Byblos in the Late Bronze Age: Interactions between the Levantine and Egyptian Worlds

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Michaelmas 2016

Abstract

This thesis investigates the position and role of the Lebanese city of Byblos in the local and international context of the Late Bronze Age Levant, when the city was a "contact zone" between the Near East and Egypt. In spite of its central role in the regional geopolitical landscape, Byblos has attracted relatively little attention among scholars. This is particularly true for the Late Bronze Age, which however appears as a crucial period, as it saw Byblos passing from being a prosperous and powerful city during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages to become a small and peripheral town in the Iron Age. This thesis addresses this gap in research, aiming to re-contextualise the role, interactions, and development of the city in the regional Late Bronze Age geopolitical landscape. The method adopted, combining archaeological and written evidence, compensates for the scattered nature of the sources and makes it possible to look at the city from different perspectives. Various aspects of Byblos' society are thus reconstructed, and the general development of the city is sketched within a descriptive theoretical framework. There emerges a picture of a dynamic kingdom that went through periods of power and prosperity and of hardship and decline influenced by micro- and macro-regional economic, strategic, and ideological factors. In particular, it can be shown that the difficulties for Byblos started well before the end of the Late Bronze Age and the troubled period that followed. This observation not only highlights the complexity of the processes affecting Byblos, but it also suggests that focusing the attention at a small scale, looking at the specificities of the development and interactions of small realities such as those of cities or local kingdoms, is a fruitful approach that can yield new insights to understand the dynamics of the region as a whole.

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February 11, 2019

Acknowledgements

Personal

Vorrei ringraziare tutte le persone che mi hanno sostenuto – e sopportato – in questi anni. Thanks to all the friends met on the way, in Oxford or elsewhere, fra tutti Federico e Francesco per i lunghi – e a volte animati – scambi di idee e a Lucia che fin dal primo giorno, letteralmente, come sai, sei stata amica sincera, preziosa spalla e indispensabile distrazione e valvola di sfogo. Thanks (and sorry) to Ania, for your support, for the unicorns and above all for having taught me the hard way (both for me and for you, I guess) that work is not all and that there are far more important things in life than a DPhil. Un grazie speciale ad Elio, per essere sempre provocante stimolo di discussioni e senza il quale non avrei mai potuto cominciare questo viaggio – t'é vist? a g'u metùu 'n pùu ma al u 'mparàa 'l inglées... – e soprattutto un grazie a mia mamma, che ha mi ha sempre spinto a realizzare i miei sogni, che ha sempre creduto in me e su cui ho sempre potuto contare.

Institutional

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr. Elizabeth Frood, Prof. Jacob Dahl, and Prof. John Baines, who have helped me at different stages of my research, as well as Prof. Nigro for his help at Università la Sapienza in Rome. I would also thank the Queen's College and the Barn's scholarship, as well as the Swiss National Science Foundation for their financial support.

Abstract

This thesis investigates the position and role of the Lebanese city of Byblos in the local and international context of the Late Bronze Age Levant, when the city was a "contact zone" between the Near East and Egypt. In spite of its central role in the regional geopolitical landscape, Byblos has attracted relatively little attention among scholars. This is particularly true for the Late Bronze Age, which however appears as a crucial period, as it saw Byblos passing from being a prosperous and powerful city during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages to become a small and peripheral town in the Iron Age. This thesis addresses this gap in research, aiming to re-contextualise the role, interactions, and development of the city in the regional Late Bronze Age geopolitical landscape. The method adopted, combining archaeological and written evidence, compensates for the scattered nature of the sources and makes it possible to look at the city from different perspectives. Various aspects of Byblos' society are thus reconstructed, and the general development of the city is sketched within a descriptive theoretical framework. There emerges a picture of a dynamic kingdom that went through periods of power and prosperity and of hardship and decline influenced by micro- and macro-regional economic, strategic, and ideological factors. In particular, it can be shown that the difficulties for Byblos started well before the end of the Late Bronze Age and the troubled period that followed. This observation not only highlights the complexity of the processes affecting Byblos, but it also suggests that focusing the attention at a small scale, looking at the specificities of the development and interactions of small realities such as those of cities or local kingdoms, is a fruitful approach that can yield new insights to understand the dynamics of the region as a whole.

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List of Abbreviations

CIS . . . . . Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 1881–, *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*, Paris: e Reipublicae Typographeo.

CK . . . . . Texts from a private collection. See Arnaud 1992, 192, n.69.

CAD . . . . . Ignace Jay Gelb et al., eds., 1956, *The Assyrian Dictionary*, 29 vols., Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago Press.

CTH . . . . . Emmanuel Laroche, 1971, *Catalogue des textes hittites*, Etudes et commentaires 75, Paris: Klincksieck.

EA . . . . . Amarna letter; tablet number in Jørgen Alexander Knudtzon et al., 1915, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln: mit Einleitung und Erläuterungen*, Leipzig: Hinrichs.

HTBM . . . . Thomas Garnet Henry James, 1961, *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, Etc.* 2nd edition, London: Trustees of the British Museum.

KBo . . . . . Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft, 1916–, *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, Leipzig: Hinrichs.

Keret . . . . . Epic of Keret, see Harold Louis Ginsberg, 1946, *The Legend of King Keret: a Canaanite Epic of the Bronze Age*, in collab. with American Schools of Oriental Research, Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research. Supplemental Studies 2-3, New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research

KTU . . . . . Manfried Dietrich et al., 2013, *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten = The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places*, 3rd, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 360/1, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

K*RI* . . . . . Kenneth Anderson Kitchen, 1975–1990, *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical*, Oxford: Blackwell.

KUB . . . . . Vorderasiatische Abteilung, 1921–1990, *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag

LÄ . . . . . Wolfgang Helck et al., eds., 1972–, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 7 vols., Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

PM . . . . . Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. B. Moss, 1960, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

PRU . . . . . Charles Virolleaud et al., 1955–, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit*, Mission archéologique de Ras Shamra 6-7, 9, 11-12, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.

RS . . . . . Ras Shamra - Museum siglum of the Louvre and Damascus.

RIH . . . . . Ras ibn Hani - Museum siglum of the Louvre and Damascus.

RSOu 7 . . . . Pierre Bordreuil, 1991, *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville: les textes de la 34e campagne (1973)*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 7, Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les civilisations.

UT . . . . . Cyrus H. Gordon, 1965, *Ugaritic Textbook: Grammar, Texts in Transliteration, Cuneiform Selections, Glossary, Indices*, Analecta orientalia 38, Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.

Urk. IV . . . . Kurt Sethe and Wolfgang Helck, 1906–1958, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums IV, Leipzig: Hinrichs.

WB . . . . . Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, 1926–1963, *Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache*, 7 vols., Leipzig: Hinrichs.

1 Introduction

Byblos, modern Jubayl, is a Lebanese city of about 40'000 inhabitants some 42 kilometres north of Beirut. During the Bronze Age, Byblos was a "contact zone" between Egypt, the Near East and the Aegean region: through its harbour, Egyptian kings had access to the products of Lebanon and Syria (e.g. Ryholt 1997, 86–9; Dumper and Stanley 2007, 104–6; Elayi 2009, 9), and at least in some periods, the city was a strong base for Egyptian military incursions in the surrounding regions (Collins 2008, 42). At the same time Byblos (and its rulers) had access to the goods, customs and knowledge of Egypt.

Byblos has a long and rich archaeological tradition: many excavations have been conducted, and the whole city has been almost fully explored archaeologically. It is also prominent in well-known historical sources and literary compositions of different periods and origin: beside the numerous attestations in Egyptian sources, it appears in texts from the archives of Ugarit and in Graeco-Roman works such as the History of Phoenicia by Philo, a Greek writer born in Byblos itself.

In spite of this prominence, however, the city has attracted relatively little attention in modern scholarship. The results of the excavations have been published mainly in the form of a catalogue of objects and in preliminary reports,[1] and as Elayi pointed out (2009, 10–11), the city has been the object only of very general publications (e.g. Dunand

[1] Only the prehistoric material, and in part the architectural remains of the Early Bronze Age, were the object of detailed investigation in the primary publication (see §2.1.2–2.1.4).

1963; Wein and Mayer-Opificius 1963; Jidejian 1968) or of studies focusing on specific periods or features of its culture (e.g. Saghieh-Beydoun 1983; Margueron 1994; Mazza 1994; Homsy 2003; Nigro 2014). As a result, some periods of the history of Byblos have so far hardly been studied. The Late Bronze Age is one of them, although even a straightforward survey of the evidence shows its cruciality in the historical evolution of the city and its interactions.

In particular, a range of evidence suggests that Byblos was a prosperous and powerful city during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages / Old and Middle Kingdoms. Both the Egyptian sources from these periods and the abundant archaeological material from the city attest to its integration in Near Eastern commercial networks (Montet 1928–1929; Dunand 1963; Helck 1994, 105–9 with refs). The same evidence demonstrates its strong cultural and economic links with Egypt, as well as suggesting that at least at times its political influence may have extended north as far as Ullassa and Irqata (Allen 2008; Thalmann 2008). Moreover, since the Early Bronze Age/Old Kingdom Byblos had had a special religious significance for the Egyptians: its region was considered a "God's Land", as was the case also for Punt (Cooper 2011), and its local goddess and her temple had an important role in the interactions with Egypt (e.g. Diego Espinel 2002). In Egyptian texts she was usually referred to as *nbt kbn*, "Lady of Byblos", probably a translation of a local epithet, because in later Phoenician sources she is referred to as *bʕlt gbl*, which also means "Lady of Byblos". She is attested in Egyptian texts since the Early Bronze Age/Old Kingdom, where she appears as a form of Hathor (Hollis 2009). Starting from the 1st millennium BC, she was also associated with Isis, while in Plutarch's narrative the city of Byblos played a role in some episodes of the Osirian cycle (Hollis 2009, with refs). As attested by Lucian (7–9), the religious connection between Egypt and Byblos lasted until Roman times (Griffiths 1980, 28–34; Lightfoot 2003, 250–3).

By contrast, the geopolitical situation of the city after the Late Bronze Age appears to have been very different. We do not know much about Byblos in the Early Iron Age (Dunand 1963, 30–1; Mazza 1994, 125–6; Homsy 2003, 246; Elayi 2009, 13, 51 and passim), but what is visible from the 8th century onward is a small and peripheral town, without a fleet and closed in on itself (Elayi 1985; Stieglitz 1990, 11; Bondì 1994,

137, 139; Mazza 1994, 134; Elayi 2009, 10–11). Byblos did not participate in the Phoenician colonial expansion,[2] and territories and cities that had been under its control before or during the Late Bronze Age appear to have been connected later with Tyre or Sidon.[3] While the city seems to have maintained some religious authority into Roman times (Ribichini 1994), its earlier political and economic power faded away. It is thus reasonable to think that such "eclipse" of the city, using Elayi's words (Elayi 2009, 11), that can be observed in the Iron Age, could have had at least some of its roots in the Late Bronze Age.

As said, however, the Late Bronze Age of the city has never been the object of a detailed study. The aim of this thesis is to fill this gap at least in part, first by presenting and assessing the primary sources available for this period, and then by using them to explore, contextualize, and characterize the role of the city, its interactions, and its evolution within the geopolitical landscape of the Late Bronze Age Levant.

1.1 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into two parts. In the first part primary sources are presented and analysed. The relevant archaeological evidence from the excavations in Byblos pertaining to the Late Bronze Age, is discussed with particular attention to evidence that points to international interactions, such as Egyptian objects or Mycenaean pottery. Egyptian written sources, Amarna Letters, documents from Ugarit and one Hittite text are then assessed. The second part consists instead of syntheses and discussions arising from the data of the first part.

The archaeological evidence is discussed first because it yields information about the structures of the city and its general dynamics, while the written sources focus more on specific events and well-defined interactions. The former provides background, while the latter highlight aspects of the socio-political history of the city. The first section

[2]Except perhaps with a colony on the Aegean island of Melos, at least according to a passage of Stephanus of Byzantium (*Peri poleōn, Mēlos*); Bondì 1994, in particular 140.

[3]A good example is the city of Batruna, which probably belonged to the kingdom of Byblos in the Amarna period (see below §5.4.5), but in Graeco-Roman times was said to be a colony of Tyre founded in the 9th century by king Ethobaal (Josephus, Ant., VIII, xiii, 2; Bondì 1994, 139).

is introduced by a summary of the history of the excavations and of the issues affecting them and their publications, followed by quantitative and distribution analyses of selected categories of objects. Egyptian items and architectural fragments found out of context are then discussed. Relevant buildings and archaeological areas are presented afterwards.

Written sources have an important role in the thesis, both because they are inherently more precise and because of the limitations affecting the archaeological material. Although both Egyptian and Near Eastern written sources form the basis of my research, the Egyptian material is particularly important, not only because of the number of attestations, but also because of the strong economic, ideological, and cultural links connecting the city with Egypt.

In order to properly interpret such written sources, their contexts as well as their underlying narratives, genre, audience and purpose in the societies that produced them have to be taken into consideration. These issues are discussed whenever they are relevant to assessing the information that the sources provide, although they are not a primary feature of my treatment. The focus of the thesis is on Byblos, and it looks at sources from the perspective of the city. Doing the opposite, that is, looking at how Byblos was perceived in the narratives of the societies mentioning it, would be interesting, but it is outside the aims and scope of this thesis.

Written sources are arranged in four chronologically organized groups, following a division that emerges more or less naturally from them. Attestations of Byblos are not uniformly distributed across the Late Bronze Age. There are three short, relatively well-defined periods with a substantial number of attestations: the period corresponding to the reign of Thutmose III (§5.2), the Amarna period (§5.4) and the time of Ramses II (§5.6). These periods alternate with two others that have produced few or no mentions: the period from Amenhotep II to the Amarna period (§5.3), for which only two mentions are attested, and the period from the end of the Amarna Age to the beginning of the reign of Ramses II (§5.5), for which no attestation of the city is known. This division of material is based on the Egyptian chronology because the majority of the texts come from Egypt, but sources from other regions fit quite well within it. Although this frame is dictated more by accidents of preservation than by a periodization based on historical

considerations, it does nonetheless produce a practical and reasonable organization of the sources. Each of these groups is discussed in a specific chapter. Because individual texts mentioning Byblos vary in character and have been unevenly studied, the way they are presented and dealt with can differ from one chapter to another.

The data yielded by the archaeological material and by the written sources is discussed in a wider perspective in the second part of the thesis. There the evidence treated in the first part is combined in order to sketch a picture of Byblos, of its socio-economic and geopolitical structures, and of its evolution during the Late Bronze Age. The last of these, in particular, is presented with the help of a descriptive theoretical model, which combines and visualizes within a single frame the observations stemming from the sources previously discussed.

A general conclusion follows, summing up the results of the research.

Finally, a series of appendices provide additional information. Appendix A contains a brief description of the software used in this research. Appendix B describes the structure of the database of the objects found in the excavation that I have compiled and used in my research. Appendix C gives a theoretical description of the approach I have developed to retrieve approximate stratigraphic information from the publication of the excavations. Appendixes D, E and F contain articles related with this research that I have published during my doctorate.

2

Sources: Archaeological Evidence

2.1 Archaeological Sources - Overview

2.1.1 Excavation History

The site of the ancient city of Byblos is now an archaeological park located on a small hill near the sea, at the very heart of a modern and thriving city numbering some 40'000 inhabitants. The development of the modern city is fairly recent, going back just a few decades. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the first systematic excavations took place, Byblos was a small town built around its medieval harbour and surrounded by a countryside marked by sparsely scattered houses and dominated by the imposing bulk of a crusader castle. The remains of the ancient city were located at the south of the castle, on a small hill in an area with just a few isolated houses. The crusader castle was the only significant building on the hill, and it was located on its side thus covering just a marginal area of the ancient city (fig. 2.1).

This ideal situation attracted the attention of scholars and archaeologists from at least the late 19th century, as it allowed extensive and long-lasting excavations with little demolition work and without conflicting with the daily life of the local population. The first to notice and record the archaeological potential of Byblos was the French philologist and historian Renan, who visited Lebanon in 1860, when the entire region was still part of the Ottoman Empire. In his exploration of the city, he limited himself primarily to

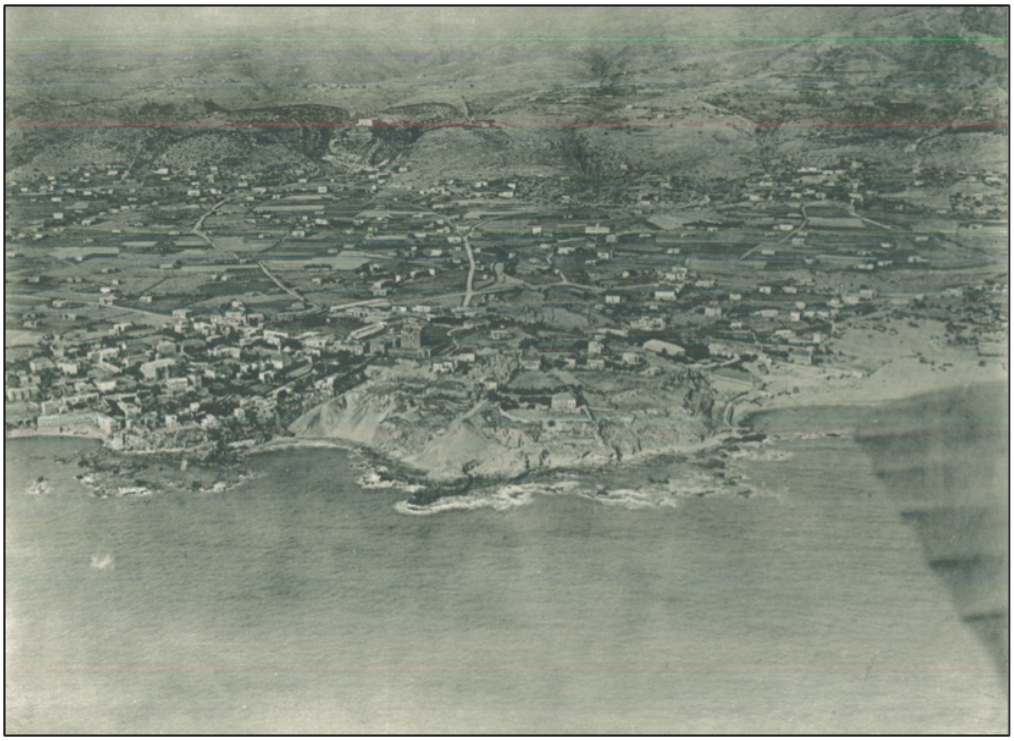


Figure 2.1: Aerial view of the area of Byblos at the beginning of the 20th century. At the centre of the picture one can see the tell with the remains of the ancient city. On the northern side of the tell (left in the picture) one can see the medieval castle, located just above the town of Byblos itself, with its medieval harbour (also on the left). Scattered houses marked the countryside around the town. From Dunand 1939, pl. i

a general surface survey and to a series of explorative trenches, but that was enough to recognize the importance of the site and its close relations with Egypt (Renan 1864, 214). After the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Lebanon became part of the French mandate, and its archaeological heritage passed under the supervision of the French authorities (Montet 1928–1929, 10).

At this time Montet managed to persuade the French government of the historical importance of the city (Montet 1928–1929, 10). At the time a few houses, some orchards and an abandoned cemetery occupied the site. After apparently difficult discussions and negotiations, he obtained permission to excavate near the medieval castle, on the land of a man called Sheik Hossain El-Housamy, and of another who is just referred as "the Hadji" (Montet 1928–1929, 15). Montet was lucky: in his first campaigns (1921–1922) he found the remains of some religious buildings, including what was later identified as the temple of the Lady of Byblos. And this was just the beginning: in 1922 a landslide revealed a

cave that appeared to be the grave of a Middle Bronze Age king (Montet 1928–1929, 17). In the following years Montet discovered eight other royal tombs. Five of them[1] had been partially or totally looted.[2] Three of them,[3] however, were intact and yielded a number of goods demonstrating the wealth and power of their owners, and the pervasiveness of Egyptian cultural influence on the ruling class of the city.

After the extraordinary discoveries of Montet, a new round of archaeological excavations was organized. These new campaigns started in 1926, 14 months after the last campaign of Montet in 1924 (Dunand 1939, 1) and were lead by Dunand who, in contrast with his predecessors, planned from the beginning a complete and comprehensive exploration of the city. His aim was to excavate the whole area down to the bare rock, and this is what he did over the following 40 years.

The constant flow of new discoveries allowed Dunand to regularly obtain the funding needed for the campaigns. The excavations had only one short interruption in 1939 because of the beginning of the Second World War, and they were finally definitely closed only in 1975, at the beginning of the Lebanese civil war. At this time Dunand's work was essentially almost complete: during his years of activity he managed to uncover the whole area within the walls of the city, and part of the late (Persian and later) quarters outside them. Only some late and peripheral sectors still needed to be explored.

Beside these main excavations, a few smaller projects have taken place also outside the main urban areas. The excavation of necropolis K in 1972–1973 under the supervision of Gimon (Salles 1980, 7) is the most important example, but projects such as the exploratory trench of Saghieh-Beydoun (2009) or Frost's study of some structures visible near the sea (2001) are notable. More recently, some geo-archaeological studies have been undertaken to try to locate the ancient harbours of the city and to better define the ancient coastline in general (Frost 1998–1999, 251–3; Morhange 1998–1999; Frost and Morhange 2000; Collina-Girard et al. 2002; Stefaniuk et al. 2005; Marriner et al. 2008; Carayon et al. 2011; Grimal and Francis-Allouche 2012a, 301–2; 2012b).

[1] I.e. tombs IV, V, VI, VII, VIII – Montet 1928–1929, 143–242.
[2] One, tomb IV, as recently as 1851 – Montet 1928–1929, 21.
[3] I.e. tombs I, II, III – Montet 1928–1929, 143–242.

2.1.2 Publication history: Renan and Montet

All these archaeological activities have been documented, but the quality of the records is not uniform and the majority of them are problematic in various ways. Renan's observations and discoveries were presented in his Mission de Phénicie (1864, 153–358), where he gave a general description of what he saw and of the objects he collected during his surface survey in the city. His description, however, was not systematic and he offered no classification of the objects and little, if any, information about their context. Renan's book is thus an important witness to the early history of archaeology in Lebanon, but it has no substantive value for the archaeological study of Byblos.

Montet collected the results of his 4 campaigns in a single volume published in 1928. Its quality is uneven: although the description of the tombs is quite detailed and accurate, the accounts of the excavations in the city present several issues. The main problem is the absence of any precise methodology: as was common at the time, Montet was more concerned about the objects and structures he was finding, rather than their locations, context and relationships. Thus the publication is essentially a catalogue of objects grouped by type and according to the building in which they were found. A series of general plans and pictures accompanies this catalogue, but usually without any information about the exact location of the various finds, Obviously nothing is said about stratigraphy and the stratigraphic relations connecting them. Montet's preliminary analyses and interpretations of the architectural remains can occasionally give some information about the context of some objects, such as, for instance, those found under the floors of the temples in foundation deposits, but they often remain too vague to be useful for further investigation and analysis. The utility of Montet reports is thus relatively limited. Fortunately, the area excavated by Montet was quite restricted, and the number of objects and structures discovered was relatively small. The lack of precise data for his excavations, therefore, does not constitute a major issue for the study of the site.

2.1.3 Publication history: Dunand

The area excavated by Dunand was much more important, and therefore much more attention has to be paid to his publications. Over the years, Dunand documented his

work in Byblos in various forms, each with its own issues and limitations. Initially, during the excavations themselves Dunand published regular reports[4] describing the process of work and the main discoveries of the season. These reports allow following the general evolution of the excavations. Given however their brevity, vagueness, and lack of precise information, they are of little use for a detailed study of the city. Since the beginning of his work, however, Dunand organized the excavations around the idea of collecting all the results in a monumental publication presenting a detailed and comprehensive study of the city and its society throughout all its historical phases. The first and most crucial problem with this approach to publication is that Dunand died before being able to complete it. His original plan seems to have consisted of 3 volumes that would have given a general, "raw" presentation of the objects and of the architectural structures discovered during the various campaigns and at least 5 or 6 other volumes treating specific aspects of the site and of the history of the city.[5]

Of these, Volumes I and II, which present material uncovered during 1926–1932 and 1933–1938 respectively, were published in 1939 and 1954. Volume III, which was meant to present the material and topographical data of the campaigns after 1938, has never been published (Dunand and Lauffray 2008, 1), and the documents and excavation notes on which it should have been based were probably lost during the Lebanese civil war (Dunand and Lauffray 2008, 9). Volumes IV and V were published in 1968 and 1973 (Dunand and Cauvin 1968; Dunand 1973), and focus on the prehistoric and pre-urban phases of the city, providing a detailed analysis of various aspects of the site in these periods, including the lithics, pottery, funerary practices and architecture. The posthumous Volume VI (Dunand and Lauffray 2008) was made possible through the efforts of Jean Lauffray (who was one of the architects who participated in Dunand's campaigns) and Yasmine Makaroun-Bou Assaf, who collected, edited and completed the

[4]Published in *Syria* and in the *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth*.

[5]Vol. IV on the prehistoric stone tools from Byblos and the Lebanese coast, Vol. V on the architecture, tombs, and domestic material culture from the Neolithic to the beginning of the urban phase, Vol. VI on the urbanism and architecture from the proto-urban phase to the Amorite occupation at the end of the Early Bronze Age, Vol. VII on the temples, from their Neolithic origins to the Roman period, and Vol. VIII on the material that should have been published in Vol. III mentioned above (See Dunand and Cauvin 1968; Dunand 1973; Dunand and Lauffray 2008). Dunand also mentioned a possible volume on the pottery (Salles 1980, 5, see also Seif 2007, 84.

notes left by Dunand. This volume analyses the architectural remains of the early urban phases up to the Amorite occupation, at the end of the Early Bronze Age. The synthesis volumes planned by Dunand for the following phases and periods have never appeared.

This is a sparse record, especially considering the long and complex history of Byblos. For the New Kingdom / Late Bronze Age phases of the city, on which my research focuses, the only sources available are the "raw" accounts of Volumes I and II. These do contain a considerable amount of data. However, they were only ever conceived as preliminary presentations of the material and architectural discoveries as they appeared in the course of the excavation. Some brief syntheses and interpretations are present, but they are nothing more than preliminary observations.

In addition, both volumes have a number of problems that are rooted in Dunand's peculiar excavation method. Since his very first campaign in Byblos, Dunand applied a very specific and innovative method. Having observed the complexity of the archaeological remains (Dunand 1939, 6), he realized that conventional (for the time) approaches would not be appropriate to properly document the site. As a result, he developed a new technique consisting of digging the whole site in "levée", i.e. artificial horizontal parallel layers of 20cm thick, according to a regular horizontal grid covering the whole surface of the excavation. Walls and architectural remains were recorded for each section of the grid at the beginning of each of these artificial layers, while the position of every single object was recorded in absolute terms, through a system of three coordinates, y, x and z, originating from a fixed topographical station.

According to Dunand, the idea imitated procedures adopted in biology to study complex structures. He took the example of an onion:

> *Cette méthode revient à découper les installations successives par le procédé des plaques minces, d'usage habituel dans les études de sciences naturelles. Ce procédé sectionne par exemple un oignon en autant de lamelles possibles, toutes rigoureusement parallèles. Ces lamelles permettront l'étude de chaque particularité intime de cette racine bulbeuse, et aussi sa reconstitution graphique absolument complète. Ce procédé s'oppose à celui qui l'étudierait par enlèvement de ses feuillets successifs de croissance. Les deux systèmes ont leurs avantages et leurs inconvénients. Par son application systématique, celui des couches minces m'a permis le relevé complet, pierre par pierre, de toutes les constructions, de tous les murs, de tous les chicots*

> *de maçonnerie; de les localiser dans un carroyage régulier où tous les objets trouvés ont pu prendre place, sans préjuger leur intérêt. Ainsi notre inventaire est total, chaque silex comme la moindre perle, au même titre que les documents plus importants sont localisés dans l'espace par trois dimensions. (Dunand 1954, 3–4)*

Dunand hoped to be able to achieve something similar with his excavations: literally to "dissect" the whole city, documenting the exact position of every object and structure, and then synthesising these data at the end of the excavations in order to obtain a complete graphic reconstruction of the remains that could be the base for further elaborations and interpretations. Ideally, the main advantage of such a method was the possibility of documenting the totality of the archaeological remains in a very precise and purely objective way, without introducing any interpretative filter during the excavations themselves.[6]

Dunand's method has often been criticized or misunderstood (or even criticized because it was misunderstood), both at the time (Dunand 1954, 3) and in recent years (e.g. Margueron 1994, 15). At the same time, it also had some defenders (Lauffray 1995; Leriche 1995, 440–1), and I agree that such an approach could have had some merits, at least in theory. Dunand's method was definitely innovative compared with the archaeological techniques applied by the majority of his peers working in the ancient Near East in the 1920s, and the fact that similar approaches are used today in various scientific fields to explore complex structures is a confirmation of the validity of the theoretical concept on which it is based.[7]

The practical realization, however, resulted in a number of problems. Firstly, such an approach does not take into consideration, at the moment of the excavation, the natural stratigraphic layers forming the site. Objects from different periods can lie side by side in the same artificial levée, because the levée itself crosses various natural stratigraphic layers. In addition, and more importantly, layers located in the middle of the 20cm artificial levée are likely to be simply ignored and lost during the excavations. Obviously,

[6] As Dunand (1954, 4) says: "*La mise en place géométrique de tous les objets, au moment ou ils sont découverts, est d'une grande importance. Plus de choix dans leur présentation, tous sont signales à leur place, indépendamment de l'orientation des recherches personnelles du fouilleur ou de son jugement, forcément imparfait, de ce qui est important ou, au contraire, lui paraît indigne d'une mention. C'est la seule manière d'obtenir la documentation entière requise pour rendre quelque vie à la cite exhume".*

[7] Essentially, Dunand's method is nothing but a form of tomography.

stratigraphic data could have been integrated into Dunand's method. It would have been enough to record them for every levée together with the objects and the architectural remains. There are some clues suggesting that Dunand was aware of the problem and that he did take note of at least some features of some of the natural stratigraphic layers.[8] These stratigraphic data, however, have not been published, and therefore not only it is impossible to use them, but it is not even possible to evaluate their accuracy and quality. It is however unlikely that they were particularly precise as Dunand was a man of his time, and in his times various basic stratigraphic concepts had yet to be formulated.[9] Moreover, in the introduction of his first volume, Dunand (1939, 6) stated that he considered the natural stratigraphy of Byblos too complex to be followed and systematically recorded and he argued that the architectural remains would have provided the "skeleton" on which the spatial and chronological study of the city and its cultural phases had to be built.

Another fundamental problem, probably the main one, resides in recording, storing, elaborating and finally interpreting and publishing the vast amount of data that an excavation like this generates. With today's technologies data collection and organization has been simplified in some ways, and can be achieved, at least in part, automatically with the help of digital tools. In Dunand's time, however, everything had to be done by hand, not only the recording of every wall and object, but also all the post-processing that, due to the peculiarities of Dunand's method, constituted a major part of the work itself.[10] This constitutes a gigantic and extremely time-consuming project, especially if one plans to apply this method to a whole city. This explains why Dunand only managed to study and publish a small fraction of the information he collected in the decades of excavations.

Time is not the only problem. The quantity of the data itself is an important issue. In order to fulfil and properly exploit the potential of Dunand's method, all the data would need to be made available. At the time this was simply impossible,[11] and therefore

[8] E.g. the various mentions of layers of ash in the first two volumes (Dunand 1939; Dunand 1954), or the stratigraphic indications appearing here and there in the plans of the recently published Volume VI (Dunand and Lauffray 2008).

[9] See Leriche 1995, 443–4.

[10] Nacousi (1985, 8) is probably the first who somehow foresaw digital technologies – without however using them – to elaborate the archaeological records of Byblos.

[11] Today publishing them in a database would be a good solution, but this option was obviously not available for Dunand.

some selection and some compromises had to be made. This is what Dunand tried to do in his first 2 volumes. The results, however, are problematic. Both catalogue-style volumes incorporate figures and plates with pictures of the excavations and of the objects themselves, a series of plans and a few short summaries and syntheses briefly presenting specific buildings or describing some phases of the excavations. Although the volumes share the same basic structure, the presentation of the data differs significantly. In the first, the various objects are numbered and listed first according to the levée and then to the rectangle of the excavation grid in which they were found. No precise coordinate is given.[12] Moreover, the grid used by Dunand during the first years was far from ideal, since it was constituted by sectors that were not only excessively large, but also quite irregular and oriented in different directions (fig. 2.2).

Although in some cases Dunand provides some information about where in the sector a specific object was found, these details are rare and neither systematic nor present in all the descriptions. Moreover, they are usually too vague to allow the precise findspots to be determined.[13]

The plans in the first volume are also problematic. During the excavations, Dunand took note and drew detailed plans of all the architectural features emerged or disappeared in every single levée. In his first volume, however, he selected and published only the general plans for just 4 of the 42 levées that he had excavated. These plans do not directly follow on from or relate to one another. Instead they represent levées 2m apart from one another. This means that the whole evolution of the architectural remains cannot be reconstructed in detail, and it is therefore impossible to identify and reconstruct the different phases of the various buildings. This problem also affects the study of the objects: without a precise architectural frame, the archaeological context and thus the relationships between the various objects cannot be reconstructed. The objects cannot be precisely located on the horizontal plan of the levées, nor can they be placed in relation

[12] Although they must have existed, as such precise records are at the basis of the method itself. It is in fact difficult to understand why Dunand did not publish the exact coordinates of the objects: was it due to some problem in the elaboration of the data? Or to some issue in the publication process? Whatever the reason is, it certainly was a poor choice that complicates and hampers the assessment of these data.

[13] They usually consist in indications like "*premier îlot*" or "*trouvée à l'ouest du rectangle 36*".

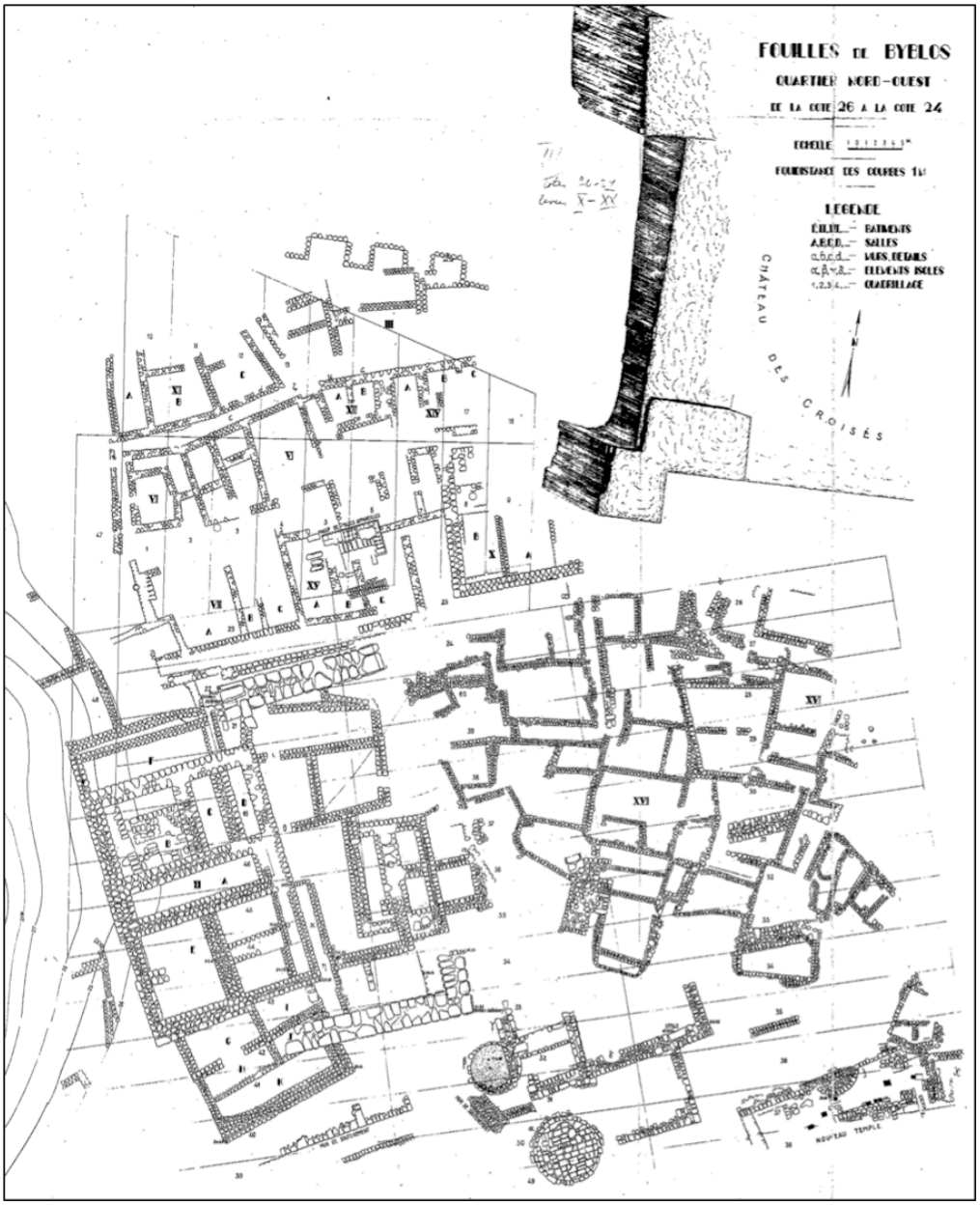


Figure 2.2: Grid used by Dunand to locate the objects published in Volume I. From Dunand 1939, pl. ccvii

to any architectural sequence. The value of the data in the first volume is thus greatly reduced; the volume can be used only as an object catalogue and little more.

The situation of the second volume is different. Objects were still numbered and listed according to the levée and sector of the excavation grid in which they were found, but the grid itself was improved, and comprised a series of regular 10 × 10 m squares covering the excavated area. Every square is defined by two numbers, one indicating its row and one its column within the grid. Objects are listed according to three numbers: the number of the levée, and the 2 numbers defining the square in which they were found. Dunand did not publish the absolute coordinates for all the objects, but he did indicate the exact position of several of them on the plans. The higher resolution and precision of the excavation grid helps with the others. These two expedients do not completely compensate for the lack of precise coordinates, but they do reduce its negative impact. Another fundamental improvement is the inclusion of plans for each levée. The way he did that, however, is not straightforward. Rather than publishing a single plan for every levée, he published 5 plans, each containing the representation of the architectural remains of 5 levées. A colour code is used to distinguish them, and to indicate where, for each levée, a given wall appears and where it disappears. This system is not easy to decode, but it is precise, complete and well-explained, and with patience it can be successfully managed and interpreted (fig. 2.3).

In spite of these two major improvements, the second volume still presents some important issues. The first is the lack of precise coordinates for the majority of objects that seemed to have little historical or artistic significance, but which could be extremely useful for determining the precise stratigraphy of the various areas of the site.[14]

A problem affecting both volumes concerns the inclusion, or lack thereof, of the ceramic data. As Dunand (1939, 9) explained in the introduction to Volume I, although he did find tens of thousands of vessels and potsherds, he published only a sample of those vessels that were complete and of those sherds that bore either peculiar decoration or inscribed signs. Pottery, however, is a vital stratigraphic marker, and more precise data would be important in the definition of the stratigraphy and could help establish the

[14] As for instance coins, lamps, looming stones or fragments of pottery.

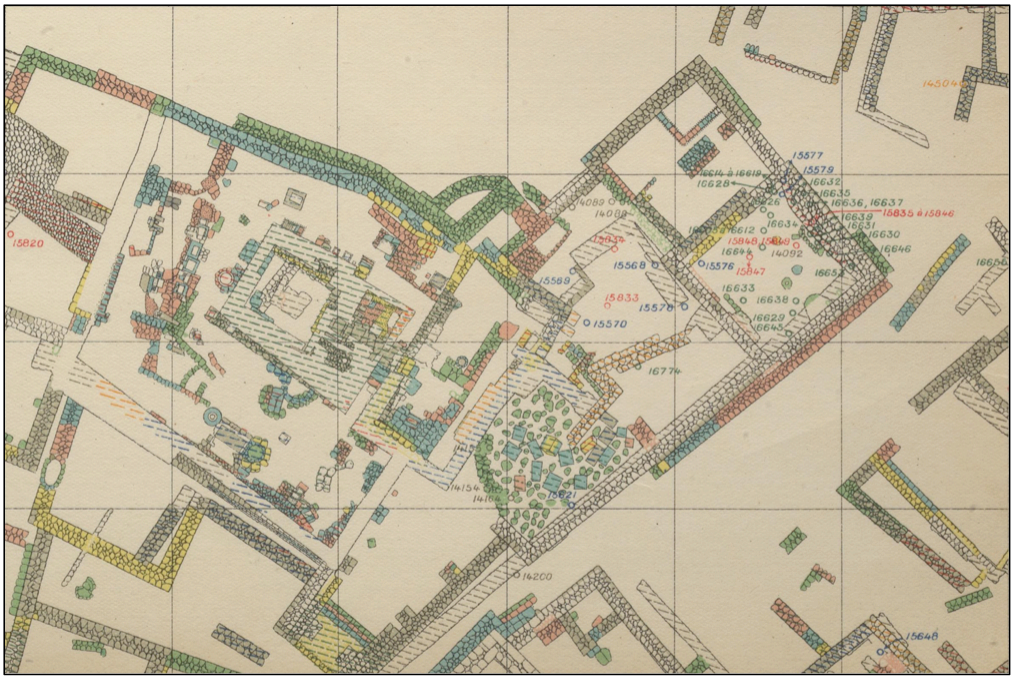


Figure 2.3: Detail of one of the plans published by Dunand in Volume II. The grid is formed by regular squares, and a colour code is used to indicate in which levée a given object (marked with the catalogue number) was found or where a given architectural element appears and disappears. From Dunand 1954, plan of the levées 16–20 (altitude 25m–24m above sea level).

context of other objects or architectural remains. It is not clear if and how much of the unpublished pottery was kept by Dunand. However, if some of it is still available and was properly recorded, then future specific studies could help filling this gap.

Although Dunand's publications are incomplete and create numerous challenges for analysis and interpretation, they present a considerable amount of information that, once properly treated, can be useful in the study of Byblos during the Late Bronze Age. The solutions that I have developed to deal with these data, and the results that I have obtained from them, are presented in §2.3, §3 and §4 below.

2.1.4 Publication history: later works

Dunand's work has formed the basis of a number of later studies seeking to assess various aspects of the city. Saghieh's (PhD thesis completed in 1975, published in 1983) analysis of the Early Bronze Age architectural remains uses data from Dunand's Volumes I and II to reconstruct the stratigraphy and to study the development of the city during the 3rd

millennium BC. Although she does not investigate the Late Bronze Age levels, her work offers a series of methodological tools and frameworks to deal with Dunand's data. In particular, she used Dunand's plans to reconstruct the various phases of specific buildings and to infer their relative succession and thus approximate their vertical stratigraphy. She then "populated" these reconstructed vertical stratigraphies with the objects catalogued by Dunand, thus obtaining cultural ensembles and chronological sequences. It is clear that the precision, the "resolution", of these stratigraphies depends directly on, and is therefore limited by, the precision of Dunand's data. Saghieh's results and their comparison with other sites, however, confirm the validity of her method.[15]

Two other important contributions which sought to elaborate Dunand's data are Finkbeiner's (1981) reconstruction of the architectural phases and architectural stratigraphy of the Obelisk temple and Nacouzi's (1985) unpublished masters thesis on the urbanism of Byblos during the Middle and Late Bronze Age. Both are based on Saghieh's approach, and both help filling the gaps of Dunand's incomplete publications. Finally, a detailed monograph has been published by Salles (1980) on the excavations of the Necropolis K, and a few additional studies have been dedicated to specific aspects of the site and the excavated material, or to other small archaeological investigations and surveys that have taken place outside the main area explored by Dunand.[16]

2.2 The city: buildings and organization

The ancient city is located on a rocky promontory of about 6 hectares that rises on the coast between two bays. The promontory is divided into two hills, a higher one at the North-West (28,30 m), located closer to the sea, and a lower one (24,30 m), some 160 m away at the South-East. A small depression divides the two hills (18,40 m; Dunand 1939, 11–14; Nacousi 1985, 2; Margueron 1994, 14). The ancient city lies on and between these two hills. It was centred around a source of water, located in the depression, that

[15] See for instance Thalmann 2008, which compared Saghieh's results with data obtained from the excavations at Tell Arqa.

[16] Esp. Boschloos 2011–2012; Frost 1998–1999; Williams 1975, (especially Appendix D); Margueron 1994; Frost 2001; Collina-Girard et al. 2002; Homsy 2003; Saghieh-Beydoun 2009.

was in use until the 20th century, when it was known with the suggestive name of 'Ayin El-Malek, the "Spring of the King" (Dunand 1960, 1960, 39; Fig. 4, A).

All this area was excavated by Montet and Dunand, but as explained in §2.1.2 and §2.1.3, the technique and the less than ideal publication make it difficult to analyse the urban structure and to follow it throughout the different periods. In addition, the preservation of the strata and architectural structures was not uniform. They were better preserved in the depression and in the eastern part of the site, while on the higher hill the archaeological layers pre-dating the Graeco-Roman period have disappeared. Despite all these obstacles, the main features of the city are recognisable and a general sketch of its organization can be drawn.

Imposing ramparts encircled the city, and they survive, in part, in the northern and western sectors of the site (fig. 2.4, B). These defensive walls were erected during the Early Bronze Age and remained in function, with successive improvements and extensions, until the Persian period (Nacousi 1985, 12). Dunand recognized at least four phases in the city's fortifications. He dated the construction of three of them, characterized by the presence of a glacis, to the 2nd millennium BC, in particular attributing the last one to the Late Bronze Age, between 1580 and 1200 (Dunand 1954, pl. ccxii; Nacousi 1985, 13). Dunand, however, did not provide any evidence to support these dates, so that his interpretation must be taken with caution. Although it is clear that the city was fortified during the Late Bronze Age, the lack of precise published data prevents a more precise and independently verifiable identification.[17] No traces of walls have been found in the western part of the site, near the sea, but it is unlikely that this side of the city was unfortified, as the low cliff could hardly have been seen as a sufficient natural protection. More likely, the traces of the fortifications there have disappeared due to the natural erosion which clearly affects the cliff.[18]

[17]Not everyone accepts Dunand's position. For instance, Nacousi (1985, 15) seems to think, on the basis of comparisons with Jericho, that at least some elements of the glacis are older and should be dated to the Early Bronze Age. The passage in which she suggests this possibility is not, however, very clear, and her view must be taken with caution.

[18]Considered for instance by Margueron (1994, 19–20). Erosion was active until recently. Indeed, it was a landslide on the cliff near the sea after some weeks of rains in February 1922 led Montet (1928, 17) to discover the underground royal tombs. For erosion in the area of Byblos in general, see Sanlaville 1977, 453; Nacousi 1985, 2.

One gate has been found in the eastern part of the walls and corresponds to one of the main arteries of the city (fig. 2.4, C). Its earliest phase date to the Early Bronze Age (Nacousi 1985, 15). A sharp turn of the wall on the northern side of the higher hill could suggest the presence of another entrance there (Nacousi 1985, 15; Margueron 1994, 20). Nacousi (1985, 15) wonders if this second entrance, which might have originated in the Middle Bronze Age, could have been reserved for the elite of the city and somehow have been associated with the royal tombs and the palace. This second entrance could correspond to a staircase identified just beyond the perimeter of the walls leading from the city to the northern bay below (Fig. 4 D). One or two other entrances may have been present in the southern walls that have now disappeared. The area delimited by the walls is relatively small and could hardly have hosted more that a couple of thousand people (Margueron 1994, 25). It is thus possible – even probable, according to Margueron (1994, 24–5) – that a lower town existed nearby, perhaps near the harbour (see below).

Remains of various temples and sacred spaces belonging to different periods characterize the central area of the city, around the water source. The temple of the Lady of Byblos (fig. 2.4, E; §4.3), the main goddess of the city, and the so-called Obelisk Temple (fig. 2.4, F; §4.4) were in use during the Late Bronze Age, and are thus particularly relevant for the current study. Although apparently in use before the Late Bronze Age, the Tower Temple (fig. 2.4, G; §4.2) is also worth attention as it attests practices connected with seafaring and navigation. Other buildings and sacred places existed in the area, but they were in use only before or after the Late Bronze Age and therefore will not be discussed here.

Various residential quarters have been identified in the remaining sectors of the area encircled by the walls, while no archaeological remains of a royal palace have been found. It is likely that the palace was located on the higher hill, near the cliff. It is there that Montet discovered a series of underground royal tombs (fig. 2.4, H; §4.8), and the parallel of Ebla suggests that they were probably located originally within the perimeter of the royal area (Montet 1928–1929, 266; Nacousi 1985, 16–17; Margueron 1994, 22). With its dominant position in relation to the city and the sea, the higher hill was well suited for hosting the seat of the royal power. The absence of any archaeological evidence of it

from any period remains, however, difficult to explain. Erosion has been proposed as a possible cause (Margueron 1994, 19–20), but the fact that later, Roman, buildings have been preserved raises some questions: if erosive phenomena erased all the pre-Roman layers, why were the Roman vestiges not equally affected during the past centuries and millennia? Another, perhaps more likely hypothesis is that the Pre-Roman structures were destroyed by the Graeco-Roman building activities in the area (Margueron 1994, 17). Even in this case, however, the total absence of any previous remain is somehow surprising. This issue, therefore, still awaits a convincing explanation.

The city seems to have extended beyond the walls only after the Persian period. The only important earlier archaeological structure identified outside them is the so-called Necropolis K (fig. 2.4, I; §4.7). This necropolis is located outside the walls at the Southeast of the city and is formed of a series of subterranean rooms dug in the slope of the lower hill. Necropolis K was in use from around the 20th century BC until the Roman period, with an interruption of a couple of centuries during the Persian period (§4.7; Salles 1980).

Finally, a description of the city cannot be complete without mentioning the harbours and the problem connected with them. The medieval harbour of Byblos, as well as the modern one, is located in a bay just north of the promontory occupied by the ancient city (fig. 2.4, J). As often pointed out, however, its dimensions are quite small, possibly too small to accommodate the important trade and imposing ships implied by the written sources (Frost 1998–1999; Margueron 1994, 24). It has thus been suggested that in antiquity the main harbour of Byblos was located south of the city, in the El-Skhiny bay (fig. 2.4, K), which was formerly larger and deeper (Frost 1998–1999, 251–3; Morhange 1998–1999; Frost and Morhange 2000; Collina-Girard et al. 2002; Stefaniuk et al. 2005; Marriner et al. 2008; Carayon et al. 2011; Grimal and Francis-Allouche 2012a, 301–2; 2012b). This possibility was stenghtened by recent geological surveys of the submarine geomorphology of the coast, which have excluded other locations around the tell. In addition, surveys in the sea in front of the bay have led to the identification of two reefs that could have been used for offshore mooring (Frost 1998–1999, 251–3; Collina-Girard et al. 2002; Grimal and Francis-Allouche 2012a, 301–2; 2012b), an idea that may be

supported by seven anchors found there (Frost 1998–1999, 252; Collina-Girard et al. 2002, 322; Grimal and Francis-Allouche 2012b, 24). Finally, also the location of the Tower Temple, not far from the El-Skhiny bay, could support the hypothesis that the main ancient harbour was located there, rather than in the northern bay (see §4.2).

As Margueron (1994, 24–5) pointed out, it is likely that a lower town, possibly fortified, was located near the harbour. While the land behind El-Skhiny bay could accommodate such a settlement, no supporting archaeological evidence has been found, and it will be hardly found in the future, as modern buildings now cover the area.

2.3 Archaeological Evidence: Elaboration of the Data

Dunand's unpublished documentation is currently unavailable for consultation. More in particular, after his death in 1987, his archives passed to the University of Geneva and were kept there until 2010, when they were given back the Lebanese government. Since then, they have been housed in the National Museum in Beirut (Seif 2012). Consultation there, however, is currently not possible (A.-M. Afeiche and P. Michel, personal communications). The University of Geneva did not make any physical or digital copies, although various projects of this type had been suggested (Le Monde 2010 – last access 6.1.2017). The objects found during the excavations that are kept in the National Museum are also largely inaccessible, because the museum catalogues, which are indispensable for locating material in the museum storage, were lost during the Civil War (Afeiche, personal communication). A few objects were kept in the museum of the archaeological site in Byblos itself, but some of them were looted in March 2013 (Libnanews 2013 – last access 6.1.2017).

Thus, the publications remain the only source available. I have thus based my work on them, developing tools and approaches for analysis that mitigate some of the issues outlined above. The first of these is a database including all the objects published in Dunand's Volumes I and II. Every entry in the database corresponds to a specific object. The catalogue number and the coordinates within the excavation grids are given; the latter consist of a single number for objects in the first volume, and a combination of two

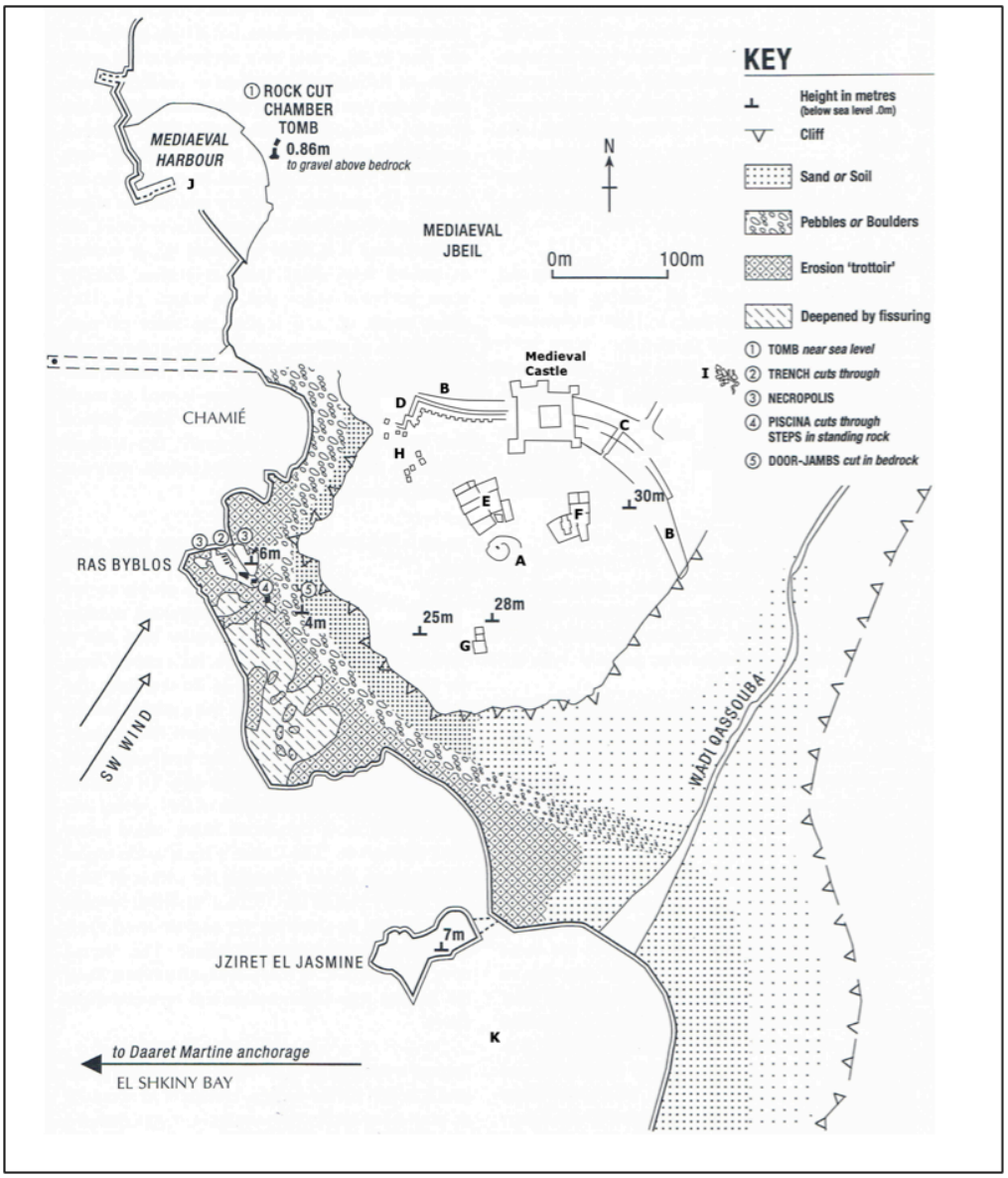


Figure 2.4: Map of the archaeological area of ancient Byblos, based on Frost 2001, 203, modified by the author with the addition of buildings and structures relevant to the thesis. This map does not want to be an exhaustive representation of the archaeological area of Byblos, but just a practical tool to locate the structure discussed in the following paragraphs.

A: Spring
B: Bronze Age walls
C: Northern-eastern gate
D: Staircase and possible secondary access
E: Temple of the Lady
F: Obelisk Temple
G: Tower Temple
H: Royal necropolis
I: Necropolis K
J: Medieval harbour
K: El-Skhiny bay

coordinates for objects in the second. Objects found outside the grid receive specific identification codes. A transcription of the description of the object is provided for every entry. All the objects are classified according to their typological categories, in some cases with more detailed subcategories. A series of attributes describing specific features of every object, such as their origin – if local or imported – their period or their material, is also given.

The database was conceived primarily for this research, and therefore some attributes and categories that are particularly relevant for my work are more developed than others. The division into basic types, however, covers all the objects and offers a general framework that can be improved and extended in the future. The database has been released online (see Appendix B) in the form of a PostgreSQL database with a php interface that allows searches with multiple inclusive and exclusive parameters.

The plans have been elaborated in order to obtain graphic and vectorial digital representations of those areas of the site that are relevant for my research. The database and these digital plans have been further developed and combined using digital tools in order to obtain additional graphic representations and new series of data, including 3D models of some excavated areas, statistical distributions, and approximations of vertical stratigraphic sequences. The database and the procedure to obtain an approximate stratigraphy are presented in the online supplement (cf. Appendix B) and in Appendix C respectively. The results of the application of these digital tools to the Byblos material are instead discussed in the following paragraphs.

Before that, however, in order to ensure that the analysis which follows is accessible, a few definitions need to be introduced:

- **Layer**: I use the word "layer" to refer to the chronological layers (Late Bronze Age layer, Roman layer) comprising the natural stratigraphy of the site. These layers do not correspond to Dunand's levées. Dunand did not describe these layers, but they can be partially and approximately reconstructed.
- **Levée**: one of the artificial layers produced by Dunand's excavation method (see fig. 2.5).

- **Square**: each of the square-shaped areas defined by the excavation grid used by Dunand from 1933 onward. Every square is identified by an x and a y coordinate corresponding respectively to the W–E and N–S coordinates of Dunand's grid (see fig. 2.5).
- **Column**: the vertical projection through all the levées of a square (see fig. 2.5).
- **Excavation Unit**: the parallelepiped defined by a grid square and one levée high, that is, each of the sections excavated by Dunand in each levée. Excavation units are defined by three coordinates: the levée number and the x y coordinates (see fig. 2.5).

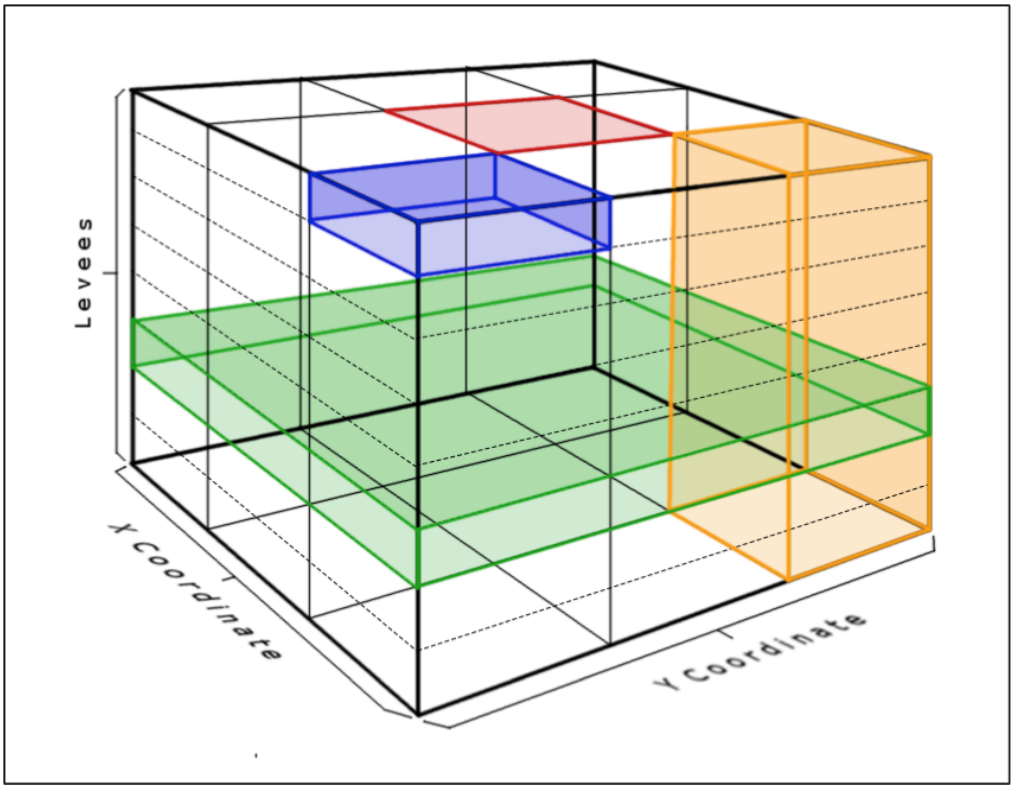


Figure 2.5: Graphic representation of the definitions used to describe Dunand's excavation method.
Green = Levée Yellow = Column
Red = Square Blue = Excavation Unit.

3

Archaeological Evidence: Quantitative Analyses

3.1 Introduction

In this section I discuss data and observations related to the totality of the site, such as its stratigraphy and the spatial distribution, concentration, and possible associations of specific categories of objects (§3).

3.2 Mycenaean pottery: distribution and spatial density

Leonard, in his index of Late Bronze Age Aegean pottery from Syria-Palestine (1994), lists 55 Mycenaean sherds from Byblos. The majority of them comes from funerary contexts, 33[1] from the necropolis K excavated by Salles (1980; see also §4.7.1), and 2 from the royal tombs (Dussaud 1930, 178–81; §4.8.1).[2] Eleven other sherds come from Dunand's 1926–1932 campaigns,[3] while Leonard lists only 4 sherds from Dunand's 1933–1938 campaigns.[4] Finally, 4 or 5 other sherds that seem not to have been pub-

[1] Leonard nos 152, 395, 572, 591, 656, 683, 750, 751, 829, 857, 912, 1224, 1225, 1276, 1515, 1516, 1595, 1730, 1756, 1775, 1823, 1857, 1877, 1878, 1933, 1947, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1978, 2094, 2199, 2300.

[2] Leonard nos 906, 1142.

[3] Leonard nos 214, 228, 229, 244, 283, 501, 582, 984, 1701, 1923, 2066.

[4] Leonard nos 657, 658, 1713, 1827 = Dunand nos 8755, 8756, 11161, 10899 respectively.

lished by Dunand or Salles, and whose provenance is thus unclear, are also recorded in Leonard's index.[5]

It should be noted that Dunand lists in his catalogue of the 1933–1938 campaigns also 8 sherds that he described as Mycenaean or of Mycenaean origin.[6] According to his descriptions and illustrations, however, these all appear to belong to Protogeometric, that is, Iron Age vessels, rather than Late Bronze Age Mycenaean ones. It is possible that further Mycenaean sherds were present among the numerous fragments which he described only summarily and did not illustrate.

It is not very clear how Leonard has approached the Byblos material. He lists and discusses the sherds that Dunand published with illustrations (drawing or photographs), but he does not state whether during his research he assessed any of those ceramics that were described but not illustrated by Dunand. The fact that he mentions a couple of sherds with their Beirut Museum catalogue numbers[7] may suggest that he had some access to the excavated material. Alternatively, he could be relying on the works of previous authors who had access to them, as is suggested by the references in his catalogue. In both cases, however, it is not clear how extensive this access was, and if it allowed the assessment of all the sherds found in the city. Since however Dunand may have given images of all relevant objects, especially decorated ones, in principle what is published in pictures and drawings may indeed be representative of what was found.

In general, Aegean pottery is rare among material excavated in the city, while it is abundant in funerary contexts, especially in necropolis K. The vessels found in necropolis K are discussed in §4.7.1 while those found in the tomb of Ahiram in §4.8.1. The vessels from the city listed by Leonard are listed in the table below. Furumark shapes, FS, and motives, FM, are also given (Furumark 1941a; Furumark 1941b).

[5]Leonard nos 859, 938, 939, 1792, and perhaps 581, although he wonders if this could be the same as 582.

[6]Dunand nos 7987, 8246, 8743, 8892, 12271, 12478, 12870, 13062.

[7]Leonard nos 581 and 1713.

Campaigns 1926–1932

Dunand 1088; Leonard no.: 2066 Type: unidentifiable form (FS ?/FM 46?) Date: LH IIIA–B Findspot: surface	Dunand 1575 + 6549; Leonard no.: 214 Type: amphoroid krater (FS 53–55?FM 23) Date: LH IIIA:2–B Findspot: Levée 2, sector 24 + Tranchée 67
Dunand 1188; Leonard no.: 582 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 171/FM Linear) Date: LH IIIA:2 Findspot: surface	Dunand 1861; Leonard no.: 228 Type: amphoroid krater (FS 53–55?/FM 1) Date: LH IIIA:2 Findspot: Levée 5, sector 27
Dunand 1444; Leonard no.: 283 Type: amphoroid krater (FS 53–55/FM 44) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 1, sector 22	Dunand 1956; Leonard no.: 984 Type: LM III stirrup jar (FS SJ (Bd)/FM Linear) Date: LH IIIA–B Findspot: Levée 6, sector 26
Dunand 1474; Leonard no.: 244 Type: amphoroid krater (FS 53–55?FM 5? 36?) Date: LH IIIB(?) Findspot: Levée 1, sector 32	Dunand 1958; Leonard no.: 229 Type: amphoroid krater (FS 53–55?/FM 1) Date: LH IIIA:2 Findspot: Levée 6, sector 27
Dunand 1534; Leonard no.: 1701 Type: deep rounded bowl/krater with horizontal handles (FS 281/FM 3). Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 2, sector 5	Dunand 2405; Leonard no.: 501 Type: small piriform jug, cutaway/beaked neck (FS 134?/FM 64:20) Date: LH IIIA:2 Findspot: VII 32

Campaigns 1933–1938

Dunand 8755; Leonard no.: 657 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 171–173/FM Linear) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 4, 14/23	Dunand 10899; Leonard no.: 1827 Type: deep conical bowl (FS 290/FM Linear) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 8, 17/14
Dunand 8756; Leonard no.: 658 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 171–173?/FM Linear) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 4, 14/23	Dunand 11161; Leonard no.: 1713 Type: deep rounded bowl/krater with horizontal handles (FS 281?/FM 7). Date: LH IIIB Findspot: Levée 9, 14/19

The difference between the amount of sherds from the 1926–1932 campaigns and that found in the 1933–1938 campaigns and published by Leonard should be treated with caution. Was there a real difference in the distribution of Aegean pottery, with higher concentrations in the smaller area excavated between 1926–1932 than in the larger one excavated between 1933–1938? Or does the apparent difference suggest that Aegean sherds from 1933–1938 went unnoticed and are not listed in Leonard's index because of factors related with depends on Dunand's publication? Because of this uncertainty, it is

not possible to compare the two areas.

As for what has been identified, the Aegean sherds found under Dunand in the city do not seem to have been associated with any specific building, either for the 1926–1932 campaigns or for those of 1933–1938. The former group appears to have been scattered in the northern and western areas of the site, where residential quarters are identifiable. None of them seems to come from the temple of the Lady of Byblos or from any other main building of the area. Similarly, the latter group was scattered in the south-eastern side of the area excavated in 1933–1938, without any association with any important structure.

Both closed (stirrup jars) and open forms (kraters, deep conical bowls, small piriform jugs) are attested among these vessels. Closed forms were probably imported for their content, which could have been of various types. Open vessels, by contrast, could not be used to transport products, so that it must be the vessels themselves that were exchanged and acquired by the people of Byblos. As observed by Stockhammer (Stockhammer 2011, 55–6), on whom the following discussion depends, it is difficult to say how they were used in the city. In the Aegean world, kraters and similar vessels were used in feasting contexts to mix wine with water, before drinking it from other, smaller vessels. Such feasting practices may have been adopted in the Levant together with the vessels. Stockhammer, however, points out that, in contrast with what is found in Greece, in the Levant kraters and drinking vessels are hardly found together in the same architectural context. More generally, the proportions of kraters and drinking vessels found in the Levant are usually quite different from those observed in the Aegean. Byblos is a good example of that: as shown above, fragments of 6 kraters and 1 deep conical bowl have been found in the city, but no Aegean drinking vessel has been identified. A possible explanation is that in the Levant the kraters were used to mix wine and water in the Aegean fashion, but local drinking vessels were used to consume it. Some representations on ivories from Megiddo could support this idea. It is, however, also possible that imported kraters were used for purely Levantine practices in local social contexts. Stockhammer points in particular to

depictions of Levantine people drinking beer from collective vessels through straws[8] and wonders whether Aegean kraters could have been used in the same way.

Whatever was the use of these vessels in Byblos, their presence shows that interactions between the city and the Aegean regions did not involve only the exchange of primary goods, but also of manufactured objects that were probably appreciated for their foreign style and for their "exotic" origins.

Considering their probable use in social contexts not strictly connected with the cult of the gods or with strictly religious practices, it is not surprising that these Aegean vessels have been found scattered around the city, in residential areas. Moreover, their presence there suggests that the use of such vessels was not confined to the royal palace and the court, although the lack of precise data about the archaeological context does not allow to determine whether the residential areas where they were found were associated with members of the elite or with other social classes. Similarly, it is noteworthy that a large number of them has been found in necropolis K, whereas by contrast neither Dunand nor Leonard mentions anything potentially Mycenaean from any temple. The presence of the sherds in the necropolis shows that the vessels were considered to be prestigious objects worth depositing in tombs. It is, however, impossible to say whether they were deposited there because of their economic or symbolic value as object, because of their content, or because they were associated with a specific system of beliefs, in which, for instance, the dead were expected to feast with kraters in the afterlife as they did in this life. Be that as it may, they were clearly valued objects worth using in life and burying with the dead.

The absence of these vessels in finds from temples suggests instead that they were not used either as offering to the local gods or in ritual contexts, in contrast with Egyptian scarabs and other Egyptian imports (§3.3.1, §4.4), which are often associated with religious buildings. This difference in distribution suggests a difference in the perception of

[8]This practice appears, for instance, on cylinder seals from Mesopotamia (for instance BM 121545 from Early Dynastic IIIa Ur: see Woolley 1934, pl. 200, no. 102; Hornsey 2003, 86–7) and it is also depicted with a single drinker and vessel on the stele of a Syrian soldier found at El-Amarna in Egypt (Berlin ÄM 14122 – See Erman and Spiegelberg 1898; Freed et al. 1999, 239, no. 114). See also Maeir and Garfinkel (1992) for archaeological evidence from the Levantine coast.

Aegean and Egyptian imports, and possibly in how the interactions behind the exchanges in which they were involved functioned (see further §6.4).

3.3 Egyptian scarabs: distribution and spatial density

Scarabs have a long history in Egypt, having been in use since the Old Kingdom/Early Bronze Age. They are probably the most representative items of Egyptian-foreign interactions. Hundreds of them, belonging to all the main periods of Egyptian history, have been found in Byblos. In Egypt, scarabs were used both as seals and as amulets, and both these functions appear in Byblos, in the form of bullae[9] and of deposits with ritual significance (see below).

Scarabs are one of the few categories of objects found in the city for which a full, comprehensive, and detailed set of data is available, at least for the campaigns between 1926 and 1938. The location of most of the scarabs found during these campaigns is precisely indicated on the published plans, and the exact coordinates of their findspots can thus be easily extrapolated. Moreover Boschloos (2011) has studied all the scarabs from the city in her doctoral thesis, together with all those found in the other sites in Syria and Lebanon. One of the most important results of her work is the database available in pdf format as an appendix to her thesis, in which every scarab is described and dated, and its archaeological context briefly discussed. Thanks to Dunand's plans and to Boschloos' study, it is thus possible both to locate the findspots of scarabs and to classify them by period.

Scarabs can be studied from two perspectives. A first possibility is to look at them as single objects and discuss what information each of them can yield individually. Boschloos's work, in particular her catalogue, is exemplary in this respect, and it is remarkable for its detailed attention to every scarab. Since her study is more than exhaustive, I only briefly list the relevant Late Bronze Ages scarabs found in the city in the online supplement (cf. Appendix B). The second possibility is to take the scarabs as an ensemble, studying their

[9] Dunand II nr. 9417, 11676, undated (Boschloos 2011–2012, BYB584, BYB519) but both from the area of the Obelisk Temple.

general distribution and looking for underlining patterns and possible associations with archaeological features such as architectural remains. This is what I do in this section.

Only the scarabs found during the campaigns between 1926 and 1938 are considered here, because they are the only ones for which the precise findspots are known. Since the Bronze Age city was located mainly in the area explored in these campaigns (§2.1.3), this is a reasonably good sample. If in the future Dunand's archives will become accessible, it will then be possible to take other sectors of the site into consideration.

3.3.1 Analysis of distribution of scarabs

Possible displacements and disturbances of archaeological materials must be taken into account in the analysis. Small objects can easily end up some distance away from their original contexts. Scarabs could also circulate long after the time when they were made and could enter the archaeological records in periods and contexts unrelated with their original function. Isolated items without relevant associations therefore have little informative value. Since however it is unlikely that whole groups of scarabs were moved far while remaining coherent, large clusters, by contrast, may rather attest deliberate deposition or the scattering of originally coherent and therefore potentially meaningful ensembles.

Clusters of scarabs can be identified through analysis of their concentration and density across the site. This can be done with a heatmap or a kernel density estimations, the results of which can be graphically represented on a map. Only the horizontal position of the scarabs is taken into account here. Although this choice might seem problematic since vertically distant scarabs could seem to be close once they are "flattened" on a single plane, the scarabs are too few and too scattered for this to be an issue. As I show, the majority of the scarabs were isolated finds. Their vertical position is therefore relatively unimportant, as there is no risk of ambiguity. At the same time, the clusters that emerge from these analyses are few enough to be checked individually, so that it is possible to verify whether such clusters are composed of truly vertically close scarabs, or if rather they are only artefacts of the procedure of analysis adopted.

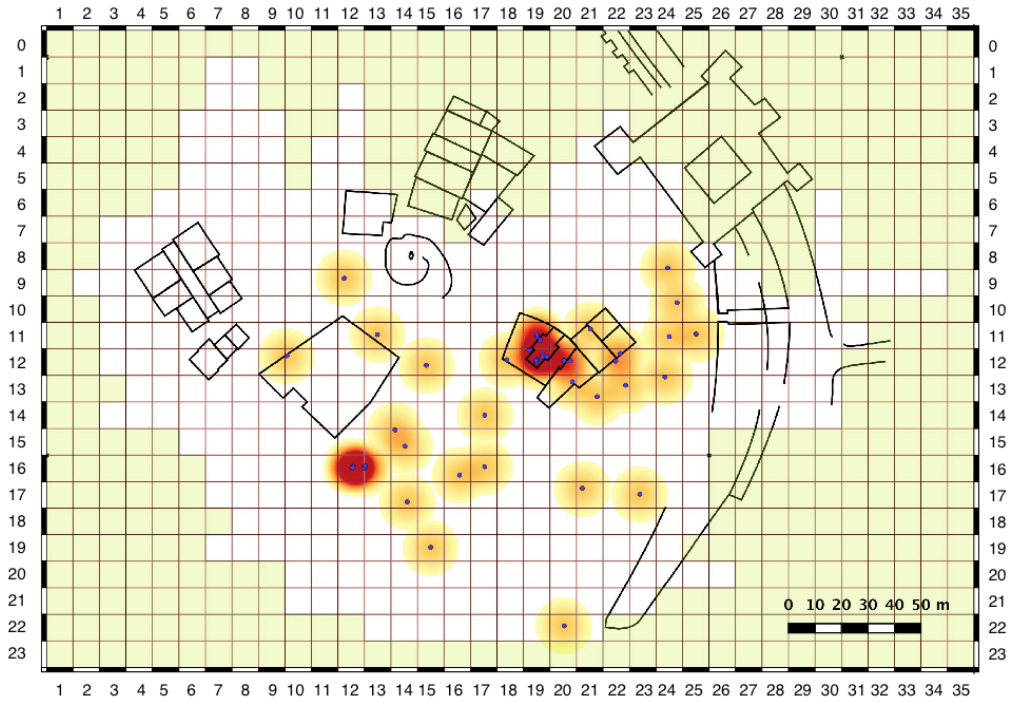


Figure 3.1: Heatmap showing the distribution of pre-New Kingdom scarabs (Early and Middle Bronze Age).

The scarabs analysed are listed in the online supplement (see Appendix B). The area of the site taken into consideration is marked in white, the areas outside it in light yellow. The white area reasonably approximate the area excavated by Dunand. Dunand, in fact, never explicitly defined the precise horizontal limits of his excavations. All the objects found in the 1926–1938 campaigns and published in Dunand's catalogue, however, were found in the squares within this white area, and therefore the limits of the white area itself must be close or identical to the limits of Dunant's excavations during those years.

I analyse scarabs in chronological groups in order to study the evolution of their patterns of distribution. The groupings are: pre-New Kingdom, 18th dynasty, 19th and 20th dynasty, and post-New Kingdom.

As appears from fig. 3.1, the distribution of Early and Middle Bronze Age scarabs is characterized by a smaller cluster in squares 16–12;16–13 and a larger one in 11–19;12–19;12–20 (extending into surrounding areas). Three of the scarabs forming the first cluster were found in levée 10[10] and the others[11] during the demolition of the walls

[10]Dunand II nos 11467, 11468, 11476.
[11]Dunand II nos 11772, 11773, 11774, 11775, 11776, 11777.

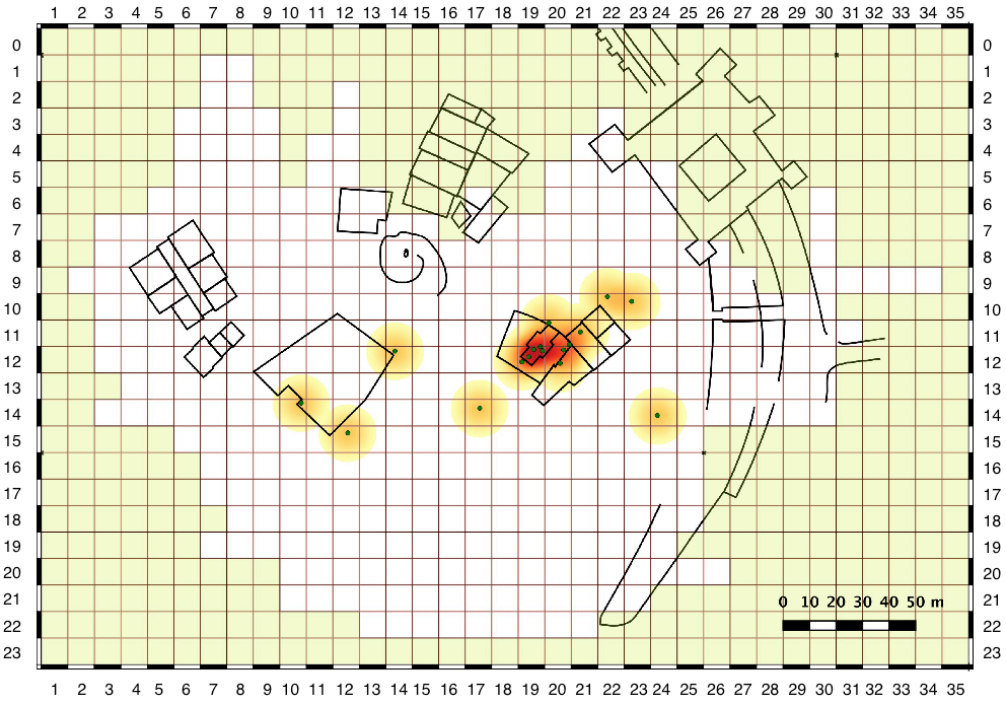


Figure 3.2: Heatmap showing the distribution of scarabs dating to 18th Dynasty.

corresponding to levées 5–10. Therefore they all likely belong to a single ensemble. This cluster does not seem to be associated with any relevant structure; Dunand recorded nothing specific for these scarabs.

The second cluster is located within the perimeter of the Obelisk Temple and is clearly associated with it. These scarabs can be divided into three groups on the basis of their vertical distribution. Four scarabs[12] come from levées 19–21 or from the walls corresponding to levées 16–20, three[13] come from levées 14–15, and seven[14] from levées 2–6. These last seven were found in layers very near the surface and were clearly out of context. Nonetheless, as discussed below (see §4.4.6, §4.4.7), they could also come from the Obelisk Temple. Such a concentration of scarabs can hardly be random or due to later disturbances. Rather, they were deposited intentionally in or near that area, possibly as offerings.

The distribution of 18th dynasty scarabs (fig. 3.2) is characterized by a main cluster that is again located within the perimeter of the Obelisk Temple. Some of these scarabs

[12]Dunand II nos 15885, 16746, 17099, 17343.
[13]Dunand II nos 13030, 13367, 13428.
[14]Dunand II nos 7728, 8166, 8181, 8668, 8669, 8992, 9394.

come from later layers and are thus out of context. As in the previous case, however, it is very likely that they come from a single source within the temple and that their displacement was mainly vertical and probably due to Roman construction works in the area (see §4.4.6, §4.4.7).

This cluster is even more relevant if we consider its relatively short span of time, limited to the period from Thutmose III to the end of the 18th dynasty. More in particular, 10 scarabs have been found in the area of the temple.[15] Four of them bear a royal name and can thus be dated with more precision: one (7645) belongs to Thutmose III, one (8127) to Amenhotep II and two (9896, 11053) to Amenhotep III. The remaining six date to the 18th dynasty but are uninscribed (see the online supplement with list of scarabs, cf. Appendix B).

In general, the distribution of pre-Late Bronze Age and early New Kingdom scarabs shows some continuity and is characterized by high concentrations within the Obelisk Temple. This continuity and this pattern disappear in the following periods, as is apparent from figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 shows the distribution of scarabs dating from the second half of the New Kingdom (19th–20th dynasties). A couple of scarabs of these periods were within the perimeter of the Obelisk Temple, but they are isolated finds and no consistent cluster can be identified. A small cluster of three scarabs can be seen in square 12–33, not far from the north-eastern corner of the temple but outside its perimeter. This cluster is significantly smaller than those observed for earlier periods, and the scarabs composing it were not vertically close to one another.[16] In view of the small numbers and the seeming lack of association with any relevant architectural feature, this could be a cluster due to chance.

In general the scarabs of this period seem to be distributed, or scattered, more uniformly throughout the city, usually in isolation. Clusters are absent not only in the area of the Obelisk Temple but throughout the whole site.

The same situation can be observed also for the scarabs dating to the Iron Age, as is evident from figure 3.4. Some of them were indeed found in the area of the Obelisk

[15] Dunand II nos 7633, 7645, 7651, 7772, 8127, 8167, 8996, 9896, 11053, 12416.
[16] Levées 1, 3, and 7, respectively scarabs 7656, 8193, and 9913.

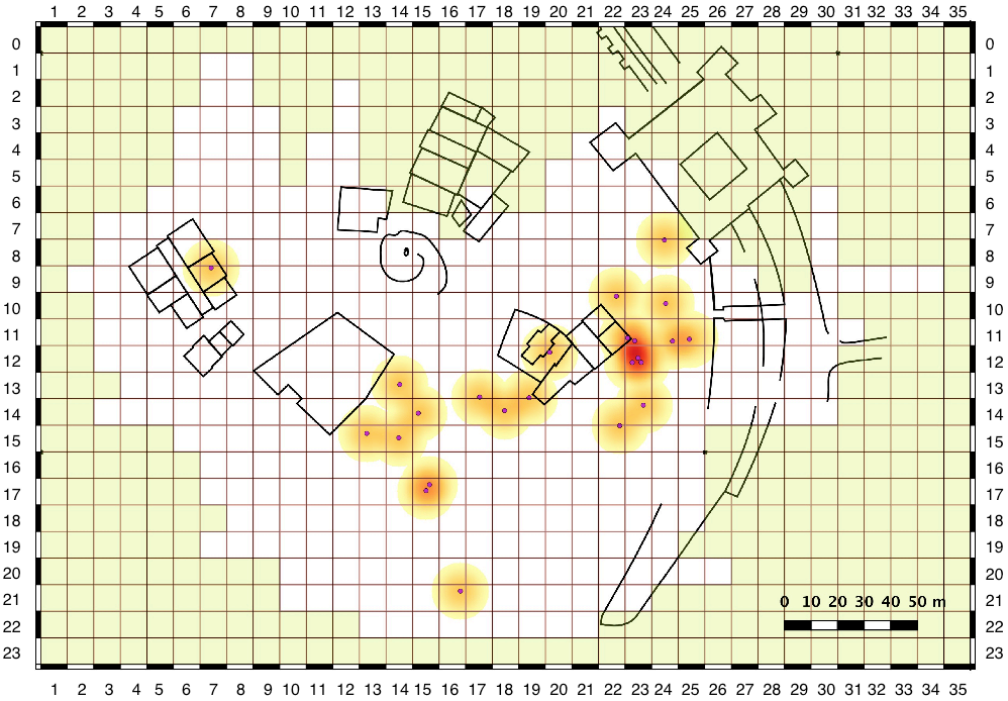


Figure 3.3: Heatmap showing the distribution of scarabs dating to 19th and 20th Dynasties.

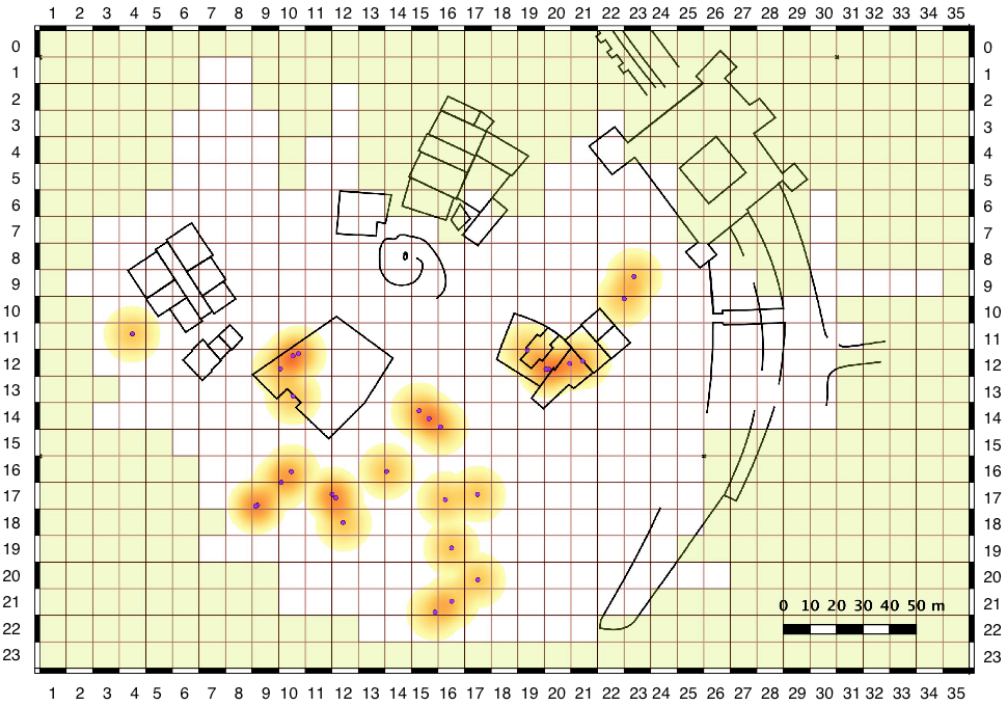


Figure 3.4: Heatmap showing the distribution of post-New Kingdom scarabs (Iron Age).

Temple, but no cluster comparable to those observed in figs 3.1 and 3.2 is present anywhere on the site.

In conclusion, it appears that the distribution of scarabs on the site is not totally random and probably changed over time. In particular, the presence of scarabs in the temple indicates that these objects were not only appreciated for their practical function as seal or amulets but were considered worth donating as offerings or including in hoards in a sacred area. Moreover, the clusters of pre-Late Bronze Age and 18th dynasty scarabs associated with the Obelisk Temple, as well as other Egyptian objects found there (see §4.4), raise questions about the role of this building in interactions with Egypt.

Finally, the fact that clusters of scarabs are attested during the pre-Late Bronze Age period and the 18th dynasty but not in later times is worthy of attention. This observation is not particularly meaningful on its own, and many explanations for such change could be advanced, including accidental archaeological factors. But when these data are considered in combination with what emerges from the written sources, it appears that such a shift could fit with them and hint at modifications in the interactions with Egypt. I return to this possibility in §6.4 and §6.5, after the analysis of the written sources.

3.4 Spindle whorls and loom weights: distribution and spatial density

The excavations at Byblos yielded hundreds of spindle whorls and loom weights. These objects are worthy of attention, as they attest to the city's textile industry. In the ancient Near East, they were made of local stones, bone, ivory, or clay and terracotta, and we cannot exclude wood was also used (Laurito et al. 2014, passim; Matoïan and Vita 2014, 318; Peyronel 2014, 129–30). This was the case in Byblos as well, where all these materials are also attested (see Dunand 1939, passim; Dunand 1954, passim and the database in the online supplement, cf. Appendix B).

The presence of spindle whorls suggests that wool was used (Breniquet and Michel 2014, 2), although vegetal fibres like flax could also be spun (Militello 2014, 266). Spinning was just one among various steps in the production of textiles: before spinning it, the wool had to be collected, cleaned and prepared, and afterwards it had to be weaved

(Andersson Strand 2014; Breniquet 2014, 65–71; Breniquet and Michel 2014, 5). The presence of spindle whorls indirectly attests these processes. Spinning required some specific technical skills (Breniquet and Michel 2014, 5), and in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Near East, it was probably a predominantly feminine activity, at least judging from the presence of spindle whorls in women's graves (Breniquet and Michel 2014, 3).

Loom weights are attested in the northern Levant in the Middle Bronze Age (Peyronel 2014, 132). Similarly to spindle whorls, the presence of loom weights attests of textile manufacturing and of the use of looms, which usually do not survive as they were likely made of wood. The weight and thickness of the loom weights play an important role when weaving, and therefore these two parameters could be used to infer information about the fabric produced (Laurito et al. 2014, 155).

The data available about the spindle whorls and loom weights found in Byblos, however, present a number of problems. First, Dunand did not indicate their precise findspots on the plans, so that only their levées and excavation squares are known. Moreover, no weight is usually given, most of the descriptions are very limited, and illustrations are available only for a few of these objects. In consequence, no precise identification, classification, or chronological sorting can be made. If the spindle whorls and loom weights are still available (they should be in National Museum in Beirut), a study of the originals would be very valuable, but any such research is beyond the scope of this doctorate.

Because of these limitations, only the general distribution of these objects across the site can be assessed here. Even such a simple analysis, however, can yield useful results, as it makes it possible to highlight areas of the city that were involved in artisanal activities. The horizontal distribution of spindle whorls and loom weights can be seen in figure 3.5 and 3.6.

Spindle whorls are quite numerous (Dunand listed 405 from the excavations and 1 surface find), and they were found all across the site. Three major clusters can be identified, in 11/24–12/24, in 16/11–16/12–17/11–17/12, and in 20/17–21/17. Other small groups are attested in 9/23–10/23, in 11/7–11/8, in 11/13–11/14, in 14/14 and more generally in the area between 17/17 and 18/19. None of these groups appears to be associated with any major building. The small cluster in 11/7–11/8 is located in the

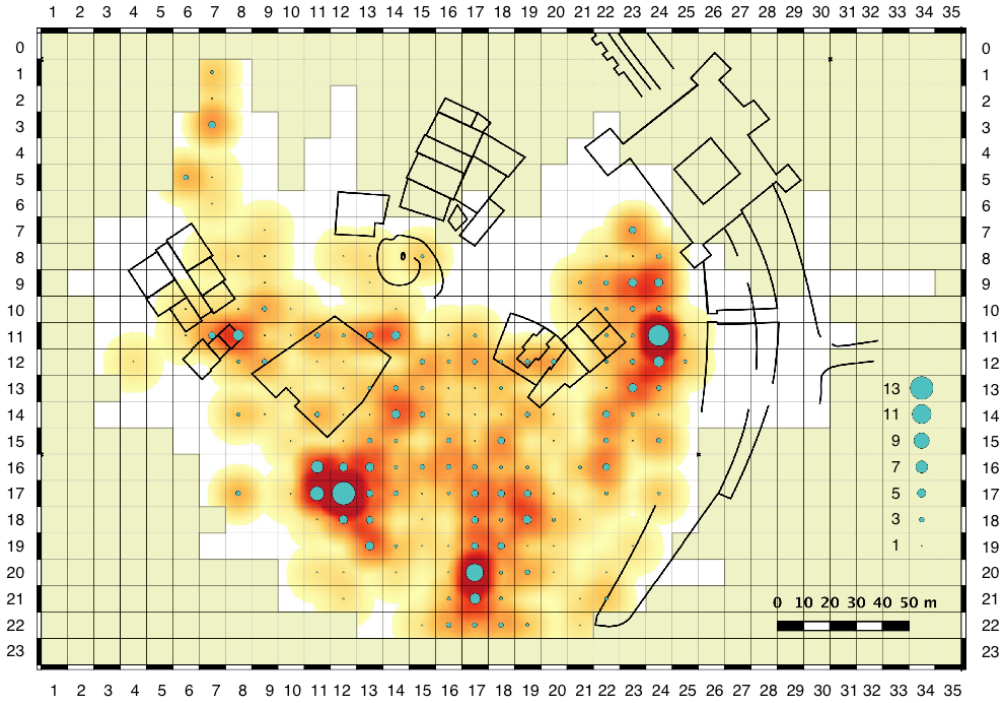


Figure 3.5: Heatmap showing the distribution of spindle whorls

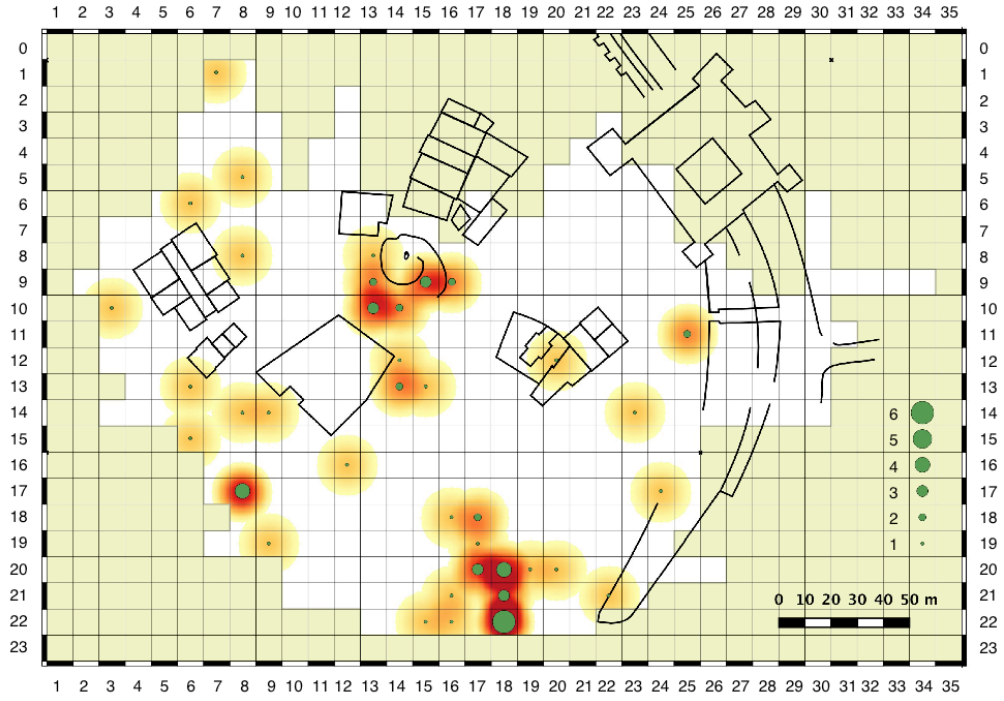


Figure 3.6: Heatmap showing the distribution of loom weights.

same area of the Tower Temple, but it does not seem to have any relation with it, as the levées in which the spindle whorls were found were above the remains of the temple. None of the major clusters is associated with any temple, and the three spindle whorls found in the area of the Obelisk Temple are likely to have been out of context and to have ended up there by chance. The three main clusters could represent production areas within the residential quarters of the city.

A similar distribution can be observed for the loom weights. The 63 loom weights identified by Dunand are far fewer than the spindle whorls, but they are equally scattered across the city. Again, three clusters can be identified, one in the area between 10/13 and 9/15, one in 17/8, and one in 20/17–20/18–21/18–22/18. The second cluster, in 17/8, does not seem to be associated with anything relevant. The third, in 20/17–20/18–21/18–22/18, instead is in roughly the same area of one of the spindle whorl clusters, partially overlapping it in 20/17. The presence of clusters of both loom weights and spindle whorls could indicate that this was a principal area of textile production. Workshops for the production of textiles managed for instance by the palace or by local temples are indeed attested in the Bronze Age Levant and in the Aegean region (Breniquet 2014, 58, 71–3; Breniquet and Michel 2014, 3, 8–9; Nosch 2014, 375, 389–90; Rougemont 2014, 358–62). Moreover, texts from Ugarit mentions also various specialists such as "shearers" (*gzzm*) "spinners" (*ġzlm*) or "weavers" (*u/išparu*, *mḫṣ/māḫiṣu*), which were working seasonally and were receiving rations from the palace (Vita 1999, 486–7). A similar organization could have existed in Byblos as well. The vertical distributions of the two groups of objects, however, are not clearly associated (see levées the list of spindle whorls and loom weights in the online supplement, cf. in Appendix B) and in general the available evidence is not conclusive. It would thus be premature to draw any firm conclusion.

Finally, the cluster of loom weights between 10/13 and 9/15 is strikingly close to the main source of the city. I do not see any reason for such an association, and it could be accidental.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that one of the Mycenaean sherds (Dunand 10899) was found near one of the main clusters of spindle whorls, in 17/14. If any association existed

between them, this could suggest that the area was occupied by a wealthy residence whose inhabitants appreciated imported vessels and were involved in textile production (§3.2). Such a suggestion is, however, hard to verify.

Finally, the absence of clusters of spindle whorls or loom weights in temples or relevant buildings suggests that textile manufacture was located in private contexts and was not connected with the city's religious institutions, unlike what may have been the case for some other artisanal activities.[17] Nothing, however, excludes the possibility that workshops managed by the temples existed in other areas of the city, far from the religious buildings themselves, although at the moment there is no evidence at all to support such a hypothesis.

[17]For instance, Dunand (1954, 651) identified one of the rooms of the Middle Bronze Age Obelisk Temple as an atelier of metalworkers.

3.5 Egyptian Objects and inscribed blocks from Byblos

1. Architectural fragment with the name of Thutmose III (1)

Description

- **No. Montet 947**
  - Findspot: out of the excavated area
  - Material: limestone
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Pictures: Montet 1928–1929, 249, pl. clii; see fig. 3.7 here below.
  - Notes: described in Woolley 1921 and published in Montet 1928–1929, 249, pl. clii. Wolley's drawing is not accurate, as Montet's photograph demonstrates. The block should be in the National Museum in Beirut, but its current location is unknown.[18]

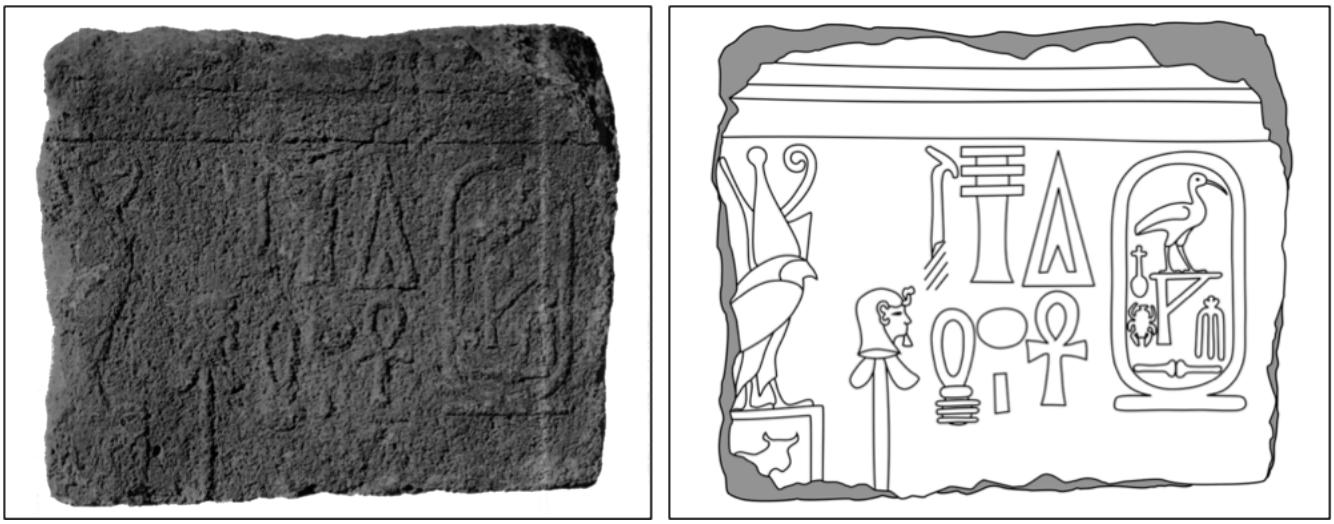


Figure 3.7: Block Montet 947. Photograph from Montet 1928–1929, pl. clii, line drawing by the author

Archaeological context

Found by Woolley in 1921 near a house at the north-east of the city, on the road toward Tripoli. Some Roman columns were present in the area, but nothing dating to the Late Bronze Age was located. It is clear that the block was not in its primary context, and was brought there at some point from the city (Woolley 1921, 200; Montet 1928–1929, 249).

[18] Personal communication.

Discussion

The block bears traces of a relief. The cartouche of Thutmose III is visible on the right, followed by the formulae *dj ʿnḫ ḏd wȝs mj rʿ* ("given life, stability, power, like Re").[19] On the right traces of the king's Horus name are visible. Between the formulae and the Horus name, the top of a staff ending with a human head is present. Comparison suggests that this staff was held by two arms beneath the Horus name, and represented the ka of the king (Woolley 1921, 200; Montet 1928–1929, 249 – in general on representations of the Horus name holding a ka pole see Eldamaty 1999 with refs). As already Wooley observed (1921, 200–1) the presence of the Ka gives no indication on the nature of the lost scene, but it suggests that the relief comes from a religious context (see also Eldamaty 1999, passim). It is thus likely that this block comes from a chapel or a shrine sponsored by Thutmose III, possibly the same one mentioned by Minmose in his biographical inscription (§5.2.2).

2. Architectural fragment with the name of Thutmose III (2)

Description

- **No. Dunand II 13439**
  - Findspot: levée 15, 12/20
  - Material: limestone
  - Dimensions: 40,5 cm x 26,5 cm
  - Pictures: Dunand 1954, pl. clv; see fig. 3.8 here below.
  - Notes: the exact findspot of this stele is indicated on Dunand's plans

Archaeological context

Found in the courtyard of the Obelisk Temple, near the western wall and the antechamber in levée 15, 12/20 (see Dunand's plans for precise find-spot and below §4.4.4).

Discussion

Dunand (1954, no. 13439) described this block as a fragment of a stele, but he did not give any explanation for this interpretation. He pointed out that the block is recut on the sides and broken at the top, at the bottom, and at the back. The style of the relief, similarity

[19] This is the standard reading of this formula. The order of the signs in the relief, however, seems to be *dj ḏd wȝs ʿnḫ mj rʿ*. Or alternatively, the signs have to be understood as being disposed in two columns of unequal width.

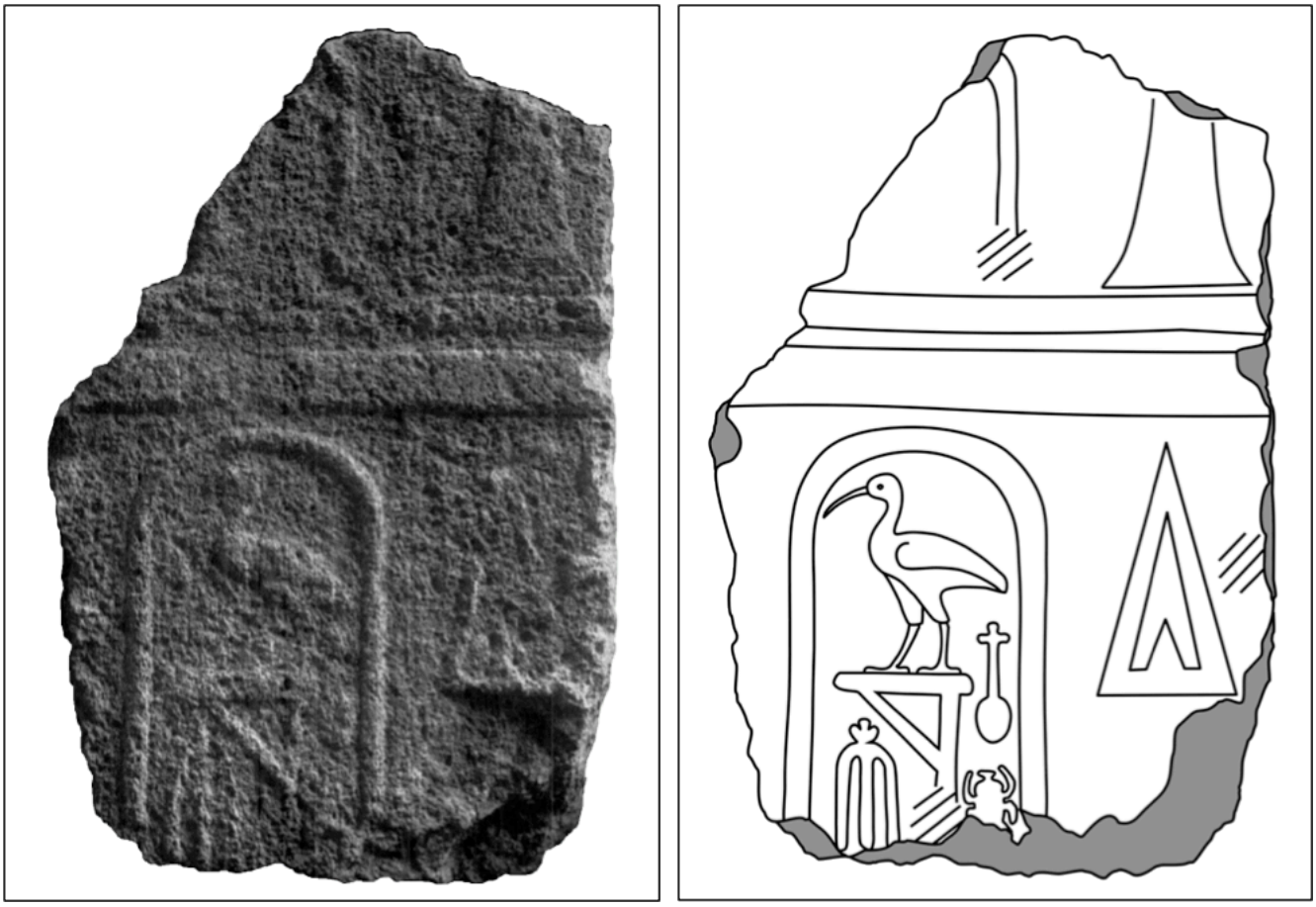


Figure 3.8: Block Dunand II 13439. Photograph from Dunand 1954, pl. clv, line drawing by the author.

in the composition with block no. 1 just above,[20] and the dimensions of the cartouche (ca. 20 cm high) make it likely that this fragment belongs to the same architectural structure, rather than being part of a stele.

The block was found in the courtyard of the Obelisk temple, but the recutting suggests that this was not its primary location. It was, however, found at a deep level, in levée 15, in layer that could correspond to the Late Bronze Age (see §4.4.4 below). It could therefore have ended up there already in the Late Bronze Age; when and how this happened remain unknown, although one possibility is discussed below in §4.6.

[20]The cartouche followed by a *dj* formula under a horizontal line mirrors quite well what appears on the other block.

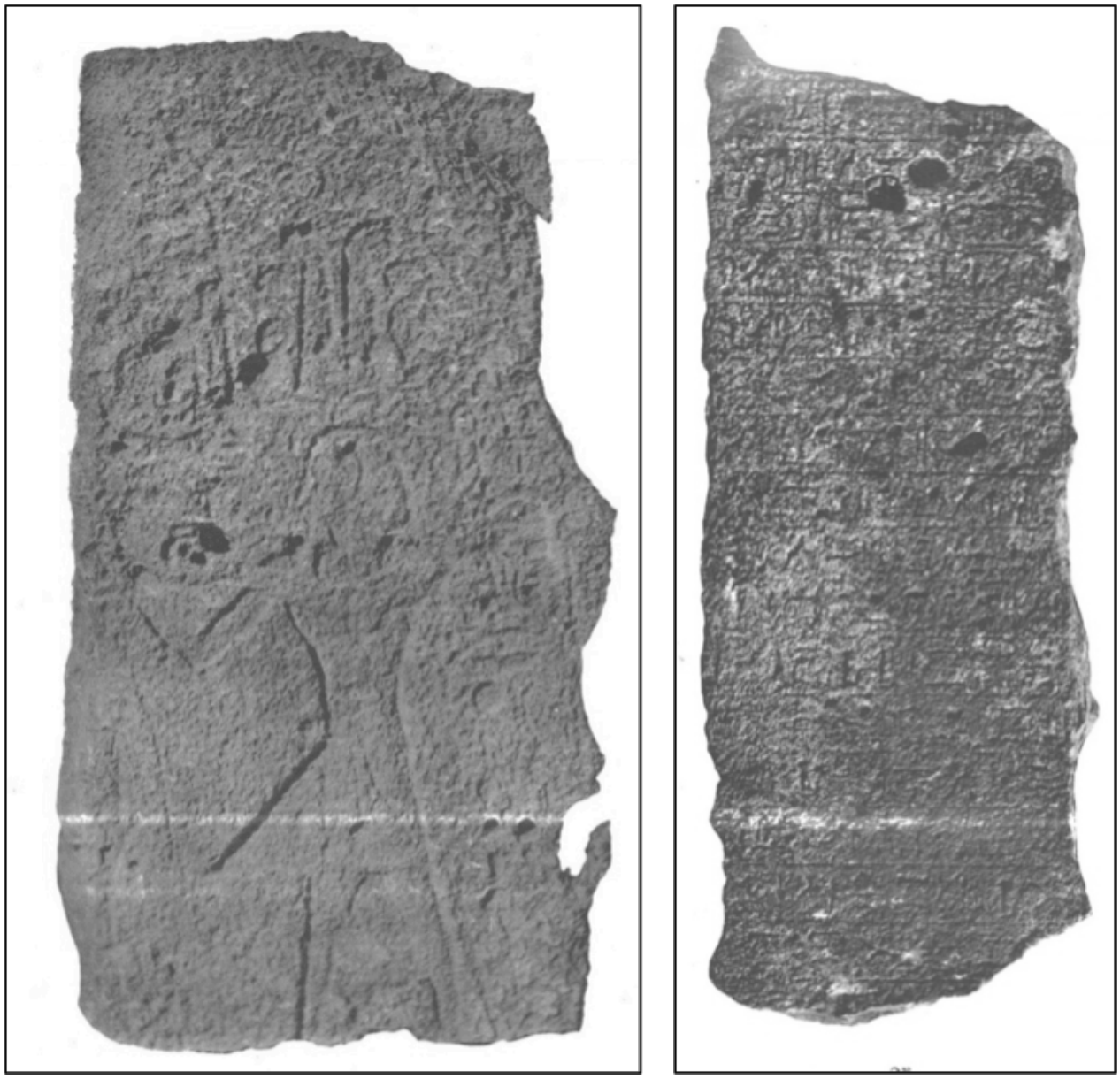


Figure 3.9: Fragments Montet 24, 25. Photograph from Montet 1928–1929, pl. xxxiv.

3. Stele of Ramesses II

Description

- **No. Montet 24, 25**
  - Findspot: area of the temple of the Lady of Byblos
  - Material: limestone
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Pictures: Montet 1928–1929, pl. xxxiv; see fig. 3.9 here below.
  - Notes: 2 fragments

Archaeological context

These two stele fragments were found in 1919 on the surface by Montet in the area of the temple of the Lady of Byblos. According to local people, the stele was found a few years earlier during building work for the foundation of the house of Ibrahim Housamy. It was then broken in four parts, two of which were used to build the house itself and were never recovered, while the other two are those found by Montet. According to Montet's plans (pls xxi and xxii), Ibrahim Housamy's house was located on the northern side of the temple of the Lady (Montet's "temple syrien"), and this is probably why he believed the stele came from the temple itself (Montet 1928–1929, 59).

Discussion

Fragment 24 bears an image of the king wearing the Atef crown and presenting offerings to a lost figure of a deity. The style is clearly Ramesside. This fragment was probably part of the lunette. The formula *sꜣ ʿnḫ ḥꜣ[=f nb] mj rʿ* ("all protection and life around him like Re") is visible behind the king. Fragment 25 bears traces of at least 17 horizontal lines of text. According to Montet (1928, 49) nothing could be read except traces of the cartouche of Ramses II in line 3, while Kitchen manage to transcribe some scattered words (K*RI* II 224, see also Obsomer 2012, 123).

The text is too fragmentary and too little is preserved to suggest a translation. It seems however to narrate (also?) about a military expedition in Syria, as the following words and expressions can be recognized: "[m]y army and chariots as well" (line 9), "extend the borders of Egypt" (line 10), "the paths […] Kharu (i.e. Syria, line 14), "my army was going while I was alone" (line 15). It thus seems that the text likely commemorated an early Syrian campaign of Ramses II, as did his Nahr El-Kalb inscriptions (Obsomer 2012, 123, §4.9). Two other fragments of steles by Ramses II were found in Tyre (K*RI* II 401), where a stele recording a campaign of Seti I was also discovered (K*RI* I 117, II 401.1–3; Loffet 2000; Wimmer 2002, 2, 6, 8 with refs). Steles of Ramses II are known also from other Levantine sites, including Adhlun (K*RI* II 223) in southern Lebanon (Wimmer 2002, 8–9 and passim, with refs; Obsomer 2012, 123).

It is interesting to observe that the text seems to be dated to year 4 (line 1), but the form of the name suggests it was engraved after year 21 (Obsomer 2012, 66–7). Similar

cases are attested in the reign of Ramses II (e.g. the "stele of year 8" from Manshiyet El-Sadr – see K*RI* II 360–2, Obsomer 2012, 306–7), and a date after year 21 would agree with other evidence (see below) and would suggest an Egyptian interest for the city also after the peace treaty with the Hittites, as discussed more in detail below (§6.6.6)

The presence of Ramses II's stele in Byblos, possibly in the temple of its main goddess, adds to other evidence that this king was active in the city, in particular in its sacred areas (see also §4.5 and passim).

4. Fragment of Egyptian relief

Description

- **No. Dunand II 11673**
  - Findspot: square 12/20, found during the demolition of the walls between levée 5 and 10.
  - Material: not known
  - Dimensions: 32 cm x 21 cm
  - Pictures: Dunand 1954, pl. clv; see fig. 3.10 here below.

Archaeological context

This block was used as a building stone in one of the walls of square 12/20, between levée 5 and 10. Dunand did not specify which wall it comes from, but the area is that of the Obelisk temple.

Discussion

Dunand dated this block to the Hyksos period or to the New Kingdom. It bears traces of two human figures on the sides, with a column of text in the middle. One arm holding a staff is visible on the left, while only one leg and the back of the torso and of the head of another figure on the right survive. The latter represents probably an offering king, judging from the outfit. As observed by Baines (personal communication) his leg look quite far apart, which makes it difficult to say how the scene should be restored. The most informative detail is the fragmentary inscription in the middle, of which the surviving signs read: …] *m ḥwt-nṯr ḥwt-ḥr nbt* [*kȝp-n-y*..., "...in the temple of Hathor Lady of By[blos...". This fragment confirms that the Lady was associated with Hathor not only in Egypt but also in Byblos itself. Since Thutmose III commissioned a chapel

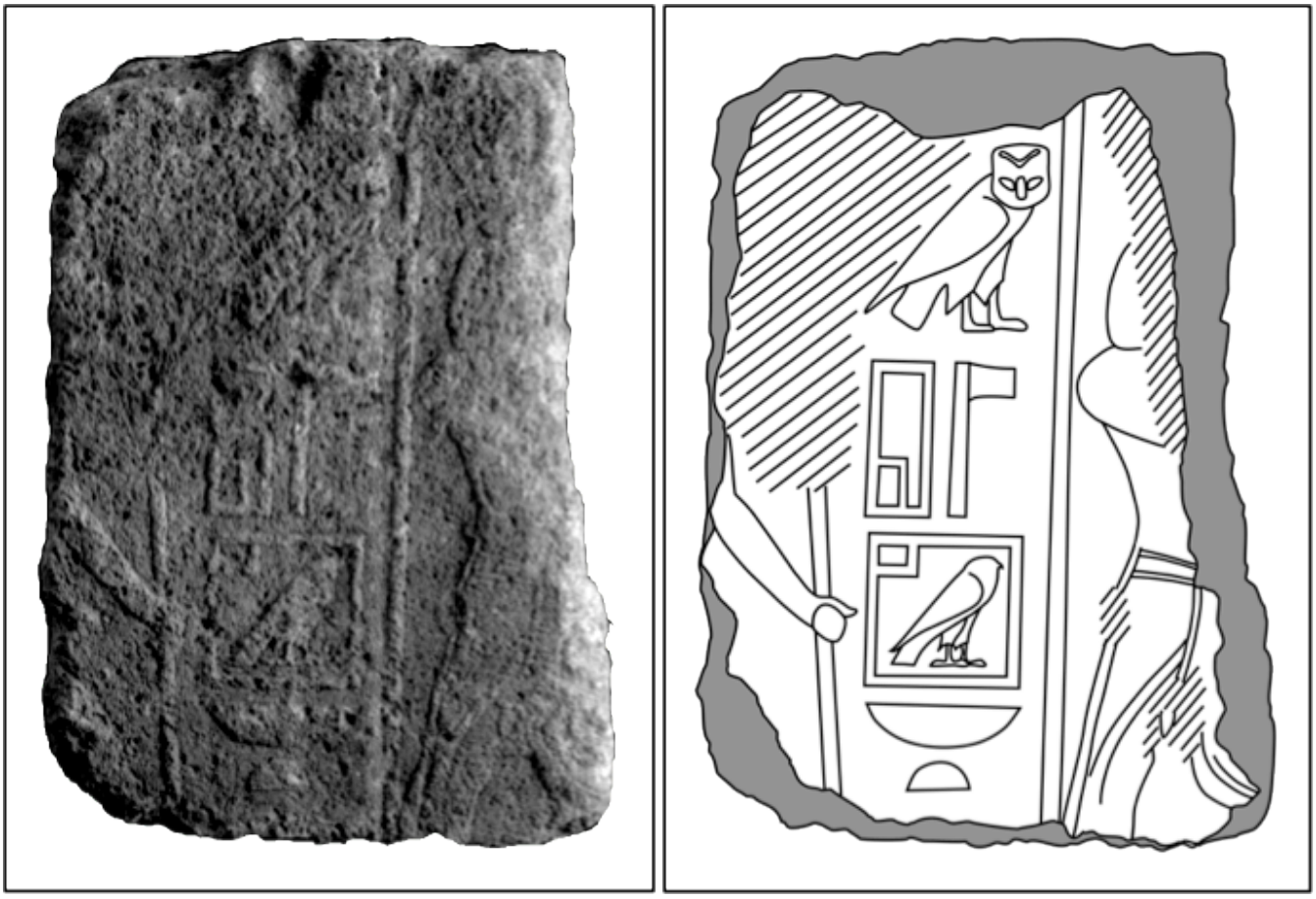


Figure 3.10: Block Dunand II 11673. Photograph from Dunand 1954, pl. clv, line drawing by the author.

or a shrine for Hathor Lady of Byblos in the city (see §4.6 and passim below), this block could perhaps come from there, as suggested for 1) and 2) above.

5. Statue of Djehuti

Description

- **No. British Museum EA 69863**
  - Findspot: unknown, first seen in mid 1970s in a dealer's stock in Paris.
  - Material: black granite (Yoyotte 1981, 44–5), the stone is likely not local and could have been imported (Baines, personal communication)
  - Dimensions: 20 × 18 × 20 cm (`http://www.britishmuseum.org/` , collection online, EA 69863 – last visited 6.1.2017)
  - Pictures: Yoyotte 1981; see fig. 3.11 here below.



Figure 3.11: Statue of Djehuti (1–2). Photographs from Yoyotte 1981.

