

Above and Beyond Ancient Mounds: The Archaeology of the Modern Periods in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean

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Introduction: Politics and Archaeology in the Middle East

Historical archaeology is a recent, and still emerging, development in the Middle East. While historical archaeology can be simply any archaeology focused on periods with documentary evidence, this chapter examines historical archaeology as the archaeology of modernity, an archaeological discourse influenced by scholars using material culture, archaeological artifacts, and excavations to expose the dynamics of the recent past. For the Middle East, the recent past is the epoch when the Ottoman Empire ruled over a region from the Black Sea to the Red Sea, from Mediterranean to the Tigris–Euphrates Rivers.

Raising the profile of the Ottoman Empire, recognizing the materiality of that great, long-lasting Islamic-Turkish world empire, confronts the nationalist narratives of its successor states. Recognizing the modern aspects of the epoch is a critique of Orientalist assumptions about the society and politics of the region. Middle Eastern archaeology, which is rooted in the last century of Ottoman rule over the Middle East, traditionally has excluded the recent past from being an appropriate subject matter for archaeological investigations. Archaeology is important in the Middle East; its national, ethnic, and scholarly significance triggers competitions over representing and understanding the past. Mapping out the emerging terrain

of excavations, analyses, and publications on the historical archaeology of the Ottoman Empire requires a consideration of the history and politics of the empire and an exploration of the differing approaches to archaeological research and representation across the region it controlled.

The Ottoman Empire: History and Perspectives of the Recent Past

The Ottoman Empire emerged in the thirteenth century, expanding across Anatolia and ruling over the Middle East and Southeastern Europe for centuries. Mehmet the Conqueror captured Constantinople in 1453, ending the long reign of the Byzantine Empire and turning the city into the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Following the Ottoman military successes in the Balkans, Sultan Selim's victory at the Battle of Marj Dabiq, near Aleppo in 1516, opened the Middle East to the Ottoman Empire. Under Kanuni Sultan Süleyman (The Lawgiver), better known in the west as Süleyman the Magnificent, the empire stretched from North Africa to Yemen, from the Persian Gulf to the gates of Vienna (Fig. 1).

Donald Quataert (2000:21) notes that under Süleyman, who reigned from 1520 to 1566, "the Ottomans are widely considered to have reached a peak of wealth and power." After Süleyman's reign, the rest of Ottoman history has been told as a time of desolation, decay, and decline. The notion of the "sick man of Europe"—a term coined by the Russian Tzar Nicholas I in 1853 to describe an assumed impending collapse—continues even in recent popular histories

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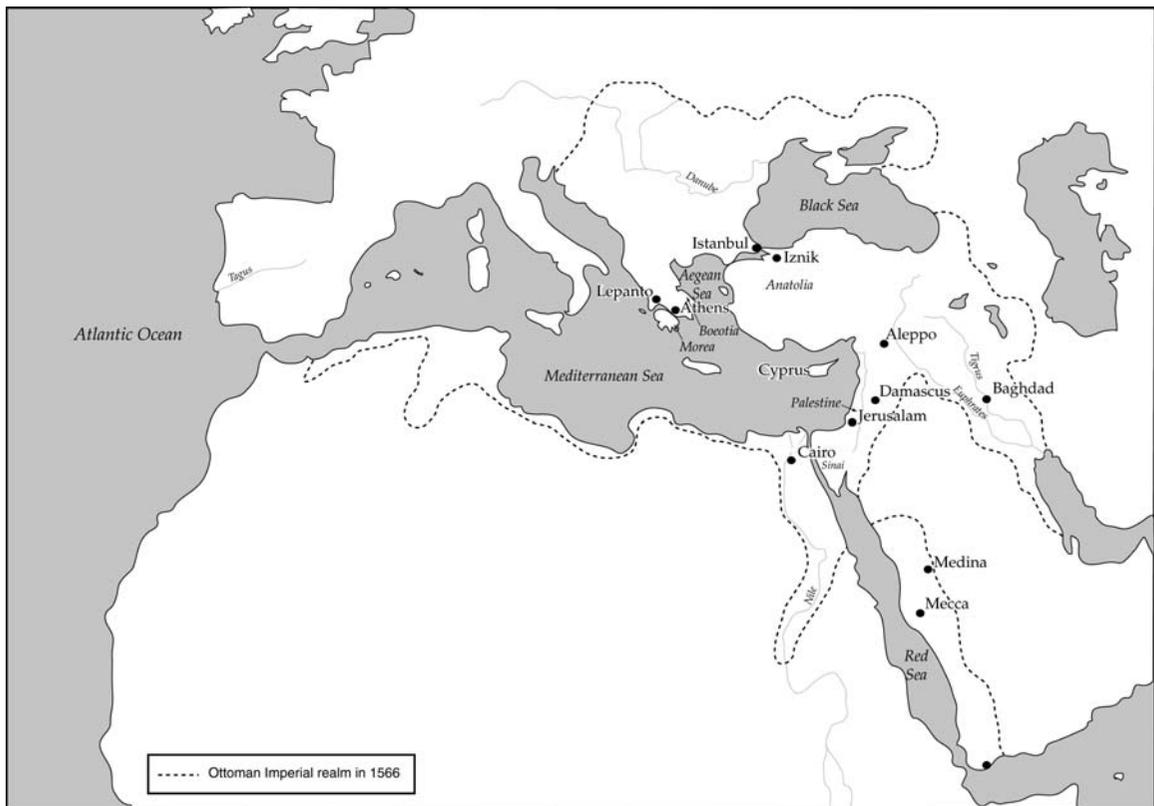


Fig. 1 Map of the Ottoman Empire at its mid-sixteenth-century territorial height (drafted by Margaret Robbins, courtesy Statistical Research, Inc.)

(the empire lasted until World War I, more than half a century after the prediction of its demise). In that tale of decline, the institutions and cultural life of the peoples of the empire were presented as degenerated or frozen in time, a discourse that Edward Said (1979) labels “Orientalism.” The negative view of the Ottoman Empire is not only a western perception. The successor Arab states treat the Ottoman era as a period of alien rule, and for Balkan peoples the legacy of the Ottoman Empire is negative heritage; even the Republic of Turkey broke with the empire (Baram and Carroll, 2000a).

