

**The Lachish Letters:
A Reappraisal of the Ostraca
Discovered in 1935 and 1938 at Tell ed-Duweir**

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Volume II

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CATALOGUES

Catalogue A

The “Lachish Letters” (1–21) – Years 1935 and 1938*

The following are my own readings and their corresponding English translations. Symbol conventions for all transcriptions and translations are as follows:

- hypothetical spaces for illegible letters are each indicated by dashes (-);
- several dots (...) indicate the difficulty of reconstructing text owing to obscure letters or faded traces of ink;
- square brackets ([]) indicate textual reconstructions or breakages in the ostrakon;
- underlined letters in the transcriptions (e.g. 'dny) indicate doubtful readings;
- non-biblical PNN that are written in italics in English translations indicate uncertain vocalisation (i.e. not found in or corroborated by the Masoretic text) (e.g. *Hiṣṣilyāhū*);
- visible word-dividing dots are indicated by full stops (.).

Catalogue A features small versions of the photographs and drawings of the 21 ostraca that accompany the readings, for the convenience of the reader. For the larger versions of the images and further material, see the corresponding Figures in this volume.

* Measurements and other specifications of Lachish 1–21 were taken during physical examination of the ostraca and double checked with the following: *Lachish I*: 184; Inge 1938: 254; Diringier 1943: 89, 93, 96; 1953: 338–339; Magrill 2006: 74, 91–92; the British Museum website (see weblink in Bibliography).

Lachish 1

(Figs 23–24)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125701.

Field No.: 4022.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.001; Lak(6):1.1.

Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 32; 2008: 57; Barnett 1966: 68; Cornfeld 1961: 465; Hauptert 1938: 31; Marston 1935: 93; *Lachish I*: 20; Tur-Sinai 1987: 2.

Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 57; Michaud 1958: 94; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. XLIX.2; Rollston 2010: 70; *Lachish I*: 21–22; Tur-Sinai 1987: 258.

Dimensions: 10.5 × 8 × 0.7cm.

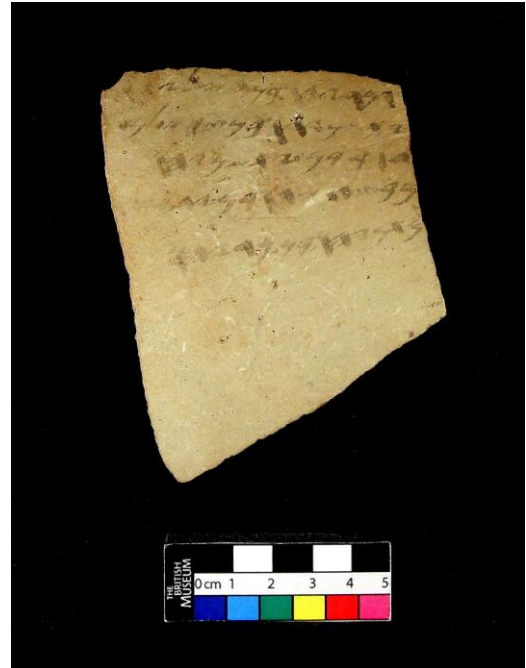
Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; hard-fired; rough surface; buff wash outside; brown fabric with a few grits; greenish buff on exterior surface; dark core, pink edges; contains crushed limestone.

Type: List of PNN.

Epigraphic description/condition: Complete five-line inscription in iron-carbon ink; ink faded in places, especially in lines 1 and 4.

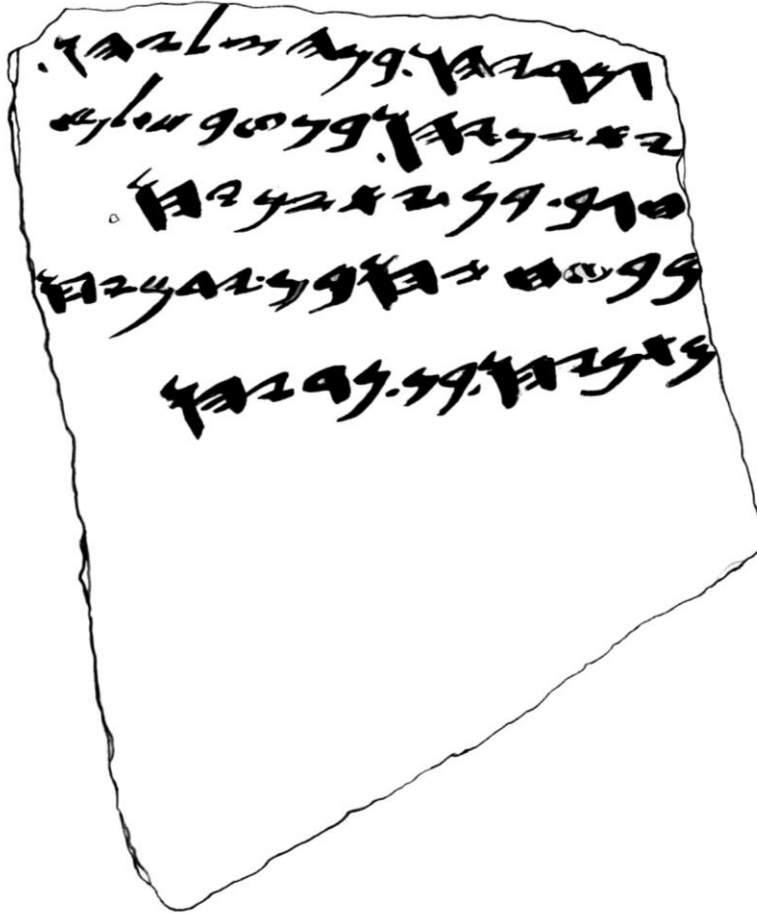
Text and transcription:

1. <i>gmryhw . bnhšlyhw .</i>	גמריהו . בנהצליהו .
2. <i>y'znyhw . bnṭbšlm .</i>	יאזניהו . בנטבשלם .
3. <i>ḥgb . bn . y'znyhw .</i>	חגב . בן . יאזניהו .
4. <i>mbṭhyhwbnrymyhw</i>	מבטחיהובנירמיהו
5. <i>mtnyhw . bn . nryhw</i>	מתניהו . בן . נריהו



Vocalisation and translation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>g^omaryāhû ben hiṣṣilyāhû</i> | G ^o maryāhû son of <i>Hiṣṣilyāhû</i> |
| 2. <i>ya'azanyāhû ben ʔobšalom</i> | Ya'azanyāhû son of <i>ʔobšalom</i> |
| 3. <i>ḥagab ben ya'azanyāhû</i> | Ḥagab son of Ya'azanyāhû |
| 4. <i>mibṭahyāhû ben yirm^oyāhû</i> | <i>Mibṭahyāhû</i> son of Yirm ^o yāhû |
| 5. <i>mattanyāhû ben n^oriyāhû</i> | Mattanyāhû son of N ^o riyāhû |



AZ 2016

Lachish 2

(Figs 25–27)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125702.

Field No.: 4023.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *Ahituv* 1.002; *KAI* 192; *Lak*(6):1.2.

Photographs in: *Ahituv* 2005: 35; 2008: 61; Balázs 1940; Barnett 1966: 69; Birnbaum 1971, fig. 24; Cornfeld 1961: 465; Moscati 1952, pl. II, fig. 2; Suder 1984: 40; *Lachish I*: 35; Tur-Sinai 1987: 25.

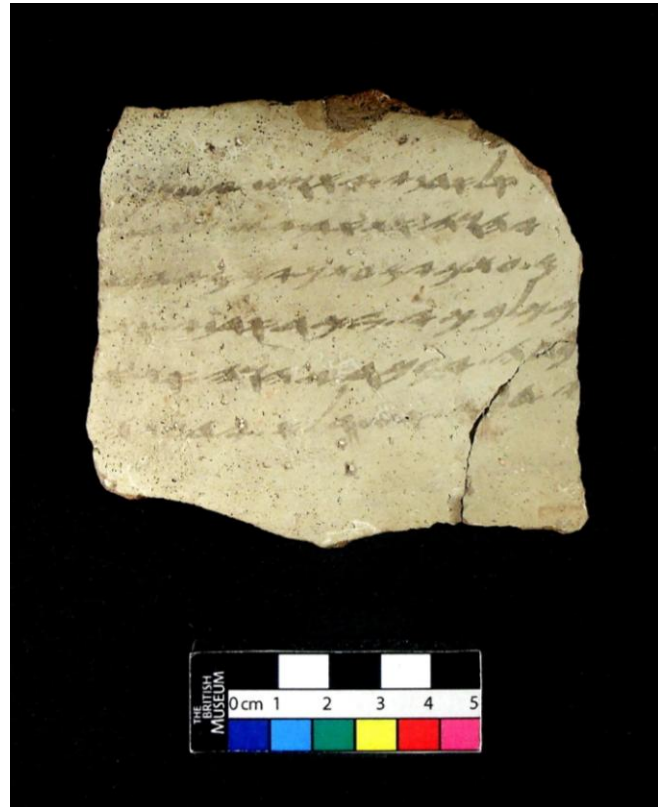
Autographs in: *Ahituv* 2008: 61; Dussaud 1938:261; Michaud 1957: 42; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. XLIX.3a; *Lachish I*: 35, 36; Tur-Sinai 1987: 259.

Dimensions: 9 × 10 × 0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; shoulder fragment of wheel-made holemouth storage jar, the same ceramic vessel as Lachish 6, 7, 8, and 18 (Tufnell’s Type 498); hard-fired; rough surface; pink brown fabric with some grits; greenish buff surface on exterior; contains fine crushed limestone.

Type: Letter/message.

Epigraphic description/condition: Partly fragmentary six-line inscription; repaired ostrakon (two pieces in total) with margin chipped off on the bottom right; ink faded in places, especially on the left-hand side of the sherd.



Text and transcription:

1. 'l'dny . y'wšyšm' .
2. yhw'h't'dny . šm'tšl
3. m . 't . kym . 't . kymmy . 'bd
4. kklb . ky . zkr . 'dny . 't .
5. ['bdh . ybkr . yhw'h't']
6. [dn]y . dbr . 'šr . l' . yd'th

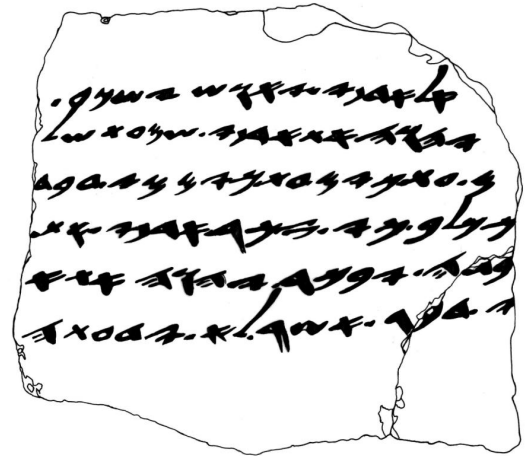
אלאדני . יאושישמע .
יהוהאתאדני . שמעתשל
מ . עת . כים . עת . כיממי . עבד
ככלב . כי . זכר . אדני . את .
[ע]בדה . יבכך . יהוהאתא
[דנ]י . דבר . אשר . לא . ידעתה

Vocalisation:

1. 'el 'ādōnī yā'ûš yašma'
2. yahweh 'ēt 'ādōnī š^emū'at šālō-
3. m 'attā kayyōm 'attā kayyōm mī 'abd^e-
4. kā keleb kī zākar 'ādōnī 'ēt
5. ['abdōh y^ebakkēr yahweh 'ēt 'ā-
6. [dōn]ī dābār 'āšer lō' yāda'tāh¹

Translation:

1. To my lord Yā'ûš. May
2. YHWH let my lord hear tidings of peace
3. today, this very day! Who is your servant
4. (but) a dog, that my lord remembered
5. his [se]rvant? May YHWH promptly bring (to) my
6. I[or]d information which you (or I) do not know!



Letter structure:

Address: To my lord Yā'ûš.

Greeting: May YHWH let my lord hear tidings of peace today, this very day!

Self-abasement/transition: Who is your servant (but) a dog, that my lord remembered his [se]rvant?

Closing greeting hinting at more information (perhaps related to above self-abasement/transition): May YHWH promptly bring (to) my I[or]d information which you (or I) do not know!

¹ Or y^eda'tōh/y^eda'tāhū (2.m.s. perfect with 3.m.s. object suffix), or y^eda'tīhū (1.c.s. perfect with 3.m.s. object suffix) (§3.1.2).

Lachish 3

(Figs 28–32)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Bronfman Archaeology Wing, Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Acquisition: Formerly in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem; presently at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Catalogue No.: IAA 1938–127.

Field No.: 4024.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.003; *KAI* 193; *Lak*(6):1.3.

Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 38–39; 2008: 64, 66; Avi-Yonah 1969: 104; Birnbaum 1971, fig. 23 (reverse only); Gray 1962, pl. 16 (reverse only); Hamilton 1962: 57, fig. 5 (obverse only); Hauptert 1938: 31, fig. 18; Jack 1938, pl. XII; Marston 1969, pl. 13 (upside down obverse); Michaud 1958, pl. VII; Naveh 1971, col. 1335 (upside down); Starkey 1935: 19–20; Suder 1984: 42; *Lachish I*: 46, 48; 1962, col. 519 (obverse only); Tur-Sinai 1987: 54–55.

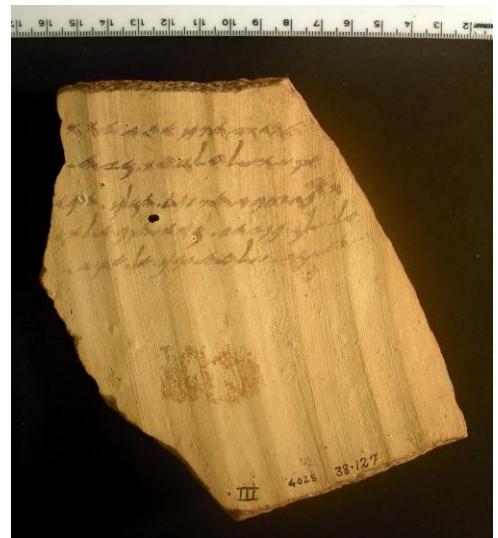
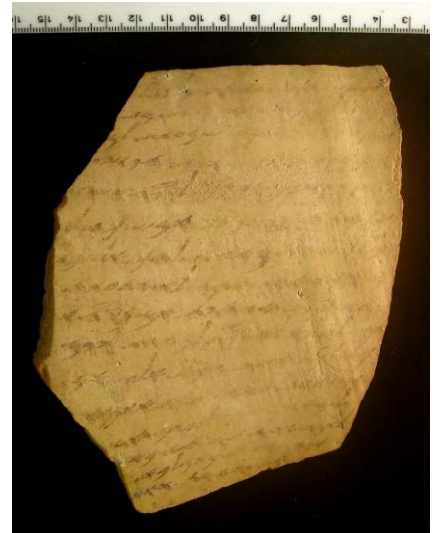
Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 65, 67; Cross 1985: 44; Jaroš 1982: 91; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. XLIX.4; L.1; Rollston 2006: 58 (reverse only); Smelik 1991: 122, fig. 14; *Lachish I*: 47, 49; 1962, col. 520 (obverse only); Tur-Sinai 1987: 260–261.

Dimensions: 15 × 10.6 × 0.6–0.8cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; medium-fired; rough surface partially burnished on the outer surface; buff wash outside, pink inside; dark brown core, red edges; contains crushed limestone; rills on the inside.

Type: Letter/message/(military) report.

Epigraphic description/condition: Complete 21-line inscription (sixteen lines on the outer surface and five lines on the inner side), the longest text in the corpus of Lachish ostraca. Ink



faded, blurred or washed away on most of the right-hand side of the outer surface, from top to bottom, while the smooth burnished surface of the left-hand side preserved the ink, and the writing remained clear. Well preserved inscription on the inner surface.

Text and transcription:

The inscription in this study has been fully transcribed after comparisons from various scholarly readings and close-up observations. In my drawing I produce the most legible graphemes (Fig. 32), and note that Harding's drawing bears some old-fashioned readings of the *editio princeps* (Fig. 31).

(obverse)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. 'bdk . hwš'yhw . šlh . l | עבדך . הושעיהו . שלח . ל |
| 2. hg[d]l'dny . [y]'[w]š . yšm' . | הג[ד]לאדני . [י]א[ו]ש . ישמע . |
| 3. yhw[h't]'dny . šm't . šlm | יהוה[האת]אדני . שמעת . שלם |
| 4. w[šm't . t̄b]w'thpqh | ו[שמעת . טב]ועתהפקה |
| 5. n't'zn'bdklspr . šr | נאאתאזנעבדךלספר . אשר |
| 6. šlhth'l'bdk'mš . ky . lb | שלחתהאלעבדכאמש . כי . לב |
| 7. 'bdk dwh . m'z . šlhk . 'l . 'bd | עבדכדוה . מאז . שלחך . אל . עבד |
| 8. kwky'mr . 'dny . l' . yd 'th . | כוכיאמר . אדני . לא . ידעתה . |
| 9. qr'sprh'hw . 'm . nsh . ' | קראספרחיהוה . אמ . נסה . א |
| 10. yšlqr'lysprlnš . wgm . | ישלקראליסלנצח . וגמ . |
| 11. klspr'šryb' . 'ly'm . | כלספראשריבא . אליאם . |
| 12. qr'ty . 'thw'wd . 'tnnhw | קראתי . אתהוועוד . אתננהו |
| 13. 'l . m'wm[hw]l'bdk . hg d . | אל . מאוצ[הו]לעבדך . הגד . |
| 14. l'mryrdsr . hšb' | לאמרירדשרץ הצב |
| 15. kny[hw]bn'lnlnb' . | כני[הו]בנאלנתלבי . |
| 16. mšrymh . w't | מצריצה . ואת |

(reverse)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 17. hwdwyhwn'hyhww | הודויהובנאחיהו |
| 18. 'nšwšlh . lqht . mzh . | אנשושלח . לקחת . מזה . |
| 19. wspr . t̄byhw'bd . hmlk . hb' | וספר . טביהועבד . המלך . הבא |
| 20. 'l . šlm . bnyd' . m't . hnb' . l'm | אל . שלם . בנידע . מאת . הנבא . לאמ |
| 21. r . hšmr . šlh . 'b<d>k . 'l . 'dny . | ר . השמר . שלחה . עב<ד>ך . אל . אדני . |

Vocalisation:

(obverse)

1. 'abd^ekā hōša'yāhū² šōlēaḥ³t^e-
2. haggī[d] la'ādōnī [y]ā'[ū]š . yašma'
3. yahwe[h'ēt] 'ādōnī š^emū'at šālōm
4. w^e[š^emū] 'at [t̄ōb] w^e'attā hapqaḥ
5. nā' 'ēt 'ozen 'abd^ekā lassēper 'āšer
6. šalaḥtah⁴ 'el 'abd^ekā 'emeš kî lēb

² Or hawša'yāhū.

³ Or šālāḥ.

⁴ Or š^elaḥtāhū.

7. 'abd^ekā dāweh mē'āz šal^ehekā 'el 'abd^e-
8. kā w^ekī 'amar 'ādōnī lō' yāda 'tāh⁵
9. q^erō' sēper hay<ya>hweh 'im nissah '-
10. iš liqro' lī sēper lāneṣah w^egam
11. kōl sēper 'āšer yābō' 'ēlay 'im
12. qārā'tī 'ōtōh w^e'ōd 'ett^enenhū
13. 'el me'um[āh ū]l^e 'abd^ekā huggad
14. lē'mōr yārad šar haṣṣābā'
15. konyā[hū] ben 'elnātān lābō'
16. miṣraymāh w^e'attā

(reverse)

17. hōdawyāhū⁶ ben aḥīyyāhū wa-
18. 'anāšāw šālah lāqaḥat mizzeh
19. w^esēper tōbīyāhū 'ebed hammelek habbā'
20. 'el šallūm ben yādā' mē'ēt hannabī' lē'mō-
21. r hiššāmēr s^elāḥōh 'ab<d^e>kā 'el 'ādōnī

Translation:

(obverse)

1. Your servant Hōša'yāhū sent (*or* is sending) to
2. repo[rt] to my lord [Y]ā'[ū]š. May
3. YHW[H let m]y lord hear tiding(s) of peace
4. and [tid]ings [of good (fortune)!]⁷ And now open,
5. I beg you, the ear of your servant about the letter which
6. you sent to your servant yesterday evening. For (*or* behold) your servant
7. has been sick at heart since you sent (=your sending) (the letter) to your servan-
8. t, and because/with respect to (what) my lord said, “You do not know
9. how to read a letter!” As YHWH lives, nobody ever
10. tried to read me a letter or, for that matter,
11. every letter which comes to me? If
12. I read it, then I (can) recount/repeat it
13. down to its (smallest) det[ail].⁸ Now,] it has been reported to your servant,
14. saying, “The commander of the army
15. Konyā[hū], son of 'Elnatan, has come down to go
16. to Egypt.” And as for

(reverse)

17. Hōdawyāhū, son of Aḥīyāhū, and
18. his men, he has sent to take (them) hence/from (t)here.
19. And the letter of Tōbīyāhū, the servant of the king, which came⁹

⁵ Or *y^eda'tāhū*.

⁶ Or *hōdawyāhū*.

⁷ The proposed reconstructions of lines 2 and 4 are based on Renz 1995: 416, Gogel 1998: 415–416, and Lemaire 2004: 2100–2101.

⁸ Alternatively, lines 8b–9a read, “You did not understand it? Call a scribe!” (Cross 1985: 43; Schniedewind 2000: 158, n. 3; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005: 309; Park 2013: 469) (see §3.1.3).

20. to Šallūm, son of Yādā‘, from the prophet, sayin-
 21. g, “Beware!”¹⁰, your ser<v>ant¹¹ has sent it to my lord.

Letter structure:

(obverse)

Opening + address: Your servant Hôša^cyāhû sent (*or* is sending) to repo[rt] to my lord [Y]ā’[û]š.

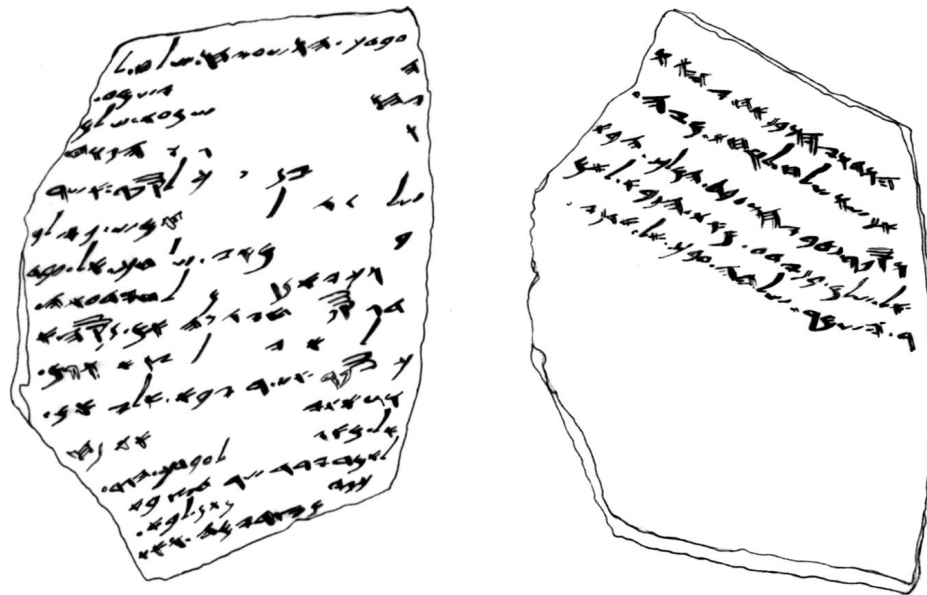
Greeting: May YHW[H let m]y lord hear tidings of peace and [tid]ings [of good (fortune)!]

Body 1 (complaint): And now open, I beg you, the ear of your servant about the letter which you sent to your servant yesterday evening. For (*or* behold) your servant has been sick at heart since you sent (=your sending) (the letter) to your servant, and because/with respect to (what) my lord said, “You do not know how to read a letter!” As YHWH lives, nobody ever tried to read me a letter or, for that matter, every letter which comes to me? If I read it, th(e)n I (can) recount/repeat it down to its (smallest) det[ail].

Body 2 (report): Now,] it has been reported to your servant, saying, “The commander of the army Konyā[hû], son of ‘Elnatan, has come down to go to Egypt.” And as for

(reverse)

Hôdawyāhû, son of Aḥīyāhû, and his men, he has sent to take (them) hence/from (t)here. And the letter of Ṭôbīyāhû, the servant of the king, which came to Šallūm, son of Yādā‘, from the prophet, saying, “Beware!/Take heed!/Be on your guard!”, your ser<v>ant has sent it to my lord.



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⁹ As proposed in the reading, *hb'* can be read either as a *qal* participle with prefixed article, or else as a *hophal* 3.m.s. perfect: “was brought”.

¹⁰ Or “Take heed!/Be on your guard!”

¹¹ As noted by Aḥituv (2008: 69), the omission of the *daleth* (*'b<d>k*) is an obvious scribal error.

Lachish 4

(Figs 33–35)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Acquisition: Formerly in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem; presently at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; previously on display in the exhibition entitled, “By the Rivers of Babylon” (2015), at the Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem.

Catalogue No.: IAA 1938–128.

Field No.: 4025.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.004; *KAI* 194; Lak(6):1.4.

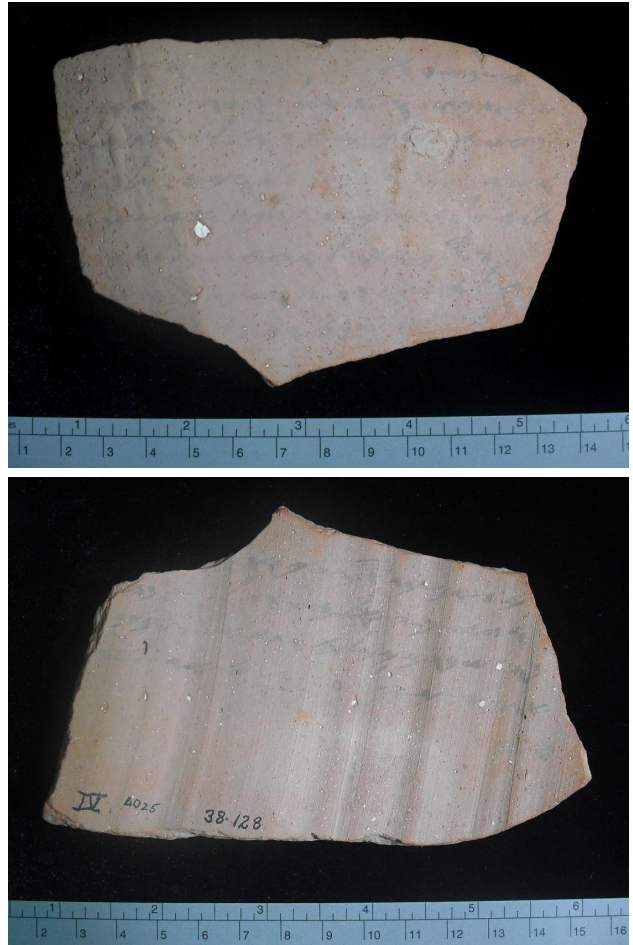
Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 44–45; 2008: 72, 74; Birnbaum 1971: Figs 24–25; Borowski 1984: 75 (reverse only); Gray 1962, pl. 16; Horn 1960: 634, fig. 285; Jirku 1967, pl. 52 (reverse only); Marston 1969, pl. 14; *Lachish I*: 76, 48; Tur-Sinai 1987: 104–105; Ussishkin 2014: 381, fig. 18.8; Vukosavović 2015: 35; Williams 1962: 711, fig. 15 (obverse only, upside down); Wright 1982: 73 (reverse only).

Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 73, 75; Borowski 1984: 75 (reverse only); Jaroš 1982: 94; Jean 1949, col. 412, fig. 466; May 1945: 24 (obverse only); Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LI.1; *Lachish I*: 77–78; Tur-Sinai 1987: 262–263; Ussishkin 2014: 381, fig. 18.8 (drawing by L. Harding); Wright 1982: 73 (reverse only); Yardeni 2002: 19, fig. 23.

Dimensions: 13 × 8 × 0.4–0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; soft-fired; rough surface; red wash outside; brown core, red edges; contains much crushed limestone.

Type: Letter/message/(military) report.



Epigraphic description/condition: Partially fragmentary 13-line inscription – starts on the outer surface (eight lines) and continues on the inner surface (five lines); inconsistent use of word-dividing dots. Ink fading and partially faded on both the outer and inner surfaces, as shown in the drawing below (cf. also Fig. 35).

Text and transcription:

The inscription in this study has been fully transcribed after comparisons from various scholarly readings and close-up observations.

(obverse)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>yšm' . yh[wh't'dny] 'tkym .</i> | ישמע . יה[והאאדני]עתכימ . |
| 2. <i>šm'tṭb . w't . kkl'sr . šlh . 'dny</i> | שמעתטב . ועת . ככלאשר . שלח . אדני |
| 3. <i>kn . 'šh . 'bdk . ktbt . 'lhdltkkl .</i> | כן . עשה . עבדך . כתבתי . עלהדלתככל . |
| 4. <i>'sr . šlh['dny]ly . wky . šlh'</i> | אשר . שלח[אדני]לי . וכי . שלחא |
| 5. <i>dny . 'l . dbr . bythrp . 'ynšm'</i> | דני . על . דבר . ביתהרפד . אינשמא |
| 6. <i>dmwsmkyhwlqḥhšm 'yhww</i> | דמוסמכיהולקחהשמעיהו |
| 7. <i>y'lhwh 'yrhw 'bdk . 'yn[n]</i> | יעלהוהעירהועבדך . אנ[ן] |
| 8. <i>yšlhšmh 'th 'w[d?]</i> | ישלחשמהאתהעו[ד]? |

(reverse)

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 9. <i>ky'm . btsbthbqr[?]</i> | כיאמ . בתסבתהבקר[?] |
| 10. <i>wyd 'ky'l . mš'tlkš . nḥ</i> | וידעכיאל . משאתלכש . נח |
| 11. <i>nwšmrm . kkl . h'tt . 'šrntn</i> | נושמרמ . ככל . האתת . אשרנתן |
| 12. <i>'dny . kyl' . nr'h't'z</i> | אדני . כילא . נראהאתעז |
| 13. <i>qh .</i> | קה . |

Vocalisation:

(obverse)

1. *yašma' yah[weh 'ēt 'ādōnī] 'attā kayyōm*
2. *šēmu'at tōb w'atta kēkōl 'āšer šālah 'ādōnī*
3. *kēn 'āsāh 'abd'kā kātabtī 'al haddelet kēkōl*
4. *'āšer šālah ['ādōnī 'ē]lay w'kī šālah 'ā-*
5. *dōnī'al d' bār beyt HRPD 'eyn šām 'ā-*
6. *dām ūs'makyāhū l'qāhōh šēma'yāhū wa-*
7. *yya 'ālēhū hā 'irāh w' 'abd'kā 'eyne[nn-]*
8. *ī šōlēah šāmmāh 'otōh 'ō[d?]*

(reverse)

9. *kī 'im bitsubbat habbōqer[*
10. *w'yāda' kī 'el mās'ōt lākīš naḥ-*
11. *nū šōm'rīm kēkōl hā'ōtōt 'āšer nātan*
12. *'ādōnī kī lō' nir'eh 'ēt 'āzē*
13. *qāh*

Translation:

(obverse)

1. May YH[WH let my lord] hear this very day
2. tiding(s) of good (fortune)! And now, in accordance to all that which my lord sent,
3. thus has your servant done. I have written on the *dlt*, in accordance to all that
4. which [my lord] sent to me. And since my lord s-
5. ent word, concerning the matter of Beth-*hrpd*, there is no
6. one (there). As for Š^emakyāhû, Š^ema‘yāhû took him, and
7. brought him up to the city. As for your servant, I am n[o-]
8. t sending him there ye[t (or agai[n)]¹²

(reverse)

9. but when morning comes around [I will (send him.)?]
10. And he will know that the (fire/smoke-)signals of Lachish we
11. are watching, in accordance to all the signs which
12. my lord has given, for we cannot see Aze-
13. kah.

Letter structure:

(obverse)

Greeting: May YH[WH let my lord] hear this very day tiding(s) of good (fortune)!

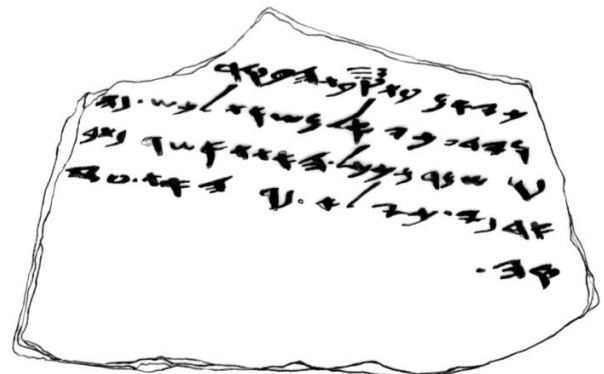
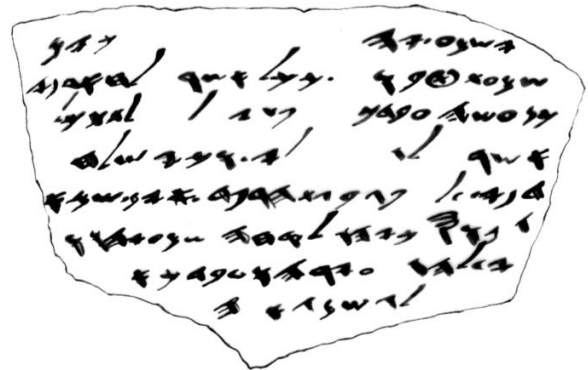
Body 1 (report 1 – follow-up of orders): And now, in accordance to all that which my lord sent, thus has your servant done. I have written on the *dlt*, in accordance to all that which [my lord] sent to me.

