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Ayelet Gilboa, Ilan Sharon, Jeffrey R. Zorn
and Sveta Matskevich

EXCAVATIONS AT DOR, FINAL REPORT

VOLUME IIA

AREA G, THE LATE BRONZE AND IRON AGES:
SYNTHESIS, ARCHITECTURE AND STRATIGRAPHY

DIRECTED BY
EPHRAIM STERN 1986–2000
ILAN SHARON AND AYELET GILBOA 2002–2004

with contributions by:
John E. Berg, Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, Allen Estes
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In memory of
Professor Ephraim Stern (1934–2018), Director of the Tel Dor Excavations
1980–2000
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CHAPTER 4

EAST OF “CHERYL’S ROOM”: AG/33–34—PHASES 5–6/7?

Allen Estes and Jeffrey R. Zorn

Excavated by:
AG/33  Karen Borstad (1989)
Stephanie Rose (1992)
Graciela Cabana (1993)
Richelle Coffin (1994)
Nati Kranot (2000)

AG/34  Ana Abraldes (1989)
Margaret Streubel (1997)
Nati Kranot (2000)

Nati Kranot (2000)

Directed by:  Andrew Stewart on behalf of UC Berkeley (1988–1994)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the Iron Age phases east of W18045, which was reached on its western face by F18076, an extension of “Cheryl’s floor” (F9657) in Phase 6b (discussed in Chapter 7).

The stratigraphic sequence of Iron Age Phases 5–7 in the area east of W18045 in AG/33–34 has been fragmented by a series of Phase 4 pits (AG/33) and the subsequent construction of the Phase 1 building in AG–AH/34 (nicknamed “Ana’s basement”), as well as adjacent rooms. These disturbances left behind a series of pit-riddled floor fragments not easily phased or correlated. This correlation is made even more difficult by the slope of these floors, reaching variations of 30 cm in elevation across these two squares (AG/33–34). Associating floors in Area G based on elevations can be problematic due to the sloping nature of the Iron Ages layers (as described in Chapter 3); however, it was usually the only means available in this part of the area. Finally, there are fewer walls to which a firm sequence can be anchored. Indeed, the base of the earliest Iron Age wall, W18045, was not reached or excavated on either its western or eastern face, creating stratigraphic uncertainty.

WALL AND FLOOR STAGES

Wall Descriptions

W9885 was a north–south rubble wall preserved only one course high and 75 cm wide (top #15.25, base #14.90; Figs.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 4.1. Wall and floors per stage and phase.</th>
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<td>vi</td>
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<td>vii/vii?</td>
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<td>viii</td>
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<td>ix</td>
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<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
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4.1–4.2). Phase 3 W9278 floated above W9885. W9885 appears to have been cut by Phase 4 pit L9875. On the other hand, it is both higher in elevation and different in orientation than the walls of the courtyard house of Phase 6 and below.

W9957 was a northwest–southeast wall fragment that was 1.7 m long and 50 cm wide. It consisted of two courses of fieldstones (top #14.82, base #14.30; Figs. 4.3–4.4; 4.11–4.13, 4.20; AG/34). Phase 1 W9282 was built across it. W9957 was built on top of W18045. Floors F9944 and F9962 reached its eastern face and appeared to also reach its southern end, suggesting that the wall might have ended at this point. W9957 is attributed to Phase 6a.
W18045, used in Phases 6b and 7, is a mudbrick wall, one meter wide, that runs across AG/33 from the southeast to the northwest into AG/34, where it seems to narrow slightly (top #14.40, base #14.16; Figs. 4.3–4.4, 4.20). Its northern end extends slightly into AH/34 (see Fig. 6.1). Since the course of this wall was only partially excavated in these three squares, it is difficult to say what its purpose was. It appears to enclose a space used for cooking (“Cheryl’s room”) in Phase 6b, associated with the courtyard house west of W9266. A series of floors reaching the eastern face of W18045 in both AG/33 and AG/34 are difficult to correlate with each other.

The general wall sequence for this unit is thus: W9885 > (? W9957 > W18045

In as much as the first wall in this sequence post-dates the Courtyard House, it is best relegated to Phase 5. The second thus becomes Phase 6 (subphase ‘a’, at a guess); which leaves the last as Phase 6b and/or 7. Elevation-wise, “Cheryl’s floor”—the signature assemblage of Phase 6b in the next unit to the west (Chapter 7)—fits W18045 rather than W9957. W18045 was not excavated to its base, so whether or not it served in earlier phases is not known.
Problems with Correlating Floors between AG/33 and AG/34

Correlation between the floors that are on the eastern side of W18045 in AG/33 and AG/34 is made difficult by the undulating nature of the surfaces that cross the area and by their fragmentary nature, which is caused both by the construction of Phase 1 walls (AG/34) and by Phase 4 pits (AG/33), as noted above.

