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Gōzān and Gūzāna

Anatolians, Aramaeans, and Assyrians in Tell Halaf

Mirko Novák

In 2006 a Syro-German project of renewed excavations at Tell Halaf in northeastern Syria began, 77 years after the end of the large-scale explorations of Max von Oppenheim. The site is known both for its prehistoric occupation, characterized by a painted pottery, and its remains of the Iron Age, when the place was named Gōzān[1] (in Aramaic) or Gūzāna (in Assyrian). The flourishing settlement was first the capital of an Aramaean principality named Palê/Bīt-Baḫiani in the tenth and early ninth century BC, then an Assyrian provincial center between the ninth and the late sixth century BC, and finally a town of unknown function during the period of Late Babylonian, Achaemenid, and Seleucid empires. Of utmost importance are the statues and reliefs belonging to a previously unknown monumental art dating to the Aramaean period.

The renewed project is conducted by the Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées in Damascus and the Museum of the Ancient Near East in Berlin in collaboration with the Universities of Bern, Munich, Tübingen, and Halle-Wittenberg;[2] the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft supports it within the framework of its long-term funding program.

The Site

Tell Halaf is situated in upper Mesopotamia, close to the karstic sources of the Khabur, the major tributary of the Euphrates. One of the main trade routes connecting Assyria with the northern Levant and the Mediterranean passed through the region, known in Neo-Assyrian times as the *ḫarrān šarri* "King's Road" (Fig. 1).[3] The area offers good conditions for agriculture, as it is located within the stable rain-fed zone and is additionally supplied with water by a large number of natural sources. Today, Tell Halaf lies immediately south of the Syrian-Turkish border near the modern twin towns of Ras al-Ain (Syria) and Çeylanpınar

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1 The root is *gwz* "to travel through", hence the name *Gawzān* means "transit place" or simply "center"; cf. Lipinski 2000: 119.

2 The project is co-directed by Abdel Masih Baghdo (Damascus/Hassake), Lutz Martin (Berlin), and the present author. The investigation of the prehistoric levels is directed by Jörg Becker (Halle). I thank the Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées and all the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic for their helpful support and all colleagues involved in the project for their ambitious work, which has made this overview possible. I am also indebted to Domink Bonatz and Lutz Martin for the invitation to participate in the present volume.

3 The route started in Aleppo and went through Harran, Gūzāna, and Naṣibīna to Nineveh.

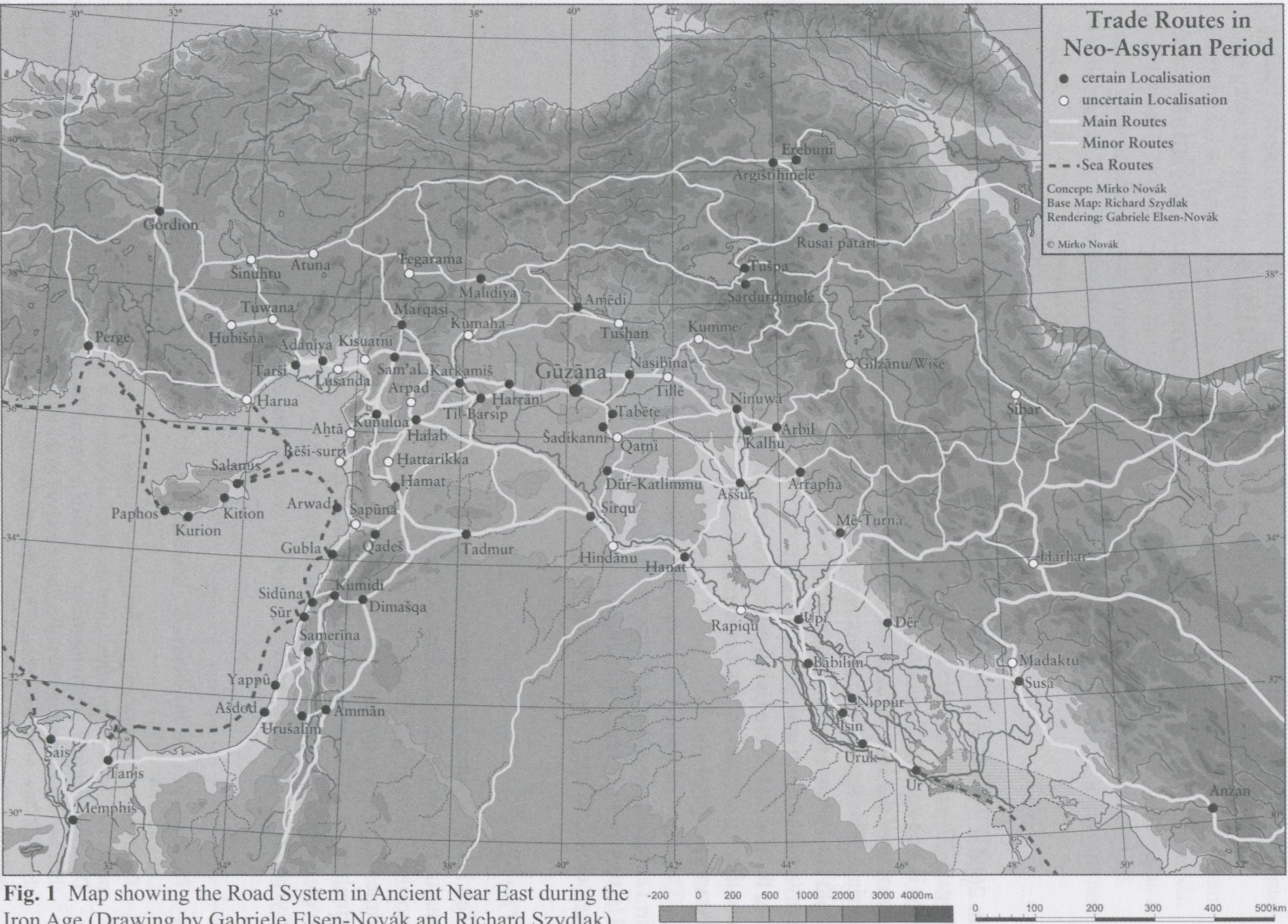

Fig. 1 Map showing the Road System in Ancient Near East during the Iron Age (Drawing by Gabriele Elsen-Novák and Richard Szydlak).

