

# TEL GEZER EXCAVATIONS 2007

Directors: Dr. Steven M. Ortiz and Dr. Samuel R. Wolff

## FIELD A: PRELIMINARY FIELD REPORT

By Dr. Gary P. Arbino, Field Archaeologist

### General Introduction

The renewed excavations of Tel Gezer were conducted from June 18, 2006 to July 20, 2007. The team was under the direction of Co-Directors Dr. Samuel Wolff of the Israel Antiquities Authority and Dr. Steven M. Ortiz of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Field A consisted of two areas, one north of the casemate system and one along the casemate system west of the 2006 excavations. This area was under the direct supervision of Dr. Gary Arbino (Marian Eakins Archaeological Museum) as Field Archaeologist.



Figure 1: Field A 2007

In Field A, a total of seven squares of 5x5 meters were opened. North of the casemate system Squares E6, D6, and C6 were excavated supervised by Mendy Loyd. Surrounding the western end of the 2006 excavations four squares were opened: Y7, supervised by Dr. Eric Mitchell, W8, Madeline Pruitt, W9, supervised by Dr. John Strong and Y10 supervised by Daniel Warner. Two additional squares, W10 and Z10 were prepared for future excavation by the removal of the 20<sup>th</sup> century overburden and dump. In addition, targeted excavation was undertaken in squares excavated in 2006: the balks were removed between Y8 and Z8 and between Y9 and Z9, smaller projects were conducted in Y9 and Z8, and some balk removal was conducted in C8 as a result of inter-

season balk collapse. All squares excavated in 2006 were cleaned.

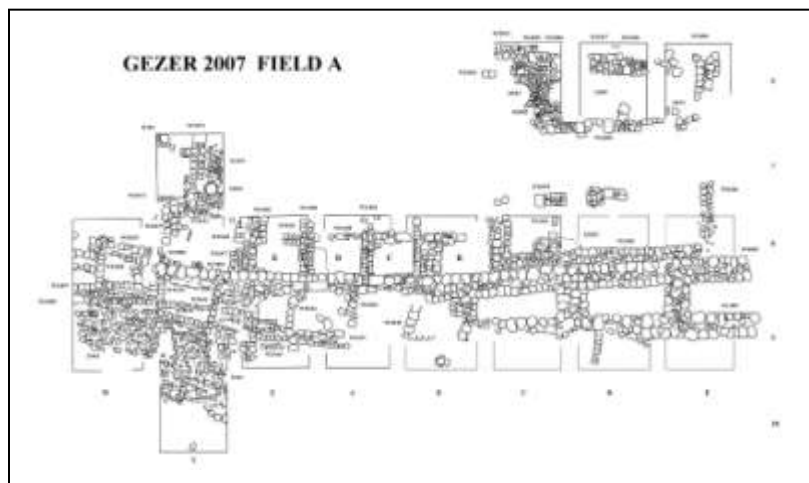
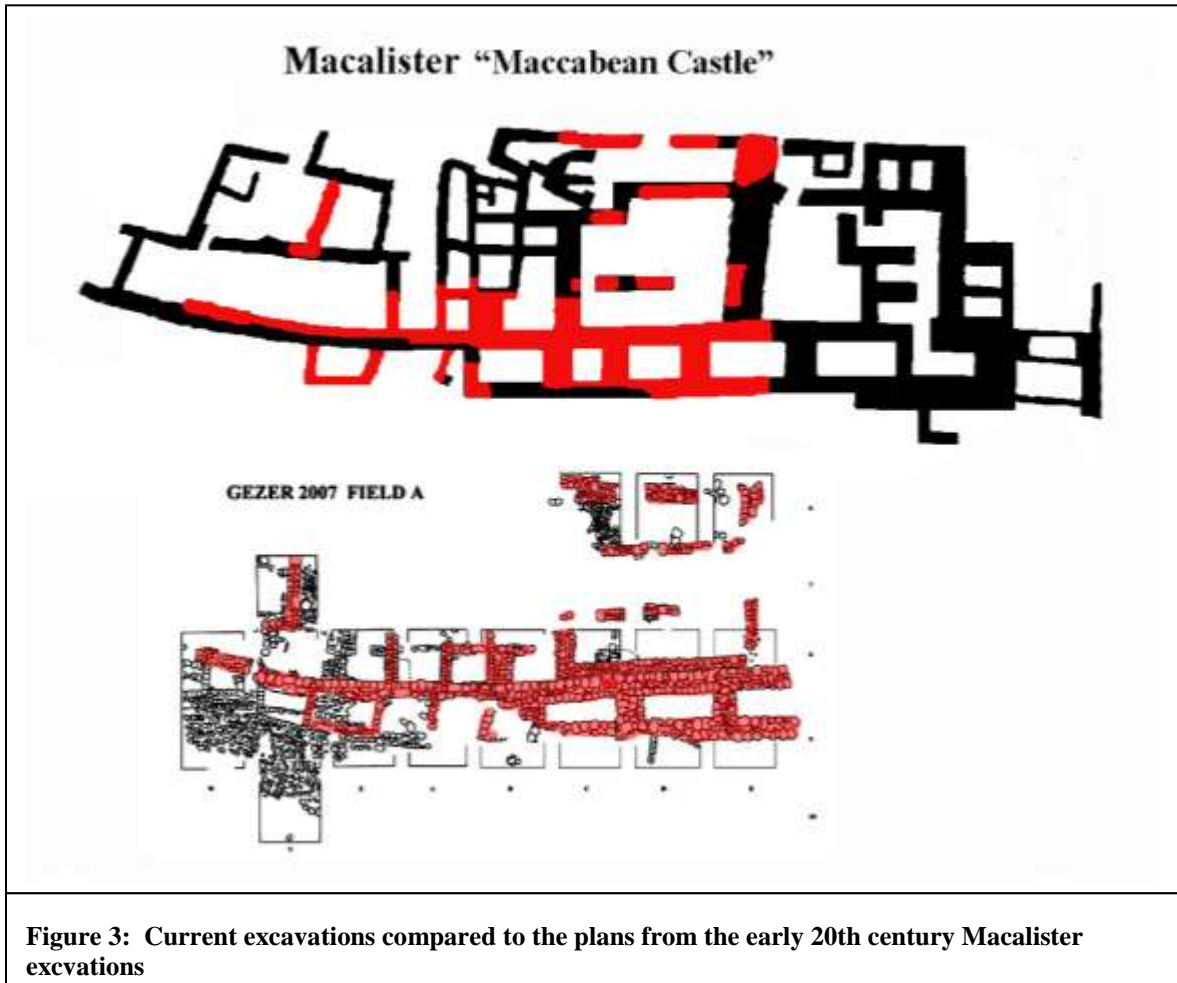


Figure 2: Field A 2007 Plan

In addition to excavation the Gezer staff and volunteers took part in conservation of the site. Between July 7 and July 13, under the direction of an IAA conservator and Avigail Applebaum, the Gezer Conservator, 5-6 Gezer volunteers conserved some of the extant walls exposed from the 2006 season. This was done by carefully removing loose dirt from between the stones and replacing it with a lime plaster/mortar to deflect water and strengthen the bonds. The shallow 2006 excavation areas to the south of the casemate system in Squares A, B, C, D and E were backfilled as well. As part of the

ongoing relationship between the Gezer Excavations and the Parks Department, the Gezer 2007 crew received permission to cut a new Visitor's Path to bypass the current excavations. The new path met with the approval of the Parks department.



**Figure 3: Current excavations compared to the plans from the early 20th century Macalister excavations**

As in 2006, much of the excavation was involved in the removal of backfill and dump debris from previous excavations. Because of this very few 'clean' loci were excavated in 2007, all but 7 of the non-architectural loci were backfill; squares W9 and Z10 along with C6, D6 and E6 had no 'clean' fill/debris loci.

The table below indicates the phases by squares represented. General alterations to the 2006 Report schema are noted in **bold and underlined**. What is most notable is the shift of strata to later dates. This is mostly due to the reassignment of the "diagonal wall system" from earlier (2006 Phase 8 & 10) to contemporary with the construction of the casemate system (2007 Phase 9). Phases 3, 6, 8, 9, 11 are predominantly or totally architectural. The seven 'clean' non-architectural loci from 2007 are also phased in the table below in brackets.

**GEZER 2007 PHASING BY SQUARES REPRESENTED**

TENTATIVE DATING	2007 FIELD PHASE	2007 SQUARES	2006 SQUARES RE-DATED	2006 FIELD PHASE	2006 SQUARES
Topsoil	Phase 1	Y7, W8, W9, Y10, C6, D6, E6, Z10	Y8, Y9, Z8, Z9, A8, A9, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, A9	Phase 1	Y8, Y9, Z8, Z9, A8, A9, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, A9
Modern	Phase 2	Y7, W8, W9, Y10, C6, D6, E6, Z10	Y8, Y9, Z8, Z9, A8, A9, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, A9	Phase 2	Y8, Y9, Z8, Z9, A8, A9, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, A9
Pebble fill	Phase 2a	Y7, W8	<b>Y8</b>	Phase 2a	---
Hellenistic	Phase 3	Y8/Z8, Y7, W8	Y8, Z8, A8, B8	Phase 3	Y8, Z8, A8, B8
Persian	Phase 4	Ceramic only	Ceramic only	Phase 4	Ceramic only
Debris of Phase 6	Phase 5	Y7 [21019, 21020, 21073]	---	---	---
Iron IIB Rebuild	Phase 6	C6, D6, E6, C8, Y7	Y8, Z8, A8, B8, C8, D8, E8 <b>A9 (11056/9)</b>	Phase 5	Y8, Z8, A8, B8, C8, D8, E8
Debris Of Phase 8	Phase 7	---	<b>A9 (11070)</b>	---	---
Iron IIA: Casemate Phase	Phase 8	Z8, Y8, Y7, W8 [W8 21090, 21095]	Y8, A8, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, E9	Phase 6	Y8, A8, B8, B9, C8, C9, D8, D9, E8, E9
---	---	---	<b>To Phase 6</b>	Phase 7: Debris of Phase 8	A9
---	---	---	---	<b>Iron I Destruction: "Siamun"</b>	
Iron IIA: Retaining Walls & Casemate Construction	Phase 9	W8, W9, Y9, Y10, Z9, [21030, 21085, 21088]	Y9, Z9, A9, <b>B9, C9, D9</b>	Phase 8: Iron I diagonal walls	Y9, Z9, A9
---	---	---	<b>To Phase 7</b>	Phase 9: Debris of Phase 10	Y9, Z9, A9
---	---	---	---	<b>LB/Iron I Destruction: "Merneptah"</b>	
LB/Iron I Debris	Phase 10	---	<b>To Phase 9</b> Y9, Z9, A9, B9, C9, D9, E9	Phase 10: Diagonal Walls, & 'spine walls'	B9, D9, C9, Z9, Y9
<b>Destruction?</b>				---	---
LB/Iron I	Phase 11	---	<b>Z9, B9</b>	Phase 11: Debris of Phase 12	Y9, Z9, A9, B9, C9, D9, E9
			<b>To Phase 9</b>	Phase 12: Walls and Platform	Y9, Z9, A9
			<b>To Phase 11</b>	Phase 13: Wall 11166 & Install 11127	Z9, B9

