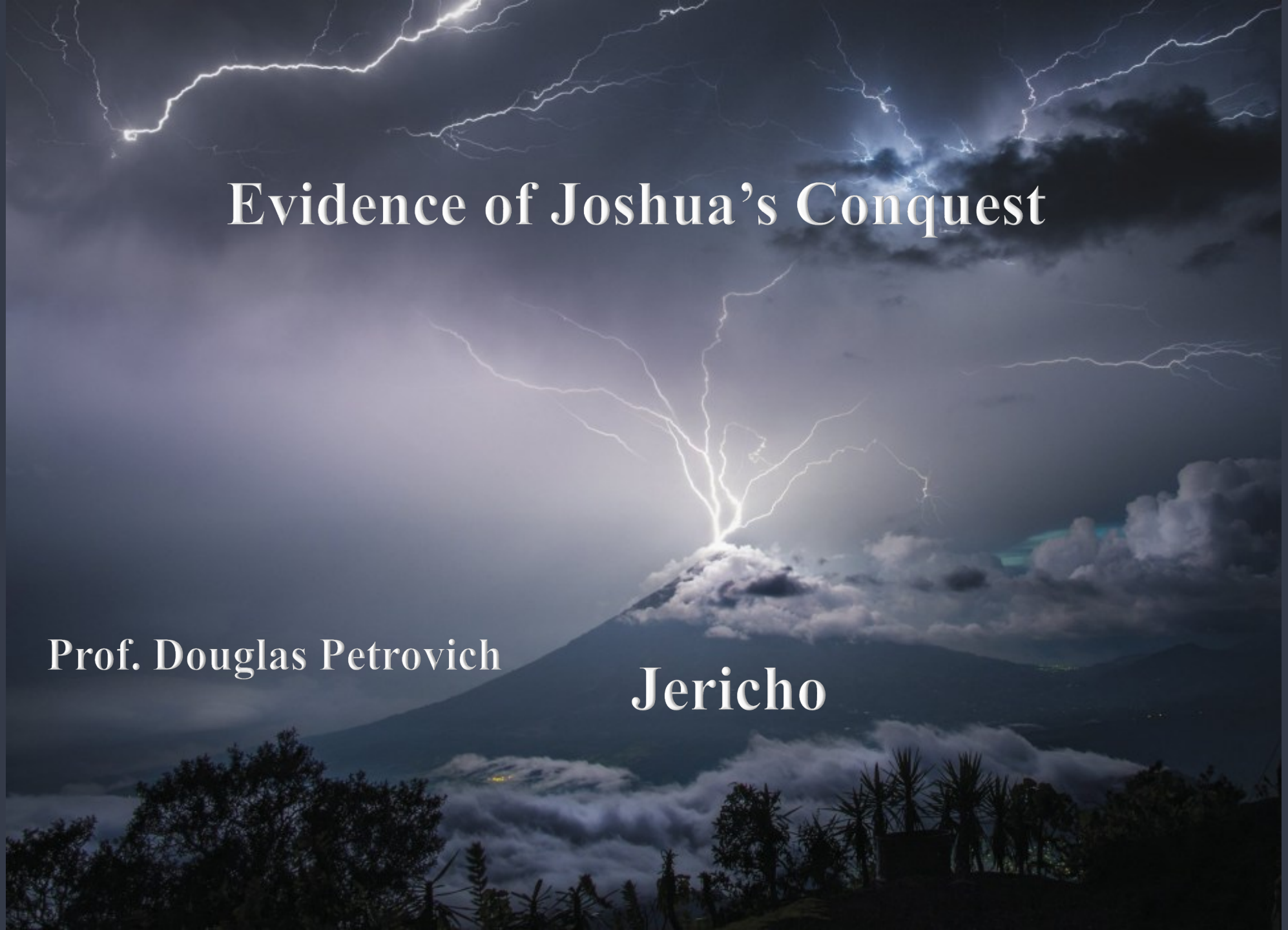

Evidence of Joshua's Conquest
Prof. Douglas Petrovich
Jericho

Conquest of Jericho during Joshua's Conquest

Joshua: 6.1Now Jericho was sealed, and it was closed off from in front of the sons of Israel. No one was exiting, and no one was entering. 6.2Then He-who-is said to Joshua, "Look, I have given Jericho, its king, *and its* powerful army into your hand. 6.3You must surround the city, *with* all of the men of war encircling the city once. You must perform *this activity* for 6 days. 6.4Plus, 7 priests must carry 7 ram's horns in front of the ark. Then on the seventh day, you must surround the city 7 times, and the priests must blow the ram's horns. 6.5So it will be during the blowing of the ram's horn, during your hearing of the sound of the horn, *that* all of the people must shout a great shout, and the city wall will fall down below itself, and the people will ascend *into the city*, *with* each man *going* forward. . . .

6.20Then the people shouted, and *the priests* blew the horns. So it happened as the people heard the sound of the horn that the people *loudly* shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down below itself. Then the people ascended *into* the city, *with* each man *going* forward. 6.21Thus, they utterly slaughtered all that *were* in the city—from man to woman, from young to old, both cattle, sheep, and donkey—with the edge of the sword. 6.22Now Joshua said to the

Conquest of Jericho during Joshua's Conquest

two men who spied out the land, "Go *into* the house of the female prostitute and bring her out from there, along with all who belong to her, according to which you swore to her." 6.23So the young male spies went and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all who belonged to her.* They also brought out all of her relatives, and they put them outside the camp of Israel. 6.24Then they burned the city with fire, and all that *was* in it. Only the silver, the gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron did they put *into* the treasury of the sanctuary of He-who-is. 6.25Yet Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, her father's house, and all that belonged to her. So she has lived in the midst of Israel until this day, because she hid the spies whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

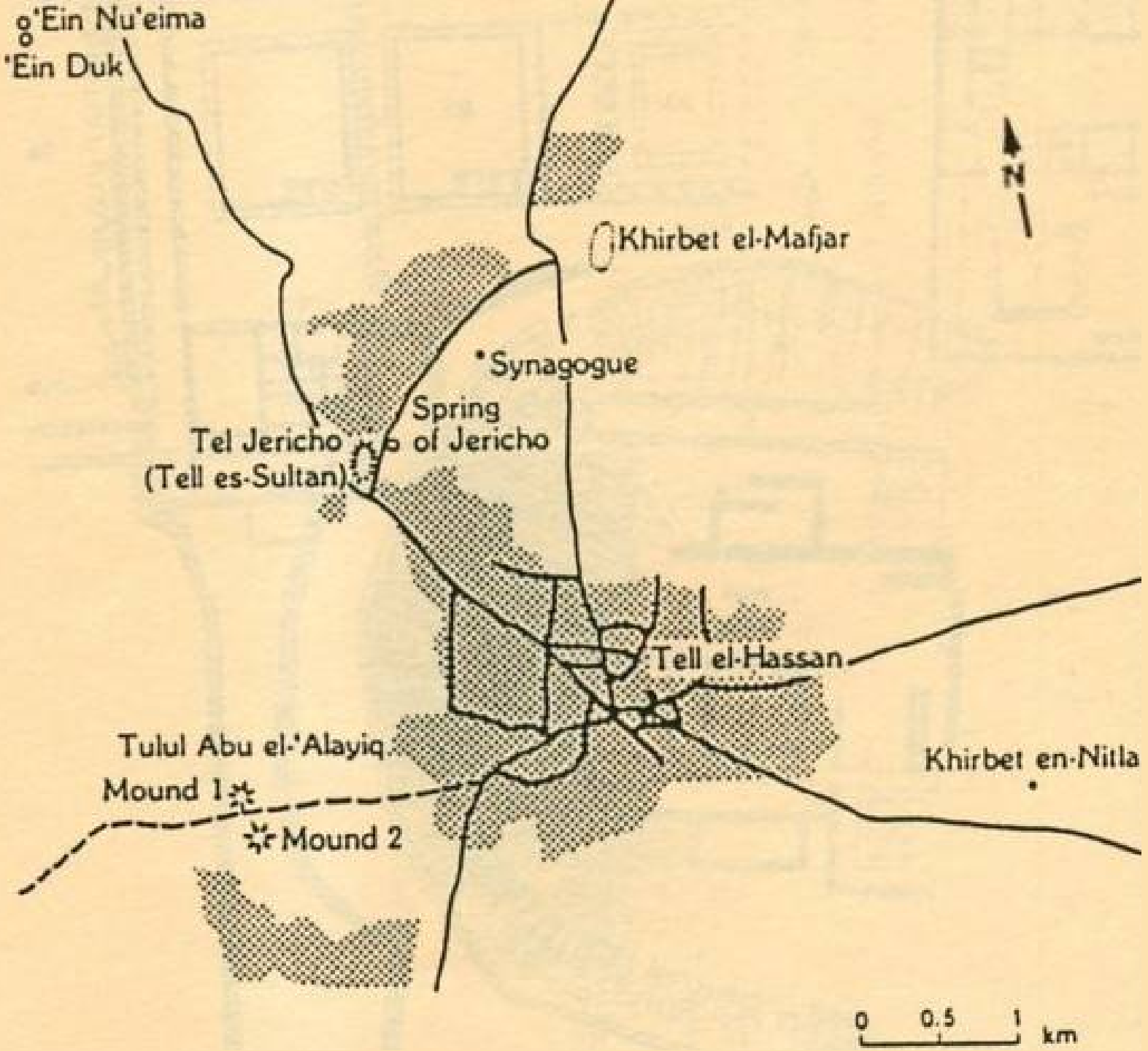
* 2.15Then she lowered them by a rope through the window, because her house *was* against the city wall, in that she *was* living along the wall. . . . 2.17Then the men [spies] said to her, "We *will be* free from this oath that you made us swear, unless when we come into the land you tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you lowered us and gather to yourself into the house your father, mother, brothers, and your father's entire house.

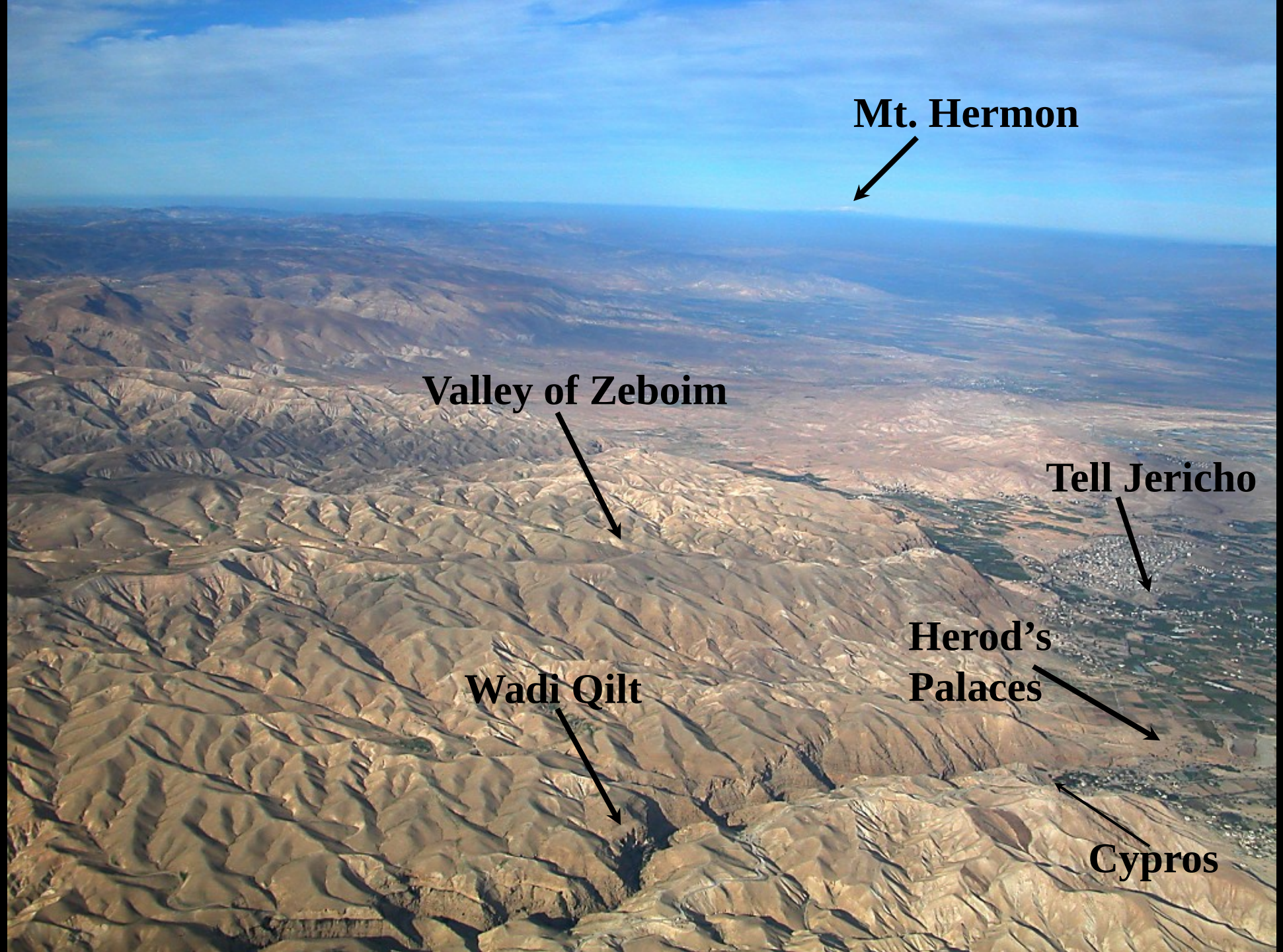
Jericho (Tel es-Sultan)