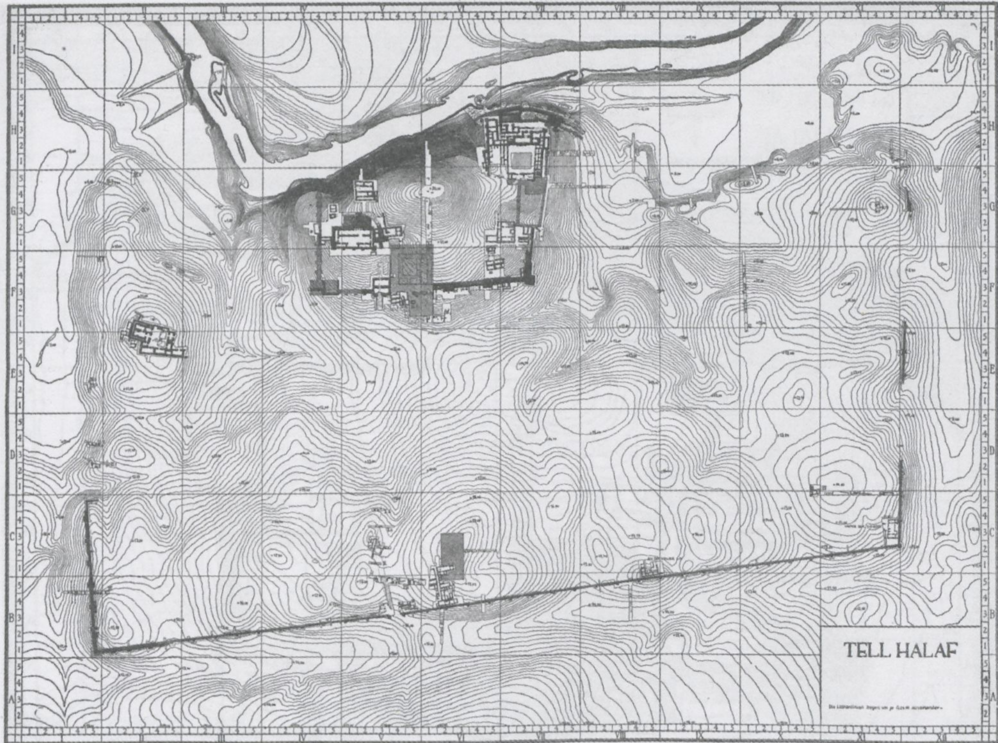

Fig. 2 Plan of the City of Gūzāna (from Tell Halaf 1950, Pl. 1).

(Turkey). Just 2.5 km to the east lies Tell Fekheriye, ancient Waššukanni (Mitanni and Middle Assyrian) / Sikāni (Aramaean and Neo-Assyrian).[4] Together with Tell Halaf it formed a twin site.

The archaeological site of Tell Halaf consists of a high mound, the tell proper and location of the Iron Age citadel (Fig. 2 and 3), and an extended lower town, enclosing the citadel to the west, south, and east. Altogether, the Iron Age settlement covers an area of approximately 75 ha *intra muros*. Within the fortified citadel, Max von Oppenheim excavated a number of buildings during his campaigns in 1911 – 13 and in 1929.[5] The most prominent were the so-called *Hilani* or "Western Palace" (Fig. 4) in the western part with the adjacent "Scorpion Gate", and the "Northeastern Palace" (Fig. 5). While the *Hilani* was extensively decorated by monumental caryatid statues and carved relief slabs and is ascribed by inscriptions to a certain Kapara, the Northeastern Palace lacked direct indications of its function or date. It was interpreted as the residential palace of Kapara. Other important buildings discovered by von Oppenheim on

4 *Cf.* the contribution of Dominik Bonatz in this volume.

5 The results were published in Tell Halaf 1943; Tell Halaf 1950; Tell Halaf 1955; Tell Halaf 1962; Tell Halaf 2010. A reappraisal of the former excavations is given by Orthmann 2002.

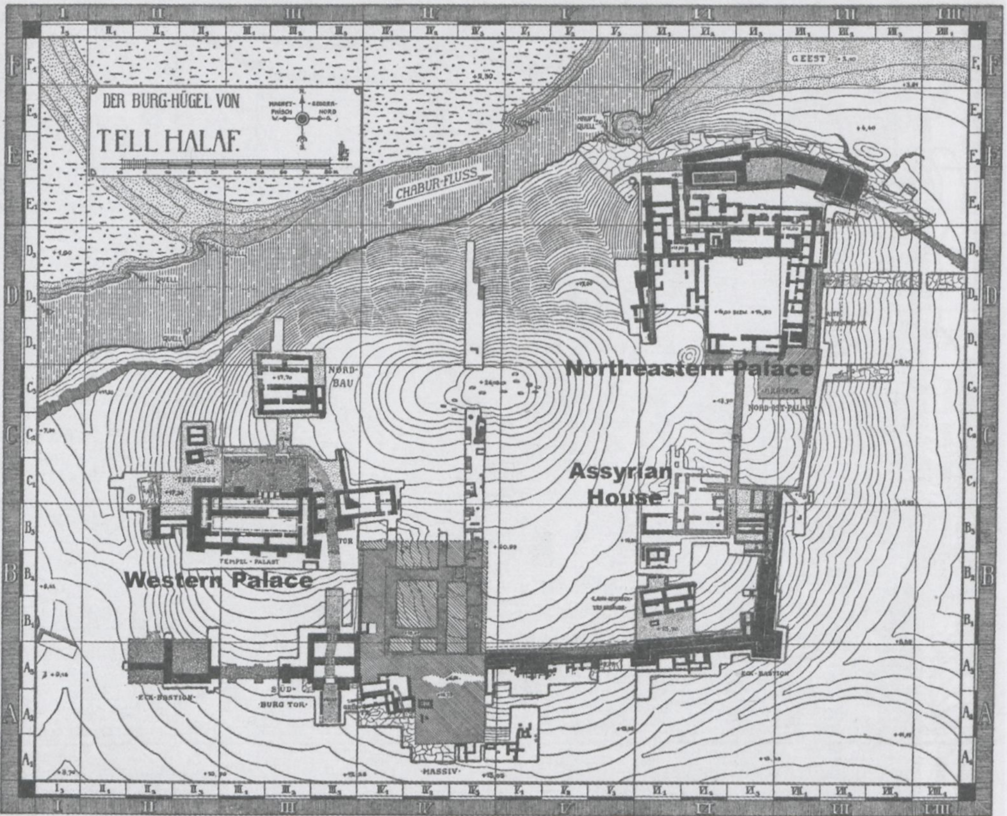

Fig. 3 Plan oft he Citadel Mound of Gūzāna with the Iron Age Buildings excavated by Max von Oppenheim (from Tell Halaf 1950, Pl. 2).

the mound were two massive mud-brick tombs north of the *Hilani* and a number of funeral chapels close to the southern citadel gate, of which two contained female statues for an ancestor's cult. The latter were buried inside a later mud-brick platform. In the lower town, the "Cult Room" (presumed to be another tomb with statues for an ancestor cult), an Assyrian temple, a couple of dwelling houses, and large parts of the defensive wall were explored.[6]

The Renewed Excavations

The aims of the joint Syro-German mission are the investigation of the nature and chronology of the prehistoric and Iron Age settlement, the spatial organization and functional structure of

6 Apart from these, von Oppenheim and his team discovered large quantities of painted pottery dating to the prehistoric occupation of the site. Thus, Tell Halaf gave its name to a period of the late Pottery Neolithic in Northern Mesopotamia. *Cf.* the contribution of Jörg Becker in this volume.

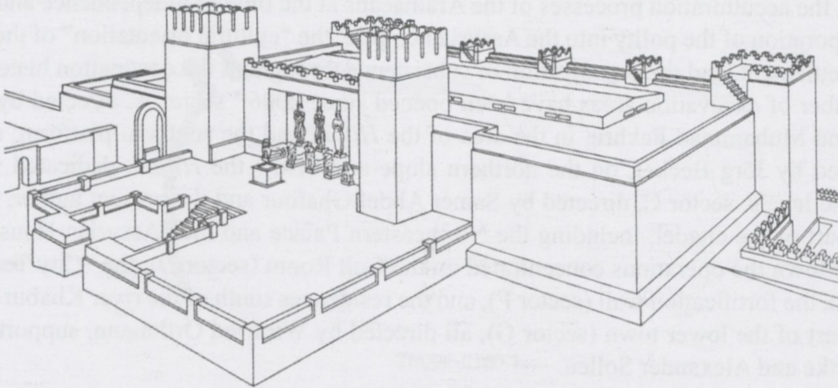

Fig. 4 Reconstruction of the *Hilani*-Palace
(from Orthmann 2002: 36, Abb. 17, after Tell Halaf 1950).

