

Tel Abel Beth Maachah – 2016 Excavation Report – Area A

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The fourth season of excavation in Area A was carried out from June 19 to July 15, 2016, under the supervision of Netanel Paz, assisted by Kenton Williams, Carroll Kobs and Scott Booth. Fredrika Loew was the registrar.

The area is composed of two parts – eastern and western. In the eastern part, work continued in seven previously excavated squares: A–T/14, A–T/13, A/12–13 and B/12. In the western part, three new squares were opened: R/12, S–T/11, while continuing some work in previously excavated Square S/12.

The main goals of this season were: 1) to better understand the transition between Strata A4 and A5 and to rethink the relation of some elements to these strata; 2) To date the A6 wall 3180 and to expose more of this stratum; 3) To expand the exposure of the western part of the A2 complex, further to the west and north; 4) To uncover remains of Stratum A3 under the A2 complex that might shed light on the metallurgical activity uncovered in the past season.

Table 1. Summary of the main features, loci and walls of Strata A2 to A6, 2016 season.

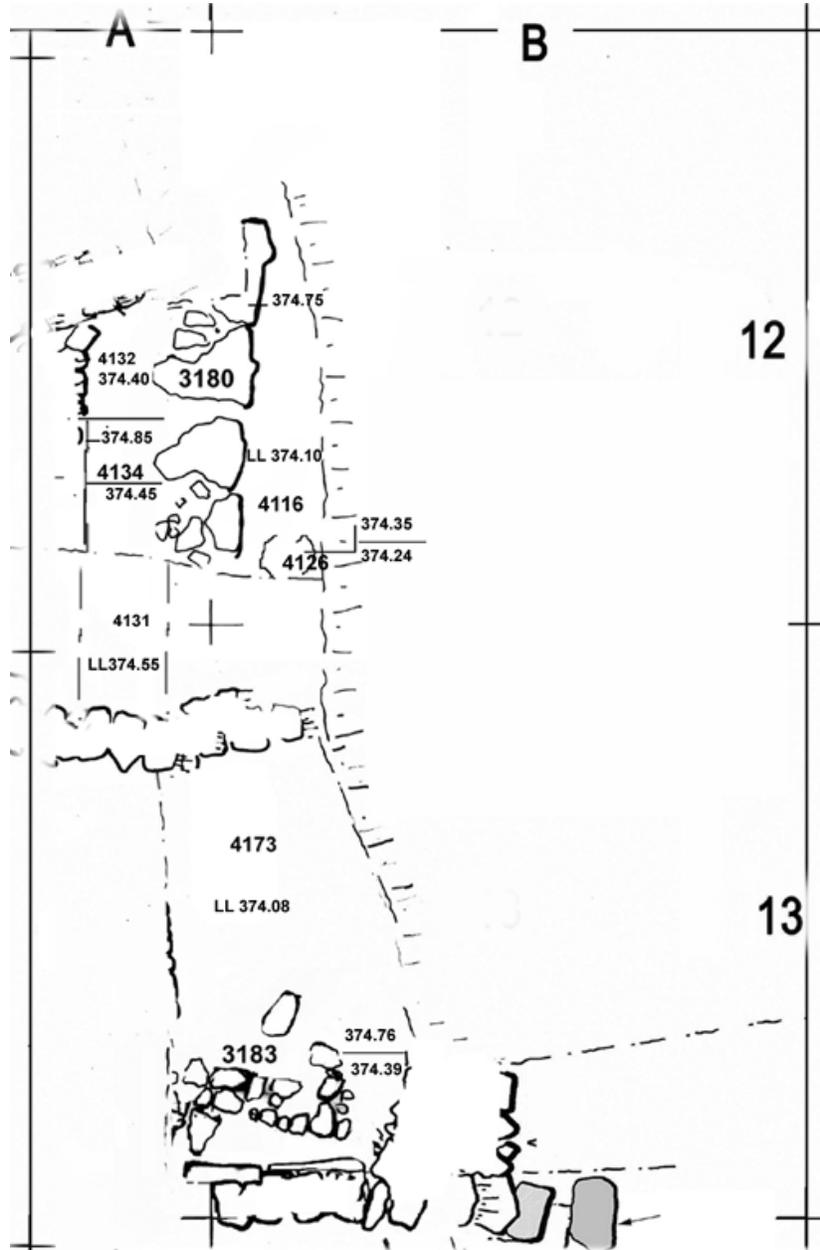
* 2016 features in red.

Local phase	General description	Height Range	Loci (2014-2016)	Walls 2013-2016
A2	Walls of a well-constructed building oriented NS-EW with related floor of hard-packed clay; two sub-phases containing floor raising and minor changes in the general plan; reuse of walls from A3 in Square S/12; entranceway between units lined with buttresses; metallurgical activity(?) or secondary use in western unit; Continuation of western unit further west and identification of a floor; continuation of structure to the north and identification of three sub-phases: two of A2 including floors, and one post A2 including pits. Large stone	377.60–376.78 In S/12 the floor is lower-376.69 377.81–376.54	<i>Square S/12:</i> 2124, 2125, 2149, 2156, 3146, 3147, 3168 <i>Square T/12:</i> 2109? (pit), 2119, 2114, 2133, 2139, 1123 <i>Square T/14:</i> 2108, 2132 Sq. R/12: 4103, 4104, 4125, 4133, 4135, 4136, 4141, 4150 Sq. S/11-12: 4176, 4183, 4184 Sq. T/11-12: 4154, 4155, 4156, 4164, 4165, 4167, 4188	<i>Square S/12:</i> 2126, 2128, 2138, 2144 <i>Square T/12:</i> 1114, 1120, 1136, 2118, 2136, [2137?], 2170, 2151 <i>Square T/14:</i> 2130, 2130 Sq. R/12: 2128 Sq. S/11-12: 4145, 4185, 4193, 4196 Sq. T/11-12: 4140, 4186, 4190 Sq. T/14: 4146, 4147, 4148

	“platform” in southeast of western ‘room’, continuing into balk			
A3	Open area with cooking activity, sealed A4 and sealed by A2; no continuity from A4, aside from the reuse of the top of A4 Wall 2145; continuity to A2: secondary use? of bellows pot. Defining tabun 3178 and exposing installation 4192 in the same room; possible use of A2 Wall 2126; dismantling wall 3123; exposing walls 4182, 4189?	376.75-376.42 Sq. S/12: 376.25–376.02 Sq. A/14: 376.33–376.23	Square T/12: 2135, 1164, 1174, 1165, 1166. Square A/13: 3101, 3110, 3114 Square A/4: 3109, 3102, 3141 Square S/12: 3175, 3176, 3178 Sq. S/12: 3175, 3178, 4192, 4194 Sq. A/14: 4119	Square T/12: 3102/1158, 3123 Sq. T/14: 4182, 4189?
A4	Three rooms, possibly belonging to same unit, with unclear continuation to the west (T/13): destruction layer and floors in Squares A/13-14, part of A/12; one, possibly two walls re-used from A-5. Slab surface and pillar bases exposed on higher level in Squares A/14 and T/14; surface with tabuns and stone ‘tables’ in Sq. A-T/13; walls 2143 and 315 are bonded.	376.40–375.15 Sq. A/T14: 376.61–375.25 Sq. A/T13: 375.66–375.18	Square A/12: 2147, 2152, 2163, 2167 Square A/13: 1150, 2115, 2116, 2141, 2142, 2159, 2162, 2164, 3131, 3144, 3148, 3160 Square A/14: 2113, 2129, 2127, 1163, 3159, 3166, 3104, 3107, 3108, 3126, 3149 Square B/14: 3127? Square T/13: 3138, 3139, 3152, 3153 Sq. A-T/14: 4122, 4151, 4159, 4160, 4169, 4172. Sq. A-T/13: 4138, 4143, 4144, 4166	Square A-T/12: 2145 Square A\13: 2143 Squares A-B/13: 2107, 2173 Square A/14: 2169 Square T/13: 3154, 3157
A5	Two E-W walls, built of boulders, directly below A4 walls; possibly one N-S wall; stone collapse, some burn, much (unrestorable?) pottery; fieldstones threshold and plaster floor. Floor with round basalt stones, bronze jewelry, faience bead, amethystscarab.	375.14-374.86 375.03–374.80	Square A/12: 3103, 3143, 3158 Square B/13: 3128, 3129, 3144, 3156 Square A/13: 3171, 3181 Sq. A12/13: 4107, 4109, 4195	Square B/13: 3120, 2107, 2173 Square A/12: 3150 Sq. A/12: 4105
A6	Massive N-S wall in probe at eastern edge of slope, Square A-B/12; fortification(?); east-west mudbrick wall under wall 4105	374.62-374.39 374.52–374.02	Square A/12: 3179 Square B/13: 3172? Sq. A/12: 4132	Square A/12: 3180; Square B/13: 3183? Sq. A/12: 4134

Stratum A6

Remains attributed to the lowest stratum revealed so far in Area A were found in the northeastern corner of Area A in Squares A–B/12: Wall 3180 and debris 3179 that abutted it on its west. In 2016, further elements that can be attributed to this stratum were revealed in this square, as well as in Square B/13, as follows.



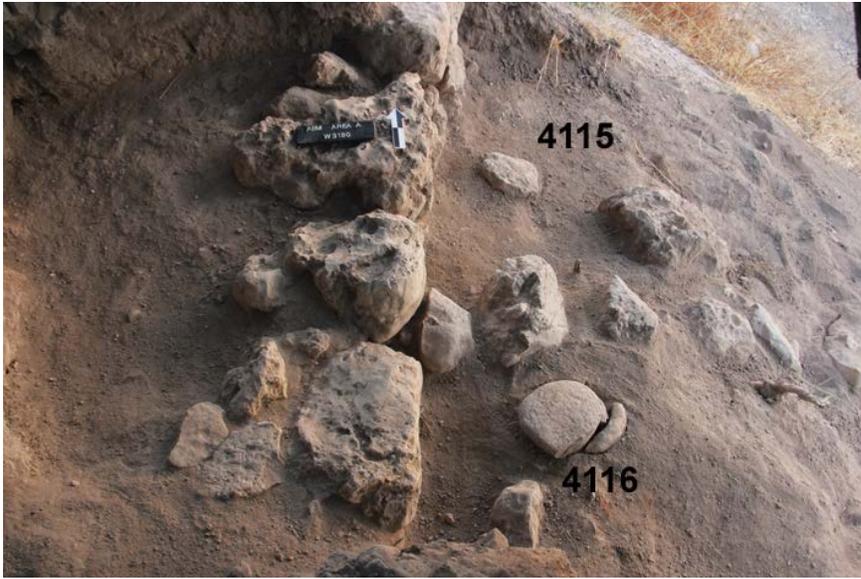
Plan (provisional) Stratum A6

Square B/12

East of Wall 3180, located on the edge of the slope, was a narrow area in which excavation down in the loose debris here exposed a lower course of Wall 3180. This loose debris also contained a number of stones, some large that seem to have fallen from Wall 3180 and others, roughly running on an east-west line, possibly the remnant of a now-eroded wall. Debris 4115 is to the north of this line of stones and 4116 to its south; in the latter, remains of a poorly preserved oven (4126) were found, which alludes to there having been a surface here; a concentration of sherds to the north of the oven supports this. These elements are attributed to A6, although their location at the edge of the erosion line on the slope makes it relatively difficult to be certain. It should be noted that a large north-south balk was left standing between A-B/12-13 that continued the line of Wall 3180 to the south, so that the southeastern end of this activity remains unexcavated to date.



Square B/12 looking west. A6 Wall 3180 in foreground; A5 Wall 3150 in background.



Square B/12, looking north; stones and debris east of Wall 3180

Squares A/12–13

Excavation to the west of Wall 3180, under a shallow debris layer 3179, a wide mudbrick wall (4134) was exposed underneath the southern end of A5 Wall 4105. The orientation of this wall is not yet certain. It seems that it ran east-west; a line of whitish brick material (similar to the mortar composition) was seen to run under the north-south line of A5 Wall 410. It is possible that this is a wall that cornered with 4134. The relationship of Wall 4134 to Wall 3180 remains unclear; it is possible that 4134 abutted 3180. Further excavation will clarify these issues.

