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Capital Cities in Late Bronze Age Greater Mesopotamia

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Archaeology

by

Evan Anders Carlson

2017

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

### Capital Cities in Late Bronze Age Greater Mesopotamia

by

Evan Anders Carlson

Doctor of Philosophy in Archaeology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Elizabeth F. Carter, Chair

This dissertation explores the relationships among founding capital cities, defining state territories, and creating and propagating national identities. In the modern period and deep into history, nascent nations struggling to define themselves and unify diverse states have founded capital cities to embody a national ethos, reveal a shared history, direct the relationship among subjects and government, and differentiate a society from its international peers. In the Late Bronze Age (LBA) (1550-1050 BC) Near/Middle East, numerous expanding territorial-states developed means of defining their territories and relationships to their international peers, and these means included founding new capital cities. This dissertation investigates three capital cities built *ex nihilo* in LBA Greater Mesopotamia (Iraq and Southwest Iran): Dur Kurigalzu in Babylonia (Southern Iraq), Al Untaš Napiriša in Elam (Southwest Iran), and Kar Tukulti Ninurta in Assyria (Northern Iraq). Eponymous kings founded these cities while seeking to unify and control vast territories of overlapping relationships among people, cities, tribes, gods, and kings. These cities exhibited the power of kings who desired total territorial control, but to unify their states and

maintain rule over diverse territories, they needed populations to internalize their propaganda. By founding new capitals, these kings tried to combine their personas into a new state identity and encouraged urban, regional, and international groups to interact with their monumental building projects.

The three capitals in question have yielded very different archaeological datasets. These myriad datasets allow an investigation of different issues concerning each capital, including: how the capitals relate to regional state-building projects, how monumental architecture and inscriptions represent ideological manifestations of the king and state, how people interacted in planning and constructing the city, and how different urban populations constructed their own spaces and experienced the monumental schemes. At a regional level, archaeological survey data reveal the commercial and administrative networks that LBA powers developed and utilized to support their new cities and control and unify their territories. Archaeological remains of inscriptions and architecture reveal how rulers used religion and history to create “national” identities that merged the king and state. Analyzing the layouts and uses of space in the cities and the context and content of inscribed material reveals both how kings sought to impose their visions over the spaces where people lived and how people negotiated these systems and merged their practices with the royal visions. Comparing different archaeological datasets from the three different cases and the role of capital cities in ancient and modern periods reveals the motives of those who built, maintained, and abandoned these spaces and the interactions among political forces, populations, and landscapes in forming and maintaining territorial-states.

The dissertation of Evan Anders Carlson is approved.

Dell Upton

Monica L. Smith

Lothar von Falkenhausen

Elizabeth F. Carter, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

*For Hazel and Eunhee*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Ä &amp; L</b>	Ägypten und Levante
<b>ÄAT</b>	Ägypten und Altes Testament
<b>ABAW NF</b>	Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge
<b>ADOG</b>	Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
<b>AfO</b>	Archiv für Orientforschung; Beih. = Beiheft
<b>AJA</b>	American Journal of Archaeology
<b>AO</b>	Antiquités orientales, Louvre Museum
<b>AOAT</b>	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
<b>AOS</b>	American Oriental Series
<b>BagF</b>	Baghdader Forschungen
<b>BagM</b>	Baghdader Mitteilungen
<b>BASOR</b>	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
<b>BBVO</b>	Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderer Orient
<b>BM</b>	British Museum
<b>BSOAS</b>	Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies
<b>BZAR</b>	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte
<b>CAD</b>	The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago
<b>CahDAFI</b>	Cahiers de la Délégation archéologique française en Iran
<b>CHANE</b>	Culture and history of the ancient Near East
<b>CRAI</b>	Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres
<b>HdOr</b>	Handbuch der Orientalistik

<b>HSAO</b>	Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient
<b>IrAnt</b>	Iranica Antiqua
<b>IM</b>	National Museum of Iraq, Baghdad
<b>JAOS</b>	Journal of the American Oriental Society
<b>JCS</b>	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
<b>JESHO</b>	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
<b>JNES</b>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
<b>MDAI</b>	Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique en Iran
<b>MDOG</b>	Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-gesellschaft zu Berlin
<b>MDP</b>	Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse
<b>MHEM</b>	Mesopotamia History and Environment Memoires
<b>MMAI</b>	Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique en Iran
<b>OAAS</b>	Old Assyrian Archives Studies
<b>OBO</b>	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
<b>OIP</b>	Oriental Institute Publications
<b>RA</b>	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale
<b>RAI</b>	Compte rendu de la Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
<b>RIMA</b>	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
<b>RIME</b>	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods
<b>RIA</b>	Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie
<b>RT</b>	Recueil de travaux relatifs a la philologie et a l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes pour servir de bulletin a la Mission Française du Caire
<b>SAOC</b>	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization

<b>SMEA</b>	Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici
<b>TCS</b>	Texts from Cuneiform Sources
<b>TSO</b>	Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik
<b>UE</b>	Ur Excavations.
<b>UET</b>	Ur Excavations. Texts
<b>UVB</b>	Vorläufiger Bericht über die von der Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft in Uruk-Warka unternommen Ausgrabungen
<b>VA</b>	Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin
<b>VAT</b>	Vorderasiatische Abteilung. Tontafeln (Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin)
<b>WO</b>	Die Welt des Orients
<b>WVDOG</b>	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
<b>ZA</b>	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete

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## VITA

### EDUCATION

- 2010 MA in Anthropology, Columbia University  
2008 BA *cum laude* in Classical and Near Eastern Civilizations & Greek, Creighton University  
Minors: Computer Science, Biblical Studies

### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2015 Visiting Scholar, *Université catholique de Louvain Centre d'études orientales*  
2014 Lecturer in Art History, *California State University Long Beach School of Art*

### PUBLICATIONS

- Refereed Journal Articles -

- 2014 Inscribed and Uninscribed Spaces in Al Untash Napirisha: Interaction and Segregation in a Late 2nd Millennium de novo Capital. *Iran* 52: 29-52.

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

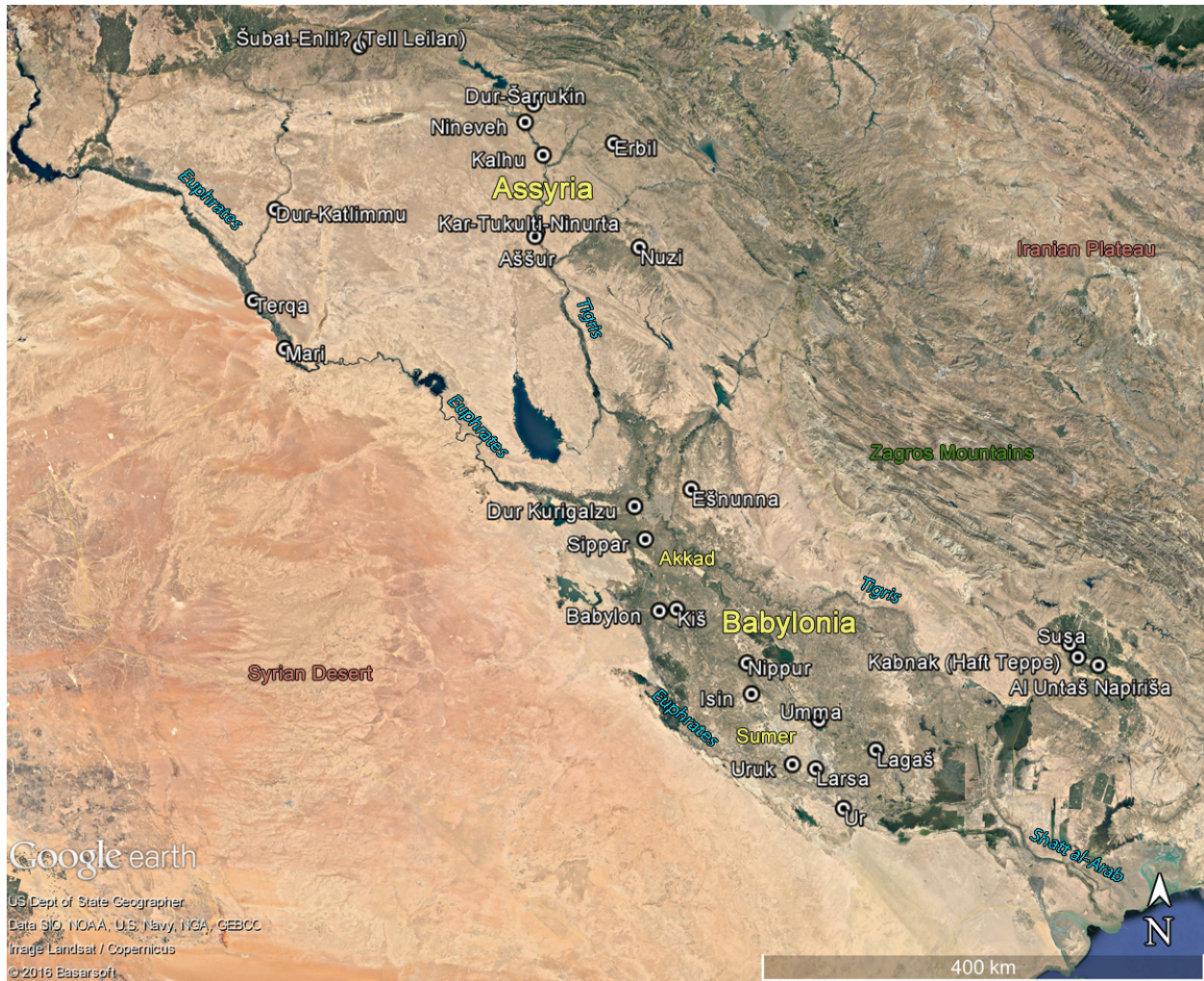
- 2015 "Refocusing Regional Interaction under the Kings of Anshan and Susa," Paper presented, International Congress of Young Archaeologists, Tehran, Iran  
2015 "Refocusing Regional Interaction under the Kings of Anshan and Susa: A Study of City and Canal Construction in the Late 2nd Millennium BC," Paper presented, 2nd Susa and Elam conference, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium  
2014 "Ruralization, Hegemony, and Stability under the Kassite Dynasty," Paper presented, ASOR Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA  
2014 "Bodies and Bronzes in Ancient China: Investigating the nexus of tattooing, material culture, and the body through Shang Ritual Bronzes," *The Edges of the Body: Extremities and Knowledge in Antiquity and Beyond*, University of Southern California  
2012 "The Loess Plateau of Northwest China: An East Asian center of indigenous metallurgical development," Paper presented, Annual UCLA Archaeology Graduate Student Conference, Los Angeles, CA  
2011 "Al Untash Napirisha and Elamite Urbanism in the Late 2nd Millennium BC," Paper presented, ASOR Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA  
2011 "Al-Untash-Napirisha (Choga Zanbil) as a Disembedded Capital in its Global Context," *Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Pizza Talk*, Los Angeles, CA  
2010 "A Constantinian Coin Deposit from the Syro-Anatolian Frontier," Poster presentation, ASOR Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA

# 1.

## INTRODUCTION

The collapse of world-wide colonial empires during the 20<sup>th</sup> century AD engendered many newly defined nations with diverse ideas about what constituted a modern state. To symbolize this new world order and each country's aspirations, the governments of these new nations founded capital cities. Only around 40 capital cities covered the 19<sup>th</sup> Century AD world; by AD 2000, there were around 200 (Gordon 2006: 1). Governments founding new capital cities to fulfill state-building aspirations have occurred throughout history, and these capitals include New Kingdom Akhetaten in Egypt (c.1348 BC) (Kemp 2012a), Shang Yin in China (c. 1300 BC) (Chang 1980; Thorp 2006), Neo-Assyrian Dur Šarukkin in Iraq (707 BC) (Caubet 1995), Zapotec Monte Albán in Mexico (c. 500 BC) (Blanton 1978), Mughal Akbarabad in India (AD 1565) (Sinopoli 1994). These examples are scattered across different time periods and locales, but, like the postcolonial period, the late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC (Late Bronze Age or LBA) in the Near East saw the foundation of numerous capitals in newly established territorial-states. This dissertation examines three LBA capitals founded *ex nihilo* in Greater Mesopotamia (Iraq and Southwest Iran): Dur Kurigalzu in Babylonia (Southern Iraq), Al Untaš Napiriša in Elam (Southwest Iran), and Kar Tukulti Ninurta in Assyria (Northern Iraq) (Fig. 1). These capitals are each named after kings who sought to transform and unify their states, represent their power and authority, and establish a new “national” identity to regional and international audiences.

The foundation of new capitals is always linked to territorial and international aspirations beyond the city itself. Archaeologist Michael E. Smith (2010: 138) defines cities as “places that serve as the setting for institutions and practices that affect a larger, regional hinterland.” For capital cities, this hinterland includes extensive and diverse territories. Lawrence Vale (2006: 17),



*Fig. 1: Greater Mesopotamia*

a professor of Urban Design and Planning, attributes the explosion of 20<sup>th</sup> century AD capitals to extra-urban forces, such as “the dismemberment of empires, the emergence of new federal systems, and the growing importance of super-national groupings.” Political scientist James Scott (1998) sees new modern capitals as the result of High Modernist and utopian ideologies and the state’s desire to simplify and standardize the relationships among people, government, land, and property. Twentieth century new capitals, he writes, resulted from similar modernist ideologies that brought about large-scale agricultural and compulsory resettlement schemes like Soviet Collectivism, the Great Leap Forward in China, and villagization in Africa. Scott sees this

phenomenon as uniquely modern. A premodern state, he argues, “knew precious little about its subjects, their wealth, their landholdings and yields, their location, their very identity” (Scott 1998: 2). Any scholar of premodern societies knows this statement is quite false, and Vale observes that capital cities for both ancient and modern states functioned as “symbolic centers” (Vale 2008: 11-12).

The similarities go beyond symbolism, and the aspects that connect and differentiate our society from Mesopotamia make an exploration of LBA new capitals a worthwhile endeavor. The societies of Greater Mesopotamia, like most 20<sup>th</sup> Century AD nations, were urban societies, and their cities became cultural and economic focal points for hinterlands and larger territories. The composition of Near Eastern states dramatically changed during the LBA. In some ways, these shifts were the opposite of what occurred in the post-colonial modern world. The LBA experienced the coalescence of federal systems and the rise of empires. Prior to the LBA, the Mesopotamian political landscape c. 3500-1595 BC was characterized by city-states that controlled small territories around them and existed in a regional system with other city-states (Stone 1997). Occasionally, one city-state would take control of the others, but would eventually lose control and the system of fragmented city-states continued (see discussion in 1.IIIb). The city-state system collapsed towards the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC, and the individual city-states never recovered. Territorial-states and eventually large-scale empires replaced the fragmented city-state system (Brinkman 1972; Liverani 2014; Van de Mieroop 2007: 22; Harmanşah 2012; Wilkinson *et al* 2004). While this situation was the opposite of Vale’s first two modern events “the dismemberment of empires, the emergence of new federal systems,” the importance of super-national groupings was reflected in the LBA. The new territorial-states competed in a peer-polity system with other states, and international prestige was of the utmost importance (Liverani 1990).

For modern cities, detailed data sources allow us to understand the planning, construction and occupation of new capital cities. Records and correspondence give the names and desires of governments, architects, and urban planners. We know how different segments of society interacted in constructing and living in the cities. We can observe how plans met with reality. However, as Michael Smith (2007: 6) has pointed out, such detailed sources rarely exist for ancient cities. Archaeological excavations reveal fragmentary city layouts, and occasionally very selective sets of texts, which are usually exclusively from society's upper echelons, and regional archaeological surveys give some idea - but never a definitive picture - of the settled landscape around cities.

This dissertation analyzes three ancient capitals that have yielded very different archaeological and textual datasets. The first step to understanding these ancient territorial capitals is to establish a comparative framework for understanding the foundation, construction, and occupation of capital cities and their role in a territorial-state. The following section analyzes three modern post-colonial capitals, Washington D.C., Brasilia, and Islamabad, to develop an understanding of urban planning, the role of the capital in the overall state, and the intersection among the desires of governments, planners, and residents. This understanding will yield a comparative basis for investigating LBA states and capitals and illustrate how the LBA case study fits into an overall understanding of the role of capital cities in human society.

## **I. Post-colonial *ex nihilo* capital cities**

### **Ia. Washington, DC**

The government of the newly independent United States of America established Washington, DC, the first post-colonial capital, in AD 1790 (Vale 2008: 64; Gillette 1995: 1). The leaders of this newly independent nation commissioned a French architect Pierre Charles L'Enfant

to design a city that would be a unifying capital for the federated states, represent the nation's democratic ideals, and act as a major commercial center and port (Gillette 1995: 1-12). A planned canal would connect this coastal city to the country's other major rivers and facilitate its commercial and political value. Despite the democratic nature of the new nation, L'Enfant took what he knew of contemporary imperial capitals to design "the Capital of a powerful Empire" (L'Enfant quoted in Gillette 1995: 6). Washington, DC was to both have a monumental plaza housing the halls and residences of government officials and be a major commercial and residential city in its own right. George Washington, the eponymous first US president, wished the city to continuously expand and tried to procure as much land as possible regardless of the size of L'Enfant's design (Gillette 1995: 8-9). L'Enfant himself envisioned the new capital eventually becoming the world's largest city (Vale 2008: 68).

Washington, DC, however, has never lived up to the vision of a functioning city in its own right. The canal for trade and the water supply were not finished until the 1850's (Gillette 1995: 12-23), its existence outside of the US federal system has stymied its administrators' ability to plan and govern, and its monumental core has always taken precedence over the surrounding neighborhoods (Gournay 2006: 115). In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, planners led by James McMillan re-envisioned its monumental core as a tourist zone that would represent the ideals of the nation, and Washington DC entered the world of 20<sup>th</sup> century nationalist capitals. The Macmillan Plan resulted in the current extensive National Mall of museums and monuments that symbolize the nation's power, history, and citizen participation. Depending on the observer, Washington, DC is either "the nation's finest urban achievement" (Gutheim and Lee 2006: 3) or a "city of failed intentions" and a "failure of urban policy" (Gillette 1995).

## **Ib. Brasilia**

The dueling views of success or failure are also readily apparent in Brasilia, the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most rigorously planned modernist capital. Before AD 1960, all Brazil's cities were located along the Atlantic coast. Already in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century AD, the Portuguese colonial government considered founding a new capital in the colony's mostly unsettled central hinterland, and after independence, plans for a future inland capital became ingrained in the nation's constitution (Batista *et al* 2006: 164-165). The populist president Juscelino Kubitschek finally commissioned this new capital upon his election victory in AD 1955. Kubitschek wanted to modernize Brazil and believed the new capital Brasilia would stimulate growth, development, and optimism across the country and redirect economic activity to the central plain (Holston 1989: 83-84). Kubitschek selected modernist architect Oscar Niemeyer to head the design team, and Niemeyer held a competition and chose a simple high modernist urban plan by Lucio Costa (Batista *et al* 2006: 167). Niemeyer and Kubitschek selected Costa's plan because its simple and stark modernism contrasted completely from existing Brazilian cities and its simplicity and completeness meant it could be finished before Kubitschek's presidential term ended in 1961 (Epstein 1973: 52).

Costa's design did not allow for future expansion; the complete urban plan and road system were preplanned and would be built quickly and filled in with apartment buildings later (*ibid*). This plan consisted of an elongated monumental core of open spaces flanked by government buildings and two residential wings extending from the monumental axis' center (Fig. 2). The wings held segregated residential units that would each fulfill all the residents' commercial, childcare, educational, and recreational needs (Holston 1989: 120). Only government employees would live in these residential areas, which were specifically built to be egalitarian and lack any

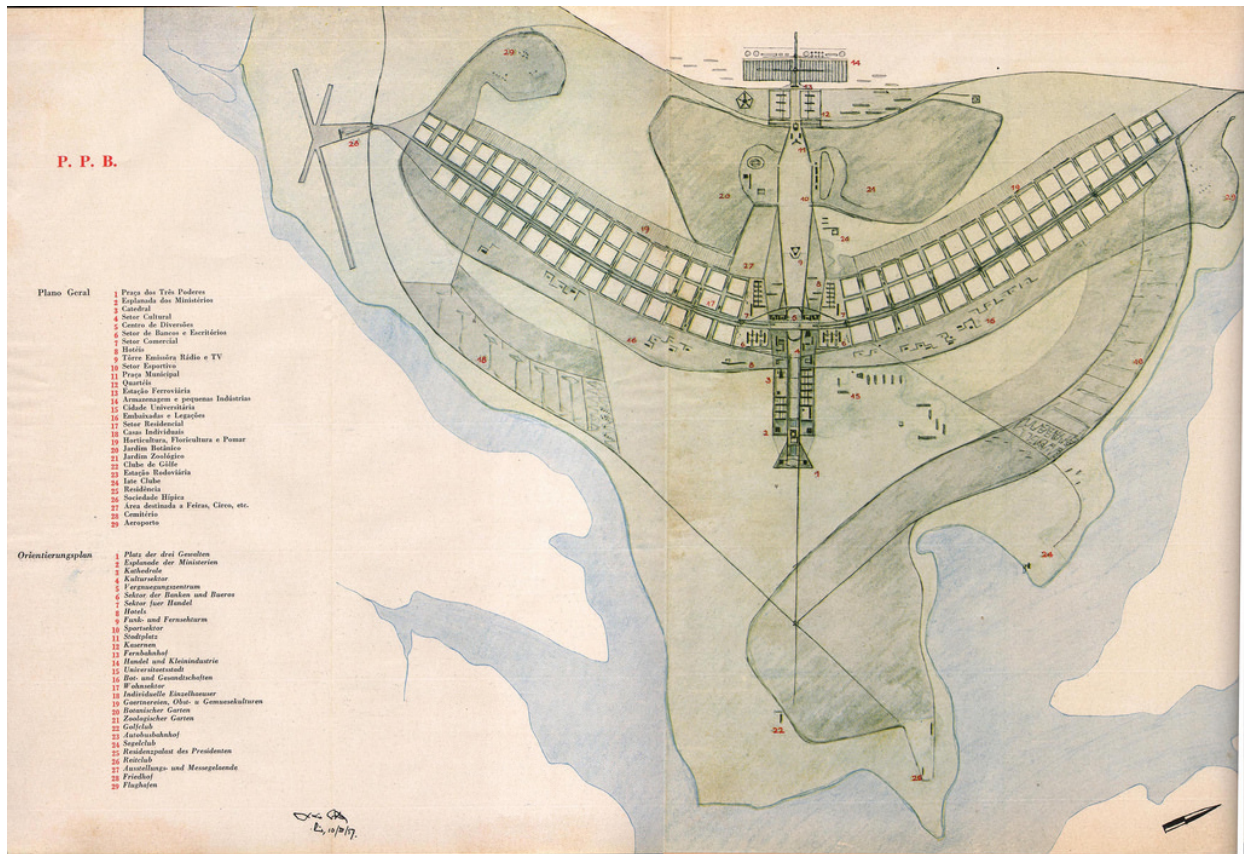


Fig. 2: Brasilia Pilot Plan by Lucio Costa, 1957



Fig. 3: Recent composite satellite image of Brasilia



neighborhood features, such as open squares, pedestrian streets, or even street corners (Holston 1989: 101-119). People lived in apartments that fulfilled their basic needs, shopped in specific commercial zones, and worked in the monumental core.

Niemeyer and Kubitschek wanted the city to become a symbol of the new Brazil and a part of Brazilian national identity. To generate popularity they not only appealed to modernism and the future, but also found legitimation in historical analogy (Holston 1989: 208-209). They advertised that people who built the new city in the undeveloped central plains were like revolutionaries fighting for Brazil's independence or early explorers discovering the country's untamed interior (*ibid*). Their appeals worked, and workers came to build the city. However, the rigid urban plan had neglected living spaces for any non-governmental workers; to this day only public servants can live in Brasilia proper. To accommodate first the construction workers who built the city and later non-governmental residents, the government had to sanction satellite towns. The 2017 satellite image in Fig. 3 shows these densely-packed satellite towns surrounding the rather open and empty Brasilia at the center. In 2006, only 256,094 people lived in Brasilia proper, while a total 2.7 million people lived in the surrounding area (Battista *et al* 2006: 175). Critical essays have decried Brasilia as a failure because its modernist utopia never came to pass, it failed to address urban needs, and class segregation became even starker in the satellite towns than in older Brazilian cities (Epstein 1973; Holston 1989; Scott 1998). However, Battista *et al* (2006) observe that the city planners were remarkably successful in their goal to settle the central plains and redirect economic activity inland, and UNESCO hails the city as “a singular artistic achievement, a prime creation of the human genius, representing, on an urban scale, the living expression of the principles and ideals advanced by the Modernist Movement.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/445>, accessed 5/31/2017

### **Ic. Islamabad**

Around the time of Brasilia's inauguration, Ayub Khan, head of the Pakistani army, led a coup and became president of Pakistan from AD 1958-1969. The nation of Pakistan had been founded 11 years prior with its capital as the port city of Karachi on the country's southwest coast. Like Kubitschek, Khan pursued modernization and development programs (Ali 2009: 126), and this program included the foundation of the new inland modernist capital Islamabad, which was to be a symbol of national unity and transform "tribal culture and agrarian society into a modern, civilized, and industrial nation" (Mahsud 2013: 97-98). Khan, a military ruler, founded Islamabad next to the existing city of Rawalpindi, which held the headquarters of the Pakistani army. Khan's secular government called the new capital the "city of Islam" because they saw Islam as a unifying factor for Pakistan's very diverse populations (Hull 2009: 469) and aligned themselves with the country's religious authorities (Rhozenal 2009: 121).

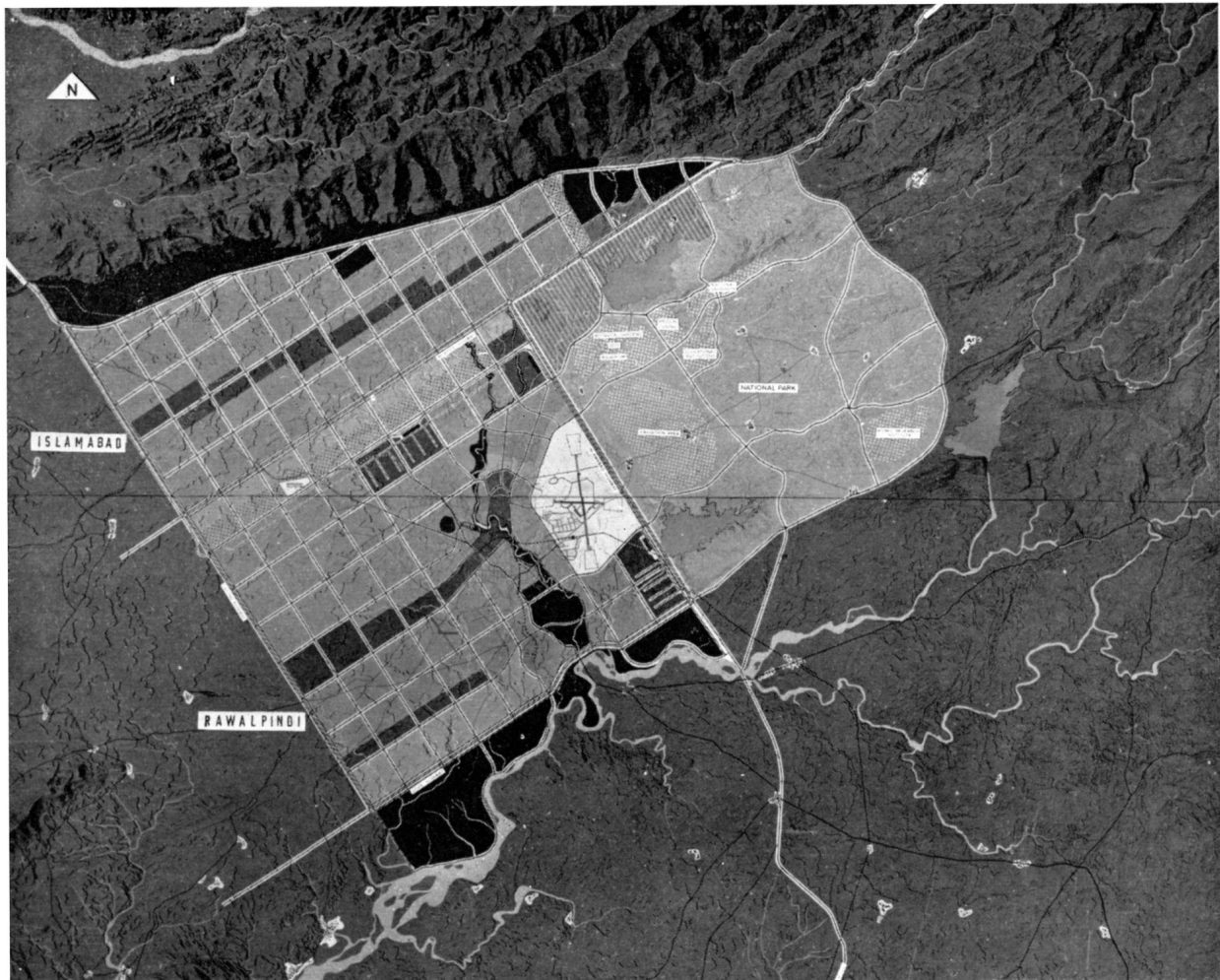
Khan commissioned the European architect Constantine Doxiadis to design the capital, and Doxiadis' vision was modernist and rather surreal. Doxiadis believed one giant super city called the ecumenopolis would eventually cover each of the world's continents, and Islamabad's location in Pakistan's far northeast foothills was the ideal location to become the center of the inevitable pan-Asian super-city (Doxiadis 1965: 7, 13). Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Doxiadis argued, would eventually merge into a "two-nuclei metropolis", and this merger would subsequently lead to the merger of all Asian cities into the ecumenopolis (Doxiadis 1965: 13). In reality, the location was likely due to Khan's military power base in Rawalpindi being so far removed from Karachi. Doxiadis planned Islamabad as a linear city that could infinitely expand in only one direction, because he believed that if cities grew from the center outwards, the center would be "strangled to death" (Doxiadis 1965: 15). This ideal, however, more likely reflects the reality that Islamabad

could only expand in one direction due to Rawalpindi and the Western Himalayas bordering three of its sides.

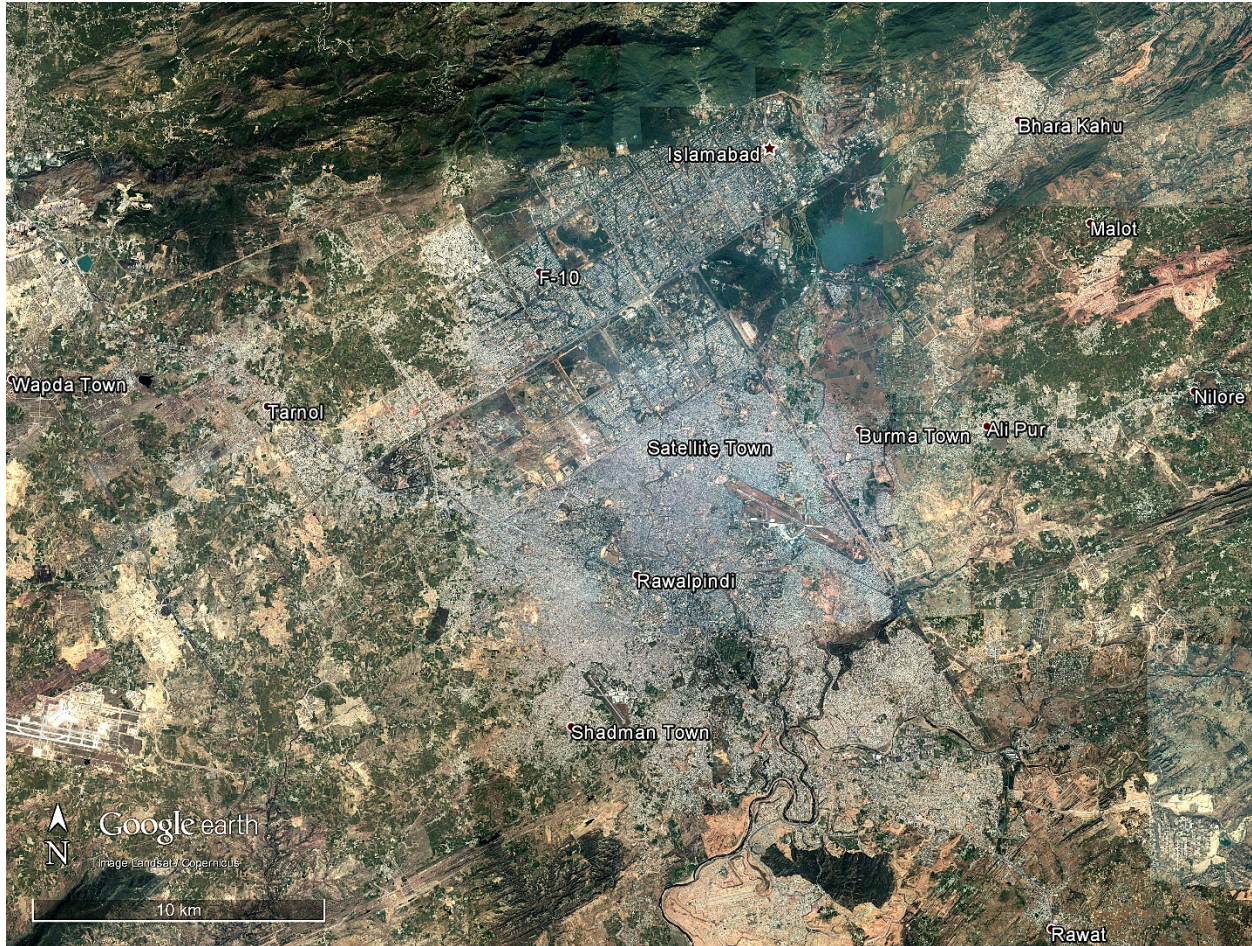
Doxiadis' Islamabad plan consisted of four lines of 2000 x 2000 m squares, which he determined to be the basic human settlement for the past "five or six thousand years" (Doxiadis 1965: 26). He claims to have observed this layout in Pakistan's ancient ruin of Mohenjo Daro (Doxiadis 1965: 21). Doxiadis' plan used highways and open green space to separate the grid squares but lacked the defined monumental core of Washington, DC and Brasilia (Fig. 4). The monumental government and religious buildings have come to occupy areas outside the plan in the city's foothill margins in the north and east. Like Brasilia, Islamabad was only supposed to house government employees and the country's administration (Hull 2009: 453), and its grid squares were each to house diverse socio-economic groups (Mahsud 2013: 113) to whom the government would allot housing commensurate with rank (Hull 2009: 460). Unlike Brasilia, Doxiadis favored houses over apartments and tried to plan neighborhoods in hierarchical units from the household to district levels (Mahsud 2013: 107-111). Since Doxiadis considered the grid to be the natural form of human settlement, he believed that Islamabad would expand infinitely westward as people continued to lay-out new grid squares.

Most of Doxiadis' predictions did not come true. Only one grid square was built according to Doxiadis' original plans, and its infrastructure is now crumbling (Mahsud 2013). The grid squares did not expand beyond those originally planned, and later additions to the city tend to follow existing rural land allotments that are purchased piece by piece (Hull 2009: 477-479). The civil service has grown far beyond the available housing, and numerous other competing factors now determine who occupies Islamabad's neighborhoods (Mahsud 2013; Hull 2009). Doxiadis stressed low-income and laborer's housing being one of the city's first concerns (Doxiadis 1965:

17), but the city's poor residents now live in squatter settlements in the open green spaces, especially along depressions and waterways (Mustafa 2005; Mahsud 2013: 111-112). Despite housing availability issues, the city's low density and open plan remain, as seen on the 2017 satellite image in Fig. 5 where Rawalpindi is far more densely occupied than Islamabad. The open plan and Western-style amenities continue to make Islamabad attractive to Pakistan's wealthiest citizens (Mahsud 2013: 114). This attraction drives the city's growth but further exacerbates economic inequalities.



*Fig. 4: Constantine Doxiadis' Islamabad plan, after Doxiadis 1965: Fig. 27*



*Fig. 5: Islamabad and Rawalpindi, 2017 Landsat*

#### **Id. Nationalism, modernism, and unity in post-colonial capitals**

These three cities, while demonstrating variability in location, plan, and government structure, show common themes of symbolizing national unity and a modern state, devotion to a charismatic individual, refocusing national economic and administrative apparatuses, and failure to adequately plan for the urban population's needs. These capitals endowed citizens with national ideals and knowledge about their roles as citizens. The cities also symbolized to the rest of the world that each country was modern, advanced, and an international player. Washington, DC's National Mall represents both democratic ideals and imperialist grandeur. Brasilia represents

Brazil as a developed and rising power and a vast and diverse country embodied not only by its coastal cities, but also its vast interior. Islamabad showcases the military's authority and role in creating an orderly, unified, moral, and modern society. These cities embody a break from the past but are also rooted in past legitimation. Washington was first represented like a past world empire and later exhibited museums that revealed the nation's history and vast collections of art and technology. Brasilia's planners advertised the creation of Brazil as akin to early explorers discovering Brazil's interior (Holston 1989: 208), and the Pakistani military governors attached themselves to the country's Islamic identity. All these representational schemes demand citizen participation. Even the most authoritarian modern capitals like Pyongyang, North Korea are built for citizen participation so long as their participation supports the government and national ideals.

While symbolizing national unity and collectivism, these capitals also each celebrate charismatic individuals. Washington, DC is named for George Washington, the US's first president, and the city's most prominent monument in the center of the monumental district is dedicated to him. Kubitschek was very keen that Brasilia would be his achievement and not associated with any other president. He ensured that the entire city would be planned, constructed, and inaugurated during his five-year presidential term. For Islamabad, while Khan and his government probably made most decisions, Doxiadis used academic publications to usurp all agency in the eyes of Western audiences. He published in scholarly journals and attributed decisions, which Khan's government likely made on Islamabad's location and shape, to "Ekistics", his own unique "scientific" understanding of the world (Doxiadis 1965). For example, Doxiadis' argument that a linear parabola is the ideal form of a city (Doxiadis 1965: 16-17) is not based upon science as he writes, but the fact that Islamabad's intended location between Rawalpindi and the

foothills formed this shape. Whatever the reality, his writings preserve his genius and agency for future observers.

The planners of each city associated it with regional economic and cultural developments. Washington was to be a great trade center for the US, Brasilia's was to drive growth in the vast central undeveloped plains, and Islamabad's founders and planners sought national industrial and rural development and to connect the country's cities to worldwide networks. The reasons for the capital's location each varied, and Lawrence Vale has compiled myriad reason for the location of capital cities, quoted here in full:

A capital may be located for reasons of climate, which could push it into the interior or toward an area of great natural beauty. Its site might also be a function of geopolitical strategy, which could dictate that it be near or away from a sensitive border. A capital may be located at some central point for purposes of convenient access to and from all parts of the territory under its administrative control, or its placement may be deliberately eccentric to allow easy access to international trade routes. In addition, it may be chosen for its impact on regional development, which could require great distance between it and other existing cities. Alternatively it may be envisioned as purely an administrative enclave that could parasitically rely on the nearby presence of established economic, social, and cultural networks. Capital placement may result from the idiosyncrasy of an indigenous leader's autocratic decree or may be externally imposed to service the needs of an overseas power. A capital may be established as a kind of binding center to mediate among rival regional or ethnic factions, or it may be sited explicitly to favor the claims of one group over others. So, too, the designation of a capital may be part of an attempt to revive some period of past glory or to disassociate a place from more recent historical events. And, finally, a capital may be selected to maximize international visibility, or it may be chosen for more purely domestic and regional reasons. The choice of a capital city is nearly always the product of compromise among these competing motives, frequently ones that seem most mutually contradictory (Vale 2006: 14).

While addressing regional concerns, all planners and governments failed to address the concerns of the populations that would live in the capitals, and these populations had to create their own spaces through negotiations and tensions with both city and national officials.

## **II. Building states and “national” identities in the LBA**

Twentieth Century AD nation-states and LBA Near Eastern territorial-states both reveal connections between founding capitals and state-building. The post-colonial capitals defined national aspirations, ideals, and expectations to citizens. To domestic and international audiences, these capitals symbolized nationalism and modernism and revealed governments as powerful forward-looking forces at home and abroad. However, LBA Mesopotamia was a very different world from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century AD, and ancient Mesopotamian societies did not think in terms of nationalism and modernism. “Kings of the Universe” ruled states and monumental palaces and temples towered over mudbrick cities. These palaces and temples created a similar monumental/mundane juxtaposition as the monumental plazas of post-colonial capitals, and the planned spaces of LBA capitals also sought to represent aspects of the state to urban, regional, and international audiences.

LBA urban and regional planning also reflects concerns of unifying fragmented landscapes of city-states, tapping international networks, and expanding the state’s cultivatable land. Mesopotamian cities, like modern cities, housed people of all classes in both urban neighborhoods and squatter settlements, but Mesopotamian capitals often also held large populations of prisoners of war (see 4.IIe). LBA Mesopotamian rulers, like 20<sup>th</sup> Century AD nations, rooted their legitimacy in ancient history while simultaneously differentiating themselves from their predecessors and revealing themselves as advanced to their international peers. While Mesopotamians may not have thought in terms of national identity, Mesopotamians expressed identities that went beyond familial or tribal affiliations. This dissertation explores what was akin to an LBA Mesopotamia “national” identity and how rulers used capital cities to exert this identity onto their own subjects and to impress international audiences.



Post-colonial capitals present an amalgam of the needs and desires of governments, architects, urban planners, and diverse urban populations. From LBA Greater Mesopotamia, neither the names nor titles of anyone involved in planning besides the king have survived. Administrative texts deal with government officials and bureaucrats (Van de Mieroop 1997: 118-141), but never mention architects or designers. In textual and pictorial records, kings throughout Ancient Mesopotamian history usurped all artistic and intellectual agency. Some of the earliest Mesopotamian royal inscriptions show the king carrying the mud to make bricks, and this motif continues for two millennia, from the Early Dynastic King Ur-Nanše (c. 2500 BC) of the city-state of Lagaš (Fig. 6) to Ashurbanipal (c. 668-631?) (Fig. 7), the last king of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Gudea (c. 2100 BC), another king of Lagaš, had statues made of him drafting the plans for a temple (Fig. 8). He declared that, in a dream, Ningirsu, god of Lagaš, ordered him to build his temple, and Gudea describes himself personally making the bricks and constructing the temple (RIME



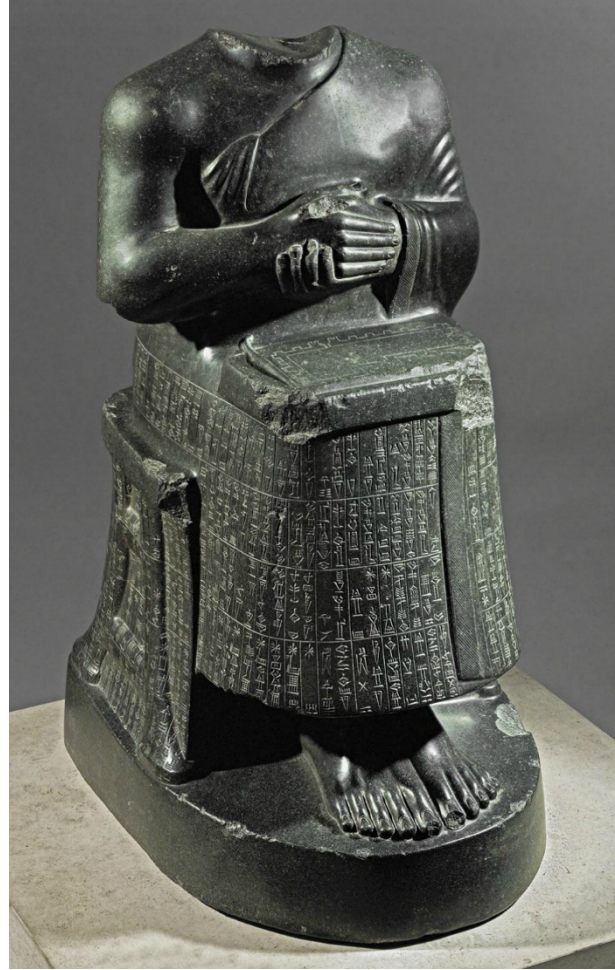
*Fig. 6: Limestone plaque depicting Ur-Nanše (c. 2500 BC), from Girsu (Telloh), after Sarzec 1884-1912: Pl. 2bis.1*

3/1.1.7.CylA). The royal inscriptions from the LBA capitals that are the subject of this dissertation also ascribe all urban planning agency to either the kings or gods.

The dearth of records from individuals not involved in the highest echelons of government severely hampers investigations of how



*Fig. 7: Ashurbanipal (668-631?) stele from Babylon, BM 90864; Image: [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=369186&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=369186&partId=1)*



*Fig. 8: Diorite Gudea with temple plan and stylus, from Girsu (Telloh); Louvre AO2, Image: Artstor*

Mesopotamian populations interacted in these capitals. Post-colonial governments used their capitals to stress civic participation. How residents of LBA capitals participate in constructing the capital or factored into city planning is of great interest but difficult to determine. Prior studies of new Mesopotamian capitals have usually avoided discussing the population or gone so far as to argue that the cities were never populated (Carter 1992a; Eickhoff 1985: 16-18; Ghirshman 1966; 1968; Joffe 1998; Van de Mierop 2007: 68-80; Harmanşah 2013: 102-152). Harmanşah (2013) studied Iron Age Assyrian capitals to understand the “negotiation of, and the dialectic between”

“the work of the political elite” and “the material practices” of urban dwellers who transformed the planned cities (Harmanşah 2013: 5). His analysis of “long-term processes of landscape change and settlement history; production of urban space through large-scale building projects; [and] the development of symbolically charged architectural technologies” (Harmanşah 2013: 8) yields an excellent study of monumental architecture and the kings’ intentions in altering the landscape. However, his case studies neither address the material practices of urban dwellers nor how these people changed the urban spaces, primarily because such data has not been recovered for his case studies. In this endeavor, this dissertation also ends up falling short of my desires. I too primarily investigate the most readily available archaeological data: settlement patterns, monumental architecture, royal inscriptions, and architectural technologies. However, as the data allows, I probe the layouts of cities, changes in urban space, and possible evidence of interaction among different groups (see 1.Va).

Planners of post-colonial capitals rigidly engineered residential spaces but failed to account for neighborhood nuances and the full spectrum of urban life. To understand the lives and spatial practices of urban populations, archaeologists and historians have given specific focus to urban neighborhoods (Keith 2003; M. L. Smith 2003; Stone 1987; Van de Mieroop 1992; M. E. Smith 2010a; Smith and Novic 2012). For Mesopotamia, all such studies (Keith 2003; Stone 1987; Van de Mieroop 1992) focus on the Old Babylonian period (first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC) because, compared to other Mesopotamian historical periods, a large body of Old Babylonian texts from private individuals survive (Van de Mieroop 1992: 3; Goddeeris 2007: 198). Cities of the following LBA (second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC), the focus of this dissertation, have not yielded private written correspondence (Biggs 1965). Neighborhood data for the LBA capitals is limited to very selective excavation and surface survey data that offer little information about the

internal structure of neighborhoods. My investigation of new capital construction and urban planning focuses instead on how different urban districts were segregated and how urban and regional LBA populations would have interacted with the new capital's monumental spaces and administrative and commercial schemes. The populations of LBA newly founded capitals came from throughout territories and beyond. The internal structure of a city, external regional settlement systems, and all the areas in-between are different nodes in the interaction sphere of populations and define the overall spatial makeup of the cities and their place in the surrounding region.

Post-colonial governments stress civic participation in their capitals. Civic participation is once again difficult to assess in Mesopotamia when texts are absent. Studies of First Millennium BC Kalhu (Nimrud) (Harmanşah 2013) and Babylon (Van de Mieroop 2003) both rely on textual sources to reconstruct participation in urban festivals. Harmanşah uses the "Banquet Stele," which tells how many people participated in festivities that inaugurated the Neo-Assyrian king Assurnasirpal II's (883-859 BC) new palace at Nimrud (Harmanşah 2013: 115-119). Van de Mieroop (2003) uses texts and archaeology of the Neo Babylonian period (626-539 BC) to reconstruct how people would have experienced the Babylonian New Year's Festival. The textual sources used in these studies are invaluable and show the importance of civic participation in ancient Mesopotamia, but similar sources are unfortunately quite rare.

With the usual absence of texts to specifically tell archaeologist what they want to know, many archaeologist use various ontological, social, and spatial theories<sup>2</sup> to ascertain how people used and constructed the spaces uncovered in the archaeological record (Anschuetz *et al* 2000; Alcock 2001; 2002; Bender 2001; 2006; Knapp and Ashmore 1999; Ashmore 1989; Knapp 1999;

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<sup>2</sup> Popular ontological/spatial/social theorists include: Merleau-Ponty 1962; Heidegger 1971; De Certeau 1984; Lefebvre 1991; Giddens 1984; Bourdieu 1977

2009; Tilley 1994; Bradley 1998; 2002; A. T. Smith 2003; M. L. Smith 2014; Canepa 2010; Forbes 2007; Barret and Ko 2009; Harmanşah 2007; 2011; 2013; Pauketat 2007; Leone 1984; Whitmore 2007; Lumsden 2004). Theories on the production of space help to analyze how urban spaces presented ideologies and how peoples' involvement in constructing the city reinforced hierarchies and transformed identities. Pred (1984) argues that people coming together to work on projects from household work to large-scale endeavors constantly produce and reproduce spaces. Lefebvre (1991: 33-39) identifies three concepts for analyzing how people produce spaces: "spatial practice" or the daily routines of individuals utilizing the spatial realities that surround them, "representations of space" or conceptualized mental or pictorial images of spaces that people generate, and "representational spaces" or symbolic space that is "directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols." Representational space thus concerns not only the image and symbolism on a rock relief of a king, but also how people interact with the relief and how its message is received and relates to social structures and relationships of the society.

By looking at people's spatial practices and representational spaces, archaeologists can look across the social spectrum to analyze the political, social, and religious processes that produced spaces and contributed to the genesis, reproduction, and breakdown of social structures and relationships. Harmanşah (2013) investigates how new cities transform the environment, engage with people through spectacle and performative events, form a part of political discourse, and eventually become a part of collective memory. Pauketat (2007) argues that early large agglomerations of people, such as Cahokia, Illinois, resulted from people coming together from across regions into single focal points that become malleable centers of diversity and constantly negotiated identities and political structures. Branting (2004) uses GIS-T to investigate interaction places at various transportation nodes outside of neighborhoods at the mid-1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BC city

of Kerkenes Dag in central Turkey and shows that this interaction resulted in monumental structures on major transportation arteries outside of the main administrative areas.

Adam Smith (2003: 72) argues that space “is a product of negotiations between an array of competing actors with varying practical capacities to transform these relationships.” In LBA Mesopotamia, the king arguably had the greatest freedom and ability to participate in the production of space. However, numerous factors of Mesopotamian society had limited the power of kings, and LBA dynasties experimented with ways of manipulating the landscape to exert their power over it and the people who dwelt therein. As LBA kings unified territorial-states and exerted regional control, they attempted to merge their own identities into a state or “national”<sup>3</sup> identity. These kings represented themselves as divine monarchs with total control, and their populations needed to experience the representational spaces to become unified in their submission to the state. The kings used royal inscriptions, art, and architecture in the capitals and other cities to extend their presence and define and promulgate a royal ideology that linked the gods, the king, and the success of the nation state to its dependents. The kings commanded military forces and exerted their power through violence and land grants, but creating stable unified nations required more than intimidation. It required involving the populations in their state-building projects.

The new capital cities culminated regional projects to extend representational spaces and the king’s presence into the spaces with which people regularly interacted in life and death. These projects included restructuring the relationship between people and cities, inscribing the king’s name throughout the landscape, representing the state in the new capital, aligning the king with a “national” god, and increasing people’s interaction with representational spaces through royally sanctioned construction projects. The rulers revealed themselves as rulers over new kinds of states,

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<sup>3</sup> Richardson (2007:25) has also used the term “national” to describe LBA states

but at the same time reached into history, religion, and language to legitimize their unquestionable authority. To understand the projects undertaken by LBA polities, we must first understand the geography, social structure, technology, and kingship of the urban societies they experienced.

### **III. Bronze Age Mesopotamia: Geography, society, and history**

#### **IIIa. Geomorphology and climate**

Greater Mesopotamia comprises a large semiarid sedimentary basin occupying Iraq, Southwest Iran, and Eastern Syria (Fig. 1). The Zagros Mountains in the east, the Taurus Mountains in the North, Mediterranean coastal ranges to the west, and the Syrian Desert and Persian Gulf to the South form its borders. The gulf coast, the only sea outlet of Mesopotamia, saw sparse settlements in antiquity due to the presence of mostly tidal flats and marshes for over 100 km inland (Baeteman *et al* 2004; Heyvaert *et al* 2013). The major rivers of Greater Mesopotamia have headwaters spread over 1,500 km, ranging from the Taurus Mountains in Central Anatolia to the Zagros Mountains in Fars, Iran, and all end up as tributaries to the Shatt al-Arab, which drains into the Persian Gulf. The two largest Iraqi rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, both form in the Taurus Mountains in Eastern Turkey and run southeast towards the gulf. In northern Iraq and Syria, the courses incise into lowland plains until just north of Baghdad in Central Iraq. Here the land becomes very flat and the rivers run along raised aggrading levees and often split into numerous anastomosing channels. Due to its location on the west side of Asia in subtropical latitudes, Mesopotamia receives almost no rain between April and October, but during the winter, low pressure cells move through the area and dump precipitation as they hit the mountains (Wilkinson 2003: 17). Lowland areas close to the mountains can receive 200-400 mm of rain per year during the winter, but the Tigris and Euphrates regions of South Iraq, located more than 100 km from the

foothills, receive less than 200 mm of rain. Dry farming is possible in Northern Iraq (Assyria) where the rivers are incised, but in South Iraq (Babylonia<sup>4</sup>), people can only farm using irrigation.

### **IIIb. Mesopotamian cities**

The origins and definitions of cities and states are some of the most complex and hotly debated archaeological topics (Adams 1966; 1981; Algaze 2005; 2007; 2008; Alizadeh 1988; 2010; Childe 1950; Blanton 1976; Huot 1988; Hudson 1999; Jacobs 1969; Jacobsen 1943; Liverani 2006; 2011; Pauketat 2007; Sinopoli 1994; A. T. Smith 2003; M. E. Smith 2007; 2010; M. L. Smith 2003; Steward 1949; Wright 1977; Wright and Johnson 1975). Rather than define a city, I will here briefly describe the features and history of Mesopotamian cities, so the reader can form a general idea of the research subject.

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium BC,<sup>5</sup> the world's first cities and states arose in Greater Mesopotamia at Uruk in Southern Iraq (Algaze 2008; Liverani 2006), Susa in Southwest Iran (Wright and Johnson 1975; Potts 2016: 49-53), and Tell Brak in Northeast Syria (Ur 2014). Early cities were particularly numerous in the marshlands of far-south Iraq where Pournelle observes that people agglomerated on dune deposits and particular kinds of levees she calls "islands in the marshes" (Pournelle 2007). These and other cities across Greater Mesopotamia were centers of ritual, identity, commerce, administration, and defense for the regions that coalesced around them. Residents primarily had to utilize the resources found in the alluvial lowlands where these cities developed: reeds, palms, fish, sheep, and clay. By the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium urban residents extracted, by trade or force, other resources, such as metals, timber, and stone, from other mountainous regions

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<sup>4</sup> I use the term Babylonia as a geographical term to indicate the area of Iraq between Fallujah and the Persian Gulf.

<sup>5</sup> Hereafter, all historical dates in this dissertation, unless otherwise noted, are BC



(Algaze 2008: 93-99). Urban and rural dwellers primarily used the local resources of reeds and clay in the form of sundried mudbricks to build all manner of structures from modest hovels to grand temples upon high terraces. The winter rains could turn such buildings back into mud, and so residents started incorporating asphalt and terracotta elements, such as cones, tiles, and kiln-baked bricks, into building exteriors to protect from weathering and for decoration.

The most important Mesopotamian resources were barley grown in irrigated or rain-fed fields and wool from sheep raised in the pastoral zone in the steppe beyond the irrigation zones and alluvial valleys. Urban and rural dwellers cultivated animal and plant resources in the vicinity of cities and circulated these goods among the city and surrounding regions. Silos stored the grain, which, in Babylonia, people moved among fields, towns, and cities by boat through canals (Steinkeller 2007: 191-192). According to the Kassite Map of Nippur, cities also contained orchards and gardens within their walls (Stone 1991). During the late 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium Ur III dynasty, the best documented period for urban employment, administrators, usually the state or temple, paid laborers with barley and wool (Waetzoldt 1987). The city of Ur employed 13,200 weavers during the Ur III period (Van de Mieroop 1997: 186), and paid rations for a full range of other occupations (Waetzoldt 1987: 121). The diversification of resources and land use patterns through exchange, agro-pastoralism, craft specialization, and construction helped sustain Mesopotamian cities and maintain continual flows of people and resources.

Mesopotamian cities were also the centers of ritual landscapes and often developed on already significant ritual spaces. Most of the largest Mesopotamian cities had a monumental temple complex or ziggurat dedicated to the city god at the highest point in the city (Stone 1991: 237). The earliest cities in Babylonia revolved around temples, which were, rather than a coercive ideological mask functioning only to exploit the countryside (Liverani 2006: 62-66), early centers

of production and exchange where the population gathered for consensual specialized meetings (Hudson 1999; Steinkeller 1993; 2007). Religion was one of the most important factors in Mesopotamian urban identity (Steinkeller 1993; 2007; J. N. Postgate 1992a), and temples reinforced identities and brought together disparate groups to function together in the city. Schneider (2011: 117) argues that in ancient Mesopotamia the “main function and justification of the state was to supply what was necessary to the gods.” The monumental and mundane aspects of Mesopotamian cities including agricultural fields, canals, residential neighborhoods, harbors, public architecture, and walls all involved religious beliefs and rituals. Old Babylonian neighborhoods at Ur contained neighborhood chapels and household shrines (Wooley and Mallowan 1976: 29-31), and public works like canals and wells were among the earliest Mesopotamian structures inscribed with dedications to deities.

Mesopotamian society was very pluralistic with multiple cultures, languages, and religions existing in the same city (Van de Mierop 1997: 101-117), and cities became religious and cultural focal points for these different groups. Steinkeller argues that religion “cemented and perpetuated social and economic relationships between the settlements within individual city-states” in Babylonia (Steinkeller 2007: 206). Cities each had their own gods, and Mesopotamians believed that the gods of city-states were integrated into a pan-Mesopotamian pantheon. Religious ritual not only linked people within a city, but also the city and the surrounding region. For example, Steinkeller (2007) highlights a boat trip taken by Gudea (c. 2100), ruler of Lagaš, upon starting a building project on the Ningirsu Temple. Gudea uses the interlinking canal system to visit the deities who dwell in different temples along the route and consult them about the project (RIME 3/1.1.7.CylA). Representatives of rural clans also played a central role in the new temple’s groundbreaking ceremony (*ibid*). This powerful sense of identity created by the religious and ritual

role of the city allowed for the continual occupation and reoccupation of Mesopotamian cities even after precipitous disasters like destruction by invading armies (Stone 1987: 19-29) or the relocation of sustaining rivers (Brinkman 1984).

Cities hold religious and economic authorities, either as a city council, temple aristocracy, king, or a combination of these. The administrative system for most Mesopotamian states c. 3500-1595, prior to the LBA, was the city-state system in which cities up to 500 ha controlled small territories around them and existed in a regional system with other city-states (Stone 1997). During the period of the city-state system, the majority of the settled population, up to 80%, dwelt in urban centers over 40 ha and secondary settlements were lacking (Adams 1981: 90, 137-138; Falconer and Savage 1995). Stone observes from data that shows the presence of houses of different sizes within neighborhoods and objects associated with wealth throughout different areas of Nippur (Stone 1987), Maškan Šapir (Stone and Zimansky 2004), Lagaš (Stone 2013: 165-168), and Khafajah (Stone 1997; 1999; 2007; 2013; Stone and Zimansky 2004: 1-5) that neighborhoods in the cities of Mesopotamian city-states were not segregated based upon class. She argues, based upon parallels to the Yoruba city-states of West Africa and Medieval Islamic cities, that Mesopotamian city-states were segregated according to affiliations of kinship, occupation, or ethnicity rather than class because the powerbase of elites was within these district-level affiliations rather than derived from the king (Stone 1997; 1999; 2007; 2013; Stone and Zimansky 2004: 1-5).

The excavated neighborhoods of Old Babylonian Ur and Van de Mieroop's analysis of the associated texts also show neighborhoods segregated according to occupational affiliations and the presence of very wealthy individuals and houses of varying sizes within each residential excavated area (Van de Mieroop 1992; Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 12-39, 95-168, Pl. 116, 122, 124; Stone

and Zimansky 2004: 5). In these cities, kings had power limited by these various urban factions, the power of families waxed and waned, social mobility was high (J. N. Postgate 1992a: 260-74, 299-301; Stone 1997; 1999; 2007; Stone and Zimansky 2004: 1-5; Steinkeller 1992), and city and countryside interacted through exchange and public markets (Trigger 1993: 9). These city-states were temple-centric and the gods of all the city-states fit into a flexible pantheon that bound the various Babylonian city-states into a unified cultural system.

### **IIIc. History of city-states and empires: c. 2600-1595<sup>6</sup>**

The history of kings placing inscriptions throughout cities and regional landscapes begins in the Early Dynastic III Period (c.2600-2300). These kings always experienced resistance and checks on their authority mostly related to the power dynamics of the temple and the military within the city-state. During this period, charismatic kings of the cities of Kiš, Ur, Umma, Lagaš, and Uruk left behind the earliest Mesopotamian building inscriptions that commemorate their construction projects, military endeavors, and territorial ambitions (Frayne 1998). These kings became bent on conquering their neighbors, and power fluctuated among the various city-states.

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<sup>6</sup> For chronologies and kings lists, the reader may consult the following chronologies that are followed in this dissertation:

-1st Millennium BC: Liverani 2014: 486

-LBA (1500-1100 BC): Gasche *et al* 1998: Chronological table on back flap (available online at <https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/misc/dating-fall-babylon-reappraisal-second-millennium-chronology>)

-Old Babylonian Period (2026-1595 BC) Charpin 2004: 385-391.

Charpin follows the Middle Chronology for the early 2nd Millennium BC. Assyriologists and archaeologists debate the dates before the 15th Century BC because no secure synchronisms exist between the Late 2nd Millennium LBA and the Early 2nd millennium Old Babylonian Period. Good internal chronologies exist, but we do not know the amount of time that passed between the last Old Babylonian King and the earliest LBA king for whom we have exact dates. Thus High, Middle, Low, and Ultra Low chronologies exist. The reader may consult the following for support or critiques of these chronologies: High, based on observation of the planet Venus (Gurzadyan 2000; 2003); Ultra low, based upon pottery (Gasche *et al* 1998; Cole 2014); Low, based on names of obscure kings in tablets from Tell Muhammad (Boese 2008; van Koppen 2010; Gentili 2003-4; 2013; Paulus 2014: 2); Middle, supported by Anatolian dendrochronology dates (Manning *et al* 2001; Barjamovic *et al* 2012; Larsen 2015)

The earliest of what might be called a Mesopotamian imperial title shows up on these early inscriptions: King of Kiš. Kiš was a city-state in Northern Babylonia, and kings used the title King of Kiš regardless of whether or not they actually controlled Kiš (Frayne 1998: 67; Steinkeller 1993). According to the Sumerian Kings List, Kiš was the first city to control Mesopotamia after the Great Flood, and Early Dynastic inscribed evidence indicates that Me-silim, a king of Kiš c. 2600, once controlled the southern cities Umma, Adab, and Lagaš. None of his building inscriptions survive, but he dedicated objects in temples at Lagaš and Adab and named the governor of those cities who served him (Frayne 1998: 69-71).

Many boundary stone inscriptions of different Early Dynastic kings from Lagaš complain that Umma crossed a territorial boundary set up by Me-silim. Another King of Kiš still held some control over Umma during the reign of Eannatum of Lagaš (c. 2400), because Eannatum's victory stele demands that "Kiš itself must abandon Giša (Umma)" (RIME 1.9.3.1). The King of Kiš responded to Eannatum's victory over Umma by forming a coalition and attacking E-anatum. E-anatum defeated this coalition and then himself claimed the Kingship of Kiš: "to E-anatum, the ruler of Lagaš, the goddess Inanna, because she loved him so, gave the kingship of Kiš to him in addition to the rulership of Lagaš" (RIME 1.9.3.5). Most of the kings of Uruk also called themselves "King of Kiš," and at least one sacked Kiš and took its king prisoner (Frayne 1998: 430). Other kings were eager to claim the same authority as Kiš, the city that initially defined an expansive city-state, and would claim the King of Kiš's title after defeating him.

The Early Dynastic Period came to a close when Sargon (c. 2296-2240) defeated Uruk, which controlled most of the Babylonian city-states, and brought all of Mesopotamia under his command (Liverani 2014: 133). He founded and ruled from a new city Akkade but, like the ED kings, used the title King of Kiš. Starting with Sargon, Assyriologists believe the title begins to

take on the meaning King of the World, Totality, or Universe and Kiš becomes a logogram for Akkadian kiššatu (totality) (Frayne 1993: 7; 1998: 67; Steinkeller 1993; Simmons 1959: 76; Liverani 2014: 148; CAD k). Kiš, Steinkeller asserts, became so associated with the idea of power that several Akkadian words sprung from it, including kašašu “to master”, kiššutu “power”, and kiššatu “totality” (Steinkeller 1993). Sargon and his successors Rimuš and Maništušu use this imperial title, but Naram Sin (c. 2213-2276), the fourth and probably most powerful king of the Akkadian Empire, never uses it, because, Moorey (1978: 172) argues, he had to quell a massive revolt started by the city Kiš. Naram Sin took a different title “King of the Four Quarters”, which became the preferred title for Babylonian imperial rulers. King of Kiš largely fell out of use among Babylonian kings after Naram Sin.

The revolt by the coalition of city-states at the beginning of Naram-Sin’s reign shows the precarious position of Mesopotamian Empires. The city-states still held some limited power and were always looking for any sign of weakness to exert their independence and dominance. The Akkadian kings took steps against this kind of opposition. They took over land in the various city-states and granted it to loyal officials (Foster 1982; Liverani 2014: 138). Naram-Sin declared himself a god, but in doing so inadvertently placed himself within the city-state system. Mesopotamian gods were gods of city-states, so he declared himself God of Akkade, thus fitting himself and Akkade into the system of city-state deities. These efforts at diminishing the power of city-states did not stave off the collapse of the empire after three generations. By the end of Naram Sin’s successor Šar-kali-šarri’s reign, all the other city-states had broken away and the king of Akkade was limited to being the king of the city-state of Akkade.

After another 40 years of city-states jostling for dominance, kings of Ur took over Greater Mesopotamia. During this Ur III period c. 2112-2004, kings attempted to control city-states by

appointing city-state governors. The Ur III kings also undertook monumental building projects within the cities and region-level agricultural projects to centralize and control production. However, despite the development of these control mechanisms, the appointed city-state governors were still from local aristocracies that sought independence (Steinkeller 1991). Like the Akkadian Empire, the Ur III Empire only lasted about a century. During the reign of Ibbi-Sin (c. 2026-2004), the individual city-states reasserted their dominance, and Isin and Larsa claimed independence. The Elamites and Shimashkians sacked Ur, and because the Ur III Empire was an extension of the city-state of Ur, once the city of Ur was defeated, the empire ceased. The ensuing political system was similar to the Early Dynastic Period but on a much larger geographic scale. City-states Isin, Larsa, Ešnunna, Mari, Aššur, and Babylon vied for dominance and occasionally would overtake one another. Hammurabi of Babylon (c.1792-1749) was the last to unify the region. His brief empire collapsed shortly after he died, and with it, the entire system collapsed. The Tigris and Euphrates had shifted far from their Early Dynastic positions, people abandoned the cities that had been the focus of Mesopotamian life for 2,000 years, and the historical sources fell silent.

#### **IV. The Late Bronze Age and the Amarna Period**

The Empires of Akkad, Ur, and Babylon all fell apart within a century because, despite a hegemonic city and ruler, the city-state system continued and city-states continued to hold varying degrees of autonomy (Brinkman 1974; Lambert 1964; Liverani 2014: 137-138, 187; Steinkeller 1991; Van de Mieroop 1992: 50). Trigger (1985; 1993) and Wenke (1997) describe the contemporary Egyptian state c. 2700-1100 as a territorial-state where urban centers also existed, but primarily acted as administrative outlets for the central government rather than commercial centers. These cities housed mostly the ruling class, and the rest of the population lived in rural

settlements and interacted with the urban elite primarily through taxation and corvée labor rather than through public markets (Trigger 1985; 1993: 10-11). The highly centralized nature of Egypt, where most settlements were under 10 ha, allowed for a unified state of Egypt to exist with some interregnum periods for over 1.5 millennia (Wenke 1997). A lasting territorial-state as described for Egypt could not have existed during the period of city-states in Mesopotamia because the multiple large competing city-states with strong local aristocracies hindered attempts to permanently centralize a region around a single ruling regime (Liverani 2014: 271).

The Late Bronze Age marked the end of the city-state system that had collapsed at the end of the Old Babylonian Period (Brinkman 1972; Liverani 2014: 271; Van de Mieroop 2007: 22; Harmanşah 2012; Wilkinson *et al* 2004). The first successful territorial-states in Mesopotamia were the Kassite state c. 1530-1155, which stretched from Bahrain (Potts 2006) to the Zagros highlands in Iran (Pons and Gasche 2006), and the Middle Assyrian State, which resulted from the city-state of Aššur growing to an expansive territorial-state that included much of Northern Iraq and Eastern Syria (J. N. Postgate 1992b; Harmanşah 2012; Kühne 1995). Under the Kassites, the majority of the population in Babylonia dwelt in rural settlements (Adams 1981: 130-155), and Northern Mesopotamian surveys reveal similar dispersed rural settlement patterns during the Middle Assyrian Period (Wilkinson 2000; Wilkinson *et al* 2004; Harmanşah 2013: 76-81). Despite overall ruralization (Richardson 2007: 23-26), the Kassite king Kurigalzu I (c. 1375) founded the c. 500 ha city of Dur Kurigalzu and the Middle Assyrian king Tukulti Ninurta I (c. 1244-1208) founded the comparably sized Kar Tukulti Ninurta.

The Kassites and Middle Assyrians were members of what Assyriologists call the Great Powers Club (Liverani 2000). The idea of the Great Powers Club is based upon international correspondence detailed in forty-three Akkadian letters found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through



clandestine digging at Tell Amarna, Egypt. In the letters, Kings of Egypt, Hittites (Turkey), Mitanni (Syria), Kassites, Aliyasa (Cyprus), and Assyria call each other brothers and discuss gift exchange, their palaces, and crimes committed against their people in other kings' territories (Moran 1992). Membership in the club required the status of a Great King of a country rather than a city. Egypt had long been such a unified state, and the other powers invented terms to reveal themselves as kings of countries rather than cities. The Kassites in Babylonia called themselves kings of a country called Karduniaš and the Assyrians dropped the title "Vice-Regent of the God Aššur" in favor of "King of the Land of Aššur." Elamite kings, who were outside of the Great Powers Club shifted from the title *Sukkalmaḥ*, which roughly translates as grand-regent or governor (Carter and Stolper 1984: 24), to the title "King of Anshan and Susa," a title that illustrated their territorial extent by citing two cities 460 km apart.

Great Kings often founded new capitals. After Kurigalzu I founded Dur Kurigalzu, the Egyptian King Akhenaten (c. 1352-1336) founded his own new capital Akhetaten, and the Elamite King Untaš Napiriša (c. 1340-1300) founded Al Untaš Napiriša. Al Untaš Napiriša, Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and Akhetaten all yielded inscriptions that boast that the king founded the city as sacred space on virgin soil to honor their supreme gods (Grayson 1987: 273; Murnane 1995: 75; Steve 1967: 60-77). Through founding the new capital, the kings showcased their divine creative powers over the landscape. They endowed landscapes with sacredness, and, along with religion, the most important factor of Mesopotamian urban identity, refocused, commerce and administration. The new sacred spaces included not only the temples, but the palaces and entire cities.

Within their new cities, kings commissioned sacred precincts and palaces to symbolize their divine abilities to unify vast regions and endow spaces with sacredness. Kings and planners during the Amarna Age devoted more resources, more space, and more reverence to palaces, which

symbolized a king's wealth and power, than to temples. Kings informed other kings when they constructed new palaces and needed gifts. In this correspondence among states practicing different religious traditions, temples, which had been the main focus of state resources, receive no mention. Religious structures, while an important facet of local identity, were of no concern to other kings who did not participate in the other state's religion. Kings invited other kings to celebrate the opening of a palace, not religious festivals. The architecture of the king in the Amarna Age was the palace, which extended the king's presence and presented him to international and domestic audiences. The palace was a reception vehicle for foreign dignitaries and citizens, and those privileged enough to enter would encounter a variety of spaces revealing experimentation and attempts at representing an empire and its ideals spatially and artistically.

The construction and implementation of the new capitals' monumental and mundane spaces involved experimentation and numerous alterations, sometimes over a short time period. Researchers often consider the layout of *ex nihilo* cities as fully pre-planned and projected over a virgin landscape, in contrast to "natural" or "organic" cities that had longer history (Van de Mierop 1997: 83-95; Joffe 1998). Joffe (1998: 51) argues that a newly founded capital ("disembedded capital" in his words) in Southwest Asia can be discerned from other cities in the archaeological record by the presence of "a non-organic urban pattern." A. T. Smith (2003: 225), however, argues that, "no system of planning, whether accomplished by a town council or by a family or by a single individual, is more natural than another." At Al Untaş Napiriša, all of the monumental structures have different orientations and styles, and at Kar Tukulti Ninurta very different architectural forms appear in a single building. Temples and palaces at these two cities have several sometimes radically different building phases occurring during the reign of a single king. At Akhetaten, the Great Aten Temple changed at least four times in only 12 years, and only

in the last years of the reign of its founder Akhenaten did it become the monumental temple initially seen in the archaeological record (Kemp 2012b; 2013). The plan of these cities in the archaeological record is not a single representation of space projected over the landscape, but instead resulted from authorities, planners, and populations adapting to each other and the realities of a space in which thousands of people interact. Ritual, administrative, commercial, and representational spaces constantly shifted depending on the fortunes and ideas of the rulers and the rest of the population.

## **V. Goals**

Dur Kurigalzu, Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and Al Untaš Napiriša contain monumental architecture and royal inscriptions that reveal ways of creating a territorial-state capital. They also exhibit neighborhoods, texts, and settlement patterns that reveal how different urban, regional, and international audiences interacted with these cities. Archaeological excavations of these cities spanned the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and followed very different methods and goals. A comprehensive investigation of the very different archaeological datasets available for each of these cities reveals how LBA powers used new capitals, inscribed material, and regional infrastructure to unify territorial-states, fulfill expansionary ambitions, and refocus regional interaction. This dissertation investigates each city's internal archaeological and textual data and external data of regional settlement systems, geomorphology, and infrastructure projects.

### **Va. Urban analysis**

I approach three primary issues concerning the internal evidence: how architecture and urban design in the new capital represented the king and the state, how the cities developed over

time through the involvement of different population groups, and how the cities' layouts segregated these different groups. The bulk of this investigation involves a thorough examination and reappraisal of each city's available excavation, geophysical, remote sensing, and surface survey data. I look for patterns in the spatial layout of urban districts and the kinds of objects and inscriptions found in different kinds of structures. I compare these aspects among the three different cities to look for parallels and unique characteristics. I also reappraise the data, if available, from the earlier capitals of each state.

#### **Va.i. Representing the king and empire**

City and architectural planners used spatial layouts, architectural decorations, and placement of inscriptions to exhibit religious ideas and represent royal power. The starkest presentation of the king's presence and authority was the juxtaposition of monumental and mundane spaces. I analyze the placement of royally-sponsored temples, palaces, and neighborhoods within the cities and note differences in building attributes, such as construction materials, decorations, and inscriptions, and locational attributes, such as elevations, land types, and proximity to other structures. These differences, when comparing the palaces and temples, can yield insights on the changing role of the palace as Mesopotamian LBA states evolved into more expansive states. The emphasis on palace or temple architecture varied across the different polities, and the separation or integration of palatial or temple structures reveals the king's role in state religion and the king's connections with the gods. Planners intended the cities, palaces, and temples to be experienced by different international and local audiences, and I analyze how different audiences would have received the architecture, art, and inscriptions.

Kings most directly presented their intentions and ideologies to future observers through their royal inscriptions. Mesopotamian royal inscriptions, which recorded dedications of buildings to deities, appear on either architectural material, such as bricks, cones, and door sockets, or stone, clay, or metal tablets placed either within or underneath buildings. From a king's titles alone, we can glean a great deal about how the king exhibited his empire to both local and international audiences and expressed his relationship to gods, people, cities, kings of other nations, and past or future kings. I compare the royal titles of different kings, noting how kings reference each other and used specific titles for different audiences. Inscriptions of different LBA kings show both change and continuity, and the way kings expressed their relationship with the landscape and the past could vary greatly. Kings could choose to associate themselves with past powerful kings or empires or exert their individuality. Some kings expressed desires to create new spaces while others only restored spaces created by prior kings. I establish correlations between changes in titles, the founding of the new cities, and different ways of interacting with the past. LBA Assyrian royal inscriptions also added a new section to their building dedications: the campaign narrative. These narratives of building and campaigning were inexorably linked, and through their juxtaposition, we can ascertain more about how Assyrian kings correlated building capital cities with expanding their territorial-state or empire.

To interpret the function and meaning of royal inscriptions, I analyze not only their content, but also their archaeological context. Styles of inscriptions, bricks, and architectural decorations varied among the Kassites, Assyrians, and Elamites, and each used textual and artistic media to display imperial narratives and extend the presence of the rulers through the spaces with which people interacted. During the LBA, kings experimented with ways to merge inscriptions and art. Building inscriptions, originally deposited below buildings or behind plaster, became increasingly

visible and were used with popular LBA decorative elements, such as molded bricks and vitreous materials (See 2.II, 3.VIIIb.iv, 4.IId.iii, 5.IIIa.i). I investigate the kinds of buildings on which these decorations occur, the audience for whom they were meant, and the different approaches across the three different case studies.

Kings also experimented with grouping different kinds of inscriptions within buildings. I analyze these inscriptions' locations and explore why certain types were grouped together in different contexts. For example: Assyrians spread palace inscriptions across many different types of buildings beyond the physical palaces (See 3.V, 3.VIa, 3.VIIIb.iv) and Untaš Napiriša created a sacred landscape by distributing inscribed spaces in the state's center and peripheries (See 5.VII). The way builders deposited and displayed inscriptions also reveal how they consecrated sacred space. Many LBA inscriptions, especially in Assyria, were deposited along with numerous small objects of precious materials. These objects, often labelled *streugaben*, were generally strewn underneath and within temples. I analyze the connection of these objects with the inscriptions and the connections between the *streugaben* and images that appear in wall friezes and murals.

#### **Va.ii. Urban planning and refined chronologies**

Planners and builders constructed and altered these new capitals during a single king's reign. While all three new capitals have at least some evidence of later occupation and rebuilding, the primary construction and occupation phases occurred during the reign of the royal founder. Many publications on these capitals lack detailed stratigraphic recording, and sometimes rapid rebuilding phases were only long enough to produce minute stratigraphic differences between building phases. Issues with understanding pottery chronologies persist in publications of these cities, especially for Al Untaš Napiriša (See 2.IIIb and 5.IVa). I observe which pottery forms

occurred together in different structures within Al Untaš Napiriša and compare these results to stratigraphically secure pottery from other sites and well-established published pottery chronologies. These pottery chronologies sometimes can establish contemporary buildings, long-term occupations, and the relationships between the city and wider regional projects.

Pottery chronologies, while useful for understanding different phases of long term occupation, are not detailed enough to elucidate different building phases and changing plans within a single generation. A detailed analysis of architectural incongruities and the context of different brick sizes and inscriptions can clarify these building phases. The early excavators of Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta extensively used minute differences in brick sizes for dating buildings to different rulers (see 3.VIb), and I test the efficacy of this approach to dating buildings by testing their results against other chronological indicators, which include the context of datable inscription and objects, such as particular kinds of glass that only date to certain time periods.

