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ONDER REDACTIE VAN

H.J.A. DE MEULENAERE  
D.J.W. MEIJER  
M.J. MULDER  
C. NIJLAND  
J.J. ROODENBERG  
J. DE ROOS  
M. STOL

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1994





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At the time, the building history of the temple had not yet been established. Thanks to Abu 'Assaf's work we can now distinguish three phases, to each of which we can assign part of the sculptures (see above). Abu 'Assaf dates these three phases as follows (pp. 39-41):

Phase I: 1300-1000 B.C.

Phase II: 1000-900 B.C.

Phase III: 900-740 B.C.

For Phase I the strongest evidence comes from Megiddo VII A (ca. 1200-1150 B.C.), which yielded an ivory with the same Hittite motif of atlantid figures<sup>9</sup>. One might also compare the atlantid figures at Eflatun Pinar, a monument which was probably unfinished at the fall of the Hittite Empire<sup>10</sup>. I would therefore date Phase I shortly after 1150 B.C.

For Phases II and III Abu 'Assaf at first (pp. 33-36) compares sculptures from Zincirli and Carchemish that belong to Orthmann's group *Späthethitisch* I and II<sup>11</sup>). Further on in the text, however, Abu 'Assaf differs from Orthmann and emphasizes the similarities of Phase III to *Späthethitisch* II and III material. He thus extends the building history of 'Ain Dara to 740 B.C., seemingly to fit the historical date for the destruction of Arpad (see below). The reviewer is inclined to follow Orthmann's exhaustive stylistic analysis and would therefore date Phase II to about 950 and Phase III to between 950 and 850 B.C.

As stated above, Abu 'Assaf would like to identify 'Ain Dara as the site of ancient Arpad, which was destroyed by the Assyrian king Tiglathpileser III in 742-740 B.C. (p. 10). After its destruction, the temple seems to have been emptied of its contents and debris and — so Abu 'Assaf thinks — a reconstruction seems to have been planned along the same lines. This would explain the presence of partly finished basalt gate lions, protomes and orthostats (not illustrated) southwest of the temple. After this plan had been given up, simple dwellings came to occupy the former temple precinct (level VI, ca. 690-500 B.C.).

One of the principal merits of this beautifully presented excavation report is its lavish photographic illustration. In addition to overall views from all angles there are individual photographs of each sculptured block and of many loose fragments. The superb photographic work was done by Peter Grunwald of the German Archeological Institute, which has published this report in its *Damascener Forschungen* series.

It is to be hoped that the loose finds, including such important pieces as the Ishtar stela and the stray lion sculptures, will be published in a forthcoming volume of the same prestigious series.

Saint Hippolyte du Fort, France, November 1992

MAURITS VAN LOON

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<sup>9</sup>) Gordon Loud, *The Megiddo Ivories* (Chicago, 1939), pl. 11. Note that another ivory from Megiddo (Loud, *op. cit.*, pls. 1-3) has lions and female sphinxes in relief with heads turned outwards three-dimensionally as on the Phase III orthostats, suggesting that Phases I and III cannot have been too far apart.

<sup>10</sup>) Kurt Bittel, *Les Hittites* (Paris, 1976), fig. 257.

<sup>11</sup>) Orthmann, *op. cit.*, p. 221, dates his *Späthethitisch* II ca. 950-850 B.C. *Späthethitisch* I-II features of the 'Ain Dara orthostats include the low relief with its sharp angles, the double outlining of body parts and the spiral claws.

Hartmut KÜHNE, *Die rezente Umwelt von Tall Šēh Hamad und Daten zur Umweltrekonstruktion der assyrischen Stadt Dūr-Katlimmu*. Berlin, Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1991 (35 cm, 194 pp.) = *Berichte der Ausgrabung Tall Seh Hamad/Dur-Katlimmu* (Batsh), I. ISBN 3 496 00499 1. DM 188.-.

This volume represents a long-term project along the lower Habūr River in eastern Syria, conducted by the universities of Berlin and Tübingen since 1975. The research included an archaeological survey along 190 km of the river, excavations at the Assyrian site of Tell Shēh Hamad (Dūr Katlimmu, ca. 800-550 B.C.), followed by environmental and paleo-environmental studies during the mid-1980s. This first report, published in large format (25 × 35 cm) and heavy, glossy paper, includes 10 papers by 12 authors, focused on environmental themes.

