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TALL ŠĒḤ ḤAMAD – THE ASSYRIAN CITY OF DŪR-KATLIMMU:
A HISTORIC-GEOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

I. Geographical and Historical Setting

Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad is situated in northeastern Syria (fig. 1), 70 km north-north-east of the provincial centre of Deir az-Zor on the east bank of the Lower Ḥābūr, only about 40 km west of the Iraqi border. The Ḥābūr is the largest perennial tributary of the Euphrates, rising at the Syrian-Turkish border and taking a southeastern course initially before it is forced to turn south by a ridge of the volcano Kaukab near the provincial centre of Hasaka. On its further way south, the river crosses the dry-farming-belt, south of which subsistence relies entirely on irrigation and pastoralism. Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu lies about 80 km south of that line.

The site of Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu (fig. 2) is situated on an outcrop of the river terrace, hereby protecting any settlement from flooding while at the same time being near its waters. This seems to have been one major reason why the place was originally chosen for settlement. The settlement of the site (fig. 3) began as early as the Late Uruk Period and continued throughout the Early Bronze Age, at that time apparently not covering more than the bare nucleus of the Tall. The first enlargement occurred in the Middle Bronze Age when a lower town (I) in the east was added to what then became the citadel, both being surrounded by a fortification wall. This configuration covered an area of about 15 hectares and continued to exist throughout the Late Bronze Age into the early Iron Age. During the 8th century, the area of the intramural settlement was enlarged by almost a factor of four to about 55 hectares by adding a newly founded lower town (II) in the northeast of the citadel. In addition, the northern and eastern suburban areas were now occupied, thereby doubling the overall settlement area to about 110 hectares. As can be demonstrated by the results of more recent excavations, the settlement was reduced to its original configuration of the citadel and lower town (I) only during the Achaemenid Period, this remaining the area of occupation during the Hellenistic to late Roman times. In Islamic times, the site seems to have been uninhabited, except for the last two centuries when it was used as a burial ground for the transhumant people of the region. Only in about 1960, two villages were founded; one in the north of the ancient settlement area called Šēḥ Ḥamad, and the other to the south, called Ġaribe, both of them occupying

some of the ancient settlement area and using the former citadel, lower town (I) and parts of lower town (II) as a cemetery.

The Assyrian city of Dūr-Katlimmu was known to historians ever since the early days of Assyriology, when H. C. Rawlinson first published the third column of the so-called “Broken Obelisk” in the British Museum (Grayson 1991:99–105). This monument is now commonly dated to the Middle-Assyrian king Aššur-bēl-kala of the eleventh century B.C. (1073–1055). The location of the site was discussed by R. Dussaud (1927:487), J. Seidmann (1935:69) and others, but no scholar had suspected it to be modern Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad. This identification was provided by a chance find of some thirty Middle-Assyrian tablets on a survey of the “Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients” in 1977 (Kühne 1974/1977; idem 1978/79; Röellig 1978). Excavation began in 1978 and has continued ever since.¹

In relation to the Assyrian centres (fig. 1), Dūr-Katlimmu is situated on about the same latitude as the capital Aššur. The distance is about 230 km as the crow flies, crossing the flat tableland of the Syrian / Iraqi Jezira. This wilderness is usually thought to be impenetrable because of the lack of water. As was demonstrated in a study of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (1966), the Jezira is rich in ground water supplies still today and it may be suspected that it was even richer in ancient times. Even today, numerous wells in regular distances, and more rarely also water holes, provide sufficient water supplies for anyone who is endeavoring to cross the Jezira. Today, the steppe consists of degenerated grass and shrub lands receiving around 100 mm of precipitation per annum (Frey / Kürschner 1991). However, in Assyrian times this region was an artemisia-steppe (*Artemisietum herbae-albae*) and the habitat of lions, elephants, and also ostriches, which have long ceased to exist, and even the numerous herds of gazelle are extinguished now.

Geographically and politically, the Jezira between Aššur on the Tigris and the Euphrates south of Kargamiš is what J.N. Postgate (1992:251–2) called ‘Assyria proper’ (fig. 4).² Aššur is the only Assyrian capital on the west bank of the Tigris. It is situated near the point of the Assyrian heartland, close to the dry-farming-belt. Its natural hinterland was the Jezira and Assyria was essentially a steppe-borne and steppe-bound empire, as has been demonstrated elsewhere (Kühne 1997). The newly discovered road station of Tall Umm ‘Aqrēbe east of Tall Šēḥ Ḥa-

1 Reports are published in a special series called *Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu*; in Vol. IV (1996). Of this series an up-to-date bibliography of this interdisciplinary research project can be found.

2 Figure 4 is a re-worked version of the map published in Kühne 1995. Fig. 2, based on further studies as well as on the map of E. Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996 Abb. 7 and new evidence from Tall Sabi Abyad provided by P.M.M.G. Akkermans and F.A.M. Wiggermann and from Tall Chuera provided by W. Orthmann and C. Kühne (personal communication).

mad / Dūr-Katlimmu indicates that a direct route connecting the capital of Aššur and the provincial centre of Tall Šeḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu (fig. 4) was apparently established during the 13th century B.C. (P. Pfälzner in Bernbeck 1993:92–6 Abb. 10; Kühne 1995: fig. 2; Kühne 1997). It is quite conceivable that this measure improved the means of communication as well as the security in the steppe considerably. Thus, the Middle-Assyrian empire was gaining territorial control.

II. Middle-Assyrian Dūr-Katlimmu

The Middle-Assyrian period has been investigated by excavations on the western slope of the Tall.³ In a step-trench, 28 levels were distinguished from top to bottom, the lowest being the Middle-Assyrian. Between two modern, but at the beginning of the excavation shut-down irrigation channels an area of about 120 m² was excavated. A large building was uncovered (fig. 5), arranged polygonally and apparently consisting of several wings. The area chosen fortunately included one of them. It consisted of several corridor rooms, from each of which oblong rooms on either side were accessible. The rooms were used for storage and as workshops. Three phases of usage were distinguished, the second being dated absolutely by the Middle-Assyrian archive. This archive had been kept in an upper story and at the moment of the destruction of the building had fallen down into Room A, which at that time was filled with sacks of grain (Kühne 1984:166–169). The archive demonstrated that the building had served as a palace.

The tablets were found in a thick black ash layer, in which they were associated with numerous jar sealings, animal bones and pottery. Forty-five *limu*'s date this assemblage to the Assyrian kings Šulmānu-ašarēd I and Tukulti-Ninurta I of the 13th century B.C. A few clay sealings with the impression of a scarab of the Egyptian pharaoh Sethos I may indicate that Dūr-Katlimmu was already functioning at the time of Adad-Nīrārī I. The foundation of the provincial center maybe associated with his successor Šulmānu-ašarēd I. After the destruction of phase 2, the northern part of this wing was not used again. After some lapse of time, the southern part was restored and used throughout most of the 12th century. This has enabled the pottery sequence to be correlated with the absolute chronology (Pfälzner 1995:235–238).

Various groups of texts can be distinguished, such as inventories, ration lists, lists of workmen and cattle, receipts, records of harvest yields and distribution of seed corn, loans and contracts (Röllig 1984: 158). No literary texts were found, but

3 Hartmut Kühne (Hg.), Die Ausgrabungen am Westhang der Zitadelle 1978–1984. *Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Šeḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu* Vol. 2 (in preparation).

most important is a small group of 35 letters. Among them is at least one royal letter of Tukultī-Ninurta I addressed to a high ranking official of the central government, a vizier or *sukkal rabiu*, by the name of Aššur-idin, who at the time was residing in Dūr-Katlimmu and controlling most of the political affairs in the western part of the empire. His successor, by the name of Šulmanu-mušabši, had been engaged in a top political affair; it seems that he was in charge of accompanying the journey of the captured Kassite king Kaštiliaš IV after the defeat of Babylon. The party seems to have been heading to Dūr-Katlimmu on a route crossing the Jezira (Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996:41–43). It may not be accidental, therefore, that two different seal impressions can be associated with this man: one, on an envelope, in the typical modelled Middle-Assyrian style (Kühne 1980a: Nr. 52 = Matthews 1990: no. 361), the other, on a bulla, in a style very similar to that of the second Kassite group.

From this information, the historical significance of Dūr-Katlimmu may be assessed as follows:

- Dūr-Katlimmu was the seat of a governor, a *bēl pāhete*, and he resided in a palace. We have no way of knowing how large was the *pāhutu*, the province (Postgate 1995), of which he was in charge. However, it seems that the province of Dūr-Katlimmu guarded the southwestern frontier of the empire towards the middle Euphrates and secured the eastern Jezira between the Tigris and the Ḫābūr (fig. 4).

- In contrast to other provincial centers which were also the seat of a governor, Dūr-Katlimmu seems to have functioned as a place of special importance to the central government. This is demonstrated by high ranking officials of the king who resided temporarily in Dūr-Katlimmu and controlled most of the western part of the empire. The king himself visited the city at least once, but probably more often.