I introduce a new kind of dating, which I utilize especially for Al Untaš Napiriša: dating based upon brick inscription content and context (5.IVb). I categorize the inscriptions by the format of the dedications and seek parallels between the context of inscriptions in buildings and the dedication format used. I use this approach to both determine building phases and make inferences about temples that are mentioned in inscriptions but which have not been recovered archaeologically. Similar dedication formulae can indicate contemporary buildings and when observed with standardized building materials, forms, and orientations can reveal which areas may have been built and planned in tandem. These refined chronologies allow us to observe how the buildings changed over time during the reign of the city's founder Untaš Napiriša.

### **Va.iii. Social structure and segregation**

Planners of post-colonial modern *ex nihilo* capitals failed to address the spatial needs of the people who would come to live in the cities. The forces who planned and administered the LBA capitals would have had to, either through foresight or not, accommodate urban groups: where they would live, how to employ them, where they came from (coerced slaves and prisoners or willing immigration), and how they would interact with the monumental spaces (ex. construction, rituals, or festivals). Many aspects of the urban environment could determine the placement, integration, and separation of different population groups. These aspects include: elevations, walls, canals, drainage, land types, and access to other city districts. Our ability to interpret the cities' overall social structure depends upon how much excavation or surveys have explored different areas of the city. If only the palace and temples have been excavated, we can make few inferences beyond the juxtaposition of those two sectors. However, with a wide variety of excavation and geophysical data (Al Untaş Napiriša) or surface survey data (Kar Tukulti Ninurta) we can make conclusions about social structures within the city. I first examine architecture, building materials, and portable objects (wealth and class distinctions, foreign or local material culture) to broadly determine who lived in different districts and the function of different areas (commercial, residential, or religious zones). I then looked for patterns in the ways that districts spread across the city and mapped the boundaries, such as walls, canals, and drainage ditches, that separate these districts.

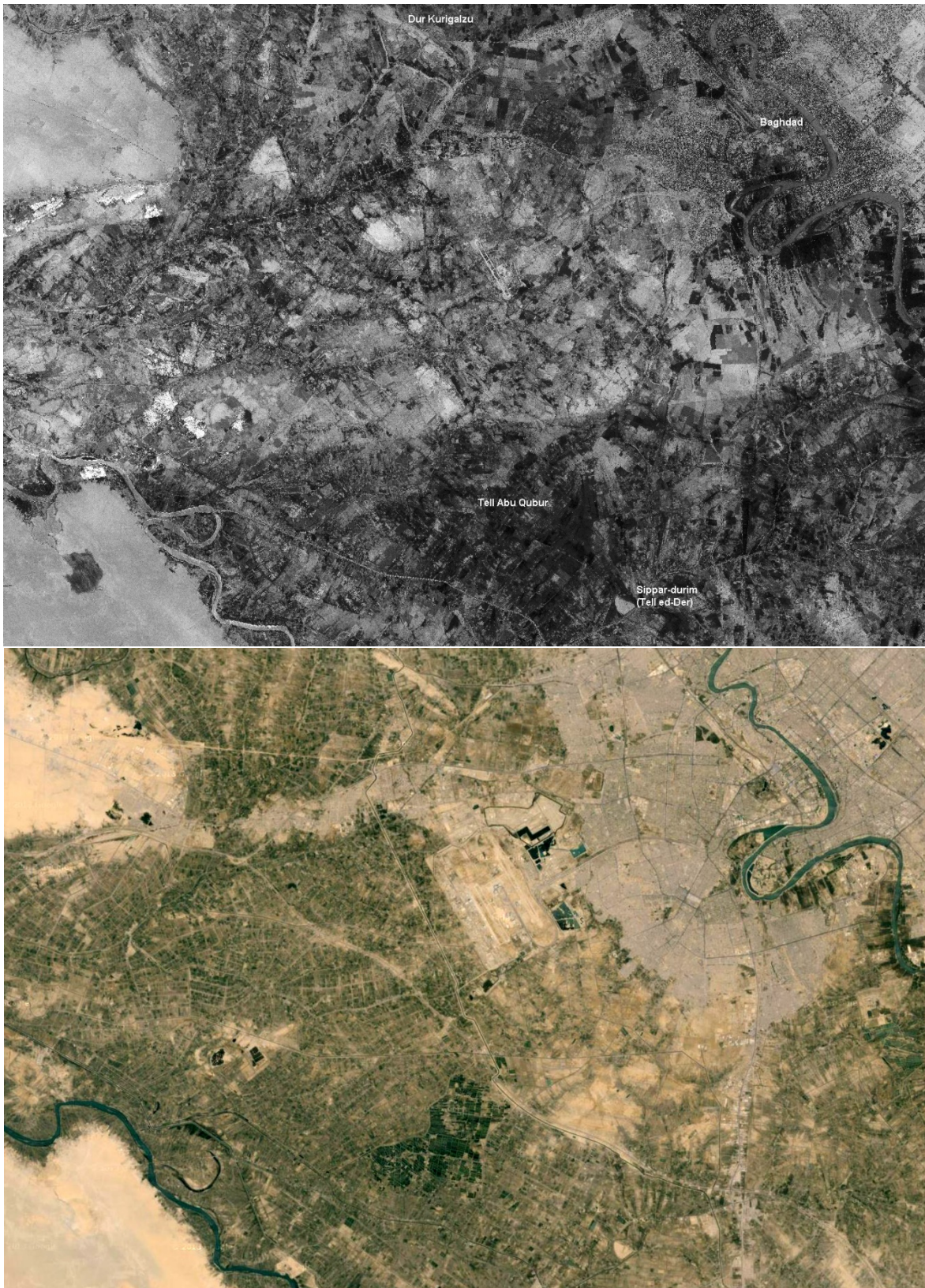
Walls and canals both separated districts and provided differential access to water and drainage. Finding these means of separation and resource procurement involves an analysis of surface survey and remote sensing data. Remote sensing includes airplane, drone, and satellite photography and other data, such as Digital Elevation Models (DEM), obtained from airborne and



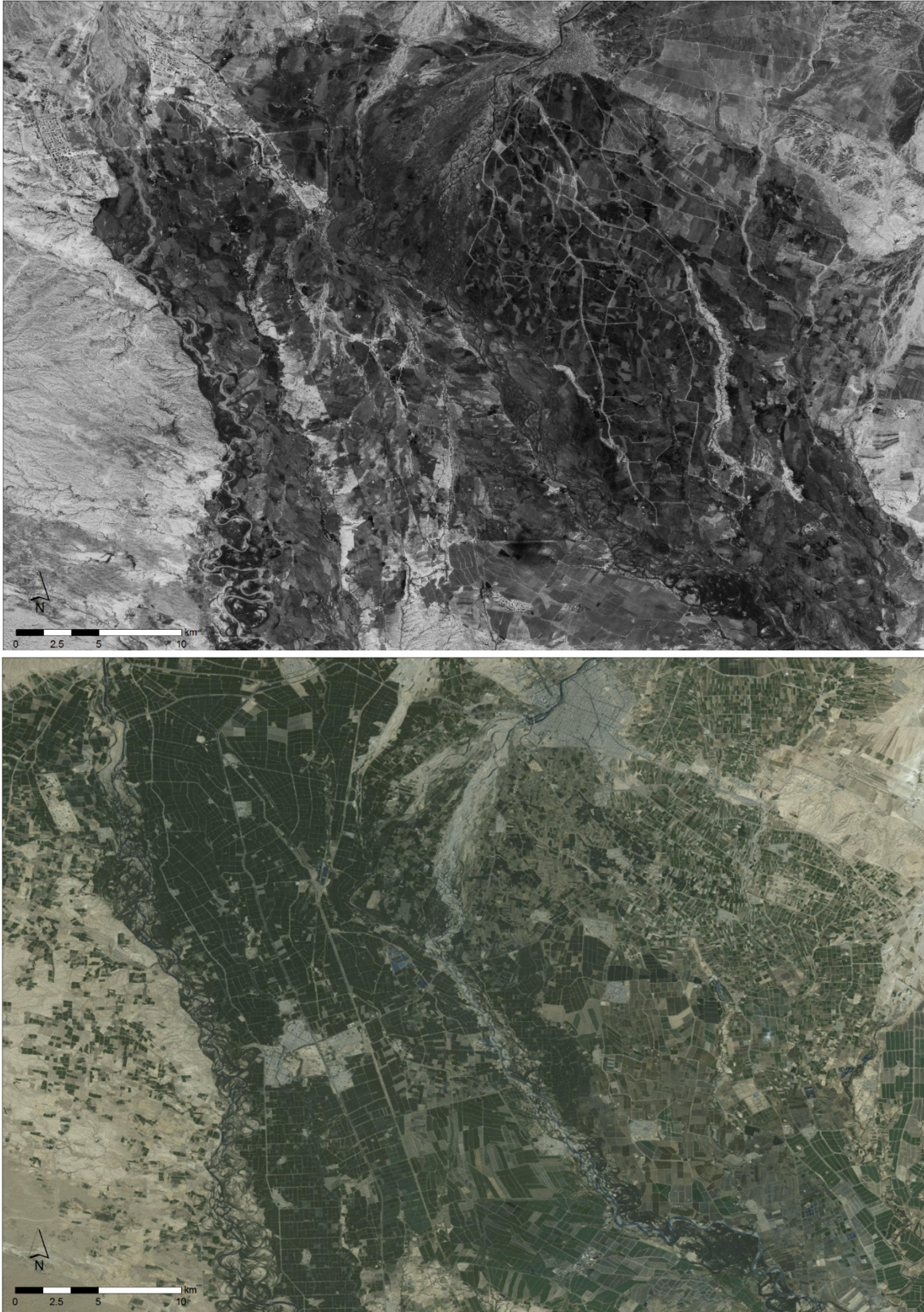
space-based instruments. Remote photography for this study includes historic aerial photographs, historic spy satellite images, and 21<sup>st</sup> century high-resolution images. For example, Ghirshman, excavator of Al Untaş Napiriša, published numerous aerial photographs that are useful for reevaluating the site. 1960's Corona spy satellite imagery used extensively in this study has become so ubiquitous in Near Eastern Archaeology that this tool needs little introduction (Alizadeh *et al* 2004; Altaweel 2008; Baeteman and Heyvaert 2004; Casana and Cothren 2008; Heyvaert *et al* 2012; 2013; Hritz 2010; 2014; Hritz and Pournelle 2015; Kouchoukos 2001; Menze and Ur 2012; Meyer 2004; Moghaddam 2008; Moghaddam and Miri 2007; Mühl 2013; Nováček *et al* 2013; Palmisano 2015; Pedersén 2014; Pournelle 2007; 2013; Scardozzi 2011; Stone and Zimansky 2004; Ur 2003; 2005; 2010; 2013; Ur *et al* 2011; 2013; Walstra and Heyvaert *et al* 2010; 2011; Walstra and Verkinderen *et al* 2010; Wilkinson *et al* 2004; 2005). Corona's greatest utility is for viewing landscapes before destruction by urban encroachment, industrialized agriculture, and warfare eradicated the traces of past landscapes. Fig. 9 and Fig. 10 compare 1967-8 Corona images to recent satellite images of the vicinity of Baghdad, Iraq and Shush, Iran. The traces of ancient canals and river courses crisscrossing the landscape and settlement mounds rising from fields on the Coronas are now mostly lost due to industrialized agriculture and urban encroachment.

## **Vb. Regional analysis**

In addition to the cities themselves, I also investigate external hinterlands and regional networks to understand the connections between the founding of new capitals and creation of Mesopotamian territorial-states. This pursuit evaluates settlement systems and region-level projects like canals using published survey data and remote sensing. Regional settlement surveys,



*Fig. 9: 1968 Corona and 2003 Landsat of Central Iraq*



*Fig. 10: 1968 Corona and 2014 Landsat of Khuzistan, Iran*

many undertaken in the 1950's-70's, include some of the world's earliest large-scale regional archaeological surveys and vary in coverage, focus, and understanding of pottery chronologies. Some important areas, like the region around Dur Kurigalzu, never experienced any intensive survey, and many earlier surveys lacked understanding of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium chronologies or comprehensive reconnaissance techniques. However, with an understanding of the survey methods used, we can employ data from some of these surveys towards understanding the regional settlement networks associated with the new capitals. Understanding the accuracy of chronologies and the way that each survey identified sites determines the utility of the data for interpreting settlement systems of the LBA. Using survey publications and some unpublished notes, I compare the index sherds from different surveys to current Mesopotamian pottery chronologies and then look for patterns across different surveys and any changes in LBA settlement networks from earlier settlement patterns.

Remote sensing fills in some of the gaps of incomplete settlement data and allows for better understanding both the regional infrastructure systems and urban plans. I use traces of canals and other surface features on Corona images, aerial photographs, historic maps, and DEM's (90 m SRTM (1999) and 30 m ASTER GDEMv2 (2011)) to determine how city planners irrigated the new capitals and why they chose certain landscapes for the erection of the new cities. To look at regional and urban issues, I have created a geodatabase incorporating settlement, geomorphic, climatic, textual, cartographic, and remote sensing data from Greater Mesopotamia. I use this database and GIS software to reconstruct waterways, interaction networks, and the former environments of cities and view how these changed over time. For southwest Iran, the geodatabase incorporates known inscriptions from different sites to view the spread of royal building projects

and give ideas on the links between the new capital and royal building programs across regions (Fig. 82).

## **VI. Plan of the present work**

Dur Kurigalzu, Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and Al Untaš Napiriša each yields different insights into how kings used the capital cities to create territorial-state identities around themselves and presented this identity to urban, regional, and international audiences. The available data from the three capitals and their regions determines which methods I use and which question I address for each case study. For Dur Kurigalzu, I primarily explore how the new capital related to Kassite regional goals. Babylonian survey data and texts allows us to reconstruct how the Kassites created a stable regional hegemony through upending the city-state system and refocusing regional interaction to their new capital Dur Kurigalzu. The Kassites also associated the earlier capital Babylon with their royal authority, but I can say little about this city, because archaeologists have not excavated its Kassite levels.

We have extensive datasets from both the Assyrian city-state capital Aššur and their new capital Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and I devote an entire chapter to each city. I observe changes in inscriptions and the urban layout of Aššur from its time as a mercantile city-state to its ascendancy as a territorial-state capital. The detailed foundation tablets left behind by Assyrian kings describe not only building projects but also campaign narratives. These tablets allow an interpretation of connections between the king's imperial persona, campaigning, and building. The context of these inscriptions at Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta and spatial relationships of the two cities and the buildings within reveals how these kings exhibited an Assyrian state

through consecrating sacred space, extending their presence into more and more spaces, and representing their imperial and divine personas.

The excavations of Al Untaš Napiriša have yielded the most datasets from a variety of districts throughout the city. It is the only one of these cities that has been subjected to a geophysical survey and excavated in its earliest non-palatial residential districts. Its thousands of recovered brick inscriptions allow for the detailed dating scheme described above. The variety of excavated spaces and micro-scale dating allow an interpretation of social structure within new territorial-state capitals and the ways that different population groups interacted. Al Untaš Napiriša has yielded a great variety of archaeological data, and our archaeological knowledge of the Elamite capital Susa pales in comparison. Settlement data, however, reveals how Al Untaš Napiriša related to state-building programs in the wider region. Comparing the diverse datasets from all these LBA cities allows for a better understanding of how new capital cities contributed to the development of LBA territorial-states and how different population groups interacting in the urban spaces and regional networks contributed to the creation of new “national” identities.

## 2.

### DUR KURIGALZU AND THE LAND OF KARDUNIAŠ

Tim Clayden (1996) concluded in the influential article “Kurigalzu I and the restoration of Babylonia” that a single charismatic Kassite King Kurigalzu I (c. 1375),<sup>7</sup> whose bricks from across Babylonia account for 2/3 of all Kassite royal inscriptions, conducted more building projects than any other 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Babylonian monarch. A more recent article by Bartelmus (2010) supported Clayden’s conclusions and calls Kurigalzu I’s actions “restoring the past.” Kurigalzu restored temple complexes in great ancient cities throughout Babylonia, but the notion of restoring Babylonia and the past implies an attempt to bring the landscape back to the way it was, to its former glory. While restoring the crumbling temples of the past, Kurigalzu fell within a long line of Kassite kings who upended the Babylonian administrative systems, social structures, and relationship between people and the landscapes they inhabited. To strengthen their control over this long volatile region, the Kassites sought to deliberately upend the ancient social structures of Mesopotamia and retool them as they saw fit. Kurigalzu may have restored temples across the landscape, but he also built a new capital Dur Kurigalzu to rival all other cities and refocus the Babylonian world to a new Kassite power and territorial-state.

In order to elucidate how the founding of Dur Kurigalzu was related to the Kassites’ larger aim of unifying the former Babylonian city-states, this case study investigates Dur Kurigalzu’s archaeological remains, survey data from southern Iraq, brick inscriptions, *kudurru* monuments, and remote sensing. These datasets reveal a relationship between Kassite land tenure policies, the founding of the new capital, and the longevity of the Kassite State. The Kassite Dynasty ruled over

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<sup>7</sup> The length of his reign is unknown

Babylonia for more than 300 years, longer than any other Mesopotamian empire. Prior empires could never hold a unified state together for so long because they always ruled over somewhat autonomous and factional city-states (see 1.Ic). The collapse of the city-state system following the end of Hammurabi's dynasty (c.1595) and the shifting Tigris and Euphrates courses allowed the Kassites to upend existing land tenure systems and refocus regional interaction away from now marginalized cities. The Kassites turned Babylonia into a new country called Karduniaš and stripped power away from depopulated cities and into the central government and loyalists. Archaeological evidence of Kassite land-use policies, such as depopulating cities, installing dendritic networks of rural settlements along canals, founding a new capital, and involving the population in large-scale infrastructure projects, show attempts by the Kassites to create a stable regional hegemony that was previously unachievable in Mesopotamia.

Data from regional surveys of Iraq undertaken between 1955 and 1975 show a drop in urban populations and increase in dispersed small rural settlements (see 2.III). These dispersed settlements cluster along canals that branched off the main river channels and created a system of dendritic nodes funneling resources and information through a settlement hierarchy directly linked to the capital. Dur Kurigalzu, an independent city detached from the earlier city-state system, was a part of this new system. Textual and archaeological evidence indicate that Kurigalzu successfully made Dur Kurigalzu a new sacred and administrative capital of Karduniaš, and it remained an important administrative center for at least 200 years until Marduk-apla-iddina (c. 1171-1159), one of the last Kassite kings. The area around Dur Kurigalzu has never been intensively surveyed, and so my study utilizes satellite imagery and historic maps to fill in the gaps and discern infrastructure projects and reasons for the location of Dur Kurigalzu. Dur Kurigalzu held an ideal



location for connections both within the state and to the outside world. Kurigalzu I utilized marginal land in a swampy area to found this new capital and open up new cultivatable areas.

### **I. The Kassite conquest of Babylonia**

Kurigalzu I ruled at the height of Kassite power. His substantial monumental building projects across Babylonia witness vast Kassite wealth and control over Babylonia and beyond during his reign. Kassite material culture and the possible extent of their influence stretched from Bahrain in the south, to Mari and Terqa (East Syria) in the Northwest, and the Central Zagros in the East (Pons and Gasche 2006; Potts 2006) (Fig. 11). Texts of the early Kassite state show that the Kassites conquered Babylonia and upended the existing city-state system to remake the landscape as they saw fit. While many Old Babylonian Period texts from Nippur concern transactions regarding private property among independent lineage groups (Stone 1987), Kassite records show full royal control of temple affairs, property, and irrigation systems (Biggs 1965). Kassite land grants commemorated on *kudurrus*, which were erected in temples, record kings awarding vast amounts of land to loyalists (Paulus 2014) and indicate that the king had firm control over the land of Babylonia and dispersed power to loyal constituents (Brinkman 2006: 25).

Few ancient sources shed light on the how the Kassites came to be masters of Babylonia or the events between the fall of Hammurabi's dynasty and Kurigalzu I. Kassites begin to frequently appear in Mesopotamian sources during the reign of Hammurabi's son Samsu-iluna (c. 1749-1712). These texts discuss Kassites living in Northern Babylonia and Eastern Syria, but no texts indicate their origins. Assyriologists generally place their origins east of Iraq in the Zagros mountains (Paulus 2011: 2; Sassmannshausen 1999; Charpin 2004: 273) where they are well attested in the 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium (Potts 2006: 113), but no direct textual or archaeological evidence

indicates this area was their original homeland (*ibid*; Clayden 1989: 53-55; Brinkman 1976-80: 467). According to Charpin, the Kassites made their initial foothold in Babylonia in the region of Sippar, and so they may have infiltrated Babylonia from the Zagros Mountains via the Diyala River (Charpin 2004: 273; Sassmannshausen 1999: 411-412).

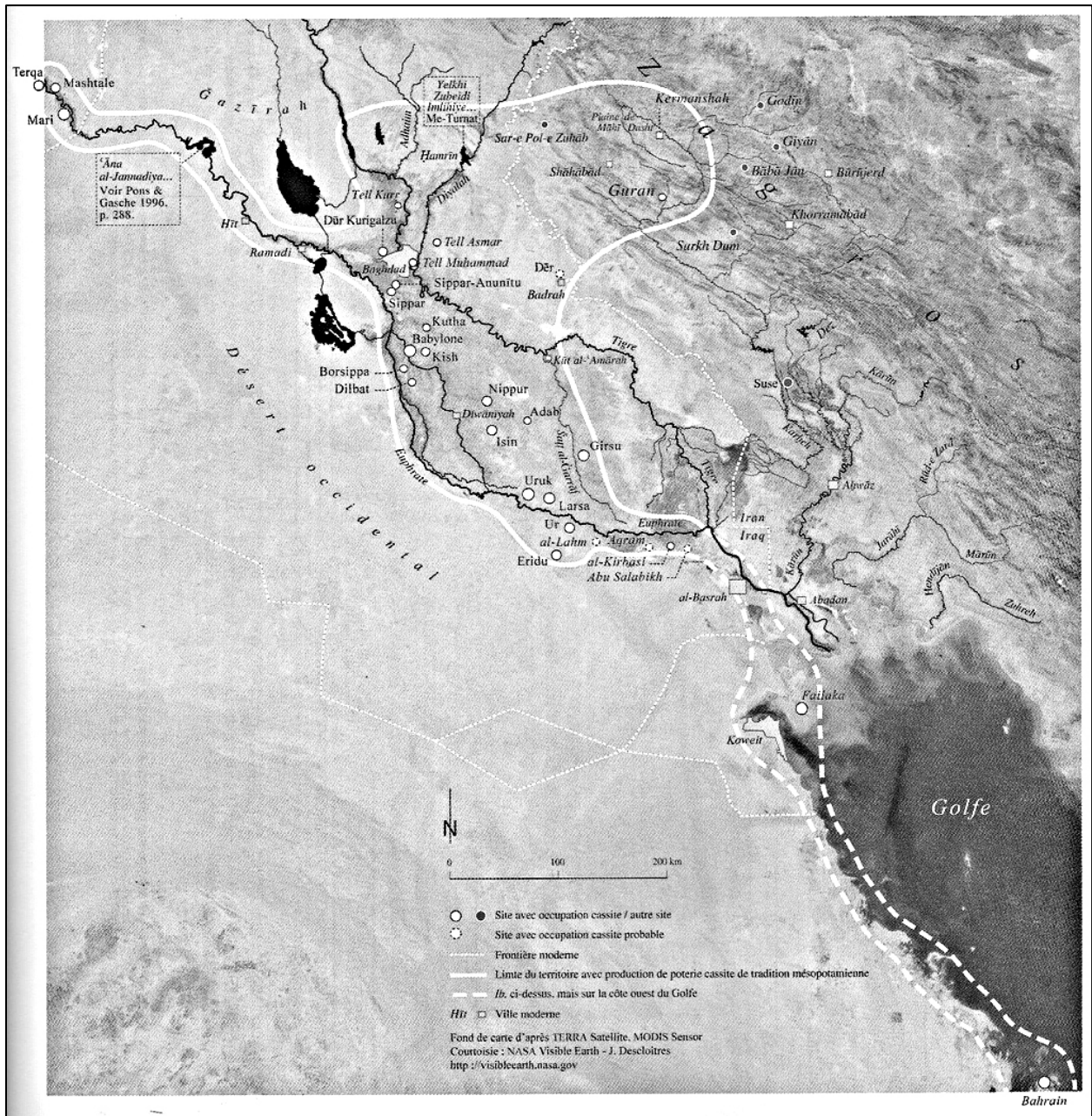


Fig. 11: Spread of Kassite Pottery, after Pons and Gasche 2006: 383

The earliest Kassite king for whom we have a good approximate date and a fair amount of archaeological evidence and royal inscriptions is Kara-indaš (c. 1413), probably the 15<sup>th</sup> Kassite king and two kings before Kurigalzu I (Brinkman 1976: 15-16). Kara-indaš's date comes from a known synchronism with the Assyrian King Aššur-bel-nišešu (c. 1417-1409). Inscriptions also survive of three earlier Kassite kings whose dates remain unknown. The 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium Babylonian Kings List A (BKLA) and Assyrian Synchronic Kings List (SyKL), which are used to reconstruct sequences of kings, only preserve the first seven and tenth Kassite kings (Brinkman 1976: 8-9), and no synchronisms survive between early Kassite kings and any Old Babylonian kings.

An original clay tablet inscription of Kaštiliašu III, probably the 12<sup>th</sup> Kassite King based upon his genealogy, commemorates a canal built to supply water to Nippur (Abraham and Gabbay 2013). Kaštiliašu declares that his father is Burna-burias I, the tenth Kassite king in the SyKL. However, Kaštiliašu does not call himself a king, but instead uses a new title “Governor (*ŠAKKANA*) of Enlil”. The Chronicle of Early Kings mentions a Kaštiliašu as the brother of Ulam-Burriaš, conqueror of the Sealand, a dynasty that controlled southern Babylonia during the early Kassite period (Grayson 1975: 156). At Babylon, archaeologists uncovered an inscribed stone of Ula-Burariaš (probably the same as Ulam-Burriaš) the son of Burna-Burariaš and king of the Sealand (Brinkman 1976: 318). Unfortunately we lack dates for these three kings, but we can say that by the reign of Kaštiliašu III, the Kassite kings controlled all Babylonia and commissioned regional infrastructure projects.

Inscriptions of two earlier kings also survive in 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium copies: Gandaš, the 1<sup>st</sup> Kassite king according to the Kings Lists (Brinkman 1976: 21, 127), and Agum Kakrime. Agum Kakrime is not preserved in the Kings Lists but his surviving inscription lists Kassite kings 2-6 as

his predecessors. Kaštiliašu III's inscription says his grandfather is Agum, and this Agum may be Agum Kakrime. Gandaš and Agum Kakrime, at least in the copies, both call themselves King of Babylon and Gandaš uses the title King of Sumer and Akkad (Oshima 2012: 242; Landsberger 1954: 68). Both commemorate restoring temples at Babylon, and Agum Kakrime declares that he retrieved a statue of Marduk that had been taken from Babylon to the land of Hana (Oshima 2012).

Gandaš's inscription mentions the conquest of Babylon, an event that must have happened during the reign of Samsu-ditana (c. 1625-1595), the last king of Hammurabi's dynasty of Babylon. Scholars have debated whether the Kassites conquered Mesopotamia by force or gained control through a slow peaceful infiltration (Clayden 1989: 48-56). Both Hammurabi's successor Samsu-iluna and his contemporary Rim-Sin II of Larsa fought against invading Kassite armies in 1743 in Northern and Southern Babylonia (Charpin 2004: 337-8; 372), but almost all scholars give credit for the final conquest of Babylon to the Hittite king Mursili I. They base Mursili's involvement on an edict of the Hittite King Telepinu who postdates Mursili by perhaps a century (Gasche *et al* 1998: 6). The edict states only that Mursili I "went to Babylon and destroyed Babylon" (Kuhrt 1995: 245). The Chronicle of the Early Kings also states "At the time of Samsu-ditana the Hittites marched against Akkad" (Grayson 1975: 156) but tells nothing more because the line does not fit the context in which it occurs: the Kassite conquest of the Sealand. Grayson argues a scribe "squeezed" it in from another source (*ibid*). A 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium ritual text called the Marduk prophecy also describes the twenty-four years Marduk lived in Hatti, but does not offer any dates or names (Foster 2005: 388-89).

Two texts published in the past 20 years argue that primarily the Kassites, not the Hittites, caused the fall of Babylon. A Neo-Assyrian tablet from Nineveh that contains copies of Old Babylonian extispicies includes an oracle of Samsu-ditana. This oracle bemoans Elamites,

Kassites, and Hanigalbateens laying siege to Babylon (Charpin 1997; 2004: 382-3). A recently published early *kudurru* of Kadašman Harbe also tells that fighting amongst the Amorites (likely the various Babylonian kingdoms Babylon, Larsa, Ešnunna, etc), Hanaeans (likely synonymous with the Hanigalbateens in the oracle), and Kassites eradicated the borders and land tenure system of Samsu-ditana's kingdom:

When the fighting of the Amorites, the attack of the Hanaeans, and the army of the Kassites altered the borders of Sumer and Akkad under Samsu-ditana, and the ground plans were rendered unrecognizable and no borders for enclosing had been created, at that time..."<sup>8</sup>

Kadašman Harbe lists these events as the reason he can award Marduk-Šamši-ili, a war leader and overseer of the Šamaš Temple, a substantial piece of land. The "ground plans", probably the earlier plans regarding land ownership in Babylonia had been cancelled and new allocations had not been drawn up. Neither of these Babylonian texts mention the Hittites, but instead tell that Kassites allied with Hana/Hanigalbat where Kings sometimes had Kassite names (Podany 2002: 43-51) took control of Northern Babylonia through force and upended the city-state system of land ownership.

Agum Kakrime's inscription also states that he retrieved the Marduk statue from Hana not the Hittites. Hatti, the location of the statue in the Marduk prophecy, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium could refer to anything west of the Euphrates, and so does not exclude Hana. Mursili I may have had some hand in the attack, but the divination inscription indicates the Kassites played an instrumental role in sacking Babylon. Kadašman Harbe I's *kudurru* indicates that the Kassites, at least by his time, believed that they themselves caused the collapse of the Old Babylonian borders and land tenure system. The reference to fighting among the Amorites indicates that the Kassite armies may

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<sup>8</sup> English translation of German translation in Paulus 2014: 296-297

have taken advantage of infighting among the Amorite kings (kings of Babylon, Isin, Larsa, etc) to overthrow the Babylonian system and rewrite the landscape as they saw fit. The Kassites intentionally eradicated the old systems of land ownership and power relations and actively replaced them with relationships favorable to them.

## II. The new land of Karduniaš

By the reign of Kara-indaš, the earliest Kassite king for whom a preserved piece of architecture survives, the Kassites were in full control of all Babylonia. Bricks excavated at Uruk, a city formerly controlled by the Sealand, commemorate an Inanna Temple commissioned by Kara-indaš. Many of these bricks were found within and in the vicinity of a small unusually shaped temple about 150 m northeast of the Ur Nammu ziggurat (Fig. 12).<sup>9</sup> This temple, a long-room temple with central cella directly in line with two very wide entrance gateways, has no direct parallels in Mesopotamian architecture and may be the only existing example of Kassite architecture (Clayden 1989: 59). Its unique features include double towers expanding diagonally outward from each corner and a freeze of molded brick divinities along the façade<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 12 and Fig. 13). The excavators found no molded bricks in the walls. These bricks were instead strewn along the ground in front of the walls and in a rubble pile containing inscribed bricks of many of the major builders of Uruk from Ur Nammu to Nabonidus (Jordan 1930: 32-33). The excavators had to completely reconstruct the façade, which they constructed as a fifteen-brick-high frieze of

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<sup>9</sup> Gasche *et al's* (1998: 8 nt 31) assertion that the excavators recorded no inscribed bricks closer than 50 m. to this temple is false. Schott (1930:53-54) records the context of brick #4237 in the temple debris and bricks #3211 and #3366 in Qc XV3, which is less than 20 m from the temple. Inscribed brick #3211 also had the same dimensions, color, and texture as corner bricks *in situ* on the temple (Jordan 1930: 33). There is no compelling reason to doubt Jordan's attribution of the Kara-indaš temple.

<sup>10</sup> See Clayden 2000 for a detailed discussion of molded brick Kassite architecture and its precursors.

divinities placed in buttresses around the entire building. The divinities hold vases from which water emanates and surrounds the whole building.

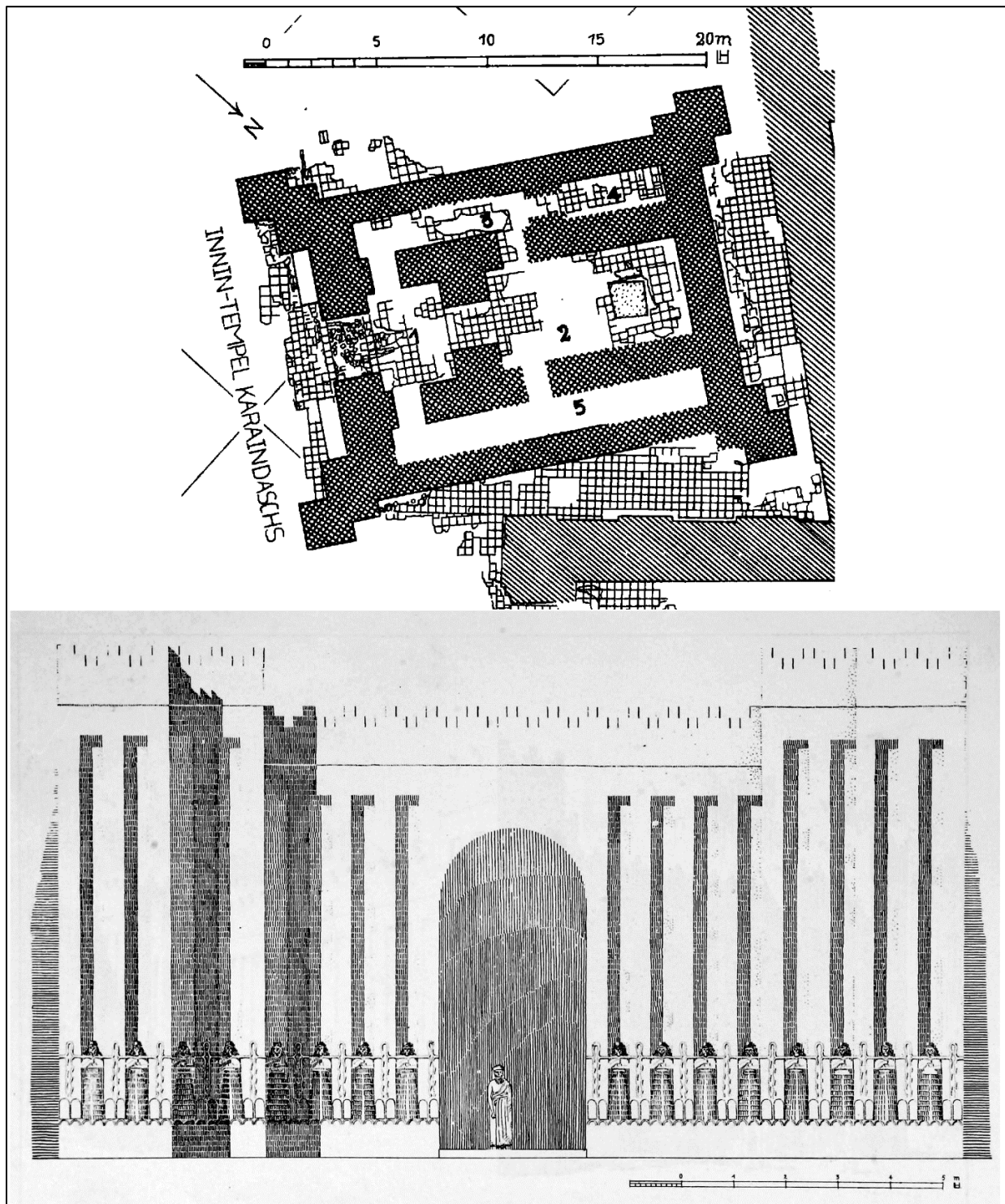


Fig. 12: Kara-indaš Temple at Uruk plan and reconstructed façade after Jordan 1930: Pl. 16, 10



*Fig. 13: Kara-indaš molded brick façade, Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin (Author's photo)*

The Kara-indaš temple architecture and inscriptions show experimentation and continuity. The brick inscriptions are Sumerian and give Kara-indaš the titles “Strong King, King of Babylon<sup>11</sup>, King of the Kassites, King of Karduniaš” (Schott 1930: 53-54). Kara-indaš continues to use the titles of Hammurabi, Gandaš, and Agum Kakrime, but uses the term Karduniaš for the first time in recorded history (Paulus 2012), and with this term comes the idea that Babylonia is now a united country under the Kassites. Kara-indaš shows continuity with the Hammurabi dynasty, but also indicates the change into a new Kassite ruled country Karduniaš, a territorial-state different from before.

Kara-indaš is the only Kassite king to use the titles King of Karduniaš and King of the Kassites in a royal inscription (Bartelmus 2010: 153). Later kings use traditional Babylonian titles, such as King of Babylon, King of Sumer and Akkad, King of the four Quarters, and King of Kiš or Totality. They only use King of Karduniaš in international correspondence. According to Amarna Letter EA10 of Burna-buriaš II (c. 1354-1328), Kara-indaš initiated the Amarna correspondence with Egypt: “From the time of Kara-indaš, since the messengers of your ancestors

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<sup>11</sup> Curiously the word Babylon is written out in Akkadian *bab-ili*<sup>RA.KI</sup> instead of the much more common Sumerian form even though the rest of the inscription is in Sumerian



came regularly to my ancestors, up to the present, they (the ancestors) have been friends” (Moran 1992: 19). While later Kassite kings decided to drop the Karduniaš title in their own land, Kara-indaš had already introduced them to Egypt and others as the land of Karduniaš, and the later kings could not so easily change their international identity and continued to use the term.

When Kurigalzu I came to the throne following Kara-indaš and Kadašman Harbe I, Kassite kings were actively remaking the landscape of Babylonia both for domestic and international audiences. They recognized themselves as the destroyers of the city-state system and were actively replacing it with a new system of land tenure and settlement. They granted land to loyalists, an act commemorated on *kudurru* monuments erected in temples, and had begun remaking temple precincts and bestowing large gifts on the temples. Brick inscriptions commemorate Kurigalzu temple restorations at Adab, Akkade, Der, Dur Kurigalzu, Isin, Kiš, Nippur, Sippar, Ur, and Uruk (Clayden 1996; Bartelmus 2010). All of these bricks lack filiation, and, since two Kassite kings were named Kurigalzu, the king who commissioned the restorations is not entirely clear (Brinkman 1976: 205).

Clayden observes that Kurigalzu I must have commissioned Dur Kurigalzu because a tablet of Burna-buriaš II who ruled after Kurigalzu I mentions Dur Kurigalzu (Clayden 1996). The projects at other cities lack such a clear indicator, but Clayden (1996) and Bartelmus (2010) have attributed all Kurigalzu bricks to Kurigalzu I due to similarities among the inscriptions. Bartelmus’ argues that Kurigalzu II would have used the title King of Totality, which does not appear on Kurigalzu building inscriptions and is first attested on a Kassite building inscription during the reign of Nazi-Maruttaš (Bartelmus 2010; Arnaud 1998: 202). Kurigalzu II, however, falls between Burna-buriaš II who does not use King of Totality in royal inscriptions (Arnaud 1998: 198)<sup>12</sup> and

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<sup>12</sup> King of Totality appears on seals of Burna-buriaš II’s officials (Bartelmus 2010: 155: nt. 60)

Nazi-Maruttaš who does (Arnaud 1998: 202). While we cannot definitively prove all building projects date to the first Kurigalzu, I will accept Clayden's and Bartelmus' interpretation with reservations.

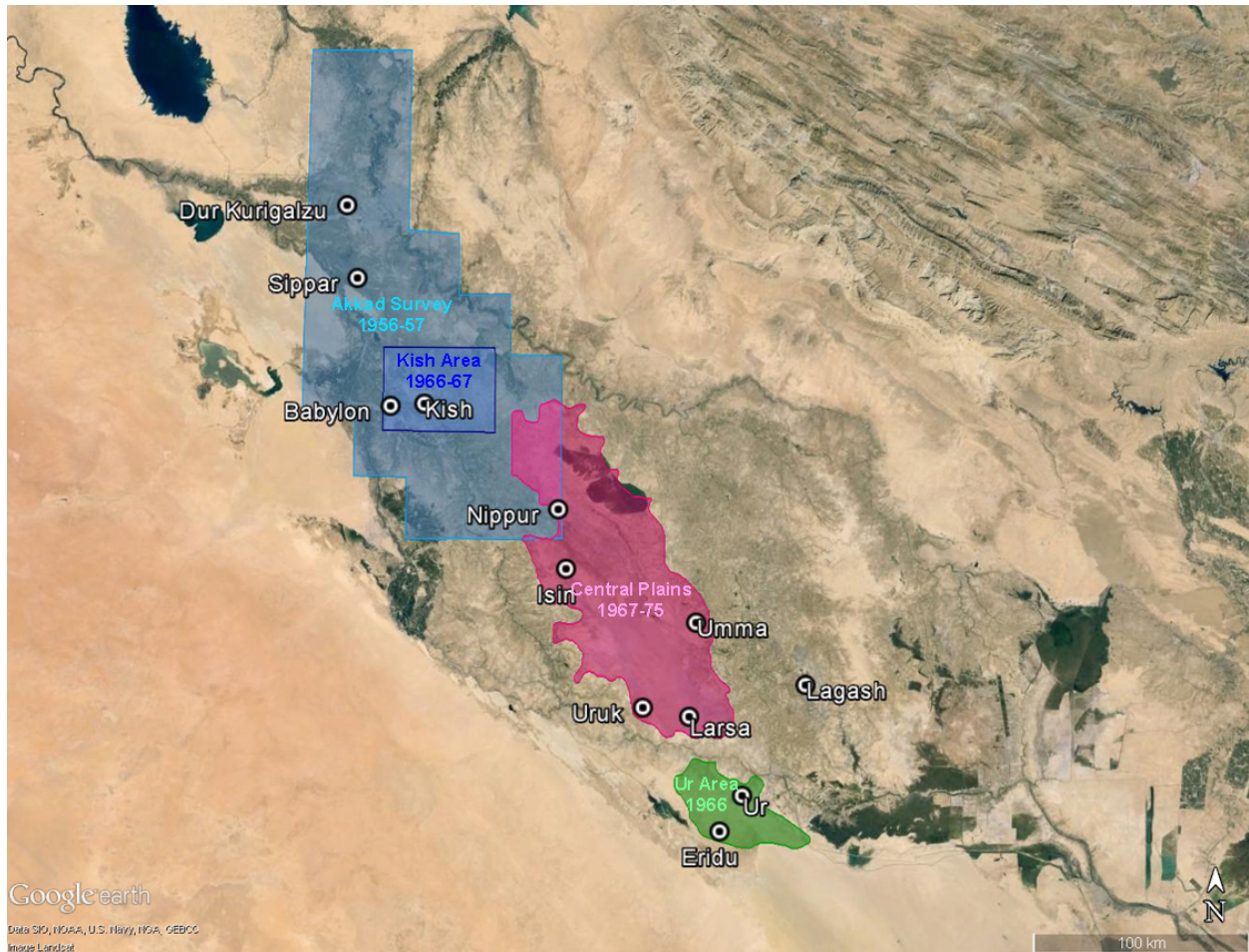
Unlike Kara-indaš who built a uniquely Kassite temple, Kurigalzu, while making numerous alterations and additions, kept the overall design schemes of existing temples. His successors continued to build and expand temple precincts across Babylonia including Burna-Buriaš II (c. 1359-1333) at Larsa and Nippur; Nazi Maruttaš (c. 1307-1282) at Larsa; Kadašman Turgu (c. 1281-1264) at Nippur; Kadašman Enlil II (c. 1263-1255) at Larsa, Isin, and Nippur; Kudur Enlil (c. 1254-1233) at Nippur; Šagarakti-šuriaš (c. 1245-1246) at Nippur, Adad-šuma-usur (c. 1221-1216) at Isin and Nippur, and Melišihu (c. 1185-1171) at Isin and Nippur (Clayden 1989: Catalogue D). The restoration of temples was a part of a new Kassite system of regional interaction that can be discerned from the result of regional surveys in the area of Uruk, Nippur, and Kiš.

### **III. Regional archaeological surveys in Southern Iraq**

#### **IIIa. Survey history**

In Iraq's Diyala region in 1936-7, Thorkild Jacobsen pioneered surveying landscapes to identify and date archaeological sites and canals (Adams 1965: 119; Hill *et al* 1990: xi), and other archaeologists surveyed much of Babylonia from 1956-1975 (Fig. 14). These surveys covered a massive area in a very short amount of time: about 30 months of total fieldwork covering over 32,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The utility of these surveys for understanding the Kassite created settlement systems varies greatly because, during these 19 years, methods changed, reconnaissance techniques improved, and pottery sequences were clarified. Many of these surveys could not properly

distinguish Kassite pottery from Old Babylonian pottery, and the intensity of the surveys varies considerably for different regions.



*Fig. 14: Regional surveys of Southern Iraq 1956-1975*

These surveys all primarily involved identifying the two most conspicuous vestiges of the Ancient Mesopotamian landscape: tells and derelict waterways. Because the archaeologists could see these traces from above or from several hundred meters away, they could identify sites very quickly compared to other parts of the world. Tells, which are ruin hills resulting from the collapse and rebuilding of mudbrick architecture repeatedly in the same place over many centuries, rise above Southern Iraq's otherwise flat landscape and datable pottery sherds from various occupation

phases often cover these mounds. In Babylonia, levees and spoil banks of ancient rivers and canals are often still visible rising above the surrounding landscape. Surveyors usually date these waterways based upon the settlements identified along them. Despite these often visible features, strong erosion, alluviation, and deflation can blur or entirely obscure features of the ancient landscape.

The earliest survey, the Akkad Survey (1956-57) led by Vaughn Crawford and Robert McCormick Adams, was by far the largest in terms of area. It covered 16,000 km<sup>2</sup> and identified 291 sites over the course of seven months (Adams 1972; Gibson 1972: Map 1). This survey and most subsequent surveys used 1:50,000 Arabic survey maps to create base maps from which to plot the survey. Reconnaissance involved driving along elevated Medieval levees to plot the tells and waterways and then visiting the tells to collect samples (Adams 1972: 182-3). For the Diyala Basin Archaeological Project (1957-58), Adams used aerial photographs to map tells and waterways, which he then visited by jeep (Adams 1965: 119-25). Remote sensing allowed the number of sites visited over seven months to increase vastly to 867 sites for an 8,000 km<sup>2</sup> area. McGuire Gibson in 1966-67 also utilized aerial photographs and similar methods to resurvey a small portion of the Akkad Survey where he located 175 sites within 10-15 miles of Kiš (Gibson 1972). In 1966, Henry Wright surveyed 1,010 km<sup>2</sup> in the vicinity of Ur and found 192 sites. Wright did not have access to aerial photographs and so he instead searched for sites by making parallel Jeep sweeps every 0.5-1 km (Wright 1981). The most recent of the Southern Iraq regional surveys, the survey of the Central Plains (region of the ancient cities Nippur and Uruk) from 1967-75, covered 7,200 km<sup>2</sup> and identified 1,639 sites over a total ten months of fieldwork. This survey had access to aerial photographs for the whole area, used 1 km spaced walking or driving transects when possible, and continued to refine methods until its completion (Adams 1981: 27-51).

### **IIIb. Kassite survey results**

Unfortunately, only surveys undertaken after the publication of the Nippur sequence (McCown and Hanes 1967: Table 2), which gave the first clear sequence of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium pottery, accurately identified Kassite sites. Some dating issues due to stratigraphic control problems in the 1948-52 excavations still existed in the Nippur sequence (Stone 1987; Armstrong and Gasche 2014: 8-10), but the same ceramics Adams (1981: 174) defined as Kassite types are still dated to the Kassite Period in Armstrong and Gasche's (2014) recent appraisal of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Babylonian pottery. These types include a tall goblet (McCown and Haines 1967: Pl. 98:14-16) and a globular jar with similar kind of base (*ibid*: Pl 98.1-5). Adams (1965: 49) notes that during the Diyala survey, Old Babylonian and Kassite sherds were very difficult to distinguish from one another. One of the Old Babylonian index sherds shown in his figures is actually a Kassite sherd (*ibid*: Fig. 12/6.a; Armstrong and Gasche 2014: Pl 97). The period maps of the Diyala survey only get as specific as Ur III-Middle Babylonian (2100-625) (Adams 1965: Fig. 3), and the Akkad Survey maps combine the Old Babylonian and Kassite periods (Gibson 1972: Map 5). Wright too, though he notes having access to photographs of the Nippur sequence, seems not yet to have fully understood the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium ceramic sequence during his survey of the Ur region. He has separate Kassite maps and explanations of Kassite settlement patterns, but his Ur III and Old Babylonian index sherds both include Kassite types (Wright 1981: 313 Fig 9/f, 315 Fig. 11/d-e; Armstrong and Gasche 2014: Pl 96-103) so his conclusions made about settlement changes in the Kassite Period are unreliable. Gibson's 1966 survey of Kiš took the Nippur sequence into account (Gibson 1972: xii) and his index sherds accurately separate Kassite and Old Babylonian types (Gibson 1972: Fig. 35; Armstrong and Gasche 2014: Table 1-8). By using the Nippur sequence Adams (1981: 171-4) notes clear differences between Kassite and Old Babylonian pottery for his

Central Plains survey and provides a Kassite survey map. Only Adam's Central Plains survey and Gibson's Kiš survey are usable for a study of Kassite settlement patterns.

These surveys still have issues including their focus on tell sites that are visible on aerial photographs or from jeep transects. The archaeologists recorded small single period occupation sites, but only if they could see the sites while following a visible watercourse (ex. Central Plains survey sites 1584, 1589, 1592, and 1594). The wealth of Ur III texts dealing with the hinterland of Umma allows for a test of the amount of Ur III sites around Umma. Steinkeller (2007) posits from information in 15,000 texts that cover a timespan of only 40 years, the presence of 1 city (more than 4,000 dwellings), 12 towns (more than 200 dwellings), 12 villages (50-200 dwellings), and 85 hamlets (2-50 dwellings) for a roughly 1,320 km<sup>2</sup> region. Adams surveys found 20 sites likely from the three larger categories, but missed about 90% of the 85 hamlets. Much of the Umma area was covered in dunes (Adams 1981: 30), which obscure the vestiges of smaller sites that might be more visible in other areas. Aside from areas covered in dunes or rendered impassable by vegetation, the Central Plains and Kiš surveys were likely able to locate, but not necessarily date, most sites larger than 2 ha and can give a usable understanding of the Mesopotamian settlement system from the village to city level.

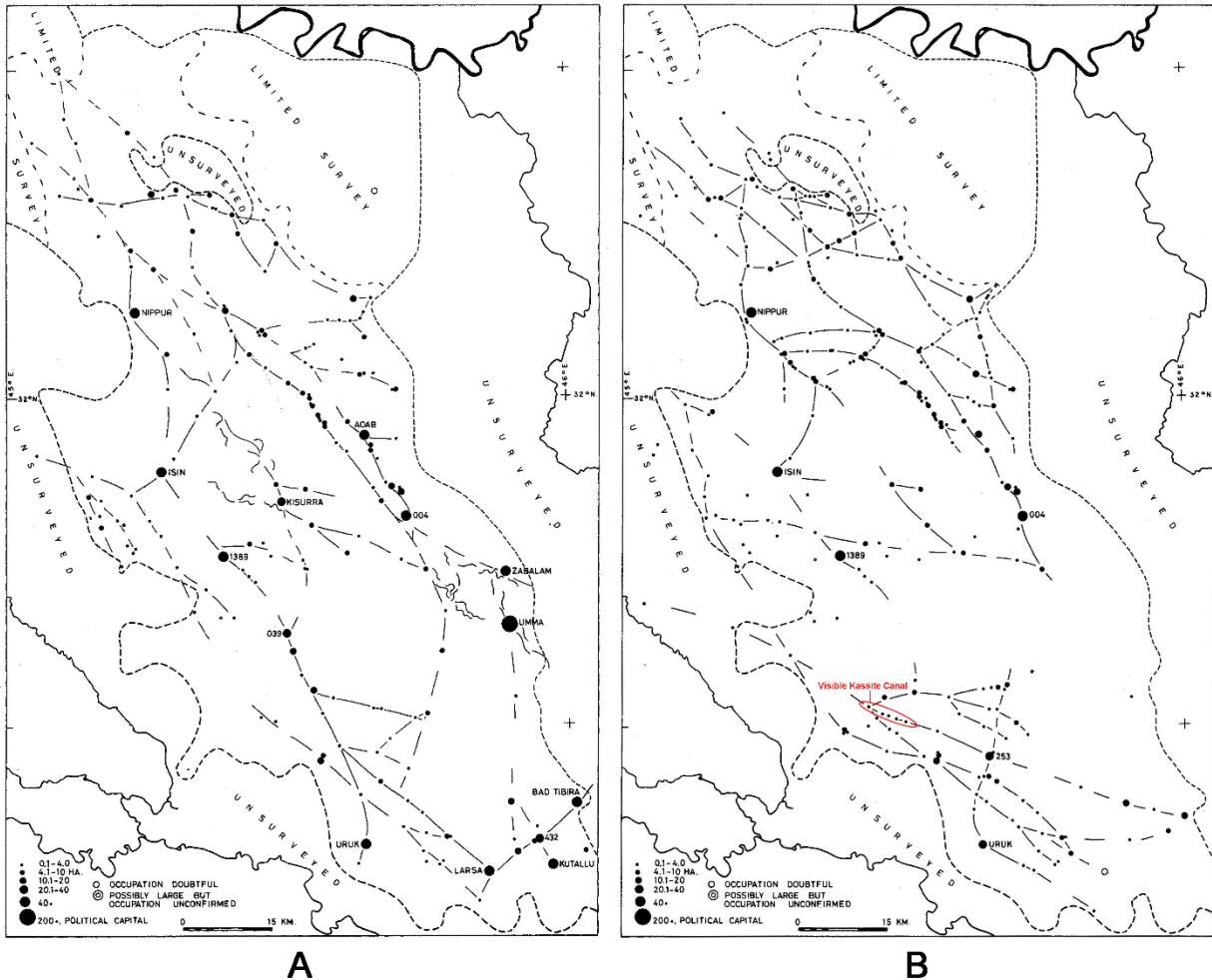
For the Kassite Period, the Central Plains survey results show a decrease in the amount and size of urban settlements and an increase in the amount of settlements under 10 ha (Adams 1981: 130-155). For the first time since cities first developed, the majority of the population dwelt in settlements under 40 ha (*ibid*). In the Kassite Period, cities still existed, but 1,000 more 4-10 ha rural settlements occur than in the Old Babylonian period and four times as many as in the Ur III period (*ibid*). Adams attributes this ruralization to the influx of semisedentary folk, changes in

social stratification and land tenure, increased rural security, and a debilitating loss in agricultural efficiency (Adams 1981: 140).

While society became more rural, the Euphrates River shifted progressively westward (Adams 1981: 18, 155-169). During the initial growth of cities in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> millennia, the course of the Euphrates ran in multiple channels roughly in the center of the desert plain that now exists between the Tigris and Euphrates floodplains. The shifting river courses profoundly affected the social, political, and hydrologic schemes of the Southern Mesopotamian polities. For example, the rise of cities like Babylon and Isin from obscurity in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium is likely related to shifts in river courses that favored cities in the western and northern parts of the plains. Central agricultural land became increasingly watered by larger and larger canals, some over 100 miles long, as the river water moved away from former population centers (*ibid*). During the Old Babylonian Period the canals typically still followed the former north-southeast flowing levees of the former river courses, but the number of feeder canals branching east of the central waterways decreased and settlement concentrations shifted westward (Fig. 15).

Kassite settlement patterns show partial and in some cases, like Umma, complete abandonment of Old Babylonian cities and substantial changes to the waterways (Stone 1987; Cole and Gasche 1998) (Fig. 15). The central branch of the Euphrates that once connected cities shifted away permanently, replaced by canals coming in from the west-northwest off the new course. The cities, as Adams observes, became fragmented enclaves characterized by multiple small settlements strung along canals around a fortified center (Adams 1981: 168), and Gibson also observes an increase in the number of rural settlements clustered along the canals in the area of Kiš (Gibson 1972). Adams identifies the three largest enclaves as Nippur, Isin, and Uruk (Adams 1981:168), which were all cities that experienced substantial building projects by different Kassite

kings. Canals branched off from these cities forming dendritic nodes linking the cities to strings of rural settlements.



*Fig. 15: Canals and settlements in the vicinity of Nippur and Uruk during the Old Babylonian (A) and Kassite (B) Periods, after Adams 1981: 186-87*

Fig. 15 and Fig. 16 indicate some of these rural clusters in the Central Plains and Kiš area survey maps. These dispersed small settlements, however, were not independent enclaves along locally managed canals, but were instead along substantial state-sponsored canals. Adams describes an 8 m wide linear Kassite canal north of Uruk. This canal was well-exposed due to surface erosion for approximately 5 km (Fig. 15, Fig. 17) (Adams 1981: 168). A canal this wide



and uniform would have required a large labor force for its construction and upkeep, yet only 6 small settlements, one 3.6 ha and the others less than 1 ha, were located along it (*ibid*). This substantial straight canal with large spoil banks, as Adams describes, was not needed for the livelihood of the few people living along it, and these people could not likely have maintained the canal on their own. The construction of the canal must have been state-sponsored and the method of settlement along it also likely the intention of the state or its dependents.

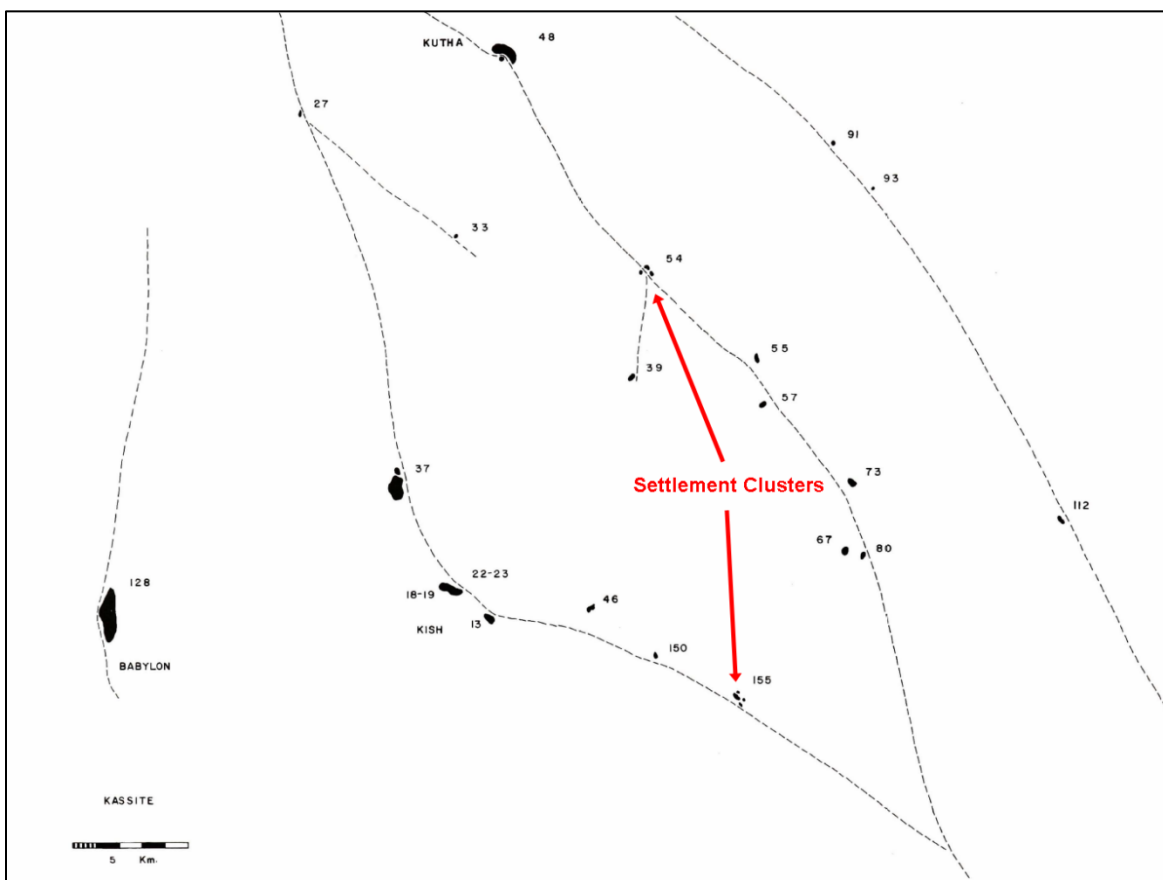
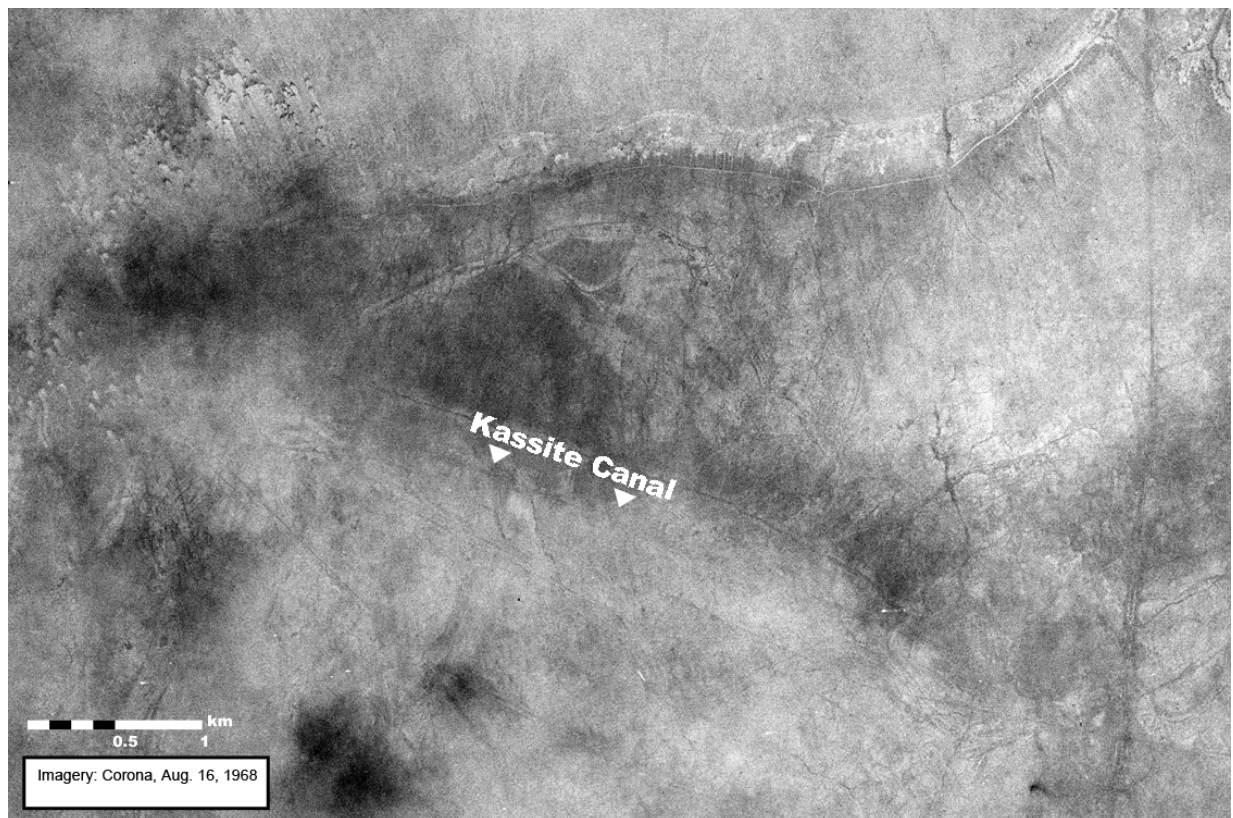


Fig. 16: Kish area during the Kassite Period, after Gibson 1972: Fig. 12

Such investment in canals for a few small settlements does not imply semisedentary folk or inefficiency, but rather shows a state run enterprise in which small rural settlements utilize state resources to produce food or goods for a larger population elsewhere. Rather than simply a loss of

efficiency or increase in mobile groups, the ruralization of society during the Kassite period was the intentional policy of the Kassite government. By building canals and dispersing people along them, the state kept cities broken up and created separate dendritic nodes funneling resources directly up a settlement hierarchy from the 4 ha settlements through medium sized cities, such as Uruk and Nippur, and finally to the seat of the territorial-state's administration.



*Fig. 17: Kassite Canal north of Uruk, August 1968 (See Fig. 15 for location)*

#### **IV. The Kassite capital**

When the Kassites refocused regional interaction through manipulating the settlement system and the fabric of cities, they would have needed to focus the country's administration toward a seat of power. Scholars often refer to both Dur Kurigalzu and Babylon as Kassite capitals

(Brinkman 1976: 252; 2004: 287; Clayden 1996; Heinz 2012: 716-20; Kuhrt 1995: 332-48; Lambert 1964; Machinist 1978: 167; Paulus 2013; Tenney 2011: 142-43; Van de Mieroop 2007: 72), and Clayden (forthcoming) states that Babylon was the only capital and not Dur Kurigalzu. Unfortunately we know little about Kassite Babylon because excavators could not reach the Kassite and Old Babylonian levels except in a residential suburb (Gasche *et al* 1998: 15). The Kassites associated the idea of kingship with Babylon since, from the time of Gandaš, the first Kassite king, to Marduk-apla-iddina, one of the last kings, all kings except one used the royal title “King of Babylon.” Kurigalzu I, the founder of Dur Kurigalzu, was the only Kassite King who never included “King of Babylon” among his royal titles (Bartelmus 2010: 156-57).<sup>13</sup> More inscribed building dedications survive from his reign than any other Kassite king, yet the title never appears. His rejection of the title suggests that he intended to remove Babylon from the idea of Kassite kingship and replace Babylon, the old city-state capital, with Dur Kurigalzu, a new administration center for the new Kassite-style Mesopotamian state.

#### **IVa. Dur Kurigalzu: Archaeological evidence**

This new capital Dur Kurigalzu stretched over at least 500 hectares on a long and narrow raised limestone terrace just beyond the western outskirts of Baghdad (Fig. 18). From 1942-45 Taha Baqir led excavations of two mounds: ‘Aqar Quf at the southeast edge of the city covered a ziggurat/temple complex and Tell Al-Abyad, about 800 m northwest of ‘Aqar Quf, contained a royal palace. Baqir only published brief summaries of the yearly progress (Baqir 1944; 1945; 1946; 1959). Kurigalzu is the only king whose name appears on inscribed architectural material from

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<sup>13</sup> Walker’s (1980) reading of LUGAL KA.DINGIR.RA.KI in a broken-off line of an unprovenienced brick is uncertain. Like brick of Kurigalzu at Uruk (Schott 1930: 54 #14): the line is completely broken off and is more likely lugal-ki-en-gi ki-uri



*Fig. 18: Dur Kurigalzu in 1968*

these excavations, and these inscriptions commemorate palaces, temples, canals, gates, and walls (Baqir 1944: 15; 1946: 89). Tell Ahmar, the far northwest margin of the city, is a little over 4 km from the ziggurat. Unpublished excavations visible on satellite images (Fig. 19) have revealed architecture extending this far. Helen Malko will soon publish details of a large building in this area (Clayden forthcoming). Since Baqir's excavations, Iraqi teams have continued to dig at the site intermittently and revealed, among other things, a well-built Kassite building that was possibly

an administrative structure at an area just south of Tell al-Abyad called Tell Abu Shijar (Jasim *et al* 2006).<sup>14</sup> None of these excavations are completely published.



*Fig. 19: 2010 Satellite image of Tell Ahmar excavations*

#### **IV.a.i. The landscape**

The primary water source for Dur Kurigalzu came from a branch of the Euphrates north of Fallujah. This branch, now canalized under the name Saklawiya, used to empty its water into a 175 km<sup>2</sup> depression just to the north of Dur Kurigalzu once called the Aqar Quf Lake (Fig. 20, Fig.

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<sup>14</sup> Clayden plans a monograph on Dur Kurigalzu that will offer a much more substantial understanding of the city than the summary presented here (Clayden forthcoming)

21, Fig. 22). The former power of the Saklawiya channel is indicated by the fact that it now supplies a canal that runs for more than 600 km, proceeding south between the Tigris and Euphrates all the way to the Persian Gulf (Fig. 23). William Willcocks, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century irrigation engineer, remarked of the strength of its discharge: “If left alone, the Sakhlawia would be capable of carrying more than half the waters of the Euphrates, and rendering the country between the two rivers uncultivable” (Willcocks 1910: 2). Some of the Saklawiya water drained into the Tigris via an outlet on the west side of the ‘Aqar Quf Lake (Cole and Gasche 1998: 15). Water management had removed the ‘Aqar Quf Lake by the 1960’s, as indicated on the 1968 Corona image where the area is already under intensive cultivation (Fig. 22), but survey maps of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century still show the lake (Fig. 20 and Fig. 21), and Baqir notes that the depression was still subject to constant inundation at the time of the excavations of Aqar Quf in 1942 (Baqir 1944: 5). When Kurigalzu I founded Dur Kurigalzu, the region around it must have been marshland on the edge of a seasonal lake and marsh. Edward Ives visited ‘Aqar Quf in 1758, made an accurate drawing of the ziggurat (Ives 1773: 298; Clayden 2010: 12-13), and commented on the swampy landscape surrounding Dur Kurigalzu:

The cement [of the ziggurat] is of mud or slime, mixed with broken reed as we mix hair with mortar; which slime might either have been had from one of the great rivers, or taken out of one of the swamps in the plain, with which the country hereabout very much abounds. We passed one of these swamps in our way, which was about an hundred yards broad, and four feet deep (Ives 1773: 298).

The new city Dur Kurigalzu stood on a raised limestone platform at the edge of a large shallow lake and was surrounded by marshland. The dearth of Mesopotamian sources on this region prior to the Neo-Assyrian Period (934-612) (Cole and Gasche 1998) may be due to the area at the margins of Babylonia being previously unsuitable to settlement.



Fig. 20: 1919 Survey map of Baghdad area by MEF with Aqar Quf Depression in top-left

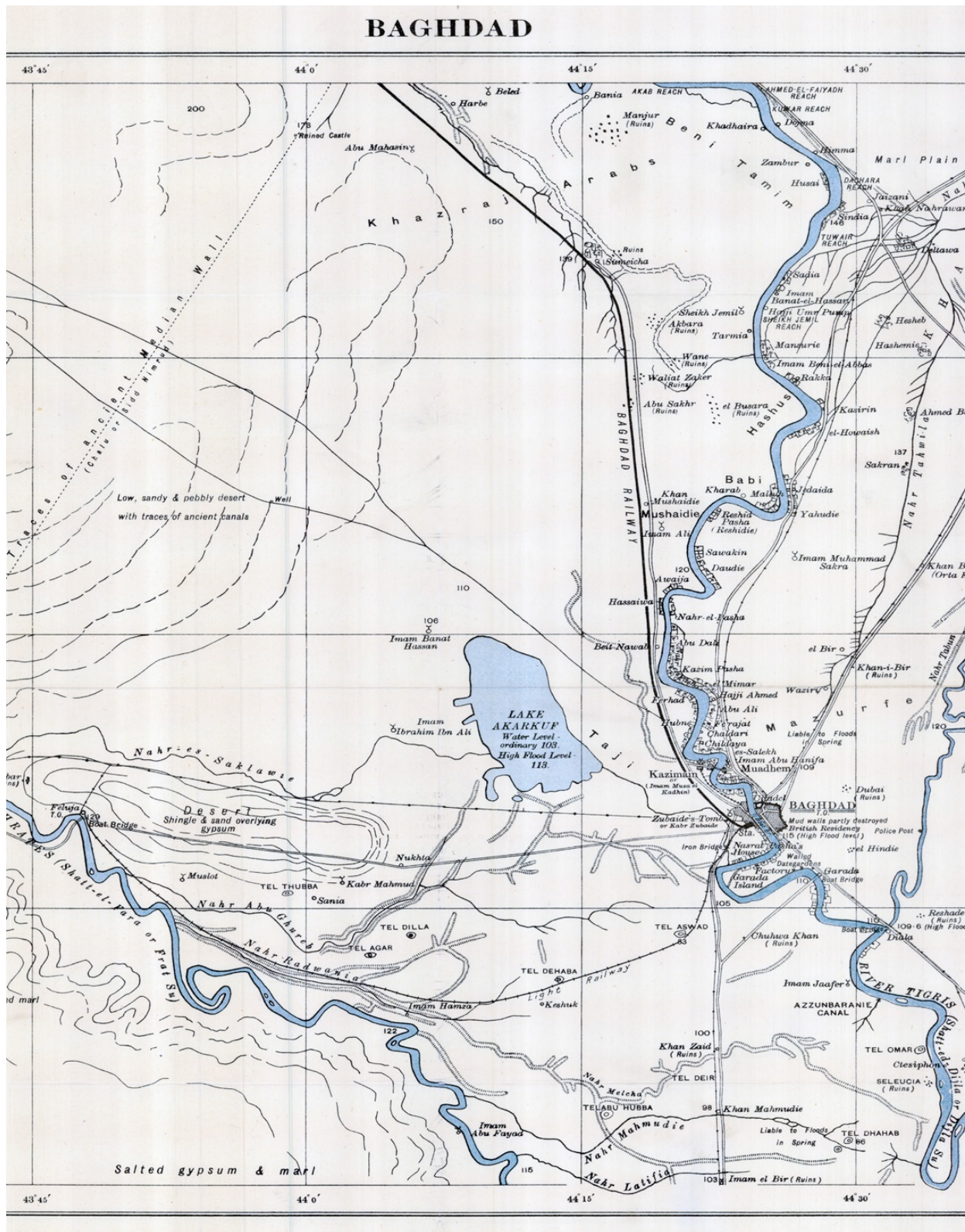


Fig. 21: 1915 Survey Map by Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton



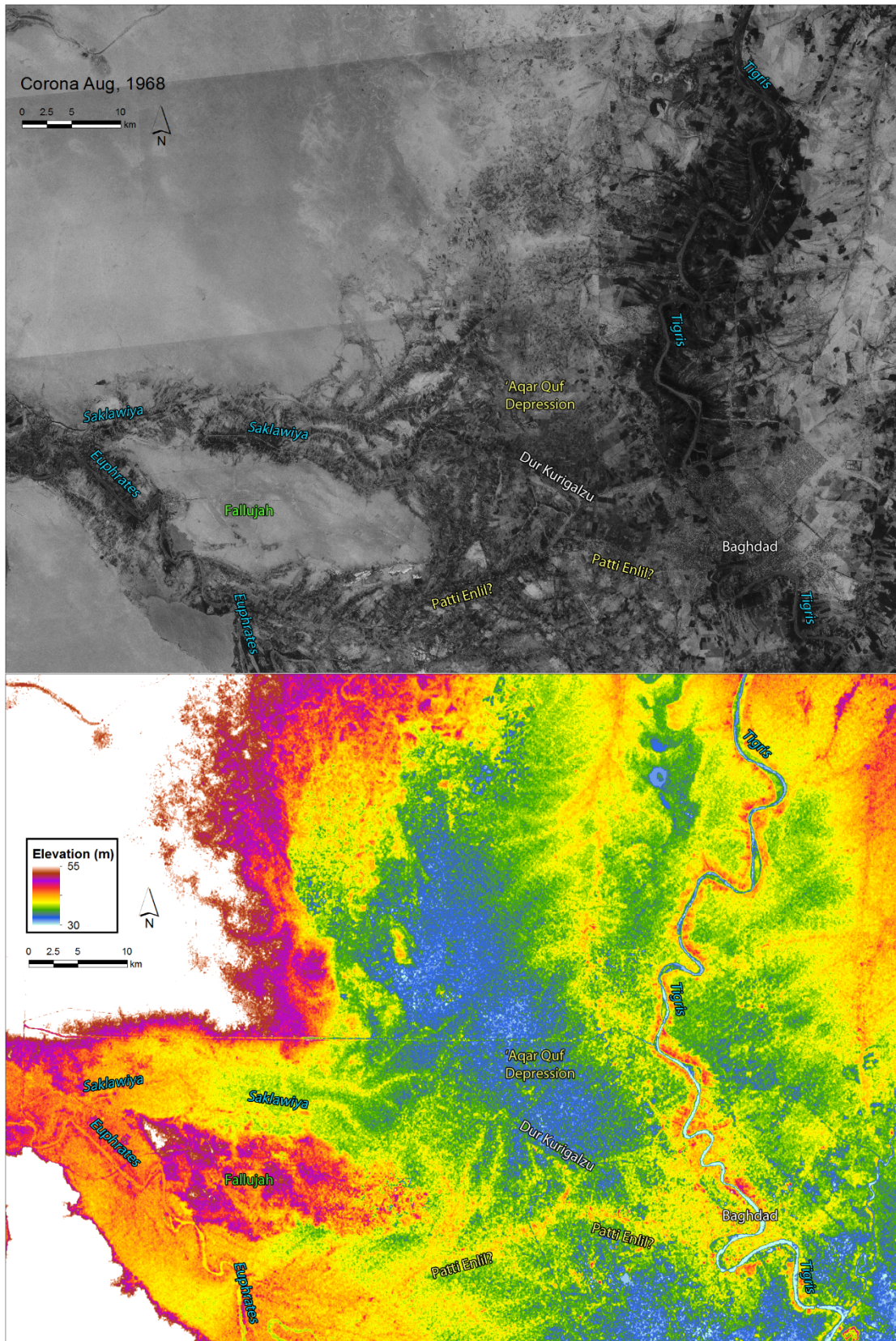


Fig. 22: 1968 Corona and 1999 SRTM DEM of 'Aqar Quf depression and surroundings



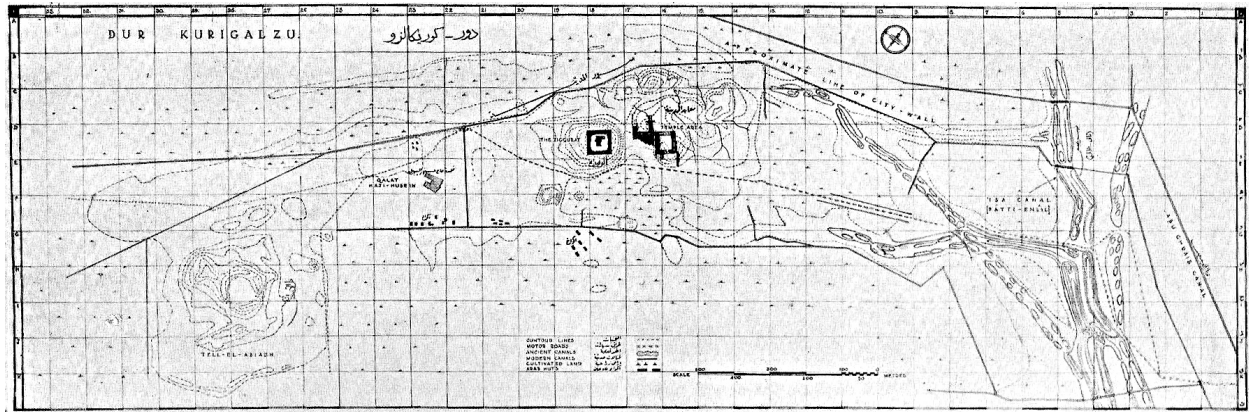
*Fig. 23: Current full course of water discharge from Saklawiya canal*

#### **IVa.ii. The boundaries: Walls and canals**

Dur Kurigalzu would need walls and canals to control floods and defend the city. One very fragmentary inscribed brick offers a dedication of the walls and the city itself:

When (Enlil?) . . . . . in heaven and earth, supporter of Eridu(?), king of Erech? And Babylon, at that time . . . . . the city of Dur Kurigalzu I . . . . ., its outer (?) wall I built of baked bricks (Baqir 1944: 15).

