

however, including material from both Banat periods, indicating that the tomb was reused.

Many Plain Simple ware and Euphrates Banded ware vessels have been identified in a preliminary analysis of the tomb's pottery. In one chamber, a niche contained Syrian bottles that had once been decorated with an elaborate design of tiny shell and stone beads. In the northwest corner of chamber D, a circular alabaster tabletop leaned against the wall. From the period of reuse, a disarticulated burial was found associated with a bronze pin, a gold pendant, and two lapis lazuli "fly" beads as well as other objects.

In chamber F of tomb 7, a wooden box positioned diagonally in the center of the room had mostly disintegrated, leaving a thin wooden core encased by mud. The corners of the box were marked by bronze straps for each plank that once fit 2 × 2 cm staves. In the northwest corner of the chamber, we found a small shallow stone bowl with deep triangular incisions for inlay. Beside it was a small broken bottle and two lapis lazuli bottle stoppers inlaid with florettes of gold. The northern niche of chamber F was damaged by stone robbing in antiquity, but nevertheless contained a bronze pin with a bird head and an ostrich egg container with a stone stopper inlaid with lapis lazuli.

Tell Banat areas D and F. Area D, on the western side of the site, was devoted to pottery production. Five kilns and a series of associated buildings have been excavated, and traces of over 15 kilns are visible on the surface. Two types of kilns have been recorded: small rectangular structures that appear to date to period I, and large oval structures belonging to period II. Two main architectural levels are associated with ceramic production in period II. The earlier, level 2, was founded on an artificial gravel deposit and consists of a large building complex with regular walls and rooms modified by the addition of a series of inner walls. A considerable change in organization is manifest in the subsequent levels, 1a and 1b. The architecture is less substantial, several isolated rooms are found, and discrete work spaces are created by low enclosing walls and benches. No architecture has been found in association with the kilns of period I. Only one period I kiln was excavated, because it had been dug into the collapsed remains of a period II kiln.

In period II, the kilns of area D produced Plain

Simple ware vessels, with large round-based jars and deep hemispherical bowls predominating. Two Euphrates Banded ware vessels were found in the debris of kiln 3, however, and it is possible that this ware was also being manufactured at Tell Banat. The material from the excavated period I kiln seems to continue the ceramic tradition of period II, with the addition of some new types, in particular jars with narrow necks and two tight loop handles high on the shoulder. Further analysis of the ceramics from area D will supplement these preliminary comments.

Evidence for domestic occupation was sought in a sounding in the northern part of Tell Banat, area F. Just below the surface, a pebbled street up to 2 m wide and running east-west was excavated in two 10 × 10 m squares. Built adjacent to the street on the north side were several rooms formed by irregular thin walls of small fieldstones. Ceramics indicate that this level dates to period I. Beneath these rooms, part of a large mudbrick structure was detected.

The presence of monumental construction, public buildings, and a ceramic industry at Tell Banat and Tell Banat North indicates that the complex belongs to a high order of settlement hierarchy and raises questions as to the nature of social and political organization at the site. Tell Banat may represent an autonomous state or perhaps a specialized component within a larger political system, in which case its function as a component may be cultic and perhaps mortuary. In future seasons we will address these issues.

Bazi. Berthold Einwag and Adelheid Otto, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Damascus, report:

In the spring of 1993, excavations began at Tell Bazi in the Tishrin Dam area.⁶ The fourth season was concluded at the end of October 1995. The site was occupied only during the Late Bronze Age, and there are no subsequent structures with the exception of a Roman fortress at the top of the citadel. Tell Bazi is located on the Jezireh riverbank of the Euphrates, at one of the few points where the valley widens to a large plain.

The site consists of a fortified natural hill, the citadel, and a lower town to the west. Various stone walls visible on the surface provided ideal conditions for the investigation of the site, which had two main goals. First, in the citadel area we examined the fortification system, buildings on the slopes of the hill

⁶ See B. Einwag, "Tall Bazi," *AJO* 40–41 (1993–1994) 228f; Einwag et al., "Tall Bazi—Vorbericht über die Untersuchungen 1993," *DM* 8 (1995) 95–124; T. McClellan and A. Porter, "Archaeological Surveys of the Tishreen Dam Flood Zone," *AAS* 39 (in press). We wish to thank Radwan Sharaf, Usama

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and on top of the plateau, the paths, and gates. Second, in the lower town, several stone walls could be traced on the surface and the floors of the houses lay just beneath the surface, providing the opportunity to uncover large housing areas and to reveal information about the planning of the town and the function of its various sectors. This study was assisted by the results of the first stratigraphic soundings, which showed that the lower town consisted of one building level constructed in two phases.