Topic: Map and Mound

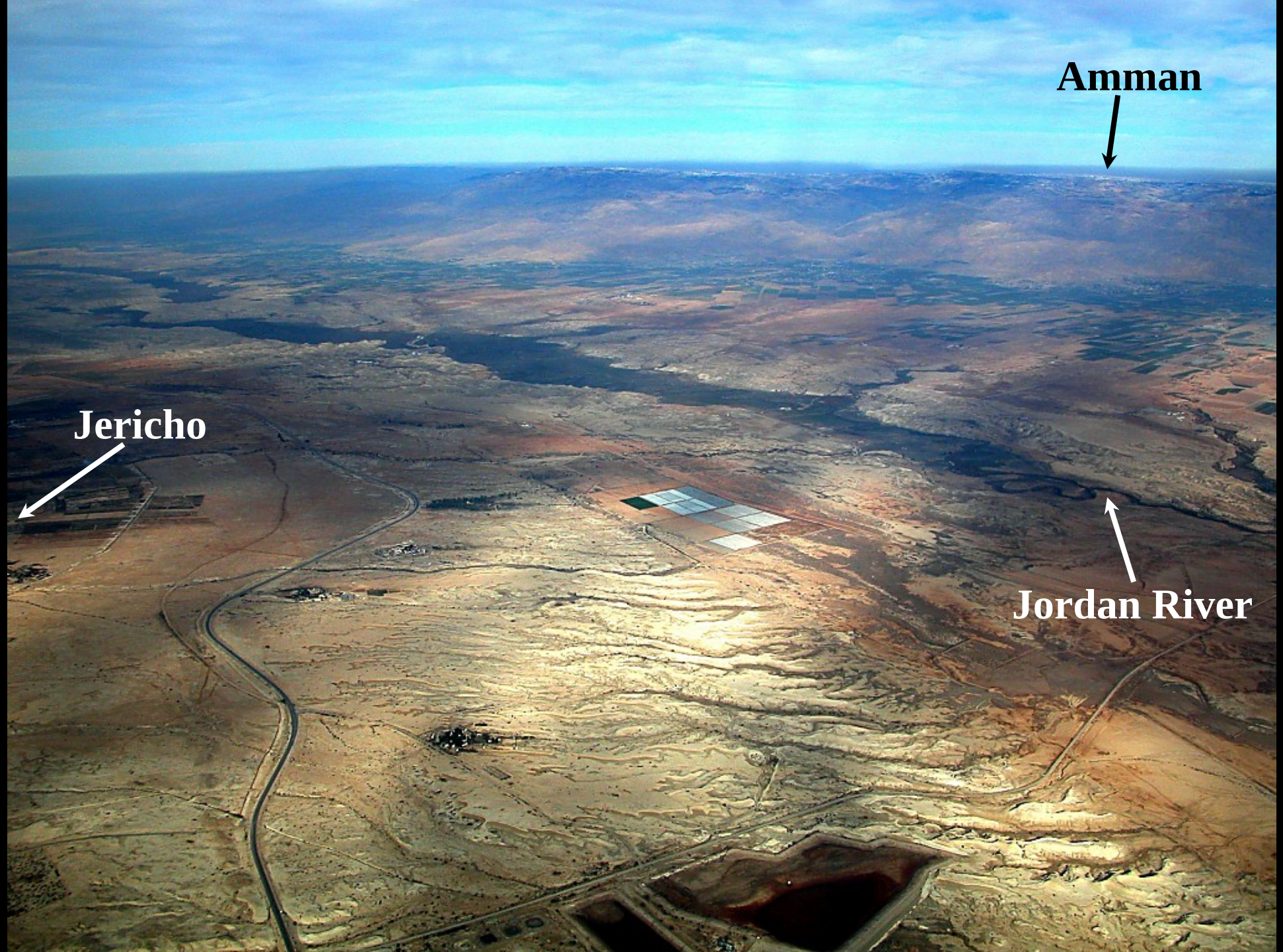
(Introduction)

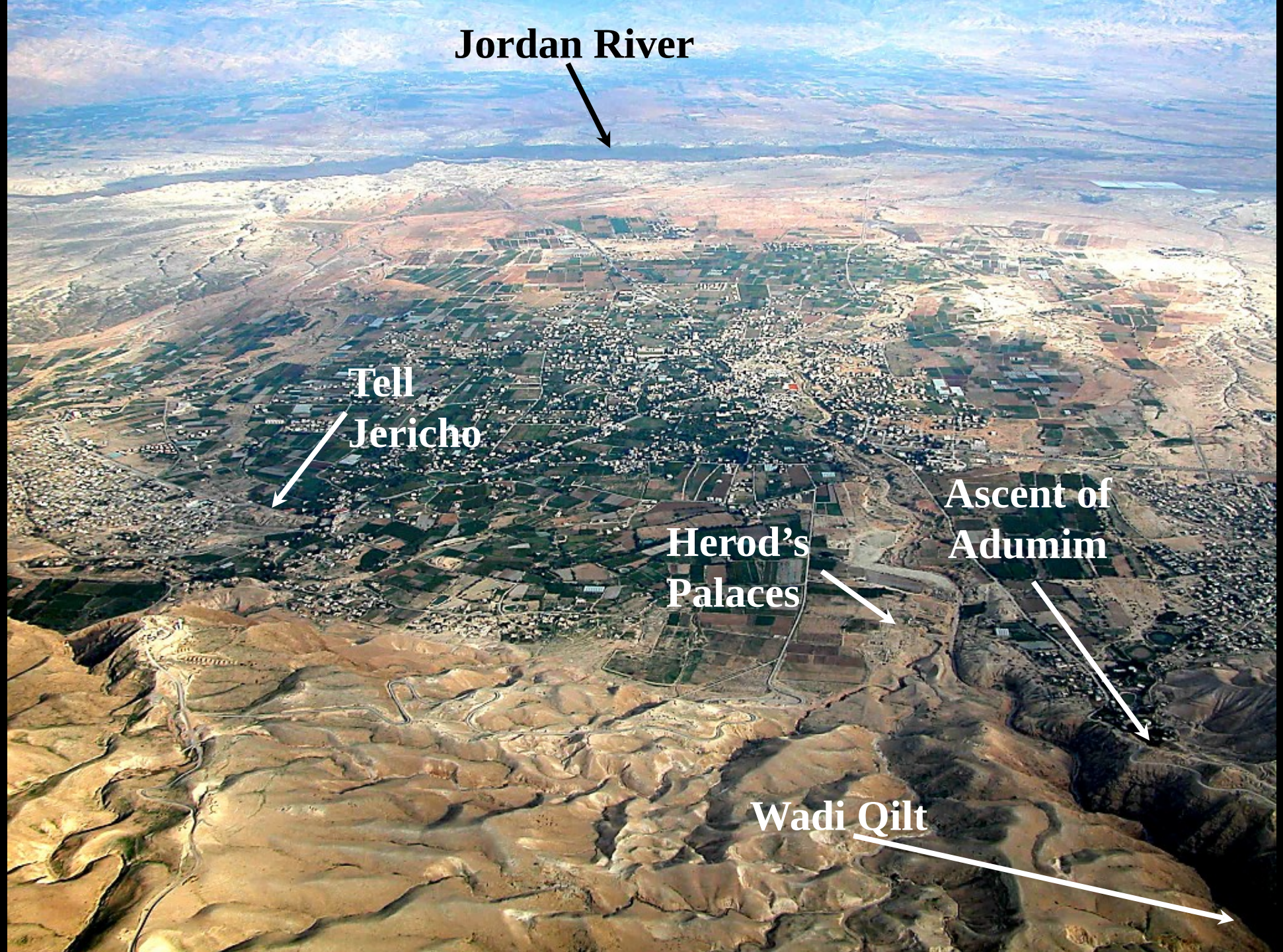
JERICHO
PHILADELPHIA
Beth Horon
Lejjun
N2a
N2b
Jabbok
W. Zarqa
Esbus
Medeba
Mt.
Nebo
2631'
Tyrus
Rabbath
Moab
O1
Arnon
W. Mujib
Motha
Charachmoba
Livias
Julias
Machaerus
Bethany ?
Aenon
Callirhoe
Lower Jordan
G2
Dead Sea -1348'
H1
Lisan
-1181'
H1
Coreae
Alexandrium
Jericho
Kh.
Qumran
Zoar
Phasaelis
Docus
Cypros
H2
En-gedi
Mt. Sedom
-610'
Hyrcania
Masada
F1
Acrabeta
Pharathon
Mar Saba
Caves &
Roman Camps
Mezad
Zohar
Mt.
Asor
3333'
Apherema
Neapolis
2890'
F2
Aelia Capitolina
JERUSALEM
Herodium
Tekoa
H2
E2
Lebonah
Gophna
Bethel
Gabath
Saul
Berzetho
Gabaon
Bethlehem
Bethther
J1
3323'
Chermela
Arad
Thamna
Upper
Beth Horon
Lower
Hebron
Beth-
zechariah
Bethsura
L2
Esthemoa
Modiin
Aijalon
Emmaus,
Nicopolis
Elah
Odollam
Adora
Malatha
Arimathea


'Ein Nu'eima
'Ein Duk
Khirbet el-Mafjar
N
Synagogue
Spring of Jericho
Tel Jericho (Tell es-Sultan)
Tell el-Hassan
Tulul Abu el-'Alayiq
Mound 1
Mound 2
Khirbet en-Nitla
0 0.5 1 km


Mt. Hermon
Valley of Zeboim
Tell Jericho
Herod's Palaces
Wadi Qilt
Cypros

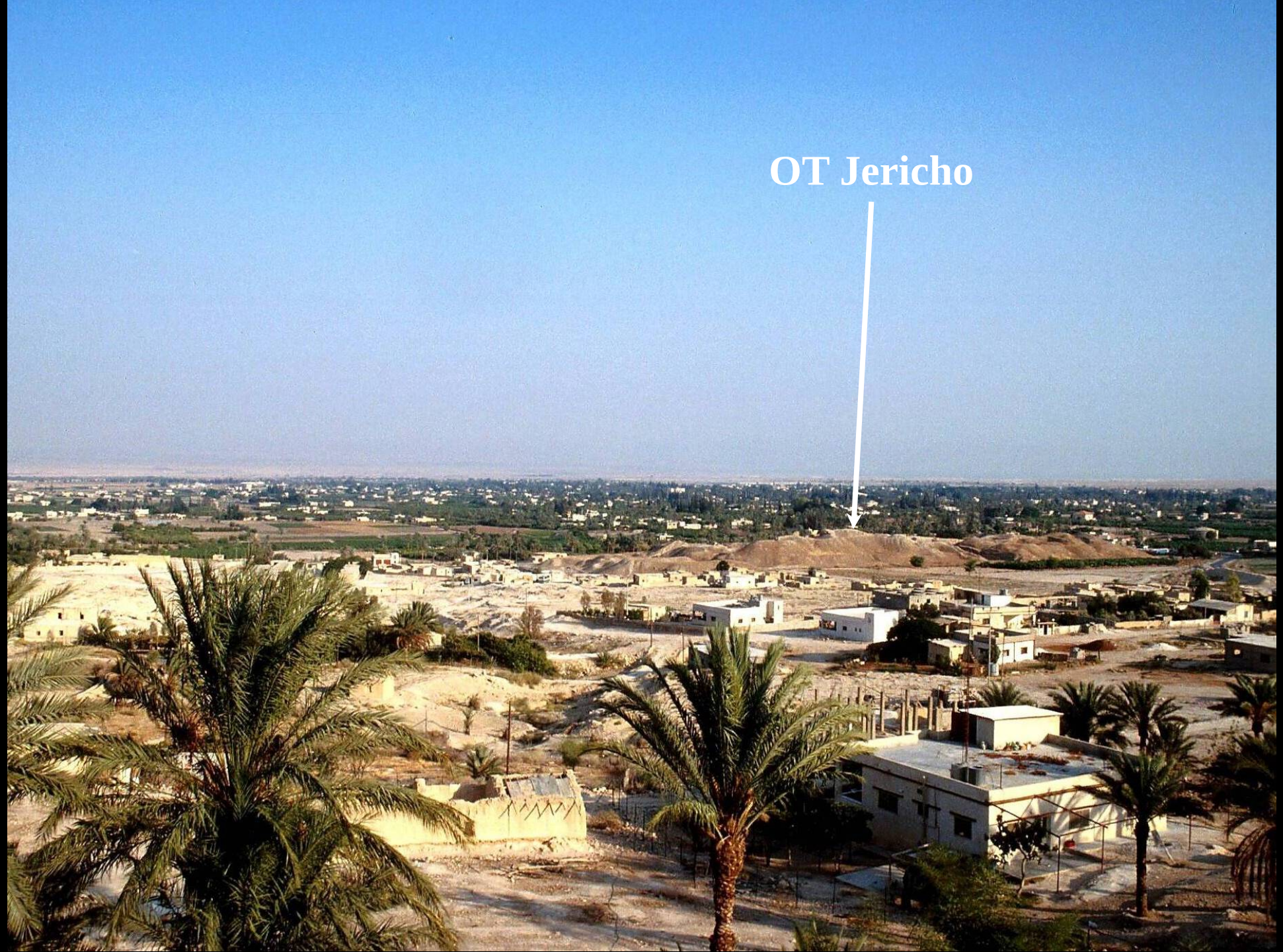
Judean
Wilderness
Tell Jericho

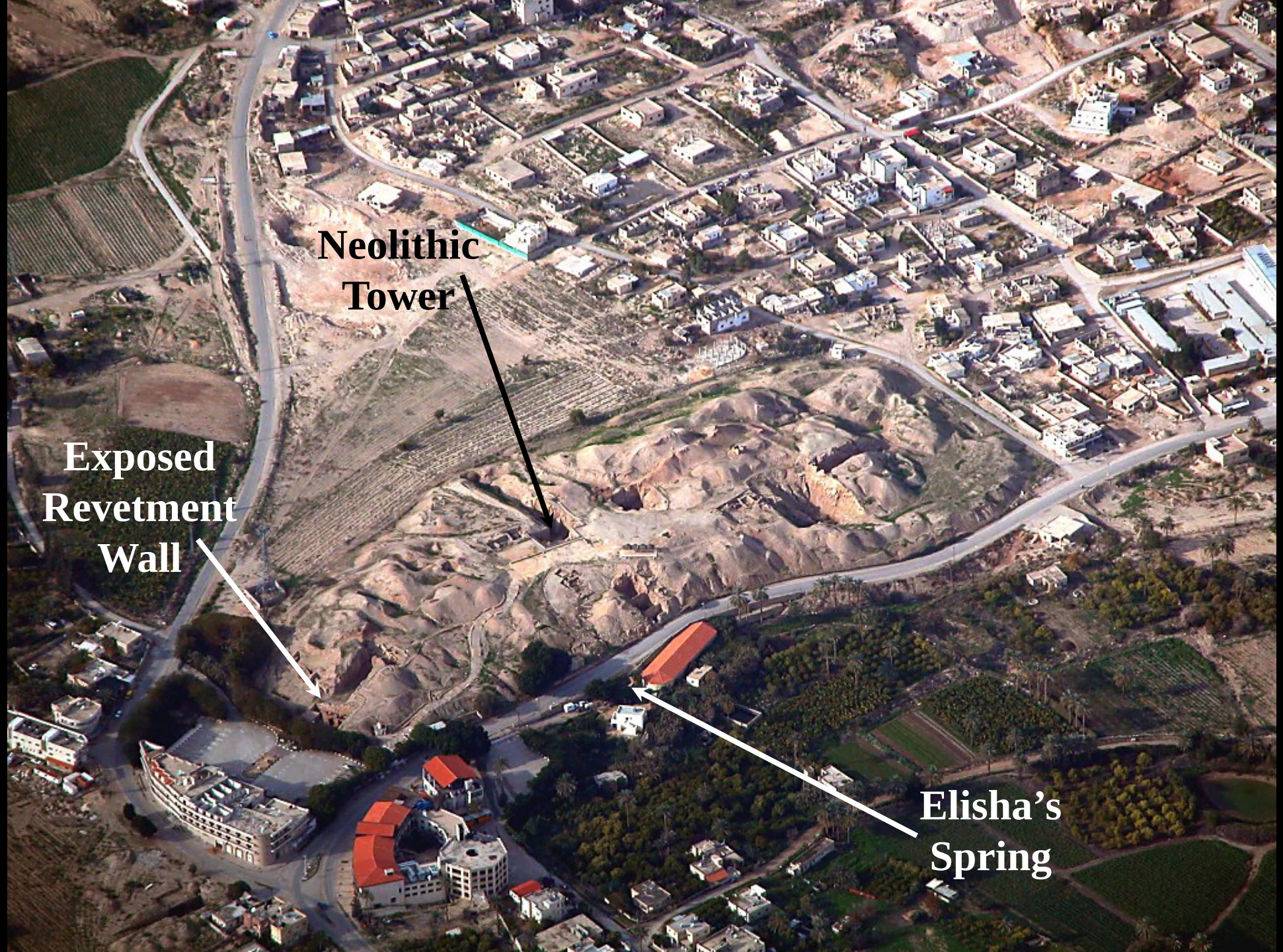

Amman
Jericho
Jordan River


Jordan River
Tell
Jericho
Herod's
Palaces
Ascent of
Adumim
Wadi Qilt

Dead Sea
Cypros
Tell
Jericho
Herod's
Palaces

Wadi Qilt
Herod's Palaces
Tell es-Samrat
OT Jericho
"Monastery of Temptation"


