



The historical geography of 1 Kings 9:11–14

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ABSTRACT

1 Kings 9:11–14 relates Solomon’s sale of the land of Cabul to Hiram, king of Tyre. Commentaries and studies on this pericope have dealt with its linguistic and historical aspects without reaching consensus on where this land was, what the term ‘Cabul’ actually means, or even whether these verses preserve an actual historic event from the 10th century BCE. This article addresses these issues through a more systematic presentation of the archaeological remains and geographic realities in the Galilee, and in so doing, offers a more contextually derived understanding of the events recorded in 1 Kgs 9:11–14 than has heretofore been offered.

KEYWORDS

1 Kings 9; Solomon; Iron Age IIA; historical geography; archaeology; Hiram; Israelite United Monarchy; Land of Cabul

Introduction

Solomon has been ‘vanishing’ from critical scholarship now for quite some time (Knoppers 1997a, 1997b; Moore and Kelle 2011, 244–257). In fact, questions are raised concerning not only the extent and nature of Solomon’s kingdom, but even whether he was in fact a historical personage. At present the general tenor when dealing with Solomon, and the Israelite United Monarchy is one of reserve. Such reserve is rightly warranted as different scholars use the same archaeological and textual materials to create quite disparate historical reconstructions of this monarchy and the reigns of Israel’s early kings, a fact highlighted already by Knoppers (1997a). It would seem that any number of studies could proceed to the point that progress in understanding a historical or biblical United Monarchy under Solomon is at an impasse. Yet, there is one avenue of assessment that has not been fully exploited and which offers the potential for articulating historical events/relations as differentiated from the later historiographical portrayal of the self-same events by biblical authors: historical geography. In this article the Cabul transaction recorded in 1 Kgs 9:11–14 is viewed in light of the geography and geology of Galilee and the archaeology of the Iron Age IIA (10th–9th centuries BCE)—the region and time period in which the story is set according to the biblical text—in an effort to evaluate the historicity of this transaction. As part of this discussion I will explore Hiram’s displeasure with the ‘Land of Cabul’ sold to him by Solomon, what the term ‘Cabul’ means, and where this ostensible land may have been located.

The text of 1 Kgs 9:11–14

Scholars debate whether 1 Kgs 9:11–14 is based on an actual source from the reign of Solomon preserving historical details, or is more ideology and fiction reflecting much later events or much later editorial/authorial concerns. Finkelstein (2013, 107) says the pericope ‘should probably be interpreted as an etiological story that explains why, in late monarchic times, areas in western Galilee were held by the kingdom of Tyre’. Such a claim, however, lacks supporting archaeological evidence or textual attestation. Lipinski (2010, 263) says the written episode may go back to the eighth century but clearly does not reflect a historical setting in the tenth century; if anything Solomon is portrayed as giving land to Hiram that Hiram already controlled (Lipinski 1991; cf. Alt 1953, 144 and Lehmann 2008, 42). While the latter is possibly the case (see below), the claim that 1 Kgs 9:11–14 does not reflect a tenth century historical setting is based on the acceptance of Finkelstein’s Low Chronology, a chronology that is highly debated (see below).

Knauf’s claim that the pericope is postexilic (1991, 168–169) is problematic in light of Geoghegan’s work on the phrase ‘until this day’ (2003), which would indicate the story is clearly pre-exilic. Lehmann (2001, 92) says the form of the received text is from later times but some aspects of the transaction may be historical. Later, Lehmann (2008, 41), as well as Noll (2001, 179) and Gal (1990, 97) see elements of the story plausibly derived from tenth century sources; for Lemaire, these sources are likely the royal annals (1991, 149), and for Na’aman (1997, 68) the source is the ‘book of the acts of Solomon’ mentioned in 1 Kgs 11:41.

As is clear, neither the level of historicity nor the date of composition of 1 Kgs 9:11–14 has reached consensus. Yet, there are two features found in verse 12 that are understood to indicate a lack of historicity and a late composition and/or redaction of the text. The first is the aetiology for the name ‘Cabul’, and the second is the use of the phrase ‘until this day’ (עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה) for rhetorical purposes.

An aetiology is a literary device ‘which asserts that a perplexing circumstance leads to the creation of a story designed to explain the enigma’ (Roi 2013, 286). Behind the circumstance is a historical reality. It is the relationship between that reality and the narrative that has been the focus of much scholarship, resulting in two main views:

- (a) the author utilizes the account in order to explain an objective phenomenon existing in historical reality (the aetiological principle); (b) historical reality serves the rhetorico-didactic purposes of the author/editor in addressing his audience (the communication principle) ... Thus while the aetiological principle asserts that any obscure historical phenomenon could give rise to a narrative devised to explain that phenomenon, according to the communication principle, any rhetorico-didactic goal could lead the writer to refer to an objective phenomenon in the narrative. (Roi 2013, 287)

In neither instance is there necessarily an implied chronological relationship between when the objective phenomenon was observed and when it was written about. Nor is there any implied qualification about the historicity of events connected to the phenomenon. In the case of 1 Kgs 9:11–14, the fact that there is an aetiology in verses 12–13 provides no indication about when the aetiology was created or when the text as we have it was written. The aetiology merely provides an explanation for a geographical term.

The phrase ‘until this day’ has been variously interpreted as deriving from multiple redactors from various time periods (Childs 1963) or, more compellingly, from a single

Deuteronomistic Historian in the days of Josiah (Geoghegan 2003). In all instances it is understood as a redactional element added subsequent to the surrounding text and belying the redactors' historical context(s) and interest(s). This phrase in and of itself does not indicate a late source/composition, but instead indicates a pre-existing source that has a specific significance for a later audience/author/redactor (cf. Brin 2001, 132).

If Geoghegan is correct that this phrase is Deuteronomistic, then it implies that 'Cabul' as a region was known as such before the seventh century BCE. Moreover, the reason 'Cabul' is mentioned is tied to concerns of the Deuteronomistic Historian with the Levites, of whom Gershonite Levites were said to inhabit the region of Cabul in the days of Solomon (Halpern 1974, citing Josh 21: and 1 Chr 6). Brin (2001, 137), who is less explicit with our specific case, merely notes that the main concern in passages with the formula 'until this day' is, 'to connect the calling of the name of an unknown place to a certain narrative tradition, or to connect a well-known narrative tradition to an unimportant place name'.

There is thus no reason to assume a late date for the composition of 1 Kgs 9:11–14, even if there are late redactional elements incorporated into the passage. On the contrary, the late redactional elements presuppose an earlier version of the text. The question is, how early is the text? Similarly, the rhetorical and aetiological elements of the narrative do not presume a lack of historicity. The question is, what is the degree of historicity in the text? Only this second question is of importance for this paper. It is through a combination of geographical considerations and the settlement pattern attested in the Galilee in the Iron Age IIA that this question will be broached.

