

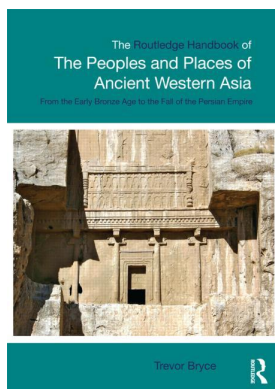
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 07 Dec 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



## **The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia**

### **The Near East from the Early Bronze Age to the Fall of the Persian Empire**

Trevor Bryce, Heather D. Baker, Daniel T. Potts, Jonathan N. Tubb, Jennifer M. Webb, Paul Zimansky

**B**

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203875506-2>

Trevor Bryce, Heather D. Baker, Daniel T. Potts, Jonathan N. Tubb, Jennifer M. Webb, Paul Zimansky

**Published online on: 14 Jul 2009**

**How to cite :-** Trevor Bryce, Heather D. Baker, Daniel T. Potts, Jonathan N. Tubb, Jennifer M. Webb, Paul Zimansky. 14 Jul 2009, *B from: The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia, The Near East from the Early Bronze Age to the Fall of the Persian Empire* Routledge

Accessed on: 07 Dec 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203875506-2>

**PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT**

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

## B

**Baba Jan Tepe** (map 13) Iron Age (Median?) settlement in western Iran, located in the province of Luristan, 170 km northwest of mod. Khorramabad. The site was excavated by C. Goff for the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, between 1966 and 1969. Settlement, which began in C9 and extended over several mounds, continued through three phases until the site was abandoned, probably in the first half of C6, after a period of 'squatter occupation'. Baba Jan Tepe's most prominent features were a so-called 'manor', 33 m × 34 m, which was fortified with seven towers and had a central courtyard flanked by long rectangular rooms, and a 'fort' with a large square hall also flanked by long rectangular rooms. The fort's destruction by fire in the site's second occupation phase may have been connected with an Assyrian campaign in this region during the reign of the Assyrian king Sennacherib (704–681).

Goff (1968–85), Dandamaev and Lukonin (1989: 62–4).

**Bab edh-Dhra** (map 8) 5 ha Early Bronze Age site in Jordan, on the plain south-east of the Dead Sea. It comprised a walled town, an area of settlement beyond it, and a large cemetery. Following a village existence in its earliest phase (c. 3150–3000), the settlement developed a flourishing urban culture between 3000 and 2300. It was fortified by a 7 m wide stone wall, within which lay a sanctuary with 'broadroom', a courtyard with a circular stone altar, and domestic and industrial areas. The assemblage of artefacts from the site, including weapons, jewellery, and a large number of cylinder-seal impressions, indicates widespread trading contacts, extending as far as Egypt and Mesopotamia. Following its destruction c. 2300, the settlement reverted to a village existence before it was finally abandoned c. 2000. Several scholars have suggested an identification with Sodom in *OT* tradition.

Schaub (*NEAEHL* 1: 130–6).

**Babitu** Iron Age frontier city of the land of Zamua, located in a mountain pass near the upper reaches of the Lesser Zab r., northeastern Mesopotamia. Liverani suggests identifying it with the mod. Bazian pass. The pass of Babitu provided access from the Assyrian plain into Zamua, which lay in the borderlands between northeastern Mesopotamia and northwestern Iran. Zamua was converted into an Assyrian province by the Assyrian king Adad-nirari II (911–891). In 881 and 880, the third and fourth regnal years of Ashurnasirpal II, grandson of Adad-nirari, Zamua rebelled three times against Assyrian overlordship. On the first occasion, the rebels tried to block Ashurnasirpal's advance by building a wall across the pass at Babitu. But neither this nor the stand made by the combined forces of the rebels prevented the Assyrian conquest and plunder of their cities. On his two subsequent campaigns against Zamua, Ashurnasirpal also entered the land via the passes of Mt Babitu.

\**RIMA* 2: 203–5, Liverani (1992: 46).

**Babylon** (maps 10, 11, 13, 16) Southern Mesopotamian city located on a branch of the Euphrates r., c. 90 km southwest of Baghdad. The name Babil is of unknown linguistic origin, but it came to be interpreted by the Babylonians themselves as Akkadian *Bab-ili(m)* meaning ‘gate of God’. ‘Babylon’ is the Greek form of the name. The biblical form is *Babel*. According to Genesis 11:9, the name was derived from the Hebrew verb *balal*, ‘to confuse’. The tradition reported by Genesis is that human beings originally spoke a single common language, but when they were building a city and tower on the site which became known as Babel, God decided to ‘confuse their language’, making it impossible for them to understand one another. He replaced the one language with many separate languages, whose speakers were thenceforth scattered over all the earth (Genesis 11:1–9). Until mod. times, a hill on the northern part of the site has retained the name Babil.

The site of Babylon is spread over a number of mounds, within a roughly rectangular walled area extending over an area of c. 450 ha. The city is bisected by the Euphrates r. running roughly north–south, though the settlement-mounds are concentrated on the side lying on the eastern bank, and this is the area which has been investigated by archaeologists. The western part of the city remains poorly known, and in fact some of it now lies under the mod. river course, which has shifted somewhat to the west since antiquity. The city’s history of occupation extends from mid M3 until C2 CE, with subsequent Arab occupation in late M1 CE. Particularly because of its biblical associations, the site attracted many early European travellers, one of the first being the C12 CE Spanish rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, who wrote a still extant description of the ruins. A survey of the site by C. J. Rich in 1811 served as a prelude to a number of minor excavations carried out there by a succession of C19 proto-archaeologists, including A. H. Layard and H. C. Rawlinson. Major excavations were conducted between 1899 and 1914 by German teams under the direction of R. Koldewey. The main focus of these excavations was the city of the Neo-Babylonian period (626–539). In the 1970s and 1980s further excavations and some substantial restoration work were undertaken by the Iraqi Dept of Antiquities.

Babylon is first attested in written records of the Akkadian and Ur III periods. In C24 it was destroyed by the Akkadian king Sargon, but was probably rebuilt soon after. In the reign of the last Akkadian king, Shar-kali-sharri (2217–2193), it contained at least two temples. Subsequently, it was attacked and captured by the Ur III king Shulgi (2094–2047), who plundered it, taking booty removed from the Esagila, the temple precinct of the god Marduk (see below). For a time, Babylon was a provincial centre of the Ur III administration, but its rise to high prominence did not begin until 1894 when it became the seat of an Amorite ruling dynasty, founded by Sumu-Abum. This was the starting point of its development into one of the greatest of the cities of western Asia. Under the first five kings of the Amorite dynasty (1894–1793), it was the capital of one of a number of petty kingdoms in Mesopotamia. But in the reign of the dynasty’s sixth king, Hammurabi (1792–1750), it became the centre of the first great Babylonian empire, whose sway extended through the whole of Mesopotamia. Material remains of Babylon in this period include several residential buildings in the walled inner city, from which clay tablets have been recovered. Information provided by these indicates the existence of a large number of temples built or rebuilt within the inner city at this time, including the temple precinct Esagila, and temples to a number of other deities, including Enlil, Ishtar, and Shamash. In general,

## BABYLON

though, knowledge of the Old Babylonian city remains limited because the high water table has mostly prevented the excavators from reaching those levels.

The Old Babylonian empire began to contract almost immediately after Hammurabi's death. Nevertheless, the succeeding members of his dynasty managed to maintain their power-base in Babylon for the next 150 years, until the city was captured and sacked by the Hittite king Mursili I c. 1595, ending the reign of its last king, Samsu-ditana. The Hittite victory paved the way for the establishment of a Kassite dynasty in Babylonia, under whose regime Babylon gained a new lease of life as a great centre of culture, commerce, and learning. If we can judge from tablets dating to late C12, which refer to the city's eight gates, its many temples, and its division into ten districts, Babylon may have had many of the same basic features and much the same layout under Kassite rule as it did in the later Neo-Babylonian period. But in late C15 or early C14, it lost its status as the administrative capital of the kingdom when the royal seat was shifted to a new site, the city of Dur-Kurigalzu (mod. Aqar Quf), founded by the Kassite king Kurigalzu I.

In the final centuries of the Late Bronze Age, the Kassites became embroiled in disputes and conflicts with their northern neighbour Assyria, and towards the end of C13 the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I swept across Babylonia's frontiers, and captured Babylon. But the Assyrian occupation was shortlived. Fifteen years after Tukulti-Ninurta's death in 1208, Babylonia regained its independence, and the Kassite dynasty managed to hold out against foreign aggressors for another seven decades, before its final collapse in mid C12. Babylon survived its fall, but remained relatively insignificant for several centuries before experiencing a resurgence in its fortunes,



*Figure 17* Hammurabi and part of law code.

firstly in the reign of Nabu-apla-iddina (888–855) and subsequently in that of Nabonassar (Nabu-nasir; 747–734). The Babylonian Chronicles (see glossary) and the 'Ptolemaic Canon' begin their accounts of Babylonian history from the date of the latter's accession. They saw it as the dawn of a new era in Babylonian history. Nabonassar appears to have enjoyed the patronage of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III, on whose support he relied for securing his kingdom against hostile action by Aramaean and Chaldaean tribes.

Subsequently, after Nabonassar's death, Babylon along with the rest of Babylonia came under Tiglath-pileser's direct rule. But resistance against Assyria was stirred afresh by the Chaldaean leader Marduk-apla-iddina II (721–710) (see **Babylonia**). When Marduk-apla-iddina was finally forced to flee to the south c. 700, the Assyrian king Sennacherib descended upon Babylon, plundered it, and carried off the fugitive's wives and members of his retinue to Assyria. When Babylonia again rose up against Assyria ten years later (689), under the leadership of another Chaldaean tribal chief, Mushezib-Marduk, Sennacherib once again attacked the city. It held out against his besieging forces for fifteen months before finally falling to him. Furious at its resistance, Sennacherib plundered Babylon of its treasures, and either carried off or smashed the statues of its gods. He claimed that he totally destroyed the city, flooding it with the waters of specially dug canals, and turning it into a wasteland (\**CS* II: 305, \**Chav.* 349). Whether or not Babylon was as thoroughly devastated as Sennacherib would have us believe, it was extensively restored under his first two successors, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, who ordered that its temples be rebuilt, and that the cult-statues and sacred furniture taken from these temples be returned (for Esarhaddon's contribution to the city's reconstruction, see \**Chav.* 354–5). In 652, Babylon and other Babylonian cities were caught up in the disputes between Ashurbanipal and his elder brother Shamash-shum-ukin, whom Ashurbanipal had placed on the throne of Babylon. Shamash-shum-ukin developed a number of grievances against Ashurbanipal, and mounting tensions between the brothers eventually erupted into open conflict, in the course of which Ashurbanipal's forces besieged and captured Babylon, where Shamash-shum-ukin had apparently made a final stand. Parts of the city were put to the torch, and it is thought that Shamash-shum-ukin may have died in the royal palace at this time (648). (For a treaty made by Ashurbanipal with a group of Babylonian allies who had initially joined the rebellion but subsequently switched their allegiance to Ashurbanipal, see *SAA* II: XXXII–XXXIII, \*64–8.) It is suggested that the Sealanders may have been the group in question.

After the fall of the Assyrian empire in late C7, Babylon entered the most illustrious phase of its history, as the capital of the Neo-Babylonian empire. Drawing on the enormous resources in human labour, booty, and tribute gathered from all parts of the empire, the first two Neo-Babylonian kings, Nabopolassar (626–605) and Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562), reconstructed the city and its temples on a massive scale. The Euphrates flowed through the city and divided it into two sectors of unequal size, the bigger and better known one on the river's east bank. A large bridge, supported on boat-shaped piers, was built across the river to link both sectors of the city. Fortifications were provided by outer and inner baked-brick walls (which we know from inscriptional evidence were initially built in the Neo-Assyrian period), pierced by eight gates and extending over a distance of c. 18 km. The fortifications were strengthened by an embankment and a moat. Herodotus (1.179) claims that the walls were

wide enough at the top to provide passage for a four-horse chariot. (He allegedly visited the city a century after the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and provides a detailed description of it, though his account contains some gross exaggerations and is inconsistent with what is known of Babylon from its archaeological remains.)

The most famous of the city's gates is the 15 m high Ishtar Gate, decorated with blue-glazed dragon figures and moulded animal reliefs. A reconstruction of the gate is housed in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin. Beneath the gate's arched entrance passed the 250 m long Processional Way, which was laid out on a north–south axis, and linked the quay where the king embarked for his journey to the Temple of the New Year festival in the north with the Esagila, the temple precinct of Marduk, in the south. On the way, it passed by the Etemenanki complex (see below). The city's main palace, the so-called 'Southern Palace' (the 'Südburg', as the excavators dubbed it), was located in the northwestern corner of the eastern sector of the inner city. Built by Nabopolassar and rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar, the complex encompassed five courtyards and numerous apartments and reception rooms. The third and most important courtyard gave access to what has been identified as the king's throne-room, imagined by some to be the place where Belshazzar's feast was held and Alexander the Great breathed his last. The throne-room (73 m × 10.4 m) has been compared in size to the Gallery of Mirrors at Versailles.

Towards the end of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar built a second palace immediately to the north of his principal palace. He and his successors may have used part of it as a 'museum', since assorted antiquities were discovered there; however, there is now some doubt as to whether these items were deliberately collected and kept there out of antiquarian interest. The contents of the so-called museum, some of which date back to M3, included a famous basalt statue of a lion, and statues and stelae of gods, kings, and governors. Both palaces were provided with huge fortification systems. At the extreme north end of the city, within Nebuchadnezzar's outer defensive wall, lay the 'summer palace', so called because of the remains of what were originally thought to be ventilation shafts, but which turned out to be the remains of the substructure of the massive fort built on the site during the Parthian era. The palace as a whole is poorly preserved. Within the centre of the city lay the temple precinct Esagila. This comprised the main shrine of the god Marduk, head of the Babylonian pantheon at this time. Within the Marduk temple and the precinct which enclosed it were cellas dedicated to other deities, including the principal gods Ea and Nabu. To the north of this complex lay another cultic precinct, Etemenanki, which housed the ziggurat dedicated to Marduk. This consisted of six stepped platforms, on the top of which was a shrine to Marduk. It may first have been built in the Late Bronze Age. In addition to these two great religious precincts, other temples were scattered around the city and were more intimately integrated into the urban fabric; they lacked enclosing precincts but simply nestled within the areas of residential housing. Various unsuccessful attempts have been made to locate the famous 'Hanging Gardens of Babylon' (as attested, e.g., in Berossus, *FGrH* 680 F9a = \**PE* 44, no. 18ii). S. Dalley has argued that the structures that inspired this tradition were in fact located in Nineveh.

After the Neo-Babylonian empire fell to the Persian Cyrus II, who entered Babylon in triumph in 539 (Nabonidus Chronicle: \**ABC* 110, \**CS* I: 468, \**Chav.* 420, \**PE* 51, no. 1; Cyrus Cylinder: \**Chav.* 428–9, \**CS* II: 315, \**PE* 71, no. 21; cf. Herodotus 1.189–92), Babylon continued to be used as a royal residence by the Persian kings, and

indeed a number of new building or rebuilding projects were carried out by these kings, especially Cyrus (\**PE* 78, no. 23) and Artaxerxes II. In 331 Alexander the Great entered the city (Curtius 5.1.17–23; cf. Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.16.3). His vision was to make it the capital of his new world empire. But this vision was never realized, and after Alexander's death in Babylon in 323, the city declined into insignificance, especially with the foundation of a new city, Seleucia, on the Tigris. The city enjoyed a period of renewal during the Parthian era, but was eventually abandoned, probably in C2 CE, until the Arabs resettled the site some seven centuries later.