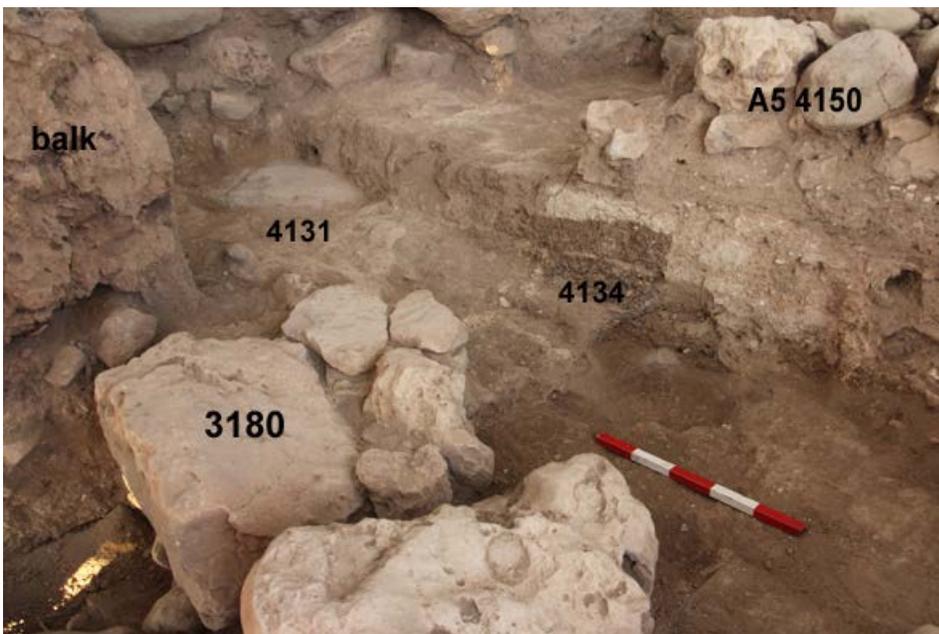


Sq. A/12-13, looking west. Top: A5 Wall 4105, with A6 brick Wall 4134 below. Bottom: Wall 3180



Squares A.11-12, looking west: A6 Wall 3180 in foreground; note wide width of dark bricks of 4134 and the white brick line under A5 Wall 4105

The bricks of Wall 4134 are composed of dark brown-gray crumbly material with which speckles, with thick white mortar lines between them. On top of the uppermost brick, directly underneath Wall 4105, is a thicker layer of this whitish mortar.



Square A/12, looking northwest; note rounded stone (pillar base?) in locus 4131 south of Wall 4134 (Square B/.12)

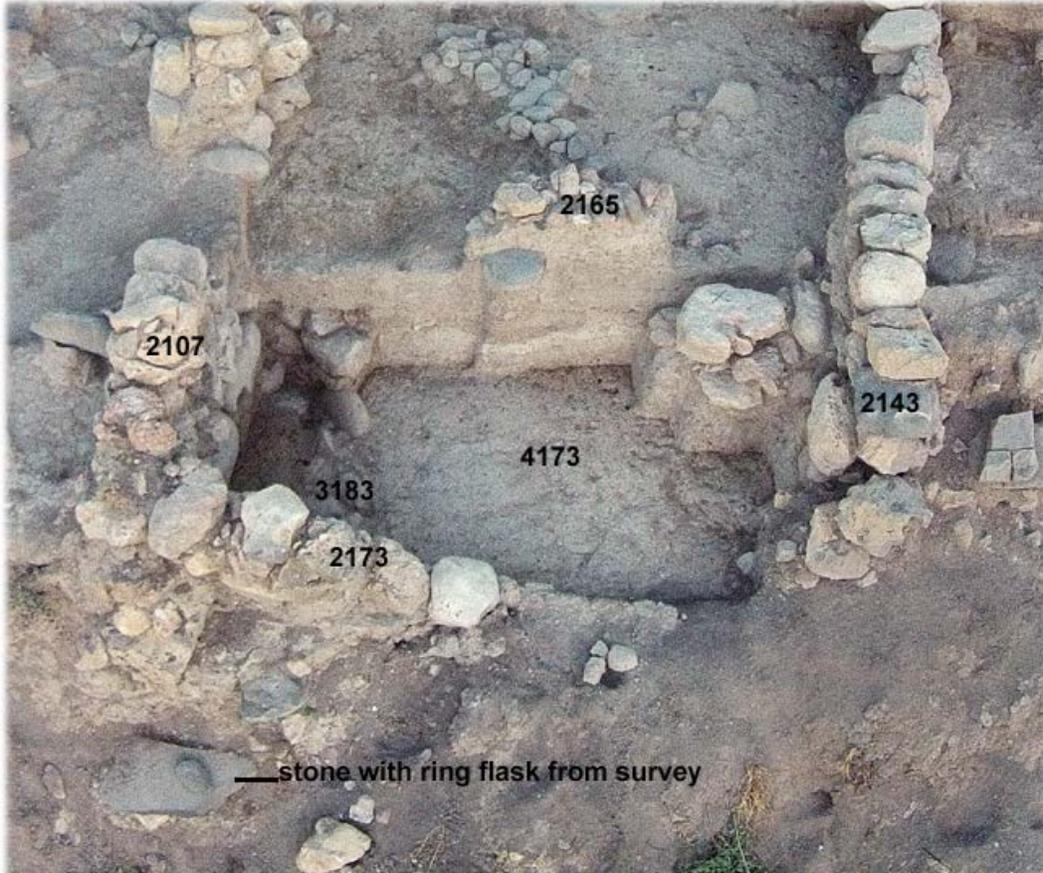
To the south of Wall 4134, between the extant balk and Wall 2143/3120, a small probe was excavated. This debris (4131) is below A5 plaster surface 4107. In its northwestern corner, part of a large rounded flat-topped stone appeared, possibly a pillar base, at 374.65 m. To the north of Wall 4134, it seems that this is the top of a burnt brick layer (4132). More excavation is necessary to know if and how these debris layers and stone are related to Wall 4134.

Square B/13

Excavation proceeded below the floating level of A5 Wall 3182, exposing more of the east-west row of stones, 3183, that had been considered a possible A6 wall at the end of the previous season. It indeed seems that Wall 3183 should be attributed to A6, as it is clearly below the walls that are attributed to A4 and A5 here (corner of 2107 and 2173, and 3182). The area between Wall 3183 on the south and the stones apparently tumbled from Wall 2143 down the top of the slope on the north contained a deep layer of soft debris with a moderate amount of pottery. The lowest level excavated was 374.08 m, which is at least 50 cm lower than the layers abutting Wall 3180 to the north, also attributed to A6. No floor was found this season and this layer appears to be some kind of fill. It is possible that this is due to the proximity to the slope and erosion line.



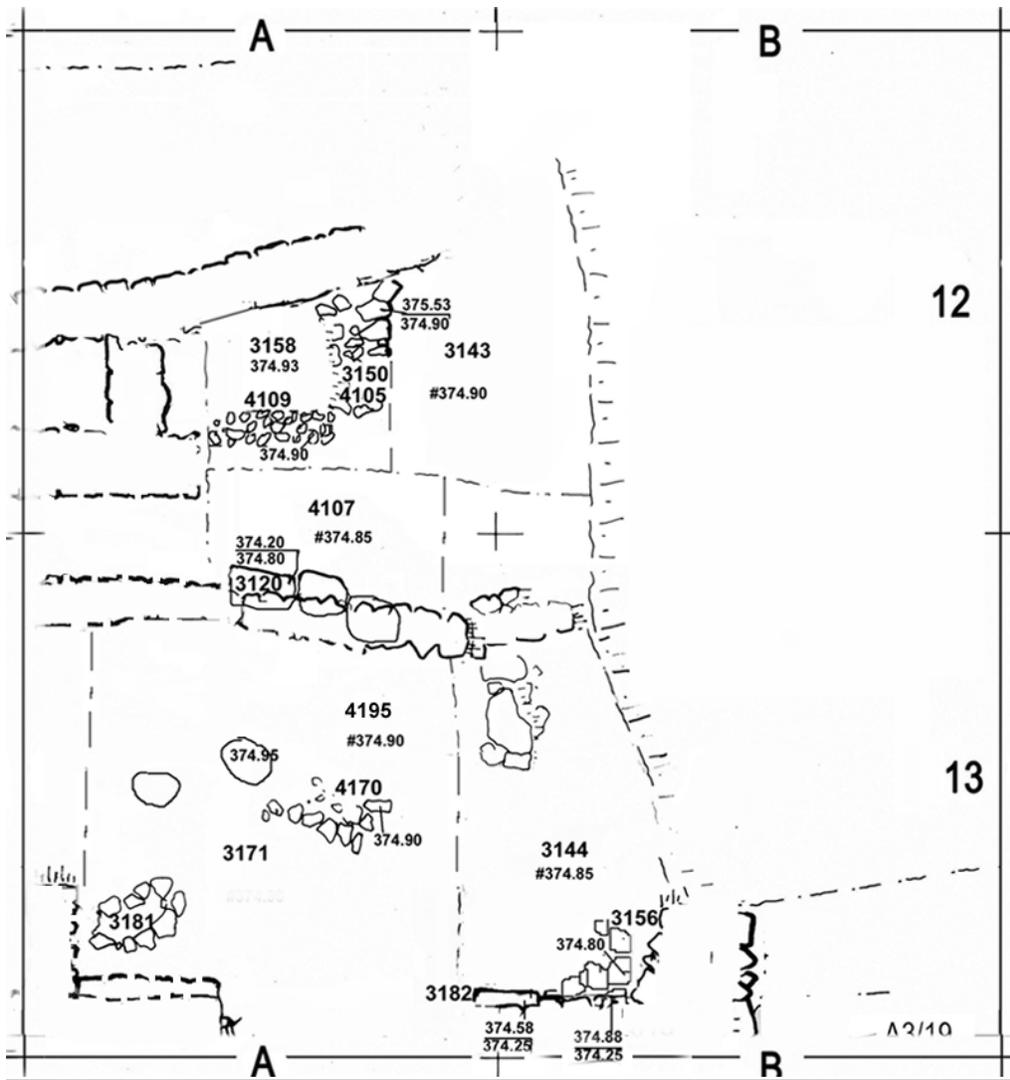
Sq. B13 looking south. Corner of A4 Walls 2107 and 2173 (left) above A5? Wall 3182; stones of A6? Wall 3183 on bottom.



Square B/13, looking west at fill/debris 4173 and Wall 3183 (A6?); note flat basalt stone where ring flask was found, on the slope below the walls

Stratum A5

Stratum A5 remains were uncovered in the eastern part of Area A, in Squares A-B/12-13. However, it should be noted that at this stage of the excavation, our understanding of these remains as an independent occupation layer is tentative, mainly due to the extreme proximity to A4 remains, as detailed below. The alternative explanation is that this is an earlier phase of Stratum A4 or, pertaining to the walls attributed to A5, they served as the foundation for the A4 walls and not as an independent building. Further excavation in Squares T-A-B/13, as well as excavation below the floor in Square A/14 (Room 2129) will help to clarify the situation.



