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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT ZIYARET TEPE, 2000 AND 2001

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In memoriam, Namit Alp, 1989-2000

This report presents the results from the fourth and fifth seasons of archaeological work at Ziyaret Tepe in the Diyarbakır Province of southeastern Turkey undertaken in July-August 2000 and July-September 2001.[1] Ziyaret Tepe is a large, multi-period mounded site located on the south (right) bank of the Tigris River, just east of the modern town of Tepe and twenty kilometers west of the confluence of the Tigris and Batman Rivers (Fig. 1). The size and long occupational sequence at Ziyaret Tepe are indicative of its strategic location atop a broad, low terrace overlooking the wide Tigris floodplain. The principal periods of occupation of the site date from the early 2nd millennium BC to the mid-1st millennium BC. In particular, Ziyaret Tepe was an important urban center during the Middle and Late Assyrian periods (c. 1300-600 BC) when it achieved a maximum extent of thirty-two hectares.

The principal goals of the 2000 and 2001 excavation seasons were: (1) to establish a basic chronological sequence at Ziyaret Tepe based on well-stratified ceramic remains and (2) to initiate a study of the morphology of the city during its urban zenith through

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[1] The 2000 and 2001 excavations at Ziyaret Tepe was co-sponsored by the Universities of Akron, Munich, Cambridge and Helsinki. Timothy Matney (Akron) served as the overall project director and the senior field directors were Michael Roaf (Munich) and John MacGinnis (Cambridge). The project was funded by the National Science Foundation, American Research Institute in Turkey, The Curtiss T. and Mary G. Brennan Foundation, The University of Akron, the Wainwright Fund of Oxford, the British Institute of Archaeology in Iraq and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. We were ably assisted by colleagues from Finland, England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, the United States and Turkey. Eryan Yılmaz from the Aydin Mjuseum was our government representative in 2000 and Yasar Yılmaz from the Konya Museum was our representative in 2001. As always, we are indebted to the generous assistance provided by Necdet Inal, director of the Diyarbakır Museum and his archaeological assistant Nevin Soyukaya and by Numan Tuna and Jale Velibeyoğlu of TAÇDAM who coordinate the many archaeological projects which are currently underway in the Ilisu Dam Salvage Area of southeastern Turkey. On the final day of excavations in 2000, we were pleased to receive a visit from the Ministries of Culture and Tourism and to provide a brief tour to the Kültür Bakan Istemihan Talay, the Turizm Bakan Erkan Mumcu and the Genel Müdür of the Department of Monuments and Museums, Alpay Pasinli all of whom expressed great interest and enthusiasm for our project and whose support we would like to acknowledge.

large-scale horizontal excavations both on the high mound and in the surrounding lower town. The first of these goals, in its broadest conception, involves establishing a solid ceramic chronology for the Upper Tigris river valley from the Neolithic through the Islamic periods. Ultimately, the Ziyaret Tepe chronology will be based on complete vessels from well stratified broad horizontal excavations. However, such a sequence will take many additional excavation seasons to complete since deposits of all periods must first be located and recorded. In the interim, we propose to build a tentative ceramic sequence based, when possible, on complete vessels, but otherwise on sherds from the most secure primary contexts (esp. floors and sealed pits). The 2000 and 2001 seasons at Ziyaret Tepe produced complete or near complete vessels from reliable contexts in four areas: (1) the broken vessels in the two kiln in the courtyard of the public building in Operation A; (2) the pottery kiln outside the city wall in Operation D; (3) the burnt vessels in one of the lower levels of the step trench in Operation E; (4) the jars and storage jars on the floors of the building with the mosaic pavement in Operation G. These are discussed in some detail below. Despite the recovery of sherds from many other primary contexts across the site, we shall largely limit comments here to these deposits as a starting point for our chronology of the site.

In general, our excavations in 2000 and 2001, as detailed below, have confirmed the initial published settlement history of the site and its identification as an important Assyrian center in 2nd and 1st millennia BC based on previous surface survey in 1997-1999 and on contemporary cuneiform texts (Matney 1998; Matney and Somers 1999; Matney and Bauer 2000). However, these excavations also necessitate minor amendments and corrections to these previously published interpretations of Ziyaret Tepe. In particular, our initial assumption that the high mound contained no post-Assyrian occupation has been shown to be incorrect with the documentation of extensive post-Assyrian pitting and later ephemeral usage seen, for example, in the large number of *tannurs* (bread ovens) overlying the Assyrian buildings. While, no substantial architecture from later periods has been uncovered, it seems clear that the high mound was nevertheless the focal point of considerable activity after its decline in the mid-1st millennium BC. Similarly, our initial site history based upon surface ceramics suggested that Ziyaret Tepe was unoccupied during the 3rd millennium BC. This hypothesis must be revised in light of the discovery of a small mound in the lower town (Operation D) with apparent 3rd millennium BC occupation layers and the presence of Dark-Rimmed Orange Ware bowls which testify to a late third millennium BC presence at the site. Finally, we have shifted somewhat from our initial interpretation of the early 2nd millennium BC occupation of Ziyaret Tepe, originally characterized as a small village, which now appears to be much more extensive than originally thought, as documented particularly in Operation E.

In terms of the second goal – documenting the structure of the Assyrian urban center at Ziyaret Tepe – nine areas were opened up for excavation during the 2000 and 2001 seasons (Operations A through I) exposing a total area of 1,440 square meters of ancient remains at Ziyaret Tepe (Fig. 2). A goal of much of this work has been to reveal as much of the Assyrian city plan during the Late Bronze Age (Middle Assyrian period) and

Iron Age (Late Assyrian period) as possible. Here, our initial interpretations of a series of subsurface magnetic field gradiometry maps generated in 1998 and 1999 showing extensive buildings in the lower town have proven to be accurate and the initial identification of the city walls, fortifications and major structures within the lower town are corroborated. Extensive excavation in two areas of the lower town (Operations D and G, discussed below) further confirm the importance of Ziyaret Tepe as an urban center in the Late Assyrian period.

Tushhan in the cuneiform texts (by Michael Roaf)

In the Late Assyrian period (c. 900-600 BC) there were three important centers along the Tigris River southeast of Amedi (modern Diyarbakır) north of the Tur Abdin range of hills. These were Tushhan (sometimes written Tushhu or Tushha), Tidu or Tedu and Sinabu. For a long time it was assumed that Tushhan, the most important of the three in Late Assyrian times, was the ancient name of the site now called Üçtepe, but known as Kurkh in the 19th century, because a stele of Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BC) was found at this site in 1861 and it was known that Ashurnasirpal erected a stele in Tushhan. But, as Karlheinz Kessler (1980: 116-120) showed in his detailed study of the historical geography of this region in the Late Assyrian period, this must be a different stele since it was erected during his second campaign in 882 BC while the Kurkh stele was erected after Ashurnasirpal's fifth campaign (that is after 879 BC). Kessler suggested that Ziyaret Tepe was a more likely location for Tushhan than Üçtepe and this view has increasingly won adherents. Two recent articles by Norbert Karg (1999) and by Karen Radner and Andreas Schachner (2001) as well as the Ph.D. thesis of Bradley Parker (1998a) have discussed in considerable detail the texts and archaeological evidence concerning the historical geography of the region and accept Kessler's identification of Ziyaret Tepe with Tushhan. Definitive proof is still lacking, but the inscribed tablets found at Giricano approximately four kilometers upstream from Ziyaret Tepe seem to confirm this proposal.