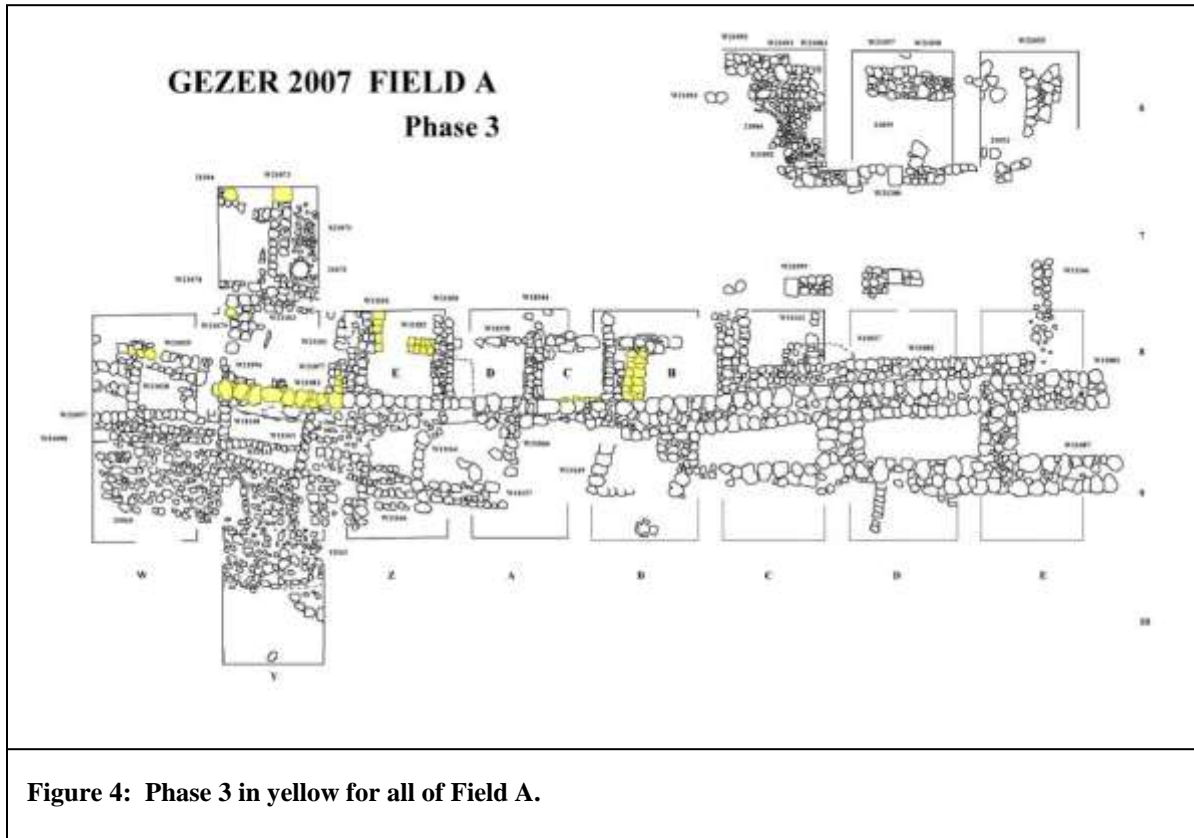
## PHASES 1 and 2 and 2a: MODERN

As with 2006 much of the excavation centered on clearing away the backfills and dumps from previous excavations: Macalister and HUC. The division into Phase 2a simply represents a concern to split out the widespread and specific feature of the Macalister backfill marked by a matrix composed almost exclusively of graded pebbles and stones. This feature was found in W8, north of the main wall line (W21029) and in Y8, filling essentially the entire square. In Y7 this feature was found throughout the square with the addition that in the western half of the square Macalister had thrown in some large boulders at the 'bottom' of his trench. The origin of these stones has not yet been determined, but it is possible that they came from W21017 in Y7 or W21029 in W8.

Several small lines of stones (21054, 21062) were found in Squares C6, D6, and E6. Initially, these were considered as possible wall lines (see photo 20070627\_2454), but upon determining that the material beneath these was modern backfill, these were understood as recent features. In addition, several trenches from the Dever excavations in the late 1980's and 1990 are also noted as modern features (21082) in and around these three squares (these are visible in Figure 1).

## PHASE 3: HELLENISTIC

Hellenistic remains have been identified in four squares excavated in 2007: Y8, Y7, W8 and Z8.



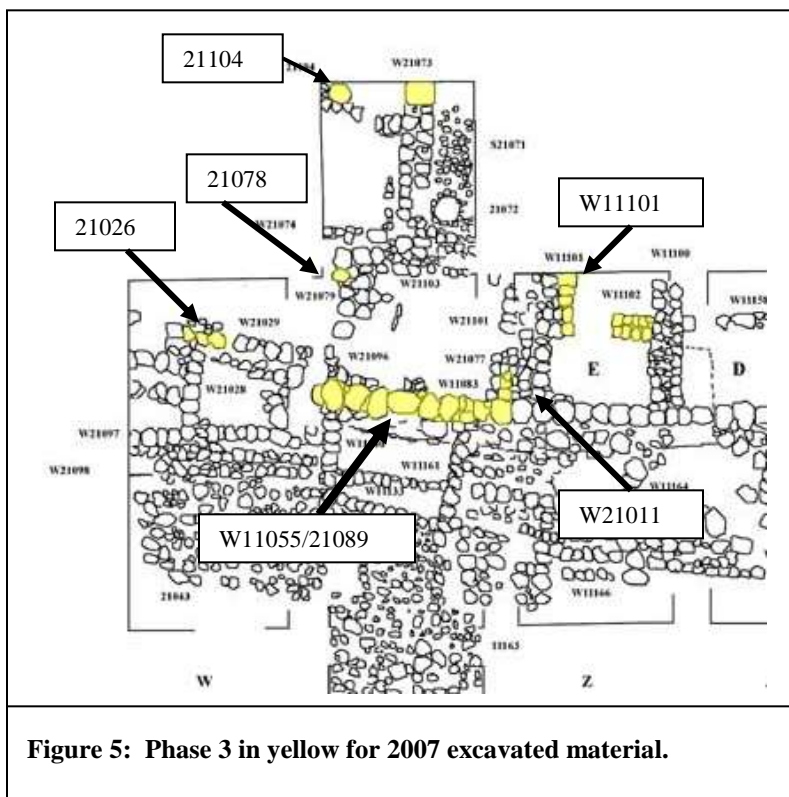
**Figure 4: Phase 3 in yellow for all of Field A.**

In Y7 two fragmentary stone architectural elements (21078 [above W21079, see Fig.15] and 21104 [above 21020]), have been dated on the basis of their stratigraphic relationship to existing Phase 6 walls and their relationship to W11055 (Y8) (excavated in 2006). The large pillar base in W21017 at the north balk in Y7 was reused in Phase 3 based on the level of it compared to 21078 and 21104. These three seen together appeared to be a set of pillar bases,

5m. north to south on the west and 3m east to west on the north. It is possible that there was once a fourth base at the south end of W21017, forming a square; Macalister would have removed it. There is, as yet, no architecture associated with them, unless they should be associated with W11055/21089 and W21011; they are at the same approximate height.

In Y8/Z8, W21011 was perpendicular to and abutted W11055. It extended northward from W11055 for about 1 meter. It was only one cobble sized stone in width, but was clearly a separate phase above 21077/11101. See Figure 18.

Within the east balk of W8, the western stones of W11055 (W21089 in W8) were removed. Further west in W8, it is possible that a small assemblage of cobbles (21026) above W21028/W21029 is also to be placed in Phase 3 (Photo 20070629\_2554). Although apparently stratigraphically later than these walls it is difficult to determine how much later it should be placed. It is also possible that it is part of W21028/W21029 and should be dated to Phase 6 or more likely Phase 9. The fragmentary nature of this feature and its proximity to the HUC dump prohibit certainty.



**Figure 5: Phase 3 in yellow for 2007 excavated material.**

Following cleanup of Z8 additional aspects of the stratigraphy were noticed. This led to a reevaluation of the walls in Room E. Because of this, W11102 and Part of W11101 have been reassigned to Phase 3 from 2006 Phase 5.

The assignment was made on the basis of a distinct leveling fill (11137 – composed of substantial inclusions of chalk and marine mollusks [cf kurkar]) on which W11102 is founded. This shows that W11102 was constructed later than both W11100, which it abuts, and W11083. At the same time cleanup revealed that the “stone blockage” in W11101 discussed in the 2006 Report and Phased to Phase 3 (Hellenistic) was founded well below (ca. 25-40cm) the founding level of W11083 (cf Photos 20060615\_0374 and 20060705\_1891; see Fig. 16) and thus needed to be dated prior to W11083’s construction. The dating of this cannot be certain; it could have been constructed when W11083

was built (Phase 6) or it could represent an earlier phase (Phase 8/9). At present it also seems that the eastern most row(s) of the north half of W11101 should be dated to Phase 3, because of construction similarities with W11102 and founding levels. Thus W11101 may well be a complex of rebuilt walls, stretching from Phase 8 (W21001) to Phase 3 (21079) (discussed below).

The exact nature of the Phase 3 (Hellenistic) remains in Field A remains uncertain. It is fragmentary and lacking in definitive pottery dating. When compared with the Hellenistic remains in Field B and VII, the materials in Field A are generally much poorer in construction. The exception to this is found in Room E where W11102 and the upper courses of W11101 are quite similar to those remains in other fields. Finally, the levels of the proposed Hellenistic elements of Field A may be inconsistent. If the Hellenistic surface in Y7 was at the level of the pillar bases (ca 217m in the north, 216.6 in the south it would have stepped down to the surface in Z8 (11137, ca 215.5m) and further east. Put another way, if W21011, on top of the west side of W11101 is in the same phase as the walls and surface of Room E (ca 1m lower), W11101 may be a terrace wall in Phase 3. The level in Y7 seems also different from that of Field B (Y5, W5), but determination of this awaits excavation of Square Y6.

In the deep probe in the south east of Square Y10, the supervisor felt that a Hellenistic layer was reached, because clean pottery from EB to Hellenistic was excavated from the probe. This probe, south of the stone structure (11163), was different from the rest of the excavations in this square in that no modern artifacts were found. The tiplines indicate that this may be a backfill from the Hellenistic period, but not enough was excavated to determine this with any certainty. Future excavations are planned to continue this excavation and open another square to the south, in order to determine the edge of the tel in the ancient periods.

#### **PHASE 4: PERSIAN**

As with the material from 2006, Phase 4 is not represented by architecture, but by a great deal of ceramic evidence in the modern backfills.

#### **PHASE 5: DESTRUCTION DEBRIS FROM PHASE 6 REBUILD**

The only square in which this phase represented is Y7.

A small “catwalk” of destruction debris was left by Macalister in the south balk of Y7 (21019; see Fig. 14). This was a small area (.5m x 1m x .4m. deep) and yielded 4 restorable store jars and other pottery. It is consistent with the destruction debris found in Field B.

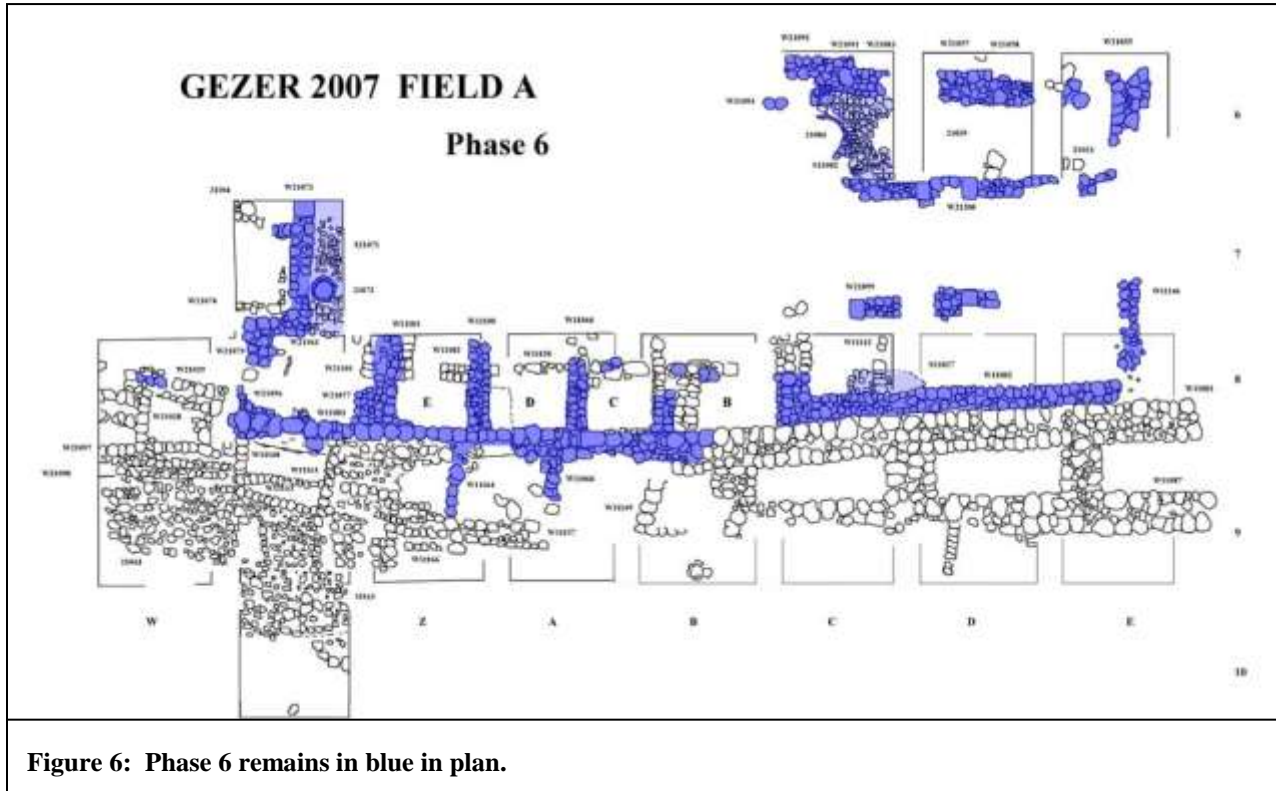
Another section of debris can be seen in the north balk of Y7 in the east corner. It is unnumbered and awaits future excavation.