In *OT* tradition, Babylon was the main place of exile for large numbers of Jews deported by Nebuchadnezzar from their homeland during the reign of the Judaeen king Jehoiachin (609–598) (2 Kings 24:12–16). Records from Nebuchadnezzar's palace, which list rations to be provided to Jehoiachin and his family, provide contemporary historical evidence of this event. The deportees and their descendants remained in Babylon until they were liberated by Cyrus, following his conquest of the city in 539. Cyrus allowed them return to Jerusalem. It was this which led the Hebrew prophet Isaiah to refer to Cyrus as the anointed of God (Isaiah 45:1). However, a large Jewish community continued to reside in Babylon, becoming increasingly integrated into the life and activities of their adoptive homeland. Biblical literature presents conflicting views on Babylon, though the most prominent image is that of a city which became a byword for luxury and decadence. Thus the book of Revelation (17:5) refers to Rome as 'Babylon, the Great, the Mother of Prostitutes and of the Abominations of the Earth'.

J. Oates (1986), J. G. Westenholz (1996a), Klengel-Brandt (*OEANE* 1: 251–6).

**Babylonia** (map 11) A modern term adopted from the city name Babylon and applied to southern Mesopotamia, the region extending roughly from Baghdad southwards to the Persian Gulf. Human settlement in the region dates back at least to M6. From at least the time of the earliest written records, this region was inhabited by a mixture of population groups speaking, variously, the Sumerian and Akkadian languages, with the latter becoming increasingly predominant during M3. However, for these early periods 'Babylonia' is an anachronism, since the term is used primarily to refer to the kingdom of which Babylon was the centre through much of M2 and the first half of M1. (For the same region in M3 see the entries **Akkad** and **Sumer(ians)**.)

The political history of Babylonia is closely linked with fluctuations in the fortunes of its chief city, Babylon, which first emerged as a small village on the banks of the Euphrates in the Early Dynastic period (c. 2900–2334), and came under the control of the Akkadian and Ur III empires in the final centuries of M3. Babylon's rise to power began with the establishment of an Amorite (q.v.) ruling house in the city in 1894, when the Amorite chieftain Sumu-abum founded the first royal dynasty at Babylon. The city reached its first peak in the reign of Hammurabi (1792–1750), the sixth king of the dynasty, when it became the centre of the first great Babylonian empire, whose sway extended through the whole of Mesopotamia. Hammurabi conquered in succession Larsa (1763), Eshnunna (1762), and Mari (1762). The last of these, after regaining its independence from Assyrian rule under its energetic ruler Zimri-Lim (1774–1762), had become one of western Asia's most powerful kingdoms before it fell to Hammurabi. In his thirty-sixth regnal year, Hammurabi gained control of the final remnants of the Old Assyrian kingdom, which had reached its peak only a few decades

## BABYLONIA

before under its king Shamshi-Adad I (1796–1775). There was, however, another formidable power which confronted Hammurabi – the kingdom of Elam which lay to the southeast of Babylonia. Its conflicts with Babylon during Hammurabi's reign are reported in letters from the Mari archives (e.g. \*LKM 320–1). To counter Elamite aggression and expansion east of the Tigris, Hammurabi formed an alliance, and engaged in an exchange of troops, with the Mariote king Zimri-Lim (1765). Yarim-Lim, king of Aleppo, also became a member of the alliance. But the task of driving out the Elamite occupation forces was made more difficult by the fact that the local northern Mesopotamian rulers were divided in their loyalties into pro- and anti-Elamite factions. Eventually, however, the western alliance began gaining the upper hand, and the Elamite king was forced to withdraw his forces along the Tigris, in the process ravaging the territory of Eshnunna before returning to Susa. (For this whole episode, see Charpin, 2003: 69–81.)

By and large, Hammurabi was successful in halting the westward advance of the Elamite forces. Soon after his death, however, the empire which he had built began to contract. This was due in part to the emergence of a new rival dynasty called the Sealand (q.v.), which arose in the marshlands of southern Mesopotamia and won control over Babylonia as far north as the city of Nippur. Hammurabi's successor Samsu-iluna (1749–1712) had to deal with rebellions by a number of Babylonian cities in his ninth



*Figure 18* Mesopotamian goddess (C18), probably from Babylon.





Figure 19 Stele of Nabonidus, from Babylon?.

regnal year, but allegedly restored order throughout the region in the following year, claiming to have killed twenty-six rebel kings (\**RIME* 4: 387). Elam also remained a serious threat. Early in the reign of Hammurabi's successor-but-one Abi-eshuh (1711–1684), an Elamite campaign which Kutir-Nahhunte I, prince of Susa, conducted into Babylonia allegedly resulted in the conquest of thirty Babylonian cities. But this conquest seems to have made no lasting impact on the Mesopotamian scene, and the Old Babylonian kingdom continued for almost a century after Abi-eshuh's death. It came to an abrupt end c. 1595, in the reign of Samsu-ditana, last ruler of Hammurabi's dynasty, when Babylon was destroyed by the Hittite king Mursili I (\**Chav.* 230; cf. \**ABC* 156). These were troubled times, and it seems likely that the Hittites were not the only foe Babylon had to contend with in this period (*Mesop.* 382–3).

The Hittite victory facilitated the rise of a Kassite dynasty in Babylonia (see **Kassites**) under whose rulers the Babylonian kingdom once again achieved the status of a major international power. It retained this status until the Kassite dynasty came to an end c. 1155, with the fall of the kingdom to the Elamites. For almost two centuries prior to its fall, Babylonia had become embroiled in a series of disputes and conflicts with its northern neighbour Assyria. These culminated in the invasion and conquest of Babylonia by the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I (1244–1208), who hauled the

Kassite king Kashtiliash IV back to Assyria in chains (\**Chav.* 145–52). But fifteen years after Tukulti-Ninurta's death, a Babylonian king called Adad-shuma-usur (1216–1187), son of Kashtiliash, who had come to power in the south of the kingdom, liberated the whole of his country from Assyrian rule.

Babylonia thus regained its independence from Assyria, and the Kassite dynasty continued to hold power for another seven decades. During this time it was not entirely free of foreign interference, suffering particularly from aggression by the Elamites. None the less, during the dynasty's declining years Babylonia seems to have enjoyed brief periods of stability and prosperity, though it had by now ceased to rank as a major international power. The Kassite regime ended with the short reign of Enlil-nadin-ahi (1157–1155). A Babylonian King List then records a line of rulers referred to as the Second Dynasty of Isin (\**RIMB* 2: 5–69), which lasted from 1154 until 1026 and consisted of eleven kings (not all of whom seem to have been related to each other). The dynasty's name suggests that the new political and administrative centre of Babylonia may have shifted south from Babylon to Isin for a time. But there is no actual evidence for such a shift, and it seems that most of the members of the 'dynasty' ruled from Babylon. The most famous of these rulers was the fourth king Nebuchadnezzar I (1126–1105), who invaded Elam and sacked the city of Susa, retrieving from it the statue of the god Marduk, which the Elamites had taken during their invasion of Babylonia in mid C12. Following the brief reign of Nebuchadnezzar's successor Enlil-nadin-apli (1104–1101), Babylon's throne was assumed by Marduk-nadin-ahhe (1100–1083) who soon became involved in conflicts with his Assyrian counterpart Tiglath-pileser I. His campaigns into Assyrian territory, during which he captured the royal city Ekallatum near Ashur and carried off from it statues of the gods Adad and Shala (according to a later inscription, of the Assyrian king Sennacherib; \**Sennachb.* 83), eventually provoked retaliation from Tiglath-pileser. The delay of ten years or more before this happened has been attributed to the king's preoccupation with his interests in the west. When he did finally move against his southern neighbour, he struck deep into Babylonian territory, capturing a number of its important cities, including Dur-Kurigalzu, Sippar, Opis, and Babylon itself (\**RIMA* 2: 43).

Following the Second Isin Dynasty, Babylonia was ruled initially by the three kings of the so-called Second Sealand Dynasty (1026–1006) (see under **Sealand**), and then for the next three centuries by a succession of generally insignificant kings – with two notable exceptions (see below). It reached a particularly low point in late C10, when the Assyrian king Adad-nirari II (911–891) defeated his Babylonian counterpart Shamash-mudammiq and conquered his entire land (\**RIMA* 2: 148). There was, however, some resurgence of Babylonia's fortunes under its king Nabu-apla-iddina, who succeeded to the throne in 888 and occupied it for thirty-three years. Nabu-apla-iddina was a member of the 'Dynasty of E' (so called in the Babylonian King List), founded by Nabu-mukin-apli in 979 and lasting until 732. During his long reign, Babylonia enjoyed once more a relatively high degree of peace, stability, and prosperity. This was due partly to the fact that the Aramaeans had ceased to be a threat, and partly to Nabu-apla-iddina's decisive victory over the Suteans (see **Sutu**), which ended their incursions into Babylonian territory. Nabu-apla-iddina's reign saw a great cultural renaissance in the land, which included the restoration of traditional cult-centres and sacred rites that had fallen into disuse.

But with the breakdown of relations between Babylonia and Assyria in the reign of

the Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad V (823–811), who as crown prince had concluded a treaty with the Babylonian king Marduk-zakir-shumi (*SAA* II: XXVI–XXVII, \*4–5), the relatively long period of peace and stability which Babylonia had enjoyed came to an end. Shamshi-Adad launched four campaigns against the country: the first two, in 814 and 813, were against Marduk-balassu-iqbi, successor of Marduk-zakir-shumi, and the third was against the next king, Baba-aha-iddina (812), whom Shamshi-Adad defeated and deported to Nineveh. Chaos and anarchy followed, with another resurgence in the country's fortunes in the reign of a king called Nabonassar (Nabu-nasir; 747–734). Two sets of historiographic texts, the Babylonian Chronicles and the 'Ptolemaic Canon', begin with his reign. After Nabonassar's death, Babylonia was again divided by struggles between competing power groups, including the Chaldeans (see below), until the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III intervened in 729. Tiglath-pileser overthrew (Nabu-)Mukin-zeri, a usurper from the clan Bit-Amukani who happened to be occupying the throne at the time, and declared himself king of Babylonia. This instituted a period of 'double monarchy', where kingship in Babylonia was in theory shared by the Assyrian king and a Babylonian appointee. But Assyrian overlordship in Babylonia was constantly challenged, particularly by a series of Chaldaean leaders.

By C8, Chaldaean tribal groups (see **Chaldaeans**), who had apparently entered Babylonia from the northwest some time during C11 or C10 and are attested in Assyrian records from C9 onwards, had become a major political force in Babylonia. Three Chaldaean tribal leaders occupied the Babylonian throne in the course of C8, beginning with Eriba-Marduk (769–761). The most notable of them was a man called Marduk-apla-iddina II (who figures in the Bible as Merodach-baladan), a man of the Bit-Yakin tribe and a former ruler of the Sealand, who assumed kingship in 721 (he was twice king in the country: in 721–710 and 703). Marduk-apla-iddina united Babylonia under his leadership for a protracted struggle with Assyria, in alliance with the Elamites, during the reigns of Sargon II and his successor Sennacherib. He claimed to have re-established the independence of Babylonia after many years of Subarian (i.e. Assyrian) control (\**RIMB* 2: 137). However, the Assyrians inflicted a number of defeats on him, and at the end of 710 he was forced to abandon his throne in Babylon and flee for his life as Sargon advanced upon the city. Babylon surrendered to Sargon, who formally became the occupant of the vacant throne at the New Year festival of 709. But Marduk-apla-iddina stirred up fresh resistance against the Assyrians (after unsuccessfully seeking asylum in Elam), first of all using his tribal capital Dur-Yakin as his base. Once again he was defeated, in a battle outside the city. However, he still managed to avoid capture by the Assyrians and to rally troops for further operations against them, until a final campaign conducted by Sennacherib in southern Babylonia, c. 703 (\**CS* II: 300–2), forced him to seek refuge once more in Elam, this time successfully. He died there soon afterwards. (For a recent treatment of the Assyrian wars against Marduk-apla-iddina during Sargon's reign, see *SAA* XV: XIII–XXIII, and for reports to Sargon from his officials on Marduk-apla-iddina's movements and activities, \**SAA* XV: 119 ff., nos 177 ff.)

Sennacherib now abolished the double monarchy, appointing to Babylonia's throne first an Assyrian puppet ruler, Bel-ibni, and then his own son Ashur-nadin-shumi. But Ashur-nadin-shumi was captured by the Elamite king Hallushu-Inshushinak during an Elamite attack on the northern Babylonian city Sippar, and replaced on Babylonia's throne by the Elamites' own appointee, the Babylonian Nergal-ushezib (693) (\**ABC* 78).

Hallushu-Inshushinak's triumph was shortlived. In the following year, Sennacherib won a victory over Elamite and Babylonian forces near the city of Nippur, which had been captured by Nergal-ushezib. Nergal-ushezib was taken prisoner, deported to Nineveh, and executed. Hallushu-Inshushinak escaped back to Susa, where he was killed by his own people. Almost immediately after Sennacherib's victory, resistance against Assyrian rule broke out afresh, firstly under a Chaldaean tribal chief Mushezib-Marduk (Shuzubu) of the Bit-Dakkuri tribe, who secured Elamite support for his military enterprises. For several years he defied the Assyrians, though he may have suffered a military defeat at their hands, until a determined campaign launched by Sennacherib in 689 ended with the Assyrian capture and destruction of Babylon (see **Babylon**) and the deportation of Mushezib-Marduk to Assyria.

Subsequent Chaldaean leaders continued to attack Assyrian garrisons stationed in Babylonia. But the decisive blow against Assyria was delivered by Nabopolassar, a Chaldaean leader who seized the throne in Babylon in 626, founding there a dynasty which ruled over the illustrious Neo-Babylonian kingdom (626–539). In partnership with the Median ruler Cyaxares, Nabopolassar destroyed the Assyrian empire, its death throes ending with the capture and sack of the Assyrian capital Nineveh by Babylonian and Median forces in 612. The kingdom founded by Nabopolassar reached its height in the reign of his son and successor Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562). Campaigns conducted by Nebuchadnezzar in the Syro-Palestinian regions extended Babylonian power westwards to the Levant, over territories formerly controlled by both Assyria and Egypt. Sidon and Tyre were among the cities that fell to Nebuchadnezzar on the Levantine coast, the latter, according to Greek sources, after a thirteen-year siege. Jerusalem was captured in 597, and after an uprising there in 586 was totally destroyed. The deportation of its population to Babylon marked the beginning of the period of the Jewish exile. A Babylonian army may also have invaded Egypt. At this time Egypt, then ruled by the Saite (twenty-sixth) dynasty, was Babylon's chief rival for supremacy over the territories of the Syro-Palestinian region. Several Babylonian campaigns were conducted into the kingdom of Que (Classical Cilicia Pedias/Campestris, called Hume by the Babylonians) in southern Anatolia, and possibly also into the neighbouring country of Hilakku (Classical Cilicia Tracheia/Aspera). Nebuchadnezzar claimed Hume amongst his conquests, and does seem to have exercised some control over the region. In the east, the old Elamite capital Susa came for a time under Nebuchadnezzar's sovereignty (c. 595). But in spite of these impressive, far-flung conquests, the empire built by Nebuchadnezzar began to crumble soon after his death. In 539, when its throne was occupied by a man called Nabonidus, the empire fell to the Persian king Cyrus II (see **Upi** (1)), and remained under Persian sovereignty until this empire in its turn fell to Alexander the Great, who conquered Babylon in 331.

Sumerian was the predominant language of Babylonia for much of M3, but towards the end of the millennium it was gradually replaced as a spoken language by the Semitic Akkadian language. By early M2 Sumerian had died out altogether as a spoken language. It survived, however, in literary and religious texts for many centuries to come, in fact until the demise of the cuneiform written tradition. The Akkadian language is conventionally divided into a number of dialects. During M2 it underwent progressive change, passing through stages now designated as Old Babylonian and Middle Babylonian, covering respectively the first and second half of M2. Later dialects include Standard Babylonian, the literary language used in Babylonia and Assyria in

## BACTRIA

later M2 and M1, and Neo- and Late Babylonian, the vernacular language of M1 Babylonia, covering the Neo-Babylonian, Achaemenid, Hellenistic, and Parthian eras. Already in earlier M1 Aramaic was gaining currency as a spoken language throughout much of the western Asian world, including Babylonia. The Aramaic script was essentially alphabetic, whereas Akkadian, following the tradition first established by the Sumerians, was written in a cuneiform script.

