Chinese Translation of the Qur‘an

Chinnereth

I. Archaeology

Tel Kinrot (Arab. Tell el’-Orme), unanimously identified with ancient Chinnereth (Fritz/Münger 2002: 2–4), is covering an area of ca. 10 ha on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee (map ref. 25,1000/75,2775 [NIG]). The strategically well-positioned site is located on a small pass along the Via Maris. It features material remains dating from the Chalcolithic to the late Ottoman period with significant gaps in the settlement sequence especially during the Early Bronze Age II. The last significant settlement at Tel Kinrot was a small fortress town – 0.8 ha in size – that was heavily fortified by a two-phased defense system; unfortunately only little undisturbed architecture along with finds in situ from these periods could be unearthed (Fritz/Münger 2002: 8–11). This is in distinct contrast to the Early Iron Age remains, which are extraordinarily well preserved on the lower mound. They not only attest a high degree of city planning and the use of a strong fortification wall which is both atypical for this period, but also shed light on a highly diversified society with economic ties spanning from Egypt to Northern Syria that amalgamated into a multitude of cultural footprints (e.g., Münger/Zangenberg/Zwickel 2009). However, a place name k-n-n-r-t is already attested by Tiglat-pileser III during the Assyrian conquest in 734/733 BCE. After this devastating event the site was only sparsely resettled again and henceforth mainly used for agricultural purposes.

Bibliography:

- Münger, S., “Handle with Care” – Notes on Stamp-Stamp Impressions on Jar Handles and a Bulla from Early Iron Age Tell el-’Oreme/Tel Kinrot,” ZDPV 125 (2009) 116–38.

II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The toponym Chinnereth (also spelled Kinneret) refers in the HB/OT usually either to the Sea of Galilee as (yam) kinneret (Num 34:11; Josh 13:27 and Deut 3:17) or (yam) kinûrōt (Josh 11:2 and 12:3) or to the wider region surrounding the lake as kol kinrôt (1 Kgs 15:20). It may well be that the particular shape of the lake actually inspired its own name. If viewed from an elevated position (like, e.g., from nearby Mount Arbel), it resembles the outlines of a lyre (Heb. kinôr; contra Fritz: 42–43).

Only Josh 19:35 knows of an actual settlement named after the lake, where Chinnereth is mentioned in a list of fortified cities of the tribe of Naphtali; a document which likely dates to the later days of the Israelite kingdom (Knauf: 221–23). However, a place name k-n-n-r-t is already attested in Egyptian sources of the 18th Egyptian dynasty where it is mentioned in a topographical list of Thutmose III (1479–1425 BCE) and in Papyrus Pettersburg 1116A, which refers to an envoy from Chinnereth to the Egyptian court, possibly during the reign of Amenhotep II (1428–1397 BCE; cf. Aḥuṭuv: 126). The name does not appear in the later el-Amarna correspondence of the 14th century BCE and other contemporary documents of the Late Bronze Age II period.

The toponographical and chronological framework of the available literary sources leaves no doubt that ancient Chinnereth should be located at the site of Tel Kinrot/Tell el-’Oreme (Arab.), Contrary to the marginal importance of a place called Chinnereth in HB/OT literature (see however Dietrich, who attributes Early Iron Age Chinnereth – within
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the historical context of 1 Sam 13 – to the kingdom of Geshur; cf. already Knauf: 228, with different arguments), its Greek derivative Γεννησαρ/Γεννησαρέτ (Gennesaret) plays a prominent role in the Gospels although it could never be located with certainty and possibly designates the boundaries of the modern plain of Ginnosar south of Tel Kinrot only (Zangenberg).


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