

1900841-Site Analysis

by Lauren Elizabeth Hopkins

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Influence of Landscape and Natural on the Canaanite City of Tel Hazor

Introduction:

Tel Hazor is the ancient Canaanite city of modern-day Israel and an exquisite example of Canaanite Civilization. It is a place of extravagant deities, monumental motifs of kingship and societal harmony. Tel Hazor was a highly religious city, especially during the Late Bronze Age period and this was evident through the wealth of archaeological material uncovered there, as attested by the Tel Hazor Excavation (The seuz Foundation: 2018) indicates. Spar (2009) suggests that Canaanite religion involves deities that are associated with nature and the deities are directly connected to kingship. For example?

There have been several excavations conducted in the Tel Hazor city in Israel and the most recent excavation was in 2011, according to Madain Project (2021). It was part of this 2011 excavation that much of the information on Canaanite culture and religion was collated from, for instance the main research paper of "Let Ba'al Be Enthroned": The Date, Identification, and Function of a Bronze statue from Hazor" by Professor Tallay Ornan (2011). Ornan (2011) suggests that this paper was of instrumental use to this investigation, this paper is of an object analysis of the statue uncovered in Tel Hazor, Ornan (2011). conclusively identifies the statue as Ba'al and indicates the importance of Ba'al within the landscape.

Canaanite culture was formed from the natural landscape around them and has been the basis for their cultural beliefs. The landscape of Hazor, had played an integral part within the formation of Canaanite religion and had shaped the sacred nature of the city of Tel Hazor. In addition, the landscape was a crucial and an influencing factor in Canaanite society and religion, particularly for the creation of their deities. Furthermore, as the landscape was the core center of Canaanite culture that guided their society, without this, it would have been a different culture altogether. This was greatly emphasized within Tel Hazor where the motifs and emblems of nature were prevalent. In addition, Ba'al who was the principal deity, was worshipped at Tel Hazor, especially within the Acropolis A area. Ba'al was classed as a royal deity, due to the kings of Canaan, who were the ones who had consistently worshipped this deity. The "Ceremonial Palace" was an area that was heavily influenced by kingship and which in turn was influenced by the landscape.

This site analysis will seek to answer the arguments with the use of primary sources that depict elements of nature and landscape, for instance, stelas, texts,

use your introduction to set the parameters for this piece of writing

Maps and plans?

Citation Needed

you should be focusing on the site: its architecture, physical setting etc. and what this might tell us about the practices enacted within

cult objects and the areas within Tel Hazor. Modern scholarship will also be included, which both corresponds to nature and landscape in Canaanite culture and would support the arguments. Each of the primary sources will be thoroughly investigated and the findings would indicate how influential the landscape was in Canaan.

Main Body:

The city of Tel Hazor, in Israel was a crucial site in Near Eastern archaeology, a wealth of archaeological material was uncovered at the site and they date to the Late Bronze Age. The objects uncovered, represent intricate and complex ideas and concepts of the Canaanite people, this demonstrates the culture was elaborate.

Background:

Canaanite religion was an intricate, symbolic and entirely based upon the natural landscape, where all aspects of nature was a prominent feature within the religion. In the Late Bronze Age period, many countries within the ancient Near East was described by various scholars, such as Cornelius (1994:1), as having excessive contact and communication with other countries, for instance Egypt and this was where ideas and concepts of society was exchanged. In addition, according to Cornelius (1994:1), these ideas and concepts included deities, mythologies and even traditions were transferred and introduced into the other cultures. This indicates this period was full of expansion and growth.

The main feature of Canaanite religion was divine patronage, and according to Knoll (2007:69), this is where a king was chosen by the gods of that area and the king would owe all his authority to that one deity. Knoll (2007:69) suggests, that the king was required to serve the god, via serving the kingdom to maintain peace and prosperity. Knoll (2007:70), also indicates, that if a king had failed in his own responsibility of protecting his kingdom, that this would cause the god who was his patronage, would be punish the king by causing a number of natural disasters.