J. Oates (1986), Grayson (1992), Beaulieu (1995), Saggs (1995), Weisberg (1996), Leick (2003; 2007).

**Bactria** (map 16) Central Asian country located in Afghanistan, north of the Hindu Kush and extending roughly to the Oxus (Amu-Darya) r. It is attested in both Iranian and Classical sources, though for the pre-Hellenistic phase of its history, information provided by Iranian sources is sparse, and the Classical sources, principally Herodotus, Xenophon, and Ctesias, are considered by many scholars to have little historical value. On the basis of what we *can* glean, from both documentary and archaeological records, it seems that Bactria had developed during the early centuries of M1 into a wealthy and populous kingdom, perhaps the most powerful in Central Asia. Its wealth was derived partly from its precious metal resources, and partly from its thriving agriculture, the latter supported by large irrigation networks for which the country was noted throughout its history. According to the Bactrians, Zoroastrianism had its origins in their country. They claimed that Zoroaster's protector, Kavi Vishraspa, was one of their early kings. In a tradition recorded by the C2–3 CE Roman writer Justin (*Epitome* 5.1), Zoroaster himself was a king of Bactria.

According to Classical sources, Bactria clashed a number of times with the Assyrians. Greek writers report several expeditions which the Assyrians mounted against the country. One of these was conducted by an Assyrian king called Ninus (*sic*), who besieged the Bactrian king Oxyartes in his capital Bactra. The city finally fell to an assault by Ninus' queen Semiramis. A Semiramis is attested in Assyrian records as the wife of the C8 Assyrian king Shalmaneser V, though Ninus has also been identified with the C9 Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta II. Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* 1.5.2) reports an Assyrian campaign against Bactria during the reign of the Median king Cyaxares (c. 625–585). Greek tradition may also have included Bactrians in the siege and destruction of the Assyrian capital Nineveh c. 612, if we can judge from what appears to be a garbled version of this event in Diodorus (2.26–7). But a number of scholars dispute the historical validity of all these episodes (see e.g. Briant, 1984b: 23–33).

Classical sources also report that the Bactrians, along with other Central Asian groups (Hyrcanians, Parthians, Sacae), paid homage to the Persian king Cyrus II after his victory over the Median ruler Astyages and his capture of the Median capital Ecbatana (c. 550). Yet resentment at the prospect of permanent subjection to Persian overlordship may eventually have led to rebellion by the Bactrians, prompting the expedition which, according to Herodotus (1.153), Cyrus planned against them (and also against the Sacae). He may have conducted such an expedition in the course of his eastern campaigns which ended with his death on the battlefield in 530. Bactria was, however, one of the lands which supported Darius I during the uprisings against him at the beginning of his reign (522), and it appears in Darius' Bisitun inscription (\*DB 6) among Persia's eastern possessions. Its satrap at this time was a Persian official called Dadarshish. Bactria is listed several other times in Darius' inscriptions among the

eastern lands of the Persian empire (e.g. \*DSe 3), and also in the *daiva* inscription (see glossary) of his son and successor Xerxes (\*XPb 3).

According to Herodotus (3.92), Bactria constituted on its own the twelfth Persian province (but see glossary under **satrapy**), called Baxtrish in the Persepolis tablets. Herodotus (7.64) lists a contingent of Bactrians under the command of Hystaspes, brother of the Persian king Xerxes, among the forces assembled by Xerxes for his invasion of Greece in 481. Later (9.113) he tells of another of Xerxes' brothers, Masistes, who had been appointed governor of Bactria, where he fled after quarrelling with Xerxes with the intention of stirring up a rebellion in the country against the king; Xerxes discovered his plans and sent an army to kill him, along with his sons and troops, before he reached Bactria. According to Ctesias (*FGrH* 688 F14), Bactria did rise up in rebellion against Xerxes' son and successor Artaxerxes I, under the leadership of its satrap Artabanus. Artaxerxes eventually reimposed his authority over the country after fighting two battles against the rebel forces.

Bactria's proverbial wealth in precious metals is reflected in a number of sources. In Classical tradition, when the Assyrian king 'Ninus' sacked the Bactrian treasury, he found enormous quantities of gold and silver there. According to Herodotus (3.92), Bactria was obliged to pay its Persian overlord, by way of tribute, the substantial annual sum of 300 talents of silver. On the reliefs from the Audience Hall (Apadana) at Persepolis, representatives from Bactria are depicted as the thirteenth delegation, bringing tribute to Darius in the form of gold, camels, and metal vessels fashioned by goldsmiths. This is perhaps indicative of a strong goldworking tradition in the country, at least during the Persian period if not also earlier. Darius (\*DSz 9) reports that gold was brought from Bactria for use in the construction of his palace at Susa.

Bactria became a place for the resettlement of peoples deported from the western parts of the Persian empire. Members of the Ionian rebel alliance in Darius I's reign were threatened with exile and enslavement there, according to Herodotus (6.9), who also reports that Barcaeans from Libya were sent to Bactria, and resettled in a village which was thenceforth called Barca (4.204). Following Alexander the Great's conquests, a Hellenistic city was built on the site of Ai Khanoum in Bactria (possibly founded by Alexander himself), and extensive colonization of the country took place under Seleucid rule.

Briant (1984a; 1984b), Holt (1988), Treidler and Brentjes (*BNP* 2: 455–7).

**Bad-tibira** (*Al-Mada'in/Madina*) (map 17) Early Bronze Age Sumerian city-state in southern Mesopotamia, between Uruk and Lagash. According to the Sumerian King List, Bad-tibira was the second of five Sumerian cities to be granted kingship in Sumer before the great flood, after heaven had first bestowed this honour upon Eridu (\*Chav 82). The King List reports that during Bad-tibira's period of sovereignty, some three kings (one of whom was the shepherd god Dumuzi) reigned for a period of 108,000 years (*sic*), before kingship passed in turn to the cities of Larak, Sippar, and Shuruppak. During the Early Dynastic period (c. 2900–2334), Bad-tibira was one of fourteen major city-states attested in written sources for the regions of Sumer and Akkad. The city is subsequently attested in C19, when Sin-iddinam, king of Larsa (1849–1843), claims to have (re)built its wall (\*RIME 4: 176).

**Bahrain** see Dilmun.

**Bala** see Sukkia.

**Balawat** see Imgur-Enlil.

**Balihu** Iron Age city located in the Balih r. valley of northwestern Mesopotamia. Its exact location is uncertain, though Lipiński suggests an identification with Tell Abyad near the source of the Balih r. The existence of an Aramaean state called Balihu has been proposed but is far from certain, since it relies on the disputed reading of a toponym in an inscription of Kapara, a C10–9 king of Guzana (Tell Halaf); at any rate, no such state is referred to in Neo-Assyrian sources. The Assyrian eponym official for the year 814 (see glossary under **Eponym Lists**) was a governor of the city Balihu, among others (Millard, 1994: 90). In 853 the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III claims to have advanced upon the cities on the Balih r. and that, fearful at his approach, they seized and assassinated their overlord Giammu. Shalmaneser entered two of these cities, Sahlala and Til-sha-turahi, where he plundered Giammu's palaces and set up his gods (*\*RIMA* 3: 22, 36 etc.). The city is also mentioned in tablets of the so-called 'Harran Census' (*\*SAA* XI: 122–45). In 616 it was among the cities captured and plundered by the Babylonian king Nabopolassar (*\*ABC* 91, *\*PE* 30, no. 10).

Lipiński (2000: 119–33).

**Banat, Tell** (map 2) Early Bronze Age urban centre (second half of M3), 25 ha in extent, located on the Middle Euphrates in the Tishrin dam region. Excavations have brought to light in the middle of the site a massive artificial gravel platform 3.5 m or more deep, with a number of large buildings constructed on terraces cut into the platform. Also cut into the platform is a monumental five-chambered tomb made of dressed stone blocks and roofed by nine enormous stone slabs, each measuring 3 m × 2 m. The tomb was apparently used a number of times through the Early Bronze IV (2600–2450) and III (2450–2300) periods. Though it was robbed of most of its contents in antiquity, the surviving grave goods, including gold and lapis lazuli pendants and beads, indicate that it was the burial place of members of an elite class, probably the local ruler and his family. The most prominent architectural feature of the site is a conical mound, 100 m in diameter and 20 m high, identified as a single structure and known as the 'White Monument', because of the whitish gravel used in its construction. A stepped layer of mud encased the original structure. Skeletal remains within suggest that this building too was used for funerary purposes, probably for privileged members of the local society. On the western side of the site an industrial area was identified, containing numerous pottery kilns. The reconstruction of a pottery sequence from Tell Banat IV and III has provided important information on the relative chronology of the region's settlement and culture in its Early Bronze phase. Akkermans and Schwartz comment that the excavations at Tell Banat 'have provided striking evidence of an economically prosperous centre dominated by a powerful and ostentatious elite in mid M3' (2003: 247–8).

McClellan and Porter (1997; 1999), Akkermans and Schwartz (2003: 246–9).

**Baqanu** Iron Age fortified city of the Chaldaean tribe Bit-Dakkuri in southern

Mesopotamia. It was besieged and destroyed by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III in his second Babylonian campaign (850) (\**RIMA* 3: 31). The battle is also recorded on one of the bronze bands from Balawat (\**RIMA* 3: 148) (see **Imgur-Enlil**).

**Bara** Iron Age population group, and also the name of its chief city, located in the land of Zamua on the fringes of the Zagros mountains, east of the Assyrian plain. Bara was conquered, plundered, and destroyed by the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II in 881 while he was campaigning against Zamua, and again in the following year during a further campaign against Zamua (\**RIMA* 2: 204–5, 206). In this context, Ashurnasirpal also reports the conquest, plunder, and destruction of the cities of several other population groups – the Larbusu, Dur-Lullumu, and Bunisu.

Liverani (1992: 47).

**Barga (Parga)** Late Bronze Age city and kingdom in northern Syria, probably lying south of Aleppo and east of the Orontes r., attested in Egyptian and Hittite texts. It is first mentioned in a fragmentary letter from the mid C14 Amarna archive, where reference is made to a king of Barga (\**EA* 57). In the seventh year of his reign, the Hittite king Mursili II (1321–1295) wrote to Abiradda, who ruled Barga as a loyal Hittite vassal, concerning a dispute over the possession of a town called Yaruwatta, which lay in the border region between Barga and the Nuhashshi lands. The king of the Nuhashshi lands, Tette, had rebelled against Hittite rule. Secret negotiations led to the overthrow of Tette, and the installation of a pro-Hittite regime in Nuhashshi. Mursili took the field against a minor Nuhashshi rebel king called EN-urta, defeated him, and handed over his land to Abiradda. A peace accord concluded by Mursili between the new Nuhashshi king Shummittara and Abiradda confirmed Shummittara's control over Yaruwatta. There is a possible connection between Barga and the Iron Age city Parga (Parqa), which lay in the same region.

\*Klengel (1963), Lipiński (2000: 259–62), Radner (*RIA* 10: 336–7), Bryce (2005: 199–200).

**Bargylia** ([map 5](#)) M1 BCE–M1 CE city in Caria in southwestern Anatolia, built on a low hill with two summits. According to one Greek legendary tradition, the city was founded by the Greek hero Bellerophon, and named after his friend Bargylus, who had been killed by a blow from Bellerophon's horse, Pegasus. But the C6 CE scholar Stephanus of Byzantium states that in Carian tradition Bargylia was founded by Achilles, and that the Carians had called the city Andanus. In C5 Bargylia was overshadowed by its close neighbour Cindya. Both cities were members of the Athenian Confederacy, but Bargylia's assessed tribute was only a small fraction of that payable by Cindya. By C4, however, Bargylia was becoming the more important city, perhaps because of its location near the Gulf of Mandalya (Mendelia?), control of which it came to share with Iasus. By C3, it had apparently absorbed Cindya, which no longer appears in the records. Also by C3, Bargylia had become a thoroughly Hellenized city. The meagre material remains of the site date to the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods.

Bean (1971: 82–7, 143), Kaletsch (*BNP* 2: 510).

**Barzanishta** Iron Age city in the land of Izalla (q.v.), located on the southeastern side of the Kashiari mountain range (mod. Tur 'Abdin). Some vineyards in Barzanishta



are among those in Izalla which are listed in an inventory of estates probably written in the reign of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668–630/627) (\*SAA XII: 52).

(H. D. Baker)  
Radner (2006: 296).

**Barzanishtun** Iron Age city located in the Nairi lands in the western reaches of the upper Tigris region, to the northwest of the Kashiyari mountain range (mod. Tur ʿAbdin). Its location in Nairi is indicated in an inscription of the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II (883–859) (\*RIMA 2: 267). Ashurnasirpal reached the city during his campaign in the region in 866 after exiting the pass of Mt Amadanu (\*RIMA 2: 220); his next stop was Damdammusa, a fortified city of Ilanu, a ruler of Bit-Zamani.

**Bashan** (map 8) Fertile, grain-producing and pastureland region in Transjordan, northeast of the Jordan r. Bashan is a Hebrew name meaning ‘smooth, soft earth’. To the north, the region borders on Mt Hermon. To the south, the Yarmuk r. forms the boundary between Bashan and the land of Gilead. In *OT* tradition, Bashan was ruled by a king called Og prior to the Israelite conquest (Joshua 9:10). After the Israelites had defeated Og at Edrei, a Bashanite city (Numbers 21:33–5), the region was allotted to Jair of the tribe of Manasseh (Deuteronomy 3:14). *OT* tradition relates that on the division of the ‘United Monarchy’ after the death of Solomon (C10), Bashan became part of the kingdom of Israel, but in the latter part of C9, its territory fell to Hazael, king of Damascus, when Israel’s throne was occupied by Jehu (2 Kings 10:32–3). (On the so-called United Monarchy, see under **Israel**.) Though it was presumably among the territories regained by Israel in the reign of the late C9–early C8 king Jehoash (2 Kings 13:25), Bashan was also presumably included in the lands conquered by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III during his campaign in the region in 732 (2 Kings 15:29). But there are no sources independent of biblical tradition to confirm the historicity of any of the above events.

Negev and Gibson (2001: 68).

**Bassit, Ras el** (Greek *Posideion*) (map 7) Small town on the coast of northern Syria, 40 km north of Latakia. Its history of occupation extends from the Late Bronze Age (c. 1600, to which the remains of a ‘palace’ date) until the Arab conquest in C7. Excavation of the site was conducted by P. Courbin between 1971 and 1984, and since then by J. Y. Perreault, both on behalf of the University of Montreal. Perreault’s excavations have concentrated on an early Christian basilica, where the most recent work has been carried out primarily by N. Beaudry, University of Quebec. The Late Bronze Age town was considered by Courbin to have been an outpost of the kingdom of Ugarit. Following destruction of the site in the upheavals at the end of the Late Bronze Age, resettlement took place almost immediately at the beginning of the Iron Age, with the town subsequently becoming subject to the Aramaean kingdom Hamath. Iron Age remains include a number of grain silos and a necropolis of C8–7 date with mainly cremation burials. The cemetery provides evidence of contacts with Phoenicia and Cyprus. Courbin concluded that in this phase of its existence, the town was small and poor, and its society egalitarian.

Bassit’s coastal location enabled it to establish contacts with the Greek world from C10 onwards, illustrated by finds of Euboean Protogeometric pottery (c. 1000–950).

