

# Religion in the Middle Bronze Age / Canaan

also known as “Religion in the Middle Bronze Age / southern Levant”

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Entry tags: Religious Group, Canaanite Religions, Ancient Mediterranean, Syro-Palestinian Religion, Middle Bronze Age, southern Levant, Temple Buildings and Temple Cult

Evidence of religion and ritual in Canaan / southern Levant during the Middle Bronze Age comes from sacred architecture and ritual spaces, cultic paraphernalia, as well as from a variety of iconographic representations (votives in the form of metal and clay figurines, glyptic). Written sources are scarce: local and contemporary religious texts are lacking. However, some information relating to the Canaanite cult comes from contemporary textual material from neighboring regions (e.g., the texts from Mari or the Egyptian Execration texts dating to the Twelfth Dynasty). Ritual and mythological texts from Ugarit are also often used in the reconstruction of the Canaanite religion, but they are from north Syria and date to the Late Bronze Age. Overall, Canaanite religion does not express a homogeneous tradition; it was rather expressed in heterogeneous terms in the different cultic contexts, reflecting the diversity of the various micro-regions in the southern Levant. The evidence points to a polytheistic religion. Deities of various kinds and names were worshiped in local sanctuaries. Such deities were organized in a pantheon and associated with particular places, e.g. as patron gods of the Canaanite cities. Nevertheless, the precise identification of Canaanite gods and goddesses venerated in the different sanctuaries remains difficult, as depictions of deities are limited and are found mainly in the form of votives (e.g., small metal and clay figurines). Likewise, the reconstruction of the pantheon(s) and the relationships between the deities vary from place to place. Sanctuaries were ultimately spaces within which social cohesion and group unity were shaped, through both the worship of the deities and ritual acts, mainly centered on propitiation of divinity and healing. We register both roofed temples and open-air cult areas. Most of the evidence comes from the city temples, linked to the officially sponsored religion: the latter belong to the type of the monumental symmetrical long-room temple, the so-called *migdal* temple with origins in Syria, including the temples of Hazor (Areas A and H), Megiddo, Shechem, Pella and Tel Haror. In addition to the central temples, rural temples and minor shrines have been unearthed at the sites of Tell el-Hayyat, Tel Kitan, Givat Sharett and Nahal Rephaim; while a small extramural cult site has been excavated at Nahariyah. Temples were often associated to large open spaces: fenced courtyards with altars, raised podiums and *favissae*, which housed various religious activities and returned a rich cultic equipment (e.g., offering and libation tables, incense stands, figurines, ritual pottery vessels). At the same time, open-air cultic precincts characterize the Middle Bronze Age settlements: these areas of worship included different installations (platforms, altars, standing stones) and votive pits with offerings of various organic and non-organic materials. Hence, open cult spaces independent or associated with temples, were important communal focal points of worship and had a multi-functional character: they were the center of offering rituals, libations and sacrifices, feasting and commensality, final deposition of cultic material, festivals and processions, which involved the members of the community (possibly even at the end of pilgrimages)



Date Range: 2000 BCE - 1550 BCE

Region: Canaan.

Region tags: Canaan, southern Levant

The area of the southern Levant as defined at least from the mid-2nd millennium BCE based on historical sources. It corresponds to the territory presently occupied by the modern states of Israel, the

West Bank and Gaza, Jordan, and the southern portions of Syria and Lebanon.

### Status of Participants:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists    ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

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Print sources for understanding this subject:

– Source 1: Susnow, Matthew. 2021. The Practice of Canaanite Cult. The Middle and Late Bronze Ages (Ägypten und Altes Testament 106), Münster: Zaphon.

– Source 2: Katz, Jill C. 2013. The Archaeology of Cult in Middle Bronze Age Canaan: The Sacred Area at Tel Haror, Israel (Gorgias Studies in the Ancient Near East 3), Piscataway (N.J.): Gorgias Press.

Notes: Nakhai, Beth Alpert. 2001. Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel (ASOR Books 7). Boston: American Scholls of Oriental Research.

## General Variables

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### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

↳ Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In some cases, traits of religious syncretism seem to emerge (for example, with the Egyptian religion).

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

↳ Is the cultural contact neutral:

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religion have official political support

– Field doesn't know

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

## Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Nature of religious group [please select one]:

– Large religious group (unknown relationship to other religious groups, or presence of other religious groups unknown)

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Specific to this answer:

Region: Canaan .

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also “oral scriptures” (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Written sources begin to be documented in the southern Levant since the first half of the second millennium BCE, but until now local and contemporary religious texts are lacking.