Plan (provisional) - Stratum A5

Square A/12-North of Wall 3120

Since the large basalt stones of Wall 3120 were found directly below the foundation of A4 Wall 2143, it was designated an A5 wall. To the north of Wall 3120, excavation below the A4 surface (2147) revealed another surface (4107) that abutted Wall 3120 at 374.85 m. Floor 4107 was cut on the east, apparently when A6 Wall 3180 was built. To the north of Floor 4107 was an east-west row of small stones (4109), found below debris 3158, that ran from the subsidiary balk on the west (under A2 Wall 1120) until the southern end of A5 Wall 3150/4105, just at its floating level. This appears to be some kind of threshold, perhaps of a room bordered on the east by Wall 3150/4105. Excavation to the north of stone threshold 4109 revealed a layer of reddish brick

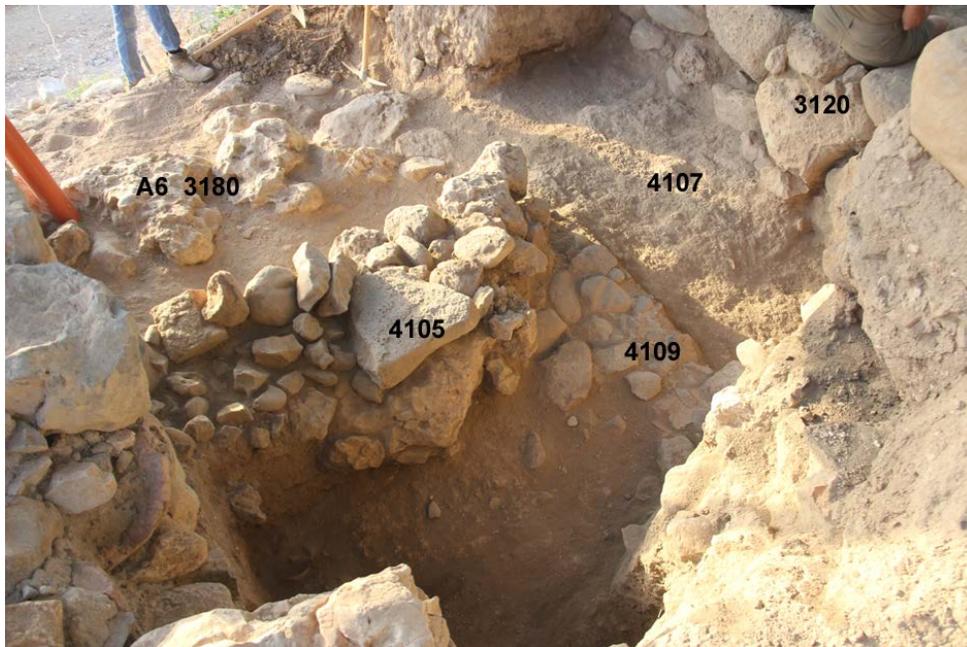
debris, with some burning (4106); only the top of this layer has been excavated and it is not clear whether it abuts Wall 4105 or runs below it.

North-south Wall 3150/4105 is rather enigmatic. Upon removal of the large white limestones of Stratum A4 that capped this wall, the stones designated Wall 3150 were rather carelessly thrown together, to the point that it was doubted whether this was a wall at all. Removal of the top layer of these stones revealed a better-built wall (though still not very well-constructed) that contained one large boulder, designated 4105, although it seems that the two are one and the same, with the loose stones on top possibly being a collapse or, alternatively, having been laid in A4 and then capped by the large limestones. This remains unclear. Wall 4105 is abutted on the east by a layer that might be a floor – 3143. Wall 3150/4105 continues to the north, penetrating under A4 Wall 2145. This layer covers the A6 elements here, described above.

Taken together, the A5 elements to the north of Wall 3210 include plaster surface 4107, which also abuts the threshold 4109 related to Wall 3150/4105, and another surface, 3143, to the east of this wall, which is cut by the erosion line on the slope.



Sq. A/12, looking northwest. A5 Threshold 4109 and Wall 4105, with meter stick on Floor 4107; to the east of the wall, excavation proceeded down to the A6 level.



Square A/12, view from the west at Stratum A5 Wall 4105, threshold 4109, Floor 4107 and the northern face of Wall 3120.

Square A/13

Excavation in this square proceeded below the level of the A4 floor (3160; a 'slice' of this floor was left in the west, along Wall 3154 – Locus 4144, see below), reaching a layer (3171) of brick debris mixed with gray earth, many stones, very many sherds, flint and groundstone tools and containing several special finds this season/, including a broken figurine (41498), an amethyst and gold scarab (41334), a bronze bracelet (41364), and a faience bead (41391). Two installations were revealed in this debris: 3181 in the northwestern corner and 4170 in the eastern end. Further excavation of 3181 this season revealed that it comprises a rounded concentration of stones adjoined on the east by a rectangle of white plaster mixed with chunks of white gravel. Installation 4170 is composed of a concentration of stones, running on a northeast-southwest line, possibly a paving of some sort. Further excavation is necessary to see if there is a relationship between these stones and Installation 3181, found just to their west. To the northwest of the stones of 4170, in the center of the excavated area, are two flat-topped round stones on an east-west line; the one on the east is larger. The level with the stones, on which the installations rested, is designated 4195 and considered the A5 surface here, although further excavation is necessary to be certain. Both debris 3171 and 4195 abut Wall 3120 on the north

and Wall 2107 on the south. This is notable, since this suggests that Wall 2107 was used in both Stratum A5 and A4, although further excavation is necessary to expose the entire northern face of this wall to be sure.



Aerial view of A5 Room 4195 (west on top); note installations and “pillar bases”; higher step with A4 floor 4144 on the west.

The southern face of Wall 3120 was revealed this season with the removal of the smaller stones of Wall 2143 above it, since Wall 2143 was built somewhat offset to the south. It was seen that that some of the large stones of 3120 protruded into the lower courses of Wall 2143, which became evident when the latter were removed from above the a segment of the eastern part of Wall 3120. In fact, it was difficult in some places to discern the difference between the walls and the question was raised whether this is one wall – built with very large stones in its foundation (=3120) and smaller stones placed on top (=2143), being somewhat intermeshed, with the wall in use through A5 and A4. However, the fact that 2143 was somewhat offset to the south, covering the southern face of Wall 3120, and the very different nature of the stones, vote in favor of them

having been two separate walls, although built very close together. It seems that the builders of the A4 building were well aware of and utilized the stones of 3120. This is also seen in the proximity of the floor levels of the two. It should be noted that, at this point of the excavation, the eastern end of Wall 3120 is floating (on the northern face, seen in A6 Locus 4131), while this level has not been reached on the southern face, which is abutted by the A5 Floor 4195.



Square A/13, looking north; A5 Floor 4195 and Wall 3120, after removal of stones of Wall 2143 above its eastern end.



Square A/13, looking northwest; A5 installation 3181 and “pillar bases” on floor 4195, showing relationship to A4 Floor 4144 and corner of Walls 3154 and 2143 on the higher step to the west.

the larger stones of 3120. Moreover, it seems that in this lower course, Wall 2143 contained several large stones that are unlike the smaller stones in the upper courses.



Square A/13 looking north. Newly exposed upper course of A4 Wall 2143 (near its western end) after dismantling A2 Wall 1118 above and excavating the ‘shelf’ created by the late burial against its southern face.

Further to the west, A2 Wall 1118 was dismantled and below the fill underneath, the western continuation of A4 Wall 2143 was exposed up to its corner with Wall 3154, the western wall of this room. A unique feature is that this ‘corner’ is, in fact, rounded so that Walls 2143 and 3154 together create a curvilinear wall. A little over one meter from this ‘corner’, the rather carelessly laid stones of Wall 3154 reached a large worked rectangular limestone block; on top of it was a course of smaller stones so that viewing the wall from the top did not reveal the block. A row of stones extends from the southern end of this block to the west, termed Wall 3157, although this might just be collapse. Just to the west of the block were a few collapsed (?) stones and then yet another worked stone - this is a basalt stone, standing upright. It is located in and partially fills the gap between Wall 2107 on the west (still covered by A3 Wall 3102 at this point) and the limestone block. This stone is enigmatic. It might be the continuation of the wall (although there is a small gap), a blocked entranceway (leading from the west into the room) or a standing stone

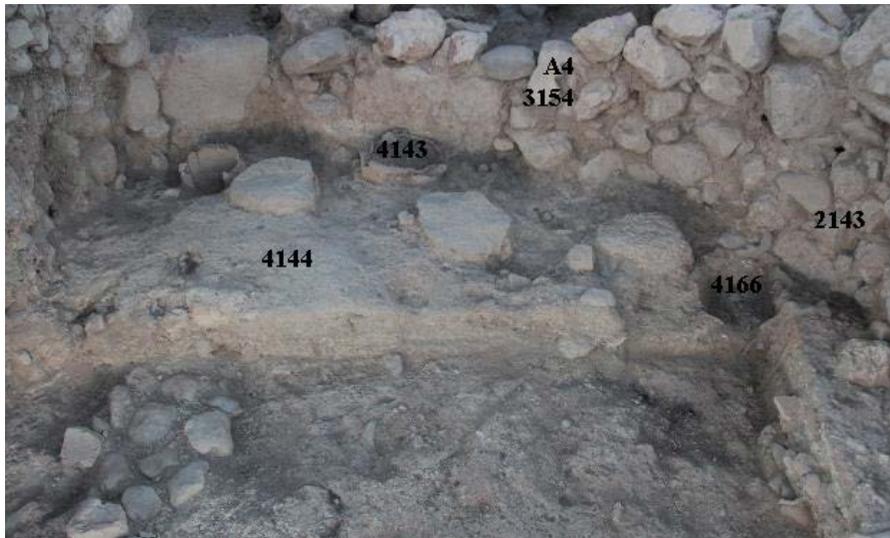
(massebah). Abutting the eastern face of Wall 3154 is a gray earth surface (4144; 375.15 m), with ash. On this surface are two ovens and a sunken storage jar base, from north to south, placed flush against the wall. The northern oven (4166) is located in the round ‘corner’ of Walls 2143 and 3154. The middle oven (41243) is placed against the large limestone block and, in fact, is adhered to it by a hard yellow clay/plaster. The sunken storage jar base (41312) is located against the large upright basalt “massebah”. Three worked flattened stones are placed in association with each installation: to the west of the northern oven, and to the north/northeast of the middle oven and the sunken jar base. The three stones form a row and are equidistant; these apparently were used as work surfaces for each oven and the jar.



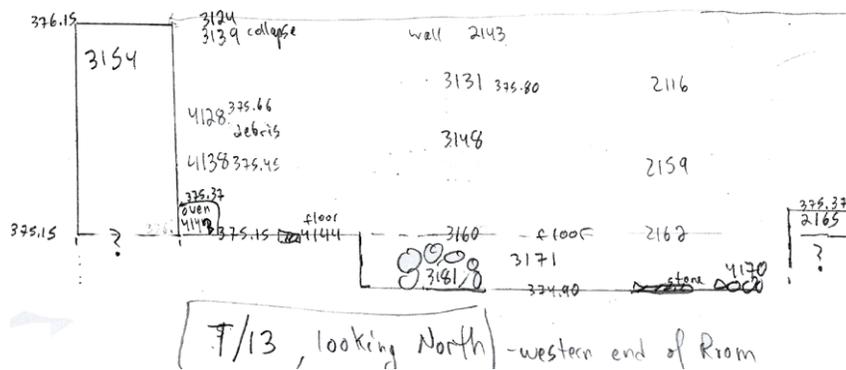
Square T/13, two ovens and storage jar base with stones against Wall 3154, looking north



Square T/13 looking west. Oven 4143 against monolithic block; Left: storage jar base



Square A-T/13, looking west. Surface 4144 with ovens 4143, 4166 and sunken storage jar base, fronted by stones; A5 debris 3171 and top of Floor 4195 in the foreground. Round 'corner' between Walls 3154 and 2143 on the right.



Schematic section, Square T/13, looking north at layers east of Wall 3154

Squares A–T/14

Excavation in the southern room of the cultic unit (Room 2129) concentrated this season in its western part, below A3 Wall 3123, which was dismantled (western end of Square A/14).