The three Late Assyrian sites of Tushhan, Tidu and Sinabu were also known in earlier periods. Already in the Old Assyrian period (c.1800 BC) the cities of Tushhan (then known as Tushhum) and Sinabu (then known as Shinamum) were important centers. A visit to Tushhum was discussed in correspondence between Shamshi-Adad's two sons, Ishme-Dagan and Yasmah-Addu, who ruled in Ekallatum and Mari respectively and other texts found in Mari (about 350 km south of Ziyaret Tepe) suggest that Shinamum may have been controlled by Shamshi-Adad (died 1776 BC), who ruled over his extensive north Mesopotamian kingdom from his capital at Shubat-Enlil (Tell Leilan) in the Khabur triangle. This control did not last long for a letter found in the archives of Zimri-Lim (c. 1775-1761 BC) in Mari states that "the land of Shinamum and Tushhum is the equal of the land of Elahut", which lay south of the Tur Abdin, and the writer of the letter, Itur-Asdu, governor of Nahur, recommends that a substantial gift or bribe of 20 minas (10 kg) of silver should be given to the land of Shinamum and Tushhum to ensure that they joined Mari in an alliance against Elahut.

Whether the city of Tidu on the Tigris was also mentioned in the early second millennium texts is uncertain as there seem to have been several other cities with this name (variously written Ta'idu, Tidu, or Taddu), one of which lay not far from Tell Brak (ancient Nagar). It is probable, however, that the later Mittanian capital, whither the Hurrian king moved after the Assyrians had sacked his previous capital Washukanni was identical with Late Assyrian Tidu which Kessler identified with the site of Üçtepe about thirty kilometers west of Ziyaret Tepe. Tushhan would then have been within the kingdom of Mittani also known as the Hurri-land or Hanigalbat. When the Hurrians were defeated by the rulers of Ashur in the later 13th century BC, it would have been incorporated into the Middle Assyrian empire.

Tushhan or Tushhum is not mentioned in the surviving inscriptions of the Middle Assyrian kings, but Ashurnasirpal II recorded that he had completely rebuilt the city wall of Tushhan (Grayson 1991: 202 A.0.101.1 ii 3-4, 242 A.0.101.17 ii 7-10) and it is likely that the earlier wall had been built by a Mittanian or Middle Assyrian king. Tushhan as far as we know was not the provincial capital under the Middle Assyrians, but that honor went to Ta'idu, which retained its role as the most important center of the region (Kessler 1980: 109).

The texts recently discovered at Giricano about four kilometers upstream from Ziyaret Tepe on the opposite bank of the Tigris belonged to the archive of Ahuni, son of Kidin-Sin (Radner in Schachner et al. in press). In five texts he is identified as coming from Dunnu-sha-Uzibi (a type of fortified agricultural center named after a man called Uzibi) which may be the ancient name of Giricano and in two texts dated to the year when Ili-iddina was the limmu-official (1069 or 1068 BC) he is identified as coming from Tushhi (a version of the name Tushhan). It is likely that these texts were written in Tushhan and that many of the other people named in these texts as participants or witnesses were also residents of Tushhan. Almost all of these names are typical Assyrian names but there are some that may have a non-Assyrian origin. It is possible that shortly thereafter the Middle Assyrian kings lost control of the region although who had control of the region in the later 11th and in the 10th century is not clear. When the Assyrians returned to this region it was part of the lands of Nairi and was dominated by Aramaeans (Grayson 1991: 261, A.0.101.19. 92-96).

More detail about the city of Tushhan is given in the inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal II, who rebuilt the city and established it as the capital of a province of the same name. On a stele found in the Ninurta Temple in his capital Kalhu (Nimrud) Ashurnasirpal described what he had done in Tushhan in 882 BC (Grayson 1991: 242-3, A.0.101.17 ii 6-28):

> "I took Tushha in hand for renovation. I cleared away its old wall, delineated its area, reached its foundation pit, (and) built (and) completed it in a splendid fashion a new wall from top to bottom. A palace for my royal residence I founded inside. I made doors (and) hung (them) in its doorways. That palace I built (and) completed from top to bottom. I made an image of myself in white limestone (and) wrote thereon praise

> of the extraordinary power and heroic deeds which I had been accomplishing in the lands Nairi. I erected (it) in the city Tushha. I inscribed my monumental inscription (and) deposited (it) in its wall. I brought back the enfeebled Assyrians, who, because of hunger and of famine, had gone to other lands to the land Shubru. I settled them in the city Tushha. I took over this city for myself and stored therein barley and straw from the land Nirbu."

In the Kurkh Stele Ashurnasirpal also mentioned that he "consecrated a palace in Tushha" and that he "reaped the harvest of the lands Nairi (and) stored (it) . . . in the cities Tushha, Damdammusa, Sinabu, (and) Tidu" (Grayson 1991: 259, 261, A.0.101.19. 67, 96-7).

Tushhan remained the capital of the province of Tushhan and the names of some eight governors are known (for details see Radner and Schachner 2001: 767-770). It is possible that in the reign of Sin-sharru-ishkun (c. 620 BC) the provinces of Amedi and Tushhan were amalgamated with the capital at Tushhan. The correspondence of some of these governors with the king has been recovered and it describes the activities of these governors, gathering intelligence about enemies on the northern border of Assyria, building forts, looking out for deserters, providing timber for the king's construction projects and saplings for his gardens, and so on (Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990: 18-35, Parker 1998b). It is clear that in the Late Assyrian period Tushhan was of great military and strategic importance in the administration and defense of the northern border of Assyria.

The later history of Tushhan is not clearly recorded in the surviving texts. Julian Reade (in press) has suggested that Tushhan and Shubria (the region north of Ziyaret Tepe on the northern side of the Tigris) may have been the destination of a Babylonian campaign in 611 BC the year after the Medes and Babylonians had captured Nineveh. He restores the badly damaged passage as the lands of Tushhan and Shinigisha, but these readings are by no means certain and even if correct tell us little about the fate of the city of Tushhan except that the Babylonian king acquired much booty from this invasion.

Although there is not much textual information about the city of Tushhan, the little that there is shows that it was an important center in the early 18th century BC and in the Middle Assyrian period. Although it seems to have suffered a decline in the later 11th and 10th centuries BC, it became a provincial capital in the 9th century BC with a rebuilt city wall, a royal palace and extensive government storage facilities. It remained the residence of the provincial governor until the fall of Assyria at the end of the 7th century BC. The subsequent fate of the city is not known from textual sources.

Site Description

The modern topography of Ziyaret Tepe consists of two basic morphological units: a high mound or acropolis and a surrounding lower town (Fig. 3). The high mound is located at the northern edge of the site and rises twenty-two meters above the surrounding

terrain and is approximately three hectares in extent. Surrounding the high mound is an extensive lower town, spreading out for twenty-nine hectares to the west, south and east of the high mound. The lower town is generally flat, although a slight rise at the southern edge of the site probably marks the line of an ancient city wall. Likewise, the western edge of the lower town is marked by a significant *wadi* and the eastern edge by a more moderate slope, both perhaps representing the line of the city's ancient fortifications.

Previous Subsurface Geophysical Mapping at Ziyaret Tepe

In 1998 and 1999, a small geophysical survey team undertook a subsurface magnetic field gradient (gradiometry) survey of portions of the high mound and lower city at Ziyaret Tepe as part of our initial study of the site (Matney and Somers 1999; Matney and Bauer 2000). A total of 8.6 hectares was mapped, representing 27% of the surface of the mound (Fig. 4). This survey technique is used to map minute fluctuations in the strength and direction of the earth's magnetic field due to disturbances immediately below the surface of the ground. The gradiometry maps resulting from our work in 1998 and 1999 showed indications of subsurface architecture and guided the subsequent placement of excavation trenches, especially in the Lower Town, where clear indications of the city wall and large public buildings could be discerned. One of the goals of the 2000 and 2001 field seasons, then, was to test our interpretations of the subsurface mapping data. Not only would this confirm our reconstruction of the line of the city wall and the gates and towers associated with it, but it would also provide the information necessary to devise improved methods for processing the gradiometry data that would make it easier to recognize subsurface features in the magnetic maps. Operation D on the eastern edge of the lower town and Operation G on the southern edge of the lower town were used as the test areas for these purposes and the results are discussed below.

