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Cover photo: A building in the ruins of Petzal, Jordan Valley (photo: B. Young)

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A layer of ruins from the Hellenistic period at Tel Shiloh

Reut Leviathan-son of Aryeh

Summary

In the excavations at Tel Shilo, a building was discovered from the end of the third century AD. The building was destroyed in a violent destruction in the middle of the second century AD. Based on the archaeological context, the relationship between it and the later buildings and the findings discovered from this period near it, it can be determined that its occupants were foreigners. Shiloh is located between the land of Judea and the land of Samaria, in an area whose administrative affiliation in the Second Temple period was not permanent. During the early Persian and Hellenistic periods, this area was administratively within the domain of Samaria, but at the end of the Second Temple period it was within the domain of Judah. The historical sources indicate that the composition of the population in the area on the eve of the Hasmonean rebellion was heterogeneous, and during the rebellion there were conflicts between the groups The different ethnicities. Red inhabitants are mentioned in this area in several sources, and Jewish settlements are also implied in it. It seems that liberated Slovak soldiers could also find a place to settle down in the area. In any case, it is evident that the alien settlement at Shiloh was destroyed during a violent conflict, and according to its dating, the destruction must be attributed to the conquests of Jonathan and Shimon as part of the expansion of the borders of the Hasmonean state.

Keywords: Shiloh, Samaria, the Hellenistic period, the second century BCE, Adumim,

Hasmoneans, amphora handles

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introduction

Tel Shiloh in southern Samaria is east of the mountain ridge road, about 30 km north of Jerusalem and about 18 km south of Nablus. Its settlement in the Hellenistic period was known based on ceramics and coins from the second and first centuries BCE that were identified in the excavations of the Danish expedition (Andersen, 1985: 109).

In the excavations led by Israel Finkelstein, a ceramic find was identified as early as the early Hellenistic period, but it is evident that the settlement grew and strengthened only in the late Hellenistic period (Finkelstein and others in the years 2010-2018, excavations took place at the site on behalf of the archeology staff officer, Hanania Hizami, and several ¹(1993, 389). archaeologists from the KMT unit participated in it. As part of these excavations, Hellenistic finds were discovered for the first time in a clear architectural and stratigraphic context on the northern surface. During the excavations, evidence of construction in Shiloh at the end of the century of Tel Shiloh was discovered (area 2B ; Figure 1).

the third or the beginning of the second century BCE, and evidence of the destruction was discovered in the middle of the second century BCE. The findings can help in understanding the history of the site and raise many questions regarding the identity of the people who settled there at the end of the Hellenistic period, the causes of this new settlement, the scope of the settlement, the circumstances of the destruction and the relationship between the settlement that was destroyed and the one that was built a short time later, in the first century BCE. I will try to answer these questions In this article, I will first present the archaeological findings from the building and its surroundings. Then I will deal with the question of the composition of the population in Samaria, in particular in the southeast of Samaria, in the Hellenistic period based on the historical sources and epigraphic findings. Another part of the article will deal with the clarification of conflicts and wars that took place in this area of Samaria in the second century CE." N. Finally, I will summarize the possibilities regarding the identification of the building's

occupants and under what circumstances it was destroyed.

Shiloh is in an area whose administrative affiliation in the Second Temple days was not fixed, between the land of Judea and the land of Samaria. It is generally accepted that the Hellenistic administrative system inherited the Persian administrative division. The historical sources do not describe the route of the borders between the state of Judah

¹ Apparently, the ancient Hellenistic settlement did not continue the Persian settlement, but a month after a settlement gap. This image emerges both from the Zeev Yevin excavations in the northern area, where a farmhouse abandoned during the Persian period was discovered (Yevin, 1992: 99-101), and from the excavations of KMT Archeology and Ariel University in Samaria in area 2G. In the east of the mound, where a Hellenistic layer was discovered on top of a Persian layer with no evidence of continuity

(Benyamin Har-Evan, oral information).

² The Hellenistic findings were discovered in excavations conducted in this area in 2012 and 2013 (licenses, 5-3-12