The geography and geology of Galilee

The Galilee is a geologically faulted and diverse region that is still less clearly understood archaeologically and historically than other regions of the southern Levant. As such, it has been particularly challenging to determine where ancient political or cultural borders transected the Galilee¹ for a few specific reasons: (1) true natural borders such as the Litani River Basin and possibly the Rosh HaNiqla Ridge have seldom served as actual borders in antiquity; (2) pots rarely equal people, something that also makes establishing the cultural, political, or 'ethnic' affiliation of a site's inhabitants difficult; (3) limited exploration of modern southern Lebanon. Thus, efforts to differentiate territory controlled by Israel versus the land of Tyre or later on, between Jewish Galilee and Greco-Roman Tyre have not resulted in a consensus.

Yet, with the increased number of excavated and surveyed sites in Israeli Galilee, older studies that sought to delineate the boundaries of Israel and Tyre based largely upon the biblical materials and/or later classical sources (e.g., Josephus) can now be reassessed (e.g., Aharoni 1957, 1979; Kallai 1986; Na'aman 1986; Katzenstein 1997). And despite the fact that the ancient border between the territory of Israel and that of Tyre is located somewhere within this relatively poorly understood region, a case will be made that when geographical and geological realities are considered along with the available archaeological remains, it is possible to state that not only was there a border, but also that this border can be delineated in the early Iron Age IIA. This is significant for establishing where the 'land of Cabul' was and why Hiram was so displeased with it, topics that will be taken up below.

In attempting to determine the border in Galilee between Solomon's purported Israel and Hiram's Tyre there are some key concepts that must be considered. First: where not to go. Both Upper and Lower Galilee are some of the most geologically faulted regions in all of Israel. This heavy faulting has created deep and rugged drainage systems in Upper Galilee and fragmented ridges separated by wide valleys in Lower Galilee. The topography limits the possible routes through the area; there are only so many ways to cross the Galilee, and these are restricted largely to east–west traffic. There are no international north–south routes that traverse the entirety of the Galilee, though there is one local route.

Figure 1 shows the main drainage systems that hinder movement through Upper Galilee along with the wide valleys in Lower Galilee. The Nahal Kesiv cuts off southwestern Upper Galilee and is highly eroded. Though this drainage system is a formidable obstacle it was only rarely used as a geographical border. The Nahal Ammud cuts a very deep canyon through south-eastern Upper Galilee. This canyon forced traffic to descend from the area of the Arbel Cliffs down to the Gennesaret Plain before climbing back out of that depression to continue northward. Only in modern times was a road built that traverses this gorge and obviates the need to enter this Galilean depression in order to travel north–south.

The Nahal Dishon is also a very deep and steeply cut drainage system. Routes went north or south of it, not across it. To the north, the Wadi Doubbe is the least eroded of the drainage systems but is still itself a considerable obstacle to overcome. Lastly, both



Figure 1. Map of the key geographical regions/features in the Galilee (map used with the permission of Biblical Backgrounds, Inc.).

the Wadis Yanuh and Aazziyeh further fragment Upper Galilee and hinder attempts to traverse the region. In addition to these major drainage systems there are numerous minor wadis and many hills and steep ascents that dictate where one can actually travel (see Karmon 1971, 177–198).

Lower Galilee, while more open than Upper Galilee, also has specific areas into which traders and travelers did not go. The northern valleys of Lower Galilee—the Beth HaKerem and Sakhnin Valleys—were not east–west thoroughfares because the Amud Canyon forms a natural barrier to their east. To the south, portions of both the Beth Netofa and Jezreel Valleys flood and become swampy in the wintertime (the former remains waterlogged throughout much of the year), causing traffic to follow their southern extremes in an effort to avoid their un-traversable parts. Even once these two valleys were crossed, however, travelers had to climb over or divert around the Allonim Hills in western Lower Galilee before descending into the swampy and sandy plain around Acco (Karmon 1971, 196).

In addition to the strictures the heavy faulting of Galilee placed on travel through the region, the underlying stone and soil types of which Galilee is comprised also impacted everything from the potential lifestyle of Galilean inhabitants, to settlement patterns, to political aspirations over the region.

Upper Galilee is composed largely of Cenomanian and Eocene limestones, the former of which weathers to produce fertile *terra rosa* soil. In the area just to the east of Tyre and throughout much of western Galilee as a whole, however, there are relatively large areas of Senonian limestone exposed. This softer, chalky limestone produces a less fertile soil than does Cenomanian and Eocene limestone. In fact, in addition to this clear geological difference, Finkelstein (1981, 86) identifies the region east of Tyre (the ‘Tyre syncline’) as the ‘Shephelah of Israel’ mentioned in Josh 11:1–3, 16. This region is on average 300 m lower in elevation than the mountains of Upper Galilee to the east, which are delineated by a sharp scarp that runs roughly southwest to northeast. This scarp, according to Finkelstein (1981, 87–92), has delineated the territory of Tyre since at least the Iron Age I.

In Lower Galilee, excessive faulting has resulted in the exposure of numerous rock types. The Allonim Hills in the southwestern part of Lower Galilee are Eocene giving way to Senonian as one moves from south to north. Central Lower Galilee is largely Cenomanian limestone with some Senonian exposed, while eastern Lower Galilee is largely basaltic stone and soil. The coastal plain (or Akko Plain) is a mixture of alluvium and sand with numerous broad swampy areas due to kurkar ridges on the western edge of the plain that block the flow of the Na’aman River (Orni and Efrat 1971, 50–51; Baly 1974, 124–125). These swampy/marshy areas appear more in the southern Akko Plain, southeast and east of Akko (Tell el-Fukhar) in the flattest areas of the alluvial plain (Lehmann 2001, 69–70). Of significance is the fact that similar broad swampy areas lined the Tyrian coast between PaleoTyre and Rachidieyeh (Marriner de Beaulieu, and Morhange 2004).

Having determined where not to go, the second consideration is where *to* go and how to get there (see Figure 2). The large majority of traffic crossing Galilee was heading to or away from Tyre. This key coastal city had only a small hinterland before the Lebanon Mountains were reached in the east (i.e., the ‘Tyre syncline’ mentioned above). Ancient travelers would avoid obstacles as often as possible, however sometimes the only path