Body 2 (report 2): And since my lord sent word, concerning the matter of Beth-*hrpd*, there is no one (there). As for Š^emakyāhû, Š^ema‘yāhû took him, and brought him up to the city. As for your servant, I am n[o-]t sending him there ye[t (or agai[n])

(reverse)

but when morning comes around [I will (send him.)?]

Body 3 (report 3): And he will know that the (fire/smoke-)signals of Lachish we are watching, in accordance to all the signs which my lord has given. For we cannot see Azeqah.



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¹² Or, if read 't h[d?], i.e. the definite object-marker 't followed by “the witness”, then lines 7–8 would translate to “And your servant cannot send the witness there” (Pardee et al. 1982: 91, 92–93; see also Gogel 1998: 417).

Lachish 5

(Figs 36–37)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125703.

Field No.: 4026.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.005; *KAI* 195; *Lak*(6):1.5.

Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 47; 2008: 78; Cornfeld 1961: 465; Michaud 1957, pl. V; Suder 1984: 44; *Lachish I*: 90; Tur-Sinai 1987: 126.

Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 79; Michaud 1957: 46; 1958: 87, fig. 20; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. L.2; *Lachish I*: 91–92; Tur-Sinai 1987: 264.

Dimensions: 10.5 × 7 × 0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; shoulder fragment? of wheel-made storage jar; soft-fired; rough surface; red wash outside; brown core, red edges; pink brown fabric with some grits; contains crushed limestone.

Type: Letter/message/(military) report.

Epigraphic description/condition: Complete ten-line inscription. Repaired ostrakon (with four pieces in total); ink was already faded at the time of discovery, with the faded first half of the text being obscure to reconstruct.



Text and transcription:

The inscription in this study has been fully transcribed after comparisons from various scholarly readings and close-up observations.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>yšm</i> '[. <i>yhwh</i> 't'd]ny | ישמע . [יהוהאתאד]ני |
| 2. [<i>šm</i> 't . <i>šl</i>]mw[<i>tḅ</i> . 't | [שמעת . של]מו[טב . עת |
| 3. <i>kym</i> [<i>tkym</i> .]my . 'bdk . | כימעתימי . [מי . עבדך . |
| 4. <i>klb</i> . <i>ky</i> [<i>šlḥt</i>] 'l'bd | כלב . כי[שלחת]אלעבד |
| 5. <i>k</i> . 'th[<i>sprm</i> . k]z' | ך . אתה[ספרמ . כ]זא |
| 6. [<i>t</i>]hšb . 'bdk . <i>hspr</i> | [ת]השב . עבדך . הספר |
| 7. <i>m</i> . 'l'dny . yr'ky | מ . אל . אדני . יראכי |
| 8. <i>hwh</i> . <i>hqš</i> [r]bṭb | הוה . הקצרבטב |
| 9. <i>hym</i> . h['l] . 'bdk . y' | הימ . ה[א]ל . עבדך . י<ב>א |
| 10. <i>ṭbyhw</i> . zr'lmk | טביהו . זרעלמלך |

Vocalisation:

1. *yašma* ' [yahweh 'ēt 'ād]ōnī
2. [*š^emū* 'at šāl]ōm w^eṭōb ['attā
3. *kayyōm* 'attā *kayyōm*] mī 'abd^ekā
4. *keleb kī* [šālaḥtā] 'el 'abd^e-
5. *kā* '[ēt *hass^epārīm* kā]zō'-
6. *t hēšīb* 'abd^ekā *hass^epārī-*
7. *m* 'el 'ādōnī *yar'ekkā* ya-
8. *hweh haqqāš*[īr] b^eṭūb
9. *hayyōm* ha['e]l 'abd^ekā yā<bī>'
10. *ṭōbḥyāhū* zera ' lammelek

Translation:

1. May [YHWH let my lo]rd hear
2. [tiding(s) of pea]ce and [(good fortune) this
3. very day, this very day!] Who is your servant
4. (but) a dog, that [you sent] to your servan-
5. t the [letters]? Like-
6. wise has your servant returned the letter-
7. s to my lord. May Y-
8. HWH let you enjoy the harves[t] in prosperity
9. today! Wi[l]l Ṭōbḥyāhū br<in>g
10. royal seed/grain to your servant?¹³

¹³ After Renz 1995: 424–425; Gogel 1998: 418; Lemaire 2004: 2104. Lines 9–10 offer other possible readings, among them those proposed by Aḥituv (2008: 77, 79), who translates lines 9–10 as “Will Ṭōbḥyāhū, of the royal family, c<o>me to your servant?” (see §3.1.5).

Lachish 6

(Figs 38–39)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Acquisition: Formerly in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem; presently at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; previously on display in the exhibition entitled, “By the Rivers of Babylon” (2015), at the Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem.

Catalogue No.: IAA 1938–129.

Field No.: 4027.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.006; *KAI* 196; Lak(6):1.6.

Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 49; 2008: 81; Decroix 1966: 18; Finegan 1959, fig. 70; Ilan 1999: 62; Michaud 1958, pl. VIII; *Lachish I*: 102; Tur-Sinai 1987: 137; Vukosavović 2015: 33.

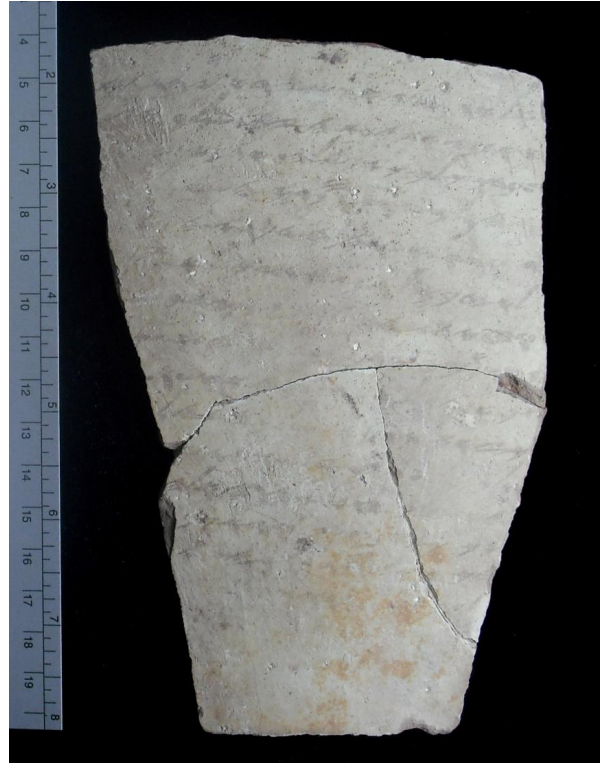
Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 82; Diringier 1958, pl. VIII; Ilan 1999: 62; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LII.1; *Lachish I*: 103–104; Tur-Sinai 1987: 265.

Dimensions: 13.5 × 12.8 × 0.4–0.8cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription; shoulder? and body fragment of wheel-made storage jar; hard-fired; rough surface; buff wash outside; inner half red, outer half brown; contains fine crushed limestone; same ceramic vessel as 2, 7, 8, and 18 (Tufnell’s Type 498).

Type: Letter/message/(military) report.

Epigraphic description/condition: Partially fragmentary 15-line? inscription. Repaired ostrakon (three pieces in total, with a further small chip missing); fading ink, with several parts of the inscription washed out at the time of discovery.



Text and transcription:

In my drawing (below and in Fig. 39) I produce the most legible graphemes. The inscription in this study has been transcribed after comparisons from various scholarly readings and close-up observations.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. 'l'dnyy'wš . yr' . yhw' . | אלאדנייאוש . ירא . יהוהא |
| 2. t'dny'th'thzh . šlm . my | תאדניאתהעתהזה . שלם . מי . |
| 3. 'bdk . klb . ky . šlh . 'dn[y'tsp] | עבדך . כלב . כי . שלה . אדני[אתספ] |
| 4. rhmlk[w't]spryhšr[ml'm] | ר . המלך[ואת]ספרי . השך[מלאמ] |
| 5. rqr'n' . whnh . dbry . h[šr(m?)] | רקראנא . והנה . דברי . ה[שר(מ?)] |
| 6. l'tbmlrptydyk[...] | לאטבמלרפתדיכ[...] |
| 7. qtydyh ['.....yd'.....] | קטידיה[י ידע] |
| 8. p[w].. k[... 'dny]hl [tk | פ[ר]..כ[... אדני]הלא[תכ |
| 9. tb'[l...lmh]t['šw . | תבא[ל ... למה]ת[ע]שו . |
| 10. kz't[.....w..y.....]hl | כזאת[.....ו.....]הל |
| 11. mlk[y]w[.....] | מלכ[ן]נ[.....] |
| 12.]hyyhwh'lh | חיייהוהאלה |
| 13. ykk[y...] 'zqr' ['b] | יככ[י - אז]קרא[עב] |
| 14. dk['t]hspr[m?] | דכ[את]הספר[ם?] |
| 15. l wh..... | ל וה |

Vocalisation:

1. 'el 'ādōnī yā'ūs yar' yahweh 'ē-
2. t 'ādōnī 'ēt hā'ēt hazzeh šālōm mī
3. 'abd^ekā keleb kī šālah 'ādōn[ī 'ēt sēpe-]
4. r hammelek [w^e'ēt] siprē haśśar[īm lē'mō-]
5. r q^erō' nā' w^ehinnēh dibrē ha[śśār(īm)?
6. lō' tōbīm l^erappōt yādaykā?[...]
7. qt y^edē hā['.....yd'....]
8. p[w].. 'k [... 'ādōnī] hālō' [tik-]
9. tōb '[...lamma]h ta 'aśū
10. kāzō't[.....w..y.....]h la-
11. mmēlek[y]w[.....]
12.]hay yahweh "lōha-
13. ykā k[ī ...] 'z qārā' ['ab-]
14. d^ekā ['ēt]hass^epārī[m?]
15. l wh.....

Translation:

1. To my lord Yā'ūs. May YHWH let
2. my lord see, at this time, peace. Who is
3. your servant (but) a dog, that my lor[d sent the lette-]
4. r of the king [and] the letters of the commander[s sayin-]

5. g, “Read, I beg you!” And behold, the words of the [commander(s)]?¹⁴
6. are not good. To weaken your? hands [....
7.the hands of the[..... know?.....]
8. ...[].....[..... my lord], will you not wr-
9. ite to t[hem saying: “Wh]y are you behaving
10. this way?”[.....?.....]to the
11. king[.....?.....
12.]As YHWH your god
13. lives.....your servant re-
14. -ad the letter(s).....
15.

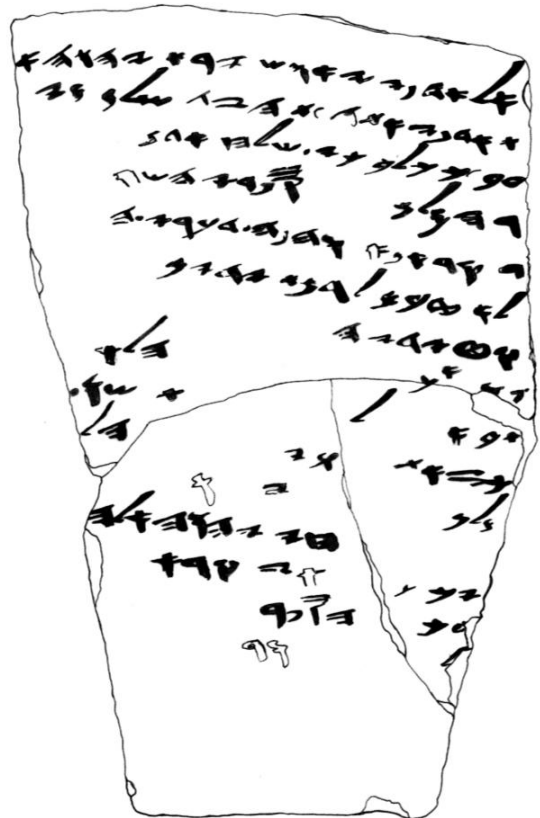
Letter structure:

Address: To my lord Yā’ûš.

Greeting: May YHWH let my lord see, at this time, peace.

Self-abasement + related information: Who is your servant (but) a dog, that my lord sent [the lette-] r of the king [and] the letters of the commander[s sayin-]g, “Read, I beg you!”

Body: And behold, the words of the [commander(s)]? are not good. To weaken your hands [.....the hands of the..... know?.....[]..... my lord, will you not write to t[hem saying: “Wh]y are you behaving this way?”[.....?.....] to the king
 As YHWH your god lives.....your servant read the letter(s)



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¹⁴ Torczyner originally restored the last word as *hnb*’ “the prophet” (see §§3.1.6 and 5.8).

Lachish 7

(Figs 40–41)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeian Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125715.

Field No.: 4029.¹⁵

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.007; *Lak*(6):1.7.

Photographs in: Cornfeld 1961: 465; *Lachish I*: 122; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 252.

Autograph in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LIII.1.

Dimensions: 13.5 × 12.8 × 0.4cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; base fragment of wheel-made holemouth storage jar, the same ceramic vessel as 2, 6, 8, and 18 (Tufnell’s Type 498); pink fabric with some grits; traces of vertical burnish on exterior (especially the top four repaired sherds and the top part of the largest, middle sherd); grey patches in places, especially the bottom, blackened repaired sherd.

Type: Unknown.

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary inscription. Torczyner observed traces of about ten lines on the outer surface, and four lines on the inner surface (although the inner side was never published in either a photograph or an autograph),¹⁶ and Diringier observed only a few letters here and there on the outer surface.¹⁷ I read several traces of graphemes on the outside



¹⁵ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4028 in Diringier 1953: 335 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

¹⁶ *Lachish I*: 124.

¹⁷ Diringier 1953: 335.

only, but the exact number of lines of writing is impossible to tell, so I reproduced below what is visible or legible. Repaired ostracon (six pieces in total, with two further pieces missing at the top and the bottom left); ink very faded, inscription barely visible.

Text and transcription:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. (traces?) | |
| 2.- <i>p</i> | עפ-..... |
| 3. ... <i>dk</i> | דכ... |
| 4. <i>šh</i> <i>b</i> | שח...ב... .. |
| 5. <i>bšlm</i> ... <i>h</i> | בשלמ ... ה |
| 6. (traces?) | |



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Lachish 8

(Figs 42–43)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125704.

Field No.: 4030.¹⁸

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.008; Lak(6):1.8.

Photographs in: Cornfeld 1961: 465; Michaud 1942: 50; *Lachish I*: 126; Tur-Sinai 1987: 253.

Autographs in: Michaud 1941: 50; 1958: 91, fig. 22; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LI.2; *Lachish I*: 127; ; Tur-Sinai 1987: 266.

Dimensions: 6.9 × 9.8 × 0.3–0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made holmout storage jar

(Tufnell’s Type 498); pink brown fabric with a few grits, greenish buff patch on exterior; contains fine crushed limestone; same ceramic vessel as 2, 6, 7, and 18 (Tufnell’s Type 498).

Type: Letter/message/(military) report.

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary eight?-line inscription (six? lines on the outer surface and two? lines on the inner surface). Repaired ostrakon (five pieces in total, with a further missing piece at the bottom); ink fading, and the writing is lost on the right half of the inner surface, where the sherd has also been inked upon, prohibiting any close-up examination.



¹⁸ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4029 in Diringier 1953: 335 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

Text and transcription:

(obverse)

1. *yšm*[' . *yhwh* 't'dnyš*m*
2. 't[*tb* . 'tkymkymwh[n
3. *h* [. *m*]n['... *lm*]*lk* . *m*'
4. *b* . *rh*...*y*...*kyhwh*
5. ... ^d/_r... []
6. ... []

- ישמ[ע . יהוהאתאדנישמ
 ע]ת[טב . ע]תכמכמוה[נ
 ה[מ . נ]ע[מ...למ]לך . מא
 ב . רח...ג...ךיהוה
 ... []...ך/ד...
 [] ...

(reverse)

7. *lm*.....*y*.....'kz*b*
8. *wh*.....'dny . š*m*[*h*]

- למ ? אכזב
 וה אדני . שמ[ה]

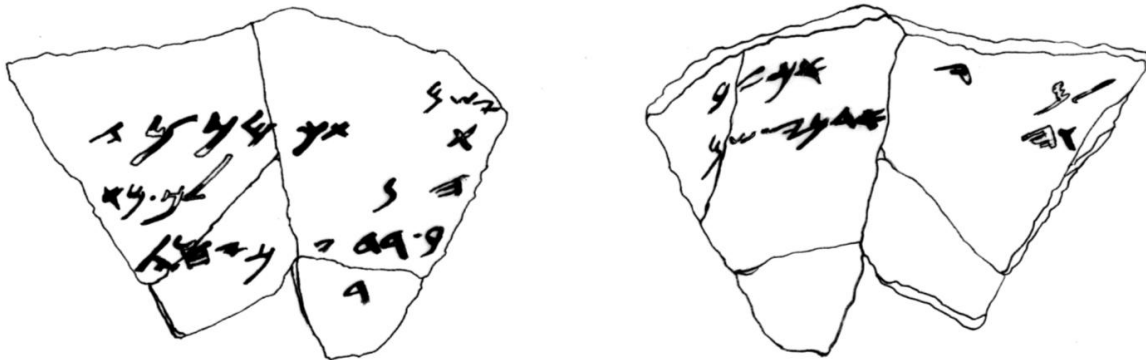
Translation:

(obverse)

1. May [YHWH let my lord hear tid-
2. ing]s [of good (fortune) thi]s very day, this day! And beho-
3. ld...[.....to the ki]ng of Mo-
4. ab..... YHWH
5. []
6. []

(reverse)

7. Achziv¹⁹
8. my lord the[re].



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¹⁹ Or the *Piel* 1 c.s. impf. of *kzb* (“I have lied”).

Lachish 9

(Figs 44–45)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125705.

Field No.: 4031 (BM); 4033 (IAA).²⁰

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.009; *KAI* 197; *Lak*(6):1.9.

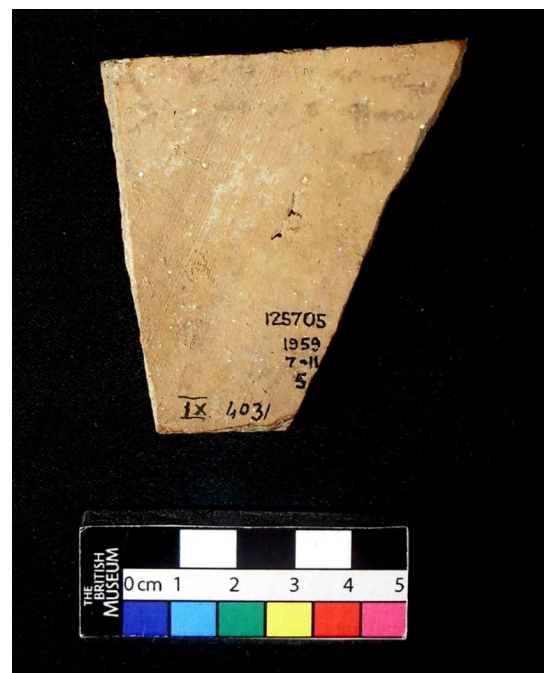
Photographs in: Ahituv 2005: 50; 2008: 84, 85; Cornfeld 1961: 465; Michaud 1957: 52; *Lachish I*: 132; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 177.

Autographs in: Ahituv 2008: 84, 85; Michaud 1957: 52; 1958: 89, fig. 21; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LII.2; *Lachish I*: 133–134; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 267.

Dimensions: 5.7 × 8.8 × 0.7cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel; hard-fired; pink brown fabric with a few grits; black core, dark brown edges; contains crushed limestone.

Type: Letter/message/ration request.



²⁰ The Field No. appears as 4031 in the British Museum records, and as 4033 in the IAA archives. Moreover, the Field No. for Lachish 9 was published incorrectly as 4030 in Diringier 1953: 335 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

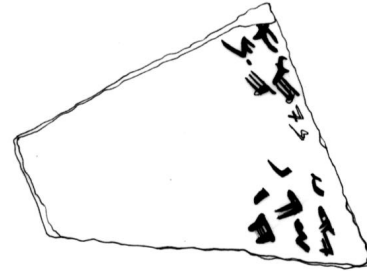
Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary nine-line inscription (six lines on the outer surface and three lines on the inner surface). Ink was rather smudged at the time of publication that led to dubious readings; today, the ink is fading.

Text and transcription:²¹



(obverse)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <i>yšm 'yhwh 't['d]</i> | ישמעיהוהאת[אד] |
| 2. <i>nyš[m 't]šlm . w</i> | ניש[מע]ת[של]מ . ו |
| 3. <i>['ttn . lhm w</i> | [ע]תתן . לחמ ו |
| 4. <i>[yyn] // [hšb</i> | [יין] // [השב |
| 5. <i>l 'bdk[d]</i> | [לע]בדך[ד] |
| 6. <i>brb</i> | ברב |



(reverse)

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 7. <i>ydš[l]myhw'</i> | ידש[ל]מיחוא |
| 8. <i>šrn['š]h . m</i> | שרנ[עש]ה . מ |
| 9. <i>ḥr</i> | חר |



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Vocalisation and translation:

(obverse)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>yašma ' yahweh ['ēt 'ādō-]</i> | May YHWH let [my lo-] |
| 2. <i>nī š[emū 'at] šālōm w^e-</i> | rd hear t[iding(s)] of peace. And |
| 3. <i>['a]ttā tēn lehem w^e-</i> | [n]ow give 10 (loaves of) bread and |
| 4. <i>[yayin] // [hāšēb</i> | 2 [(bath-measures? of wine)]. [Send word |
| 5. <i>l^e 'abd^e kā [dā-]</i> | to your] servant |
| 6. <i>bār b^e-</i> | by |

(reverse)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 7. <i>yad š^e[l]emyāhū 'ā-</i> | means of Š ^e lemyāhū, wh- |
| 8. <i>šer na['aše]h mā-</i> | ich/as to what we shall do tom- |
| 9. <i>ḥār</i> | orrow. |

Letter structure:

(obverse)

Greeting: May YHWH let [my lo]rd hear t[iding(s)] of peace.

Body (request for rations with directions): And [n]ow give 10 (loaves of) bread and 2 [(bath-measures of?) wine]. [Send word to your] servant by

(reverse)

means of Š^e[le]myāhū, which/as to what we shall do tomorrow.

²¹ The reading and subsequent translation mostly follow those by Pardee et al. 1982: 105; and Lemaire 2004: 2107. The font for the legible numerals has been reproduced by courtesy of Kris J. Udd.

Lachish 10

(Figs 46–47)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125709.

Field No.: 4032.²²

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.010; *Lak*(6):1.10.

Photographs in: Cornfeld 1961: 465; *Lachish I*: 140.

Autographs in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LIII.2.

Dimensions: 14.8 × 14 × 0.6cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel; hard-fired; smooth surface outside, rough inside; buff wash outside; black core, red edges; pink brown fabric with a few grits, greenish buff patch on exterior; contains some crushed limestone.

Type: Unknown.

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary inscription; traces of about eleven lines (thirteen according to Torczyner²³). Repaired ostrakon (four pieces in total); ink very faded and blurred, no words can be read with certainty.²⁴

Text: Only a few scattered letters are legible; general reconstruction of the text is impossible.



²² Published incorrectly as Field No. 4031 in Diringier 1953: 336 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

²³ *Lachish I*: 141.

²⁴ Scholars concur: *Lachish I*: 141; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 182; Diringier 1953: 336; Lemaire 2004: 2108.

Lachish 11

(Figs 48–49)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125712.

Field No.: 4033 (BM); 4031 (IAA).²⁵

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.011; *Lak*(6):1.11.

Photographs in: Cornfeld 1961: 465; *Lachish I*: 144; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 254.

Autographs in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LIV.1; *Lachish I*: 145–146; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 268.

Dimensions: 12.5 × 8.5 × 0.4cm.

Material: pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; medium-fired; buff wash outside; brown core, pink at outer edge; pink fabric with some grits; contains some crushed limestone.

Type: List of PNN

Epigraphic description/condition: fragmentary multi-line inscription; Torczyner originally recognized traces of 13 lines, but only a few could be read.²⁶ Repaired ostrakon (two pieces in total, with a further piece missing); ink very faded with a few letters still visible on the top sherd (§5.2.3).



²⁵ The Field No. appears as 4033 in the British Museum records, and as 4031 in the IAA archives. Moreover, the Field No. for Lachish 11 was published incorrectly as 4032 in Diringer 1953: 336 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

²⁶ *Lachish I*: 147.

Text and transcription:

(top sherd)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| 1. <i>bl</i> (traces) | ... בל |
| 2. <i>'ltn</i> | אלנתן |
| 3. <i>mkyhw</i> | מכיהו |
| 4. <i>smkyhw</i> | שמכיהו |
| 5. <i>šdq...</i> | ... צדק |
| 6. (traces?) | |

Translation:

1. ?.....
2. 'Elnatan
3. Miḳayāhû
4. S^emakyāhû
5. Šidqi[yāhû]?
6. ?.....



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Lachish 12

(Figs 50–51)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeian Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125713.

Field No.: 4034.²⁷

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.012; *Lak*(6):1.12.

Photographs in: *Lachish I*: 150; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 255.

Autographs in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LII.4; *Lachish I*: 151–152; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 269.

Dimensions: 8.3 × 8.2 × 0.5–0.7cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; soft-fired; pink slip outside with a few grits; black core, red edges.

Type: Letter/message?

Epigraphic description/condition: Eight?-line inscription on the outside; Lemaire adds that at least one and a half lines were probably originally present on the inner side of the sherd,²⁸ but I did not spot any traces other than greyish stains and grit on the surface. Repaired ostracon (two pieces in total); very faint traces of writing at the time of discovery, which were mostly lost in the eventual cleaning process; today the ink is practically illegible; several deep and surface scratches running top-left to mid right.



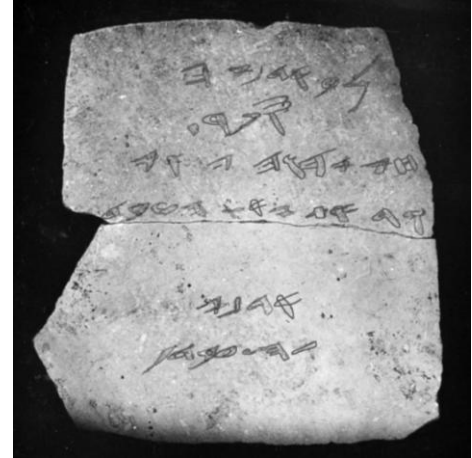
²⁷ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4033 in Dinger 1953: 336 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

²⁸ Lemaire 2004: 2109.

Text and transcription:

(Harding/Torczyner) (see Fig. 57)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. ... <i>klb</i> . 'dny h..... | ..כלב . אדני.ה..... |
| 2.[s]pr..... |[ס]פר..... |
| 3. [h]yyhwh - - y | חיהוה - - י |
| 4. [qr] 'ty['th'bd | קר[אתי]את[ה]עבד |
| 5. | |
| 6.'dny | אדני |
| 7. h . 'bdk | ה - עבדך |
| 8. | |



Base image courtesy:
Israel Antiquities Authority

(my readings)

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. [']l['dn]y.y.... |ל [א]דנ[ב]י...י |
| 2. ...h ... ^b /p r ... | ...ה...ב/פ ר... |
| 3. [h]y y ₂ yhwh ... 'y/h .. | ח'י . יהוה...א , ה' |
| 4. [qr] 't]y['t]h['b ^h /a | קר[א]ת[א]ת[א]ת[ע]בד |
| 5. | |
| 6.'dny | אדני |
| 7. ...- h . 'bdk..... | ה - עבדך |
| 8. ...w ... l... |ל...ל..... |



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Lachish 13

(Figs 52–53)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum (London).

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125714.

Field No.: 4035.²⁹

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.013; *KAI* 193; *Lak(6)*:1.13.

Photographs in: *Lachish I*: 156; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 256.

Autographs in: *Renz and Röllig* 1995, III, pl. LIV.2; *Lachish I*: 157–158; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 270.

Dimensions: 18 × 12.7 × 0.6cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; hard-fired; rough surface; pink fabric with some grits; buff brown on much of exterior, grey on interior and part of core; has contained crushed limestone; inner surface pelted.

Type: Either an instruction or a part of another letter/message/(military) report.

Epigraphic description/condition: Three-line inscription on the inner surface of the ostrakon (§3.1.13). In my close-examination of the outer surface I could not spot any trace of writing, yet I do not exclude the possibility of writing that has practically faded beyond recognition. Repaired (six pieces in total); ink very faded with parts of the inscription (barely) visible.



²⁹ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4034 in *Diringer* 1953: 336 (see *Magrill* 2006: 91).

Text and transcription:

(obverse – if the outer surface possibly bore writing, it is now washed-out)

(reverse ?)

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>qmwł'štml'kh</i> . ³⁰ | קמולעשתמלאכה . |
| 2. <i>msm[kyhw....h]prh...w</i> | מסמ[כיהו....ח]פרה...ו |
| 3. 't. 'špt | את... אשפת |

Vocalisation and translation:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>qūmū la'āsōt mēlā'kāh</i> | Arise to do work! |
| 2. <i>misS^cm[akyāhū yah]pōr h...w</i> | from S ^c mak[yāhū]? shall dig out.... |
| 3. 't 'āšāpōt |quivers. |



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³⁰ Conversely, if read as the Qal 3.c.p. perfect *qmw* (“They arose to do work...”), then the tone of the inscription changes completely, perhaps indicating part of another long report about duties being carried out (see §3.1.13).

Lachish 14

(Figs 54–55)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125711.

Field No.: 4036.³¹

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.014; Lak(6):1.14.

Photograph in: *Lachish I*: 162.

Autograph in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LV.1.

Dimensions: 18.5 × 14.2 × 0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; medium-fired; brown wash outside; pink brown fabric with some grits; black core, red edges; contains little crushed limestone.

Type: Unknown.

Epigraphic description/condition: Multiple-line inscription; Lemaire notices traces of “at least nine lines; practically illegible”;³² I have noticed traces of about ten or eleven lines of writing, basing on S.W. Michieli’s (black & white) photograph in *Lachish I* and during examination of the ostrakon.³³ Repaired (eleven pieces in total); ink very faded, only scattered letters visible.



³¹ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4035 in Dinger 1953: 337 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

³² Lemaire 2004: 2110.

³³ See *Lachish I*: 162.

Text and transcription:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. <u>y</u> - | ' | <u>א</u> | -י |
| 3. <u>šy</u> | | | שי |
| 4. <u>š</u> ^{b/k} ny | <u>t</u> <u>b</u> | <u>ב</u> <u>ת</u> | <u>ש</u> ^{ב/ב} <u>נ</u> |
| 5. <u>šh</u> | w | <u>ו</u> | <u>ש</u> ה |
| 6. <u>b</u> | -w ... | ... ו .. | <u>ב</u> |
| 7. | hh-t. ' | הח-ת. א | |
| 8. | d q'-š | <u>ד</u> קא- <u>ש</u> | |
| 9. | y | י | |
| 10. | <u>s</u> bh | <u>ס</u> בה | |
| 11. | | | |



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Lachish 15

(Figs 56–57)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125710.

Field No.: 4037.³⁴

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.015; Lak(6):1.15.

Photograph in: *Lachish I*: 166.

Dimensions: 17.3 × 20 × 0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription in iron-carbon ink – the largest potsherd in the corpus of Letters; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; hard-fired; smoothed surface; buff wash outside; pink fabric with some grits; brown core.

Type: Unknown.

Epigraphic description/condition: Inscription was no longer legible at the time of discovery; Torczyner had noticed traces of letters at the top left corner of the sherd, the readings of which were, however, doubtful, but the inscription was read and published upside down³⁵ (§§3.1.15 and 5.2.3). Repaired (four pieces in total), with a further piece missing; ink completely faded; some incrustation and discolouration.

Text: I could only discern a few letters in the bottom right (on the smaller sherds attached to the larger piece); the number of lines given here conform with the number of lines of text I am able to identify on the three smaller sherds, although the possibility of further lines above is not excluded.



³⁴ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4036 in Diringier 1953: 337 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

³⁵ *Lachish I*: 167.

Lachish 16

(Figs 58–59)



Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the ballast of the Persian roadway (Level I) (E./F.17/18:N).

Dating (archaeological): Stray sherd found in secondary context.

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125706.

Field No.: 4038.³⁶

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.016; *Lak*(6):1.16.

Photographs in: *Lachish I*: 170; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 189.

Autographs in: Michaud 1957: 55; 1958: 96; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LII.5; *Lachish I*: 171–172; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 271.

Dimensions: 3.4 × 3.4 × 0.4cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel; hard-fired; buff wash outside; pink fabric with a few grits; black core, red edges; contains crushed limestone.