3-3-13), see Levitan-Ben Aryeh and Hizami, 2014: 121-123

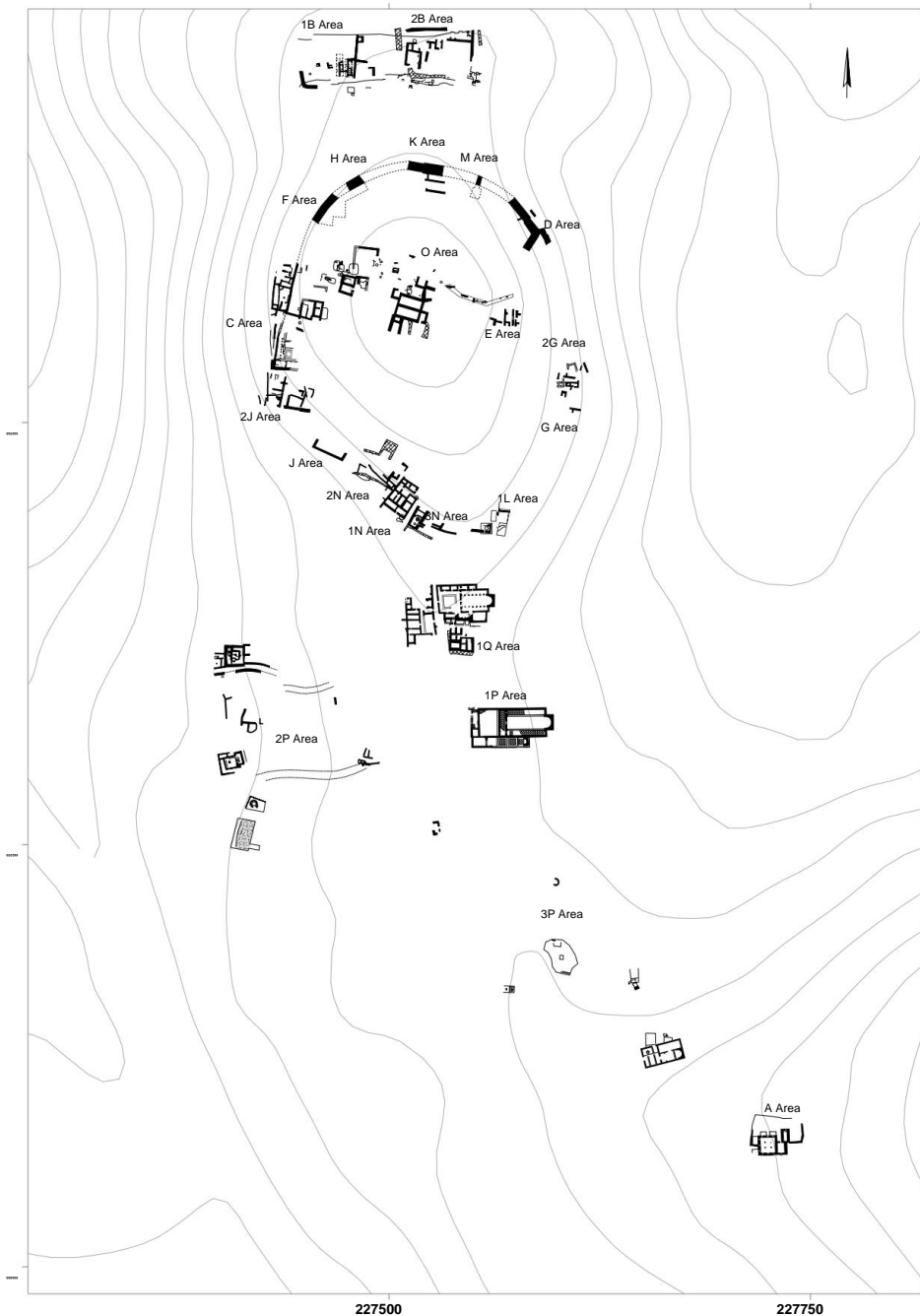


Figure 1: The site plan (drawing: P. Portnov and A. Harel)

to the state of Samaria, but according to most opinions, this region in the southeast of Samaria politically belonged to Samaria during the Persian and Hellenistic periods (Kalai, 1960 87-92); Stern, 1981 97; Avi-Yona, 1984, 19-20 Map A, 26-28; Zartel, 1999 76; Rainey and Notley, 2006 284). However, it is possible that during the Persian period, Southern Samaria was a buffer zone and did not absolutely belong to any of the neighboring states (Tabgar, 2012 80-81). The 3 : Ephraim, Ramatim granting of the three provinces

and Lod, from Demetrius I to Jonathan in 151 BCE indicates that in the middle of the second century BCE Shiloh was still Amcabems outside of Judah, since it was north of the Ephraim tribe), 11:4 However, at the end of the Second Temple period, Shiloh belonged to the Akbara tribe 33- 34; Raviv, 2019 267-268).

Yehuda (3, Jewish War The which extended over southeastern Samaria and was included in the province of 51-58); V, 70 (Klein, 2009 177). When was the Aqraba province defined as an administrative unit, and history natural how did it become part of Judah - these are questions that are difficult to answer fully based on the historical sources, but it is common to assume that this province was annexed to Judah after the conquest campaign of Yohanan Hyrcanus and the conquest of the city Samaria (107/108 BCE; Bar-Kochva, 2002 28). However, Jewish settlement and conquest campaigns of the Hasmonean kings in the region took place even earlier (and see below).

The archaeological find

In the excavations of area B in the north of Tel Shilo, a part of a building was discovered consisting of a row of three rooms from east to west (Figure 2). Two of the rooms, the eastern and the central, have an internal division into a northern and a southern unit. Since the rock surface is not uniform, the rooms of the building are built on several levels. The western room and the unit The northern walls of the central room are about 35 cm higher than the rest of the rooms. In places where the level of the rock surface is high, the rock itself was used as floors for the rooms, and in places where the level of the rock surface is low, a pounded earth floor or a crushed limestone floor was installed. The northern wall of the three rooms has been well preserved along its entire length, and it appears that at its western end there was an opening that connected the western room to the space to the north of the building. This space is bounded on the north by a rock wall that was cut in an ancient period, so its shape is not orthogonal. Its length is about 15 m, while its width varies from 3 m in the west to 5 M'

3 We will use here the Hebrew term "Plech" which corresponds to the Roman term "Toparchy" or the Greek "Nomos".

4 The granting of three palichs is mentioned in a letter from Demetrius I to Jonathan in 151 BCE. Although in this letter the palichs are not mentioned by name, the letter from Demetrius II to Jonathan in 145 BCE confirms the identification of the palichs mentioned in the first letter (Bar-Kochva, 2002 23).

in the east. Since a sherpa layer was identified in its western part, it is possible that this part was covered, while its eastern, wider part was open. The southern wall of the row of rooms is very partially exposed, and it is difficult to determine where there were openings, but it seems probable according to the plan that there was a southern opening for each of the rooms, and the building continued further south. A future excavation could shed light on the complete plan of the structure.