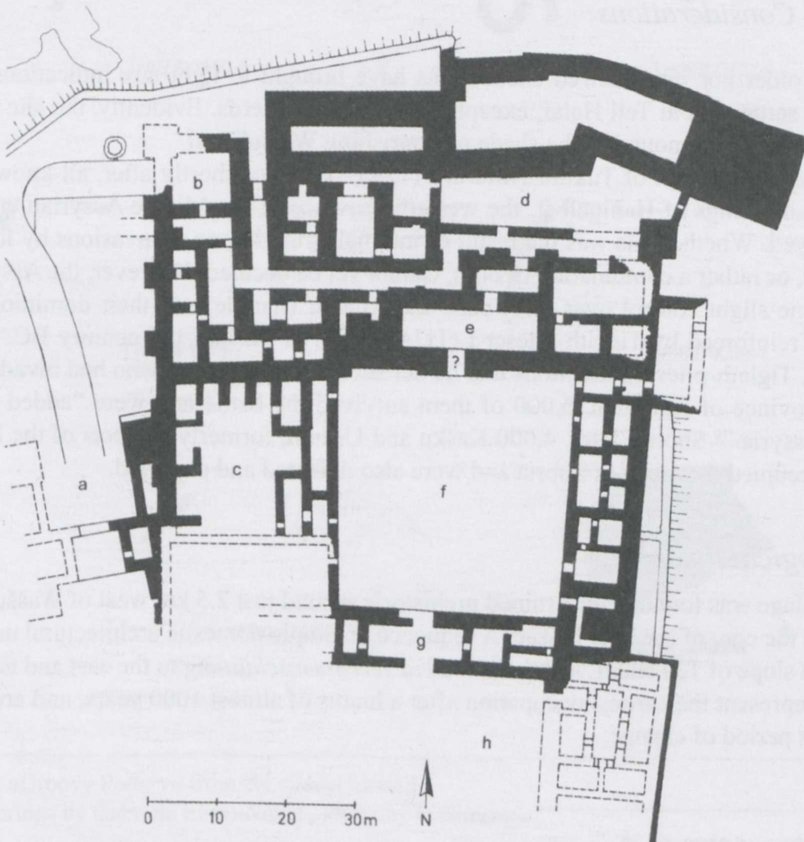

Fig. 5 Northern part of the Assyrian Governor's Palace, the so-called "Northeastern Palace"
(from Orthmann 2002: 41, Abb. 21).

the town, the acculturation processes of the Aramaeans at the time of independence and after the incorporation of the polity into the Assyrian empire, the "cultural orientation" of the Hellenistic settlement, and the organization of subsistence throughout the occupation history.[7]

A number of excavation areas have been opened since 2006:[8] sector A, directed by Lutz Martin and Muhammad Fakhru, in the area of the *Hilani* and the southern platform; sector B, directed by Jörg Becker, on the northern slope and below the *Hilani*, dedicated to the prehistoric levels; sector C, directed by Samer Abdel Ghafour and the present author, in the eastern part of the citadel, including the Northeastern Palace and the "Assyrian House". In the lower town the operations concentrated on the Cult Room (sector D), the "City Temple" (sector E), the fortification wall (sector F), and the residences south of the river Khabur in the eastern part of the lower town (sector G), all directed by Winfried Orthmann, supported by Ralf Wartke and Alexander Sollee.

The First Settlement: A Village near the Provincial Centre

Historical Considerations

Neither the older nor the renewed excavations have brought to light any indications of a Bronze Age settlement at Tell Halaf, except for a very few sherds. Evidently, the site was a ruined and abandoned mound in the shade of flourishing Waššukanni.

At the end of the reign of Tukulti Ninurta I (1233–1197) or shortly after, all known administrative buildings of Ḫanigalbat, the western province of the Middle Assyrian empire, were destroyed. Whether this was the result of internal struggles, or of invasions by foreign mercenaries, or rather a combination of both, cannot yet be decided. However, the Assyrians still had some slight control over most parts the Khabur triangle, and their dominion was temporarily reinforced by Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076) in the late 12th century BC. In his inscriptions, Tiglath-pileser I mentions that he defeated 20,000 Mušku, who had invaded the Assyrian province of Katmuḫu. 6,000 of them survived the battle and were "added to the people of Assyria."[9] Shortly later, 4,000 Kašku and Urumu, formerly subjects of the Hittite king, had occupied the cities of Šupria and were also defeated and deported.

Archaeological Evidence

The new village was founded on a ruined prehistoric mound just 2.5 km west of Waššukanni and became the core of the later Gōzān. A sequence of simple domestic architectural units on the northern slope of Tell Halaf, and the so-called *Terrassenschüttung* to the east and north of the *Hilani* represent the earliest occupation after a hiatus of almost 1000 years, and are to be dated to this period of change.

7 *Cf.* Baghdo *et al.* 2009: 8–10.
8 On the recent excavations *cf.* Baghdo *et al.* 2009; Martin/Novák 2010; Baghdo *et al.* 2012.
9 Grayson 1991: Tiglath-pileser I A.0.87.1, 62–88.

