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Archéologie et Histoire de la Syrie

I

La Syrie de l'époque néolithique à l'âge du fer

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Avant-propos

En 1989 parut le volume II du livre « Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie », traitant des périodes de la domination des Achéménides jusqu'aux débuts de l'islam. Il était alors prévu d'entamer dans la foulée le travail pour le volume I présentant une période allant de l'époque du néolithique jusqu'à l'empire néoassyrien. Pour diverses raisons, les préparatifs pour ce livre furent retardés et c'est seulement en 2002 qu'à la demande de la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées de la République Syrienne, le travail reprit. Les collaborateurs pressentis pour les différentes parties se déclarèrent prêts à envoyer leurs textes et illustrations dans un délai raisonnable et au cours de l'année 2003 les premiers manuscrits parvinrent. Malheureusement, il fallut finalement une dizaine d'années pour réunir tous les textes compris dans ce volume.

Entretiens, la recherche avait fait des progrès considérables, grâce à une activité intense de fouilles à laquelle participèrent directement un grand nombre de collaborateurs de ce volume. Les auteurs des manuscrits achevés depuis longtemps ont saisi l'opportunité d'actualiser leurs textes au regard de ces recherches récentes et d'intégrer dans leur bibliographie de nouvelles publications. Les éditeurs de ce volume remercient tous les collaborateurs pour leur patience et leur effort d'actualisation.

Dans la recherche archéologique en Syrie, plusieurs systèmes chronologiques et désignations de périodes sont pratiqués. Les éditeurs n'ont pas estimé utile de pousser à une unification de la terminologie à l'intérieur de ce volume, celle-ci étant amenée à d'autres modifications dans les prochaines années, en raison d'initiatives telles que notamment ARCANÉ. Le tableau au page 584 essaie de donner une concordance des différentes terminologies pour l'âge de bronze en Syrie.

*Paolo Matthiae
Winfried Orthmann*

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State and Empire of Assyria in Northeast Syria

HARTMUT KÜHNE

*State and Empire of Assyria*¹

Historically and culturally modern Northeast-Syria is part of Upper Mesopotamia. The ‘Ġazira’ called landscape between Euphrates and Tigris is divided in two halves by the present border with Iraq; the Syrian Ġazira constituted the western part of the ‘home provinces’ of the Assyrian State (POSTGATE 1995, 1). In this paper, the Assyrian State is seen holistically as continuous establishment from the 13th cent. to the reign of Tiglath-pileser [Tukulti-apil-Ešarra] III (744–727 BCE)², as a prelude to the following Empire which lasted from the reign of the afore mentioned king to its collapse in 612 BCE. Thus, it disregards the traditional categories of the Late Bronze and Iron Age whereby the Middle Assyrian State (AKKERMANS, SCHWARTZ 2003, 348–50) would belong to both and the Neo-Assyrian Empire to the last. Reviewing the history of events it must be emphasized that during the period of great change (12th century), which is usually labeled ‘dark age’, Assyria did not crumble like the Hittite and the Babylonian dynasties but rather continued to act albeit on a reduced scale.³ While the causes of this decline are more often associated with climatic desiccation⁴, catastrophic events, break down of palace economy and trade routes (SHER-RAT 1998), newcomers, mainly the Aramaeans (SCHWARTZ 1989; DION 1997; SADER 2000; LIPINSKI 2000), unstable political situations, and a general step backwards in civilization, it should be highlighted that it also saw an important progress in technology, the annealing of iron to form steel (AKKERMANS, SCHWARTZ 2003, 360–361). It is this resilience that gave Assyria a permanent competitive edge to procure iron resources and advanced military technologies which were important preconditions to form an empire.

1 For the differentiation between State and Empire cf. POSTGATE 2010.

2 Usually Assyrian history is divided into three periods: Old Assyrian (Middle Bronze Age), Middle Assyrian (Late Bronze Age), Neo-Assyrian (Iron Age); in this paper the temporary Old Assyrian State is disregarded as a forerunner of the permanent Middle Assyrian State which developed to the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

3 Historians have maintained that it shrank to its core region while I will argue below that it still controlled the Lower Ḥabūr region.

4 For full discussion see RECULEAU 2011

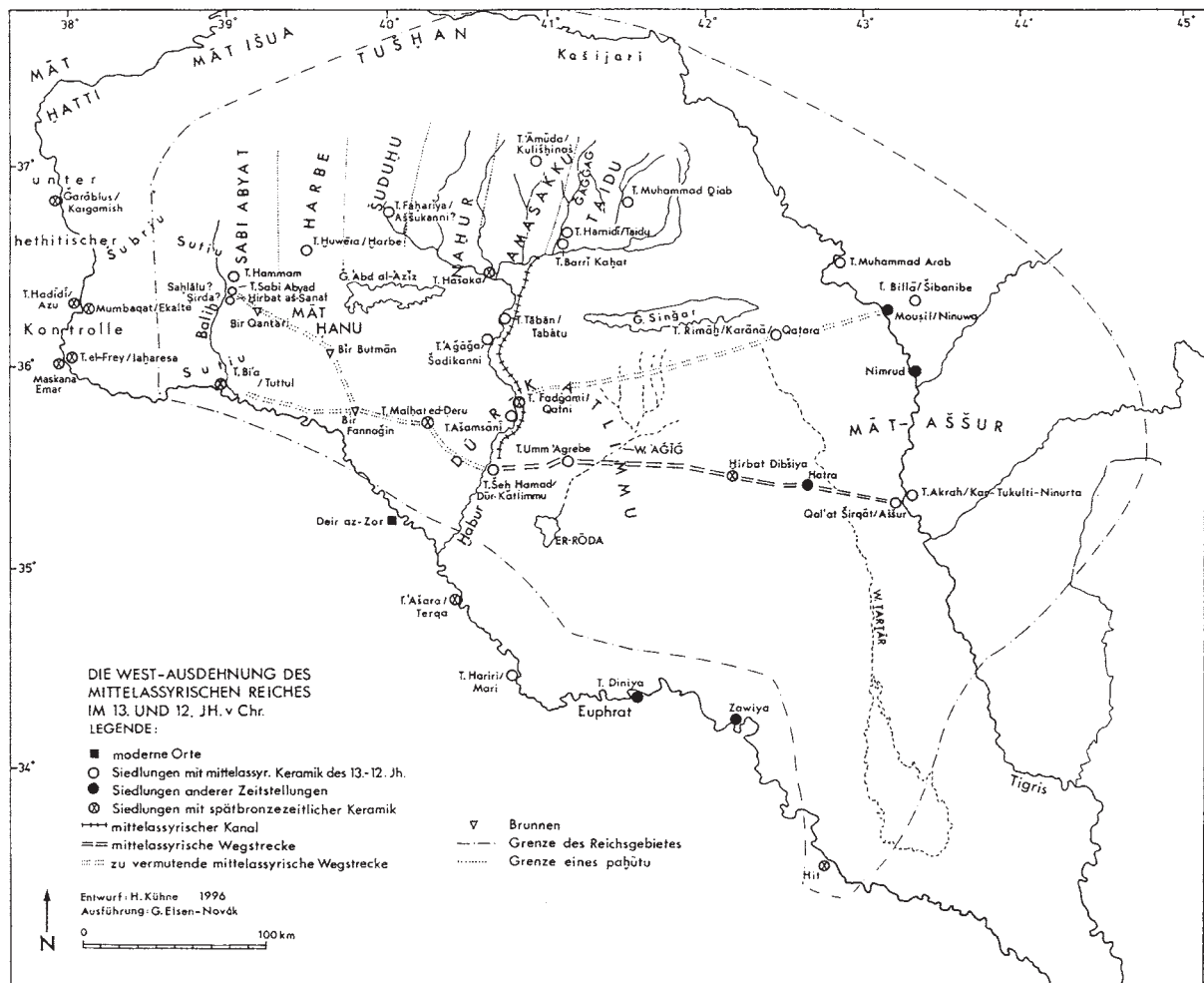


Fig. 247. The Middle Assyrian State in the 13th / 12th c. BCE (© T. Šeḫ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

The archaeological evidence of the Early Assyrian State (ca. 1300–936 BCE)

The thirteenth century BCE

Beginning with Adad-nīrārī I (1295–1264 BCE)⁵ the Middle Assyrian kings conquered Ḫanigalbat which was situated in the Upper Ġazīra.⁶ Within the 13th century the Assyrians improved the government apparatus to administrate their state (Fig. 247) by agencies dispersed all over the country to secure control and stability (AKKERMANS, SCHWARTZ 2003, 348–350). One of the most important achievements was the introduction of a provincial system (RADNER 2006–2008, 45–53; POSTGATE 1985, 1995) whereby Assyrians were appointed to hold office in newly constructed or defined centres of regions which had attained the provincial status as opposed to other regions which were kept in a vassal status with a (re-)installed local elite ruler with limited independence. These ‘home provinces’ were assyrianized by developing agri-

5 The absolute dates of the Middle Assyrian kings down to Aššur-dan I are quoted according to BOESE, WILHELM 1979, beyond that point according to NISSEN 1999.

6 For a definition of the territory of Ḫanigalbat cf. CANCIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 33.

cultural areas and colonizing the steppe. It is still debated to what extent they profited from the preceding Mittani state politically/administratively as well as culturally (KÜHNE 1995a, 297–298; RADNER 2004, 113). But fact is that they annihilated the memory of the Mittani sustainably by restructuring the settlement pattern of the territory of Ḫanigalbat (Mittani) according to Assyrian standards. Thus, they established a new identity, calling it the Land of Aššur (*māt Aššur*), and a memory of their own pioneering kings that was reiterated in documents of later centuries (POSTGATE 1992, 249).