Directly below this wall were two worked roughly rounded limestones, placed ca. 60 cm apart. A concentration of small stones was found to their south, against the balk of the square; it is not clear if they are related to the activity described here or not. Each of the two worked stones was set on a ca. 5 cm thick layer of whitish plaster and gray earth. The southern stone was taller (28 cm high) than the northern one (11 cm high); both were set in a matrix of gray earth and white plaster that went down to 376.04 m, where a more consistent layer of white plaster (4122). It is not clear what the function of these stones was. It is possible that they had served as pillar bases, although their different heights seem to preclude this. The other possibility is that they were maṣṣebot, standing stones (see further below on their relationship to elements on the floor to the east). The plaster surface on which the stones sat (4122) was cut on the north by A3 Wall 3102.



Square A/14, looking north as the worked stones were revealed under A3 Wall 3123; 1=southern worked stone (with stone above it); 2=northern worked stone; 3=slabs of 4172 reused in modern burial? (4159); note small stones in lower left near balk. Right: Floor 3108 on lower level



Square A/14, looking west. Late burial 4151/4159 in center. Note it and A3 Wall 3102 cutting the plaster of 4122 (arrow).



Square A/14, looking west; closeup of worked stones with layer of fill with plaster, reddish brick debris and charcoal under each stone, down to white plaster of 4122. Background: higher 'step' with basalt slab floor 4172 under burnt debris 4169. Left: top of trapezoidal 'maşşebah'

Ca. 25 cm to the west of the worked stones, and ca. 25 cm higher than the plaster surface 4122, was a surface composed of fine flattened basalt slabs (4172; 376.29 m), nicely arranged one next to the other. The level of the slab stone surface is, in fact, just about the same as the southern worked stone. Notably, the paving stones end on the south just on line with this southern worked stone; to their south is a layer of burnt debris with some collapsed stones. This higher step was covered by a layer of burnt debris (4169), very similar to the collapse and debris

found in the room to the east. This burnt debris was covered by an A3 layer (4160) and there is no connection between the basalt slabs and the A3 walls to the north of it (4182, 1158+3102), further supporting the attribution of this slab surface to A4, despite it being on a higher level than the white plaster surface 4122 with the worked stones. Thus, our understanding of this raised western part of Room 2129, higher by ca. 90 cm (the lower part-4122 with the worked stones) to 1.2 m (the higher part-4172 the stone slabs) is a kind of 'platform'. Further support for this raised area having been contemporary with the eastern, lower part of the room is the orientation of the worked stones: the stone bamah (2127) on the lower floor is located just between the two worked stones; as noted above, this is also on line with the basalt slab pavement. The alternative interpretation would be that this raised area belongs to a later phase of Stratum A4 (and contained two 'steps' as well) that had been violently destroyed; however, no such phase has been identified elsewhere and certainly no two superimposed destruction levels belonging to this stratum have been found. Moreover, if this was a later phase of Stratum A4, we would expect to find the continuation of plaster floor 4122 to the east, but no such traces were found below the A3 floor and above the A4 destruction debris in the room.

While the option that that this raised area is a later phase seems untenable, there are problems with the interpretation of it being a platform, mainly that no clear visible support for this platform was identified below surface 4122 and the stones. A probe into the section below them was cut (4127), revealing lines of burnt brick with mortar, but also much burnt and collapsed debris; in fact, the straight lines are above the collapse and no clear structure could be identified. On the northern end of the section – between the northern worked stone and Wall 2107– the debris in the section contained a huge burnt chunk of brick that might have been part of a built element, but it could not be identified. This northern part was cut on top by the later burial (4151/4159-see below) so it is difficult to clearly determine what happened there. An element on the south of the section might be related to a possible structure that supported this assumed platform. As mentioned above, Wall 2169 in the south of the room is understood to have been a bench or screen wall in the room; its northern end contained a 1 m high brick 'pillar' (no individual bricks were identified, only pisé). To the north of this brick 'pillar' was a 1 meter high trapezoid monolithic stone, found tilted towards the north and coated on its northern side with thick white plaster. The original height of the stone would make it just on the level of 4122, the level on which the two worked stones are set. Between the tilted stone and the brick 'pillar' is

dark gray burnt debris surrounded by reddish brick debris. It is possible that originally the stone had adjoined the northern face of the 'pillar', but collapsed during the fiery destruction. Whether this was yet another massebah or possibly had some constructional function is not clear.



Squares A–T/14, looking northwest. Raised area in west of A4 Room 2129. Plaster surface 4122 with two worked stones and higher step with pavement 4172 to its west; debris and stones to the west of slabs 4172 is 4169



Squares A–T/14 looking west at raised part of the room. See also next photo.



Squares A-T/14, looking west. 1=brick 'pillar' above wall/bench 2169; 2=monolithic trapezoid stone, tilted, with line of white plaster on northern face; 3=worked stones on surface 4122; 4=destruction debris on slab surface; 5=slab surface 4172; 6=probe into western section below worked stones-note tilted/collapsed bricks; 7=large burnt bricks on northern end of section, above stone floor 3104; 8=disturbance/late burial 4151/4159.



Square A/14, looking west at section of higher area in the west; note burnt debris and large brick chunks; Floor 3108 on bottom; top of trapezoid monolithic stone on right

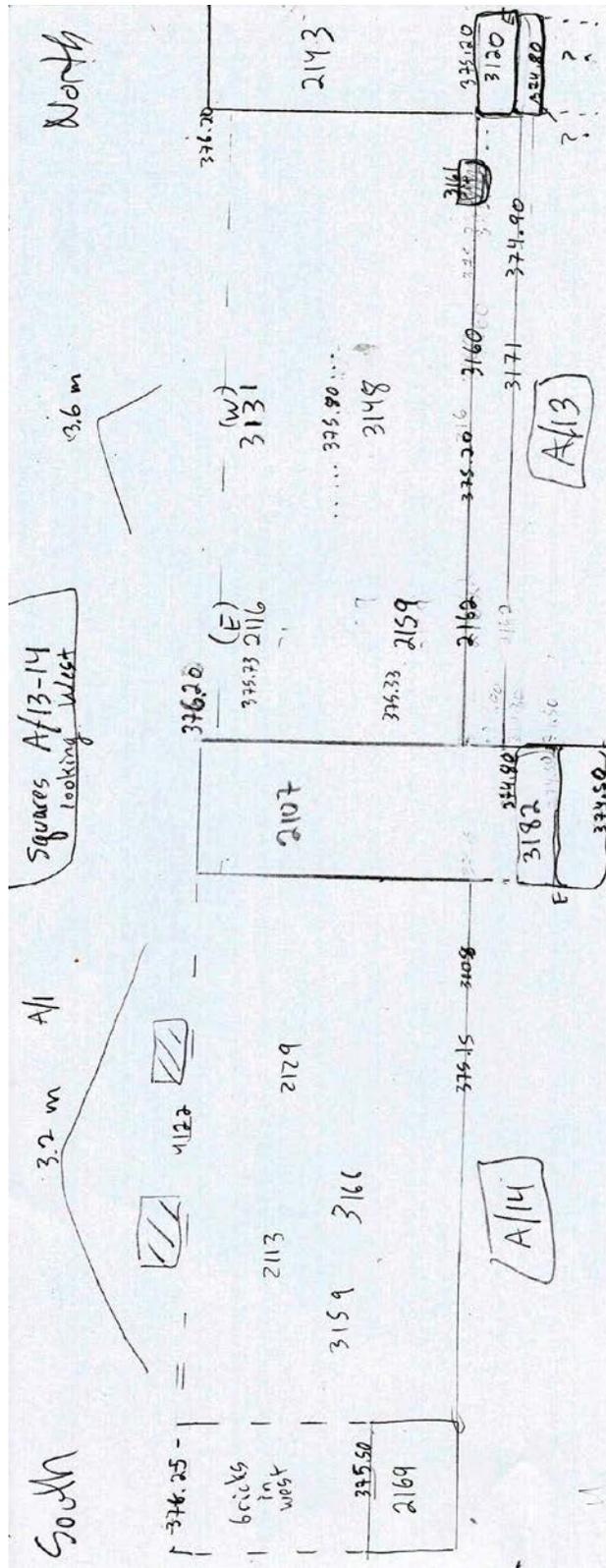
North of slab pavement 4172 and plaster surface 4122 is a later disturbance (4151) that cut through the surface and the collapse above it. The people who dug this pit reached the basalt slabs and reused them as what seems like coverstones of a grave (4159).



Squares A–T/14 looking west. Late disturbance (burial?) 4159, cut into plaster of 4122.

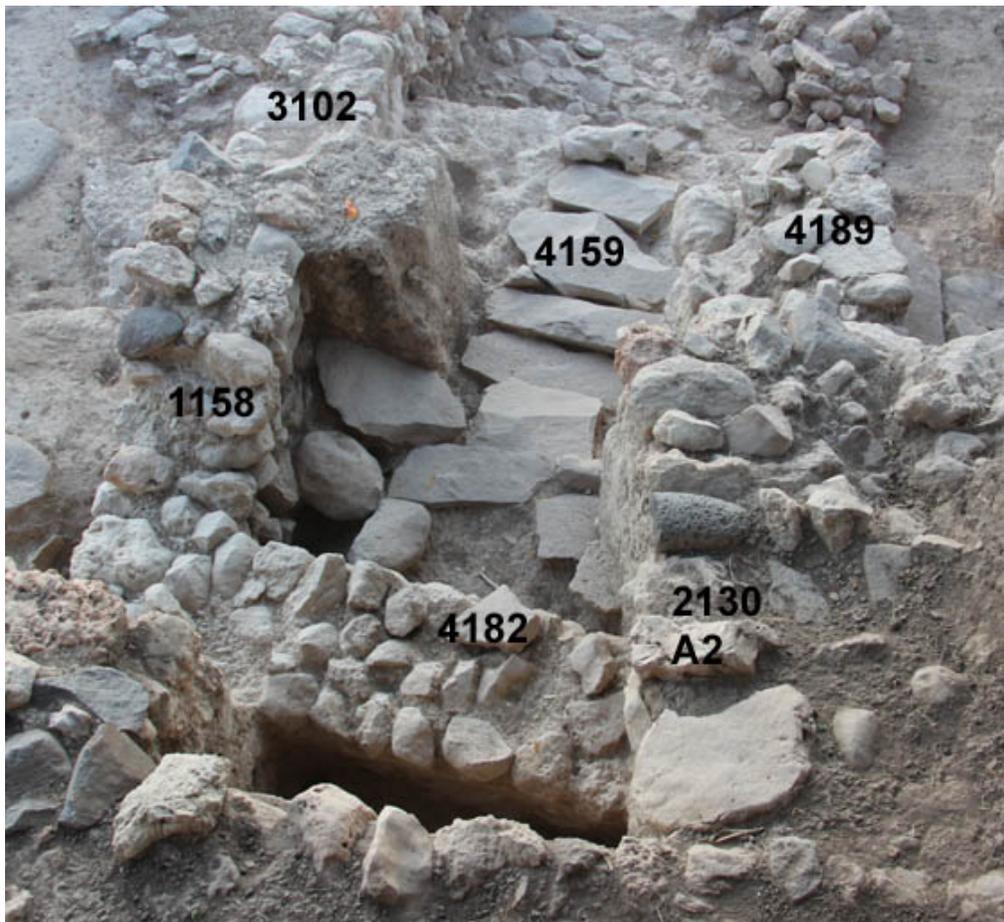


General view of A4 remains at end of 2016, looking west. In the northern room (right), excavation proceeded down to A5 (lower step in center) and A6 (lower step in right foreground)



Schematic section, Squares A/13-14, looking west

courses, running under A2 Wall 1147 which was removed this season, so that the corner of Wall 4182 with Wall 1158/3102 on the north was revealed. The area to the east of Wall 4182 was excavated as 4181 and continued down to the top of the slabs covered the late burial(?) 4159, as well as the northern end of the A4 slab floor 4172. A very narrow area west of Wall 4182, between it and the floating A2 Wall 2131 above was excavated (4180) but did not reach the paving stones. The corner between Wall 4182 and 1158/3102 is, in fact, the first time that substantial architecture has been found that clearly relates to A3.



