

ISCACH (Beirut 2015)

International Syrian Congress on Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

**PROGRAM
AND
ABSTRACTS**

**3-6 DECEMBER 2015
GEFINOR ROTANA HOTEL
BEIRUT, LEBANON**

ISCACH (Beirut 2015)

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Introduction: Welcome to ISCACH, Beirut 2015

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, the Japanese Society for West Asian Archaeology and the Lebanese Archaeological Missions worked in Syria welcome all with an interest in archaeology and cultural heritage to the **International Syrian Congress on Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**, Beirut, 3-6 December 2015.

Three years ago, archaeological research in Syria came to an abrupt halt. In the years since we have heard countless alarming reports of damage to and the destruction of archaeological sites and cultural artefacts – mindless acts which rob humanity forever of vast swathes of history and knowledge.

Numerous international organizations and academic institutions have organized conferences, symposiums and workshops dedicated to the preservation of those cultural assets that are currently endangered or lamenting those now wholly lost.

In contrast, few academic gatherings have focused on what has most recently been found and recorded: namely, the results of fieldwork carried out immediately prior to the present conflagration.

With numerous archaeological sites and aspects of cultural heritage the subject of study by both Syrian and international scholars in the years leading up to 2011, we believe it both timely and desirable to now share those results among both the scientific community and the general public.

The Organizing Committee

Organizing Committee

Prof. Dr. Jeanine Abdul Massih (Director of Archaeological Mission to Cyrrhus): Lebanese University,

Prof. Kiyohide Saito (Director of Archaeological Mission to Palmyra): President, the Japanese Society for West Asian Archaeology,

Prof. Dr. Akira Tsuneki (Director of Archaeological Mission to Tell el-Kerkh): University of Tsukuba,

Dr. Shin'ichi Nishiyama: Chubu University.

Program Summary

Thursday 3rd December		Friday 4th December		Saturday 5th December		Sunday 6th December	
08.30-09.00	Welcoming Participants	Homs Session / R. Pierobon Benoit		Hasake Session 2 / M. al-Maqdissi		Deir ez-Zor Session /G. Bunnens	
09.00-09.30	Opening Session	09.00-09.20	Michel al-Maqdissi	09.00-09.20	Suleiman Elias	09.00-09.20	Sylvie Blétry
		09.20-09.40	Jean-Marie Le Tensorer	09.20-09.40	Yoshihiro Nishiaki	09.20-09.40	Shaker Al Shbib
		09.40-10.00	Dorota Wojtczak	09.40-10.00	Shigeo Yamada	09.40-10.00	Yaarob Alabdullah
Palmyra Session / M. Abdulkarim		Raqqa Session / G. Clarke				Latakia Session 2/ F. Braemer	
09.40-10.00	Kiyohide Saito	10.00-10.20	Dorothee Sack	10.00-10.20	Raffaella Pierobon Benoit	10.00-10.20	Massoud Badawi
10.00-10.20	Grzegorz Majcherek	10.20-10.40	Ayham al Fakhri	10.20-10.40	Johnny Baldi	10.20-10.40	Yaser Yusef
10.20-10.40	Tomasz Waliszewski					10.40-11.00	Balazs Major
10:40 - 11:10 Coffee Break							
Idlib Session / J.M. Le Tensorer		Hama Session / P. Bieliński		Damascus Session / D. Sack		11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break	
11.10-11.30	Maamoun Abdulkarim	11.10-11.30	Karin Bartl	11.10-11.30	Ahmad Taraqji	11.30-13.00	Special Session: Thinking Future of Syrian Cultural Heritage
11.30-11.50	Akira Tsuneki	11.30-11.50	Bernard Geyer	11.30-11.50	Rima Khawam		
11.50-12.10	Paolo Matthiae	11.50-12.10	Nazir Awad	11.50-12.10	Cancelled		
12.10-12.30	Francis Pinnock	12.10-12.30	Mathilde Gelin	12.10-12.30	Houmam Saad	13.00-13.05	Closing Session
12.30-12.50	Stefania Mazzoni	12.30-12.50	Cancelled	12.30-12.50	Edmond El-Ajji		
12.50-13.10	Shin Nishiyama	12.50-13.10	Haytham Hassan	12.50-13.10	Ahmad Dally		
13.10-13.30	POSTER PRESENTATION	13.10-13.30	Abdel Wahab Abou Saleh	13.10-13.30	POSTER PRESENTATION		
13:30 - 14:30 Lunch Break							
Hasake Session 1/ P. Matthiae		Aleppo Session 2/ TBA		Daraa Suweida Session / K. Saito			
14.30-14.50	Cancelled	14.30-14.50	Heather Jackson	14.30-14.50	Pierre-Marie Blanc		
14.50-15.10	Dominik Bonatz	14.50-15.10	Jeanine Abdul Massih	14.50-15.10	Frank Braemer		
15.30-15.50	Piotr Bieliński	15.30-15.50	Ammar Abdulrahman	15.30-15.50	Ahmed Dyab		
15.50-16.10	Mohamad Fakhro	15.50-16.10	Justine Gaborit	15.50-16.10	Qasem al-Muhammad		
16.10-16.30	Samer Abdel Ghafour	16.10-16.30	Marie-Odile Rousset	16.10-16.30	Ghazi Alolo		
16:30 - 16:50 Coffee Break							
Aleppo Session 1/ K. Bartl		Latakia Session 1/ S. Mazzoni		Damascus Region Session / V. Matoian			
16.50-17.10	Takeru Akazawa	16.50-17.10	Michel al-Maqdissi	16.50-17.10	Mahmud Hamud		
17.10-17.30	Yousef Kanjou	17.10-17.30	Ahmad Deeb	17.10-17.30	Ghada Suleiman		
17.30-17.50	Serena Maria Cecchini	17.30-17.50	Leila Badre	17.30-17.50	Woroud Ibrahim		
17.50-18.10	Guy Bunnens	17.50-18.10	Valérie Matoian	17.50-18.10	Nada Sarkis		
		18.10-18.30	Khazama al-Bahloul				
20:00	WELCOMING INVITATION DINNER						

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Thursday 3rd December	
08.30-09.00	Welcoming Participants
09.00-09.30	Opening Session
	Official speeches (TBA)
	Palmyra Session / Chair: M. Abdulkarim
09.40-10.00	Kiyohide Saito Archeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara (Japan) <i>Japanese Archaeological Works in Palmyra from 1990 to 2010</i>
10.00-10.20	Grzegorz Majcherek Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland) <i>Shaping an urban landscape: Church buildings in Palmyra</i>
10.20-10.40	Tomasz Waliszewski Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland) <i>An olive oil for oasis. On some installations from Palmyra.</i>
10:40 - 11:10 Coffee Break	
	Idlib Session / Chair: J.-M. Le Tensorer
11.10-11.30	Maamoun Abdulkarim / Gérard Charpentier DGAMS, Damascus University (Syria) / CNRS, Université Lyon2, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée (France) <i>Archaeological and Architectural Studies in Northern Syria (Dead Cities), General presentation with three missions in, El Bâra and Ruweiha</i>
11.30-11.50	Akira Tsuneki University of Tsukuba (Japan) <i>Tell el-Kerkh: A Neolithic Mega Site in Idlib Province</i>
11.50-12.10	Paolo Matthiae Sapienza University of Rome, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (Italy) <i>The Excavations at Tell Mardikh-Ebla in 2004-2010: The Temples of EB IVA-B and the Royal Citadel of MB I-II</i>
12.10-12.30	Francis Pinnock Sapienza University of Rome (Italy) <i>The Archaeological Park of Ebla. A Long-Term Plan for the Site and its Region</i>
12.30-12.50	Stefania Mazzoni Università di Firenze (Italy) <i>Tell Afis: Late Bronze and Iron Age (13th-7th cent. B.C.)</i>
12.50-13.10	Shin Nishiyama / Shigeo Wakita Chubu University (Japan) / the Ancient Orient Museum, Tokyo (Japan) <i>Tell Mastuma, Idlib: Rise and fall of an Iron Age rural settlement in northwest Syria</i>
13.10-13.30	POSTER PRESENTATION
13:30 - 14:30 Lunch Break	

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AFTERNOON SESSIONS	
	Hasake Session 1/ Chair: P. Matthiae
14.30-14.50	Presentation Cancelled
14.50-15.10	Dominique Bonatz Freie Universität Berlin (Germany) <i>Tell Fekheriye/Ras el-Ain in Northeastern Syria: A Short Report on the Archaeological Site and its Neighboring Town Before and After the Political Crisis</i>
15.30-15.50	Piotr Bieliński Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland) <i>IIIrd Millenium BC city on Tell Arbid - structure of a middle sized urban centre in the Jezireh</i>
15.50-16.10	Mohamad Fakhro DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Halaf - Guzana - (excavation project 2006 - 2010)</i>
16.10-16.30	Giorgio Buccellati / Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati / Samer Abdel Ghafour Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles and the International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies (USA) / DGAMS (Syria) <i>Urkeshe: Widening the chronological spectrum in the past and safeguarding the site for the future</i>
16:30 - 16:50 Coffee Break	
	Aleppo Session 1/ Chair: K. Bartl
16.50-17.10	Takeru Akazawa / Yoshihiro Nishiaki / Youssef Kanjou Kochi University of Technology (Japan)/ the University of Tokyo(Japan) / DGAMS (Syria) <i>Dederiyeh Cave, Afrin</i>
17.10-17.30	Yousef Kanjou / Ryszard F. Mazurowski DGAMS (Syria) / University of Warsaw (Poland) <i>The archaeological excavation at Tell Qaramel 1999 -2011, Aleppo, north Syria</i>
17.30-17.50	Serena Maria Cecchini University of Bologna (Italy) <i>La dernière fouille à Arslan Tash</i>
17.50-18.10	Guy Bunnens Université de Liège (Belgium) <i>Unfinished work at Tell Ahmar/Til Barsib</i>
20:00	WELCOMING INVITATION DINNER

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Friday 4th December	
Homs Session / Chair: R. Pierobon Benoit	
09.00-09.20	Michel al-Maqdissi DGAMS (Syria) <i>Syrian Excavations in Mishirfeh-Qatna</i>
09.20-09.40	Jean-Marie Le Tensorer University of Basel (Switzerland) <i>The Lower Palaeolithic of the El Kowm Area (Central Syrian) and the question of the first inhabitants of the Syrian Desert</i>
09.40-10.00	Dorota Wojtczak University of Basel (Switzerland) <i>The long Palaeolithic sequence of Hummal (Central Syria)</i>
Raqqa Session / Chair: G. Clarke	
10.00-10.20	Dorothee Sack / Martin Gussone Technical University of Berlin (Germany) <i>Resafa, a multidisciplinary approach to reconstruct the development of the city</i>
10.20-10.40	Ayham al-Fakhri DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Hwejet Halaweh</i>
10:40 - 11:10 Coffee Break	
Hama Session / Chair: P. Bieliński	
11.10-11.30	Karin Bartl DAI (Germany) <i>Archaeological Investigations in the Hama Region</i>
11.30-11.50	Bernard Geyer / Frank Braemer Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée (France) <i>Palaeoenvironments and Settlement Patterns in Western Syria and Lebanon</i>
11.50-12.10	Nazir Awad DGAMS (Syria) <i>Al Rawda: A city dating to the third millennium on the edge of the Syrian Desert</i>
12.10-12.30	Mathilde Gelin / Shaker Al Shbib CNRS-IFPO (France) / DGAM (Syria) <i>Qalaat al-Mudiq, citadel of Apamea: past and present</i>
12.30-12.50	Presentation Cancelled
12.50-13.10	Haytham Hassan DGAMS (Syria) <i>Masyaf Castle</i>
13.10-13.30	Abdel Wahab Abou Saleh DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Maksour</i>
13:30 - 14:30 Lunch Break	

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AFTERNOON SESSIONS	
	Aleppo Session 2/ Chair: TBA
14.30-14.50	Heather Jackson University of Melbourne (Australia) <i>A Commercial Area at Seleucid Jebel Khalid?</i>
14.50-15.10	Jeanine Abdul Massih Lebanese University (Lebanon) <i>Results of 2006-2011 Research Program on the site of Cyrrhus.</i>
15.30-15.50	Ammar Abdulrahman Damascus University (Syria) <i>Genders in the classical period</i>
15.50-16.10	Justine Gaborit UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée (France) <i>New Evidences from Euphratésia : survey and excavation project in Hiérapolis area (Menbij) in the right bank of the middle Euphrates</i>
16.10-16.30	Marie-Odile Rousset CNRS - Lyon (France) <i>Qinnasrin / Chalcis main results of 2008-2010 archaeological work</i>
16:30 - 16:50 Coffee Break	
	Latakia Session 1/ Chair: S. Mazzoni
16.50-17.10	Michel al-Maqdissi DGAMS (Syria) <i>Syrian Excavations in Ras Ibn Hani (2011)</i>
17.10-17.30	Ahmad Deeb DGAMS (Syria) Results of the latest archaeological excavations in Tell Nahr Al-'Arab-Latakia
17.30-17.50	Leila Badre Archaeological Museum, AUB (Lebanon) <i>Tell Kazel: Major Results</i>
17.50-18.10	Valérie Matoïan Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée (France) <i>The Syro-French archaeological Mission of Ras Shamra – Ougarit</i>
18.10-18.30	Khozama al-Bahloul (paper read by TBA) DGAMS (Syria) <i>The result of excavations works at fortification area (Ugarit), Syrian team</i>

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Saturday 5th December	
	Hasake Session 2 / Chair: M. al-Maqqdissi
09.00-09.20	Suleiman Elias DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Shaeer</i>
09.20-09.40	Yoshihiro Nishiaki The University of Tokyo (Japan) <i>The Pre-Pottery to Pottery Neolithic settlement of Tell Seker-Aheimar, Hassake, Syria: Excavations from 2000 to 2010</i>
09.40-10.00	Shigeo Yamada / Hirotooshi Numoto University of Tsukuba (Japan) / Kokushikan University (Japan) <i>Excavations at Tell Taban</i>
10.00-10.20	Raffaella Pierobon Benoit Università di Napoli Federico II (Italy) <i>Tell Barri/Kahat 2000-2010: the contribution of ten years' excavations to the history of Upper Mesopotamia (3000 B.C./ 900 A.D).</i>
10.20-10.40	Johnny Baldi IFPO (France) <i>Tell Feres. New evidences on the development of proto-urban societies in northern Mesopotamia</i>
10:40 - 11:10 Coffee Break	
	Damascus Session / Chair: D. Sack
11.10-11.30	Ahmad Taraqqi DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Sakka</i>
11.30-11.50	Rima Khawam DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell Aswad</i>
11.50-12.10	Presentation Cancelled
12.10-12.30	Houmam Saad DGAMS (Syria) <i>Temple of Jupiter in Damascus, New prespective</i>
12.30-12.50	Edmond El-Ajji DGAMS (Syria) <i>Citadel of Damascus; Possible Earlier Dating According to New Discoveries.</i>
12.50-13.10	Ahmad Dally DGAMS (Syria) Site Museum of Souk al-Sagha
13.10-13.30	POSTER PRESENTATION
13:30 - 14:30 Lunch Break	

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AFTERNOON SESSIONS	
	Daraa Sweida Session / Chair: K. Saito
14.30-14.50	Pierre-Marie Blanc CNRS Nanterre (France) <i>The Town of Bosra</i>
14.50-15.10	Frank Braemer CNRS Nanterre (France) <i>Leja/Qarassa</i>
15.30-15.50	Ahmed Dyab Damascus University (Syria) <i>Survey of Prehistoric Sites in Daraa, South of Syria</i>
15.50-16.10	Qasem al-Muhammad DGAMS (Syria) <i>The results of the latest excavations at Tell al-Ash'ari, Hauran (during the Bronze Age)</i>
16.10-16.30	Ghazi Alolo DGAMS (Syria) <i>A report on surveying the Safaitic inscriptions, east of al-Namara and al-Zuluf</i>
16:30 - 16:50 Coffee Break	
	Damascus Region Session / Chair: V. Matoian
16.50-17.10	Mahmud Hamud DGAMS (Syria) <i>Excavation at Tell Al-Humira</i>
17.10-17.30	Ghada Suleiman DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tell al-Bahariya</i>
17.30-17.50	Woroud Ibrahim DGAMS (Syria) <i>Al-Qaryatayn in the heart of the Syrian Desert, Monastery of St Elian.</i>
17.50-18.10	Nada Sarkis DGAMS (Syria) <i>Frescoes of Church of St Sergius and St Bacchus, Sadad</i>

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Sunday 6th December	
	Deir ez-Zor Session /Chair: G. Bunnens
09.00-09.20	Sylvie Blétry Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3 (France) <i>The necropolises of Halabiya-Zenobia</i>
09.20-09.40	Shaker Al Shbib DGAMS (Syria) <i>Tall As-Sin, on the eastern limes</i>
09.40-10.00	Yaarob Alabdullah DGAMS (Syria) <i>The Works of the Syrian Mission in the Byzantine City (Tell Al Kasra) in Five Seasons (2006–2010)</i>
	Latakia Session 2/ Chair: F. Braemer
10.00-10.20	Massoud Badawi DGAMS (Syria) <i>Excavations at Tell Tweini (Syrian Mission)</i>
10.20-10.40	Yaser Yusef DGAMS (Syria) <i>The results of archaeological excavations in Amrit for 2003 and 2011</i>
10.40-11.00	Balázs Major Pázmány Péter Catholic University (Hungary) <i>Latest results of the al-Marqab research project.</i>
11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break	
11.30-13.00	Special Session: Thinking Future of Syrian Cultural Heritage
13:00-13:05	Closing Session

LIST OF POSTERS

1. Takeru AKAZAWA (Japan) *Dederiyeh cave, Afrin*
 2. Yoshihiro NISHIYAKI (Japan) *The steppe exploitation during the Palaeolithic to Bronze Age in the Middle Euphrates Valley: 2007–2011 surveys*
 3. Ewa PARANDOWSKA (Poland) *Conservation of Roman wall paintings from Mithraeum in Hawarte*
 4. Jesper EIDEM (Netherlands) *Qala'at Halwanji*
 5. Maya HAIDAR BOUSTANY (Lebanon) *Archaeological discoveries in the Homs Gap by a Syrian-Lebanese-Spanish Mission (2004-2010)*
 6. Bernard GEYER (France) *The Arid Margins of Northern Syria, Recent Results*
 7. Christophe BENECH (France) *Prospection Géophysique*
 8. Dominique Marie PARAYRE (France) *Tell al-Nasriyah on the bank of the Middle Orontes from the Bronze ages down to the medieval period*
 9. Pierre-Marie BLANC (France) *The Jebel el-Arab project*
 10. Said ALHAJE (Syria) *Study on awareness of the people of Bosra in saving cultural heritage*
 11. Michel AL-MAQDISSI and Eva ESHAK (Syria) *Terracotta figurines from Tell Toueini (First millennium B.C.)*
 12. Michel AL-MAQDISSI (Syria) *Palmyra*
 13. Fatema AL-SULAITI (Qatar) *Sarouja-Damascus: An example of historical and architecture development of Islamic neighborhoods*
 14. Michał GAWLIKOWSKI (Poland) *Discovering the site of the Palmyra Tariff. Polish excavations 2010-2011*
 15. Miquel Molist and Anna Gómez (Spain) *Tell Halula (Vallée de l'Euphrate, Syrie) : Nouveautés de la recherche dans la période 2011-2015*
- DGAMS ACTIVITIES**
16. Ahmad DEEB *Preservation and packing the museums artifacts*
 17. Tony GEROUGE *Archiving system for archaeological sites*
 18. Lina KUTIFAN *Syrian World Heritage sites*
 19. Moussa Dib EL-KHOURY and Hala MOUSTAFA *DGAMS Publications*
 20. Jeannette MAKHOUL *Planification at DGAMS*

ISCACH (Beirut 2015)

POSTER ABSTRACTS

THE MIDDLE EUPHRATES VALLEY

Yoshihiro NISHIAKI

The University of Tokyo (Japan)

The steppe exploitation during the Palaeolithic to Bronze Age in the Middle Euphrates Valley: 2007–2011 surveys.

Due to intensive investigations, the Middle Euphrates Valley is extremely valuable for reconstructing a long history of the human occupations in inland Syria. However, most investigations have been conducted in its narrow valley basin, while leaving the archaeological records of its hinterland dominated by the vast steppe relatively unexplored. In an effort to better understand human exploitation of the steppe in prehistory, a series of intensive archaeological surveys was conducted between 2008 and 2011, focusing specifically on the steppe. The survey area was defined within a 10 km radius from the Early Bronze Age site of Tell Ghanem al-Ali situated at the boundary of the valley basin and the steppe. Surveys documented an extensive human occupational history of the steppe from the Lower Palaeolithic onwards. Among other finds, the most impressive was the large number of aceramic flint scatters from the Early Bronze Age. These probably indicate that the exploitation of the Middle Euphrates steppe started in that period on a hitherto unparalleled scale, most likely due to the significant developments of the pastoralism socioeconomy.

HAWARTE

Ewa PARANDOWSKA

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archeology, University of Warsaw (Poland)

Conservation of Roman wall paintings from Mithraeum in Hawarte.