Middle Eastern archaeology, formed in the aftermath of the late-eighteenth-century Napoleonic intrusion during the days of the Ottoman Empire, found no reason to examine that empire. Archaeologists, seeking the ancient civilizations and evidence of the Biblical narratives, ignored the material culture of the late Ottoman period, with its continuities to the objects used from the fifteenth century onward. The traditions of focused study on the rich and complex material and

documentary records of antiquity discouraged attention on the materiality of the recent past.

In the 1980s, Albert Glock (1985), Philip Kohl (1989), and Neil Silberman (1989:228–242), based on the potential they saw in historical archaeological research in North America, called for expanding archaeology from distant antiquity into the recent past. They gave particular attention to including the excavation of Ottoman-period sites. The calls for an archaeology of the Ottoman Empire came from an urge to tell a different story for the history of the region, one that could counter the repercussions of colonialism, imperialism, and Orientalism. These advocates hoped local archaeologists, of all nationalities, would recognize a shared heritage in the archaeological record of the recent past. One prominent example of such hopes of finding the commonalities of the past focused on archaeology as a source of reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. Such an archaeology centers on rethinking and rediscovering the recent past to reconstruct the lives of peoples—both the elite and

the commoners—of the past several centuries from the things they left behind in the archaeological record.

Glock (1985, 1994) began excavations at the Ottoman-period village of Ti'innik on top of Tel Taanach, a famous site of Biblical significance. The research program sought to be relevant to the inhabitants of the land by including recent epochs. Glock envisioned the archaeological study of the recent past as contributing to the methods and theories of archaeologies of the more distant past to provide an accurate view on the development of identities in the region. The finds and analysis from Ti'innik are discussed below.

Even with the success of archaeology at Ti'innik and other sites, a decade ago an observer of Israeli archaeology could state that excavators were avoiding or excluding the recent strata from archaeology (Baram, 2002). In the 1990s, the notion of systematic excavation attracted the attention of a new generation of archaeologists to artifacts from the upper layers of excavations. The lands that were Palestine during the Ottoman period are an important place for the historical archaeology of the Middle East because of the relative wealth of excavations and publication of Ottoman materials. Similarly, Greece and Cyprus are significant arenas for Ottoman archaeology.

P. Nick Kardulias (1994:39), in a review of historical archaeology for Greece, notes the “primacy of texts over the material record in the interpretive process.” Kardulias (1994) advocates lessons from historical archaeology to influence an anthropological Classical Archaeology for Greece. His review of archaeological projects in Greece recognizes that the “neglect of the Ottoman period, and to a lesser extent the Byzantine, Frankish, and Venetian eras, brings researchers, finally, to a consideration of the sociopolitical climate within which archaeology operates in Greece” (Kardulias, 1994:48–49). As in Israel, sociopolitics is a key component for the position of the recent past in archaeological practice. Kardulias (1994:49) states this boldly: “In archaeological circles, the situation means that one does not undertake excavations of Ottoman-period sites because, in part at least, the work would conflict with important national ideological needs.” Although the situation has changed, as the below examples will show, that context is part of the convergence of traditional archaeological practices and nationalism across the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. This is seen clearly in antiquities legislation that ends during

or before the Ottoman period. For instance, the British, during their Mandate over Palestine, set the year 1700 as the endpoint for archaeology. The successor states, Jordan (McQuitty, 2001:561) and Israel (Benvenisti, 2000:303), continued that policy in their respective antiquities legislation.

The third significant locale for Ottoman archaeology is Turkey. The Republic of Turkey has a wide range of archaeological projects that include the Ottoman period, including extensive archival research, art-history studies of monuments and elite wares, and settlement-pattern analyses.

Even in these countries with their developing studies of archaeological materials from the Ottoman period, there are very few projects that exclusively focus on the archaeological record of the Ottoman period. Most of the archaeological data for the Ottoman period have come from incidental components of expeditions focused on the Biblical or Classical eras or from salvage operations; only a small portion of the materials encountered gets published, and the majority of these publications are recent. Baram and Carroll (2000a) were the first to attempt a theoretical examination of those archaeological materials and projects by identifying central concerns for the archaeology of the Ottoman Empire. The studies in *A Historical Archaeology of the Ottoman Empire* (Baram and Carroll, 2000b)—covering Greece, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, and Egypt—provide examples of the regional centers of published Ottoman archaeology projects and the materials that constituted historical archaeology. This chapter surveys the developing approaches to the archaeological record, organizing recent projects toward emerging scholarly trajectories. While there are different scholarly foundation and research trajectories among the regions, this chapter seeks to integrate projects to illustrate the common contributions that can expose the histories of the former Ottoman realm.

Pathways to the Archaeologies of the Recent Past

Baram and Carroll (2000a:15–25) explored several pathways for an archaeology of the Ottoman Empire. One pathway follows the calls for the

archaeology of the Ottoman period to embody critiques of the present; the lack of research is the means to explore the ideological meaning of archaeology. Cultural anthropologists have picked up this theme in exploring the silences of history; for instance, Bauman (2004) illuminates the muffling of the recent past in the Israeli National Park of Zippori, known as the Roman city of Sepphoris. The focus on the Classical period obscures the habitation of the site up to the mid-twentieth century, even as an Ottoman-period citadel dominates the center of the park.

Another pathway uses the Ottoman period, the recent past of the Middle East, as ethnoarchaeology; the recent past, particularly with its identifiable artifacts and insights into preservation, provides an avenue to sharpen archaeological insights into the more distant past, what Ziadeh-Seely (2000) calls reverse chronology.

The archaeology of Islam is another possible disciplinary home for Ottoman archaeology. Insoll (1999) provides a framework for studying Islam via archaeology. The Ottoman Empire was the last great Muslim empire: the Sultan was Caliph, sultans sponsored construction of impressive mosques, and organizing the Hajj was a significant part of rulership. To the east of the Jordan River, way stations for the Hajj are a significant Ottoman imprint on the landscape of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. While such structures are parts of an Ottoman archaeology, the challenge for the archaeology of Islam comes from using material culture to approach a world religion. While the Ottoman Empire was an Islamic empire, it was also a Turkish Empire, and the empire was part of the emerging modern world system interacting with and being influenced by global processes and events. Religion was only one facet of the cultural landscape during the Ottoman centuries in the Middle East.