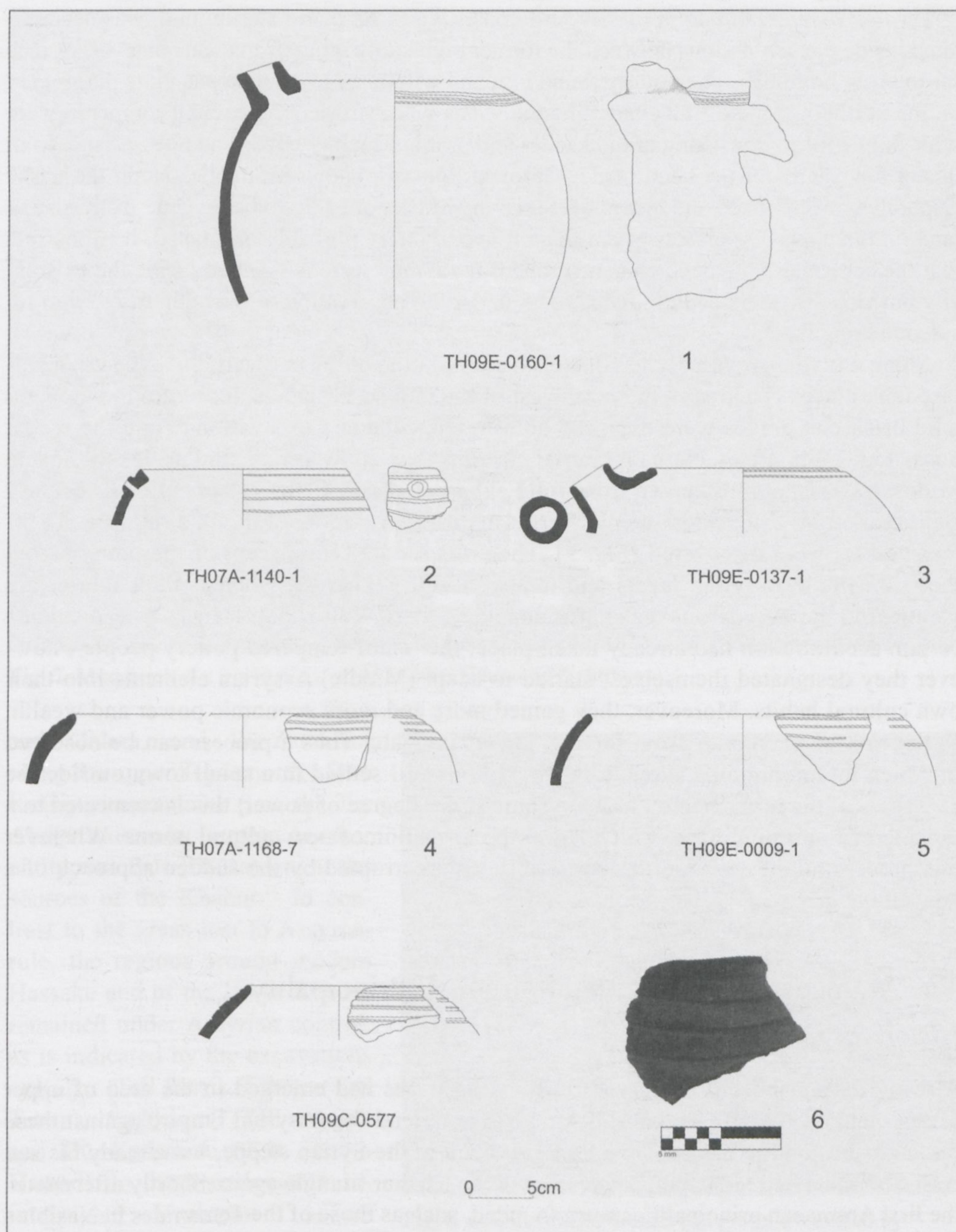

Fig. 6 »Groovy Pottery« from the citadel mound
(Renderings by Gabriele Elsen-Novák, Photo by L. Simons).

The *Terrassenschüttung*, a massive fill consisting of hard and sterile mud, was accumulated inside the depressions between the former prehistoric mounds to create an even surface for the new buildings. The pottery found in it and within some small house units discovered on the northern slope of the citadel mound was a wheel-made, crude, chaff-tempered ware with simple forms consisting of thick sides and profiles, mainly bowls and pots.[10] Aside from this, a few sherds of the hand-made 'Grooved Pottery', known from sites along the upper Euphrates,[11] were discovered (Fig. 6). Since the Mušku are said to have come from Alšu, a land on the upper Euphrates, where the Grooved Pottery probably originated, it is possible that the settlers are the deportees mentioned. If so, they were not settled inside the existing city but close-by at a newly founded town under the observation of the authorities, who resided in Waššukanni.

Along with the growth of the village, an assimilation of the new settlers to Assyrian culture took place. The area in the northwest of the mound became a burial ground. Several mud brick cist graves were explored both in Oppenheim's excavations[12] and the recent ones (Fig. 7). In architecture and burial customs they show strong similarities to the late Middle Assyrian tombs known from Tell Fekheriye, dating to the 11th or early 10th century BC. Apart from a considerable number of luxury grave goods (Fig. 8), a number of pottery vessels were discovered (Fig. 9). Their shapes are reminiscent of the pottery from the late Middle Assyrian layers and tombs in Tell Fekheriye, whereas their fabrics are identical to the Early Iron Age chaff-tempered ware in Tell Halaf. Hence, it seems that a certain acculturation had already taken place: the 'chaff-tempered pottery people', however they designated themselves, started to adapt (Middle) Assyrian elements into their own cultural habits. Moreover, they gained more and more economic power and wealth, as the rich luxury goods from the cist graves indicate. Thus a process can be observed in which the immigrants, already integrated but still settled in a small town outside the city gates of the urban centre, took on some slight degree of power; this is connected to a process of transculturation, which led to the formation of new cultural norms. Wherever this process might have led to, it was abruptly interrupted by the sudden approach of a new ethnic group.

The Aramaean Town: Capital of a Small Principality

Historical Considerations

Already during the 11th century BC Aramaean tribes had emerged in the area of upper Mesopotamia (Fig. 10). Tiglath-pileser I had to defend the Assyrian Empire against these raiding tribes on the banks of the Euphrates and in the Syrian steppe, but already his son Aššur-bēl-kala had to face the aggressors in the Khabur triangle again. Shortly afterwards, the first Aramaean principalities were founded, such as those of the Temanides in Naṣibīna

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10 Sievertsen in Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 139–184.

11 *Cf.* Bartl 2001. On some examples already discovered by Oppenheim *cf.* Bartl 1989.

12 *Cf.* Orthmann 2002: 47–50.

Fig. 7 Mud-brick cist grave discovered in 2008 (Photo by L. Simons).

and Gidara, and Bīt-Zammāni along the upper Tigris north of the Kaššiyari mountains (i.e., the Tur Abdin mountain range). Another entity was Palê/Bīt-Baḫiani at the sources of the Khabur.[13] In contrast to the areas lost to Assyrian rule, the regions around modern Ḥassake and of the lower Khabur remained under Assyrian control, as is indicated by the excavations at Kaḫat (Tell Barri), Ṭābetu (Tell Taban), Šadikanni (Tell Ajaja), and Dūr-Katlimmu (Tell Sheikh Hamad). In these settlements uninterrupted development is attested from the Middle to Neo-Assyrian Period.

Fig. 8 Golden plaque from a cist grace, excavated by Oppenheim north of the *Hilani* (from Tell Halaf 2010: 357, XV.20.4).