The citadel. The citadel lies on a spur of the mountain range bordering the Euphrates valley, separated from the mountains by an artificial ditch. Numerous stone walls covering the hillside were still visible on the surface and guided the investigation during the first two seasons. They turned out to be fortification walls surrounding the citadel on several levels, most of them serving mainly as retaining or terrace walls facilitating occupation of the steep ground. At the eastern slope of the hill the lowest wall, built of huge limestone blocks, was investigated over a length of 120 m. This wall is founded on one of the natural horizontal rock ridges and was constructed in several sections, some of which ended in a right-angle turn up the hill. The wall's primary purpose was the fortification of the citadel. A step trench was dug into the eastern slope in order to reveal information about the system of terrace walls. They are also built of unfinished limestone blocks and are filled behind with small stones and stone chips. Small buildings cover the slope of the hill in a steplike fashion, using the terrace walls as the back walls of the houses.

The plateau of the citadel was originally square and served as a stronghold; the northwest corner was later cut away for the installation of a huge open cistern. On the plateau we discovered parts of two large buildings, which, based on their plans and small finds, may be interpreted as official buildings: a *bit hilani* and a temple, separated from each other by a street. During Roman times the natural defense of the hillside and the still existing LBA fortification walls were used for the construction of a fortress to control the valley and one of the few crossing points over the Euphrates.

On the northern slope the access to the high plateau was investigated. A shallow depression in the surface leading up toward the citadel turned out to be the access route that was controlled by a gate halfway up the slope. Investigations revealed that this was built in several phases; the gate of one phase was strengthened by a bastion.

Lower town. Directly west of the citadel and adjoining it lies the lower town, measuring about 200 × 250 m (figs. 10–11). It was built on the natural grav-

el terrace of the Euphrates, only a few meters above the valley level. During the latest seasons the northern third of the lower town was completely excavated. A north-south trench was dug 100 m through the housing area.

The investigations conducted so far reveal that the lower town was planned and erected at one time. After approximately 100 years, it was completely destroyed and abandoned. An unexpected threat hit the inhabitants so suddenly that they apparently saved only their lives, leaving behind all their goods. This sudden event enables us to study not only the architectural remains but also to carry out a functional and social analysis of rooms and houses and the entire community.

The first excavations were started in the northeast; a second area was later opened in the northwest. During the last campaign both areas were connected, revealing an excavated area of more than 5,000 m². So far more than 20 houses have been completely or partially uncovered. The settlement is oriented along broad streets, 6 m wide, which were evidently the first part of the town to be built. The houses are often separated by narrow lanes that were accessible only to the neighboring occupants, as suggested by lockable doors at the entrance to the alleys. The ground plan and size of the houses follow a strict scheme, altered only during the second phase. The normal ground plan of a house consisted of a large main room with a row of three or four small square rooms arranged along the long side. Each measures about 10 × 15 m. The lower layers of the walls are built of limestone, and the upper layers of mudbricks. In the middle of the main room, an oval oven is often connected to a low working platform. The small rooms served as granaries and storage rooms and were mostly filled with large storage jars, some of which contained carbonized grain. Numerous metal objects such as weapons (including a complete dagger, 28 cm long) and tools (sickles, knives, and awls) were found in the houses. We found that manufacturing activity took place in the main room of the houses as well as in separate workshops. These main rooms thus served both as residences and as the site of small-scale industry. One household in the southwestern corner specialized in the fabrication of bronze tools; a variety of molds were found there, primarily made of limestone. A small steatite mold found in the same house also indicates the manufacture of jewelry using precious metals. In another building the production of hematite weights and stone or shell jewelry is suggested by the finished or partly finished objects as well as by the raw materials found there.



Fig. 10. Bazi. Lower town, northeastern area. Two domestic quarters separated by a broad street.