Polish-Syrian salvage excavations conducted between years 1998-2010 at Hawarte near Apamea brought to light a Mithraic sanctuary with high-class Roman wall paintings. Such an important discovery was also a source of many conservation problems. The cave was filled with debris, collapsed ceiling and deep foundation walls of the later churches. Decoration consisted of five superimposed coats of painted plaster, the latest one relatively well preserved.

The key question was: could this unique wall painting be preserved *in situ* or should it be removed and exhibited in museum interiors?

The decision was to protect paintings in their original context, under temporary roofing. Big part of collapsed ceiling decoration and thousands of small plaster fragments recovered from the fill layers were collected for further conservation.

The team of Polish and Syrian restorers worked for many seasons simultaneously in the Hawarte cave, in the Hama Museum laboratory and in the Academy of Fine Art in Warsaw. Today, seven large scenes composed of reassembled painted fragments form part of the permanent exhibition in the Archaeological Museum in Hama. The virtual reconstruction of destroyed fragments helped to identify the stylistic chronology of the sanctuary's decoration.

Publication since 2010

Ewa Parandowska, *Hawarte –Last Masterpieces of Ancient Painters*, Warszawa, 2012

QALA'AT HALWANJI (ALEPPO)

Jesper EIDEM

Netherlands Institute for the Near East, Leiden (Netherlands)

Qala'at Halwanji.

The archaeological site of Qala'at Halwanji towers over the Sajour River, located high on a square limestone cliff ca. 15 kms west of the Euphrates. It was first identified in 2007, and in 2008-9 preliminary investigations were carried out by the author in cooperation with Syrian colleagues. A surface survey and test excavations show that the site was first occupied in the Early Bronze Age IV, but its main level, immediately under the modern surface, represents a brief Middle Bronze Age II (early 2nd Mill. BC) occupation destroyed by fire. Excavated rooms in the well-preserved south and southwestern parts of the site contain numerous *in situ* ceramic vessels and specimens of remarkable sealings. During this period Qala'at Halwanji seems likely to have been a fortress constructed by a regional or international power. An identification with ancient *Dūr-Šamšī-Adad*, a fortress established in this region by Šamšī-Adad I ca. 1786 BC, and lost to Jamhad ca. 1779 BC, is one textually documented possibility, but others are possible.

TELL AL-NASRIYAH (HAMA)

Dominique Marie PARAYRE

CNRS UMR 7041 équipe Vepmo, Professeur émérite Université de Lille3 (France)

Tell al-Nasriyah on the bank of the Middle Orontes from the Bronze ages down to the medieval period.

The "Syro-French expedition of the Orontes" was exploring a very important quadrangular settlement just on the right bank of the Orontes 15 kms south of Hama, and compared it to Tell Massin set on the plateau. Both the acropolis and the lower town were excavated, and the surrounding micro-region was explored, so as to understand the changes in the morphology of the town as well as the changing role of the river during about 5 millenia. We also found the places of the dead, both huge tumuli just outside the main entry (Bronze ages) as well as cinerary urns inside the city (LB-Iron ages).

HOMS GAP

Michel AL-MAQDISSI, Maya HAÏDAR-BOUSTANI, Juan JOSÉ IBÁÑEZ

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), Musée de Préhistoire libanaise, FLSH-USJ (Lebanon), Institución Milá y Fontanals, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Spain)

Archaeological discoveries in the Homs Gap by a Syrian-Lebanese-Spanish Mission (2004-2010).

From 2004 to 2010 a Syrian-Lebanese-Spanish mission has carried out archaeological investigations in the Homs Gap. The project area extended between the city of Homs to the East, Qalaat al-Hosn to the West, the parallel of latitude 3852.28 to the North and the frontier with Lebanon to the South; an area which covers around 560 km². Three main geographical areas can be distinguished: the basaltic plain in the West bank of the Orontes River, the basaltic hills in the central area and the Bouqaia Basin in the West. Over 160 new archaeological sites spreading all over this region and dating from the Lower Palaeolithic until the Ottoman period have been documented. What should be emphasized among these sites is the discovery of an Early Natufian site, Jeftelik, and a Pottery Neolithic site, Tell el Marj. The excavations undertaken on these two sites located in the Bouqaia shed some light on the Neolithization process in this region of the Levant and on the cultural parallels with the Lebanese-Syrian coastal Neolithic. Also, a considerable and extended megalithic landscape, spreading near the Orontes River, has been documented.

Publication since 2010

ARMENDÁRIZ A., IBÁÑEZ J.J., M., AL-MAQDISSI M., HAÏDAR-BOUSTANI M., TEIRA L. and GONZÁLEZ URQUIJO J., 2011, « The megalithic necropolises at the West of Homs (Syria) », in: STEIMER-HERBET T. (dir), *Pierres levées, stèles anthropomorphes et dolmens/Standing stones, anthropomorphic stelae and dolmens, Colloque International, Amman 15-17 juin 2007*, BAR International Series XXXX, pp. 55-65.

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THE ARID MARGINS

Nazir AWAD, Mohamed AL-DBIYAT, Jacques BESANÇON (†), Bernard GEYER, Marie-Odile ROUSSET

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), Maison de l’Orient Méditerranéen Lyon (France)

The Arid Margins of Northern Syria, Recent Results.

The Arid Margins of Northern Syria have been the object of a geoarchaeological survey, which ended in 2010 after 16 field campaigns. It allowed to discover and to characterize more than 1000 archaeological sites, which were all replaced in their environmental context. The aim was to understand the complexity of the Human – environment relations in notoriously difficult environments and to redraw the history of a region with early sedentarisation where the influence of the environment upon development of the human societies has been important very early.

The poster presents the way we proceeded to synthesize the environmental data and our knowledges about settlement, land use and development. This stage is essential to understand the economic models on which societies of the past based themselves to become established and develop in regions marked by strong constraints, the first of which being aridity. But, generally, only the climatic aridity is put forward to explain the modalities of land use, what distorts widely the conclusions to which one can end.

We looked at ways to introduce, on one hand, realities of the edaphic aridity and, on the other hand, consequences of the human endeavour, in particular hydro-agricultural installations, to manage to define and to map classes of attractiveness at the scale of the surveyed region.

This approach revealed itself particularly interesting for the Early Bronze Age IV and for the byzantine period, which will be illustrated.

TELL TOUEINI (LATAKIA)

Michel AL-MAQDISSI, Massoud BADAWI, Karel VAN LERBERGHE, Joachim BRETSCHEIDER

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium)

Presented by **Eva ISHAQ**, Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Terracotta figurines from Tell Toueini (First Millennium B.C.)

Tell Toueini is located near the modern town of Jebleh, which lies on the Syrian coast, 28 km south of Latakia and roughly 35 km from the ancient city of Ras Shamra-*Ugarit*.

A number of terracotta figurines were discovered in areas A and B excavated by the joint mission within the levels dated to the First millennium B.C.

We can distinguish the following six main categories:

- Female figurines
- Male figurines
- Animal figurines
- Human heads
- Animal heads
- Legs

All the terracotta figurines analyzed were dated to the Late Iron Age II and Iron Age III with one exceptional specimen from the Iron Age I tradition.

The female terracotta is a traditional model dating back to the Iron Age II, discovered in Tell Afis, Neirab and at the sites of the Amuq Plain.

The female plaque with arms down was a popular product in the Levant during the Iron Age II-III and maybe one of the oldest known Late Bronze Age artefacts also known from Ras Shamra-*Ugarit*, Tell Mumbaqa-*Ekalte* on the Euphrates, Tell Beit Mirsim in Palestine.

The male figurine carrying a conical shape, with two holes in the bottom to put the legs, is a very rare example and it is called a 'Puppet'. It represents the Cypriot and Greek tradition of the Iron Age. Some analogies for this figurine can be found in the Middle East at such sites as Babylon and even in Susa.

The large molded terracotta figurine of a naked woman, which has a unique and very special shape, can be considered as one of the rare examples that appeared on the Phoenician coast especially as they date back to the Iron Age III.

The 'Persian Riders' represent a very popular type that covers all of Near Eastern sites, from the Syrian-Lebanese coast to Tell Halaf in the east. M. Rostovtzeff noted 'Similar Statuettes of the Archaemenid period are found in hundreds in all the cities which were occupied by the Persian Army'. This type was manufactured in special workshops from very fine clay of light beige color.

The animal terracotta figurines have very limited variation with the domination of the ruminants or herbivores. Their dating is generally related to the late phase of the Iron Age (probably Iron Age III).

DGAMS ACTIVITIES

Tony GEROUGE

Documentation of Archaeological Sites and Historical Buildings.

- In cooperation with the department of historical buildings, all related data for those buildings registered on the National Heritage List (NHL) have been input.
- A dedicated interface was constructed to record damages: location and parts, short description, and photos, through a constant feedback by the department of site management; in order to have real-time reports of inter-related data.

Lina KUTIFAN

Syrian World Heritage Sites.

UNESCO has declared six sites in Syria to be of outstanding universal value and added them to the World Heritage List, including the:

- Ancient City of Damascus (1979)
- Ancient City of Bosra (1980)
- Site of Palmyra (1980)
- Ancient City of Aleppo (1986)
- Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din (2006)
- Ancient Villages of Northern Syria (2011)

The ancient city of Damascus stands out. Founded in the third millennium B.C., Damascus vies for—and just might own—the title of the world oldest continuously inhabited city.

Bosra is a major archaeological site, containing ruins from Roman, Byzantine, and Muslim times. Further, Nabatean and Roman monuments, Christian churches, mosques and Madrasahs are present within the city.

Palmyra was one of the artistic cities in the Middle East its ruins constitute unique achievement influenced on the posterior development of the architectural style and town planning.

Aleppo, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, dating to the 2nd millennium B.C

The Crusader castles Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din represent a distinct evolution in the defense systems that were prevalent in the Europe. They also contributed to the development of castles in Bilad Al Sham.

The Ancient Villages of Northern Syria are some 40 villages grouped in eight parks situated in north-western Syria provide remarkable testimony to rural life in late Antiquity and during the Byzantine period.

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

PALMYRA (HOMS)

Kiyohide SAITO

Archeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara, (Japan)

Title:

Japanese Archaeological Works in Palmyra from 1990 to 2010.

Abstract:

Nara-Palmyra archaeological mission carried out excavations and reconstructions at the southeast necropolis from 1990 to 2005. The excavation since 2006 at the north necropolis has been suspended with conflicts since 2011.

Over the course of 16 years, six tombs including Tomb A that is a house tomb; Tomb C that is an underground tomb constructed by YRHY in 109 AD; Tomb F that is an underground tomb decorated with beautiful floral patterns constructed by BWLH & BWRP in 128 AD; Tomb G that is a Hellenistic pit grave, the earliest grave at Palmyra; Tomb E that is an underground tomb constructed 3rd century; and Tomb H that is an underground tomb constructed by TYBL in 113 AD and a complete sarcophagus expressed family banquet scene was found. Among them, the restoration and reconstruction of Tomb F and H were carried out.

No.129-b House Tomb at the north necropolis is taken in the Zenobia Wall constructed as a defensive wall in the Diocletian period. Through scanning collapsed stones by 3D laser scanner the heap of stones showed a rough process of the collapse of the tomb. The reconstruction of outside and inside structure of this tomb could illustrate through the excavation. Infant graves were found at the working slope for constructing the defensive wall.

Thursday 3rd December

Palmyra Session

PALMYRA (HOMS)

Grzegorz MAJCHEREK

Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland)

Title:

Shaping an urban landscape: church buildings in Palmyra.

Abstract:

The paper summarizes results of our research on Early Byzantine churches in Palmyra with special focus on the last two seasons of fieldwork in 2008 and 2009. Within the framework of this program, our activities concentrated on excavations in northern Basilica, the largest church building in the city. Great part of the apse, as well as the nave and both aisles were cleared. Of particular interest was the so-called Syrian bema occupying the center of the nave, undoubtedly the most unusual architectonic feature. While the bema is quite common in churches of northern Syria, it is the first time that such a structure has been discovered in central Syria.

Excavations revealed also evidence of Early Islamic occupation of the site. In the 9th-10th centuries AD, the abandoned and dilapidated church was re-oriented and transformed into secular building addressing new needs of population. This alteration reflected the changed urban landscape of the Early Islamic Palmyra.

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Palmyra Session

PALMYRA (HOMS)

Tomasz WALISZEWSKI

Polish Center of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland)

Title:

An olive oil for oasis. On some installations from Palmyra.

Abstract:

Until very recently production of the olive oil in ancient Palmyra was virtually unattested. The preliminary inventory of few surviving presses or dozens of their elements scattered all over the site suggest that the olive oil was a part of the local agriculture, especially during the late antique and early Islamic period.

The preliminary typology of installations known from Palmyra, based on author's field research, corresponds to similar typologies established already in Palestine or Northern Syria. The registered examples belong to the lever-and-weight type, lever-and-screw, and screw-press types. The question of their chronology seems to be especially controversial due to the lack of archaeological context for the majority of installations or their elements.

DEAD CITIES (IDLIB)**Maamoun ABDULKARIM, Gérard CHARPENTIER**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), Damascus University (Syria)
Architect CNRS –Université Lyon2 / Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée (France)

Title:

Archaeological and Architectural Studies in Northern Syria (Dead Cities): General presentation with three missions in El Bâra and Ruweiha.

Abstract:**1. Throughout History**

The "dead cities," as they used to be called, in northern Syria constitute one of the most wonderful archeological sites in the world. They consist of over 700 sites from the Roman and Byzantine periods and extend on a wide region between Turkey in the north, Apamia in the south, the Efrin and Orontes valleys in the west and the Aleppo plain in the east. They also occupy a number of Limestone Mountains called the "limestone block". The surface area of this block is about 2,000 square kilometers: the Simeon and Halaqa mountains in the north, Barisha and A'ala in the middle and the Zawiya in the south.

The significance of these sites does not lie in their number but in rather in its rural nature: they are not cities but old villages surrounded sometimes by stonewall forming cadastral networks from the Roman period. The civilizations that date back to the end of the old ages are definitely urban civilizations, but they relied on the base formed by the rural areas in which the vast majority of people lived and worked and which essentially determined the level of their wealth. The villages and rural areas of the Roman and Byzantine periods are not well known: the sources of the texts are city dwellers who did not know them very well, in addition to the fact that their remains are largely destroyed. But the case is the exact opposite in northern Syria, where these ruins have been exceptionally preserved. The villages that are better preserved are often in full-integrated groups.

As of 1994 the mission has become a joint Syro-French mission which allowed for enhancing cooperation with the Department of Museums and Antiquities, in the framework of real scientific partnership, with the launch of new excavations in al-Bara (2006) and in Ruweiha (2008), with also the preparation of an archeological map with a geographical frame of reference.

2. Al Bara village

It is situated in one of the most fertile areas of the Limestone Block in a valley whose soils come from the decomposition of the limestone and the basalt. This village of El Bara is the biggest antique town in the *gebel* Zawiya. It covers an area of about two kilometers from the North to the South and one kilometer from the West to the East. Since 2007, a more ambitious research program has been opened at El Bara. It concerns the method of occupation and development of this big rural town that differs from the other villages of the Limestone Block on several points: First, its dimensions :(more than 50 ha), which are the ones of an authentic town. On the other hand, its organization is the one of a traditional village. Then, its way of development, which seems to be different from the other villages of the Limestone Block from chronological regards.

Finally, its numerous post byzantine archeological remains which show a sustained occupation after the Arab Islamic conquest probably just after the Omayyad era.

The excavations of the central area of El Bara village - The archeological works concern an area of about one ha situated in the central part of the antique town which is composed of the two big buildings which were excavated between 2007 and 2010, the public baths, which were converted into housing, and a big mosque which has been identified thanks to a *mihrab* and which has been fully preserved.

-The baths: The excavations have shown that there have been four main phases of occupation: 1) the construction of the Protobyzantin Baths; 2) the conversion of these baths into hammams at the beginning of Islam; 3) A phase when the baths were abandoned during the XIth century; 4) The conversion of the baths into housing during the Mameluk period.

-The mosque: In its initial condition, the mosque used to consist of a larger architectural grouping than it seems to be. For a long time, it has been considered as belonging to the medieval period, but it could have been created at the beginning of the Abbasside period. Established on older constructions, it is part of the center of a town about which one of the first phases of occupation could be prior to the Protobyzantin buildings.

In its early phase, the mosque could be contemporary with the public baths that used to operate like usual therms before being changed into hammams... In spite of the small, still cleared surface area, the outsides seem to have been planned to constitute the beginning of road works in the surroundings of a huge mosque, which was built in the early Abbasside period within the context of an urbanization plan for a big village.

3. Ruweiha village

Ruweiha is a large village characterized by its elevated position, North-East of Jebel al-Zawiya. It is surrounded by valleys, separating it from Jerade village, and agricultural plains. It contains perfectly preserved archaeological buildings made of local limestone. Most of the village dates to the Byzantine period.

Ruweiha village is home to several important historic buildings, including the Church of Bissos, to the North-East, dating to the sixth century AD. Two tombs flank the church; one is in the form of a Roman temple dating to the fourth century. The second has a dome. Another church from the fifth century is located to the south. To the east, a tomb, dating back to the end of the fourth century, also has the form of a temple. In addition, the village is abundant in large residential buildings that are still well preserved.

Besides, Ruweiha contains Roman ruins, particularly to the western corner of the village as well as in its center. For example, House 13 was built in accordance with construction techniques that are different from those adopted in the other dwellings belonging to the Byzantine era. Its decorations, moreover, indicate that it dates back to the pre-Christian era. In comparison with both Serjilla and al-Bara, this site is one of the most undisputed archaeological sites in the region given that numerous assumptions have been presented as regards al-Bara site in terms of the nature of settlement in the Roman era and during the transition period to the Byzantine era. However, systematic archaeological excavations should be carried out at the site.

Some researchers, such as Howard Crosby Butler and Georges Tchalenko, suggested the existence of public open spaces or agoras (marketplaces) in some of the villages of the Limestone Massif, for example Dahis and Dar Quita in Jebel Barisha and Ruweiha in Jebel al-Zawiya. Previous studies conducted by Tchalenko indicated that Ruweiha village witnessed the beginning of urban planning as evidenced by Building 22, consisting of a two-story portico, located in the center of the village. It is claimed to be a market or a commercial exchange center; in addition, wealthy landowners are thought to have built large villas, made of stone, in the late fifth century and during the sixth century.

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Notwithstanding these hypotheses, Georges Tate believes that those structures were merely residential buildings. He argued that Butler's proposition was based on the existence of squarely shaped public buildings whose sides are 40 meters in length. Tate refuted this hypothesis on the grounds that the data was not valid as the sides of the buildings are 35 meters long not 40. These measurements are customary in the houses of Jebel al-Zawiya, especially in Ruweiha.

The Syrian-French mission working in Ruweiha village carried out the following: 1- Conducting archaeological field surveys in Ruweiha using topographic equipment in order to record and draw the ruins located in the agricultural fields surrounding the site. 2- Conducting archaeological excavations in Building 22. 3- Studying the decorative elements in the residential buildings at this site and the neighboring ones.

Excavations in Building 22, in Ruweiha, were carried out in order to test the above-mentioned hypotheses. In addition, various parts of the building and its surroundings were inspected, which proved its occupation during the Byzantine period up until the Islamic era.

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Idlib Session

TELL EL-KERKH (IDLIB)**Akira TSUNEKI**

University of Tsukuba (Japan)

Title:

Tell el-Kerkh: A Neolithic Mega Site in Idlib Province.**Abstract:**

Tell el-Kerkh is a large tell-complex located in the south of the Rouj Basin, Idlib province. A DGAM-University of Tsukuba Archaeological Mission carried out excavations at the site from 1997 to 2010 to reveal a series of Neolithic settlements there. The oldest settlement dates back to the middle of the 9th millennium BC. The people built large-sized settlements (16 - 8ha) during the late 8th and 7th millennium BC, which matched the small cities of later historic periods. Their societies were complicated, including communal storage, communal cemetery, and advanced technology for craft production, long-distance trade, and ownership concepts. On the other hand, we did not find clear evidence of social classes. Neolithic people lived in egalitarian societies, where economic and social disparity had not yet been actualized. The discipline for integrating large scale societies might be based on frequent ritual practices, the evidence for which we observed here and there in the excavations. It is also notable that the excavations produced the oldest outdoor communal cemetery in the Near East, consisting of over 240 human skeletons and dating back to the late 7th millennium BC. The evidence from Tell el-Kerkh provides a lot of material for reconsidering why people started to congregate together, why they started to create large and complex societies and what constitutes a city.

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Thursday 3rd December

Idlib Session

TELL MARDIKH-EBLA (IDLIB)

Paolo MATTHIAE

Sapienza Università di Roma, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (Italy)

Title:

The Excavations at Tell Mardikh-Ebla in 2004-2010: The Temples of EB IVA-B and the Royal Citadel of MB I-II.

Abstract:

"The Italian Archaeological Mission at Ebla, beyond some minor other results, during the years 2004-2010, got important successes in the excavations of two main temples of Early Bronze IVA-B with a unique succession of several sacred buildings on the Acropolis and in the Lower Town and in the continuation of a long work on the Royal Palace E-F in the western sector of the Acropolis, that is the great palatial building of Middle Bronze I-II. The discovery of the cult buildings of Areas D and HH shed light on the history of the religious architecture during the last centuries of IIIrd and the beginning of IInd millennium BC, while the work in the Areas E and F of the Acropolis revealed important hints for the topographic extension and planimetric structure of the Royal Palace E: it is now clear that the palatial sectors till now recovered were only a limited part of a very large architectural complex that certainly was a real Royal Citadel, destroyed at the end of Middle Bronze II and largely re-employed during the Late Bronze I, when the function was no more a palatial one."