The Habūr is a tributary of the Euphrates that flows through the semidesert plain of the Syrian Jazīra, but receives its waters from subhumid uplands in Turkey that, during later Holocene times had a closed, forest vegetation (W. Van Zeist and S. Bottema, *Vegetational history of the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East during the last 20,000 years*, in: J.L. Bintliff and W. Van Zeist, *Paleo-climates, Paleoenvironments and Human Communities in the Eastern Mediterranean Region in Later Prehistory*, 277-321. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, Int. Series 133, 1982). With less than 200 mm rainfall, a Neoassyrian town of 7000 to 9000 inhabitants presumably depended on irrigation agriculture. The basic goal of the various investigations was to confirm that the area was arid during historical times, complementing the survey evidence for an elaborate irrigation system along the length of the lower Habūr.

A central piece of the investigation was the geomorphology of the river itself, with its impressive, multiple meander belts, active or abandoned (P.J. Ergenzinger). The visible channel traces appear to have a time depth of about 1800 years, and <sup>14</sup>C dated features within 1.6 m of the surface are younger than 1000 years. Exposures and cores typically show 2 to 5m of flood silts (clayey silts or silty clays), above sands and gravels with dates of 5990 and 7600 B.P. Archaeological materials also indicate that the switch from a braided to a meandering stream took place during late prehistoric (pre-Uruk) times. This shift is attributed to heavy erosion of loessic soils since the late Neolithic. Although it is argued that there has been no fundamental change in discharge volume during the last 6000 years, Ergenzinger notes that greater channel widths ca. 1000 to 1800 years ago indicate bankfull discharges some 40% greater than during the last 500 years or so. That is a substantial difference, that cannot be swept under the rug.

This period of high floods happens to coincide with maximum dilution of <sup>16</sup>O in Lake Van c. 650-1400 A.D., a representative hydrological indicator of the Tigris-Euphrates watershed (M. Schoell, Oxygen isotope analyses on authigenic carbonates from Lake Van sediments, in: E.T. Degens and F. Kurtman, eds., *The Geology of Lake Van*, 92-97, Ankara, 1975), as well as with expanded swamp sedimentation in the Euphrates delta region during early Islamic times (calibrated dates of c. 750 and 1310 A.D.) (P. Sanlaville, *Considérations sur l'évolution de la Basse Mésopotamie au cours des derniers millénaires*, *Paléorient* 15 (2) 1989: 5-28). Drawing in other studies in the region also suggests a more convincing ex-

planation for the shift from a braided to meandering stream c. 6000 B.P., namely the delayed recolonization of the high country by forest vegetation between 8000 and 4000 B.P. (Van Zeist and Bottema, op. cit., 1982; S. Bottema and H. Woldring, Anthropogenic indicators in the pollen record of the Eastern Mediterranean, in: S. Bottema, G. Entjes-Nieborg and W. Van Zeist, eds., *Man's Role in the Shaping of the Eastern Mediterranean Landscape*, 231-264, Rotterdam 1990) and the rapid acceleration of sedimentation rates in Lake Van c. 6000 B.P. (S. Kempe and E.T. Degens, Lake Van varve record: The past 10,420 years, in: E.T. Degens and F. Kurtman, eds., *The Geology of Lake Van*, 56-63, Ankara 1975). In effect, the meander belts of the Habūr record a more favorable hydrology and well vegetated watershed after 6000 B.P., as well as particularly strong floods c. 650-1400 A.D.

Charcoal was abundant in the excavations and indicates that extensive riverine forests of cottonwoods (*Populus euphratica*) and salt cedar (*Tamarix*) covered the alluvial plain of the Habūr at the time of the Middle Assyrian settlement (ca. 1550-1200 B.C.), with semidesert shrubs further out (W. Frey, C. Jagiella, and H. Kürschner). But at the time of the much larger, Neoassyrian town, the primary timber used was pine, derived from the high watershed, while the riverine forests apparently were degraded. Today the floodplains of the Habūr and adjacent Euphrates are dominated by salt cedar and reedswamps. The charcoal finds are complemented by extensive palynological work, anchored in a comprehensive, surface sampling program (W.H.E. Gremmen and S. Bottema), but preservation of pollen is poor except in the coring from a salt-lake 60 km east of the Habūr. The results serve to underscore that there has been little or no environmental change in the lowlands during the last 6000 years or so, but that weedy plants, olive, and cerealia-type pollen became more common after about 2000 B.C. Not surprisingly, the rich faunal inventory from the town strata belongs overwhelmingly to domesticated animals (88% by number, 78% by weight, 65% by MNI), dominated by sheep and goats (C. Becker). The only game of significance was fallow deer, an animal likely to have been fairly common in the riverine forest. Mollusca are relatively abundant in the occupation strata (D.S. Reese), primarily riverine *Unio* shells, probably used as food. There also are marine shells, modified as ornaments; the Middle Assyrian examples derive mainly from the Mediterranean Sea, but the Neoassyrian counterparts include species from the Red Sea. Altogether, the bioarchaeological work can be rated as exemplary. It is rounded off by a good study of the modern agricultural geography, which demonstrates that cultivation and stockraising today barely serve subsistence needs.