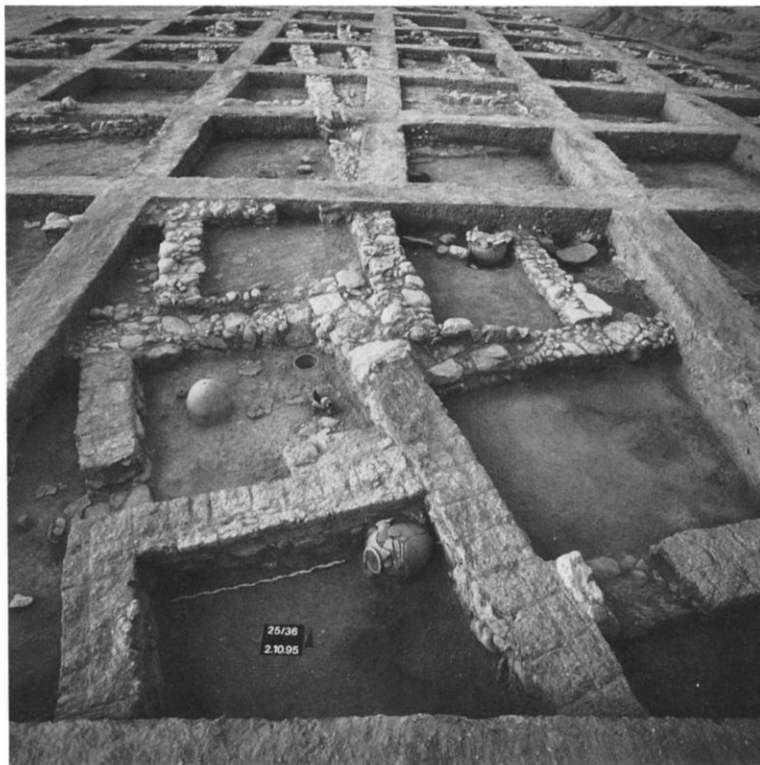


Fig. 11. Bazi. Lower town, northwestern area and adjoining corners of four houses.

A trench dug in the northeastern corner extending from the terrace down to the valley level shows that the lower town was not fortified. This suggests that the sudden end of this flourishing town may have been brought about by the attack of an enemy. The aim of the north-south trench was to reveal the borders of the lower town, but the southern boundary of the settlement has not yet been reached. The trench proved, however, that throughout the settlement there existed only two phases. The next campaigns will concentrate on uncovering the southern parts of the lower town.

Beydar. Marc Lebeau, European Center for Upper Mesopotamian Studies, reports:

The Euro-Syrian Excavations at Tell Beydar (formerly the European Archaeological Mission in Syria) are organized by the European Center for Upper Mesopotamian Studies in coordination with the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus.⁷ The European universities participating in the Center are the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Karel Van Lerberghe), Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (Joachim Bretschneider), Universidad autonoma de Madrid (Fernando Valdes), Université libre de Bruxelles (Philippe Talon), and Université de Lille III (Dominique Parayre).

Tell Beydar is a circular 28-ha third-millennium city, with a diameter of 600 m, defended by a city wall with seven gates. A lower town (Beydar II) of 30 ha was built in the Mitanni period, then abandoned and later rebuilt in Neo-Assyrian times. A few hundred meters south of the third-millennium city is an area occupied during the Hassuna, Halaf, and Ubaid periods (Beydar III), identified by Antoine Suleiman.

The important "Kranzhugel" city of the third millennium has been exposed in several operations. Sector H is located at the northern gates of the city, where the city wall was partially destroyed by Early Dynastic II and III tombs. The interior side of the city wall had small houses and workshops of ED I date that indicate the age of the ramparts. Sector G on the north flank of the upper city is a step-trench that exposed three levels of Seleucid occupation, under which are several levels of ED III and ED II domestic structures. There is evidence for an interior rampart ca. 5 m wide.

In sector E on the west side of site, we exposed a Seleucid level, under which was an ED III official building measuring 26 × 7.5 m. This building consists of four square rooms of identical dimensions with an entrance on the west facing toward the interior of the city. Two floors for this building have been identified. Associated with the upper floor, at the rear of the building, was a small ED III private residence.

In sector F on the acropolis, under a Seleucid level and two levels of Akkadian occupation, we uncovered a large ED III building, probably a palace (fig. 12). This palace was rebuilt in late ED III, but the rebuilding followed most of the earlier plan. The original ED III palace was constructed of white baked brick and had 17 or 18 rooms and a courtyard, all with floors covered with thick plaster. This is a rectangular building, 32 × 21 m, with an entrance in the middle of the east facade. The building conforms to the architectural traditions of contemporary southern Mesopotamia. The ED IIIb reconstruction replaced half of the destroyed or damaged walls of the earlier building while preserving many white brick walls of the first phase. Some doors were blocked, and some walls were opened. In general the architecture is considerably poorer than that of phase 1. Four tablets were found in the second ED III occupation phase.

In sector B, we found an ED III domestic quarter under Hellenistic house foundations. No complete house plan is yet available, but partial plans of six or seven houses have been exposed. In 1993 and 1994, under the original floor of one house, 140 tablets were retrieved (fig. 13). The associated ceramics are ED IIIb. Also contemporary with these are two tablets from sector E, four from sector F, and one from the lower town. F. Ismail, H. Hammade, W. Sallaberger, K. Van Lerberghe, and P. Talon are responsible for the decipherment and publication of the Beydar tablets. The 147 Beydar texts are contemporary with those from Ebla, Mari, Abu Salabikh, and Fara.

The lower town (Beydar II) was tested in sector J and an associated sounding. Here walls of a Neo-Assyrian residence with baked brick foundations were exposed. On the floor of this residence were numerous sherds of Nuzi ware. Although damaged

⁷ The Tell Beydar excavation is a Syro-European project sponsored by the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Vorderverein Tell Beydar and its sponsors, Nationaal Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, Fonds national de la recherche scientifique (Belgium), Onderzoeksraad K.U.

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