Square T/14, looking east at corner between A3 Walls 4182 and 1158/3102. Note A2 Wall 2130 covering 4182 and the stones of Wall 4189 (A2b?3?) running just to the south of 2130. Between the walls is the cut of late burial(?) 4159 with reused stone slabs from A4.

Another wall that might belong to Stratum A3 is 4189, an east-west stone wall running directly underneath and slightly to the south of A2 (late phase) Wall 2130. However, this wall is floating much above the level of Wall 4182 to its west and it is possible that it should be attributed to an early phase of A2 Wall 2130 instead.



Squares A-T/14 looking north; note relationship of Wall 4189 to A2 Wall 2130 and to A4 slab floor 4172

Square A/12

Remains of Stratum A3 were found in the area between A2 Walls 2126 and 2128, which were found to be floating above them. The complete pot bellows was found in this space, attributed to an earlier phase of A2. Underneath it was debris 3175, which was found to abut the top of two ovens/furnaces: 3176 on the east, under the threshold of the A2 room and 3178 in the northern part of the space. Two new installations/features were revealed this season: 4192, probably yet another oven, west of 3178, and a large hollow pit(?), unnumbered, in the bottom of the western balk. Debris 4194 surrounded these ovens/installations. Oven 3176, in the balk created under the threshold of the A2 room, was not excavated this season, although its southern face which protrudes from the balk shows that it is well-built and has burnt sides. The relationship of this oven to the stones to its north, which continued down from the stones in the threshold, is not clear. Oven 3178, in the northern part of the space, is composed of thick red tabun material, lined with ceramic sherds. Its northern part is under Wall 2128. To the west of the oven, protruding from the western balk, a cylindrical ceramic installation was exposed. Not enough was exposed to know its nature; it might be a ceramic vessel, since the walls seem to be fired. Inside, two distinct lines were observed: the northern one was off-white plaster-like material and the

southern was of white material that seemed to be phytoliths Just to the south of 4192 is what seems to be a pit or some kind of hollow in the western balk; deep inside were sherds of a pithos (41415), so this might be the imprint of a sunken vessel that is ‘hiding’ in the balk. Gray ash is found to the south of this ‘hold’ . In the southern part of the space is a NE-SW line of small fieldstones already exposed last season; Wall 2126 floats above them.



Square S/12, looking west. Oven 3178 at the right and installation 4192 at top right, in western balk. Note the pit(?) in the balk. The lowest debris layer in this photo – 4194.

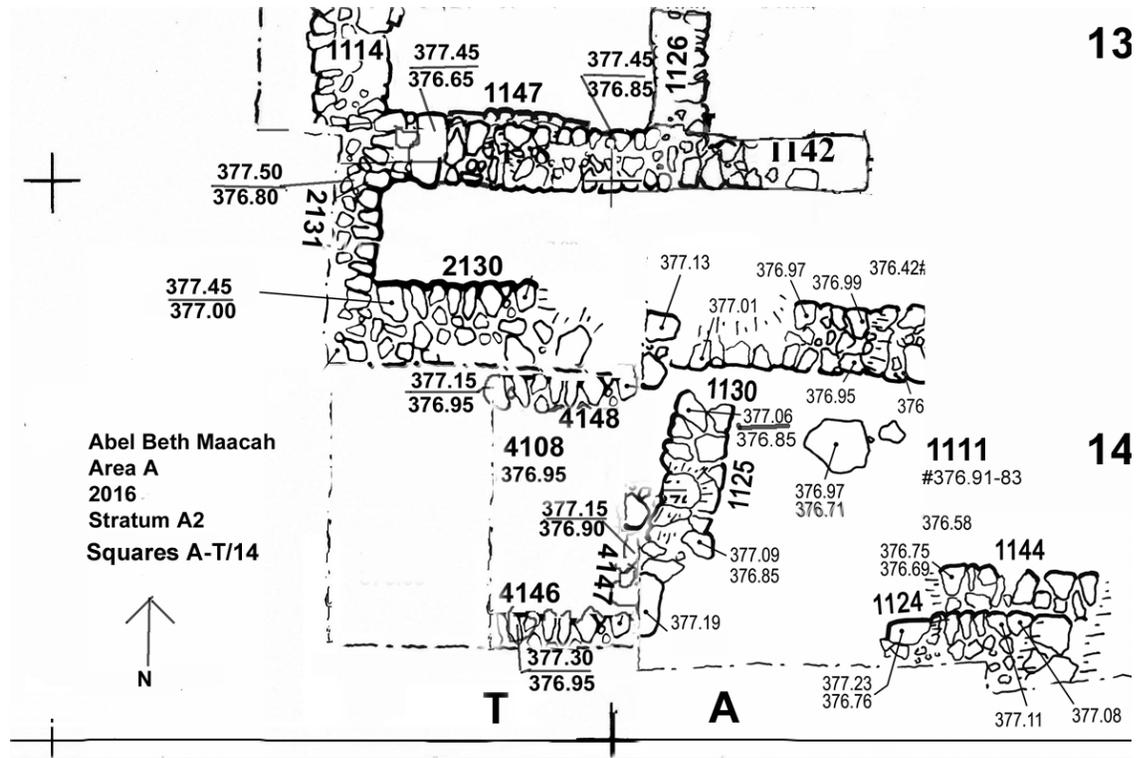


Square A/12, looking south; floating level of Wall 2126 above A3 debris 4194 and stones

Stratum A2

Remains of Stratum A2 were excavated in the eastern quarter of Square T/14 and mainly in the upper western part of Area A, in three new squares: S-T/11, R/12, where two phases were identified.

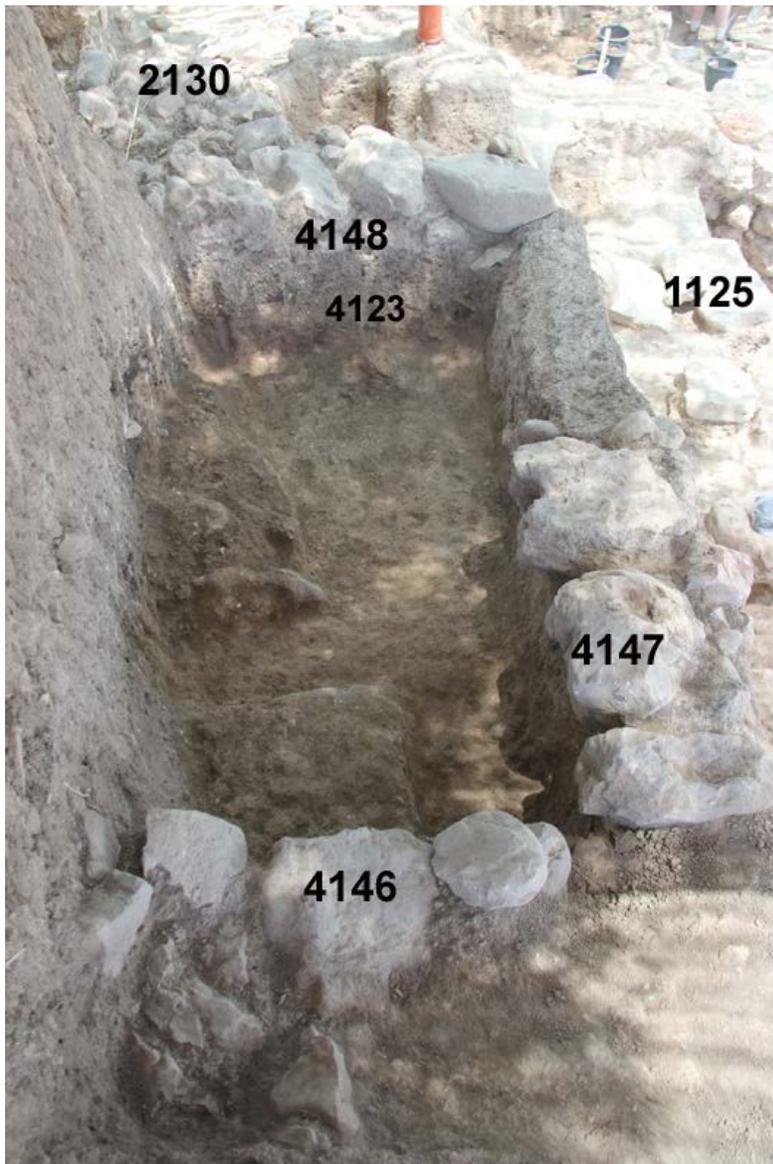
Square T/14



A2 remains in Square T/14

Excavation in the eastern quarter of Square T/14 revealed three short segments of fieldstones walls that continue to the west into the unexcavated western part of the square (Walls 4146, 4147, 4148). All three are similar and preserved one course high (though possibly a lower course is 'hiding' in the debris under Wall 4146); a debris layer (4108) abutting them, although no clear floor was found down to their floating level. This debris did not contain many sherds or other finds. The southern part of east-west Wall 4146 is inside the southern balk. On its east, it makes a corner with Wall 4147. Wall 4147 ends ca. 80 cm south of Wall 4148 and this might be an entrance. It is suggested that perhaps this entrance was blocked at some later phase by Wall 1125, a north-south wall excavated in 2103 that runs at a slightly different angle (northeast-southwest), but whose southern end joins with the stones of Wall 4147 nicely. Another possible

relationship between the 'room' excavated this season in T/14 and the A2 remains in Square A/14 to the east is Wall 1124; like 4146, its southern face is in the balk and it is similarly oriented and of similar elevation. Either they had originally formed one wall and for some reason (during the assumed later phase when 1125 was added? Due to a modern disturbance?) they were cut. Alternatively, they represent two different walls with a large gap between them. On the north of the 'room' is Wall 4148, which runs flush along the southern face of Wall 2130, so that the relation between them is not clear. It is possible that 4148 is a kind of thickening of 2130 or even collapse from that wall. Below 4148 is Wall 4148 which is attributed to A3.



Square T/14, looking north. A2 walls 4146, 4147 and 4148; 2130 in the background



Square T/14, looking northwest at subsidiary balk in middle of square; note layer of dark debris with charcoal and white speckles (4123) under the walls.

Under the walls was a debris layer, 4123, that covered A3 Wall 4189 and its related debris, 4160. Thus, this layer is attributed to A2-3, although in matrix, it is very similar to 4108 (hard brown-gray debris with charcoal and white speckles).