Figure 2: Plan of phases of area 2B (drawing: S. Meir and A. Harel)

In two of the rooms of the building (7356L, 7338L) a 15 cm thick layer of ash was discovered on the floor. In the ash layer, no complete vessels were discovered, with the exception of one candle dating to the second and first centuries AD (5356L; Figure 3). Also, fragments of a bowl were discovered in the same room (Figure 5:2) and a jug (Figure 5:11). In room 7113, a landslide was discovered, and in the ceramic find underneath it were rounded bowls (Figure 5:1, 4), a fish bowl (Figure 5:5), jugs (Figure 5:6-10) (Fig. 5:25), a pitcher, as well as a flech weight (see below, Fig. 7:4). In the southeastern room (7131L) a dense layer of pottery was discovered, mainly fragments of pitchers, whose scattering indicated that they were not left intact in place, but were smashed and scattered (Fig. 5:12-24). With them were also discovered a bowl (Figure 5:3) and a slate (Figure 5:26). The ceramic assemblage from the ruin layer dates to the middle of the second century

Seven small spherical hand stones were also discovered between the pots and under them (Figure 4), which were ⁵to Pesh'a'an possibly sling stones fired at the structure. In the room west of the jar room (7342L) 16 nails were discovered, most of them stuck in the floor when exposed and bent at a right angle. They apparently testify to some device that was in the room, perhaps a weaving loom whose threads were tied to the floor (Figure 6). Two coins minted between 222 and 187 BCE were discovered under the floor, indicating that the earliest date for the building's construction is 222 BCE .

6



Figure 4: hand stones that were discovered in the jar room (photo: S. Amami)

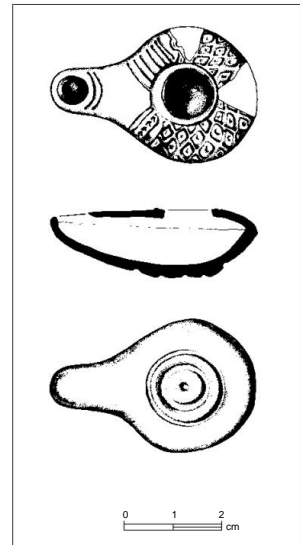


Figure 3: The Hellenistic candle discovered in the cremation layer in room 7356

I would like to thank all my colleagues who examined the find and helped date it, first and foremost the late Yuval Peleg, ⁵ who was the first to examine the assemblage of jars, even before the healing was done. Thanks also to Devir Raviv who saw the assemblage and even the rest of the Hellenistic ceramics from Area B. The Hellenistic findings from the Gerizim excavations contributed greatly to the understanding of the whole. The Hellenistic ceramics from the Tel Shiloh excavations will be published in the final report of the Tel Shiloh excavations which we are currently working on completing.

6 KMT numbers: 042417K, 042423K. The coins are from the time of Antiochus III and were minted in Antioch. I would like to thank Chaim Shakolnik for identifying the coins.

