

## BRONZE AGE FUNERARY PRACTICES IN LEBANON

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Map showing the main sites.

Jean-Paul Thalmann has extensively researched the Levantine Bronze Age and his excavations in Tell Arqa have substantially contributed to the understanding of third and second millennium Lebanese coastal settlements, several aspects of which remain unfortunately unexplored. In their contribution to this volume in his honor, the authors investigate Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age funerary customs in Lebanon by systematically collecting and analyzing the evidence from pre- and post war excavations, including the recently published evidence from Tell Fadous-Kfarabida and the yet unpublished excavation results from Tell Burak (see map).

### I The Early Bronze Age: State of the Evidence

Despite the rather long history of archaeological research in Lebanon, which began already in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, several periods are rather poorly defined up to now. One of them is certainly the Early Bronze Age

(hereafter EB). This becomes especially clear when looking at Early Bronze Age funerary practices. The available evidence mainly derives from chance discoveries, many of which have not even been fully published.

#### The Early Bronze Age I

Byblos has produced a large number of graves dated to the *Énéolithique Récent*, 2101 in total<sup>1</sup>. The burials are clearly intramural, dispersed between the houses. Most of the deceased were interred in large pithoi, and accompanied by grave goods such as pottery vessels, copper daggers and jewelry consisting of stone beads as well as gold and silver ornaments. Some of the burial jars contain multiple interments. A few skeletons were also found in simple pits, while others were interred in natural caves<sup>2</sup>. The contemporary settlement with oval houses and the widespread use of flint blades of the Canaanite type clearly place the settlement – and thus also the graves – in the EB I according to the terminology of the Southern Levant<sup>3</sup>, i.e. roughly in the second half of the fourth millennium BC. Especially the copper daggers found in the graves<sup>4</sup> are not



attested before the EB I in the Levant <sup>5</sup>.

A similar situation is encountered at the site of Sidon-Dakerman. Also here, eight burials of adults in large jars were found, placed under the floors of oval houses or directly outside the buildings <sup>6</sup>. The burials were not accompanied by grave goods, except for tomb 4, which contained a flint blade. A radiocarbon sample taken from the bones of tomb 1 provides a date between 3629 and 3016 BC when calibrated <sup>7</sup>, thus confirming a dating in the EB I according to the Southern Levantine terminology.

One additional jar burial, this time of a child, is reported from the site of Khan Khalde <sup>8</sup>, again in a settlement consisting of oval buildings.

A different burial tradition is attested in Kafr Ġarra in the hinterland of Sidon. Here an open chamber in cliff measuring ca. 4,9 x 2,2 m was used for burials. Unfortunately the tomb itself was robbed, but villagers had extracted four handmade ceramic vessels (two bowls and two jugs), which are comparable to the *Énéolithique Récent* in Byblos, and which therefore should be dated to the EB I <sup>9</sup>.

### The Early Bronze Age II-III

Burials in natural or artificial rock chambers continue in the EB II and III. In Lébé'a, situated 15 km east of Sidon, a 2,5 by 3,0 m rectangular rock cut chamber was excavated in 1924. Two superimposed levels suggest an extended use of the tomb. Although no skeletal remains were retrieved, the large amount of burial gifts, consisting of two badly preserved bronze pins and 61 ceramic vessels (bowls, beakers, amphoriskoi, jugs and jars) suggests a multiple burial. The types of the pottery as well as the fact that the majority is wheel-made suggest a date within the EB II and III <sup>10</sup>.

Another rock-cut chamber tomb was discovered in 1955 during construction work in Byblos, outside the ancient Tell <sup>11</sup>. Unfortunately the tomb was robbed upon discovery, but a group of vessels was later retrieved and sold to the Museum of the American University of Beirut. Thirteen of these vessels date to the EB II-III, while three further vessels testify to a later reuse of the tomb in the Middle Bronze Age (hereafter MB). As no bones were retrieved, the number of interments remains unknown. Finally, a tomb was discovered in Addousiye, 15 km south of Sidon. Little is known about it and all that is available is Dunand's short description: "*Dans les éboulis de l'entrée nous avons rencontré quelques tessons du Bronze III, puis plus rien. La tombe semble n'avoir jamais été occupée*" <sup>12</sup>.

1 Tell Fadous-Kfarabia seen from the east.

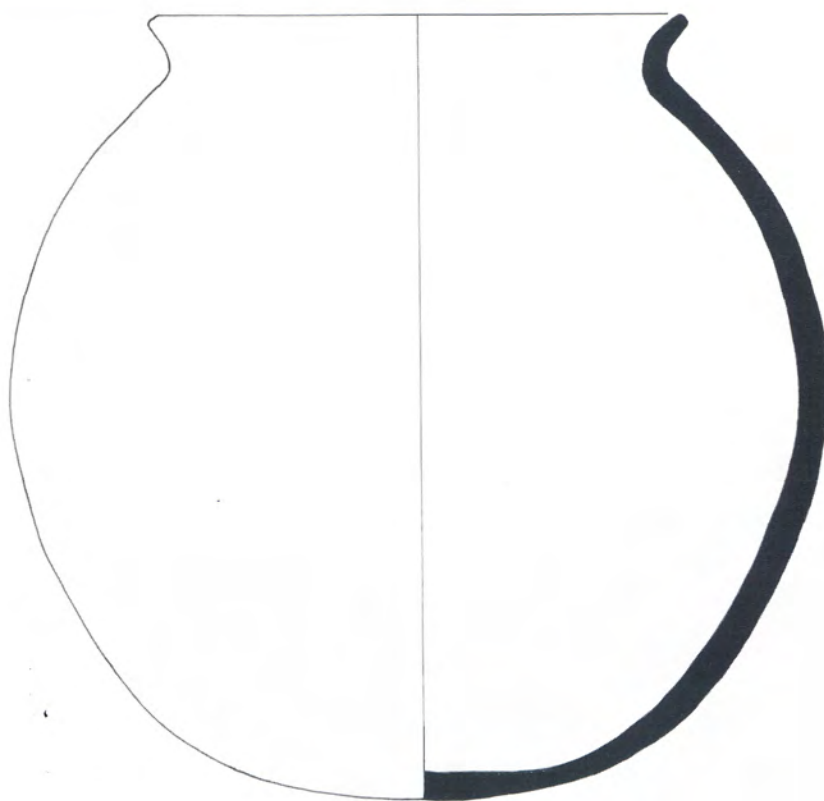


The recent investigations at Tell Fadous/Kfarabida (fig. 1) added a new aspect to the EB burial customs in Lebanon. While documenting a section in 2005 two infant burials were discovered, both of them intramural <sup>13</sup>. The jar burial context 67 (fig. 2) consists of the disarticulated bones of an infant aged between 6 and 18 months, which were deposited in a nearly complete cooking pot (fig. 3). This vessel was placed upright in a stone-filled pit. No lid or





