

BERICHTE DER AUSGRABUNG
TALL ŠĒḤ ḤAMAD / DŪR-KATLIMMU
(BATSH)

Band 1

Herausgegeben von
Hartmut Kühne, Asa'd Mahmoud und Wolfgang Röllig



DIE REZENTE UMWELT VON TALL ŠĒḤAMAD
UND DATEN ZUR UMWELTREKONSTRUKTION
DER ASSYRISCHEN STADT DŪR-KATLIMMU

Herausgegeben von
Hartmut Kühne

Mit Beiträgen von:

Cornelia BECKER, Sytze BOTTEMA, Peter J. ERGENZINGER, Wolfgang FREY,
W. H. E. GREMMEN, Hans HOPFINGER, Christian JAGIELLA, Friedhelm KRUPP,
Hartmut KÜHNE, Harald KÜRSCHNER, David S. REESE, Wolfgang SCHNEIDER

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DAVID S. REESE

MARINE AND FRESH-WATER SHELLS AND AN OSTRICH EGGSHELL FROM TALL ŠĒḤ ḤAMAD, SYRIA (ABB. 8I–9I; TABELLEN 34–35)

Zusammenfassung (summary):

Im folgenden werden die Mollusken-Funde aus Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad vorgestellt. Der größte Teil der Schalenreste läßt sich der Süßwassermuschel-Gattung *Unio* zuordnen, die mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit auch eine Nahrungsquelle darstellte. Die Schalenreste der marinen Mollusken fanden überwiegend als Schmuck Verwendung. Durch die durch die Fundumstände gegebene zeitliche Differenzierung (13. und

7./6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.) deutet sich möglicherweise eine Änderung der Bezugsquelle an. Die aus dem 13. Jahrhundert v. Chr. vorliegenden Funde stammen hauptsächlich von mediterranen Sippen, während die Beispiele aus dem 8.–6. Jahrhundert v. Chr. vier Sippen aus dem Roten Meer enthalten. Die Schalen mit Bearbeitungsspuren und der Fundkontext werden abschließend den aus anderen zeitgleichen Fundorten bekannten Mollusken gegenübergestellt.

نعرض فيما يلي المكتشفات من الصدف والقواقع في تل الشيخ حمد .

إن معظم القواقع الصدفية المكتشفة هي من النوع النهري المعروف باسم (أونيو- Unio) ، ومن المحتمل جداً

أنها كانت من المصادر الغذائية في ذلك الزمان .

أما بقايا القواقع الصدفية البحرية فكانت في معظمها تستخدم لأغراض الزينة . وبالاستناد الى مكان اكتشاف

تلك القواقع ومواقع وجودها فقد حددنا تاريخ استخدامها بين القرن الثالث عشر والقرن السادس قبل الميلاد ، ولعله

من الممكن تحديد الأماكن المستوردة منها ، فالقواقع الموجودة في طبقة أثرية مؤرخة بالقرن الثالث عشر قبل الميلاد هي

الأصناف المألوفة في البحر الأبيض المتوسط ، أما القواقع المكتشفة في طبقة أثرية مؤرخة بين القرنين الثامن والسادس

قبل الميلاد فانها من الأصناف الأربعة المألوفة في البحر الأحمر . هذا ويجري مقارنة القواقع الصدفية المشغولة مع

شبهاتها المكتشفة في مواقع أثرية تعود بقاياها الى العصر التاريخي نفسه .

Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad is located 70 km northeast of Dēr az-Zōr on the east side of the Lower Ḥābūr River. The site is 450 km from the Mediterranean Sea, 850 km from the Red Sea (at 'Aqaba), and 950 km from the Persian Gulf, all distances being as-the-crow-flies.

Most of the shells present (99 individuals) are the fresh-water bivalves *Unio tigris* and *Unio mancus*, which was probably a food source. The 36 marine shells were for the most part used as personal ornaments and are mainly from the Mediterranean (*Glycymeris violascens*, *Arcularia gibbosa*, *Acanthocardia tuberculata*, *Cerastoderma edule glaucum*, *Conus mediterraneus*, *Cymatium* sp., *Columbella rustica*, and *Bittium* sp.).

There are six shells which come from the Indo-Pacific province, either from the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf (*Cypraea annulus*, *Cypraea moneta*, *Marginella monilis*, and *Nerita albicilla*). Mediterranean shells are present beginning in the 13th century B. C., but Indo-Pacific shells only from the late 8th to 6th century B. C.