But actual Greek settlement seems not to have occurred before the last quarter of C7. It was then that the site was called Posideion. Its former name or names remain unknown. Greek settlement led to closer contacts with the Greek world – on Anatolia's western coast, the Aegean islands, and mainland Greece – as reflected in finds of east Greek pottery (C7) and Attic pottery (C6). These contacts seem not to have been disrupted by the Persian conquest of the town in 539, though there may have been some reduction in trade for a time in C5, during the periods of conflicts between the Greek and Persian worlds. Subsequently Posideion appears to have minted its own coinage, before the arrival of Alexander the Great in the region. Following Alexander's death, it became part of the Seleucid empire. It was conquered by Rome in 64.

Courbin (1986; *OEANE* 1: 278–9).

**Bastam** see Rusai-URU.TUR.

**Batash, Tel** (biblical Timnah) (map 8) Settlement-mound located in the Sorek valley, on the northern border of Judah, southern Palestine, 5 km northeast of Ekron (Tel Miqne). Its history of occupation extends from the Middle Bronze Age (C17–16) to the Persian period (C6–4). The site was excavated over twelve seasons, between 1977 and 1989, as a joint venture of the Southwestern Baptist Seminary and the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, under the direction of G. L. Kelm and A. Mazar. Twelve occupation levels were identified, beginning with the foundation of a Middle Bronze IIB fortified settlement on the site c. 1700. The settlement suffered a number of destructions by fire during its Middle and Late Bronze Age phases (levels XII–X and IX–VI respectively). Despite these destructions, Tel Batash developed into a prosperous Canaanite city in the Late Bronze Age. At that time it was probably part of the kingdom of Gezer, which dominated the Sorek valley. Its prosperity is reflected in its substantial two-storeyed public buildings with large pillared halls, and its rich assemblages of artefacts. The city was unfortified in this period. The outer walls of its houses, Mazar comments, apparently served as a defence line. After its destruction in C14, the settlement was rebuilt, but its final Late Bronze Age phase (C13) reflects none of the prosperity of its former existence.

During its Iron Age phases (levels V–II), Tel Batash is generally identified with the Judaeen-Philistine city of Timnah (3) attested in *OT* sources. (In Judges 14:1–10, for example, Samson is reported to have married a Philistine woman from the city.) It was probably built by the Philistines in the second half of C12, to serve as a border town in the territory of Ekron (thus Mazar). Its destruction c. 1000 has been associated with the expansion of the Israelites. The city was abandoned for a short period following this destruction. Its rebuilding on a new plan with new structures (level IV) probably reflects Israelite occupation. This level was destroyed in late C10, almost certainly by the pharaoh Sheshonq I (biblical Shishak) during his campaigns in the region. The succeeding level III city was built on a substantial scale and was heavily fortified. A noteworthy feature of the architecture of this period is an impressive city gate, providing the main access to the city. But this level also ended violently, in the campaign conducted by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 701. Some time prior to this, to judge from 2 Chronicles 28:18, Timnah was one of the cities subject to the Judaeen king Ahaz (735–715) which were attacked and captured by the Philistines. In C7 the city once again rose from its ashes. It was rebuilt and refortified. An impressive,

well-planned, and densely populated settlement grew up within its walls, which also enclosed a large industrial and commercial complex. The substantial quantities of artefacts found within the houses indicate contacts with Phoenicia and the east Greek world as well as with Transjordan and other Judaeen cities. Mazar believes that the export of olive oil was a major factor in the city's prosperity.

Once more, at the end of its level II phase, the city was devastated by fire, in the course of the Babylonian conquests of the region at the end of C7. It was now largely abandoned, except perhaps for a few squatters. During the Persian period (C6–4) a small settlement was built atop the mound (level I).

Mazar and Kelm (*NEAEHL* 1: 152–7), A. Mazar (1997b), Mazar and Panitz-Cohen (2001), Bunimovitz and Lederman (2006: 407–9, 420–4).

**Behistun** see Bisitun.

**Beersheba** (*Tell es-Seba*) (map 8) Iron Age city in southern Palestine (southern Judah), 4 km east of mod. Beersheba in the Negev desert. Its history of occupation extends through nine designated strata, covering the period from C12 to early C7 (with reoccupation occurring, after a period of abandonment, in C4 and continuing through the Hellenistic and Roman periods). Strata IX–VI belong to Iron Age I (C12–10), and V–I to Iron Age II (C10–early C7). The small 1–ha site was excavated for the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, by Y. Aharoni from 1969 to 1975, and by Z. Herzog in 1976 and from 1990 onwards. Stratum IX, dated by Philistine pottery and Egyptian scarabs to the second half of C12 and the first half of C11, and probably inhabited by a semi-nomadic community, contained a number of pits cut into the bedrock. Some of them apparently served as dwelling-places. Stratum IX was followed, after its destruction, by a settlement which contained the site's first houses (Stratum VIII). When this level was destroyed at the end of C11, a new settlement was built, encircled by four-roomed houses on stone foundations, whose back walls collectively formed an enclosure wall for the community (Stratum VII). A large number of small finds, including ceramic ware, jewellery, weapons, and figurines, date to this period of the community's existence. Its abandonment in early C10 was followed by brief reoccupation (VI), which ended in destruction in mid C10. One of the most noteworthy features of the settlement's Iron Age I phase is a well, 69 m deep, dug into the slope of the mound.

Beersheba reached the height of its development in the Iron Age II phase (V–I), when it became an important administrative centre in an outlying region of Judah. Its features included a well-planned street layout with drainage channels beneath the streets; a number of storehouses and other public buildings – one of which was perhaps a governor's residence – near the town gate; and a large town square. During its Iron Age II phase, Beersheba was an oval-shaped settlement, fortified firstly by a solid wall (V–IV), and subsequently by a casemate wall (III–II). In both cases access to the interior was provided by a four-chambered gate. The Iron Age II town suffered four destructions. Stratum V was possibly destroyed by the pharaoh Sheshonq I (biblical Shishak) in late C10. The violent conflagration which ended Stratum II has been attributed to the Assyrian king Sennacherib, during his campaign in the region in 701, to a later date in C7, or even later, to the campaign of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II in 586.

Following its destruction Beersheba was once more reoccupied (Stratum I), but now only on a very modest scale. It never again achieved the status it had previously enjoyed as an important urban administrative centre in the region of Judah. Subsequently the site was abandoned for up to three centuries (depending on the date of the destruction of Stratum II). Reoccupation took place in C4 during the Persian period, and continued through the Hellenistic and Roman periods. In these final phases of its existence, Beersheba appears to have supported little more than a modest fort.

The city is frequently attested in *OT* sources, primarily in connection with the patriarchal narratives.

Herzog (*NEAEHL* 1: 167–73; *OEANE* 1: 287–91), Laughlin (2006: 46–51).

**Beirut, Berytus** see *Biruta*.

**Beit Mirsim, Tell** (map 8) 3 ha Canaanite site in Palestine's hill country, c. 20 km southwest of Hebron. Its history of occupation extends through the Bronze and Iron Ages. The site was excavated over four seasons, between 1926 and 1932, by a joint expedition from Xenia Theological Seminary and the American Schools of Oriental Research, under the direction of W. F. Albright. Ten major strata were identified, extending from the Early Bronze Age until Iron Age II. The identification of the site with biblical Debir, as proposed by Albright, is no longer accepted; the latter is probably to be identified, as M. Kochavi has demonstrated, with Khirbet Rabud. A necropolis was discovered during looting of the site in the 1970s. Some thirty tombs were subsequently investigated between 1978 and 1982, by D. Alon and E. Braun on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

Only meagre remains survive from the city's Early Bronze Age (M3) phase, covering the first three strata. There are, however, more substantial remains of the four Middle Bronze Age strata (early M2), which indicate that the city was fortified in the second of these strata, had a number of large houses, presumably the residences of a social elite, and displayed some attention to urban planning. The city reached the height of its development as a Canaanite urban centre in the last two of its Middle Bronze Age strata. In the last stratum a large courtyard building, identified as a 'palace', was unearthed. The many storage jars which it contained indicate that part of the building was used as a storage magazine. The city's Middle Bronze Age phase came to an end with its destruction in mid C16, followed by a period of abandonment. When it was resettled during the Late Bronze Age, its earlier predominantly urban aspect was now more attenuated, reflected by open spaces, between houses, occupied by grain silos. However, imported Mycenaean and Cypriot ware found in the city indicates some trading links, albeit indirect, with the world beyond the Levantine coast. Around 1225, in the final decades of the Late Bronze Age, the city was destroyed by fire.

The final two strata of its existence belong to the Iron Age. Again, grain silos are a feature of the site. Ceramic ware recovered from these suggest a continuation of Canaanite culture – at least until early C10, when the city may have come under Israelite occupation. A new casemate fortification wall was erected where the old Middle Bronze Age fortifications had once stood. Destruction of the city, probably in late C10, is associated with the campaign which the pharaoh Sheshonq I (biblical

Shishak) conducted into the region in late C10. This destruction in fact paved the way for a new era of prosperity in Beit Mirsim's history, characterized by a planned urban layout, three- and four-roomed pillared houses, a monumental building near the city centre, a tower structure built over part of the casemate fortifications, and rock-cut cisterns and oil presses. The destruction of this city by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in his campaign of 701 effectively marked the end of Beit Mirsim as a prosperous urban centre. There may, however, have been some reoccupation of the site during C7 or early C6.

Albright and Greenberg (*NEAEHL* 1: 177–80), Greenberg (*OEANE* 1: 295–7).

**Bellapais** (map 14) Early and Middle Bronze Age cemetery at the locality of Vounous, near the mod. village Bellapais in north-central Cyprus on the north slopes of the Kyrenia range. The Swedish excavator E. Gjerstad noted burial chambers here in 1926. Following reports of extensive looting of the tombs, excavations were undertaken in 1931 and 1932 by P. Dikaïos for the Cyprus Museum. Further tombs were excavated in 1933 by C. F.-A. Schaeffer on behalf of the Museums of France in collaboration with Dikaïos. In 1937 J. R. Stewart undertook final excavations on the site, sponsored by the British School of Archaeology at Athens. The settlement associated with the cemetery has not been located.

A total of 164 tomb complexes were uncovered, some of them multi-chambered. Over 107 of these appeared intact, producing more than 200 burials. These were accompanied by a wide range of ornaments, tools and weapons, and ceramic vessels. Clay models of animal and human figures, sometimes applied to pots, are seen as valuable indicators of the material culture of the Early and Middle Bronze Ages. Swiny comments that the cultural material from the cemetery belongs near the beginning of an artistic tradition that lasted 700 years.

Swiny (*OEANE* 5: 322–3).

**Benjaminites** and **Bensimalites** see Yaminites.

**Bethel** (*Tell Beitin*) (map 8) Settlement in southern Palestine, located on the West Bank on the border between Israel and Judah, 16 km north of Jerusalem. Well known from biblical sources, Bethel was first identified with the site of Beitin by the American explorer E. Robinson in 1838. Following a brief settlement in the late Chalcolithic period (c. 3200), Beitin was apparently abandoned and left unoccupied for c. 800 years. It was resettled in the Early Bronze III period, c. 2400, and thenceforth occupied, with several further intervals of abandonment, until the Byzantine age. Excavations on the site were carried out, on behalf of the American Schools of Oriental Research, by W. F. Albright and J. L. Kelso in 1934, and subsequently by Kelso in 1954, 1957, and 1960. Bethel is one of the most frequently attested towns in *OT* sources. Its importance must have been due at least in part to its strategic location on the border between Israel and Judah, and at the junction of major north–south and east–west routes of communication.

Early Bronze Age remains on the site are meagre. However, by the Middle Bronze II period (c. 1800–1650) Bethel had become a prosperous town with impressive Cyclopean fortifications (see glossary) and well-built private houses. It continued to flourish in its Middle Bronze Age III phase (c. 1650–1500), but may have been

destroyed at the end of this phase. It was abandoned for about a century, before being reoccupied in the Late Bronze II period (c. 1400–1200). Well laid out houses with courtyards and drains typify the new settlement. The excavators divided this period into two phases, observing that the earlier C14 phase was superior in quality to its C13 successor.

We have no hard evidence to indicate what brought this level to an end, though attempts have been made to link it with the Israelites' alleged conquest of Canaan. From the beginning of the Iron Age, early C12, Beitin/Bethel was again occupied, possibly by a new population group, presumably the Israelites. Unfortunately, archaeological reports provide little detailed information about the site in its Iron Age phases. It was apparently unfortified during the first two centuries of the Iron Age. To judge from *OT* references, it was an important Israelite city at this time, particularly in the last two centuries of M2, corresponding in biblical terms to the period of the judges. According to the biblical stories, it was used as an assembly point for the Israelite tribal confederacy (Judges 20:18), and for a time it became the repository of the Ark of the Covenant (Judges 20:26–8). Samuel's regular visits to it as a judge is further testimony to its importance in *OT* tradition. By C10 it had again become a strongly fortified, apparently prosperous town.

In *OT* tradition, Bethel appears to have lost much of its importance during the reigns of David and Solomon (C10), if we can so judge from the absence of any biblical references to it in this period. But with the emergence of the divided monarchy following Solomon's reign, it came once more into prominence. It was established as a major sanctuary by Jeroboam I, first ruler of the Northern Kingdom, in late C10, and is referred to as a royal sanctuary at the time of the C8 prophet Amos (Amos 7:12–13). In late C7 the Judaeen king Josiah reportedly destroyed this sanctuary (2 Kings 23:15). (None of the above events is attested in extra-biblical sources.) The city's fortifications were rebuilt several times in the following centuries, until it presumably fell victim to the Babylonians in early C6. (The archaeological reports do not provide any clear indications of this.) The Babylonians may have destroyed the town, but there is evidence of later settlement during the Persian period (C6–4). In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the town may once again have enjoyed some of its former importance and prosperity. It is still attested in Byzantine times.

Kelso (1968; *NEAEHL* 1: 192–4), Dever (*OEANE* 1: 300–1).

**Beth Gan** (map 8) Site located in northern Palestine, to the west of the Sea of Galilee. Its history of occupation extends from the Late Bronze Age until the Byzantine and Mamluk periods. The site was excavated by H. Leibowitz for the University of Texas at Austin in 1992, 1994, and 1995. According to the excavator, evidence of Beth Gan's Late Bronze Age occupation lends support to the idea of a significant population in the eastern Lower Galilee at that time. Pottery and domestic dwellings represent Iron Age settlement, a storage jar represents settlement in the Persian period (C6–4), and architectural fragments and domestic ware reflect settlement in the Roman period.

Leibowitz (*OEANE* 1: 301–2).

**Beth-Shean** (Beth Shan, *Tell el-Husn*) (map 8) 4 ha settlement-mound located in the Jezreel valley in northern Palestine at the intersection of two major routes running north–south (through the Jordan valley) and west–east (through the Jezreel and

Beth-Shean valleys). An extensive lower settlement at the base of the mound dates from the Hellenistic period onwards. The site's history of occupation extends from the Late Neolithic to the mediaeval period, with a number of breaks in between. Excavations were conducted by C. S. Fisher, A. Rowe, and subsequently G. M. FitzGerald, on behalf of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, from 1921 to 1933, by Y. Yadin for the Institute of Archaeology, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in 1983, and by A. Mazar for the Hebrew University and the Tourism Administration of Beth-Shean, from 1989 to 1996. Following continuous settlement on the mound through the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Early Bronze, and Middle Bronze Age I levels, there was an occupation gap during Middle Bronze IIA (early M2) before resettlement in the Middle Bronze IIB–C period. Throughout its Middle Bronze Age phases the city was unfortified. The fine quality of its ceramic ware and other artefacts in this period indicates a relatively advanced, sophisticated society.