It is reasonable that 21020 (in the north west corner of the square, under 21104, Phase 3) is also part of this same phase; stratigraphically it fits and the pottery was clean and consistent (Iron II) if meager. A second, similarly hardpacked yellow fill (21073) was excavated east of 21020. The supervisor posited that these were both from the same phase. However the single bucket of pottery from this locus was ‘lost.’ It is also possible that these were both part of a Phase 3 construction fill, but this seems unlikely from the level of the other debris in Y7.



## **PHASE 6: REBUILD**

Phase 6 is found in all the northern squares and represents an 8<sup>th</sup> century rebuild of the wall system and interior buildings. Of course, the Phase 6 plan reused much of the Phase 8 casemate system in Squares E-B, and the substructure of that system, extant south of the main wall line.



**Figure 6: Phase 6 remains in blue in plan.**

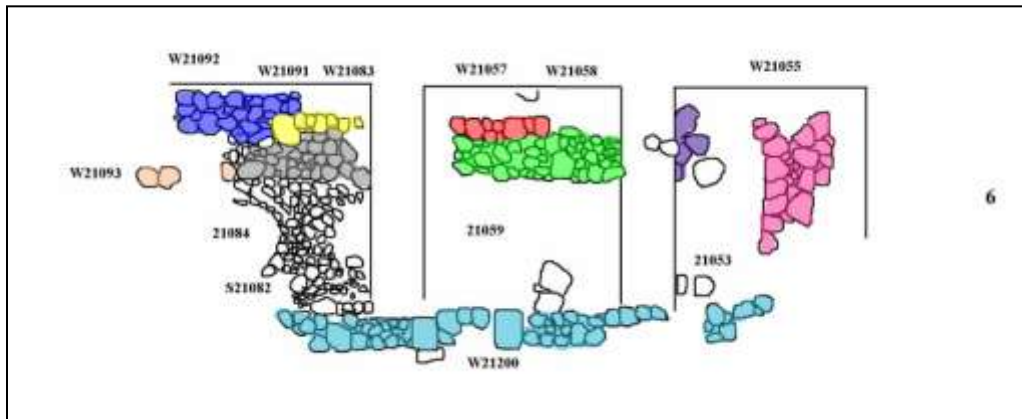
### **BUILDING A ('Palace 8000')**

In Squares C6, D6 and E6 the walls of a large building were uncovered. These connect with the remains unearthed in 2006 in Squares C8, D8 and E8. This building, measuring almost 15m x 15m can be seen on both Macalister's plan and Dever's 1984/1990 plan. Both of these plans and their relationship to the plans from current excavations will be discussed below.

As was noted above in Phases 1 and 2, the material above the walls and features in C6, D6 and E6 was 20<sup>th</sup> century backfill and topsoil. This report will deal only with the architecture uncovered. The founding levels of most of these walls were not reached.

The northern wall line appears to extend through all three squares east to west (see Figure 7). It is comprised of several wall sections (W21083, W21092 and W21091 in C6 and W21058 and 21057 in D6, stones in 21053 may be part of this wall in E6). In C6 wall W21083 is the main wall. It is a four row wall of cobble sized stones and forms the south edge of this wall system. It extends over 3 meters from the east balk. Bonded to the north side of this wall and perhaps part of it is W21091. This is a one to two row wall, extending only 2m from the east balk. Extending from the west end of W21083 and W21091 and north from that wall line one row of stones is wall W21092. This wall is composed of the same material as the other two walls. Extending westward at a slightly lower level but in the same line is what appears to be another section of this wall line (W21093). These are actually 2 stones which seem to connect across the Dever test pit and may form the continuation of this wall.

The north wall does not continue into the balk between C6 and D6. This conforms to the space left on the Dever plan (below). In D6 again there are two parts to this wall. The main wall is W21058 while W21057 functions in much the same way as W21092 in C6: it appends another course to the north of the main wall. Currently there is not enough information to separate any of these wall sections into different phases. The wall does not seem to continue into E6 (although the large stones of locus 21053 may be part of this) and the wall does not connect to the eastern wall (W21055). The eastern wall (W21055) is composed of the same substantial material as the northern wall and is 3 rows wide. All of these walls indicate engineering strong enough to support a substantial building, likely two stories high. Wall 21055 is in line with W11146 extending north from Square E8, partially excavated in 2006. Wall 11146 is extant at only two rows wide (Fig. 12).



**Figure 7: Remains in C6, D6 and E6. W21093 (light tan), W21083 (grey), W21091 (yellow), W21092 (blue), W21058 (green), W21057 (red), W21055 (magenta), W21200 (light blue). Also Silo 21084 (east side) and cobble surface (S21082) in C6.**

Almost 5 meters south of the north wall system (in the south balk of these squares) is another east-west wall unit (numbered W21200 in the off season) which is constructed of pillar bases (set approximately 2m apart) with two to three rows of stones in between each. There are two pillar bases, perhaps three. This wall line extends from midway in C6 eastward to midway in E6. It is less extant in E6. It was not excavated in 2007, but was cleaned off. This wall is parallel to what appears to be a mirror wall system north of C8 and D8. These have not been excavated, but during cleanup in C8 to remove a collapsed balk, the south face of one of these sections (W21099) was exposed (Figure 8).



**Figure 8: North balk of C8 showing W21099. Note that it is above W11142 extending south to north in the right of the picture (Photo 20070621\_2327).**

The exposure reveals that the walls containing the pillar bases are deeply founded indicating that they were designed to support considerable weight. Thus when viewed as a whole unit this building was substantial. The cobble surface found in C6 (S21082) compares well to the small portion of cobble surface (S11027) in C8. This indicates that the outer aisles of this building were cobbled, even though no cobbles have been found in D6 or E6.

A silo (21084), or specifically the remaining east half (1.3m wide), was found in the northwest section (C6). It was lipped with stones (similar to the smaller one of the same phase in Y7 – 21072) and was lined with flat cobble sized stones. It is extant to a depth of



about 1.2m, (see Figure 9) but it is not possible to determine if this is the actual bottom of the silo or simply where Dever excavations ceased to dig, having possibly gone through the bottom of the silo. The condition of this silo is currently too poor to make any guess as to possible use.



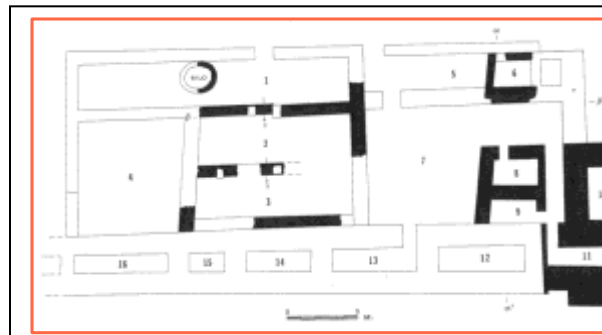
**Figure 9: View eastward looking into the Silo (21084) in C6, which was previously excavated by Dever. Mendy Loyd is standing on the cobble surface (S21082). Photo 20070718\_3396.**

Thus far no western wall has been found in C6 to ‘connect’ with W11086/W11144, which extends northward in C8. The western edge of this building presents some problems.

While the western side of the building seems obvious from W11086, the material found in C6 does not seem to allow for a room ending at this point. In C6, Silo 21084, if completed (currently 1.3m wide) westward would extend into the wall line (Fig. 12). It is possible that a wall line extended south from W21092, but this might require a flattening of the silo to the west. The west side of the silo appears to

have been drawn in Macalister’s plan but only the east side shows in Dever’s plan. Additionally, if W21093 is a continuation of the north wall, then a different interpretation of the buildings northwest corner will be necessary.

A comparison of these three plans (Macalister, Dever, Gezer 2007) shows some major differences between Macalister and the more modern ones. The silo as noted above shows the east side instead of the west and seems to have a wall running through it. Is this because he excavated the west half and did not find the east side? He did find the north wall and the gap that is on the plans of both Dever and Gezer 2007. He also found W21055 and W11146. Dever shows these in outline on his plan indicating he took these from the Macalister plan. Dever posits that the west side wall did not continue north of the north pillar base wall (W21200). The Gezer 2007 plan indicates that the west wall might have angled westward, thus solving the problem.

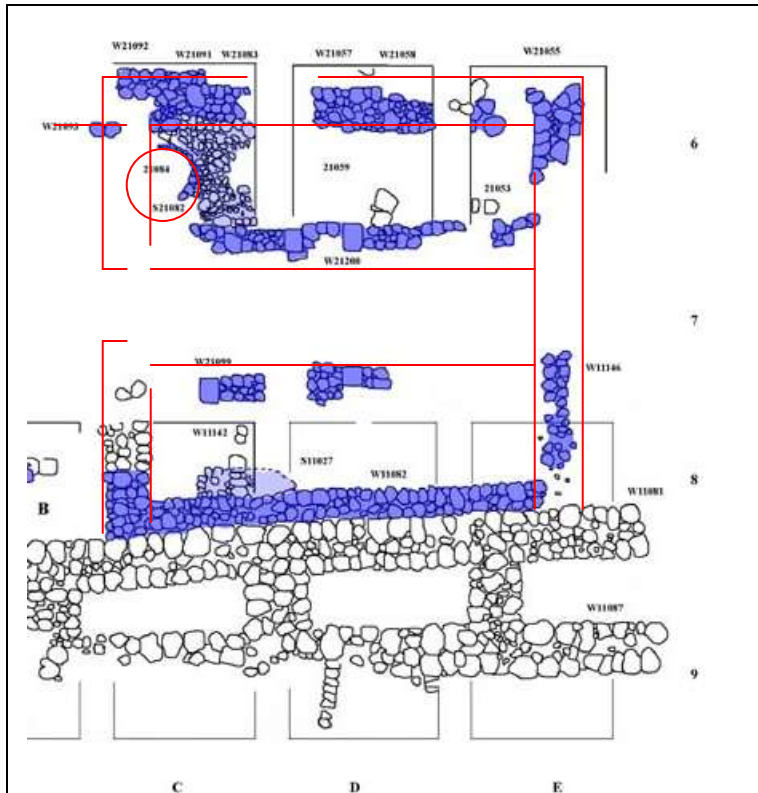


**Figure 10: Dever's "Palace 8000" plan from 1984/1990.**



**Figure 11: Macalister's "Maccabean Castle" plan.**

Macalister’s plan shows the northern pillar base wall (W21200) as an offset wall, which (correctly) Dever shows as straight. Dever draws the pillar bases in the south pillar base wall (W21099). We also shows the two main bases in W21200. Dever’s plan indicates that he excavated the western end of W21200 and that it connected with a continuation of W211055, but does not connect it to W11146. If his drawing is correct, there was no opening in the eastern wall (as Macalister also indicates).

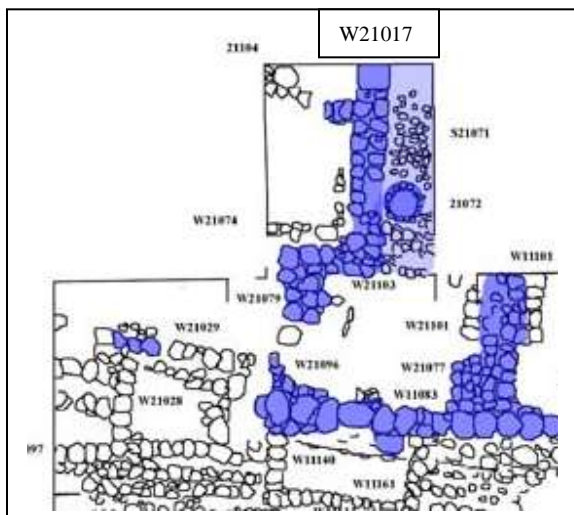


**Figure 12: The extant remains of Building A (in blue). The casemate wall system to the south would have been reused as would the wall (W11144) extending northward from C8.**

This large building is connected with the gate complex and should be considered to have had an administrative or public function. It seems to have had no entrance on the east side, so the opening must be assumed to have been on the west wall.

Cobble Surface 11027 (C8), part of Building A was at 214.95 which is the same level as the Cobble Surface 21082 (214.86) in Square C6. This indicates that these two surfaces were part of the same building complex. It seems however, that only the “side aisles” in the north and south were cobbled. No indication of paving can be seen in the central nave. The cobble surface in Y7 (S21071) is only about .5m higher in elevation (215.6) from the levels in Building A. This shows a strong central plan for the Rebuild and that in spite of the current rise in the landscape from the Gate to the west, in Phase 6 this was basically level.