13 Lipinski 2000.

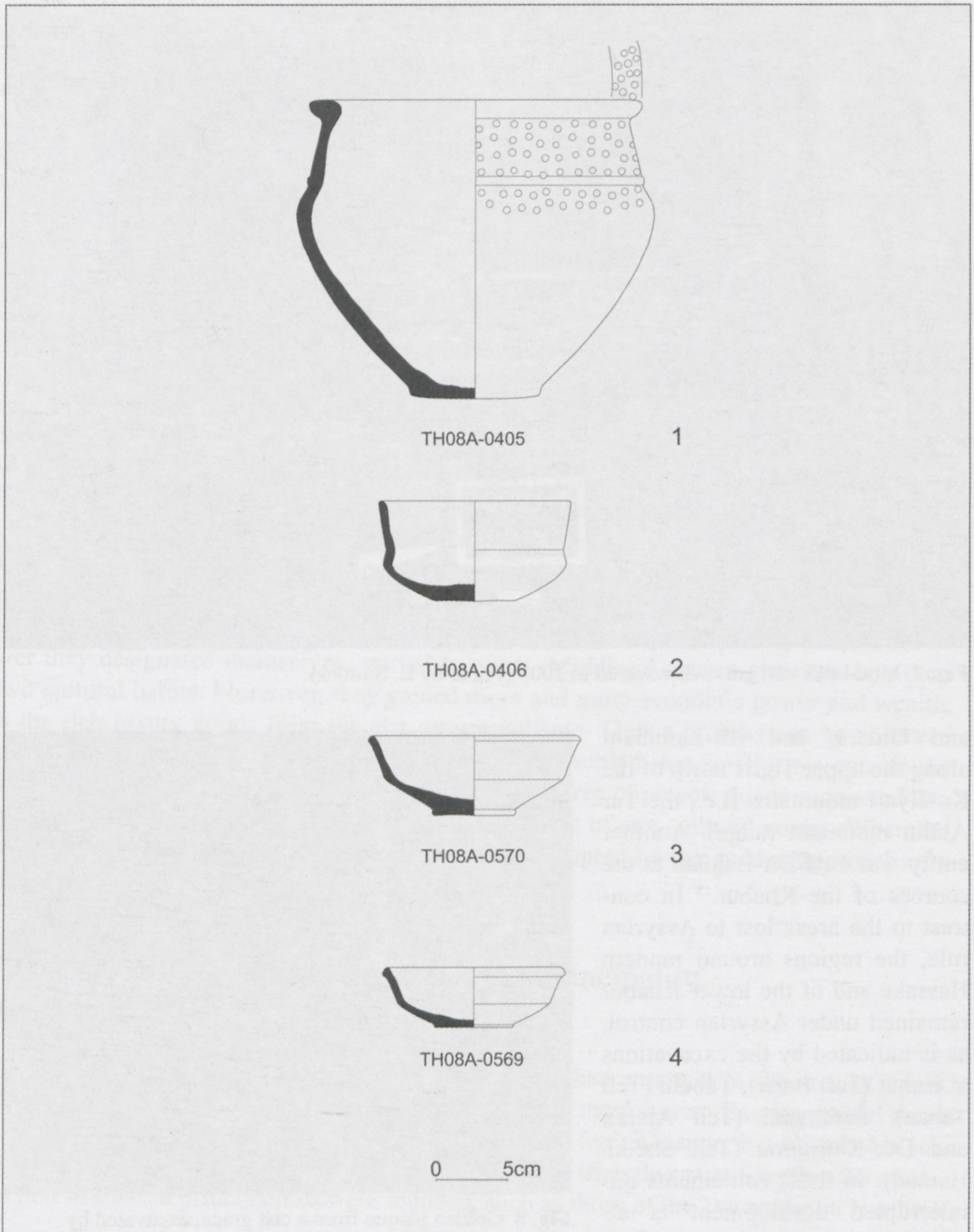

Fig. 9 Assyrianized *chaff-tempered pottery* from the mud-brick cist grave (Renderings by Gabriele Elsen-Novák).

How and where the ethnogenesis of the Aramaeans took place is still obscure. In earlier literature, a common hypothesis was that the Aramaeans were one of the Semitic nomad peoples originating from and living in the northern part of Arabian peninsula; it was simply the result of climatic and political changes in the early 12th century BC that these people started to move northwards and raid the partly depopulated regions of the Levant and upper Mesopotamia. It is likely that at least some of the immigrants may indeed have originated in the Arabian desert; the famous and powerful tribe of the *Temanayyū* (Temanides), which settled in the Khabur triangle, is most probably named after the oasis town of Taima. Still, more and more arguments support the idea that the majority of the Aramaeans were the descendants of the original Western Semitic inhabitants of the Late Bronze Age Levant and upper Mesopotamia, the lands of Kinaḫḫu/Kanaan, the Ammurru/Amorites. After the collapse of the urban system and the immigration of people from the Aegean and Anatolia ("Sea People" and others), some parts of the original population may have stayed with the immigrants, while others may have changed to a pastoral, nomadic life, joining the tribes that were already present. After a certain period, the ethnogenesis of the Aramaeans was complete.

The earliest known rulers from the Aramaean principality of Palê were Ḫadiānu, perhaps still the chief of a nomadic tribe, and his son Kapara.[14] The latter claimed in his inscriptions that he "did what his father and grandfather never had done", which probably means the act of building and residing in a palace and a city. It seems that the dynasty of a certain Baḫianu replaced the House of Ḫadiānu and Kapara just shortly later.[15] Changes of ruling dynasties are attested in other Aramaean entities as well, e.g., in Śam'al[16] and Bīt-Adini[17]. In the Assyrian inscriptions, the realm of Gōzān was named Bīt-Baḫiani, whereas the designation Palê does not appear.

After a period of weakness and reconsolidation, Assyria restarted its expansion to the west in the late tenth and early ninth century. Adad-nīrārī II collected the tribute of the Aramaean kingdoms in upper Mesopotamia and seized Naṣibīna and Gidara. Abī-salāmu, ruler of Gōzān from the House of Baḫianu, had to pay tribute and subordinate himself to Assyria.[18] Nevertheless, he did not open his capital city to the Assyrians, but met the Assyrian king in Sikāni, the former Assyrian provincial capital Waššukanni, by now degraded and perhaps largely depopulated.

Archaeological Evidence

Kapara was probably the first Aramaean ruler to reside in Tell Halaf: no inscription of any of his predecessors, e.g., his father Ḫadiānu, has been discovered so far, and the buildings connected with him were built immediately on top of the settlement of the 'chaff-tempered pottery people'.

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14 Dornauer in: Tell Halaf 2010: 50–52.

15 Fuchs in: Cholidis/Martin 2011: 353–358.

16 *Cf.* the chart in Tropper 1993: 19.

17 On the dynastic struggles in Bīt-Adini *cf.* Bunnens 2009.

18 Grayson 1991: 153, A.O.99.2. Z. 100–104. *Cf.* Novák in: Baghdo *et al.* 2009: 95.

Fig. 10 Map showing the Extension of the Aramaean Principality of Palê/Bīt-Bakhiani (Drawing by Gabriele Elsen-Novák and Richard Szydlak).

The layout of the town was dramatically changed. The former burial ground in the northwest of the mound was abandoned; in some cases the mud-brick cist tombs were heavily damaged. The area instead became the building ground for a grand palace in the western Levantine '*Hilani* style', decorated with huge caryatid statues of the main deities at its entrance and a large number of relief slabs along the south and north façades. Connected to the palace, the richly decorated so-called Scorpion Gate gave access to the inner part of the citadel. The whole mound was transformed into a fortified citadel, accessible only from the south via a gate. An inner part of the citadel was separated from an outer one by another defensive wall. The Scorpion Gate was part of this inner wall, thus copying the structure of Luwian and Aramaean citadels in the west. The outline of the city itself was rectangular, defined by a moat and a mud-brick wall on its western, southern, and eastern flanks.[19] The Djirjib, a branch of the Khabur River, protected its northern side. Hardly anything is known about the dwelling quarters of that period. However, the Cult Room in the southern periphery of the Lower Town proves at least the latter's existence at that time.

Since the cemetery of the 'chaff-tempered pottery people' had been abandoned to make way for the *Hilani* palace, a new burial ground had to be established. The area immediately south of the citadel's fortification and east of the outer citadel gate was chosen as the burial place of the elites. Von Oppenheim discovered a number of chapel-like buildings, each consisting of one or two rooms, reminiscent of the contemporary Cult Room in the Lower Town. Two of them contained monumental statues, showing sitting women, who hold cups in their right hands, similar to the statue of a couple discovered in the Cult Room. This specific kind of statue was a dedication linked to the ancestor cult, and had a long tradition in the northern Levant at that time, as indicated by functional and formal similarities to Middle Bronze Age statues from Qatna and Ebla. Below one of the statues, an urn was discovered that contained the cremated bones of the deceased and some luxury grave goods. It is of great interest that the burial customs had apparently changed with the foundation of the Aramaean city; inhumation, exclusively practiced in the early cemetery, was now replaced by cremations. The reason behind this change is still unknown, but it could be seen in the light of a western, Luwian influence. The ancestor cult is a western tradition, hinting that the origin of the Aramaeans lay in the northern Levant.

No temple of the Aramaean period has been discovered so far. Some partly erased inscriptions on the so-called "Small Orthostats" mention an É.GAL-*lim* U "Temple of the Storm God," written in an unusual way.[20] For a long time it was presumed by most scholars that this temple should be located somewhere in the still unexcavated parts of Tell Halaf, but the discovery of the statue of a certain Hadad-Yis'i in Tell Fekheriye challenged this opinion.[21] The bilingual inscription of this man, who designates himself "king" (in Aramaic) or "governor" (in Assyrian) of Gōzān in the ninth century BC (see below), proves that the "Storm God of Sikāni" (Aramaic) or "of Gōzān" (Assyrian) was worshipped in Sikāni, i.e. Tell Fekheriye,

19 Tell Halaf 1950; Baghdo *et al.* 2009; Martin/Novak 2010.

20 Dornauer in: Tell Halaf 2010: 51, FN 104 with earlier references.

21 Abou-Assaf/Bordreuil/Millard 1982.

the findspot of the statue. The cult itself dates back to the third millennium BC.[22] Why it was not transferred to the new capital when the Storm God became the tutelary god of Gōzān, but instead remained at an almost abandoned site, remains obscure. And why the decoration of this temple was removed and re-used at the back of Kapara's palace is an even greater mystery.