Thursday 3rd December

Idlib Session

EBLA/TELL MARDIKH (IDLIB)

Frances PINNOCK

Co-Director, Ebla Expedition, Sapienza Università di Roma (Italy)

Title:

The Archaeological Park of Ebla. A Long-Term Plan for the Site and its Region.

Abstract:

The Italian Archaeological Expedition at Ebla started a long-term restoration program developing in different stages, and with different techniques. At the beginning, in fact, our aim was only to protect the structures brought to light, whereas only since the Nineties of last centuries, thanks to a strong economic support by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was possible to launch a more ambitious project, aiming at restoring all the main buildings of the ancient town, at creating an itinerary for the visit, and at promoting the traditional activities in the Ebla region.

Thursday 3rd December

Idlib Session

TELL AFIS (IDLIB)

Stefania MAZZONI

Università di Firenze (Italy)

Title:

Tell Afis: Late Bronze and Iron Age (13th-7th cent. B.C.).

Abstract:

Tell Afis is a multi-phase site: thanks to its favourable position it was settled continuously from the Late Chalcolithic to the late Iron Age. The last excavations were concentrated on the acropolis, where a residential quarter dating to two phases of Late Bronze II (13th cent.), and a sequence of superimposed temples with their annexes, dating from Iron I (11th cent.) to Iron III (7th-6th cent.), were brought to light. Architecture and material culture from this long sequence of occupation give evidence of three distinct cultural horizons, with their regional orientations; these can be connected with the transformations of the social and political scenario of North-Western Syria in this period.

The paper will discuss chronology and cultural traits of the Afis LB-Iron sequence.

Publication since 2010

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A. Archi, Hittites at Tell Afis: the Cuneiform Tablets: *Orientalia* 81.1 (2012), pp. 32-55.

F. Venturi, New evidence of cultural links between Syria and Anatolia through analysis of Late Bronze Age II Tell Afis material culture: *Orientalia* 81.1 (2012), pp. 1-31.

A. Archi, The Texts from Tell Afis: Evidence from the Periphery of the Hittite Empire: *Origini* XXXIV (2012), pp. 413-420.

A. Di Michele, Fortification and burial grounds in Tell Afis (Syria) between Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age, in F. Borrell Tena, M. Bouso García, A. Gómez Bach, C. Tornero Dacasa & O. Vicente Campos (eds.). *Broadening Horizons 3. Conference of Young Researchers Working in the Ancient Near East*, Barcelona, 2012, pp. 169-182.

G. Carenti, Tell Afis (Syria): Ritual Meals and Foundation Ceremonies. Findings from the 2009–2010 Excavation Campaign, in Ch. Lefèvre (ed.), *Proceedings of the General Session of the 11th International Council for Archaeozoology Conference (Paris, 23–28 August 2010)*, (BAR International Series 2354), Oxford: Archeopress, 2012, pp. 183-190.

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C. De Gregorio, M. Pepe, D. Aureli, The Italian Prehistoric Survey in the Jazr (Idlib district - north west Syria), Preliminary Investigation of human occupation from Palaeolithic to Chalcolithic times, in F. Borrell Tena, M. Bouso García, A. Gómez Bach, C. Tornero Dacasa & O. Vicente Campos (eds.). *Broadening Horizons 3. Conference of Young Researchers Working in the Ancient Near East*, Barcelona, 2012, pp. 19-32.

D. Giannessi, Tell Afis and the northern Orontes region in the Post-Ubaid period, in C. Marro (ed.), *After the Ubaid: Interpreting Change from the Caucasus to Mesopotamia at the Dawn of Urban Civilization (4500-3500 BC). Papers from the Post-Ubaid Horizon in the Fertile Crescent. International Workshop held at Fosseuse, 29th June-1st July 2009* (Varia Anatolica XXVII), Paris 2012, pp. 261-274.

S. Mazzoni, Tell Afis: History and Excavations: *Near Eastern Archaeology* 76/4 (2013), pp. 204-213.

A. Archi, F. Venturi, Tell Afis in the Thirteenth Century B.C.E. under the Rule of the Hittites: *Near Eastern Archaeology* 76/4 (2013), pp. 214-222.

S. Mazzoni, S. Soldi (eds.), *Syrian Archaeology in Perspective. Celebrating 20 Years of Excavations of Tell Afis* (Ricerche di Archeologia del Vicino Oriente 4), Pisa 2013.

S. Mazzoni, Tell Afis and the Early-Middle Bronze Age Transition in S. Mazzoni, S. Soldi (eds), *Syrian Archaeology in Perspective. Celebrating 20 Years of Excavations at Tell Afis* (Ricerche di Archeologia del Vicino Oriente 4), Pisa 2013, pp. 31-80.

F. Venturi, The Transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age at Tell Afis, Syria (Phases VII-III), in K. Aslihan Yener (ed.), *Across the Border, Late Bronze-Iron Age Relations between Syria and Anatolia. Proceedings of a Symposium held at the Research Center of Anatolian Studies, Koç University, Istanbul May 31- June 1 2010*, Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA, 2013, pp. 227-244.

F. Venturi, The "Transitional" 12th Century Bc. The Beginning of the Iron Age, In Syria and in the Eastern Mediterranean, in S. Mazzoni, S. Soldi (eds), *Syrian Archaeology in Perspective. Celebrating 20 Years of Excavations at Tell Afis* (Ricerche di Archeologia del Vicino Oriente 4), Pisa 2013, pp. 117-138.

S. Soldi, *Red Slip Ware* from the Acropolis of Tell Afis: The Evidence of Area G, in S. Mazzoni, S. Soldi (eds), *Syrian Archaeology in Perspective. Celebrating 20 Years of Excavations at Tell Afis* (Ricerche di Archeologia del Vicino Oriente 4), Pisa 2013, pp. 199-217.

G. Carenti, G. Minunno, The Role of Birds in Tell Afis (Syria): Sacrifices and Rituals in a Temple Area during the Iron Age, in L. Bombardieri, A. D'Agostino, G. Guarducci, V. Orsi and S. Valentini (eds), *SOMA 2012. Identity and Connectivity. Proceedings of the 16th Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology, Florence, Italy, 1-3- March 2012. Vol. I* (BAR International Series 2581), Oxford 2013, pp. 119-122.

Mazzoni, S., Tell Afis in the Iron Age: The Temple on the Acropolis: *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77.1 (2014), pp. 44-52.

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Cecchini, S.M. 2014. Tell Afis in the Iron Age: The Official Buildings in the Eastern Acropolis: *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77.1, pp. 58-63.

Amadasi, M.G., 2014. Tell Afis in the Iron Age: The Aramaic Inscriptions: *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77.1, pp. 54-57.

Venturi, Fabrizio, The Late Bronze Age Sequence at Tell Afis, Baffi Francesca, Fiorentino Roberto, Peyronel Luca (eds), *Tell Tuqan Excavations and Regional Perspectives. Cultural Developments in Inner Syria from the Early Bronze Age to the Persian/Hellenistic Period. Proceedings of the International Conference May 15th-17th 2013, Galatina (Lecce) 2014*, Congedo Editore, pp. 297-323

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D'Amore, Paola, 2015. Iron Age Clay Figurines from Tell Afis, in P. Ciafardoni and D. Giannessi (eds), *From the Treasures of Syria. Essays on Art and Archaeology in Honour of Stefania Mazzoni* (PIHANS. Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul CXXVI), Leiden, pp. 261-286.

Venturi, Fabrizio, 2015. Storage Jars and Household Storage Methods in Tell Afis Between Late Bronze Age II and Iron Age II, in P. Ciafardoni and D. Giannessi (eds), *From the Treasures of Syria. Essays on Art and Archaeology in Honour of Stefania Mazzoni* (PIHANS. Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul CXXVI), Leiden, pp. 75-108.

Thursday 3rd December

Idlib Session

TELL MASTUMA (IDLIB)**Shigeo WAKITA, Shin NISHIYAMA**

Ancient Orient Museum, Tokyo (Japan), Chubu University (Japan)

Title:

Tell Mastuma, Idlib: Rise and fall of an Iron Age rural settlement in northwest Syria.**Abstract:**

Tell Mastuma is a middle-sized tell (200 m) site located 5 km south of the city of Idlib, in northwest Syria. The site was excavated by the Japanese mission from the Ancient Orient Museum, Tokyo between 1980 and 1995. The most extensively investigated level was that of the Iron Age which may be dated from the 10th century to the early 7th century BC. Although the excavation was closed in 1995, the mission returned to the site between 2004 and 2006. During this period, 1) surface survey of the tell sites in the vicinity of Mastuma, 2) further study of the excavated material including flora and faunal remains, and 3) obtaining radiocarbon samples from the excavated layers. The result of these post-excavation studies reveals that the Iron Age settlement of Mastuma was self-independent and well-planned settlement using the local resources effectively. In the Iron II period, the settlement expanded to its maximum size with a local “temple” structure built near the southern gate. After the late 8th century BC, the settlement started to diminish rapidly and finally abundant by the end of 8th or early 7th century BC. The paper summaries what has been newly understood from the analysis of excavated data since 2000.

Publication since 2010

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Adachi, T. 2010. Considering the Neo-Assyrian influence on ceramic bowls in the Iron Age Levant, *Bulletin of the Ancient Orient Museum*, 29/30, 33-50.

Wada, H. 2011. Houses and settlements in Northwest Syria: from the cases of Tell Mastuma, Kodai (*Journal of the Archaeological Society of Waseda University*), 125, 47-68. (in Japanese)

Nishiyama, S. 2012. A local temple in the Iron Age village? Reassessing a building complex at Tell Mastuma in the northern Levant, *Orient* (Reports of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan) 47, 91-124.

Tsumoto, H. 2014. Neighbor of ancient Israel: Archaeology of the kingdom of Hamath, in S. Hasegawa (ed.) *Festschrift for Prof. Akio Tsukimoto, vol. 2: Biblical world seen from archaeology*, Seikokai Shuppan: Tokyo, 144-183. (In Japanese)

Thursday 3rd December

Hasake Session 1

MIDDLE KHABUR

Frank HOLE

Yale University (USA)

Title:

Ubaid sites on the Middle Khabur River.

Abstract:

In the Late Ubaid, immigrant groups settled several sites along the Middle Khabur River valley. Excavations and small-scale sampling reveal initial occupation on a virgin landscape, and then abandonment after some 500 years. The principal sites are Mashnaqa, Ziyadeh, Kuran and Beydar III.

TELL FEKHERIYE (HASAKE)

Dominik BONATZ

Freie Universität Berlin (Germany)

Title:

Tell Fekheriye/Ras el-Ain in Northeastern Syria: A Short Report on the Archaeological Site and its Neighboring Town Before and After the Political Crisis.

Abstract:

A joint Syrian-German excavation project involving the Syrian Department of Antiquities and Museums and the Freie Universität Berlin was carried out at Tell Fekheriye in northeastern Syria from 2006 to 2010. These investigations have considerably broadened our knowledge of this important archaeological site, as they have produced valuable new evidence linked primarily to the early Neolithic, Mitanni, Middle Assyrian, and Roman-Byzantine periods. As for other archaeological sites in Syria, the research at Tell Fekheriye became interrupted after the political crisis started in 2011.

The paper will provide a short overview of the latest excavation results from Tell Fekheriye and collect information about what has happened with this site after 2010. In addition to that it will report on news about the battle for control of the neighboring town of Ras el-Ain which is now mainly in the hand of Kurdish separatists. As the historical importance of Tell Fekheriye is in some way linked to this struggle, the paper also discusses how archaeology in this region is drawn upon for recent political agendas.

Publication since 2010

Bonatz, D., "A Middle Assyrian Centaur from Tell Fekheriye", in: P. Ciafardoni and D. Giannessi (Hg.), *From the Treasures of Syria. Essays on Art and Archaeology in Honour of Stefania Mazzoni*, PIHANS, vol. 126 (2015), 153-162

Bonatz, D., "Tell Fekheriye in the Late Bronze Age. Archaeological Investigations into the Structures of Political Governance in the Upper Mesopotamian Piedmont", in D. Bonatz (Hg.), *The Archaeology of Political Space. The Upper Mesopotamian Piedmont in the Second Millennium BC*, edited by D. Bonatz. Topoi. Berlin Studies of the Ancient World, Berlin: DeGruyter (2014), 61-84.

Bonatz, D., "Tell Fekheriye: An Introduction in the Current Stage of Research", in: D. Hulinek / P. Valent (ed.), *Archaeology at Three Continents, 2006-2011*. Slovakian Archaeological and Historical Institute (SAHI). Bratislava (2013), 7-24.

Bonatz, D., Tell Fekheriye – Renewed Excavations at the "Head of the Spring", in: D. Bonatz / L. Martin (eds.), *100 Jahre archäologische Feldforschungen in Nordost-Syrien – eine Bilanz*, Schriften der Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung 18, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (2013), 209-234.

Thursday 3rd December

Hasake Session 1

TELL ARBID /JEZIREH

Piotr BIELIŃSKI

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology / the Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw (Poland)

Title:

IIIrd Millenium BC city on Tell Arbid - structure of a middle sized urban center in the Jezireh.

Abstract:

There is no evidence suggesting presence on Arbid of a settlement-predating period of Ninevite 5 culture. During the Early Jezireh I and II periods the city achieved climatic stage in its history. Remains representing this phase are present in every part of the site and accumulation of layers containing them exceeds 12m. Regardless of the changes in several forms of material culture in most of the investigated sectors were found clear indices of stability in spatial organization of the city with only few exceptions. The streets layout and localization of shrines are the best examples.

TELL HALAF (HASAKE)

Abd el-Masih BAGHDO, Lutz MARTIN, Mirko NOVAK

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin (Germany), University of Bern (Sweitzerland)

Presented by **Mohamad FAKHRO**, Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Halaf - Guzana - (excavation project 2006 - 2010).

Abstract:

The Tell Halaf, ancient Guzana, is situated on the Djirdjib River, one of the sources of the Khabur, in northeast Syria. Nearby the settlement mound, around three kilometres east, lies the modern town Ras al-Ain. Directly north of the Tell runs the legendary Baghdad railway, today this forms the border between Syria and Turkey. The ancient settlement is divided into a town complex with an almost rectangular citadel measuring six hectares in area and some 20 metres in height, and another, also almost rectangular, lower town, approximately 60 hectares in size.

It was in the citadel that Cologne banker's son and later imperial Ministerresident Max von Oppenheim (1860–1946) discovered strange-looking monumental sculptures during a brief sounding in 1899. Regularly excavations were carried out under his direction between 1911 and 1913 and 1929. After an interruption of 77 years a joint mission of the Museum of the Ancient Near East in Berlin and the Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées in Damascus, in cooperation with the Universities of Halle, Tübingen and Bern continued the explorations in 2006. Five excavation campaigns were carried out between 2006 and 2010.

What is known about the ancient settlements on Tell Halaf? The first small settlements were established around 8,000 years ago. The brightly-coloured ceramics produced during that time are considered typical of an era during the Late Neolithic period. Today, this era is known as the Halaf period. At the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, the Aramaic ruling dynasty known as Bit Bachiani founded their principality's capital on the prehistoric settlement mound. The name of the city, Guzana, was first mentioned in an Assyrian text dating from 894 BC. The most important ruler of Guzana was presumably Kapara, during whose reign in the late 10th to early 9th century BC the Western Palace was erected. Oppenheim called this building Temple Palace, whose façade he had uncovered in his soundings in 1899. In architectural terms, it is a so-called *bīt hilani*, the Assyrian name for a northern Syrian type of palace consisting of two parallel long rectangular rooms and featuring a colonnaded portico at the entrance.

Thursday 3rd December

Hasake Session 1

TELL MOZAN-URKESH (HASAKE)

Giorgio BUCCELLATI, Marilyn KELLY-BUCCELLATI

Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles and the International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies (IIMAS) (USA)

Presented by **Samer ABDEL GHAFOR**, Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Urkesk: Widening the Chronological Spectrum in the Past and Safeguarding the Site for the Future.

Abstract:

A stunning new element emerged during our last season of excavations, in 2010. Just below the surface, near the top of the tell, the corner of a niched building appeared, almost certainly the fourth millennium precursor of the later temple complex. We only have the external corner of the structure, which echoes the architectural template of southern Mesopotamia, such as the temple in Eridu, but the date is certain because of both the glyptic and ceramic evidence, and because of 14C determinations. The stratigraphic seal just above the structure is firm (it was the solid glacis of the later Temple terrace), and it seems most likely that the rest of the building is fully preserved. In 2010, we could not reach the level of the original inside floor, which we had hoped to excavate in 2011, a project unfortunately left in abeyance ever since. But there is also good evidence that this structure rested on top of what was already a very high Temple terrace, about 22 meters above the plain level, implying the existence of a large city that could support the presence of such a monumental structure. -- Before hostilities began, we had set in place an effective system of conservation and site presentation. It continues to date. In spite of our enforced and protracted physical absence from the site, we have been able to sustain without interruption preservation work at the site, through direct supervision of the work done by two guards and four assistants, and by providing the necessary materials. As a result, the site is in excellent shape, documented by means of a thorough photographic and descriptive record.

Thursday 3rd December

Aleppo Session 1

DEDERIYEH CAVE, AFRIN (ALEPPO)

Takeru AKAZAWA, Yoshihiro NISHIYAKI, Youssef KANJOU

Kochi University of Technology (Japan), University of Tokyo (Japan), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Dederiyeh Cave, Afrin.

Abstract:

Dederiyeh Cave is located on the left bank of Wadi Dederiyeh at the northern edge of the Levant, 60 km NW of Aleppo, northwest Syria. It is a Palaeolithic cave site, measuring 60 by 15–20 m and is 10 m high. Wadi Dederiyeh transects the hilly limestone plateau (450 m asl) of the Jabaal Samman and leads to the Afrine Valley, which eventually runs into the Mediterranean Sea. The survey located a dozen Palaeolithic caves in the Afrin Valley, among which Dederiyeh was intensively excavated in 1989-2011 (Akazawa and Muhesen (eds), 2002; Kondo *et al.*, 2006; Akazawa *et al.*, 2009; Nishiaki *et al.*, 2011, 2012). The excavations revealed a long cultural sequence spanning late middle to latest Pleistocene deposits containing a succession of Lower, Middle and Epipalaeolithic cultural layers. In addition, well-preserved Neanderthal remains were recovered in association with Middle Palaeolithic faunal and lithic assemblages. These discoveries have established Dederiyeh Cave as a prime locale for defining Palaeolithic and palaeoanthropologic events in the northern Levant.

Publication since 2010

T. Akazawa and S. Muhesen (eds) 2002 *Neanderthal Burials: Excavations of the Dederiyeh Cave, Afrin, Syria*. Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies.

Y. Nishiaki, Y. Kanjo, S. Muhesen, and T. Akazawa (2011) Newly Discovered Late Epipalaeolithic Assemblages Lithic Assemblages from Dederiyeh Cave, the Northern Levant. In: E. Healey, S. Campbell, and O. Maeda (eds.) *The State of the Stone Terminologies, Continuities and Contexts in Near Eastern Lithics*, pp. 79-88.

Y. Nishiaki, Y. Kanjo, S. Muhesen, and T. Akazawa (2012) The Temporal Variability of Late Levantine Mousterian Lithic Assemblages from Dederiyeh Cave, Syria. *Eurasian Prehistory*, 9(1-2): 3-27.

Thursday 3rd December

Aleppo Session 1

TELL QARAMEL (ALEPPO)

Youssef KANJOU, Ryszard F. MAZUROWSKI

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), University of Warsaw (Poland)

Title:

The Archaeological Excavations at Tell Qaramel 1999 -2011, Aleppo, north Syria.

Abstract:

Tell Qaramel located 25 km North of Aleppo on the right bank of the Queiq River. The Syrian Polish joint mission started the excavations on the site from 1999-2011. The oldest Period uncovered dated back to the Neolithic period, around the beginning of 11,000 BC until the end of 9,000 BC. (Proto-neolithic to Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPNA)).

The excavations lead to the discovery of 5 circular towers (the oldest in the world) and a *Shrine / Communal* house. In addition, 28 graves were discovered, between them individual, collective graves and a grave for skulls only.

In this presentation we will talk about the significance of the excavations result at Tell Qaramel for the history of Levant and the beginning of humanity in particular what is related with the development of architecture and mortuary practice.

Publication since 2010

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Kanjou Y., Kuijt, I., Erdal, Y. S., and Kondo O. (2013), 'Early Human Decapitation, 11,700–10,700 cal BP, within the Pre-Pottery Neolithic Village of Tell Qaramel, North Syria'. In *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*.

Ryszard F., Mazurowski, R. Y. and Kanjou, Y. (eds.) (2012), "Tell Qaramel 1999-2007: ProtoNeolithic and early Pre-pottery Neolithic settlement in Northern Syria. (Preliminary results of the Syrian –Polish Archaeological Excavations in Seasons 1999-2007)". *PCMA* No.2. University of Warsaw, Poland.