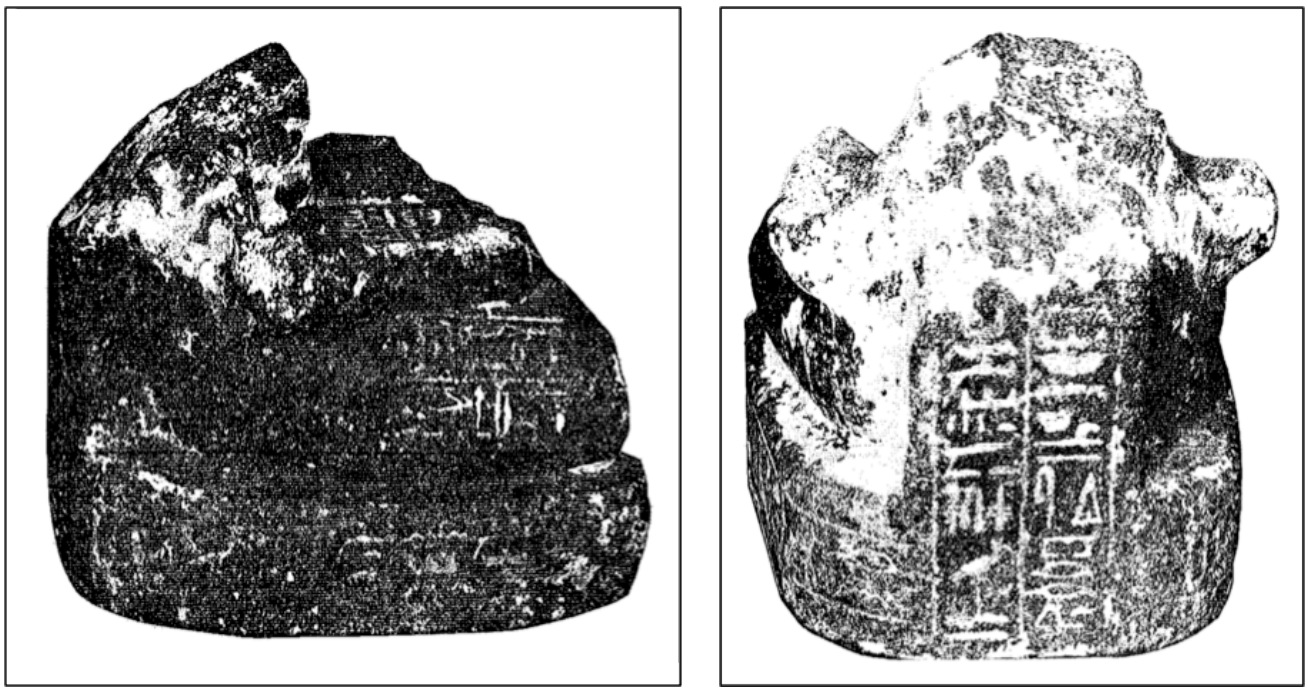


Figure 3.12: Statue of Djehuti (3–4). Photographs from Yoyotte 1981.

Archaeological context

This statue was seen on the antiquities market by Jean Yoyotte, who was told that it belonged to a Lebanese man (1981, 41). It was sold by Christie's London in 1986

(Gubel and Bordreuil 1987, 319) and it was later acquired by the British Museum (EA 69863 – Bourriau 1989, 209). The original archaeological context is unknown, but its inscription suggests that it may come from the temple of the Lady in Byblos. Gubel found some reportedly reliable sources in Lebanon who confirmed that the statue was discovered accidentally in Byblos, in an area at the south-east of the ancient city (Gubel and Bordreuil 1987, 317, 319).

Discussion

The statue represents its owner, Djehuty, as a seated scribe. He holds on his legs an open papyrus roll with a brief biographical inscription facing him. The head is missing as well as the upper part of the torso; the lower part is well preserved. Another inscription running around the base of the statue continues the text of the papyrus; the end of a third inscription can be seen on the back pillar.

Because the statue comes from the antiquities market, its authenticity has to be evaluated with caution, especially because in the 1970s other examples of fake artefacts attesting interactions between Egypt and the Levant are known. Yoyotte (1981, 44–5), however, discussed these issues and concluded that both the statue and the inscriptions are probably authentic.

Djehuty was an officer of Thutmose III who fought with him in the Levant. His career is known also from other documents. The statue thus belongs to the period of Thutmose III's campaigns in the Levant. Djehuty is also the protagonist of the "Capture of Joppa", a 19th dynasty Late Egyptian tale (Lilyquist 1988; Simpson 2003, 72–4; Morris 2005, 138). On the back pillar, the final sections of two columns are visible. The surviving text is the following:

> Col1: …]*n nb(t) pt ḥnwt tɜwy dj=s prrt*
> Col2: …] *kɜ n imy-rɜ ḫɜswt mḥt(yw)t sš nsw Ḏḥwty mꜥɜ-ḫrw*
>
> Col1: …]n (end of toponym), Lady of the Sky, Mistress of the Two Lands, may she give all that comes out
> Col2: …] (to) the ka of the overseer of the northern foreign lands, the royal scribe Djehuty, justified.

We have here fragments of a standard offering formula. The deity addressed in the inscription is a goddess, as *ḥnwt* "mistress" and the feminine pronoun *=s* demonstrate, and it is associated with a foreign locality whose name ends with *-n*. As suggested by Yoyotte (1981, 46), the name of the deity can be reconstructed as *nbt kȝpn*, the "Lady of Byblos". The titles Djehuty bears here are similar to those in the inscription on the papyrus and the base, which reads:

> [1] *jp bȝkw šsp* [2] *jnw jnw n bȝw* [3] *ḥm=f m* [4] *ḥtr nt <nt?>* [5] *rnpt m-ʿ wrw* base-front *[nw] Rtnw sḫntj m imww r tȝ-mrj* base-right *[jn] imy-rȝ ʿȝ(?) ḫȝs(w)t mḥt(yw)t sḫ nsw Ḏḥwty mȝʿ-ḫrw* base-left *jr~n sȝb jmn-ms msy js-snb*
>
> Assessing the *bȝk*-contributions, receiving the *jnw*-contributions brought to the awesomeness (*bȝw*) of His Majesty as *ḥtr*-contribution of the year from the hand of the chiefs of Northern Levant (*Rtnw*), being transported southward in ships to Egypt by the overseer of the door(?) of the northern foreign lands, the royal scribe Djehuty justified, begotten by the dignitary (*sȝb*) Amenmose and born of Is-seneb

According to the inscription, Djehuty oversaw the contributions of the northern Levantine vassals, which were sent to Egypt by sea (a detail attested also in the Annals of Thutmose – see §5.2.1 and §5.2.5). He is said to be a royal scribe, while the second title seems to be "overseer of the door(?) of the northern foreign lands" (Yoyotte 1981, 48; Lilyquist 1988, 15, 62). The word *ʿȝ*, "door", was marked as doubtful by Yoyotte, and it is hard to recognize it in his drawing. Djehuty thus stated that he was in charge of the Egyptian administration in the Northern Levant, an office suggested also by the title of *imy-r ḫȝswt mḥtt* (et similia) "Overseer of the northern foreign lands" attested in other documents (Yoyotte 1981, 47; Lilyquist 1988, 62, passim). The title of *imy-r iwʿyt*, "overseer of the garrison" that he bears on other objects (Yoyotte 1981, 47; Lilyquist 1988, 7, 11, 15, 62) attests to his military role. We know that the overseers of the northern foreign lands were installed in conquered territories to supervise the military and economic situation there, and to assure the interests of the Pharaoh among the local vassals (Yoyotte 1981, 47; Murnane 1997; Shirley 2011, 295 n.15). The probable dedication of the statue to the Lady of Byblos makes it likely that he performed at least some of his functions there, in the city. This raises questions about the role of Byblos in the Egyptian administration of

northern Levant at the time of Thutmose III (see further §5.2.5.1).

6. Fragment of stone vessel with name of Ramses II

Description

- **No. Dunand I 6031**
  - Findspot: at the centre of Tranché 61, on the surface.
  - Material: alabaster
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Pictures: Dunand 1939, pl. xxxviii; see fig. 3.13 here below.

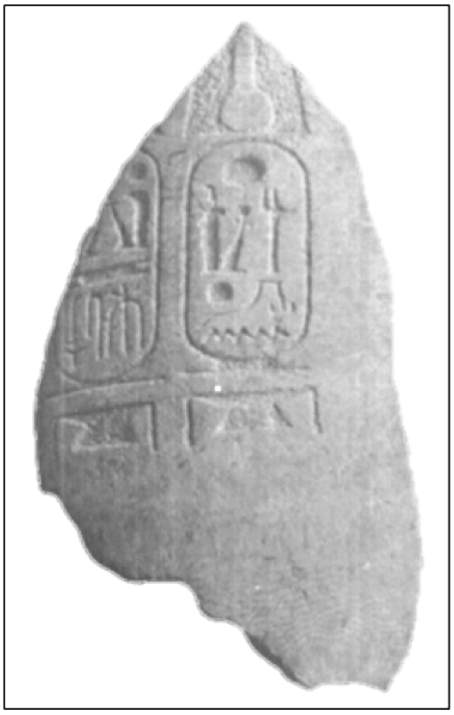


Figure 3.13: Fragment of stone vessel Dunand I 6031. Photograph from Dunand 1939, pl. xxxviii

Archaeological context

Found by Dunand during the campaigns 1926–1932 on the surface of an explorative trench (Tranché 61). Clearly out of context.

Discussion

This fragment of a stone vessel bears the name of Ramses II. The form of the name suggest that it was inscribed, and therefore reached Byblos, after year 21 of his reign. It was found out of context, so that little more can be said about it, except that, like the stele

here above (no. 3) than that it provides evidence for interactions between this Pharaoh and the city after the conclusion of peace treaty with Hattusili III (Obsomer 2012, 67–8; Edel 1997; K. A. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, i 573–94, no. 71, ii 57–60, with refs.).

7. Fragment of statue of Ramses III

Description

- **No. Dunand II 13658**
  - Findspot: surface, square 8/11
  - Material: green amphibolite
  - Dimensions: not known, but clearly a small object.
  - Pictures: Dunand 1954, pl. clvii; see fig. 3.14 here below.



Figure 3.14: Fragment of statue Dunand II 13658. Photograph from Dunand 1939, pl. clvii

Archaeological context

Surface find, no relevant archaeological context.

Discussion

Fragment of Egyptian statue, only the head and the shoulders are preserved. The back pillar bears traces of the Horus name of Ramses III (K*RI* V 256.15; Morris 2005, 707; F. W. James 1966). This is the only attestation of a Pharaoh of the 20th dynasty in Byblos. The statue was clearly out of context, and therefore nothing can be said about the circumstances that brought it to the city. The dimensions of the statue are not known, but it is clearly a small object, which could have reached Byblos in various ways.

4

Archaeological Evidence: Sectors and areas of interest

4.1 Introduction

In the following paragraphs a few buildings and sites relevant for the present study will be discussed in detail. They are the so-called Tower Temple (§4.2), the Temple of the Lady of Byblos (§4.3), the Obelisk Temple (§4.4), the Chapel of Ramses II (§4.5), the Necropolis K (§4.7), the area of the Royal Tombs (§4.8) and the Nahr El-Kalb area (§4.9). A brief preliminary conclusion about the temples is presented in §4.6.

The so-called Egyptian Temple is also occasionally mentioned in the paragraphs below, but it is not discussed in detail, because it dates to the Persian period with additions as late as the Hellenistic period (Dunand 1939, 70–2) and it is therefore beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice it so say here that, as the name suggests, the temple seems to have had some connections with Egypt. Its most remarkable feature is the presence of four Egyptian-style seated statues. We do not know whom this temple was dedicated to, although Dunand suggested it could be related with the cult of Adonis (Dunand 1939, 79). A stele found in front of it could suggest some link to the temple of the Lady of Byblos, which is not far (CIS I,1; Dunand 1941). The temple has never been published in detail, but extensive descriptions can be found in Montet 1928–1929, 29–44 and Dunand 1939, 66–79.

4.2 The Tower Temple

The so-called Tower Temple was located in the southern part of the city. Dunand did not explore the area until after 1938, so neither the temple nor the material associated with it appear in his published volumes. The temple was not dismantled by Dunand, and in 1998 new measurements and analyses were performed (fig. 4.1, Frost 1998–1999, 255), while accurate plans based on unpublished notes were published in 2008 (Dunand and Lauffray 2008, 391–5).

The temple dates to the end of the III millennium BC (Piqueté II–III – see Frost 1998–1999, 257–8; Dunand and Lauffray 2008, passim), and nothing in the published material points to its having been in use during the Late Bronze Age. Its possible function, however, makes it relevant for the present study.

Frost (1998; 2002; 2009) suggested that this temple worked as a point of reference on the coast, and perhaps as something like a lighthouse for sailors heading toward the city.[1] Three features, and a parallel, point in this direction. First, one of the most distinctive features of this building is the presence of stone anchors[2] not only deposited around it[3] but also integrated within its masonry. One was used as a corner stone, while five "dummy" anchors or anchor-shaped blocks form the first step of its monumental staircase (see 4.2; Frost 1998–1999, 253). These "dummy" anchors have only their top surface flattened and dressed, whereas their backs are rough-cut or unworked. The function of these pieces was thus clearly votive, and they point to a strong connection between the temple and the maritime world.

The imposing staircase and the thick walls indicate that the temple was probably a tall building, possibly similar to a tower, standing out against the surrounding houses (Frost 1998–1999, 255). Although its original height cannot be established, it has been calculated that even the basement on which the cella was located was about 6m above the street level and was accessible through an imposing staircase of about 20 steps (Frost

[1] But contra see Saghieh-Beydoun 2009, 35, n1, who thinks that the foundations were not solid enough for a high tower, and argues that the view of the temple would have been obstructed by some massive buildings around it.

[2] Many of these have disappeared since their discovery (Frost 1998–1999, 253)

[3] As in other buildings and areas, such as the Sacred Enclosure (Frost 1998–1999, 247) and Necropolis K (Salles 1980, 12).

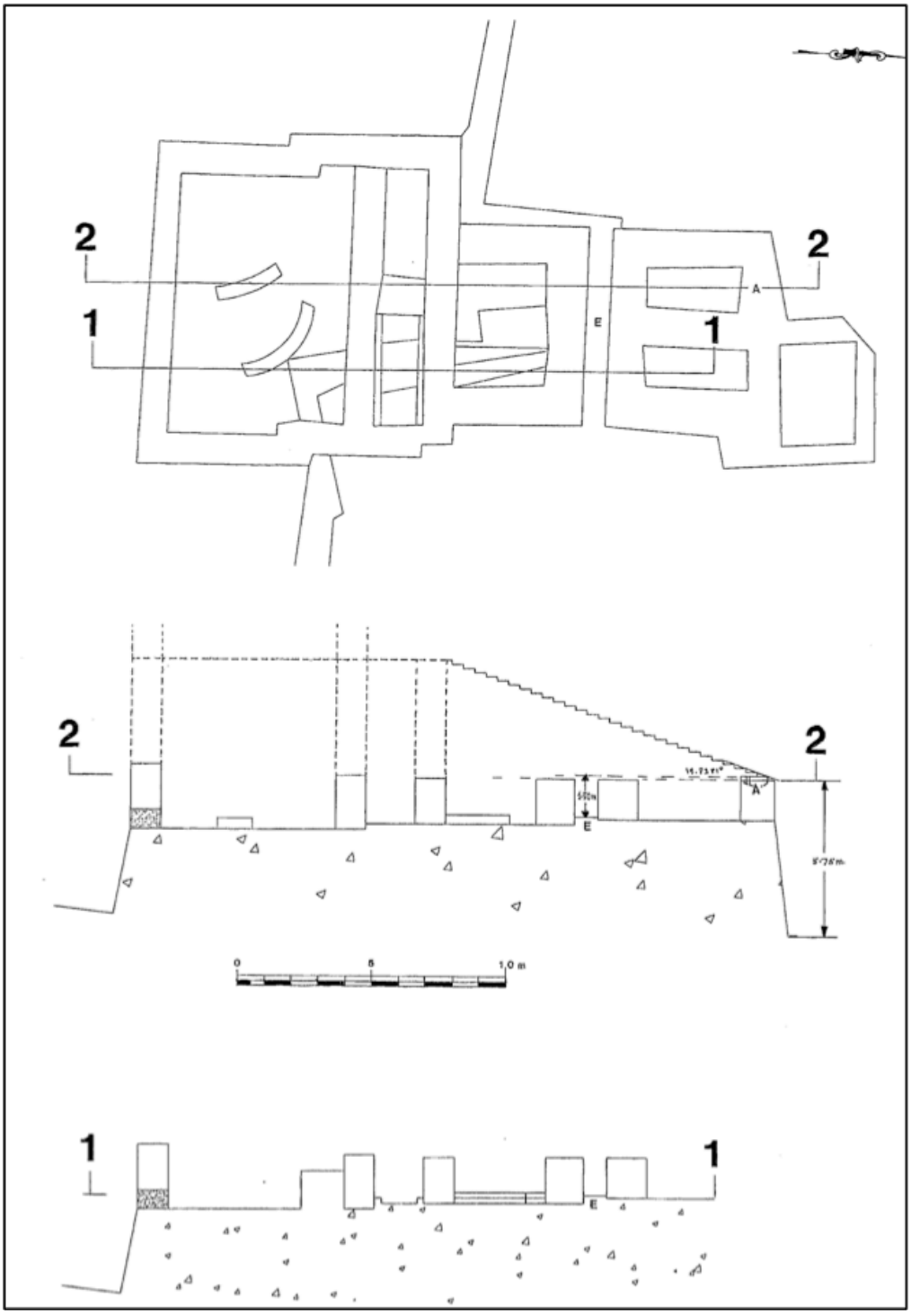


Figure 4.1: Plans and sections of the Tower Temple, from Frost 1998–1999, 256

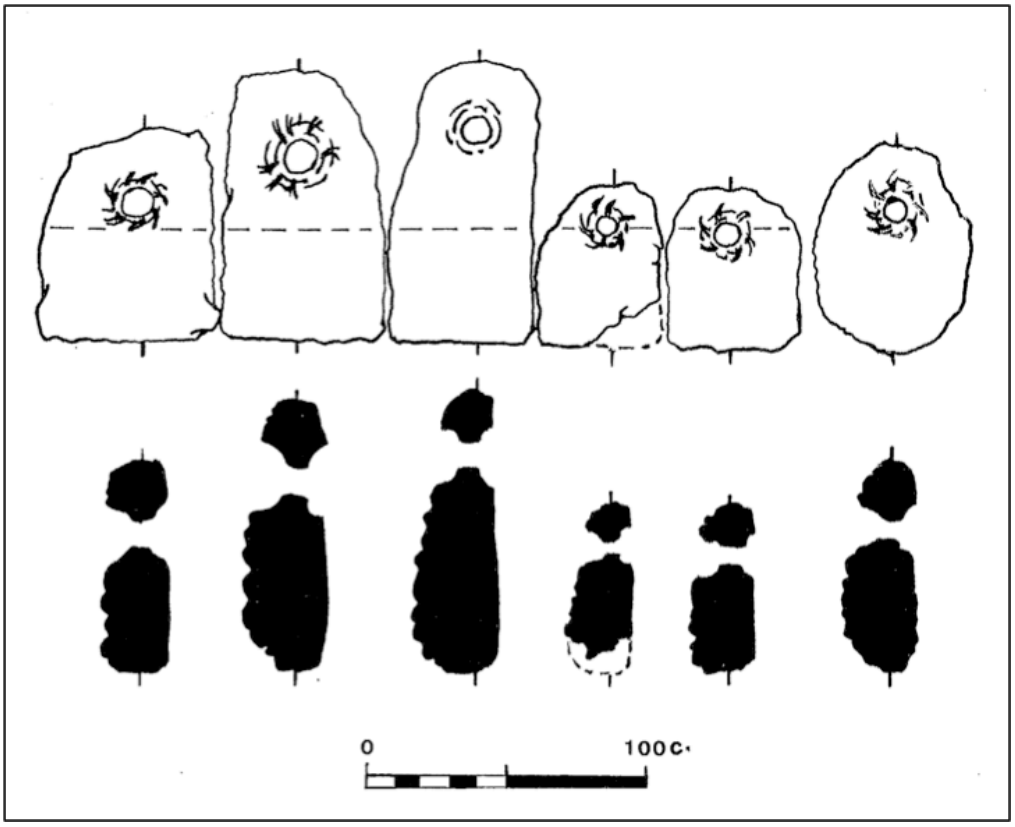


Figure 4.2: Scale drawing of the Tower Temple anchors. The first five from the left are the dummy-anchors used in the staircase. The dotted line represent marks the tread of the first step. The sixth anchor on the right was used as corner stone. From Frost 1998–1999, 254

1998–1999, 255). Moreover, the temple is not far from the edge of the hill, near the sea and just above the El-Skhiny bay at the South of the city, where the ancient harbour may have been located (see §2.2). According to Frost (1998, 247, 257), there are two submerged parallel reefs that could have been used for offshore mooring just in front of the temple. Given the Tower Temple's elevation and its position, it must have been a distinctive feature of the urban landscape, especially from the perspective of a ship sailing toward the city.

Such a building would not be unique on the Levantine coast. In particular, the temple of Ba'al at Ugarit also had the form of a tower and, as in Byblos, many stone anchors were found associated with it. These characteristics, combined with Ugaritic texts mentioning sacrifices performed on its roof, which implies the presence of smoke by day, and possibly of fire by night, have led some scholars to suggest that this building could have worked

as a lighthouse. The Tower Temple in Byblos could have had the same function (Frost 2009, 396), although the temple in Ugarit is much later than the one in Byblos, and was active during the Late Bronze Age. The example from Ugarit, however, attests that such buildings also in later periods. It is thus possible that a similar construction existed also in Late Bronze Age Byblos, possibly as a functional heir of the Tower Temple, either in the same location or elsewhere.

The presence of the Tower Temple fits with the commercial orientation of Byblos and attests to its integration within an international network of exchanges from the early Bronze Age onward, because lighthouses were needed by crews of ships that approached the city from the open sea; local fishermen and small boats sailing for short distances near the coast did not need them to orient themselves. At the same time, the presence of votive anchors in both Byblos and Ugarit points to the existence of a common cultural framework and system of beliefs among the sailors. Frost suggested that this framework was not limited to the North Levant but was shared also by Egyptian and Aegean crews.[4] It has to be noted, however, that the Egyptians were probably employing Levantine personnel in their crew, possibly already during the Old Kingdom (see e.g. Bietak 1988), and therefore even though the anchors (and the ships those anchors came from) were Egyptians, the sailors who offered them could have been from the Levant. In general, clearly, these sanctuaries had the double function of protecting the ships through the benevolence of their gods and through their very practical function as lighthouses. This common background and piety attest and pertain to the everyday life of the sailors and of the wider population, rather than to the international relations and exchanges of palaces and kings.

4.3 The Temple of the Lady of Byblos

The temple of the Lady of Byblos was the most important in the city. Unfortunately it was excavated in part under Montet (1928, 45–59) and in part during Dunand's first seasons (1939, 79–87), so that its publication is particularly problematic (Sala 2015, 36). Just two

[4]Votive anchors have been found also in Ugarit, at Gawasis in Egypt (on the Red Sea), in Kition and are even mentioned in the *Argonautica* (1:950). A Cypriot anchor, associated with Cypriot pottery, was found also in the temple of Karnak, a possible offering of a Cypriot crew (Frost 1969, 440–1; Sayed 1980; 1998, 253; Frost 2009, 395–401; Abdelmaguid 2012)

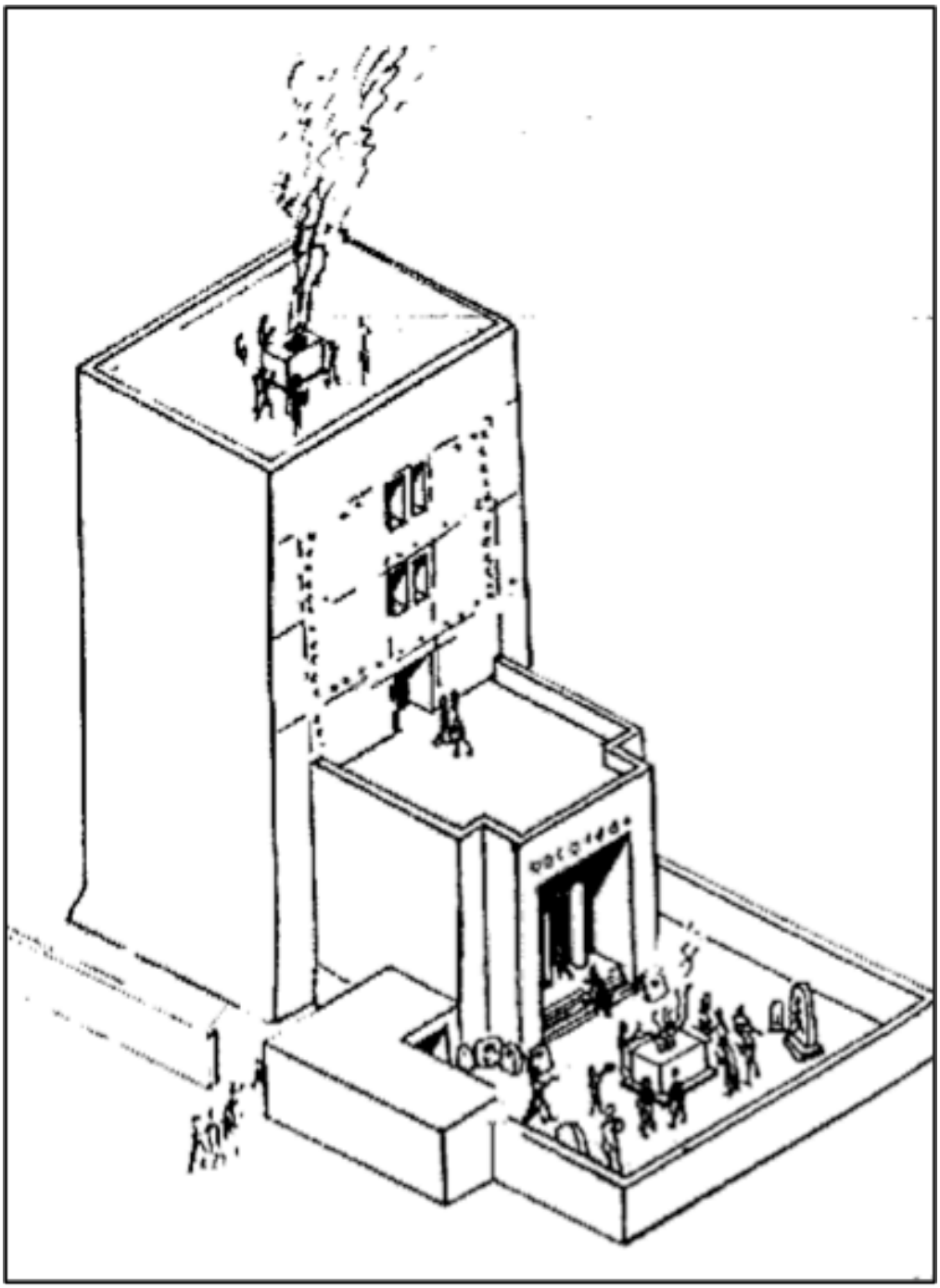


Figure 4.3: Reconstruction of the temple of Ba'al at Ugarit. From Callot 1987, 34

sketches exist for Montet's excavations (1928, pls xxi, xxii) and a few plans in Volume I for the sectors excavated by Dunand. Only the horizontal organization of the temple can be gleaned from these records, but no vertical reconstruction, and obviously no stratigraphy, can be inferred. Moreover, the irregular grid used by Dunand during his first campaigns makes it extremely complicated to try to identify the precise provenance of the objects found. Some more precise information can be obtained from the descriptions of the temple that both Montet (1928, 45–59) and Dunand (1939, 79–87) offered. None of these sources, however, is precise enough to allow a full study of the temple during the New Kingdom. Slightly more precise data are present in Saghieh (1983) and in Volume VI by Lauffray (2008). Both these works, however, focus only on the Early Bronze Age phases of the building and therefore are not relevant for the present study.

Another potential problem is that no Late Bronze Age layer may survive in the temple. This possibility seems to be supported by the fact that Dunand first reported that he had found a stone tiled floor dating to the 3rd century CE and then affirmed that Middle Bronze Age layers, including a Middle Bronze Age stone tiled floor, lay just beneath (Montet 1928–1929, 45–7, 61; Dunand 1939, 62–3, 79, 144, 157). He mentioned no possible Late Bronze Age structure between these two floors, and since in general only foundations of Middle Bronze Age and subsequent structures remained, all vestiges of the Late Bronze Age could have been destroyed. This is a real possibility, because the whole area seems to have been levelled in later times, possibly to create an even surface that joined the nearby hill (Dunand 1939, 80). The terrain was also greatly affected by building activities of the Roman and medieval periods.

What can be said about this temple is therefore limited. We know that this was the largest and most important temple of Byblos, and its long history supports its centrality in the life of the city. Indeed, the temple displays a remarkable continuity of use from the Early Bronze Age to the Roman period (Montet 1928–1929, 59; Dunand 1939, 81).

According to the archaeological evidence, the temple seems to have been completely rebuilt only once, at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, after the possibly violent destruction of an older sanctuary implied by ruins bearing traces of fire that were

found under the Middle Bronze Age floor.[5] The temple underwent various modifications, restorations, and additions throughout its history (Dunand 1939, 86–7, 278–9). Dunand stated that the exact sequence and chronology of these architectural works was very difficult to determine at the time of the excavations, and such task is now impossible so long as we have to rely only on the published plans and descriptions.

As Dunand noted (1939, 85), the poor state of preservation of the temple means that nothing can be said about its economy and functioning. A few observations, however, have been made for its architectural organization. Taking Solomon's temple as a parallel, Dunand suggested equating Room A with the *ulam* (portico), Room E with the *hekal* (main hall) and Room B with the *debir* (inner sanctuary) of Jerusalem's sanctuary (see the description given in the Bible, 1 *Kings* 3–5). He also suggested that an altar was present near the foundations of the western wall of Room E (Dunand 1939, 3, 65, 80–1, pls xi, xii).

Busink (1970, 439–41) thinks also that Room B was the cella, but he suggests instead identifying room E with a forecourt ("Vorhof"). He also rightly observes that according to Dunand's plans, some structure seems to have been present in the northern corner of Room B. Dunand however did not describe it and it is therefore impossible to explain what such element was supposed to be, if an altar, a bench or something else.

By looking at architectural features such as the thickness and arrangement of the surviving foundations, Matthiae (1975, 53–6, see also Sala 2015, 39) suggests instead to interpret Room E as a roofless sacred courtyard, Rooms F and A would be lateral spaces closes by some small dividing wall without foundations, while Room D, C and B would correspond to the antechamber, the antecella and the cella respectively of the temple itself. This structure looks more reasonable, and as observed by Matthiae, it has some parallels both in structure and dimensions in other contemporary Middle Bronze age temples of the Northern Levant, such as Tell Mardikh IIIA temple D or Tell Atshanah/Alalakh temple VII (see also Sala 2015, 44). A Mesopotamian influence can perhaps be seen in the structure of these temples, but according to Matthiae (1975, 56–7, with refs) a corresponding strict typological classification would be contradictory and local traditions and developments have to be taken into account. In the case of the temple of the Lady

[5] Layers of ashes found throughout the site and dated to the end of the Early Bronze Age indicate a period of generalized destruction (Sala 2015, 44; Dunand 1939, 81).

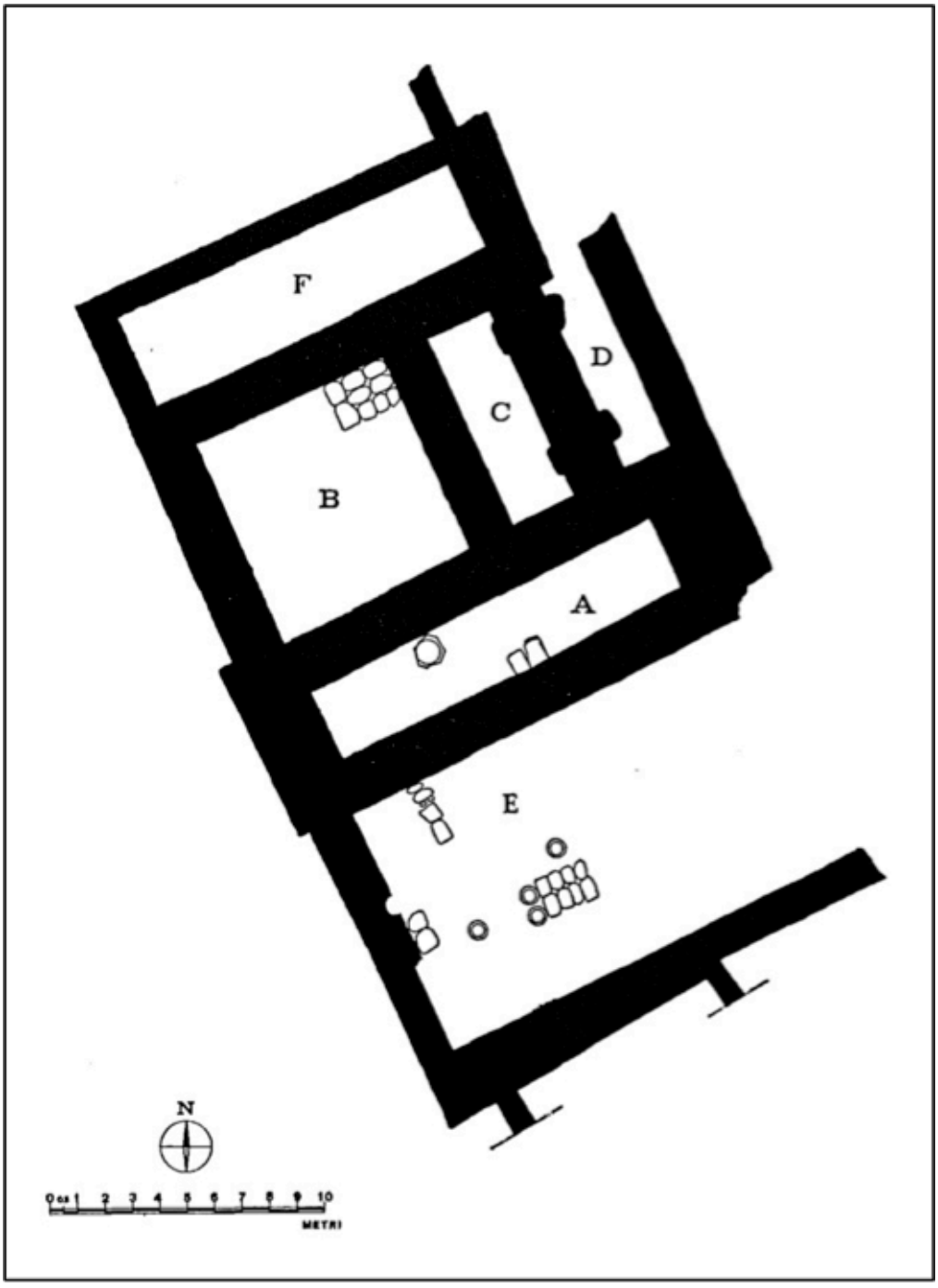


Figure 4.4: Plan of the foundations of the temple of the Lady of Byblos dated to the Middle Bronze Age (from Matthiae 1975, 52).

in Byblos, however, the very poor state of preservation and publication does not allow to further explore these potential influences.

Dunand (1939, 62, 65, 85–6) stated that nothing can be said about the elevation of the temple, except that a few blocks decorated with uraei may come from a cornice with

Egyptian motifs – as attested in Phoenician naoi – and the shaping of some stones could suggest that Egyptian-influenced, non-vertical, battered walls were present.

Written sources point to strong connections between Egypt and the goddess of Byblos and her temple (Montet 1928–1929, 265–305; Diego Espinel 2002; see further §5.2.2, §5.2.3, §6.5.0.1). These connections are confirmed, at least in part, by the archaeological evidence. In addition to the friezes with uraei, Dunand (1939, 84–5) thought that the base of an Egyptian-style column found by Montet (1928, 46, fig. 13) could be connected with the temple. In addition, various Egyptian and Egyptianizing objects of the Old and Middle kingdoms were discovered in offering and foundation deposits below the Middle Bronze Age floor (Montet 1928–1929, 61–139; 1939, 81–4). It thus seems that the temple was indeed involved in interactions with Egypt. Yet because Late Bronze Age layers have not been found on the site, it is impossible to evaluate the temple's role in these interactions at the time. It is however worth mentioning that Montet believed that the fragments of the stele of Ramses II found near a house in 1919 could come from the temple of the Lady (Montet 1928–1929, 48–9 – see §3.5 here above where the stele is discussed in detail). If so – and this is likely as steles were usually erected in temples –, it could have been dedicated in the temple to celebrate the king's campaigns in northern Levant (as the apparent mention of military activities and the form of the names on it suggests), possibly before the construction of Ramses II's chapel discussed in §4.5.

Some other objects found in the area of the temple merit to be mentioned here, although they do not necessarily date to the Late Bronze Age / New Kingdom. The first is a fragment of a limestone statue of a sitting man, possibly a priest, found by Montet (Montet 1928–1929, 57, no.32). The published description and the picture are not precise and clear enough to date it. According to Montet an Egyptian inscription is present on the statue, and the words ...] *Ḥwt-Ḥr nbt* [... , "... Hathor Lady of..." can be read. The statue is interesting because, as the one belonging to Djehuti discussed in §3.5, it clearly does not belong to a king and rather it attests of the veneration enjoyed by the goddess of Byblos among the Egyptians outside the royal sphere.

Different, instead, is the case of the fragments of statues bearing the names of Sheshonq I, Osorkon I, and Osorkon II found by Montet (1928, 48–57, nos 26–31) and Dunand

(1939, 115–7, no. 1741). Although of obvious Egyptian origin, the statues bear Phoenician inscriptions stating that the contemporary kings of Byblos dedicated them to the Lady. These statues are important because they attest of the presence of interaction between Egypt and Byblos also after the New Kingdom. At the same time they are intriguing because they do not present any specific feature that could associate them with the goddess, except secondary Phoenician inscriptions that attested they were offered to the lady by the local king of Byblos, rather than by the Egyptian Pharaohs. This could indicate that the Egyptian perception of the goddess had somehow changed by the time of these 22nd dynasty kings (see below §6.5.0.1). Since however these statue do not date to the Late Bronze Age/New Kingdom, they will not be discussed further here.

4.4 The Obelisk Temple

The Obelisk Temple, which Dunand also called the *Temple de Rechef* is the best-preserved building in the city. It is located in the central area of the site, next to the spring and the temple of the Lady of Byblos (map 2.4). The temple was built at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, on remnants of a previous cultic building (the Temple en L) that was probably burned down in the destruction of the end of the Early Bronze Age (Dunand 1954, 115, 898 and passim; Sala 2015, 44). According to Dunand, it remained in use, in one form or another, at least until the Iron Age (Dunand 1954, pl. ccxii, point xii, temple de Rechef). The temple owes its name to an impressive series of obelisks and standing stones located in a court around its cella. They were erected during the earliest phases of the temple itself, and Egyptian influence is likely, especially since one obelisk bears a dedicatory inscription in Egyptian engraved by the Byblian Middle Bronze Age king Ibishemu and praising the Egyptian god Heryshef (Dunand 1954, 646 and no. 16980; see below §4.4.7). A local component is, however, also present: the veneration of obelisks and standing stones (baetyli) is well attested in the West-Semitic area and in the Phoenicio-Punic world in particular, both archaeologically and in written sources (e.g. Hutter 1993; van der Toorn 1997; Sala 2015, 46–7; see also §4.4.7 here below). The obelisks of Byblos are an early example of that tradition and of its intersection with Egyptian motifs.

Most of the obelisks were found standing in their original positions, while a few dismissed ones were discovered buried in a *favissa* (Sala 2015, 47). The whole area of the temple seems to have been deliberately kept free from buildings until the Roman period or a little earlier. Dunand interpreted this fact as a clue to the area's having maintained some sacred connotation without interruption until a very late period. He went further and suggested that the tips of the tallest obelisks could have remained visible and have helped to maintain the memory of the sacred place even when its principal buildings had disappeared under layers of deposits (Dunand 1954, 35–6, 128–9). This hypothesis is very difficult to prove, especially without precise data about the stratigraphy and how the courtyard acquired its fill. Nonetheless, the dimensions of the obelisks and their upright position must have been a remarkable and undisturbed feature of the area for a very long time.

The Obelisk Temple does not seem to be mentioned in any written source. Unlike the temple of the Lady, it is relatively well preserved, and Dunand's publications are enough to establish its plan and to enable a study of its architectural phases.

Finkbeinder (1981) was the first to analyse the architectural remains. Starting mainly from Dunand's plans, he studied the architectural development of the Temple en L, of the Obelisk Temple, and of the later structures in the area. For the Obelisk temple itself, he recognizes four major building phases (Finkbeiner 1981, 60–7). Finkbeiner's remarkable work is an extremely valuable starting point that can be further developed and improved with the digital technology. In particular, if one starts from Dunand plans and integrates them with Finkbeiner's results, it is possible to reconstruct a 3D model combining the reconstructed phases with the architectural remains at the moment of their discovery. In this way one can "reconstruct" Dunand's excavations, and through a virtual exploration of such reconstruction one can verify and improve upon what Finkbeiner proposes.

Finkbeiner focuses on the architectural remains of the temple, and he orders the architectural phases according to a relative chronology, but he does not try to date them within an absolute chronological frame, nor does he discuss the associated material finds. My 3D reconstructions can instead be combined with the objects published by Dunand in his catalogue and plans. These objects can be sifted, identified, and selected through my

database (see online supplement, cf. Appendix B). Moreover, since Dunand indicated on the plans the precise findspot of many inscribed or artistically and historically relevant items found during the campaigns of 1926–1938 (§2.1.3), the locations within the temple of a significant number of these objects can be determined and their exact coordinates extrapolated. They can then be plotted in 3D models and associated with the architectural phases in order to define an approximate absolute chronology.[6]

The details of this approach are discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.4.1 Elaboration of the Data

Treatment of the archaeological evidence from the Obelisk Temple involves various steps. First, the plans published by Dunand need to be digitized and the coordinates for each wall in each levée need to be extrapolated. This can be done semi-automatically, for instance using digitizer software to retrieve data from graphs. Once the coordinates of the walls have been extrapolated, they can be plotted into a 3D modelling software, automatically or manually triangulated, and 3D representations of the individual walls can thus be obtained (figs 4.5–4.8). This process corresponds essentially to "reconstructing the sliced onion", as Dunand suggested in the description of his excavation technique (§2.1.3).

This process of digitization makes it possible to check the accuracy and coherence of Dunand's different plans. For instance, sections of the same wall can appear on two plans in slightly different alignments, probably due to the small errors inherent in manual recording. In general, however, Dunand's plans are quite precise and fit together well with one another, which support their reliability.

Within these 3D reconstructions, walls can be divided or grouped into related ensembles on the basis of their reciprocal relationships (such as continuity, superimpositions, or cross-cutting relationships). The many pictures of the excavations of the temple that Dunand published (Dunand 1954, pls xxi–xxxvi), as well as a few additional plans of specific phases published in his catalogue help in this process (Dunand 1954, fig. 22, pp. 27–8; fig. 767, pp. 644–5; fig. 1007, pp. 895–6). The building sequences can then be combined to group the various architectural remains into specific building phases,

[6] One naturally has to take into consideration the possibility that the findspots of these objects do not necessarily correspond to their original primary context, as I explain later.

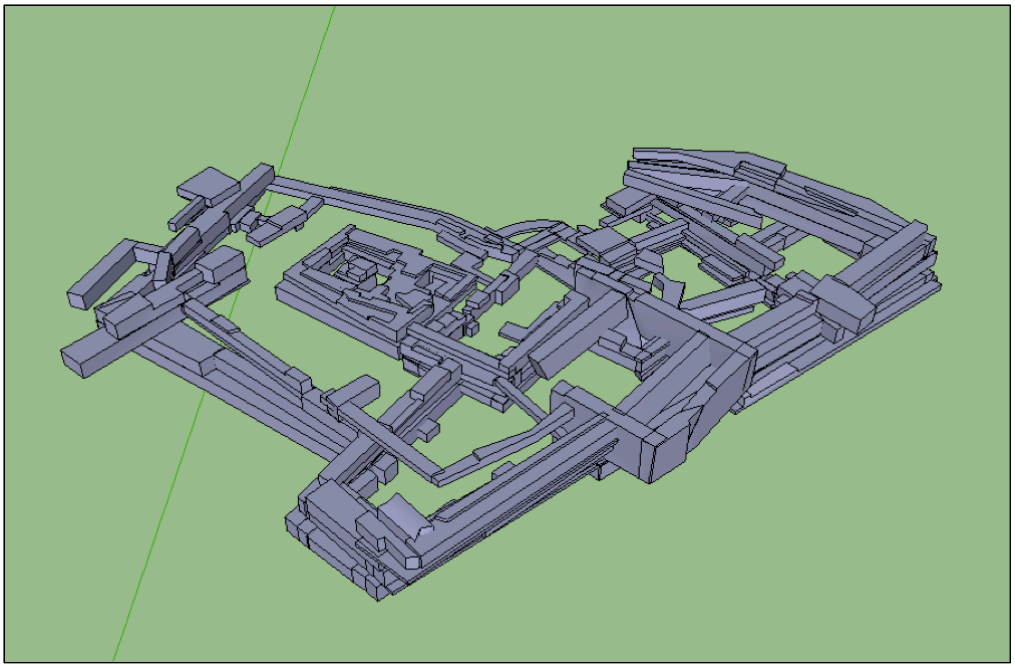


Figure 4.5: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated, from a south-eastern perspective.

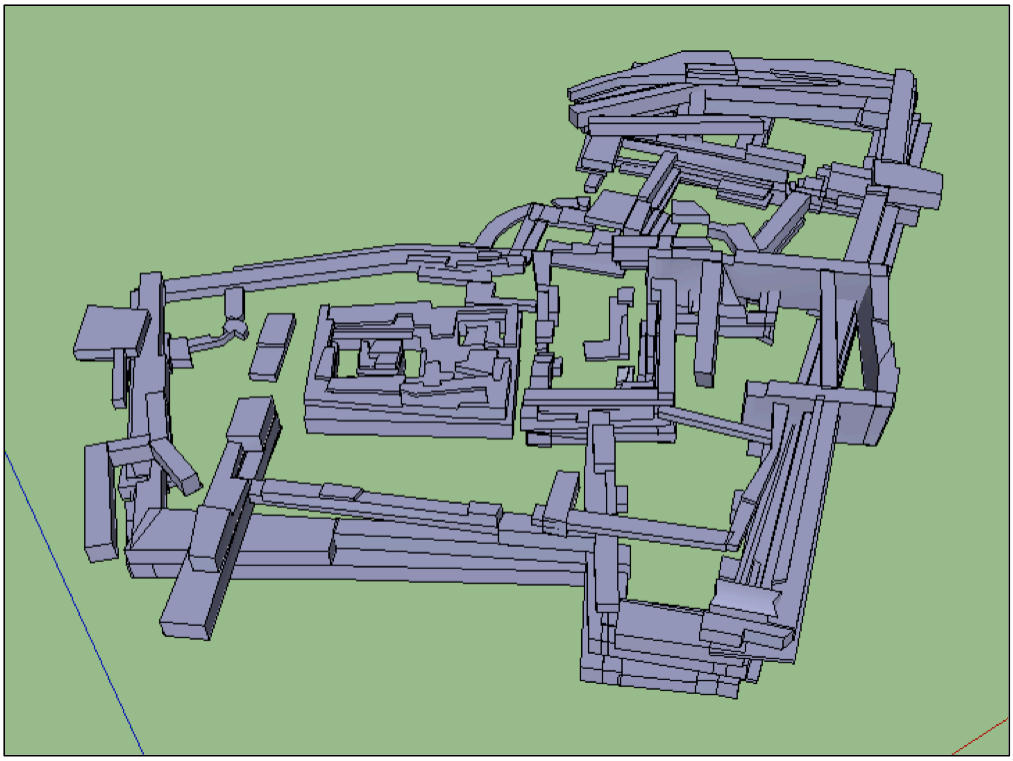


Figure 4.6: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated, from southern perspective.

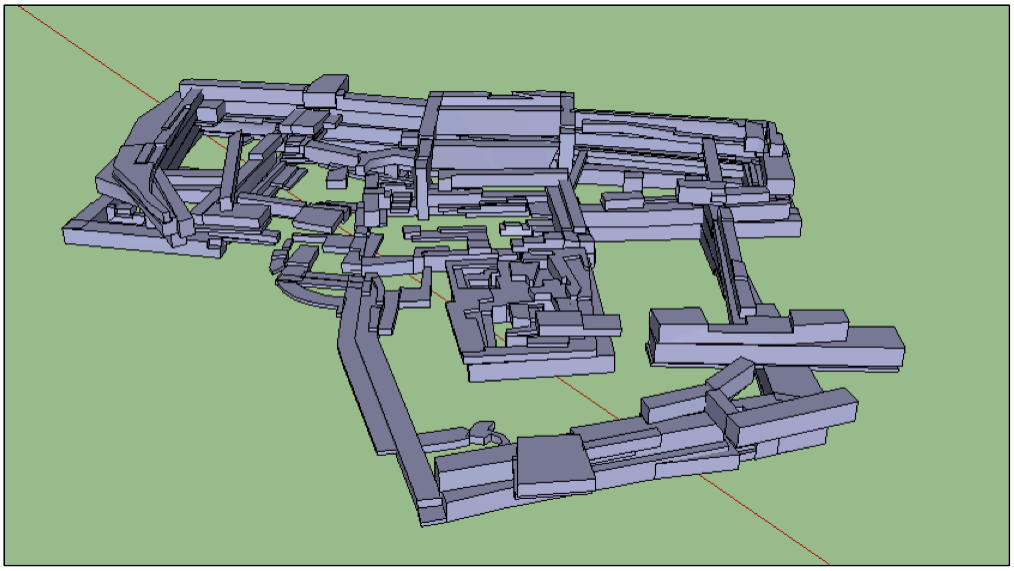


Figure 4.7: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated, from western perspective.

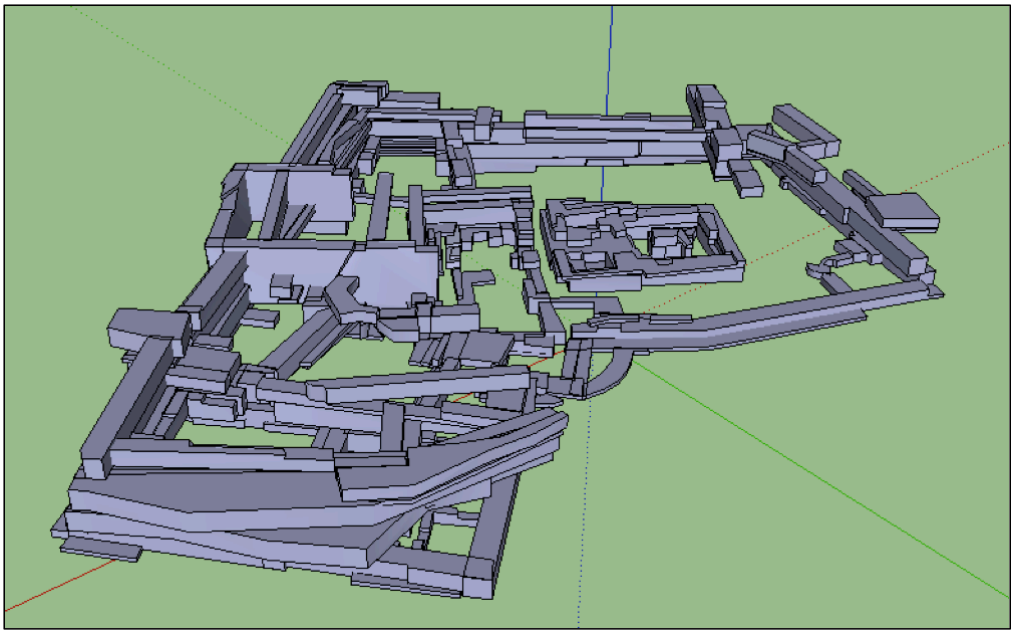


Figure 4.8: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated, from a northern perspective.

which in turn can be combined with Finkbeiner's results and be used for more elaborate reconstructions (see below §4.4.4, §4.4.5). Various manipulations can be performed on these models. For instance, specific groups of walls can be highlighted (4.9–4.10) or vertical sections can be obtained in any direction and for any point in the building (4.11).

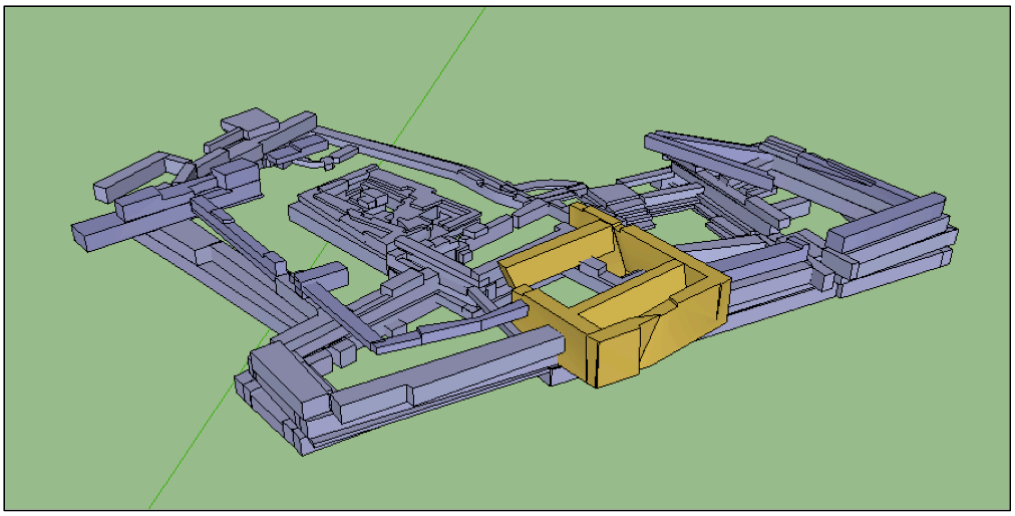


Figure 4.9: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated. The foundations of the Roman period Chapelle Orientale are highlighted in yellow.

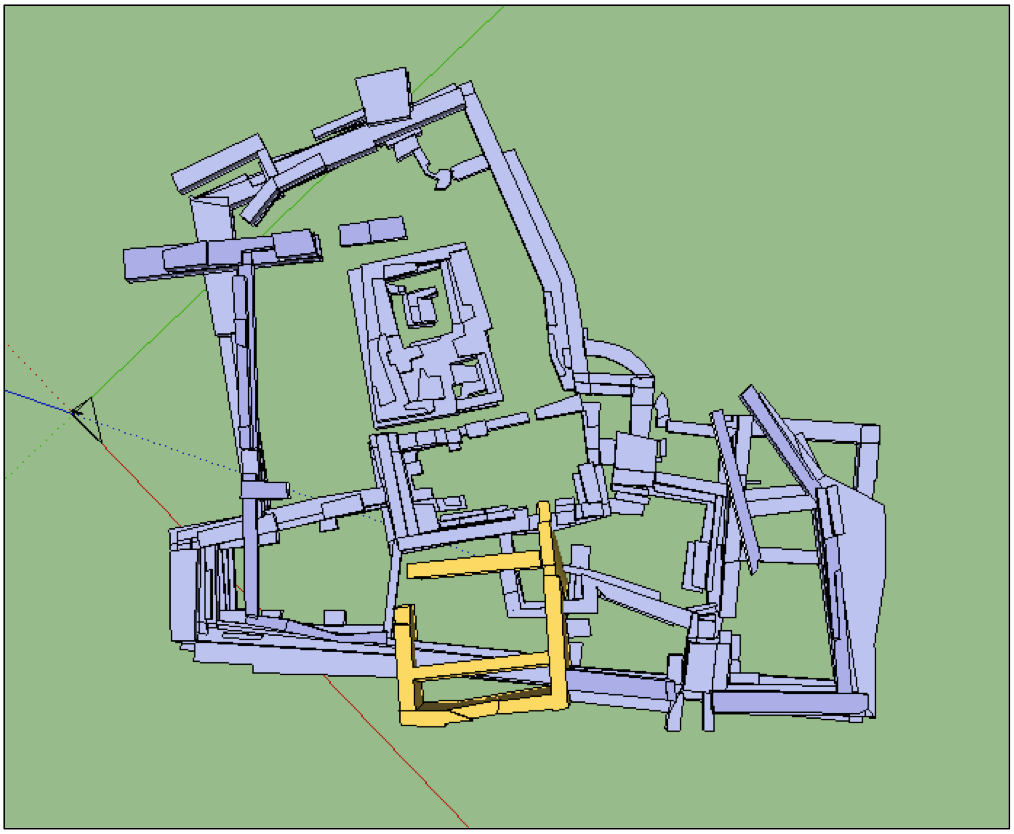


Figure 4.10: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated. The foundations of the Roman period Chapelle Orientale are highlighted in yellow.

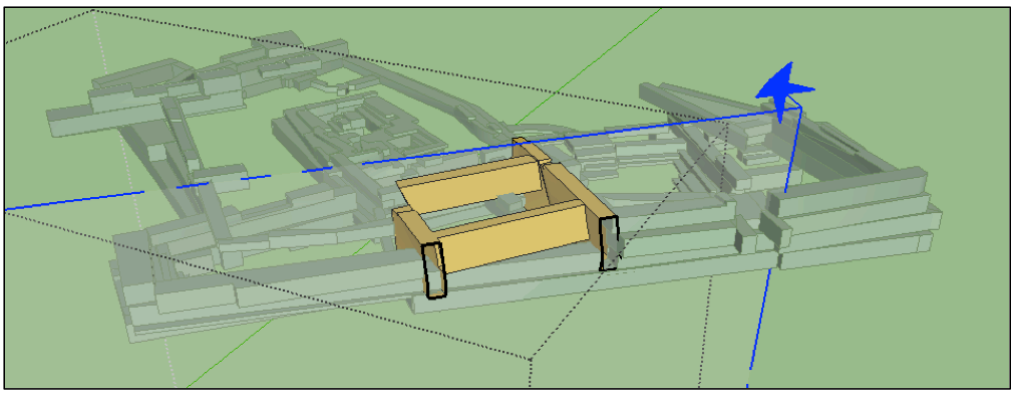


Figure 4.11: 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated. The foundations of the Roman period Chapelle Orientale are highlighted in yellow.

4.4.2 Architectural phases

In general, my phases correspond quite well with Finkbeiner's, while the comparison of the 3D reconstruction of the excavated remains with his reconstruction makes it possible to identify where his proposals are based on surviving architectural remains and where they are informed suggestions. Since this thesis focuses on the Late Bronze Age, only the architectural phases corresponding to the Obelisk Temple proper are discussed. Its predecessor building, the so-called Temple en L, is not studied here because its remains are located below and predate the destruction layer of the end of the Early Bronze Age. Likewise, the remains of the structures build after the Obelisk Temple, such as the Roman Chapelle Orientale, are excluded.

As observed by Finkbeiner, four distinct architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple can be recognized, his Phases IV, V, VI, and VII, which are my Phases 4–7 (figs 4.12–4.18). These 3D reconstructions can be combined, as in fig. 4.19. Walls can be removed, and we can look at floors only as in fig. 4.20. These 3D projections can be combined with the stratigraphic approximation of the Late Bronze Age layers (see Appendix C), as it can be seen in fig. 4.21 and 4.22. Finally, these 3D projections can be further elaborated to obtain architectural models and plans of the specific phases, as explained in the following paragraphs.

Phase 4

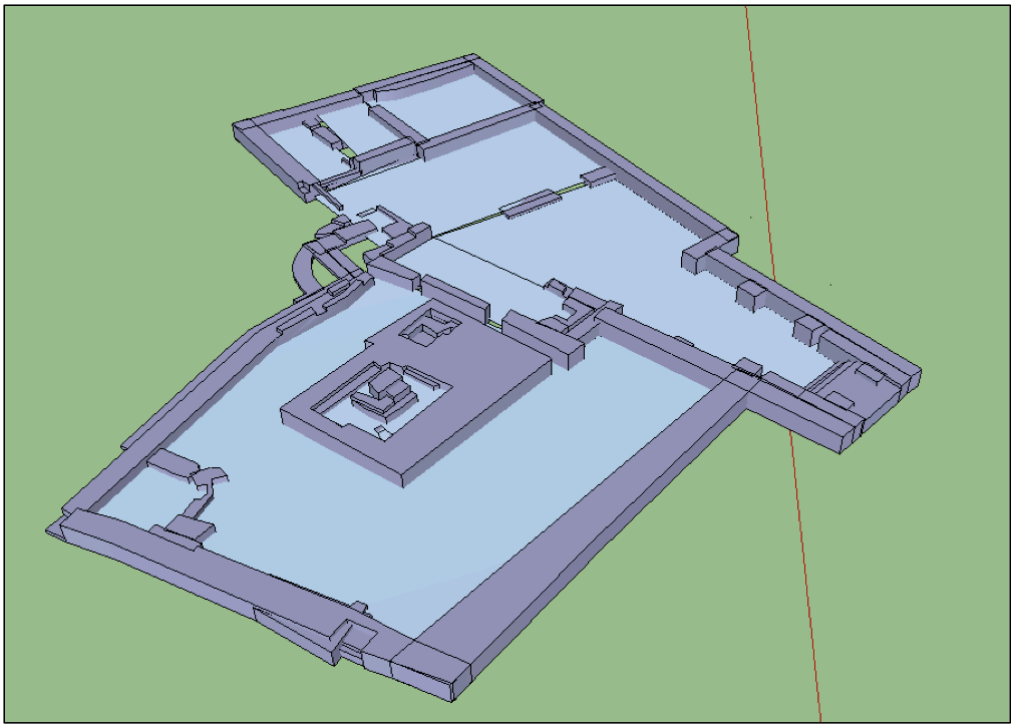


Figure 4.12: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Phase 4 with walls and floors.

Phase 4–5

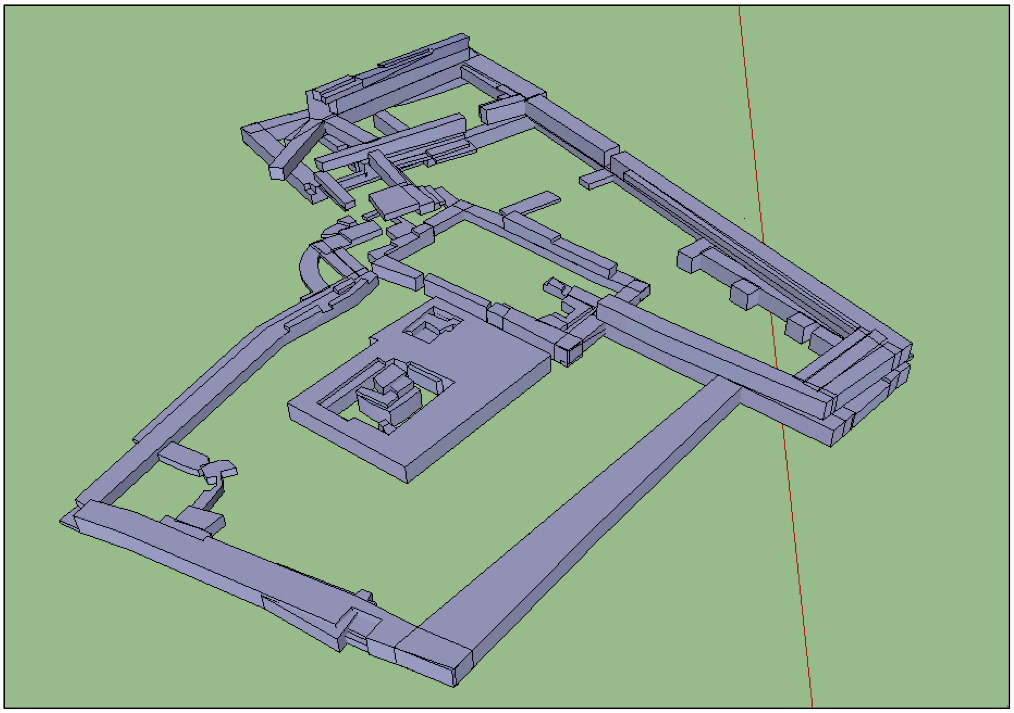


Figure 4.13: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Walls of phases 4 and 5 combined.

Phase 5

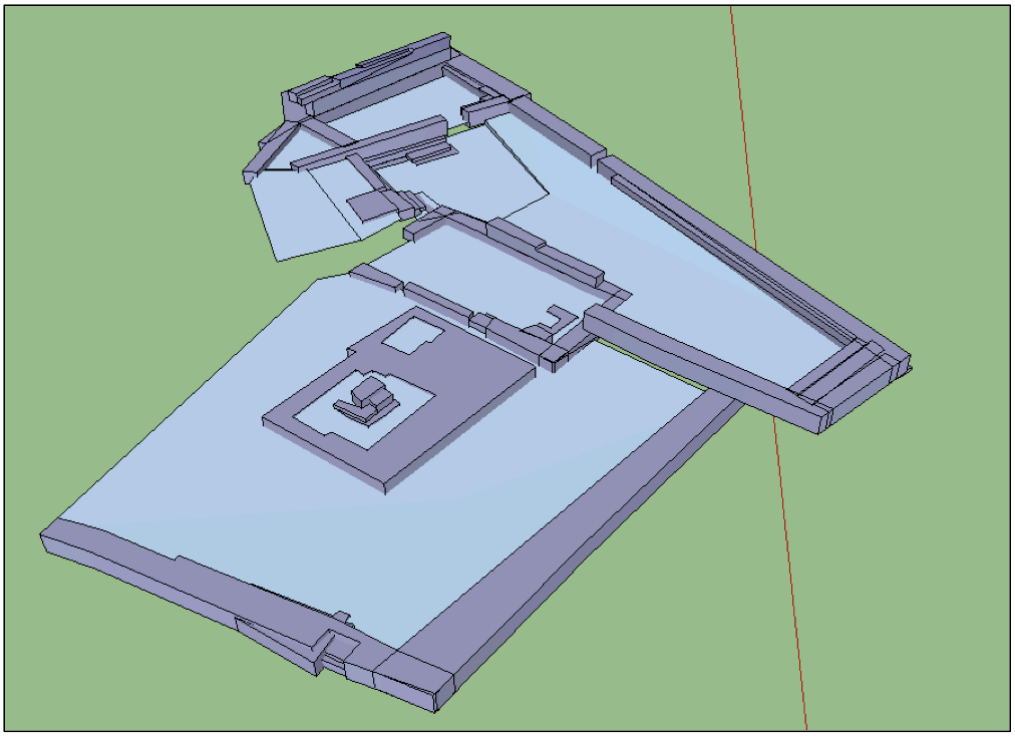


Figure 4.14: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Phase 5 with walls and floors.

Phase 5–6

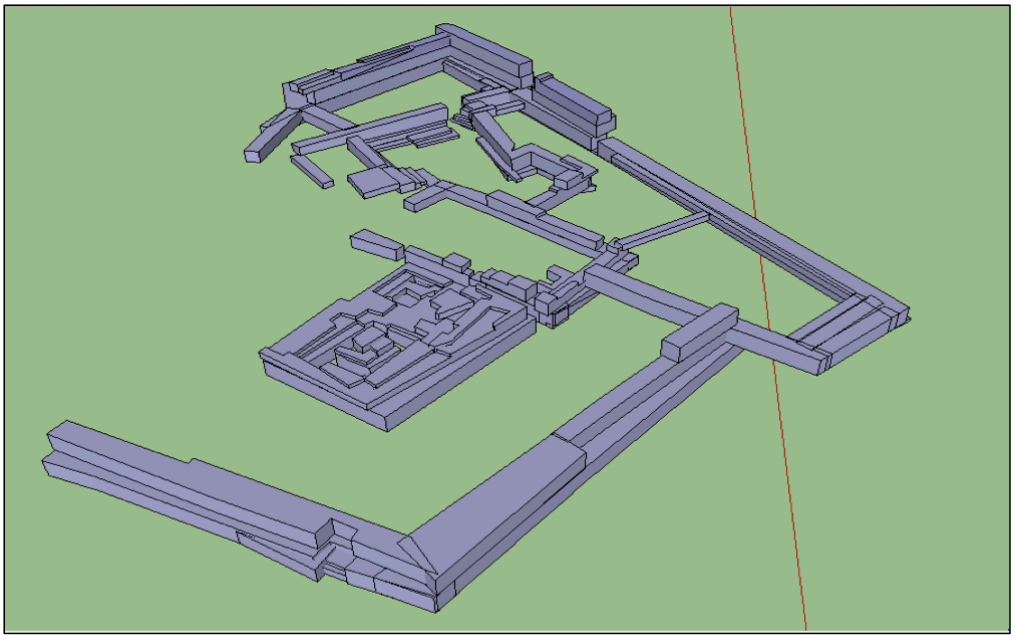


Figure 4.15: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Walls of phases 5 and 6 combined.

Phase 6

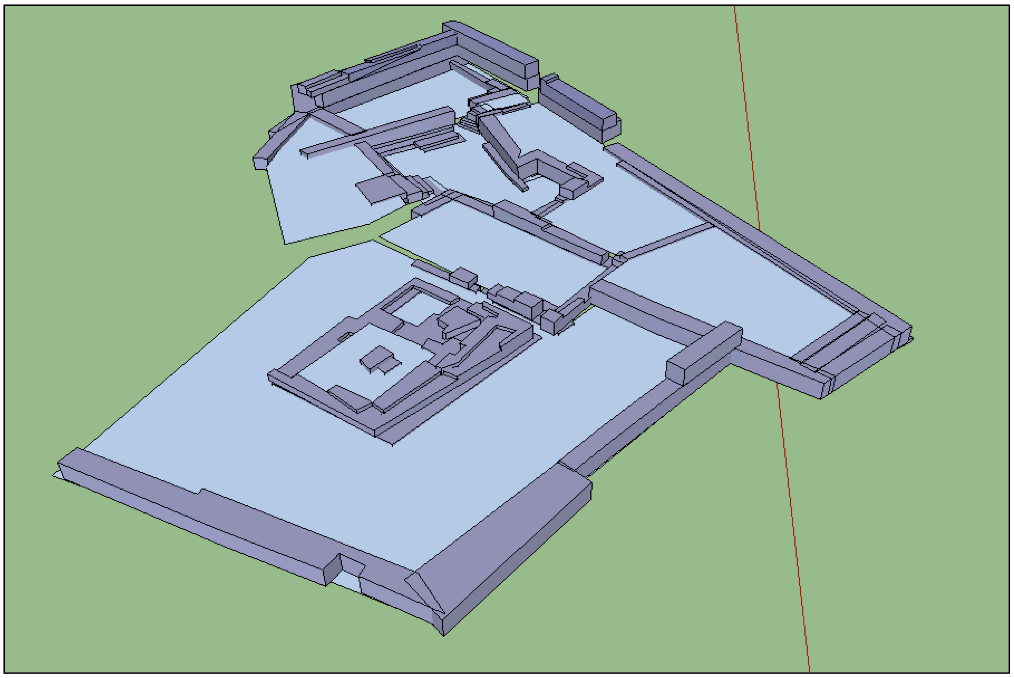


Figure 4.16: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Phase 6 with walls and floors.

Phase 6–7

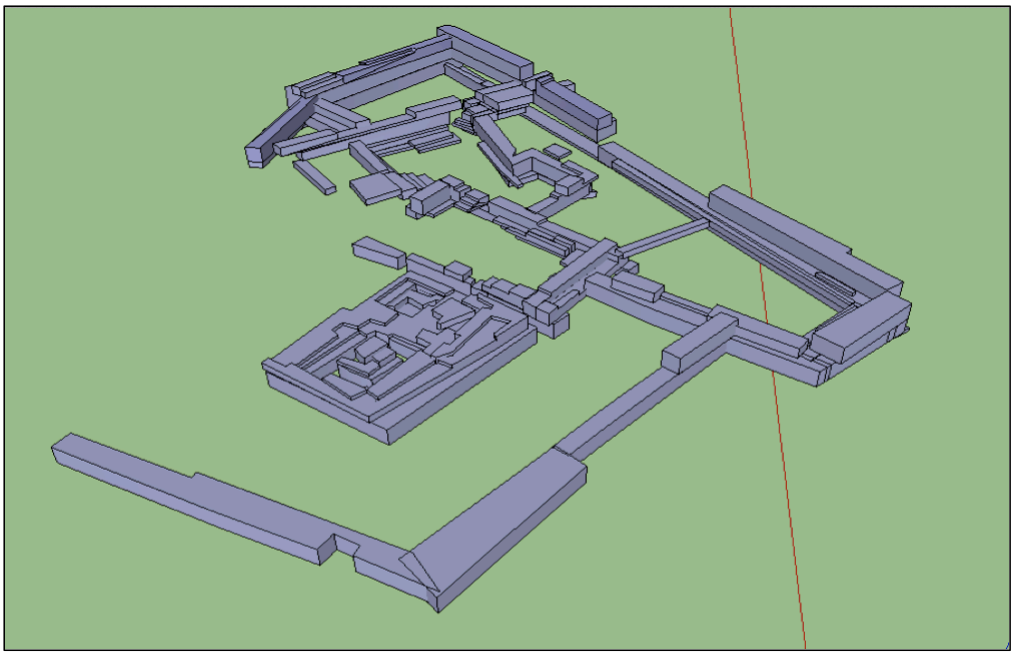


Figure 4.17: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Walls of Phases 6 and 7 combined.

Phase 7

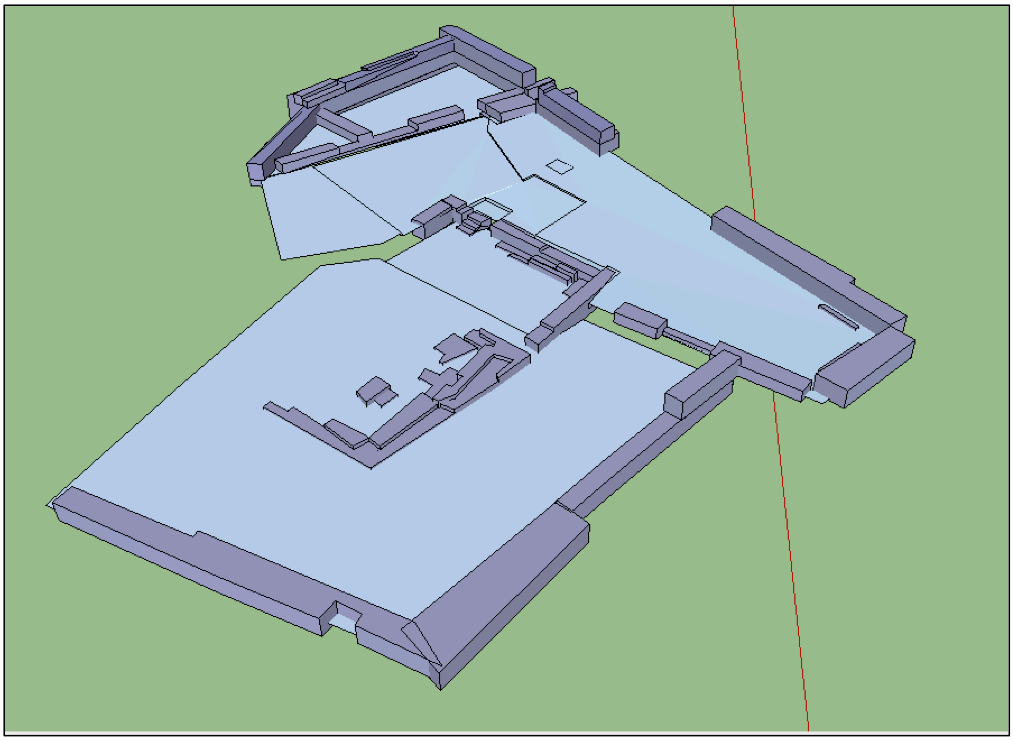


Figure 4.18: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Phase 7 with walls and floors.

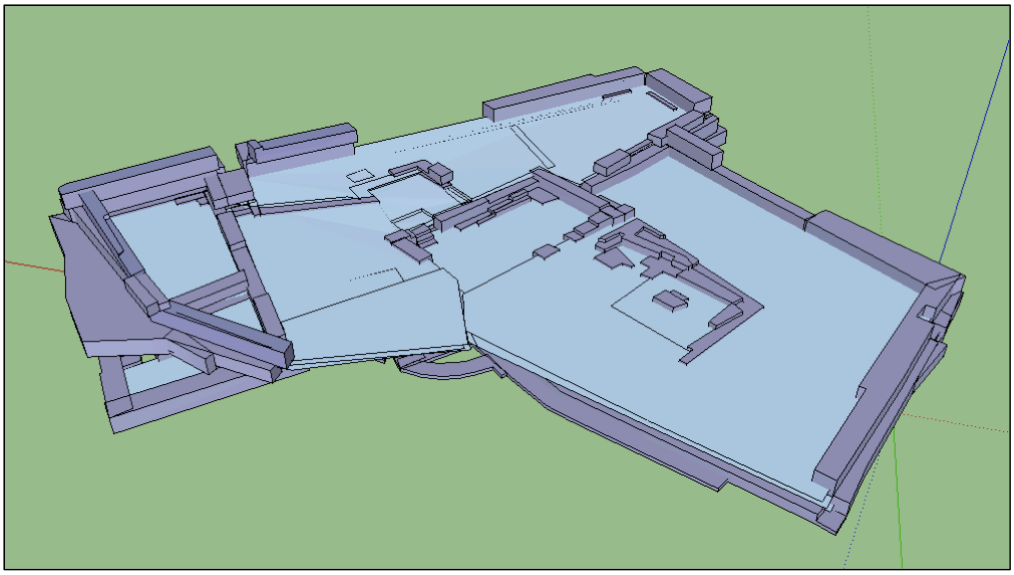


Figure 4.19: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple combining the walls and floors of Phases 4, 5, 6 and 7.

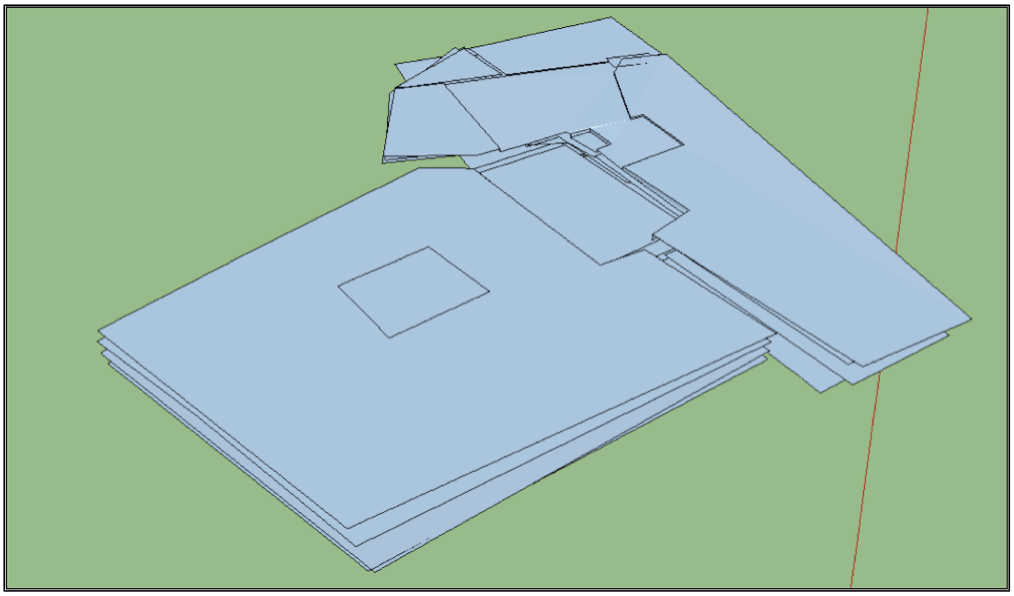


Figure 4.20: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple combining the floors of Phases 4, 5, 6 and 7.

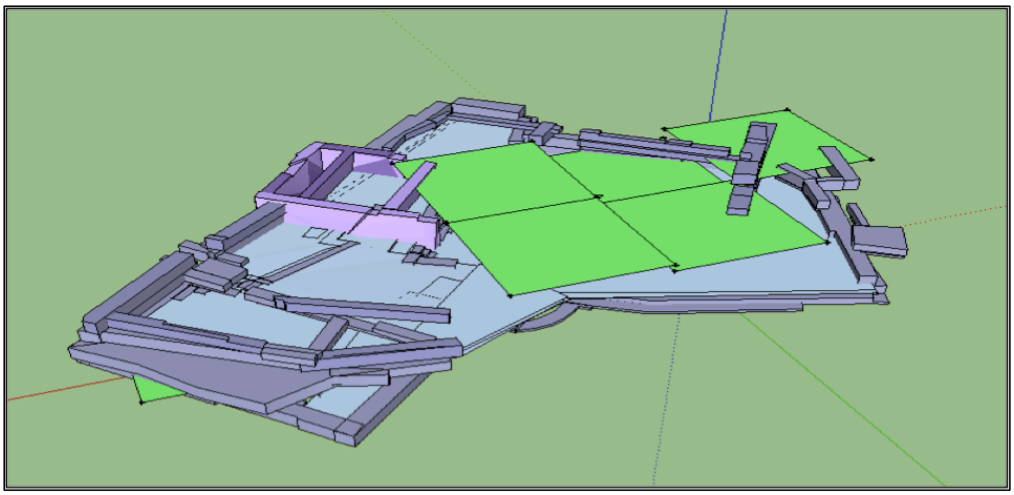


Figure 4.21: Projection of the *terminus sub quo* (green – see Appendix C) in combination with the 3D model of different architectural phases and from a north-western perspective.

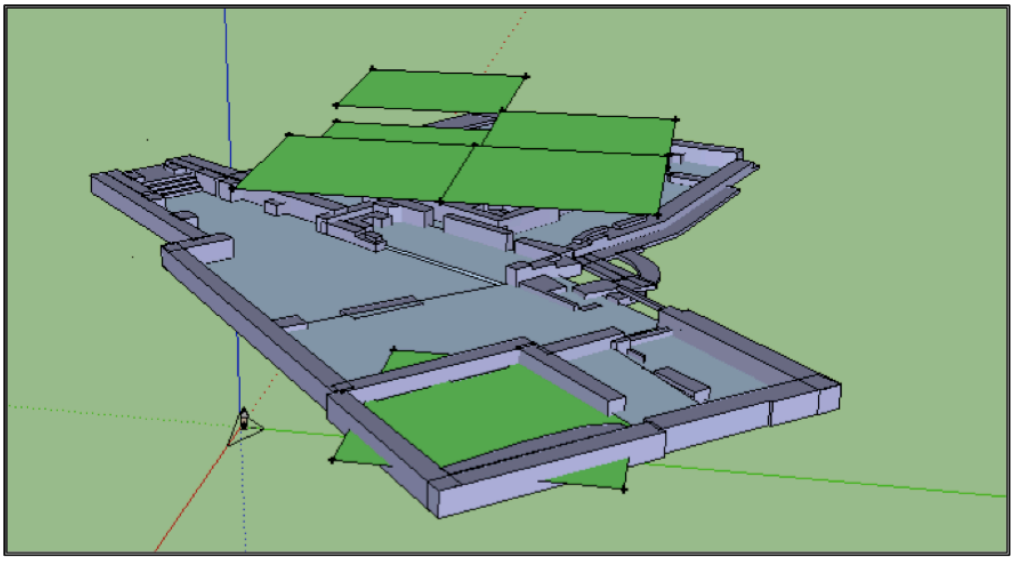


Figure 4.22: 3D model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple – Phase 7 with walls and floors.

4.4.3 Late Bronze material and layers

A series of observations can be made starting from the combination of the stratigraphic approximations with the 3D models. First, the *sub quo* limit for the Late Bronze Age (see Appendix C) appears very coherent in the area of the Obelisk Temple, and in the majority of the squares it is located between levée 2 and levée 11.[7] The only exception is square 11/22, where the *sub quo* limit is much lower and corresponds to levée 18. On the basis of Dunand's records, it appears that a coin (no. 15581) was found in that Excavation Unit. In view of the coherence of the *sub quo* limit elsewhere in the temple, it is likely that we have here a contamination from upper, later layers. Dunand did not give the exact location of the coin and it is impossible to say how it ended up there, wheter because of some major disturbance or because of some minor infiltration. As a consequence, the whole square has thus to be considered with caution, as it could have been stratigraphically disturbed.

Late Bronze Age objects have been found both below the level of the *terminus sub quo* and above it. The latter are clearly out of place. They, however, are worthy of attention, as they form a relatively coherent ensemble both spatially and typologically (see §4.4.6).

Scattered allusions indicate that Dunand had a clear and precise idea about the chronology of the structures he was excavating, but he did not publish a coherent chronological

[7] In particular: levée 5, 11/19; levée 2, 11/20; levée 6, 12/18; levée 11, 12/19; levée 2, 12/20.

discussion, especially for these late periods. The objects found below the *terminus sub quo* can help in filling this gap. The evidence is not much because, as already discussed, Dunand's records are not very informative about the dating of objects discovered. Nonetheless, although only a few chronological points of reference can be identified, the available evidence provides enough of a basis for offering some suggestions about the architectural development of the temple.

A. The first dating clue is a fragment of a stone block bearing the name of Thutmose III (no. 13439; see §3.5 above). This was found near the south-eastern corner of the courtyard (fig. 4.25) in levée 15 (elevation 25.20–25.00 m), that is, above the level of the floor of Phase 6 (elevation 24.90 m) and just below that of Phase 7 (elevation 25.30 m). The block was clearly recut for secondary use. Therfore no direct association between it and its context of discovery can be suggested. Nevertheless, it is a good *terminus post quem*: since no trace of disturbance is recognizable in the area where it was found, we can assume that the associated layers are either contemporary with the time of Thutmose III or later.

B. Dunand found another fragment of a stele near the southern wall of the small chapel located at the east of the antechamber (Dunand's Annexed Chapel, 1954, 650; see figs 4.25 and 4.30). This stele is mentioned in Dunand's catalogue (Dunand 1954, 650), but it is not listed among the discovered items. Montet also discussed it briefly in a later publication (1964, 65–6). The text was very eroded, and only a few words could be translated – see below 4.4.4.

   According to Dunand (1954, 650, n.1), this stele dates to the Second Intermediate Period. Montet, instead, suggested to date it to the Old Kingdom. This would imply that it was completely out of context, since the layers where it was found are clearly above the remnants of the "Temple en L" and above the destruction layer from the end of the Early Bronze Age/Old Kingdom. Montet's date, however, is far from certain, being based solely on the observation that the name of Byblos is spelled *k-b-n*, rather than *kȝp-n-y* (1964, 66). Although *k-b-n* was indeed the usual spelling during the Old Kingdom, its use is attested in Egypt until well into the

Middle Kingdom (Horn 1963, 59–61). Nothing excludes its being used slightly later in Byblos. The stele could thus date to the (late?) Middle Bronze Age/late Middle Kingdom or to the Second Intermediate Period, as suggested by Dunand. In the future, examination of the original might identify further dating criteria.

C. A deposit found near the southern wall of the courtyard gives another point of reference for dating. This deposit consists of a small jar containing two bronze figurines (nos 15883, 15884) and a scarab (no. 15885).[8] Dunand found it near the southern wall of the courtyard in levée 19 (elevation 24.40–24.20 m), above the floor level of Phase 4 (elevation 24.10 m) and approximately at floor level of Phase 5 (elevation ca. 24.40 m). The jar was intact when discovered, and the deposit does not seem to have been disturbed, which suggests that it was found in its original position. According to Dunand, one of the bronze statuettes (no. 15883) should be dated to the Second Intermediate Period or perhaps to the New Kingdom. According to Boschloos (2011, BYB 556), however, the scarab dates to the late Middle Bronze I–Middle Bronze II/Late Middle Kingdom and is contemporary with its context (she gives no reason for this interpretation). This deposit may thus date to the Late Middle Kingdom or to the early Second Intermediate Period.

D. 1) Objects that according to Dunand could date to the Late Middle Bronze Age (MB III)/Second Intermediate Period or to the Early Late Bronze (LB I–IIA)/Early New Kingdom have been found also in the Procella of the temple. In particular, a bronze blade (no. 13386) and five jugs (nos 13387–13391) that Dunand dated to the Middle Bronze III or to the Late Bronze Age I–IIA were found under a bench near the northern wall of the Procella, in levée 15 (elevation 25.20–25.00 m). According to the archaeologist, they could be a deliberate deposit, perhaps commemorating the construction of the bench.

2) Figurine no. 14613 could also date to the Second Intermediate Period, according to Dunand. Its precise findspot is not specified, but its catalogue number makes it likely that it was found close to the deposit 14560–14607, near the south-eastern

[8] For a detailed discussion of bronze figurines in the Levant, including Byblos, see Seeden 1980; Negbi 1976.

corner of the Procella, in levée 17 (elevation 24.80–24.60 m). On the basis of Dunand's plans, these levées appear to correspond to architectural Phases 6 and 7.[9]

E. Finally, according to Dunand (1954, 651), the little chapel (the Annexed Chapel) discovered in the area at the south-east of the antechamber was built during Middle Bronze III, equivalent to the Second Intermediate Period.[10] This chapel was added to the temple during the architectural Phase 6.[11]

A tentative absolute chronology can be suggested on the basis of this evidence. We can follow Dunand and suggest that Phase 6, characterised by the construction of the Annexed Chapel, dates to the Middle Bronze III/Second Intermediate Period (see E. above) and perhaps the Early Late Bronze Age I–IIA/early New Kingdom (18th dynasty). This would agree with the dating of objects found in the corresponding layers of the Procella, namely figurine no. 14613 (D.1. above) and possibly the deposit under the bench, nos 13387–13391 (D.2. above), and it would support Dunand's dating for the stele found in the Annexed Chapel (B. above). Phases 4 and 5 could thus be dated to the Middle Bronze I–II/Middle Kingdom, as they precede Phase 6 but are later than the destruction of the "Temple en L", which probably took place in the late Early Bronze Age (EBIV)/end of the Old Kingdom – the First Intermediate Period. This interpretation would agree with the Middle Bronze age dating suggested by Boschloos for the small deposit (C. above) found approximately at the floor level of Phase 5. Finally, Phase 7 can be dated to the Late Bronze Age or later, as it follows Phase 6. It is however difficult to establish when the transition from Phase 6 to Phase 7 took place.

[9]The Procella does not seem to have undergone any significant architectural change between Phases 6 and 7.

[10]Dunand actually wrote "première époque intermédiaire, c'est-à-dire du Bronze Moyen 3". It is clear from the context that this is a mistake, and that he intended Second Intermediate Period.

[11]See Dunand's fig. 767 (1954), which combines two architectural phases. The western part, with the cella and the courtyard, corresponds to my Phase 5 (Finkbeiner's V), while the eastern part, with the antechamber, Annexed Chapel, and the nearby rooms, corresponds to my Phase 6 (Finkbeiner's VI). This fits with Dunand's statement that the Annexed Chapel was "encore plus tardive que le Temple aux obélisques dans l'état que nous venons de présenter" (Dunand 1954, 651).

Two scenarios can be suggested for the position of the fragment of Thutmose's stone block, which was found just below the supposed floor level of Phase 7. The first possibility is that Phase 6 corresponds to both the end of the late Middle Bronze Age (MBIII)/Second Intermediate Period and the early Late Bronze Age (LBI)/early New Kingdom, possibly around the first half of the 18th dynasty, while Phase 7 would be later, and could date to the Late Bronze Age IIA–B/late 18th or to the 19th dynasty. In this case, the block with the name of Thutmose III, if originally relating to the Obelisk Temple, could pertain to Phase 6 and could have been destroyed during the building works of Phase 7. The second possibility is that Phase 6 corresponds to both the late Middle Bronze Age (MBIII)/Second Intermediate Period and the Late Bronze Age (LBI–IIA/B)/ 18th and 19th dynasty, in which case Phase 7 would instead be much later, corresponding to the final part of the Late Bronze Age (LBIIB)/19th dynasty or even to the beginning of the Iron Age/post 19th dynasty. Since Dunand seems to have dated Phase 6 to the late Middle Bronze Age III/late Second Intermediate Period rather than to the Late Bronze Age/New Kingdom (see E. above), since there is no mention of Iron Age material in clear association with these phases of the Obelisk Temple and the *teminus sub quo* based on Iron Age and later material is clearly above the level of Phase 7 (see figs 4.21 and 4.22), and since construction activities are attested in the cultic area of the city under Ramses II (see §4.5 below), the former scenario is the more plausible.

The chronological sequence can thus be summarized as follows:

Phase 4: Middle Bronze Age I–II/Middle Kingdom
Phase 5: Middle Bronze Age I–II/Middle Kingdom
Phase 6: Middle Bronze Age III–Late Bronze Age I/ Second Intermediate Period-Early New Kingdom (early 18th dynasty)
Phase 7: Late Bronze Age IIA–B/late New Kingdom (late 18th dynasty and later)

Phases 6 and 7 are therefore the most relevant ones for the present study; they are discussed more in detail in the following paragraphs.

4.4.4 Phase 6

On the basis of the 3D reconstruction of Dunand's excavation described above, it is possible to develop a 3D architectural model of Phase 6 of the Obelisk Temple (figs

4.23 and 4.24). Relevant objects can be plotted in this model, and a plan can be obtained from it, as it appears in fig. 4.25.

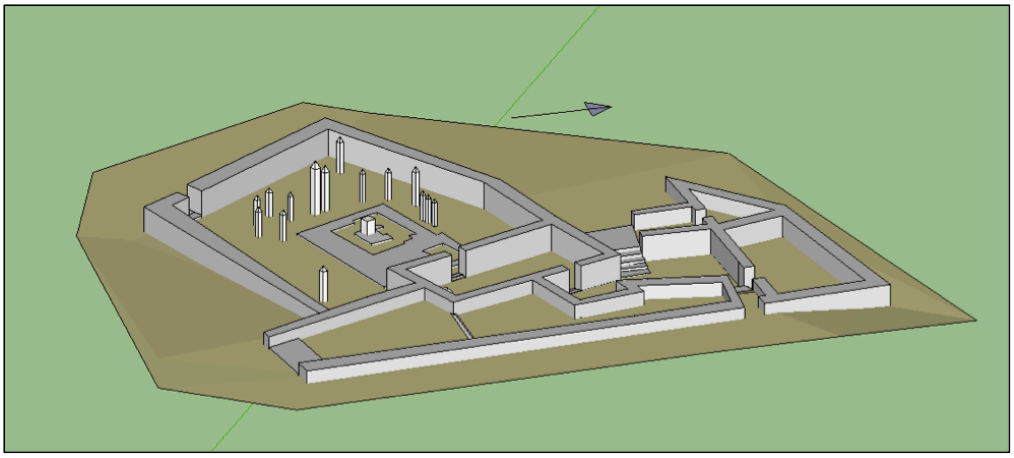


Figure 4.23: Phase 6 – Tridimentional reconstruction. The elevation of the obelisks is indicative.

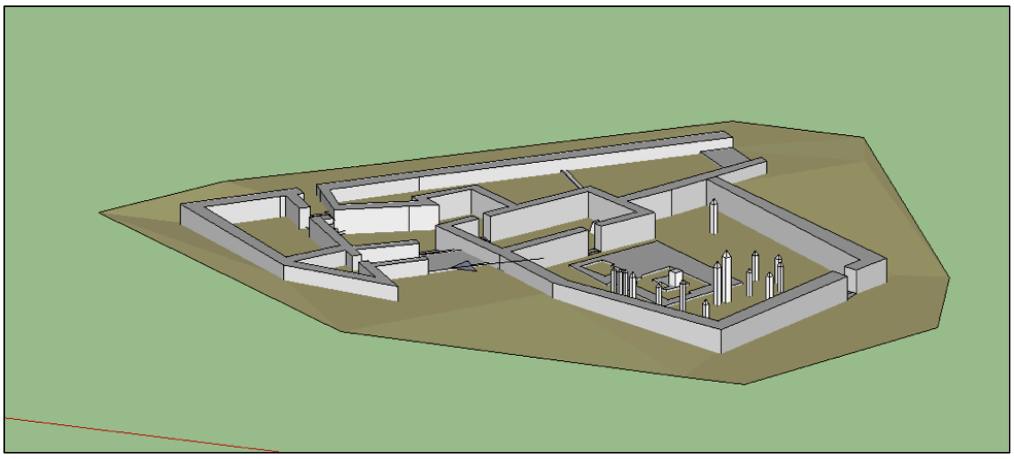


Figure 4.24: Phase 6 – Tridimentional reconstruction. The elevation of the obelisks is indicative.

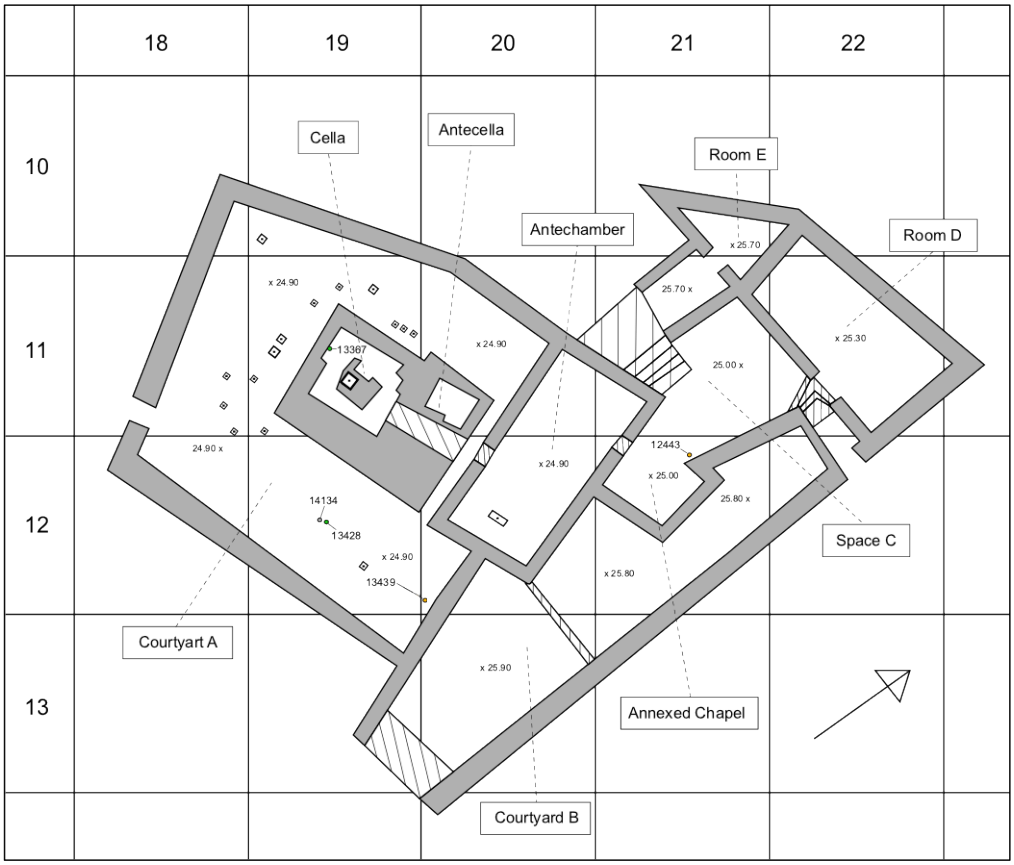


Figure 4.25: Phase 6 – Plan. Hatched areas indicate thresholds, stairs, and other architecturally marked access points, while the dotted squares represent obelisks. Only the main obelisks are indicated (Dunand mentioned at least 26 obelisks or fragments of obelisks – Dunand 1954, 646).

The temple presents an original architectural design which differs from contemporary temples in Syria and Southern Levant (Sala 2015, 47). The south-western part of the Obelisk Temple is the most characteristic and most innovative in comparison with the Early Bronze Age "Temple en L" that preceded it, but it remain constant later on. This area was the heart of the temple. The cella was located there at the centre of a broad courtyard encircled by a wall that defined it and separated it from the city and the outside world. The cella was a room of around 5×5 m. A pedestal made of stones was discovered at its centre (Dunand 1954, 644). It was probably the base of a monumental object – perhaps a baetylus or an altar? – that was the focus of ritual practice. The cella was preceded by an ante-cella on its eastern side. The access was on the east, by way of a short staircase and a narrow passage through the ante-cella. Various obelisks and standing stones were present in the courtyard, especially in its western part, behind the cella. The

Egyptian inscription found on one of them and dedicated by the Byblian king Ibishemu[12] shows that at least some of these obelisks were offerings to the deity of the temple. The whole courtyard was apparently used to collect and display offerings, as attested not only by the obelisks but also by the vessels, sherds, and various objects found scattered there.

The eastern part of the temple is characterized by a certain architectural continuity with the Early Bronze Age Temple en L, although individual rooms and spaces were modified and reorganized during the Middle Bronze Age. Access to the court was through an antechamber, located just in front of the access of the cella. On the south side of the antechamber Dunand found a stele in situ. It surface was eroded and nothing survived of any decoration and inscription. On the north there was a stone base and a stone disk; the functions of these are not clear (Dunand 1954, 649).

To the east of the antechamber there was an elongated room or courtyard (Courtyard B in fig. 4.25) that may or may not have been roofed. A similar area was present there already in the Temple en L. During Phase 6 a new architectural element, which Dunand term the Annexed Chapel (Dunand 1954, 649–51) was built within Courtyard B, in front of the access to the antechamber (fig. 4.25). In particular, since only foundations remain, it is not possible to say if this structure isolated the antechamber from Courtyard B or if a passage was present. This area of the temple is difficult to reconstruct, as it was affected by the construction of the foundations of the Roman Chapelle Orientale, which were as deep as Phase 6 (see fig. 4.11 above). At the north of the Annexed Chapel was a small intermediary space (Space C in fig. 4.25). From there two stairways led to accesses connecting the temple with the outside world, the main one was on the west while a smaller one could be found on the east. Finally, to the north of this space were two rooms of unclear, most likely utilitarian function. During the Middle Bronze Age, one of these rooms (part of room D in fig. 4.25) was used as a metalworking shop for producing bronze figurines and other objects, possibly to be offered in the temple (Dunand 1954, 651). From Dunand's records, however, it is impossible to say if this room maintained the same function also in Phases 6 and 7.

[12] *mry ḥry-šf ḥ3ty-ʿ n k3pny jb(j)šmw wḥm ʿnḫ ḫtmw-nsw=f kwkwn s3 rwqq m3ʿ-ḫrw* "Beloved of Heryshef, the count of Byblos Ibishemu, repeating life, his royal sealer Kukun son of Ruqeq, justified" Montet 1962, 96 – see below.

Only a few objects worthy of notice were found in the layers corresponding to Phase 6; their findspots are indicated on Dunand's plans and in fig. 4.25.

- **No. Dunand II 12443 – Fragment of stele or architectural block**
  - Findspot: Space C (fig. 4.25), just north of the Annexed Chapel – levée 12, 12/21.
  - Description and notes: Fragment of stele or architectural block made of sandstone and bearing traces of an Egyptian relief depicting two offering tables. According to Dunand, it had been cut down to the size of a building stone (42×28×26 cm). Dunand published only a drawing (see fig. 4.26 here below), so that it is impossible to date it or say anything more. Since it was recut in antiquity, it might not have come from the Obelisk temple, and its location could be secondary.

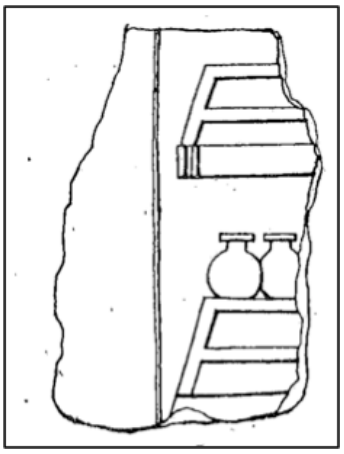


Figure 4.26: Fragment of stele or architectural block Dunand II 12443. From Dunand 1954, 524

- **No. Dunand II 13428 – Scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 15, 12/19 (precise findspot not known).
  - Description and notes: Uninscribed amethyst scarab, a picture was published by Dunand (pl. cxxviii; here fig. 4.27). Boschloos (2011, BYB542) dates the scarab to the 12th or 13th dynasty. Dunand did not indicate a specific findspot, but square 12/19 includes part of the main courtyard of the temple. According to Boschloos (2011, BYB542, without quoting a source), the scarab was found outside the temple, in the street running along the southern wall of the courtyard. If she is right, this scarab may not be relevant here because it would be impossible to determine it bears any relation with the temple. Moreover, it cannot be directly associated with any specific architectural phase of the temple itself. If it was after all found in the courtyard, it could have been a temple offering deposited at the time of Phase 6, having circulated for a time after production and before deposition, or it could be out of context and could come from deeper, earlier layers.



Figure 4.27: Scarab Dunand II 13428. From Dunand 1954, pl. cxcviii

- **No. Dunand II 13439 – Fragment of building block with Egyptian Inscription**
  - Findspot: south-eastern corner of the courtyard, south of the cella – levée 15, 12/20.
  - Description and notes: Fragment (40.5 × 26.5 cm) of a limestone block bearing traces of the name of Thutmose III and of the *dj ʿnḫ* formula. A picture was published in Dunand 1954, pl. clv (see further §3.5 above). As explained above, this fragment is probably out of context, but it can be used as a *terminus post quem* for dating this architectural phase.

- **No. ? – Fragment of a stele inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs**
  - Findspot: against the southern wall of the Annexed Chapel.
  - Description and notes: This limestone stele inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs is not listed in Dunand's catalogue, but it is mentioned in a section describing the Obelisk Temple (Dunand 1954, 650) and was briefly published by Montet (1964, 65–6), who gave its dimensions of 85×60 cm. For issues of dating, see above. The stele was found in situ in the Annexed Chapel, against its southern wall. Traces of the inscription are visible only in its lower half, where a horizontal line precedes a series of vertical columns. The text was almost completely eroded at the time of the discovery, and Montet was able to read only the following words in the horizontal line:

    …]*jr mnww qd ḥw(t)=s (?)* […] *ḥwt-ḥr nb(t) kbn*[…
    …] making monuments, build her temple (?) […] Hathor Lady of Byblos […

    The stele thus seems to record the dedication of a building. It was probably made in the city, not imported from Egypt. The mention of the lady of Byblos and possibly of "her temple" raises questions about the relation between the Obelisk Temple and the Temple of the Lady (see below §4.34, §4.6).

In addition to these objects, a fragment of a stone vessel (no. 14134) was found in square 12/19, in levée 16 (height 9.3 cm, not illustrated). According to Dunand's description in his catalogue, it was from a diorite vessel, in the shape of truncated cone with flat bottom and a large horizontal lip. Its exact findspot is not known. Such vessels and their contents were luxury objects, and they were probably offered in the temple.

Various other objects were found in the area of the temple in the levées corresponding to Phase 6, including bronze weapons, beads, brooches, human and animal figurines, and pottery. Nothing specific can however be said about them, because their findspots are not known; usually only their square and levée are indicated in the publication, and their descriptions in Dunand's catalogue are not precise enough to be useful. It is clear nonetheless that the majority of these objects were offerings and property of the temple, and they attest the importance of the Obelisk Temple in the life of the city.

4.4.5 Phase 7

A 3D architectural model and a plan can be obtained also for Phase 7, they are shown in figs 4.28, 4.29 and 4.30. The architectural layout of Phase 7 is similar to that of Phase 6. Beside the general rise of the level of the floors, the only remarkable change was in the antechamber, which according to Dunand's plan became slightly shorter. In addition, in the intermediary Space C the floor level rose to reach that the street outside, rendering the access stairs unnecessary.

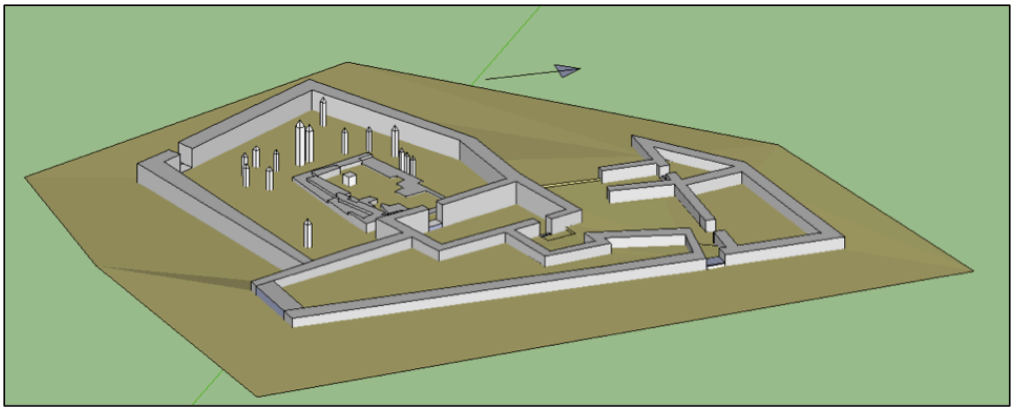


Figure 4.28: Phase 7 – Tridimentional reconstruction. The elevation of the obelisks is indicative.

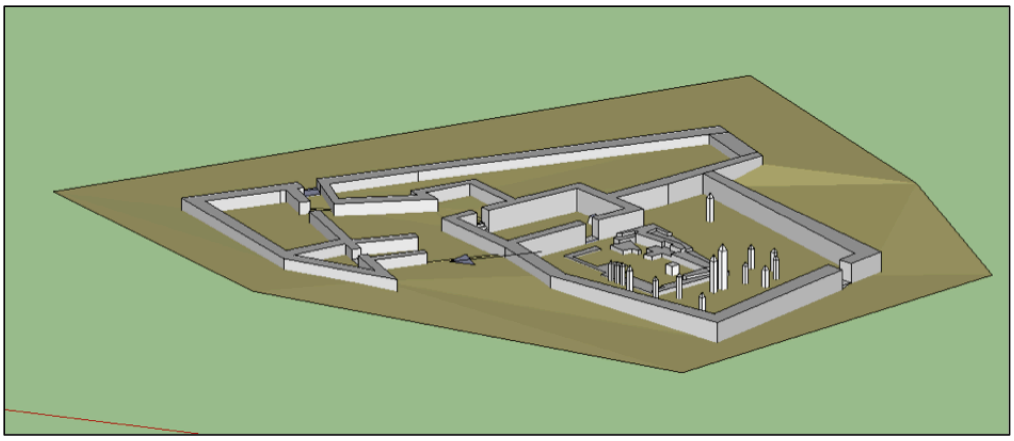


Figure 4.29: Phase 7 – Tridimentional reconstruction. The elevation of the obelisks is indicative.

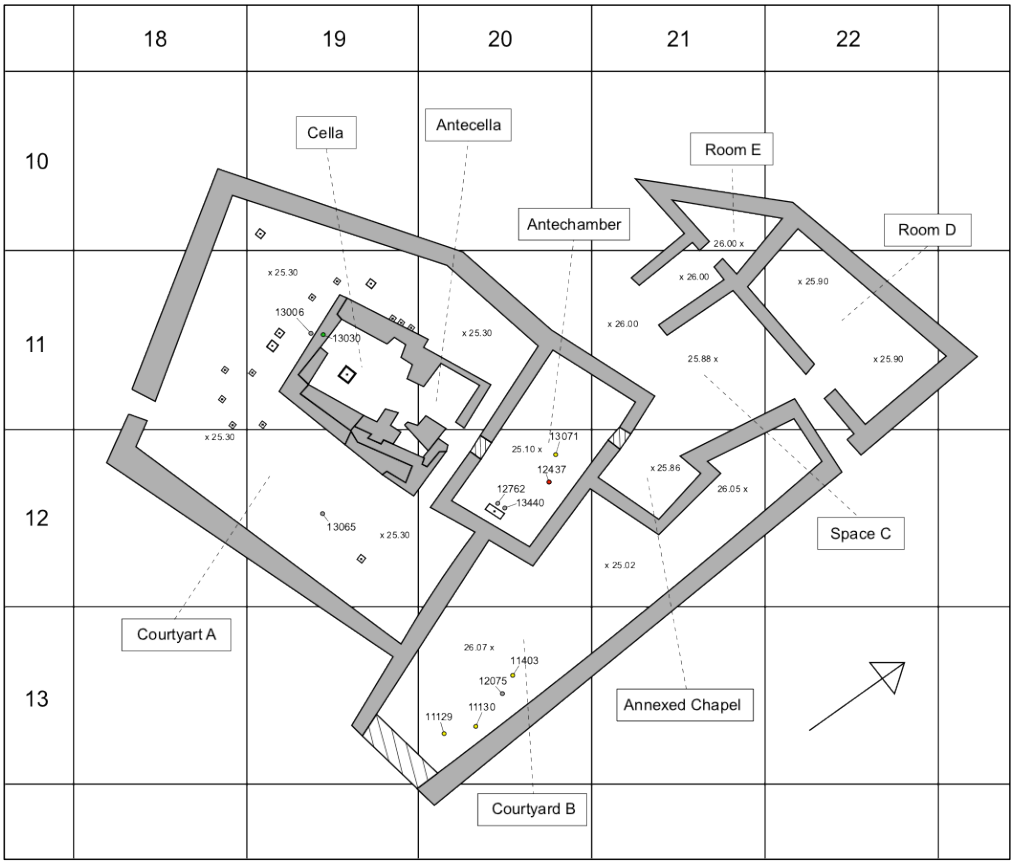


Figure 4.30: Phase 7 – Plan. In the plan hatched areas indicate thresholds, stairs, and other architecturally marked access points, while the dotted squares represent obelisks. Only the main obelisks are indicated (Dunand mentioned at least 26 obelisks or fragments of obelisks – Dunand 1954, 646).

As for Phase 6, a few objects found in association with Phase 7 deserve attention.

- **No. Dunand II 11129 – Bronze figurine**
  - Findspot: Southern part of the courtyard B – levée 9, 13/20.
  - Description and notes: Bronze standing male figurine, possibly representing a deity, and probably donated to the temple as an offering. Not identified by Seeden 1980. Height: 6.7 cm.

- **No. Dunand II 11130 – Bronze figurine**
  - Findspot: Southern part of the courtyard B – levée 9, 13/20.
  - Description and notes: According to Duannd, male silhouette cut from bronze foil. According to Seeden Seeden 1980, 90, D female figurine. If Dunand is right, another probable offering representing a male deity. (Dunand in pl. clxiii; see fig. 4.31). Height: 7 cm.

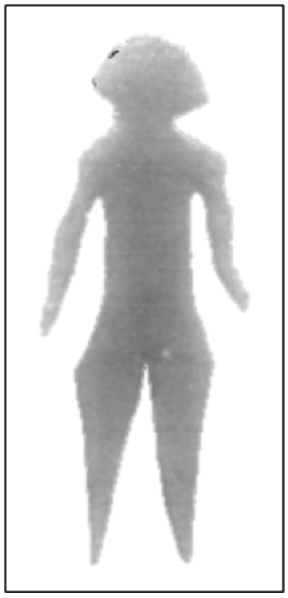


Figure 4.31: Figurine Dunand II 11130. From Dunand 1954, pl. clxiii).

- **No. Dunand II 11403 – Bronze figurine**
  - Findspot: Southern part of the courtyard B – levée 10, 13/20.
  - Description and notes: On the basis of Dunand's description in his catalogue, figurine similar to 11129 above. Not identified by Seeden 1980. Height: 7.2 cm.

- **No. Dunand II 13071 – Bronze figurine**
  - Findspot: Antechamber – levée 14, 12/20.
  - Description and notes: On the basis of Dunand's description in his catalogue, figurine similar to 11129 above. Not identified by Seeden 1980. Height: 5.6 cm.

- **No. Dunand II 12437 – Egyptian statue**
  - Findspot: Antechamber – levée 12, 12/20.
  - Description and notes: Diorite statue of a man, lost below chest level (11 cm high; fig. 4.32; Dunand 1954, pl. clvii). Dated by Dunand to the Second Intermediate Period or to the New Kingdom.

- **No. Dunand II 13030 – Scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 14, 11/19.
  - Description and notes: Probably found in the courtyard of the Obelisk Temple (Dunand did not indicate a precise findspot). According to Boschloos (2011 , BYB538), it is made of green jasper and dates to the late Middle Kingdom or later. As in the case of no. 13428, it could have circulated for some time before being deposited or could have migrated from deeper layers.



Figure 4.32: Statue Dunand II 12437. From Dunand 1954, pl. clvii).

As in the case of Phase 6, other objects were found scattered in the area of the Obelisk Temple in the levées associated with Phase 7. Among them there were stone vessels (nos 12075, 13065, 13006, 12762, 13440), weapons, jewels, figurines, and ceramics, including the five jugs mentioned above (§4.4.3, D.1) and dated by Dunand in his catalogue to the Second Intermediate Period/Late Middle Bronze Age or Early New Kingdom/Early Late Bronze Age. The blade and bronze figurine discussed above with these vessels (4.4.3, D.1) are probably also associated either with Phase 6 or Phase 7. As for Phase 6, Dunand's records are too vague to allow a detailed study of these objects, which can do no more than confirm the importance of the temple during this phase.

4.4.6 Late Bronze Age objects out of context

Some Late Bronze Age objects were found above the *terminus sub quo*. Although these objects were out of place, their distribution is rather coherent, suggesting a correlation between them and possibly a common origin. I refer to these objects as "Ensemble A" in the following paragraphs. Dunand seems to have thought that, beside a few exceptions. the objects found in this area[13] generally date to the Hyksos or Late Bronze times but were out of context, having been brought to the surface by the excavation for the foundations

[13]Dunand does not give the catalogue number of these objects, but it is reasonable to assume that he is referring to the objects of Ensemble A, as they are the only one found in the area that would fit the description.

of Roman buildings (Dunand 1954, 128–9, 272 n.3). Dunand did not explain the reasons for such an interpretation, but a re-evaluation of the evidence can shed some light on this point, and can support his idea.

Horizontally, the objects of Ensemble A are scattered mainly in 5 squares (12/18; 11/19; 12/19; 11/20; 12/20), roughly corresponding to the area of the temple antechamber and the southern part of its courtyard. Horizontally, the wall of the courtyard of Finkbeiner (1981) Phase VIII seems to mark the limit of this ensemble; no relevant object can be identified beyond it. Vertically, the situation is more complex. These objects are located above layers that contain post-Late Bronze material, but at the same time Middle Bronze Age scarabs are mixed with Late Bronze Age ones or found above them. It thus seems that we have a regular stratigraphy up to levées 7 or so, and then a confused, perhaps partially reversed one, in the squares containing Ensemble A. The easiest explanation for such a situation is that Ensemble A is the result of the secondary deposition of earth dug out from early layers. The Late Bronze Age material would have been dug out and discarded in this secondary position before the Middle Bronze material, and this would explain the loose, in part perhaps reversed stratigraphy. Such a disturbance would have occurred after the Iron Age and Greek period, whose layers are shown to lie below Ensemble A by the position of the *terminus sub quo*, but possibly when the top of the wall of the courtyard was still visible. The earth containing Ensemble A could have even been thrown there in order to fill a depression in the ground delimited by that wall and corresponding to the space occupied by the previous Obelisk Temple's courtyard.

As for the original position of these objects, the volume of the earth containing Ensemble A can be roughly estimated to be at least 260 m^3.[14] It is unlikely that such an amount would have been brought there from far away. The source must have been close, and relatively deep, to reach the Middle Bronze Age layers. These constraints fit very well with the excavation that must have taken place in Roman time to build the foundations of the Chapelle Orientale. As appears from fig. 4.11, those foundations are deep enough to reach and touch the floors of Phase 5, which can be dated to the Middle Bronze Age.

[14] I.e. the volume corresponding to the Excavation Units in which Ensemble A is scattered, counting 1 levée for square 12/18 and 11/19, 9 levées for 12/19, 3 levées for 11/20 and 4 levées for 12/20.

All the later phases were thus affected by these Roman architectural works. Moreover, it appears that the foundation of such Roman walls were not accommodated into narrow trenches. Rather, the whole space occupied by the foundations was fully excavated, as is demonstrated by the absence of remains of the eastern wall of the Obelisk Temple within the two foundation walls above levée 10 (see fig. 4.11, confirmed by Dunand 1954, 652). The volume of the earth removed for the construction of these foundation walls can thus be estimated as at least 360 m^3. Part of it probably returned as fill for the excavated foundations. The rest must have been discarded somewhere, probably not far away. The area containing Ensemble A would have been very suitable, especially if it needed to be filled and levelled. It is thus very likely that these objects came originally from the Obelisk Temple, and at least some of them could have been stored in a jar or some other container that was broken during the Roman work, scattering them around.

Among the objects forming Ensemble A were New Kingdom scarabs, including a few bearing royal names. They are the following:

- **No. Dunand II 7761 – Egyptian scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 2, 12/19.
  - Description and notes: scarab made of a white paste with the name of Thutmose III, *mn-ḫpr[-rʿ]*. Not listed in Boschloos.

- **No. Dunand II 8127 – Egyptian scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 3, 11/20.
  - Description and notes: steatite scarab with the prenomen of Amenhotep II *ʿȝ-ḫprw-rʿ*. The standard formulae *nfr nṯr, nb tȝwy*, and *dj ʿnḫ ḏt* are engraved around the name. According to Boschloos (2011, BYB445), this is an Egyptian import contemporary with the king's reign.