Since repeated upheavals against the Assyrian sovereignty occurred under Adad-nīrārī I's, his son's (Salmanu-ašared I, 1263–1234 BCE) and even his grandson's (Tukulti-Ninurta I, 1233–1197 BCE) reign (GRAYSON 1987), it seems conceivable why the Assyrian policy chose a site in a stable political environment to serve as an administrative centre for the western part of the state: T. Šēḫ Ḥamad is situated about 160 km south-east of T. Faḫarīya, the assumed former Mittanian capital of Waššukanni/Aššukanni (BONATZ 2008; 2010). Excavations in 1978–1983 on the western slope of the citadel mound (KÜHNE 2005, 25–39; 1984) furnished the discovery of a Middle Assyrian archive⁷ which ascertained the identification of the site with the Assyrian centre of Dūr-Katlimmu (RÖLLIG 1978). The eminent person of the archive was a man by the name of Aššur-iddin who was a member of the royal family, more closely a descendant of a brother of Adad-nīrārī I; he functioned as vizier (*sukallu*) and later as great vizier (*sukallu rabiū*), and carried the title “king of Ḫanigalbat” (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1999; 1996, 19–25).

Building P, presumably the outer extension of the palace of the Great Vizier Aššur-iddin, partly preserved because of slope erosion and only partly excavated because of substantial settlement accumulations of later periods on top, remains fragmentary for the time being (Fig. 248); the archive was found in room A in which it had fallen from a story above. Numerous tablets are impressed with Middle Assyrian cylinder seals of excellent quality furnishing the royal seals of the kings Salmānu-ašared I (Fig. 249) (KÜHNE, RÖLLIG 1989) and Tukulti-Ninurta I. (Fig. 250) (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 23–25; KÜHNE 1997), a hitherto unknown cut style of the Middle Assyrian period (KÜHNE 1995a), and impressions of Mittanian seals in fair number and variety (KÜHNE 1995a, 297–298).

According to this evidence Dūr-Katlimmu was the administrative centre of a newly established district (*paḫūtu*) and the seat of a governor (*bēl paḫete*).⁸ Beyond that it functioned as a supra-regional centre next to the capital Aššur furnishing the seat of a Great Vizier (*sukkallu rabiū*) of whom two office holders are recorded: Aššur-iddin and Šalmānu-muṣabši. All the issues of political administration, development, and security of the western part of the Middle Assyrian State seem to have been controlled from this place. It



Fig. 248. Revised plan of the Middle Assyrian Building P (Phase 2) at Dūr-Katlimmu (© T. Šēḫ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

7 It consisted of 668 registered items; after the reduction of tiny fragments 459 pieces remained for analysis out of which 360 pieces will be or have already been published. These numbers replace the ones given by RÖLLIG 2008, 1.

8 Two office holders are known from the texts, cf. CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 19

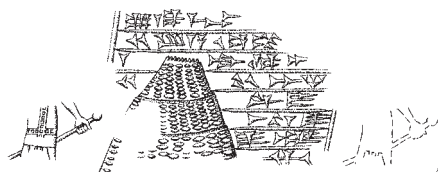


Fig. 249. Impression of cylinder seal of Salmānu-ašared I on a clay envelope from Dūr-Katlimmu (© T. Šeḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

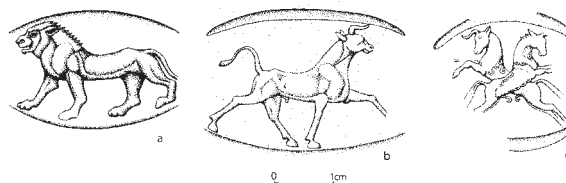


Fig. 250. 05a-c: Impressions of three different signet rings of Tukulti-Ninurta I from Dūr-Katlimmu (© T. Šeḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

is for this reason that the label “capital” of the “West-State” for Dūr-Katlimmu may be justified (KÜHNE 2006–2008, 546; AKKERMANS, SCHWARTZ 2003, 349). This significance is reinforced by the fact that King Salmānu-ašared I constructed the temple of Salmānu, the city god of Dūr-Katlimmu (RADNER 1998; RADNER 2002, 15–16), of which any archaeological record is missing so far. He integrated the name of this god in his throne name (BAKER, YAMADA 2002, 1071–1078), a unique procedure! By this act he founded a tradition which was carried on by four more Assyrian kings until Salmanu-ašared V (726–722 BCE), this being a proof in itself for the continuity of the Assyrian State. Furthermore, the visit(s) of King Tukulti-Ninurta I at Dūr-Katlimmu recorded in the local documents (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 16, 147–153) seem to indicate that Dūr-Katlimmu enjoyed a privileged royal status.

The archaeological evidence of Middle Assyrian Dūr-Katlimmu is supplemented by the excavations in T. Ḥamīdīya [Taidu?], T. Barrī [Kaḥat] T. Faḥariya [Waššukanni?], T. Ḥuēra [Ḥarbe] and T. Šabī Abyaḍ. Both, in T. Ḥamīdīya (EICHLER et al. 1990) and in T. Barrī (PECORELLA 2008, 389–390 Tavola 3), fragments of “palaces” to be dated possibly to the reign of Adad-nīrārī I (1295–1264 BCE) have been unearthed.⁹ Most notable is the new textual and glyptic evidence from T. Faḥariya (BONATZ 2010) discovered in “House I” and in the contact zone of House I and II. The architecture suggests that “House I” may be part of larger building (palace?). In T. Ḥuēra the level 3 building has been labeled “palace” (ORTHMANN et al. 1995, 188–190, Beilage 18). So far the evidence seems to confirm the role of Dūr-Katlimmu described above. Administration in Ḥanigalbat was performed by subordinate officials, one of the most important in the rank of a vizier (*sukallu*) being Sin-mudammeq operating from Waššukanni [T. Faḥariye?] is mentioned in the texts from Dūr-Katlimmu, Ḥarbe, and T. Faḥariya (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 29–32; JAKOB 2009, 4–6). Of particular interest is the architecture of T. Šabī Abyaḍ (Fig. 251) (AKKERMANS 2006–2008, 476–478; AKKERMANS, SCHWARTZ 2003, 349–350) which may be associated with a fortified centre (*dunnu*)¹⁰ consisting of a central tower with remarkable thick walls and a small tripartite “palace” next to it, which are walled in and surrounded by a dry moat. In the 400 texts discovered within this context the place is designated as the personal property of Ilī-padā, son of Aššur-iddin, who followed Šalmanu-muṣabši as Great Vizier.

The chronology of the textual evidence suggests that some tablets from T. Faḥariya may date to the early regnal years of Salmānu-ašared I. The texts from Dūr-Katlimmu cover most of the reign of both kings, Salmānu-ašared I as well as Tukulti-Ninurta I, that is about 60 years¹¹, while the texts from T. Ḥuēra are dated to the reign of the latter king only (JAKOB 2009, 2–3). The youngest lot seems to be from T. Šabī Abyaḍ representing the period shortly before and after the murder of Tukulti-Ninurta I (AKKERMANS 2006–2008, 478). This is mirrored by the archaeological evidence that demonstrates continuity to the 12th century by stratigraphic sequence but also decline in architecture and perhaps settlement size.

⁹ A huge unexcavated Middle Assyrian site is T. Farfara that was discovered during the T. Leilān Regional Survey conducted by H. Weiss, site no. 186; <http://leilan.yale.edu/pubs/files/HAS--fig15.pdf> (see above p. 268).

¹⁰ A *dunnu* has recently been discovered in Giricano near Bismil in South-eastern Turkey, cf. RADNER 2004, 113.

¹¹ For the most recent discussion of the sequence of the eponyms cf. RECULEAU 2011, 169–172.

Fig. 251. T. Şabī Abyaḍ. Middle Assyrian Fortress, Level 6 (Akkermans 2006-2008, 477)



In general the Middle Assyrian settlement policy of the 13th century seems to have followed the aim to create a new complexity according to Assyrian strategies consisting of settlement clusters. If there had been a previous settlement they leveled it and superimposed their own one, including the variant that occupied settlements were forced to be given up with the population being displaced; but often they also settled on virgin soil. A good example of this policy seems to be the settlement pattern of the Lower Ḥābūr (Fig. 252) (KÜHNE 2009a, 26–33; KULEMANN-OSSEN 2009). By doing so they obviously created a new identity, the Land of Aššur.

To administrate their state spatially and comprehensively ‘palaces’ at every place with central functions regardless of their size or settlement complexity were constructed. From these ‘fortified central places’ cultivation of the steppe was enforced even if the environment was hostile. The fortress of T. Şabī Abyaḍ (Fig. 251) seems to be a perfect example of this transformation strategy. It served almost certainly as an ‘outpost’ in still hostile land¹², as I would suggest to translate *dunnu*, and was not heading a complex settlement system. Intensifying ways of communication with the capital Aššur seems to have been another major concern of the Middle Assyrian State (FAIST 2006; KESSLER 1997). An unexcavated site by the name of T. Umm ‘Agrēbe, some 40 km east of Dūr-Katlimmu, may have been founded for two reasons: almost certainly it was situated on a new(?) steppe route from Dūr-Katlimmu to Aššur covering a distance of 200 km with road stations at an interval of about 40 km (PFÄLZNER 1994); secondly it was an outpost like T. Şabī Abyaḍ to cultivate the steppe in the middle of the roaming ground of nomads! Similarly it has been suggested that T. Ḥuēra served as a road station on a route which in Neo-Assyrian documents is known as the ‘royal road’ (*ḥarran šarri*) (KÜHNE 1994, 66 Fig. 11; PFÄLZNER 1994; CANCIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996,

12 This does not contradict the functions of a “seat of regional Assyrian administration, as well as a garrison station, customs post and rural estate” assigned by AKKERMANS 2006-2008, 478.