ARSLAN TASH (ALEPPO)

Serena Maria CECCHINI

Director of the Syro-Italian mission at Arslan Tash, University of Bologna (Italy)

Title:

La dernière fouille à Arslan Tash.

Abstract:

A Syro-Italian archaeological expedition worked between 2007 and 2009 at Arslan Tash, where French excavations in 1928 by the Musée du Louvre, directed by F. Thureau-Dangin, brought to light palaces, temples and city walls and their gates with inscriptions which allowed for the identification of the site with the neo-Assyrian city of Hadatu, a provincial centre of Til Barsip/Kar Shalmanu-asharedu. In the framework of a joint project of the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums of Syria, the University of Bologna and the Musée du Louvre for the study and restoration of the Arslan Tash engraved ivories, unearthed by the French archaeologists in the so-called Bâtiment aux ivoires, new excavations started with the aim of collecting the missing data relating to the archaeological context of the discoveries from the 1928 season. The first two campaigns were devoted to the relocation of the ancient buildings excavated in 1928 (and now disappeared under the new city buildings) through a topographical and geo-physical survey of the site. During the 2009 campaign a small sounding was made in the area of the Bâtiment aux ivoires, revealing walls of this palace and two more ancient Neo-Assyrian building phases.

Publication since 2010

Serena Maria Cecchini, *Il viaggio di Melqart*, in G. Bartoloni et al. (edd.), *Tiro, Cartagine, Lixus: nuove acquisizioni. Atti del Convegno Internazionale in onore di Maria Giulia Amadasi Guzzo*. Roma, 25-25 novembre 2008, Roma 2010 (= *Quaderni di Vicino Oriente IV* [2010]), pp. 73-87.

Serena Maria Cecchini, *I porta-köhöl di Tell Afis, originale esempio di artigianato siro-ittita*, in R. Dolce (ed.), *Quale Oriente? Omaggio a un Maestro. Studi di arte e archeologia del Vicino Oriente in memoria di Anton Moortgat a 30 anni dalla sua scomparsa*, Palermo 2010, pp. 411-430.

Serena Maria Cecchini, "Disegni e modelli", dal Levante al Mediterraneo occidentale, in P. De Vita, F. Venturi (edd.), *Da Tell Afis a Mozia*, Lugano 2011, pp. 77-91.

Serena Maria Cecchini, *Un sigillo neo-assiro con scena di culto da Arslan Tash*, in C. Lippolis, S. de Martino (edd.), *Un impaziente desiderio di scorrere il mondo. Studi in onore di Antonio Invernizzi per il suo settantesimo compleanno* (Monografie di MESOPOTAMIA, XIV), Torino 2011, pp. 85-90.

Serena Maria Cecchini, *Loomweights and the textile industry in north Syria in the Early Iron Age*, in V. Karageorghis and O. Kouka (eds.), *On cooking pots, drinking cups, loomweights and ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and neighbouring regions. An International Archaeological Symposium held in Nicosia, November 6th – 7th 2010*, Nicosia 2011, pp. 195-202.

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Serena Maria Cecchini, Fabrizio Venturi, A sounding at Arslan Tash. Re-visiting the “Bâtiment aux ivoires”, in R. Matthews, J. Curtis et alii (eds.), *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (12 April – 16 April 2010, the British Museum and UCL, London), Volume 3, Wiesbaden 2012, pp. 325-341.

Serena Maria Cecchini, La stele di Breyg, in A. M. Arruda (ed.), *Fenícios e Púnicos, por terra e mar. Actas VI Congresso Internacional de Estudos Fenicio Punicos* (Lisboa 2005), Lisboa 2013, pp. 275-283.

Serena Maria Cecchini, The Official Buildings on the Eastern Acropolis, in *TELL AFIS: History and Excavations: Near Eastern Archaeology*, 77:1 (2014), pp. 58-63.

Thursday 3rd December

Aleppo Session 1

TELL AHMAR/TIL BARSIB

Guy BUNNENS

Université de Liège (Belgium)

Title:

Unfinished work at Tell Ahmar/Til Barsib.

Abstract:

Archaeological research at Tell Ahmar on the Euphrates came to an abrupt end in 2010. The excavation season planned for Spring 2011 could never be organized and, therefore, important aspects of the research programme could not be completed. The last phase of the 3rd millennium funerary complex known as the “Hypogeum” was beginning to emerge as well as its relation to 2nd millennium stratification. A third millennium temple could be only partially excavated. A 2nd millennium tomb consisting of a small stone chamber was about to be entirely exposed. The paper will report on these findings and comment on the preliminary conclusions that can already be drawn from the results obtained in 2010.

Publication since 2010

Tell Ahmar III = JAMIESON, Andrew S., *Neo-Assyrian Pottery from Area C*, Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 35, Louvain–Paris–Walpole 2012.

BACCARIN, Cristina, “Burial practices in the middle Euphrates area during the early Bronze Age: The contribution of the hypogeum of Tell Ahmar (North Syria),” *Broadening Horizons 3. Conference of Young Researchers Working in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Ferran BORRELL TENA, Mònica BOUSO GARCÍA, Anna GÓMEZ BACH, Carles TORNERO DACASA & Oriol VICENTE CAMPOS, Bellaterra (Barcelona), 2012, pp. 137-149.

BACCARIN, Cristina, “The Hypogeum of Tell Ahmar: An analysis of the monumental burial complex in the context of the Early Bronze Age funerary practice,” *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, 51 (2014), pp. 213-225.

BACCARIN, Cristina, “Child burials from Tell Ahmar (North Syria): A few examples from the Early and Middle Bronze Age, » *Akkadica*, 136/1 (2015), pp. 1-16.

BUNNENS, Guy, “Tell Ahmar in the Middle and Late Bronze Age,” *Proceedings of the 6th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, May, 5th-10th 2008, “Sapienza” - Università di Roma, Volume 2, Excavations, Surveys and Restorations: Reports on Recent Field Archaeology in the Near East*, ed. Paolo MATTHIAE, Frances PINNOCK, Lorenzo NIGRO & Nicolò MARCHETTI, with the collaboration of Licia Romano, Rome, 2010, pp. 111-122.

BUNNENS, Guy, “Sealing Practices at Neo-Assyrian Til Barsib: Cylinders – Stamps – *Sissiktu* – Seal Box,” *The Ancient Near East, a Life! Festschrift Karel Van Lerberghe*, ed. Tom BOIY, Joachim

Thursday 3rd December

Aleppo Session 1

BRETSCHNEIDER, Anne GODDEERIS, Hendrik HAMEEUW, Greta JANS & Jan TAVERNIER, Leuven–Paris–Walpole, MA, 2012, pp. 75-89.

BUNNENS, Guy, "Looking for Luwians, Aramaeans and Assyrians in the Tell Ahmar stratigraphy," *Syrian Archaeology in Perspective Celebrating 20 Years of Excavations at Tell Afis*, ed. S. MAZZONI & S. SOLDI, Pisa 2013, pp. 177-197.

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BUNNENS, Guy & John M. RUSSELL, "A bit-hilani at Til-Barsib? Clarifications and further evidence," *Ugarit-Forschungen*, 43 (2011 [2013]), pp. 31-35.

JAMIESON, Andrew, "Processes of Assyrianisation: Identity and connectivity manifested in Neo-Assyrian ceramics and the Tell Ahmar Area C pottery," *Identity and Connectivity*, SOMA 2012, ed. L. BOMBARDIERI, A. D'AGOSTINO, G. GUARDUCCI, V. ORSI & S. VALENTINI, Oxford 2013, pp. 75-85.

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MISHIRFEH - QATNA (HOMS)

Michel AL-MAQDISSI

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Syrian Excavations in Mishirfeh-Qatna.

Abstract:

Excavations at al-Mishirfeh-Qatna site started in 1994 and lasted until 2011 by a Syrian team. The excavations led to the discovery of architectural structures dated to the 3rd millennium, the 2nd millennium and the first half of the 1st millennium BC.

Focus in the past years has been directed towards exploring a section of a residential neighborhood dating to the Iron Age II (900-720 BC) and located in a low area south-west of the hill (Area S). The section is comprised of a number of adjacent dwellings, as well as pottery products, including Aramean clay jars used for storage and clay pots painted red (Red Slip). The western gate (Area E), previously discovered by R. du Mesnil du Buisson, was also investigated. It was established in the mid-2nd millennium BC and was used during the Late Bronze Age. It was also used in the Iron Age II.

Other surveys carried out in the vicinity of the site indicated that extensive human settlement at the site started in the mid-3rd millennium BC and continued until the Iron Age II.

However, during the Iron Age III and the classical periods, the region witnessed major changes and became very marginal as political focus and attention were shifted towards Aritusa city on the Orontes River during the Hellenistic period and Emesa city during the Roman and Byzantine eras.

Friday 4th December

Homs Session

EL KOWM (HOMS)**Jean-Marie LE TENSORER**

University of Basel (Switzerland)

Title:

The Lower Palaeolithic of the El Kowm Area (Central Syrian) and the question of the first inhabitants of the Syrian Desert.**Abstract:**

Today, the oldest traces of human cultures are found in Eastern Africa. New discoveries set anew the questions about human and animal dispersal into Eurasia. Issuing from Africa, the first humans migrated at different periods. During these dispersal phases, the Levant played a leading role as a crossroads between the three continents. In fact, for over 1.8 million years, humans have been present in Syria. An extensive program of surveys and excavations in the region of El Kowm, in the Syrian Desert have been carried out over 30 years by the Institute for Prehistory and Archaeological Science of the Basel University, together with the General Directorate of Syrian Antiquities; these studies showed that this part of the world was also a very ancient land of settlement. The oldest site, Aïn al Fil, was excavated in 2008 and 2010. It shows remarkable similarities with the oldest African assemblages. Together with the neighboring sites Hummal and Nadaouiyeh, these levels would be the oldest traces of human presence ever found in Syria. They show that first humans not only occupied favorable zones but regularly ventured deep into less welcoming environments suggesting an astonishing flexibility in their behavioral and survival skills.

Publication since 2010

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Le Tensorer, J.-M, Le Tensorer, H., Elsuede, H., Martini, P., Schmid, P., & Villalain, J.J. (in press) The Oldowan site Aïn al Fil (El Kowm, Syria) and the first humans of the Syrian Desert. *L'Anthropologie, Special Issue of the XVII World UISPP Congress 2014 in Burgos, Session B33 - Environmental and cultural development during the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic in the Syrian Desert.*

Le Tensorer, J.-M., von Falkenstein, V., Le Tensorer, H. & Muhesen, S. 2011. Hummal: a very long Palaeolithic sequence in the steppe of central Syria – considerations on Lower Palaeolithic and the beginning of Middle Palaeolithic. In *The Lower and Middle Palaeolithic in the Middle East and Neighboring Regions*, ed. J.-M. Le Tensorer, R. Jagher & M. Otte, ERAUL 126. Liège: University of Liège Press, pp. 235-48.

Friday 4th December

Homs Session

HUMMAL, EL KOWM (HOMS)

Dorota WOJTCZAK

University of Basel (Switzerland)

Title:

The long Paleolithic sequence of Hummal (Central Syria).

Abstract:

The spring of Hummal, which is located in the region of El Kowm, is a reference site for the Paleolithic of the interior Levant due to its long archaeological sequence with Lower to Upper Paleolithic deposits. It is alike Tabun, one of the longest Pleistocene stratigraphy of the Levant. The site demonstrate that the steppe regions between the Mediterranean coast and the Euphrates river were favorable zones for prolonged and continues human settlement and allow us to reconstruct the human dispersal and technological innovations during the Pleistocene in subsequent Paleolithic periods.

Research at the well-site of Hummal was carried out by a joint Syro-Swiss team until 2010. An in-situ succession of limnic and terrestrial sediments and soil formation processes overpasses 15 meters, preserving more than 60 archaeological levels.

This paper presents the place of Hummal within Paleolithic deposits in the Middle East area and the techno-typological trends in stone tools production between all major Paleolithic cultural complexes discovered on the site and in the region.

Friday 4th December

Raqqqa Session

RESAFA (RAQQA)

Dorothee SACK (2006-2012), **Michaela KONRAD** (since 2013), **Martin GUSSONE** (Technical Director of the Mission since 2006)

Technical University of Berlin (Germany), University of Bamberg (Germany),
Assigned by the German Archaeological Institute Damascus/Berlin (DAI).

Title:

Resafa, a multidisciplinary approach to reconstruct the development of the city.

Abstract:

Based on previous research since the 1980s a comprehensive project with five sub-projects (TP 1-5) was launched in 2006 to analyse the development of the site *intra* and *extra muros* (10 field campaigns, since autumn 2011 on going reprocessing of the results and preparation of the final publication):

- TP 1: Archaeological Map: Reconstruction of the building phases of all known monuments to explain the history of the city (1st–13th cent.) with its recent village (founded after 1952)
- TP 2: Archaeology and Prospections: multidisciplinary researches mainly in the residential settlement
- TP 3: City Wall: researches with the methods of *Bauforschung* to understand the construction and the development of the city wall
- TP 4: Heritage Conservation: Works of consolidation and restoration mainly in Basilica A as well as *Bauforschung* and archaeological research in the Tetraconch Church (*Zentralbau*) to prepare a demanded partial anastylosis.
- TP 5 Site Management: development of a masterplan to provide up to date explanations for visitors (information boards, flyer and guide book).

The multidisciplinary approach gives the basis to reconstruct the development of the city of pilgrimage of St. Sergius (since 5th cent) and the caliphal residence, founded by the Umayyad caliph Hisham b. Abd al-Malik (reg. 724-743) as well as the last reoccupation of the site in the Ayyubid period (12th/13th cent) and the foundation of the village (mid 20th cent.).

Friday 4th December

Raqqa Session

TELL HWEJET HALAWEH (RAQQA)

Ayham AL-FAKHRI

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Hwejet Halaweh

Abstract:

Located on the left bank of Lake Assad, near a village named after it, 90 km west of Raqqa governorate center, about 15 km from al-Jurniyeh town and adjacent to Tell Mumbaqa, Tell Hwejet Halaweh consists of two parts separated by a water body.

Its archaeological layers date back to the Early Bronze Age (300 BC), as well as the Roman and the Byzantine eras.

Excavation missions at the site in 2011: a mosaic, with an area of 58 square meters, was discovered beneath the wall of Hwejet Halaweh school. It is an extension of a mosaic previously uprooted by the Belgian mission in the mid-1970s. In addition, it is part of a niche located on the east side of a church discovered earlier. An area, 12 meters long and 7 meters wide, within and outside the wall of the school, was probed. A hole no more than 60 cm deep led to unearthing the mosaic, which has various geometric shapes including red and black squares surrounded by red and black triangles.

The mosaic was fixed on white stone foundations, which were uprooted from the rocks surrounding the banks of the lake. An entrance leading to what is believed to be a church was discovered to the south. The niche of the church was uncovered on its east side. Moreover, this mosaic is considered part of the church as well as other mosaics, which were uprooted and displayed in Raqqa Museum.

The mosaic dates back to the 6th century BC and is considered, along with similar ones discovered in the Euphrates valley extending from Tell Abu Saeed in the south to Tell Abyad, one of the abundant mosaics in that region which represent the Byzantine art.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE HAMA REGION

Karin BARTL

German Archaeological Institute Damascus/Berlin (DAI) (Germany).

Title:

Archaeological Investigations in the Hama Region.

Abstract:

The work of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) in Damascus during the years 2003 to 2010 focused on the Hama region, one of the central settlement areas in western Syria, which had been investigated only sporadically after the extensive Danish excavations at the ancient settlement tall of Hama in the 1930s.

The DAI/DGAM research program covered various issues relating to general settlement development as well as on individual aspects of the Neolithic, Hellenistic-Roman and Ottoman periods.

Numerous new research data were generated by archaeological surface investigations in the region between ar-Rastan and Shayzar, excavations in the Late Neolithic site of Shir, geophysical prospecting in the Roman legionary fortress and city Raphanea, soundings at the Hellenistic-Medieval settlement of Shayzar / Larissa and architectural/historical studies on the Ottoman old town of Hama.

The results of these activities attest a complex settlement for the Hama region in all periods since the Paleolithic with a special focus on the Bronze Age and the Roman/Late Roman periods. In addition, the structure of an important settlement site of the hitherto largely unknown Late Neolithic period (7th mill. BCE) could be determined. The work at the Hellenistic-Roman sites of Shayzar / Larissa and Raphanea added new information to these historically known places, while the studies in the old town of Hama supplemented earlier research undertaken in the frame of the excavations of the 1930s.

Publication since 2010

Orontes Survey

Bartl K., al-Maqdissi M.

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Shir

Bartl K., Farzat A., al-Hafian W.

2012 The Late Neolithic Site of Shir, *Zeitschrift für Orient-Archäologie* 5, 168-187.

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2014 Shir – Settlement and Environment of the 7th millennium BC in the Northern Levant. In: K. Bartl, M. al-Maqdissi (eds.), *New Prospecting in the Orontes Region. First Results of Archaeological Fieldwork*, *Orient-Archäologie* 30, 149-161.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

Raphanea

Gschwind M., Hasan H.

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2014 The Legionary Fort and Roman City Raphanea: Topographical, Archaeological and Geophysical Survey Work conducted in 2005-2007. In: K. Bartl, M. al-Maqdissi (eds.), *New Prospecting in the Orontes Region. First Results of Archaeological Fieldwork*, *Orient-Archäologie* 30, 119-129.

Shayzar

Grawehr, M.

2014 Putting Larissa on the Map. In: Bartl, M. al-Maqdissi (eds.), *New Prospecting in the Orontes Region. First Results of Archaeological Fieldwork*, *Orient-Archäologie* 30, 131-126.

Hama

Bartl K., Farzat A. (Hrsg.)

2013 *Qasr al-'Azam. Ein osmanischer Gouverneurspalast in Hama. Baugeschichte und historischer Kontext*, *Damaszener Forschungen* 15, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz.

Ahmad, A.

2014 Survey of the Old Town of Hama: Documentation of Monuments. In: *New Prospecting in the Orontes Region. First Results of Archaeological Fieldwork*, *Orient-Archäologie* 30, 137-145.

WESTERN SYRIA AND LEBANON PALAEOENVIRONMENTS

Jacqueline ARGANT, Frank BRAEMER, Bernard GEYER, Philippe SORREL

Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon (France)

Title:

Holocene Palaeoenvironments and Settlement Patterns in Western Syria and Lebanon.

Abstract:

The PaleoSyr/PaleoLib program, that took place from October 2010 to October 2014, had the aim to integrate what we know about palaeoclimate and palaeoenvironment with our knowledge of the land use and development during the Holocene in the northern Levant. The challenge was to better define the genuine roles of (1) climatic variations and their impact on environmental dynamics including landscape evolution, and (2) the consequences of human activities on changes in settlement pattern and landscapes, in this region who played a key role in the development of agriculture, urbanization, state formation.

This research includes numerous temporal and spatial scales aiming to: (1) refine the regional scheme and to build a relevant geo-historical setting at the regional scale, (2) model "social climate" systems for periods of environmental crisis and/or periods of stability, (3) model periods of change induced by human activities, and to characterize ruptures in natural ecosystems.

To do this, we used integrating methods of sedimentary analyses to those of archaeology and geoarchaeology in order to build models of human-environment interactions.

For Syria, the main results cover 1) the assessment of human settlements at the sub-continental scale: Western Syria / Lebanon Archaeological Database and GIS, from the Paleolithic to the 19th century spatial; identification of landscape entities according to their agro-pastoral potential. 2) Sedimentology of sediment cores: High resolution age models based on a multi-proxy dating approach (¹⁴C, OSL, palaeomagnetism); Climate change and land cover change: Syrian coast 6000-2500 cal BP, Syrian arid 1400-400 cal BP.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

AL-RAWADA (HAMA)

Nazir AWAD, Corinne CASTEL

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria), CNRS-Université Lyon 2, (France)

Title:

Al Rawda: A city dating to the third millennium on the edge of the Syrian Desert.

Abstract:

The site was discovered during an archaeological geographical and environmental survey of the dry edges of the desert of al-Salamiyah city by a Syrian-French mission in the spring of 1996. The site was dated back to the Early Bronze Age according to the investigated potsherds.

A geographic topographic and environmental presentation:

Al-Rawada is located in central Syria on the northern slopes of the Palmyrene mountains, 150 km from the Mediterranean. It is a circular hill with a height of 3-4 meters and has an area of more than 15 hectares including the city walls.

The city was founded on a low land where a number of large and important valleys, originating from al-Bilaas mountains, such as al-Amour, al-Zourib and al-Qastal valleys, formed altogether a vital vein for the city.

Moreover, the city is located in a *fayda*, a landform sunken or depressed below the surrounding area, formed by Wadi al-Qastal valley and surrounded by a number of plateaus. The site can only be seen from those plateaus, which provide it with natural fortification and defense.

The layout of the city indicates that the original founders of the city had extensive knowledge of and experience in city planning and in choosing the right location at the crossroads of ancient routes.

Excavations:

Excavations at the site started in 2000 and were carried out by a Syrian-French mission aiming at uncovering the nature of urban planning of the site, highlighting and analyzing the archaeological data and studying the defensive fortifications and ways of employing the environment and the production systems in this dry climate during the third millennium BC. This also aimed at shedding light on the nature of the urban communities settling in the region and the relationships between them at the time.