Table 34 lists the species of marine shells found at the site and Table 35 is a specific description of the shells and records their distribution at the site.

The context of some of the shells are of particular interest, and are noted here. The 13th century B. C. Room A of Building P produced 12 burnt shells with five *Arcularia* (unmodified: SH 81/1527 I/168; holed: SH 81/1527 I/69 [Abb. 81], 223 [Abb. 82], 256, 399), a fragmentary *Cypraea* (SH 80/1527 I/153), a *Conus* holed at the apex (SH 80/1527 I/219, [Abb. 83]), a cockle fragment (SH 81/1527 I/262) and three *Unio* fragments. There is also an unburnt *Acanthocardia* fragment holed at the umbo (shell »beak«) (SH 80/1527 I/69DD).

In Building F of the northeastern corner of the Lower City II the late 8th to 6th century B. C., Room B produced a water-worn *Glycymeris* with a holed umbo (SH 86/8975 I/40) and three *Unio*. Room C produced 16 *Unio* and Room WW three examples. A *Cypraea annulus* with an open dorsum (SH 82/8977 II/84, [Abb. 84]) and a fossil bivalve in matrix (SH 83/8977 II/86) have no special context.

The 7th century shells from Building G in the center of Lower City II mainly come from two rooms. Room M2 produced three water-worn *Glycymeris*, two with a naturally-made hole at the umbo and all ground-down on the exterior (SH 87/5753 I/78, [Abb. 85]), SH 87/5753 I/139 (two, Abb. 86), a water-worn *Conus* holed at the apex (SH 87/5753 I/67, [Abb. 87]) and four *Unio*. Room D yielded a water-worn *Glycymeris* with a naturally-made hole at the umbo and also ground-down on the exterior (SH 86/5953 I/35), two *Marginella* ground-down and holed on the body (SH 86/5953 II/16), and four *Unio*.

Most of the Roman shells come from Grave 51/87 in Building G. There are two water-worn *Glycymeris* with naturally-made holes at the umbo, an *Arcularia* holed on the lower dorsum and ground-down and holed on the side of the body, one *Cypraea annulus* (Abb. 88 left) and another cowrie, both with a ground-down dorsum, a *Nerita* ground-down and holed at the apex (Abb. 88 right), one *Cymatium* with worn holes on the body, two worked shell columellas with small drilled holes (Abb. 89), two *Unio*, with one very small, and an ostrich eggshell fragment (SH 87/5953 III/178 + 182). Also in this building, Graves 37/87 and 50/87 each produced one *Unio*.

Of the unstratified shells, there is one *Cypraea moneta* with a ground-down dorsum (SH 78/1729 III/18, [Abb. 90]) and a *Conus* apical bead (SH 78/1527 I/15) from the area of Building P. There is also a *Bittium* fragment (SH 87/9181 III/105) from the northeastern corner of Lower City II.

Unstratified shells from the area of Room M2, Building G include three water-worn *Glycymeris* (one holed at the umbo, two much eroded, one unholed at the umbo but ground-down on the exterior; SH 87/5753 I/90) and an unmodified *Columbella* (SH 87/5753 II/123). The unstratified area of Room K1 of this building yielded a holed *Cerastoderma* and an *Arcularia* holed on the lower dorsum (SH 87/5953 IV/203, Abb. 91).

COMPARANDA

The comparanda discussed here are Late Bronze Age and later shells from Syria and eastern Turkey. For earlier evidence in Syria and Turkey see my report on the Kurban Höyük shells (REESE, 1990) and the Tell Chuëra shell report by von den DRIESCH and FALKNER (1989).