OT Jericho


Neolithic
Tower
Exposed
Revetment
Wall
Elisha's
Spring

Jericho (Tel es-Sultan)

Topic: Background on the Site of Jericho

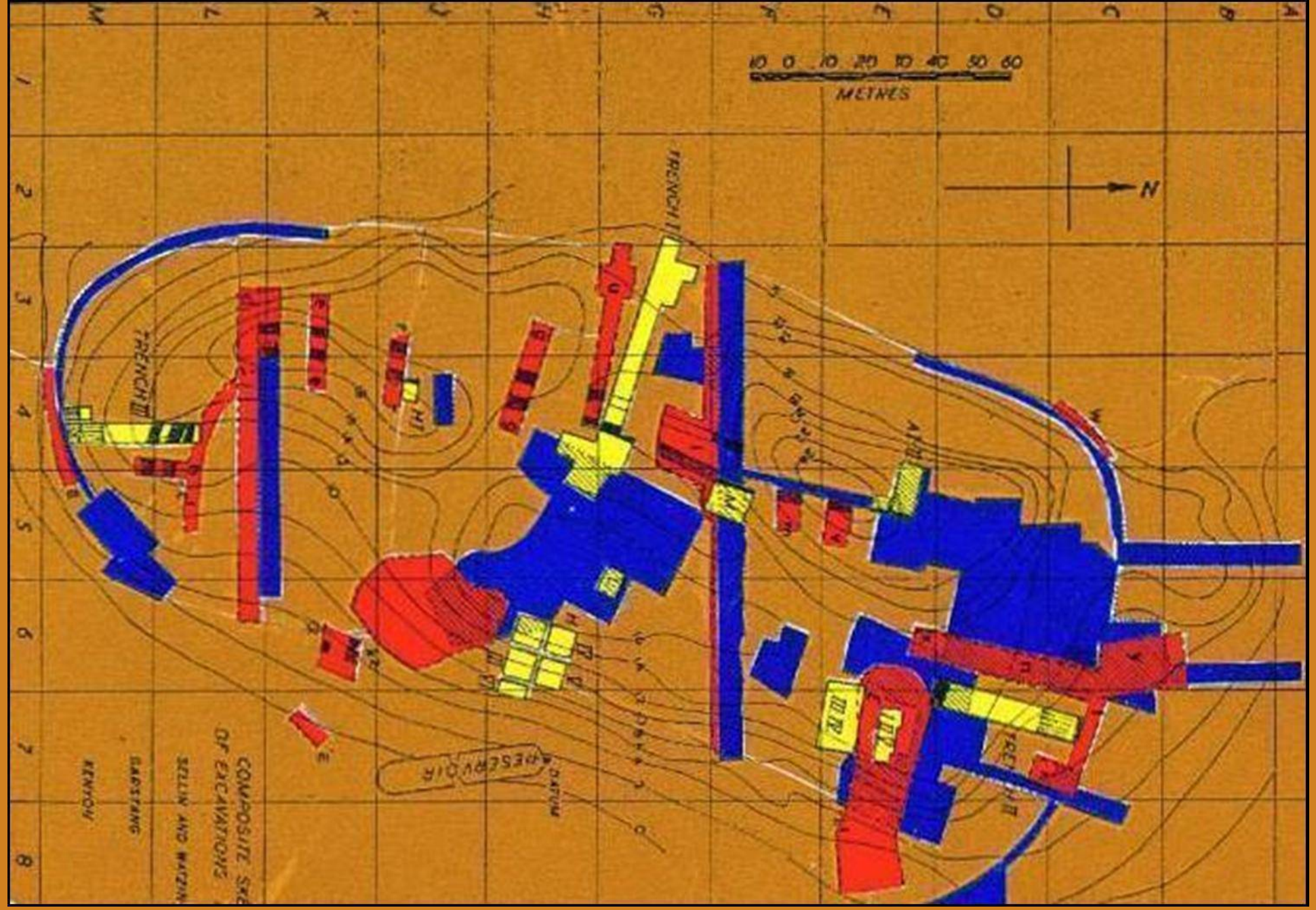
(Introduction)

Background on Jericho

Jericho is situated in the southern part of the Jordan Rift Valley, about 10 mi (16 km) northwest of the mouth of the Dead Sea, and dominating one of the few routes leading directly from east to west. Josephus gives an accurate description of the region around Jericho, including the distances from Jericho to the Jordan River and to Jerusalem. The city was established at one of the largest freshwater springs in all of the southern Levant, a spring known as Ain es-Sultan, and it was close to the east-west highway that connected Transjordan to the hill -country of Cisjordan. From its earliest occupation, Jericho enjoyed prominence and great importance among the cities of Canaan.

Background on Jericho

Charles Warren took initial soundings at the tel in 1868, sinking a number of shafts into the mound and concluding that there was nothing to be found. The first large-scale excavations were those of an Austro-German expedition in 1907–1909 and 1911, under Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger. John Garstang of Great Britain excavated from 1930–1936, finding a residential area (City IV) that was destroyed by fire and dating it to *ca*. 1400 BC. Fellow Brit Kathleen Kenyon excavated from 1952–1958, correctly re-dating the Middle Building of Garstang to the end of the MBA II (*ca*. 1560 BC), but incorrectly re-dating the destruction of City IV to the end of the MBA II, rather than the end of the LBA I.



Excavational Plan: Germans (blue), Garstang (red), Kenyon (yellow)

JERICHO PERIOD:

Through Early Bronze Age (??00–2000 BC)

Archaeological Strata: Various

Settlement through the Early Bronze Age:

The earliest remains on the tel are attributed to the Natufian culture, which is dated conventionally to *ca*. 9700 BC with ^{14}C remains. Flint tools, carved bone, and harpoon heads are associated with these occupants.

The subsequent period, the Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPN) A Age (commonly dated to 8500–7500 BC), actually overlaps with the Natufian culture. Jericho's "Neolithic Tower" commonly is dated to the 8th millennium BC, although there are ample grounds to doubt this dating. The purpose of the Tower is much debated, with most favoring its use as being for defensive purposes.

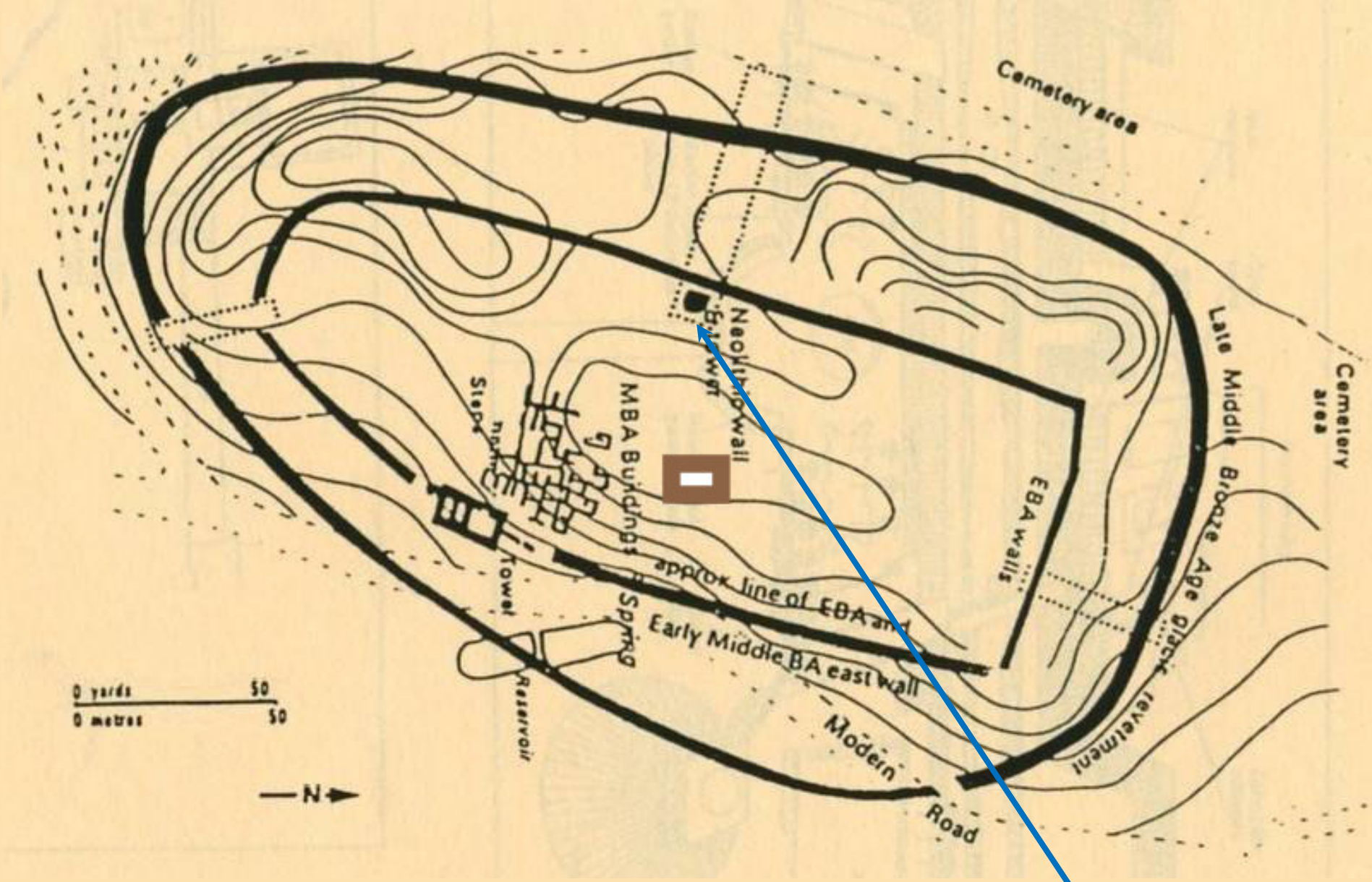
The PPN A and PPN B (conventionally dated to 7500–6000 BC) towns both featured walls built of rough stones. Both occupations came to an abrupt end. The Pottery Neolithic Age (5500–4500 BC) featured pits dug-out as deeply as 2 m, bearing Jericho's first pottery.

Settlement through the Early Bronze Age:

With the appearance of pottery came a change in the flint industry, especially with sickle blades. Above the pits were scanty remains of buildings. The houses were round with convex bricks.

A complete break in the pottery and artifacts at Jericho, as well as the usual erosion stage, speaks to an occupational gap. Toward the end of the Chalcolithic Period, a new culture came to reside at Jericho, characterized by their rock-cut-tomb burials, unlike the beneath-the-floor burials of earlier phases. The residents of the EBA IV (*ca*. 2100–2000 BC) apparently arrived in 3 waves, with each new culture boasting its own pottery style.

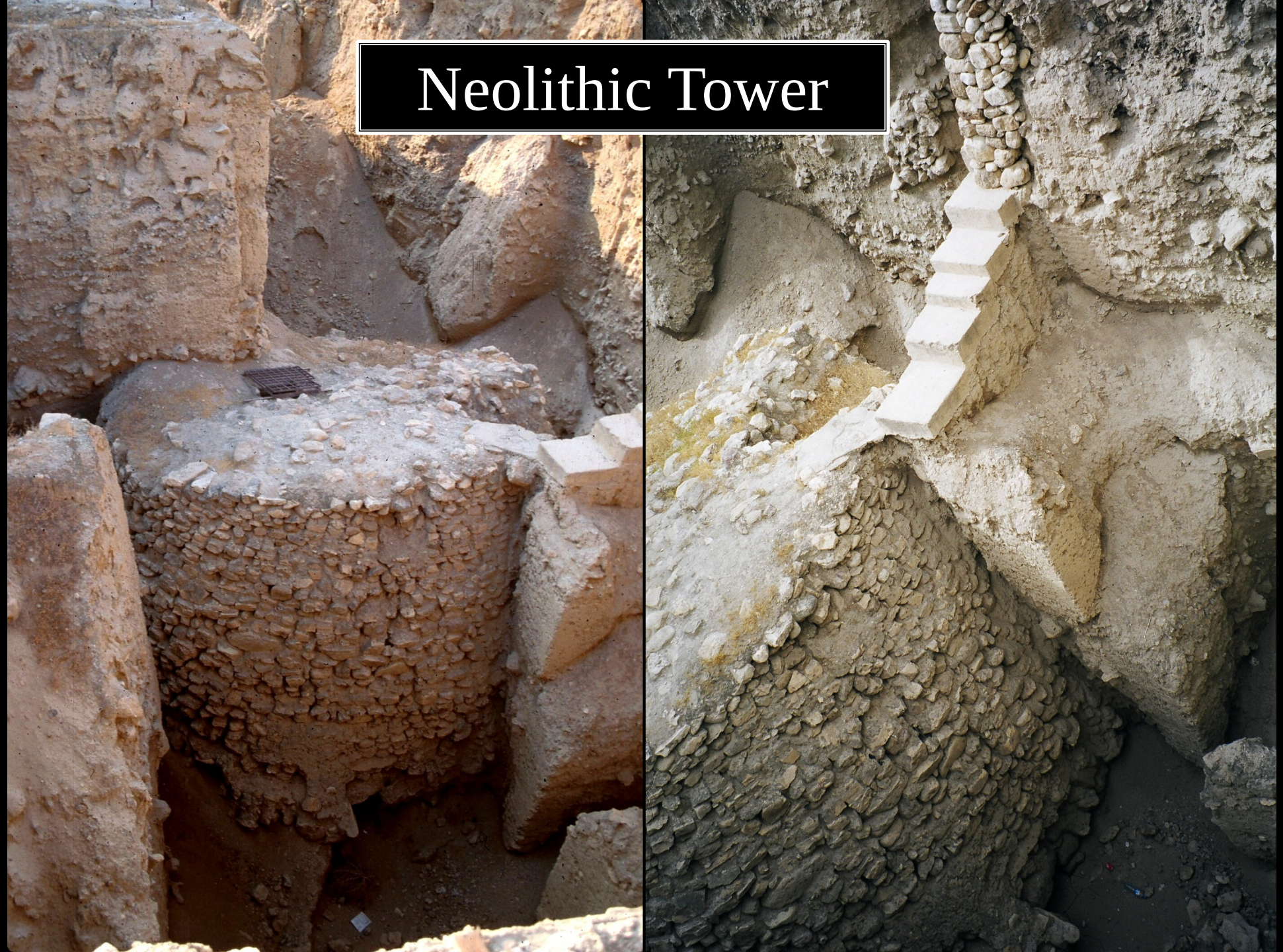
The end of the EBA at Jericho was sudden. A final stage of the town wall, which in at least one place shows signs of having been rebuilt in a hurried manner, was destroyed by fire.