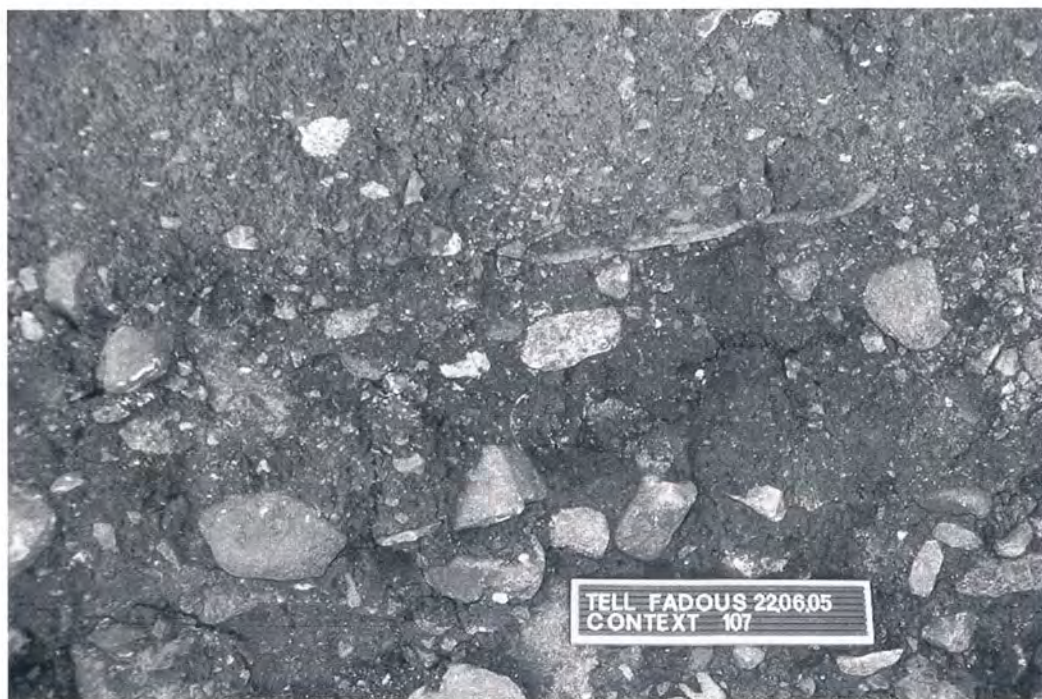
2 Early Bronze  
Age Jar burial from Tell  
Fadous Kfarabida  
(context 67).



3 Cooking pot  
from jar burial context  
67.

0 5 10 cm





4 Early Bronze Age Jar burial from Tell Fadous Kfarabida (context 107).

cover was preserved and no burial gifts accompanied the skeleton. The second child burial is of a different type. Here the bones of a child aged between 3 and 4 years were placed in an obviously disarticulated manner on the body sherds of a large storage jar (fig. 4), and they were then covered with smaller sherds originating from the same jar. Again no grave goods were found. Burials of infants in jars are quite common in the Ancient Near East, and especially during the third millennium BC. Such burials are one of the hallmarks of Period K in Hama, where 70 of them were excavated, usually under house floors<sup>14</sup>. The Hama infant burials are directly comparable to context 67 at Tell Fadous-Kfarabida, as also in Hama cooking pots were used, and the burials are generally devoid of funeral gifts. Similar infant burials are also reported for Tell Nebi Mend, dating to the earliest phase of the EB sequence<sup>15</sup>, and Tell Judaidah in the Amuq Plain (Phase G)<sup>16</sup>. The same type of infant burial is also common in the Euphrates Region in Syria<sup>17</sup> and throughout Mesopotamia<sup>18</sup>. All the parallels for the jar burial of Tell Fadous-Kfarabida found in Syria and Mesopotamia are clearly intramural burials.

### The Early Bronze Age IV

Early Bronze Age IV funerary customs can best be studied in Rafid, located in the Wadi at-Taym southeast of Kamid el-Loz. Here, an EB IV chamber tomb was discovered during construction work in 1966 and excavated in 1967. Unfortunately, in the meantime, the tomb had been robbed, so that mainly the material rescued in 1966 is preserved. The subterranean chamber, which measures ca. 3,00 x 1,50 m, was covered by one monumental 3,40 x 2,30 m stone slab. The height of the chamber is 1,1 – 1,2 m. The location of the entrance remains unclear due to damage during the discovery. The chamber was covered probably by a stone tumulus. Preserved finds consist of 13 ceramic vessels, all wheelmade, one dagger, one toggle pin, one awl or needle, as well as several stone beads and pendants and one carnelian bead. The number of interments remains unclear<sup>19</sup>.



More EB IV tombs are mentioned from Bna'foul<sup>20</sup>, Chhim<sup>21</sup>, Sarafand (Dahr el-Zaatar)<sup>22</sup> and Wadi el-Laymoun. At the latter site, an EB IV cemetery was partly excavated by M. Simson and R. Saidah<sup>23</sup>, and besides pottery one bronze dagger blade is mentioned. Unfortunately no detailed information on the funerary practices and the objects found at these sites is available. 262

A rather unusual burial practice is attested at the al-Hourriye cave in the Qadisha Valley. In this natural cave with cremations and inhumations, two different burial rites are recorded side-by-side. The accompanying finds consist of EB IV and MB I pottery, as well as a few metal objects such as biconical copper beads and toggle pins as well as stone and shell beads, bone and flint tools<sup>24</sup>. The practice of cremation is rather unusual during the Bronze Age in the Levant<sup>25</sup>, and no convincing explanation for its presence at al-Hourriye cave can be given for the time being.

A similar case of presumably EB burials in a natural cave is recorded for Mugharet esh-Shatawi (Khallet el-Khazen VI), west of Marjayoun<sup>26</sup>. Here, however, no remains of cremations are mentioned, and the lack of a detailed publication precludes any comments on the funerary practices and the precise date of the burials.

### The problem of the dolmens

Dolmens in Lebanon are mainly attested in the Biqaa Valley<sup>27</sup> and in the Akkar Plain<sup>28</sup>. In general, dolmens in the Near East are difficult to date, due to their frequent reuse and to ancient or modern looting, but many scholars favor a construction during the EB<sup>29</sup>. The only concrete evidence for dating the Lebanese dolmens is found in the group around Mengez in the Akkar Plain, which Tallon investigated between 1961 and 1962. The earliest pottery recovered from the structures has been assigned to the earlier part of the EB<sup>30</sup> or the Chalcolithic to EB<sup>31</sup>. Other finds such as flint tools, beads and seals confirm these suggested dates<sup>32</sup>.

### Conclusions

Due to the extremely limited availability of well-excavated and fully published EB cemeteries and tombs in Lebanon, it is almost impossible to provide an overview of the general trends in the development of EB funeral customs. The EB I period seems to be characterized mainly by intramural jar burials, at least in the coastal plain<sup>33</sup>. Yet rock-cut chamber tombs common in the Southern Levant<sup>34</sup> are also attested, for instance at Kafr Ġarra. In the EB II-III, rock-cut chamber tombs seem to be most common, just as in the Southern Levant. The absence of anthropological studies prevents us from gaining insights into the number of interments per grave, but the large quantity of objects found in the tomb at Lébé'a suggests multiple interments. The uniformity of burial goods with bowls, juglets and jugs prevailing<sup>35</sup> and the general absence of prestige goods observed in the Southern Levant also characterize the few cases from Lebanon. In addition to chamber tombs, jar burials continue for infants, as attested at Tell Fadous-Kfarabida. For the EB IV burials, a built chamber tomb is attested at Rafid, while in al-Hourriye a natural cave was used as a place for inhumation as well as cremation burials. Dolmens are mainly



attested for the eastern and northern parts of the country, and seem to have been in use throughout the entire EB.

## I Funerary Practices in the Middle Bronze Age

263

Several sites in the Biqaa Valley and on the coast have yielded evidence for funerary practices in the MB.

In the Biqaa Valley, four sites have yielded tombs of the MB period: these are from North to South: Baalbek, Tell Hizzin, Tell el-Ghassil, and Tell Kamid el-Loz.

### Baalbek

In Baalbek, three MB tombs were found during the excavations in the courtyard of the Jupiter temple<sup>36</sup>. These finds were never published. According to the available information, each skeleton was buried under the floor of a different room. In terms of grave goods, only some items of the accompanying funerary material are mentioned: a toggle pin, amethyst beads, a bronze spearhead, as well as an axe-head, which is said to be similar to the ones found in the tombs east of Sidon. Since two types of axe-heads, duckbill and rectangular, were found in the latter<sup>37</sup>, it is difficult to determine the type to which the Baalbek axe-head belongs. One of the skulls was pierced by an arrowhead<sup>38</sup>, which suggests that at least one of the buried persons died during an armed conflict.