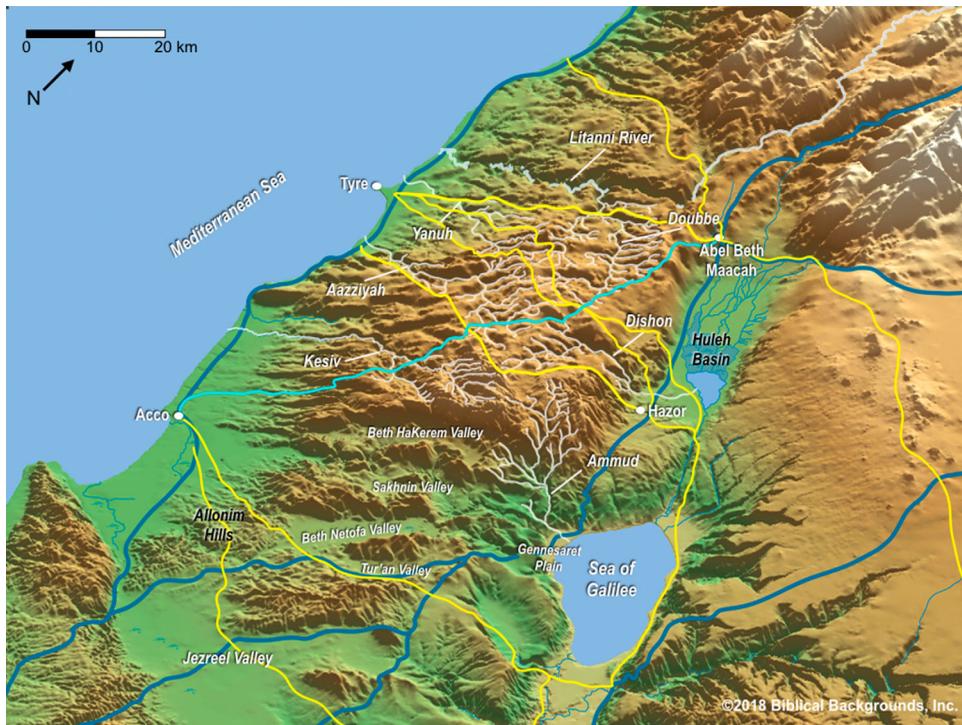


Figure 2. Map of Galilee showing the main trade routes: international north-south routes are dark and east-west routes are light. The local north-south route through the Galilee is highlighted from Abel Beth Maacah to Acco (map used with the permission of Biblical Backgrounds, Inc.).

was the difficult path. The main east–west routes to and from Tyre were via Hazor and Abel-beth-maacah. From the former, one route ascended to the plateau on which Maroun er-Ras sits, and then followed the ridge between the Aaziyeh and Doubbe and then Aaziyeh and Yanuh drainage systems, before descending to Tyre. A second parallel route that also ran through Maroun er-Ras passed slightly to the north, proceeding past Tel Kedesh and then Safad el-Battikh (biblical Beth Anath?) before passing down a ridge amidst the Yanuh system. A third route from Hazor ran along the southern side of the Dishon Canyon then southwest across the Dalton Plateau before heading northwest past Har Adir and Tel Sha’ar and down to the coast.

Other key routes passed through Abel-beth-maacah, including the often mis-identified *Via Maris*, which ran from Damascus to Tyre (Rainey 1981). Additionally, it is from Abel-beth-maacah that the only substantial north–south route cuts across Galilee on its way to Acco. Whether this route was highly utilized in the Iron IIA, however, is not known, but based on the scant archaeological remains from Acco at this time it probably was not as important as any of the routes to Tyre (Dothan 1993, 21). A coastal road did run from the region of Akko to Tyre over the Rosh HaNiqla ridge but as is clear from Papyrus Anastasi I (COS 3.2) it was quite a difficult road.

The third consideration for traversing Galilee is why to go where you are going. While the most important reason for crossing the Galilee was trade, it was not the only reason. Large portions of Upper Galilee, especially the plateau between Safad el-Battikh and

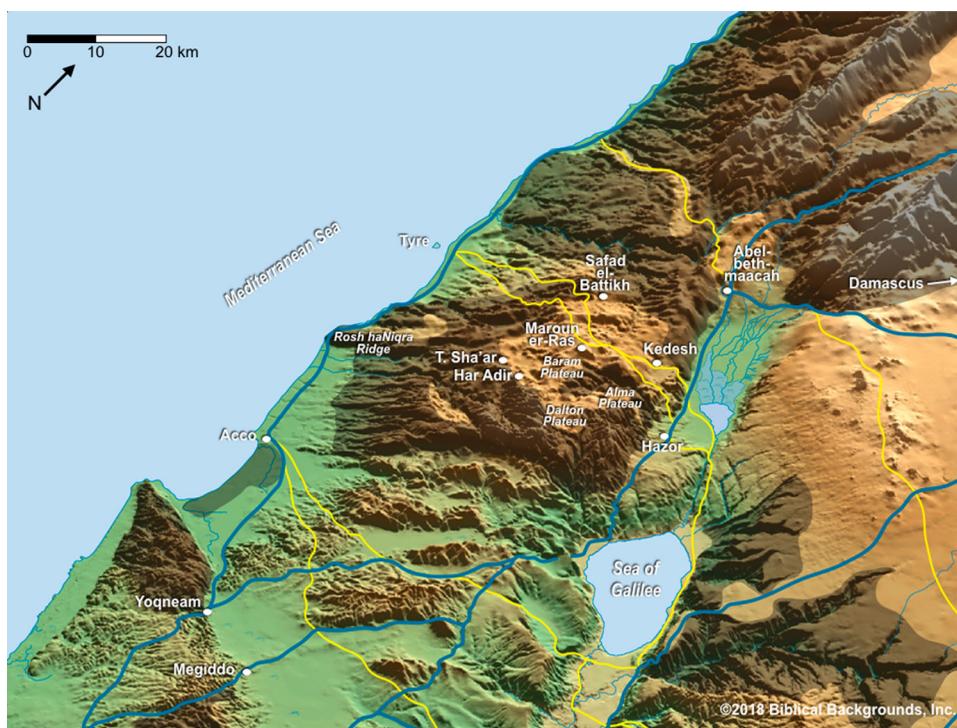


Figure 3. Map highlighting major obstacles to navigating the Galilee and surrounding regions (shaded areas), and the key agricultural areas in the Upper Galilee (map used with the permission of Biblical Backgrounds, Inc.).

Baram, could be cultivated. With the exception of the less fertile soil just to the east of Tyre, Galilee was quite fertile. Control of the fertile areas including the Maroun er-Ras area, the plateau on which Kedesh was located, and the Dalton and Alma Plateaus south of the Dishon was a high priority (see Figure 3). The Bible records that the Israelites battled near the waters of Merom (Josh 11), somewhere in the area of Maroun er-Ras though the exact location is unknown, but were apparently unable to hold onto the land (Josh 13:6; see Aharoni 1979, 236–39; cf. however Gal 1992a, 88–89). Aside from this account, there are no explicit references as to whom central Upper Galilee belonged or where a possible border might be drawn, either in the Bible or in the earlier Amarna texts, the latter of which mention dissention over the area between the cities of Tyre and Hazor. Still, based on later historical comparanda, Finkelstein (2016, 24) states,

... taking a long-term territorial history perspective, there can be no doubt that the Upper Galilee always belonged to territorial entities and administrative divisions to its south and southeast, while Tyre ruled only over the lower hilly areas to its east and southeast. This was so in the Ottoman, Mamluk and Crusader periods, as well as Roman-Byzantine times ... in short, Tyre never ruled in the Upper Galilee ...

We turn now to the archaeology of the area to see what light it can shed on the issue of who controlled which parts of the Galilee in the tenth century BCE.