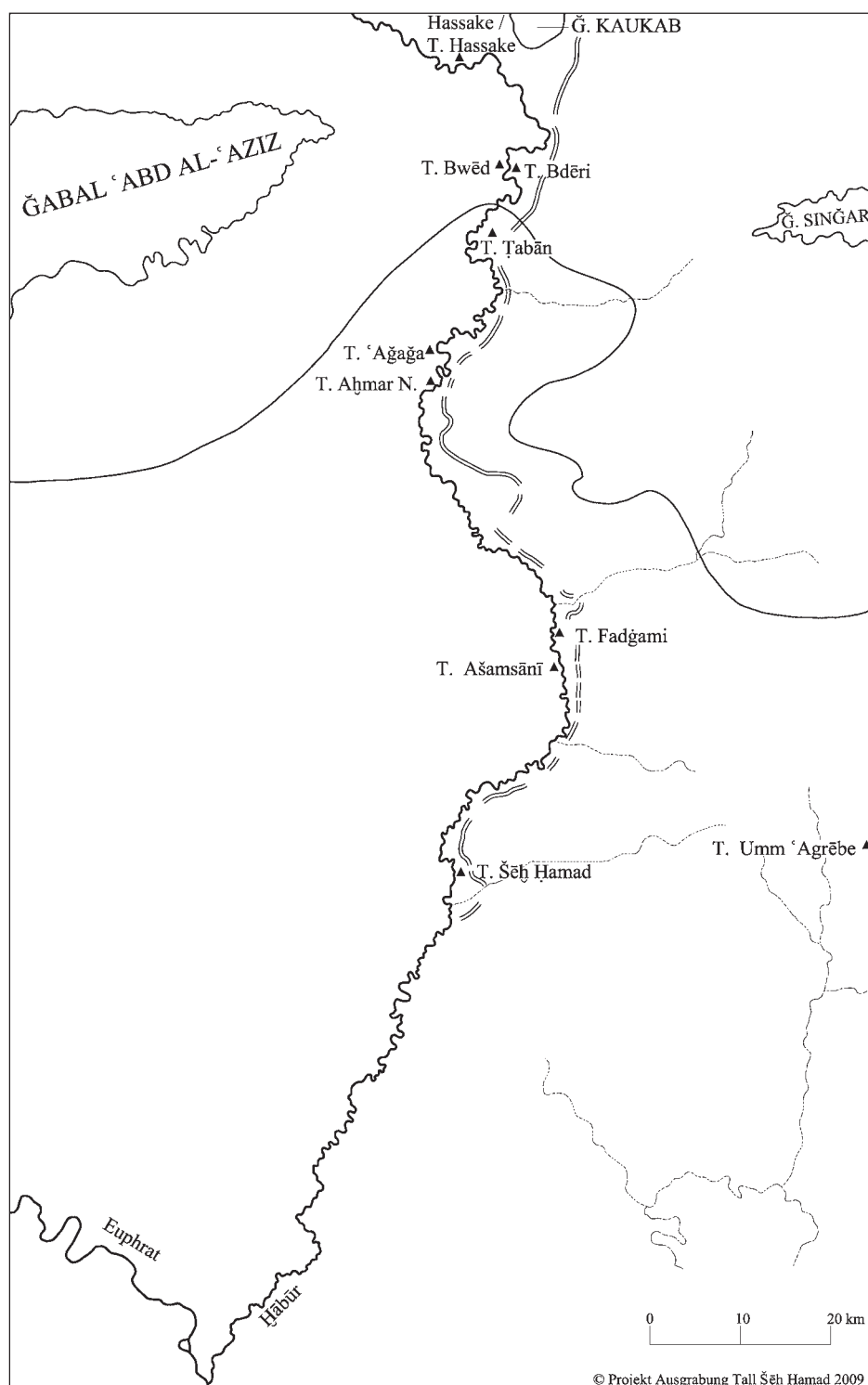


Fig. 252. Settlement pattern at the Lower Ḥabūr during the Middle Assyrian Period
(© T. Šēḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

Abb. 7; FAIST 2006). Still another aspect of the aims and ability of the Middle Assyrian State is the construction of waterways to improve irrigation agriculture as well as transportation means (ERGENZINGER, KÜHNE 1991; KÜHNE 2012).

The twelfth to the middle of the eleventh century BCE

With the murder of Tukulti-Ninurta I in 1197 the consolidation process of the Middle Assyrian State was interrupted; his three sons quarreled and followed him on the throne in short intervals until 1183. Putting an end to this unworthy and devastating situation the throne was seized by Ninurta-apil-Ekur (1182/1–1169 BCE) (BOESE, WILHELM 1979, 38), son of Ilī-padā, Great Vizier and last king of Ḫanigalbat, grandson of Aššur-iddin and great grandson of Ibašši-ilī (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1999, 214–217). He is followed by his son Aššur-dan I who reigns 46/36 years (1179/1169–1134). Of both kings very few royal inscriptions are attested (GRAYSON 1987, 303–308), from which a period of political weakness and decline has been deduced, which seems to be mirrored in the archeological record of the sites mentioned above, i.e. T. Šabī Abyaḍ, T. Ḥuēra, T. Faḥariya and T. Šēḥ Ḥamad (PFÄLZNER 1995, 236–238), by the reduction of settlement and architecture.

With the ascendance of Aššur-rēša-iši I (1132–1115 BCE) on the Assyrian throne a revival of the Middle Assyrian State begins, comes to an apex under Tiglath-pilešar I (1114–1076 BCE) and more or less to an end under his son Aššur-bel-kala (1073–1056 BCE). Being well documented by royal inscriptions (GRAYSON 1991) the administration and function of the Middle Assyrian State during these eighty years, particularly during the reign of Tiglath-pilešar I, can be retraced satisfyingly (POSTGATE 1985). Regions and sites of the Ḫazira and the Ḫābūr are mentioned frequently but until recently any archaeological record of this phase in north-eastern Syria was missing completely.¹³ This lacuna is now filled by the excavations of T. Bdēri (PFÄLZNER 1988; 1989/1990; 1995; MAUL 1992) and T. Ṭabān (OHNUMA et al. 1999, 2000; OHNUMA, NUMOTO 2001; NUMOTO 2008; NUMOTO 2009; MAUL 2005). Unfortunately the material evidence is in both places rather limited and not offering any cultural clues¹⁴, but within its context inscribed cones and stamped bricks were discovered that revealed the identification of the sites, Dūr-Aššur-kettī-lēšer and Ṭabētu respectively. The spatial and administrative relation of both sites is clearly assigned (KÜHNE 2009a, 27–31), since Dūr-Aššur-kettī-lēšer was conquered by ‘king’ Aššur-kettī-lēšer, who added it to his territory of the ‘land of Mari’ whose palace stood in Ṭabētu. Dated to the reign of Tiglath-pilešar I the inscriptions allow reconstructing the dynasty of this regional ‘kingdom’ to a progenitor by the name of Adad-bēl-gabbe who – it has been speculated – could have been identical with a brother(?) of Tukulti-Ninurta I (MAUL 2005, 13–17; CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1999, 214), but the dynasty is now supposed to be of Churrian origin, their ‘kings’ taking up Assyrian names when being enthroned (SHIBATA 2011).

From the middle of the eleventh to the second half of the tenth century BCE

The following phase of a little more than a hundred years from king Eriba-Adad II (1055–1054 BCE) until Tiglath-pilešar II (966–935 BCE) is marked again by a scarcity of royal inscriptions (GRAYSON 1991, 113–130). However, an inscription on a broken clay cylinder found in Aššur (KÜHNE 1995b Pl. I) that was written during the reign of king Aššur-rēša-iši II (971–967 BCE) renders the deeds of a ruler by the name of Bēl-ēreš of Šadikanni, modern T. ‘Aḡāḡa on the Lower Ḫābūr, announcing his vassal status to Aššur (GRAYSON 1991, 126). The excavation of T. ‘Aḡāḡa (MAHMOUD 2008; MAHMOUD, KÜHNE 1993/1994; MAHMOUD et al. 1988) did not furnish any pre-Neo-Assyrian levels but the surface collections of the Lower Ḫābūr survey revealed sherds of the Middle Assyrian period (KÜHNE 2009a, 30 Abb.

13 For example, Ḫanigalbat, the river Ḫābūr, Dūr-Katlimmu, and other sites are mentioned in the inscription of the “Broken Obelisk” (GRAYSON 1991, 99–105) but the sites are cannot be localized; in the case of Dūr-Katlimmu levels of this period are unexcavated.

14 The evidence in T. Bdēri comes from a pit, no settlement remains were encountered; in T. Ṭabān the excavation areas on the western slope furnished small exposures of settlement remains.

8). Šadikanni is mentioned frequently in the texts from Dūr-Katlimmu (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 1996, 184); in another text of likely Middle Assyrian date from Niniveh an Assyrian by the name of Kidin-Ninua is mentioned as governor(?) of Šadikanni and a broken off person as governor of Qatni (MILLARD 1970, 172–173; NASHEF 1982, 241).

The cultural-historical picture that emerges from these archaeological and assyriological bits and pieces has stimulated Kühne (1998, 282–284; 2009a; 2009b) to suggest that the newly founded districts (*pabutu*) of the 13th century in the Lower Hābūr valley, i.e. Dūr-Katlimmu, Qatni, Šadikanni, and possibly Ṭabēte, had developed to self provisioning entities under less central Assyrian control in the 11th and 10th century, governed by local potentates, but still politically loyal to and dependent from Aššur according to their own witness; thus, the Middle Assyrian State had not shrunk to its mere nucleus as is maintained elsewhere.¹⁵ Furthermore the collective evidence from the Hābūr region illustrates that there is no ‘dark age’, there does not even seem to be “a long recession of varying intensity” which has been suggested as replacement for ‘dark age’ (POSTGATE 1992, 247) whereas this may well apply for other regions including the one of Aššur itself (RECULEAU 2011).

Aramaeans

However, the Middle Assyrian State was faced with another problem, the migration of the Aramaeans who are first documented under this designation in the year 1111 BCE in the annals of Tiglat-pileser I but prevailed under the label Aḫlamu throughout the earlier history of the state (KÜHNE 2009b, 44; SZUCHMAN 2007). In the political strategies of the central Assyrian government the Lower Hābūr self provisioning entities may have ranked as a buffer zone (KÜHNE 2009b, 46) against the Aramaeans to divert the direction of their migration from the Assyrian mainland. In the ‘Broken Obelisk’ from Niniveh, assigned to the reign of Aššur-bēl-kala (1073–1056 BCE), towns along the Lower Hābūr are mentioned as ‘battle’ places between Assyrians and Aramaeans, among them Dūr-Katlimmu.¹⁶ Actually, the Assyrian reports on battles with the Aramaeans mirror desperately the military difficulty to pinpoint these mobile groups down and some of these battles may have been mere skirmishes (FUCHS 2011, 353). It is obvious that the Assyrians could not win but only delay the infiltration. Vice versa, zones of contact and interaction must have emerged all over and prove to have existed in the Hābūr/Middle Euphrates region (KÜHNE 2009b). This seems to be also indicated by the more recent excavations in T. Aḫmar [Til Barsib] which furnished levels 7 and 6 dating by radio carbon samples to about 1100 BCE (BUNNENS 2009, 68–71).