III. Dūr-Katlimmu During the 'Dark Ages'

Historians have labelled the time after the death of Tukultī-Ninurta I (1207) down to the reign of Aššurdan II (932–910) as the 'Dark Ages' due to the paucity of written sources available. According to most scholars, the territory under Assyrian control was reduced to the bare nucleus of Assyria (Moortgat 1950: 400 and others) except during the reign of Tiglat-Pileser I and Aššur-bēl-kala in the 11th century, who tried to re-establish the limits of the 13th-century empire, but without lasting success (Postgate 1985, 1992).

The archaeological evidence from Dūr-Katlimmu mentioned above clearly in-

dicates that the palace was reused in the 12th century (Pfälzner 1995: 238). No levels have been excavated which could be attributed to the 11th or 10th centuries. But the mention of Dūr-Katlimmu in the ‘Broken Obelisk’ demonstrates that Dūr-Katlimmu did still exist (fig. 6–7). It has been debated whether it survived under Assyrian or Aramaean control. The more recent translation by A. K. Grayson (1991:102) seems to suggest that Aššur-bēl-kala was fighting the Aramaeans at the city of Dūr-Katlimmu. This could imply that Dūr-Katlimmu was still under Assyrian control and needed some help against the Aramaeans.

Regional evidence has been missing so far. Newly discovered and already known cuneiform sources from the Lower Ḥābūr indicate that, despite their general weakness, the Assyrians still controlled this region (Kühne 1995, 72–75). New evidence is provided by the texts from Tall Bderi (Maul 1992) furnishing a hitherto unknown local dynasty of Ṭābēte in the 11th century with an ancestry well back to the 12th century (fig. 6). Even though their members styled themselves ‘king’ they seem to have been dependent on Aššur (Maul 1992:49–50). Since these inscriptions were found in a controlled excavation, the associated pottery (MA III) can be considered as having an absolute date. The typological analysis has demonstrated that it should be considered an evolution from the latest Middle-Assyrian (MA IIc) pottery assemblages from Dūr-Katlimmu (Pfälzner 1995:106–160, 235).

In addition, the well-known inscription of Bēl-ereš (Nassouhi 1927) should be reconsidered. This text clearly originates from Šadikanni, modern Tall ‘Aḡāḡa (Mahmoud / Kühne 1993/94), on the western bank of the Ḥābūr, about 25 km south of Tall Bderi. It is dated to the reign of king Aššur-reš-iši II (969–965) but refers to the long reign of king Aššur-rabi II (1010–970). Since Bēl-ereš mentions his forefathers one might suspect that this local dynasty had been in power for some time during the 11th century (fig. 6). The character of this local dynasty in relation to the central Assyrian government is clearly defined by the reference to the two Assyrian kings, to whom Bēl-ereš announces his subordination.

This evidence provides almost continuous testimony (fig. 6) for the existence of local dynasties along the Lower Ḥābūr from the time after the death of Tukulti-Ninurta I to the re-establishment of central Assyrian power in the region by the campaigns of Adad-Nīrārī II, Tukulti-Ninurta II and Aššurnaširpal II (Kühne 1980b; Russel 1985; Liverani 1988). These dynasties may have been the descendants of the earlier governors (*bēl pāhete*) of the 13th century, who after the death of Tukulti-Ninurta I gained more independence on account of the weakened central government – except in the 11th century, during the reigns of Tiglat-Pileser I and Aššur-bēl-kala, when centralization was reinforced and the complete Ḥābūr region returned back under Assyrian control (fig. 7). It may have been due to the pressure of the Aramaean tribes, especially the ‘Ahlammu’, that these local dynas-

ties needed Assyrian support to maintain their independence and therefore remained loyal to Assyria. It seems to have been some kind of community of fate which kept the two parties together. In addition, the existence of the road station of Tall Umm 'Aqrēbe continued to function for some time during the 12th century. Only later it was replaced by another centre, Tall Umm 'Aqrubba (see below). It does seem therefore that the Lower Ḥābūr region and the steppe remained under Assyrian control during the whole length of the 'Dark Ages', while the political development around it saw the Aramaeans eventually gaining political power and founding independent city states (fig. 8).

IV. Neo-Assyrian *Dūr-Katlimmu*

During the final third of the 10th century, beginning with the reign of Aššur-dan II (934–912), the central Assyrian government regained strength and set out to re-establish control over 'Assyria proper'. The change of the political relationship between the Ḥābūr region and central Assyria is quite well documented by the annals of the Neo-Assyrian kings Adad-nīrārī II, Tukultī-Ninurta II and Aššurnāširpal II (Kühne 1980; Russell 1985; Liverani 1988). They clearly mark the end of the independence of the local potentates along the Lower Ḥābūr. The character of these campaigns has been disputed but it seems - in light of our suggestion about the earlier type of relationship - that they were far from being a conquest but rather a demonstration of regained power. At the end of this process a huge province by the name of Rašappa was established, whose capital is still unknown,⁴ controlling most of the Jezira between Aššur and the Lower Ḥābūr.

The archaeological evidence for the 9th century is scanty. Fortunately the excavation of Tall 'Ağağa / Šadikanni has provided some data by the discovery of some Assyrian styled sculpture (Mahmoud / Kühne 1993/1994). Five pieces are actually a rediscovery because they had been excavated by A.H. Layard more than a century ago (Layard 1853:277). One of the pieces is inscribed, the inscription reading: "palace of Mušeziḫ-Ninurta, *sangû*". As is well known, Mušeziḫ-Ninurta has been identified with the local dynasty of Šadikanni on the grounds of the inscription on a cylinder seal, which was found in Šarif Ḥān / Tarbišu, and renders a genealogy which runs: Mušeziḫ-Ninurta, son of Ninurta-Ereš, grandson of Samanuḫa-šar-ilāni, *sangû* (fig. 6). The grandfather is mentioned in the annals of Aššurnāširpal II, in the year 883, as being the *sangû* of Šadikanni and having delivered tribute. Consequently Mušeziḫ-Ninurta is the third generation of this local dynasty of Šadikanni. If regarded in relation to Bēl-ereš mentioned above, who ruled over

4 K. Kessler suggests Tall Ḥadail in Kessler 1987.

Šadikanni some 80 years before Samanuḫa-šar-ilāni, it seems to be even more likely that Šadikanni was ruled continuously by independent but local rulers throughout the 'Dark Ages' (fig. 6), who remained loyal to Assyria. E. Unger (1953:21) suggests that the seal "was probably removed from its original location at the captivity of its 'prince' (i.e. Mušezib-Ninurta) in 808 B.C." It seems that the local dynasty came to an end then and Šadikanni became part of an Assyrian province.

At no other site along the Lower Ḥābūr have levels of the 9th century B.C. been excavated. But further evidence of the material culture of this period is provided by a surface find from Tall Šēh Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu of an orthostat (fig. 9; Kühne 1995:77 Pl.II) which can be compared stylistically to an orthostat from Room G of the Northwest Palace of Aššurnāširpal II at Nimrud, and therefore should be dated to his reign (fig. 9). The reconstruction of the scene seems to suggest a seated king, possibly Aššurnāširpal II himself. The style is quite clearly of imperial workmanship, contrasting sharply with the provincial style of the fragmentary stele of Adad-Nīrārī III, which was found by H. Rassam, most probably at Tall Šēh Ḥamad, more than a century ago (Millard / Tadmor 1973).

The significance of this piece of art lies rather in the fact that it was found at Dūr-Katlimmu, which according to K. Kessler (1987) did not provide either an Assyrian or a non-Assyrian residence in that period, unlike, for example, Tall 'Aḡaḡa-Šadikanni. One can hardly imagine a building decorated with such sculpture not belonging to an Assyrian residence. Unfortunately, the cuneiform sources do not mention Dūr-Katlimmu as a seat of a governor or as an administrative centre of a province. One is tempted to speculate that it may have been of some importance to the neighbouring province of Rašappa, which covered most of the territory which had been controlled by Dūr-Katlimmu in Middle-Assyrian times. Above all, on the other hand, one may conclude that if the scene really depicted the king, the place must have been associated with him in some special relationship (Kühne 1995:77).

In the Wadi 'Aḡiḡ, R. Bernbeck's period A is roughly contemporary with the 9th century B.C. The road station Tall Umm 'Aqrēbe was revitalized for a short period (or was it used throughout the earlier centuries?). Two very small settlements adhered to the centre, but do not constitute a settlement system (Bernbeck 1993: 133 Abb. 11).

In clear contrast to the Assyrian efforts to re-establish control over the region, are the contemporaneous Aramaean city states north and south of Dūr-Katlimmu, within a distance of 100 km. They are marked by a flourishing culture, especially the Aramaean state of Bīt Baḡiani with its capital Tall Ḥalaf / Guzāna and the site of Tall 'Ašāra / Terqa to which we owe the stele fashioned in Aramaic/Late Hittite style but inscribed by the Assyrian king Tukultī-Ninurta II. Unfortu-

nately, no Iron Age levels have been discovered at Tall 'Ašāra so far (personal communication from O. Rouault). The Assyrian styled works of art from the Lower Ḥābūr clearly underline the Assyrian tradition prevailing in the region, which would not have existed if the Lower Ḥābūr had been dominated by the Aramaeans during the 'Dark Ages'.