The results:

The results of the excavations and archaeological studies revealed that the site was a city defended by a double rampart and two ditches. It was accessible through fortified gates. The necropolis is situated outside the city to the west.

The temple, discovered north-west of the city within the city walls, was home to the rites and offerings of different and various faiths.

In addition, excavations revealed parts of residential dwellings and gave a clear idea of the plans of the houses within the residential neighborhoods. Numerous potteries and agricultural tools as well as daily use machines and cylinder stamp seals were also unearthed.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

Economic activities:

Studies of the agricultural activities at the site indicated that barley was the most cultivated crop along with vegetables, fruit and wheat.

Furthermore, the mission carried out an archaeological survey around the site, which led to the identification of small settlements that were part of the city in addition to the discovery of several animal traps and ways of organizing and exploiting water resources around the site. All of that has given us much deeper understanding of the nature of economic life of the city's population.

Sites that have similar patterns:

Geophysical surveys of the site have revealed a clear picture of the circular street pattern that finds parallels in sites located in a similar environment dating to the same era such as Tell al-Shuaerat, Tell Chuera and Tell Kherbet al-Qasr as well as Mari and the third millennium Qatna.

The great wall:

The advanced location of al-Rawda site, adjacent to the ancient great wall stretching on the edge of the desert from north to south along a distance of about 220 km poses many questions as regards the function of this wall on the one hand and its association with al-Rawda city on the other hand.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

QALAAAT AL MUDIQ (HAMA)

Mathilde GELIN, Shaker AL SHBIB

CNRS-Institut Français du Proche-Orient (France), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Qalaat al-Mudiq, citadel of Apamea: past and present.

Abstract:

The Syrian-European mission of Qalaat al-Mudiq - citadel of Apamea worked in 2004 and 2005 for emergency consolidations and restorations on the medieval fortifications settled on the top of the hill.

A coring was realised to verify the underground stability, and showed that the entire hill is an archaeological tell.

Preliminary archaeological soundings have been realised at the foot of the zones to be consolidated, which showed ancient fortifications belonging to Bronze Age and Hellenistic periods.

The consolidations and restorations were lead on three main endangered places, including a whole medieval tower.

After these scientific and preservation works, today the site and all the places we restored have been partly touched or destroyed. Worst, it is the totality of the tell which is endangered.

Publication since 2010

Al Shbib Shaker, Gelin Mathilde, (in press) «Qalaat al Mudiq, citadel of Apamea, excavations and restorations», *One hundred sites tell us the history of Syria*, ed. Y. Kanjou and A. Tsuneki, University of Tsukuba.

Gelin Mathilde, «Note sur le rempart "de l'âge du Bronze" à Qalaat el Mudiq, citadelle d'Apamée de l'Oronte», *Un "cœur syrien", Mélanges dédiés à la mémoire d'Antoine Souleiman, Studia Orontica* 11, 2013, pp. 129-142.

Gelin Mathilde, «Conservation et mise en valeur du patrimoine archéologique au Proche-Orient: quelques réalisations de missions archéologiques», *Journal of Historical, Philological and Cultural Studies* 27-1, *En l'honneur des 75 ans de Guénnadi Andréïévitch Koshelenko*, Académie des Sciences de Russie, Moscou-Magnitogorsk-Novossibirsk, 2010, pp. 62-84, pl.1.

TELL AL NOUHAS (HAMA)

Komait ABDALLAH

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The preliminary results of the excavation in Tell Al Nouhas in Massyaf region.

Abstract:

Tell Al Nouhas is situated in 3 km in the east of the city of Massyaf in the Hama province. In 2013, the directorate of the Antiquities at Damascus had consisted a mission for prospecting the Tell, energised as archaeological site in 2010. The prospection allowed us to know there is a roman street that links Apamea and Homs, near the Tell. In addition, there are a remains of a building near the river that passes near the Tell, and some rests of walls dispersed above it. The potteries collected show that they belong to the Hellenistic period and to the Iron Age and Bronze Age. Then, the mission has begun to do some surveys to know the stratigraphy of the tell. These surveys showed many periods of occupation and abandon. The most ancient belong the Bronze Age 4 (2200-2400 BC), there is also an occupation from the second Iron Age (900-700BC. The last period of occupation belongs to the early Hellenistic period (3 and early 2 centuries BC). The two last seasons of excavation in 2014 and 2015 revealed several structures built in stone, and tombs dating probably between 900 and 700 BC. For this congress we will present the results of our excavation in Tell Al Nouhas.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

MASYAF (HAMA)

Haytham HASSAN

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Masyaf Castle

Abstract:

Masyaf Castle is one of the most important castles in western Syria. It is located 45 km west of Hama city and east of modern Masyaf city, which stretches on the eastern edge of the Coastal Mountain Range (Jabal Bahra in the Medieval Period). Excavations and restoration works, funded by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture Historic Cities Support Programme in cooperation with the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM), started in the castle in 2000. An archaeological team from the DGAM was formed to carry out systematic archaeological studies in order to preserve the castle and the unearthed artifacts. The national archaeological team, including Syrian young cadres, conducted a number of excavation seasons between 2000 and 2013, leading to significant archaeological findings regarding the history of the city and that of Syria in the Middle Ages. Excavations and discoveries indicated that the castle was occupied between the 10th and the 20th century AD, during which the castle was converted from a fort, where the Emirs of Banu Munqidh spent the summer, into the headquarters of the Nizari Ismailis in Syria and finally the headquarters of some local leaders under the Ottoman rule. These excavations highlighted the importance of studying a local rural community that lived in isolation in the history of this city and its castle.

Friday 4th December

Hama Session

TELL MAKSOUR (HAMA)

Abdul Wahab ABU SALEH

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Maksour.

Abstract:

Tell Maksour is located in al-Ghab plain, Hama governorate, on the left bank of the Orontes River. The site consists of four *tells*, A, B, C and D. Emergency excavations at the tell started in 2009 by a national mission; in 2012, another national team was formed and directed by Abdul Wahab Abu Saleh. Those excavations led to the discovery of layers, south-east of the tell, dating to the classical periods. The discoveries included a wall dating back to the beginning of the Roman era in Syria, in addition to several rooms decorated with mosaics and frescos.

JEBEL KHALID (ALEPPO)**Graeme CLARKE, Heather JACKSON**

Australian National University (Australia), University of Melbourne (Australia).

Title:

A Commercial Area at Seleucid Jebel Khalid?**Abstract:**

The Hellenistic site of Jebel Khalid-on-the Euphrates has been excavated by an Australian team since 1985. The Governor's Palace, the Temple, the Main Gate and the Housing Insula have all been published, but this huge site has more to reveal. No agora has been found, but Area S, excavated anew in 2006-2010, is possibly a Commercial Area, situated at the head of a wadi that leads down to (and up from) the Euphrates. An imposing building with colonnaded façade was the first to be excavated and was thought at first to be a *stoa*, but its length of only 18 meters disqualifies it. Its possible function and that of the surrounding buildings and courtyards, is the focus of discussion in this paper. The complex contains two large courtyards facing east; they are adjacent but non-communicating. Each was originally enclosed with a protected entry. Along the northern perimeter is a series of large rooms that do not appear to be shops. Along the western perimeter, with no access to the road, are several narrow rooms whose contents suggest they were working areas. An extensive database has been composed listing the artefacts and pottery associated with each room, which will be used to interpret this site.

Publication since 2010***Final Reports on the Excavations at Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates***

Volume One: *Report on Excavations 1986 to 1996*, by G. Clarke. P.J. Connor, L. Crewe, B. Frohlich, H. Jackson. J. Littleton, C.E.V. Nixon. M. O'Hea, D. Steele, Mediterranean Supplement 5, Sydney 2002, xi + 335pp and plates I-VIII (colour), 1-51 (b&w). (ISBN 0-9580265-0-5)

Volume Two: *The Terracotta Figurines*, by H. Jackson, Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 6, 2006, xi + 246pp, 59 figures, plates I-VIII (colour), plates 1-44 (b&w). (ISBN 978-0-9580265-2-9)

Volume Three: *The Pottery*, by H. Jackson and J. Tidmarsh, Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 7, Sydney 2011, xxxi + 554pp and plates I-IV (colour), 1-36 (b&w) (ISBN 978-0-9580265-3-6)

Volume Four: *The Housing Insula*, by H. Jackson, Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 9, Sydney 2014, xxix + 646pp, 5 large plans, 485 figures, 1 DVD. (ISBN 978-0-9580265-5-0)

Volume Five: *Report on Excavations 2000–2010*, by G. Clarke, H. Jackson, L. Jose, C.E.V. Nixon, J. Tidmarsh, K. Wesselingh, forthcoming as a Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement in 2016.

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G. Clarke, H. Jackson, 'Evaluating cultural and ethnic identities from archaeological remains: the case of Hellenistic Jebel Khalid', in Richard Alston and Sam Lieu (eds), *Aspects of the Roman East. Papers in Honour of Professor Sir Fergus Millar FBA*, vol. 2, *Studia Antiqua Australiensia* 7, (to appear), reprinted, in abbreviated form, as 'Can the Mute Stones Speak?' in: *Humanities Australia* vol. 2, Canberra (2011), 16-30.

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N. Wright, 'The last days of a Seleucid city: Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates and its Temple', in K. Erickson and G. Ramsey (eds), *Seleucid Dissolution: the sinking of the anchor* (2011), 117-32

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G. Clarke, A. Dusting, K. Grant, H. Jackson, L. Jose, M. McConchie, C. E. V. Nixon, M. O'Hea, W. Reade, J. Tidmarsh, K. Wesselingh, 'Jebel Khalid Report 2009-10', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 24, 2011, 131-81 and Plates XIII-XX

H. Jackson, J. Tidmarsh, 'Pottery Imports to Hellenistic Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates', in N. Fenn and C. Römer-Strehl (eds), *Proceedings of the Conference Networks in the Hellenistic World according to the Pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond, held in Cologne, February 26-27 2011*, BAR International Series 2539 (2013), 329-38.

H. Jackson, 'The Housing Insula at Hellenistic Jebel Khalid, in C. Hope and A. di Castro (eds), *Proceedings of the Conference on Ancient Housing and Habitat in the Mediterranean, held in Prato 29th June to 2nd July 2011*, 153-62 (to appear).

H. Jackson, 'Domestic cult or culture? Figurines from a Hellenistic housing insula in north Syria', in A. Müller, S. Huysecom-Haxhi (eds), *Figurines en contexte: iconographie et fonction. Procédures du 35th symposium international organisé par Halma- Ipel à l'Université de Charles de Gaulle, Lille, 7-8 décembre, 2011* (to appear)

G. Clarke, 'The Jebel Khalid Temple: Continuity and Change', in Michael Blömer, Achim Lichtenberger and Rubina Raja (eds), *Religious Identities in the Levant from Alexander to Muhammad: Continuity and Change* (2015), 142-55

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H. Jackson, *Jebel Khalid on the Euphrates, Volume 4: The Housing Insula*, Mediterranean Archaeology Supplement 9 (2014), xxix + 646pp and 5 plans, 1 DVD

M. Mottram, 'Settlers, hermits, nomads and monks: evolving landscapes at the dawn of the Islamic era', in R. Matthews and J. Curtis (eds), *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress of the Ancient Near East*, 2012, 533-49

M. O'Hea, 'A Lion-Bowl and other Worked Stone Objects from Jebel Khalid', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 26, 2013, 67-80 and Plates 11-19

G. Clarke, 'Jebel Khalid Area C: The Palaestra', *Chronique archéologique en Syrie* 7, 2013 (to appear)

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J. Tidmarsh, 'Uncovering Alexander's 'Lost' Cities', *TAASA Review* 22 no.1, 2013, 4-6

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Friday 4th December

Aleppo Session 2

CYRRHUS – NEBI HOURI (ALEPPO)

Jeanine ABDUL MASSIH, Shaker AL SHBIB

Lebanese University (Lebanon), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Results of 2006-2011 Research Program on the site of Cyrrhus.

Abstract:

From 2006 to 2011, the Syrian (DGAMS), Lebanese (Lebanese University) Archaeological Expedition had worked in Cyrrhus, investigating the territorial occupation of the city *intra* and *extra muros*, the fortifications and the evolution of the town planning through the analyses of the apparent monuments. The implementation of the research program was made following the analysis of the remains visible on site partly uncovered by the previous mission (French Mission – 1952 to 1995 - led by Edmond Frézouls from Strasbourg University) and nearly unpublished.

Kyrrhos/Cyrrhus established during the Hellenistic period is known as a Seleucus Nicator foundation even if no written evidence mentioned the city before 220 BC. In 64 BC, Cyrrhus and the Cyrrhestique are annexed to the Roman Province of Syria. In the mid of the 3rd century, the several and repetitive incursions of the Parthians and Sassanids caused a debut of the decline of the city. In his writings, Theodoret (423-466), Bishop of Cyrrhus describes the depreciation of the city and its major monuments. During the 5th century, the city became an important center of Christianity and will recover its importance in the 6th century under the reign of Justinian (565-527). In 637, the Arab armies conquer the city that is reoccupied by the Byzantine in the early 11th century, and re-conquered and dismantled in 1150 AD by Nur al-Din al Zengui.

In this paper the latest results of the Syrian-Lebanese research program will be presented as a brief synthesis of the established problematic that must be developed in the future.

Publication since 2010

Volumes

Abdul Massih J., 2012, *Cyrrhus 1, Le théâtre de Cyrrhus, d'après les archives d'Edmond Frézouls*, BAH 196.

Al Hajj M., 2015, *Les fresques de la maison romaine de Cyrrhus*, Mémoire de Master 2, Lebanese University.

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Articles

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Abdul Massih J., 2012, «La mission archéologique française de Cyrrhus», dans *Cyrrhus 1, Le théâtre de Cyrrhus, d'après les archives d'Edmond Frézouls*, BAH 196, p.11-76.

Abdul Massih J., 2010, «Notes préliminaires sur l'étude du système défensif méridional de Cyrrhus, Campagnes 2007-2008», *Chroniques 2008*, Damas 2010, p.109-218

Abdul Massih J., and Gelin M., (in press), "The fortifications and town planning in Kyrrhos: the Hellenistic origin and its evolution", in *Conference on the Research of Ancient Fortifications 6-9 December 2012 at the Acropolis Museum in Athens*.

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Al Shbib Sh., 2012, «Les fortifications de la ville de Cyrrhus, étude préliminaire», *Territoires, Architecture et Matériel au Levant, Doctoriales d'archéologie syrienne, Paris Nanterre, 8-9 décembre 2011*, A. le Bihan, P.-M. Blanc, F. Braemer, J. Dentzer-Deydy, F. Villeneuve (éd.), Presse de l'IFPO, Beyrouth.

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Bessac J.-C., 2016, à paraître, «Les pierres ornementales utilisées à Cyrrhus (Syrie)», dans : *Cyrrhus 3 (2007-2011)*, J. Abdul Massih (dir.).

TELL GINDARIS (ALEPPO)**Ammar ABDULRAHMAN**

Damascus University (Syria)

Title:

Genders in the Classical period.**Abstract:**

Tell Gindaris is located north-west Syria in the Umuq plain between Sam'an mountain in the east and Amanus mountain in the west. The top of the tell covers about 14 hectares, and contains several levels dating from classical period tell at least early Bronze Age.

The excavation by Syrian mission carried out in the western mound of the tell, which called area "A". We have uncovered an area of 800 m² squares A1-A8 each one 10x10 m, with deep of 2.5m. The fieldwork of 2009 concentrated on three squares A5, A7, A8. And we revealed in square A8 under the surface level the traces of building with mosaic floors and dates back to Byzantine period (early sixth century). And due to recent destruction, we could only recognize three mosaic pieces, the first one is the bigger and measures 2X3m, with geometric pattern colored by white and black to form black squares with white background. The other two pieces is formed from only white stones but they were organized to show flower from 8 plates, and what rest from the second piece measures 2X1.75m. but the third is badly damaged and contain only white stones.

This structure is obviously important, and we try to define its function, especially when we relate it with the adjacent canalization system. So the most appropriate function is to be a bath (hammam), and not as we assume as a Villa. Plenty of finds has been discovered such as: two censer from limestone, and candleholder from metal with four legs, coins and lamps, also some colored beads. Level two return back to the roman period and have been recognized structures of temporary residence represented by poor architecture. It has been noticed the available of big amount of stone weight and pottery such as dishes and jars. The third level has no structure traces but we refer it to the Hellenistic period, according to the pottery and coins that has been discovered on the floor.

Publication since 2010

Dietrich Surenhagen, Preliminary Scientific reports from Tell Djāndaris (93-2001),
Norbert Kraemer, 2006, Gindaros in the North West of Syria (Arabic translation Damascus 2007)

HIERAPOLIS (MENBIJ), NABGHA

Justine GABORIT

UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée, Lyon (France)

Title:

New Evidences from Euphratesia: survey and excavation project in Hierapolis area (Menbij) in the right bank of the middle Euphrates.

Abstract:

From 2009 to 2011, the archaeological survey on the Cyrrestic area (J. Gaborit, Ifpo- H. Saad, DGAMS) has highlighted new evidences for the organization of the city of Hierapolis and its surroundings. Emergency excavations were realized in modern Menbij: 1) on the fortification, a stratigraphy sounding period was conducted from Hellenistic to medieval levels; 2) in the Mankuba area, the remains of a church were found and confirmed that the pavement of mosaic, first discovered by the department of DGAMS-Alep, belongs to a huge Christian complex; 3) on the supposed location of the sacred pond of Atargatis, the excavations revealed also features of Late Antiquity. All this new data must be added to the restitution of the occupation the Northern part the proto-byzantine province of Euphratesia, in relation with the results of the previous survey in the Middle Euphrates (Gaborit 2015) and the discovery of the oldest syriac inscription (Briquel Chatonnet & Desreumaux 2011) in the site of Nabgha, (DGAMS 2009).

Publication since 2010

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DGAMS 2009: Direction Générale des Antiquités de Syrie, *Le martyron Saint-Jean dans la moyenne-vallée de l'Euphrate : Fouilles de la Direction générale des antiquités à Nabgha au nord-est de Jarablus*, Documents d'archéologie syrienne 13, Damas.

Gaborit 2015: Gaborit, J., *La Vallée engloutie : géographie historique du Moyen-Euphrate (du IVe s. av. J.-C. au VIIe s. apr. J.-C.)*, tome 1 - synthèse, tome 2- catalogue des sites, Beyrouth, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique BAH 199, Presses de l'Ifpo.

QINNASRIN (ALEPPO)**Marie-Odile ROUSSET, Youssef KANJOU**

CNRS-University of Lyon (France), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Qinnasrin / Chalcis: Main results of 2008-2010 archaeological work.**Abstract:**

The city of Qinnasrin / Chalcis was founded at the end of the Hellenistic period, on the edge of the Limestone Massif of Northern Syria, zone of contact between this fertile region and the steppe of the Arid Margins. Archaeological work conducted on the site from 2008 to 2010 revealed the extension of the different occupations and their chronological succession. After an important development during the Roman period, the agglomeration reached its maximum size in the Byzantine period. Capital of the administrative district created as a border zone with the Byzantine Empire, its morphology was modified following the coming of the Muslims. One of the main discoveries of these campaigns was a fortress, erected atop of the mountain, which overlooks the town, in the early Islamic period.

Publication since 2010**Book**

M.-O. Rousset (dir.), *Al-Hadir. Étude archéologique d'un hameau de Qinnasrin (Syrie du Nord, VII^e-XII^e siècles), Qinnasrin 1*, Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient n°59, 2012, 256 pp.

Articles

M.-O. Rousset, "La céramique abbasside d'al-Hadir", *al-Rafidan*, vol. 32, 2011, pp. 214-231.

M.-O. Rousset, A. Mohammed, Y. Bière, M.-C. Bosert, M. Bovagne, C. Kepinski, A. Othman, M. Rochette, «Travaux de la mission syro-française de Qinnasrin en 2009», *Chronique archéologique en Syrie V, 2009*, Damas, 2011, p. 207-218.

M.-O. Rousset, «Chalcis/Qinnasrin: from Hellenistic city to the *jund* capital of North Syria», in Roger Matthews and John Curtis, with Michael Seymour, Alexandra Fletcher, Alison Gascoigne, Claudia Glatz, St John Simpson, Helen Taylor, Jonathan Tubb and Rupert Chapman (eds), *7ICAANE. Proceedings of the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 12-16 April 2010, the British Museum and UCL, London, Volume 2 Ancient & Modern Issues in Cultural Heritage – Colour & Light in Architecture, Art & Material Culture – Islamic Archaeology*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2012, pp. 551-567.

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M.-O. Rousset, «Traces of the Banu Salih in the Syrian steppe? The Fortresses of Qinnasrin and Abu al-Khanadiq», *Levant* 45, 2013, pp. 69-95.

Friday 4th December

Aleppo Session 2

J. Studer, D. Genequand et M.-O. Rousset, «Environmental influence on animal exploitation and consumption during the Early Islamic Period in Syria. A case study from Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi and al-Hadir», , in B. De Cupere, V. Linseele & Sh. Hamilton-Dyer (eds), *Archaeozoology of the Near East X. Proceedings of the Tenth International Symposium on the Archaeozoology of South-Western Asia and Adjacent Areas*, 2013, pp. 265-282.