The archaeological evidence of the independent phase of the Aramaean polities is heavily disputed and it depends on the beholder whether it may be considered abundant or little. Crucial in this debate is the archaeological record of the excavation of T. Ḥalaf, the Aramaean centre of Guzana of the polity of Bīt Baḫiani (ORTHMANN 2002). After the renewal of the excavation in 2006 (BAGHDO et al. 2009) and after the restoration and reconstruction of the in World War II fragmented sculptures in Berlin (CHOLIDIS, MARTIN 2010) the dispute about the date of the ruler Kapara continues in most recent essays (FUCHS 2011; SCHAUDIG 2011). To interpret Kapara and his father Hadianu as representatives of a forerunner ‘dynasty’ of Baḫianu and his son Abi-salamu, who became a vassal of Adad-nīrārī II in the year 893 (FUCHS 2011:355), is a plausible alternative considering the ‘archaic’ style of the sculptures (Fig. 253) as well as the architecture of the West-Palace, a so called Bit Hilani (Fig. 255), from where they were exca-

15 Most recently: FUCHS 2011, 354; VAN DE MIEROOP 2004, 172: “These successes were ephemeral, however, and by 1050 Assyria was reduced to its heartland, with Aramaeans in control of most of northern Syria and large parts of Mesopotamia. A one-hundred-year period of total obscurity ensued.”

16 GRAYSON 1991, 102 „In the month Kislev, eponymy of Ili-iddina, on campaign against the Aramaeans, he fought (with them) at the city of Magrisu of the land of Iaru (to be replaced by: Mari [note of the author]). In that year, in the same month, on campaign against the Aramaeans, he fought (with them) at the city of Dur-katlimmu. In that year, ..., [he plundered the Aramae] ans opposite the city Sangaritu [which is on] the Euphrates.“

Fig. 253. Statue of a deceased and deified Aramaean ruler of Guzana [T. Ḫalaf] (10th cent. BCE). (CHOLIDIS, MARTIN 2011, 363)

Fig. 254. Statue of Adad-yis'i (Syrie. *Mémoire et Civilisation*, 1993, 260 no. 225)



vated. Both have nothing in common with Assyrian art or tradition.¹⁷ Consequently, they should be dated to the 10th century¹⁸, prior to Adad-nīrārī II (911–891 BCE).

Similarly, in the case of Til Barsib/Masuwarī at the western edge of the Assyrian homeland more recent excavations of building remains of level 5 (BUNNENS 2009:74 Fig. 5)¹⁹ have most probably uncovered an eastern extension of the architecture of “Le Niveau Araméen” excavated by Thureau-Dangin (Fig. 256) (THUREAU-DANGIN, DUNAND 1936). The at the time of the French excavators rather arbitrarily chosen label “Araméen” now seems to be confirmed by Aramaean names in Luwian inscriptions (BUNNENS 2009, 75–76). Again the architecture should be assigned to the 10th century, prior to Adad-nīrārī II (911–891 BCE) who mentions the polity Bit Adini in his annals in the year 899 for the first time. If agreed, North-eastern Syrian (Upper Mesopotamian) culture of the 10th century is suddenly substantially enhanced by material evidence that may rightly so be associated with the Aramaean ethnicity. The West-Palace of Guzana was conceived as a *bīt hilani* in the western tradition of Ḫatti with its outer decoration of sculptured orthostates (PUCCI 2008b, GILBERT 2011) but with purely Aramaean styled reliefs; it may have been in use continuously until its destruction in the middle of the eighth century (SCHAUDIG 2011) without any major changes while the Assyrians constructed their governor’s palace in the north-east corner of the citadel (NOVÁK, GHAFOR 2009). Concerning the visual arts, the dating of the sculptures from the

17 Contra Röllig, cf. p. 463 of this book.

18 Contra KÜHNE 2009b, 48; the new excavations have furnished some new aspects concerning the “Baugeschichte” of the West-Palace (MARTIN, FAKHRU 2009) which make this date much more appealing.

19 See this article for previous literature.

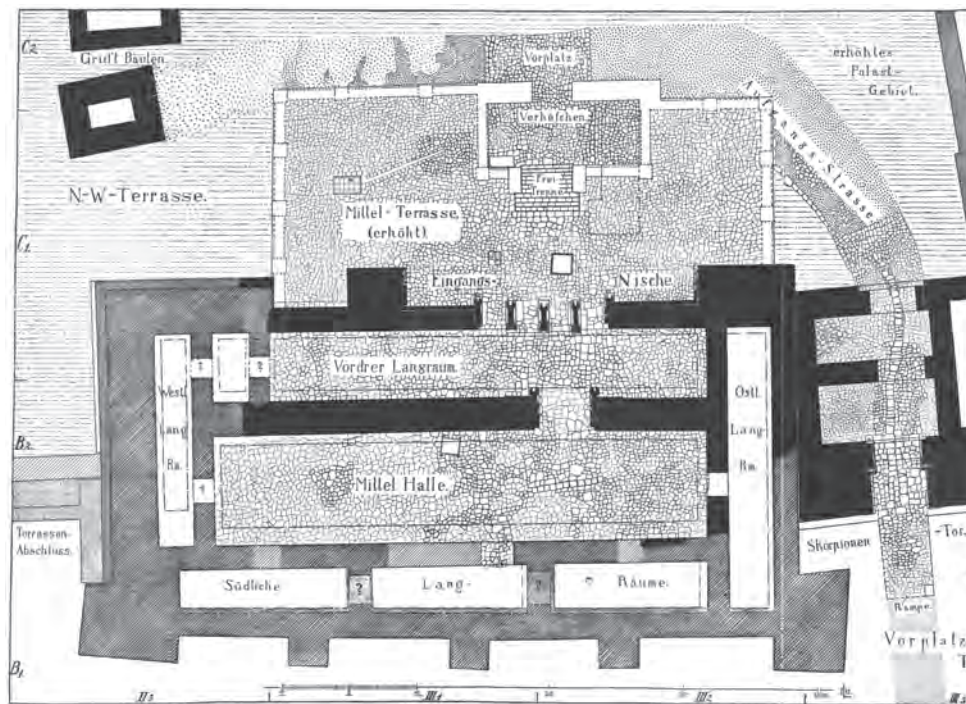


Fig. 255. Plan of the West-Palace of Guzana [T. Halaf] (CHOLIDIS, MARTIN 2011, Abb. 303)

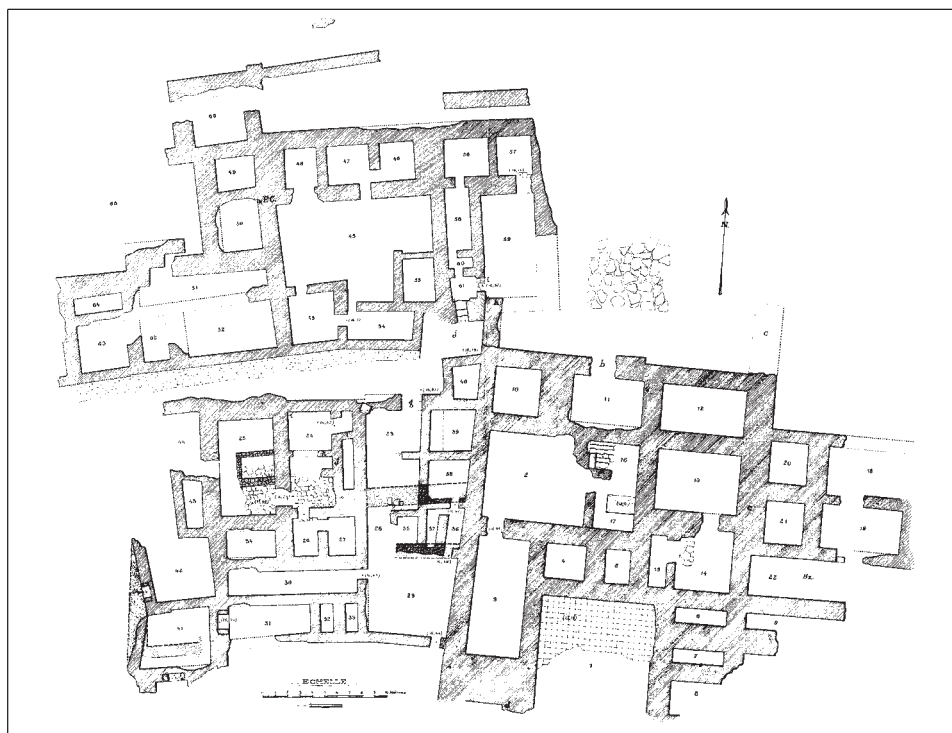


Fig. 256. Plan of "Le Niveau Araméen" of Til Barsib (THUREAU-DANGIN, DUNAND 1936, Plan C)

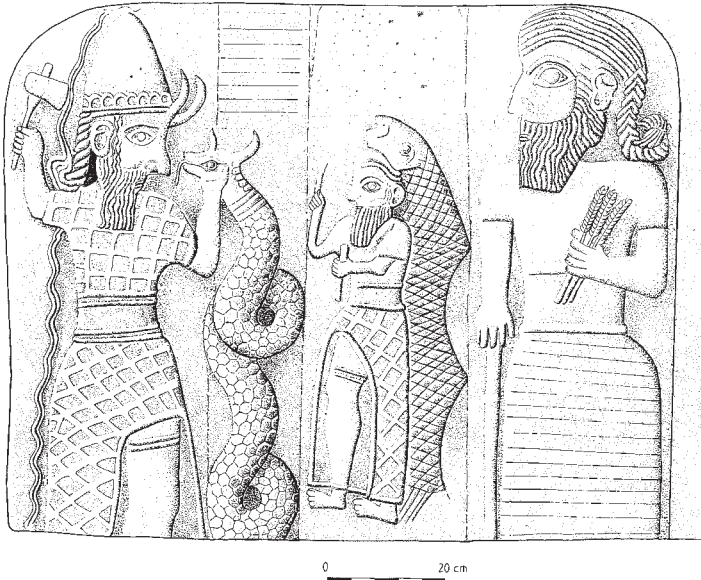


Fig. 257. Stele of 'Ašara drawing (MASETTI-ROUAULT 2001, 195)



Fig. 258. Stele of T. 'Ağāğa
(© T. Şeh̄ Hamad Archive, Berlin)

West-Palace of Guzana to the 10th century must initiate a reappraisal of Aramaean culture and interaction with Assyria. On the other end, “Le Niveau Araméen” of Til Barsip was supplanted by the Assyrian governor’s palace (see below).