The multidisciplinary approach of Middle Eastern studies, specifically Ottoman Studies, allows inclusion of any discipline. Many scholars would welcome the archaeology of the Ottoman period, in terms of artifacts and recovered settlement pattern. Beshara Doumani (1992:22), a historian of Ottoman Palestine, calls for inclusion of primary sources that contain the voices of people excluded from history: “Ottoman court records, family papers, *physical evidence*, and oral history” (italics

added). An area studies approach has its merits, and there is an eager audience for archaeological insights particularly within an interdisciplinary context. Several examples for this chapter are part of regional studies. The challenge is integrating the different regional traditions, with their paradigms, toward reclaiming larger areas; the fragmenting of the Ottoman Empire seems to have created different histories.

While there are multiple, productive pathways for the archaeology of the recent past with important results, Baram and Carroll (2000a:16–18) argue for situating the Ottoman Empire within global historical archaeology. The other choice would have been to situate the archaeology of the Ottoman Empire with post-medieval archaeology, an approach from Europe that is relevant but not simply applicable to the Middle Eastern aspects of the empire. Global historical archaeology provides a large-scale perspective, with anthropological approaches to the past. In a review of historical archaeology, Paynter (2000:201) concludes that “studies in historical archaeology seek to illuminate the complex ways in which state formation, race, class, and gender structure the everyday lives and history of the post-Columbian world.” These are key issues for the recent past of the Middle East, as Ottoman imperial control intersected with nationalist movements and imperialist intrigue. In addition, as Orser (1996) notes, historical archaeology provides new perspectives on the trajectories and the interconnections that contextualize objects and sites as part of the emergence of the modern world. A global historical archaeology for the Ottoman period insists on integrating places connected in the recent past but divided by guarded borders by twentieth- and twenty-first-century nation-states. Comparative studies across the region can bring out insights not possible with detailed, close examination of finds.

While there are productive debates on the meaning of historical archaeology, historical archaeology as a history from below exposes the lives of people negotiating their social positions and daily practices under imperial control. The textual traditions of the archaeologies of the previous complex societies and empires of the region (e.g., Egyptology, Classical Archaeology, and Biblical Archaeology) provide an emphasis that is not germane for the complexity

and fluidity of the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, historians are still exploring, analyzing, and translating materials from the vast archives of the Ottoman Empire. There are gaps for many decades, and even centuries, and for many of the regions of the empire, particularly the rural areas. Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire, as an administrative body, allowed localized control; thus, there is wide variation among the practices across the vast region controlled by Istanbul. The Ottoman elite understood local conditions, allowing them to build an empire that endured for centuries. Molly Greene (2005) describes how the leadership of the Ottoman Empire, after its military conquests, would read the cultural landscape and adjust imperial rule accordingly. So rather than a simple story of Ottoman despotism and decline, by probing deeper into the history and the local variations, archaeologists can find evidence of interactions, coexistence, and fluidity among the peoples of the empire. Global historical archaeology opens an avenue to study the intersection of internal colonialism, foreign imperialism, and local agency in a global, comparative context.

Paynter's (2000:201) general concerns for historical archaeology have applications for the Ottoman Empire, particularly his call for historical archaeologists to "write innovative and provocative culture histories." There is collaboration possible since many historians of the empire have called for situating the empire in a global context (e.g., Quataert, 2000) to locate commonalities with other empires, to understand better its dynamics, and to explore and understand the origins of the present. Historical archaeology in the Middle East, as the below examples should illustrate, is beginning to contribute to those concerns. Addressing modernity under the Ottoman Empire allows interdisciplinary approaches that integrate a wide range of resources from archaeological artifacts from surveys and excavations, standing structures and landscape features, oral histories, travel accounts, imperial records and local archives, and art history, architectural studies, and social history. The archaeology of the social dynamics and political economy under the Ottoman imperial realm explores the emergence, spread, and resistance to modernity in the empire and its successor states. Vroom (2003), perceptively, titles her important study from archaeological surveys in

Greece *After Antiquity* (discussed below). The archaeology of the modern period is examining the dynamics that created the contemporary Middle East.

Starting with Ottoman-Period Artifacts

Baram's (1996) first steps toward an archaeology of the Ottoman period focused on analyzing artifacts, following the steps set in North American historical archaeology. Historical archaeologists have given much energy to creating typologies for the chronology and production of clay tobacco pipes. The most distinctive object, even the hallmark of the Ottoman period, is the Turkish tobacco pipe (Fig. 2). Archaeologists have recovered fragments of the clay bowl (the stem was typically made of wood and not preserved) in the hundreds if not thousands at some sites. Rebecca Robinson (1983, 1985) used period paintings as resources for chronological typologies to organize a large collection from the Athenian Agora excavations. Hayes (1992) provided a typology for excavated tobacco pipes from Saraçhane, in Istanbul. Baram (1996) built on those analyses, using assemblages from Israel and Cyprus, to posit



Fig. 2 A clay tobacco pipe. Archaeologists consider this class of artifacts as the hallmark of the Ottoman period (courtesy Uzi Baram)

chronological and production typologies. Baram (1999) argued for interpreting the clay tobacco pipe and coffee cup sherds commonly found in Ottoman-period layers in terms of modernity, to move beyond typological concerns.

Ceramics, in general, have received a great deal of descriptive and analytical attention. Carroll's (1999) work in Turkey examines the use of blue-and-white ceramics as part of the long-term trade in porcelains and the use of localized emulations. The emulations focus on Iznik wares. Hayes (1992) describes the categories of Miletus (best known from the Iznik series), Kütahya, and Çanakkale wares. These ceramics are famous for their artistic merit. The excavations of the Iznik Tile Kilns document Iznik ceramic production (Aslanapa et al., 1989). The city of Iznik became a famous center of pottery production in the early sixteenth century. Iznik wares were soft and sandy, usually with a white slip and painted with stylized designs of flowers that ranged from blue and white to turquoise, green, purple, and black. Carroll (1999) exposes the elite choices between Chinese porcelains and Ottoman ceramic industries and their effect on the history of the styles.