- **No. Dunand II 9393 – Egyptian scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 6, 12/19.
  - Description and notes: steatite scarab with the names and titles of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiyi, *nṯr nfr nb-mȝʿt-rʿ dj ʿnḫ* and *ḥmt nsw tjy ʿnḫtj*. According to Boschloos (2011, BYB489), Egyptian import contemporary with the king's reign.

- **No. Dunand II 9896 – Egyptian scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 7, 12/19.
  - Description and notes: scarab made of a soft and powdery white paste with the name of Amenhotep III *nb-mȝʿt-rʿ*. According to Boschloos (2011, BYB497), Egyptian import contemporary with the king's reign.

- **No. Dunand II 11053 – Egyptian scarab**
  - Findspot: levée 9, 12/19.
  - Description and notes: steatite scarab with the name of Amenhotep III, *nb-mȝʿt-rʿ* and the words *wʿb* "pure", *wȝst* "Thebes", and a *"s"* sign (S29) around it that Boschloos (2011, BYB508) interprets as a royal epithet meaning "purifier of Thebes". According to Boschloos this scarab is an Egyptian import contemporary with the king's reign.

These scarabs date all to the mid 18th dynasty, and they could have been stored together. They could come from the Obelisk Temple and represent an offering of some sort. More generally, they attest to continuing interactions with Egypt during the 18th dynasty. It is instead impossible to say if the Egyptians directly offered them to the temple, or if they ended up there in an indirect way, for instance passing through the royal palace first. The fact that some 18th dynasty scarabs were found also in Necropolis K (§4.7) and around the city (§3.3.1) shows that they were not items exclusively reserved to the temples.

4.4.7 Obelisk Temple – Discussion

During the Late Bronze Age the Obelisk temple had a sacred area constituted by a cella within a walled courtyard. The courtyard with its obelisks was a privileged place for the deposition of offerings. Access to the court was through an antechamber that probably had some cultic function, since the socle of a stele or altar was found in it. Next to the antechamber was the Annexed Chapel, which was probably built during Phase 6. This chapel was characterized by a small stone bench and two offering tables, and contained a stele inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs possibly recording some act of piety or building activity in the temple. The eastern part of the Obelisk Temple complex was probably more utilitarian, with a courtyard inherited from the earlier Temple en L and some rooms that probably had at least partially functional purposes. The objects found in the area of

the temple attest its importance in the socio-economic landscape of the city, while the presence of deposits provides evidence of cultic practices involving offerings and ritual depositions. The presence of Egyptian objects raises questions about the role of this temple in the religious interactions of the city with Egypt. These aspects are explored in more detail in relation with the remains of a chapel bearing the name of Ramses II and in the following discussion (§4.5, §4.6).

Since no written source refers to the Obelisk Temple, identifying the nature of its cult is difficult. Some hypotheses, however, can be suggested on the basis of the following observations:

1) One of the Middle Bronze Age obelisks found in the courtyard bears the following inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphs:

> *mry ḥry-šf ḥ3ty-ʿ n k3pny jb(j)šmw wḥm ʿnḫ ḫtmw-nsw=f kwkwn s3 rwqq m3ʿ-ḫrw*
>
> Beloved of Heryshef, the count of Byblos Ibishemu, repeating life, his royal sealer Kukun son of Ruqeq justified (Montet 1962, 96).

As said above, this inscription seems to suggest that the temple involved the cult of a male deity identified with the Egyptian Heryshef, whose local, native name is not known. The numerous bronze male figurines found as offerings within the temple fit with the worship of a local male deity (Dunand 1954, passim; see also above).

2) The stele found in the Annexed Chapel and associated with Phase 6 (§4.4.4 above) suggests a connection of the temple with the Lady of Byblos. It is unlikely that the Obelisk Temple was the primary temple of the goddess, which was elsewhere in the city (see §4.3). Moreover, objects referring to the Lady or to her temple existed in other religious buildings in the city, such as the stele of the Phoenician king Yehaw-milk, found in front of the later so-called Egyptian Temple (Dunand 1941, see §4.1). Since it is unlikely that multiple temples were dedicated to the goddess, it is plausible that the Obelisk Temple was dedicated to a male deity who was connected with the Lady of Byblos and her temple.

A hint to the possible nature of such a connection can perhaps be found in Lucian of Samosata's *De Dea Syria*. The text, which dates to the 2nd century AD, describes aspects of the Syro-Phoenician religious world, focusing on the temple of the goddess Atargatis

in the city of Hierapolis Bambyce, in the area of Aleppo. In particular, in chapter 28, Lucian says (Lightfoot 2003, 267):

> *The place itself where the temple is situated is a hill; it lies right in the centre of the city, and two walls surround it. Of the walls one is old, the other not much earlier than our own times. The propylaea of the temple face the north, their height about a hundred fathoms. It is within these propylaea that the phalli stand which Dionysus erected, themselves three hundred fathoms tall. One of these two phalli is climbed twice a year by a man who lives on top of the phallus for the span of seven days. The reason for his ascent is supposed to be this. Most people think he converses with the gods up there and asks blessings for the whole of Syria, and they hear his prayers from near at hand. Others think this is done for Deucalion's sake, in memory of the calamity when mankind climbed into the mountains and the tallest trees for fear of the flood-water. To me this also seems unconvincing. I think that it, too, is done in honour of Dionysus, and I infer it from the following. All those who erect phalli for Dionysus set wooden figurines on these phalli, for what reason I shall not say. But I think the man ascends in counterfeit of that other wooden man.*

This description presents some significant similarities with the situation in Byblos: there are a main temple dedicated to a goddess, namely a form of Astarte as in Byblos, as well as a sacred area with some pillars (likely standing stones, or obelisks of some sort) associated or dedicated to a male deity interpreted as Dionysus. There are offerings of "wooden men" in the area of the pillars, which recall the many bronze figurines found in the Obelisk Temple in Byblos.[15] It has even been suggested that the rectangular recesses present on some of the obelisks in Byblos could have been used as niches for small cult statues, which would thus have been put on the stones as the "wooden men" described by Lucian (Seeden 1980, passim; pl. 133; Sala 2015, 47). It cannot be excluded that there were wooden offerings in Byblos' Obelisk Temple as well. Wood, however, would not survive to be excavated.

While it would be wrong to establish any direct link or to interpret what we observe in Late Bronze Age Byblos on the basis of a Greco-Roman text describing a temple in Syria in the 2nd century AD, this passage show that main temples could have a connection

[15] At least one bronze figurine was present also in the temple described by Lucian, who says: "This too is found in the temple: on the right of the sanctuary sits a little bronze man with a large organ" (chapter 16: Lightfoot 2003, 257). The similarity is not only in the metal: many of the male figurines found in Byblos have clearly marked genitals (Dunand 1954, passim).

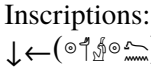
with secondary shrines or cultic spaces associated with other deities. Such a scenario is attested for Byblos itself in the same *De Dea Syria*, where Lucian states that in Roman times the mysteries of the male hero/god Adonis were celebrated in the Temple of the Lady of Byblos (*De Dea Syria* 6; Lightfoot 2003, 251).

It is thus possible that the Obelisk Temple was the temple of the main male deity of the city, who was associated with the Lady of Byblos not only on a theological level but also in the practices of the cult.

4.5 The chapel of Ramses II

During the campaigns of 1926–1932 Dunand discovered a number of limestone blocks of a chapel or shrine bearing reliefs and inscriptions with the name of Ramses II. These blocks were not in primary position, but were partly scattered in the Byzantine layer and partly reused in a stone pavement of late date near the Egyptian Temple, which Dunand (Dunand 1939, 71–2; Dunand 1982, 198) dated to the Persian period or later.

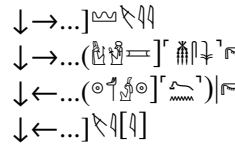
The blocks are the following, dimensions are given as height × width/length × depth:

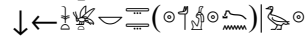
- **No. Dunand I 1315**
  - Findspot: Byzantine Level, first ilôt, 4 meters forward of the statues of the Egyptian Temple.
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragment with traces of the name of Ramses II.
  - Inscriptions:
    

- **No. Dunand I 1317**
  - Findspot: Byzantine Level, first ilôt, last three rooms bottom right of pl. ccvi (Dunand 1939).
  - Dimensions: 186 cm x 55 cm x 67 cm
  - Description: left doorjamb, possibly from a small door. On the front is a figure of the king, standing, facing right, toward the door opening, and offering a pointed loaf. Above him is his *nsw-bjty* name. The image of the king appears remarkably small compared to the text. According to Dunand, another man, with a shaved head and a long dress, probably a priest, is represented presenting an offering on the lateral face of the doorjamb. Dunand 1939, pl. xxvii; fig. 4.34.
  - Inscriptions:
    

- **No. Dunand I 1318**
  - Findspot: Byzantine Level, first ilôt, last three rooms bottom right of pl. ccvi.
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: right doorjamb corresponding to the previous one. According to Dunand it bears the same images, but the head of the king and the inscription are missing. No image seems to be available, although Dunand referred (wrongly?) to the photograph of pl. xxvii (Dunand 1939). However, it does not seem that any of the blocks represented in that photograph (reproduced here below, fig. 4.34) matches with Dunand's description.

- **No. Dunand I 1319**
  - Findspot: Byzantine Level, first ilôt, last three rooms bottom right of pl. ccvi.
  - Dimensions: 75 cm x 137 cm x 35 cm
  - Description: limestone beam with large rebate.

- **No. Dunand I 1320a + 1320b**
  - Findspot: Byzantine Level, first ilôt.
  - Dimensions: height 72 cm x depth 23 cm + height 65 cm x depth 33 cm, width/length not known.
  - Description: two fragments with cartouches of Ramses II, possibly part of a lintel. Found next to the previous blocks. Dunand 1939, pl. xxvii; fig. 4.34.
  - Inscriptions: vertical columns, from left to right
    

- **No. Dunand I 1354**
  - Findspot: levée 1, sector 18
  - Dimensions: 135 cm x 45 cm x 43 cm
  - Description: fragment of a similar doorjamb with cartouche of Ramses II.
  - Inscriptions:
    

- **No. Dunand I 1355a + 1355b**
  - Findspot: levée 1, sector 18.
  - Dimensions: 59 cm x 33 cm x 35 cm + 33 cm x 71 cm x 29 cm
  - Description: two fragments of a doorjamb with cartouche of Ramses II similar to that of Dunand I 1354.
  - Inscriptions: no image.



Figure 4.33: Block 7226 (from Dunand 1954, pl. clv).

- **No. Dunand II 7226**
  - Findspot: Levée 1, 16/18.
  - Dimensions: height 205 cm, width/length and depth not known.
  - Description: Fragment of a block with two decorates faces. On one of them are parts of a figure of a man holding a sceptre. On the other traces of a man in veneration. Dunand related it with the previous blocks. Published in Dunand 1954, pl. clv – see also fig. 4.33.

Dunand (Dunand 1939, 54) was sure the three blocks 1317–1319 came from the same building and thought that the same was likely for the other blocks as well. The presence of doorjambs and a lintel led him to make a suggested reconstruction of a small door, possibly belonging to a chapel (see also Dunand 1939, pl. xxvii). As he pointed out (1939, 433), the blocks with uraei that are mounted above the lintel come from a different area of the site and could be unrelated. This reconstruction, formerly in the National Museum in Beirut, is no longer on display.

The only inscriptions on these blocks were the name of the king and conventional offering formulae, while the Egyptian-style reliefs consist essentially of symmetrical images of the king followed by priests (Dunand 1939, 54–5). As Dunand observed (1939, 54), this is a small chapel or shrine commissioned by Ramses II. The building was dismantled before or during the Persian period, when some of its blocks were reused.



Figure 4.34: Reconstruction of chapel of Ramses II using blocks 1317, 1318, 1320a, 1320b, formerly in the National Museum of Beirut (from Dunand 1954, pl. xxvii).

On the basis of the forms of the names of Ramses II attested on the various blocks, the constructions of this temple can be dated after the year 21. In particular, the combination of the *nesu-bity* name *Wsr-Mɜʿt-Rʿ-stp-n-Rʿ* with the Birth Name *Rʿ-msj-sw-mrj-Jmn* attested on some of the blocks above is common only after this date and is attested occasionally only after year 18 (Obsomer 2012, 66–7). The chapel was thus build after Ramses II's Syrian campaigns, and probably also after the ratification of peace treaty with the Hittites of year 21. The presence of such a building in Byblos, together with other evidence (see §3.5, §4.8 and §5.6), confirms that Ramses II was active in the city, and its late date suggests that the Egyptian attention was not only economic or strategic and that the city retained some religious prestige also later in the reign.

Since only fragments in secondary position were found, the original location of this chapel and its relation with the other temples of the city are unknown. Dunand suggested a possible connection with the Obelisk temple, but without further comment (1954, 80, n.4, in reference to no. 1317): "Pieds-droits qu'on peut attribuer au dernier état du temple aux obélisques, sous Ramsès II".

This shrine might have been located at the place of the Egyptian Temple (see map 2.4). It could have been its predecessor, since the blocks were found in the same area and the Egyptian character of the temple could hint at some continuity. Moreover, if the Persian period Egyptian Temple continued the tradition of a shrine of Ramses II, the latter might have replaced some earlier structure. The temple of Thutmose III, which is attested only by scattered blocks, is an obvious candidate (§3.5 – see also §4.4.3, A. and §5.2.2). Successive construction on the site could explain why so few traces of these New Kingdom shrines survive: Thutmose III's chapel would have been dismantled and replaced, or perhaps usurped and in part reused, under Ramses II, whose chapel would in turn have been dismantled and replaced by the Egyptian temple in or just before the Persian Period, erasing traces of any previous building. The Egyptian Temple is very close to the temple of the Lady of Byblos and this must have been true for the chapels of Thutmose III and Ramses II as well, if they were its predecessors. Since the Lady of Byblos was the focus of Egyptian devotion, it would make sense that their religious buildings were in her temple complex, possibly annexed or at least close to it.

The Obelisk Temple and the Egyptian objects found there should be taken into consideration here. The predominance of 18th dynasty material there (see also §3.3 for the distribution of scarabs) could suggest that the Obelisk Temple was the predecessor of Ramses' chapel and of the later "Egyptian Temple", or at least that Thutmose III shrine was in some way related with it.

The stele of the Iron Age king of Byblos Yehaw-milk (Dunand 1941) could provide support for the idea that the Egyptian Temple, as well as any possible predecessor, were chapels connected with the temple of the Lady of Byblos rather than independent sanctuaries belonging to other deities. This stele, which was found probably in situ in front of the Egyptian Temple, commemorates restoration works commissioned by the king in the Temple of the Lady of Byblos (Dunand 1941, 84–5), and could suggest that the two sanctuaries were somehow connected.

The presence of Egyptian chapels connected with the local temple of the Lady but architecturally distinct from it could also explain the paucity of New Kingdom Egyptian objects in the temple of the Lady observed by Dunand (1939, 116): if the Egyptian temple and its possible New Kingdom predecessors were chapels connected with the temple of the Lady rather than distinct shrines, the majority of the Egyptian offerings for the goddess might have been deposed there, rather than in the main body of the temple.

4.6 Byblos temples: discussion

The Late Bronze Age religious landscape of Byblos was complex. The temple of the Lady of Byblos was neither the only important temple in the city nor the only one involved in interactions with Egypt. In particular, shrines or chapels of specifically Egyptian character were also present. The latest known one was the Egyptian Temple, possibly built during the Persian Period. A chapel commissioned by Ramses II (§4.5), blocks from which were found nearby, and a shrine of Thutmose III attested by two blocks found out of context (§3.5), could have been its symbolic and architectural predecessors. The Obelisk Temple, in which Egyptian objects have been found, probably also participated in the interactions. Perhaps the Egyptian chapels were related with this temple, as Dunand seems to have thought (1954, 80, n.4; see above §4.5). Both the Obelisk Temple and

the Egyptian chapels were also linked with the Temple of the Lady. Steles mentioning the temple of the Lady were found both in the Obelisk Temple (§4.4.4) and in the later Egyptian Temple (§4.1), while the biographical text of Minmose (§5.2.2 below) suggests that building activities under Thutmose III in the city were related with the Temple of the Lady. Therefore, rather than taking every sanctuary of the city as an independent entity, we should perhaps think of the religious buildings of Byblos as a cultic area composed of shrines and cultic spaces that interacted in an organic network of cultic, administrative, and economic relations.[16] The archaeological evidence, however, is insufficient for a detailed reconstruction. Similarly, we cannot know how the Egyptians perceived these shrines – as distinct sanctuaries? As different parts of a single cultic ensemble? – nor whether the Egyptian offerings reached them directly through Egyptian donations or whether they were first presented to a single authority – perhaps the king or the temple of the Lady – and were then redistributed among the other sanctuaries. What is clear is that all these cultic places were involved both spiritually and economically in the city's international relations.

4.7 Necropolis K

Necropolis K was discovered in 1971 and excavated between 1972 and 1973 (Salles 1980). It is located in the eastern part of the archaeological area of Byblos. During the Late Bronze Age this area was outside the city walls. According to Jean-François Salles (1980, 7), who published the necropolis, the excavation was almost complete before the interruption imposed by the Lebanese civil war. The necropolis consists of a dozen subterranean rooms dug into the soft sandstone of the hill (Salles 1980, 10; fig. 4.35).

These rooms are all connected with one another. The original entrance was through a well (without number – indicated as "entrée" in fig. 4.35; see Salles 1980, 10), while

[16] See for instance Diego Espinel (2002), who takes the role of the Temple of the Lady of Byblos into consideration in the relations between the city and Egypt during the Old Kingdom. In particular, he stresses the possible role of the Lady of Byblos and her temple as cultural bridge that would have facilitated the exchanges between Egypt and Byblos. His argument could be taken further, and other temples could have had a similar role, or could have been somehow involved in such interactions.

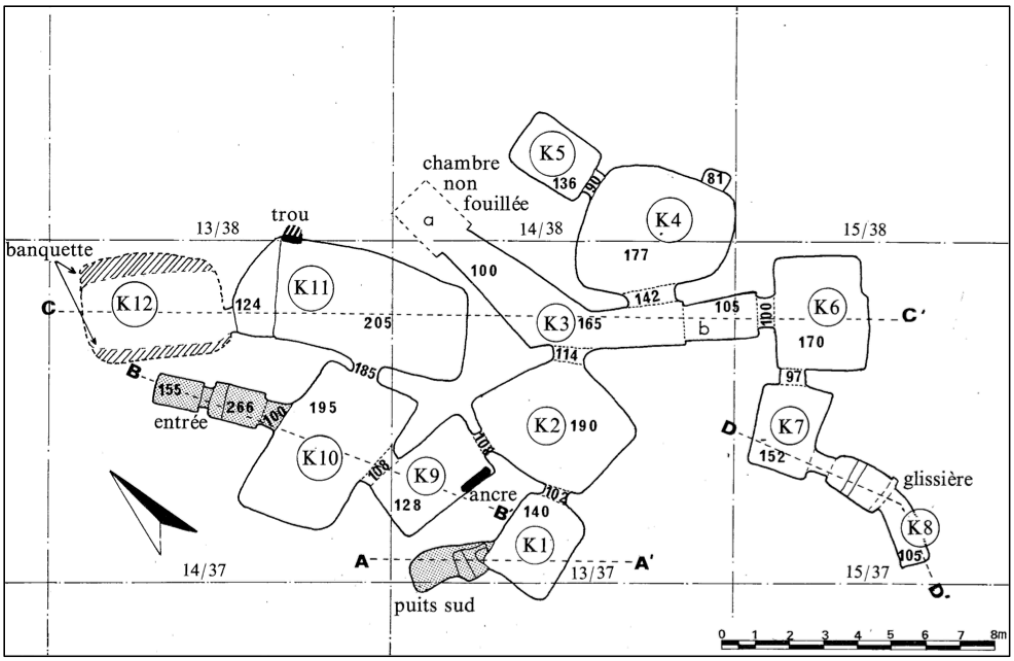


Figure 4.35: Plan of Necropolis K (Salles 1980, pl. 5).

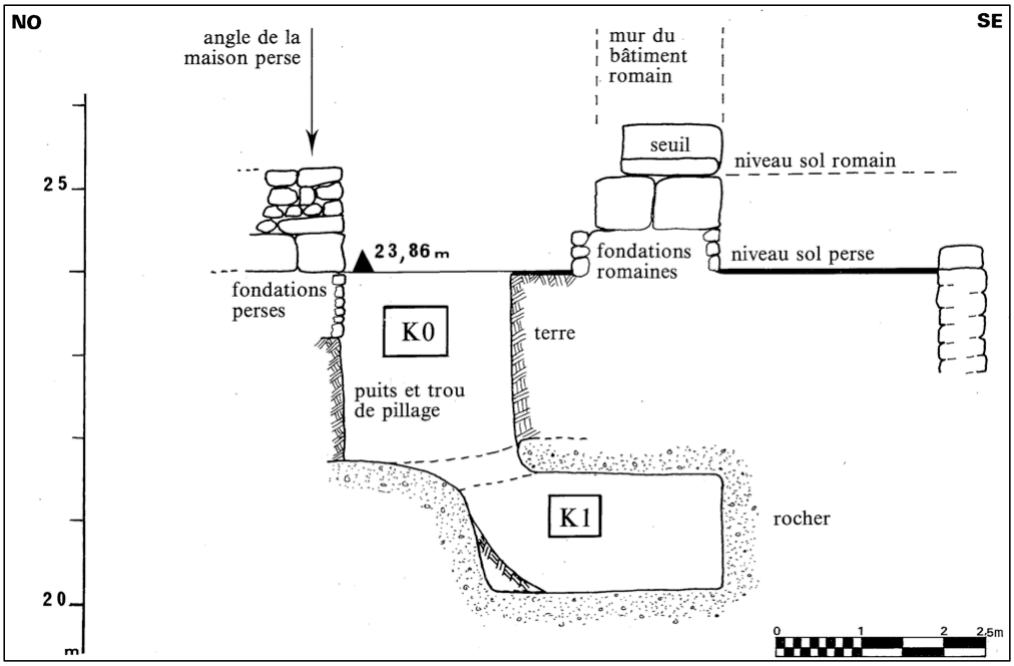


Figure 4.36: Section A–A' of Necropolis K (Salles 1980, pl. 3).

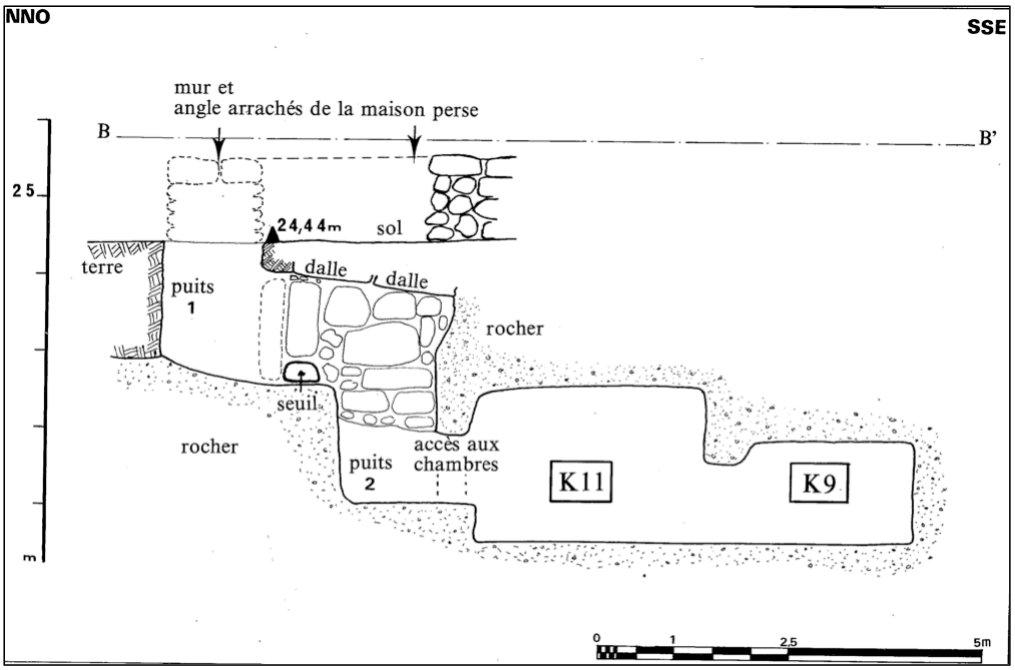


Figure 4.37: Section B–B' of Necropolis K (Salles 1980, pl. 4).

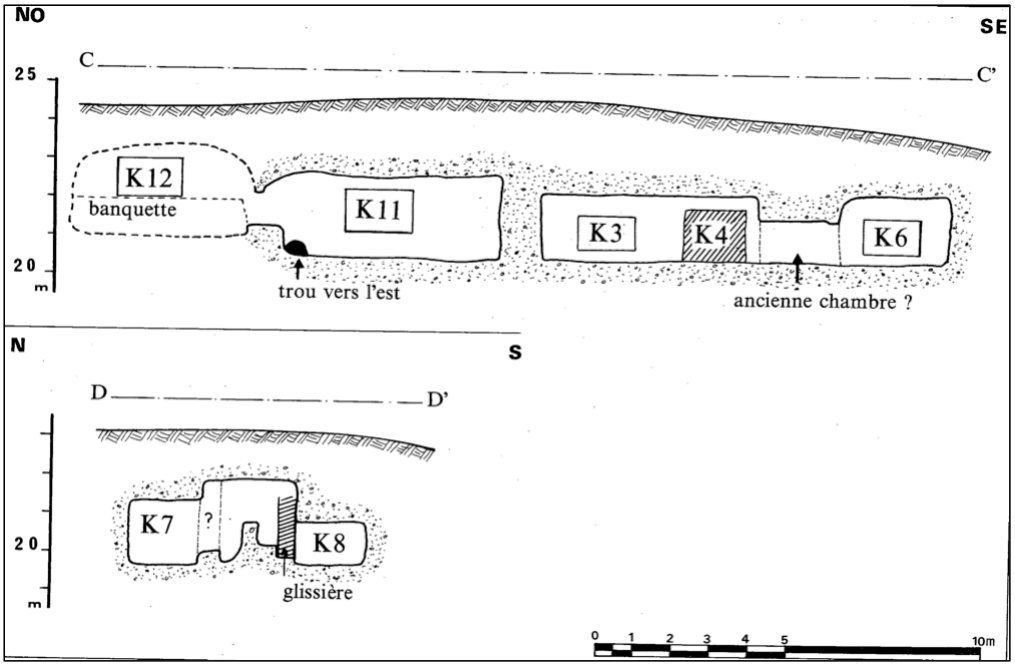


Figure 4.38: Sections C–C' and D–D' of Necropolis K (Salles 1980, pl. 6).

a second access was dug in a later period, possibly by looters, on the southern side (well KO – Salles 1980, 9, indicated as "puits sud" in fig. 4.35).

Similar necropolises exist elsewhere in the Levant, although usually they have multiple accesses and fewer rooms than in Byblos (Salles 1980, 15; §4.7 below). Typologically, Necropolis K can be compared to the royal tombs of Byblos found by Montet (Salles 1980, 15). It was in use, initially, from the Middle Bronze Age (the earliest material seems to date to the 20th century BC) to the Achaemenid period (Salles 1980, 5, 9, 10, 66), including the Late Bronze Age. It was then abandoned and probably forgotten for a couple of centuries, as in Persian times a fortress was constructed on the top of the hill and houses, possibly connected with the fortress, were built over the whole area (Salles 1980, 10). The necropolis was brought back into use during the Hellenistic period, and burials continued until the Roman period. The chronological sequence of the construction and use of its various rooms is not clear, but it is likely that the whole necropolis (K1–12) was in use before the Persian period (Salles 1980, 12, 14). Afterwards, however, rooms K1–8 were sealed, since Hellenistic and Roman inhumations are found only in rooms K9–12 (Salles 1980, 14). A stone anchor was used as sealing stone for rooms K1–8. The reasons for such a choice, if any, are not known. It is therefore impossible to say if the use of such stone reflect some religious custom in which the tombs were somehow related with the sea, or if it was rather just dictated by practical reasons.

The necropolis was visited and looted before the archaeologists discovered it, and only bones, pottery, and a few other, scattered and largely uninformative objects were found. The bones, belonging to hundreds of individuals, were scattered through the rooms, and it was impossible to reconstitute any skeleton (Salles 1980, 12). As for the pottery, Salles took note only of complete vessels, or of sherds that could be fitted together, stating that it was impossible to record the thousands of fragments present everywhere (Salles 1980, 7, n.3). Very little can thus be said about funerary practices, except that there were probably multiple depositions and that at times bones and offerings were moved and collected in specific chambers (K1–2) to make room for new inhumations (Salles 1980, 12, 14).

The most relevant feature of the necropolis for the present study is the abundance of Late Bronze Age Mycenaean and Cypriot vessels: 65 Mycenaean vessels (4,4% of the

total – Salles 1980, 13, 30) and 80 Late Bronze Age Cypriot ones (9% of the total – Salles 1980, 24)[17] have been identified. Both open and closed forms are present among the group in the necropolis, which suggests that some of these vessels were deposit into the tombs for their content and others for their socio-economic value. Such large numbers show unequivocally that Byblos was integrated within the commercial network of the Eastern Mediterranean and had active contacts with the regions from which the vessels came. The abundance of such vessels may even suggest the presence in the city of a Cypriot or Mycenaean trading post with a stable community, as in Ugarit, Sidon, and Tell Abou Hawam (Salles 1980, 65–6). As Salles recognized, however, at the moment this cannot be confirmed nor dismissed. Perhaps in the future petrographic analyses of these vessels could reveal whether they were imported or produced locally.

As pointed out by Salles (1980, 30, 66), the presence of LH III C Mycenaean pottery raises the question of the so-called Sea-Peoples. Although the lack of clear archaeological layers for the end of the Bronze Age limits the understanding of that period in Byblos, there does not seem to be any evidence for any Sea People presence or attack in the city (Salles 1980, 35, 66). Rather, the general continuity that can be observed in the temples of Byblos suggests that, even if the city was affected by the changes and movements of populations that characterized the end of the late Bronze Age, their impact must have been relatively limited. Nevertheless, the presence of pottery from this late phase shows that Byblos had contacts with groups which could have been associated with the Sea People, and in general it suggests that at the time the city was still active on the international commercial scene.

Four Egyptian scarabs were found in the necropolis, two of the "Hyksos" type, one with the name of Thutmose III, and one with that of Amenhotep III. Because the material in the rooms was not stratified, nothing specific can be said about them, except that their presence shows that these objects were circulating in Byblos and were appropriate funerary offerings for non-royal tombs.[18]

[17] According to Salles 1980, 13, the necropolis yielded 88 Cypriot vessels and 118 fragments, but these figures probably include items that are not of the Late Bronze Age.

[18] On the scarabs found in the Middle Bronze royal tombs of Byblos see Montet (1928, 143–238; Boschloos 2011–2012.

4.7.1 Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery from Necropolis K

4.7.1.1 Mycenaean vessels

The following list presents the 65 Mycenaean vessels found in Necropolis K. The data are from Salles 1980 except where stated otherwise. Both Salles' and Leonard' (1994) numbers are given, as well as Furumark shapes, FS, and motives, FM (Furumark 1941a; Furumark 1941b). Salles' chronological indicator "Myc." (Mycenaean) has been replaced with its current equivalent, "LH" (Late Helladic).

Bowls and Cups

Salles K2/98; Leonard no. 1595 Type: Levanto-Mycenaean cup with angular or elongated loop handles (FS 244) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: K2 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 3	Salles K9/T1[19] ; Leonard no. 1775 Type: deep bowl (FS 284 Linear) Date: LH IIIA:2–C (Leonard IIIC Early) Findspot: K9 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K11/03; Leonard no. 1516 Type: shallow semiglobular cup (FS 220) Date: LH III B (Leonard IIIA:2–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 2	Salles K11/04; Leonard no. 1515 Type: shallow semiglobular cup (FS 220) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 1
Salles K11/T6; Leonard no. 1756 Type: deep bowl (FS 284a) Date: LH III A2–C (Leonard IIIB(–C)) Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 9	Salles K11/T15; Leonard no. 1823 Type: deep bowl (FS 284–285 local?) Date: LH IIIA:2–C (Leonard IIIB–C) Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K11/T12 – K11/T23; Leonard no. 1857 Type: shallow bowl with two horizontal handles (Leonard FS 295–296) Date: Leonard LH IIIB–C Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated	Salles K11/T14; Leonard no. 1878 Type: shallow bowl with two horizontal handles (FS 296 – Leonard FS 295) Date: Leonard LH IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 2a
Salles K11/T20; Leonard no. 1877 Type: shallow bowl with two horizontal handles (FS 296 – Leonard FS 295) Date: Leonard LH IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 2b	Salles K12/T22; Leonard no. – Type: bowl (FS 284) Date: LH IIIA:2–C Findspot: K12 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 5c

Stirrup Jars

Salles K/10; Leonard no. – Type: stirrup jar (FS 171) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: K Fig.: Salles pl. x 7	Salles K1/T2; Leonard no. 152 Type: fragment of unidentified pithoid/piriform jar (Leonard FS 44–48) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K1 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K1/079; Leonard no. 683 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 176) Date: LH IIIC Findspot: K1 Fig.: Salles pl. x 9	Salles K11/01; Leonard no. – Type: stirrup jar (FS 171 or 176) Date: LH IIIA/IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. x 10
Salles K11/T5; Leonard no. 857 Type: Late Minoan III stirrup jar (FS 171 or 176) Date: LH IIIA/IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. x 11	Salles K11/T7; Leonard no. 1947 Type: fragment of unidentified closed vessel Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K11/29; Leonard no. – Type: stirrup jar (FS 171) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. x 5	Salles K11–12/30; Leonard no. 750 Type: squat stirrup jar (FS 178 – Leonard FS 180) Date: LH IIIA:2 (Leonard IIIB) Findspot: K11–K12 Fig.: Salles pl. x 2
Salles K11–12/31; Leonard no. 751 Type: squat stirrup jar (FS 171/176 – Leonard FS 180) Date: LH IIIA/IIIB (Leonard IIIB) Findspot: K11–K12 Fig.: not illustrated	Salles K11/32; Leonard no. 572 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 171) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K11/33; Leonard no. – Type: stirrup jar (FS 171) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. x 7	Salles K11/37; Leonard no. 591 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 171) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. x 1
Salles K11/40; Leonard no. 656 Type: globular stirrup jar (FS 176 – Leonard FS 172/173) Date: LH IIIC (Leonard IIIB) Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated	Salles K12/T7; Leonard no. 1964 Type: fragment of unidentified closed vessel Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K12 Fig.: not illustrated
Salles K12/19; Leonard no. 829 Type: conical stirrup jar (FS 181 – Leonard FS 183) Date: LH IIIC:1 (Leonard IIIB) Findspot: K12 Fig.: Salles pl. x 4	

Kraters

Salles K1/T15; Leonard no. 1730 Type: krater (Leonard: Krater FS 281/282) Date: LH III C (Leonard IIIB(–C?)) Findspot: K1 Fig.: not illustrated	Salles K2/T6: Leonard no. 1969 Type: krater (Leonard: unidentifiable open form) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIB–C) Findspot: K2 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 1e
Salles K2/T7; Leonard no. 1974 Type: krater (Leonard: unidentifiable open form) Date: LH IIIB (Leonard IIIB–C) Findspot: K2 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 1f	Salles K11/T3; Leonard no. 912 Type: krater (Leonard: stirrup jar) Date: LH IIIC (Leonard IIIA–B) Findspot: K11 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 4
Salles K12/T6; Leonard no. 1978 Type: krater (Leonard: unidentifiable open form) Date: LH IIIB Findspot: K12 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 2	Salles K12/T23 + K1/T14; Leonard no. 2094 Type: krater (Leonard: unidentifiable open/closed form) Date: LH IIIC (Leonard IIIB–C) Findspot: K12–K1 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 1b–c
Salles K12/T24; Leonard no. 1933 Type: krater (Leonard: fragment of unidentified closed vessel) Date: LH IIIC (Leonard IIIA:2) Findspot: K12 Fig.: Salles pl. xii 1a	

Flasks

Salles K1/344; Leonard no. 1276 Type: globular flask, vertical type (FS 188 – Leonard FS 189) Date: LH IIIA:2 Findspot: K1 Fig.: Salles pl. xi 4	Salles K2/53; Leonard no. – Type: flask (local production?) Date: – Findspot: K2 Fig.: Salles XI 6
Salles K8/10; Leonard no. 1225 Type: lentoid flask (Leonard FS 186 variant) Date: Leonard LH IIIB Findspot: K8 Fig.: not illustrated	Salles K11/43; Leonard no. 1224 Type: lentoid flask (Leonard FS 186 variant) Date: Leonard LH IIIB Findspot: K11 Fig.: not illustrated

Others

Salles – ; Leonard no. – Type: local imitation of a myc. metal hydria? Date: – Findspot: – Fig.: Salles pls 14, 5; xii 5–6	Salles – ; Leonard no. – Type: 3 fragments without number Date: LH IIIC Findspot: – Fig.: Salles XI 7

4.7.1.2 Cypriot vessels

Salles did not give a detailed description of the Cypriot vessels, he only listed the main typologies and their findspots as indicated below. Local imitations are marked with *. For images of some of these vessels, see Salles 1980, pls 9, 10, viii, ix.

Classes	K0	K1	K2	K6	K8	K11	K12	Total
Base-Ring I								
bowls		2				1		3
falsks, jugs, jars		7+3*	2	1	1	4+2*		15+5*
bottles	1	1+1*			1*			2+2*
sherds	at least 35 flasks and jars							
Base-Ring II								
bowls		2						2
falsks, jugs, jars		1		1		3		5
sherds	at least 17 flasks and jars							
Black Slip V								
falsks		1						1
Monochrome Ware								
bowls		13	2			2		17
jars		1					1	2
White Painted VI								
small jars		2						2
White Shaved								
jars		10	3					14[20]
sherds	at least three dozens of jars							
White Slip I–II								
bowls		9	5	1		2	1	18
sherds	at least 30 bowls							

[20] Salles has 13

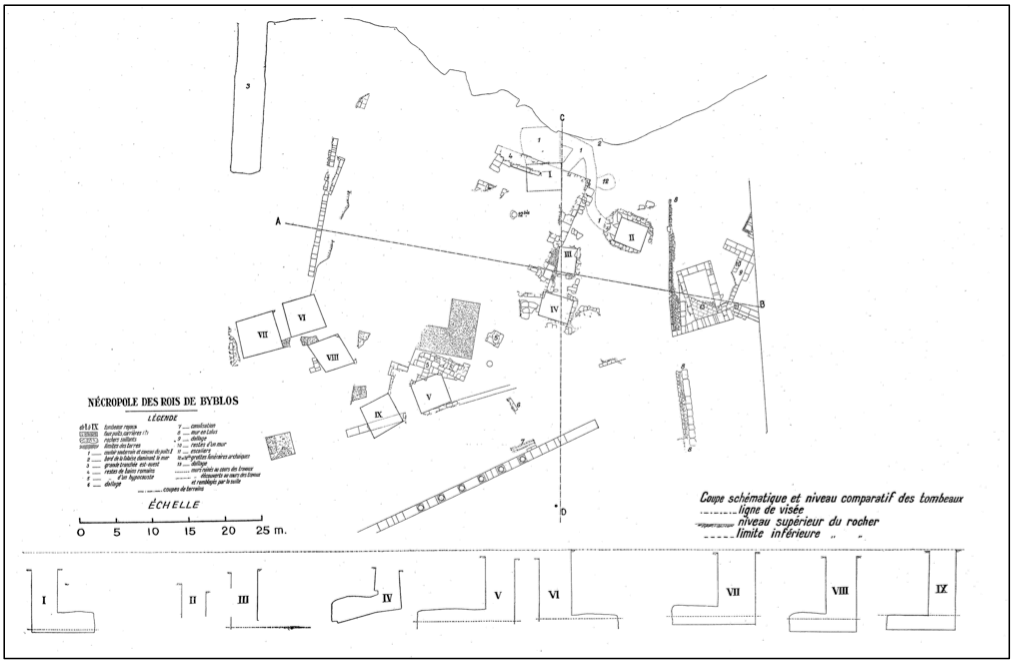


Figure 4.39: Plan of royal necropolis (Montet 1928–1929, pl. lxxii).

4.8 The Royal Tombs and the area of the Palace

The rocky hill at the north-western corner of the site is characterized by the presence of nine royal tombs. These tombs have the form of square pits a few metres deep, with underground burial chambers containing the stone sarcophagi of the kings of Byblos at the bottom.

The tombs can be divided into two groups. The first group (tombs I–IV: Montet 1928–1929, 143; fig. 4.39) dates to the Middle Bronze Age. Some of these tombs were intact and yielded a wealth of often precious objects, including Middle Kingdom Egyptian imports and Egyptianizing local productions. The tombs of the second group (tombs V–IX) are later; all had been looted in antiquity, and it is difficult to date them precisely. A few hints suggest that at least some of them could date to the end of the Middle Bronze Age and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, while others could date to the Late Bronze Age (Montet 1928–1929, 213–4; fig. 4.39).

One tomb, known as the tomb of king Hiram, could date to the Late Bronze Age IIB, that is around the time of Ramses II (Montet 1928–1929, 215–38). Like the other tombs in the second group, this one had been looted in antiquity, but at the moment of discovery

it contained three sarcophagi, one of them being that of Hiram, and a few objects (Montet 1928–1929, 217), including two fragments of stone vessels bearing the name of Ramses II (see §4.8.1 below). Two of the sarcophagi are uninscribed and undecorated. One of them appears to be similar to that in tomb VII. The third sarcophagus is instead richly decorated and bears a Phoenician inscription addressing its owner as king Hiram of Byblos (Montet 1928–1929, 217).

This tomb, and in particular the inscription on the sarcophagus of Hiram, has been the subject of a long controversy. The problem is the dating. When Montet found the tomb, he assumed that king Hiram was a contemporary of Ramses II, because of the objects associated with it (Montet 1928–1929, 227–8); Hiram's inscription was thus dated to the 13th century and was assumed to be the earliest known Phoenician inscription. This interpretation was soon contested, and Hiram's inscription was dated palaeographically to the 10th century. This remains the most widely accepted date, although there have been occasional attempts to redate it to the 13th century (Rehm 2004, 15–19, 63, 67). If the inscription dates to the 10th century, the presence of Late Bronze Age objects in the tomb needs an explanation. Since it now seems clear that the context of the tomb belongs in the 13th century (Rehm 2004, 63, 67), two scenarios can be suggested. A first possibility is that the sarcophagus dates to the 13th century and was usurped for Ahiram in the 10th century, either by adding only the inscription (Martin 1961) or reshaping the whole sarcophagus (Délivré 1998). The second option is that Hiram usurped the tomb, but the sarcophagus is his and was introduced there in the 10th century (Porada 1973). At present there does not seem to be a way to decide between these possible explanations (Rehm 2004, 69–70). New analyses[21] or the discovery of a similar sarcophagus in another site with clearer chronological contexts could perhaps help to solve this issue.

However the sarcophagus is dated, the fact that the tomb and material in it date to the 13th century and it includes luxurious items such as the Egyptian stone vessels, show that Byblos' royal family enjoyed a period of prosperity around the time of Ramses II:

[21] It is interesting to note that some bones have been found in these coffins (Montet 1928–1929, 217). Their current whereabouts are unknown, but if Montet kept them and if they could be recovered, perhaps carbon dating them could help confirming at least some of the dating.

building such monumental tombs was expensive and probably required some political stability (see §6.6.6).

The presence of royal tombs is also an important clue for the location of the royal palace. No archaeological evidence of a Bronze Age palace has been found in the city. As discussed above, however, it is a well attested Levantine practice to have royal tombs in the area of the local palace (§2.2), and therefore their presence on the hill of Byblos might suggest that the latter was located there (Montet 1928–1929, 266; Nacousi 1985, 16–17; Margueron 1994, 22). This position would have the advantage of dominating the city and overlooking the sea. Moreover, as said in §2.2, the absence of archaeological remains would not be surprising there, because little remains below the Roman layers, which lie directly on the rock. It is clear that this gap in the archaeological record does not attest to an absence of occupation, but it is rather the result of natural or artificial destruction of earlier layers (Margueron 1994, 17, 19–20; see §2.2 above). Margueron (1994, 33) conjectures that the palace occupied the whole hill.

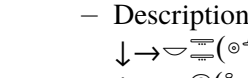
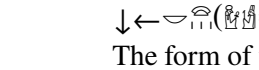
4.8.1 Late Bronze Age objects found in Ahiram's tomb

Below is a list of the objects found in the tomb of Ahiram dating to the Late Bronze Age or potentially attesting of foreign interactions. For the Mycenaean pottery Leonard' numbers (1994) and Furumark shapes, FS, and motives, FM (Furumark 1941a; Furumark 1941b) are given.

- **No. Montet 864**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access shaft
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragment of a Mycenaean stirrup jar (FS SJ (Bd)/FM Linear) dated to LH IIIB (Leonard no. 1142). See also Dussaud 1930, 179, 8 (lower left).

- **No. Montet 866**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access well
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragment of a Mycenaean stirrup jar (FS SJ (Sh)/FM=73:3) dated to LH IIIB (Leonard no. 906). See also Dussaud 1930, 179, 8 (lower left).

- **No. Montet 881**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access well
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an unidentified faience object originally bearing some decoration and a hieroglyphic inscription. Only *ḥ3ty-ʿ n* […, "Count of […" is legible.

- **No. Montet 883**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access well
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an alabaster vessel bearing the name of Ramses II.
    
    
    The form of the name is that attested after year 21 of Ramses II (Montet 1928–1929, 225–6; Obsomer 2012, 67–8), and therefore the vessel must have reached Byblos after this date.

- **No. Montet 884**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access well
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel.

- **No. Montet 885**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Access well
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel.

- **No. Montet 887**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Burial chamber
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel dated to the New Kingdom by Montet.

- **No. Montet 888**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Burial chamber
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel.

- **No. Montet 889**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Burial chamber
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel.

- **No. Montet 889bis**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Burial chamber
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragments of an uninscribed alabaster vessel.

- **No. Montet 890**
  - Findspot: Ahiram tomb – Burial chamber
  - Dimensions: not known
  - Description: Fragment of an alabaster vessel bearing the Horus name of Ramses II. Montet (Montet 1928–1929, 227) suggested that the name may be written inside a *ḥwt* sign, possibly referring to a shrine founded by the king in the city. Perhaps this could be the chapel whose blocks were found by Dunand (§4.5).

The Mycenaean sherds can be compared with those found in Necropolis K and confirms that such vessels, or their content, were prestigious enough to be deposited in royal tombs (§4.7). The fact that both the sherds come from stirrup jars, which are closed forms, suggests that possibly it was the content as much as the container that was offered to the deceased (§4.7). Similarly, the fragments of stone vessels suggest exchanges with Egypt at the level of the Egyptian court, as appears from the two fragments bearing the name of Ramses II. The fact that such a vessel was found in a royal tomb may imply that the king of Byblos was involved in these exchanges.

4.9 The Nahr El-Kalb

The Nahr El-Kalb ("Dog River") valley is about 18 km south of Byblos and 15 km north of Beirut. The valley, which is more than 20 km long, stretches from the sea into the inland toward the chain of Mount Lebanon (fig. 4.40).

A steep sandstone promontory stands on the south side of the river, at its mouth. This promontory is famous for its numerous rock inscriptions of many periods. The earliest are three inscriptions commissioned by Ramses II that were published for the first time at the

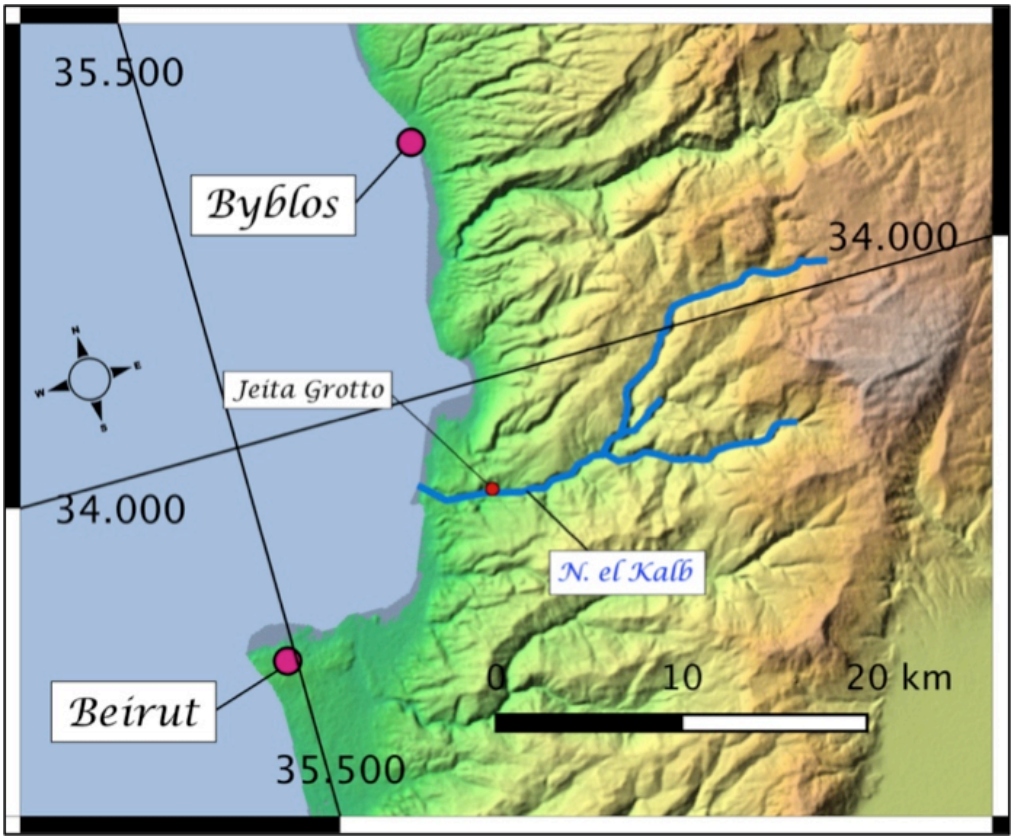


Figure 4.40: Nahr El-Kalb Valley.

beginning of the 19th century. Two are still visible today, while Napoleon III had the third erased and covered with plaster in order to engrave a celebratory inscription about his own campaigns. The inscriptions were copied more than once (in particular Bonomi 1839, see Weissbach 1922; published again in Maïla-Afeiche 2009, 139); a collation of two of them (the one destroyed and one of the two remaining) can also be found in Kitchen's K*RI* II 2.

All three texts are almost completely eroded away. Apart from a few traces of the scenes in the lunettes, only some cartouches of Ramses II, a few signs of the first lines of each inscription and some further isolated signs are preserved, but nothing beyond the introductory formulae can be translated for the main body of their texts. The dates of two inscriptions can still be read as years 4 and 10 of Ramses II (Weissbach 1922, 21–2). These dates correspond to the king's first and sixth campaigns, and they suggest that the king was active or at least passed through the area of Byblos both before and after the battle of Qadesh, which took place in year 5 (Cavillier 2002a; Obsomer 2012, 122–5, 187–9; see also Thum 2016, 72–5).

The location of these inscriptions at the mouth of the Nahr El-Kalb could respond to the prominence of the cliff, just above a narrowing in the coastal road. Moreover, it could also evoke a symbolic value attached to the valley, since one of the main sources of the Nahr El-Kalb springs from one of the most impressive caves of Lebanon, the Jeita Grotto, where prehistoric and Early Bronze Age material has been found (Copeland and Wescombe 1965, 90–1). Caves were also present at the basis of the cliff itself, although they were sealed during the construction of the now disappeared railroad (Yazbeck 2009). Some of them (Ras El-Kalb II and Ras El-Kalb III) yielded chalcolithic and Late Bronze Age material suggesting the presence of tombs (Copeland and Wescombe 1965, 123–5; Yazbeck 2009, 191). Furthermore, living rock inscriptions may have also had the function of claiming the ownership of the Pharaoh on the territory (Liverani 1990b, 59; Thum 2016). This could have been particularly true in the Levant, were local power like the Hittites had a consolidate tradition of using living rock steles to claim disputed territories (Glatz and Plourde 2011; Thum 2016, 69).

The Nahr El-Kalb is also roughly located halfway between Beirut and Byblos, and the former city can be seen from the top of the cliff bearing the inscriptions. All these features make the Nahr El-Kalb an ideal, symbolically freighted natural border between the two kingdoms. Whether or not their frontier was at the Nahr El-Kalb itself, it was probably somewhere in that area.

5 Written Sources

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Thutmose III

The first attestations of Byblos in Late Bronze Age written sources come from Egypt and date to the reign of Thutmose III. Various texts of various nature mention Byblos, and provide informations about various aspects of the city. No mention of Byblos outside Egypt has been identified for this period.

5.2.1 Gebel Barkal stela

The so-called Gebel Barkal stele[1] was found by the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts Expedition in 1920, face down in rooms B 501, III–V, VI of the temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal in Nubia (Leprohon 1991, 23.733 3/5). The text is dated at the beginning

[1] Findspot: rooms B 501, III–V, VI of the temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal in Nubia – discovered by the Boston Museum expedition in 1920 (Leprohon 1991, 23.733 3/5).
Current location: Boston Museum of Fine Arts – MFA 23.733.
Material: granite (G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 24).
Dimensions: 173 × 97 × 15 cm (G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 24).
Publication and general bibliography: *Urk.* IV 1227–1243; G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933; Leprohon 1991, 23.733 3/5; Beylage 2002, 171–203, 652–71; Klug 2002, 193–208; Redford 2003, 103–19.
General description: the lower right hand corner has been broken away in ancient times, the top and side edges are worn (G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 24).

to year 47 of Thutmose III, on the occasion of an expedition of the king in the area, and it is described as "his monument to his father Amun, lord of the thrones of the Two Lands, in the fortress of 'Smiting-the-Foreigners' (*smȝ ḫȝstyw*) (lines 1–3: *Urk.* IV 1228.6–12; Manuelian 2006, 413; Spalinger 2006, 361, 366).

The year 47 date is five years after the last entry in the surviving Annals (Cline and O'Connor 2006, 29). Because of its structure and content, Redford (2003, 101–2) interprets the text as a *ḥmst-nsw*, that is an inscription presenting a discourse of the king. As he (2003, 101) points out, "while the form [of these texts] need not presuppose the reality, there is a good a priori case to be made … that an historical 'seance' may in fact underly such texts" (see also Spalinger 1982, 193–221). The king's speech could have taken place during a visit in the area. As suggested by Morris (2005, 198, 207), it is likely that the text's audience was the local community of the Egyptian settlers, and its aim was to boast the achievements of the Pharaoh through the choice of the topics treated in it. For example, the many references to the victorious deeds of the king in the Levant – at the other end of the empire from the stele – were probably meant to exalt the power and grandeur of the king. The text is composed of a series of clearly distinct and heterogeneous episodes, ranging from reminiscences of campaigns and payments of tribute, to an elephant hunt and the miraculous appearing (or falling?) of a star.[2] The episodes are not in geographical or chronological order and focus instead on the glorification of the king and his actions.

Byblos is mentioned once, in an episode that is not attested in other surviving texts from the reign. The stele narrates two other episodes related to Lebanese cities and Lebanon in general that are relevant here. The first gives, together with a parallel passage in the Annals, valuable information about the geopolitical frame of the coastal region of Lebanon, while the second, which does not name the city, seems to refer to the expedition to Byblos described by Sennefri in his tomb (see §5.2.3). I present the passages relating to Byblos and its region in the order they occur in the text. The first passage is in lines 11–12 (*Urk.* IV 1232.1–6; G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 28–9, pl. iv):

[2]But see Winkler 2013, who thinks the mention of the miraculous star should be understood as a metaphor representing the king.

Passage A

[11] *jst ḏȝ~n ḥm=j r pḥww nw stt*	Now my Majesty crossed to the ends of Asia;
jw rdj~n=j mḏḫ=tw ꜥḥꜥw ꜥšȝw nw ꜥš	I caused many ships to be built of *ꜥš*-wood
ḥr ḏww nw tȝ-nṯr	from the hills of God's Land
m-hȝw tȝ nbt kpny	in the neighbourhood of the Lady of Byblos;
rdj ḥr wrrywt	they were placed on carts
jḥw ḥr stȝ	and oxen pulled (them);
sqd=sn ḫr- [12] *[ḫȝt] ḥm=j r ḏȝt jtrw pf ꜥȝ*	they sailed before My Majesty to cross that great river
jr(r) r-jmytw ḫȝst tn r nhrn	that flows (lit. "makes") between this land and Naharina.[a]

a. This is the usual translation of this passage, offered also by Gardiner (Gardiner 1957, §177). This, however, is the only example he gave of this construction. See further below.

This excerpt comes from a passage narrating events of the 8th campaign, in year 33 (Redford 2003, 105, 220–8, Cline and O'Connor 2006, 29–30, Redford 2006, 333–4). Thutmose III is said to have sailed from Egypt to Byblos, where he had ships built from local wood in order to attack Mitanni. The ships were then carried by his army on the march toward the interior of Syria. It is generally assumed that these ships were used to cross the Euphrates (e.g. Redford 2003, 106–7). I however wonder if this was really their main purpose, as the river is hundreds of kilometres inland and the action of the Egyptian troops on its other side seems to have been just a simple demonstration of power culminating with the erection of a stele. Rather, they could have been used to move the army faster within Syria, possibly navigating the Orontes river, which flows northward from the north of the Beqa'a valley and was probably at least partially navigable for small boats, from Hama and perhaps even from Homs (see Butcher 2003, 133–4). Such a use, of course, would not exclude that they could have also been employed to cross the Euphrates later on during the campaign.

The fact that the ships were built near Byblos suggests that the city controlled considerable forest resources. Moreover, the ships are built using wood from "God's Land in the neighbourhood of the Lady of Byblos" (line 11), not simply "from Byblos". The stress is on the goddess, and the text refers to the city through her. The strong association between the city and her goddess is well attested earlier, from the Old and Middle Kingdoms and continued in later periods (see §5.2.5.2, §6.5.0.1).

As noted above, this was the 8th campaign in year 33. Thutmose had been campaigning on the Lebanese coast at least since year 29, and the Egyptians would have had a good knowledge of the local geographical and geopolitical situation. Therefore, the choice of Byblos could also have been influenced by strategic reasons: the city may have been safer and more loyal and willing to help the Egyptians than other ones on the Levantine coast. Here, the special relationship between the city and Egypt, which was also formulated in religious terms through the Lady of Byblos, was probably significant (see §5.2.5, §6.5.0.1 and §6.5.0.2).

Two other passages refer to Lebanon and are relevant to Byblos. The first is in lines 30–32 (*Urk.* IV 1237.9–1238.2; G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 34–5, pl. v):

Passage B

[30] *mḏḥ [n=j m ḏȝ]hy tnw rnpt nbt*	(Wood) was hewn [for me in Dja]hi each and every year
m ʿš mȝʿ n rmnn	from real ᶜš-wood of Lebanon
jnw r stp-sȝ ʿ.w.s.	which was brought to the palace l.p.h.
jw n=j ḫwdt r kmt sḫntw [...]	A wealth (of timber[a]) comes for me to Egypt, brought south [...]
[31] [... *ʿš?*] *mȝ*[ʿ] *n ngȝw*	[...] real [ᶜš-wood?] of Negau
m stp n tȝ-nṯr	the best of God's Land,
swȝḏ st	having been despatched
mȝʿ[*w? tp?*] *mj šs*[?]*r* [*p*]*rt r ḫnw*	with its ballast in good order(?)[b], to come out to the residence
nn snt jw trw jry tnw rnpt nbt	without the passing of the coming of the season thereof each and every year.
jw mšʿ=j nty m jwʿyt m wȝnrȝtȝ	My troops, which are as a garrison in Ullassa,[c] come
[32] [...] *n*[*t*]*y m ʿš n nḫtw ḥm=j*	[...] which is ᶜš-wood from the victories[d] of My Majesty
m sḫrw jt=j [*jmn-rʿ*]	through the plans of my father [Amun-Ra]
wḏ n=j ḫȝstyw nbt	who allotted to me all foreigners.
n rḏj=j jm=w n sttyw	I did not give of it to the Asiatics,
ḫt pw mr=f	(since) it is wood that he loves.
wʿf=f mtr=sn n nb=j	He subdued, (so that) they would testify[e] to my lord,
qsn=sn ḥtp [...]	their recalcitrance being pacified.

a. The determinative 𓌙 (M3) shows that a wealth of timber is meant.
b. This is the reconstruction and translation suggested by Redford (2003, 111 n.36). Alternatively he also suggests *mȝʿ[w] tp mj šsr [p]rt r ḫnw* "(sent off) in the right direction, its ballast in good order…". These are only two among the many possible reconstructions. The passage is too fragmentary for confident restoration.
c. Or "from the garrison in Ullassa".
d. According to Galán (1995, 65–6), the word *nḫtw* could refer to the booty – resulting from the *nḫt*, "success", "achievement", of the king – which was displayed and seen and which was thus probably somehow comparable to *jnw* and *bȝk*.
e. This is a difficult passage. Redford (2003, 112) translates "he has enforced (it) so that they operate regularly for 'The Lord', (even though) they be irked being in a state of peace (?)",

> Klug (2002, 201) translates "Er eroberte, indem sie meinen Herrn anerkennen, (und) indem ihr Leid befriedigt (d.h. beseitigt) ist" while Beylage (2002, 195) renders "Er (i.e. Amun) erobert, und wenn sie meinen Herrn bezeugen, so hat ihr Leiden ein Ende".

This passage is probably to be related to the following passages of the Annals (*Urk.* IV 700.6–9, and similarly *Urk.* IV 713.46, 732.6–7; see also Redford 1990, 40–63; Redford 2003, 75):

> *jst* [26] *n nʒ n mnjwt sspd m ḫt nb(t) mj ḥtr=sn*
> *mj nt-ʿ=sn nt ṯnw rnpt*
> *ḥnʿ bʒk n rʒmnn mj nt-ʿ=sn n ṯnw rnpt*
> *ḥnʿ wrw nw rmn*[*n...*
>
> Now the harbours were provided (*sspd*) with everything
> according to their dues quota,
> according to their annual written agreement (*nt-ʿ*),
> together with the *bʒk* of Lebanon according to their annual written agreement
> and with (that of?) the chiefs of Lebanon [...]

and with the following (*Urk.* IV 719.7–10; cf. *Urk.* IV 723.4–7 for a similar passage; see also Redford 1990, 40–63; Redford 2003, 89, 91):

> [90] *jst n nʒ n mnjwt sspd m ḫt nb(t) nfrt*
> *mj nt-ʿ=sn nt ṯnw rnpt*
> *m [ḫd] m ḫntyt*
> *bʒkw n rʒmnn r-mjtt*
>
> Now the harbours were provided (*sspd*) with every good thing,
> according to their annual written agreement (*nt-ʿ*)
> (for?) sailing northward and sailing southward
> (with? / of?) the *bʒkw* of Lebanon likewise.

These passages describe the annual (*nt ṯnw rnpt*) equipment (*sspd*) and delivery of *ḥtr* and *bʒk* taxes of Lebanon to the coastal harbours (*mnjwt*). These ports are generally interpreted as (some of) the Lebanese coastal settlements themselves (e.g. Redford 1990, 56–61; Redford 2003, 219; Spalinger 2006, 362). These passages seem to suggest that these *mnjwt* had been transformed by the Egyptians, after the 5th campaign (Redford 2006, 328), into collecting posts for the local revenues of "taxes" and impositions,[3] possibly as strategic storage depots along maritime routes (Redford 1990, 56–61). No name is associated with these *mnjwt*, but it is quite likely that Byblos was one of them,

[3] On the meaning of *bʒkw* and *ḥtr*, and on the related *jnw*, see Kruchten 1980; Bleiberg 1984; 1988; A. H. Gordon 1984; 1996; J. J. Janssen 1993; Galán 1995, 66; Quirke 1998; Liverani 2001, 176–82

and the temple built or restored there by Thutmose III (see §3.5, §4.5 §4.6, §5.2.2) – or some storehouses in other areas of the city but belonging to it – could have been the focal point of this revenue collection (Morris 2005, 121, 139 and §5.2.5.2). As for the other "harbours", considering what is known about the geopolitical situation of the region, some suggestions can perhaps be advanced. Two cities seem to me to be particularly likely candidates: Ullassa, which seems to have hosted an Egyptian garrison (mentioned in the passage of the Gebel Barkal stele discussed here; see also §5.4.5 for references to it in the Amarna letters); and Sumur, if one considers that its important administrative role in the late 18th dynasty as attested by the Amarna letters could have had its origin in the reign of Thutmose III (see §5.4.5). Another possibility is Tyre, which was located at the mouth of the Litani River and therefore was a strategic access point to the Beqa'a Valley; in the Amarna letters this city is referred to with the curious and puzzling epithets URU *ra-bi-tu*, "capital city" (EA 147.62), $GEME_2$ LUGAL, "servant girl of the king" (EA 149.10), URU LUGA[L], "city of the king" (EA 150.7, 151.6 passim), URU *m*.MI_2 *ma-ia*$_8$*-a-ti*, "the city of Mayati (possibly princess and later queen Merytaten)" (155.42 passim), which perhaps could refer to some special role of it in the Egyptian administration of the region (see Katzenstein 1973, 37–9). The role and importance of Tyre during the first half of the 18th dynasty is however quite obscure because of the lack of archaeological evidence and its almost total absence from written sources of the 18th dynasty, outside the Amarna letters and Amenhotep III's topographical list discussed below in §5.3.2. A final possibility is Sidon, but this city is not mentioned at all in Egyptian sources outside the Amarna letters, pap. Anastasi I (§5.6.1) which dates to the 19th dynasty and the Tale of Wenamun, which is even later (§5.7). The only hint of a possible role played by Sidon in the Egyptian administration is the mention, in the Amarna letters, of the visit of an unnamed Pharaoh, probably Thutmose IV (EA 85; see Giveon 1969, 56, 58), to the city.

As for the term *nt-ꜥ*, translated above as "written agreement", it also requires comment. Since however it does not appear specifically in the Gebel Barkal stele, its meaning and potential historical relevance is treated in more detail in §5.2.5.1.

The economic inflow represented by the collections of resources must have benefited the cities that were "provided" (*sspd*), in this way. This flow of goods traversed the sea

and reached Egypt: the *m [ḫd] m ḫntyt*, "sailing northwards and southwards", probably refers to the ships going northward from Egypt and southward toward Egypt. The need for harbours alone points to regular maritime traffic and a stream of goods.

This flow, which was probably bidirectional,[4] constituted a form of trade and is probably referred to in the present passage of the Gebel Barkal stele. Its characterisation as annual both in the Annals and in the stele points to its regularity; the *jw trw jry*, the "passage of the season thereof", in the Gebel Barkal passage, instead, suggests perhaps a seasonal pattern. Maritime trade between Egypt and the Levant was indeed probably seasonal, because winter was a season of storms and difficult sea conditions in the Eastern Mediterranean, as has been suggested by several authors (e.g. Sauvage 2008, 210–1; 2012, 168, 265–7 for discussion and bibliography; and Liverani 1990a in relation to the Amarna Letters).

The presentation of these exchanges as unidirectional in the Gebel Barkal stele and in the Annals, as something that Egypt (or Amun) takes because it/he owns it (line 32), without mention of an "agreement", may relate to the partly tributary character of these exchanges, but it could also be ideological. These texts were in fact ideological compositions (Baines 1996; 2008), although Redford (Redford 1990, 40–63; Redford 2003, 4 with references) suggests that that the sections of the Annals discussed here could have been based on and shaped by administrative documents. If he is right, this may well mean that these passages are more accurate representations of the nature of these economic transactions.

Such a separation between the reality of these exchanges and the way they are presented in ideologically oriented sources like the Gebel Barkal stele has been discussed in detail by Liverani (Liverani 2001; see also §5.2.5, see also §6.5), who observes that something comparable is developed in the story of Wenamun: when finally received by the king of Byblos, Wenamun claims Amun's ownership of and love for the wood of Lebanon, an idea that also appears in the Gebel Barkal stele.[5] But the fact that in the

[4] Although there is no explicit source confirming that for the time of Thutmose III, this is a reasonable assumption that is confirmed in later period, for instance by the Amarna letters (see below §5.4.4, see also §6.3.0.2).

[5] Wenamun 2.24, 2.28, 2.34, at least if one takes *r-b-r-n* as a word for "juniper", as I suggest elsewhere (Kilani 2016a).

end he has to pay to obtain the wood shows that his claims are an ideological construct to mask an otherwise ideologically unacceptable commercial exchange.

The Gebel Barkal stele adds details that are absent in the Annals. The main commodity traded is wood, which is not surprising as Lebanon was famous for it, not only in Egypt. It is notable, however, that this wood was fetched, at least in part, by Egyptian soldiers, who according to the stele, were based in Ullassa. Their involvement is supported by an image in the tomb of Sennefri (Strudwick 2016, 106–7, pl. 17B; see §5.2.3 here below) and by a passage of the Annals for the 9th campaign, in year 34 (*Urk.* IV 707.10–14):

jst mnjwt nb(wt) nt ḥm=f sspd(w)
m ḫt nbt nfrt nt šsp ḥm[=f ḥr? ḫɜst ḏɜ]hy
m ꜥš
kftjw kɜpnwt s[k]tw ɜtp m wḫɜw sɜwt
ḥnꜥ ḫtw ꜥɜw n mḏ[ḥw jw]ꜥyt [a] *n ḥm=f*

Now all the harbours of His Majesty were provided
with every good thing that [His] Majesty received [from?] Djahy
and with ᶜš-wood
(while) (the) *kftyw*, *kbnw* and *sktw* ships[b] were loaded with poles and boards
together with the big timbers that the [garri]son of His Majesty cut.

a. Convincingly suggested by Redford (Redford 2003, 80, n.139). Sethe suggested *ꜥɜw* (*Urk.* IV 707.14).
b. On these types of ship see Säve-Söderbergh 1946, 46–50; Martin-Pardey 1984; Jones 1995, 73; Wachsmann 1998, 51–2; C. Ward 2012.

This passage does not say where these Egyptian soldiers were based, whereas the Gebel Barkal stele states that they were *jw ꜥyt m wɜnrɜtɜ*, "a garrison in Ullassa" (line 31). Perhaps these soldiers could be the same mentioned in the later passage of the stele treated below. The cutting of these flagpoles is probably depicted also in the tomb of Sennefri, where Egyptian soldiers come out of a Levantine fortified city to cut wood (Davies 1933, 30–1, pl. 36). The surviving inscription in Sennefri's tomb does not mention Ullassa; Byblos, which is either mentioned or implied by allusion to its goddess seems to have been the focal point of his expedition (§5.2.3; see also §5.2.5).

This passage raises the issue of the predominance of Byblos in the sources of the period: if trade with various Lebanese harbours was normal, some factor other than its wood and products must have caused Byblos to stand out in Egyptian eyes (see §5.2.5 below; contra Betsy M. Bryan 2006, 81).

The last surviving passage in the Gebel Barkal stele that involves Lebanon narrates of the expedition that Thutmose III organized to acquire flagpoles for the temple of Amun in Karnak (lines 44–8: *Urk.* IV 1241.11–1242.13; G. A. Reisner and M. B. Reisner 1933, 38, pl. v):

Passage C

44 [*rdj~n*]*=j ḥryt=j m pḥww nw sṯt*	[I spread] my dread in the ends of Asia
nn dnjw wpwty=j[a]	without my messenger being hindered.
jn mšʿ=j swꜣ snwt m ḫtjw nw ʿš	It is my army who cut down the flagpoles on the slopes of ʿš-wood
ḥr ḏww [*nw*] *tꜣ-nṯr* [...]	on the hills [of] God's Land [...]
45 [...] *r mnw jtw=j*	[...] for the monuments of my fathers,
nṯrw nbw nw šmʿw mḥw	all the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt.
jw mḏḥ~n ḫm=j dpt nt ḫnt nt ʿš [...]	My Majesty hewed a processional ship of ʿš-wood [...]
[... ◊ M1? [b]] *ḥr mryt [n] rmnn m mnn*	[...trees?] in/on the shore [of] Lebanon in the fortress [...]
46 [*w*]	
[...]	[...]
[*n*]*ḏr wrw nbw rmnny jmww-nsw*	all the chiefs of Lebanon carpentered royal ships
[...] *r sḫnt jm=sn*	to transport southward in them
r jnt bjꜣyt nbt [nt ḫ]nt(y)-š r stp-sꜣ ʿ.w.s	and to bring all kinds of precious goods [of Kh]enty-she to the palace l.p.h.,
wrw nw 47 [...]	the chiefs of [...]
[...]	[...]
[...*jn* (?)] *wrw nw rṯnw sṯꜣ nꜣ n snwt ḥr jḫw r mryt*	[... it is (?)] the chiefs of Retenu who dragged these flagpoles with (lit. "on") oxen to the shore;
ntst jy ḫr bꜣkw=sne	it is they who came bearing their *bꜣkw*-impositions
r bw ḫr ḫm=f r ḫnw m 48 [...]	to the place where his Majesty was, to the residence in [...]
[...]	[...]
ḫr mꜣʿnb nfr jnw m bjꜣyt[c] *rs* [...]	bearing all good products that were brought as wonders of the south [...]
ḥtrw m bꜣkw n ḫrt-rnpt	charged as annual *bꜣkw*-impositions
mj nḏt nbt nt ḫm=j	like all the subjects of My Majesty.

a. On messengers see Valloggia 1976; Liverani 2001, 71–8, with 73–4 on the significance of being able to send messengers in safety.
b. The sign ◊ (M1) seems to appear at the end of the lacuna. Is it the determinative of a word for a kind of tree or wood?
c. On *bjꜣyt* see Graefe 1971; Liverani 2001, 176–82.

Even thought this passage of the Gebel Barkal stele does not refer explicitly to Byblos, it does mention *rmnn*, "Lebanon", *ḫnt(y)-š*, "Khenti-she" (another term for Lebanon, probably referring to the coast and its forests – LÄ I 1013; WB III, 310–1) and the *ḏww* [*nw*] *tꜣ-nṯr*, the "hills of the God's Land". The name of the city could have occurred in lost areas of the text, or could have been superfluous since all these terms, and *tꜣ-nṯr*

"god's Land" in particular, refer to its region (see Cooper 2011). This expedition to obtain flagpoles is thus comparable with, and probably is the same as, that depicted in Sennefri's tomb (see §5.2.3). The fact that the flagpoles are mentioned in the ideologically freighted Gebel Barkal stele in the far south of the territory controlled by Egypt reinforces the symbolic importance of this mission.

In contrast with Sennefri's account, the Gebel Barkal stele focuses more on the act of obtaining and setting up the flagpoles than on the expedition itself. This difference in the descriptions may be a matter of perspective: the Gebel Barkal text presents the matter from the point of view of the king who commissioned the expedition, and it focuses on its achievements rather than on details about its execution. Sennefri's version is instead the account of the person who undertook the journey and was eager to describe the journey itself, emphasizing his own role and deeds in accomplishing this mission for the king and Amun.

In line 45 the text mentions a *dpt nt ḫnt nt ꜥš*, a "processional ship of *ꜥš*-wood". Is this a sacred bark for a temple, perhaps for the temple of Amun in Karnak, like the poles? This possibility, besides being an interesting parallel for Wenamun, would confirm once again the strong religious connections with the city during the reign of Thutmose III.

In line 46 there is a mention of a fortress. The location of this fortress has been much discussed: Byblos and Ullassa seem the most likely options, but Tyre, Sidon, and even the Galilee have been suggested (Morris 2005, 153–8 with refs). Other sources of the time of Thutmose III mention a fortress in the Levant, which could be the same. They are discussed more in detail in §5.2.5.1 below.

Finally, a curious technical detail: the use of oxen to draw the timbers, mentioned in line 47, appears also centuries later in the text of Wenamun (Wenamun 2.43; Schipper 2005, 82; see §6.3.0.1 and §6.3.0.2). Evidently, this aspect of the process of obtaining wood did not change much during the last centuries of the Bronze Age.

5.2.2 Statue of Minmose

Minmose was a "count" (*ḥɜty-ꜥ*), an "overseer of the prophets of Montu lord of Thebes" (*jmy-rɜ ḥmw-nṯr n mntw nb wɜst*), a "overseer of the works in the temples of [all?] the

Gods" (*jmy-rꜣ m rꜣw-prw nw nṯrw* [*nbw*?]), and a "royal scribe" (*sḫ nsw*) under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II (Drioton 1927, 53).

His career can be reconstructed from various documents. In his early years, he followed Thutmose III in his campaigns in Syria. Later, as his titles suggest, he was chief architect for the whole of Egypt, and as such he claimed to have supervised the construction of numerous temples. He also held various religious titles, which however could have been related with his position as architect, and could thus have been at least in part honorary (see Kees 1953, 33–5; de Meulenaere 1981, 318; Der Manuelian 1987, 164–6).

On a granodiorite squatting statue that has lost its head, found in 1926 in the Great East Court of the temple of Montu at Medamud, is a relatively well-preserved biographical inscription (Drioton 1927, 52–6). This describes what Minmose saw and did as a servant of Thutmose III. The reference to Byblos occurs in a section describing the building activities that he supervised (*Urk.* IV 1442.15). Vernus (1978, 29) suggests, from this text as well as from a stele from Tura, that these works were completed under Amenhotep II. The relevant passage is as follows (*Urk.* IV 1442.16–1443.25):

[14] *mꜣ~n(=j) rwḏt-ʿ ḥm=f ḥr ḫpr m ʿḫꜣ*	I saw the stenght of the hand of His Majesty when he was in battle
ḥr ḥꜣq dmj 30 m-ḫn[15]*w w n tḫsy*	and plundering 30 towns within the region of Takhsi.
jnw wrw=sn ḫrw=sn mnmnt[16]*=sn*	Their chiefs, their subjects, their herds were taken away.
sšm~n(=j) mšʿ qnj n nsw	I led the brave army of His Majesty,
tj wj m rwdw n nsw m jr[17]*w ḏdwt*	while I was agent of his Majesty as executor of the orders.
jw rd~n ḥm=f m ḥr=j r ḫrp kꜣwt	His Majesty instructed me to direct the works
m rꜣw-prw nw nṯrw nbw [...]	in the temples of all the gods:
[18]*n mnṯ(w) nb wʿst, kꜣ ḥr-jb mꜣdw*	of Montu, Lord of Thebes, Bull who is in Medamud
n wp-wꜣwt nb sꜣwty	of Wepwawet, Lord of Asyut,
[*n*]*n ḥwt-ḥr nbt tp jḥw*	of Hathor, Lady of Atfih,
n [19]*bꜣstt nbt ʿnḫ-tꜣwy*	of Bastet, Lady of Ankh-Tawy (Memphis),
n spdw n jꜣty spdw	of Sopdu, Lord of the two hills of Sopdu,
n ḥr nb ḫm	of Horus, Lord of Letopolis,
n ḫnm ḫnt(y) wꜣt[*=f* ?]	of Khnum, who is in front of [his] path (?)
[20]*n sḫmt ḫntt ḫꜣs(t)*	of Sekhmet who is the foremost of the desert
n ḥr-rʿ nb sꜣḫbw	of Horus-Ra, Lord of Sakhbu,
n ḥwt-ḥr nbt jmꜣw	of Hathor, Lady of Imau (Kom El-Hisn),
n wꜣḏ[*t nbt*] *p dp*	of Wadjet, [Lady of] Pe and Dep,
[21]*n wsjr nb ḏd*[*w*]	of Osiris, Lord of Busiris,
n ḥr-ḫnty-ḫtj m km-wr	of Horus-Khentekhtai, in (the nome of) the Black Bull (Athribis),
n bꜣstt nb[*t*...]	of Bastet, Lady of [...]
[22][...]	[...]
[*n jmn-rʿ nb nsw*] *tꜣwy m jw n jmn*	[of Amun-Re Lord of the thrones] of the two lands, in the Island of Amun (el-Balamun),

n ḥwt-ḥr nbt kȝ[*p*]*n*	of Hathor, Lady of By[b]los,
n jmn [...]	of Amun [...]
[23][...]	[...]

The description of the building activities comes after the mention of a campaign against Takhsi in Syria. This order is not necessarily chronological but could be thematic and/or hierarchical, as is found in other biographical texts of the time.[6] The name of Byblos is partially damaged, but still easily recognizable. Wimmer (1990, 1090) observes that the temples are organized from south to north. If this principle was maintained throughout, the last temple, whose location is lost in a lacuna, should have been north of Byblos, in northern Lebanon or western Syria. Sumur, Qadesh, or Qatna, for example, would be good candidates, although no evidence of a temple of Thutmose III has been found in any of these cities. This south–north order may have been the main list's structuring device, although possibly with exceptions: Helck (1971, 444) and Wimmer (1990, 1091; Wimmer 1998, 102), in particular, have suggested identifying the last temple with that of Amon at Gaza in Palestine, as it is the only known temple of this kind in the Levant for this period.

The existance in Byblos of a temple or chapel sponsored by Thutmose III is archaeologically confirmed also by two blocks found during the excavations (see §3.5 above). Although it is virtually impossible to demonstrate it, I think it is likely that these blocks belong to the same building mentioned by Minmose. Otherwise, one would suggest the presence of at least two different buildings sponsored by this king, which although not impossible, would certainly not be the most economic interpretation.

The presence of an Egyptian cultic building suggests that Byblos was under stable Egyptian domination. Moreover, temples played a fundamental role as centres of power and collection points of regional revenues (J. J. Janssen 1979; Singer 1988, 5; Bleiberg 1988; Cole 2004, 93–7 with refs). The temple in Byblos could have had a similar function, and the city itself could have acted as an administrative centre for these remote areas under Egyptian influence. The statue of Djehuti discussed in §3.5 could support this idea.

[6]Such as the biography of Amenemheb in Theban Tomb 85 (see e.g. di Biase-Dyson 2015, with references).

5.2.3 Biography of Sennefri

The tomb of Sennefri has been explored and studied by the Fitzwilliam Museum of Cambridge. The first volume of the final report should be published by the end of 2016. Dr. Strudwick kindly gave me access to some drafts of the sections dealing with the texts presented in this chapter. In addition, various preliminary report have been published in the past years (Leclant and Clerc 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997; 1998; 1999; 2000; Strudwick 2000; Leclant and Clerc 2001; Strudwick 2001; 2005). Finally, Kurt Sethe's 1906 publication is also relevant as it contains an early transcription of the text.

Sennefri is a well attested official of the reign of Thutmose III whose career has been much discussed (e.g. Eichler 1998, 217–8; Strudwick 2000, 243–4). His primary title was "overseer of sealbearers" (*jmy-rꜣ ḫtmtjw*), the standard title of expedition leaders, but this does not appear in preserved parts of the very fragmentary tomb biography, where only *ḥꜣty-ʿ* is present. Sennefri was probably not from Thebes, as seems to be confirmed by a mention of the estate *wꜣtt-ḥr*  on a statue of his father Haydjehuty. The location of *wꜣtt-ḥr* is not precisely known, but it should be somewhere in the Delta or on the Ways of Horus across North Sinai. Sennefri is mentioned in connection with an economic transaction recorded in Pap. Louvre E3226 and dated to year 32 of Thutmose III (Eichler 1998, 217–8). A shrine at Gebel El-Silsila bears his name in association with the cartouche of Hatshepsut, but his name there could be a later addition (Helck 1981).

The passage of the biography that I treat here describes an expedition that Sennefri led to Byblos in order to obtain wood for flagpoles, probably for the temple of Amun in Karnak. Although the text is essentially biographical, it is clearly distinguished from the main biography in the tomb, which is inscribed on the southwestern wall of the chapel (no. 12 fig. 5.1). The text narrating the Byblos expedition is on the northwestern and northeastern walls of the hall (nos 3 and 4 respectively of fig. 5.1). This is the area where representations of the king are usually found (Eichler 1998, 217, 223; see further below).

The text of the expedition to Byblos is divided into four parts, two written on the wall to the right of the door leading toward the inner part of the chapel (passages A, *Urk.* IV 532.12–15 and B *Urk.* IV 533.1–534.3, Strudwick 2016), and two on the left

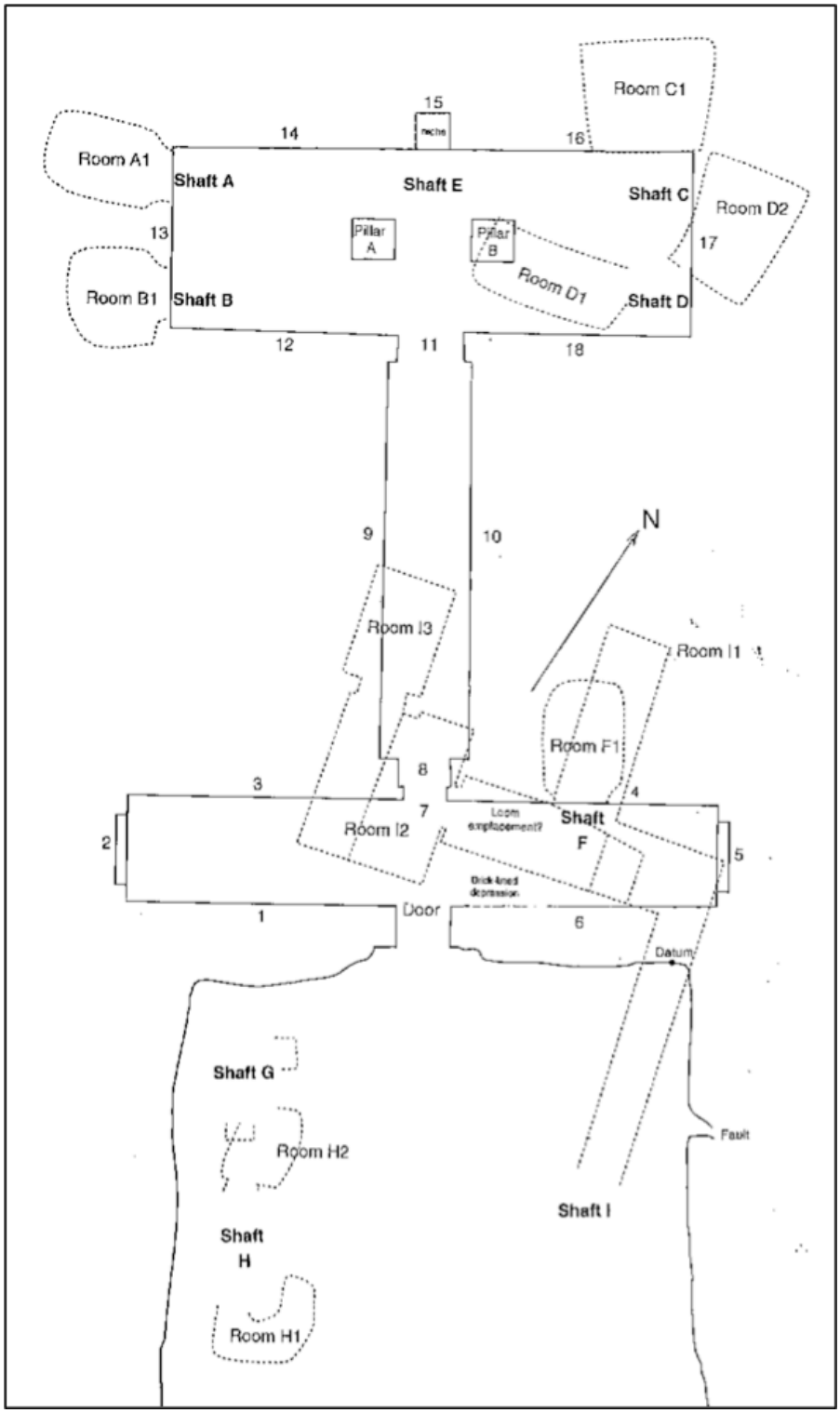


Figure 5.1: Plan of TT99 (Strudwick 2000, 242).

(passages C, *Urk.* IV 534.11–535.16 and D *Urk.* IV 536.2–4, Strudwick 2016, 100–5, figs 88–90, pls 28A, 29, colour pl. 16). All restorations within square brackets are Sethe's unless otherwise stated.

Passages A and B are too fragmentary to suggest a continuous translation. In the very short surviving fragments of text A the only remarkable word that can be recognized is a possible mention of *ḫnty[-š]*, "Khenty-She", a name used to refer to Lebanon (line 1). The "noble [slopes of *ꜥš*-trees]" are perhaps mentioned in line 2. This part of the biography possibly described the appointment of Sennefri as leader of the expedition (Eichler 1998, 216). Text B, for which more fragments survive, consists instead in a eulogy of the king, possibly Sennefri's answer to the appointment (Eichler 1998, 216). Text C is more relevant to the present research, as it deals with the expedition to Byblos itself. In this case, slightly longer fragments are preserved, and a translation can thus be suggested:

Passage C

[1] *jst jn jry-pꜥt ḥɜty-ꜥ ḫtmty bjty* [*smr wꜥty sn-nfrj jww m ḥtp* [a] ...	Now, the Prince, the Count, the Seal-bearer of the *bity*, [the unique friend, Sennefri, came in peace ...
... *sqd~n=f m wɜḏ-w*]*r* [b]	... he sailed the se]a
[2] *s*[*ɜḥ~n=f tɜ*	and r[eached the land...
[3] ... [4] ... [5] ...	...
...[*ḫp*]*r* [6] *m b(w)* [*ḥ*]*r=j*	... happe]ned in the place [wher]e I was,
ḥḏ ḥr [*n mšꜥ=j* ...	and [my army] as happy [c][...
...*jw*][7]*=j šm=kwj ḫ*[*r* ...]*=j ḏw p*[*n* ...	…] I went with/under [...] this [...] of mine [...
...] [8] *ḥr-tp šnyt*	…] on top of/above a storm
jw=j ꜥq=kwj r ḫn[*ty-š* ...	I entered into Khenty-she (Lebanon/forest)
...	...
... *rdj~n=j*] [9] *mɜꜥ n=s wdn m ḥḥ m ḫt ḥr-tp* [*ꜥnḫ wḏɜ snb ḥm=k* [d] ...	[I caused] to present her offerings consisting of millions of things on behalf of [the life, prosperity and health of Your Majesty…
... [10] *mm* [e] *kɜpn*[*y*] *dj sṯ n Ḥrw=s n st-*[*jb*]*=s*	... in Byblos. They were given to her Horus,[f] for her satisfaction
rdj [...] [11] *m stpw jry*	gave/cause [...] of the finest thereof,
jn~n=j mḥ [*6*]*0 m ɜ*[*w=sn* ...	(which?) I brought, 60 cubits in [their] len[gth…
...	...
[12] *spd st r wšm*	they were sharper than (the prickles on) ears of grain,[g]
ḥr(y)-tp jr[*y*] *w*[*mt r*:..	the upper part thereof thick[er than...
... *shɜ~n*][13]*=j st ḥr ḫɜst nw tɜ-nṯr*	...] I [brought] them [down] on/from the mountains of God's Land.
spr(w) r rɜ-ꜥ[h] *ḫnty-š* [...	(They) arrived at the limit of Khenty-she (Lebanon/forest)
[... *ɜtp r ꜥḥꜥw* ... [i]]	[...loaded on the ships...]
... *sqd~n=j m wɜḏ*][14]*-wr m mɜꜥw nfrw*	... I sailed in] the [se]a with a good wind
ḥr sɜḥ [*tɜ* ...	reaching [land...

a. The sequence of titles is as suggested by Sethe (1906, 359; *Urk.* IV 354.11).
b. Following Sethe (1906, 359; *Urk.* IV 354.12). His suggestion is based only on very few traces, but it is followed by Strudwick 2016, 101.
c. Following Strudwick 2016, 101. Montet reported (1928, 310) that N. de Garis Davies, who visited the tomb around 1928, read this line as *jw=j šm=kwj ḫns (?) mšʿ=j ḏw pn*. Montet rendered "J'allai et mes soldats parcoururent cette montagne". If this is correct, it would imply that Egyptian soldiers were involved in Sennefri's activities. This possibility would agree with what emerges from other sources (see §5.2.1, §5.2.5.1).
d. See Gardiner 1957, §178.
e.  could be the preposition *mm*, or a 18th dynasty variant of *jm* "there" (Gardiner 1957, §205). The preposition is rarely attested in the New Kingdom with place names as a (erroneous?) variant of the preposition *m* and *jm*= (Wb. II.2). Therefore, it is not impossible that it could refer to Byblos.
f. This passage, which includes the only surviving explicit mention of Byblos in the text, is difficult to interpret. An initial problem lies in its structure. Sethe (1906, 360) divided it into two sentences, the first ending with *mm*, "there", and the second starting with *kȝpn*[*y*], "Byblos". Eichler (1998) and Strudwick (2016, 101) follow Sethe here. Redford (2003, 175) takes it as a single sentence and he considers *kȝpn*[*y*], "Byblos" to be in apposition to *mm*. Other problems emerge in the remaining part of the sentence. Sethe translated "Byblos hat sie (plur.) gegeben seinem Lieblingshorus (dem Könihe)", while Redford suggest the translation "... therein, (viz.) Byblos, who had given herself to her Lord voluntarily", which however is difficult to explain. Sethe took Byblos as the subject of the verb *dj*, although it is not clear to me which verbal form he is implying. *dj* could be a participle: "Byblos, which gives...", or "It is Byblos which gives" without the normal *jn* before "Byblos" (see Gardiner 1957, §227, d; §373; compare also Gebel Barkal stele, §5.2.1). Another possibility is to take *dj* as a participle referring to something lost in the lacuna rather than to Byblos. Such a participle could be feminine, since the final *t* is quite often omitted in this period, and could refer to the same feminine entity as the following suffix pronouns. The possessor "her" cannot be Byblos, because *kȝpny* is masculine. The simplest assumption is that these pronouns refer to the Lady of Byblos, the goddess of the city, who is mentioned in the inscription of Minmose (see §5.2.2) and in the Gebel Barkal Stele (see §5.2.1; and see below). The pronoun *sṯ* raises another problem. *sṯ* could be either a 3. pl (Sethe) or a 3 sg. fem. (Redford) dependent pronoun. If 3 pl., it probably refers to the "flagpoles". If 3 sg. fem., it probably refers to the local goddess. If the *dj* is a participle or an active verb form, *sṯ* is its direct object. Finally, another possibility could be to split the passage in two sentences, but after Byblos, rather than before it. In this case, *dj* could be a passive participle and the predicate of an adjectival sentence and *sṯ* would be the subject: "They were given..." or conceivably "She was given...". To sum up, I see the following options as the most likely possible translations for this fragment:
1) ... there. Byblos, which gave them/her to her Horus...
2) ... there, (viz.) Byblos, which (i.e. Byblos) gave them/her to her Horus...
3) ... therein, (viz.) Byblos, who (referring to a "her" lost in the lacuna) gave them/her(self ?) to her Horus...
4) ... therein, (viz.) Byblos / ...in Byblos (see previous note). They were given to her Horus...
I think 4) makes most sense in context.
g. Strudwick (2016, 102, n.p) suggests that this expression could mean "they being of the highest quality" or alternatively he thinks it could perhaps be a reference to the needle-like foliage of the Lebanese conifers.
h. Strudwick (Strudwick 2016, 102) reads  for .
i. Sethe's reconstruction, which is followed by all the other authors, is reasonable.

Passage D is again too short and too fragmentary to offer a continuous translation. Among the few words that can be read there seems to be a mention of "flagpoles" (*snwt*,

line 1), of the "Ennead" (*psḏt*, line 3) and of "presented (goods)" (*mȝʿw=sn*, line 4).

Overall, the very fragmentary biographical text was relatively long, consisting of at least 5 + 15 + 14 + 4 columns. Its general meaning, main elements, and structure can be glimpsed. The inscription describes a royal expedition to Byblos in search of wood for flagpoles for the temple of Amun in Karnak. Although the name of the temple is not preserved, the poles were probably destined for there (Eichler 1998, 222; Redford 2003, 175; Shirley 2011, 302, n.56), and Eichler in particular (1998, 222) observes that some of Sennefri's titles appear to be related with Amun (Eichler 1998, 222). The "flagpoles", *snw(t)*, appear in one of the last fragments of the text (D,1; *Urk.* IV 536.2) and the earlier allusion to something *mḥ [6]0 m ȝ*[*w=sn*, "60 cubits long" (ca. 31 metres: C,11; *Urk.* IV 535.8) confirms that these were the primary reason for Sennefri's travel.

In line C,8 (*Urk.* IV 535.2) there is a mention of "on top of a/the storm" (*ḫr tp šnyt*). This might indicate that the Egyptians met bad weather on their way to Lebanon. Redford (2003, 175) suggests it could allude to Sennefri undertaking this journey in winter,[7] drawing a parallel with the Tale of Wenamun, although he also raises the possibility that the preceding lacuna hides a mythological reference to Baʿal "cloud rider". Strudwick (Strudwick 2016, 101–2) suggests that this mention of storm or clouds could refer to the heights of Mt. Lebanon, from where the wood came. The fragmentary state of the text makes it difficult to reach any firm conclusion. As is stated at the end of section C of the text, Sennefri returned to Egypt with his precious cargo. Redford (2003, 175) suggests that the expedition, which is not dated, took place after year 33, possibly in relation with the works on and around the 7th pylon, which he argues (2003, 125, 175) must be dated to years 33–34. This expedition is very probably the one mentioned by Thutmose III in his Gebel Barkal stele, which also treats flagpoles from Lebanon (lines 44–50, *Urk.* IV 1241.13, §5.2.1).

A further relevant detail is the use of feminine pronouns in two fragments of lines C 9–10 of the text, which probably refer to Hathor Lady of Byblos (n. g to text C). The goddess is also mentioned in the statue of Minmose and in the Gebel Barkal stele (§5.2.2

[7] That trees could have been felled in winter has been suggested also by Semaan (2015, 101), as this would have allowed to use the rivers, enriched with the water of melting snow, to float the logs down to the coast during spring.

and §5.2.1); her presence in all these texts underscores her centrality in the relationship between Egypt and Byblos. It seems that Sennefri, having arrived in Lebanon, gave offerings to the local goddess before obtaining the wood. The same pattern is attested in Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt (Liverani 1990b, 248–9; Liverani 2001, 168–70; see also Harvey 2003, 88; §5.2.5.2 below).

Another connection with the reign of Hatshepsut can probably be identified in the structure of Sennefri's text. Four distinct parts can be recognized: a first section with title and introduction, a presentation of the royal commission, acclamations and support from the court, and finally a part describing the execution of the orders and the successful result. Eichler (1998, 222–8) observes that this structure is unusual for a biographical text, and he rather suggests that it can be compared to that of the Königsnovelle,[8], and a particularly close parallel is with Hatshepsut's account of the expedition to Punt. These intertextual references and the role of the Lady of Byblos are significant for the present research and are discussed more in detail later (see §5.2.5.2, 5.2.5.3; see also §6.5.0.1 and §6.5.0.2).

More broadly, this text highlights the religious importance invested in Byblos during the early 18th Dynasty, as noted in relation to the Egyptian temple in the city mentioned by Minmose (§5.2.2). Moreover, passage C,13 describes the region of Byblos as a *t3-nṯr* "God's Land", a designation used also in the Gebel Barkal stele (see §5.2.1). Furthermore, as Eichler notes (1998, 217), Sennefri's account is displayed in the most prestigious and visible part of his tomb (Hartwig 2004, 15–19), and leading an expedition to Byblos was a deed worth to be recorded in private biographies since the Old Kingdom (Diego Espinel 2002; Marcolin 2010; Marcolin and Diego Espinel 2011).

Bryan (2006, 81) suggests that the commercial revenue of the expedition was what made it worth recording in Sennefri's tomb. However, in view of the centrality of the search for temple flagpoles and the reference to he *t3-nṯr*, "God's land", Sennefri – and his Old and Middle Kingdom predecessors – may rather be celebrating here the religious service he performed in the name of the "living God Thutmose III", in obtaining wood for Amon from the land of Hathor, Lady of Byblos. It is possible that this religious aura surrounding Byblos was the primary ideological motivation for Egyptian kings and

[8]See Hermann 1938. A literary genre attested at least since the Middle Kingdom or even before and common in New Kingdom in official and royal texts (Loprieno 1996; Spalinger 2011).

elites, rather than its commercial resources. During the reign of Thutmose III Byblos was under stable Egyptian control. A straightforward commercial trip to the city was probably not an extraordinary accomplishment, as trading interactions with Byblos and other cities of the region were probably flourishing at the time (see §5.2.5). The king, however, commissioned a new temple to Hathor or restore an existing one (see §5.2.5), exemplifying the special religious importance Egyptians attributed to the city. Religious factors thus emerge as fundamental for interpretation, as religion played a key role in defining, influencing, and shaping Egyptian interactions with the world. As I discuss later (§6.5), comparison with sources from different periods can offer possible answers to the question of whether and how this Egyptian framework influenced Byblos.

Finally, a few scenes are associated with the biographical text, although only fragments of them survive. On wall 4, two registers are visible. In the top one, a series of Egyptian soldiers carrying bows and axes precede some horses and chariots (Strudwick 2016, 102–4, colour pl. 16B). In the lower register, instead, some Asiatic and Egyptian men are pulling something using ropes (Strudwick 2016, 104–5, colour pl. 17A). The remaining part of the scene is lost, but it is likely that we have here a representation of the dragging of the logs from the mountains of Lebanon described in Sennefri's biography. Similarly, the first register probably represents the soldiers of his expedition. The top of a Levantine city or fortress with Asiatics with arms raised in a gesture of adoration on its walls is instead recognizable in the surviving fragments of wall 5 (Strudwick 2016, 106–7, colour pl. 17B). It would be tempting to see in this city a representation of Byblos, as that is the only city mentioned in the biography, but both the text and the scene are too fragmentary for any conclusive identification. The scene, however, is likely related with Sennefri's expedition, and as discussed below, it could be connected also with the timbering activities mentioned in the Gebel Barkal stele and with a scene present in TT 42, the tomb of Amenmose, a contemporary of Sennefri (§5.2.5.1).

5.2.4 Tomb TT 143

Little can be said about the mention of Byblos in this Theban tomb in Dra Abu El-Naga (TT143), whose owner's name is lost (E. Fleming 2012).

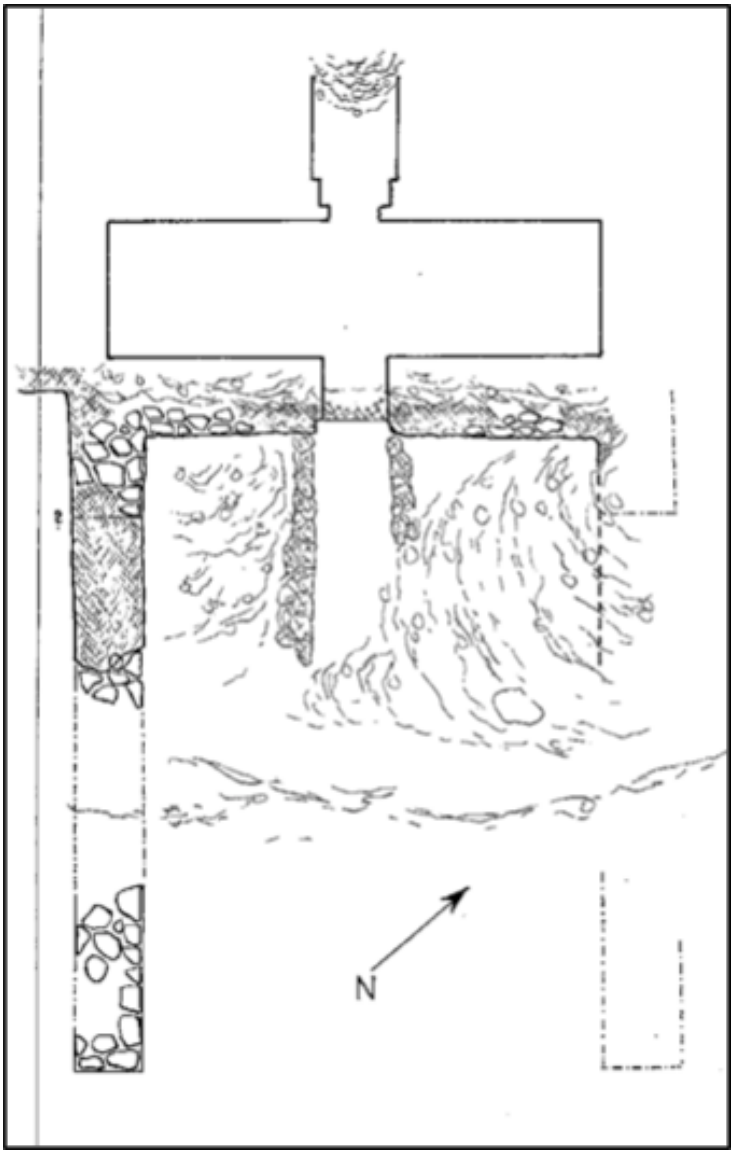


Figure 5.2: Plan of TT143 (Kampp 1996, 429).

The tomb probably dates to the reign of Thutmose III or Amenhotep II (E. Fleming 2012). The name of Byblos occurs in a very fragmentary caption on the north-west wall of the transverse hall (fig. 5.2), where the scenes show the arrival in Egypt of ships bringing goods from Punt (PM I, 255–7). The fragment mentioning Byblos (*Urk.* IV 1472.15–16) runs as follows:

...] *wdn ḫt* [*nfrt wʿbt* ...] *mw (?) m-ḫt spr jmw n kȝp*[*ny*]

Offering of [good and pure ...] things, [...] water (?) after the arrival of the ships of Byblos.

The remaining fragments of texts and paintings show that the context is the return of

an expedition to Punt. The expression *jmw n kȝp*[*ny*] is noteworthy. "Byblos-style" ships are well attested in the Egyptian sources, and were referred to with the technical term *kbnt*, which is first attested in the Old Kingdom and derives from *kbn*, the name of Byblos. The term *kbnt* may originally have indicated ships from Byblos or ships trading on the route to Byblos, but it seems later to have assumed a more general meaning, indicating a kind of (cargo?) ship (Montet 1954; Darnell 1992; Bradbury 1996). *Kbnt* is thus a "Byblos-style" ship, not necessarily a "Byblian ship". Such ships are attested in trade with Punt, and the text of TT143 could be understood in this way, as Louise Bradbury does (1996). The text, however, reads *jmw n kȝp*[*ny*], "ships of Byblos",[9] presumably indicating that the ships are from Byblos, rather than of the *kbnt*, i.e. "Byblian", type. If correctly interpreted, this would be the only attestation of a Byblian involvement in expeditions to Punt. The present caption may thus suggest that Byblian involvement in Egyptian ventures on the Red Sea and collaboration between Egyptians and northern Levantine sailors took place also during the reign of Thutmose III. This would not be surprising, as other sources suggest that shipbuilders from Byblos worked elsewhere (see §6.3.0.2), and Levantine artisans were probably present in the Egyptian shipyards of Peru-Nefer (Zayed 1987, 107–8). Moreover, the tale of Wenamun suggests that there were Levantine captains in Egyptian employment or at least that Egyptian envoys could fare on ships with Levantine captains (Schipper 2005, 62–3, Wen. 1,54–1,55), and Herodotus states that the 26th dynasty king Neko contracted Phoenician crews to sail the Red Sea and circumnavigate Africa (Mauny 1976; Moje 2003), although this could just be one of the many unfounded legends he recorded.

5.2.5 Discussion

In the sources just discussed, Byblos is always mentioned in relation with royal or official activities. No written sources provide information about Byblos's social and political structure, its ordinary trades or any other non-royal aspect of the city. Some elements can,

[9]This could also mean "for Byblos" (as suggested by Baines, personal communication), but considering that these ships are clearly related with Punt, such a translation would be difficult to explain.

however, be derived indirectly from the texts; they are presented here and in §6, where they are discussed in relation with written and non-written sources from other periods.

Three main aspects emerge from the sources of the time of Thutmose III: the strategic role of the city; the central importance of the temple of the Lady of Byblos; and the religious and ideological frame influencing the Egyptian perception of and relation with Byblos. They are discussed in the following paragraphs.

5.2.5.1 Geo-political setting and strategic role

At the beginning of the 18th Dynasty Egypt entered an expansionist phase that led it to clash with Mitanni for the control of Northern Levant. The apex of this conflict was reached at the time of Thutmose III, who fought at least 11 campaigns in the Levant (Redford 2003, with refs) and established the basis of a stable Egyptian supremacy in the area.

The city of Byblos appears to have played an important strategic role in Thutmose's military activities. It is desirable to investigate the details of this interaction. A first question is how Byblos was incorporated into the Egyptian possessions. Did the city voluntarily ally or submit itself to Egypt, perhaps due to the background of past close connections, or was it conquered? There is no mention of a conquest of Byblos in the Annals of Thutmose III, and the city does not appear in the related topographical list (Simons 1937, 109–22; Rainey 1982), which may record the territories conquered by the king. Byblos is not the only city that is absent from the list: none of the centres of the southern Lebanese coast is mentioned there or in the Annals. This absence is noteworthy, especially since the conquest of coastal cities a little north of Byblos such as Ullassa, Sumur, and Arwad is indeed recorded.[10] A first possible explanation for this distinction could be that the centres of the southern Lebanese coast were too small and politically irrelevant, at least from an Egyptian perspective, to appear in the texts of Thutmose III. While this could perhaps be argued for cities like Beirut, Sidon, or Tyre, which are hardly ever mentioned in Egyptian sources from before the 19th dynasty (Gauthier 1925–1931, I 25, VI 106–7, VI 113; Ben-Tor 2006), this explanation does not apply to Byblos. In

[10] Annals: Ullassa: *Urk.* IV 690.17, and probably 985.8 (see §5.2.1); Sumur: *Urk.* IV 689.13; Arwad: *Urk.* IV 687.5, 689.14. The names of Ullassa and Arwad may appear in Thutmose's topographical list, at nos 123 and 175 (*Urk.* IV 788.8; *Urk.* IV 789.14 – see Simons 1937, 119, 120; Rainey 1982).

view of the city's prominence in Thutmose's other sources, one would expect any military conquest to be mentioned in the Annals as well as perhaps in other official inscriptions. This, however, is not the case.

An alternative possibility is that these cities were not conquered but were peacefully annexed into the nascent Egyptian empire. Some clues suggest that the Lebanese coastal towns were not normal conquered vassal territories but became and were bound to Egypt by diplomatic treaties or comparable agreements. First of all, as already mentioned (§5.2.1), the Annals record that some Levantine "harbours" (*mnjwt*: – *Urk.* IV 700.6–9 and passim – see §5.2.1) were supplied and the *bꜣk*-contributions of Lebanon (*bꜣk n rꜣmnn*) were delivered "according to their yearly *nt-ꜥ*" (*mj nt-ꜥ=sn n ṯnw rnpt*). In addition, an inscription of Thutmose III on an obelisk by the 7th Pylon[11] describes the god Amun as: [*r*]*dj n*[*t*]-ꜥ *m tꜣw m-ṯ-n ꜥšꜣ r šꜥ*, "who establishes *nt-ꜥ* in the land of Mitanni more numerous than sand" (*Urk.* IV 589).

According to Routledge (2001, 329–31), who studied the *nt-ꜥ* within the frame of ritual practice, this term refers to lists of ritual or legal duties with a customary basis, characterized by their written form and by a certain periodicity and formality. The term can thus refer to various kinds of documents defining duties, and in an international context it assumes the meaning of "written diplomatic treaty". This secondary meaning developing in diplomatic contexts is easy to understand: a treaty is a written document defining a series of commonly and formally agreed obligations.[12] This is evident from the peace treaty between Ramses II and Hattushili III, where *nt-ꜥ* is used not only to refer to the document itself but also as a translation of Akkadian *rikiltu* "treaty", "agreement" in a more general sense (CAD, 14.345–6; Edel 1997, 22–3 §3.7, 88–9; Murnane 1990, 73–4). Routledge argues that these *nt-ꜥ* must have been incorporated in written documents defining a series of reciprocal duties between Egypt and the Lebanese cities, such as paying the *bꜣk*-contributions, or supplying the harbours, as mentioned in the passages of Annals discussed here (see also §5.2.1). While the sources do not show whether

[11] Probably the twin of the obelisk in Istanbul. See *Urk.* IV 589, Barguet 1962, 270; Habachi 1978, 147; Redford 2003, 124.

[12] Or, more precisely, a "list of the duties stipulated through a diplomatic agreement" i.e. it is possible that the term *nt-ꜥ* refers to the content of the treaty, rather than to the treaty itself. This however is rather a philological or even philosophical distinction.

they were conceived and perceived as formal diplomatic treaties, there are grounds to support this possibility.

The use of messengers in relation with foreign political entities is attested in Egypt at least already at the time of Senuseret III (cf. the Semna stele of year 8, 4–5, see Obsomer 1989, 181–3), and this naturally implies that Egypt was involved in some form of international diplomatic relations even before the New Kingdom. Oral agreements were certainly part of them. Written agreements involving Egypt could have also existed, but the earliest clear evidence is later, and dates to the 18th dynasty (Weeks 2004, 99).

In particular, the strongest and earliest surviving evidence consists in the "Kurustama treaty" between the Hittites and Egypt. This treaty is preserved only in very fragmentary tablets found in Hattusha (Laroche 1971, CTH no. 134), but two later texts mentioning it help in reconstructing its content and context.[13] The tablets of the treaty probably contain two distinct but related documents. The first appears only on the obverse of the preserved tablets (Sürenhagen 2006, 64) and seems to deal with regulations or orders addressed to the people of Kurustama concerning their displacement from the Hittite territory into the territory controlled by Egypt. The second document, written only on the reverse of the tablets, seems to be a diplomatic treaty between the Egyptians and the Hittites. This treaty mentions the agreement about the displacement of the Kurustama people as a positive antecedent and therefore must be at least a little later (Sürenhagen 2006, 65). The surviving parts of the treaty do not include names of kings. However, given its antiquity, demonstrated by the archaic nature of its language, Itamar Singer suggested that the Hittite king was probably Tudhaliya I (Singer 2004, 604). As for the Egyptian Pharaoh, Singer thought it could have been Amenhotep II or perhaps Thutmose III, as argued also by Breyer (2010). Whichever of the two it was, these agreements show that the Pharaohs of the time were using treaties as political and diplomatic tools. Therefore, since Egypt was stipulating such agreements with the Hittites and Mitanni at the time of Amenhotep II or even already during the last years of Thutmose III, it would be fair to assume that it could have stipulated some sorts of treaties or written agreements also with

[13] Mursili II's "Second Plague Prayer" (Sürenhagen 2006, 60–1; text: Laroche 1971, CTH no. 378) and the posthumous edition of the "Deeds" of Hattusili III's grandfather Suppiluliuma (Sürenhagen 2006, 61–2; text: Laroche 1971, CTH no. 40, fragm. E3 IV).

costal Lebanese cities, and with Byblos in particular.[14] This might explain why these cities do not appear in Thutmose III's topographical lists: they would not be defeated enemies, but allies that sided with Egypt through the acceptance of agreed – not just imposed, at least formally – duties within a diplomatic frame.

Whether conquered or peacefully accepting vassalage, Byblos clearly played a crucial role in Thutmose's military activities in northern Levant. Its importance is particularly salient in the Gebel Barkal stele. Here we read that the Pharaoh built boats used during his campaign in Syria in the area of the city (§5.2.1).

Moreover, various evidence seems also to suggest the existence of an Egyptian *mnww* fortress somehow related with Byblos. Such fortress is mentioned in the lines 45–46 of the Gebel Barkal stele (*Urk.* IV 1241.19, see §5.2.1). A fortress built "amid the chiefs of Lebanon" (*ḥr-jb n wrw nw r-m-n-n*) appears also in a passage of the Annals inscribed on the 6th pylon in Karnak (*Urk.* IV 739.15–740.1).

> ...] *ḥr ḫȝst rṯnw m mnnw qd~n ḥm=j m nḫtw=f ḥr-jb n wrw nw rmnn nty rn=f r wʿf šmȝ* (*mn-ḫpr-rʿ*)|
>
> ...] in/from the foreign land of Retenu, in the fortress that My Majesty built from (or "as"?) his achievement(s)[15] among the chiefs of Lebanon, whose name is "Menkheperre-is-conqueror-of-the-land[16]-of-the-vagabonds".

A fortress or a fortified city is also represented in the tomb of Sennefri (see §5.2.3). Finally, another Theban tomb, that of Amenmose (TT 42) preserves an image of a fortress or fortified city in a forest in Lebanon, which the fragmentary caption seems to associate with the land of Negau, in the area of Byblos (Montet 1923;): only the words [*jmn*]*ms*

[14] Even though the Kurustama treaty as well as later ones, such as those that Amenhotep II or Thutmose IV probably stipulated with Mitanni (Betsy M. Bryan 2000, 76–9), or that between Ramses II and Hattusili III mentioned above (see Edel 1997; K. A. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, i 573–94, no. 71, ii 57–60, with refs.) were treaties between equals, while any agreement between Egypt and a Levantine city would have been conceptually somehow different, as it would have implied a superior–inferior relation.

The way these relations were formalized is not clear, and it has been suggested (e.g. Weeks 2004, 103–9) that only oaths, but no treaty, was involved. Even in the case this were true as a general rule, the ancient close links between Egypt and Byblos and the Lebanese coast in general could have granted them some exceptional status, and therefore some exceptional agreement. For a discussion of the nature and form of the relation between the Pharaoh and its Levantine vassals in the Amarna Age, and for the possible existence of formal vassal treaties, see Liverani 1979c, esp. 5; Moran 1985; Zaccagnini 1990, 51;Moran 1995; Murnane 2000, 104–5; Weeks 2004, 103–9.

[15] See Galán 1995, 41–100, esp. 51–3, 93–100

[16] The sign 𓊪 suggests that the name refers to the "land" of the vagabonds.

[*n*]*gȝw* "[Amen]mose Negau" and *wrw n rmnn* "chiefs of Lebanon" survive (Davies 1933, 30–1, pl. 36).

Although no name for this stronghold is given in the Gebel Barkal stele, it is likely that all these mentions refer to the same facility (so Morris 2005, 137, 809). In addition, according to the Gebel Barkal stele (*Urk.* IV 1241.11–1242.13; §5.2.1), the fortress was involved in procuring timber to send to the temple of Amun in Karnak.[17] As Morris points out (2005, 157), these activities are closely similar to those attributed in the Gebel Barkal stele to the garrison located at Ullassa (*Urk.* IV 1237.9–1238.2, §5.2.1), which could suggest that the fortress and the garrison may be related. This possibility seems to be supported by the image in the tomb of Sennefri,[18] which depicts some Egyptian soldiers taking part in timbering seemingly near a fortified city or, possibly, a *mnnw* fortress.[19]

Unless we assume that many Egyptian forces and fortifications existed in the same area, it is reasonable to think that all these attestations refer to a single garrison linked with a single fortress, as Morris suggests (2005, 809). The location of this fortress is uncertain. Among the various options that have been put forward, Morris favours two. The first locates the fortress in the city of Ullassa or nearby, the second in the area of Byblos or in the city itself (Morris 2005, 122, n.31, 137–8, 154–7).[20] These two suggestions are based essentially on the texts discussed here. Morris also points out that Byblos had a long tradition of friendship with Egypt and could have welcomed a military presence. Moreover, Thutmose launched his 8th campaign against Mitanni from the territory of Byblos, which would have needed to be prepared accordingly, while some Amarna letters (EA 117, 121, 122, 130) refer to the presence of a garrison in the territory of Byblos before the time of Amenhotep III, although the reliabiltiy of these allusions is rather difficult to

[17] Wood to be transformed into cultic objects, flagpoles, and divine barks.

[18] Unpublished, but described in Shirley 2011, 302, n.56; Strudwick 2000, 245–6. A Lebanese fortress or fortified city associated with Egyptian soldiers is also depicted in the tomb of Amenmose (Davies 1933, 30–1, pl. 36; see here above). In that case there is no representation of work with timber, but the fortress is depicted against the background of a forest.

[19] According to Morris (2005, 814), *mnnw* should be considered *fortress-towns*, rather than isolated strongholds.

[20] Others less convincingly suggested to located the fortress "inland at the southern end of Lebanon," (Säve-Söderbergh 1946, 36), in the area of Sidon (Alt 1951, 134–5) or Tyre (Alt 1951, 134–5), in Sumur (Noth 1937, 168), or even farther south in Galilee (Yeivin 1934, 213). Redford (Redford 2003, 214–5) thinks to either Tyre or Byblos.

judge (see §5.4.3). Finally, Morris (2005, 254) thinks that Sennefri's offerings could also be understood as a sort of payment to install an Egyptian fortification in the area.

As for Ullassa, Morris (2005, 172) observes that some Amarna letters (EA 104, 105, 109, 117, 140) suggest that the city was an Egyptian base at the end of the 18th Dynasty (Morris 2005, 122; see also §5.4.5), while the Gebel Barkal stele states that the city hosted a garrison at the time of Thutmose III (Morris 2005, 138, 155). Finally, as discussed above, the involvement of both the fortress and the Ullassa garrison in timbering activities and the image in the tomb of Sennefri suggest that the two could be related. While the references in the Gebel Barkal stele seem to point to Ullassa, however, the representations in Sennefri's tomb are clearly associated with his biographical text and therefore point to Byblos.

This apparent clash between the evidence pointing to Byblos and that pointing to Ullassa can perhaps be resolved by reference to further sources and arguments. First, the statue of Djehuty deserves attention. As discussed in §3.5, it is possible that Djehuty was a commander of Thutmose III's army in the Levant, and the fact that his statue is dedicated to the Lady of Byblos may suggest that his administrative position was somehow related with and possibly even based in the city.