The archaeology of Iron IIA Galilee

One possible way of determining a border in a land that is largely devoid of major natural borders is in the settlement pattern. The distribution of the archaeological sites in both Upper and Lower Galilee, the coastal plain around Acco, and the Huleh Basin shows an interesting shift from the Iron I to the Iron IIA, and then from the early Iron IIA (roughly second half of the tenth century) to the late Iron IIA (roughly ninth century). Almost all the Iron I (ca 1185–980 BCE) sites in these regions were unfortified, aside from the site of Har Adir. The nascent kingdoms of Tyre, Aram-Damascus, and Israel as attested to in the biblical texts and later non-biblical sources had not yet coalesced into entities capable of struggling over the region following Egypt's withdrawal at some point between roughly 1178 and 1130 BCE.

It is only in the Iron I/IIA transitional period that, according to the biblical texts, struggles among petty kingdoms in the region brought about a change in the landscape. Archaeologically speaking there is a rapid fortification of the countryside starting in the Iron IIA and a subsequent decrease in the total number of settlements in comparison to the Iron I.² The shift from small villages that are unfortified or built in circular patterns (i.e., H. 'Avot, Carmiel) where the outer walls of the houses are contiguous to sites surrounded by thicker casemate walls attests to changing concerns.³ While the more robust fortification of many sites in the Iron IIA is important in and of itself, this importance becomes even more paramount when we consider where these sites are located.

The distribution of fortified sites in Galilee provides an interpretive framework that is potentially more illustrative than those frameworks based on ceramic remains. This is because the ceramics of the Iron IIA cover a period from roughly 980–840/800 BCE according to the Modified Conventional Chronology put forward by Mazar (2005). And although greater refinement between early and late Iron IIA phases is starting to happen with new radiocarbon dates from key sites in the northern part of Israel (i.e. Hazor, Megiddo, Tel Rehov), none of these are technically in the Galilee. Moreover, the interpretation of these radiocarbon dates is debated (cf. articles by Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2003, 2006a, 2006b vs Mazar 2005; Mazar et al. 2005, 243; Bruins, Mazar, and van der Plicht 2007; and Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008).⁴ Radiocarbon dating has not resulted in a consensus view of the chronology of the Iron IIA, nor provided a definitive anchor for attaching specific strata to historical personages/events. Nevertheless, the raw data aligns more closely with the more traditional connection between strata and absolute dates; strata traditionally associated with the mid-tenth century (the time of Solomon) via relative dating, should still be ascribed to this period despite the idea of a Low Chronology.

As radiocarbon dating has not proved to be the hoped-for panacea for the chronology of the early Iron Age, reliance for dating key ceramic assemblages from Galilean sites is still largely done by comparison to assemblages from sites in nearby regions even though: (1) the sizes of assemblages from Galilean sites are quite limited in comparison to those of other regions in Israel (only smaller sites or sites that do not have the chronological sequence relevant for this paper have been excavated), and; (2) the Iron IIA ceramic assemblage is known to persist for roughly 150 years.

And aside from a few potential ceramic forms (i.e., pithoi and perhaps kraters) there are no clear markers of specific 'ethnicity' or, perhaps more accurately, 'political control' in the ceramic remains in Galilee.⁵ Thus, the geographic location of sites, when viewed through

the lens of strategic military concerns, provides the necessary clue for proffering a more refined chronology for when and why specific sites appeared across the Iron IIA.

Sites that move from unfortified or ephemeral fortifications in the Iron Age I to substantial fortifications in the early Iron IIA included Tell Abu Hawam IIIA, Yoqneam XIV, Megiddo VA–IVB, Horvat Rosh Zayit IIb, Tel Mador, Tel Harashim Ia, Hazor X, and potentially Tell Alil Hamma’arabi,⁶ and H. Gamum.⁷ These sites are at key geographical locations that either sit directly on a trade route or overlook a trade route between Galilee (Upper or Lower) and the Acco Plain/Coastal strip west of the mountains of Upper Galilee and/or Jezreel Valley to the south or the Huleh Basin to the east. All of the smaller, non-tell, sites have northward and westward-facing views and would be militarily strategic for someone to the east and/or south wishing to control and observe traffic coming from the north/northwest. Factoring in the geographical setting there is a very great probability that the line of newly fortified sites—in particular, Tell Abu Hawam, Yoqneam, Tel Alil Hamma’arabi, Tel Mador, H. Rosh Zayit, H. Gamum, and Tel Harashim—running from the southwestern tip of the Allonim Hills, through these hills to the northeast, into Upper Galilee, and along the E–W watershed (see Figure 4) marks the border between Israelite and Tyrian territory in the Iron Age IIA.⁸ The archaeological remains suggest a sudden and southern-oriented construction regime in this period. The question is to what point in the Iron IIA this network of sites should be dated? This is where the geopolitical situation must be considered.

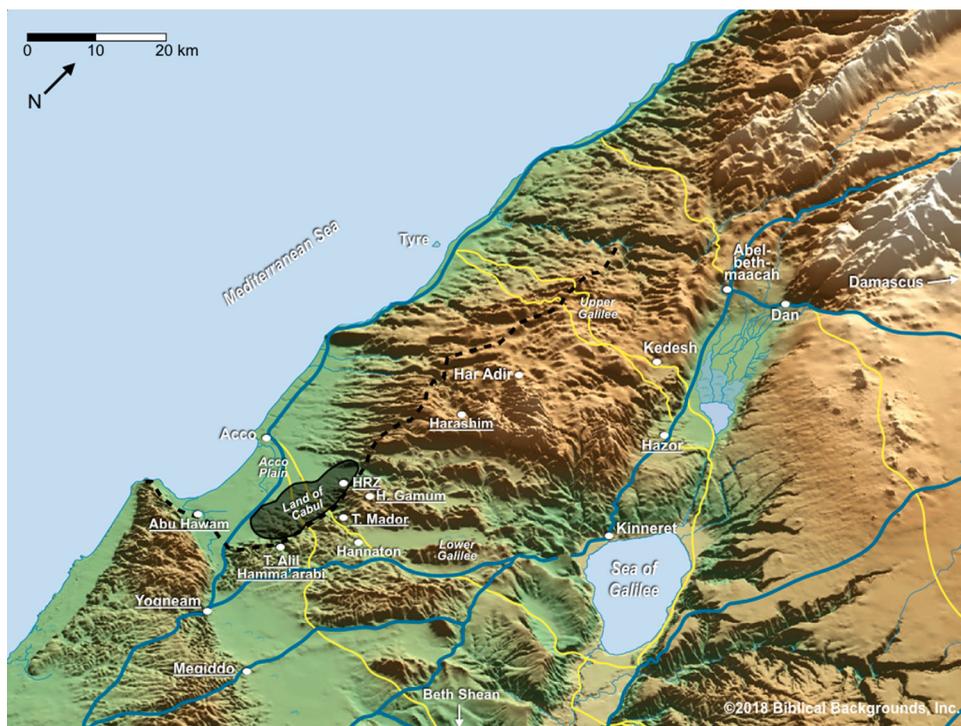


Figure 4. Sites newly fortified in the tenth century BCE are underlined. The dashed black line marks the proposed border between Tyre and Israel, and the Land of Cabul is shaded (map used with the permission of Biblical Backgrounds, Inc.).