Baqir observed a possible portion of the city-wall on the northeast side of ‘Aqar Quf. He identified the wall with canal spoil banks that began southeast of ‘Aqar Quf and continued northeast around the mound before turning west and disappearing (Baqir 1944: 5). He notes the possible location of the wall on his map, but its traces are not clearly marked (Fig. 24) (Baqir 1944: Pl. I and III).<sup>15</sup>



*Fig. 24: Plan of Dur Kurigalzu, after Baqir 1944: Fig. 1*

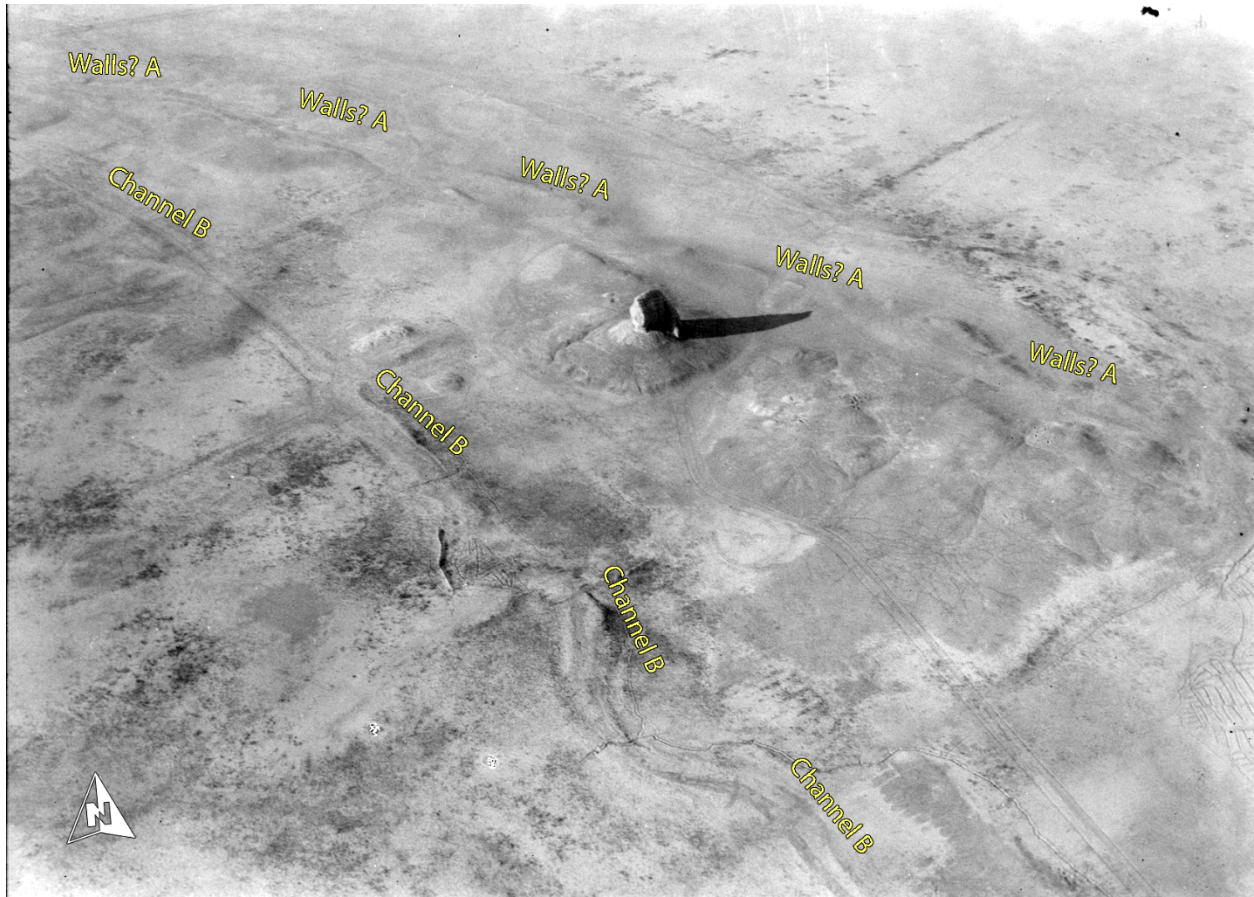
City-wall traces at Dur Kurigalzu are very difficult to discern on 1930's-60's aerial and satellite photographs even from different angles (Fig. 25, Fig. 26). The only clear but still questionable traces are just to the northeast of the ziggurat and probably the same traces observed by Baqir. These run along the northeast and southwest peripheries of the ‘Aqar Quf temple precinct, but are so shallow and fragmentary that they may be no more than the spoil banks of canals. An oblique aerial photograph taken c. 1932 before the construction of modern canals, which had overtaken the area even by the time of Baqir's excavation, shows the clearest traces of

<sup>15</sup> The black line below the words city-wall is, according to the map key and accompanying aerial photograph, a modern canal

these walls (Fig. 26). To the northeast of the ziggurat, two parallel tracts of earthworks (Fig. 26.A) run along what must have been a canal or moat and could be spoil banks or modest walls. On the same photograph, a derelict canal (Fig. 26.B) also runs to the southwest of the ziggurat. Earthworks are not easily discernible around Channel B, but these two canals or moats could have formed the boundaries of the temple precinct. They both continue to the northwest from the ziggurat and come closer and closer together such that they meet just off the edges of the photograph.



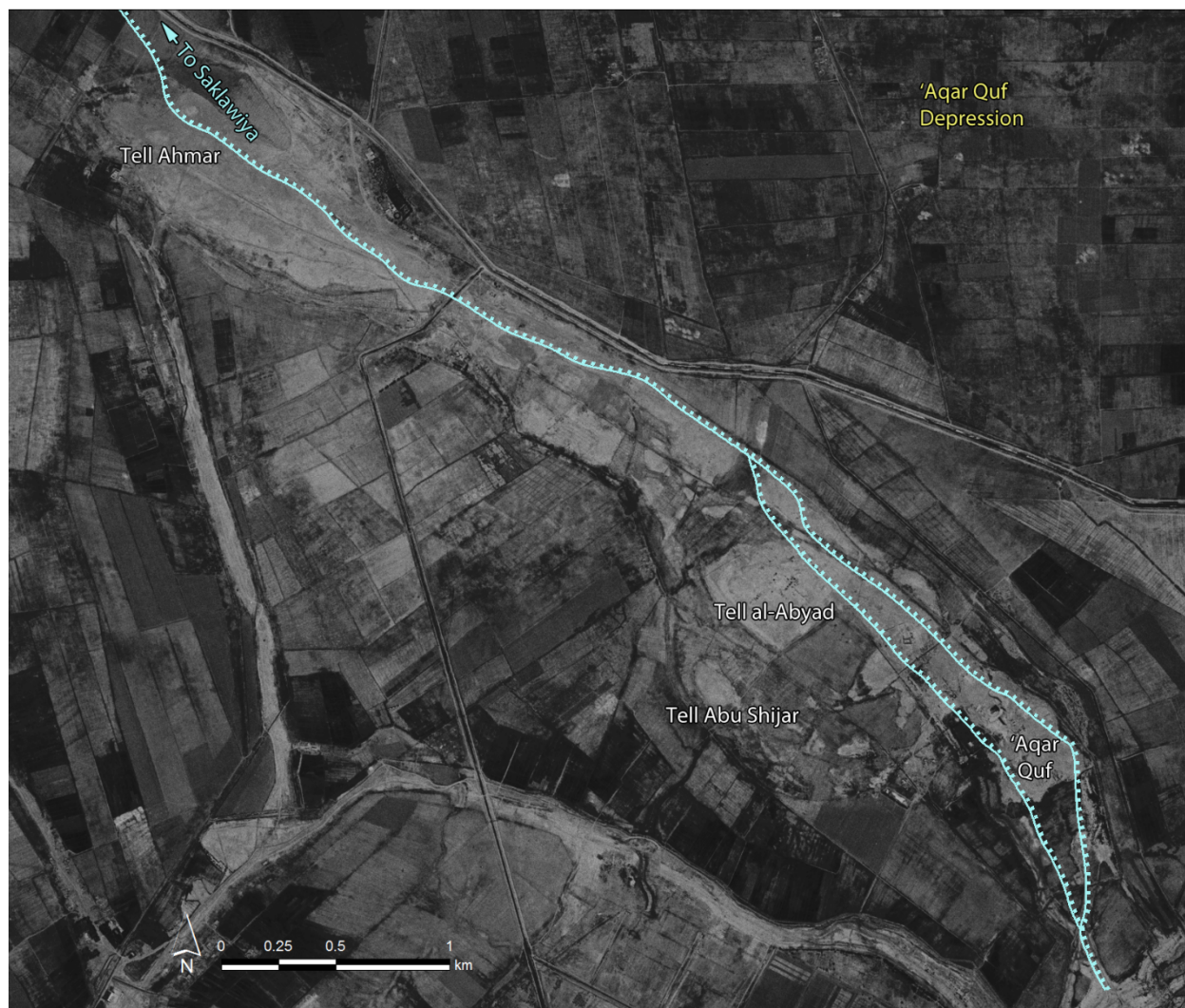
*Fig. 25: 1968 Corona of Dur Kurigalzu with possible canal or wall traces highlighted; inset: see Fig. 26*



*Fig. 26: Aerial photograph of 'Aqar Quf c. 1932 with possible walls of canals highlighted.  
Library of Congress # LC-M33- 4509*

Further traces of these canals or walls are far more difficult to discern on wider Corona images (Fig. 25) or an unfortunately very small reproduction of an aerial photograph in Baqir's excavation report (Baqir 1944: Fig. 3). The canals' trajectory on the 1932 photograph and possible faint traces on Fig. 25 indicate that they likely continued along the northeast side of Tell al-Abyad. The temples at 'Aqar Quf and the palace at Tell al-Abyad would then be on opposite sides of Channel B. The canals probably continue across the city to the northwest where they likely eventually meet the Saklawiya branch. Fig. 27 shows a possible reconstruction of this canal system, but its course is very speculative beyond 'Aqar Quf. No city walls or gates stand out on aerial and satellite photographs of Dur Kurigalzu. Nevertheless, Clayden notes that Hellen Malko

has mapped a wall surrounding 200 ha of the city (the area of the limestone terrace) (Clayden *forthcoming*). This wall would exclude important areas of the city, such as Tell abu-Shijar, that are outside of the main limestone terrace. Malko's suggestion is possible, but given the lack of visible traces compared to other cities, Dur Kurigalzu's wall must not have been very substantial.



*Fig. 27: Possible Dur Kurigalzu canal*

### IVa.iii. Temples<sup>16</sup>

At 'Aqar Quf, Baqir excavated a roughly 5 ha temple precinct with several large temple courtyards and a ziggurat (Fig. 28). The ziggurat measures 69x69 m, is preserved 57 m tall, and contains many inscribed bricks that dedicate an É.U.GAL “House of the Great Lord” to Enlil. The tower is solid brick with layers of reed matting, sand, and gravel separating every eighth or ninth brick layer. A single staircase extends from the center of the ziggurat’s southeast side, directly in front of which is another shorter square 44x44 m mudbrick platform about 4.5 m high (Clayden forthcoming). Baqir’s plans show this platform, but his text never mentions it. Three large temple courtyards with side rooms abut the northeast and southeast sides of the platform. Kurigalzu door sockets found *in situ* label each courtyard unit as a different temple. The central and largest is, like the ziggurat, called É.U.GAL and dedicated to Enlil. Baqir found fragments of a colossal diorite statue of Kurigalzu throughout this section (Veldhuis 2008).

Off the north corner of the Enlil temple is the É.GAŠAN.AN.TA.GÁL “House of the Exalted Queen” to Ninlil and to the south is the É.SAG.DINGIR.RI.E.NE “Foremost House of the Gods” to Ninurta. All of these temples are built completely out of solid equally-sized mudbricks with no rubble fill. Baqir published a stratigraphic sequence for one of the temple rooms where the uppermost pavement held a Neo Babylonian tablet, the next pavement down held a tablet of the Kassite king Šagarakti-šuriaš (c. 1245-1433) and a *kudurru* fragment of Nazi-Maruttaš (c. 1307-1282), and the lowest layer, several layers down, dates to Kurigalzu and rests on virgin soil (Baqir 1944: 11). Another 65x28x6 m brick platform excavated 100 m west of the ziggurat indicates that the temple precinct extended well beyond the temples adjacent to the ziggurat. This platform had

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<sup>16</sup> The description of the temples is derived from information in Baqir 1944 and 1945.

niches and buttresses on the façade and held another temple containing an inscribed brick labelling it the É.GAŠAN.AN.TA.GÁL of Enlil and a fragment of another diorite Kurigalzu statue.

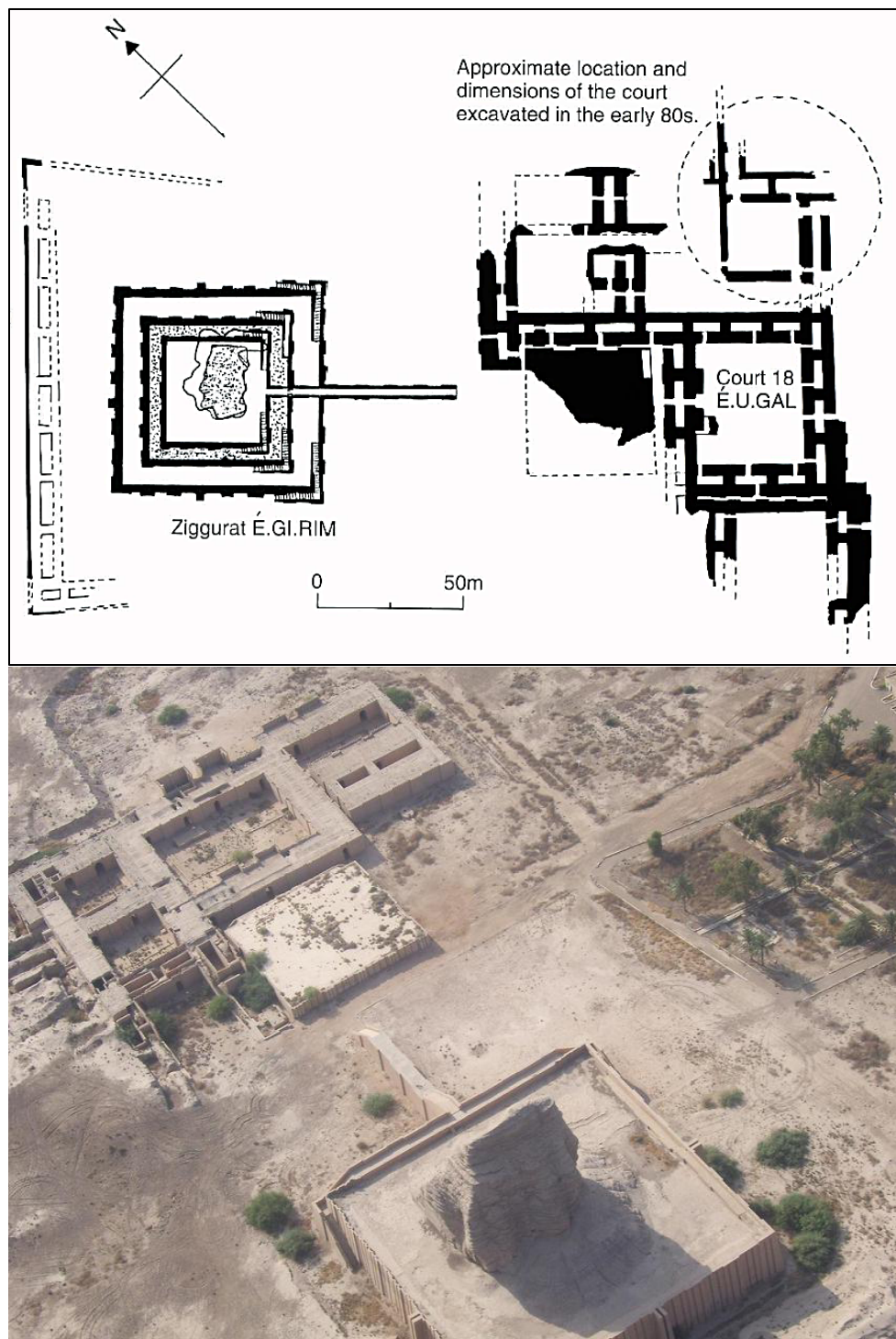


Fig. 28: 'Aqar Quf Ziggurat Precinct. Plan after Clayden 2000: Fig. 11; Photo: Google Earth



#### IVa.iv. Palaces<sup>17</sup>

At Tell al-Abyad, about 900 m NW of the ziggurat, the archaeologists used surface traces of walls to sketch an at least 9 ha palace<sup>18</sup> that consists of numerous courtyard units with surrounding side rooms, the largest of which, unit A, is about the same width as the ziggurat (Fig. 29). The published plan of the palace represents only the last Kassite building, which dates, based

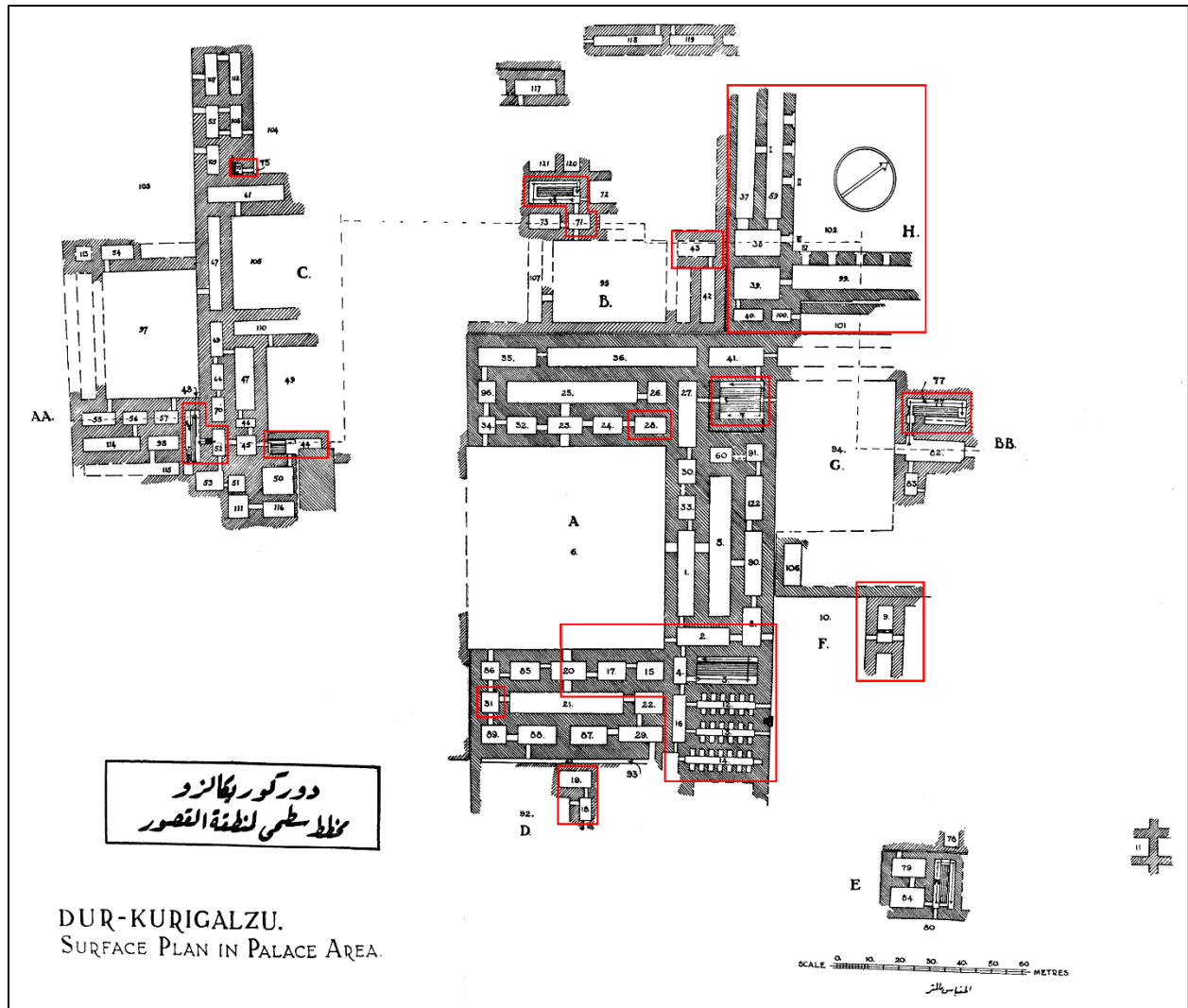
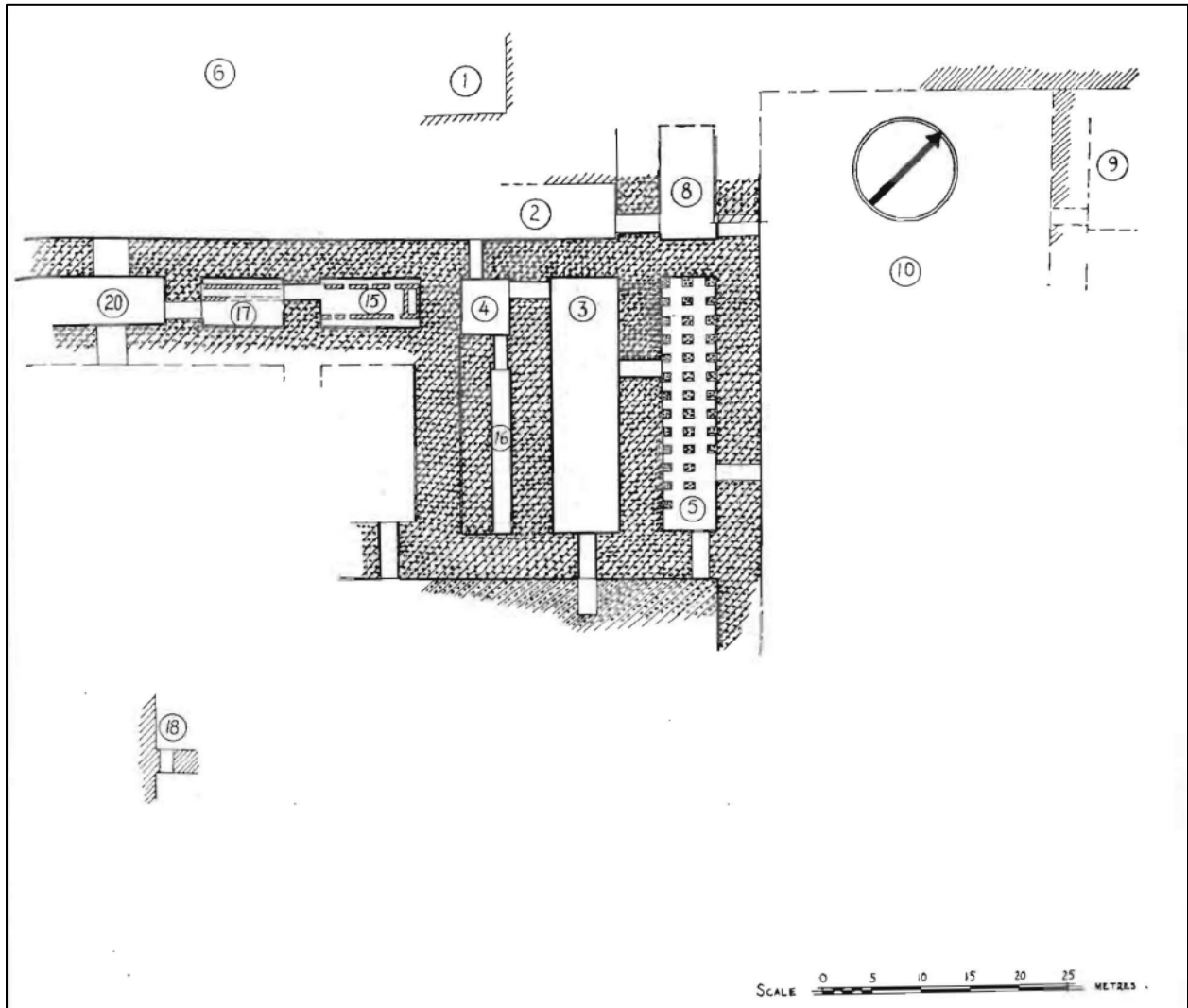


Fig. 29: Plan of Palace of Marduk-apla-iddina I at Tell al-Abyad, after Baqir 1946: Fig. 1.

<sup>17</sup> The description of the palace is based on Baqir 1945 and 1946

<sup>18</sup> The 42 ha Baqir records for the string of hills called Tell al-Abyad (Baqir 1945: 4) extends beyond the boundaries of the palace.

*Excavated portions outlined in red.*



*Fig. 30: Tell al-Abyad Levels 3 and 4 (Kurigalzu levels), after Baqir 1945: Plate 7 (See Fig. 29, bottom-center for location)*

upon tablets found on the surface and within, to Marduk-apla-iddina (c. 1170-1158), one of the last Kassite kings. The lower levels are only known from deep soundings in several isolated rooms and a larger group of rooms to the south of Unit A (Fig. 30). A 26x5.65 m room in the two lowest levels, III and IV, contained three lines of up to 13 white plastered brick pedestals. In this room, white paint adorned the walls, fragments of gold and other valuable objects covered the platforms and floor, and large sections of plaster painted with white, red, and blue guilloche and clusters of

fruit patterns had fallen from the ceiling. The ceiling was likely vaulted since some of the plastered fragments are curved. Another nearby room contained compartments full of fragments of fine art objects, such as gold ornaments, painted fine “Nuzi” ware sherds, and carved bone and faience animals. Inscribed stone door sockets and maceheads of Kurigalzu label the palace É.GAL.KI.ŠÁR.RA “Palace of totality” and É.GAL of Dur Kurigalzu. Baqir concluded erroneously that three different Kurigalzus commissioned palaces because later Kassite occupants reused the door sockets in each subsequent occupation level. Baqir in fact observed in the lowest level, indentations where door sockets he found in upper levels had been removed.

Level II of the palace contained numerous tablets, some bearing the names of kings Kudur Enlil and Kaštiliašu IV (c. 1232-1225). The uppermost level, Level I, was destroyed by fire, and given its date at the end of the Kassite dynasty, may have been destroyed by the Elamite attack that brought the dynasty to an end. Several excavated stairway rooms that once held wooden stairs were particularly burnt. These stairways held an abundance of precious objects, such as gold ornaments, glass mosaic, tablets, and inscribed bronze weapons. Notable among the objects discovered in Level I, but unmentioned by Baqir, is a copper oxhide-shaped ingot, a type characteristic of LBA international trade and the only such example from Mesopotamia (Moorey 1994: 245). In this final construction phase, a king, perhaps Marduk-apla-iddina, added a new courtyard unit (H) to the north corner of the palace, the highest point on Tell al-Abyad. Unit H has a unique form since it is surrounded by long corridors instead of side rooms. This unit had a bitumen coated baked brick pavement and elaborate wall paintings in all its rooms. Painted processions of noblemen adorned the walls of gateways (Fig. 31) that led into rooms painted with colorful rosettes and other designs.



*Fig. 31: Processional Wall Painting, Court H, Tell Al-Abyad, after Baqir 1946: Fig. 7*

#### **IVb. Dur Kurigalzu: Kassite capital**

The 500 ha Dur Kurigalzu became the largest city in Mesopotamia during the Kassite period, since no surveyed city south of Babylon was larger than 200 ha (Adams 1981: 142). Dur Kurigalzu's at least 9 ha Palace of Totality, compared to other excavated palaces of Bronze Age Mesopotamia (Margueron 1982), was the largest palace yet built.<sup>19</sup> This palace bore the name Palace of Totality, similar to the imperial title King of Totality, and remained important for the duration of the Kassite dynasty as kings continued to rebuild and expand it. The procession of

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<sup>19</sup> We have no information on the size of the palace at Babylon

nobles on the paintings in Unit H from the Late Kassite Period are reminiscent of the processions of nobles found on the reliefs of Assyrian and Achaemenid imperial palaces and indicate court H's role as a royal audience hall where Marduk-apla-iddina attended state administration and gathered his dependents. Dur Kurigalzu's 62x62 m ziggurat was larger than the 62.5x43 m Ur Nammu ziggurat that he restored at Ur, and Dur Kurigalzu's temples have solid mudbrick walls whereas Kurigalzu's temples at Ur use brick facing over rubble cores (Baqir 1944: 10; Woolley 1965).

Kurigalzu dedicated his temple complex at Dur Kurigalzu to Enlil the chief god of Mesopotamia at the time, and the scale of this complex would have rivaled the main Enlil sanctuary at Nippur. While Babylon had ideological importance to most Kassite kings, Enlil, rather than Babylon's god Marduk, seems to have led the Kassite Mesopotamian Pantheon. Marduk does not play a prominent role in Kassite inscriptions and does not become the chief deity of Mesopotamia until at least the following Isin II period (Lambert 1964; 1984; Brinkman 1976: 252). Enlil, An, and Ea are usually the main gods referred to in Kassite royal inscriptions and *kudurrus*, and Enlil grants kingship to the Kassite kings (Brinkman 1976; Lambert 1964; Slanski 2003: 69-79). The Tukulti Ninurta epic, written during the reign of the Middle Assyrian king Tukulti Ninurta (1244-1208), details his war against Kaštiliašu IV and focuses on Enlil abandoning the Kassite king (Machinist 1978).

At Dur Kurigalzu, temple inscriptions give Kurigalzu the title Governor (*ŠAKKANA*) of Enlil (Baqir 1944: 14. DK2-17, DK2-41), a title that only he (Seux 1967: 448) and Kaštiliašu III used,<sup>20</sup> while palace inscriptions use imperial titles: Strong King, King of Sumer and Akkad, and King of the Four Quarters (Baqir 1945: 13 DK3-142, DKs-144). The use of different titles and the spatial segregation of the temples and palaces reveal a conscious attempt to keep the palatial and temple

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<sup>20</sup> Bartelmus (2010: 153) indicates the title is unique to Kurigalzu, but the subsequent publication of Kaštiliašu III Nippur inscription shows that both kings use this title.

sectors separate, like in earlier city-states. The palace is almost 1 km away from the ziggurat and the two sectors probably sat on different sides of a canal (Fig. 27). The area between the two sectors is devoid of settlement (Elizabeth Stone, personal communication), making this separation all the more stark. This intentional separation reveals tension between the king's role as representative of the chief deity and the representation of the king as an all-powerful imperial ruler. The sinuous appearance of the city reveals a clear hierarchy through its layout: temple → palace → everybody else. This spatial hierarchy reveals the continuing paramount role of the temples in Mesopotamian urban society and the king's intermediary role between Enlil and the rest of society.

The temple's scale and distance from the other urban districts disconnects the temple from the city, whereas in city-states, the main temples were well integrated into the city and abutted the urban districts. The Dur Kurigalzu Enlil Temple is a national temple set apart from all others. The imperial palace and colossal temple complex function as separate counterparts at the top of Mesopotamian society. The separation of the two also reveals the different audiences. The king receives international audiences at the palace, which manifests the king as a Great King, whereas the temple beckons domestic audiences who view the association between the king and god as key to the king's power.

With the spatial segregation and titles, Kurigalzu represents himself at Dur Kurigalzu as a subordinate to Enlil. His use of the Governor of Enlil title on Enlil Temple inscriptions may be to show humility to Enlil as Kaštiliašu III had done. However, in inscriptions from other Babylonian cities, Kurigalzu is somewhat less humble. Some bricks from Ur and Uruk call Kurigalzu "The God Kurigalzu," and these same bricks usually lack the Governor of Enlil title (Gadd and Legrain 1928: 48 #155; Schott 1930: 54).<sup>21</sup> Kurigalzu's inscriptions set him apart from other Kassite kings.

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<sup>21</sup> A variant exists of UET 159 that has the divine determinative and Governor of Enlil

He is one of only two kings to use the Governor of Enlil title, the only deified Kassite king, and the only king to not include “King of Babylon” among his royal titles. He intended his new city Dur Kurigalzu, where he focused more resources than any other city, to replace Babylon as the ideological, administrative, and commercial capital of the Kassite state.

A text of unknown provenience describing favors granted by Kurigalzu II to the city of Babylon (Sommerfeld 1985) illustrates the continued importance of Dur Kurigalzu after Kurigalzu I. This text gives no filiation for its Kurigalzu, but he must be Kurigalzu II since the gods nominate him for kingship in an already standing Dur Kurigalzu and he uses the title King of Totality. This text indicates a dual association of Dur Kurigalzu and Babylon with Kassite kingship. The city of Babylon, the subject of the text, is called “the seat of the Kassite kings”, but Dur Kurigalzu, the only other city named on the text, is mentioned before Babylon as the place where the gods bestowed kingship upon Kurigalzu. Administrative tablets from Nippur also indicate the paramount administrative role of Dur Kurigalzu in the overall Kassite state. Tenney (2011: 142-43), in a study of 14<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century Kassite texts from Nippur, finds much more direct interaction between Nippur and Dur Kurigalzu than between Nippur and Babylon despite the closer proximity of the latter. Nippur and Dur Kurigalzu exchanged workers, and Dur Kurigalzu would send materials such as horses and gold to Nippur for pasturing and production, and Nippur would send finished products, such as chariots, textiles, and grain, to Dur Kurigalzu (*ibid*).

International audiences seem to have also viewed Dur Kurigalzu as one of the paramount Kassite cities. A fragment of a diplomatic letter to a Hittite king recovered from the palace (Baqir 1946: 89-90; Fig. 13) illustrates that Kassite kings received foreign envoys at Dur Kurigalzu. The Tukulti Ninurta Epic gives a list of Kassite cities in which the first is Nippur, the city of Enlil whose divine sanction is the focus of the epic; the second is Dur Kurigalzu, also associated with

Enlil; and the third is Babylon followed by other important cities (Foster 2005: 300-301; Machinist 1978: 65). Clayden (forthcoming) observes that a list of Babylonian toponyms on the funerary temple of the Egyptian king Amenhotep III (c. 1391-1353) also lists Dur Kurigalzu before Babylon. The international connections, scale of the Dur Kurigalzu palace, supreme temple to Enlil, and change in royal titles all indicate Kurigalzu's desire to make Dur Kurigalzu the capital of Kassite Babylonia.

#### **IVc. Dur Kurigalzu: Location**

If Kurigalzu founded Dur Kurigalzu to be the new capital for Babylonia, it would need to be ideally placed for both local administration and international relations. Unfortunately, because no Babylonian regional survey investigated the region around Dur Kurigalzu, we cannot definitively map how Dur Kurigalzu fit into the Kassite regional system of dendritic canals and settlements. Only the early and methodologically deficient Akkad survey touched this area, and, for the region north of Sippar, Adams identified only four sites, only one of which dates before the Parthian Period (Gibson 1972: Maps 1B, 2-7). His maps show the area surrounding Dur Kurigalzu entirely devoid of mounds or canal traces (Fig. 32), but this lack of sites does not reflect the reality since at least thirty-two undated tells appear on Corona images within about 6 km of Dur Kurigalzu (Fig. 33). Without dated settlements, we cannot precisely reconstruct the Kassite period canal system around Dur Kurigalzu because of several thousand years of overlapping derelict canals crisscrossing the landscape around Baghdad (Fig. 22).

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium, as noted above, the shifting of the Tigris and Euphrates away from the center of the plain fundamentally altered the riverine landscape of Mesopotamia. Cole and Gasche (1998) analyzed the published textual sources that discuss the location of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>



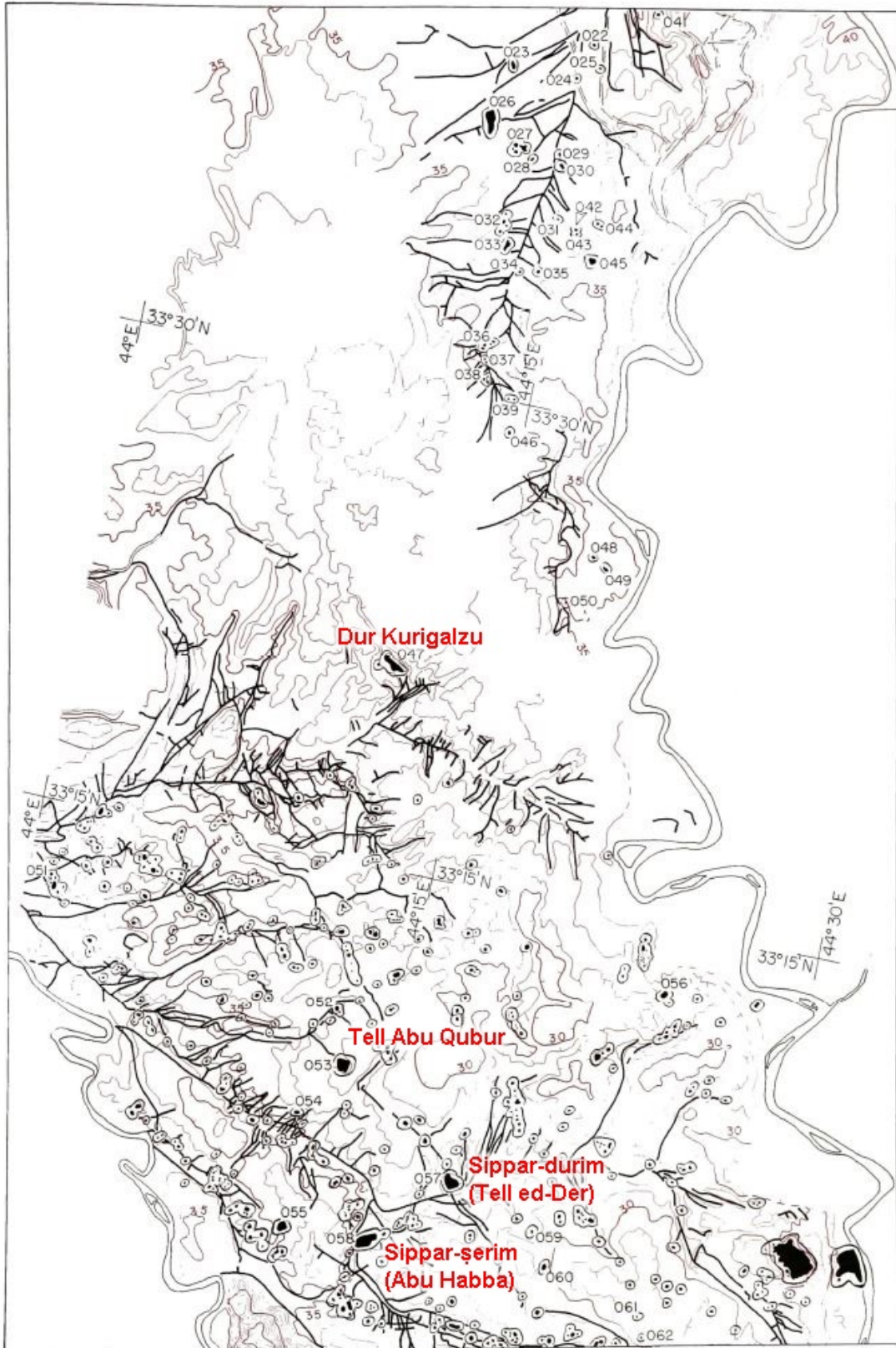
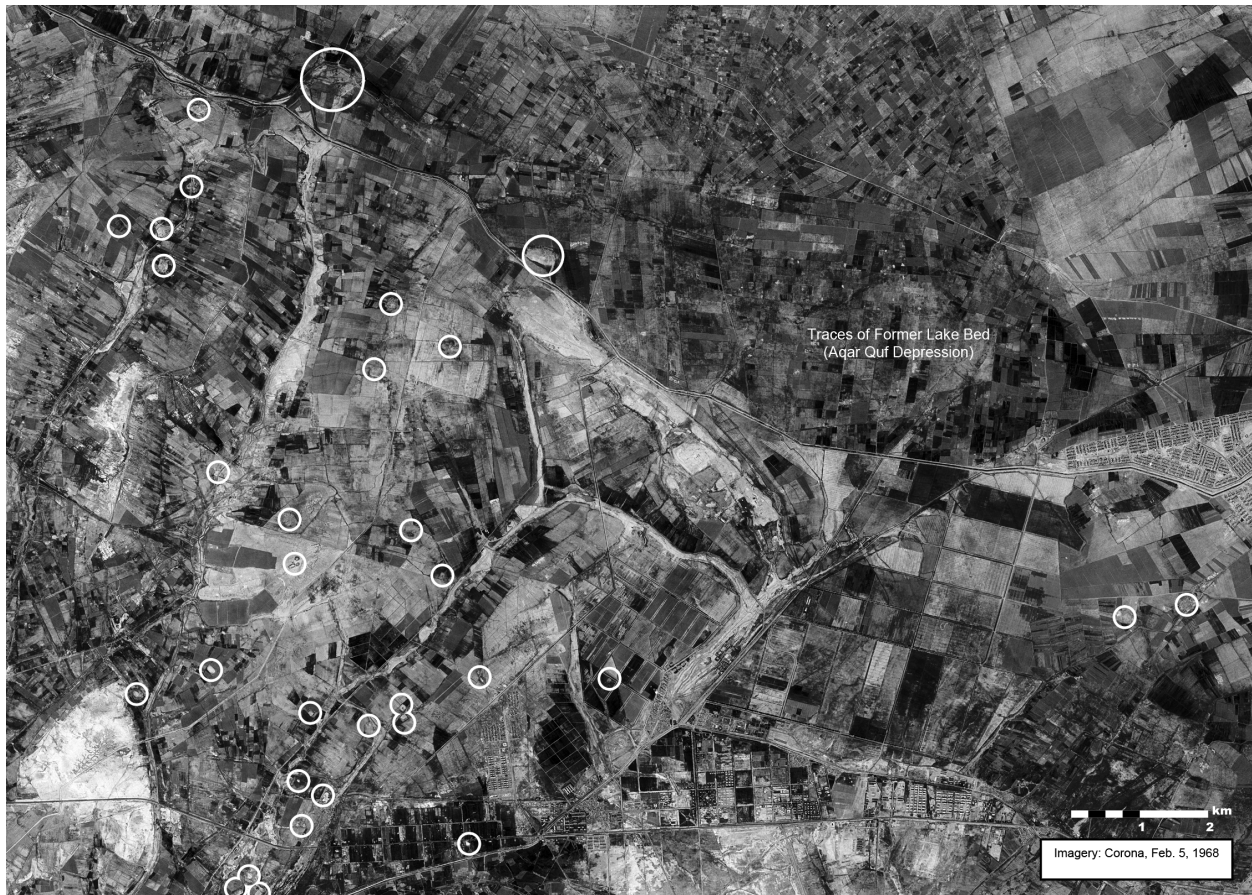


Fig. 32: Akkad Survey map in the vicinity of Dur Kurigalzu, after Gibson 1972: Map 1B



*Fig. 33: 1968 Corona satellite image of Dur Kurigalzu and surroundings with tell sites circled*

Millennium waterways in Northern Babylonia. They could say little about the Kassite period due to lack of sources, but they do observe that a natural branch of the Euphrates called Irnina, which in Old Babylonian sources linked the Tigris and Euphrates near the confluence of the Diyala and Tigris Rivers, no longer appears in Kassite or Neo-Assyrian sources (Cole and Gasche 1998: 16-23). Instead a new canal called Patti Enlil links the Tigris and Euphrates somewhere between Dur Kurigalzu and Sippar (Cole and Gasche 1998: 4, 30-35, Maps 8-9). The Neo-Assyrian King Tukulti Ninurta II (c. 891-884) who gives the best information concerning the location of this canal states that he camped at the Patti Enlil after leaving Dur Kurigalzu and before arriving at Sippar (Grayson 1991: 174). Another Neo-Assyrian source implies that the canal linked the Euphrates to

the Tigris so that goods could be shipped from the Khabur Triangle to Nineveh (Cole and Gasche 1998: 31).

Baqir associated the Patti Enlil with a wide derelict canal bed to the east of Dur Kurigalzu and believed that the Patti Enlil flowed from Dur Kurigalzu to Sippar (Baqir 1944: 5, Fig. 1) (Fig. 24). Cole and Gasche identify the Patti Enlil with a sinuous line appearing midway between the two cities on a low resolution DEM of unknown source,<sup>22</sup> but admit they have little evidence for the identification (Cole and Gasche 1998: 31, Map 9). This identification, which they did not check against any photographic observations, is likely incorrect since the line is quite sinuous for a state-sponsored canal and does not pass near any important settlements. The identification of Patti Enlil with any particular ancient channel including Baqir's (1944) or Cole and Gasche's (1998) channels is too speculative given the amount of ancient canal traces in northern Babylonia. However, we might assume that Dur Kurigalzu, being a major Kassite city in the same region, was likely connected at least indirectly to this new Kassite canal linking the two rivers. Fig. 22 shows a possible location just to the south of Dur Kurigalzu.

Dur Kurigalzu sat along a natural depression towards which many past and present natural and artificial channels gravitate (Fig. 22). For millennia, people have constructed a tapestry of canals crisscrossing the landscape towards Dur Kurigalzu because of the natural inclination of the landscape. As rivers shifted during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium, the Dur Kurigalzu region was one of the only parts of Babylonia where the Tigris and Euphrates still flowed near each other, and, because of the depression, traffic from both rivers could easily be maneuvered through Dur Kurigalzu. As noted in the introduction, Pournelle (2007) describes early Mesopotamian cities as "islands in the marshes", and Algaze (2007; 2008) argued that the

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<sup>22</sup> The earliest widely available DEM of Iraq is SRTM from 1999. Cole and Gasche do not reveal the data sources or methods used to generate their elevation model, which was developed before SRTM

conduciveness of this riverine environment to trade, transportation, and communication caused the first states to develop. Dur Kurigalzu was, like the earliest Babylonian cities, an island in the marshes, and the reeds holding up its ziggurat come from clearing the nearby marshes. Its location, which gave the new capital access to both the Tigris and Euphrates through river channels or canals, made it well poised for both administration of Kassite territories and engagement with the international world. The 'Aqar Quf depression could make the city a transportation hub, and water management, such as siphoning off some of the Saklawiya flow through canals, could open up some of the inundated areas around Dur Kurigalzu to cultivation.

The rural settlement enclaves along canals in southern Babylonia funneled resources through subsidiary cities and up the rivers to the transportation hub at Dur Kurigalzu. Kurigalzu pushed the capital to the northern periphery rather than a more central location because of both the importance of international relations and trade during the LBA and his desire for expansion at a time of great Kassite wealth and power. The Diyala River on the opposite bank of the Tigris from Dur Kurigalzu leads up to possible Kassite territorial possessions in Iran (Fig. 11) and trade routes to Afghanistan where Kassites obtained lapis lazuli, a material greatly desired by Egyptians. In the opposite direction, the Middle Euphrates, accessible by the Saklawiya channel, leads towards other possibly Kassite territories and other territorial-states in Syria, Anatolia, and Egypt. Rulers before and after the Kassites have preferred the vicinity of Dur Kurigalzu for imperial capitals. The first imperial capital of Southern Mesopotamia, Akkade, is likely somewhere in the vicinity (Wall-Romana 1990) and the Seleucid, Sasanian, and Abbasid capitals would all be founded in this region. This area, which still holds the current capital of Iraq, is a prime spot both for governing Mesopotamia and reaching out towards the world beyond.

## V. Conclusion

Charismatic leaders often establish a new capital to refocus a nation's government and economy, develop underdeveloped areas, and become better connected to the international world. These endeavors, while breaking away from past structures that linked urban and national administration, are often associated with long historical processes (Harmanşah 2013: 4). Kurigalzu I founded Dur Kurigalzu not as an independent vanity project, but both as a show of his individual prowess and a part of an ongoing Kassite process of creating a unified Babylonian territorial-state. The Kassites turned Babylonia from a group of autonomous city-states into a landscape of dispersed rural settlements where the diminished former city-states acted as administrative and religious centers under the control of the Kassite government. Intercity traffic, as evidenced by the Nippur tablets, existed primarily between the Kassite capital and the lower-order cities. The Kassites presented their new "modern" state to their international peers: Kara-indaš approached the Egyptians as the King of the land of Karduniaš, and this identity stuck to the foreign conception of Babylonia even into the Neo-Assyrian period (Paulus 2012).

Kurigalzu, the only Kassite king to not use the King of Babylon title, intended his new capital Dur Kurigalzu to become the new capital of a unified Babylonian state. The new city symbolized the government's aspirations to control the Babylonian landscape, and its separated districts of neighborhoods, palaces, and temples represented the ideal order of society. The Enlil Temple, the city's dominant feature and religious beacon, stood alone, detached from the city, and the palace rivaled all others. The Palace of Totality showcased an all-powerful monarch and represented Kurigalzu as a Great King to foreign audiences. Regional and international traffic coalesced into this city near formerly uncultivable marshland in Babylonia's far north. Kurigalzu's government likely sought to cultivate this marginal area while constructing the new capital. The

new cultivatable land in the north and avulsion to the south probably encouraged migration to Dur Kurigalzu's neighborhoods, and these migrants were joined by a large contingent of slaves who, at least in Late Kassite times, made up a large percentage of the workforce (Tenney 2011).

The Kassite kings used their new capital and other methods of controlling former city-states to create one of the most stable and prosperous states of Mesopotamian history. Dur Kurigalzu remained one of its paramount cities until the dynasty's end in 1150, at least two centuries after the city's founding. The Kassites territorial-state influenced the development of the pan-Near Eastern Empires that would dominate this part of the world for millennia. The Neo-Assyrian and Achaemenid Empires followed the Kassite model of founding a new capital, controlling communications, and manipulating where people lived. The Kassite kings, despite having great builders, such as Kurigalzu, were not immortalized in legends like Sargon, Šulgi, Hammurabi, or Nebuchadnezzar. However, the lack of such charismatic kings during the Kassite Dynasty is not a sign of weakness, but rather a tribute to the stability of their state. The fact that the kings did not have to exert their individual prowess shows that the position of the king and his government in society was so strong that a weaker individual king did not spell the end of the state.

# 3.

## AŠŠUR: CITY, GOD, AND COUNTRY

The kings of the mercantile city-state of Aššur, upon encountering the wealth and power of Kassite Babylonia, also desired to create an expansive territorial-state that beckoned the wealth of the Egyptian kings. They took the Kassite lead and brazenly approached the king of Egypt (Moran 1992: 37-39) and later founded a new royal city. The Assyrian case allows for a detailed comparison of the historic city-state capital Aššur and the newly founded capital Kar Tukulti Ninurta. The Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft excavated both Aššur in 1904-1914 and Kar Tukulti Ninurta in 1913-14. Much of the Aššur material is published, and, after more than a century, the Kar Tukulti Ninurta reports are finally mostly available. The published material includes detailed plans of monumental architecture spanning the whole history of Aššur and hundreds of building inscriptions. These datasets show that throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium, Assyrian kings used architecture and inscriptions to present Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta as capitals of an Assyrian territorial-state.

The architecture and inscriptions in these and other Assyrian cities (Fig. 34) formed a national narrative that reached into the past and strove towards the future. Kings Šamši Adad (c. 1833-1775), Adad-narari I (c. 1307-1275), Shalmaneser I (c. 1274-1245), and Tukulti Ninurta I (c. 1244-1208) all associated themselves with past glory and experimented with ways to showcase themselves as unique and powerful kings apart from all others. They vied for dominance over all Mesopotamia and used inscriptions and architecture to extend their increasingly divine presence across their territories. Their capital cities showcased architectural styles, resources, and people from across their territory. The material from Aššur reveals links among the placement of inscriptions, foundation of buildings, and the king's power to create sacred spaces. Inscriptions

link this power to create and define sacred spaces to the king's power to conquer and control territory. Through these building programs, Assyrian kings sought to use links between themselves and the national god Aššur to merge their personas with the identity of the Assyrian state.



*Fig. 34: Map of cities discussed in chapter*

## **I. The immortality of inscriptions**

At the height of Neo-Assyrian power in 630 BC, King Ashurbanipal's (c. 668-631?) armies dominated the entire Fertile Crescent from Egypt to Iran, but, in a testament to how quickly a



Mesopotamian state could falter and disappear, fifteen years later the empire had vanished. Ashurbanipal had died an unknown death at an unknown time and the armies of Babylon and the Medes converged on the empire's core. In 614, the Medes sacked Aššur. They plundered the tombs of the Assyrian kings and looted and tore down the Temple of Aššur, the true heart of the Assyrian Empire. The ruin, however, was not left to rot. The new rulers of Aššur, whoever they were, built a small temple (Temple A) on the Aššur Temple's ashes using the bricks of the now fallen temple. The new rulers left no inscriptions of their own to commemorate their work, but into this temple, they collected and placed 53 stone inscriptions of the great Assyrian kings from across the city of Aššur (Andrae 1904b: 48).

The inscriptions commemorated temples and palaces from throughout the city's history and placed Temple A within the long narrative of the city of Aššur and the might that was once Assyria. The inscriptions within this small temple began long before the Neo-Assyrian Period with the Amorite conqueror Šamši Adad and include the Middle Assyrian kings Adad-narari I, Shalmaneser I, and Tukulti Ninurta I. These kings extolled the buildings they had built and the campaigns they had fought. The texts always end with the same concern: what would happen to the inscriptions after the king is gone. The inscriptions warn future rulers of curses for any infraction against the inscriptions and asked for rituals to be performed on the inscriptions. Since their mudbrick buildings would soon fall into decay, kings were very concerned with the permanent objects in the walls and foundations that would remain inscribed with the kings' name long after the building decayed.

The post-Assyrian rulers of Aššur who had sacked the city were still genuinely concerned about the power of these inscriptions lurking under the city and collected them and preserved them. The four 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium kings whose inscriptions were found in Temple A: Šamši Adad, Adad-

narari I, Shalmaneser I, and Tukulti Ninurta I were no accident of preservation. The people who gathered these inscriptions were continuing a narrative of building and inscribing that began with these early kings. This chapter will focus on the building projects and inscriptions of Šamši Adad, Adad-narari I, Shalmaneser I, and Tukulti Ninurta I. These kings' evolving means of representing the state and kingship would eventually culminate in Kar Tukulti Ninurta, the first new Assyrian capital outside of Aššur.

This chapter will first discuss the city-state of Aššur and the Amorite king Šamši Adad. Šamši Adad defined a Northern Mesopotamian state by linking himself to the long past Akkadian Empire and elevating the god Aššur to be the paramount Northern Mesopotamian deity. He undertook a building program that used inscriptions to show continuity with the past and exhibited new architectural styles and ideas, such as large temple complexes to two deities and molded-brick decoration. Šamši Adad's state was short-lived, but his inscriptions and architecture influenced the Middle Assyrian Kings Adad-Narari I, Shalmaneser I. and Tukulti Ninurta I. These kings retook Šamši Adad's former territories and also sought to define an Assyrian state. They used inscriptions and architecture to extend themselves and their legacies throughout their state and its cities. They added the idea of the Land of Aššur to make this state specifically Assyrian and made an innovation to the building inscriptions by adding historical campaign narratives that linked the king's building projects with the king's history of conquest. Their building programs further monumentalized Aššur as a territorial-state capital and extended the king's presence throughout the capital city and cities across Assyrian territory. Through these construction projects, people from across the city of Aššur and conquered regions interacted directly with the spaces and materials that represented the power of their rulers.

## II. Aššur: Mercantile city-state to imperial capital

The layers of Aššur lying beneath Qal'at Sherqat (Fig. 35), a high rocky plateau on the west bank of the Tigris River, hold a history of buildings, inscriptions, and people who created the historical narrative of Aššur through building, inscribing, and living. Aššur was founded at least as early as c. 2600 and became an important mercantile center. Aššur before Šamši Adad (Old Assyrian Period) was likely a maze of densely packed residential neighborhoods and areas for public assembly. Old Assyrian administrative tablets scarcely mention temples and palaces (Larsen 2015: 122). Like the kings of Babylonian city-states, Old Assyrian kings shared power with powerful urban groups and had a reciprocal relationship with the population (Larsen 2015: 104). The king, city elders, and an assembly of adult males shared power (*ibid*), and the king had to rely on powerful and wealthy individuals in his interactions with the citizens (Larsen 2015: 110). The kings, while called kings in letters, used the title “Vice-Regent of the God Aššur” in royal inscriptions. The true king of the city of Aššur was its eponymous god Aššur (RIMA 0.27.1; Larsen 2015: 105). Larsen hypothesizes that the assembly of citizens who met in the city’s sacred precinct would assemble between the Aššur Temple and the Old Palace in the open area that would later hold the Aššur ziggurat (Larsen 2015: 116).

Already before the conquests and imperialism of Šamši Adad, kings had tried to upset this balance. After the fall of the Ur III Empire around 2000, the kings of Aššur began to commission monumental buildings on the city’s northern edge. Here the plateau rises on a steep ledge overlooking the Tigris 20 m below. The earliest inscriptions of the Temple of the God Aššur, which rises from a prominent outcrop in the city’s northwest corner, date to Šalim-ahum (Haller and Andrae: 21; RIMA 0.31.1) who ruled around 2000. His son Ilu-šumma (died c. 1973) commissioned the Assyrian Ištar Temple (RIMA 0.32.1; RIMA 0.78.11) 400 m southwest of the

Aššur Temple. The 1.2 ha Old Assyrian Palace lies between these two temples and probably dates to around the same time (Klengel-Brandt 1995:17). The oldest palace inscriptions date to Erišum I (c. 1972-1993) (Pedde and Lundström 2008: 30) who was the most prolific builder of the Old Assyrian period. Erišum, however, shows trepidation in his attempts to monumentalize the city. When he started his building projects, he offered tax exemptions to appease the citizens of Aššur (Larsen 2015: 104; RIMA 0.33.2).



*Fig. 35: Monumental structures at Aššur, adapted from Roaf 1990: 149 and Peri and Bloch 2015: 28*

Beginning with the imperialism of the Amorite conqueror Šamši Adad, the power of these urban groups diminished, and architecture and inscriptions in Aššur and other Assyrian cities began to form an imperial narrative. Kings usurped more and more land and took more and more power from the assembly. Every year, a different powerful member of the assembly had held the top office of the Eponym. Šamši Adad's son Išme Dagan was the first king to claim one of the eponym years for himself (Larsen 2015: 124), and Middle Assyrian kings often claimed this top assembly title multiple times during their reign (Freydank 1991). The Office of the Eponym eventually lost its ties to the obsolete assembly and became a ceremonial position bestowed by the king on loyal royal officials (Larsen 2015: 124). The spaces in which the citizens assembled were gradually replaced with monumental architectures until, by the reign of Tukulti Ninurta I, nothing was left on the northern plateau for the city's citizens.

### **III. Šamši Adad**

In 1808 Šamši Adad, an Amorite of obscure origins, conquered Aššur, and by 1792 he had conquered Mari, bringing the whole of Upper Mesopotamia under his dominion. He even possibly had Hammurabi of Babylon as a vassal in 1782 (Charpin 2004: 155). He took the Assyrian title “vice-regent of the god Aššur” even in inscriptions for buildings at Mari (RIMA 0.39.4&5) and Terqa (RIMA 0.39.8) and seems to have associated Aššur more than any other city with his kingship even though his primary capitals were at Šubat Enlil and Ekallatum. Šamši Adad built and inscribed buildings at Aššur, Nineveh, Mari, and Terqa (Fig. 34), and architectural inscriptions from each of these cities use the Assyrian title Vice-regent of Aššur and the ancient Mesopotamian imperial title King of Kiš/Totality. The Akkadian imperial kings from Sargon (c. 2296-2240) to Maništušu (c. 2229-2214) had used this title, but, for the 400 years between Maništušu and Šamši

Adad, imperial kings from the far southern cities of Ur, Isin, and Larsa did not use the “King of Kiš” title. These southern kings also primarily used Sumerian for their royal inscriptions whereas the Akkadian kings had used Akkadian. Šamši Adad used the memory of Akkad, including its titles, language, and sacred spaces, to establish a Northern Mesopotamian state that opposed the southern powers.

When Šamši Adad restored the Shrine of Emenue in the Ištar Temple complex at Nineveh he encountered inscriptions of the Akkadian king Maništušu. Šamši Adad left his own foundation tablets (RIMA 0.39.2) that establish a direct link to Maništušu and tell how Šamši Adad interacted with Maništušu’s inscription:

The temple Emenue - which (is) in the district of Emašmaš, the old temple - which Man-ištūšu, son of Sargon, king of Akkad, had built, (that temple) had become dilapidated. The temple which none of the kings who preceded me from the fall of Akkad until my sovereignty, until the capture of Nurrugu — seven generations have passed — had rebuilt...<sup>23</sup>

This excerpt stresses the idea that Šamši Adad resurrected the long dormant Akkadian Empire. He directly connects himself to Maništušu and Sargon despite the seven generations that had passed. He further elaborates on how carefully and respectfully he dealt with Maništušu’s inscriptions:

The monumental inscriptions and clay inscriptions of Man-ištūšu I swear I did not remove but [restored] to their [places]. I deposited [my monumental inscriptions and clay inscriptions ...] beside his [monumental inscriptions] and clay inscriptions. Therefore the goddess Ištar, my mistress, has given me a term of rule which is constantly renewed. In the future when the temple becomes old, when Ekituškuga which I built has become dilapidated, and the king whom the god Enlil appoints restores (it): May he not remove my monumental inscriptions and clay inscriptions but restore them to their places as I did not remove the monumental inscriptions and clay inscriptions of Man-ištūšu.

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<sup>23</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all translation within this chapter come from RIMA 1

Šamši Adad restored Maništušu's inscriptions to their proper places and deposited his own inscriptions alongside them. He advocates that future kings show the same reverence to his own inscriptions. The inscriptions inform future audiences that Šamši Adad directly succeeds the Akkadian emperors and his state reclaims their former territories. However, his use of the "vice-regent of the god Aššur" title on these inscription also indicates a break from the Akkadian kings and an intention to unify the north around a northern deity. While Aššur had previously been the god of only a single mercantile city, Šamši Adad chose Aššur to be his "national" god and used his architecture and inscriptions to advocate that Aššur was the Northern Mesopotamian version of Enlil, Babylonia's paramount deity.

### **IIIa. Šamši Adad's Aššur/Enlil Temple: A microcosm of Mesopotamia**

A foundation tablet from Temple A (RIMA 0.39.1) and numerous inscribed bricks and door sockets attest to Šamši Adad's work on the Aššur and Enlil temples at Aššur and are the only inscribed evidence for Šamši Adad's patronage at Aššur. Šamši Adad's Aššur Temple would heavily influence Middle Assyrian imperial ideologies and architecture. Walter Andrae's excavations from 1904-1914 uncovered the remains of Šamši Adad's Aššur Temple beneath later structures (Andrae 1904a: 33; Haller and Andrae 1955; Andrae 1977: 122). Only its foundations and pavements, which contain numerous stamped bricks of Šamši Adad, remained. From these remains, Andrae discerned the layout of a 108 x 54 m temple (Haller and Andrae 1955: 18) oriented southwest-northeast on its long axis (Fig. 36).

Monumental entrances with flanking towers in the center of the northwest, southwest, and southeast walls give access to the temple. The Southeast Gate led into the temple via a ramp from a large triangular forecourt. At the base of the ramp, the forecourt's pavement consists of square

and triangle bricks stamped with a three-line inscription of Šamši Adad and set at a 45 degree angle to the temple (Fig. 37). The bricks of this unusual diagonal pavement are unusually carefully shaped, firmly baked, and laid in a bed of reddish yellow fine sand (Haller and Andrae 1955: 27). Temple authorities continued to maintain Šamši Adad’s diagonal pavement until the time of Sargon II (c. 721-705) (Haller and Andrae 1955: 28).

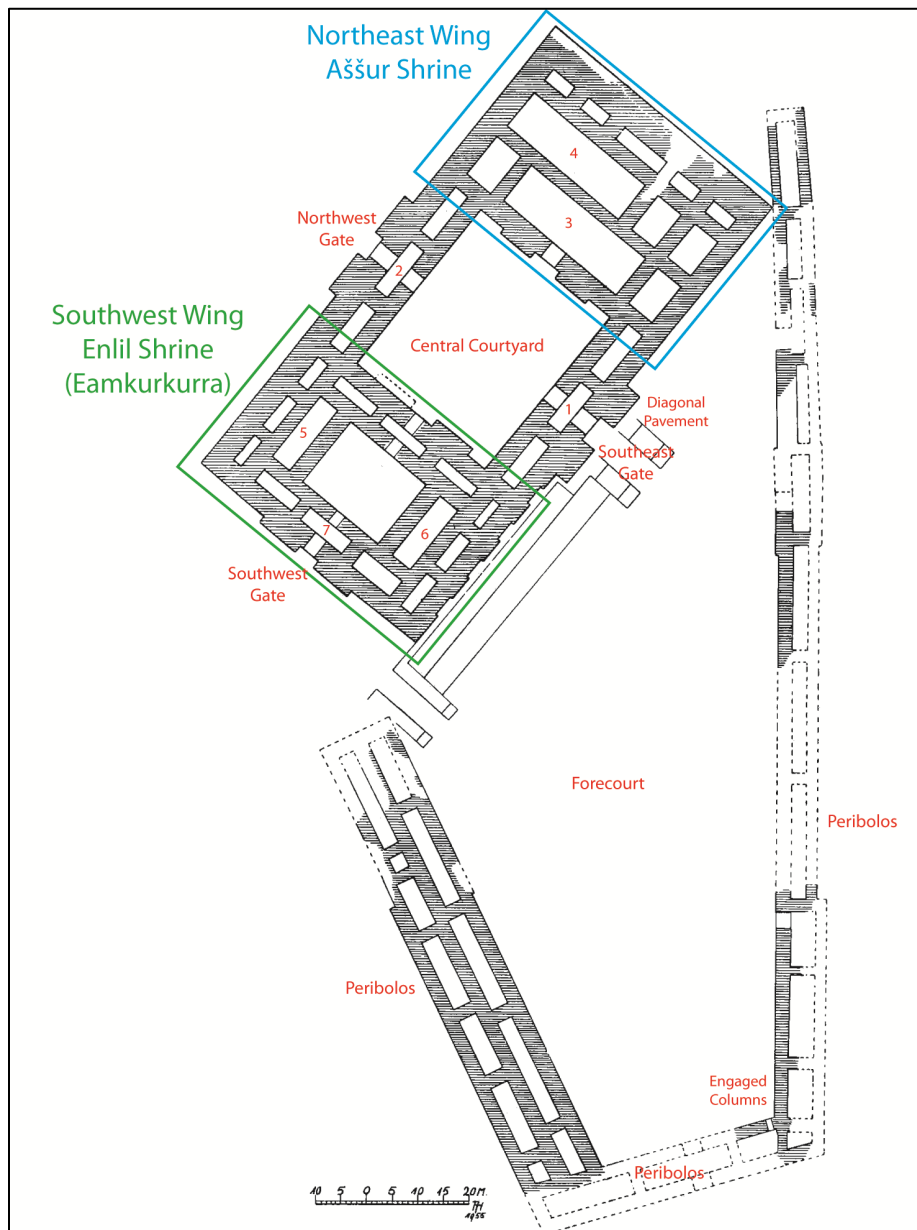


Fig. 36: Aššur/Enlil Temple at the time of Šamši Adad. Plan after Haller and Andrae 1955: 17.





The Southeast Gate is directly in line with the Northwest Gate and both lead through equally sized foyers into the temple's large Central Courtyard (Fig. 36: 1, 2). The Central Courtyard's brick pavement bore Šamši Adad stamps and a 1 mm thick lead plate covering (Haller and Andrae 1955: 19). The temple's equally-sized southwest and northeast wings flank the Central Courtyard and are accessible through opposing central doorways bordered by large buttresses (Fig. 36). In the Northeast Wing, an antechamber (Fig. 36: 3) leads from the Central Courtyard to a room that Andrae determined was the cella (Fig. 36: 4). This cella contained hardly any material, and, unusual for a temple, a line of small narrow rooms runs behind the cella.

The Southwest Wing contains a smaller courtyard area (Southwest Courtyard) that leads through another foyer out to the Southwest Gate. A direct line of site follows from the Southwest Gate to the cella. Rows of rooms surround the Southwest Courtyard on all sides, and two narrow rooms the same width as the courtyard run along its northwest (Fig. 36: 5) and southeast (Fig. 36: 6) sides. The southwest wing when considered apart from the rest of the building has the appearance of a smaller *breitraum* temple perpendicular to the rest of the temple; room 5 or 6 could serve as the cella (Fig. 36).

The equally sized Southwest and Northeast Wings make the building fairly symmetrical across the axis of the Southwest and Northeast Gates. Some of the unusual features of the temple, such as the line of rooms behind the cella and the buttress-flanked doorways on the opposite sides of the Central Courtyard, enhance this symmetry, which is not present in any other excavated Mesopotamian temple prior to this building. Usually the cella section is larger than the entryway section, and the main courtyards only have buttresses on the cella side. Symmetrical temples, such as the Sin/Šamaš temple and the Anu/Adad temple, would become common in Aššur in the Middle Assyrian period and were always dedicated to two deities. Assyrian kings even dedicated

asymmetrical temples to two deities, such as Tukulti Ninurta's Assyrian Ištar temple that also contained a shrine to the goddess Dinitu (see 4.1.Ia).

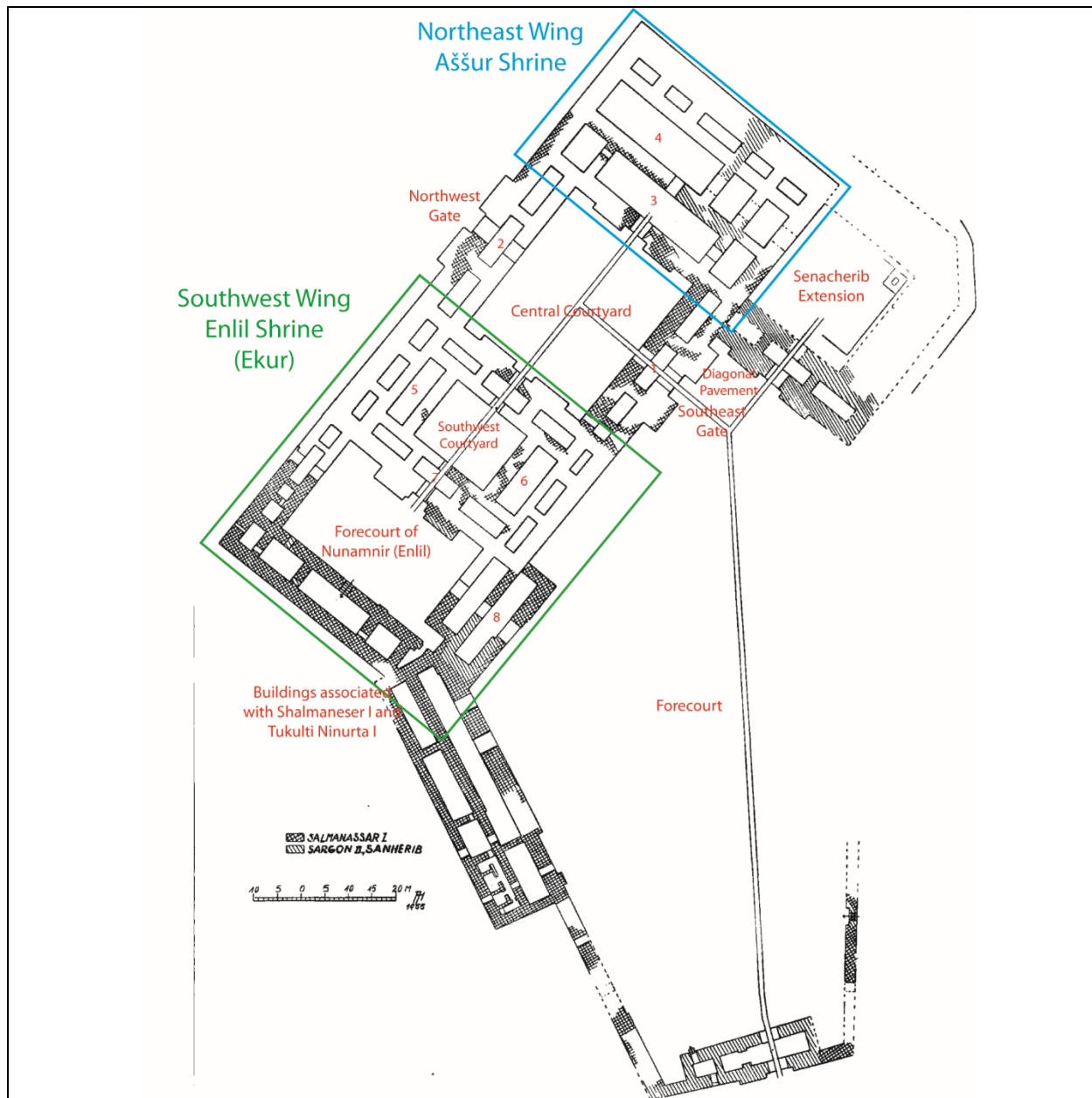
Šamši Adad's Aššur Temple was the first Assyrian symmetrical/dual temple. He dedicated the temple not only to Aššur but also to Enlil. All of the Šamši Adad bricks and door sockets in the temple bear dedications to Aššur, but the foundation tablet inscription from Temple A and several small fragments of the same inscription found in the Aššur Temple list Šamši Adad as the builder of the Aššur Temple and dedicate the temple to Enlil. Andrae believed that the Enlil temple was an undiscovered structure, separate from the Aššur Temple (Haller and Andrae 1955: 5) while Grayson argues that Šamši Adad simply calls the Aššur temple the Enlil Temple (Grayson 1987: 47). However, Grayson's interpretation is incorrect since Šamši Adad's numerous pivot stones, bricks, and foundation tablets label the temple as the Aššur Temple.

The Enlil Temple seems to have been a section of the Aššur temple since Shalmaneser I's later Aššur temple inscriptions (RIMA 0.77.2-5) mention work on a section of the temple dedicated to the god Nunamnir, a common epithet for Enlil (See 3.VIa).<sup>24</sup> The symmetrical nature of the temple suggests that, like all other later symmetrical temples in Aššur, the Aššur Temple contained shrines to two deities. The Northeast Wing was dedicated to Aššur while the Southwest Wing, which forms a miniature version of the temple turned 90°, was dedicated to Enlil (Fig. 36). Shalmaneser I notes that when he restored the temple, he greatly expanded the forecourt of Nunamnir (Enlil), and the only new layout addition from his time is a large forecourt attached to the entrance of the Southwest Wing (Fig. 38).

With the symmetrical shrines of the Aššur/Enlil Temple, Šamši Adad began the Assyrian tradition of dedicating temple complexes to two deities. A person who entered the complex through

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<sup>24</sup> see for example the following Sumerian literature: The Song of the Hoe (Farber 1997); The Birth of Shulgi (Klein 1997); Hymn to Enlil (Jacobsen 1987: 101-111); Enlil and Ninlil (Jacobsen 1987: 167-180)



*Fig. 38: Aššur/Enlil Temple in the Middle and Neo-Assyrian Periods. Plan after Haller and Andrae 1955: 51.*

the Central Courtyard could enter either shrine through the opposing monumental buttressed entrances. Standing here, this visitor would experience the dual states of Assyria and Babylonia. This temple's dual identities, which combined the top Northern and Southern Mesopotamian deities established an early idea of separate Northern and Southern Mesopotamian states. The title

“Appointee of the god Enlil, Vice-regent of Aššur,” which appears on almost all Šamši Adad foundation inscriptions, also captures this duality. The titles that Šamši Adad used and architecture that he patronized in Aššur both define Northern and Southern Mesopotamia as territorial entities and represent his desire to create a new pan-Mesopotamian Akkadian empire.

### **IIIb. Inscriptions and architecture: Different mediums and audiences**

The northern and western reaches of Šamši Adad’s territory hold further remains of monumental architecture. Fabulous temples and palaces at Tell al-Rimah 65 km west of Nineveh and Tell Leilan 160 km northwest of Nineveh contain no building inscriptions, but seals and tablets in the lowest levels of these structures attest to their erection during the reign of Šamši Adad (Postgate *et al* 1997: 18; Weiss *et al* 1990: 536-37). The Tell al-Rimah Great Temple has an attached ziggurat and its outer-walls were adorned with 270 engaged columns, 50 of which bear flamboyant molded and carved bricks that depict spirals and palm tree trunks (Fig. 39) (Oates 1967: 94). The outer façade of Tell Leilan’s temple also bore engaged plain, palm tree, and spiral columns (Fig. 40). Tell Leilan’s excavators identified the city as Šubat Enlil, one of Šamši Adad’s capitals and his primary residence (Whiting 1990), yet they found no royal inscriptions in its palace or main temple.

The lack of inscriptions on these impressive structures bears a stark contrast to Šamši Adad’s works at Aššur and Nineveh. Why, if Šamši Adad commissioned these works, would he not take any credit? He may not have been involved in the construction if the buildings were commissioned by his governors or client kings. Such could be the case for Tell al-Rimah, but if Šubat Enlil was Šamši Adad’s capital, he would likely have had a role in commissioning its public buildings. The sheer scale and intricacy of design of the structures at both cities would argue for

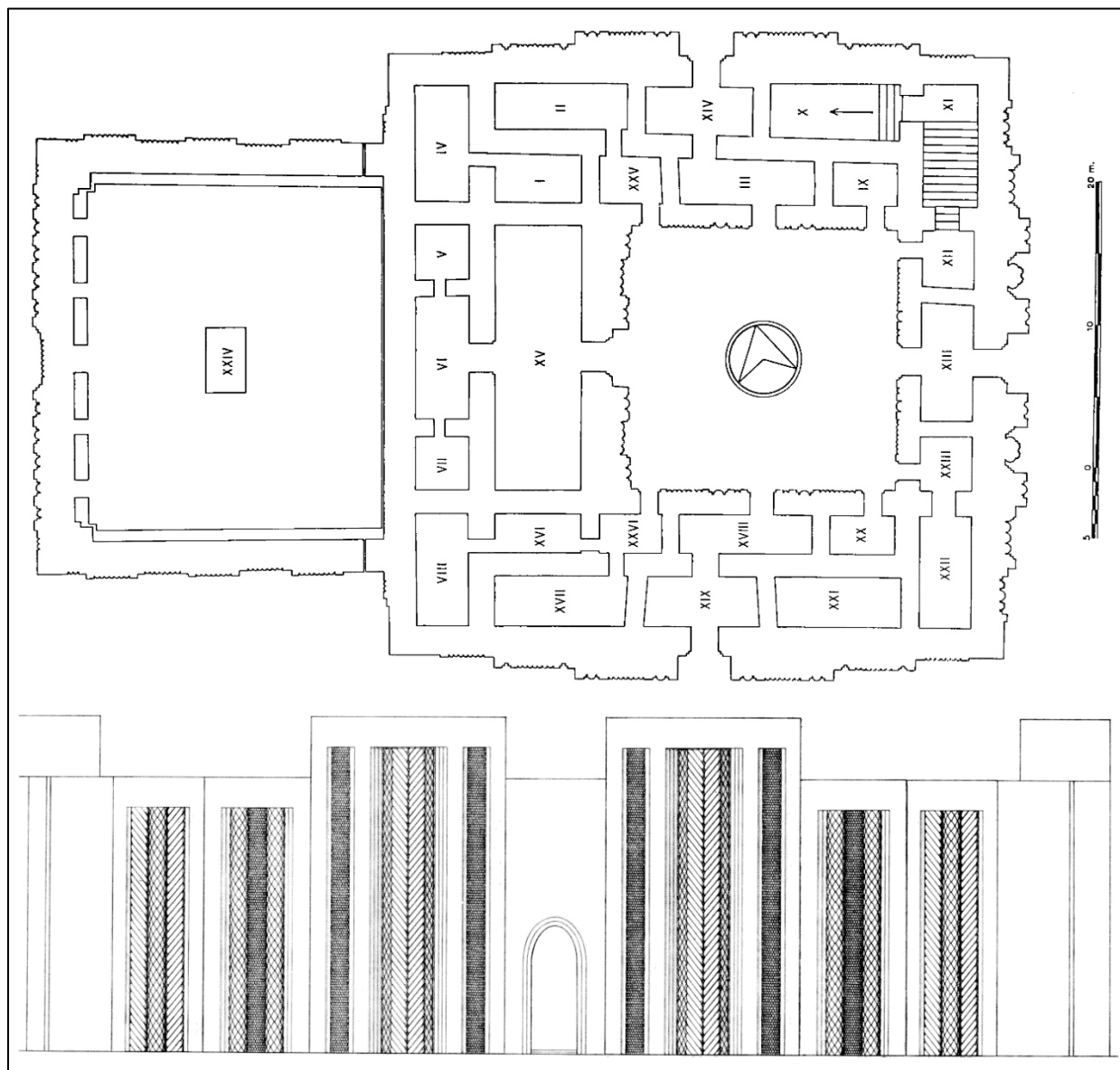
the imperial monarch's patronage rather than lesser client kings. These structures may lack inscriptions because Tell Leilan and Tell al-Rimah had no earlier tradition of inscribing buildings. Inscribing had a long history at Aššur and Nineveh, and Šamši Adad's foundation tablets always tell how he interacted with earlier kings' inscriptions. The Aššur/Enlil Temple foundation tablets even prescribe rituals that future kings must perform on Šamši Adad's inscriptions:

Who(ever) does not anoint my clay inscriptions and my monumental inscriptions with oil, does not make a sacrifice, does not return them to their places, (but) instead alters my monumental inscriptions... (RIMA 0.39.1)

No preserved Mesopotamian king's tablets prior to Šamši Adad had prescribed rituals to be performed on the inscriptions. Šamši Adad considered the inscribed legacy of ancient buildings to be of the utmost importance and sought to insure his place in this legacy. However, inscriptions at Tell al Rimah and Tell Leilan, which held no earlier inscribed material, had no inscribed legacy.