During the 8th century, a remarkable change in the policy of occupation became noticeable (fig. 10). An exact date for its beginning cannot be provided; however, it seems that it started as early as the beginning of the century, under the initiative of Adad-Nīrārī III.⁵ As is described mainly in the stelae from Saba'a and Tall Rimāḥ, the steppe became subjected to a programme of colonization (Weipert 1992). This corresponds well to the results of the 'Aḡiḡ-survey, where a settlement system begins to emerge for the first time (Bernbeck 1993:133).

Unfortunately, the Assyrian cuneiform sources for the greater part of the 8th and of the 7th centuries fail to provide any information about the area of concern. It seems that the region had reached a state of integration within the territorial empire in which everyday life ran along such normal lines that it did not require any recording. Regional sources, which had been lacking completely, are now available in small quantity from Dūr-Katlimmu but they do not so far furnish any information relevant to the problem. They do not even record the city's name.

The archaeological evidence is more informative. Even if still unsatisfactory, the typological knowledge of the pottery in combination with the results of archaeological fieldwork is beginning to provide a fairly safe basis of judgement.

For the first time in the occupational history of the Lower Ḥābūr (fig. 10), large parts of the lowest terrace were occupied. Many villages were new foundations, prompted by the elaboration of the local irrigation system to a regional one on both banks of the river during the latter part of the 8th century (Ergenzinger / Kühne 1991). The canals enlarged by a factor of three the basis of subsistence for the local population and made sedentary life more secure against the arbitrariness of climate. Consequently the population grew, the settlements grew and more settlements had to be founded (Kühne 1994:63). This development is paralleled in the Wadi 'Aḡiḡ. Here also, the population grew considerably (Bernbeck 1993:132 Tab. 68, 136–141). The whole settlement systems seems to have consisted of four tiers (fig. 10) which were headed by the provincial centre of Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu. The foundation of new villages seemed to have prompted an upgrading of existing villages and thus stimulated a process of urbanization (Kühne 1994). Some of the new villages were clearly situated at crucial points on the irrigation systems, such as dams and sluices, and seem to have been specialized in the

5 J.N. Postgate arrived at a similar conclusion from a different starting point, cf. Postgate 1995.

maintenance of the canals. Needless to say, that the administration of both colonization and irrigation system had to be established somewhere. It seems that the city of Dūr-Katlimmu served these needs.

As has been mentioned above, the intramural area of settlement of the city of Dūr-Katlimmu was enlarged considerably, almost by a factor of 4, at the end of the 8th century, to about 55 hectares. A new fortification wall of 4 km length enclosed this metropolis which now consisted of the citadel, lower town I, and lower town II. The continuing excavation in lower town II had uncovered some 45,000 m² by the end of the 1995 season. The lesson learned from this effort seems to be quite clear: this lower town II was not the domestic area for the growing population, as anticipated prior to excavation. Rather, it was designed to serve the needs of the increased administration and bureaucracy as well as the residence and representation of the high officials. The buildings were arranged in large clusters, separated from each other by wide streets and large open areas.

Two areas of the lower town II have been under excavation since 1984, one in the northeast corner (fig. 11), the other in the central part (fig. 12). In the northeast corner, a palace (fig. 11) was uncovered which was dated by eponyms to the 7th century; within this building Assyrian and Aramaean written tablets were found at several places (Kühne 1989/90:310). The ground plan of the palace is very similar to the one of Arslan Taš, consisting of a combination of the Assyrian palace scheme with the Aramaic *bit hilani*-type (Kühne 1993/94: 267–270). To conclude from the small finds and pottery so far discovered in the rooms, they seem to have been fairly well equipped (Kühne 1984:173 Abb. 67).

In the central part, four Assyrian houses (fig. 12) were excavated, in plan very similar to houses from Aššur. As E. Heinrich (1984:167) suggested, they should be interpreted as residences of high officials. All of them are equipped with a reception hall and a number of utility rooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, storerooms, and living rooms. The reception hall of the largest house was decorated with wall paintings (fig. 14–15).

V. Post-Assyrian Dūr-Katlimmu

The historical record (Dalley 1993) does not provide any information about the fate of the Lower Ḥābūr region during the final days of the Assyrian Empire. Nabopolassar reports in his chronicles that after having conquered the capital Nineveh in the year 612 together with the Median king Kyaxares, he marched on to the Upper Ḥābūr, to Nusaibin/*Našibīna*. On his way, he plundered the province of Rašappa (Röllig 1993, 131). He does not record any details and we are left guessing whether the Lower Ḥābūr area submitted voluntarily or not. In any case, the

year 612 marks the final stages of Assyrian domination and administration of the Lower Ḥābūr region.

Post-Assyrian Dūr-Katlimmu has emerged from the seasons of excavation between 1992 and 1995. Previously, the archaeological record had indicated levels which – according to the typology of their finds – had to be associated with the ultimate Assyrian or even Post-Assyrian Period. This rather vague notion was set on firm grounds with the somewhat sensational discovery of four cuneiform tablets which were written in Assyrian but dated to the years 2 and 5 of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II (Kühne, Postgate, Röllig, Brinkman, Fales 1993). This has launched a complete new chapter of the history of Tall Šēḥ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu.

The tablets were found in the northwestern corner Room XX (fig. 13) of a building which had been founded on the ruins of one of the Assyrian residences (Kühne 1993:76–81). Up to the end of the season of 1995, 4,500 m² of this building have been excavated; it seems to have functioned as a palace and it was labelled the ‘Red House’ because the walls of many rooms were partly covered with a red wash (fig. 13). The former Assyrian residences (fig. 12) to the west of this palace, parts of which had been destroyed by fire, were reused by the new complex. Re-evaluating other excavation data, it is quite certain that at this time the whole of lower town II was reoccupied. As the dates of the tablets confirm, this establishment was loyal to the Babylonian king but its officials were Assyrians, writing Assyrian on clay tablets and adding Aramaean postscripts as in former Assyrian days. The stratigraphic evidence confirms that the former city of Dūr-Katlimmu – there are indications that the city’s name may have been changed – went on existing un-reduced in size throughout the Late Babylonian Period.

The results of the seasons of 1993–1995 indicated that some parts of the ‘Red House’ belonged to the earlier Assyrian architecture and had been incorporated into the new building. It is as yet uncertain which particular walls or rooms belong to this phase of reusage. In one of these rooms, a small archive of 31 heart-shaped Aramaic inscribed ‘dockets’ was discovered in 1995. They contained a number of Assyrian *limu*’s, all belonging to the post-canonical phase of the Assyrian empire, adding to the evidence of the small archive which was found in 1986 in the north-east-corner (Kühne 1989/90:310). But the date of the tablets described above clearly puts the main occupation period of the ‘Red House’ into the 6th century B.C., during the late Babylonian empire.

The ‘Red House’ was destroyed by a conflagration. Some separate units were reused after the destruction. In one of these units three Aramaic ostraca were discovered in a stratified deposit dated on epigraphic grounds to the 5th or 4th century B.C. This archaeological record corresponds to isolated units in the northeast corner of lower town II, also dated by written documents. It seems, therefore, that

during the Achaemenid Period the lower town was given up and occupied only by isolated houses, possibly a kind of ‘squatter’ occupation. The settlement was reduced to its original configuration of the citadel and lower town I. This town continued to exist until the end of the Roman Period.

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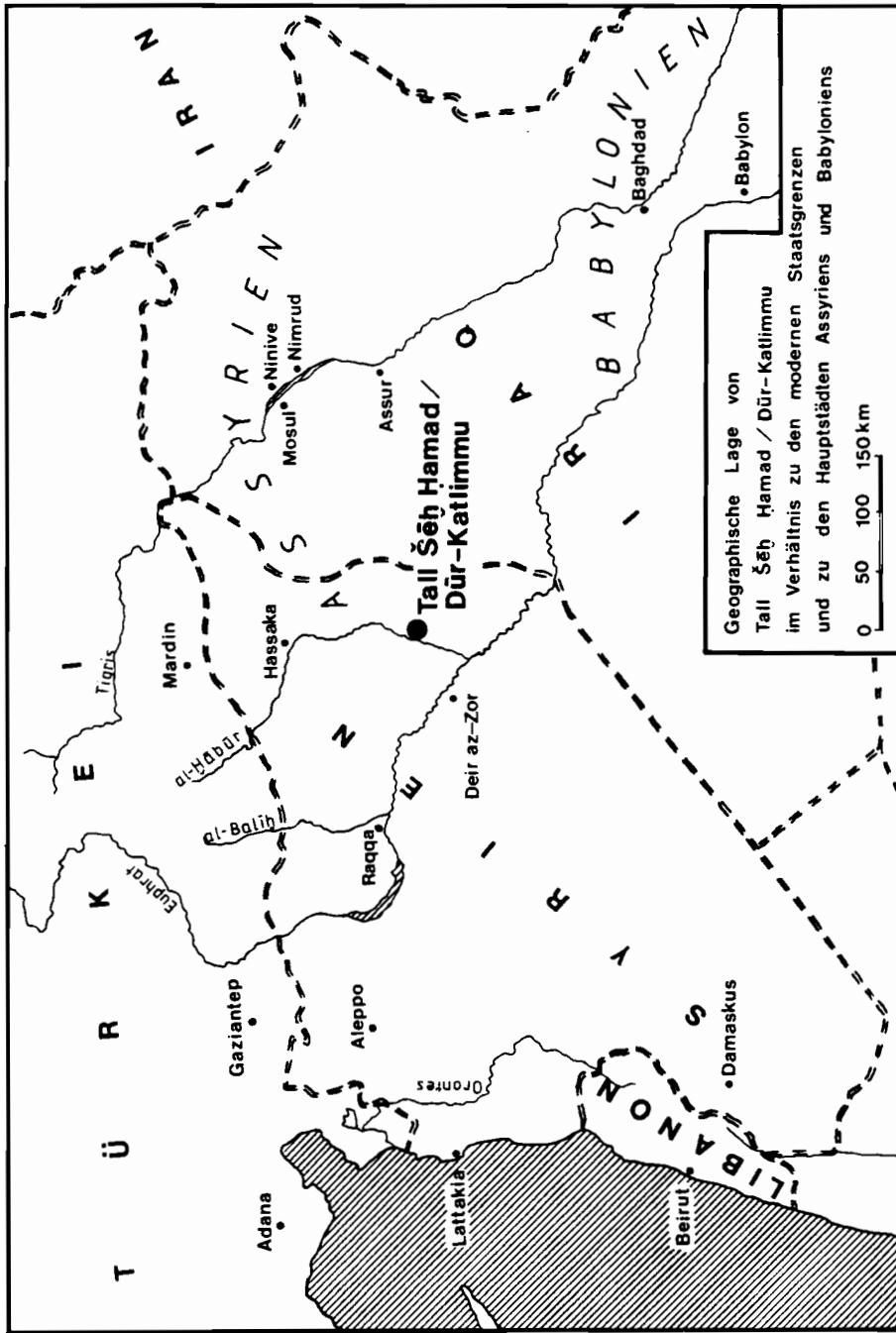