**SQUARE Y7**



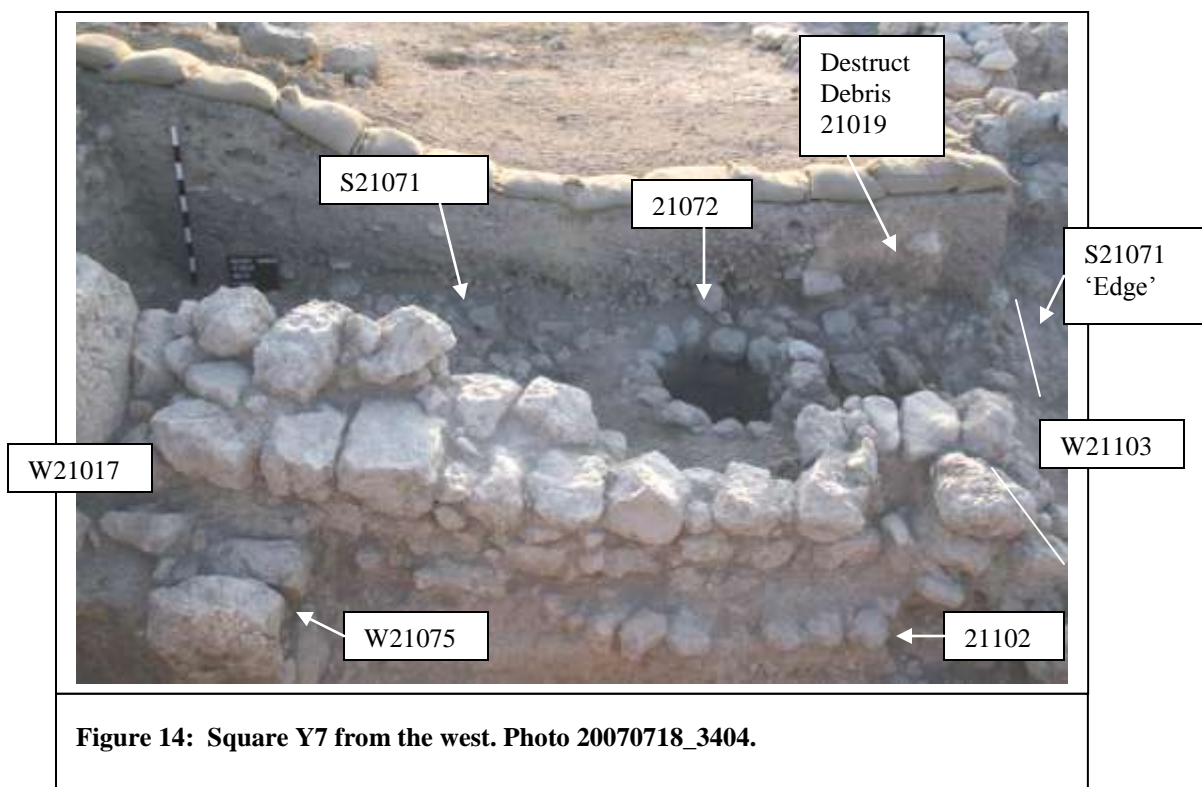
**Figure 13: Phase 6 remains (blue) from Squares Y7, Y8 and W8 .**

In Square Y7, the west portion of a room was uncovered. The destruction debris sealing part of this room confirm the phasing of this room. The room is bounded on the west by wall W21017. This wall is a two row wall of small boulders which was founded on smaller socle stones. A portion of the wall is missing, most likely having been excavated by Macalister (although possible destruction debris [21076] was found in the ‘gap’ that may relate to 21019).

At the north end of this wall, where it enters the north balk, there is a large pillar base. The size and shape of this stone conforms to the pillar bases found in the walls of Building A (W21099, W21200). It is actually in line with the north pillar base wall (W21200). The wall is founded contemporary with a cobble surface (S21071) similar to those in Building A (S11027, S21082). The surface slopes downward from the north to the south. At the south edge of the Y7 south balk the surface simply ends. It can be seen eastward into the balk of Z7 but nothing of it remains in Y8.

Against the base of the west side of W21017 is a row of cobbles (21102). This single row is at the same level as the cobbles of the surface on the opposite side of the wall. While there is not enough remaining for certainty, it is reasonable to conjecture that there was a cobble surface on the west side of W21017. Macalister destroyed this surface when he threw the very large boulders into this area of square Y7. Also on the west side of W21017 is a short single line of small boulders (W21075) protruding west from W21017 and incorporated into it. The nature of this line is unclear, since there is so little remaining; it might be part of another wall, or something else.

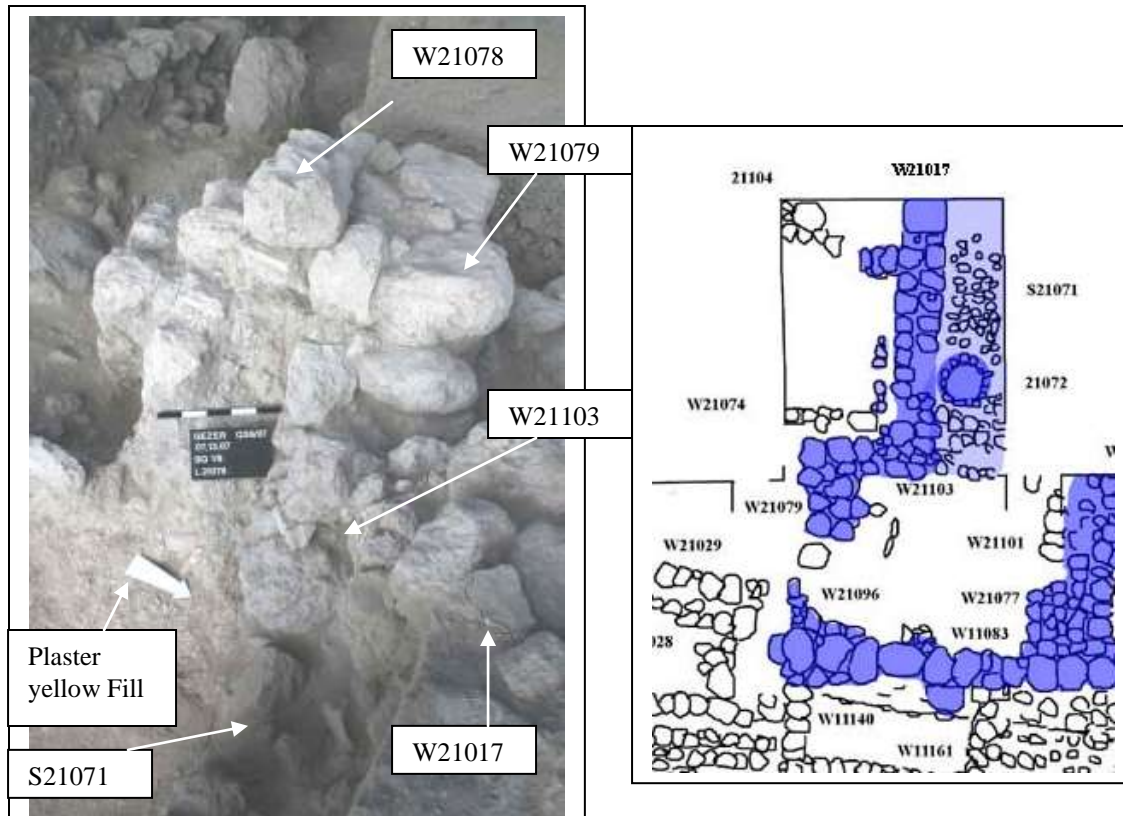
Another similarity between Building A and Y7 is the stone rimmed small silo or bin in Y7 (21072), which is set into the cobble surface just as the larger one is set into cobble surface S21082 in C6. Like the C6 silo the Y7 bin is rimmed by cobbles which actually are raised above the cobble surface on the south side, giving the bin a 'wishing-well' look. The Y7 bin is one meter in diameter, about 1/3 the diameter of the C6 silo. The contents were excavated, but the dark soft soil seems to have been previously excavated. It is clear from the 2007 excavations that Macalister reached this surface and bin, but it is not on his plan of the area.



**Figure 14: Square Y7 from the west. Photo 20070718\_3404.**

In 2006 a collection of stones (W11056) was excavated in the northwest corner of Y8. These were assigned three phases. More of this group was excavated in 2007 when the Y7 south balk was removed. Because of the chalky plastery yellow construction fill that covered most lower parts of this assemblage, it was finally concluded that all of this (with the exception of 21078 -- see Phase 3 above) was of the same phase. Further the grouping was composed of two separate walls: W21079 and W21103. These were both composed of similar sized small boulders; the founding levels have not yet been reached. W21079 is about 2m long and runs north south through the balk between Y7 and Y8. It appears to be two stones wide. W21103 is composed of slightly smaller stones and runs east to west connecting the south end of W21017 with W21079. Thus the entire wall system begins at the north balk, where W21017 bisects the square running south into the south balk, and then W21103 creates a right angle to the west and runs for .5m until it connects at a right angle with W21079, which continues south for almost 2 m. The southern extent of W21079 is indeterminate owing to excavation activities (ancient or modern, see below), but it is in line with the small wall (W21096) that extends north from W11083. The yellow construction fill is consistent with the yellow fill found throughout Y8 and is discussed below (11138).





**Figure 15: Y7 south balk looking southwest. W21078, W21079, W21103, W21017. Photo 20070713\_3140.**

**SQUARE Y8/Z8: BALK**

On the east side of Y8 and into Z8 is a large wall system called W11101/a in the 2006 Report. With the removal of the Y8/Z8 balk more of this wall was exposed (W21077). Some of this exposure was discussed above in Phase 3. Sections of this wall are in at least two different phases (in addition to Phase 3).



**Figure 16: Room E (Z8 2006) looking W at W11101. Photo 20060615\_0374. Phase 3 (yellow), Phase 6 (blue), Phase 8 (red). Phase 8 material conjectured because the stones are founded below the founding level of W11083, but this may simply be a Phase 6 construction backfill.**

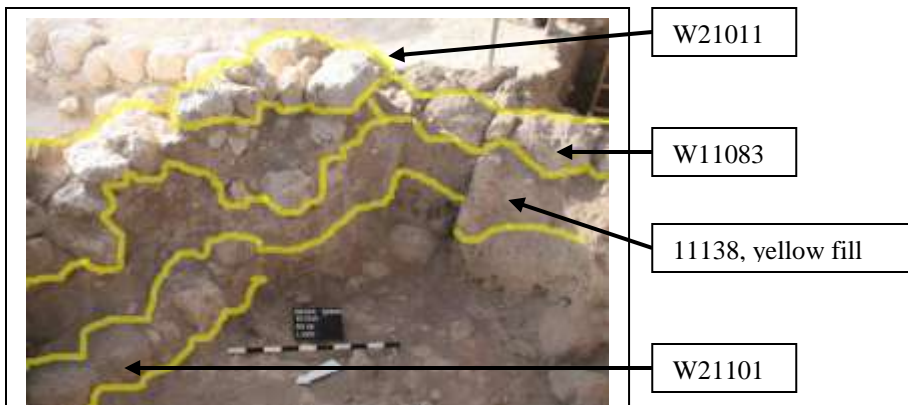


**Figure 17: W11101/21077 (2007) looking south. Photo 20070722\_3548. Phase 3 (yellow), Phase 6 (blue) and Phase 8 (red: W21101)**

Figures 16 and 17 illustrate the size of this wall. It is possible that the Phase 3 materials replaced earlier stones destroyed or robbed out. It also seems likely that the ‘space’ above the Phase 8 wall (W21101) was originally part of the Phase 6 construction. Thus the total width of this wall would have been 6 rows in Phase 6. The possible reason for this construction is discussed below.

### **SQUARE Y8: THE TOWER?**

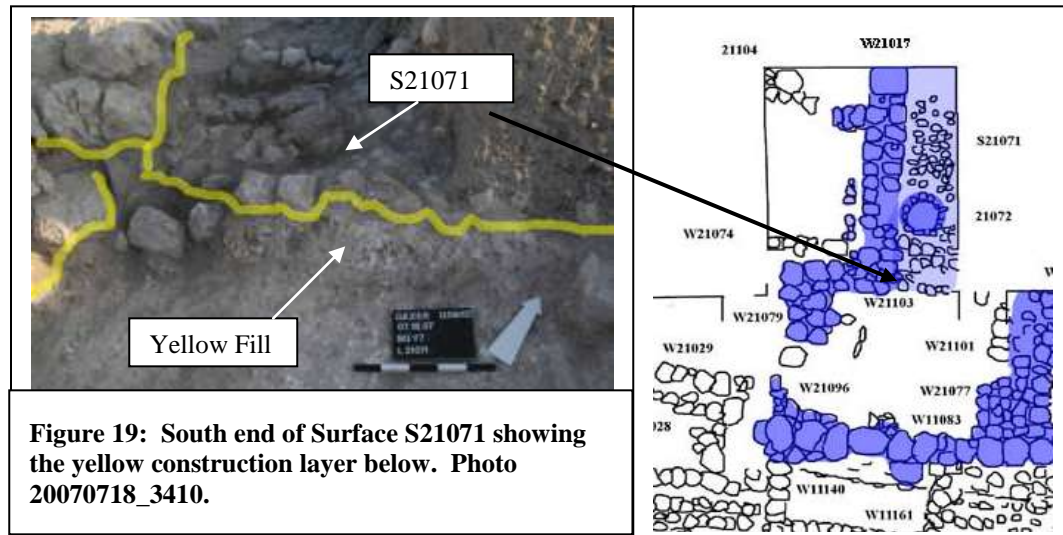
The elements of Phase 6 form a “hollow” square space and are founded on a plastery-chalky yellow fill (11138) that can be seen around the “inside” perimeter of the “space” below each of the elements of Phase 6. This indicates that all of the elements are in phase (see above Fig. 15 and Fig. 18). Yet there is some question regarding whether they ever formed a coherent “room” owing to some inconsistencies in the remains.