For the Late Bronze Age, five settlement phases have been identified. During the last four of these, Beth-Shean was under Egyptian sovereignty, becoming one of the most important centres of the pharaoh's administration in Syria–Palestine. It was a garrison city, under the direct authority of a resident Egyptian governor. References to it occur in the texts of the pharaohs Tuthmosis III, Seti I, and Ramesses II. Seti was perhaps responsible for rebuilding the city after it was destroyed by fire in late C14 or early C13. Two basalt stelae from his reign indicate the city's importance as a bulwark of Egyptian authority in the region against rebellious subject states and marauding Habiru (q.v.) groups. One of the major archaeological features of the site during this period is a sequence of five temples extending through the Late Bronze and Iron Age I levels. The plan and layout of one of these (Stratum IX) display a number of unique



*Figure 20* Beth-Shean.

architectural characteristics. One of the most notable finds of the transitional period between the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age is a cemetery containing more than fifty anthropoid coffins, most of whose lids depict human faces. Mazar believes that the coffins belonged to Egyptian officials and military personnel, though some of them may have contained the bodies of mercenaries from among the Sea Peoples who served in the Egyptian army.

The two Iron Age I strata at Beth-Shean (C12–11) reflect the final period of Egyptian authority in Syria–Palestine. At this time, Egypt was ruled by the pharaohs of the twentieth dynasty. In the reign of one of these (Ramesses VI or Ramesses VIII, according to Mazar), Beth-Shean was again destroyed by fire. By C11 it had been rebuilt, and was now probably occupied by Canaanites, and perhaps also, Mazar suggests, by some of the Sea Peoples. Its material culture was Canaanite, and it now featured twin temples. According to *OT* sources, Beth-Shean was one of the cities whose Canaanite occupants resisted the Israelites' attempts to drive them out (Joshua 17:11–12; Judges 1:27). And it was to the walls of Beth-Shean that the Philistines are alleged to have attached the body of Saul, after stripping him of his armour and cutting off his head (1 Samuel 31:10). Excavations have failed, however, to find any hint of Philistine occupation at the site. The Canaanite city was destroyed at the end of C11 or early in C10, concluding its Iron Age I phase. It was subsequently rebuilt in Iron Age II. Not long after, it appears among the cities conquered by the pharaoh Sheshonq I (biblical Shishak) during his campaign in the region in late C10. Evidence of further violent destruction by fire at the end of the Iron Age II phase is probably to be associated with the campaign which the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III conducted in the region c. 732.

A small community subsequently arose on the mound, which may have continued to function as a cultic site through the Persian period (C6–4). But there was no significant reoccupation of the site until the Hellenistic period, from which time the city became known as Nysa or Scythopolis.

A. Mazar (1997a; *NEAEHL* 1: 214–23; *OEANE* 1: 305–9; 2006).

**Beth-Shemesh** (map 8) 3 ha settlement-mound located in the northeastern Shephelah hill region of western Palestine. Its name was identified by E. Robinson in 1838. The city is frequently attested in biblical sources: for example, in the allocation of lands to the Israelite tribes, it is assigned to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:31). But it occurs in no written sources outside the Bible. Beth-Shemesh's history extends through six major occupation levels, from Early Bronze IV to the mediaeval period. The first excavations were undertaken by D. Mackenzie in 1911–12 for the Palestine Exploration Fund, and subsequently by E. Grant from 1923 to 1928 for Haverford College, Pennsylvania. Work on the site was resumed in 1990 by S. Bunimovitz and Z. Lederman on behalf of Bar-Ilan and Ben-Gurion Universities (1990–6), and from 1997 onwards under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University. The earliest of the six occupation levels identified on the site, Stratum VI, spanning Early Bronze IV to Middle Bronze II (C22–18), is represented only by pottery sherds. Stratum V (Middle Bronze II–III) was the first significant phase in the site's development, when the city was strongly fortified and accessed by a triple-entry gate. The prosperity of this period, as indicated by residences of an elite upper class, continued into the following Late Bronze Age phase (Stratum IV), from which a number of



well-built houses were unearthed, along with numerous cisterns, a smelting furnace, and a hoard of jewellery. Tombs dating to both this and the preceding period were also brought to light. The cause of the destruction of the Late Bronze Age city c. 1200 remains unknown.

The large Iron Age I settlement (Stratum III) showed some degree of continuity with its predecessor, though with little evidence of town planning. Its destruction early in C11 is generally attributed to the Philistines. The successor Iron Age II settlement (Stratum II), extending from C10 to C8 (which included three sub-phases), was a well-planned, prosperous city. One of its most noteworthy features is a rock-hewn, cross-shaped water reservoir, discovered in 1994, with a capacity of c. 200 cubic metres. Other features of the city in this period include a number of pillared courtyard houses, a large grain silo, a tripartite storehouse, and some structures identified as industrial installations. All lay within a casemate city wall, built c. mid C10. Bunimovitz and Lederman (2001: 145) observe that at approximately this time, the large and unfenced Iron Age I village of Beth-Shemesh was transformed by a central authority into a fortified town with an impressive array of public buildings. It has been suggested, by scholars who accept the historicity of an Israelite United Monarchy, that Beth-Shemesh now became an administrative centre of the monarchy. The destruction of this phase of the city's existence was attributed by the earlier excavators to the Babylonians in 586. But since no C7 remains have been revealed by the recent excavations, this destruction is now thought to belong within the context of the Judaeen campaigns conducted in 701 by the Assyrian king Sennacherib. Some years earlier the city was, according to 2 Chronicles 28:18, seized by the Philistines from Judah, along with other cities in the region, during the reign of the Judaeen king Ahaz (735–715). Through the Iron Age, and particularly in C8, Beth-Shemesh served as a frontier post on Judah's northern border.

Following its destruction at the end of the Iron Age, Beth-Shemesh was apparently abandoned for several centuries before it was reoccupied in the Hellenistic period. Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine remains are represented in Stratum I.

Bunimovitz and Lederman (*NEAEHL* 1: 249–53; 2000; 2001; 2006: 409–24), Dever (*OEANE* 1: 311–12), Laughlin (2006: 68–72).

**Beth-Zur** (*Khirbet el-Tubeiqa*) (map 8) Settlement-mound, 1000 m above sea level, located in the hill country of Judah, southern Palestine, 30 km southwest of Jerusalem. It has a commanding position overlooking routes passing north to Jerusalem and west towards the Shephelah, on Judah's northern frontier. The site was excavated by O. R. Sellers, sponsored by the Presbyterian (McCormick) Theological Seminary, Chicago, and the American Schools of Oriental Research, in 1931, and again in 1957. Five main occupation strata were identified, extending from the Early Bronze Age through Middle Bronze Age, Iron Age I and II levels, and terminating with a 'Second Temple' level spanning the period from C5 to the end of C1.

After sporadic occupation in M3 (Stratum V), Beth-Zur was resettled in mid C17 (Stratum IV, Middle Bronze II), and fortified the following century. Its massive 2.5 m thick city wall, consisting partly of huge polygonal stones, is considered to be a typical 'Hyksos' (q.v.) construction. The city appears to have suffered destruction by fire c. 1550, and its site was abandoned for almost half a millennium before resettlement occurred in the early Iron Age, C11. The new 'Israelite' settlement, Stratum III,

appears to have been a relatively poor one, smaller in size than its Middle Bronze Age predecessor. However, a new city wall was built, using in part materials from the Middle Bronze Age fortifications. (The identification of this settlement as Israelite is based on biblical, not archaeological information.) Stratum III was destroyed by fire towards the end of C11, and the site was almost entirely abandoned at that time. The only indications of any habitation there for the next three centuries are provided by a few pottery sherds. Israelite occupation resumed in Iron Age II, as attested by the material remains of Stratum II, dated to the period c. 700–587. Despite the claim made in 2 Chronicles 11:7 that Beth-Zur was one of the towns built up by Rehoboam for the defence of Judah, no evidence has been found to indicate that the city was fortified in this period. However, the discovery of a number of *lamelekh* (see glossary) handles have led to the suggestion that a military garrison was stationed in the city, perhaps in the reign of Hezekiah (c. 715–687). Stratum II probably came to a violent end c. 587, and if so, it was presumably a victim of the Babylonian invasions of Palestine at this time – though the evidence for such a destruction is not conclusive.

Once again the site may have been abandoned, until C5, when there is some sparse evidence for reoccupation, marking the beginning of Stratum I. The city grew in importance during the Hellenistic period, with the construction of the first stage of a citadel in C3, and appears to have enjoyed a period of peace and prosperity under Seleucid rule. Its value as a Judaeon garrison-city was no doubt at least partly responsible for this. In the Hellenistic period, the city came to be known as Bethsura. It was finally, and permanently, abandoned c. 100.

Our knowledge of Beth-Zur's history is almost entirely dependent on archaeological evidence. There are only four references to the city in the *OT*, and none in extra-biblical written sources prior to the Hellenistic period. Information about the city during the Hellenistic period is provided by the first and second book of the Maccabees, and by the Jewish historian Josephus.

Funk (*NEAEHL* 1: 259–61).

**Beycesultan** (map 2) Large double-mound settlement in western Anatolia, 600 m × 400 m in extent, located on a former course of the Maeander r., 5 km south of mod. Çivril (Denizli province). Its history of occupation extends from the Chalcolithic to the Late Bronze Age, with subsequent resettlement on the flat-topped southern part of the site during the Byzantine period. The site was excavated between 1954 and 1959 by S. Lloyd and J. Mellaart for the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. Forty occupation levels were identified, extending from the Chalcolithic to the Late Bronze Age. Twenty-one of these levels are of Chalcolithic date (XL–XX), when the site was characterized by rectangular mudbrick houses, sometimes with stone foundations, equipped with benches, hearths, and ovens. In the Early Bronze I period, perhaps after a gap in occupation, megaron-type structures (see glossary) were built on the site. The characteristic feature of these structures was a main room entered through a portico and containing hearths and so-called 'horns of consecration', with another room at the back. Though the excavators believed that buildings of this kind were shrines, it is now thought more likely that they were domestic dwellings. The excavators interpreted the presence of northwestern handmade Anatolian pottery in Beycesultan's Early Bronze II period (mid M3) as indicating the arrival of new elements on the site. By the end of Early Bronze II, wheel-made pottery was also being produced. After this phase of the

city's existence ended in destruction, another hiatus in occupation may have occurred, as reflected in a gap in the pottery sequence, before the third and final phase of the Early Bronze Age settlement (Early Bronze III). In total, the Early Bronze Age at Beycesultan was spanned by fourteen occupation levels (XIX–VI).

The most important phase in Beycesultan's development occurred during the succeeding Middle Bronze Age – levels V–III. Excavation of the first of these levels brought to light the remains of a burnt 'palace', dating to the first centuries of M2 and contemporaneous with the Assyrian Colony period (see glossary). The building complex, measuring 85 m × 55 m, was at least two storeys high, made of timber and mudbrick, and when excavated still contained traces of painted murals. Its presence on the site suggests that by this time Beycesultan had become the seat of a local ruler. A temple and parts of the city's fortifications were also discovered in this level. Beycesultan's apparent prosperity in this period was probably due in large part to its strategically advantageous position at the headwaters of the Maeander r. It is very likely that it lay on major routes of communication which linked it with the Troad as well as with the central Aegean coast, and perhaps also with places lying to its east. In the Late Bronze Age, another palace was built, on the city's eastern summit. This was smaller than its predecessor, measuring c. 60 m × 60 m. Its reduced size suggested to Lloyd that Beycesultan had by this time suffered a decline in importance. However, much of the city remained unexplored at the close of excavations, making it difficult to form any clear notions as to its size and significance at the time Anatolia was dominated by the Hittites.

Beycesultan lay in the region where scholars believe the complex of countries called the Arzawa Lands was located. These are attested in numerous Hittite records. Mellaart had hoped that Lloyd's and his excavations might confirm Beycesultan as one of Arzawa's cities. Unfortunately, this hope was not realized, partly because of the failure to find any trace of written records on the site. Nevertheless, Beycesultan was almost certainly a part of the Arzawa geopolitical complex. In the light of recent research on the political geography of Late Bronze Age Anatolia, J. D. Hawkins (1998b: 24) has suggested that it may have been the chief city of the land called Kuwaliya in Hittite texts, which was attached to the Arzawan kingdom of Mira as frontier territory probably in mid or late C14.

Mellaart (1998).

**Beydar, Tell** (Nabada?) ([map 2](#)) M3 settlement located on a tributary of the Habur r. in northern Mesopotamia. The site is circular, covering c. 28 ha, with a walled citadel at the centre and a lower town around it surrounded by an outer circular wall (in other words, a typical 'Kranzhügel'). It has been excavated since 1992 by a joint European and Syrian expedition, under the direction of M. Lebeau and, in succession, H. Hammade, A. Suleiman, and A. Baghdo. The excavations have so far brought to light over 200 clay tablets written in Akkadian cuneiform and dating to the late Early Dynastic III period, contemporary with the tablets from the Ebla archive (C24). The texts are administrative documents, dealing with such matters as workers from different parts of the town and from different villages, and the distribution of animal products. The majority of the tablets came from what appear to have been private dwellings, but four were unearthed in a building on top of the mound interpreted as a palace, and two others from what was apparently a large official building. The

excavators have concluded that the site was probably a regional administrative centre, called Nabada, belonging to the kingdom of Nagar (see **Brak, Tell**).

Lebeau and Suleiman (2003; 2007), Milano *et al.* (2004).

**Bi'a, Tell** see Tuttul.

**Biqa'** (map 7) Narrow plain and valley in central Lebanon located between the Lebanon range in the west and the anti-Lebanon in the east. The Greeks called the region Coele-Syria ('Hollow Syria'). Throughout its history, it was the home of numerous small countries and cities which became embroiled in the political and military upheavals of their ages.

Dever (*OEANE* 1: 41).

**Bira, Tel** (map 8) Settlement-mound in northern Palestine, 9 km southeast of Akko, bordering on the Akko plain. It is probably to be identified with Rehob (see **Rehob** (2)), which in *OT* tradition was one of the Canaanite cities assigned to the tribe of Asher (Joshua 19:30, Judges 1:31). The site consists of an acropolis, a lower city, and several cemeteries located near the mound. Its history of occupation extends from the Middle Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period. Excavations were conducted on the site by M. Prausnitz for the Israel Dept of Antiquities and Museums between 1957 and 1980. Attention was focused primarily on the lower city and the cemeteries. In the Middle Bronze Age, the settlement was fortified by a city wall and a glacis (see glossary), the wall enclosing a total area of some 20 ha, encompassing both citadel and lower city. Excavation of the Middle and Late Bronze Age cemeteries revealed numerous burials in rock-cut pit-graves, the bodies surrounded by funerary goods, including weapons and ceramic ware. Iron Age burials were also made in rock-cut tombs, for both single and double interments. Some of the tombs were cut to fit the size of the bodies, with hewn niches for the accompanying funerary goods. Tombs dating to the Hellenistic period indicate that the settlement was still in existence at that time, but was probably abandoned shortly after.

Prausnitz (*NEAEHL* 1: 362–3).

**Biruta** (Classical **Berytus**, *Beirut*) (maps 6, 7) City on the Levantine coast, the capital of mod. Lebanon, located between Byblos and Sidon. Though we have evidence of human settlement in the area from the Palaeolithic period onwards, there are only meagre material remains of the anc. city prior to the Roman imperial period. Historical records are also sparse before this period. The earliest significant documents are six letters found in the mid C14 Amarna archive, addressed to the pharaoh Akhenaten. Three are written by Ammunira, king of Biruta (\**EA* 141–3), and three by Rib-Hadda, king of Gubla (Byblos) (\**EA* 136–8). Both writers are vassals of the pharaoh. Rib-Hadda had formed an alliance with Ammunira in an attempt to counter the threat which Gubla's aggressive northern neighbour Amurru posed to a number of cities along the Levantine coast and its hinterland. After losing power in a coup in his own kingdom, Rib-Hadda sought refuge with Ammunira while vainly awaiting support from Egypt in his bid to regain his throne. Ammunira was sympathetic to his cause, but apparently unwilling or unable to provide him with any material assistance.

The M1 Phoenician city is briefly attested in the Persian period (C6–4), but it

remained relatively insignificant until the end of the Hellenistic period. Around 14 BCE, Berytus became a Roman colony.

Khalifeh (*OEANE* 1: 292–5), Vidal (2005).