Plan of OT Jericho

Neolithic Tower

Neolithic Tower



Neolithic Tower

JERICHO PERIOD:

Middle Bronze Age (2000–1560 BC)

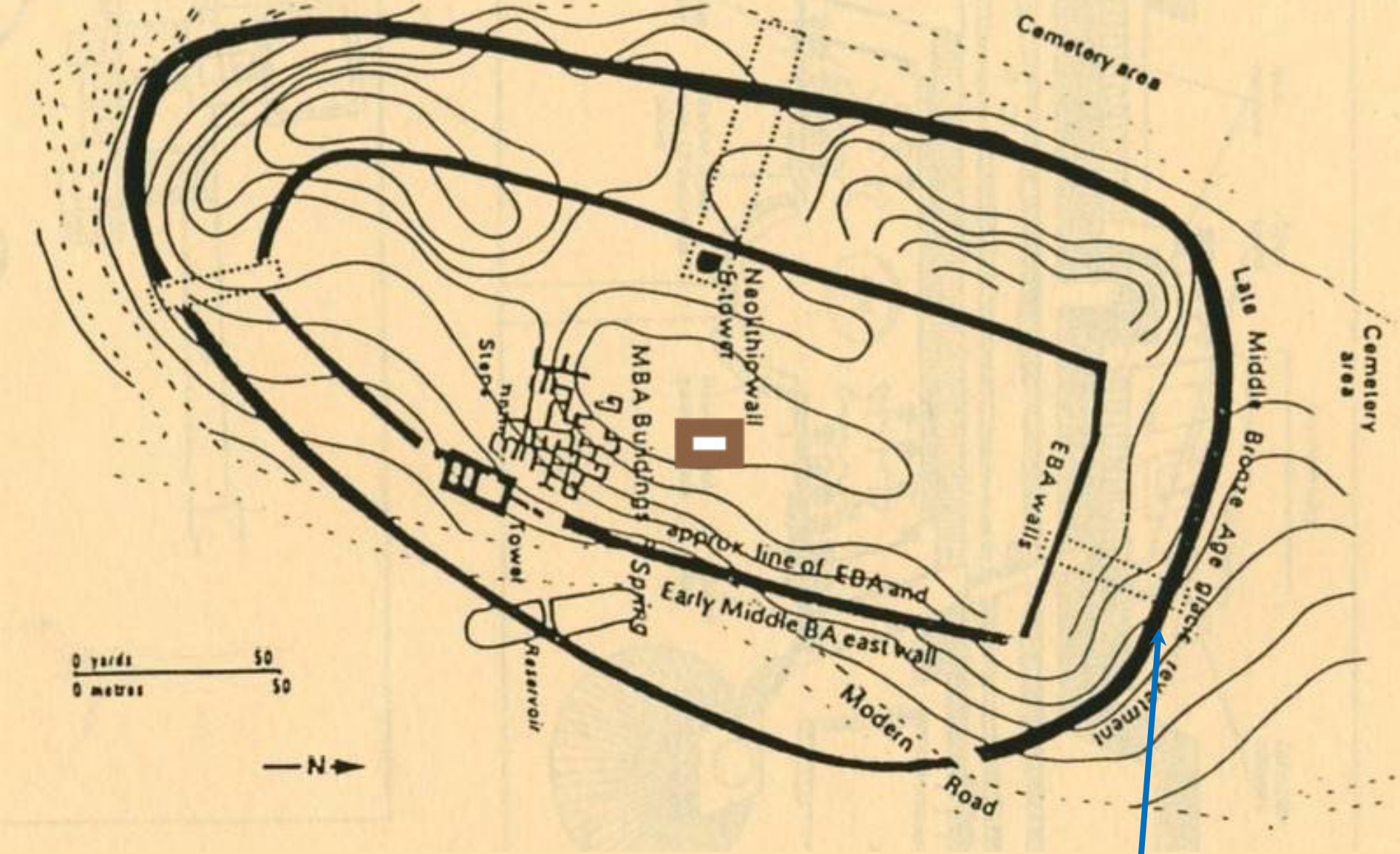
Archaeological Strata: Various

Middle Bronze Age Settlement:

Semi-nomads in tents were the first occupants in the Middle Bronze Age IIA (*ca*. 1900 BC). The first houses of the MBA had features quite different than those of the EBA: distinctive green bricks, irregular plans, and slighter buildings. This was no true urban center, though. Burials were performed in separate tombs.

All signs point to this being part of the great expansion of the Amorites, who formed an important population in both Cisjordan and Transjordan, and became a formidable foe for the Israelites. Town walls were erected in a fashion similar to those of Early Bronze Age IV.

The final stage of the Middle Bronze Age featured more of a town-plan, including a massive revetment wall that served as a first line of defense at the base of the mudbrick wall that rose above.



Plan of OT Jericho

Glacis, Revetment Wall

MBA Revetment Wall

MBA Revetment Wall

MBA Revetment
Wall

JERICHO PERIOD:

LBA I (*ca.* 1560–1406 BC)

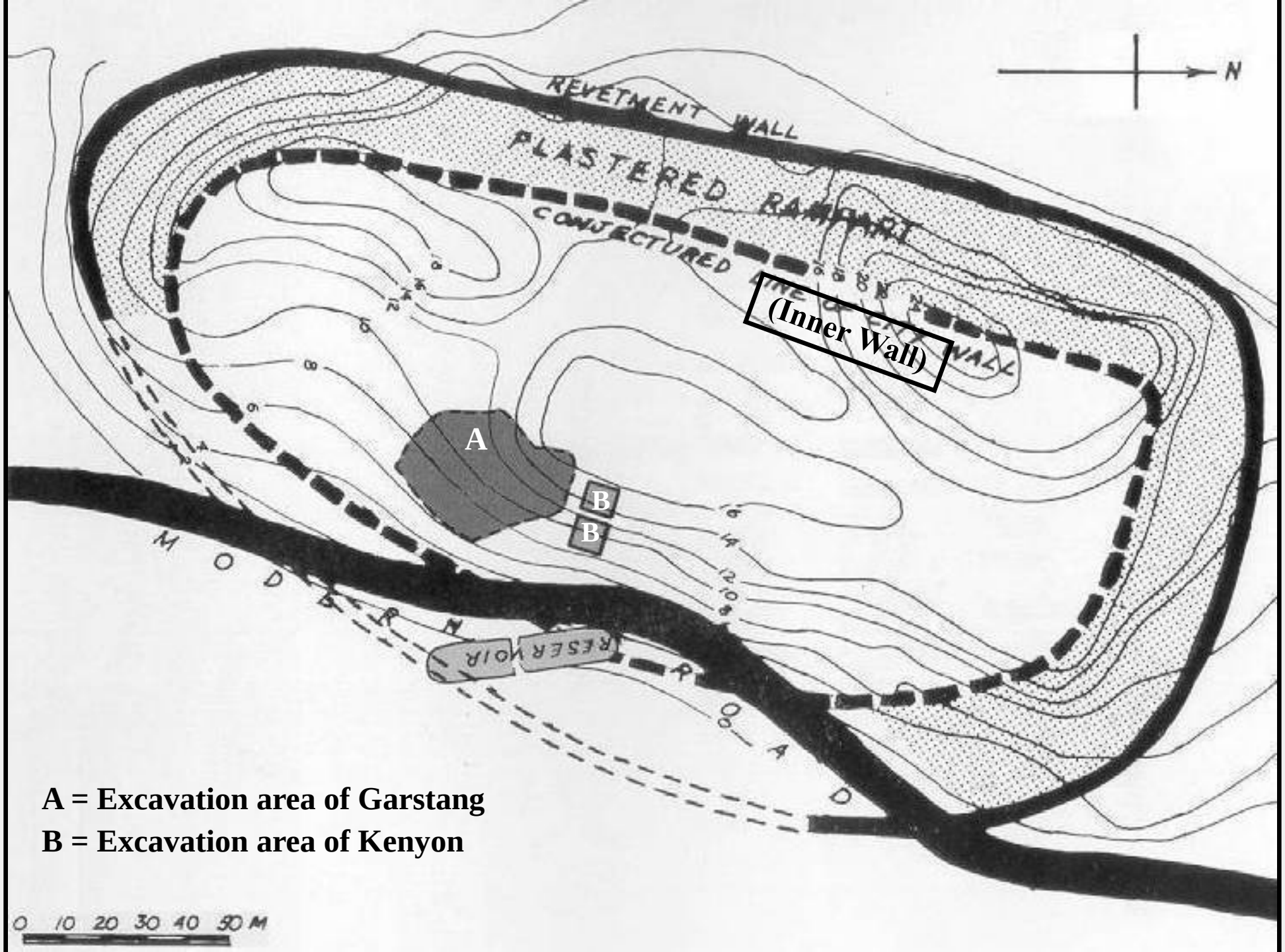
Archaeological Stratum: City IV

Late Bronze Age I Settlement:

The houses of City IV that were excavated in the 1930–1936 and 1952–1958 expeditions were small dwellings, with small and irregular rooms, lining two roads that in parts had shallow cobbled steps going up the slopes. “Many of these houses contained a large number of jars filled with grain,” as Kenyon admitted, and both Kenyon and Garstang (before her) had found.

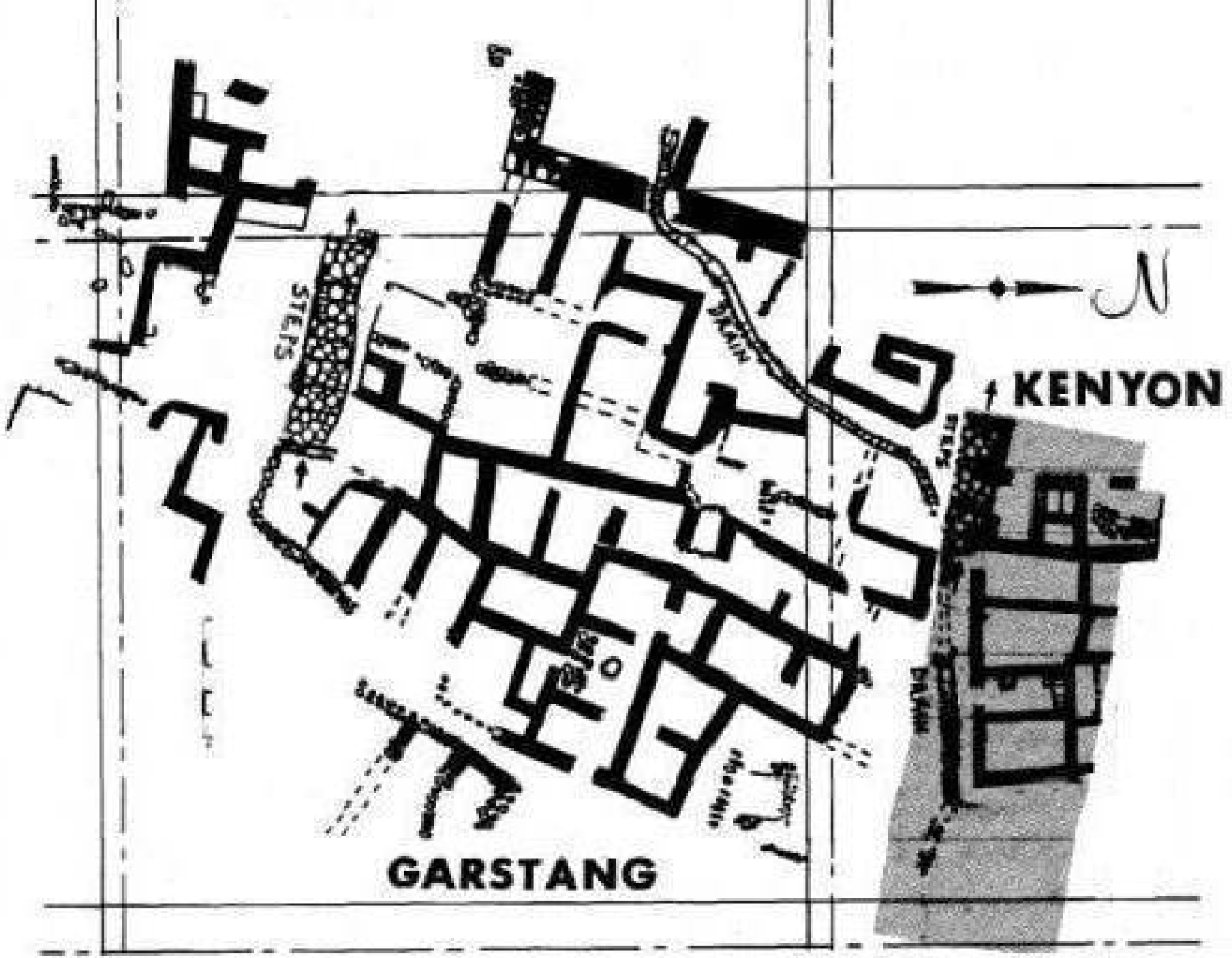
The paths/roads (of his Area A and her Area B) revealed that this was an ordinary part of town. Storerooms and shops were on the ground level, while “living rooms” were on the 2nd floor, which is quite understandable, given the heat in the Jordan Rift.

Garstang referred to the “Middle Building” that he found as a palace and dated it to the same era as the houses of City IV. Yet Kenyon rightly demonstrated that it belonged to a later date.