³⁶ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4037 and British Museum registration number 125705 in Diringier 1953: 337 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

Type: Apparently a “tiny fragment out of the middle of a letter”.³⁷

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary inscription – traces of six surviving lines on the outer surface and four lines on the inner side. Ink highly faded, especially on the inner surface; a little discolouration.

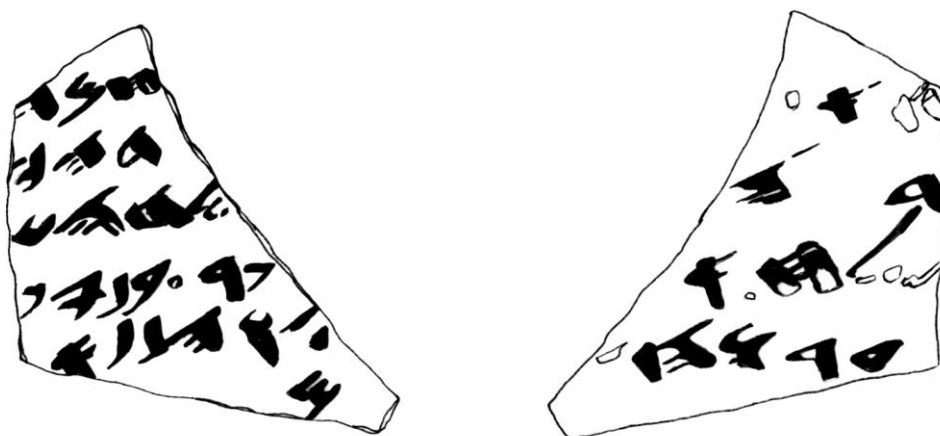
Text and transcription:

(obverse)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.] <i>hm</i> ^{h/d} [|]חמ ^ה /[|
| 2.] ^{h/d} <i>hy</i> [|]ה ^ה /י[|
| 3.] <i>šlhš</i> [|]שלחהש[|
| 4.] <i>pr. bnyk</i> [|]פר . בניכ[|
| 5.] <i>hwhnn</i> ³⁸ [|]הוחננא[|
| 6.].. <i>m</i> ...[|]...מ..[|

(reverse)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7.] ^{h/h} <i>'</i> ..[|].. ^ה /א[|
| 8.] <i>d-h</i> [|]ד-ה[|
| 9.] <i>šlh</i> . '[|]שלה . א[|
| 10.] ^{b/} . ^{d/r} <i>w</i> ^{h/hw} ..[|].. ^ה /ו ^ה /ד ^ב /[|



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³⁷ *Lachish I*: 173.

³⁸ See §§3.1.16 and 5.7 on the reading *hnb'* in line 5 by most commentators.

Lachish 17

(Fig. 60)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, presumably recovered during the sieving of the dump heap from the Persian roadway and gateway area (§1.5).

Dating (archaeological): Unstratified.

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125707.

Field No.: 4039.³⁹

Other designations (corpora/handbook references):

AHI 1.017; *Lak*(6):1.17.

Photographs in: *Lachish I*: 176; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 191.

Autographs in: Michaud 1957: 56; 1958: 97; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LII.3; *Lachish I*: 176; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 271.

Dimensions: 3.7 × 3 × 0.5cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel; hard-fired; red wash outside; pink brown fabric with some grits; black core, red edges; contains crushed limestone.

Type: Fragment of a letter?

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary three-line inscription; conservative script with archaizing *yod* (line 2) and *nun* (line 3). The inscription was fairly legible at the time of discovery, but today the ink is very faded, with lines 1 and 2 barely visible.

Text and transcription:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.] 'bd[|]עבד[|
| 2.] 'dny[|]נדנ[|
| 3.] ^r / _a ny ^d / _r [|]נ ^r / _י ני ^r / _י [|



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³⁹ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4038 in Diringer 1953: 337 (see Magrill 2006: 91).

Lachish 18

(Figs 61–62)

Find spot: Discovered in 1935, in the burnt ash of the “guardroom” or eastern tower of the gateway (Room E.18:C).

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Previously on loan from the Wellcome Trustees since 1937; donated to the British Museum in 1959 by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome.

Catalogue No.: BM 125708.

Field No.: 4028.⁴⁰

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.018; *Lak*(6):1.18.

Photographs in: Michaud 1957: 57; *Lachish I*: 180; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 193.

Autographs in: Michaud 1957: 57; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LIII.3; *Lachish I*: 181–182; *Tur-Sinai* 1987: 272.

Dimensions: 16.5 × 10.5 max./8.3 min. width × 0.4 cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made storage jar; pink brown fabric with some grits; greenish buff on exterior surface; partial grey core, burnt? patches in places; same ceramic vessel as 2, 6, 7, and 8 (Tufnell’s Type 498).

Type: A short letter/message or “probably only the end of a longer ostrakon”.⁴¹

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary two-line inscription (Gibson remarked about traces of another possible line of writing at the top left⁴²). Repaired (originally four pieces in total, with a further piece that broke at the top left in modern times and was immediately



⁴⁰ Published incorrectly as Field No. 4039 in Dinger 1953: 338 (see Magrill 2006: 92).

⁴¹ Lemaire 2004: 2112.

⁴² Gibson 1971: 48.

repaired; currently in five repaired pieces in total);⁴³ ink very faded but part of inscription still visible.

Text, transcription, and vocalisation:

1. 'd . h 'rb[]šlmyšlh['b[dk'ṭ?]}hspr'šr עב . הערב[]שלמישלה[ע]ב[דךאֲת?]}הספראשר
2. šlh . 'dny[]zr . h' שלח . אדני[]זר . הע

1. 'ad hā'ereb[]šlm yišlah ['a]b[d'kā 'ēṭ?]}hassēper 'āšer
2. šālāh 'ādōnī []zr h'

Translation:

1. Until the evening []šlm [your servant] will send the letter which
2. my lord sent []?.....



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⁴³ I noticed the small, top left repaired sherd of Lachish 18 while examining the sherd at the British Museum, and I suspect this happened recently, or at least after R. Richmond Brown's original photographs (cf. Figs. 61 and 62). I did not add this break to my autograph.

Lachish 19

(Figs 63–65)

Find spot: discovered in 1938, at the base of the south-west corner of the mound of Tell ed-Duweir (Lachish) (Saddle Area 500), among the burnt debris of the Assyrian siege ramp.

Dating (archaeological): probably Iron Age IIB/Lachish Level III, during the Assyrian siege of Lachish (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 701 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script probably dating to the late 8th century B.C.E.

Current location: Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem.

Acquisition: Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem.

Catalogue No.: IAA 1939–799.

Field No.: 6899.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.019; *KAI* 199; Lak(6):1.19.

Photographs in: Diringier 1943, pl. V, fig. 1; *Lachish III*, pl. 48A, fig. 2; Tur-Sinai 1987: 199.

Autographs in: Diringier 1943, pl. V, fig. 2; Michaud 1958: 93, fig. 23; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LVI.1; *Lachish III*, pl. 48B, fig. 2; Tur-Sinai 1987: 273.

Dimensions: 15 × 9.3 × 1–1.2cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel?; hard-fired; grey-pink fabric in and out with some grits; irregular form, nearly trapezoid.

Type: List of PNN with hieratic numerals.

Epigraphic description/condition: The sherd contains multiple lines of writing, of which the first five only are more or less decipherable, and further traces are noticed in the sixth and seventh lines. Highly faded ink; only the right half of the inscription was more or less decipherable back at the time of discovery and publication; today almost illegible.

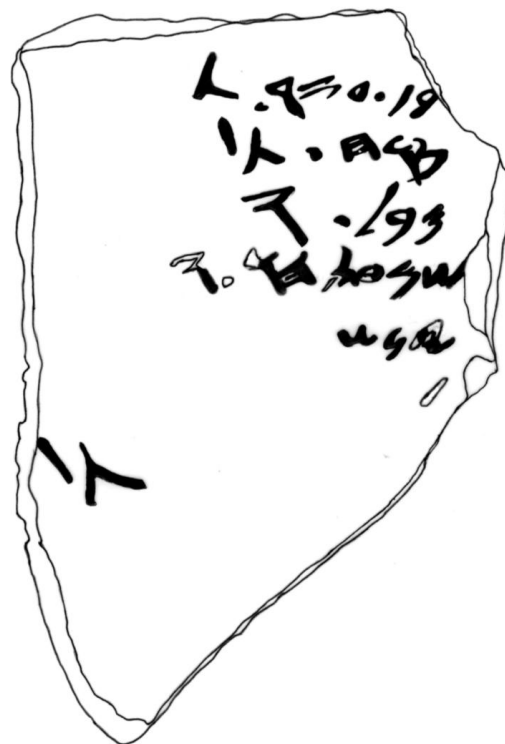


Text and transcription:⁴⁴

1. <i>bn</i> . 'zr .	כ	בן . עזר .
2. <i>pqh</i> .	ק	פקח .
3. <i>mbl</i> .	מ	מבל .
4. <i>šm</i> 'yhw .	ש	שמעיהו .
5. <i>ybs</i> (traces)		יבש ...
6. <i>l</i> (traces)		ל ...
7. (traces)	כ	כ

Translation:

1. Son of 'zr 10
2. Peqaḥ 11
3. Mabal 20/50
4. Š^ema yāhū 20/50
5. Yabeš ...
6. L?
7. 11



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⁴⁴ The font for the legible numerals has been reproduced by courtesy of Kris J. Udd.

⁴⁵ Lemaire (1977: 132; 2004: 2112) insists that the shape of the hieratic sign in lines 3 and 4 is closer to that of the numeral 20, whilst Renz (1995: 435), following Aharoni (1966: 18, 19, fig. 4), reads the hieratic sign as the numeral 50.

Lachish 20

(Figs 66–67)

Find spot: Discovered in 1938, in a room on the east side of the Palace C ruins (L.12:1065), “lying blackened on the floor among the ashes of the destruction”.⁴⁶

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Formerly at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London – donated by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome in 1956; acquired by the Trustees of the British Museum from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, in 1980.

Catalogue No.: BM 16707.

Field No.: 6820.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.020; *Lak*(6):1.20.

Photographs in: Diringen 1943, pl. VI; Michaud 1957: 58; *Lachish III*, pl. 48A, fig. 1; Tur-Sinai 1987: 214.

Autographs in: Michaud 1957: 58; Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LV.2; *Lachish III*, pl. 48B, fig. 1; Tur-Sinai 1987: 274.

Dimensions: 17.3 × 14.6 × 0.35–0.55cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; shoulder fragment of wheel-made water jar; hard-fired; light red fabric in and out.

Type: Storage-jar label with date formula.

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary two-line inscription; apparent archaizing *nun* (line 2). Repaired (seven pieces in total, with a further two pieces missing); ink faded in places.



⁴⁶ Inge 1938: 254.

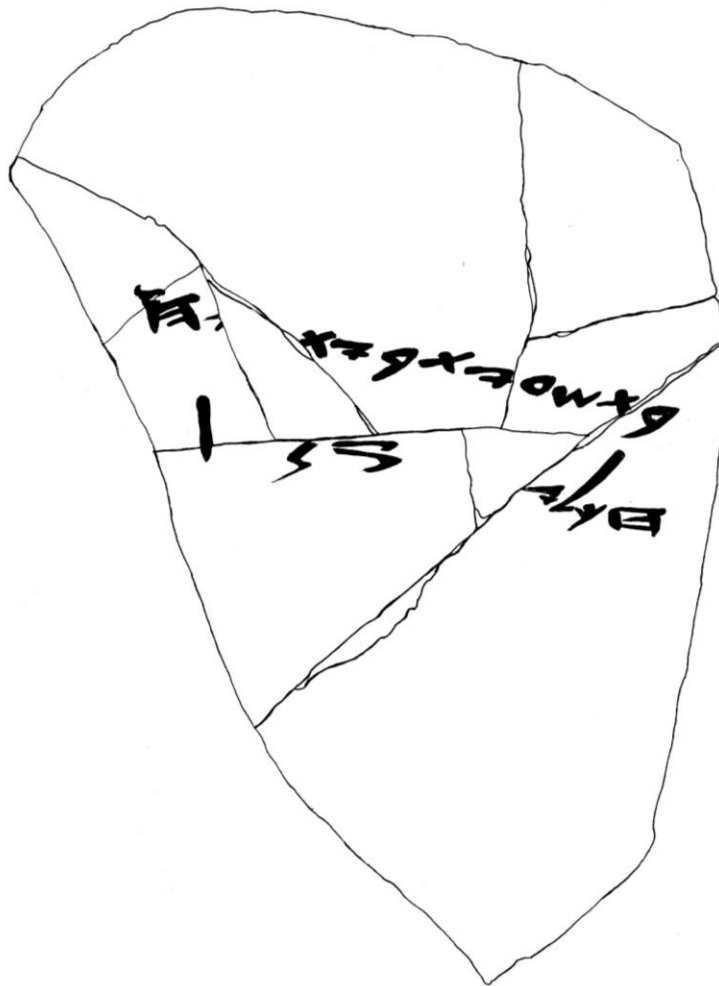
Text and transcription:

1. *biš* 'ytbyt[]yhw
2. *ḥkly*[hw?] zn \

בתשעיתבית[נהו
חכלי[הו? זן \

Translation:

1. In the ninth (year), house (of) []yāhû
2. *Ḥakaly*[āhû?] kind/sort? 1



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Lachish 21

(Figs 68–69)



Find spot: Discovered in 1938, below the floor of a room (L.12:1065) on the east side of the Palace C ruins.

Dating (archaeological): Iron Age IIC/Lachish Level II, the final decades of the Judaeen Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.); the findspot may suggest the sherd belongs to a few years earlier than Lachish 20 and the other contents of Room L.12:1065, or else it accidentally ended up below the floor during the room's construction.

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script dating to the late 7th century–early 6th century B.C.E.

Current location: Room 57, British Museum, London.

Acquisition: Formerly at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London – donated by Sir Henry Solomon Wellcome in 1956; acquired by the Trustees of the British Museum from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, in 1980.

Catalogue No.: BM 125715a.

Field No.: 6821.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.021; *Lak*(6):1.21.

Photographs in: Dinger 1943, pl. V; *Lachish III*, pl. 48A, fig. 3a–c; Tur-Sinai 1987: 218

Autograph in: Renz and Röllig 1995, III, pl. LIII.4.

Dimensions: 4.9 × 4.6 (max.) × 0.45–0.55cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in iron-carbon ink; body fragment of wheel-made vessel; hard-fired; rough surface; buff wash outside; pink fabric with

some grits, grey on interior and core; contains fine crushed limestone; irregular form, nearly trapezoid.

Type: Probably a fragmentary part of a letter/message.⁴⁷

Epigraphic description/condition: Fragmentary inscription – traces of five surviving lines on the outer surface and six surviving lines on the inner side; highly faded ink on both the outer and inner surfaces.

Text and transcription:

(obverse)

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| 1. 'l[|]אלא |
| 2. h . 't[|]ה . אתא |
| 3. t . kl'š[|]ת . כלאש |
| 4. wš'dny[|]וצאדנ |
| 5. wh'...[|]והא.... |

(reverse)

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 6. '.....[|].....א |
| 7. ik...h ^d / _r / ^r /d[|]טכ...ה...ד/ר/ד/ר |
| 8. ^b / _n ...l.../t _p ..[|]...ל...פ.../ט |
| 9. md'yn..[|]מ...ד/ינ...א |
| 10. hr..[|]..ח |
| 11. dh[|]דח |



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⁴⁷ See also Inge 1938: 254.

Catalogue B

Lachish Ostraca 22–35

Ostraca 22–35 have been provided in this catalogue as presented in their respective publications, for the convenience of the reader. For further literature on and images of these ostraca, see bibliographic citations below.

Lachish ostracon 22 (Year 1966)*

22

Dating (archaeological): Retrieved from the same stratigraphic layer as Lachish 1–15, 18, 20, and 21, namely Iron Age IIC/Level II, the final decades of the Judaeian Monarchy (with a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 588/7 B.C.E.).

Script/Dating (palaeographical): Cursive Palaeo-Hebrew script, dating to the late 7th–early 6th centuries B.C.E.¹

Find spot: Discovered during the 1966 Israeli excavations, led by Yohanan Aharoni, in a Level II storeroom (Locus 3), below the Level I Solar Shrine, atop Tell ed-Duweir, along a rich assemblage of Level II pottery, six shekel weights, and a juglet containing 17 bullae that may suggest that this ostracon was related to the distribution of a certain commodity.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Current location/Catalogue: Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem; IAA 1972–166.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.022; *Lak*(6):15.

Dimensions: 7–8.5 × 10.3–11 × 0.7cm.

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in ink; more or less rectangular body fragment of wheel-made storage jar?; hard-fired; rough surface.

Epigraphic description: List of 10 PNN, all preceded by the preposition *lamed* (*l-*) (“[Belonging] to PN”), with still legible undeciphered numerals (for measures, perhaps for grain) in lines 6 and 7.² The ostracon could have been a list of issuances of some kind, with the last line mentioning the house of Achziv, which possibly suggests that the listed people belonged to this house or temple, or may have been workers in a royal pottery workshop at Achziv.³ Alternatively, the list could denote levied employees, who received amounts of food, or goods that they raised as tax that were stored at Lachish.⁴

* Details on Lachish 22 are taken from Aharoni 1971; Aḥituv 2008.

¹ Renz and Röllig 1995: 405.

² Lemaire 2004: 2116.

³ See Aharoni 1975: 24; Lemaire 1977: 137; 2004: 2116; Aḥituv 2008: 86–88.

⁴ Mendel-Geberovich, Arie and Maggen 2016.

Type: List of PNN with faded hieratic numerals.⁵

Condition: Ink is barely legible on the right-hand side, and faded on the left.

Transcription and translation:

1. <i>l</i> [...?	To [...?
2. <i>l</i> [...?	To [...?
3. <i>l'l</i> [...?	To 'l[...?
4. <i>ldl</i> [<i>yhw</i> ?]	To D ^e la[<i>yāhû</i> ?]
5. <i>lsmkyhw</i>	To S ^e mak ^y āhû
6. <i>l's</i> [<i>yhw</i> ... →	To 'Eš[<i>yāhû</i> ?] →
7. <i>l'syhwbn</i> [...] '... ↙	To 'Ašayāhû son of '... ↙
8. <i>l'lyš</i> [<i>b</i> '	To 'Elyaši[b...
9. <i>l</i> [...?	To [...?
10. <i>lbyt</i> 'kzy[<i>b</i> ...	To the House of 'A ^k zi[<i>b</i> ...

Lachish ostraca 23–35 (Years 1973–1987)*

23

Date: Probably 8th century B.C.E. owing to the crude shape of the letters.

Find spot: Found in 1973, in Podium A of the Judaeon Palace-Fort, in Locus 3022, in the Level IV constructional fill, or what is more likely Level III debris from Palace C, eroded since the British dig in this area (K12: 1055).

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Current location/Catalogue: Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem; IAA 2005-784.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.023.

Dimensions: 7.5 × 5.8cm

Material: Pottery sherd with Palaeo-Hebrew inscription.

Epigraphic description: fragmentary three-line inscription in iron-carbon ink.

Type: A schoolboy's exercise?⁶

Transcription:

1. [*'bg*?] - *hwzḥt*?*glx*?
2. [*lmns*?] - - *šqr*'*b*
3. [*š*?]*t*?

⁵ The sign for *homer* or *kor* in line 6 and *ephah* in line 7, according to Lemaire. The font for both symbols has been reproduced by courtesy of Kris J. Udd.

* Details on Lachish 23–35 are taken from Lemaire 1976; 2004; Ussishkin 1978: 81–88; 1983: 157–160; Davies et al. 1991: 9–10; Renz and Röllig 1995, unless stated otherwise.

⁶ Lemaire 1976.

24

Date: Late 7th–early 6th century B.C.E.

Find spot: Storage jar uncovered in Area GE, Lachish Level II, Storeroom 4084.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Current location/Catalogue: Bronfman Archaeology Wing, Israel Museum, Jerusalem; IAA 1978-1415.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.024; Lak (7/6): 19.

Dimensions: 7.5 × 5.8cm (inscription)

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription and adjoining symbol, incised pre-firing, on the body of a storage jar, just below the angular shoulder, the shoulder apparently serving as an upper guideline for the scribe.

Epigraphic description: Incised four-letter inscription (the first four letters of the Palaeo-Hebrew alphabet) and a large adjoining symbol (8 × 4cm), which is similar enough to an arrowhead or to sign No. 27 of the Cypro-Minoan syllabry.

Type: Unknown.

Transcription:

[symbol] 'bgd

25

Date: Probably 600 B.C.E. or early 6th century B.C.E. (on the basis of the archaeological context).

Find spot: Decanter uncovered in Area GE, Level II, Storeroom 4084, and published by Zimhoni.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.025; Lak (7/6): 20.

Dimensions: Inscription is 7.5cm wide

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in ink, on the shoulder of a large decanter (23.5cm in height, 24cm in diameter, 10.95 litres in capacity).

Epigraphic description: Judaeen writing *yyn* is different from the Israelite writing *yn*.⁷ Palaeography is conservative, similar to Lachish 1.

Type: Storage-jar label.

Transcription and translation:

yyn . 'šn. Wine of Ashan

⁷ See Davies et al. 1991: 373–374.

26

Date: Late 7th–early 6th century B.C.E.

Find spot: Storage jar uncovered in Area GE, Lachish Level II, Storeroom 4084, and published by Zimhoni.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.026; Lak (7/6): 21.

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in black ink on the body of a storage jar.

Epigraphic description: First two letters are almost completely washed out. However, the traces make the uncertain reading *ln* more likely than *l]*.⁸

Type: Ownership/acquisition label?

Transcription and translation:

lnryhw To Neryāhû

27

Date: Late 7th–early 6th century B.C.E.

Find spot: storage jar uncovered in Area GE, Lachish Level II, Storeroom 4084, and published by Zimhoni.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.027; Lak (7/6): 22.

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in black ink on the body of a storage jar, below the carinated shoulder.

Epigraphic description: Reading disputed – Ussishkin proposed [*lyhw*]*bnh*, but Lemaire prefers the reading *lbnh*, since the first letter is a visible upper diagonal stroke of *lāmed*.⁹

Type: Ownership/acquisition label?

Transcription and translation:

lbnh Libnah

28

Date: Probably early 6th century B.C.E.

Find spot: storage jar uncovered in Area GE, Lachish Level II, Storeroom 4084, and published by Zimhoni.

⁸ Lemaire 2004: 2120 vis-à-vis Puech 1980: 119.

⁹ Lemaire 2004: 2121 vis-à-vis Ussishkin 1978: 85; Renz and Röllig 1995, I: 314.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.028; Lak(6):23.

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in black ink beneath one handle of a large two-handled storage jar.

Epigraphic description: Interpretation is uncertain.

Type: Unknown

Condition: Badly preserved.

Transcription and translation:

?nryhw bn b/p/r[?

?Neryāhû son of - [?

29

Date: Early 6th century B.C.E.

Find spot: Storage jar found in Area GE, Level II, Storeroom 4086, and published by Zimhoni.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.029; Lak(6):24.

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in black ink on the shoulder of a large storage jar (53cm high and 37cm wide).

Epigraphic description: Three-line inscription; the date formula possibly refers to the fourth regnal year of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah (ca. 594/3 B.C.E.) ; line 2 is tentative – Lemaire proposes the reading *ʔlm* as a possible place-name (cf. Jos 15:24) or a PN (cf. Esr 10:24), while the syntagma *bn ʔnt* appears on inscribed arrowheads, as well as an inscribed rim of a bowl from Tel Migne/Ekron; the abbreviation *B ʔ* appears on several Arad ostraca (such as 1.2, 2.2 and 3.2), apparently after mentioning *yyn*, which could indicate that this storage jar also contained wine.

Type: Unknown.

Condition: Badly preserved .

Transcription and translation:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>brb ʔt</i> | In the fourth (year), |
| 2. <i>ʔlm . bn ʔnt .</i> | Telem son of ʔAnat |
| 3. <i>B ʔ</i> | <i>B(ath)</i> 1 |
-

30

Date: ca. 600 B.C.E.

Find spot: Decanter found in Area GE, Lachish Level II, Storeroom 4086, and published by Zimhoni.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.030; Lak (7): 25.

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription written in black ink on the shoulder of a decanter.

Epigraphic description: script is conservative and elegant; the archaeological context makes it difficult to date this inscription much earlier than ca. 600 B.C.E.

Type: Storage-jar label of contents.

Condition: Badly preserved.

Transcription and translation:

mz . šmqm . šhrt .

Extract of black raisins

31

Date: ca. 600 B.C.E.

Find spot: Found in Area GE, Locus 4583, the constructional fill beneath the floor of Lachish Level II Storeroom 4084.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.031; Lak (7): 26.

Dimensions: 4.6 × 5.5cm.

Epigraphic description: script is conservative and elegant; the archaeological context makes it difficult to date this inscription much earlier than ca. 600 B.C.E.

Type: Apparently a list of PNN.

Condition: Fragmentary.

Transcription and translation:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. ?] - - - - [? | ?] - - - - [? |
| 2. ?]bn . ybrk[? | ?]son of Y ^c barek[?... |
| 3. ?] 'bdyhw . | ?]'Abdiyāhû |
| 4. ?]bn . qrh . | ?]son of Qorah |
| 5. ?]bn . ygr . | ?]son of Yagar |
-

32

Date: Unknown.

Find spot: Found in Area R, Locus 6004, in unstratified debris.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Other designations (corpora/handbook references): *AHI* 1.032.Lak (7/6): 27.

Dimensions: 6.1 × 6.1cm (fragmentary).

Material: Palaeo-Hebrew inscription incised pre-firing on the body of a storage jar just below the shoulder line.

Epigraphic description: script is clearly *not* Hebrew and is unusual at Tell ed-Duweir

Type: Ownership/purchase label?

Condition: Fragmentary.

Transcription and translation:

l'lyrb

To Elyarib

33

Date: 8th century B.C.E.?

Find spot: found in Area GW, Lachish Level III, Locus 4061.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Dimensions: 4.9 × 4.5 × 0.5cm (fragmentary).

Type: Apparently a list of names with quantities of grain.

Condition: Badly preserved, reading is uncertain.

Transcription and translation:

1. 'yr ? / 'Ir ? 1
2. yrḥm + / Y^croḥam *homer/kor* 1
3. p'lt + / P^eulat *homer/kor* 1
4. šlm + / Shillem *homer/kor* 1

34

Date: Unknown.

Find spot: Found in Area GW, Lachish Level IV, Locus 4227; possibly a stray find from a later level.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Dimensions: 4.9 × 4.9 × 0.9cm.

Type: Apparently a list of PNN with numerals.

Transcription and translation:

1. 'šn' // . 'Ushna 2
2. [š]bn' // [She]bna 2

35

Date: Unknown.

Find spot: Found in Area GW, in an unstratified context.

Acquisition: Israel Antiquities Authority.

Dimensions: 7.4 × 5 × 0.7cm

Type: Apparently a list of PNN.

Condition: Lower right part has been damaged.

Transcription and translation:

1. 'zryhw . 'Azaryāhû
2. gzl' . Gazlâ
3. [g/d/']mlyh[w.] [G/D/'e]malyāh[û]

FIGURES

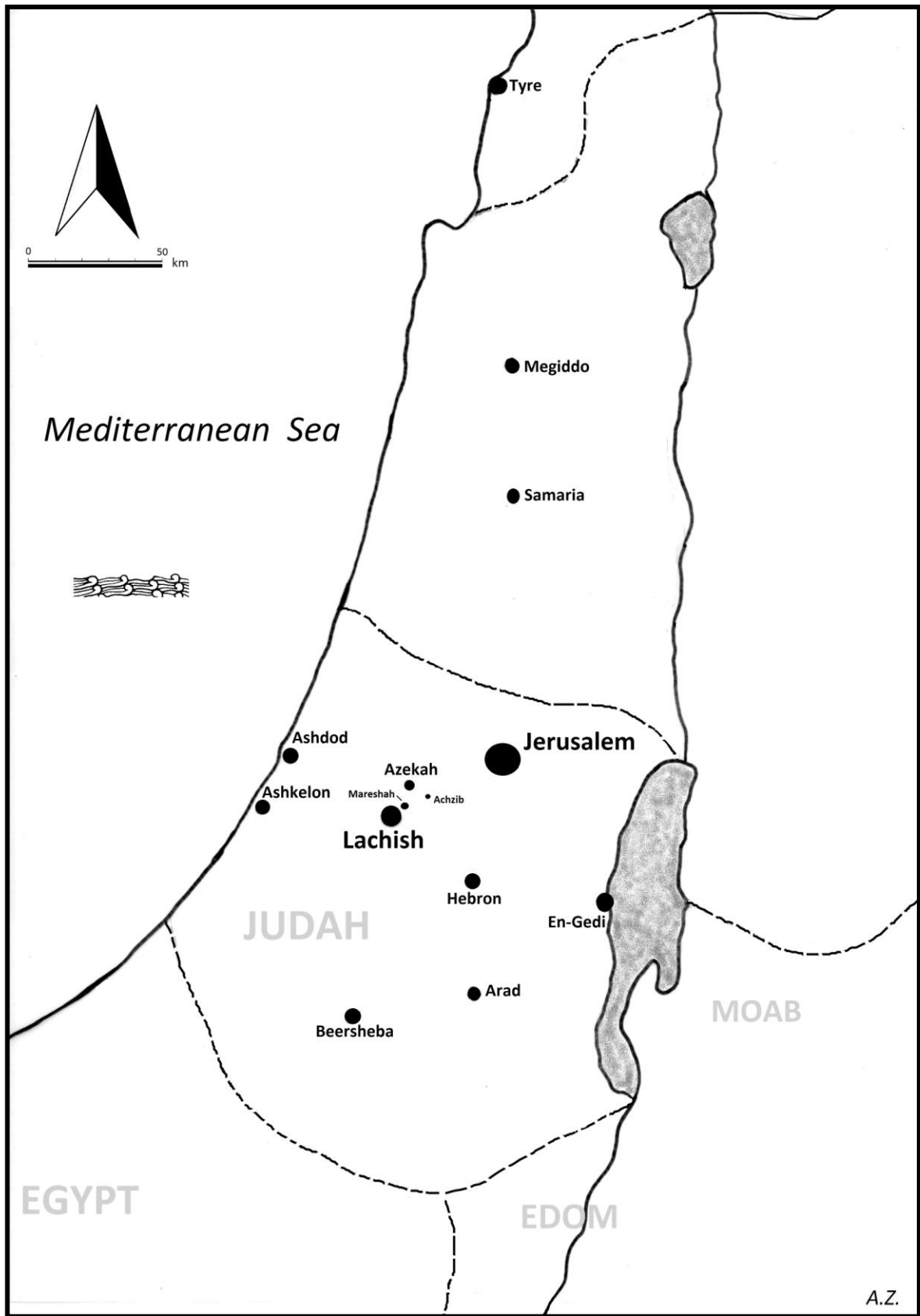


Fig. 1 Map of late Iron Age Judah showing the location of Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir)
 (Map: A. Zammit).

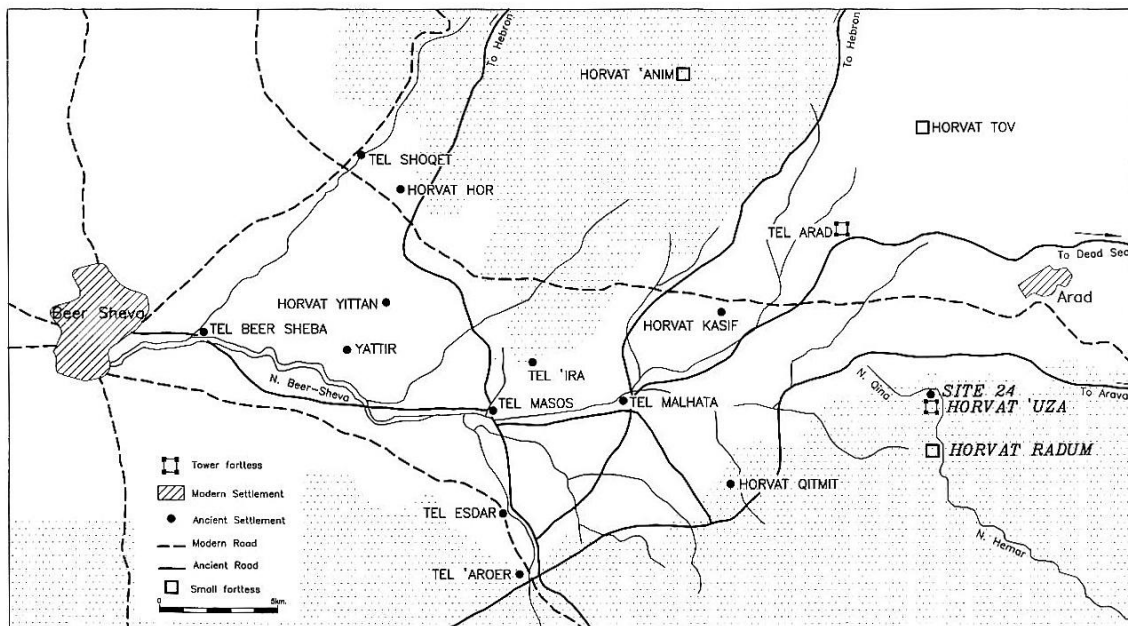
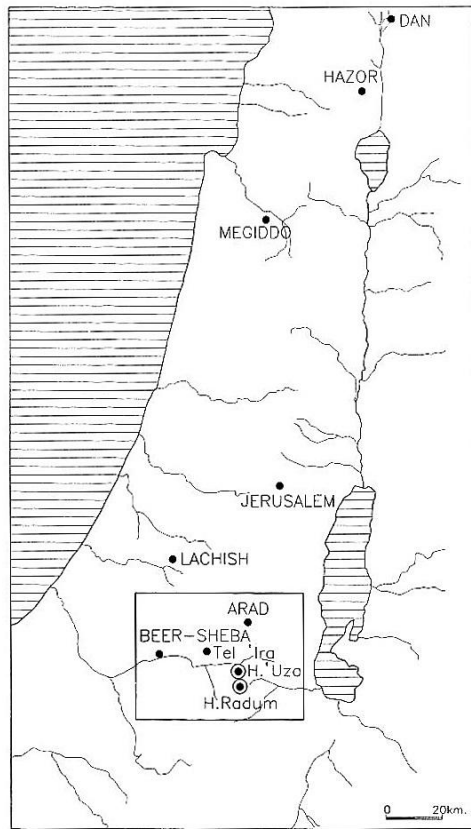


Fig. 2 Map and enlargement of some major excavated Iron Age sites in the Arad-Beersheba Valley (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 2007a: 2, fig. 1.1).



