

the objects brought to light during this excavation, some are quite in harmony with the trading activities we assume to have been going on at Tell 'Atij.

The most important objects are surely a handful of crude clay tokens of various shapes discovered in context and clearly related to the granary located to the north of the main tell (fig. 11). Not far from there, a numerical tablet turned up among the debris, confirming the interest of the inhabitants of 'Atij in accounting. A well-preserved cylinder seal engraved in the linear Jemdet Nasr style, lying on the uppermost floor level of the main tell, was surely used to seal storage jars that were filled, most probably with grains, with the help of ceramic funnels, two specimens of which we found. We assume that the storage jars were loaded on small boats sailing on the Habur River, which was navigable at this time; we think we have the outline of one of these sailing boats carved on the face of a miniature wheel-chariot. In order to moor the boats or to reduce their speed downstream, stone anchors were used; 10 specimens have been retrieved to date.

There could even be the remains of a small quay made of large flat stones right at the edge of the secondary tell, by the channel that existed then between the main and the secondary tells and which was probably used by small boats sailing on the Habur to moor at 'Atij in order to load their shipments. We cut a 40 m long trench across this channel from one tell to another and the pedomorphologist studied and sampled sections to demonstrate its function in antiquity.

The architectural remains on the secondary tell are still difficult to reconstruct, since most of the walls, apparently of houses occupied by people operating the trading outpost of the main tell, have been badly eroded if not completely erased following the digging of several tombs, some dating from Roman times, others contemporary with the occupation of the main tell of 'Atij. Ten tombs of the Ninevite 5 cemetery have been opened; they contained mostly vases of fine fabrics but also pieces of jewelry and metal (bronze) objects.

Finally, a 47 m long, 2 m wide, and 2 m deep pedological trench was sunk in a depression of the ground thought to conceal a former irrigation canal,

some 400 m from the site, within the modern village. It turned out to be no more than a natural and recent overflow canal linked to the wadi flowing near the site and into the Habur River.

Following these three seasons in the field, a study season has been carried out on the fragmentary material, consisting mostly of sherds, brought back from Syria and now kept in a laboratory at Université Laval. A ceramic typology is being worked out by the author.

Tishreen Dam Salvage Project. Thomas L. McClellan, Fulbright Fellow, Damascus, reports:

Construction of the new Tishreen hydroelectric dam on the northern Euphrates threatens archaeological sites from el-Qitar at the dam to just below Carchemish (modern Jerablus). A program of regional survey and selective excavation was begun in 1988 that examines settlement patterns from the Neolithic to the present and investigates four related issues: fluctuations in sedentary population, the interrelationship of sites, the role of the Euphrates as a boundary or conduit, and the nature of military organization in border areas.⁴⁵

As early as the Pre-Pottery Neolithic there may be observable sociocultural differences between sedentary/semi-sedentary agricultural settlements on the left bank in the eighth millennium (PPNA Jerf el-Ahmar [see supra] and Mureybet III) and those on the right bank (Tell Abu Hureyra).⁴⁶ In the second half of the third millennium, according to survey data, the number of settlements increased and larger settlements emerged (Tell Beddayeh[?], Tell el-Banat Village [see infra]), probably as independent city-states. Carchemish (not threatened) was an important city-state in the first half of the second millennium, but archaeological evidence for settlements in the flood zone in that period is problematic. Large earthen rampart fortifications, generally thought to date to the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2000–1600), belong to the Early Bronze Age III/IV (ca. 2500–2000) at Tell el-Banat, and elsewhere in the Euphrates basin at Tell Sweyhat (see infra) and, in the first half of the third millennium, at Mari (see infra), suggesting that those at Carchemish should be reevaluated.⁴⁷

Mountain fortresses first appear in the area during the latter part of the MBA (el-Qitar) and continued

⁴⁵ T.L. McClellan and A. Porter, "Archaeological Surveys of the Tishreen Dam Flood Zone," AAS (forthcoming); T.L. McClellan, M. Mottram, and A. Porter, "The Tishreen Salvage Excavations, 1989," AAS (forthcoming).

⁴⁶ For Mureybet see van Loon (supra n. 16); Cauvin (supra n. 18) 19–48; Moore 1975, 1979, 1990 (supra n. 19).

