussed, but it seems clear that both A. Mazar and Finkelstein are assuming that a state like the biblical United Monarchy, if historical, both required and was reflected by a high level of material development in terms of its exercise of authority and administration, in particular as this pertains to its capital. Again, however, this is an anachronistic assumption of a bureaucratic legal-rational authority applicable to the modern-day context but not necessarily to ancient Israel. A. Mazar challenges Finkelstein not by questioning the unspoken basis of that position, but instead by buying into the same idea and simply arguing for a different understanding of the same body of evidence.

For both of these scholars and many others, justification for the assumption that monumental buildings would reflect the complexity and coercive power of the state and also be necessary for the exercise of that complexity or power is lacking. How exactly such an aspect of material culture facilitates the commercial, military, administrative, and resource coordination functions of a state such as the United Monarchy goes unexplored, as does the question of why a lack thereof would negate a state's ability to exercise those functions.

Jerusalem, Center of the Universe

It has already been established that the archaeological record from the early Iron Age at the City of David presents a frustrating and significant challenge to forming an accurate impression of the city as it existed in the tenth century B.C.E., due not only to taphonomic disturbance and accessibility for excavation but also because of the difficulty in dating and determining the historical context of the Large and Stepped Stone Structures. If one accepts that they may have been built (or partially built in the case of the Stepped Stone Structure) in the tenth century B.C.E., then it is certainly fair to ask how the alternative framework rooted in Weberian patrimonialism offered here would understand this activity. This framework does not *a priori* expect or demand a lack of monumental architecture, even if it doubts its presence is a necessary index of state-level authority. Ugarit, of course, was not lacking in such construction, though by the time of its destruction at the end of the Late Bronze Age it had existed as a polity for much longer than David and Solomon's relatively short-lived kingdom would have, so this is not surprising. Either way, it seems ill-advised to attempt to dictate any specific expectations as

to how a patrimonial kingdom should have developed and how it should appear in the archaeological record, as doing so would fall afoul of the same problematic tendency as the evolutionist view of state-formation.

Moreover, seeing Jerusalem in context as the capital of an ancient Near Eastern patrimonial kingdom calls for a significant shift in the method of interpreting evidence relating to its tenth-century role and position. Moving away from the strictly material focus of the functionalist approach to an interpretation that incorporates the biblical and archaeological records in dialogue facilitates an understanding of Jerusalem as an active ideological center shaped not in a static way but as the product of socially embedded action, including construction. This is what is attempted below.

The Bibliology of Jerusalem in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings

First it is necessary to distinguish between the "City of David" and "Jerusalem" as those names are used in biblical texts, as they are apparently not coterminous. It has already been observed that the City of David was the deliberate refashioning of the "Fortress of Zion" by David as mentioned in 2 Sam 5:7, 9, after he and his men had arrived in front of "Jerusalem" back in v. 6. That a fortress has suddenly become a city is in fact an idiosyncrasy of the English translation of the Hebrew word עיר, a rather amorphous term that can be used for various types of settlements, including what might be rendered in English as "fortresses," but certainly does not conform exclusively to the modern notion of a city (Zevit 2008: 203; Hutzli 2011: 174–76). Presumably, the house that Hiram of Tyre built for David was located within the City of David/Fortress of Zion. Therefore the City of David is to be located upslope from the rest of Jerusalem, of which it was still considered to be a part. This is borne out in the wording of 2 Sam 11:1–2, 8, where David's residence is clearly positioned above the residence of Uriah and Bathsheba (Zevit 2008: 205).