Fig. 3 Tell ed-Duweir/Tel Lachish:
(top) view north-east, photographed in 1933 (*Renewed Excavations*, I: 23, fig. 2.1); (bottom)
aerial view, photographed in 1981, view north-east (*Renewed Excavations*, I: 24, fig. 2.2).

<i>Period</i>	<i>Levels</i>	<i>Areas D, P, S Levels</i>	<i>Starkey's Levels</i>	<i>Observations</i>
Pottery Neolithic				Small settlement on mound or in vicinity
Chalcolithic				Small Ghassulian settlement on mound
Early Bronze IA				North-West Settlement
Early Bronze IB				Small settlement on mound
Early Bronze II				Small settlement on mound
Early Bronze III		Remains in Area D		Extensive, probably fortified, settlement on mound
	<i>ca.</i> 2200			Destruction or desertion of settlement
Intermediate Bronze				North-West Settlement; Cemetery 2000
Middle Bronze I		Area D cult-place; P-6		Settlement on mound; Pottery of Aphek Phase 3/Palace II
Late Middle Bronze I		?		Graves in Cemetery 9000
Middle Bronze II		P-5; P-4	VIII	Fortified city: ramparts, palace, tombs
	<i>ca.</i> 1550			Destruction by fire
Middle Bronze II		P-3		Squatters in palace
Late Bronze IA		Area P: Interim phase		Meagre remains in Area P & Fosse Temple area
Late Bronze IB		?		Fosse Temple I
Late Bronze II		P-2; S-3; S-2; S-1*		Fosse Temple II
Late Bronze IIIA	VII	P-1; VII	VII	Fosse Temple III
	<i>ca.</i> 1200			Destruction by fire
Late Bronze IIIB	VI		VI	Prosperous Canaanite city; Egyptian hegemony
	<i>ca.</i> 1130			Destruction by fire
				Occupation gap during the Iron I
Iron IIA	V		V	Judean kingdom period; unfortified settlement
	IV	Area S: IVd-IVa	IV	Central Judean fortified city
Iron IIB	III	III	III	Rebuilt central Judean fortified city
	701			Destruction by Sennacherib
				Occupation gap
Iron IIC	II	II	II	Judean fortified settlement; 'Lachish letters'
	588/6			Destruction by Nebuchadnezzar
				Occupation gap
Persian	I (Phase 1)			Settlement and pits
	I (Phase 2)	I	I	Persian fortified centre
Hellenistic	I (Phase 3)			Deterioration of settlement
	<i>ca.</i> 150			Desertion of site

* Levels P-2 in Area P and Levels S-3, S-2 and S-1 in Area S date to the end of the Late Bronze II/Fosse Temple II period and to the beginning of the Late Bronze IIIA/Fosse Temple III period. Level P-1, on the contrary, dates to the Late Bronze IIIA only.

Fig. 4 The stratigraphy of Tel Lachish (all dates B.C.E.)
(*Renewed Excavations*, I: 44, table 2.1).

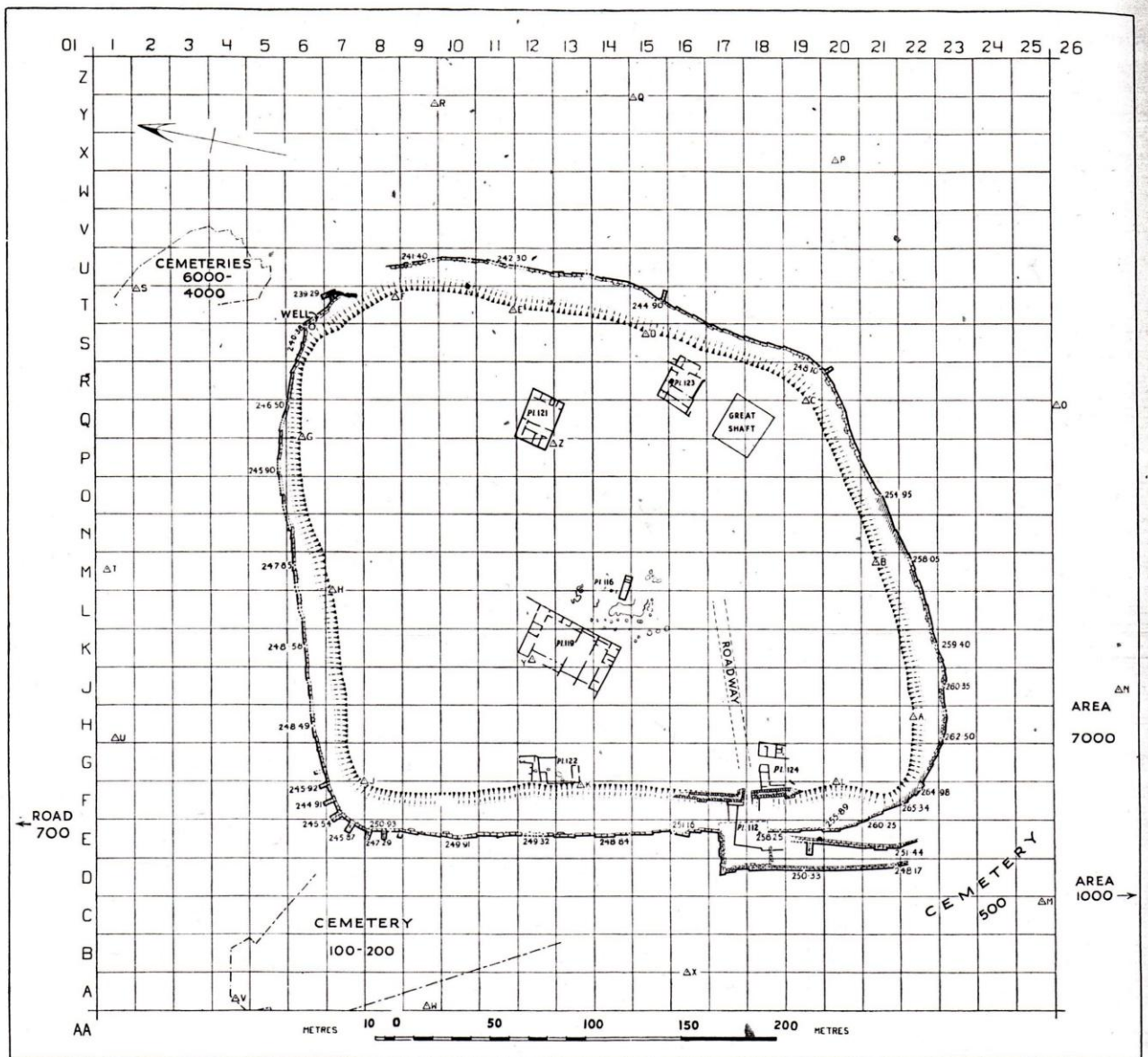


Fig. 5 Tell ed-Duweir: reference grid, triangulation points, fortifications, buildings and cemeteries (*Lachish III*, pl. 108).

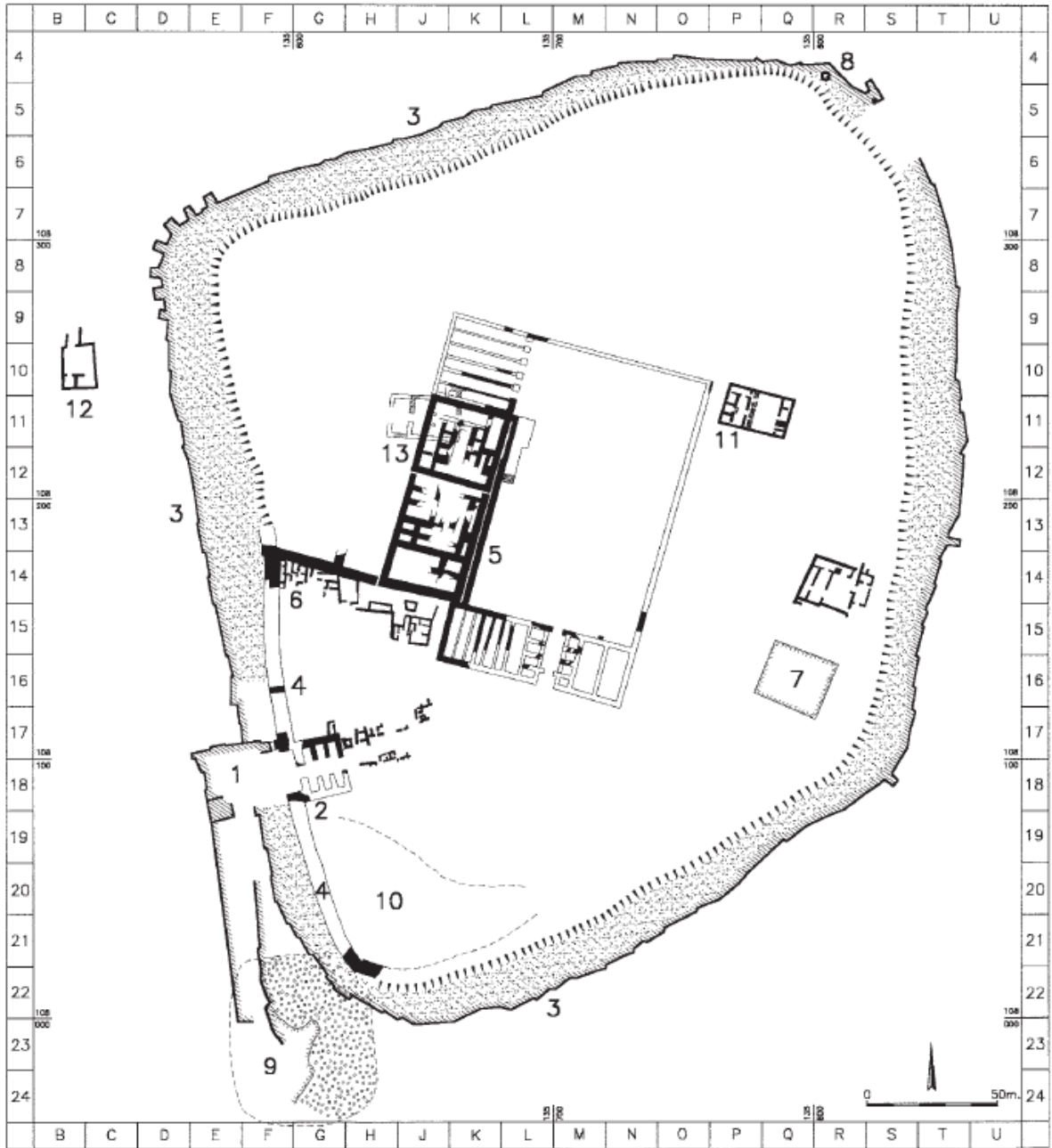


Fig. 2.9: Plan of Tel Lachish showing the most important structures from the various periods: (1) outer gate; (2) Level IV-III inner gate; (3) Outer Revetment Wall; (4) Main City Wall; (5) Judean Palace-Fort complex; (6) Area S; (7) the Great Shaft; (8) the well; (9) the siege ramp; (10) the counter-ramp; (11) the Solar Shrine; (12) the Fosse Temple; (13) the acropolis temple.

Fig. 6 Plan of Tel Lachish showing the most important structures from the various periods (*Renewed Excavations*, I: 34, fig. 2.9).

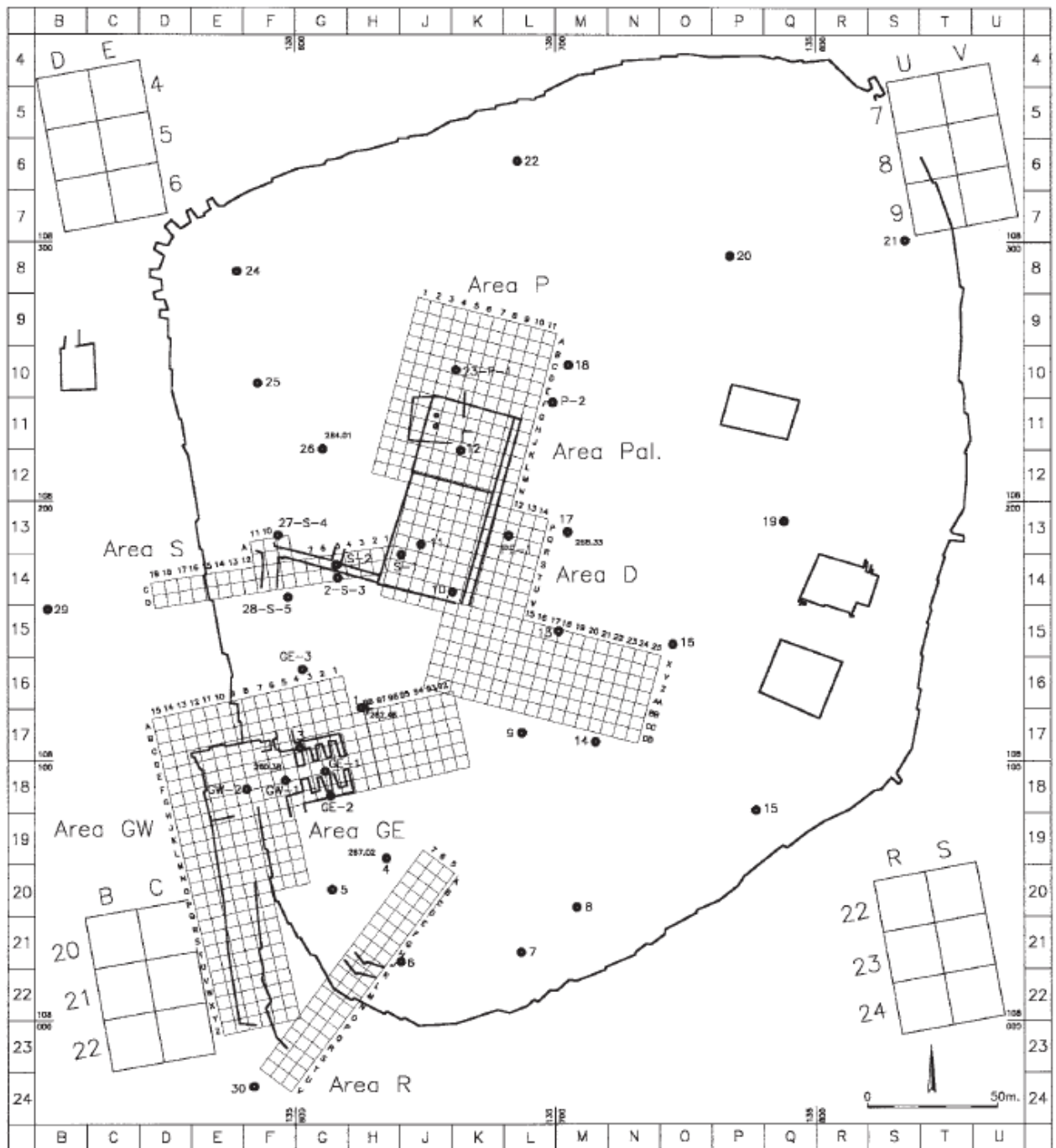


Fig. 2.10: Plan showing the general grid of the renewed excavations, oriented to magnetic north; the grid of the British expedition, oriented a few degrees off of north; the fixed points on the surface of the site; and the four local grids covering (1) Areas GE and GW; (2) Area S; (3) Area R; (4) Areas D, P, and Pal.

Fig. 7 Plan of Tel Lachish showing the general grid of the renewed excavations in the following areas: Areas GE and GW; Area S; Area R; Areas D, P, and Pal. (Renewed Excavations, I: 35, fig. 2.10).

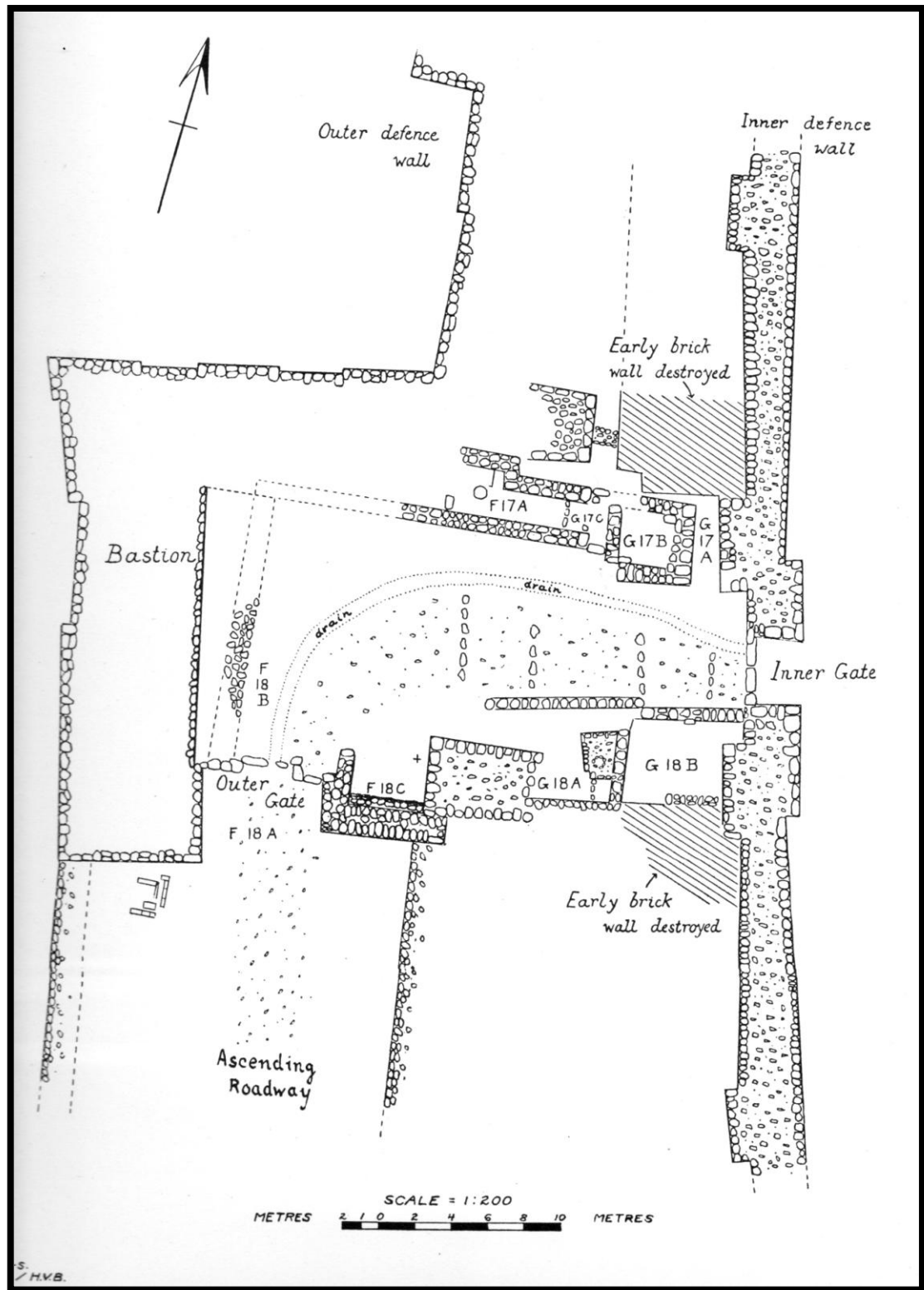


Fig. 8 Plan of bastion and gateways (note the old, erroneous designations, e.g. F 18 A, F 18 B, and F 18 C) (*Lachish I: 223*).

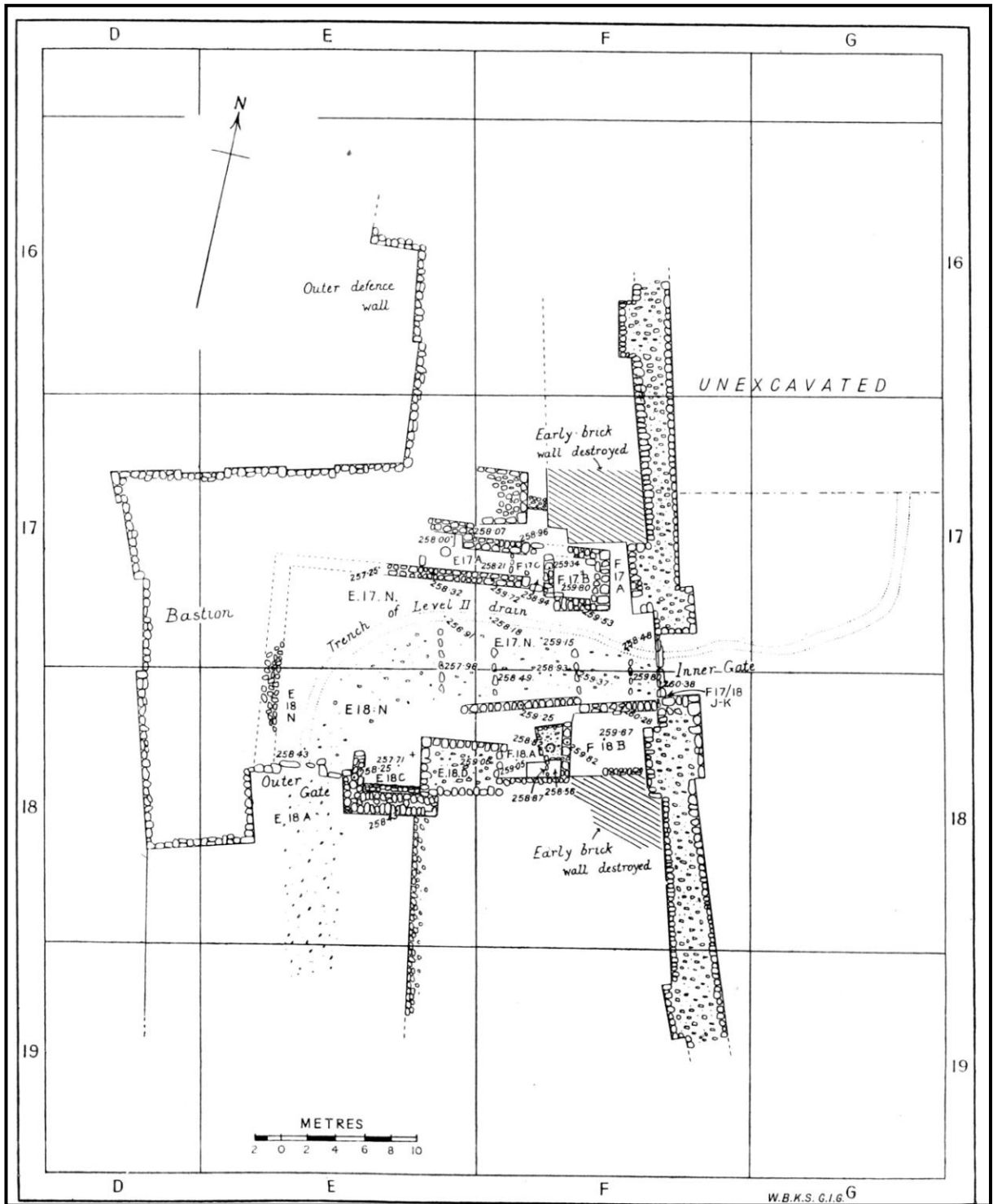


Fig. 9 Bastion and gateways, Level II (note the corrected designations, e.g. E 18 A, E 18 N, and E 18 C) (*Lachish III*, pl. 111).

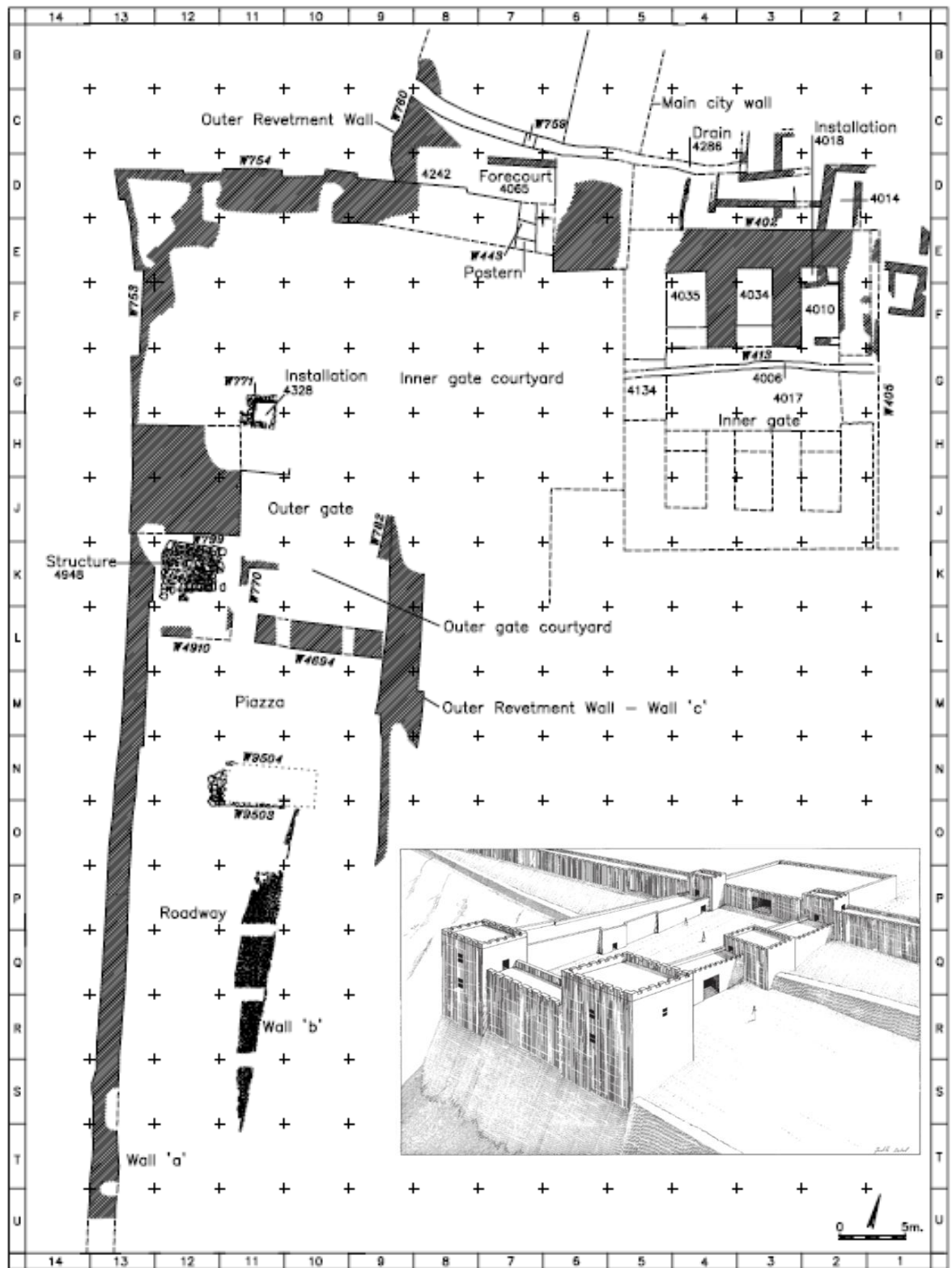


Fig. 10 The Level III gate complex (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 515, fig. 10.5);
 (inset) suggested reconstruction of the Level III gate complex
 (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 516, fig. 10.6).

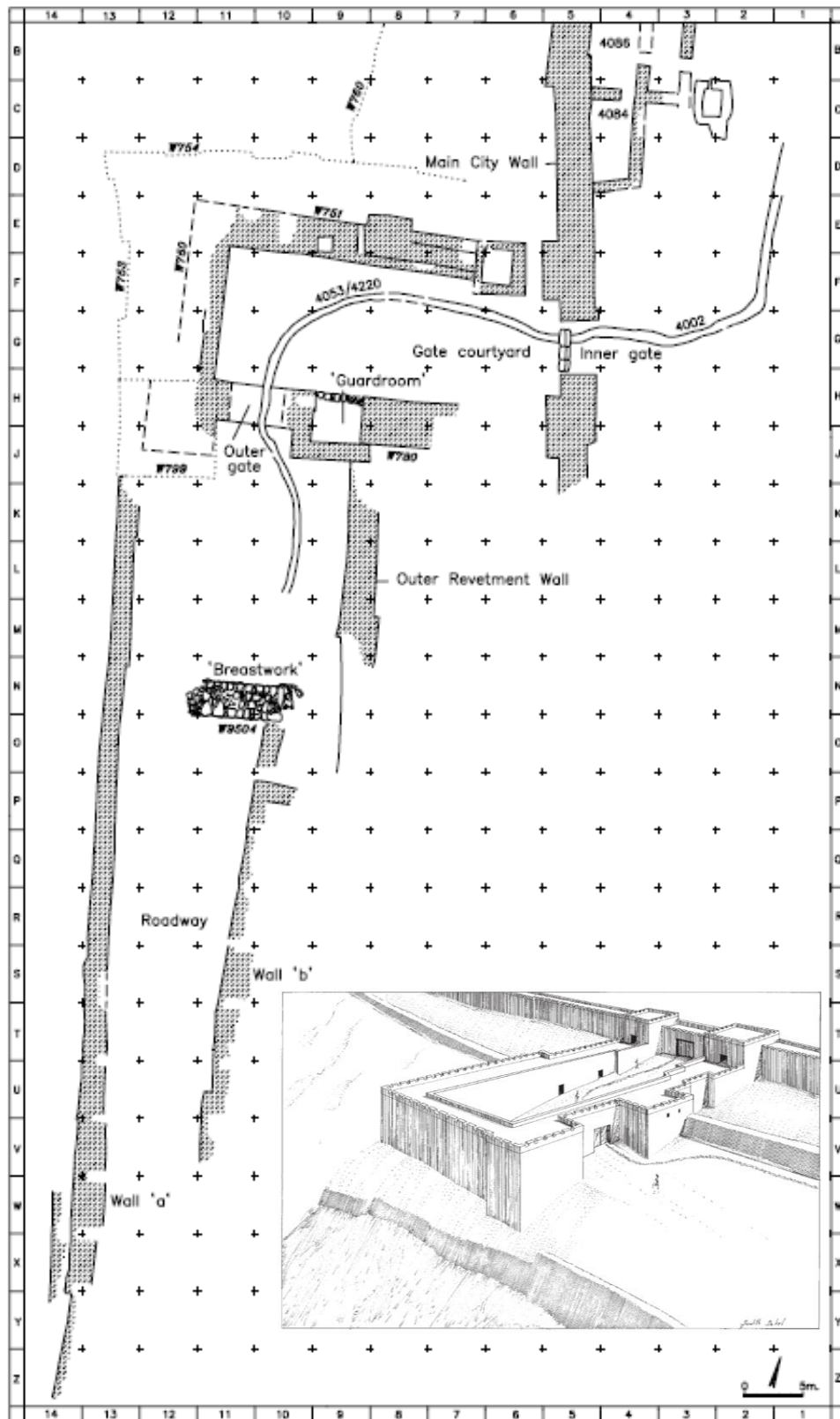


Fig. 11 The Level II gate complex (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 520, fig. 10.8);
 (inset) suggested reconstruction of the Level II gate complex
 (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 521, fig. 10.9).



Fig. 12 The outer gate and inner gate courtyard of Level II following Ussishkin's excavations (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 590, fig. 11.82).



Fig. 13 (top) The Level II “guardroom” (Locus [E.18:C]), as uncovered by the British, view south-east (reproduced in *Renewed Excavations*, II: 593, fig. 11.86, after *Lachish III*, pl. 14:4); (bottom left) the Level II stone-paved gate courtyard, as uncovered by Ussishkin, with the drain on the left and the Main City Wall and inner city-gate in the background, view east (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 591, fig. 11.83); (bottom right) Locus 4346, showing the stones of Wall 780 beneath the floor of the “guardroom” (Locus [E.18: C]), and the Level III perforated stone embedded in the wall, view south (*Renewed Excavations*, II: 593, fig. 11.87).



(a) James Leslie Starkey in the “guardroom” pointing at the findspot of the “Lachish Letters”, photograph taken by Rev. Charles Bernard Mortlock in 1935 (PEF-P-Portrait-Starkey) (Copyright: Palestine Exploration Fund).



(b) The author standing in the reconstructed “guardroom” at Lachish and pointing at the findspot of the “Lachish Letters”, view south (Photo: A. Zammit).