M.-O. Rousset, De Chalcis à Qinnasrin, in *Villes et campagnes aux rives de la Méditerranée ancienne. Hommages à Georges Tate*, *Topoi* Supplement 12 (2013), 2014, pp. 311-340.

M.-O. Rousset, M. Rochette, «Des bains à Qinnasrin / al-'Is (Syrie): premier rapport préliminaire», in: M.-Fr. Boussac, S. Denoix, Th. Fournet et B. Redon (éds), *Le bain collectif en Orient, Actes du colloque Balnéorient, Damas 2009*, IFAO-IFPO, Études urbaines 9, Le Caire-Beyrouth, 2014, pp. 519-534.

M.-O. Rousset, «Deux sites fortifiés au début de l'époque islamique au Bilād al-Šām: Qinnasrīn et Abū al-Ḥanādiq», in: M. Eychenne, S. Pradines et A. Zouache, *La guerre dans le Proche-Orient médiéval (X^e-XV^e s.). Etat de la question, lieux communs, nouvelles approches*, RAPH 37, Ifao, Le Caire, 2014, pp. 193-229.

RAS IBN HANI (LATAKIA)

Michel AL-MAQDISSI

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Syrian Excavations in Ras Ibn Hani (2011)

Abstract:

In 2011, a Syrian mission started excavations at Ras Ibn Hani site, in the field located halfway between the Northern Palace and the Southern Palace, as a follow-up to the excavations of the Syrian-French mission in 1978, headed by Dr Adnan al-Bounni and Mr Jacques Lagarce.

During these excavations, successive layers were studied, and a large hole was discovered. The hole, dated back to the Hellenistic period, contained various potteries and clay lanterns, in addition to a number of local and imported clay dolls.

Other holes dating to the end of the Iron Age III were also discovered. They contained potsherds belonging to the Greek traditions and a number of clay dolls bearing Persian features.

During the Iron Age II, the remains of a building were placed above the Late Bronze layer. The building, believed to have a religious nature, consisted of two connecting rooms with the entrance located in the first room, whereas the second room contained a small altar made of stone.

Besides, a dwelling dating to the Late Bronze Age had an extension reaching the eastern wall of the site.

It is worth mentioning that this dwelling standing on the ground has some Ugaritic features in terms of the architectural techniques. It also contains a number of local potteries placed on the floors. Moreover, wooden materials were used in building some walls and doorways between the rooms.

TELL NAHR AL-'ARAB (LATAKIA)**Ahmad DEEB**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Results of the latest archaeological excavations in Tell Nahr Al-'Arab-Latakia**Abstract:**

Tell al-Shameyeh (Nahr Al-'Arab) is located in the north-east of Latakia on a rocky mount near al-'Arab river, which passes near al-Shameyeh village, 3 km from the tell.

This tell has an equilateral triangle form of about 6 hectares of 240 m of the eastern-western axis and 250 m of the northern-southern axis. The satellite pictures of the tell show crossed lines dividing the tell into unequal sections. In the last years, the tell was affected by many contraventions, especially on the northern and southern slopes and a part from the western side, what led to a semi-complete destruction in the slopes. As well as, there were big contravention in the eastern-northern foot, which was affected by destruction and plundering works of the cemeteries in the region, which the recent excavations showed that dated to the Late Bronze Age.

History of the archaeological researches in the site:

In 1932, many archaeological soundings were occurred in the tell by the French scientist Claude Schaeffer, who described the tell, which located on the bank of Al-'Arab river, and defined their dimensions in that time of 190 m of the eastern-western axis and 140 m of the northern-southern axis. He worked according to four soundings on the surface of the tell, which showed existence of architectural remains and regular stair dated to the third Iron Age. As well as, it was discovered a red Greek ware colored with black and an Egyptian scarab, in addition to various pottery fragments dated to Iron and Middle and Late Bronze Ages. Gebraeel Sa'adah also mentioned the tell many times in his studies about the coast especially Ugarit kingdom.

The archaeological surveys were occurred within the general works of survey, which were executed by the concerned archaeological authorities in Latakia under a supervision of Dr. Bassam Jamous and Dr. Jamal Haidar. As well as, in 2001, the Syrian-Japanese mission under a supervision of Dr. Bassam Jamous and Dr. Jamal Haidar from the Syrian side and Dr. Akira Tsuneki from the Japanese side executed archaeological surveys works in the site, which showed existence of pottery fragments and archaeological elements dated to many periods (Iron Age, Roman and Byzantine periods).

In 2010, archaeological excavations and researches began in Tell al-Shameyeh by the national mission under a supervision of Dr. Bassam Jamous, in the time Dr. Michel Al-Maqdessi was the field supervisor and Dr. Antoine Sulaiman was the scientific supervisor.

The results of excavations and soundings works in this season:

- Existence of architectural elements dated to the Hellenistic age without forming integral architectural unit.
- Existence of architectural masses dated to the Third Iron Age (Phase IV).
- Existence of architectural remains dated to the Middle Bronze Age and plundered tombs digged in the rock of a well type dated to the same period.
- The soundings in this season through the pottery remains indicated to an existence of a level dated to the third Bronze Age.

Friday 4th December

Latakia Session 1

Excavation works were resumed in Tell al-Shameyeh in 2012 till 2015. A national team from the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums executed works of excavations, which showed architectural remains dated to the third and second Iron Ages and Late Bronze Age in addition to cemeteries dated to the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.

Publication since 2010

Deeb, Ahmad, 2015, First report on the results of 2012 of the excavation in Tell nahral-'arab season, *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*.

Deeb, Ahmad, 2010-2011, "Puits d'entèrrement du bronze final à Tell Nahr el Arab (al Chamyieh)", *Annales Archéologiques, Arabe, Syrienne*.

TELL KAZEL (TARTUS)

Leila BADRE

Archaeological Museum, American University of Beirut (Lebanon)

Title:

Tell Kazel: Major Results.

Abstract:

The Tell Kazel site is located in the Syrian Akkar plain 28 km south of Tartous. It occupies a very important strategic location on the main passage between the Mediterranean coast and inland Syria at the unique break point between the mountain chains. It is identified with Sumur or Simyra of the Amarna tablets (14th c BC), not yet attested by the discovery of a written document. The continuous excavations, by the American University of Beirut Museum, on that site (1985 – 2010) have brought to light successive layers from the Middle Bronze to the Hellenistic period. The major period is that of Late Bronze II which has mainly yielded two superimposed temples with very offerings rich and cultic material. This material is both of local and imported origins. It includes pottery, bronze and faience objects. The very rich pottery, published recently (in press), will be of a considerably valuable contribution to the material culture of the Northern Levant.

The destruction of this late period is marked by a fierce fire. We date this fire level to the transition period between the LB II and the beginning of the Iron Age, a period which corresponds to the movements of the Sea Peoples at the beginning of the 12th c. BC.

Publication since 2010

Badre, L. 2009. "The Religious Architecture in the Bronze Age: Middle Bronze Beirut and Late Bronze Tell Kazel". in *Interconnections in the Eastern Mediterranean, Lebanon in the Bronze and Iron Ages. Proceedings of the International Symposium, Beirut 2008*. Hors-Série, BAAL Vol. VI, 2009, pp. 253-270.

Badre, L. 2011. "The Cooking Pot Tradition at Tell Kazel" in *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loomweights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighboring Regions*. An International Archaeological Symposium held in Nicosia, November 6th-7th 2010. Nicosia, pp.149-166.

Badre, L. 2011. "Tell Kazel (Sumur ?) à l'âge du Bronze". *L'archo thema* n.15 : 24-27.

Badre, L. 2012. "Tell Kazel" contribution to "Dizionario Enciclopedico della Civiltà Fenicia", Roma.

Badre, L. 2013. "Tell Kazel – Sumur et le Royaume d'Amourrou" Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Paris.

Badre, L. 2015. "Les Pays d'Ugarit et les Pays d'Amurru ne font qu'un", *Semitica et Classica*, 8, Paris.

Badre, L. and Capet, E. 2015. "La Céramique du Akkar au Bronze Récent (64 p. and 42 pl.)", Paris, (in press).

RAS SHAMRA, UGARIT (LATAKIA)

Valérie MATOÏAN

Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon (France)

Title:

The Syro-French archaeological Mission of Ras Shamra – Ougarit.

Abstract:

Since 2000, the field activities (archaeological and geo-environmental) undertaken by the Syro-French archaeological Mission of Ras Shamra – Ougarit comprised researches on the Tell of Ras Shamra and on several coastal sites (Ras Bassit, Ras Ibn Hani, Tell Sukas, Nah res-Sinn). New excavations at Ras Shamra (areas "Grand-rue", "Rempart") and completion of previous operations ("Résidence Nord", "Palais Sud", "Maison d'Urtenu" and the unique "Bridge-dam" on the Nahr ed-Delbe) improve our knowledge concerning the Late Bronze Age city of Ugarit. And the publications of the old excavations undertaken by Schaeffer (temples of the Acropolis...) further increase our understanding of this Mediterranean capital, a major centre of exchanges and cultural interconnections during the second millennium BC. In parallel, a diachronic approach (sounding near the "Temple of Dagan") gave new data on the first steps of the history of the city. The studies of archaeological and epigraphic materials, based on multidisciplinary researches and numerous collaborations (CNRS, Agence Nationale de la Recherche, Louvre, Collège de France, Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France...), continue. The results are published within the frame of the joined reports of the mission (revue Syria) and the serie Ras Shamra – Ougarit (ten volumes edited since 2000, two in press and two more in preparation for 2016). Then, the mission co-organized three exhibitions, one in France (Lyon) and two in Damascus, which provided the opportunity to publish bilingual catalogues (in French and in Arabic).

RAS SHAMRA, UGARIT (LATAKIA)

Khozama AL-BAHLOUL

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The result of excavations works at fortification area (Ugarit), Syrian team.

Abstract:

The excavation of Syrian team at fortification area had started since 2005 up now. It is located on the southern western side. Our objective is to:

- Verification of the presence of fortifications in this area
- Check for housing on the wall.

It has enabled us overall excavations during the last seasons of the substantiation of the desired objectives, in particular, the existence of the city-wall on the south-western slope which is an extension of the fortifications in the West End, as, we were able to detect a large important building, which had built directly on the top of the city wall, we call it (the great Building). This building had built in a hard technical architect during the Late Bronze Age II and continued his activities of restorations and the closure of some of rooms and change their functions during the Late Bronze Age III.

The importance of this building is coming from:

- Strategic location, which opens on the Royal Street directly off the southern palace, on one hand.
- and architectural and organization of the building and the nature of the archaeological finds unearthed the remains of furniture as the existence of furniture from elephant ivory and stele of god Baal, in other hand.

All this evidence, are leaders these directories to divide the building into two sections: a service part and ritual part. We can also say that, this building belongs to the one of royal family or member of it.

Publication since 2010

Michel al-Maqdissi, Khozama al-Bahloul, et al. 2007.

Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de Ras Shamra-Ougarit en 2005 et 2006 (65 et 66 campagnes) Syria.

Michel al-Maqdissi, Khozama al-Bahloul, et al. 2009

Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la mission Syro-Français de Ras Shamra-Ougarit en 2007-2008 (67-et 68 campagnes) Syria.

Michel al-Maqdissi, Khozama al-Bahloul, et al. 2013

Rapport préliminaire sur les activités de la mission Syro-Français de Ras Shamra-Ougarit en 2009-2010 (69 et 70 campagnes) Syria.

Khozama al-Bahloul. 2015

Preliminary report on the excavations works on Ras Shamra (area D-fortification area) Syrian team. Season 2012. *Chronique archcheologique en Syria* (In Arabic).

TELL SHAEER (QAMISHLI)**Suleiman ELIAS**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Shaeer.

Abstract:

Tell Shaeer is located 23 km east of al-Qamishli city and 2 km north of the road leading from al-Qamishli to al-Malikiyah. Excavations at the site started in 2006 under the direction of Dr Suleiman Elias; however, in 2011, those excavations came to a halt due to the prevailing security situations in Syria. Systematic excavations at the site resulted in some important findings indicating that human settlement at the site lasted sporadically from the 6th millennium BC (Hassuna period) to the Ayyubid period. The major layers discovered at the site include:

- Hassuna period: it contains a small settlement west of the tell.
- The Chalcolithic period
- Nineveh period
- Hurrian period
- Mitanni period
- 1st millennium BC
- Islamic period

The archaeological layers cover an area of about 6 hectares, more than 30 meters high. The *tell* rises 454 meters above sea level. It has an oval shape stretching from north to south. The *tell* is situated 7 km south of Taurus Mountains in a fertile red-soiled land with an average annual rainfall of more than 500 mm. In addition, groundwater is close to the earth's surface. It is also historically well-known for its rain-fed agriculture. Excavations in the first season of 2006 included a topographic survey, dividing the tell into a network of squares (5x5 m). In addition, the starting point was located on the top of the tell, and a probe was conducted 20 meters east of the starting point and down the *tell*. The most important discoveries at Tell Shaeer during 6 excavation seasons included a floor paved neatly with white stones, 5 meters wide and 11 meters long. A drainage canal paved with red bricks and covered with large white stones was also discovered beneath that floor. Thus, we believe that this could be the entrance to a huge architectural structure that has not been identified yet. Besides, a huge defensive wall, 4.7 meters wide (the discovered part measures 5 meters long and 2 meters high), was discovered 20 meters east of that floor. Moreover, the numerous unearthed artifacts included human and animal shaped dolls made of clay, potteries, bronze tools such as spearheads and knives, bracelets, arrowheads made of stone, spindles made of clay and stone, impressions of cylinder stamp seals made of clay, a cylinder seal made of black stone, dating to the Nineveh period and containing geometric shapes, and a seal made of clay, dating to the Mitanni period. Furthermore, a number of tombs dating to the 4th, 3rd and 2nd millennia BC as well as a large number of old Islamic tombs were discovered at the site. Hence, this entails us to say that Tell Shaeer used to be a large settlement that lasted from the end of the 3rd millennium to the mid-2nd millennium BC.

Saturday 5th December

Hasake Session 2

TELL SEKER-AHEIMAR (HASAKE)

Yoshihiro NISHIAKI

The University Museum, The University of Tokyo (Japan)

Title:

The Pre-Pottery to Pottery Neolithic settlement of Tell Seker-Aheimar, Hassake, Syria: Excavations from 2000 to 2010.

Abstract:

The Neolithic settlement of Tell Seker-Aheimar, Hassake, represents one of the oldest farming villages in the Upper Khabur Basin. It was occupied over a period of ca. 7300 to 6500 BC. Excavations between 2000 and 2010 revealed a range of previously unknown aspects of Neolithic cultural developments in this western part of Upper Mesopotamia, including some never yet reported from the Levantine region. Particularly important discoveries include: (1) sophisticated bullet-core technologies for flint blade production comparable to those of the Upper Mesopotamia and Zagros Neolithic; (2) solid stratigraphic and architectural records on the transition from the Pre-Pottery to Pottery Neolithic phase, showing links with the traditions of Upper and Middle Mesopotamia; (3) a unique symbolic system using female figurines in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period, perhaps persisting into the Pottery Neolithic further to the east; and (4) a large water well of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic, at which some symbolic activities may have occurred on the occasion of its construction, use, or abandonment.

TELL TABAN (HASAKE)

Hirotohi NUMOTO, Shigeo YAMADA

Kokushikan University (Japan), University of Tsukuba (Japan)

Title:

Excavations at Tell Taban

Abstract:

Tell Taban is located in Hasake Dam Salvage Area, south of Hasake, in the north-eastern part of Syria not far from the border with Iraq. In the excavations of the site in 1997-1999, about 70 clay objects bearing cuneiform texts dating to the Middle Assyrian period (13th-11th centuries BC) were discovered. These documents have proved that the site is identified with "Tābetu," the ancient city of strategic importance in the region. Later in the excavations from 2005 through 2010, further about 500 inscribed clay tablets and other objects were unearthed; they are mostly dating to the Middle Assyrian period (13th-11th centuries), but tens of them originate from the Old Babylonian period (18th century BC). The discovery of large number of cuneiform documentary sources for the first time by Japanese mission, as well as their decipherment and study by Japanese researchers, attracted attention as one of the outstanding achievements of Japanese archaeological work in western Asia.

Publication since 2010

H. Numoto, D. Shibata, S. Yamada (2013) 'Excavations at Tell Taban: Continuity and Transition in Local Traditions at Ṭābatum/Ṭābetu during the Second Millennium B.C.', in: D. Bonatz and L. Martin (eds), *100 Jahre archäologische Feldforschung in Nordost-Syrien*, Schriften der Max Freiherr von Oppenheim-Stiftung 18, Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden, pp. 167-179

TELL BARRI/KAHAT (HASAKE)**Raffaella PIEROBON BENOIT**

Università di Napoli Federico II (Italy)

Title:

Tell Barri/Kahat 2000-2010: the contribution of ten years' excavations to the history of Upper Mesopotamia (3000 B.C/ 900 A.D).**Abstract:**

Since their opening (1980) excavations at Tell Barri revealed a long sequence of human occupation. The succeeding years precised the chronological history of the site, inhabited without significant interruptions on the 'longue durée'. An increase of knowledge on the political and administrative nature and settlement's quality of the site was obtained since 2000: a sacred area (EJ II-III) cleared the first phases of Kahat; royal graves housed in the palace of AdadNirari I confirmed the role of the site in MA period, offering new glimpses to his international relations. Pottery and other artifacts confirmed the growing power of the site during the NA phase. Tell Barri was still occupied in the next centuries, becoming a stronghold of the Parthian empire; this role continued after the sasanian conquest. Excavations showed in the succeeding centuries a change in the spatial organization of the site exploiting -as before- the agricultural and pastoral resources and developing craftsmanship activities.

The main result of the last researches concerns the contribution to the debate on *crisis* and *continuity/discontinuity* in the succession of powers in the region: buildings, site organization and overall pottery, showed that at least in Tell Barri the political events did not produce devastating changes.

Publication since 2010

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R. Pierobon Benoit, *Shrines, Offerings and Rituals at Tell Barri/Kahat* in *Religious Offerings and Sacrifices in the Ancient Near East, 20-22 July, 2015, Oriental Institute (University of Oxford)*, ARAM in press.

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A. D'Agostino, *The Tell Barri Sequence of Late Bronze Age Levels: Evolution Trends within Late 2nd Millennium Ceramic Culture*, in M. Luciani, A. Hausleiter (eds), *Recent trends in the study of Late Bronze Age ceramics in Syro-Mesopotamia and neighbouring regions: proceedings of the International Workshop in Berlin, 2-5 November 2006*, Rahden/Westf., Leidorf, 2014, 235-261.

C. Coppini, A. D'Agostino, *Life at the edge of the settlement: the MBA-LBA transition at the southern slope of Tell Barri (NE Syria)*, in AAVV, *Proceedings of the 8th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East: 30 April-4 May 2012*, University of Warsaw, Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden, 2014, 385-410.

V. Orsi, *Crisi e rigenerazione nella valle dell'Alto Khabur (Siria): la produzione ceramic dal Bronzo Antico al Bronzo Medio*, Firenze: Firenze University Press 2011.

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R. Palermo, *A Parthian Domestic Complex at Tell Barri (Syria)*, *Proceedings of the 7th International congress on the archaeology of the Ancient Near East: 12 April-16 April 2010, the British Museum and UCL, London*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz 2012 637-647.

R. Palermo, *Evidence of Destruction at Tell Barri (Syria)*, *Proceedings of the International Congress "Destruction: Archaeological, Historical and Philological perspectives*, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2013, 473-485.

R. Palermo, *The Jaghjagh River Valley During the Roman Period (2nd – 4th cent. CE)*, in G. Affanni et al. (eds), *Broadening Horizons 4, Conference of young researchers working in the Ancient Near East, Egypt and Central Asia, University of Torino, October 2011*, B.A.R. 2698, 2015, 257-263,

R. Pappalardo, *The islamic common ware from Tell Barri (Syria): Preliminary study*, in R. Matthews, J. Curtis (eds), *Proceedings of the 7th International congress on the archaeology of the Ancient Near East: 12 April-16 April 2010, the British Museum and UCL, London*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz 2012, 647-657.

R. Pappalardo, *The islamic relief-moulded jugs from Tell Barri (Syria)*, in G. Affanni et al. (eds), *Broadening Horizons 4, Conference of young researchers working in the Ancient Near East, Egypt and Central Asia, University of Torino, October 2011*, B.A.R. 2698, 2015, 161-168

M. Raccidi, *Chariot Terracotta Models from Tell Arbid and Tell Barri. A Typological and Functional Analysis*, *Proceedings of the 7th International congress on the archaeology of the Ancient Near East: 12 April-16 April 2010, the British Museum and UCL, London*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2012, 673–682.

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Hasake Session 2

M. Raccidi, The “hammer-head” bowls in Syrian-Jezirah: case-study from Tell Barri, in G. Affanni et al. (eds), *Broadening Horizons 4, Conference of young researchers working in the Ancient Near East, Egypt and Central Asia, University of Torino, October 2011*, B.A.R. 2698, 2015, 89-96

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R. Palermo, Settlement Patterns and Roads Network in Upper Mesopotamia during Roman period. The support of the satellite images for historical the and archaeological reconstruction, *Actes du colloque Échanges culturels dans la Syrie Romaine: le paraître et l'intime, Lyon, Maison de l'Orient Méditerranée, 4-6 Maggio 2012*.