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Reference: Beth Alpert Nakhai. *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel* (ASOR Books 7). Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research. isbn: 978-0897570572.

Reference: Matthew Susnow. *The Practice of Canaanite Cult. The Middle and Late Bronze Ages* (Ägypten und Altes Testament 106). Münster: Zaphon. isbn: 978-3-96327-142-7.



In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In general, limited portions of the Middle Bronze Age settlements have been excavated, therefore it is not possible to establish the percentage of the area taken up by the religious monuments.



Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:

– Square meters: 558

Notes: The most monumental temple was the migdal temple at Shechem: a large building 21.20 m × 26.30 m, with stone foundations 5.10 m wide, which supported a multi-storied superstructure of mudbricks and timber. The measures refer to the building only.

<https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/29/4/1>

<https://bryanwindle.files.wordpress.com/2022/06/image-1.png>

Reference: Lawrence Stager undefined. *The Fortress-Temple at Shechem and the "House of El, Lord of the Covenant"*. (Prescott Jr Williams , Theodore Hiebert undefined, Ed.), *Realia Dei: Essays in Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr.* at His

Retirement. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press. isbn: 0788506102.

↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Buildings are not preserved with their original elevation.

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Monuments have very variable dimensions.

↳ Height of average monument, meters:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Buildings are not preserved with their original elevation.

↳ In the largest settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

Notes: Archaeologists typically find adult burials in rock-cut tombs (cave tombs), with multiple interments over time. This continued use of the same burial place over multiple generations indicates a kinship-based group identity. Stone-built chamber tombs, shaft burials, stone-built cist tombs and pits also occur. These different burial types co-exist in intramural and extramural cemeteries, in relation to different demographic and social status. In addition, infant jar burials placed under houses/courtyards are widespread in Middle Bronze Age settlements.

Reference: David Ilan. Mortuary Practices at Tel Dan in the Middle Bronze Age: A Reflection of Canaanite Society and Ideology. (Stuart Campbell , Anthony Green, Ed.), *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Manchester Conference, 16th-20th December 1992* (Oxbow monograph 51). Oxford: Oxbow Books. isbn: 978-0946897933.

Reference: Kristine Garroway. Chapter 9. Child Burials in Canaan. (Kristine Garroway), *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household ( Explorations in Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations 3)*. Penn State University Press. isbn: 978-1-57506-295-2.

Reference: Beth Alpert Nakhai. When Considering Infants and Jar Burials in the Middle Bronze Age Southern Levant. (Itzhaq Shai, Jeffrey Chadwick, Louise Hitchcock, Amit Dagan, Chris McKinny, Joe Uziel, Ed.), *Tell It in Gath: Studies in the History and Archaeology of Israel. Essays in Honor of A. M. Maier on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday (Ägypten und Altes Testament*

90). Münster: Zaphon. isbn: 978-3-96327-032-1.

## ↳ Cemeteries:

### – Yes

Notes: See, e.g., the Jericho necropolis

Reference: Kathleen M. Kenyon. Excavations at Jericho. Volume One. The Tombs excavated in 1952–4. London: The British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.

Reference: Kathleen M. Kenyon. Excavations at Jericho. Volume Two. The Tombs excavated in 1955–8. London: The British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.

## ↳ Temples:

### – Yes

Notes: Middle Bronze Age city temples mainly belong to the type of monumental symmetrical long-room temple: the so-called migdal temples, linked to Syrian prototypes. See, e.g., the temples of Hazor (Areas A and H), Megiddo, Shechem, Pella or Tel Haror. In addition to these city temples, rural temples and minor shrines have been also unearthed, at Tell el-Hayyat, Tel Kitan, Givat Sharett and Nahal Rephaim.

Reference: Amihai Mazar. Temples of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages and the Iron Age. (Aharon Kempinski, Ronny Reich undefined, Ed.), *The Architecture of Ancient Israel: From the Prehistoric to the Persian Periods*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society. isbn: 9652210137; 9789652210135.

Reference: Sharon Zuckerman. *The Temples of Canaanite Hazor*. (Jens Kamlah, Ed.), *Temple Building and Temple Cult: Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant (2.–1. Mill. B.C.E.)* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 41). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. isbn: 9783447067843.

Reference: Matthew Susnow. *The Space Syntax of Canaanite Cultic Spaces: A Unique Category of Spatial Configuration within the Bronze Age Southern Levant*. issn: 0003-097X. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1086/712563>.