Results of Excavations

As noted above, excavations in 2000 and 2001 were conducted in nine morphological areas of Ziyaret Tepe. Operations A, B, C, E, F and I were located on the high mound. Operations D and G were carried out in the lower town and Operation H involved the investigation of an external cemetery near the Tigris River during the 2001 field season. The results of excavations in these areas will first be discussed below (in alphabetical order), while the conclusions which follow will address our two main research objectives, namely site chronology and city planning, in light of the preliminary results from these two seasons of work. Much of this material has only been preliminarily studied and we anticipate that many of the results presented below will require significant modification during the on-going archaeological investigation of the site.

Recording System

Grid squares. The grid system employed at Ziyaret Tepe assumes a notional site datum approximately 600m off-site to the southwest. The entire site, then, is gridded into 10m by 10m squares identified by a northing and an easting. These numbers are expressed in meters. The grid square N1000 E1180, then, is 1000m north and 1180m east of the imaginary datum. Individual find spots are also noted in this system, e.g., N1002.35 E1186.75 represents a point 2.35m north and 6.75m east of the southwestern corner of grid square N1000 E1180.

Locus numbers. Features (e.g., walls, floors, pit cuts, pit contents and fills) are sequentially numbered with designations unique within each Operation. For recording purposes, a locus is defined as a unique archaeological feature or excavation unit. The form of these designations is the Operation letter followed by a three or four digit number, e.g., E-032 refers to locus 32 in Operation E. The locus system allows artifacts and samples from a single meaningful content to be analyzed as a unit.

ZT numbers. Artifacts and samples from Ziyaret Tepe are labelled with unique sequential four figure numbers prefixed with the label "ZT", hence ZT 0485. Groups of artifacts, such as pottery lots, are further subdivided, as needed, using an appended number. Hence ZT 1910 refers to a collection of pottery sherds from a single locus, while ZT 1910/10 refers to a specific diagnostic sherd from this group.

Operation A

Operation A is located at the eastern edge of the High Mound and was excavated over a total area of 450 square meters immediately adjacent to a modern robber's pit in which a substantial baked brick pavement with seemingly associated Late Assyrian sherds was visible. In this area we hoped to obtain a large-scale plan of Assyrian public architecture immediately below the surface of the high mound. Two separate excavations within the Operation A area were started in 2000. First, a 10m by 10m trench directly adjacent to the robber's pit noted above was opened at N1000 E1180 and was later extended to include the northern 5m by 10m area of grid square N990 E1180. Additionally, a second 10m by 10m trench was opened up in 2000 at grid square N1000 E1140, forty meters west of the first area. The purpose of opening this western trench was to test the extent of the Late Assyrian building and to document the nature of occupation on the High Mound away from the steep edges of the mound where considerable erosion has clearly taken place. Later, in 2001, three additional areas (grid squares N990 E1180 (southern half), N1000 E1170 and N1010 E1180) were excavated to the north, south and west of the eastern trenches excavated in 2000.

Operation A can be characterized in general as comprising a series of monumental mudbrick constructions which are poorly preserved in many places due to extensive later pitting and site erosion. The architectural sequence of walls, floors and associated deposits is complex, but the essential picture of the Operation A architecture is as follows. First, the

entire area was leveled in the Late Assyrian period in preparation for the construction of a huge mudbrick platform (Phase A), which was laid down across the entire area. No excavations have yet reached the bottom of the platform, so we have no data on earlier architectural remains in this area. Subsequently, a large public building was built on top of the mudbrick platform, representing the principal Late Assyrian occupation of Operation A (Phase B). This building clearly has several distinct architectural phases, which are discussed in greater detail below. During the latest phase of the building the southern half of Operation A was covered by an extensive baked brick pavement (Phase C). This pavement sealed a number of important, possibly ritual, deposits dating to the end of Phase B. After the baked brick pavement and the associated architecture of Phase C fell out of use at the end of the Late Assyrian period, the area of Operation A appears to have been used sporadically, as post-Assyrian burials and pits cut into the earlier building. We have also documented very patchy evidence of surfaces, floors and parts of walls of uncertain function or date in Operation A (Phase D).

Platform (Phase A). The Late Assyrian building platform is a solid mudbrick mass at least 1.5m thick (and perhaps much thicker) made of evenly laid mudbricks. In some places the architects had used the platform itself for the foundations or lowest courses of the walls of the Late Assyrian building. In other places, wall foundations are trenched into the Late Assyrian platform. These two observations taken together suggest that the initial platform may not have been entirely level and that during the construction of the monumental building, the architects were forced to use a variety of methods to create a true horizontal surface for the construction of the building or to compensate for irregularities in the platform.

Assyrian Public Building (Phase B). As noted above, the building itself is not well preserved due to extensive later pitting and erosion. The basic plan of the building in its early phase consists of a courtyard or open space surrounded on at least two sides by a series of flanking rooms (Fig. 5). There were at least two floor levels associated with the early phase plan and it is clear that some floors were either plastered or made out of pebbles. There were traces of white wall plaster on the lowest brick courses in the building, although very little remained intact. Clear doorways have not been preserved and the floors, in many cases, are badly disturbed across the excavated area. As a result, this occupational Phase B of the building has provided very little in terms of well stratified remains or pottery. The few diagnostics recovered in primary context on the surface of the pavement Rooms 1 and 5 and on a small floor at the northern edge of the excavated area (Room 4, near the southern wall) are consistent with a date in the Late Iron Age on stylistic grounds. One item of note is a cylinder seal (ZT 0572) found in the building collapse of the main occupation level (Fig. 6). This cylinder seal is made of frit and bears three clear symbols: an *ankh*, a horned snake and a human with upraised arms.

As noted above, the Phase B occupation was sealed by an extensive baked brick pavement, described below as Phase C. During the 2001 season, we removed the pavement in grid squares N990 E1180 and N1000 E1180 and found below it an earlier pebbled courtyard (A-0517 and A-0249) and two unusual deposits associated with the end of the

Phase B architecture described above. The first of these deposits was found in a group of stones arranged in a rough square (A-0251) forming a sort of box (Fig. 7). The stones were laid on top of the pebbled courtyard (A-0249) and were sealed by the baked brick pavement of Phase C. Inside the stone box were a collection of disarticulated animal bones, mostly goat and sheep and fragments of a highly polished painted pottery vessel (ZT 6851) not otherwise attested at Ziyaret Tepe.

The pottery vessel ZT 6851 is most likely imported and has parallels with the eastern Mediterranean, perhaps Cyprus, as the painted concentric circles or 'targets' found on the polychrome sherds occur on Cypriot pottery vessels, although that does not necessarily mean that this pot was necessarily made in Cyprus itself. For example, Hansen and Postgate (1999: 117) refer to Knappett's publication of 'Cypriot' pottery vessels from Kilise Tepe, which is made from local clay. The shape of the sherds from Ziyaret Tepe is consistent with a globular jar or a round-bodied deep bowl. The gray fabric may be either original or a product of post-breakage burning. This would be consistent with the observation that the ivory fragments from the nearby, and possibly associated, kilns were also burnt. The presence of this exotic ware in this small sealed feature suggested to us that it may have been part of a votive deposit placed at the time the pebbled courtyard was sealed by the baked brick pavement.

Also sealed by the baked brick pavement were two rectangular features (A-0242 and A-0252) with semicircular depressions on either end (Fig. 8). Each is 3.70m long and between 1.00m and 1.20m wide and are preserved to a depth of 1.25m. They were cut through the floor of the Phase B building and into the underlying mudbrick platform (Phase A). Their walls were plastered and heavily burnt. Both features are cut by later small circular pits. The excavation of these features revealed that the bottom of both features were filled with ash and slag, probably metal slag from copper-bronze working. This suggested that the features might be kilns or metal-working facilities. In addition to copious amounts of slag, these features also contained a significant number of metal objects and fragments. Most importantly, the excavation uncovered the remains of thirteen complete (although damaged) bronze vessels, three bronze rings bound with wire (possibly handles), fragments of finely carved burnt ivory, broken Fine Ware pottery vessels and two stone vessels, one intact and one in fragments. (Fig. 9). The metal vessels will be published in detail in a separate report following final conservation and recording.