**Bisitun** (*Bebistun*) (map 16) Site located in a mountain pass in western Iran, 30 km east of Bactaran (formerly Kermanshah). It is best known for its famous rock-cut relief and trilingual inscription, carved at the command of the Persian king Darius I in 520–519 on the site's southeast cliff-face, 70 m above the highway leading from Mesopotamia into the highlands of Media.

The inscription appears in three versions – Old Persian, Babylonian, and Elamite. It records Darius' seizure of his throne and the military triumphs he won during his accession year and first regnal year. The inscription was carved in three stages. The Elamite text was the earliest version, followed by the Babylonian and finally the Old Persian texts. All three texts are inscribed in the cuneiform script. Differing from one another in a number of matters of detail, they provide the only historical account we have of Persian history from Persian sources during the Achaemenid period (see glossary). Copies of the inscription were distributed throughout the Persian empire, as illustrated by remains of it discovered at Elephantine in Egypt (written in Aramaic) and Babylon. The three versions partly frame a 3 m high relief panel, which depicts Darius placing his foot on Gaumata, a defeated pretender to his throne, and nine other captive rebel leaders from different parts of the empire. Roped together at the neck, they are proceeding from the right towards Darius. Between 1835 and 1847, H. C. Rawlinson, a British officer stationed in the region, copied the trilingual inscription and undertook the decipherment of the Old Persian version. His success in so doing provided the foundation for all subsequent investigations and translations of the cuneiform languages.

Other anc. remains found at Bisitun date back to the Palaeolithic period, and extend through the pre-Achaemenid, Achaemenid, Parthian, Sasanian, and Islamic periods.

Schmitt (1987), Kleiss and Calmeyer (1996), Stronach and Zournatzi (*OEANE* 1: 330–1).

**Bit-Adini (I)** (map 7) Early Iron Age Aramaean tribal area and people, located in the middle Euphrates region between the Balih and the Euphrates rivers but also extending westwards across the Euphrates into northeastern Syria. In mid C9, the region came under the control of a certain Ahuni, and included the Neo-Hittite city-state Masuwari (called by the Aramaean name Til-Barsip in Assyrian records), which was probably the centre of a small kingdom or principality of the same name (see *Abmar, Tell*). Other cities of Bit-Adini included Asmu/Azmu, Dabigu, Dummetu, Kaprabu, and La'la'tu. Bit-Adini's commanding strategic location, astride important routes which linked Anatolia and the Syro-Palestinian coastlands with Mesopotamia, made it an obvious target of the westward expanding Neo-Assyrian kingdom. Conflict with the Assyrians began in the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859). It may have been precipitated by support which Bit-Adini, along with Babylonia, apparently gave to an unsuccessful rebellion by the states Suhu, Hindanu, and Laqe (which lay between Bit-Adini and Babylonia) against Assyrian rule. Ashurnasirpal followed up his victory over the rebel states by launching an attack upon Dummetu and Azmu, cities of Bit-Adini (*\*RIMA* 2: 215). One of the rebel leaders, Azi-ilu of Laqe, had headed towards them, accompanied by the remnants of his troops, after the rebel alliance's

defeat. Ashurnasirpal retaliated by storming Dummetu and Azmu and putting them to the torch. His subsequent military operations in Bit-Adini in 878 resulted in the capture and destruction of its fortified city Kaprabu, whose population he deported (\**RIMA* 2: 216). Yet he apparently made no attempt to annex Bit-Adini's territory. Instead, he contented himself with receiving a substantial payment of tribute from Ahuni.

Bit-Adini remained independent of Assyrian rule until the reign of Ashurnasirpal's son and successor Shalmaneser III (858–824). In his first regnal year, Shalmaneser took the field against a coalition of northern Syrian and southern Anatolian states. Bit-Adini, under the leadership of Ahuni, played a leading role in the coalition, which suffered two defeats by the Assyrians (\**RIMA* 3: 9–10, 15, 16–17) (see **Pat(t)in**). Shalmaneser conducted further campaigns in Bit-Adini, subduing many of its cities both east and west of the Euphrates. Ahuni made his last stand against Shalmaneser in Til-Barsip (856) (\**RIMA* 3: 10–11, 19, 21), which fell to the Assyrians after a siege. Ahuni managed to escape, but was captured the following year and deported to Assyria (\**RIMA* 3: 22, 29–30). In the aftermath of Shalmaneser's conquests, Bit-Adini was absorbed into the Assyrian empire, forming part of the Province of the Commander-in-Chief (see glossary). Its elimination as an independent state paved the way for the consolidation of Assyrian power in the middle Euphrates region, and provided the Assyrians with an important bridgehead across the Euphrates for their campaigns in the west.

*CHLI* 1: 224–5, Lipiński (2000: 163–93).

**Bit-Adini (2)** M1 Chaldaean state in southern Babylonia, whose population was apparently a clan of the Bit-Dakkuri tribe. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser V (726–722) deported captives from there, according to a later letter written in Aramaic which refers to the king by his other name, Ululaiu. In 691 troops from Bit-Adini were among the forces which fought the army of the Assyrian king Sennacherib at the battle of Halule (q.v.) on the Tigris r.

Lipiński (2000: 163).

**Bit-Agusi** (map 7) Iron Age Aramaean state located in north-central Syria, occupying much of the territory between the kingdoms of Carchemish and Pat(t)in (Assyrian Unqi). To the south, it shared a frontier with the kingdom of Hamath. It is attested in Assyrian sources from the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859) onwards. Named after its eponymous founder Gusi, Bit-Agusi is closely associated, in the record of Ashurnasirpal's western campaign (c. 870), with a land called Yahan, to the north of which Ashurnasirpal passed in his march from Carchemish to Patin. During the course of this campaign, we are told that Ashurnasirpal received tribute from Gusi, who is referred to as 'the Yahanite'. An Aramaean land called Yahan is first attested in the reign of the Assyrian king Ashur-dan II (934–912), who reports his conquest of it during his third campaign. He notes that the land was already in existence at the time his kingdom's throne was occupied by Ashurabi II (1013–973). As attested in these periods, Yahan appears to have been located east of the Tigris, in the vicinity of Lake Šari (thus Lipiński; see his map, 2000: 197). The apparent existence of another western Aramaean tribe bearing the name Yahan and first attested in Ashurnasirpal's reign probably reflects a westwards migration by the tribe or some of its clans in late C10 or early C9.

In 858 and 857, Gusi's son and successor Arame paid a substantial tribute to Ashurnasirpal's son and successor Shalmaneser III, during the western campaigns which the latter conducted in his first and second regnal years (\**RIMA* 3: 17, 18), and again as he was embarking on another western campaign in his sixth year (853). One of the versions of the 858 campaign contains a reference to a man called Adanu the Yahanite, who also appears among the local rulers submitting to Shalmaneser (\**RIMA* 3: 10, 17). This may imply that Gusi's kingdom was divided between Arame and Adanu, or that at this time Yahan was not yet part of the kingdom of Bit-Agusi – though we have no other evidence that there was ever any distinction between Bit-Agusi and Yahan. Possibly Adanu was assigned rule over part of the kingdom's territory, under Arame's overall authority.

Arame reigned for at least twenty-five years, from 858 to 834 or later. During his reign there were further conflicts with Assyria, in the course of which Arame lost to the Assyrians the city of Arne, apparently his royal seat, and the cities Apparazu and Muru. But resistance to Assyria continued under Arame's son(?) and successor Attar-shumki (I). The latter is actually identified in the texts as 'son of Adramu', but it is likely that Adramu is simply a variant form of Arame's name. The city of Arpad (which has been identified with Tell Rifa'at, 35 km north of Aleppo) is now attested as Bit-Agusi's capital. Attar-shumki led a coalition of northern Syrian states against the Assyrian king Adad-nirari III (810–783), who claimed victory in the ensuing battle fought at Paqarahubunu on the upper Euphrates (\**RIMA* 3: 205). But the outcome of the conflict may have been inconclusive (see under **Paqar(a)hubunu**). Subsequently, Attar-shumki led another coalition of forces against his kingdom's southern neighbour Hamath, now attached as a client-kingdom to Assyria. Military intervention by Adad-nirari led to terms of peace being settled between Attar-shumki and Hamath's king Zakur. In accordance with these terms, the boundary between the two kingdoms was redrawn (\**RIMA* 3: 203–4), resulting in territorial gains for Attar-shumki at Hamath's expense. Treaties were also concluded by Attar-shumki's son and successor Mati'ilu with the Assyrian king Ashur-nirari V (754–746) and with a man called Bar-ga'ya, king of Ktk (\**CS* II: 213–17).

In spite of these treaties, Bit-Agusi continued to stir up opposition to Assyria among the northern Syrian and eastern Anatolian states, no doubt encouraged by its alliance with the kingdom of Urartu, Assyria's most formidable enemy. But the anti-Assyrian forces suffered a major defeat in 743 at the hands of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III. Arpad, Bit-Agusi's capital, had played a leading role in the confrontations with Assyria, and now became a specific target of Assyrian retaliation (\**Tigl. III* 186–7). After a three-year siege, the city finally fell to the Assyrians. Bit-Agusi now became Assyria's first fully fledged province in Syria, and was renamed Arpad after its capital. From then on it appears to have remained submissive to Assyrian overlordship, except for one (known) occasion when it joined Hamath in a revolt against the Assyrian king Sargon in 721–720.

Hawkins (*RIA* 5: 238–9, s.v. Jahan), *CHLI* I: 388–90, Lipiński (2000: 195–219), Kahn (2007).

**Bit-Amukani** (map 11) M1 Aramaean tribe in southern Mesopotamia. It was probably located not far north of the city of Uruk, with which it had close ties. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser III reports that it paid tribute to him while he was residing in Huradu, royal city of the Bit-Dakkuri tribe, during his second Babylonian campaign

(850) (\**RIMA* 3: 31–2). A scene, with inscription, carved on the throne-base of Shalmaneser excavated at Fort Shalmaneser in Kalhu (Nimrud), depicts tribute being brought to Shalmaneser by Mushallim-Marduk, ruler of Bit-Amukani, and Adinu, ruler of Bit-Dakkuri (\**RIMA* 3: 139). In 729 Bit-Amukani was conquered by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (\**Tigl. III* 122–3), who had blockaded the tribe's leader (Nabu-)Mukin-zeri in his city Sapiya (Babylonian Shapiya) in a siege begun in 731 (\**Tigl. III* 163–4, 196–7). The Assyrian king Sennacherib includes thirty-nine walled cities of Bit-Amukani in his lists of conquests in Chaldaea during his first military campaign against Marduk-apla-iddina II (some time between 704 and 702; see under **Babylonia**) (\**CS* II: 301).

Though once allied with the Aramaean tribe Puqudu, whose territories lay near the Elamite frontier, Bit-Amukani subsequently came into conflict with it, particularly in mid C7 at the time of, or shortly after, the rebellion against the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal by his brother Shamash-shum-ukin (see **Babylon**). At least some of the Puqudu clans had supported the rebel, while Bit-Amukani remained loyal to Ashurbanipal. We learn this from a letter written to Ashurbanipal by Uruk's governor, Kudurru (c. 647), which reports that the Puqudu had carried out a raid against Bit-Amukani and had even settled in its territory (\**Waterman*, 1930: 189, no. 275). The most famous of Bit-Amukani's chiefs was the aforementioned (Nabu-)Mukin-zeri, who seized the throne of Babylon in 731 and occupied it until 729.

Lipiński (2000: 419–22).

**Bit-Bahiani (Bet-Bagyan)** (map 7) Iron Age Aramaean state in the Habur valley, northern Mesopotamia, first attested in the records of the Assyrian king Adad-nirari II (911–891). Ashurnasirpal II, Adad-nirari's successor-but-one, received tribute from it during his campaign in the region in his second regnal year (882) (\**RIMA* 2: 203), and also on a later campaign in northern Syria (\**RIMA* 2: 216). The name of the state is derived from its founder, a C10 Aramaean chieftain called Bagyan. Its capital was the city of Guzana (*OT* Gozan, mod. Tell Halaf; see *Halaf, Tell*) near the source of the Habur r. By the end of C9 Bit-Bahiani had been absorbed into the Assyrian empire, and thenceforth its capital was administered by governors acting on behalf of the Assyrian king.

Lipiński (2000: 119–33).

**Bit-Burutash (Bit-Paruta)** see **Tabal**.

**Bit-Dakkuri** (map 11) M1 Chaldaean tribe located to the southeast of Babylon in southern Mesopotamia, mentioned in texts of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (858–824). It is one of five Chaldaean tribal groups known from written sources (for the others, see **Chaldaeans**). In 850, during the course of his second Babylonian campaign, Shalmaneser invaded Bit-Dakkuri and destroyed its fortified city Baqanu. This action was apparently sufficient to discourage any further resistance in the land, and when Shalmaneser approached the royal city Huradu, Bit-Dakkuri's ruler Adinu submitted voluntarily to him, paying a handsome tribute in the form of gold, silver, and other metals, special wood, ivory, and elephant hides (\**RIMA* 3: 31). A scene, with inscription, carved on the throne-base of Shalmaneser found in Fort Shalmaneser at Kalhu (Nimrud), depicts tribute being brought to Shalmaneser by Mushallim-Marduk,



ruler of Bit-Amukani, and Adinu, ruler of Bit-Dakkuri (\**RIMA* 3: 139). A Chaldaean called Nabu-shuma-ishkun, a member of the Bit-Dakkuri tribe, occupied the throne of Babylon from c. 760 to 748 (\**RIMB* 2: 117–26), and another member of this tribe, Mushezib-Marduk, occupied it from 692 to 689 (for this king, see under **Babylonia**). The Assyrian king Sennacherib includes thirty-three walled cities of Bit-Dakkuri in his lists of conquests in Chaldea during his first military campaign, against Marduk-apla-iddina II (some time between 704 and 702; see under **Babylonia**) (\**CS* II: 301). Later on, following the fall of Babylon to Sennacherib in 689, its ruler Mushezib-Marduk was deported to Assyria with his family. In 678, during the reign of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon, the Bit-Dakkuri tribe under the leadership of a certain Shamash-ibni came into conflict with Assyrian troops after it had seized territory belonging to the cities Babylon and Borsippa. The Assyrians were victorious, the seized land was restored to its original owners, and Shamash-ibni was executed (*ABC* \*83, \*126, 218).

Lipiński (2000: 419–22).

**Bit-Gabbari** see Sam'al.

**Bit-Halupe** M1 Aramaean tribal state in northern Mesopotamia, located within the triangular region formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and Habur rivers. It was one of four Aramaean states on Assyria's western frontier which by C9 had come under Assyrian control (the other three states were Bit-Zamani, Bit-Bahiani, and Laqe). While in the city of Sur(u) in Bit-Halupe, the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta II received tribute from Hamataya, the ruler of Laqe (\**RIMA* 2: 176). Suru also figured in an unsuccessful rebellion against the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II in 883 (\**RIMA* 2: 198–200) (see **Suru** (2)).

Lipiński (2000: 78–82).

**Bithynia** (map 4) Classical name for the region in northern Anatolia between Mysia to the west and Paphlagonia to the east. Through it ran major routes linking the Anatolian plateau with the Pontic region. Its rugged mountain terrain was complemented by fertile plains, watered by the Sangarius r. (mod. Sakarya) and its tributaries. Its inhabitants, whose ancestors came originally from Thrace, enjoyed a prosperous existence, their wealth deriving in large measure from the region's abundant timber stands and rich agricultural resources. During the period of the Persian empire (C6–4), Bithynia enjoyed a relatively high degree of independence, as it also did in the Hellenistic period when its kings formed alliances with the Galatians against the Seleucid kings (C3). In 75/74 the Bithynian king Nicomedes IV bequeathed his kingdom to Rome, and under Roman rule, the province of Bithynia and Pontus was created by Pompey the Great in 63.

Broughton/Mitchell (*OCD* 244–5).