Squares R–S–T/11–12

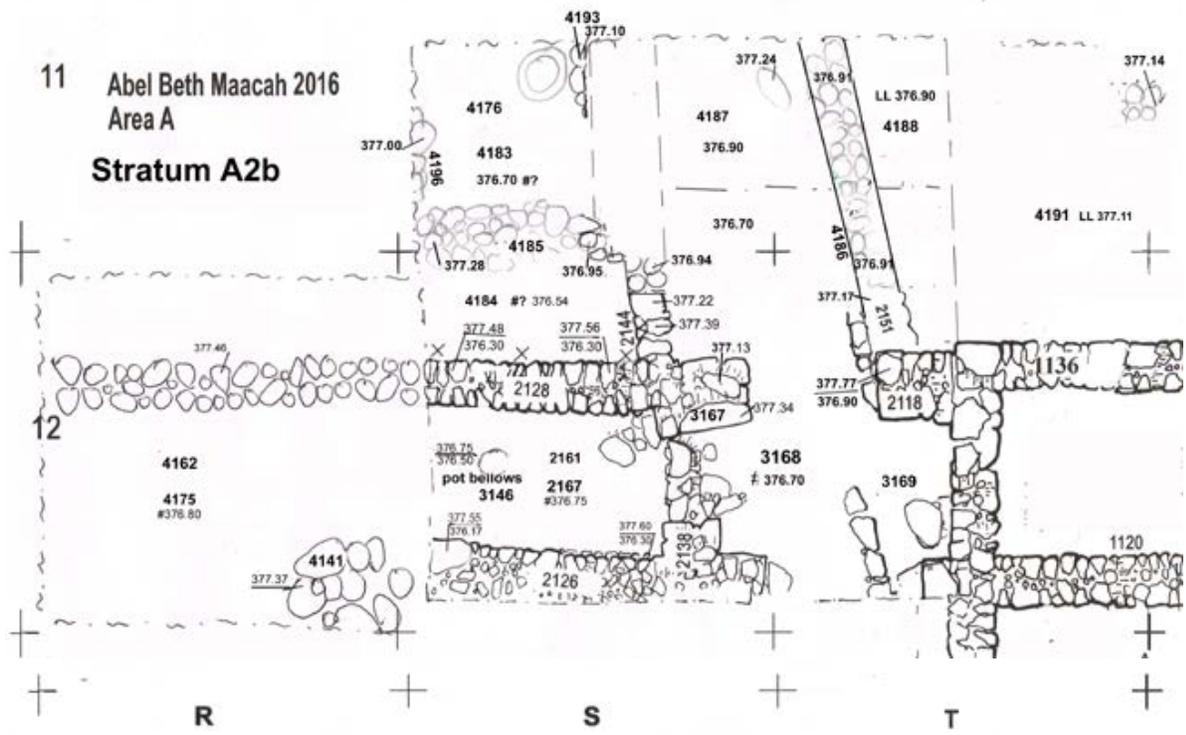
Two phases were identified in the expansion of the excavated area to the north and west. These two phases were already seen in Square S/12 in the previous seasons and the new data that has accumulated in Squares R–S–T/11–12 demonstrate the complexity of the activity in this part of Area A. In 2016, the extension to the north revealed that the passageway at that end was bordered by earlier walls, with a slightly different orientation (northwest-southeast) than that in the passageway as excavated in Squares S-T/12 (north-south). Like in the latter squares, the upper phase contains disturbances in the form of large concentrations of stones which cut into the soft debris. For provisional plans of Phases A2a and A2b in this area, see the following page.

R

S

T

11 Abel Beth Maacah 2016
Area A
Stratum A2b



R

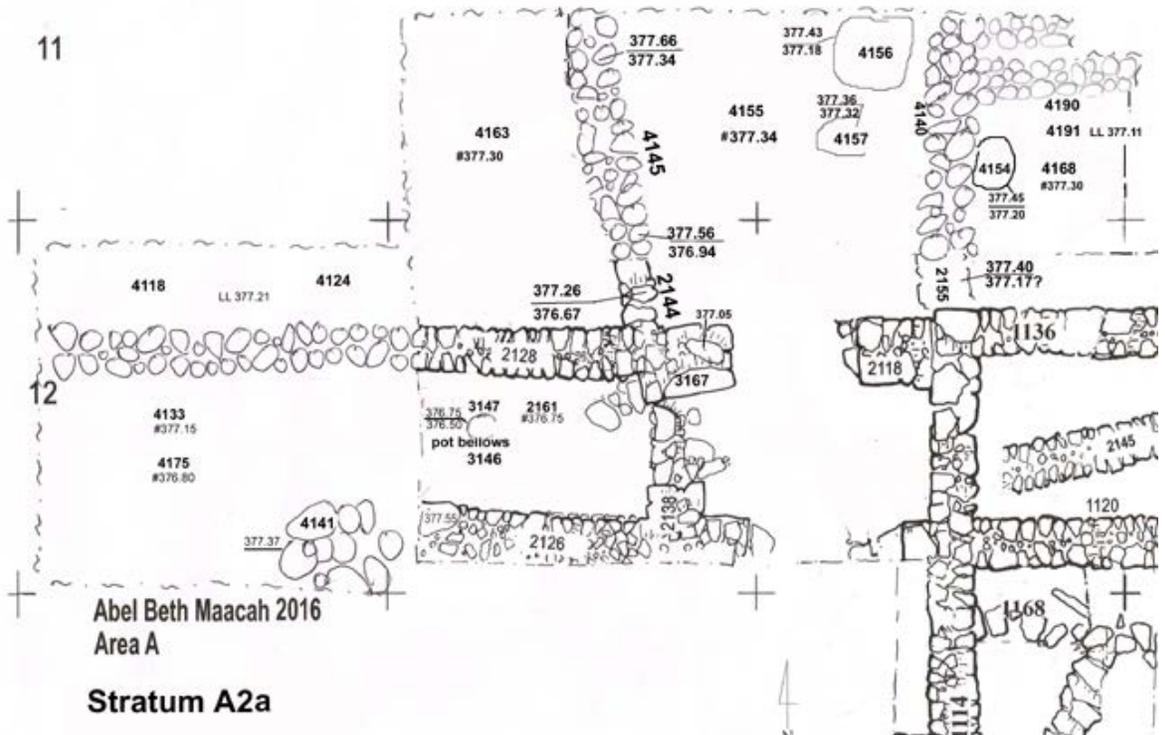
S

T

11

12

Abel Beth Maacah 2016
Area A
Stratum A2a



Squares S/11–12 and R/12 – The Northwestern Area

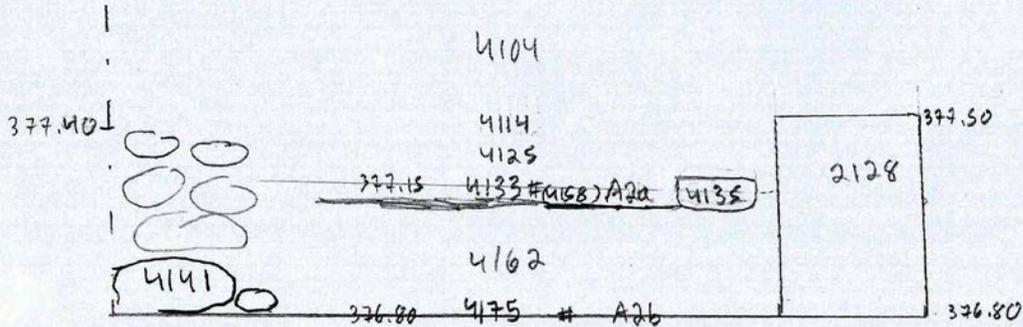
The two major east-west stone walls, 2126 (south) and 2128 (north) were used in both phases of Stratum A2, and the changes in the space they bordered were mainly floor raisings. These debris and floor layers were excavated in Square S/12 in previous seasons and expansion to the west in Square R/12 showed that the same sequence existed in that part of this large space, as detailed in the table and schematic sections below. Notably, it was found that the northern wall, 2128, continues to the west up to the border of the excavation and beyond while, on the other hand, Wall 2126 terminates just at the balk between R/12 and S/12, possibly turning to the south at this point. It was found that Wall 2126 is wider than Wall 2128; only excavation to the south of 2126 can reveal the reason for these differences. The termination of Wall 2126 creates an L-shaped space leading from the north-south passageway between the western and eastern buildings in the A2 complex, by way of the threshold between Walls 2126 and 2128 near the passageway. This supports the idea that the area between the walls was a passageway leading into a very large courtyard on the west (and south?). Walls 2126 and 2128 float above the installations/ovens and debris attributed to A3.

Sequence of loci and installations in Squares R-S/12

Phase	R/12 (west)	Lower Elevation	S/12 (east)
Topsoil, debris	4104, 4114, 4136	377.50/377.44	2104, 2111
A2a	4125, 4150	377.15/377.19	2124
	Floor 4133/4158	377.15/377.11	Floor 2153
A2b	4162	376.89/376.80	2161
	Floor 4175	376.80/376.80	Floor 2167

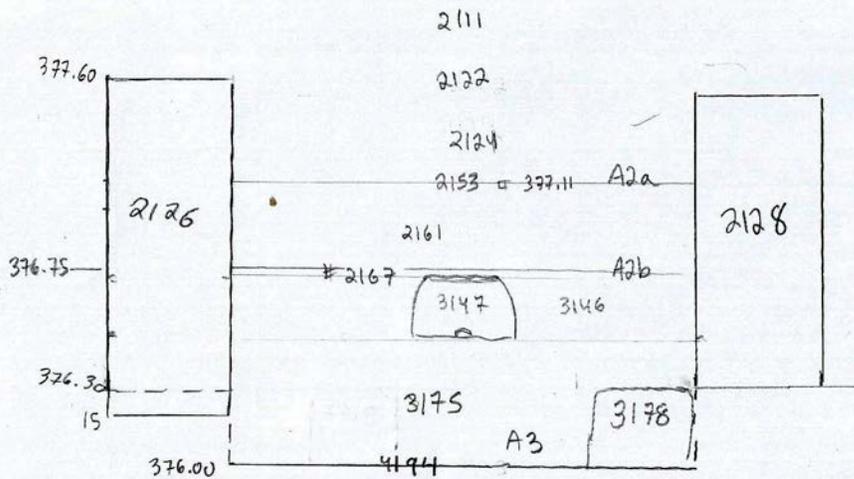
The sequence of debris layers and floors in the eastern part of the space – Square S/12 – bordered by Walls 2126 and 2128, showed there were two superimposed phases (excavated in past seasons). The upper one (A2a) contained a debris layer with some traces of burning (2122, 2124) resting on an earthen floor (2153). Below it was a debris layer (2161) without traces of burning, resting on an earthen floor that was difficult to detect (2167). In the makeup of this floor was a complete pot bellows, sunken so that its rim, encircled by stones, was visible; it apparently was in secondary use. The layer in which the pot bellows was sunk (3146) covered Stratum A3 activity (described above).

schematic section
R/12
looking west
2016



(A3 levels not reached in 2016 in this square)

schematic section
Square S/12
looking west
2016



Note pot bellows sunk in the A2b floor

The sequence in the western part of this space –Square R/12 – bordered on the north by Wall 2128 and on the south by the balk, is more ambiguous. Under a thick layer of hard white bricky debris (4104) was a very burnt layer, full of ash, charcoal, burnt red brick and collapsed bricks,

as well as some fallen ceiling material, ca. 35 cm deep (4125). At this height, three features were revealed that indicated a floor level: a round patch of hard light gray brick/plaster (4135) that seems to have been the bottom of an oven or some installation. To its east was a fine basalt mortar, tipped over on its side. Between them was a black ashy patch. In the west of this layer was a round ash patch, possibly a pit. To its west was a concentration of pottery, including typical Iron I shapes, such as an s-profile bowl. These features seem to indicate there was a floor here, though such a layer was not clearly defined, aside from some patches of soft brown earth (4133). These patches became somewhat more successive and were designated the floor makeup (4158). Excavation below this layer revealed more burnt destruction debris (4162) that was, in fact, very similar to that above the floor/floor makeup. This debris was excavated down to a layer with gray earth and brick debris (4175) that seemed to be a floor, attributed to Phase A2b. This layer is just on the same level as the surface with the pot bellows sunk in it to the east, so its definition as a surface apparently is correct. However, the possibility should be considered that this entire space was filled with burnt destruction debris from under the thick white brick layer down to this surface and there is only one phase of activity here; if so, then the pottery, black ash patch, round installation and mortar are in the debris some 20-30 cm above the floor, which is possible.