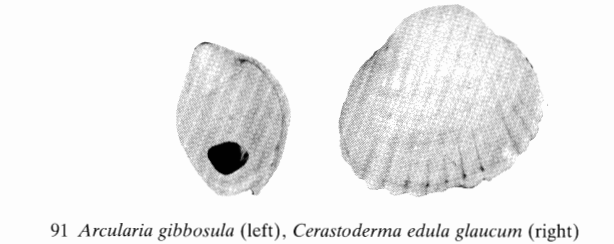
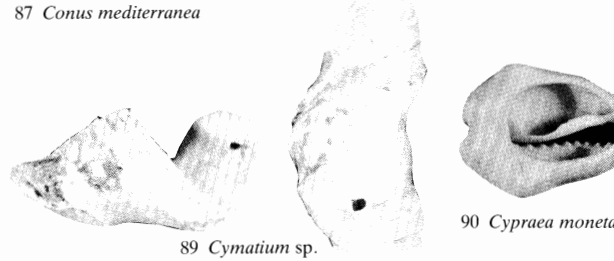
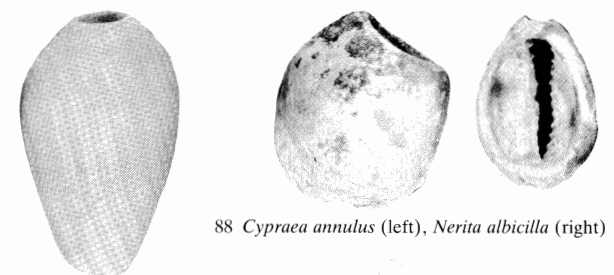
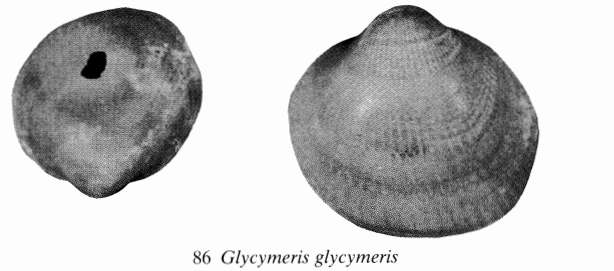
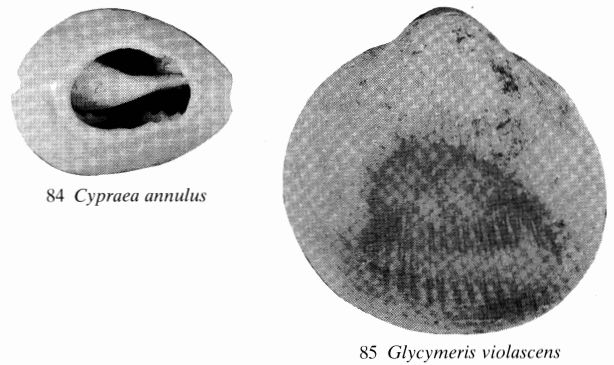
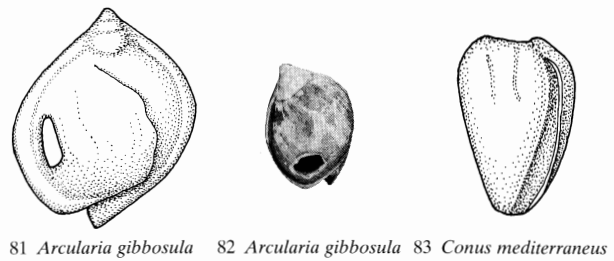
WORKED AND HOLED BIVALVES

The four 7th century and single unstratified *Glycymeris* from Building G which have been ground-down on the shell exterior are a worked shell type not reported from other Syrian or Turkish sites.

The Hana period (c. 1720–1600 B.C.) at Terqa on the Syrian Euphrates, 425 km from the Mediterranean, produced an *Acanthocardia* (or *Cerastoderma*) with a hole below the umbo (KELLY-BUCCELLATI and MOUNT-WILLIAMS, 1977, 43, Fig. 20 TPR 8 55, Ill. 32 TPR 8 55). MB and LB al-Qitār on the Syrian Euphrates, 175 km from the Mediterranean, produced five umbonally-holed *Glycymeris*.

The temple of Ishtar at Mari in eastern Syria, about 475 km from the Mediterranean, yielded a *Glycymeris* containing a black pigment and a holed example from a necklace (PARROT, 1956, 170, Fig. 95:416, Pl. XIc:310).

So far undated deposits at Tall Nebi Mend (Kadeš) on the southern Orontes, about 50 km from the sea, produced seven *Glycymeris*, with six water-worn, one worn, and two holed at the umbo.



BASKET SHELLS

The small *Arcularia* gastropods are inedible and have a long history of ornamental use in the Mediterranean Basin and Near East (REESE, 1982, 86–87; 1986: 320–21, 331, Figs. 104: 1, 7, Pl. 39b center left, c). Tall Hadīdī on the Syrian Euphrates, 200 km from the Mediterranean, produced 27 holed LB I examples.