Reference: Stephen Bourke. *The Six Canaanite Temples of Tabaqat Fahil. Excavating Pella's 'Fortress' Temple (1994–2009)*. (Jens Kamlah, Ed.), *Temple Building and Temple Cult: Architecture and Cultic Paraphernalia of Temples in the Levant (2.–1. Mill. B.C.E.)* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 41). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. isbn: 9783447067843.

Reference: Jill Katz. *The archaeology of cult in Middle Bronze Age Canaan: the sacred area at Tel Haror, Israel* (Gorgias Studies in the Ancient Near East 3). Piscataway (N.J.): Gorgias Press. isbn: 978-1-59333-791-9.

Reference: Steven E. Falconer, Patricia L. Fall. *Bronze Age Rural Ecology and Village Life at Tell el-Hayyat, Jordan* (BAR international series 1586). Oxford: Archaeopress. isbn: 9781841717999.

Reference: Lawrence Stager. *The Fortress-Temple at Shechem and the "House of El, Lord of the Covenant"*. (Prescott Jr Williams, Theodore Hiebert, Ed.), *Realia Dei: Essays in Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Edward F. Campbell, Jr. at His Retirement*. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press. isbn: 0-7885-0610-2.

Reference: Aharon Kempinski. *Megiddo: A City-state and Royal Centre in North Israel*

(Materialien zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Archäologie, Bd. 40). München: Beck. isbn: 9783406319341.

↳ Altars:  
– Yes

↳ Devotional markers:  
– Yes

↳ Mass gathering point [plazas, courtyard, square. Places permanently demarcated using visible objects or structures]:  
– Yes

↳ Other type of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes [specify]: Open-air cult places, with different kinds of cultic installations (standing stones/massebot, altars, stone basins, pits, etc.).

Notes: See, e.g.: - the "High Place" at Gezer, with its monumental row of standing stones/massebot (Macalister 1912, 381–406; Dever 2014); - the open-air cult area at Megiddo, from the beginning of the second millennium BCE (Kempinski 1989, 178–181, plans 2–4); - the open-air cultic precinct on the acropolis of Hazor, with its row of unworked, plain standing stones/massebot (Ben-Ami 2006; 2010). For the "High Place" at Gezer: <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/wp-content/uploads/gezer-standing-stones.jpg> For the Middle Bronze Age massebot in the cultic precinct of Hazor: [https://www.asor.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/76-2Hazor\\_Fig22.jpg](https://www.asor.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/76-2Hazor_Fig22.jpg) [https://www.asor.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PID000110\\_Israel\\_Hazor\\_2017\\_06\\_Standing-Stones-1024x576.jpg](https://www.asor.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PID000110_Israel_Hazor_2017_06_Standing-Stones-1024x576.jpg)

Reference: Robert Alexander Macalister. The Excavation of Gezer, 1902–1905 and 1907–1909. Vol. II. London: John Murray.

Reference: Doron Ben-Ami. The Middle Bronze Age Cultic Enclosure at Hazor. (Paolo Matthiae , Frances Pinnock , Lorenzo Nigro , Nicolò Marchetti undefined, Ed.), Proceedings of the 6th International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 5 May – 10 May 2009 [i.e., 2008], "Sapienza", Università di Roma. Volume 3. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. isbn: 978-3447062176.

Reference: Doron Ben-Ami. Mysterious Standing Stones. Biblical Archaeology Review, 32(2) issn: 0098-9444.

Reference: William G. Dever. The Middle Bronze Age "High Place" at Gezer. issn: 0003-097X. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5615/bullamerschoorie.371.0017>.

Reference: Aharon Kempinski. Megiddo: A City-state and Royal Centre in North Israel (Materialien zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Archäologie, Bd. 40). München: Beck. isbn: 9783406319341.

Is iconography present:

– Yes

↳ Where is iconography present [select all that apply]:

- At home
- Only religious public space
- Some public spaces

↳ Are there distinct features in the religious group's iconography:

– Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not):

– No

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic):

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract symbol):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Portrayals of afterlife:

– No

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Humans:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other features of iconography:

– Yes



Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: This is the case, for example, of the extramural small cult site at Nahariya: place of outdoor ritual activities, feasting, and possible destination for pilgrimages.

Reference: Liat Naeh. Nahariyah. (Eric Orlin, Ed.), *The Routledge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*. New York: Routledge. isbn: 9780415831970.

Reference: Moshe Dothan. Sanctuaries along the Coast of Canaan in the MB Period: Nahariyah. (Avraham Biran, Ed.), *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times. Proceedings of the Colloquium in Honor of the Centennial of the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion Jerusalem 14-16 March 1977*. Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology.

Reference: Imanuel Ben-Dor. A Middle Bronze Age Temple at Nahariya.