Fig. 14



Fig. 15 Archive photographs of the inner gate of 588 B.C.E. from outside (view east, from different angles), showing the cobbled courtyard (top) and the drain passing from beneath the threshold (bottom) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 6996950-054800_001_000125).

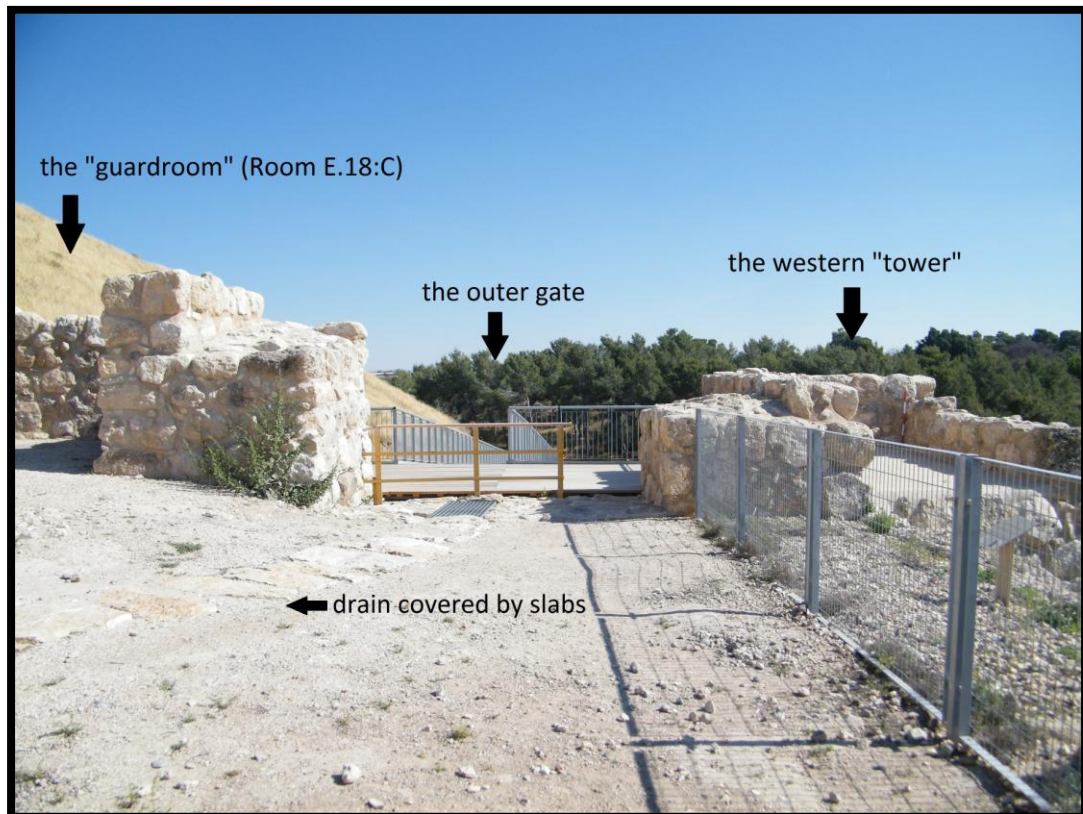


Fig. 16 (top) The reconstructed gateway courtyard covered by cobbles and gravel, view east-south-east; (bottom) the reconstructed outer gate flanked by the “guardroom” on the east and the other “tower” on the west, view south (Photos: A. Zammit).



Fig. 17 (top) Black-painted cement lines at the bottom of the reconstructed western wall of the “guardroom” and beside the drain, view east; (bottom) a black-painted cement line along the reconstructed Outer Revetment Wall, view south-east (Photos: A. Zammit).

This image cannot be made
freely available via ORA
due to copyright restrictions.

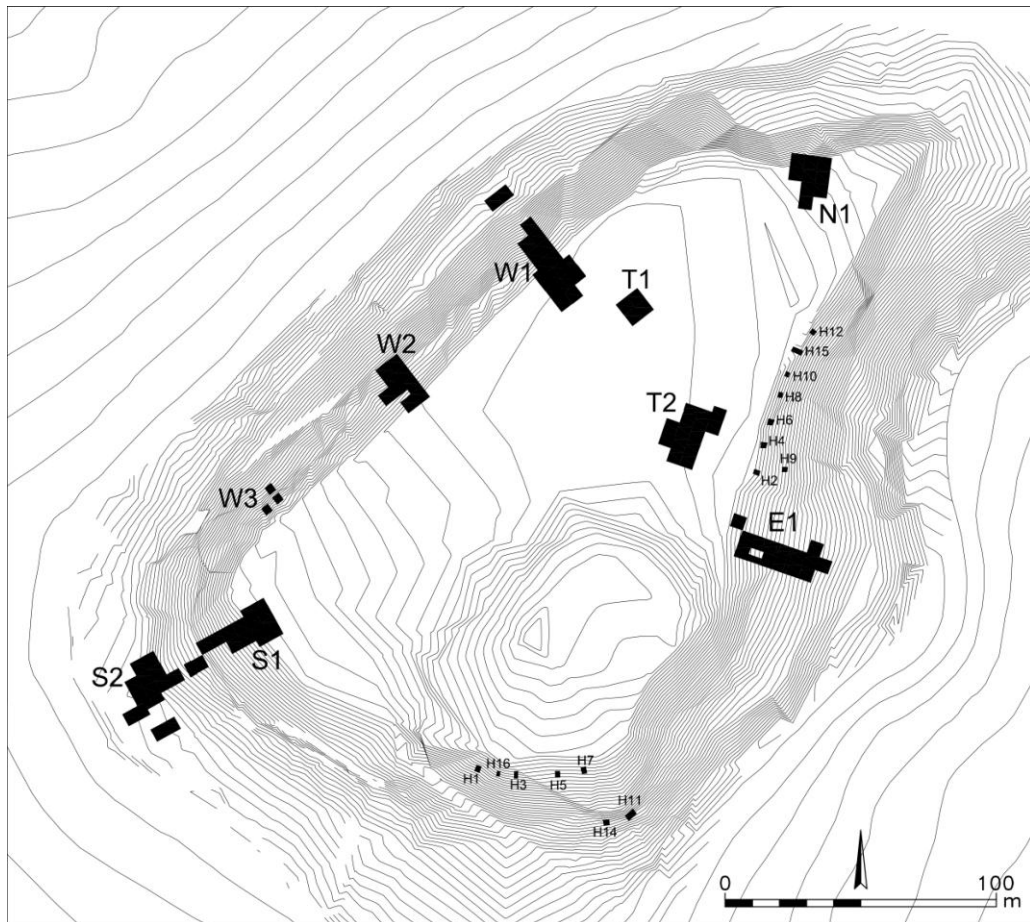


Fig. 18 Aerial view of Tel Azekah (1945 [top left]; 2010 [top right]);
(bottom) plan of the renewed excavations at Tel Azekah until 2014.
All images courtesy of the Lautenschläger Azekah Expedition.

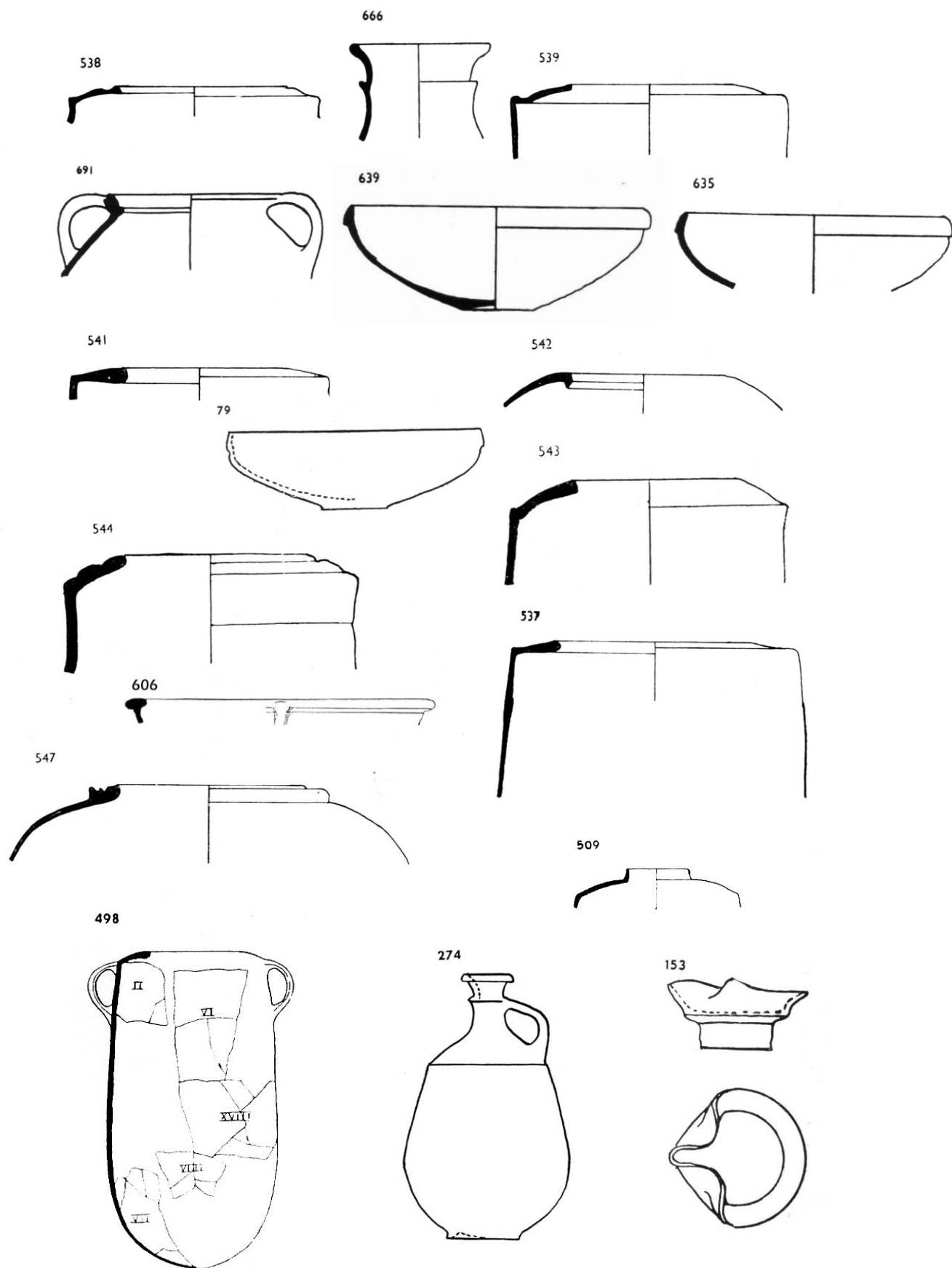
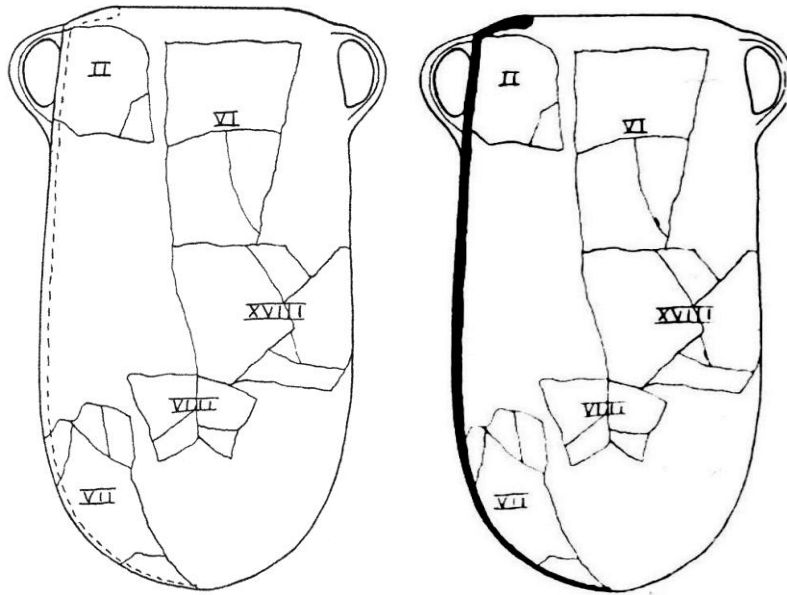
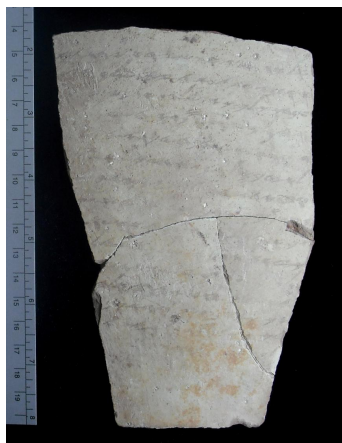
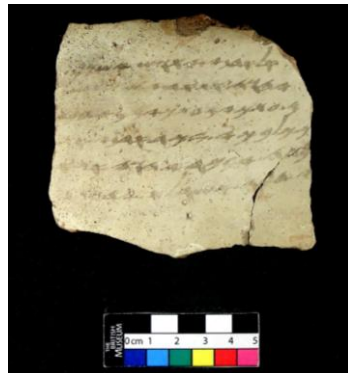


Fig. 19 The Iron Age pottery found in the “guardroom” (Room E.18:C) (not to scale, and not to scale to one another) (after *Lachish III*, pls. 80, 83, 87, 96, 97, 99, 101, 103, 104).



(a) Profile of Tufnell's Type 498 holemouth storage jar, showing the five ostraca pertaining to this vessel (not to scale) (*Lachish I*: 220 [left]; *Lachish III*, pl. 96.498 [right]).



(b) The five ostraca pertaining to the Type 498 vessel: 2 and 18 [upper row]; 6, 8, and 7 [lower row]) (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum and the Israel Antiquities Authority).

Fig. 20

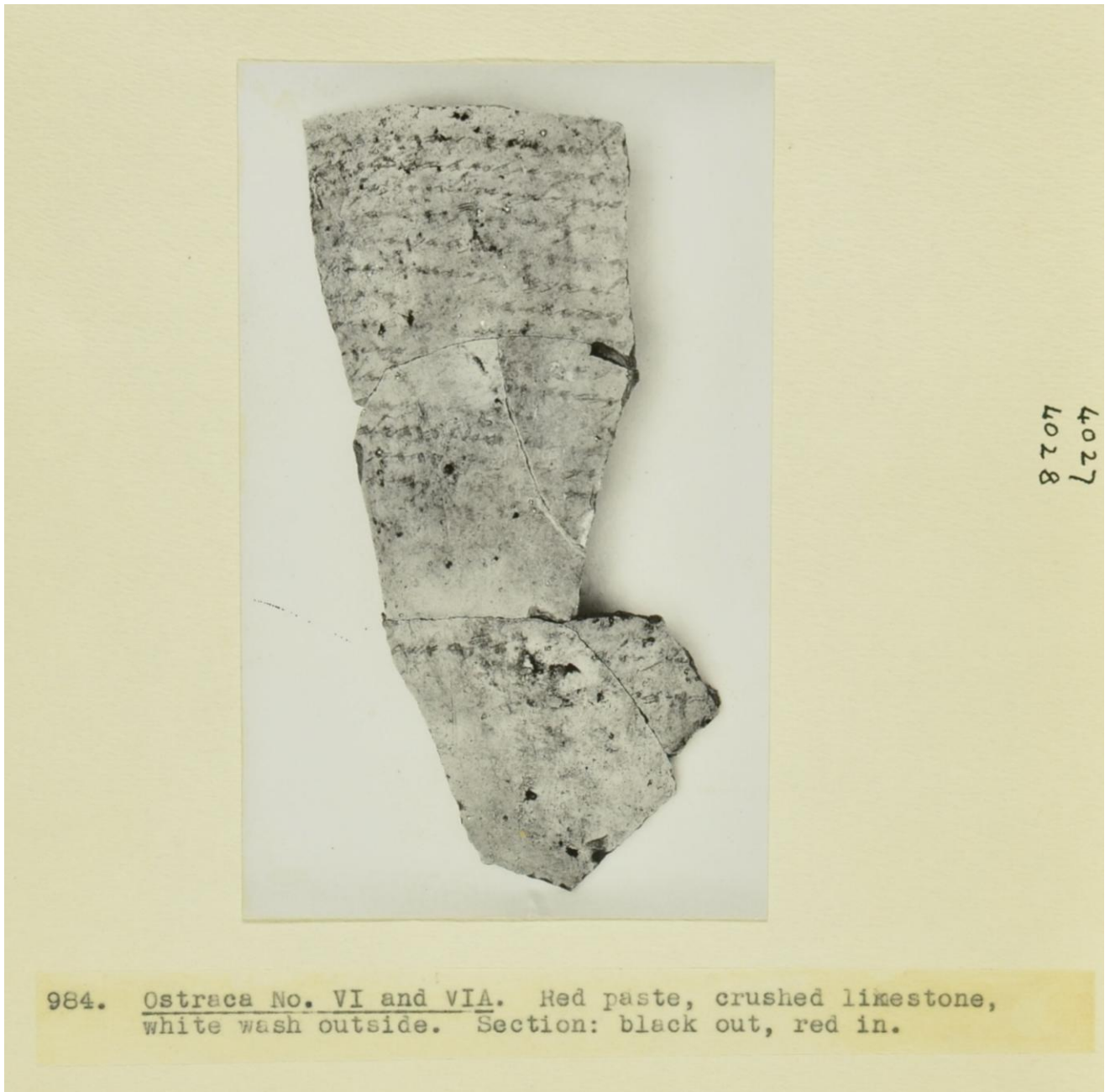


Fig. 21 Archive photograph of Lachish 6 (VI) joining parts of Lachish 18 (formerly VIA), as part of the same vessel – Tufnell’s Type 498 holemouth storage jar (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 1442506-054900_001_000453).

		Lachish																				
	Samaria	Yavneh Yam	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	16	17	18	19	20	21
כ	ככ	ככ	ככ	כככ	ככ	ככ	ככ	ככ		ככ	ככ		כ	ככ	ככ	כ	ככ	כ	כ			כ
ב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	בב	ב			בב			ב	ב	בב	בב	בב	
ג	גג	גג	גג		גג		ג															
ד	דד	דד		דד	דד	דד	דד	דד		דד	דד			דד		ד		דד	ד			ד
ה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	הה	ה		ה	הה	הה	ה	הה		הה			ה
ו	וו	וו	וו	וו	וו	וו	וו	וו	ו	ו	וו	ו	ו	וו	וו		וו					ו
ז	זז	זז	זז	ז	זז	ז	זז	זז	ז	ז				זז					ז	ז	ז	ז
ח	חח	חח	חח		חח	חח	ח	חח		ח	חח	ח		חח			חח		חח	ח	ח	ח
ט			טט		טט	ט	ט	טט		ט									טט	ט	ט	ט
י	י	י	י	י	י	י	י	י	י	י	י		י	י		י	י	י	י		י	י
כ	כ	כ		כ	כ	כ	כ	כ		כ	כ		כ	כ	כ							כ
ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל	ל
מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ	מ		מ				מ			מ		מ
נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ		נ	נ			נ	נ	נ	נ	נ	נ
ס	ס	ס			ס	ס	ס	ס					ס	ס					ס			ס
ע	ע	ע		ע	ע	ע	ע	ע		ע	ע			ע	ע		ע	ע	ע	ע	ע	ע
פ	פ	פ			פ	פ	פ	פ						פ	פ				פ	פ		פ
צ	צ	צ	צ		צ		צ						צ									צ
ק	ק	ק			ק	ק	ק	ק						ק	ק					ק		ק
ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר		ר	ר			ר	ר		ר	ר	ר	ר	ר	ר
ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש	ש				ש				ש	ש	ש	ש
ת	ת	ת	ת	ת	ת	ת	ת	ת		ת	ת			ת	ת	ת					ת	ת

Fig. 22 Comparative palaeographic chart for the 21 Lachish ostraca (not to scale) (Courtesy of Kris J. Udd).

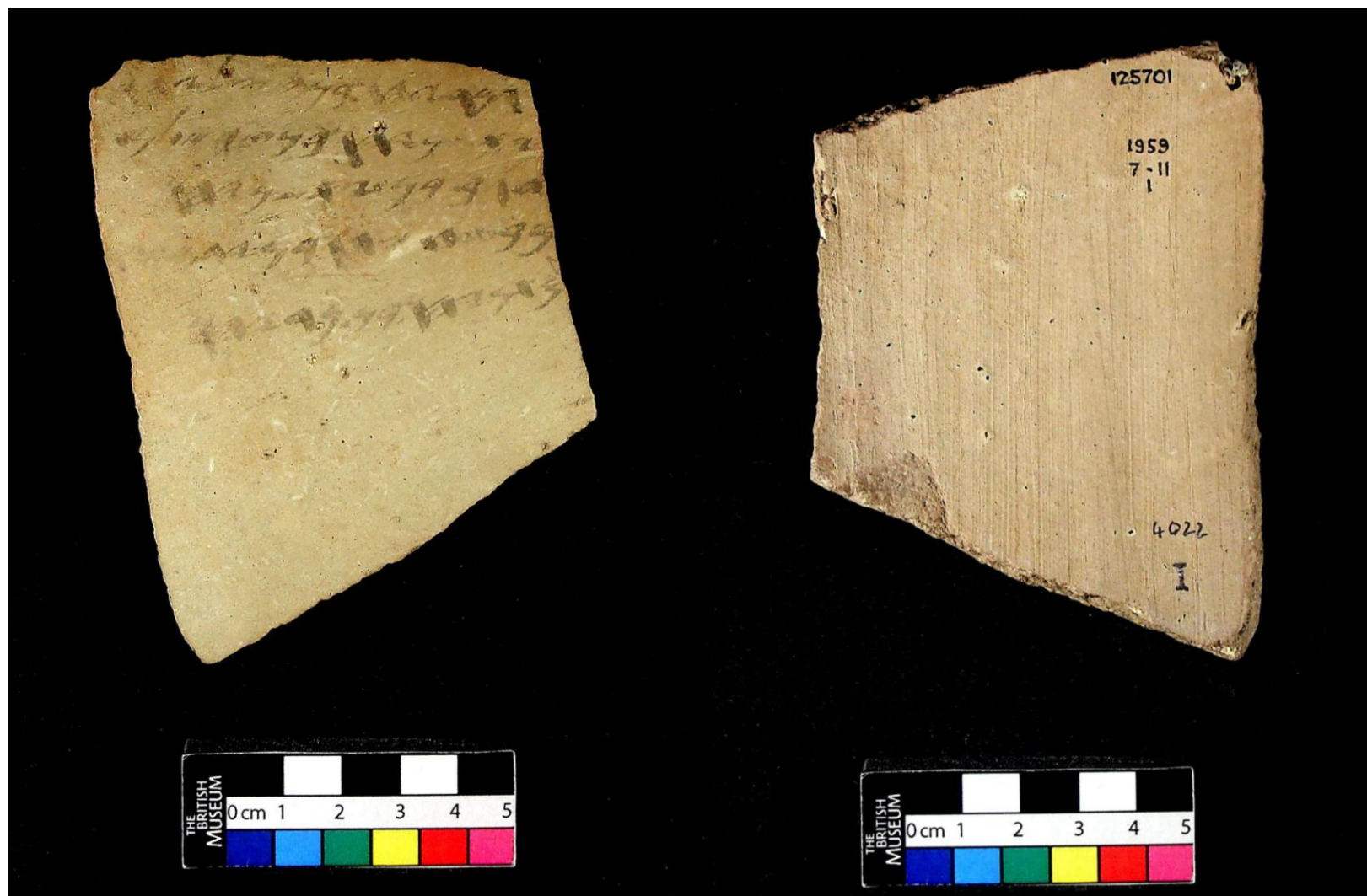
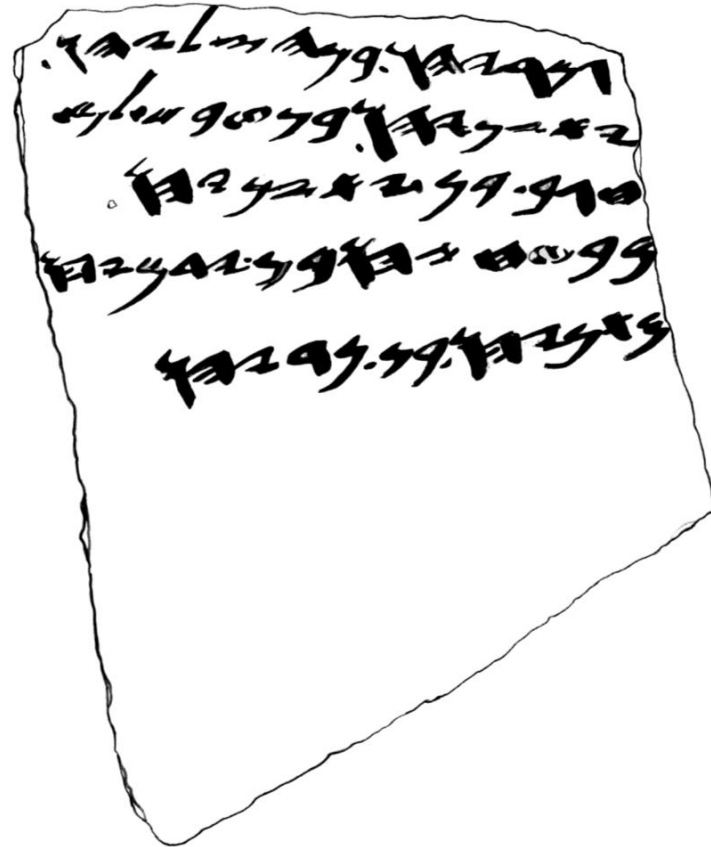
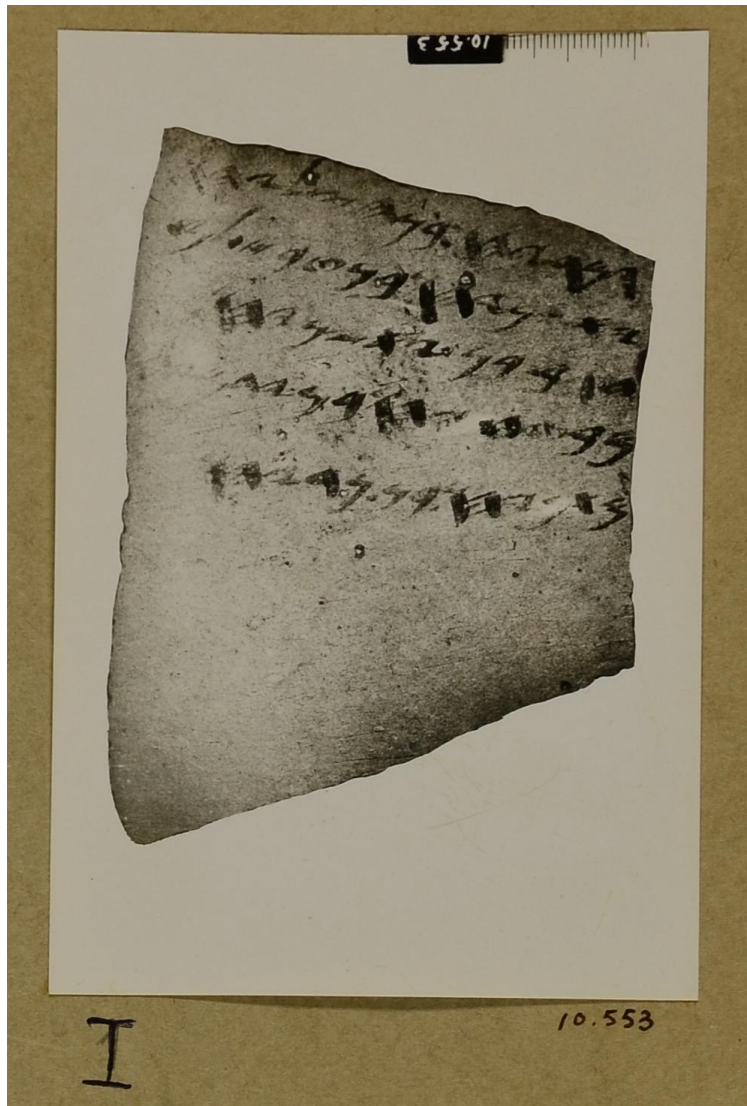


Fig. 23 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 1
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 24 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 1 (obverse) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5270974-040290_001_000004); (right) Lachish 1 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).

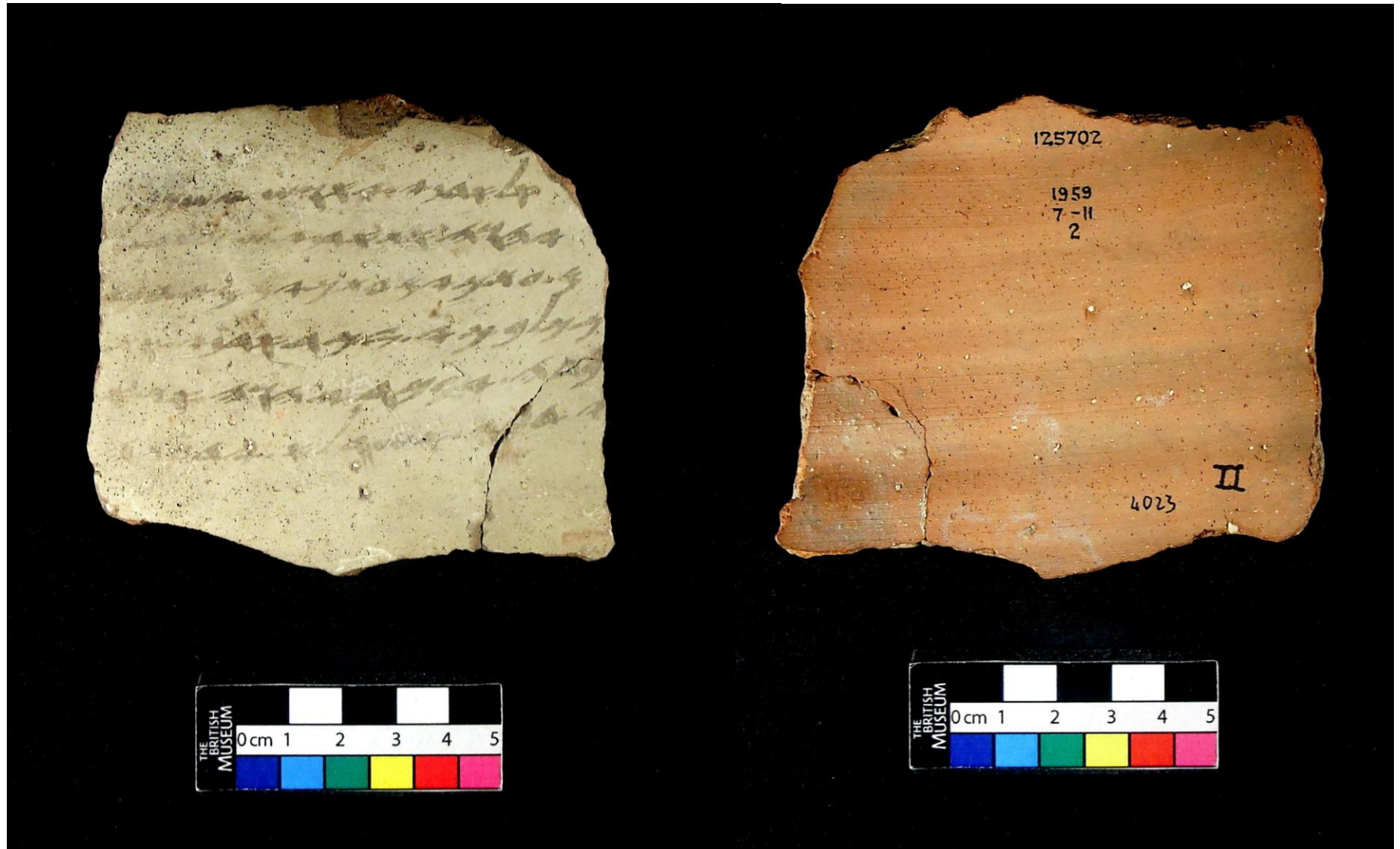
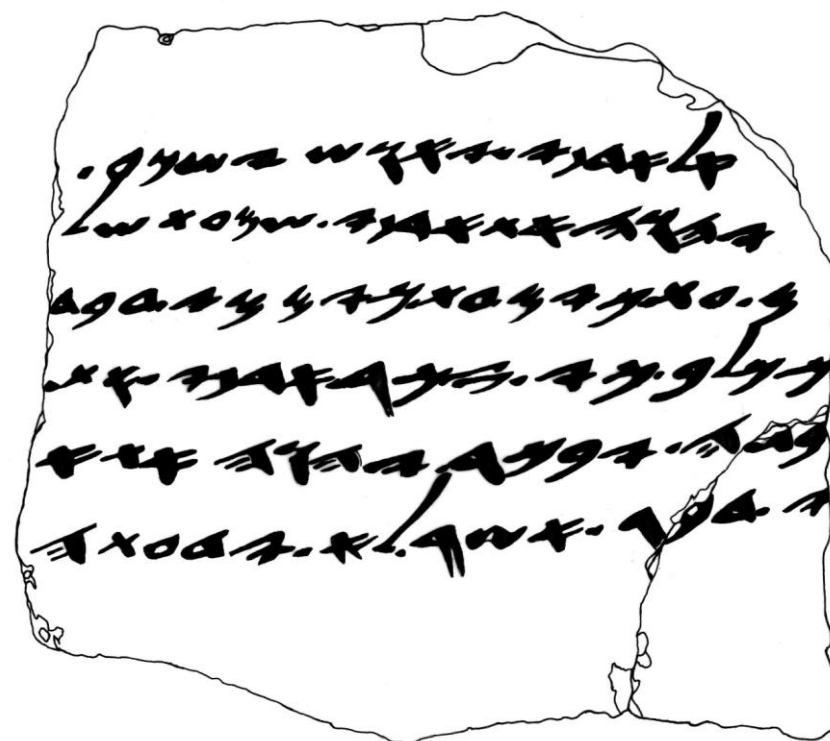
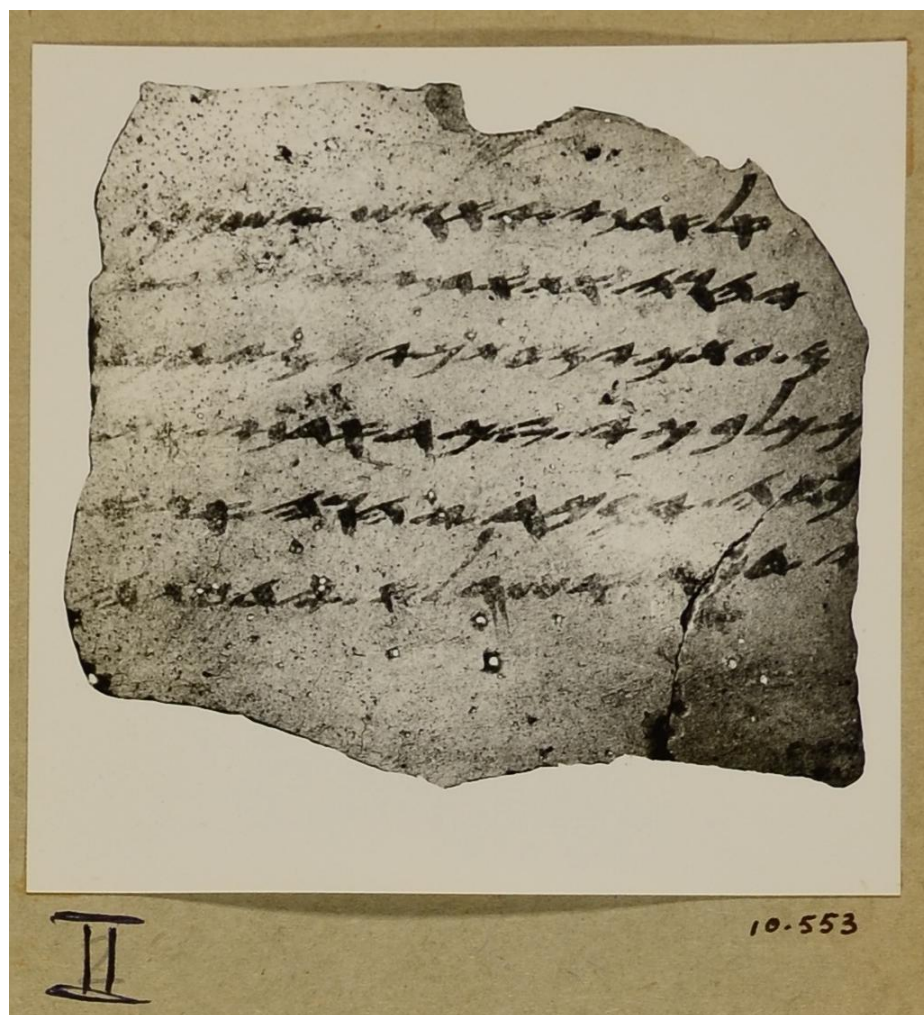


Fig. 25 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 2 (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 26 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 2 (obverse) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5162222-040290_001_000005); (right) Lachish 2 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).