### Tell Hizzin

Tell Hizzin, ancient *Hasi*<sup>39</sup>, is located 10km southwest of Baalbek. It was excavated during two short seasons by the Department of Antiquities after the accidental discovery on the site of a statue of the Egyptian Pharaoh Sebekhotep IV. The excavator uncovered MB tombs around the Tell but, unfortunately, he never published them. The only description we have of these tombs is the following: "*Sur le pourtour du tell, de nombreuses tombes séparées par des dalles ou circonscrites par de petites pierres, ont livré un riche matériel céramique composé de bols ou de petits vases à anse bifide rappelant ceux des tombes de Kafr Ġarra*"<sup>40</sup> This very brief description seems to suggest that two types of tombs were probably used in Tell Hizzin: some were cists while others were simple earth pits surrounded by a fieldstone wall. From the "rich" funerary material that was excavated only two types of pottery vessels are mentioned: bowls-without further details regarding the type- and double-handled jugs. They<sup>41</sup> are said to be characteristic of the Hyksos period, i.e. dating to MB IIB.

### Tell el-Ghassil

In Tell el-Ghassil, seven tombs dated to the MB were found in the 1972-1974 seasons in Area III<sup>42</sup>. According to Badre<sup>43</sup>, this area may have been a cemetery. Three tombs belong to stratum XI (tombs 3-5)<sup>44</sup> dated to MB IIA<sup>45</sup>. The absence of constructions in this stratum seems to confirm the original function of the area as a burial ground. Tombs 3 and 4 are simple earth pits and contained one adult and a two-year old child respectively

while tomb 5 is a jar burial, which contained the remains of a one to six month old infant. No funerary offerings were found in these tombs. Four tombs (1, 2, 6, and 7) belong to Level X<sup>46</sup> dated to MB IIB<sup>47</sup>. Tombs 1 and 6 are earth pits. The first is surrounded by stones and contained several skeletons, 3 plates, 4 carinated bowls, 2 juglets – one of them of the Tell el-Yahudiyeh ware –<sup>48</sup>, 4 beads, and a bronze needle. In the second, a one to two year old child was buried without offerings. Regarding tomb 1, the excavator<sup>49</sup> believes that all skeletons were placed there at the same time and that the tomb was never re-opened. She suggests that all those buried died simultaneously either from disease or as the result of a funerary ritual whereby the retinue or family members were buried with their master<sup>50</sup>. A more plausible explanation however may be suggested to account for the situation in tomb 1: the dismembered skeletons are secondary burials, which have been buried together with the man for whom the tomb was built<sup>51</sup>.

Tombs 2 and 7 are jar burials: in the first one, a six to twelve month old infant was buried without any offering. Two animal bones belonging to a caprid were mixed with the human bones. In the second was a double burial: a newborn infant one to six months old and a two year old child. Bronze, shell and serpentine beads were placed in the jar. The skeleton of a five year old child may also belong to tomb 7 but the evidence is by no means conclusive<sup>52</sup>.

### Qabb Elyas

A MBII tomb was found in Qabb Elyas in the Central Biqaa Valley but was never published<sup>53</sup>.

### Kamid el-Loz

On the northern slope of the Tell, 27 tombs were excavated<sup>54</sup>. Tombs 96 and 113 are intramural earth pits and were found under the floors of Building I while the others were found in a burial ground. They were distributed in groups and this feature is most probably due to the fact that they re-used architectural elements from decaying buildings<sup>55</sup>. 8 adult and 19 child burials, mostly newborn infants, were found. Only four of the newborns were buried in jars directly in the ground without any protection. All remaining burials were placed in earth pits of either oval or rectangular form. In some instances the walls of the pit were plastered with mud. Of the oval pits, two tombs were dug in old walls, three were laid on and surrounded with stones, two were surrounded by irregular stones, and finally, two had no specific features.

No physical anthropological analysis was undertaken and the gender distribution is unknown. Moreover, the dead adults were buried in a north-east-southwest direction while children and infant burials showed no defined orientation. Twelve tombs – two adult and ten infant tombs – had no funerary offerings while others contained one to six pottery vessels consisting of plates, carinated and rounded bowls, trefoil-mouthed juglets which were found exclusively in adult tombs, and jars. As for other types of offerings, one tomb contained an elongated metal axe-head, one a bronze pin, one a gold plated bronze ear plug and a bronze earring,



two had necklaces: one made of frit, clay, and shell beads and one made of carnelian and snail beads, and finally, two had animal offerings.

On the coast, MB tombs were found in several ancient settlements. From North to South evidence came from Tell Arqa, al-Hourriye Cave **265** (located further inland in the Qadisha valley area), Byblos, Sin el Fil, Beirut Kharji, Sidon, Majdalouna, Lebe'a, Kafr Ġarra, and recently, from Tell el-Burak.

### **Tell Arqa**

In Tell Arqa <sup>56</sup>, six tombs, five of which were jar burials under house floors, dated to MB I were found in level 14 <sup>57</sup>. Tomb T14.29 had two jars. The extra mural tomb, T14.14, is partly destroyed. It is a rectangular pit lined with stones and plastered with mud. It is a "warrior tomb" and contained a bronze duckbill axe-head, two bronze spearheads, a bronze dagger, three trefoil mouthed jugs, a carinated bowl and a carinated goblet. The dead was buried in a wooden coffin in a secondary interment. The jar burials contained the remains of children and infants and they were placed in pits surrounded by stones. The neck of the jar was cut to introduce the child and in one instance two jar bases were used. All had a single burial except one, which contained the remains of two newborns. Three had no funerary offerings and in the remaining two, pottery vessels and a necklace were found.

In level 13, twenty-three tombs dated to MB II were found <sup>58</sup> but two of them, T13.67 and T13.69, contained two jar burials each. The only indication is that tombs associated with floor 13/1 of AK 21 and those found in area AL/AM 22 are more recent than the others <sup>59</sup>. However, the table illustrated in fig. 20 presents the group of older tombs while that in fig. 21 presents the more recent group.

Only half of the tombs were intact, while the other half were partly preserved. Some were found under house floors while others were found in a burial ground devoid of constructions. With only two exceptions where children were found, earth pits were used exclusively for adults. One adult tomb had brick walls. Four adult tombs were single and three were multiple burials. In the latter case the archaeological evidence of T13.10 suggests successive burials while that of T13.11 suggests the simultaneous burial of two adults and a child. All children and infants were buried in jars. In this case all with only one exception were single burials.

The funerary offerings found in the tombs consist almost exclusively of pottery vessels, 1-4 per tomb. In all jar burials except one there is only one miniature vessel: a carinated bowl, a jar or a juglet. In adult tombs, the common assemblage consists of a large jug, a rounded bowl, a carinated bowl or a small vase, which according to Thalmann <sup>60</sup> were used for food, and a narrow-necked jar, which was used for perfumed oil. In some adult tombs, animal bones were found attesting food offerings. Apart from the ceramics, a bronze needle was placed in two adult tombs and a necklace in two jar burials.

### **Al-Hourriye Cave**

The al-Hourriye Cave is located in Northern Lebanon in the village of Karm



Sadde. According to excavation results <sup>61</sup>, the cave was used as a burial ground in EB IV and MB I. The ceramic material of group 1 and 2 <sup>62</sup> date these inhumations to MB I.

Regarding the inhumations little is known about the funerary ritual.

Contrary to the earlier groups, the MB I bone remains, which were <sup>266</sup> buried on the cave floor do not bear traces of incineration. Information about number, disposition, age and gender is not available and more detailed information about this highly interesting site is to be expected from future excavations and publications.

### Byblos

In Byblos, eight royal tombs and several ordinary tombs dated to the MB were found <sup>63</sup>.