The concluding chapter presents evidence for historical irrigation works, based on ground survey and air photos (Ergenzinger and Kühne). A canal was constructed along the east bank during the 13th century B.C., and a second canal along the western side in Neoassyrian times, linked to the Euphrates canal system. Reconstructed flows indicate the canals were navigable, facilitating transport. In early Islamic times the waters for the eastern canal apparently were diverted to the Tigris, although one would have liked air photo delineation and confirmation for such a course. Since the presumed Mongol destruction of the western canal, the Habūr Valley has lacked permanent settlements until very recently.

This volume is a welcome addition to the Near Eastern literature, providing important insights in regard to settlement

of the Syrian Jazīra. The only significant omission in the research program was a geoarchaeological study of the tell itself (see for example A.M. Rosen, *Cities of Clay: The Geoarchaeology of Tells*, Chicago 1986), with methods that could have elucidated the processes of site occupation and abandonment, as well as post-occupational site transformation. One can also hope that a future project will address the middle Habūr drainage, a zone rich in tells, and one where environmental systems would probably be more sensitive to change.

The University of Texas at Austin, March 1993

KARL W. BUTZER

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*OUEILI. Travaux de 1985*, sous la direction de Jean-Louis HUOT. Paris, Édition Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1991 (30 cm, 343 pp., 57 pp. en arabe) = Bibliothèque de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Iraq n° 6, Centre de Recherche d'Archéologie Orientale. Université de Paris I, n° 8. ISBN 2-86538-212-1. Prix: 270 FF.

Comme on le sait, la mission archéologique française dirigée par J.-L. Huot fouille simultanément les deux sites irakiens voisins que sont Larsa et 'Oueili. Les résultats des travaux ont été publiés régulièrement et, pour la campagne de 1985, nous disposons à présent de deux rapports volumineux consacrés respectivement à Larsa<sup>1)</sup> et à 'Oueili.

Le présent volume débute par l'avant-propos (p. 11-12) qui est suivi d'une description générale des recherches effectuées en 1985 et des articles de la présente publication (p. 13-15).

Dans un long article (p. 17-158) intitulé «L'architecture de la phase de 'Oueili-Obeid O. Travaux de 1983-1985», J.-D. Forest expose en détail les résultats des travaux engagés depuis 1983 sur une superficie de 250 m<sup>2</sup> au nord-ouest de la colline principale. Je reviendrai sur cette publication importante dans la deuxième partie du compte rendu.

Dans l'article suivant «Un niveau de la période d'Uruk à tell el'Oueili» (p. 159-209), Y. Calvet publie les vestiges de la période d'Uruk fouillés pour la première fois sur le site. Parmi les quatre phases repérées dans ce chantier, les phases A-B datent de la période d'Uruk récent, tandis que les deux suivantes (C-D) correspondraient à une période de transition entre les périodes d'Obeid 4 et d'Uruk.

Dans deux articles, M. Lebeau donne ensuite un aperçu, d'une part, de la céramique d'Obeid 1 et, d'autre part, de celle d'Obeid 2 et 3 (p. 212-266).

Les deux articles de Liliane Courtois et B. Velde, «Les peintures céramiques à chromites de l'Obeid 3 et 4 de 'Oueili et en basse Mésopotamie» (p. 267-283) et «Recherches comparées sur les techniques céramiques de l'Obeid 0 à 2» (p. 285-312) présentent les résultats des analyses qui concernent, pour le premier, les peintures et, pour le deuxième, essentiellement les pâtes. Il apparaît que les «peintures d'ocres» des périodes précédentes ont cédé la place à une autre technique (peintures à chromites) à partir de la période d'Obeid 3. Par ailleurs, l'utilisation de terres argileuses variées, de provenance cependant locale, pendant la période d'Obeid 0 peut être due

<sup>1)</sup> Pour le rapport relatif à Larsa, cf. mon compte rendu dans *BiOr* 49 (1992), 496-498.