The inscriptions and architecture conveyed Šamši Adad's ideas about state identity and imperial ambitions in different ways and to different audiences. The innovative architectural splendor of building exteriors and the unique symmetrical temple layouts imparted ideas onto present literate and illiterate audiences. These temple's new eye-catching forms would have made viewers well-aware of the new power in their midst and informed viewers of the grandeur of Šamši Adad's state. The inscriptions, on the other hand, are steeped in continuity and their audience was only future kings and temple authorities who would uncover them during later refurbishments. The inscriptions place Šamši Adad's legacy into a historically relevant setting and indicate Šamši Adad's place in a long line of imperialist kings. The presence of an ancient inscribed tradition at Aššur may have been one of Šamši Adad's primary reasons for choosing Aššur as the city he associated the most with his kingship in royal inscriptions. This city, like the great southern cities,

had an inscribed tradition, and its god Aššur was an integral part of its citizens' and kings' identity. Šamši Adad used this city's inscribed ideas about religion, kingship, and identity to define an entire Northern Mesopotamian state.



*Fig. 39: Tell al-Rimah Temple Plan and façade from the time of Šamši Adad. Plan after C. Postgate et al 1997: 24, Façade after Oates 1967: Pl 36*

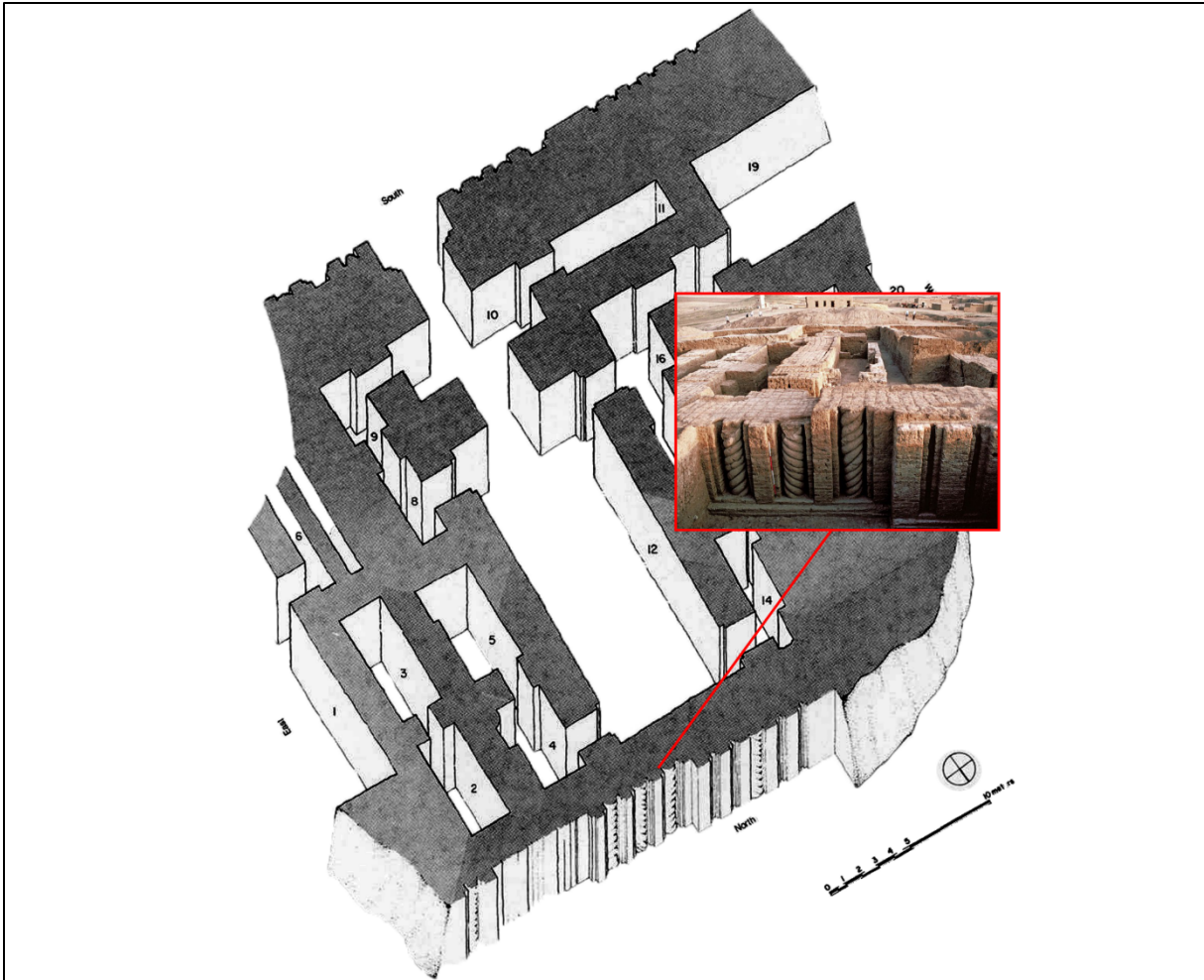


Fig. 40: Tell Leilan Temple at the time of Šamši Adad. Reconstruction after Wright et al 1990, photo: <http://leilan.yale.edu/about-project/excavations/acropolis-northeast-temples>

#### IV. The Land of Aššur

Šamši Adad's empire collapsed shortly after his death, and Aššur reverted back to a city-state controlling its immediate surroundings. Aššur recovered somewhat by the reign of Aššur-narari I (c. 1550) two centuries after Šamši Adad. According to Aššur-narari I's brick inscriptions, he commissioned restorative work on the Aššur temple and city walls and built the symmetrical/dual Sin/Šamaš temple. Subsequently, Aššur fell under the control of Mitanni for much of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but seems to have regained some degree of autonomy by the reign of



Aššur-nadin-ahhe (probably II c. 1400-1391) who, according to EA 16, had diplomatic relations with Egypt and, according to inscribed bricks at Aššur, constructed a new palace on the ruins of the Old Assyrian Palace.

Assyria's rise at Mitanni's expense came during the Amarna Age and the height of Kassite power under Kurigalzu I, a contemporary of Aššur-nadin-ahhe. Aššur-uballit (c. 1363-1328) threw off Mitanni's yoke and even campaigned into Mitanni territory. Now the king of a wide territory far beyond the immediate surroundings of Aššur, Aššur-uballit made overtures to Egypt so that he could enter the Great Powers Club as a Great King. He, like the other Near Eastern kings, created a new title to become a member of the Great Powers Club: King of the Land of Aššur (usually translated King of Assyria), which he used in letters sent to the King of Egypt (Grayson 1972: 48). Thus, now the chief god, the capital city, and all territorial possessions fell under the same name. None of Aššur-uballit's building inscriptions from Aššur use the "King of the Land of Aššur" title; the only objects found at Aššur to bear this title are two seal impressions (RIMA 0.73.6). Aššur-uballit seems to have created the title to use exclusively with other Great Kings or a foreign audience (Cifola 1995: 21). Locally, Aššur-uballit continues to be the Vice-regent of the God Aššur in all his few recovered building inscriptions. The changes in Assyrian royal ideology are exhibited mainly on the international scene, but this idea of Assyria as an international power would come to influence the inscriptions, architecture, and ideology of his successors.

Only one building inscription survives from Aššur-uballit's successor Enlil-Narari (c. 1327-1316), but this inscription contains the first campaign chronicle inscription of an Assyrian monarch (A.0.74.1001). His successor Arik-din-ili (c. 1317-1306) also produced a campaign narrative that survives in a fragmentary inscription (RIMA 075.8) and lists several of his victories. Arik-din-ili is usually overshadowed by his successor Adad-narari whom Assyriologists consider

the instigator of the Assyrian campaign narrative tradition (Grayson 1987: 128). Arik-din-ili, however, makes significant contributions to both Assyrian royal inscriptions and the city of Aššur. He appears to have started the campaign narrative tradition that would become the hallmark of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and is the first king to use the title “King of the Land of Aššur” on building inscriptions. Arik-din-ili brings the idea of the “Land of Aššur” to an Assyrian audience and informs future Kings that he rules a nation. He also projects the idea back into the past and declares Aššur-uballit and Enlil-narari to also be Kings of the Land of Aššur. This title, once used to address the king of Egypt, had become a part of an Assyrian monarch’s identity and inscribes the idea of the Assyrian territorial-state into the fabric of Aššur. The title “Strong King”, last used in Assyria by Šamši Adad, also appears in the building inscriptions of Arik-din-ili. These titular changes show that the king increasingly presents himself as an all-powerful monarch controlling a vast territorial-state.

## **V. Adad-narari**

The titles used on building inscription evolved further during the reign of Arik-din-ili’s successor Adad-narari I. Adad-narari fully conquered Mitanni and extended Assyria’s border to the Hittite southern frontier near Karkemiš. He also fought to the south where he clashed with Nazi-Maruttaš and extended the border towards the Diyala. For the first time since Šamši Adad, the title King of Kiš/Totality appears in building inscriptions of Adad-narari. The majority of his inscriptions begin with something similar to: “Adad-narari, king of the universe (KIŠ), strong king, king of Assyria, son of Arik-din-ili, king of Assyria, son of Enlil-narari (who was) also king of Assyria” (Grayson 1987: 135-175). The titles used here for the different kings clearly differentiate Adad-narari from his predecessors. Adad-narari alone uses the title King of Kiš, and his unique

use of this title advocates to future kings and readers that he founded a new Assyrian-focused Mesopotamian empire. He also connects himself to past imperial rulers, like Šamši Adad, who used the title. This title also had ramifications for Adad-narari's relationship with the Kassites. The Kassite kings Kurigalzu II and Nazi-Maruttaš actively campaigned against the Assyrians and also used the King of Kiš title. Adad-narari held back an invasion by Nazi-Maruttaš (Grayson 1975: 160-161) and usurped the King of Kiš title to argue that Assyria not the Kassites whom he defeated were the dominate power in Mesopotamia.

Four of Adad-narari's recovered inscribed foundation tablets begin with the King of Kiš introduction cited above followed by a detailed narrative of Adad-narari's Mitanni campaigns (Grayson 1987: 135-137). Two (RIMA 0.76.4 and 22) were inscribed on tablets intended to be used at the city of Taidu, one of the conquered cities listed in the campaign narrative. However, the name of the renovated building in 0.76.4 is left blank. Scribes at Taidu could inscribe the name of any existing building, and such inscriptions would inscribe Adad-narari's conquest throughout Taidu and inform future rulers of how Assyria conquered the city. The campaign section offers an explanation as to why the rule has changed and why an Assyrian king is now updating the buildings: Adad-narari conquered the city due to the treachery of the Mitanni kings and has a right to rule because he is not just an Assyrian king like his forebears, but rather a King of Totality in control of Northern Mesopotamia.

As the role of the king and the scope of the state underwent fundamental change during the reign of Adad-narari, ideas concerning the role of the palace in society and what constituted the palace evolved. Numerous Adad-narari pavement bricks found throughout the Old Palace indicate that Adad-narari carried out substantial restorations on Aššur-nadin-ahhe's palace. One unfortunately poorly published innovation of Adad-narari in this palace is the use of large brick

tiles as orthostats to cover the walls in two rooms (Preusser 1955: 16). Decorated stone orthostats with carved scenes of the king adorned later Neo-Assyrian palaces (Fig. 55). The brick “orthostats” of Adad-narari’s palace are the earliest use of this kind of wall decoration in Assyria, but no photos or drawings have been published; Preusser only mentions them in one sentence (*ibid*), and Pedde and Lundström’s (2008) republication of the Old Palace material, which only offers details and photos for the Neo-Assyrian palace, lacks any mention of these Middle Assyrian orthostats.

Architects in Syria and Anatolia had used stone orthostats since the Middle Bronze Age for decoration and protection from weathering (Harmanşah 2013). Such features had spread throughout Syrian and Hittite territories by the late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium (Harmanşah 2013: 178). Assyria, upon conquering parts of Syria up to Karkemiš and the Hittite border, imported the style but used the substitute materials of clay and asphalt. The orthostats contributed to a new palatial style that incorporated Eastern elements in an Assyrian form. Adad-narari’s palace’s orthostat rooms allowed conquered dignitaries from the West to encounter the styles they knew in an Assyrian setting. This bringing in and adapting different styles in palatial residences resulted in an eclectic melding of styles in Middle Assyrian palatial architecture.

Architectural innovations were not the only changes that defined the Middle Assyrian palaces. The idea of what constituted the palace underwent a dramatic shift. Most Adad-narari stamped bricks begin with “Palace of Adad-narari, King of Kiš” regardless of the structure for which they were intended (Grayson 1987: 162-177; Schmitt 2012: 66). The specific structure is named at the end of the brick inscription, and in at least two cases, the quay wall (A.0.76.39) and the temple of Belat-same (A.0.76.37), the structure is not connected to the physical palace. Only the bricks on the Aššur Temple at Aššur do not follow this formula and give Adad-narari the title Vice-Regent without mentioning the palace. The titles and types of inscriptions used on the bricks

reflect different audiences and traditions bound to monuments as well as experimentation with constructing the king's presence in Aššur and the territories beyond. Stamping an object with "Palace of RN" usually indicated that the palace owned an item. The palace stamps on bricks throughout Aššur also indicate ownership. These stamps make monumental sacred and secular architecture throughout Aššur and beyond a part of Adad-narari's great house and extended his presence into these structures. This extension of the king represents the meaning of Kiš as "totality"; everything is made a part of his palace, his personal domain.

His domain of totality, however, does not extend to the Aššur temple, the one part of Aššur that exhibits humility and continuity with his predecessors. The Aššur Temple bricks represent some resistance or hesitation against his attempt to extend his ownership over all aspects of life in Aššur. The continued use of the traditional title stresses the king's specific connection to Aššur and perhaps celebrates Aššur through the now unique brick inscription type for his temple. However, despite the profound link between the king as high priest of Aššur and the Aššur temple, the difference in the Aššur Temple inscription shows a continued separation between the Aššur Temple and the palace.

While the Aššur temple bricks stress continuity, stasis, and the intimate connection between the king and the god Aššur, an introduction found on various foundation tablets, which commemorate restoration work on the walls of Aššur, stresses the break from the past and marginalization of the king's relationship with Aššur:

Adad-narari, holy prince, pride of the gods, lord, appointee of the gods, founder of cult centres, defeater of the heroic - the army of the Kassites, Qutu, Lullumu, and Šubaru - scatterer of all enemies above and below, trampler of their lands from Lubdu and the land Rapiqu to Eluhat, conqueror of the cities Taidu, Šuru, Kahat, Amasaku, Hurra, Šuduhu, Nabula, Waššukanu, and Irridu, the entirety of Kašiiiri to/with Eluhat, the fortress of the city Sudu, the fortress of Harrānu to/with Carchemish which is on the bank of the Euphrates, capturer of all people, extender

of borders and boundaries, the king at whose feet the gods Anu, Aššur, Šamaš, Adad, and Istar made all rulers and princes bow down, exalted priest of the god Enlil;

Son of Arik-din-ili, appointee of the god Enlil, vice-regent of Aššur, conqueror of the land of the Turukku and the land Nigimhu to its entire extent (as well as) all rulers of the mountains and hills of the extensive district of the Qutu, conqueror of the land Kutmuhu and its entire allies, the hordes of Ahlamu, Sutu, Iūru, together with their lands, extender of borders and boundaries;

Grandson of Enlil-narara (who was) also vice-regent of Aššur, who defeated the army of the Kassites and overcame every one of his enemies, extender of borders and boundaries;

Offspring of Aššur-uballit (I), strong king, whose priesthood was outstanding in awesome Ekur and the well-being of his sovereignty was established as far away as the mountains, subduer of the land Musru, disperser of the hordes of the extensive land of the Subaru, extender of borders and boundaries. (RIMA 0.76.1)

Here Adad-narari uses neither King of Kiš nor any traditional Assyrian royal titles and connects his empire back to Aššur-uballit, who lacks any Assyrian title, by extending his filiation beyond his two immediate predecessors. The inscription stresses each king's individuality by giving each king different titles and offering a brief summary of each king's individual accomplishments. The titles multiply with each successive king and establish the developing power and sacred mandate of each. Enlil-narari is only Vice-regent of Aššur. Arik-din-ili receives Šamši-Adad's title "Appointee of the God Enlil, Vice-regent of Aššur," which implies greater power over Mesopotamia since he has Aššur and Enlil (North and South). With Adad-narari, the title becomes simply "appointee of the gods".

Adad-narari's initial titles establish his sacred nature and are fairly universal since no specific gods are mentioned. Aššur has a rather diminished role since Adad-narari is the exalted priest of Enlil rather than Aššur. Adad-narari's description exhibits a cosmic king endowed with sacred power. He is a holy ruler, approved by all the gods, and a founder of new cult centers (*mahazu*). This last title implies the ability to endow the landscape with sacredness. Cult centers are sacred spaces where the land comes in contact with the gods, and Adad-narari, the cosmic

sacred king, creates such spaces on a whim and directs the communication with the gods on earth. His cosmic and godlike nature sets him apart from his predecessors. He is a unique individual who has extraordinary accomplishments and the sacred spaces that he creates and inscription that he lays extend his presence throughout the Assyrian state.

## **VI. Shalmaneser I**

### **Via. Aššur/Enlil Temple: Refurbishing the microcosm**

Inscriptions from buildings of Adad-narari's successor Shalmaneser I have been found at Aššur and Nineveh and these inscriptions reference building projects at other cities. His inscriptions show considerable continuity with Adad-narari's inscriptions and further experimentation. Many of Shalmaneser's inscriptions come from the Aššur/Enlil Temple at Aššur, which Shalmaneser ordered rebuilt after a fire destroyed the Šamši Adad temple. Andrae and Haller (1955) attribute remains of the temple to Shalmaneser based upon a change in brick size from the Šamši Adad temple (35 cm wide to 37 cm wide) and the presence of Shalmaneser's inscribed pavement bricks and pivot stones. These remains for the most part follow the layout of Šamši Adad's temple, but an additional courtyard wing (Forecourt of Nunamnir) extends from the temple's southwest side (Fig. 38). The new courtyard eliminated the temple's symmetry by elongating it to the southwest and adding a second much more modest entrance to the southeast wall.

The temple was still devoted to both Aššur and Enlil since, as discussed above (3.IIIb), numerous foundation tablets and cones commemorate part of the temple dedicated to Nunamnir, an epithet of Enlil. The Nunamnir section must be the Southwest Wing since the inscriptions specifically state that Shalmaneser greatly expanded the forecourt of Nunamnir and the new

southwest courtyard is Shalmaneser's only major addition. Shalmaneser calls this wing É.KUR, which is a change from É.AM.KUR.KUR.RA, its name under Šamši Adad. The Enlil shrine at Nippur, the top temple of the Babylonian pantheon, was also called É.KUR. Shalmaneser, by changing the name of the Enlil Temple at Aššur to É.KUR, made a version of the paramount Mesopotamian temple within the city of Aššur. Shalmaneser expanded the Enlil section because he wanted the Enlil Temple in Aššur to rival the southern cult centers at Nippur and Dur Kurigalzu. Shalmaneser made É.KUR a part of his royal identity and often uses the title "builder or overseer of É.KUR." The É.KUR name makes a powerful claim that at least an extension of the É.KUR at Nippur now resides in Aššur. The dual shrines É.HUR.SAG.KUR.KUR.RA (Aššur Temple) and É.KUR continue to represent a microcosm of Mesopotamia, but É.KUR makes a bolder statement of power over Babylonia.

At Aššur, Adad-narari used palace bricks on all his building projects except the Aššur Temple. Shalmaneser's Aššur Temple brick inscriptions, on the other hand, all read "Palace of Shalmaneser, king of the universe, son of Adad-narari (I), king of the universe" and do not even mention the Aššur Temple. Most of Shalmaneser's building projects at Aššur use similar brick inscriptions that only mention the royal palace rather than the structure for which they were intended. These mass-produced palace bricks extend Shalmaneser's palace over any monumental building, and the Aššur Temple palace bricks show the now all-encompassing royal control over Assyrian institutions. When Shalmaneser rebuilt the Aššur/Enlil Temple, he brought it firmly under his control. His full control over the Aššur/Enlil Temple represents the Assyrian king's paramount authority over all Mesopotamia and access to its paramount deities.

Shalmaneser also restored the Ištar Temple and ziggurat at Nineveh, but this temple's bricks bear a traditional dedication that uses the Vice-regent of Aššur title: "To the goddess Ištar, his mistress, Shalmaneser, vice-regent of the god Aššur, dedicated." While Shalmaneser had



extended his dominance throughout the cultic institutions at Aššur, he still faced resistance from ancient and powerful cults elsewhere. The Assyrians had controlled Nineveh for centuries, but the Ninevite Ištar cult had been among the most powerful Northern Mesopotamian cults long before Assyrian rule (Harrak 1987: 51). Even the Assyrian king had to tread lightly when restoring and claiming his authority over its temple. Despite his dominance over Assyrian society, Shalmaneser could not put his palace stamp on the Ninevite Ištar Temple.

The Aššur/Enlil Temple at Aššur contained, in addition to bricks, numerous inscribed cones, door sockets, and foundation tablets. These tablets place Shalmaneser's building within the temple's history and inscribed tradition. The dedication first lists the number of years between the Erišum and Šamši Adad temples and follows precedents set by these earlier king's inscriptions. Erišum and Šamši Adad's Aššur Temple inscriptions listed luxury items that were used as construction material (RIMA 0.33.2, 0.39.1). Shalmaneser says that he followed the earlier prescriptions and made the temple "much more cunningly than before" by adding further precious materials: "At its foundation I set stones, silver, gold, iron, copper, tin, layers of aromatic plants. I mixed its plaster with oil, scented oil, cedar resin, honey, and ghee" (RIMA 0.77.1).

Šamši Adad's Aššur/Enlil Temple inscriptions urged readers to anoint the inscriptions with oil and perform sacrifices. Shalmaneser's foundation tablets inform that he specifically carried out these instructions and he urges future kings to perform the same rituals on his own inscriptions. He even adds more ritual treatment to past kings' inscriptions: "I deposited my monumental inscriptions. I anointed with oil the monumental inscriptions of my forefathers, made sacrifices, and returned them with stones, silver, and gold to their places" (RIMA 0.77.4). This material, which Shalmaneser claims he deposited with the inscriptions, recalls the material that he claims he buried under the temple walls. The same materials' presence in both instances indicates that

Shalmaneser dedicated temples and deposited inscriptions under similar rituals and beliefs for consecrating sacred space and sacred objects.

Shalmaneser's longest and most detailed inscription (RIMA 0.77.1), which appears on numerous foundation tablets from the Aššur/Enlil Temple ruins and Temple A, contains a detailed narrative of four military campaigns. Adad-narari's campaign narrative, which focused exclusively on his Mitanni campaigns and appeared on inscriptions bound for the Mitanni city of Taidu, explained the change to Assyrian leadership and inscribed Assyria's victory into former Mitanni cities. Shalmaneser's campaign narrative, which covers multiple campaigns and only appears on Aššur Temple inscriptions, functions differently from Adad-Narari's narratives. Shalmaneser himself gives a reason for the campaign narrative in the inscription: "In the future may a later prince, when that temple becomes old and dilapidated, hear of my heroic deeds (and) recount my praiseworthy power." Shalmaneser states here that he added the campaign narratives so that the Aššur temple inscriptions can immortalize his accomplishment. Future kings and builders will continue to acknowledge his accomplishments as they continue to restore the Aššur Temple.

The content of the narrative suggests more than just a recounting of Shalmaneser I's mighty deeds. Assyriologists do not count his campaign narrative among the Assyrian royal annals because none of the events have dates (Grayson 1987: 4). Shalmaneser's narrative describes four wars against regions bordering Assyria: Urartu, Musri, the land of the Gutians, and Hanigalbat. These four campaigns define Shalmaneser's empire's geographic extent: the Gutians in the East, Urartu in the North, Musri in the Northeast, and Hanigalbat all the way to Carchemish in the East (Fig. 41). The only temporal information is that the Urartu campaign occurred at the beginning of Shalmaneser's reign. The campaign section's lack of chronological information contrasts against the tablet's building section, which gives a specific date for Shalmaneser's restoration and the

number of years between each previous rebuilding. The campaign narrative does not give a chronological narrative of the king's deeds like later Neo-Assyrian chronicles (*ibid*), but rather describes the geographical extent of Assyria's conquests. This narrative of power and conquest inscribed into the Aššur/Enlil Temple functions as a map of the Assyrian state and defines its borders under Shalmaneser.

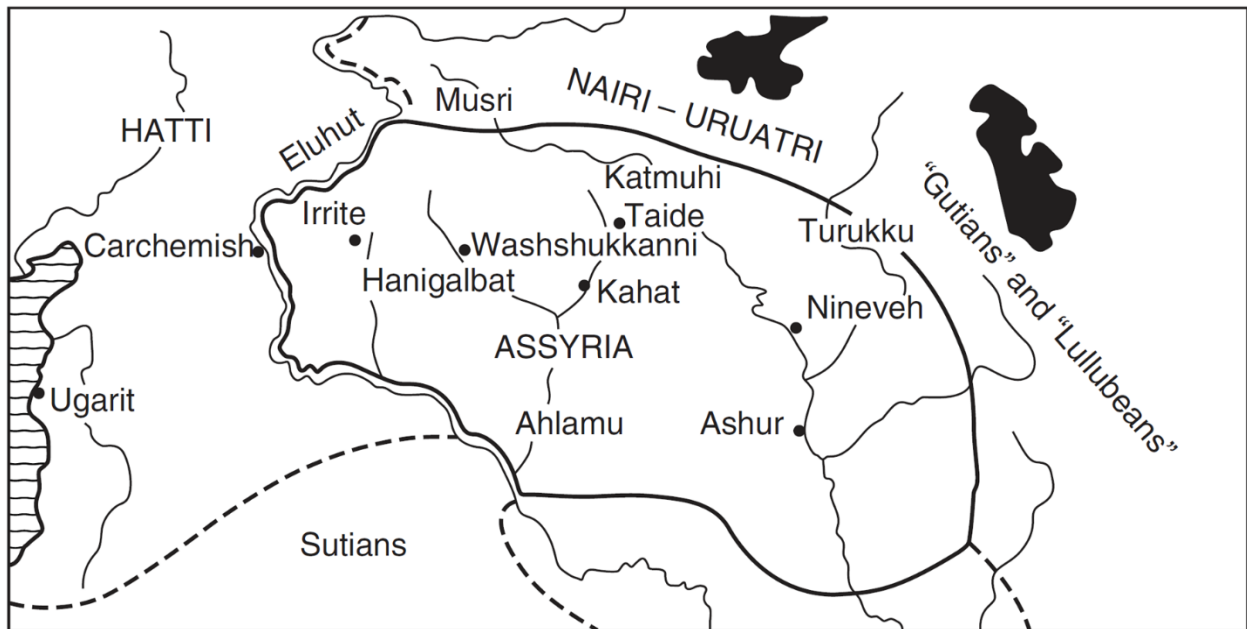


Fig. 41: Assyrian territory at the time of Shalmaneser and Adad-narari, after Liverani 2014: 348

A variant (RIMA 0.77.16) of Shalmaneser's campaign inscription was found in the Aššur/Enlil Temple's Central Courtyard. The text lists, immediately following the campaign narrative, Shalmaneser's building projects throughout Assyria, including temples, ziggurats, and walls in Tarbisu, Talmussu, Arbail, Aššur, and Kahat. The section concludes with "I made those cult-centers (and) shrines better than previously." Shalmaneser's scribes added this list to show that Shalmaneser has, along with imperial power and military prowess, extensive building prowess. The campaign narrative lists numerous cult centers that Shalmaneser conquered, and this building section shows that he both sacks and restores cult centers. The list of building projects

from different cities inscribes all the cult centers that Shalmaneser built throughout the empire into the Aššur Temple. Through the words inscribed into its structure, this temple, a microcosm of the state, contains the top deities of Mesopotamia, the total extent of Assyrian territory, and some of its most important sacred spaces.

## **Vib. Aššur Ziggurat**

Among these sacred spaces that Shalmaneser claimed he erected is the Aššur ziggurat at Aššur. The remains of the Aššur ziggurat stand 100 m southwest of the Aššur Temple and 30 m east of the Old Palace. It was the largest and most prominent monument at Aššur; at 61-62 m per side, it is almost the same size as the Dur Kurigalzu ziggurat. This ziggurat gave the city of Aššur the monumentality necessary for a national capital and reveals enigmatic ways of consecrating sacred space. The Aššur ziggurat was a fitting complement to Shalmaneser I's Aššur/Enlil temple, which showcased Aššur as the capital of Mesopotamia and home of its chief deities. The monument's dating, however, reveals many of the issues with how Aššur's excavators dated monuments and needs a reappraisal to properly place the ziggurat within the Middle Assyrian Period.

The ziggurat consists of an upper and lower terrace (Fig. 42) that are each composed of different materials and separated by layers of clay and reeds. The lower section is a flat terrace 1.3-3.3 m tall and built of 35x35x10 cm bricks. The upper ziggurat is preserved 19 m tall, contains slightly wider bricks, and is recessed about 50 cm from the lower terrace (Andrae 1904c: 45-47). Double recessed niches adorn the upper ziggurat's preserved sides. An excavation trench dug through the ziggurat revealed numerous small precious objects under both the center and corners of the upper and lower ziggurat. These deposits each consisted of shells, about 1,000 faience and

glass beads, spiral glass rods 12 cm long, and fragments of various stones and metals underneath a layer of grass (Fig. 43) (Andrae 1914: 19; Andrae 1977: 130-33; Andrae and Haller 1955: 3; Miglus 1985: 23-29). The corners underneath the upper ziggurat also held gold and silver discs that bear Shalmaneser’s inscribed dedication of the ziggurat to Aššur (*ibid*).

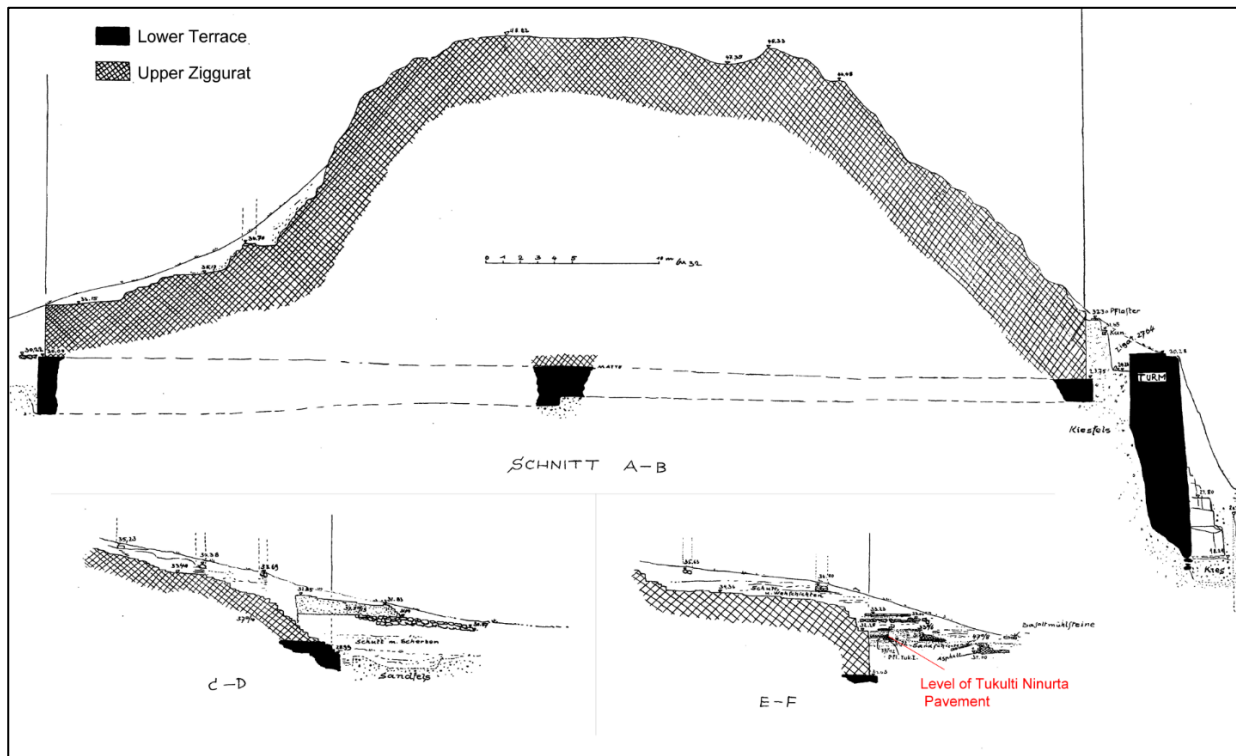


Fig. 42: Aššur ziggurat sections, after Haller and Andrae 1955: Pl 2

The inscriptions lack any filiation, so the Shalmaneser in question is unclear. Andrae attributed the discs to Shalmaneser III (c. 858-824) based upon similarities to his inscriptions and brick size (Andrae 1914: 21). Borger (1961: 50-51) and Grayson (1987: 211) attributed the inscriptions to Shalmaneser I, but do not explain their reasoning. Andrae references other Shalmaneser III inscriptions that also begin with the phrase “a-na (deity’s name) EN-šú md<sup>v</sup>šul-ma-nu- MAš,” but this wording also occurs on Shalmaneser I’s Aššur temple door sockets (RIMA 0.77.20-21), which like the ziggurat inscriptions begin with “a-na d<sup>a</sup>aš-šur EN-šú md<sup>v</sup>šul-ma-nu-

MAŠ(or SAG) ŠID aš-šur”. The list of building projects in Shalmaneser I’s Aššur Temple inscription (RIMA 0.77.16) also declares: “The great ziqqurat I (re)built for the god Aššur my lord inside my city Aššur.” No such boasts survive from Shalmaneser III.

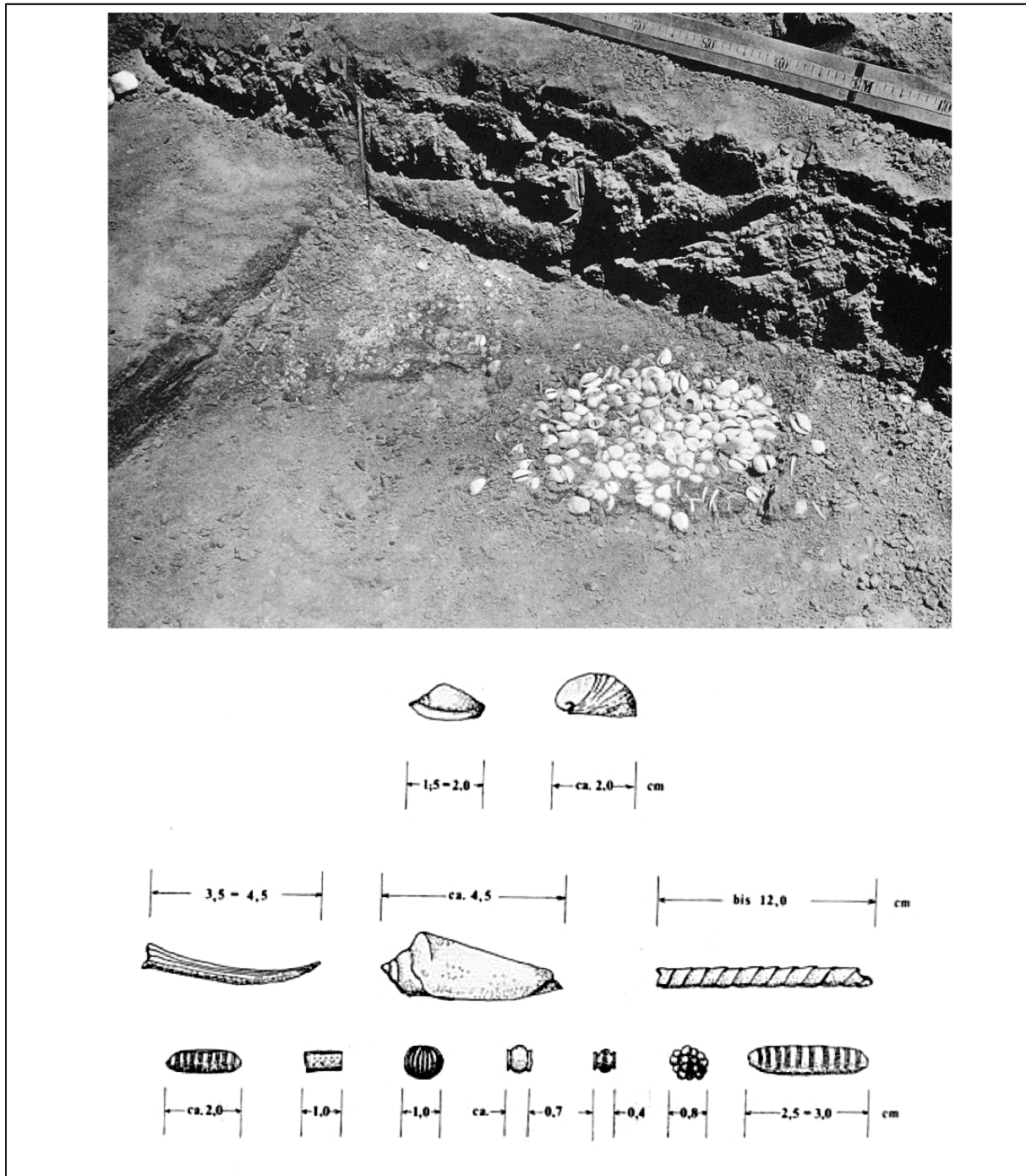


Fig. 43: Shells and glass from Aššur ziggurat streugaben. Top: after Haller and Andrae 1955: Taf 22; Bottom: after Miglus 1985: 26

Miglus (1985) agrees with Grayson and Borger that the inscriptions do not date to Shalmaneser III but instead attributes the upper ziggurat to the otherwise obscure Shalmaneser II (c. 1030-1019), a king who ruled at a time of Assyrian weakness and has no other known building projects. Miglus' argument is based primarily upon the original Aššur excavators' belief that 0.5 and 1 cm differences in recorded unbaked brick sizes indicate which king commissioned a building. Miglus argues that the upper ziggurat level cannot date to the time of Shalmaneser I because the ziggurat's unbaked bricks are recorded as  $37\text{-}37.5^2/12$  cm while the Shalmaneser I Aššur temple bricks are recorded as  $37\text{-}38^2/10\text{-}11$  cm. He advocates that the upper ziggurat must date to the early Iron Age, because the brick size is closer to the recorded size for Tiglath Pileasar I's Anu-Adad temple's bricks ( $37.5\text{-}38^2/11.5\text{-}12$  cm). These Tiglath Pileasar I bricks, however, are only a half cm different from Shalmaneser I's Aššur temple bricks.

Minute differences in brick size are not good criterion for dating, since neither was brick-making an exact science nor was brick measuring consistent among early twentieth century excavations. Ziggurat brick sizes vary across Andrae's publications and drawings. Miglus (1985) observes that Andrae recorded  $37\text{-}38^2/10\text{-}11$  cm bricks for the Shalmaneser I Aššur Temple and  $37\text{-}37.5^2/12$  cm for the upper ziggurat. Andrae and Haller (1955: 2, 8) give slightly different measurements:  $38\text{-}39^2/11$  cm for the Aššur temple and  $37.5\text{-}38^2/12$  for the ziggurat. In the same publication, one of the original section drawings labels the upper ziggurat brick size "37/10" (Andrae and Haller 1955: Pl. 2 C-D). Andrae's initial published observations of the ziggurat state another size:  $39^2/13$  (Andrae 1904c: 34), and a year later he gives the brick size as  $37.5^2 \times 11$  cm (Andrae 1905: 44), which is the same size as the Shalmaneser I Aššur Temple bricks.

Miglus' size for upper ziggurat bricks ( $37\text{-}37.5^2/12$  cm) is also present among recorded Middle Assyrian brick sizes before Tiglath Pileasar I. Bachmann, for example, recorded most Kar

Tukulti Ninurta bricks as 36-37<sup>2</sup>/12-13 cm (see 4.IIa). Dating monuments to particular kings based upon brick size is further untenable since monuments dated by inscriptions to a single king could contain different brick sizes and monuments of different kings often have the same brick sizes. Tukulti Ninurta I has at least three different brick sizes (see 4.IIa) and Shalmaneser III uses 11 cm and 13 cm wide bricks on different monuments (Andrae 1909: 39). Shalmaneser III also used the same bricks size as Tiglath Pileser I on the Anu-Adad Temple (*ibid*) and Adad-narari I used the same brick size as Šamši Adad (see 3.V). Without inscribed evidence, the brick sizes have little value for assigning buildings to particular kings.

Miglus further observes that the upper ziggurat must postdate Tukulti Ninurta I because it covered a Tukulti Ninurta pavement (Miglus 1985: 37-38). Miglus publishes a series of section drawings (Miglus 1985: 30-37), two of which were already published in more detail by Andrae and Haller (1955: Pl. 2 C-D and E-F) (Fig. 42). The sections show, among other things, some brick terracing and a Tukulti Ninurta I pavement built on the southwest side of the ziggurat. Several sections show the Tukulti Ninurta pavement either near or abutting the ziggurat. All sections show the pavement to be several meters above the bottom of the upper ziggurat (Fig. 42), and no sections show the ziggurat covering the pavement. The ziggurat could not have covered the pavement because the pavement was too high. Further, if the ziggurat covered the pavement in only one section, as Miglus suggests (Miglus 1985: 37), then the ziggurat would need to somehow jut out in just one spot to cover the pavement. Since the pavement was far above the upper ziggurat's base and was built alongside the ziggurat, the upper ziggurat was already standing in Tukulti Ninurta I's time.

Shalmaneser I is the most likely king who left the gold and silver discs under the corners of the upper ziggurat. Shalmaneser II is the most unlikely king since he only ruled for 10 years and



had neither the power nor resources to build the largest monument in Aššur. Shalmaneser III is possible. The niche decoration on the Aššur ziggurat matches the niche decoration on Shalmaneser III's Anu/Adad ziggurats and similar wording is used on Shalmaneser III's inscriptions. Shalmaneser I is a better candidate for several reasons. First, one of his inscriptions boasts that he rebuilt the ziggurat. Second, the Aššur temple door sockets and ziggurat inscriptions begin almost exactly the same as the ziggurat inscriptions, giving the possibility that these monuments were commissioned together. Third, the Tukulti Ninurta I pavements built alongside the upper ziggurat, several meters above its lowest course, show that the upper ziggurat was already built before Tukulti Ninurta I. Last, as Miglus has already observed, the kind of deposits under the ziggurat's corners are frequently found on Middle Assyrian buildings and are discussed in Shalmaneser I's Aššur Temple inscriptions (see 3.VIIIb).

Andrae (1977: 129, 217) and Miglus (1985) conclude that the lower terrace is a remnant of a Šamši Adad era ziggurat that Shalmaneser leveled. They attribute the lower ziggurat to Šamši Adad based entirely upon its brick size (35x35x11 cm) that matches Šamši Adad's Aššur Temple brick size. Andrae also argued that the Enlil Temple mentioned on Šamši Adad's Temple A inscription was actually the high temple of the ziggurat, which Šamši Adad dedicated to Enlil (Andrae and Haller 1955: 5), but this argument lacks evidence. No Šamši Adad inscriptions mention the ziggurat, which is not referenced before Adad-narari I who says his father Arik-dinili built the new Aššur ziggurat. Adad-narari's palace is also made of 35x35x11 cm bricks (Preuser 1955: 14), so no archaeological or textual evidence indicates that the lower platform dates to Šamši Adad. The deposits underneath the lower terrace, in fact, completely rule out Šamši Adad. Moorey has already questioned the dating of the ziggurat deposit to Šamši Adad due to the presence of large quantities of glass beads (Moorey 1999: 190-192). The only evidence of glass in the Near

East before the Kassite period is the sporadic presence of single small beads in tombs (*ibid*). The ziggurat deposits contain not only thousands of glass beads, but also long spiral glass rods that require advanced glass-production knowledge. No evidence supports such a glass-making industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but similar glass crafts frequently occur in 14<sup>th</sup> century contexts (See 5.Va.i.1).

The lower ziggurat must, like the upper ziggurat, date to the Middle Assyrian Period. Shalmaneser I and Adad-narari I are the only kings who discuss the ziggurat in inscriptions, and Adad-narari also references Arik-din-ili's work. The ziggurat remains may represent a project that spanned the reigns of all three kings and brick sizes changed as the building progressed.<sup>25</sup> The flat lower terrace may not have been an earlier ziggurat at all, but rather only the initial phase of the ziggurat that Shalmaneser I eventually completed. If Larsen is correct that the Old Assyrian assembly met at the same location of the Aššur ziggurat, then Arik-din-ili, Adad-narari I, and Shalmaneser I removed the city's most visible spatial manifestation of the assembly and the citizens' power.

They took an important part of people's spatial practice and turned it into a space that not only represented the supreme power of Aššur, but also the power of the king over the citizens. This monumentalizing of former meeting spaces was done under the auspices of fulfilling offerings to the gods, the duty of the king and the state. The ziggurat further monumentalized the god Aššur, whose identity was synonymous with the identity of the eponymous Land of Aššur. The king's ability to create sacred space was integral to his ability to build and define a state. The deposits underneath the ziggurat reveal methods used to define sacred space, and further evidence of these practice from the reign of Shalmaneser I's successor Tukulti Ninurta I help to decode their meaning.

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<sup>25</sup> Brick sizes changed during the construction of palaces at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, see 4.IId

## **VII. Tukulti Ninurta**

Shalmaneser I's successor Tukulti Ninurta culminated the Middle Assyrian narrative of conquest and empire building. He continued to expand the empire, including conquering Babylonia, and broke free from the past by creating new sacred spaces, cities, and palaces. He further built up the city of Aššur as an imperial capital and expanded his presence throughout its built spaces. Tukulti Ninurta preferred to build entirely new buildings and sacred spaces rather than restoring old ones. At Aššur, he rejected both the Ištar Temple, one of the most ancient temples in Aššur, and the Old Assyrian Palace to build a new palace and temple in new locations. These structures reveal the increasing merger of the king's identity with the patron deity and the identity of the state.

### **VIIa. The Assyrian Ištar Temple**

Tukulti Ninurta tore down what was probably the most ancient temple in Aššur, the Assyrian Ištar Temple, and built an entirely new larger temple a few meters away. In doing so, he destroyed a very ancient sacred space steeped in tradition to create his own new sacred space. The deepest archaeological layer of the Archaic Ištar Temple predates Tukulti Ninurta by around 1300 years, and the Assyrians considered the temple to be one of the most ancient institutions in Aššur. According to Tukulti Ninurta himself (RIMA 0.78.11), the Archaic Ištar Temple had been built by King Ilu-šumma 720 years before Tukulti Ninurta. Tukulti Ninurta tore down this very ancient sacred space and moved it to a new area just to the west.

Tukulti Ninurta's new Ištar Temple is the best-preserved temple ruin of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Aššur, and no building in Aššur or probably the entire Near East has yielded so many *in situ* foundation tablets. Andrae's team, under the direction of Julius Jordan, systematically dismantled all the walls and found inscribed foundation tablets under the building's preserved corners and

under the walls behind the cult pedestals. Two different texts inscribed on foundation tablets reference the temple's erection on an entirely new site:

At that time, at the beginning of my sovereignty, the goddess Ištar, my mistress, requested of me another temple which would be holier than her (present) shrine, and the old temple, the dwelling of the goddess Ištar, my mistress, which previously (was) her only one, (which) alone was designated as the abode of the goddess Ištar and before which no room of the *šahuru* had been built (RIMA 0.78.11);

[T]hat temple had become dilapidated and I cleared away its debris. I changed its site. As an addition I constructed the room of the *suhuru* and the towers. I established a lofty dais for the abode of the goddess Ištar, my mistress. I built (that temple) from top to bottom (RIMA 0.78.11).

This “holier” temple was 51.5x37 m and contained two separate shrines to the Assyrian Ištar and Dinitu (Fig. 44).<sup>26</sup> The walls were composed almost entirely of 38x38x10 cm unbaked bricks and were preserved in some places up to 2 m high. The outer walls preserved a pattern of double-recessed niches and engaged molded-brick columns (Fig. 45 and Fig. 46). Most of the temple's rooms were paved with bitumen-covered baked bricks with Tukulti Ninurta palace stamps. The temple had no courtyards and was made up of three rows of quite large rooms, six of which form the Ištar shrine. The seventh room held the Dinitu shrine. Bitumen on the Ištar cella's pavement (Fig. 44: 3) bore numerous imprints of objects (Fig. 47), and strips of bitumen and red and black paint decorated the cella walls (Fig. 48). A 112 cm clay phallus also rested on the floor.

The cult image stood on a 2 m high raised plinth built over the pavement on the cella's far northwest side. The excavators uncovered a 2.68 m wide inscribed limestone block under the wall behind the plinth (Fig. 49). Several silver, gold, and lead tablets bearing almost the same inscription as the limestone block lie both on top of and beneath it (Fig. 49). These inscribed tablets were placed into a similar deposit as the inscriptions on the ziggurat: a bed of fine clay, stone

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<sup>26</sup> The following description of the Ištar Temple is based upon information in Andrae 1935 and Schmitt 2012

shavings, shells, plant fragments, and multi-colored glass, agate, and lapis lazuli beads. This mixture was also sprinkled above the tablets. In the center of the wall above the tablets, a brick lined hollow space behind the plinth contained another five alabaster tablets of Adad-narari from the former Istar Temple (Fig. 49). These tablets were also imbedded in a mixture of glass beads, fine sand, and clay. Andrae notes a track left by liquid running through the sand, and he believed this trace was left by the oil poured onto the inscriptions (Andrae 1935: 44).

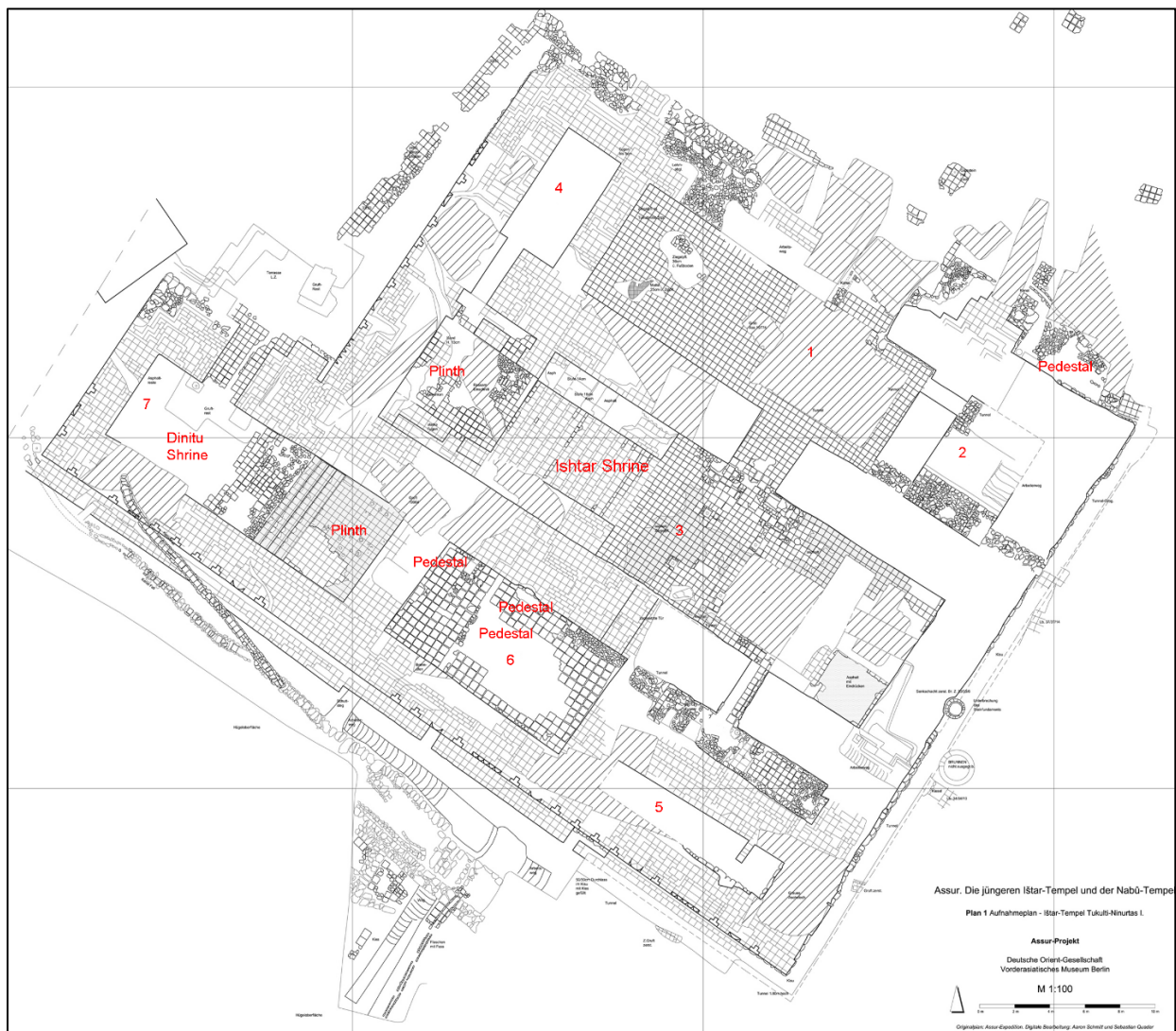
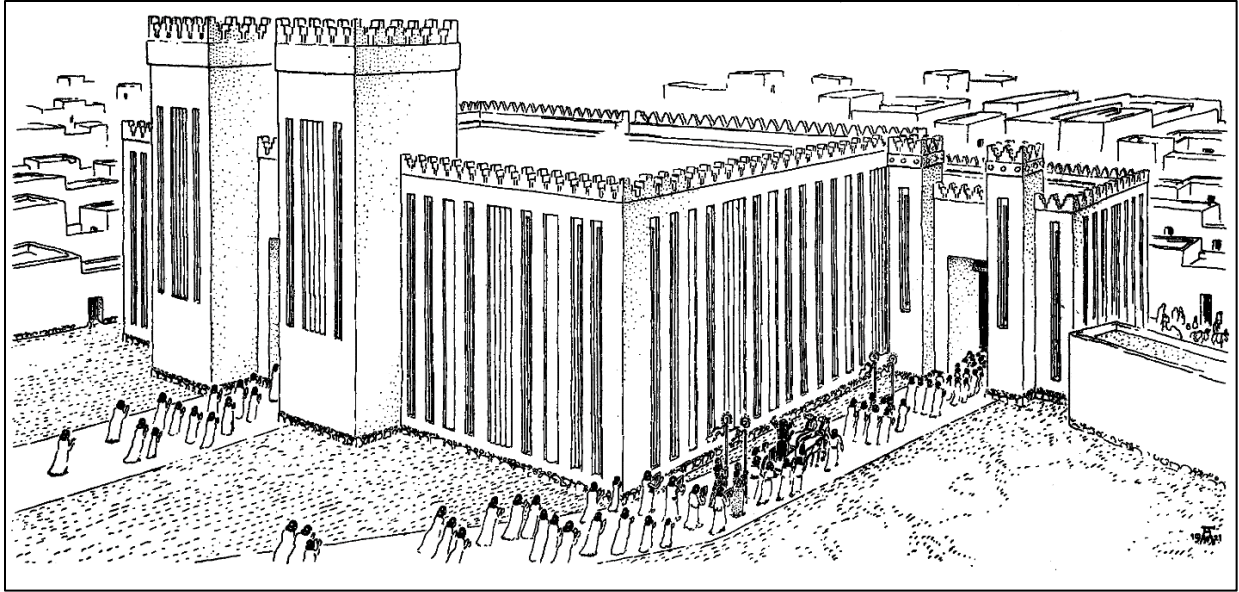


Fig. 44: Assyrian Istar Temple. Plan after Schmitt 2012: Plan 1



*Fig. 45: Assyrian Istar Temple reconstruction, after Andrae 1935: Pl. 3a*



*Fig. 46: Assyrian Istar Temple façade, after Schmitt 2012: Pl. 27a*



Fig. 47: Bitumen layer over baked brick pavement on Dinitu plinth. Room 6 and one of the pedestals within is visible in the upper right, after Andrae 1935: Pl. 13b

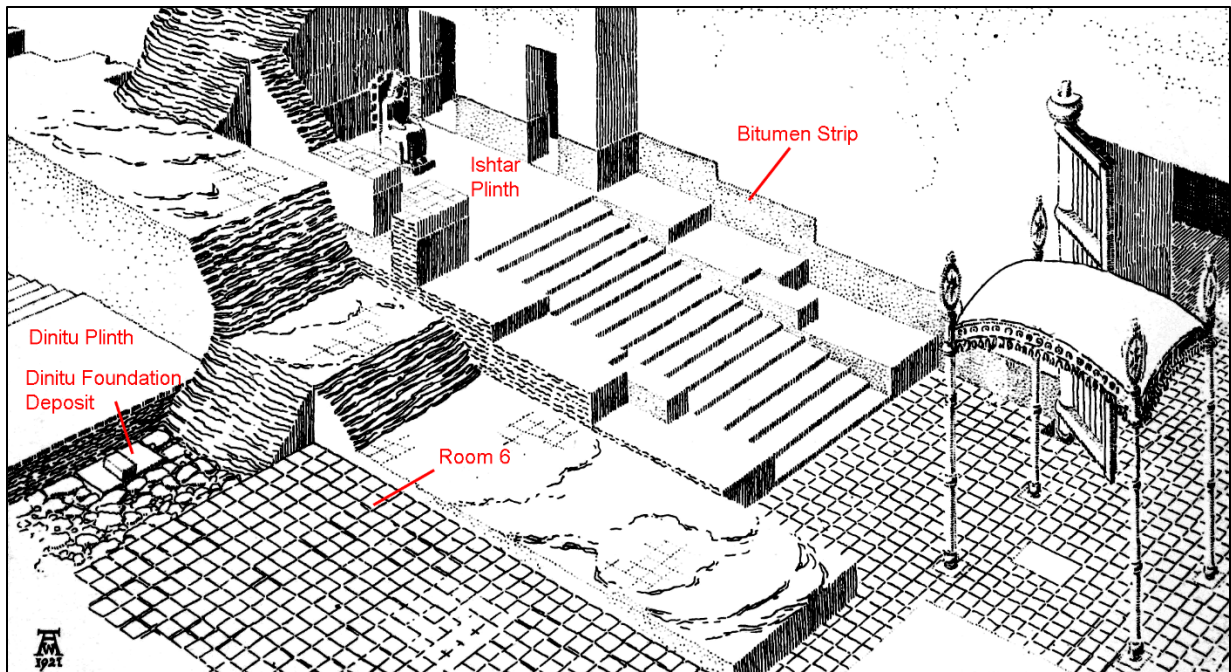


Fig. 48: Interior of Assyrian Istar cella, Dinitu shrine, and Room 6, after Andrae 1935: Pl. 3b

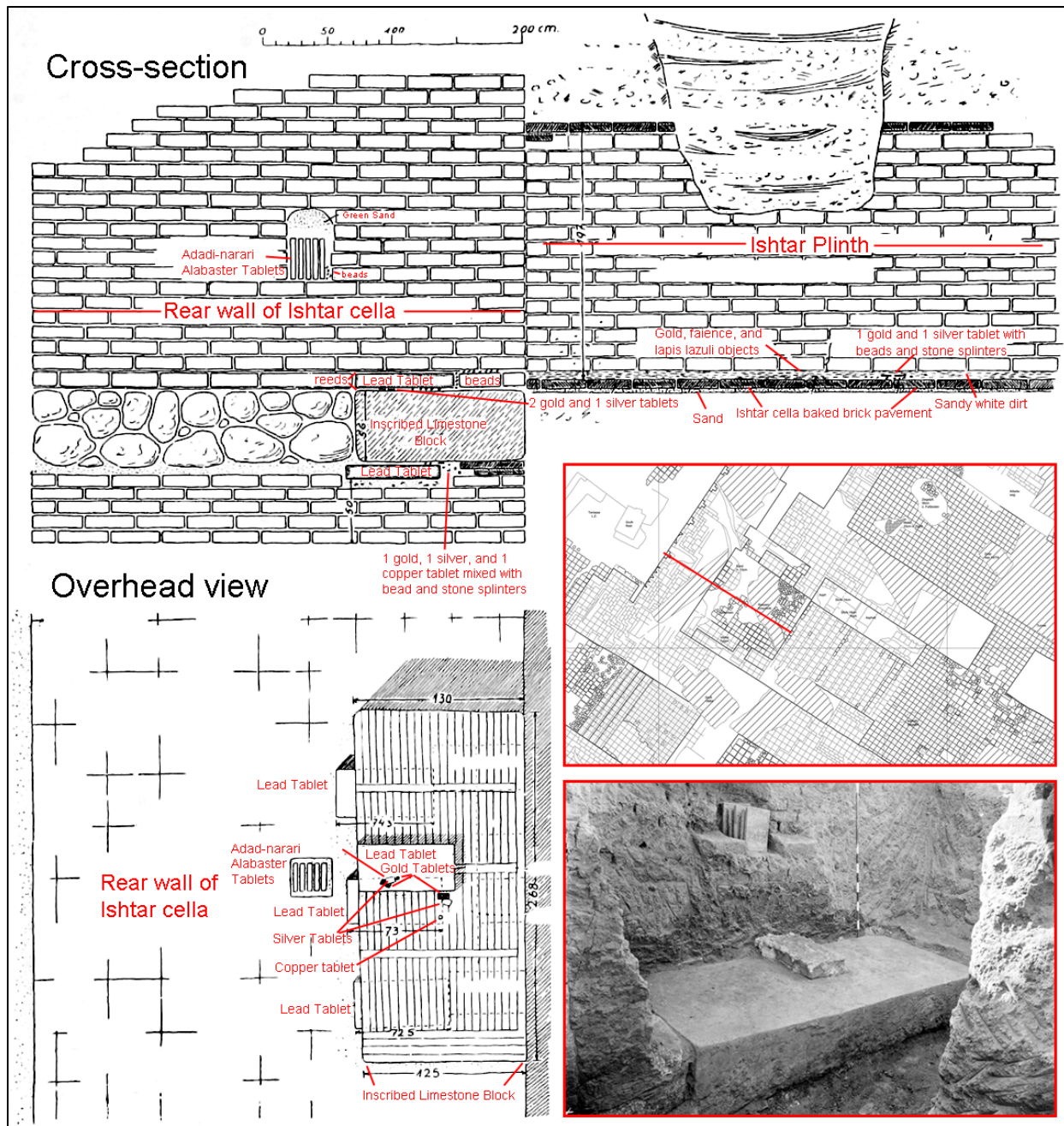
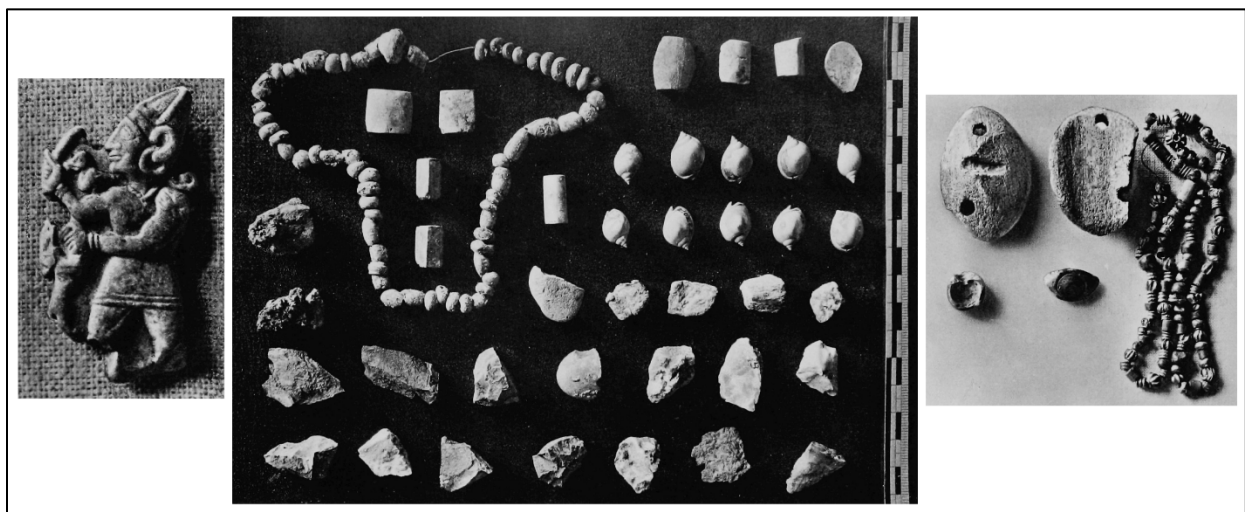


Fig. 49: Views of Istar Cella rear wall and plinth containing inscriptions and streugaben, after Andrae 1935: 43, Pl. 21

The plinth itself rested on a layer of beads, shells, stone splinters, fine sand, and one gold and one silver tablet (Fig. 50). The tablets under the plinth bore a different inscription from the tablets behind the plinth. A very similar deposit, albeit without the Adad-narari tablets, was found



under and behind the plinth in the neighboring Dinitu shrine, which is a small-scale copy of the Ištar cella (Fig. 48). An intact alabaster slab inscribed with a lengthy text commemorating Tukulti Ninurta's New Palace (RIMA 0.78.5) was also used as a pavement tile on top of the Dinitu plinth (Schmitt 2012: 47). The excavators found additional deposits of inscribed lead tablets in the temple's preserved north and west corners. The west corner tablet lay, like the tablets in the cellas, on a bed of clay, beads, grass, and reeds. The north corner, however, lacked the beads.



*Fig. 50: Some streugaben from underneath Assyrian Ištar Plinth, after Andrae 1935: Pl. 26*

The contexts of the inscriptions in the walls and under the plinths are almost picture-perfect examples of the rituals described in Shalmaneser I's inscriptions: "I deposited my monumental inscriptions. I anointed with oil the monumental inscriptions of my forefathers, made sacrifices, and returned them with stones, silver, and gold to their places." The Ištar Temple deposits always contain an inscription, sometimes in silver and gold, similar to the Shalmaneser ziggurat deposits and the deposits described in Shalmaneser's Aššur Temple inscription. In the Ištar Temple, the Adad-narari inscriptions, which Tukulti-Ninurta moved from the old temple to his own foundation deposit, add an excellent example of an older king's inscriptions placed in a foundation deposit

alongside the current king's inscriptions. This practice had been described in inscriptions since Šamši Adad but not archaeologically attested until Tukulti Ninurta.



*Fig. 51: Pedestals in partially excavated Room 6, after Andrae 1935: Pl. 12d*

Scholar have labeled these kinds of deposits as *kissen* (cushion) (Andrae 1935: 39; 1977: 131; Ellis 1968: 135) or *streugaben* (Andrae 1935: 55; 1977: 237; Ellis 1968: 138; Rashid 1957-71: 656). The use of *streugaben* deposits in the Ištar temple goes beyond foundation deposits. Two large side rooms (Fig. 44: 5 and 6) open onto the Ištar cella and contained an abundance of *streugaben* style objects. Room 6 held three 57-80 cm tall gypsum altars or pedestals (Fig. 51) and two stone foundation tablets, one of Zarriqum, a governor of Aššur during the reign of Amar-Sin of Ur (RIMA 0.1003.2001), and the other a pierced plaque of Ilu-šumma (RIMA 0.32.1) whom Tukulti-Ninurta credited with building the archaic temple. Two of the pedestals have simple linear

decoration while the other bore a Nusku dedication and an image of two Tukulti Ninurtas standing before a similar pedestal (Fig. 52). This pedestal had traces of bitumen on the base, and since there is no bitumen on the floor of this room, was likely originally in another part of the temple (Schmitt 2012: 45).



*Fig. 52: Pedestal of Nusku by Tukulti Ninurta I from Assyrian Istar Temple Room 6, Artstor*

The room was strewn with numerous small objects in faience, lead, glass, terracotta, and other metals; faience was the most common material (see table in Schmitt 2012: 40-43 and find list p. 46). Above, below, and within the joints of the room's brick pavement were layers of beads,

shells, colorful pebbles, and sand. Similar objects made up the *streugaben* deposits in the temple's foundation deposits. The small objects and *streugaben* in Room 6 were especially prominent underneath and around the pedestals and inscriptions (Schmitt 2012: 39). At some point, a brick wall sealed off the room's door and all the objects inside. Room 5 in the temple's south corner contained an abundance of similar objects. A central wall divided the room in half, and the area behind the wall held numerous faience, glass, clay, and metal objects above a layer of debris and covered by a reed mat. These objects included beads, human and animal figurines, rosettes, representations of male and female genitals, pierced plaques, knobs and nails, bowls, round amulets, and miniature masks and faces.

### **VIIIb. Streugaben**

The publications listed above have described and categorized *streugaben* deposits, but they have deduced little about their function. Ellis (1968: 140) could only conclude that the objects rendered foundation ceremonies more solemn and momentous. The building inscriptions shed some light on the function and meaning of the *streugaben* deposits. Adad-narari I, Shalmaneser I, and Tukulti Ninurta I frequently use a variation of the title "founder of cult centers". The king had an important duty and power to determine and create sacred spaces. Middle Assyrian Kings placed *streugaben* deposits beneath the walls and foundations of sacred buildings that they commissioned, and often these deposits included inscriptions, which were themselves sacred objects. The Aššur Ziggurat and Assyrian Ištar Temple were new sacred spaces, and according to Shalmaneser's inscriptions, the new Aššur Temple foundations were cut into the bedrock. The cutting down to bedrock, although not true based upon the archaeological evidence, advocates that the temple's restoration was, like a new temple, constructed on virgin profane ground. The *streugaben* may

have been part of rituals involved in creating sacred spaces and separating the sacred from the profane. The deposits acted as a “cushion” between the temple or the inscription and the space around it, and created different levels of sacredness. The temples themselves had *streugaben* beneath, and the inscriptions, which were even more sacred than the temples because kings intended them to last forever, were embedded within further *streugaben* under and inside the temple walls.

Archaeologically attested *streugaben* in the ziggurat and Ištar Temple were placed below the corners of the building perhaps to elevate the temple and separate it from profane ground. In the Ištar Temple, the *streugaben* also further cordoned off the most sacred parts of the temple. The plinths upon which the cult statues stood had *streugaben* and gold and silver tablets placed beneath to elevate the platforms above the cella. *Streugaben* containing high amounts of faience and lead objects also littered the floors of rooms that housed sacred objects and inscriptions. Archaeologists have also found numerous faience objects in temples at Kar Tukulti Ninurta and Tell al-Rimah where the Middle Assyrian levels of the Great Temple contained glass and faience objects, “in particular mosaic glass, female masks, cosmetics containers and rosettes, along with the very common beads and amulets” (C. Postgate *et al* 1997: 26). In these cases, like the Ištar Temple, the faience objects were both within the cella and collected into adjoining side rooms. Like the *streugaben* under the buildings, the *streugaben* in Room 6 contained prior kings’ inscriptions that had been treated with reverence and ritually placed. The *streugaben* separated these inscriptions from the ground, and when rooms 5 and 6 were sealed off, the inscriptions and objects within, like the objects under the foundations, became imbedded in the temple and cut off from human contact.

These deposits served to turn the human-made temples into natural sacred spaces created by the gods. The Aššur Temple, starting with Adad-narari, was called É.HUR.SAG.KUR.KUR.RA,

which means “House, Mountain of the Lands (George 1993: 101), and Shalmaneser describes his rebuilding as if erecting a mountain: “I laid its foundation in bedrock like the base of a mountain” (RIMA 0.77.1). Like mountains, the temples were filled with mysterious and sacred cavities deep within the earth. The *streugaben* deposits of plants, earth, precious stones, and glass could represent the minerals found beneath mountains and equate the mountain created by the king with mountains created by the gods. Like mountains, the glass, minerals, and inscriptions would last forever and ensure the kings’ memory lasts forever even after the temple above comes down. The scattered *streugaben* could symbolize sacredness bursting up from below the earth and covering sacred object and inscriptions. Like the sacred tree, a common motif of Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian art, bursting up from the ground, the *streugaben*, which were involved with the creation of sacred space, fertilized the profane space with sacredness. With the inscriptions, the *streugaben* added further ritual care that rendered history and kingship sacred and treated the king’s words like the temples themselves.

### **VIIc. The New Palace of Tukulti Ninurta**

#### **VIIc.i. The duality of *é.lugal.umun.kur.kur.ra* and *é.hur.sag.kur.kur.ra***

The palace as a representation of the king and the state reached its Middle Assyrian zenith under Tukulti Ninurta who built an entirely new palace, which was larger and more prominent than the Old Palace, and commemorated its construction in temples throughout Aššur. While the new Ištar Temple is the best preserved temple ruin of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Aššur, Tukulti Ninurta’s New Palace was completely dismantled not too long after his reign, since by the Neo-Assyrian period, residential neighborhoods covered its former location. The only remaining archaeological witness to the palace is the massive terrace upon which the palace sat and which Andrae

hypothesized covered at least 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> (Andrae 1977) (Fig. 53). Commemorative tablets that have been found elsewhere in Aššur describe it thusly:

At that time, inside my city, Assur, in the vicinity of the ziggurat of Adad, my lord, up to the Craftsman's (Tabira) Gate, on the north side, (at the location of) houses and dwellings, extensive spaces, (and) large plots of land, I purified a sacred terrace of my city, Assur. (The place?) at the side of the steles(?) (*asamatu*) of the former kings, including them (the steles), I cleared away. The graves of the ancient people (that were) in the dwelling places of those houses, I cleared away. In the area of 50 *sar* (*mušāru*, ca. 1800 m<sup>2</sup>) straight down the (earthen) fill of that building plot, I reached bedrock. The plots (of land) that (belonged) to my city, Assur, I enlarged. Its (sacred) terraces I strengthened with limestone and brick. The *narûs* (inscribed monuments) of the former kings, which lay beside the steles, I placed at one location. A large house, house of the king of (all) lands, the festive house of all the gods, the dwelling-place of kingship, the palace of my enjoyment I built (and) erected completely from its foundations to its crenellations, and I placed (there) my *narûs*.<sup>27</sup>

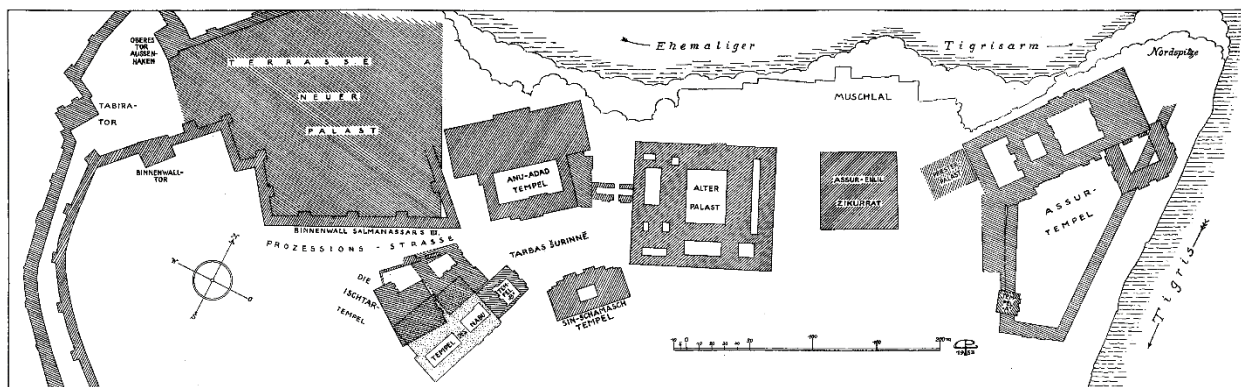


Fig. 53: Location and possible size of Aššur New Palace terrace, after Preuser 1955: Pl. 8

Tukulti-Ninurta had the New Palace built on the one part of the plateau's northern edge that lacked monumental architecture and makes no secret of the fact that he evicted the residents of this area and tore down their houses to construct his own. The inscription reads that desired terrace area was

<sup>27</sup> Only fragments of this inscription (RIMA A.0.78.1) were uncovered during the excavations of Aššur, and much of the building dedication section was missing. A complete copy held by a private collection was published by Görg (1989). This inscription is now displayed by the Israel Museum who provide the English translation (Peri and Bloch 2015) based upon the revised German translation by Streck (2007).

“at the side of *asamatu* of former kings.” *Asamatu* is probably some kind of stele (Streck 2007: 159). The mention of *asamatu* of former kings right next to common houses may be Tukulti Ninurta’s way of indicating why the houses needed to be torn down and purified: this profane neighborhood, as the one place on the plateau’s northern edge that was still not taken up by monumental architecture, was too close to the royal section of the city. Tukulti Ninurta’s builders removed the neighborhoods, cut into the plateau, and built a terrace that extended over its edge. Into this palace, Tukulti Ninurta gathered the former kings’ foundation tablets (*narus*) along with his own. The New Palace was a new structure, but by moving texts of former kings into it, Tukulti Ninurta placed the structure within Aššur’s long history of building and inscribing.

With the construction of the ziggurat and the New Palace, monumental architecture filled Aššur’s entire northern edge. The palace terrace, jutting out of the side of the plateau towards the Tigris, dwarfed all the other monumental structures nearby. The Aššur Temple on its prominent outcrop to the east and the New Palace on its terrace 450 m to the west formed the borders of the line of monumental buildings that overlooked the Tigris. The New Palace’s designers seemed to have wanted the palace to become a counterpart to the Aššur’s Temple. Foundation tablets call the New Palace terrace *ešertu*, a word typically used for cult buildings (Streck 2007: 158) and translated as “sacred terrace” above. The new complex functioned both as a secular administrative center and a kind of temple complex. Inscriptions describe it as both a place for Tukulti Ninurta to practice his lordship over “all lands” and a house for celebrating festivals of the gods. The language used and description of the New Palace in its commemorative tablets emulate Shalmaneser I’s Aššur temple foundation tablets. Shalmaneser had campaign narratives inscribed only on the Aššur Temple inscriptions, and the New Palace inscriptions are the only Tukulti Ninurta inscriptions at Aššur to contain a detailed campaign narrative. The building dedication section of both structures’



foundation tablets uses the same mountain imagery to describe digging each buildings' foundations:

Tukulti Ninurta's New Palace inscriptions (RIMA 0.78.3):

“Eighty mušaru down its foundation pit I reached bedrock. [...] I erected ... its sanctuary with limestone [and bricks]. I made its foundation as strong [as] the base of a mountain. (Thus) [I built] (as a place for the exercise) of my rule Elugalumunkurkurra, [a palace], my royal residence [and rooms] for all the [great] gods.”

Shalmaneser's Aššur Temple Inscription (RIMA 0.77.1):

“At that time I cleared away (the debris of) that temple entirely (and) removed the dirt down to the bottom of the foundation pit. I laid its foundation in bedrock like the base of a mountain.”

Shalmaneser's Aššur Temple Inscription (RIMA 0.77.2):

“I greatly enlarged beyond previous extent [Ehursag]kurkurra, the temple of Aššur, my lord. I rebuilt (it) from top to bottom. I placed therein all the gods of Ekur.”

The name given to Tukulti Ninurta's New Palace É.LUGAL.UMUN.KUR.KUR.RA “house of the King, Lord of the Lands” (George 1993:171) is very similar to É.HUR.SAG.KUR.KUR.RA “House of the Mountain of the Lands”, the name used for the Aššur Temple in Shalmaneser I and Adad-narari I's inscriptions. These tablets also describe both the New Palace and the É.KUR section of É.HUR.SAG.KUR.KUR.RA as dwellings for all the gods.

I argued above that the mountain imagery equates constructing the temple with the divine power of creating a sacred mountain. The New Palace and the Aššur Temple are both sacred, since the palace is also a cosmic mountain, sacred space, and dwelling of the gods. These two structures on opposite sides of the city counterbalance each other and bring the symmetry and dualities that had governed Assyrian temple design to the overall design of the city's monumental sector. These two equal “houses” placed symmetrically across city act as dual shrines to Tukulti Ninurta and

Aššur/Enlil. The two buildings dominated the Aššur skyline, showcased the two national Mesopotamian gods and the king as equal but separate entities, and represented the king's divine and terrestrial natures.