### The Royal Tombs

Byblos is so far the only Lebanese site where royal tombs of the MB have been excavated. Nine such tombs, eight of which are dated to the MB, were found on the northwestern edge of the site <sup>64</sup>. Tombs I-IV are contemporary with the 12<sup>th</sup> Egyptian dynasty, more precisely with the reign of Amenemhat III and IV (1842-1790) BC <sup>65</sup> while tombs VI-IX are dated to the Hyksos period <sup>66</sup>. They are all shaft tombs dug in the rock. The 6-12 m deep shaft is square or rectangular in section and perpendicular to the funerary chamber, which was dug at the bottom of the shaft. Some funerary chambers like that of Tomb III had stonewalls and pavement <sup>67</sup>. The body was often placed in a stone coffin inside the funerary chamber except in tomb II where a wooden coffin was found <sup>68</sup>. In some instances <sup>69</sup>, animal bones were mixed with the human bones attesting animal offerings. Most of these tombs were looted in antiquity. The intact tombs yielded very rich funerary offerings among which Egyptian imports predominate. Grave goods consist of pottery vessels, jewelry, ceremonial weapons such as gold and electrum fenestrated axes, a curved sword, daggers, pottery and metal vessels, and imported Egyptian objects made of gold, obsidian and faience <sup>70</sup>.

### Private tombs

Three ordinary tombs known as "*tombeaux des particuliers*" were excavated on the southern edge of the ancient tell but they were unfortunately not completely published. They are rock-cut tombs dug on the southern slope of the site where a large number of ceramic vessels, an axe-head, arrowheads, and ivory fragments were found. While Montet <sup>71</sup> is not sure about the exact date of these tombs, the published material clearly dates them to MB IIB <sup>72</sup>. Most characteristic of MB IIB are the Tell el-Yahudiyeh jars and the duckbill axes.

To the northeast of the site, outside one of the city gates, a rock-cut tomb was found. It is dated to the MB IIB or Hyksos period by a scarab, which had escaped the attention of looters who entered the tomb from the ceiling <sup>73</sup>. Stone walls reinforced the inside of the rock-cut chamber and its main entrance was sealed by a stone wall. A large jar containing animal bones was also preserved attesting animal offerings <sup>74</sup>.

One additional tomb was found at the bottom of the cliff northwest of



the site <sup>75</sup>. It is a rock-cut tomb dated to the EB and MB II. Its material was bought by the AUB Museum <sup>76</sup> where it is currently on display and was published by Baramki, the then curator of that museum <sup>77</sup>. To MB IIA belong 3 jugs, one deep bowl, one large jar and a vessel of the Kamares type.

267

Finally in the so-called "Nécropole K", a shaft leading to a complex of 12 rock-cut chambers was found <sup>78</sup>. This cemetery was used from the MB IIA until the Roman period. The evidence does not allow to identify specific MB tombs and to reconstruct details of the funerary ritual of that period. Among the retrieved ceramics some are clearly dated to the MB and belong to the classical repertoire found in other MB tombs such as round and carinated bowls, goblets, miniature vessels, teapots, jars, jugs, and juglets <sup>79</sup>.

### Jounieh-Sahel Alma

In the early 1950's, three shaft tombs were accidentally discovered on the road leading from Jounieh to Sahel Alma some 20 km north of Beirut <sup>80</sup>. These tombs were first used in the Chalcolithic period and reused in the MB over a long period of time as attested by the large number of ceramic vessels found. "*Cette céramique, près de 100 pièces dans la tombe n° 2, était accompagnée de haches, poignards, épingles et perles en bronze, d'un singe en terre émaillée, de perles en cornaline et améthyste*" <sup>81</sup>. Nothing is said about the human remains and the finds were never published.

### Sin el Fil

An accidental discovery in 1932 uncovered the existence of several rock-cut tombs in Sin el Fil, 5 km northeast of Beirut. Chéhab <sup>82</sup>, who reported on the discovery, does not mention the exact number of tombs. He only says that all have been looted with the exception of one, which he published. This tomb, which was sealed by a big stone slab, received successive burials, contained skeletal remains near the entrance and rich funerary offerings. Nothing is said about the number of interments in the tomb but it may be implied from the excavator's use of the expression "*les morts*" and also from the large quantity of funerary offerings that multiple and successive burials were found. The excavator also does not mention whether primary or secondary burials are attested. He gives a detailed description of the funerary material found in the tomb, which clearly dates it to MB IIB. It consists of the usual pottery assemblage found in tombs, jars, jugs, juglets, vases, and plates. Noteworthy is the presence of a Tell el-Yahudiyeh jug and a red-slipped chalice. Bronze weapons, duck-bill axes, spearheads, and daggers, typical of the offerings placed in the so-called "warrior tombs" are also attested. Finally, bronze and silver needles, scarabs, a gold ring and carnelian beads were also part of the funerary deposit.

### Beirut

In the Beirut Central District, four shaft tombs dug in the rocky promontory north of Martyrs' Square were accidentally found in 1954 and summarily documented by the Lebanese Department of Antiquities <sup>83</sup>. The final report on *Grotte 4* was prepared for publication by Roger Saidah, William



A. Ward, and Helga Seeden but the untimely death of Saidah delayed the publication until 1994 <sup>84</sup>. This tomb was occupied in the MB and it continued to be used in the Late Bronze Age (hereafter LB). It is a shaft tomb with one circular and one rectangular funerary chamber <sup>85</sup>. Nothing is said about the human remains that were found. Only the funerary offerings deposited in the tomb have been catalogued and published. The ceramic material <sup>86</sup> which includes three cups of the Kamares type <sup>87</sup> as well as the metal finds and scarabs date the earlier phase of use of the tomb to MB IIA.

During the recent excavations in the city center <sup>88</sup>, two jar burials containing respectively the remains of a newborn and a 3-4 year old child were found in the Tell area. The jar with the older child contained a necklace of beads. The three pottery vessels, which accompany the burial <sup>89</sup>, date it to the MB.

### **Majdalouna**

In 1937, an accidental discovery uncovered a tomb of the MB in Majdalouna, 10 km northeast of Sidon <sup>90</sup>. It is a shaft tomb with a double funerary chamber where several individuals were buried. There is however no mention whether the burials were primary or secondary. A large number of ceramic vessels were part of the funerary offerings and some of them such as the carinated bowls, piriform jugs and juglets, are typical of the pottery assemblage of MB IIB tombs <sup>91</sup>. The tomb continued however to be in use during the LB as attested by the presence of some ceramic forms, as well as by the scarabs which are clearly dated to the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty <sup>92</sup>. Bronze daggers, needles, and tweezers were also found.

### **Lebe'a**

Located 15 km east of Sidon, the site has yielded six tombs, three of which (Tombs 1-3) are clearly dated to the MB <sup>93</sup>. Tomb 1 is a shaft tomb with ceramic and bronze material clearly dated to the MB IIB <sup>94</sup>. The bronze weapons, axe-head, spearhead, and dagger, which were retrieved there, identify it as a "warrior tomb". No information concerning the burials is given. Tomb 2 was not excavated. The described material was retrieved at a depth of 1.15 m but not from the funerary chamber. It consists of ceramic vessels typical of MB IIB <sup>95</sup>. Tomb 3 was looted and the three vessels <sup>96</sup>, which were bought from the looters, clearly date the tomb to MB IIB. Tomb 4, which the excavator ascribes also to MB IIB <sup>97</sup>, did not yield any material. At least, none is described in the publication.

### **Kafr Ġarra**

Conteneau was the first to mention the existence of MB tombs in Kafr Ġarra <sup>98</sup>. The shaft tomb he describes contained human remains of multiple burials surrounded by ceramic vessels among which are button base juglets and jugs of the Tell el-Yahudiyeh type. This tomb is dated to the Hyksos or MB IIB period.