It is clear that "Jerusalem" and the "City of David" are distinguished within the text. In both the narrative of the transfer of the Ark from the custody of Obed-Edom (2 Samuel 6) and the description of Solomon's wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, residing in the City of David until the completion of her own residence (1 Kgs 3:1, 9:24), the עיר stands in apposition to another house rather than to awhole settlement. The contrast is even more striking in the description of the transfer of the Ark into the newly completed Temple in Jerusalem; the elders are gathered by Solomon in Jerusalem, but it is from the City of David, equated directly there with Zion, that the Ark is removed. The same is clear from the relevant building

accounts, which begin with David's work only in the apparent context of the City of David. Solomon also closes a "breach" in the City of David in 1 Kgs 11:27 and (re)builds the wall of Jerusalem in 1 Kgs 9:15 (Zevit 2008: 204–8; Hutzli 2011: 167–74). Thus it can be gleaned that the City of David refers to a distinct part of Jerusalem, likely a single fortified complex between the main Jerusalem settlement below and the Solomonic palace and Temple compound higher up the hill (Zevit 2008: 207; Hutzli 2011: 173).

It is also interesting to note the role of the City of David in the burial formulas of every king from David to Hezekiah in 1–2 Kings. In each instance the king is stated to have been buried in the City of David where he "sleeps" with his fathers; i.e., he was buried in the same place as his ancestors. Burials within the royal residence have been found at several ancient Near Eastern sites, including Ugarit, where excavations have not as yet revealed any separate necropolis (Hutzli 2011: 172; Marchegay 2000), and Kalhu/Nimrud, where the entombments of some Neo-Assyrian queens were found beneath the floors of the Northwest Palace (Hussein 2016). Indeed, Schloen notes that at least one family tomb within each multi-house compound is quite common at Ugarit, where the ancestors and the proper deference to them remained part of household life even in death (Schloen 2001: 329–30, 342–47).

It can be concluded, then, that the biblical text regards the City of David to have constituted a defensive complex of some sort located on the upper part of the hill and originally known as מצדת ציון; it was renamed עיר דוד by its conqueror and rebuilt as his residence. The City of David thus constituted only part of Jerusalem. It seems that "Jerusalem" was the name of the settlement area as a whole, that is, both the City of David and the settled area below. Only under Solomon did Jerusalem first expand with the construction of the palace-Temple complex north of the City of David on the highest section of the eastern hill. It can therefore be said that the biblical text furnishes a relatively minimal and somewhat ambiguous description of the royal area of Davidic and Solomonic Jerusalem, with even less attention to the occupation below עיר דוד. Even in the case of the much more richly described palace and Temple compound, it is difficult to assess the geographic context of Solomon's northward expansion given the realities of modern Jerusalem and to test them archaeologically.

Just as important as understanding the layout of the city is the interpretation of certain statements about the character of Jerusalem at the time of the United Monarchy. The particular passage of note, which seems to be what Finkelstein has in mind when he expresses his view mentioned above, is 1 Kgs 10:23–25, 27: "King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in

wisdom. And all in the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had placed in his heart. Each man brought tribute, objects of silver and objects of gold, robes, weaponry and spices, horses and mules, year after year … The king caused silver to be as abundant in Jerusalem as stones and he made cedar-wood as abundant as the sycamore trees in the Shephelah."

Leaving the question of the date of composition aside, we must first recognize that this is a political text from an ancient Near Eastern society, so the methodology of reading ancient Near Eastern political texts must apply; taking it literally ignores its context of composition (Younger 1990: 157–59). Deliberate hyperbole, taking a kernel of truth and inflating for the purpose of ideological expression, is typical of royal expression in the ancient Near East. It is so typical that more than one utopian depiction of the king's reign extends as far as to claim uniqueness, as in the case of the decorative lions on the steps of Solomon's throne: "the like had not been made for any kingdom" (1 Kgs 10:20; Younger 1990: 160–66). Such rhetoric may overstep the bounds of credibility to a modern reader, but what ancient reader would have the position or desire to tell the king otherwise?[7]

Moreover, the image of Solomon presented in 1 Kings aligns with public representations of Near Eastern kings of the 11th to 9th centuries B.C.E., as evident from the Assyrian records of that period. This is most prominent in the portrayal of Solomon as a natural philosopher and as a collector of exotic species (Halpern 2001: 114–23). However, a consequence of all this is that it is difficult to render a historical judgment from a passage like 1 Kgs 10:23–25, 27, because the rhetoric obscures the kernel of truth beneath, as is its purpose; this seriously limits its usefulness for rendering an archaeological and historical verdict on the biblical United Monarchy.