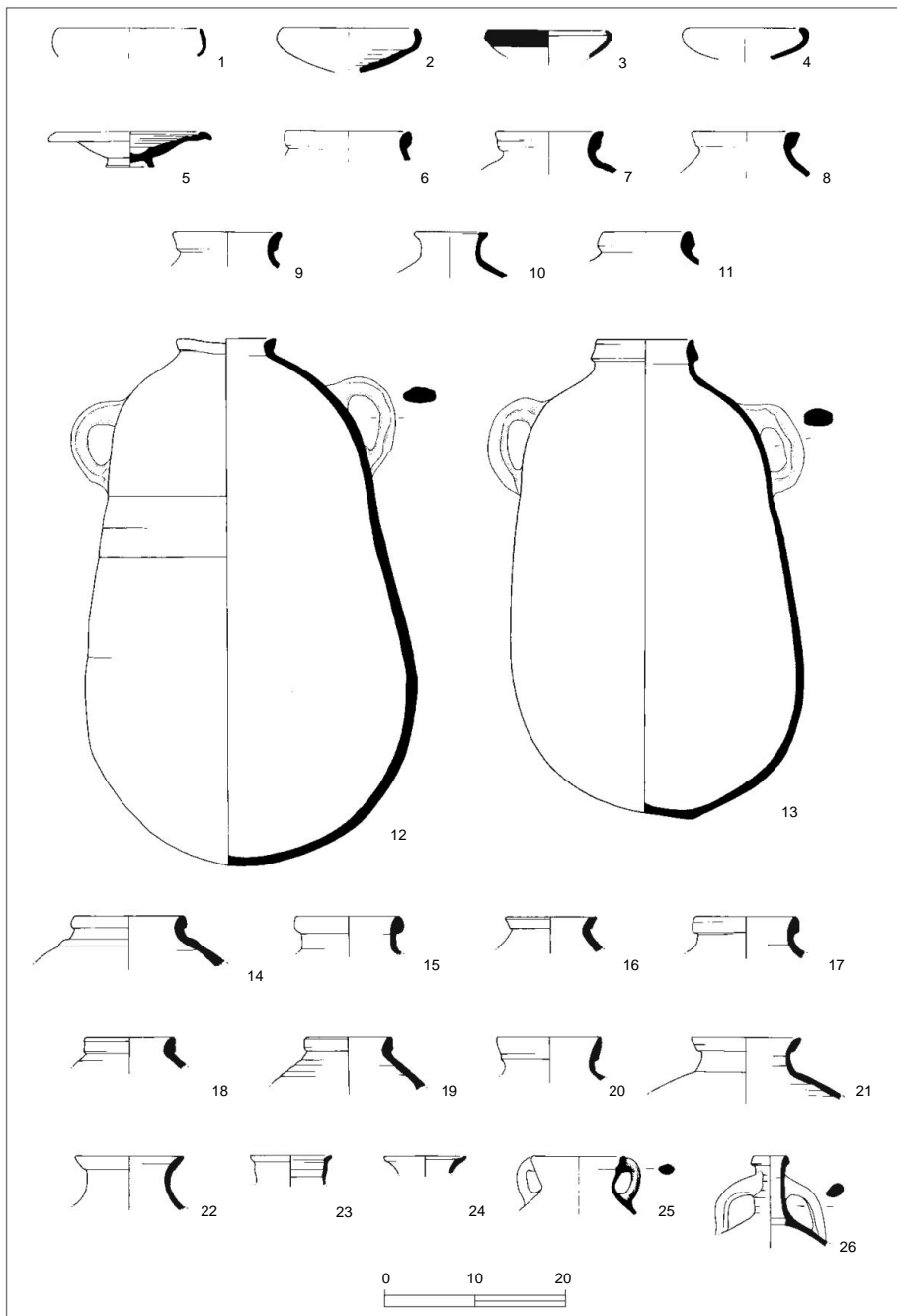


Figure 5: Hellenistic ceramics discovered in the rooms of the building



Figure 6: Nails stuck in the floor of room 7342

According to the findings discovered in the rooms, it can be suggested that room 7131 was a storage room, room 7113 was a living/eating room, and room 7342 was a craft room. Rooms 7356 and 7338 were probably used for sleeping, so there were almost no finds in them. As mentioned, the numismatic find indicates that the building was built at the end of the third century BCE. According to the assemblage of pottery, the end of use of the building must be dated to the middle of the second century BCE. The destruction is evident in a different way in each of the rooms of the building. While in rooms 7356 and 7338 a layer of ash is evident, probably from the burning of the roofing system, in room 7113 there is a landslide that apparently indicates a second floor that was above this room, and in room 7313 there are

fragments of jars scattered on the floor and testify to the intentional breaking of the vessels.

The Hellenistic building is meanwhile the only architectural remnant from the early Hellenistic period that was uncovered in the Shiloh excavations. However, even in mixed loci outside the building, Hellenistic findings were discovered that may complete the picture regarding the material culture of the residents of the settlement in the period

this. Four stamped handles of imported amphorae were discovered in our excavations, one of them dated to 161-183, one to 147-159, and two more to the second century BCE (Figure 7:1-2).

A figurine head from the period was also discovered (Figure 7:3) and an arrowhead typical of the Hellenistic period. 8 Imported tools and a figurine head are not appropriate for Jewish culture and may testify

about a non-Jewish population living on the site (Raviv, 2018 19-20).

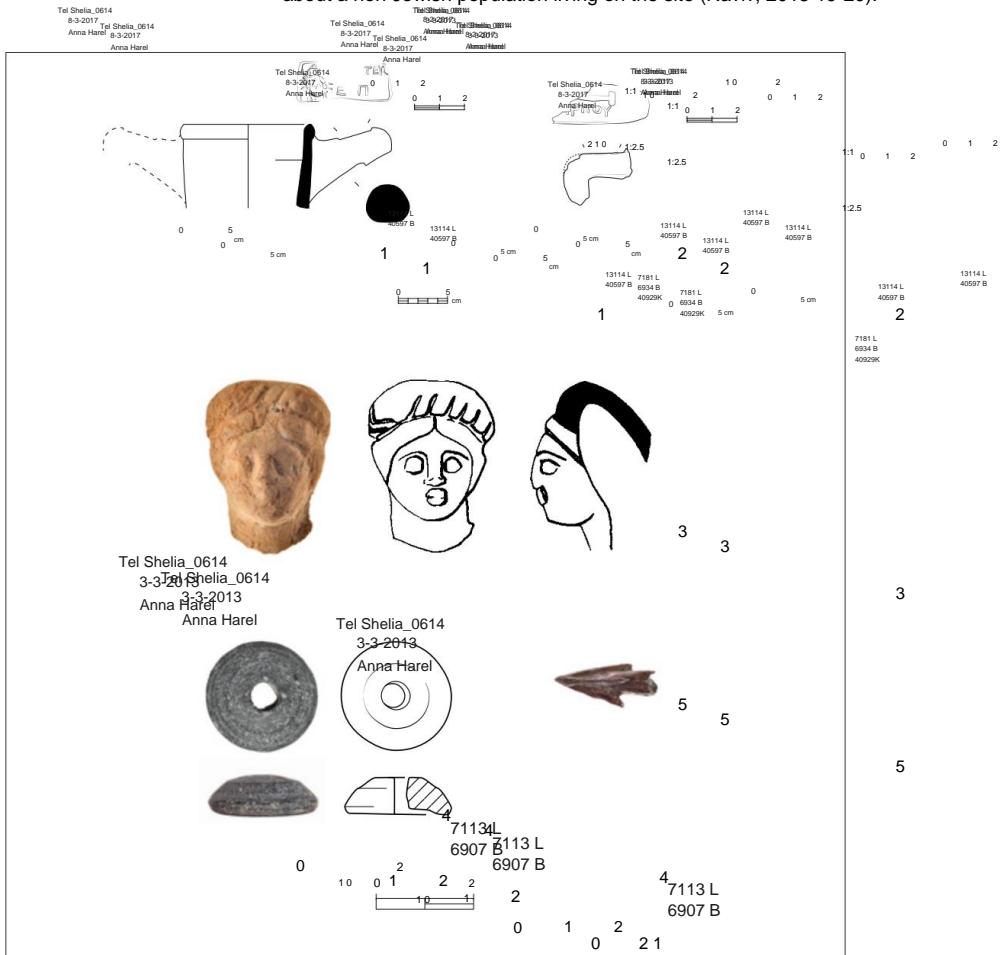


Figure 7: Hellenistic findings from mixed loci (photo: S. Amami; Drawing: M. Manoukian and A. Harel)