**Bitik** (map 2) Findspot in north-central Anatolia, 25 km northwest of Ankara, of a large fragmentary vase, dating to the Hittite Old Kingdom (C17–15) and notable for its polychrome relief scenes. These appear in three registers. The top register depicts a standing man lifting a seated woman's veil and holding a cup to her lips. The lower registers may depict worshippers or other persons engaged in ritual activities. The ensemble is generally interpreted as a depiction of a sacred marriage. It is possible,

however, that the apparently ritual elements portrayed in the relief scenes were normally associated with Hittite weddings, at least at the higher social levels. The vase is often compared with the famous polychrome vessel found at İnandıktepe (q.v.). Here too the reliefs are generally assumed to represent a sacred marriage.

Bittel (1976: 142–5).

**Bit-Kilamzah** Iron Age city in the Zagros region of northeastern Mesopotamia. It was attacked and captured by the Assyrian king Sennacherib during the first of his campaigns in the mountains east of Assyria (702) (\**Sennach.* 26–7). Sennacherib garrisoned the city and settled deportees there taken from other areas of his conquests.

**Bit-Rehob** see Soba.

**Bit-Shilani** M1 Chaldaean tribe in southern Mesopotamia. It was conquered by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (745–727), along with other Chaldaean groups, during the king's Babylonian campaign of 731. Tiglath-pileser reports defeating Bit-Shilani's chieftain Nabu-ushabshi in a battle outside his city Sarrabanu. Nabu-ushabshi was impaled before the city gate, and the city itself was captured by the Assyrians after a siege. Tiglath-pileser looted it, allegedly taking prisoner 55,000 of its inhabitants, then destroyed it along with other cities in its vicinity (\**Tigl. III* 160–3, 272).

**Bit-Yahiri** Iron Age Aramaean tribal state located in northern Mesopotamia, to the southwest of the Kashiyari range (mod. Tur 'Abdin) and occupying at least part of the land called Zallu (Azallu) (q.v.). In 882 the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II received tribute from its ruler Ahi-ramu, described as 'belonging to the house of Yahiru, of the Zallean land' (\**RIMA* 2: 203, 346).

Liverani (1992: 43).

**Bit-Yakin** (map 11) The wealthiest and most powerful of the five Chaldaean tribes attested in Iron Age sources. Located in southern Mesopotamia in the Sealand, it exercised extensive control over the region of Ur and the marshland areas to the east. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser III reports receiving tribute from it while he was residing in Huradu, royal city of the Bit-Dakkuri tribe, during his second Babylonian campaign (850) (\**RIMA* 3: 31). The Babylonian king Eriba-Marduk (769–761) was a member of the Bit-Yakin tribe. Its tribal capital Dur-Yakin was the original seat of the Chaldaean leader Marduk-apla-iddina II (the biblical Merodach-baladan) who was twice king of Babylonia (721–710, 703; see under **Babylonia**) (\**RIMB* 2: 135–42). Particularly during the reign of Marduk-apla-iddina, Bit-Yakin's resistance to the Assyrians was strengthened by its close alliance with Elam. But by the end of C8 the once powerful tribe had become greatly weakened, due both to heavy losses in military conflicts with the Assyrians, and to the deportation of large numbers of its population (to Kummuh in eastern Anatolia) in the aftermath of Assyrian conquest. Sennacherib includes eight walled cities of Bit-Yakin in his list of conquests in Chaldea during his first military campaign (some time between 704 and 702) (\**CS* II: 301).

However, Bit-Yakin's hostilities with Assyria continued in the reign of Sennacherib's son Esarhaddon (680–669), when Nabu-zer-kitti-lishir, the Bit-Yakinite governor of

the Sealand and a son of Marduk-apla-iddina, rebelled against Assyrian rule and in 680 laid siege to Ur, which remained loyal to its Assyrian allegiance. Troops sent by Esarhaddon forced Nabu-zer-kitti-lishir to abandon the siege and flee to Elam, where he was executed by the Elamite king (\**ABC* 82). Some time before 651 Bit-Yakin's leader, Nabu-bel-shumati, grandson of Marduk-apla-iddina and ruler of the Sealand, supported Shamash-shum-ukin in his revolt against his brother, the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (see under **Babylon**). Like his grandfather, Nabu-bel-shumati was closely allied with the Elamites. Perhaps with their support, he had some successes in his anti-Assyrian operations until he was forced, like his father, to flee to Elam, where he committed suicide. His corpse was packed in salt and dispatched to Assyria, where the king mutilated it.

Lipiński (2000: 419–20, 422, 433–4, 479).

**Bit-Zamani** (map 7) Aramaean state located northwest of the Kashiyari range (mod. Tur ʿAbdin) of northern Mesopotamia, to the north of the kingdom of Bit-Bahiani. Its capital was the city of Amidu (Assyrian Amedu, mod. Diyarbakır). It is first attested in an early C13 Assyrian cuneiform text from Shibaniba (mod. Tell Billa), which names Ashur-kashid as governor of the province of Bit-Zamani. The next reference to the land occurs in early C9, when its king Ammi-Baʿal suffered a defeat at the hands of the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884) (\**RIMA* 2: 171–2). Subsequently, Tukulti-Ninurta concluded a pact with Ammi-Baʿal, which secured the latter's continuing occupancy of his kingdom's throne, as an ally, in effect a vassal, of Assyria. Lipiński (2000: 154) notes that Bit-Zamani appears in Tukulti-Ninurta's Annals as an ally of the Assyrians in their fight against the Hurrian and Urartian principalities around the upper Tigris, the so-called Nairi lands (\**RIMA* 2: 171). But Ammi-Baʿal's rule came abruptly to an end in 879, in the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta's son and successor Ashurnasirpal II, when he was assassinated in a rebellion by the elders of Bit-Zamani, under the leadership of a man called Bur-Ramman. Ashurnasirpal responded promptly, crushing the rebels, and flaying alive their ringleader (\**RIMA* 2: 211, 261). He was, however, content to leave the kingdom under the immediate authority of a local ruler, appointing Bur-Ramman's brother Ilan to this position, and taking a number of steps to ensure that the region remained submissive to Assyrian control. For a while, he may have succeeded. But eventually Ilan broke his allegiance to his Assyrian overlord, prompting retaliatory action by Ashurnasirpal in 866. The Assyrian king led his troops into Bit-Zamani, captured Ilan's stronghold Damdammusa, and attacked his capital city Amedu (\**RIMA* 2: 220).

The final outcome of this campaign is not known, nor do we know of any other military operations later conducted by Ashurnasirpal in the region. Bit-Zamani probably maintained a relatively high degree of independence, albeit as a nominal vassal state of the Assyrians. In 856, however, the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III conquered the region as he passed through it (\**RIMA* 3: 19), and added it to the province governed by his chief cupbearer. In 830, Shalmaneser's commander-in-chief Dayyan-Ashur led an army from Bit-Zamani to the Arsanias r. (mod. Murat Su) where he met and defeated the Urartian king Se-duri (Sarduri I) (\**RIMA* 3: 69). The Assyrian province which Shalmaneser created in the region was subsequently known by various appellations: the province of Bit-Zamani (after the former Aramaean state), the province of (the city) Amedu, of Nairi, of (the city) Sinabu, and of (the city) Tushhan (see

Radner, *RIA* 11: 49–50, for details). In late C7, for example, the eponym official Bel-iqbi was known variously as governor of Bit-Zamani or governor of Tushhan (Millard, 1994: 90).

Lipiński (2000: 135–61).

**Borsippa** (Barsipa, Parsipa, *Birs Nimrud*) (maps 11, 13) City in southern Babylonia, c. 20 km southwest of Babylon. Its history of occupation extends from late M3 until the Islamic period. Birs Nimrud has been excavated on a number of occasions, from mid C19 CE onwards, most notably by H. Rassam (1879–82), R. Koldewey (1902), and E. Trenkwalder (beginning in 1980). The site has long attracted attention because its ziggurat, still imposing in its ruins, was mistakenly identified by early travellers with the biblical ‘tower of Babel’. In fact, this structure and the temple associated with it are all that remain of the precinct, known as the Ezida, of the city’s chief deity Nabu and his consort Tashmetum. Its earliest phase dates back to the Old Babylonian period (Middle Bronze Age), when it is mentioned in the prologue to Hammurabi’s laws.

From at least the reign of Hammurabi (1792–1750), Borsippa was one of the great cult-centres of the Babylonian world. But virtually nothing is known of its history before the early centuries of M1, when it was subject to incursions by the Aramaeans. A number of privileges were granted to the city, especially exemption from certain taxes, by the Babylonian king Marduk-zakir-shumi I (854–819). In 850, during the course of his second Babylonian campaign, the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III visited the city and made sacrifices to the gods there (\**RIMA* 3: 31). Around 769, the Babylonian king Eriba-Marduk restored to the city land taken from it by the Aramaeans (\**ABC* 182–3), but a few years later, members of the Chaldaean Bit-Dakkuri tribe settled in its territory. In spite of the insecurity which these encroachments must have caused, Borsippa enjoyed high prestige as a holy city, especially from mid C8 onwards, becoming a place of pilgrimage for both Assyrian and Babylonian kings. Nabu-shuma-imbi, a governor of the city when the Babylonian throne was occupied by Nabu-shuma-ishkun (760–748), describes Borsippa as ‘the city of truth and justice’. But during Nabu-shuma-ishkun’s reign, it suffered from severe political turmoil, and from conflicts with outside groups, including Chaldaeans and Aramaeans and the people of the city of Dilbat (\**RIMB* 2: 124). These conflicts arose from disputes over Borsippa’s territory. Hostilities between Borsippa and Babylon are reported during the reign of Nabu-shuma-ishkun’s successor Nabu-nasir (Nabonassar; 747–734), who conducted a campaign against the city (\**RIMB* 2: 127).

As noted above, Assyrian kings who campaigned in Babylonia acknowledged Borsippa’s sacred character, and they sometimes bestowed material benefits on it. Tiglath-pileser III (745–727) offered sacrifices to the gods there (\**Tigl. III* 160–1). Sargon II (721–705) repaired the canal which linked it to Babylon (*Sargon II* 332), and restored to the city the land taken from it by a tribal group called the Sutaean (see **Sutu**) (*Sargon II* 335). Yet Borsippa’s relations with Assyria remained volatile. The city supported the Chaldaean tribal leader Marduk-apla-iddina II (biblical Merodach-baladan) in his struggle with the Assyrians during the reigns of Sargon II and his successor Sennacherib. But part of its population held fast to Assyria, prompting Marduk-apla-iddina to take hostages from among them, whom he dispatched to his capital Dur-Yakin (for further details, see under **Babylonia**). The Assyrian king

Esarhaddon (680–669) granted a number of benefits to the city, repairing its sacred precinct and restoring its traditional administrative institutions which had been abolished by his father Sennacherib. He also restored to the city land seized from it by the Bit-Dakkuri tribe, after defeating the tribe in battle and capturing and executing its leader Shamash-ibni (678) (\**RIMB* 2: 164, \*173–4). However, in the conflict between Esarhaddon's son and successor Ashurbanipal (668–630/627) and Ashurbanipal's brother Shamash-shum-ukin, Borsippa made the mistake of supporting the rebel. (The latter had carried out some restoration work on the enclosure wall of the Ezida temple in the city while he occupied the Babylonian throne; \**RIMB* 2: 252–3.) Ashurbanipal retaliated by attacking Borsippa. It fell after a two-year siege, and was plundered by the Assyrian troops. Ashurbanipal confiscated its important collection of literary and scientific texts and added them to his library in Nineveh. But at some time in his reign he also rebuilt the city's walls, which had fallen into ruin, in order to increase the security of its sanctuaries, and restored the temple of the god Nabu (\**RIMB* 2: 216, 217–9).

In the Assyrian empire's declining years, Borsippa allied itself with the Babylonian king Nabopolassar. His successor Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562) carried out extensive restoration works in the city – to the walls, and to many of its sacred buildings, most notably the Ezida and the ziggurat Eurmeiminanki (\**CS* II: 309–10). Further restoration work in the city was carried out by Nabonidus (556–539), the last of the Babylonian kings before Babylon fell to the Persians. According to Berossus (\**FGrH* 680 F10 = \**PE* 81–2, no. 25), Nabonidus sought refuge in Borsippa after being defeated in battle by Cyrus II (for more on the battle and its aftermath, see *Upi* (1)). Following his capture of Babylon, Cyrus proceeded to Borsippa to place it under siege, when Nabonidus voluntarily surrendered to him. The Babylonian king's life was spared, and he was sent to Carmania, southern Iran, where he spent his remaining days in exile. Under Persian rule Borsippa continued to flourish as a religious centre, and more restoration work was carried out on the Ezida during the Hellenistic period by the Seleucid king Antiochus I (280–261). The cult of the god Nabu persisted for many centuries, and was still being celebrated in Assyria in C3 CE.

Borsippa's basic layout was rectangular in plan, covering an area of c. 240 ha. Access through its walls was provided by at least eight gates. The Ezida precinct lay at the centre of the city and had its own enclosing wall. A number of other temples were located elsewhere in the city.

Unger (*RIA* 1: 402–29), Joannès and Sauvage (*DCM* 140–1).

**Bosporus** Narrow strait connecting the Propontis (mod. Sea of Marmara) with the Euxine Sea (Black Sea), 27 km in length. The Bosporus, Propontis, and the Hellespont (mod. Dardanelles) constitute the waterway between the Aegean and Black Seas. Counter-currents and strong counter-winds made navigation of this route from the Aegean end difficult for Bronze Age sailing ships: the daily average speed of the winds is 16.2 km per hour, and the current in the Bosporus has an average maximum of 4 to 5 knots, which can climb to 7 knots. But the introduction of the powerful fifty-oared Greek penteconters in C8 overcame the problems of wind and current, and from then on the waterway was regularly used by ships for both commercial and military purposes. It provided the chief route taken by Greek colonists, particularly from Miletus, who travelled to the northern shores of the Black Sea to found new settlements.

## BOZRAH

In C5 control of the waterway became vital in protecting the shipments of grain brought from Black Sea regions to provision Greek cities of the Aegean world. The most important city located on the Bosphorus was Byzantium, founded in 668 by Greek colonists from Megara. Seventeen years earlier, on the opposite shore, the city of Chalcedon had been founded by settlers from the same mother city. The later Constantinople, mod. Istanbul, encompassed both cities, and is thus situated partly in Europe and partly in Asia, the Bosphorus (along with the Hellespont) providing the narrow dividing strip between the two continents.

von Bredow and Toktas'ev (*BNP* 2: 733–4).

**Bozrah** The name (meaning 'fortress', 'enclosure' in Hebrew) of several cities in Syria and Palestine. The most important of these was a city belonging to the kingdom of Edom, according to *OT* sources (e.g. 1 Chronicles 1:44), and perhaps the Edomite capital. This Bozrah has been identified with mod. Buseirah (q.v.). Another city called Bozrah, attested in Jeremiah 48:24, lay in the land of Moab, and may be mod. Bezer. A third, near Syria's southern frontier, is mod. Busra eski-Sham. It became the northernmost stronghold of the Nabataean empire.

Baly (*HCBD* 153).

**Brak, Tell (Nagar/Nawar)** ([map 10](#)) Settlement-mound on the upper Habur plains in northeastern Syria, covering an area of 43 ha, with a history of occupation extending from the Ubaid period (M6–5) to the end of the Bronze Age (c. 1200). It is now



*Figure 21* Bosphorus today.

generally believed to be the site of the M3–2 city Nagar/Nawar (q.v.). Excavations were conducted by M. Mallowan for the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, from 1937 to 1938, and by D. and J. Oates for the Institute of Archaeology, London University, between 1976 and 1993. Subsequently excavations have been conducted by a number of field directors under the general direction of D. Oates (1994–2004) and J. Oates (1994–present): by R. Matthews for the British School of Archaeology in Iraq and the McDonald Institute of Cambridge University (1994–6); by G. Emberling (1998–2002) and H. McDonald (2000–4), with sponsorship by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the British School of Archaeology in Iraq; and by A. McMahan of the University of Cambridge, sponsored by the British School of Archaeology in Iraq and other bodies (2006 on).

