

Archaeobiology 2

The Wide Lens in Archaeology

Honoring Brian Hesse's Contributions
to Anthropological Archaeology

edited by Justin Lev-Tov, Paula Hesse, and Allan Gilbert



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Sarah Witcher Kansa, editor

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2017

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Brian Hesse at the University of Hawaii in 2010

Introduction: Bones as Building Blocks for Brian Hesse's Social Archaeology

JUSTIN LEV-TOV

Brian Hesse started out his professional career with a strong interest in animal bones, finishing his PhD at Columbia University by writing a still widely cited dissertation on the domestication of goats in western Iran, based on his research on faunal remains from Tepe Ganj Dareh (Hesse 1978). In fact, Brian many years later returned to that subject, revisiting the same dataset and coauthoring a paper on it with Melinda Zeder (Zeder and Hesse 2000). In the process, Brian's original conclusions were confirmed: the goats from the site were early domesticates based on the assemblage's demographic profile, even though they were not morphologically distinguishable from wild goats at that point in the Neolithic. One of Brian's last projects was another return to the Neolithic, a study of the bones from the pottery Neolithic site of Sha'ar Hagolan, Israel (Hesse 2002), in which he focused on the site's late Neolithic date (sixth millennium BCE) and its implications for understanding animal husbandry after the so-called Neolithic Revolution but prior to the Urban Revolution.

Hesse, though maintaining a focus on the Fertile Crescent (Hesse 1982, 1984) after finishing his PhD, was always somewhat eclectic, especially in the first several years of his career. Like other American archaeologists of his generation, he had to end his research in Iran at the time of the 1979 revolution. That perhaps led him to his work during the early 1980s in South America, where he studied camelids, Muscovy ducks, and other animals in Chile, Ecuador, and Brazil. His South American interlude did not last, and while working at the Smithsonian Institution in the 1980s, Hesse collaborated with a colleague there on prehistoric sites in the North American plains as well as historic period sites near Washington, DC. The southeastern U.S. state of Alabama became an area of research for Brian after he took up a long-held position at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. There he worked on faunal assemblages from North American prehistoric contexts and had the opportunity to train graduate students in zooarchaeology, utilizing both local and Near Eastern assemblages.

Brian very evidently never lost his interest in the animal bones of the Middle East, and, since Iran had become off-limits, switched to working in other coun-

tries within the region, at first seemingly trying out research in Yemen, Tunisia, and Jordan prior to settling on Israel as a place within which to focus his research. Although the domestication of animals in the Middle East remained an interest of his, he turned his main attention more and more to faunal remains from the Near East dating to post-Neolithic periods. The shift to later periods began his intense interest in integrating animal bones into the mainstream of Near Eastern archaeology by attempting to show that the material could help answer important questions about Bronze and Iron Age societies. Up to the time of Brian's entry into the zooarchaeology of the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Levant, as well as more recent periods, there had been much doubt among excavation directors there that animal bones could be useful in helping reconstruct those ancient societies (cf. LaBianca 1995, 4). As Halpern and Greer (2011) wrote, "Before Hesse, bones were never properly sampled, but after his work ... excavators in Israel, and a good many in Syria and elsewhere, have placed a new emphasis on the collection of faunal remains." In a way, however, Brian's foray into dietary studies within complex societies was a return to earlier themes: as a graduate student, Brian published a paper in Columbia's Near Eastern studies journal (Hesse 1971) which attempted to show how bones could be useful in the reconstruction of ancient states. Indeed, though never published, one of Brian's earliest researches in the post-Neolithic Mediterranean world was his participation in Lawrence Stager's excavations in Carthage on behalf of Harvard University, a relationship that led Stager to invite Brian to study the animal bones from Harvard's subsequent excavations in Ashkelon, Israel.

Later, with his wife Paula Wapnish Hesse, in a widely cited article published for a large audience in the popular magazine *Biblical Archaeologist* [now called *Near Eastern Archaeology*] (1993), the need for insights from zooarchaeology to be integrated into site interpretations and not relegated to little-read appendices was again addressed. This article dealt with the curious phenomenon of dog burials from Ashkelon's Persian era. His papers in the 1980s on post-Neolithic animal bones in the Near East, many coauthored with Paula, would for many scholars form his most recognizable body of work. It was within this period that Brian began his lasting affiliations with several projects in Israel, including Ashkelon, Tel Dan, and Tel Miqne-Ekron. Seemingly, during analysis and interpretation of faunal remains from those projects, Brian developed what was arguably new, or at least unusual, in both Near Eastern archaeology and even zooarchaeology: the employment of complex social arguments to explain patterning in animal bone collections (see Fowles 2008). In an obituary for Hesse, Shanks (2011), the publisher of the popular magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review*, noted that work on the dog cemetery had made the resultant article about the phenomenon one of the most widely read in the magazine he edits, *Biblical Archaeology Review* (see Stager 1991).