For the geopolitical situation, reliance is upon the biblical description as that is the only written source that discusses this time period.⁹ While much of 1 Kgs 1–11 has undergone later redaction or was simply composed in the late Iron Age, there are a number of early historical kernels preserved. Few scholars would dispute the Bible's claims that Aram-Damascus rose in power at the end of the tenth or early ninth centuries BCE and came into conflict with the nascent northern Kingdom of Israel.¹⁰ With greater political cohesion came increasing military potential and the prospect of local conflict that led to a further and more intensive fortification of sites located between the competing powers (Keimer 2013, 415, 417). In particular, sites in the Huleh Basin—the region over which the conflict of the day would span—saw the construction of far more massive fortification systems in comparison to what existed in the mid-tenth century. Hazor, which was a small settlement that occupied the western half of the upper mound in the tenth century (Str. X-IX, early Iron IIA), doubled in size and was largely fortified with a solid city wall in the ninth century (Str. VIII, late Iron IIA). Massive fortifications were also erected at the site of Dan (Stratum III).

The archaeology shows that concern in the late Iron IIA (late tenth/early ninth centuries to ca. 840/800 BCE) shifted from the border with Tyre/Phoenicia—where no fortifications of comparable scale to those at Hazor VIII or Dan III are constructed at any point in the Iron IIA—to the border with Aram-Damascus. Damascus was the threat that led to the creation of massive fortifications in northern Israel, while relations between Israel and Tyre were at their all-time strongest due to royal intermarriage. The border with Phoenicia, therefore, did not need to be policed as much as the border with Damascus (Keimer 2013, 415, 417; cf. Ben-Ami and Wazana 2013).

If, as is proposed here, we can see a reflection of the political situation in the geographical distribution of archaeological sites and their constituent fortifications, then there is a framework by which we can potentially understand the Cabul transaction as recorded in 1 Kgs 9:11–14.

The term *Cabul*

The etymology of the term 'Cabul' is unclear and multiple proposals have been made.¹¹ Cabul first appears in Josh 19:27 where it appears as a place name, and again in 1 Kgs 9:13 where it refers to a region (the 'land of Cabul'). The presence of a modern town named Kabul in western Galilee, in conjunction with the archaeological record, led Gal to identify the nearby site of Horvat Rosh Zayit with the Cabul of Josh 19:27 (1990, 97). This identification is generally accepted, but less definitive is the identification of 'the land of Cabul'.

According to 1 Kgs 9:11, Solomon gave twenty 'cities' (עִיר) in 'the land of Galilee' to Hiram. After viewing them, Hiram was displeased and called them a 'land of *cabul*' (אֶרֶץ קָבּוּל) in v.13. Is it that Hiram is calling the territory Solomon gives him 'the boundary (land)', or the 'mountainous region', the 'good for nothing land', or the 'land of fetters' (see en. 11)? When we consider the geography and archaeology, I suggest that determining the actual etymology of *cabul* becomes secondary to the identification of the region itself; regardless of the actual root of Cabul, each of the translations offered suggests one specific region in the Galilee for this land: the Allonim Hills and western hills ascending into Lower Galilee.¹² This region was essentially the boundary between Tyre and Israel, it

was mountainous, it was covered with forests, it had poor soil, and it kept—in this instance—Hiram from easily accessing the better agricultural land of the valleys further to the east and south. It is understandable why Hiram's dissatisfaction is recorded, regardless of whether or not the biblical text preserves an historic response or not.

Interpretation—geopolitical considerations

Geography is the great leveler of man. The old adage of man versus nature rings true particularly in this instance. Tyre, as an island, had only the small stretch of land on the mainland as a hinterland. While it had access to and dominated sea trade, changing weather patterns over the course of the year and shipwrecks hindered any attempt at stable and foreseeable access to foodstuffs. If the kingdom was to experience any constancy it needed an agricultural hinterland.

The best and most abundant agricultural land was to be found in the fertile valleys of Lower Galilee, the Jezreel Valley, the Acco Plain, and the plateau around Maroun er-Ras. Hence, the early expansion of Tyre during the late eleventh and tenth centuries BCE did not direct the Tyrians westward into the Mediterranean, but rather into the nearby territories of western Galilee and the Acco Plain (Aubet 2001, 76–79; Lehmann 2001, 93). But, as the archaeology indicates, the fertile regions listed above are specifically those regions defended by a string of fortresses/fortified sites all of which appear to be aligned with a political entity to the south (i.e., Israel) based on their strategic geographic settings, and potentially their close material culture ties to sites further to the south. And so while the hinterland of Akko may have been transformed by Tyre in the beginning of the Iron Age II as Lehmann and Peilstöcker (2012; see also Lehmann 2001, 93–94) suggest, the archaeology of the Galilee on the whole indicates that the sites in the hills and mountains shared more in common with 'Israelite' sites to the south and east.¹³

Despite peaceful relations between Tyre and the so-called United Monarchy of Israel—according to the biblical texts—the archaeology shows a certain pragmatism in the type of settlements constructed and their location, particularly on the part of the Israelites. The distribution of the fortified sites in the Iron IIA appears to reflect a geopolitical situation as portrayed in the biblical texts in which Israel is the main power contending with Tyre. This is the time when the early Israelite monarchy is still attempting to consolidate its territory and it reflects the fragmentation in power in the region. In the tenth and possibly early part of the ninth century in the Galilee, a line of fortresses separated Tyrian and Israelite territory.¹⁴ Later, from the mid-ninth century through the end of the northern Kingdom of Israel these fortresses disappear; people move to cities and massive fortifications appear along the border with Aram and/or along the routes between Samaria and Damascus.¹⁵ The fortresses in Upper Galilee cease to exist but the sites in the Huleh expand and are more strongly fortified. Hazor VIII is double the size of the settlement in Stratum IX; Dan III also is massively fortified. This is the time when Aram-Damascus is gaining in power and also the time in which ties between the northern Kingdom of Israel and Tyre/Phoenicia are their strongest according to the biblical text. The border with Phoenicia, therefore, does not need to be policed as much as the border with Damascus.

It is useful to consider the writings of Aeneas Tacticus at this point. He states that if a land is difficult to invade, then all of the routes into the land should be protected, but if a land is easy to invade, then strategic positions should be occupied to hinder an enemy's

invasion (*Siege* 16.16–17). The geography of the Galilee certainly made invasion from the northwest challenging. If we allow for a United Monarchy, under a historic Solomon, to control this region—and there is no evidence that precludes such a reality (see Keimer [forthcoming](#))—then Solomon recognized that despite cordial relations with Hiram, it was prudent to secure his northern border, particularly in light of the Tyrian necessity for expansion into agriculturally productive lands. If Hiram were to gain access to greater agriculturally productive land, then Solomon, who provided Hiram with foodstuffs (1 Kgs 5:25), would lose his bargaining/trading chip, so to speak. Solomon took steps to exert Israelite control and prevent Tyrian expansion into such lands in the Galilee by erecting fortresses along the routes connecting Tyrian and Israelite territories (cf. Ben-Ami 2009).