During the Uruk period (M4), the site became a major urban centre, ‘as large and complex as cities in southern Iraq during early M4’ (Emberling and McDonald, 2001: 21), and in the second half of the period developed extensive cultural and commercial contacts with the cities of southern Mesopotamia, as reflected in the strongly southern Mesopotamian character of its culture. Its most prominent architectural feature in this period was a tripartite ‘Eye Temple’, so called from the discovery in it of a number of small stone plaques with eye symbols.

After a period of apparent decline during the early centuries of the Early Bronze Age (M3), reflected in a reduction in the size of the settlement, Tell Brak had once more grown to its maximum size by the middle of M3, when it was almost certainly the most important political and economic centre in the Habur region. Its strategic location on the Jaghjagh r., at the entrance to the Habur plains from southern Mesopotamia and astride the route to the Ergani Maden copper mines in eastern Anatolia, is considered to be a major factor in the prominence which it achieved. Rich hoards of artefacts and precious metals testify to its wealth. Recent excavations have uncovered what Emberling and McDonald (2001) call the ‘Brak Oval’ dating to this period. Its excavated portion contains a large bakery with facilities for storing and grinding grain and a series of rooms arranged around an inner courtyard. Around 250 seal impressions were recovered from the building.

This phase of the city’s existence ended violently c. 2300 when large parts of it were put to the torch, almost certainly by the forces of the newly emerging Akkadian empire. It was restored under Akkadian domination, probably in the reign of the Akkadian king Naram-Sin (2254–2218), who used it as a centre for the administration of the Habur region. The focal point of the administration was a ‘palace’ (probably, rather, a fortified storehouse), discovered by Mallowan and attributed to Naram-Sin because of inscriptions bearing his name stamped on mudbricks used in the building’s construction. It was a massive square structure covering an area of c. 1 ha. An apparent destruction of this building during Naram-Sin’s reign has been associated with a supposed attack upon the city by the warlike Lullubu peoples (q.v.) who were allegedly responsible for widespread devastation throughout Naram-Sin’s kingdom. Other monumental buildings of the period, including one adjacent to the palace, were unearthed by D. and J. Oates. Around the time of the collapse of the Akkadian empire, c. 2193, the city was again destroyed by fire, perhaps at the hands of the Gutians. It was reoccupied very soon after, at the end of M3, when it probably became a capital of one of the Hurrian principalities of northern Mesopotamia, most likely the kingdom of Urkesh and Nagar/Nawar. But by early M2 the southern half of the site had been abandoned.

## BRANCHIDAE

Tell Brak gained new prominence in the Late Bronze Age when it became a major centre of the kingdom of Mitanni. A palace-fortress dating to this period has produced the earliest known Hurrian text of the Mitannian empire, as well as texts dating to the reigns of the C14 Mitannian kings Artashumara and his brother and successor Tushratta. The latter was the last ruler of the Mitannian empire, which was conquered by the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I in the third quarter of C14. Brak itself apparently survived the Hittite conquest, but its palace was destroyed the following century by the Assyrians. The site continued to be occupied until it was abandoned, finally, at the end of the Late Bronze Age, in the early years of C12. There is also some evidence for later settlement, in the Neo-Assyrian and Roman periods.

D. Oates (1982b), T. J. Matthews *et al.* (1994), Oates and Oates (1997), Oates *et al.* (1997), Emberling and McDonald (2001; 2003).

**Branchidae** see *Didyma*.

**Bulliiana** Iron Age city located in northern Mesopotamia in the eastern part of the Kashiyari mountain range (mod. Tur *ʿAbdin*). On his return from Tushhan in 882, after conquering the city of Ishpilibria, the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II entered the pass of Bulliiana and followed the Luqia r. as far as the Tigris (*\*RIMA* 2: 203, 244). The settlements in this part of the Kashiyari, which the king conquered en route, reportedly belonged to one of the regions called Habhu (q.v.).

Radner (2006: 290).

**Bunashi** Fortified Iron Age city located in northeastern Mesopotamia or northwestern Iran near the land of Zamua. It was conquered by the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II, allegedly along with thirty other cities in its environs, during his campaign in the region in his third regnal year (881) (*\*RIMA* 2: 204–5). A man called Musasina was ruler of Bunashi at that time.

**Burgaz** see *Uranium*.

**Burmarina** (*Tell Shiyukb/Shioubk/Šuyub Fawqani/Faouqani*) (map 7) M1 city in northwestern Mesopotamia, located on the east bank of the Euphrates r. near Carchemish, within the Aramaean state Bit-Adini. In 858, when Bit-Adini was ruled by Ahuni, Burmarina was one of the cities conquered by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III during his first western campaign (*\*RIMA* 3: 15). It has been identified with Tell Shiyukh Fawqani, a 35 m high mound to the northwest of Tell Ahmar (Ahuni's capital, Til-Barsip). This identification is based on several documents belonging to a C7 Neo-Assyrian archive (which contained tablets written in Aramaic) discovered in a house on the site. Excavations carried out at Shiyukh Fawqani in the course of the Tishrin dam salvage project, which encompassed a number of cities on the upper Euphrates, have indicated that the site was already occupied in the Late Bronze Age. It is likely that the Late Bronze Age city Marina (q.v.), first attested in a C13 Assyrian text, was located there.

\*Fales, Bachelot, and Attardo (1996), Bachelot (1999), Fales (1999), Lipiński (2000: 175–6).

**Buruncuk** Site of M1 city in the region of Aeolis, northwestern Anatolia, 28 km north of Izmir. It is often identified, though inconclusively, with one of the places



called Larisa in Classical sources, in particular, the legendary Larisa of the Pelasgians in Homeric tradition (*Iliad* 2.840–1). Remains of the city, located on the hill above the mod. village, have been assigned to three periods: pre-Greek (early M1), late Archaic (c. 500), and late Classical–early Hellenistic (C4). They include fortifications dating to each of these periods, and within them the foundations of two temples, a palace, megaron- and subsequently peristyle-type houses (see glossary for both terms), and the remains of an aqueduct dated to c. 500. From a necropolis of C6 date lying to the east of the city, more than one hundred tombs have been recovered. These are tumulus tombs for the most part, consisting of stone circular structures surmounted by cones of earth. The graves themselves are made of stone slabs and are located in the middle of the tumuli.

Bean (*PECS* 174).

**Burunkaya** see under **Kızıldağ**.

**Buseirah** (map 8) Iron Age city located in mod. Jordan 10 km south of Tafila. It was identified with the Edomite city called Bozrah in *OT* sources (e.g. Genesis 36:33, 1 Chronicles 1:44) by U. J. Seetzen in 1806. There is, however, no inscriptional evidence to confirm his proposal. The uncertainty of the identification was one of the reasons prompting C.-M. Bennett to begin excavating the site in 1971. She conducted five seasons there, from 1971 to 1974 and in 1980, first on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, and subsequently for the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History. Her excavations brought to light a major Edomite city of Iron Age II date (early M1), with possible continuity into the Persian period (C6–4), and perhaps reoccupation in the Nabataean and Roman periods. The Iron Age settlement, which was fortified by a city wall, featured several large buildings, apparently used for administrative purposes. It appears to have been a major regional centre of the kingdom of Edom, perhaps even the capital. The fact that in prophetic oracles Bozrah seems to be synonymous with the whole land of Edom (Isaiah 34:6, Jeremiah 49:13, 22, Amos 1:12) may provide some support for the conjecture that it was indeed Edom's capital.

The date of the city's foundation is at present uncertain. Ceramic evidence suggests that it was no earlier than C7, though a foundation date in C8 or even C9 has not been ruled out. At all events, it is clear that the city did not exist in Iron Age I, thus excluding a foundation before 1000. This would virtually rule out the historical validity of the Edomite list of kings, recorded in Genesis 36:31–9 and 1 Chronicles 1:43–51, 'who reigned in Edom before any Israelite king reigned' – on the assumption, of course, that Bozrah's identification with Buseirah is correct.

Bienkowski (1990: 101–3; *OEANE* 1: 387–90), Reich (*NEAEHL* 1: 264–6).

**Butamu** Iron Age city belonging to the Neo-Hittite kingdom of Pat(t)in (Assyrian Unqi) in northwestern Syria. It was captured by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III during his campaign west of the Euphrates in his first regnal year (858) (*\*RIMA* 3: 17). *CHLI* I: 362.

**Byblos** (Gubla, Gebal, *Jebail*) (maps 3, 6, 7, 10, 13) Port-city located on the coast of Lebanon, 60 km north of Beirut, with a history of occupation extending from the

## BYBLOS

Pre-pottery Neolithic period (M6 or earlier) to the present day, with a gap in occupation after the mediaeval period. The anc. city was rediscovered in 1860, and identified as Byblos by the end of C19. Excavations were conducted initially by the French archaeologist P. Montet between 1921 and 1924, and subsequently by M. Dunand, on behalf of the Lebanese government and the French Academy of Inscriptions, from 1928 until 1975. The name Byblos derives from the Greek word *bublos* meaning 'papyrus scroll', reflecting the city's importance as an intermediary in the papyrus trade between Egypt and the Aegean world. In Bronze Age Akkadian texts, the city is called Gubla. In Hebrew texts, it is called Gebal.

By the Early Bronze Age, Byblos had become a thriving commercial centre, enjoying trade links with Anatolia and Mesopotamia, and particularly with Old Kingdom Egypt. It was the chief port on the Lebanese coast for the export of cedar, in high demand in Egypt for construction projects, including the building of palaces and ships. Already in the first centuries of M3, Byblos was defended by massive fortifications, which enclosed a well-planned urban centre with solidly built houses. Access to the city was via two gates in the walls, a 'Sea Gate' and a 'Land Gate'. The most important building of this period was the temple of the goddess Baalat Gebal, 'lady of Byblos'. Erected c. 2800, it was one of the first monumental structures of the Syro-Palestinian region. About 200 years later, a second temple was built opposite it, called the L-shaped temple by Dunand because the two units and courtyard of which it was composed were so arranged. Though destroyed in an Amorite invasion towards the end of M3, Byblos was rebuilt and resettled by early M2. In the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1900–1600), it was again one of the most important commercial centres along the Syro-Palestinian coast. Trade was resumed with Egypt, and trade links were also



Figure 22 Byblos.

## BYBLOS

established with Crete, as attested by finds of the famous Minoan Kamares ceramic ware in the city, dating to Crete's First Palace period (c. 1900–1650). During Byblos' Middle Bronze phase, the 'Obelisk temple' (so named because of twenty-six obelisks discovered in its courtyard) was constructed over the remains of the Early Bronze Age temple of Baalat Gebal. Dunand had the building relocated a short distance away so that he could excavate the earlier temple.

Through the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, Byblos retained its close ties with Egypt, ties of both a commercial and a political nature (its commercial dealings with Egypt are mentioned by the C15 pharaoh Tuthmosis III) – in the face of threats posed by the other major powers which sought to establish their dominance in the region, notably the kingdoms of Hatti and Mitanni. In mid C14, Byblos under its Akkadian name Gubla figured prominently in the Amarna letters (see glossary). The ruler of the city at the time was a man called Rib-Hadda, whose kingdom incorporated a number of small coastal towns, including Ammiya, Batruna, and Shigata. Rib-Hadda's letters to the pharaoh Akhenaten constitute the most voluminous body of correspondence exchanged between vassal and overlord in the Amarna archive (\*EA 68–140). For the most part, the letters deal with the aggression and depredations of Abdi-Ashirta and his son Aziru, successive rulers of Gubla's northern neighbour Amurru, and are full of complaints about the pharaoh's alleged failure to respond to Rib-Hadda's appeals for assistance.

The fate of Byblos at the end of the Bronze Age is uncertain. However, during the Iron Age, from C12 onwards, it ranked as one of the wealthiest and most important of the Phoenician cities. Unfortunately, remains of the Iron Age city have not yet been uncovered, and may lie beyond the limits of the French excavations. The Assyrian king



*Figure 23* Obelisks temple, Byblos.

Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076) reports receiving tribute from it – and also from Sidon and the island-city Arvad (Arwada) – during his campaign in the west against the land of Amurru (\**RIMA* 2: 37, 53). In early C11, Byblos figured in the well-known *Tale of Wenamun* (\**CS* I: 89–93); the merchant Wenamun had been sent to obtain cedar from the king of Byblos, but suffered a hostile reception from him before he managed to secure his consignment of timber. A noteworthy find of this late M2 period is the so-called Ahiiram sarcophagus (Ahiiram was a king of Byblos), now in the Beirut Museum. In addition to the artistic motifs on its lid, which display a range of Egyptian, Hittite, and Syrian influences, it exhibits the earliest surviving example of a Phoenician alphabetic inscription.

During its Iron Age phase, Byblos owed much of its importance to the role it played as a centre for the papyrus trade, and the export of Lebanese timber. It was noted also for the skills of its stonemasons and carpenters, who according to 1 Kings 5:18 assisted in the construction of Solomon's temple. Like other Phoenician city-states, Byblos succumbed to Assyrian domination, beginning in C9 with the reign of the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II (883–859), who conquered the city. Following its participation in the ultimately unsuccessful anti-Assyrian coalition which confronted Ashurnasirpal's son and successor Shalmaneser III at the battle of Qarqar in 853 (\**RIMA* 3: 23), it remained under Assyrian domination until the fall of the Assyrian empire in late C7. But like the other Phoenician cities, it was allowed a high degree of independence, and continued to prosper, so long as it remained submissive to Assyrian overlordship and continued to pay the tribute demanded of it, as illustrated by the appearance of its king Sibittibi'il among the tributaries of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (745–727) (\**Tigl. III* 68–9).

Byblos subsequently came under Babylonian and then Persian domination. Herodotus (3.91) included it in what he called the fifth Persian province (but see glossary under **satrapy**), the seat of whose administration was located in Sidon. A limestone stele discovered in 1869 contains an inscription, datable to C5 or C4, of a king of Byblos called Yehawmilk (\**CS* II: 151–2). A relief carving on the stele depicts the king, bearded and dressed in Persian-type attire, receiving a blessing from the goddess Baalat. In general, there is little surviving evidence of Persian influence in the city, though the Persians were responsible for reinforcing the city's walls. Byblos submitted without resistance to Alexander the Great when he came to the region in 332 (Arrian, *Anabasis* 15.6), and subsequently became part of the Seleucid empire. During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, it was thoroughly Hellenized and then Romanized. Almost all traces of its Phoenician character were obscured. In the Roman period it became a centre of the cult of Adonis.

Jidejian (1971), Joukowsky (*NEAEHL* 1: 390–3). The primary work is the account of M. Dunand's excavations (Dunand, 1937–73).

**Byzantium** (map 4) City founded on the western side of the Bosphorus on the site of European Istanbul. Its location on the eastern end of the triangular peninsula, bounded by the Propontis (Sea of Marmara) to the south and the Golden Horn to the north, provided it with an excellent defensive position, as well as enabling it to control all sea traffic passing between the Aegean and the Black Seas. Though evidence of occupation of the site dates back to prehistoric times, the city proper was founded opposite the city of Chalcedon (Herodotus 4.144) in 688 by colonists from the mainland Greek city

## BYZANTIUM

Megara, who were probably joined by settlers from central and southern Greece. In 516 the city became subject to the Persian emperor Darius I during his campaign against the Scythians, and remained under Persian control except for the period of the Ionian revolt (499–494) until the Persian retreat from the Greek world in 479. Subsequently, it became a member of the Athenian Confederacy, but rebelled twice against Athens, in 440–439 and 411–408. Later it allied itself with Athens on two occasions, between c. 378 and 357, and in its opposition to Philip II of Macedon in 340–339.

It was during the Byzantine period that the city reached the height of its power and splendour under the name Constantinople, as the capital of a vast empire extending over the eastern half of the world formerly ruled by Rome. There is little remaining material evidence of the Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman phases of the city's existence.

MacDonald (*PECS* 177–9).