Al-Qitār produced 22 *Arcularia* holed on the dorsum. Contemporary Munbāqa on the Syrian Euphrates and 200 km from the Mediterranean produced three *Arcularia* holed on the dorsum (BOESSNECK and von den DRIESCH, 1986, 156, Pl. 1: 5; BOESSNECK and PETERS, 1988, 58).

Tall Faḥariya, about 400 km from the Mediterranean, produced a holed 13th century B.C. example (McEWAN *et al.*, 1958, 44, Fl660, Pl. 44:24). Ḥana period Terqa produced a holed *Arcularia* (KELLY-BUCCELLATI and MOUNT-WILLIAMS, 1977, 39, Fig. 18 TPR 8 47, Ill. 32 TPR 8 47). Mari produced a necklace with almost a hundred holed *Arcularia* (PARROT, 1975, Fig. 6).

Tall Brak, about 475 km from the Mediterranean, produced three *Arcularia* with an open dorsum. Nebi Mend produced three *Arcularia*, one with an open dorsum, one holed, and one unmodified.

INDO-PACIFIC COWRIES

Tall as-Sāliḥiyya, east of Damascus and over 450 km from the Red Sea, produced at least three cowries with an open dorsum (von der OSTEN, 1956, Fig. 31: TS 92, 96, 183).

Tall Hadīdī, 800 km from the Red Sea, produced a cowrie from a Roman deposit.

At Mari (900 km from both 'Aqaba and the Persian Gulf) the Temple of Ištar produced holed cowries (PARROT, 1965, Pl. LV1a). Necklaces from the Middle Hittite Tomb R. W. 1 at Carchemish on the Euphrates and Syrian border and about 850 km from the Red Sea, produced a cowrie with an open dorsum (WOLLEY, 1921, 134, Pl. 27a: 9). The nearby Deve Höyük cemetery, mainly of the 5th century B.C., produced cowries with an open dorsum (MOOREY, 1980, 120, Fig. 21).

CONE SHELLS

A *Conus*, apparently ground-down and holed at the apex, comes from the Ḥana period at Terqa. A worn *Conus* or Indo-Pacific *Strombus* holed at the apex and drilled on the edge of the spire comes from a burnt house of the second millennium here (KELLY-BUCCELLATI and MOUNT-WILLIAMS, 1977, 41 TPR 8 49; MOUNT-WILLIAMS, 1980, 4, 16, Fig. 6 TPR 3 25, Ill 9 TPR 3 25). Mari produced an apically holed cone shell (PARROT, 1975, Fig. 6 center) and Brak an example ground-down and holed at the apex.

Circular *Conus* apical whorl beads are also known from Tall Hadīdī, al-Qitār, Tall Faḥariya, and Mari (REESE, 1986, 325–26, Figs. 63:49, 68:2, 4–7, Pl. 28b top left and right, bottom right).

INDO-PACIFIC NERITES

The single Šēḥ Ḥamad *Nerita* is from a Roman grave. Brak, over 950 km from the Red Sea, produced a *Nerita* ground-down and holed at the apex (Ashmolean Museum no. 1939.564) and similarly worked *Nerita* are known from other Near Eastern sites (REESE, 1986, 327–28, 331).

OSTRICH EGGSHELLS

The ostrich eggshell fragment from the Roman grave may be from an eggshell vessel. Ostrich eggshells are known from numerous sanctuaries and graves in the Near East, although the previously known examples are all pre-Roman (REESE, 1985, 374–76).

Photographs are by Diane Alexander-White, Department of Photography, Field Museum of Natural History.

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Table 34: Marine Shell Species present at Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad (Listed by type and in order of frequency).

Frequency	Marine Shell Species
10	<i>Glycymeris violascens</i> (Lamarck, 1819) Dog-cockle
7	<i>Arcularia gibbosula</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) Basket shell, Nassa shell
5	<i>Cypraea annulus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) Money cowrie, Gold-ringer <i>Cypraea moneta</i> Linnaeus, 1758 Money cowrie <i>Cypraea</i> sp. Cowrie
3	<i>Acanthocardia tuberculata</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) <i>Cerastoderma edula glaucum</i> (Bruguère, 1789) Cockle
3	<i>Conus mediterraneus</i> »Hwass« in Bruguère, 1792 Cone shell
2	<i>Marginella monilis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) Margin shell
2	carved conical sections of large gastropod columellas
1	<i>Nerita albicilla</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) Nerite
1	<i>Cymatium</i> sp. Triton or Trumpet shell
1	<i>Columbella rustica</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) Dove shell
1	<i>Bitium</i> sp. Needle shell