### **Ruweise**

In the locality called Ruweise, Guigues discovered two tombs dug in the rock and covered with stone slabs, Tomb 3 and Tomb 13, which contained a jar burial <sup>99</sup>. Tomb 3 is a rectangular pit and contained the skeletal remains



of an infant mixed with bird bones <sup>100</sup>. Tomb 13 is elliptic in shape and contained bone remains of an infant.

A third child burial was found in tomb 14 <sup>101</sup> which is a rectangular pit dug in the rock. Here, the child was placed on the floor together with several pottery vessels and two silver rings. The pottery <sup>102</sup> dates the tomb to MB IIA. 269

Twenty-one shaft tombs with circular or square shafts, four circular or rectangular earth pits, as well as two cist tombs were also found. Most of these tombs were looted in antiquity but the preserved ones yielded a rich ceramic and bronze material, mainly weapons, as well as beads, ivory needles (N° 25), cylinder seals (N° 57, 66) and scarabs which clearly date most of these tombs to MB IIB <sup>103</sup> with the exception of tomb 25 which may be slightly earlier <sup>104</sup>. The presence of animal bones in several tombs attests the practice of food offerings.

Most of the preserved shaft tombs contained multiple burials while earth pits had one single skeleton (N° 56, 71). In tomb N° 25 the head of the dead rested on a stone slab.

### Sidon

The recent excavations of the British Museum on the "College Site" in Sidon, near the Crusader land castle, have yielded so far sixty tombs dated to the MB <sup>105</sup>, the largest number of MB tombs excavated on a Lebanese site. On the other hand, on that same site, Dunand <sup>106</sup> had found in the late 1940's two MB jar burials sunk in the sand layer that the recent excavations have found (see below). He dated the tombs to the 17<sup>th</sup> c. BC.

All the tombs excavated by the British Museum were summarily presented in preliminary reports <sup>107</sup> but the finds of only twenty of them, which were excavated during the 2001 season, were presented in detail together with an anthropological study of their human and faunal remains <sup>108</sup>. Most tombs excavated in Sidon were found in a burial ground covering the EB remains which had been sealed with a 90-140 cm layer of sterile sand <sup>109</sup>.

The tombs are of three types: built tombs, earth pits lined with stones/bricks or plastered, and jar burials. They belong to Sidon's MB Phase 1-5, which span the whole MB II period <sup>110</sup>.

Single burials are the overwhelming funerary practice and multiple burials are extremely rare in Sidon. Burial 7 is the only example with 16 individuals dated to Phase 5, i.e. MB II=MB IIB period. Another multiple burial of adults is Burial 42 with only four individuals dated to Phase 2 (MB IIA). There is no evidence so far of secondary burials in Sidon.

While jar burials are the most common type of burial for neonates and very young children, some of them were buried in simple earth pits (Burial 26 and 28), alone or with adults (Burial 7). On the other hand, sub-adults are exceptionally buried in jars (Burial 54). Some jar burials often contain the remains of more than one infant or child (Burial 2 and 29). There is no systematic orientation of the body inside the tomb.

Concerning the offerings they consist mainly of pottery vessels, bowls, jars, jugs, juglets, and plates <sup>111</sup>. No imported pottery was found inside the tombs. Adult tombs contained also metal weapons such as axes, spear-heads, daggers, and knives. The richest in metal finds are the so-called



5 Tell el-Burak  
seen from the south.



6 Middle Bronze  
Age tomb from Tell el-  
Burak.



warrior tombs. Among other more exceptional offerings <sup>112</sup> are beads (Burial 8), scarabs (Burials 1,4,10,12), cylinder seals (Burial 33), game piece (Burial 1), jewelry, mainly silver anklets (Burial 13), and stone tools (Burial 3).

Food offering seems to have been also a widespread practice. They <sup>270</sup> consisted mainly of domestic animals, sheep, goat, cow, and pig. The richest animal deposits were found in constructed graves <sup>113</sup>.

### Tell el-Burak

The recent excavations on the site of Tell el-Burak-South Lebanon (fig. 5) have yielded in Area I, Square 31/25, a tomb dated to MB IIB. D. Kamel has studied the stratigraphic context and finds of the tomb <sup>114</sup> and L. Trelliso its skeletal remains. Their contributions will be part of the final publication of the MB settlement in Area I.

Against the southern wall of room 7 of the MB palace, a floor made of a yellow cal-

careous material was found. On it were the skeletons of at least five individuals mixed with funerary offerings (fig. 6). This tomb was disturbed by the foundation of an Ottoman period house, which was built on top of the MB remains. The skeletons were very badly preserved. The Tell el-Burak tomb was used for a long period of time for multiple successive burials. The archaeological evidence shows that the tomb was most probably constructed and covered with either a vault or a mass of earth and entered through a shaft or a skylight. Inside the tomb only one skeleton holding a small piriform, red-slipped juglet was not disturbed while



the others were dismembered when pushed to the back of the tomb. The funerary offerings consist of pottery vessels, mainly five small juglets, two dipper juglets, six bowls, three jars and a so-far unattested pottery shape of the Tell el-Yahudiyeh ware, as well as bone inlays which are attested for the first time in a MB tomb from Lebanon. The bone inlays<sup>115</sup> represent ducks and geometrical motifs very similar to the Jericho examples<sup>116</sup>. They may have been used to decorate a wooden cosmetic box<sup>117</sup>.

### Sarafand

Two infant jar burials and a tomb dug in virgin soil were found in stratum L which is dated to the late Middle Bronze Age<sup>118</sup>. The jar burials were accompanied by pottery vessels, bowl and small juglets, and one contained carnelian beads.

### Conclusion

The evidence presented above has contributed substantial information about MB funerary practices in spite of the fact that many finds have not been properly documented and published. The partial, preliminary, and summary character of the overwhelming part of the available data does not allow exact statistics on the exact location of the tombs within or outside the settlement, on the number of tombs excavated, the number of individuals buried, the type of tomb, and the exact number and type of objects found in them.

Older publications fail to give useful information about the human remains, mainly in the case of multiple burials, and sometimes simply ignore them. The grave goods, which were considered to be more important and worthy of mention are often simply enumerated and seldom presented in detail with a photographic and/or a drawing record.

The conclusions related to funerary practices during the MB can therefore only be a general assessment based on the current state of the evidence.

### The tombs

In most cases the dead were buried in a special burial ground located either inside or outside the settlement and less often, inside the dwellings under house floors. This latter type of interment was not restricted to a specific age group of people but was used for both adults and infants. Outside the settlement, shaft and rock-cut tombs predominate while inside the settlement earth pits and jar burials are widely attested.

Six major types of tombs were used during the MB: Shaft, rock-cut, cist, and built tombs as well as earth pits surrounded by bricks or stones and, finally, jar burials. One could add a sort of "mixed" type of tomb where the walls of a rock-cut chamber or earth pit are lined with either stones or bricks. The most widely used type of tomb for adults is the earth pit and the shaft-tomb, for neonates and children the jar burial. The case of Kamid el-Loz is noteworthy in this context: the overwhelming majority of the 19 children and infants, 15 out of 19, were not buried in jars<sup>119</sup>. Jar burials were exclusively used for infants and never for adults but neonates and children were also buried in other types of tombs. Cist and built tombs are very rare. Regarding regional differences, the evidence shows only one major difference between the Biqaa Valley and the coast, namely that



shaft and rock-cut tombs are attested almost exclusively in the latter region. This may be explained by the difference in the geo-physical characteristics of these two areas.