The upper three surfaces in AG/34 (F18222, F18238 and F18258) seem to correspond to the complex of resurfacings and floor fragments found between F9870 and F9962 in AG/33. All of these surfaces are related by elevation and their crushed kurkar makeup. These floors relate to W9957 and belong to the same phase (6a).

The related surfaces, F18553 (=18559) and F18562 (=18566), appear to be most closely related to F18555 in AG/33 and belong to Phase 6b. This connection is based partly on the similarity in elevation, but primarily on field observations that F18553 looked similar to F18555. F18567 (AG/34) corresponds to F18556 (=18571; AG/33), which are either Phase 6c or 7.

DISCUSSION OF PHASES AND STAGES IN AG/33

Phase 5/6a? (Stages vi–vii)

stage vi W9885 ≡? F9796 (wall and floor fragments)

See above for the description and phasing of W9885. Fragmentary floor L9796 (#15.33) is the best candidate for a Phase 5 floor (Fig. 4.6), although it did not reach W9885. It cannot be later than Phase 5, since the Phase 4 pits L9871 and L9875 cut it.

stage vii/vi? W9885 ≡ F9858 (= F9853 = F9863)–kurkar floor

F9858 = F9853 = F9863 (#15.24–15.18; Fig. 4.7) consisted of patches of crushed kurkar that undulate slightly. Except for the fact that this floor was cut by L9871, it did not relate to
any other feature. Its elevation would match a use with Phase 5 W9885, although it is not impossible that this is, in fact, the highest of the series of Phase 6a resurfacings (see below).

Phase 6a (Stage viii) — Resurfacing of the Original Phase 6a Floor

\[
\text{Stage viii} \begin{cases}
  F9870 = F9901 = F9889 \\
  \forall (?) \\
  F9932 \\
  \forall (?) \\
  F9948 \\
  \forall (?) \\
  F9944
\end{cases} = F9957
\]

F9870 = F9901 = F9889 (#14.89–14.71; Fig. 4.9) consisted of a number of fragmentary patches of floor made of crushed kurkar. The floor was cut by Phase 4 Pits L9871, L9875 and L9890. F9889 and F9901 cover W18045.

F9932 (#14.78–14.67; Fig 4.10) was also constructed of crushed kurkar, like F9870. In fact, what is here termed F9932 likely represents the same floor as F9870, F9932 then being simply an earlier set of the same surfaces. All of the patches of F9932 and F9870 were at slightly different elevations, but still within the neighborhood of each other, although their disconnected nature precluded definitive correlations between them. Some connections were visible in the balks, which resulted in grouping numerous floor patches together as F9932. All of these surfaces sloped, sometimes by as much as 30 cm. None of the floor fragments related to other features, other than being cut by the Phase 4 pits.

F9948 (#14.70–14.67) was a 4 cm-thick surface made of crushed kurkar pounded together with dark gray mud. A portion of this floor was below a fragment of F9932 and so is described as a separate surface. F9948 also probably belongs to the same complex of surfaces as F9870 and F9932.

F9944 (#14.69–14.66; Fig. 4.11) is another in the series of ill-defined floor patches of crushed kurkar. It, too, should be
grouped with the series of floor fragments and resurfacings in AG/33 between the elevations of #14.90–14.40, described above. F9944 reached the eastern face of W9957 and curved around the wall to reach its southern end.

The general situation in this space is of several successive resurfacings above the initial floor surface reaching W9957. Judging by the maximum number of overlaid surfaces at any one point, there were at least three. However, few of the floor patches actually delineated were, in fact, directly overlaid. Few, if any, of the artifacts—which were sparse anyway—can be considered sealed by any of the surfaces. Although only F9944, the lowest set of floors in the series, actually reaches W9957—which defines Phase 6a in this unit (cf., Fig. 4.10 vs. 4.11)—all of them are lower in elevation than the base of W9885. In as much as all these surfaces are fragmentary, that the number of finds from each is limited, and that these finds cannot be adequately isolated to sub-stages, we lump them together into a single stage.

Phase 6a (Stage viii)

stage viii F9962 (= F18000 = F18006 = F18030)—original 6a floor
F9962 = F18000 = F18006 = F18030 (AG/33; #14.69–14.40; Figs. 4.12–4.13) appear to have been the original surface of the sloping kurkar-floor complex described above. It, too, was a widely scattered patchy surface of crushed kurkar. F9962 is the lowest floor which reached W9957 on its eastern face and its southern end (slightly) and covered W18045 (#14.63).