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Hasake Session 2

TELL FERES (HASAKE)

Régis VALLET, Johnny BALDI

CNRS - Institut Français du Proche-Orient (France)

Title:

Tell Feres, new evidences on the development of proto-urban societies in northern Mesopotamia.

Abstract:

Recent researches on Chalcolithic Northern Mesopotamia have focused on the notion and modalities of regionalized evolution processes. The evidence for local ways towards social complexity has proven to be a major outcome of the excavations conducted in the last decades in northern Syria and south-eastern Turkey. To this respect, Tell Feres, in Syrian Djezirah, is a key-site for the identification of regional patterns within Northern Mesopotamian chalcolithic developments, because of its long uninterrupted sequence and the large surfaces exposed during the excavations. This paper briefly presents the main results obtained after five excavation seasons at Tell Feres (2006-2010).

TELL SAKKA (DAMASCUS)**Ahmad FARZAT TARAQJI**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Sakka**Abstract:**

It is one of the archaeological *tells* of the Ghouta of Damascus, 20 kilometers south-east of Damascus city. The tell has previously been subjected to several violations damaging it severely in different positions; nonetheless, it still retains its archaeological and historical importance.

Tell Sakka was named after a nearby small village, 5 kilometers north-west of Damascus International Airport. The village was mentioned by some Arab explorers and historians in the 12th and 13th centuries. Besides, it was home to a sixth-century monastery of the Jacobins, known as the Monastery of St Paul. It is needless to say that the word *Sakka* has an Aramaic origin. Its fertile location made it a special place.

Excavations at the site, carried out by a national cadre between 1989 and 2012, have so far uncovered the following five archaeological strata:

The first stratum: it contains Islamic graves dating mostly to the Mamluk and Ottoman rules. These graves have no headstones or inscriptions indicating the deceased's names. They are simple graves constructed with sun-dried crude bricks, and most of them are mere holes in the ground.

The second stratum: it contains graves dated to the classical periods (Seleucid, Roman and Byzantine), from 300 BC to the 6th century AD. Some simple jewelry and metal and clay tools were discovered inside many of the graves.

The third stratum: it dates back to the Late Bronze Age (1600-1300 BC) and contains a number of simple houses, built with sun-dried crude bricks, which used to be dwellings belonging to farmers who had some domestic professions, including knitting, weaving and pottery making, in addition to herding. Their houses, moreover, consisted of a small room (4x4 m) and a courtyard or two rooms and a courtyard normally tiled with stones. The thickness of the sun-dried crude brick walls does not exceed 60 cm, and these walls do not contain any ornaments or decorative elements. Besides, Egyptian commercial and administrative influence was quite evident at the site.

The fourth stratum: it dates back to the Middle Bronze Age (1800-1600 BC), and it is the most important stratum at the site. It led to the discovery of a large building consisting of rooms and courtyards that have thick walls made of sun-dried crude bricks (between 140 and 160 cm). Its floors were done in a highly sophisticated manner. Sewage disposal systems in the building were taken care of. Its walls were coated with plaster and fresco technique paintings decorated with geometric and colorful themes. In addition, large clay jars used to store grains were also found in the building. The walls of the building were designed in accordance with the four cardinal directions. Its rooms have doorways with basalt thresholds, which is similar to the Amorite architecture that can be seen in Mari, Alalakh and Qatna. This building was an important part of a significant palace.

It is evident that the palace was destroyed during an invasion or a military attack, and its walls were vandalized. The palace was also engulfed by fire as indicated by the remains of frescos scattered randomly on its floors.

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The themes of the frescos at Tell Sakka dealt with the daily life of a ruling class, as well as religious and mythological issues.

The most notable discovery is a small cuneiform tablet (4×4 cm) found on the floor of one of the rooms of this building. It is a royal message sent to the king of Damascus.

Furthermore, in the season of 2010, another cuneiform tablet (measuring 4.5×9.5 cm), preserved in a mud casing was unearthed. It contains a legal text that refers to a court ruling against a property owner who failed to pay taxes due to his traveling. This document leaves no doubt that it was written at the same site.

The fifth stratum: it dates to the Middle Bronze Age I (2000-1800 BC). A tomb, discovered underneath one of the rooms, contains the remains and skeletons of two women and a child, in addition to a number of potteries.

The importance of Tell Sakka is attributed to its location on a direct trade route linking the Middle Euphrates, Palestine and the Nile Valley and passing through the Damascus Ghouta and across the Syrian desert. In addition, the discovery of cuneiform texts gave Damascus access to the world of cuneiform tablets as those are the first and only cuneiform texts unearthed in Damascus in particular and in southern Syria in general. Other discoveries including frescos and murals gave special importance to the site due to their cultural implications which filled a large gap in the history of Syria during the second millennium BC at the time when the area of Damascus was known as *Apum* as mentioned in the Mari archives, as well as the relation between this area with the other Amorite kingdoms in the Levant. We also believe that this site is full of important cultural surprises that will influence our current knowledge of the history of Damascus in the second millennium BC.

TELL ASWAD (DAMASCUS)**Danielle STORDEUR, Rima KHAWAM**Directeur de recherche *émérite* CNRS (France), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell Aswad.**Abstract:**

Tell Aswad, located 30 km east-southeast of Damascus, is a nearly 6 hectares tell, not exceeding 4.5 meters height. The whole stratigraphy of the site dates from 8200 to 7500 B.C., including the end of the Early PPNB, the middle PPNB, and the beginning of Late PPNB. The environment is rich in natural resources. Plants and animals indicate the proximity of an ancient lake. The cereals (emmer and barley) are cultivated. Herding (sheep, pigs, cattle, and probably goat) is also in evidence throughout the whole sequence. The conception of the buildings does not seem to follow definite geometric models. Houses, constructed with earth then with hand modelled bricks, are mostly rounded and in general undefined in form.

The site has provided rich funerary evidence. More than 119 individuals have been excavated. Our results indicate the presence of a diachronic continuity of the funeral practices throughout the occupation due to an ancestral tradition. At the same time, the spatial organization of the burials during the PPNB occupation of Tell Aswad reveals changes in burial localization, from burials in the house inside the family unit, then later the establishment of a specific area dedicated to funerary practices. The spatial organization of these areas becomes a supplementary testimony of the social organization in the site. They reveal the use of simple burials but also specifically in the multiple burials by means of the skull removal. The variability in the skull treatment, including the modeled skulls, corresponds to "ritual" and funerary practices of a highly developed culture. They reflect a social order and a group integrity materializing one of the major features of the cultural identity of Neolithic PPNB society in Tell Aswad.

The late adoption of quadrangular architectures and the practice of modelled skulls in the PPNB are the most striking features that link Tell Aswad to the southern Levant. Tell Aswad could be one of the most northern sites in the southern Levant traditional group. This site could have played a role of relay between northern and southern Syria, in the middle PPNB.

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TULUL EL-FAR, TELL TAOUIL, TELL AL-KHARAZE AND DAMASCENE (DAMASCUS)

Sophie CLUZAN, Ahmad FARZAT-TARAQJI

Musée du Louvre (France), Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tulul el-Far, Tell Taouil, Tell al-Kharaze and Damascene area during the Bronze Age.

Abstract:

Three sites of different sizes are named after Tulul el-Far appellation. The three mounds are situated at the South of Damascene oasis, nearby the river al-A'ouaj, at the east end of its course. The three mounds have been included in a shared project by DGAM and Louvre museum, in order to characterize more properly the oasis during the Bronze Age period, mainly Ancient and Middle Bronze Age. If the importance of the latter is already well known due to the results of the Syrian expedition at Tell Sakka (Ahmad Ferzat Taraqji), the former is not yet documented from excavations, except in very small portions of old Damascus city (Michel al-Maqdissi).

Out of the three campaigns conducted on two of the sites, some important results can already be presented, noteworthy the inclusion of the settlements in the more global network linking Egypt and Palestine to the North of Syria as well as to the East, reaching as far as Euphrate and Jezireh. Moreover a regional study shows how Damascene settlements do act as a local network in order to protect this exceptional area, which could already have been dominated by an important city.

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JUPITER TEMPLE (DAMASCUS)

Houmam SAAD

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Temple of Jupiter in Damascus. New perspective.

Abstract:

Jupiter temple ruins in Damascus have been well studied by different specialists since the early twentieth century. This temple has acquired a unique importance in the study and research of the city of Damascus with its function as a sacred place until today. The problem exists which concerns the pagan sanctuary when he was transformed into a church and then into a mosque that has lost much of its elements.

The last archaeological work in 2009, has uncovered important new construction well preserved *in situ*, inside a house near the present Umayyad mosque. This construction was built with some architectural elements (pedestals, columns, ionic capitals, arch ... etc.), with a Greek inscription on one pedestal, it is a dedication to the god Zeus dated in 151AD.

The new results allow us in one hand to understand the organization inside the *temenos* and also around the sanctuary (*cella*), and in the other hand, to have a new dating of the temple. They also throw light on new results concerning the cult in the temple, which was not known up to our time.

CITADEL OF DAMASCUS (DAMASCUS)**Edmond EL-AJJI**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Citadel of Damascus: Possible earlier dating according to new discoveries.**Abstract:**

Since the earliest of the 20th century several researches and studies projects were conducted on the Citadel of Damascus to investigate its history and architectural components in order, to draw its chronological state in details and inhabiting state of the old Damascus in general. We and most of the researchers believed that, an important city as Damascus, should has its own defensive system since its erecting, such system couldn't be completed with the city walls only may, it should has the military prestigious aspect which could be assured with the presence of a fortress.

The occupation of the citadel courtyard and its buildings with recent structures (belonging to the latest function of the citadel as a prison) impeded researchers to investigate it in deep. Nowadays, after clearing the fortress of all these modern structures, it's possible to develop more precise research project benefiting of the oldest researches and theories established since the early beginning of the last century. Most of these theories agreed unanimously on dating the origin fortress to the Islamic period, and more precise to the 11th century. Few of it, kept a doubt about its earliest origin, wherein, we tried to justify that through several investigation soundings conducted on the eastern walls of the inner enclosure (Seljuk fortress) between 2013 and 2015. The results were surprising whereas, we find behind the Seljuk-blocks slice (the walls dating to the Seljuk fortress) a well built masonry wall of nearly 2m thick with treated plaster on surface. On the top of this wall, a stabilized layer of mud was made in order to lay successive courses of mud-bricks (as an evidence to the fortress of the 10th century mentioned by Al-Maqdissi) which still preserved on the top of tower 16th (the southeast corner tower of the Seljuk fortress) and the two starts of the south and east walls.

The most important discoveries was, the finding of the same treated masonry technique in the deepest point of the sounding conducted around the inner corner pillar of tower 18 (on the northeast corner of the Seljuk fortress), where we found also several blocks measures (1.2*0.6*0.5) could form a part of successive courses of fortified wall. The collected potteries were few and couldn't date the erection of the masonry wall, but, a sample of the inner components of the walls were extracted in order to carry out the (C14) analysis which could define the date of construction. The result should appear around November 2015, so shall it'll carry out a new dating for the origin of the Citadel of Damascus? We'll see.

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Damascus Session

SOUK AL-SAGHA (DAMASCUS)

Ahmad DALLY

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The future of the excavated sites in Damascus, Site Museum of Souk al-Sagha.

Abstract:

Souk al-Sagha is the modern name of a site in Old Damascus, adjacent to the southern wall of the Umayyad Mosque. In 1973, a national team started excavating the site, and these works lasted until 2013. The excavations resulted in a number of discoveries, including several archaeological structures dating to various historical periods; the most notable and oldest are the remains of a Roman fountain, called the Temple of Water Nymphs, which used to be an independent building within the Temple of Jupiter.

The importance of the project is manifested in shedding light on the discovered elements and in establishing a site museum that gives the visitors, tourists and researchers the opportunity to take a tour at the site and learn more about the discovered ruins which highlight a significant phase in the history of Damascus city.

Besides, the project aims at safeguarding the archaeological discoveries at the site, removing all foreign elements and rehabilitating and restoring the walls surrounding the discovered structure, in addition to ensuring the safety of the visitors and developing an adequate plan to manage the site, including signboards and other services required at the site.

Finally, we hope, through this project (the first time in Syria), to establish a model site museum in Damascus city. This can also be done at other sites such as the tombs discovered in Bab Sreejeh and the Roman era tomb discovered in the vicinity of al-Mujtahid hospital.

Saturday 5th December

Daraa Suweida Session

BOSRA (DARAA)**Pierre-Marie BLANC**

CNRS Nanterre (France)

Title:

The Town of Bosra.**Abstract:**

The town of Bosra was never completely abandoned due to the spring. An oval tell, in western part, is surrounded by a polygonal stonework rampart (ca. 1750 BCE). It is the first urban development after occasional episodes at the beginning of the sixth and third millennia.

The Nabataean major phase (late-first century BCE – 106 CE) was under king Rabbel II. The Roman annexation in AD 106 led to a further phase of monumentalisation which transformed the city's landscape around the main public buildings: theatre, hippodrome, amphitheatre, baths, temples, forum and market fed by an aqueduct that brought pressurised water.

Military camp (legion III Cyrenaica ca. 120 AD) and the legion's honorific arch are clear signs of the presence of a new power. The Christian period witnesses the building of several churches. During this period, the city walls were restored and buildings were renovated or rebuilt.

Whilst the beginning of the Islamic period does not seem to have brought about any major change, Al-Omari mosque and the transformation of the South Baths into an hammam. The earthquake of AD 749 would radically modify the city, causing the collapse of the majority of the roads' colonnades and the ruin of the more important ancient buildings. This event caused the emergence of a new urban layout.

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Daraa Suweida Session

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QARASSA (SUWEIDA)

Frank BRAEMER, J.J. IBANEZ, X. TERRADAS, M. GODON, T. STEIMER

CNRS (France)

Title:

Leja/Qarassa.

Abstract:

The Qarassa site (Sweida Mohafazat, Syria) was excavated from 2007 to 2010 by a Syro-French-Spanish team. The site was implanted on the southern fringe of the Leja basaltic plateau at the junction with the Hauran plain. It presents an exceptional chronology of occupation preserved in stratigraphy divided between three distinct areas, from the Natufian to the Iron Age. The Natufian settlement was on the rock surface 400 m to the north of a paleolake. The Northern tell yields Pre Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) to Final Chalcolithic occupations, and the Southern one was occupied from the Early Bronze Age I to the Iron Age. A huge Early Bronze Age megalithic necropolis spreads over 14 hectares on the rocky area to the north of these living sites.

The Qarassa micro-region itself, with perennial waters from a spring and its lake, and in the wadi Abu Dhahab, offers interesting possibilities to tackle the issue of environmental changes throughout the Early Holocene in a region so far lacking such research.

Ultimately, the Qarassa excavations, connected to the 2002-2006 Leja archaeological surveys, are shedding light on regional archaeological evidence and cultural developments from the onset of Neolithisation to the rise of complex urbanism in a region so far practically neglected, at last merging the Jordan valley with the Northern Levant and Syria. The knowledge gap in Southern Syria may thus be, if not completely, partially filled with the long term Qarassa chronological sequence.

Saturday 5th December

Daraa Suweida Session

DARAA SURVEY (DARAA)

Ahmed DYAB

Damascus University (Syria)

Title:

Survey of Prehistoric Sites in Daraa, South of Syria.

Abstract:

The Department of Archaeology at Damascus University, in cooperation with the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, conducted an archaeological survey of the prehistoric sites in Daraa, between May 9 and 16, 2010.

The survey included three adjacent regions in southern Daraa, namely Wadi Sharar, Wadi al-Khawabi and Kherbet al-Shaiyah, which all flow into Wadi al-Zaydi valley near Daraa city. We collected 1212 stone tools found in 32 sites in these areas. These sites are situated on the valley shoulders and the plateaus and were covered with flint masses and tools that became blackish as a result of patina.

Wadi Sharar is considered the most important site in this survey due to the fact that its surface is full of hundreds of manufactured stone tools, particularly hand axes. In addition, the site undoubtedly consists of several accumulated layers that contain a large number of manufactured stone tools. Moreover, surface runoff and erosion contributed to uncovering the deposition of archaeological layers as well as alluvium of various thicknesses reaching up to two meters at one point in the valley shoulder, which makes it a very promising site.

The collected stone tools varied and, thus, included pointed hand axes (al-Lataminah type) and almond-shaped hand axes representing the Acheulean type, which was found in the region for the first time. Levalloisian fragments representing the Mousterian style were also discovered.

This is considered the first survey of prehistoric sites in southern Daraa conducted within a limited geographical area, including only two tributaries of Wadi al-Zaydi valley. Nevertheless, the area is abundant in numerous sites covered with hundreds of flint tools that require several excavation seasons to uncover.

TELL AL-ASH'ARI (DARAA)**Qasem AL-MUHAMMAD**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The results of the latest excavations at Tell al-Ash'ari, Hauran (during the Bronze Age)**Abstract:**

Excavations at Tell al-Ash'ari, west of Hauran plain, 14 km north-west of Daraa city, started in 1998. These excavations have shed light on one of the most important *tells* in southern Syria, dating back to the Middle Bronze Age, which can be associated with the old eastern civilizations in ancient Syria. Through modern archaeological discoveries, these *tells* can also be compared to sites being currently excavated, such as Tell Sakka in the Damascus basin, Tell Debbeh and Tell al-Matouneh in al-Suwayda, Tell al-Zaydi in Daraa and many others. Besides, Tell al-Ash'ari was one of the ten key cities in southern Syria, mentioned in several historical sources and inscriptions as well as coins.

During the period from the end of the 3rd millennium BC to the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, the west part of Hauran plain witnessed remarkable human growth given that people lived in rural communities.

As the ancient name of Tell al-Ash'ari (during the Bronze Ages) is still undecided and archaeological data regarding this period is insufficient, attempts to identify the site using any of the names mentioned in those sources are nothing but mere speculations.

By means of a comprehensive survey conducted around the hill and on the surface layer during the first excavation season of 1998, it was evident that human settlement at the site began in the Late Stone Age. Moreover, the city walls, in addition to a huge basalt tower, dating to the Bronze Age, are very similar in size and form to the circular walls of Tell Ashtara, 3 km to the north. As for the Bronze Age cemeteries of Tell al-Ash'ari, discovered during two stages in 1992 and 2010, they are located outside the fortifications of the city on the eastern side of the tell.

The burial methods at Tell al-Ash'ari and in Daraa are based on the local methods of the Levant. These methods were practiced in the beginning of the Early Bronze Age (the 3rd millennium BC). The tomb is accessed through a vertical round passage, 2 meters deep, leading to a narrow passage, no more than 1 meter in diameter, which in turn leads to a burial chamber, which is sealed by a large rock or several medium and small rocks. Tombs were carved in a layer of soft limestone. Furthermore, potteries, dating back to the Early Bronze Age IV, the Middle Bronze Age I and the Middle Bronze Age II, are abundant at the site. Numerous metal weapons and jewelry were contained in the tombs as well.

SAFAITIC INSCRIPTIONS (DARAA)**Ghazi ALOLO**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

A report on surveying the Safaitic inscriptions, east of al-Namara and al-Zuluf.**Abstract:**

It is located 15 km east of al-Namara and al-Zuluf region, in the Wadi al-Souh and Wadi Zuriq valleys. The team started surveying and documenting the Safaitic inscriptions and texts. The two valleys stretch south beyond the Syrian-Jordanian borderline adjacent to a continuous range of medium height hills, whose surfaces are covered with a layer of basalt. The Safaitic people used to write their inscriptions on the rocks and boulders of the desert scatter, or on the stones of cairns; those were used as a tomb whose stones function as an archive that immortalizes and reflects their current concerns, including memories, ideas, traveling, sadness and mourning. Moreover, Safaitic people always took pride in their clans and tribes, and they also gave very detailed accounts of their family lines, mentioning in some cases 17 forefathers ending up with their tribes.

Moreover, they attempted to immortalize the kind of relationship between the members of the same tribe and their relationship with the other tribes and neighboring peoples, as well as to introduce us to the different aspects of their daily life extending from the first century BC to the third century AD across an area stretching all over the Syrian desert and into the Euphrates river. This resulted in more than six hundred Safaitic inscriptions together with drawings, images, signs and symbols, in addition to one Greek inscription.

The topics of their inscriptions varied and, hence, included personal issues, historical subjects concerning the lives of important deceased people and incidents related to different nations and countries. It is also worth mentioning that the Safaitic people worked in agriculture and used the iron plow drawn by oxen to cultivate their lands as seen in the images accompanying the inscriptions. For example, one of the inscriptions shows a drawing of two oxen pulling a plow and mentions that the owner of the inscription was plowing his land for cultivation. The Safaitic people practiced herding and owned sheep, camels, goats and cows. The drawings also included their hunting activities, such as ostrich hunting and deer hunting, as well as war themes, chivalry and dancing women.

Besides, religion had a major and key role in the life of the Safaitic people; thus, they prayed to their gods and deities and asked for their support and assistance in issues related to safety, vengeance and rain. Nevertheless, thousands of other inscriptions are still awaiting to be discovered and exposed to the world.