⁴⁷ For Tell Sweyhat, see T.A. Holland, "Preliminary Report on Excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat, Syria, 1973–1974,"

Levant 8 (1976) 36–70; Holland, "Preliminary Report on Excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat, Syria, 1975," *Levant* 9 (1977) 36–65; J.-C. Margueron, "Etat présent des recherches sur l'urbanisme de Mari, I," *Mari* 5 (1987) 483–98; C.L. Woolley, *Carchemish, Pt. II: The Town Defences* (London 1921); P. Parr, "The Origin of the Rampart Fortifications of Middle Bronze Age Palestine and Syria," *ZDPV* 84 (1968) 18–45.

into the 15th century (el-Qitar, Tell el-Bazey).⁴⁸ During the LBA (ca. 1600–1200) the area was in the sphere of Mitanni power at first and then became the border between the Hittite's Syrian empire to the west and Mitanni, and later Assyria, to the east. Little is known archaeologically about Carchemish in the LBA when it became an important Hittite administrative center. In the Iron Age it and Tell Ahmar were independent city-states, but the latter became a provincial center of the Assyrian empire. Settlements of this period are sparse elsewhere in the flood zone. Later, large fortresses were built along the right bank: in the Hellenistic period at Jebel Khalid, 2 km south of the Tishreen Dam, and in the Islamic period at Qal'at Nejim, which guarded a crossing of the Euphrates.⁴⁹ The research issues are how integration into these city-states, kingdoms, and empires affected local settlement patterns, how the political boundaries influ-

enced settlement along the river, and whether differences are discernible between the right and left banks. After extensive excavations at the LBA fortress of el-Qitar, the focus is now upstream on the cluster of sites around Tell el-Banat Village (also see *infra*, s.v. Kabir) and on the PPNA site of Jerf al-Ahmar (see *supra*).

Banat. Thomas L. McClellan reports:

Three soundings (A–C) were made in 1989 to determine the nature and date of occupation within Tell el-Banat Village, and the date of the earthen ramparts. Sounding A, closest to Tell el-Bazey, revealed a domestic area of the Late Bronze Age (fig. 12). Immediately beneath this stratum was occupation of the late third millennium (Early Bronze III/IV). Public constructions of that period were found in sounding C, including two large limestone column bases previously excavated by villagers and, *in situ*, a round

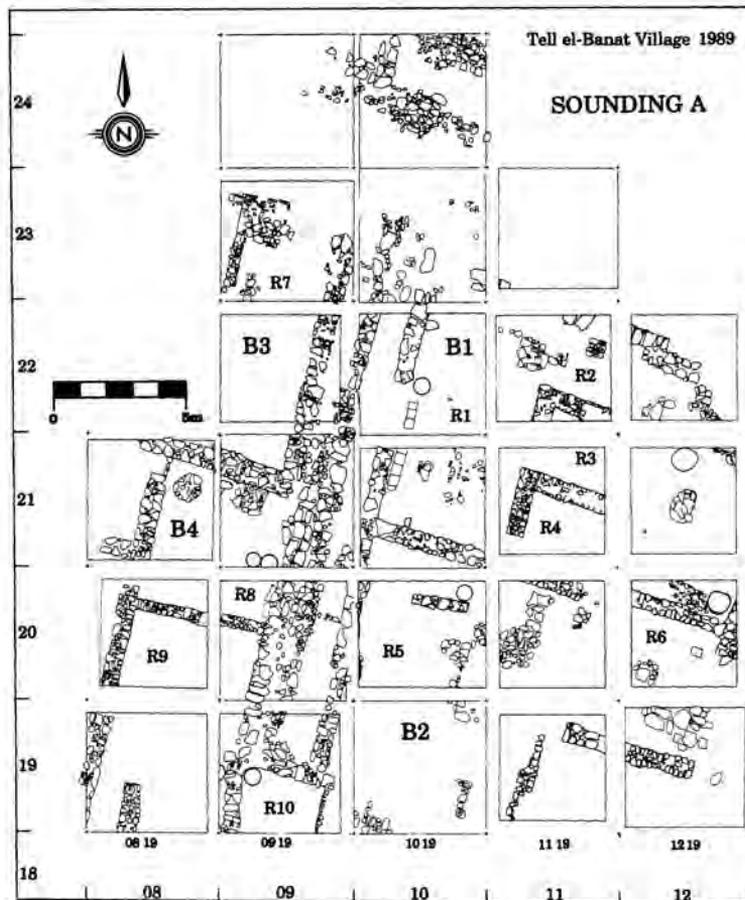


Fig. 12. Banat. Plan of sounding A in Tell el-Banat Village.

⁴⁸ T.L. McClellan, "A Syrian Fortress of the Bronze Age: El-Qitar," *NatGeoRes* 2 (1986) 418–40. No EBA remains were found on the upper settlement at el-Qitar, but EB III/IV remains existed on the lower settlement of el-Qitar and

at Jebel Ahmar on the opposite side of the river.