Whatever the exact balance of truth and rhetoric may be imagined to have been, the issue of the subsequent history of Jerusalem and its impact on archaeological preservation should be reiterated here. Finkelstein, to judge by the wording of his arguments, would seem to demand extensive and unambiguous archaeological evidence for the above passage from 1 Kings to be accepted as historically reliable, all the more so given his rather literal reading. Even if it were in fact accepted for the sake of argument that such wealth was to be found in the Jerusalem of Solomon's day, the subsequent history of the city and of the kingdom of Judah,

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[7] Halpern has also described what he calls the "Tiglath-Pileser Principle," by which a modern critic of an ancient Near Eastern royal text may ask of its particular claims: What is the minimum that the king had to have achieved in order to be able to put forth a particular claim? On this subject, see Halpern 2001: 124–32.

the events of Shishak's invasion (1 Kgs 14:26) in particular, render it no more likely that a Jerusalemite of the late monarchy would recognize the Jerusalem of Solomon's day than would a modern archaeologist.

From Disembedded Capital to Symbolic Center

The decision that David makes in the text to conquer Jerusalem, rename its citadel for himself, and make it his capital is typical of an ancient Near Eastern monarch wishing to demonstrate his power, in particular his power as a creator (Younger 1990: 168; Uziel and Shai 2007: 166). It has also been observed that the biblical description of David moving his court from Hebron to Jerusalem is a classic case of the "disembedded capital" (Joffe 1998: 566). The concept of the disembedded capital refers to the establishment or transfer of the royal center of power to a new, neutral location in order to undercut and shut out traditional structures of power and influence, thereby re-aligning the system to the monarch's advantage (Joffe 1998: 549–50). In the biblical text, David removes himself and his court from Hebron, a traditional center of his native tribe of Judah, and shifts it to the previously unconquered Jebusite stronghold of Jerusalem, where he remains outside and unbeholden to the vicissitudes and traditional loyalties of the Israelite tribal system (Halpern 2001: 219; Uziel and Shai 2007: 164–66). The criteria for recognizing a disembedded capital are primarily archaeological and therefore difficult to apply to what is known of early Iron Age Jerusalem. Unlike the typical disembedded capital, Jerusalem was not entirely a foundation *de novo*. Also, some criteria stick somewhat too close to functionalist assumptions—"[e]vidence of centralized administrative activities, such as writing, sealing, storage, or redistribution" (Joffe 1998: 551) in particular. However, these criteria are not binding; historical and geographical variation is accounted for in Joffe's description of the concept.

Indeed, the term "disembedded capital," though useful, is somewhat imprecise if we consider its applicability to Jerusalem within the parameters of the United Monarchy. Schloen re-emphasizes what had already been recognized: that disembedded capitals had to re-embed into existing structures of power and those who wielded it. Otherwise they could not survive changes that removed the need for them—specifically regime changes, which tended to be the prime factor behind the decision to move the capital and thus shift the structures of power (Schloen 2001: 198; Joffe 1998: 572–73). In the context of patrimonial societies throughout the Near East, the need to re-embed into existing power structures is especially significant, for how could a king who has stubbornly walled himself off from

his wider national affiliations possibly hope to meet the basic economic needs of his capital or to exercise his traditional authority down through the father-son relationship that he had with his subordinates and they with their subordinates? The survival of the Davidic dynasty and the resulting survival of Jerusalem as the dynastic and cultic capital are further contrasted not only to the wider Near East but also to the situation in the Northern Kingdom, which had three different capitals, each beginning with a new dynasty (1 Kgs 12:25, 15:33, 16:15–24).