The Assyrian City: Center of a Prosperous Province

Historical Considerations

Early in the ninth century, Gūzāna (the Assyrian variant of the toponym) became a vassal to the Assyrians and remained so for at least two generations. The *mode* of transformation of an independent principality first to a vassal, still ruled by local but subordinate dynasties, and later to a province, ruled by governors directly installed by the Assyrian king or his officials, can be traced quite well in the case of Gōzān.

Bīt-Baḫiani is occasionally mentioned by Assurnasirpal II and Šalmaneser III. It contributed troops to the Assyrian army and paid its tribute regularly.

The abovementioned Hadad-Yis'i[23] claimed to be "governor" (Assyrian version) or "king" (Aramaic version) of Gōzān/Gūzāna. Although his name argues for an Aramaean origin, his father's name, Šamaš-nuri, is clearly Akkadian/Assyrian. Hence it is uncertain whether Hadad-Yis'i was a descendant of the local dynasty who had integrated himself into the governmental system of the Assyrian empire, or an Assyrian official who took the position of local king so that he might be better accepted by the local population, in a similar way to the Middle Assyrian governor of upper Mesopotamia, who adopted the title of "king of Ḫanigalbat." An identification of his father with the Assyrian eponym of the year 866 BC would favor the latter solution. If so, Gūzāna was completely incorporated into the Assyrian provincial system already during the reign of Šalmaneser III. The title of a "king of Gūzāna" was abandoned at latest after a military intervention that happened in 808 BC.

However, Gūzāna became one of the most important provincial towns of the Assyrian empire, as is indicated by the right of its governor to hold the office of the eponym in the 16th or 17th year of each Assyrian king.[24] Probably Šamaš-nuri was the first eponym, who owed this honor to his position as governor of Gūzāna. The activities of one of his successors, Mannu-kī-māt-Aššur, eponym of the year 793 BC, are well attested by his archive, discovered by Max von Oppenheim in the southern part of his palace.

Only one event disturbed the peaceful history of Gūzāna as provincial town and seat of a regional governor. In 761 – 758 BC the city, together with Arrapḫa and Kalḫu, participated in a revolt against the powerful eunuch Šamši-ilu, the true ruler of the empire at that time. The city was besieged for two years and then finally captured. After that, it remained the seat of a governor until the fall of the Assyrian Empire in 609 BC. Even after this, the town was of some importance during the Late Babylonian period, although we lack any historical information.

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22 On the Storm God of Sikāni and Gūzāna *cf.* Kessler/Müller-Kessler 1995.

23 Abou-Assaf/Bordreuil/Millard 1982.

24 Dornauer in Tell Halaf 2010: 67.

Archaeological evidence

The general layout of the city with its division into lower town and citadel remained largely unchanged after the Assyrian invasion. Even some of the Aramaean buildings were renewed and retained their function: the Southern Gate of the citadel was rebuilt in an only slightly modified style; glazed tiles (assyr. *ṣiqqātu*), discovered in the debris of the *Hilani* palace, and some fragments of Assyrianizing reliefs found *in situ* in its entrance,[25] attest to the continued use of the building in the Assyrian period.[26]

However, the inner structure of the citadel was modified dramatically at the beginning of Assyrian rule. Huge and high mud-brick terraces were built in the south and east of the citadel, which overbuilt the fortification wall and buildings of the Aramaean period (e.g., some of the ancestor cult chapels) and stretched beyond the former limit of the citadel into the area of the Lower Town. In this they followed the pattern of the Assyrian capital cities.

The southern mud-brick terrace became the substructure of the residences of the elite. The cemetery of the Kapara period was thoroughly covered by this terrace, leaving the ancestor statues undestroyed. The residences are of a typical Assyrian type, with inner courtyards and reception suites, including stately main halls and bathrooms. The new excavations have revealed House A with a luxury inventory, including golden earrings, bronze fibulae, glazed vessels, etc. A cuneiform tablet, discovered on the floor, mentions a woman named Belēssa-pilakku as the presumable owner of the residence and gives a *terminus post quem* for its destruction. Unfortunately there are two possibilities for dating the *līmmu* Aššur-da''inanni, either as the governor of Zamua (733 BC) or of Que (685 BC). However, in von Oppenheim's excavations the post-canonical archive of a certain Il-manānī, most likely to be dated to the years 612–608 BC, was discovered nearby. Although the former excavators did not recognize any architectural context, it surely derived from one of the elite residences.

The eastern part of the citadel was chosen as the site of the governor's palace, built on top of another massive, 3 m high mud-brick terrace. The building, which was founded in the ninth century, saw one major reconstruction with significant changes in its formal and functional layout. Since the archive of Mannu-kī-māt-Aššur was discovered within the debris of this first phase, the reconstruction must have occurred after 793 BC; presumably the reconstruction was prompted by severe damage during the capture of the city in 758 BC. The second phase of the palace was succeeded by a third phase with nearly the same layout. On the basis of the date of the inventories discovered on these floors, the occupation of the palace must have lasted at least until the Late Babylonian period.

The reconsideration of von Oppenheim's excavations in what he called the "Northeastern Palace," and new excavations in the area south of it and within von Oppenheim's "Assyrian House" produced the surprising result that all three parts belonged to one and the same building, extending over almost the whole eastern flank of the citadel. This palace was sub-

25 Orthmann 2002: 71–72.

26 Since no Assyrian buildings were detected above the ruined *Hilani* (only presumably Hellenistic remains) it seems to the present author quite unlikely that its destruction happened before the final abandonment of all administrative and stately buildings during or after the Late Babylonian period. For a contrary view *cf.* Schaudig in: Cholidis/Martin 2011: 359–362.