Given that all of the vessels were damaged prior to deposition, it is tempting to posit that they were deliberately smashed and that, like the votive offering described above, this deposit may represent a ritual "killing" of the old building immediately prior to the construction of the baked brick pavement. It seems unlikely that such a body of metal vessels would have just been thrown away, as even if broken, or no longer required in their present form, the metal could have been usefully recycled. It is hard to support the idea that so much perfectly good metal would be taken out of circulation without a compelling reason. It may be that the building went through a change of use and that some vessels and other objects that had been used in it were no longer required for the same purpose, yet remained somehow too special to be simply melted down and were instead buried within it,

perhaps being ritually broken first.

The pottery from the kilns in Operation A was badly broken but the majority of the sherds from at least four vessels were recovered. (Fig. 10). These are almost identical to Late Assyrian pots from Nimrud: a shallow Palace Ware bowl (ZT 7277/2, cf. Oates 1959: pots 27 and 28) in the strict sense as outlined at the Heidelburg *table ronde* (Blaylock 1999: 269); a Fine Ware bowl, close to Palace Ware in fineness (ZT 7202/1, cf. Oates 1959: pot 59); a painted bottle of a type sometimes referred to as 'carrot-shaped' (ZT 7285, cf. Oates 1959: pot 90) and a Fine Ware dimpled beaker, again near Palace Ware in its fineness. The sherds from these vessels were found in different parts of the kilns suggesting that either considerable post-depositional activity has altered the provenience of the pots or that they were broken in antiquity and scattered in different parts of the kiln in the process of filling them prior to the construction of the baked brick pavement. A fragmentary bottle rim is also very similar to an example from Nimrud (Oates 1959: pot 86). Also found in these kilns were two ceramic vessels with very high ring bases or stands (ZT 6858 and ZT 6857). One of these had a cup surmounting the base, the other a bowl. Although the published Late Assyrian assemblage from Nimrud has goblets with high ring bases, the bases usually make up less that half the height of the vessel, unlike these Ziyaret Tepe examples (Oates 1959: pots 55-57). There are, however, vessels with very tall bases from Tille level 8 (the Late Assyrian level) although where the vessel on top of the stand is extant it is usually more cup-like than bowl-like (Blaylock 1999: fig. 10:20-22). The sum of all these parallels strongly support the stratigraphic argument made above that these kilns represent a Late Assyrian feature within the large public building of Operation A. Furthermore, the presence of Fine Ware vessels and the unusual 'chalice deposit' strengthen the argument put forward above that these deposits represent some kind of ritual activity associated with a refurbishment of the building.

Late Assyrian Building (Phase C). At some point late in the use-life of the building, a significant alteration took place in which the southern half of Operation A was covered in a large, well built baked brick pavement. This pavement extended more than 16m from north to south and more than 6m from east to west without having yet reached the southern edge and with the eastern edge eroded away at the edge of the mound. This pavement is associated with the earlier walls that, in places at least, mirrored the line of the earlier Phase B building, as the northern edge of the pavement stopped abruptly at the northern wall of Room 1. The pavement itself was clean, providing little in the way of stratified remains. The pavement was made of badly worn baked bricks, suggesting use over an extended period of time.

Post-Assyrian Disturbances (Phase D). After the final abandonment of the Phase C building, the area of Operation A was used only used ephemerally. Most obviously, the area was badly pitted by a large number of deep, wide storage or refuse pits. In addition, there was one clear pot burial of child (A-0048) cut in from an upper surface, now eroded away. The burial rested on top of the Phase C baked brick pavement, but is not associated with that pavement. (Fig. 11). This burial was first recorded in 2000 and, in itself, did not seem particularly noteworthy. The child was buried in a small ceramic vessel and had a

number of grave goods associated with the skeleton, including nine complete and fifteen fragmentary golden-colored glass beads (ZT 2171), a single ceramic vessel (ZT 2172) and three earrings, of which one was silver (ZT 2170) and two appeared to have been of copper-bronze (ZT 2488 and ZT 2489). It was not until the 2001 season, when our conservation staff started to clean the earrings for drawing and photography, that we discovered that the copper-bronze earrings, were actually made of an alloy of gold and copper, as was shown when a spot test using a solution of hydrochloric and nitric acids and deionized water tested positive for gold in the artifacts. Furthermore, testing of other copper-bronze artifacts from post-Assyrian contexts revealed five more gold-copper artifacts: two bowls discovered in 1998 as surface finds in a plowed-up grave in the lower town (ZT 0189 and ZT 0190), two additional earrings (ZT 5562 and ZT 5799) and a fine metal pin (ZT 5622). The context of all of these finds, as near as can be determined since several came from uncertain or mixed deposits, is post-Assyrian in date. Whether they form a coherent assemblage remains to be determined through additional metallographic analyses.

Grid square N1000 E1140. While the remains of the monumental mudbrick structure of Operation A lay immediately below the surface at the eastern edge of the high mound, the results of work immediately to the west of this area were less informative. In grid square N1000 E1140, only 40m from the monumental building, there was no clear Late Assyrian architecture recovered. Here, careful excavation revealed a series of hard-packed earthen surfaces associated with tannurs and pits, many of which included glazed Islamic sherds. The depth of this deposit is over two meters, suggesting that our initial assessment of the medieval period as brief and ephemeral at Ziyaret Tepe was mistaken. Indeed the depth of the medieval period deposits, both here and in Operation B (discussed below) argue for a lengthy post-Assyrian use of the high mound. Despite considerable exposure, however, we have yet to recover any substantial post-Assyrian structures on the high mound. This may be the result of taphonomic processes and erosion, or the vagaries of sampling error given the small percentage of the high mound surface that has been excavated. However, it may also indicate that the later usage of the High Mound may have been limited to temporary, even seasonal, shelters and does not represent an important occupation of the mound. Only in a small 3m by 2m sounding in grid square N1000 E1140 was a surface located that seems to contain significant Iron Age materials. At a depth of approximately 2.50m below the surface, a stone-paved surface was found along the northern edge of the grid square containing a few possibly Late Assyrian ceramic forms.

Apart from the pottery from the kilns and the votive deposits, very little other Late Assyrian pottery was found in the Operation A building. There were two main reasons for this. First, the large post-Assyrian pits had removed a substantial area of the floors. Second, those floors and courtyard surfaces that remained had been kept clean and supra-floor deposits contained a quantity of residual material including Middle Assyrian sherds and Dark-Rimmed Orange Ware bowl sherds. The latter is a distinctive ware type with a bright orange slip and a dark band at the rim and occurs in bowl forms with a slightly inturned rim and a flat or ring base. Despite a superficial similarity to Hellenistic bowl types, Dark-Rimmed Orange Ware bowls date to the later half of the third millennium BC and have

been found at Tell Brak, where they are fairly rare (Oates et al. 2001: fig 401:271-73, 275). At Ziyaret Tepe at least as many sherds of this type have been found in one season (in which no third millennium BC levels were dug) as were found in twelve seasons spent excavating third millennium BC levels at Tell Brak. This is a further indication that this ware type belongs in the Upper Tigris area and not in the Khabur region, a conclusion shared with the excavators of Tell Brak (Oates et al. 2001: 162).

The post-Assyrian pottery from Phase D of Operation A spans over 1000 years. There are only about three possible Partho-Sasanian sherds with applied decoration on the rims and several possible Roman jar rims in a red-brown very gritty fabric (close to Brittle Ware) with strap handles and corrugated shoulders. The Islamic period is better represented with gritty jar rims (occasionally with rolled moulded decoration) and jar disc bases, emerald green glazed sherds, Sgraffiato Ware in a variety of colors and fine hemispherical plain white/yellow glazed bowls. A number of complete sections of a flat-based bowl type with vertical sides and occasional lugs in an orange coarse chaff fabric are also probably Islamic in date.