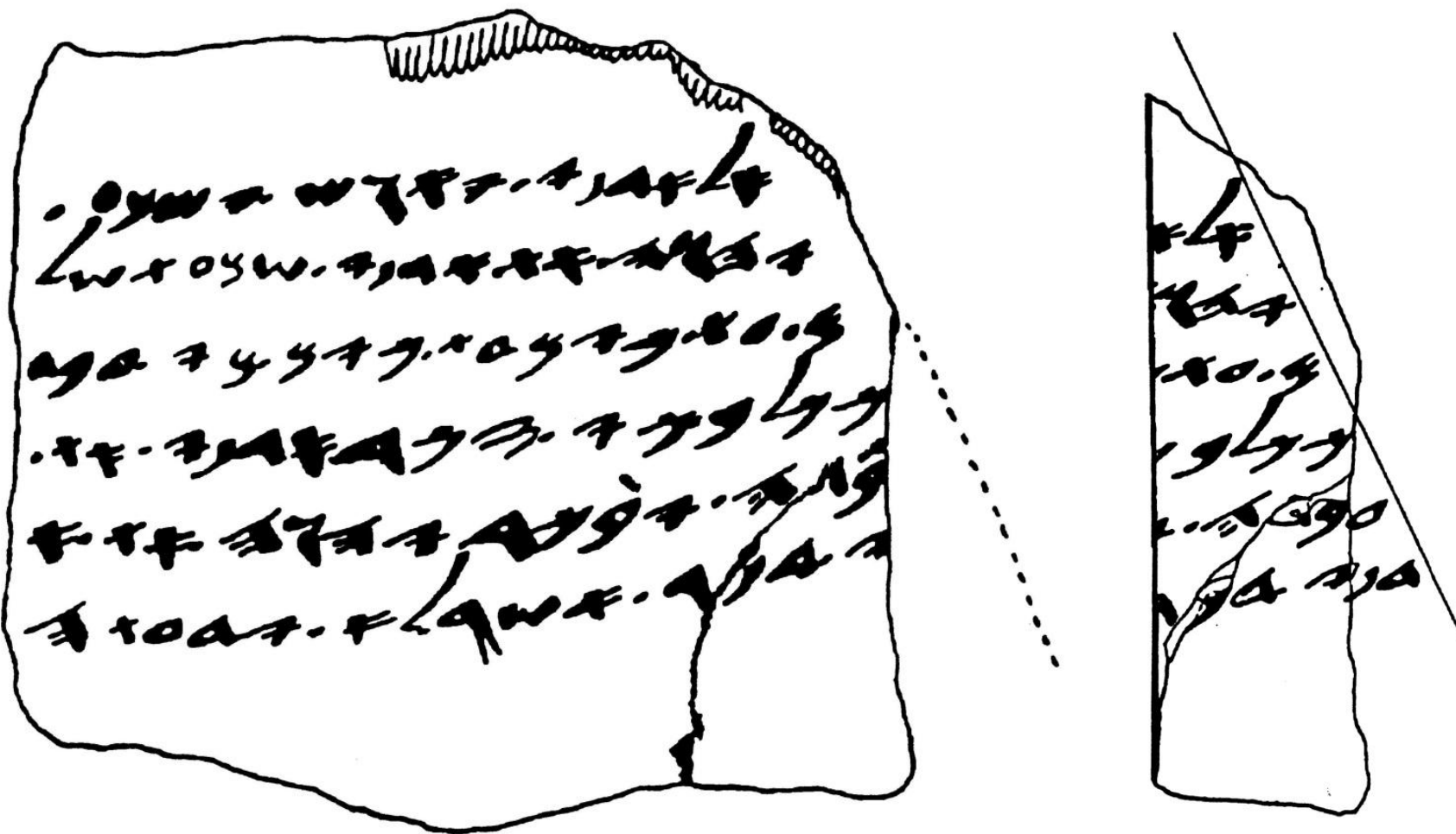


Fig. 27 (left) The proposed outline of the missing piece of Lachish 2 (not to scale) (Michaud 1957, fig. 1); (right) the proposed right-hand margin and reconstructed letters of the missing piece of Lachish 2 (not to scale) (*HAE*, III, pl. XLIX.3b).

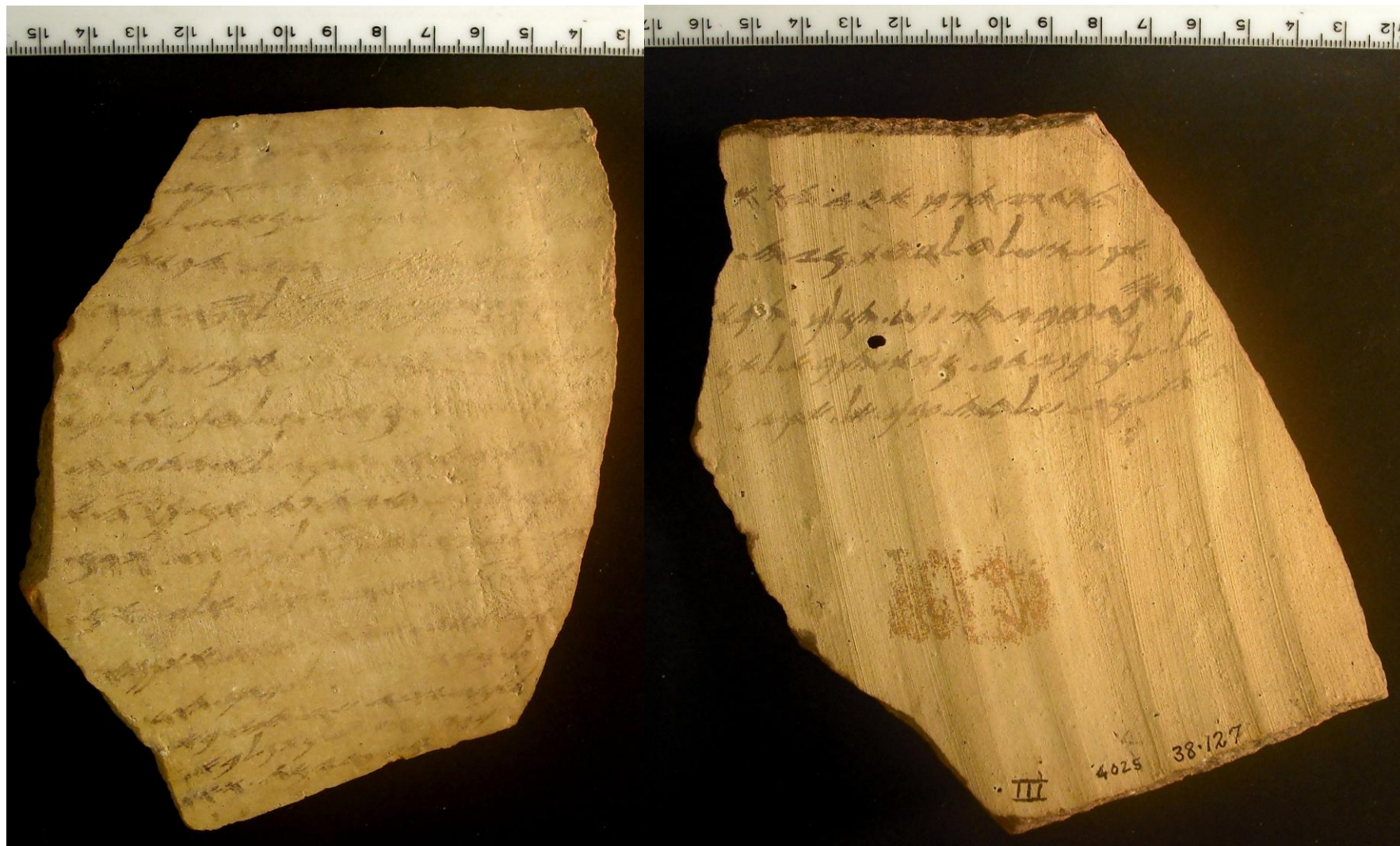


Fig. 28 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 3
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem).

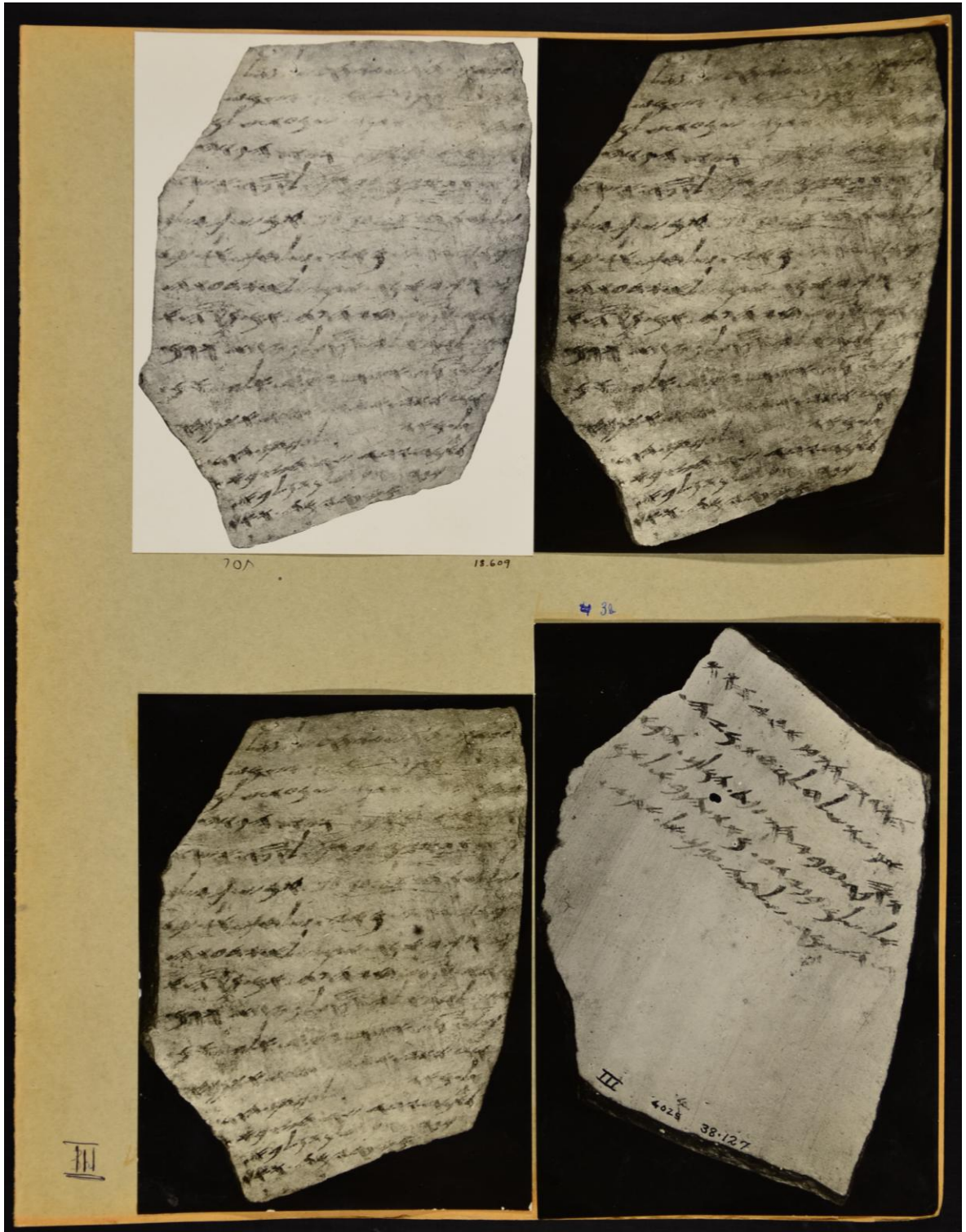


Fig. 29 Archive photographs of the obverse (top and bottom left) and reverse (bottom right) of Lachish 3 (not to scale)

(Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 5768107-040290_001_000006).

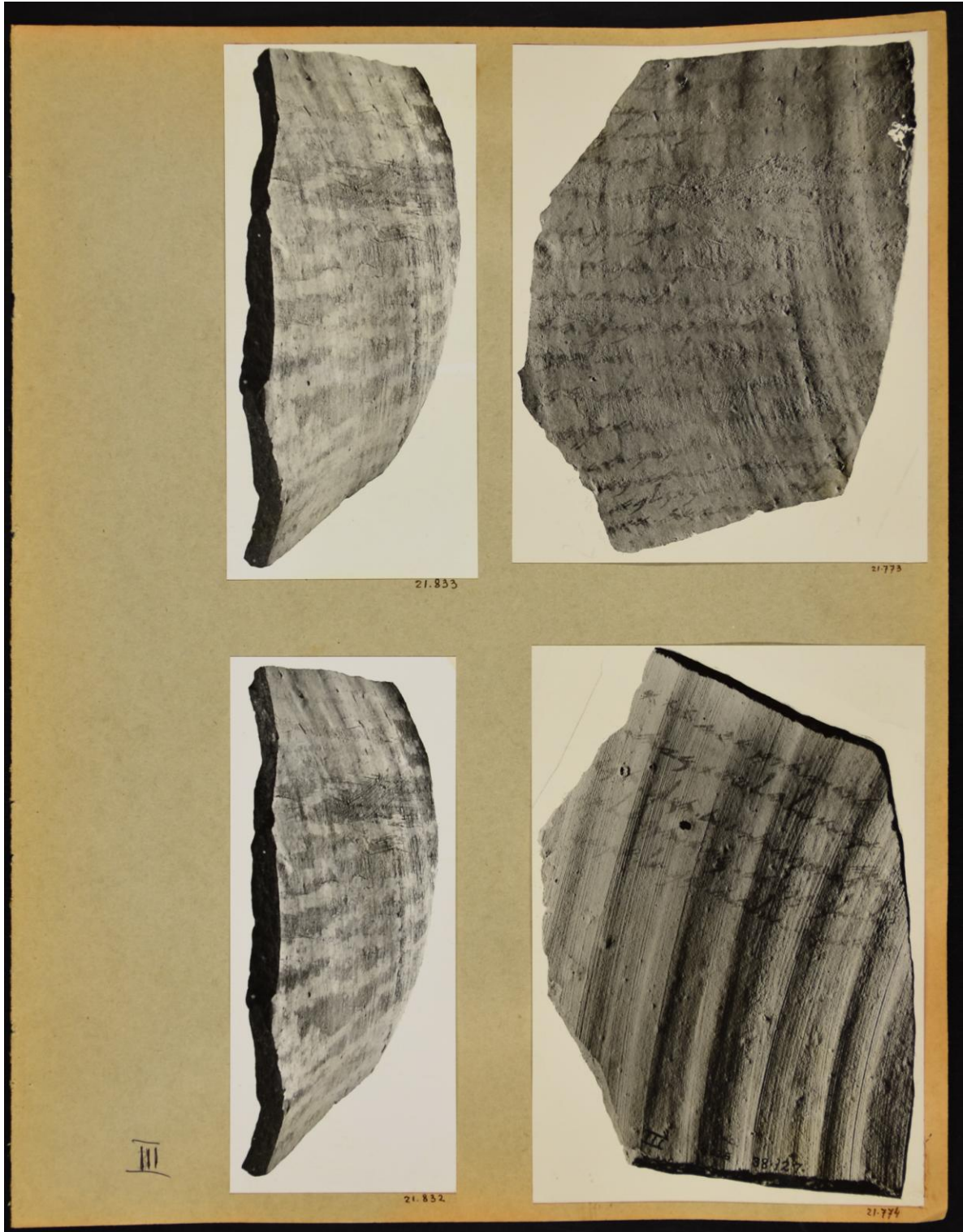


Fig. 30 Archive photographs of the side view/profile (top and bottom left), obverse (top right), and reverse (bottom right) of Lachish 3 (not to scale)
(Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 5773255-040290_001_000007).

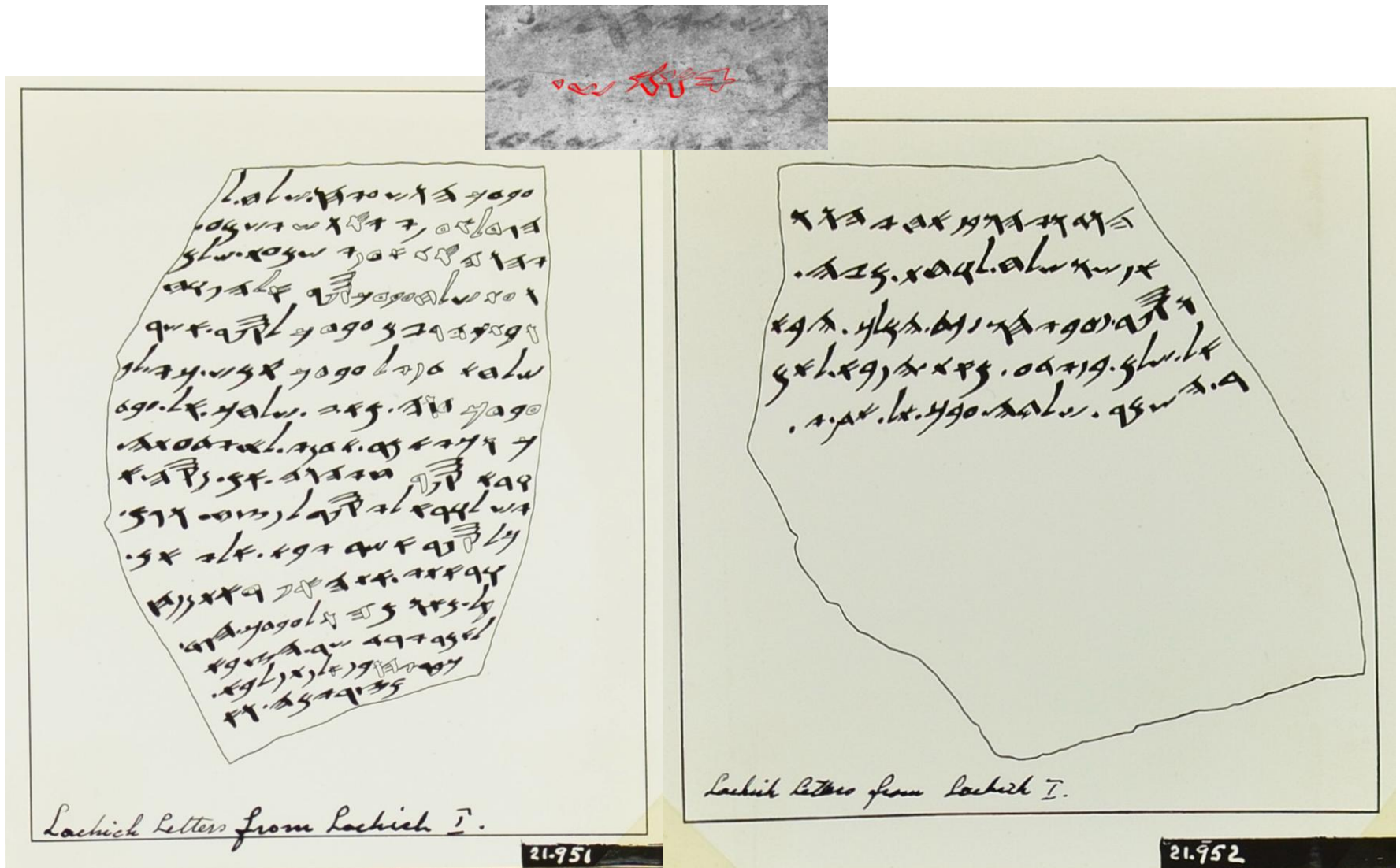


Fig. 31 (top) Detail of line 2 of Lachish 3 (obverse), where the faded name *y'wš* (Yā'ûš) is traced (detail of image 5768107-040290_001_000006); (bottom) Harding's autographs of Lachish 3 (not to scale) (obverse [left], from image 6613563-054800_001_000232; reverse [right], from image 6640967-054800_001_000234). All images courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

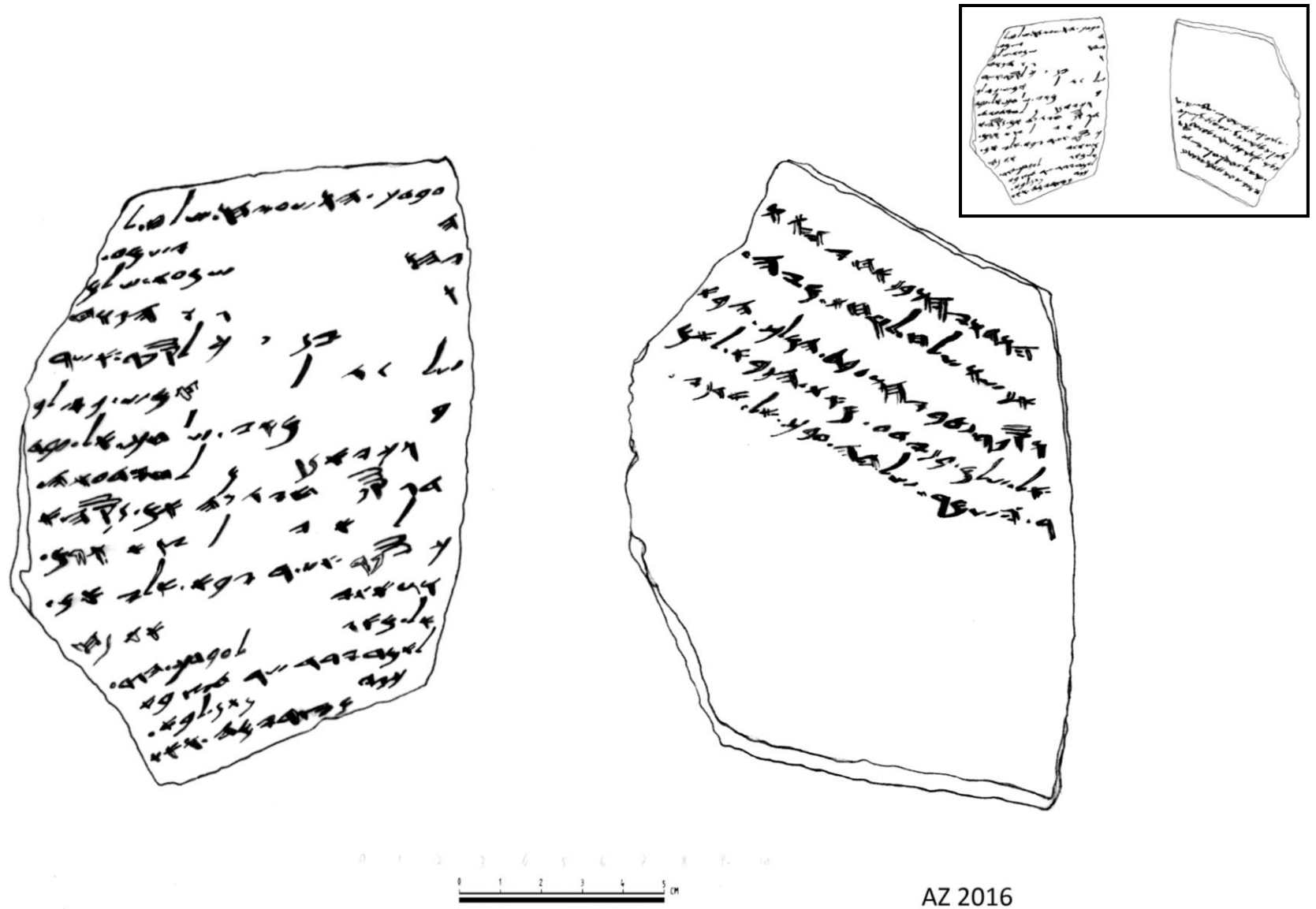


Fig. 32 The most legible graphemes of Lachish 3 as seen today; inset shows the location of the reverse inscription on the ostracon when flipped over at 180° (Drawings: A. Zammit).

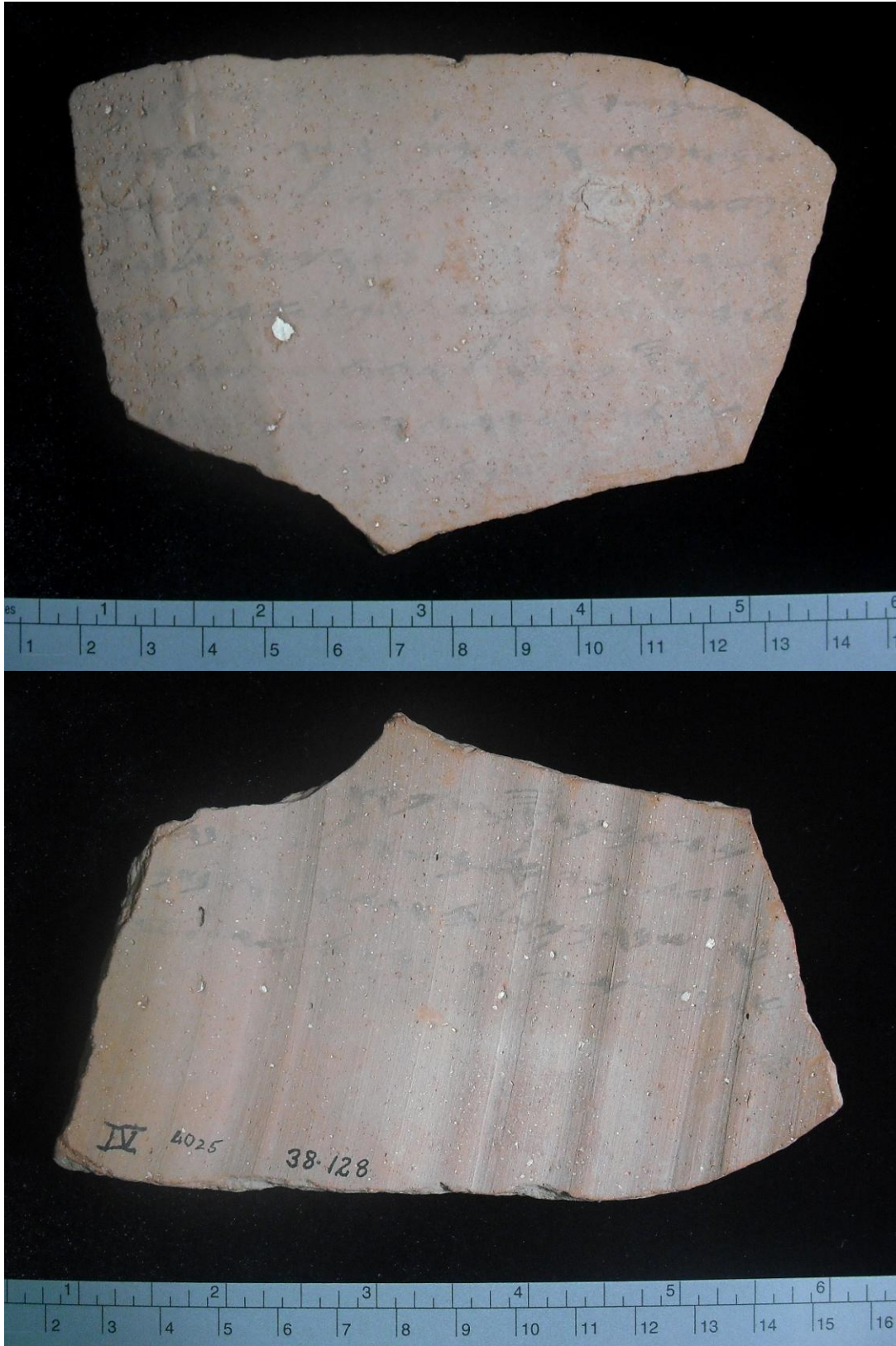


Fig. 33 The obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) of Lachish 4
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority).