The archaeological evidence of the Later Assyrian State (935–810/746 BCE)

The second phase of the Assyrian State begins with king Aššur-dan II (935–912 BCE) who returns the political initiative to Assyria; it ends with the administrative reform that is conventionally attributed to Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE). However, Postgate (1995, 2–5) has argued convincingly that the reform should be assigned already to Adad-nīrārī III (810–783 BCE) which is confirmed by Radner (2006–2008, 43). It will be argued here that the reform was initiated during the reign of Adad-nīrārī III and came to an end shortly before or at the beginning of the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. It consisted of a spatial reassignment of the provinces which resulted in most cases in a reduction of the territory, a restriction of the power of the governors (CANKIK-KIRSCHBAUM 2003, 64), and most probably in the introduction of eunuchs to this office to curb its hereditary (POSTGATE 1995, 5).

Within this time span of about one hundred and fifty years powerful descendents of Aššur-dan II recovered the North-eastern Syrian territory of the “home provinces” that their Middle Assyrian ancestors had established in the 13th century. Instead of the Mittani/Hurrians of Ḫanigalbat they now had to fight the Aramaean polities who had reached a status of what might best be called city states that were designated according to the progenitor of their tribe, i.e. Bīt Baḫiani (see below), Bīt Adini (BUNNENS 2009, 68–74), Bīt Zamāni (SZUCHMAN 2009) and others. By elaborating the provincial system, creating central places of administration, military and economic functions, by building palaces and even cities according to a master plan (BUNNENS 1996) the Assyrians seem to have applied similar but more sophisticated methods to (re-) incorporate the regained territory into their state than before.

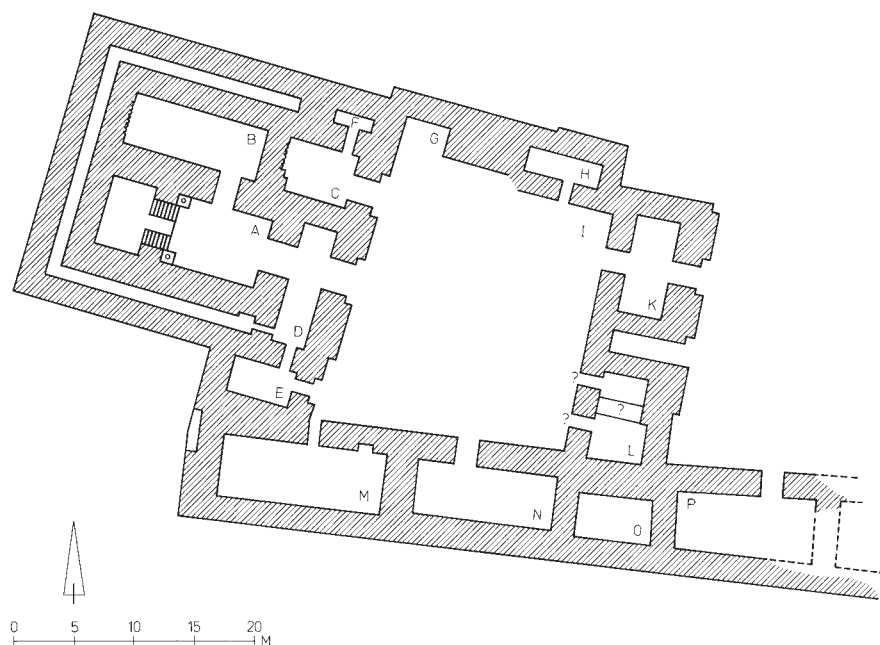


Fig. 259. Plan of the 'Stadttempel' at T. Halaf (Heinrich 1982, fig. 356)

The Ḫābūr region

Assyrian central power in the Ḫābūr region was reinforced by three consecutive campaigns of the Assyrian kings Adad-nīrārī II (911–891 BCE), Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884 BCE), and Aššur-nasirpal II (883–859 BCE) (KÜHNE 1980). The archaeological evidence of the Ḫābūr-survey indicates that the settlement pattern of the Lower Ḫābūr did not change much from the Middle Assyrian one during most of the 9th century (KÜHNE 1995b, 78 Fig. 4; KÜHNE 2009a, 30 Abb. 8) consisting of the four major centers Ṭabēte, Šadikanni, Qatni, and Dūr-Katlimmu and a few small satellite settlements clustering to each of them which incidentally matches the delineation of the annals of Adad-nīrārī II and Tukulti-Ninurta II (GRAYSON 1991, 153. 177). Changes seem to coincide with the reform of Adad-nīrārī III.

Tukulti-Ninurta II constructed a palace in Kaḫat [T. Barrī] (PECORELLA 2008, 390-390 Tavola 5) and had a three sided *kudurru* (Fig. 257) sculptured that was found prior to excavation in T. 'Ašāra on the Euphrates just a little downstream of the junction with the Ḫābūr (KÜHNE 2009b, 49; MASETTI-ROUAULT 2009; MASETTI-ROUAULT 2001, 89–133). A palace was also erected in Šadikanni [T. 'Aḡāḡa] that has partly been excavated more recently (MAHMOUD, KÜHNE 1993/1994; MAHMOUD et al. 1988). The sculptures (re-)discovered in the excavation render stylistic hybrids (Fig. 258) which have been inspired by interaction spheres of Aramaeans and Assyrians (KÜHNE 2009b: 54) that may be localized within the distance of one hundred kilometres between Guzana and Šadikanni. They are partly conceived along traits of Aramaean art reminiscent of the sculptures of Kapara and his father of the 10th century; on the other hand, the Assyrian traits would date them to the 9th century (KÜHNE 2009b).

Guzana became vassal by 893 during the reign of Adad-nīrārī II (911–891 BCE) (GRAYSON 1991, 153); it was then ruled by local Aramaean potentates like Adad-yis'i (Fig. 254) who calls himself "king" in the Aramaean and correctly "governor" in the Assyrian inscription (ABOU-ASSAF et al. 1982). His statue is rendered in strongly Assyrianizing style which reflects his actual political dependency most properly. At what time this status changed to that of a province with an Assyrian governor is debated but the most probable date is 808 BCE after king Adad-nīrārī III had conquered Guzana again and entitled Mannu-kī-Aššur as governor (NOVÁK 2009, 97; RADNER 2006–2008, 51). The recent archaeological record does not offer a clue for the construction date of the Northeast-Palace (NOVÁK, GHAFOR 2009, 59). With

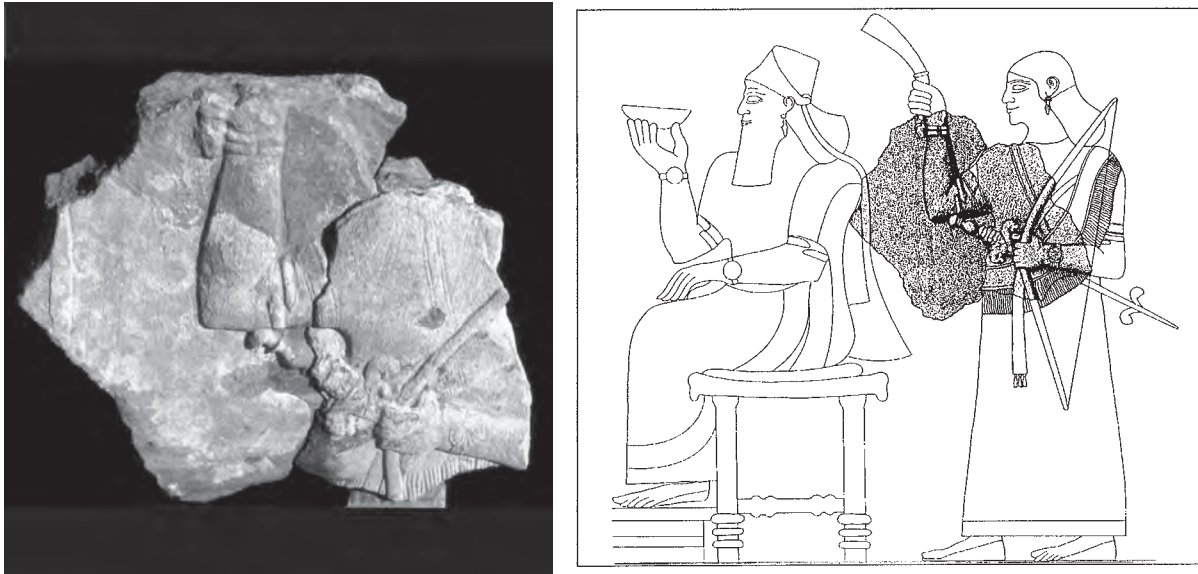


Fig. 260. Fragment of an orthostate and reconstruction of the scene; T. Šeḥ Ḥamad, 9th cent. BCE. (© T. Šeḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)

respect to the above mentioned self image as “king” I would argue that the Aramaean potentates serving as vassal held office in the Hilani and the Assyrian governors constructed the “Lehmziegelterrasse” and the Northeast-Palace; if so, the year 808 would be the *terminus post quem* for the latter.

Astonishingly rare is the archaeological record of temples. The only fully excavated example seems to be the so called ‘Stadttempel’ of Guzana situated at the western edge of the city, westsouthwest of the Hilani (Fig. 259) (ORTHMANN 2002, 44–46). It betrays a typical Assyrian ground plan consisting of an ante cella and a long rectangular cella with a podium opposite the entrance. While the dedication of this temple is unknown contemporary temples in T. Rimāḥ [Zamāḥu] (OATES 1967, Pl. XXXIII) and Dūr-Katlimmu (unexcavated) are consecrated to the weather god Adad and to the city god Salmānu respectively (KÜHNE, RADNER 2008, 33–34).