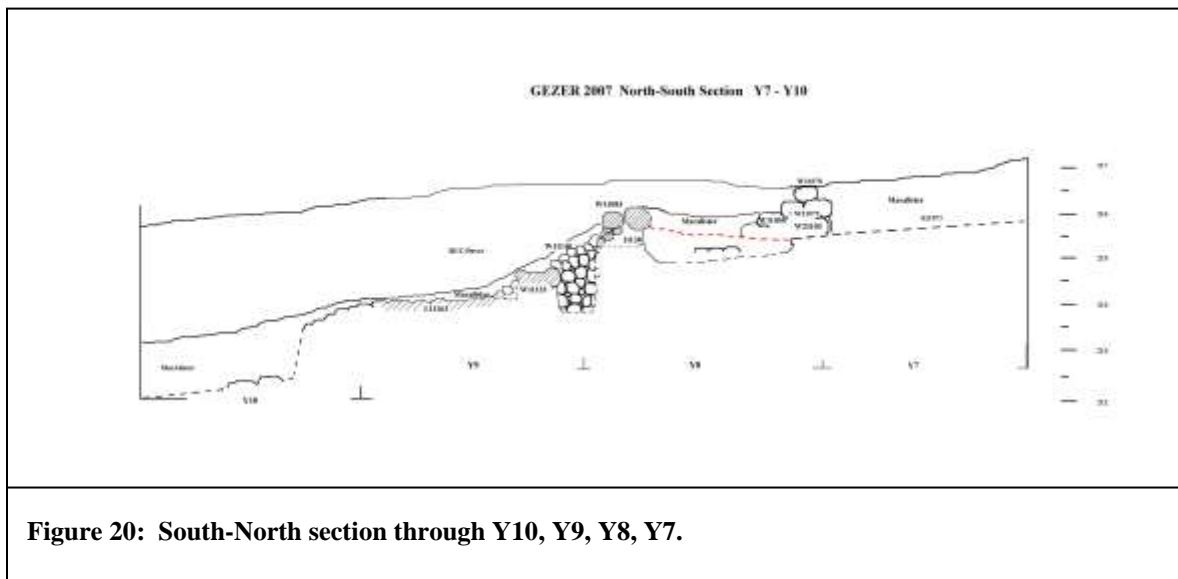
**Figure 18: Southeast corner of Y8 showing the 'yellow' construction fill. Photo 20070713\_3138.**



Most notably is the transition (or lack thereof) between Surface S21071 in Y7 and the “space” in Y8. Y7’s Surface 21071 simply ends at the northern side of Y8 (and continues eastward into the balk toward Z8 and W11101). It is possible that the surface simply continued south toward the main wall system (W11083) and was dug out by Macalister.



However there is a significant problem with this interpretation. The level of S21071 slopes southward through Y7 ending at the S balk at 215.59. The founding level of W11083 is ca. 215.50. If the surface went across Y7 it would have had to slope upward to ca. 216.00 (after sloping down at about the same angle -- see Figure 19, in red). This does not seem reasonable.



However, such a “v” shaped slope is possible, as evidenced at Tel Miqne Field I (4NW & 3NW, north sections), where there was a considerable slope of earlier strata on both sides of a – later – major wall system. The slope was caused by the weight of the wall compressing the earlier layers. No such wall or other weight-producing architectural element is evident between Y7 and Y8 at Gezer. It makes sense that the surface did not continue unbroken southward to W11083 (even if it were in a separate room).

If S21071 was broken at the north edge of Y8, what was it broken by? Either there was a wall where S21071 enters Y7 or a step up or threshold of some sort. No wall or step is extant. Although it is conceivable that Macalister removed whatever was there, this seems unlikely, due to the fact that he left one of his “catwalks” immediately to the north of where the architectural element would have been (see Fig. 14) indicating that there was no architecture present when he dug. The “catwalk” abuts the east side of north-south W21017 where it intersects with east west W21103 and actually continues the wall line of W21103 eastward (this “catwalk” seems to have been drawn as a “wall” on Macalister’s plan). Thus, whatever was originally at the south edge of S21071 was most likely already removed prior to Macalister.

The question of what exactly was at the edge of S21071 and within the “hollow space” is uncertain.

It seems unlikely that there was a room wall, which would have connected W21103/W21071 with W11101 (=W21077). This would require not only the blocking of the “entrance” to the room (assumed to be on the north wall on analogy with the other rooms along the inner face of the main wall system), but also an odd off-set to the wall line. The postulated wall would have needed to be set south of the W21103 east-west line. This would have created an odd ‘zig-zag’ pattern when the unit W21079 (N/S) (= W11056) + W21103 (W/E) + W21017 (N/S) is seen as a whole.

That there could have been a step up or threshold leading into a room abutting W11083 is reasonable, but not without problems. The most notable of these is the massive size of the eastern wall unit (W11101/W21077). If all of the extant rows are presumed to be part of the Phase 6 structure, it is six rows wide; wider than any other wall thus far excavated, including the casemate itself. Even if the eastern one or two rows (in Z8) are ex novo from a later period and not simply replacing earlier rows (see discussion for Y8/Z8 above), the wall is still quite large. Only the wall between Rooms B and C (W11084/W11085) is as wide and currently this wall is phased to three different phases, the latest being a Phase 3 rebuild (Hellenistic). Along with the large width of W11101/W21077, the construction used in the W21103/W21079 system is also quite substantial. The southward extension of W21079 may or may not have connected with W11083, but clearly the line of the W21079 intersects W11083 exactly where W11083 is inset as it moves westward into W8 (at 21096). The architectural heft of these two units indicates that something substantial originally occupied the “hollow” in Y8.

Provisionally, it can be argued that a “tower” once stood in the “hollow” now referred to as Y8. Such a tower would have been positioned at the first “curve” of the main wall system. It would have been bounded on the east by W11101/21077, on the south by W11083, on the west by W21096 and W21079 and on the north by W21103/W21017 and Surface S21071, which may well have joined a set of steps up into the interior or base of the tower. As indicated above, the stones and other elements of the tower would have been robbed out prior to Macalister and after their construction in Phase 6. There are, however, at least two problems with this interpretation.

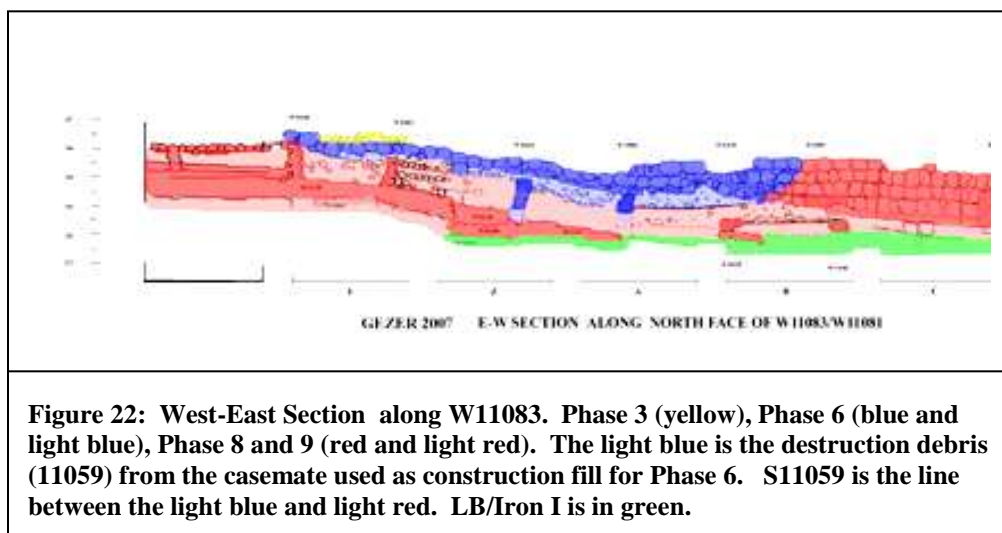
The first and most obvious is that there are no stones left within the “tower.” One might well expect to find more than simply the square outline of a stone tower. Two possible answers might be promoted. First, since these stones would have had to have been robbed out prior to Macalister, and the destruction debris (21019, 21020 in Y7 and material in Field B) was still intact when he dug it stands to reason that the stones of the ruined (?) tower stood above the destruction debris layer in antiquity, and this is the reason why they were chosen to be robbed out, leaving the “hollow” that Macalister dug into. That there may have been some of these tower stones still in place but not forming a coherent-looking unit in Macalister’s day may be evidenced by the large stones deposited by Macalister west of W21017 in Y7. The second response to the emptiness of Y8 is less likely; the tower was constructed of wood.

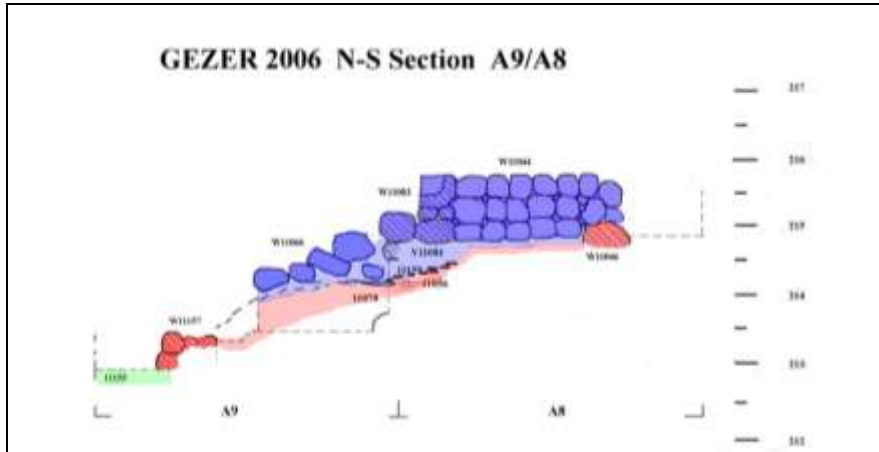
A second problem with the interpretation of a tower in Y8 is that there is no massive support for a tower on its south side at W11083. Such a support would be expected parallel the heft of W21079 on the west, W21103 on the north and W11101/21077 on the east. As will be discussed below, in the section relating to the ‘diagonal wall system’, the main wall in this area (W/8, Y8/Y9, Z8/Z9) was at most three rows wide and most likely only two. Furthermore, in Room A (‘Building A’ in C8, D8 and E8) an additional wall (W11082) was constructed against the earlier casemate system ostensibly to support new (Phase 6) architecture.

In spite of these difficulties, the best explanation for the mysterious ‘hollow’ in Y7 is that there was a tower at this spot.

## **PHASE 7: DEBRIS FROM DESTRUCTION OF PHASE 8**

In the 2006 Report, considerable attention was paid to the destruction layer in A9 (11056). In that report it was phased as the destruction debris of the casemate system. This report, although changing the phase number, retains this phasing.