7 My thanks to Donald Zvi Ariel for the initial identification of the prints. Three footprints were discovered in area B, and one in area 1L. None were discovered on site. 8 Coins

from the early Hellenistic period were also discovered at the site, but were not listed here because they could have been used in the following period as well, and they are not an indication of a settlement in the early Hellenistic period.

Above the remains of the building was discovered a layer from the first century BCE and the first century CE. The buildings from this phase were built west of the Hellenistic remains, while in the area of the sword building there was a garbage pit (7334L) and an agricultural area whose fill was supported by a terrace wall (7081W). The material culture attributed to this layer includes besides the pottery typical of the period also tableware made of stone 9 and is therefore attributed to a Jewish population. Cardboard and Jewish coins were also found all over the mound, Cardboard stone vessels, Jewish coins and mikvahs from the first century BCE, and these are attributed to the same layer and testify that the settlement built after the destruction in the second century CE, was a Jewish settlement.

historical background

The population in southern Samaria during the Persian and Hellenistic periods

As stated above, Shiloh and its surroundings were outside the borders of the State of Judah at least until the second half of the second century BCE. However, administrative affiliation does not have the power to testify to the ethnic composition of the population. Unlike the State of Judah, whose leaders in the Persian period worked for ethnic purity from its inception, its neighbors to the north and south - Samaria and Idumea - were very mixed in terms of their ethnic composition (Levin 2012). The bulk of the local population in Samaria during the Persian period was apparently the descendants of the Israelites who remained after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel. Another significant minority were the descendants of the peoples that the Assyrian rule exiled to Samaria from Syria, Arabia, Babylon and Elam (Cross) 2002 46-47). At the end of the Persian period we witness the presence of minorities in Samaria whose names are Arab, Phoenician, Edomite, Ammon, Iranian and Akkadian, alongside the Hebrew majority (Cross, 2006 86). In this period the distinction between the residents of Samaria and the residents of Judea is mainly in political affiliation And not in religious belief, although there was a conflict between the two¹⁰. According to what is told in the book Yehudit, written at the end of the Persian period or the beginning of the Hellenistic period, there was a Hebrew population in Samaria with national ties to Judah¹¹. More is told there

9 Coins of Alexander Yanai, of Herod, of Agrippa I and coins from the second year of

The big rebellion.

10 The conflict is hinted at, for example, in Nehemiah 4:6. It is implied from there that there were Jews in Samaria and the countries adjacent to Judah who helped Nehemiah in his conflict with the countries.

11 For a summary of the various opinions regarding the dating and reliability of Sefer Yehudit see Moore, 1985 109-117. According to this essay, the mobilization of the Samaria residents against Holofernes was due to their loyalty to the state of Judah, and they responded to the call of

7, 4-11). Jewish girl Jehoiakim the High Priest to mobilize to prevent the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem)

Because during the siege of the virgin city,¹² "the sons of Esau and the sons of Ammon" sent forces to "Aqraba which is near 18.7. The town of Aqraba in the book of the Samaria desert, about 7 km northeast of Shiloh, Koz" (probably preserves the name of the village mentioned In Sefer Yehudit. The name "Koz" perhaps expresses the Edomite deity - Kos, and it has been proposed to identify it with the village of Koza, about 9 km north of Shiloh (Hartom, 1963 23). Eitan Klein suggested that the purpose of their arrival in Akbara was to prevent Jewish forces from coming from Judah to help their brothers in the north of Samaria (Klein, 2007 67). In my opinion, the mention in the Book of Yehudit indicates that at that time there were red people living in Akbara and Koz, and therefore their people found there a convenient base for war against the other inhabitants of Samaria. There is also evidence of an Edomite population in southeastern Samaria in the book of Maccabees: "And Judah fought In the sons of Edom he made the scorpion because they afflicted Israel, and he struck them a great blow and he defeated them and took their spoil" (5:3). This event took place in the interim period Amcabems) of the year 163 BCE, after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, when Judas Maccabeus went out to rescue Jewish settlements isolated all over the Land of Israel, including in "Adom at Akraba". Although there were different opinions regarding the identification of the place, it is very likely to accept Jonathan Goldstein's grammatical analysis that it is a settlement named Adom located in the Akrabathini palkh (Goldstein, 1976 294) ¹³. The settlement of Adom mentioned in the text is most likely the settlement of Adom Rabbah mentioned in the context of the Great Revolt and identified with the village of A-Duma in the Book of Desert 4, 509-513; Alto 1926; But, 1958 310; Samaria, about 7 km east of Shiloh (Rig, 1989 25). It is possible that the verse in Maccabees alludes to the reason for the name of the place - the sons of Esau, i.e.

the Edomites, came to settle in the desert of Samaria, and the place where they settled was named after them - Edom. Another source that implies that Aqraba lived in Aqraba is an Edomite ostracon from the Persian period in which people from Aqraba are mentioned (Yordani, 2016 488). ¹⁴ The identification of Aqraba (or scorpions) in the ostracon is

¹² The city of Batulia is not known from other sources, but from the context it can be understood that it was in northern Samaria, and Adam Zartal proposed to identify it with the site of al-Kharaik (Zartal, 2009 167-168).