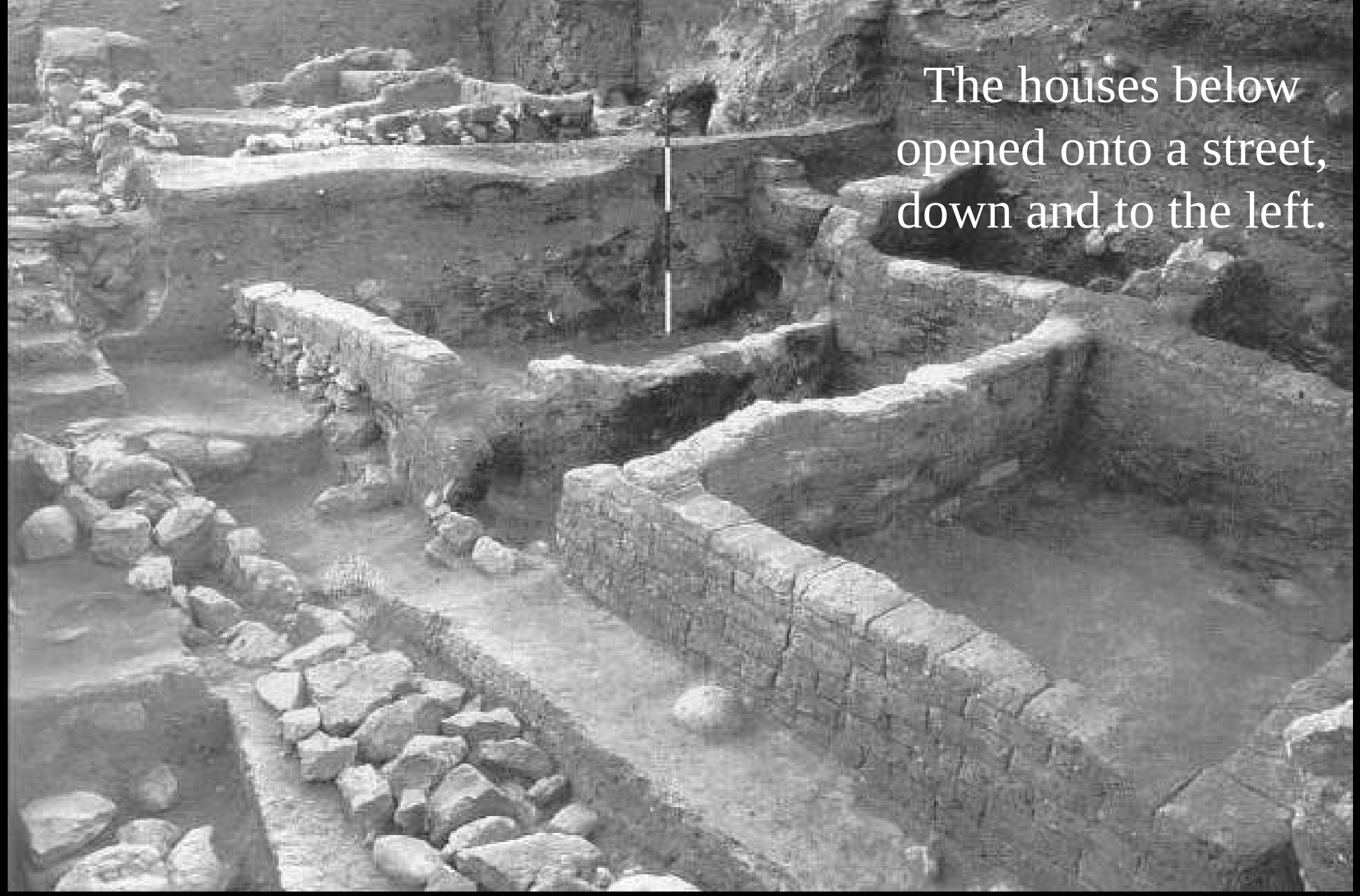


A = Excavation area of Garstang

B = Excavation area of Kenyon


KENYON
GARSTANG
STEPS
STEPS

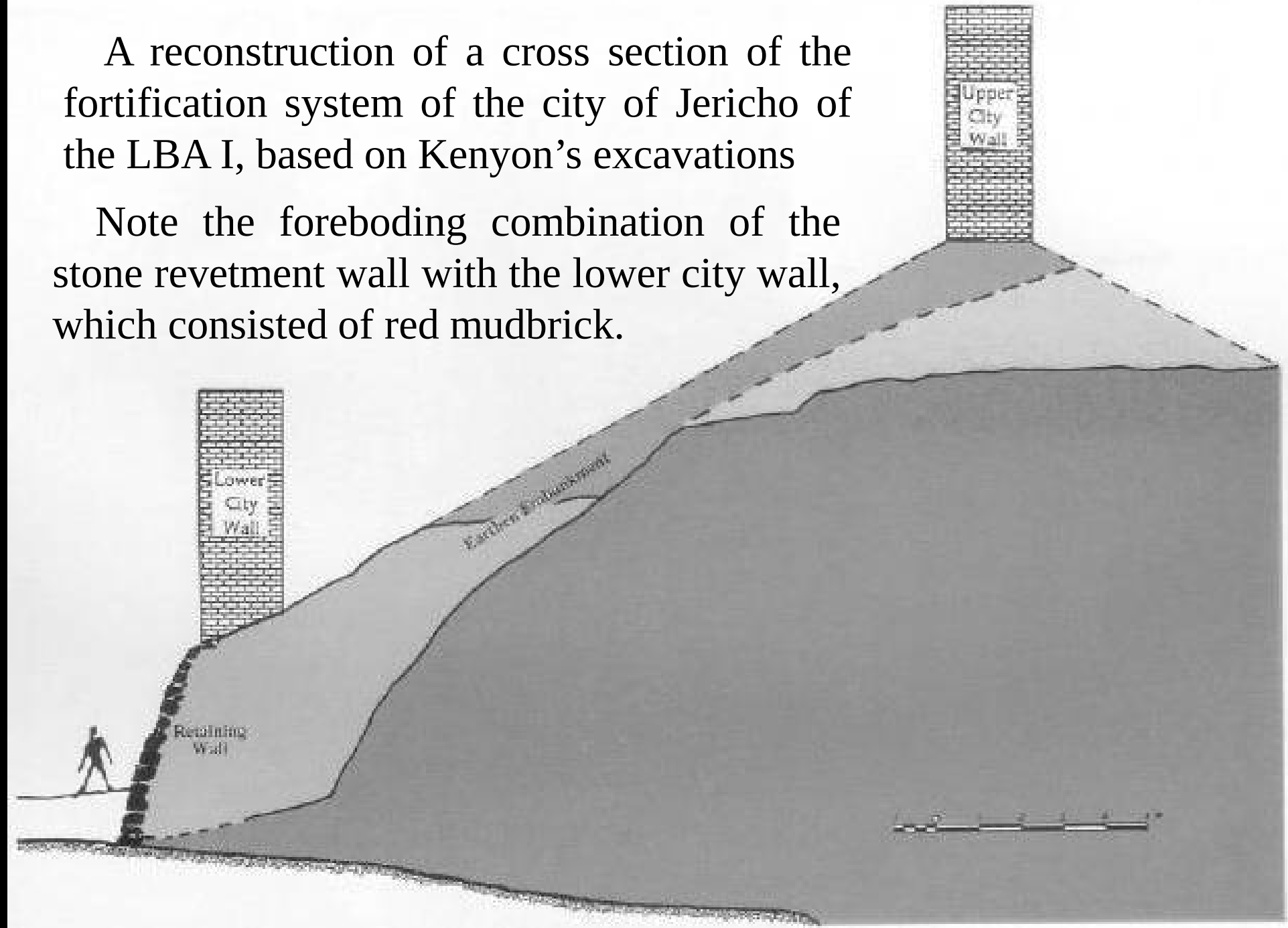
The Remains of the LBA-I City as Excavated by Garstang

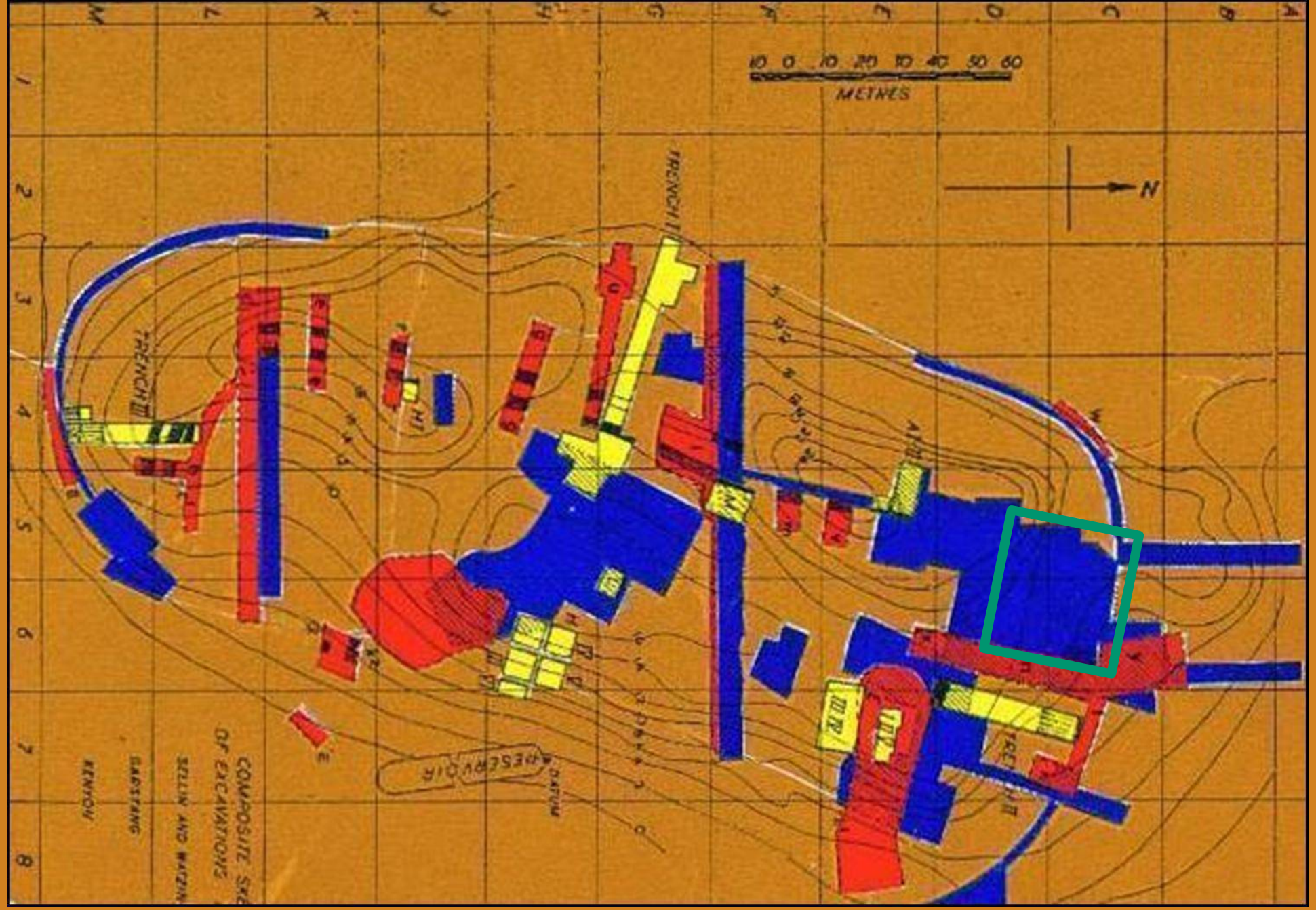


The Remains of the LBA-I City as Excavated by Kenyon

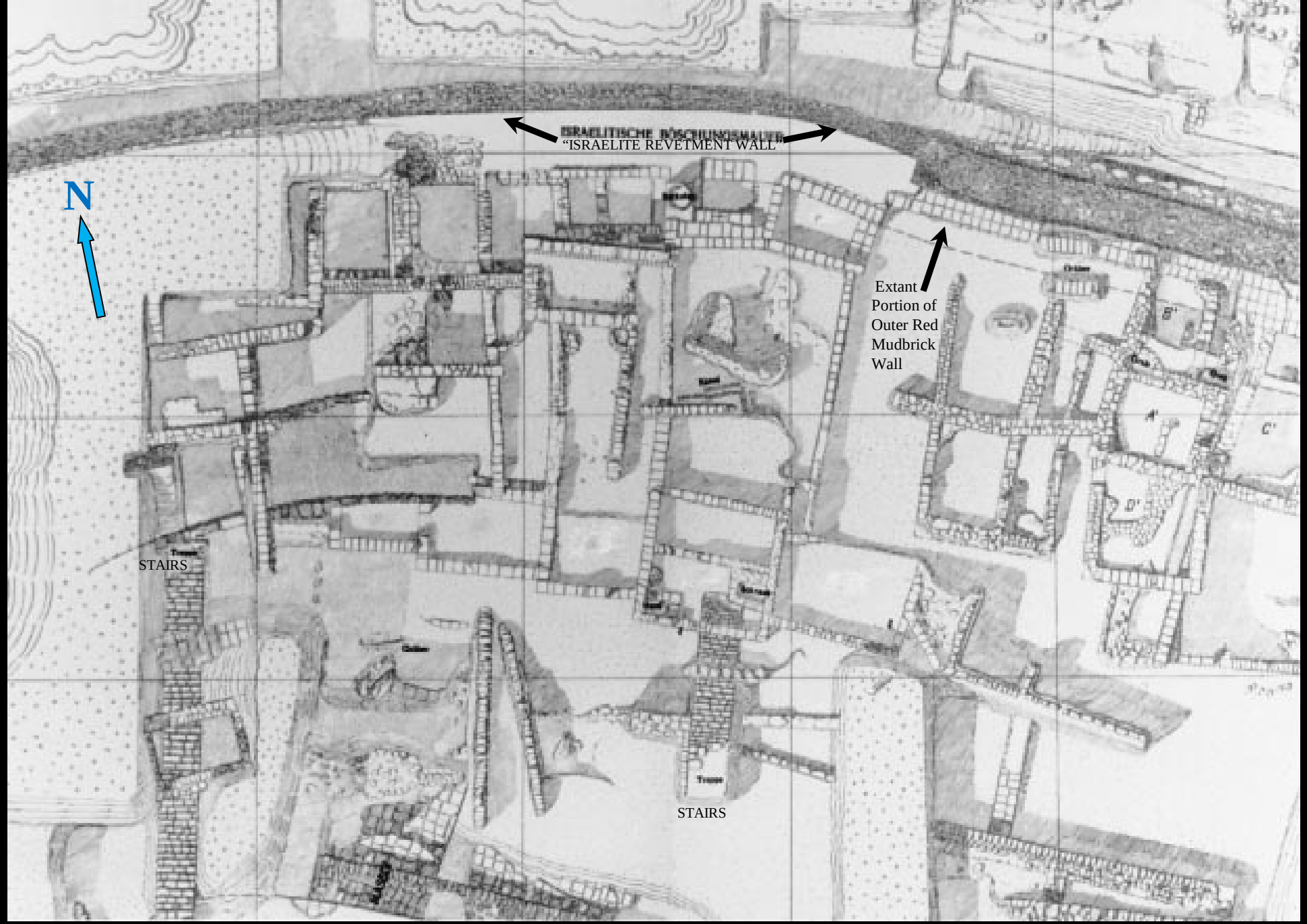
A reconstruction of a cross section of the fortification system of the city of Jericho of the LBA I, based on Kenyon's excavations

Note the foreboding combination of the stone revetment wall with the lower city wall, which consisted of red mudbrick.