Before, in between, and after, Brian published a number of articles on ethnicity and diet. His views on pig bones in the Near East comprise another influential corpus of scholarship, not only for fellow scholars in the community of faunal analysts, but also for archaeologists whose specialty is pottery. Pots and people arguments are old in archaeology, and Brian gave archaeologists something new to chew on: pigs and people. With the start of Hesse's work at Tel Miqne-Ekron (Hesse 1986), archaeologists who had long speculated that the Philistines came from elsewhere in the Mediterranean to settle in the southern Levant now had what they perceived then, and still perceive now, to be a new *fossil directeur*. The Philistines apparently loved pork, as the bones from that and other Philistine sites where Brian worked showed something of a correlation, a pond of pig bones amidst a vast steppe of sheep and goat (and practically pig-free) surrounding sites. Of course, Brian, ever the iconoclast, never quite saw the pigs-Philistines correlation as the sine qua non of Philistine origins in the Aegean region, and was never ready to accept the elevation of pig bones to index fossils (see Hesse 1990, 1995; Jones 1994, 21). But his work on pigs, despite his cautions and protestations, spiked a curiosity among a generation of archaeologists that arguably had not previously considered animal bones as a data source relevant to their socio-historical inquiries. Archaeologists working on Philistine—and non-Philistine—sites commonly cite Brian's work at Tel Miqne-Ekron when they discuss pig bones as a characteristic of Philistine culture. Luckily, the appeal of Brian's publications on animal bones from the post-Neolithic Near East seems to have sparked a wider interest among nonanimal bone archaeologists. That may be one reason why saving and studying animal bones has become normal practice in the region since the 1980s.

New excavations often provided Brian with chances to explore different themes in his research. With Paula and Brian's involvement with the Tel Dan and Megiddo expeditions came the opportunity to examine the use of animals in ancient Near Eastern religions, as items of sacrifice (Wapnish and Hesse 1991, 2000). Perhaps more than any other subject written about by Brian, except possibly food taboos, animal bones found within cultic areas provided the context for the Hesse team to explore their subject from both an anthropological point of view—discussing the bone evidence and why people sacrificed what they did—as well as from an historical point of view, integrating what the Hebrew Bible and other ancient texts had to say on sacrifice in the region's religions (Hesse, Wapnish, and Greer 2012).

This volume is meant to celebrate Brian Hesse's legacy in archaeology. As displayed in the table of contents, the book is divided thematically into six sections, papers dealing with methodology, with ethnicity, ritual, animal burials, animal economics, and site-specific analyses of faunal assemblages. The papers in the book reflect his main career foci: on the post-Neolithic Near East, and the evi-

dence that animal bones can contribute to archaeological studies. The book ends where Brian's career began: with a paper on bones from a Neolithic (and later) period site in Iran (Chogha Mish). Still other papers discuss lesser-known themes of Brian Hesse's work, including site formation processes, taphonomy, and the role of computers in archaeology. Brian Hesse, with Paula, explored taphonomy early in their careers, largely prior to the explosion of interest that subject saw in the 1990s (see Hesse and Wapnish 1985), as well as the computerization of archaeological data. Perhaps the greatest testaments to his influences are those papers in this volume by nonzooarchaeologists. Two of those contributions take up the subject of ethnicity in archaeology, but do so by integrating a variety of artifacts including animal bones. Another paper examines site formation processes in part through the lens of mollusk shells. Brian Hesse (with A. Rosen 1988) was also interested in site formation process, approaching that subject in part through—of course—animal bones. I believe that the inclusive approach to the archaeology of the Bronze and Iron Age Near East that is now common came about in large part due to Brian's influential publications. These demonstrated how relevant piles of broken bones from archaeological sites could be. Brian's work also helped lead to an understanding that the entire matrix of sites were of relevance, not just the pots and other "finds" floating within them.

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Brian Hesse with students in his zooarchaeology class at Penn State University, 2008 (courtesy Deirdre N. Fulton)

Curriculum Vitae of Brian Hesse

Education

BA: Anthropology, Columbia College, Columbia University, 1970

MPhil: Anthropology, Columbia University, 1973

PhD: Faculty of Political Science (Anthropology), Columbia University, 1978

Doctoral Dissertation: *Evidence for Husbandry from the Early Neolithic Site of Ganj Dareh in Western Iran*. Committee: Professor Ralph Solecki, Chair; Dr. Dexter Perkins, Jr., Advisor; Dr. Dennis Stanford, Dr. Malcolm McKenna, Dr. Rose Solecki; Dr. François Bordes, participant.