¹³ Some believed that the "Scorpion" mentioned in the verse should be located in the area of Ma'ale Akrabim (Klausner, 1959 31); Stern, 1981 179), however, the presence of a Jewish settlement in the Negev Mountains is not known at all from the written sources and the archaeological findings. Also, the name ending in the Greek text - "Akrabatini" - indicates that in this context it is a name for Falech (Bar-Kochva, 2002 21-22; Klein, 2007 68). Others suggested that it was a copying error, and that $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ was written instead of $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ (Bar-Kochva, 2002 21; and see there references to other researchers). The main difficulty with this proposal is that the Aqraba region was undoubtedly not yet in the Judean region at this stage.

¹⁴ Like many red ostracon, this ostracon was not discovered in documented excavations and came to researchers through the antiquities market. However, the ostracones have characteristics that distinguish them as one group, and since many of them mention the names of sites in the Idomea area, and similar ostracones were discovered in the Marsha excavations, it is common to assume that their origin is in Idomea. On the origin of the ostracans, see Jordani, 2016 XXI–XXII.

certainly. Ada Jordani believed that this was an unknown city in the area of Idumea and not in Aqraba in Samaria, and in her opinion this is the city mentioned in the verse from Maccabees. As mentioned, in my opinion the settlement mentioned in Maccabi should be identified With the town of Akbara which lies in eastern Samaria, and this is also the town mentioned in the Ostrakon. A connection between Idumea and Akbara implies the activity of Edomim in Samaria.

Another source of information for the possible presence of Edomites in Samaria is found in the papyri discovered in Wadi Dalia, where two distinct Edomite names appear: one of them of a merchant and the other of a slave. It is true that the presence of a merchant and a slave is not proof of settlement but only of trade relations, but some see these names as evidence of Edomite settlement in Samaria (Zertal, 1999 *83-84; Bar-Kochva, 2002 21). In any case, the commercial activity of the Edomites in Samaria joins the Ostrakon from Edomia that mentions people from Aqraba, to the allusion of a Jewish book that "the sons of Esau and the sons of Ammon" went to the Aqraba area, probably because there was an Edomite population there, and above all to the explicit mention in a book Maccabees that Adom lived in the village of Adom in the region of Akbara. It is possible that each of these sources alone could not have established the theory that there was a concentration of Adom in southern Samaria, because of the methodological difficulties in relying on them as a source of information, but the multitude of sources that are independent of each other and imply the presence of Adom in this region , strengthens her.

However, it is evident that during the Hellenistic period, not only the Edomites lived in the Aqraba kingdom, but also Jews. The clear evidence of this is the reason for Judah's battles in Edom in Akarba - the rescue of isolated Jewish settlements. A hint of a Jewish presence in the Aqraba kingdom can also be seen in the letter sent by Antiochus VI to Jonathan (145 BCE), in which the king confirmed the boundaries of four kingdoms whose names are not specified. Some believe that the letter indicates the annexation of the three kingdoms: Ephraim, Ramatim, and Lod, and a fourth kingdom - Aqraba (Abel, 1938, 135; Safrai, 1980, 71). If indeed the letter refers to the Aqraba county, it seems that there was some demand on the part of the Hasmoneans to receive the county, and it is likely that such a demand arose from Jewish settlement or the military activity of the Hasmoneans in the area. Therefore, it can be seen as evidence of the existence of the county as an administrative unit and for a Jewish presence in it in the middle of the second century BCE 15. A third source that indicates Jewish settlement in the Aqraba province is the reason for the conquest of Samaria by Yohanan 13, 275. According to Bezalel Bar-Kochba, Hyrcanus, as it appears in Josephus (the wording indicates a planned settlement of Jews in the version that is in the Aqraba district, about 4 km north of Ancestry of the Jews

East of Shiloh, in the second half of the second century BCE (Bar-Kochva, 2002 33-34).

15 It is possible that the letter does not express a historical fact but false promises of Antiochus VI to Jonathan (Bar-Kochva, 2002 28), but in any case it indicates that there was a basis for the annexation demand because Jews lived there.

Another nation associated with the Samaria region is the Samaritans. The question of the time of their formation as a religion separate from Judaism has not yet been decided in the research, but there is no doubt that at the beginning of the Hellenistic period it is already possible to speak of the Samaritans as an ethnic unit with its own identity whose main difference from the Jews is the sanctification of Mount Gerizim. The area of their settlement in the Hellenistic period is not clear enough. There is an argument that the settlements The "Amorites" mentioned in the Midrash "Visa" in southeastern Samaria, are Samaritan sites that were conquered by the Hasmonean kings (Raviv, 2018 35). However, it should be noted that there is a debate as to whether this story can even be considered a historical source, and moreover, there is no allusion in the story This is precisely a struggle between Jews and Samaritans¹⁶. Even if the story is based on historical events, then the "Amorites" mentioned in it could just as easily be red or other foreigners. From the more reliable sources, such as the dedication inscriptions on Mount Gerizim, it appears that during the Hellenistic period the Samaritan population lived only in the heart of Samaria (Magan and others, 2004 28-30) ¹⁷.