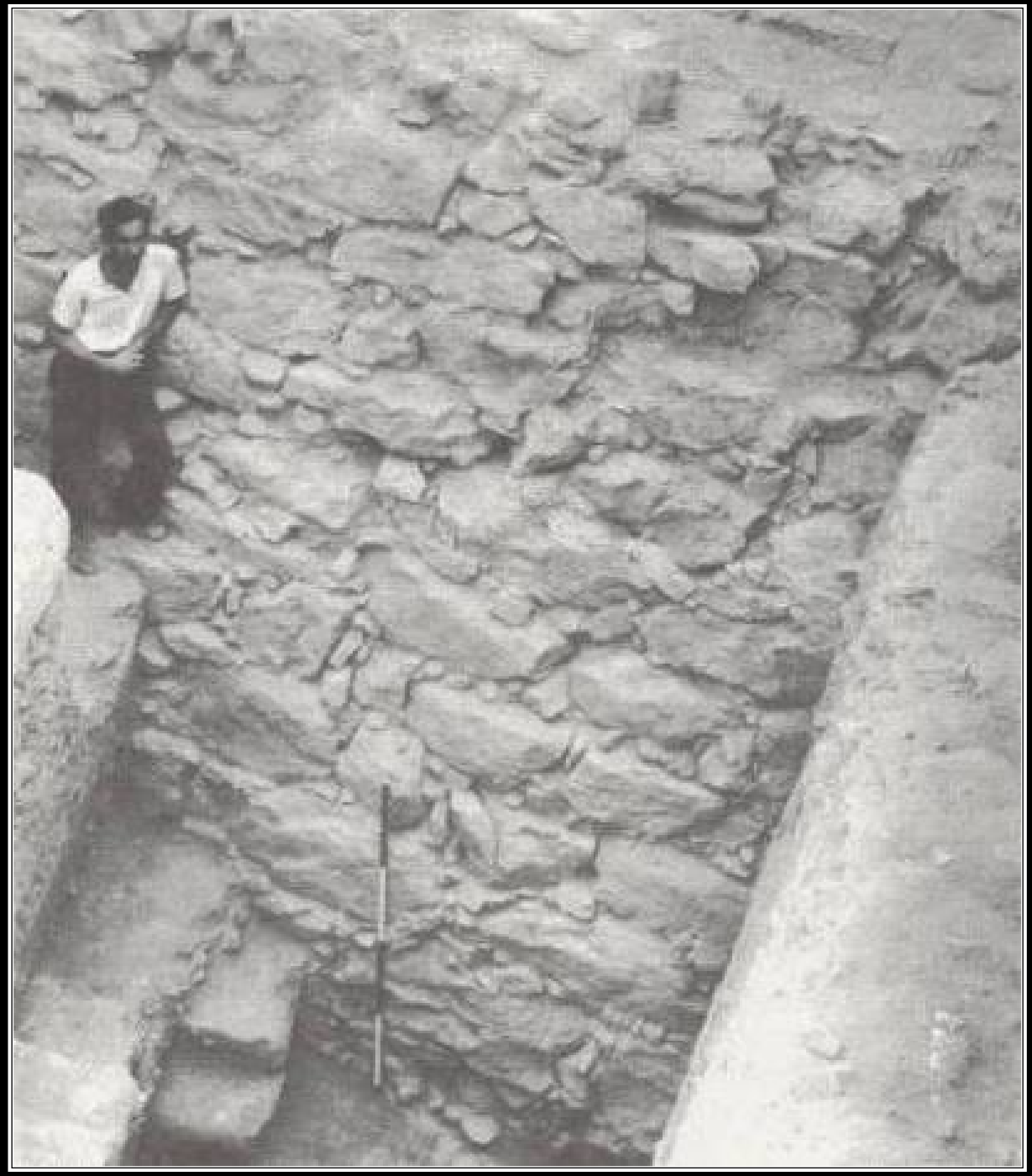




Note the northern part of the tel excavated by the Germans (green).



Plan from the Original Germano-Austrian Excavations (1907–1909) of City IV

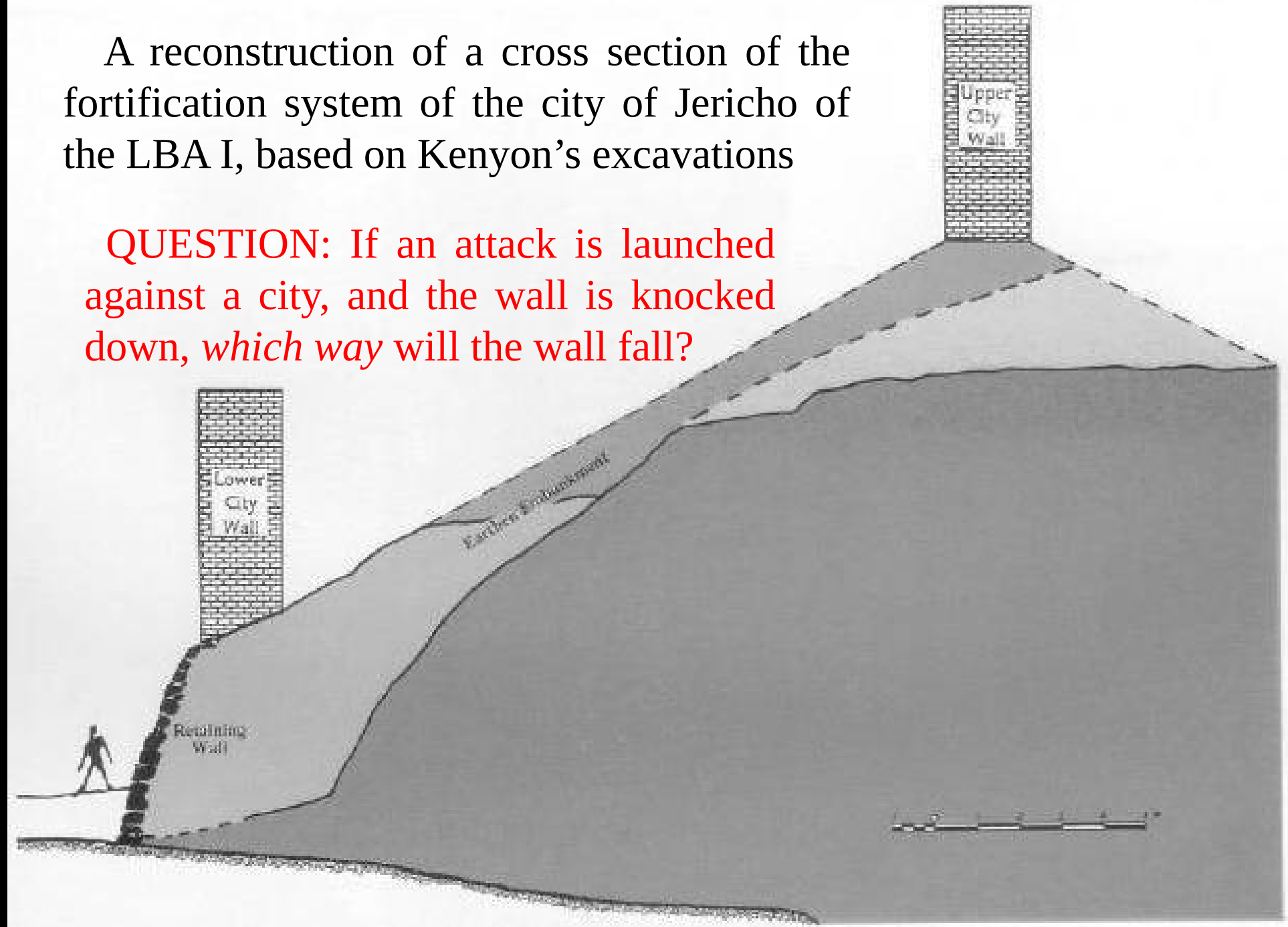


Towering Stone Revetment Wall of City IV

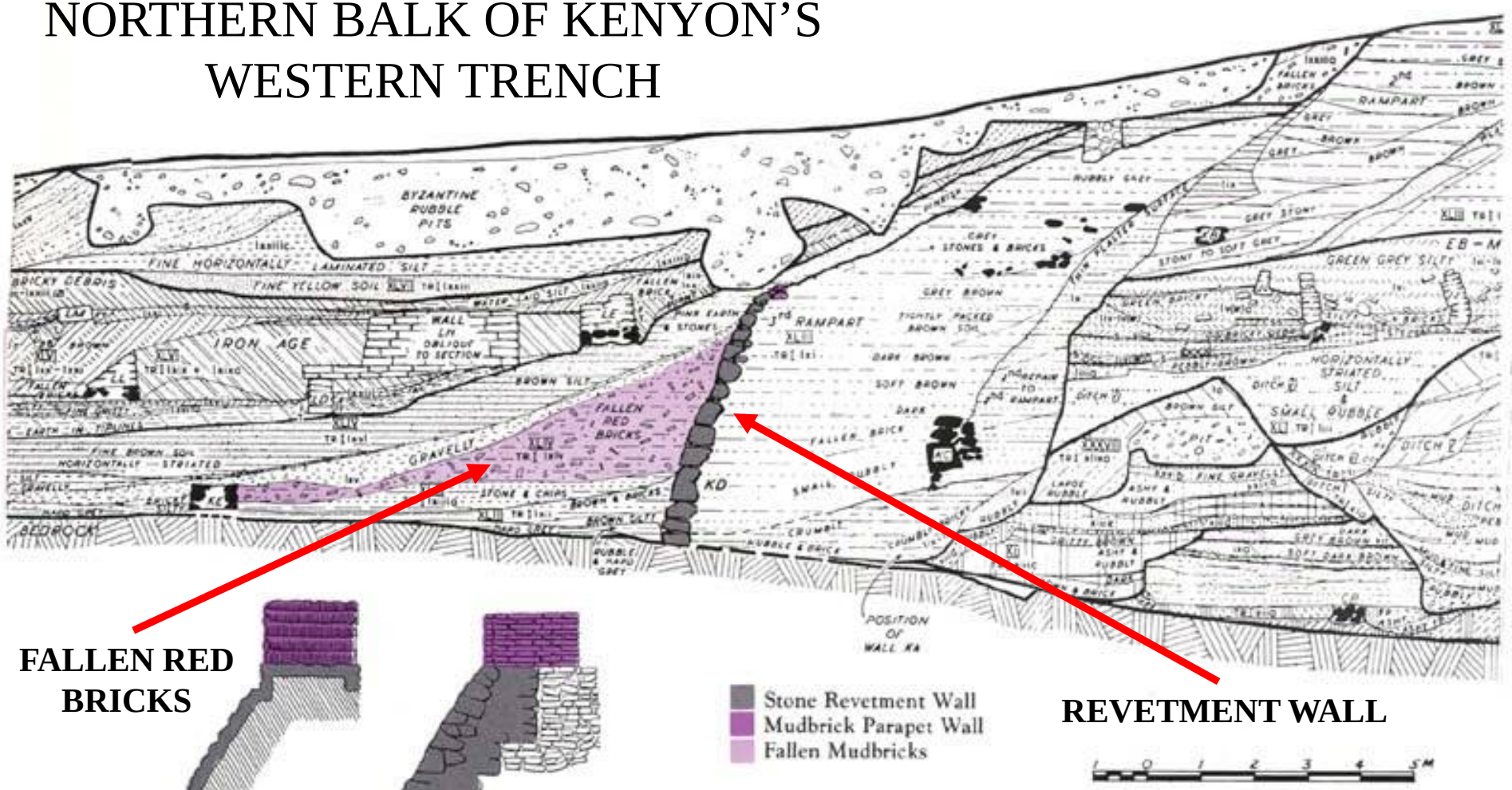
At the base of the tel was a stone revetment wall 4.65 m (15 ft) high. The revetment wall held in place a massive earthen embankment that was covered with a plastered rampart/face extending to the top of the tel. Two red walls made of red mudbrick protected the city: 1 atop the revetment wall and 1 on the earthen embankment.

A reconstruction of a cross section of the fortification system of the city of Jericho of the LBA I, based on Kenyon's excavations

QUESTION: If an attack is launched against a city, and the wall is knocked down, *which way* will the wall fall?



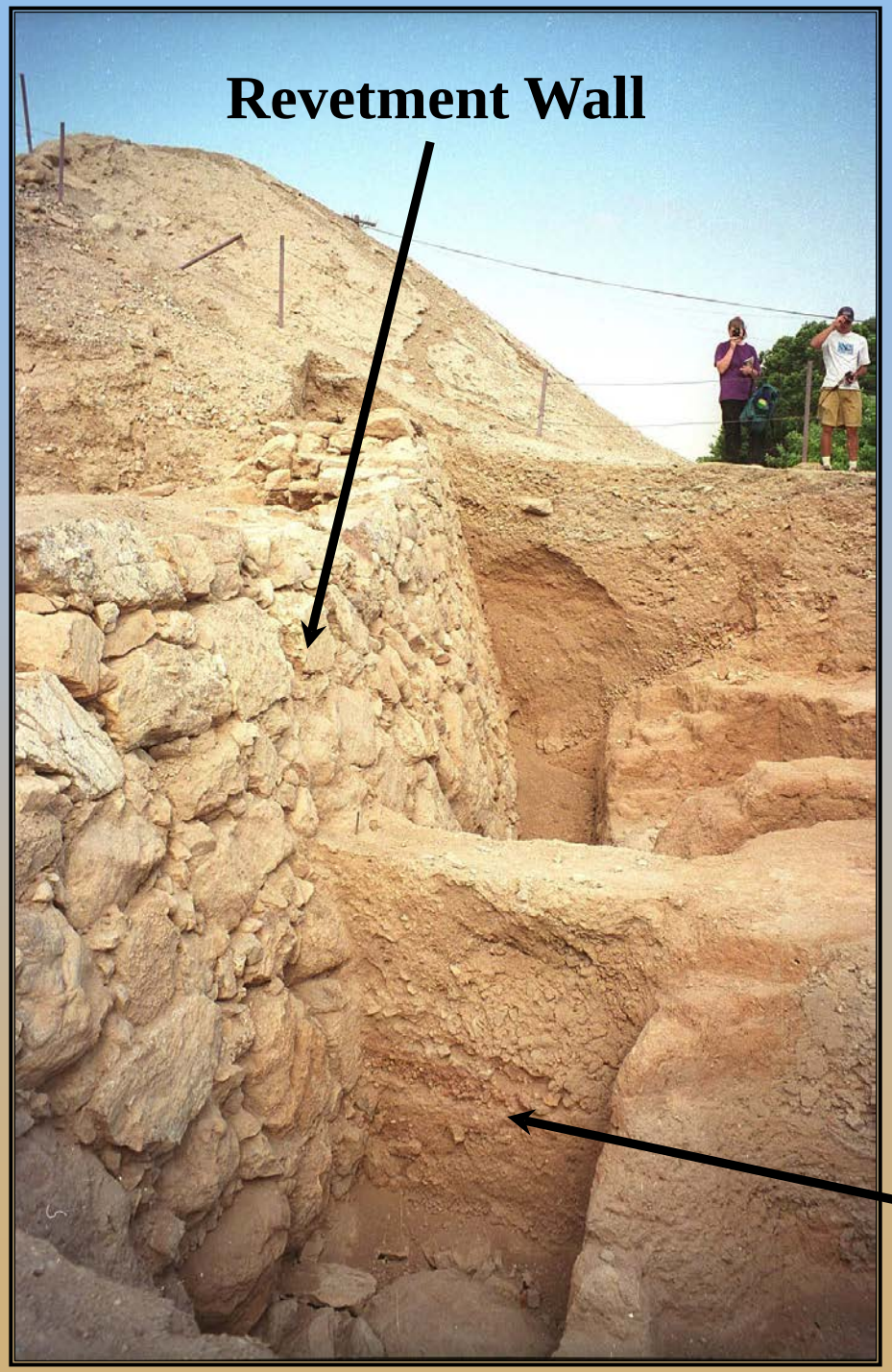
NORTHERN BALK OF KENYON'S WESTERN TRENCH



