

other writings going so far as to establish laws on the matter (Deut. 26.14, Gen. 28.22). It is likely that any local cults or any such homage paid to supernatural powers other than Yahweh were perceived as threats to the power of a Jerusalem-centered hierarchy which was learning to wield the powerful political weapon of exclusivist Yahwism.

### CONCLUSIONS

Our impression is that this Tsur Natan tomb was probably a family/kin group burial place, fitting with the pattern noticed in the area by Ayalon *et al.* (1994: 2), who pointed out clusters of wine and oil presses, cisterns and tombs on and around the hilltop. The burial gifts found in the tomb appear to have been quite common and to comply with broader cultural trends, indicating local patterns and cultural and economic contacts further afield. At the same time, the artifact clusters indicate differential treatment of the individuals interred here, with the green-colored cluster in Fig. 8.1 receiving the lion's share of burial

gifts in terms of both quantity and quality (see also Table 8.2), except for the metal objects which were focused in the orange cluster (Table 8.3). The possible anthropomorphic pendant, meanwhile, was deposited in an isolated location within the tomb, away from all the interments.

By adding to the growing corpus of Iron Age tombs in the southern Levant, we hope this publication will contribute to much-needed research in the archaeology of death, and other areas reliant on particular artifact assemblages. We have tried to touch upon questions which we believe are worthy of further investigation. However, in making it our priority to publish our findings, we recognize that we have placed more emphasis on description than on discussion, and we have not invested in as broad and up-to-date research as we might have. This was a decision required by the constraints of time and budget. In an article to be published soon we hope to expand upon and investigate at a higher resolution the questions this tomb has provoked in its excavators.

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## CHAPTER 9

### FEATURES RELATING TO WINE, OIL AND FOOD PRODUCTION (PHASE 2)

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One oil press and one press basin were found at the site. These had been respected and avoided by the quarry features, which may indicate that—whilst pre-dating the quarry—they were still in use at that time.

L5 is a simple press installation (Fig. 9.1 and Plan 3 [p. 68]) consisting of a small treading floor (1.05 x 0.85m) linked by a channel to a 0.52m-deep vat, which in turn led to a smaller, cupmark-like

feature. There were no associated artifacts. We interpret this as a simple domestic oil-producing installation (Frankel's Type T111 [1999: 55]), only very slightly truncated by the Byzantine/Early Islamic-period quarriers of F3—which suggests at least rough contemporaneity.



Figure 9.1. The L5 oil press, respected by quarry F3 (see also Plan 3, p. 68).



Figure 9.2. The L7 press basin, left, untouched by the F12 quarry (unlike the Iron Age tomb which can be seen partly truncated in the top center of the photograph).

L7 is a press basin with a 2m-diameter (Fig. 9.2 and Plan 12 [p. 77]), also respected by the quarrying activity (F12). It incorporated the quadrangular mortise designed to hold a press screw (Frankel [1999] Type T31). No other elements of the press installation were found.

L6 and L8 were cupmarks located beside the quarries. Their function is unknown. We follow the common theory that some form of food preparation was involved, with cupmarks serving to collect liquid and as mortars (Frankel 1999: 57). Their date is also unknown. However, L8 was respected by the quarry at F5 (Plan 5, p. 70). So, like the wine and oil installations, we believe these cupmarks were used at the same time as the quarries—perhaps in the making of workers' meals.

#### REFERENCES

Frankel, R. 1999. *Wine and Oil Production in Antiquity in Israel and Other Mediterranean Countries* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament/American School of Oriental Research Monograph Series 10). Sheffield.