Overall conclusions in Operation A. It is clear that Operation A has uncovered part of a monumental Late Assyrian public building. Within the limited excavated area it is impossible to determine with certainty the function of this building. The size of building, the thickness of the walls and the extensive baked brick pavement testify to its importance, as does its location at the eastern edge of the acropolis overlooking the expansive lower town. To date, we have no evidence for a destruction layer in the building and the paucity of *in situ* finds argues for a gradual abandonment. It is conceivable that the monumental building recovered in Operation A is the palace of Tushhan that was constructed by Ashurnasirpal II in 882 BC, but there is insufficient evidence to make this claim with any certainty. The discovery of the metal-working installations and the presence of considerable luxury goods, such as the burnt ivories, imported pottery and metal vessels hint at a palace workshop area, although a much larger area must be uncovered to make this claim with any certainty. Work will continue in Operation A during the 2002 field season.

Operation B

Operation B was located on the western half of the high mound where subsurface magnetic field gradiometry in 1998 produced enigmatic results, but showed the possible existence of a large structure, roughly square in shape. Excavation here was limited to a 5m by 5m square in the southwestern corner of grid square N1040 E1000. This area contained a thick layer of medieval remains, most clearly represented by a number of large storage pits and associated *tannurs*. One especially large *tannur* had been relined at least five times in antiquity suggesting that it had remained in use over a considerable time. Despite finding pits and *tannurs* dated to the Islamic period in Operation B, there is no evidence of any substantial architecture or permanent dwellings from that period. Again, based on the remains of Operation B, it is suggested that periodic and temporary visits to the site over centuries led to the accumulation of trash deposits and significant disturbance of remains

immediately below the modern-day surface. The prominent features of Operation B are a very large storage pit and the significant depth of the post-Assyrian deposit.

Operation C

Operation C was cut into the western slope of the high mound at a point approximately 6m below the present top of the tell. This operation was not laid out along strict grid coordinates since its location was determined by the pit dug by the villagers, and it lies within grid square N1040 E940. This area was chosen because a large, flat limestone slab laying parallel with the slope of the mound had caught the attention of local villagers and had encouraged clandestine digging. Furthermore, villagers from nearby Tepe claimed to have taken some complete vessels from a hole in this part of the mound. Since we noticed active illicit digging on the mound, it was deemed prudent to investigate. It was immediately obvious that a large modern pit had disturbed the area and dislodged the limestone slab noted above. The methodology we chose to employ in Operation C was to clear away the soil which had fallen into the modern pit and then expand the pit, cutting a straight stratigraphic section into the side of the mound, thus minimizing the amount of work needed to assess the nature of this area of the site. In order to do this, we cleaned across an area 3m wide to a depth of 2.10m (Fig. 12).

In Operation C, both the northern and southern edges of the trench were marked by large pits filled with soft gray ashy fill. Later *tannurs* are also seen in the section overlying well-stratified deposits. These deposits were tentatively assigned to the first half of the second millennium BC because of the presence of Red-Brown Wash Ware (see below). While admittedly excavated over a very small area, these deposits seem to represent a building that was terraced into the side of a pre-existing mound. Architecturally, the area was marked by two stratigraphically contemporary floors on either side of a mudbrick wall running parallel to the edge of the high mound. The easternmost floor was approximately 1.10m above the level of the western floor. As this building is at the edge of the mound, the most obvious explanation for such a dramatic difference in floor levels is that the building was terraced into the side of the high mound. The eastern floor had an associated plastered feature of unknown purpose and little diagnostic pottery associated with it. The western floor, however, was a stone-paved surface covered in pottery sherds, mostly fragments of large storage jars. This ceramic group (ZT 1910) contained of a number of diagnostic sherds, most of which were of Red-Brown Wash Ware (Fig. 13). This pottery is ubiquitous on archaeological sites in the Upper Tigris region and seems to represent a flourishing of the area prior to the rise of the Mittani and Middle Assyrian empires. The dating of these ceramics to the first half of the second millennium BC is based on the association of Red-Brown Wash Ware with a Khabur Ware vessel at Uçtepe (Sevin 1989; 1992; Köroğlu 1998), as well as its stratigraphic position at Ziyaret Tepe in Operation E (see below).

Operation D

Under the supervision of John MacGinnis of the McDonald Institute at Cambridge University, an area of 500 square meters was exposed in Operation D in 2000, located at the eastern limit of the lower town. Operation D included grid squares: N1000 E1480; N1000 E1490; N1000 E1500; N1010 E1480 and N1010 E1490. This area is marked by a significant rise of less than two meters in the contour of the otherwise flat lower town. The primary objective in excavating Operation D was to investigate whether these contours marked the remains of a city wall and whether the noticeable mound along this line was formed from the remains of a gate structure. The site had further interest in terms of a large magnetic anomaly that was seen in the subsurface gradiometry survey map completed in 1998 (Matney and Somers 1999: fig. 6). Recovery of datable material was a significant consideration in all these operations. The principal result of the 2000 field season was the confirmation of the presence of a monumental mudbrick building at the eastern edge of the settlement (Fig. 14). This structure was represented by a series of mudbrick walls between 2.5m and 3.0m thick, with possible external butresses or small towers. The northern area of Operation D was dominated by a mudbrick platform 13m wide from east to west and extending into the northern baulk.

The excavation of this mudbrick structure was extremely difficult for, despite its size, the bricks were generally in poor condition and exceedingly hard to delineate. The structure was found immediately below the topsoil and its walls consisted of a mixture of red and gray mudbricks clearly visible in section under good light but very difficult to recognize in plan. The bricks measured 34cm square by 10 to 12cm thick; the mortar joins were 2 to 5cm thick and composed of hard brown clay with white chalk inclusions, which is the same composition as virgin soil in this area of the site. The monumental mudbrick structure overlay a deposit of gray soil, approximately 10cm thick, which ran across the whole of Operation D and effectively divided the stratigraphy into two phases (Fig. 15). Excavation of the earlier phase, below the gray soil stratum, was limited to two 1m-wide slot trenches running along the western and northern sides of grid square N1000 E1490. Beneath the gray soil layer (D-006), we found an earlier cultural horizon marked by a white plastered floor (D-008) abutting a lower, thin mudbrick wall (D-011) with an associated supra-floor deposit (D-007). The supra-floor deposit was rich in cultural materials — bone, pottery, charcoal and worked flint. The wall was preserved to a height of only 14cm and on the south side of the wall was a door socket (ZT 3554) that was let into the floor. Under the white plastered floor was a layer of brown earth and a cobbled surface (D-014) with an associated pit, itself cut into natural. These deposits, stratified below the main north-south wall that is part of the city fortifications, possibly represents a small settlement in the lower town prior to the expansion and fortification of Ziyaret Tepe. The ceramics found in place, including a possible Ninevite 5 sherd, suggest a date in the third millennium BC. These surfaces were clearly stratified below the wall and predate the major expansion of the site in Assyrian times. The wall was only one brick thick, suggesting a modest domestic structure of Early Bronze Age date. Elsewhere on the site, we have recovered — albeit not

yet from non-primary contexts — several sherds that resemble Metallic Ware, a late third millennium BC ceramic ware known from numerous sites in northeastern Syria. Similarly, a number of Dark-Rimmed Orange Ware bowls dating to the late third millennium BC were found. The very limited distribution and quantity of third millennium BC pottery suggests that, while Ziyaret Tepe was not a large town in the Early Bronze Age, it was also not entirely abandoned as we had previously thought.

The northern sector of Operation D was dominated by a massive mudbrick platform that filled nearly the entire western third of the excavated area (Fig. 16). The bricks were of a standardized size: 37cm square by 11cm thick and were red or gray in color. A later grave had been cut into the platform in the southeastern corner of this trench. The nature of the structures which might have been constructed above this platform are impossible to determine as no overlying architecture was recovered and our area of excavation was limited, although the possibility of this being part of the city gate seems very likely (see also Scott and MacGinnis 1990 on Late Assyrian gateway structures from Nineveh).

The western portion of Operation D produced the only clear occupation surfaces associated with the mudbrick structure. At least two small rooms were constructed in the western part of Operation D in grid square N1000 E1480 (Fig. 17). These two rooms were approximately 4m by 6m in extent; their precise function is uncertain. The northernmost of the two rooms was badly disturbed by the late burial noted above. The southernmost room had enigmatic mudbrick features associated with the northern part of the room and a poorly defined floor, although the lines of the walls were very clear during excavation. It seems possible that these rooms were part of a tower or gatehouse structure and that the small scale of our excavations has limited our ability to understand the total plan of these remains.