From all the evidence presented above, it can be concluded that in the south-east of Samaria, a red population appeared as early as the Persian period. Jewish settlements also joined this population during the Hellenistic period, probably part of an overall phenomenon of the expansion of the Jewish settlement into the neighboring provinces during the transition from the Persian to the Hellenistic period (Lipshitz et al., 2014

141-145) ¹⁸. Of course, there may have been other minorities, but these are not reflected in the sources

Who destroyed the Hellenistic building at Shiloh?

As mentioned, Shiloh is in the area of the Aqraba region. This kingdom is in the middle between the kingdom of Ephraim which was handed over to Jonathan in 151 BCE, and the state of Samaria conquered by Yohanan Hyrcanus at the end of the second century BCE (Mount Gerizim in 112/113 and Samaria in 107/108 BCE). annexed to Judah following the conquests of Yohanan Hyrcanus in Samaria (Bar-Kochva, 2002 28), however the destruction reflected in the archaeological find at Shiloh occurred in the middle of the second century BCE and not at the end. Therefore, if the war that caused this destruction was recorded, it must be sought in the sources

¹⁶ Uriel Rapaport, for example, believed that the original should not be seen as a description of a historical event, and pointed out that it reflects the attitude of Jews towards the Reds, rather than Samaritans (Rapaport, 1967, 228-229).

¹⁷ Although it is possible that there were believers who came to the temple from other places, but did not leave inscriptions, or that their inscriptions did not survive, however, the fact that all those who survived originated in one area greatly strengthens the hypothesis that in the Hellenistic period the Samaritans had not yet spread beyond the nucleus very close to Mount

Gerizim. ¹⁸ This expansion may have been part of a strategic plan by the Hasmonean leaders to continue the sequence of Jewish settlement of the districts of Ephraim and Ramatim and to surround the concentration of the Samaritan population around Nablus

(Bar-Kochva, 2002 33-34).

The histories that describe events near the middle of the second century BCE. Because in the middle of this century the Hasmonean rebellion took place, and immediately after that campaigns were conducted with the aim of expanding the borders of the country, but it is natural to link the layer of destruction to the actions of the Hasmonean House. This is the verse from the Book of Maccabees mentioned above - Judah fought the sons of Esau who lived in Edom, which, as mentioned, must be identified with A-Duma, about 7 km east of Shiloh. It is not impossible that as part of the retaliatory actions, Yehuda the Maccabi reached several other settlements of foreigners in the vicinity. From the verse it is also possible to learn that there were Jewish settlements in the Aqraba region alongside foreigners, and that there were local struggles between them.

Dating the destruction of Shiloh to the Maccabean Judean period is possible, but it is undermined in light of the Hellenistic find that was discovered at the site, and its time is after the Judean period. This is an amphora handle dated to 159-147 BCE. This handle was not discovered within the layer of destruction in the Hellenistic structure but in a complex that contained findings from the second century BCE alongside findings from the first century BCE and the first century BCE. Since the settlement on the site did not resume immediately after the destruction but after a settlement gap, the handle must be attributed to the time of the building and later its destruction after 159 CE. Since Judah's military activity in the Aqraba region took place in 163 BCE, and the Hedit was sunk afterwards, it is impossible to attribute the destruction of Shiloh to Judah the Maccabee's war in the region, nor to a local war between Jews and Gentiles that preceded Judah's retaliatory action.

If so, it seems that the Hellenistic building at Shiloh was destroyed after the days of Judah the Maccabee and before the days of Yohanan Hyrcanus, during the reigns of Yonatan and Shimon. The destruction of the site could be the result of local struggles between different populations, which continued even after Judah's retaliatory action. Besides this, it is possible that this is a direct result of the conquests of Jonathan and Shimon to expand the borders of their control. These conquests in southern Samaria were not directly reported in the historical sources, but perhaps they are reflected in the story of the Bnei Ya'akov war that appears in several sources (Raviv, 2018 35-40). 19. Shiloh itself is mentioned in the composition as one of the cities that the Bnei Yehuda conquered from the "Amorites"²⁰, and the layer of destruction which was discovered in it, dating to the middle of the second century BCE, supports the link between the composition and the conquests of Jonathan and Shimon.

The 19 compositions that mention the war of the sons of Jacob - the Testament of Yehuda, the Book of Jubilees, Bereshit Rabbah, Ecclesiastes Rabbah and the Midrash "Visa" (Safrai, 1987 Tarig-Tartez). The earliest among them is probably the Midrash "Visa", which also includes the largest number of sites among All essays. The question of whether it is indeed possible to identify a historical core to the story, and the dating of the events that are allegedly implied in it, are subject to controversy among the scholars who dealt with the midrash. For a discussion, see Raviv, 2018, 35-40

²⁰ An exception in the research is the opinion of Esther and Hanan Eshel that Shiloh should be identified in connection with Silat a-Dhara north of Sebastia (Eshel and Eshel 2002).