Rendered in genuine Assyrian imperial style of the ninth century a fragment of a relieved orthostate (Fig. 260) was discovered on the surface of the southern slope of the citadel mound of Dūr-Katlimmu (KÜHNE 2009b, 52). Excavation in the Lower Town II has demonstrated more recently that the foundation of this eminent settlement enlargement must date back to the 9th or even late 10th century²⁰; the architectural remnants of this occupation had been leveled to a remaining maximum of two layers of mud bricks with hardly any preserved floors and original contexts with the exception of the seal impression Išme-ilu, eunuch of Nergal-ēreš²¹ (Fig. 262; KÜHNE, RADNER 2008). Structurally and stratigraphically connected to this oldest occupation of the Lower Town II is a canal of 358m length and 10m width that crossed the Lower Town II in east-west direction and cut the occupation in two parts (PUCCI 2010; KÜHNE 2012).

20 In earlier writings I have frequently maintained that the foundation of the Lower Town II dates to the second half of the 8th cent. This assessment became questionable when the date of the oldest cuneiform text excavated in the Lower Town II could be fixed to the year 828 BCE (RADNER 2002, 41. 157–158).

21 Nergal-ēreš is the famous governor of the Assyrian province of Rašappa (including Lāqê) who was in office according to his two eponymats between 803 and 775 BCE (RADNER 2002, 7).

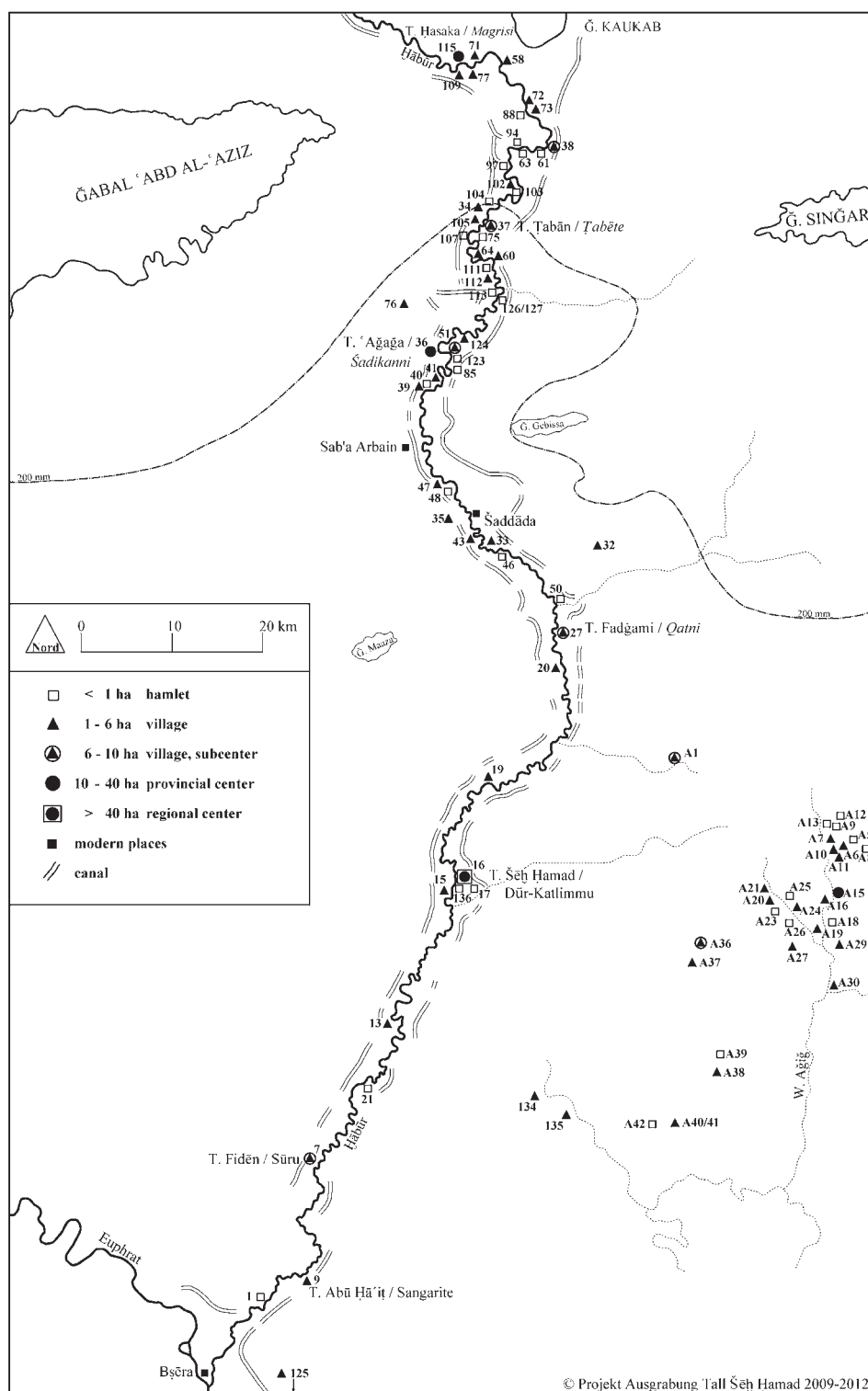
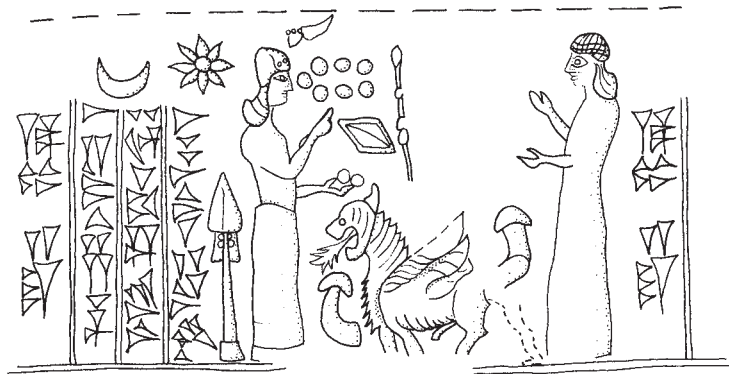


Fig. 261. Settlement pattern of the Lower Hābūr in the 8th and 7th century BCE (© T. Šeḡ Hamad Archive, Berlin)

Fig. 262. Seal impression of Išme-ilu, eunuch of Nergal-ēreš. (© T. Šeḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin)



Nergal-ēreš

By this evidence the end of the oldest occupation period of the Lower Town II of Dūr-Katlimmu, including the disuse of the town canal, falls within the reign of Adad-nīrārī III (810–783 BCE) or, at the latest, of Salmānu-ašared IV (782–773 BCE), that is within the time of the reform. As mentioned above it reduced the territories of the provinces and restricted the power of the governors – with two exceptions: the governor of the province of Rašappa, Nergal-ēreš, and the general (*turtānu*) Šamši-ilu.

During his mandate of at least thirty years Nergal-ēreš accomplished the foundation of numerous cities, restructured the settlement pattern, and urbanized his provinces. This is well documented by the archaeological record of the Ḥābūr-Survey; the Lower Ḥābūr valley witnessed an enormous increase of settlements and obviously population from the beginning of the 8th through the 7th century (Fig. 261). Further more it is confirmed by two royal stelae, one from T. Rimāḥ [Zamāḥu] excavated in original position, and the other from a place called Saba’a (GRAYSON 1996, 207–212) of which it is said in the inscription to have been erected in Zabanni, a place that has been suggested to be identified with T. Umm ‘Aqrubba (BERNBECK 1994, 141–143).²² Both must be dated after the year 797 because Ḥindānu is mentioned which was added to his domain in that year. At the end of his mandate, that is shortly after his second eponymat in 775, Nergal-ēreš fell in disgrace and became subject of a *damnatio memoriae* which means that inscriptions mentioning him and his deeds were erased.²³

The two stelae relate strongly to the geographical space of the Lower Ḥābūr and the steppe east of it and south of Ġabal Sinġar; this region is marked by the wādī-systems of the ‘Aġiġ and the Ṭarṭar (KÜHNE 2009a). Dūr-Katlimmu is mentioned in both inscriptions, the presence of Nergal-ēreš is confirmed in its archaeological record, and it furnishes a fragment of a stele of Adad-nīrārī III itself (RADNER 2002, 15), which certainly falls within the mandate of Nergal-ēreš.

A new large fragment of an aniconic stele discovered in T. Masaiḥ mentions both Nergal-ēreš and King Adad-nīrārī III in context with the place name Kar-Aššurnasirpal on account of which the site was identified with this Assyrian city by the excavator (MASETTI-ROUAULT 2010, 389). The site itself seems to belong to a row of fortresses along the Middle Euphrates that were constructed and maintained by the Assyrians to pacify this rebellious region of Suḥu.

Šamši-ilu

The younger coeval of Nergal-ēreš was a powerful man operating west of the Ḥābūr, the general (*turtānu*) Šamši-ilu, who acted as the head of the “province of the general” (RADNER 2006–2008, 48) during the

²² The geographical position of Saba’a was first mapped by W. Schwenger in MEISSNER 1925, appendix “Karte von Assyrien”.

²³ According to our standards Nergal-ēreš has never been disloyal to his king. However, the mere fact that he and other governors initiated inscriptions on royal stelae on their own behalf was certainly one of the causes that accelerated the reform (BLOCHER 2001; GRAYSON 1996, 200–201).

had (re-)constructed the palace and decorated it with the most important scenes in halls XXIV and XLVII which render a seated king (XLVII) and a person of unclear function (XXIV) because of the destruction of his headgear, but in which Moortgat assumed the depiction of Šamši-ilu himself (MOORTGAT 1967, 143–146). It may be speculated that this would have to be dated to the apex of his career which may fall together with his inscription on the lion sculptures of the northeast gate in which he celebrates his victory over Urartu without mentioning his king (THUREAU-DANGIN, DUNAND 1936, 141–151; ROOBAERT 1990; BUNNENS 2009, 79). In any case, if the (re-) construction of the palace is attributed to his initiative it would precede the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III by a decade or more. After the general Šamši-ilu had resigned the “province of the general” was divided up in smaller units which became provinces of their own (RADNER 2006–2008, 48, 56) just like the realm of the governor Nergal-ēreš. Thus, when Tiglath-pileser III took over the Assyrian throne the rearrangement of the Assyrian home provinces was completed.