In addition, according to Knoll (2007:69), the king, having a divine patron, was the most common form of political government in antiquity; and where the gods were in control of every aspect of the Canaanite people's lives, for example, creating the laws and customs which the king was required to enforce. Furthermore, this divine "hierarchy" and "political-social" outlook formed a constitution in Canaanite religion, which was key, according to Knoll (2007:71). Knoll (2007:71), also states that the elite classes within society was

Relevance

comfortable as a result of this religious custom and where their legitimacy, divine, political status had created the legal structure.

In this manner, Knoll (2007:71) suggests, that this permitted the fertility of crops, humans and nature to prosper, and also as a result, their deities were associated with every aspect of the landscape and this was their way of coping with un-domestication and unpredictable nature of that landscape. Furthermore, this indicates that Canaanite governments were royal and heavily influenced by religion. This also conveys that the beliefs the Canaanite's held was pivotal to them in living within their harsh environment. Relevance

Burke (2011:899), suggests that Canaanite civilization, was full of temples within their cities, and these were created for their principal deities. This demonstrates, their most important religious and divine figures were honored and worshipped in specially designed structures and this proved their devotion to their deities. For instance, Burke (2011:899) also states, in Tel Hazor, the Ceremonial Palace was a **Migdol style temple** which housed bronze statues of Ba'al and was identified as the temple of Ba'al. 8

Furthermore, there are several other temples within Acropolis A which were considerably smaller than the temple of Ba'al, as Burke (2011:899) indicates. 9 These temples represent other principal deities, with clear indications that they were worshipped, however, Burke (2011:899), does not state who those deities are. Additionally, according to Gray (1952:195), Canaanite culture and religion was heavily dependent upon kingship were "Davidic" kingship, this was deemed a crucial element in the governing of Canaanite kingdom. Gray (1952:195), states that the two primary source texts from Ugarit called the "Krt" text and the "Dnel" or was also called the "Akhet" discusses Canaanite kingship in detail. However, Gray (1952:195), does not go into detail about the contents of those texts.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, kingship was described by Cornelius (1994:1), as being dependent upon approval of their gods in the form of "divine patronage" and the stability of the royal family was counting on these gods. Relevance Where, according to Gray (1952:196), the main deity that was worshipped during the Late Bronze Age and by kings was Ba'al, the god of thunder.

Foxwell-Albright (1994:124) indicates that Ba'al was the god of thunder, the king of heaven and of earth and the fertility of crops and he was also a deity worshipped by Canaanite kings, as a god of kingship. Foxwell-Albright (1994:124), also described Ba'al as the son of Dagan, his individual name was "Hadad" and he resided upon Mount Casius or Saphon. Ba'al was also Relevance

described by Foxwell-Alrnicht (1994:125), as the “Triumphant Ba’al in various epics, although, it is not clear which epics Ba’al was mentioned in.

According to Spar (2009), Ba’al, along with the deity El was described as the main warriors of the cosmos and nature, rulers of the universe and within the pantheon of other deities **akin to the Greek pantheon of gods.** In addition, Spar (2009) states the link to nature is evident from the depiction  10 tales of Ba’al all include Ba’al as having a spear and in Canaanite symbolism, the spear was symbolic of Ba’als control and power over nature both on land and seas.

This, as Spar (2009), suggests is how and why Ba’al was a symbol of kingship and due to Ba’al being held as a protector of the kingdom against the natural and dangerous forces of nature as a warrior god was prominent and important. 

Arguments and Ideas:

The arguments and ideas concerning Tel Hazor entails, the natural landscape played an integral part in the religion, the sacredness of the city and the preferences of the people residing there. In addition, the landscape was a crucial and influencing factor in the creation of Canaanite religion, deities and the culture. Furthermore, the natural landscape was the core center of Canaanite culture, especially within Tel Hazor and was the main basis for the societal concepts and ideas. Additionally, as more sub-arguments include, Ba’al was the principal deity worshipped at Acropolis A and the rest of the city. Ba’al was the principal god worshipped by kings and this indicates the worship of Ba’al can be, but not exclusively, a royal practice. Furthermore, the “ceremonial Palace” was heavily influenced by divine kingship.