Another aspect to consider is that the fortress represented in the tomb of Sennefri may have been connected with his expedition. This point is significant when we consider that among the things that Sennefri obtained in Lebanon were flagpoles for the temple of Amun.[21] It has been convincingly argued that those flagpoles were made of ʿš-wood. The term ʿš-wood may have had various meanings, and could have referred to generic "conifer wood" or "conifer trees" such as cedar, juniper or fir, depending on the context (Kilani 2016a with refs). In the case of the flagpoles, however, there is hardly such ambiguity: as first pointed out by Loret (Loret 1916, 40–7) and others after him (e.g. Jacquemin 1933; Helck 1961, 241–307; Helck et al. 1972–, II 1266 and passim, Bardinet 2008, 330

[21] The same described as coming from the "the slopes of ʿš-wood on the hills [of] the God's Land [...]" in the Gebel Barkal stele (*Urk.* IV 1241.13–14, §5.2.1).

and passim), the Cilician Fir is the only tree growing in the region whose characteristics would match those of the flagpoles described in the texts and shown in images.[22]

This is a crucial detail, because today the Cilician Fir grows only in forests north of the Kadisha valley, near the area of Tripoli and therefore near the probable site of Ullassa.[23] This was possibly true also in the past: although Lebanon went through extensive deforestation and it is thus difficult to estimate the past distribution of the different trees in its territory, the fact that the Cilician Fir is common in the remaining Cedar forests north of the Kadisha Valley and Horshe Ehden but absent in the groves to the south may suggest that the Valley is, and was also in the past, a natural boundary for the diffusion of the tree (Mikesell 1969; Awad et al. 2014, passim, fig. 1; Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 2016 at `http://threatenedconifers.rbge.org.uk/taxa/details/abies-cilicica-subsp.-cilicica`, accessed 6.1.2017). It thus appears that three distinct elements are associated with both Byblos and Ullassa: first, a fortress seems to be associated with both cities, second an Egyptian expedition claims to have fetched from Byblos flagpoles made of a wood that only grows further north, in the area of Ullassa, and third a garrison seems to be related with both the fortress and the timbering operations, which, again, in some texts are associated with Byblos, in others with Ullassa.

I think that the simplest explanation of this pattern is that Ullassa was not an independent city but belonged in some way to the kingdom of Byblos. The fortress could then be situated in Ullassa, which in turn was located within the kingdom of Byblos and under its political authority, where Djehuty was possibly based. If Ullassa was under the authority of Byblos, so would its resources have been. It would thus not be surprising that wood and in particular Cilician Fir flagpoles fetched in the area of Ullassa were reciprocated with offerings to the Lady of Byblos, as suggested by Sennefri's biography (§5.2.3). Ullassa, as part of the kingdom of Byblos, belonged with its forests to the Byblos goddess, and it is to her that offerings were due.

[22] In relation with that, it is worth noticing that some fragments of the poles have been found in the temple of Karnak (Ducros 1903; Loret 1916, 42), but their location is no longer known and no analysis is thus possible.

[23] On the probable location of Ullassa near Tripoli see Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2003, 5, n.6 with refs; Goren, Finkelstein, Na aman, et al. 2004, passim; Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, passim.

Two passages of the Annals support this geopolitical scenario, as well as giving some clues as to its genesis and development. In *Urk.* IV 685.8–686.10 we read that in year 29 Thutmose III plundered Ullassa,[24] capturing its ruler and defeating a garrison from Tunip based there. The city, however, was soon lost and occupied by a new army from Tunip, so that Thutmose had to recapture it in year 31 (*Urk.* IV 690.17–691.8). These passages show that Ullassa was a strategic city that originally sided with, or was occupied by, Tunip against the Egyptians. They also show that at least until Thutmose's year 29, Ullassa was an independent city with its own ruler, most likely opposed to Byblos in view of its links with Tunip. This situation changed in year 29, when the Egyptians conquered Ullassa for the first time, capturing its ruler and probably deporting him to Egypt, since he is listed among the plunder brought from the town (*Urk.* IV 686.4). This detail is noteworthy, as the usual Egyptian practice seems to have been to ask local rulers to pronounce an oath of submission, after which they were reinstalled. This is what happened, for instance, to the king of Megiddo during the 1st campaign: after the capitulation of the city, the Pharaoh received him and his allies, asked them to swear a oath of loyalty, and sent them back to their cities (Redford 2003, 34, 109–10, 199–200). The loyalty of the reinstalled rulers could be reinforced by taking hostages, such as children and kin of the rulers, who were brought to Egypt to ensure the loyalty of their relatives and to prepare them to be installed subsequently as loyal vassals when a ruler died. This practice is attested for the campaign of year 30 (see Redford 2003, 69–71). In the case of Ullassa there is no evidence either for the re-instalment of the old ruler or for the appointment of a new one after year 29. Moreover, no ruler, but only a "commander [of the vile army(?)] of the son of the doomed one of Tunip" is mentioned when the Egyptians again attacked the city in year 31 (*Urk.* IV 691.3, see also Redford 2003, 71). So if the Egyptians removed the old ruler and did not appoint a new one, who was in charge of the city? The Egyptians

[24] The name of Ullassa is written in two slightly different ways in the Annals. Here it is written , *wꜣ-rꜣ-ṯ*, or , *wꜣ-rꜣ-ṯ-ṯ*, while in *Urk.* IV 690.17 it is written , *jwn-rꜣ-t-w*. Redford (Redford 2003, 64–5) wonders if these two spellings could refer to two different cities. Other texts, however, use yet other spellings (e.g. in the Gebel Barkal, *Urk.* IV 1237.15, we find , *wꜣ-n-rꜣ-ṯ-ꜣ*. Unless we were to assume a multiplication of cities with very similar names, it is simplest to interpret these as orthographic variants referring to the same city, Ullassa. The presence of different spelling in the Annals could indicate that these two passages were written by different people or based on different sources.

would hardly have allowed Ullassa to choose its own ruler, especially since it was on the northern border of the newly acquired Egyptian territories. More likely, Ullassa was administered by Egyptian officials or was handed over to a loyal vassal. Byblos would be the most obvious candidate.

The presence of an Egyptian garrison based in Ullassa (*Urk.* IV 1237.15, §5.2.1) suggests the presence of some Egyptian administration in the city, and thus it rather points toward the first option. However, as convincingly argued (e.g. Pintore 1972; Pintore 1973; Frandsen 1979, 174–80; Liverani 1990b, passim; Murnane 2000, 103–4; Morris 2005, passim), the 18th dynasty Egyptian administration in the Levant probably relied heavily on the support of local rulers. This must have been especially true at the beginning of the imperial expansion under Thutmose III, when the Egyptians were invaders without any solid support in the region. Thus, the Egyptian garrison may have been in charge of Ullassa, while relying on the support of Byblos and acting within the organisational frame of its kingdom.

Such an arrangement would have been convenient for everyone. Allowing or encouraging Byblos to extend its political influence northward to the area of Ullassa and its resources (forest, agricultural land and sea coast, including harbours) could have been a reward, almost a payment, for its active strategic support and loyalty during the campaigns of Thutmose. The link existing between Ullassa and Tunip, at the time at war with the Pharaoh, would have raised apprehension in Egypt, and the loyal Byblos could have appeared as a perfect overseer for those crucial northern territories.[25] At the same time, keeping a garrison and a fortress in the freshly captured Ullassa would have enabled the Egyptians to guard their northern border and consolidate their grasp on a region that evidently was prone to change allegiance, while relying on Byblos for some support would have meant that the burden of everyday administration was delegated to the local ally.

[25] And previous hostilities between Byblos and Ullassa could have facilitated the process. We have no information on the geopolitical situation, power relations, and conflicts in the area immediately before Thutmose III's campaigns, but one of the few Middle Kingdom mentions of Byblos narrates an ongoing war between Byblos and Ullassa (Allen 2008). This mention also shows that in the 12th dynasty the two cities where independent. It is however impossible to say what impact these earlier events, or their memory, had on the relation between Byblos and Ullassa at the time of Thutmose III, if any at all.

The Egyptian garrison may have been moved to Ullassa after year 29, when the city was first conquered, and again before Sennefri's expedition, which may have been in year 33–34 (Redford 2003, 125, 175; §5.2.3). Perhaps the ships that Thutmose commissioned during his 8th campaign (year 33) in the "God's Land in the neighbourhood of the Lady of Byblos" (*Urk.* IV 1232.2–3) were constructed in the area of Ullassa. Those ships were placed on carts and brought by land to Syria, and Ullassa's location, not far from the Akkar plain and the Eleutheros valley, was a much better starting point for such an expedition than Byblos. If this was the case, the garrison would have been there by year 33.

The events of year 31, when the city was conquered for the second time (*Urk.* IV 690.17–691.8), can be interpreted in two ways. If the Egyptians installed a garrison in Ullassa in year 29, that garrison was defeated and expelled during the following year. Ways in which this could have happened include a direct attack by an outside force and a popular rebellion, perhaps with outside support. Tunip was probably involved in these events, supporting or even fomenting such revolts, as it had a garrison or at least some troops in Ullassa both when the Egyptians captured the city in year 29 and in year 31 (*Urk.* IV 686.3 and 691.3 respectively). Alternatively, the Egyptian garrison may have been established later: if the city was left unprotected, local leaders and/or Tunip may have taken advantage of the situation (*Urk.* IV 690.17–691.8). In this case, as Redford (2003, 218) and Morris (2005, 124) have suggested, it would have been only after this second conquest that Thutmose consolidated his presence and left a garrison in the city. In this second case, it would not be clear who ruled and administered the city in the previous period of Egyptian control, between year 29 and year 31. Once again, however, Byblos with its traditional close links with Egypt, looks like the best candidate.

Such a scenario, in which Byblos took advantage of the Egyptian conquests in the area to extend its own political control and influence as far north as Ullassa, fits all the information present in the sources of the time of Thutmose III. The absence of references to conquered cities in southern Lebanon in the Annals and the topographical list, as well as the allusions a "written agreement" (*nt-ꜥ*; see here above), suggests that when Thutmose reached Lebanon, Byblos, and possibly other coastal cities south of it, did not offer resistance and joined the Egyptian side. The news of Thutmose III's conquests in

nearby Southern Levant and the perspective of advantages in respect of local regional alliances and rivalries, together with a long tradition of friendly relations, could have influenced the political line adopted by these coastal cities, which may have actively supported the invading forces. Byblos, in particular, seems to have played an important role in strategically backing the Egyptian armies, and it is tempting to think that the city took advantage of the situation to extend its own political influence northward toward, and perhaps at the expense of, Ullassa.

The scenario sketched here could find some distant support in the Amarna letters. First, some statements of Rib-Hadda in the Amarna letters may refer to the support given by Byblos to the Egyptians at the time of Thutmose III (see §5.4.3). Moreover, the general geopolitical landscape of the Amarna letters appears similar to the that posited above, with Byblos directly or indirectly controlling the areas to the north; the main difference is in the position and prominence of Sumur, which was at the time the seat of the Egyptian authority in the area (§5.4.5). This does not seem to be the case under Thutmose III, possibly because at the time the city had just been conquered (in year 30, *Urk.* IV 689.13) and the area was still unstable. The establishment of an Egyptian administrative presence in the city may thus have been a successive development of the Egyptian policy in the area that took place during the reign of one of Thutmose III's successors, but before the Amarna Age.

It should be noted that Byblos was not geostrategically the best-placed city on the Lebanese coast. It did not have a particularly good harbour and did not directly control any major road toward inner Syria. Tyre, for instance, had better harbours, was located at the intersection between the road along the coast and the one leading to the Beqa'a Valley and Qadesh, while its island location rendered it almost impregnable. Byblos, however, had the advantage of having a long tradition of friendship with Egypt. This is an important aspect that contrasts with later periods, when Egypt's claims and suzerainty on the northern Levant had been a geopolitical reality for decades or centuries and the territory was better known and easier to access and control, so that imperial activities could be optimized strategically. Before Thutmose III, however, the Egyptians had never controlled those territories, and the Pharaoh and his armies were advancing

as newcomers, invaders, and conquerors. The Egyptian grip needed to be built, not consolidated. In such a context, having a friendly local city on which Egyptian could rely must have been crucial to the definition of Thutmose III's strategy and may have even been more important than mere geographical considerations. Byblos could have taken advantage of this situation, actively supporting the Egyptian armies in exchange of various rewarding privileges.

5.2.5.2 The Lady of Byblos and her temple

Another prominent element in the sources of the time of Thutmose III is the role of the temple of the Lady of Byblos in the economic interactions between Egypt and the city. Two aspects are explicitly mentioned: Thutmose's sponsoring of building activities in her temple (§5.2.2), and the presentation of offerings to the goddess by Sennefri (§5.2.3).

The latter is paralleled in the account of the expedition to Punt sponsored by Hatshepsut, where the Egyptian crew also presented offerings to a local deity they identified with Hathor. The two episodes have attracted the attention of scholars. Liverani, in particular, has suggested that these offerings are nothing but an ideologically acceptable way to present and describe a "payment" for traded goods (Liverani 1990b, 248–9; Liverani 2001, 168–70).

Egyptian building activities are instead mentioned in the biographical inscription of Minmose, who claims to have "directed works" in a temple of Hathor in the city (§5.2.2). This is probably valid, because two uncontexted blocks bearing part of the name of Thutmose III were found in Byblos although little can be said about the building to which they belonged (§3.5, §4.5, §4.6). Such building activities reinforced the link with Egypt, and brought the temple at least ideologically, within the domain of the Pharaoh, turning it ideologically into an "Egyptian" temple for an "Egyptian" goddess. This is indeed implied by Minmose's biography, where the temple of Hathor Lady of Byblos is listed alongside other Egyptian temples. The ideological manoeuvre described above thus appears to be quite sophisticated: if the temple to which these offerings were made could be considered an "Egyptian" temple for an "Egyptian" goddess, what was in effect

a payment to a foreign king of lower status acquired the character of an act of religious piety comparable to those that the Pharaoh performed toward Hathor in Egypt.

Moreover, during the New Kingdom, temples became important in the Egyptian imperial structure in the Levant, functioning as centres for the collection of taxes and tributes (Singer 1988, 4–5). Morris (2005, 120–1) and others have suggested that during his campaigns Thutmose III used some temples in the Levant as economic and administrative centres. Not surprisingly, she proposes that the temple of Byblos could have been one of them, and the statue of Djehuty discussed above (3.5) could support this hypothesis. Its inscriptions state that he oversaw the collection and shipment of the tribute of "the chiefs of Northern Levant (*Rtnw*)". These activities took place in an Egyptian administrative centre on the Levantine coast, and it is plausible that this was Byblos. Temples were well established actors within the local economic systems, both in the Levant and in Egypt. Diego Espinel (2002) has shown that the temple on Byblos was central to the interactions with Egypt already in the Old Kingdom. He proposes that the economies of the temple and the palace of Byblos were closely connected, with the goddess functioning as a sort of cultural bridge between Egypt and the city, facilitating interactions and therefore commerce. Close links between temples and palace seem also to have been common in the Levant. Similar interactions can be recognized also in Late Bronze Age Ugarit and Alalakh (Klengel 1979; Gaál 1988; Lipiński 1988, 125; Zeeb 2001). In Ugarit, it appears that priests were employees within the royal administration (Heltzer 1982; Lipiński 1988), they could have economic functions among their responsibilities, and they received payments, like other specialists of the king, from the taxes and offerings managed by the palace (Anderson 1987, 79; Pagolu 1998, 177; Altmann 2011, 223). It is thus likely that also in Bronze Age Ugarit the economies of the palace and the main temples were integrated, and as Wyatt (Wyatt 1999, 563 n.99) points out, the temple itself was an important element in the life of the city.

It thus appears that at the time of Thutmose III the Lady of Byblos and her temple were important actors in relations between Egypt and Byblos, continuing a tradition going back to the Old Kingdom. This involvement of the goddess and her temple in the interactions

with Egypt had a significant impact on the social-political structure of Byblos, and the two developed in relation to each other (see next paragraph and further §6.5.0.1 and §6.5.0.2).

5.2.5.3 Relations with Egypt and ideological frameworks

A final aspect emerging from the texts dating to the reign of Thutmose III is the significance of ideological frameworks in influencing the Egyptian perceptions of and interactions with Byblos. Expeditions like that of Sennefri were not seeking common Levantine products. Rather, the main goal was to obtain timber from the "God's Land" for the bark and other items for the temple of Amun in Karnak, in exchange for offerings to the "Lady of Byblos". No doubt the Egyptians acquired other goods that did not end up in Karnak. The wood and the other products for the temple were nevertheless the salient aim of the expedition, and their ideological and sacred connotations may have consecrated the mission itself, as it is clear also in the case of Hatshepsut's mission to Punt.

Moreover, Sennefri's journey presents remarkable similarities with Hatshepsut's Punt expedition. Both missions were presented as being the will of Amun and were both aimed at God's Land, in the south or the north. Both were seeking marvellous goods to bring back to Egypt, and in return both made offerings to a local goddess identified with Hathor. Finally, Eichler (1998, 222–8) points out that both Hatshepsut's account and Sennefri's text present stylistic characteristics of the Königsnovelle genre (see §5.2.3 and §6.5.0.2). It is possible that Sennefri's journey was celebrated with official literary compositions, ideologically analogous to that of Hatshepsut, that happen not to have survived. All these similarities suggest that these two expeditions took place within a common ideological frame. Such a frame, which must be assessed within a perspective beyond the sources of the time of Thutmose III, is discussed in more detail in §6.5.0.2.

5.3 From Amenhotep II to the Amarna period

Sources of this period are rather silent about Byblos. Only two texts mention the city, and the information they give is extremely limited. The first (§5.3.1), dating to the reign of Amenhotep II, suggests that people from Byblos were living in Egypt, for instance as wives and concubines of Egyptian officers. The second (§5.3.2) is a topographical

list inscribed in the temple of Soleb and dating to Amenhotep III. While topographical lists are known from the reigns of Amenhotep III's predecessors, the list in Soleb is the earliest known mentioning Byblos and other cities of the southern Lebanese coast.

5.3.1 Stele of Wsr-stt

Wsr-stt was viceroy of Kush during the reign Amenhotep II. He is known from a number of sources, but no biographical text is attested for him and his tomb has not been found. His career can thus be reconstructed only on the basis of titles and other clues in his inscriptions. He was the son of *Sꜣ-Jmn*, a man bearing only the title *sꜣb*, and of *Nn-ḥr-mnt=s*, a lady of the harem during the reign of Thutmose III. He probably grew up in the palace together with Amenhotep II. Later he became a royal herald (*wḥmw nswt*), a function in which he may have fought in northern Syria (for early career and life see Helck 1955, 30; Der Manuelian 1987, 154). Later, under the reign of Amenhotep II or perhaps already under Thutmose III, he was appointed viceroy of Kush (Helck 1955, 30). The end of his career is mysterious. His name is erased from some of his monuments, suggesting that he fell into disgrace (Der Manuelian 1987, 158).

The stele[26] discussed here presents some unusual characteristics (fig. 5.3). The text is dated to the year 23 of Amenhotep II and it reproduces a *wḏ*  (line 1, *Urk.* IV 1343.11). The word means "letter" when the term refers to a communication coming from the king, which in this case has been copied on a stele, as the determinative suggests. This letter is said to have been written to *Wsr-stt* by the Pharaoh *m ʿwy=fy* "with his own hands". The rather fragmentary text starts with a date "Year 23, 4th month of Akhet, 1st day, day of the festival of the Coronation" (Helck 1955, 25), followed by a description of the context in which the letter was written. It says that the Pharaoh, whom Helck and Der Manuelian

[26] Findspot: Semna Fort, discovered by the Boston Museum expedition in 1924 (expedition no. 24–2–319).
Current location: Boston Museum of Fine Arts – MFA 25.632.
Material: white limestone (Helck 1955, 22).
Dimensions: 94 × 58 × 10 cm.
Bibliography: *Urk.* IV 1343–1344, Helck 1955; Dunham and J. M. A. Janssen 1960, 17, pl. 82; Der Manuelian 1987, 155–8; Leprohon 1991, MFA 25.632; Darnell 2014 with refs.
General description: broken in a number of pieces. Two of them survive the top is lost. The better preserved lower portion bears the text, which is partially damaged but legible (Der Manuelian 1987, 155–7; Leprohon 1991, MFA 25.632 1/4).

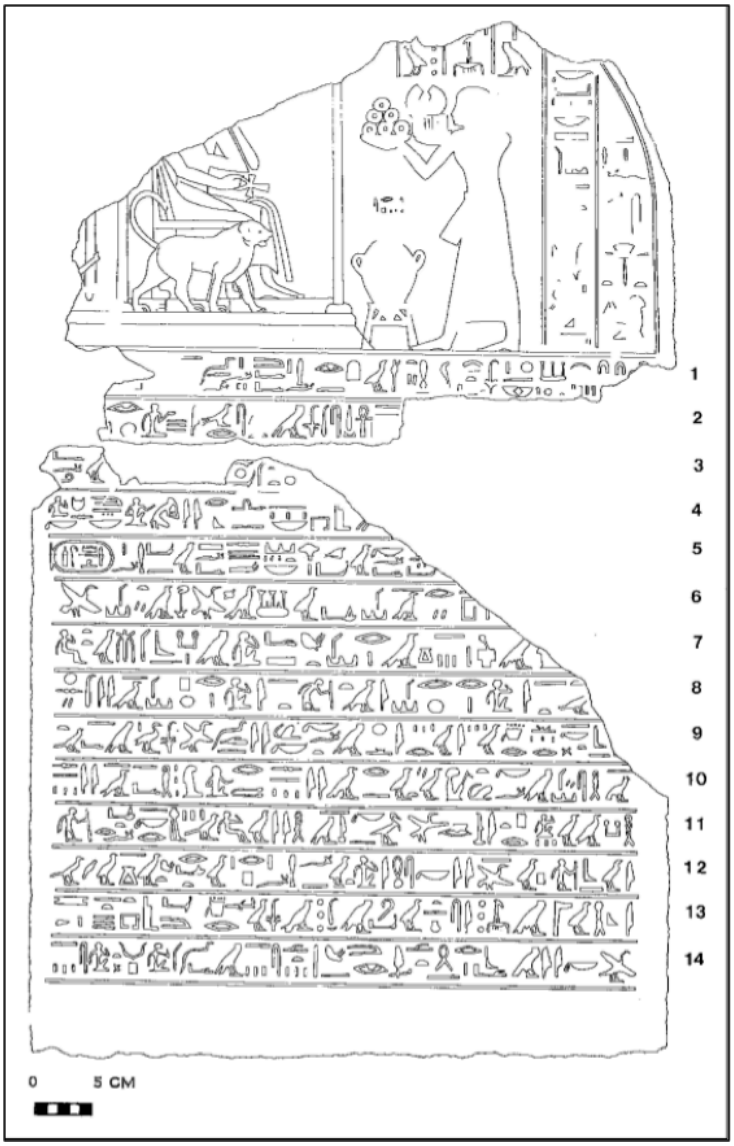


Figure 5.3: Stele of *Wsr-stt*, from Der Manuelian 1987, 156).

identify with Amenhotep II (Helck 1955, 25; Der Manuelian 1987, 157), was drinking and having a *hrw nfr*, "a good day", in the palace when he decided to write to his viceroy. The letter which follows begins with a (self-)laudatory introduction of the king, followed by a sequence of laudatory epithets for *Wsr-stt*. The content and message is essentially a royal complaint concerning a Nubian servant sent to the palace by *Wsr-stt* (ll. 11–12, *Urk.* IV 1344.13–14) and a general invective against Nubians, with the king urging *Wsr-stt* to beware of "their people and their magicians" (lines 10–11 – *Urk.* IV 1344.12) and exhorting him not to pay attention to "their words" (or "matters") and missions.

The language is noteworthy: the careful construction of the text (see below) sug-

gesting a high register, combined with the facetious content and the use of (early) Late Egyptian, gives an ironic and playful effect (Helck 1955, 29), especially in something supposedly written by the king himself.

This is the only known example of a letter that appears to deal with trivial topics in a quite personal and friendly way being inscribed on a stele. One cannot know whether the text reproduces a royal letter or the presentation is a literary device, and the function of such a stele is difficult to grasp. Helck (1955, 31) suggested that *Wsr-stt* decided to "publish" this letter for reasons of prestige, as a demonstration of his close friendship with the king, but because the character of the text is unique, it is difficult to suggest an interpretation with any confidence (see Darnell 2014 for a discussion of previous scholarship and interpretations).

The mention of Byblos is in the laudatory words that the king addresses to his viceroy. Amenhotep describes *Wsr-stt* as (*Urk.* IV 1343.19–1344.7):

[5] [... *q*]*ny qfʿw ḥr ḫ3swt nb(w)*	[...] a brave one who loots from all foreign lands
snn šfʿw n ḥm=f (jmn ḥtp ḥq3 jwnw)|	a charioteer who has fought for His Majesty Amenhotep (II)
[6][...] *nhryn3*	[...] Naharina,
djw š3w p3 ḫ3ty	who decided (lit. "gave") the fate of the land of Khaty,[a]
p3 [7][*nb n ḥmt*] *m s3-n-g3-r(3)*	the owner (lit. "master") of a woman from Sangar (Babylon),
sḏmt-ʿš m k3bn	of a maidservant from Byblos,
mswtt [8]*šrjt nt j-r(3)-r-ḫ* [...]	of a girl-child of Alalakh
j3t nt j-r(3)-p-ḫ	of a old woman of Arrapkha.

a. Or possibly an unusual spelling for Hatti? Note that in this text also the name of Byblos is spelled in an unusual way. See Darnell 2014, 251–2.e.

The text states that *Wsr-stt* had a servant from Byblos. Gaál (1976) took this mention as historically accurate and tried to identify the historical circumstances and events in which *Wsr-stt* could have obtained these women. For Byblos, he argued that the servant could have been acquired during a campaign of Thutmose III, possibly the one in which the king stopped in Byblos to build ships (Gaál 1976, 208; see §5.2.1). The idea is tempting, but it is one among the many possibilities, and he might have obtained or bought her somewhere along the way. In addition, it is not even sure that these women

actually existed, as this could be a fictionalising statement that relates to and perhaps prefigures Amenhotep II's focus on foreigners later in the text. Although the mention of specific cities, including unusual ones such as Arrapkha, could support the idea of a realistic account, Helck (Helck 1955, 29) highlighted the artfully developed structure underlying this list, which gives a vivid literary flavour to the whole passage (Helck 1955, 29). This is evident in the paired opposition between *ḥmt* "woman" and *sḏmt-ʿš* "maid-servant", and between *mswtt*, "child-girl", and *jɜt*, "old woman", while the origin of the first two women is indicated by *m*, "from", and that of the last two with the genitive particle *nt* "of".

The text's historical value must thus be assessed with caution. The stele can hardly be used to argue that *Wsr-stt* captured or acquired a girl from Byblos during the campaigns of Thutmose III or Amenhotep II. It does indicate, however, that at the time of Amenhotep II it was possible at least in a literary context to have a servant from Byblos in an elite household, even in Nubia, suggesting more broadly that there were low-status people from the city working in Egypt.

5.3.2 Topographical lists

Lists of foreign populations, cities, or regions are attested since no later than the reign of Senuseret I (Giveon 1977, 171). The largest numbers of topographical lists come from the New Kingdom, starting in the early 18th dynasty. In particular Simons (1937) recorded 10 lists from the 18th dynasty, 16 from the 19th dynasty, 7 from the 20th dynasty, 2 from the 22nd dynasty, and 1 from the 25th dynasty. Fragments of further lists, such as those of Amenhotep III from his mortuary temple at Kom El-Hetan or those in Ramses II's temples at Amara-West and Aksha, were found later. The lists are generally composed of foreign geographical names written within rings representing the walls of fortified cities. A bust of a foreigner bound like a prisoner is normally added above them. Quite often these prisoners are attached to a rope held by the king or by one or more gods.

The potential historical and geographical value of such lists for the study of Late Bronze Age Syria-Palestine is clear. Their varying types, however, have to be taken into consideration to exploit them correctly. Kitchen (2009, 129–30) has suggested that the

lists should be classified in three typological groups[27] and eight categories in relation to the context in which they were used.[28] Their possible sources must also be taken into consideration: in some cases parts of lists may reflect real military activities or other kinds of contacts (Giveon 1977, 171, 181; Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 2009, 133–4), while other examples appear to have been based on other kinds of administrative or literary documents (Helck 1971, 262 Giveon 1977, 181–2; Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 2009, 133–4) or to have been copied or adapted from earlier lists. Furthermore, the lists often assemble material from different sources.

Topographical lists belong to the repertory of textual and iconographic motifs centred on the victory of the king over chaotic forces represented by hostile or subjugated foreign peoples. Although some of them may record and present real military exploits, their function is mainly ritual, ideological, and symbolic. Several authors have suggested that topographical lists could have an apotropaic power similar to that of execration texts: representations on temple walls of foreign lands being defeated and subdued by the king and the gods would forestall their rising against Egypt (e.g. Giveon 1964, 254; Giveon 1977, 171–2; see also detailed discussion of Martinez 1993). Thus, these lists were probably not specifically designed to describe the geographical reality of the time when they were engraved, but rather to provide a "sample" representing all possible enemies.

As for Byblos, it appears only in three related lists in Nubia: one is in the temple of Amenhotep III Soleb, while the other two are in the nearby temples of Ramses II at Amara West and Aksha. The Ramessid lists were copied from that of Amenhotep III or from a common source (Helck 1971, 262; Giveon 1977, 179; see also discussion of Edel 1980). I discuss here only the list of Amenhotep III; those of Ramses II do not bring any additional relevant information.

The Soleb list[29] in which Byblos is mentioned presents some peculiar features in

[27] 1) Encyclopedic; 2) Regional lists, 3) Lesser lists (Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 2009, 129–30).

[28] 1) Triumph-scenes; 2) Similar scenes and lists in lunettes of major steles; 3) Row of names along the base-panels of temple walls; 4) Sets of names inscribed around lower parts of columns and door-passages; 5) Lists inscribed around the base-blocks of royal statues and sphinxes, 6) Brief "heraldic" lists; 7) Series of place-names in non-list contexts; 8) Series of place-names in sets of battle-reliefs (Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 2009, 129–30).

[29] Published in Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol. III 108–68; Vol. V pls 215-300. See also Giveon 1964; Giveon 1977; Edel 1980; Grimal 2006; Grimal 2009

comparison with older lists. First, the sequence of names has no clear earlier parallel, suggesting that this list was essentially a new composition. The repetition of some names may indicate that it was compiled from several sources (Giveon 1977, 178–9). The Soleb list is carved on the bases of the columns in the hypostyle hall, an arrangement that is not found elsewhere. The names are organized on the columns in more or less coherent geographical groups, with each column representing approximately a region or a part of the world (Giveon 1964, 241–53). Once again, this organization is only attested at Soleb.

Byblos appears on column 10, together with *qrqmš* (Karkemish), *jswr* (Asher?), *tnr(s)* (?), *jpttn* (Khirbet Ipthan), *mrknš* (?), *ḏr* (Tyre), *ḏtw(kr)* (?) (Giveon 1964, 250–1; Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, III 138 β4; V, 233). The geographical locations of the identifiable cities show that this column represents the Lebanese coast and part of northern Syria (Giveon 1964, 252). Grimal (2009, 346) suggests that an even more complex organization, based not only on geographical but also at least partly hierarchical considerations, underlies the list. In particular, he observes that the names of the main political entities of the time, such as Babylon (*sngr*), Naharin (*nhryn*), and Hatti (*ḫt*), are inscribed on column V, which is next to the central axis, possibly in order to emphasize their importance. Some of Grimal's identifications are, however, questionable, as are some of his geographical groupings. For instance, on the very column where Byblos is inscribed, Grimal identifies *jswr* with Aššur, *tnr(s)* (which he reads *rwnrw*) and *jpttn* as Lullu and Abdadani in western Iran, and equates *ḏtw(kr)* with Sidon and reads *mrknš* as Murkunash, which he locates in modern Syrian Kurdistan, north of modern al-Hasakah.[30] Although these identifications are not impossible for a period when Egypt had contacts with Mitanni and Babylon and could have heard of such remote places, they are somewhat recondite. Nevertheless his general idea may be valid.

The column on which Byblos is mentioned is in the second row from the central passage in the northern half of the room. This location does not suggest any specific relation between the city and Amenhotep III. Its inconspicuous position in the list presents the city as a Levantine centre without special distinguishing features, in contrast with

[30]Grimal 2009, 347 and passim – I was not able to find any modern town or village called Murkunash in that area. The only candidate would be the modern village of Markadah, previously known as Makasîn, which however is located south of al Hasakah.

its status in sources of the time of Thutmose III (§5.2, in particular §5.2.5). This could suggest that something changed in the Egyptian approach to the city and its region. Such a change would agree with what can be observed in the Amarna letters (§5.4 below), where the main concern of Rib-Hadda king of Byblos is with the apparent lack of interest of the Pharaoh – Amenhotep III or IV – in his city.

More broadly, this list does not give the appearance of corresponding to any military exploit. Rather, its distribution on the columns seems to constitute an encyclopaedic representation of the geographical entities with which Egypt had not only military, but also trading and diplomatic relations. The list could still have had an apotropaic function, but its scope appears to be more "universalistic" than their predecessors: here the king – and the associated gods – is not considered only as the rulers of Egypt and its champions against the chaotic forces outside its borders, but he is presented as a ruler whose dominion extends over the whole world and all its nations, including those too far from Egypt to be an actual threat. This global perspective is probably not unique to Soleb: Amenhotep III's topographical lists in his mortuary temple at Kom El-Hetan, which are the earliest known including Aegean toponyms, suggest a similar vision (see e.g. Cline and Stannish 2011). Amenhotep III was probably not the first king whose topographical lists could imply such a universal perspective (see e.g. Giveon 1969, 55–7 for Thutmose IV's chariot list). His lists, however, are the earliest in which such a global geographical knowledge appears in detail.

As I have argued elsewhere (Kilani 2016b and below §6.5.0.2), a shift of paradigm in the Egyptian geographical imaginary and narratives about the organization of the world seems to have taken place during the 18th dynasty.[31] In particular, one can observe the emergence of the concept of a universal ruler and a royal narrative ideologically aiming and claiming control over the whole world.[32] After the conquests of Thutmose

[31] This shift of paradigm in the geographical narratives took probably place within a larger shift in the Egyptian general worldview, at least among the elites. See below §6.5.0.2 and specifically, for the reign of Amenhotep III, see e.g. the discussion in O'Connor and Cline 1998.

[32] For instance, before the 18th dynasty the Egyptian kings claimed to vaguely "extend the borders" of Egypt, while the kings of the 18th dynasty started claiming to have "extended the borders up to the limits of the world" – see Kilani 2016b and §6.5.0.2 below for further discussion

III there seems to have been a shift from an Egyptocentric geographical narrative toward an acknowledgement of a more complex geopolitical reality. These two aspects are likely related, because in order to claim control over the whole world, one has to know something about it, while at the same time increased knowledge leads to reconsideration of traditional ideological narratives about it. Comparable developments can be observed in cultures and historical periods such as Imperial China (Lewis 1999) or Colonial Europe (Baber 1996; MacLeod 2000; Schiebinger and Swan 2005; Trumbull 2009; McClellan 2010; Boomgaard 2013). Amenhotep III's topographical lists, with their more "global" organization and scope, would fit well with such development and new ideological framework.

The absence of Byblos from the earlier lists also deserves attention. First, Byblos is not the only southern Lebanese city to be absent or extremely rare in them. Tyre (*ḏȝ-yr*) appears first in this Soleb list and, apart from the related lists of Amara West and Aksha, it then occurs only in lists of the reigns of Seti I, Ramses II, and Ramses III.[33] Beirut (*bȝ-j-rw-tw*) is perhaps mentioned in the list of Thutmose III,[34] while Sidon (*ḏy-dw-nȝ*) is not attested in any surviving list. If this absence concerned only one list, this could be a matter of chances of preservation, with the names of these cities being lost in lacunae. But none of these cities is surely attested in any list from before the time of Amenhotep III. This absence cannot be due to lack of knowledge of or interest in the region, because other cities of the same area such as Karkemish, Qatna, Qadesh, Tunip and Ugarit are well attested in other earlier and later New Kingdom lists (respectively at least 4, 7, 11, 8, 2 times).[35] The omission of Tyre, Beirut, and Sidon could simply indicate their limited

[33] i.e. Simons' list xiii (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 32: 57), list xiv (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 29: 62), list xv (Seti I, Qurneh, K*RI* I 33: 21), list xvi (Seti I, Abydos, K*RI* I 32: b,3), list xx (Rams. II, Luxor, K*RI* II 178: 14), list xxi (Rams. II, Luxor, K*RI* II 177: 33), list xxvii (Rams. III, Medinet Habu, K*RI* V 96: 121).

[34] *bȝ-j-rw-tw* No. 19 and 109 of Simons's list i (Simons 1937, 116, 118; *Urk.* IV 782.1: 19, 786.1: 109). This identification, however, is doubtful and had already been rejected, for instance, by Gauthier (Gauthier 1925–1931, II 2) who identified the place mentioned with Berotha-Atherûn. Moreoever, in pAnastasi I Beirut is written *bȝ-rw-tj*, without *-j-* (= aliph). The aliph, could, however, be irregularly written or pronounced in the time of Thutmose III but no longer in the time of Ramses II. Simons's suggestion therefore remains possible.

[35] In particular, leaving aside the list of Amara West which is likely a copy of the Soleb one: Karkemish: list i (Thut. III, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 792.3: 270), list xxvii (Rams. III, Medinet Habu, K*RI* V 94: 29) in Simons 1937, and in a list at Kom El-Hetan (Rams. II, Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 1965, 4: 7, pls. ii, viii) and in one at Soleb (Amen. III, Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol.

importance in Egyptian eyes: although they became the main centres in the Iron Age Phoenician civilization, they do not seem to have been particularly prominent in the New Kingdom Egyptian sources before the Amarna Period or the 19th dynasty (see below §5.4, §5.6). This interpretation seems to fit with the scarcity of archaeological evidence from these sites[36] as well as with the fact that they do not appear in any other Egyptian documents dating to the 18th dynasty.[37]

However, if a supposed geopolitical irrelevance could perhaps justify the absence of those southern Lebanese cities form the lists, such an explanation could hardly work for Byblos, since the archaeological evidence shows that the city played a prominent role and had strong links with Egypt before and during the 18th dynasty, while textual attestations show that the Egyptians were well aware of its importance. This considered, it may perhaps be better to correlate the absence of Byblos from the topographical lists with this very prominence: if the lists represent foreigners potentially threatening Egypt,

V, 232 – not in Simons).
Qatna: list vi (Amen. II, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 1338.5: 17), list ix (Amen. III, Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol. V, 231), list xii (Horem., Karnak, 2 times: a,11, c,15), list xiii (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 31: 30), list xiv (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 28: 31), list xxx (Rams. III, Medinet Habu, K*RI* V 35: 7) in Simons 1937, and in a list at Luxor (Rams. II, Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 1965, 6: a,16, pls iii, x).
Qadesh: list i (Thut. III, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 781.6: 1), list vi (Amen. II, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 1338.3: 12), list viii (Thut. IV, tomb KV 43, *Urk.* IV 1560.16: 5), list ix (Amen. III, Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol. V, 223), list xii (Horem., Karnak: a,10), list xiii (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 31: 28), list xiv (Seti I, Karnak, K*RI* I 28: 29), list xv (Seti I, Qurneh, K*RI* I 34: 31), list xvii (Seti I, Wadi Abbad, K*RI* I 36: 3), list xxxiii (Rams. III, Karnak, Temple of Amun, K*RI* V 111: 3: a,6) in Simons 1937, and in a list at Karnak (Rams. II, Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 1965, 8: d,2, pl. xiv).
Tunip: list i (Thut. III, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 781.12: 127), list vi (Amen. II, Karnak, *Urk.* IV 1338.4: 16), list viii (Thut. IV, tomb KV 43, *Urk.* IV 1560.15: 3), list ix (Amen. III, Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol. V, 223), list xii (Horem., Karnak, 2 times: a,9, c,13), list xv (Seti I, Qurneh, K*RI* I 34: 32, 38), list xxx (Rams. III, Medinet Habu, K*RI* V 35: 3) in Simons 1937, and in a list at Karnak (Rams. II, Kenneth Anderson Kitchen 1965, 8: d,1, pl. xiv).
Ugarit: list ix (Amen. III, Schiff Giorgini et al. 1965–, Vol. V, 223), list xii (Horem., Karnak, 2 times: a,12) in Simons 1937.

[36] Although this too could be a matter of accidents of conservation and discovery, considering also that the excavations of Sidon by Contenau at the beginning of the last century and Dunand in 1969 were never properly published. In general, see Katzenstein 1973; W. A. Ward 1997; Doumet-Serhal 2013.

[37] Yet some of these Lebanese cities, including Byblos, are mentioned in Middle Kingdom execration texts (e.g. Ben-Tor 2006), which may therefore suggest a different picture. It is true, however, that as pointed out by Ben-Tor (Ben-Tor 2006, 78, n.14), some mentioned cities, such as Tyre, were probably abandoned when the execration texts were written. Therefore a mention there does not necessarily prove that a city was important, only that the Egyptians knew of their existence.

Byblos could have been left out because of its long tradition of friendship with Egypt.[38] Moreover, if Byblos allied or submitted itself to Egypt, possibly within the frame of a treaty (see §5.2.5.1), its pro-Egyptian political line could have induced New Kingdom compilers to omit it from their lists of defeated enemies and dangerous foreigners. This explanation could also apply to the other Southern Lebanese cities: if they too sided with Thutmose III and had treaties with Egypt, they too could have been omitted from the lists because of their friendly and collaborative attitude. Be this as it may, their presence in the Soleb list shows that at the time of Amenhotep III something was different in conceptions of the meaning of topographical lists, in attitudes toward these cities, or in both.

5.4 The Amarna period

The cuneiform letters found in Amarna are the main and only source available to study the city in this period. No mention of the city in Egyptian texts is known for this period, and no relevant source has been identified outside Egypt.

5.4.1 Amarna letters

The Amarna archive consists of cuneiform tablets mainly in Akkadian found on the site of Tell El-Amarna, the capital of Akhenaton and one or more successors. The main part of the archive consists of 32 non-diplomatic texts and 350 letters, drafts, and inventories, usually of diplomatic content, sent to the Pharaoh by his Levantine vassals or by other states, such as Assyria, Mitanni, or Babylon (Moran 1992, xv–xviii). The absolute chronology of these documents is uncertain, but they can be roughly dated to the last years of Amenhotep III and to the reign of Akhenaton, covering a period no longer than 30 years. The archive was abandoned with the city, at the end of the Amarna Age.

Rib-Hadda, the contemporary king of Byblos, was the most prolific author of the archive, and his letters are very informative both for the history of the city and of the region as a whole. The chronology of Rib-Hadda's letters has been discussed more than

[38] And in this respect it is interesting to note that in the Middle Kingdom execrations texts, in contrast with all the other mentioned Levantine cities, it is not the "city" of Byblos that is pointed out as an enemy, but its "tribe", as if the threat was not in the city itself, but rather just in the populations of its region (see Ben-Tor 2006, 67).

once, and although doubts remain about the chronological position of single tablets, the general frame and sequence adopted by Moran (1992) appears to be the most likely (recent discussion: Pryke 2010, 32–52). Two main periods can be identified, the first corresponding to the time of the leader of Amurru ʿAbdi-Ashirta, while the second is marked by the rise of ʿAbdi-Ashirta's son, Aziru. The first period corresponds roughly to the last years of reign of Amenhotep III and the second to the reign of Akhenaton. These periods were characterized by two consecutive wars between Byblos and Amurru, and they are used as a chronological frame in this section.

In contrast with the treatment of written sources in earlier chapters, here I do not present, translate, and discuss each of Rib-Hadda's letters individually. His letters have been discussed as a whole and analysed in specific studies (Liverani 1974; Youngblood 1961; Liverani 1979c; Moran 1992; Pryke 2010), and in view of their number, a detailed reassessment of his correspondence would be beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, I adopt a topic-oriented approach, looking for passages and references concerning specific aspects and problems relevant to my research. The principal topics I discuss here are the role of the goddess of Byblos in the interactions with Egypt, the evidence of ordinary trade, the mentions of pre-Amarna interactions with Egypt, and the location and evolution of the borders of the kingdom of Byblos.

The transliterations in the following paragraphs are based on published editions of the tablets.[39] The translations of the passages are usually mine, and checked against those of Moran (1992), Izre'el (1991), Pryke (2010) and Rainey and Schniedewind (2015).

5.4.2 The goddess of Byblos in the Amarna letters

The socio-economic importance of the "Lady of Byblos"[40] observed in the sources of the time of Thutmose III can be also perceived in Rib-Hadda's correspondence. The prominent position of the goddess is evident from the openings of his letters, where he often adds the blessings of the "Lady of Byblos" to his introductory greetings. In EA

[39] In particular Knudtzon et al. 1915, Rainey and Schniedewind 2015 and Izre'el: `http://www.tau.ac.il/humanities/semitic/amarna.html` (accessed 6.1.2017)

[40] The main goddess of the city, called *nbt-kpn* in Egyptian and usually ^{d}NIN *ša* URU *gu-ub-la* in the letters of Rib-Hadda – e.g. EA 68:4.

68:4–8, for instance, the king of Byblos addresses the Pharaoh by wishing: "May the Lady of Byblos grant power to the king, my lord. I fall at the feet of my lord, my Sun, seven times and seven times."[41] Similar expressions can be found in 27 letters.[42] Rib-Hadda is the only Levantine king who sends the blessing of a deity of his city to the Pharaoh. It is difficult to say whether this practice was a local peculiarity, a traditional greeting common in the city, or if it was a conscious attempt to attract the attention of the Egyptian king by reminding him that Byblos was not just a vassal city but also the seat of the "Lady". A letter of a king of Byblos found in Ugarit that begins with a rather standard salutation not mentioning the goddess may support the second option (§5.6.5.1; RS 18.134).

This pattern suggests that Rib-Hadda expected the Egyptians to feel some form of respect or reverence toward his goddess. Not only did he believe that the Lady of Byblos could bless and protect the Pharaoh, he also claimed (EA 116:63–67) that the Pharaoh was appointed by the goddess herself, together with the "gods and the Sun".[43] Such a claim is noteworthy, as it implies a relation of subordination of the Egyptian king to the goddess of Byblos. The confidence of Rib-Hadda and the boldness of such a statement can hardly be a manifestation of a purely local and unfounded theological parochialism, especially because it has no parallel in the letters of any other Levantine king. In view of the nature and long history of the interactions between Egypt and Byblos, one can easily explain how such an idea could have arisen in the city and how it could even have been (unconsciously?) nurtured by the actions of the Egyptians themselves: the more Egyptian acts of worship and offerings (in exchange for goods) flowed into the temples of Byblos, the more the people of the city may have been encouraged to believe that their goddess occupied a primary position in the lives of their Egyptian visitors. And since

[41] [4[d]]NIN *ša* URU *gu-ub-la* [5]*ti-id-di-in*$_4$ *du-na* [6]*a-na* LUGAL *be-li-ia* 7*a-na* GIR$_3$.MEŠ EN-*ia* [d]UTU-*ia* [8]7-*šu* 7-*ta-a-an am-qut* (EA 68:4–8)

[42] From the 1st period: EA 68:4–6, EA 74:2–4, EA 75:3–4, EA 76:3–5, EA 78:3–5, EA 79:3–5, EA 81:3–4, EA 83:3–4, EA 85:4–5, EA 89:3–4, EA 92:5–6. From the 2nd period: EA 105:3–4, EA 107:4–6, EA 108:4–5, EA 109:2–3, EA 114:3–4, EA 116:3–5, EA 117:3–4, EA 118:6–8, EA 119:3–5, EA 121:3–5, EA 122:4–6, EA 123:4–7, EA 124:3–4, EA 125:5–7.

[43] [63]*u*$_3$ *an-nu-u*$_2$ *na-a[d-nu-ka]* [64]DINGIR.MEŠ *u*$_3$ [d]UTU *u*$_3$ [d]N[IN] 65*ša* URU *gub-la u*$_3$ *aš-[b]a[-ta]* [66]*a-na* GIŠ.GU.ZA E$_2$ *a-bi-ka* [67]*a-na* KUR-*ka* (EA 116:63–67).

the Lady of Byblos had enjoyed the attention of the Egyptians since no later than the Old Kingdom, at the time of Rib-Hadda this feeling would have been well established.

The wealth deposited in the sacred places of Byblos would have corroborated this idea. In EA 137:60–62, Rib-Hadda affirms that "there is much silver and gold" in the city and "much is the property" of its temple(s).[44] He knew that these riches came in good part from Egypt, as can be seen where he warns the Pharaoh that "If Byblos becomes their (i.e. of the sons of 'Abdi-Ashirta's) city, there is much property of the king in it, possessions of our ancestors in the past".[45]

All these letters describe a reality of long-established interactions that agrees well with what emerges from the Egyptian sources, where the Lady of Byblos appears as an important economic intermediary (§5.2.5; §6.4). The involvement of the Lady of Byblos in the economic life of the city may also be alluded to in EA 77:8–11, where she is cited as witness of the lack of copper for Rib-Hadda and for her "unjustly treated ones".[46] This passage is, however, fragmentary and this is not the only possible interpretation.[47]

The goddess obviously needed cult personnel to exercise her influence. EA 83:51–57, EA 84:42–44, and EA 85:84–86 show that the personnel had, or at least attempted to have, a voice in the city's international relations. All these letters contain traces of messages sent to the Pharaoh by the "maidservant of the Lady of Byblos" Ummahnu and her husband Milkuru.[48] None of the messages themselves survives.[49] Here too, Byblos

[44] [60]*šum-ma ma-gal ma-ad* [61]KU3.BABBAR KU_3.GI *a-na lib₃-bi-ši a-na* E_2.DINGIR.MEŠ-*ši* [62]*ma-ad mi-im-mu* (EA 137:60–62) - For *šum-ma* as introductory particle ("Behold!") see Moran 1992, 1992, 108 n.3, 220 n.11.

[45] [72]*u₃ qi₂-be-ti* [73]*a-na be-li-ia a-mur* URU *gub-li* URU-*lu*.KI-*ši-na* [74]*ma-ad mi-im* LUGAL *a-na lib₃-bi-ši mar-ši-te*.MEŠ [75]LU_2.MEŠ *ab-<bu->ti-nu pa-na-nu* (EA 137:72–75).

[46] *hab-[l]i-še* (EA 77:11), following Moran 1992, 147–8.

[47] Rainey and Schniedewind reconstruct *i-nu-ma* [7] *ta-aš-pu-ra a[-na]* URUDU.MEŠ *u₃ a-na* [8] *ši₂-in₄-ni-m[i ti-]i-de* dNIN [9] *ša* URU *gub-l[a] šum-ma i-šu* [10] URUDU.MEŠ *u₃ š[i-i]n₄-ni [pi₂-r]i* [11] *a-na ia-ši u₃* [URU].KI-*li-šix*(ŠE) [12 m] *mil-ka-yu* [1] NA_2 *ma-[ḫ]a-aṣ* [13] *u₃ na-ad-n[a-t]i ši-in₄-na-šu* [14] *[a-n]a ba-la-ṭ[i₃-ia] a-na* [15] [LUGAL] URU *ṣur-r[i]*. They translate "Inasmuch as you have written con[cerning] copper and concerning ivory, the Lady of Byblos [kn]ows if I have (or: there is) copper or [elepha]nt ivory, either to me or to her [cit]y! Milkayu overlaid one bed but I gave its ivory [fo]r [my] sustenance to [the king] of the city of Tyre." (Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, 466–7).

[48] [53f] *um-ma-ah-nu* $u_{3\ m}$ *mil-ku-ru* [54]*mu-ut-še* GEME *ša* [d]NIN [55]*[ša* UR]U *gu[b-l]a* (EA 83:53–55).

[49] Vidal (2010) has suggested that these letters could refer to a journey to Egypt by the priestess Ummahnu herself. This suggestion, however, is based solely on his reconstruction of the text in the many lacunae of these passages.

is exceptional within the Amarna archives: among the surviving letters from all the cities, these are the only ones in which a local religious figure tries to communicate with the Pharaoh. These passages thus show that the temple clergy assumed to be in a position to address the Egyptian suzerain; naturally the letters do not say anything about the Egyptian reception of and reaction to their presence in these diplomatic exchanges. At the same time, Rib-Hadda's mediation highlights the centrality of the king in the city's politics and international relations and points to the existence of close links between the monarchy and the personnel of the goddess. Such ties agree with the general economic role of the temple emerging from other evidence (see §5.2.5, §6.4) and they also constitute an antecedent for the interplay between religious and political powers attested among the Phoenicians and in the wider West-Semitic world during the Iron Age.[50] Strong links between political and religious powers are also evident in Late Bronze Age Ugarit, where the texts show that the king was central in the ritual life of the city (Wyatt 1999, 559–62), as is confirmed by the physical proximity of the royal palace to a "palatial" or "royal" temple (Yon 2006, 49). There is, however, a slight but significant difference between Ugarit and Byblos: in Ugarit it is the king who plays a role in the religious life of the city, while in Byblos it is the temple personnel who try to be involved in the diplomacy – and thus the politics? – of the city.

Finally, this intervention from the clergy is made by a woman with her husband, rather than by a man with his wife. Attestations of priestesses and female cult personnel are rare in the Bronze Age West-Semitic world, and in later periods priestesses do not appear to be prominent, although mentions of them are known in Phoenician and Punic contexts.[51] The presence of Ummahnu in the letters of Rib-Hadda is therefore a remarkable exception among the Levantine sources, probably due to the fact that the main deity of the city was a goddess, rather than a god.

[50] Classical sources state, for instance, that in the 9th century Ethbaal, a priest of Astarte, became king of Tyre, founding a new dynasty (Katzenstein 1973, 129); in general, it seems that the priestly class in Tyre was related to the royal family (Katzenstein 1973, 129–30). Similarly, strong ties are attested between the king and priests in Iron Age Jerusalem (see e.g. Goodblatt 2001; in general Lorberbaum 2011).

[51] See Becking 2001, 181. A notable exception is a ritual for installing a high-priestess found in Emar (D. E. Fleming 1992). The West-Semitic world contrasts here with both Egypt and Mesopotamia, where priestesses are well attested.

To sum up, it appears that during the Amarna period the Lady of Byblos remained central to the interactions with Egypt, or at least this is what the king of Byblos seems to have thought. One may wonder how these repeated references to a traditional goddess and to the Pharaoh's being in some way subordinate to her were perceived at the religiously reformist court of Akhenaton. While it is impossible to know the answer, the fact that Rib-Hadda was forced into exile after numerous vain requests for Egyptian intervention in his support suggests that the Lady of Byblos did not succeed in attracting the attention Rib-Hadda was hoping for (see §6.5.0.1).

5.4.3 Pre-Amarna relations with Egypt

Most of the letters of Rib-Hadda deal with current events in Byblos, but here and there they hint at the city's relations with Egypt before the Amarna period. These allusions are usually vague, and although some may refer to real historical antecedents, the king of Byblos clearly used most of them as rhetorical devices to attract the Pharaoh's attention. This is probably the case both with the mentions of troops and supplies that Rib-Hadda states were sent to the city in the past[52] and with the reminders of his ancestors' loyalty toward Egypt.[53]

In this context one passage stands out for its specificity. In EA 109:5–8 Rib-Hadda claims that "in times past whenever the king of Mitanni was at war with your ancestors, your ancestors did not desert my ancestors."[54] The specific mention of Mitanni, rather than of a general "enemy", suggests that Rib-Hadda had some specific event in mind. In his time, however, Egypt and Mitanni were at peace, and relations between them had been good since the mid of the reign of Amenhotep II (Betsy M. Bryan 2000, 73–9; Freu 2003, 55–90, in particular 72–3). Moreover, Egypt had fought wars against the Mitannian empire in the time of Thutmose III and during the first years of Amenhotep II, some 50 years before Rib-Hadda. The fact that Rib-Hadda seems to refer to such past events that he can hardly have experienced himself suggests not only would it suggest

[52] 1st period: EA 76:31–33; 2nd period: 112:50–51, 117:48–51, 121:11–17, 122:11–19, 124:46–47, 125:14–18, 126:18–23, 130:21–25, 132:8–18, 137:73–75.

[53] 1st period: EA 74:5–8, 2nd period: 116:55–56, 118:39–44

[54] For instance: ^{5}*pa-na-nu* ^{6}[LUG]AL KUR *mi-ta-na* NU.KUR$_2$ *a-na a-bu-ti-ka* ^{7}*u$_3$ la-a [y]i-na-mu-šu-n[a]* ^{8}*[a-]bu-tu-ka iš-tu a-[b]u-t[i-ia]* (EA 109:5–8)

that the Levantine king was aware of the political history of his city,[55] but it would also confirm the city's direct involvement in the Egyptian wars in Syria and hence corroborate what emerges from the analysis of the Egyptian sources of the time of Thutmose III (§5.2.5). Moreover, if Rib-Hadda was aware of the strategic role played by Byblos in the establishment of the Thutmosid empire, it becomes clear why the apparent lack of interest of the Amarna court in the fate of the city may have seemed to him to be so incomprehensible (see further §6.5, and §6.6.1).

5.4.4 Trade in the letters of Rib-Hadda

The Amarna letters also provide some information about trade between Byblos and Egypt. In particular, in EA 77:6–15 (1st period) Rib-Hadda claims that he does not have the copper and *š/sinnu* (ivory?)[56] requested by the Pharaoh, while in EA 126:4–6 (2nd period) an Egyptian request for boxwood is mentioned. If on the one hand it is interesting to see in EA 77:6–15 (1st period) that the Lady of Byblos was involved in the city's trade, as attested already at the time of Thutmose III (5.2.5.2), on the other it is noteworthy that none of the letters contains a mention of Byblian conifer wood, which is so prominent in the Egyptian sources. Even the wood mentioned in EA 126:4–6 (2nd period) is not wood from Byblos but from Ugarit and the land of Salḫi. Thus, the king of Byblos was both trading directly with Egypt and acting as middleman between Egypt and the northern Syrian city and certainly with other places.[57]

Moreover, as appears from various letters, the war with Amurru caused a shortage of grain in the city, and the people of Byblos had to import it from Yarimuta,[58] another

[55] A detail that recalls the "scroll" with the records of previous interactions with Egypt read by the king of Byblos Zeker-Ba'al to Wenamun: Schipper 2005, 2005, 68, 2,8–2,9, although it is clear that Wenamun has been used with caution as it is a much later and above all a fictional source. Still, it would not be surprising that some form of archive existed in the city at the time of Rib-Hadda, and that in general such past wars survived in the memory of the city's elite.

[56] Probably "ivory" (CAD 17.3, 48; Billigmeier 1988, 323), possibly "crafted ivory" (Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, 1420–1); but see Moran 1992, 148, n.2

[57] It is not clear why the Pharaoh did not address the king of Ugarit directly. However, the role and political position of that city at the time is disputed: some scholars think that it was a vassal of Egypt, while others believe that it was independent. Singer (Singer 1999, 626–7) showed that there is no definite evidence for its having belonged to the Egyptian sphere of influence, but it may be anachronistic to speak of complete autonomy. The city was perhaps autonomous but aware of its subordinate status in relation to Egypt.

[58] On Yarimuta and its possible identification see Halpern 2011

costal city.[59] According to Rib-Hadda, the situation in his kingdom was so desperate that his subjects had to pay this grain with "their sons, their daughters"[60] and with "the furnishings of their houses".[61] He also asked the Pharaoh several times for supplies,[62] but it is difficult to understand whether he was proposing to trade or was seeking a donation from the Pharaoh within the frame of their suzerain–vassal relationship.

These letters describe commercial interactions that are clearly different from those lying behind royal expeditions such as that led by Sennefri and celebrated in the texts of the time of Thutmose III. They reveal details of the normal running of the regional commercial network in which Byblos was certainly integrated (see also §6.3). This network did not involve only Egypt, and the Egyptians do not seem to have made any attempt to regulate or interfere with it. Rather, they interacted with it through Byblos and possibly through other cities: there is no evidence that Byblos had an exceptional status in this respect. The absence in the Amarna letters of any mention of royal missions to fetch wood and other products comparable to that of Thutmose III agrees with their absence in the contemporary Egyptian sources (see Bardinet 2008, 243–8). In view of their religious significance and their particular association with the god Amun and the Karnak temple (see §5.2, in particular §5.2.5), the religiously reformist Amarna court might not have been involved in any such expedition. Since however these trading missions certainly had an impact on the economy and even on the political reality of Byblos, one may ask how this religious and ideological change in Egypt could have affected the city (see §6.5 below).

5.4.5 Borders and political structure of the kingdom of Byblos in the Amarna period

The letters of Rib-Hadda are also informative about the geography of his kingdom and the definition of its border, as noted above in relation to the sources of the time of Thutmose

[59] From the 1st period: EA 68:27–28, 74:15–17, 75:11–14, 81:38–41, 85:12–15, 90:36–39. From the 2nd period: 112:27–30, 114:54–57.

[6012] *ga-am-ru* $_{13}$ DUMU.MEŠ-*šu-nu* ^{f}DUMU.MI$_2$-*šu-nu* (EA 85:12–13).

[6113] GIŠ.ME[Š] E$_2$-*šu-nu* (EA 85:13). In general, from the 1st period: EA 74:15–17, 75:11–14, 81:38–41, 85:12–15, 90:36–39.

[62] From the 1st period: EA 74:53–57, 85:16–22, 86:31–37. From the 2nd period: 112:30–39, 113:48–49, 116:72–74.

III (§5.2.5.1). These letters offer the opportunity to see how the situation had developed almost a century later. The most important topics are the two wars Byblos fought against Amurru. In particular, in numerous letters Rib-Hadda describes his enemies' advances toward Byblos, while the account of his territorial losses makes it possible to sketch a reconstruction of the geographical structure of the kingdom and of its socio-political organization.

In the following paragraphs I discuss letters from both the periods together, with the aim of defining where the borders of the kingdom were claimed to be and how big the associated area of influence was. The evolution of the borders themselves in and between the two periods is discussed in the following section (§5.4.6).

First, Rib-Hadda's correspondence shows that during the Amarna age, the kingdom of Byblos was an independent polity controlling various towns and cities. Unnamed towns belonging to Rib-Hadda are mentioned in various letters from both the periods of his reign.[63] In some letters Rib-Hadda is instead more precise and mentions the name of a few specific cities that appear to be part of his kingdom or to be in some way connected with it. Two of these cities, Shigata (modern Chekka, ca. 25 km north of Byblos), and Batruna, (modern Batroun, ca. 15 km north of Byblos) clearly belonged to his kingdom. Concerning Shigata, in EA 71:22–31 (1st period), Rib-Hadda says: "And send me 50 pairs of horses and 200 infantrymen[64] that I may resist[65] him in Shigata until the coming of the (Egyptian) troops.[66] Let him not gather together all the 'Apiru so he can take Šigat[a] and Ampi, and [...[67]]".[68]

[63] 1st period: EA 69:15–18, 74:19–21, 81:6–9; 2nd period: EA 106:45–47, 116:37–38.

[64] Following Moran 1992, 140–1, n.5.

[65] *i-zi-za ... i-na pa-ni-šu*: lit. "stand ... in front of him".

[66] *pí-ṭá-ti* is a transcription of the Egyptian word *pḏty*, "troops", specifically "infantrymen", "archers", possibly vocalized */piḏātə/ (reconstructed on the basis of *pḏt* */pīḏə/ < /pīḏat/, corresponding to Coptic *pite*, and transcribed in Akkadian as *-pi-ta*; see Loprieno 1995, 38–9). The use of the Egyptian word shows that Rib-Hadda is here referring specifically to Egyptian troops.

[67] Moran (1992, 141, n.6) suggested something like "and he seized them" in the lacuna, on the basis of 76:23. Rainey and Schniedewind (2015, 447) instead translate: "Let him not assemble all the 'apîru men and take the town of Shigata and the town of Ampi and seize the [hill co]untry where he can [take a stand]". The concept is essentially the same.

[68] [22] u_3 [23] *uš-ši-ru-na-ni* 50 *ta-pal* [24] ANŠE.KUR.RA u_3 2 *me* $ERIN_2$.MEŠ GIR_3.MEŠ [25] u_3 *i-zi-za i-na* URU *ši-ga-ta* [26] *i-na pa-ni-šu a-di* [27] *a-ṣi*$_2$ $ERIN_2$.MEŠ *pi*$_2$*-ṭa*$_2$*-ti* [28] u_2*-ul yu-pa-hi-ra ka-li* [29] LU_2.MEŠ GAZ.MEŠ u_3 [30] *yi-il*$_3$*-qa* URU *ši-ga-t[a]* [31] u_3 URU *am-pi*$_2$ u_3 [...] (EA 71:22–31)

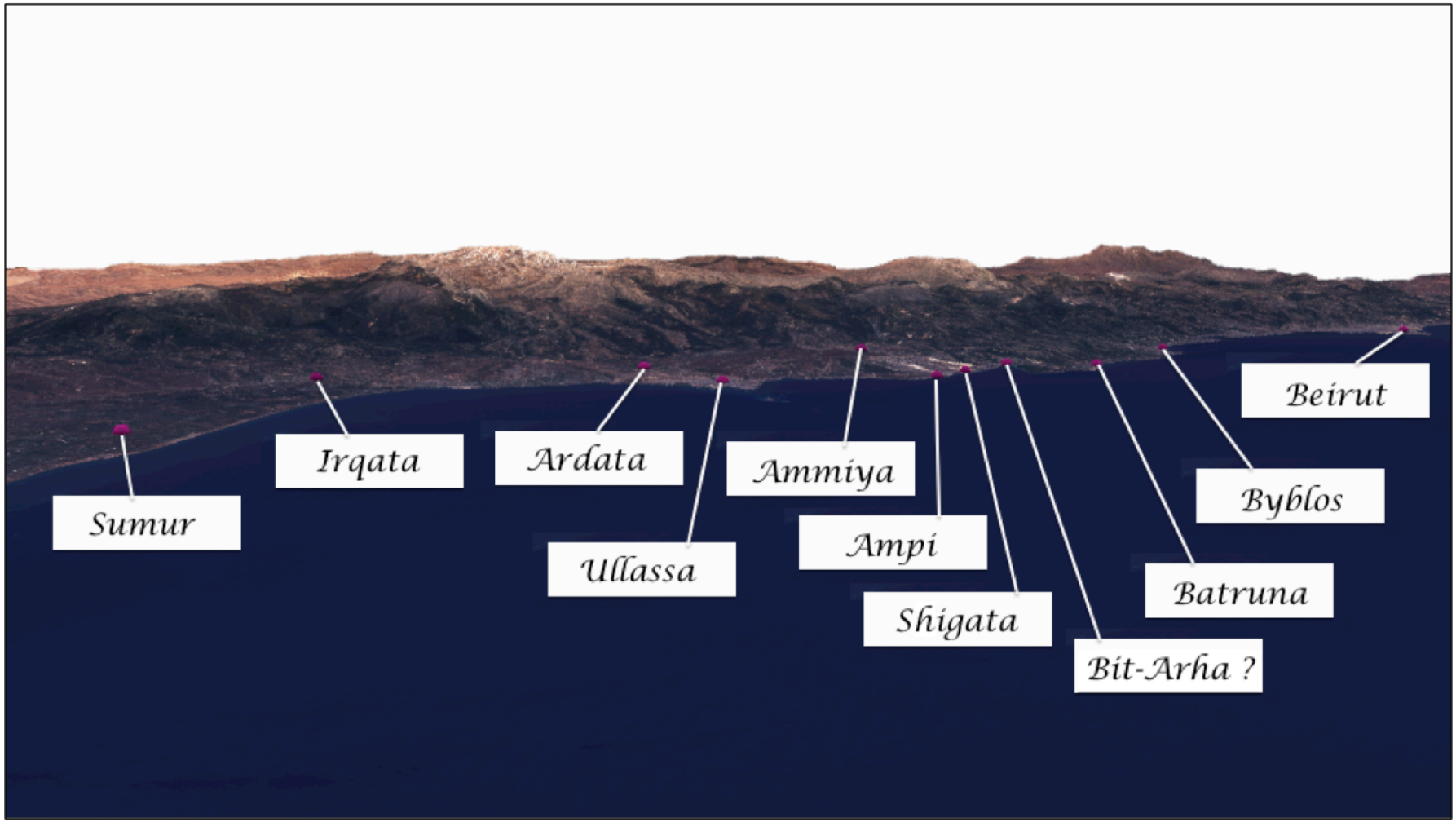


Figure 5.4: The northern Lebanese coast in the Amarna Age. The 3D model of the area has been created starting from satellite Landsat images and SRTM altimetry data (`https://libra.developmentseed.org` and `http://www.imagico.de/map/demsearch.php` – last access: 6.1.2017).

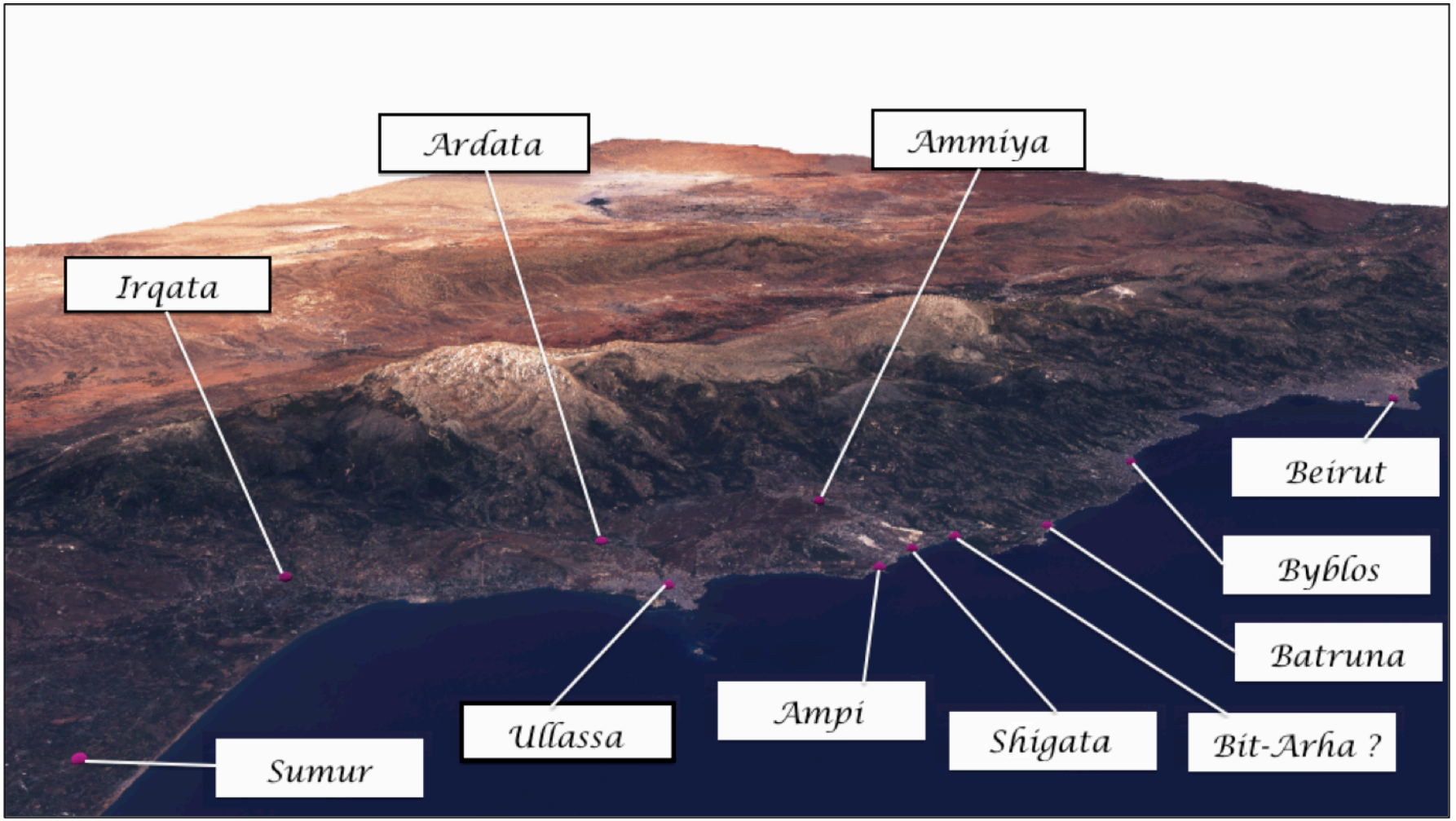


Figure 5.5: The northern Lebanese coast in the Amarna Age. The 3D model of the area has been created starting from satellite Landsat images and SRTM altimetry data (`https://libra.developmentseed.org` and `http://www.imagico.de/map/demsearch.php` – last access: 6.1.2017).

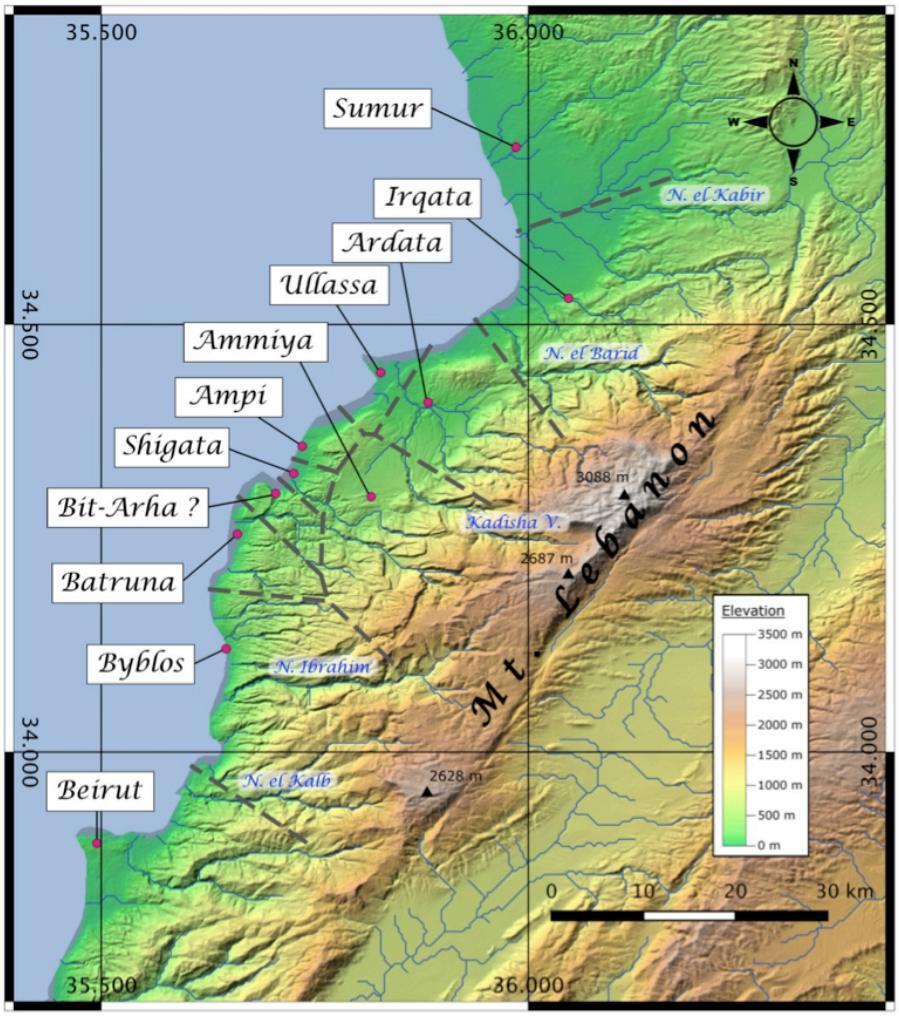


Figure 5.6: The northern Lebanese coast in the Amarna Age. The borders indicated in this map are just a mathematical average approximation of the territory that each city could have controlled. They have been obtained through a Voronoi tessellation, a mathematical procedure consisting in the partitioning of a plane into regions based on average distance to points. Thus, they do not necessarily represent the reality on the terrain – the data available are too few to reconstruct it with precision –, but rather a mathematically ideal territory for each city. Interestingly, in some cases, these theoretical borders do seem to match with geographical features that could have indeed played the role of real geographical boundaries. Examples are: the border between Byblos and Beirut, which is approximately located at the Nahr El-Kalb valley (see §4.9); the border between Ardata and Irqata, which roughly corresponds to the valley of the Nahr El-Barid; the border between Irqata and Sumur, in the area of the Eleutherus river, modern Nahr El-Kabir (which today still marks the border between Lebanon and Syria); the border separating Ammiya and Ardata from the cities of the coast, which roughly corresponds to a series of low hills delimiting the western side of the plain in which the former are located. The map has been created starting from SRTM altimetry data, while the river network is based on WWF's HydroSHEDS data (`http://www.imagico.de/map/demsearch.php` and `http://hydrosheds.cr.usgs.gov/index.php` – last access: 6.1.2017).

The association of these cities with Byblos is confirmed also by EA 90:6–19 (1st period), where we read: "[He has taken][69] all my cities; [Byblos] alone rem[ains] to me. I was in Shigata and I wr[ote] to [y]ou, 'Give thought to [your] city or ʿAbdi-Ashirta will take it'. [But] you did not listen to m[e. Then fr]om Batruna I wr[ote to yo]u, 'Send men to ta[ke the ci]ty for you.' [My] words went [u]nheeded, [and] they were [no]t taken to heart. Now they have [ta]k[en] my cities."[70] It thus appears that Shigata belonged to Rib-Hadda, as he was planning to go there to defend it and there to "resist" the forces of Amurru. Moreover, in EA 90:6–13 he reports that he did try to defend the city even though the Egyptians did not send any aid: this shows that his attempt to protect Shigata (EA 71:22–27) was not mentioned only to impress the Egyptians, but that it fell within his personal concerns and duties.

As for Batruna, in EA 81:6–11 (1st period), Rib-Hadda explicitly claims that the city is the only one remaining to him beside Byblos, as he had stated already in a previous letter, EA 79:21–29 (1st period). Like Shigata, Batruna was visited by Rib-Hadda, as appears from EA 78:17–19 (1st period) and from EA 90:6–19 (1st period; see above). In EA 90:6–19, in particular, the king of Byblos affirms that he wrote to the Pharaoh from the city, before it was conquered: "[He has taken] all my cities; [Byblos] alone rem[ains] to me. I was in Shigata and I wr[ote] to [y]ou, 'Give thought to [your] city lest ʿAbdi-Ashirta take it'. [But] you did not listen to m[e. Then fr]om Batruna I wr[ote to yo]u, 'Send men to guard [the ci]ty for you.' [My] words went [u]nheeded, [and] they were [no]t taken to heart. Now they have [ta]k[en] my cities." [71]

The "[He has taken] all my cities; [Byblos] alone rem[ains] to me", which opens the paragraph, and the "Now they have [ta]k[en] my cities" closing it, confirm that both Shigata and Batruna in principle belonged to Rib-Hadda.

Beside these cities, Rib-Hadda refers to two others in a way that strongly suggests they were part of his kingdom. The first of these is Ampi, modern Enfeh, ca. 30 km north

[69] Based on EA 91:19, an exact parallel – see Moran 1992, 164, n.1.

[706] *il*$_3$*-qe*$_2$*]* [7] *ka-li* URU.MEŠ*-ia* UR[U *gub-la]* [8] *i-na e-de-ni-še ir-ti[-ha-at]* [9] *a-na ia-ši i-na* URU *ši-g[a-ta]* [10] *i-ba-ša-ti u*$_3$ *aš-ta-[par*$_2$*]* [11] *a[-n]a [ka]-ta*$_5$ *mi-lik-mi a-na* UR[U-*ka]* [12] *[u*$_2$*-u]l yi-il*$_3$*-qe*$_2$*-ši* ^{m}IR$_3$*[-a-ši-ir-ta]* [13] *[u*$_3$ *l]a ti-iš*$_3$*-me a-na ia-š[i u*$_3$*]* [14] *[iš-t]u* [U]RU *baṭ-ru-na iš-t[a-par*$_2$*]* [15] *[u]š-ši-ra-mi* LU$_2$.MEŠ *ti-[na-ṣa-ru]* [16] [U]RU *a-n[a] ka-ta*$_5$ *a-wa-t[u-ia]* [17] *[u*$_2$*]-u[l] tu-uš-mu-na u*$_3$ [18] *[u*$_2$*-]u[l t]u-ul-qu*$_2$*-na a-nu-[m]a* [19] *[yi-il*$_3$*-q]e*$_2$ URU.MEŠ*-ia* (EA 90:6–19)

[71] See previous note for transliteration.

of Byblos and ca. 3 km north of Shigata. No detail is given about the political status of Ampi, but in EA 71:28–31 and in EA 76:17–20 (both 1st period) Rib-Hadda mentions it in close association with Shigata, first claiming that both are threatened by the ʿApiru of ʿAbdi-Ashirta (EA 71:28–31), and then reporting that they have both been captured (EA 76:17–20). The association of these two cities in Rib-Hadda's words and in Rib-Hadda's concerns, as well as their geographical proximity, suggests that Ampi's status was similar to that of Shigata and that it belonged to the kingdom of Byblos. Moreover, in EA 102:20–25 (2nd period) Rib-Hadda claims to be unable to go to Ampi, because Amurru has captured the city, which supports its association with Byblos. Since, as seen above, Rib-Hadda visited the cities belonging to his kingdom, the fact that he intended to go there may suggest that Ampi belonged to him as well.

The mention of a "magnate" (LU_2.GAL) of Ampi is not incompatible with this possibility and does not necessarily mean that the city was independent: the "magnate" could, for example, have been Rib-Hadda's local representative in Ampi. It is noteworthy that he calls him "magnate", LU_2.GAL, rather than "lord", EN = *bēlu*, or "king", LUGAL = *šarru*, the words used to refer specifically to kings of other cities.[72]

Finally, a fourth city mentioned by Rib-Hadda could have belonged to his kingdom. In EA 74:19–26 (1st period), the king affirms that after the conquest of Shigata only three cities, Byblos and two others, remain to him. One of these "two cities" is clearly Batruna, as discussed above (EA 79:21–29 and EA 81:6–11, both 1st period). The other city cannot be either Shigata nor Ammiya, whose capture is announced in the same letter (EA 74:23–30). Ampi is also likely to be excluded, as it is located a few kilometres north of Shigata and thus farther from Byblos, so that it would probably have fallen into ʿAbdi-Ashirta's hands before or together with Shigata. This interpretation is perhaps supported by EA 76:17–20, where Rib-Hadda affirms that ʿAbdi-Ashirta has attacked and taken both Shigata and Ampi. Ampi seems to be mentioned also in EA 72, which, however, is too fragmentary to be translated. Nevertheless, since Rib-Hadda seems to

[72] See for instance respectively EA 73:27, 74:26, 75:34, and EA 139:14–15, 140:10–12, the last two of these written by Rib-Hadda's successor. In EA 140:11–13, the title LU_2.GAL, "magnate", refers to the Egyptian commissioner and is used in opposition with LUGAL, "king", which indicates the leaders of the cities of Ammiya, Ardata and Irqata.

talk about these cities only when they are in danger, this reference could indicate that when this letter was written the city was already threatened, or even captured, by ʿAbdi-Ashirta. Thus, if we exclude Ampi, the only remaining candidate to be the fourth city is Bit-Arha, whose capture is mentioned a few letters later, in EA 79:21–29 (1st period). According to that letter, ʿAbdi-Ashirta first captured Bit-Arha and then started to move toward Batruna and Byblos. Rib-Hadda states (EA 74:19–26) that these two cities were at that point the only ones left to him. Since Bit-Arha was the last city captured by the enemy before Batruna, it is likely to have been the third town mentioned in EA 74:19–26. The location of Bit-Arha is not known. Gubel (2010, 122–3) proposes to locate it in the Arqa Valley, possibly not far from Irqata. He assumes that the name Bit-Arha is related to the name of the local river, known in sources from the time of the Crusades as Arche/Archis/Archas. This location, however, is quite far to the north and does not seem particularly convincing. Since ʿAbdi-Ashirta was moving southward in his campaign against Byblos and he conquered Bit-Arha after Shigata but before Batruna, it would be more logical to look for it somewhere between these two cities. However, I know of no modern toponym in the area that can be safely identified with the name Bit-Arha. The only possible, although very doubtful candidate is El-Heri, a small town on the coast just ca. 1 km south of Shigata, on the way to Batruna. The change *r*-*ḫ* > *h*-*r* required by this identification is however quite significant, and this match is no more than a suggestion.

To sum up, as is apparent in figs 5.4, 5.5 and fig. 5.6, all these cities are located in a relatively well-defined area north of Byblos. Among those mentioned by Rib-Hadda, these are the closest to Byblos itself. Not surprisingly, he describes them as the last cities conquered by the armies of Amurru on their march southward. Since Rib-Hadda clearly claimed them, it is safe to assume that the original northern border of the kingdom was presumably located somewhere north of Ampi, although it is difficult to say how far north. Rib-Hadda does not explicitly claim any territory beyond Ampi, but this does not necessarily mean that his direct or indirect political power did not extend further north. Indeed, the concern that he expresses for other cities in the area raises questions and needs attention. A first group of more northerly cities consists of three towns, namely Ammiya, Ardata and Irqata. They correspond respectively to modern Amioun, ca. 35 km north of

Byblos, modern Arde, ca. 53 km north of Byblos, and modern Tell-Arqa, ca. 71 km north of Byblos. As is stated in EA 139:14–16 and EA 140:10–13, both letters of Ili-Rapih (see below §5.4.6), all these cities had their own kings,[73] which means that they could not belong to the kingdom of Byblos, but must have had some form of distinct – although not necessarily independent – political administration. Rib-Hadda also mentions the leaders of Ammiya and Irqata, although less directly, in EA 74:23–29 and EA 75:25–27,32–34 (both 1st period). He does not mention any king or leader of Ardata, but he reports the capture of that city in EA 75:30–31 (1st period). Although these cities had their own kings, they were on the side of Byblos in its war against Amurru, as is evident from the latter's involvement in the murder of their leaders (EA 74:23–29, 75:25–27,32–34, as well as in EA 139:14–15, 140:10–12 by Ili-Rapih), and it is confirmed by Rib-Hadda, who describes them as "loyal cities of the King"[74] in EA 88:4–8 (1st period).

Furthermore, the presence of kings does not exclude the possibility that these cities were somehow subordinate to Byblos or in a relation of vassalage with it. Small kingdoms that were vassals of more important cities are well documented in the area, for instance at Ugarit (see e.g. Singer 1999). Although there is no explicit mention that these cities were subject to Byblos, some clues may point in that direction. In particular, in EA 88:13–17, Rib-Hadda claims that he sent messengers to Egypt reporting the capture of his cities.[75] This could mean that he is reporting the fall of Ammiya, Ardata, and Irqata and the murders of their rulers because they were vassals of his, and in that sense "his cities". It is relevant here that no letter from Ammiya or Ardata was found at Amarna. As for Irqata, only one letter is known, EA 100, and that is from its "elders",[76] not from its king. This rather unusual letter will be discussed further later. This lack of correspondence may be significant since, as the fate of their leaders shows, these cities were directly involved in the war with Amurru and therefore had every reason to call for Egyptian intervention, as Rib-Hadda was doing. Although it cannot be excluded that such letters were indeed

[73] The letter actually claims that the kings of these cities had been killed by the leader of Amurru, but this obviously implies that they did have a king in the first place.

[74] [URU].KI.HI.A *ki-it-ti* LUGA[L BE-*ia]* (EA 88:8)

[75] 13 *[ša*$_2$*-ni-t]am aš-tap-par*$_2$ LU$_2$.DUMU.KIN-*ia i-nu-ma* 14 *[il*$_3$*-q]e*$_2$ URU.KI.HA$_2$-*ia* (EA 88:13–14).

[76] *ši-bu-ti-ši* (EA 100:4) – see Moran 1992, 173, n.1

present at Amarna and have not survived or have not been found, this absence could also indicate that these cities were not on the same political level as Byblos and other major cities, being characterized by a subordinate, possibly vassal, status. If so, Byblos might well have played some role in their exterior relations, including their diplomatic interactions with Egypt.

The strongest evidence in favour of this interpretation, at least for Irqata, comes from the only letter from this city found at Amarna. EA 100, apparently written just after the death of ʿAbdi-Ashirta,[77] is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it was written by the "elders" of Irqata, rather than by its king. This is very unusual, and could indicate that the letter was composed after the murder, mentioned above, of Aduna, the king of the city. More significant, however, is its second characteristic, namely its physical appearance. Several scholars have pointed out that the script, the physical features, and even the language of EA 100 look suspiciously similar to those of the king of Byblos.[78] Whatever the reasons behind these similarities are, they indicate a strong administrative (and thus political?) and perhaps even cultural dependence of Irqata on Byblos. I see two possible explanations for this connection: EA 100 was written in a "Byblian style" either because Irqata was traditionally a vassal city of Byblos,[79] or because Byblos took advantage of the death of king Aduna to step in and install some form of (at least administrative) control over it. Whatever that control was, however, it cannot have lasted long, as in EA 103:9–13, a letter dating to the 2nd period, Irqata is explicitly said to belong to the Egyptian magnate, that is, to the local Egyptian governor.

To sum up, Irqata seems to have passed through at least three distinct political phases during the period covered by the Amarna letters. First it was ruled by a king, but he was killed during the 1st period, at the time of ʿAbdi-Ashirta. Then the city must have been ruled for some time by its elders, probably with some kind of Byblian influence or interference. Finally, during the 2nd period the city appears to have "belonged" to

[77] As it mentions both the war against him (20–32) and that the sons of ʿAbdi-Ashirta are planning to get their revenge (11–19).

[78] Knudtzon et al. 1915, 1194; Klengel 1969, 196; Singer 1991, 149, n.17; Moran 1992, 173, n.5. Klengel even wonders if the letter could have been sent from Byblos in the name of Irqata.

[79] See Bietak and Czerny 2008 for a discussion of possible cultural links between the two cities emerging from the archaeological material.

the Egyptian magnate and was perhaps under direct Egyptian administration. Various interpretations of these developments can be put forward.

A first possibility is that king Aduna was a vassal of Byblos, and Rib-Hadda intervened in support of the elders of the city after he was murdered, either already before or possibly only after the defeat of ʿAbdi-Ashirta. Alternatively, Byblos could have taken advantage of a power vacuum to take control of a previously independent city. The role of the Egyptians is equally difficult to understand. In particular, it is not clear whether the city has always "belonged" to the magnate or whether the Egyptians stepped in at some point after the death of Aduna. Therefore, it is also not clear how the Egyptian intervention and Byblian influence should be read and interpreted together. What is certain is that Byblos was politically interested in Irqata and in the region north of Batruna, and it could have tried to take advantage of this political turmoil to reinforce its influence there. Since Ammiya and Ardata are relatively close to Irqata and all three lost their rulers in the same period, something similar may have occurred in them too.

In addition to Irqata, Ammiya, and Ardata, a fourth city needs to be listed here. This is Wahliya, which is mentioned twice by Rib-Hadda (EA 104:11, EA 114:12). The exact location of Wahliya is not known, although the area around and including Tripoli has often been suggested (Salame-Sarkis 1975; Lipiński 2004, 286–7 with references). The letters give no detail about the ruler(s) of the city or its administration. We only know that Rib-Hadda was concerned about its possible capture.

Finally, two other cities need to be discussed here: Sumur and Ullassa. Various letters found at Amarna (EA 76:33–37, 103:9–16, 104:27–36, 116:8–12) indicate that Sumur was the main seat of the Egyptian authority in Northern Lebanon, recognizing that the city belonged to the Pharaoh or to his administrator (called either Akk. LU_2.GAL, "magnate", or Akk. LU_2.MAŠKIM$_2$, "commissioner"). No king of Sumur is ever mentioned, no letter from a "King of Sumur" was found in Amarna, and Moran thought that even the "magnates" mentioned by Aziru in EA 157:9–12 are probably to be understood as the Egyptian administrators and officers (Moran 1992, 243, n.2; see also Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, 1507, following Moran). In EA 84:11–16 (1st period), Rib-Hadda affirms that Sumur hosted a bedroom and a treasure chamber belonging to the Pharaoh;

the same royal buildings are probably referred to also by the people of Tunip, in EA 59:34–38. From these letters it seems that everyone recognized the Egyptian authority over the city, as represented in the person of the LU_2.MAŠKIM$_2$, "Commissioner" / LU_2.GAL, "Magnate".

A few other letters, however, seem to indicate that the leaders of Amurru and the king of Byblos believed they had some rights and duties toward the city. In particular EA 60:18–32, a letter from ʿAbdi-Ashirta, seems to imply that when the Egyptian administrators were not present, control over the city reverted to a local ruler, in this case the leader of Amurru. Or at least, this is what ʿAbdi-Ashirta claimed. The idea that the absence of the commissioner legitimized the intervention of Amurru is argued also years later by Aziru, who affirms, in EA 62:4–32, to have saved Sumur from an imminent attack by the troops of Shehlal (Location unknown: see Altman 1978, 103–7).

Still, the fact that in this letter Aziru is replying to an Egyptian accusation raises the suspicion that the Egyptians had different ideas about the matter. It is not clear, however, whether the Egyptians were arguing about the intervention of a local mayor in general or about the intervention of Aziru in particular. The evidence seems to support the latter possibility, appearing to indicate that the Pharaoh was expecting some of his vassals to support and participate in the Egyptian activities in Sumur. Rib-Hadda of Byblos, in particular, felt that he was particularly involved and needed to stress the point in his letters. In EA 102:13–19 he claims that the Pharaoh asked him to go to Sumur, while in the next letter (EA 103:9–22) he reports to the king that he has been in the city. He mentions a visit to Sumur, probably the same one, also in EA 114:26–31. Zimredda king of Sidon and Yapah-Hadda king of Beirut were also supposed to go with Rib-Hadda or at least to help him (EA 103:17–19), but they ignored the letters from the Egyptian magnate. Rib-Hadda, by contrast, was a much more diligent vassal, or at least he says so. In EA 106:8–13, 41–45 he affirms he has been in Sumur, claims that the troops of Amurru have raided it but did not succeed in conquering it, and declares himself ready to march against Aziru with his army in support, or at the service, of the Egyptians (while adding that the Egyptians must supply the horses, 20 pairs). The same idea is repeated in EA 107:32–47, although this time Rib-Hadda asks for 30 pairs of horses and some chariots.

A few letters later, the Pharaoh asked the king of Byblos to get some of his messengers into Sumur. After initial hesitation (EA 109:56–57), Rib-Hadda reports the success of the mission (EA 112:40–56, 116:19–24) and points out to the Pharaoh that in the past he used to receive a reimbursement for similar missions (EA 112:40–56). It thus seems that Rib-Hadda collaborated actively with the Egyptians in matters relating to Sumur, while expecting something in exchange for his services – horses and chariots for his military support, as well as provisions for introducing the messengers into Sumur.

In addition, in EA 114:26–31 Rib-Hadda reports his attempts to encourage the troops in Sumur: "Look, I (must) keep writing like this to you about Sumur. Look, I did go and I strongly urged the troops to [guard i]t, but now they have abandoned it, [and] the garrison [has deserted]."[80] He does not specify whether those troops were local, Egyptian, or from Byblos. Earlier in the same letter (EA 114:6–11), however, he accuses Aziru of having captured some of the men from Byblos whom he had sent to Sumur. The presence of Rib-Hadda's troops in Sumur seems to be confirmed by a later letter, EA 131:6–14, in which Rib-Hadda mentions the death of Byblian soldiers.[81] Although the context is not explicit, the letter seems to suggest that these troops died when Sumur was captured.

This feeling of participation in the political and military life of Sumur is expressed by Rib-Hadda also in EA 116:8–12, where he refers to the garrison there as "our garrison".[82] In view of the passages cited above, it is reasonable to see this as another reference to the presence of troops from Byblos in the city. Thus, Byblos not only gave strategic support to Egyptian administrative activities, but also probably had a military presence in Sumur itself. And if Byblian troops were involved, it is then possible that the Byblian king expected to gain some political or economic right in relation to the city. Rib-Hadda does not seem to be the kind of person who does things for free. This could also explain why Rib-Hadda feels able to criticize the Egyptian commissioner/vizier about Sumur. In EA 71:7–16, he asks the vizier Ḫaya: "You are a wise man; the king knows (this) and because of your wisdom he sent you as commissioner. Why have you been negligent,

[80] 26 *a-nu-ma* 27 *ki-ma iš-⌈tap-⌋ru a-na ka-ta*$_5$ UGU 28 URU *ṣu-mu-ra a-nu-ma i-ti-lik* 29 *u*$_3$ *a⌈h-⌋ta-ni* ERIN$_2$.M[EŠ] *a-na* 30 *⌈na-ṣa-ri-š⌋i u*$_3$ *a-nu<-ma> i-te*$_9$*-zi-ib-ši* 31 *⌈u*$_3$ *pa-aṭ-ru⌋* UN-*tu*$_3$ (EA 114:26–31).

[81] 9 ERIN$_2$.MEŠ URU *gubub-li* (EA 131:9).

[82] UN-*nu* (EA 116:11).

not speaking to the king so he will send archers to take Sumur?"[83] Rib-Hadda, however, is not the only one who complains with the Egyptians. In EA 98:1–9 it is Yapah-Hadda of Beirut who accuses the Egyptian commissioner Yanḫamu of having been "neglectful of Sumur",[84] letting that "all lands from Byblos to Ugarit have become enemies in the service of Aziru".[85]

Thus, to sum up, we have:

- the local rulers recognizing that the city of Sumur belongs to the Pharaoh, and mentioning his residence and his treasure chamber there (1st period).
- the leaders of Amurru claiming that when the Egyptian commissioner was not in Sumur, it is them who guarded the city and its resources (1st and 2nd period).
- the Pharaoh and the Egyptian commissioner direct some vassals (Byblos, Beirut and Sidon) to go to Sumur, possibly to support the city (2nd period).
- Rib-Hadda king of Byblos offering to send troops to protect the city and to fight those who he considered enemies of the Pharaoh (2nd period).
- the Pharaoh asking Rib-Hadda to get some messengers into Sumur (2nd period).
- Rib-Hadda being in Sumur and encouraging the troops there to resist the advance of Amurru (2nd period).
- Rib-Hadda reporting that some of the Byblian men (soldiers?) he sent to Sumur have been captured, and others killed, possibly when the city has fallen into the hands of Aziru (2nd period).
- Rib-Hadda talking about the garrison in Sumur as "our" garrison (2nd period).

It is difficult to combine and interpret all these elements. I suggest that the evidence points to a form of Egyptian control relying on the support of local rulers, either with the city being administered by the Egyptians when the commissioner of the Pharaoh was

[837] *a-mur at-ta* LU_2 *em-qu*$_2$ [8] *i-di* LUGAL *u*$_3$ *i-na im-<qu*$_2$*>-ti-ka* [9] *iš-ta-par*$_2$*-ka* LUGAL*-ru* [10] *i-na* LU_2.MAŠKIM$_2$ *a-na mi-nim* [11] *qa-la-ta u*$_3$ *la-a* [12] *ti-iq-bu a-na* LUGAL*-ri* [13] *u*$_3$ *yu-wa-ši-ru-na* [14] $ERIN_2$.MEŠ *pi*$_2$*-ṭa*$_2$*-ti u*$_3$ [15] *ti-il*$_3$*-te*$_9$*-qu*$_2$*-na* [16] URU *ṣu-mu-ra* (EA 71:7–16)

[843] *qa-la-ta* [4] *iš-tu* URU *ṣu-mu-ra* (EA 98:3–4).

[854] *i-nu-ma* [5] *na-ak-ra-at-mi* [6] *gab*$_2$*-bi* KUR.MEŠ *ar-ki* [7] *ma-zi-ri iš-tu* [8] URU *gu-ub-li*^{KI} [9] *a-di* URU *u*$_2$*-ga-ri-ti* (EA 98:4–9).

there and being entrusted to a local vassal when he was away, or in some sort of joint administration in which the local rulers were required to support the Egyptian administration in its aims and needs. Something between these two options is also possible.

Whatever the situation was, Rib-Hadda may have aimed to be the main collaborator of the Egyptian administration, while the leaders of Amurru tried to take his place. The reasons for such collaboration could have varied. As the implicit request of Rib-Hadda for reimbursement suggests (EA 112:50–56), helping the Egyptians and working for them could have been a lucrative business.[86] In addition, the presence of an Egyptian garrison in the area gave local rulers who succeeded in ingratiating themselves with the Egyptian administration some strategic advantages, as well as possibly some stability and increased political power.

This possibility is implied by Rib-Hadda in EA 122:9–19[87] "As to the king's saying, 'Guard yourself,' consider that previously, in the days of my ancestors, there was a garrison of the king with them and property of the king was at their disposal, but as far as I am concerned, there are no provisions from the king at my dis[pos]al, and there is no garrison of the king with me."[88] It is clear from this letter that Rib-Hadda hopes to have an Egyptian garrison in Byblos to use it for his own security and, probably, for his own interests.

The main interest in such a collaboration, however, is probably the one suggested by ʿAbdi-Ashirta in EA 60:21–29: if it is true that a local ruler could be entrusted to guard the harvest – and probably other resources – of Sumur and of lands under direct Egyptian administration when the Egyptian commissioner was away, there would be a clear value in such a collaboration. In addition, Sumur was located on the Mediterranean coast just south of Ugarit,[89] and not far from the mouth of the Eleutheros/Nahr El-Kabir

[86] This is also the opinion of Morris (Morris 2005, 224–5).

[87] EA 121:7–17 and EA 130:14–30 present similar statements.

[88] [9] *i-nu[-m]a yi-qa-bu* LUGAL-*ru* [10] *u₂[-ṣu]r-mi ra-ma-an-ka* [11] *a-m[ur pa]-na-nu i-na* [12] UD[.KAM₂].MEŠ *a-bu-ti-ia* [13] LU₂.M[EŠ] *ma-ṣa-ar<-ti>* LUGAL [14] *i[t-t]i-šu-nu u₃ mi-im-mi₃* [15] LUGAL UGU-*[š]u-nu u₃ an-nu-u₂* [16] *a-na-ku ia-nu b[a]-la-aṭ* [17] LUGAL-*ri i-[li]-ia u₃* [18] *ia-nu* LU₂.MEŠ *ma-ṣa-ar-ti* [19] LUGAL-*r[i] i[t-]ti-ia* (EA 122:9–19).

[89] See EA 98:3–9, where Yapah-Hadda, the king of Beirut, affirms that after the fall of Sumur, all the land from Ugarit to Byblos belongs to Amurru. This can be taken as meaning that Sumur was the last kingdom before Ugarit, that is, that the territory of Sumur extended as far north as the southern border of Ugarit.

river and its valley, one of the main access to Syria. Sumur thus was in a very strategic and advantageous position within the regional and international trade network, as the Egyptians no doubt recognized. Moreover, the city is located in the Akkar plains, and the land around it is particularly well suited for agriculture. Finally, if one considers that the territory held by the Egyptian commissioner did not stop at Sumur but, as I argue below, it may have included other cities, the advantages would have been even greater.

Another city that deserves attention is Ullassa. I have already mentioned the case of Irqata, which at least in the 2nd period is said to belong to the Egyptian commissioner (EA 103). Ullassa seems to have been in a similar situation, again at least during the 2nd period. In particular, in EA 104:27–36, Rib-Hadda accuses Aziru of having taken the cities of the commissioner, going on to affirm that he has taken Ullassa. Moreover, in EA 105:83–85, Rib-Hadda mentions the presence of Egyptians in the city, although he does not give any information about their function or activities there. In addition, in EA 60:18–29 ʻAbdi-Ashirta claims to guard both Sumur and Ullassa when the commissioner is on a mission, which may imply an administrative link between the two cities. All these mentions come from the 2nd period. In the 1st period, ʻAbdi-Ashirta claims to "guard" Ullassa (EA 60:22–23),[90] but this is probably the result of his recent conquests. Nothing is said about the previous political situation of the city. What seems to be clear is that there was no king in Ullassa, as no king is mentioned anywhere, and no letter written from Ullassa was found at Amarna. It is therefore very likely that the city was not independent.[91]

The Amarna letters include no mention of an Egyptian garrison stationed in Ullassa, unlike what has been inferred from sources of the time of Thutmose III (§5.2.5). At the same time, those sources do not mention an Egyptian presence in Sumur, still less a garrison there.[92] These two point, which are probably connected, can be explained on the assumption that between the time of Thutmose III and the period of the Amarna

[90] ^{22}*a-na-ṣa-ar* ^{23}URU *ṣu-mu-ri* URU *ul-la-sa*$_3$ (EA 60:22–23).

[91] In fact, the last known king of Ullassa is the one captured by Thutmose III (*Urk* IV 685.8–686.10, in particular 686.4 – see §5.2.5)

[92] Outside of the Amarna letters Sumur appears only twice in the New Kingdom Egyptian sources: once in the annals of Thumose III, where it is just said that the city has been "reached" by the Egyptian army (*Urk.* IV 689.13) and once during the 19th dynasty, in Pap. Anastasi I, 18,8, where Sumur is just mentioned among other costal cities.

letters the Egyptians moved their garrison from Ullassa to Sumur, turning the latter into their new administrative centre in the area. Such a move would make strategic sense: at the beginning, in the time of Thutmose III, when the Egyptians were still newcomers in the area, it was safer to establish their military and administrative base at Ullassa, in a relatively protected area not far from Byblos, a loyal ally. Once their grip on the region had been consolidated, however, it could have been advantageous to move their centre northward to a more strategically convenient position, such as Sumur. This change must have occurred between the last years of Thutmose III and the beginning of the Amarna correspondence, but it may be impossible to say when it happened exactly.

The only possible clue to this change comes in three letters of Rib-Hadda,[93] in which he affirms that his ancestors had an Egyptian garrison with them, whereas he does not have one. This reference could indicate that in previous times there had been a garrison located much closer than Sumur, possibly within the Byblos territory. The garrison in Ullassa mentioned in the Egyptian sources of the time of Thutmose III is a tempting possibility, especially since the sources of the time of Thutmose III do seem to suggest that Ullassa may have been part of the kingdom of Byblos or in the Byblian sphere of influence (§5.2.5). However, even if this is what Rib-Hadda means in these letters, it does not help in establishing when the Egyptian garrison moved from Ullassa to Sumur. It was before his reign, as he is speaking about his ancestors, but it is impossible to say how long before.

In conclusion, while there are uncertainties of detail relating to the dynamics and functioning of the geopolitical landscape emerging from the letters discussed here, it is at least possible to sketch its structure and its layout. First, the Amarna period kingdom of Byblos did not consist only of the city of Byblos itself but included at least four other cities: Shigata, Batruna, Ampi, and a fourth one, possibly to be identified with Bit-Arha. These cities belonged to Byblos in the time of both ʿAbdi-Ashirta and Aziru. Second, there were the cities of Ammiya, Ardata, and Irqata. In the time of ʿAbdi-Ashirta these cities had their own kings and were therefore probably not part of Rib-Hadda's domain. Their level of independence, however, is difficult to determine, and they may have been

[93] EA 121:11–17, 122:11–19, 130:21–25.

related in some way, and possibly subordinated, to the kingdom of Byblos. Whatever their relations were, the kings of these cities were aligned with the anti-Amurru position held by the king of Byblos and so were probably politically allied with him. The city of Wahliya, possibly in the area of Tripoli, also attracted the concern of Rib-Hadda, but the sources are insufficient to say anything about its political situation. The friendly area defined by these cities would thus correspond quite well with that suggested for the time of Thutmose III (see §5.2.5).

The letters do not reveal anything about the status of these cities at the time of Aziru, except that Irqata seems to have passed under the authority of the Egyptian commissioner at some point after the death of ʻAbdi-Ashirta. Ullassa probably had a similar status, at least during the 2nd period; the letters are instead silent about its status during the time of ʻAbdi-Ashirta. Finally, Sumur was the seat of the local Egyptian authority, but clues suggest that some local ruler was involved, or tried to get involved, in the Egyptian administration of the city and of its territories. Figures 5.7 and 5.8 summarize the situation just described, distinguishing between the beginning of the period of ʻAbdi-Ashirta (1st period) and the beginning of that of Aziru (2nd period). The evolution of the borders of Byblos and of its neighbours during the Amarna period is presented in more detail in the following section (see also §6.2 and §6.6.1).

5.4.6 Evolution of the borders and political structure of the kingdom of Byblos in the Amarna period

As suggested in the previous section, the northern borders of the kingdom of Byblos moved more than once during the Amarna age. The primary cause of these changes was the expansionist policies of the neighbouring kingdom of Amurru. The history of Amurru is known only from written sources found outside the kingdom, as its core territory is still largely archaeologically unexplored (see Singer 1991, 135; the situation has hardly changed since then). These sources are limited,[94] but it is nonetheless possible to sketch the main lines of its historical and political development. The Amarna letters, especially

[94] A problem that is visible in the scholarship about the kingdom: although studies on specific aspects have been published, no in-depth investigation has been dedicated to Amurru. The point of reference is still Singer's historical appendix (1991) to Izre'el's work on the Akkadian of Amurru.

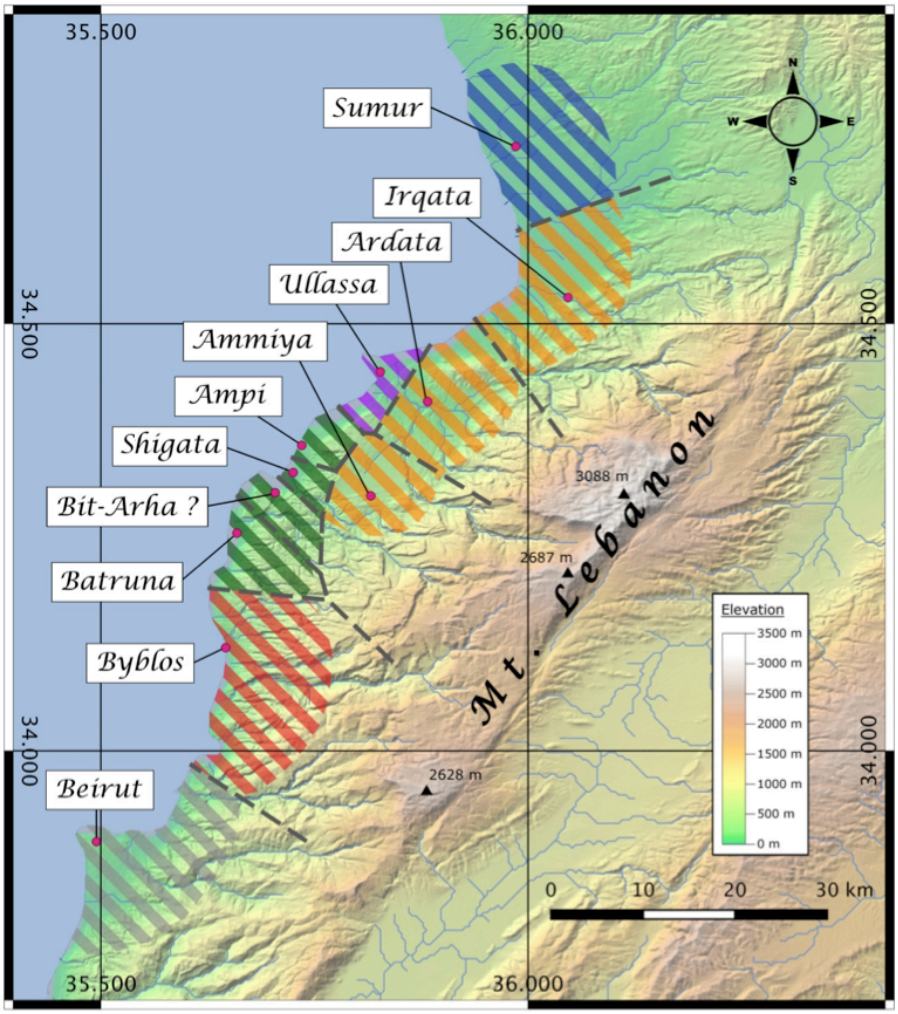


Figure 5.7: Geopolitical situation of Byblos and its neighbours during the Amarna Age, at the beginning of the war with 'Abdi-Ashirta (1st period)

Red – Byblos
Blue – Sumur
Green – Cities belonging to the kingdom of Byblos
Yellow – Cities allied with and/or possibly vassals of Byblos
Purple – Cities whose political status is not known
Grey – Other cities

The map has been created starting from SRTM altimetry data, with the river network has been based on WWF's HydroSHEDS data (`http://www.imagico.de/map/demsearch.php` and `http://hydrosheds.cr.usgs.gov/index.php` – last access: 6.1.2017).

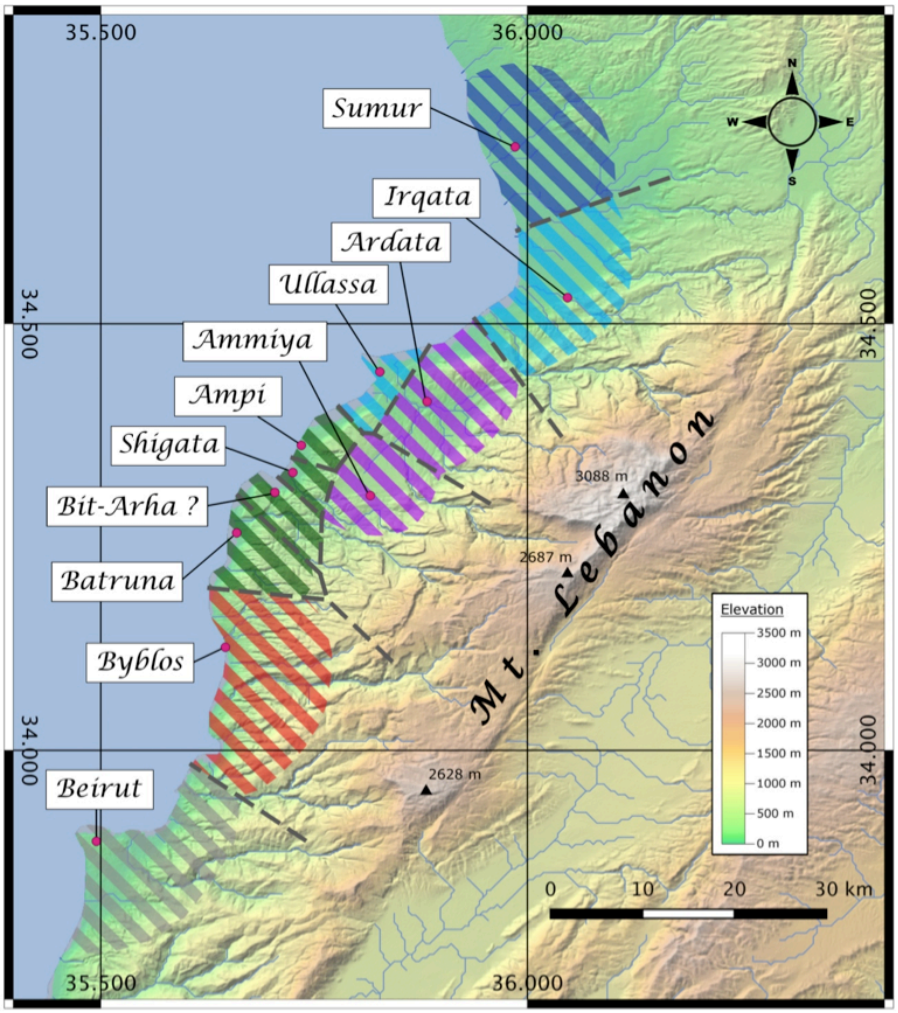


Figure 5.8: Geopolitical situation of Byblos and its neighbours during the Amarna Age, at the beginning of the war with Aziru (2nd period).

Red – Byblos
Blue – Sumur
Green – Cities belonging to the kingdom of Byblos
Yellow – Cities allied with and/or possibly vassals of Byblos
Light blue – Cities said to belong to the Egyptian commissioner in Sumur
Purple – Cities whose political status is not known
Grey – Other cities

The map has been created starting from SRTM altimetry data, with the river network has been based on WWF's HydroSHEDS data (`http://www.imagico.de/map/demsearch.php` and `http://hydrosheds.cr.usgs.gov/index.php` – last access: 6.1.2017).

those of Rib-Hadda, are vital for understanding the emergence and establishment of the kingdom. The Amarna period was a formative phase for the small highland kingdom of Amurru (Singer 1991, 139): under the leadership of ʿAbdi-Ashirta it started to expand from its original location in the mountains east of modern Tripoli, becoming in a few decades one of the main actors on the regional scene (Singer 1991, 138–40; Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2003, 1). This expansion of Amurru under ʿAbdi-Ashirta can be followed not only through Rib-Hadda's letters, but also through the petrographic analysis of the tablets that the leader of Amurru sent to the Pharaoh. Goren et al. (2003, 8–9) have demonstrated that the Amarna letters from Amurru were made in several cities, the sequence of which runs from the mountains east of Tripoli to Ardata and then Irqata, reflecting quite well the sequence of military gains described in the letters themselves.

The letters of Rib-Hadda show in particular that at the beginning ʿAbdi-Ashirta conquered Ardata and Irqata, consolidating his position in the area around modern Tripoli and in the Akkar plain. He then turned his attention to Byblos, starting to advance toward the city on a north–south route along the coast. The cities of Ampi, Shigata, Bit-Arha and finally Batruna were conquered successively by the armies of Amurru, while the population of the inland city of Ammiya, probably a vassal or ally of Byblos, rebelled against its king and joined Amurru after the fall of Shigata. ʿAbdi-Ashirta's campaign against Byblos was so successful that by the time Rib-Hadda sent letter EA 90, all the territories of Byblos were lost, and Byblos itself was under siege. ʿAbdi-Ashirta, however, did not succeed in conquering the city. Instead, his death was perhaps announced by Rib-Hadda a few letters later, in EA 101:29–30,[95] and he had certainly disappeared by the time of EA 102:20–28, when Amurru appear already to be ruled by the sons of ʿAbdi-Ashirta. The causes of his departure are not clear, and various hypotheses have been suggested (see summary in Singer 1991, 144–5). The only thing that seems to be established is that ʿAbdi-Ashirta died either during or just before an Egyptian intervention in the region. The arrival of the Egyptian troops halted the expansion of Amurru and brought about a new redefinition of the borders that seems to have favoured Byblos and restored its area of influence.

[95] Following Moran 1992, 174. Rainey and Schniedewind (Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, 553), instead, take it as a future, and interpret this sentence as Rib-Hadda's suggestion.

It is difficult to say whether these new borders corresponded exactly to those before the war with ʿAbdi-Ashirta. As seen in the previous section, the Egyptians seem to have used their military intervention against ʿAbdi-Ashirta to extend their own direct control in the region, especially in the area of Irqata. In EA 106:45–49, however, Rib-Hadda informs the king that some of his cities have deserted again just after the departure of the Egyptian troops. This suggests that his possessions and borders had indeed been largely or even completely restored through the Egyptian intervention, but it also shows that the newly restored control did not last long. In fact, soon after the death of ʿAbdi-Ashirta and the departure of the Egyptian forces, the sons of ʿAbdi-Ashirta took up the expansionist agenda of their father and resumed hostilities with Byblos. The letters of Rib-Hadda present this new war as developing in a similar way to the previous one: the armies of Amurru marched southward again, conquering the coastal cities of the kingdom, and by the time of EA 124 only Byblos remained to Rib-Hadda.

This time, however, the events took a different course. The details and dynamics of what happened are difficult to grasp, both because the only source we have consists of Rib-Hadda's letters, with their attendant biases, and because the Amarna correspondence as a whole stops soon after this point. A few decisive events are, however, clear, the most important of these being the exile of Rib-Hadda. The king of Byblos had already suffered at least two failed attempts on his life, one at the time of ʿAbdi-Ashirta (EA 82:35–39) and one at the time of Aziru (EA 138:39), and it seems that in the end his opponents managed to depose him. According to what Rib-Hadda says in EA 137:14–25 and EA 138:44–50, it was his brother who, taking advantage of the general discontent of the city due to the war and encouraged by the growing support for Aziru among the general population and the elite (EA 136:6–15, 138:49–50), allied himself with the leader of Amurru and usurped the throne. This version is corroborated by Ammunira, the king of Beirut, who states essentially the same in a letter to the Pharaoh, where he claims that Rib-Hadda's brother has allied himself with Aziru and has usurped the throne (EA 142:15–24). Rib-Hadda was thus forced to flee the city and to seek refuge at the court of Ammunira in Beirut (EA 137:14–15 and EA 138:20–21,51–53, and also in EA 142, a letter from Ammunira himself).

It is difficult to judge the reliability of this narrative. Popular dissatisfaction within the kingdom of Byblos[96] could have played a bigger part in Rib-Hadda's demise than he admits, as Pryke has suggested (2010, 143–71, 386–7). But since both ‘Abdi-Ashirta and Aziru were accused many times of fomenting rebellions and not only by Rib-Hadda,[97] there may have been some truth in Rib-Hadda's words, and Amurru may well have been involved in the events. Rib-Hadda still tried to communicate with the Pharaoh from Beirut but, as he points out in EA 138:passim, it seems that no one paid attention to him. What happened afterwards is not clear. According to a letter sent by the Pharaoh (probably Akhenaton) to Aziru (EA 162:7–21), the exiled Rib-Hadda asked Aziru himself to restore him back to power in Byblos. The leader of Amurru, however, did not help him and instead had him killed, possibly in Sidon. If this is true, Rib-Hadda may have thought that no help would come from Egypt and may have played his last card and tried to ally himself with his old enemy. In EA 162, however, the Pharaoh is just repeating the version given by Aziru, and it is clear from the general tone of the letter that the Pharaoh not only questions it but he also has severe doubts about the words and loyalty of the king of Amurru. The only thing we can be sure of is thus that Rib-Hadda died in exile, apparently through the agency of Aziru.