Across the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, art history provides insights into elite wares; it is the more common utilitarian ceramics that require archaeological study. While a century of scientific excavations have created precise chronological typologies for ceramics from the Bronze and Iron Ages and Classical periods, the common wares from the recent past are grouped into vast categories. For instance, the Late Islamic period subsumes the many centuries of Mamluk through Ottoman rule. Milwright (2000), in a review of the published archaeological evidence for greater Syria, lays out a programmatic argument for further studies, including speculations on its origins of diagnosis types, but the challenges start with the creation of typologies for the common ceramics.

An important example of pottery studies comes from Robin Brown (1992), who analyzed materials from archaeological surveys on the Kerak Plateau in Jordan, with the goal of interpreting the settlement pattern from the Crusader period (end of the thirteenth century) to the late Ottoman period (the twentieth century). Her typology for the pottery divides the ceramics into three manufacturing

techniques: handmade, wheel-thrown, and mold-cast. Brown's (1992:241–246) analysis of wheel-thrown versus local handmade pottery opens an avenue to use ceramic assemblages as indicators of the intersection of Ottoman policies, changing settlement patterns and distribution networks, and household activities for the study region. The general pattern, of handmade pottery replacing wheel-thrown ceramics after the sixteenth century in Kerak, is clear even if counterintuitive; though covering eight centuries of Islamic rule, the typology is more useful for the Mamluk period than for the Ottoman centuries.

Gazaware exemplifies the challenge for historical archaeology. Gazaware is the commonly recovered ceramic type across Israel; with its black or dark-gray slipped surface and gray fabric, archaeologists can readily identify and describe the type. Many archaeological reports describe the type, and travel accounts from the late Ottoman period note its use in the twentieth century. However, no one has established its origins and range of variation (Baram, 2002:23). An ethnographic attempt by the excavators of Tell el-Hesi (Toombs, 1985:106–107) to locate producers of Gazaware in Gaza failed in the third quarter of the twentieth century; the potters of Gaza designated the style as being older than their traditions. With little precisely known about the chronological origin of these common vessels, Schaefer (1989:274–275) has an intriguing hypothesis for a medieval Jordanian origin for the type, but the example should illustrate the challenges faced in organizing ceramics and strata for even the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When the most common ceramic forms are the least understood, there is much work to do. More progress on utilitarian ceramics comes in the Aegean, where Joanita Vroom (2005) published a field guide to post-Roman ceramics that could transform the study of ceramics from the recent past.

While clay tobacco pipes are a key tool, and ceramics in general offer the potential for unlocking the dating of archaeological layers, Kuniholm's (2000) work using dendrochronology has established a means to date Ottoman-period standing structures. Mosques, villas, factories, repairs to older buildings, and even a shipwreck have fixed construction or repair dates due to Kuniholm's studies of oaks, pines, and juniper that came from

Turkish forests. Kuniholm (2000) has solved construction questions across Anatolia for the Ottoman period.

Object-focused studies are providing temporal order and chronological typologies for field archaeologists. There are two major focal points for fieldwork across the Middle East: surveys and intensive excavations of ancient mounds. Although the focus of much of archaeology traditionally has been the Biblical and/or Classical periods, with the more recent past being typically ignored or avoided, systematic surveys and excavations often encountered Ottoman-period remains by virtue of the empire extending over the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East for several centuries. The tops of ancient mounds often contained materials from the recent past. Archaeologists who document the remains of the recent past use that material as ethnoarchaeology, incorporate the information into the larger sequence for the region (usually to illustrate the documentary history), or employ the material evidence to explore change—whether social, economic, or political—that came with Ottoman conquest and over the Ottoman centuries. Below, several approaches to the recent past across the former Ottoman realm are discussed with case studies.

Adding the Recent Past to the Sequence

When Biblical Archaeology began in the nineteenth century, western scholars turned to contemporary Middle Eastern villages and Bedouin for examples of Biblical lifeways. The assumption was one of stasis then, but the notion of using the present for the deeper past was compatible with an ethnoarchaeology that occasionally employed lifeways that started in the Ottoman period.

Multitudes of ethnoarchaeological studies have focused on the Middle East, many of which are useful for Ottoman archaeology. For an example of an innovative focus in Jordan, Kana'an and McQuitty (1994) focus on a house built in 1910 and used through the twentieth century. The example illustrates the goals of the Vernacular Survey of the Kerak Plateau, which uses the present as a guide for the past, to expose the relationships between the

built environment and the socioeconomic change. One of their contributions is the avoidance of a dichotomy created by the concept of tradition. The complexities of using previous techniques on new materials and the integration of new components of living spaces with the previous structures successfully shows the need for nuanced analysis of material culture in the Middle East.

Ethnoarchaeology implies a concern for the recent past for understanding more distant antiquity. The line between ethnoarchaeology and the archaeology of the recent past is not always clear. Ethnoarchaeology provides material evidence for the practices from the recent past. A framework for historical archaeology started when Neil Silberman (1989) observed the successes of Middle Eastern archaeology in exposing and explaining social change from the Paleolithic through the Bronze Ages, from the Iron and Classical periods to Islamic times, and he wondered why the narrative ended at the doorstep of the present. Continuing the search for explanation into the present seemed worthwhile. Many of the projects that feed into historical archaeology, by providing data and case studies, grew out of a commitment by excavators to expose all elements of the archaeological past, from bedrock to the surface.

