

# Contextual analysis of the use of space at two Near Eastern Bronze Age sites

Leverhulme Research Grant F757

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## Part 1: Preface

This compilation represents the raw material of a project funded by the Leverhulme Trust. The project, jointly initiated by Dr. R.J. Matthews and J.N. Postgate, was designed to collect and analyse data from two Near Eastern excavations, Tell Brak in north-eastern Syria, and Kilise Tepe in southern Turkey. These data were intended to throw light on the use of space within two different urban settlements, and in particular, by adopting standardised objectives and procedures, to enable comparison between the same phenomena at two different sites. The research was in one sense a continuation of ideas and techniques devised by Dr. Sebastian Payne at the Bronze Age urban site of Abu Salabikh in southern Iraq, a report on which appeared under the title "The imprint of living in an early Mesopotamian city: questions and answers", in R. Luff & P. Rowley-Conwy (eds.), *Whither Environmental Archaeology?* (Oxbow Monograph 38; Oxford 1994), 171-212.

The fieldwork was conducted, in the case of Tell Brak, in March-May 1995 and 1996, and at Kilise Tepe in July-August 1995, 1996 and 1997, under the direction of Matthews and Postgate respectively. For both sites the work of the Leverhulme project was directed and co-ordinated by Dr. Sue Colledge, who was attached to the project full time for three years. In the course of the project a number of meetings were held to agree standardised objectives and procedures. These generated a simple classification of deposit classes and use categories, which is attached as Appendix 1. In order to ensure consistent recording of the animal bone material by the two zoo-archaeologists, a standard recording form was agreed, and this is attached as Appendix 2.

At the excavations Dr. Colledge was responsible not only for the archaeobotanical recovery and analysis, but also for the technical control of the recovery procedures and for the analysis of other classes of finds, including potsherds and miscellaneous small artefacts. The zoo-archaeology was carried out at Tell Brak by Dr. Keith Dobney, and at Kilise Tepe by Dr. Polydora Baker. Bulk samples (of ca. 60 litres in volume) were taken from different contexts. Materials contained within these samples formed the basis of both the archaeozoological and the archaeobotanical studies. The samples were processed by flotation and wet-sieving (as part of the same operation, using flotation machines designed specifically for the purpose). The flots (i.e. charred plant material) were submitted to Sue Colledge for analysis and the non-floating residues were sieved and sorted into the different constituent components including the bone, which was submitted to Keith Dobney or Polydora Baker for analysis. Pottery, metal objects, flint, obsidian, shell, seals etc. were also extracted from the residues, and were catalogued, counted and weighed as appropriate; except for the pottery component (described in Part 8), the analysis of these categories is not included in the present archive. Some samples were in the end not studied, for one reason or another, and some were studied by one specialist but not the other (reasons are given by the specialists in their reports).

Dr. Wendy Matthews planned and mostly executed the recovery of micromorphological samples at both sites. Every effort was made to cut the micromorphological thin-sections from stratigraphic units which were also being bulk sampled. Nevertheless, micromorphological study takes much of its interest from the relationship between different stratigraphic deposits, and hence, unlike the flotation samples, they may include material from more than one unit.

Much of the identification and analysis of the materials recovered took place in laboratories in the U.K., specifically at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research (Cambridge), at the EAU (York), and UCL (London). We are grateful to all these institutions, and also to the authorities in Syria and Turkey for their helpful collaboration. The separate contributions were circulated in their first and second drafts to all members of the project, for comparison and comment. The final versions have been compiled into a single electronic archive in Cambridge with the invaluable editorial and technical assistance of David Thomas.