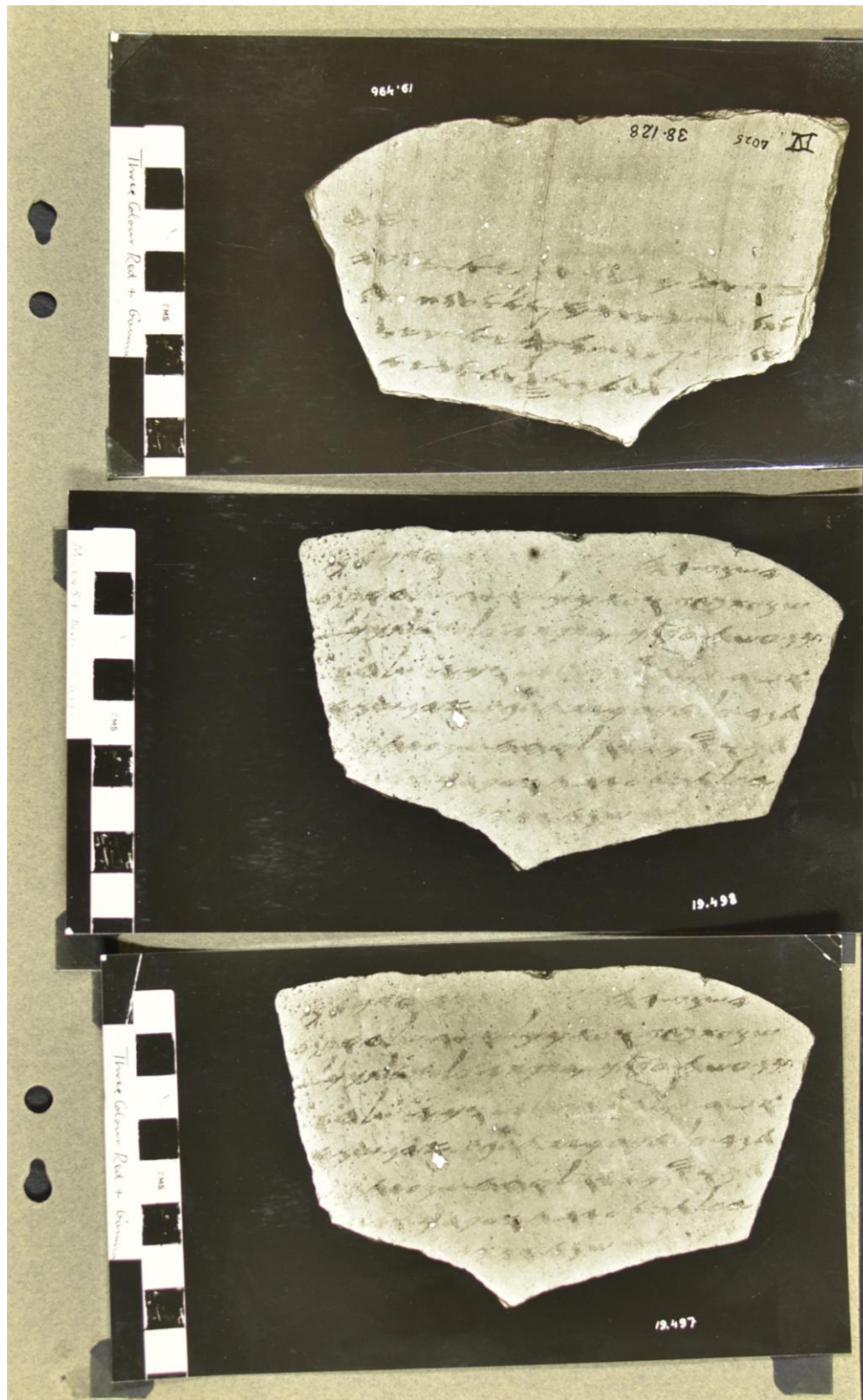
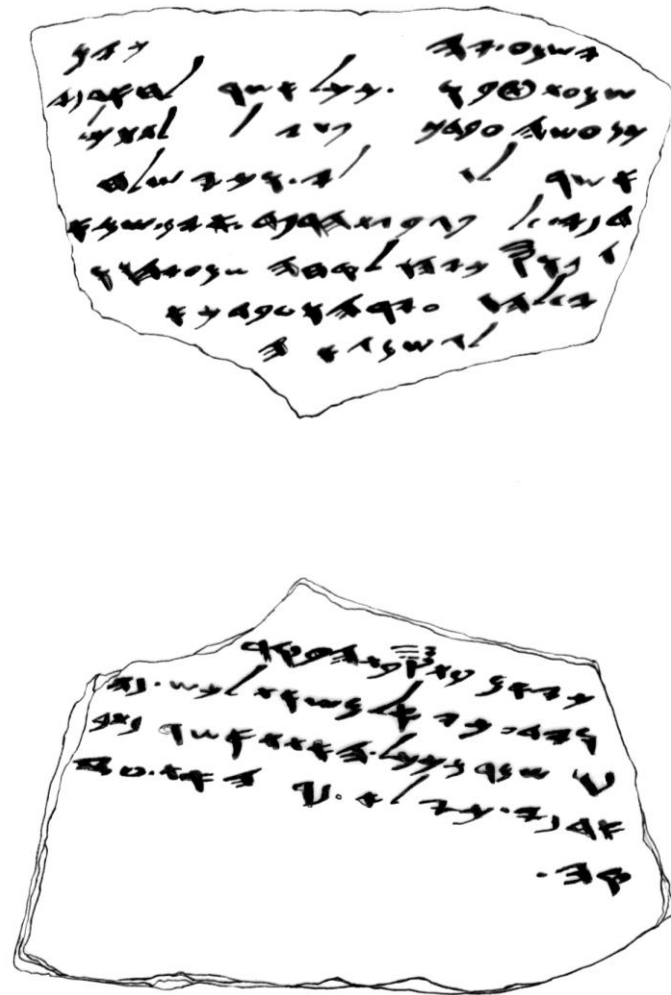
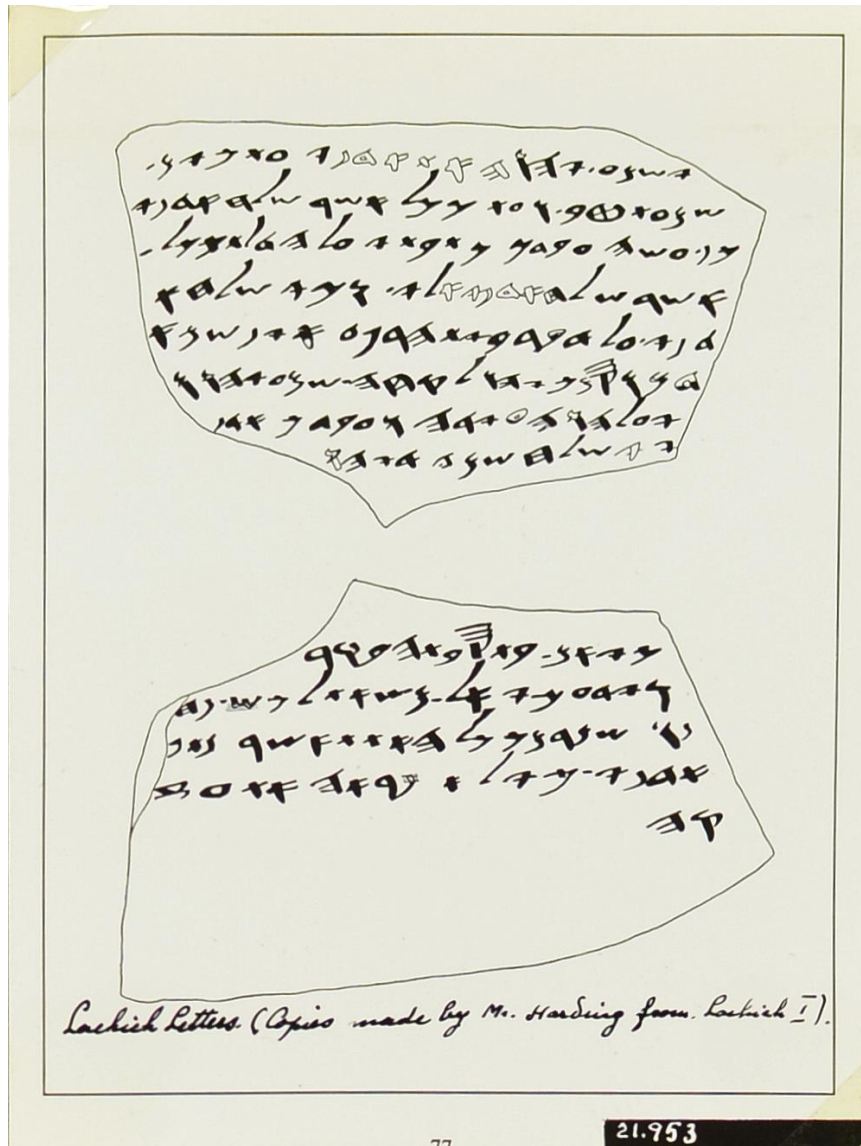


Fig. 34 Archive photographs of the obverse (bottom and middle) and reverse (top) of Lachish 4 (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 7100601-054800_001_000238).

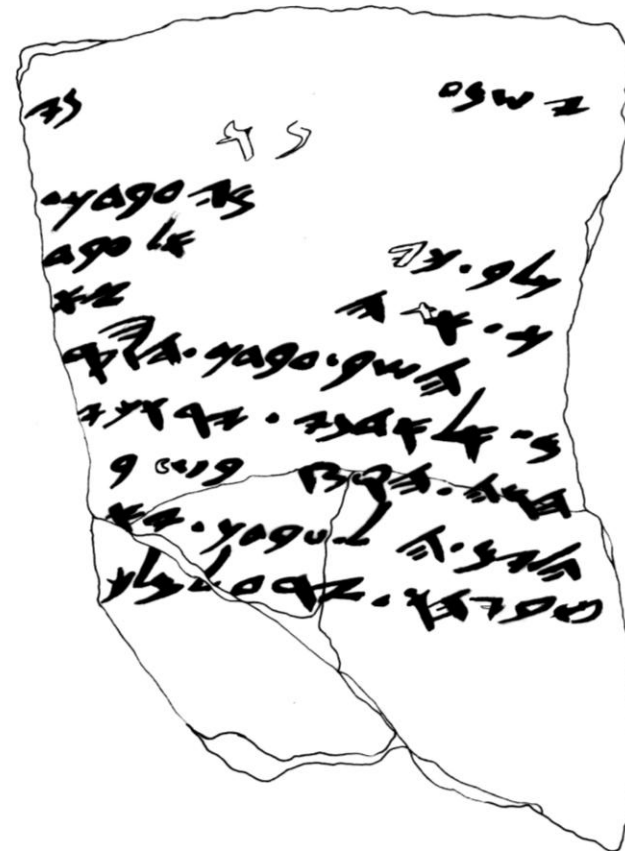


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Fig. 35 (left) Harding's autographs of Lachish 4 (obverse [top] and reverse [bottom]) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 6753930-054800_001_000227); (right) the most legible graphemes of Lachish 4 as seen today (Drawings: A. Zammit).



Fig. 36 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 5
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 37 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 5 (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5171755-040290_001_000012); (right) the most legible graphemes of Lachish 5 (obverse) as seen today (Drawing: A. Zammit).

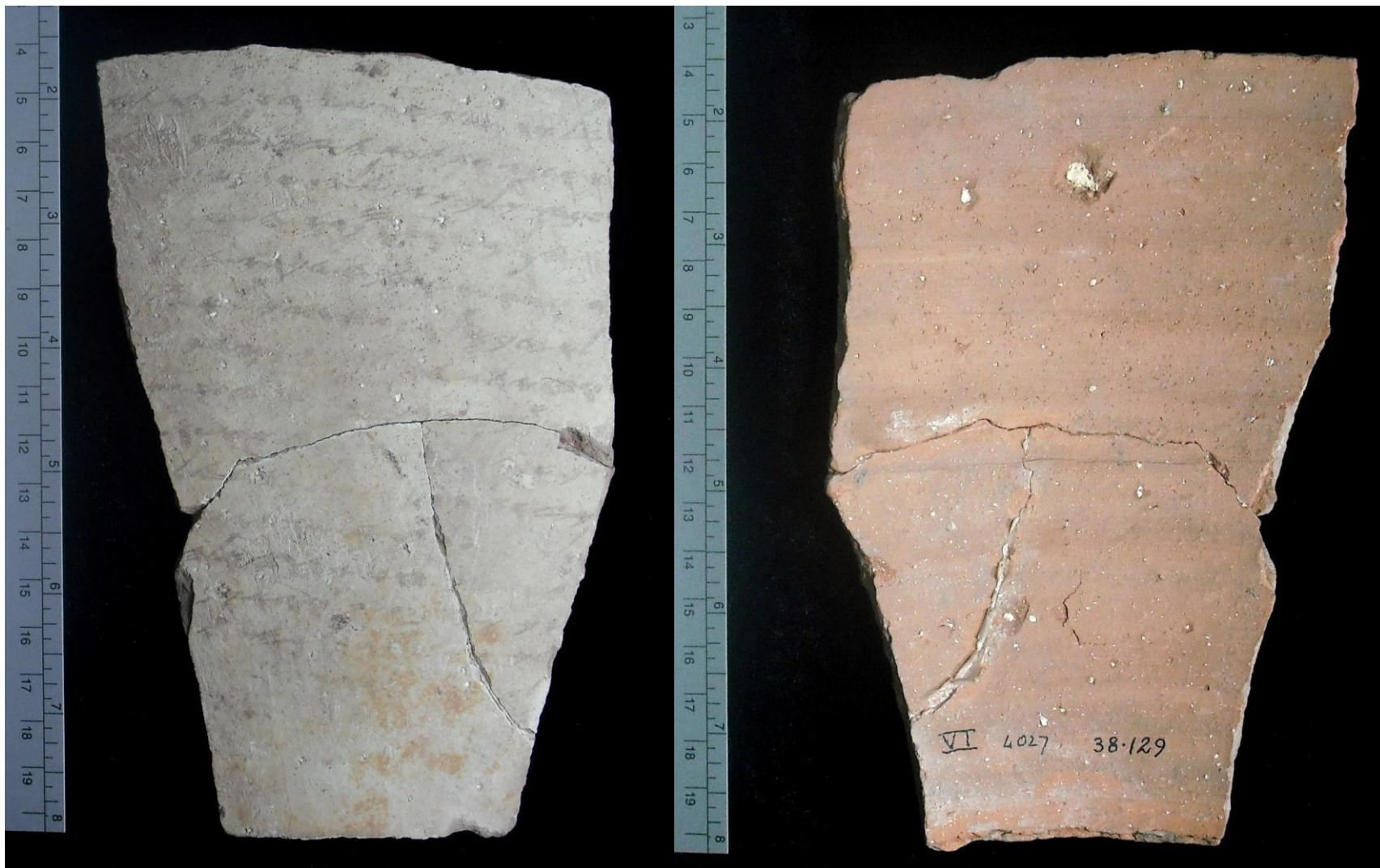


Fig. 38 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 6
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority).

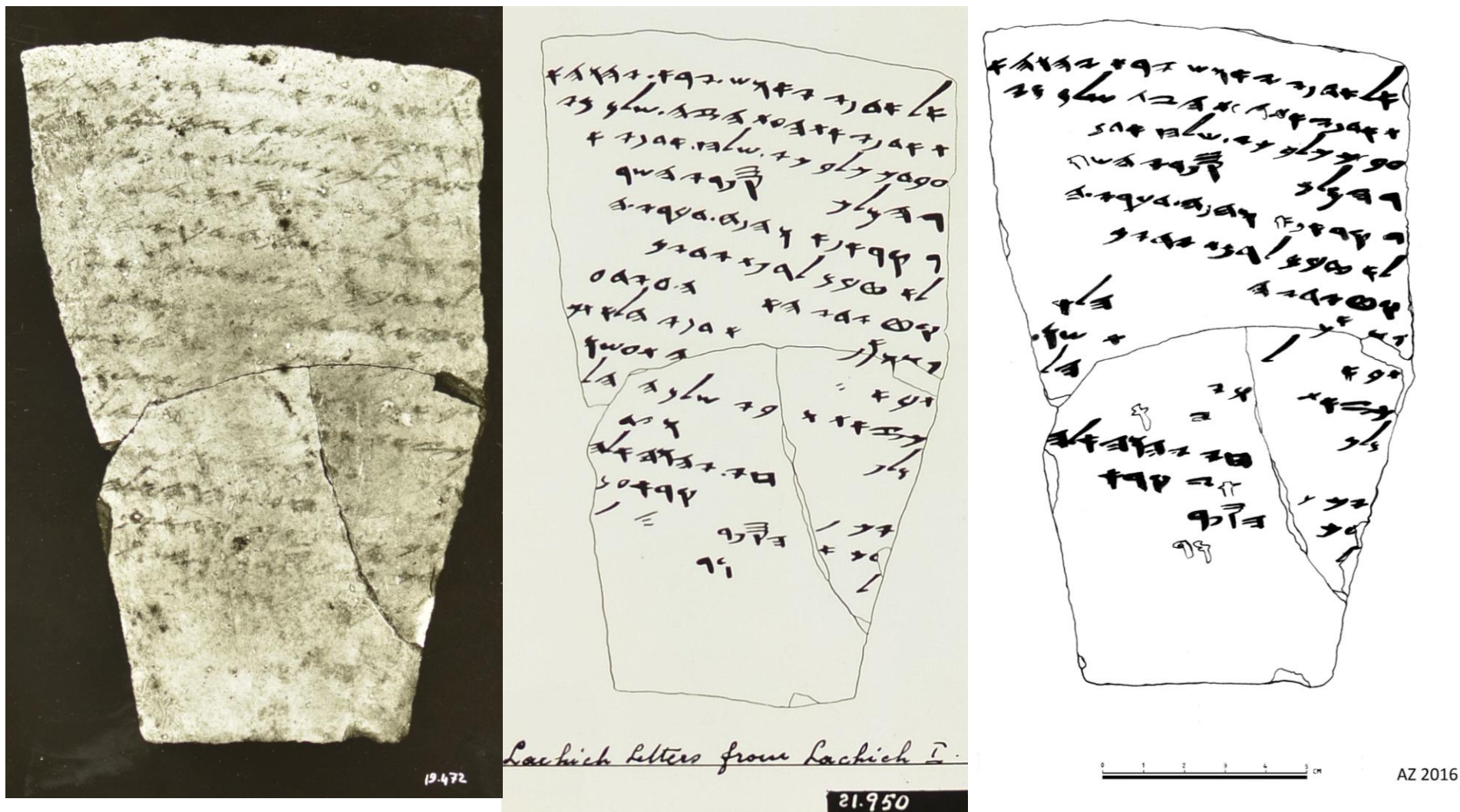


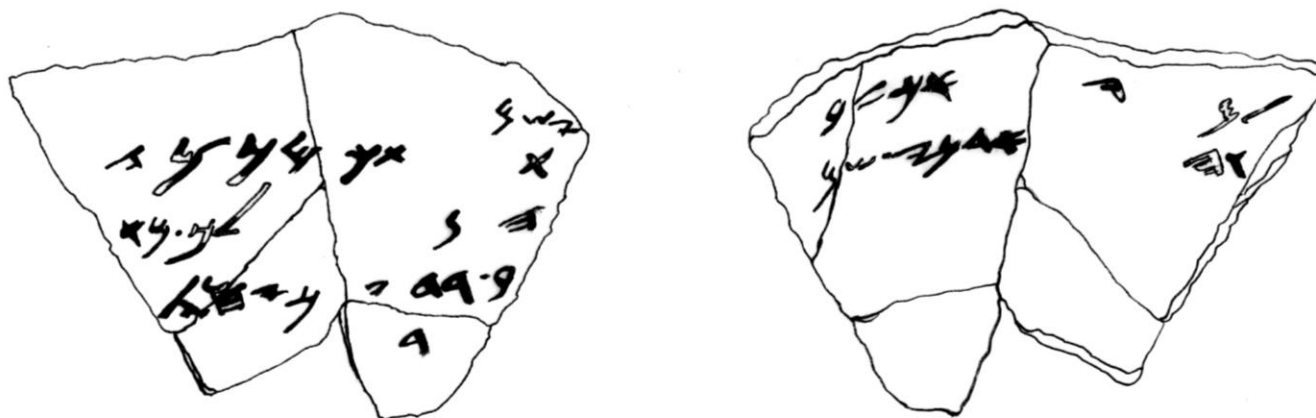
Fig. 39 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 6 (obverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 7674961-054800_001_000249); (middle) Harding's autograph of Lachish 6 (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 6613563-054800_001_000232); (right) the most legible graphemes of Lachish 6 as seen today (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 40 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 7
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



Fig. 42 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 8
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

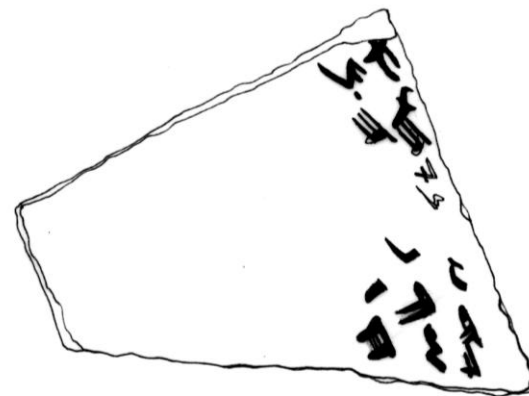
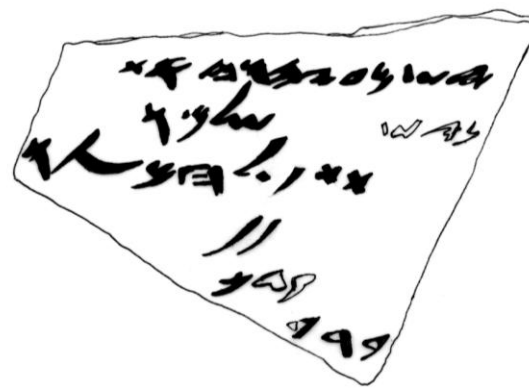
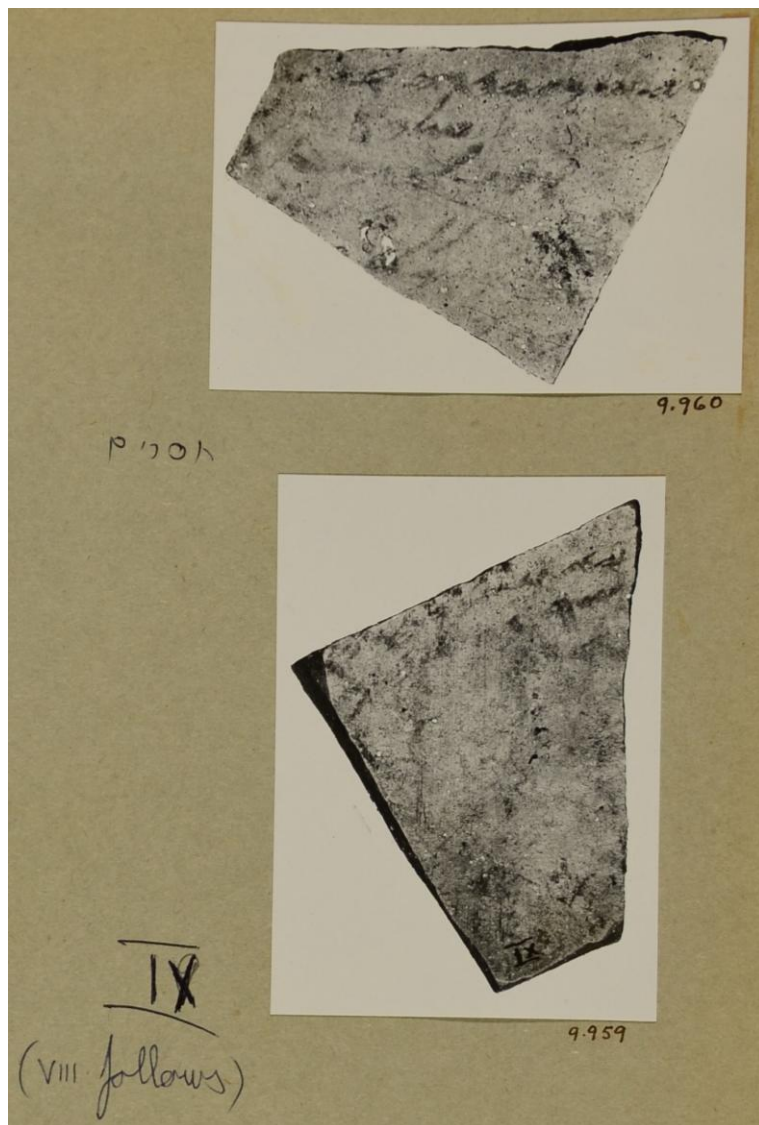


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Fig. 43 (top) Archive photographs of the obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 8 (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5140341-040290_001_000016); (bottom) the most legible graphemes of Lachish 8 as seen today (Drawings: A. Zammit).



Fig. 44 The obverse (left) and rotated reverse (right) of Lachish 9
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 45 (left) Archive photographs of the obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) of Lachish 9 (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5085246-040290_001_000017); (right) Lachish 9 (Drawings: A. Zammit).

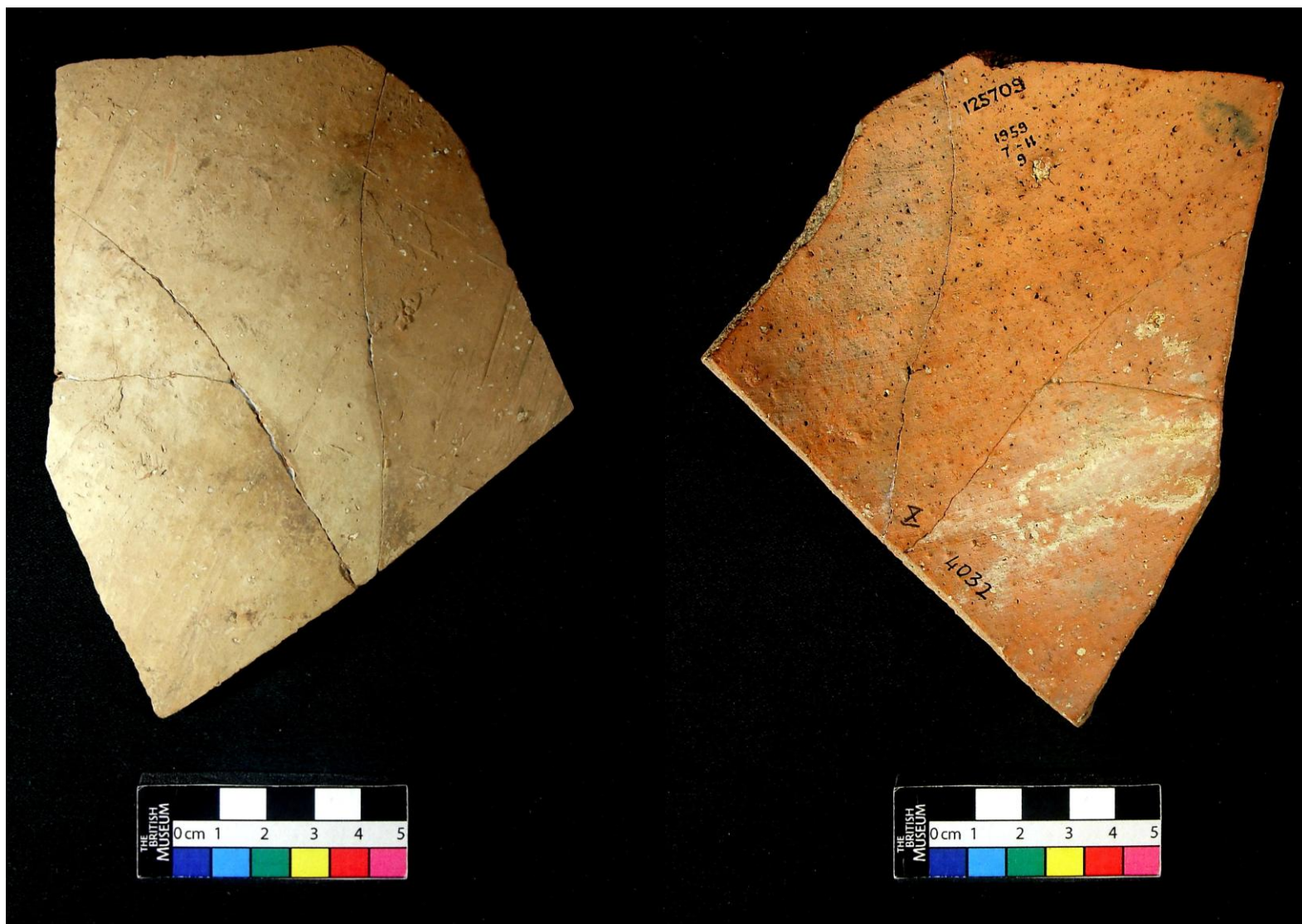


Fig. 46 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 10
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



Fig. 47 (left) Autograph of Lachish 10 (obverse) (not to scale) (*HAE*, III, pl. LIII.2); (middle) archive photograph of Lachish 10 (obverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 1506032-054900_001_000457); (right) the graphemes of Lachish 10 (obverse) identified by the author (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 48 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 11
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

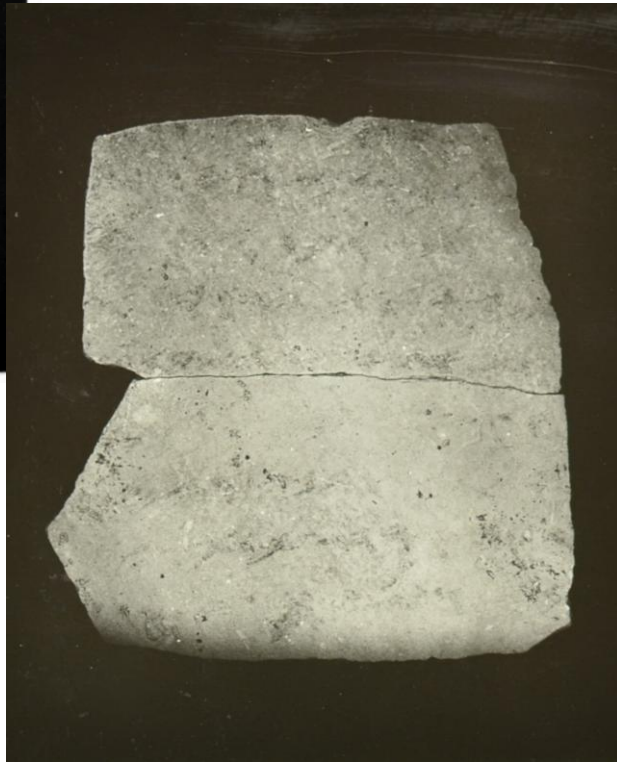
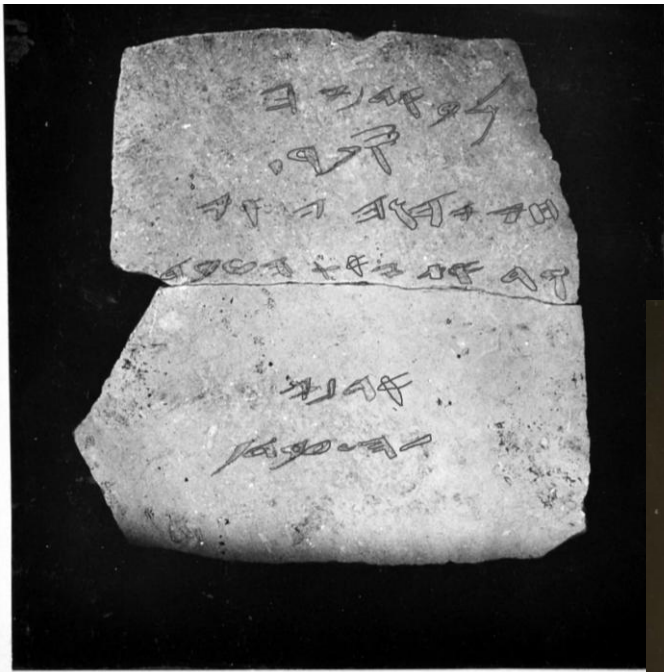


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Fig. 49 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 11 (obverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5012227-040290_001_000018); (right) Lachish 11 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 50 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 12
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

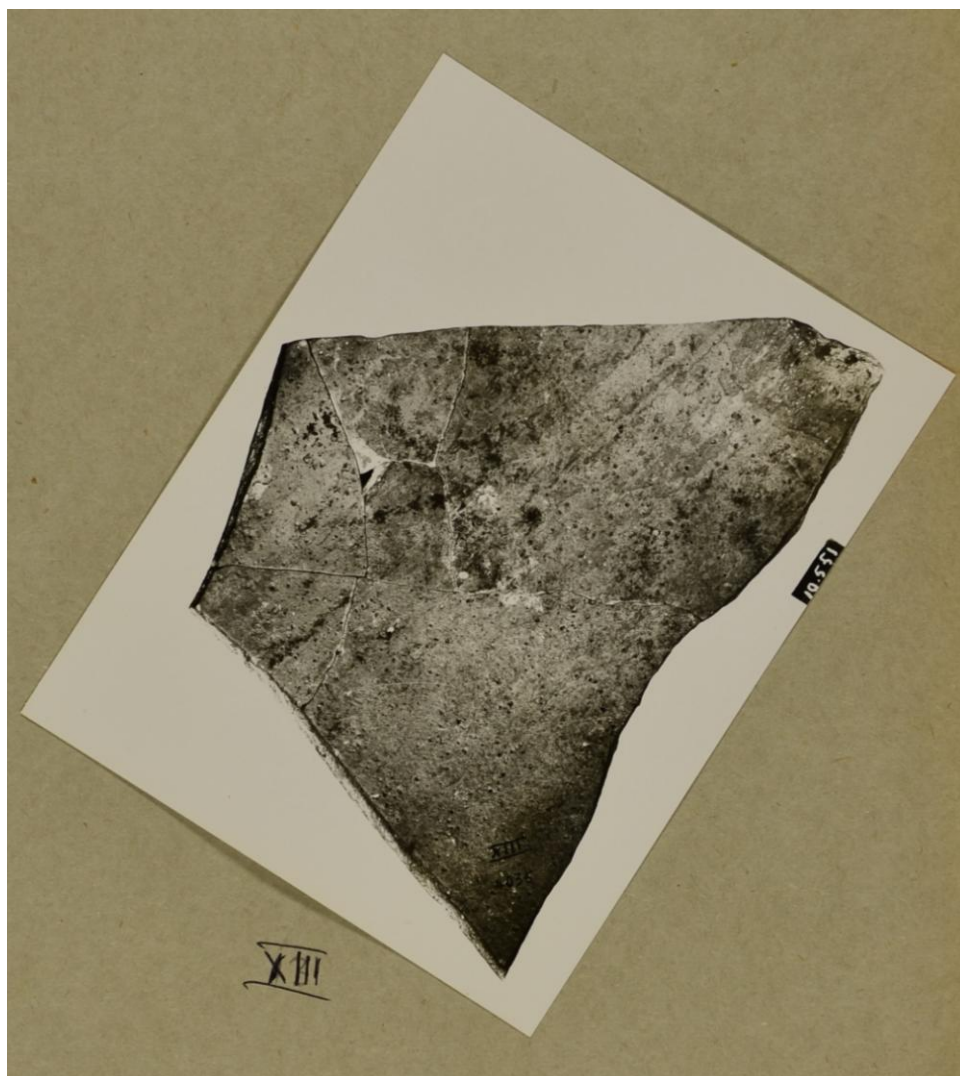


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Fig. 51 (middle) Archive photograph of Lachish 12 (obverse) (not to scale), with my digital enhancement of the same image and roughly re-traced graphemes observed by Harding (top left) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 1358454-054900_001_000459); (top right) Lachish 12 (obverse) with my readings (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 52 The reverse (left) and obverse (right) of Lachish 13
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 53 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 13 (reverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5414594-040290_001_000019); (right) Lachish 13 (reverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 54 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 14
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).