Fig. 1 Geographical Position of Tall Šeḥ Hamad / Dür-Katlimmu in Relation to the Assyrian Capitals

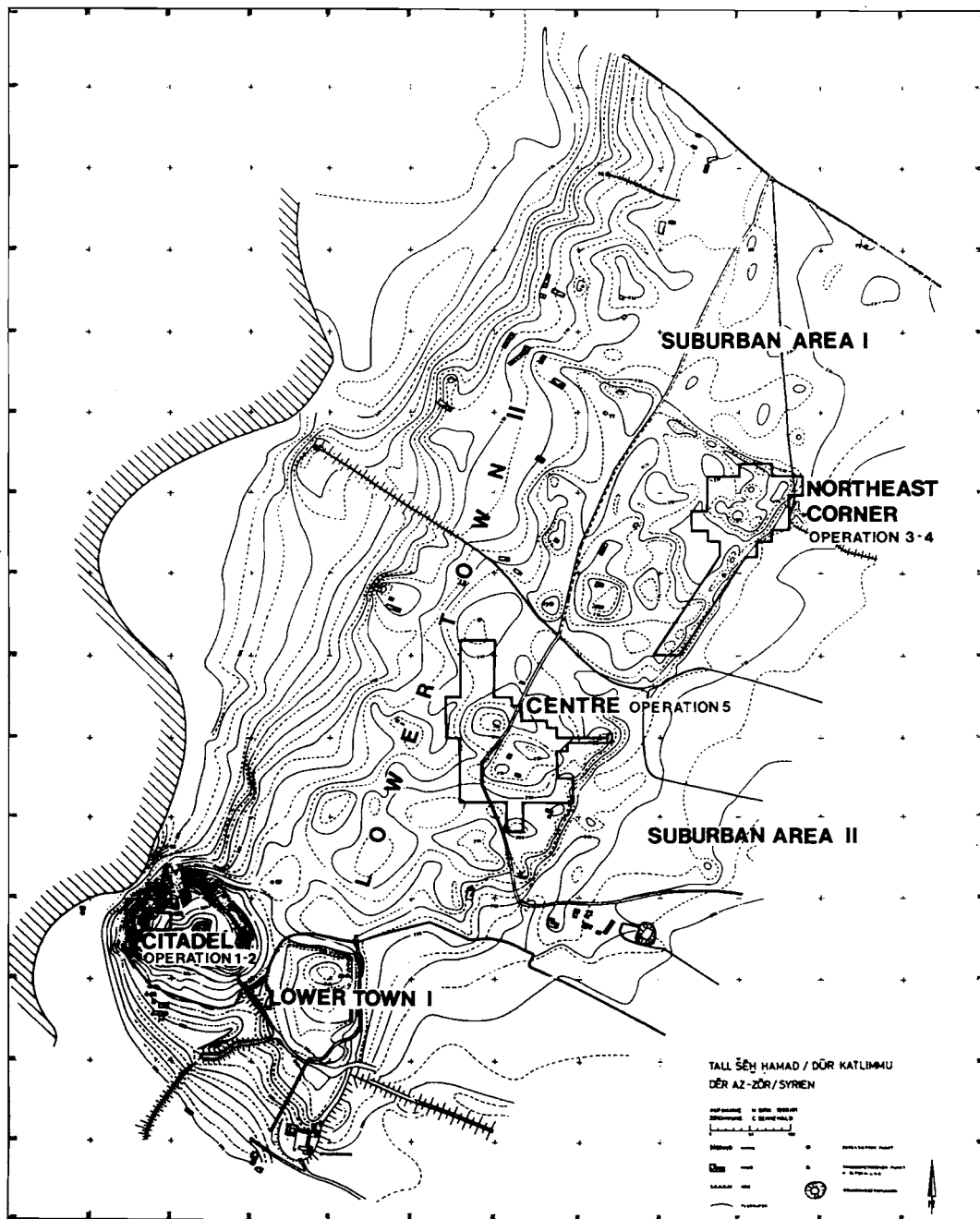
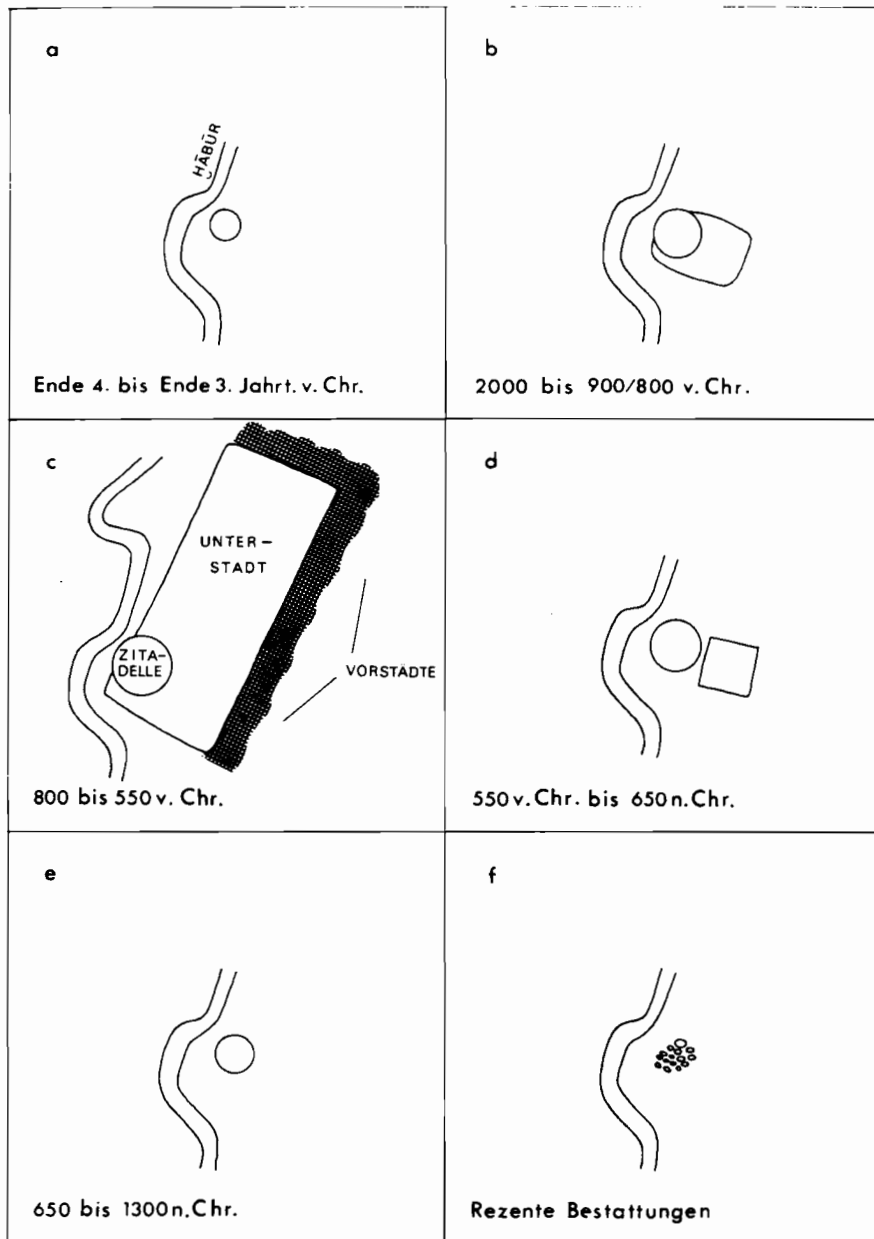


Fig. 2 Topographical Plan of Tall Šeh Hamad / Dūr-Katlimmu with Indication of the Excavation Areas



ENTWURF: H. KÜHNE, 1990
 AUSFÜHRUNG: M. LEICHT

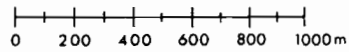


Fig. 3 Development of Settlement of Tall Šeḥ Ḥamad between the Fourth Millennium B.C. and the Present Time

Local Dynasties at the Lower Habūr, c. 1150 - 850 B.C.