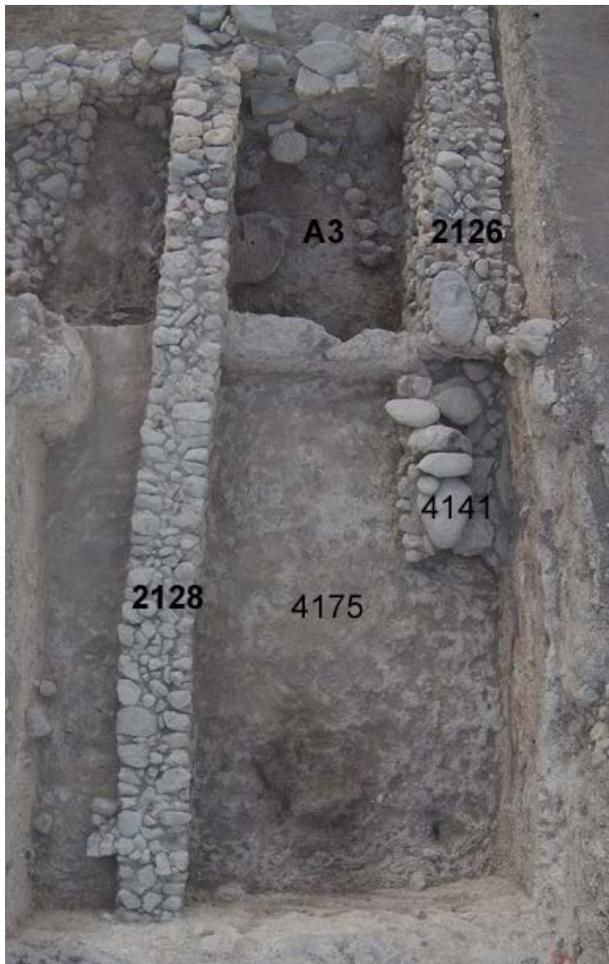
Excavation terminated in 2016 on the level thought to be the A2b floor (4175), based on its matrix and its correlation to the floor level in the eastern part of this space (Square S/12), excavated in previous seasons.



Square R/12, looking north; A2a burnt layer-floor (2125-4133) with mortar and oven 4135; unexcavated area on the left (west) that was subsequently excavated down to A2b (see photo below). Note stones of feature 414 in lower right foreground, covered by debris.



Square R/12, looking west at balk; note thick layer of whitish brick debris covering A2a burnt debris; layer with burnt patches and brick debris 4162 (A2b);



Squares S-R/12 at end of 2016 season (north on the right)

Stone ‘Platform’ 4141

In the southwestern corner of Square R/12 was a feature (4141) that remains enigmatic until future excavation can clarify its nature and function. 4141 is a concentration of stones, ca. 1.5 m from east to west and running into the southern balk; extant size from north to south is ca. 1.4 m. This feature was visible from the level of the top of the burnt debris of the A2a level (4125) and continues down into the lowest excavated level – that of A2b 4175. Its upper level was composed of a ‘row’ of smooth oval basalt and limestones running north-south, with smaller stones around them. Underneath them are a layer of what seem to be worked stones, some flat-topped, forming a squarish ‘platform’, though this needs further clarification. It is not clear if the upper oval-shaped stones are the same phase as the lower ‘platform’; they might have been added later. 4141 abuts the western end of Wall 2126 and continues into the southern balk. Its function is not clear; it appears to be a platform or podium of some sort. It appears to have been

built in A2b and reused in A2a, possibly with a new course of stones added to raise its elevation. Alternatively, it is a later intrusion (possibly the upper oval shaped stones only?), although that possibility seems less likely, since the burnt debris covers it.



Square S/11 in foreground, looking southeast; stones 4141 emerging in the burnt debris of A2a Locus 4125 (debris on top of stones not yet cleared). See previous photo for 4141 completely exposed, on A2b level.



Square R/11, stones 4141. Left: on A2a level; Right: on A2b level; note flattened stones forming squarish ‘platform’ below large upper stones, continuing into southern balk.



View of 4141 at end of 2106, looking east.

Square S/11 and the Northern End of Squares S/11-12

Excavation to the north of Wall 2128 took place in Square S/11, as well as in the northern end of Squares S/11 and S/12. In the latter (Square S/12), the area between Wall 2128 and the northern balk was too narrow to excavate beyond the upper layer (4118, 4124), which was the same layer of thick whitish hard brick found in the rest of the square, attributed to the post Stratum A-2 occupation or agricultural activity. The area to the north of Wall 2128 in Square S/12 will be described together with the finds in Square S/11. Originally, a balk was left between the two squares, but it was removed halfway during the season so that this whole area was excavated as one unit.

Phase A2b

The earliest remains reached in this area include the two walls on the west (4196) and east (4193), as well as an east-west stone feature that is currently described as a wall (4185) in the center, ca. 1.5 m to the north of Wall 2128. Walls 4193 and 4196 are similar in composition – unworked field stones – though at this point, only their top course and faces are exposed, since the other face is inside the respective balks (western face of 4196 and eastern face of Wall 4193). ‘Wall’ 4185 continues into the western balk and on the east, seems to make a corner with Wall 2144 (a short segment of a wall that corners with Wall 2128). This corner is superimposed by a later wall (4145 – see below), so it is not clear what the relationship is exactly. 4185 is composed of medium and small stones, ca. 1.2 m wide on the east and narrowing towards the west, creating a funnel-like look. It stands ca. 4 courses high so far. The stones are closely laid and do not form orderly rows; moreover, their top is somewhat rounded. This could either be due to collapse or, possibly, this is not a wall but rather some built element; one suggestion is a drain. Between 4185, 4196 and 4193 is a burnt layer (4176), black with ash especially in its northern half, where a very large and well worked basalt mortar was found in the northeastern ‘corner’ of the excavated area (against Wall 4193); several grinding stones were found around it and very burnt organic material inside it. The layer on which the mortar was set (4183) is apparently a floor. To the south of ‘Wall’ 4185, between it and Wall 2128 to the south and Wall 2144 on the east (on the west – the balk), is a narrow (ca. 1.5 m x 2.6 m) area that lacked the very burnt ashy material and contained brick debris and light-colored earth. The locus was excavated from 376.90, but at ca. 376.70, sherds of restorable vessels appeared along the northern face of Wall 2128 and in the

corner of 2128 and 2144. Excavation proceeded down to 376.55 m here, so it seems that there was a floor level somewhere between these two elevations. This needs to be further clarified. Among the vessels were an intact jug (41534) and sherds of a Galilean? pithos (41535- in corner of Walls 2144 and 2128).



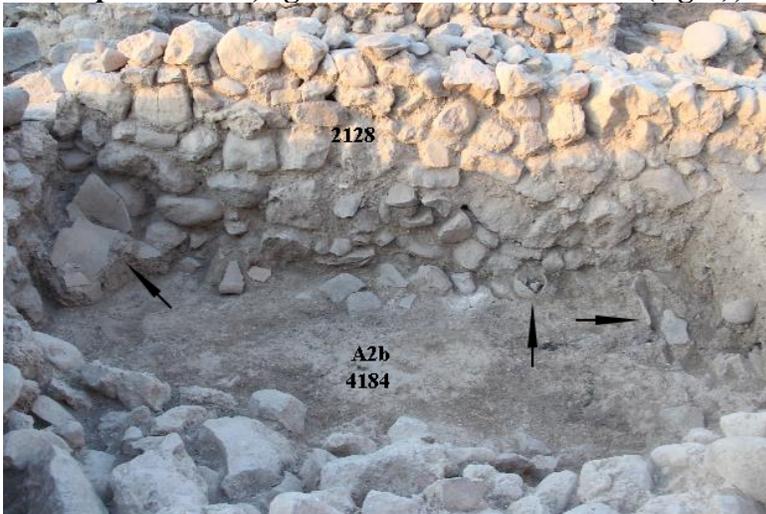
Square S/11 and northern end of S/12, looking north; top of Wall 2128 in foreground; emergence of ‘Wall’ 4185 with burnt layer and mortar to its north; later (A2a) Wall 4145 in the center, built above 4185 and 2144.



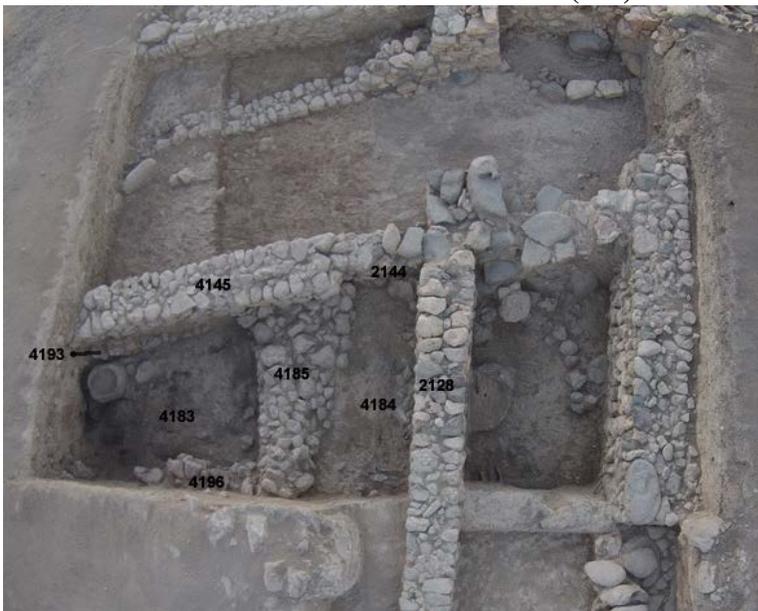
Square S/11, looking east; A2a Wall 4145 built above A2b Wall 4193 and 4185; burnt layer 4183 with mortar.



Closeup of mortar, against stones of Wall 4193 (right); note ash and grindstone



Northern end of Square S/12 looking south. In situ vessels in locus 4184 leaning against wall 2128 and in corner of 2128 and 2144 (left).



Squares S/11-12 in foreground, looking east; Room with burnt layer and large mortar, and 'Wall 4185' on the left. Note funnel-shaped contour of 4185 and Wall 4145 on top of 4185; note also the relation between Wall 4145 and 2144.

Phase A2a

The 'room' just described was covered by a layer of compact gray-white debris (4171) that might be a fill. Above this layer, a new 'room' was built, comprised of Wall 2128 on the south (continuing from A2b) and a new wall on the east (4145), nicely built of two rows of medium-large stones, preserved three courses high, but floating higher on the north (377.34) than on the south (376.94). The northern end of this wall was built above Wall 4193 (with a 25 cm gap between them), while the southern end is built directly above the eastern end of 'Wall' 4185. The relation of the southern end of Wall 4145 and Wall 2144 is unclear; 4145 continues the line of 2133, but there is no join between them; in fact, it seems that 4145 partially covers the northern end of 2144. If so, this would have created a gap between Wall 4145 and Wall 2128. Perhaps there was an entrance into the room here, with the top of Wall 2144 serving as a threshold, although it is quite high for such a function. A clear floor in this room was not detected, although Locus 4163, a layer of loose light brown debris, only ca. 11 cm thick, might have been the floor.



Square S/11, looking southwest; A2a phase of room bordered by Wall 4145/2144 on the east and 2128 on the south

On top of 4163 was a layer of debris with many burnt patches and flecks of charcoal, phytolith, small stones, some pottery, flint and bones (4142). The burn here does not look like typical destruction debris, as it is more localized in patches and might represent some activity that left this residue in its wake. A clear burnt line can be seen in the western balk (and less so in the northern balk) at the elevation of 377.30, suited to the bottom level of Wall 4145 and the

assumed floor in this room (4163) in Phase A2a. The western and northern borders of this room lie beyond the present limits of the excavation. Above all these remains was a layer of topsoil (4129) that contained hard whitish brick debris and loose gray soil.



Square S/11 – note burnt line in western balk (right) above A2b Wall 4196, probably marking A2a surface 4163 (room excavated to A2b level in this photo); A2a Wall 4145 on upper right.



**Square S/11-12, looking north at 'join' of Walls 4145 and 2144
Square T/11 and Eastern Part of Square S/11**

The remains to the east of Walls 4145 and 2144 comprise the northern continuation of the passageway (in Squares S-T/12, excavated in previous seasons) between the western complex and the eastern building, as well as the area to the north of the eastern building – north of Wall 1138, where a room with an oven was found.

Remains in the Passageway-Phase A2b

The earliest remains exposed in this area contain the top of a northwest-southeast wall (4186) composed of two rows of nicely built field stones. This wall continues the line of Wall 2151, a short segment that had been excavated in previous seasons, extending (but not bonding with) from the northern face of Buttress 2118. The relationship between these two walls remains unclear at this point. They obviously join, but the preserved top of 2151 is higher than the exposed top of 4186 at the point of their join, with a difference of ca. 40 cm. It remains to see whether 2151 is floating, while 4186 goes down, which might clarify the relationship. In any event, it seems that Wall 4186 was earlier than Buttress 2118 and possibly 2151 is an element added when the buttress was built. Note that there is a line of fieldstones that runs right under the western face of buttress 2118 and apparently below Wall 2151. This line could be an earlier wall of Stratum A3, but further excavation is necessary to determine for sure.