Schloen (2001: 198) also points out that the act of re-embedding the capital in a new location was not only a pragmatic reorientation of the center of power within the existing social structure but also a matter of reorienting the symbolic structures of that society. The case of Jerusalem as presented in the biblical text is once again demonstrative of symbolic re-embedding, beginning with the relocation of the Ark under David and completed in Solomon's construction of the Temple as the one and only legitimate shrine for the worship of the national deity. Within Deuteronomistic ideology in particular, this undercut the old, decentralized worship of YHWH at local sanctuaries by insisting that He be worshipped in the Jerusalem Temple alone (Uziel and Shai 2007: 165–66; Noth 1981: 93–94). Making the capital—and specifically a part of it immediately adjacent to the royal palace compound—the sole legitimate place of worship, at least within the royal ideological outlook, helped create an indelible theological link between the deity and the Davidic dynasty (Joffe 1998: 569–70; Uziel and Shai 2007: 167). As an ancient Near Eastern capital, Jerusalem was to be the center of its "cosmion," its own little world, and it therefore drew in elements of its world, be they people coming for cultic purposes or royal justice or splendid exotic goods from the furthest reaches (Younger 1990: 168–71; Schloen 2001: 66, 69–70; Stager 1985: 25). If any conspicuous display of wealth in the Jerusalem of David and Solomon is even to be supposed, then, it should not be understood as part of some functionalist facilitation/reflection of economic development but rather as a symbolic representation of the city and dynasty as the center of its patrimonial domain.

In fact, perhaps the Jerusalem of the United Monarchy should even be imagined as an exclusively regal-ritual center that held the domestic populace at arm's length to increase the separate and distinctive character of the royal city, before the city's domestic populace began to expand in the Iron IIB period due to changing regional circumstances (Uziel and Shai 2007: 167–70). Such exclusivity need not be seen as born of a desire to eternally divorce the king from his people, but rather to articulate the capital's role as the symbolic center of the Israelite "cosmion," the

place around which the world was to be understood given the centrality of the royal Davidic dynasty under the patronage of YHWH (Stager 2003).

Jerusalem as Patrimonial Capital

It can thus be asked how the Jerusalem of the United Monarchy should be envisioned. As power and authority were not exercised in the patrimonial capital on a legal-rational basis, the notion that Jerusalem would have been the home of a distinct, separate, and professional bureaucracy of literate, specialized officials must be dispensed with. Within the patrimonial framework, Jerusalem would have been the base of the king and the small cadre of persons who served him via a literal or symbolic father-son, master-servant relationship. These persons were therefore members of the king's statewide household at its highest levels, while also being heads of their own households, with corresponding relationships to their servants and sons. Their households and their biological or symbolic subordinates within them would function as the loci of their own agricultural subsistence and conduct of affairs, just as they were positioned in that sense towards the king. Of course, when we dispense with the distinction between public and private spheres as discussed above, the basic subsistence functions and activities related to the state as a whole are not to be separated, as both were bound within the structure of the king's house *as* the state itself (Schloen 2001: 64–68, 195–96; Master 2001: 128–29; Stager 2003: 67–71).[8]

Whether or not the Jerusalem of David and Solomon sought to hold the populace, either Israelite or resident Jebusite, at arm's length as Uziel and Shai propose, the biblical text still envisions regular residency there. It offers no overt indication of a displacement of the resident Jebusite, that is to say Canaanite, landholders; witness David's acquisition of the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite by purchase rather than by royal fiat (2 Sam 24:18–25). There is also an interesting contrast to be found in the landholdings of David's courtiers in Jerusalem. From 2 Sam 14:30 we see that David's son Absalom and his nephew and right-hand man Joab maintained their own households and accompanying agricultural land in Jerusalem itself. This is not surprising for Absalom, the king's direct offspring. But