### **Treatment of the dead**

During the MB, the only burial practice was inhumation. Burial was <sup>272</sup> overwhelmingly primary and only in one instance (Tell el Ghassil Tomb 1) is there evidence to suggest secondary burial, a practice otherwise widely attested in Bronze Age Syria and Palestine. On the other hand, single and multiple successive burials are both attested. In earth pits and jars single burials predominate while in shaft and rock-cut tombs, except for the royal graves of Byblos, only multiple burials are attested. There is nowhere clear evidence whether the latter are family or simply communal tombs. Inside the grave, the body was usually placed directly on the floor in various positions and no consistency can also be noted in the way the body was oriented. In some instances, a stone slab was placed under the head of the dead and in others, the body rested on a stone paved area. Exceptionally, the body was placed in a stone or wooden coffin inside the tomb. Stone coffins were exclusively used by royalty.

There is no clear evidence for any special treatment of the body before interment such as embalming or mummification. The presence in the tombs of pottery vessels with very narrow necks, which seem to have contained perfumed oils, may suggest the existence of some embalming of the dead body. The presence of bronze needles and pins in most graves indicate that the dead were shrouded in a cloth.

### **Funerary offerings and ritual**

Several items can be found in MB tombs ranging from personal belongings to ritual offerings.

In terms of personal belongings, jewelry, weapons, tools, cylinder seals, scarabs, game pieces, and cosmetic boxes are attested. The mere presence or absence, as well as the quality and quantity of such items inside a tomb clearly reflect the social status of the dead. We can, hence, differentiate on the basis of these personal belonging whether the dead is a royal person if locally made or imported luxury objects are found, or a warrior, if a weapon collection accompanies the burial, or a commoner, if such precious items are lacking.

Consistent in almost all tombs is the pottery assemblage destined to receive the funerary meal for the dead and which consist of open vessels (plates) for solid food and closed vessels (mainly bowls, jugs, juglets and dipper juglets) for liquids. As already mentioned, some jars with very narrow necks seem to have contained more precious materials such as perfumed oils suggesting a funerary ritual of embalming. These pottery assemblages are the most important indicator for dating the tomb.

Regarding pottery, a special mention should be made of the Tell el-Yahudiyeh ware, which has been so far attested only in tombs of the MB IIB in Lebanon. These vessels may have contained a special type of offering since all of them, with the exception of the Tell el-Burak vessel, are juglets. The same applies to Kamares ware vessels, which have been also found so far only in funerary contexts. These precious imports may have been placed in the tombs as a status symbol item.



In some instances the plates and jars still contained animal bones. The attested presence of domestic animal bones in most burials may suggest the existence of a funerary ritual banquet in which the dead symbolically participated. The presence of animal bones may also be interpreted as a ritual sacrifice of an animal in honor of the dead.

273

The evidence from the tombs may help partly to understand the view the MB people had of the afterlife. The presence of scarabs in several tombs may suggest the belief in a life after death since this item is in Egypt the symbol of re-birth and re-generation. It is interesting to note that apart from scarabs, there is no item with a clear religious function in the tombs such as divine images or amulets for example.

Table 1. Distribution of tomb types in the Middle Bronze Age.

| Site          | Number of tombs | Earth pits | Cists | Shaft tombs | Jar burials | Rock-cut tombs | Built tombs | Mixed tombs | Cemetery in the settlement | Cemetery outside settlement | Under house floors |
|---------------|-----------------|------------|-------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Baalbek       | 3               | 3          |       |             |             |                |             |             |                            |                             | X                  |
| Tell Hizzin   | Several         | X          | X     |             |             |                |             |             | X                          |                             |                    |
| Tell Ghassil  | 7               | 4          |       |             | 3           |                |             |             | X                          |                             |                    |
| Qabb Elyas    | 1               |            |       |             |             |                |             |             |                            |                             |                    |
| Kamid el-Loz  | 27              | 23         |       |             | 4           |                |             |             | 25                         |                             | 2                  |
| Tell Arqa     | 29              | 13         |       |             | 18          |                | 1           | 1           | X                          | X not investigated          | X                  |
| Al-Hourriye   | Several         |            |       |             |             |                |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Byblos        | 14              |            |       | 9           |             | 4              |             | 1           | X                          | X                           |                    |
| Jounieh       | 3               |            |       |             |             | 3              |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Sin el Fil    | Several         |            |       |             |             | X              |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Beirut Kharji | 4               |            |       | 4           |             |                |             |             | X                          |                             |                    |
| Beirut        | 2               |            |       |             | X           |                |             |             | X                          |                             |                    |
| Majda-louna   | 1               |            |       | 1           |             |                |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Lebe'a        | 4               |            |       | 4           |             |                |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Kafr ?arra    | 25              |            |       | 22          |             | 3              |             |             |                            | X                           |                    |
| Sidon         | 62              | X          |       |             | X           |                | X           | X           | X                          |                             |                    |
| Tell el-Burak | 1               |            |       |             |             |                | X           |             | X                          |                             |                    |
| Sarafand      | 3               | 1          |       |             | 2           |                |             |             |                            |                             |                    |



## I Funerary Practices in the Late Bronze Age

Late Bronze Age burials are well attested in Lebanon, but their distribution is rather uneven, with most of the evidence coming from the coastal plain.

274

### Tell Arqa

In Tell Arqa, fifteen tombs, three of which were multiple burials, were found in level 12, dating to the LB <sup>120</sup>. Among the 13 remaining tombs are several jar burials containing sub-adults and children. This indicates the continuity of this funerary practice during the LB. One of the three multiple burials, Tomb 12.67, is an oval pit and contained the remains of at least 14 individuals. The archaeological evidence clearly indicates successive interments.

### Byblos

Already in 1955, a burial cave with two chambers belonging to the LB was discovered north of the acropolis. Only a short summary report was published, mentioning the presence of a large number of pottery vessels, including Cypriote imports, as well as bronze daggers, knives, arrowheads and pins. In addition to bronze pins, some made of silver are also attested. Scarabs, one bearing the name of Thutmosis III, and two cylinder seals were also found, as well as a large number of beads of various materials <sup>121</sup>.

A more extensive funerary complex was discovered in 1971 on the eastern slope of the Tell, and subsequently excavated in 1972 and 1973, the so-called "Nécropole K" <sup>122</sup>. The complex consists of at least 12 interconnected rock-cut chambers, and was in use from the MB till the Roman Period. The LB material, in addition to local pottery types such as bowls, pitchers, juglets, jugs, jars and pilgrim flasks, comprises more than 80 Cypriote and 65 Mycenaean vessels. Non-ceramic finds are attested by a bronze dagger blade and three arrowheads, a duck-shaped ivory pyxis and two scarabs, one bearing the name of Thutmosis III, the other one the name of Amenophis III. As the skeletal remains were only poorly preserved and heavily disturbed by the frequent re-use of the chambers, it was not possible to establish the number of interred individuals.

In contrast to the common burials, which were situated outside of the actual settlement, the royal necropolis was located on the western part of the tell facing the sea.

Of the nine shaft tombs uncovered by P. Montet in the royal necropolis of Byblos, tomb V containing the famous Ahiiram sarcophagus is clearly the latest in the series <sup>123</sup>. Besides the Ahiiram sarcophagus the tomb chamber contained two undecorated stone sarcophagi. Unfortunately the chamber was looted in antiquity, and only sparse remains of its original contents could be recovered. Among these are Cypriote White Slip milk bowls and fragments of Egyptian alabaster jars with the name of Ramses II found in the fill and at the bottom of the entrance shaft <sup>124</sup>. Further, LB objects were dispersed in the tomb chamber, such as more fragments of alabaster vessels bearing the cartouche of Ramses II and a small ivory relief <sup>125</sup>. The date of the Ahiiram sarcophagus has been the subject of a highly debated discussion, with suggestions ranging from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries BC <sup>126</sup>. The iconography of the sarcophagus suggests a date in the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC <sup>127</sup>,



while for its inscription a date in the 10<sup>th</sup> century is still the most likely option <sup>128</sup>. The explanation for this discrepancy may be that the LB sarcophagus was reused for the burial of King Ahiram in the Iron Age <sup>129</sup>.