An early example comes from Tel el-Hesi in Israel. Toombs (1985) and Eakins (1993) document Israeli military trenching in the ancient mound, as well as in a large Bedouin cemetery. Tel el-Hesi is legendary in the history of Middle Eastern archaeology since Sir William Matthews Flinders Petrie excavated the site using the systematic techniques he developed in Egypt. In the 1970s, an American team turned to Tel el-Hesi and decided to treat all components of the tell as significant, including the top layers. The results provide maps of the military trenching from the 1948 war between Israeli and Egyptian troops and the excavation of 400 Muslim burials dated between 1400 and 1800. The excavations of the cemetery required a tremendous commitment of time and resources, and the outcome provided a systemic description of burial practices and research into the history of Bedouin movements over the Ottoman centuries. Simpson (1995) has situated these results within a survey of excavated Islamic burials from Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, illustrating a

larger point for archaeologists regarding the material variation possible under a uniform religion.

The research at Tel el-Hesi is significant and enacted under scientific principles from processual archaeology. Combining a scientific concern with social concerns, the systematic excavation of Ottoman-period Ti'innik, located near the "Green Line" that divides Israel proper from Palestinian territories conquered in the 1967 war, crossed several types of boundaries. Albert Glock used the site to explore the divides between groups as well as time periods. Glock focused on the Arab village on top of the Biblical mound in his mid-1980s expedition. The expedition was the first excavation totally staffed by Palestinians, some of whom used techniques of ethnography to identify artifacts and settlement pattern. The publication of the expedition is providing significant insights into Ottoman-period material culture and rural life. The ceramic catalogs (Ziadeh, 1995) are invaluable, beginning the task of inventorying items used by peasants during the Ottoman period.

Another contribution of the research at Ti'innik focused on the analysis of site abandonment (Ziadeh-Seely, 1999). Site abandonment addresses historical issues for the cycles of settlement changes during the Ottoman period and provides theoretical support for understanding the lower levels of tells. The issue is a crucial concern for determining population and settlement patterns for Palestine over the Ottoman centuries. Ziadeh-Seely's (1999) work compares the archaeological evidence of abandonment with sixteenth-century tax registers. Those registers imply a 40 percent increase in Ti'innik's population during the Ottoman period. Three excavated houses in Stratum 6 of Ti'innik have evidence of abandonment, with cleared floors under collapsed debris. Ziadeh-Seely (1999:144) found that neighbors used the spaces as dumping grounds. This insight has important implications. Travelers to Ottoman Palestine saw a desolate landscape, and their views have structured understandings of Palestinian history. Ziadeh-Seely's work shifts the terminology; the archaeology shows that those abandoned houses were actively part of rural life.

The Ti'innik excavations were in a component of a tell, an ancient mound of many layers of history. At Tel el-Hesi and Ti'innik, the excavations included the top layers. Including the top layers of tells is

becoming standard across the region. At Tel Yoqne'am, Avissar (2005) published the architecture and artifacts found on top of the acropolis of the important mound. The report documents the materials well and seeks to situate the archaeological record in the history of the chronology for the tell. Avissar provides a checklist for the chronology: archaeological evidence for a Crusader township, a century of use during the Mamluk period, and a mid-eighteenth-century fortress abandoned by the early nineteenth century.

Beyond ancient mounds, the rise of regional surveys—the examination of the larger landscape context for a tell—has proven beneficial for scholars interested in the Ottoman past. For instance, the extensive excavations at Troy have provided Ottoman archaeology with several publications. John W. Hayes (1995) documented the finds from an excavation unit in the Lower City of Troy. Similar to his work at Saraçhane in Istanbul (Hayes 1992), the catalog for the Ottoman Troad builds an understanding of material changes, as well as filling in the gaps for the pottery sequence created from the Istanbul excavations and analysis. Hayes's discussion of the Troy artifacts provides a benchmark for recognizing the transition from Byzantine to Ottoman rule via ceramics in the Troad. Beyond the ancient mound, Ayda Arel (1993) identifies an isolated tower on the plain of Troia as the remnant of the eighteenth-century farmstead of the Ottoman Grand Admiral Cezayirli Hasan Paşa. A 1776 engraving and detailed architectural study, along with Peter Ian Kuniholm's dendrochronological study of wood samples, fix the identity of the structure. Arel (1993:185–186) explains that the interior space of the tower is typical for the period, but the exterior indicates "an architectural sign of autonomy and authority," an anachronistic symbol of an earlier Ottoman politico-economic system. The use of past in the present is not unique to our social world.

The impetus for inclusion guides much of the collection of Ottoman-period materials across the region. Regional surveys in Greece and Cyprus now regularly include material culture from the recent past. Jack Davis (1991) recognized that archaeology could shed light on rural populations during the Ottoman period. Allaire Brumfield (2000), from a survey on the eastern part of Crete, provides a

history of agricultural practices and landowning patterns; a history from below that illustrates the variation in rural life during the Ottoman period. A large project during the 1990s, the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP), systematically included all time periods for a large region of mainland Greece, thus including the Ottoman components. *Sandy Pylos* (Davis, 1998) reviews the Ottoman period (1460–1684 and 1715–1827), with its Venetian interruption (1686–1715), emphasizing the important military Battle of Navarino. The history is complex, including interventions by the Russian Catherine the Great and Muhammad ‘Ali of Egypt, and scholars interpret the region as a “rich embroidery of Italian, Turkish, Greek, Albanian, and Western traditions” (Davis, 1998:252).

The events at Navarino have great historical significance and extensive documentary information. PRAP also examined the sites at the edges of history, such as Hasanaga, a village that otherwise is only a shadow in the documentary record. Hasanaga was probably a country estate, noted in the census and the accounts of travelers. The archaeologists mapped its surviving structure and courtyard walls and collected a sampling of artifacts. The archaeological project stopped at Greek independence, moving up the boundary for the proper domain of archaeology by several centuries. The amount of documentary resources explodes in size with the establishment of Greece; the need for material evidence fades with the wealth of detailed, documented insights into the region. The impressive scholarship documents the material remains, maps new places onto the landscape of Ottoman Greece, and wrestles with the textual traditions of the region’s archaeology.