Time Period	Tall Šēṭ Hamad / Dūr-Katlimmu	Tall Ašamsani / Tall Faḏḡami / Qatni	Tall 'Aḡḡa / Šadikanni	Tall Taban / Tabēte Tall Bderi / Dūr-Aššur-ketti-iēšer	Object, Provenance
1150	Middle-Assyrian Palace ↓	bēl paḡḡe	bēl paḡḡe	Adad-apla-iddina	Text from Nineveh
1100				Mannu-īu-ju (≈1133) Adad-bēl-apli Adad-bēl-gabbe Aššur-ketti-iēšer (1096)	Ninurta-Tukulū-Aššur
1050	"Broken Obelisk"		↑ forefathers		"Broken Obelisk"
1000			Bēl-ereš-šangū (Aššur-rabi II 1012-972; Aššur-reš-iši II. 971-967)		
950					Clay-cylinder from Aššur
900	Orthostat		883: Samanuḡa-šar-ilāni, šangū, Ninurta-ereš, Mušēzib-Ninurta		Cylinder seal from Šarif Hān / Tarbišu
850					

Fig. 6 Local Dynasties at the Lower Habūr between c. 1150–800 B.C.

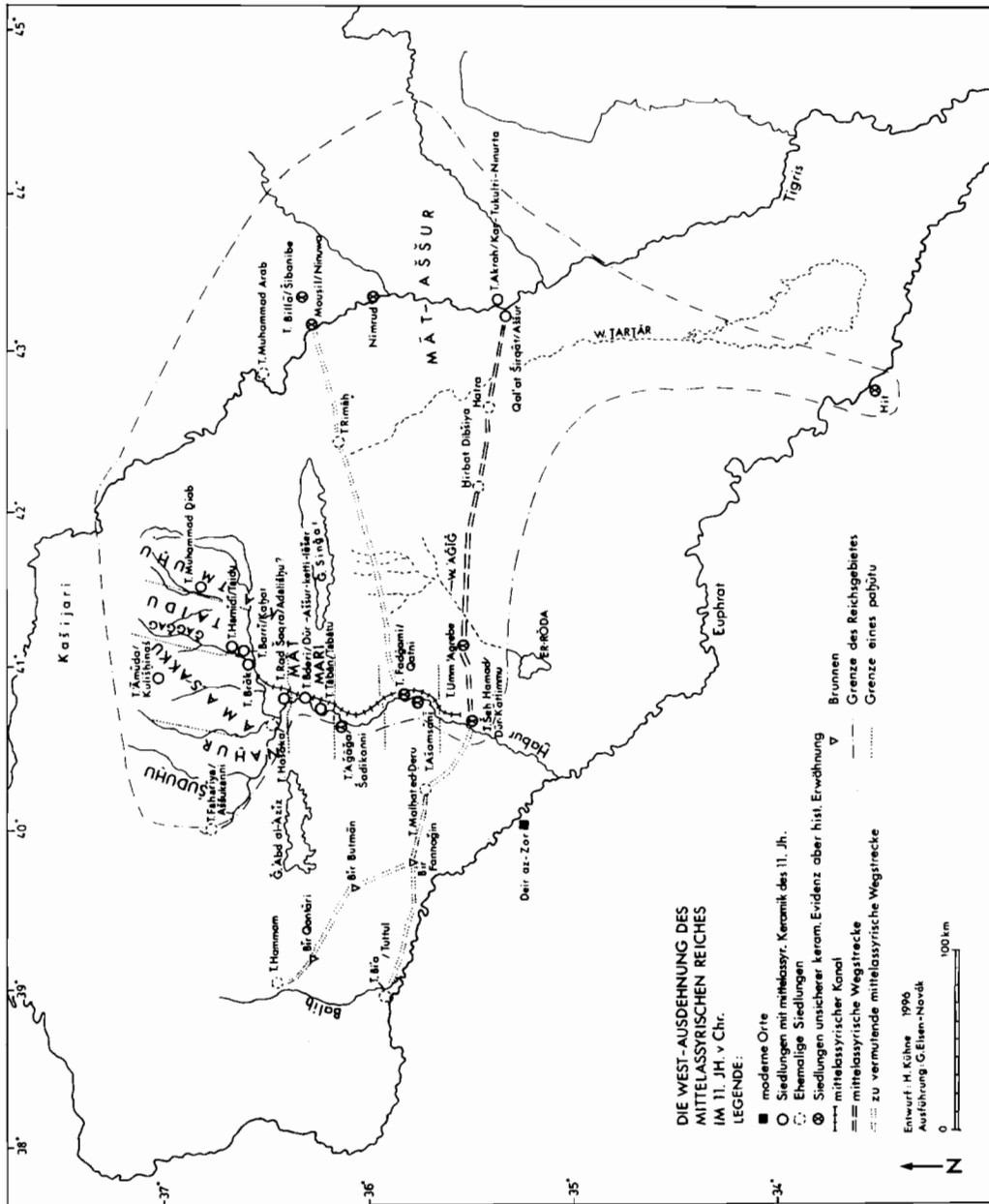


Fig. 7 The Extent of the Middle-Assyrian Empire During the 11th Century B.C.