Theories:

The **theory that was used**  11 was the “Anthropology of Landscape Theory” and “Spatial Anthropology”, these are theoretical frameworks, which involves observing the landscape and how the landscape was represented in ancient cultures, as attested by Hirsch (1995:1). The main framework that was used was the Anthropology of Landscape: where the basic features of this framework, according to Hirsch (1995:1), includes the presence and significance of a culture and was used to frame the core concepts of a society through the area around them.

In addition, Hirsch (1995:1), also suggests how societies relate to, use, refer to, depict and live within their environment. Essentially, to silently observe and

record every aspect of every culture from all possible viewpoints. Additionally, Hirsch (1995:4) also indicates that, the criteria for observing cultures with this framework was rather complex, as it can feed into various other frameworks. Such as, “Space, inside and the outside representation and image”. Hirsch (1995:4), also conveys that these concepts can be interchangeable, fluid and can overlap as displayed in the diagram below:

Culture:

Place → Image → Inside

Space → Representation → Outside

(Hirsche, 1995:4)

Moreover, this framework entails that the landscape was a highly cultural process, that are both intertwined and are reliant upon each other.

Furthermore, the spatial anthropology framework was slightly different and more personally based than society based. According to Roberts (2018:5), “Spatial Anthropology” or the spatiality of an area was contingent upon the individual’s material in everyday life. The area was a reflection of the person who resides there, complete with their objects, décor preferences and essentially anything that person desired was in that space.

Application of Theoretical Frameworks:

Regarding the Anthropology of Landscape theory, the Canaanite culture fits within the criteria remarkably well. The city of Tel Hazor seems to reflect the basic principles of the theory. For instance:

Culture:

Nature around City (Place) → Nature (Image) → City (Inside)

Tel Hazor City (Space) → Ba'al/thunder/fields (Representation)

→ Nature around city (Outside)

(Hrische, 1994: 4).

In addition, the spatiality of an area theory, fits rather well also. Within Acropolis A of the Tel Hazor city, the king decorated the area with objects of

Ba'al possibly wall murals of nature, various motifs of nature and possibly objects that represented plants and flowers. This seems to convey that the concept of nature, the natural and the colorfulness of nature was crucial aspect of Canaanite culture.

Analysis of Location:

The city of Tel Hazor, a desert area that encompasses vast amounts of architecture, where the structures dates to two distinct time periods of Bronze Age and Iron Age. This city was constructed from mudbrick bricks, each building was individually constructed in the Migido-style of buildings, as Spar (2009) indicates. There has not been that much research conducted on the architecture of the ancient Canaanite cities in any great detail.

Furthermore, according to Zuckerman (2012:2), the material that dates to the Bronze Age comprises of administrative objects, cult objects and residential objects. This illustrates, Tel Hazor was a multi-functional city, where aspects of daily life live in harmony together and not in separate areas. This also demonstrates that religion was prevalent in every aspect of the Canaanite culture, not only in their beliefs, but it played a part in the governing of their society, how they have lived and how they saw the world around them.

In addition, Zuckerman (2012:19), states that the temples within Tel Hazor depicts scenes of nature, which directly and conclusively indicates the sacrality of their landscape. Implying that nature was a pivotal influencer over Canaanite culture. Although, Zuckerman (2012:25), also suggests that the sacred landscape was heavily dynamic and experienced periods of growth and change within the city. This was due to, as Zuckerman (2012:25) indicates, colossal political and social activities and this greatly altered the landscape of Tel Hazor. However, Zuckerman (2012:25), does not describe in any detail what factors of politics and society was involved in this change. Although, this resulted in the entire landscape shifting from its pre-established form and the change was monumental.

The place or landscape of the site was constructed to reflect the natural world around them, to mirror the natural light of the sun, which they considered a manifestation of heaven the home of Ba'al, and in a way they could worship their deities easily. The landscape was an important aspect of how they created their place, that natural was pivotal in the arranging of their city and that it fed into their societal traditions as the city grew.

The space aspect was very much a reflection of nature, the objects uncovered at Acropolis A indicates they preferred to be surrounded by religious and

ritualistic objects, for instance, statues of their gods that were situated upon altars and to properly worship them. Additionally, to present the statues with emblems and motifs that represent nature and how they perceive the natural world around them. Scholars know that the Canaanites conducted many ritual practices within this sacred space, all of which would have been crucial in their beliefs. However, there are very little information on the details of these religious practices, all that was known was that they were significant to their culture.