The archaeological evidence of the Assyrian Empire (809/744–612 BCE)

The point of departure for the Assyrian Empire is the above mentioned reform. After its completion the Assyrian home provinces became the strategic hinterland of further expansions to the west. They were subject of normative life to the extent that the provinces or cities of the region are rarely mentioned in imperial administrative or legal records (FALES, POSTGATE 1992, 1995; KWASMAN, PARPOLA 1991). Local archives or single texts apparently recorded most of the ongoing provincial activities but have not been discovered in larger quantity²⁵ except for the archive discovered in the “Red House” of Dūr-Katlimmu (RADNER 2002).

Whether intended or not, the reform also changed the image of the king. He gained absolute power and was now facing the gods on eye level in the coronation ritual and as high priest. A hierarchically structured, well functioning civil service of clearly defined liabilities and allegiances was executing his orders. The backbone of the home provinces, the socio-economic structure, and the reliable administration constituted the condition of building the Assyrian Empire.

Ruralizing the steppe

Adad-nīrārī III's reform seems to have been rather effective in terms of agrarian development, foundation of settlements, and demography within a short period of time. If compared with the Middle Assyrian period there was an enormous increase of settlements during the 8th and 7th century including the development of the hinterland of the major centres. Unfortunately, our knowledge of Assyrian pottery (HAUSLEITER 2010; HAUSLEITER, REICHE 1999; MORANDI BONACOSSO 1999) does not allow differentiating the 8th from the 7th century so that any process-related reconstruction of the rural development by archaeological criteria is as yet impossible. Nevertheless, the archaeological record confirms that the Assyrians cultivated systematically new land between pre-existing settlements and put in value marginal lands like the ‘Aḡiḡ or the North Ġazira (WILKINSON 1995, 157). Hand in hand with the development of the settlements and the agrarian resources went the construction respectively upgrading of the regional canal systems on both sides of the Ḥābūr. In addition, the system of the Royal Road (*ḥarran šarri*) was developed further – a branch from the main road in the north was now leading down the Ḥābūr to Dūr-Katlimmu and from there via the ‘Aḡiḡ to Aššur (RADNER 2002, 3–4; KESSLER 1997). These big construction projects must have gone on for years if not decades and have to be considered as heavy financial investment of the Assyrian government in the home provinces about which the cuneiform records – imperial as well as local ones – unfortunately report nothing. After the completion of them a service supply had to be installed to regulate the use and the maintenance of the canals. A glimpse of that is recorded in the texts of Dūr-Katlimmu in

25 For a full record of Neo-Assyrian texts outside the Assyrian core region see RADNER 1997, 4–18.



Fig. 265. Plan of excavated buildings and town wall of the North-east Corner, Lower Town II of Dūr-Katlimmu (© T. Šēḫ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin).

century. The total intramural ground now covered maximal 52 hectares.²⁶ According to the most recent evidence it appears to have been fully occupied already during the 9th century with the town canal (PUCCI 2010 ; KÜHNE 2012) cutting it in two halves. At the beginning of the 8th century the canal was abandoned, refilled and sealed by a street or new buildings. This change of urban paradigm seems to be attributable to Nergal-ēreš on account of the find spot of the seal impression of Išme-ilu (see above).

The new occupation level sees a complete new layout which becomes the master plan of the Lower Town II for the next two hundred years and even for the settlement beyond the collapse of the Assyrian Empire. In the Central Lower Town II a compound of four houses was erected, covering 3481 m² (Fig. 264), out of which House 1 was large, House 4 medium size, and Houses 2 and 3 small (PUCCI 2008a). The reception hall B of House 4 was decorated with murals depicting a garden scene and a pavilion above which a cuneiform inscription read: “The Garden House” (KÜHNE 1989/1990, 320 Abb. 138). Plant pits of a small garden were discovered in the southern courtyard of House 1 (KÜHNE 2006). The northern front of the compound was flanked by a street which had sealed the refilled town canal. The architectural similarity with houses from the capital Aššur (HEINRICH 1984, 167–170. 187–189 Abb. 103–105) indicates that the Houses 1–4 of Dūr-Katlimmu obviously served a similar function.

In the Northeast Corner of the Lower Town II an array of buildings was excavated covering a total of 10021 m² (including the town wall) dating to the 8th and 7th century (KÜHNE 1993/1994). The main

26 This is a revised figure according to the geophysical prospection; former estimations had ranged around 60 hectares.

building consists of three parts which have been designated “Gebäude F”, “Gebäude F-Erweiterung”, and “Gebäude W” covering 3,768 m² (Fig. 265). Bordering “Gebäude W” in the west is a double row of rooms furnishing the main entrance and leading to a large courtyard EZ (400 m²). By crossing the courtyard in a zigzag fashion the main reception hall could be entered from which a staircase led to an upper story. A corridor room connected that hall with another courtyard²⁷ which gave access to “Gebäude F”, a *bīt hilani* type building. “Gebäude F-Erweiterung” has not completely been excavated but seems to have featured the living space of the whole complex. The *bīt hilani* type building “Gebäude F” served as a reception suite of the landlord while “Gebäude W” featured the administrative, commercial, and storage functions of the building. As opposed to the clear Assyrian layout of the “private Houses” in the Central Lower Town II this building has an official aura of a palace-like function with clear Aramaean elements (*bīt hilani*). A number of architectural modifications and installations of new floors make it highly probable that the foundation reached back to the 8th century; the cuneiform texts discovered in three rooms of the building (RADNER 2002, 26) date exclusively to the 7th century.

At the point of erection the palace-like building apparently had to consider the “Gebäude Northwest” which remained inserted in its north-western corner but without connecting doors. The western front of the “Gebäude W” was facing an open area in the west from which an alley spread out south between “Haus 2” and “Haus 1” which turned to the south-east between “Haus 1” and possibly “Haus 3” of which only small parts were excavated. “Haus 1” must be interpreted as a workshop in which an installation was discovered which resembled an oil mill. Further south-east the southern flank of “Gebäude F” faced another open area.

The two excavation sectors of the Lower Town II have displayed large buildings that were of residential and semi-official function. This evidence is complemented by a geophysical map of the Lower Town II. It demonstrates that most of the intramural space was occupied by similar large buildings, some of them obviously larger than the excavated ones. Apparently the Lower Town II was designed for spatial mansions or residences, official buildings, workshops, streets, open – public – spaces, and probably gardens. The conclusion from this must be that upper class people were dwelling there. The population lived in the suburban areas of the outer Town and /or in small villages within a distance of about three kilometres.

The structure of the society living within the walls of Lower Town II is fairly well mirrored in the excavated texts (RADNER 2002, 8-14). According to this evidence it must be assumed that the high Assyrian officials like the military governor (*rab muggi*) and the confidant of the king (*ša-qurbūti*) next to the leading members of the contingents of the Assyrian chariotry and of the intelligence service that were based in Dūr-Katlimmu were living there with their higher staff and their families while the servants and workmen may have had their houses outside the walls. More difficult to assess is whether other well to do members of the society such as merchants, squires, and craftsmen were residing there also because the texts lack distinct indications for them except for smiths (RADNER 2002, 9) and the archaeological evidence is certainly still too limited for a clear statement but at least indicates that processing trade was based in the Lower Town II. It may also be assumed that storage and distribution facilities, arsenals (*bēt-māšarti*), and a rest house (*bēt-madēte*) were located within the Lower Town II because Dūr-Katlimmu was situated at a junction of the Royal Road (*ḥarran šarri*) to Aššur. Indications of a harbour (RADNER 2002, 16) may be associated with the river Ḥābūr or with the regional canal of which a branch was feeding the city with fresh water. Obviously larger parts of the population but only few of the elites were Aramaic speaking and writing; they may have given an Aramaean name to Dūr-Katlimmu which is documented in texts of the seventh century, Magdalu. In the variant of Magdala it was carried on to the Hellenistic-Parthian-Roman period (KÜHNE, LUTHER 2005). Material culture demonstrates that Assyrians and Aramaeans were living in a state of “cohabitation” in the 7th century but probably had done so since the 9th (KÜHNE 2009b).

27 This arrangement of a hall giving access to a staircase in a right angle at one end and to courtyard at the other end may be found very similarly in Arslan Tash, in the “Bâtiment aux Ivories” (HEINRICH 1984, Abb 81).