All we know of the person who usurped Rib-Hadda is that he was his brother.[98] Two letters found at Amarna have generally been ascribed to him (e.g. Moran 1992, 382). These are EA 139 and EA 140, which were sent by one Ili-Rapih. The matter of Rib-Hadda's exile, however, is rather unclear. If we assume that Ili-Rapih was the usurper and place these letters after the exile of Rib-Hadda, then their content and their similarity with the letters of Rib-Hadda becomes surprising. Ili-Rapih writes to the Pharaoh asking for help and accusing the leader of Amurru not only with exactly the same kind of anti-Aziru claims, but also with the same rhetoric, the same examples and even the same

[96] Dissatisfaction and the danger of revolts are mentioned often in Rib-Hadda's correspondence, especially at the end of his reign; see e.g. EA 122:38–48, 123:18–22, 125:25–40, 127:30–34, 130:39–42, 134:16–20, 136:8–15 as well as EA 112:7–12, 114:21–22, 117:90 and 118:21–28,36–39 for earlier and more general threats. See also Pryke 2010, 143–71, 386–7.

[97] See for instance EA 59 from the people of Tunip.

[98] Possibly with the support of other member of the family, as the mentions of previous episodes of dissatisfaction within the royal house in EA 136:8–15 seem to suggest.

formulations as Rib-Hadda. In other words, Ili-Rapih appears not only to agree with Rib-Hadda's policies but also to continue his epistolary practice, both in the content of his messages and in their form.[99] Yet one would expect a usurper who allied himself with Amurru to try to avoid the attention of the Egyptians. Alternatively, these letters could have been sent before the exile of Rib-Hadda. In that case, however, one would need to ask what circumstances would have made Ili-Rapih to write to the Pharaoh in place of Rib-Hadda while the latter was still the king of Byblos. Perhaps Rib-Hadda was away (in Sumur, Beirut, or somewhere else), or he was sick (as he affirms to be in EA 137:29–30).

It is also conceivable that Ili-Rapih was not the usurper and successor of Rib-Hadda. Ili-Rapih also appears in another Amarna letter, EA 128:20–25. This letter, which is too fragmentary to be translated, was written by Rib-Hadda, ending with a postscript added by Ili-Rapih (Moran 1992, 208, n.1). We have seen in the case of the priestess of the Lady of Byblos that members of the city's elite tried to communicate with the Pharaoh through the letters of Rib-Hadda. These messages and the people sending them must have been approved by the king, so that the presence of a postscript by Ili-Rapih in a letter of Rib-Hadda suggests a certain closeness, rather than hostility, between the two. So who was Ili-Rapih? A possible candidate is suggested in two letters of Rib-Hadda from his exile in Beirut, in which he says that he has sent his son to Egypt to meet the Pharaoh (EA 137:36–37 and EA 138:75–78). Ili-Rapih could perhaps be this son of Rib-Hadda, who clearly played an active role in support of his father. If so, we would have no letter from Byblos after Rib-Hadda was forced into exile. This would make good sense: if the usurper truly allied and aligned himself with Amurru, he would not have needed Egyptian support and he could have favoured a pro-Hittite and anti-Egyptian agenda. Such a scenario appears more straightforward than previous interpretations and fits with the evidence of the letters, but the lack of additional information and the abrupt ending of the Amarna correspondence soon after these events leave the question open.

As for Aziru, he was luckier than his father: not only he did not die at the peak of his conquests, but he seems to have succeeded in consolidating his position by switching sides at the right moment, leaving the Egyptian camp and pledging his loyalty to the

[99] Although he seems to mix up the crimes of 'Abdi-Ashirta with those of Aziru – was this intended deliberately to discredit even more the leaders of Amurru?

Hittites. He probably changed allegiance before the end of the Amarna correspondence, by the time of EA 126, in which Rib-Hadda affirms that he is being attacked by Aziru and by Hittite troops (Singer 1991, 153). In EA 165 Aziru admits that the Hittites are already close.[100] While at some point the Egyptians started to doubt of Aziru's loyalty (e.g. EA 162), the concerns and accusations they expressed in their last letters to Aziru were not enough to stop him. Since Rib-Hadda mentions Hittite troops in association with Amurru already in EA 126:51–66, it is likely that Amurru had been considering a shift of allegiance for some time. The turmoil of the end of the Amarna period provided the opportunity to act with little risk of retaliation. At this point Aziru disappears from the Egyptian sources only to appear again in the Hittite ones, where one can follow his long and successful career under his new suzerain. With the end of the correspondence of Rib-Hadda, we are left without direct information on the location and possible shifts of the border between Byblos and Amurru. The evident general success of Aziru's politics make it likely that he did not lose any of the territories that he had conquered before he changed side, and his conquests, and therefore his new borders, were probably recognized and internationally secured by the Hittites. This state of affairs is implicitly presupposed by the treaty between the Hittites and Aziru (Laroche 1971, CTH no. 49, obv. 27–30; Beckman 1999, 34; K. A. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, i 419–38, no. 58, ii 47), where we read that the Hittite overlord committed himself to the protection of the territory of Amurru. More importantly, such a commitment is stated explicitly in a later treaty between Benteshina of Amurru and Hattusili III, the Hittite overlord of the time. In the historical preamble of Benteshina's treaty we read: "In the time of my grandfather Suppiluliuma, Aziru, [king of the land of Amurru], revoked [his vassalage(?)] to Egypt, and [fell] at the feet of my grandfather Suppiluliuma. My grandfather had [compassion] for him and wrote a treaty tablet for him. He wrote out the borders of the land of Amurru of his ancestors and gave it (the tablet) to him" (Laroche 1971, CTH no. 92, obv. 4–6; Beckman 1999, 95–6; K. A. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, i 564–72, no. 69, ii 56–7). The text continues by saying that subsequent leaders abided by these terms. The borders

[100] Singer Singer 1991, 153 thought that this letter could contain an important chronological clue and that the meeting with the Hittites could have occurred during Suppiluliuma's "one-year" campaign to Syria in ca. 1340 B.C.

of Amurru were thus recognized and probably explicitly defined when Aziru passed to the Hittite side, and they probably included the new border between Amurru and Byblos that had been defined by Aziru's conquests. Naturally, the fact that this was the "official" border did not exclude Byblos from trying, possibly with the support of Egypt (Singer 1991, 155), to recover some of these territories. They probably succeeded in that only in the reigns of Seti I and Ramsses II. Those northern conquests, however, were unstable and never lasted for long (see §5.5, §5.6 and §6.6.1). The Egyptians finally gave up any claim on the area, Amurru included, when they ratified the peace treaty with the Hittite king Hattushili III, in year 21 of Ramesses II. If at that time the borders between Byblos and Amurru were still those defined by Aziru, the ratification of the Hittite–Egyptian treaty must have extinguished any Byblian hope for or claim on those northern territories (see further §5.6, §6.2 and §6.6.6).

The drastic reduction of the extent of the Byblos kingdom's territory at the end of the Amarna period was not only a political set-back but also had negative economic consequences. Some of these are explicitly described by Rib-Hadda in his letters. In EA 85:8–11 (1st period) the king of Byblos affirms: "since he ('Abdi-Ashirta) has attacked me three times this year, and for two years I have been repeatedly robbed of my grain, we have no grain to eat".[101]

A similar statement occurs also in EA 86:38–40 (1st period), while in EA 113:14–15 (2nd period) Rib-Hadda accuses his enemies of having looted his sheep and goats. Plundering of the countryside and consequent shortages seem to have been important concerns during both the wars with Amurru. The theme of the lack of provisions appears quite often in Rib-Hadda's correspondence. In six letters of the 1st period he claims to have been forced by the war to buy provisions from the land of Yarimuta (EA 68:27–28, 74:15–17, 75:11–14, 81:38–41, 85:12–15, 90:36–39), while in EA 85:16–22, 86:31–37 (1st period) and 113:48–49 (2nd period) he asks the Pharaoh for provisions for himself and for his loyal cities.

Provisions from the land of Yarimuta are mentioned also in a letter of the 2nd period (EA 112:27–30), where it is not clear whether Rib-Hadda is talking about the present

[1018] *a-nu-ma* 3-*ta-an i-zi-iz* UGU-*ia* MU.KAM$_2$.MEŠ [9] *an-ni-ta* u_3 2 MU *am-ma-ša-'u*$_5$ [10] ŠE-*im*.HA$_2$-*ia ia-nu* ŠE-*im*.HA$_2$ *a-na* [11] *a-ka-li a-na ia-ši-nu* (EA 85:8–11).

or about an earlier event in the time of ‘Abdi-Ashirta. In any case, by the time of EA 114 (54–59) even Yarimuta was no longer accessible. One must bear in mind that Rib-Hadda deliberately presents himself as a weak victim in need of Egyptian help, as a “giusto sofferente” to use Liverani’s expression (1974; 2004), and therefore the magnitude of his claims and perhaps even their veracity should be taken with caution. Still, the area conquered by the leaders of Amurru in the northern part of the Byblian kingdom is particularly suited for agriculture and pastoralism, and it is likely that the city’s economy relied on it to some extent. It is impossible to say how Byblos was exploiting these territories, whether by claiming some form of direct ownership of that land and its products or indirectly by imposing for instance some form of taxation on the vassal cities. Be that as it may, having them plundered and then losing them to Amurru had serious economic repercussions for Byblos.

Furthermore, agriculture was not the only resource of that part of the northern Lebanese coast. The area north of Byblos was also covered by dense forests supplying trees and essences that were particularly valued in the international market, such as the Cilician Fir, which may have grown only in this area (see §5.2.5). In view of the central role that timber and forest products played in the economy of Byblos, and especially in the relations with Egypt both during earlier periods and during the 18th Dynasty, losing access to these areas must also have had a serious negative impact on the city.

Finally, the fact that all the cities belonging to the kingdom of Byblos mentioned in the Amarna letters (Shigata, Batruna, Ampi) are located on the coast, while the inland cities enjoyed some independence and were probably linked to Byblos only by relations of alliance and/or vassalage (§5.4.5), suggests that the sea played a dominant role in the politico-economic setting of the kingdom. Fish and other maritime products[102] could be exploited both for local consumption and as a commercial resource. A long coast means numerous harbours, which generate revenues both in trade and possibly in dues

[102]Including, perhaps, purple dye. There is no attestation of purple production in Byblos at the time, but considering that the purple industry is attested in Ugarit during the Late Bronze Age (Curtis 1999, 21) we cannot exclude that it was known also in Byblos and that its archaeological traces have not been found, have not been recognized or have been ignored.

on the trade itself.[103] Byblos lost all these resources in the war with Amurru and seems never to have recovered them (see §6.2 and §6.6.1). In addition, at some point during the 2nd period Amurru and its allies appear to have imposed a naval blockade on Byblos (EA 105:14–16, 126:7–13) and conducted acts of piracy (EA 113:14, 114:15–20), events that would have hampered not only the movements of Rib-Hadda and his men but also the city's trade.

These problems must have affected deeply the economic stability of the city as well as its regional status and political power, both during the war itself and in the following periods. Thus, the war with Amurru and the consequent shift in borders appear to have been a crucial watershed in the history and development of Byblos.

5.5 The end of the 18th Dynasty and the early 19th Dynasty

No authentic written source from this period mentions Byblos. There is a bowl that appeared on the antiquity market in 1972, and that bears an inscription mentioning a campaign by Horemheb in Byblos. Such inscription has however been soon recognized as a fake, and therefore there is no need to discuss it here (Yoyotte 1981, 44). Nothing specific, therefore, can be said here about the city, while for a more general discussion of Byblos in this period in a larger perspective see §6.6.5.

5.6 Ramses II and the 19th dynasty

Byblos reappears in the written sources of the reign of Ramses II. One text, Pap. Anastasi I, can be dated to the reign of this king (§5.6.1); a few other written sources belong to the same period or to the following few decades. Among these there are texts from Egypt (§5.6.2, §5.6.3), from the Hittite Empire (§5.6.4) and from Ugarit (§5.6.5).

[103] Such taxes are attested in Late Bronze Age Ugarit, and there is no reason to doubt that they were common all along the Levantine coast: Heltzer 1978, 130.

5.6.1 Pap. Anastasi I

Papyrus Anastasi I[104] is the best preserved copy of the "Letter of Hori", a 19th dynasty literary composition. The text was appreciated and widely copied (Gardiner 1911, 4*) and is attested on 4 other papyri and at least 76 ostraca (Fischer-Elfert 1986, 1–4). The versions of Pap. Anastasi and of the ostraca are slightly different and attest at least two textual traditions originating in Memphis and Thebes (Gardiner 1911, 5*; Fischer-Elfert 1986, 261–7). A date of composition during the reign of Ramesses II has been proposed on internal evidence,[105] possibly before his year 21 because of the mention of Sumur, which passed to the Hittites before or at the time of the Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty (Fischer-Elfert 1986, 261–7). The copy on the papyrus, however, could have been written during the reign of Merenptah (Fischer-Elfert 1986, 261–7). The text is a satirical letter written by a scribe, Hori, to another scribe, Amenemope. The text has the form of a response to an ill-written letter by Amenemope, in which Hori tries to correct his colleague, arguing with him, giving him problems to solve and examples to follow and interrogating him about subjects in which he appears to be ignorant. The text was used to train scribe in schools (Fischer-Elfert 1986; Goldwasser 1991; Osing 1997). Within this epistolary frame, 14 "topics" representing the main domains of knowledge that a good scribe may have been expected to master are presented. The topics touched on are heterogeneous, ranging from a problem concerning supplies for troops to one concerning the erection of a colossus, from questions about classics of literature to general notions of foreign geography.

Paragraph XVII, preserved only in Pap. Anastasi I, deals with the cities of Lebanon, including Byblos. In 20,7–21,2 Hori says:

20,7 *sḏd=j n=k ky dmj štȝ*	I will tell you of another mysterious city.
r-ḏd kȝ-pw-nȝ rn=f	Byblos is its name;
sw mj-jḫ	what is it like?

[104] British Museum, Pap. BM EA 10247. Dimensions: 8.25 × 0.20 m. Publications and bibliography: Birch et al. 1842, pls xxxv–lxii; Gardiner 1911, 1*–34*, 1–40; Fischer-Elfert 1986; Fischer-Elfert 1992; Schad 2006, 11–62.

[105] Gardiner 1911, 4*, Fischer-Elfert 1992, 261–7, Schad 2006, 59–61 because of the many references to Ramesses II, in particular the mention of "Sumur of Sese", that is, Sumur of Ramesses II.

tʒy=sn nṯrt ky sp	And their goddess, what is she like?
bw [20,8]*dgʒs=k sw*	You have not set foot on it.
mtr my r bʒ-rw-tj	Teach (me), come to Beirut,
r ḏy-dw-nʒ	and to Sidon
ḏʒ-yr-pw-tj	and Sarepta.
pʒ ḫd [21,1]*n nʒ-ṯʒ-nʒ tnw*	Where is the stream of the Litani?
jw-ṯw mj-jḫ	What is Uzu like?
st ḥr ḏd ky dmj m pʒ yw-m,	They tell of another city in the sea,
ḏʒ-yr-n- [21,2]*mrw rn=f*	Tyre-of-the-port is its name.
jtʒ=tw=f(sic!) mw m nʒ bʒyry	Water is taken over to it in boats,
wsr sw m rmw r šʿ(y)	and it is richer in fish than in sand.

The cities mentioned in this paragraph correspond to the main centres of the southern Lebanese coast. Hori distinguishes them from the preceding Syrian cities and the following Canaanite cities.[106] Both the *sḏd=j n=k* at the beginning of the excerpt and the *sḏd=j n=k* after it are rubricized, indicating that the passage is a complete section. One can wonder whether this presentation reflects a geographical reality or if it is a sign of a different cultural – proto-Phoenician? – identity.

Byblos opens the presentation, while the other cities follow from north to south. Despite its brevity, this passage is rich in information about the Egyptian perceptions of the area. Byblos and Tyre enjoy a special prominence evident not only from their initial and final positions – which, in view of the north–south order could just be a reflex of their actual geographical locations –, but also from the way they are described: while Beirut, Sarepta, and Sidon are only mentioned by name, the main features of Byblos and Tyre are sketched. About Byblos, Hori says: "I will tell you of another mysterious city. Byblos is its name; what is it like?" The force of *štʒ*, "mysterious", "hidden", in this context is not clear. Perhaps this term refers to some religious or mystical association or event of the city.[107] Alternatively, Hori is perhaps using here this term in a ironical way, implying that Byblos was a city that a good scribe had to know and only a ignorant person would have considered it as "mysterious". As if someone would ask today "do you know the mysterious city of London?", the irony and ad absurdum nature of the question, and therefore the intention of mocking the ignorance of the interlocutor, would be evident to

[106] Syria and northern regions: Pap. Anastasi I 18,7–19,4; northern Palestine: 21,2–22,2; central Palestine: 22,3–23,1; southern Palestine: 27,3–28,1.

[107] It is known for instance that in later periods the city was renowned for some "miraculous" events taking place during religious festivals (See Lucian's *De Dea Syria 7–8*; Lightfoot 2003, 250–3).

everyone. In either case, a good scribe would have known what Byblos was, and Hori explains also why: "And their goddess, what is she like?". The local goddess, the Lady of Byblos, is its most important feature, the only specific aspect the scribe mentions. It is noteworthy that Hori decided to direct the attention of the reader to the religious and divine side of the city, rather than toward more practically important features, such as its harbours or its wood production. The mention of the goddess also shows that the Lady of Byblos still enjoyed prestige at the time of Ramses II, as is found in other written sources (especially Pap. BM EA 9997 + 10309, see §5.6.2) and agrees with the archaeological evidence: blocks of a chapel bearing the king's name have been found in the city (§4.5) and a statue of the same general period mentioning the goddess was found, possibly, in the area of Deir El-Medina (§5.6.3).

Tyre is the only other city about which Hori gives details, which could point to its relative importance. It is possible that Byblos and Tyre are more elaborately described for rhetorical and stylistic reasons, as the first and last cities in this list, although no similar pattern can be observed in other paragraphs. The majority of the 48 other Syrian or Palestinian countries and cities appearing in the papyrus are mentioned by name only in a list-like form, like the other southern Lebanese cities in the present passage (P. Anastasi I 18,7–19,4; 21,2–22,2; 22,3–23,1; 25,2; 27,3–28,1). Additional comments or more detailed descriptions are otherwise found only for the land of Upe (22,6), Joppa (25,2), and the unlocated land of *M-g-r* (19,2), whose rich forests are described, and which was probably not far from Byblos.[108]

In contrast with Byblos, no god or goddess is mentioned in Hori's description of Tyre, and no other Egyptian source points to any special religious connotation of the city. Hori describes it as a *mrw*, a harbour, and mentions its curious location *m pȝ y-w-m*, "in the sea", as well as stating that it city is rich in fish. It is difficult to say if this

[108]It particular, since the name could be linked with the Semitic root *m-ġ-r* meaning "cave", it has been suggested to identify it with the region of the Afqa cave, which in classical times was within the border of the territory of Byblos in the mountains to the east of the city and was known for its sanctuary of Adonis, whose cult was connected with Byblos. Alternatively, it has been suggested that *M-g-r* could correspond to the plains of Makra, mentioned by Strabo (*Geography* xvi 2,17–18; Roller 2014) and probably located between modern Batroun and Tripoli, just north of Byblos and potentially within its kingdom, at least in some periods (see §5.4.5, §5.4.6). See Gauthier 1925–1931, III 10; Fischer-Elfert 1992, 165 q.

last detail is a reference to a real and characteristic economic activity (as assumed by Katzenstein 1973, 53), a literary cliché or a mix of both. Abundance in general, and of fish in particular, are well attested in contemporary "praise of city" genre (Ragazzoli 2008, 200–2), and the formulation in Pap. Anastasi, *wsr sw m rmw r šʿ(y)*, "richer in fish than in sand", is very closely paralleled in Pap. Lansing 12,10 (Ragazzoli 2008, 86–7), where we read *ʿšʒ rmw r šʿ(y) n wḏb*, "the fish are more numerous than the sand of the shore". Yet while other echoes of this genre may be present in Pap. Anastasi I, notably in the mention of gardens and blossoming flowers in Joppa (I 25,2–4), the majority of the cities are only mentioned by their name, more in the style of the onomastica (see Gardiner 1947; Herbin 1986; Fox 1986; Sidarus 2000). Moreover, our passage does not present any of the themes or structural and stylistic features of the genre (Ragazzoli 2008, 165–202). Finally, the word referring to the "richness" in fish of Tyre in Pap. Anastasi I is a derivative of the root *wsr*, whose primary meaning is "strength", "wealth", "influence", and consequently "richness". By contrast, the words used in praises of cities are generally forms of *ʿšʒ*, whose meaning is more strictly connected with "abundance" or "multiplicity" in a quantitative sense. No word derived from *wsr* is attested in the corpus of praises of cities studied by Ragazzoli (2008).

It is well known that fish production and commerce were important in the economy of the ancient Eastern Mediterranean.[109] Since Tyre was "in the sea", it is likely to have had a developed fish industry, famous enough to be specifically mentioned in Hori's letter.[110]

[109]See note below. The mention in the Tale of Wenamun of "30" and "5 baskets of fish" (2.41–42; Schipper 2005, 81–2) sent by the Pharaoh to the king of Byblos could suggest that fish was indeed an exchanged good, at least during the reign of Ramesses XI.

[110]In the Bible Tyre appears to be associated with fish production and commerce. In particular Ezekiel (Ezek 26:4–5) threatens that "the spreading of nets", will be the only activity surviving in Tyre after God chastises the city:

וְשִׁחֲתוּ חוֹמוֹת צֹר וְנָתְרסוּ מִגְדְּלֶיהָ וְסִחֵיתִי עֲפָרָהּ מִמֶּנָּה וְנָתַתִּי אוֹתָהּ לְצְחִיחַ סָלַע:
מִשְׁטַח חֲרָמִים תִּהְיֶה בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם כִּי אֲנִי דִבַּרְתִּי נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהָיְתָה לָבַז לַגּוֹיִם:

"[4]And they will destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will scrape her dust from her, and I will make her like the top of a rock. [5]It will be (only?) a place for the spreading of nets in the middle of the sea: for I have spoken it, said the Lord god: and it will be a spoil for the nations."

In Neh. 13:16 we read:

וְהַצֹּרִים יָשְׁבוּ בָהּ מְבִיאִים דָּאג וְכָל־מֶכֶר וּמֹכְרִים בַּשַּׁבָּת לִבְנֵי יְהוּדָה וּבִירוּשָׁלָם:

"People from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were importing fish and all kinds of merchandise and were selling them in Jerusalem on the Sabbath to the people of Judah." See also Katzenstein

Hori concludes by observing that water has to be brought to Tyre by boat, a detail that recalls two Amarna letters (EA 148 and EA 149) in which Abi-Milku, king of Tyre, reports that his city is without water because Zimredda king of Sidon has captured the city of Uzu.[111] Tyre on the island and Uzu, facing it on the coast, were interdependent, and this passage clarifies these letters and the seriousness of the Sidonian threat.

It thus appears that Byblos and Tyre were two of the few cities whose most salient aspects are described by Hori. This special treatment could perhaps suggest some particular prestige or renown of these cities in the Egyptian culture of the time, or at least in the eyes of the scribe and his readers.

5.6.2 Pap. BM EA 9997 + 10309

P. BM EA 9997 + 10309 are two fragments of a single hieratic papyrus containing magical spells mainly against snakes.[112] The date of composition is not known, but on the obverse of the papyrus there is an administrative text of years 14 and 15 of Ramesses XI (Leitz 1999, 1, n.1), which gives an approximate date for this copy. The spells are related to later compositions of cippi of Horus and of healing statues. The central part of the text, between EA 9997 and EA 10309, is missing.

The papyrus preserves two mentions of *nbt kbn*, the "Lady of Byblos", both of them in Incantation 6, on the last surviving column of EA 9997. Only the beginnings of the lines of this column survive; the ends were destroyed by insects. The text describes Isis healing a young Horus who had been bitten by a snake while playing with his companions in the desert. Nephthys seems to be with Isis, and other goddesses are invoked during the magical treatment against the poison and the reptile. The two mentions are in Pap. 9997 VIII,5 and VIII,13 (Leitz 1999, 21, pl. 8):

1973, 53 n.53, 73, 163.

[111] EA 148, 26–34: "May the king give attention to his servant, and may he charge his commissioner to give Uzu to his servant for water, for fetching wood, for straw, for clay." (Moran 1992, 235). EA 149, 49–51: "(Still), Zimredda seized Uzu from <his> servant. I abandoned it, and so we have neither water nor wood." (Moran 1992, 236). See also Katzenstein 1973, 29, 52.

[112] Dimensions: 92.5 × 22.0 cm + 71.0 × 21.5 cm. Publication and bibliography: Leitz 1999.

Passage A

[4] *mny n mny* [...] *nbt ʒḫ-bjt jn srqt*●	X, born to Y. [...] lady of Chemmis by Selqet●
[...]	[...]
[5]*ḏd=j m nbt kʒp[wny ...]*●	I said to[a] the Lady of By[blos ...]●
mj ʒs.tj m-ḫʒt mḥ[?...	Come, being quick before ...?... [...]
[6]*mʒʒ=tw*[...] *msw*●	are seen [...] children.●
[jm]j ṯʒw n nty ḥr [...	Give air to the one who [...] is [...]
[7]*gʒy ḥy*[...] *rnw* [...]	constricted at the thro[at...] name(s ?) [...]
m mḏww-nṯr	as divine words/hieroglyphs.

a. Written 𓂝. I translate "to" following Leitz 1999, 21 who reads *n* for *m*.

Passage B

[13] ...]●	... [name of a goddess.]
srqt ḫwt[-ḥr]●	Selkis, Hathor,●
nbt kʒpwn ʒst●	(the?) Lady of Byblos, Isis,●
nb ḫwt●	Nephthys●
[...	[...

The first attestation comes just before a lacuna, probably at the beginning of a passage of direct speech: someone is addressing the Lady of Byblos, asking her to come quickly. Leitz (1999, 21) restores *ʒst* "Isis!" in the lacuna, translating "I said to the lady of Byblos: Isis! Come...", while adding in a note that the Lady of Byblos is probably Hathor. Although the name of Isis fits the lacuna (Leitz 1999, pl. 8, 13) and would be significant here because it would be the earliest attestation of her being associated with the Lady of Byblos, I consider the restoration unlikely. While from around the 7th century the Lady of Byblos is attested as identified with Isis (see Hollis 2009, 4), nothing in this text points toward such an association. Moreover, the lacuna could also accommodate the name of Hathor, of which there is a fragmentary example in VIII, 13. Hathor would be a more obvious choice, as the "Lady of Byblos" had been associated with her since the Old Kingdom (Hollis 2009, 1) and is identified with her in a possibly roughly contemporary statue (§5.6.3). Restorations other than a goddess' name are also possible, such as a particle or another imperative introducing the direct speech.

The second passage, in which the name of the goddess appears among other goddesses in a fragment between two lacunae, suggests that the Lady of Byblos was invoked to help Isis while being distinguished from her. Overall, the information yielded by these

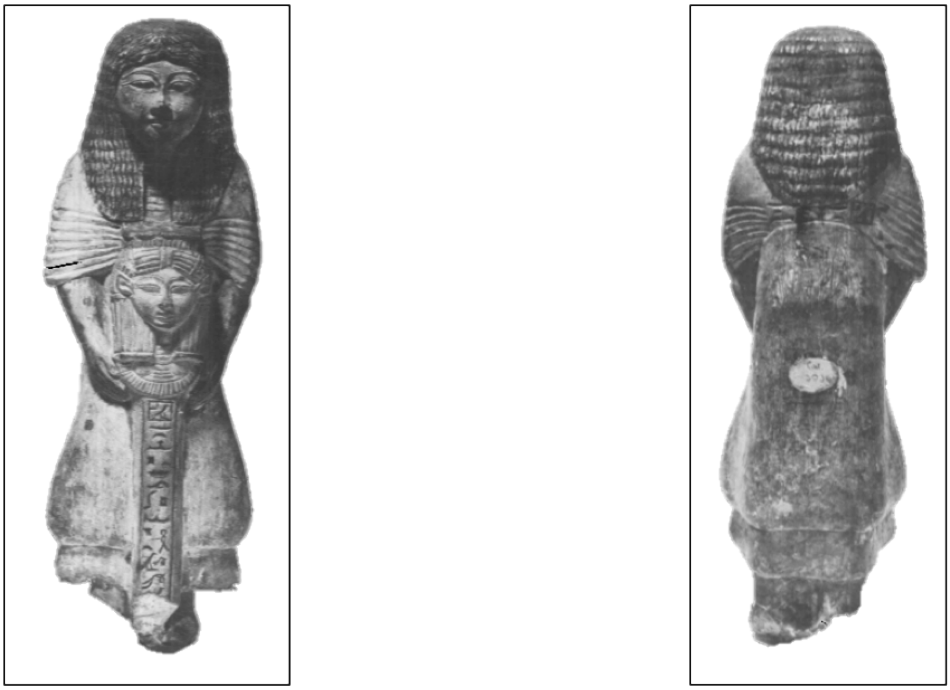


Figure 5.9: Statue Turin 3036 (from Scandone Matthiae 1987, pl. xxvi)

passages for the present research is rather meagre, although they do attest to the potency of the goddess of Byblos in magical rituals of the end of the New Kingdom.

5.6.3 Statue Turin 3036

Turin Nr. 3036 is a statue of a man holding a Hathor-headed staff, probably an abbreviated sistrum.[113]

The statue's precise provenance is unknown. Scandone (1987, 118) dates it to the 19th dynasty, possibly the reign of Ramses II, on stylistic grounds, suggesting that it could come from Deir El-Medina. The fragmentary inscription on the staff of the sistrum reads: *Ḥwt-Ḥr nbt-ḥtp(t) nbt Kp(n) ḥnwt Wȝw[ȝt...*, "Hathor, Lady of Hetepet[114], Lady of Byblos, Mistress of Waw[at...". This inscription attests that the Lady of Byblos was still identified with Hathor in the 19th dynasty. Scandone (1987, 122–3) observes that

[113]Findspot: unknown, possibly Deir El-Medina (Scandone Matthiae 1987, 122). Current location: Museo Egizio di Torino – 3036. Material: white limestone (Scandone Matthiae 1987, 115). Dimensions: 27 × 8 × 6.8 cm. Publication and general bibliography: Scandone Matthiae 1987. General description: generally well preserved, the feet and the basis are missing (Scandone Matthiae 1987).

[114]Here likely the name of a city in Egypt, although the primary meaning was probably "vulva". See Vandier 1964, 56, 61–65, who also briefly mentions the statue discussed here (see pp. 82–3, viii and pl. 4). On this form of Hathor see also Vandier 1965; Vandier 1966; Vandier 1968.

Ramses II sponsored the construction of a temple dedicated to Hathor in Deir El-Medina, and this statue could belong to someone connected with it.

The spelling of *kpn*, with the sign of the hand instead of the *kȝp* sign[115] is, as far as I know, otherwise unattested in the New Kingdom. The usage is phonetically understandable since this sign is attested in the 19th dynasty (K*RI* IV 8.15) as determinative of *kȝ-pw*, a Semitic loanword meaning "palm of the hand" (from Semitic *k-p*, same: Hoch 1994, 317–8). In addition, this very spelling of the name of Byblos is also attested in later sources, for example in the 22nd dynasty topographical list of Sheshonq (Epigraphic Survey 1954, pl. 4). Hoch (1994, 318) suggests it could be due to popular etymology.

5.6.4 Hittite sources: KBo XXVI 94.9

Byblos is mentioned in only one Hittite source, KBo XXVI 94.9, a tablet fragment found in Hattusa. The small fragment preserves 16 disjointed and incomplete lines of apparently mythological nature (Polvani 1992, 452–3; Groddeck 2000–2001).

Of particular interest is line 9, where "cloths from Byblos" are mentioned:

] *a-ra-an na-at-kan*$_2$ ^{URU}*ku-up-la-aš* GADA-*it* [	] stand(?) and they(?) cloth(s) from Byblos [[a]

a. For a suggested reconstruction of the lacuna, see Groddeck 2000–2001, 24–9. The rest of the text, however, is not relevant here.

Groddeck observes that the same phrase, or a very similar one, also appears in the related fragment KBo XXVI 83.9. The fragmentary nature of these passages limits interpretation. Byblos is not the central topic, being mentioned only as the place of origin of some textiles. However they confirm that textiles from Byblos were significant enough to the Hittites to appear in a mythological context, and by inference that at some point, there were commercial relations between the two polities.

The absence of references to Byblos in other Hittite texts contrasts with the widespread presence of Byblos in Egyptian sources. Moreover, whereas northern kingdoms like Amurru and Ugarit are well attested in Hittite sources,[116] the other cities of the Southern

[115] So at least seems to me on the basis of the pictures published by Scandone.
[116] See Del Monte and Tischler 1978, i, 14–15; ii, 5; i 451; ii 177.

Lebanese coast are also extremely rare. Only Tyre and Sidon are found, just once, in a ritual text mentioning various Syro-Lebanese cities in relation to some "Cedar-gods" (KUB XV, p.34). Byblos does not occur in this text: might this suggest that at the time Byblos was not a prominent partner for the Hittites in the timber commerce? In fact, in contrast with the Egyptians, for which Lebanon was the nearest source of conifer wood, the Hittites had access to a larger number of forests in a number of places, including Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus and even Anatolia itself. Byblos and Lebanon in general, therefore, was not their only possible source of wood, nor the closest one.

In general, the Hittite sources contain rather little relating to the part of the coast that was within the Egyptian sphere of influence. It is difficult to say whether this reflects a lack of Hittite interest, if it points to different forms of contact and interactions that did not leave traces in the archives of Hattusa, or if it is the consequence of other factors, such as mere accidents of preservation. In any case, this lack strongly underscores the exceptional nature of the Egyptian sources and of their interest in Byblos.

5.6.5 Ugaritic Sources

The excavations at the site of Ras Shamra, the ancient city of Ugarit, started in 1929. They were directed by Claude Shaeffer until 1970 and then in succession by Henri de Contenson, Jean Margueron, Marguerite Yon, Yves Calvet, and Bassam Jamous until 2010, when they were suspended because of the Syrian civil war (`http://www.ras-shamra.ougarit.mom.fr/` accessed 6.1.2017). A city with ancient origins,[117] Ugarit was a flourishing trade centre and the capital of a prosperous kingdom during the Late Bronze Age until it was destroyed at the beginning of the 12th century BC (Singer 1999, 729–30). Its sudden destruction, and the fact that it was never rebuilt, has enabled archaeologists to explore the remains of the Late Bronze city in detail and to recover thousands of tablets dating mainly to the last 50 years of its life (Lackenbacher 1995, 70). These texts are one of the main sources for studying the Near East during the Late Bronze Age, offering in particular crucial information on aspects of culture and society during

[117] The site was inhabited in the 8th millennium BCE in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B: Yon 2006, 7.

the 13th century BC. The texts are mainly written in Akkadian or in Ugaritic, a North-West-Semitic language spoken in the city. Those in Ugaritic are written either in syllabic cuneiform or in a cuneiform alphabet used in the city. These are not the only languages attested at Ugarit: some Hittite and Hurrian documents are known, Sumerian appears in some texts, while other languages and scripts including different North-West-Semitic languages, Egyptian, and Cypro-Minoan have also been identified (Wyatt 1999, 529). The city emerging from the texts and from the archaeological evidence was a culturally Canaanite city located at the margin of the Hittite sphere of influence. It was integrated in a well-developed trading network that extended as far as Egypt and the Aegean region and that linked it to various coastal cities, including Byblos.

5.6.5.1 The Ugaritic sources: the texts

Byblos, called ^{URU}*gub/gu-ub-la/li* in Akkadian and *gbl* in Ugaritic, is mentioned in three texts found in Ugarit. The first two (RS 19.28 and RS 18.25) are records of commercial interactions between the two cities, while the third (RS 34.145) is a letter of the king of Karkemish to the queen of Ugarit discussing various issues, including the possibility for ships from Ugarit to sail to Byblos and other coastal cities.

Five further texts contain possible attestations of Byblos. One (RS 19.182) seems to mention a person from Byblos, while a fragment of another (RS 18.134) may preserve the beginning of a letter sent by a king of Byblos to a king of Ugarit. The name of Byblos may perhaps also appear in three other texts (RS 19.45, RS 18.5, RS 24.642D). These mentions, however, are doubtful and not very informative. It is possible that the toponym *g-b-l* occurring in two of them does not refer to Byblos but to a consonantally homophonous place in the hinterland of Ugarit. The last tablet is too fragmentary for any conclusions to be drawn.

All these texts were found in the archives of the Royal Palace except for RS 24.642D, which is from the so-called House of the Hurrian Priest on the southern slope of the acropolis (Soldt 2000, 235).

RS 19.28

= *PRU 6, 126*

Findspot: Royal Palace

Obverse

[1] 7 TUG_2.MEŠ GIŠ.MA_2.MEŠ *ma-aš$_2$-ḫa-ṭu-ma*	7 *mašḫaṭu* textiles of the ships[a]
[2] 1 TUG_2 *a-ga-su-nu*	1 *agasunu* textile
[3] 2 TUG_2.MEŠ *mu-ru-u$_2$-ma*.MEŠ	2 *murūma* textiles
[4] 2 TUG_2.MEŠ *ma-za-ʳruʾ-ma*.MEŠ	2 *mazaruma*[b] textiles
[5] 6 TUG_2 LA.MEŠ *lu-ḫu-ma(?)*[c]	6 luxurious *lu-ḫu-ma* textiles
[6] 2 TUG_2 *u$_2$-ra-tu*	2 *ūrātu* textiles
[7] 2 TUG_2 GAL.MEŠ	2 GAL textiles[d]
[8] 3 TUG_2.ʳMEŠʾ *ma-ar-tu(?)*[c]	2 *martu*[e] textiles
[9] ŠU [l]*a-bi-ḫi-li*	(in) the hands of Abihilu
[10] *a-ʳnaʾ* ^{URU}*gu-ub-li*	for (the city of) Byblos
[11] ŠU.$NIGIN_2$ 2ʳ5(?)ʾ TUG_2.MEŠ ŠU [l]*a-bi-ʳḫiʾ-li*	total: 2[5 (?)] textiles (in) the hands of Abihilu

a. Perhaps a kind of sail or cover? Nougayrol (1970, 159) took *mašḫaṭu* as meaning "removable" and suggested "removable ship cover".
b. Possibly related to *mazāru*, "to treat wool in a certain way" (*CAD* 10/1, 432). Nougayrol (1970, 159) suggested "felt".
c. So Nougayrol 1970, 100.
d. Perhaps "textiles of greatness"?
e. Possibly connected with *mardatu*, "fabric woven with several colors in a special technique" (*CAD* 10/1, 277).

This text, which is written in Akkadian, is a list of textiles given to Abihilu, destined for Byblos. Abihilu was probably the official merchant (*tamkaru*) in charge of the trade with Byblos (Heltzer 1978, 12), and the tablet looks like a receipt or a memorandum confirming the transaction. The precise nature of these textiles is not known, but among them were some "luxurious" items (line 5), perhaps some wool textiles (line 4) and some textiles that were dyed (line 8), conceivably with purple, which was used in Ugarit and for which the Phoenicians were later famous (Schaeffer 1951; Stieglitz 1994). The mention of "textiles of the ships" (line 1), referring possibly to sails or similar, is also interesting, inasmuch as the tablet treated next also records a transaction between the king of Ugarit and the king of Byblos involving ships.

RS 18.25 (lines 10–18)

= PRU 5, 106 = UT 2106 = KTU 4.338

Findspot: Royal Palace

Only obverse lines 10–18 are studied here because the rest of text deals with an unrelated subject.

[10] *ḫmš . måt . årbʿm*	Five hundred and forty (shekels)
[11] *kbd . ksp . ånyt*	of ship-money
[12] *d . ʿrb . b . ånyt*	which were provided as a guarantee for ships
[13] *l . mlk . gbl*	to the king of Byblos;
[14] *w . ḫmšm . ksp*	and fifty (shekels) of silver
[15] *lqḥ . mlk . gbl*	(that) the king of Byblos has received
[16] *lbš . ånyth*	(for) the outfitting of his ships
[17] *bʿrm . ksp*	in *ʿrm*.[a] (This amount of) silver
[18] *mḫr . hn*	is their value.

The translation adopted here is based on Pardee (1975).
a. Unknown locality, perhaps in the territory of Ugarit (Pardee 1975, 616–7).

The text of this tablet, which is in Ugaritic, consists of two unrelated parts. The first is a list of people, while the second, discussed here, is a memorandum referring to a commercial transaction with the king of Byblos. The nature of this transaction is not clear. Ziskind (1974) saw in it a form of loan to finance a shipping venture, but Pardee (1975, 618–9) convincingly rejected this interpretation on linguistic grounds and very tentatively suggested that this text could refer to the lease of Byblian ships to the king of Ugarit. Whatever kind of transaction is meant, this text confirms that economic relations between Ugarit and Byblos included exchange or collaborations involving ships.

RS 34.145

= RSOu 7, 9

Findspot: secondary deposit, southern part of the tell

Only obverse/lower edge lines 9–14 are studied here because the rest of text deals with completely different matters.

Obverse (9–13) – Lower edge (14)

[9] *aš-šum* GIŠ.MA$_2$.MEŠ *ša taš$_3$-pu-ri*	As for the ships you wrote about,
[10] *i-na* ^{KUR}*gu$_5$-ub-li*	let them go to Byblos
[11] *i-na* ^{KUR}*ṣi-du-ni*	and to Sidon

12 *lil-li-ka* u_3 *i-na gi-ri*	but they should not go
13 *ru-*u_2*-qi lu-*u_2	on a long(er) trip
14 *la-a il-la-ka*	

RS 34.145 is a letter send by the Hittite viceroy of Karkemish to an unidentified queen of Ugarit. The message tackles various administrative matters, such as compensation for a homicide (lines 5–8) and an issue concerning some stone seals (lines 15–18), and it has often been quoted in discussions of the political role and power of queens in Ugaritic society (Vita 1999, 470; Neal Thomas 2013, 77). In the passage discussed here, the Hittite overlord agrees to allow some ships to sail south to Byblos and Sidon, but forbids them to travel any further. The meaning of these limitations is not clear. A Hittite-organized blockade[118] against Egyptian territories can hardly be implied, both because only the ships the queen "wrote about" are involved and because Lebanese cities like Byblos and Sidon, which were indeed in the Egyptian sphere of influence, are not affected. It seems more likely that the measure was therefore probably dictated by some other consideration. It is however evident from this letter that the Hittites were well informed about Ugarit commercial interactions and at least in some cases intervened to influence them.

RS 19.182

= *PRU 6,81*

Findspot: Royal Palace

Obverse

x+1 [...]	[...]
x+2]-*šu* URU⌜*gu*⌝-[*ub-la-a*]	]-*šu* [from (the city of)] B[yblos]
x+3]-*nu* URU*gu-*⌜*ub*⌝-[*la-a*]	]-*nu* [from (the city of)] B[yblos]
x+4]-*ia-*u_2 URU*ṣi-*⌜*du*⌝-[*na-a*]	]-*yau* [from (the city of)] Sid[on]
x+5]-*ra-a* URU*gu-*⌜*ub*⌝-[*la-a*]	[from (the city of)] By[blos]
x+6]-*la-ya* URU*a-*⌜*ki*⌝-[*ya*]	]-*laya* [from (the city of)] Ak[ku]
x+7]-*ya-*⌜*'u*⌝ ⌜URU⌝[	]-*ya'u*(?) [from (the city of) ?]
x+8]-*nu* [	]-*nu* [
x+9 [...]	[...]

[118] Various blockades are attested in the Near Eastern sources of the Late Bronze Age, for instance, for the Amarna Period, EA 101 where a local king, probably Rib-Hadda, asks the Pharaoh: "Let the king tell the three cities and the ships of the army not to go to the land of Amurru. If a servant seizes a boat, let him give it to you. Be informed of the affairs of your loyal servant" (Moran 1992, 174). See also Zaccagnini 2002, 144, for a comparable example from Assyria.

Reverse

x+1 [...]	[...]
x+2] ˹*na*˺ *am ta* [	[...]
x+3] ˹*ḫu*˺ *ra ni* [	[...]
x+4 [...]	[...]

The structure of the text, as well as its parallels with similar lists found in Ugarit (including RS 18.5 discussed below), suggest that this is a list recording the names of a group of people followed by their cities of origin (Nougayrol 1970, 79). None of the city names is complete, but the traces correspond well with Byblos, Sidon, and Akko, three coastal cities to the south well attested in the texts found at Ugarit (Vidal 2006). The determinative URU and the probable association with Sidon and Akko support the assumption that the $^{\text{URU}}$*gu-*˹*ub*˺-[and $^{\text{URU}}$ ˹*gu*˺-[of this tablet is Byblos, which will then appear at least three times, in lines 2, 3, and 5, recording three people from the city who had some contact with Ugarit or were perhaps living there. Their occupation is unknown and the text is too fragmentary for further interpretation. Such lists probably recorded people dealing with or working for the royal administration of the city.

RS 18.134

= PRU 5, 159 = UT 2159 = KTU 2.44

Findspot: Royal Palace

Obverse

1 *l* . *mlk*[. *ủ*]*grt*	To the King of Ugarit
2 *iḫy* . *rgm*	my brother, say:
3 [*tḥ*]*m* . *m*[*lk* . *g*]*bl*[*m*?]	Message of the Ki[ng of (the people of ?) By]blos
4 *yšlm* . *l*[*k*] . *ilm*	May you be well, may the gods
5 *tġr* . *tšl*[*m*]*k*	protect you (and) keep you healthy
6] *špš*	] sun
7 [...]	[...]
8].*bt*(?).*gb*[*l*(?)	[ ]house(?) of Byb[los (?)]
9]*k*[...]. *w* . *špš*	[ ] and the Sun
10 [*b*]. *ṣp*[*n*?	[on] (Mount) Zaph[on ?]
11 [ ]*š*[ ]	[...]
12 [...]	[...]
13 [...]	[...]
14]*tty*	[...]
15]*rd*(?)*y*	[...]
16]*bʿl*	] Baal (?)
17]. *plz*	[...]

[18]]*ttk*	[...]
[19]]*mlk*	]king (?)
[20] [...]	[...]

RS 18.134 is a letter addressed to the king of Ugarit. Details of the sender are partially lost, but it could be the king of Byblos. Since the text is in Ugaritic, the tablet is possibly a translation made for the archives.[119] Only the introduction and the usual salutation formulae (Hawley 2008, 206) are preserved. The use of the "brotherhood metaphor" is notable; the expression *ỉḫy*, "my brother", usually indicates that the two kings considered themselves to be peers (Pardee 1997–2002, III 93 n.39; Liverani 2002, 18; Vidal 2005, 292–4; Hawley 2008, 213–8). The mention of the receiver before the sender is probably a matter of diplomatic politeness and does not necessarily imply subordination, and in any case the introductory formula could have been modified by the Ugaritic scribe/translator in accordance with an "Ugaritic perspective".

The content of the letter is largely lost. The possible mention of the god Ba'al (line 16),[120] of Mount Zaphon (line 10) where Ba'al dwelled (Wyatt 1999, 544–5), and of the sun or sun god (line 6), could suggest that the letter discussed a religious matter, rather than a commercial transaction. This would not be exceptional: although the cities of the coast had commercial relations with Ugarit (Arnaud 1992; Vidal 2006), the letters sent by their kings to the king or the *sakinu* of Ugarit usually dealt with non-commercial issues. In particular, of the 14 letters from Lebanese cities found in Ugarit,[121] only two mention, marginally, an economic transaction.[122] All the others concern diplomatic or non-commercial matters, such as enquires about the arrival of messengers, a complaint about excessive taxes in Ugarit, a communication about an Ugaritic shipwreck in Tyre, or

[119] On the likelihood that some texts found in Ugarit are translations, see Pitard 1999, 51, n.8; van Soldt 1999, 30, n.12. In general, if the letter was in Akkadian, it is unlikely that it would have been translated as Akkadian was well known in Ugarit. If it was in another language or on another support, it might have made sense to translate it into Ugaritic (Liverani 1979b, 1328; Watson 1999, 124; Vidal 2006, 271). Pardee (1997, III 93 n.37) does not dismiss the possibility that these texts are translations but observes that no Akkadian original has been found and wonders if these Ugaritic letters could be transcriptions of messages delivered orally or could have been written in Ugaritic by scribes from Ugarit residing at the foreign court.

[120] Although *bʿl* in Ugaritic could also mean simply "lord".

[121] From Beirut: RS 11.730, RS 34.137, RS 86.2212; from Sidon: RS 11.723, RS 25.430A, RS 34.149, RS 86.2208, RS 86.2221 + 86.2225 + 86.2226 + 86.2240 , RS 86.2234, and perhaps RS 18.054A; from Tyre: RS Varia 25, RS 18.031, RS 17.424C, RS 34.167.

[122] RS Varia 25 and RS 34.167, both from Tyre.

an attempt to settle a dispute related to a religious offence committed in Sidon by people from Ugarit (86.2208, 86.2221+, 86.2234 and perhaps also RS 18.054A; see Singer 1999, 670 with references). It is hard to say whether this range is representative of the overall content of the letters exchanged between kings. If so, commercial matters were perhaps dealt with by agents other than the kings, such as merchants or different members of the administration, or orally or in other forms involving different media. Alternatively, these letters could represent just a small part of the exchanged correspondence that was specifically selected to be kept in the archives. The motivations for this selection could have been various, and could have included, for instance, whether long-term matters were at issue.[123] In both cases, if the few religiously focused references surviving in RS 18.134 are representative of its content, then this letter from Byblos would fit with the generally non-commercial nature of the attested correspondence between kings.

RS 19.45

= PRU 5, 38 = UT 2038 = KTU 4.618

Findspot: Royal Palace

Obverse

[1] [*b* .] *gt* . *ṯpn* . *ʿšr* . *ṣmdm*	10 yokes (of steers) in the *ṯpn*-farm
[2] *w* . *tlṯ* . *ʿšr* . *bnš*	and 13 labourers
[3] *yd* . *ytm* . *yd* . *rʿy* . *ḥmrm*	with two foremen and a muleteer
---	
[4] *b* . *gt* . *gwl* . *ṯmn* . *ṣmdm*	8 yokes (of steers) in the *gwl*-farm
[5] *w* . *årbʿ* . *ʿšr* . *bnš*	and 14 labourers
[6] *yd* . *nġr* . *mdrʿ* . *yd* . *šbrm*	with a guardian of the sown land with sticks
---	
[7] [*b*] . *gt* . *ỉptl* . *tt* . *ṣmdm*	6 yokes (of steers) in the *ỉptl*-farm
[8] [*w* .] *ʿšr* . *bnšm* . *yd* . *šbr*[*m*]	and 10 labourers with stick[s]
---	
[9] *b* . *ůlm* . *bd* . *r*[*b*?]*m* . *dlm*	in *ůlm* ? [a]
[10] *tt* . *ʿšr ṣmd* . *ålpm*	16 yokes of oxen
[11] *w* . *tšʿ* . *ʿšr* . *bnš* . *ḫr*[*š*]	and 19 craftsmen
[12] *w* [.] *tlṯ* . *ḫršm* . *mrkbt*	and 3 chariot-makers
---	
[13] [*b* . *gt* . *åtlg* .]*tlṯ* . *ṣ*[*m*]*d* . *ålpm*	3 yokes of oxen [in the *åtlg*-farm]
[14] [*w* . *ʿš*]*r bnšm*	and 10 labourers
---	
[15] [*b* . *gt* . *gbl* . *ḫ*]*mš* . *ṣmd* . *ålpm*	5 yokes of oxen [in the *gbl*-farm]
[16] [*w* . ? . *bn*]*šm*	[and ?] labourers

[123] See for instance the case of the "great sin" committed by people of Ugarit in Sidon and discussed in various letters (Arnaud 1992, 185, 189–91; Singer 1999, 670).

---	
[17] [*b . gt . ẓrỉ*]*š . ḫmš . ṣmd . ålpm*	5 yokes of oxen [in the *ẓrỉ*]*š*[-farm]
[18] [*w . ? . bn*]*šm*	[and ?] labourers
---	
[19] [*b . gt . ġẓ kbd*]. *ʿšr . ṣmd . ålpm*	10 yokes of oxen [in the *ġẓ kbd*-farm]
[20] [*w . ? . b*]*nšm*	[and ?] labourers

Lower edge

[21] [*b . gt . ḫr*]*ṯm . ḫmš . ṣmdm*	5 yokes (of steers) in the [*ḫr*]*ṯm*-[farm]
[22] [*w . ? . bn*]*šm*	[and ?] labourers

Reverse

[23] *b . gt ṯpn . åḥd*	in the *ṯpn*-farm: 1
[24] [*b .*] *gt gwl . åḥd*	[in] the *gwl*-farm: 1
[25] [*b . gt ỉ*]*pṯl . ʿšr*[ ]	[in the *ỉ*]*pṯl*-farm: 10[]
[26] [*b . gt*] *ůlm . åḥd*	[in] the *ůlm*-[farm]: 1
[27] [*b . gt*] *åtlg . åḥd*	[in] the *åtlg*-[farm]: 1
[28] [*b . g*]*t gbl . åḥd*	[in] the *gbl*-fa[rm]: 1
[29] *b . gt ẓrỉš . ḫmš* ʿ[*šr*]	in the *ẓrỉš*-farm: 15
[30] *b . gt ġẓ kbd . ṯmn*	in the *ġẓ kbd*-farm: 8
[31] *b . gt ṯrmn . ḫ*[*m*]*š*	in the *ṯrmn*-farm: 5
[32] [*b .*] *gt ḥrṯm . aḥd*	[in] the *ḥrṯm*-farm: 1

a. The meaning of *dlm* is not known (Olmo Lete 2003, 271), and the uncertainty of the second consonant of *r*[*b*?]*m* makes the reading of this passage very doubtful.

RS 19.45 is an administrative document in Ugaritic, whose recto records the distribution of personnel and animals to various *gt*, literally "wine/olive presses" and by extension "farms", "agricultural estates" (del Olmo Lete 2003, 311). The names of these estates are repeated on the verso, followed by some numbers; this list is probably a summary or a receipt.

The name of the sixth place in the list is lost in the first part of the tablet, but is preserved as *gt gbl* in the final list. As seen above, *gbl* is the usual Ugaritic spelling for Byblos, but the tablet's content does not easily fit with this interpretation, because this document deals with local agricultural administration with which Byblos would hardly be involved. It is thus likely that the *gbl* of this tablet is the name of a place in the hinterland of Ugarit,[124] not that of Byblos.

[124]In Ugaritic *gbl* can also mean "mountain" or "boundary" (del Olmo Lete 2003, 293).

RS 18.5

= PRU 5, 121 = UT 2121 = KTU 4.321

Findspot: Royal Palace

Obverse

x+1] *bn . ġs . ḥršš . šgty*	] son of *ġs*, worker, from *šgt*
x+2 *ʿdy . bn . slʿy . gbly*	*ʿdy*, son of *Slʿy*, from Byblos
x+3 *yrm . bʿl . bn . kky*	*Yrm-bʿl*, son of *Kky*

This Ugaritic tablet bears a list of people's names, professions or patronyms, and places of origin. One person is said to be *gbly*, "from *gbl*". If this *gbl* is Byblos, this is a Byblian person living in Ugarit or having a connection with the city. In contrast with RS 19.182, however, this *gbl* is not associated with other coastal cities, and the other place mentioned, *šgt*, is unknown. It is therefore impossible to know whether this *gbl* is Byblos, is a *gbl* located in the countryside of Ugarit as in RS 19.45, or is another homonymous place.

RS 24.642D

= KTU 7.137

Findspot: House of the Hurrian Priest

This Ugaritic tablet is too fragmentary to be translated. A mention of Byblos may be present in the few disconnected words that survive: the consonants *g-b-l* can be read in line 5, but the root *g-b-l* can also mean "mountain" and "border" (Olmo Lete 2003, 293), or it may refer to a place in the hinterland of Ugarit, as in RS 19.45.

5.6.5.2 Ugaritic sources: discussion

In contrast with the Egyptian sources, the texts from Ugarit do not deal with exceptional, royally-sponsored missions but describe regular interactions and exchanges within a regional network. Since Byblos was not the only coastal city interacting with Ugarit, assessing the amount, nature, and distribution of the attestations of other cities and kingdoms in the documents from the city can offer a more general picture of the position of Byblos within the network. These cities and kingdoms can be divided into three groups

according to how they are represented in the archives of Ugarit. They can be attested as partners in documents dealing with politico-legal matters linking them with Ugarit, as senders of letters found in Ugarit, or their names can be mentioned in documents originating within Ugarit. The first group consists only of the kingdom of Amurru, which is attested in Ugaritic sources in three different ways: the name of the kingdom is mentioned in at least 17 texts mainly originating from the Ugaritic administration;[125] 11 letters were sent by various people of Amurru;[126] and 4 politico-legal texts between Ugarit and Amurru[127] are known. The last group consists of three documents concerning the divorce of the Ugaritic King ʿAmmiṯtamru II[128] from the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru, and an earlier treaty[129] from the times of Niqmaddu II and Aziru.[130]

A second group of cities is represented by letters sent by their kings and by mentions in various documents from Ugarit itself. These are Sidon (7 letters, 2 uncertain letters, and 4 mentions[131]), Tyre (5 letters and 2 mentions[132]), Beirut (4 letters and 1 mention[133]), and Byblos (1 letter and 4 mentions + 1 uncertain mention,[134] as seen above).

The third group is formed of cities that are only mentioned in texts from Ugarit, but for which no letter is known. They are Acre (6 mentions[135]), Ashdod (6 mentions[136]), Ashkelon (2 mentions[137]), and Arwad (1 mention[138]).

[125]RS 16.146+, RS 16.270, RS 17.82, RS 17.228, RS 17.318, RS 17.372A+, RS 17.396, RS 17.450A, RS 18.6, RS 19.68, RS 20.4, RS 34.135, KTU 1.4, KTU 2.58, KTU 2.72, RS [varia 9], Semitica 41–42.

[126]RS 15.24 + 50, RS 16.111, RS 16.116, RS 17.116, RS 17.152, RS 17.286, RS 19.6, RS 20.33, RS 20.162, RS 23.23, RS [Varia 27].

[127]The "tablette G. Badr" (Arnaud and Salvini 1991), RS 17.228, RS 17.318+, RS 17.360A+.

[128]Ca. 1260–1235; see Singer 1999, 678–83.

[129]RS 19.68.

[130]Dating to the second half of the 14th century (Singer 1991, 148). This treaty is one of the oldest agreements, perhaps the oldest, found in the palace (Márquez Rowe 1999, 409).

[131]Letters: RS 11.723, RS 18.54, RS 25.430, RS 34.149, RS 86.2208, RS 86.2221+, RS 86.2234 and perhaps RS 1–11.[28], RS 18.268. Mentions: Keret IV 199, 201, RS 19.182, RS 34.145, RS 34.153.

[132]Letters: RS [Varia 25], RS 17.424C, RS 18.31, RS 18.40, RS 34.167+175. Mentions: Keret IV 199, 201, RS 19.42.

[133]Letters: RS 11.730, RS 34.137, RS 86.2212, CK 7. Mentions: RS 16.191+272.

[134]Letter: RS 18.134. Mentions: RS 18.25, RS 19.28, RS 19.182, RS 34.145 and perhaps RS 18.5.

[135]RS 10.52, RS 18.31, RS 19.42, RS 19.182, RS 34.147, RIH 78/12.

[136]RS 11.840, RS 18.42, RS 19.20, RS 19.96, RS 23.28, RS 1957.701.

[137]RS 19.42, RS 19.91.

[138]RS 19.42.

These groups are geographically coherent, and the profiles of their sources give a north-south gradient: Amurru in the north is the most richly attested, the cities of the Lebanese coast attested only in letters and mentions, and those of the southern Levant only in scattered mentions. Only Arwad does not fit into this pattern, but this could be because, possibly, at the time the city was not independent but a dependency of Amurru (Vidal 2008).

The different sources for these groups correspond to different kinds of interaction. As noted above, mentions are usually in texts concerning economic, commercial, or administrative matters. The letters, instead, tend to deal with diplomatic and other non-commercial issues. The treaty with Amurru and the tablets concerning the divorce attest to more political and strategic relations. Thus Amurru's interactions with Ugarit appear to have involved political (the treaty), diplomatic (the letters) and economic/administrative (the mentions) exchanges. Amurru belonged to the same Hittite sphere of influence as Ugarit and was its closest southern neighbour, thus both a potential ally and a potential threat. The cities of the Lebanese coast were probably too distant and not big enough to be politically relevant. The presence of both letters and mentions, however, suggests that they were still close enough to have commercial ties and diplomatic relations with Ugarit. The cities of the southern Levant traded and had economic interactions with Ugarit but were probably too far away for any substantive diplomatic attention.

This range of interactions characterizes the relations of Ugarit with comparable regional polities but does not apply to the macro-regional powers of the Hittite Empire, Egypt, and Assyria. Hattusa and Karkemish, the Hittite suzerains of Ugarit, had important economic, diplomatic, and political ties with Ugarit in spite of their distance, no doubt because of their dominant role over the city. For Egypt and Assyria, in contrast, their international significance is what is relevant. Egypt was much more distant than the southern Levant, but Ugarit had diplomatic exchanges with it,[139] since macro-regional prestige, power, and leverage outweighed distance. Assyria's situation was probably analogous.[140]

[139] Attested by 2 or 3 letters, namely RS 86.2230, RS 88.2158 and perhaps also RS 26.158.
[140] Assyria is also attested by 2 or 3 letters, RS 6.198, RS 34.165 and perhaps RS 18.054A.

This situation was almost certainly not unique to Ugarit; such patterns of interactions were probably common among the cities and kingdoms of the area, including Byblos, that have not produced archives. Significantly, at the time of these documents the Ugaritic network extended beyond the Hittite sphere of influence and included not only cities that were Egyptian vassals but also Egypt itself. It is not known when or how this network originated, but the peace treaty between Hattusili III and Ramesses II and the ensuing period of peace will have affected it significantly (Singer 1999, 646–7, 653). It clearly appears that in this period of the later 13th century, polities with different overlords could sustain regional and macro-regional commercial and diplomatic connections, and these opportunities must have had an important impact on the cities of the coast, including Byblos. In particular, Byblos and the other cities of the southern Lebanese coast, with their traditional connection with Egypt, could have been interesting commercial partners for northern policies such as Ugarit or Amurru, which instead were located within the Hittite sphere of influence, as this must have given them access to a different range of resources, commercial partners, and competitors.

Finally, a trace of an emerging geo-political balance and organization can perhaps also be seen in the distribution of the texts just discussed. In particular, for the cities of the Lebanese coast, the numbers of letters vary significantly, with Byblos being the least represented: only one letter mentions the city, in contrast with the 7/9 letters from Sidon, 5 from Tyre, and 4 from Beirut. This could suggest that for Ugarit Byblos was not as prominent as Sidon and Tyre. It has often been suggested that Sidon may have had a dominant role in the 13th century (Arnaud 1992, 182; Singer 1999, 670; Vidal 2005, 294), and these frequencies could support such scenario.

5.7 The end of the Late Bronze Age and the lack of sources from the period

Byblos disappears again from the written records at the end of the Late Bronze Age and reappears both in Egyptian and Levantine texts only in the Iron Age. The tale of Wenamun is by far the most important of these later sources. The text was composed after the Bronze Age, and therefore I will not discuss it in details here, as it would be beyond

the aims and scope of this thesis. The text contains however crucial information about Byblos, which can be useful also to understand its Late Bronze Age reality, and therefore is is worth to briefly present it here. The Tale of Wenamun as long been considered a reliable report of an official mission to buy wood in Byblos, but currently the general consensus is to see it as a fictional composition (e.g. Scheepers 1992; Baines 1999; Schipper 2005; Baines 2009). Because of its literary nature, the tale can hardly be used as a reliable historical document. Nevertheless, it has been observed that even though the story could be fictive, its setting and implicit dynamics could be informative for the reality of the time (Liverani 2001, 172). For instance, the text contains references to practices and conventions that have parallels in earlier and later sources (de Spens 1998; Liverani 2001, 170–5), as well as precious information on the goods that could be exchanged in these commercial interactions and on the wood trade in general (Homsy 2009, Kilani 2016a). The tale can thus be a crucial source to complement the information collected from other evidence. For this reason, I occasional refer to it in this thesis: although the text is not strictly a Late Bronze Age source, it adds information that can help in better defining some of the phenomena observed in that period.

5.8 Other sources

5.8.1 Byblos in Egyptian personal names

The epithet *nbt-kbn*, "Lady of Byblos", with which the Egyptians referred to the goddess of Byblos, appears on a few Egyptian objects and is attested in personal names since the Middle Kingdom (Ranke 1935, I, 189). New Kingdom attestations are given below.

- **1. No. Cairo 34117, Stele**
  - Publications: *PM* V, 58, Lacau 1909, 169, pl. liii
  - Date: 18th dynasty, reign of Thutmose III
  - Provenance: Abydos
  - Citation: Ranke 1935, i, 189; Horn 1963, 61
  - Orthography of name:
  - Notes: *Nbt-kbn* is the main character of the main register of the stele, where she is shown sitting and receiving offerings from her son and his family. Other members of the family are represented in the lower register. *Nbt-kbn* was a member of the royal court and the nurse of *S3t-Jmn*, daughter of Ahmose, and it is possible she

was already deceased when the stele was dedicated (see Betsy M. Bryan 2006, 98–9, who vocalizes the name "Nebetkabeny"). The orthography of "Byblos" in the name is unusual, and seems to be otherwise attested only on the stele of *Wsr-stt* (§5.3.1).

- **2. No. British Museum EA 365, Stele**
  - Publications: *PM* V, 96; *HTBM* 7, 13, pl xlvi; Budge 1909, 119, pl. xlvi
  - Date: 18th dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III (see *HTBM* 7, 13 and online catalogue of the BM `http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=123142&partId=1` accessed: 6.1.2017))
  - Provenance: Abydos
  - Citation: Ranke 1935, i, 189
  - Orthography of name: 
  - Notes: The stele belonged to the *w ʿw n tȝ ḥntyt*, "sailor of (Pharaoh's) crews", Apeni. In the third register, on the right, two couples are represented in front of an offering-table – they are probably relatives of Apeni. *Nbt-kbn* is one of these women. The  sign in her name is abbreviated to a simple line, but Ranke's (1935, i, 189) identification looks correct.

- **3. Turin Cat. 40, Ushabti/statuette**
  - Publications: Fabretti et al. 1882, 8 (without photograph)
  - Date: New Kingdom (according to Ranke 1935, i, 189)
  - Provenance: not known
  - Citation: Ranke 1935, i, 189
  - Orthography of name: not known
  - Notes: The Turin catalogue describes nr. 40 as a small (4 cm high) bronze statuette of Osiris. Ranke (1935, i, 189) cited it with a question mark, indicating uncertainty about including it. He described it as an ushabti and dated it to the New Kingdom without explanation. Bronze is not the normal material for ushabtis (although some are indeed known, see Clayton 1972), so it may be a bronze votive, unless Ranke's number is wrong. No image is available to me and I have been unable to determine the orthography of the name.

- **4. Turin Cat. 30, Statue?**
  - Publications: Fabretti et al. 1882, 5 (without photograph)
  - Date: New Kingdom (according to Horn 1963, 61
  - Provenance: not known
  - Citation: Horn 1963, 61
  - Orthography of name:  (Horn 1963, 61)
  - Notes: The entry in the Turin catalogue describes this object as a small (0.48 cm) stone statuette of Osiris. The god is described as standing with an "obelisk" (probably an obelisk-shaped back-pillar) against his back bearing a hieroglyphic inscription.

On the front of the base there is a "lute" (i.e. the *nfr*-sign 𓄤 F35 or the *sm3*-sign 𓅱 F36?) between two probable udjat-eyes ("sul davanti del piedistallo il liuto in mezzo ai due occhi mistici"). No image is available, but the orthography of the name is given in Horn (1963, 61). The orthography of *Nbt-kpn* recorded by Horn looks suspiciously similar to that of statue Turin 3036 (§5.6.3), especially if Horn's *k3p* sign is a misreading of the hand sign. The two could be the same, and if so the catalogue number given by Horn is wrong (30 instead of 3036). This could explain why in the catalogue description of statue nr. 30 there is no mention of an inscription to the Lady of Byblos: it is the wrong statue. Likewise, if Horn catalogue number is wrong for this entry, the number of another object in Turin that he recorded (5 here below) could be wrong.

- **5. Statue? Stele?**
  - Horn (1963, 61) mentioned another stele bearing the name *nbt-kbn* dating to the New Kingdom. According to him, it is Turin Nr. 166. However, this entry corresponds to a wooden statue in the catalogue of Fabretti et al. 1882. No image is available in Horn or in the catalogue so the information cannot be verified. It could be a mistake for the ushabti no. 40 mentioned by Ranke (Ranke 1935, i, 189), which is not in Horn's list.

Of these objects, 1 and 2 date to the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep III respectively, while 3, 4 and 5 (doubtful) cannot be precisely dated. The attestations from the reign of Thutmose III are in keeping with the pre-eminence that the city enjoyed during his reign (see also §5.2.5.2). Overall however, these names are not very informative. They confirm that the goddess of Byblos was known and worshipped, or at least respected, in Egypt during the New Kingdom and in particular during the 18th dynasty, but nothing more. These names cannot be used as evidence for the origin of these women or their families, because there could be different reasons for their having been chosen: were they people from Byblos like the servant mentioned in the stele of *Wsr-stt* (§5.3.1), and had names honouring the goddess of their home city? Or were they Egyptian women who bore these names because their families were somehow connected to the city (for instance through participation in campaigns or expeditions?) or because some form of worship of the goddess was practised in Egypt itself (as suggested by Pap. BM EA 9997 + 10309, §5.6.2)?

None of these questions can be answered, but they should be asked, as they show that

interactions between Egypt and Byblos were not only a matter of international politics, kings and gods, but that they also had effects on the everyday lives of ordinary people.

6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This second part of the thesis combines the data gathered from the primary sources in order to present a coherent picture of Late Bronze Age Byblos, of its interactions and of its historical evolution.

The first aspects treated here are the geographical and geopolitical layout of the kingdom and its socio-economic landscape, as well as the evolution of its relationship with Egypt. This relationship was defined and shaped by economic, geopolitical, and ideological considerations. The ideological factor, in particular, played an central and peculiar role, and it is therefore discussed in detail in §6.5.

Finally, the general development of the city is studied in §6.6.1 with the help of a theoretical interpretative framework. This framework is introduced and described in §6.6.1.1.

6.2 Geographical and geopolitical layout

The kingdom of Byblos was located on the coast just north of Beirut. The city of Byblos was its capital and it directly controlled various towns and villages within its territory, while other regional political entities were probably in a relation of alliance, or even vassalage, with it (see §5.4.5).

In the east and in the west, the kingdom was delimited by the natural frontiers formed by the chain of Mount Lebanon and by the Mediterranean Sea. By contrast, political borders defined its southern and northern extension. Southward the kingdom of Byblos adjoined that of Beirut. No source gives information about the exact location of this frontier, but it is likely that it corresponded to a natural feature such as a river or a valley. The Nahr El-Kalb, in particular, is a good candidate: its valley is located between the two cities (being ca. 16 km North of Beirut, and ca. 28 km South of Byblos), and its mouth is characterized by a cliff forming a natural bottleneck on the main road along the coast. Moreover, the choice of the Nahr El-Kalb by Ramses II to engrave his steles suggests that the place had some sort of symbolic, possibly liminal, connotation (§4.9). Since no conflict or other political event that could have caused a modification of this border is attested in the sources, it could have remained stable throughout the Late Bronze Age.

The situation on the northern border, instead, was more complex, and the location of the frontier there changed more than once during the Late Bronze Age. At the beginning of the 18th dynasty the border was probably somewhere between Byblos and Ullassa, which was then an independent city (§5.2.5.1). Ullassa, however, was captured and submitted by the Egyptians between years 29 and 31 of Thutmose III, and it is possible that Byblos extended its territory and political influence northward in the wake of this event (see §5.2.5.1 and §5.4.5). The resulting geopolitical asset lasted until the end of the 18th dynasty, when the kingdom of Byblos suffered important territorial losses caused by the emergence of Amurru and the following wars with ʿAbdi-Ashirta and Aziru (§5.4.6). At the end of the Amarna correspondence the northern frontier was probably located very close to Byblos itself, somewhere south of Batruna (§5.4.6). The sources are silent about the evolution of the northern border after the Amarna period, but it is unlikely that the situation changed again significantly.

Various factors could affect the geographical and geopolitical situation of Byblos positively or negatively. Competition and wars with other local political entities, modification in alliances, and shifts in the balance of power could be occasions for political and territorial expansion or could cause territorial and political losses. The status of Byblos could also be affected by the macro-regional geopolitical situation. The city was often the

northernmost territory under control of the Egyptians, for whom it was then strategically important. The long tradition of friendly relations with Egypt made Byblos a precious potential ally, while its position made it a good starting point for military expeditions in the north, especially at the beginning of the New Kingdom when the Egyptian grip on the region was far from being consolidated. Moreover, the city could easily be reached by sea, and its shipbuilders could be put at the service of the Egyptian army, as Thutmose III did in his 8th campaign (§5.2.1). Byblos itself could benefit from the presence of Egyptian soldiers in the area. The city's rulers of the city could take direct advantage of Egyptian military activities to expand their own sphere of influence and possibly their territory. It is likely that in the reign of Thutmose III an Egyptian garrison was installed near Byblos, possibly in Ullassa, which perhaps was administratively connected with the kingdom of Byblos (see §5.2.5.1). Its presence could have improved its prestige and reinforced the authority and political weight of Byblos in the region. It is clear, however, that the strategic value of Byblos was not a constant factor, but it rather depended on the wider situation in general, and on Egyptian political and military ambitions in particular. When these ambitions where oriented toward Syria and the Levantine coast, Byblos could benefit from them, but when Egyptian attention on the area declined or moved elsewhere, their potentially positive influence faded away (see further §6.6.2–6.6.7).

6.3 Economy and economic landscape

Economic factors were vital in the interactions and evolution of Byblos. The kingdom's territory supplied various natural resources, and the city was a hub for many artisanal activities. Moreover, Byblos was part of a regional and international trading network. The scattered and uneven nature of the information, however, limit the scope of the analysis of these economic realities. Moreover, no archive has been found in the city, unlike in Ugarit and in Alalakh (see e.g. Nougayrol 1970; Soldt 2000; von Dassow 2005), so that many aspects of the everyday economy of Byblos remain inaccessible. Nevertheless, some principal features of its economic system can still be inferred from the evidence.

6.3.0.1 Natural resources

The most famous natural resource of Byblos was timber. Although today's Lebanon displays a rather barren landscape, during the Late Bronze Age the inland and the slopes of Mount Lebanon were covered with dense forests (Mikesell 1969). Different trees and other plants grew there according to altitude, latitude, and exposure. To mention only the best-known trees of the region, oaks (*Quercus calliprinos*) and pines (*Pinus brutia*, *Pinus halepensis*) were typical below 1000 meters. The famous cedars (*Cedrus libani*) grew between an altitude of 1000 m and 2000 m, while forests of juniper (*Juniper excelsa*) were commun above 2000 m. The Cilician Fir (*Abies cilicica*) could also be found between 1000 m and 2000 m, but only north of Byblos, more precisely north of the Kadisha Valley and of Horshe Ehden inland from modern Tripoli (Mikesell 1969; Awad et al. 2014, passim, fig. 1; Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh 2016). Wood was both used locally and exported. Thalmann (2006, esp. 865–71) has convincingly suggested that the buildings of Byblos were made of wood or of mudbricks set within wooden frames and erected on stone foundations. Wood was also used for shipbuilding (see §6.3.0.2). It was exported, both as raw logs and as semi-finished items; an example is the Tale of Wenamun, where specific ship parts are sent to Egypt by the Byblian king of Byblos (Wen. 2,38, Schipper 2005, 80). Resins, oils, and essences obtained from various trees were also known, exploited, and exported (Asensi Amorós and Vozenin-Serra 1998; Serpico and White 1998).

Animal husbandry was practiced in the kingdom. Oxen were used for heavy works such as logging, as attested by the Gebel Barkal stele (§5.2.1) and the Tale of Wenamun (Wenamun 2.43; Schipper 2005, 82; §5.7), while in Amarna letter EA 113:14–15 the king of Byblos Rib-Hadda claimed that his "[cattle] ˹and˺ small cattle"[1] had been plundered by Yapah-Hadda. The meat from sheep was probably consumed,[2] while wool was central

[1] [GU_4. MEŠ] ˹u_3˺ UZ_3.MEŠ: see Rainey and Schniedewind 2015, 602

[2] As it is implicitly suggested by Wenamun (2.69 – Schipper 2005, 94) and attested by the archaeological evidence from Ugarit, where zooarchaeological analyses of the bones found on the site have observed patterns that suggesting that some of the small herd animals of the city were raised for meat consumption (Matoïan and Vita 2014, 311). Such analyses are impossible for Byblos because the archaeologists seem not to have collected animal bones. However, there is no reason to think that the situation was particularly different.

in the economy of the Near East, as for instance at Ugarit (Matoïan and Vita 2014; Breniquet and Michel 2014), and that was probably the case at Byblos as well. The wool was woven (§3.4) and used locally or exported (§5.6.4). We have no evidence to determinate how cattle was managed in Byblos. In Ugarit, it seems that families owned only small herds, made in average of a few tens of animals, while the palace owned herds of thousands of animals. The general picture is that of a modest peasant society that probably complemented their economy with the products of farming and other activities, in opposition with a central administration managing the majority of the animal resources, either directly or trough a system of taxes, such as the *maqqadu* grazing tax that could be paid in "sheep" (Matoïan and Vita 2014, 315–6). It is possible that in Byblos the situation was similar, but there is no evidence to support this view. Moreover, the texts from Ugarit show that husbandry was probably not uniformly distributed over the territory of the kingdom. Rather, some regions (namely the north and north-east) seem to have been geographically and environmentally more suited than others for breeding livestock (Matoïan and Vita 2014, 316). In Byblos, however, the geographical and environmental conditions could have been different, either favouring or hampering husbandry. Since however we have no text nor animal remains from the city, it is impossible now to assess the suitability of the territory of the kingdom for such activities. Modern environmental data are not helpful either, as Lebanon went through an intense process of deforestation in the recent past (Mikesell 1969), and land that today is available for grazing could have been covered with forests, and therefore inaccessible, in the past. In fact, considering the importance of wood in the city's economy, the city could have favoured forests over grazing land. Again, however, there is no source or evidence to support such hypothesis and in general the reality in Byblos could have been different from that of Ugarit or of other Levantine kingdoms.

Agriculture was another primary resource for the city, but the only references to it are in the Amarna letters. Peasantry is mentioned in various letters from Byblos,[3] while in others Rib-Hadda claims to be forced to buy grain from Yarimuta, as there is not enough

[3]LÚ.MEŠ *[ḫu]-up-ši* et similia – see EA 77: 36–37, EA 81: 33, EA 114: 21–22, EA 117: 90, EA 118: 23, 37, EA 125: 27, 34–35, EA 130: 42.

food in Byblos (§5.4.4, §5.4.6). This suggests that, at least during the war with Amurru, local agricultural production might not have been enough to sustain the city. Rib-Hadda claims twice that his crops have been plundered for two (EA 85:9–11) and three (EA 86:38–39) years and this is why he and his people needed to buy grain from Yarimuta. Both these letters were written after the fall of Shigata and Ampi (implicitly announced in EA 78) but before the announcement of the capture of Batruna recorded in EA 87 (§5.4.5, §5.4.6). Batruna is still said to belong to Rib-Hadda in EA 81, which suggests two possible scenarios. The first is that the capture of Batruna is announced by Rib-Hadda in EA 87, but the city fell earlier, possibly as early as EA 82 (with EA 81 being the last letter in which Batruna still belongs to Rib-Hadda). Rib-Hadda, however, seems to be quite eager to communicate the enemy advances to the Pharaoh, and there is no real reason to expect him to delay in mentioning such an event. Therefore, a second scenario, in which the fall of Batruna occurred just before EA 87, is more likely, which would then mean that the plundered crops mentioned in EA 85 and EA 86 could have been grown around and possibly north of Batruna, where the battlefront was at the time. This would imply that Byblos was relying for its sustenance on the agricultural production of territories in that area and possibly farther north toward Shigata, that is, relatively far from the city itself. The land around the northern Lebanese coast is in fact more suited for agriculture than around the city of Byblos, as the mountains are farther from the coast and there are larger plains that anticipate the Akkar plain around Sumur. It is thus plausible that these territories were the "granary" of the kingdom, and this could have been a factor in Byblos's evident political interest in the north. At the same time, the capture by Amurru of these agricultural lands was probably a serious economic loss (see already §5.4.6).

Beside war, natural events could also have affected agriculture in Byblos. In particular, it is possible that the drought that struck the Levant in the 13th century (Langgut et al. 2013) affected the Byblos area, although no evidence of that seems to be available.

Finally, the sea was an important resource, both for its natural products and as gate to international trade. Fishing was certainly practised. Murex, and therefore purple, is another possible resource obtained from the sea. There is no direct evidence for its production in the city – or Dunand did not recover any – but the purple industry is attested

in Late Bronze Age Ugarit and could have been present in Byblos as well (Curtis 1999, 21; Schaeffer 1951; see §5.6.5).

Many of these natural resources were unevenly distributed within the kingdom, so that their availability was influenced by changes in borders and territorial extent. In particular, as said, the area north of Batruna is suited for agriculture and has a long coast with good natural harbours. Forests were probably widespread,[4] and some trees were typical and unique of the area. The Cilician Fir, in particular, probably grew only north of the Kadisha Valley (§5.2.5.1). Controlling these northern areas, as Byblos seems to have done before the Amarna age (§5.2.5.1; 5.4.5; 5.4.6), was no doubt economically lucrative, whereas losing them, most likely during the war with Amurru, would have had a strong negative impact on the city's economy.

6.3.0.2 Regular trade and local industries

The timber industry was central to the Byblos economy. In Roman times the exploitation of the forest was regulated by the state (Dalix and Chaaya 2007–2008; Semaan 2015, 101, passim) and the evidence suggests that some similar regulation existed also in the Iron Age, when the Assyrian controlled the region (Semaan 2015, 97–8, 101). Although it is possible that some similar regulation existed in the Late Bronze, the evidence is lacking. Forests and trees needed to be taken care of, and although no explicit source attests them, it is likely that specialised lumberjacks and nurserymen existed in Iron Age, and therefore possibly in Bronze Age Levant (See Dalix and Chaaya 2007–2008, 240–3, for a discussion of some possible clues suggesting some form of management of the forests in the bible and in the Epic of Gilgamesh). Thureau-Dangin (1920, 29), for instance, presented a text mentioning some "*nukaribbu* of the Hittites" supplying some kind of nuts. In Mesopotamia the word *nukaribbu* primarily refers to people involved in the date cultivation (CAD 11ii.323–7), but as dates are not characteristic of the Hittite territory, it is likely that in this text the term refers to some kind of gardener or nurserymen attending some other kind of plant or tree. Something similar could have existed in Lebanon, to manage the local forests. Because of the total lack of any source, however, nothing can

[4] Mikesell 1969; Dalix and Chaaya 2007–2008; see also Pap. Anastasi I (19,2–4) with its description of thick forests covering the land of Magara, probably located north of Byblos (§5.6.1).

be said about their organization, their social status or the dynamics characterizing their activity or the transmission of their knowledge.

It seems that when the Egyptian armies were in the region, Egyptian forces took part in the timbering activities (§5.2.1, §5.2.3 and §5.2.5.1). The discovery of three Egyptian copper axes in Lebanon[5] dating to the Old Kingdom suggests that Egyptians could have had an active role in the timbering activities already during the Early Bronze Age (Semaan 2015, 100), but we do not know how they interacted with the local woodcutters.

Dunand found in the excavations of Byblos various bronze tools that could have been used by lumberjacks or carpenters, such as axes, adzes, drills, chisels, a gouge and a hammer (Deshayes 1960, 59, passim, Semaan 2015, 99–100). None of them, however, can be securely dated to the Late Bronze Age. Axes and ropes were certainly used to fell the trees in Lebanon, as it appears from Seti I's relief in Karnak (Meiggs 1982, 16, 331; Wachsmann 1998, 310; Bardinet 2008, 254–5; Semaan 2015, 100).

Lebanese archaeologists have identified ancient paths in the forests, but their date could not be established and it is impossible to say whether they were used during the Bronze Age or only in later periods (Semaan 2015, 102–6). Little is known also about the way logs were brought from the forests to the coast. It has been suggested that floating in rivers could have been used during spring, when the level of their waters was higher due to the rain and the melting of the snow on the mountains. As however Semaan (2015, 108–13, with bibliography) has argued, Lebanese rivers and narrow valleys often are not suited for such a transportation technique. By contrast, oxen were certainly used to pull the cut wood, as attested by the Gebel Barkal stele (§5.2.1) and by the later tale of Wenamun (Wenamun 2.43; Schipper 2005, 82; §5.7). We do not know however if they were used to descend the wood from the mountains – which would then imply the presence of some form of prepared road – or just for secondary activities.

The wood was either exported or used by the local carpenters to construct buildings and ships. Although no source is available to confirm it, it is likely that the timbering activities followed seasonal patterns. Trees were probably cut during winter, possibly brought down from the mountains in spring (if we assume that river were at least in part

[5]One from the area of the Nahr Ibrahim and 2 from Byblos (Deshayes 1960, I 245–7, II 103).

used as a transportation way). The logs were then exported during summer, the sailing season in the Eastern Mediterranean, although it is likely that this occurred months or even years after they were cut, as the wood had to be seasoned and dried (Semaan 2015, 101–2). We do not know where the ships transporting the logs were loaded, as it has been pointed out that the current port of Byblos is hardly big enough to harbour cargo ships, but there may have been another harbour in the bay south of the city (§2.2). Some timber could also have been fetched and loaded away from the city itself. During the reign of Thutmose III, in particular, the area of Ullassa with its timber industry and infrastructure could have been controlled and exploited by Byblos (§5.2.5.1).

Likewise, we know that Byblian carpenters built ships, but we do not know where the city's shipyards were. As discussed above (§5.2.5.1), the shipbuilding mentioned in the Gebel Barkal stele could have taken place near Ullassa, although some shipyard must have been present also near Byblos itself, perhaps in the hypothetical harbour south of the city.

We know nothing about the patterns of exploitation of the forests, but it is likely that the most accessible trees, i.e. those near big rivers, at lower altitudes and on the smoother foothills of Mt. Lebanon were exploited first and more intensely (Semaan 2015, 101). This considered, the Nahr Ibrahim Valley, near Byblos, and the Kadisha Valley, near Ullassa, sounds as ideal places for timbering activities. The control of these areas, and of the Kadisha Valley in particular, could have been one of the factors alimenting the hostility between Byblos and Ullassa and driving Byblos interest for those northern territories (§5.2.5.1).

Textiles were imported, exported, and produced locally. The distribution of spindle whorls points to the presence of production areas within the city, but it is not yet possible to put these objects into a precise chronological frame (§3.4). The Tale of Wenamun mentions textiles imported to the city (see below), while the text discussed in §5.6.4 attests that luxurious textiles from the city were appreciated in the Hittite empire. We do not know if these textiles were produced in Byblos or only modified, for example dyed, there, but it is remarkable that this is the only explicit mention of the city known from Hittite documents.

Information about imports to Byblos can be obtained both from archaeology and from written sources. Egyptian objects are archeologically well attested, and some types were fairly common. Scarabs, possibly used as seals or amulets are numerous (§3.3), while a few bullae[6] attest the presence of something sealed. Egyptian stone vessels are also abundant. However, since the numerous fragments found under Dunand have not been studied in detail, it is not yet possible to date them precisely, to assess their distribution, or to evaluate the ratio between imports from Egypt or other regions and local production. A few fragments inscribed with Egyptian royal names attest however that Egyptian-made stone vessels were imported during all of the main historical periods, including the New Kingdom, notably the reign of Ramses II (see §3.5 and §4.8.1). They could have contained cosmetics, medicines, perfumed oils and ointments, and perhaps even beer and wine in the largest ones. The vessels were luxurious and expensive commodities, and they hint at a highly lucrative trade (Sparks 1996; Sparks 2003).

Moreover, fragments of Mycenaean and Cypriot vessels, as well as a bronze figurine possibly from Byblos found in the sea in front of Sicily[7] show that the city was in contact with Cyprus and the Aegean world. Questions however remain about the nature and dynamics behind these western contacts.[8] Finally, the presence of non-Egpytian Late Bronze scarabs, possibly at least in part imported from the Southern Levant,[9] suggests, not surprisingly, that the city was in contact with this region, as well as probably with inland Syria. More information about interactions with these areas could perhaps be obtained from an analysis of the ceramic found on the site. Dunand's descriptions, however, are not detailed enough for such a study, and there has been no thorough analysis of the sherds from the excavations yet.

[6]Dunand II nr. 9417, 11676, undated (Boschloos 2011–2012, BYB584, BYB519) but both from the area of the Obelisk Temple.

[7]It has been suggested it was likely brought there by Mycenean traders - see Tusa 1973

[8]§3.2; §4.7.1. See also Giannakoulas (Giannakoulas 2013, 193–4) for the possibility that Byblos and other Levantine cities were exporting Egyptian stone vessels to the Aegean area, at least before the Late Bronze Age.

[9]See Boschloos 2011–2012: BYB 150 = no excavation number, BYB159 = Dunand no. I 1170, BYB229 = Dunand no. I 1425, BYB231 = Dunand no. I 1427, BYB237 = Dunand no. I 1571, BYB353 = Dunand no. II 6844, BYB355 = Dunand no. II 6846, BYB410 = Dunand no. II 7413, BYB437 = Dunand no. II 7772, with refs also to the excavation numbers, when present. See database and online supplement – cf. Appendix B.

Written sources are also informative about Byblos' imports. In particular, a Ugaritic tablet bears a list of textiles imported to Byblos (§5.6.5.1, RS 19.28), showing that the city was not only a production centre, but also a hub for their trade and exchange.

In the Tale of Wenamun, we read that the Egyptians paid for the wood with 4 *ṯb*-vessels of gold, 1 *kꜣkmn*-vessel, 5 *ṯb*-vessels of silver, 10 garments of royal linen, 10 veils of fine Upper Egyptian linen, 500 papyrus rolls (or "smooth cloths"), 500 ox-hides, 500 ropes, 20 sacks of lentils, and 30 baskets of fish (Wen. 2,39–41, Schipper 2005, 80–1). A few of these items need attention. The possible mention of papyrus rolls is significant: the basic Greek word for papyrus is βύβλος, which derives from the name of Byblos,[10] likely because in a relevant period the city played a central role in the trade in this material with Aegean regions. In view of this connection, one may wonder if also the Egyptian cloths mentioned in Wenamun would have been meant to stay in Byblos or rather were destined for re-export, especially if they were rare and high-quality items.

It is clear that Byblos was not only a source and arrival point for products and resources but also an intermediary hub where goods were redistributed to other parts of the commercial network. The Amarna letters confirm this. In EA 126:4–6 we read that the Pharaoh asked the king of Byblos for boxwood from Ugarit and Salhi. In EA 77:6–15, by contrast, Rib-Hadda claimed that he could not send copper and *š/sinnu* (probably ivory, possibly worked ivory)[11] to the Pharaoh (see §5.4.4). Since there is no native copper in the region of Byblos, Rib-Hadda was acting as a middle-man, first importing the metal from an unknown source, perhaps Cyprus, and then exporting it toward Egypt.

Finally, the city also exchanged knowledge and skills. Zeker-Baal, the king of Byblos in the tale of Wenamun, says it explicitly: "Thus craftsmanship came from it (Egypt) in order to reach the place where I am!" (Wen. 2,21, Schipper 2005, 73). A good example of this non-material and cultural trade is writing. Egyptian hieroglyphs are attested

[10] Or perhaps the other way round: it has been suggested, not very convincingly in my opinion, that the Greek name of the city could have been influenced by the word for papyrus, which was imported from there (Beekes 2010, 246–7). Be that as it may, the strong linguistic association in Greek between the word for papyrus and the name of Byblos is clear. See also Wachsmann 1998, 313

[11] Fragments of ivory were found also in the tomb of Ahiram (Montet 1928–1929, nos 876, 877; see Homsy 2009, 422), but we do not know if they date to the Late Bronze Age or have been introduced in the tomb later (see §4.8) and we do not know if the ivory was local or imported.

at Byblos from the Old Kingdom onward (Montet 1928–1929; 1962; 1964), and they probably played a role in the development of the so-called Byblos pseudo-hieroglyphic script (Dunand 1945, 171–3; Sznycer 1994). For its part, Byblos probably exported skills, especially in seamanship, shipbuilding, and carpentry. The existence of a temple of Ba'al and Astarte in Perunefer, the 18th dynasty main harbour and shipyards of Egypt, suggests the presence there of a Levantine community of carpenters and artisans building royal ships (Zayed 1987; Collombert and Coulon 2000, 217–23). Workers or sailors from Byblos could have been among them, especially in light of the text in Theban Tomb 143, which may imply that Byblian ships (and therefore Byblian crews) were involved in Egyptian expeditions to Punt (§5.2.4).

Moreover, in the Hebrew Bible, we read that "The craftsmen of Solomon and Hiram and workers from Byblos cut and prepared the timber and stone for the building of the temple" (1 Kings 5:18), while a poetic text in Ezekiel comparing the city of Tyre to a ship states that "Veteran craftsmen of Byblos were on board as shipwrights to caulk your seams" (Ezek. 27:9). The ship in the latter passage is described as being made of the best materials available for each of its parts, and therefore the fact that the carpenters are said to come from Byblos suggests that the city enjoyed international renown in this craft. These later passages could reflect practices that went back to the Late Bronze Age.

Whether the people in Perunefer were from Byblos or not they were likely from the Levant, and the presence of a cult of Ba'al and Astarte there clearly suggests that they moved to Egypt bringing at least some of their (in this case religious) traditions with them. Nothing sure can be said about their social status, within the Egyptian society, but they were certainly not slaves and rather, the presence of temple dedicated to their foreign gods could suggest that they enjoyed some privilege or special status. At the same time, their presence in Egypt certainly had an impact on the Egyptian society itself, and it is likely that such communities played a role in the introduction in Egypt of Levantine cultural elements. It has been suggested, for instance, that Perunefer played a role in the diffusion in Egypt of West-Semitic cults and mythemes after Thutmose III campaigns and in particular during Amenhotep II reign (Collombert and Coulon 2000, 217–9). There is no source to assess the role of Byblos in these dynamics, but considering its traditional

religious connections with Egypt as seat of the Hathor Lady of Byblos, it would not be surprising if the city played some role in them.

6.3.0.3 Exceptional exchanges: Egyptian royal expeditions

In addition to the ordinary commercial network described in the previous section, Byblos was reached by exceptional missions organized by the Pharaohs. These ventures are well attested both archaeologically and in written sources, and they appear to have occurred in all the main historical periods.[12] One such mission, mentioned both in royal and non-royal inscriptions, took place during the reign of Thutmose III (§5.2.1; §5.2.3; §5.2.5.2), and others are recorded for later kings, although they are usually said only to head toward Lebanon in general.[13] It is possible, even likely, that at least some of these later expeditions were directed toward Byblos, as suggested by the tale of Wenamun.

These expeditions probably stood out because of the kind, quantity, and quality of the wood imported, as well as in the scale (and revenue) of the transaction. It is possible that wood was regularly exported to Egypt also within the ordinary regional network (see §6.3.0.2), but it is likely that expeditions seeking flagpoles and wood for the bark of Amun and other furniture of the temple of Karnak had ritual connotations and therefore were outside the range of normal trade (Baines 2009). We do not know what Sennefri brought as "offerings" to the goddess of Byblos in his expedition during the reign of Thutmose III (§5.2.3), but in view of the importance of his request, the transaction must have been far above the average of exchanges in volume and value, and its impact on the economy of Byblos must thus have been significant, at least in the short term.

6.3.0.4 Other economic activities

Beside trade, Byblos was involved in, and sometimes the victim of, other kinds of economic activities. A document from Ugarit (§5.6.5.1, RS 18.25, lines 10–18) may show that Byblos was leasing ships to other coastal cities. The document is unique, and it is impossible to evaluate the economic impact of this practice.

[12] See Bardinet 2008, 193–306 for a discussion of all the attestations the use of Lebanese wood in Egyptian temples brought by expeditions from the Old Kingdom to the Ptolemaic period.

[13] See Bardinet 2008, 242–50 (attestations of later 18th dynasty kings), 251–75 (19th and 20th dynasty evidence).

It is also likely that Byblos levied taxes on trade and foreign goods reaching its harbours and the harbours of its dependent cities. Similar taxes are attested in Ugarit (Heltzer 1978, 130). Again, however, it is impossible to establish the economic scale of any such practice.

Providing services to the Egyptian overlords was another source of income for the city, primarily for its king. This is the case of the Amarna period king Rib-Hadda, who asks indirectly to be paid for helping an Egyptian envoy to enter Sumur (§5.4.5). Moreover, it is possible that at least during the Amarna period local rulers were involved – or attempted to be involved – in the administration and management of Egyptian possessions in the area (see §5.4.5). Since they were interested in undertaking this activity, they were probably making some kind of profit from it.

Byblos was probably rewarded also for its support to the Egyptian military activities. Perhaps at the time of Thutmose III Egypt rewarded the city by endorsing the expansion of its influence northward (see §5.2.5.1). And naturally, by gaining territory Byblos would have gained resources.

At the same time, Byblos was expected to pay tribute to Egypt. The Annals of Thutmose III record making harbours available and the payment of yearly *bꜣk*-contributions by the cities of Lebanon, probably including Byblos (§5.2.1; §5.2.5.1). Moreover, it has been convincingly argued (e.g. Pintore 1972; Pintore 1973; Frandsen 1979, 174–80; Liverani 1990b, passim; Murnane 2000, 103–4; Morris 2005, passim), that before the 19th dynasty the Levantine cities were probably also expected to support the Egyptian armies campaigning in the region strategically and economically. If the cities of the southern Lebanese coast submitted to the Egyptians with written treaties rather than being conquered by them, then the burden of the Egyptian domination could have been less heavy than for less collaborative polities (§5.2.5.1).

A final economic activity attested in the sources is piracy. In particular, in Amarna letters EA 113:14 and EA 114:15–20 Rib-Hadda accuses Yapah-Hadda of Beirut of acts of piracy against his ships and even his territory. Byblos is presented as the victim. There is no evidence that people from Byblos actively practised piracy, but this possibility cannot be excluded, and it would be surprising if they did not, especially in wartime and against

regional adversaries and enemies. The economic returns – or losses – deriving from piracy and its dynamics are impossible to estimate, but it is likely that the phenomenon, alongside brigandage on land roads, increased in periods of political instability.[14]

6.3.0.5 Byblos Economy - Summary

The Late Bronze Age economy of Byblos was more complex and diversified than can be appreciated from looking only at individual sources. The kingdom had at its disposal resources such as animal, agricultural, forest, and sea products. Many of these products were both used locally and exported. Timber was a major commercial asset, but it was not the only one. Moreover, the city did not only trade raw materials, but it also exported finished products such as textiles or ship components. Byblos was a transit node where incoming goods were redistributed to other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean commercial network. Knowledge and skills were also resources, and it is possible that Byblian craftsmen were employed abroad. The city's network was wide and diverse: it interacted with local, micro-regional political entities such as Ugarit, Tyre, or Yarimuta, with neighbouring regions such as Canaan and Cyprus, with macro-regional powers such as Hatti and Egypt, and with the relatively distant Mycenaean world. While under Egyptian domination, the city probably had to pay tribute to its overlords. Its loyalty, support, and services may, however, have won it rewards that made the domination economically less heavy to bear, or even lucrative. Furthermore, the intensification of international relations among major powers and the general geopolitical advance in the region that followed the creation of Thutmose III's empire led to a period of general peace and possible commercial prosperity for all the centres of the coast,[15] including Byblos.

[14] In general, for piracy in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean see Wachsmann 1998, 320–1.

[15] Although we do not have explicit sources for the years just after Thutmose III, the Amarna letters give us a glimpse of the regional economic landscape at the end of the dynasty. What appears is a vital and well developed commercial network where various goods such as natural resources and luxury items are exchanged among local actors as well as between major powers and minor political actors (see above §5.4.4). It is also interesting to observe the numerous examples of luxury goods belonging to the so-called "international style" found in Egypt in 18th dynasty contexts (M. H. Feldman 2006, 143–4). Although it is clear that this apparent relative "abundance" could be due to the accidents of preservations, and although it is possible that at least part of these luxurious goods were the result of plunder or tribute rather than trade, they hint to a period of general prosperity and general cultural interconnection.

Various aspects of Byblos economy and economic landscape, however, remain obscure. For instance, we know that the Hittites were importing textiles from Byblos (§5.6.4), but we do not know what Byblos obtained in exchange. The Hittites, however, controlled several resources that could be important for the city (such as copper, silver and gold – Bryce 1998, 27). Similar problems exist for many of the city's other attested trading connections. For instance, we have no evidence at all of trade with Mitanni and inner Syria in general, but clearly this is likely due to a gap in the evidence, rather than to a real lack of interactions. Similarly, we know that metals, especially copper, tin and bronze were one of the most important commodities exchanged in the regional network, and were traded in great quantities by ship, as attested by the Uluburun and other shipwrecks (Bass 1991; Pulak 1998; Pulak 2008; Galili et al. 2013; Goren 2013; Zangani 2016). Future analyses of the metal objects found in the city could shed some light on the issue, but for now the available evidence does not allow to properly assess Byblos' role in this trade.[16] There is also a chronological problem: it has to be borne in mind that the sources used above often come from different periods. Thus, the general picture that can be obtained from them is a conflation of fragments of information that may not be related with one another. Nevertheless, such conflation does give an idea of the complexity and dynamism of the economic panorama of Byblos.

This general picture, as it can be deduced from the sources discussed above, is summarized in fig. 6.1.

Defining the nature and form of these interactions in Byblos is difficult, as is the case for Late Bronze Age trade in the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole. The debate centres on two main points. First, while there is abundant evidence for trade based on a system of reciprocal gifts, the extent and role of trade of a more narrowly commercial nature remains unclear. Second, similarly, while it is clear that palaces and ruling elites had a crucial role in international exchanges, the extent and nature of private initiatives, as well as their development in the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age, is still much debated (Liverani 1979a; A. Sherratt and S. Sherratt 1991; Snodgrass 1991; Cline 1995; Routledge and McGeough 2009; K. McGeough 2015).

[16] For other examples of possible traded goods not attested in the sources see Wachsmann 1998, 313.

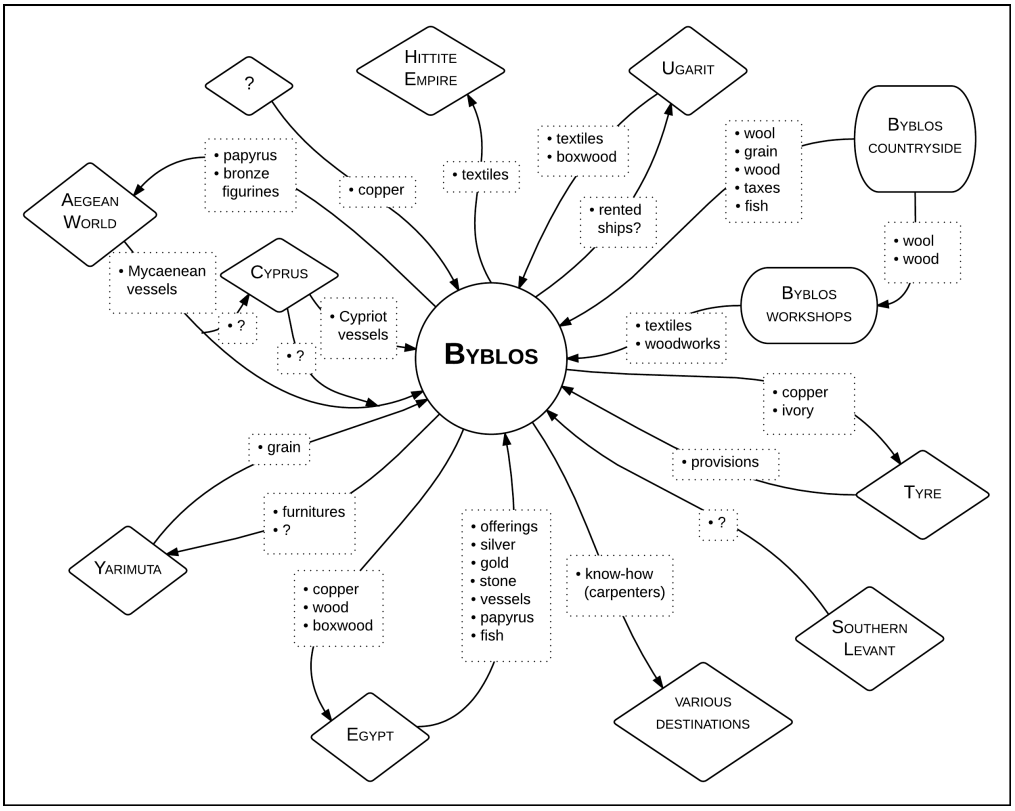


Figure 6.1: Diagram summarizing attested economic interactions of Byblos. Foreign actors are indicated by rhombi, while actors within the kingdom of Byblos are indicated with rounded squares.

The evidence from Byblos is too scattered to bring any decisive contribution to this debate, although future analyses of the excavated material could perhaps supply new data.[17] However, some observations that agree with what has been suggested so far, and perhaps even some new insights, can be proposed.

First, the king of Byblos was involved in the city's economic interactions, as is shown both by the Amarna letters (§5.4.4) and by a letter from Ugarit (§5.6.5). Similarly, various sources suggested that the Byblos ruling group traded within frameworks and narratives of gifts exchange and offerings, as it appears from both the Egyptian texts (§5.2.5.3) and the Amarna letters (§5.4.4, see also Liverani 2001, 135–54).

By contrast, private trade is not mentioned explicitly in the written sources. The abundance of Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery in necropolis K at Byblos suggests that the

[17]For instance, a chemical analyses of the various metal objects or a petrographic analyses of the pottery, combined with a study of their distribution across the city could yield information about their geographical origin and about the social groups that used them in Byblos.

wares and goods from these regions were not reserved exclusively to the palace. This agrees with what has been observed in other Levantine sites such as Ugarit or Sarepta and could point toward some form of private initiative in their trade (C. Bell 2005; C. Bell 2009; Routledge and McGeough 2009, 23–4). A system of redistribution stemming from the ruling group cannot, however, be excluded, and the absence of archaeological remains of the palace of Byblos prevents any assessment of the role of the court in these interactions and of the dynamics of circulation of these goods in the city.

The most significant element that emerges from the Byblos data, however, is the indirect evidence for the presence of a conception of international commercial trade outside any framework of reciprocal gifts. Such evidence consists in the claims of Rib-Hadda that in order to obtain food he and the people of Byblos were forced to give their sons and daughters and the furniture of their houses to the land of Yarimuta (EA 68:27–28, 74:11–17, 75:11–14, 81:38–41, 85:12–15, 90,36–39, 105:84–86, 112:26–30; see §yyy). Although such a claim is largely rhetorical and may not reflect a real exchange, at least in his extreme terms (Liverani 1974), the conception underlying such a statement is relevant here. Rib-Hadda is saying that in order to obtain vital basic goods the dire condition of the city forced his people[18] to give away something they cared about and were not planning to exchange. Such an economic interaction is different from the exchanges of luxury goods that are usually mentioned in the Amarna letters, and it cannot be interpreted as belonging within a system of reciprocal gifts. Rather, such a claim implies some conception of commercial trade (compare Snodgrass 1991, 15), because it implies a concept of trade based on obtaining as much as possible while giving as little as possible, and therefore of agreed price and “profit”. The "irrationality" highlighted by Liverani in the usual interactions discussed in the Amarna letters and other contemporary sources (Liverani

[18]Rib-Hadda’s phrasing in EA 85:12–15 could suggest a private initiative on the part of his subjects, but the mechanisms involved could have been different, so that, for instance, he could have dealt with Yarimuta in the name of his subjects. In various letters he talks about “our sons and daughters” (EA 68:27–28, 74:11–17, 75:11–14, 90,36–39), while in EA 105:84–86 he claims that “Yapah-Hadda does not let my ships [in]to Yarimuta”, and in EA 112:26–30 that “everything of] mine [is gon]e through being sol[d i]n the land of Yarimuta for provisions to keep me alive”. This implies that he was personally involved in the trade with Yarimuta, and thus might exclude that his subjects were acting independently and privately.

1979a) is not mentioned and can hardly be imagined in the situation described by Rib-Hadda. It is also hard to imagine that Rib-Hadda and the people of Byblos would have sent their goods – whether young people and furniture or something rhetorically less spectacular – to Yarimuta in exchange for unspecified or vaguely defined amounts of merchandise, as seems often to have been the case within the system of reciprocal gifts (Snodgrass 1991, 16–7).

These observations may suggest that the system of reciprocal gifts can work so long as the societies involved are exchanging luxurious or non-primary items and have a sufficiency or even a surplus of basic goods that assures them a relative self-sufficiency. However, where basic goods are needed – not just desired –,[19] and other ways of acquiring them are not available,[20] the system of exchanges becomes unbalanced, because the main goal of trade shifts away from maintaining social relations through the exchange of goods (Routledge and McGeough 2009, 26) and rather focuses on the acquisition of necessities itself.

These considerations may explain why commercial trade is so difficult to identify in available Late Bronze age sources: what we see in them is usually the social interactions and luxurious exchanges of societies and actors who were economically self-sufficient, or claimed to be so because of the ideological conventions and narratives required by their status (Snodgrass 1991, 16–7; Cline 1995; Liverani 2001, 155–9). By contrast, commercial trade in basic goods stems from a need and hence makes evident a weakness, and weakness has little place in the ideological narratives of the interactions attested in the Amarna letters and comparable sources. Such a trade does, however, appear in Rib-Hadda's letters, which are rather exceptional in character: in contrast with other correspondents of the Pharaohs, he does not present himself as a strong ruler who asks

[19] It is likely that basic goods, such as food or natural resources, were also exchanged within the system of reciprocal gifts, although different "registers" of trade, implicitly or explicitly defining which goods could be exchanged with what, could have existed. The fact however that basic goods were exchanged, does not necessarily imply that they were needed: for instance food could have been exchanged as gift even in contexts where there was no scarcity of it. Thus, in such cases the exchange of a *per se* basic item such as food can actually also be considered as an exchange of non-primary goods, because the actors involved may desire it, but are not necessarily in need for it.

[20] For example because the actor is not in the condition or position to use violence, for instance in the form of piracy or war and looting, to acquire what is needed.

for gifts but does not need anything. Instead, he writes to the Pharaoh as a besieged, weak ruler in need of everything, and within this narrative he finds it acceptable to talk about this kind of commercial trade.

It thus appears that the concept of commercial trade was present in Byblos, and that it emerges in the sources because of the real or rhetorical hardship deriving from the war with Amurru. Similar dynamics could have taken place in other centres of the coast. It could thus be worth reassessing the evidence from other sites from a perspective that takes into consideration the general state of need – or lack thereof – of the various actors, as this could reveal new insights into the role of commercial trade in the Late Bronze Age and its elusiveness in the available sources. The same approach could produce new insights on the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age. It has often been observed that a major distinction between the two periods is the weakening or disappearance of the system of reciprocal gifts and the emergence of commercial, profit-based trade (e.g. C. Bell 2009 with refs). One may wonder whether the troubles of the end of the Late Bronze Age created a condition of need that could in turn have worked as a catalyst in the transition between these two trade systems. Such a possibility would need further research and is beyond the scope of this thesis.

6.4 Society in Byblos

Various actors of Byblos' society emerge from the texts and archaeological evidence. A king and a royal family[21] are attested, as well as cultic personnel managing the temples,[22] soldiers and mercenaries,[23] peasantry,[24] carpenters,[25] and people producing textiles.[26] Other social groups, such as merchants, scribes and administrators must have existed,

[21] See §5.4.6 for discussion, especially about Rib-Hadda's brother and son, and EA 136:8–15 for a reference to the queen and other members of the royal family being in disagreement with the king.

[22] §5.4.2 – see EA 83:51–57, EA 84:42–44, EA 85:84–86.

[23] §5.4.5 – see EA 81:16 EA 122:35, EA 123:15, EA 131:6–14.

[24] §5.4.5 – see EA 77:36–37, EA 81:33, EA 114:21–22, EA 117:90, EA 118:23, 37, EA 125:27, 34–35, EA 130:42.

[25] §5.2.1, §6.3.0.2.

[26] §3.4, §5.6.4, §6.3.0.2.

but no source mentions them. All these groups interacted, had specific roles, and performed distinct activities within the city. Available sources are usually silent about these functions and interactions, which therefore cannot be discussed in detail.

Something can be said only about the economic and politico-diplomatic scenes in the city. The Amarna letters and the documents from Ugarit show that it was the king and his court who entertained diplomatic relations both with international powers like Egypt (Amarna letters: §5.4) and with other local political entities (documents from Ugarit: §5.6.5).

While we know nothing specific about the organization of the economic scene in the city, various actors must have been involved in it. The king was one of them, as is shown by scattered references to economic transactions in the Amarna letters of Rib-Hadda (§5.4.4). Then there was the temple, or the temples. Both the Egyptian sources (§5.2.3; §5.2.5.2) and the archaeological evidence (§4.6) point to an involvement of the temple of the Lady of Byblos in interactions with Egypt since the Old Kingdom. Andres Diego Espinel (2002) has suggested that the goddess could have functioned as a cultural bridge facilitating these interactions and exchanges. The archaeological evidence, as well as some details in the Amarna letters, suggest that at least during the New Kingdom the situation was more complex. In particular, the following evidence should be considered:

- Egyptian objects are attested in the temple of the Lady of Byblos, but they are present also in other sanctuaries of the city. In particular, remarkable numbers of New Kingdom objects were found in the area of the Obelisk Temple (§4.4, in particular §4.4.3-4.4.7)
- As discussed in §3.3.1, pre-New Kingdom scarabs and 18th dynasty scarabs tend to be found in groups and are concentrated in or around temples. Later scarabs, by contrast, are found in isolation and much more scattered around the site.
- In the Amarna letters, the Pharaoh traded for goods with the king of Byblos without mentioning the temple (§5.4.4).
- Mycenaean sherds are found scattered across the city but not in the temples. They are also abundant in the tombs of necropolis K (§3.2, §4.7.1).

This evidence points to a relatively complex range of interactions both with the international partners of the city and among its internal actors themselves. It is clear that

the temples of Byblos played a role in the interactions with Egypt; contrary to what the Egyptian sources seem to suggest, however, not only the temple of the Lady benefited from these connections. The amount of Egyptian material found in other sanctuaries like the Obelisk Temple shows that they participated in this economic exchanges, although it is impossible to say whether they interacted directly with the Egyptians or whether they belonged to a redistribution network which had its centre in some other institutions of the city, for instance in the temple of the Lady or in the royal palace.

The distribution patterns of the scarabs seem to suggest that the way Egyptian goods were distributed within the city changed at some point between the end of the 18th dynasty and the 20th dynasty (§3.3.1).

In a first phase, the temples were involved in the exchanges with Egypt although, at least in the Amarna period, this relation also included the king of Byblos.[27] Indeed, there is no direct evidence from the Amarna period for interactions between Egypt and the temples of Byblos, although the king of the city knew that Egyptian goods were deposited in them (§5.4.2). Temples seem to have been extraneous to trade with the Aegean, at least as far as it can be inferred by the ceramic evidence. The distribution of Aegean sherds across the city but not in the area of the temples, and their relative abundance in Necropolis K could suggest that trade in them was mainly a civil/royal affair not related to the temples. This can be argued especially for craters and open vessels in general, which were likely imported for their intrinsic value (§3.2). With closed vessels, instead, one cannot also exclude that it was the content, rather than the vessel itself, that was the object of the exchange (§3.2). As a consequence, one cannot exclude that the contents of the closed vessels were used in the temples in such a way that no ceramic evidence would be present there.

This considered, what emerges is thus a complex pattern in which some partners and transactions belonged in a civil/royal frame, while others went through the temple of the Lady of Byblos and, possibly, the other sanctuaries. Possibly some partners or some exchanges involving some categories of goods, notably those related with the

[27] §5.4.4; the involvement of the "chief of Lebanon" in the supplying of wood for the Pharaoh is mentioned also at the time of Thutmose III, e.g. in the Gebel Barkal stele (§5.2.1). The king of Byblos is not explicitly singled out, but it is reasonable to assume he was one of them.

Aegean, favoured the first frame. Egypt, however, had exchanges with both the king and the temple(s), although the relation with the latter may have changed after the 18th dynasty. The written sources suggest that within the ordinary regional network Egypt interacted with the king, while temples were relevant to royal expeditions such as that led by Sennefri's, at least until the end of the 18th dynasty.

The change that seems to have occurred after the 18th dynasty could thus relate mainly to some modifications in the dynamics driving royal expeditions. A few clues seem to support this possibility. First, although there were expeditions to Byblos after the time of Thutmose III (see above), none was celebrated in a comparable way to that of this king. Indeed, very often no explicit mention exists for later expeditions, and in most cases we can only infer their existence from records of the remaking of temple flagpoles and of the bark of Amun with timber from Lebanon (Bardinet 2008, passim). Obviously, random factors can affect the survival of royal inscriptions, and this could have played a role in the lack of explicit attestations of later expeditions. The fact however that many attestations from many later kings of the use of the products obtained from such expeditions do exist (Bardinet 2008, passim) could at least in part rule out the possibility that this lack of explicit specific records about the mission themselves is entirely due just to the accidents of preservation.

Three statues of Sheshonq I, Osorkon I and Osorkon II found in Byblos in the area of the temple of the Lady are also worthy of attention (Montet 1928–1929, 49–59; Dunand 1939, 115–7 – see §4.3). These statues were probably donated by the Pharaoh in connection with some official exchange. What is noteworthy, however, is that nothing in them suggests that they were made to be offered by the Egyptians to the Lady of Byblos. Rather, they bear two clearly secondary Phoenician inscriptions affirming that it is the kings of Byblos who dedicated them to the goddess.[28] It thus seems that these 22nd dynasty Pharaohs interacted with the kings of Byblos rather than with the temple of the Lady, and the involvement of the goddess was a successive and local matter. This pattern contrasts with that of earlier periods, when the Egyptians themselves dedicated objects

[28]Montet 1928–1929, 49–59. It is noteworthy that both the Phoenician inscriptions ask the Lady of Byblos for more years of life for the kings, which has an exact parallel in what Wenamun offers to king Zeker-Ba'al (Wen. 2,57–58), Schipper 2005, 88–9.

and offerings to the Lady of Byblos.[29] Finally, it is worth noting that in the Tale of Wenamun the Egyptian envoy negotiates for the wood for the royal bark only with the king of Byblos, and there is no mention of the Lady of Byblos or of any other temple. This is in contrast with the perceivable presence of the goddess in both the accounts of Thutmose III's expedition (namely in the Gebel Barkal stele and in Sennefri's biography §5.2.1, §5.2.3 – see also Baines 2009).

These observations are not in themselves decisive and could have various explanations. For instance, one could argue that the evidence is affected by literary factors, such as differences in the genres and purposes of texts or images. In combination, however, they all point in the same direction, suggesting a change in the dynamics regulating royal expeditions. Ideological factors, and in particular a change in the Egyptian ideological narrative about the cosmographic structure of the world could have been crucial in this development, as discussed in the following paragraph.

6.5 Ideology

6.5.0.1 The Lady of Byblos

The Lady of Byblos is the most recurrent character in the history of the city. The goddess is attested both in the city and in Egyptian sources since the Early Bronze Age, and she is prominent also during the Late Bronze Age. Since the Old Kingdom she was associated with Hathor and venerated by the Egyptians, and she was still so during the 18th and 19th dynasties. Works in her temple in the city were sponsored by Thutmose III and Ramses II, as attested by archaeological evidence and written sources (§5.2.2; §3.5; §4.5). A 19th dynasty statue probably from Deir El-Medina (§5.6.3) and a Ramessid papyrus with magic spells (§5.6.2) mentioning her show that she was also known in Egyptian non-royal contexts as well.

During the 18th dynasty her temple, and possibly other temples in the city, played a role in the politico-economic relations with the Egyptian monarchy, as suggested by the Gebel Barkal stele (§5.2.1), the biography of Sennefri (§5.2.3), the statue of Djehuty

[29] See §5.2.3 and §5.2.5.2 where Sennefri's offering possibly to the goddess are discussed, or the pre-New Kingdom objects found by Dunand and Montet that bear dedicatory inscriptions (Helck 1994; Scandone Matthiae 1994).

(§3.5) and some passages of the Amarna letters mentioning Egyptian goods in the city's temples (§5.4.2).

As suggested by Diego Espinel (2002) in relation with the Old Kingdom, in the 18th dynasty the temple was probably used as a religious and cultural bridge in economic exchanges between the city and Egypt. In particular, making offerings to the temple(s) of the city allowed the Egyptian kings to ideologically legitimize their trade with a polity of inferior status.