Wall 4186 continues to the north into the balk. It runs parallel to Wall 4193 to its west (although the latter has barely been exposed to date) and possibly the two are the borders of the early phase of the passageway. If so, and assuming that Wall 4193 had been some 50 cm wide (like Wall 4186), the passageway here would have been around 2.5 m wide. This is narrower than the passageway to the south, between the buttresses, which was 3 m wide, making the latter something of a small piazza, perhaps due to the cult corner in its southeastern corner. The slightly different orientation of this part of the passageway is probably the result of the mound's topography, which indeed makes a turn at this point, evidenced by the slope below Area A (and the modern road). It should be kept in mind that the passageway floor and cult corner between the buttresses in Square S-T/12 to the south is attributed to the lower phase of A2, so that the area between Walls 4148 and 4193 is contemporary with it.

The matrix in the passageway abutting Wall 4186 is hard compact material, possibly a surface (4187), covered by a debris layer (4161) that was sealed by the gravelly layer of A2a above (see

below); a slightly higher step was left in the north at the end of 2106. In the northern end of the passageway, to the west of Wall 4186, is a round-topped standing stone. It recalls the masseboth in the Stratum A4 cultic unit, as well as the rounded stones used in the cultic corner Square T/12 to the south; this standing stone is on line with that installation (though it might just be collapse).



Squares S-T/11, looking south at passageway. Left: A2b Walls 4186 and 2151; far left: Wall 4140; Right: A2a Wall 4145 above A2b burnt room with ‘drain’ 4185.

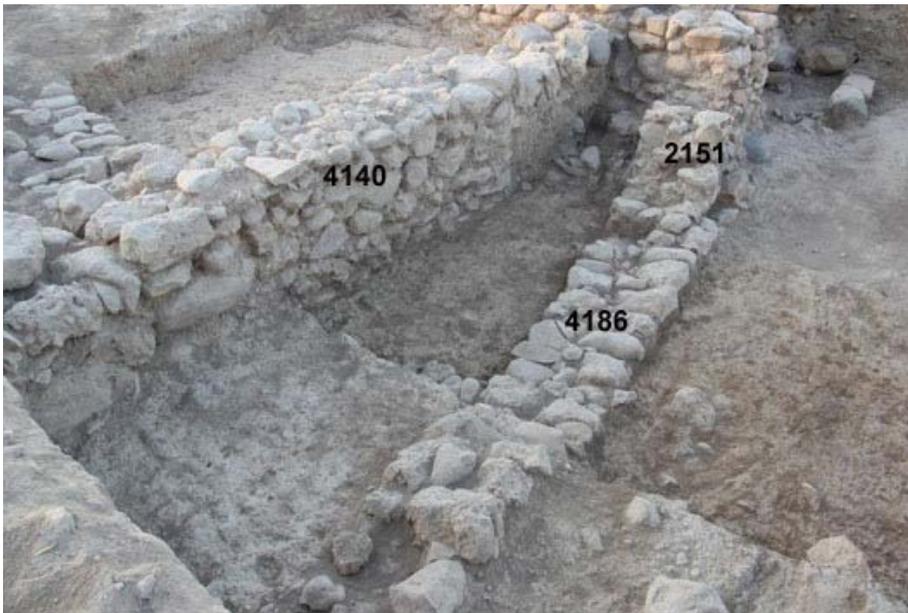


Squares S-T/11, looking northeast; A2b passageway bordered by Wall 4186/2155 on the east



Square S-T/11, looking north at floor(?) in passageway in A2b; Wall 4145= A2a' Wall 4140=A2a+b? ; note round-topped stone in north, against Wall 4186, near the balk.

The relationship between Wall 4186/2151 and Wall 4140, a north-south wall that runs to its east, is unclear. If we assume that 4140 existed only in Stratum A2a, then there is no clash between the two. However, at this point of the excavation, it seems that 4140 continues down on the same level as 4186 (see further below). A concentration of stones in the south of the v-shaped area between them seems to be collapse. Locus 4188 in this area might be a surface, equal to 4187 in the passageway to the west of Wall 4186.



Square T/11, looking southeast; A2b Walls 4186 and 2151, in relation to Wall 4140; note northern 'end' of 4140 with entrance, possibly blocked or with a later(?) threshold

Remains in the Passageway-Phase A2a and Later

The western border of the passageway in A2a is Wall 4145, built above Wall 4193 of A2b. In the east, the border was Wall 4140, built to the east of A2b Wall 4186 (see further below about 4140). Thus, the passageway in this phase was ca. 3.5 m wide, similar to the width in Square T/11 below, between the buttresses. However, the contents of the area between these walls is somewhat ambiguous; although a layer that seems to have been a floor (4155) was found, there were a number of features that appear to have been disturbances, although they contained mainly Iron I pottery and do not seem to have been intrusive from a higher level.

Above the assumed surface of the A2b passageway (4187) was a debris layer (4161). Above this was a gravelly layer (4155) that covered parts of the area of the passageway and is a surface with several pits, including 4156 a rounded patch of black ash in the northeastern corner that was visible already in the debris layer (4139) above the gravelly surface. Near ash pit 4156, debris 1439 contained several bronze pieces and greenish bones (41178, 41179, 41188, 41189, thought to perhaps belong to metallurgical activity, although analysis did not sustain this. To the south of this burnt area was a concentration of bones (4157) resting on the gravelly layer. Debris 4139 and gravelly surface 4155 abutted Walls 4145 and 4140. Thus, it seems that this was the A2a surface; its elevations are similar to other A2a surfaces in this area as well.

Disturbances in the A2a Passageway

Two concentrations of stones were found, their tops visible in debris layer 4139; one (unnumbered) was found in the southeast of the passageway here, partly on and partly below the gravelly layer. The other stone concentration (4165) penetrated down almost to the level of the A2b floor; its lowest level is surrounded by debris 4161 which was under gravel layer 4155. Stones 4165 were disorderly on the upper layer, but seemed to form a rectangle on the lower level. As noted above, the pottery recovered from these stones was all Iron Age I, so it does not seem to be a later disturbance. Yet it does not seem to be a built element, and its function and phasing are not clear. 4165 recalls similar elements excavated in the upper layer of the passageway/piazza to the south in T/12 (2156, 2167, etc.). To the east of 4165 was a pit full of gravel and some bones (4167).



Squares S-T/11, looking south; latest layer in northern part of passageway between Walls 4140 (left) and 4145 (right); top of stones 4165 near meter stick.



Square T/11, looking south; unnumbered stone 'disturbance' in southeast of area; Wall 4140 on the left (east)



Square T/11, Stones 4165; Left: looking west (Wall 4145 in background); Right: looking north; note the stones floating above the A2b surface in the passageway here.

East of the Passageway – Room 4168 (Square T/11)

As noted above, north-south Wall 4140 bordered the passageway on the east. It is finely built with two rows, standing at least 5 courses high. On its southern end, it has one course of large stones, ca. 1.2 m long, that abut the northern face of Wall 1136 (the northern wall of the eastern building). These stones were noted in previous seasons and denoted Wall 2155; now it is clear that they are part of Wall 4140. These stones are laid on an earthen fill, although to their north, the stones of Wall 4140 continue down and the wall is not yet floating. Wall 4140 is abutted on the west by the layer (4188) that also abuts A2b Wall 4186 on its western face. The explanation for this would be that Wall 4140 cut a foundation trench into this debris; however, as of now, no such trench has been identified. The alternative explanation is that Wall 4140 was also used in A2b, but this would not make architectural sense, as it forms an obtuse angle with Wall 4186.

Just to the north of the floating level of the stones that extend from Wall 1136 (=Wall 2155) is a very long smooth basalt stone that has the appearance of a kind of lintel. Above this long stone were one-two courses of smaller stones; it seems that there was a small gap between the long stone and these, but this needs further clarification. This arrangement is not clear. If the stones 2155 served as a kind of threshold, it is not clear why the wall to the north has much lower foundations. This remains to be further clarified.

Topsoil debris 4152 covered Wall 4140; when the stones of this wall became clear, 4152 was continued to its east for a short while until the top of a large oven, 4154, was revealed, and the

locus was changed to 4164, which is debris around the oven and down to floor 4168 (377.30). Wall 4140 bonded with east-west Wall 4190, built similarly to 4140, creating the northwestern corner of this room. Oven 4154 was built against the eastern face of Wall 4140; many cooking pot sherds were found on the floor around it (41265, B.41314), so it seems quite certain that this area was used for cooking in Phase A2a.



Square T/11, looking southwest; arrow points to ‘threshold’ stones (2155); note long stone to the north of the “threshold”, with smaller stones above it. A2 Wall 1136 on the left (south) and A2b Wall 4186 to the west (lower level).



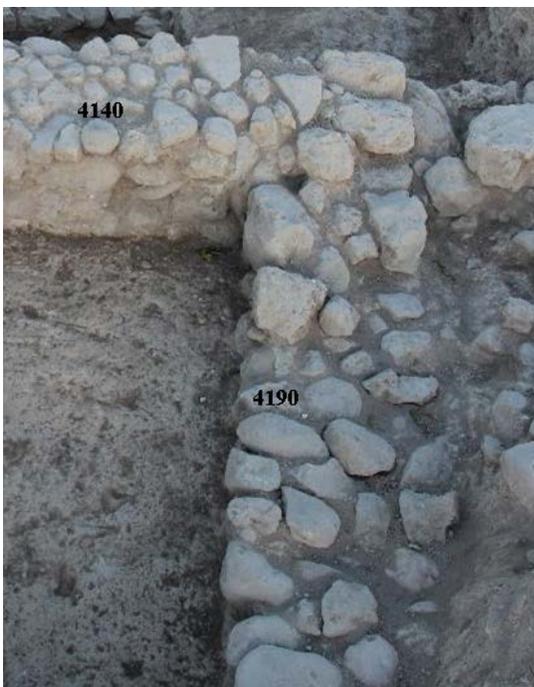
Oven 4154, looking south; Wall 4140 on the right.



Oven 4154 on Floor 4168, against Wall 4140, looking northwest, before exposure of Wall 4190



Corner of Walls 4140 and 4190, looking southeast; Wall 4140 seems to continue to the north



Corner of Walls 4140 and 4190, looking west.

Square S/12 – Threshold in A2b

The entrance into the hall/ passageway between Walls 2126 and 2128 had a threshold, in which two phases were identified. In 2016, the upper threshold (A2a), north of Wall 2138, was dismantled and the lower threshold (A2b) was exposed. Several stones from the northern end of wall 2138 were also removed so as to completely expose the lower threshold. The later threshold was narrower than the earlier one. Moreover, it is clear that wall 2138 was originally built in phase A2b, and only its northern segment was added in the later phase in order to narrow the threshold. The threshold is paved with large stones and is built on top of oven 3176.



Square S/12 looking northwest. Wall 2138 and earlier threshold.

Basalt Slab in Eastern Slope-Under Wall 2173

The basalt slab on which the ring flask was found in the 2012 survey was cleaned; it is clearly earlier than the Stratum A4/5 unit and apparently belongs to A6.



Phase A1

Square R/12

The remains from this phase include a thick layer of compact lime fill which was partially excavated by a tractor when we prepared the area for excavation, and partially by manual excavation (loci 4103 and 4104). Above this fill, a (Ottoman?) terrace was exposed, situated on the balk line between squares R12 and S12. It was built of two rows of large fieldstones preserved one course high, and oriented south-north.



Square R/2, looking southeast. Note remains of A1 terrace wall in north and south balks.



Area A, end of 2016