#### **VIII.d.ii. The narrative of the New Palace: campaigning and building**

The foundation tablets of Tukulti Ninurta's New Palace and Shalmaneser I's Aššur/Enlil Temple both contain detailed campaign narratives. Campaign narratives first appeared on foundation tablets of Adad-narari, and these tablets, which were intended for the city of Taidu, inscribed the conquest narrative into a conquered city and explained the leadership change to future observers. Shalmaneser used his Aššur/Enlil Temple campaign narratives to preserve his deeds for future readers and inscribe the Assyrian territorial-state's extent and conquests into its paramount temple. The details of the wars described in Tukulti Ninurta's campaign narrative both established the state's extent and explained how the building related to the conquests. The New Palace, according to the inscriptions placed within it, was built following Tukulti Ninurta's numerous campaigns to the East, North, and West. The territories listed show that he enlarged the empire and pushed the boundaries beyond those of Shalmaneser I (Galter 1988). Only one New Palace inscription, the Dinitu temple plinth example (RIMA 0.78.5), includes the Tukulti Ninurta's conquest of the Kassites to the South. The other New Palace inscriptions must have been inscribed before the Kassite campaigns. However, these earlier New Palace inscription still give Tukulti Ninurta a title new to Assyria: "King of the Four Quarters." Tukulti Ninurta usurped this Kassite title for his building inscriptions before he conquered them. By using a title that had only kings who control the south had previously used, he included the south in his conquest narrative despite having not yet conquered the south.

The campaign episodes that appear in New Palace inscription RIMA 0.78.1, which does not mention the Kassite campaign, each offer an explanation of how that campaign relates to the New Palace's construction. These episodes tell where the New Palace's resources came from and why the city Aššur needed a new palace. The first episode, the war against the Gutians, describes Tukulti Ninurta's conquest of Uqumenu and discusses the city of Aššur's role in that conquest:

I captured Abule, the king of the land Uqumenu, and the hordes of his princes. I carried off their captives (and) their property (and) brought them to my city, Assur. I made them swear an oath by Ashur and the great gods of heaven (and) earth. I imposed upon their necks the heavy yoke of my lordship (and) sent them (back) to their lands. The resistant ones among them I subdued at my feet and imposed (upon them) corvée. Annually I received their heavy tribute with ceremony in my city, Aššur (Peri and Bloch 2015: 27).

This passage informs the reader that Tukulti Ninurta brought the conquered people to Aššur where they encountered a literal *axis-mundi* with the gods of heaven and earth meeting. He forced the conquered to come back yearly to Aššur where he would receive them with pomp. The campaign narrative argues that Tukulti Ninurta needed a grand new palace so that he would have a place at Aššur to bring conquered people, receive their tribute, and fill them with awe. In the building section of the same inscription (see 3.VIIc.ii), the New Palace is established as “the festive house of all the gods, the dwelling-place of kingship,” so it acts as a place that conquered people can both swear before all the gods and be received by the king. Assyrian Temples with their private sanctums were unable to receive a large contingent of foreigners before the gods and the king, but the New Palace well fulfilled that function.

The next described campaign, the conquest of Mehru, directly references how that conquest contributed to the New Palace:

“I cut down mighty beams of the land Mehru (and) brought (them) to my city, Aššur. I buttressed my lordly palace which I love with those beams from the land Mehru.”

This section informs that the conquests gathered resources that could be used for the New Palace. The Mehru land provided good timber, something in short supply around Aššur. The Uqemenu and Mehru cases offer specific examples of how Tukulti Ninurta gathered people and resources into Aššur for use in the new palace. The conquest narrative’s final two sections, which cover multiple areas conquered in the North and East, repeat this same idea in a more general sense. A variant of the phrase, “Captives (and) property I carried off from them (and) brought to my city, Aššur,” is used twice to cover how all of these areas contributed to the construction of the palace. The gathering of people and resources from across the empire into the palace, reflected in one of Tukulti Ninurta’s titles “receiver in Aššur of valuable booty from the four quarters” (RIMA 0.78.42), contributed to the idea of the palace as a microcosm of the state. Materials from different lands made up the palace’s structures, and we might imagine that the eclectic melding of styles seen in Adad-narari’s palace also existed at the New Palace.

The conquest narrative section closes with the phrase: “All (my) enemies [I brought] under one command,” closing a discussion of a vast territorial-state and indicating the state’s need for a central capital or command center. By the time the inscription reaches the building section, the reader understands how and why Tukulti Ninurta built his New Palace and its monumental terrace. He is great king of a vast territory, and so he needs a fitting palace to showcase his power, represent his “nation”, and greet foreign dignitaries. To build his palace, he has accumulated countless resources from campaigns and can pool all of these assets into a new kind of palace that represents a territorial-state underneath an all-powerful king who rules numerous lands beyond Aššur.

### **VIIIb.iii. The visual and spatial extension of the New Palace**

Adad-narari I and Shalmaneser I's used palace bricks to extend their presence and establish ownership over monumental architecture throughout Assyria. In all monumental buildings at Aššur, Tukulti-Ninurta also exclusively used palace bricks that follow the same formula as Shalmaneser's bricks: Palace of RN, King of Kiš, son of RN, also King of Kiš" with no mention of the specific structure. Such Tukulti Ninurta palace bricks have been found at Aššur, Nineveh, Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Sibanibu (Tell Billa) (Grayson 1987: 231), and Tell Agamiya (Muhl 2013: 178). The one building that does not contain palace bricks is still the same: the Nineveh Ištar Temple's bricks bear Tukulti Ninurta's dedication of the temple to Ištar (RIMA 0.78.33-34). Tukulti Ninurta, however, uses the title King of Kiš/Totality instead of Vice-Regent of Aššur, which Shalmaneser used.

With Tukulti Ninurta, the extension of the palace also applies to inscribed tablets. The Dinitu plinth's pavement bore an alabaster slab inscribed with a lengthy text that commemorates Tukulti Ninurta's New Palace (Schmitt 2012: 47; RIMA 0.78.5), and excavators found another intact palace inscription (RIMA 0.78.6) in the Aššur Temple's central courtyard where it may have been set up. The Dinitu plinth slab and RIMA 078.1, which was found in fragments throughout Aššur, both contain detailed campaign narratives and curse someone "(who) discards my monumental inscription and puts (it) in another place where there is no visibility." This line implies that Tukulti Ninurta did not intend these texts to be placed under or within walls as had been common practice for commemorative tablets, but instead intended them to be erected as visible monuments. The Dinitu palace inscription, for example, had half its text facing up so people could view it on Dinitu's sacred platform. If Tukulti Ninurta intended these inscriptions to be visible monuments, then he wished that not only would future kings see them, but also present literate

people, such as priests or foreign dignitaries who might encounter the tablets. Since inscribed tablets were usually inscribed on both sides, observers could only read half the inscription if the tablet was used as a pavement block. Even if an onlooker could not read the inscriptions, the presence of a visible lengthy inscribed monolith was enough to strike awe into whoever saw it regardless of whether or not the observer could read it.



*Fig. 54: Watercolor by Frederick Charles Cooper made during excavations of Kalhu (Nimrud).  
Ninurta Temple gateway of Ashurnasirpal II. BM 2007,6024.155.*

Flat stone tablets built into the walls or pavements where visitors can see the text bring to mind the inscribed orthostats of Neo-Assyrian buildings, such as Ashurnasirpal II's (c. 883-859) temples and palaces at Kalhu. Adad-narari I's architects had already used orthostats in the form of large format bricks placed over the surface of walls and were likely influenced by encounters with

stone orthostats in the West. By the reign of Ashurnasirpal II and his famous orthostats at Nimrud, stone slabs inscribed with text and images dominated the walls of Assyrian palaces and temples. These images of kings, campaigns, and fantastical beings were covered with campaign and building inscriptions that ran along the center of slabs and around the rooms. Watercolors made during the 19<sup>th</sup> century excavations of Ashurnasirpal II's Ninurta Temple at Nimrud show massive inscribed stone blocks carved with only text (RIMA 0.101.1) paving the passageways of the temple (Fig. 54). Such blocks were used as paving and wall slabs (Grayson 1991:191), and Layard describes one as measuring 6.4 x 5.0 x 0.3 m and filled with a 325 line inscription on both sides (Layard 1853a: 352). The Tukulti Ninurta Dinitu slab is the earliest example of inscribed stone slabs used as pavement blocks, and the other "visible" New Palace inscriptions were also likely used as pavement or wall slabs like the much larger versions in the later Ninurta Temple.

The orthostats were based in part upon 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Syrian and Anatolian orthostats, but their use also developed from the rituals associated with Assyrian foundation tablets. Šamši Adad initiated the idea that foundation tablets were ritual objects and could make a point about the connection among different kings and the political nature of building projects. Shalmaneser and Adad-narari used foundation tablets to inform future people of their mighty deeds and to inscribe these deeds into the fabric of their cities. These two kings also used inscribed palace bricks in numerous non-palatial buildings to extend their presence and show ownership. Under Tukulti Ninurta, the foundation tablet texts began to take on a similar function to the palace bricks. He had palace slabs erected in visible parts of temples, such as the Dinitu Temple Plinth and Aššur Temple Central Courtyard. The addition of the campaign narrative to foundation tablets and the growing need for buildings to function as reception places for conquered peoples brought new urgency to the role of these texts in affecting present observers. Tukulti Ninurta inscribed his deeds both as a

campaigner and a palace builder onto stone slabs and set them up in different buildings where he intended them to be visible. The audience for the texts shifted to people who would interact with the buildings during their use life, rather than exclusively people who were involved in later construction projects.

The visible texts inscribed with the king's deeds were intimately connected to the king's persona and were a part of the king and building that would last forever. The New Palace, which was an extension of Tukulti Ninurta's person, was a place where terrestrial rulers and heavenly gods met and lowly conquered people and gods gathered in the presence of the king. This palace commemorated on inscriptions throughout Aššur, was national symbol that represented the king's power through his association with the state god. This microcosm represented the "Land of Aššur" both spatially through the gathered resources from conquered regions and temporally through the gathered steles of former kings. The god Aššur, in his temple across the plateau, ruled over the Land of Aššur, the two entities of the same name being almost interchangeable. Tukulti Ninurta's palace rivaled Aššur's temple and Tukulti Ninurta's divine presence and mighty state-building deeds flowed through the fabric of temples. Tukulti Ninurta, like his predecessors, wanted the king and god to merge into an identity that would unify the Assyrian state.

## **VII. Conclusion**

The ziggurat and Aššur/Enlil Temple stood as monuments to Assyrian power and placed Aššur as the paramount Mesopotamian city. Throughout the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium, Assyrian kings used architecture and inscriptions to present Aššur as a territorial-state capital, associate themselves with past glory, and experiment with ways to show themselves as unique and powerful kings. Through their titles, inscriptions, architecture, and eventually new capitals, Middle Assyrian Kings



would attempt to coalesce themselves, the patron god Aššur, and the state all into a single identity. In architecture and inscriptions, Šamši Adad presented ideas about the nature of his state through dualities, such as Aššur and Enlil, which placed Aššur, now the head god of Northern Mesopotamia, alongside Enlil, the head god of Southern Mesopotamia. He also used the memory of the Akkadian empire to define a northern imperial state that opposed Babylonia. Aššur-uballit subsequently defined this northern state as the Land of Aššur, and kings Adad-narari I, Shalmaneser I, and Tukulti Ninurta I all experimented with ways to extend the king's presence across this "Land of Aššur" and merge the king's identity with Aššur. These kings extended their domain over cities and sacred spaces through both records of their mighty deeds that were placed in *streugaben* and mass-produced palatial bricks that claimed ownership over all kinds of spaces. Through their building inscriptions, 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Assyrian kings interacted with past and future kings and continued their power narratives across centuries. They sought to place themselves within a long line of kings and traditions while simultaneously establishing themselves as greater than their predecessors.

These king's erected temples and palaces along the northern plateau of the city of Aššur. These monumental spaces turned Aššur from a city-state capital controlled by an assembly to a "national" capital of monumental representational spaces and divine/royal presence. The expansion of Aššur's monumental spaces destroyed the city's neighborhoods and social spaces. These building projects were always rooted in religion, the basis of the king's authority. Since the repurposed spaces made way for temples, the sacred space could not be defiled by being turned back into neighborhoods. Tukulti Ninurta, however, cleared neighborhoods to build a palace. He a tried to make his palace a sacred space and a monument necessary for the state's power. His integration of king and god was never fully accepted, and while the temples that overtook

neighborhoods remained until the Medes sacked Aššur 600 years later, the New Palace was abandoned and Aššur's elite had reclaimed its spaces by the 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium. When building a city that will be a massive representational space, the population, whether factored into the plan or not, will always become involved in some level of producing space. The creation of a national identity always involves both governments that produce spaces, text, images, and performances to reinforce that identity and the people who dwell in the nation and must submit or resist such attempts at power and unification.

The audience for these projects extended beyond the "Land of Aššur" into Assyria's international neighbors. Middle Assyrian kings presented themselves as imperial monarchs in a world of Great Kings interacting, negotiating, and vying for power. The Great Kings of Assyria, Mitanni, and Karduniaš all desired to dominate Mesopotamia, and this clash of powers informed Middle Assyrian royal identity and the composition of the Middle Assyrian state. The Assyrians, the last power to join the club, created grandiose titles and eclectic palatial architecture to present their king as a Great King. However, in this international competition, their city Aššur was never as large or impressive as some of its neighbor's capitals. The Assyrian efforts to represent a dual-natured king and surpass their international peers culminated in a new capital city across the Tigris: Kar Tukulti Ninurta.

## 4.

### **KAR TUKULTI NINURTA: CITY OF THE SUN GOD OF ALL PEOPLE**

Sometime after the construction of the New Palace, Tukulti Ninurta invaded Babylonia and defeated the Kassite king Kaštiliašu IV. After conquering Babylonia, Tukulti Ninurta boasts in his building inscriptions that his empire stretched from Lake Van to the Persian Gulf and even beyond Mesopotamia to Dilmun (Bahrain) and Meluhha (RIMA 0.78.24). He charted his own royal narrative and added new titles that presented him as a unifying king and god for all Mesopotamia and beyond. However, his encounter with the Kassite capital Dur Kurigalzu brought him face to face with a palace around five times the size of his new “Palace of the King of all Lands.” Aššur alone no longer sufficed as a symbol of Assyrian might and Tukulti Ninurta commissioned a new city across the Tigris to complete his imperial narrative. The creation of this new capital Kar Tukulti Ninurta was the culmination of Middle Assyrian imperial and architectural narrative, a statement of an empire that controlled both Northern and Southern Mesopotamia, and a preview for Neo-Assyrian imperial projects.

Kar Tukulti Ninurta emulated Dur Kurigalzu, but as the only new LBA capital placed so close to the former city-state capital (only 3 km away), its planning also reveals uniquely Assyrian ideas. Dedicatory inscriptions call Kar Tukulti Ninurta a “cult center” (*mahazu*) built on virgin ground and give Tukulti Ninurta the new title “Sun god of all people.” The creation of sacred space extends into Tukulti Ninurta’s palaces, which inscriptions describe as dwellings for all the gods. The palaces also exhibit architectural forms and material usually associated with religious architecture. Assyrian art and architecture represented a cosmology composed of dualities, such as the king’s divine and terrestrial natures and symmetrical temples to two gods. Sacred dualities had been present in Assyrian temple architecture since the time of Šamši Adad, and Tukulti Ninurta

applied these dualities to city-planning. His New Palace at Aššur acted as a sacred counterpart to the Aššur Temple, and Kar Tukulti Ninurta acted as a sacred counterpart to the city of Aššur. The two cities, like numerous dual temples at Aššur, represented two divine beings, the god Aššur and the king.

The spatial relationships, inscriptions, and art from Tukulti Ninurta's building projects show the increasing scale of represented dualities, the linking of imperial conquest and creation of new sacred spaces, the increasingly divine nature of the king represented in architecture and inscriptions, and the changing audience for the building programs. These building projects involved people, resources, and ideas from all over Mesopotamia. Tukulti Ninurta made the new city Kar Tukulti Ninurta a microcosm of the empire by having conquered people from all over the empire settled there in the presence of the gods and the Great King.

### **I. The dual-natured king**

Scholars have identified the dual-natured king as a common motif in Neo-Assyrian art, especially during the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (c. 883 to 859) (Ataç 2010: 83-144; Brandes 1970). Dualism had been apparent in Assyrian temple building since Šamši Adad, but Tukulti Ninurta begins to use inscriptions and art to represent duality in the king's persona. On a foundation tablet from Kar Tukulti Ninurta, he uses the titles "king of Assyria and king of Karduniaš, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of Sippar and Babylon, king of Tilmun and Meluhha, king of the Upper and Lower Seas, king of the extensive mountains and plains" (Deller *et al* 1994: 465, IM 76787). Šamši Adad had first defined Assyria and Babylonia as two separate states primarily by referencing their paramount deities. Here Tukulti Ninurta expresses Mesopotamia as a dualism of the two territorial-states: the Land of Aššur and the Land of Karduniaš. His other titles also express dualities. "King

of Sippar and Babylon” is a title otherwise unheard of, and seems to be used because the Kassite title “King of Babylon” does not encapsulate a duality.

The few surviving images of Tukulti Ninurta also exhibit the duality of his persona. The relief image on the stone pedestal in Room 6 of the Assyrian Ištar Temple depicts two identically dressed Tukulti Ninurtas, one kneeling and one standing, approaching a pedestal on top of which appears to be a stylus and a tablet (Fig. 52) (Bahrani 2003: 190). The inscription on the pedestal indicates that the pedestal itself belongs to Nusku, the god of light, whose symbol is usually a lamp and not a tablet as shown on the relief (Bahrani 2003: 190):

Cult platform of the god Nusku, chief vizier of Ekur, bearer of the just scepter, courtier of the gods Aššur and Enlil, who daily repeats the prayers of Tukulti-Ninurta, the king, his beloved, in the presence of the gods Aššur and Enlil and a destiny of power [for him] within Ekur... (RIMA 0.78.26)

Bahrani argues that the text and image on the pedestal are meant to show Nusku’s function as a dream god rather than light god and that the tablet on the pedestal shows the king his “dream-destiny” (Bahrani 2003: 197). However, the function of Nusku described in the inscription is not god of light or dreams but is instead one who intercedes on behalf of the king to Aššur and Enlil. The three functions given to Nusku are vizier of the gods, “bearer of the just scepter”, and intercessor to Aššur and Enlil, and these attributes are all also functions of the king. The king is also the vizier or governor of Aššur.<sup>28</sup> The king, as high priest of Aššur and Enlil, is also the one who intercedes on behalf of people to these gods, and the Assyrian king is sometimes called the bearer of the just scepter (ex. RIMA 0.79.1; RIMA 0.86.1). By carrying out the king’s functions in relation to the gods, Nusku, as described on the pedestal, embodies the king’s divine qualities

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<sup>28</sup> the word used for Nusku meaning governor/vizier is SUKKAL.MAH whereas the words used for the Assyrian king are either ENSI or ŠID

and is represented by an inscribed tablet. This tablet could be one of the king's building inscriptions, which were extensions of the king that continuously interceded to the gods in the temples.

Scholars believe that the two figures of Tukulti Ninurta on the pedestal represent sequential action to show movement (Bahrani 2003:190; Muscarella 1995: 113). In this case, the standing figure is Tukulti Ninurta approaching, and the kneeling figure is the same figure a few moments later having reached the altar and dropped to a kneel. This kind of comic-strip-like representation is known from the lion hunt panels of Ashurbanipal where a lion emerging from a cage is shown three times in order to capture its movement as it lunges towards Ashurbanipal. Otherwise, however, this kind of representation is rare and unheard of for an image of the Assyrian king. The idea that the king approaches and then kneels in order to pray is also not in keeping with Mesopotamian worship. A typical presentation scene of a Mesopotamian monarch before the gods always shows the king standing and even common people are represented in art as standing to worship. Kneeling to pray, while the norm in many religions today, was not the way Mesopotamians prayed.

While sequential movement is rare in Mesopotamian art, the repetition of the king, especially in pairs, is very common in Neo-Assyrian art, especially during the reign of Ashurnasirpal II, but is not used to show movement. Typically the king shown in sequential narratives of campaigns or other events is depicted in only one spot per narrative event so that he stands out and his role is clear. The dual images of the king typically show up in reliefs that show the king performing highly ritualized actions among cosmic figures that exist outside of time. Ataç (2010: 83-144) and Brandes (1970) have thoroughly discussed the dual representations of the king

on Ashurnasirpal II's Kalhu reliefs and argued that these dual kings represent a dichotomy between the king's divine and earthly qualities or the king's military and priestly qualities.

The relief slab behind Ashurnasirpal's throne in the throne room of the Northwest Palace depicts two Ashurnasirpal II's on either side of a sacred tree (Fig. 55). Like the two Tukulti Ninurtas, the two Ashurnasirpals wear the same dress, but their stance is different. One points his finger up at a representation of a deity in a sun disk and the other points down at the sacred tree. The king pointing up has his arms positioned so that the necklace of divine emblems he wears is fully visible. His arm is shrouded in his garment and he holds his mace up. The king on the other side of the tree points down at the tree. His arm crosses over his chest hiding most of the emblems on his necklace. His arm is out of his garment revealing his powerful muscles and his mace is thrust downwards and touches the tree. The main difference between the two kings is that one king focuses down on the tree and the other king focuses up towards the sun disk.



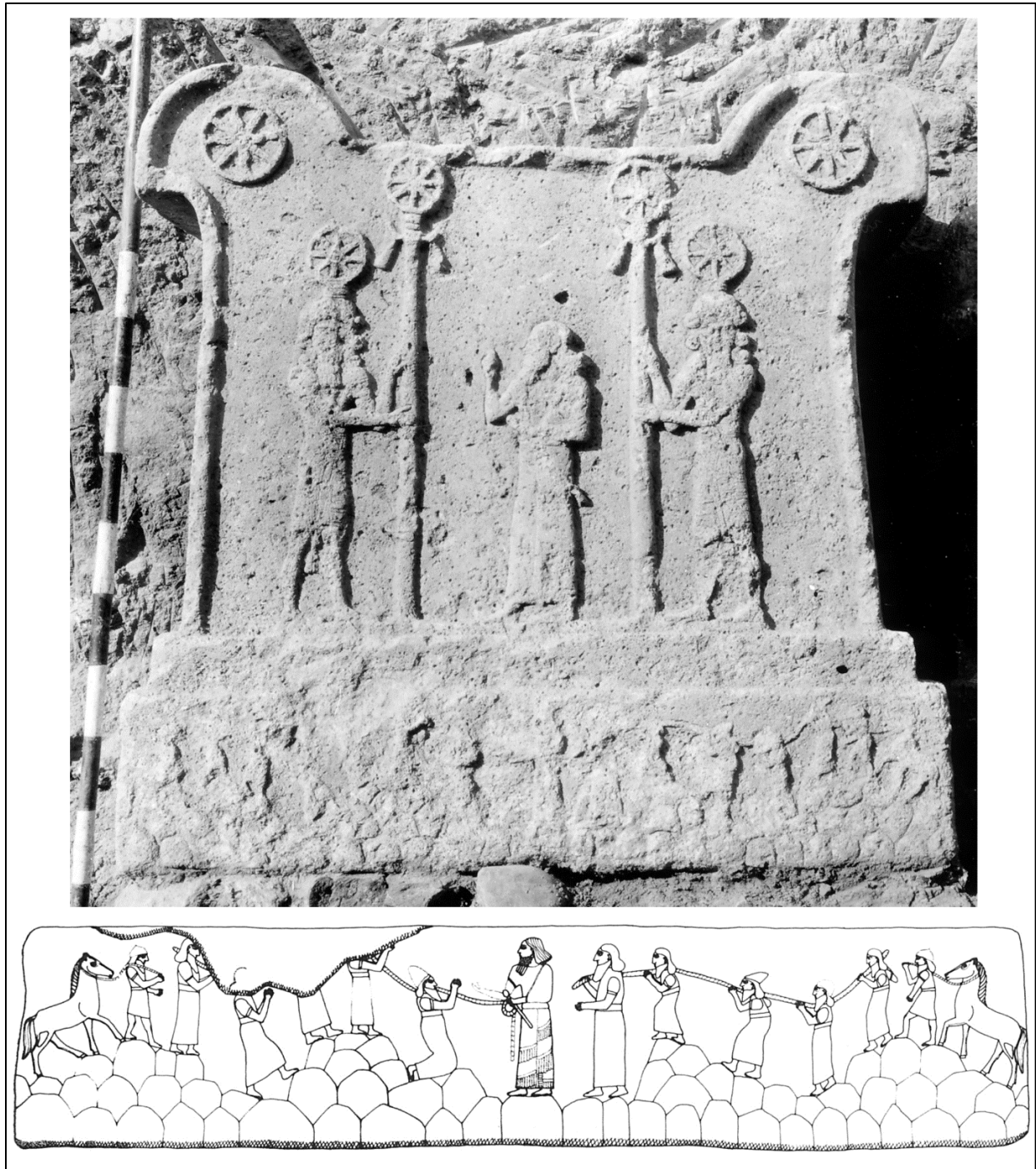
*Fig. 55: Relief behind throne in Room B, Ashurnasirpal II's NW Palace at Kalhu (Nimrud), BM 124531 (author's photo)*

Ataç (2010: 83-144) and Brandes (1970) do not interpret the two similarly dressed Ashurnasirpals as representing a sequential narrative. Instead they represent the dual nature of the king with one focused towards the divine aspects and one focused towards the terrestrial aspects. This panel is an apt analogy for the Tukulti Ninurta pedestal. Like the two Ashurnasirpals, the two Tukulti Ninurtas point with their index fingers. The standing king focuses up and the kneeling king focuses down. Bahrani has observed the importance of doubling in the pedestal's image and inscription (Bahrani 2003: 193-194), and the double Tukulti Ninurtas more likely represent a dual-natured king like Ashurnasirpal than sequential action. The two Tukulti Ninurtas represent a cosmic duality in which the lower king represents the terrestrial aspects and the standing king represents the divine aspects.

The duality of the divine/priestly king and terrestrial/military king is also present on another Tukulti Ninurta pedestal discovered next to the entrance of the Assyrian Ištar Temple (Fig. 56). This similarly shaped pedestal is larger than the Nusku pedestal and shows Tukulti Ninurta standing between two curly-haired Akkadian heroes who hold standards capped with divine emblems. The plinth below the pedestal has another register with a poorly preserved relief image in which faintly visible groups of bound prisoners approach a central figure who holds a scepter. A reconstruction by Moortgat-Correns (1988) shows the central figure to be the same Tukulti Ninurta from the upper register standing over the prisoners. The upper and lower registers represent the cosmic duality of the king. The upper register shows the king in his divine form flanked by heroes and divine emblems, and the lower register shows the king in his terrestrial military form flanked by conquered prisoners. This pedestal uses ancient Akkadian motifs like the curly haired hero and the conquest scene to show the king's duality, while the Nusku pedestals



shows the same qualities by using a uniquely Assyrian representation of repeating the king's image in different positions.



*Fig. 56: Pedestal of Tukulti Ninurta found next to entrance tower of Assyrian Istar Temple. Aššur Excavation Photo #6121; Drawing after Moortgat-Correns 1988*

Like his predecessors, Tukulti Ninurta connected himself to the Akkadian empire and charted his own narrative as the dual king. Tukulti Ninurta used the title King of Kiš/Totipotity in almost every building inscription. He also takes the southern titles King of Sumer and Akkad and King of the Four Quarter and creates a new title <sup>d</sup>Šamšu KIŠ UN.MEŠ “Sungod of all people.” Šalmaneser I had occasionally extended LUGAL KIŠ to LUGAL KIŠ UN.MES “King of all people,” and Tukulti Ninurta continued to adapt the title by merging it with <sup>ilu</sup>Šamaš KA.DINGIR.RA.KI “Sun god of Babylon,” a title used in the law code of Hammurabi. This title, however, should not be viewed exclusively as Tukulti Ninurta claiming a southern title and trying to be a southern king (Galter 1988). The southern kings had been gods of cities: Naram-Sin was God of Akkad and Hammurabi was God of Babylon. <sup>d</sup>Šamšu KIŠ UN.MEŠ combines Hammurabi’s divine with the Assyrian title LUGAL KIŠ UN.MEŠ. The title is firmly rooted in Assyrian ideas of dualities since the LUGAL KIŠ and <sup>d</sup>Šamšu KIŠ UN.MEŠ emphasize the dual natured king: one the terrestrial king of an ancient empire, one a godlike king overseeing totality and all its people. The Hittite and Egyptian kings also called themselves Sun God, and the Egyptian idea of a sun god who rules over two lands may have influenced Tukulti Ninurta who claims a similar position after the unification of Mesopotamia.

Tukulti Ninurta aggrandized his act of unification in more than titles and inscriptions. His construction projects in the cities at the center of the empire also symbolized this new realm. Tukulti Ninurta had constructed a new imperial palace at Aššur, but the Kassite palace at Dur Kurigalzu was over four times its size. How could conquered Kassites be filled with majesty coming to Aššur if its architecture was not comparable to what they knew in Karduniaš? Tukulti Ninurta answered this question by using the Assyrian idea of a dual-natured reality headed by a dual-natured king. He founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta, meaning the “Port” or “Colony” of Tukulti

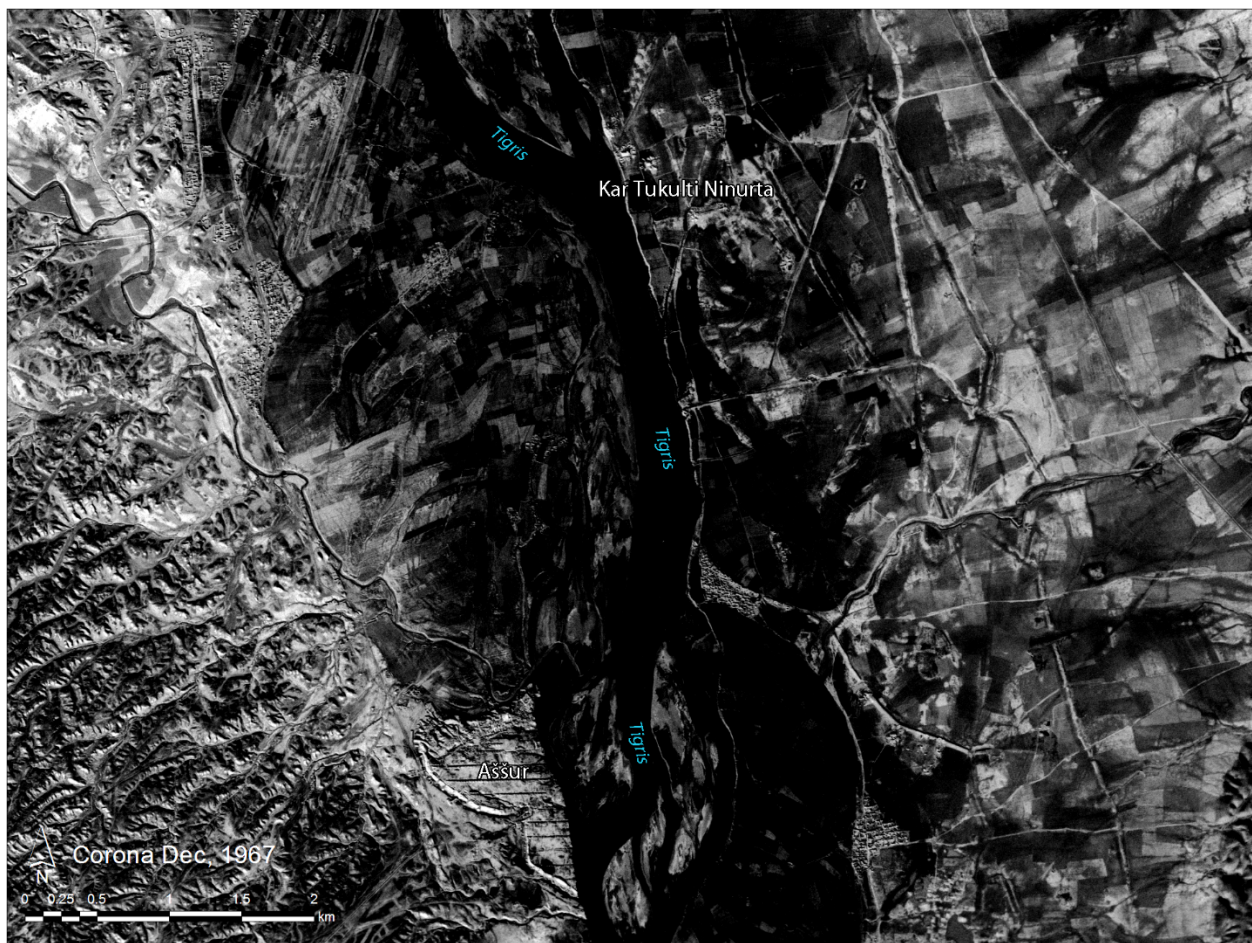
Ninurta, a second royal city that would act as a counterpart to Aššur. There he commissioned a new palace and Aššur Temple, but this time the role of divine king and sun god ruling over Mesopotamia would be readily apparent.

## **II. Kar Tukulti Ninurta: The archaeological evidence**

Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta lies beneath Tulul al-Aqr on the east bank of the Tigris River 3 km north of Aššur (Fig. 57). Walter Bachmann excavated numerous structures in AD 1913-14, but since then, the records and finds have been beset by numerous problems that have prevented a complete report from ever being released. During World War I, British agents in Iraq and Portugal confiscated the finds that the German excavators sent to Berlin. Many of these finds made it to the British Museum where they remain, while Walter Andrae ransomed others to Berlin. Bachmann published notices in MDOG (Andrae and Bachmann 1914) during the two years of excavations and prepared some notes and maps for the final publication in the 1950's shortly before his death. However, he did not complete this publication, and the original reports disappeared until 1992 (Dittmann 1997b). Eickhoff (1985) used the maps Bachmann prepared before his death and available notes to publish a monograph on the findings. This publication contains detailed plans, but without the excavation diary or the specific contexts of finds, much information was lacking. A printing problem has also resulted in all of the published copies of these plans missing the middle of the image (Eickhoff 1985: Plans 1-3, 5-6).

In 1992, Reinhard Dittmann found the original dig diary notes, journals, and drawings in Bachmann's old office and has since published some of the original sketches. Recently, Dittmann posted online an unpublished write up of Bachmann's original diary, notes, and context of finds,

and I will use this material extensively in the following analysis.<sup>29</sup> In 1986, 88, and 89, Dittmann also led surveys and limited excavations in Kar Tukulti Ninurta. The time and resources available limited the surveyors to using modern field boundaries as survey units and only covering about 90 ha of noncontiguous units within a 250 ha area. In 2002, the Iraqi Makhul Dam Salvage Project expanded some of the excavations from the 1980's and probed a few other areas of the city.



*Fig. 57: Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Corona Dec. 1967*

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<sup>29</sup> Cited as Bachmann 2016. This text appears in a pdf file containing many of Dittmann's writings on Kar Tukulti Ninurta ([https://www.academia.edu/26063665/KAR-TUKULTI-NINURTA\\_with\\_Bachmanns\\_report](https://www.academia.edu/26063665/KAR-TUKULTI-NINURTA_with_Bachmanns_report)). Bachmann's notes appear on pg. 264-348 and have no page numbers listed on its pages, so the page numbers cited are the page numbers in that pdf document. The list of small finds in the following analysis are all compiled from information in that document.

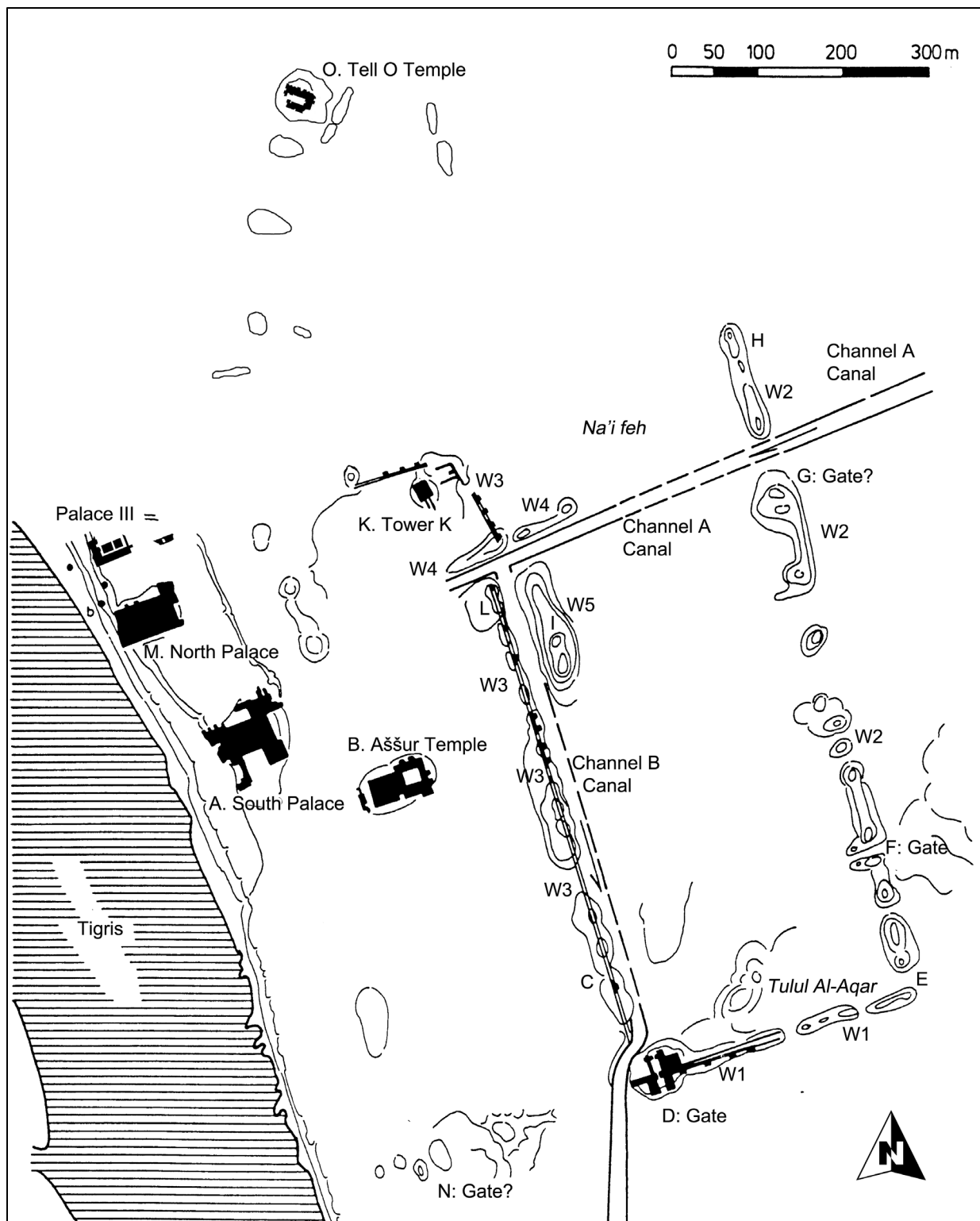


Fig. 58: Kar Tukulti Ninurta Plan adapted from Dittmann 1996: Fig 4; Dittmann 1990: Fig 5; Muhl and Sulaiman 2011: Fig 8

Kar Tukulti Ninurta follows the orientation of the Tigris, about 10° west of north.<sup>30</sup> Bachmann determined the city to be a 62 ha rectangle constrained by the Tigris to the West and traces of fortification walls to the south and east. He described Kar Tukulti Ninurta as a clean ruin compared to Assur, since he observed few sherds, bricks, or stone debris on the surface (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 46) and the landscape is flat aside from several large mounds, which he labeled A-N. He excavated a palace with a large mudbrick terrace under A (South Palace), a second palatial structure to the north under M (North Palace), a ziggurat and temple dedicated to Aššur under hill B in the center of the western half of the city, some kind of smaller free lying tower or terrace under hill K, a mansion under hill J, a city gate under G, and fragments of fortification walls (Fig. 58).

Bachmann sought above all to record architectural plans during his two short seasons at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and so his team usually only dug trenches around the walls of rooms. They fully cleared rooms only in special cases. Because of this method, we know a fair amount about the layout of buildings but little about interior spaces. Bachman believed, after digging through several of the ruin hills, that he had excavated all of the important parts of the city (Bachmann 2016: 275 nt. 31). He observed no small hills like the mounds that covered residential occupation at Assur (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 47), and so concluded that few people lived at Kar Tukulti Ninurta and that the eastern half the city was empty. The German surveys in the 1980's also found sparse surface remains but discovered that the city extended far to the north and south of the boundaries that Bachmann identified (Fig. 59). Dittmann argues that the total city area was actually around 500 ha (Dittmann 1997b). The highest sherd concentration covered an area of the city that passed beyond Bachmann's northern boundary, and another 450 m north of this boundary,

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<sup>30</sup> For simplicity and clarity, I will refer to the sides of buildings by the closest cardinal direction, such as north for the side of a building that is oriented more to the north than west.

excavations in 1989 at a mound labeled Tell O revealed another temple (Dittmann 1990: 168-71). 60 m north of Bachmann's North Palace, another excavated area without visible surface remains revealed further palatial or temple structures. The 1980's team did not excavate south of the fortifications, but evidence of occupation extended all the way to the southern boundary of the survey, 1 km south of the fortification wall.

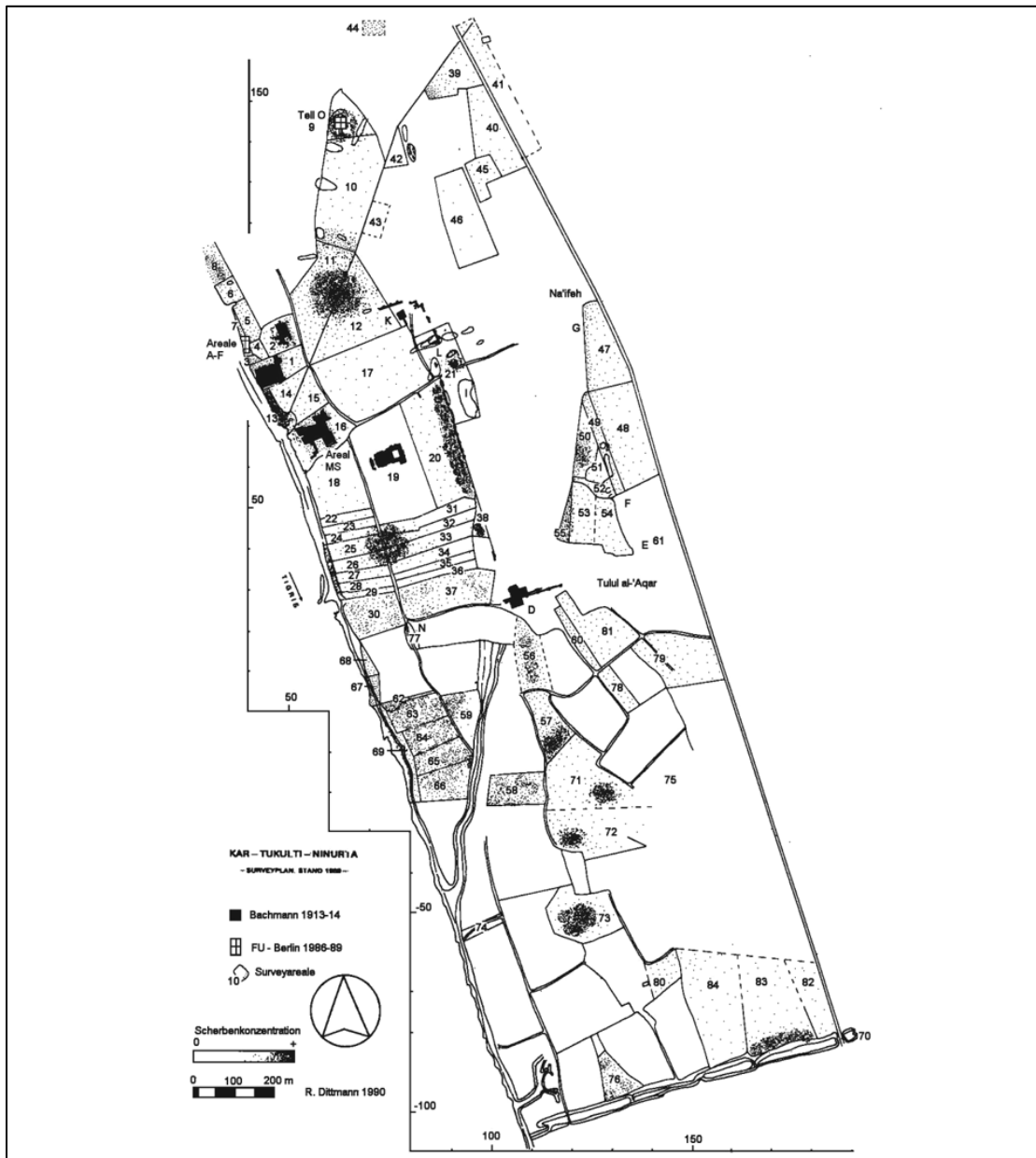


Fig. 59: German Archaeological Institute Survey 1986-89, after Dittmann 1990: Fig 5

## IIa. City walls

Six recovered inscriptions commemorate construction work at Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Bachmann found two *in situ* in the Aššur Temple and ziggurat (RIMA 0.78.23-24) and Andrae, Fuad Safar, and others acquired one more ziggurat inscription (RIMA 0.78.25) and two from the city walls (RIMA 0.78.25, IM 57821, IM 76821) through other means. That several city wall inscriptions have come to light over the years is not surprising given that people in the area seem to prefer to build their houses on top of the wall mounds and might unearth these stones when doing construction work. Tukulti Ninurta declares in these inscriptions that Kar Tukulti Ninurta was “built before my city, Aššur, a city for (the god) Aššur on the opposite bank, besides the Tigris, in uncultivated plains and meadows where there was neither house nor dwelling, where no ruin hills of rubble had accumulated, and no bricks had been laid” (Deller *et al* 1994: 467). This cult center built on new ground, he continues, had two walls surrounded by a moat, temples to eight different gods, a palace called É.GAL.ME.ŠÁR.RA (House of Totality), and two canals, one of which was named Pattu-mešari (Canal of Justice) and functioned to provide offerings to the gods.

Several long narrow trains of mounds indicate the location of the fortification walls. One runs east-west (Fig. 58: W1) extending from the Tigris 750 m until it meets and forms a corner with the southern end of another north-south running line (Fig. 58: W2) that extends 800 m from there to the north. At about the center of W1, another north-south running line (Fig. 58: W3) runs parallel to W2 and divides the area between W2 and the Tigris in half. Excavations revealed that W3 is only half as wide as W2. In order to make the city be square shaped, Bachmann drew a hypothetical wall running from the north end of W2 to the Tigris on his plan of the city (Fig. 60). However, there is no evidence for this wall, and Eickhoff questions whether such a wall was ever completed (Eickhoff 1985: 16). Subsequent excavations, which have revealed palatial architecture



underneath this line (see 4.IId.iii), show that, at least in the western half of the city, such a wall never existed. Bachmann determined, based upon the shape of the hills, that W1 and W2 each had 2 gates, but he was unable to find any evidence of gates on W3.

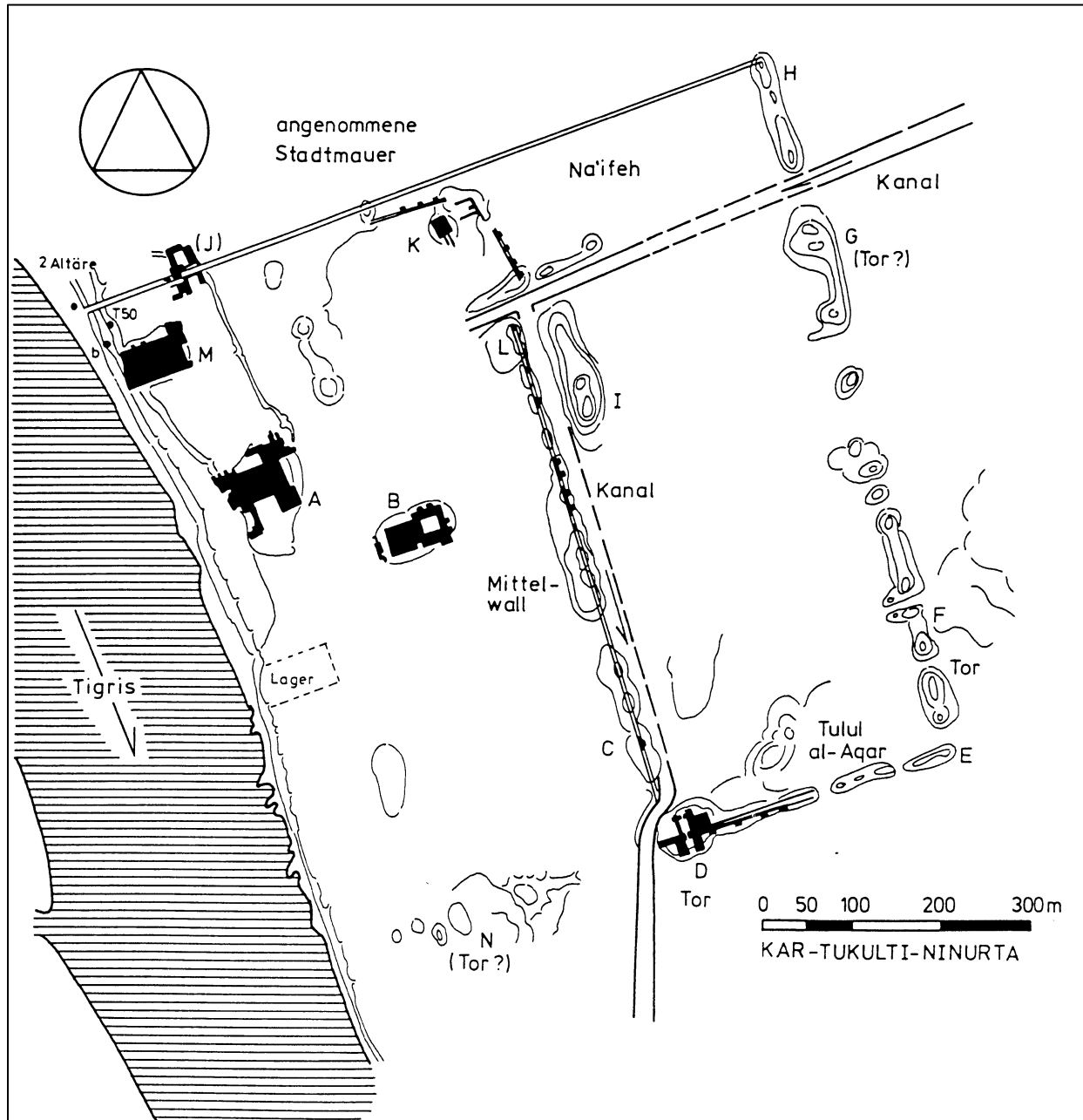


Fig. 60: Bachmann's plan of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, after Dittmann 1996: Fig. 4

Bachmann excavated portions of W1 and W3 (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 43). He observed that the bricks, which were 36-7x36-7x12-13 cm (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 24), were made of poor clay, and the walls and gate, as was the case for all the excavated structures at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, lacked foundations and were built directly on the plain (Eickhoff 1985: 20). In the remains of an excavated gate (G) on W1, Bachmann found numerous tablets in a stairway room (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 44) and a Shalmaneser I palace stamped brick in the overlying debris (Bachmann 2016). Along the eastern side of central wall W3, Bachmann excavated a 13 m wide, 2 m deep ditch (Fig. 58: Channel B) (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 49), which was likely either a canal or a moat. W3 extends north from W1 for 600 m until it is cut off by another east-west running straight depression (Fig. 58: Channel A) that runs parallel to W1 and was likely another canal that links to Channel B. North of Channel B, W3 continues about 20 m east of its earlier position and, after running for another 100 m, turns 80° to the west and disappears after another 50 m.

Bachmann determined that the city boundaries were W1, W2, the Tigris, and a hypothetical northern wall enclosing an almost square space of 62 ha. However, the surveyors in 1986 and 1988 observed continuous surface remains continuing to the survey's boundary 1.3 km south of W1 (Dittman 1990: 165-66). Dittmann determined that an earthen dike (Fig. 61 & Fig. 62: DW1) used as the survey's southern boundary and where he observed clusters of mainly MA sherds was also the city's southern wall (Dittmann 1990). After gaining access to Bachmann's notes and journals, he discovered that this rampart was one of two earthen walls identified by Bachmann in the area between Kar Tukulti Ninurta and the modern town of Isdere (Dittmann 1997a) (Fig. 63). Dittmann could not locate the more southern of these two ramparts, which was far outside of the survey area. According to Bachmann, who dug a trench through at least one of the ramparts, the ramparts were

dams made of heaped up earth as opposed to city walls with any mudbrick structure (Dittmann 1997a: 100). These dams, Bachmann writes, had gravel supporting the outer flanks and gravel placed in a net pattern over the surface (*ibid*) (Fig. 63a).

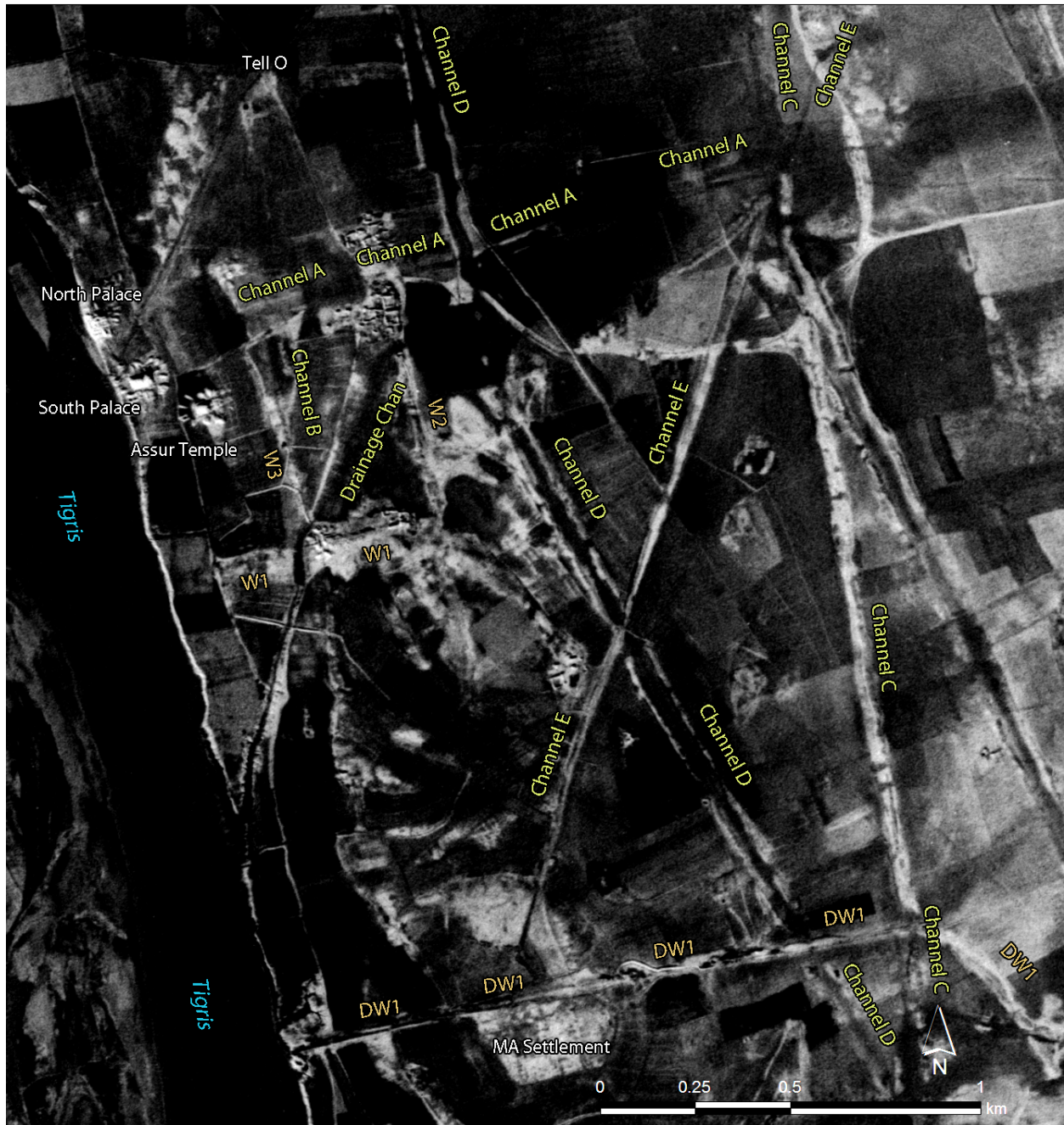


Fig. 61: Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Corona Dec. 1967

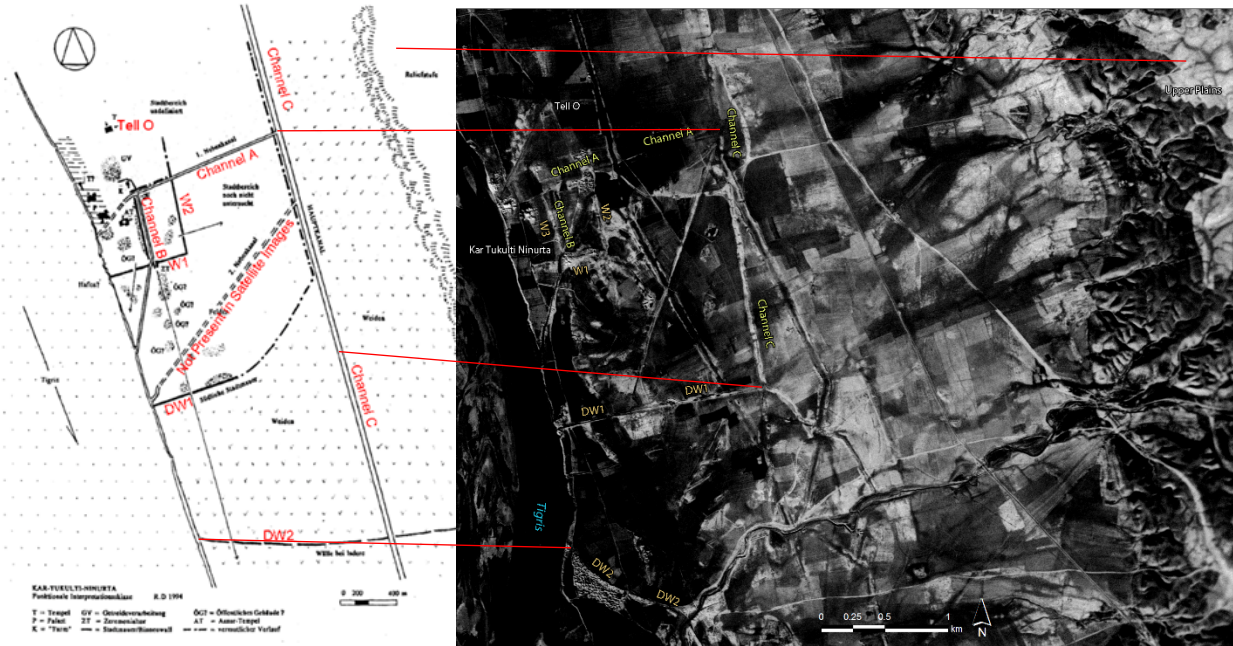


Fig. 62: Dittmann's map of Kar Tukulti Ninurta boundaries, after Dittmann 1996: Fig.2), Compared to Corona Dec 1967

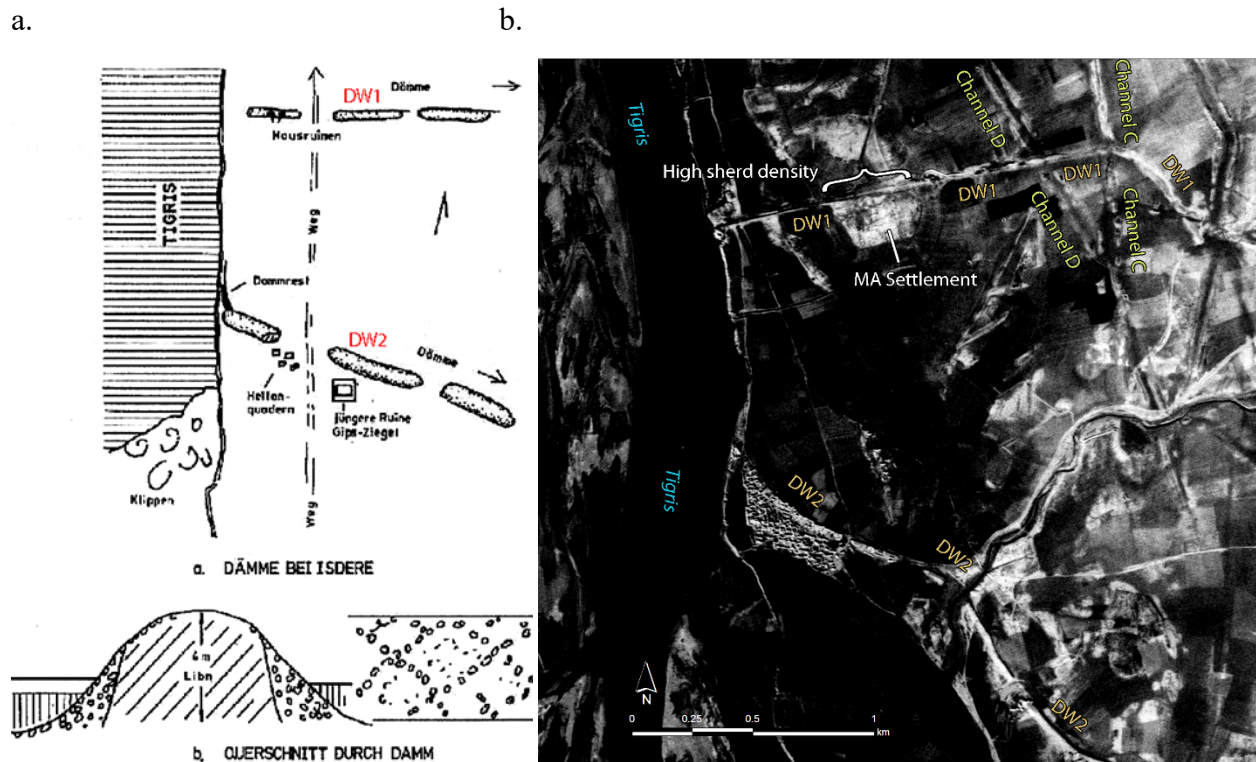


Fig. 63: Kar Tukulti Ninurta South: a. Bachmann's sketch of dams south of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, after Dittmann 1996: Fig. 3; b. Dams and settlement traces south of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Corona Dec. 1967

Contrary to Dittmann's assertion, Bachmann observed that these two ramparts cannot date to the Middle Assyrian Period because they cross over a Middle Assyrian canal (*ibid*). Dittmann believes that Bachmann's notes only apply to the southern rampart because Dittmann did not observe the gravel patterns on the surface during the 1989 survey. During that survey, however, he did not know to look for the gravel decoration, which is probably under the overlying surface, and even Dittmann admits that it may have been destroyed (Dittmann 1997a). While by the 1980's the southern rampart (Fig. 63: DW2) had been built over by the expansion of Isdere, both ramparts are readily visible on satellite images from 1967, and these images reveal that Bachmann is in fact talking specifically about the northern of the two ramparts. DW2 does not cross over any derelict canals, but DW1, the rampart identified by Dittmann as Kar Tukulti Ninurta's southern wall, crosses over at least two derelict large-scale regional canals (Fig. 63: channels C&D), which do not likely predate Kar Tukulti Ninurta, since there is no evidence of large-scale irrigation schemes on the east side of the Tigris prior to the construction of this new city (Reculeau 2011: 78). DW1 must date much later than the founding of Kar Tukulti Ninurta since it crosses over these two canals.

The Middle Assyrian sherds that Dittmann observed along parts of DW1 also do not necessarily mean that this wall dates to the Middle Assyrian period. Units 82-84 where he shows concentrations of sherds appear on satellite images to be a part of a probably Middle Assyrian shallow settlement mound that extends for at least another 200 m south of DW1 into an area Dittmann did not survey (Fig. 63b). The digging of the rampart through this settlement zone likely disturbed the Middle Assyrian settlement below the surface and brought pottery up to the surface along its edge. DW1 cannot be a wall of Kar Tukulti Ninurta. It is not a *stadtmauer* as Dittmann claims, but more of a dam as described by Bachmann. It crosses over canals that either date to the

settlement of Kar Tukulti Ninurta or later, and it cuts through what is likely a Middle Assyrian settlement. The two ramparts DW1&2, which Bachmann concluded were of the same form, were possibly two flood control barriers associated with Isdere, the town just to the south of the ramparts. The southernmost wall of Kar Tukulti Ninurta was W1, but the settlement beyond the walls extended farther south than both Dittmann and Bachmann thought.

## **Iib. Canals**

The city must have extended north of the Tell O temple, but neither Bachmann nor Dittmann observed any walls that far north. Dittmann gives the city a combined area of at least 500 ha and believes the city also extended 1 km farther east than Bachmann's boundary to a derelict canal well outside the survey area (Fig. 62: Channel C). Dittmann did not perform any surface investigations, but instead found the canal on Bachmann's regional maps that he later acquired (Fig. 64). Dittmann identifies this canal as the Pattu-mešari, a canal mentioned in two inscriptions from Kar Tukulti Ninurta. The commemorative inscriptions from Kar Tukulti Ninurta describe this canal, oftentimes unnamed, as a canal to irrigate the plains surrounding the city and provide regular offerings to the gods forever.

The city's founding required monumental irrigation schemes, and two recent authors (Freydank 2009 and Reculeau 2011) have even argued that Tukulti Ninurta founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta primarily to irrigate the plains east of the Tigris. The information in the inscriptions and the numerous canal traces spanning 3,300 years make identifying the canals difficult if not impossible. Channels A and B, the two waterways observed within the city walls, are likely associated with Kar Tukulti Ninurta (Fig. 58). Channel A enters the city from the east where it

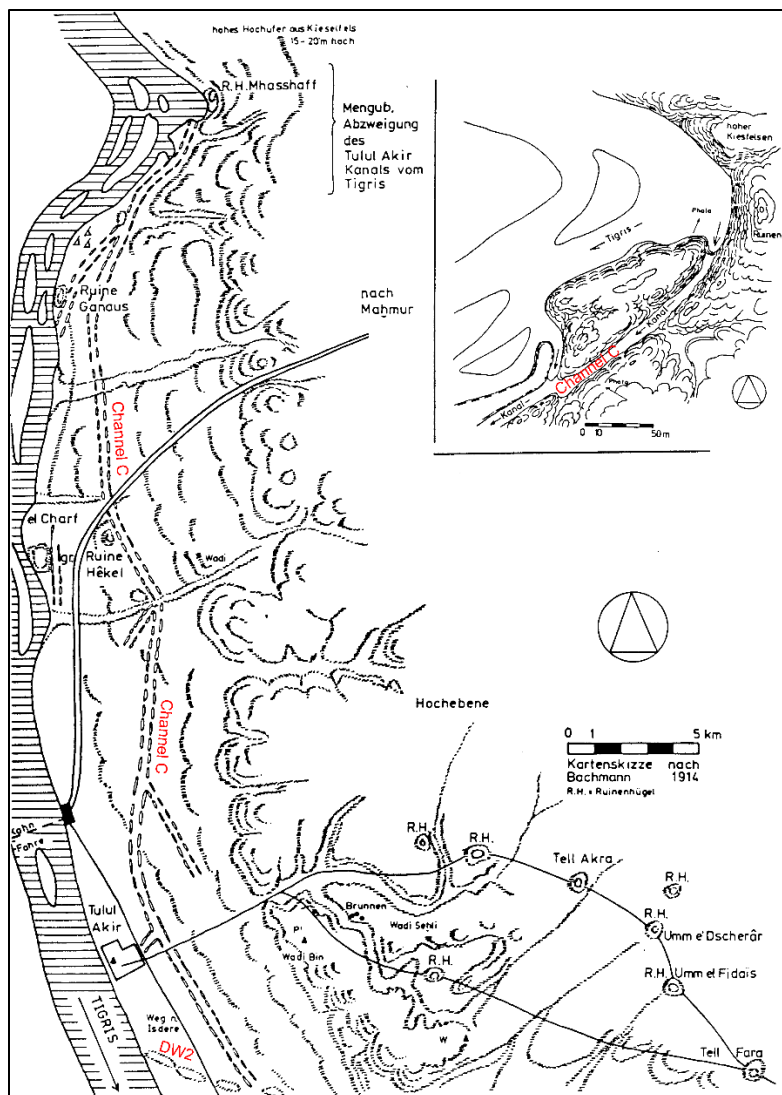


Fig. 64: Bachmann topographic sketch map, after Dittmann 1997: Fig. 1

must have linked to another feeder canal outside of the city. Interpretations about concerning the associated regional canals that fed Channel A.

The canal or canals irrigating Kar Tukulti Ninurta likely originated somewhere that the water was high enough to be extracted from the Tigris or one of the Zabs. On the Corona images, numerous such derelict canals dissect the landscape (Fig. 67). Dittmann has concluded that a derelict canal (Channel C on Fig. 62, Fig. 63, Fig. 64, and Fig. 65), which Bachmann sketched leaving

the Tigris about 20 km north of Kar Tukulti Ninurta and passing Kar Tukulti Ninurta about 1 km east of W2 (Fig. 64), was the Pattu-mešari and the main canal irrigating the city and its plains (Dittmann 1997a). Altaweel (2008: 47) and Scardozi (2011: 10) identify the Pattu-mešari with a different derelict canal (Channel D on Fig. 62, Fig. 63, Fig. 64, Fig. 65, and Fig. 67) that appears on Corona imagery and runs only 200 m east of W2. Altaweel (2008: 47; Pl 34, 40, and 52) associates Channel C with the Nahr Qasuna, a canal that the 10th century Arab geographer Ibn

Hawqal describes running parallel to the Tigris in this area. Altaweel considers Channel C (Dittmann's Pattu-mešari) to be the Islamic Nahr Qasuna, because another canal arm (Fig. 65: Channel E) branches from Channel D and runs over Channel C. However, Channel E actually crosses over both Channels C and D and continues into the upper plains west of the Tigris where it branches off another canal that originates on the Lower Zab (Fig. 65, Fig. 67: Channel F).

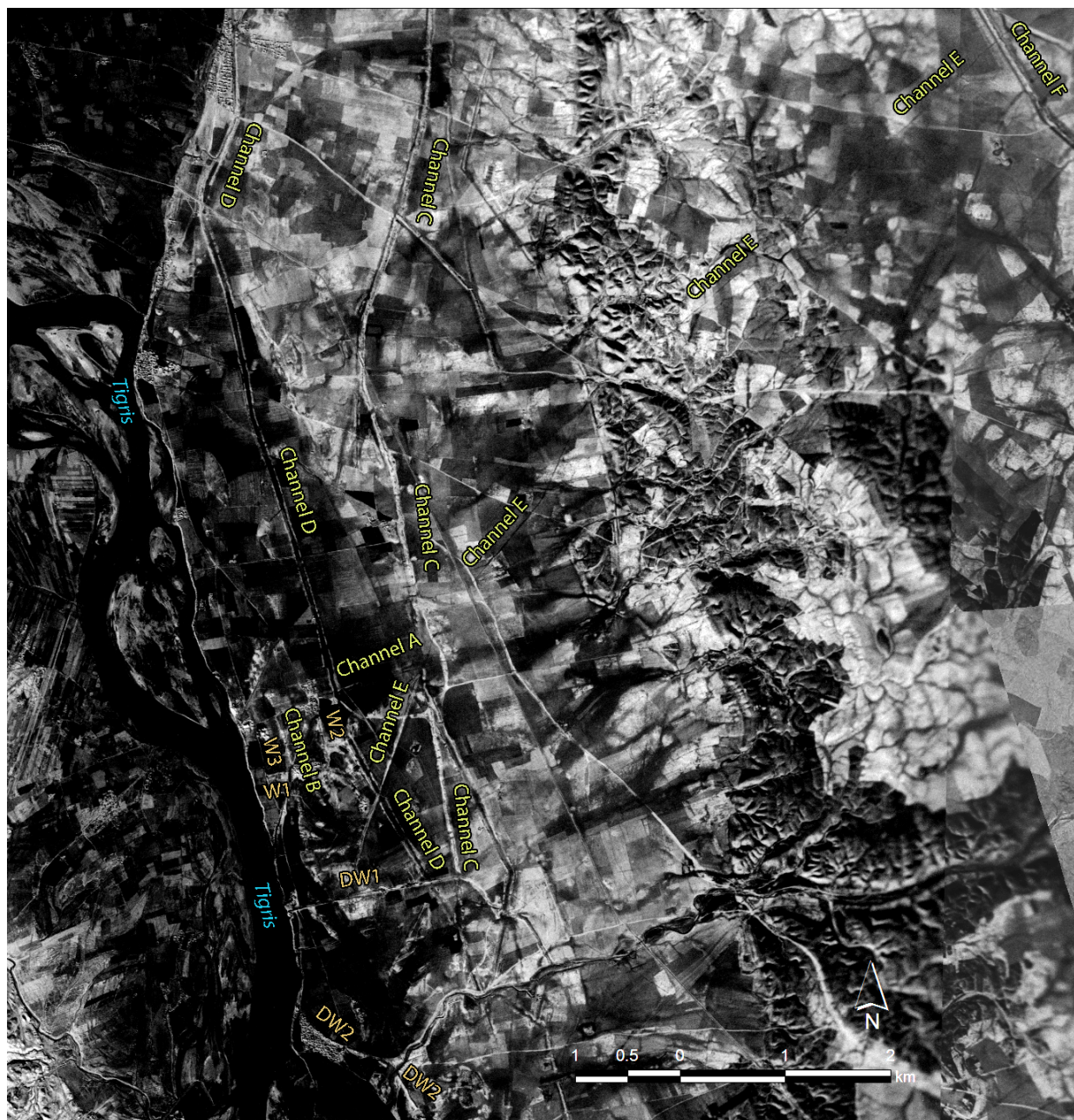


Fig. 65: Derelict channels and wall traces in the vicinity of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Corona 1967



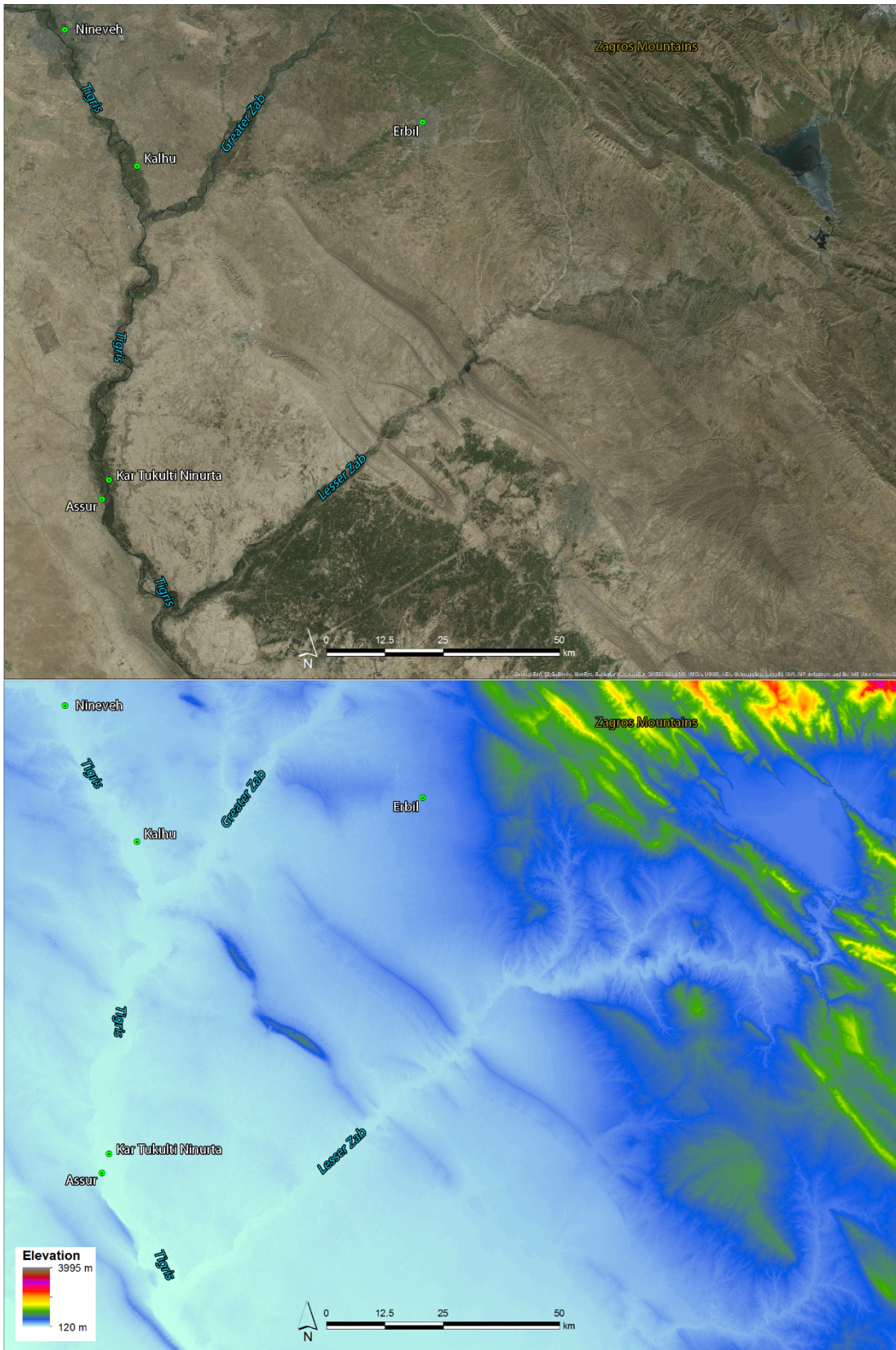
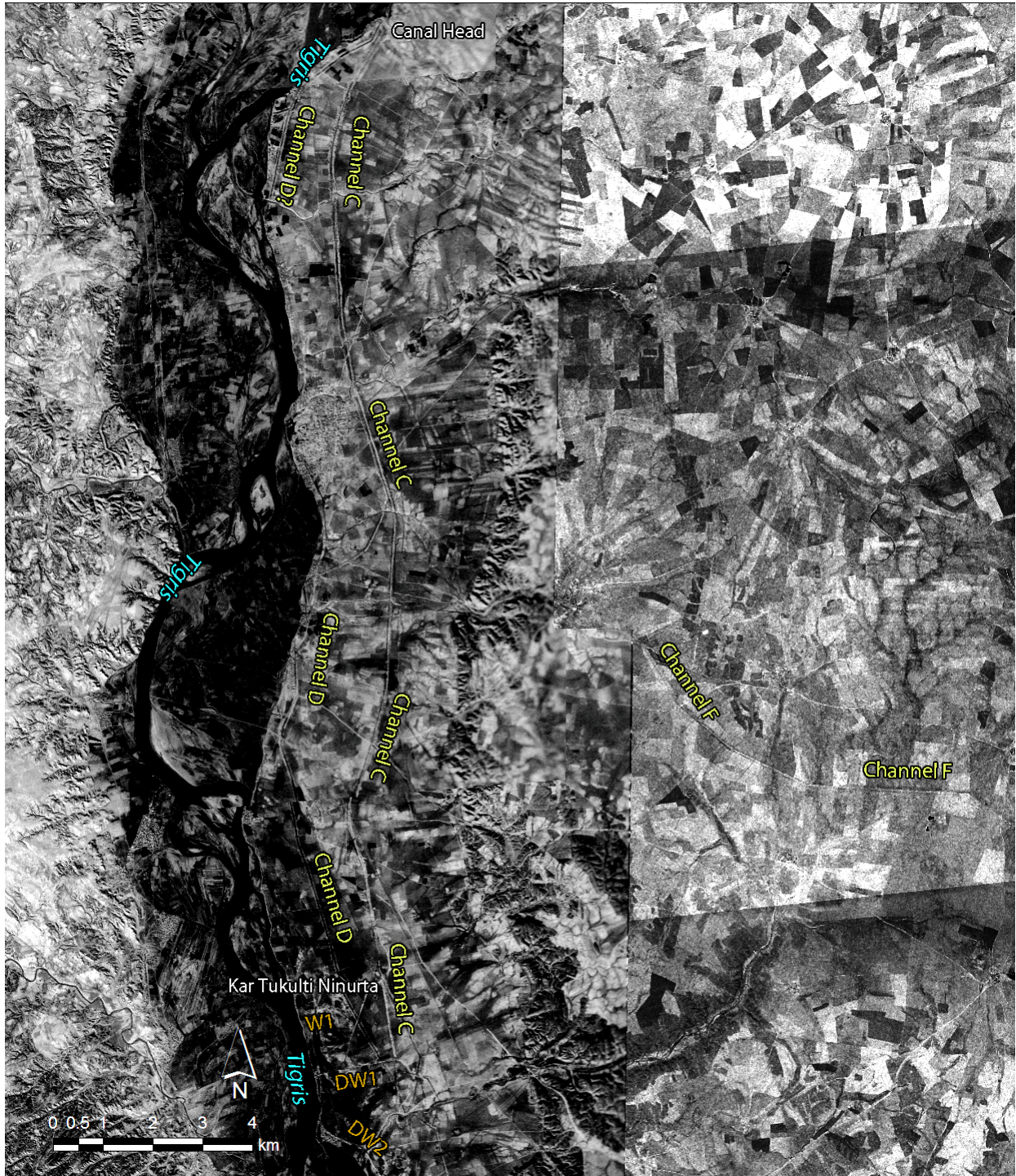


Fig. 66: True color (Landsat 8) and Aster DEM of Northern Iraq



*Fig. 67: Trans-regional canals in the vicinity of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Corona Dec. 1967*

Too many large-scale derelict canals traverse this area to consider any canal trace to be the Pattu-mešari without intensive surface investigations. The one canal that likely dates to the Middle

Assyrian period is Channel A, which Bachmann identified as a canal of Kar Tukulti Ninurta and Dittmann again observed in 1986 (Dittmann *et al* 1986: 121: nt. 23). Channel A when followed east of Kar Tukulti Ninurta clearly passes under Channel D and runs to Channel C, from which it possibly branches or continues eastward. Channel D is likely later than C since it crosses over Channel A and the earthworks running along its edge appear better preserved than C's. These earthworks are certainly far too well-preserved for a 3,300 year old canal that predates all others in the area. C and D both likely postdate the Middle Assyrian Period, but Kar Tukulti Ninurta's canal may have originated from the same place on the Tigris (Fig. 64 and Fig. 67).