[8] In this sense the conception of the "capital city" in an ancient patrimonial context is quite different from that of its modern equivalent. Jerusalem might be likened more to the base of a Middle Eastern tribal sheikh in the modern period, which housed the sheikh's harem (cf., for example, 2 Sam 16:22) and wives taken from among the daughters of chiefs of subordinate lineages, and from which he went out to maintain relations with dispersed kin (Gellner 1990).

as the ancestral landholdings of Joab's family were presumably to be found back in the Bethlehem area like those of his uncle David (following 1 Chronicles 2), his acquisition of land in Jerusalem is perhaps an indication of a desire by David to concentrate his confidants in his capital. The case of Abiathar would indicate this more vividly: After picking the wrong side in the final struggle to succeed David, he is banished by Solomon to his own fields in the priestly city of Anathoth northeast of Jerusalem, from which he would seem to have been sustained while serving the king in Jerusalem.

Conclusion

The distinction between public and private spheres has been abandoned and the state conceptualized as indistinct from the household that encompassed the totality of the king's subjects; these subjects existed in patrimonial association with the king and with each other through the operation of Weberian traditional authority. The functionalist assumptions discussed above concerning indications of bureaucratic facilitation, expression, and activity at Jerusalem should therefore be rejected. The very idea of "public buildings" no longer needs to be taken for granted, and certainly no longer needs to be conjoined with the exercise of authority on a legal-rational basis, given its inapplicability to ancient Near Eastern and Israelite society as argued by Schloen. The presence or lack of monumental architecture is therefore no longer significant in terms of indicating the state's degree of development or the reach of its control in the tenth century B.C.E. (Schloen 2001: 195–96, 265–67). In fact, "[t]he construction of a monumental building—a temple or a palace, for example—was done by the divine or human ruler's servants in order to provide him or her with a house, in exactly the same way that any householder's dependents labored on his behalf to build and maintain his household" (Schloen 2001: 266).

Some such buildings may well be found in the archaeological record of Jerusalem, and thus the Stepped and Large Stone Structures may reasonably be related to the biblical account. But such buildings, the irrecoverable Temple in particular, must be understood not as the nodes of purely material functionality but instead within the project of representing the Israelite cosmion centered upon the royal capital. The patrimonial framework, with its renewed attention to the native linguistic expression of society, allows Jerusalem to be viewed as the centripetal point of this cosmion. There the house of the king was the apex of the house that encompassed the nation, and he himself had performed his rightful duty as servant of YHWH in building his heavenly patron an exalted house.

The archaeology and history of Jerusalem have served well as focal points of discussion here and as means of stressing the main point of this paper: The debate concerning the historicity of the United Monarchy cannot hope to address the problem productively if the participants are not cognizant of the mindset of society in David and Solomon's time and place. By applying an interpretive framework directly conscious of this native mindset to the central example of Jerusalem, this paper has shown an alternative way of understanding the archaeology and history of the United Monarchy.

In the Jerusalem, and indeed in the United Monarchy, that *ought to be* the object of historical examination, the presence of bureaucracy and the projection and facilitation of authority through the construction of public buildings need not be the measures by which the historicity of the biblical account is assessed. Unlike in the framework engendered by the functionalist approach, in the patrimonial framework these factors do not form part of the native understanding; abandoning the functionalist approach reveals that physical manifestations of a state are only indirect evidence of what is in fact a state of mind, so similar manifestations cannot be used to compare or evaluate societies that had different symbolic conceptualizations of social order (Schloen 2003: 287).

Hopefully, if this paper has achieved anything, it is its argument for the soundness of the Weberian patrimonial framework advocated and described by Schloen, Master, and Stager. The framework itself may continue to aid in productive scholarly discussion and refinement. One certainly need not accept all of its elements to appreciate that it is necessary to seek the native form and nature of Israelite society in order to study its archaeological manifestations.

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