FALLEN RED BRICKS

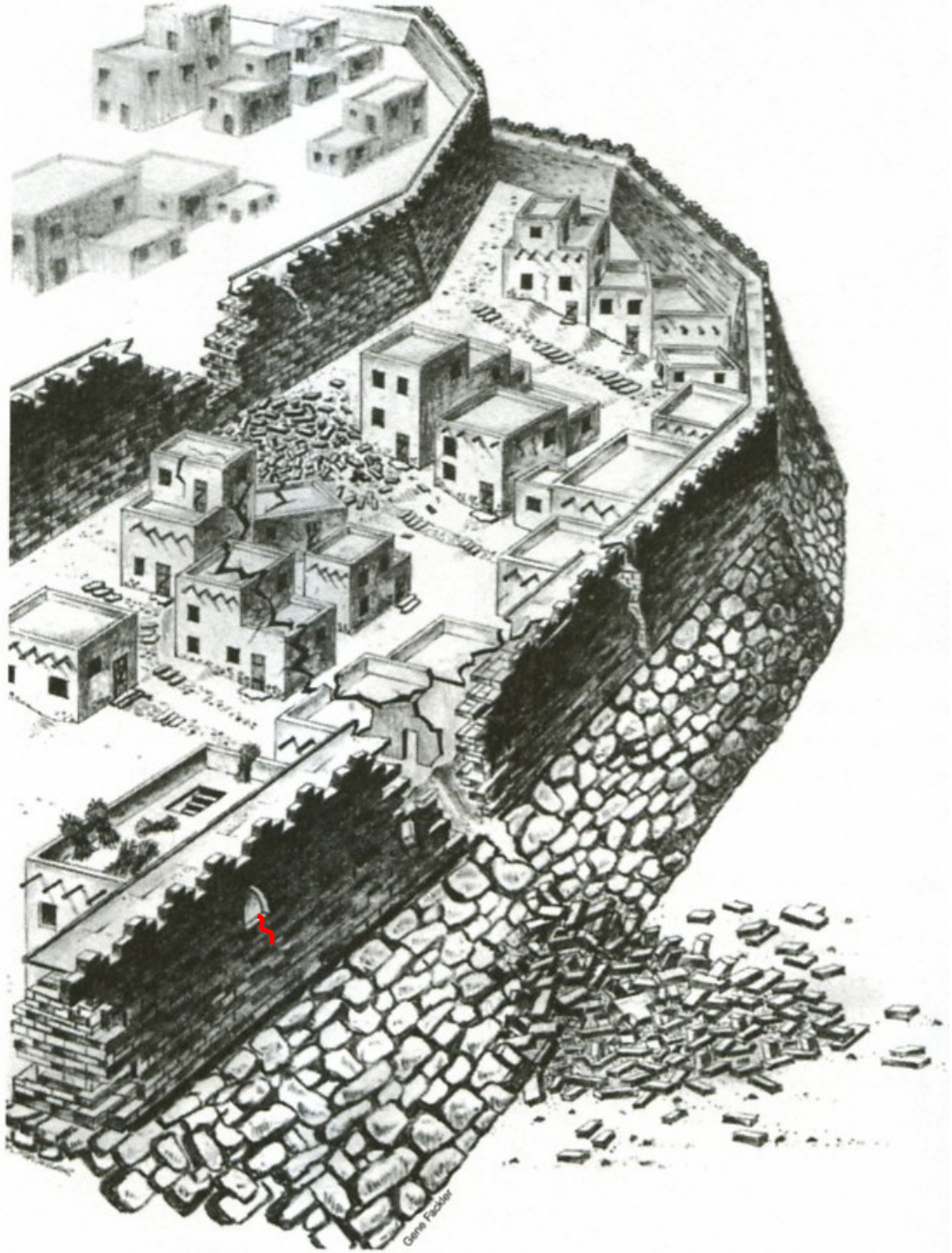
REVETMENT WALL

Northern balk of Kenyon's western trench, showing the fallen mudbrick residue from the collapsed city wall ("FALLEN RED BRICKS," to the left of the revetment/retaining wall).



Remains of Collapsed, Red-Mudbrick Wall on the Outer Side of the Revetment Wall

1997 Excavations of Italian team led by Lorenzo Nigro and Nicolo Marchetti



An Artist's Reconstruction of the Walls of Jericho's City IV.

The Jericho of the LBA I was defended by a slanted stone -revetment wall below, and a red-mudbrick wall immediately above it. To protect the citadel, another mudbrick wall rose up above the plastered rampart. Bryant Wood envisioned that Rahab's house stood above the stone revetment wall and was connected to the inside of the lower mudbrick wall. City IV was destroyed by a massive fire, though parts of the wall seem to have collapsed prior to the city's being set ablaze.

COLORED RENDITION

Real estate values here below the upper mudbrick wall must have been lower, since the houses were positioned on the embankment between the upper and lower city walls. Not the best place to live in a time of war! This area, no doubt, was the overflow from the upper city: the poor part of town, perhaps even a slum district.

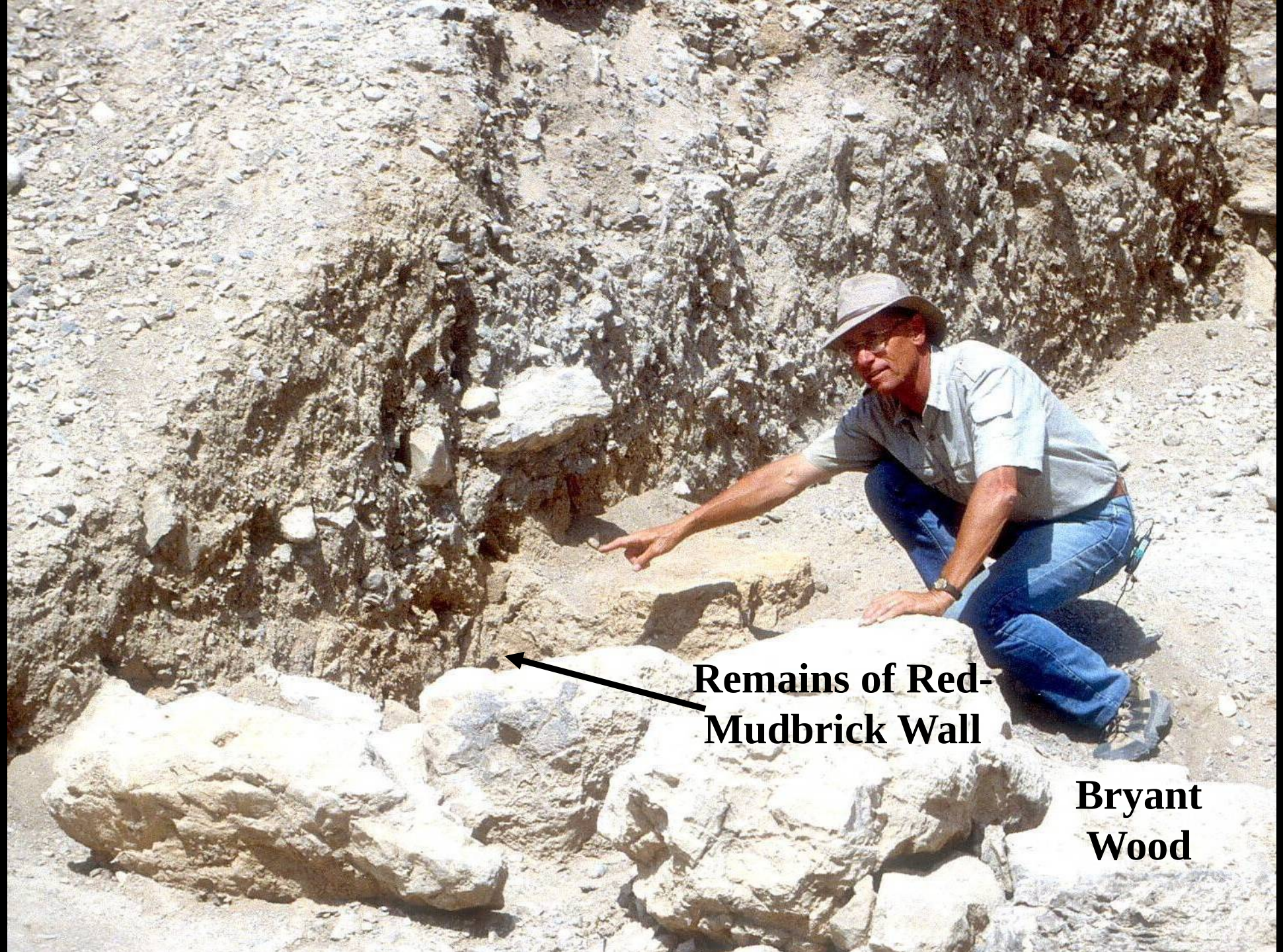
Drawing by Michael Carroll

Provided by Bryant Wood

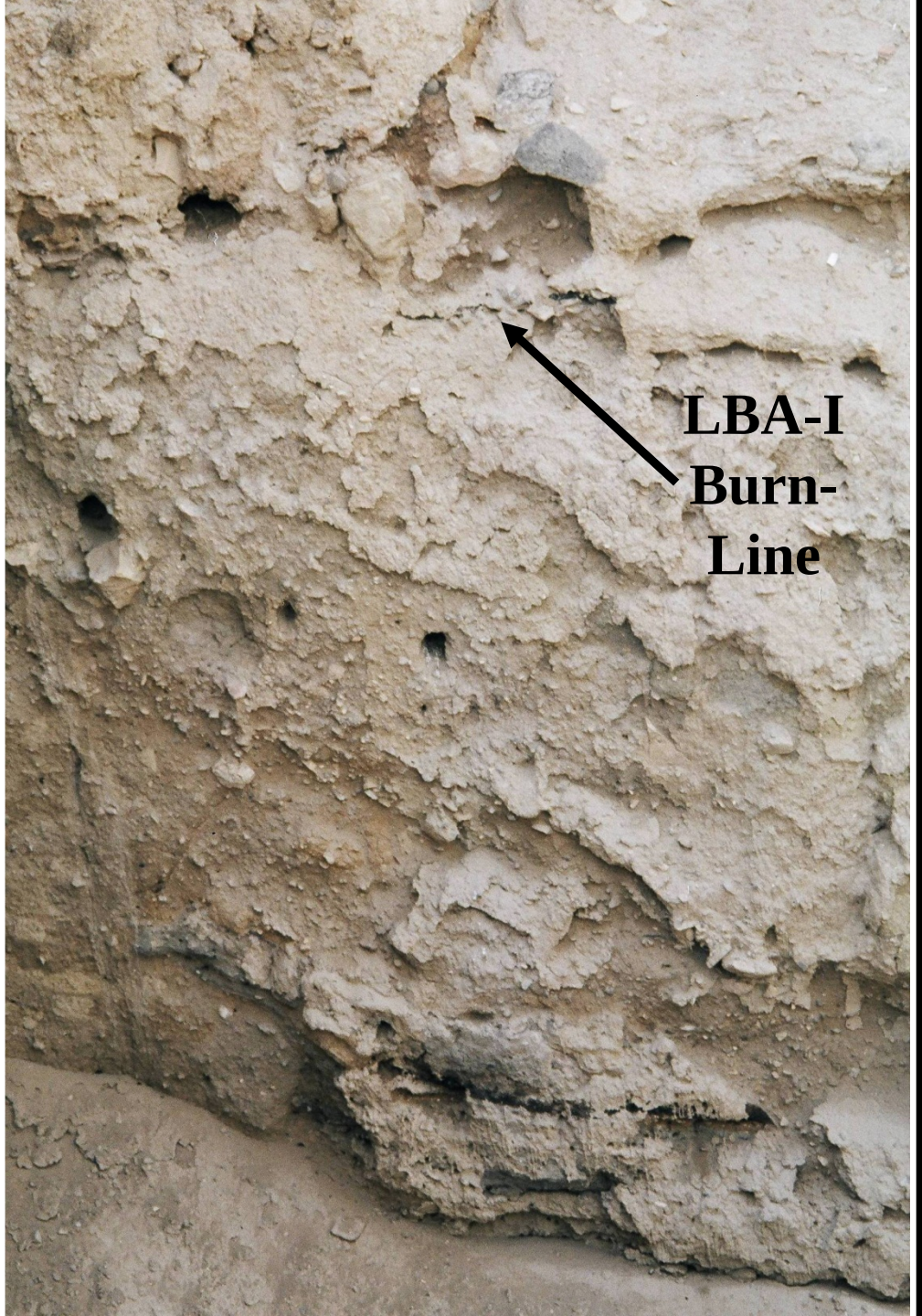
Retaining Wall at Right, and Balk with Red-Mudbrick Residue at Left