### Nahr el-Kelb

A natural cave immediately west of the famous inscriptions was cleared in 1949, after the chance discovery of two intact pottery vessels <sup>130</sup>. The cave contained a mixture of pottery ranging in date from the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium (termed Chalcolithic) to the LB. No stratification was discernable. In addition, the bones of at least 25 individuals of all age groups and both sexes are attested. Whether the cave was used as a burial place for all the periods attested by the pottery remains unclear. As the 36 vessels datable to the LB are all of types frequently found in burials in the region, at least for this period, a use of the cave for burial purposes can be regarded as certain. The only other find securely datable to the LB is a socketed bronze spearhead.

### Beirut

The shaft tombs discovered in 1954 in the Central District of Beirut, already discussed above in connection with the MB burials, also contained LB material <sup>131</sup>. Mycenaean vessels are represented by an amphora, two kraters, 12 stirrup jars and several pilgrim flasks, while the Cypriote pottery consists of three White Slip milk bowls and a local imitation of a Base Ring jug. Local pottery is only represented by one dipper juglet <sup>132</sup>. Other LB objects are an Egyptian axe <sup>133</sup>, an alabaster vessel bearing the name of Ramses II <sup>134</sup> and four LB scarabs made of steatite, one of them with the name of Thutmosis III <sup>135</sup>.

### Khalde

In 1974, R. Saidah uncovered a LB tomb east of the site of Khalde, which contained two vessels, one of them obviously a Red Lustrous Wheelmade spindle bottle. Unfortunately no further information is available, and the vessels are not illustrated <sup>136</sup>.

### Fayadieh

At Fayadieh, 5 km east of Beirut, a funerary cave was discovered between 1963 and 1966. Due to the presence of a larger number of Cypriote Monochrome vessels and a Bichrome jug, the tomb was assigned to the LB I <sup>137</sup>. No further information is available, and the material remains unpublished.

### Sidon-Dakerman

Between 1967 and 1973, R. Saidah conducted extensive excavations at Dakerman, one of the southern suburbs of Sidon. During the course of this work, a LB necropolis, consisting of 22 individual tombs, was uncovered <sup>138</sup>. More tombs must have originally existed as suggested by the presence of isolated LB objects, which most likely originated from tombs destroyed by later activities.

The burials consist of inhumations in pits, with the deceased placed in extended position on the back. All tombs contained pottery vessels,



mainly bowls, juglets, jugs and jars. Remarkable is the high percentage of imported vessels, which includes 19 Mycenaean vessels, among them, bowls, pyxides, alabastra, goblets, stirrup jars and flasks and an even larger number of Cypriote vessels, such as Base Ring bowls, juglets and jugs, White Slip milk bowls and White Shaved juglets. Three Red Lustrous Wheelmade spindle bottles were also found. Non-ceramic objects are only rarely attested. Tomb 7 contained a bronze dagger and a duck-shaped ivory pyxis, while for Tomb 8 a scarab and an ivory rod and for tomb 10 a bronze fibula are mentioned. The necropolis dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.

276

### Graye

The site is located 8 km south-east of Sidon. Excavations conducted in 1924 by P. E. Guigues revealed a LB burial cave cut into a rock cliff and closed on its eastern side by a stone wall <sup>139</sup>. Unfortunately the number of interments is not mentioned, but the size of the burial cave and the number of grave goods seem to suggest multiple burials. The objects discovered include 26 pottery vessels, among them Mycenaean stirrup jars, a bowl and a pyxis, Cypriote pottery represented by White Slip milk bowls and a White Painted IV jug, as well as local pottery such as dipper juglets, kraters and storage jars. Other items include a glass vessel, a faience vessel with a lid, a terracotta figurine, bone or ivory buttons, beads made of faience, carnelian, rock crystal and gold, 15 scarabs and three cylinder seals. As two of the scarabs bear the name of Thutmosis III, Guigues dated the tomb to the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century BC <sup>140</sup>. However, a recent study of the Mycenaean pottery has demonstrated that the majority of the vessels have to be classified as Late Helladic IIIB, some even with a possible extension into Late Helladic IIIC <sup>141</sup>, thus the use of the tomb certainly extends to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.

### Sarafand

In the winter of 1929, a LB burial cave was accidentally discovered in Sarafand. In 1932 the cave was re-examined by H. Ingholt, and a plan was drawn. The cave itself is roughly semicircular, and a 60 cm high bench surrounds the chamber on all sides except where the entrance is located. Of the 74 vessels discovered in 1929, 67 were bought by the Museum of the American University of Beirut. The ceramic material consists of 34 Mycenaean vessels, including stirrup jars, pilgrim flasks, jugs and bowls, three Cypriote bowls, and a number of local vessels. A scarab and two faience amulets were bought at a much later date, so it is not sure whether these originally belonged to the tomb assemblage. As no skeletal remains were reported, the burial customs remain unknown <sup>142</sup>.

### Majdalouna

The tomb discovered at Majdalouna has already been discussed above in the section dealing with the MB tombs. However, the tomb clearly continued to be used in the LB, as demonstrated by the presence of Cypriote vessels such as bowls, juglets and jugs of Base Ring ware and scarabs with 18<sup>th</sup> Egyptian Dynasty motifs <sup>143</sup>.



## Tyre

In the stratigraphic sounding that Bikai made in Tyre in the area of the former island, north of the road separating the Crusader cathedral from the modern Shiite cemetery, three graves dating to the LB were found <sup>144</sup>.

Two of them were pits dug in the sand layer and they contained 277 three and four skeletons respectively. The grave goods consist of local and imported pottery vessels, beads and a fishing hook <sup>145</sup>. The third grave was a double infant jar burial with pottery vessels as funerary offerings <sup>146</sup>.

## Kamid el-Loz

Kamid el-Loz for the time being is the only site in the Biqaa Valley from which LB tombs have been reported.

Between 1973 and 1978, in areas IJ16 and IJ17, a building which was provisionally called 'Treasury' due to the rich finds found there, was excavated east of the LB palace. Later, it became clear that the building actually is a burial structure for the royal family of Kamid el-Loz <sup>147</sup>. The building is almost square and contains four rooms: the main rooms S and T in the eastern part of the building, and the corridor R/U as well as the entrance room Q in the west. The building can be stratigraphically connected to Palace P4 <sup>148</sup>, and thus dates to the period between 1450 and 1350 BC <sup>149</sup>. Three skeletons were found inside the building: a mature man and a child of ca. seven-years in room T, and a ca. eight-year old girl in room S <sup>150</sup>. Although the building was partly looted in antiquity and some looting even occurred during the excavation, the finds, especially from rooms S and T, are remarkable: bronze weapons and vessels, glass, stone and pottery vessels, gold jewelry and ivory objects <sup>151</sup>. The prominent location of the building and the nature of the finds clearly indicate that it served as a burial place for the royal family of Kumidi/Kamid el-Loz <sup>152</sup>. Similar LB burial structures in close association with palaces are attested at Megiddo and possibly at Tell Atchana <sup>153</sup>.

The absence of other LB burials in the excavations indicated that the common cemetery must have been located outside the settlement. In 1981, a number of recently looted burial caves were discovered at the foot of the ej-Jabali hills, 3 km northeast of Kamid el-Loz. The openings of the natural caves had been closed by dry-set stonewalls. Mycenaean sherds, which were found there, indicate their use during the LB <sup>154</sup>.