Within this ideological narrative, the goddess of the city replaced the local ruler as the Egyptian king's economic partner (Liverani 2001, 168–9, 171–2 and passim), and since within the official narrative the Egyptian king was acting in the name of the Egyptian gods,[30] exchanging goods with the goddess of Byblos and possibly other gods of the city was ideologically acceptable. The Egyptian goods delivered to Byblos in exchange for its resources were thus framed as offerings to the goddess, while the resources of Byblos were gifts to Egypt from the goddess or other deities such as Amun (in the Gebel Barkal stele). The temple of the goddess in the city and other cult places were crucial for this narrative, because they physically received these offerings (§4.3; §4.4.7; §4.5). Local rulers, including the king of Byblos, were presented not as protagonists in these interactions but as simple executants who provided the resources in the name of the god(s) and according to their will, as is stated for instance in the Gebel Barkal stele. At the same time, the biography of Minmose (§5.2.2) suggests that the temple of the goddess in Byblos could have been considered as "Egyptian". Such a perception of the temple introduces an important ideological distinction between the resources obtained from Byblos and the goods the Egyptians provided in exchange. Ideologically, in an Egyptian perspective, resources from Byblos were "foreign" products brought to Egypt by foreign leaders according to the will of Egyptian gods. By contrast, goods from Egypt would be pious donations within an Egyptian system, involving only Egyptian actors, whether real – the king – or ideologically framed – the temples in Byblos and the gods of the city – ones. This ideological framework was only relevant for and only applied to official missions of the Egyptian king. Although there is virtually no direct evidence

[30]Since, for instance, the wood was meant for the barque of Amun and the flagpoles for his temple.

about regular trade between Egypt and Byblos and the Levantine coast, it can be assumed that it did occur and it is more than likely that it was set within more explicit narratives.

It is very likely that during the 18th dynasty the kings of Byblos were aware of this Egyptian royal ideological framework and at least partly conformed with their conventions. Such an awareness seems to underlie some of the rhetoric of Rib-Hadda, the king of Byblos during the Amarna period. Liverani (1974) and Pryke (2010), for example, have observed that Rib-Hadda's letters are built around recurrent ideas and rhetorical themes, including the goddess and issues related with her (§5.4.2). For instance, these letters are characterized by the very frequent addition of the "blessings of the lady of Gubla", and occasionally of other gods including Amun, to his greetings to the Pharaoh and the Egyptian officers. Because contemporary letters sent by Rib-Hadda to other kings are not known, it is impossible to say if this was rhetorical device reserved to the Egyptian correspondence or if it was a general epistolary practice. Such blessings, however, seem to be absent in the only later letter from Byblos found in Ugarit (§5.6.5.1, RS 18.134). Perhaps more significant, however, are Rib-Hadda's attempts to support his requests to the Egyptian king by reminding him of the many Egyptian goods in the city temples or by suggesting that the Lady of Byblos was among the deities who appointed him to the throne. The messages of the priestess of the goddess mentioned in some of his letters could also be relevant here (see §5.4.2). The aim of these allusions seems to be to attract the attention of his Egyptian interlocutors to the centrality of the Goddess to the city and to the long tradition of Egyptian veneration of her. Such a rhetoric is in harmony with the ideological narrative framework about exchanges described above and could thus have been fruitful language to interact with 18th dynasty kings, at least until the Amarna period. Although we have no idea about how the letters of Rib-Hadda were perceived in Egypt, it is easy to imagine that constantly referring to the Lady of Byblos or even to Amun (e.g. EA 71:4, 77:3, 86:3, 87:5, 95:3) was hardly the ideal way to attract the sympathy of Akhenaton and his reformist court. Rib-Hadda's use of such rhetoric may suggest that he was not aware of, or did not fully understand, the events taking place in Egypt. Such a miscalculation may have come at a price and have been one factor in the apparent lack of Egyptian support to Rib-Hadda in his wars against Amurru.

There is no evidence for the evolution of this ideological framework after the Amarna period. As I argue elsewhere and discuss below, some clues suggest that the perception of Byblos within Egyptian ideological narratives changed and the city lost some of its prestige (Kilani 2016b; §6.5.0.2 below). This in turn could have affected its interactions with Egypt and its geopolitical position in the region.

The Egyptians, however, continued to make devotions to the goddess, and through her the city maintained a religious renown also in later periods. Both written sources and archaeological evidence show that in the reign of Ramses II the Egyptians still worshipped the goddess in Egypt and in Byblos (§4.5; §5.6.1; §5.6.2; §5.6.3).

The evidence from this period, however, points to a purely religious attention to the goddess: there is no evidence for her presence in Egyptian ideological narratives of interaction with the Levant. It is thus possible that in the 19th dynasty her, and her temple's, economic role in relations with Egypt may have been in decline. Such a scenario would agree with the picture emerging from later evidence. In the tale of Wenamun the goddess of Byblos is not mentioned, and the protagonist bargains directly with the ruler of Byblos (Liverani 2001, 170–5; Schipper 2005). Naturally, the tale is a literary composition and cannot be taken at face value as ideological narratives could and probably did underlie it (see e.g. Baines 1999, 2009; Sass 2002). It is noteworthy, however, that the ideological narrative about the role of the goddess in the trade with the city evident in the 18th dynasty sources was clearly not one of them.

Nevertheless, the goddess did maintain some renown and religious authority in this later period, while her characteristics changed. Until the New Kingdom only Hathor is attested as Egyptian equivalent of the Lady of Byblos, while from the early 1st millennium Isis also started to be associated with her (Hollis 2009). At the same time, Isis began to assume a predominant position in Egypt (Münster 1968; LÄ III, 186–203). The two developments are likely related, and they may also be connected with the prominence of the cult of Adonis in the city and its association with Osiris attested in classical times (Servais-Soyez 1977, 1983; Griffiths 1980, 28–34; Lemaire 1986). The emergence of the association with Isis is probably a reflex of changes in Egypt, a way of accommodating ancient links between Egypt and the goddess of the city within this altered religious

reality. These developments, however, belong to the Iron Age and therefore they are beyond the scope of my research.

6.5.0.2 Byblos and the Egyptian ideological frames

In addition to the special relation connecting Egypt with its goddess (§6.5.0.1), Byblos was integrated into other Egyptian ideological frameworks. These frameworks changed over time, thus affecting the Egyptian perceptions of and interactions with the city and the city itself. I have discussed these aspects in an article whose main arguments I summarize in the remaining part of this section.[31]

First, in order to understand these dynamics, two ideological concepts have to be introduced. The first is the Egyptian cosmographic narrative. As in many societies, Egyptians had a well-organized geographical narrative, or cosmography, describing the structure of the world around them. That cosmography was composed of concentric layers with different characteristics. At the centre was Egypt, which was inherently positive. Just beyond Egypt itself were *ḫ3swt*, "foreign lands" inhabited by *ḫ3stYw*, "foreigners" who were conceived ideologically as chaotic, barbarian, negative. The limits between Egypt and the *ḫ3swt* were delimited by the *t3š(w)*, "frontier(s)", of Egypt. Beyond the *ḫ3swt*, there were instances of *t3 nṯr*, "God's Land", namely another group of foreign countries that had positive connotations. They were sources of rare and precious goods (often referred to as *bj(3)w* or *bj(3)ywt*, "wonders", "marvels"), were inhabited by friendly foreigners, and were often associated with Hathor. *ḫ3swt* and God's Land do not seem to be divided by any defined border. By contrast, beyond the God's Land were the edges of the world (*pḥww/pḥwy* "ends", ḏrw "ends", "limits" etc.), and beyond them cosmic darkness and the world of the gods. This cosmographic narrative is fully identifiable in Middle Kingdom sources, but its origins probably go back at least to the Old Kingdom. Two real geographical entities appear to have been archetypes of this idealized God's Land. One was Punt, in the south, the other Byblos, in the north. As biographical texts show, Punt and Byblos stood in a positive complementary geographical opposition and enjoyed a privileged position within the Egyptian geographical imaginary at least since

[31] Kilani 2016b, with refs; included here as appendix D. Note that this section is essentially a summary of the article, and therefore only references not present there are mentioned here.

the Old Kingdom. A second conception that has to be taken into account is the royal duty of *swsḫ tȝš(w)*, "to extend the border(s)" of Egypt. This concept is attested already in the sources of the Middle Kingdom, and was an ideologically crucial task for the king in its royal function.

Until the New Kingdom, these two conceptions seem to have been relatively distinct and independent. In the 18th dynasty, however, they became combined and a new concept and aim for the king emerged: "extending the borders up to the limits of the world".[32] The first king attested as claiming to have accomplished such a deed is Thutmose I, after being the first Pharaoh to have marched as far upstream as Kurgus and as far north as the Euphrates.

Hatshepsut chose a different approach, and rather than organizing far-flung military campaigns, she commissioned an expedition to Punt, a region that enjoyed a special place in the Egyptian imaginary as a God's Land located at the limits of the world. Her expedition was therefore not just a commercial venture; it was a divinely ordained mission aiming at extending her authority to the limits of the world, as we read in an inscription in her temple at Deir El-Bahri: "They (the gods) will set your frontier as far as the breadth of the sky, as far as the limits of total darkness" (*Urk.* IV 248.16–17). The mission was successful, and this exploit enabled her to claim on her later obelisks that "he (Amun) made my frontier as far as the limits of heaven, so that what the sun-disc encircles labours for me" (*Urk.* IV 368.11–12) and that "my southern frontier is as far as the shores of Punt, [the … being in my f]ist; the eastern frontier is as far as the limits of Asia, the Mentyw of Asia being in my fist" (*Urk.* IV 372.5–8).

Then it was the turn of Thutmose III. Like Thutmose I, he marched north to the Euphrates and as far south as Kurgus, and in both places he left an inscription beside that of his predecessor. Moreover, he organized an expedition to the God's Land of Byblos (§5.2.1, §5.2.3) which is a perfect ideological counterpart to Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt (see §5.2.5.3). As with Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt, that of Thutmose III to Byblos was not only economic but also a religious and ideological mission aiming to extend the king's authority symbolically as far as the God's Land and the limits of the

[32]This "world" was perhaps as defined in and by previous narratives; discussion of the point, however, is beyond the scope of this thesis.

world. Like his predecessors, also Thutmose III felt entitled to claim to have extended his dominion from the southern limits of the world to the pillars of the sky in the north, over all that the sun encircles (see Kilani 2016b, 79 for examples).

However, Thutmose III's accomplishments, especially those in the north, were different from those of his predecessors. Thutmose I reached Lebanon and the Northern Levant, but he did not annex those regions to the Egyptian realm. Similarly, Hatshepsut's expedition did reach Punt, but she never had authority over it. As observed by Liverani (2001, 25), real conquest or annexation were not indispensable: in order to claim control over remote regions, and therefore over the world as a whole, it was enough to show or claim that the king and his armies could reach them if he wished to do so. Moreover, the lack of effective Egyptian control may have allowed these places to maintain their semi-mythical aura within the Egyptian imaginary, perpetuating the idea that, as the farthest one could reach, they were close to the limits of the world. Thutmose III, however, not only reached the Northern Levant but also conquered much of it and annexed it to his growing empire, truly extending the *t3š(w)* of Egypt to the God's land of Byblos and beyond. What he found there were not the "limits of world" of the traditional cosmographic narrative but other territories and powerful states. These newly attained polities, although not completely unknown, were now a relatively close reality that had to be acknowledged and could no longer be relegated to a position at (or beyond) the limits of the main narrative. This new geographical reality became increasingly distanced from the traditional narrative described above, leading, I suggest, to a paradigm shift.

The increasing disparity between ideal geographical narratives and knowledge in a period of expansion and exploration is not unique to Thutmose III's Egypt but is attested in different societies and historical periods. Usually, two strategies have been adopted to deal with the resulting contrasts and paradoxes. The first is to readjust the ideological framework around the new geographical knowledge, either by extending its limits beyond the new reality or by accommodating the new entities within it (Kilani 2016b, 80–1, with examples). The second possibility is to abandon the old paradigm and replace it with a new cosmographic narrative, or with a more pragmatic conception of geography as a whole (Kilani 2016b, 80–1, with examples).

In Egypt both strategies seem to have been adopted, at least at first. With Thutmose III's conquests in the northern Levant, Egypt established diplomatic contacts with imperial powers including the Hittite and Mitanni empires, as well as Babylonia. The existence of these political entities, or rather the need to acknowledge their presence – since the Egyptians probably already knew of their existence –, undermined Egypt's centrality and political uniqueness in the old geographical narrative. Egypt had had contacts with, and some knowledge of, the northern regions in earlier periods. Not until Thutmose III, however, did these distant territories and their inhabitants became real neighbours, belonging to an ordinary reality that had to be acknowledged and engaged with (Liverani 2001, 200–2; Liverani 2002; Zaccagnini 2002; see Kilani 2016b, 83).

Some people must have realized that this was so, and from the end of the reign of Thutmose III the Pharaohs engaged with the international scene in a way that demonstrates their recognition and adoption of a different, polycentric, geographical paradigm. This change appears most clearly in the Egyptian involvement in the diplomatic life of the Near East, as attested by diplomatic treaties and the implicit recognition of parity and of hierarchies of states in diplomatic correspondence attested in the Amarna letters (e.g. Liverani 2002). It is very likely that international diplomatic exchanges existed also earlier. The evidence from the New Kingdom, however, shows a developed and complex system, involving elements that would have been hard to reconcile with the old cosmographic narrative. The increasing acceptance and adoption of foreign cultural elements in Egyptian culture and society hint that such changes were widespread (Kilani 2016b, 82–3, with refs and discussion).

All these points suggest that on economic, administrative, political, and diplomatic levels, Egyptians were pragmatically aware of the limits of the traditional Egyptocentric paradigm; having set it aside, they integrated themselves into a more polycentric macro-regional framework. Although Thutmose III's campaigns could have been a catalyst, this shift was not sudden and immediate but gradual. The older paradigm survived in royal display and narrative, with the traditional model adapted to new geopolitical knowledge and realities. Thus, in royal and official monuments, these new neighbouring powers

ended up being depicted as the traditional, inherently weak, dangerous and chaotic foreign polities encircling Egypt, whether they were in fact enemies or allies.

Such paradigm shifts affected Byblos' position within the Egyptian geographical imaginary, in turn affecting overall the relations and interactions between the city and Egypt (Kilani 2016b, 84–5). Within the old cosmographic framework, Byblos enjoyed the privileged status of a "God's Land" at the edge of the acknowledged world, a status that played a role in the development of its interactions with Egypt, bringing prestige as well as political and economic advantages. In particular, until the time of Thutmose III, Byblos was depicted as a distant, exotic, but friendly city, renowned for its association with Hathor and for its precious and rare products.

However, and in contrast with Punt, which maintained its mythical connotations also in later periods, perhaps in part because it was never conquered, after Thutmose III's conquests Byblos' status in the Egyptian imaginary probably changed, possibly radically: the city, now a vassal within the Egyptian realm, could no longer play the role of a land of marvels at the edge of the world and lost its aura of exoticism and remoteness. A trace of this change could be seen, for instance, in the fact that the emphasis on the expedition to Byblos in sources of the reign of Thutmose III continues the tradition of previous centuries but is in striking contrast with the absence of any later comparable royal or non-royal account. This could be due to the accidents of preservation, but it could also suggest that, after Thutmose III, reaching the city was not perceived as an exceptional deed any longer. Moreover, although the city probably continued to be a source for specific goods, it was no longer the only one or the main one: the Egyptian commercial network in the Levant had expanded greatly, and Byblos was now one of many coastal cities and polities – some farther north – that were controlled by Egypt, or were in regular contact with it.

As seen above, a change can perhaps be observed also in the Egyptian perception of the Lady of Byblos, who gradually passed from being a form of Hathor to being identified with Isis in the earlier first millennium BC. In view of Hathor's association with the "God's Land", this change is remarkable as it demonstrated that the mythological connections of the city had been modified within the Egyptian imaginary. Since a similar shift from Hathor to Isis happened in Egypt too, the development in Byblos could

represent an attempt to reinterpret within a new cosmographic framework the traditional knowledge that a very ancient Egyptian goddess dwelt in the city.

The final outcome of this process can perhaps be seen in the tale of Wenamun. The Byblos depicted in the tale is very different from that of the time of Thutmose and before. Although the city is presented as a hub for trade in timber, neither Hathor nor a local "Lady of Byblos" is mentioned, and the Egyptian expedition does not bring offerings for the latter's temple. The Byblian king is aware of and acknowledges its long tradition of interactions with Egypt, but he does not seem to attach any special prestige to it (2.19–22; Schipper 2005, 72–3). Although Byblos is the destination of Wenamun's expedition, it is not the only Levantine scene of the narrative. It is Wenamun's goal but not the final leg of his odyssey or the limit of the tale's world: the protagonist's misadventures continue with his being wrecked on Cyprus. Byblos is no longer a "God's Land" at the edge of the world; if anything, to judge from the few surviving lines of the Cyprus episode (2.74–83; Schipper 2005, 97–101), it is the island, rather than Byblos, that presents features of an exotic, mysterious, but positively connoted land. This passage, however, is incomplete and too short for any conclusion to be drawn from it without more detailed analysis (Kilani 2016b, 85).

Byblos seems to have enjoyed short periods of revival after the 18th dynasty, probably connected with some of the other economic or strategic factors described in this thesis (§6.2, §6.3, §6.4). However, its status within the Egyptian geographical imaginary seems to have radically changed: its ancient prestige and favoured position as a land at the edge of the world were gone.

6.6 Byblos in the Late Bronze Age

6.6.1 A descriptive model – introduction

In this section I propose a descriptive model to coherently illustrate Byblos' interactions and evolution during the Late Bronze Age.

Theories and models are common tools both in social sciences (e.g. Berberoglu 2005; D. C. Bell 2009; Jaccard and Jacoby 2010) and in some historical disciplines, in

particular pre- and protohistoric archaeology (e.g. Trigger 2006; Johnson 2010; Hodder 2012). Various typologies of models exist, and they have been and are used to investigate various aspects of present and past human societies (Jaccard and Jacoby 2010, 3). Often, theoretical models are used to conceptualize, understand and even predict phenomena and events, that is not only to illustrate what happens, but also to suggest and identify recurrent patterns and trends and to suggest a theoretical interpretative key to suggest how and even why a certain phenomenon takes place in general, beyond the specific instance under study (Jaccard and Jacoby 2010, 3, 28–9).

The scope of my model is far less ambitious, as its primary (albeit not exclusive) aim is descriptive, rather than interpretative or predictive. Various reasons have dictated this choice, the most important being that the evidence from and about the city can hardly be used in its raw form to build general and generalized theories. Prehistoric archaeologists, for instance, use theoretical models to infer information about the socio-cultural structures and their developments in contexts without written sources. To achieve this, they rely on numerous data ideally obtained with various highly specific scientific analyses (see for instance the various scientific analyses used by (Earle and Kristiansen 2010) because, as Renfrew stated, theories "can be of practical use to the archaeologist only if they allow him to seek and find (or disconfirm) patterns among real data" (Renfrew 1975, 38). This however is an essentially impossible task with the archaeological evidence from Byblos in its current state. For instance, no model about the socio-economic role of husbandry in the city and on the territory of the kingdom can be built on the basis of the remains of domesticated animals, simply because no animal bone has been collected during the excavations (see Breniquet and Michel 2014, in particular 52–78, 202–31 for discussion of some such theoretical models applied to husbandry and wool production in the ancient Middle East). Similarly, no "biography of objects" (Gosden and Marshall 1999; Earle and Kristiansen 2010, 11) can be obtained for, for instance, the swords found in the city, and therefore no model of their "life" and socio-economic chains and dynamics behind their production, use and deposition can be suggested, because no scientific analyses of their chemical composition, or microscopic assessment of possible traces of use on their surface, is available.

At the same time, written sources, albeit scattered, do provide information that make some of the approaches used in pre- and protohistoric archaeology at least in part superfluous: for instance no theoretical model is needed to suggest that Byblos' political structure was organized around a king, a court and some religious institutions that controlled the territory and resources around the city, because the texts attest it explicitly.

At the same time, however, also the written sources present intrinsic problems. In particular, from a textual perspective Byblos can be compared with what a black hole used to be for a physicist: until very recently,[33] there was no tool to directly study it, no information could be obtained directly from it, and its presence and characteristics could be inferred only on the basis of its gravitational effects on the space around it (Romero 2014, 223–62). The textual situation of Byblos is somehow similar: essentially no written source survives from Byblos itself, and the city can be studied only through the lens of scattered and heterogeneous texts originating from the regions around it, or from texts composed within the city but meant for foreign audiences (like the Amarna letters, §5.4.1). It is thus difficult to obtain a coherent picture on the basis of such texts, because we cannot really search them for specific and coherent information,[34] but we have rather to content ourselves with collecting and combining the scant data they provide.

With this I am not arguing that it is impossible to analyse the data from Byblos within a theoretical perspective. Rather the opposite: I am persuaded that it is possible and I do believe that such an approach could yield interesting new insights. Another step, however, has to be taken first: the data have to be contextualized within a common frame of reference, i.e. they have to be "translated" into a common conceptual language, in order to coherently organize and combine the information they carry, and to highlight its distribution and its gaps.

This is the primary goal of the framework described below, namely to combine and to describe the information collected from the sources within a conceptually common system of reference. Since the framework is primarily descriptive, it has the advantage

[33] The very recent LIGO's discoveries (Abbott et al. 2016) are a game-changer in this sense, but let them aside for now for the sake of the parallel.

[34] As it can be done for other historical periods or sites, where written sources are more abundant and/or more general in content.

of being open, in the sense that it does not rely on the current set of data to be meaningful, but it can always be integrated with additional data, if and when they should become available. Similarly, as the framework is not bound to a specific set of data, it can be used to describe, in a same common conceptual language, also other historical and geopolitical realities beside Byblos.

At the same time, however, the framework does also have an explicative and interpretative power, to a certain extent. Specifically, it does try to establish relations and casual links between the events wherever possible, and in doing so it also integrates concepts derived from interpretative models. Moreover, the data themselves are not collected in a general unstructured way, but rather they are organized around a specific research question: how the geopolitical situation of Byblos evolved during the New Kingdom/Late Bronze Age, and what factors, and which actors influenced it? The resulting description, therefore, aims at answering this question and therefore can be seen as somehow inherently interpretative.

The model, however, is not predictive, and does not aim at synthetizing the available information into more abstract, general theories. Such a development would certainly be possible, but it would also be beyond the scope and possibilities of this thesis. The descriptive framework here below is enough, I think, to give a first answer to the specific research question of this thesis.

I believe, however, that in order to push the theoretical analysis beyond that point, not only should one take into account other sites, cities and political entities of the region[35] but it would also require practical resources that are beyond the possibility of a single doctoral dissertation.[36] I thus prefer to leave such task to further, future research.

[35]Since I believe that building a theoretical model on the basis of a single site would have high chances of generating something either too site-specific or too general and naïve to be really useful.

[36]Earle and Krsitiansen study, for instance, is the result of a teamwork based on 4 different sites with specific archaeological investigations and analyses and including 12 different doctoral dissertations (Earle and Kristiansen 2010, 258–62), I do not pretend to be able to imitate it in any way.

6.6.1.1 Definition of the model

The sources analysed in the first part of this thesis show that Byblos was well integrated into the economic and geopolitical system of the Eastern Mediterranean. Byblos was a regional actor and it had political and economic exchanges with its neighbours as well as with more distant partners.

Macro-regional actors, such as Egypt, Mitanni, or the Hittite empire, were also part of this network, and they interacted in various ways with the city. Byblos was not part of their restricted "Great Powers' Club" (Liverani 2002); rather, the city with its territory was a simple, albeit significant, micro-regional actor. Its political influence and weight were never comparable to those of an empire; its position was inferior, and at times subordinated, to the major powers.

Byblos was thus part of a multi-scalar system, in the sense that different entities interacted at different geo-political levels (Earle and Kristiansen 2010, 1–9). In some respects, Byblos relation with the major powers of the area could be compared with a "core–periphery" relation within a world-system theoretical framework (Wallerstein 1974; Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982; Kardulias 1999; Wallerstein 2004). Such an interpretation, however, would be incomplete, since Byblos was not just a passive and subdued periphery. Instead, it was a dynamic political and economic entity with its own agenda, and with connections and interactions not only with its specific "core" of reference but also with other partners of different levels, and in some respects it was even more advanced and developed than the "core" itself, as for example in its maritime skills and technology. Such characteristics do not fit with the definition of "periphery" in a standard core–periphery system (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982, 11, 19–21; Champion 1995, 1–20). Rather than just a "periphery", Byblos could perhaps be defined as an "autonomous periphery", synthesizing similar analyses suggested for instance by Kohl (1989), Kardulias (1996) or Berg (1999) for the Bronze Age Aegean or for the Bronze Age Near East in general. More specifically, an "autonomous periphery" can be understood as a polity that is partially subordinated to other polities while enjoying some degree of initiative and autonomy in its socio-political status.

At the same time, Byblos was a key actor on the regional level, and it interacted and struggled with neighbouring polities. This regional level was the city's main frame of reference, and it is thus within the frame of this regional level that Byblos' development has to be studied. In order to achieve that, it is important to recognize when Byblos was going through "positive" or "negative" periods, i.e. periods characterized respectively by favourable or unfavourable conditions for the city and for the achievement of its goals. Since however available sources are scant, it is often difficult or even impossible to exactly know Byblos' socio-political objectives and ambitions, and to determine how the people of the city perceived complex and culturally dependent concepts such as "success" or "failure". The sources, however, do provide information about two more concrete interrelated factors that are very likely to have affected Byblos's regional competitiveness, and therefore its prosperity or decline. These two factors are its regional political weight and its economic strength. As Mann (1986, 2–6) points out, humans strive "to increase their enjoyment of the good things of life": control of material resources – i.e. economic power – and of social resources – i.e. political power – are the two essential means to make it possible and to attain human goals, whatever these may be. Whatever may have counted as "success" for the people of Byblos (or at least of its elites), it could hardly be achieved without a strong political and economic position, while it is hard to believe that decline in political power and economic hardship could have been perceived as anything but a form of "failure". These two parameters are thus suitable indicators to analyse the development of the city in the period under study.

Various factors originating within the micro-regional level affected the city's political weight and economic strength. First, political control of the territory and related access to its economic resources, as well as the capacity to expand, were crucial. Geopolitical relations and competition with neighbouring polities have also to be considered. Being at war with a nearby kingdom or obtaining the alliance or submission of another would affect the city's economy and micro-regional standing. Similarly, the regional commercial network was an arena of competition and opportunities that could strengthen or weaken Byblos' political and economic position. It has to be noted that Byblos is not an exceptional case

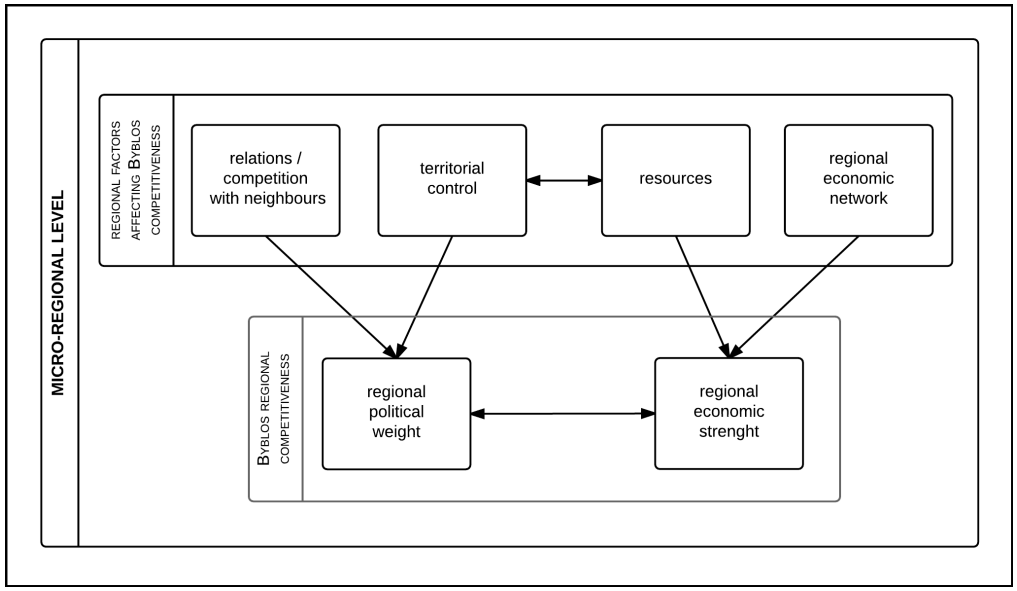


Figure 6.2: Diagram summarizing the factors affecting the competiveness of Byblos on the micro-regional level and their connections.

in this respect. Various examples can be mentioned for various historical periods. Classical Greece, for instance, with its mosaic of city-states in continuous competition between each-other and its changing network of alliances and warfare, is a perfect example of the importance of micro-regional factors in influencing and shaping the politico-economic situation of local political entities (Hansen 2006, 125–31; Hansen 2013, 273–5).

These elements constitute the core of my model, and the basic framework within which the evolution of Byblos and the dynamics affecting it can be described. They can be represented as in fig. 6.2.

This, however, was not a closed system. In addition to the local factors, the political and economic conditions of Byblos and its general wellbeing were affected by events originating outside the micro-regional level. Macro-regional powers, with their policies and interests, are the most important of these factors. Strategic, economic, and politico-ideological considerations were crucial in shaping the foreign policies of major powers, and their decisions often affected significantly the geopolitical and economic realities of micro-regional polities such as the kingdoms of the Lebanese coast. Any war between macro-regional powers involving smaller vassals could be an example of that. In the case of Late Bronze Age Byblos, Egypt was by far the most important of these macro-regional actors, not only because of its imperial ambitions in the area but also, and especially,

because of the special connection linking it to Byblos at least since the Old Kingdom, which, as seen, was the result of strategic and economic considerations combined with religio-ideological beliefs (see §6.3.0.2, §6.3.0.3 and §6.5).

Events originating from macro-regional actors could affect the economic and political situation of Byblos and of other micro-regional polities. Similarly, events originating within the micro-regional level could trigger responses in the macro-regional level. Thus, a local war could influence the policies and dynamics of macro-regional actors and in turn affect, once again, the micro-regional level. Amurru's expansion in northern Levant and its switch of allegiance from the Egyptians to the Hittites at the end of the Amarna period is a good example, as these local events triggered a period of open confrontation between Egypt and Hatti (Singer 1991, §5.4.6).

The impact of macro-regional events at a local level was potentially far greater than that exerted by local polities on the macro-regional level. The relation between them was proportional to their power and to the leverage one had on the other. Simply, the leverage that the major powers – the "cores" – had on the micro-regional reality – the "peripheries", in this case "autonomous peripheries" – was much greater than that in the opposite direction. But since the polities of the Levant were not completely subjugated, events on the local level could indeed, sometimes, exercise some leverage on the macro-regional level. Essentially, as Mann observes, those on higher level have greater organizational superiority, and therefore power, over the others, which are in turn embedded within the power organizations controlled by the first. If however the lower levels manage to cooperate and organize themselves they can enhance their joint power and thus affected, or even challenge, the upper levels (Mann 1986, 6–8).

This hierarchical relation between macro- and micro-regional levels can be represented graphically as in fig. 6.3.

Finally, some events whose origin is external to both the levels can affect both macro- and micro-regional systems. I term these supra-regional events. Natural catastrophes, climate changes, plagues, and long-distance migrations of populations are good examples. The 14th century Black Plague, which has been argued not only killed a large part of the European population, but also had a deep impact on the European economy and society

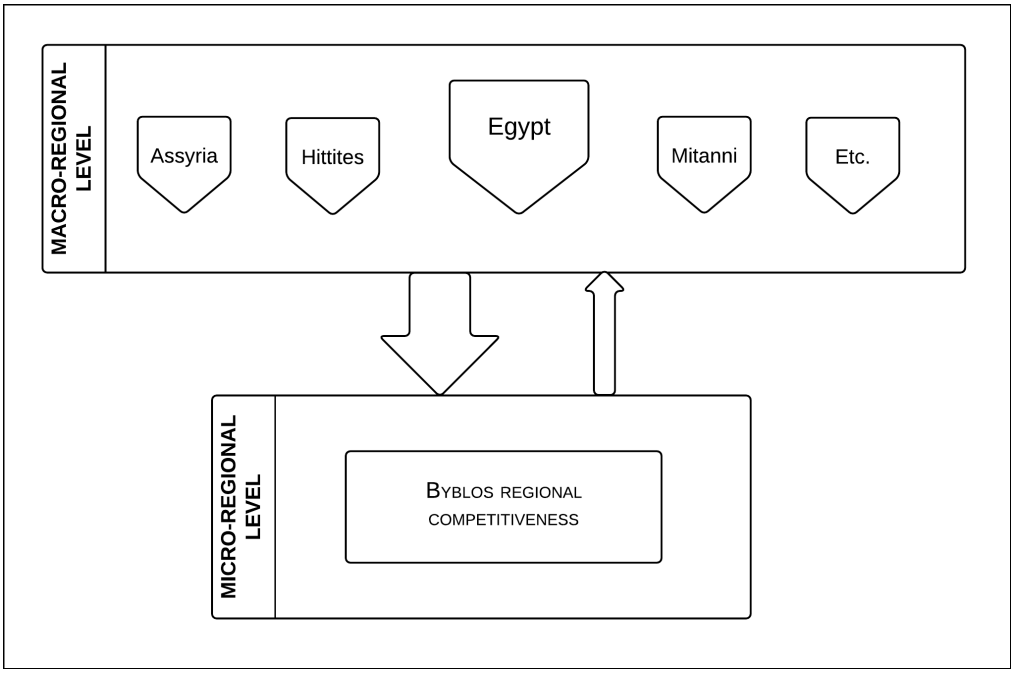


Figure 6.3: Diagram of hierarchical relations and mutual influence between the macro- and micro-regional levels.

(Byrne 2004, 57–72) is an obvious example. Technical innovations and discoveries can also be grouped among these supra-regional events, as they act as external factors and can affect any level and can change the general balance of power of the whole system. For instance, the introduction of the pike phalanx in the late Middle Age, which appeared in subordinate political entities (Flanders and Switzerland), had important consequences on the whole European social and geo-political structure, affecting also the dominant powers of the time (Mann 1986, 15, 18–20). In theory, this supra-regional level could also be affected by events originating within the macro- or micro-regional systems. For instance, intensive human activities and exploitation of the environment can influence natural phenomena and trigger wider changes. For example, intense deforestation on mountains can lead to erosion and soil impoverishment or can affect the water cycle, while intensive husbandry on freshly deforested areas can prevent the growth of new trees and can lead to desertification. Both these phenomena have probably taken place in Lebanon, but possibly only after the Late Bronze Age (Mikesell 1969). Similarly, the displacements of populations in unhealthy conditions, such as prisoners of war, can trigger the spread of diseases, as probably happened in the Hittite Empire after Suppiluli-

uma's campaigns in the Egyptian territories in southern Syria (Bryce 1998, 183). No instance of such influences from the macro- or micro- level onto the supra-regional level, however, seems to be identifiable in the sources for the area of Byblos during the period I am studying here.[37]

More in general, the nesting of these levels means that the upper ones can be influenced by events originating in lower levels, but much less than events originating in upper levels are likely to influence lower ones.

All these elements can be combined into a single theoretical framework that can be graphically represented as in fig. 6.4.

Specific events such as political decisions, wars, conquests, commercial interactions, or natural catastrophes connect levels and actors, and their consequences may have positive, negative or neutral effects on the competiveness of the geopolitical entity under study (namely, in this case, Byblos). Events have causes or triggers, such as political agendas, economic interests, or ideological factors. Theorists have tried to classify and define the nature of these connectors, obtaining various definitions of powers (Mann 1986, 2, 22–7). Such definitions, however, are not particularly relevant here, because as said my model aims at being primarily descriptive, rather than interpretative. The goal is to describe what events or triggers can be recognized in the sources, without classifying them into any specific theoretical category.

Both events and consequences can become triggers for further consequences or events. Thus, in the example illustrated in fig. 6.5, Actors A and B from the macro-regional level, combined with the trigger A, are at the origin of Event A, which has a positive (green) consequence (A) on Byblos' competitiveness and capacities in relations with other regional polities. In turn, this consequence triggers another, neutral (yellow) consequence (B). Consequence B triggers another event (C), which in turn has a negative (red) consequence (D) on the territory controlled by the city. At the same time, the macro-regional actor C, together with triggers B and C, leads to event B, which has a further

[37]The deforestation mentioned above could have perhaps started already in the Late Bronze Age, but no mention of any consequence for the climate or the natural environment can be identified in the available evidence. Future environmental studies could alter this perception. For instance, the plague that affected the Hittite empire probably had an impact on the whole region, but nothing is known of its possible effect on Byblos.

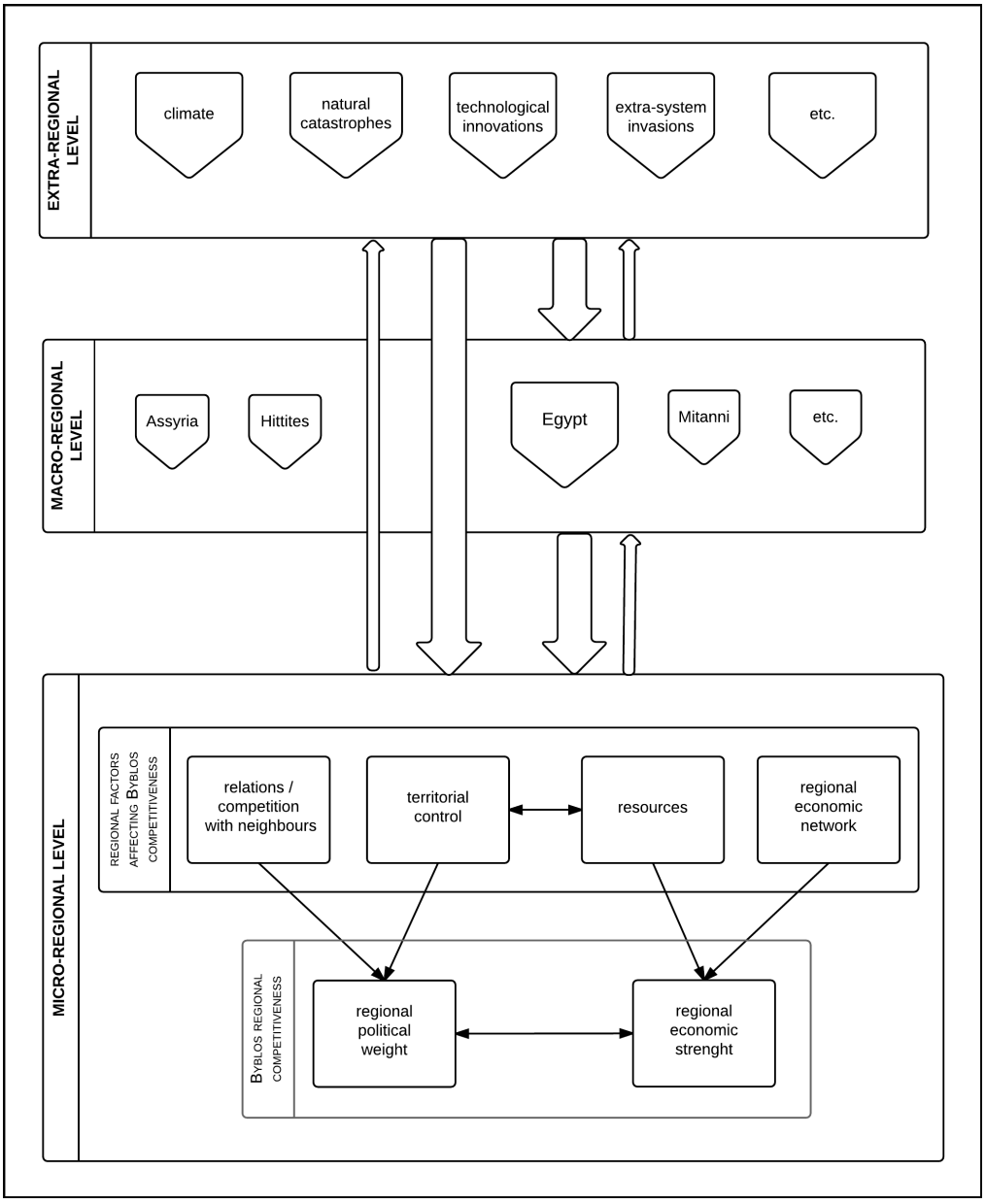


Figure 6.4: Graphical representation of the theoretical framework presented in §6.6.1.1.

consequence (C) on the territorial control of Byblos. The nature and impact of Event B and Consequence C, however, are unclear, and are therefore coloured in grey and the link connecting them is dashed.

The dynamics and development of Late Bronze Age Byblos can be assessed within this framework. The model sketched here could be extended, for instance by adding sub-levels below the micro-regional level (such as vassal cities within the kingdom, or lower social classes), or defining a sub-hierarchy within the levels. Interpretation

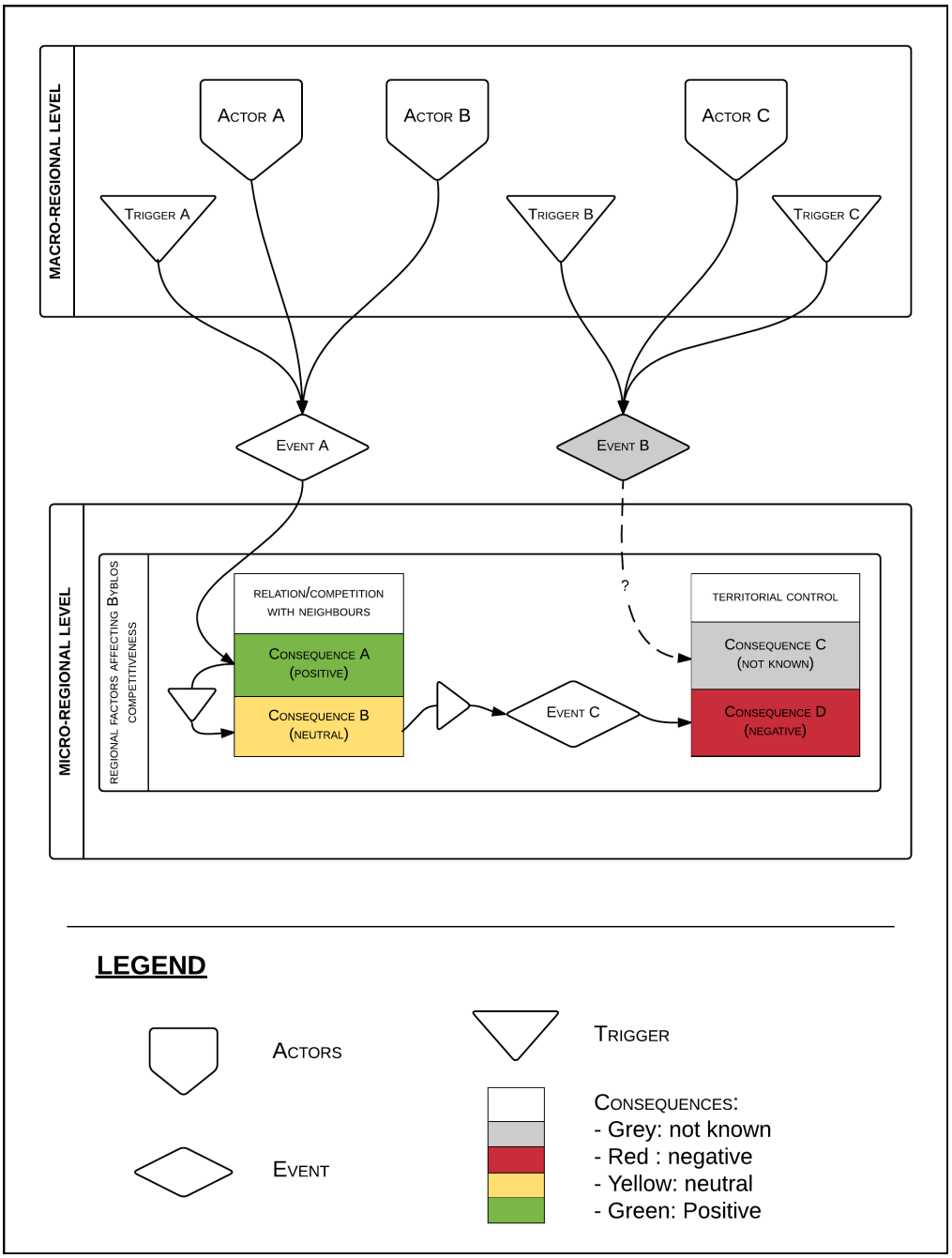


Figure 6.5: Example illustrating the connections and elements linking actors and levels

depends on the perspective and focus and on the sources available. The present focus is on Byblos and the aim is to study its development within the geopolitical landscape on a micro-regional level from the perspective of the city. Additional distinctions would be, therefore, rather irrelevant. At the same time, available sources contain little or no information about actors located hierarchically below Byblos or operating within the kingdom itself. It would thus be superfluous to add levels below the micro-regional one.

This theoretical framework is flexible and could be applied to other contexts and historical periods with different sources, actors, and perspectives, with the model extended or modified to accommodate the case under study and the desired perspective and focus. For instance, in the case of Ugarit it could be interesting to add some level below the micro-regional level, as the archives of the city supply a wealth of information about the actors within the kingdom itself.

In §6.6.2–6.6.7, the development and relations of Byblos during the Late Bronze Age are described and discussed within such framework. The discussion is based on the written sources and archaeological evidence presented in the previous part of the thesis, where relevant references can also be found.

6.6.2 Thutmose III's reign

After the gap of the Second Intermediate Period, Byblos is mentioned again in the Egyptian sources of the time of Thutmose III, and Egyptian objects dating to the reign of this Pharaoh made their appearance in the archaeological record. This evidence allows to highlight some of the events and dynamics that characterized this period. They are graphically summarized in fig. 6.6.

At the beginning, before Thutmose III's campaigns, the city was probably one of the independent kingdoms controlling the Lebanese coast. Its eastern border was likely marked by the slopes of Mount Lebanon, while on the west the Mediterranean Sea limited its territory (§6.2, §4.9). There is no textual evidence for the location of the southern border, but the configuration of the area suggests that it may have been between Beirut and Byblos itself, possibly in the area of the Nahr El-Kalb, as was perhaps the case also in later periods. The location of the northern frontier, which is more difficult to

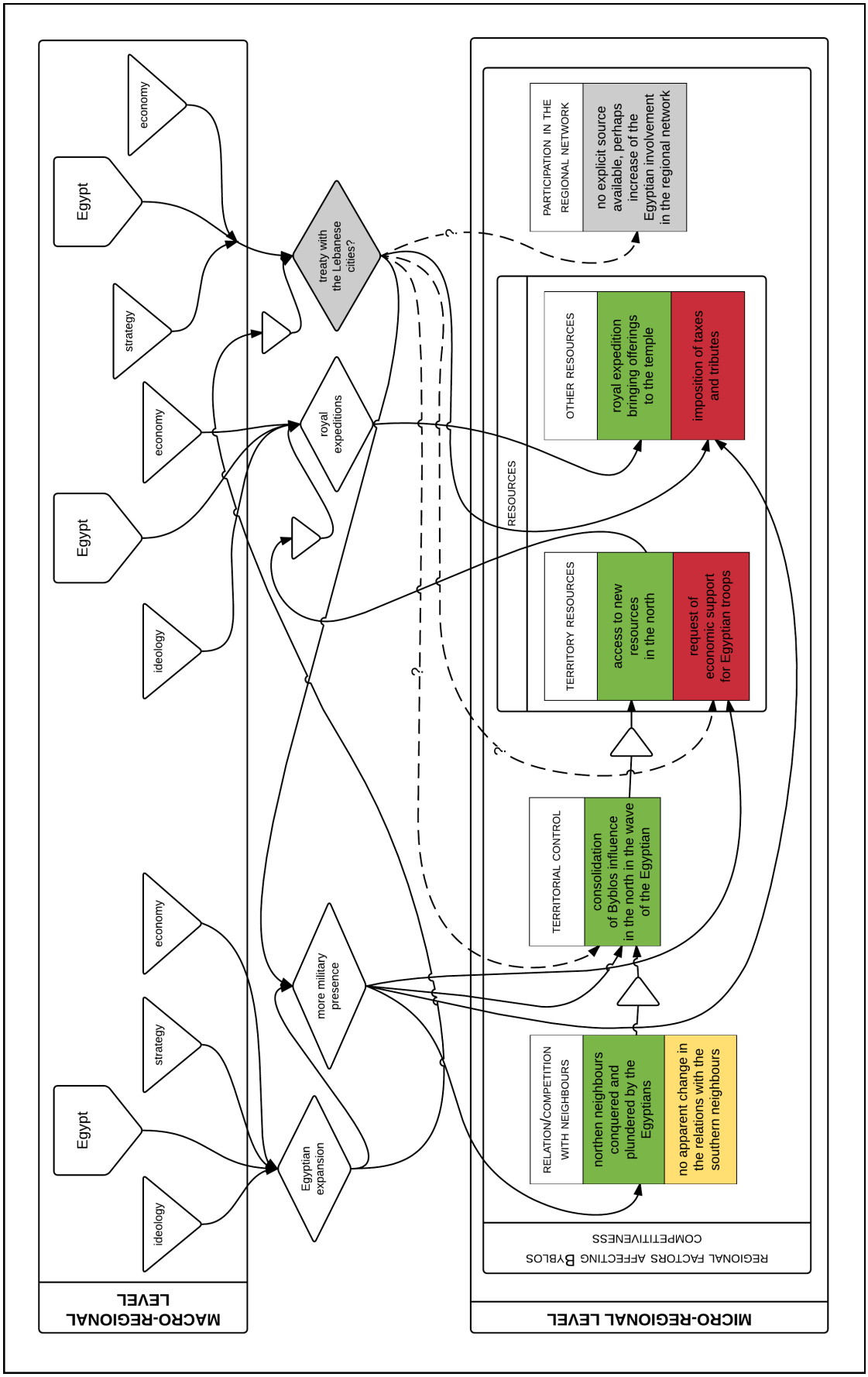


Figure 6.6: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos in the reign of Thutmose III. Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

determine, was probably somewhere between Byblos and Ullassa, which at the time was an independent polity.

The Egyptian return on the Levantine scene and the establishment of Thutmose III's empire were without doubt the main geopolitical events of this period. Interest in the Levant had been renewed at the beginning of the dynasty, which was characterized by the re-emergence of Egypt as a unified state and by the wars against the Hyksos, and the campaigns of the first kings of the dynasty can be seen as a continuation of this military drive (e.g. Vandersleyen 1971; Redford 1979a; 1979; Bradbury 1985; Hoffmeier 2004; Spalinger 2005, 46–69; Ahrens 2015). New technology and new strategy, connected in particular with the war chariot, evidently played a role in these developments (Díaz Hernández 2014).

Although early 18th dynasty kings could have passed through Byblos (see esp. Redford 1979a, 271–5), no text mentioning the city is known, and no evidence of them was found in the excavations. As said, Byblos reappears in the records only under Thutmose III, whose campaigns mark a turning point in the Egyptian policy toward the Levant (e.g. Weinstein 1981, 7–15; Redford 1990, 33–4; Knapp 1992, 92; Morris 2005, 27–67, 115–80, esp. 115–6; Spalinger 2005, 70–139). In contrast with the military activities of his predecessors, those of Thutmose III were not extemporary demonstration of power or raiding with few or no geopolitical consequences: they were regular and progressive ventures that ended by establishing a lasting Egyptian military presence and political dominance, that is, an empire, over the coastal region.

It was probably a combination of politico-strategic, economic, and ideological factors originating within Egypt that stimulated this new phase of expansion. Campaigning in the Levant, and even more controlling it, were very lucrative activities. First lootings and later levying tribute and taxes, combined with the control of the trade routes to the Levant and Mesopotamia, were likely important sources of income for the Egyptian state (e.g. Aḥituv 1978; Na'aman 1981; Redford 1990, 40–63; Liverani 2001, 52–6, 141–88; Hoffmeier 2004, 133–7; Spalinger 2005, 111–36).

Ideological factors also played a role. Beside the general legitimation deriving from conquests, these kings seem to have sought authority in the idea of extending the borders

of Egypt, ideally to the end of the world (Kilani 2016b, with refs – see also §6.5.0.2 above).

Byblos must have been affected by these events, and there were many consequences of Egyptian expansionism for the northern Levant as a whole. As discussed earlier (§5.2.5.1), Byblos and other cities of the southern Levantine coast may not have been conquered by Thutmose and may have submitted themselves to Egyptian domination from the beginning, possibly by treaty. In this way, the cities could have avoided being looted, as happened to those which were conquered, and their rulers could have retained their positions and have received some advantages in return for their goodwill and allegiance.

The prestige deriving from friendly relations with the Egyptian occupying armies could have been one of the advantages, as could support in defeating local adversaries. This could have been the case with Ullassa, Byblos probably main northern neighbour. From the Annals it can be deduced that when Thutmose III arrived in the Levant, Ullassa was allied with, or subject to, Tunip and aligned against Egypt. The city was military conquered by Thutmose in year 29, and then again in year 31, probably after a revolt or having been occupied by Tunip. The ruler of Ullassa is mentioned in the list of booty of year 29, and thus was probably deported to Egypt. To judge also from the Amarna letters, these events could have left the city without a ruler (§5.2.5.1; §5.4.5; §6.2).

We do not know anything about the relations between Byblos and Ullassa before the arrival of the Egyptians. The fact that Byblos sided with the Egyptians while Ullassa was collaborating with Tunip suggests that they had different political agendas, but it is impossible to say if there was any real hostility.[38] In view of their geographical positions, it is likely that Byblos played a role in the Egyptian conquest of Ullassa. As a reward for its military support, Byblos could have been allowed to expand its own influence northwards in the wake of the Egyptian campaigns.

It is not clear if Ullassa itself was annexed to the kingdom of Byblos or if instead it was politically distinct but somehow administered by it, but it is likely that Byblos was successful in claiming some authority over the resources in the area (§5.2.5.1). In

[38]Hostility between Byblos and Ullassa is attested in the Middle Kingdom, but that episode is too much earlier to be indicative of the situation during the Late Bronze Age (Allen 2008 – see also §5.2.5.1 n.27).

general, the submission and neutralization of nearby cities had a positive effect, since it reduced the number of political and economic competitors on the micro-regional level. Moreover, the Egyptian military presence could have increased the regional prestige and political leverage of Byblos, especially if, as seems to be the case, this presence took the form of an Egyptian fortress and Egyptian garrison in the area, possibly within the sphere of influence of Byblos or within the kingdom itself (§5.2.1 §5.2.5.1).

Belonging to the Egyptian empire, however, did not only have positive consequences for the city. As appears from the Annals of Thutmose III (§5.2.1; §5.2.5.1), the Lebanese "harbours" (*mnjwt*, e.g. *Urk.* IV 700.6–9; see §5.2.1), presumably including Byblos, were expected to pay yearly *bȝk*-contributions (Redford 1990, 56–60). These contributions may have been stipulated in a "treaty" (*nt-ꜥ*; see §5.2.5.1).

Moreover, as various scholars have argued, during the 18th dynasty the Levantine vassals were probably expected to supply strategic and economic support for the Egyptian armies. In particular, they may have had to provide buildings for accommodation as well as provisions and other resources. Although direct evidence is lacking, the passage of the annals about supplying the harbours may suggest that the situation was comparable all along the coast and it is likely that such impositions applied to Byblos as well (see §5.2.5.1 with refs).

Beside the Egyptian military expansion, another prominent event in the sources of Thutmose III's time is a royal expedition to fetch wood for the flagpoles and the sacred barque of the temple of Karnak. The expedition was sent to Byblos around years 33–34 (§5.2.3) and was probably led by Sennefri, who left an account of it in his tomb. The mission is likely to have had both ideological and economic motivations. In addition to its evident religious significance, Sennefri's expedition should probably also be understood as a way of claiming the Pharaoh's control on lands traditionally considered as remote and exotic (§6.5.0.2).

Such expeditions were also major economic ventures both for Egypt and Byblos. Beside the wood, which was felled and transported in large amounts, the Egyptians most probably acquired also other valued goods, such as oils, resins and essences (§6.3.0.1). Both these products and the wood were materials meant for the Egyptian palace, temples

and elites. With its possible northward expansion, Byblos could have obtained access to new resources, such as different types of trees (§5.2.5.1), thus becoming an even more attractive trading partner for the Egyptians.

Byblos profited from these Egyptian expeditions. We know in particular that in recompense for the wood and the other products, the Egyptians presented offerings to the temples of the city (§5.2.5.1; §5.2.5.2; §6.3.0.2; §6.5.0.1). We do not know precisely what these "offerings" consisted of, although they must have been significant and valuable, and could have included the scarabs of Thutmose III found in the Obelisk Temple (§4.4.6). While only the Lady of Byblos appears as the beneficiary of these offerings in the Egyptian sources, the archaeological evidence shows that Egyptian items were also present in other temples in the city (§4.6 §6.4). This suggests either that the Egyptians were dedicating offerings also to other temples of the city or that the offerings made to the temple of the Lady of Byblos were redistributed among other actors of the city, including other temples. Moreover, some of these Egyptian goods could have been redistributed also outside Byblos, being traded within the city's regional network. The Egyptian stone vessels found in the Aegean could be an example of such redistribution, as suggested by Giannakoulas (2013, 193–4 – see §6.3.0.2).

It thus appears that the temple or temples of Byblos played an important role in the economic interactions of the city with Egypt. In addition, they were also venerated by the Egyptians. Thutmose promoted architectural works there, as attested by the inscription of Minmose (§5.2.2) and by two blocks found there out of context (§3.5, 1–2). The details of these works are not known. It is also possible that the temple of the Lady played a role in the Egyptian administration of the region. Temples in the Levant often had administrative and economic functions (§5.2.5.2; Singer 1988, 4–5; Morris 2005, 120–1) and this is likely to have been the case in Byblos as well. Thutmose's construction works could have been at least partly motivated by such functions and not due only to respect for the deity. In general, a possible role of Byblos in the Egyptian regional administration is supported by the statue of Djehuty, an officer of Thutmose III. He probably had had administrative duties, and the fact that he dedicated in Byblos a statue to its goddess, could suggest that he was based in the city (§3.5, 5).

In sum, the major events of these years affected Byblos in various ways. Both their consequences, and this period in general, seem to have been positive for the city.

6.6.3 From Thutmose III to the Amarna Period

Very little evidence is available for the time between the death of Thutmose III and the Amarna period, and little seems to have changed. The few elements that seem to be identifiable are graphically represented in figure 6.7.

Royal expeditions to the Lebanese coast for timber continued (Bardinet 2008, 242–8). It is likely that Byblos played some role in them, but its name is not attested in the sources. The presence in Byblos of scarabs of this period supports the assumption that contacts with Egypt continued (§3.3; §4.4.6; see also §B). Many of these scarabs were found in the sacred area of the city, possibly attesting the involvement of the temples in these exchanges.

Byblos' strategic value may have lessened. The establishment of diplomatic treaties with Mitanni around the end of the reign of Thutmose III inaugurated a period of relative peace in the region. Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV seem to have conducted only few occasional campaigns in the Levant, mainly in response to local revolts (Der Manuelian 1987, 47–55; Bryce 1998, 132–57, 236; Kühne 1999, 217; Betsy Morrell Bryan 2000, 77–9; Freu 2003, 72–3).

After Thutmose III's conquests in Amurru, the border of the empire in the Northern Levant had moved away from Byblos and was located farther north. Probably in this period Sumur became the centre of the Egyptian administration in the area, as attested in the Amarna letters (§5.2.5.1; §5.4.5). It is not clear whether Sumur inherited an administrative function that had been based in Byblos, but its position was likely more strategic: located north of Byblos and south of Ugarit, nearer than Byblos to the northern border of the empire, it controlled the coast as well as the Akkar plain and the Eleutheros/Nahr El-Kabir valley, which give access to the area of Qadesh and inner Syria.

The Egyptian ideological perception of Byblos could have started to change in this period. By contrast, the geopolitical panorama attested in the Amarna letters suggests

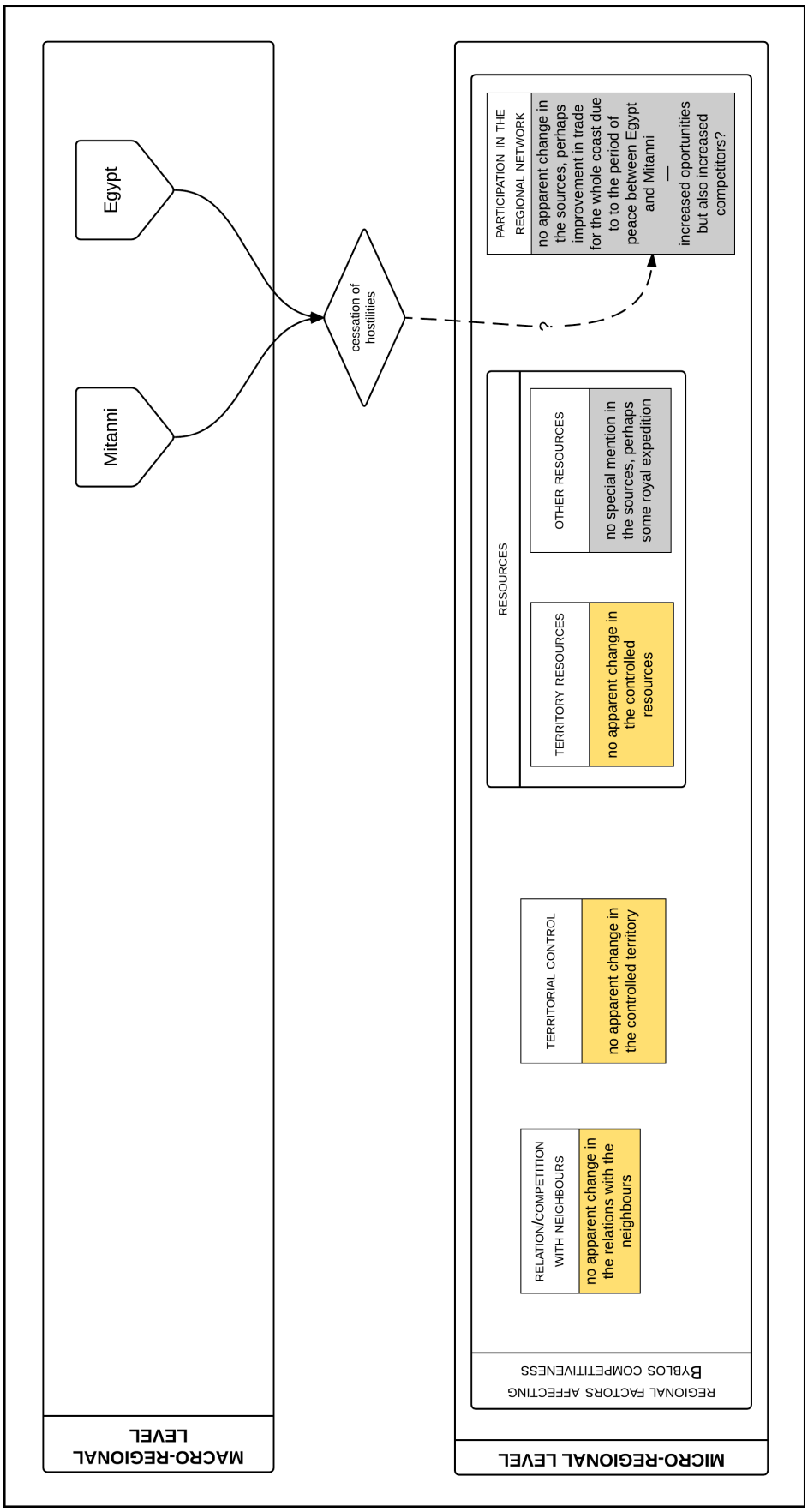


Figure 6.7: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos from the time Thutmose III to the Amarna Period. Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

that the sphere of influence of the city did not change much, still extending northward toward Ullassa as had done since Thutmose III's conquests.

6.6.4 The Amarna period

The Amarna letters and the wealth of information they provide allow a more detailed understanding of the geopolitical situation in the Levant. The resulting picture is summarized in graphic form in fig. 6.8. The Amarna period appears to have been a difficult time for Byblos. Ideological changes within Egypt, as well as the long period of peace that followed the treaty with Mitanni at the time of Amenhotep II, probably affected the Egyptian perception of the city. Egypt now focused less on Byblos than it had.

This lack of interest created room for new leaders eager to challenge the micro-regional status quo. A new political entity, Amurru, emerged just north of Byblos. Possibly originating from tribal elements having their ancestral home in the hills east of Tripoli, the ruling group of Amurru pursued aggressive expansion in order to impose itself in the area (Singer 1991, 138–40; Goren, Finkelstein, and Naʾaman 2003; §5.4.5; §5.4.6). First, Amurru took control of cities – such as Ardata, Irqata, and Ammiya – that had been independent but probably associated politically with Byblos. Having consolidated its hold on them, Amurru moved on to attack the kingdom of Byblos itself. The letters of the Byblian king Rib-Hadda give details about Amurru's advance on the coast. The ruler of Amurru 'Abdi-Ashirta attacked city after city, capturing all of Byblos's coastal possessions and, according to Rib-Hadda, finally reaching the doors of Byblos itself (EA 87:21–24, 88:18–21 – see (§5.4.5; §5.4.6). At that point, the Egyptians seem to have intervened and the status quo was restored. It is not clear exactly what happened, but 'Abdi-Ashirta disappeared from the political scene, and at least some of the territories of Byblos were returned to it. The peace, however, did not last long. Soon after 'Abdi-Ashirta's demise, his son Aziru took his place after a brief period of rule with his brothers. Aziru followed his father's path, first bringing neighbouring cities on his side and then attacking Byblos directly. At that point the Egyptians seem to have started questioning his intentions, but it was too late: Aziru consolidated his conquests and his position by switching sides and pledging submission to the Hittites. His new vassal status was

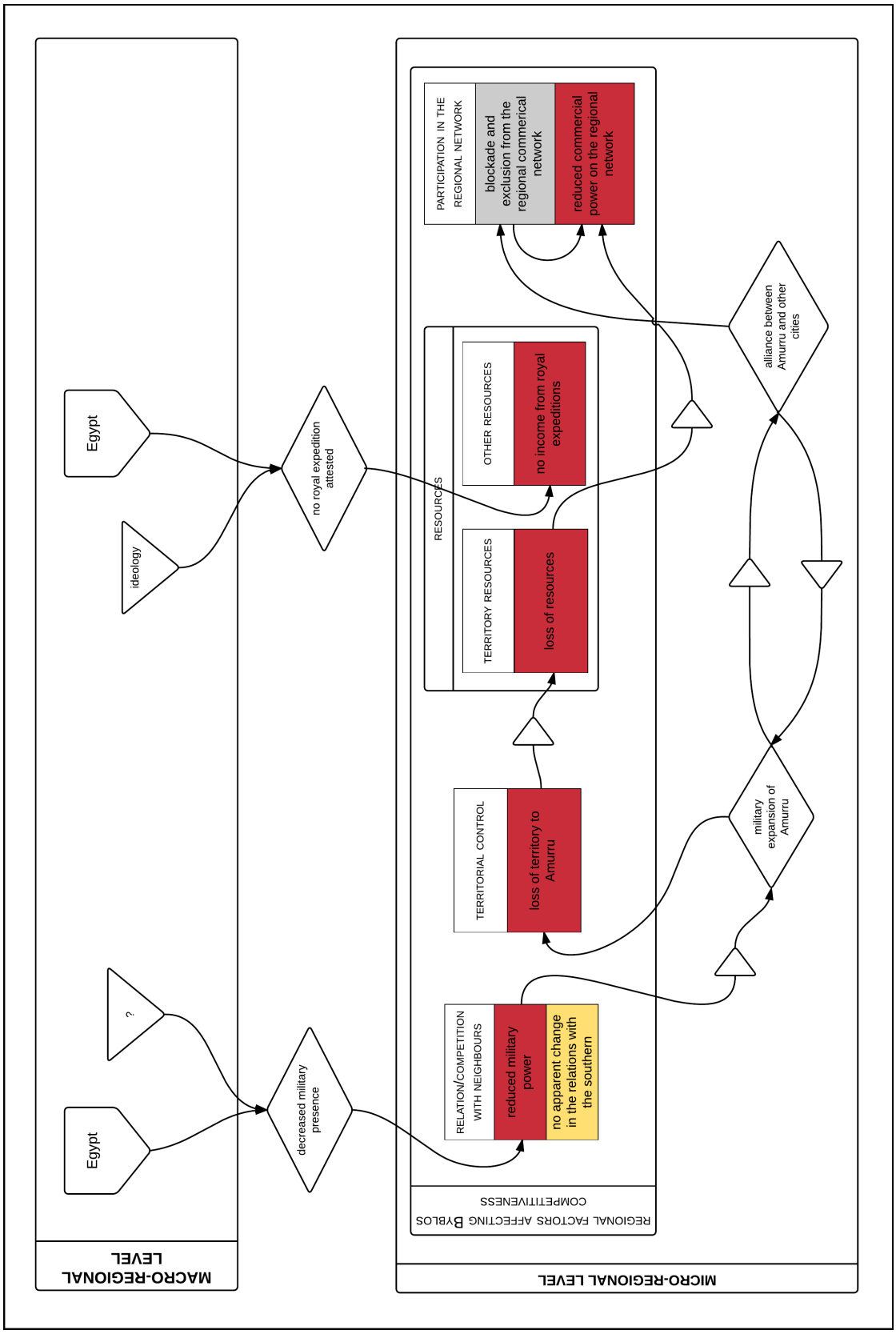


Figure 6.8: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos in the Amarna Period. Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

formalized with a treaty, in which his territorial conquests and the new borders of his kingdom were probably recognized (§5.4.6). At that point the Egyptians seem to have considered a direct intervention to bring their vassal back into line, but nothing seems to have happened in the end. Probably the internal troubles of the end of the 18th dynasty prevented any initiative in the Levant (Singer 1990, 162–5; Singer 1991, 155; see above §5.4.6).

Amurru's expansion had deep and negative consequences for Byblos. The loss of its northern possessions was not only a military defeat but also affected the city's economic and political life. The sources suggest that within a few years Byblos passed from being a leading polity of the region, with a territory including several cities and a number of allies or vassals, to being a small kingdom controlling only the city itself and a limited area around it. The loss of the northern coast and the drastic reduction of its political influence meant that the resources of these areas were no longer in its control (§5.4.6).

These were not the city's only problems. As discussed above, the coast to the north and the south became increasingly hostile to Byblos, at least according to Rib-Hadda's letters (§5.4.5; §5.4.6). The rise of Amurru was not only territorial but also political. Alongside their conquests, its leaders developed a network of alliances across Lebanon and the northern Levant, and this network probably extended as far south as Sidon and Tyre, since Rib-Hadda stated that these cities were in friendly relations, if not allied, with Amurru (EA 101:20–35, 114:12–15; Vita 2001–2002, 428–9). These cities grew increasingly opposed or even hostile to Byblos. In his letters, Rib-Hadda talks for instance of acts of piracy and of a naval blockade enforced by Amurru and its allies (§6.3.0.4). Amurru thus not only attacked Byblos directly but also succeeded in isolating it politically and economically.

The Amarna letters suggest that this hostile environment ended up destabilising Byblos internally. Factions challenging Rib-Hadda's rule started to emerge within the city. For some time he was able to contain them, but he was finally overthrown and forced into exile, where he probably died. We do not know exactly what then happened to Byblos. It is possible that the city's new rulers struck some agreement with Amurru, perhaps finally siding with Aziru (§5.4.6). The city, however, was not annexed to Amurru, or if it was

it soon regained its independence: a king of Byblos, clearly distinct from the king of Amurru, is attested some decades later in a letter found in Ugarit (see §5.6.5, RS 18.134). No evidence suggests that Byblos, unlike Amurru, passed to the Hittite side or made a treaty with them. It is thus likely that the city remained formally within the Egyptian orbit.

The difficulties of Byblos were probably not only a result of Amurru's expansion. The suggested lack of interest from Egypt for the region may have hit Byblos more severely than other cities. Since its relations with Egypt were freighted with ideological and religious factors (6.5), it is probable that the largely religious Amarna revolution had a negative effect on them. Nothing definite is known about Akhenaton's attitude toward the Lady of Byblos or toward foreign deities in general, but the goddess could not have any prominent role in the Atonist ideology, and it is most unlikely that the reformist Amarna court paid any respect (or made any offering) to Byblos as seat of the Lady of Byblos. Within the late 18th dynasty ideological context, and even more within the Amarna universalist vision of the world, Byblos' position hardly retained any special significance.

The events of the Amarna period affected Byblos negatively in political and economic terms, in its international relations and exchanges, and in its territorial integrity. The role of Byblos and its influence on the micro-regional level seem to have become greatly diminished. The Amarna period appears thus as a phase of hardship and decline for the city.

6.6.5 Early 19th Dynasty

Written and archaeological evidence are silent about this period. The only written attestation of the city comes from a bowl attributed to the reign of Horemheb, which however is probably a fake (Yoyotte 1981, 44, with refs; see §5.5). While it is impossible to reconstruct the development of the city in detail, a few trends can be suggested by comparing the geopolitical situation of Byblos in the previous and following periods. They are graphically summarized in fig. 6.9.

It is likely that Byblos was involved in the Egyptian attempts to conquer back the territories of Amurru, after its secession at the end of the Amarna period. Campaigns with this aim may have taken place under Horemheb (Murnane 1990, 30; Ahrens 2014)

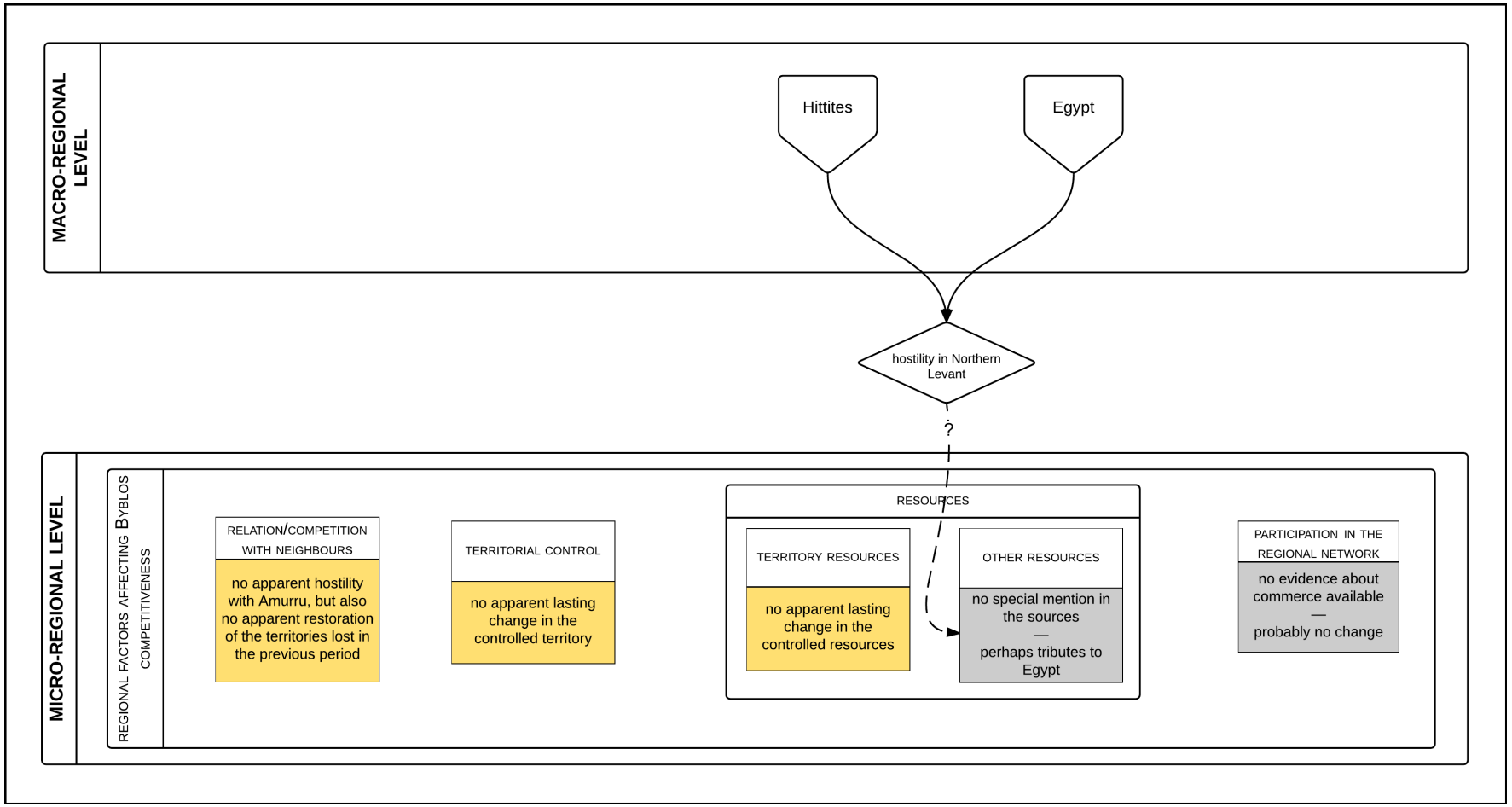


Figure 6.9: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos in the early 19th Dynasty.
Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

and are attested under Seti I (Murnane 1990; see below §6.6.6). A stele by this last king found in Tyre is likely to be related with these military activities.[39]

It is likely that Egyptian forces passed through Byblos when the Egyptians marched northward against the Hittites. Although Seti I's campaigns were more successful than those of his direct predecessors, his conquests were probably short-lived, and Ramses II had to campaign again in the area at the beginning of his reign in order to assert his control (Murnane 1990, 39–45, 52–65; Singer 1991, 164–5; Cavillier 2002a). Nothing suggests that in this period Byblos recovered any of the territories lost to Amurru during the Amarna Age, and its borders probably remained those defined by the conquests of Aziru.

By contrast, it is likely that duties were imposed on the cities of the region in the wake of these Egyptian military activities. For instance, we know from his reliefs in Karnak that Seti I required the rulers of Lebanon, presumably including Byblos, to provide wood during one of his campaigns (K*RI* I 13.8; Epigraphic Survey 1986, 28–34, esp. 33, pl. 10; Murnane 1990, 43; Obsomer 2012, 37). At the same time, the Egyptian interests in the area brought perhaps some new commercial opportunity and some occasional benefit deriving from Byblos' strategic position as last major coastal city before the Hittite border.

6.6.6 Ramses II

A dominant element in Ramses II's early years was the war with the Hittites. Like his predecessors, the young king aimed at reconquering the territories of Amurru and inland Syria (Murnane 1990; Cavillier 2002a). First Ramses established Egyptian control on the coast and in the western part of Amurru with several campaigns during the early years of his reign. Then he tried a direct attack on Qadesh, marching through the Beqa'a Valley while supporting troops approached from the coast. This strategy did not work as expected, and the troops from the coast barely managed to save the king's life during the Battle of Qadesh. In the aftermath of the battle, Ramses retreated southward, definitively losing the whole of Amurru (Singer 2002, 198–9).

[39] K*RI* I 117; top and bottom portions missing. No date is preserved; only the name of the Pharaoh and the initial fragments of encomium survive. See Brand 2000, with refs. On Tyre, see also below.

Byblos is not mentioned in sources relating to these Egyptian military endeavours. Some elements of its situation in this period can nonetheless be extrapolated from the scarce evidence presented above and the general geopolitical context of the time (§3.5; §4.5; §5.6). They are graphically summarized in fig. 6.10.

Byblos was likely involved in Ramses II's military operations, at least during the first campaigns. The steles of the Nahr El-Kalb (§4.9), the one found in the city itself (§3.5), two other fragments of steles found in Tyre (K*RI* II 40; Wimmer 2002, 2, 6, 8, with refs) and another rock inscription from Adhlun (K*RI* II 223; Wimmer 2002, 8–9 and passim, with refs; Obsomer 2012, 123), attest the passage of Ramses II's armies on the Lebanese coast in these campaigns. The return of a strong Egyptian authority in the area probably also meant that tax, tributes, or other services were expected. Morris, however, argues that Horemheb introduced a series of reforms to ease the economic burden of the Egyptian expedition on the local authorities, thus suggesting that during the 19th dynasty the Egyptian functionaries could rely at least in part on a permanent, self-sufficient Egyptian infrastructure set up in place to support their needs, rather than just on resources and facilities co-opted from local vassals (Morris 2005, 17–20 and passim). If correct, then the burden of the Egyptian domination was probably less heavy to bear than in previous periods.

The presence in Tyre of steles of Seti I (see above) and Ramses II demonstrates some Egyptian presence there. Tyre at the time presented some strategic advantages over Byblos. As an island, the city was a perfect stronghold, and it was located at the southern limit of the Lebanese coast and at the entrance of the Beqa'a, thus near a crucial crossroad (Murnane 1990, 51–65; Cavillier 2002b; Cavillier 2002a). By contrast, the strategic position of Byblos was not very strong. While the city was on the coastal road, it had no direct access to the Syrian interior.

Moreover, the general strategic value of the city could have changed from that of previous periods. Under Thutmose III Byblos must have appeared as an ideal place to rely on for northern military operations not least because of its long tradition of friendly relations with Egypt. Under Thutmose III the Egyptians were intruders in the area and had not consolidated their presence. Having a dependable ally in a freshly conquered

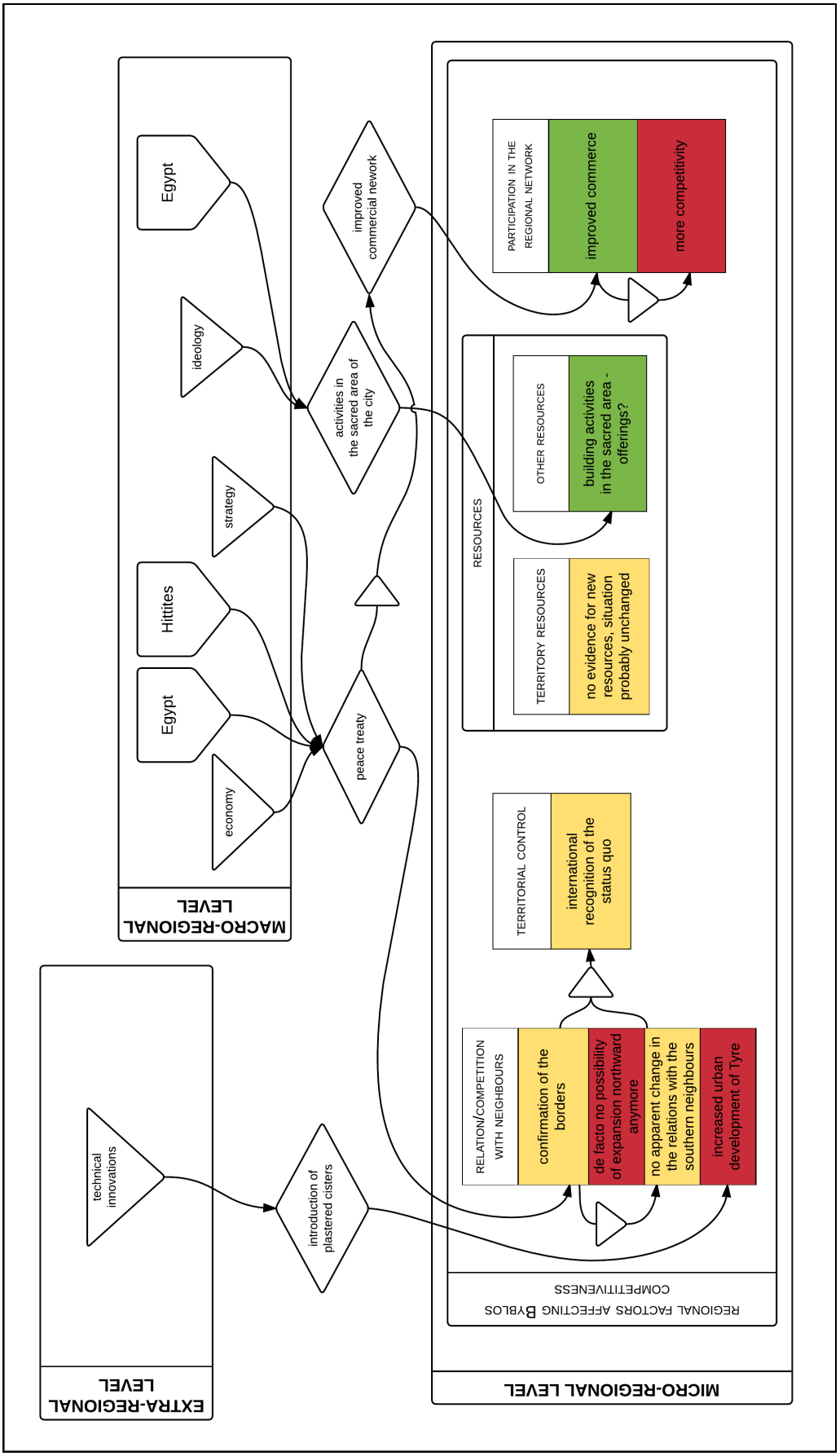


Figure 6.10: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos in the reign of Ramses II before the treaty of Qadesh. Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

and potentially hostile territory could have been a crucial strategic factor in the Egyptian interest in Byblos. At the beginning of the 19th dynasty, however, much of the Lebanese coast had already been under direct Egyptian domination for nearly two centuries. The territory was well-known, and the Egyptian armies could rely on a well-established infrastructure to control it (Morris 2005, 27–67; 115–80; 217–310; 343–611). Although Byblos was probably still a good ally, the Egyptians could now rely on strategically more convenient options for their military campaigns and for developing and managing their imperial infrastructure in the area. Tyre was possibly one of them.

The collapse of Mitanni and the re-emergence of the Hittites could have also changed the geography of power in the region, inducing or enabling the Egyptians to try new ways to approach Syria. In particular, the focuses of power of the Mitannian and Hittite empires were in different regions, the former being to the north-east of Lebanon and the latter further north. It is thus possible that the Beqa'a Valley, which is to the east of Mount Lebanon and very close to Mitannian territory but quite distant from the core of the Hittite territories, was a much safer route during the 19th dynasty than in the time of Thutmose III.

Ethnicity and cultural identity could also have been in play. Whereas the Hittites were ethnically foreign to both the Beqa'a and the Lebanese coast, the situation was different for Mitanni. As appears from the names of the local kings attested in the Amarna correspondence, the ruling groups of the coast used names, and probably were, of clear West-Semitic origin, while those east of Mount Lebanon tended to bear non-West-Semitic, usually Hurrian or Indo-Aryan names and therefore probably identified themselves as ethnically or culturally closer to the state of Mitanni. More in particular, all the identifiable names of city rulers on the Lebanese coast in the Amarna letters are interpreted as clearly West-Semitic. These are: Aduna of Irqata, 'Abdi-Aširta and Aziru of Amurru, Rib-Hadda of Byblos, Yapah-Hadda of Beirut, Zimredda of Sidon, Abi-Milku of Tyre.[40] By contrast, almost all the attested names of rulers in the Beqa'a Valley and in regions east of Mount Lebanon have been interpreted as non-West-Semitic: Akizzi of Qatna, Aitakama of Qadesh, Tewatti of Lapana, Arašša of Kumidi, Biryawaza of

[40]Respectively: Hess 1993, 22; Hess 1993, 9 and Hess 1993, 46; Hess 1993, 134; Hess 1993, 85; Hess 1993, 170; Hess 1993, 18–19.

Damascus.[41] Two other names may or may not be West-Semitic: Ildayyi of Hasi and Bieri of Hašabu.[42] By contrast, only one name east of Mount Lebanon that be safely identified as West-Semitict is ‘Abdi-Riša of Enišasi (Hess 1993, 16-17).

This ethno-cultural partition of the Northern Levant could have influenced Thutmose III’s approach to the region: the rulers of the West-Semitic coastal cities could have seen the Egyptians as offering an opportunity to take a stand against their neighbours, who may have identified themselves with a different ethno-cultural identity. In particular, the rulers of the Beqa’a, who appear to have identified themselves with the Hurrian and Indo-Aryan ethno-cultural traditions, could have been more integrated into the Mitannian sphere of influence and therefore may have displayed greater hostility toward Egyptian attempts to control the area. In consequence, Thutmose III could have favoured a safer coastal approach to northern Syria in some of his campaigns, rather than a more direct, but also more exposed, route through the Beqa’a. During the 19th dynasty, neither the coast nor the Beqa’a shared ethnic or cultural links with the Hittites. Therefore, at that date the rulers of the Beqa’a could perhaps have been more supportive to the Egyptian troops, so that the valley could have offered easier access to Syria than at the time of Thutmose III and Mitanni.

Whether or not these considerations are valid, Tyre was ideally located for a military approach to the north that targeted both the Beqa’a and the coastal road. This strategic advantage, combined with associated commercial advantages and with its island harbours, which may have been better than those of Byblos (Marriner et al. 2008; Carayon et al. 2011, 56–9), could have stimulated the Egyptian interest in the city during the 19th dynasty, strengthening its regional position and likely making it a stronger contender for Byblos. The introduction of plastered cisterns around the 13th century BC could have also favoured Tyre, enhancing its advantages as an island. As Pap. Anastasi I and

[41] Respectively: Hess 1993, 28; Hess 1993, 28; Hess 1993, 158; Hess 1993, 37; Hess 1993, 61. Hess identifies Akizzi and Aitakama as Hurrian name. He identifies also Arašša as Hurrian, although he thinks it could be a family name, rather than a proper name and suggests the form should be read *A-ra-wa-na*, rather than *A-ra-aš-ša*. Biryawaza is likely Indo-Aryan, according to Hess, while he identifies Tewatti as Indo-European, possibly Anatolian, although Indo-Aryan etymologies have also been suggested. He considers a Hurrian etymology is unlikely. The name, however, is clearly non-West-Semitic.

[42] Respectively: Hess 1993, 20; Hess 1993, 57-8.

the Amarna letters show, the island relied on the coast for water (Katzenstein 1973, 14–15, 29, 52; see also §5.6.1). The plastered cisterns would have increased water stocks, making it more resilient to attacks and allowing the city to develop to an extent that would previously have been unsustainable.

Byblos could nonetheless have retained some strategic value for the Egyptians, especially during Ramses II's earlier campaigns. At that time it was probably the northernmost city in the Egyptian sphere of influence and was therefore significant for operations in Amurru. The steles of the Nahr El-Kalb attest of the passage of Ramses II's army in the area in at least three of his Syrian campaigns (§4.9), as probably does the stele found in the city itself, even if it could be later in date (§3.5).

Byblos may have enjoyed some benefit and conceivably territorial gains in the wake of the Egyptian campaigns, but any such conquests would have been lost after the battle of Qadesh and the definitive Egyptian retreat from Amurru (Spalinger 1981, 356–8; Singer 1991, 167–8; Obsomer 2012, 187–9, 194–5). It can be inferred from two observations that the borders of the kingdom of Byblos had not changed much after the end of the 18th dynasty. First, when Amurru defected from Egypt at the end of the Amarna period, its new Hittite suzerains consistently recognized its borders, as later treaties between the two polities attest (see above §5.4.6). In addition, one consequences of the peace treaty between Ramses II and Hattusili was the Egyptian recognition of the Hittite sovereignty over Amurru (see above §5.4.6, Edel 1997; K. A. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, i 573–94, no. 71, ii 57–60, with refs.). By implication, it is likely that, pace Byblos, Amurru's borders recognized by Ramses II would have been those of the time of its move over to the Hittites, when Byblos lost its northern territories (§5.4.6, §6.2).

The peace treaty with the Hittites in year 21 of Ramses II inaugurated a new geopolitical phase for the northern Levant. Once again, sources about the effects on Byblos are few. Some features of the city's situation in the following period can, however, be inferred by contextualizing this scattered evidence within the cultural and geopolitical landscape of the time. The resulting picture is represented graphically in fig. 6.11.

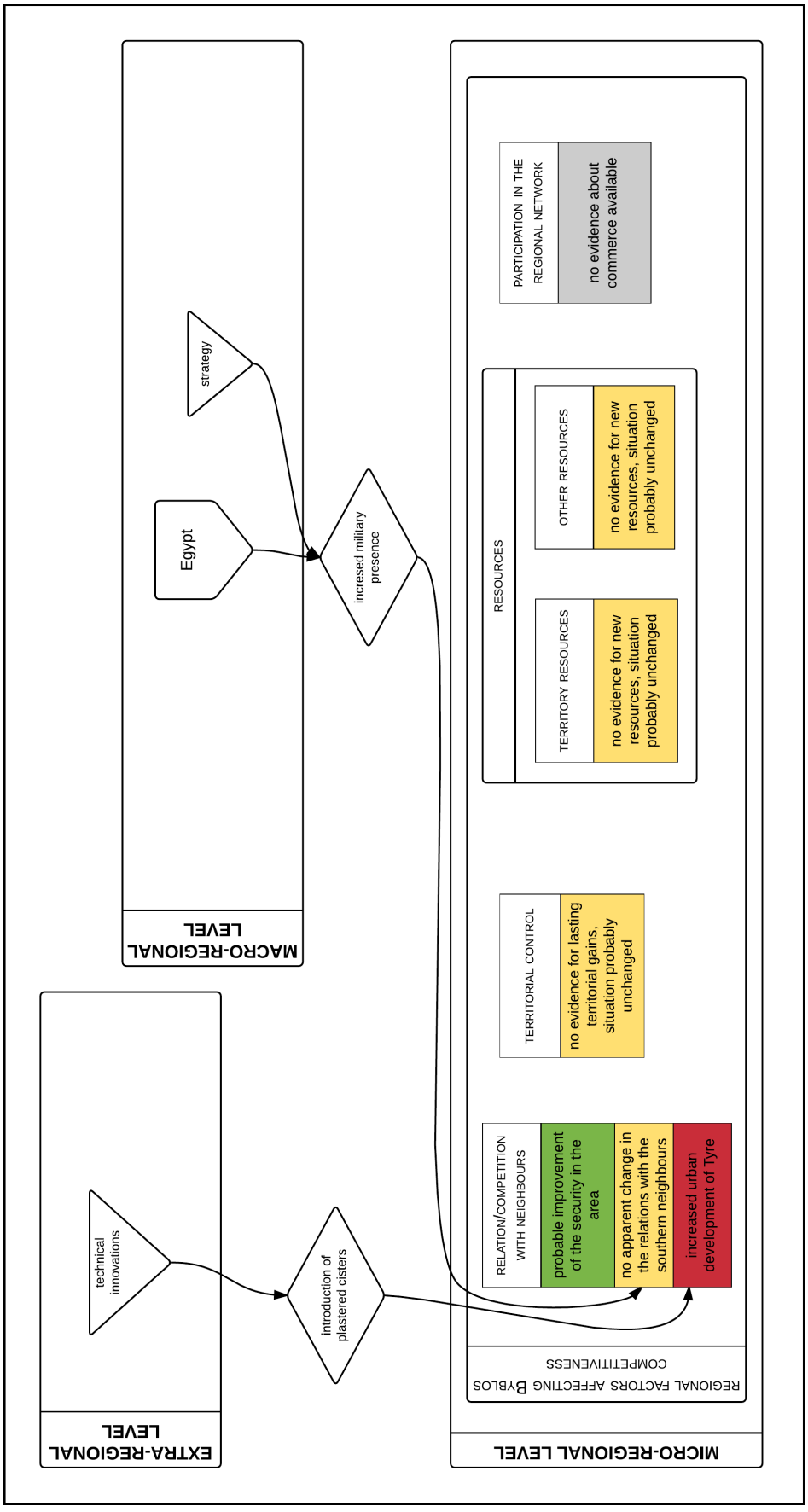


Figure 6.11: Model of the economic and geopolitical landscape of Byblos in the reign of Ramses II after the treaty of Qadesh. Abbreviations: ? = unknown or unclear.

As stated, the conclusion of the treaty sealed the end of the territorial disputes between Egyptian and Hittites in Northern Lebanon and the peace deriving from it created ideal conditions for commerce and economic prosperity (Singer 2002, esp. 199–201).

Byblos surely took advantage of this situation. Archaeological evidence attests that economic exchanges with Egypt continued during the reign of Ramses II, as attested by fragments of stone vessels with his name (§3.5, §4.8.1). While some of these objects could have reached the city in the early years of Ramses II and could relate to his Syrian campaigns as gift exchange or as some form of reward, the form of the name of Ramses II on some of the fragments shows that at least some of them were brought later, around or after the Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty, possibly within a trading context.

The trading network of Byblos was not limited to Egypt, and it could have prospered in the new period of peace. The fragmentary text from Hattusa presented in §5.6.4 shows that textiles from the city were exported to the Hittite empire, while tablets from Ugarit document commercial and epistolary relations with the Syrian city, which was then a Hittite vassal (Singer 1999, 627–83; see above §5.6.5). Byblos, however, seems not to have enjoyed a privileged position in these exchanges. If any, it is Sidon and Tyre that appear as the most prominent cities of the southern Lebanese coast in the Ugarit archives (§5.6.5.2). This prominence of Tyre and Sidon is comparable with the geopolitical landscape of the Iron Age, when they dominated the Phoenician coast (Katzenstein 1973; Elayi 1989; Stieglitz 1990; Stern 1998; Vita 2001–2002; Boyes 2012; see below §6.6.7).

Only interactions with Ugarit are attested, but Ugarit is also the only Levantine coastal city where large archives have been found. It is thus reasonable to assume that similar relations and exchanges probably existed with other cities of the coast. Moreover, the data from Ugarit suggest that the intensity of interactions could have been determined by a combination of factors such as distance, prestige, or the political status of partner cities (§5.6.5.2).

Both archaeological evidence and texts suggest that at the time of Ramses II the Lady of Byblos was still central to the city's interactions with Egypt (see above §6.5.0.1). The goddess was prominent enough to be mentioned as a distinctive feature of the city in Pap. Anastasi I (§5.6.1), while blocks from a chapel bearing the name of Ramses II attest of

Egyptian architectural activities in the sacred area of the city (§4.5). The form of the names on the blocks suggests that the chapel was built after year 21 and therefore after the peace treaty (§4.5). The stele of Ramses II found possibly in the area of the temple of the Lady bears similar name forms, although the text itself seems to be said to be dated to year 4 (§3.5). Similar retrospective datings of steles are known from Egypt; an example from the same reign is the "stele of year 8" from Manshiyet El-Sadr (K*RI* II 360–2, Obsomer 2012, 306–7). The chapel and stele show that Egyptian attention to the city was not only contingent on Ramses II's Syrian campaigns at the beginning of his reign.

These Egyptian dedications were probably paralleled by offerings. The fragments of stone vessels bearing the name of Ramses found by Montet and Dunand (§3.5, §4.8) could have been among them, and in general they attest of the exchanges the city had with Egypt. The fact that two of these fragments were found in one of the royal tombs of Byblos together with uninscribed sherds shows that the royalty also profited from this situation. More broadly the presence of new royal tombs dating to this period suggests that the ruling elite was relatively prosperous.

Ramses II's reign thus appears as a period of positive, although perhaps limited, opportunities for Byblos. The reigns of Ramses II and his successors seem to have been a favourable period for the whole coast (Singer 2002), although this probably also meant that Byblos had to face growing economic competition. In this respect, relative frequencies of attestation in documents from Ugarit may suggest that the most prominent cities of the Lebanese coast were Sidon and Tyre, not Byblos. Such a scenario would anticipate what we see in the Iron Age, when those cities dominated the Phoenician coast while Byblos was relegated to a politically marginal role (§6.6.7; §7).

6.6.7 The period after Ramses II

No written source mentions Byblos in the period after the 19th Dynasty. The archaeological evidence is also rather meagre. Some 20th dynasty scarabs (§3.3, see §B), a fragment of a statue of Ramses III (3.5) as well as some evidence for royal expeditions to the northern Levant (Bardinet 2008, 261–71), may suggest that contacts with Egypt were maintained, but nothing specific can be said about them.

No destruction level that could be associated with the end of the Late Bronze Age was identified in Byblos. The presence in Necropolis K of LH III C Mycenaean pottery, usually associated with so-called Sea Peoples, suggest some interaction with these groups but nothing specific (§4.7).

The Egyptian withdrawal from the northern Levant at the end of the New Kingdom can hardly have been positive for the city (Snape 2011, 414–6; Weinstein 2011). Troubles in the north, with the collapse of the Hittite Empire, could also have weakened its commercial network (Bryce 1998, 327–56; 2012, 9–32; Singer 2000; D'Alfonso and Mora 2012, with refs). There is no evidence suggesting that with the decline of Amurru and its disappearance around the end of the late Bronze Age (Singer 1991, 172–9), Byblos seized the opportunity to extend once again its influence northward. On the contrary, it may be relevant that many of the cities that had belonged to Byblos before the Amarna period and afterwards passed to Amurru (see §5.4.5, §5.4.6) were said in classical times to be colonies of Tyre or Sidon, often with traditions of foundation during the Iron Age. Batruna, said to be founded by Ethobaal of Tyre (Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, viii, 13,2; L. H. Feldman 2004), or Tripoli/Ullassa, said to originate from three colonies of Tyre, Sidon, and Arwad (Strabo, *Geoography*, xvi, 2,15; Roller 2014), are particularly relevant examples. This could suggest that Tyre and Sidon, which may have prospered during the 19th dynasty, exploited the troubles of the end of the Late Bronze Age to extend their influence in the north, filling the power vacuum left by the collapse of Amurru and Ugarit and the disappearance of the Hittite empire. While such a development would fit well with the general picture emerging here, Amurru and its territories in this period of transition have not been investigated in detail, and more specific studies are needed.

The statues of Sheshonq I, Osorkon I and Osorkon II found in the city (§4.3; §6.4) show that in the Iron Age Egypt maintained contact with Byblos. The city however was no longer in the Egyptian sphere of influence and by the middle of the 9th century it paid tribute to Assyria (Healy 1991, 10). Egyptian royal expeditions were still organized to obtain wood for the bark of Amun (Bardinet 2008, 271–5), but no detailed account survives and the evidence is too meagre for detailed discussion.

The only extensive source from the period is the tale of Wenamun, which is likely a literary composition rather than as historically accurate account (Baines 1999; 2009; Schipper 2005; Winand 2011). Nevertheless, even as a tale, it can still be a crucial source of information about narratives and perception of such expeditions at the time. In particular, Wenamun's expedition has more of the character of an ordinary trading mission within the regional network than that of an exceptional royal venture. This at least is what the practical and ordinary obstacles faced by Wenamun suggest and what Zeker-Ba'al, the Byblian king in the tale, seems to think, especially when he asks him for documents supporting his claims or when he seems to implicitly compare Wenamun's mission to that of the other ships in his harbour (1,52; 1,58–2,2; see Schipper 2005, 62, 64–5; see also de Spens 1998 for the local legal challenges).

Moreover, the prominence of the king of Byblos in the negotiations, and the absence of any mention of the Lady of Byblos or her temple in the tale of Wenamun are noteworthy, as they contrast with what is observed for previous periods (§6.5.0.1). It is naturally possible that the "Lady of Byblos" was implied among the "gods" which Zekerbaal was sacrificing to in 1,38 (Schipper 2005, 56), but it is remarkable that she was not explicitly mentioned by the author of the tale, and that even the deity who interceded by talking to Zekerbaal telling him to meet with Wenamun was a "god", not a "goddess" (1,38, Schipper 2005, 56). Egypt did maintain some religious connection with the city and its goddess also after the Late Bronze Age, but this relation seems to change. In particular, Isis, rather than Hathor, started to be associated with the Lady of Byblos (Hollis 2009). As discussed above, this shift could be related to a change in the Egyptian perceptions of the city (§6.5.0.2).

In the following Iron Age, Byblos appears as a peripheral city in the regional context (Stieglitz 1990; Stern 1998; Vita 2001–2002; Elayi 2009; Boyes 2012; see §1). This new configuration was likely a crystallization of developments that started in earlier periods. The end of the New Kingdom was probably the final step in this transition.

7
Conclusions

The Late Bronze Age appears to have been a particularly dynamic and eventful period for Byblos. Although far from being complete or exhaustive, the textual and archaeological sources make it possible to identify some characteristic features and trends in the city, in its evolution, and in its interactions.

Byblos was integrated into a commercial network that connected it with both smaller regional and larger more distant partners. Wood was a crucial resource, both for export and for local use, but it was not the only one. The economy of the city is difficult to reconstruct in any detail, but the few elements that can be inferred from the available evidence suggest that a wide and diversified range of goods and resources were exchanged as well as probably being produced locally.

Some aspects of the society of the city can be inferred from the written sources, especially from the Amarna letters. The most characteristic among these is the prominence of the Lady of Byblos, its main deity, and of her temple. The Lady of Byblos had been worshipped in Byblos at least since the Early Bronze Age, and Egyptians had brought offerings to her temple since no later than the Old Kingdom. Her temple was therefore not only a place of worship but also a crucial actor in interactions with Egypt and in the economic life of the city. The prominence of the goddess and her temple at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, in the time of Thutmose III, is evident, and her salient position is attested throughout the Late Bronze Age and even later. Perceptions

of her role and of that of her temple could, however, have changed over time. Sources from the 18th dynasty show that her temple was involved in economic exchanges with Egypt, but from the 19th dynasty onward this is less clear. The Lady and her temple were still the object of Egyptian attention in the time of Ramses II, when an Egyptian-style chapel was built in the city. At that date, however, the interest could have been primarily religious, and there is no evidence to say whether it also involved significant economic transactions. The absence of attestations of involvement of the goddess and her temple in such interactions could suggest that at the time her economic importance had decreased, or conceivably disappeared.

More broadly, the period of transition from the 18th to the 19th dynasty seems to have been a crucial one. The establishment of the Egyptian domination of the area during the reign of Thutmose III and its consolidation during the later 18th dynasty seem to have had a positive impact on Byblos. The ancient tradition of friendly relations with Egypt may have assured a prominent role in Egyptian operations in the area to the city, which may have built on that to increase its political influence, and possibly its territories, in the wake of the Egyptian conquest. In the Amarna period, however, things seem to have changed. The emergence and expansion of the kingdom of Amurru triggered a phase of instability and war along the northern Lebanese coast. Byblos was directly involved in this confrontation, which cost it the loss of a substantial part of its northern territories. Moreover, the leaders of Amurru appear to have established a network of alliances that stretched from Ugarit through the Beqa'a as far south as Sidon. It is thus likely that the whole of the coast surrounding Byblos became increasingly hostile to it. The defection of Amurru from Egypt and its submission to the Hittite Empire at the end of the Amarna period probably consolidated this state of affairs.

Egyptian interventions at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th dynasties succeeded in briefly reconquering Amurru and might have enabled Byblos to regain some of its territories in the north, but any such gains were probably minor and short-lived: at this point Egyptian control over Amurru seems to have been ephemeral. Nothing suggests that Byblos managed to gain a stable hold on any of the territories lost during the Amarna period. Later, the conclusion of the peace treaty between Ramses II and

Hattusili III probably involved recognition of Amurru's borders, thus putting an end to any attempt of Byblos to regain its old possessions and their resources.

This development probably led to a sharp weakening of its position in the regional geopolitical landscape. Having lost such a large proportion of its domains, Byblos could hardly have maintained after the Amarna period the same power and influence it had enjoyed during the 18th dynasty in the wake of the Egyptian conquests.

Many factors influenced and shaped the city's development during the Late Bronze Age. Changes in the strategic interests of the region's major powers and of the general international political landscape, with the disappearance of Mitanni as a major player and the emergence of the Hittites, were very significant. The establishment of Egyptian dominion in the area and its changing needs and strategic aims affected Byblos in various ways. In particular, the city and its longstanding friendly relations with Egypt could have made it a crucial ally in the early phases of the Egyptian expansion. However, its strategic importance would have decreased later, with the consolidation of the Egyptian hold on the region and the possible emergence of new approaches and better strategic options for the achievement of Egyptian goals. Moreover, since the Early Bronze Age/Old Kingdom, the city's relation with Egypt had been deeply influenced and shaped by ideological factors, as Byblos was not just a commercial partner but also occupied a special place in Egyptian cosmographic narratives. Some evidence suggests that the Egyptian perception of these narratives, and therefore of the city itself, may have changed during the 18th dynasty. The new framework, described in §6.5.0.2, would have probably caused a loss of prestige for Byblos and a reduction in its significance for the Egyptians. Such a change is likely to have had serious negative consequences, especially in troubled periods like the end of the 18th dynasty, when Byblos had to face the direct hostility of neighbouring polities.

The general development of the region during the late 18th and 19th dynasties introduced new factors that are likely to have affected Byblos' situation. While the strengthening of the regional and international commercial network probably created new economic opportunities, the associated benefits probably had a positive effect also on the neighbouring cities, thus increasing competition on the regional level.

In such a scenario, the limitations of Byblos' geographical setting and of the configuration of its territory may have been serious impediments to its development. In particular, although the city was sited on the coast and on the costal road, it was not close to any intersection with any other major commercial route and did not have easy and direct access to the Syrian interior. This limitation was probably not a serious obstacle in the pre-Late Bronze commercial networks, before exchanges became intense, when Byblos had fewer regional competitors, and when factors such as the city's ideological prestige could have favoured it and counterbalanced its less than optimal location. However, within a complex network like that of the Late Bronze Age, and still more during the Iron Age, Byblos' geographical position was commercially less attractive, and hence significantly less favourable, than those of other coastal cities to its north or south. Moreover, architectural and technical innovations could have further favoured the development of some other coastal cities such as Tyre (see §6.6.6).

Similarly, while we don't know what was the precise impact on the city of the troubled years of the end of the Late Bronze Age, it is clear that the changes they brought did not favour it.

These considerations highlight the fact that the decline of Byblos was not, or not only, the consequence of events relating to the general collapse of the Late Bronze Age system. Rather, the position of Byblos in the region had begun to be challenged and eroded already during the Late Bronze Age, probably during the Amarna period, and these events could have started a tread that contributed to its decline, marginalization, and eclipse in the Iron Age.

Byblos, and therefore the present research, however, are only a part of a much larger picture. It would therefore be valuable to look at my results in larger synchronic and diachronic perspectives. For instance, it may be worth comparing them with the patterns and dynamics characterising previous or following periods, or looking at patterns in the evolution of its contemporary neighbours, in order to understand whether and how the different political entities of the region affected one another. Some of the approaches presented in this thesis could help in such an undertaking, if applied to other periods, sites, or regional entities.

The present research exemplifies the relevance and fruitfulness of combining different types of evidence, especially when written sources are few and scattered in time and space. The importance of Byblos in the Levantine geopolitical landscape has long been known, but this is the first time that such a range of different written sources has been collected and discussed in detail together with relevant archaeological evidence. Since these written sources had various origins, audiences, and functions, they make it possible to look at the city from multiple perspectives, revealing different, at times complementary, aspects of its socio-economic structures and interactions. For example, some Egyptian sources highlight the special ideological and religious relation linking the city with Egypt, while the analysis of texts from Ugarit adds information about Byblos' participation in the normal regional network, an aspect that has rarely been considered.

Moreover, if one takes into consideration archaeological evidence, light is shed on other aspects of the city, such as its cultic practices, allowing a contextualization of the events and relations mentioned in the texts. In this undertaking, the creation of a database and the use of digital tools has made it possible to recover data from old excavation records and to better visualize the results. The main advantage of using digital tools, however, is probably the possibility of publishing the raw data online. Sharing this information online not only allows other scholars to access it and to use it in their own research, it also assures its preservation, something that is particularly relevant for today's Levant. This combination of sources contributes to a general picture that, while far from exhaustive, gives a glimpse of the multiple elements characterizing the city and its society. In addition, the use of a theoretical descriptive model makes it practicable to combine the different data within a coherent framework and hence to sketch the historical development of the city throughout the Late Bronze Age, and even to suggest some general features of periods for which specific sources are scarce or lacking.

Byblos, with its relatively salient presence in the written sources from the earliest periods onward and its extensive archaeological excavations, is exceptional in the panorama of the Northern Levant. Nevertheless, at least some elements of the approach presented in this thesis could be fruitfully applied to other political entities and to the wider geopolitical reality of the region. Amurru would be the best candidate. Although the original

core territory of this kingdom in the Lebanese mountains is archaeologically little known, various cities and sites related with it, such as Irqata and Sumur, have been at least in part excavated and explored. Moreover, as in the case of Byblos, a wide range of written sources preserves information about the kingdom during the Late Bronze Age. Discussing all these data together, and even combining them with what has emerged from the present research on Byblos, should result in new insights and in a better understanding not only of Amurru itself, but also of dynamics and structures in the region as a whole. Less well attested cities and sites, such as Sidon or Qadesh, could also be integrated into such a discourse, and what emerged from better attested neighbouring sites and cities could be used to offer suggestions about them and to compensate, at least in part, for the lack of direct evidence.

Although gaps will always exist, such an approach may provide clues for filling some of them and reconstructing a more precise general picture. Furthermore, a better understanding of the local realities, and of their synchronic and diachronic connections, would yield new insights into the dynamics affecting these societies, and therefore into the Late Bronze Age Levant as a whole.

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Appendices

A Appendix

A.1 Software

One of my main goals is to make not only my results, but also my data and my methods available to the widest possible audience. I believe in fact that having fully access not only to the results of a research, but also to the sources, the methods and the tools used is crucial: everyone should not only be able to discuss the outcome of my study, but should also have the possibility of picking up and re-elaborating all of my data according to one's specific needs, in order to carry on the research as freely as possible.

These considerations have shaped my decisions regarding the software and methods I use. In particular, I have decided to work with open source, widely available and possibly easy to use software. This decision is not only in agreement with my sharing philosophy, but it also has the advantage of allowing everyone to have easy and free access to the software I am using, and therefore to my data, tools and techniques. Freely available plugins, and the possibility to easily write new ones, often combined with thriving online communities, gives flexibility to open source software, and increase its potential. When various comparable programs are available, I tend to choose the alternative that appears to be the easiest and the most popular.

Finally, there is the problem of compatibility. Technology evolves very quickly, and it is very difficult to foresee which format will still be available and which one will

have disappeared in 10 or 15 years from now. Rely on opensource software or licenced but freeware software supported by large communities online should give a slightly higher probability of continuity, or at least a slightly higher probability of backward compatibility that should at least allow to access and then update old data formats.

Here below is a list of the software I have used:

A. Gimp 2.8.10

- Raster graphics editor.
- `http://www.gimp.org/`
- Licence: GNU General Public License v3+
- I used Gimp as editor for most of the figures of the thesis. It is freely distributed, and it allows to edit a wide range of image formats.

B. Inkscape 0.91

- Professional vector graphics editor.
- `http://www.inkscape.org/`
- Licence: GNU General Public License v3+
- I used Inkscape to create and edit vector images. INKSCAPE was also useful in the preliminary elaboration of the plans of Dunand's excavations used in the 3D modelling of the Obelisk Temple (§4.4).

C. GraphClick 3.0.3

- Graph digitizer software.
- `http://www.arizona-software.ch/graphclick/`
- Licence: proprietary, distributed freeware
- I used GraphClick 3.0.3 to retrieve the coordinates of objects and architectural features from the plans of Dunand's excavations.

D. QGIS 2.8

- Geographic Information System.
- `http://www.qgis.org/`
- Licence: GNU General Public License
- I used QGIS to elaborate satellite data and the geographical maps, as well as to calculate and generate the data used the heatmaps in §3.3, §3.4.

E. Blender 2.75

- 3D computer graphics software.
- `http://www.blender.org/`
- Licence: GNU General Public License v2+
- I used Blender to elaborate satellite data and to generate 3D geographical models, such as the images of the Lebanese coast used in §5.4.

F. SketchUp Make 2014

- Raster graphics editor.
- `http://www.sketchup.com`
- Licence: proprietary, distributed freeware
- I used Sketchup to create the 3D models of the Obelisk Temple (§4.4), and to elaborate the *terminus sub quo*, the *terminus super quem* and the approximate stratigraphic sections derived from them (Appendix C). SketchUp is not an opensource software, but its basic version is freeware. Moreover, Sketchup projects can be shared online in virtual library and can be integrated into other packets, such as GoogleEarth, which could be useful in possible future developments of my project.

G. ELKI 0.6.5

- "Data mining" software framework.
- `http://elki-project.github.io`
- Licence: GNU Affero General Public License v4+
- I used ELKI in the preliminary analysis and elaboration of archaeological data.

H. GNU Octave 3.4.0

- Software primarily intended for numerical computations.
- `http://www.gnu.org/software/octave/`
- Licence: GNU General Public License
- I used GNU Octave in the preliminary analysis and elaboration of archaeological data.

B
Appendix

B.1 Online Supplement

As I strongly believe in the importance of freely sharing and distributing not only the results, but also the sources of one's research, I have decided to make all my data freely available online.

In order to make it easily accessible, and to assure it at least some stability I decded to use GitHub, a free opensource cloud service which already host thousands of projects and data. In addition to freely storing the data indeterminately, Github offers also the possibility to download and to create new instances of the uploaded data. This means that new analyses and subprojects could easily be created and linked with my original set of data if anyone will ever wish to do so.

The address of the GitHub repository associated with this DPhil thesis is the following: `https://github.com/Kilani-DPhil/Byblos`

B.1.1 GitHub repository – Content

The follwoing data are available in the GitHub repository.

- Database files
  - As explained in §2.3, one of the results of my research was the development of a database collecting the object found by Dunand in his campaigns of 1926–

1932 and 1933–1938, and published in his catalogue volumes (§2.1.3). The resulting data, collected in .csv files are available in the GitHub repository. The table presents the catalogue number, the findspot coordinates, a transcription of Dunand's entry automatically obtained with OCR software, as well as various other information about the objects themselves (such as their category, material, provenance etc). A *readme* file explaining how to read the .csv table is also available in the github repository. A working, searchable version of the database is also available online. It is currently hosted on Heroku, a git-based provider using a PostgreSQL database engine. The address is the following: `http://kilani.herokuapp.com/byblos_db/`. Note however that the location of this database could change in the future. The updated address of the database, however, is available in a specific *readme* file in the main github repository.

- 3D models – Obelisk temple
  - Files of the 3D models of the Obelisk Temple discussed in the thesis (in particular §4.4). Both the files of the 3D models (.skp format) and the raw sets of coordinates used to generate them (.csv format) are available.
- 3D models – Stratigraphy
  - Files of the 3D renditions of the *terminus sub quo* and *terminus super quem* plans discussed in Appendix C. Both the files of the 3D models (.skp format) and the raw sets of coordinates used to generate them (.csv format) are available.
- Approximate stratigraphy
  - Files of the approximate vertical stratigraphies along the x axes of Dunand's excavation grid for the campaigns 1933–1938. Presented also in Appendix C.
- 3D model of the Lebanese coast
  - 3D model of the Lebanese coast obtained from satellite data and used in figs 5.4 and 5.5.
- Maps and plans
  - QGIS files for the various maps and plans used in the thesis, including the heatmaps presented in §3.3 and §3.4.
- Objects
  - Data about specific categories of objects discussed in the thesis. In particular, .csv tables with data about Mycenean pottery (§3.2), scarabs (§3.3), spindle whorls (§3.4) and loom weights (§3.4) are available.

- Images
  - Any image created by the author and used in the thesis.

C
Appendix

C.1 Identification of the Late Bronze Age layers

C.1.1 Definition of the theoretical framework

Without stratigraphic data, it is challenging to identify the Bronze Age layers. The structure of the site is an obstacle: not only is there the complex and often uneven stratigraphic development typical of any urban area, it is also clear that many sectors were disturbed or destroyed by natural phenomena (erosion) or by later (especially Greco-Roman and medieval) activities. Dunand himself observed that "à Byblos les couches hellénistiques et romaines sont souvent superposées directement aux couches du Moyen Empire" (Dunand 1939, 64; see also p.79). Still, mentions of Late Bronze Age material and architectural remains are scattered through his publications, suggesting that Late Bronze Age layers did survive here and there. It is thus important to determine where these layers could be. While it is clear that it is not possible to reconstruct the stratigraphy of the whole site, something can be done, and Dunand (1954, 3–5) suggested a method for making such a reconstruction possible (see above §2.1.2, §2.1.3, §2.1.4)

Dunand's ideas are a good starting point and can be further developed. In particular, on the basis of the principles of stratigraphy one can assume that an object found above another one is later in date than the latter, unless some disruption has occurred. Therefore, the lowest object of a given period can be taken as a reference point, a "*terminus sub quo*",

under which the uncontaminated layers of the previous periods could be located – "could be" rather than "are", because layers of previous periods might have been contaminated by later material or might be absent, either because they never existed or because they were destroyed. If uncontaminated layers of previous periods do exist, then they must be located below that point. If instead there has been a disruption, one may find a later object below an earlier layer. In this case, the object will still be a valid "*terminus sub quo*", but one that will mark the possible limits of the disruption itself.

So for example, if in a given Column (see §2.3 for the terminology used here) there is Greek material in levées 1, 3 and 4, it can be assumed that the Late Bronze Age layer was either located somewhere below levée 4 or, if it was above those levels, it was contaminated or destroyed by later activity at the site. Obviously, such a limit is only a possible stratigraphic indication. If the Late Bronze Age layers never existed or were destroyed, this limit may lie directly on earlier strata, dating for instance to the Middle or Early Bronze Age.

Another aspect to take into consideration is that not all the columns of the excavations have yielded material that can be used to define such a *terminus*. This problem can be managed by using those Excavation Units that did yield dating objects as reference points for a triangulation that creates a virtual plane encompassing all the relevant area. This plane approximates the limit of the *terminus sub quo* for the Late Bronze Age layers also for those columns that did not yield any diagnostic dating artefact. In this way the gaps in the information represented by these empty columns will be filled in by an average value represented by the plane and inferred from the value of the *terminus sub quo* in those columns around it that have yielded objects. This approach is illustrated graphically in fig. C.1.