Identifying the occupants of the Hellenistic

building The Hellenistic building at Shiloh was used for a very short period of time - it was built at the end of the third century or the beginning of the second century BCE, and was used until the middle of that century. From the findings of the excavations made to date at the tell, it appears that it is a single building and is not part of an extensive settlement. The totality of the findings that was discovered in the building and its surroundings from the same time period, reflects Hellenistic culture. As mentioned, the layer that was discovered above the Hellenistic construction dates to the first century BCE and the first century CE, and is attributed to a Jewish population. Despite the short gap between the destruction of the Hellenistic layer and the appearance of the layer above it in the first century BCE There is no continuity in the use of the ancient walls. It is evident that these are not the same residents who returned to their site and rebuilt their homes, but a new, different population. Because the layer above the ruin layer is typical of the settlement Jewish, it is likely that their predecessors on the site were foreigners who left the site due to the destruction of the building by Jews. The identification of the building's occupants as strangers is most probable in light of the archaeological find, but it is difficult to determine who those strangers are. Apparently, since Shiloh is in Samaria, it is possible to suggest that Samaritans lived there, but this suggestion is not reasonable because the presence of imported tools is not at all typical of Samaritan sites (Magan, 2008 209). Also, as I mentioned above, it seems that during this period the Samaritan settlement did not spread until South Samaria. Dvir Raviv suggested that this is a Samaritan population from Greece (Raviv, 2018 20). It is worth noting that this proposal was put forward to reconcile the apparent contradiction between the Hellenistic material culture discovered in Shiloh, and the unproven assumption that the sites mentioned in the "Visa" Midrash are Samaritan sites: "It is accepted to assume that the midrash reflects struggles between Jews and Samaritans that took place during the days of the Temple" (ibid., 35). It seems that this assumption is based on another premise - that the inhabitants of Samaria were Samaritans, but I have already shown above that in Samaria, and especially in its south-eastern fringes, they lived other minorities, and that the Samaritans themselves lived only near Mount Gerizim. Since the main characteristic of the Samaritan identity at this point is the worship at Mount Gerizim, it is impossible to see the list of settlements from which they came to Mount Gerizim as a random list, as suggested by Raviv. If a person did not come from southern Samaria to offer sacrifices at Mount Gerizim Gerizim, it is impossible to identify the residents of South Samaria as Samaritans. Therefore, if the settlements mentioned in the "Visayo" midrash must be identified with sites in southern Samaria as suggested by Raviv (ibid., 37-40), then these sites are not Samaritan. The more likely possibility is that the tenants were pagans. In light of the above description of an Adomite population that lived in the Aqraba region at the end of the Persian period and at the beginning of the Hellenistic period, it is possible to suggest that the inhabitants of the Hellenistic building at Shiloh were Adomites. The find indicating the Hellenistic culture is not surprising in this context, since a Hellenistic material culture was also discovered in Adomia itself. In Marsha, for example, many Hellenistic elements appear. Another possibility is to identify the Hellenistic structure as an outpost

A military that was established at the beginning of the Seleucid rule, in the days of Antiochus III, to strengthen the control on the outskirts of Samaria. The presence of imported amphora handles as well as the arrowhead discovered at the site, strengthen this suggestion because they are especially common in the environment of soldiers²¹. On the other hand, the structure itself is not fortified, and the construction seems too simple for a military outpost. It is therefore possible that they were ex-soldiers who were looking for land for themselves to settle in the east outside the dense settlement area in Sebastia and at the base of Mount Samaria.

Summary

The Hellenistic structure that was uncovered on the northern surface of Tel Shiloh is for now the only built remnant in Shiloh from the early Hellenistic period, before the Hasmoneans. It was built at the end of the third century or the beginning of the second century BCE, and was destroyed in the middle of the second century BCE. Its unique findings and the distinct layer of destruction that were discovered in it, opened a window for dealing with the ethnic composition of the residents of southeastern Samaria and the history of the struggles and wars that took place there. It seems that this is a single and short-term settlement point of a pagan population that was affected during the expansion of the Hasmonean state in the days of Jonathan and Shimon. The many evidences of Edomites who lived in the south-east of Samaria during this period raise the possibility that the inhabitants were Edomites. However, it is also possible that they were Hellenistic soldiers on duty or military veterans who settled in the land. Continued excavations at the site and in-depth research of the remains of the Hellenistic period also in the immediate vicinity will be able to shed light on the settlement at the site during this period and clarify its nature and so

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²¹ In this context, it should be noted the correlation between the sudden increase in the amount of imported amphora handles and the intensification of the military presence in Jerusalem, both in the last decade of the third century BCE, and in the days of Antiochus IV and the Hasmonean revolt (Finkelstein, 1999 *26-28).

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Arie-Ben Livyatan Reut

Shiloh Tel at Period Hellenistic the from Layer Destruction A

BCE century third the of end the from building a revealed Shiloh Tel at Excavations Based. BCE century second the of middle the in violently destroyed was building The from finds other and buildings later with its relationship, archaeological context the on is Shiloh. gentiles were its occupants that determined be can it, its vicinity in period the districts administrative different in included area an in, Samaria and Judea between located Hellenistic Early and Persian the In. period Temple Second the during times different at period Temple Second the of end the at but, Judea of Land the outside was area this, periods the on population the that indicate sources Historical. Judea of Province the inside was it conflicts were there revolt the during; heterogeneous was Revolt Hasmonean the of eve being as sources several by mentioned are Edomites. various ethnic groups the between may have soldiers Seleucid Discharged. implied also are localities Jewish and, area the in the that clear is it, case any In. Samaria western in did they as, well as area the in settled dating its based on violent confrontation a in destroyed was Shiloh in foreign settlement the of part as Simeon and Jonathan of conquests the to attributed must be destruction the .state Hasmonean the of borders the of expansion

Edomites, BCE second century, Hellenistic period, Samaria, Shiloh : **Keywords** handles amphora, Hasmoneans

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