## The problem of the dolmens

The dolmens investigated by Tallon in the vicinity of Menez <sup>155</sup> in addition to EB material also produced a considerable amount of LB artifacts. LB pottery is represented by jugs and jars in local fabrics, but imported pottery, mainly Base Ring juglets from Cyprus, is also attested in considerable quantity <sup>156</sup>. Non-ceramic artifacts of LB date are a cylinder seal <sup>157</sup> and lozenge-shaped bronze arrowheads <sup>158</sup>. The range of LB objects from the dolmens at Menez clearly suggests their reuse as funerary monuments, as similar objects are regularly found in other LB tombs. A LB re-use of dolmens is also attested for other regions in the Levant <sup>159</sup>.



## Conclusions

The majority of the LB burials in Lebanon are cave burials for multiple interments and pit burials for single interments. These are also the most common grave types attested in the Southern Levant <sup>160</sup>. All of these cemeteries or isolated burials seem to have been located outside 278 the settlements, although one has to bear in mind that only a few LB sites have been uncovered on a larger scale in Lebanon so far. The only cases of intramural burials are the royal tombs attested at Byblos and Kamid el-Loz as well as the common graves from Tell Arqa. The royal tombs also differ from the common burials by their more elaborate funerary structures: a funerary building erected next to the palace was used in Kamid el-Loz, while in Byblos rock-cut shaft of tomb V is much deeper than the ordinary cave burials, and in addition the use of stone sarcophagi is attested for the interments.

## General conclusions

The insufficient state of knowledge of Bronze Age burials in Lebanon makes a general evaluation of the burial customs rather difficult. Regional variations of different tomb types and burial customs cannot really be investigated, as large areas remain blank on the map. This is especially true for the Early and Late Bronze Ages, where the evidence is almost exclusively derived from the coastal region. Only for the MB it is noteworthy that shaft and rock-cut tombs are not attested in the settlements of the Biqaa, as rock outcrops are not available in this alluvial plain. Concerning the chronological development of tomb types and burial customs, only some general trends can be observed. Jar burials, which are widely attested at the beginning of the EB for adults as well as infants, seem to get less popular later on, and are only used for infants from the later EB to the LB. The most commonly attested tomb types from the EB II onwards until the end of the LB are rock-cut tombs with multiple interments and pit burials with individual interments. Built tombs and other types are only infrequently found. This picture seems to be typical for the entire Levant.

In general, the development of tomb types and burial customs through the entire Bronze Age in Lebanon indicates a continuous development rather than marked breaks or the sudden introduction of new traditions. This observation is confirmed by the fact that many tombs remain in use for longer periods. Rock-cut tombs at Byblos, Beirut and Majdalouna were used during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. Also the royal necropolis at Byblos clearly shows a continuous development from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. Only the so-called "Warrior burials" which are characterized by the presence of a specific assemblage of weapons, are exclusively attested in the MB.

It is only at the beginning of the Iron Age that the common use of cremation heralds a marked change of burial customs in Lebanon.



## NOTES

- 1 M. Dunand, 1973, p. 214 and 246-265.
- 2 *ibid.*, p. 260.
- 3 See E. Braun, 1989, p. 1-43 for the oval houses, and S. A. Rosen, 1983, p. 15-29 for the dating of the Canaanean blades. For a general view see A. Ben-Tor, 1989, p. 41-52. See also K. Prag, 1986, p. 63 who notes the close resemblance between the pottery of the "Énéolithique récent" and EB I Palestine.
- 4 M. Dunand, 1973, p. 313 and fig. 186.
- 5 G. Philip, 1989, p. 139-140, accepts the daggers from Byblos as 'Chalcolithic', but in the light of the evidence presented above, a date within the EB I is more likely.
- 6 R. Saidah, 1979, p. 42; H. de Contenson, 1982, p. 82.
- 7 Calibrated with Oxcal 4.0.
- 8 R. Saidah, 1967, p. 168-169.
- 9 P. E. Guigues, 1937, p. 56-61; L. Copeland and P. J. Wescombe, 1965, p. 97.
- 10 P. E. Guigues, 1937, p. 42-56.
- 11 D. C. Baramki, 1973.
- 12 M. Dunand, 1939, p. 119.
- 13 K. Badreshany, H. Genz and H. Sader, 2005, p. 28-29.
- 14 E. Fugmann, 1958, p. 26-40; I. Thuesen, 1988, p. 95-109.
- 15 V. T. Mathias, 2000, p. 419.
- 16 R. J. Braidwood and L. S. Braidwood, 1960, p. 343 and fig. 228:3.
- 17 E. Strommenger and K. Kohlmeyer, 1998, p. 9.
- 18 D. T. Potts, 1997, p. 230.
- 19 G. Mansfeld, 1970, p. 117-128.
- 20 R. Saidah, 1967, p. 171.
- 21 *ibid.*, p. 171.
- 22 *ibid.*, p. 171; K. Prag, 1974, p. 115.
- 23 L. Copeland and P. J. Wescombe, 1966, p. 161; R. Saidah, 1967, p. 171.
- 24 F. Beayno *et al.*, 2002.
- 25 P. Bienkowski, 1982; for an alternative view see the remarks by D. Ilan, 2002, p. 95-99.
- 26 L. Copeland and P. J. Wescombe, 1966, p. 42-43.
- 27 M. Tallon, 1958, p. 230-232; M. Tallon, 1959, p. 91-111; L. Copeland and P. J. Wescombe, 1966, p. 32-33; M. Zohar, 1992, p. 48; L. Marfoe, 1995, p. 82.
- 28 M. Tallon, 1958, p. 224-229; M. Tallon, 1964, p. 7-19; M. Zohar, 1992, p. 48; T. Steimer-Herbet, 2000.
- 29 M. Zohar, 1992, p. 51-52; K. Prag, 1995, p. 78.
- 30 M. Tallon, 1964, p. 14-15.
- 31 T. Steimer-Herbet, 2000, p. 16-20.
- 32 M. Tallon, 1964, p. 11-13; T. Steimer-Herbet, 2000, p. 17-18.
- 33 A few EB I jar burials in Northern Palestine are attested further inland, for instance at Tel Teo and Khirbet Kerak, see D. Ilan, 2002, p. 94, but this practice is unknown in Central and Southern Palestine.
- 34 *ibid.*, p. 93-94.
- 35 *ibid.*, p. 96.
- 36 M. Chéhab, 1965, p. 111-112.
- 37 P. E. Guigues, 1938, fig. 51.
- 38 H. Sader and M. van Ess, 1998, p. 262.
- 39 *ibid.*, p. 251.
- 40 M. Chéhab, 1949-50, p. 109.
- 41 *ibid.*, p. 109.
- 42 L. Badre, 1982, p. 123-132; C. Doumet-Serhal, 1996, p. 11 ff.
- 43 L. Badre 1982, p. 125.
- 44 C. Doumet-Serhal, 1996, p. 11.
- 45 *ibid.*, p. 8.
- 46 *ibid.*, p. 12.
- 47 *ibid.*, p. 8.
- 48 L. Badre, 1982, fig. 7.
- 49 *ibid.*, p. 127.
- 50 Against this interpretation and in favor of successive interments, see J.-P. Thalmann, 2006, p. 58, note 4.
- 51 For secondary burials and the ideology behind them see A. Porter, 2002, p. 1-36.
- 52 *ibid.*, p. 13.
- 53 L. Marfoe, 1995, p. 159 and note 135.
- 54 R. Miron, 1982.
- 55 *ibid.*, p. 104.
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- 57 *ibid.*, p. 34 and 44-47.
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- 59 *ibid.*, p. 57.
- 60 *ibid.*, p. 65.
- 61 F. Beayno *et al.*, 2002.
- 62 *ibid.*, Pls. 4-8.
- 63 For a review of the MBA tombs discovered at Byblos and a short description see J.-F. Salles, 1994.
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- 65 Montet 1928, p. 202-204.
- 66 *ibid.*, p. 214.
- 67 *ibid.*, p. 150-151.
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