Because of a foundation tablet that says Tukulti Ninurta's workers dug a canal through high mountains, two recent investigators of Assyrian irrigation systems concluded that Tukulti Ninurta's canals originated at a source in the nearby mountains (Bagg 2000: 38-43; Reculeau 2011: 78). The inscription reads:

I cleared a way through high difficult mountains with stone chisels, I cut a wide path for a stream, which supports life in the land (and) which provides abundance, and I transformed the plains of my city into irrigated fields. I arranged for regular offerings to the god Assur and the great gods, my lords, in perpetuity from the fish (lit. 'produce') of the water of that canal (RIMA 0.78.23).

The topography of the region renders this enterprise almost impossible. The closest mountain front is 100 km away and a water source even farther. In order to lead a canal from these mountains to Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Tukulti Ninurta's workers would have had to cross over two at least 300 m high anticlines (Fig. 66). If Tukulti Ninurta actually did cut through mountains, he would also likely have used more stone resources to construct the city, but he did not even use stone for foundations.

The mountain imagery used to describe the canal construction is not an actual description of the event, but rather serves to symbolically connect Tukulti Ninurta's building narrative to his conquest narrative. Galter (1988: 224) and Bagg (2000) have pointed out that the workers cutting through mountains to dig the canal passage parallels an episode from Tukulti Ninurta's eastern campaigns described in the same inscription:

With my surpassingly strong might I frequently traversed mighty mountains (and) extremely difficult ranges, the paths of which no other king knew. I cut into their mountains with copper picks (and) widened their impassable paths. I did battle with forty kings of the lands Nairi (and) brought about the defeat of their army. (Thus) I became lord of all their lands. I fastened bronze clasps to the necks of those same kings of the lands Nairi (and) brought them to Ekur, the great mountain, the temple of my support, into the presence of the god Aššur, my lord. I made them swear by the great gods of heaven (and) underworld (and) levied upon them tribute and impost forever" (RIMA 0.78.23).

These episodes of cutting through mountains to campaign or to dig a canal only occur in the same inscription. The two wall inscriptions that do not describe cutting through mountains to dig the canal also do not describe such an action occurring during the Nairi campaign. For both the Nairi campaign and the canal construction, Tukulti Ninurta traverses difficult mountains and widens a path through the mountains. The passages are the same except for the resource being guided through the mountain: in one case an army, in another case water. Tukulti Ninurta's inscriptions present the campaign and building descriptions as inseparable parts of the same coherent narrative that contains parallel structure and logical conclusions. These parallel narratives connect the acts of city-building and state-building. Both the canal and campaigns supply offerings to the gods, one of the main functions of a Mesopotamian state, and bring mountain resources to the capital. The cutting through mountains imagery is symbolic rather than factual and makes both the campaigns

and city foundations parallel scenes in the same narrative of pacifying the land in order to expand Assyrian territory and honor the gods.

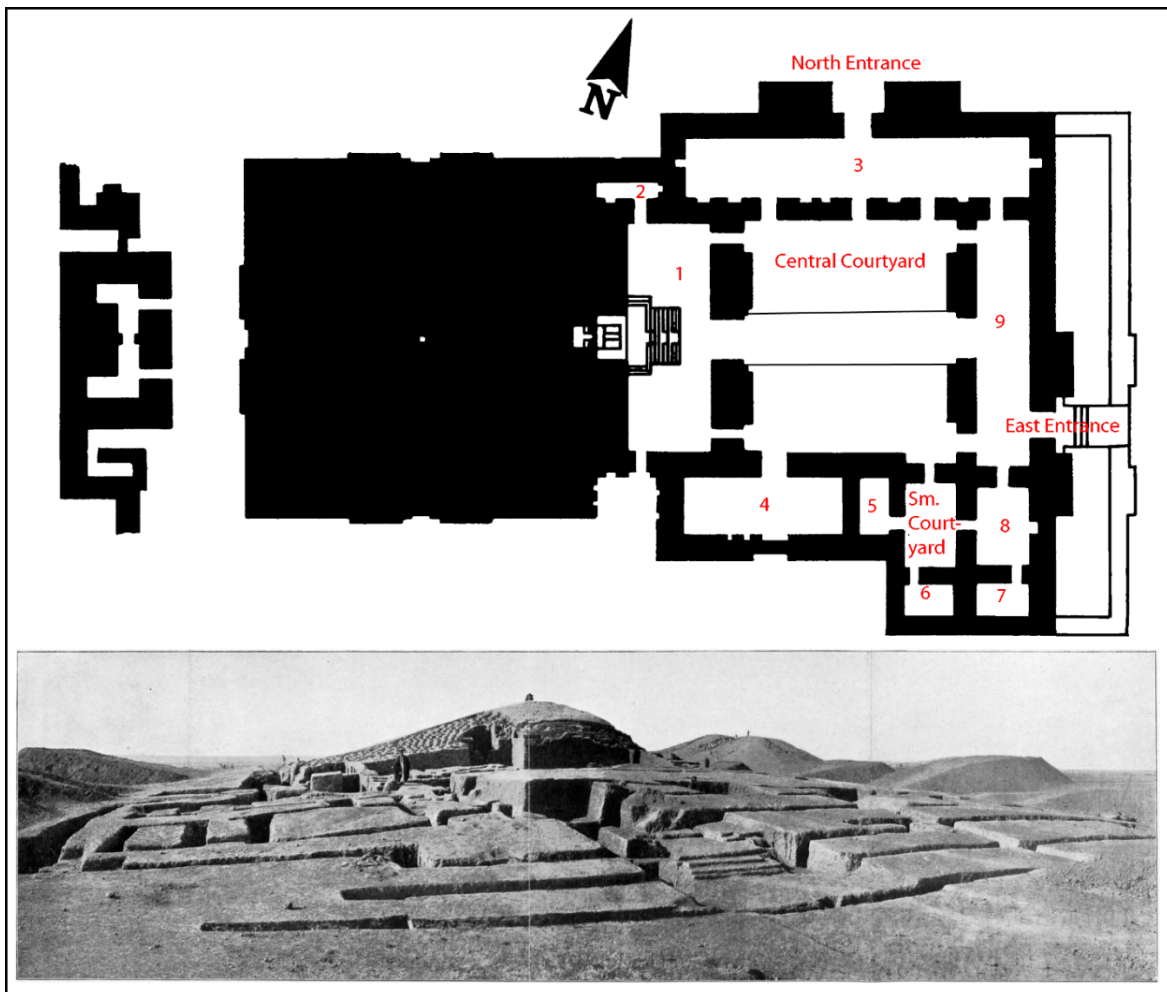
## **IIc. The Temples**

### **IIc.i. The Aššur Temple Complex**

According to the foundation tablets, the canals of Kar Tukulti Ninurta functioned primarily to supply offerings to the city's gods. Bachmann uncovered the city's chief temple, a 93 m long temple and ziggurat (Fig. 68), in the center of the city's western half. According to inscriptions found within, Tukulti Ninurta dedicated the complex called É.KUR.ME.ŠÁR.RA to Aššur. The ziggurat (30x30m and preserved 15 m high) dominates the complex and directly abuts the cella of a temple building (51.8 m x 53.3 m on its longest sides) on its east side and overlooks a series of poorly preserved rooms to the west. Like all monumental buildings at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, the complex lacks foundations, but builders did raise a 1 m high earth mound upon which they built the temple and ziggurat (Bachmann 2016: 76). The buildings' walls contain exclusively square 36-37x36-37x12-13 cm bricks with no rubble fill (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 42, 49) and little architectural embellishment (Eickhoff 1985: 30). The excavators only cleared rooms beyond the walls if they found preserved wall paint, so we know little about the contents of most rooms except that they had a simple clay layer for the floor. A few rooms had a bitumen covered air-dried brick pavement, but no baked bricks were used (Bachmann 2016: 276).

The temple had two entrances flanked by towers on the east side opposite the ziggurat and on the north side. The east entrance, which Eickhoff believed was the main entrance, passes through a forecourt (Fig. 68: 9) where three doors in the west wall lead to the temple's Central Courtyard. In the Central Courtyard, buttresses flanked both the central doorway coming from

Room 9 and the central doorway to the cella (Fig. 68: 1) on the opposite wall. A 6 m wide bitumen-covered brick path leads between these two buttressed gateways. The east temple entrance leads to the cella via this path but is considerably offset from it, so there is no direct line of sight to the cella. The cella's rear wall abuts the ziggurat, and a niche in this wall cuts into the ziggurat mass. The cella, niche, and a side room (Fig. 68: 2) are paved with bricks covered with bitumen. Bitumen also runs 50 cm up the walls, which are painted with red and white plaster. Bachmann records faience, glass, lead, and copper objects and glazed and painted sherds throughout the cella and a side room (Bachmann 2016: 287).



*Fig. 68: Aššur Temple. Plan after Eickhoff 1985: Fig 8; Photo after Andrae & Bachmann 1914: Fig 12*

Room 2, accessible through the cella's north wall, shares one wall with the ziggurat and has several niches in the preserved walls, but the outer wall is missing (Bachmann 2016: 283). Opposite Room 2, a door in the cella's south wall enters a similar area with wall niches. This area was full of painted sherds, glass and alabaster fragments, and numerous faience rosettes, pendants, and animals. Bachmann's plans show this area open to the outside, but given its similarities to Room 2 and the presence of these *streugaben* type objects, this area likely was enclosed and its outer wall has also disappeared. The bitumen used as wall paint and faience and glass fragments found throughout the cella but concentrated in side rooms recall Tukulti Ninurta's Assyrian Ištar Temple (see 4.Ia), as does an elevated area in the niche for the cult statue. Bachmann did not find foundation deposits under the walls like those of the Assyrian Ištar Temple, but he did uncover an alabaster commemorative tablet (RIMA 0.78.24) embedded upright on a bed of shells and faience beads in the decaying east cella wall opposite the niche (Bachmann 2016: 283 & nt 56).

Back in the Central Courtyard, three modest doors in the north wall lead to a long room (Fig. 68: 3) that extends for the entire length of the temple and contains the north entrance to the temple. Three walls contain a number of unevenly sized and spaced niches, which Andrae (1935: 58f. and 1977: 176-178) and Eickhoff (1985:30) have argued contained altars to other gods mentioned in inscriptions from Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Dittmann, however, argues that the room does not have an important cultic function because it lacks decoration and the uneven niches, which do not extend to the floor, could not hold large altars (Bachmann 2016: 283 nt 58). The opposite side of the central courtyard from Room 3 only has two doors, one of which leads to a large room (Fig. 68: 4) that has a canal in the floor and Bachmann believed to contain the stairs leading to the roof.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Because Bachmann's numbering system is inconsistent across his various notes, Eickhoff confused this room with Room 9 where he could not see why Bachmann posited a staircase.

The other door leads into a small courtyard that has one door on each wall leading into surrounding rooms. Room 8 to the east of the small courtyard has a niche in its east wall, but room 5 on the opposite side of the small courtyard is the most interesting. Beyond the door of the room is a fireplace, a paved floor with stamped palace bricks, and black, red, and white painted walls like the main cella (Bachmann 2016: 283). Bachmann thought this area was a house for the guards (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 51), but the decoration found in room 5 indicates more likely that it was the cella of a second shrine, a miniature version of the temple also with its own courtyard and side rooms. This second shrine within the temple would be in keeping with the Assyrian preference for dedicating temples to two deities. Because Bachmann did not remove any of the walls to find foundation tablets, we do not know to which deity this shrine would have been dedicated.

A brick lined capsule under the center of the ziggurat held an alabaster inscription but no *streugaben*. Bachmann could not locate any other foundation deposits under the ziggurat, but, newly revealed in Bachmann's diary, a tunnel dug through the ziggurat from its center to the temple cella niche uncovered beneath the ziggurat a three-brick high platform made of 48x48x7 cm baked bricks stamped with É.LUGAL.UMUN.KUR.KUR.RA (New Palace at Aššur) stamps (Bachmann 2016: 287). A brick pavement, possibly a continuation of the pavement under the ziggurat, runs between the west side of the ziggurat and a poorly preserved U-shaped room 6.5 m away. This area contained many finds: numerous inscribed tablets, lead plaques, raw lead, beads, shells, fragments of terracotta knobbed plaques, pottery sherds, and ash (Bachmann 2016: 287).

The complex has similarities and differences with other temples, but no direct parallels. Scholars have attributed the design of the Aššur Temple to Babylonian influence (Dittmann 1997b: 270; Eickhoff 1985: 32). For example, Eickhoff observes that the orientation is Babylonian, but it is difficult to support an argument based upon orientation since the temples at Aššur reveal no



preferred orientation for Assyrian temples. The temples at Aššur all face different directions, and the presence of symmetrical shrines means that several even have a 180° difference in orientation. The Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple has the opposite orientation of the Aššur Temple at Aššur, but both are oriented the same way with respect to the Tigris: both cellas face away from the river. Eickhoff (*ibid*) cited the Šamaš temple complex at Larsa as a similar Babylonian temple. At the time, surface traces at Larsa showed an unexcavated ziggurat directly abutting a temple with a niche cut into the ziggurat. However, excavations later revealed that this section of the Larsa temple complex is Neo-Babylonian (Pardo 1989).

The most direct parallels to the Aššur Temple at Kar Tukulti Ninurta are two northern temples: the Great Temple at Tell al-Rimah built during the time of Šamši Adad (Fig. 39) and the Aššur Temple at Aššur. The Tell al-Rimah temple had been remodeled extensively by the Middle Assyrian period, but its form may have represented a common type of temple in Upper Mesopotamia from whence Tukulti Ninurta drew ideas. The ziggurat at Tell al-Rimah abuts the rear wall of the cella, but no niche cuts into the ziggurat from the cella and the Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple lacks the intricate engaged columns that cover the sides of the Tell al-Rimah temple. The most direct intended reference is probably the Aššur Temple at Aššur. Gilibert has observed links between the Aššur Temple at Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta, such as both were called É.KUR in some form and the ziggurat at Kar Tukulti Ninurta is almost exactly half the size of the ziggurat at Aššur (Gilibert 2008). No one has referenced the Aššur Temple layout as an influence on the Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple, possibly because according to temple typology, the two are not similar.<sup>32</sup>

However, to an Assyrian visitor, the experience would be easily recognizable. Upon entering the Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple through the north entrance to room 3, a visitor would have

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<sup>32</sup> In Heinrich's (1982) classification, the Aššur Temple is a "mittelsaalhaus" temple whereas the Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple is "Haus mit umschlossenem Hof"

a similar experience as entering the Aššur temple through the southeast entrance. After passing through the entrance gateway, this visitor would pass through a foyer and enter a courtyard with monumental buttressed entrances leading to different parts of the temple to his left and right. Like at Aššur, this privileged person would enter the cella to the right and to the left would approach another one of the temple's entrances. The Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple, however, lacks the symmetry of the Aššur Temple at Assur, but a second shrine is present at both. In the Kar Tukulti Ninurta temple, the second shrine juts out of one of the corners of the building, similar to the Dinitu shrine at the Assyrian Ištar Temple. Despite some differences, the Kar Tukulti Ninurta Aššur Temple seems to be a miniaturized and condensed version of the Aššur Temple and ziggurat at Aššur.

### **IIc.ii. Tell O Temple**

800 m north of the Aššur Temple, a small mound (Tell O) conceals the ruins of another smaller temple (Fig. 69). Dittmann excavated a part of this temple, but the deity worshiped remains unknown since he did not reach the foundations or find commemorative inscriptions. Bastert and Dittmann (1995: 17) have determined two occupation phases: one dating to Tukulti Ninurta and a 2<sup>nd</sup> phase from immediately after his reign until the 9<sup>th</sup> century. All excavated sections, like the Aššur temple, are built entirely from 37x37x11 cm unbaked bricks; baked and stamped bricks were only found in overlying debris. In the temple's cella, a clay bench and probably five clay tables line each wall just past the entrance door, and an elevated platform flanked by two side rooms (Fig. 69: 4 and 6) takes up the rear. A niche on the north wall just in front of the platform contained almost 3000 small glass and faience balls and a number of ceramic flasks (Fig. 69: 7) (Bastert and Dittmann 19 nt. 21). Faience rosettes 16 cm wide, which are larger, more intricate, and more

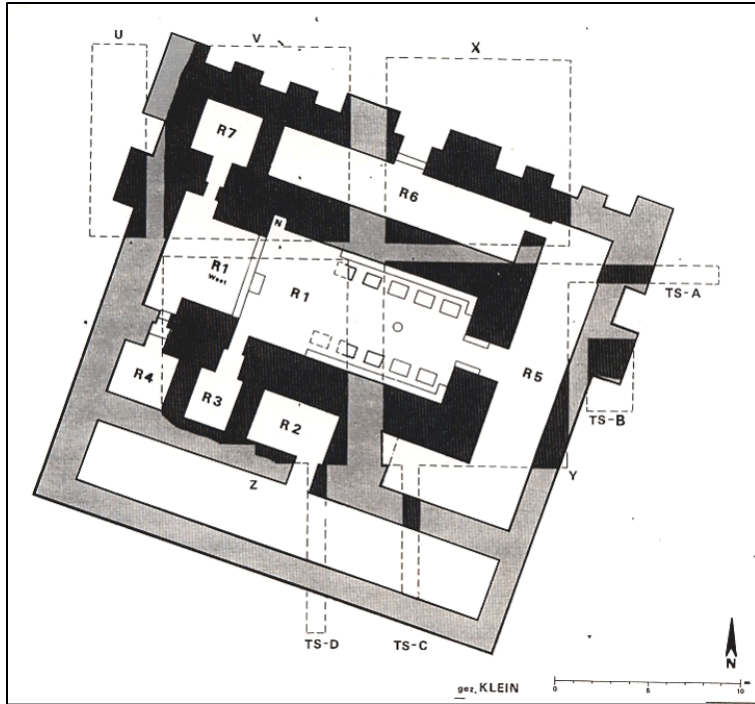


Fig. 69: Tell O Temple Plan, after Bastert and Dittmann 1995: Fig 3

colorful than the typical Middle Assyrian faience rosettes and unique to this temple, lay on top of the balls (Fig. 70). Bastert and Dittmann argue that the rosettes were left in a different phase from the balls. Photographs (Fig. 70) show the rosettes lying on top of the balls, so how the excavators separated the two into separate phases is unclear.

Dittmann found twenty-two more such rosettes in the middle of the floor of the cella and in the temple's entrance room (6) (Dittman 1990: 169).

Bastert and Dittmann (1995: 16-17) argue that the rosettes, which are pierced with six holes, hung from the walls and fell into the middle of the floor when the walls came down. However, they provide no evidence that the walls collapsed intact inwardly, and excavation photographs show at least one rosette intact and face-up *in situ* (Fig. 70). If it fell from above, it would likely land face down in pieces. Instead, someone seems to have intentionally placed the rosette face-up in the middle of the floor. It may have been placed on the floor when the temple went out of use, but the Assyrian Ištar temple at Aššur contains evidence that objects were strewn on the floor of the cella while the building was still being used and suggests another interpretation. The Assyrian Ištar Temple's bitumen floor held impressions of objects that had been on the floor but later removed, and a large stone phallus was still resting on the floor at the time of excavation.

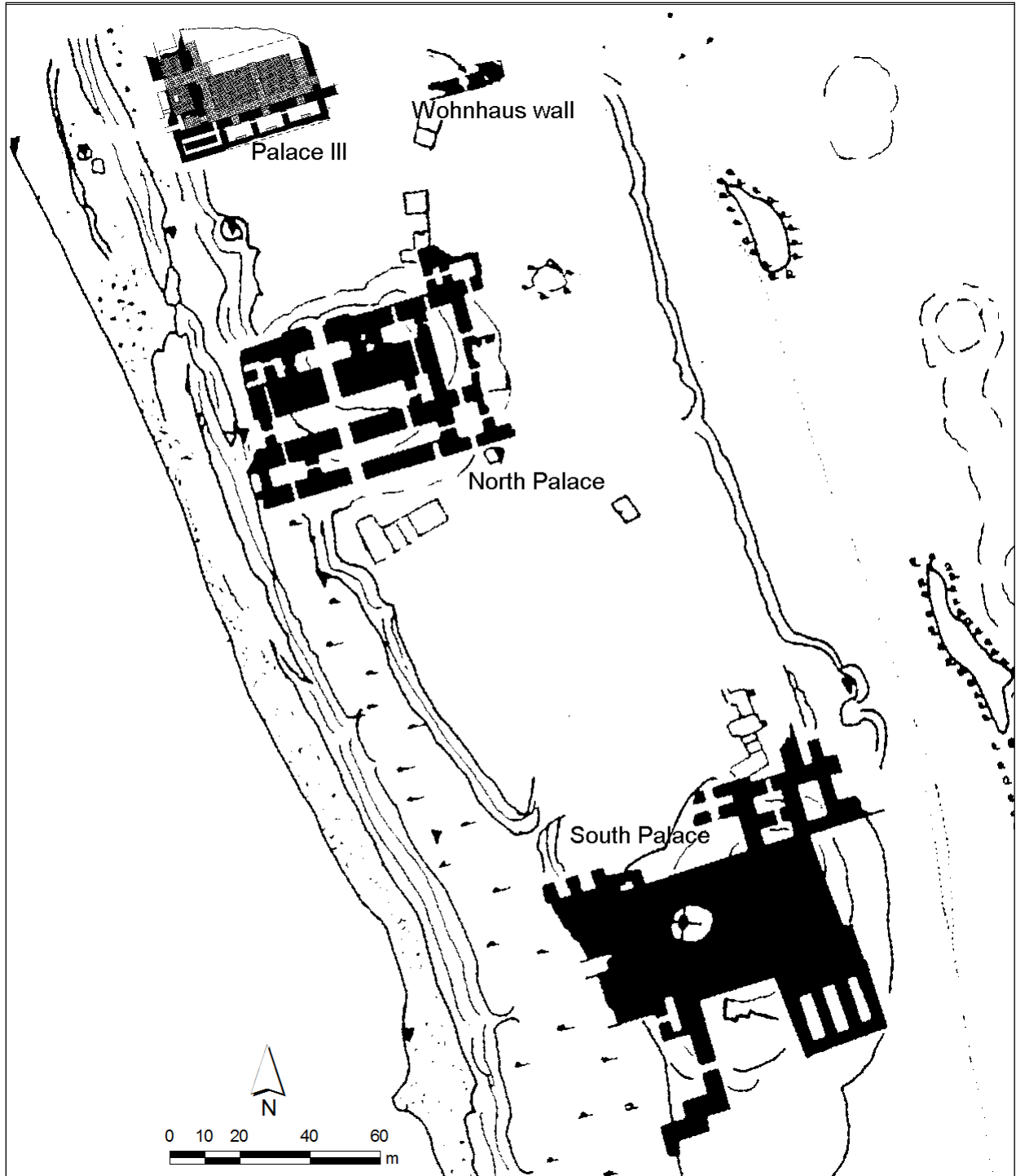
The objects on the floor of the Ištar Temple must have sat on the floor long enough to leave impressions and been removed before the building was abandoned. *Streugaben* then were not only under buildings or in side rooms, but may even have littered the floors of the cellas. These rosettes and phalli on the floor, like *streugaben*, may represent phalli and plants blossoming through the floor to fertilize the sacred space.



Fig. 70: Tell O faience rosettes and glass/faience pearls, 1989 excavation photographs from German Archaeological Institute Excavation, source: [https://www.academia.edu/23210369/Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta\\_1913\\_14\\_and\\_1986\\_89](https://www.academia.edu/23210369/Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta_1913_14_and_1986_89)

## IId. Palaces

The city wall inscriptions boast of a palace elevated on a brick terrace 120 bricks tall and called É.GAL.ME.ŠĀR.RA, which the inscription translates into Akkadian as “house of *kiššati* (totality).” Like the New Palace and Aššur Temple at Aššur, the Aššur Temple and palace at Kar



*Fig. 71: Excavated palace sections, adapted from Eickhoff 1985: Plan 1 and Muhl and Sulaiman 2011: Fig. 8*



*Fig. 72: North and south palace mounds before excavation, after Andrae and Bachmann 1914:  
Fig. 11*

Tukulti Ninurta have almost the same name (É.GAL.ME.ŠÁR.RA and É.KUR.ME.ŠÁR.RA), and the palace's name recalls É.GAL.KI.ŠÁR.RA "Palace of totality", the name of the Kassite palace at Dur Kurigalzu. The palace area of Kar Tukulti Ninurta covered at least 5 ha along the banks of the Tigris (Beuger 2011: 182) (Fig. 71). In this area, Bachmann excavated two 8 m tall mounds 140 m apart (Fig. 72). Within the mounds, he uncovered very fragmentary palatial structures, which he labelled the South Palace and the North Palace. The South Palace includes the remains of an at least 80x40 m mudbrick terrace. Bachmann suspected that these structures were part of a much larger palace complex (Bachmann 2016: 289; Eickhoff 1985: 43). Dittmann proved the extent to be much larger than Bachmann believed when the former uncovered a part of the palace (Palace III) beneath an area even farther north than Bachmann's city boundaries (Dittmann 1990: 166-

168). The palaces overall show much more architectural sophistication than the temples: baked bricks are common and architectural and artistic embellishment and experimentation abound. However, the palaces have yielded no building inscriptions aside from stamped bricks.

### **IId.i. South Palace**

The southern of the two mounds that Bachmann excavated contained the decaying remains of the terrace referenced in the city wall inscriptions (Fig. 73). Dittmann believes, based upon these inscriptions, the size of bricks, and the thickness of mortar, that the terrace, 8 m tall today, was originally c. 20 m tall - even taller than the nearby Aššur ziggurat (Bachmann 2016: 291, nt 98). Bachmann, upon first mounting this impressive piece of architecture, extolled its great view (Bachmann 2016: 269). The architecture is unfortunately so poorly preserved that no coherent unit of the palace can be discerned. All recognizable areas are limited to one or two preserved rooms on the side of the terrace, and nothing remains of the buildings on top. These remains also represent the amalgamation of multiple building programs in which substantial changes to the buildings occurred. In several instances, terracing covers an earlier decorated façade, and two different sizes of bricks were used: 36/7x36/7x12-13 bricks (brick A) and 35x35x14-15 cm bricks (brick B). The majority of the preserved structure is the mass of the terrace, which is made of brick B. Fragmentary sets of rooms often made of brick A abut the terrace, and the terrace also covers earlier buildings made of brick A. Bachman believes that the whole terrace is covering up older structures and that the rooms flanking the terrace were also once covered by the terrace (Bachmann 2016: 293-295).

Most of the walls on the terrace and the surrounding rooms were painted, usually in plain white (Bachmann 2016: 295), but fragments of blue, red, white, and yellow painted murals were

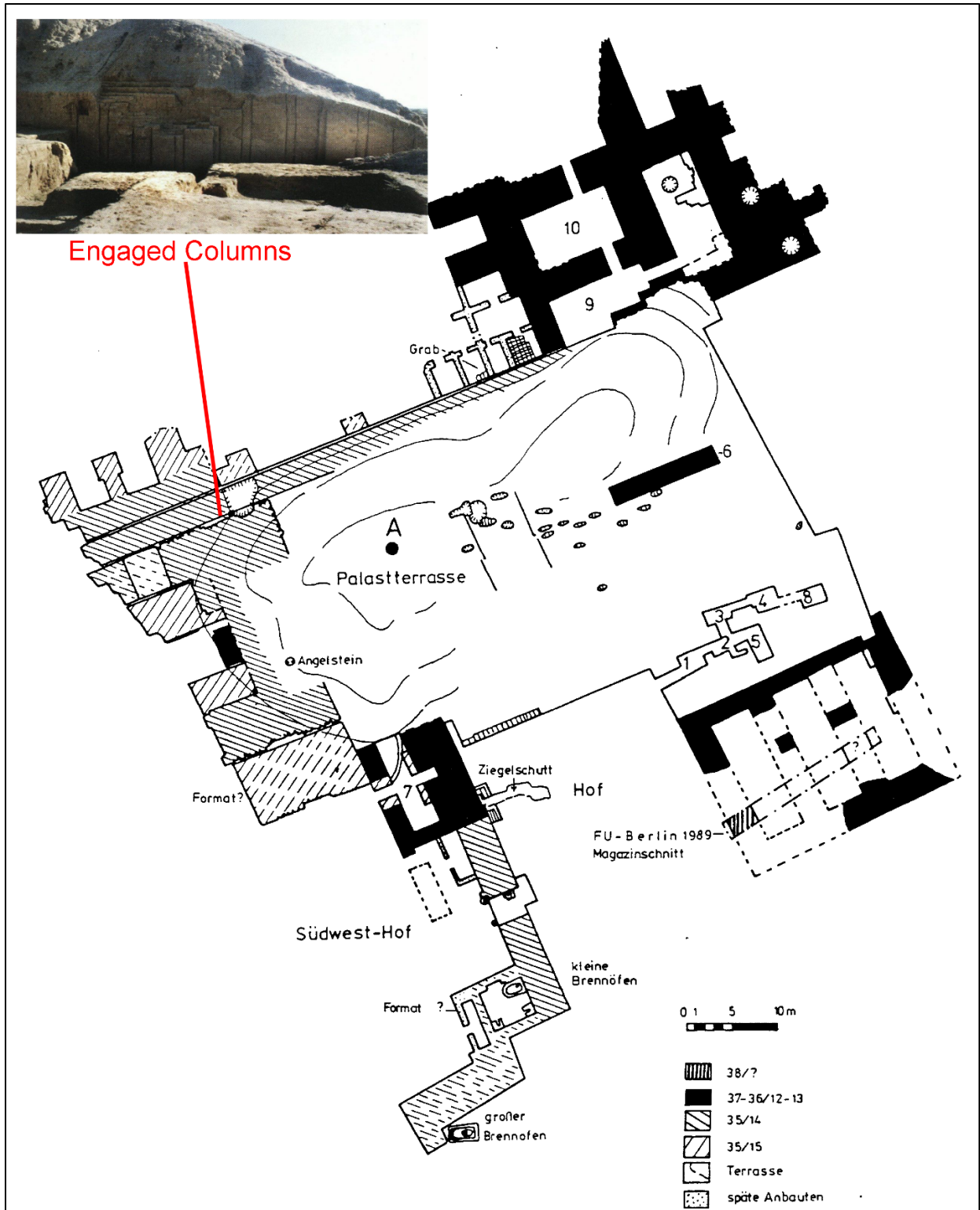


Fig. 73: South Palace. Plan after Dittmann 1997: Fig 6; Photo after Sulaiman 2009: Pl. 164.9



also present. Little was found on the terrace itself except a knobbed plaque inscribed with Tukulti Ninurta's name (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 53). Two large courtyards separated by a wall, which contains one well-preserved room, border the terrace's south side (Fig. 73: 7). The well-preserved room contains a corbelled vaulted niche and is built of brick A. Its walls were widened using brick B, Bachmann believed, so that the terrace could be built on top. Bachmann recorded a multitude of finds in the vicinity of Room 7 including many faience objects, painted pottery, glass fragments, lead objects, faience and stone knobbed-plaque fragments, a terracotta idol, and, in one of the walls, an unpublished 10x10 cm fragment of an inscribed gypsum tablet (Bachmann 2016: 294). To the east of Room 7, the large courtyard south of the terrace contained numerous objects that may have fallen off the terrace. These objects include painted plaster, copper locking mechanisms, lead debris, lead plaques, figurines, and fragments of knobbed-plaques, glass, faience, and painted and glazed pottery.

Near the northeast corner of this courtyard, a line of narrow haphazard rooms tunnel into the terrace and contained tablets, a faience rosette, and painted sherds. The far southwest area of the palace holds what appears to be a workshop area that was used until the early 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium. Several kilns along with a sieve, bronze arrowhead, armor scales, faience animal figurines, lead plaques, and glazed and painted sherds cluttered this workshop area. The east side of the terrace was probably another courtyard since there are no wall remains, while wall fragments dot the whole extent of the terrace's north side. Bachmann excavated the area northeast of the terrace for about 20 m and uncovered a few large thick-walled rooms that are made of brick A and continue beyond the excavated area. These rooms and their vicinity contained lead, bronze, and faience objects as well as bitumen remains with colorful leaf decoration, an inscribed bitumen tablet, inscribed clay tablets, beads, shells, bone, and ash (Bachmann 2016: 293).

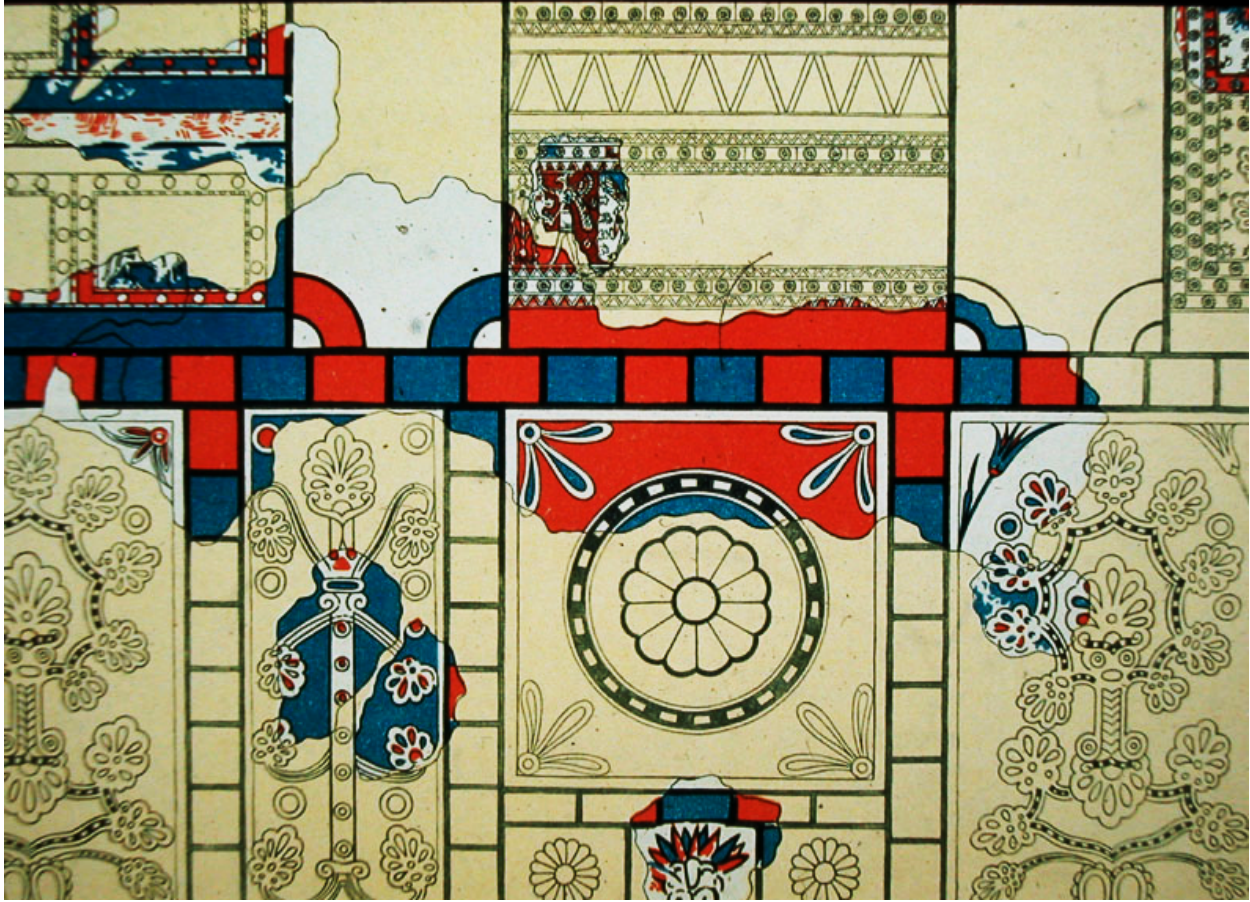


Fig. 74: South Palace murals, after Andrae 1923

Bachmann uncovered, in the rooms surrounding the terrace, collapsed walls with mural fragments that he believed fell from the terrace above. The murals, which Andrae published in watercolor copies (Andrae 1925), show many floral and rosette motifs similar to the faience versions common in Middle Assyrian contexts (Fig. 74). The sacred tree also appears with one instance of the genie-fertilizing-the-tree motif known so well from Neo-Assyrian palaces. The most frequently repeated shapes are small circles usually with dots in the center. These circles often appear to sprout different kinds of plants or go up a tree trunk, and sometimes the sprouting images multiply and repeat several times like a fractal. The rosette and palmette motifs are shapes often found in *streugaben* contexts, and the frequent small circles may represent the small balls or

beads usually found in great quantities with these strewn about items. Here the beads are shown perhaps as seeds from whence plants burst forth, sometimes repetitiously strewing the plants and circles across the space. The *streugaben*, I have argued, may be related to the idea of the sacred tree, which is also frequent on these paintings. The *streugaben* on the floors of buildings burst forth from below the foundations and fertilized the area with sacredness like a sacred tree.

### **IId.ii. North Palace**

One hundred forty meters north of the terrace another 8 m high mound covered a roughly 70x60 m portion of the palace in which some of the walls still stood 8 m high (Fig. 75). The Tigris destroyed the west side of the building and the east side was also destroyed for unknown reasons. This North Palace lacks multiple terrace additions and so is easier to describe than the South Palace. The preserved portions of the building contained 18 possible rooms in essentially two parts: three lines of parallel rooms extending to the east from the Tigris, and, east of those rooms, 2 lines of north-south running rooms. These two sets of rooms appear to form the borders of courtyards north and south of the building, and limited excavations revealed the courtyards were paved with palace-stamped baked bricks (Eickhoff 1985: Plan 6).

The internal and external walls of the building are incredibly thick (4-9 m). The 4 m thick north outer wall contains a monumental entrance with flanking towers that leads into vestibule room 1. Room 1 was only partially excavated and contains, along with two smaller rooms on either side, fragments of blue, red, and white wall plaster (Bachmann 2016: 301). Room 3 leads to room 4, which at least in the excavated portions is entirely paved in baked bricks and contained a sherd inscribed with the name of Shalmaneser I. The walls of this first row of rooms are built with Brick B, while the rest of the building's walls use Brick A. The walls of the two sections rest directly

against one another so that a 9 m thick wall, the thickest in the complex, separates the first and second rows of rooms.

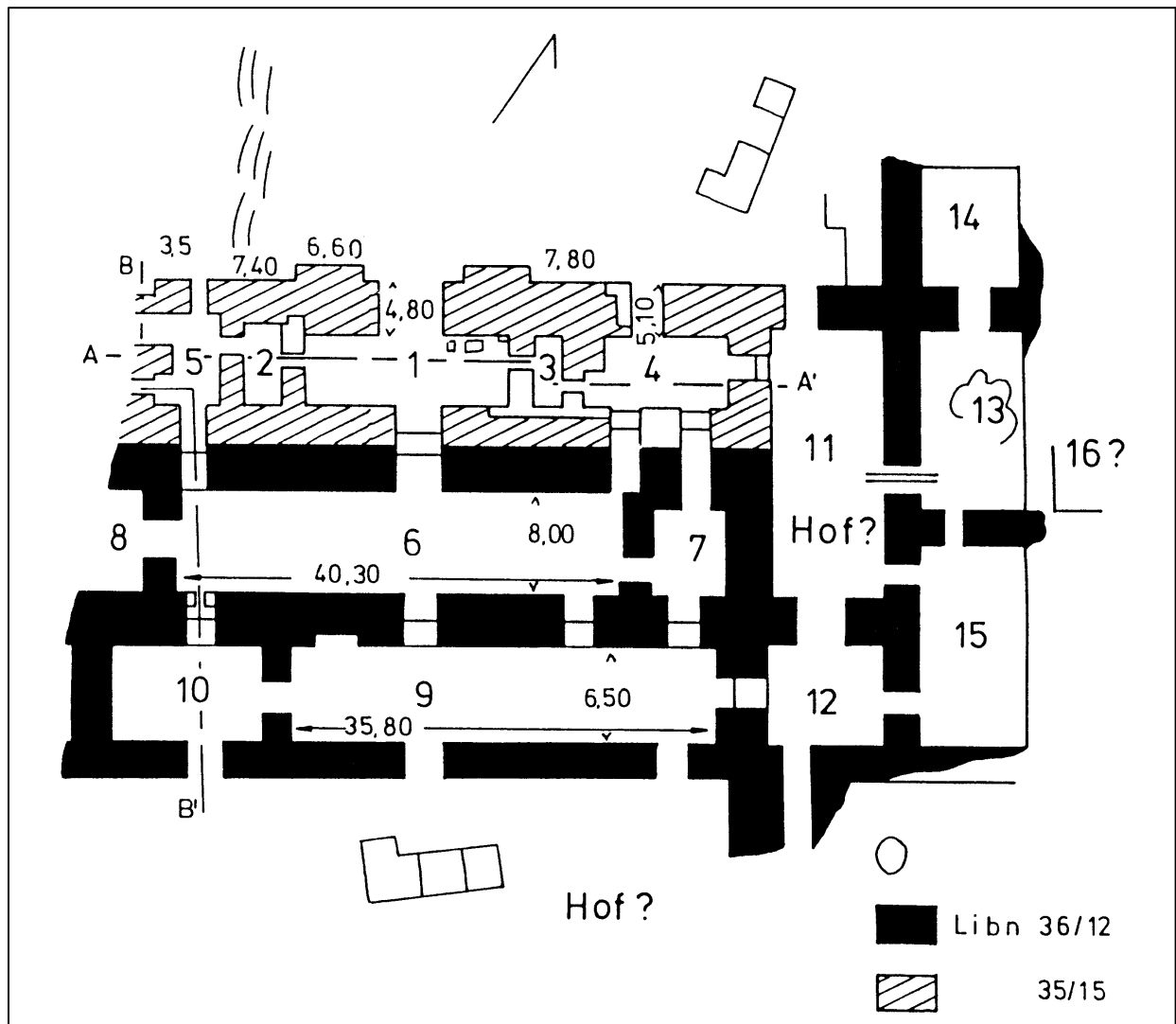


Fig. 75: North Palace, after Bachmann 2016: Fig. 22

Room 6, the largest (40x8 m) and most elaborately decorated room in the complex, dominates the middle row of rooms. Bachmann only excavated a small portion of Room 6, which held a fragment of a round knobbed plaque that would have originally been more than 60 cm in diameter (T 387) and a piece of inscribed basalt (T 365). The excavated area was paved with bitumen-coated palace-stamped baked bricks resting on a layer of bitumen and sand (Eickhoff

1985: 42; Bachmann 2016: 301-302). The bitumen continued in a strip at the bottom of the walls and strips of red, blue, and white plaster covered the walls above the bitumen strip. The excavated area of Room 9 in the southernmost line of rooms also contained traces of red plaster (Bachmann 2016: 303) and had niches on the north and south walls and an exit to the courtyard south of the building. The outside of the building may have been decorated with gold, since Bachmann found pieces of sheet gold in many places around the building.

Eickhoff argues that the whole North Palace was a monumental entrance leading to the rest of the palace (Eickhoff 1985: 42). This interpretation seems unlikely since five passageways lead to the North Courtyard, and multiple doors imply an internal courtyard rather than a gate for restricting access. Subsequent excavations have also revealed what is likely another part of the palace on the opposite side of this courtyard.

### **IId.iii. Palace III**

Sixty meters upstream from the North Palace, excavators in 1986 uncovered another section of the palace (Palace III)<sup>33</sup> that contains some of the most fascinating décor at Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Bachmann failed to notice this part of the palace because it left no surface traces, and he believed only mounded areas concealed architecture. This northernmost palace area was completely overbuilt by several phases of Neo-Assyrian residential occupation, but Dittmann chose to excavate in 1986 because a large altar and palace brick were sticking out of the Tigris shore nearby. In 2002, the Iraqi Makhul Dam Salvage Project excavated more of the structure,

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<sup>33</sup> No publication has a good designation for this section of the palace. Dittmann calls it Area A, but this term could be confused with Mound A, the original designation of the South Palace. Muhl and Sulaiman (2011: Fig. 8) call it and the North Palace the “Northern Palace,” and Sulaiman (2010) calls it “the palace of Tukulti Ninurta I”. None of these designations are effective when trying to discuss and compare the different sections of the palace. Borrowing a term from Chogha Zanbil, I have chosen to refer to give it the distinct title: “Palace III.”

including a 32 m wide courtyard and side rooms with unique pavement and wall decoration (Fig. 76) (Sulaiman 2010; Muhl and Sulaiman 2011). Both of these projects have only published summaries of the architecture and some of the pottery.

The courtyard uses different kinds of baked bricks to establish a more fanciful design scheme than the usual bitumen or plaster-covered bricks. For the pavement, strips of square 50 cm/side<sup>34</sup> white palace-stamped bricks extend along the walls and across the floor to separate the room into quadrants. Within these quadrants, yellow and green rhomboid tiles laid diagonally create a vibrant contrast to the square bricks on their borders (Fig. 76) and recall the Šamši Adad Aššur temple's diagonal pavement (Beuger 2011), which still would have still been visible during Tukulti Ninurta's reign. A glazed brick tile revetment also covers the walls so that the pavement and walls are bright and full of varying shapes and colors. On the walls, bitumen covers the lowest 20 cm, followed by a course of c. 15 cm tall glazed orange bricks, above which are c. 50 cm/side blue tiles placed upright like orthostats. Another set of orange bricks, which are the highest preserved portion of the wall, follows the "orthostats" (Fig. 76.c). A buttress-flanked gateway in the west wall of the courtyard leads to another smaller room (4) with similar decoration on the floor and walls. A 24x35 cm fragment of a green faience knobbed plaque found in the fill of this room was originally around 50 cm/ side and sports rosette and repeated palmette decoration (Fig. 76.b) (Beuger 2011: 183-184). Beyond Room 4, the building continues towards the Tigris, but those rooms have been destroyed by erosion.

The south side of the courtyard has three modest doors, each with blue bricks in the thresholds (Sulaiman 2010: 101; Muhl and Sulaiman 2011: 382), which lead to identical rooms with a bitumen stripe and white paint on the walls and a table on the opposite side of the room

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<sup>34</sup> Dittmann says 52 cm/ side, Sulaiman says 50

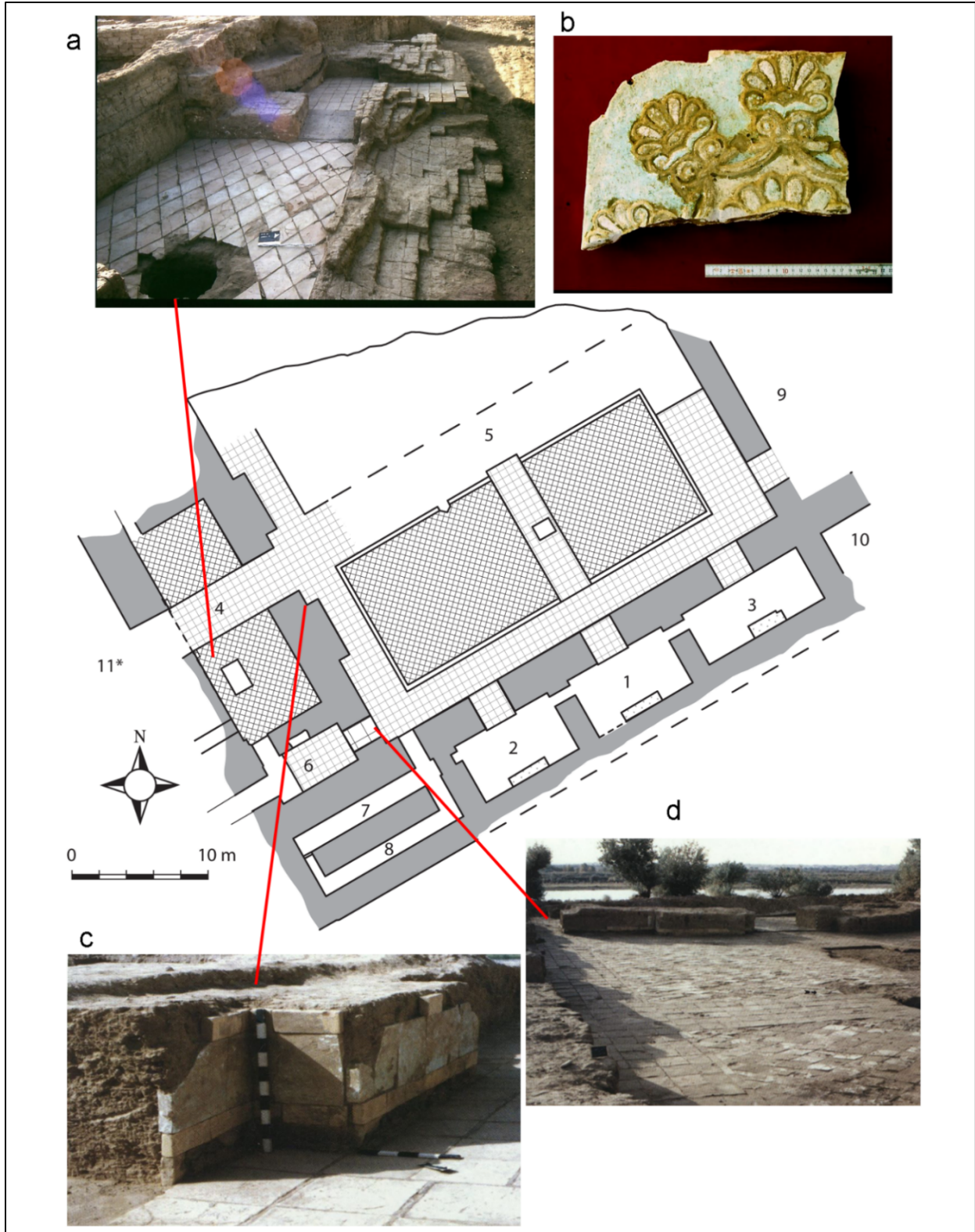


Fig. 76: Palace III, plan after Muhl and Sulaiman 2009: Fig. 8; Photos: a&b: 1989 excavations ([https://www.academia.edu/23210369/Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta\\_1913\\_14\\_and\\_1986\\_89](https://www.academia.edu/23210369/Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta_1913_14_and_1986_89)); b&d after Sulaiman 2009: Pl. 163

from the door. The southwest corner of the courtyard leads to a long stairway-type room like those in the palace at Dur Kurigalzu. The west edge of the stairway room is the only part of this building for which any details on the small finds have been published. Like the Kassite stairway chambers, this room contained numerous objects including: seals, administrative tablets, more than 60 bronze nails, a bronze pin, bronze rosettes, lead objects/fragments, four inlay pieces of green glass, faience beads, and evidence of conflagration (Dittmann 1997-98: 38; Beuger 2011: 181-182). Based upon its layout, three decorated rooms, altar tables, knobbed plaque, and the stone altars that Bachmann found nearby, Dittmann (1997b) and Muhl and Sulaiman (2011) suspect that Palace III could be a *breitraum* temple. If it is a temple, it also appears to be part of the palace, since it is on the far side of a 50 m wide courtyard in front of the North Palace with which it shares its orientation (Beuger 2011).

#### **IId.iv. A sacred palace**

All three excavated portions of the palace exhibit architectural forms and material usually associated with religious architecture. Palace III has a similar pavement to Šamši Adad's Aššur temple, apparent cult rooms, and a layout reminiscent of Old Babylonian *breitraum* temples. Bachmann originally believed that the North Palace was a temple, but he revised his interpretation when he found palace bricks and no room that could serve as a cella. The South Palace conceals engaged columns and niche and buttresses within the terrace and Room 7 contains a niche and material and decoration typical of Middle Assyrian temples. Before Tukulti Ninurta, elevated mudbrick platforms usually held temples rather than palaces. So much religious-style architecture is present that none of these structures can definitively be called a palace. No commemorative inscriptions identify the buildings, and palace bricks cannot define the building type since palace



stamps were used on any official monument. Nevertheless, the city wall inscriptions refer to an elevated palace terrace, which must be the South Palace, and other architectural elements are reminiscent of palaces. An eclectic melding of styles as seen in these buildings had been present in palatial architecture at least since the reign of Adad-narari when we first know of orthostat decoration. No wall paintings have survived from Assyrian contexts before this building, but wall paintings adorned the Palace of Zimri-Lim (1780-1758) at Mari, the Mitanni palace at Nuzi, and, farther afield, at palaces in Egypt, Crete, and Greece.

The ruins at Kar Tukulti Ninurta represent a shifting focus in state sponsored architecture during the Amarna Age. Kings and planners devoted more resources, more space, and more reverence to palaces than to temples. The palace is a reception vehicle for dignitaries and residents, and those privileged enough to enter would encounter a variety of spaces revealing experimentation and attempts at representing a territorial-state/nation and its ideals spatially and artistically. In Kar Tukulti Ninurta, planners had great freedom to determine how spaces would be used and chose to focus on the palace. The city wall inscriptions, which give an overview of the city, detail the size and name of the palace terrace but do not even mention the ziggurat. The Kar Tukulti Ninurta palaces had elaborate decoration while the temples lacked even baked brick pavements.

The city-gate inscriptions reveal that Kar Tukulti Ninurta was a cult center founded by Tukulti Ninurta. It is sacred space consecrated by the king and dug out of mountains and harsh terrain. The palace is a part of this sacred space, and its architectural sophistication, much of which is reminiscent of religious architecture, exhibits its sacredness. According to Tukulti Ninurta's inscriptions, all the gods gathered in the palace where the king also receives audiences, so a visitor navigating the palace would move between secular administrative areas as well as temples and

shrines. The Aššur temple and ziggurat at Kar Tukulti Ninurta may even be a part of the palace, which extends to unknown dimensions beyond what has been excavated. Any barren area of the city could hide palatial architecture since Palace III lies under an area with no surface traces, Neo-Assyrian occupants levelled the palaces to build houses, and the Makhul Dam project uncovered Neo-Assyrian houses in shallow test pits throughout the city (Sulaiman 2010; Dittmann 2011).

Wall W3 could be the boundary of the palace. To the north of Channel A where W3 turns to the West, Bachmann excavated an enigmatic 2 m high, 20x18.15 m wide brick platform that he labelled “Tower K.” According to Eickhoff’s plan (Fig. 77), Bachmann only excavated the platform 2 m from the edge on top and 1 m from the edge at the base. The platform is built of

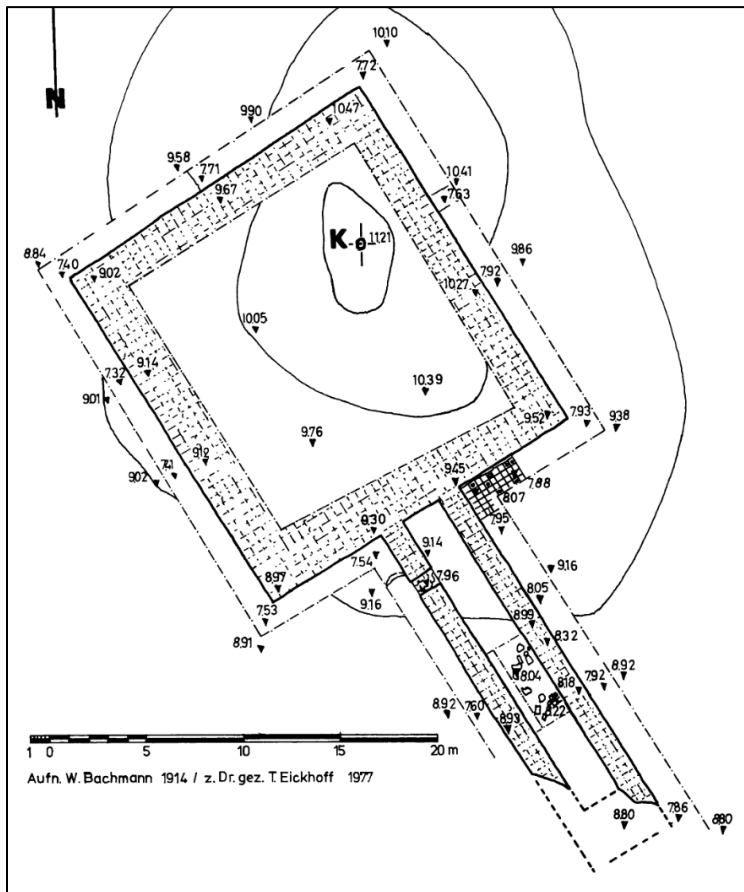


Fig. 77: Tower K, after Eickhoff 1985: Fig. 6

Brick B, which is otherwise only used on the palaces (Eickhoff 1985: fig 6), and bitumen coated all preserved sides of the platform and the ground around it (Bachmann 2016: 275). In the center of the south side of the building, a corridor formed by two parallel walls 2 m apart extends from the building for about 20 m before it disappears. At the point where this corridor meets the platform, the area on the east side is paved with inscribed bricks and brick orthostats cover the sides of the

platform (Eickhoff 1985: 24). Eickhoff and Bachmann concluded that Tower K was a part of the fortifications (Bachmann 2016: 275; Eickhoff 1985: 24), but it is 20 m away from the wall and uses a different brick size that is otherwise only found on the palaces. The brick size, use of orthostats, and stamped-brick pavements suggest that Tower K is a part of the palace, perhaps a kind of ritual platform. Like the other palace remains, it must have been part of a larger structure that is mostly lost.

If the palace extended from the Tigris to W3, then the Aššur temple and ziggurat would also be part of the palace. Gilibert (2008) has observed that the Kar Tukulti Ninurta ziggurat is rather small at around half the size of the ziggurat at Aššur and argues that its small size indicates its subordination to the Aššur Temple at Aššur. The smaller size, however, shows subordination to a much closer structure: the Kar Tukulti Ninurta palace (Dolce 1997: 255) whose terrace platform is wider and taller than the ziggurat. Like the ziggurats of Neo-Assyrian Palaces at Kalhu and Dur Šarrukin, the Aššur ziggurat at Kar Tukulti Ninurta was a part of the palace. As had been the case at Aššur, the palace and temple with comparable names were counterparts, but the size and spatial relationships indicate the palace's dominance at Kar Tukulti Ninurta. This Palace of the Universe, like the Aššur Temple, is dedicated to a god: Tukulti Ninurta, the Sun God of all People (Dolce 1997: 256).

## **Ile. Residential**

W3 separated the palace from the rest of the city where people who interacted with the monumental structures through construction and other kinds of *corvée* lived. The eastern walled area of the city between W3 and W2 has neither been excavated nor surveyed. Bachmann describes it as empty and Dittmann observed sparse surface material for the city overall (Dittmann 2011).

However, areas devoid of surface remains do not equal a lack of remains below. The lack of surface material here, as at Chogha Zanbil (Chapter 5), is a function of the length of occupation rather than occupation density. At mounded sites like Aššur and Susa, people continuing to inhabit and dig through the same area continuously churn several thousand years' worth of pottery and other material to the surface. Sites like Kar Tukulti Ninurta, which was only occupied for perhaps 600 years and probably with a sparse population after the first twenty or so, have little material on the surface because people did not continue to churn it up. Eickhoff further observes that, "Moderne Bodenbearbeitung dürfte die vermutlich dünne Kulturschicht der einfachen Wohngebiete vollends zerstören, sofern solche Quartiere in Kār Tukulti Ninurta überhaupt existierten." (Eickhoff 1985: 15). He notes that the 1980's aerial photographs available to him show no evidence of residential occupation, but 1967 Corona images taken just as the area was beginning to be modernized clearly show the occupation extent. Small mounds and discolored anthropogenic soils extend at least 1 km south of the fortifications, and a line of mounds, which Bachmann notes in his diary (Bachmann 2016: 307), also extends north of the palaces towards Tell O (Fig. 61). Dittmann's survey also confirmed that Middle Assyrian occupation and monumental architecture extended south of W1.

Texts mostly published by Freydank in various articles in *AoF* detail deportees and employees who lived in Kar Tukulti Ninurta (Freydank 1974; 1975; 1980; 1982; 1985; 2009; Jakob 2003). Many people lived and worked in Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and their occupations include singers, carpenters, teachers, and shepherds (Freydank 1982: 60). Deportees were often segregated by place of origin (e.g. Kassite) or occupation and were overseen by administrators responsible for giving out rations supplied by the state. One family, for example, was responsible for 2,262 workers (Freydank 1974; 1982). The tablets state that these people are palace employees (Freydank 1985: 362), but given the broad blanket of what falls under the property of the palace

in MA times, they did not necessarily work in the physical palace. Dittmann hypothesized that the city was divided into segregated districts (Dittmann 1997a: 100-102) and argues that survey units 11-12, which are between Palace III and Tower K, were an area for Kassite and Elamite prisoners since he found Elamite and Kassite type sherds (Dittmann 1988: 119). Such interpretations are highly speculative because the sherds probably ended up on the modern surface in this area due to a later disturbance and attributing ethnicity based on a few sherds is problematic. Nevertheless, this area may have housed deportees involved in the construction of the palace.

Kar Tukulti Ninurta was a populated city full of diverse groups, including deportees from across the social spectrum, Assyrian elites who oversaw them, and Assyrian workers and residents who escape the notice of ration texts concerned with prisoners and deportees. Archaeologically, we can say little about them or how they interacted with monumental building projects aside from that they helped build the projects and received their livelihood from the state. As at Aššur, the gathering of people, now including Kassite prisoners, made the capital a cosmopolitan microcosm of the state where people experienced or suffered the grandeur of Tukulti Ninurta as they worked to build his temples and palaces. I have talked about privileged people experiencing the palaces and temples, but the lower-class residents of Kar Tukulti Ninurta also experienced the monumental projects as they spent their years building and rebuilding them. The frequent palace changes required direct contributions from the population at large to construct it, and the myriad of styles indicates a variety of influences and attempts to play to a variety of audiences.

### **III. Kar Tukulti Ninurta: When?**

All Kar Tukulti Ninurta commemorative tablets describe the capture of Kaštiliašu IV and the initial conquest of Babylonia, which occurred sometime between Tukulti Ninurta's 13<sup>th</sup> and

19<sup>th</sup> regnal years (Gilibert 2008: 178). Tukulti Ninurta must then have commissioned the ziggurat, which holds a commemorative tablet underneath, and the walls after Kaštiliašu's defeat. The Middle Assyrians used names of officials (eponyms) to differentiate years on tablets, and the eponyms on all datable tablets from Kar Tukulti Ninurta also date after this event (Freydank 1991: 43-51). Thus most scholars date the founding of the city after Kaštiliašu's defeat. One tablet from Aššur dating to Tukulti Ninurta's 4<sup>th</sup> regnal year preserves the word "Kar" but not the rest of the town name. Freydank argues that the town name should be reconstructed as Kar Tukulti Ninurta (Freydank 1991: 50), and based on this tablet, Dittmann (1997a) and Gilibert (2008) suggest that Tukulti Ninurta founded the city by his fourth regnal year.

Gilibert offers further textual evidence from a Kar Tukulti Ninurta ration text (VAT 17999) and the Tukulti Ninurta Epic. She claims the ration text predates the Kassite campaign, but Freydank (1974: 76-77) and Yamada (2003: 161) date this text, which lists many Kassite prisoners and describes provisions for Tukulti Ninurta's campaign in Babylonia, to Tukulti Ninurta's 2<sup>nd</sup> Babylonian Campaign after the capture of Kaštiliašu. Gilibert also claims that because the Tukulti Ninurta epic boasts of Kassite booty dedicated at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, the city must have been standing before the Kassite campaign. However, the Tukulti Ninurta epic does not mention Kar Tukulti Ninurta, only É.KUR.ME.ŠÁR.RA (Aššur Temple/Ziggurat), and the part of the line stating what Tukulti Ninurta did for the temple is not preserved (Machinist 1978: 130 ln. 19). É.KUR.ME.ŠÁR.RA is the one structure that certainly postdates the Kassite campaign, and the epic could be referring to the building of the temple after the campaign, as Machinist reconstructs: "[Ekur]mešarra, the habitation of the Assyrian Enlil [he (built and) ornamented with...]" (Machinist 1978: 131).

Gilbert and Dittmann also argue that, because the palaces show evidence of several construction phases, Tukulti Ninurta's workers could not have erected and expanded the city's buildings in only 17-24 years. However, LBA mudbrick cities were erected quite quickly and changed often in relatively short amounts of time. The Egyptians built and occupied the new capital Akhetaten only during the last 12 years of Akhenaten's reign, during which time the Great Aten Temple dramatically changed form and expanded four times (Kemp 2012b; 2013). Tukulti Ninurta probably had access to more slave labor than any of the previous city builders and his workers hastily constructed Kar Tukulti Ninurta's buildings with no foundations and often using subpar building materials.

Given the timeframe for Akhetaten's construction, two decades would suffice for the workers to construct and modify Kar Tukulti Ninurta. The monumental structures and principal occupation of Kar Tukulti Ninurta must date after Kaštiliašu's capture because the ziggurat, walls, and all of the datable tablets from Kar Tukulti Ninurta postdate this event. The only evidence for the early construction is the 4<sup>th</sup> year tablet where the city name is not preserved. If a town called Kar Tukulti Ninurta existed at the time of this tablet, it must have been a smaller town that later expanded into the second capital after the Kassite campaigns.

#### **IV Kar Tukulti Ninurta: Why?**

The most discussed issue concerning Kar Tukulti Ninurta is Tukulti Ninurta's reasons for founding the new city. No prior Assyrian king had founded a new capital city. Tukulti Ninurta forged his own path by founding a new city across the Tigris and gave his reasons to future readers:

At that time the god Aššur, my lord, requested of me a cult center on the bank opposite my city, the desired object of the gods, and he commanded me to build his sanctuary. At the command of the god Aššur, the god who loves me, I built before

my city, Aššur, a city for the god Aššur on the opposite bank, beside the Tigris, in uncultivated plains (and) meadows where there was neither house nor dwelling, where no ruin hills or rubble had accumulated, and no bricks had been laid. I called it Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta (RIMA 0.78.23).

His reasoning is simple: Aššur ordered Tukulti Ninurta to build a new Aššur Temple and city on the opposite bank of the Tigris, so he built them. Most scholars do not take Tukulti Ninurta at his word and seek out a different impetus. The original excavators felt that Tukulti Ninurta simply wanted to live in an ideal royal residence (Andrae and Bachmann 1914: 48). The most frequently suggested cause is that Tukulti Ninurta built Kar Tukulti Ninurta to escape the city of Aššur whose elites diminished his power and threatened to kill him (Weidner 1939-41; Soden 1954: 72; Liverani 2014: 354-55; Dolce 1997; Joffe 1998). This interpretation is primarily based upon Neo-Babylonian Chronicle P, which states that Tukulti Ninurta removed a statue of Marduk from Babylon and, when Babylonian forces later began to turn against Tukulti Ninurta, his son and Assyrian officials assassinated him (Grayson 1975: 176). Weidner (1939-41) first argued that this chronicle indicates that elites in Aššur turned against Tukulti Ninurta because he extolled Marduk and forced them into compulsory labor. To prove the rebellion against Tukulti Ninurta at Aššur, Dolce (1997) uses a Tukulti Ninurta hymn that asks Aššur for help because enemies are rising up against Assyria. Dolce believes these enemies are the Assyrian elite, but the hymn is rather explicit that the Assyrians are behaving nobly and the enemies are external (Foster 2005: 319).

Based on Dolce's and others' reasoning, Tukulti Ninurta only wanted future readers to think Kar Tukulti Ninurta was founded for Aššur while he covertly tried to introduce the worship of Marduk and southern influence into Assyrian culture (Machinist 1978: 526; Dolce 1997; Weidner 1939-40; Foster 2005: 298). However, only one royal inscription of Tukulti Ninurta mentions Marduk in a list of various gods (IM 76787), and the Tukulti Ninurta Epic places little



emphasis on Marduk who is only mentioned as the God of Babylon (See 2.IVb). The writers of the much later Neo-Babylonian chronicle stress the capture of the Marduk statue because they were concerned to show the role of Marduk throughout history. Marduk, however, did not become the prime deity of Babylonia until the Isin II period (See 2.IVb). If Tukulti Ninurta was trying to escape the Aššur temple elite who frowned on his Marduk worship, he must have been trying to escape from himself since he was the high priest of Aššur.

The Tukulti Ninurta epic extolls Tukulti Ninurta's acquisition of a variety of southern texts, which Machinist (1978: 526) argues injected scholarly Southern culture into Aššur. Tukulti Ninurta may or may not have placed southern culture in esteem, but these texts function the same way as any of the other booty and resources gathered through conquest. Tukulti Ninurta's inscriptions always describe how conquests funneled resources into Aššur, and in the case of Karduniaš, the resources include literature and knowledge. Libraries were an aspect of southern capital cities and so Tukulti Ninurta moved the libraries to Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta in order to move the seat of power from Karduniaš to Aššur and hold all knowledge within his capital. Machinist also observes Sumerian influence in the *breitraum* style and the Sumerian name of the Aššur temple at Kar Tukulti Ninurta (Machinist 1978). However, at least since the time of Šamši Adad, all named Assyrian temples had Sumerian names and many had *breitraum* layouts.

The escape from Aššur argument is a non sequitur when stated in one sentence: as a result of having little power and being victimized at Aššur, Tukulti Ninurta embarked on the most successful military campaign and grandiose building projects in Assyria to date. The conquest of the Kassites and building of Kar Tukulti Ninurta were not acts of a monarch trying to hide his diminished power, they were acts of a monarch who has considerable power and control. Eickhoff argued that while diminished power and factionalism could have led to Tukulti Ninurta's downfall,

Tukulti Ninurta must have founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta when he was at the height of his power (Eickhoff 1985: 49). Eickhoff and Gilibert view the nearby cities of Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta as operating in close cooperation (*ibid*; Gilibert 2008), but Eickhoff, believing that Kar Tukulti Ninurta was never occupied, favors the same interpretation as Ghirshman for Al Untaš Napiriša (see 5.Va): the king and his court would visit the buildings for festivals and then return to Aššur.

The rather large population indicated by the ration texts and survey and satellite data speaks against this interpretation. Gilibert (2008) rejects this argument and favors another argument that has gained traction in recent years: Tukulti Ninurta founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta to irrigate the east Tigris plain and increase food production to feed the growing population of immigrants, deportees, and refugees (Wiseman 1965: 10; Freydank 2009; Reculeau 2011). The inscriptions do stress the digging of canals for irrigating fields, and the overall textual and archaeological record supports the interpretation of a productive and commercial zone rather than an exclusively palace and temple city. However, an expansion of the agricultural landscape does not necessitate a city with a massive palace and ziggurat. A system of small dependent villages similar to the Kassite system (see 2.IIIb) could have worked the fields. Kar Tukulti Ninurta seems to have reverted to such residential towns after the death of Tukulti Ninurta when people leveled the palace and built their homes over it. Eickhoff (1985) and Dolce (1997) both argue for possible ideological reasons for Kar Tukulti Ninurta's founding, which Dolce defines as possibly "a reflection of the cosmic order, in contrast to chaos" and "[t]he desire to create a universal empire" (Dolce 1997: 255).

#### **V. Kar Tukulti Ninurta: *karu* and *mahazu***

The name Kar Tukulti Ninurta contains the word *karu*, which during the Old Assyrian Period denoted a merchant colony that is subordinate to Aššur (Larsen 2015: 149). At that time,

the city-state of Aššur had merchant colonies dispersed across Upper Mesopotamia and Anatolia (Larsen 2015). Mercantile endeavors were so essential to Assyrian identity that Old Assyrian commercial tablets used the words for Assyrian citizen and merchant interchangeably (Larsen 2015: 112). The city of Aššur, through its merchant citizens and their colonies, extended across the Near East. The world of the *karum* colonies was a world where the assembly of Assyrian citizens determined Aššur's local and international endeavors. By Tukulti Ninurta's time the *karums* and the assembly no longer existed. Tukulti Ninurta's immediate predecessors had replaced the assembly's meeting places with monuments, and his New Palace eradicated the last vestiges of the Old Assyrian neighborhoods along Aššur's north ridge.

Tukulti Ninurta's Aššur was still a densely packed Mesopotamian city. Aššur was confined to a ridge overlooking the Tigris where it enjoyed a prominent defensible location. This location served it well as a commercial city among competing city-states, but the city high on a hill on the edge of barren desert plains was detached from the fertile alluvial valley across the Tigris. Old Assyrian Aššur was a mere 55 ha, 1/8 the size of some of its Southern counterparts. In the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium, kings began walling in a new area of Aššur, but this endeavor could only expand the city another 18 ha. The Middle Assyrian palaces and temples were rather outsized for the city. The north district of monumental structures took up 40% of the Old City, and so the rest of the city must have become more and more crowded. As Aššur's representation as an imperial capital expanded, the city became less capable of fulfilling the functions of an imperial capital. The city's restrictive space could not adequately accommodate the spatial needs of the growing labor force and bureaucracy of an expansive state.

The landscape of Kar Tukulti Ninurta a mere 3 km away was a stark contrast. Kar Tukulti Ninurta inhabited a long flat alluvial plain, and the landscape of the city had no natural distinction

from the land around it. The city was somewhat seamlessly integrated into the agricultural landscape. Walls, apparently never completed, segregated some of the official districts from their surroundings, but the form of these walls followed the form of the rural landscape. The path of Kar Tukulti Ninurta's rectilinear walls was quite different from Aššur's walls that followed the edges of the plateau. Kar Tukulti Ninurta's walls formed two side-by-side rectangles similar to the regular rectilinear patterns of Mesopotamian irrigated fields (Fig. 78). Beyond the walls surrounding the palace and Aššur ziggurat, the neighborhoods and even temples extended across an unbounded landscape and were probably intermixed with the fields. Water readily flowed through canals into the fields and low-lying city, and the low lying city on the edge of the river was more conducive to being a port than Aššur, which was elevated 20 m above the river.

Kar Tukulti Ninurta was not only an agricultural city supplying new produce to Aššur. The new city had a massive palace more expansive than the palaces at Aššur and its own Aššur temple and ziggurat. This *karu* was also not a merchant colony located in a far off foreign land, but instead a *mahazu*, a term that not only denoted the city's sacredness, but also its size and importance since *mahazu* denoted cities containing important temple complexes (CAD 10: 85). *Mahazu* can also mean quay or harbor (CAD 10: 88), and so this term captures Kar Tukulti Ninurta's both sacred and commercial functions. Despite rather profound differences, Kar Tukulti Ninurta does exhibit similar ideas to the old *karums*. The *karums* were extensions of the city of Aššur projected into foreign lands. Citizens of Aššur populated the *karums*, and the government of Aššur enforced its laws. Kar Tukulti Ninurta was also an extension of the city of Aššur projected into the fertile plain below. Tukulti Ninurta used Kar Tukulti Ninurta to extend his persona into the agricultural plains and fields, which he pacified with canals and construction projects like he pacified his distant enemies (See 4.IIb).

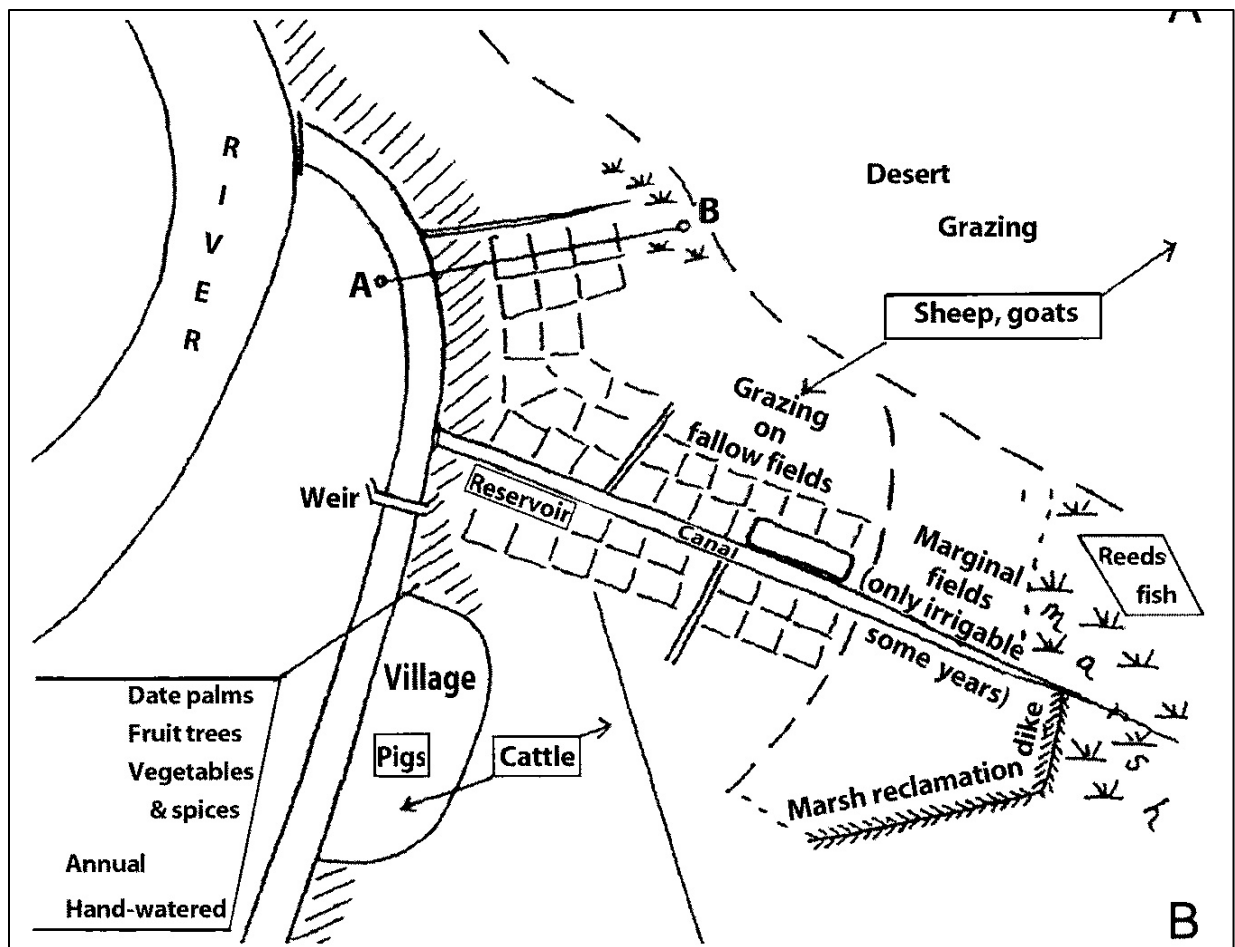


Fig. 78: Irrigated fields in Babylonia, after J. N. Postgate 1992a: Fig. 9.1

Beginning with Tukulti Ninurta's grandfather Adad-narari, Assyrian kings had extended their persona using inscribed palace bricks. Three pavement layers of specifically É.LUGAL.UMUN.KUR.KUR.RA (New Palace) bricks made up the foundation of the Kar Tukulti Ninurta Aššur ziggurat. These bricks were not construction leftovers from the New Palace, but instead, the urban planners purposefully placed a platform made of New Palace bricks below the ziggurat to extend the New Palace at Aššur into the ziggurat and the new sacred city. Assyrian kings used foundation inscriptions to consecrate sacred space, and Tukulti Ninurta had experimented with different ways of using inscriptions to extend the domain of his royal palace. He placed not only palace bricks, but also inscribed stone palace tablets into temples. Kar Tukulti

Ninurta and the inscriptions within extended Tukulti Ninurta's palace and presence into more and more spaces with which people regularly interacted, in this case the agricultural fields and port across the Tigris.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Tukulti Ninurta built up Kar Tukulti Ninurta to expand his imperial persona after conquering Karduniaš. Aššur at this time was a territorial-state capital showcasing resources, styles, and people gathered from across the "Land of Aššur". Its temples and palaces looming over the plateau's northern edge symbolized the association of the king and the god Aššur and struck awe into those brought before the king. The intimidating effect of Aššur changed after the submission of the Kassites. Tukulti Ninurta brought the defeated Kaštiliašu IV to a palace less than a quarter of the size of Kaštiliašu's Palace of Totality in Dur Kurigalzu, and the inadequacy of Aššur would have been apparent to deported Kassites. Karduniaš had multiple royal cities like Dur Kurigalzu and Babylon while Tukulti Ninurta had one royal city and some other lesser cities like Nineveh and Erbil.