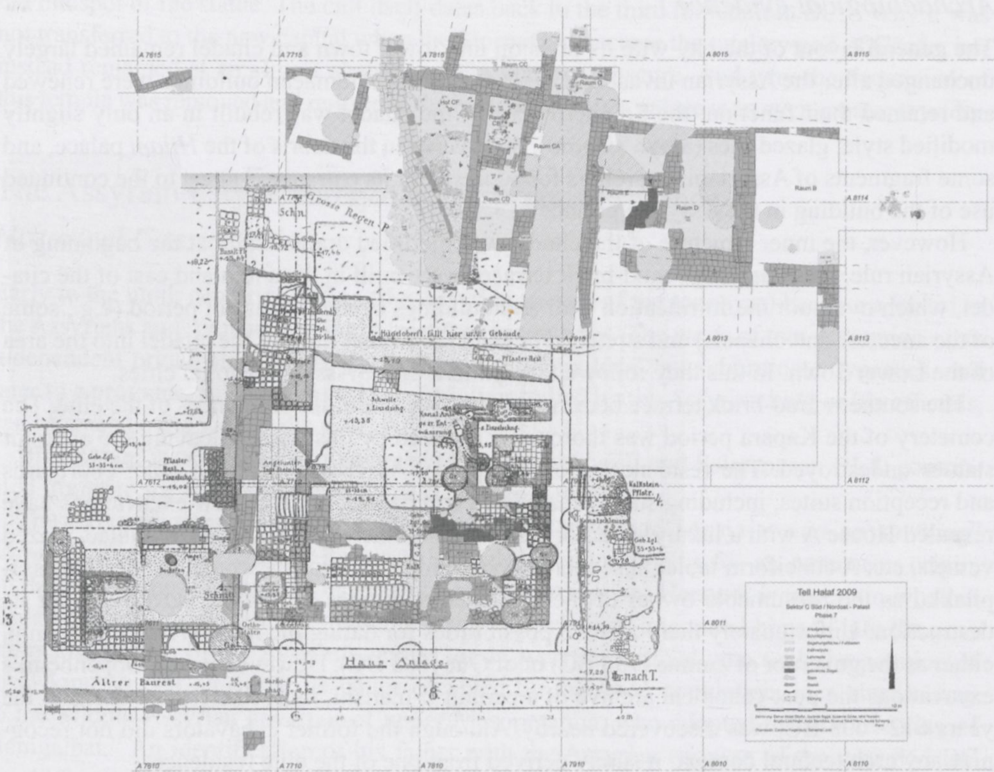

Fig. 11 Southern wing of the Assyrian Governor's Palace including the "Assyrian House" (Rendering by Gabriele Elsen-Novák).

divided into multiple units, each of them centered on a courtyard. The main entrance has not yet been localized, but it can be excluded that it was situated within the northern wing. It should probably be sought in the area southwest of von Oppenheim's excavations. If so, the whole northern part of the building can be recognized as the innermost unit of the palace, its 'private' suite. The stately and administrative units of the palace are still undiscovered and should be sought somewhere north or northwest of the recently excavated areas. The "Assyrian House", too, turned out to be a unit within the palace (Fig. 11). The southern end of a stone-paved road, running through the recently discovered courtyard of the southern wing, ends immediately next to where the northern boundary wall of the "Assyrian House" was located, although it was no longer preserved due to erosion. Thus, the main, or rather the only, access into the "Assyrian House" was from the courtyard, indicating that the house was actually the southernmost unit of the palace itself!

The Lower Town of Gūzāna was densely inhabited during the Neo-Assyrian period. As well as a temple, ordinary houses and elite residences were excavated.[27]

27 *Cf.* Orthmann/Sollee/Wartke in: Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 109–131.

The "Lower Town Temple," excavated by Max von Oppenheim, is situated in the western part of the lower town. The building is placed on top of an artificial platform and shows a typical Assyrian layout with a vestibule, a courtyard, a broad antechamber and a long *cella* with an elevated *adyton*, as well as some adjacent chambers and corridors. The renewed excavations have proved the existence of two subsequent phases. The later one, which is the one explored by Oppenheim, is marked by the limestone pavement of its central courtyard. The earlier phase, lying about a meter below, has a pavement of baked bricks instead. A re-used drain system indicates that the functional structure may have been the same in both phases. Unfortunately only very few objects have been discovered so far. Since all of them date exclusively to the Neo-Assyrian period, it seems that both phases were Assyrian in date; so far there are no hints that an Aramaean predecessor of the building existed. The stratigraphy and the key architectural characteristics of the courtyard pavement are reminiscent of the Governor's Palace. Hence it is alluring to synchronize the chronology of the two buildings.

Fig. 12 Dockets from Area G in the eastern part of the Lower Town (Photo by Laura Simons).

Several houses were excavated by von Oppenheim's team in the Lower Town, most of them quite modest in size and inventory.[28] However, their precise chronology had remained open. The recent excavations have revealed the remains of a house in the eastern Lower Town. At least two building phases can be distinguished, the later one destroyed violently, as marked by burned wooden beams and collapsed walls. Two dockets with Aramaic inscriptions and seal impressions, dated most likely to the years 625–617 BC belonged to the inventory of this later phase (Fig. 12). The key architectural characteristics of the house, including white wall painting and stone thresholds, and the inventories are reminiscent of the residential quarter excavated in the lower town of Dūr-Katlimmu.[29] It is evident that some of the urban elite were residing outside the citadel. This suggestion is supported by the coincidental discovery of the basalt statue of a certain Kammaki, dating to the first

28 Müller in: Tell Halaf 1950.

29 *Cf.* the contribution of Hartmut Kühne in this volume.

Fig. 13 Statue of Kammaki (from Röllig 2003: 432).

half of the eighth century BC (Fig. 13).[30] The Assyrian inscription mentions Kammaki's father, the scribe Ilu-lē'i[31] who is also attested elsewhere, and is addressed to a future *rubû* "nobleman" or "grandee." Since usually the addressee of a commemorative inscription is of equal status with the writer (or the instructor) himself, this is evidence that Kammaki was a *rubû*, and thus of high rank within the local hierarchy of Gūzāna. His and his father's Aramaic names suggest furthermore that both were of Aramaean origin. The style of the statue stands in the tradition of the ancestor statues from the cemetery at the citadel gate and from the so-called Cult Room in the southern Lower Town. It was hence most likely had the same function. This highlights the still vivid Aramaic traditions at Gūzāna, also exemplified by the emergence of the Aramaic script and language even in the official administration of the town.

The Aftermath: The Late Babylonian City and Hellenistic Town

Little is known of the history of Upper Mesopotamia in the centuries after the collapse of the Assyrian Empire. It seems that most of the settlements continued to exist and the administration remained largely intact during the Late Babylonian period. This is indicated, on the one hand, in Gūzāna itself by the attempts to use cuneiform, as attested by some tablets discovered by Oppenheim, which were written in a Late Babylonian formula. Further, Gūzāna is also attested in an administrative record from Nippur, which dates to the year 542 BC, the 13th year of the last Babylonian king, Nabû-nā'id (555–539 BC).[32]

Archaeological evidence for this period was gained in the governor's palace. Its latest phase contained material generally known as "Post-Assyrian" (which actually means nothing other than "Late Babylonian" or "Early Achaemenid"). Hence, at least the most significant

30 Röllig 2003.
31 Röllig 2003: 423
32 Dornauer in: Tell Halaf 2010: 66.

administrative institution of the city, its palace, remained in use during the sixth and presumably also fifth centuries BC. The precise date of its abandonment has not been absolutely determined yet, but it should most probably be set during the Achaemenid period. However, a number of objects, such as terracotta figurines, indicate that the town itself was still occupied and remained so until the Seleucid period.

Even in the Hellenistic era Gūzāna remained a regional centre. This is indicated by Ptolemy's designation of the region as *Gauzanitis*.[33] Nevertheless, there was a significant reduction of the settlement size: the Lower Town was abandoned and partly used as a burial ground. A number of cist graves were discovered in almost all areas of excavation. The village was concentrated on the citadel. Although only dwelling houses have been discovered so far, there is textual evidence of a temple of the Storm God.[34] Most of the houses can be attributed to an advanced urban society, as can the inventories.[35] Lots of luxury goods, among them a considerable number of imports of high value, indicate the wealth of their owners. Hence, irrespective of its reduced size, Gūzāna was still a flourishing and prosperous town, until it was finally abandoned in the late first century BC in favor of Tell Fekheriye, which had meanwhile been resettled and renamed Rhesaina.

A New Periodization

Local Periodization

The comparative stratigraphy of Tell Halaf and its nearby twin-site Tell Fekheriye provides the opportunity to establish a local periodization, based mainly on archaeological evidence such as settlement history, building phases, and object typologies (of ceramics in particular), but including historical considerations as well.