The stress on the documentary record is clear in *A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: the Southwest Morea in the 18th Century* (Zarinebaf et al., 2005). As a collaboration between two archaeologists and a historian, the authors acknowledge that the volume serves future archaeological projects rather than demonstrating innovative methodological intersections between texts and artifacts. It is worth noting that whereas the Ottoman Empire has extensive archives, there are many more documentary materials than scholars capable of translating and employing them. Thus, the publication of the imperial law code and the

cadastral survey are important for the history of the eighteenth-century Morea, providing tremendous details on its cultural geography. The archaeology serves to illustrate points for the history. Even with this approach to documents and artifacts, PRAP is a showcase for intensive surveying and integrating of information, but as Davis (1998) makes clear in the volume’s conclusion, the examination of the recent past and integration of multiple forms of data was a struggle.

The surveys of regions are opening up the study of the recent past. In the foothills of the Troodos Mountains, the Sydney Cyprus Survey Project (SCSP) during 1992–1997 systematically collected artifacts from all time periods, examined standing buildings and other features of the landscape, and recorded oral histories from contemporary residents of the survey area (Given and Knapp, 2003). One of the most remarkable consequences of the research design that included the post-medieval periods was the extent of material activity recognized by the project. The success of this volume radiates from Michael Given’s (2000) commitment to a systematic, intensive, multidisciplinary approach to the post-Classic landscapes of Cyprus.

Most importantly, these survey projects never ignore that the inhabitants in the post-medieval period had material prosperity (unlike the Orientalist assumptions of decay and decline) or that they lived under Byzantine, Lusignan, Venetian, Ottoman, and British imperial rule. In exposing the activities of the survey area, Given and Knapp (2003) demonstrates the dynamics of life under empire; but the productivity and activities came under imperial rule, with its domination as well as its possibilities.

A recent contribution, edited by Siriol Davies and Jack Davis (2007) and titled *Between Venice and Istanbul*, continues a consideration of life under distant imperial control. The contributions delve into the Ottoman archives and the archaeological record, though not always together, to explore significant historical and social issues for Greece and Cyprus. The explorations of the documentary record changes in names and movements of populations bring out the complexity of regional settlement patterns. The meaning of Kütahya ceramics comes from a thorough review of scholarship and descriptions of the type. There is an important

critique of “empty landscapes”; archaeological surveys have located material evidence in regions that were considered nearly devoid of inhabitants. Along with those impressive insights into objects and settlements, the volume provides a methodology for texts, images, and archaeology that sheds light on Ottoman Greece and Cyprus.

New Questions and Innovative Approaches

For historical archaeology to be relevant in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, studies need to integrate the documentary record and the material record in innovative ways. If the archaeology of the recent past is a handmaiden to history, there is little justification for the expense of excavations, analysis, and curation. The continuing challenge for historical archaeologists is to work with the research programs of other archaeologists and to match the concerns from the periods of antiquity with the data for the modern period. For instance, McQuitty (2001:561), in a chapter for *The Archaeology of Jordan*, notes that archaeological evidence for settlements, society, and economy—the themes of the volume—are “inconclusive and invisible” for the Ottoman period. McQuitty (2001) notes that several models are available to explore the Late Islamic period in Jordan. Notable among them are Jum’a Mahmoud H. Kareem’s (2000) settlement-pattern analysis, Robin Brown’s (1992) center–periphery model, and Øystein LaBianca’s (2000) food systems model. Yet the study of Hajj forts, ceramic sherds, clay tobacco pipes, railroad stations, and the few buildings from the nineteenth century to the end of Ottoman rule does not match the concerns of the archaeology for the Bronze Age through Classical period in Jordan well. The challenges are not so much the nature of the rural population of Jordan during the Ottoman period as the questions being asked of the archaeological record, the documentary record, and their intersection. The archaeological record of the recent past requires new questions as well as innovative approaches.

Yet, as mentioned earlier, one of the major challenges for the archaeology of the Ottoman period

remains identifying and organizing ceramics and other artifacts. Ziadeh (1991) provides typologies for Tel Ti’innik; for Greece, Joanita Vroom (2003) organized an even larger assemblage collected by field survey. With some 12,000 post-Roman sherds from Boeotia in central Greece, Vroom explored the problems of chronology and terminology for the recent past and constructed a chronological typology. Similar to the concerns in Israel, Vroom needed to collect information on production, distribution, and consumption, as well as to critically appraise previous considerations of ceramic types. Her efforts produced a masterful work. The publication is a foundation for archaeological studies of the modern periods in Greece and as a model for Ottoman archaeology across the Middle East. Yet, Vroom (2003) goes further in her study of ceramics. She explores, in the different types, shifts in foodways. For her study area, the political changes go from the Byzantine Empire to the Frankish period; the Ottoman Empire ruled from the late fifteenth century to nineteenth-century Greek War of Independence. Vroom (2003) argues for communal meals during the Byzantine based on ceramic evidence, texts, and paintings, a shift to individualism with western European Catholic control of the region, but, when the Ottoman Empire conquered Greece, there were again bowls for sharing food. For Vroom (2003), the modern period comes after World War II; the early modern period, a period of western influence as seen materially, occurs around the nineteenth century. Vroom (2003) and Carroll (1999) move beyond a simple critique of Orientalist assumptions regarding Ottoman history; instead of replacing the Orientalist decay-and-decline thesis with its opposite, their different studies expose a more complicated history with expansions and contractions, decline and progress. The material and social transformations of the Ottoman period require studies of diversity and variation.

That continuing search for variation is a key contribution of an archaeology of the Ottoman Empire. The successor states of the empire are nation-states that have mobilized the past to secure their present. Archaeology is illustrating that different social organizations existed in the recent past and that nationalist representations of antiquity and history can be misleading. In an example of such a critique, Charlotte Schriwer (2002:216) examined architecture

in Lebanon, Jordan, and Cyprus and concluded that “The Ottoman period buildings looked at in this study may have architectural elements and details which are labeled by many as being either Turkish, Greek, Cypriot, Lebanese, or Arab, but these identities appear, at least without more detailed evidence, to bear a weak ethnic relationship with the people who once lived there.” Marking material culture—objects, architecture, or landscapes—as ethnic is a twentieth-century phenomenon, one that has divided the peoples of the region. Historical archaeology offers a different view of the social transformations that came with political changes and provides avenues to explore one of the contested issues of the region: the nature of modernity.