⁴⁹ G. Clarke, "A Brief Report on Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates: A Hellenistic Settlement in North Syria," *Primitiae* 7 (1989) 1–3.

mud-plaster foundation for one of the columns. In sounding B three phases of LBA buildings were constructed over the line of the earthen rampart. At the lowest point a round solid mudbrick structure, possibly a tower, started to emerge at the end of the season. Some EBA sherds were found in the lowest levels reached. It appears that the earthen ramparts date to the EBA; there were no known occupations of Tell el-Banat Village during the MBA, and LBA occupation is restricted to the southern quarter of the site, which was unprotected by city walls, and the mountain fortress of Tell el-Bazey.

Several hundred meters north of Tell el-Banat Village is Tell el-Banat, a small steep conical site. Only Early Bronze III/IV pottery was found when the entire site was sherded. The site, which may have been a single large structure, must have served a public function. To the west of Tell el-Banat Village random surface collections were made on the sites of Tell es-Saghir and Tell el-Kabir (see *infra*) in 1988 and excavations were conducted at the latter in the summers of 1989 and 1990.

Gudeda. Michel Fortin, Université Laval, reports:

Tell Gudeda is the second site excavated by the Canadian expedition to the Middle Ħabur salvage area led by M. Fortin⁵⁰ (see *supra*, s.v. 'Atij). Although the name of the site means "the new hill," Tell Gudeda belongs to the same period as Tell 'Atij, "the old hill," i.e., the Ninevite 5 period; Gudeda might, however, have been occupied until a later time, judging from the greater proportion of Metallic ware among the ceramic assemblage. Two campaigns have been carried out to date,⁵¹ the first, in the fall of 1987, having been only a short exploratory season. This work has been done concurrently with that at Tell 'Atij, which is our principal activity.

Tell Gudeda is a very small hill, oval in shape, 65 × 110 m, rising roughly 6 m above the plain level. Its summit is flat and its flanks are gently sloping. The Ħabur River flows 10 m away from the base of its northern flank.

A large step trench, 5 m wide, was sunk along the northern flank, from the very bottom to the summit of the hill, in order to assess the stratigraphy of the tell. As expected, we reached virgin soil: sediments deposited by riverbeds that were systematically sampled by a pedomorphologist who will study them in his laboratory at Université Laval. Above this sedimentary substratum stands an 8-m accumulation of archaeological levels, six of which have been positively

identified so far. Only the two upper levels have been partly exposed, although thousands of sherds have been collected from each of the layers encountered in the stratigraphic trench and are being studied in relation to the stratigraphy of the site.

At the very place where the stratigraphic trench reaches the summit of the tell, a 225-m² area has been opened. Below a 1.5 m thick layer of topsoil peppered with recent and Islamic tombs, there appeared a first occupation level the features of which have been slightly disturbed by the digging of these tombs. The main architectural remains consist of a series of small square rooms, 2 × 2 m each on average, aligned according to an east-west axis and located just at the edge of the summit of the tell (fig. 13). The northern outer wall of these rooms, which follows the edge of the summit, possesses a foundation made of stones, as do almost all the walls at Gudeda (the rest of the walls are made of mudbrick). The lower exterior part of this wall was protected by a pavement of pebbles that could also have served as a passageway to facilitate circulation on the site at this steep place and, as well, as a drainage system for rain, which could otherwise easily have caused a landslide. One of the rooms, at one end of the alignment, opens onto a courtyard equipped with an oven and a basin made of gypsum plaster; the floors of the room and the yard are also plastered.

To the south of this row of small rooms, five ovens were discovered, one next to the other. They measure between 60 and 80 cm in diameter and have been preserved up to 60 cm; their walls are made of crude clay, reinforced by the addition of large sherds applied with mud on their external surfaces. One of them is surrounded by a rectangular basin, 1.2 × 2.0 m, made of gypsum plaster, in which, very likely, food to be cooked in the ovens was prepared. Another basin of the same shape, 1.4 × 1.8 m, was found in the vicinity. Lastly, more than 40 querns cut from local basalt were retrieved in a limited area immediately next to the cluster of ovens; logically, they would have been used in connection with the latter. None of the artifacts found at this level deserves particular mention except for a small fragment of fresco: a triangular motif painted in black and red on a piece of plaster.

It is still too early to say anything definite about level II, as the excavation is incomplete. Near the very edge of the summit of the tell, we came upon a remarkable structure, made of gypsum plaster. It con-

⁵⁰ For references to preliminary reports and sponsorships, see *supra* p. 698 and n. 41.

⁵¹ For a summary article on these two campaigns: M. Fortin, "Tell Gudeda: un site industriel du III^{ème} millénaire

av. J.-C. dans la moyenne vallée du Khabour?" *Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies* 21 (1991) in press.