Finally, the discovery of an intact pottery kiln in the northeastern corner of the trench is important as a potential piece of evidence for the dating of the construction of the city defenses (Fig. 18). The kiln was 2.60m long and was preserved to a height of 1.40m. This was the source of a strong magnetic anomaly in the gradiometry survey conducted in 1998. This kiln was some 14m east of the edge of the mudbrick constructions in Operation D and lay clearly outside of the city proper. We were not able to excavate the entire kiln in the time available, but we were able to section it across the middle and excavate one half completely. The structure of the kiln was reasonably well preserved. It had been constructed by excavating a large hole into virgin soil and lining the hole with roughly formed bricks of varying sizes (variously 31 by 17 by 11cm; 44 by 20 by 12cm; 29 by 32 by 8cm). In the center of the kiln was a column of bricks preserved up to the seventh course, at the top of which the beginnings of arching were still intact. The floor of the kiln was formed simply by the natural clay, burnt red by firing, with no other prepared surface. Some of the post-firing contents of the kiln were still present, probably not *in situ* in terms of their original placement within the kiln, but found as they had been left following the sorting through of the kiln after its final firing. A considerable quantity of vitrified clay material suggest that the final usage of the kiln may have involved a significant overfiring that resulted in its abandonment.

The fill of the kiln as excavated consisted of mixed layers of earth and ash containing substantial quantities of potsherds, including three whole vessels that were broken but otherwise complete (Fig. 19) and a number of diagnostic fragments. The pottery has been provisionally studied. The latest pottery (ZT 2547) is probably Mittani or Middle Assyrian in date. ZT 2547 has a rectangular rim which may be Middle Assyrian, although there are also rectangular rims on some Mittani vessels (cf. Oates et al. 1997: fig 212: 614). A Khabur-Like Ware jar (ZT 2549) with painted decoration would be called Khabur Ware if found on a site further south and has a rounded ring base frequently found on second millennium BC jars, for instance on Old Babylonian jars from Tell al-Rimah (Postgate et al. 1997: fig. 90). The jar also has similarities with late Old Babylonian jars at Tell Brak (Oates et al. 1997: fig. 193: 312, 313). Also found were a Mittani gray burnished ware tripod bowl (ZT 2548; cf. Oates et al. 1997: fig. 205: 530 for shape) and two Mittani carinated bowl rims. The two rims are in a coarser fabric with more vegetal inclusions than similar shapes from Tell Brak which are often burnished (cf. Oates et al. 1997: fig. 189: 200, 206: 559 for shape).

Although the precise dating of the kiln can not be ascertained by reference to the vessels within, which may in fact cover a significant span of time, it does seem clear that the latest pottery within the kiln pre-dates the Late Assyrian period and, in fact, there is no Late Assyrian pottery associated with the kiln. This is significant because if the kiln was intentionally located outside the city wall and was in use in the Late Bronze Age, then the fortification of the Lower Town may have been undertaken long before the Late Assyrian period and the form of the urban settlement in the Late Assyrian period may have followed a pattern previously established in the Mittani or Middle Assyrian period.

Operation E

Excavations on the high mound along the eastern edge of the *tell* in Operation E were directed by Michael Roaf of the Institut für Vorderasiatische Archäologie in the University of Munich and financed by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft as part of the research project investigating "The northern frontiers of Mesopotamia". Operation E produced the best stratigraphic sequence from Ziyaret Tepe, revealing a sequence of occupation layers from the Middle Bronze Age (c. 2000 BC) to the Late Assyrian period (c. 700 BC). Although there are some gaps in the sequence, these do not seem to have been of long duration and the major periods of occupation are well represented both in architectural remains and in pottery finds.

Work was started in August 2000 by clearing a 5m-wide trench from the top of the mound towards the bottom, scraping with shovels to remove overlying loose soil and thorny vegetation. The clearance started in the northern half of grid square N1080 E1190 and was halted approximately two-thirds of the way down the mound as it appeared that the surface deposits below this point consisted of slope wash.

Having cleared the surface of the slope, it was possible to see several points high on the slope of the mound where mudbrick walls were eroding out. Working in the western-

most areas of the clearance (N1085-1090 E1190-1198) we were able in 2000 to recover a well-stratified sequence of deposits, including many superimposed building levels as well as pits dug into these levels. In 2001 the excavations were extended 5m further to the west and about the same to the east (N1085-1090 E1185-1203). In order to facilitate the description of the excavation the sequence has been divided into six steps numbered from the top. These steps are the result of how the trench was excavated and, although roughly in chronological order, do not represent significant stages in the settlement history at Ziyaret Tepe.

Step 6 (Fig. 20). The earliest levels excavated so far were investigated at E1201-1203, where a series of several external surfaces were discovered. Into the earliest of these a ceramic drain consisting of a flat ceramic trough (E-309; ZT 7535) 35cm wide, 12cm deep and originally more than 83cm long was inserted. A later surface contained an area of stone and pottery tile paving (E-306). The dating of these layers is difficult as only a small area has been excavated and not many sherds were recovered, but the presence of a number of Dark-Rimmed Orange Ware bowls suggests a date towards the end of the third millennium BC (or later if these are residual sherds), since this type of pottery is dated to the later centuries of the third millennium BC at Tell Brak. A later pit (E-304) more than 2 meters deep was dug in the southern part of this step.

Step 5. Above these surfaces was one of the most interesting discoveries of the 2001 season. Here part of a single period building was excavated, which was destroyed in a fire of exceptional vehemence that turned the collapsed roof debris into a kaleidoscope of bright reds, yellows, and oranges (Fig. 21). The small part of the Brightly Burned Building that has so far been excavated (E1197.5-1201) includes the outer east mudbrick wall built on a foundation of river cobbles (E-079 and E-080) and part of a paved street or alley (E-311) running along the wall. On the west side of the eastern wall parts of two rooms have been excavated: the northern one is quite narrow (c. 1.1 m wide) while the southern is more than 2.5 m wide (the southern wall of the room lying beyond the southern edge of the trench).

Both rooms were filled with extremely highly fired debris. Much of this derived from the burnt roof of the building and impressions of timber beams were preserved in baked plaster from the roof. Unusually, large potsherds were incorporated into the upper layer of the roof plaster: these might have provided additional protection against the winter rains. Amongst the debris were also several complete pots and the remains of large heavily straw tempered clay containers probably originally unbaked or lightly fired which were subsequently baked in the fire. These vessels may have been stored on the roof and collapsed into the room. Good samples of seeds and of charcoal were collected which should give useful information for dating and for the botanical remains. Unfortunately none of the charcoal so far recovered is large enough for a dendrochronological determination, but it is likely that suitable samples will be found in the as yet unexcavated portion of the building. The fire was so intense that the originally sun-dried mudbricks of the wall between the two rooms have been turned into baked bricks. There were almost no finds on the small area of floor of the northern room that has been excavated: the floor of the southern room has not yet been reached.

The date of the Brightly Burned Building cannot yet be firmly established. It is clearly later than the lower lying levels containing late third millennium BC Dark Rimmed Orange Ware Bowls and earlier than the layers above which contain pottery which has parallels with Mittani period assemblages in Syria and northern Iraq. A date in the first half of the second millennium would seem to be most likely. Before we can be more precise about the date we need a larger sample of pottery, but we may note that in this building sherds of Red-Brown Wash Ware were identified. The dating and significance of this type of pottery is uncertain, but some of those excavating in the Ilisu Dam area consider it to be diagnostic of the first half of the second millennium. Red-Brown Wash Ware has also been found in the excavations at Uçtepe in association with a classic Khabur Ware vessel and at Giricano, but the other pottery from these two sites, despite some general similarities, is not identical with that from the Brightly Burned Building. It is likely that the differences between these sites are chronological and the Brightly Burned Building should be dated earlier, perhaps to the first quarter of the second millennium BC. Most of the vessels from this small room were deep carinated bowls (in two sizes), as well as two jars with rolled rims and an open bowl with lugs on the rim (see Fig. 24: ZT 3291 and ZT 3305). There are also a number of sherds with concentric painted circles from the Brightly Burned Building which are certainly not Khabur Ware in style. It seems that, unlike in the subsequent periods, the pottery in the Upper Tigris region was distinct from that in Mesopotamia south of the Tur Abdin. On present evidence, this level probably belongs somewhere in the first half of the second millennium, but with a restricted repertoire of vessels recovered so far it is not possible to be more precise at the moment.