The following chart reflects the results, the full argumentation is presented elsewhere.[36] Note that the abbreviation "RA" stands for Ras al-Ain.

Tab. 1 Chronology and local Periodization of Tell Halaf (January 2011).

Period		**Sector B**	**A**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**Date**
RA I	*PPN A und B*	Hiatus							
RA II-1	*Proto-Hassuna Period*	Not yet excavated							*7000–6500*
RA II-2	*Hassuna Period*								*6500–6100*
RA II-3	*Proto-Halaf Period*								*6100–5950*

33 Luther in: Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 215–220..
34 Kessler/Müller-Kessler 1995.
35 Katzy in: Baghdo *et al.* 2009: 87–92 and in: Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 185–210.
36 Becker/Novák in: Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 221–233. The Tell Fekheriye evidence will be given by Dominik Bonatz in this volume.

Period		Sector B		A	C	D	E	F	G	Date
RA II-4	*Halaf Period*	B 22 (N) B 21 (N) B 20 (N) B 19 (N) B 18 (N)	B 14 – B 12							*5950–5300*
RA II-5	*Halaf-Obeid Transition*	**B 17 (N)**	?	*Not yet excavated*						*5300–5200*
RA III-1/2	*Early Chalcolithics*	B 16 (N)	B 11							*5200–4200*
RA III-3	*Late Chalcolithics 1–2*	B 15 (N) B 14 (N)	B 10							*4200–3700*
RA III-4	*Late Chalcolithics 3–5*	?								*3700–2900*
RA IV	*Early Dynastic, Akkad*									2900–2000
RA V	*Ur-III, Old Babylonian*	Hiatus								*2000–1500*
RA VI-1/2	*Mittani*									*1500–1300*
RA VI-3/4	*Middle Assyrian*									*1300–1120*
RA VI-5	*Late Middle Assyrian*	↑↑ *(Overlap RA VI-5 with RA VII-1 possible and probable)* ↑↑								*1120–1060*
RA VII-1	*Pre-Aramaean*	B 13 (N) –		A 14 –						*1060–950*
RA VII-2		B 5 (N)	B 9–8	A 11	↑	↑		↑		
RA VII-3	*Aramaean (Kapara)*	↓	B 5–7	A 10	C 10	D 4		F 6	?	*950–900*
RA VIII-1	*Neo-Assyrian*			**A 9–8**	**C 9–8**	*Not excavated*		**F 5**	**G 5**	*900–758*
RA VIII-2				A 7	C 7	D 3	E 4	F 4	G 4	*758–612*
RA VIII-3	*Late Babylonian*			A 6	C 6					*612–539*
RA VIII-4	*Achaemenid*	*removed ?*			**C 5**					539–330
RA IX-1	*Seleucid*	B 3 (N) B 4 (N)	B 3 B 4	A 5			E 3	F 3	?	*330–120*
RA IX-2	*Early Parthian*	?		A 4	C 4 a–d	?	?		G 3	*120–0*
RA IX-3	*Middle Parthian*				Pits					*0–150*
RA IX-4	*Late Parthian*	Hiatus								*150–250*
RA X	*Sasanidian/Byzantine*									*250–636*
RA XI	*Islamic (medieval)*		B 2	A 3	C 3		E 2			*636–1258*
RA XII	*Islamic (modern)*	B 2 (N)		A 1	C 1	D 1		**F 2**	G 2	after 1258
	Recent	B 1 (N)	**B 1**	**A 1**	**C 1**	**D 1**	**E 1**	**F 1**	G 1	present

Several rulers of the city are known and can be listed in the following way:

Tab. 2 Rulers of Gōzān/Gūzāna.

Rulers of the City	Title/Rank	Synchronism	Dating (BC)
Mušku etc. ('Grooved Pottery and Chaff-tempered Pottery People')		Tiglath-pileser I.	*ca. 1100*
...			
Ḫadiānu	Nomadic chief ?		
Kapara	King of the Land Palê (?)		*ca. 950 (?)*
...			
Baḫiānu	?		
Abī-salāmu	King of Bīt-Baḫiāni	Adad-nīrārī II.	*893*
(?)	"Son of Bīt-Baḫiāni"	Assurnasirpal II.	*between 883–867*
Incorporation into Assyrian provincial system		Assurnasirpal II.	*before 866*
Šamaš-nuri	King/Governor (?)		*866*
Hadad-Yis'i = Adad-rēmanni (?)	King/Governor		841 (?)
Rebellion in Gūzāna		Adad-nīrārī III. (3)	*808*
Mannu-kī-māt-Aššur	Governor	Adad-nīrārī III. (18)	*793*
Kammaki (?)	*rubû*		
Bur-Saggilê	Governor	Aššur-dān III. (10)	*763*
Rebellion in Gūzāna		Aššur-dān III. (14, 15)	*759–758*
Bēl-Ḫarrān-bēlu-uṣur	Governor	Tiglath-pileser III. (19)	*727*
Mannu-kī-Aššur-le'ī	Governor		*before 706*
Mutakkil-Aššur	Governor	Sargon II. (16)	*706*
Nabû-mār-šarri-uṣur	?	Aššur-uballiṭ II. (?)	*ca. 610*

Iron Age Periodization

The new chronological and stratigraphical considerations provide an opportunity to develop a regional periodization. Here, only a first draft proposal will be presented, knowing that it should be elaborated in more detail.[37] The system and terminology of the ARCANE project is adapted in the following. This has already been done for the second half of the second millennium BC, for which a 'Middle Jazirah' (MJZ) chronology has been proposed by Peter Pfälzner. We here want to continue with a 'Neo-Jazirah' (New Jazirah, NJZ) periodization.

37 On the arguments cf. Becker/Novák in: Baghdo *et al.* 2012: 232–233.

37 LT: "LowerTown II"; T: "Tell"

Tab. 3 Synchronized Stratigraphies and Periodization of the Iron Age in Upper Mesopotamia.

Jazirah	Date BC (ca.)	Characteristics	Tell Halaf	Sheikh Hamad[37]	Barri	Fekheriye
MJZ 3	1120–1050	Late Middle Assyrian / Anatolian IA I-pottery	RA VI-5/ VII-1	?	1b–d	Early Cemetery
NJZ 1	1050–950	Terminal Middle Assyrian pottery tradition	RA VII-2	T 27c	2	Late Cemetery
NJZ 2	950–900	"Aramaean" and Assyrian transitional pottery	RA VII-3	?	3–6	
NJZ 3	900–750	Early Neo-Assyrian Pottery	RA VIII-1	LT9-8/ T27-26	7–8	
NJZ 4	750–608	Late Neo-Assyrian Pottery	RA VIII-2	LT7 / T25	9–11	
NJZ 5	608–539	Late Babylonian/"Post-Assyrian" Pottery	RA VIII-3	LT6 / T24		
NJZ 6	539–301	Achaemenid/"Post-Assyrian" Pottery	RA VIII-4	LT5 / T17		

Tab. 4 Proposal for a new Periodization of the Iron Age in Upper Mesopotamia.

Jazirah Chronology	Historical Period	Metal Ages	Date
MJZ 3	Late Middle Assyrian	Iron Age I B	ca. 1120–1050
NJZ 1	Transitional Period	Iron Age I C	ca. 1050–950
NJZ 2	Aramaean	Iron Age II A	ca. 950–900
NJZ 3	Early Neo-Assyrian	Iron Age II B	ca. 900–750
NJZ 4	Late Neo-Assyrian	Iron Age II C	ca. 750–608
NJZ 5	Late Babylonian		608–539
NJZ 6	Achaemenid	Iron Age III	608–539