Employment

2003–2011: Director, Jewish Studies Program, The Pennsylvania State University

2003–2011: Professor of Jewish Studies, Anthropology, and Ancient Mediterranean Studies, The Pennsylvania State University

2005–2011: Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

2002–2003: Chair, Department of Anthropology and Social Work, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1998–2002: Chair, Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1998–2002: Co-Editor, *Near Eastern Archaeology*

1995–1996: Acting Chair, Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1991–2003: Director, International Studies Program, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1990–2003: Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1983–1990: Associate Professor (tenure), Department of Anthropology, Univ. Alabama at Birmingham

1979–1983: Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

1978–1988: Research Associate, Smithsonian Institution

1978–1979: Course Coordinator, Union College

1976–1978: Anthropologist, Office of Exhibits, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

1972: Instructor, North Shore Junior Science Museum, Long Island

1967–1969: United States Army, Training in communications (32E40), service in Vietnam.

1966–1967: Research Assistant, Department of Anthropology, New York University.

Publications

Book

- 1985 *Animal Bone Archeology: From Objectives to Analysis*. Washington DC, Taraxacum. (with P. Wapnish)

Articles

- 1971 Faunal analysis - a tool for early historic research. *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 3: 38-45.
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1975 Smithsonian Institution Predoctoral Fellowship

1981 Linn-Henley Foundation Grant

1982 National Science Foundation Travel Award

1984 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship

1986 Fulbright Fellowship

1989–1991 National Science Foundation Grant

Abbreviations

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ABS	Archaeology and Biblical Studies
ADAJ	<i>Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan</i>
ADPV	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
AeL	<i>Ägypten und Levante/Egypt and the Levant</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>Am Anthropol</i>	<i>American Anthropologist</i>
ANES	Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series
<i>AnSt</i>	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
<i>AnthrToday</i>	<i>Anthropology Today</i>
<i>AuOr</i>	<i>Aula Orientalis</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BARIS	British Archaeological Reports International Series
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BASORSup	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research Supplement
BP	before the present time
BSA	<i>Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture</i>
BTAVO	Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CChem	Contributions to the Chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean.
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
COS	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002.
HdO	Handbook of Oriental Studies
EANEC	Explorations in Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations
EB	Early Bronze Age
<i>ErIsr</i>	<i>Eretz-Israel</i>

<i>ESI</i>	<i>Excavations and Surveys in Israel</i>
ha	hectare
HACL	History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant
<i>HBAI</i>	<i>Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel</i>
IAAR	Israel Antiquities Authority Reports
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>JANESCU</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i>
JPCS	Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series
JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
<i>JCSMS</i>	<i>Journal of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies</i>
<i>JFA</i>	<i>Journal of Field Archaeology</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JPOS</i>	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSSEA</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</i>
km	kilometer
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LB	Late Bronze Age
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
m	meter
<i>MAA</i>	<i>Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry</i>
MAU	minimum number of animal units
MAVA	Materialien zur allgemeinen und vergleichenden Archäologie
MB	Middle Bronze Age
MNE	minimum number of elements
MNI	minimum number of individuals
MS	Mnemosyne Supplementum
MSSMNIA	Monograph Series of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology
n.d.	no date
<i>NEA</i>	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
<i>NEAEHL</i>	<i>The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> . Edited by Ephraim Stern. 5 vols. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993, 2008.
NF	number of fragments
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament

NISP	number of identified specimens or number of individual specimens
<i>NumC</i>	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
NS	new series
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OBOSA	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis Archaeological Series
OEANE	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East</i> . Edited by Eric M. Myers. 5 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
<i>OJA</i>	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OpAth	Opuscula Atheniensia
OtSt	Oudtestamentische studiën
PAe	Probleme der Ägyptologie
<i>PEFQS</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement</i>
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
pers. (comm.)	personal (communication)
pl(s).	plate(s)
<i>PNAS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
<i>RDAC</i>	<i>Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus</i>
<i>RSF</i>	<i>Rivista di Studi Fenici</i>
SAHL	Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>SM</i>	<i>Scripta Mediterranea</i>
<i>Strata</i>	<i>Strata: Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society</i>
SymS	Symposium Series
TA	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
TAVO	Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients
TIM	total identified mammal remains
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit Forschungen</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina Vereins</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZfA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Archäologie</i>

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