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Archaeozoological Finds from the Excavations West of Tell Qasile

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Animal bones were found inside four of the tombs dated to the Middle Bronze Age IIB. Each tomb contained the remains of one individual sheep/goat, usually in bowls or vessels (see Kletter, this volume). In Tomb 800, the bones of a Palestine mole (*Spalax ehrenbergi*) were also found, but they do not necessarily date to the period of the tomb's usage.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the skeletal elements in the assemblage of domestic animal bones from the MB II settlement, keeping in mind that in a few places the sample may include

Table 1. Species Representation and Frequency Breakdown of Domestic Animal Bones from the MB II Settlement

Species / Bones	*Ovis aries/ Capra hircus*	*Bos tauros*	*Sus scrofa*	*Equus asinus*	*Equus caballus*	Total
Cranium		15		1		16
Orbit		2				2
Mandibula	11	9	1	2		23
Molar	18	23	1	24	1	67
Premolar	7	3		7		17
Incisor				1		1
Scapula	5	2		1		8
Humerus	5	3				8
Radius				1		1
Ulna		2		1		3
Metacarpus		1				1
Pelvis	5	5				10
Femur	1	1				2
Tibia	1			2		3
Astragalus		2		1		3
Calcaneous	1	5		1		7
Fibula				1		1
Metatarsus	1			1		2
Metapod	16	6		12		34
Phalanx I	1	2		2		5
Phalanx II				2		2
Vertebra atlas	1	1				2
Vertebra lumbar	2	2				4
Costa	5	1		2		8
Total	*80*	*85*	*2*	*62*	*1*	*230*
%	*33.78*	*36.96*	*0.87*	*26.96*	*0.43*	*100.0*

Table 2. Left and Right Bones from MB II Settlement

Bones \ Species		*Ovis aries/ Capra hircus*		*Bos tauros*		*Equus asinus*	
		R	L	R	L	R	L
Humerus	D	1	4	1	1		
Radius	P					1	
Ulna	P			2		1	
Metacarpus	P			1			
Femur	D	1				1	
Tibia	D		1			1	1
Fibula	D						
Calcaneous			1	2	3	1	
Astragalus					1	1	
Metatarsus			1			?	

D = Distal; P = Proximal

Table 3. Seashells from the MB II Settlement

Species	N
Gyeymeris violscescens (Lamark)	2
Murex tranculus (Linne)	2
Pteria hirundo (Linnè)	3
Dolium galea (Linnè)	1
Phalium saburon (Bruguiere)	3

Table 4. Species Representation and Frequency Breakdown of Domestic Animal Bones from the Hellenistic-Period Well 807

Bones \ Species	*Ovis aries/ Capra hircus*	*Bos tauros*	*Sus scrofa*	*Canis Familiaris*	Total
Cranium	5				5
Mandibula	7				7
Molar	20	1		1	22
Premolar	9				9
Canine	0			2	2
Scapula	4				4
Humerus	12		2		14
Radius	3				3
Ulna	2			2	4
Metacarpus	0			2	2
Pelvis	3	2	2		7
Femur	4				4
Tibia	3	1	1		5
Fibula	0				-
Metatarsus	2			5	7
Metapod	43		15	6	64
Astragalus	1	2			3
Phalanx I	1			2	3
Phalanx II	2		3		5
Vertebra lumbar	21				21
costa	30				30
Total	*172*	*6*	*23*	*20*	*221*
%	*77.83*	*2.71*	*10.41*	*9.05*	*100.00*

Table 5. Left and Right Bones of Domestic Animals from Well 807

Bones \ Species		*Ovis aries/ Capra hircus*		*Bos tauros*		*Sus scrofa*		*Canis familiaris*	
		R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L
Humerus	P	3	1						
	D		4						
Radius	P	2	1						
Ulna	P		1						1
Metacarpus	P							2	
	D							2	
Femur	P	2	1						
	D		1						
Tibia	P	1	2		1		1		
	D	1	1						
Astragalus		1		1	1				
Metatarsus	P		1					5	
	D							3	

D = Distal; P = Proximal

remains from tombs that have been ruined or dispersed. Apparently, the people at this site raised cattle (36.96% of all the animal bones). A large number of donkey bones were also found (26.96%). Table 2 gives a comparison of right and left bones, from which one can deduce a minimum number of ten individuals (MNI): four sheep/goat, three cattle, one donkey, one horse and one pig. The presence of sea shells is not surprising, considering the proximity of the site to the Mediterranean shore (Table 3).

For the Hellenistic period, many animal bones were found in a well (L807). The breakdown of skeletal elements from Well 807 (Table 4) shows that sheep/goat bones constitute 77.83% of the whole assemblage. Left and right bones (Table 5) provide the MNI: four sheep/goat, one cattle, one pig and two dogs. Once again, the many mole (*Spalax ehrenbergi*) bones (6 femur, 4 tibia, 2 fibula, 1 metatarsus, 1 metapod) may well be intrusive. A snail shell (*Helix engoddensis*) and two sea shells, both *Gyeymeris vidacescents (Lamark)*, were also found.

For both the MB II and Hellenistic periods, no wild animals were identified in the archaeozoological remains.

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