Such economic machinations are clear also in the distribution of the so-called tripartite buildings, which, according to Blakely (2002, 50) not only ‘define the limits of a single entity, a united Israel and Judah’, but also attest that ‘the primary goal of David and later Solomon was to capture and exploit trade’, something that is advanced also by Halpern (2001), Kochavi (1998a, 1998b), and Blakely and Horton (2001). The control of agricultural land, and its subsequent produce, was *more important* than having great sums of ‘prestige’ items; the latter raised the profile of the king and/or government, the former kept the constituency alive so the king could use them to expand or maintain his territory.¹⁶

Solomon’s sale or gifting of the ‘land of Cabul’ for 120 talents of gold is a case of brilliant business, or perhaps wisdom.¹⁷ If our proposal to identify the ‘land of Cabul’ with the Allonim Hills and western slopes of Lower Galilee, and our interpretation of the settlement pattern seen in the archaeology from the early Iron IIA (tenth century) to late Iron IIA (ninth century) as chronologically significant, are correct, then Solomon sold/gave Hiram the one region in Galilee that provided Hiram with a payment/gift, preserved Solomon’s international standing via his honor (i.e., regardless of whether the land and settlements were worth their weight in gold)¹⁸, but did not actually result in the loss of any economically valuable resources for Israel. The Allonim Hills and western slopes of Lower Galilee did not provide Hiram with a strategic improvement over what he already controlled.

Thus, Halpern’s statement about Solomon’s ‘cavalier’ (1974, 523) treatment of the northern Israelite tribes—Asher in particular, as the land of Cabul is understood to come from this tribe’s allotment—must be tempered at least in regards to economic matters.¹⁹ Surely Solomon had less concern for the Israelite tribes in comparison to his own tribe of Judah, and, if Halpern is right, the growing Egyptian pressure against Judah with the ascension of Shishak would have given Solomon reason to divert attention to the south at expense of his northern borders. Yet, the location of the fortified sites in the north that block every route linking Galilee to the north and west shows that Solomon minimally still concerned himself with controlling the flow of trade to and from Tyre from land, and maximally sought to hinder Tyrian expansion into any of the major valleys in the Galilee, including the Jezreel Valley. Further, Solomon controlled choke points at Hazor and Megiddo (and presumably elsewhere if we consider the list in 1 Kgs 9 to be partial) to guard against growing power in Damascus. This Damascene power—as with the Egyptian power—however, would only materialize in actual military threats in the days after Solomon’s death.

When the geography and archaeology are considered, the presumed primacy of Tyre over Israel in the early Iron II is not actually supported (contra Donner 1982; Na'aman 1986, 61–62; Knauf 1991; Lehmann 2001, 92). Solomon no doubt was dependent on Hiram for specialized labour and resources, but Hiram was even more dependent on Solomon because the latter controlled the agricultural land necessary to provide Tyre with supplies that could enable its continual growth.

Conclusions

Neither Solomon nor most other ancient Near Eastern kings built walls to encompass their borders; nevertheless, they implemented defensive strategies to protect their resources. The protection of resources was even more paramount than the protection of people up until the point at which an enemy invaded.²⁰ In 1 Kgs 9:11–14—a pericope that would appear to best reflect the period it purports to discuss in light of the archaeology and geography of tenth century BCE Galilee—Solomon chose to give Hiram a portion of Galilee that was agriculturally unproductive and strategically unimportant. Hiram recognized this and was displeased with this land that was, in fact, *Cabul*, ‘good for nothing’/‘a mountainous terrain’/‘a boundary region’/‘a land of fettering’. Fertile areas such as the Alma Plateau, the Dalton Plateau, the area around Kedesh, and the Jezreel Valley remained under the control of Israel and were defended by a string of fortified sites erected by Solomon. By giving north-western Lower Galilee to Hiram, Solomon was essentially giving him something that he (Hiram) did not want because the trading entrepot that was Tyre was limited by its surrounding geography; there was not enough cultivable land to produce enough food for expansion and even perhaps to supply its already existing population. This is why Hiram required Solomon to pay for Tyrian services in kind. That this arrangement highlights the upper-hand held by Solomon is clear when the geography is considered, despite claims by many that Hiram was the superior partner in the arrangement. If Solomon were to hand over agricultural land to Hiram, then he would need to turn to other items by which to pay Hiram for his services. In the end, Solomon’s sale/gifting specifically of the ‘land of Cabul’ as recorded in 1 Kgs 9:11–14 attests to a geopolitical situation in the tenth century BCE wherein domination of trade routes through the southern Levant was of prime concern for local political entities. The control of land, distribution of settlements, and overall geopolitical situation from the early ninth century BCE until the end of the Israelite/Judahite monarchies is entirely different and makes little sense as the historical context for the Cabul passage.

Notes

1. The term ‘Galilee’ refers to the entire area from the Litani River in the north to the Jezreel Valley in the south and the Huleh Basin/Sea of Galilee on the east to the Acco Plain on the west. ‘Upper Galilee’ refers to the region from the Litani to the Beth ha-Kerem Valley in the South. ‘Lower Galilee’ is from the Beth ha-Kerem Valley to the Jezreel Valley.
2. Gal (1990, 91) notes that the beginning of the Iron II (which he roughly dates to 1000 BCE) sees the appearance of 15 newly fortified sites, some of which were in places previously uninhabited. There were also two-dozen rural sites founded at this time. Frankel et al. (2001, 104) note that the number of settlements drops from 71 in the Iron I to 36 in the Iron II.