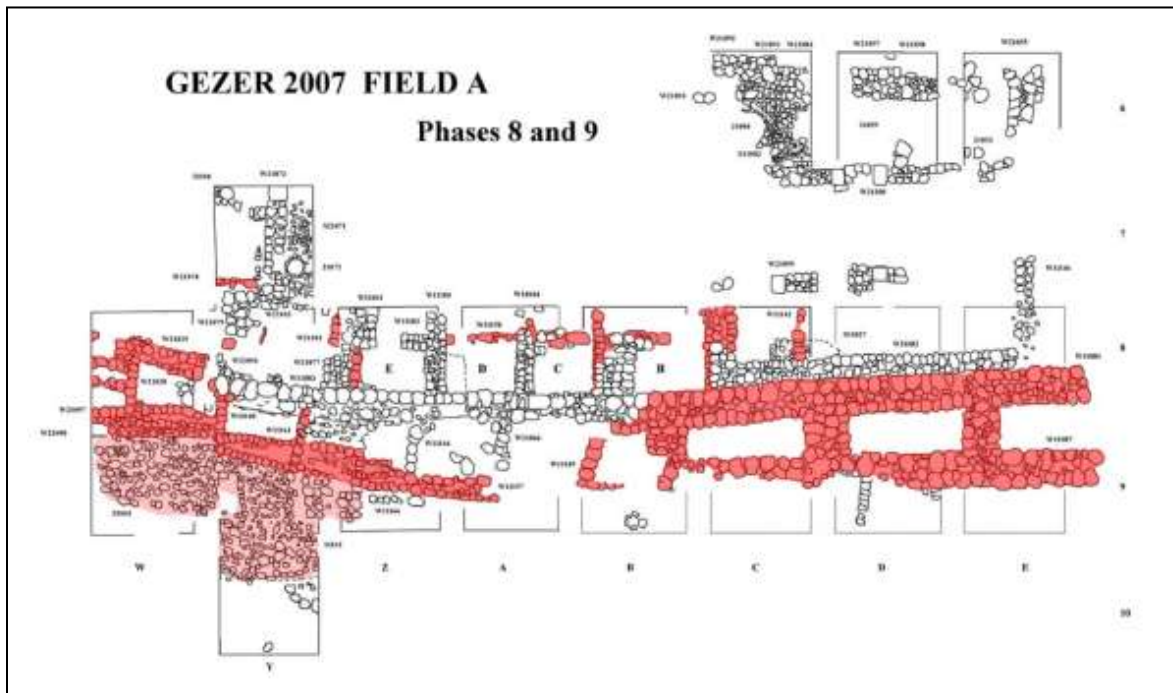




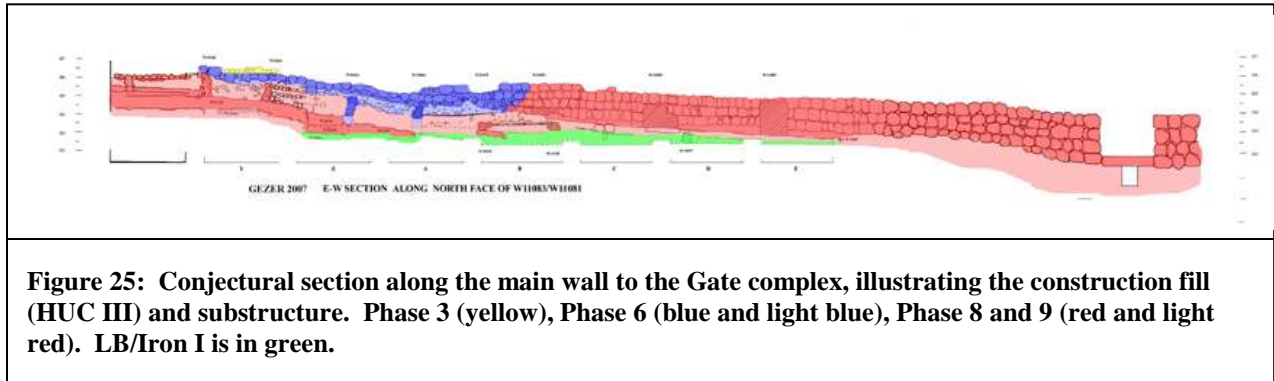
**Figure 23: Section through A9-A8 . The material immediately under W11083 is conjectured based on the other elements.**

### PHASE 8: CASEMATE

Phases 8 and 9 have been separated in order to discuss more cogently the relationship between the casemate system of Phase 8 and the substructure and retaining system that supports it. The casemate itself was excavated in 2006 (E8, E9, D8, D9, C8, C9, B8, B9) and no additional sections of it have been uncovered in 2007. Although the wall line of W11083 appears to follow the casemate line, W11083 is a rebuild. It will be argued below that the main casemate (two walls of three rows each) did not continue west of B8/9, at least there is no evidence to support such a conclusion. Rather there seems to have been a single two-row wall in its place.



**Figure 24: 2007 Plan of Phases 8 and 9 (in red).**



**Figure 25: Conjectural section along the main wall to the Gate complex, illustrating the construction fill (HUC III) and substructure. Phase 3 (yellow), Phase 6 (blue and light blue), Phase 8 and 9 (red and light red). LB/Iron I is in green.**

Phase 8 is represented in the squares excavated in 2007 in Y7 and Y8/Z8 and are consistent in size and level with the Phase 8 materials uncovered in 2006 (A9, B9, C9). In Y8/Z8 the tops of a single line of stones (W21101) appears as the lowest level of W11101/21077 and is not excavated (see Figs. 17 and 18). Also in this wall unit, in the southeast section, several of the stones, which are founded below W11083, may be from Phase 8 (see Fig. 16). These too have not been excavated. In Y7, a similar wall line (W21074) was uncovered just to the north of W21079. Again, only the tops have been excavated thus far.

This material comprises the casemate itself and walls thought to be from interior rooms. The substructure for the casemate fortifications is discussed as Phase 9.

## **PHASE 9: RETAINING WALLS & CASEMATE CONSTRUCTION**

In 2007 excavation south and west of the previously excavated squares produced significant finds which has aided in the interpretation of the fortification system.

In the balk between W8 and Y8 excavation revealed a .3m gap west of the current extent on W11083. West of this gap the wall line is offset .4m to the north and curves northward. The wall (W21029) in W8 is 4m long and .75m wide and is lower than W11083 (see below). It is composed of two parallel lines of cobble-sized stones with a space between them. A large boulder, apparently tumble from this wall, rests to the north. This indicates that what remains of W21029 is a socle system for a larger wall. When compared to construction of this wall line further east, the construction of wall 21029 (W8) is the same as that of 11083 in Room D (A8/Z8: see Photo 20060706\_1805): W11083 rests on a bed of socles. In Room D Wall 11100 (West side) floats above the lower courses (Photo 20060705\_1605), indicating that the upper courses may well be the rebuild phase and that 11083 should be divided upper and lower. This comports with W21029, which has a lower course (extant) of smaller and less defined stones and had an upper course of larger stones (one of which is tumbled to the north of the wall).

In W8, a diagonal cross wall (W21028) is bonded to W21029 and extends southward 3-4 meters. It is one row wide and is composed of small boulders. This construction and orientation continues the diagonal wall system seen to the east; especially in W11140 and W11161 (Y9) and lends support to the idea that at least the lower courses of W11083 are contemporary with the diagonal wall systems south of the main wall line (more on dating below).

It should be noted that there are possibly some errors in elevations on the architect's plans in W8: Wall 21029 (W8) is placed at 216.07 (west) to 216.13 (east). However W11083 is spotted at 216.13 at the W-Y balk. Photos clearly indicate that these two are about .5 meters different (W21029 being lower). Plans from 2006 have the W11083 levels at 216.16 (essentially the same as the 2007 levels). The excavator's report listed the top of W21029 at 216.75 and its bottom working level (the foundations have not yet been reached) at 215.28. That said, W21028 (W8) slopes



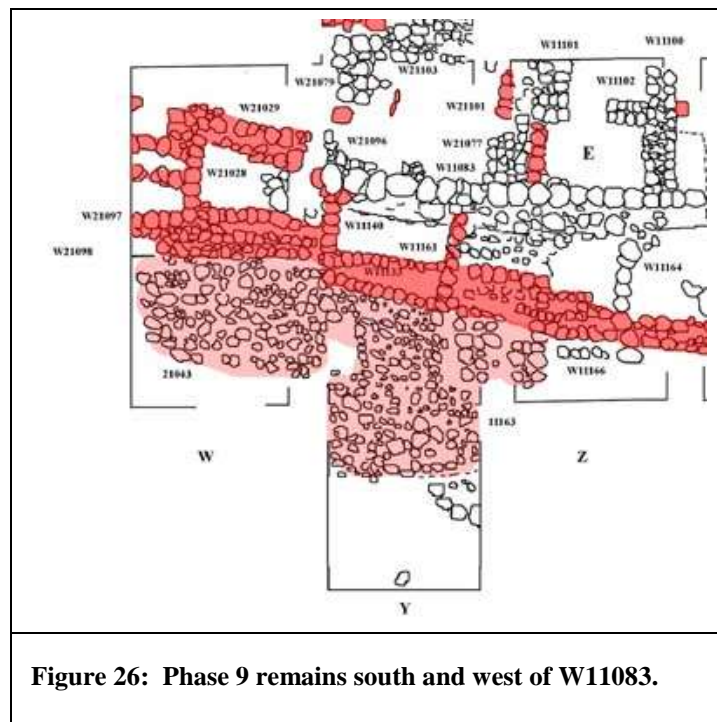
down from W21029 to W21098 at 215.97 to 214.97; this seems accurate. It seems that the readings in W8 should be checked again in the field in 2008.

Wall W21028 connects to and is set within the stones of an east-west wall system lower down slope. The upper wall (21097) is similar in construction to W21029 with two rows of cobble-sized stones. It runs the length of the square from east to west and does not curve northward as does 21029. The two rows of cobbles are roughly parallel with the northern, upslope row, a full cobble higher. This is possibly a result of erosion and site processes rather than construction intent; there seems to be a lower course of stones beneath it. Currently it is unclear exactly how this wall connects to the wall system eastward (W11040, W11133) as there remain some smaller stones covering the connection. These were left in place until the nature of the entire system is further studied. That said these two rows are offset to the north from the line of W11133, in the same manner and by the same approximate distance as the offset between W11083 and W21029.

Down slope from W21097 there are the tops of another line of cobble-sized stones (W21098). This is a single line that extends parallel to W21098 across the eastern 4 meters of the square. The stones of W21028 may be incorporated into this wall, or perhaps not. It is unclear whether or not W21098 is actually a wall, it lines up exactly with the southern row of W11133, or if it is simply a part of the stone mantle feature found throughout W9 and Y9 (11063, 21043).

Extending southward and down slope across most of W9 is a feature made up of cobbles and small boulders (21043). These have been intentionally laid to step down the slope, but without a strong sense of order and uniformity. This feature slopes south but is relatively flat across the square, east to west. The southern edge of this feature is not straight and angles to the east. The east side of 21043 connects to the 'Platform 11163' in Y9 uncovered in 2006. It is similar in construction and orientation and appears to be part of one large system. There is a 1 x 2m gap between them just east of the Y9 west balk line. South of Y9, in Y10, 11163 continued for approximately 2.5 meters. It continues to slope down and ends in a wide arc. In both Y10 and W9 dating was hampered by the proximity to the HUC and Macalister dumps; modern artifacts (a straight razor, cups, etc) were unearthed almost right on top of the stones. That said, there did seem to be splotches of clean material right on the stones, but these were hard to control and cleanly excavate given the slope, the stones, and the dumps.

The balk removal of Y9/Z9 produced connections between the two squares. It is perhaps most clear in this section to see the courses of stones which continue to step up the slope. These stones (W21005 and 'surface' 21008) look like wall lines but may well be stepped stones that are forming a mantle that covers the structures on the slope.



**Figure 26: Phase 9 remains south and west of W11083.**

In the 2006 Report, considerable attention was given to the nature and dating of the “diagonal walls” which extend southeastward from the main wall system. In that report it was concluded that these were two sets of walls and were earlier than the main wall system (both the casemate and the rebuild). In addition, the east-west walls that are at the south end of some of them were concluded to have been earlier still. Because of excavation and reexamination in 2007, this interpretation requires modification both in terms of nature and dating.

### **NATURE OF THE ‘DIAGONAL WALLS’**

The nature of the “diagonal wall system” (discussed in the Gezer 2006 report, Phase 8) was significantly clarified in 2007. This occurred in three ways.