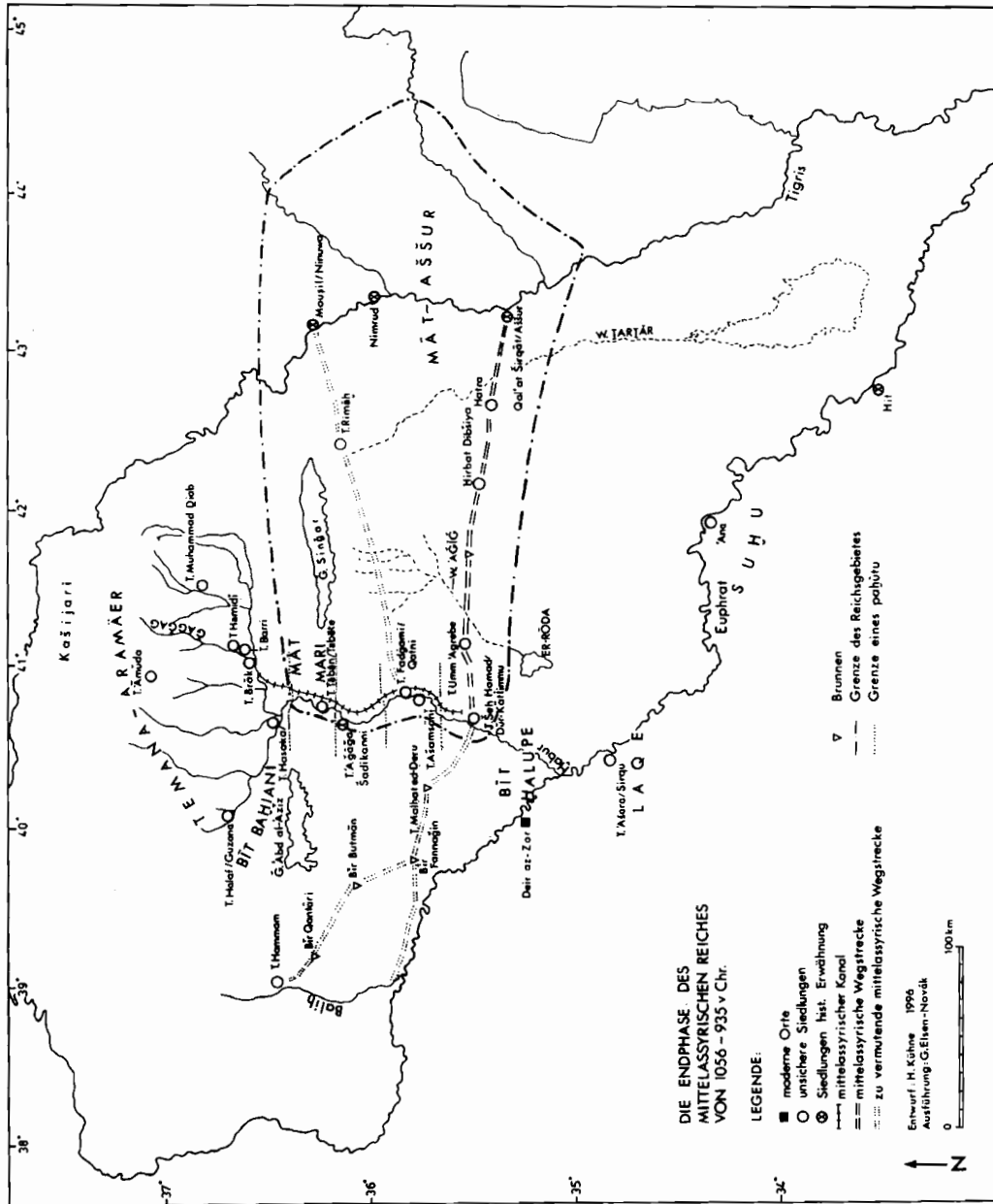


Fig. 8 The Extent of the Middle-Assyrian Empire During its Final Stage

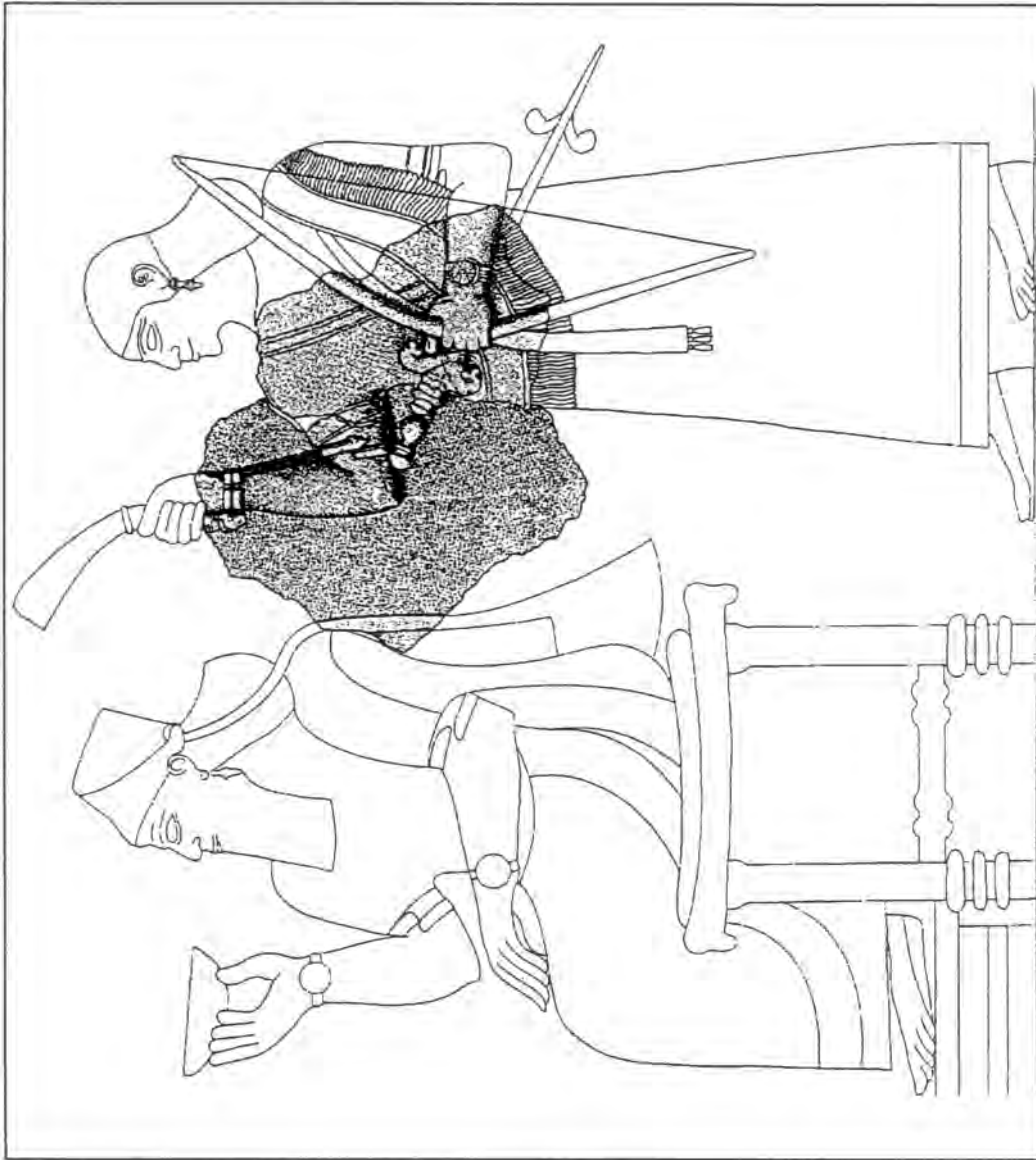


Fig. 9 Two Fragments of a Sculptured Orthostat (65 × 65 cm) from Tall Šeh Hamad / Dur-Kalimmu and the Reconstruction of the Scene After Slab G-3, Room G, Northwest Palace of Nimrud

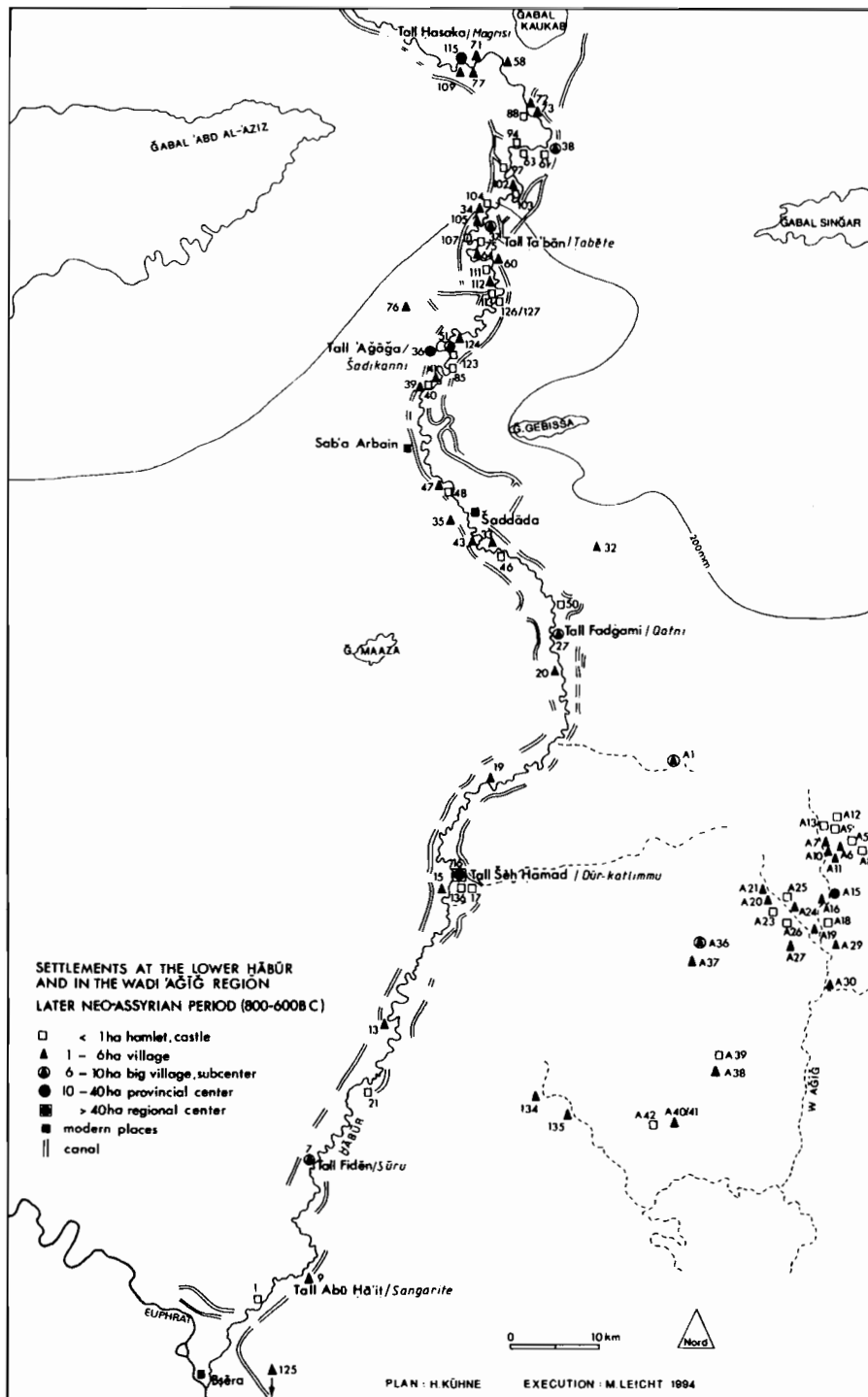


Fig. 10 Settlements on the Lower Hābūr and in the Wadi 'Agiġ During the Later Neo-Assyrian Period (800–600 B.C.)