Table 35: Distributions of Shells at Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad
(measurements in millimeters)

13TH CENTURY B. C. (Building P, western slope of citadel)

- 5 *Arcularia* – 5 burnt, 4 holed: L 17, W 12.5, hole 3 × 4; L 17, W 12, hole 4 × 2.75; L 16, W 12.5, hole 4 × 2.5; 2 broken; unmodified: L 15.5, W 12 (Abb. 81, 82)
 1 *Cypraea* sp. – burnt, fragmentary
 1 *Conus* – burnt, holed apex, broken (Abb. 83)
 1 *Acanthocardia* – fragment, holed at umbo
 1 *Acanthocardia/Cerastoderma* – burnt, fragment
 7 *Unio* – 3 burnt
 1 small fresh-water gastropod – burnt

LATE 8TH CENTURY TO 6TH CENTURY B. C.

(Northeast corner of Lower City II, Buildings F and W, Houses 1 and 2)

- 1 *Glycymeris* – ww, holed at umbo; L 26.25, W 23, hole 2 × 1.5
 1 *Cypraea annulus* – open dorsum; L 19, W 14.5, hole on dorsum 10 × 6.5 (Abb. 84)
 42 *Unio* – 2 burnt
 1 fossil in matrix; L 27, W 18, H 12

7TH CENTURY B. C. (Building G, Lower City II)

- 4 *Glycymeris* – 4 ww, 4 g-d on body, 3 holed at umbo; L 36, W 35, hole 4 × 2.25, g-d area 15 × 13; L 35, W 37.5, hole 2.25 × 2, g-d area 24 × 22; L 40.5, W 40.5, slit hole 4.5 × 2.5, g-d area 24.5 × 22; L 29, W 29, unholed, g-d area 17.5 × 18, holed in center of g-d area (Abb. 85, 86)
 2 *Marginella* – both g-d and holed on body; L 10.5, hole 7 × 4; L 9.5, hole 6 × 3.5
 1 *Conus* – ww, holed at apex; L 28, W 18, hole 5 (Abb. 87)
 18 *Unio*

ROMAN (entire site)

- 2 *Glycymeris* – 2 ww, 2 holed at umbo; L 29.5
 W 29.5, hole 2 × 1.25; L 28.5, W 26+, hole 2.5 × 1.5
 1 *Arcularia* – holed on lower dorsum and g-d on side of body; L 17, W 11, holes 4 × 4 and 4 × 5
 2 *Cypraea annulus* – 2 g-d dorsi; L 20, W 15, g-d dorsum 14 × 10.5; L 15.5, W 11, g-d dorsum 11 × 7.5 (Abb. 88 left)
 1 *Nerita* – g-d and holed at apex; L 17.5, W 15.5, hole 6.75 × 4 (Abb. 88 right)
 1 *Cymatium* – worn, 2 holes on body and open apex, L 32
 2 carved conical sections of large gastropod columellas with small drilled holes; L 36, W 16.5, hole 1.5; L 30, W 16, hole 1.5 (Abb. 89)
 8 *Unio*
 1 Ostrich eggshell fragment; 22 × 16

UNSTRATIFIED (entire site)

- 3 *Glycymeris* – 3 ww, 2 much eroded, 1 holed at umbo, 1 broken, 1 g-d on body; L 30, W 30.5, g-d area 19 × 15.5
 1 *Cypraea moneta* – g-d dorsum; L 16, W 11.5, g-d dorsum 9.5 × 6.5 (Abb. 90)
 1 *Arcularia* – holed on lower dorsum; L 18.5, W 13, hole 4 × 4.5 (Abb. 91 left)
 1 *Cerastoderma* – holed at umbo, now broken, fresh; L 21.5, W 24 (Abb. 91 right)
 1 circular *Conus* whorl bead – L 14, hole 4.25 × 4, 3.75 thick
 1 *Columbella* – unmodified, brightly colored; L 12
 1 *Bittium* – fragment
 4 small fresh-water gastropods
 24 *Unio*

Key:

- L – length
 W – width
 H – height
 g-d – ground-down
 ww – water-worn