**Figure 27: Y9 from west showing the relationship of the wall system. Photo 20070722\_3550.**

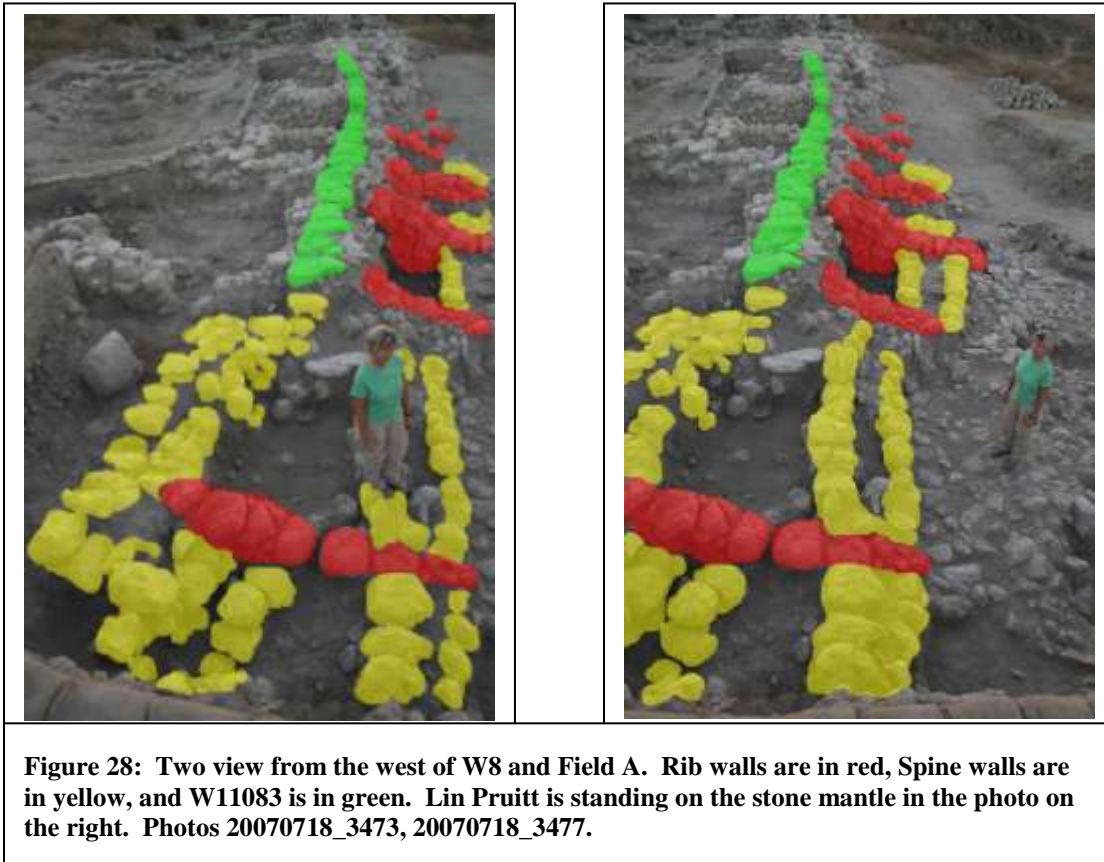
**1)** Cleanup in Y8 revealed that the diagonal walls (W11040, W11061) were contemporary with the lower wall (W11133). Since the two diagonal walls extended below the top of W11133 as well as over the top, clearly this was built as a single unit. This unit was constructed either underneath the main wall system or against it, the former seems the most reasonable. The material within this unit can no longer be considered destruction debris (unless the unit should be considered to be an open room, which is highly unlikely given its narrow dimensions and sloping height). Thus the material in 11031 (see 2006 Report) with the “Siamun” type seal should now be seen as backfill and would be composed of earlier materials than the structure itself (more on dating below).

This “box” in Y8/Y9 (W11040, W11133, W11061 [and W11083]) is connected architecturally and stratigraphically eastward to the other diagonal walls and forms a single system. Although the lowest courses of W11040 and W11061 and W21028 have not yet been reached, the other walls have been excavated to their founding levels revealing the slope of the tel when they were constructed. It is important to note that W11164 was structurally and stratigraphically connected to spine wall W11136 while wall W11168 was lower and separated from the W11164/W11136 unit by a significant amount of soil (Photo 20060704\_1542). This could very well indicate that W11164/W11136 was a rebuild of the original retaining system, of which W11168 and W11157 (in Z9/A9) is part. Additionally rib wall W11066 may also be a rebuild since it also is not (presently) connected to its spine wall (of course architectural preservation in A9 is more sparse than one would like).

That these two rib walls are rebuilds matches well the nature of W11083 in this area (between W11066 and W11168) which has a thick layer of chunky cobble sized material (socles?) under the courses of wall stones; this is different from other areas of this same wall. In addition, W11066 in A9 is founded upon a thin destruction surface (11056) which extends under the main wall system (W11083). The dating of this destruction layer was the subject of much speculation in the 2006 Report, and has been dated to Phase 7 above and will be discussed again below.

That the easternmost diagonal walls (W11149, W11148) have no retaining walls is not a problem for this interpretation (although W11150 in B9 could well be the vestiges of such a spine wall). In the first place, one could posit that erosion or earlier excavations (or a bulldozer) has simply removed them. The eastern portion of the system (B9, C9) would not have needed to be as significant as the more western (A9, Z9, Y9, W8), given the massive nature of the casemate system and the lessening of the slope eastward. It needs to be remembered that the Gate was founded on fill (HUC Field III, see Fig. 25). Thus the original (pre-Phase 8) slope from east to west was deeper, so the slope was more pronounced eastward, but was mitigated by the Phase 8 fill, therefore the retaining system was much less pronounced eastward. It simply provided the structural fill between the fill of the Gate and

the natural hill, without resorting to a deep and unsupported fill on the slope. It is also possible that these walls are from an earlier stratum.



2) Excavations in W8 showed that the structure in Y8 continued westward as well. More importantly, W8 showed that the “top” of this system was a socle structure (W21029). Thus the full structure of this architectural unit can be seen. This unit is a retaining system for a wall. The ‘diagonal’ walls are rib walls connecting and adding stability to the lower spine (retaining) walls. The retaining system was topped by a socle system which formed the base of a wall. The purpose for this retaining system is to provide stability for the wall at the top of the system. It does not seem to have been defensive, but rather structural.

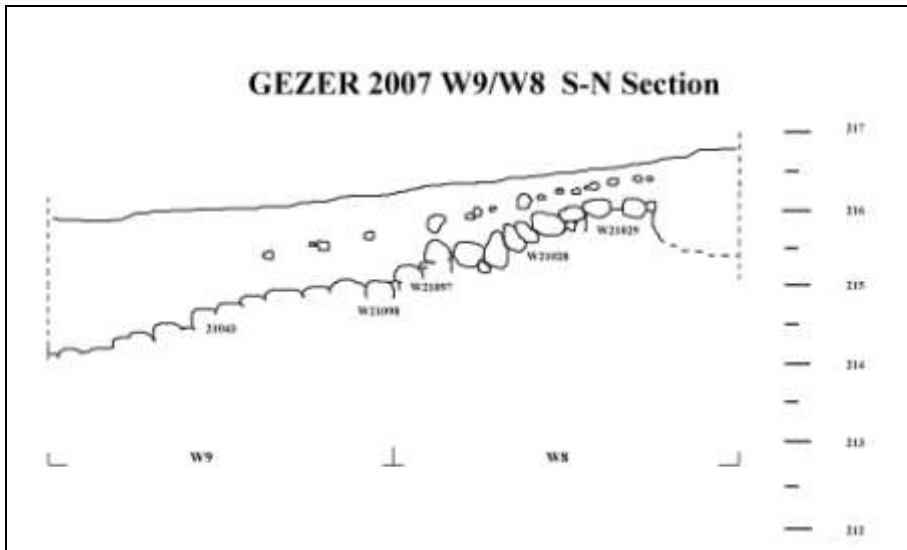
The socles would have supported a wall no more than two rows wide, only two-thirds the width of one of the casemate walls closer to the gate (C9, D9, E9). This, combined with the lack of sufficient width of the entire retaining system in W8 and Y9/Y8 to support a casemate system as wide as the double walls further east as well as the fact that Macalister found only a single wall in this area, argues strongly that the Phase 8 casemate system did not continue this far west of the gate complex. Rather, at some point (A9, see below) the wall line changed from a casemate consisting of two walls of three rows each to a single wall of only two rows whose inner row continued along the line of the inner wall of the casemate system.

**3)** Removal of the balk between Y9 and Z9 and excavations in W8 and W9 indicate that the stone platform uncovered in Y9 in 2006 (11163) is part of a larger feature that is most likely contemporary with the retaining system. This connection between the retaining system and the stone feature can be seen in Figures 28 and 29. This feature extends from W9 to A9 and can be seen as a “mantle” or “apron” of stones forming a sort of glacis or

rampart that covered the retaining system (see especially Y9 and Z9). These stones are cobble sized and not dressed, but are laid in a somewhat stepped manner upslope. The overall manner of this construction is intentional but not well organized.



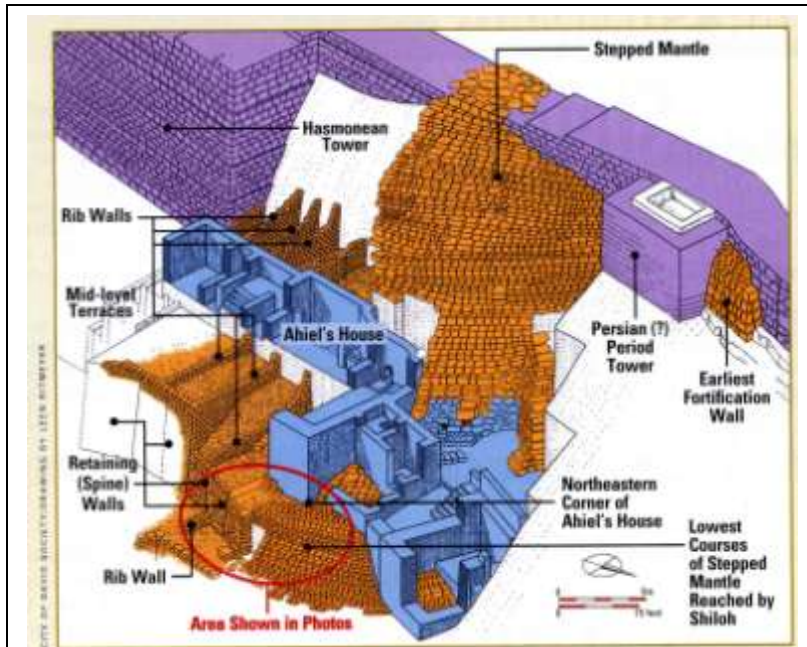
**Figure 29: West balk of W9 and W8 showing the interrelatedness of the stone 'mantle' to the retaining wall system. Photo 20070718\_3470.**



**Figure 30: Section W9-W8 showing slope and relationship of stone 'mantle' to retaining walls.**

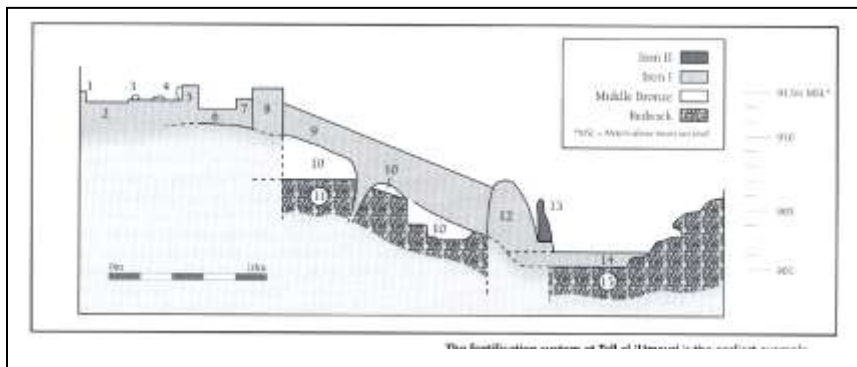
**The nature of this entire system can now be postulated. It served to structurally reinforce the slope of the tel, provide a socle foundation for the wall above and create a measure of defensibility through the stone mantle.** Its dating is discussed below.





**Figure 31: BAR Drawing of the substructure of the "Stepped Stone Structure." Note the ribs and retaining walls. Used without permission.**

Perhaps a close parallel may be seen in Area G of Jerusalem where a series of ribs and spines is backfilled and covered by a stone mantle. Obviously, the magnitude and orderliness of the Jerusalem architecture is far greater, but the basic retaining structure on a slope is generally comparable. The City of David example does not have a socle system but was surmounted by a wall.



**Figure 32: Tall al'Umayri publication drawing of the Iron Age fortifications. Used without permission.**

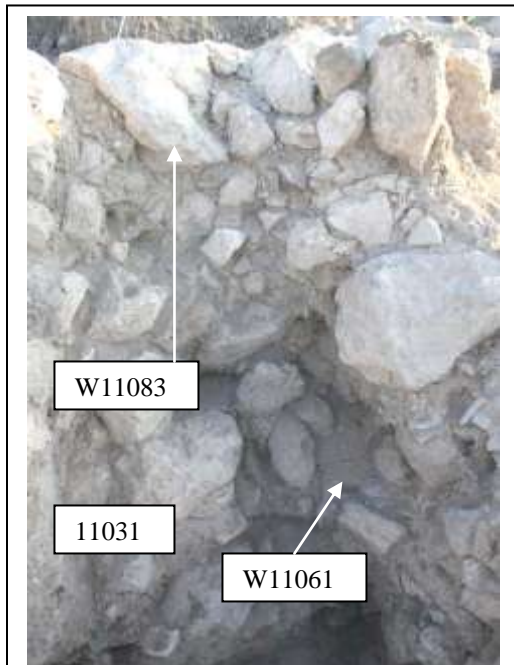
Another possible parallel may be found in the Iron I fortifications at Tall al-'Umayri, Jordan. The lower wall downslope south of the current excavations, uncovered by Macalister, coupled by the upper wall system with a stone glacia/mantle in between seems at least in general to be comparable.