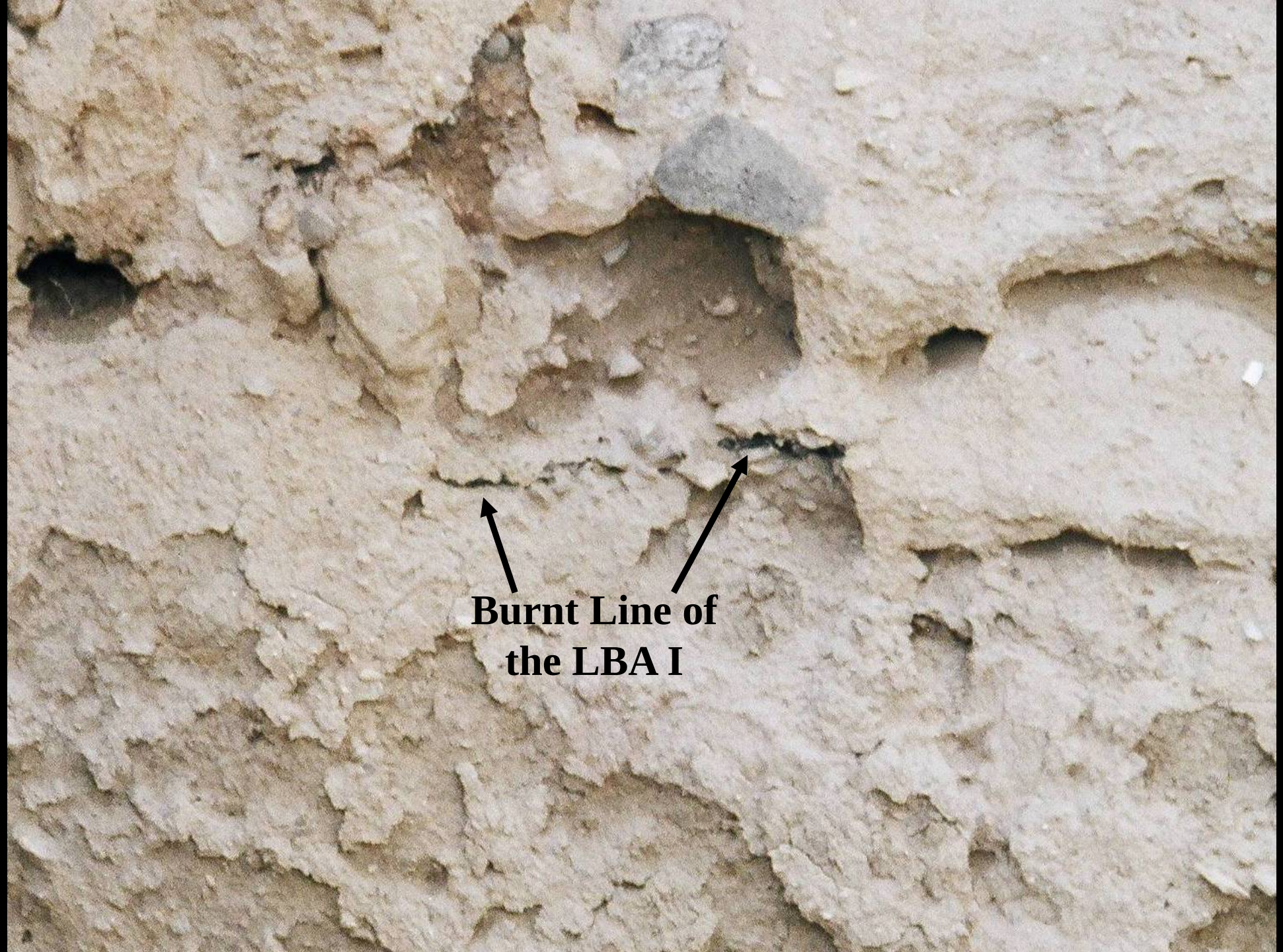
Residue of the Collapsed, Red-Mudbrick Wall (red layer, lower left)

CLOSEUP OF THE COLLAPSED, RED-MUDBRICK WALL

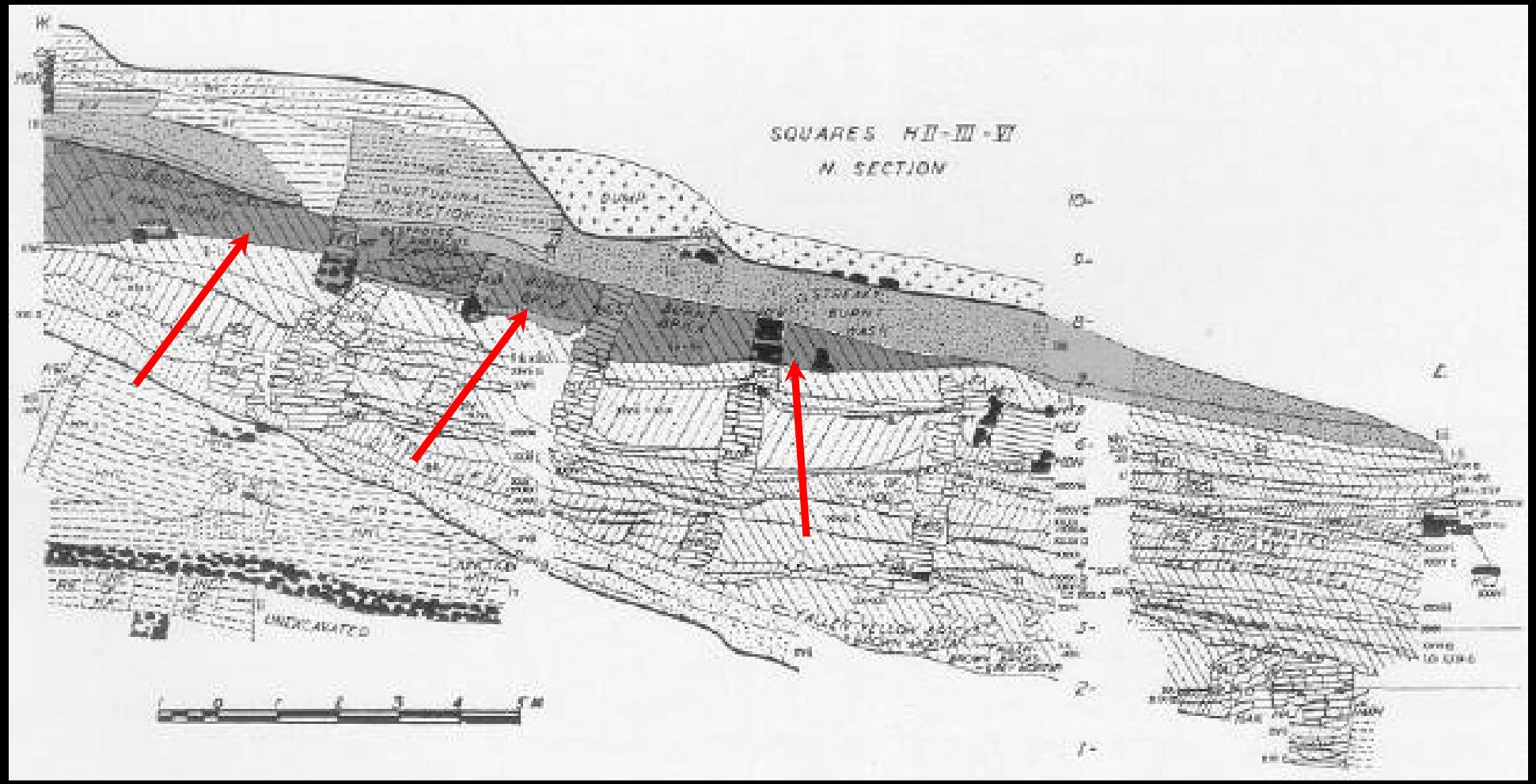

Remains of Red-
Mudbrick Wall
Bryant
Wood

Todd
Bolen
Remains of Red-
Mudbrick Wall


LBA-I
Burn-
Line


Burnt Line of
the LBA I

Burn Layer Excavated by Kenyon

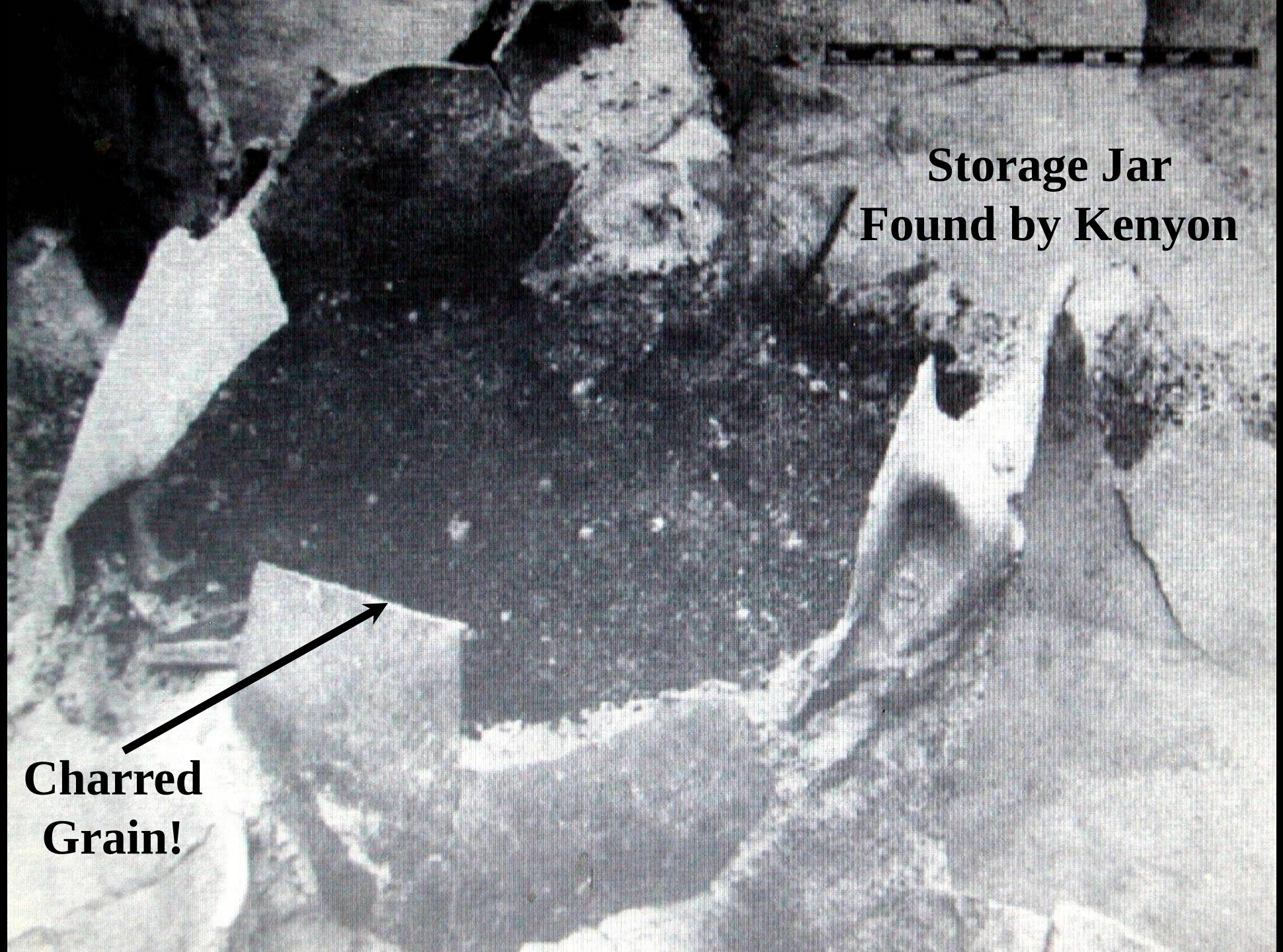


A cross section of Kenyon's excavation, showing house-walls from City IV. The lower shaded area is the burn layer, written "BURNT BRICK". Both excavators found that City IV was destroyed by a massive fire that left a layer of destruction debris 1 m or more thick across the entire excavational area.

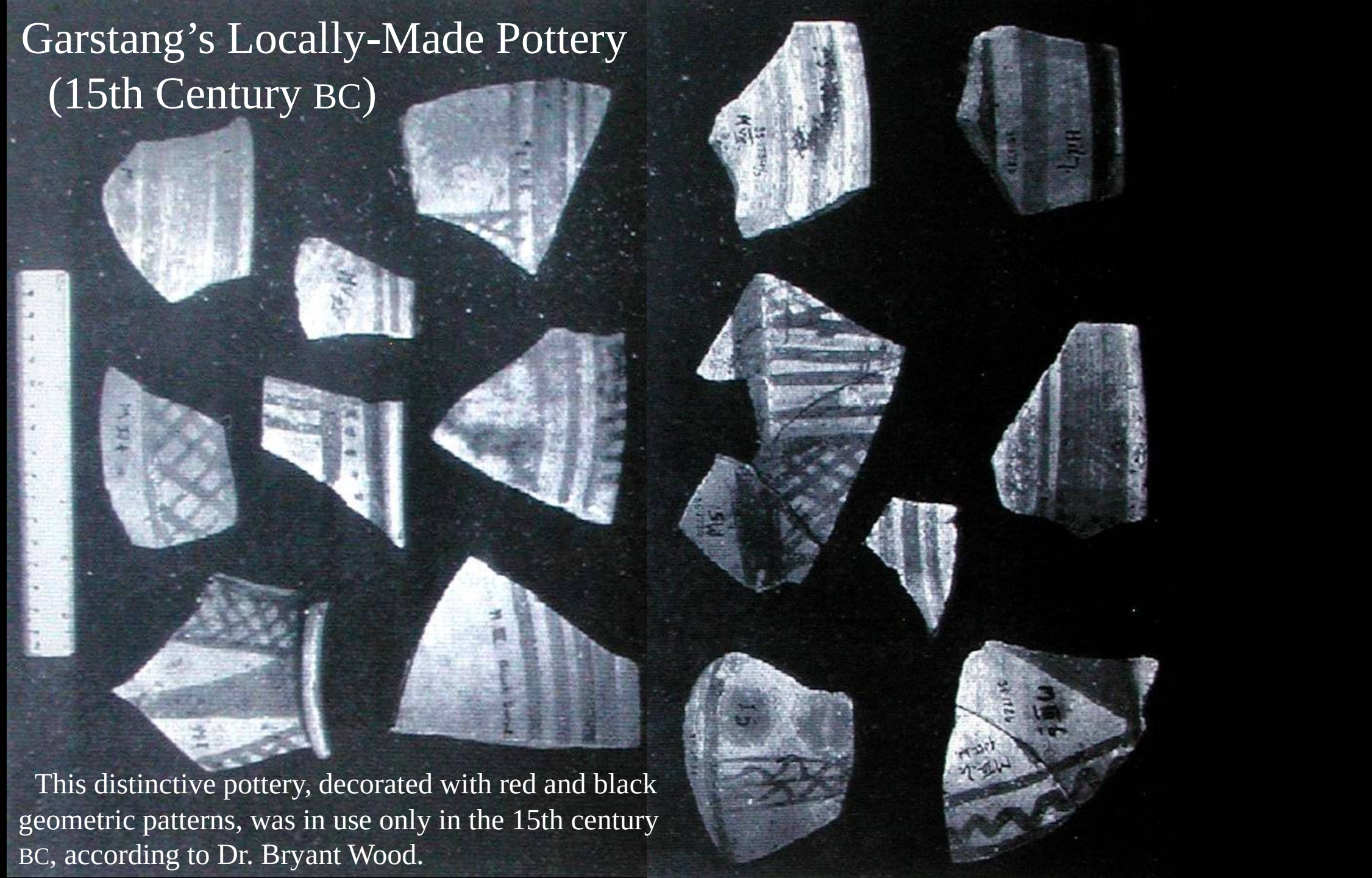
Storage Jars Filled with
Grain in Kenyon’s Balk

Storage Jars Filled with Grain in Kenyon's Balk

Garstang found these storejars, charred in the fire set by the Israelites to destroy Jericho, still full of grain when he excavated the city of LBA I. Their discovery points to a destruction that followed the spring harvest.


Storage Jar
Found by Kenyon
Charred
Grain!

Garstang's Locally-Made Pottery (15th Century BC)



This distinctive pottery, decorated with red and black geometric patterns, was in use only in the 15th century BC, according to Dr. Bryant Wood.