Phase 6b (Stage ix)

stage ix F18044 ≡ F18555 = W18045 (possibly equivalent to F9657, “Cheryl’s floor” in AH/33)
F18044 (#14.20–14.16; see Fig. 7.1) consisted of a patchy kurkar floor. Most of these patches were preserved along the eastern face of mudbrick W18045 and reached the wall. Large amounts of pottery were recovered from L18044 just above the level of the floor. Phase 4 pits L9875 and L9890 probably contaminated this locus.

Phase 6c?/7? (Stage x)

stage x F18556 (= F18571) = W18045
F18556 = F18571 (#13.98–13.80; Fig. 4.14) consisted of several patches of a thin, white ashy floor with a gray, circular hole in its southern end, which might have been a small pit. Although the floor was not observed reaching the face of W18045, this is really the only option. F18556 was uncovered in the southern section of the square, while F18571 was uncovered in its middle and it is probable that they are parts of the same floor, given the similarity in makeup and elevation.

DISCUSSION OF STAGES IN AG/34

On the north side of W9282, no Iron Age architecture was found above mudbrick W18045. Therefore, the only way to correlate surfaces here is by comparing elevations and, where possible, the matrix of the surfaces to the ones discussed above.
Phase 6a (Stage viii)

stage viii F18222 ≡ F18238 ≡ F18258 (resurfacing of original Phase 6a floor)

The upper three floors in AG/34 (F18222, F18238 and F18258) correspond to the complex of floor fragments and resurfacings to the south in AG/33 and are related to each other by their elevations and usually crushed-kurkar makeup. All these floors likely related to W9957 and belong to the same phase (Phase 6a).

F18222 (#14.77–14.69) is a patchy floor of crushed kurkar that has no observable relation to any walls or features, except that it was cut by the much later construction of Phase 1. F18222 was probably a resurfacing of F18238.

F18238 = F18258 (#14.66–14.62; Fig. 4.15) is a gray, ashy beaten-earth floor, with no noticeable crushed kurkar. This floor is similar to the series of resurfacings found above F9962 in AG/33, described above. F18222 was probably a resurfacing of F18238. This floor was also damaged by the construction of the Phase 1 building overlying it.

Phase 6b (Stage ix)

stage ix F18288 = latest Phase 6b floor

F18288 (#14.55–14.45; Fig. 4.16) belongs to the series of resurfacings east of and below Phase 1 W18248. It consisted of a very patchy surface of crushed kurkar and beaten earth, cut by elements of Phase 1.

stage ix F18553 = F18559 = F18562 = F18566 ≡ W18045 (possibly equivalent to F9657, “Cheryl’s floor” in AH/33)

The Phase 6b surfaces F18553 (= 18559) and F18562 (= 18566) in AG/34 appear to be most closely related to F18555 in AG/33. This connection is based partly on the similarity in elevation, but primarily on field observations that F18553 was similar to F18555. F18567 (AG/34) corresponds to F18556 (= 18571) in AG/33 (Phase 6b/c or ?).

F18553 (#14.38; Fig. 4.17) consisted of two patches of floor. One patch was of crushed kurkar, found north of W18045 (where it curves to the west). This patch of floor resembled F18555 in AG/33; both reached W18045. The second patch of this floor was located farther to the east and was a white ashy surface; it had no relation to W18045.

F18559 (#14.30; Fig. 4.18) was a highly fragmented floor...
East of “Cheryl’s room”: AG/33–34—Phases 5–6/7?

Fig. 4.17. Patches of F18553 and a northern extension of W18045 just beginning to be exposed, looking west. (p08Z3-1073)

Fig. 4.18. F18559 and northern extension of W18045, looking west. (p08Z3-1074)

Fig. 4.19. F18569; the floor could not be traced to W8045, but likely reached it; looking southwest. (p08Z3-1080)

Fig. 4.20. General view of AI/33–34, AH/33–34 and AG/33–34, looking north; walls from Phases 1–9. W9957 sits on the just-visible preserved upper portion of the mudbricks of W18045; to its west is mudbrick W9735 which may have formed a corner with W18045. (p08Z3-1099)
Fig. 4.21. Locus genealogy for AG/33. (d09Z3-1271)
that consisted of two small, white ashy patches. The floor was similar to the second surface of F18555, described above. No relations could be defined for this floor. F18553 and F18559 probably represent the same floor, which had been resurfaced.

F18562 = F18566 (#14.32–14.26) was a fragmentary beaten-earth floor that was partly covered by a yellowish layer and contained small burn areas on it. F18566 was a second patch of this floor that was situated alongside W18045 and appeared to reach the wall. The elevations of this floor suggest that it belonged to a complex of surfaces that included F18553 and F18559.

Phase 6c/7? (Stage x)

stage x  F18567 (= F18568 = F18569) = W18045

F18567 = F18568 = F18569 (#14.17–14.14; Fig. 4.19) is a narrow strip of white ashy floor along the eastern face of W18045; it presumably had reached this wall.