Citation Needed

Primary Source Analysis:

There were several avenues of interest for this analysis, these where from a wide range of media's and functions such as stelas, texts, and areas. These are the site of Tel Hazor: The Ceremonial Palace and Area A, which are of particular interest; statue of Ba'al, an object, Ba'al Stela, a text and another text the Myth of Ba'al. These sources were selected due to their very composition, function and the narrative around them will be essential supporting evidence for the arguments.

The site of Tel Hazor was rich in archaeological data concerning the religious and sacred nature of the landscape, where there is a wealth of examples that describe how the landscape around them was pivotal in their societal development and how they perceived the world.

In addition, the Ceremonial Palace, Area A, was a prime indicator that nature was of monumental importance to the Canaanite people. The Ceremonial Place was composed of two structures, one black and one white, as attested by Bonfil and Zarzecki-Peleg (2007: 348). The Black Building according to Bonfil and Zarzecki-Peleg (2007: 348), was rather large, it had a porch, a number of columns an entrance hall and a number of rooms one of which was a throne room. Furthermore, the White Building, as Bonfil and Zarzecki-Peleg (2007: 348), indicates was similar in construction to the Black Building and was located not far from the Black Building. The Ceremonial Palace primarily depicts Ba'al which was the ultimate deity associated with nature.

The Ba'al statue uncovered in Acropolis A, in Tel Hazor, was a monumental find, in linking natural religion and kingship. The statue was uncovered through an excavation where Professor Tallay Ornan (2011:253), worked and who originally analyzed this statue. Ornan (2011:253), had proved that the statue was Ba'al based on the iconographical markers which indicates Ba'al's association with nature.

Furthermore, Spar (2009) suggests. the Ba'al stela, this text depicts Ba'al standing in the traditional pose, with his left leg behind his right leg and arms raised above his head and with a mace and spear in either hand. The spear, as Spar (2009) depicted was a pivotal marker of nature and landscape, as it was said to be the tool that Ba'al had used to control the powers of nature. Where, this demonstrates Ba'al's desire to protect the kingdom from nature.

In addition, the Myth of Ba'al illustrates, as attested by Spar (2009), was a celebration of Ba'al's association to divine kingship, how he achieves this and how he was associated with nature and harvest. In this myth, Spar (2009), states, that Ba'al governed the seasons and was responsible for a successful harvest. Where during the winter crops were not able to grow due to Ba'al being in the underworld and his power not being able to reach the land. This greatly indicates Ba'al's influence and control over nature.

Findings and Discussion:

The primary sources indicate, the themes of nature, religion and kingship which were contingent upon the landscape. Individually, each of these sources corresponds to the arguments presented and conclusively supports the arguments. These demonstrates that all these three concepts were dependent upon each other and can all be linked to the landscape and how the Canaanite people saw that landscape.

The site reveals that nature and landscape was a core concept withing Canaanite culture, where the gods represented various forces within the natural landscape around the city. The Ceremonial Palace and Area A were important reflections of nature and the landscape, were numerous examples of flowers, trees and other natural elements were depicted and this was either through objects or through texts.

In addition, the statue of Ba'al was the most prominent source and the one that could reveal the most information, each aspect of the statue from the casting of the statue, the attire and garments present on the statue, the formation of the face and event but especially the crown indicates the god was Ba'al. Whereby this was a representation of the strong influence nature once had over the Canaanites, as their most sacred and royal god was associated with a strong aspect of nature.

Furthermore, the Stela and Myths of Ba'al were also important indicators of the prevalence nature had not only in the more tangible examples of Canaanite

culture, such as objects. In addition, that their societal tales relied upon the controlling of nature and to be dominant over the natural world.

Conclusion:

The primary sources indicate that the landscape was a direct influencer over Canaanite culture and over religion, where natural disasters are controlled by the gods and where the gods control the whole universe. The themes of nature, religion, and kingship were all dependent upon the landscape and this was a means the Canaanites used to understand their world around them. This demonstrates how important nature was in their daily lives.