### DATING OF THE RETAINING AND SUBSTRUCTURE SYSTEM

There are three obvious options for the dating of this retaining wall system: prior to the main casemate system, concurrent with the main casemate system, after the main casemate system. Making the assignment more difficult is the fact that so much of the area was previously dug and clean loci are not readily available.



### A) LATER THAN THE CASEMATE



**Figure 33: Relationship of rib wall W11061 to W11083. Photo 20070722\_3355.**

The connection of rib wall 11061 with the “casemate rebuild” (W11083) as seen in Figure 32, may well indicate that the diagonal system was constructed at the same time as the rebuild. This system would then be seen as a Phase 6 complete rebuild of the wall line west of square C. This seems the most obvious reconstruction, given the close proximity and elevations of the rib walls in relation to W11083. Additionally, it is difficult to imagine that a massive wall was completely destroyed and yet the far less substantial retaining wall system was left largely intact.

In this reconstruction the fill material in Y9 (11031) containing the early Iron I mud jar lids (stoppers) with the “Siamun” type seal impression, would simply be composed of much earlier material and thus not be stratigraphically relevant. Similarly, the destruction layer in A9 (11056), upon which one of the diagonal ribs was founded, would then belong to the destruction of the earlier casemate system (or associated structures if the casemate did not continue that far west).

Another line of argument for this reconstruction is the elevation of the earlier walls on the north side of the main wall system. These walls (Fig. 24, Photos C8, Dever ‘Palace 10000’ findings) are clearly earlier than the Phase 6 rebuild as seen in C8 where W11142 runs under the later wall (W11082) and the Phase 6 surface (S11027), and in A8 where W11158 runs under Phase 6 W11100 in Room D. However, at some places these walls are lower than the extant “top” of the retaining system and they seem

to have no foundation trenches, at least at the current level of excavation. This implies that when the retaining system was constructed it extended above the surface of the interior city in phase with these earlier walls and thus can be argued as a later phase.

The issue of the two eastern most rib walls (W11149 and W11148) that appear to be under the earlier casemate (W11087) in Squares B and C, presents a problem with this reconstruction, but may be explained as follows. Since the orientation of these two walls is different, these walls are not part of the same system and therefore could belong to another phase; one contemporary with or earlier than the casemate system. If this is the case then it stands to reason that the casemate in this area was repaired rather than rebuilt when W11083 was constructed.

If this reconstruction is correct, that the retaining system is later than the main casemate, then there can be little -- or more probably nothing -- remaining of an earlier casemate system, if indeed it actually continued beyond square C. Perhaps the presumed lower walls (W11168, W11166, W11157) in Z9 and A9 may represent this earlier phase, but at present not enough of these have been excavated to make any speculation.

### B) CONTEMPORARY WITH THE CASEMATE

As was noted above, an architectural connection between the retaining system and the extant wall system W11083 is very likely. Therefore, it is reasonable to postulate that these two wall systems were contemporary. However since W11083 is a rebuild of the casemate at a later time, this poses problems for the retaining system and the casemate.

If the retaining system is to be considered contemporary with the Phase 8 casemate, one of two things must be true. Either the proposed rebuild of the system (W11083) is in fact not a rebuild but rather the original system, or the lowest portions of the retaining system must have remained intact and continued to be reused by the rebuild.

The first of these options is possible but problematic given W11083's connections to the Phase 6 rebuild of the interior city. This is especially seen in Y8 where the same construction fill (11138) can be seen under the Phase 6 surface (S21071) and under the main wall (W11083) and can be reasonably traced and connected between these two points (see above). Similarly in Room E (Z8) there is a similar construction fill under W11083. Both of these fills bear a strong semblance to the fill used under the Phase 6 surface (S11027) in C8. This does seem to strongly argue for a rebuild of W11083.

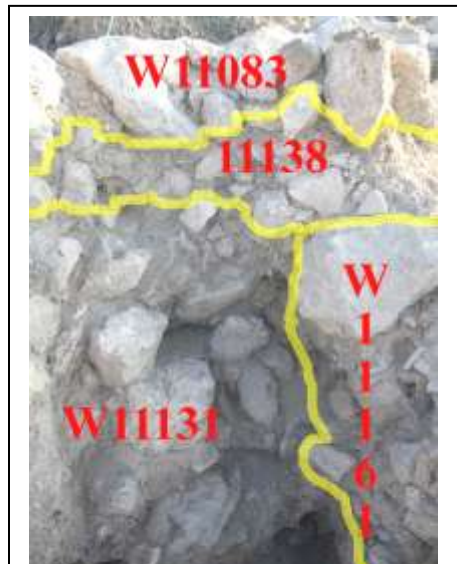
The second option is more likely than the first, but it is not without difficulty. The revealed structure of this system in W8 indicates that the upper spine wall consisted of a socle system underneath the main wall (see above for discussion). Since this is the case, it is reasonable to postulate that this was the original construction technique continuing eastward. In the initial construction phase (Phase 6) these socles supported the Phase 6 wall (not extant – replaced by W11083).

In this scenario, the backfill found in Y9 (11031) represents a probable timeframe for the early Iron I seal impression (Siamun) and pottery, and also provides an explanation for the later (Iron II) material found above 11031 in 11009.

### **Rebuild at the Breach**

When the Phase 8 wall was breached some of these socles were destroyed, leaving only the ribs. This may account for the lack of socles under W11083 seen in Rooms C and E and in Y8. In other places the socles remained intact and were reused by the Phase 6 rebuild (W8). Room D appears to have the socles intact, but when seen in the light of other evidence, these may be a later feature. Given the significant change in construction of the wall W11083/W11082 in B9 it is reasonable to postulate that the main breach of the Phase 8 wall occurred in Z9/A9/B9.

As discussed above, rib walls W11164 and W11060 (and possibly W11149) are most likely rebuilt. Wall W11060 is founded upon the destruction surface in A9 S11156, which has Phase 8 pottery above it (11159; LB/11/10) and Phase 10 pottery below it (11170; LB/Iron I -- although mixed). Thus S11156 can be seen to represent the actual breach in the wall and the surface created by traffic through the breach. Later, the Phase 6 builders rebuilt the rib walls and backfilled the gap with the chunky cobble material to 'smooth' the slope for the Phase 6 wall (W11083) (see Figs. 21, 22, 23). Further upslope to the west, where there was not as much sub-structural damage, they laid the yellow construction fill, as they had eastward under the pillared building (Building A ['Palace 8000']).



**Figure 34: The connection between W11161 and W11083, postulating the fill 11138 between them. Photo 20070722\_3355**

### **Difficulty**

The difficulty with this reconstruction is the nature of the stratigraphic relationship between the material at the upper part of rib wall W11061 (Y9) and the apparent founding of W11083. On the north side of this single row (extant) wall, the lowest stone is founded upon the yellow construction fill (11138), while on the south side the stone seems to be founded directly upon the socles which are connected to W11061. With current excavation it is impossible to tell how exactly this foundation works. The problem is that either the stone of W11083 is founded on Phase 6 construction fill or it is founded on the socles of Phase 8 (is it or is it not a rebuild?). It is possible that, following the destruction of Phase 8, the socles in this area were only partially destroyed and the rebuild of Phase 6 used the remaining northern socles and filled the rest in with the construction fill. It is perhaps best solved by postulating that the matrix of the yellow construction fill (11138) under W11083 in Y8 became more coarse and even more like socles (see Fig 21) as the builders moved south, so that the same locus (11138) appears as yellow fill on one side and a mixed stone fill (with socles?) on the other. The question currently cannot be fully resolved given that we will not excavate the stones of W11083.

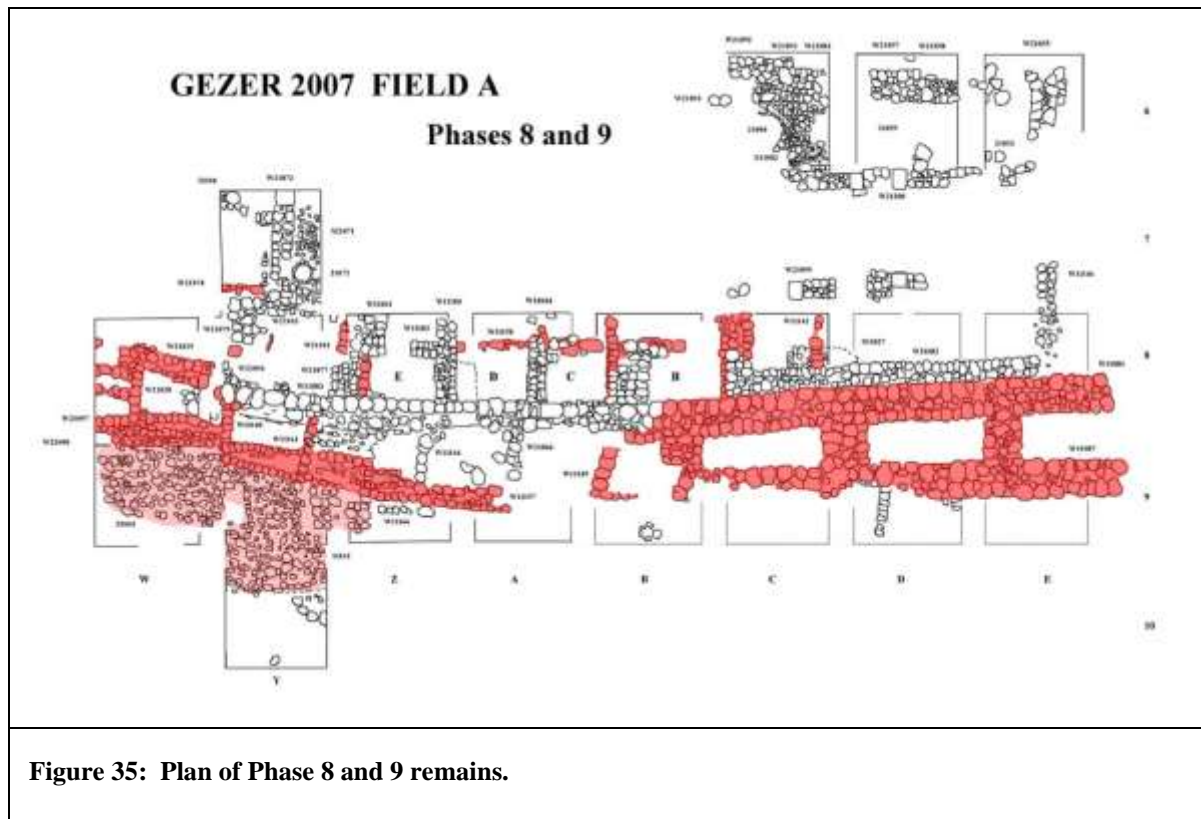
### C) PRIOR TO THE CASEMATE SYSTEM

Most of the same arguments listed above for a contemporary dating would also apply to a dating prior to the wall system. Obviously, the retaining system was constructed before the wall was placed on top. How much earlier is questionable. If analogy with Area G in Jerusalem is pushed, then the system dates to either the 12<sup>th</sup> century (M. Steiner) or the 13<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> centuries (J. Cahill). Cahill argues that the stone mantle is contemporary with the rib/spine system, which seems to be the case in Gezer A, while Steiner contends that the stone mantle is from the late 10<sup>th</sup> century (see *BAR*, 24/4, 1998 and Vaughn and Killebrew, Eds. *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology*, 2003).

If an earlier date is posited, the most eastern wall (W11148) could then be included in the system.

### Conclusion

Upon consideration of the available reconstructions, it seems most plausible that the retaining wall system is contemporary with the main casemate system. The narrowness of the socle system indicates that the large, three row double wall casemate system did not continue west beyond Square B. The two walls in A9 and Z9 (W11066, W11064, and possibly W11148) were rebuilt in following the breach in and destruction of the Phase 7 wall system.



**Figure 35: Plan of Phase 8 and 9 remains.**

## **PHASE 10: LB/IRON I DEBRIS**

South of the wall system 2006 excavations reached a level which was stratigraphically and ceramically dated to the LB/Iron IA. The 2007 excavations did not reach this level, but the 2006 conclusions remain valid, with the knowledge that the wall systems have been dated later than in the 2006 report.

## **PHASE 11: LB/IRON I**

Although only the top of W11166 in Z9 was reached in 2006, it still appears that this wall should be dated to the LB or Iron I. It is stratigraphically earlier than the Casemate and Retaining systems. The nature of the lowest remains in Z9 is still unclear. Perhaps when we better understand the edge of the tel in antiquity through continued excavations down slope.

# GEZER 2007 FIELD A