3. The form and nature of a fortification type is related to numerous variables including access to resources, political aspirations, and the military potential of an enemy. Without considering these variables, unfortunate expectations about what qualifies as a 'fortification' lead to false evaluations of political control, social structure, and the rationale for the specific manifestation of that fortification. One-meter-wide bounding walls can be classed as fortifications the same as 5 m wide walls depending on the capabilities and potential an enemy possesses.
4. The alternate chronological framework to Mazar's MCC is Finkelstein's Low Chronology (LC) which dates the Iron IIA from roughly 920–800/785 BCE (Finkelstein and Piasezky 2010). While the disparity between the MCC and LC is closing according to radiocarbon samples run from a number of sites, the majority of the data supports the MCC (Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2008). Of particular note is the fact that the results provided for samples run at the Weizman Institute in the 1990s—which form much of the data set utilized by Finkelstein to support his Low Chronology—consistently produced dates that were younger by 100–150 years than those samples run at Groningen and 50–100 years younger than samples run at the University of Arizona (Mazar et al. 2005, 193, 252; Mazar 2004, 31–35). This inconsistency between results obtained from the Weizmann and other labs is noted also by Finkelstein and Piasezky (2003, 774).
5. Political control or ethnicity is not necessarily inherent in the specific forms of ceramics; other factors such as sociocultural and religious motivations must be considered when discussing the distribution of specific vessel forms. The question of whether pots equal people is not only applicable for the Israelite settlement in the Central Hill Country, though this is the area that has received most of the focus in scholarly research, but also it is appropriate to ask of the pottery in the Galilee (for the ceramics of Tyre see Bikai (1978); for Sarepta see Anderson (1988)). De Geus (1991, 15) has argued that there is no way to distinguish between Phoenician and Israelite material culture in the early Iron II. He argues that Israelite culture is Phoenician culture. Frankel, et al. (2001, 104 and pls. 26–27), however, suggest in their survey of Upper Galilee that at least some pottery is distinct to each culture; particularly noticeable are the Galilean and Tyrian Pithoi. According to them, production of the first type of pithos centered in the area of the Peqi'in Valley, while evidence of the latter from Har Adir, 'is clearly the southern extreme of a distribution area centered further north'. See also their discussion on p. 126. Additionally, Gal and Alexandre (2000, 198) note that ca 93% of the ceramics from Str. IIB-a at Horbat Rosh Zayit is 'local' or 'Israelite' ware that shares most similarities with ceramics from Megiddo, Taanach, and Hazor. The other 7% is what they call 'Phoenician' or 'Cypriot' and includes plain ware and black-on-red ware. While not coming down on a specific interpretation for what the site was, the excavators propose two scenarios: (1) the site is a Phoenician administrative center and established by Hiram after taking over the Land of Cabul, and (2) it is Israelite. They lean towards the first option, something more definitively claimed by Gal elsewhere (1992b, 2003, 2014). Regardless of whether these patterns of ceramic distribution are indicative of political or 'ethnic' or social realities they are important to note, but they do not necessarily clarify which sites fell under the aegis of which kingdom in this instance.
6. Mention of this site is based on Gal's (1992a, 20, 22, 94–96) discussion of the site. In his synthesis he states that the site was fortified in the tenth century, however, caution is necessary as the site was not excavated but merely surveyed. Further, the few sherds illustrated from this site include early and late Iron IIA sherds (i.e. tenth-ninth centuries). A few other intriguing, albeit problematic, sites are Be'ana (1758.2596 OIG/225773.759727 NIG), Kh. Abu Mudawer Tamra (1708.2486 OIG/221650.748638 NIG), and Har Gamal (1707.2583 OIG/220708.758388 NIG). The first is located in a perfect location to monitor traffic coming from Tyre over the Tzurim ridge as it is located at one of the few breaks in this ridge that allow the ridge to be crossed. Further, it guards the western extent of the Beth-Hakkerem Valley. Unfortunately this tell is covered by the modern Arab town and none of the survey pottery is published; I rely on Gal's assessment of this site as a new settlement in the tenth century BCE (Gal 1992a, 29, 94). The second site, which is 1.5 km NE of Tel Mador and provides a solid westward view, is also poorly preserved. Whether the 'massive

built corner' visible on the surface is part of an Iron Age building (which is the most representative period in the survey) or a later building is unclear, though Gal appears to favor the first option, even apparently ascribing it to the Iron IIA (Gal 1992a, 27, 96). The third site occupies a comparable situation to Be'ana only a few kilometers to the west and is identified as a potential fort by Frankel et al. (2001, 104, Site 133). Though dated to the Iron I based on apparent comparisons to Har Adir (Frankel et al. 2001, 104–105) this site likely continued into the early Iron IIA as it is also comparable to Harashim, which dates to the early Iron IIA (Ben-Ami 2004). No ceramics for the site are illustrated, unfortunately, but the prerequisites that Frankel et al. used to date sites to the Iron I are pithoi and kraters, the Iron I forms of which do continue into the early Iron IIA (2001, 55–58; cf. Ben-Tor and Zarzecki-Peleg 2015).

7. Har Adir II may also potentially be included in this list if Ilan's revised dating of the site to the Iron IIA is correct (1999, 183). Recently, however, Hayah Katz has begun re-analyzing the results of the Har Adir excavations and has concluded that all three phases of the occupation at the site should be dated to the Iron Age I (personal communication).
8. At Tell Abu Hawam, Balensi (1985, 69) considered Stratum IIIA to be evidence of a Phoenician city because of a lack of a 'casemate rampart or of any four-roomed houses'. More recent excavations have uncovered a 'pillared building' and Balensi now appears to believe the settlement of Str. IIIA (tenth century) is Israelite (Balensi, Herrera, and Artzy 1993, 10). Frankel et al. (2001, 104) and Gal (2014) argue that Har Adir represents an actual Tyrian/Phoenician presence. Against this interpretation is Ben-Ami (2004, 207), who states that there is a similarity in cultural affinity, rationale underlying establishment, and function between Har Adir and Tel Harashim, the latter of which, 'does not support a Phoenician origin for its residents'. He is even more adamant in an Israelite ascription for these sites in a more recent article (Ben-Ami 2009).
9. Katzenstein (1997, 75) notes that the history of Tyre and Hiram's reign in particular are based largely on the writings of Josephus in the 1st century CE.
10. Kalimi (2019) in particular makes a strong case that much of the material about Solomon in 1 Kgs 1–11 is derived from old and accurate sources reflecting the actual situation in the tenth century even if the DH ultimately fashioned the text at a later point. As such, I adhere to the view that the biblical texts do preserve historiographically accurate details of earlier periods, i.e., the United Monarchy, even if the final form of the text is established at a later time (cf. Mazar 2014; Pioske 2015; Richelle 2016; Hutton 2009; Millard 1997; Kalimi 2019).
11. Josephus (*Ant.* 8.142) says the word means 'not pleasing' in Phoenician. The popular explanation that the term derives from כַּבֵּל = 'like nothing' is based on Josephus' etymology (Montgomery 1967, 205; see also Mulder 1998, 477). Noth (1968, 211), however, favored deriving the name from the root כַּבֵּל 'to fetter', translating it as '[a land] bound' (cf. Akk and Arb. *kbl*; and the nominalized form 'fetter' in Pss 105:18; 149:8). Choosing to read *Cabul* in this way—as a Hebrew/Phoenician passive participle, 'bound'/'fettered'—is intriguing though not without problems (this verbal form also appears in Amarna Canaanite and Ugaritic (see Sivan 2001, 122; Rainey 1996, II.306)). At the same time, the nominal form *qvt(t)vl* is also attested, though not entirely without issue, at Ugarit as informed by Akkadian syllabic equivalents (Huehnergard 2008, 307, 309; cf. Sivan 2001, 68, 70)). It is intriguing because we could translate the phrase (אֶרֶץ כַּבֵּיל) as 'a fettered land' or even 'a land for fettering' (according to Joüon and Muraoka (2006, 381) some passive participles can be read in this way (e.g., Deut 28:31 and Ps 111:2); they do not always have a past meaning), which is how it is understood in *BT Sabb.* 54a, Rashi, and Redak, all of which understand the name as referring to 'a land of fetters' or 'infertile land'. If we translate *Cabul* in such a way, then we can make the case that the land is seen by Hiram as fettering him in some way.