In addition, the site of Tel Hazor, itself from the landscape theory, indicates the city was constructed to reflect the natural world around them, to heighten the light of the sun over the city and this was considered heaven where Ba'al resided. The buildings were constructed in a way that allowed the Canaanite people to worship their deities easily. Also, this facilitated the need to construct the city that could best reflect the power of the gods and to always be within their gaze.

Furthermore, the site of Tel Hazor, from the spatiality theory, demonstrates, the city's objects and furnishings were as much of a reflection of the natural world around them as the city itself. The objects that were uncovered, such as the statues and other cult objects, indicates that the Canaanite people were highly religious and they preferred to surround themselves with objects that demonstrates their intense beliefs, their devotion to their gods and possibly as a decorative feature. This illustrates that either from a religious point of view or a decorative point of view, nature was a prominent and symbolic feature within their society.

The arguments and ideas were, the natural landscape played an integral part in religion, the sacredness, holiness and the preferences of people living within Tel Hazor. The landscape was a crucial and governing factor in the creation of Canaanite religion, deities and their culture. Furthermore, the natural landscape was the core of the Canaanite culture, especially within Tel Hazor, and this was the main basis for the societal concepts and ideas. Additionally, the sub-arguments included Ba'al was the principal deity worshipped at Acropolis A and the rest of the city. Ba'al can be but not exclusively, a royal practice. Furthermore, the "Ceremonial Place" was heavily influenced by divine kingship.

This analysis can be either beneficial to the scholarship around understanding and interpreting the intricacies of landscape within Canaanite culture. Also, this may aid and inspire more work in this area of study in the future. To enhance our understanding of the Canaanite people and how they viewed their world, and to delve deeper into their story and how they lived.

In ancient Israel, a desert land much like its modern form, it is utterly amazing how a desert land can influence a culture and to such a high degree. It also illustrates the connection to ancient cultures, especially in Tel Hazor, had with nature and how this symbolic and beautiful the connection was. Also, how strong the connection was compared to modern cultures.

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FINAL GRADE

58/100

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

You have not done what the assessment asks you, which was:

Present and discuss an ancient site/space/place significant in religious or cult practices relevant to your research topic. You should consider how space was created, shaped, manipulated and experienced in the religious or cult practices enacted at this site.

Your discussion might focus on a specific site, or a type of site, or even part of a site. Your answer should be grounded in the theoretical approaches to interpreting space, place and phenomenology covered in the module.

Much of your discussion is irrelevant to the question. The landscape theory section had some relevance, but this should have been drawn out in more detail.

Rather than engaging with a physical location, presenting it and analysing the space (and objects) theoretically to think about the practice of cult within such a place you have instead written a general essay on Canaanite religion, with some focus on Hazor.

However, your writing style has improved immensely and your engagement with the literature is also greatly improved.

Text Comment. use your introduction to set the parameters for this piece of writing

Text Comment. Maps and plans?



Comment 1

meaning?



Comment 2

???



Comment 3

evidence?

How do we know what the people of this city felt? You might state that there is plentiful evidence for religious sites, religious practice...

Text Comment. For example?



Comment 4

i would prefer to see you moving onto your actual religious site first



Comment 5

in what way? citation>



Citation Needed

Cite Source:

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PAGE 2

Text Comment. you should be focusing on the site: its architecture, physical setting etc. and what this might tell us about the practices enacted within

Strikethrough.



Comment 7

in what way? citation needed



Relevance

Relevance?

PAGE 3



Relevance

Relevance?



Comment 8

explain what this is. Perhaps illustrate it...

How was this used in cult practices? is there any evidence for inclusion/exclusion etc?



Comment 9

more information needed about the spatial configuration



Relevance

Relevance?



Relevance

Relevance?

PAGE 4



Comment 10

? you are discussing second millennium BC gods; Greek pantheon is late first millennium BC



Relevance

Relevance?



Comment 11

where?

Do you mean you are using landscape archaeology here?

How?

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

Strikethrough.



Comment 13

explain Migidio-style ? do you mean migdol

No mention of this in Spar 2009



Comment 14

for example? references

PAGE 7

QM

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Comment 15

who?

Citation



Comment 16

explain how

PAGE 8

PAGE 9

PAGE 10

PAGE 11

QM

Sp.

Spelling error