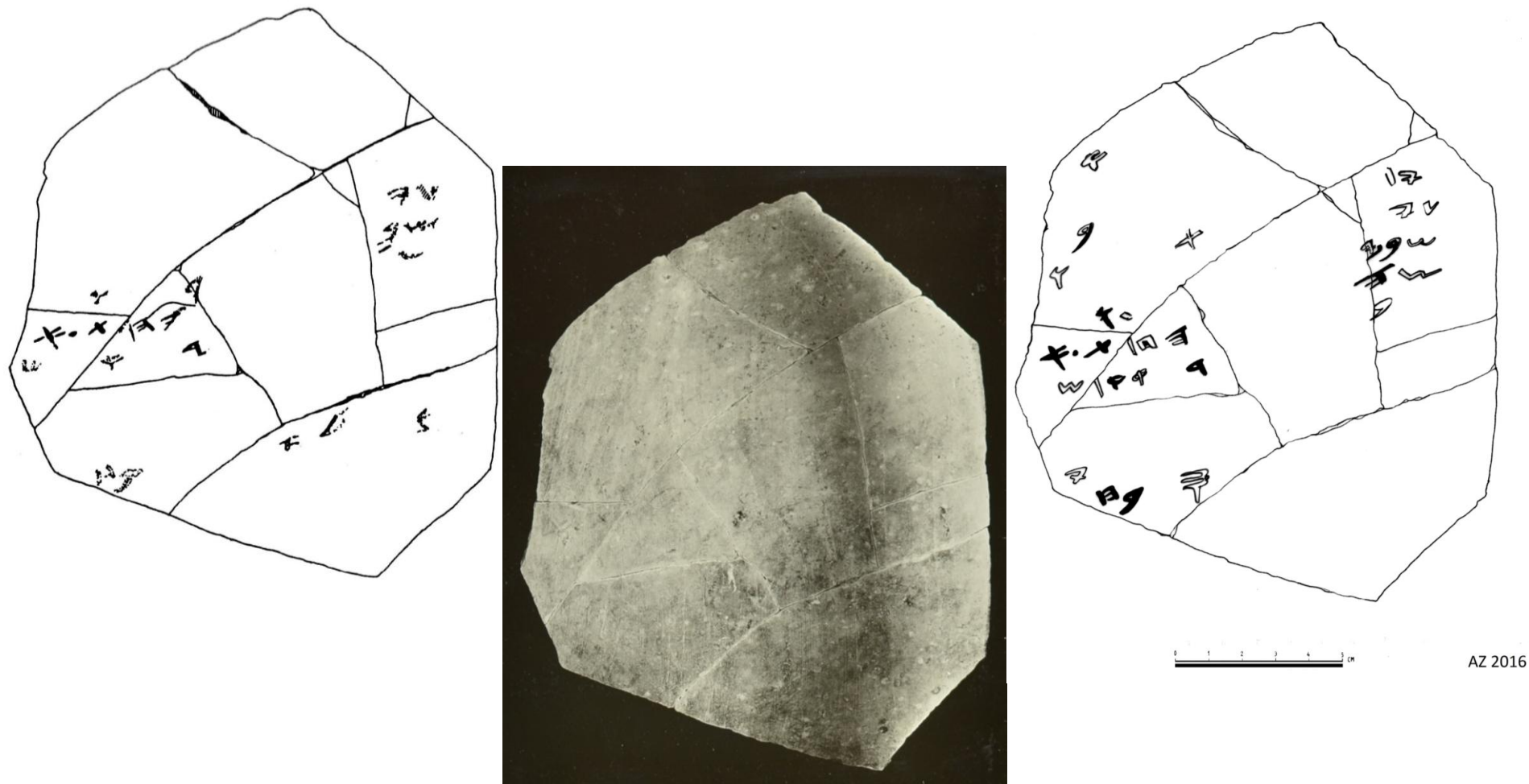
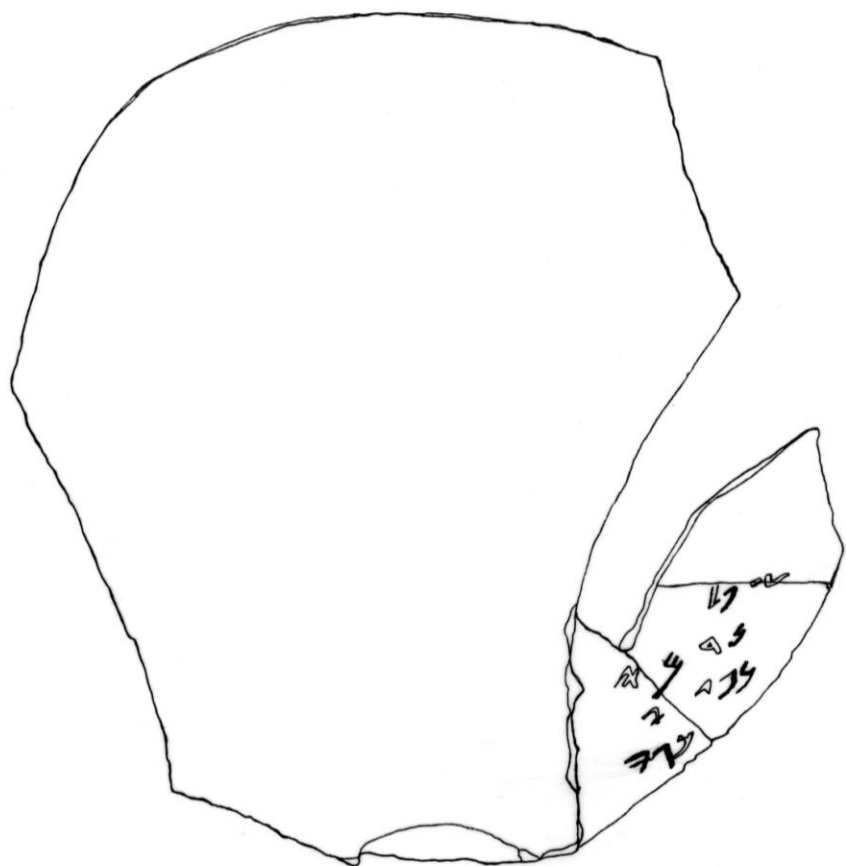


Fig. 55 (left) Autograph of Lachish 14 (obverse) (not to scale) (*HAE*, III, pl. LV.1); (middle) archive photograph of Lachish 14 (obverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 1453499-054900_001_000461); (right) the graphemes of Lachish 14 (obverse) identified by the author (Drawing: A. Zammit).



Fig. 56 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 15
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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(left) Lachish 15 (obverse)

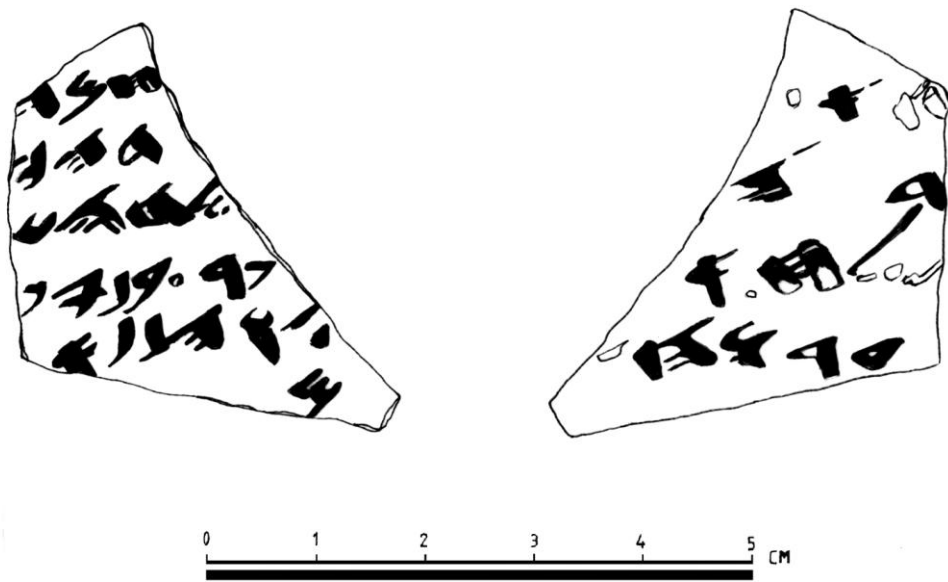
(Drawing: A. Zammit);

(top) archive photograph of one of the obverse pieces bearing traces of writing (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, detail of image 1221081-054900_001_000463);

(right) archive photograph of the three inscribed bottom right sherds of Lachish 15 (obverse) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, detail of image 7451101-054800_001_000224).



Fig. 57



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Fig. 58 (top) The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 16 (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum); (bottom) Lachish 16 (obverse and reverse) (Drawings: A. Zammit).

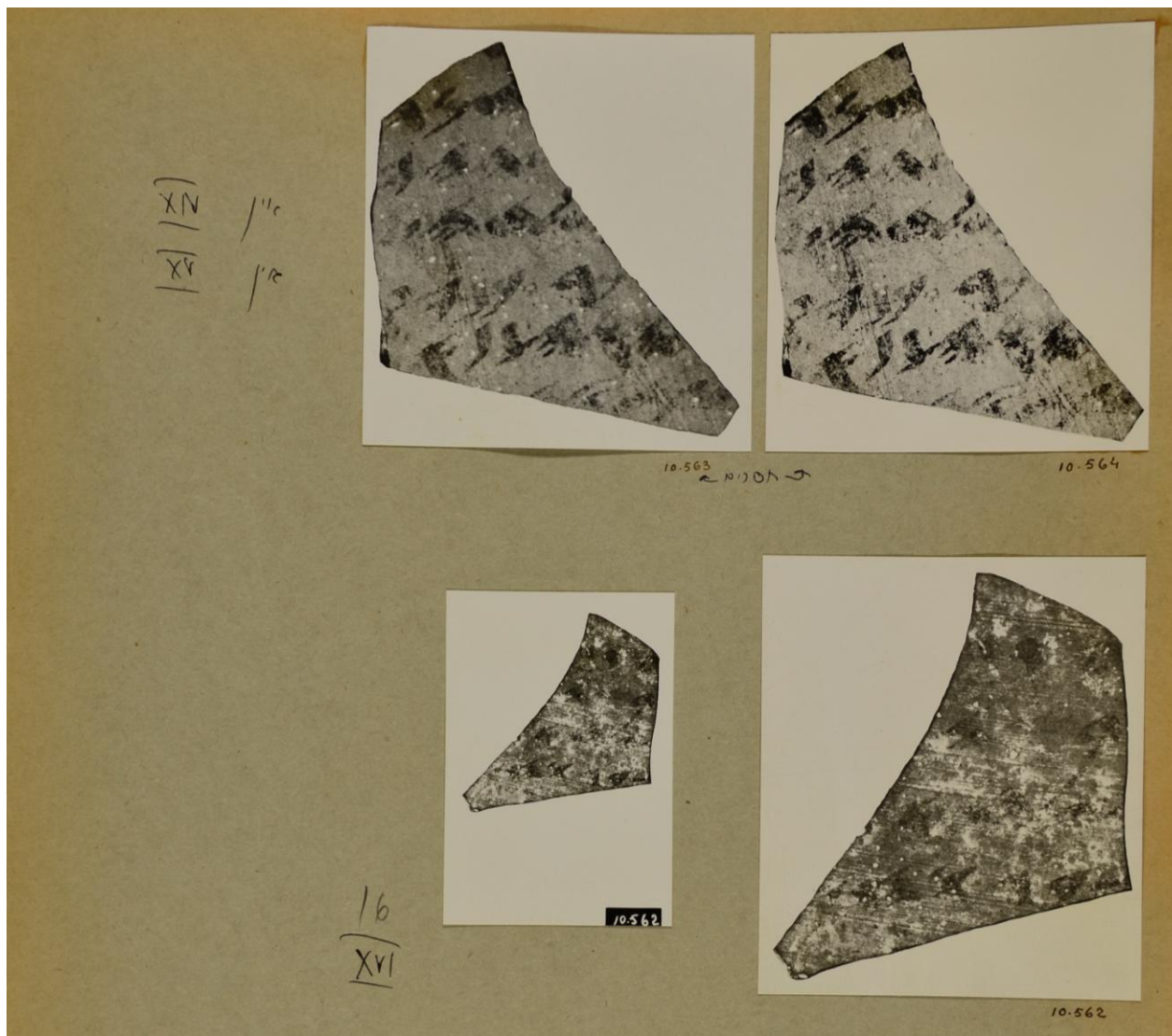
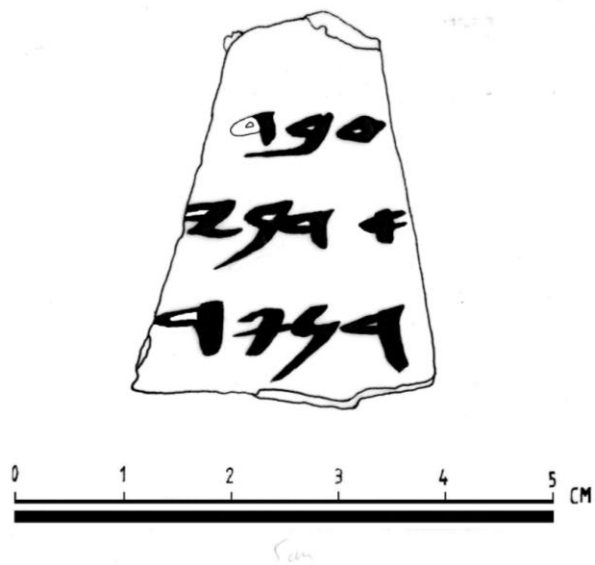
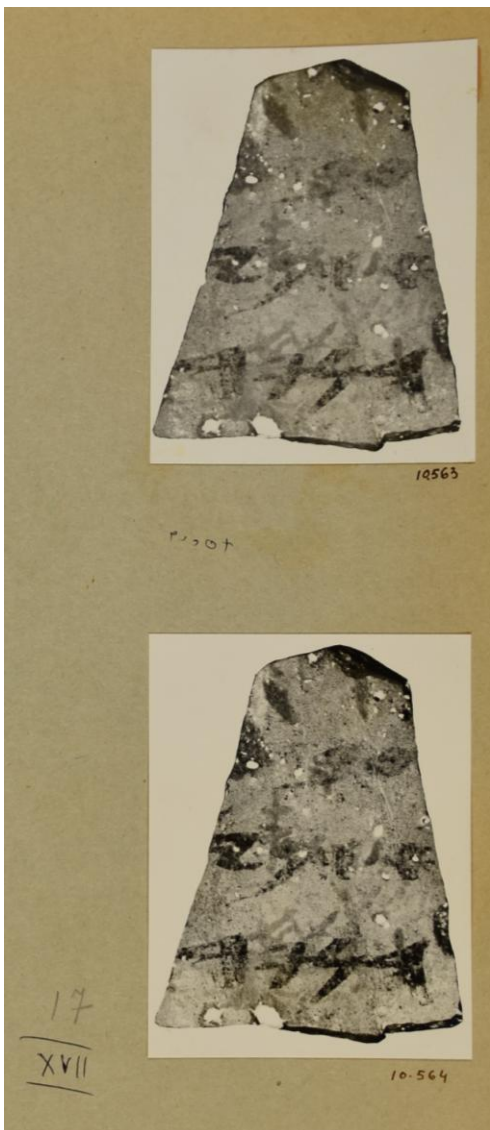


Fig. 59 Archive photographs of the obverse (top) and reverse (right) of Lachish 16 (not to scale)
(Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 5266417-040290_001_000020).



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(far top) The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 17 (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum);

(top) Lachish 17 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit);

(left) archive photographs of the obverse of Lachish 17 (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 5039326-040290_001_000021).

Fig. 60



Fig. 61 The obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) of Lachish 18
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



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Fig. 62 (top) Archive photograph of the obverse of Lachish 18 (not to scale)
(Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, detail of image 7451101-054800_001_000224);
(bottom) Lachish 18 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).

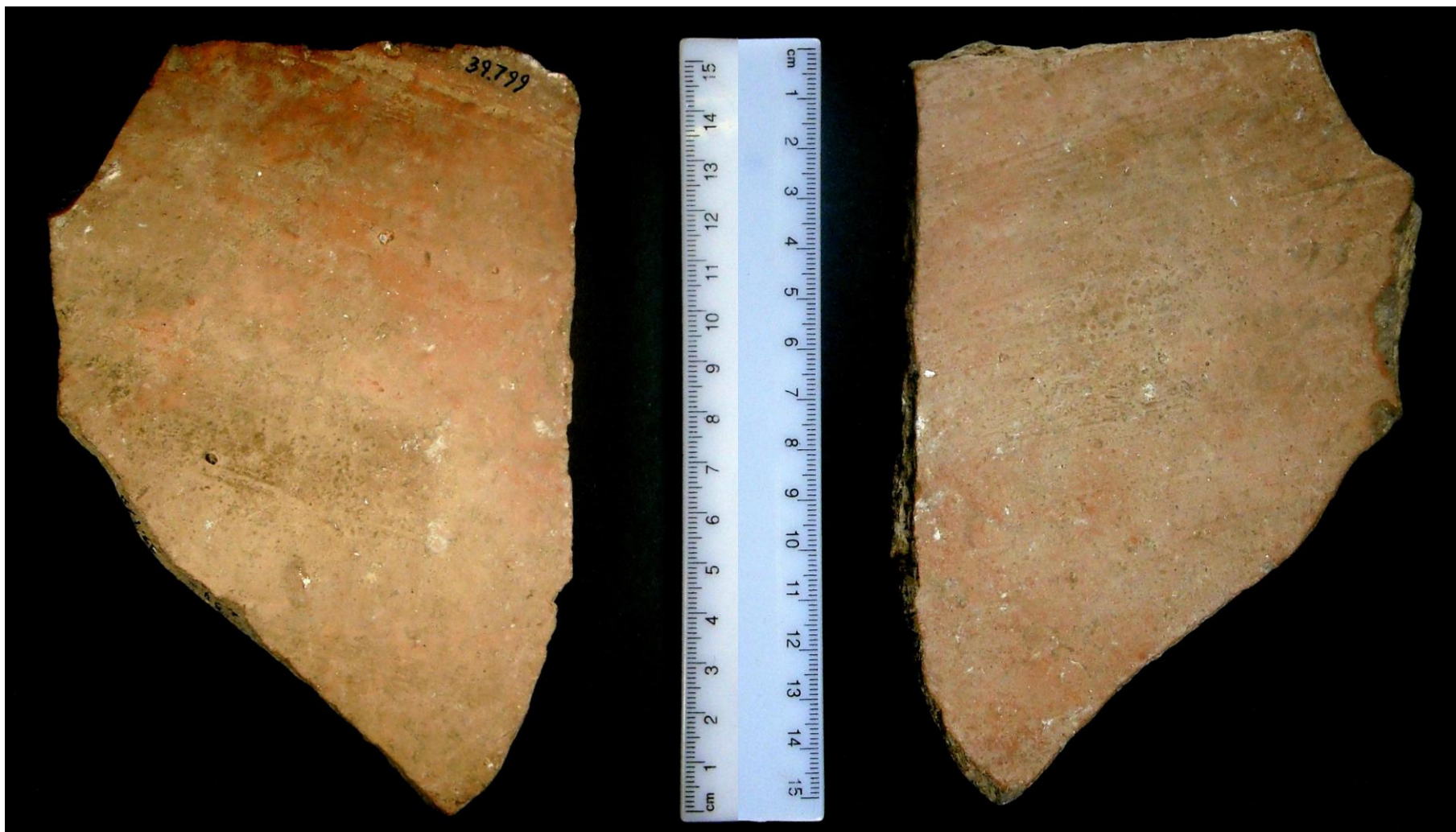


Fig. 63 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Lachish 19
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority).



AZ 2016

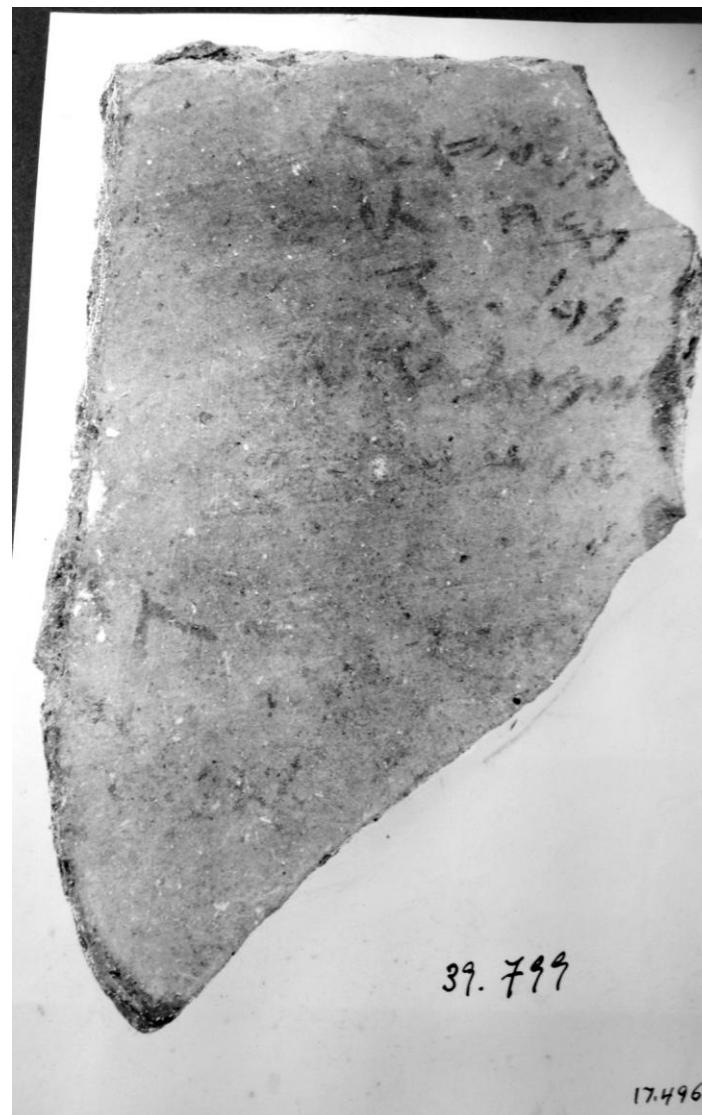


Fig. 64 (left) Lachish 19 (reverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit);
(right) archive photograph of Lachish 19 (reverse) (IAA 1939-799) (not to scale) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority).

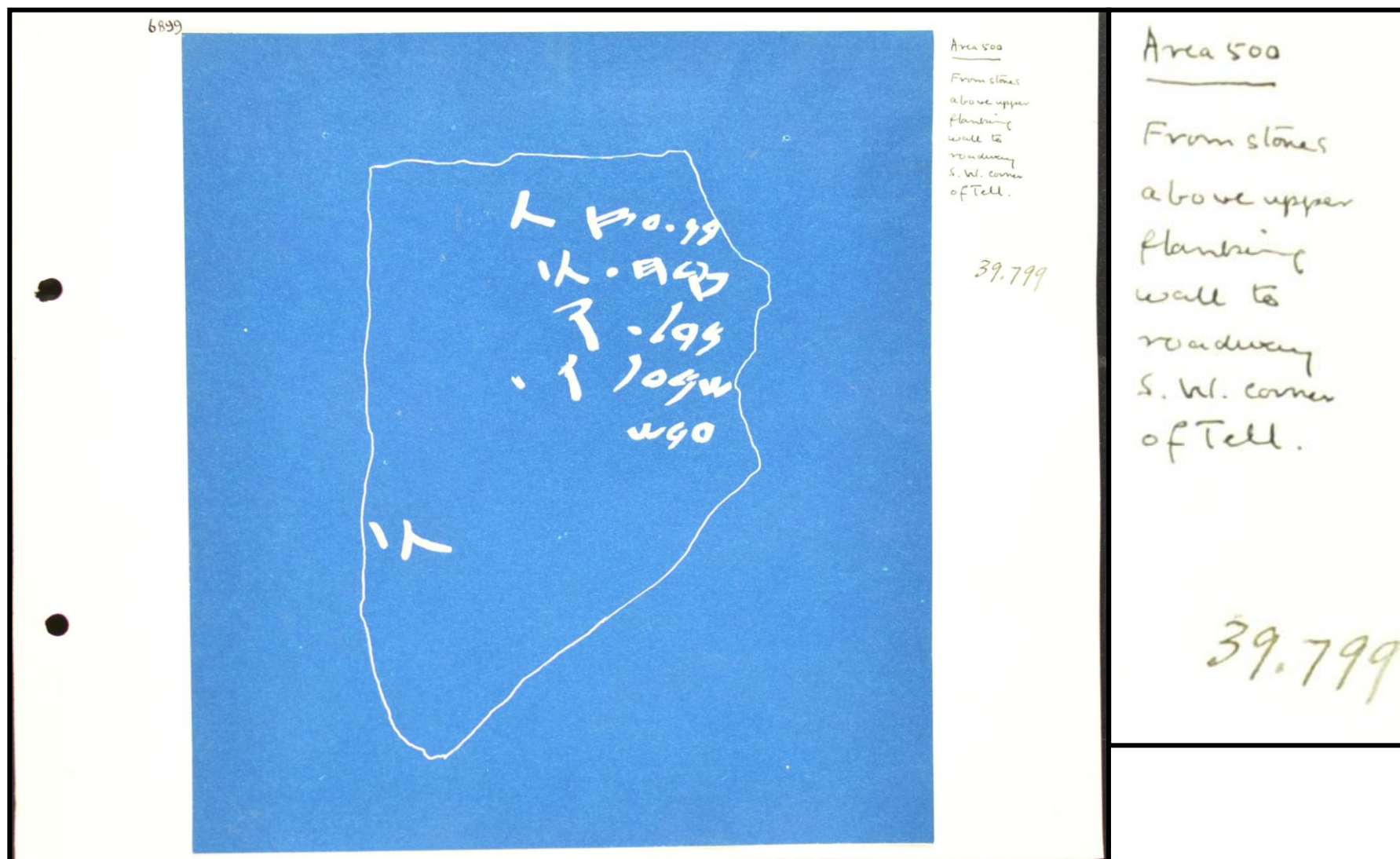


Fig. 65 (left) Harding's blueprint drawing of Lachish 19 (reverse) (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 1928511-054900_001_000110); (right) detail of the handwritten description of the find spot.



495

(left) The obverse of Lachish 20;

(top) detail of the Lachish 20 label
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the
Trustees of the British Museum);

(right) profile of Tufnell's Type 495
holemouth jar, of which Lachish 20 forms
part (not to scale) (*Lachish III*, pl. 96.495).

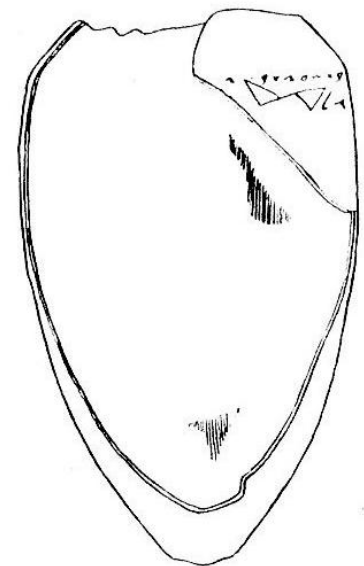


Fig. 66



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Fig. 67 (left) Archive photograph of Lachish 20 (obverse) with a missing piece on the left (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, from image 6620575-054800_001_000253); (right) Lachish 20 (obverse) (Drawing: A. Zammit).



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(top left) The obverse (top) and reverse (bottom) of Lachish 21 (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum); (top right) Lachish 21 (obverse [top] and reverse [bottom]) (Drawings: A. Zammit); (right) autographs of Lachish 21 (not to scale) (*HAE*, III, pl. LIII.4).

Fig. 68

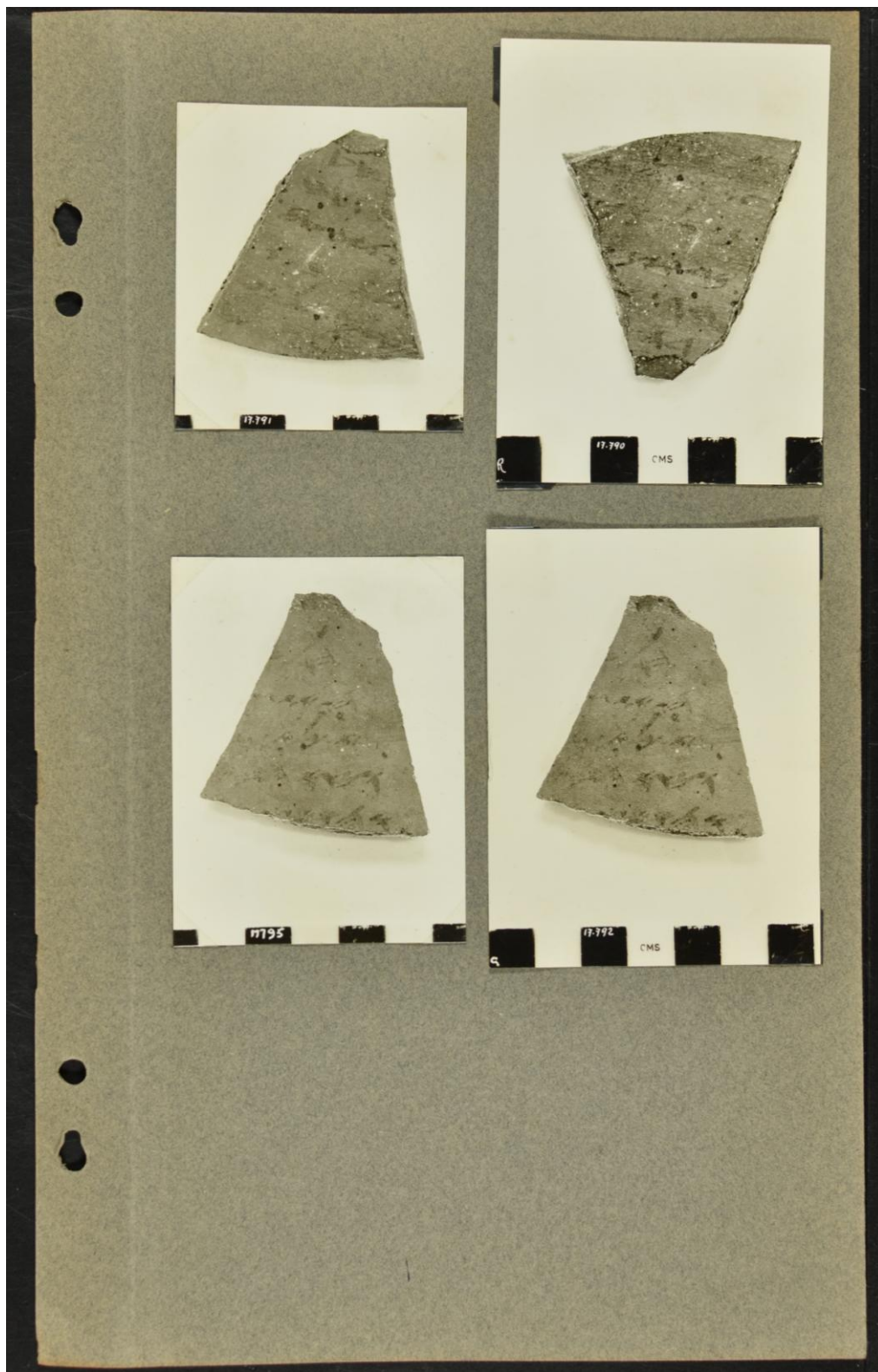


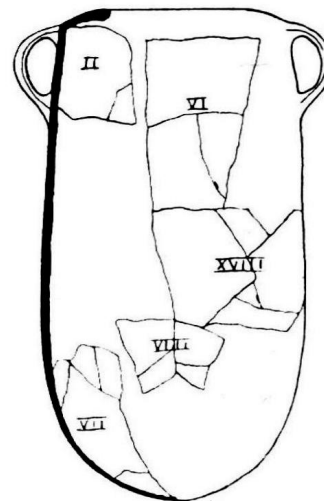
Fig. 69 Archive photographs of the obverse (top left and bottom) and reverse (top right) of Lachish 21 (Courtesy: Israel Antiquities Authority, image 6100011-054800_001_000252).



Fig. 70 The obverse (left) and reverse (right) of Sherd 7941
(Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum).



498



The reverse and profile (far left) and the rim's profile (top) of Sherd 7941, marked as belonging to Type 498 (Photos: A. Zammit by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum);

(left) profile of Tufnell's Type 498 holemouth storage jar, showing the five ostraca pertaining to this vessel (not to scale) (*Lachish III*, pl. 96.498).

Fig. 71