Modernity and modernization are the key issues of historical archaeology. There are productive debates that situate modernity as either imposed by western influence or created by the series of nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms known as the *Tanzimat*. Just as variation comes forward from integrating texts and artifacts, so too can the meaning of material culture and the built landscape. As discussed above, an Ottoman admiral’s tower in the Troad provides insights into architecture as a symbol of authority; Lynda Carroll is offering insights into larger issues involved in the built landscape (Fig. 3). She (Carroll et al., 2006) has been

researching the development and social meanings of large-scale farmsteads that resulted from changes in the Ottoman Land Code. The Land Code, part of nineteenth-century reforms of the empire, was an ironic failure. Such farmsteads are found across the region, for instance, in Israel on the Mount Carmel range. Hirschfeld (2000) documents Beit Khouri, a farmstead operated by a member of Haifa’s elite. The central government meant the Land Code to protect peasants, but urban elite took ownership of large tracts of land and employed the peasants as agricultural workers. Beit Khouri is particularly interesting because it became one of the first Rothschild-funded Zionist settlements. A series of studies in the Balqa region of Jordan are exposing the implications of the transformation in land regulations (e.g., Walker, 2005). Unlocking the complex nature of landownership is a key to understanding the economic and social transformations in the region over the last few centuries.

While locating the local roots of modernity is a goal for scholars confronting the legacy of Orientalism, the external pressures and processes that transformed the Middle East need to be included in analyses. For instance, the opening to the west is a key phase in the scholarship of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. The steady stream of visitors to the region from western Europe and



Fig. 3 An Ottoman-period farmstead in Hesban, Jordan, illustrates changes in the landscape that came about as mid-nineteenth-century land reforms facilitated the establishment

of large farmsteads in rural areas of the empire (courtesy Lynda Carroll)

North America increased greatly with new transportation channels. Writings, paintings, and photographs recorded the region and its people, and they are sources for studying the Middle East. However, they are also components that constructed the modern Middle East. Baram (2007) employs the work of David Roberts, the famous artist who drew Egypt and the Holy Land in the 1830s, to illustrate how the western imagination constructed landscapes whose legacies continue to the present. The intersections of modernity, Ottoman reforms, travelers, and communities in the Middle East can, and should, employ a wide range of materials. Such landscape studies could contribute to understanding the formation of the modern Mediterranean world, a project fitting Braudel's (1973) vision for understanding change over time.

The challenge becomes clear in anthropological studies of material culture. An ethnographic study of pottery by Ioannis Ionas (2000) documents ceramic production from the end of the Ottoman period on Cyprus at 1878, when the British gained control over the island. The examination of Cypriot ceramics is thorough, documenting variation in styles, clays, potters' implements, forming and finishing methods, firing, organization of production, terminology, and the uses of pottery. Ionas links ceramics to ordinary and extraordinary functions, providing inventories of types and an engendered understanding of the objects. Ionas focuses on a disappearing craft, noting the need to fill the gap between the studied ancient forms and the products of potters in the recent past. *Traditional Pottery and Potters in Cyprus*, a useful volume that archaeologists can use as a field guide, celebrates a heritage acknowledged for its richness. Similar concerns guide the study of ceramics for Ottoman Palestine (see Salem 1999). Even more clearly in regard to memories and heritage, Nairouz's (2001) survey around Ramallah, in the West Bank, which focused on small stone dwellings called *qusur* built in the nineteenth century, explores landscape features whose meanings are fading from personal recollections. She employed documentary, ethnographic, and archaeological research to reveal the past cultural landscape of Ottoman Palestine. By identifying the *qusur* as agricultural installations, understandings of social and economic change in the region over the last several centuries are coming forward. Such archaeological

studies document remnants of previous lifeways, allowing the present generation to remember its past.

These examples illustrate that historical archaeology is developing in ways that will situate material culture, documentary evidence, landscape studies, and archaeological analyses in local context. But the result is not local studies; implicit in much of the research is the global interconnections evidenced by the presence of clay tobacco pipes, Chinese porcelains, British ceramics, and western travelers, as well as Ottoman-produced and Ottoman-influenced goods and emigrants found around the modern world. The study of shipwrecks provides the clearest evidence of such connections.

Underwater Archaeology

The majority of archaeological research in the Middle East, as elsewhere, is terrestrial. Terrestrial sites for the Ottoman period are complex and multifaceted, and rarely have sharp demarcations from the earlier and later periods. Underwater archaeology offers a view on particular moments in time. In 1968, Raban (1971) uncovered a shipwreck off the southern tip of Sinai. The main cargo of this Ottoman ship was pottery vessels; nearly a thousand handleless flasks—an unidentified type among other ceramics—came from the wreck. More recently, and similarly from the northern Red Sea, Cheryl Ward (2000) has excavated a mid-eighteenth-century shipwreck. The ship sailed on the Red Sea, an Ottoman-controlled body of water. The impressive range of artifacts—more than 3,000 objects were recovered—includes Chinese porcelains and earthenware water vessels (Fig. 4). Cargo included coconuts, spices, and coffee. The Sadana Island shipwreck was just one of the eighteenth-century ships in the Red Sea that were part of the important sea routes north of Jiddah for elite-focused goods. Beyond the trade networks, Ward (2000) identified clay tobacco pipes and lamps used as personal items, the physical evidence of life aboard a trading vessel during the Ottoman period. The crew was Muslim and the ship likely a locally owned and operated vessel, carrying goods within the empire that were destined for the elite market. Ward's studies are conveying the complex movement of people and things during the Ottoman period.