1. Sites of the *Hābār* Survey:

01 T. Ġubn
 07 T. Fidēn
 09 T. Abū Hāʾit
 13 T. Šuwar
 15 T. Huṣṭen
 16 T. Šeḥ Ḥamad
 17 Ḥirbat al-Ḥumra
 19 T. Marqada
 20 T. Ašamsānī
 21 T. Namlīya
 27 T. Fadgami
 33 T. Brīk
 34 T. Knēdiġ
 35 T. Šaddada
 36 T. ʿAġāġa
 37 T. Taʾbān
 38 T. Tnēnīr
 39 T. Aḥmar
 40 T. Aḥmar-Mitte
 41 T. Aḥmar-Nord
 43 T. ʿAdla
 46 T. Ġarmiz
 47 T. Bahza
 48 Ḥirbat al-Bahza
 50 T. Abū Hamda
 51 T. Maqbara ʿAġāġa
 58 T. Raġman
 60 T. Mašnaqa
 61 T. Šeḥ ʿOtmān
 63 T. Hasna
 64 T. Matarīya
 65 T. Bdēri
 71 T. Abū Amšah
 72 T. Rad Šaqra
 73 T. Kerma
 75 T. Ḍahab
 76 T. Maraza
 77 T. Abū Bakr
 85 Ḥirbat al-Banat
 88 T. Mullā Matar
 94 T. Naġa
 97 T. Bwēd
 102 T. Nahhāb-Sūd
 103 T. Nahhāb-Ost
 104 T. Knēdiġ-Nord
 105 T. Dagaga
 107 T. Dġērāt
 109 T. Guwerān

111 T. Mašnaqa-West
 112 T. Flēti
 113 T. Maqbara Flēti
 115 T. Hasaka
 123 T. Maqbara ʿAġāġa-Sūd-II
 124 Ḥirbat Gamal
 125 T. Kraḥ
 126 T. Tayara-Nord
 127 T. Tayara-Sūd
 134 Ġilīb al-Adad
 135 Ġedad
 136 T. Ġariba I

2. Sites of the *ʿAġiṛ* Survey (A #):

A 1 Abū Suwēl
 A 4 Tall Umm ʿAqrēbe
 A 5 Umm ʿAqrēbe II
 A 6 Umm ʿAqrēbe III
 A 7 Umm ʿAqrēbe IV
 A 8 Umm ʿAqrēbe V
 A 9 Umm ʿAqrēbe VI
 A 10 Umm ʿAqrēbe VII
 A 11 Umm ʿAqrēbe VIII
 A 12 Umm ʿAqrēbe IX
 A 13 Umm ʿAqrēbe X
 A 15 Tall Umm ʿAqrubba
 A 16 Umm ʿAqrubba-Sūd
 A 18 Qaret Umm ʿAqrubba I
 A 19 Qadīr an-Našmi
 A 20 ʿAnaiāt es-Šarqi I
 A 21 ʿAnaiāt es-Šarqi II
 A 23 ʿAnaiāt es-Šarqi IV
 A 24 ʿAnaiāt es-Šarqi V
 A 25 Ḍahr ʿAnaiāt
 A 26 Hoġ Hšām
 A 27 Ġilīb el Haġġi ʿObēd
 A 29 Mḥālat Ġdeide
 A 30 Mūqa ed-Dabawiya
 A 31 Mešhadaniya I
 A 35 Ġilīb es-Siyāḥ
 A 36 Ġilīb el ʿAmah
 A 37 Ġilīb el ʿAbūd
 A 38 Abū Kitāḥa I
 A 39 Abū Kitāḥa II
 A 40/41 ʿAuaġ I/II
 A 42 ʿAuaġ III

Key to Fig. 10

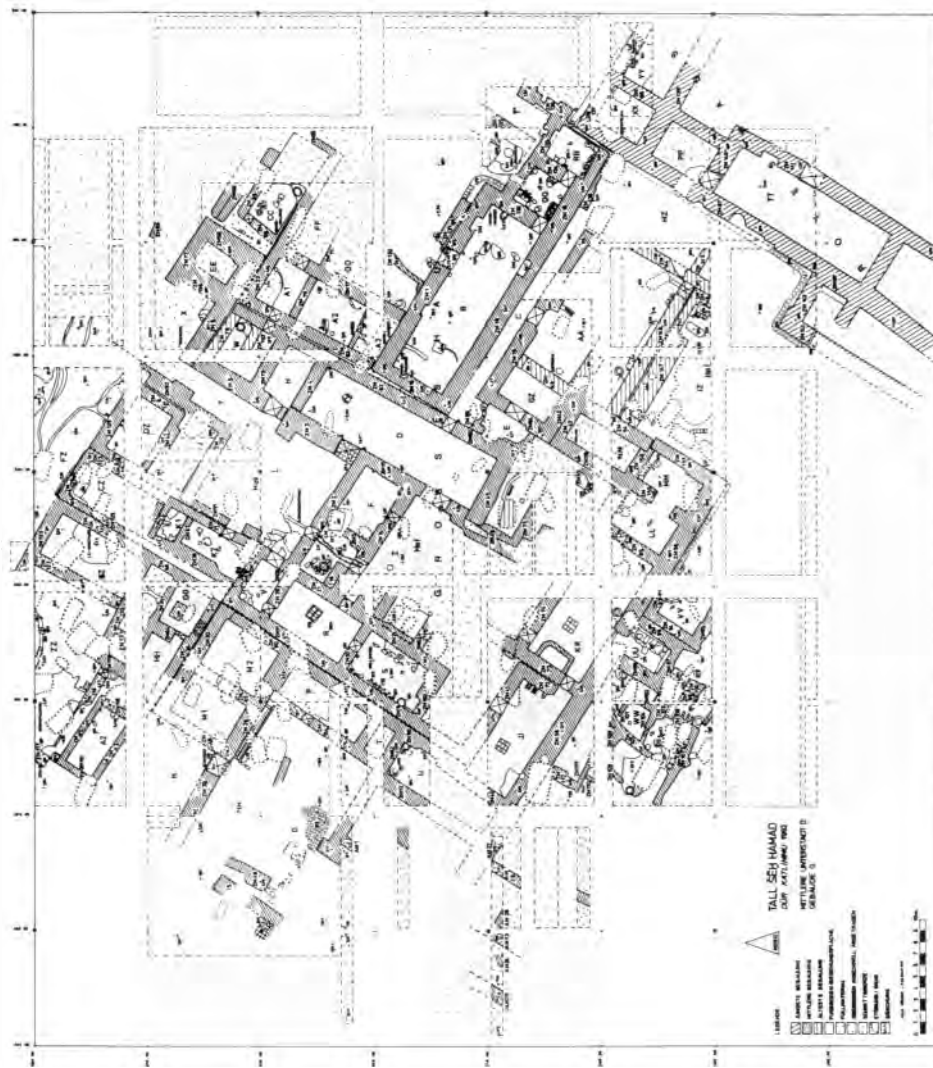


Fig. 12 Neo-Assyrian Residences (7th and 6th Century B.C.) in the Central Part of the Lower Town II of Tall Šeḫ Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu

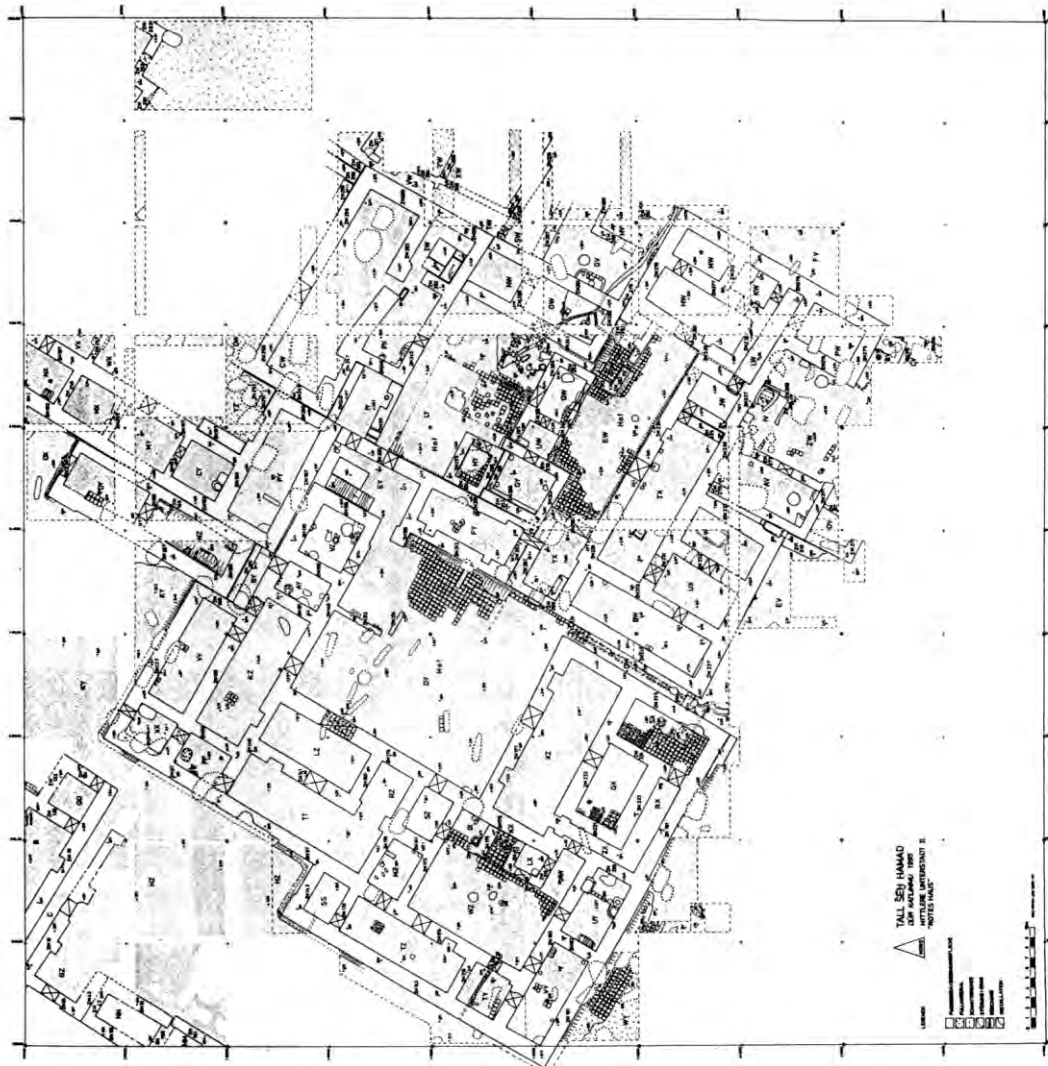


Fig. 13 The Post-Assyrian 'Red House' (6th Century B.C.) in the Central Part of the Lower Town II of Tall Šēh Ḥamad / Dūr-Katlimmu