After having defined the position of the plane corresponding to the *terminus sub quo*, it is possible to obtain a series of vertical sections of the site along the x or y lines of the excavation grid. These sections enable one to visualize where the limits of the layers so defined are located in relation to the levées. They can therefore be considered as an approximate guideline for the stratigraphy of the site, although a rough and loose one, with a resolution of only one Excavation Unit (fig. C.2).

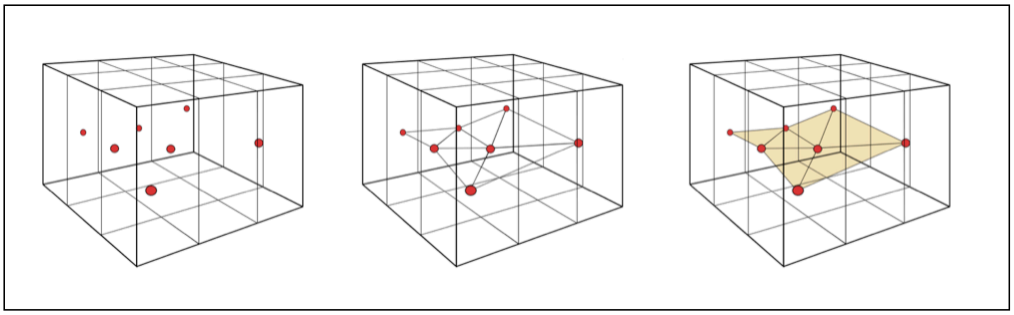


Figure C.1: The lowest dating objects of each column (red dots here) can be triangulated to build an artificial plane approximating and vertically representing the *terminus sub quo*. The triangulation allows the plane and the *terminus* to be projected for those columns that do not contain any dating object.

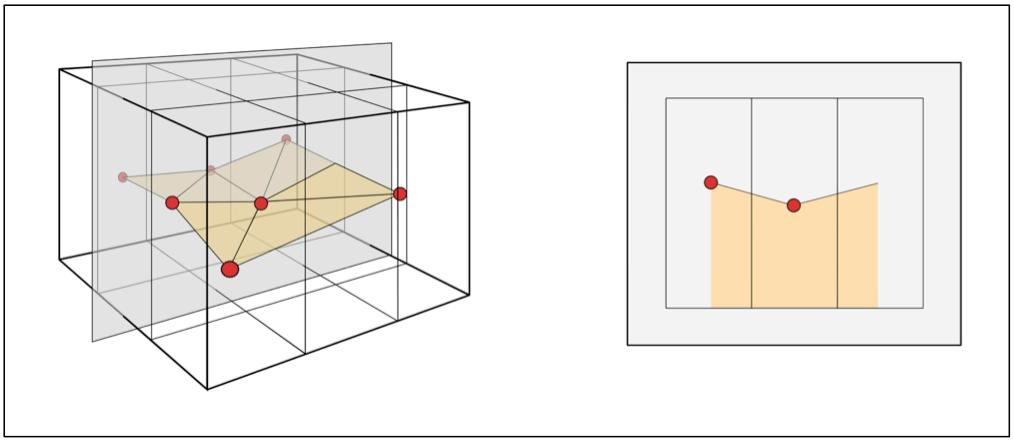


Figure C.2: Starting from the three-dimensional representation, it is possible to obtain vertical sections in which the projection of the *terminus* can be used as a stratigraphic guideline.

It is clear that if the columns and Excavation Units with diagnostic objects are close to each other, the resulting approximation of the layer in the adjacent and intermediate empty columns will have a relatively high degree of reliability. If, however, the Excavation Units with dating objects used as reference points are some distance away, the resulting plane is potentially less reliable and precise (fig. C.3).

Due to the limitations of the data available, the resolution of such a reconstructed stratigraphic model is relatively low. Since the location of the objects is given only by Excavation Units, the resolution of the reconstructed stratigraphy cannot be higher than that of the unit. This means that although it is possible to identify the Excavation Unit containing the limit of the layer, it is not possible to define where and how this

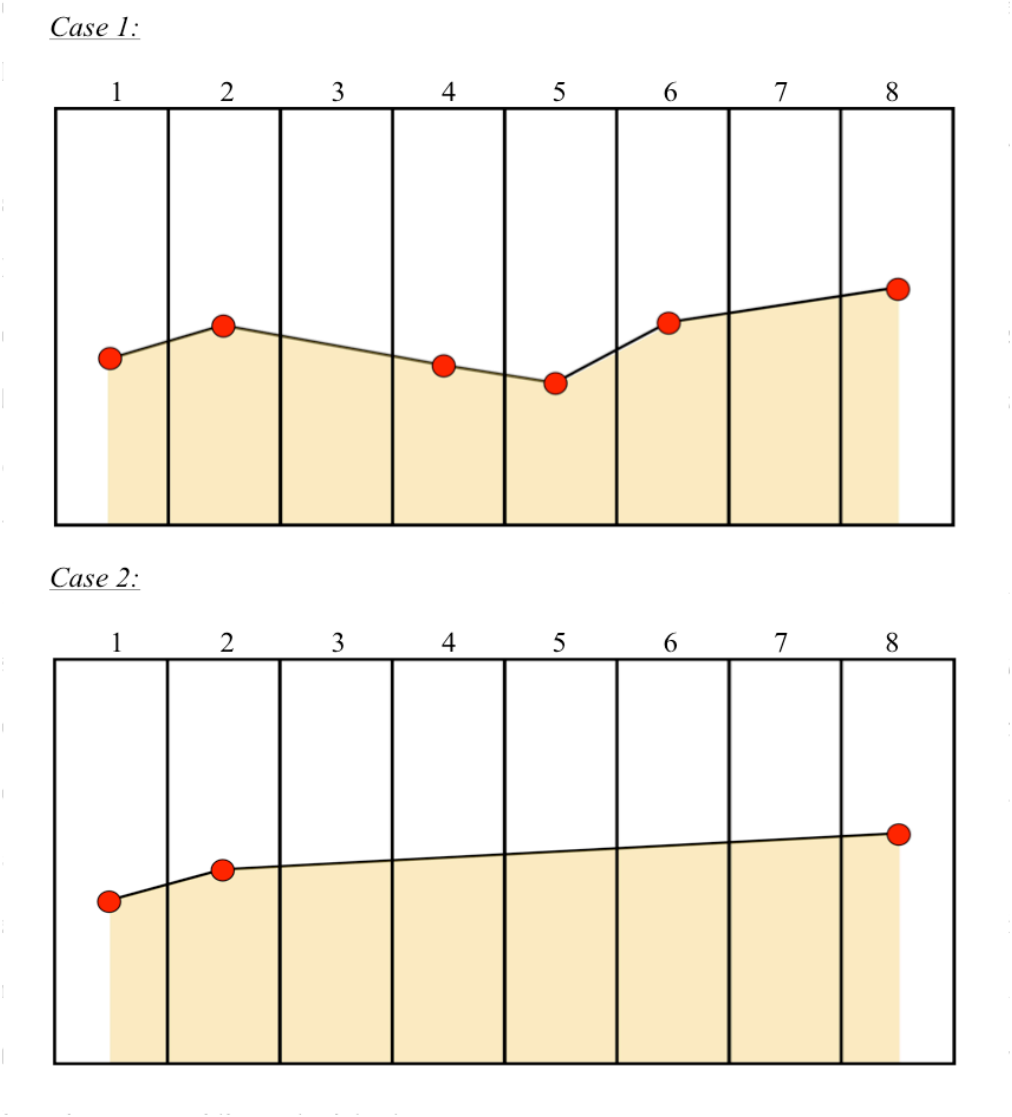


Figure C.3: In case 1, six of the eight columns have dating objects on which the *terminus* can be based. In this case, the estimation of the limit for the two empty columns can be considered relatively accurate, as it is inferred from the position of the dating objects in the adjacent columns. In case 2, by contrast, only three of the eight columns have dating objects. The estimation of the *terminus* in the five remaining, intermediate empty columns is therefore much less precise.

limit passes within that Unit. According to Lauffray,[1] Dunand did use a more precise system of coordinates to record the absolute location of every object discovered. These data could be used to refine the stratigraphy, but if they have survived, they have never been published.

In addition to the definition of this *terminus sub quo* for the Late Bronze Age layers, it is also possible to try to define a *terminus super quem*, that is, the upper limit of the layers of the periods preceding the Late Bronze Age. The principle is the same, but reversed: the *terminus super quem* can be defined using the highest attestation of material of previous periods.

This *terminus super quem*, however, is much less indicative than the *terminus sub quo*, since whereas only direct vertical contamination can introduce a later object into an earlier layer, many factors can cause an earlier object to be found in a later layer. In addition, if a later-object-into-earlier-layer contamination is usually limited in space to the area affected by the disturbance, an earlier-object-into-later-layer contamination can also involve significant horizontal displacements: for example earth (and associated objects) dug out from a pit could be deposited very far from the pit itself. Similarly, an object that has been circulating for decades or even centuries could end up in chronologically and spatially unrelated contexts. As a consequence, the presence of an object in a certain place does not necessarily imply that the layers below it belong to the same or to an earlier period, nor even that, if that is not the case, they have been disturbed: the object could have been brought to the surface elsewhere and could have been moved there at a later time.

These are serious limitations, and therefore the *terminus super quem* should be seen only as a very approximate guide. With some adjustment, however, these limitations can be contained and the *terminus super quem* can be fine-tuned in order to obtain a relatively valid stratigraphic indicator. In particular, identifying coherent ensembles of objects, rather than isolated objects, improves the reliability of a *terminus super quem*. It is clear that one isolated Middle Bronze Age pot is not indicative of a Middle Bronze

[1] Lauffray 1995, 457. The existence of such a system can also be inferred from the precise location of the objects in the plans of Volume II and by the scattered mentions of specific coordinates in that volume (see e.g. Dunand 1954, 26, 272).

Age layer, but a group of Middle Bronze Age vessels within a small vertical or horizontal range of Excavation Units would point to the presence of a stratigraphic ensemble that might reflect a Middle Bronze Age layer. Focusing on intact, fragile objects is another productive strategy, so that ceramics are a very good choice. Vessels break easily, either before deposition or as a consequence of later disturbance, and their sherds can easily get out of context. Sherds are thus poor indicators for the *terminus super quem*, but vessels that are intact or broken but complete, can indicate deposition and little or no disturbance.

C.1.2 Definition of the terminus sub quo and terminus super quem for the Late Bronze Age layer

As mentioned above, the *terminus sub quo* and the *terminus super quem* for the Late Bronze Age layers can be defined only for the section of the site excavated between 1933 and 1938, which was published in enough detail for such an approach to be viable. The grid of the earlier excavations was too wide and too irregular, while the material excavated later has never been published. In terms of material, the area excavated between 1933 and 1938 is also the most productive for such an approach: the area excavated before 1933 is relatively small, with limited quantities of objects,[2] while the campaigns after 1938 focused mainly on the walls or on areas outside them and, according to the published reports, they uncovered mainly, if not exclusively, remains from the Iron Age or the Persian, Greek and Roman periods (See the excavation reports mentioned above in §2.1.3 for details).

In order to define the *terminus sub quo*, abundant and widespread objects that postdate the Bronze Age are needed, so that many reference points across the surface under analysis will be available. Pottery and potsherds are ideal, but two problems have to be considered. First, only a small part of the pottery found was listed in Dunand's catalogue (1939, 9). Second, even the published sherds are not described or assessed in detail, and therefore too often cannot be dated. Some later studies treat particular categories of pottery from Byblos, but these mostly focus on pre-Late Bronze Age material and are

[2] 5756 objects found under Dunand between 1926 and 1933 (Dunand 1939) versus 12537 objects found between 1933 and 1938 (Dunand 1954).

not useful in the definition of the *terminus sub quo* (compare Williams 1975; Saghieh-Beydoun 1983; Thalmann 2008). There are two notable exceptions. The first is a group of Iron Age vessels identified and studied by Grace Homsy (2003). Homsy was able to study some of the pottery excavated by Dunand that is now kept in the Museum in Byblos. Her work is not exhaustive, as the vessels she had access to represent only a fraction of the pottery excavated,[3] but she succeeded in identifying 120 Iron Age vessels of various types. However, their usefulness for the present study is limited since, of the 120 vessels she lists, only 20 came from the area of the 1933–1938 excavations, with one of those being a surface find whose original place of deposition is not known.

The second pottery type that can be used in this definition is impressed handles. These are handles, usually of amphorae, that bear stamp impressions with Greek inscriptions and Greek iconography; they are therefore all later than the Late Bronze Age. Dunand published them in his catalogue and, in view of the close attention that he paid to all kinds of inscribed objects, the handles that he listed are likely to represent a good part, perhaps the totality, of those found in the excavations (confirmed by Dunand 1954, x). Given their abundance and their ubiquity on the site, they are a very good stratigraphic indicator.

Coins can also help in the definition of the *terminus sub quo* having been introduced to Phoenicia in the 5th century BC, long after the Late Bronze Age. Like the stamped handles, coins are quite abundant, ubiquitous, and well documented by Dunand. Neither of these categories dates to the periods immediately after the Late Bronze Age, but they are the best available markers in the published material. This gap in time means that any possible Late Bronze Age layers could be a little bit deeper than the level indicated by the *terminus sub quo*. Since, however a gap corresponding to the Early and Middle Iron Age layers has been observed (Mazza 1994; Homsy 2003, 246), it is possible that a *terminus* defined in this way could be quite close to the limits of the Late Bronze Age layers.

[3]The remaining part, which Homsy was unable to study, is in Beirut. It is impossible to estimate the size of this group and what percentage of the pottery found under Dunand it may represent. It is, however, clear that various vessels appearing in Dunand's catalogue that could date to the Iron Age are absent from in Homsy's list (e.g. nos 9864, 9931, 10378, 11199 and 13034, which are similar to 10377 and 14019, recognized by Homsy as dating to the Iron Age). This could be because she did not have access to them or she did not recognize them.

For the definition of the *terminus super quem*, I use the Early and Middle Bronze Age vessels studied and classified by Saghieh (1983), Williams (1975), and Thalmann (2008). Although these vessels neither represent the totality of the pottery of these periods nor all those recorded by Dunand, they are numerous and widespread enough to cover the entirety of the area studied here. These vessels are generally complete,[4] which increases their validity as stratigraphic indicators.

Among the objects that would ideally be used in defining the *terminus sub quo* and the *terminus super quem*, some have to be left out, either because they are clearly in a disturbed context or because their coordinates are flawed by errors in Dunand's publication; these are listed in the online supplement (see Appendix B). This leaves 95 valid points of reference for the *terminus sub quo* and 71 for the *terminus super quem*. By using 3D modelling software (here Google Sketchup) it is possible to plot these points and to obtain a model of the excavation with the two *termini* represented as planes. In order to have a spatial frame of reference within which the planes of the *termini* can be plotted, I have defined the original topographical profile of the whole area excavated by Dunand. This topographical profile is obtained by plotting the coordinates of the highest objects found in each Column, that is, the first object found under the surface in each Column. The results of this process are displayed in §C.1.3.1 below.

C.1.3 Figures

C.1.3.1 Terminus sub quo and terminus super quem

In figure C.4 the *terminus sub quo* plane is plotted together with the surface of the site, while in figure C.5 the surface is removed and the plane itself is visible. In figure C.6 the *terminus super quem* is plotted together with the *terminus sub quo* and with the surface. In figure C.7 the *terminus super quem* is plotted only with the surface, in figure C.8 only with the *terminus sub quo*, and finally in figure C.1.3.1 it is plotted alone. In the following figures the vertical dimension is magnified 10 times in relation to the horizontal. This allows the general profile of the areas of the site that are being investigated to be emphasized and to better appreciate the vertical sections obtained.

[4] Although they could be broken when discovered.

Figure C.4 a)

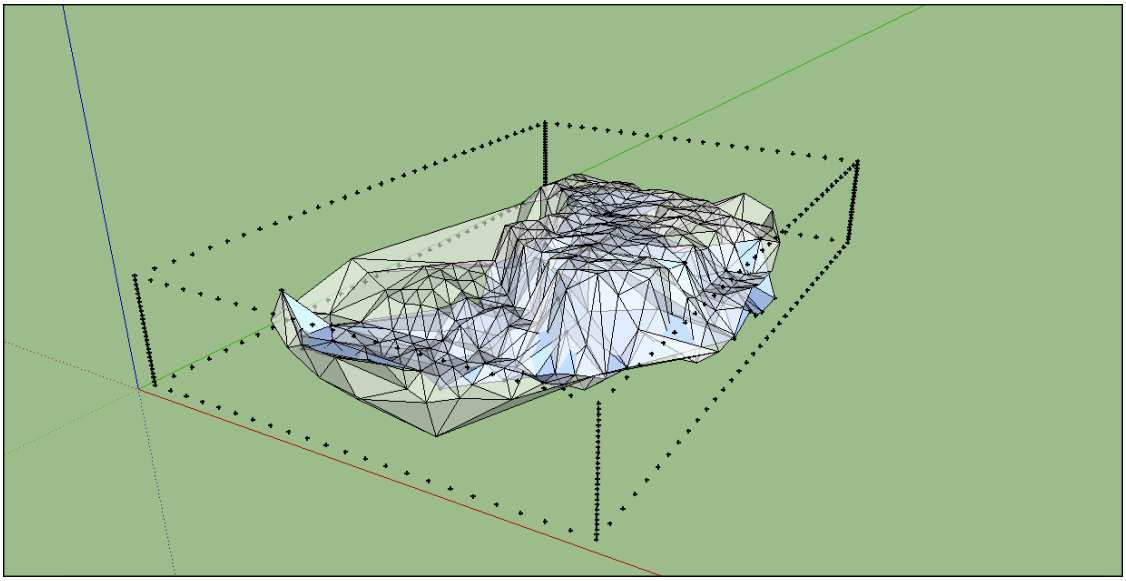


Figure C.4 b)

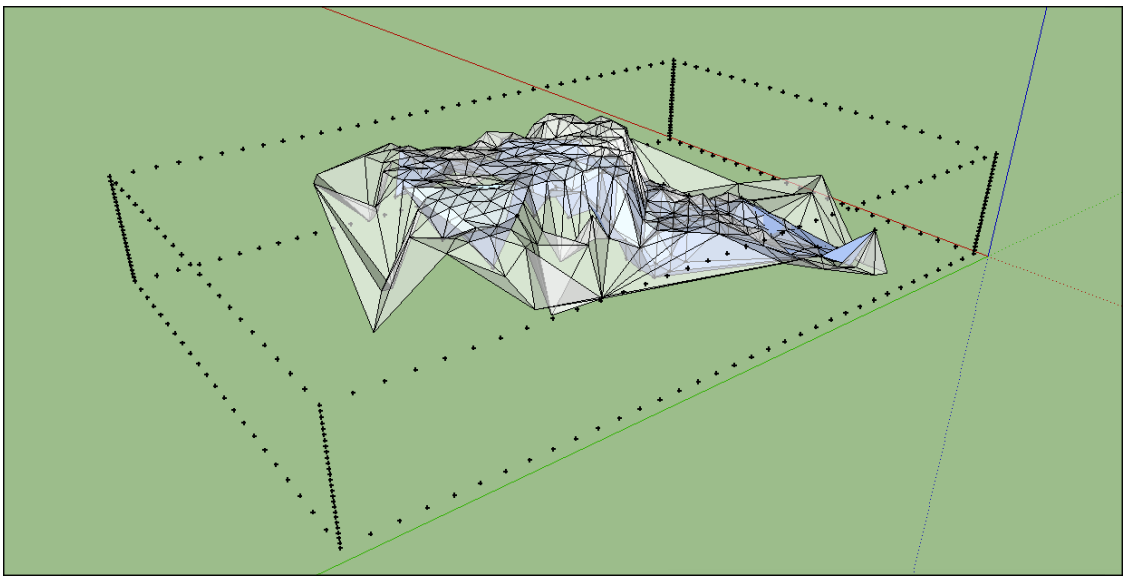


Figure C.4 c)

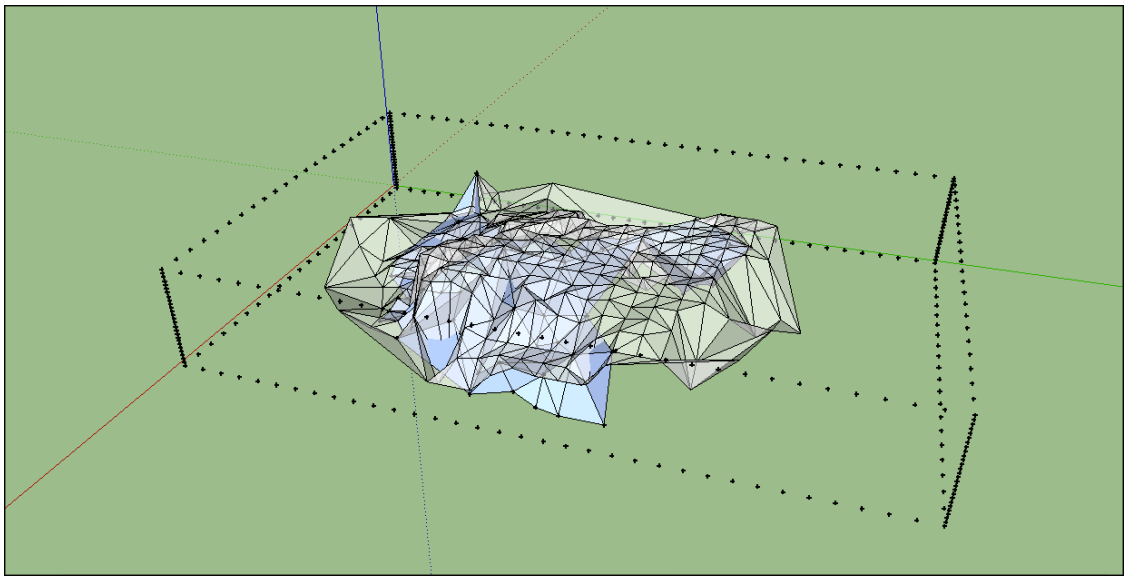


Figure C.4 d)

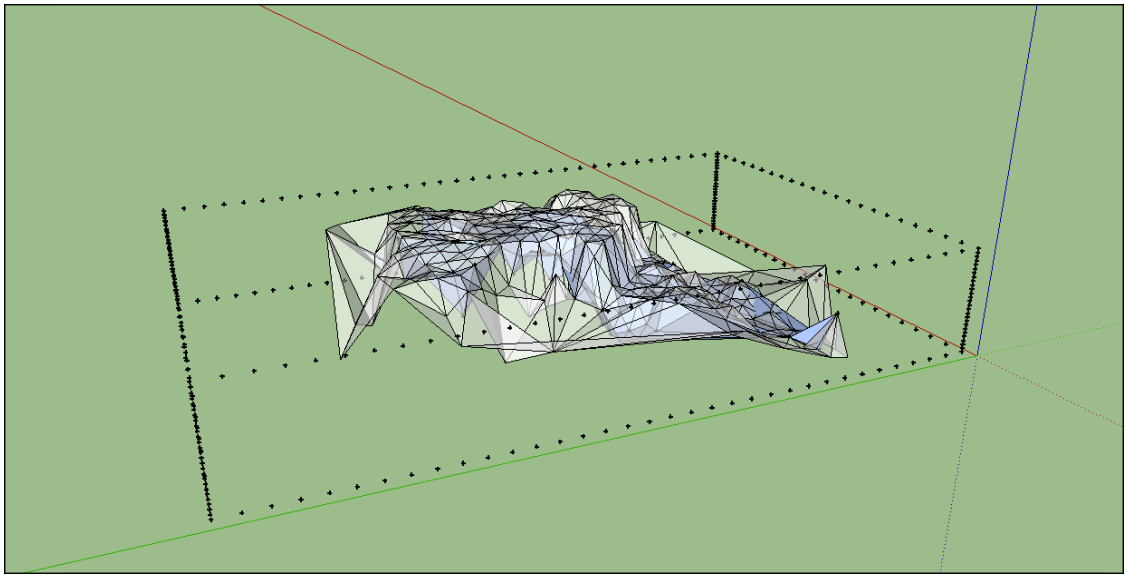


Figure C.4: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus sub quo* (blue) together with the surface of the area excavated (white).

Figure C.5 a)

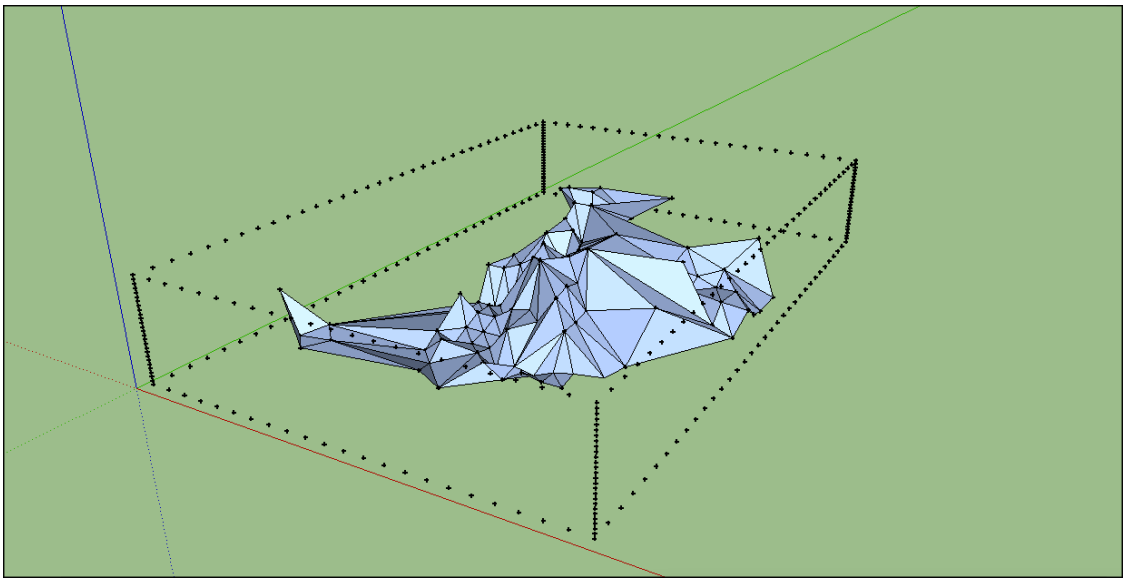


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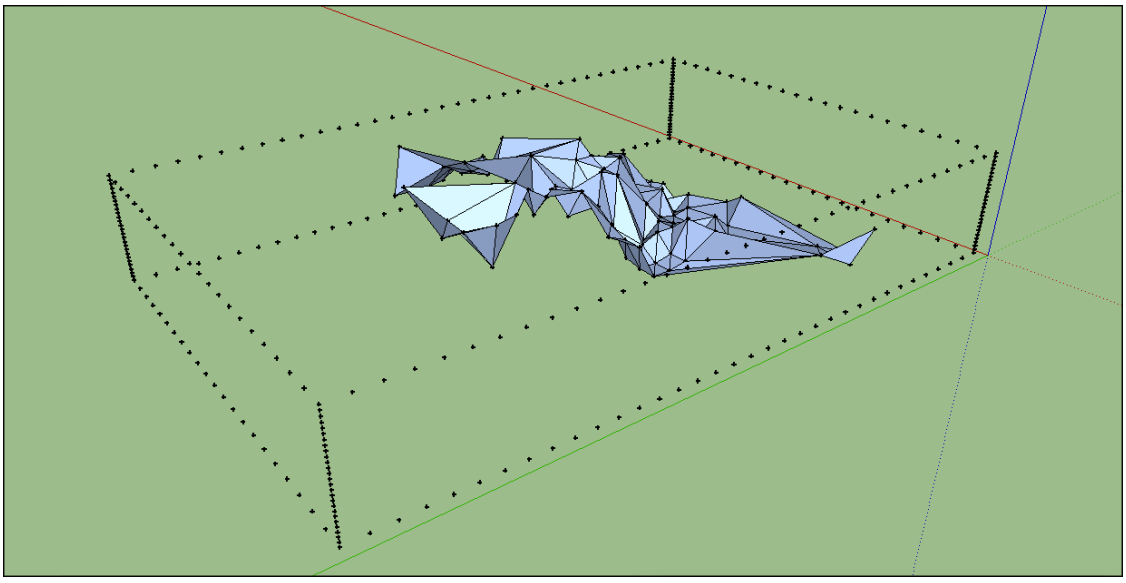


Figure C.5 c)

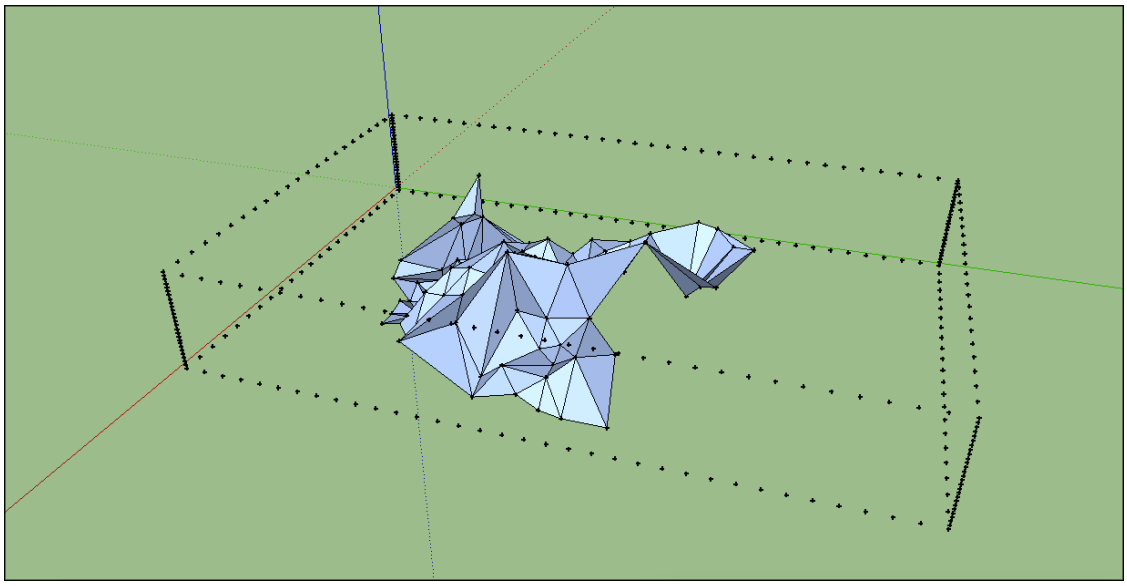


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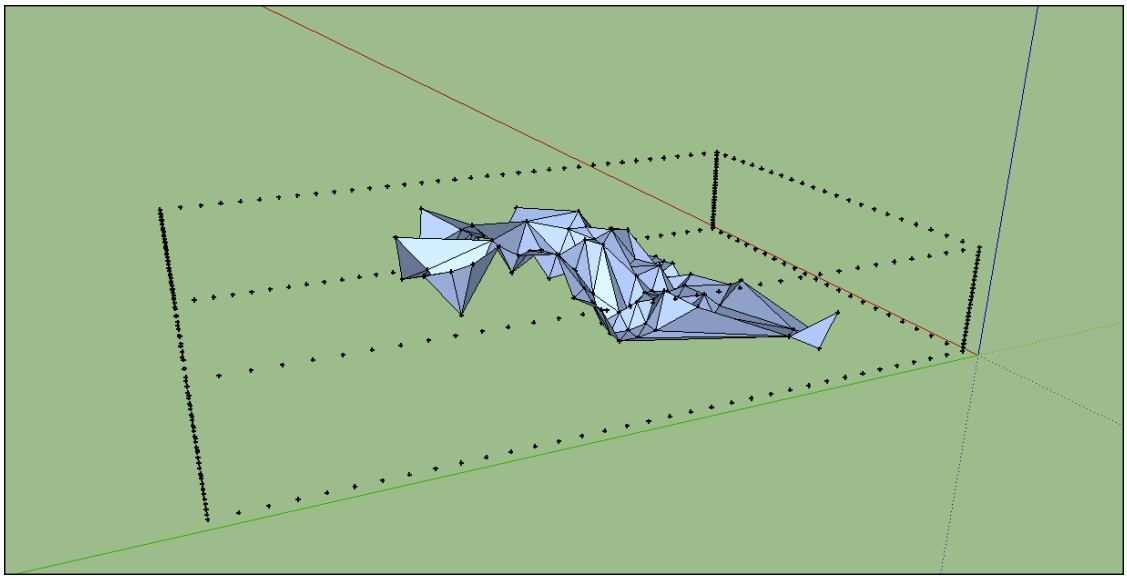


Figure C.5: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus sub quo* (blue).

Figure C.6 a)

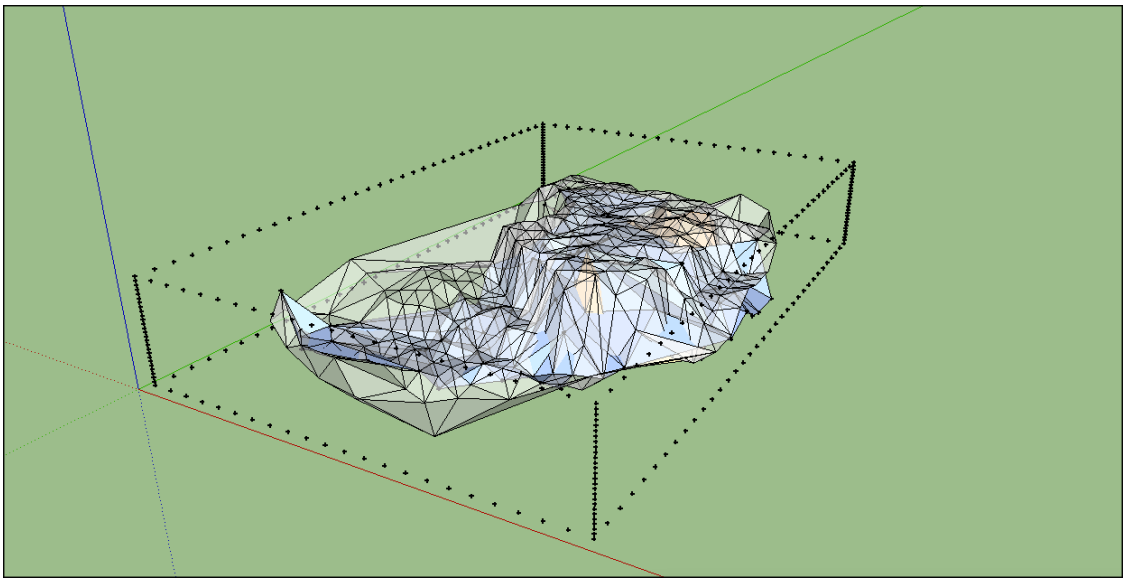


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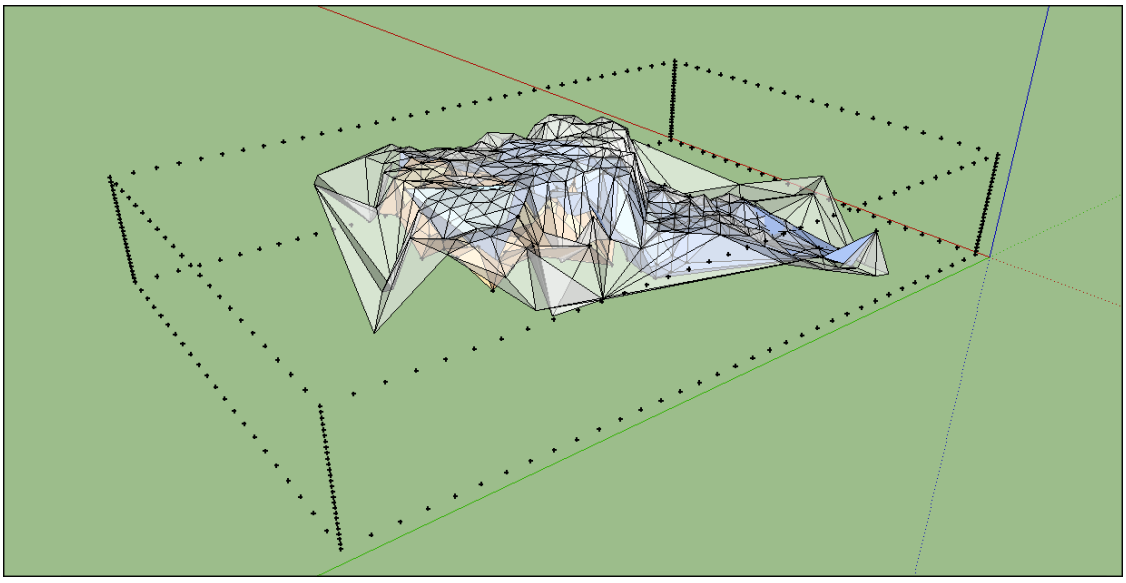


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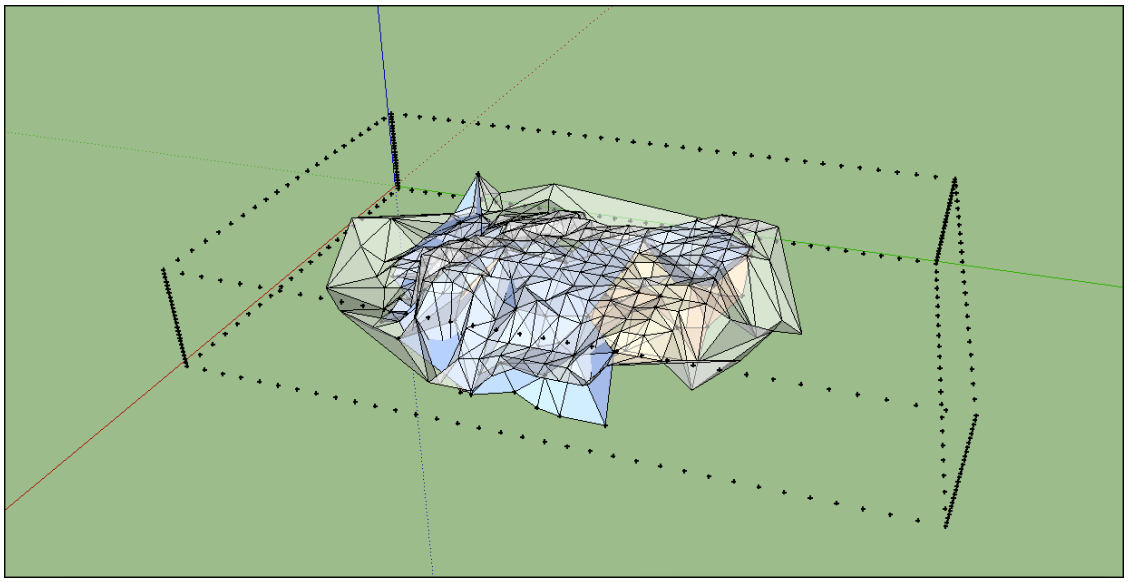


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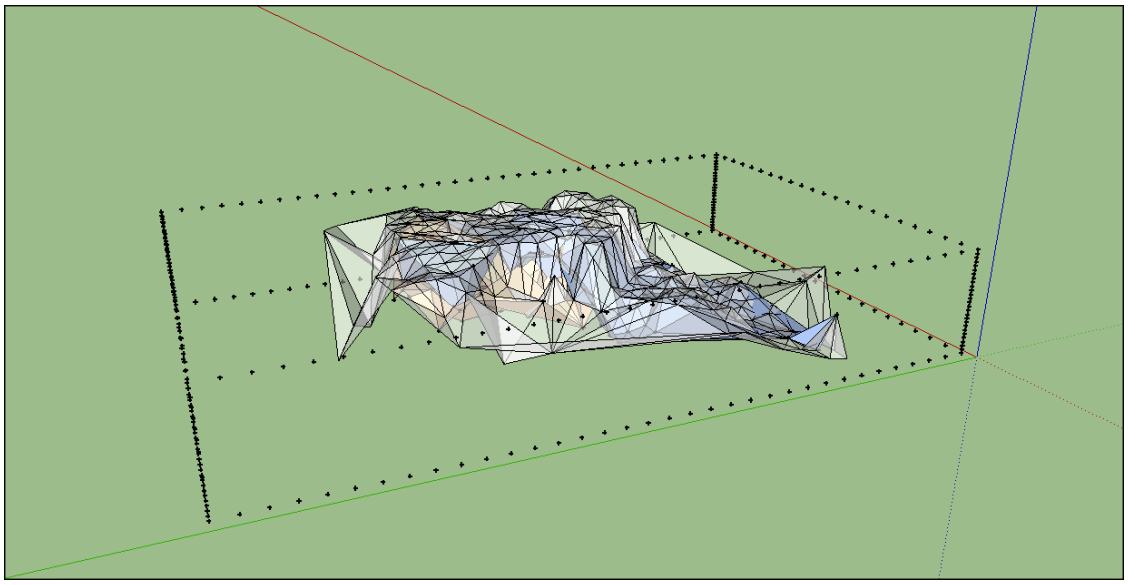


Figure C.6: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus sub quo* (blue) together with the *terminus super quem* (yellow) and the surface of the excavated area (white).

Figure C.7 a)

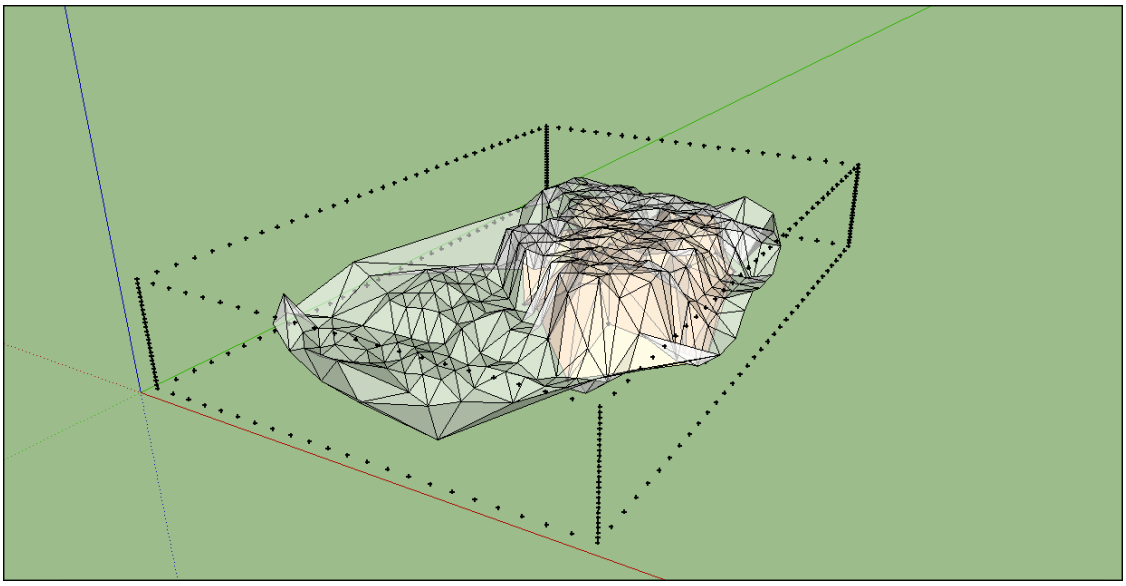


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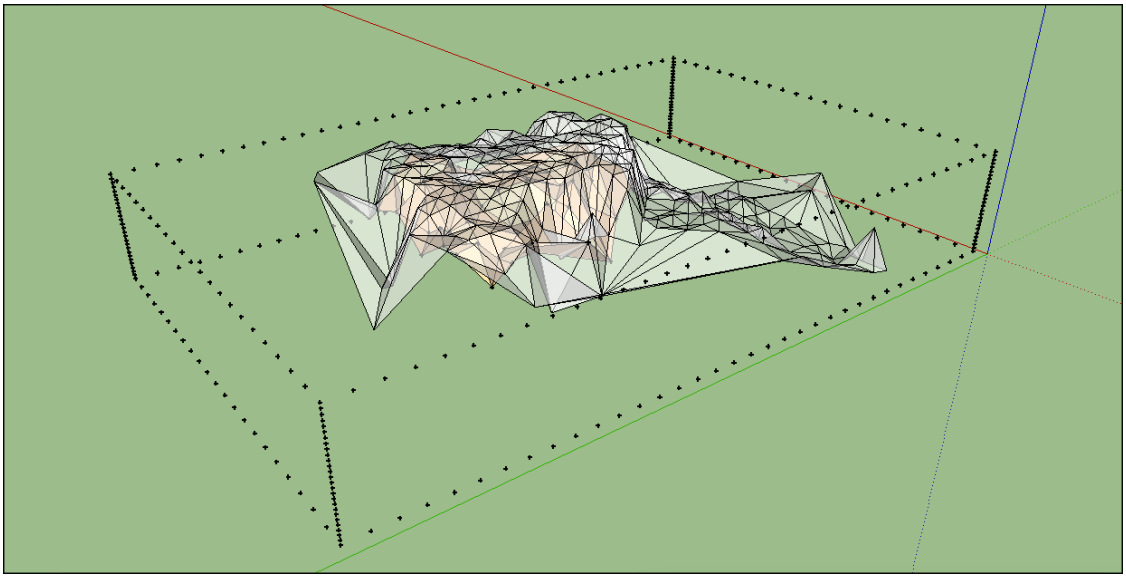


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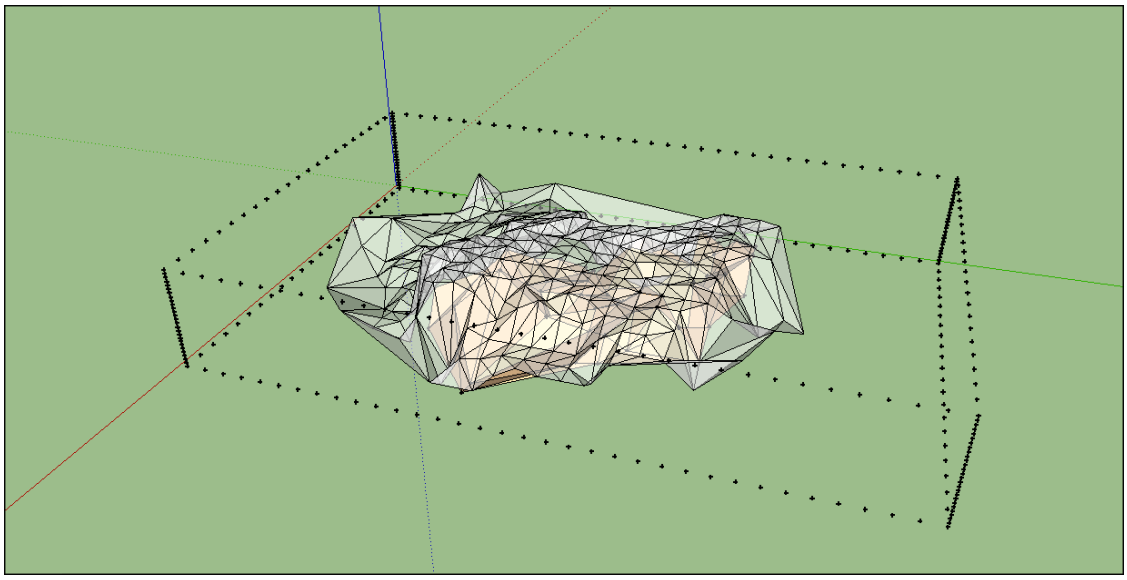


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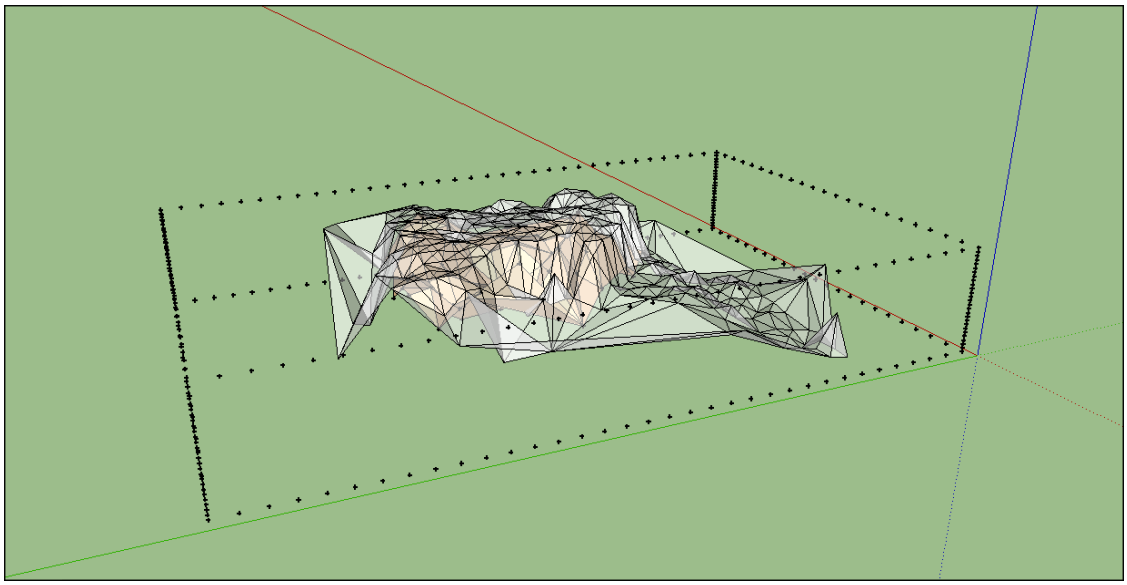


Figure C.7: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus super quem* (yellow) together with the surface of the excavated area (white).

Figure C.8 a)

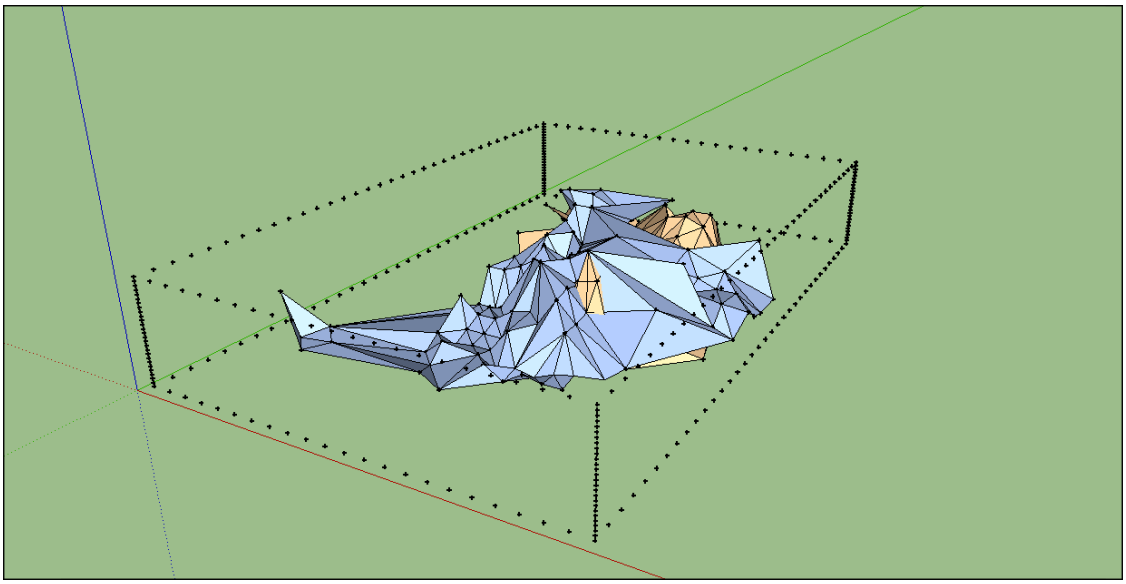


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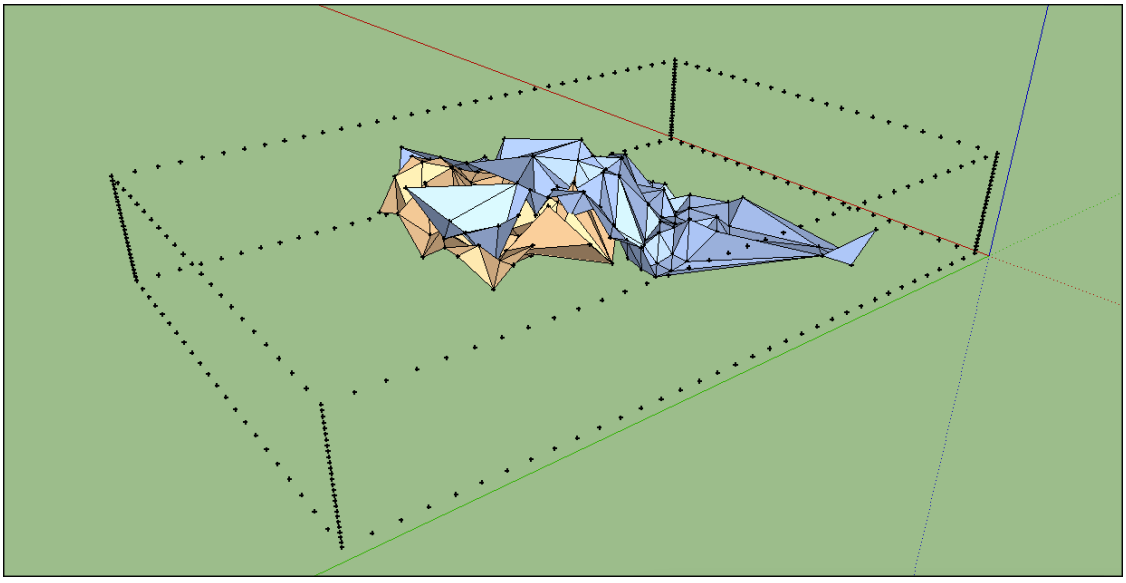


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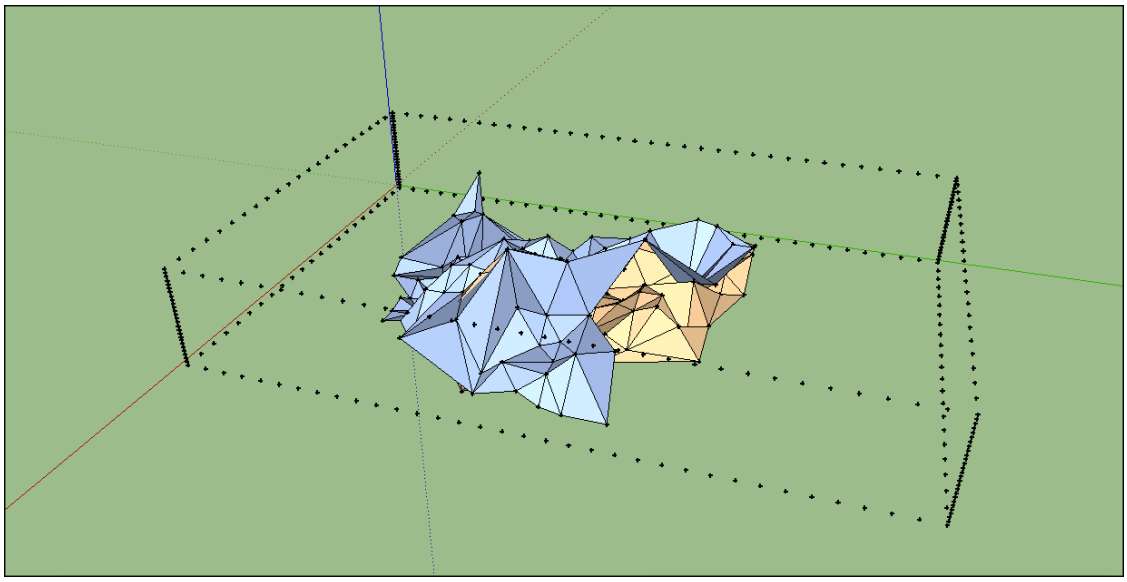


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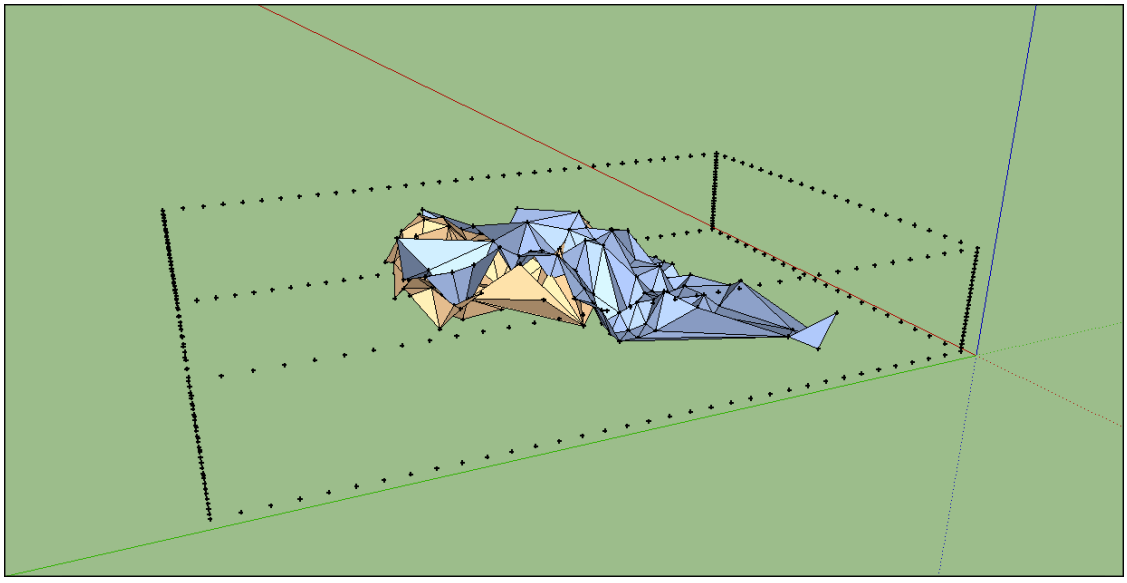


Figure C.8: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus sub quo* (blue) together with the *terminus super quem* (yellow).

Figure C.1.3.1 a)

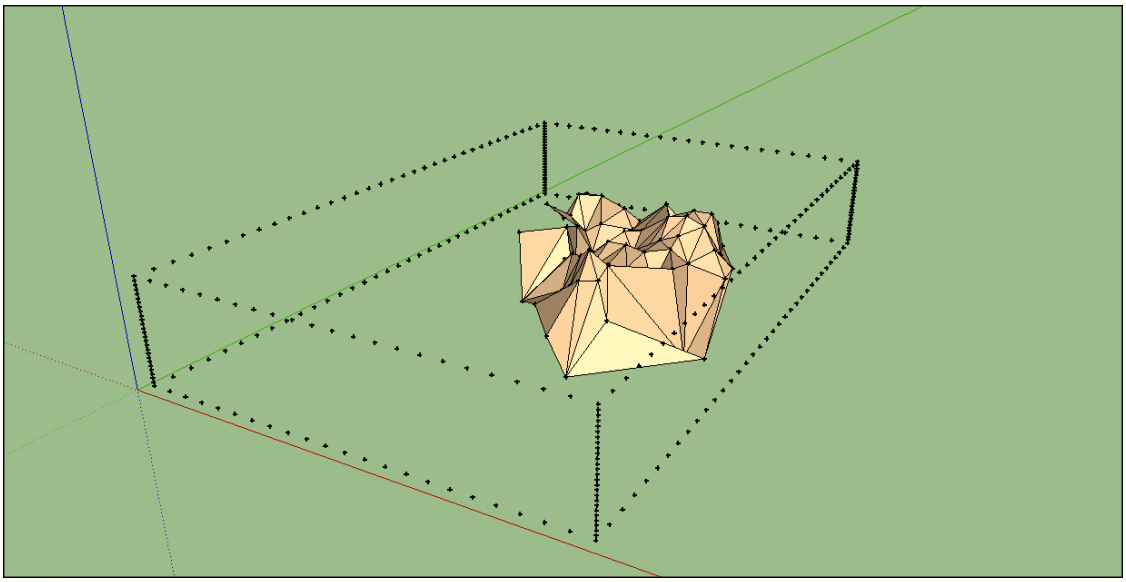


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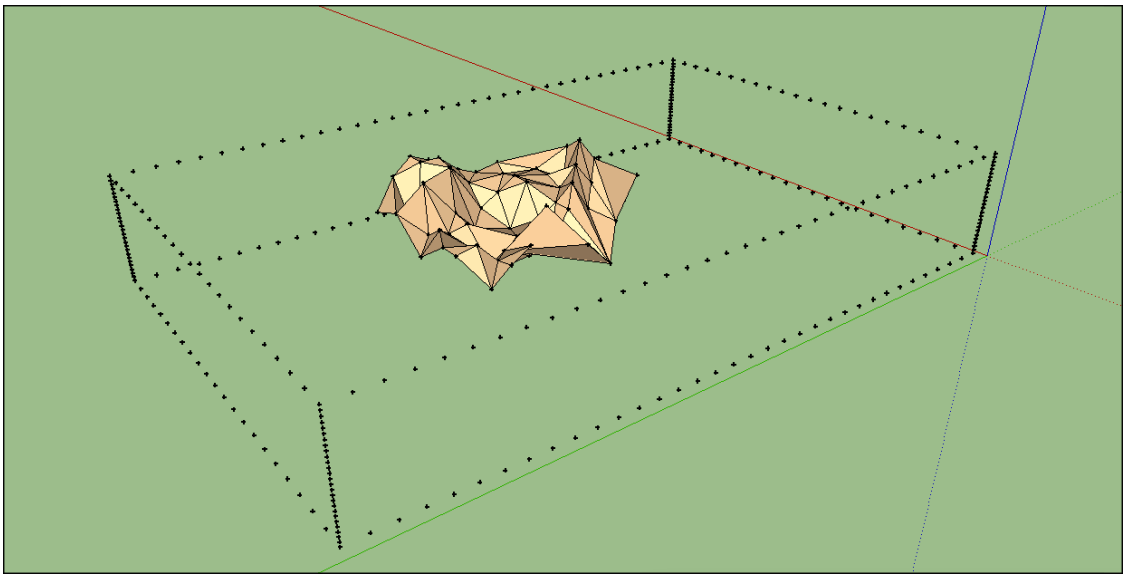


Figure C.1.3.1 c)

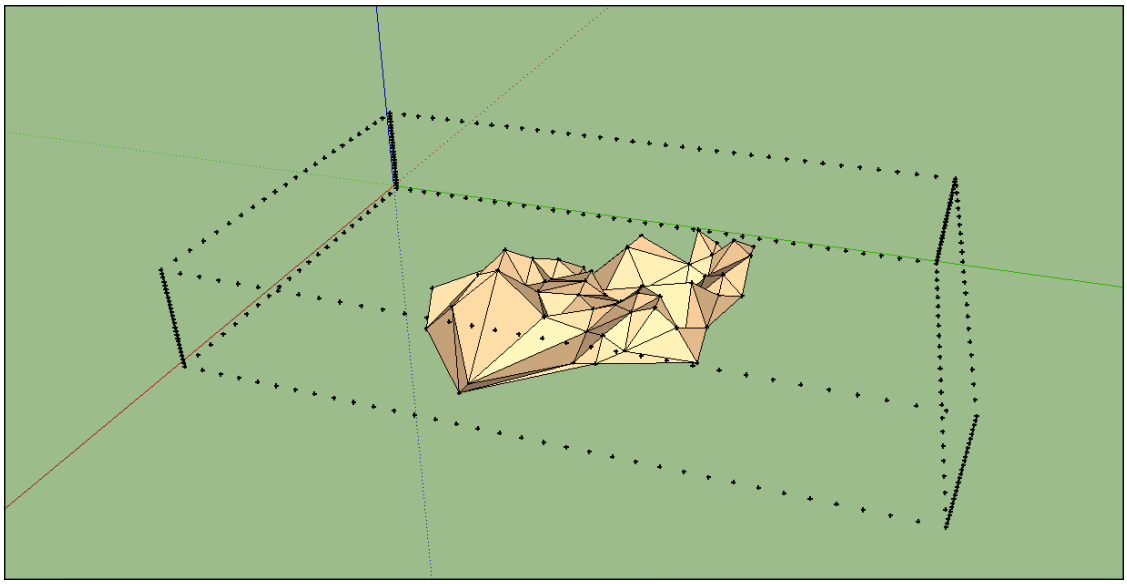


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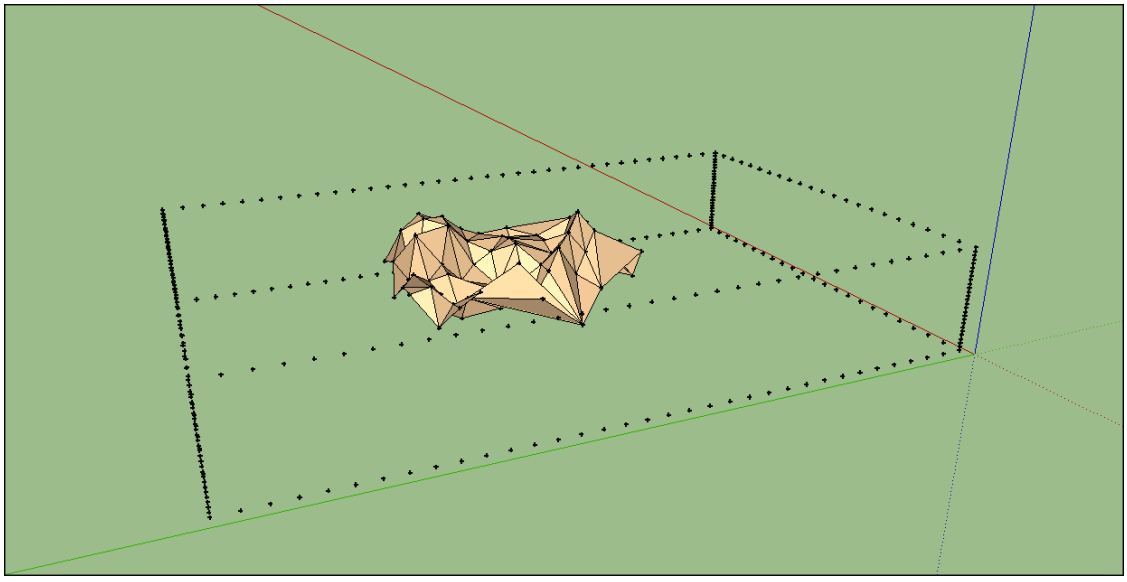


Figure C.9: a–d) 3D representation of the *terminus super quem* (yellow).

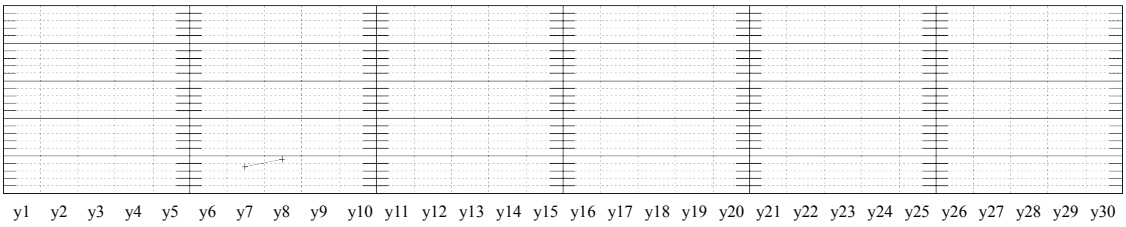
C.1.3.2 Approximate stratigraphy

This 3D model can then be cut along the x and y coordinates of Dunand's excavation grid to obtain vertical sections with representations of the *termini*. These vertical sections can be used as approximate stratigraphic guidelines for the site. The figures here below show

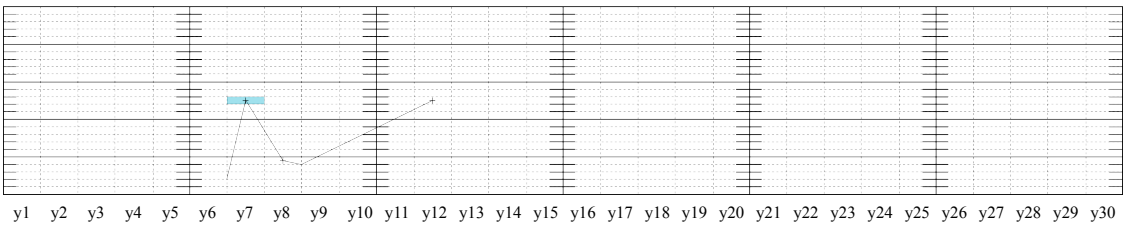
the approximate stratigraphies along the x axis, one for each x line of the excavation grid. The stratigraphies along the y axes can be inferred and built from them.

The Excavation Units located between the surface and the *terminus sub quo* are marked in blue, while those located below the *terminus super quem* are marked in yellow (dark blue/dark yellow = columns with diagnostic dating objects, light blue/light yellow columns without dating objects whose limit has been inferred from the projection of the planes). If present and not disturbed, the Late Bronze Age layers should be located below the blue Excavation Units, and possibly above the yellow ones. The vertical dimension is magnified 10 times in relation to the horizontal.

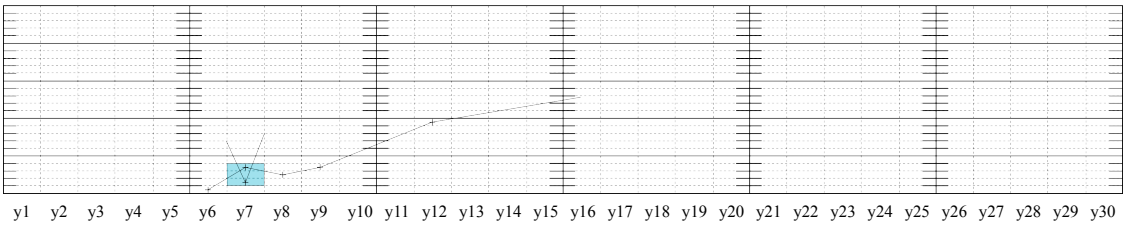
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 1



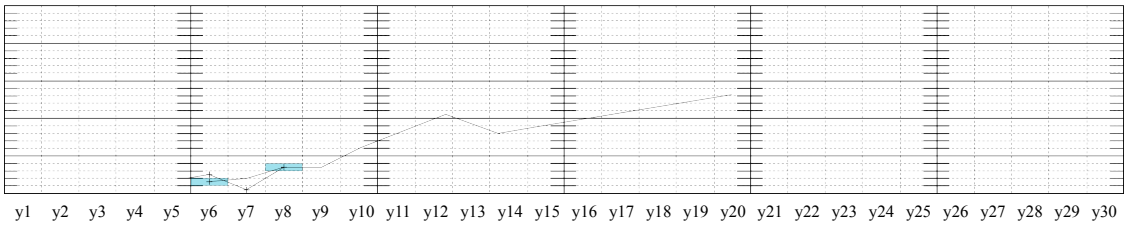
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 2



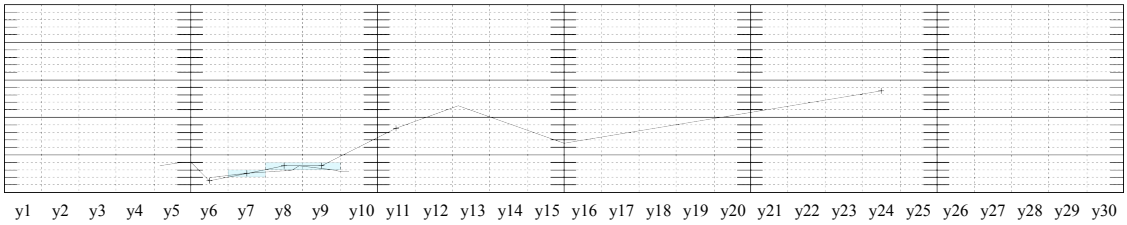
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 3



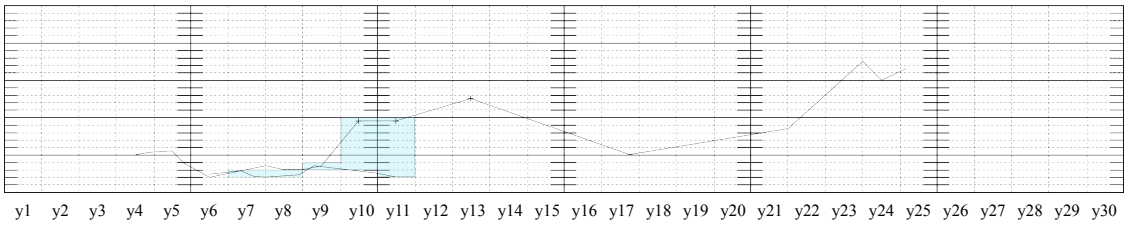
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 4



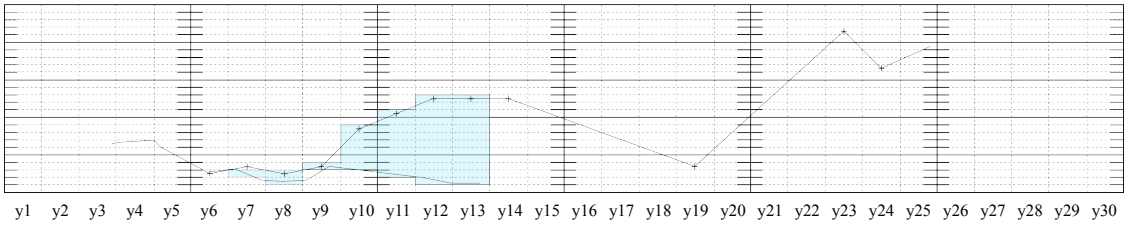
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 5



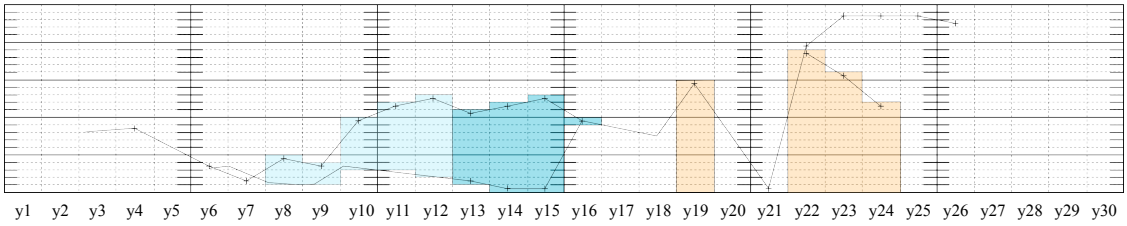
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 6



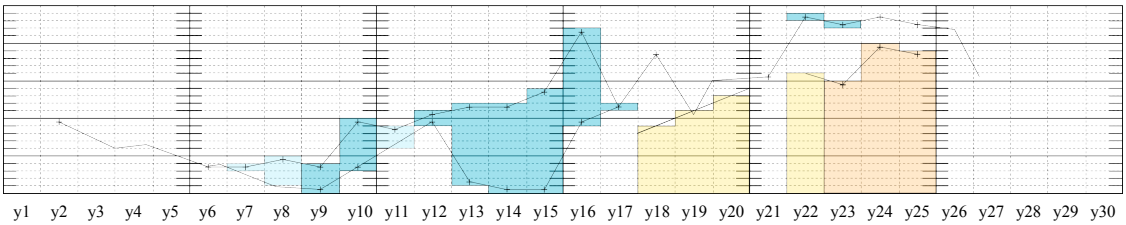
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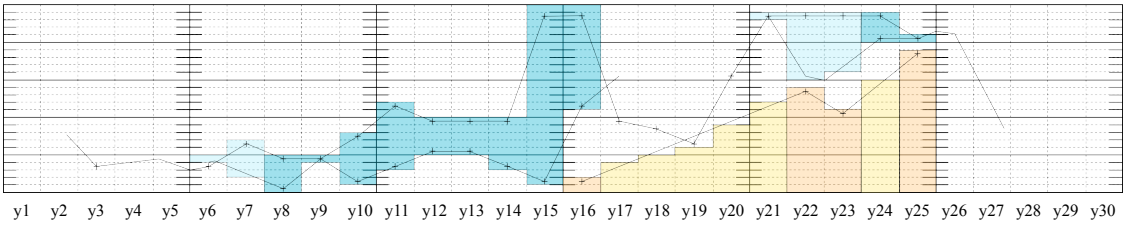
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 8



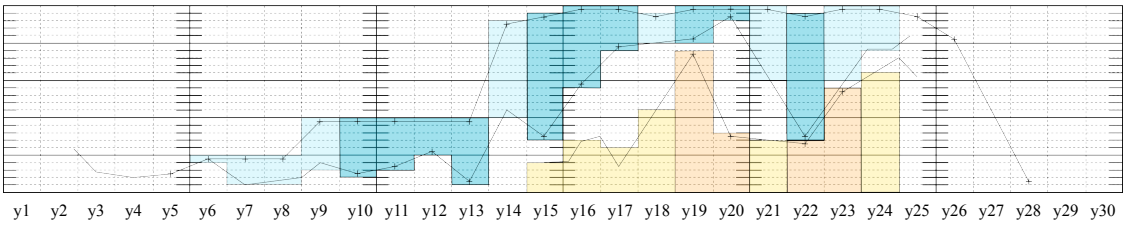
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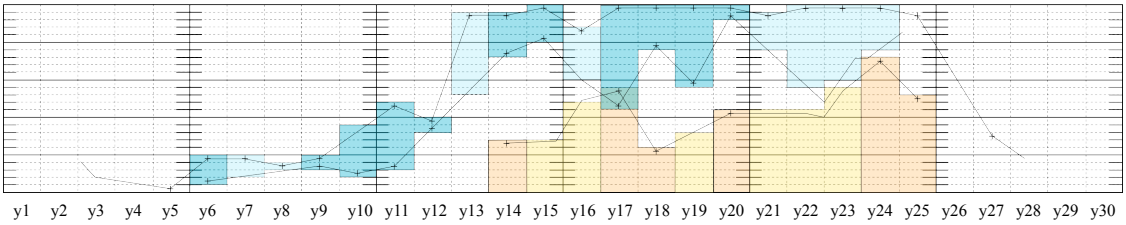
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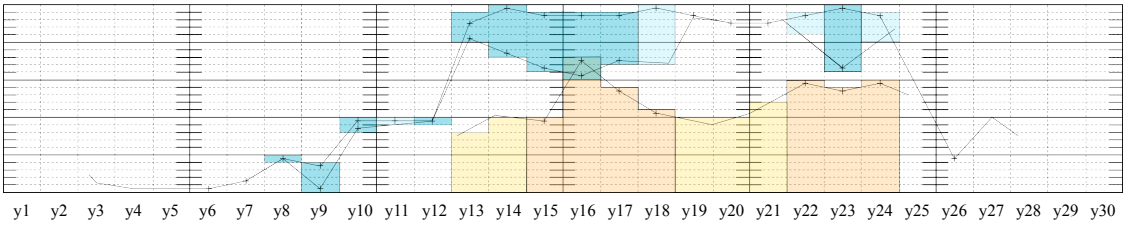
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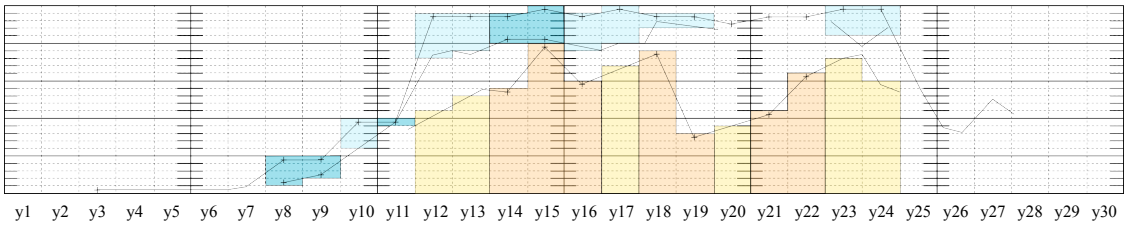
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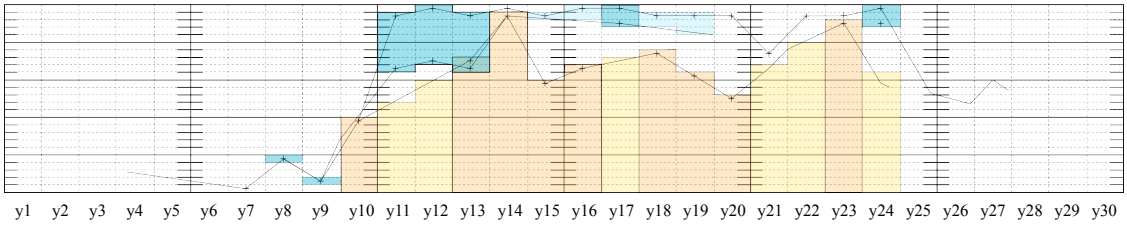
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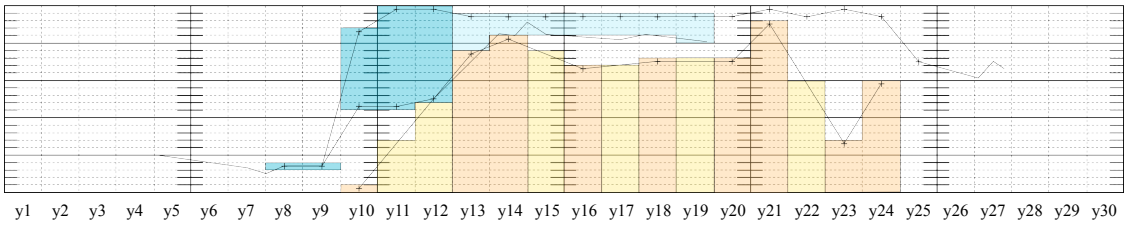
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 14



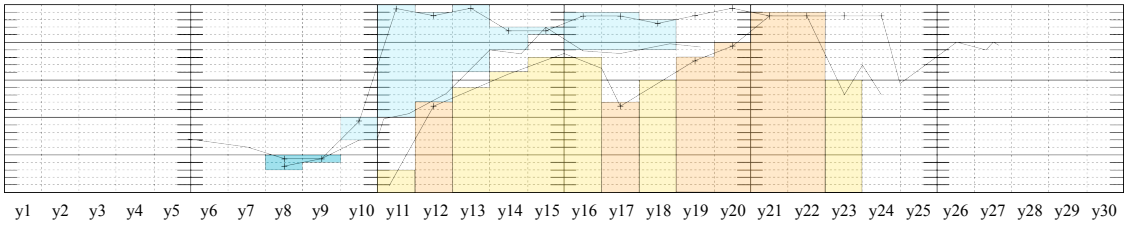
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 15



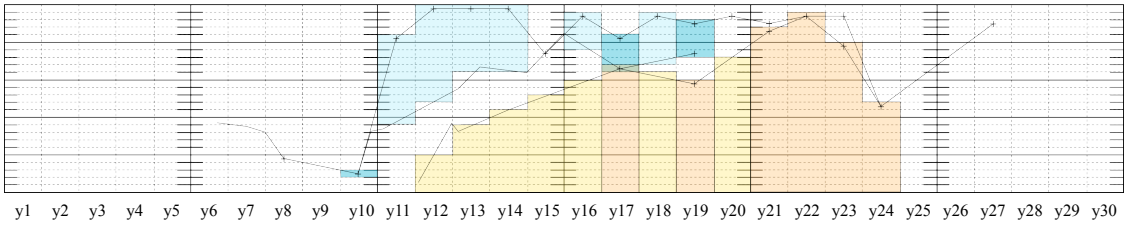
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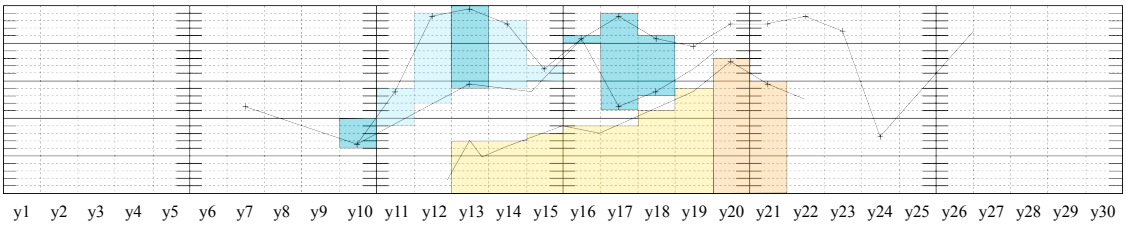
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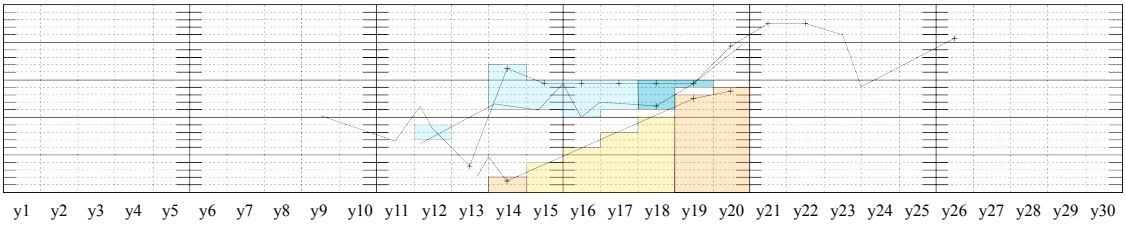
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 18



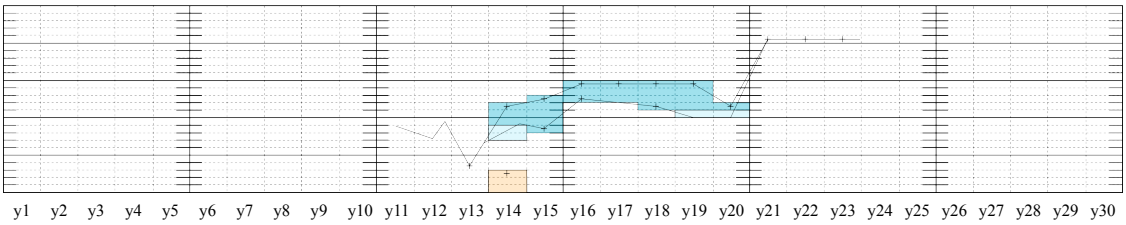
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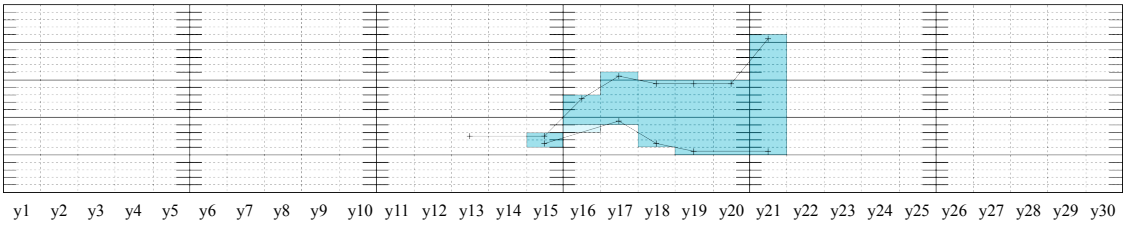
Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 20



Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 21



Approximate stratigraphic section along the x axis 22



D
Appendix

D.1 Article 1

Marwan Kilani, 2016b, "Between Geographical Imaginary and Geographical Reality: Byblos and the Limits of the World in the 18th Dynasty", in: Christelle Alvarez et al. (eds.), *Current Research in Egyptology 2015 – Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Symposium, University of Oxford, United Kingdom 15–18 April 2015*, Oxford; Philadelphia: Oxbow, 74–87

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AN OFFPRINT FROM

Current Research in Egyptology 2015

Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Symposium

University of Oxford, United Kingdom
15–18 April 2015

edited by
Christelle Alvarez, Arto Belekdanian,
Ann-Katrin Gill, and Solène Klein

Paperback Edition: ISBN 978-1-78570-363-8
Digital Edition: ISBN 978-1-78570-364-5 (epub)



© Oxbow Books 2016
Oxford & Philadelphia
www.oxbowbooks.com

Published in the United Kingdom in 2016 by
OXBOW BOOKS
10 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford OX1 2EW

and in the United States by
OXBOW BOOKS
1950 Lawrence Road, Havertown, PA 19083

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Paperback Edition: ISBN 978-1-78570-363-8
Digital Edition: ISBN 978-1-78570-364-5 (epub)

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'What are these foolish journeys which they have had you make?'
Wenamun 2.22

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Chapter 6

Between geographical imaginary and geographical reality: Byblos and the limits of the world in the 18th dynasty

Marwan Kilani
University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Introduction

The aim of this article is to develop in more detail some issues touched on in my doctoral research, which focuses on the interactions and evolution of the city of Byblos in Lebanon during the Late Bronze Age. In that period, Byblos played an active role in the local geopolitical landscape, interacting politically and economically with various micro- and macro-regional actors. Various factors affected these interactions and the city's general development positively or negatively. In this paper I discuss one of these factors, namely an ideological change that may have occurred during the 18th dynasty and could have had a negative influence on Egyptian perceptions of Byblos. It is important to stress that this was most probably not the only factor affecting the fate of the city – the situation was certainly more complex and the product of a combination of different elements. The possible shift in ideology that I examine here, however, has not been discussed in this perspective and thus repays separate treatment. In order to understand this change, I introduce two ideological concepts in the next two sections.

Egyptian ideological narratives about the 'world' before the 18th dynasty

Like almost every society, Egyptians had a clear and well-structured ideological narrative about the geographical world around them. This paradigm, or 'cosmography', becomes fully evident during the Middle Kingdom, although its basic components and structures can be identified already in Old Kingdom sources.

As it is the case for many cultures, Egypt was the centre of the world (Allen 2003, 23; see also Loprieno 2001, 64–74). It could be defined in various ways (*t3wy*, *t3-mry*,

kmt, etc.) and its connotations were naturally positive. All around Egypt, encircling it, there were *ḫ3swt*, 'foreign lands', inhabited by people inherently negative and chaotic, and therefore hostile and inimical. The limits between Egypt and these foreign lands were marked by the *t3š(w)*, 'frontier(s)', of Egypt itself, coinciding with the ideological limits of the beneficial dominion of Pharaoh (Liverani 2001, 32; see Galán 1995, 101–35 for discussion).

The geographical cosmos of the Egyptians did not end there. As John Baines (2007, 14) points out, another term, 'God's Land', 'was used for distant, eastern places from Punt through Sinai to the Lebanese mountains. Despite the Egyptians' stereotyped (not necessarily real) contempt for foreigners and places abroad, remote regions had divine associations, as if they were nearer to the gods, in a conception of a "world" – that is, Egypt – surrounded by hostile areas, beyond which were inaccessible but idealized places at the edge of the larger cosmos'. These various realisations of 'God's Land' thus formed a second belt around Egypt. The distinction between 'foreign lands' and 'God's Land' does not seem to be marked by any defined border.

These 'God's Lands' were sources of rare and precious goods unavailable in Egypt (often referred to as *bj(3)w* or *bj(3)ywt*, 'wonders', 'marvels'), were inhabited by friendly foreigners, and were often associated with the goddess Hathor (see Cooper 2011 for a discussion of the term and critical review of previous scholarship). Appearing for the first time in the sources of the reign of Pepy II, the expression 'God's Land' is well attested in the Middle Kingdom and in later periods (Cooper 2011, 50–1). The concept of *t3 nṯr* seems to be predominantly associated with the 'east'. There are instances, however, where they are explicitly located to the north and to the south of Egypt (Cooper 2011, 52), but never to the west. As Julien Cooper suggests (2011), the *t3 nṯr* could correspond to the whole half of the horizon where the sun rises, thus including the east but also the north-east and the south-east, and could be understood as opposed to the west in the broadest sense, which was associated with sunset, death, and the Netherworld.

Two geographical entities appear to have been the archetypes of these idealised foreign lands: one is Punt, in the south, and the other is Byblos, in the north. As is apparent from many mentions in biographical inscriptions, these two lands were already perceived as geographically complementary in the Old Kingdom. The best example is in the 6th dynasty tomb of Khui at Qubbet el-Hawa (west bank of Aswan), where the names of Byblos and Punt are graphically associated and written as alternates within a single line (Urk. I, 140, l. 17; Newberry 1938; Diego Espinel 2004; Baines 2013, 251–2). The many references to travel to both places in biographical texts confirm the prestige they enjoyed in the Egyptian imaginary, both in the Old Kingdom and later (see for instance Allen 2008 and Marcolin 2010 for other examples of biographical texts of the Old and Middle Kingdoms in which expeditions to Byblos enjoy prominent positions). It is worth noting that, although they were sources of precious goods, Crete and the Aegean regions do not seem to have been considered 'God's Lands'. This is perhaps due to their relatively western location.

Finally, beyond the 'God's Lands' were the edges of the world. These edges were referred to in various ways. Two common terms were *pḥww/pḥwy* 'ends' and *ḏrw* 'ends', 'limits', which could qualify both the *t3* 'land' or the *pt* 'sky' (see below; Galán 1995, 101–35, esp. 128–32: review of scholarship and discussion). At the limits of the world there were the *sḫnwt*, the (four) 'posts' of the sky, which could also indicate the limits of the world itself. The southern limit was also called *wpt t3*, the 'brow/forehead', while for the northern limit the expression *pḥww (stỉ)*, the 'rear/end (of Syria)', was used. These 'limits' marked the end of this world. As we read in an inscription of Hatshepsut (see below), beyond them is the darkness, a darkness that is more matter for theological speculation than geographical and ideological concern (see Allen 2003 for these mythical parts of the cosmos). The location of these borders, understandably, is not defined; they are just somewhere beyond the 'God's Lands'.

This cosmological structure is summarised graphically in Fig. 6.1. It must be noted that this narrative was an ideological construct and did not necessarily

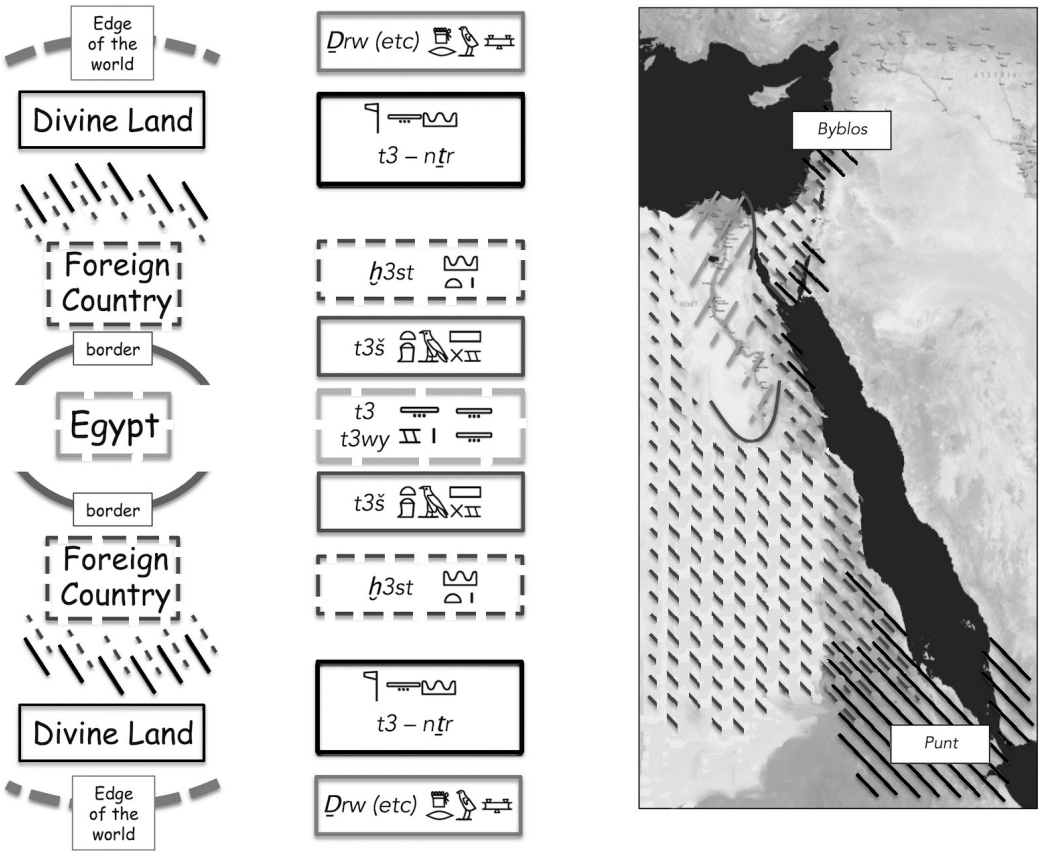


Fig. 6.1: The Egyptian geographical ideological narrative before the 18th dynasty. © M. Kilani.

reflect actual or potential Egyptian geographical knowledge. We cannot exclude that already in the Middle Kingdom, if not even earlier, Egyptians had some awareness or suspicion of the existence of territories located beyond this ideological frame, especially in the north. However, they were probably just too far, both geographically and geopolitically, to require any specific acknowledgement and therefore to affect or to be included into the main cosmographic narrative. Nevertheless, this narrative was ideologically central, and can also be recognised in the fictionalised geographical world of Middle Kingdom literature. There, Egypt, or better the royal residence, is the undisputed centre of the world (Loprieno 2001, 64–74), while highly fictionalised foreign lands characterised by generally positive features lie at its most distant extremes and constitute the limits of the narrative itself. For instance, the mythical island full of every good thing reached by the shipwrecked sailor, or the prosperous land where the good Amunenshi welcomes Sinuhe are perfect examples of such fictionalised and positively connoted lands at the end of the narrative framework.[1]

Finally, it is also worth noting that a very similar pattern emerges in Egyptian conceptions of time as well – and in conceptions of the past in particular. The 'centre' is the present, the domain of the current king, and therefore generally positively connoted. Before that, there was a 'near' past, the domain of the Pharaoh's direct predecessors. This 'near' past often had negative connotations or was at least conceived as worse than the present. Beyond this near past, however, there was an ideal and inherently positive 'remote' past that the current Pharaoh tried to imitate, restore, or even surpass. Neither the 'near' negative past, nor the 'remote' positive past is univocally defined. The first is obviously not fixed, but is continuously redefined in respect to the present itself. It can thus be identified with historical periods generally perceived as 'troubled' (such as the Second Intermediate Period, from the point of view of the early 18th dynasty 'present') or, simply, with the reigns of generic previous pharaohs, whoever they were and whatever they did. As for the 'remote' past, in some cases it is a purely mythical 'time of the god', and in other (especially later) contexts it corresponds to historically real periods that are in some way mythicised and commonly identified as times of success, prosperity, and grandeur. This is exemplified, for instance, by the use and revival of Middle Kingdom artistic elements in the Thutmosid period. This general framework is not spelled out in any source, but its elements and structure can be perceived for all periods of Egyptian history, as has been discussed by Baines (e.g. 1994, 135–8; 2007, 180–3) and Aldo Piccato (1997, 146–9, 152–5). These authors do not, however, describe the ideological framework that I am suggesting here, but they do discuss in detail the elements on which it is based.

[1] See Loprieno 2001, esp. 64–74, for a related discussion on geography in Middle Kingdom literature touching on many of these elements, although he does not spell out the ideological conception of foreign lands being proposed in this paper.

Geographical deeds and duties of the king

From the perspective of royal ideology, a good king was defined and characterised by a series of responsibilities, tasks, and duties. One of them was to *swsḫ t3š(w)*, 'to extend the border(s)' of Egypt (Galán 1995, 101–35, esp. 101–3). This concept was central in royal ideology, and it appears already in Middle Kingdom sources (Blumenthal 1970, 187–8). It is, for instance, the first attribute of Senusret III in a hymn from Kahun, where he is said to be the 'protector of the land, who extends his/its frontiers' (Pap. UCL 32157 = Pap. Lahun LV.1, col. 2; Griffith 1898, pl. 1). The same idea appears in Sinuhe: 'He (i.e. the king) is one who extends the frontiers' (Sinuhe B 71: Koch 1990, 38). This concept can also be expressed negatively; in Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela we read that 'the gods ignored this land, (so that) if troops were sent to Djahi to extend the frontiers of Egypt, no success at all would come about for them' (Urk. IV, 2027, l. 12–14). Obviously, from the point of view of Tutankhamun's reign, his predecessors were not good pharaohs and therefore the gods prevented them from extending Egypt's borders (Liverani 2001, 46).

The 18th dynasty: conquering the world

Until the New Kingdom, these two ideological concepts seem to have coexisted on two distinct planes without really interfering with each other. At the beginning of the 18th dynasty, however, they became combined and kings went beyond simply 'extending the borders' to 'extending the borders up to the limits of the world[2]' (Galán 1995, 129).

The earliest attestations of such claims are from the reign of Thutmose I. He was the first Pharaoh to lead military campaigns as far north as the Euphrates (or the Orontes) and as far south as Kurgus. In both places he carved commemorative inscriptions celebrating his conquest of the 'world' (Liverani 2001, 35–6). The one at Kurgus still exists, and it describes Thutmose as someone 'who goes beyond (lit. brings in) the limits of the land upon his area, who treads its two limits (*pḥwy*) with his successful khepesh' (Urk. IV, 85, l. 7–8), while 'his southern frontier is as far as the *Khentyw* of this land, the northern one as far as that inverted river (i.e. the Euphrates or the Orontes)' (Urk. IV, 85, l. 13–4).

It is clear, however, that Thuthmose I's actions in these distant regions did not amount to conquest. They were reached by the Egyptian armies, but were not 'annexed' to the Egyptian kingdom. As observed by Liverani (2001, 25), annexation was not indispensable: in order to claim control of these remote regions, and therefore of the world as a whole, it was enough to show (or claim) to the public in Egypt that the king and his armies could reach them if they so wished. These places retained a semi-mythical aura, perpetuating the idea that, being the farthest one could reach, they were indeed close to the limits of the world.

[2] Defining what this 'world' was is open to discussion and beyond the possibilities of this article. I would tend to think of a world as defined in and by previous narratives, but this side of the question is provisional.

Hatshepsut too committed herself to this ideological duty, but she seems to have chosen a different approach. Rather than sending armies to the north and south, and erecting stelae in remote and exotic locations, she turned her attention towards Punt, which had enjoyed a special status in the Egyptian imaginary at least since the Old Kingdom. A source of rare and precious goods, Punt had a clear economic attraction; Hatshepsut's expedition, however, was not merely a commercial venture. Rather, it was a divinely ordained (and ideologically motivated) mission aiming at extending her authority as far as the 'God's Land' so as to conquer the whole world, as we read in the account of the expedition inscribed in her temple at Deir el-Bahri: 'They (the gods) will put your frontier as far as the breadth of the sky, as far as the limits of total darkness' (Urk. IV, 248, l. 16–17; Naville 1898, 14, pl. 57; Galán 1995, 130; Creasman 2014, esp. 400–2; Taterka in this volume).

As a result of her successful expedition, Hatshepsut felt entitled to claim that 'he (Amun) made my frontier as far as the limits of heaven, so that what the sun-disc encircles labours for me' (Urk. IV, 368, l. 11–12) and that 'my southern frontier is as far as the shores of Punt, [the…being in my f]ist; the eastern frontier is as far as the limits of Asia, the Mentyw of Asia being in my fist' (Urk. IV, 372, l. 5–8). Once again, Hatshepsut's conquest was virtual, not actual; Egypt never annexed Punt. Still, the Egyptian ships could reach that exotic 'God's Land' without opposition, which was enough for her to claim dominion, and to affirm to have extended the borders of Egypt up to the limits of the world.

It was then Thutmose III's turn. To judge from his claims and actions (e.g. in the Annals, Urk. IV, 647, l. 12–14 and elsewhere), he was very aware that a good Pharaoh was expected to extend the borders of Egypt and was clearly determined to equal, and even surpass, his predecessors. He matched Thutmose I's exploits in his campaigns, reaching both the Euphrates (or the Orontes) and Kurgus (Redford 2003, 155, 158, n. 28 and *passim*). There, he set up inscriptions beside those of his grandfather: 'He set up another beside the stele of his father' (Urk. IV, 697, l. 5), and 'he set up his stele in Naharin, extending the frontiers of Egypt' (Urk. IV, 698, l. 15–699, l. 1). The Kurgus inscription still exists (Davies 2003).

Thutmose III also challenged Hatshepsut's exploits, but did so by going in the opposite geographical direction: while she went south, to Punt, he went north, to Byblos. In the Gebel Barkal stela we read: 'Now when My Majesty crossed over to the marshes of Asia, I had many ships constructed of cedar upon the mountains of God's Land, in the vicinity of the Mistress of Byblos' (Urk. IV, 1232, l. 1–3). For Thutmose III, no official account comparable to Hatshepsut's description of her expedition is known. Nonetheless, various royal and non-royal sources from his reign mention an expedition to Byblos, which presents similarities with Hatshepsut's account that can hardly be coincidental. For instance, local forms of Hathor played the role of intermediaries in both expeditions, both of which were also presented as realising the will of Amun. Moreover, Eckhard Eichler (1998, 223–8) observes that Sennefri's description of Thutmose III's expedition has some of the characteristics of a royal

tale and is structurally similar to Hatshepsut's account. These similarities could suggest that literary compositions about Byblos analogous to that of Hatshepsut circulated in Thutmose's court. Finally, we know that Thutmose III also commissioned the 'botanical garden'; this room in the temple of Karnak has its lowest register decorated with 'various strange plants and various fine blooms which are in "God's land", br[ought to] His Majesty when His Majesty journeyed to Upper Retenu' (Beaux 1990, 41–2). These reliefs have a clear parallel in the parade of exotic plants and animals depicted in Hatshepsut's Deir el-Bahri temple, and in the real trees from Punt planted at its entrance.

It is thus clear that, as in the case of Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt, Thutmose III's to Byblos was not just a commercial enterprise, but a religious and ideological mission aiming at symbolically extending the dominion of the king up to the 'God's Land' and thus, once again, as far as the limits of the world. In this way, Thutmose III achieved similar feats to Thutmose I and Hatshepsut, which allowed him to make similar claims. He is described as one 'who reaches the limits of the foreign lands that had attacked him' (Urk. IV, 1229, l. 5), while 'his southern boundary stretches to the "Horn of the Earth", south of this land, and his northern one to the Marshes of Asia and the supports of heaven' (Urk. IV, 1230, l. 17–18). Thutmose further affirms: 'what the sun-disc encircles is in my fist' (Urk. IV, 1234, l. 4).

Thutmose III's exploits, however, were different from those of his predecessors. For the first time, the conquests were not just virtual but real. In contrast with Hatshepsut, whose expedition reached Punt and returned, Thutmose's reached Byblos, annexed it to his nascent empire, and went further. He really extended the *t3š* of Egypt to the 'God's Land' of Byblos and beyond, bringing its border in contact, not with the end of the world, but rather with other countries and powerful states. These newly reached geographical entities, although probably not completely unknown at the time, were now a concrete and 'close' reality that had to be officially acknowledged and could no longer be vaguely relegated at (or beyond) the limits of the main geographical narrative. As a result, this new geographical reality became increasingly distant from the ideological-geographical paradigm that I have described above.

The world after Thutmose III: a change of paradigm

The emergence and increase in discordance between ideal (and ideological) geographical narratives and geographical knowledge in a period of expansion and exploration is not unique to Thutmose III's Egypt. Rather, it is a phenomenon attested in different societies in various historical periods. Usually, two strategies have been adopted to deal with the resulting contrasts and paradoxes.

The first strategy consists essentially in abandoning the old paradigm after having recognised that it is erroneous, and either replacing it with a new one or moving to a more objective and realistic concept of geography as a whole. A good example of such a shift can be observed in pre-Hellenistic Greece, when the archaic

idea of a circular (or shield-like) world, with Delphi at the centre of an island earth encircled by the river Ocean, started to be replaced with more elaborate and realistic geographical concepts (Romm 1992, 12–15). It has been suggested that this change occurred around the 5th century and was, at least in part, influenced by the geographical knowledge acquired through the colonial expansion in the Western Mediterranean and, to a lesser degree, the contacts with the Persian Empire. Traces of this cosmographic debate and shift can be seen for instance in Herodotus, who questioned and dismissed the existence of the river Ocean, thus dismissing the whole old paradigm (Romm 1992, 12–15, 32–6, but see 41–4 for the continuation of the debate in the following centuries).

The second possibility is to adapt the old paradigm to the new geographical knowledge, either by accommodating the new discoveries within it or by extending it beyond the limits of the new geographical reality. Some examples of this phenomenon include the European concept of 'India(s)' before and after Columbus; the myth of Eldorado, always located a little farther beyond the territories explored by the Europeans; and the medieval legend of Prester John's kingdom, a mythical Christian kingdom initially located somewhere beyond Muslim lands, and later found in various other regions including Central Asia, Russia, India, and Ethiopia, partially following the evolution of European geographical knowledge (Grousset 1970, 191; Beckingham and Hamilton 1996; Brooks 2014).

In the Egyptian case, the evidence suggests that both these strategies were adopted, at least at the beginning (Fig. 6.2). When the Egyptians conquered the northern Levant, i.e. one of the traditional regions considered a 'God's Land', regular contacts were established for the first time with other imperial powers such as the Hittite and Mitanni Empires, or Babylonia. The existence of these political entities, or rather the need to acknowledge their presence (as it is possible that Egyptians already had some knowledge of their existence before), undermined the centrality and political uniqueness that characterised Egypt in the old geographical narrative. Egyptians must have realised that this was so and, from the end of the reign of Thutmose III onward, the pharaohs engaged with the international scene in a way that demonstrates that they recognised and adopted a different, polycentric, and more realistic geographical paradigm. This change appears first and foremost from the Egyptian involvement in the diplomatic life of the Near East. It is possible, and even probable, that some form of international diplomatic interactions existed also before the New Kingdom, as could be implied, for instance, in the special regulations for Nubian messengers stated in Senusret III's Semna stela (recto, 4–5; see Obsomer 1989, 181–3). The evidence from the New Kingdom, however, shows a much more developed and complex system, involving elements that would have been hard to reconcile with the old cosmographic narrative. Treaties with new neighbours like the Mitanni or Hatti, attested in the sources for the first time during the reign of Thutmose III or Amenhotep II (Singer 2004), are an example. Such treaties implied Egyptian recognition of an equal status

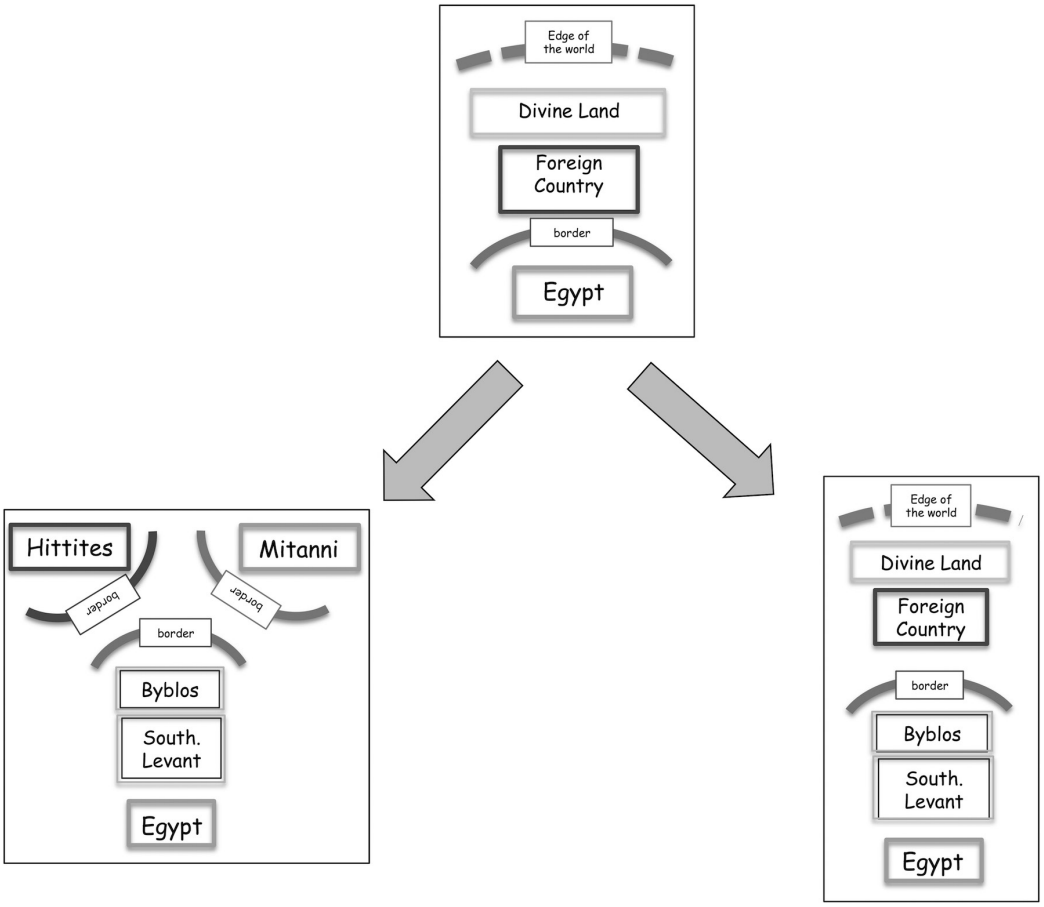


Fig. 6.2: After the 18th dynasty, Egypt adopted two strategies to cope with the new geographical reality; pragmatically abandoning the old paradigm while incorporating other foreign powers (left) and ideologically maintaining and extending it for the purposes of its own internal narrative (right). © M. Kilani.

to foreign countries. The latter, according to the old geographical paradigm and as new direct neighbours of Egypt, were supposed to be inherently and inevitably 'bad', 'chaotic', dangerous, and inferior; or were simply located in areas at, or even beyond, the limits of the old geographical narrative itself.

The increasing acceptance and conscious adoption of foreign cultural elements also hint at such a change. Various aspects of the culture and society were affected. For instance, an increasing number of foreign words was often consciously employed (Hoch 1994; Pap. Anastasi I: Fischer-Elfert 1986; Allen 1997; Schneider 2008), while new foreign cults and gods, sometimes sponsored by kings and states, made their appearance in Egypt, such as the cult of Ba'al and Astarte at Peru-Nefer (Collombert and Coulon 2000, 217–18, 220, 223). Trade was favoured in this new

cultural environment, in turn bringing to Egypt more accurate knowledge about the geography of the external world and its organisation. An example of this could perhaps be seen in Amenhotep III's topographical lists at Kom el-Hetan, where we find the earliest attestation of Aegean cities in Egyptian sources (see e.g. Cline and Stannish 2011).

Another relevant topographical list from the reign of Amenhotep III is in the temple of Soleb, in Nubia. In contrast with its predecessors, this list is not simply a sequence of names of real or imaginary conquests. Rather, the geographical names are written on the bases of the columns of the hypostyle hall and are spatially organised according to their geographical position and, at least in part, to their political relevance in relation with Egypt. Thus, the aim of the list was probably not just to enumerate the conquests of the king, but also to represent the whole known world and its geopolitical organisation, both inside and outside the Egyptian sphere of influence (Grimal 2006, 111–13; Grimal 2009, 346). One could go further and suggest that the 'universalistic' nature of the god Aten could also have been influenced by such a paradigm shift, but this aspect of the question would need investigation that is beyond the scope of this article.

All these elements suggest that on economic, administrative, political, and diplomatic levels, the Egyptians were pragmatic enough to be aware of the limits of their traditional Egyptocentric paradigm; having discarded it or at least set it aside, they integrated themselves into a more polycentric and geographically neutral macro-regional frame. This shift was not sudden and immediate, but was a gradual process, and although Thutmose III's campaigns were possibly a catalyst, one should not underestimate the fact that Egypt had contacts with, and some knowledge of, these northern regions in earlier periods. It was, however, only at the time of Thutmose III that these distant territories and their inhabitants became real neighbours. They were not a vague and unimportant feature of a distant land anymore, but became an ordinary reality that had to be acknowledged and dealt with purposefully and politically.

Together with the pragmatic recognition of these connections, however, the older paradigm seems to have survived in royal display and narrative, and the traditional model was adapted to the new geopolitical knowledge and reality. Thus, in official documents, these neighbours and foreign powers beyond the newly extended *t3š* of Egypt end up being depicted as the traditional, inherently weak, dangerous and chaotic foreigners encircling Egypt, whether they were in fact enemies or allies. On a couple of occasions this Egyptian rhetoric even led to complaints by their Hittite allies (Brand 2007, 23). This disjuncture between the official royal narrative, which reiterated traditional Egyptocentric views, and the reality of Egyptian international relations, which exhibited a much more pragmatic perception of the world, has already been noted and discussed (e.g. Liverani 2001, 200–2). Here I suggest further that the disjuncture could correlate with, and at least in part reflect, the evolution of the Egyptian cosmographic conceptions discussed above.

Consequences of the change

Whether the Egyptians abandoned their paradigm entirely or adapted it to new geopolitical knowledge, Byblos and its area were surely affected by this shift. Within the old cosmographical frame, Byblos enjoyed the privileged status of 'God's Land' at the edges of the conceptually acknowledged world, a status that evidently played a role in the development of its interactions with Egypt, bringing prestige as well as political and economic advantages.

After Thutmose III's conquest, the city became a vassal state within the borders of Egypt, and consequently its status in the Egyptian imaginary was probably affected accordingly. Until the time of Thutmose III, Byblos was depicted as a distant, exotic but friendly city, renowned for its association with Hathor and for its precious and rare products. Afterwards, however, Byblos seems to have lost its aura of exoticism and remoteness – in contrast with Punt which maintained its mythical aura, perhaps also because it was never actually conquered. Reaching Byblos was not a feat, and although the city probably remained one of the sources for specific goods, it was no longer the only one, possibly not even the main one. The Egyptian commercial network in the Levant had expanded greatly, and Byblos was now one of many coastal cities and political entities – some even farther north – which were either in regular contact with Egypt or even controlled by it. Finally, the Egyptian perception of the Lady of Byblos changed significantly. During the New Kingdom and the early Iron Age, the Lady of Byblos passed from being a form of Hathor to being identified with Isis, who is attested in the city for the first time in the first half of the first millennium BCE, in a development that is difficult to date but that was probably gradual (Hollis 2009). Considering Hathor's association with the 'God's Land', this change is remarkable as it attests a modification in the mythological connections of the city within the Egyptian imaginary. At the same time, considering that a similar shift from Hathor to Isis happened in Egypt too, the development in Byblos could represent an attempt to reinterpret and explain the traditional knowledge that a very ancient Egyptian goddess dwelled in the city in order to fit it into the new cosmographic frame.

The letters of Rib-Addi, the king of Byblos during the Amarna period, are also relevant here (Moran 1992, 137–225). Their numerous references to the city goddess and to a past of friendship and reciprocal support, as well as their many complaints about current (real or perceived) neglect by the pharaohs, show that Rib-Addi was aware of the past prestige of Byblos and that he clearly realised that something had changed. While much in Rib-Addi's letters is rhetorical (Liverani 1974), details show that he had some awareness of the past history of his city (as I discuss in my doctoral thesis) and, to judge by his exasperation, did not seem to understand all the causes of what was happening.

The outcome of this process can be clearly seen in the *Tale of Wenamun*. A detailed discussion of the development of these geographical narratives at the

time of Wenamun and in later periods is beyond the scope of this article, but it is worth noting that the Byblos depicted in the tale is very different from that of the time of Thutmose and before. Although the city is still described as a hub for trade in timber in the text, neither Hathor nor a local 'Lady of Byblos' are mentioned anymore, and the Egyptian expedition does not bring offerings for the Lady of Byblos' temple either. The Byblian king remembers and acknowledges its long tradition of interactions with Egypt, but no special prestige is attached to it. Moreover, although Byblos is the destination of Wenamun's expedition, it is not the only Levantine scene of the narrative. It is Wenamun's goal but not the final leg of his odyssey, and certainly not the 'limit' of the world in which the tale takes place; the misadventures of the Egyptian, in fact, continue with his being wrecked on Cyprus. Byblos is not a 'God's Land' at the edge of the world anymore; if anything, judging from the few surviving lines of the Cyprus episode, it is the island, rather than Byblos, that presents features of an exotic, mysterious but positively connoted land. This passage is incomplete, however, and is too short to draw any conclusion from it without a more detailed analysis.

It is possible that Byblos enjoyed short periods of revival, probably connected with some of the other factors mentioned at the beginning of this article; in particular under Ramesses II, perhaps due to its strategic value in the war against the Hittites, and later during the reigns of Shoshenq I and Osorkon I as a commercial partner.[3] However, its ancient prestige and favoured position were gone, and its status within the Egyptian geographical imaginary seems to have changed definitively.

Conclusions

I have suggested how ideological narratives about the structure of the world could have played a role in the definition of Egyptian international interactions, influencing crucial political undertakings. These same acts led to an improvement in Egyptian geographical knowledge, which came to encompass increasingly distant regions, becoming incompatible with those ideological narratives. The evolution of these ideas affected not only Egypt but also the fortunes of foreign regions. It is possible, and even probable, that the special position of 'God's Land' at the edge of the world enjoyed by Byblos in the traditional cosmography favoured the city and its commercial interactions. It perhaps also played some role, together with other factors, in the early 18th dynasty Egyptian expansion in the Levant. It is equally reasonable to propose that the change of paradigm brought to the fore by Thutmose III's conquests also played a role in the decline in Egyptian interest in the city, and hence ultimately in its own decline. The character of Egypt's international interactions cannot have been determined only by these ideological concepts, but it is likely they were a significant factor, one that has been little considered so far.

[3] This is further discussed in my doctoral thesis.