Above the collapse of the building were a series of external surfaces. At a later time a shallow pit formed in the southwestern part of the area in which water collected. This was partly filled with stones and formed the substructure for the pebble and sherd surface encountered in the next step up.

Steps 3 and 4. This pebble and sherd surface was associated with a number of features found in the lowest excavated part of Step 4 (E1196-1198). Here in an early phase an east-west mudbrick wall (E-042) c. 60cm wide had been constructed with open areas to the north and south. A pottery pipe in the wall acted as a drain allowing water to flow under the wall. This pipe may have been a re-used tall stand. To the south of the wall an additional wall was built up against the E-W wall which with a wall running to the south created the corner of a room. Within this room part of a mudbrick bin filled with ash was excavated.

After these structures had fallen out of use a sloping pebble surface was identified running over the top of them. Above this were further deposits and a surface that may have been associated with a row of stones running approximately north-south along the northern two-thirds of the western limit of excavation of Step 3 (E1195-1196). These stones were probably either the foundations for a mudbrick wall or were placed against the edge of a mudbrick wall lying further to the west. Above this but running in a slightly different direction and reaching as far as the southern edge of the trench was a mudbrick wall. Whether these walls were house walls or boundary walls is uncertain but the latter seems

more likely. The mudbrick wall was buried beneath a thick deposit (c. 1m deep) of numerous external surfaces showing evidence of puddling and burning. These surfaces were fragmentary and difficult to follow but undoubtedly represent the gradual accumulation of fill in open external areas, possibly courtyards within a house or unoccupied areas within the settlement.

The structures within Steps 3 and 4 may date to the Mittani period. A Nuzi Ware sherd came from these layers and amongst the pottery were other typical Mittani types (e.g., tall carinated beakers), but the ceramic sample is small and largely consists of redeposited sherds and so this dating must be considered provisional.

Step 2. (Fig. 22). A pebble surface, which sloped down from east to west, ran over the top of these fill layers. In the side of Pit E-032, which was dug through the northern part of Step 2 (E 1193-1195), it could be seen that this surface ran up to a mudbrick wall still standing five courses high. After this wall had fallen out of use, it was covered by a layer of ash and on top of this two mudbrick walls (E-025 and E-026) forming the corner of a room were built. Dug into the corner of this room was a child's grave (E-030). This was much disturbed by being used later as an animal lair, but as well as fragmentary human bones it contained part of a fine brown conical beaker which might be of Middle Assyrian date. It is not clear whether this grave should be associated with the use of this building or was dug after the building had fallen out of use. The floors to the west of these walls were destroyed by Pit E-022 and the northern part of Wall E-026 and the associated floors were destroyed by Pit E-032.

Step 1. Step 1 was excavated in two separate 5m by 5m squares. Excavations were started in 2000 in E1190-1195. In 2001 the excavations in this square were continued and the 5m by 5m square to the west (E1185-1190) was also investigated (principally under the supervision of Diana Stein). The stratigraphic situation was complicated in this area because the foundations of later walls were dug into earlier building levels and the whole was made more difficult to interpret by later pits removing vital stratigraphic connections.

There is no obvious hiatus between Steps 1 and 2 and the excavations in Step 1 have in some places reached levels investigated in Step 2, but, since no direct stratigraphic link has yet been established (the earlier levels in Step 1 being observed in the edges and bottoms of later pits and the intervening layers being not yet excavated), it is easier to treat them separately at the moment. Furthermore a row of pits (including Pits E-022, E-032, and E-083) has effectively removed most of the layers between Step 1 to the west of E1193 and Step 2 to the east. The earliest features in Step 1 are mudbrick walls and surfaces visible in the sides and bottoms of pits dug deep into earlier levels. These walls are aligned with those in Step 2 and are probably contemporary with them.

Visible in the south side of Pit E-032 is a pebble surface about 30cm above the floor on the west side of Wall E-026. The occupation layers above this no longer survive, but must have built up to a height of more than 1m since dug through them was a circular pit (E-022) over 2m in diameter with a white layer at the bottom typical of grain storage pits. These pits are often more than two meters deep, but the sides of this pit only survived to a height of 50cm and were covered by a later surface. The explanation must be that the area

was levelled in antiquity and the later levels including that from which Pit E-022 was dug were removed in this operation. It is possible that this levelling operation was carried out in conjunction with the construction of Walls E-234 and E-211: the absolute level of the floor to the east of Wall E-211 is the same as that of the surface sealing Pit E-022 and the layers to the west of Walls E-211 and E-234 belong to an earlier phase than the walls showing that they were terraced into the mound. Above Pit E-022 were a series of external floor surfaces often strengthened with pebbles and sherds. Into these surfaces were inserted several small pits and two *tannurs* (E-010 and E-004) in subsequent phases. From the pottery found in these layers they can be dated to the Middle Assyrian period.

The latest of the surfaces to the east of Wall E-234 rose up to go over the eroded stub of the wall suggesting that this area had at some stage fallen out of use. These layers, as well as Walls E-211 and E-234, were cut by the deep foundation trench (in places more than 1.1m deep) for a later building. The surviving walls (E-013, E-208, E-237 and E-238) in these foundation trenches are of unplastered mudbrick and are the remains of the walls below floor level.

The plan of the building consists of a N-S wall (numbered E-013 and E-237 and visible in the base of the rectangular pit) with two cross walls running E-W. The wall to the north (E-238) has been exposed for a distance of c. 1.20m while that to the south (E-208) extends a distance of 4.60m as far as the west edge of the excavated area, forming a room over 3m wide. The thickness of the walls and the depth of the foundations indicate that this was a substantial building. Since there are no cross-walls running to the east, it is possible that Wall E-013 is the east wall of the building. More of the plan of this building can be recovered through shallow excavation in the neighboring grid squares.

At the moment the dating of this building is uncertain as no pottery that can be firmly associated with it has yet been excavated. It is clearly Middle Assyrian or later and it is cut by the pit in which Walls E-011, E-012, E-204, and E-239 were inserted, which is dated by the sherds found in it to the Late Assyrian period. It is possible that it should date to the Middle Assyrian period. Less likely it might belong to the period (c. 1050-900 BC) when the Assyrians no longer controlled this region (Roaf and Schachner in press). The pottery found in the nearby Pit E-032 dates to this period, but the character of the building is not what might be expected to have been built in this period. The third possibility is that it was constructed early in the Late Assyrian occupation of the site.

An important discovery in 2000 was the large Pit E-032, whose excavation was completed in 2001 (Fig. 23). The pit cut the surfaces above Pit E-022 as well as the earlier occupation layers revealed in Step 2. The base and lower part of this pit were marked by a white surface resulting from the decay of chaff or straw. The pit was round, approximately 3m in diameter. In all probability it was used for the storage of grain. The fill of the pit was very varied with bricky patches and ashy lenses. The surface from which this pit was dug has not survived. The pit is now c. 2m deep but may have originally been deeper.