Reference: Haskel J. Greenfield. The Zooarchaeology of Cult: The Animal Remains from Moshe Dothan's Excavations of the Middle Bronze Age Canaanite Temple Complex at Nahariya, Israel. (Aren M. Maeir , George A. Pierce, Ed.), *To Explore the Land of Canaan. Studies in Biblical Archaeology in Honor of Jeffrey R. Chadwick (Archaeology of the Biblical Worlds 4)*. De Gruyter. isbn: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110757804-007>.

Reference: Dvor Namdar , Anat Cohen-Weinberger , Sharon Zuckerman. Towards a New Understanding of MB IIB Cult Practices: Analyses of Seven-Cupped Bowls from the Shrine of Nahariya. (Itzhaq Shai , Jeffrey R. Chadwick , Louise Hitchcock , Amit Dagan , Chris McKinny , Joe Uziel), *Tell it in Gath: Studies in the History and Archaeology of Israel: Essays in Honor of A.M. Maeir on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday (Ägypten und Altes Testament 90)*. Münster: Zaphon. isbn: 978-3-96327-032-1.



Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

– Field doesn't know

Are pilgrimages present:

– Yes



How strict is pilgrimage:

– Field doesn't know

## Beliefs

### Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Field doesn't know

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: Funerary rituals, bone treatment and grave goods suggest a belief in afterlife.



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Reincarnation in this world:

– Field doesn't know

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Field doesn't know

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes



Human sacrifices present:

– No



Animal co-sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: It must be pointed out, however, that often it is impossible to say whether, in a tomb, an animal was sacrificed or simply provided for food. Funerary feasting is another explanation for the deposition of faunal remains. Intentional burials of equids (for the most part identified as donkeys) associated with human tombs are a typical feature of the Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant, as well as in the Egyptian Delta. Donkey burials not associated with human graves also occur (e.g., foundation deposits or ritual interments, as in the sacred area of Tel Haror).

Reference: Brian Hesse , Paula Wapnish , Jonathan Greer. Scripts of Animal Sacrifice in Levantine Culture-History. (Anne Porter M. , Glenn Schwartz M., Ed.), Sacred Killing: The Archaeology of Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns. isbn: 978-1-57506-236-5.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes



Personal effects:

– Yes

↳ Valuable items:

– Yes

↳ Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):

– No

Notes: Few special artifacts that can signify wealth come from the Middle Bronze Age tombs. Overall, there is scarce evidence of attributed rank or wealth differences in the mortuary remains.

↳ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):

– Yes

Notes: E.g., metal weapons, toggle-pins and jewelry; bone and ivory inlays; stone vessels; faience bottles; Egyptian-style scarabs; Syro-Mesopotamian-style cylinder seals

↳ Other valuable/precious items interred:

– Yes [specify]: Imported objects

Notes: E.g., Syro-Mesopotamian cylinder seals, Egyptian scarabs, Egyptian stone vessels

↳ Other grave goods:

– Yes

Notes: Mainly pottery vessels (in particular, jugs and juglets which probably contained scent or oil); at times textiles, mats, wooden containers and wooden furniture (beds and stools, very well-preserved in the Jericho tombs).

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Reference: David Ilan. Mortuary Practices at Tel Dan in the Middle Bronze Age: A Reflection of Canaanite Society and Ideology. (Stuart Campbell, Anthony Green, Ed.), *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Manchester Conference, 16th-20th December 1992* (Oxbow monograph 51). Oxford: Oxbow Books. isbn: 978-0946897933.

↳ As cenotaphs:

– No

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

↳ Family tomb-crypt:

– No

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– Yes

Notes: Tombs are found both in extramural cemeteries (e.g. Jericho/Tell es-Sultan) and beneath domestic architecture (e.g. Tel Dan).

↳ Other formal burial type:

– Yes [specify]: Infant jar burials

Notes: A widespread phenomenon during the Middle Bronze Age is that of the infant jar burials. The jars were domestic storage jars, buried under the walls or floors of houses or under courtyards, although sometimes they were also deposited in communal tombs. The jar usually contained an infant younger than one year and a few grave goods (one or two small vessels and at times a scarab or a blade). Infant jar burials dated to the Middle Bronze Age have been found at Akko, Kabri, Tel Dan, Hazor, Beth Shean, Aphek, Dothan, Megiddo, Taanach, Tell el-Farah (N), Tel Mevorakh, Tel Miqne/Ekron, Tel Qasile, Gezer, Hebron, Tell el-Ghassil, and other sites in the southern Levant. The fact that child burials differed from those of adults, and that children were buried in a way that would keep them close to home, could be linked to the fact that children were not viewed as full members of society. It is possible, for example, that they have not yet undergone initiation or integration rites.