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E
Appendix

E.1 Article 2

Marwan Kilani, 2016a, “A New Tree Name in Egyptian: *r-b-r-n* = “juniper” in the Tale of Wenamun”, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 75.1, 43–52

A New Tree Name in Egyptian: *r-b-r-n* = "juniper" in the *Tale of Wenamun*

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Introduction

The word *r-b-r-n*, , attested three times in the *Tale of Wenamun* (Wen. 2,14; 2,24; 2,28), is generally translated as "Lebanon" or "Mt. Lebanon." This translation is, however, problematic and should be revised. As it appears after a reconsideration of the evidence, it is more appropriate to take *r-b-r-n* as a rendition of the Semitic word *d-p-r-n*, "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)." The present paper is divided into four sections: in the first, I deal with the issues surrounding the translation "Lebanon." In the second part, I discuss the arguments in support of the translation *r-b-r-n* = "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)," and in the third I present a reconsideration of the relevant passages of Wenamun. The fourth and final section is dedicated to a discussion of a related word appearing in Papyrus Chester Beatty I. The importance of this new translation, and its potential relation with the problem of the words *ʿš* and *mrw*, will be discussed in the conclusion.

Against *r-b-r-n* = "Lebanon"

As mentioned above, the standard translation for the word *r-b-r-n,* attested in the *Story of Wenamun*, is "Lebanon." This translation has a long and well-established tradition.[1] Beside a vague assonance between the two words, however, no one has ever advanced any valid and objective argument to support such an identification, and a reassessment of the evidence shows that it is possible to put forward at least three precise arguments to firmly reject it. The first of these arguments is that in all the earlier attestations in Egyptian sources, the name "Lebanon," Semitic *l-b-n-n*, is regularly transcribed as *r-m-n-n*[2], never as *r-b-r-n*.

[1] The translation as "Lebanon" has remained in use for more than a century, and up to the present day—all the way from, e.g., Adolf Erman, "Eine Reise Nach Phönizien Im 11. Jahrhundert v. Chr.," *Zeitschrift Für Ägyptische Sprache Und Altertumskunde* 38 (1900): 9, to Bernd Ulrich Schipper, "Die Erzählung des Wenamun: ein Literaturwerk im Spannungsfeld von Politik, Geschichte und Religion" (Ph.D. diss., Universität, Hamburg, 2005), 70, with many works in between. Other authors have instead translated "trees of Lebanon" or the like, recognizing on the basis of the determinative that the word refers to a tree, but still connecting it with the name of Lebanon; see in particular: Ernest Budge, *Egyptian Tales and Romances : Pagan, Christian and Muslim* (London, 1931), 133. Finally, one can also mention Alessandra Nibbi and Claude Vandersleyen, who have firmly rejected the interpretation *r-b-r-n = Lebanon*, although their arguments and position are clearly related with their controversial and much-disputed theories rejecting any connection between Egypt, Byblos, and the Northern Levant in general (Claude Vandersleyen, *Le rapport d'Ounamon (vers 1065 avant Jésus-Christ): analyse d'une mission manquée*, Connaissance de l'Egypte ancienne 15.Y [Bruxelles, 2013], 95–98; and Alessandra Nibbi, "Some Remarks on the Cedar of Lebanon," *Discussions in Egyptology* 28 [1994]: 37; "Cedar Again," *Discussions in Egyptology* 34 [1996]: 37–59; and "The Lebanon (sic) and Djahy in the Egyptian Texts," *Discussions in Egyptology* 1 [1987]: 17–26).

[2] For both Egyptian *r* for Semitic /l/ and Egyptian *m* for Semitic /b/, there are regular and well-attested correspondences; see James E. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom*

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To equate *r-b-r-n* to *r-m-n-n* and therefore to "Lebanon," one should first give a valid justification for the change of the spelling, but this has not been done.

Secondly, the scribe of the *Tale of Wenamun* was generally precise and coherent in the use of determinatives. If *r-b-r-n*  would really mean "Lebanon" or "Mt. Lebanon," one would expect to find it written with one or more geographical determinatives (like N25, , O49, , or a combination of the two ), and possibly combined also with T14, , to indicate its foreign nature, as is the case for *all* of the other foreign geographical terms mentioned in the text.[3] Yet, this is not what appears here. A combination of the tree determinative M1, , and the determinative N25, , would also be an acceptable combination, as these are the determinatives used with *r-m-n-n*, the common spelling for Lebanon during the 18th dynasty discussed above. Still, again, this is not what is observed here, where only M1, , and the plural strokes are used as determinatives of the word. Now, it is interesting to observe that this same combination , i.e., tree M1 + plural strokes Z3, is used in Wen. 1,54 as determinatives for the word , *ʿṣ*, "*ʿṣ*-wood". This suggests that *r-b-r-n* could be the name of a tree or of a kind of wood, rather than a geographical term.

And third, the Semitic form of the name Lebanon is *l-b-n-n*.[4] Thus, in order to argue that *r-b-r-n* transcribes the Semitic name *l-b-n-n*, one should assume both that Egyptian *r* can transcribe Semitic /l/, and that Egyptian *r* can also transcribe Semitic /n/. Now, the use of Egyptian *r* to transcribe Semitic /l/ is well-known and not problematic,[5] but the use of Egyptian *r* to transcribe Semitic /n/ is never attested.[6] This apparent incompatibility between Egyptian *r* and Semitic /n/ is an important issue, and the fact that

and Third Intermediate Period (Princeton, NJ, 1994), 402 and 407, respectively. This spelling is possibly already attested twice during the Middle Kingdom (Stefan Jakob Wimmer, "Byblos vs. Ugarit: The Alalakh Seal Impression 194 Once Again," *Levant* 37 [2005]: 130–31), and it is certainly widely attested during the reign of Thutmose III (Urk IV 700.80, 719.10, 737.17, 739.17, 1237.10, 1241.18, 1242.2, 1711.7 and in the tomb of Amenmose)—see Nina Macpherson Davies, *The Tombs of Menkheperrasonb, Amenmosẽ, and Another (nos. 86, 112, 42, 226)* (London, 1933), pl. XXXVI, as well as during the 19th Dynasty (during the reigns of Sethi I [*KRI I* 13.8, 14.5], and Ramesses III [*Med. Habu II*, pl. 103.3]). The spelling *r-m-n-n* appears also on an undated fragment of a sphinx from Tell-el-Maskhuṭa (J. Leibovitch, "Amon-Ra', Rechef et Ḥouroun Sur Une Stèle," *Annales Du Service Des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 44 [1944]: 171). It is interesting to note that although this form is common during the New Kingdom, its spelling and the two possible mentions from the Middle Kingdom suggest that its origins are more ancient (Wimmer, "Byblos vs. Ugarit," 130). A variant spelling *r-b-nw-n*, with Egyptian *b* instead of *m* transcribing Semitic /b/, is possibly attested for the Middle Kingdom, on a seal produced in Byblos, i.e., in Lebanon itself (ibid.). The word *r-b-n(w)* attested in oTurin CG 57365.8 (Jesús López, *Ostraca ieratici N. 57450–57568. Tabelle lignee N. 58001–58007* [Milano, 1982]) from Deir El Medina could either be another spelling variant analogous, although much later, to the previous *r-b-nw-n*; or it could be a different word or a different locality. Cf. in particular *r-b-n* in the Lists of Thutmose III, probably referring to a place in Southern Canaan; see Henri Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques* (Le Caire, 1925), vol 3, 116. Virginia Condon believes that a similar form can be recognised in pTurin CG 54031, also from Deir El Medina (*Seven Royal Hymns of the Ramesside Period : Papyrus Turin CG 54031* [München, 1978], 10–31). This attestation, however, is far from being certain: only the beginning *r-b-* is preserved, while the second half of the word is lost in a lacuna.

[3] I.e., "Sidon" (Wen. 1.59), "Syria" (Wen. 1.8, passim), "Dor" (Wen 1.8), "(The Land of ? the) Tjekker" (Wen. 1.9), "Byblos" (Wen. 1.17, passim), "Tyre" (Wen. 3.6, passim), "Alasya" (Wen. 2.75, passim).

[4] Akkadian *la/ibnān-* (Erich Ebeling et al., eds., *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* [Berlin, 1928–1968], vol. 6, 641); Ugaritic *l-b-n-n* (Gregorio del Olmo Lete, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* [Leiden, 2003], vol. 2, 491); Phoenician *l-b-n-n* (Zellig S. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language* [New Haven, CT, 1936], 114, and Herbert Donner, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, 2., durchgesehene und erw. Aufl. (Wiesbaden, 1966), §31); Biblical Hebrew *l-b-n-(w-)n* (Ludwig Köhler, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Leiden, 1994], 518–19); Samaritan Aramaic *l-b-n-(w-)n* (Abraham Tal, *A Dictionary of Samaritan Aramaic* [Leiden, 2000], 425); and Judean Aramaic *l-(y-)b-n-n* (Köhler, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, 519). In late (i.e., first millennium AD) Mandaic sources, two forms are attested: *libnan/lbnan/liban* and *Lilban* (Wilhelm Gesenius, *Wilhelm Gesenius' Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, 18. Aufl. [Berlin, 2005], 595; Ethel Stefana Drower, *A Mandaic Dictionary* [Oxford, 1963], 235–36). The first is comparable to the standard Aramaic form and to the Semitic forms in general. As for the second, it is not relevant here, as I think it can be explained as a late secondary development resulting from the assimilation of the first /n/ to the initial /l/ after a metathesis /bn/ > /nb/, i.e., *libnan* > **linban* > *lilban*.

[5] Hoch, "Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts," 407.

[6] Except in a single case, in which the use of *r* is probably the result of a process of assimilation due to a following /r/ in the Semitic form itself (see ibid., 359, 407). In the case of Lebanon, however, the Semitic form does not present any /r/ that could justify an assimilation in the Egyptian transcription. As for Allen's assertion that Egyptian *r* could represent also Semitic /n/ (James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Language : An Historical Study* [Cambridge, 2013], 40), his claim is neither referenced nor supported by any example, and therefore it is impossible to verify or discuss—perhaps it is a mistake, or perhaps he is also referring to the single case with assimilation just mentioned.

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no explanation to justify it has ever been put forward is a strong argument against interpreting *r-b-r-n* as "Lebanon."

The only possible way to phonetically reconcile the spelling *r-b-r-n* with the meaning "Lebanon" would be to assume that what we have here is not a transcription of the native Semitic form of the name, but of its Hittite/Anatolian version, "Lablana."[7] In this case, both Egyptian *r*'s would transcribe the Anatolian /l/.

This possibility, however, is decidedly unlikely, especially if we consider that on the one hand during the Third Intermediate Period, when the tale of Wenamun was written, the Hittite Empire had already disappeared, and Egypt in general does not seem to have been in close contact with Anatolia; while on the other hand, during the New Kingdom, when Egypt did have contacts with Anatolia and could have indeed been exposed to the Anatolian form *lablana*, it was nevertheless only the form *r-m-n-n*, a transcription of the Semitic form *l-b-n-n*, that was consistently and exclusively used. In addition, one would still have to explain why an Egyptian scribe would have put in the mouth of a king of Byblos with a Semitic name an *Anatolian* rendition of the name of his own region, rather than simply using the more natural native Semitic form *l-b-n-n* (written *r-m-n-n*).

These three issues and the lack of valid arguments are compelling reasons to abandon the traditional interpretation *r-b-r-n* = "Lebanon." In its stead, an easier and more convincing solution can be suggested.

Egyptian *r-b-r-n* = Semitic *d-p-r-n* = "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)"

Rather than "Lebanon," it can be suggested that the Egyptian word *r-b-r-n* means "juniper" and is in fact a transcription of *d-p-r-n*, the name of a kind of juniper tree well-attested in the Semitic languages of the Levant[8] and even in Hittite.[9] This new interpretation is based on two arguments. One, as already pointed out above, the determinatives  (M1 + Z3) and their parallel use in the word , *ʿš*-wood/tree(s) in Wen. 1,54, suggest that *r-b-r-n* is a kind of tree or wood; and two, it has been pointed out that Egyptian *r* can transcribe Semitic /l/. Egyptian *r*, however, can also correspond to Semitic /d/, as is attested by another word in the very same story of Wenamun: , *ʿ-r-š-n,* "lentils" (Wen. 2,41; 2,42), which is a transcription of Semitic *ʿ-d-š-n*, also "lentils."[10] The word *ʿ-r-š-n* is in fact considered by J. E. Hoch as a reliable attestation of this *r* = *d* correspondence,[11] and its use in the tale demonstrates that Egyptian *r* could transcribe Semitic /d/ not only in general at the time of the story Wenamun, but even *in* the story of Wenamun itself.

Considering the two arguments above, the Egyptian form *r-b-r-n* can thus be compared with *d-p-r-n*, the name of a kind of juniper in various Semitic languages.[12] The use of Egyptian *b* to transcribe Semitic /p/ is well-attested,[13] especially when, as in the case of *d-p-r-n*, /p/ appears in proximity of an /r/.[14]

The *d-p-r-n juniper* is usually identified with *Juniperus Drupacea*[15] or with *Juniperus Excelsa*.[16] The latter is common both in Syria and Lebanon, while the former is today known mostly in Syria though surviving in a few scattered locations in Lebanon;[17] considering the vast deforestation that has affected Lebanon in modern times,[18] however, one cannot exclude that *Juniperus Drupacea* also grew there in antiquity. *Juniperus Excelsa* is a medium-sized tree up to 20–25 m. tall and up to 1.5–2.5 m. in diameter at breast height;[19] *Juniperus Drupacea* has similar characteristics, although it tends to be slightly smaller.[20] The wood of *Juniper Excelsa* is

[7] Ebeling et al., *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, VI, 641.

[8] Aramaic *d-p-r-n* (M. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's* Lexicon Syriacum [Winona Lake, IN, 2009], 162), Ugaritic *d-p-r-n* (Wilfred G. E. Watson, "A Botanical Snapshot of Ugarit. Trees, fruit, plants and herbs in the cuneiform texts," *AuOr* 22 [2004]: 114), Akkadian CAD D s.v. *daprānu/duprānu*.

[9] In the form *tabrinni* (Marie-Claude Trémouille, "Il Tabri E I «suoi Addetti» Nella Documentazione Ittita," in *Quattro Studi Ittiti*, ed. Imparati, Eothen 4 [Firenze, 1991], 78).

[10] Hoch, "Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts," 74–75: *-n* probably indicates a plural with nunation as in Aramaic.

[11] For other possible examples of Egyptian *r* transcribing Semitic /d/ and discussion, see ibid., 63–65, 74–75, 406, 430.

[12] See n. 4 above.

[13] Hoch, "Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts," 401.

[14] Ibid., 402.

[15] CAD D s.v. *daprānu/duprānu*.

[16] Ebeling et al., *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, vol. 6, 643.

[17] *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2013*: www.iucnredlist.org/details/42232/0 and www.iucnredlist.org/details/30311/0 (accessed 24 Nov. 2015). See also Aljos Farjon, *A Handbook of the World's Conifers* (Leiden, 2010), 407–10 and 411–14.

[18] Marvin W. Mikesell, "The Deforestation of Mount Lebanon," *Geographical Review* 59/1 (1969): 1–28.

[19] Farjon, *Handbook of the World's Conifers*, 411.

[20] Farjon, *Handbook of the World's Conifers*, 407.

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characterized by a pleasant smell and is appreciated in construction for its durability and resistance to fungi and insects. These species of juniper were widely used in antiquity, including in Egypt,[21] and their wood was often compared, and confused, with that of the more famous cedar.[22]

Finally, in support of the idea that *r-b-r-n* is the rendition of a Semitic tree name, it is also worth noting that there is at least one other case attesting that the Egyptians did know and use local Levantine names to indicate specific kinds of trees from the Lebanese coast: in Papyrus Anastasi I[23], line 19.3, there is a mention of a *j-l-n*[24] tree, which is clearly a transcription of Semitic *ʾ-l-n*, "oak."[25] Thus, *r-b-r-n* can simply be another instance of the same phenomenon (and perhaps of a comparable display of erudition by the scribe using it?).

[21] Cedar was by far the most common foreign wood used in Egypt (Alfred Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, 4th ed., rev. J. R. Harris [London, 1962], 429–30; Dietger Grosser, Regina Grünewald, and Barbara Kreissl, "Holz - ein wichtiger Werkstoff im alten Ägypten," in *Anch: Blumen für das Leben: Pflanzen im alten Ägypten*, ed. S. Schoske, B. Kreissl, and R. Germer [München, 1992], 258–59; W. V. Davies, "Ancient Egyptian Timber Imports: An Analysis of Wooden Coffins in the British Museum," in *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant : Interconnections in the Second Millennium BC* [London, 1995], 150). Juniper, however, appears to be (depending on period) the second most common foreign wood in the objects analysed in Munich by Grosser et al. ("Holz," 258–59), and the third most common foreign wood in both the objects of the British Museum analysed by Lucas (*Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, 429–30) and by Davies ("Ancient Egyptian Timber Imports," 150). It is clear from these data that, cedar left aside, juniper was one of the most commonly used foreign woods. For the use of juniper in the objects of Tutankhamun see also F. Nigel Hepper, *Pharaoh's Flowers : The Botanical Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 2nd ed. (Chicago; London, 2009), 38, 40, 60–61.

[22] See: Mikesell, "Deforestation of Mount Lebanon," 14; Russell Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford, 1982), 410–16; Rowena Gale et al., "Wood," in *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, ed. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw (Cambridge, UK, 2000), 349. The two trees, in fact, grow in the same areas and have a very similar wood (Meiggs, *Trees and Timber*, 406, 409; Cheryl A. Ward, *Sacred and Secular: Ancient Egyptian Ships and Boats* [Philadelpha, PA, 2000], 23). In Egypt, the use of juniper wood for coffins and shrines is attested side by side with real cedar, and it has been suggested that this could actually be the result of a similar confusion (Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries*, 429–30; Hepper, *Pharaoh's Flowers*, 61).

[23] For the publication, see: Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Hieratic Texts* (Chicago, 1911).

[24] Spelled *j-nr-n*; for the regular use of *nr* = /l/ see Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts*, 407.

[25] Ibid., 24–25.

r-b-r-n = *d-b-r-n* = "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)" in the *Story of Wenamun*

The word *r-b-r-n* appears in three passages in the story of Wenamun, and in all of them the translation "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)" (or possibly "juniper-like tree/wood") fits very well into the context, unlike the usual but often contextually problematic translation "Lebanon."

The three passages are the following:

> Wen. 2.13–14
> 2.13 *jw=j (r) ʿšˁ sgḥ r pȝ* 2.14 *r-b-r-n j.jr tȝ pt wn jw nȝ ḫt dy ḫȝʿ spt pȝ ym*
> When/If I cry aloud for/to the **juniper**, the sky opens and the wood lies here on the shore of the sea.[26]

This sentence is puzzling, and its meaning difficult if one takes *r-b-r-n* as meaning "Lebanon." If, however, one assumes that *r-b-r-n* means "juniper," then the passage becomes clearer. In particular, the reference to the sky can be compared with lines 19.2–3 of Papyrus Anastasi I, where it is said that the trees (*ʿwnt*-trees, *ʿšˁ*-trees and oaks) of the land of Magara[27] *pḫ=w ḫryt*, "reach the firmament," and, as a result, *pt kkw=tj m ḥrw*, "the sky is dark by day." In an opposite way, the phrase "the sky opens" could mean that once Zeker-Baʾal has called "for/to the juniper," the trees are cut and the sky "opens," i.e., they are cleared and the sky is no longer darkened by their branches or foliage. It is a possibility that would fit well into the narration. Moreover, with *r-b-r-n* translated as "juniper," the relation between Zeker-Baʾal's cry and the wood lying on the shore becomes clearer: the king of Byblos claims to be so powerful that it is enough for him to call for the juniper, and the wood will lie on the shore, almost as if it came of its own accord.

Let us turn now to the second passage:

> Wen. 2.24
> *ḫr {m}ntf pȝ r-b-r-n nty twk ḏd jnk sw j.jr=f (2.25)rwd n jmn-wsr-ḫȝt pȝ nb n br nb*
> And as for it, the **juniper** that you say "it is mine," it is only for the (bark of Amun) *jmn-wsr-ḫȝt*, the lady of all ships, that it is growing.

[26] Third Future used in a conditional sentence: see Schipper, "Die Erzählung des Wenamun," 70.

[27] An unidentified land, but very likely near, probably north, of Byblos; see Gauthier, *Dictionnaire des noms géographiques contenus dans les textes hiéroglyphiques*, vol. 3, 10.

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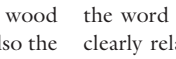
This passage, which has raised much discussion and generally been considered difficult,[28] becomes clear if one translates *r-b-r-n* as "juniper," as it becomes evident that Wenamun is here stating that the trees of Lebanon are growing specifically to provide wood for the bark of Amun. This translation solves also the problem of the interpretation of the verb *rwḏ*, "to grow," for which no definitive solution has been suggested so far.[29]

Finally, the third passage:

Wen. 2.28
twk ḥ‘=t r jr(t) šwy n pȝ r-b-r-n m-ḏ[r]j jmn pȝy=f nb (lit. pȝy nb=f)
You stand to bargain on the **juniper** with Amun, its lord/owner.

Given that Wenamun is on a mission to buy wood, "to bargain on the juniper" makes perfect sense, much more than the usual translation, "to bargain on Lebanon." Translating the word in question as "juniper" sheds some light also on the final part of the sentence: there is no attestation that Amun has ever been considered "Lord/Owner of the Lebanon" (if anything, it is Hathor who has always been identified as the Lady of Byblos, and, in later periods, it is Osiris and Isis who are associated with the city[30]), but in the Jebel Barkal Stela it is said that *prt nbt m swn[t] ḫr ḫm=j n=f st*, "Everything that comes before My Majesty through trade (*swn[t]*) is his (i.e., Amun's)" (Urk. IV 1240.14). Further, it is stated that Amun "loves" the wood of Lebanon (Urk. IV 1237.16–1238.1; cf., on this detail, Wen. 2.34 for a similar expression). Thus, having Wenamun claiming Amun's ownership of the juniper (wood) of Byblos that he is trying to obtain corresponds very well with Egyptian tradition and ideology.

Papyrus Chester Beatty I

The word *r-b-r-n* is attested only in Wenamun. A related word, however, appears once in the last line a hymn to Ramesses V preserved in Papyrus Chester Beatty I:[31] *ḫ‘=k sgb r pȝ r-b-r-(n-)n-y s‘ȝ pȝ ḥbn* (pChB I vs B:31–33). Alan Gardiner[32] translated this line as "Thou cryest aloud unto the Lebanon and it writheth in birth-pangs. The ebony."[33] This passage has a striking parallel in Wen. 2,13–14,[34] and the word , *r-b-r-(n-)n-y*, which is clearly related to the *r-b-r-n* of Wenamun, has thus usually been translated as "the Lebanese (people),"[35] or as "the Lebanon."[36]

If, however, we consider that Wenamun's *r-b-r-n* means "juniper" rather than "Lebanon," then the translation of the *r-b-r-(n-)n-y* of Papyrus Chester Beatty I has to be reconsidered as well. In order to do so, a few things can be observed. The determinatives seem to indicate that the word refers to a group of (foreign) people, and the preceding singular masculine article *pȝ*, combined with the determinative, shows that it has to be taken as a collective. The ending *-y* looks like a marker of plurality quite common in words borrowed from Semitic languages.[37] Finally, the double *n* is probably just an orthographic variant.[38]

Assuming that *r-b-r-n* means "juniper," *r-b-r-(n-)n-y* must then refer to people somehow related

[28] See for instance Schipper, "Die Erzählung des Wenamun," 74, n. 204.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Susan Tower Hollis, "Hathor and Isis in Byblos in the Second and First Millennia BCE," *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 1/2 (2010): 1–8.

[31] Alan Henderson Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty : Description of a Hieratic Papyrus with a Mythological Story, Love-Songs, and Other Miscellaneous Texts* (London, 1931), 42, pl. XXI.

[32] Ibid., 42; see also Ursula Verhoeven, "Ein historischer 'Sitz im Leben' für die Erzählung von Horus und Seth des Papyrus Chester Beatty I," in *Wege öffnen: Festschrift für Rolf Gundlach zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Rolf Gundlach and Mechthild Schade-Busch (Wiesbaden, 1996), 354–55, for a similar translation.

[33] The text ends after this word. It is not a lacuna.

[34] *(2.13) jw=j (ḥr) ḫ‘ sgb r pȝ (2.14) r-b-r-n,* "When I cry aloud for/to the *r-b-r-n*." See above p. 46, and Gardiner, *Library of A. Chester Beatty*, 42, n. 2; Jean Winand, "The Report of Wenamun: A Journey in Ancient Egyptian Literature," in *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K. A. Kitchen*, ed. M. Collier and S. Snape (Bolton, UK, 2011), 553, who think that the author of Wenamun is here explicitly quoting the passage of Chester Beatty I.

[35] Shmuel Aḥituv, *Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents* (Jerusalem, 1984), 130–31.

[36] Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*, 42.

[37] Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts*, 445–47. The origins of this marker, however, are not clear: Hoch (ibid.) notes that in Aramaic a plural /-ayyā/ is attested since around 800 BC, and A. Sperber (*A Historical Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: A Presentation of Problems with Suggestions to Their Solution* [Leiden, 1966], 29–40, §34–35) suggests that also Biblical Hebrew possibly had a plural in *-y*. J. P. A. Erman (*Neuägyptische Grammatik, Zweite völlig umgestaltete Auflage* [Leipzig, 1933], 65, §150) and J. Černý and S. Groll (*A Late Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd ed. [Rome, 1984], 51) instead interpret it as an Egyptian morpheme.

[38] See, e.g., *Ḏ-d-n-n*, transcribing *Ḏ-d-n*, "Sidon," in Wen. 1.59. It is also important to point out that the combination *r* + *n* is not a transcription for /l/, as Aḥituv seems to imply (*Canaanite Toponyms*, 130, n. 328). It is *n* + *r* that can represent /l/ (Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts*, 407), but this is not what we have here.

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to juniper wood in some way. Interestingly, in Semitic languages it is indeed possible to derive nouns of professions related to plants from the names of the plants themselves. Two well-known examples are *k-r-m*, "vine grower, vintner,"[39] from *k-r-m*, "wine, vineyard";[40] and *t-m-r*, "date seller, date grower,"[41] from *t-m-r*, "date, date palm."[42] The Arabic شَجَّار, *šajjār*, "tree grower, nurseryman, arboriculturist," from شَجَر /شَجَرَة, *šajar/šajara*, "tree," is also worthy of notice. *r-b-r-(n-)n-y* could thus be an analogous derivative meaning "juniper growers" or "juniper workers," or maybe even "tree growers" or "tree cutters" in a more generic way.[43] The fact that there is evidence suggesting that the ancient population of Lebanon practiced forestry and tree nurturing,[44] and the fact that "tree growers" are indeed attested in the ancient Levant[45] are arguments supporting this idea.

It is true that the determinatives seem to indicate a foreign population, rather than a group of foreign members of a specific profession. This, however, is not a big obstacle: it could either be a mistake of the scribe or, perhaps more likely, it could be that the Egyptians perceived the "tree growers" as a specific social group or population. This would not be surprising, considering that probably the main "tree growers" known by the Egyptians were essentially the populations of the Lebanese coast, a region that was often called by the Egyptians simply *ḫnty-š*, "the Garden," "the Forest."[46] It would seem fairly reasonable that, from an Egyptian perspective, "the Garden" was inhabited by the "Tree-Growers," and this association could have been helped both by the assonance between *r-b-r-n* and *r-m-n-n/l-b-n-n*, and by the various examples in Egyptian of associations between specific professions, habits or practices and ethnic groups.[47]

Going back to the passage of Papyrus Chester Beatty I, two translations are thus possible. The first is simply to take this passage as Gardiner did, translating "tree growers" instead of "Lebanon": "Thou cryest aloud unto the **tree growers**[48] and they writhe in

[39] Biblical Hebrew כֹּרֵם, *koram*; Aramaic כרם, *k(ā)r(e)m*; Classical Arabic كَرَّام, *karrām*; attested also in Egyptian as *kꜣny*.

[40] Hebrew כֶּרֶם, *kerem*; Aramaic כרם, *kr(e)m*; Classical Arabic كَرْم, *karm*; attested in Egyptian as *kꜣn/mw*.

[41] Classical Arabic تَمَّار, *tammār*; Phoenician, *tmr*.

[42] Classical Arabic تَمْر, *tamr*; Phoenician, *tmr*. One can note that the Phoenician form *tmr*, "date seller" (attested in inscriptions, see Jacob Hoftijzer, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* [Leiden, 1995], vol. 2, 1222), is spelled in the same way as the word *tmr*, "date," from which it derives. As in the Arabic, Hebrew, and Aramaic examples in the notes above, the difference was probably in the vocalization, which however was not indicated in Phoenician, and therefore is not preserved. This is a detail to keep in mind, as it could suggest that other analogous names of professions could exist in Phoenician or Ugaritic (which also used a purely consonantal writing system, and in which many names of plants, including *krm*, *tmr*, and *dprn* are attested: see Watson, "Botanical Snapshot"), but they might not have been recognized so far because they are spelled exactly as the name of the plant from which they derive.

[43] Like *krm* above, which originally means "vintner," but often assumes the generic meaning of "gardener," also in Egyptian (Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache* [Leipzig, 1926–63], V, 106).

[44] Anne-Sophie Dalix and Anis Chaaya, "L'activité Forestière Au Liban Dans L'antiquité Pré-Classique: De L'exploitation À L'exportation," *Archaeology and History in Lebanon* 26/27 (2007–2008): 240–43.

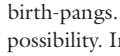
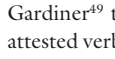
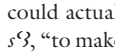
[45] See for instance F. Thureau-Dangin ("Notes Assyrologiques," *Revue d'Assyriologie et D'archéologie Orientale* 17/1 [1920]: 29), for a mention of "tree growers of the Hittites."

[46] See Erman and Grapow, *Wörterbuch der aegyptischen Sprache*, III, 310; *ḫnty-š* is attested since the Old Kingdom until the Greco-Roman period, and it is the usual and more common name used by the Egyptians to refer to the Lebanon. The name *r-m-n-n*, mentioned above, and which is the Egyptian transcription of the native Semitic name, is much rarer.

[47] See for instance the names *nmjw-šʿ* and *ḫry-šʿ*, with which the Egyptians referred to groups of non-sedentary people or "Bedouins": the first is derived from the Egyptian verb *nmj*, "to travel," and means "those who travel the sand," while the second is an Egyptian expression literally meaning "those (who are) upon the sand." The word *šmꜣw* is another common term used to indicate groups of foreigners (see for instance in the name of the fortress built by Thutmose III in Lebanon - Urk IV 740.1); literally it means "wanderers," from the verb *šmꜣ*, "to roam about," "wander about." Another word used in Egyptian to refer to groups of nomads and Bedouins which possibly shows similar interferences is *šꜣsw*, whose etymology is not clear (from the Egyptian verb *šꜣs*, "to travel" or from a Semitic attested in Hebrew as שסס/שׁסס *šss/šśh* with the meaning "to attack," "to loot"? See, e.g.: Raphael Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens* (Leiden, 1971), 261–64; William A. Ward, "The Shasu 'Bedouin': Notes on a Recent Publication," *JESHO* 15/1–2 (1972): 35–60, but which ends up meaning simply "herdsmen" in Coptic (ϣⲱⲥ, see: Walter Ewing Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* [Oxford, 1939], 589). Finally, a last potential example is the ethnic name *fnḫw*, which has been suggested could be related with the Egyptian word *fnḫ*, "carpenter" (Gábor Takács, *Etymological Dictionary of Egyptian* [Leiden, 1999–2008], II, 571–72). In this case, however, the connection is not sure, and the etymology of the word *fnḫw* itself is debated (see Salvador Ramírez de Arellano, "El Origen Egipcio Del Término 'Fenico'," *Boletín de La Asociación Española de Egiptología* 6 [1996]: 181–87 for an overview).

[48] As said before, *r-b-r-n-y* is preceded by the article *pꜣ*, and therefore it is grammatically singular. However, given the plural strokes and the suffix *-y*, which as said above is probably a pluralizing suffix, it is clear that the word has to be understood as a collective: "a **group** of *r-b-r-n-y*" or the like. Hence, the plural is adopted in the translation here.

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birth-pangs. The ebony. . .". There is however another possibility. In particular, the verb  *s'ȝ*, that Gardiner[49] took as a form of the obscure and poorly attested verb  *s'j*, "to writhe in birth-pangs,"[50] could actually simply be a form of the verb  *s'ȝ*, "to make great."[51] In this case, this verb could be a participle referring to the trees that the "tree growers" are caring for, and the determinative B2, , would be justified by the "nurturing" aspect implied in the work of the "tree growers."[52] The passage could thus be translated as: "You cry aloud to the **tree growers,** who take care of (lit., "make great") the ebony (or perhaps simply "precious wood"?)." Such a reading would explain why the text ends after *hbn*, and not before it,[53] and it could even give a parallel for the passage in Wen. 2.24–25, where it is the "juniper" which "grows" (on its own) for the bark of Amun.

Conclusions

In the present paper, I have argued for the rejection of the translation of the word *r-b-r-n* as "Lebanon," and instead suggested that we should interpret it to mean "juniper (*excelsa/dupracea*)." Such a meaning is not only more compatible with the spelling of the word and its determinatives, but also makes more sense of the contexts in which it is used. As a consequence, I think that the interpretation of *r-b-r-n(-n)-y* in Papyrus Chester Beatty I has likewise to be reconsidered, and should be understood as "juniper growers" or "juniper workers," or more generally "tree growers" or "tree workers." Considering the determinatives with which it is written, this could in fact be a professional term used by the Egyptians as a way to refer to some social group or population (i.e., "the Tree-Growers"). In this case, such an interpretation would match well with the common Egyptian reference to Lebanon as *ḫnty-š*, i.e., "the Forest" or "the Garden."

Finally, reading *r-b-r-n* as *juniper excelsa/dupracea* or more generally as "juniper-like tree" brings in an important new piece of evidence for the much-discussed problem of the nature and identification of *ḫ*-wood. In general, *ḫ*-wood is mentioned in the Egyptian sources in association with Lebanon, with the building of ships and with the building of the Bark of Amun in particular.[54] In the story of Wenamun itself, there is a mention of ships made of *ḫ*-wood (Wen. 1.54). Originally thought to be cedar,[55] then briefly interpreted as acacia,[56] the term *ḫ* is now unanimously recognized as referring to some variety of conifer.

But which one? Ducros[57] identified it with the yew, without being too convincing.[58] Loret's suggestion[59] that *ḫ* corresponds to the Cilician fir, and possibly to pine, has met with a certain degree of approval,[60] although the identification of *ḫ* with cedar is still common[61] and has been validly defended.[62] Other authors avoid any specific identification, and choose to identify *ḫ* with a generic "conifer" or with various trees at the same time.[63] For the sake of completeness, one can

[49] Gardiner, *Library of A. Chester Beatty*, 42, n. 2.

[50] Leonard H. Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, ed. Barbara S. Lesko, 2nd ed. (Providence, RI, 2002–2004), II, 12–13 gives only one other attestation in K. A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical* (Oxford, 1975–1990), V, 15, 8.

[51] Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, II, 13.

[52] It is interesting to observe that this semantic association is indeed attested in other languages, as for instance in English, where tree growers are also called "nurserymen."

[53] Gardiner thinks that *hbn* is the first word of a deleted line (Gardiner, *The Library of A. Chester Beatty: Description of a Hieratic Papyrus with a Mythological Story, Love-Songs, and Other Miscellaneous Texts.*, Pl XXIa, note c).

[54] There are many examples, but the most interesting is certainly a fragmentary inscription in the Temple of Karnak from the time of Herihor, which could refer to the very same bark of the story of Wenamun. The fragment reads: . . . *mḏḥ wȝ=f m ḫ ḫnty[-š]*: ". . . build(ing?) his (i.e., Amun's) bark with *ḫ*-wood of Kenty-[she] (= Lebanon)" (Kitchen, *KRI*, VI,713,6). See also Schipper, "Die Erzählung des Wenamun," 167.

[55] François Joseph Chabas, "Le Cèdre Dans Les Hiéroglyphes," *Revue Archéologique année* 2/4 (1861): 47–51; Philippe-Jacques de Horrack, "Notice Sur Le Nom Égyptien Du Cèdre," *Revue Archéologique année* 5/9 (1864): 44–51.

[56] Victor Loret, "Étude Sur Quelques Arbres Égyptiens," *Recueil de Traveaux Relatifs À La Philologie et À L'archéologie Égyptiennes et Assyriennes* 2 (1880): 21–26, 60–65.

[57] H. Ducros, "L'arbre Ash Des Anciens Égyptiens," *Annales Du Service Des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 14 (1914): 1–12.

[58] Victor Loret, "Quelques Notes Sur L'arbre Âch," *Annales Du Service Des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 16 (1916): 33–51.

[59] Ibid.

[60] E.g., Marcel Jacquemin, "Cèdre Ou Sapin?," *Kêmi* 4 (1933): 113–18; Wolfgang Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches* (Wiesbaden, 1961), 241–307; Wolfgang Helck, Eberhard Otto, and Wolfhart Westendorf, eds., *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Wiesbaden, 1972), II 1266 and passim.

[61] E.g., Geoffrey Killen, "Woodworking," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford, vol. III (Oxford, 2001), 516–19.

[62] Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Appendix 2.

[63] E.g., Ward, *Sacred and Secular*, 20–24; Stephen Ranulph Kingdon Glanville, "Records of a Royal Dockyard of the Time of Tuthmosis III: Papyrus British Museum 10056," *Zeitschrift Fur Ägyptische Sprache Und Altertumskunde* 66 (1932): 105–21.

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also mention the works by Alessandra Nibbi,[64] who makes a summary of the question and gives her own interpretation of the problem based on her controversial rejection of any connection between Egypt and Byblos and the Northern Levant in general. More recently, Th. Bardinet identifies the *ꜥš* mainly with the *Pinus Pinea*,[65] but also with the Cilician fir, the juniper *macrocarpa* from both Lebanon and Cyrenaica, and with the juniper *oxycedrus*.[66]

Clearly, there are numerous and often contrasting opinions on the subject, and the situation becomes even more complex when one considers that the issue of the *ꜥš*-wood/tree is also related with the identification of the *mrw*-wood/tree, taken as cedar by those who consider the *ꜥš* to be the Cilician fir or the pine, and taken as the fir or the pine by those who see the *ꜥš* as cedar. One can say that, in general, the debate has essentially been built around two opposite approaches: on the one hand, those who expect the terms *ꜥš* and *mrw* to have precise, one-to-one correspondences to species of plants; and on the other hand, those arguing for an interpretation of these words as general terms, potentially referring to various species of plants at the same time. Both views are in fact problematic, as for instance in Bardinet's recent book.[67] Although indubitably noteworthy for its accuracy and completeness, his work is also a good example of the difficulties of the first approach. Bardinet assumes that all the Egyptian terms related with trees, including the word *ꜥš*, must refer to clearly distinct and very specific trees. Starting from this assumption, and on the basis of different kinds of data and various considerations, he reaches the conclusion that the term *ꜥš* must indicate the *Pinus Pinea*.[68] As it is however clear that some of the mentions of the word *ꜥš* are not compatible with such an identification, Bardinet assumes that some combinations of the term with other expressions have actually to be considered as distinct and equally specific definitions referring to other kinds of trees.[69] In this way he "increases" the number of Egyptian terms that he can match with specific trees, and expressions as vague as *ꜥš n tp ḫtyw*, "the *ꜥš* of the top of the Ladder (= Lebanese mountains)"—or as rare as *ꜥš ḫt(wt) Ḥr*, "the *ꜥš* of the fields of Horus"—end up being precise definitions for the "Cilician fir"[70] or for the "juniper-*macrocarpa* when it is cultivated in Cyrenaica."[71] The result is a list of seventeen types of *ꜥš*, each of them corresponding to one and only one of five different trees.[72] It seems to me that the general vagueness of the term *ꜥš* that emerges from this multiplicity of identifications stands in stark contrast with the assumed precision of the single definitions, and of the definition of the term *ꜥš* as *Pinus Pinea* in the first place.

This struggle between the vagueness and specificity of *ꜥš* and its associated terms is not unique to Berdinet's work, and in fact in one form or in another it has been a characteristic trait of the whole debate. This problem, obviously, exists also for the opposite approach: assuming that *ꜥš* could have had only a very general meaning, such as "conifer" or the like, can be a good solution in some cases, but it would be in contrast with the specific characteristics of the *ꜥš* emerging from other sources.

It is thus clear that new evidence is needed to get out of this impasse, and the new interpretation of *r-b-r-n* presented here can supply some. The key, in fact, is the bark of Amun: since Wenamun describes the wood of the bark as *r-b-r-n = juniper excelsa/dupracea*, while other sources describe it[73] as *ꜥš*-wood, we can conclude that the *r-b-r-n* of Wenamun *is* (a kind of) *ꜥš*-wood. The importance of such a fresh and for once very precise and explicit piece of evidence is manifest, and it invites to a re-examination of the whole question of the *ꜥš*. It is clear, however, that such a complete and exhaustive reassessment of the problem of the term *ꜥš* is beyond the aims and the possibilities of this article. It is nevertheless useful, I think, to point out a series of considerations emerging on the margin of the *r-b-r-n = juniper excelsa/dupracea* identification that could be worthwhile to consider in future, more specific studies.

[64] Alessandra Nibbi, "Some Remarks on the Lexikon Entry: Zeder, Cedar," *Discussions in Egyptology* 7 (1987): 13–27; "Cedar yet Again," *Discussions in Egyptology* 56 (2003): 69–83; and other works cited in n. 1, above.

[65] Thierry Bardinet, *Relations économiques et pressions militaires en Méditerranée orientale et en Libye au temps des pharaons: histoire des importations égyptiennes des résines et des conifères du Liban et de la Libye depuis la période archaïque jusqu'a l'époque Ptolémaïque*, Etudes et Mémoires d'Egyptologie 7 (Paris, 2008).

[66] Ibid., 330.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 23–29.

[69] Ibid., 330 and passim.

[70] Ibid., 51–57.

[71] Ibid., 186–187.

[72] Ibid., 330.

[73] See the above-mentioned passage (see n. 54) in the Temple of Karnak from the time of Herihor, which could refer to the very same bark of the story of Wenamun.

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First of all, if *r-b-r-n* means *juniper excelsa/dupracea* or "juniper-like tree," then obviously it can be suggested that the term *ꜥš* could also refer to the *juniper excelsa/dupracea* or to a "juniper-like tree." This does not mean that *ꜥš* is *only* juniper and cannot refer also to cedar, fir or pine. Instead, it shows that it can *also* be juniper,[74] bringing support to the idea that in fact the word *ꜥš* was, or at least could be in some contexts, a rather general term referring to a large category of trees sharing similar characteristics but essentially belonging to different species. With this in mind, one could wonder if the real problem is actually not so much in the meaning of the term *ꜥš* itself, but rather in the approaches tried so far and in the underlying opposition between "specific" and "vague" theoretical frames.

This considered, rather than a univocal translation for *ꜥš*, it would perhaps be better to assume a "multilayered" system of definitions, in which the degree of precision and the meaning of the term *ꜥš* itself would depend on the context in which it was used, and on the terms to which it was related or opposed. In particular, considering that on the one hand the Egyptians were first in contact with the cut *wood* of these trees (imported as timber for building and craftsmanship purposes) rather than with the trees themselves,[75] and that on the other, the *ꜥš*-wood is often represented as yellow, in contrast to the red *mrw*-wood,[76] one could suggest that the term *ꜥš* was in the first place a *technical* term possibly developed in the context of craftsmanship. In this case, its meaning could have been something like "(foreign) yellow wood(-tree)" and it should be understood as being in semantic opposition with *mrw*, which would have thus meant "(foreign) red wood(-tree)."[77] The term *ꜥš* would therefore refer to the wood of trees like the Cilician fir or the pines in general, without specifically referring to any of them; while the term *mrw* would refer to red woods like those of the cedar, or of the *juniper excelsa* and *dupracea*, but again without specifically referring to any of these trees. These two terms, *ꜥš* and *mrw*, could have also stood in semantic opposition to at least another term, *ꜥwnt*, which could have indicated a generic "aromatic wood(-tree)" or something like that, probably referring to small and bush-like species of juniper, like the *juniperus oxycedrus*.[78] Then in other (later, or less technical?) contexts, i.e., on another "semantic layer," the term *ꜥš mꜣꜥ*, "true *ꜥš*," could have been used to refer to a more specific kind of tree or wood. This term would have stood in opposition to a more generic term *ꜥš* whose meaning, in these contexts, could have been extended to indicate any kind of "conifer" tree or wood, including conifers with red woods like the cedar or the junipers *excelsa* and *dupracea*. This *ꜥš mꜣꜥ*, this "true *ꜥš*," could have possibly been the Cilician fir, as already suggested by Loret,[79] which with its majestic characteristics could have easily been perceived as the "yellow wood(-tree)" par excellence. Again, these two terms, *ꜥš mꜣꜥ* and *ꜥš*, could have stood in opposition to *ꜥwnt*.

In addition, the Egyptians did also have precise names for specific plants or woods such as *nḥt* = "sycamore," and *ḥbn* = "ebony wood," and at least during the New Kingdom, they also knew and used specific Semitic terms like *j-l-n* < Sem. *ʾ-l-n*, "oak" and *r-b-r-n* < Sem. *d-p-r-n*, *juniper excelsa/dupracea*. These names correspond to another, different semantic layer, and represent another way, complementary to the previous ones, to refer to woods and trees.

It is thus clear that with such a multilayered semantic system, in which the meanings of the various terms depend on the context, and on the other terms to which they are linked and opposed, the same term could have indicated various kinds of woods and trees, and at the same time the same wood or tree could have been referred to by various and potentially contrasting terms depending on the context.

Finally, if one assumes that originally the term *ꜥš* meant something as vague as "(foreign) yellow wood(-tree)" or the like, then it also becomes possible

[74] This idea has actually already been suggested by Meiggs (*Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, 409) on the basis of the fact that junipers and cedars were often confused in antiquity as they grow in the same areas, their wood looks similar and has similar properties.

[75] As already pointed out by Loret ("Quelques Notes Sur L'arbre Âch": 34, 51).

[76] See in particular the coffin of Sopi, Louvre E 10779 A; see also ibid.: 38.

[77] One can compare the use of the word "ebony" in English, which does not indicate any specific plant, but rather is used to indicate a kind of wood with specific characteristics (dark and very hard) which can be obtained from different kinds of trees. Interestingly, the English word "ebony" comes ultimately from the Egyptian word *ḥbn*—and if the Egyptian term *ḥbn* was meant to indicate a kind of wood, rather than a kind of tree, then the same could have been true also for the terms *ꜥš* and *mrw*.

[78] The identification *ꜥwnt* = *juniperus oxycedrus* as already been suggested by Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, 409.

[79] Loret, "Quelques Notes Sur L'arbre Âch": 48–49.

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to advance an interpretation for its etymology, which has so far remained unclear. If in fact one considers that the term ꜥš regularly refers to wood imported primarily from the Levant and could therefore have its origin in a word borrowed from some (West?) Semitic language; and if at the same time one considers that the term ꜥš is particularly ancient[80] and therefore a loanword which must have entered into the Egyptian language in a particularly remote period;[81] then one can suggest that the term ꜥš is a loanword derived from *ʿṣ́, [ʕ-ɬ'], the Proto-Semitic ancestor of the common Semitic word ʿṣ = "wood"/"tree (in general)."[82] If in fact it is unlikely that Egyptian phoneme š = [ʃ] can correspond to the Semitic phoneme ṣ = [s'], it is instead reasonable to assume that š = [ʃ] could have been used to render its Proto-Semitic ancestor ṣ́ = [ɬ'][83]. This would not be surprising, as [ɬ'] and [ʃ] are very close phonemes, being the first an emphatic voiceless alveolar lateral fricative and the second a voiceless post-alveolar sibilant fricative. The closeness of [ɬ'] and [ʃ] is in fact indirectly supported by the fact that the proto-Semitic ś = [ɬ],[84] i.e., the non-emphatic form of [ɬ'], evolves into [ʃ] in various Semitic languages.[85] Since Egyptian did not have an emphatic equivalent of [ɬ'], they could have used š = [ʃ], the closest phoneme available, to approximate and to represent it. If so, the Egyptian term ꜥš could have originally indicated just the "wood" imported from a Semitic-speaking area, and the multilayered system described above could have gradually developed over time in response to an intensification of interactions with the Levant, and to an increased familiarity with its woods.

[80] It is already attested in the 1st dynasty, on a year tablet of king Den: see Wolfgang Helck, *Untersuchungen zur Thinitenzeit* (Wiesbaden, 1987), 159–160; Ilona Regulski, "A Palaeographic Study of Early Writing in Egypt" (Leuven, 2010), 143, 504.

[81] Certainly before the reign of Den, when it is attested for the first time (see previous note). The reign of Den has been recently dated to 2945–2904 BC (Michael Dee et al., "An Absolute Chronology for Early Egypt Using Radiocarbon Dating and Bayesian Statistical Modelling," *Proceedings of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Science* 469/2159 [2013]: 5).

[82] The proto-phoneme ṣ́ is accepted as the ancestor of (West-) Semitic ṣ, and it is generally assumed to have been realized as [ɬ'], although some have argued that if could have rather been an affricate [tɬ']. For a recent discussion, see for instance Edward Lipiński, *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar* (Leuven, 1997), 129–32, and Leonid Kogan, "Proto-Semitic Phonetics and Phonology," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. Stefan Weninger et al. (Berlin, 2011), 71–80.

[83] Proto-Semitic has recently been dated to 3750 BC (Andrew Kitchen et al., "Bayesian Phylogenetic Analysis of Semitic Languages Identifies an Early Bronze Age Origin of Semitic in the Near East," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 276/1668 [2009]: 2703–2710), thus relatively close to the reign of Den (see nn. 81 and 82, above), when the term ꜥš is attested for the first time. It is therefore very likely that when the Egyptians heard this word for the first time, certainly *before* the reign of Den, it must have still been pronounced as in Proto-Semitic, or at least with a pronunciation very close to it.

[84] The phonetic closeness of ś = [ɬ'] and ṣ́ = [ɬ] is demonstrate for instance by the alternation in Arabic between ḍ < ṣ́ and š < ś. See: Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 131–32.

[85] Ibid., 132.

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F
Appendix

F.1 Article 3

Marwan Kilani, in press, "Computer Science and Old Excavations: the Case of Byblos", in: *Proceedings of the Graduate Archaeology at Oxford (GAO) Conferences 2015-16: Interaction, Integration & Division: archaeological approaches to breaking boundaries*.

Computer Science and Old Excavations: the Case of Byblos.

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Abstract: Byblos, modern Jebail, is a costal Lebanese city that played a central role in interactions between Egypt and the Levant during the Bronze Age. The city was fully excavated between 1922 and 1974, but the results have received little attention and have only rarely been used. This is due to two main problems: first, the excavation technique was based on artificial layers of 20 cm that allowed a precise recording of the position of objects and architectural remains, but that at the same time did not respect and did not consider the natural stratigraphy of the city. Second, the publication consisted essentially of raw data presented in the form of list of objects with the corresponding coordinates, and plans representing the artificial layers. Elaborations and syntheses had indeed been planned, but they have never been realized. Byblos has thus been considered a failed excavation, from which little or nothing can be recovered. This, however, is far from being true. The present paper aims to show how modern computer techniques can help to elaborate these data and to make them finally accessible and interpretable, "rescuing" old but fundamental excavations from oblivion.

Key words: Digital tools; 3D reconstructions; Byblos; Obelisk Temple; urban archaeology

Introduction

This paper aims to present some technical solutions I have envisaged in the course of my doctoral dissertation. My work focuses on the Late Bronze Age phase of the Lebanese city of Byblos. Byblos was almost entirely excavated between the 1920s and the 1970s by Maurice Dunand. The data from the excavations present several problems. First of all, the records were never fully published, some of them were destroyed during the Lebanese civil war, and the rest are currently inaccessible.[1] The only data available, essentially, are a catalogue of roughly 20,000 objects and a few plans of some of the excavation campaigns.[2] The second problem stems from the excavation methodology used. Instead of following the natural stratigraphy, Dunand decided to excavate the city through artificial regular layers of 20 cm that he called levées. Each levée was divided into a series of regular squares of 10 m × 10 m.[3] A system of coordinates based on such squares and on the levée was used to indicate the finding spot of the various objects in the above-mentioned catalogue. The specific find spots of the most important among them were also indicated with more precision on the plans. Each plan combines and merges the architectural remains appeared in 5 levées. A code of colours was used to indicate in which of the 5 levées each wall or architectural feature appeared or disappeared (Figure 1)

The issue with such a system is clear: since the natural stratigraphy of the city rarely corresponds with Dunand's artificial levées, it often happens that objects and architectural structures from different periods were found in the same excavation units, and therefore ended up being recorded together. Consequently, the resulting data, although in general quite precise, are almost impossible to use, as in its published form it is difficult to determine which object is, potentially, in a primary context, and which one is instead out of context, or to recognize real associations both among objects and between objects and architectural structures.

In order to deal with this material, I have created a database for the objects published by Dunand, and I have digitized the plans, obtaining graphic and vector representations of those areas of the site that are relevant for my research. In the following paragraphs I will present some strategies I developed on the basis of these tools to recover additional information about the excavations. First I will discuss a way to recover an approximate stratigraphy and to identify areas of the site where Late Bronze Age layers could have been preserved. Then I will show how 3D reconstructions can be used to visualize and analyse the architectural remains of a building –in this case the so-called Obelisk Temple– and the material associated with it.

[1] Anne-Marie Afeiche and Patrick Michel, pers. comm.

[2] M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1926-32*, Vol. 1. (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1939); M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, Vol. 2. (Paris: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient A. Maisonneuve, 1954).

[3] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos, 1926-32*, 6–10; Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos, 1933 - 1938*, 3–7; J. Lauffray, "La méthode de fouille de M. Dunand à Byblos. II: Introduction à la méthode M. Dunand," *Topoi* 5 (1995): 453–68; Pierre Leriche, "La méthode de fouille de Maurice Dunand à Byblos. I: M. Dunand et l'archéologie au Proche-Orient au début du XXe siècle," *Topoi* 5 (1995): 439–52.

Analysis - definitions

To ensure that the following analysis is accessible, a few definitions are introduced:

- **Layer**: I use the word "layer" to refer to the chronological layers (Late Bronze Age layer, Roman layer) comprising the natural stratigraphy of the site. These layers do not correspond to Dunand's levées. Dunand did not describe these layers, but they can be partially and approximately reconstructed.
- **Levée**: one of the artificial layers produced by Dunand's excavation method (see Figure 2).
- **Square**: each of the square-shaped areas defined by the excavation grid used by Dunand from 1933 onward. Every square is identified by an x and a y coordinate corresponding respectively to the W–E and N–S coordinates of Dunand's grid (see Figure 2).
- **Column**: the vertical projection through all the levées of a square (see Figure 2).
- **Excavation Unit**: the cuboid defined by a grid square and one levée high, that is, each of the sections excavated by Dunand in each levée. Excavation units are defined by three coordinates: the levée number and the x y coordinates (see Figure 2).

Identification of the Late Bronze Age layers

Without stratigraphic data, it is challenging to identify any Late Bronze Age layer. The structure of the site is an obstacle: not only is there the complex and often uneven stratigraphic development typical of any urban area, it is also clear that many sectors were disturbed or destroyed by natural phenomena (erosion) or by later (especially Greco-Roman and medieval) activities.[4] Still, mentions of Late Bronze Age material and architectural remains are scattered through Dunand's publications, suggesting that Late Bronze Age layers did survive here and there.

Dunand's catalogue of objects, and the database I have built on it, can be used to recover at least some approximate stratigraphic data. In particular, on the basis of the principles of stratigraphy one can assume that an object found above another one is later in date than the latter, unless some disruption has occurred. Thus, the lowest object of a given period found can be taken as a reference point, a "*terminus sub quo*", under which the uncontaminated layers of the previous periods could be located – "could be" rather than "are", because layers of previous periods might have been contaminated by later material or might be absent, either because they never existed or because they were destroyed. If uncontaminated layers of previous periods do exist, then they must be located below that point. If instead there has been a disruption, one may find a later object below an earlier layer. In this case, the object will still be a valid "*terminus sub quo*", but one that will mark the possible limits of the disruption itself.

So for example, if in a given Excavation Column there is Greek material in levées 1, 3 and 4, it can be assumed that the Late Bronze Age layer was either located somewhere below levée 4 or, if it was above those levels, it was contaminated or destroyed by later activity at the site. Obviously, such a limit is only a possible stratigraphic indication. If the Late Bronze Age layers never existed or were destroyed, this limit may lie directly on earlier strata, dating for instance to the Middle or Early Bronze Age.

Another aspect to take into consideration is that not all the columns of the excavations have yielded material that can be used to define such a *terminus*. This problem can be managed by using those Excavation Units that did yield dating objects as reference points for a triangulation that creates a virtual plane encompassing the area under study. This plane approximates the limit of the *terminus sub quo* for the Late Bronze Age layers for those columns that did not yield any diagnostic dating artefact. In this way the gaps in the information represented by these empty columns will be filled in by an average value represented by the plane and inferred from the value of the *terminus sub quo* in those columns around it that have yielded objects. This approach is illustrated graphically in Figure 3.

After having defined the position of the plane corresponding to the *terminus sub quo*, it is possible to obtain a series of vertical sections of the site along the x or y lines of the excavation grid. These sections enable one to visualize where the limits of the layers so defined are located in relation to the levées. They can therefore be considered as an approximate guideline for the stratigraphy of the site, although a rough and loose one, with a resolution of only one Excavation Unit (Figure 4).

It is clear that if the columns and Excavation Units with diagnostic objects are close to each other, the resulting approximation of the layer in the adjacent and intermediate empty columns will have a relatively high degree of reliability. If, however, the Excavation Units with dating objects used as reference points are some distance away, the resulting plane is potentially less reliable and precise (Figure 5).

Due to the limitations of the data available, the resolution of such a reconstructed stratigraphic model is relatively low. Since the location of the objects is given only by Excavation Units, the resolution of the reconstructed stratigraphy cannot be higher than that of the Unit itself. This means that although it is possible to identify the Excavation Unit containing the limit of the layer, it is not possible to define where and how this limit passes within that Unit. According to Lauffray,[5] Dunand did use a more precise system of coordinates to record the absolute location of every object discovered. These data could be used to refine the stratigraphic reconstructions, but if they have survived, they have never been published.

[4] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1926-1932*, 64; see also79.

[5] Lauffray, "Introduction à la méthode M. Dunand," 457.

In addition to the definition of this *terminus sub quo* for the Late Bronze Age layers, it is also possible to try to define a *terminus super quem*, that is, the upper limit of the layers of the periods preceding the Late Bronze Age. The principle is the same, but reversed: *the terminus super quem* can be defined using the highest attestation of material of previous periods.

This *terminus super quem*, however, is much less indicative than the *terminus sub quo*, since whereas only direct vertical contamination can introduce a later object into an earlier layer, many factors can cause an earlier object to be found in a later layer. Moreover, if a later-object-into-earlier-layer contamination is usually limited in space to the area affected by the disturbance, an earlier-object-into-later-layer contamination can also involve significant horizontal displacements: for example earth (and associated objects) dug out from a pit could be deposited very far from the pit itself. As a consequence, the presence of an object in a certain place does not necessarily imply that the layers below it belong to the same or to an earlier period, nor even that, if that is not the case, they have been disturbed: the object could have been brought to the surface elsewhere and could have been moved there at a later time.

These are serious limitations, and therefore the *terminus super quem* should be seen only as a very approximate guide. With some adjustment, however, these limitations can be contained and the *terminus super quem* can be fine-tuned in order to obtain a relatively valid stratigraphic reference. In particular, identifying coherent ensembles of objects, rather than isolated objects, improves the reliability of a *terminus super quem*. It is clear that one isolated Middle Bronze Age pot is not indicative of a Middle Bronze Age layer, but a group of Middle Bronze Age vessels within a small vertical or horizontal range of Excavation Units would point to the presence of a stratigraphic ensemble that might reflect a Middle Bronze Age layer. Focusing on intact, fragile objects is another productive strategy. For instance, vessels break easily, either before deposition or as a consequence of later disturbance, and their sherds can easily get out of context. Sherds are thus poor indicators for the *terminus super quem*, but vessels that are intact or broken but complete, can indicate deposition and little or no disturbance.

The details about the procedure to specifically identify a *terminus sub quo* and a *terminus super quem* for the Late Bronze Age Layer are discussed in my doctoral dissertation. An example of a reconstructed stratigraphy is given in Figure 6.

The Obelisk Temple

The Obelisk Temple is the best-preserved building of the city. It is located in the central area of the site. The temple was built at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, on remnants of a previous cultic building (the so-called "Temple en L") that was probably burned down in the general destruction that characterized the end of the Early Bronze Age.[6] According to Dunand, it remained in use, in a form or another, at least until the Iron Age.[7] The temple owes its name to an impressive series of stone obelisks standing in a court around its cella. They were erected during the earliest phases of the temple itself and an Egyptian influence is likely, although a local component is also present.[8] The obelisks have been found in place, still standing. According to Dunand, the area of the temple in general seems to have been voluntarily kept free from buildings until the Roman period or just a little earlier.[9] Dunand's interpretation is difficult to confirm, but considering their dimensions and their standing position, it is clear that the obelisks must have been a remarkable and undisturbed feature of the area for a very long time.

The Obelisk Temple is relatively well preserved, and although Dunand's publications are not excellent, they are enough to establish its plan and to study its architectural phases. A first analysis of the architectural remains was performed by Finkbeiner 1981.[10] Starting mainly from Dunand's plans, he analyses the architectural development of the 'Temple en L', of the Obelisk Temple and of the later structures attested in the area. As for the Obelisk temple proper, he recognizes 4 major building phases.[11] Finkbeiner's work is remarkable, and it is an extremely valuable starting point that can be further developed and improved with modern digital technology. First of all, starting from Dunand plans and integrating them with Finkbeiner's results, it is possible to reconstruct a 3D model combining the reconstructed phases with the architectural remains at the moment of their discovery. This allows us to "reconstruct" Dunand's excavations, and going virtually through it allows us to verify and improve Finkbeiner's reconstructions.

This process involves various steps. First of all, the plans published by Dunand need to be digitized and the coordinates for each wall in each levée need to be extrapolated. This can be done semi-automatically, using for instance digitizer software for retrieving data from graphs.[12] Once the coordinates of the walls have been

[6] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, 115, 898 and passim.
[7] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, pl. CCXII.
[8] M. Hutter, "Kultstelen und Baityloi. Die Ausstrahlung eines syrischen religiösen Phänomens nach Kleinasien und Israel," in *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien und dem Alten Testament : internationales Symposion Hamburg, 17.-21. März 1990*, ed. B. Janowski *et al*. (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 1993), 87–108; K. van der Toorn, "Worshipping Stones: On the Deification of Cult Symbols," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 23 (1997): 1–14; Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, 646 and nr. 16980.
[9] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, 35–36, 128–29.
[10] U. Finkbeiner, "Untersuchungen zur Stratigraphie des Obeliskentempels in Byblos: Versuch einer methodischen Auswertung," *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Abteilung Baghdad: Baghdader Mitteilungen* 12 (1981): 13–69.
[11] Finkbeiner, "Untersuchungen zur Stratigraphie des Obeliskentempels in Byblos," 60–67.
[12] I used GraphClick 3.0.3.

extrapolated, they can be plotted into 3D modelling software,[13] they can be automatically or manually triangulated, and 3D representations of the individual walls can be obtained. This corresponds essentially to the process of "reconstructing the sliced onion" that Dunand himself suggested in the description of his excavation technique.[14]

A first result emerging from this process of digitization is the possibility of verifying the accuracy of Dunand's different plans. For instance, sections of the same wall appearing on two different plans can be slightly unaligned, an issue probably due to the small errors inherently present in manual recording. In general, however, Dunand's plans are quite precise and match with each other, which supports their reliability.

Within these 3D reconstructions, walls can be divided or grouped into related ensembles on the basis of their reciprocal relationships (such as continuity, superimpositions or cross-cutting relationships). The many pictures of the excavations of the temple published as plates by Dunand (pls. XXI-XXXVI), as well as a few additional plans of specific phases published in his catalogue (Vol. II fig. 22, pp. 27-8; fig. 767, pp. 644-5; fig. 1007, pp. 895-6) help in this process. The building sequences can then be combined to group the various architectural remains into specific building phases, which in turn can be combined with Finkbeiner's results and can be used for more elaborate reconstructions.

Various manipulations can be performed on these models. For instance, vertical sections can easily be obtained in any direction and for any point of the building.

Specific architectural phases, roughly corresponding to Finkbeiner's phases IV, V, VI and VII, can then been distinguished and manipulated in various ways.

Moreover, these 3D projections can be combined also with the stratigraphic approximation and with the *terminus sub quo* or with the *terminus super quem* of the Late Bronze Age layers, as it can be seen in Figure 10 a-b.

Finally, architectural reconstructions and plans of the specific phases can be obtained from these models. Objects can also be plotted into these graphs and plans, and they can thus be re-contextualized and can be associated with the architectural remains.

A detailed analysis of the Obelisk Temple and of the material associated with it based on these reconstructions is possible, but would be far beyond the aim and limits of this paper. It will be available in my doctoral dissertation. Here, suffice it to say that by combining the 3D models with the objects collected in the database and with the approximate stratigraphy obtained as described above, it is possible to suggest a general absolute chronology for the main architectural phases of the temple, which can be summarized as follow:

- **Phase IV** - Middle Kingdom/Middle Bronze Age I-II
- **Phase V** - Middle Kingdom/Middle Bronze Age I-II
- **Phase VI** - Second Intermediate Period-Early New Kingdom/Middle Bronze Age III-Late Bronze Age I-II
- **Phase VII** - late New Kingdom/late Late Bronze Age

Moreover, it has also been possible to reconstruct some past events that characterized the history of the building, so for instance I could show that a group of Late Bronze Age material found in the area of the temple was out of context as it was likely located in post-Iron Age layers. It was then possible to suggest that the objects composing it came originally from the Late Bronze Age layers of the Obelisk Temple itself, and they probably ended up in those later layers in Roman times, during the excavation of the foundations of a Roman chapel built on the Eastern part of the temple (for details, see my doctoral dissertation).

In general, the aim of this paper was to show an example of how digital technology can be applied to old excavations and combined with other digital tools and techniques not only to reorganize the data available, but also to elaborate them and to recover and extract additional information that would otherwise be inaccessible.

[13] In recent years 3D modelling has become increasingly common in archaeology. Several techniques and software have been used to perform various tasks, such as virtual reconstructions or documentation and analysis of objects, architectural structures, and excavations. A comprehensive overview of these tools and their application is briefly discussed in my doctoral thesis, but is beyond the aims of this paper. Here suffice it to say that I tried various software applications, and finally I opted to use Google SketchUp. This choice has been dictated by various considerations. First of all, basic versions of SketchUp are available for free. It is true that in its basic form SketchUp lacks functionalities available in other, usually commercial, software, but the many free plugins available, and the possibility to easily write new ones, usually allow us to compensate for them. Moreover, SketchUp is much more intuitive and easy to learn –also thanks to the broad and thriving online community– than other more specialized software. This, I think, is a very important feature for a project like mine, which aims at making not only the results, but also the data, the processes and the methods as broadly available as possible. Sketchup projects can be shared online in virtual libraries and can be integrated into other software, such as GoogleEarth. Finally, there is the problem of compatibility. Technology evolves very quickly, and it is very difficult to foresee which format will still be available and which one will have disappeared in 10 or 15 years from now. Relying on free software distributed by a big commercial company should give a slightly higher probability of continuity, or at least a slightly higher probability of backward compatibility that should at least allow accessing and then updating of old data formats.

[14] Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos: 1933 - 1938*, 3–5.

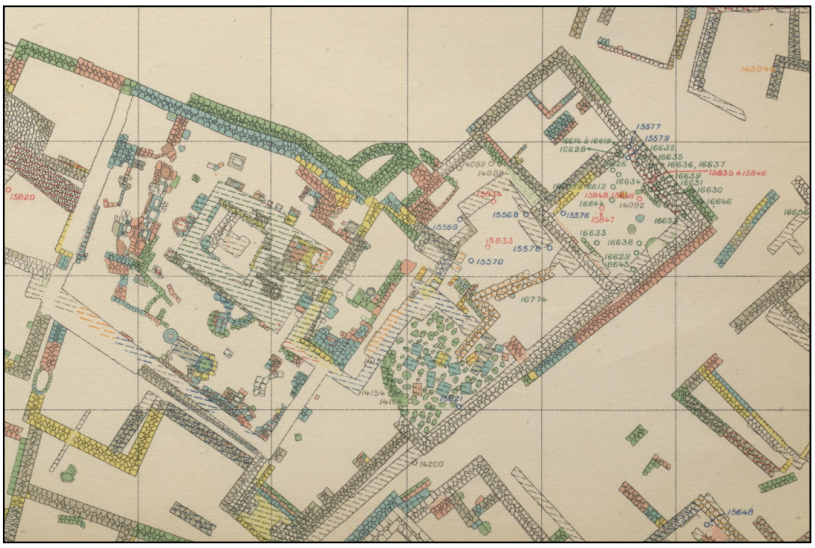


Figure 1. Detail of one of the plans published by Dunand in Vol. II. The grid is formed by regular squares, and a colour code is used to indicate in which levée a given object (marked with the catalogue number) was found or where a given architectural element appears and disappears. After Dunand 1954, plan of the levées 16-20 (altitude 25 m-24 m above sea level). Modified by the author.

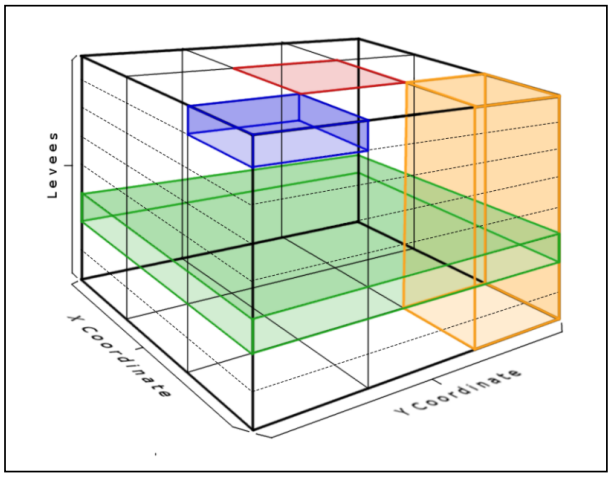


Figure 2. Graphic representation of the definitions used to describe Dunand's excavation method. Created by the author.

Green = Levée **Red = Square**

Yellow = Column **Blue = Excavation Unit**

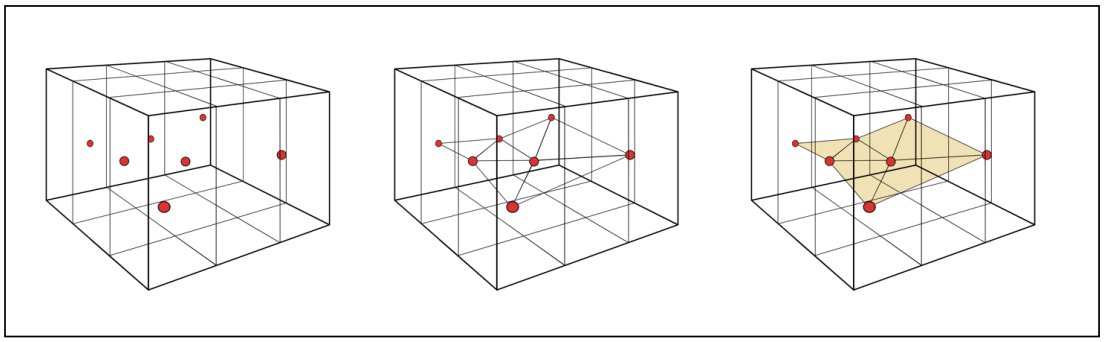


Figure 3. The lowest dating objects of each column (red dots here) can be triangulated to build an artificial plane approximating and vertically representing the *terminus sub quo*. The triangulation allows the plane and the *terminus* to be projected for those columns that do not contain any dating object. See figure 2 for the description of the axes and frame. Created by the author.

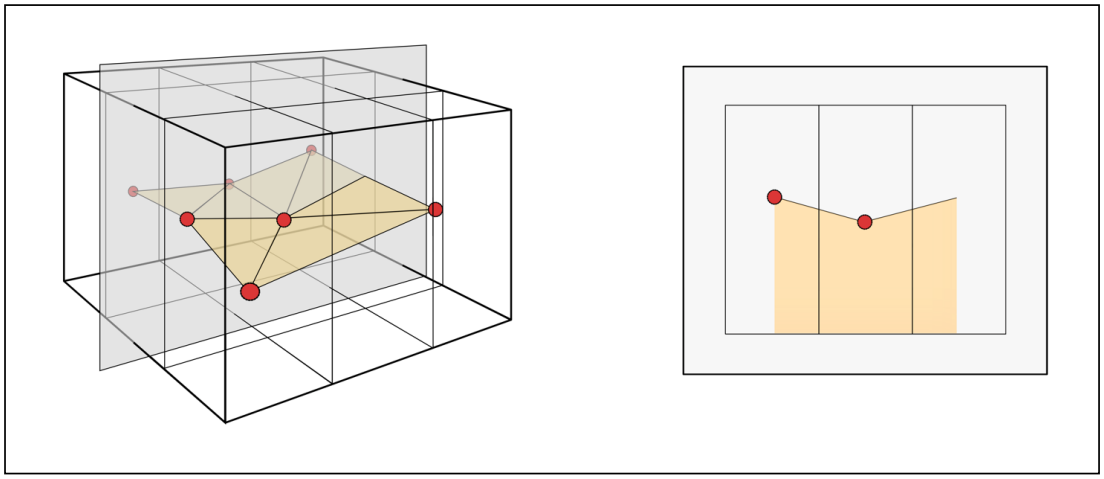


Figure 4. Starting from the three-dimensional representation, it is possible to obtain vertical sections in which the projection of the *terminus* can be used as a stratigraphic guideline. See figure 2 for the description of the axes and frame. Created by the author.

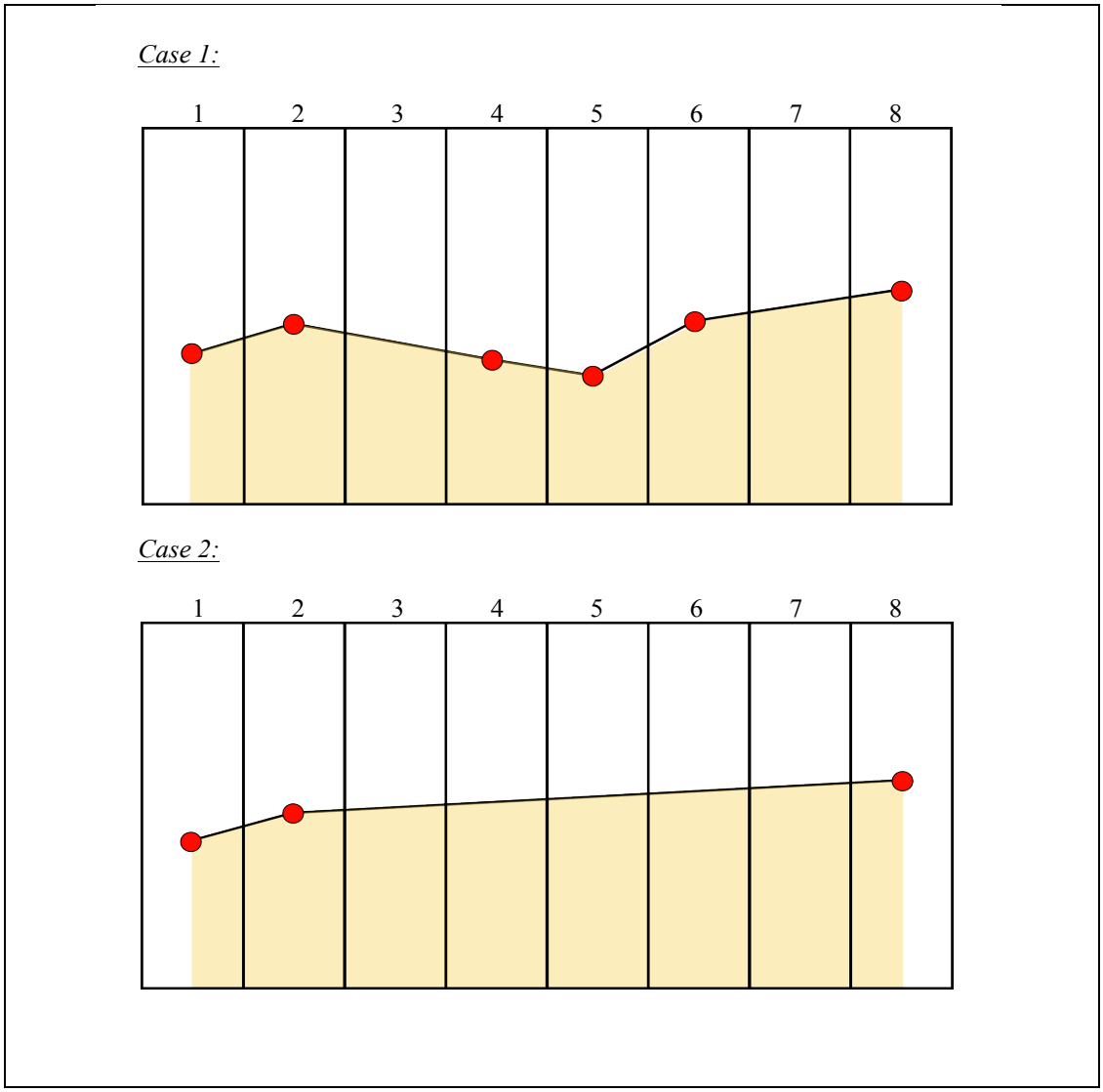


Figure 5. In case 1, six of the eight columns have dating objects on which the *terminus* can be based. In this case, the estimation of the limit for the two empty columns can be considered relatively accurate, as it is inferred from the position of the dating objects in the adjacent columns. In case 2, by contrast, only three of the eight columns have dating objects. The estimation of the *terminus* in the five remaining, intermediate empty columns is therefore much less precise. See figure 2 for the description of the axes and frame. Created by the author.

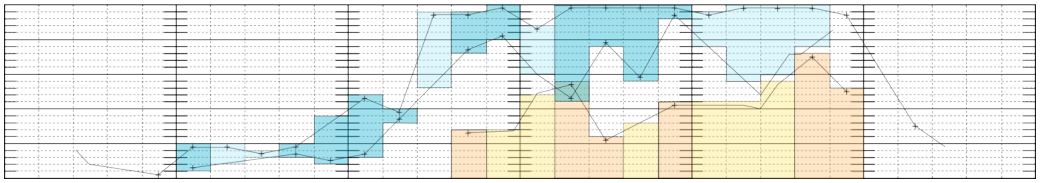


Figure 6: Example of a vertical section obtained from the 3D representation of the *terminus sub quo* and the *terminus super quem*. The Excavation Units located between the surface and the *terminus sub quo* are marked in blue, while those located below the *terminus super quem* are marked in yellow (dark blue/dark yellow = columns with diagnostic dating objects, light blue/light yellow columns without dating objects whose limit has been inferred from the projection of the planes). If present and not disturbed, the Late Bronze Age layers should be located below the blue Excavation Units, and possibly above the yellow ones. Created by the author.

Figure 7 a:

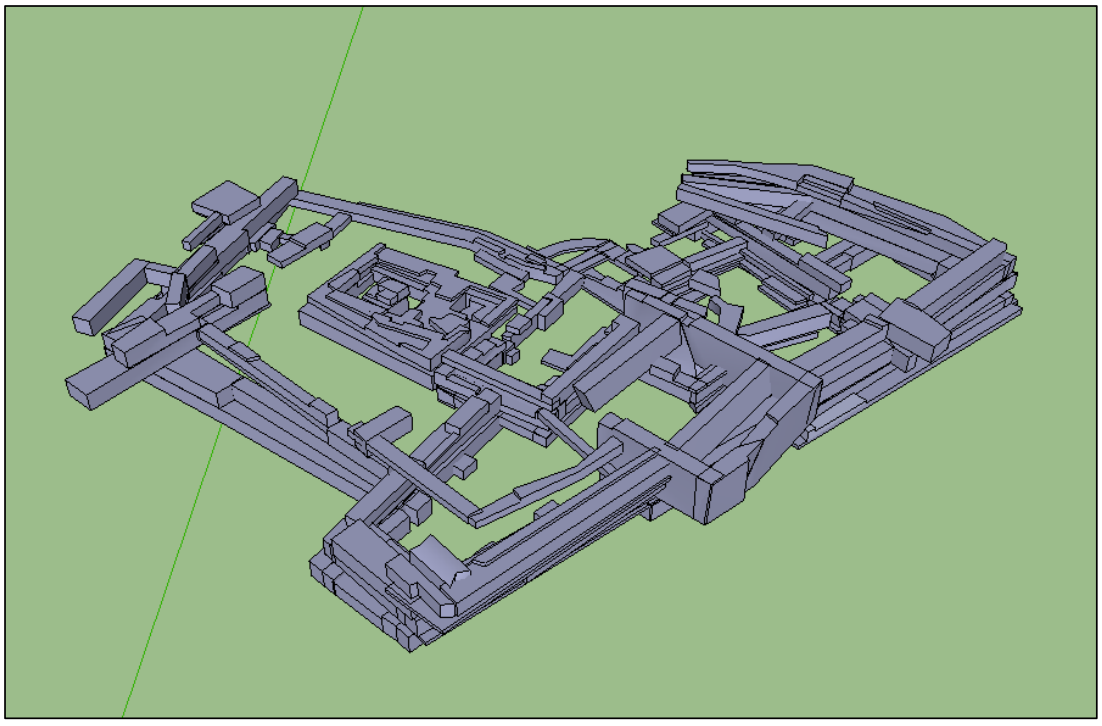


Figure 7 b:

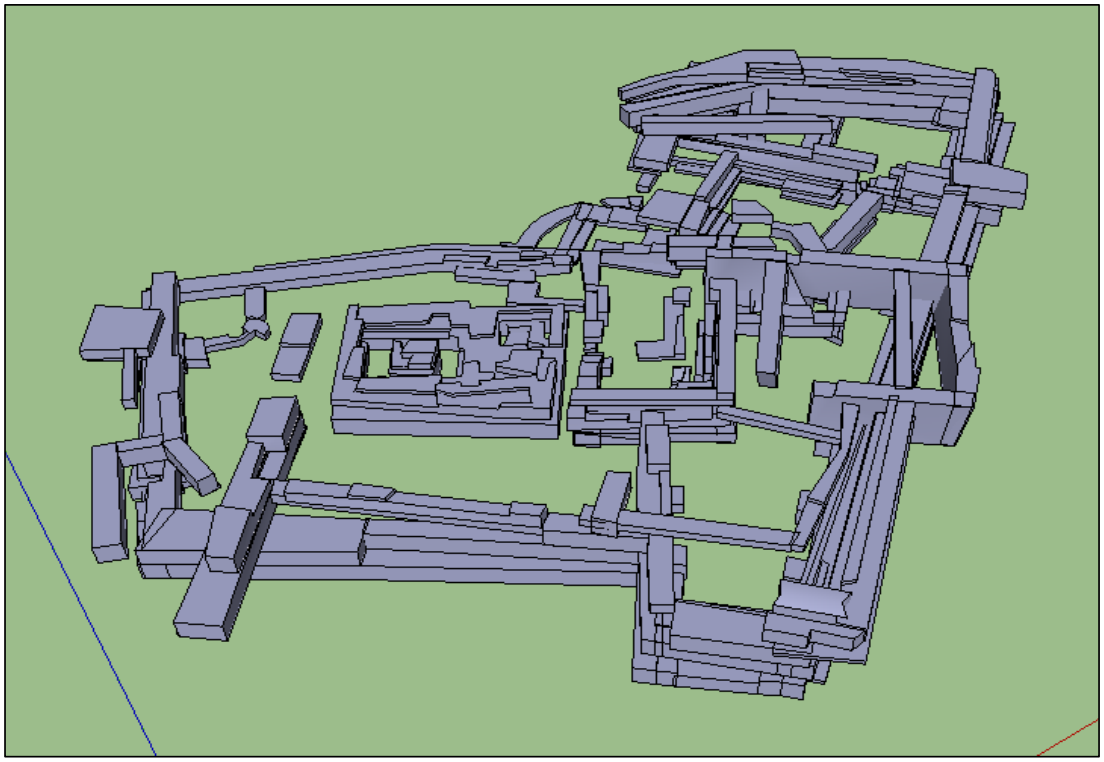


Figure 7 c:

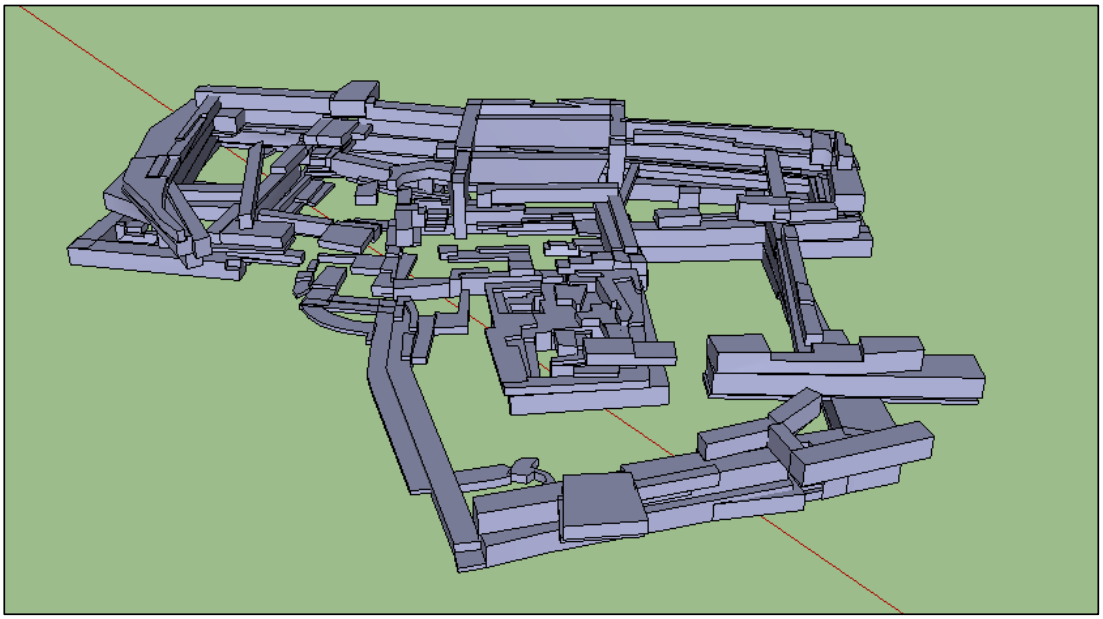


Figure 7 d:

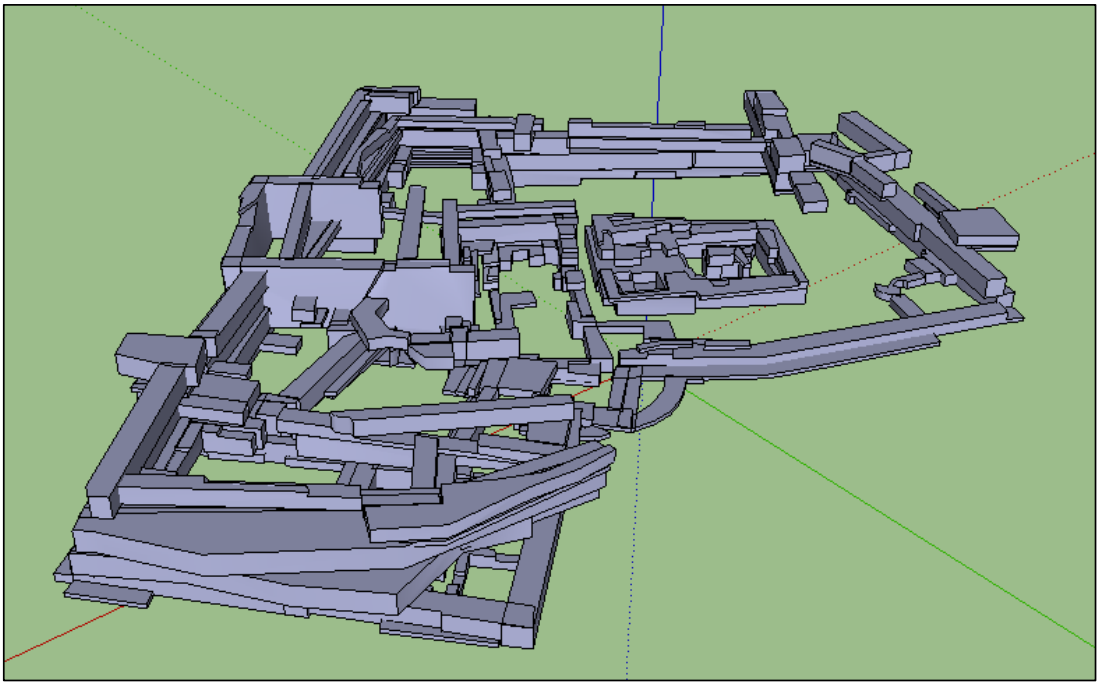


Figure 7 a-d. 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated, from different perspective. Created by the author

Figure 8 a:

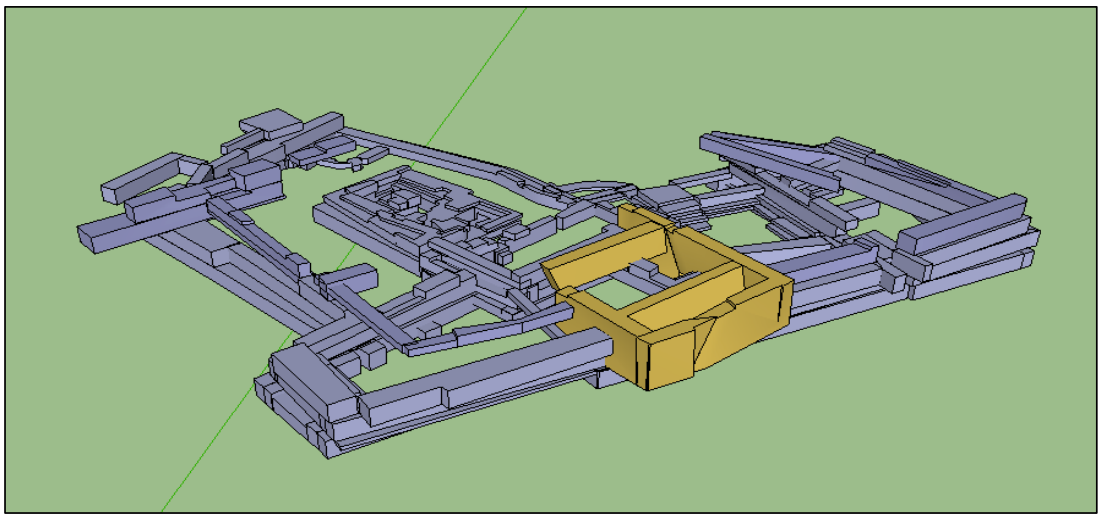


Figure 8 b:

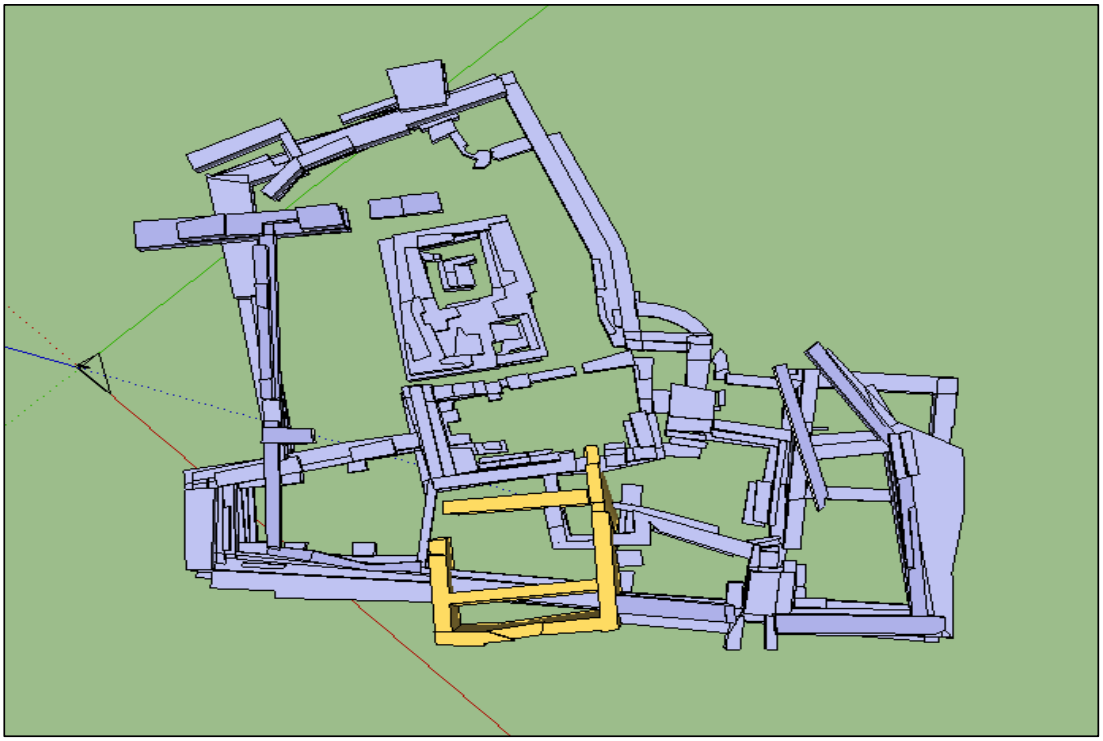


Figure 8 c:

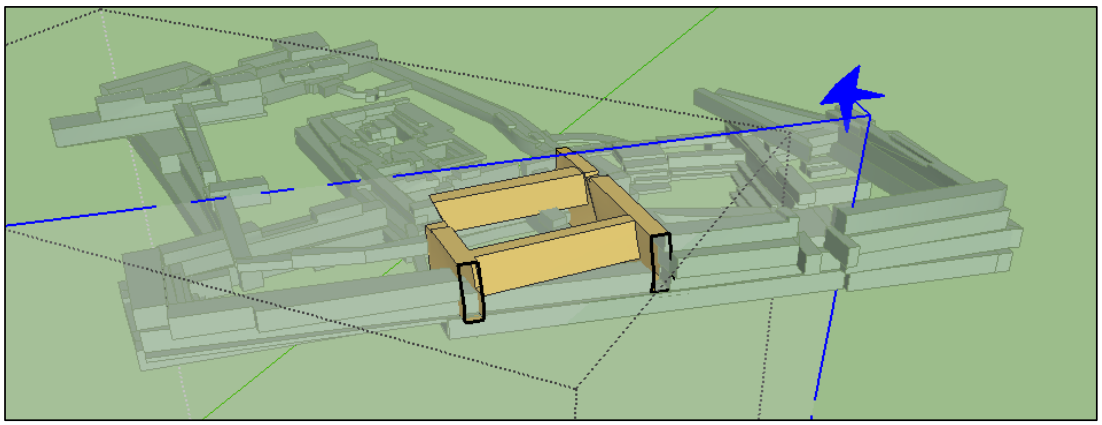


Figure 8 a-c. 3D model of the architectural remains in the area of the Obelisk Temple as they appeared when excavated. The foundations of a Roman chapel, the so-called "Chapelle Oriental", are highlighted in yellow. Created by the author.

Figure 9 a: Phase 4

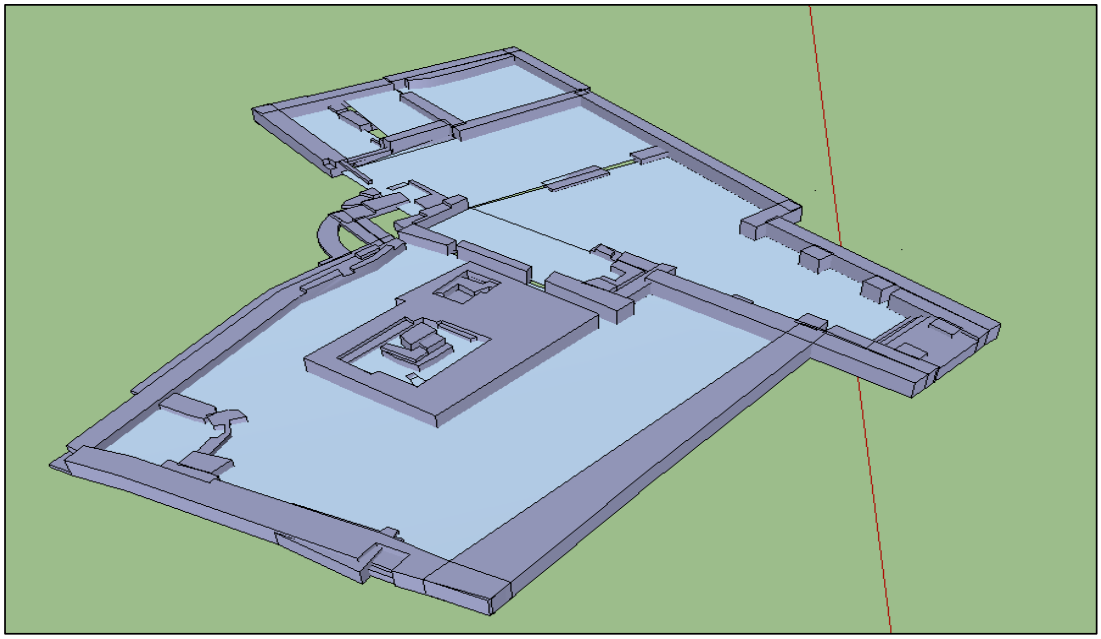


Figure 9 b: Phases 4–5

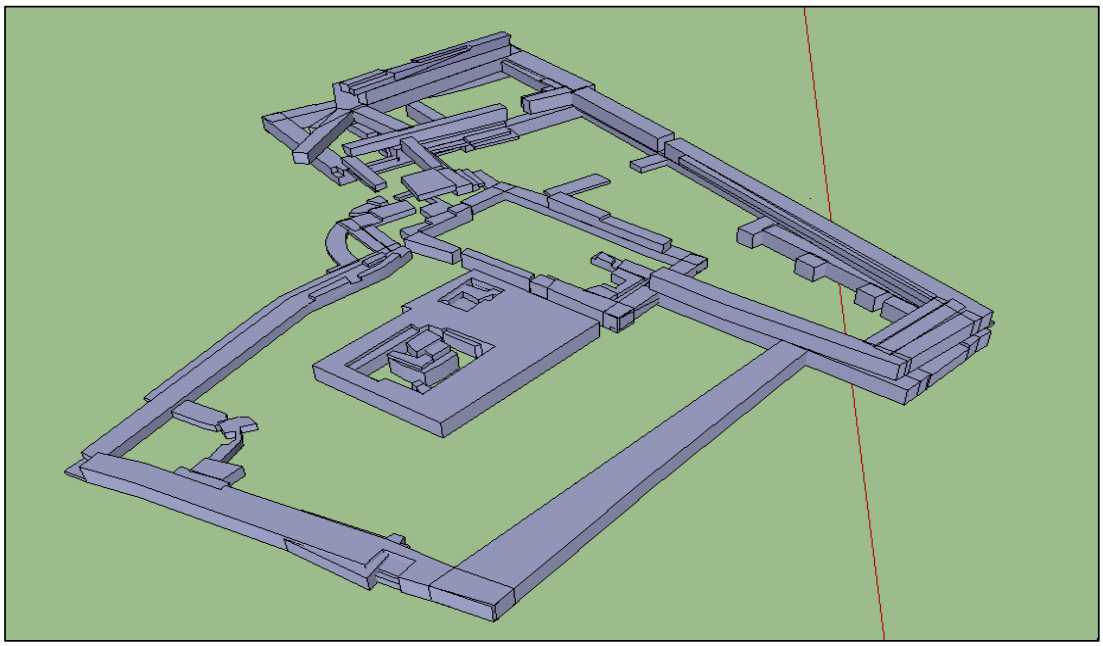


Figure 9 c: Phase 5

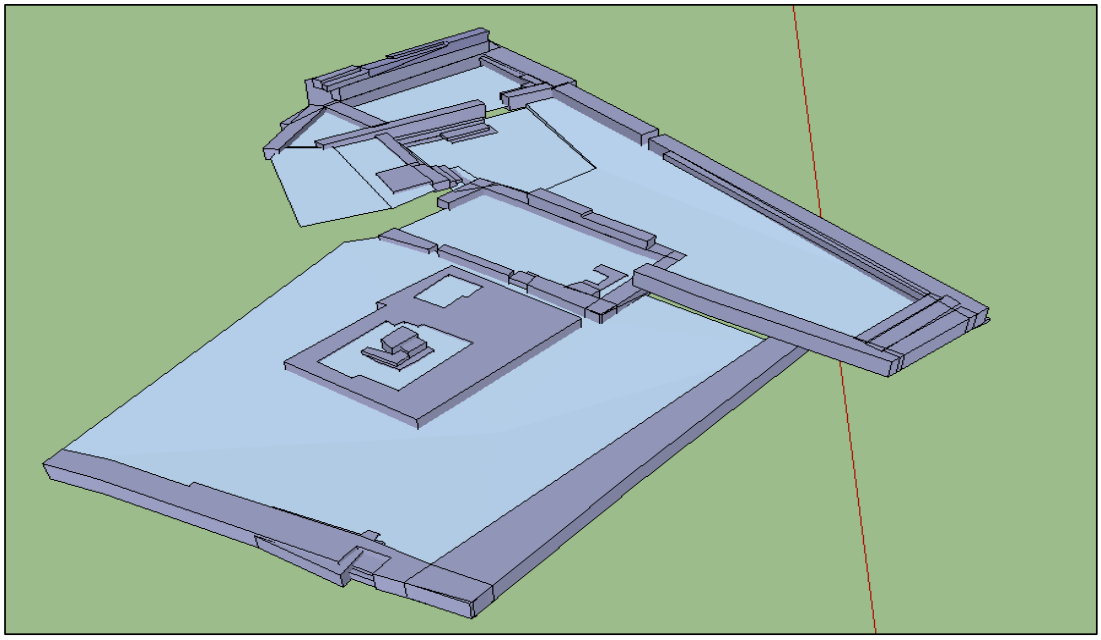


Figure 9 d: Phases 5–6

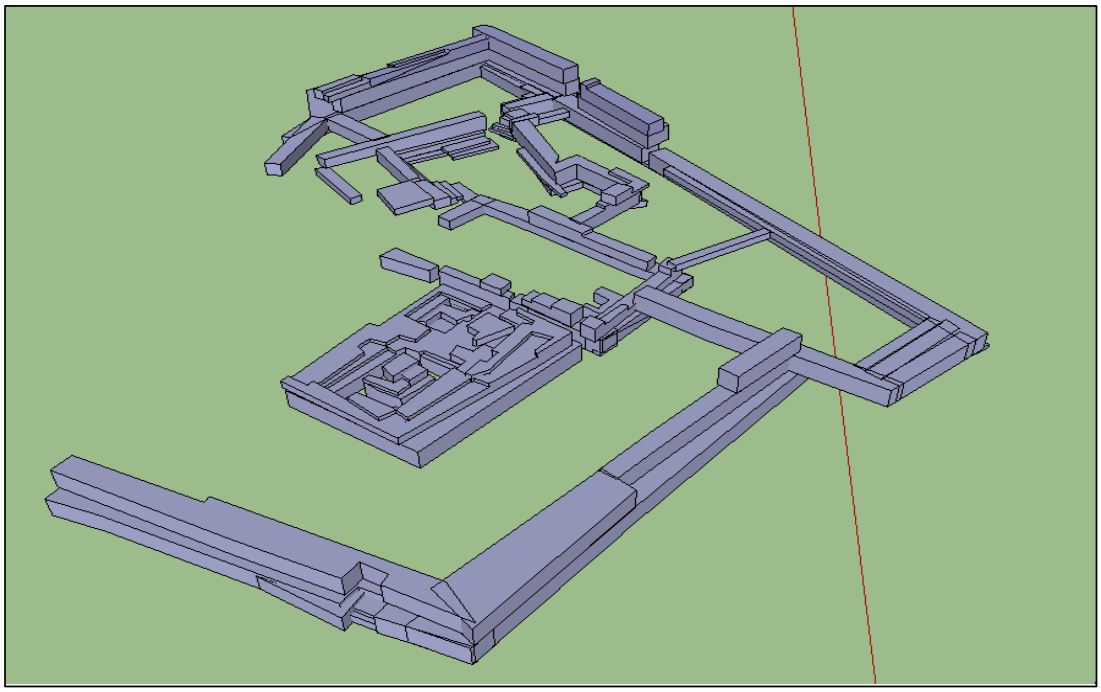


Figure 9 e: Phase 6

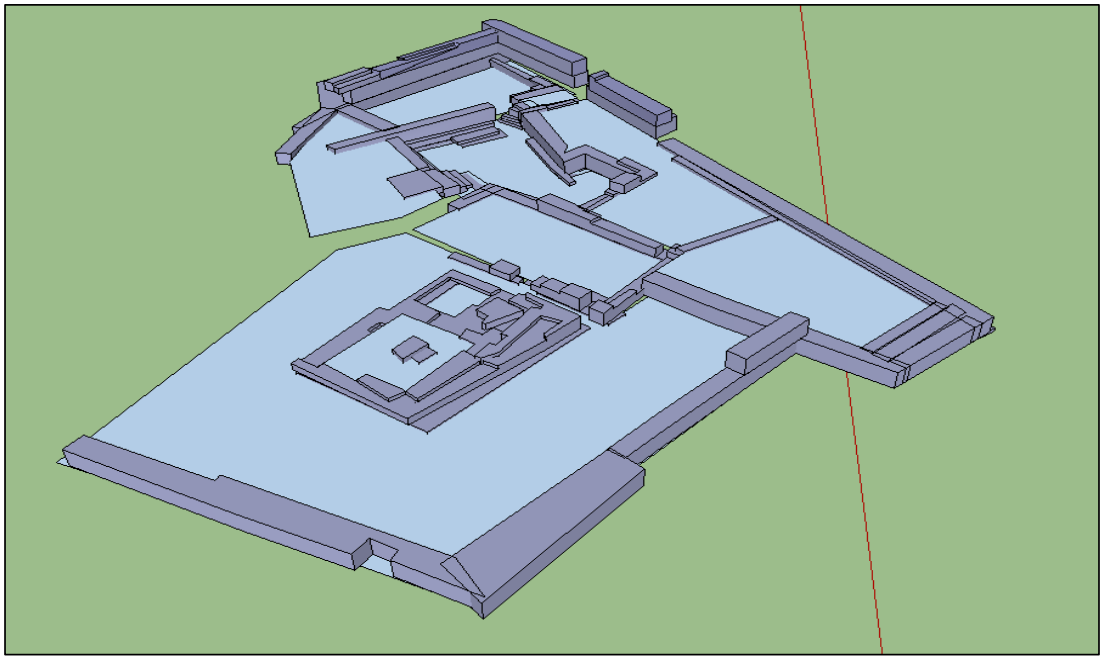


Figure 9 f: Phases 6–7

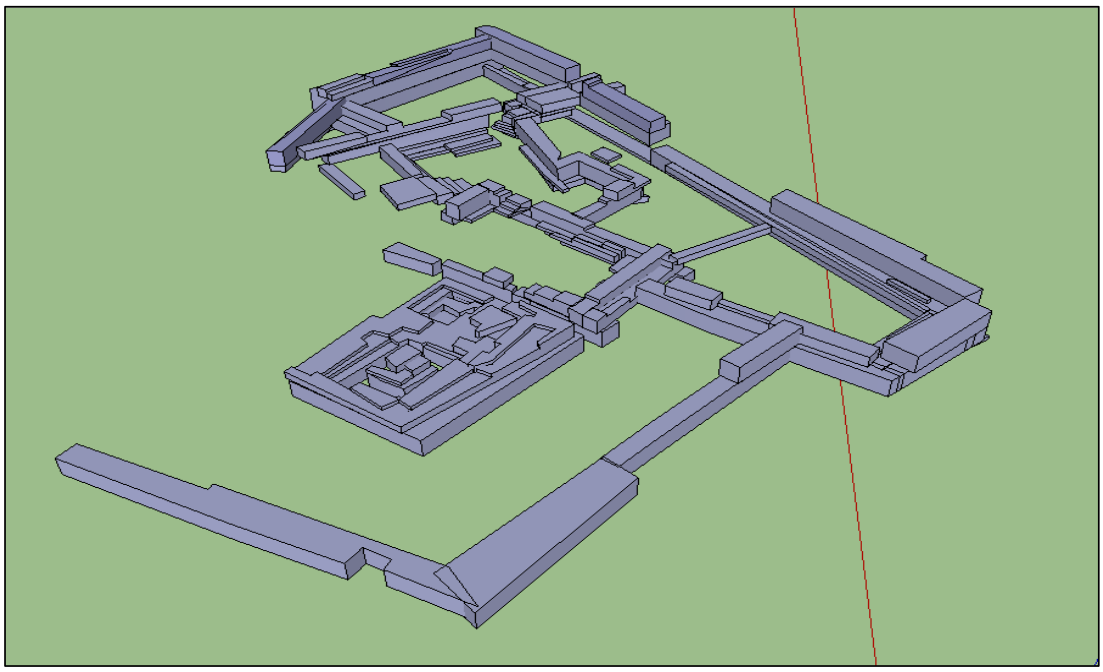


Figure 9 g: Phase 7

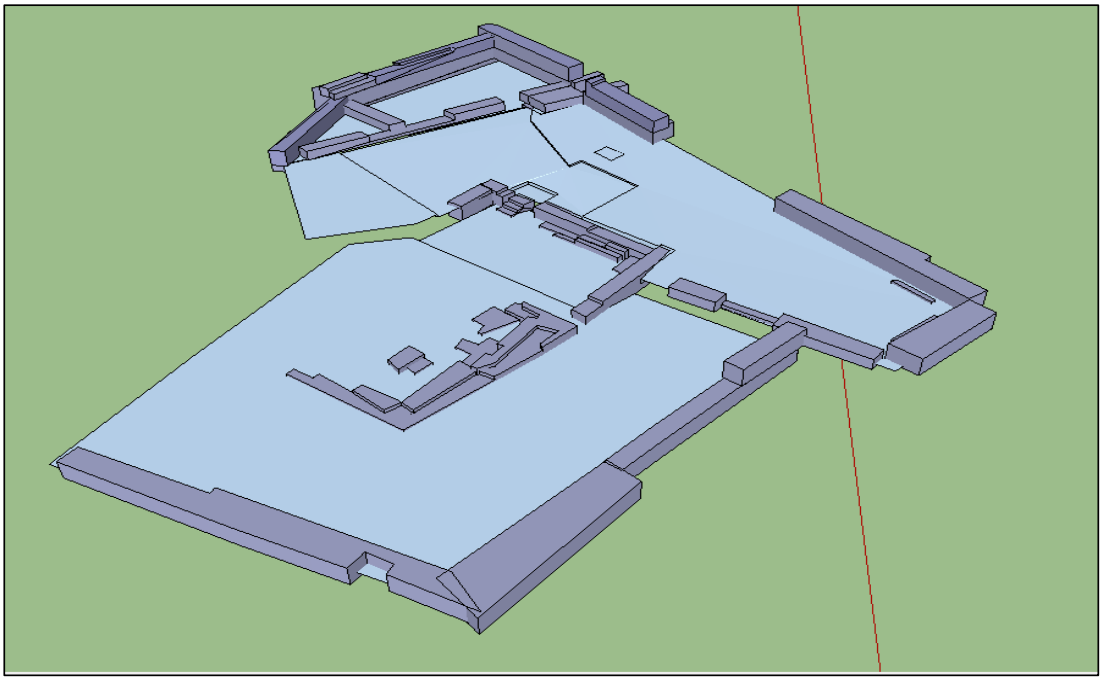


Figure 9 a-g. Tridimentional model of the architectural phases of the Obelisk Temple. From top to bottom: phase 4 with walls and floors; walls of phases 4 and 5 combined; phase 5 with walls and floors; walls of phases 5 and 6 combined; phase 6 with walls and floors; walls of phases 6 and 7 combined; phase 7 with walls and floors. Created by the author.

Figure 10 a:

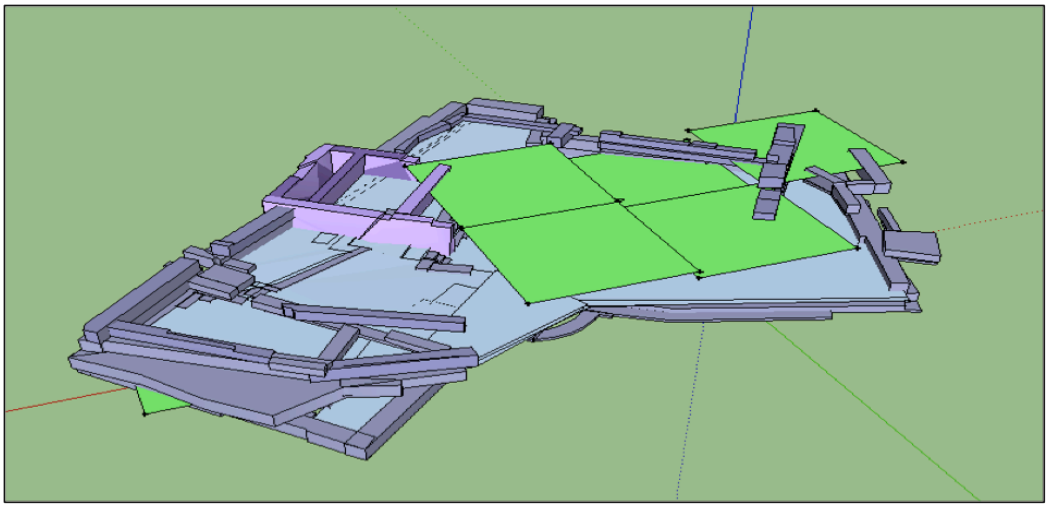


Figure 10 b:

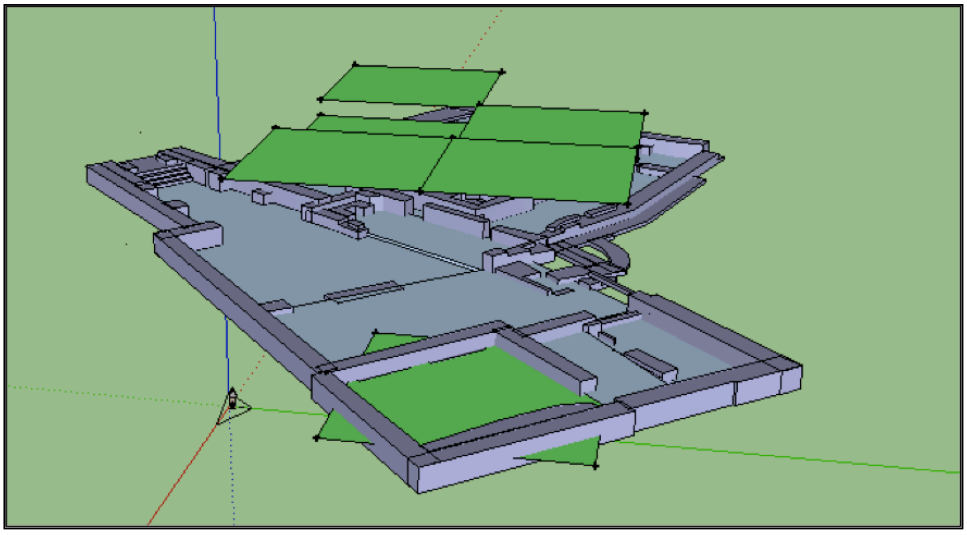


Figure 10 a-b. Projection of the *terminus sub quo* (green) in combination with the 3-dimensional model of different architectural phases and from two different perspectives. Created by the author.

Figure 11 a:

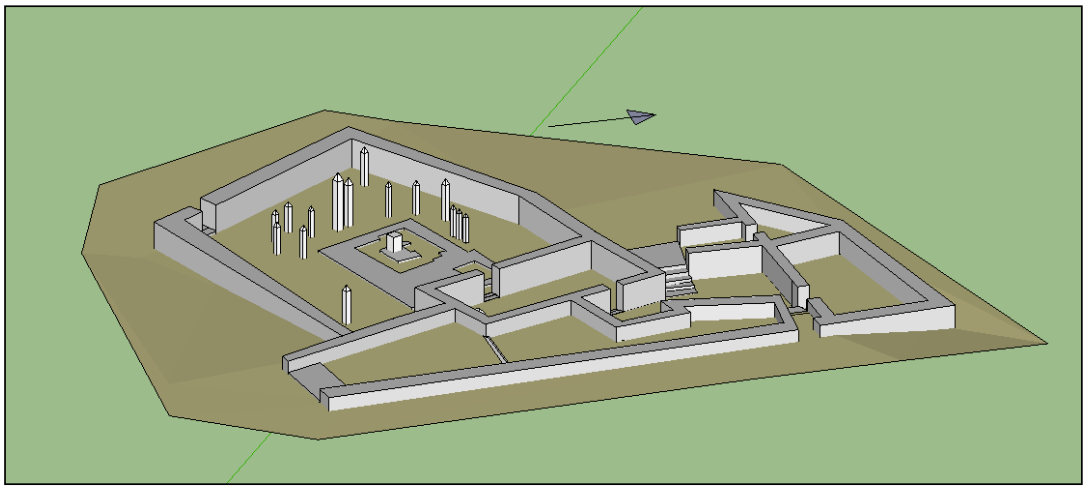


Figure 11 b:

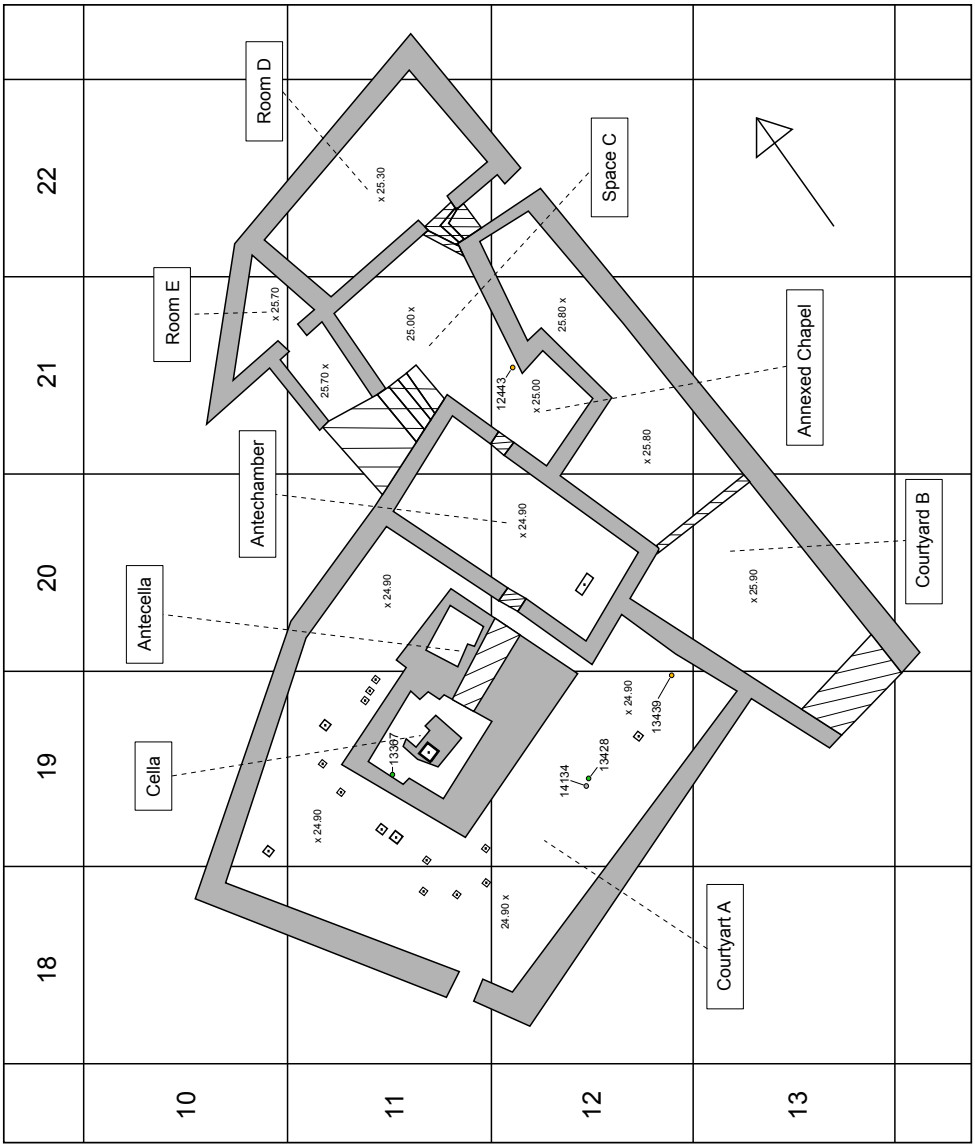


Figure 11 a-b. Phase 6, 3-dimensional reconstruction and plan. In the plan dashed areas indicate thresholds, stairs and other architecturally marked accesses, while the dotted squares represent obelisks. Only the main obelisks are indicated –Dunand (1954, 646) mentioned at least 26 obelisks or fragments of obelisks–and their elevation in the 3D model is just indicative. Created by the author.

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