The crowded Aššur had no room for any new palaces or expansion on its constricted plateau. Tukulti Ninurta's solution to his inadequacy was through the Assyrian idea of presenting the state's identity through dualities. Aššur was full of temples to two gods and the counterpoint powers of the king and Aššur were shown in their two sanctuaries/palaces. Tukulti Ninurta had already added this idea of duality to the overall design of Aššur's monumental district. Now he took it to the regional level by having two cities dedicated to Aššur on opposite sides of the Tigris. Kar Tukulti Ninurta's location, "built before my city, Aššur" 3 km upstream, stood in a direct line of sight from the city Aššur's northern outcrop upon which the Aššur/Enlil Temple rests; it aims

like an arrow at Kar Tukulti Ninurta across the river (Fig. 79). Aššur, up on its plateau, stands about 20 m higher than Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and a person standing on this outcrop in Aššur would look out over the landscape and see the “Palace of the Universe” at Kar Tukulti Ninurta. The plateau of Aššur loomed above Kar Tukulti Ninurta downstream, but the Palace Terrace at Kar Tukulti Ninurta rose to almost the same height as the Aššur plateau. Both, as Bachmann observed, give a grand view of the surrounding Assyrian landscape.

Looking back from Kar Tukulti Ninurta, another observer would see the northern edge of the Aššur plateau, resplendent with its temples and New Palace terrace jutting out over the river. A third traveler, passing between the two cities while sailing down the Tigris, would experience the new and experimental palace of Kar Tukulti Ninurta to his or her left and the monuments of Aššur rising up in front of him or her (The reader may view Fergusson’s very fanciful 1853 reconstruction of Kalhu’s waterfront (Fig. 80) to get some idea of the experience of passing Kar Tukulti Ninurta). Even with Kar Tukulti Ninurta’s raised palace terrace, the Aššur ziggurat at Aššur was still the highest point on the landscape, and showed that, as Gilibert argued, Aššur still reigned supreme and Kar Tukulti Ninurta, the city of the king, while powerful was a under the auspices of Aššur.

Tukulti Ninurta founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta as sacred space and consecrated it with a palace to the Sun God of all People. During the reign of Tukulti Ninurta, the god Aššur largely subsumed Enlil as the two became Aššur/Enlil, and Tukulti Ninurta replaced Enlil as Aššur’s counterpart. The dual capitals changed a territorial-state capital into an imperial capital that symbolized pan-Mesopotamian control. From the inscriptions underneath temples strewn with sacred objects to the erection of an entire city, Tukulti Ninurta fertilized the landscape with sacredness through his divine powers of creation. He gathered resources from across the empire

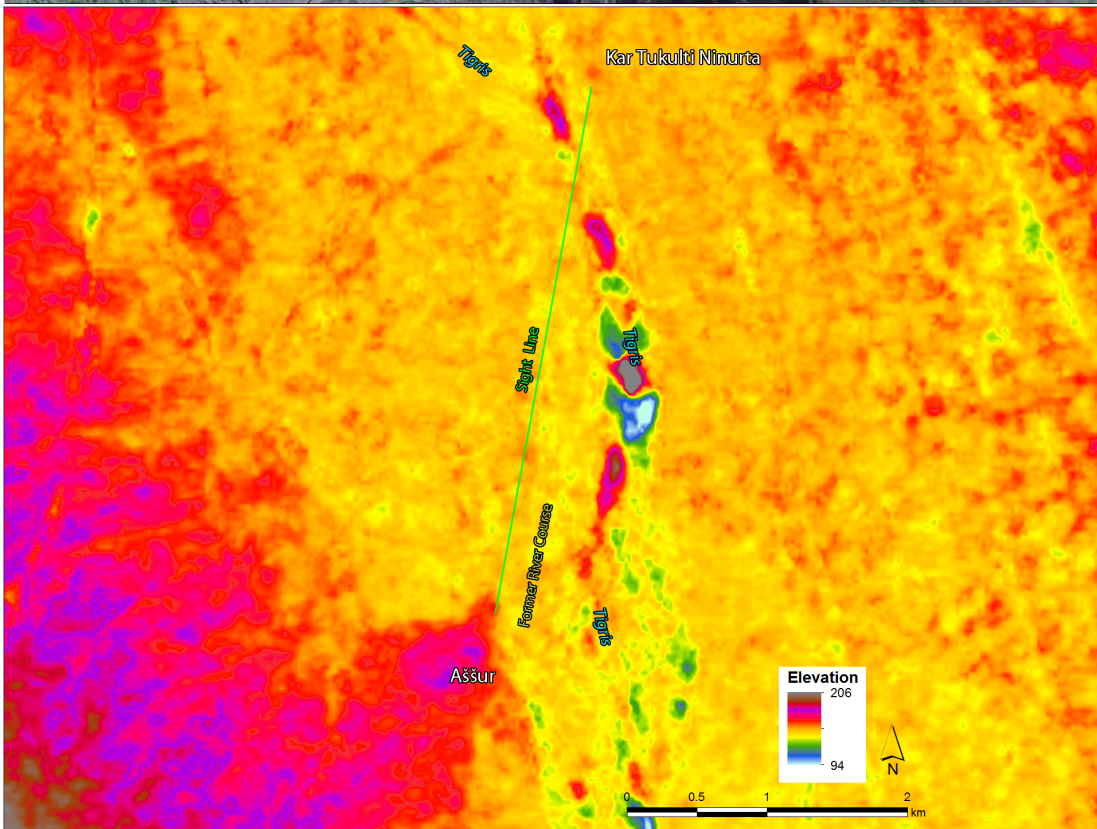
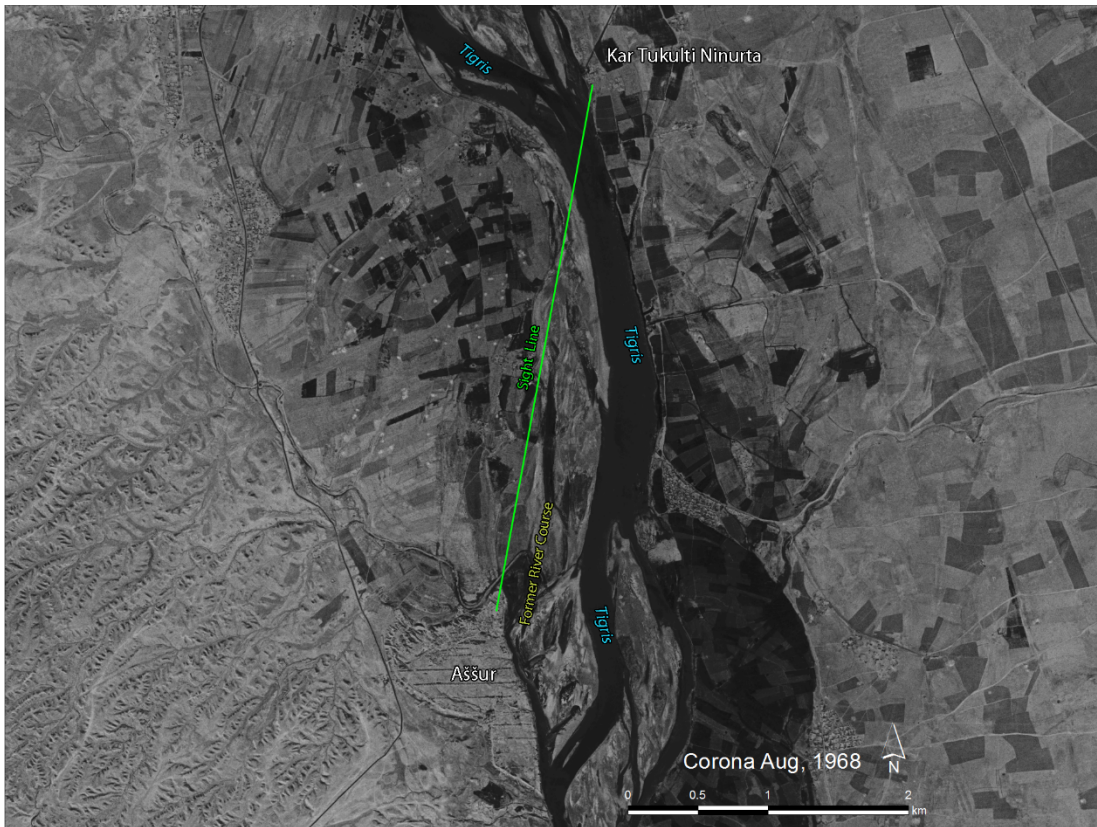
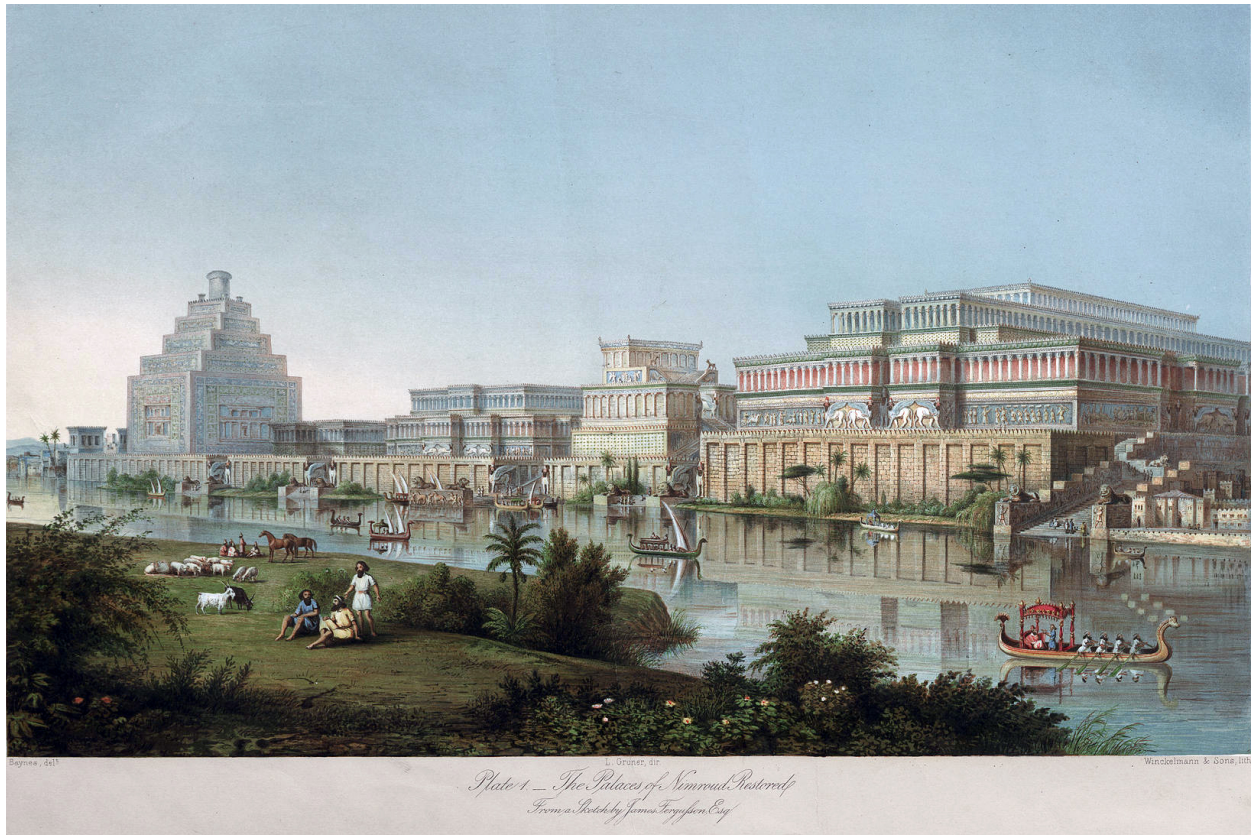


Fig. 79: Sight Line from Aššur to Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Top: Corona, Bottom: SRTM





*Fig. 80: Drawing of Kalhu waterfront by J. Fergusson, after Layard 1853b*

into Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta - not only prisoners and booty, but texts and knowledge from Karduniaš. Kar Tukulti Ninurta through its segregated districts of different people from across the empire and dominated by an imperial palace and temples to all the gods was, along with Aššur, a microcosm of the empire. The two conquered cities represented all of the dualities present in a united Mesopotamia and extolled in inscriptions from Kar Tukulti Ninurta: “king of Assyria and king of Karduniaš, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of Sippar and Babylon, king of Tilmun and Meluhha, king of the Upper and Lower Seas, king of the extensive mountains and plains” (IM 76787 Deller *et al* 465). The two cities Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta across the Tigris symbolized this duality at the top of society: two divine rulers.

## 5.

### INSCRIBED AND UNINSCRIBED SPACES AT AL UNTAŠ NAPIRIŠA

The final case study moves out of Iraq and Mesopotamia proper and into Susiana, the nearby lowland alluvial valleys of Southwest Iran. This region, at the foot of the Zagros Mountains and detached from the Tigris and Euphrates alluvial plains, existed in a hybrid world between the Mesopotamian city-states to the west and neighboring highland confederations to the east. A traveler in late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Susiana would pass through new cities and decaying ruins constructed by recent kings who experimented with ways of manipulating the landscape as they sought to create the Kingdom of Anšan and Susa, now called the Middle Elamite (ME) Period. The three Middle Elamite dynasties, Kidinuids (ca. 1450-1400), Igihalkids (ca. 1400-1200), and Shutrukids (ca. 1200-1050),<sup>35</sup> each achieved major changes to the political landscape of Susiana. The Kidinuids expanded a city at Haft Tappeh, the Igihalkid king Untaš Napiriša (c. 1340-1300)<sup>36</sup> constructed an entirely new city of Al Untaš Napiriša (modern Chogha Zanbil), and the Shutrukids agglomerated symbols of Elamite and Mesopotamian rulers into Susa, the ancient Elamite religious center. This chapter reveals how Untaš Napiriša used Al Untaš Napiriša to centralize and define the Elamite territorial-state and how people interacted with and inhabited its spaces.<sup>37</sup>

The Middle Elamite landscape of Susiana was inundated with the inscribed texts of its past and present rulers imbedded into spaces of every aspect of social life. The amount of inscribed

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<sup>35</sup> Elamite scholars, based on the three dynasties and changes in pottery forms, usually subdivide the Middle Elamite Period into three parts: Middle Elamite I, II, and III (Potts 2016: 176-248).

<sup>36</sup> I follow those who date this monarch to the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Steve and Vallat 1989; Vallat 2006; Potts 2016: 200; Gasche *et al*: 1998). For arguments supporting a 13<sup>th</sup> century date, see Mofidi Nasrabadi (2013: 37-39); Goldberg (2004: 41).

<sup>37</sup> This Chapter is a revised and expanded version of a preliminary article published as Carlson (2014).

bricks Middle Elamite Kings put into their architecture is almost incomparable to their Kassite and Assyrian counterparts. The most bricks recovered from a city worked on by Kurigalzu, the most prolific inscriber in LBA Iraq, is just over 100 inscribed bricks at Isin (Walker and Wilcke 1981, 96-98). Al Untaš Napiriša has yielded at least 5,527 inscribed bricks from a single king (Steve 1967: 1), and at least 2,026 inscribed Middle Elamite bricks from Susa made it to the Louvre (Malban Labrat 1995: 244-263). Given the poor recording techniques (Carter 1992b) and scores more bricks built into the archaeologists' chateau at Susa (Fig. 81) or sent to the archaeologists' friends across the world, these numbers must be far higher. The fragments of these bricks still litter the surface of these cities and now, as in the past, exude the presence of kings throughout Susiana in monumental inscribed temples or reused in the fabric of people's houses (Fig. 82).



*Fig. 81: Elamite bricks used as pavement in the archaeologists' chateau at Susa (author's photo)*

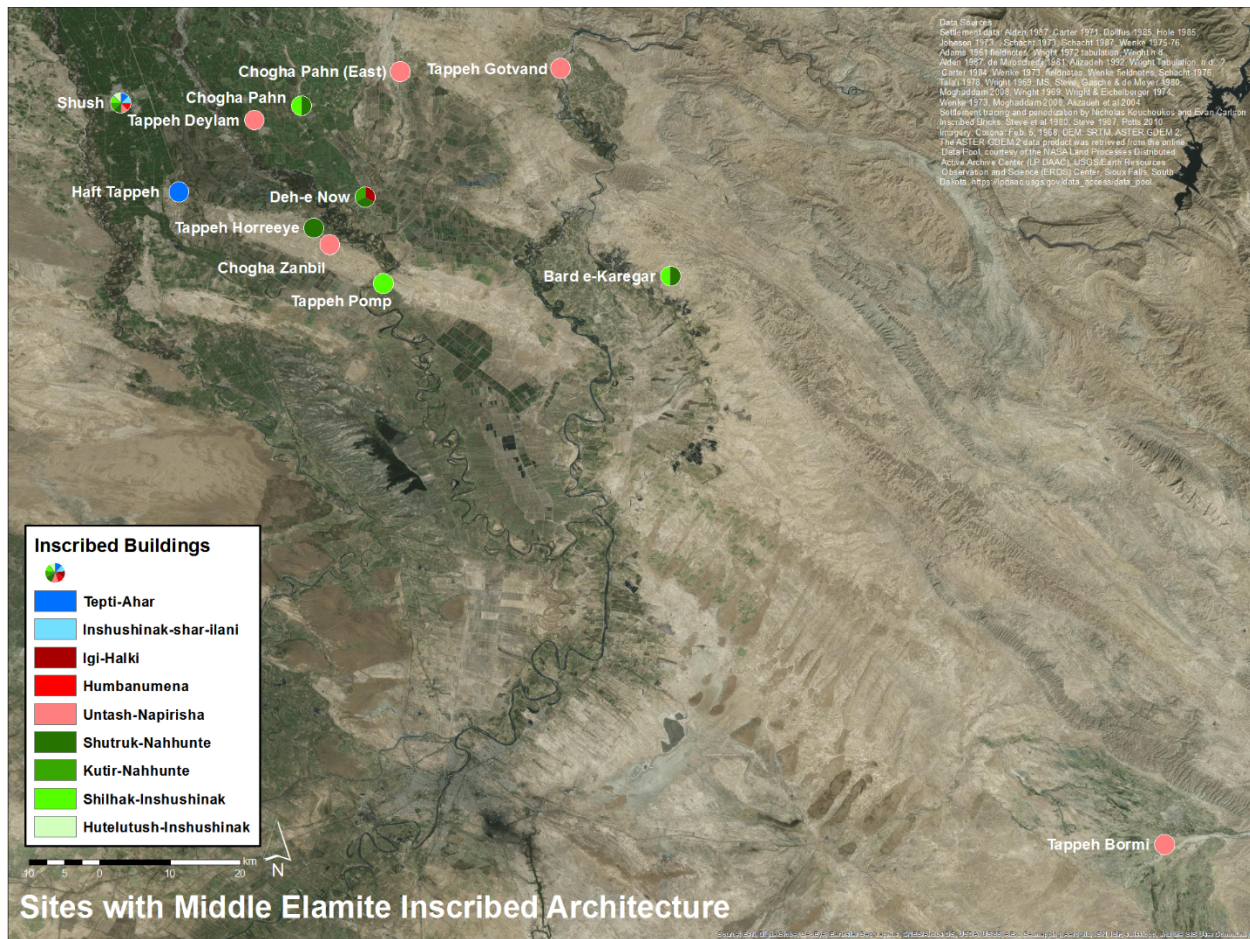


Fig. 82: Middle Elamite inscribed bricks in Susiana and Ram Hormuz

Al Untaš Napiriša symbolized the power of the kings and enforced social structures upon the populace who moved through and interacted with inscribed representational spaces. The archaeological data from Al Untaš Napiriša allows for a detailed analysis of the city’s social organization, the implementation and evolution of the urban plan, and the ways building projects affected different segments of the society. An examination of Untaš Napiriša’s inscribed material from Al Untaš Napiriša and other sites across Susiana further reveals how this king used inscribed sacred spaces to construct an Elamite state centered on his new capital.

## I. Elam: The setting

The land associated with ancient Elam comprises several alluvial zones hugging the eastern foothills of the central Zagros Mountains, and the highland zone of the Kur River basin on the Iranian Plateau (Fig. 83). The Middle Elamite Kings took the title King of Susa and Anšan, which referred to two cities: Susa in lowland Susiana and Anšan in the Kur River Basin. These zones stretch over 650 km<sup>38</sup>, and the highland zone is about 2000 m higher than the lowest point in the alluvial lowlands. The lowland zones bordered Babylonia to the west and cycled through varying levels of control and integration with both the Mesopotamian world and the political systems of the Kur River Basin, which never found itself under Mesopotamian control (Potts 2016). Very different societies lived in the lowland and highland zones, which were only ever loosely integrated and passed through different kinds of united confederations such as the kingdoms of Shimashki and the Sukkalmah, which was a contemporary of the Old Babylonian kingdoms (*ibid*).

The primary focus of this chapter is Susiana, which researchers often describe as a continuation of the Mesopotamian Plain (Veenenbos 1958: 18; Johnson 1973: 17). However, while connected to the alluvial plains of Iraq, the Susiana Plain in Khuzestan, Iran is of a different character and was created by different forces. Mesopotamia, at least in the south of Iraq, is a long flat plain surrounded by mountains and deserts. Khuzestan is located where the Zagros Fold Belt sags to a lower elevation in a subsistence zone known as the Dezful embayment (Oberlander 1965; Allen and Talebian 2011; Woodbridge 2013: 61-69; Casciello *et al* 2009; Mouthereau *et al* 2012) (Fig. 84). Susiana has many of the characteristics of the lowland alluvial plains of Mesopotamia while still holding characteristics of the Zagros fold belt, such as undulating terrain, anticlinal ridges, and transverse drainage. Khuzestan is thus both a highland plain like Luristan or

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<sup>38</sup> The distance from the Deh Luran plain to eastern margins of the Kur River Basin

Kermanshah and a lowland alluvial plain like Mesopotamia. These shared characteristics go beyond geomorphology to the identity and construction of the societies who inhabited the region and have always been not quite highlanders and not quite lowlanders.

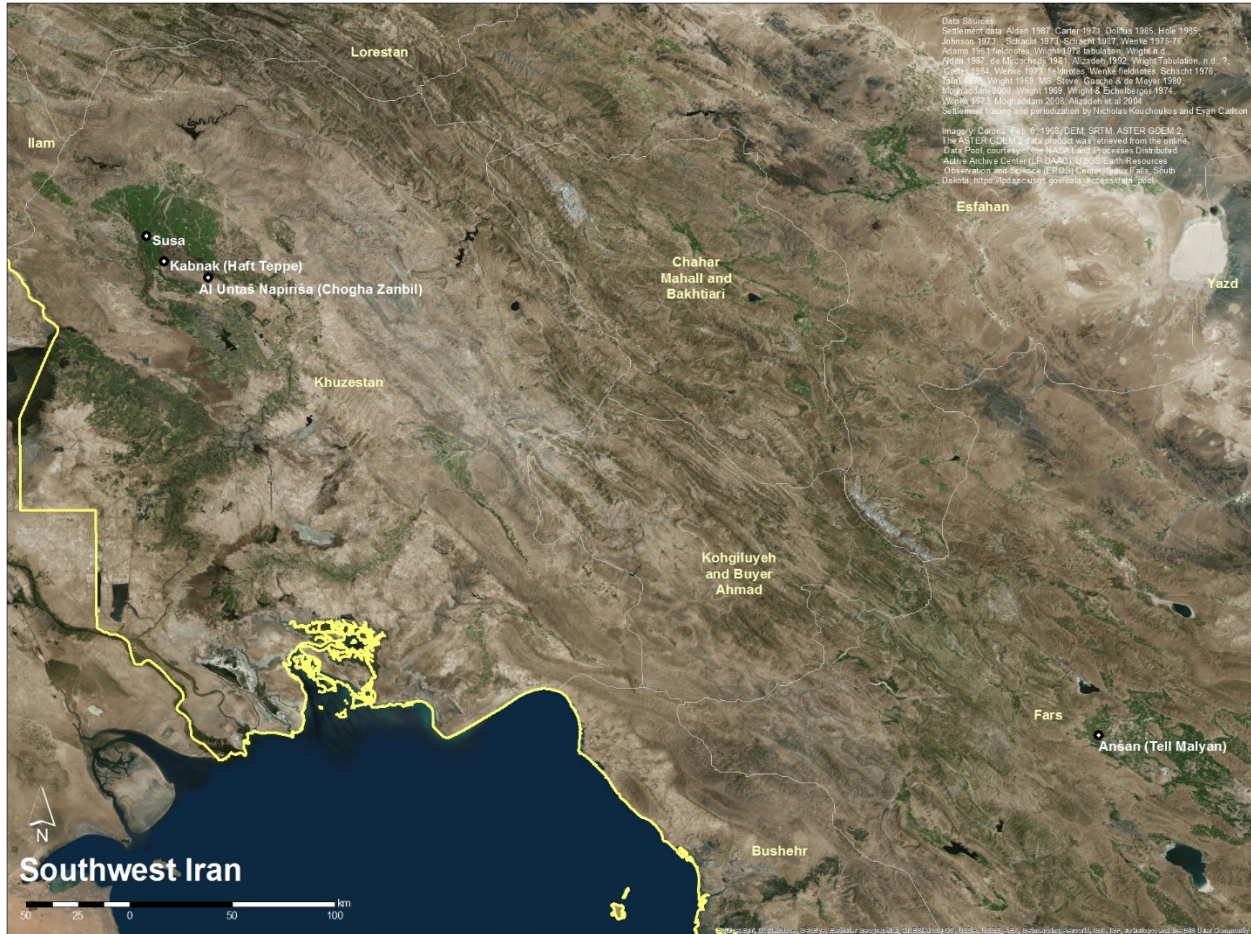


Fig. 83: Extent of Elam

Khuzestan consists of a series of alluvial plains separated by the major rivers Karun, Karkheh, and Dez and the Dezful, Haft Tappeh<sup>39</sup>, Shaur, and Ahwaz anticlinal ridges (Fig. 85). The hills surrounding the plains are all dotted with numerous alluvial fans from whence many

<sup>39</sup> This anticline is referred to as the Sardarabad Anticline in several recent geological publications (Woodbridge *et al* 2015; Allen and Talebian 2011). I maintain Haft Tappeh Anticline here because that term is used in most archaeological publications

perennial and intermittent water-courses coalesce on the plain. The Karkheh, descending into Susiana at about 110 m elevation in the far northwest of the plain, crosses the west margin of the Susiana Plain, and comes within about 2 km of ancient Susa. Another parallel stream, the Shaur, which is fed from an underground source probably from the Karkheh, runs at the foot of Susa. The Dez River descends into the plains 33 km east of the Karkheh, moves to the middle of the plain, and divides Susiana into its two most important alluvial plains: the Shush plains to the west and Dez plains to the east. The Karun enters the plain south of the Dez plain. It joins the Dez and eventually the Shatt al-Arab along with the Tigris and Euphrates. All three rivers are far shorter and have less force than their Iraqi counterparts, but higher rainfall can help make up for the deficit in river water (Adams 1962).

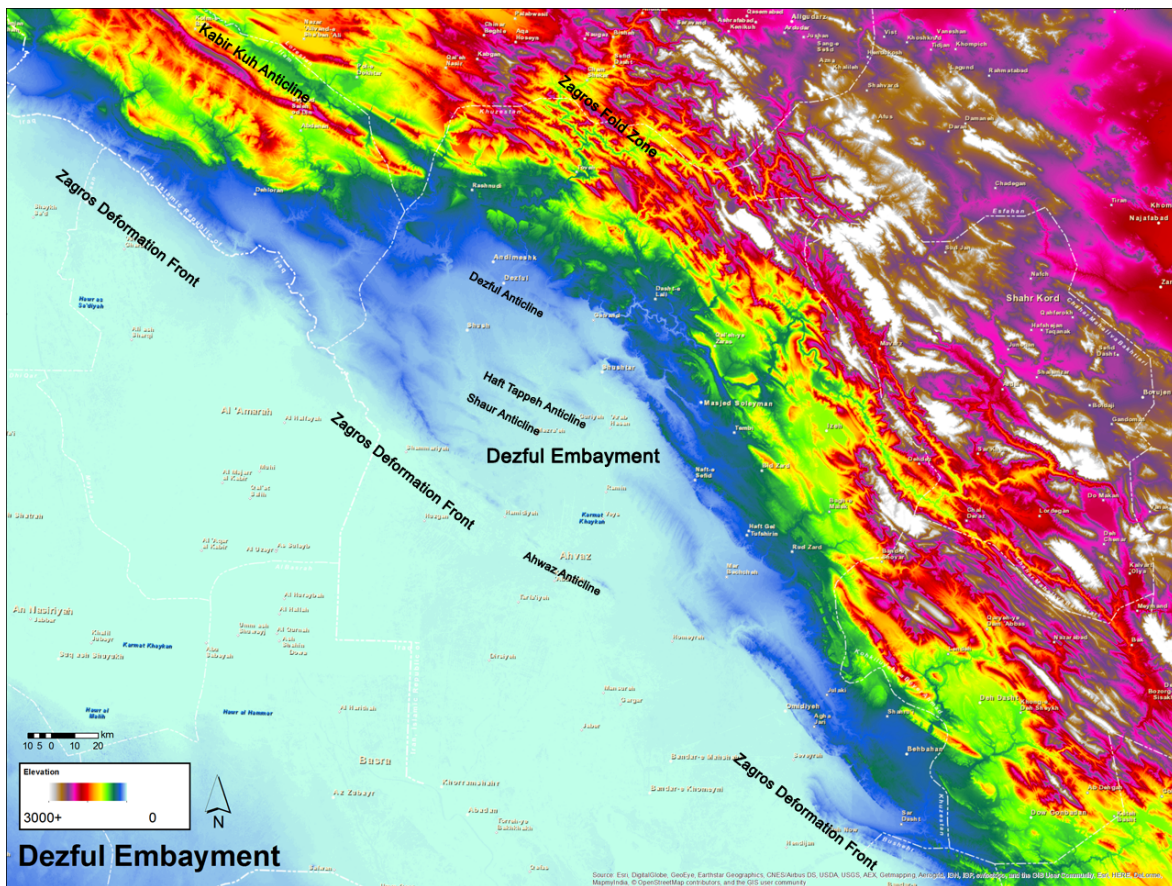


Fig. 84: Dezful Embayment and Zagros Fold Belt. DEM source: ASTER GDEM V2, 2011

The rainfall of Khuzistan averages 200-400 mm per year as one moves from the southwest margins at Ahwaz towards the Zagros foothills (Adams 1962). Dezful, at the foot of the Zagros, receives around 400 mm; Veenenbos observes that: “The Dezful data from 1951-1954 show a variation from 274-540 mm with an average of 447 mm” (Veenenbos 1958: 49). Johnson, however, observes that the mean annual precipitation for Dezful between 1962 and 1970 was only 280 mm and that year to year amounts at Susa were highly variable, ranging from 85 mm to 580 mm (Johnson 1973: 17-21). As in Iraq, almost all precipitation falls from November to May, and the driest months coincide with the hottest months when high temperatures of 120° F are not uncommon (*ibid*). Thus while Khuzestan lies in an area where rainfed agriculture is technically possible, the extreme seasonal and yearly variation in rainfall, high temperatures, and high evaporation rates still make rainfed agriculture very risky (Kirkby 1977). In the late 1950’s before industrialized agriculture fundamentally altered the landscape, most of the alluvial plains were irrigated and rainfed agriculture was limited to areas at the base of the mountains and areas where the water table is high (Kirkby 1977: 279; Veenenbos 1958: 61, Map 3).

## **II. Regional settlement trends in 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Susiana**

In 1947, Louis Le Breton who had surveyed Susiana since 1933 published what is likely the earliest published archaeological survey map pertaining to a particular period. The map identifies which archaeological sites contained painted pottery of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium or earlier (Le Breton 1947). In 1961, Adams surveyed Susiana using similar methods to his Diyala surveys, located c. 250 sites from the prehistoric to medieval periods (Kouchoukos 1998: 82) and attempted to identify past watercourses. He published the results only in a short article that divides the material into four periods: prehistoric up to 3500 BC, Late Elamite 1200-640 BC, Sassanian AD



226-639, and Islamic 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century AD (Adams 1962). In 1968-69, Carter who had better knowledge of 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium pottery sequences revisited Adams' 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium sites and further elucidated four distinct 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium pottery phases (Carter 1970; 1971; Carter and Stolper 1984). Miroschedji, using improved seriation from Susa *Ville Royale* excavations in the 1970's, from 1975-78 again resurveyed late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium and 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium sites (Miroschedji 1981). From 2001-4, the Iranian Center for Archaeological Research surveyed archaeological sites of the Eastern Plain, along and to the southeast of the Karun River (Moghaddam and Miri 2003; 2007; Modghaddam 2008; Alizadeh *et al* 2004).

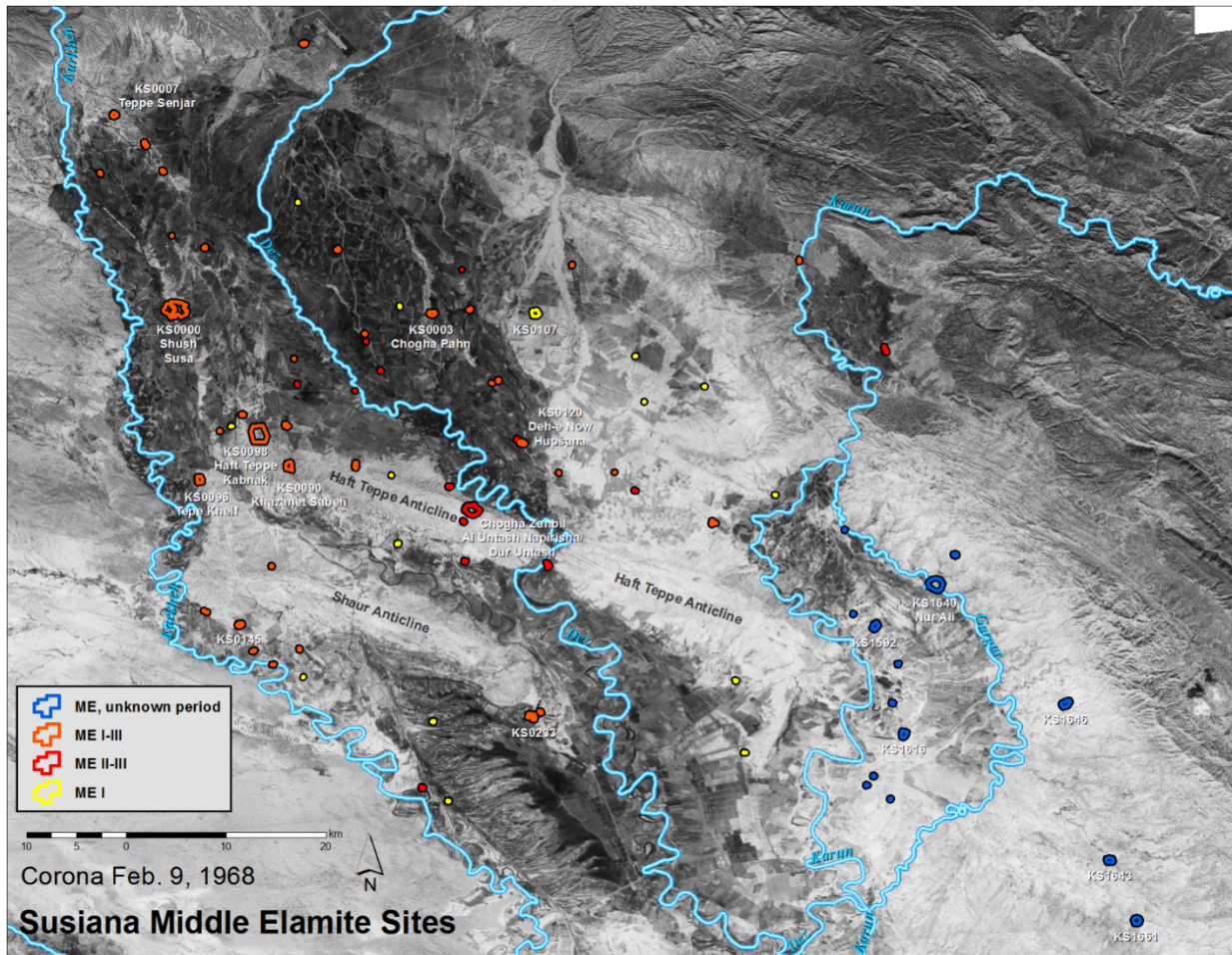
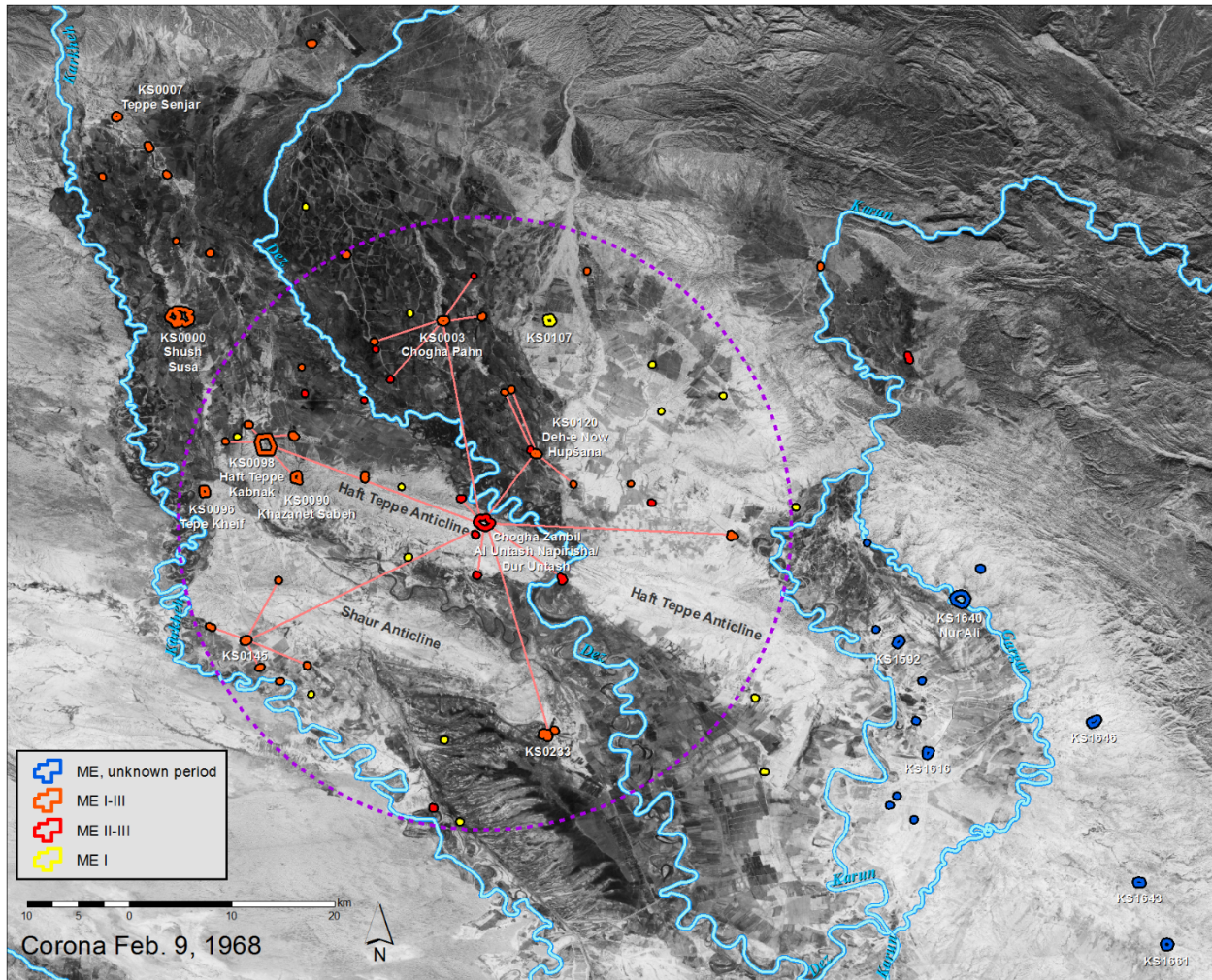


Fig. 85: Middle Elamite Sites in Upper Khuzestan



*Fig. 86: Al Untaş Napiriša regional system*

These surveys reveal that Middle Elamite sites in the Shush plain, aside from Susa, cluster in the northern margins and along the edge of the Haft Tappeh anticline (Fig. 85). Many of the larger Middle Elamite sites west of the Dez River, including Haft Tappeh and Chogha Zanbil, cluster along the edge of the Haft Tappeh Ridge at some distance from the major rivers (Fig. 85). The new capital Al Untaş Napiriša sits near the geographic center of the Susiana Plain, and Middle Elamite settlements encircle it for up to 29 km (Fig. 86). The concentration of these settlements is highest 15-20 km to the northwest between Al Untaş Napiriša and Susa, but they form an arc around Al Untaş Napiriša rather than Susa. The settlement pattern shows a clear central-place

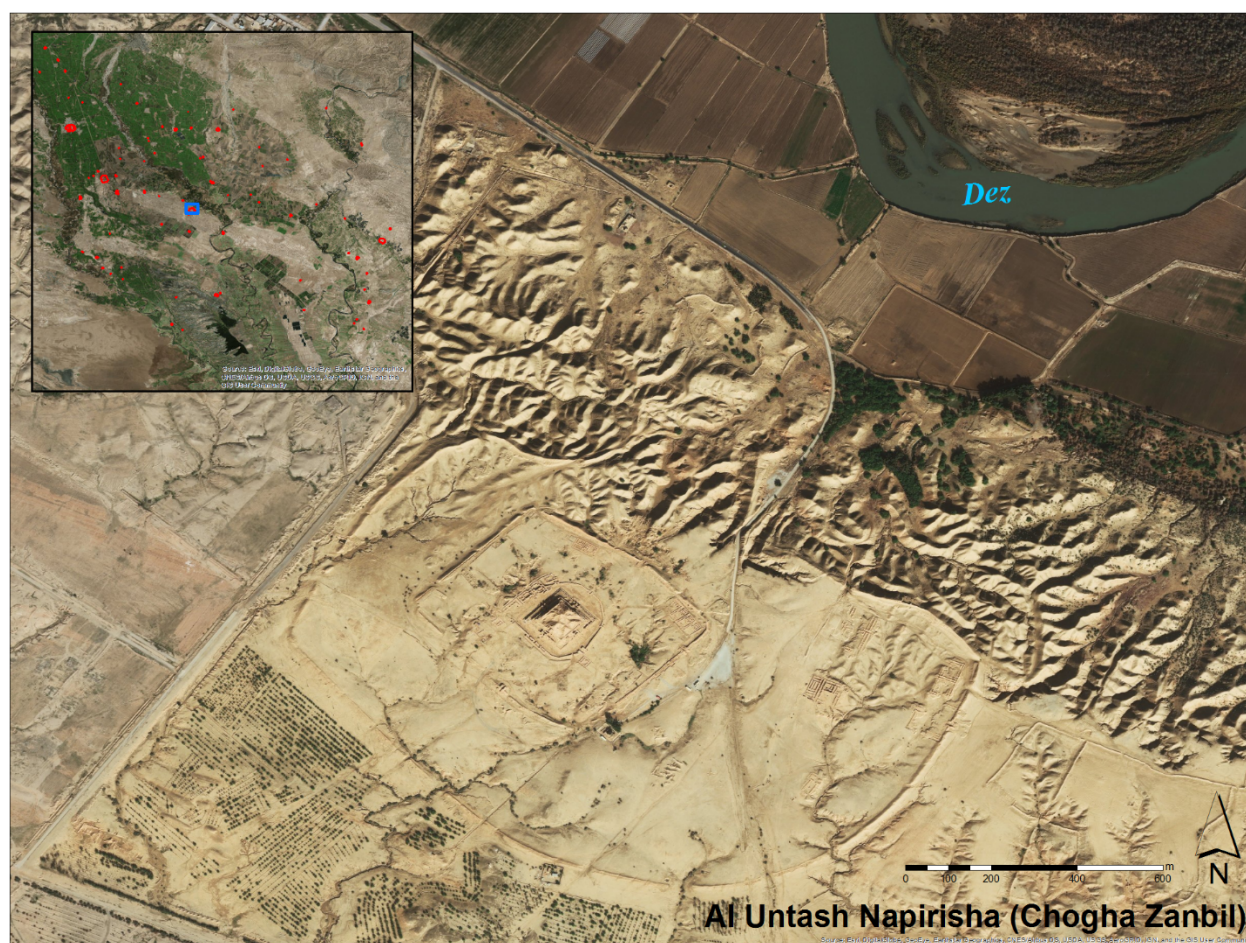
hierarchy around Al Untaš Napiriša. Several midsize settlements at Haft Tappeh, Chogha Pahn, KS-233, and KS-145 are each about 20 km away, have their own set of satellites, and could have served as secondary centers in support of the capital.

Numerous sites along the Karun and in the rather marginal rocky valley between Shushtar and Ram Hormuz were also occupied for the first time in the Middle Elamite Period. Here five sites larger than 20 ha with baked-brick architecture form a line towards Ram Hormuz (Fig. 85). A transportation route from Susiana to the Iranian Plateau leads through this stretch of sites, which Moghaddam and Miri (2007) labeled the “Eastern Corridor.” Among these sites is KS1641 Nur Ali, which according to its surveyors had artifact scatters covering 100 hectares and a large detached Elamite temple sanctuary (KS 1625 Bard e-Karegar) 2.5 km away (Alizadeh *et al* 2004; Kozuh 2014). This site must have been another important Middle Elamite urban center along with Susa, Haft Tappeh, and Al Untaš Napiriša. Susa, the ancient religious center, sits alone in the west margins of the plains whereas most settlements gravitate around the new cities Kabnak (Haft Tappeh), Al Untaš Napiriša, and Nur Ali (original name unknown). Overall the Middle Elamite period shows a concentration of sites into centrally-located and elevated urban areas and in corridors that connect these cities to other parts of the state and the world beyond.

### **III. Al Untaš Napiriša: The archaeological evidence**

The 96 ha site of Al Untaš Napiriša at Chogha Zanbil, 33 km southeast of Susa and 1 km southwest of the Dez River, stands at one of the highest points on the desolate Haft Tappeh ridge where it commands a far-reaching view of the lowland Elamite state (Fig. 87). The site was surveyed and excavated by Roland de Mecquenem in 1935-39 and 1946 (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953), Roman Ghirshman from 1951-62 (Ghirshman 1966; 1968), and Behzad Mofidi

Nasrabadi in 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005 (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2003-4; 2007). A team from the University of Kiel also performed a magnetometer survey on 35 ha of the city (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007). These projects have recovered data from a full spectrum of Al Untaš Napiriša's urban districts, including, temples, palaces, industrial areas, waterworks, and impoverished residential areas.



*Fig. 87: Chogha Zanbil and surroundings. 2017 Satellite Image, ESRI World Imagery*

This data is detailed enough to reconstruct the city's chronological development during the reign of Al Untaš Napiriša, but only with a reappraisal of the published data. Interpretations of Middle Elamite pottery chronologies still vary across publications, so establishing a concrete

relative pottery sequence for Al Untaş Napiriša is crucial for understanding the city's development and its relationship to the Elamite region. Tabulating and comparing the context and content of the thousands of inscribed bricks furnishes an even finer understanding of building sequences and the spatial relationships among buildings. The following examination of archaeological data, inscriptions, chronology, and geomorphology will yield a greater understanding of the planning and implementation of a territorial-state capital and the class segregation and interaction among different groups through construction and ritual.

Ghirshman's AD 1951-62 excavations are the most substantial and well known, and he unearthed a large ziggurat, three concentric city walls, twelve temples, and an area containing large buildings that he considered to be palaces (Fig. 88). He concluded that the site was empty aside from these structures and a few temporary habitations and that no one besides priests, not even the royal founder, actually ever lived in the city. The city, according to him, was not actually a city but rather a pantheon sanctuary for pilgrimages and religious processions (Ghirshman 1968: 1, 58, 109-120). Untaş Napiriša built this sanctuary on the border of the Susiana plain and the Zagros Mountains, Ghirshman argued, to symbolize the union of highland and lowland Elam (*ibid*).

Most subsequent authors have based their understanding of the site solely upon Ghirshman's excavations, interpretations, and site plans with the belief that Ghirshman uncovered most of the structures of the city (Carter 1971: 187-189; 1992a; Carter and Stolper 1984; Miroschedji 1980; 1997). Ghirshman's interpretation, however, makes several assumptions that the available data show to be incorrect: 1.) that the manifestation of the city in the archaeological record was the original plan of the city when it was first founded, 2.) that the city, especially within the second enclosure wall, contained only temples, and 3.) that the city was never populated or finished and was left in a dilapidated state when the founder died. The archaeological and

documentary evidence reveal on the contrary that the city was occupied with residential, commercial, and sacred enclaves and underwent numerous building phases as opposed to one unified building program.

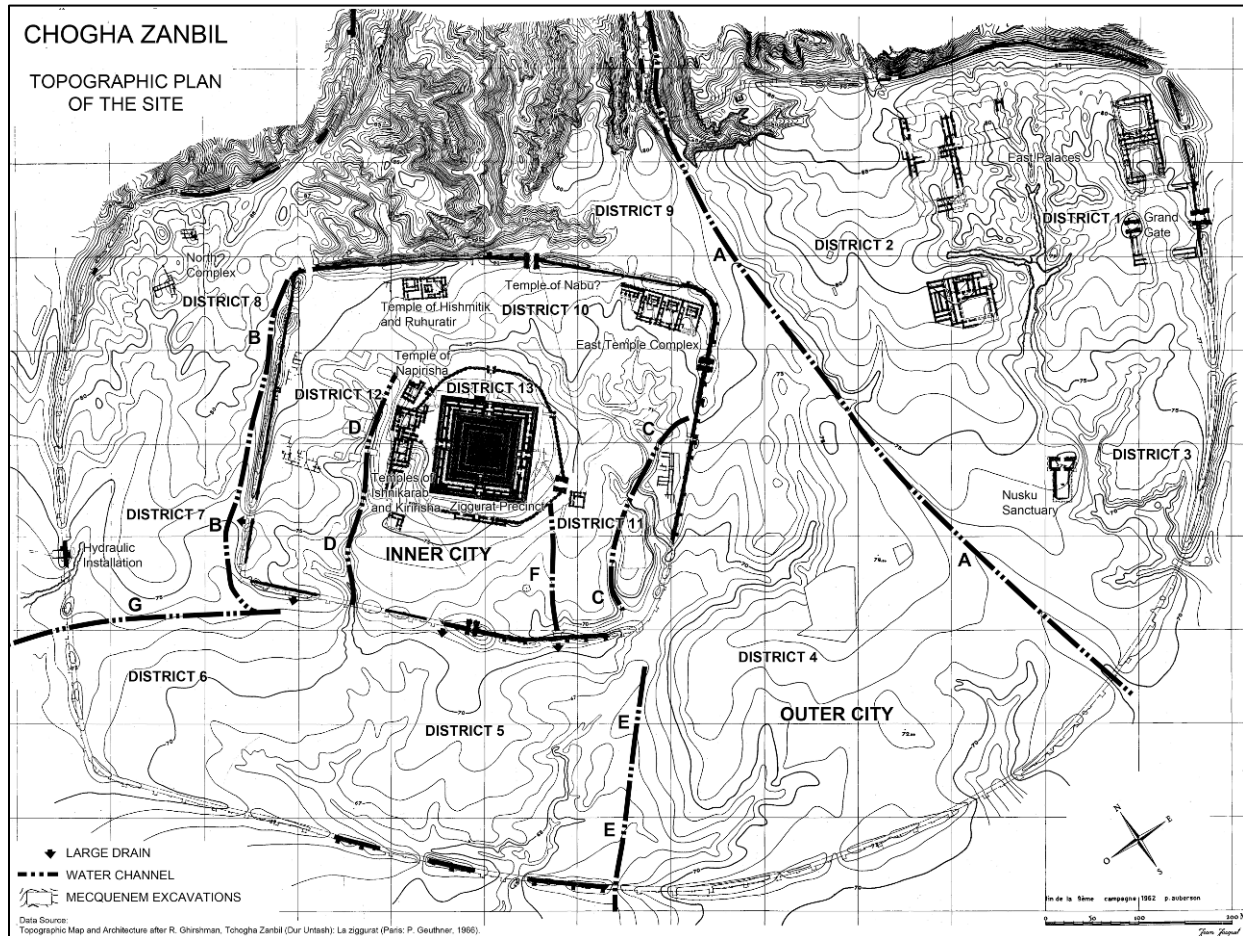


Fig. 88: Topographic Map of Chogha Zanbil, after Ghirshman 1966: Plan 3, with city sectors and hypothetical water management system indicated, after Carlson 2014: 30

Ghirshman primarily excavated areas of the city where Untaš Napiriša commissioned sacred monuments to bear his thousands of inscribed bricks and other decorative architectural elements. Residents of Al Untaš Napiriša interacted both with these inscribed spaces (the Inscribed City) in which structures were inscribed with dedications to the gods in the name of the king and uninscribed spaces (the Uninscribed City) where structures were not actively inscribed by state

authorities. These two archaeologically observable categories of built space represent two levels of planning and state engagement overlying what would have been a vast array of relationships involved in the production of the urban landscape. Continuous interactive planning among authorities, builders, and residents concurrently produced both the inscribed spaces, such as temples and other public works, and uninscribed spaces of residences and daily life. Through this interactive construction, the inscribed elements circulated beyond the inscribed spaces and into the uninscribed spaces where residents built the inscribed fragments into their own dwellings.

Based upon observations of the different kinds of structures agglomerated in different areas of Al Untaš Napiriša and the context of inscribed bricks found therein (Table 1), I have divided the city into 13 separate districts seen on Fig. 88 to help explain the city's social organization, infrastructure, and construction phases. Through an analysis of architecture, chronology, and social organization across urban districts, I will show how the various sectors of the city interacted and the constraints that authorities placed upon residents.

### **IIIa. The Inscribed City**

Steve, who published the bricks found during Ghirshman's excavations, records 5,257 inscribed bricks, all of which bear Untaš Napiriša's name (Steve 1967: 1). The vast majority of the bricks were inscribed in Elamite, but 67 bricks were in Akkadian. A summary of the information published by Steve can be found in Table 1. Every inscription begins with "I, Untaš Napiriša" and is a dedication of some kind of structure to one or several deities. Most are from the façades of temples, and I have ascertained four different regular formulas used to compose most temple dedicatory inscriptions and grouped these inscriptions by formula as Type 1-4 (Table 1). The inscriptions mention at least twenty-two different temples, but we can only associate half of these

temples with excavated structures. Except for the unidentified Temple of Nabu, which is mentioned on 147 bricks, the unidentified temples appear on fewer than ten bricks each. Recovered brick inscriptions also come from the city gates, enclosure walls, a house of justice, and a canal.

The inscriptions on the gates of the Outer Wall say that the city and a *siyan kuk* were constructed together and had two enclosure walls, an outer and inner wall, and within these walls was a *kukunnum* dedicated to Napiriša (identified by the Sumerogram <sup>d</sup>GAL), the chief god of the Elamite pantheon (Hinz 1965; Miroschedji 1981) and Inšušinak, the patron god of Susa. The *siyan kuk* literally means “that which protects the temple” (Steve 1967: 11) and this Elamite phrase also appears in the Akkadian inscriptions. It appears most often as an epithet of a deity in the form: “(deity’s name) of the *siyan kuk*” but also stands on its own in the city gate inscriptions. Steve (*ibid*) argues that *siyan kuk* refers to an area of the city reserved for deities and that those deities that have the epithet “of the *siyan kuk*” are deities who resided in that area.

However, the inscribed bricks refer to most deities as “of the *siyan kuk*” regardless of which part of the city their temple is in. The *siyan kuk* is therefore not necessarily a specific part of the city. It is enclosed within the city, possibly analogous to the city itself, and can be constructed. Finally, *siyan kuk* is associated with almost all of the gods, both Mesopotamian and Elamite, mentioned on the bricks. It could refer to the act of consecration of any temple, which in being bestowed to the deity renders the temple and deity protected. This type of consecration could extend to the whole city, which is enclosed and protects the temple and sacred spaces within. *Siyan kuk*, in this sense would be similar to the Assyrian *mahazu*, a term for a sacred city or cult center.

The city gate inscriptions, which the excavators found mostly removed from their original context, bear the names of seven different city gates (Steve 1967: 60-71). However, Ghirshman found evidence of only two gates along the outer wall: a northeast gate of which little remains and



a southeast gate consisting of two parallel gateways around a mostly destroyed structure (Ghirshman 1968: 87-92). In the Northwest half of the city, a second Middle Wall surrounds a 17 ha Inner City and has four gates. The inscriptions found on these gates do not name the gates but do mention two walls, temples, and a ziggurat dedicated to Inšušinak (Steve 1967: 42-46). At the center of the Inner City is the innermost wall that encloses the 2.5 ha ziggurat precinct. This wall has six gates that overall lack inscriptions, and the largest of the gates in the southeast probably functioned as the main entrance. The southwest portion of the inner wall contains three rooms (chapels according to Ghirshman) that open towards the ziggurat. These rooms were filled with objects, including precious stone, metal, glass, and faience beads; shells; glazed terra-cotta and faience animals and figurines; bronze weapons; 127 seals; and other metal, glass, faience, and stone objects (Ghirshman 1966: 71-72).

### **IIIa.i. The ziggurat precinct**

Like the Susa terrace before it, the ziggurat (Fig. 89), which measures 105.2 m per side, dwarfs all other previous ziggurats in Mesopotamia. Its core consists of unbaked bricks with a 2 m thick baked-brick façade, and central internal staircases on each side lead to the upper levels. Blue-green, glazed-ceramic, 1.3 m tall, inscribed bulls and griffins stood guard on the staircases. The ziggurat now stands 25 m high but was originally around 50 m high with four levels crowned with a temple called the *kukunnum* (Ghirshman 1966: 58-61). 662 bricks inscribed with temple inscription Type 1 dedicate the ziggurat and the *kukunnum* to Inšušinak and make up every eleventh course of bricks around the perimeter of the ziggurat walls (Fig. 90) (Ghirshman 1966: 12-13; Steve 1967: 7-12). The bricks form a kind of frieze around the building -- a rather novel and previously unattested decorative use of inscribed bricks.

**Table 1. Summary of Inscribed Bricks.**

I. Temple Inscriptions in Elamite

a. Type 1<sup>40</sup>

Content: king's titles and filiation - invocation for the life of the king and his line - construction of edifice - dedication of edifice to deity - deity's acceptance of offering

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
<i>kukunnum</i> <sup>41</sup> of Inšušinak; erection of ziggurat	662 bricks in ziggurat walls, 11 in southeast gate of Inner Wall, 1 in north gate of Inner Wall	Steve 1967 #1; Malbran-Labat 1995 #28
temple of Inšušinak	37 bricks; some in jambs of blocked gateway inside of court built over by ziggurat	Steve1967 #5
temple of Kiririša	12 in west temple of Kiririša, 9 in east temple of Kiririša	Steve1967 #7
<i>talīn</i> temple of Napiriša and altar	22 bricks; 14 in Temple of Napiriša	Steve1967 #9
<i>ipillati</i> of Nusku	16 fragments from Nusku sanctuary	Steve1967 #23
KU U U of Nusku	9 bricks from Nusku sanctuary	Steve1967 #24
temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir	5 bricks not from Hišmitik and Ruhuratir temple	Steve1967 #39
temple of Humban	3 bricks from depot, 1 from west corner of ziggurat	Steve1967 #40
temple of Nabium	6 bricks; 2 from south corner of ziggurat precinct	Steve1967 #42
temple of Nusku	15 bricks; 6 used in temple of the Napratep	Steve1967 #43
temple of NIN.É.GAL	3 bricks from ziggurat precinct	Steve1967 #47
temple of Manzat	1 brick in ziggurat precinct pavement, fragment in southeast complex (Sector 11)	Steve1967 #48

<sup>40</sup> cf. Malbran-Labat 1995: 72

<sup>41</sup> For italicized words see references and entries in Hinz and Koch (1987).

b. Type 2

Content: king's titles and filiation - construction of edifice - dedication of edifice to deity

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
temple to Išnikarab	101 bricks; 94 in temple of Išnikarab	Steve1967 #8
<i>alumimma</i> temple to Pinikir	3 bricks; unknown original placement	Steve1967 #11
<i>aštam</i> to Pinikir	16 bricks; 14 found behind East Temple Complex	Steve1967 #12
<i>silin</i> temple to Adad and Shala	foundation layer of cella of IM and Shala temple	Steve1967 #14
<i>kinin</i> temple to Šimut and NIN-Ali	36 bricks from temple of Shimut and NIN-Ali	Steve1967 #16
<i>sir</i> to the Napratep	unspecified	Steve1967 #18
<i>hunin</i> temple to Hišmitik and Ruhuratir	3 bricks in depot, 2 lining canal in Hišmitik and Ruhuratir annex	Steve1967 #20
high temple to Inšušinak	7 bricks throughout the site	Steve1967 #33
<i>likrin</i> temple to Inšušinak; mentions chosen construction materials	5 bricks from depot, 2 among crushed brick pavement	Steve1967 #34
House of Justice to Napiriša	16 bricks; 10 from depot	Steve1967 #38; Malbran-Labat 1995 #26
<i>pukši takkippi</i> (house of life) to the god Great King	1 brick from Hišmitik and Ruhuratir annex, 1 in Middle Wall, 1 in depot	Steve1967 #46
temple to Šiašum	1 brick in cache behind temple of Shimut and NIN-ali	Steve1967 #49

c. Type 3<sup>42</sup>

Content: king's titles and filiation - construction of edifice to deity - installation of golden deity - deity's acceptance of offering

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
temple and gold statue to Pinikir	Pinikir temple	Steve1967 #10; Malbran-Labat 1995 #25
temple and gold statue to IM and Shala	100 bricks; 60 in temple of IM and Shala	Steve1967 #13
temple and gold statue to Shimut and NIN-Ali	156 bricks; 96 from temple of Shimut and NIN-Ali	Steve1967 #15

<sup>42</sup> cf. Malbran-Labat 1995: 67

temple and gold statue to the Napratep	55 bricks; 22 from East Complex	Steve1967 #17
temple and gold statue to Hišmitik and Ruhuratir	17 bricks from Temple of Ruhuratir and Hišmitik; none from the annex	Steve1967 #19
temple and gold statue to Nabu	141 bricks; 85 from depot	Steve1967 #41

d. Type 4<sup>43</sup>

Content: king's titles and filiation - invocation for the life the king and the kingship -

construction of edifice to deity - dedication of edifice to deity - deity's acceptance of offering

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
temple of Kiririša	1 brick between sanctuary of Nusku and Palace 1, one in Middle Wall near Temple of the Napratep	Steve1967 #25
temple of the Great King	9 fragments; 8 from East corner of city, 6 of those between Grand Gate and Palace III	Steve1967 #26
temple of Napiriša	6 fragments from Palace I court A and the area between Palace III and the Grand Gate	Steve1967 #28; Malbran-Labat 1995 #27
temple of Kilah Šupir	Fragments from behind Temple of the Napratep, Court A of Palace I, and Grand Gate	Steve1967 #51, 29

e. Other religious structures

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
<i>ulhi</i> of Napiriša and Inšušinak in gold or silver. Warning of the terror of Napiriša, Inšušinak, and Kiririša to those who would harm it.	Bricks in high parts of ziggurat: NE side: 24; NW side: 24; SW side: 22; SE side: 44	Steve1967 #2, 3, 4
enclosed <i>siyan kuk</i> and <i>šunšu irpi</i> to Napiriša and Inšušinak	26 bricks; cylindrical pedestals in ziggurat courtyards	Steve1967 #6
temple and gold statue of Nahhunte; mention of kingship	1 brick in Palace I; 2 in the area and 5 in door socket of Grand Gate	Steve1967 #27; Malbran-Labat 1995 #30
temple of Kirm/wašir	1 fragments in Palace II; 1 fragment in Palace III	Steve1967 #30
temple of the Kings of the Gods	fragments in pavement	Steve1967 #35

<sup>43</sup> cf. Malbran-Labat 1995: 70

temple and statue of Inanna	4 fragments in Sector 12, 5 from depot	Steve1967 #45
temple and statues of Šušmusi and Belitit;	1 brick from depot, 1 behind temple of IM and Shala	Steve1967 #50
<i>murti</i> in the <i>ipillati</i> to Nusku	5 bricks in depot, 1 fragment in north corner of Middle Wall	Steve1967 #44

## II. Fortification Inscriptions in Elamite

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
Light of the World to Napiriša and Inšušinak	220 bricks; 84 from buttress in southeast Middle Wall some still in situ, 55 littered on ground near Middle Wall behind temple of IM and Shala, 12 in depot, 2 in ziggurat courtyards, 1 in southeast gate of Inner Wall, 1 in entrance to Inšušinak temple B	Steve1967 #21; Malbran-Labat 1995 #29
enclosed <i>tuš</i> , temples, interior and exterior enclosure walls, and ziggurat to Inšušinak	8 or 54 <sup>44</sup> bricks from southeast gate of Middle Wall, 18 or 2 <sup>45</sup> from southwest gate of Middle Wall	Steve1967 #22
City Gate of the Oven to Napiriša and Inšušinak	16 dispersed examples	Steve1967 #36

## III. Bilingual Inscriptions

Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
City of Untaš Napiriša and the <i>siyan kuk</i> with an exterior and interior enclosure wall; <i>kukunnum</i> to Napiriša and Inšušinak; City gates that vary by inscription: Grand Gate, Gate of the King, Gate of Justice, Gate of the Grove, High or Eminent Gate, Priest's Gate, and possibly Gate of the Grove; warning in Akkadian and Elamite of the terror of Napiriša, Inšušinak, and Kiririša to those who destroy the walls and gates of the <i>siyan kuk</i>	47 bricks from depot, 15 from southeast city gate, 3 from main gate, 2 from east corner of city, 1 from Palace I Court A. Provenience of individual gate identifiers, ie. from main gate or depot, is not made clear	Steve1967 #31, 32

<sup>44</sup> Steve 1967: 1

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*

#### IV. Akkadian Inscriptions

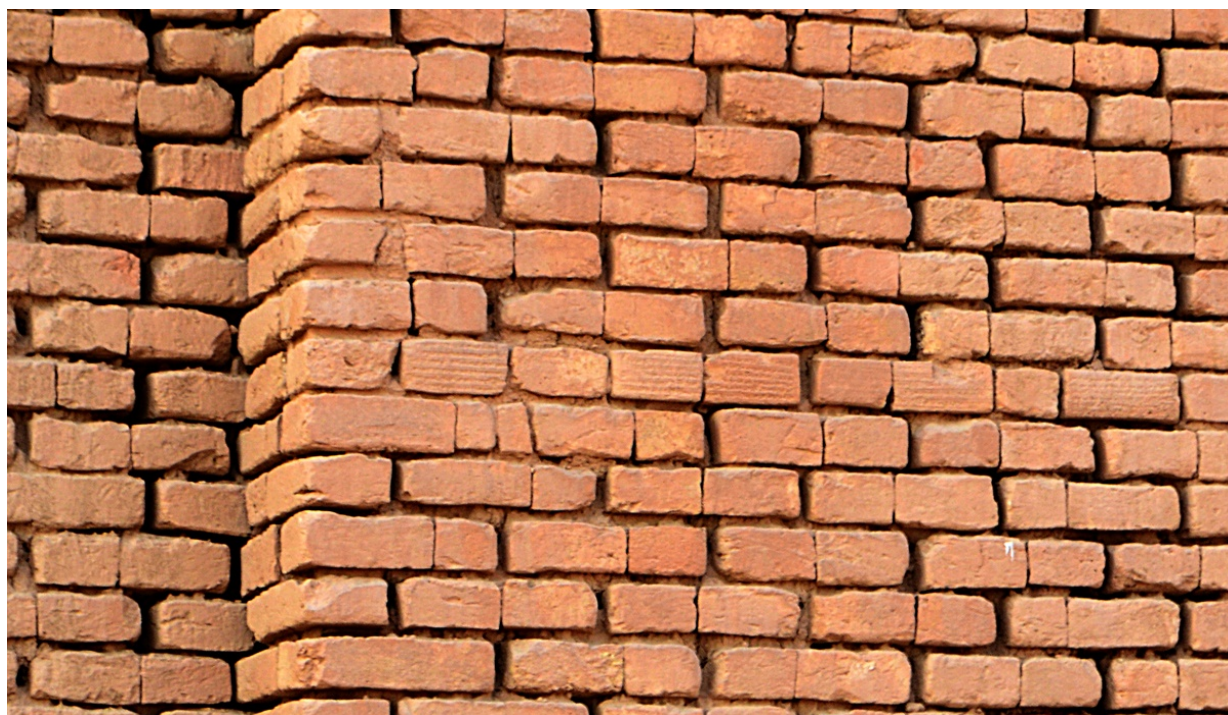
Subject of dedication	Provenience in Chogha Zanbil	Reference
<i>kukunnum</i> made of gold, silver, obsidian, and alabaster bricks to Napiriša and Inšušinak. Warning of the terror of Napiriša, Inšušinak, and Kiririša to those who would harm it.	66 bricks; 33 in depot, 10 used in repairs of southeast gate of Middle Wall, 6 dispersed, 17 from faces of the ziggurat: 4 on each of NE, NW, and SE side, 5 on SW side	Steve1967 #I
Fragmentary	9 glazed fragments in different colors found in the high parts of the ziggurat	Steve1967 #II
fragmentary; mentions Inšušinak	glazed fragment from NE face of ziggurat	Steve1967 #III
a canal to Napiriša and Inšušinak	2 fragments from ziggurat precinct, 1 from Palace III	Steve1967 #IV
basin in the enclosure wall to Napiriša and Inšušinak	1 brick behind Temple of Shimut and NIN-Ali; fragment in ziggurat precinct	Steve1967 #V



*Fig. 89: Chogha Zanbil ziggurat (author's photo)*

These inscribed bricks and the aforementioned inscriptions on the gates of the Middle Wall are the only inscriptions that mention the ziggurat, and both dedicate it to Inšušinak alone. Other inscriptions found in the vicinity of the ziggurat associate somewhat enigmatic aspects of the structure with Inšušinak and Napiriša, such as a *kukunnum* mentioned on 16 Akkadian bricks found in the collapse of the ziggurat walls (Steve 1967: 105-109), an *ulhi* in gold and silver mentioned

in Elamite inscriptions found in the collapse of the upper parts of the ziggurat (Steve 1967: 13-21), and a *šunšu irpi* described in Elamite inscriptions found on four circular pedestals placed near the four entrances to the ziggurat (Steve 1967: 22-24). These pedestals, like the ziggurat, have a ring of inscribed bricks around their façade (Fig. 91).



*Fig. 90: Restored inscribed bricks row (center) on Chogha Zanbil ziggurat (author's photo)*

The southeast side of the ziggurat's first level contained two temples dedicated to Inšušinak built to the right (Temple A) and to the left (Temple B) of the central stairway. Temple A opened out to the courtyard in front of the ziggurat, but Temple B's entrance faces inwards towards the ziggurat's mudbrick mass. Builders sealed off Temple B before building the ziggurat's interior layers. Temple B's entrance contains inscribed Type 1 bricks similar to the standard ziggurat inscription but with no mention of a ziggurat or *kukunnum* (Ghirshman 1966: 21-46; Steve 1967: 21-22). Ghirshman dug a tunnel through the bottom of the ziggurat, and this tunnel revealed a

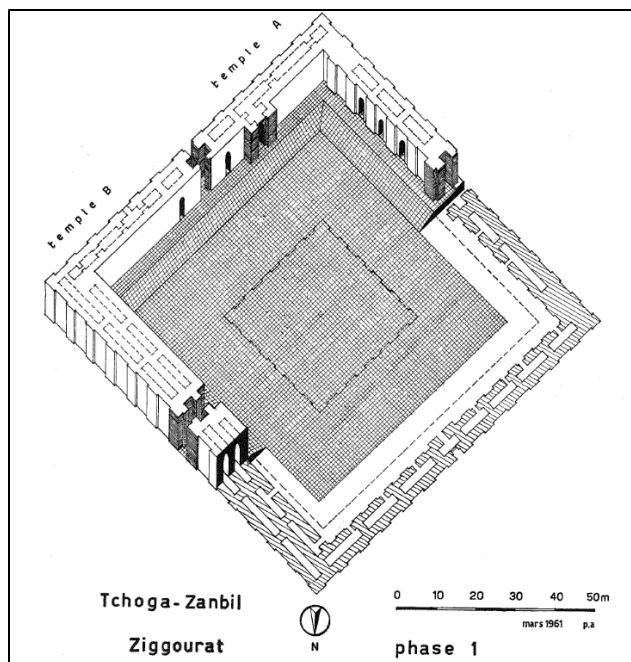
brick pavement underneath the ziggurat. Ghirshman hypothesized that the ziggurat was originally an open courtyard inside a large square temple (Fig. 93) that later became the first level of the ziggurat, thus sealing off Temple B.



*Fig. 91: Chogha Zanbil ziggurat pedestal (author's photo)*

In addition to the two Inšušinak temples, the ziggurat's first level contained storage pits filled with dyes, shells, black and white glass rods, 225 square blue-green glazed-clay knobbed plaques, and over 700 glazed-clay nails (Ghirshman 1966: 18). The nails and plaques are quite large and inscribed with Untaš Napiriša's name. The plaques range in size from 13-45 cm wide (Fig. 92), and the nails are around 35 cm tall and 28 cm wide. The archaeologists often found similar fragmentary plaques, nails, and glass rods in the debris of temple entrances and gateways, which the objects likely adorned.





*Fig. 93: Ghirshman's reconstruction of pre-ziggurat temple, after Ghirshman 1966: 41*

and Napiriša have Type 1 dedicatory inscriptions in their walls and entrances, and Type 1 inscriptions found scattered throughout the ziggurat and its courtyards also mention four other temples not yet located. The entrance to the Išnikarab Temple is adorned with Type 2 bricks inscribed with her name and leads into a T-shaped foyer<sup>46</sup> where Mecquenem discovered two decorated bronze spades, one bearing the name of the god Nabu, next to an altar (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 56-57). The doorways of the Išnikarab Temple courtyards

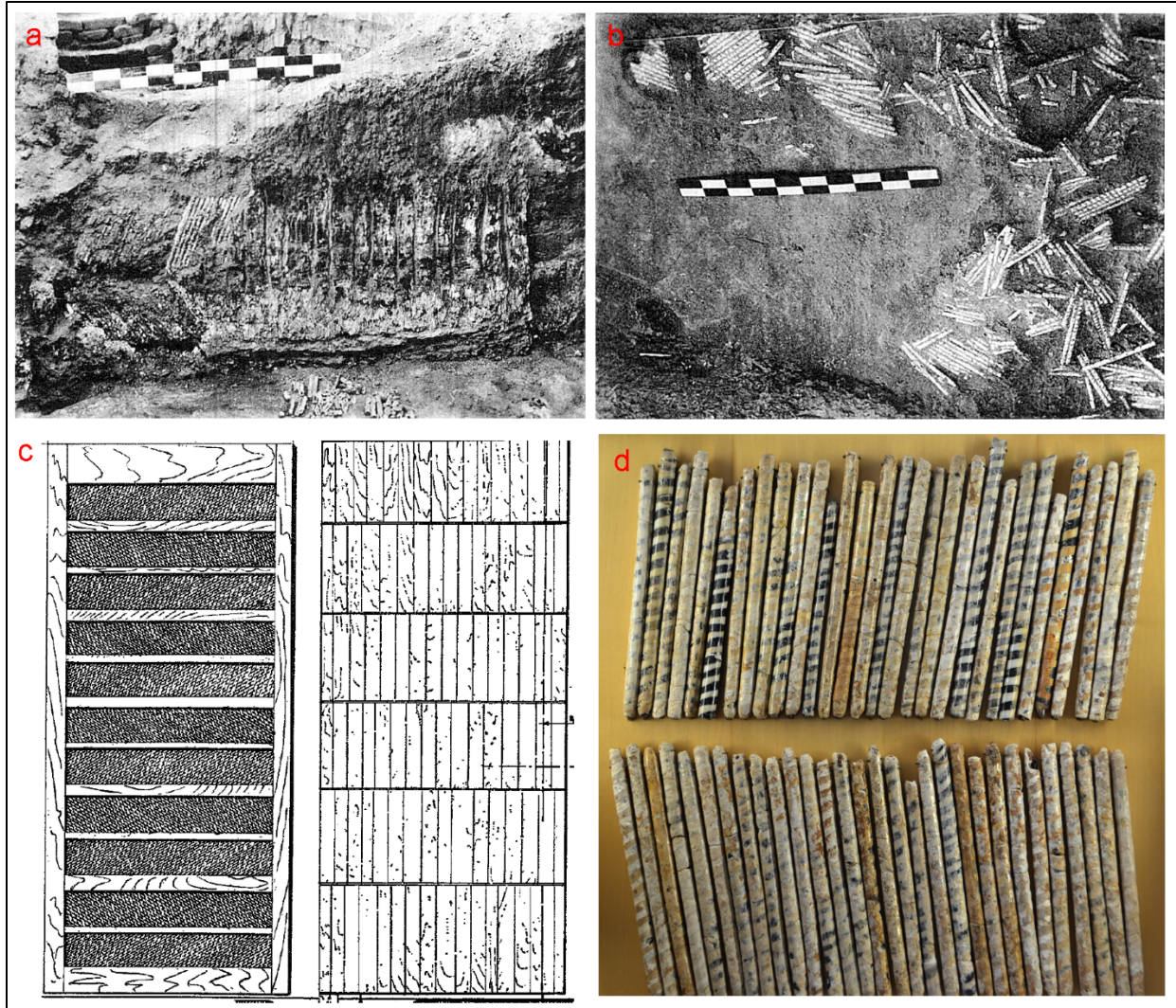
A baked-brick paved courtyard surrounds the ziggurat, and to its northwest, another complex at least 95 m long contains two temples to the Elamite deities Išnikarab and Kiririša. The walls of this complex are mostly made of dried bricks with a baked bricked façade facing the ziggurat. Of similar construction to the Išnikarab/Kiririša temple complex but built just outside of the inner wall is another rectangular 21.5 x 17 m temple dedicated to Napiriša. The temples of Kiririša



*Fig. 92: Glazed knobbed plaque from Chogha Zanbil ziggurat storage chamber, BM 132225 [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collect ion\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?obje ctId=367934&partId=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collect ion_online/collection_object_details.aspx?obje ctId=367934&partId=1)*

<sup>46</sup> incorrectly identified by Miroschedji (1997) and Potts (2016: 215) as the Temple of Nabu

often have steps installed due to the change in elevation from the buildup of dirt on the floor (Ghirshman 1966: 88-93).