Reference: Beth Alpert Nakhai. When Considering Infants and Jar Burials in the Middle Bronze Age Southern Levant. (Itzhaq Shai, Jeffrey Chadwick, Louise Hitchcock, Amit Dagan, Chris McKinny, Joe Uziel, Ed.), *Tell It in Gath: Studies in the History and Archaeology of Israel. Essays in Honor of A. M. Maier on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Ägypten und Altes Testament 90). Münster: Zaphon. isbn: 978-3-96327-032-1.

Reference: Kristine Garroway. Chapter 9. Child Burials in Canaan.. (Kristine Garroway), *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household* ( Explorations in Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations 3). Penn State University Press. isbn: 978-1-57506-295-2.

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– No

Notes: The main deities of the pantheon remain the same throughout the region, but each city has its own main patron god/goddess.

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: However, some places of worship and cult installations have been associated with ancestor worship. Textual data also suggest that some rituals may be related to communication with, or caring for, deceased or deified ancestors. Evidence of cult of the ancestors in the West Semitic tradition emerges, for instance, from the texts of Mari and Ugarit.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere (in the dark, at

home):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings knows your basic character (personal essence):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have other knowledge of this world:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings can reward:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings can punish:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

– Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: As indicated by the iconographic representations (votives in the form of metal and clay figurines, and glyptic) and some textual sources, the Canaanite religion during the Middle Bronze Age was a polytheistic religion, which recognized and worshiped gods and goddesses of various kinds and names. These deities were venerated as local deities, each Canaanite city having its own main and patron god, and were organized into pantheons. However, precise identification of Canaanite gods and goddesses associated with the different local sanctuaries remains problematic, as depictions of deities are limited and are found mainly in the form of votives. Furthermore, the principal male and female deities often have similar attributes and epithets, and share representative forms (e.g., the bull was associated with numerous deities, including the storm god Ba'al or Hadad, El and the moon god). Among the deities we can mention: El, the creator, depicted in Canaanite art as a seated male figure with his arms raised as if to bless; the storm god Ba'al, owner and defender of fertile lands, depicted in bronze votive figurines as a young man with his hand raised in a gesture of victory or represented by means of a bull, his symbolic animal; Asherah, the mother of the gods; Astarte, the goddess of both love and war. In addition to these principal deities, other gods and goddess are attested, with specific domains: Resheph, Horon, Dagan, Anat, Qadeshet etc. The fact remains that most of the information on Canaanite deities originates from the Late Bronze Age ritual and mythological texts from Ugarit (in northern Levant), but it is not certain that LBA religion at Ugarit reflects Canaanite religion in general or that of the earlier Middle Bronze Age. Local and contemporary religious texts or archives are lacking; however, echoes of a multitude of deities are documented in certain local cuneiform tablets, as well as in theophoric elements attested in south Levantine names.

↳ Organized by kinship based on a family model:

– Yes

↳ Organized hierarchically:

– Yes

↳ Power of beings is domain specific:

– Yes

↳ Other organization for pantheon:

– Field doesn't know

### Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Field doesn't know

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Field doesn't know

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Field doesn't know

### Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– Field doesn't know

Is an eschatology present:

– Field doesn't know

### Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

## Practices

### Membership Costs and Practices



Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: There is no archaeological or textual evidence for this.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: There is no archaeological or textual evidence for this.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Notes: There is no archaeological or textual evidence for this.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Yes

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to small-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Yes

↳ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:

– Field doesn't know

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:

Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Is there use of intoxicants:

– Field doesn't know

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– Field doesn't know

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– Field doesn't know

## Society and Institutions

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### Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– Other [specify in comments]

Notes: A network of small city-states, centered on fortified and spatially organised urban settlements, which controlled the surrounding territory, villages and manors.

Reference: Margreet L. Steiner, Ann E. Killebrew. *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant*. OUP Oxford. isbn: 9780191662546.

Reference: Raphael Greenberg. *The Archaeology of the Bronze Age Levant*. Cambridge University Press. isbn: 9781107111462.

### Welfare

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Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– Field doesn't know

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– Field doesn't know

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– Field doesn't know

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– Field doesn't know

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

## Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– Field doesn't know

## Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– Field doesn't know

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– Field doesn't know

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– Field doesn't know

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– Field doesn't know

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an

institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– No

Notes: They use an Akkadian cuneiform writing system similar to that used in the Syro-Mesopotamian region.

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– Field doesn't know

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Field doesn't know

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

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