But, reading *cabul* as a passive participle is problematic in that we would see a masculine participle coupled with a feminine noun (אֶרֶץ), something that does not occur in Hebrew. Also, a more straight forward passive translation would result in confusion because we would be left with determining who or what is fettered based on the Hebrew syntax: is

Hiram fettered by Solomon? Is the land fettered? To whom is the land fettered? Why is it considered fettered? Moreover, the root כבל is best exemplified only in Mishnaic (and Targumic) Hebrew (HALOT II.458); the degree to which it was used earlier is unclear.

Another possible translation comes from II כ + ביל 'like a (wood) block' (cf. Akk *bulū*, dry wood). Lipinski (2010, 262) favors this root and translates *cabul* as 'lump' (or 'block'), an etymology that is easier to accept than the previous view that saw it as a passive participle from *kbl*.

HALOT (I.115) offers a third possible etymology, III ביל 'produce; tribute' (cf. Akk *biltu*), but this option seems least likely due to Hiram's displeasure. Despite instances where kings complain about tribute given to them, the general tenor of the verses in 1 Kgs 9 mitigate against this option because 'a land of tribute' does not make sense unless we wish to read sarcasm into Hiram's response.

The situation becomes more convoluted when the LXX is considered as it renders ὄριον 'boundary' instead of *cabul*, suggesting that it is translating the Hebrew גבול instead of כביל (there is evidence of a *g* for *k* switch in EA (see Rainey 1996, 11) and Ugaritic, though it is fairly rare, particularly in the writings of the latter corpus (Huehnergard 2008, 219)). When did this discrepancy appear and was it linguistic or orthographic in nature? Further, was this discrepancy accidental or meaningful? Nonetheless, if we presume an original Hebrew גבול then we also have the potential of translating the term as 'mountain'. The result would be 'mountain/boundary land' or perhaps 'barrier land' (Lipinski 2010, 262 translates 'hill country').

12. Gal (1990, 97) assumes that the 'land of Cabul' is the northern and central parts of the Akko Plain based on his identification of Horbat Rosh Zayit as a Phoenician fort (cf. Gal 2014 and Lipinski 2010, 263). And although Gal does not define the limits of the Akko Plain, Lehmann (2001, 68) does: it is the region that runs from the Rosh HaNiqra ridge in the north to the Carmel Mountains in the south, and from the Mediterranean in the west to the foothills of the mountains of Galilee in the east. The northern and central parts of the Akko Plain are quite agriculturally productive, a point that contrasts the negative connotation ascribed to the region by Hiram in 1 Kgs 9:12, and as such I prefer to associate the 'land of Cabul' more definitively with the Allonim Hills and western slopes of Lower Galilee, the general region that Gal himself does later equate with the 'land of Cabul' (Gal and Alexandre 2000, 197; cf. Lehmann 2008, 42).
13. The picture of Tyrian transformation of the Akko Plain must be nuanced. Lehmann's (2001, 94–95) discussion of Tyrian abilities and interests is acceptable if one is considering the entire Iron II (cf. Ezekiel's rant against Tyre and the economic scope of the city's reach in the sixth century BCE). If we limit the scope to just the early Iron IIA, then on what specific data can we articulate the Tyrian economic system? The largest site in the Akko Plain, Akko, is in a period of decline in comparison to earlier and later periods. Settlements are fewest in the plain and more abundant in the hills/mountains, which are outside of Akko's reach. Thus, it appears that the wealth of Tyre has been read through later periods (an approach that is rightly and highly criticized for understanding ancient Israel, in particular the United Monarchy). When it comes to Tyrian expansion and influence, more evidence is needed to show that they wished to exploit the hills and mountains of Galilee—thus providing a connection to the settlements there—as opposed to having a desire for more land useful for growing cereals in the tenth century (see Stieglitz 1990 for a reconstruction of Tyre's early rise in the eleventh century BCE).
14. In the case of Horbat Rosh Zayit and the nearby site of H. Gamum, Gal argues that the latter, which was further uphill than Horbat Rosh Zayit and guards the entrance to the Sakhnin Valley, was built after Solomon gave the region of Cabul, including Horbat Rosh Zayit, to Hiram (1992a, 104). That way Solomon continued to hold the more strategic site.
15. Gal (1992a, 91) notes that of the 15 sites that were newly constructed in the Iron II in Lower Galilee, over half are destroyed by the mid-ninth century.
16. Compare the situation in the Middle Assyrian kingdom, among others, which sought control over agricultural lands and regularly extracted produce 'for Assur' (see Brown 2013).

17. Debate surrounds why Hiram gave Solomon 120 talents of gold (see Fensham 1960, Montgomery 1967, and Sweeney 2007, 143 for discussions of the various views). While this debate is not integral to the present paper, I prefer to see the entire Cabul transaction in light of royal gift-giving protocol common throughout the ancient Near East, and attested in much royal correspondence in the Late Bronze Age. That this is a royal transaction between peers is suggested by Hiram's reference to Solomon as 'my brother' in 1 Kgs 9:13, and by the fact that the payment is in gold and not silver. Westbrook (2010, 462–463) notes about this latter point that gold is the 'medium of diplomatic gift-giving, not silver, the medium of commercial exchange'.
- As a point of comparison, there are instances of the legal transferral of cities by one king to another attested to in the Alalakh tablets (Fensham 1960; Wiseman 1953, 52; 1958).
18. Bunnens (1976, 21) argues that the relationship between Solomon and Hiram was one of constant gift-giving of which the biblical story only preserves a snapshot of one moment in this exchange. The importance in the transaction surrounding Cabul, according to Bunnens, was less in the value of the gift than in the gesture of the donor; the gift was 'an exchange of diplomatic courtesies' (1976, 19) meant to preserve the honour of the gift giver.
19. Josh 19:24–31 lists the Akko Plain as part of the allotment given to the tribe of Asher, but Josh 13:6 and Jdg 1:31–32 clearly note that the Asherites never drove the Canaanites out of the region. To what degree did Israel control the Akko Plain? If it was not subdued during the settlement period, then did David take the region? What evidence is there that he did? Tyre probably had a hinterland that extended to Akko because if any dominant Canaanite/Phoenician king were to arise as Hiram did, the local Canaanites presumably would have rallied behind him instead of a foreign, i.e., Israelite, king. Nothing suggests the Akko Plain ever became less Canaanite/Phoenician from the Late Bronze Age to Iron II. But, surveys do show that numerous new settlements appear in the Galilean hills and mountains (Lehmann 2001) in the Iron I and II. We must consider what interest coastal-dwelling Canaanites had in those regions if they did not settle them in the Late Bronze Age? So when Solomon gives Hiram just such a region, he is upset because what he needs and wants is more agricultural land.
20. We have to wonder what the nature of the settlement of Asher was. If land possession in a geographical, border sense was not the main concern, then the loss of a given territory or portion of land is not that significant. We can actually see the rationale for land control in the way that the defensive networks of the northern kingdom of Israel and of Judah changed over the course of the Iron Age.

Notes on contributor

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