*Fig. 94: Glass rod door panels. a. in situ example in Inšušinak Temple B, after Ghirshman 1966: Pl. 25.1; b. partially assembled panels in Kiririša Temple annex, after Ghirshman 1966: 52.2; c. reconstruction, after Ghirshman 1966: 31; d. Glass rods displayed at Louvre Museum (author's photo)*

The Temple of Kiririša (Ghirshman 1966: 94-95, 99-101) has two sections both east and west of the Temple of Išnikarab. The east section, which consists of three small rooms in an L-shape, contained a buried hoard of more than 100 stone and bronze maceheads, many inscribed

with Untaš Napiriša's name. Twenty-four cm below the macehead hoard was another hoard of bronze objects including many daggers, spearheads, armor parts, rings, pendants, axe heads, animal figurines, and vessels. Among the axe heads was a particularly fine silver and electrum axe head with a lion's head and boar on the socket and Untaš Napiriša's name on the blade. The western section of this complex contained a series of workshops containing scores of glass rods, large bronze rings, two large six-chambered ovens, massive stone mortars, and a room with an ash layer, cast bronze and silver ingot fragments, and small pits in the floor (Ghirshman 1966: 95-99; Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 25-32). The glass rods and bronze rings produced here were used for door assemblies. The bronze rings were part of locking mechanisms, and the glass rods decorated door panels (Ghirshman 1966: 98). Ghirshman found a partially intact glass-rod-decorated door panel *in situ* in ziggurat Inšušinak Temple B and some partially assembled examples in the Kiririša temple annex (Fig. 94) (Ghirshman 1966: LII.2).

### **IIIa.ii. Inscribed structures between the Inner and Middle Walls**

Ghirshman excavated five other temples along the northeast side (District 10) of the 14.5 ha area between the Inner Wall and the Middle Wall. In the east corner, four temples dedicated to Pinikir, Adad (IM) and Šala, Šimut and NIN-Ali, and the Napratep gods form a line within one 30x100 m rectangular complex (East Temple Complex) (Ghirshman 1968: 9-21). In the Pinikir Temple, Ghirshman records but does not give the exact context of scores of terracotta and faience figurines, faience vessels sometimes in the form of faces, bitumen and faience eyes, faience animals, faience and glass beads, glass rods, bronze objects, and shells (Ghirshman 1968: Pl. 69-76). The other temples of this complex also contained lesser amounts of similar objects.

Another 47.5 x 23.5 m temple dedicated to Hišmitik and Ruhuratir sits 180 m northwest of this complex. Like the Išnikarab/Kiririša complex, the temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir contains evidence of workshops and annexes. The temple courtyard contains a large kiln in one corner, and the annexes held a floor basin in one of the side rooms and hundreds of fragmentary goblets, cups, and jars in a courtyard (Ghirshman 1968: 24-42). The annexes were built later than the temple as evidenced by niches and buttresses, which would originally have been on the exterior of the temple, on the interior wall between the temple and annex. The ruins of these five temples all contained bricks with Type 2 inscriptions reused as parts of the foundations or gutters. The surviving walls, on the other hand, bore Type 3 inscriptions dedicated to the same deities. The type 3 inscriptions dedicate a golden statue along with the temple. Each of these temples is comprised of an open court with a small internal square building containing a pedestal (Ghirshman 1968: Plan 2) that could have held this gold statue.

One hundred forty-one Type 3 inscribed bricks also mention a Temple of Nabu, and 85 of these bricks were found in a brick depot that contained more than 2,500 baked bricks, 456 of which were inscribed, spread out over 90 m along the northeast Middle Wall between the East Temple Complex and the Temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir (Ghirshman 1968: 25). Steve (1967) only identifies 209 of the 456 inscribed bricks, and these include, in addition to the Nabu bricks, 44 from the city gates in the outer wall, 33 of the Akkadian *kukunnum* dedication, and a few each for other gods of unidentified temples. Since Type 3 inscriptions only occur on the five temples in District 10, the Temple of Nabu was likely originally also in this area before it was dismantled and many of its inscribed bricks placed in the brick depot.

Ghirshman argues that the depot is proof that the construction of the city's temples ceased suddenly when the founder died, because the depot consisted of construction material made for

future buildings (Ghirshman 1968: 25). Steve, however, believes that bricks found in the depot and elsewhere out-of-context are from dismantled structures (Steve 1967: 81). Steve's interpretation seems to be correct for several reasons: the depot bricks lack any organization from which a worker could easily find bricks for specific temples, only the Temple of Nabu among all the unknown temples has more than 5 bricks found in the depot, bricks from structures known to have been completed are found in the depot, and bricks for gates in the outer wall are very far from where they would be needed for construction. Rather than construction material never used, these bricks were likely removed from structures that had become dilapidated and gathered into this place for reuse. Bricks removed from the original context are found reused all over the site and were used to construct and repair all manner of buildings. Baked inscribed bricks, especially glazed, are of the best quality and more watertight than air-dried, and so make good material for the repairs of foundations or the construction of gutters and door sockets (Moorey 1999: 306) where they are often found reused.

### **IIIa.iii. Inscribed structures in the Outer City**

The rubble of a 47 x 29.5 m T-shaped structure in District 3 of the Outer City contains Type 1 inscriptions that dedicate an *ipillati* and a podium rather than a temple to the god Nusku (Steve 1967: 46-49). This structure contains two large perpendicular courts, very thick walls, no side rooms or cella, and 5.5 m wide enfilade entrances to each court. Ghirshman argues that the structure may be some kind of fire temple, a precursor to Zoroastrian types (Ghirshman 1968: 86-88), but contemporary parallels indicate a different function. The tomb-temple complex at Haft Tappeh also has a T-shaped structure composed of a large courtyard with a podium in the center, a perpendicular court with a wide doorway linking it to the first court, no side rooms, and very

thick walls (Negahban 1991: Plan 3). Unlike the other temples of Al Untaş Napiriša that resemble courtyard houses, these structures resemble tombs, such as those below the *palais hypogée* (see below), which also tend to have two perpendicular or enfilade rooms and no side rooms (Ghirshman 1968: Plan 11). Nusku’s association with the underworld (Steve 1967: 49) may be related to this tomb-like layout. Since Ghirshman only excavated the northwest external wall of the Nusku sanctuary and a ravine cuts off the southeast side, the sanctuary could have been part of a larger complex with tombs. At least one vaulted tomb was found near the sanctuary (Ghirshman 1968: 101-104), and a cluster of large magnetic disturbances, many forming rectangles, just to the southeast of the structure could be more tombs or further remains of this structure (Fig. 95.A).

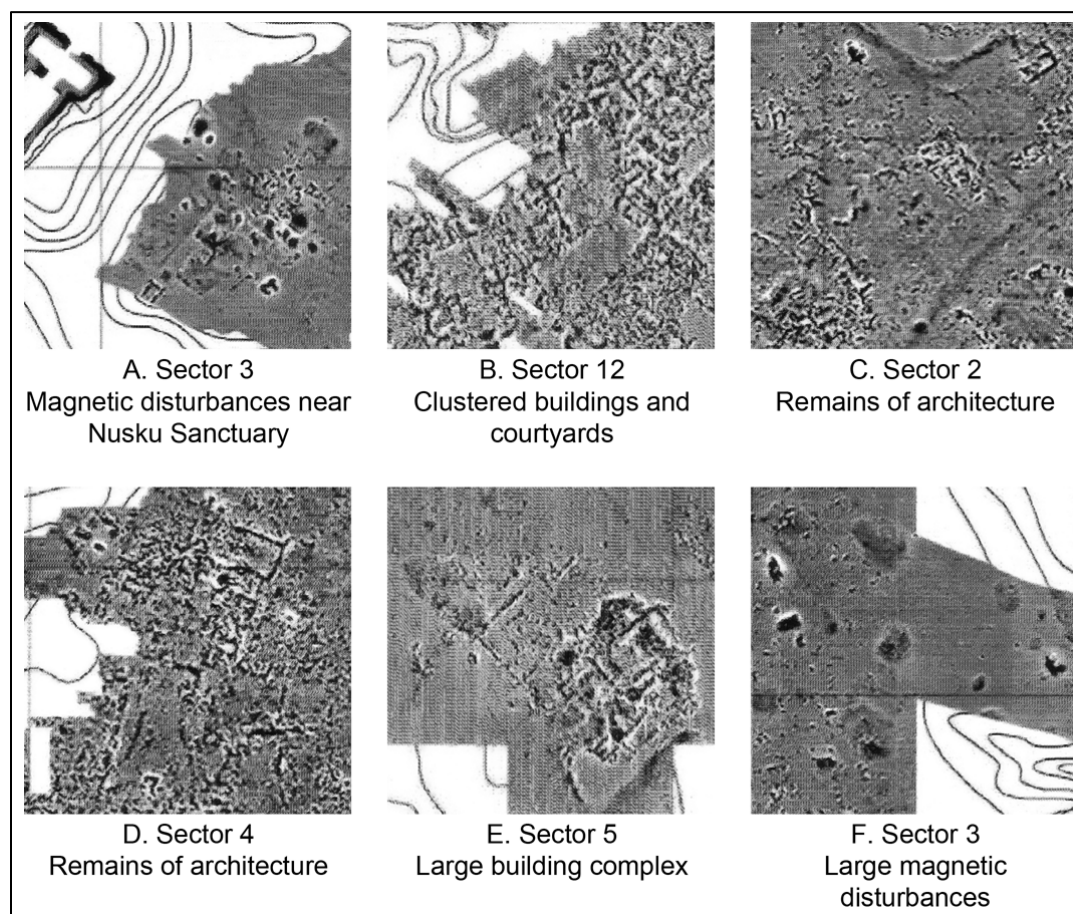


Fig. 95: Samples of Magnetometer results, after Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plans 7-9. Each square is 1 ha. For complete map see Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plans: 6-9

To the northeast of the Nusku sanctuary, District 1, the east corner of the Outer City, is the highest point in the city and contains, spread over about 7.5 ha, the southeast city gate and at least three monumental rectangular buildings that Ghirshman labeled palaces. These palaces lacked the baked and inscribed bricks and niches and buttresses of the temples, but their entrances were adorned with inscribed glazed knobbed plaques and glass rods on the doors. The plaques unfortunately give only Untaş Napiriša's name and so do not reveal the function of these structures. A large area between the three probable palaces likely contained similar structures but had been destroyed by deluge.

The westernmost of the palaces is 70x56 m and contains three courts with side rooms and a series of long hallway type rooms in the rear. One room off the largest court contained an abundance of goblets and cups and another contained the remains of an ivory mosaic (Ghirshman 1968: 47-58). Ghirshman dubbed this palace the *palais hypogée* because sealed stairways under it lead to five vaulted and previously looted tombs that follow the layout of the rooms and hallways above. These tombs have walls, vaults and stairs entirely lined with baked bricks and plaster. Only two tombs still had bodies, each with three to a tomb, and all but one were cremated. The remaining grave goods were sparse and included fragments of weapons, some goblets and cups, and jewelry in bronze, stone, and precious metals (Ghirshman 1968: 59-74).

The second and northernmost palace is a 116 x 58 m rectangle that consists of two similarly sized courts with side rooms. The rooms and walls of this palace are very poorly preserved. The third and easternmost palace is similar to the second but smaller at 90 x 43 m and with narrower walls. It has two nearly identical courts surrounded by eight sets of similar four-roomed L-shaped apartments that each contains living spaces, a kitchen, and a room with a shallow floor basin made of glazed bricks with an accompanying drain (Fig. 96.C). This palace is the only one for which

Ghirshman gives the elevations, and at 84 m is the highest recorded building in the city (Ghirshman 1968: 75-84, Pl. 92). Unfortunately the heart of this palatial district has been destroyed by erosion, leaving an interpretation of how these fragmentary structures might have functioned as part of a larger palace unclear. Fragmentary bricks containing Type 4 inscription littered the surface of the palatial district, and Steve concludes that, since the inscriptions mention kingship, these bricks were from palatial temples or chapels that once stood in this area (Steve 1967: 50). This scenario is possible, but the same line that mentions kingship is also found on circular pedestals in the ziggurat precinct.

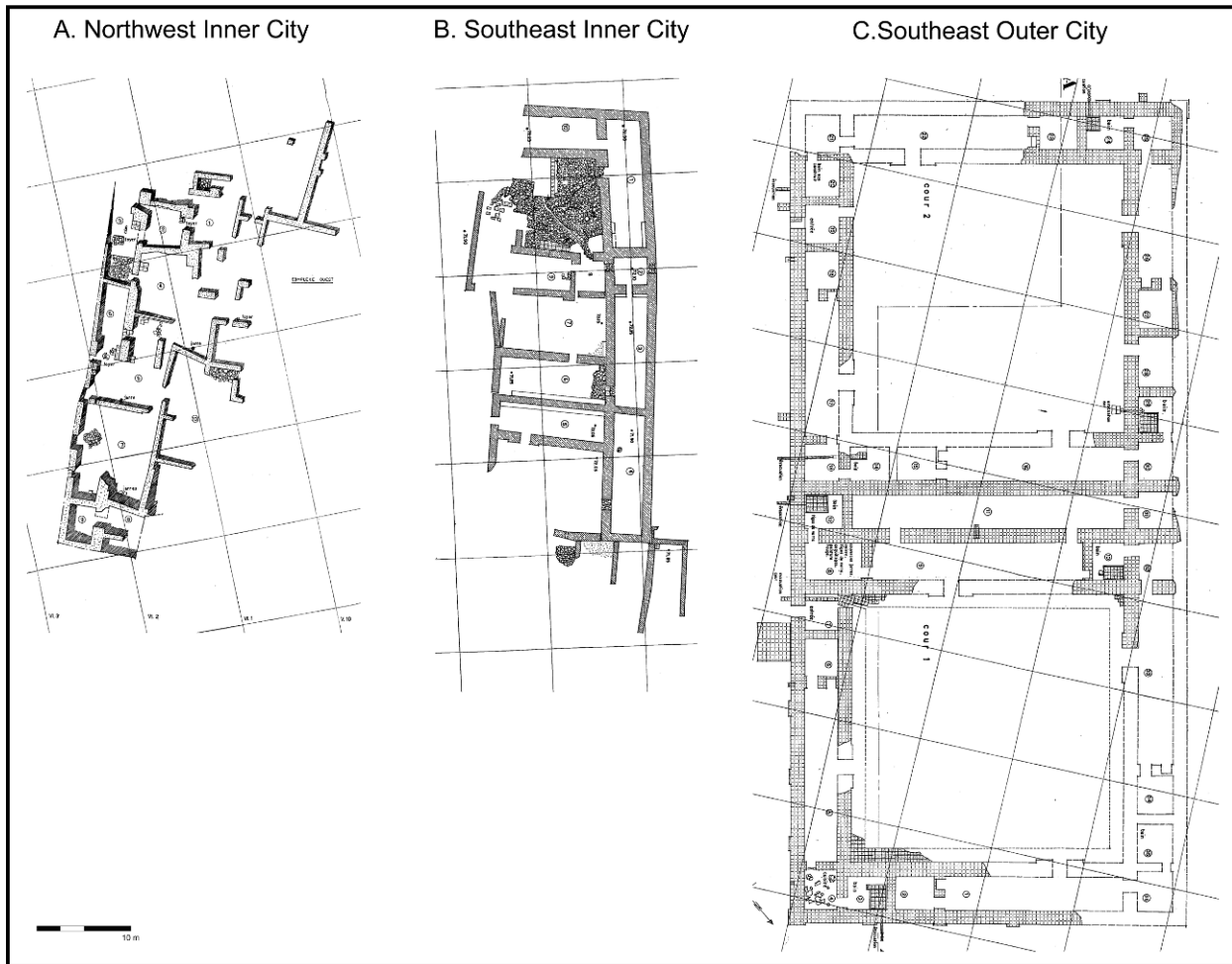
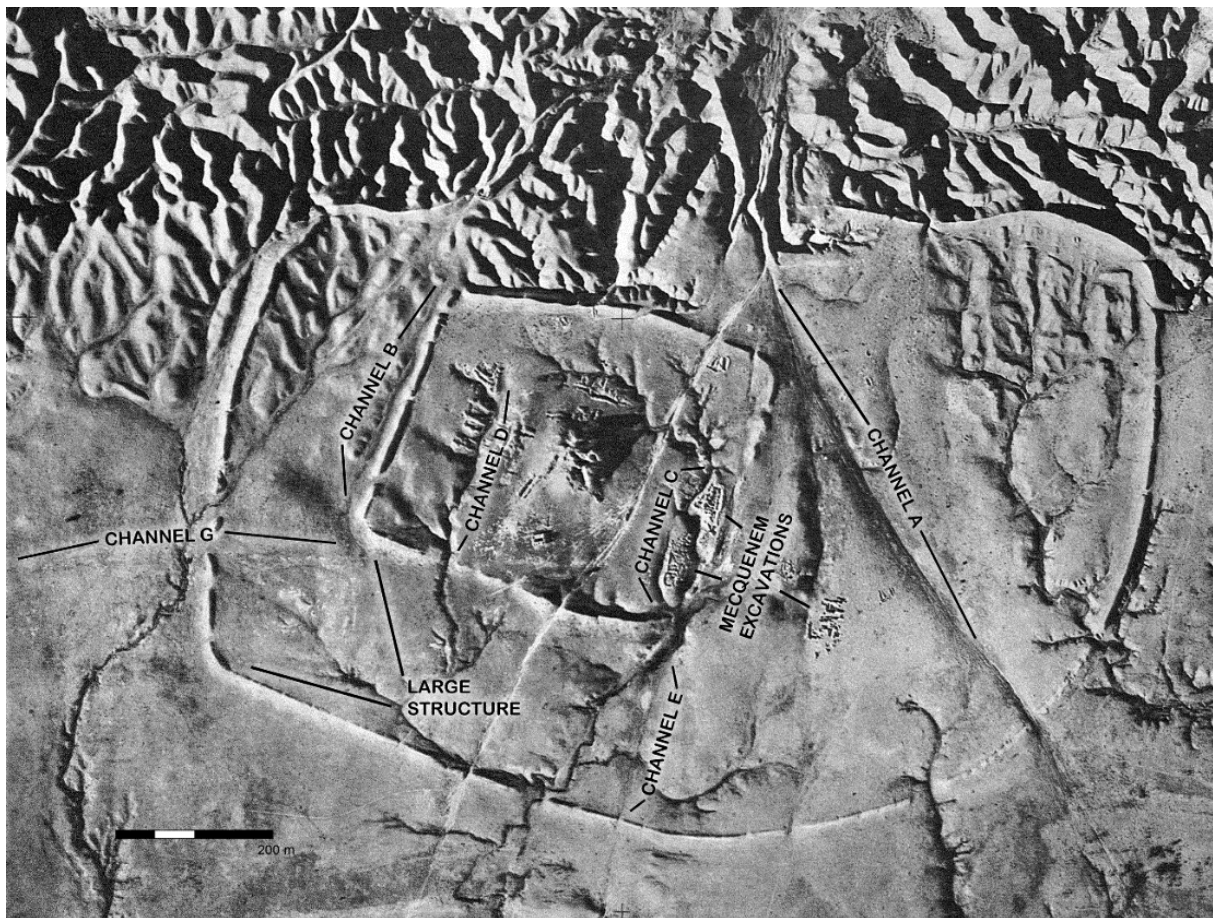


Fig. 96: Possible residences, after Ghirshman 1968: Plans 7, 9, 14



Magnetometry and remote sensing in the Outer City reveal further structures that could be further palatial architecture or some of the unidentified temples listed in inscriptions. Architecture possibly related to the palaces appears on the magnetogram throughout District 2 (Fig. 95.C), an at least 6 ha area between the palaces and the Middle Wall (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plans 6-9). Elsewhere, in District 5, the area of the Outer City southwest of the Middle Wall, the magnetogram reveals a large rectangular building with straight sides and large courts in an at least 80x50 m complex (Fig. 95.E), and in District 6, the west corner of the city, another about 200 m square enclosure wall appears on aerial photographs (Fig. 97, left corner).



*Fig. 97: Aerial photograph before Ghirshman excavations, after Ghirshman 1966: Pl. 2, with water channels and possible monumental construction indicated, after Carlson 2014: 3.*

### **IIIb. The Uninscribed City**

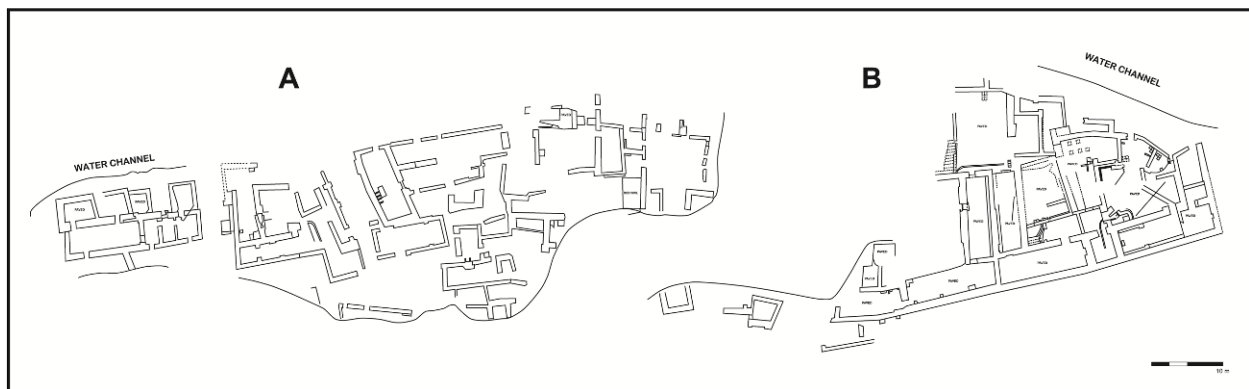
#### **IIIb.i. Inner City residences**

Temples and the avenues and courtyards that link them take up about 8 ha of the 96 ha total city area. Ghirshman would have this number closer to 17 ha since he labeled the entire area within the Middle Wall the Temenos, a Greek term that defines an area cordoned off for the placement of temples. However, besides the Temple of Napiriša, which is connected to the ziggurat precinct, only two temple complexes occupy this Temenos and these temples are only in one area along the northeast wall. The total Temenos area taken up by temples and the broad avenues that link them to the gates is about 5.5 ha. Archaeologists have subjected much of the rest of the middle-walled area to either excavation or magnetometer survey, and densely-packed nonreligious structures appear to fill up the other 9 ha of the space within the Middle Wall, which I will call the Inner City rather than the Temenos.

District 12, the 4 ha of the Inner City northwest of the ziggurat precinct, appears have been a densely-packed slum. Excavations by Ghirshman and Mecquenem found structures with straight thin walls that are made of fragmentary bricks and often start and stop arbitrarily (Fig. 96.A). These structures contained reused inscribed bricks and evidence of domestic habitation, such as rudimentary kitchens, multiple hearths, millstones, and coarse pottery (Ghirshman 1968: 45-46; Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 25). Ghirshman believed these structures were sparse temporary dwellings for workers who built the city (Ghirshman 1968: 44-45), but magnetometer results show that these kinds of structures fill up almost the entire 4 ha area and fit into a somewhat regular grid (Fig. 95.B) (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plan 7).

Mecquenem and Mofidi Nasrabadi both excavated different areas of District 11, the south section of the inner city, and found clustered buildings that had walls made of fragmentary bricks,

some inscribed, and contained many ovens, hearths, mortars, pestles, millstones, and sieves (Fig. 98.A) (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 34-38; Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 46-92, Plan 7). Mecquenem and Ghirshman both also excavated a 60 x 25 m structure in District 11 near the center of the southeast Inner City (Fig. 96.B & Fig. 98.B). This structure had thinner walls than the temples, but like the temples contained baked brick pavements, glazed tiles, stone door hinges, and a 1 m thick baked brick façade on the exterior wall (Ghirshman 1968: 46; Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 34-38). The southeast part of the building is mostly straight and square but the northwest walls curve to fit around a ravine that appears to continue along the northwest side of the other structures that Mecquenem excavated in District 11 (Fig. 98). The back rooms contained large mortars and millstones and a very fine whetstone handle in the shape of a ram's head.



*Fig. 98: Mecquenem excavations in Sector 11, after Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: Pl. 12-13. See Fig. 97 for location*

### **IIIb.ii. Outer City residences**

Residential areas from different social groups stretch across the 83 ha Outer City that lies between the Middle and Outer Walls. I have already described the palatial residences in the west and the possible further residences in District 2 (See 5.Va.iii). In District 8, the north corner of the outer city, Ghirshman excavated fragments of further residential structures (Ghirshman 1968: 93-

95). While the bricks in most of Al Untaš Napiriša's buildings are made of fine alluvial soil from the banks of the river, the bricks of the buildings in District 8 are made of the rocky soil of the ridge. Five small rooms remain of a structure that sits near the elevation of the palaces, and the remains of another structure consist of an L-shaped apartment, which has a similar layout to Palace III's apartments, around a fragment of a court. The material found in these structures is unlike that of the rest of the site, and includes Elamite goblets (Ghirshman 1968: 95 #3&5), a Kassite goblet (Ghirshman 1968: : Pl. 97.GTZ 1110; Baqir 1945: Pl. 23; Parrot 1968: 221; Zettler 1993: Pl. 81.c), globular sometimes painted pots with no parallels (Ghirshman 1968: 95 #1, Pl. 97.GTZ1111), several small bowls or pots similar to Haft Tappeh examples (Ghirshman 1968: 95 #6, Pl. 97.GTZ1005, 1096, 1103, 1104), and a very crude version of a kind of high-stemmed cup found elsewhere in the site (Ghirshman 1968: 97.GTZ1101).

Mecquenem carried out excavations in the Outer City in District 4. Michalon notes that the walls found here are similar to the walls of the structures in District 11 (southeast Inner City) but with higher quality masonry and more regularity to the walls. He also indicates that a great amount of material was found there compared to other trenches, and this material includes glazed faience vases, inscribed stone weights, millstones, hammers, and flint blades (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 39, 44, 56). The stone weights and tools indicate some kind of production and commerce, and the glazed vases and high quality masonry are indicative of a high degree of wealth in this area. Mofidi Nasrabadi notes that District 4 had the highest concentration of material found in his surface survey of parts of the city (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 3-6), and magnetometer results show an abundance of structures, including a 200 m<sup>2</sup> thick-walled courtyard (Fig. 95.D), covering an area of at least 7 ha (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plan 9.2).

An area just to the south, which covers about 10 ha between District 4 and the Nusku Sanctuary, contains large magnetic disturbances likely caused by some kind of pyrotechnology (Fig. 95.F) and may have been used for industrial production. In Mesopotamian cities, production took place both in concentrated areas (Carter 1989-90; J. N. Postgate 1990: 104; Stone 1991: 240; 2007: 227) and within residential neighborhoods (Stone 1987; 1991). The same appears to be the case in Al Untaš Napiriša given the production tools and refuse also found in the excavations of residential structures. The temples were also involved in production of goods as evidenced by the remains of metal and pottery production found in the Temple of Kiririša and Temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir annexes (See 5.Va.i.1-2 and 5.Vd).

#### **IV. Al Untaš Napiriša chronology**

##### **IVa. Pottery chronology**

The chronological relationships of these buildings and districts are still a matter of debate because Middle Elamite pottery dates still vary across even the most recent publications. All scholars agree that the city's foundation dates to Untaš Napiriša, but debate the date of the final Elamite occupation. Ghirshman (1966: 8) argues that the latest Elamite pottery on the site dates to the sacking of the city of Dur Untaš in 644 BC described in the annals of Ashurbanipal, while Pons (1994) dates the final occupation to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century based upon ceramic evidence. The only stratigraphic information Ghirshman that discusses comes from the Išnikarab Temple's main court, and that stratigraphy reveals two distinct pottery phases: a Middle Elamite phase dating to Untaš Napiriša and his successors and a late Middle Elamite to Neo-Elamite reoccupation of a few buildings. Pons (1994) observes that Ghirshman's report appears to show three successive layers of pottery: stocky, short-necked, 20 cm tall goblets at the court's pavement (Fig. 99.A), somewhat



Fig. 99: Chogha Zanbil goblets, after Ghirshman 1966: Pl. 64; Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Pl. 25-26; Carlson 2014: 42

longer-necked and narrower goblets 0.5 m above the pavement (Fig. 99.B), and finally very narrow 30 cm tall goblets 1 m above the pavement (Fig. 99.C) (Ghirshman 1966: 91-92, Pl. 96).

Pons argues that these different pottery types represent three distinct phases of Elamite pottery (Pons 1994: 47), but this progression does not show up at any other site and the depths of 1 and 0.5 m seem somewhat arbitrary. At Susa,<sup>47</sup> the stocky goblets (A) show up in *Ville Royale* (VR) A levels XII-IX (Gasche 1973: 97) but not in VR II. The middle level goblets (B) also show up in VR A XII-IX (Gasche 1973: 93) and VR II level 11 (Miroschedji 1981: 58-

59). Both A and B goblets occur at Haft Tappeh (Negahban 1991: 28, Fig 5 #52, 53), with no contextual reason to date the B goblets to a later phase as suggested by Pons (Pons 1994: 46). A and B goblets also occur together in the palaces of Al Untaş Napiriša without indication of stratigraphic relationships (Ghirshman 1968: 79, Pl. 88, 92) and in the same level of a house in Sector 11 (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 52-57; Pl. 25-26, 46-51). Because these goblets lack any clear

<sup>47</sup> For levels chart see Steve *et al* 2005: 389-390

stratigraphic differentiation aside from the one questionable Išnikarab Temple example, separating two chronological phases based upon A and B goblets is untenable.

The narrow 30 cm tall goblets (C) are clearly from a later phase than the initial occupation of the city, since C goblets do not show up until VR A level 9 and VR II level 10 (Gasche 1973: 93), and people built steps into the doorways of the Išnikarab court so they could ascend to the court's elevated floor that had built up over time (Ghirshman 1966: 91). Miroschedji dates VR II level 10 to the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Miroschedji 1981: 36-37, 58-59), and such goblets are also found in level IVA at Malyan, dated by Carter to 1250-1150 BC based upon C14 dates (Carter 1996: 14-16). Most of the structures at Chogha Zanbil contain A and B goblets. Only the *palais hypogée*, the southeast city gate, and several open earth tombs also contain C goblets.

Except for the *palais hypogée*, residential structures, like most temples, contain only A and B goblets (Ghirshman 1968: 45-46; Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 25; Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Pl. 25-26, 46-51). Mofidi Nasrabadi, however, dates the pottery from his excavations in District 11, which includes both A and B goblets and no C goblets (Fig. 99) (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Pl. 25-26, 46-51), to the 10<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 90-92), despite using pottery from late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium VR II level 11 as comparanda (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 100, 104-105; Miroschedji 1981: 40). Elsewhere, Mofidi Nasrabadi argues that the enigmatic assemblage of District 8, which he finds comparable to material from Haft Tappeh, indicates that District 8 is the earliest occupied residential area and District 11 was not occupied until several centuries after the foundation of the city (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2013: 47-8). However, Districts 8 and 11 contain similar Elamite goblet styles (Ghirshman 1968: 95 #3; Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Pl. 47), and the other enigmatic material of District 8 discussed above is not found anywhere else in the city. District 11 and other residential architecture contain similar goblets to those found in the initial phases of the

temples, and so, in terms of a relative site chronology, the temples, residences of the inner city, and palaces all likely date to the reign of Untaš Napiriša.

#### **IVb. Inscription chronology**

The different inscription formulae that appear on inscribed bricks and the context of these bricks (Table 1) allow for a relative chronology of temple building during the reign of Untaš Napiriša. Understanding this sequence of temples helps to better discern the city's different planning phases and the implementation of the urban plan. The use of Type 2 and 3 inscriptions on the Inner City temples (East Temple Complex, Temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir) show a clear correlation between inscription formula and building phases. The Type 2 inscriptions of these temples are mostly found reused as parts of the foundations or gutters whereas the inscriptions *in situ* in the walls are all Type 3. The Type 2 inscriptions were likely from an earlier versions of these buildings that were torn down and their baked-bricks used for structural and water tight components of the surviving temples.

Temples containing Type 1 inscriptions are likely the earliest temples, because Type 1 inscriptions appear on the Temple of Inšušinak that was sealed off by the ziggurat and most of the temples with Type 1 inscriptions do not survive. These temples may have been dismantled for material to build the ziggurat since the few bricks found for these temples were mostly built into the ziggurat or its surroundings. The Temples of Kiririša and Napiriša also contain Type 1 inscriptions. These two temples and the Temple of Inšušinak were likely the original temples in the ziggurat precinct since these three deities are often associated (Steve 1967: 25-26; Malbran-Labat 1995: 59-61) and several inscriptions mention them together as the three deities that protect the city (Steve 1967: 13-21; 60-71; 105-107).



The Temple of Išnikarab, which is the only temple in the ziggurat precinct to use Type 2 inscriptions, may date along with the other temples containing Type 2 inscriptions to a second building phase. Išnikarab is not otherwise associated with Napiriša, Kiririša, and Inšušinak (Steve 1967: 27) and her temple has evidence that it was built onto earlier constructions. For example, the back wall of the ziggurat precinct extends very straight behind the Temple of Kiririša before suddenly bulging out to meander around the Temple of Išnikarab and then continuing on the other side of the temple at a haphazard angle. One of the interior walls of the Temple of Išnikarab's main court also has appears to have originally been an originally exterior wall since it is made of baked bricks and has niches and buttresses. This wall was probably an exterior wall of an earlier structure, possibly the East Temple of Kiririša, which is split from the West Temple of Kiririša by the Išnikarab Temple (Ghirshman 1966: Plan 2).

This sequence of inscriptions and the available archaeological data reveal a tentative sequence of temple construction phases. The city's earliest manifestation contained a courtyard temple to Inšušinak, the surviving temples of Napiriša and Kiririša, and many other lesser temples or shrines either in the vicinity of these temples or elsewhere. At some point, the urban planners developed a new vision for the main temple precinct, dismantled several of the early temples, erected a ziggurat within the courtyard temple, and set up a group of temples with Type 2 inscriptions along the northeast side of the Inner City. They subsequently replaced these Inner City temples with new temples containing Type 3 inscriptions and golden statues. Sometime after the construction of the ziggurat, city authorities joined Napiriša and Inšušinak together in the *kukunnum* and new renovations happened all over the city. They added both the Akkadian inscriptions that dedicated the *kukunnum* to Napiriša and Inšušinak and the bilingual city gate inscriptions that dedicate the *kukunnum* and the whole city to these two gods. Type 4 inscriptions

and inscriptions on the circular pedestals in front of the ziggurat both extol the king's long reign (Malbran-Labat 1995: 70; Steve 1967: 23-24; 51) and were perhaps added late in Untaş Napiriša's reign when the ziggurat and other structures were rededicated.

The tearing down and replacement of so many temples resulted in the abundant fragmentary bricks used in construction throughout the site, but Ghirshman publishes almost no stratigraphy and makes little indication of so many rebuilding and restoration phases. However, he must have found evidence of rebuilding throughout the site and not published since he neglects to mention known evidence, such as the abundance of reused bricks discussed in detail by Steve (1967) and Mecquenem and Michalon (1953). Mofidi Nasrabadi also re-excavated the southeast gate of the Middle Wall, published by Ghirshman like most other structures without stratigraphy, and discovered three separate paved floor levels, much evidence of restorations, and a second façade rebuilt onto the exterior of the gate towers (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 29-37).

Al Untaş Napiriša was a city, like any other, under constant construction. New buildings went up alongside old and the winter rainstorms of Susiana left mudbrick buildings in constant need of repair. Like at Kar Tukulti Ninurta, the builders may have used rushed methods to erect the whole city at once, and so the initial buildings were not very sturdy. Beginning with the earliest constructions in the city, construction refuse left a large supply of recycled fragmentary bricks, some inscribed, which were used in both meager houses and monumental architecture (Ghirshman 1966: 12). The reuse of bricks is not indicative of late squatters as may be assumed (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 32; Mofidi Nasrabadi 2013: 47), but rather a construction technique used throughout the city as a byproduct of active construction projects, which involved the greater population engaged in interactive planning of the new city's structures and functions.

## **V. Al Untaš Napiriša: The urban environment**

Building decay is one of many difficulties Al Untaš Napiriša's residents would have faced while living on the desolate Haft Tappeh ridge 35 m above the Dez River. The ridge's harsh terrain contrasts with the lush surrounding landscape of the Susiana Plain. The ridge's soil is composed of coarse regosols with sparse vegetation that is only suitable as pasture (Moghaddam 2008: 81-82; Dewan and Famouri 1964), and the groundwater is brackish and undrinkable (Ghirshman 1968: 96-100). Because of steep slopes and minimal vegetation on the ridge, heavy winter rains cut across the landscape as sheetfloods and streamfloods, exacerbate erosion (Moghaddam 2008: 66), and result in an undulating terrain of deep gullies that cut across the entire surface of the ridge. The winter rains would have also flooded areas of the city and eroded the mudbrick buildings. The ridge land is only usable as pasture and the Dez floodplain below, due to the intense meandering of the river in this area, is a large marshland that, while containing abundant timber, is mostly unusable for fields. There are only about 200 ha of cultivatable land within 3 km to support this 96 ha city, and so, for food, the capital's residents would likely need to rely on other settlements throughout the region.

The city's position also makes water procurement difficult, and the city would face shortages or excesses of water depending on the season. During the summer, residents would either have to haul water up from the river 35 m below, reserve water from the winter rains, or build a canal from a source elsewhere. A few reused bricks found within the city dedicate the construction of a canal by Untaš Napiriša (Steve 1967: 109-111), and Ghirshman uncovered a 350 m<sup>3</sup> reservoir built into the northwest Outer Wall and linked to a canal coming in from the northwest (Ghirshman 1968: 96-100). Ghirshman projects that the canal came from Pa-i-pol on the Karkheh River about 55 km to the northwest where a Sassanian bridge dam once redirected water to the Shush Plain

(Fig. 101) (Ghirshman 1968: 98-100; Adams 1962). Graadt van Roggen, a hydraulic engineer, investigated Pa-i-pol in 1904 and excavated a primitive canal that predated the Sassanian canals (Graadt van Roggen 1905: 190-198) (Fig. 100). He dated the primitive canal to the Middle Elamite Period by comparing the amount of sediment in the two derelict canal heads. His dating methods are not precise enough to actually place the canal in a particular period, but he does show that at least some canals at Pa-i-pol predated the more massive Sassanian irrigation works.

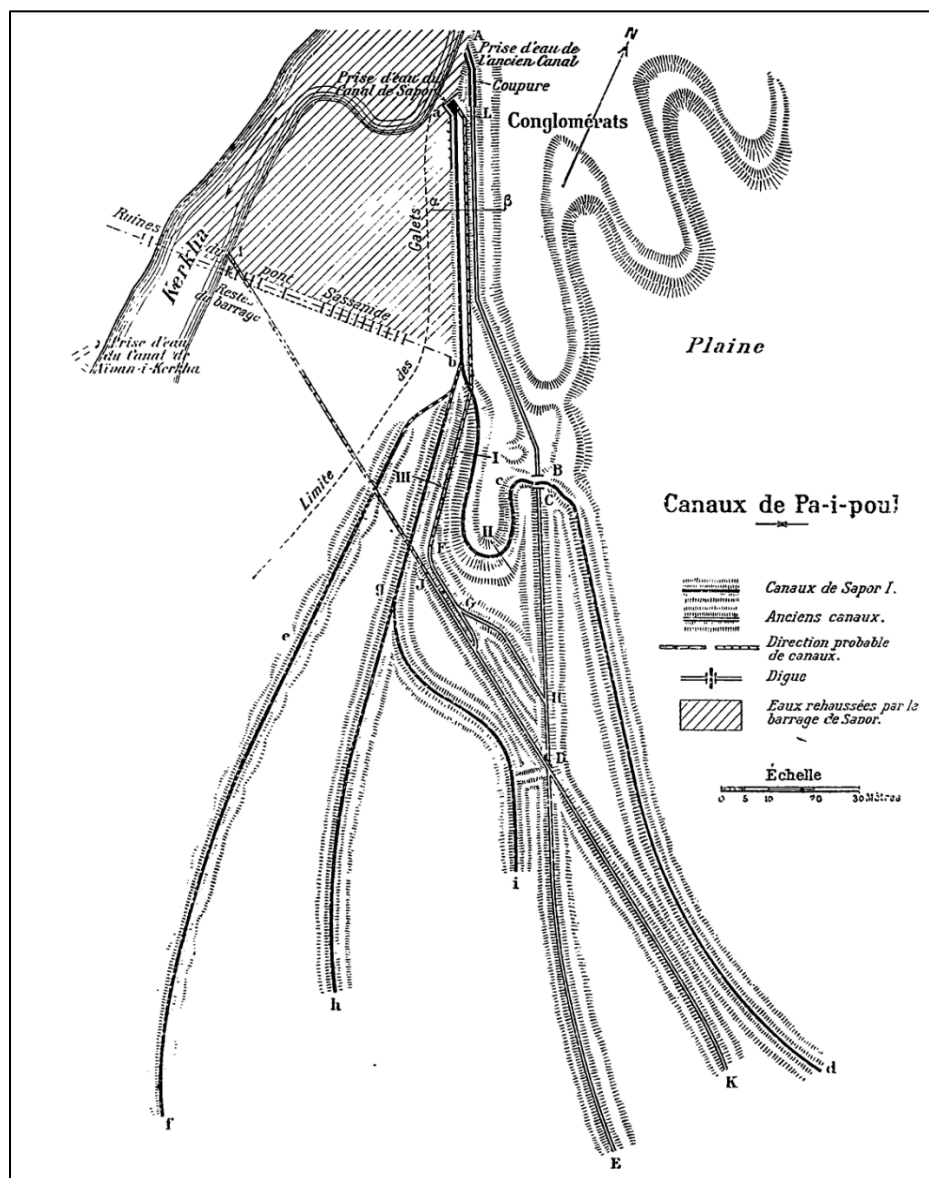


Fig. 100: Pa-i-pol after Graadt van Roggen 1905: 192

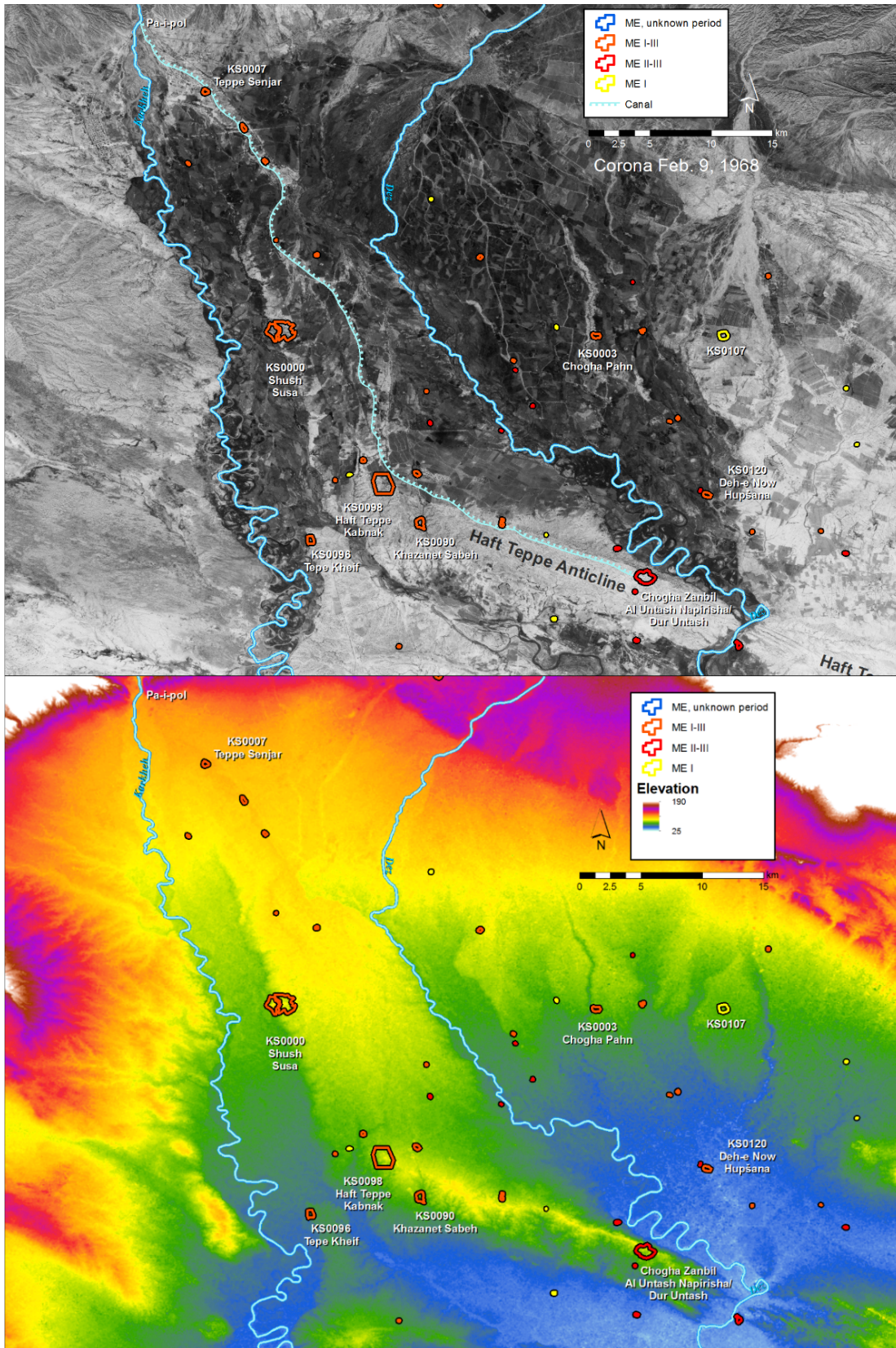


Fig. 101: Possible Canal from Pa-i-pol to Al Untaş Napiriša; Top: Corona, Bottom: SRTM

Fig. 101 shows the course the canal may have taken from Pa-i-pol based upon the elevation of the plain. The canal would have started at about 110 m in elevation and descended passing just east of Susa and Haft Tappeh before moving east across the Haft Tappeh Ridge to reach Al Untaš Napiriša at about 75 m in elevation. The canal came upon the ridge near the Middle Elamite site KS-79 where the elevation of the plain and the ridge are both about 75 m, but the canal would have to go through an 80 m high hump on the edge of the ridge. Fig. 102 shows a deep trench that cuts through the hump near KS-79 and from there a straight darkened line with possible spoil banks runs along the ridge perpendicular to the natural northeast-southwest channels. Despite dating issues, archaeologists have had much success identifying canals by using remote sensing to observe the spoil banks and earthworks that line canals and the darker soils that forms from greater moisture retention in their beds (Adams 1981: 28-32; Altaweel 2008: 72; fig. 24; Hritz and Wilkinson 2006; Stone and Zimansky 2004: 405; Ur 2005; Wilkinson *et al.*: 2005: 27-32; 2010). Here, however, given the natural gully-ridden landscape of the ridge, confirming whether or not features are actually canal traces needs excavation, and recent surface clearance for horticulture just to the west of Chogha Zanbil has revealed clear subsurface vestiges of this canal, visible on the 2017 satellite image in Fig. 102.

The location shown in Fig. 102 is the best spot on the ridge for the canal, because if it went farther to the north, it would have to climb to a greater elevation and if it went farther to the south, it would descend to lower elevations and have to come up to reach the city. Upon reaching the city, the canal could feed the basin uncovered by Ghirshman, but the basin would neither have enough volume to supply water to the whole city nor would it likely be able to hold back the discharge of a 65 km long canal. The canal would enter the city a little to the southwest where there is a large hole in the wall that was not caused by one of the natural drainage channels (Fig.

88.G, Fig. 97.G, Fig. 102.G). Fig. 97 tracks some possible spoil banks continuing into the city from there, but the rest of the course of the canal is unclear.



*Fig. 102: Location of possible canal on Haft Tepe Ridge leading from KS-79 to Chogha Zanbil, after Carlson 2014: 47*

While experiencing water shortages for part of the year, the city would have faced problems with excess water from the strong rains and erosion on the ridge during the winter. Cities, by covering an area with buildings and roads, change the flow of water through an area (Douglas *et al* 2008:188), and the three enclosure walls and other structures of Al Untaş Napiriša no doubt constricted the natural drainage of the ridge. The city would need a drainage system to channel the flow of water. Almost every building in the city has some kind of drainage consisting of either clay pipes or brick-lined channels, and the city walls and the ziggurat have drains around their

perimeter at regular intervals (Auberson 1966; 1968). A long straight channel that cuts across the east half of the city at the base of the palace mound (Fig. 88.A & Fig. 97.A), a straight trench running from the south corner of the Middle Wall to the Outer Wall (Fig. 88.E & Fig. 97.E), and a ditch along the external face of the Northwest Middle Wall (Fig. 88.B & Fig. 97.B) were likely drainage channels constructed to channel water through and out of the city. Because channeling water into specific places increases its speed and destructive power and water will attempt to regain its natural meandering course (Mustafa 2005: 579), these channels would have needed constant upkeep to maintain consistent drainage. The drainage ditch in the northwest appears to have failed during the city's occupation since the west corner of the Middle Wall had been destroyed by the flow of water and shoddily repaired during antiquity (Ghirshman 1968: 2-8).

## **VI. Al Untaš Napiriša: Social organization**

Elizabeth Stone observes that canals, like walls, in Mesopotamian cities divided the city and segregated residents since wide water channels could only be crossed either by bridges or ferries at certain spots (Stone 1991; 1999; 2007). At Al Untaš Napiriša, the channel at the base of the palace mound (A) separated the palatial section of Districts 1 and 2 from District 4, the channel leading from the south corner of the Middle Wall (E) separated Districts 4 and 5, and waterways in the Inner City separated the inscribed spaces of the temples from the unscribed spaces of the neighborhoods. The northwest walls of the structures excavated by Mecquenem in District 11 of the Inner City follow the edge of a ravine that must have existed when the buildings were constructed (Fig. 88.C, 6, & Fig. 97.C) (Mecquenem and Michalon 1953: 34), and the buildings of Mofidi Nasrabadi's excavations in District 11 also seem to follow a different channel to the



northwest (Fig. 88.F) (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: Plan 30). Another large channel also runs between the residences of District 12 and the Išnikarab/Kiririša Temple Complex (Fig. 88.D & Fig. 97.D).

These Inner City channels run between the neighborhoods and the ziggurat precinct and channeled torrents of water from the stairways and gutters of the ziggurat towards these neighborhoods during the winter. A small gate in the south side of the Inner Wall may have served as a drain for the ziggurat precinct (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2007: 24-25) and channels water into District 11 where waterways likely channeled the water into two large drains in the southwest Middle Wall (Fig. 88) (Auberson 1966; 1968; Ghirshman 1968: Plan 8). Two similar drains were also recently found during reconstructive work near the north corner of the Middle Wall (Mofidi Nasrabadi 2013: 309; Pl. 5). The land close to and downslope of the ziggurat thus became, rather than prime real estate as may be assumed for land close to the main temple, hazardous land where people would have endured localized flooding.

Despite general trends across the city districts, such as the use of courtyard houses and mudbrick architecture, the neighborhoods of these different segregated districts show different kinds of material remains and uses of space. The neighborhoods overall seem to be segregated based upon class, especially as one moves southeast to northwest (Fig. 96). The city's richest residences, the palaces, are at the highest point in the southeast of the Outer City and are separated from the rest of the city by a large channel (A). District 4, another apparently wealthy area, is just to the west across the channel, while District 8 in the far northwest corner contains structures that appear to be economical copies of the palaces. Residential space near the main temple in the Inner City, which was more prone to flooding and at a 10 m lower elevation than the palaces, was less desirable. District 12, located in the northwest Inner City and probably the poorest district in the city, could be called an inner city ghetto. Its residents were limited to fragmentary bricks from

construction waste for building their dwellings and were concentrated behind the temples. They could not easily access the rest of the city since the walls surrounding District 12 have no gates. Despite proximity to the main temples, people in this area would have been out-of-sight and well controlled - an ideal location for the dwelling of conscripted workers.

District 12, the dwelling place for the city's poorest workers and probably slaves, borders areas of industrial production. Large brick lined vats near the north corner of the Middle Wall seemed to have been used in the production of plaster and bitumen (Ghirshman 1968: 34; Plan 6), and, just to the southeast of District 12, workers produced door parts in the Kiririša annex, which they could have accessed the via a service entrance in the back of the Išnikarab temple. The Temple of Hišmitik and Ruhuratir also borders District 12 and has a workshop annex. The temples surrounding District 12 seem to have specialized in different kinds of industry. The Kiririša annex specialized in door parts (at least at the time it was abandoned), while Hišmitik and Ruhuratir specialized in pottery production. These temple workshops, which were probably worked by laborers or slaves rather than priests, created direct points of interaction between the servile population and the inscribed sacred spaces of the temples. These workers lived segregated from the Inscribed City but had to enter its monumental spaces since they performed industrial labor within the temples. These spaces blurred the lines between sacred and profane, and the objects people produced, such as inscribed and glazed bricks managed to circulate out of the inscribed city and into the uninscribed city where people lived.

Evidence from tombs also illustrates class segregation by district. The richest tombs are underneath the *palais hypogée*, and two less grand but still wealthy vaulted tombs with unbaked brick construction, precious stone and metal grave goods, and three bodies each were found in the southeast near the Nusku sanctuary and in District 7 to the southeast of the hydraulic installation.

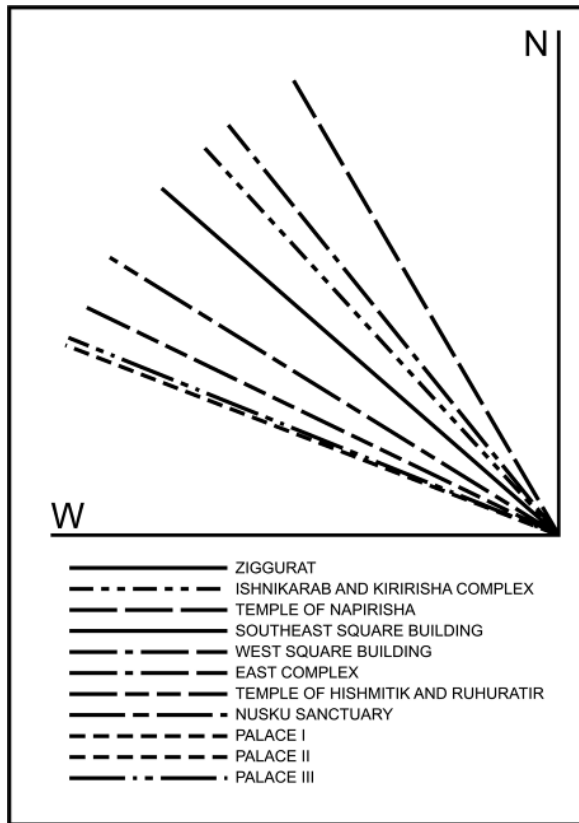
A similar vaulted tomb was uncovered near the North Complex in District 8, but like the residences, it is an economical copy. It has the same layout of the other vaulted tombs, but the walls are made of the virgin soil instead of brick. It also contained at least nine bodies instead of two or three and only pottery vessels and two rings as grave goods (Ghirshman 1968: 101-107).

As noted above (1.IIIb), Stone argues that neighborhoods in the cities of Mesopotamian city-states were not segregated based upon class. Susa VR A XV-XI, dated from the Sikkalmah to Middle Elamite phases, follow this structure since these layers contained different-sized houses controlled by the powerful merchant family of Attaru Uktuh who lived in the district's largest house (Ghirshman 1964; 1965; Steve *et al* 1980: Fig. 3-7; Carter 1979). While Mesopotamian city-state elites depended on their local support base for power, Stone believes that if the aristocracy derives its power from state institutions, then elites would live in districts segregated from commoners (Stone 1991: 236). If Stone's observations are correct, the class segregation in Al Untaş Napiriša may represent a city founded to reorganize society around dependency to the king. This social reorganization would increase the king's power over city and state. The palaces occupied the city's highest where they overlooked residences and temples and displayed royal authority and state power. The city itself was founded at a high central location that commanded a view over the landscape, but this location also made the city difficult to maintain. The city needed royal authority and state support to be sustainable. Al Untaş Napiriša's very existence embodied the government's control over the region that needed to support the capital.

## **VII. Conclusion**

At Al Untaş Napiriša, most monumental structures, even those in the same district, have different orientations (Fig. 103), wall widths, layouts (Ghirshman 1968: 37-41), and styles of

niches and buttresses, and most major paved thoroughfares run at diagonals between offset



*Fig. 103: Orientation of monumental structures in Chogha Zanbil, after Carlson 2014: 50*

entryways. Orientations also differ among monumental structures at Haft Tappeh. The coordination of monumental structures in these cities would seem to belie central planning, yet Al Untaş Napiriša's inscribed spaces bear the king's name and imply a central authority behind a major component of the city. The urban form did not result from a single coordinated effort of one institution, but instead was a product of interactive planning that combined a royal building program of inscribed spaces with the lived unscripted spaces of the population who lived under varying levels of constraint both within the city and across Susiana.

In Al Untaş Napiriša, inscribed spaces consisted of either temples or mundane spaces that Untaş Napiriša made sacred through inscribed dedications to the gods. Religion was one of the most important factors in urban identity in greater Mesopotamia, and temple dedications could involve priests and worshippers from throughout a city's hinterland. The building and commemoration of temples in Al Untaş Napiriša was an interactive effort that involved the city and the greater population in religious festivals, encouraged feelings of identity with the state and new capital, and engaged residents of the city through patronage, construction, and specialized industries. The city was not simply a pilgrimage site empty aside from temples, but instead a

combination of palatial residences, wealthy neighborhoods, poor housing, temples, tombs, and production and exchange zones. Through interactive construction among these various districts, the inscribed elements circulated beyond the inscribed spaces into the unscribed spaces where segregated residents brought inscribed fragments into their own dwellings. These inscribed bricks had rendered monumental spaces sacred, and so people placing them in their homes extended the city's sacred spaces and royal presence beyond the monumental districts.

Untaš Napiriša's inscribed spaces extended beyond this capital city at the center of Susiana. Archaeologists have recovered inscribed bricks originating from temples that Untaš Napiriša commissioned at sites along Susiana's margins, including Chogha Pahn East at the edge of the Dez Floodplain, Tappeh Gotvand situated in an intermontane valley just above where the Karun descends into the Plain, and Tappeh Bormi in Ram Hormuz at the junction between the lowland and highland areas of the Elamite state (Fig. 82) (Steve *et al* 1980: 79-82; Steve 1987: 15-18). These inscribed spaces extended Untaš Napiriša's presence throughout the kingdom and connected the center and peripheries via a sacred geography. Through inscriptions commemorating gods from across the Elamite pantheon and connections to cities on the margins, Al Untaš Napiriša embodied the territorial-state and acted as its *axis mundi*. Al Untaš Napiriša is the only city besides Susa to have a major Inšušinak (whose name means "Lord of Susa") sanctuary (Potts 2010: 63), and Al Untaš Napiriša's Inšušinak ziggurat gave the city a virtual connection to Susa, the principal religious center for lowland Elam since the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium. The temples to gods of other cities gave Al Untaš Napiriša further connections to those sacred spaces that Untaš Napiriša inscribed along the peripheries. These links between the inscriptions in Al Untaš Napiriša and inscribed spaces elsewhere helped to represent the Elamite state within the capital and extend Untaš Napiriša's presence from the capital to the far-flung places of his territories.

Despite large-scale royal investment and an initial influx of population, Al Untaş Napiriša's population significantly declined towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium. Due to the difficulty in provisioning the city, the city required a considerable amount of state investment to survive, and a prolonged weakness in royal power or drop in royal investment could result in its slow demise. As evidenced by the presence of Middle Elamite III goblets (Fig. 99: C) in only a few structures, most of the city was likely abandoned by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and if there was any occupation during the conquests of Ashurbanipal, it was negligible. The city for a time commanded the whole region of Susiana and acted as a cosmic center with spiritual connections to other inscribed temples throughout the state. However, after the Shutrukid kings abandoned the city and moved its sacred objects to Susa (König 1965: 74-75 #21-22), only a small portion of the population still considered the city a significant place.

## 6.

### CONCLUSION

About two decades ago, Alexander Joffe (1998) applied the term “disembedded capital” to several new capitals in the Near East, including Kar Tukulti Ninurta, Akhetaten, Kalhu, and Dur Šarrukin. Since this article’s publication, “disembedded capital” has become almost synonymous with newly founded capitals in the Near East (M. L. Smith 2006: 128; Van de Mieroop 2007: 68-80; Wilkinson *et al* 2005; Radner 2011: 323). Richard Blanton (1976), excavator of Monte Albán in Mexico, originally coined the term “disembedded capital” to describe a situation in which different commercial cities in a regional central-place system each have a monopoly on different products and services. As none can supersede the others or cede its commercial monopoly to the others, a new capital arises that is “disembedded” from the commercial and productive capabilities of a standard central place. The disembedded capital, rather than taking on all of the commercial and productive capacities of the competing centers, is a neutral city that governs the other centers and has a solely administrative role (Blanton 1976: 257-58).

While numerous New World anthropologists criticized the notion of a city disembedded from commerce and industry (Sanders and Santley 1978; Santley 1980; Willey 1979), Joffe found the idea a fitting theoretical framework for Near Eastern newly founded capitals:

Disembedded capitals were typically founded by new elites, either usurpers or reformers, as part of innovations designed to simultaneously undercut competing factions and create new patterns of allegiance and authority. But while intended to break away from existing power relationships, in order to function disembedded capitals were necessarily reembedded back into those structures. In an evolutionary sense disembedded capitals were short-lived phenomena, which tended to create long-term societal problems (Joffe 1998: 549).

Joffe's interpretation of this phenomenon was based in part on the prevailing understanding that Tukulti Ninurta founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta to escape from Aššur. Gilibert (2008) has previously argued against Joffe's interpretation of Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Of the three new capitals that have been the focus of this dissertation, Kar Tukulti Ninurta fits least into the disembedded capital model. Not only was it more of an extension of Aššur than a competing city, but also the Middle Assyrian State did not have numerous competing centers. Aššur had been the paramount Assyrian city since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium and Tukulti Ninurta does not seem to have intended Kar Tukulti Ninurta, only 3 km away, to be a neutral centrally-located city divorced from the previous system.

Conversely, Al Untaš Napiriša and Dur Kurigalzu show a number of similarities to the disembedded capital model. For at least 1000 years before the Kassite dynasty, the Babylonian regional system was characterized by a number of competing cities. The Kassites sought to supplant these competing factions and established a neutral administrative center. Elam had also long been a federated and fragmented system. Power often passed between the competing centers such as Susa, Anšan, Awan, and Šimaški (Potts 2016); the title "King of Susa and Anšan" in itself implies two competing centers. In true central-place fashion, Untaš Napiriša founded Al Untaš Napiriša as a new neutral administrative city at the center of the Susiana plains encircled by fairly equally placed lesser order centers (Fig. 86). He also raised the two gods of the competing centers Susa and Anšan into the new city's pinnacle temple (5.IIIa.i).

Dur Kurigalzu, the city that best fits the disembedded model, goes against one of Joffe's core tenants: that the disembedded capitals were short-lived and caused long-term problems. While both Al Untaš Napiriša and Kar Tukulti Ninurta ceased to be capitals after their founders' reign, Kassite kings and Babylonian populations occupied and expanded Dur Kurigalzu for over 200 years. Dur Kurigalzu did not "break away" from the city-states, which had already lost their status



after 200 years of prior Kassite rule, but rather culminated Kassite regional projects that refocused regional interaction and created the most stable of all Babylonian dynasties. While perhaps acting as a neutral administrative center, Dur Kurigalzu was not disembedded, but rather very well embedded into the Kassite regional system where land and cities were held by people loyal to the Kassite kings. Dur Kurigalzu at around 500 ha also likely had administrative, commercial, and productive functions.

Untaš Napiriša also attempted to ensure that Al Untaš Napiriša was well embedded in its regional system. He inscribed temples on the peripheries and made virtual connections to the regional sacred landscape through the inscribed temples at Al Untaš Napiriša (Fig. 82). Al Untaš Napiriša, however, ended up largely abandoned by succeeding dynasties that did not want to maintain a city on a desolate ridge. Kar Tukulti Ninurta, which was not disembedded from a network of competing centers, also did not long outlast its founder, although it did continue as a sizable residential city. Al Untaš Napiriša and Kar Tukulti Ninurta may have been shorter-lived than Dur Kurigalzu because they were emulating the earlier Dur Kurigalzu. Dur Kurigalzu had a specific function within the Kassites' overall regional projects, and, while they had some models from very ancient cities like Akkade, the Kassite approach to founding a city was largely their own. It was part of a regional plan of altering the Babylonian landscape to control the region through networks of rural settlements. The Assyrians and Elamites borrowed some ideas from Babylonia, which they encountered through trade, intermarriage, diplomacy, and conquest, and often tried to apply these ideas in their own regions where their new cities were less successful.

These LBA kings were experimenting with ways to exert control over large and diverse territories. This endeavor, as embodied by the titles kings used, involved approaching a problem common among kings of LBA territorial-states: how to represent totality and universal control

(Liverani 1990: 44). Liverani (1990: 25) observes that the kings of the Amarna Period powers were concerned with two kinds of audiences: an international audience to whom they exhibited “interest” through gifts and marriage exchanges, and a local audience to whom they exhibited “prestige”. To the other Great Kings, the Great King was another leader of a powerful country, a “brother”. To locals, he was a King of Totality, King of the Four Quarters, and Strong King. As these kings expanded their territories, they experimented with ways to represent totality and imperial ideas through inscriptions, art, and architecture. To have real tangible control over diverse territories and states, these kings needed to not only broadcast their power through propaganda, but also ensure that those who dwelt in the controlled regions internalized the propaganda’s meaning.

To legitimize new territorial-states to inhabitants, governments sought to define a state identity that encapsulated both territorial unity and the king’s total control. While using ancient titles that reflected universal control, kings also developed titles that reflected more clearly defined territories: “King of the Land of Karduniaš,” “King of the Land of Aššur,” and “King of Anšan and Susa”. Territorial-states and their cities involved diverse people, and rulers needed to extend themselves into the spaces with which people interacted. These kings founded new capital cities that represented the roles of ruler and ruled and changed the relationships between people and governments. To impress the state upon people’s identity, the kings who built territorial-state capitals utilized religion and history, the two strongest unifying ideologies in Mesopotamian cities and states. These endeavors manifested materially in the creation of sacred spaces, expansion of the palace, and experimentation with architecture and the content, context, and medium of royal dedicatory inscriptions.

Middle Assyrian royal inscriptions specifically defined how constructing capital cities paralleled military campaigns that defined the state's borders and controlled its people. Adad-narari I had campaign narratives that described Assyria's territorial extent inscribed into buildings in peripheral cities, and Shalmaneser I had similar campaign narratives inscribed into the fabric of the main temple at the capital Aššur. Tukulti Ninurta I's building inscriptions defined how the border regions contributed to the capital's construction, growing population, and offerings to state gods. He argued that both new capitals and campaigns to extend and secure borders supplied offerings and resources for the gods. In these kings' worldview, building a capital and campaigning to establish their territory were inseparable enterprises.

Unlike the Assyrians, Kassite and Elamites did not leave detailed narratives for future observers, but the Middle Elamite kings did leave behind far more building inscriptions. Untaš Napiriša inscribed buildings at both his capital in the center and buildings along the periphery to create a sacred geography that gave the capital at the center virtual connections to the state's other shrines. At the center lie the ziggurat of both Inšušinak, the main god of Susiana, and the top highland deity Napiriša (whose name is literally "The Great God"). Kurigalzu restored temple precincts throughout Babylonia, and erected the largest ziggurat at Dur Kurigalzu. He dedicated this ziggurat not to the city's god, but to the national god Enlil. In Northern Mesopotamia, Šamši Adad first made the god Aššur into a national god for a defined Northern Mesopotamian state, and the Middle Assyrian kings codified this relationship between the god Aššur and the territorial state by naming the territory "Land of Aššur".

These governments defined their relationships with their dependents through both power narratives and a religious identity that was manifested spatially across the regional landscape. This sacred geography placed the new capital at the center even if it was not at the geographic center.

Inscriptions commemorating the capitals use terms like Assyrian *mahazu* (cult center) or Elamite *siyan kuk* (protection of the temple) to reveal the capitals as sacred spaces. Mesopotamian cities all functioned as temple precincts for the cities' divinities, and so the new capitals, in order to function as capitals and cities, also needed to have their own sacred landscape that was superior to the more ancient sanctuaries. All the new LBA capitals had massive ziggurats and large temple precincts dedicated to the top national gods: Enlil in Babylonia, Aššur in Assyria, and Inšušinak and Napiriša in Elam. These ziggurats rose well above their surroundings and often sat on a brick pavement or platform that separated the ziggurat from the profane ground below.

LBA architecture and city planning often reflects the means that kings used to demarcate sacred space. Assyrians frequently placed *streugaben* underneath and around temples and sacred objects in order to separate these objects from the profane world (3.VIIb). The *streugaben* even littered the floors of temples where they burst from the ground and fertilized the space with sacredness. Similar objects appear in Elamite contexts, such as the hordes of small precious objects, especially faience, in the side chapels of the Al Untaš Napiriša ziggurat precinct (5.IIIa.i) and the shells, faience figurines, and other precious objects hoarded into the Pinikir Temple (5.IIIa.ii). This fertilization of sacred space shows up frequently in art, such as the water-bearing molded-brick deities on the Kara-indaš temple at Uruk (2.II), an older Mesopotamian motif, but now repeated across the entire building. Sacred flowers and trees also appear frequently in Middle Assyrian wall paintings and *streugaben* objects (4.IId.i). These architectural and artistic creations manifested the king's divine ability to create sacred spaces and implant religious identity onto the state.

The kings' personas exuded sacredness. Kurigalzu and Tukulti Ninurta are both the only kings of their dynasties to claim divinity, and these divine kings exhibited their powers of creation

through establishing sacred spaces and erecting palaces or “houses of totality” (É.GAL.KI.ŠÁR.RA and É.GAL.ME.ŠÁR.RA) that rivaled their sacred precincts. Palaces now rivaled temples for state resources, and the palaces at Aššur and Kar Tukulti Ninurta blurred the lines between palace and temple. Starting with Adad-narari, Middle Assyrian kings extended the palace into the temples by placing palace bricks in the temples (3.V, 3.VIa), and Tukulti Ninurta deposited lengthy palace inscriptions in visible parts of temples (3.VIIb.iii). Tukulti Ninurta’s New Palace was a dwelling place for the gods and complemented the Aššur temple through a sacred duality of the king and national god. At Al Untaš Napiriša the architectural splendor and decorative and inscribed elements of temples far surpassed the palaces. However, the palaces were at the highest point in the city and looked down on the ziggurat. The palaces also had some similar architectural material as the temples, such as glazed knobbed plaques and glass rods (5.IIIa.iii). Dur Kurigalzu’s palace was the largest of all, over 9 ha, and was used and expanded for 300 years. It was painted and featured frescoes of processing nobles that represented the palace’s function as a reception place for a worldly capital (2.IVa.iv).

Liverani argues that one of the ways that kings expressed universal control was by using twofold designations, such as “king of Sumer and Akkad” (Liverani 1990: 44-45). The Assyrians, beginning with Šamši Adad, extended this idea beyond titles to symmetrical temples to two gods. After conquering Babylonia, Tukulti Ninurta applied this duality to himself and the god Aššur. He founded Kar Tukulti Ninurta with its “Palace of Totality” and created a new royal title from “King of Totality”: “Sun God of all People”. Aššur, the city of the god Aššur, stood on its plateau looming over the Tigris, looking over the new capital Kar Tukulti Ninurta, just upstream on the opposite shore (Fig. 79). These two cities facing each other represented Tukulti Ninurta and Aššur as two divine beings who formed a sacred duality at the top of Assyrian society. Using the new capital to

coalesce the identity of the king and the national god Aššur also inserted the king's persona into the state's "Land of Aššur" identity.

During the LBA, kings had to aggrandize themselves to local and international audiences and needed to find different ways to express their state ideologies to these different audiences (Liverani 1990). The Kassites created the title "King of Karduniaš" to express themselves to the outside world, but within Babylonia they usually used all-encompassing imperial titles like King of the Four Quarters. The Assyrians under Aššur-uballit initially presented themselves as Kings of the Land of Aššur to international audiences, but later found this title to be a fitting expression of their territorial mandate at home. LBA Kings sought ways to exhibit their states as "modern" to their peers and to impress their subjects and neighbors, so they featured numerous points of architectural and artistic experimentation in their palaces and temples. For example, the use of bricks and inscriptions for artistic expression reached new heights in LBA cities. Kara-indaš used molded bricks to create figural friezes around a temple (2.II), and other Kassite kings also used molded brick architecture for figural decoration (Clayden 2000). Adad-narari began laying brick slabs over the façade of walls like orthostats (3.V). Tukulti Ninurta improved this technique by using multicolored glazed brick orthostats in Palace 3 and Tower K at Kar Tukulti Ninurta (4.II.d.iii-iv). He also hung 60 cm wide faience knobbed plaques (4.II.d.iii) and began using inscribed stone slabs as visible decorative elements of temples and palaces (3.Ib.iv).

The most prolific users of brick art and expression were the Middle Elamite Kings. Mesopotamian kings would stamp a few bricks, which were scattered in walls and floors, to show ownership and then cover them up. The Middle Elamite inscribed bricks were almost all hand inscribed and show up in astronomical numbers compared to the Kassites and Assyrians. The Middle Elamite kings had the bricks placed in artistic ways, such as in friezes around buildings

(5.IIIa.i). Untaš Napiriša first exhibited glazed inscriptions on knobbed plaques (5.IIIa.i) and his Shutrukid successors would refine these techniques into complex molded, inscribed, and glazed figural imagery on temple façades (Mecquenem 1922: 127-130; Malban-Labat 1995: 88-118; Lambert 1978). Like Tukulti Ninurta, the Elamites were interested in cuneiform text as something that could be displayed and exhibit their power. Steles and statues had carried display texts since the ED III period, but using the fabric of buildings as a canvas to display inscriptions was a novel concept in LBA Mesopotamia. These projects made text something that could be interacted with and experienced. Even if people could not read the king's text, the decorative use displayed its grandeur and sacredness.

The new capitals were not only mediums for symbolic expression, but also acted as administrative centers for large regions, opened up new areas of the state to cultivation, expanded regional infrastructure systems, and provided housing for displaced populations. Constructing each of these cities involved constructing or expanding massive regional canal systems that significantly enlarged the available agricultural land and linked the cities to the surrounding countryside. Each city utilized previously marginalized land: Dur Kurigalzu on a rocky outcrop along a marshy lake north of the other major Babylonian cities, Kar Tukulti Ninurta on the uncultivated east side of the Tigris, and Al Untaš Napiriša on a desolate ridge at the center of the Susiana Plain.

All three cities have previously been viewed as cities devoid of populations, and at least in Kar Tukulti Ninurta and Al Untaš Napiriša, surveys and excavations have shown otherwise. Diverse groups lived in segregated districts and supplied the workforce for the massive construction projects. Dur Kurigalzu was a long and narrow city with temple, palace, and city districts clearly separated by sometimes 1 km. Limited excavations have revealed structures across the city's 5 km long expanse, but, unfortunately, we have no data on the city's residences outside

of the palace. With respect to the overall city plan, the clear separation and order of the city's districts represented the state's ideal interaction in which the palace is placed between the people and the national god who stands set apart from all else.

At Aššur, the city's population was slowly pushed out of the monumental sector, which became a line of temples and palaces overlooking the Tigris. Tablets and inscriptions from Kar Tukulti Ninurta speak of settling prisoners of war in the capital (4.IIe), and the walled part of the city separated the monumental and royal spaces. The very open and rectangular plan of the monumental section bears stark contrast to Aššur and most other prior Mesopotamian cities. Much of the walled section is devoted to the palace, which dwarfs the temples that are subsumed by it. The enclosure walls, however, are unusual, because the north side was either not finished or not planned (4.IIa). The palace extends beyond what appears to be the northern boundary and only the southern and eastern sides of the monumental district are enclosed. The uninvestigated eastern walled section may have been planned for residential space, but most residential areas and even some temples extend out into the surrounding landscape with apparently little orthogonal planning.

At Untaš Napiriša's three enclosure walls and numerous water channels segregated space. Palaces stood at the highest point in the city and temples occur throughout the city. The area within the innermost enclosure wall exclusively holds temples, including the city's ziggurat. People lived throughout the city's other districts and were segregated by class, as indicated by the different kinds of dwellings grouped in different areas of the city. The area behind the city's ziggurat and main temple precinct, surprisingly, holds the poorest dwellings, while the richest are in the west near the main city gate. The temples had attached industrial workshops, and these production zones along with religious festivals and rituals probably made the temples the areas where most inter-district interaction took place.



The layout of cities and buildings in the LBA enhances spatial segregation and control. Old Babylonian Period temple layouts typically had a direct line-of-sight from the main entrance all the way to the cella (Fig. 36). The LBA temples at Aššur, Dur Kurigalzu, Kar Tukulti Ninurta, and Al Untaš Napiriša all have exterior doorways deliberately offset from the interior doorways, so that each access-level is invisible from the previous. At Al Untaš Napiriša, this use of offset entrances extends to the overall city layout where the entrances to buildings and the gateways between the enclosure walls are all offset from each other. These constantly offset entrances make all the cities' preserved pathways run diagonally. While segregation is apparent in an aerial view, the diagonal paths and lack of a clear view from one area of the city to another would create a disorienting experience to a person moving through the city, and this isolation would make people who dwell in segregated districts aware of their place in society. In the palaces at the highest point, a resident can look out over the city, and the effect of isolation and control is diminished. Like planners of modern capitals, planners of LBA capitals represented hierarchies, celebrated those in service to the state, rigidly segregated space based upon class or rank, and neglected neighborhood planning as a part of urban planning.

Despite separation, people interacted in the cities through constructing the monumental edifices and performing rituals that celebrated the state. The new capitals, due to their size and the ever-present lack of planning for all aspects of urban life, were constantly under construction and underwent continued experimentation while they were occupied. The palace at Kar Tukulti Ninurta constantly changed, perhaps with each building season, as it turned from a single level building with niches and buttresses to a massive terrace with a painted palace on top (4.IId.i). Temples at Al Untaš Napiriša came down, new ones went up, and its planners decided to alter its sacred precinct and add the largest ziggurat yet seen in Mesopotamia (5.IVb). The workers who built

these structures, through their spatial practices, circulated the symbolic elements of the city's representational spaces across the city into the most mundane spaces where archeologists now find them. The people who lived in the new capitals, whether forcibly relocated or willing immigrants, became a part of the city's overall symbolic expression as the presence of diverse groups from across the territory showcased the entire state within the city's sacred walls.

Both people and monuments became the legacy of these cities. In ancient and modern *ex nihilo* capitals, charismatic individuals attempted to co-opt all agency to themselves and became part of the national identity. The LBA cities preserved their founders' name, but, at least in the case of Kar Tukulti Ninurta, people reclaimed the landscape after its founders' demise. They sealed up the temples, tore down the palaces, and built their houses all over the city. Al Untaş Napiriša, built on a desolate ridge, did not fare so well as a lived space, but its landmarks were so impressive and eye-catching that Neo-Assyrian kings continued to include it in their itineraries of the region long after the city had been abandoned.

These capitals existed in a particular historical moment, the rise of peer-polity territorial-states, and their construction and occupation was very much a product of that moment. Because the new capital cities were so embedded into a particular state form, changes in state structure, ruling groups, or goals would render such nationalist projects detached from the identity that their founders sought to create. The neighborhoods might remain neighborhoods or the monuments might remain monumental, but when the identity that linked states, people, rulers, and monuments ceased, the connection between lived spaces and monuments disappears.

Lawrence Vale (2008: 14) argues that "Capitals do not merely exist; they are the various products of human will and historical circumstance. The existence of a particular form of capital in a particular location at a particular time is dependent upon a delicate and shifting balance among

many kinds of contending forces.” The circumstances for *ex nihilo* capitals include the coalescence of federated city-states in the LBA and collapse of colonial empires into nation states in the modern period. The success or failure of capitals in either period varies based on the observer and depends on the many overlapping functions of cities and states. The new capitals can embody the triumph of modernism or the birth of Assyrian imperialist art, but also fail to address the needs of displaced populations or workers who slaved away to build the monuments. New capitals are a means of imparting a national identity and the worldview of a privileged elite onto a diverse population, and in both ancient and modern contexts, the new capitals exhibit how much the rulers both know and do not know about the people whom they rule.

The need of governments to have a deep relationship with their subjects did not begin in the modern period, and throughout history, the people who governments sought to control needed to internalize elite-generated ideologies and social constructs. People interacting in *ex nihilo* capitals through, for example, construction, festivals, or trade circulated shared identities of what constituted their place within the larger state. Propaganda, as such, is interactive and must be internalized. If we archaeologists or historians wish to immerse ourselves in ancient societies that had rules, customs, and hierarchies, we must ask: how did the rules and cosmologies become a part of the identity of those who followed them?

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