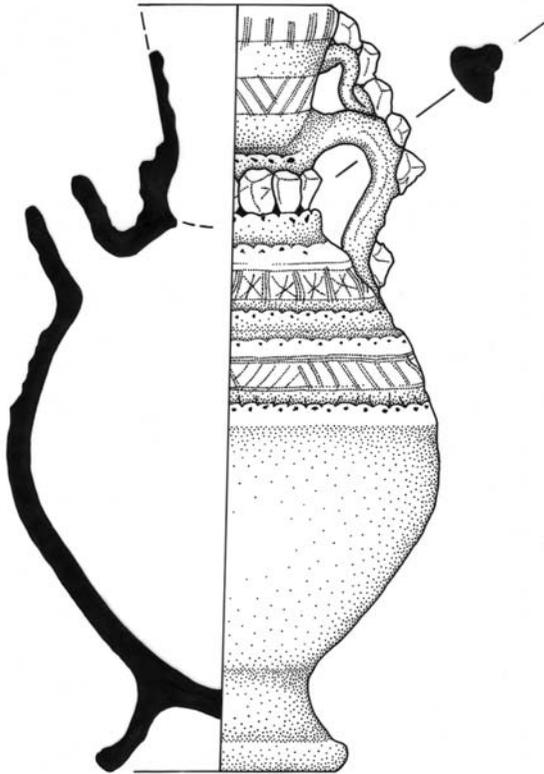


Fig. 4 A ceramic spouted jar recovered from the mid-eighteenth-century Sadana Island shipwreck. The jar is one of nearly 900 ceramic containers shipped as cargo on the Ottoman-period vessel (drawing by L. Piercy, courtesy Cheryl Ward and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology)

Underwater archaeology has also recovered evidence of western military intrusions. After Napoleon's defeat at Akko in 1799, his French troops marched to Tantara, a small harbor town south of Haifa. There, Napoleon waited for Admiral Perrée to help evacuate the French troops. The ships never arrived. Napoleon, realizing he would have to march back to Egypt, ordered the cannons buried in the sand or thrust into the sea. The weapons lay forgotten until the 1970s, when Shelley Wachsmann and Kurt Raveh (1984) recovered French muskets, cannonballs, and other equipment from the sea off Tantara as part of excavations at the ancient site of Tel Dor. On land, only flintlocks and a saber were located. The underwater search was more successful: a bronze mortar, made in Peru, with the Spanish monarch's mark and an Ottoman cannon. The description of both canons contributes to the history of military equipment; the tale of

the Peruvian copper being made into a Spanish cannon and ultimately used by the French against the Ottoman Empire reads like a good mystery. While Wachsmann and Raveh (1984) situated the finds as a footnote to history at Tel Dor, the finds illustrate global connections and flows for the historical archaeologist. Underwater archaeologists have located even more of Napoleon's endeavor. The Battle of the Nile, or, more accurately, the Battle of Aboukir, was fought in August 1798. It pitted Britain's Sir Horatio Nelson against a French fleet led by Admiral François Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers. Napoleon's dreams ended at Akko and at the Battle of Aboukir. The details of the battle, the lives of the sailors, and the complexity of the recovered material culture convey the potential of the archaeology of the recent past for the Middle East, even for well-documented events.

Conclusion: The Future of Ottoman Archaeology

Historical archaeology in the Middle East is still in its emerging stage. Recent reviews (e.g., Schick, 1997–1998; Milwright, 2000; Baram, 2002) have gone beyond lamenting the lack of archaeology to expose the developments of ceramic typologies, published excavation reports, and synthetic diachronic landscape studies. Today, there are useful research tools for differentiating layers and sites and some important case studies to guide future research designs. Most prominent among those tools is Joanita Vroom's (2005) field guide, *Byzantine to Modern Pottery of the Aegean*. As a reference guide, field archaeologists now have a resource to which they can turn. The 16 diagnostic types for the Venetian to Ottoman periods and the 9 diagnostic types for the early modern era in Boeotia allow productive examination of published site reports. Archaeologists can take this framework and evaluate previous studies for differentiating the recent layers; fewer excuses are possible for ignoring the recent past because of this publication. Vroom's other work (e.g., 2003) illustrates how the typologies open research avenues for archaeological exploration of social change, regional variation, and the development of modernity.

The developments are moving in positive trajectories. It is becoming more common for scholars to incorporate the recent past in surveys of archaeologically based history. For instance, in a history of the battles of Jerusalem, the archaeologist Eric Cline (2004) integrates the Ottoman period for an important perspective on the major military events for that contested city. Such research is opening up questions and debates for historical archaeology. Furthermore, historical archaeologists can turn to a corpus of new studies on architecture, such as Andrew Petersen's (2001) *A Gazetteer of Buildings in Muslim Palestine*, detailed historical studies of cities, and geographic studies to open up possibilities for research questions that fall into historical archaeology's focus on the materiality of modernity. The larger goals of historical archaeology can be addressed with these materials and illustrate the transition to the present for the modern Middle East. Nevertheless, as this chapter started and Petersen (2005) emphasizes for Islamic archaeology in general, the archaeological study of the modern era in global perspective is political. Recovery, preservation, and presentation for the Ottoman period bring out social groupings that are now vanished (such as the Jewish heritage of Salonica, Greece), now in the minority (the Muslim heritage for southeastern Europe), or organized as oppositions rather than the coexistence or cosmopolitanism that characterized some of the recent past (in such places as Cyprus, Lebanon, and Israel).

The hidden histories of the Middle East, the types of histories that constitute historical archaeology's contributions to the study of the past, bring out a more socially complex Middle East than is

extant in the early twenty-first century. The multicultural, multireligious communities of the Ottoman Empire are challenging to recall in the present, but a history from below for the recent past provides a contrast to the present nationalist homogeneity across the countries of the region and can help integrate the monuments and remnants of the Ottoman Empire found across the region's landscapes (Fig. 5). The possibility of using the recent past to locate shared histories drives some researchers, but the majority of the publications focus on documenting the artifacts recovered on the way to the goals for Classical and Biblical archaeologies. While the initial impetus for historical archaeology was political, in the recognition that the recent past could expose concerns and understandings for the deep social divisions of the region, now archaeologists across the region generally agree that the recent periods are as intrinsically interesting as are those of the distant past. There is much potential for scholars to integrate the growing materials into meaningful analyses and interpretations of the Middle Eastern past and situate the artifacts, assemblages, and cultural landscapes of the Ottoman period into a global context.

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Fig. 5 The imprint of the Ottoman Empire continues to dominate some Middle Eastern and eastern Mediterranean landscapes. The Süleymaniye Mosque hovers over Istanbul (courtesy Uzi Baram)



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