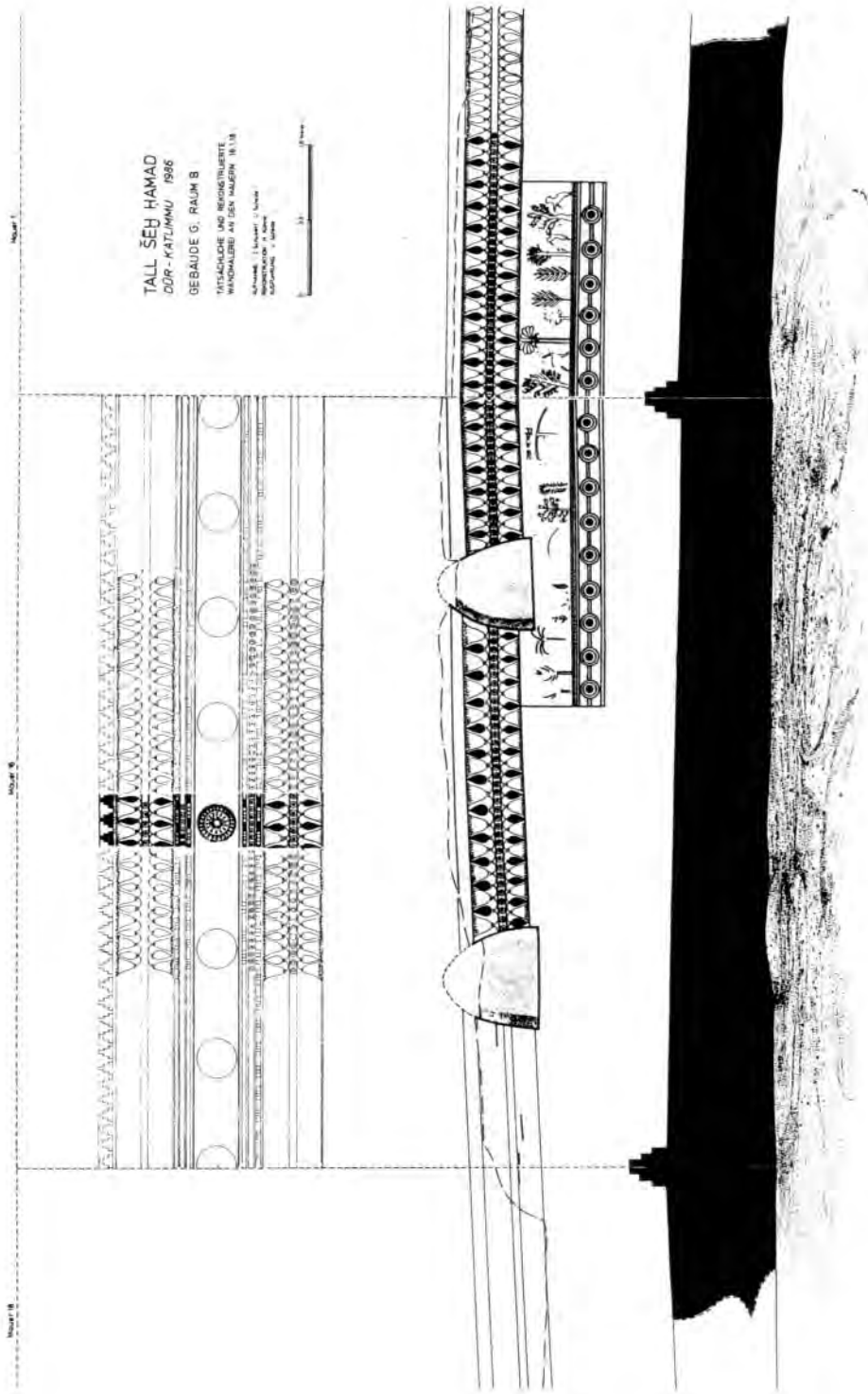


Fig. 14 Wall Painting on the West Wall of Hall B of the Residences (cf. fig. 12)

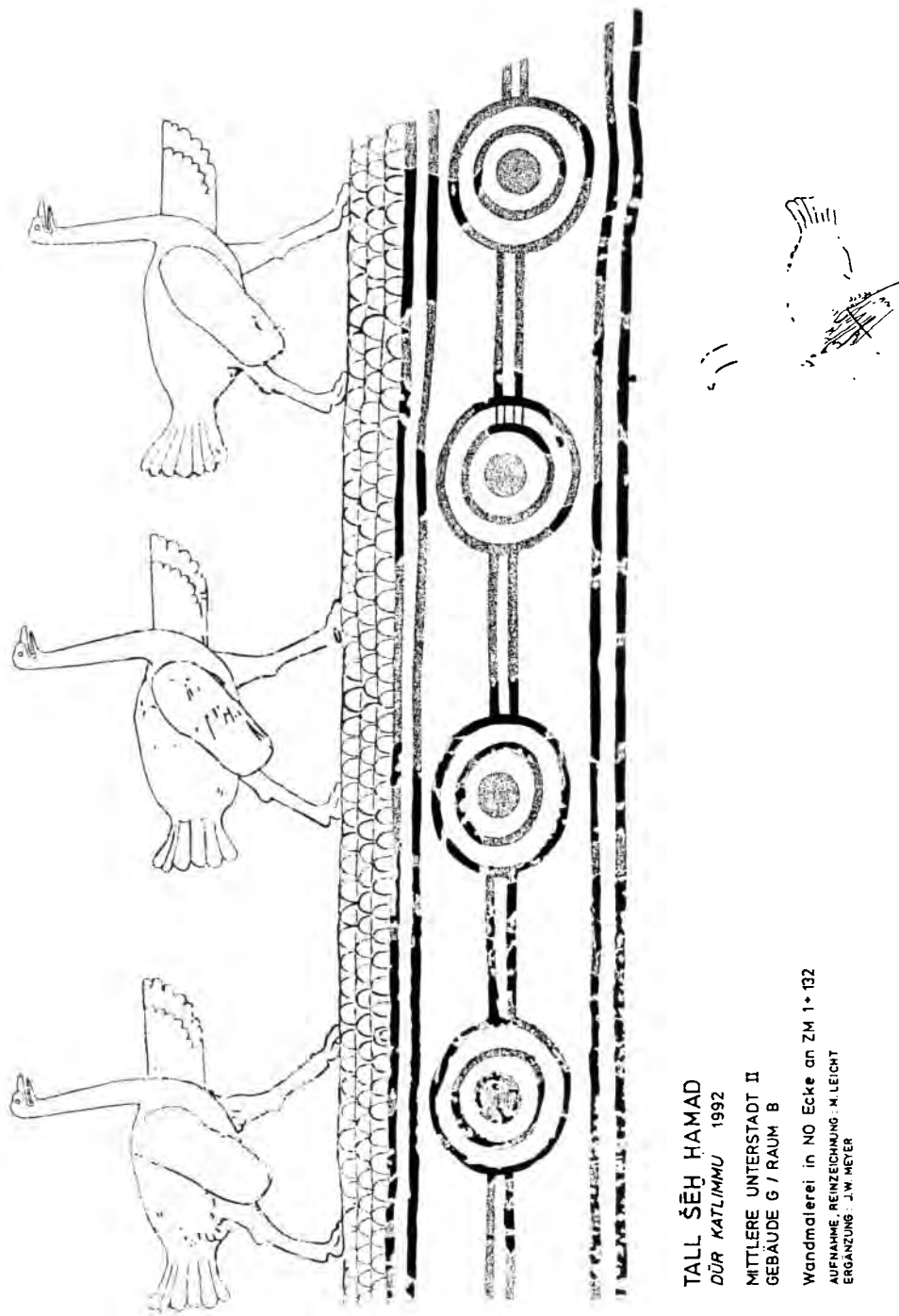


Fig. 15 Reconstructed Wall Painting on the East Wall of Hall B of the Residences (cf. fig. 12)

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