Lecture for the VERA-Seminar

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**Radiocarbon Dating of Bronze Age Stratigraphies at Ashkelon in comparison to Tell el-Dabca: The Flow of Time from Dynasty 12 to the Minoan Santorini Eruption.**

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Ashkelon was the major city-state along the southern Mediterranean coast of Canaan during the Middle Bronze Age (MB). Stratigraphic Phases 14, 13, 12, and 11 relate to four successive stages of a mudbrick city gate. The material culture of MB Ashkelon has been differentiated according to the sequence of the four gates and their associated ramparts, walls, and streets. Phase 10 (MB IIC) marks the end of the Middle Bronze Age stratigraphy and also the transition to the Late Bronze Age. Pumice pieces from the Minoan Santorini eruption were found at Ashkelon, as well as at Tell el-Dabca, the largest and most important MB site in Egypt in the eastern Nile Delta and the capital of the Hyksos. Stratigraphic correlation, based on material culture, exists between the two sites. Tell el-Dabca Strata H and G/4 (MB IIA, Dynasty 12/13) relate to Ashkelon Phase 14 (Gate 1). Tell el-Dabca Stratum G/1-3 (MB IIA, Dynasty 13) relates to Ashkelon Phase 13 (Gate 2). Tell el-Dabca Stratum E/3 (MB IIB, Dynasty 13) relates to Ashkelon Phase 12 (Gate 3). Concerning associations with the Hyksos: Tell el-Dabca Stratum E/1 (MB IIB, Dynasty 15) relates to Ashkelon Phase 11 (Gate 4) and Tell el-Dabca Strata D/3 and D/2 (MB IIC, Dynasty 15) relate to Ashkelon Phase 10. Radiocarbon dates of Ashkelon will be presented and compared with those of Tell el-Dabca, including the oldest strata that were found to contain Minoan Santorini pumice. The results are discussed in relation to conventional historical-archaeological age assessments.