Saturday 5th December

Damascus Region Session

TELL AL-HUMIRA (DAMASCUS REGION)**Mahmud HAMUD**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Excavations at Tell Al-Humira.**Abstract:**

Tell Humira is located in the Qalamoun region, 100 km north of Damascus, near Deir Atiyah city 12 km to the north. It measures 75×100×8 m and rises 1200 m above sea level. The site has been subjected to violations and acts of vandalism by the villages that removed large quantities of its soil to make mud bricks for their dwellings, which caused severe damage to the site. An archaeological mission belonging to Rif Damascus excavated the site between 2008 and 2012 completing four seasons, during which the *tell* was topographically mapped, and archaeological probes were conducted revealing that the oldest settlement at the site goes back to the end of the second millennium BC and the latest one to the 7th century BC.

Excavations at the site uncovered numerous architectural ruins and artifacts, including round stamp seals and stamp seal impressions (Scarab) found on the necks of jars, in addition to a large number of stone loom weights indicating that the site witnessed successful industrial growth that lasted till it was abandoned. Nonetheless, the most important discovery was a potsherd carrying an incomplete Aramaic text composed of a few letters that probably refer to a temple, which gives a clear signal to the possible existence of a temple at the site. We also believe that a part of the remains of the thick-walled buildings established on the hill could be the temple referred to on that potsherd. The importance of Tell Humira stems from the fact that it was a significant commercial hub on the road between northern, central and southern Syria and into Palestine and Egypt.

The site was perhaps the most important stop between Damascus and *Nazala* (modern al-Qaryatayn) on the road leading from Palmyra and the Euphrates. Moreover, the site was a key administrative and religious center on the edge of the Syrian Desert, as well as a shopping and commodities exchange center between the inhabitants of the desert and the site dealers who used to buy their goods from the trade caravans crossing this site in the first millennium BC. The Qalamoun Mountains were mentioned in a number of the Annals of the Kings of Assyria (including Shalmaneser III, 859-824 BC, Adad-nirari III, 805-782 BC, and Tiglath-Pileser III, 745-727 BC) who passed through the area during their military campaigns targeting Damascus and southern Syria. Besides, the names of other places in the Qalamoun, including Danabu, Khadara and Addrin, were mentioned. These places were once the summer headquarters of the rulers of Aram-Damascus, including Hazael. Some researchers believe that Addrin is modern al-Qutayfah and Khadara is modern Adra; thus, it is possible that Tell Humira is Danabu, which is what we are attempting to discover though future excavations at this site, which has been subjected to severe damage.

Publication since 2010

M. Hamoud, & G. Abou Kahla, Tell Alumira (Dier Ateyeh), *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*, Vol. 6, Damascus, 2012, pp.77-91.

Saturday 5th December

Damascus Region Session

TELL AL-BAHARIYA (DAMASCUS REGION)

Ghada SULEIMAN

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tell al-Bahariya.

Abstract:

Tell al-Bahariya is located in the Damascus basin, about 45 km from Damascus and 617.7 meters above sea level.

Archaeological strata:

Excavations have uncovered three historically successive archaeological strata:

- Phase 1: 6000 – 5000 BC
- Phase 2: 5000 – 4000 BC
- Phase 3: 4000 – 3500 BC

Discoveries:

Archaeological discoveries have indicated that human groups settled at the site starting in the 6th millennium BC. They built their homes using molded building blocks, wooden and clay ceilings and limestone floors.

As for the first stratum, a circular house was discovered. As for the second stratum dating back to the 5th millennium BC, the foundations of old buildings were used to construct new houses containing multifunctional rooms and floors tiled using molded blocks.

As far as the third stratum is concerned, it was erected on the ruins of the two earlier strata as evidenced by the restoration layer there given that the whole settlement was engulfed by fire in the late 5th millennium BC.

The results:

The archaeological remains in Tell al-Bahariya testify for the artistic development of the ancient man. Hence, we can see several types of constructing residential dwellings, in addition to development in pottery making in terms of style and color. Bull horns were also found buried in one of the houses of worship discovered at the site. Clay balls used for calculations were unearthed, too, in addition to flint tools made of imported obsidian. This proves that there were cultural and commercial relations between the north and south and the inner and coastal areas in ancient times.

Saturday 5th December

Damascus Region Session

MONASTERY OF ST ELIAN (DAMASCUS REGION)**Woroud IBRAHIM**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Al-Qaryatayn in the heart of the Syrian Desert, Monastery of St Elian.**Abstract:**

Al-Qaryatayn is an ancient city dating back to the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. Mentioned in the Mari (modern Tell al-Hariri) texts, it was known as *Nazala*. The Arameans called it *Haser Ayan*, and during the Roman era, it was known as *Qurada*. Located in the heart of the Syrian Desert on the road between Damascus and Palmyra, Al-Qaryatayn was an important stop for trade caravans and pilgrims. Al-Qaryatayn's most distinctive landmark is its archaeological hill 2 kilometers to the south (where ancient al-Qaryatayn used to be). Dating to the mid-second millennium BC, the hill contains on its top stone foundations of a temple that belongs to the Roman Palmyrene era during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

Monastery of St Elian

It is located about 4 kilometers south of al-Qaryatayn and was named after St Elian, who was mentioned in several sources, such as the hymns of St Ephrem the Syrian. Excavations aiming at studying the site historically and archaeologically started in 2001, and a Syrian-British mission was formed. In 2004, a Syrian national mission became in charge of the excavations, directed by Woroud Ibrahim. The most important discoveries in the Monastery of St Elian include the tomb of St Elian dating to the 4th century, which contains an unembalmed corpse, which is still preserved (based on the samples taken from the corpse, it is considered to be the first preserved corpse contained in a tomb). The Monastery also housed a church that dates to the same era. In addition, a cemetery dedicated to priests, dating to the end of the 14th century was uncovered. The Monastery chapel has an old door that dates to the 7th century, which is currently displayed in the Classical Age wing at the National Museum of Damascus; it is one of a collection of six rare wooden doors of Byzantine churches. The Monastery has a small gate located within the southern wall and beautifully decorated and ornamented.

Most excavations carried out in the Monastery have revealed several close historical periods. This was done by means of uncovering simple structures representing the nature of the region and indicating the continuity of monasticism and religious rites. These periods include the Byzantine era and the Islamic periods, including the Abbasid era and the Mamluk period up until the Ottoman rule. In addition, this has introduced us to the Christian architecture and rituals followed in the Islamic period.

Publication since 2010

Woroud Ibrahim, 2011, The Monastery Mar Elian - Results of Excavation 2001-2009, *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*, p.107.

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Woroud Ibrahim, 2009, Excavation 2000-2007 at Mar Elian al Cheikh, *Adiyat*, Aleppo.

Woroud Ibrahim, 2008, Al Qaryatein in the Syrian Steppes, Deir Mar Elian al Cheikh, *Journal Mahd al Hadarat*, Damascus.

Saturday 5th December

Damascus Region Session

ST SERGIUS AND ST BACCHUS, SADAD (DAMASCUS REGION)

Nada SARKIS

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Frescoes of Church of St Sergius and St Bacchus, Sadad.

Abstract:

Frescoes in Syria have had a remarkable presence since the first fresco in the world dating back to the 9th century BC was discovered in Ja'adat al-Maghara, in addition to other ones containing various techniques and themes dating to several different eras. These were meant to represent each age and way of life artistically and faithfully. Hence, the frescoes of the Church of St Sergius and St Bacchus in Sadad have contributed to the richness of the history of frescoes in Syria and the world as a whole since they represent the Syriac church and history by means of introducing all the saints they depict along with their intellectual accomplishments. Thus, the walls of the church was ornamented with local and rare Syriac paintings dating to the 18th century, which still have their unique charm and effect to date.

Eduard Sachau was the first to mention and describe these frescoes in a paper published in 1883 following his visit to the town of Sadad on September 21, 1879. After that, many archaeologists visited the town to learn more about the place. In 2005, the first national Syrian mission commenced its work in restoring these frescoes. Consequently, we learned about their technical, artistic and archaeological history as well as the damage befalling them due to climatic and human interventions. In addition, the restoration works helped uncover several original artistic elements as well as the iconographic content of the frescoes. The mission also documented all the stages of restoring the southern wall of the church in the hope of completing the restoration works of the whole church in the near future.

HALABIYA-ZENOBIA (DEIR EZ ZOR)**Sylvie BLETRY**

Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3 (France)

Title:

The necropolises of Halabiya-Zenobia.

Abstract:

Since Jean Lauffray campaigns and publication on Halabiya, a Syrian-French mission, held between 2006 and 2010, worked *in situ*, and undertook, among other things, a more complete survey in the north and south necropolises surrounding the urban site than the former one. This paper will summarize a few chapters of the incoming general publication of our five seasons (October 2015).

When Lauffray identified about 50 tombs, we raised this number up to 164 funerary monuments (indeed, most of them are collective tombs) in the north necropolis. When Lauffray counted only 3 tombs in the south necropolis, we found 16 new ones.

These results let us renew Lauffray's typology, and we could also make some assumptions about the dating of these tombs, as this issue has never been studied by taking into account the total documentation. Only the tower tombs were mentioned in several former publications, and even so, the propositions of dating were made by stylistic comparison with tower tombs from other sites (mainly in the Euphrates valley or in Palmyra). Now, the architectural data from Halabiya's tower tombs show how original they were, as well as and the other types of tombs. In addition, we are able to propose some hypotheses about the social organization of some sectors in both the necropolises.

Publication since 2010

BLÉTRY, S., *et al.*, «Trois années de recherches à Zénobia-Halabiyé (Syrie), ville forteresse proto-byzantine sur le limes oriental», *Semitica et Classica*, 3, 2010, 249-264

BLÉTRY, S., «La campagne 2010 de la mission archéologique franco-syrienne à Halabiya-Zénobia», *Res Antiquitatis, Journal of Ancient History* 2, 2011, 229-258.

BLÉTRY, S., «Les nécropoles de Halabiya-Zénobia, premiers résultats des observations et prospections menées en 2009 et 2010», *Syria* 89, 2012, 305-330.

BLÉTRY, S., «Guerre et paix sur l'Euphrate entre Perse et Byzance au temps de Justinien: *si vis pacem, para bellum*. Les apports de l'étude du cas historique et archéologique de Zenobia», Hommages à Jean Bouffartigue et Pierre-Louis Malosse, *Revue d'Études Tardo-antiques (RET)*, 4, Supplément 3, 2014-2015, 73-101.

BLÉTRY, S., «*Si vis pacem, para bellum*, La politique de paix de Justinien avec l'empire perse. L'exemple d'un cas historique et archéologique : Zénobia», *Actes du colloque La fabrique de la paix, Montpellier, 2-4 octobre 2013*, Presses de l'Université Laval, Québec, 45-66.

Sunday 6th December

Deir ez-Zor Session

BLÉTRY, S. (dir), *Zenobia-Halabiya, Habitat urbain et nécropoles, Cinq années de recherches de la mission syro-française (2006-2010)*, Cuadernos Mesopotamicos 6, La Coruña, 572 pages, 604 figures + CD. (sous presse)

BLÉTRY, S., «Les recherches de la mission syro-française sur le site de Zénobia-Halabiya, 2006-2010», in *Projet Khanuqa. Archéologie au défilé basaltique du Moyen Euphrate (Deir ez-Zor, Syrie)*, J. L. Montero (ed.), Bibliotheca Euphratica 2, Université de La Corogne, en cours de publication.

BLÉTRY, S., «L'urbanisme et l'habitat de la ville de Zénobia-Halabiya: résultats de la mission franco-syrienne (2006-2010)», *Actes de la table-ronde «New Cities in Late Antiquity», Istanbul, 9-10 novembre 2013*, Bibliothèque de l'Antiquité Tardive, en cours de publication.

TELL AS SIN (DEIR EZ-ZOR)

Shaker AL SHBIB

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Tall As-Sin, on the eastern limes.

Abstract:

Tell As-Sin is located on the left bank of the Euphrates, 10 km southeast of Deir ez-Zor. The site corresponds to a Byzantine fortified town, consisting of an acropolis, a lower town and a necropolis that extends beyond the northern wall.

Three archaeological excavation campaigns were carried out on the site by a Syrian-Spanish archaeological mission in 2005, 2006 and 2007. This archaeological work permits us to observe the following chronological details: two major phases can be distinguished in the Byzantine occupation of the city and the necropolis of Tell As-Sin. The first dates from the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century AD. A second phase would follow which extended until the middle of the 7th century AD.

Under the hill of Tell As-Sin, the city must be interpreted today within the historical context of the Near East in the period from the 6th century AD to the arrival of Islam. By its characteristics, it is a fortified city in the eastern border (*limes*) of the Roman Empire, an exceptional site to study the defence system, the way of life, the socio-economic organisation and funerary beliefs, among other aspects, of a Byzantine community in the Middle Syrian Euphrates valley.

Publication since 2010

AL SHBIB Sh, MONTERO J-L. (in press), "Tall As-Sin, the results of the Syrian-Spanish mission work 2005-2007", *One hundred sites tell us the history of Syria*, ed. Y. Kanjou and A. Tsuneki, University of Tsukuba.

MONTERO FENOLLÓS, J.L., SHBIB, S., *La Necropolis Bizantina de Tall As-Sin (Deir ez-Zor, Siria): Memorias del Proyecto Arqueológico Medio Éufrates Sirio I*, (Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo 4), CSIC, Madrid, 2008.

MONTERO FENOLLÓS, J.L, SHBIB, S., "La mission archéologique syro-espagnole au Moyen Euphrate. Première campagne à Tall as-Sin (Deir er-Zor, Syrie)", *Orient-Express*, 2006/1, pp. 3-5.

MONTERO J-L., AL SHBIB Sh., « Tell Qubr Abu al Atiq: From an Early dynastic city to a middle Assyrian Fort », *Aula Orientalis* 28, 2010, pp. 73-84.

Sunday 6th December

Deir ez-Zor Session

TELL AL-KASRA (DEIR EZ-ZOR)**Yaarob ALABDULLAH**

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The Works of the Syrian Mission in the Byzantine City (Tell Al Kasra) in Five Seasons (2006–2010)**Abstract:*****Location and entomology:***

Tell al-Kasra is located on the left bank of the Euphrates river, about 40 km north-west of Deir ez-Zor city. Its old name is still unknown; however, Antoine Poidebard called it *Allan*. It has an area of 27 hectares. Its wall and urban design indicate that it was an old polis. In addition, Tell al-Kasra is believed to have been a significant site due to emperor Justinian's policy regarding the reformation and reorganization of the military in the region. Besides, he dedicated special attention to fortifying the suburbs of Mesopotamia. Hence, the site witnessed several changes within its historical context beginning in the 5th century up until the Islamic period.

Excavations at the site:

The site was first excavated in 1849 by the British mission, which was in charge of studying the areas situated on the Euphrates, directed by Chesney. The site was also called *Soor al-Humur*.

Moreover, Tell al-Kasra was studied and surveyed by Ed. Sachau in 1879 and Gertrude Bell in 1909 who photographed it and called it *Um al-Rukuba*. It was later mapped by Antoine Poidebard during the French Mandate.

The site layout:

The hill is surrounded by a wall made of unbaked clay bricks, which can still be seen from three sides, whereas it was demolished to the north-west. The western part of the site was subjected to erosion as a result of rainfall forming a network of deep cracks gradually sliding until they reach the river plain, which is 20 meters deep below the hill's surface. A new cemetery is located in the western part of the hill, as well.

Important discoveries:

- The gate of the fort: it was discovered in the northern wall.
- The cemetery E2.
- The bathhouse and the mosaic.

Publication since 2010

BLANKE, L., "The Central Baths in Gerasa in Context" in M.F. Boussac; J.-F. Salles, *Bains d'outre Jourdain. Actes du colloque Balnéorient de Amman, mai 2008*, IFPO (forthcoming).

FOURNET, T.; REDON, B. (éds.), *Le Bain Collectif en Egypte: Origine, Évolution et Actualité. Actes du Colloque Balnéorient d'Alexandrie, Déc. 2006*, IFAO, Le Caire, 2009.

FOURNET, T., "The ancient Baths of Southern Syria in their Near Eastern Context" (Extract from the *Proceedings of the International Frontinus-Symposium on Technical and Cultural History of Ancient Thermal Springs, Aachen, March 18-22, 2009* (forthcoming).

TELL TWEINI (LATAKIA)

Massoud BADAWI

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

Excavations at Tell Tweini (Syrian Mission).

Abstract:

Tell Tweini is located 1.7 km north-east of the modern city of Jableh and has an area of 11.6 hectares. Excavations at the site started in 1999 by a Syro-Belgian interdisciplinary team aiming at discovering the nature of occupation at the site and the name of the city during the Late Bronze Age.

According to the discoveries of the mission, Tell Tweini was inhabited from at least the middle of the third millennium BC until the end of the Iron Age. In addition, the site was partially occupied during the classical and Byzantine periods which uncovered several residential neighborhoods and facilities mainly dating back to the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The importance of Tell Tweini is attributed to the uncovering of a layer dating to the Late Bronze Age which included many residential buildings containing numerous potteries and some cylinder stamp seals. Moreover, archaeological documents indicate that Tell Tweini was in the dominion of Ugarit.

Another is the stratum of the Iron Age I, where a temple and some residential buildings were discovered, indicating human settlement at the site following the invasion of the Sea Peoples.

Besides, excavating layers, dating to the first millennium BC, resulted in the discovery of architectural facilities dating mostly to the Iron Age II. These facilities were part of urban designs that were uncovered by means of a geophysical prospection conducted on the complete surface of the *tell*, which introduced us to the urban plan of the city consisting of several streets and roads, as well as residential districts and religious and civil buildings.

Publication since 2010

Al-Maqdissi, M., Badawi, M., 2011. Rapport préliminaire sur la dixième campagne de fouilles syrienne à Tell Toueini, *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*, Volume V, Damas, p. (59-66), (In Arabic).

Massoud Badawi, (in press) Le Niveau Byzantin de Tell Tweini (Chantier B), Tweini II/Niveau 3

AMRIT (TARTUS)

Yaser YUSEF

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (Syria)

Title:

The results of archaeological excavations in Amrit for 2003 and 2011.

Abstract:

Situated on the Syrian coast, 7 km south of Tartus city, Amrit has an area of about 6 square km and is one of the most prominent cities of the Canaanite-Phoenician coast. It is located next to the archaeological hill to the east of its temple dating to the Bronze Age.

Amrit spanned numerous historical periods starting in the Bronze Ages up until the Byzantine era. However, its most distinctive feature was during the Phoenician period where it prospered and thrived.

In addition, Amrit became one of the main cities on the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly following the collapse of Ugarit Kingdom and the rise of Arwad Island (Amrit was in the dominion of Arwad).

Amrit's most significant archaeological monuments include a temple dedicated to the god Melqart (the tutelary god), its famed Pre-Olympic Phoenician Stadium and the burial towers, including *al-Maghazil* (the Spindles) and Azar cemeteries which stretch on an area of about 12 hectares, in addition to the rock-carved religious house, the warehouse, the sacred spring and its ancient harbor among others.

Moreover, Abu Afsah cemetery was discovered in 2003 and became one of Amrit's important landmarks. It is a rock-carved cemetery that can be accessed by stairs. It consists of a rectangular-shaped courtyard containing on both its sides rock-carved silo-type burials, which include coffins, made of clay and lead. A platform, located in the central part of the courtyard, contains a U-shaped hall with coffins, so the visitors can move around freely. It dates back to the late third century. Several other facilities have been discovered around the cemetery.

As for 2011-2012 excavations, the foundations of a building dating to the 6th and 7th centuries BC and several artifacts were discovered.

Publication since 2010

Yaser Yusef. Premier Report the National excavation in Amreet 2003 Cemetery of Abu Houfssah. *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*, Volume VII. 2015. p.97-107

Yaser Yusef and Hassan Marwan. Amreet 2012. Premier Report about the National excavation in Amreet 2012 the fifth section- the playground. *Chronique Archéologique en Syrie*, Volume VII. 2015. p.109-123

AL-MARQAB (LATAKIA)**Balázs MAJOR**

Pázmány Péter Catholic University (Hungary)

Title:

Latest results of the al-Marqab research project.**Abstract:**

The Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission has been conducting a joint research project in al-Marqab Citadel (Tartous Governorate) since 2007 with many fields of enquiry including: archaeology, architectural history, art history, wall painting research, geophysical research, geology, archaeozoology, geoarchaeology, anthropology, seismology, several types of laboratory analyses. The results of the combined research started to reveal the functions of the various areas and spaces of the castle and shed light on the functioning of this important medieval site and its environs. The discovery of a new extensive medieval suburb outside al-Marqab Citadel and the unearthing of a hoard of medieval weapons inside the castle rank amongst the most important latest discoveries, the processing of which continued in the past couple of years unhindered. The paper is intending to present the latest results of the work done on the al-Marqab material.

Publication since 2010

2014 Micromorphological and Geochemical Investigation of Formation Processes in the Refectory at the Castle of Margat (Qal'at al-Marqab), Syria. *Journal of Archaeological Science*. authors: Shillito, L.-M., Major B., Almond, M., Anderson, E., Pluskowski, A. accepted manuscript - doi: 10.1016/j.jas.2014.07.031.

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