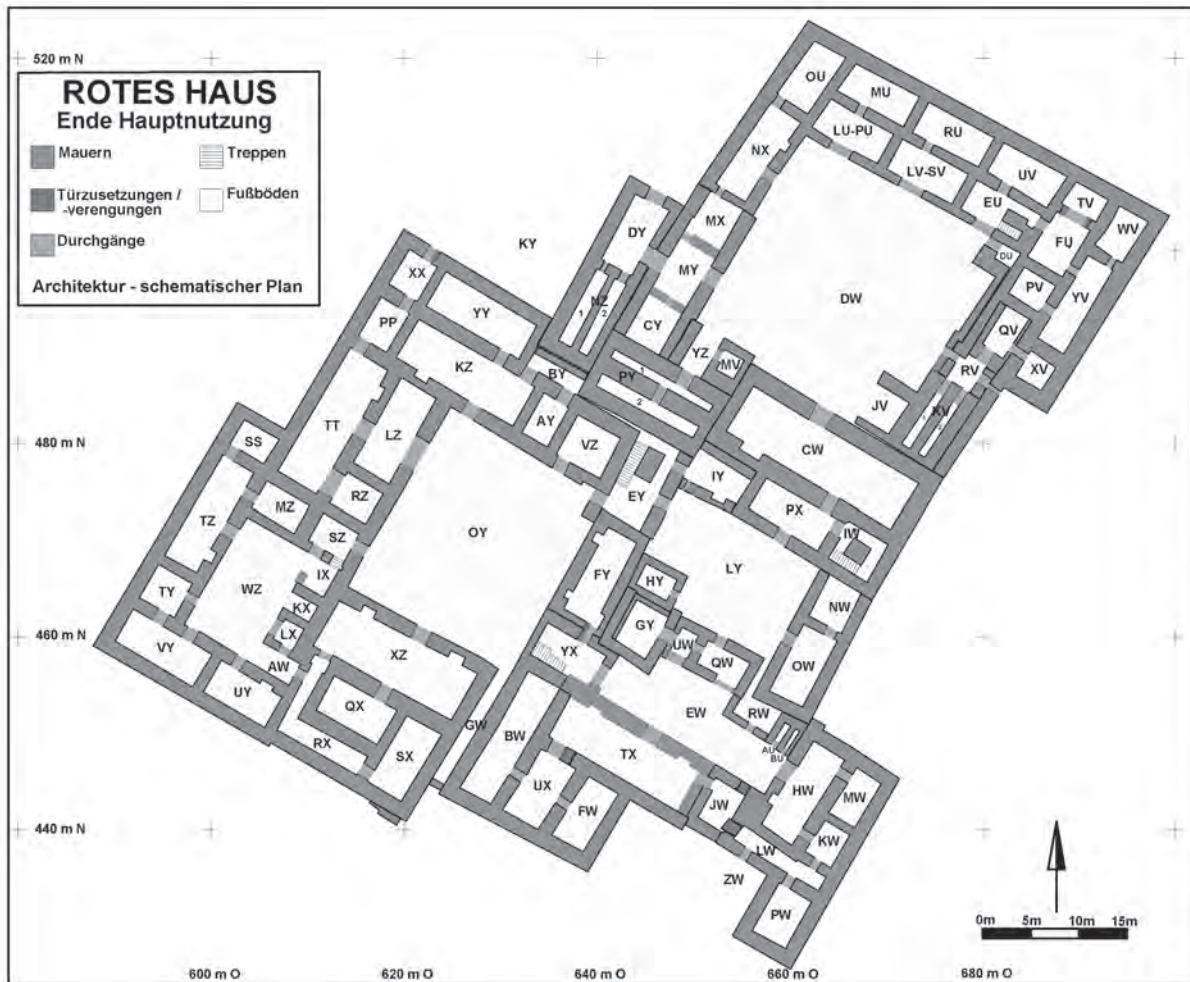


Fig. 266. The “Red House” of Dūr-Katlimmu, excavation sector Central Lower Town II (© T. Šeḥ Ḥamad Archive, Berlin).

Conclusion

Dūr-Katlimmu must have been a buzzing provincial centre of the Assyrian homeland, perhaps endowed with some royal privileges. Economically based on agriculture and animal husbandry it certainly produced a surplus which may have been used meeting military requirements. The former investments in the infrastructure of the region, i.e. the development of settlements, the cultivation of marginal areas, and the construction roads and of a regional canal system to improve water supply, irrigation, and transportation, were now paying off. It may be imagined that other provincial centres such as Til Barsib (BUNNENS 1997) flourished and functioned along these lines in various degrees and diversity.

The archaeological evidence of the Post-imperial Assyrian homeland (612–539 BCE)

The Assyrian Empire crumbled in 612 BCE with some political and military convulsions lingering on until 610/9. As described by the Babylonian Chronicle the looting and devastation of the Assyrian capitals Niniveh and Nimrud has been confirmed by the archaeological record; the Babylonian king Nabopolassar

(626–605 BCE) also reports that he raided the province of Rašappa (GRAYSON 1975, 90). Assyrian written documents were rare before the collapse but were lacking completely after 612. Historians deemed the complete disappearance of the Assyrians (SMITH 1925, 130; POSTGATE 1989, 9; KUHRT 1995, 540–541), a *topos* that can be traced back to the 19th century historiography and ultimately to the information provided by the Bible (MEYER 1884, 577).

It appears that the only reliable archaeological evidence of the Post-Imperial Assyrian homeland comes from the excavation of Dūr-Katlimmu (KÜHNE 2002, 2011). A few rooms of the eastern flank of House 4 of the “Residences” and an unknown number of buildings east of them of the Lower Town II occupation were destroyed by fire. A new mansion, the “Red House” (Fig. 266), was founded in the ruins not considering the layout of the former building but driving its foundation trenches down to bed rock. It covered an area of 5 176 m² and consists of 85 rooms arranged around 5 courtyards which were completely excavated. On the floor of the north-western corner room XX four unique cuneiform tablets were recovered (KÜHNE 1993). They were written in Assyrian language, in an Assyrian format, and by a scribe with an Assyrian name, but they are dated by a Babylonian date formula to the years two and five of the reign of Nebukadnezar II (604–562 BCE), i.e. to the years 603 and 600 (RADNER 2002, 61–69) indicating that the “Red House” was in use at the time. Some of the witnesses mentioned on the tablets can be traced back to families known from the time before the collapse documented in the archive that was discovered in rooms YV and WV (RADNER 2002; ZADOK 2009–2010). Phoenician ostraka and imported pottery correspond very well to this date of the beginning 6th century. The life time of the “Red House” certainly covered the first half of this century until it was destroyed by a fierce conflagration. The adjoining Houses 1–4 of the former “Neo-Assyrian Residences” were reused. In the North-east Corner a contemporary level was detected.

This archaeological record bears far-reaching conclusions. Regardless whether the “Red House” was constructed during the final years of the Empire or just after its collapse the city of Dūr-Katlimmu did not suffer much harm from the latter break down. While the capital cities were laying waste Dūr-Katlimmu continued to exist at unchanged spatial dimensions and only eventually altering socio-economic conditions. Assyrian material culture lingered on (KREPPNER 2006; 2008a.b). Babylonian administration is missing, cultural interaction and emulation are limited; instead the Assyrian elites apparently went on managing life and economy until the end of Neo-Babylonian Empire in 539 when the Achaemenids stepped in. There are some indications that other important sites of the homeland went on like this on a perhaps more reduced scale than Dūr-Katlimmu. In T. Ḥalaf [Guzana] three texts were discovered in the Lower Town that date to post-collapse years (NOVÁK 2009); in the Lower Town of T. Ahmar [Til Barsib] levels were excavated that may date very closely to the collapse only to be abandoned afterwards (BUNNENS 1997, 28).²⁸ In the *long durée*, however, the Ġazīra was deprived of its first rate homeland-function of the Assyrian core region because the centres of power had changed to Babylonia and later to Persia for which the Ġazīra was marginal (KÜHNE 2010). This is confirmed by archaeological evidence: at about the time when the Achaemenids took over (539 BCE) life in Dūr-Katlimmu continued on a much reduced scale, the city shrinking to the size of the former Middle Assyrian Period.

28 Another site documenting the collapse of the Assyrian Empire by textual evidence is Ziyaret Tepe [Tušhan], cf. PARPOLA 2008.

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Table of terminologies in use for the Bronze Age of Syria

Approximate Dates BC	Historical Terminology for Mesopotamia	Historical Terminology for Syria	Bronze Age Terminology for Syria	Jezirah Terminology
4000	Late Uruk		LC / EB I	EJ 0
2900	Jamdat Nasr		EB II	
	Early Dynastic I			EJ 1
2700			EB III	
	(Early Dynastic II)	Early Syrian 1		EJ 2
2600			EB IVa	EJ 3a
	Early Dynastic IIIa			
2500		Early Syrian 2 ('Mature')		EJ 3b
	Early Dynastic IIIb			
2350			EB IVb	EJ 4
	Akkadian	Early Syrian 3 ('Late')		
2100	post-Akkadian			EJ 5
	Neosumerian /	Old Syrian 1	MB I	
2000	Ur III			OJ 1
	Old Babylonian	Old Syrian 2	MB II	OJ 2
1800				
1560		Mittani	LB I	OJ 3
1525	Kassite /			
	Mittani /			MJ 1
1350	Middle Assyrian		LB II	
1200				MJ 2

List of Abbreviations

AAA	Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology (Liverpool)	IstM	Istanbuler Mitteilungen
AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research	JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
AASyr	Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes.	JdI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung	JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology	JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
AnSt	Anatolian Studies	MDOG	Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft
APA	Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica	NEA	Near Eastern Archaeology
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament	OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis,
AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen	OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
ArchAnz	Archäologischer Anzeiger	OrAnt	Oriens Antiquus
ARES	Archivi Reali di Ebla - Studi	RIME	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods
AUWE	Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka. Endberichte	RIA	Reallexikon der Assyriologie
BagF	Baghdader Forschungen	SAAB	State Archives of Assyria Bulletin, Padova.
BagM	Baghdader Mitteilungen	SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
BAH	Bibliothèque archéologique et historique.	SBA	Saarbrücker Beiträge zur Altertumskunde
BAR	British Archaeological Reports	SMEA	Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici, Roma.
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research	SUN	Studien zur Urbanisierung Nordmesopotamiens
BATSH		SVA	Schriften zur Vorderasiatischen Archäologie
BBVO	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient	TMO	Collection travaux de la Maison de l'Orient
BCSMS	Bulletin of the (Canadian) Society for Mesopotamian Studies	UF	Ugarit-Forschungen
BiMes	Bibliotheca Mesopotamica	VicOr	Vicino Oriente. Annuario del Dipartimento di Scienze storiche, archeologiche e antropologiche dell'antichità, sezione Vicino Oriente
CDOG	Colloquien der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft	VFMOS	Vorderasiatische Forschungen der Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung
CRAI	Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres	WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
CRRA	Comptes rendus de la Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale	WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
DamM	Damaszener Mitteilungen	ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie
FAOS	Freiburger Altorientalische Studien		
HSAO	Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient		
ICAANE	International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East		
IstF	Istanbuler Forschungen		

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N.B.: The designation ‘Tall/Tell’ and the Arabic article ‘al’ usually have been omitted from the placenames. The transcription of Arabic names follows the usage of the “Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients”.

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