The pottery from Pit E-032 included much East Anatolian Early Iron Age pottery. (Fig. 24). Particularly diagnostic were bowls and hole-mouth jars with corrugated, grooved or ribbed rims. The pottery from the pit forms a largely coherent and consistent assem-

blage, even though it also includes a number of Mesopotamian Late Bronze Age sherds (Middle Assyrian and Mittani) and a few even earlier sherds. At Tille, these handmade grooved vessels occur in a level that is preceded by three Iron Age levels (levels 1-3) that have different pottery. Blaylock (1999: 268-269) suggest a date in the 10th or 9th century BC for the grooved pottery levels at Tille (levels 4-7), although Müller and Bartl (2001) would place this pottery between 1100 and 900 BC (see also Roaf and Schachner in press). The pottery from Pit E-032 includes several different fabric types. The grooved bowls with inturned rims occur in cooking ware (black/brown burnished with abundant medium mineral inclusions), in a brown fabric with fine vegetal and mineral inclusions and a black burnished exterior surface, and in a yellowish fabric with abundant fine white mineral and fine vegetal inclusions. There are also small hemispherical bowls in the latter fabric with no grooved decoration and a variety of rolled rim, other bowls, handmade jar rims and several painted sherds, some of which conform to the yellowish gritty wheel-made fabrics decorated with plum-red paint that co-occur with the grooved bowls at other sites, e.g., Gredimse and Giricano. It is hoped that in the course of the next year a detailed report on the pottery and other finds will be prepared for publication. The pit was also sampled for animal bones and botanical remains.

The latest construction in Operation E was another pit, this time roughly rectangular in outline. This cut through the upper part of Pit E-032 as well as the foundation wall E-237. The sides of this pit were lined with mudbrick walls, those on the south and west one brick thick while those on the north and east only a half brick wide with the rough cut edges of the half-bricks set against the edges of the cut. The floor of the structure was covered with whitewash that was also observed on the lower parts of the unplastered surfaces of the walls. The pottery from above the floor contained only a small number of diagnostic sherds, half of which were Middle Assyrian and the rest Late Assyrian in date. One of the latter groups from this building in Operation E was a cylindrical beaker with a slightly rounded base. This beaker type has been identified by Arnulf Hausleiter as one of the few Late Assyrian pot types that is confined to the earlier part of the Late Assyrian period (Hausleiter 1996; Roaf 2001). It is probable then that this room was constructed in the Late Assyrian period. The function of the structure is also not certain. It was mostly subterranean and may have been used for storage. Whether it was a free-standing structure or part of a larger building which has been completely eroded away is uncertain as is also the elevation of the floor or surface from which it was dug.

The northwest corner of the structure was partly removed by the digging of Pit E-205 which also removed part of the south face of Wall E-238 and of the east face of Wall E-234. Other late pits included E-230 and E-212, all of which were cut from surfaces which have been eroded from the surface of the mound. The latest "pit" (E-055) was dug into the "Late Assyrian" structure between the 2000 and 2001 seasons. Presumably dug in search of treasure, it removed the remains of Wall E-011 and the east end of Wall E-239 as well as part of the edge of Pit E-032. To the north this pit had been extended to create a cave over 2m deep. This cave follows the outline of an earlier pit (called E-083) which was filled with very soft ashy material. The precise relationship between Pit E-083 and Pit E-

032 is not clear but it may well be that Pit E-083 was dug before Pit E-032.

Overall Conclusions in Operation E. The stratigraphy of Operation E is detailed and complex and covers a period of about 1500 years. Some nine separate building levels have been identified. In all but one case there is evidence for breaks in occupation between the building levels attested either by external surfaces overlying the building remains or by levelling operations that have removed later layers.

This fine-grained stratigraphy offers the opportunity to establish a detailed ceramic sequence which will cover both the little known Middle Bronze Age as well as the Mittani and Middle Assyrian periods. Of particular interest is the Brightly Burned Building which seems to belong to a local Upper Tigris culture independent of the kingdoms south of the Tur Abdin, perhaps after Shamshi-Adad ventured into this region. The pottery of the Mittani and Middle Assyrian periods found at Ziyaret Tepe is very similar to that found in northern Syria and northern Iraq, while the grooved pottery found in the Early Iron Age Pit E-032 has connections to the west, north and east but not to the south. One observation that may have wider implications is that at Ziyaret Tepe it appears that when the Upper Tigris valley was ruled by Mesopotamian kings, whether of the Mittanian, the Middle Assyrian or the Late Assyrian empires, the pottery used is very similar to that from south of the Tur Abdin. At other periods, however, the pottery is not closely related to southern pottery. So perhaps here pottery assemblages change not with population but with political control. In future seasons we wish to pursue this question in greater detail, by refining the pottery sequence in order to document the changing relationships not only with the regions to the south but also with those to the west and north. We will also extend the excavation to give information about earlier periods.

Operation F

Like Operation C, this excavation was conducted in order to investigate an area of the high mound that was badly disturbed by illicit modern digging at Ziyaret Tepe. Operation F is located in grid square N1070 E1090. This is an area at the southern end of a deep ravine which cuts into the high mound, which Guillermo Algaze suggested was the location of the city gate in Late Assyrian times. This area suffers from very dramatic erosion, seen in the quantity of material that has spread out from this cut onto the surrounding landscape to the north of the high mound. In Operation F, a mechanical backhoe had been used by villagers to cut a deep, narrow hole into the high mound. It was approximately 2.5m deep and exposed an impressive section on its southern side. Conveniently, it was roughly rectangular in shape, having been made with a mechanical digger, and the section was easily cleaned. Our approach to this Operation in 2001 was to cut into the mound to the south of the hole in order to expand the area covered and to allow us easy access to the northern section. Approximately half of the soil required to complete the clearance was stratigraphically removed, exposing at least one cobbled (exterior) surface (F-0017). A very preliminary assessment of the pottery from this area determined that the material excavated in 2001 was mixed, with a considerable quantity of Islamic sherdage.

Operation G

Work in Operation G in the lower town in the 2001 season was directed by John MacGinnis. Operation G was located southwest of the main mound. Two factors led to choosing this part of the site for the focus of work in 2001. First, this area showed up on the contour survey as a significant low mound in its own right. Second, results of the subsurface magnetic field gradiometry survey completed in 1998 in this area showed features that had the appearance of coherent architecture. An area of 400 square meters was exposed. Apart from the plowzone and layers of mudbrick wash, we came down straight onto a major residence with walls 1.5 m thick, made of large bricks (41 x 41 x 12 to 14cm) of fresh red clay (Fig. 25). The architecture was covered by less than a meter of overlying material. The most striking feature of this large residential building is undoubtedly a mosaic pavement of squares of black and white river pebbles that average about 12cm long. These were arranged in a checkerboard pattern, mostly whole squares of a single color, but with some divided into four by diagonal lines with opposing triangles of the same color, and some decorated with rosette patterns (Fig. 26). The main entrance to the residence was through a doorway paved with three large stone slabs (each measuring approximately 1.20m by 0.60m). It is not yet clear whether this led into a roofed room or an outer courtyard; in any case, this room/courtyard then gave access to the cobbled courtyard. Another small room off the cobbled courtyard in which the pieces of one large pot were found smashed on the floor was excavated in its entirety. A third, larger room was also partly excavated, revealing the remains of a pithos in the center, while a fourth room contained two more pithoi *in situ* in addition to a quernstone and the remains of six other whole pots.

We also carried out two deep soundings in different parts of the building. The first of these was excavated in order to determine the depth of the building's foundations. These turned out to be five courses of brick deep, or about 70 cm. This sounding also revealed remains of a possible earlier building of a much less substantial nature than the later residence. A pit cutting this earlier phase but sealed by the main residence yielded pottery and a carbon sample. The second sounding was carried out to investigate the overall depth of cultural deposits in this part of the site, which proved to be a little over 3.0m. It was encouraging to note that the features interpreted as walls on the gradiometry survey corresponded closely to the plan actually recovered.

Although only a small part of this building has been excavated, the presence of a checkerboard patterned mosaic floor indicates that this was an important Late Assyrian building (Fig. 27). Such pavements have been uncovered at Tell Ahmar/Til Barsip (Areas C and E), at Arslan Tash ("bâtiment aux ivoires"), and at Tille Höyük, as well as in the recent excavations at Ashur itself. (Blaylock 1998; Bunnens 1989; 1992; 1994; 1997; Radner, pers. comm. on Ashur). These Late Assyrian mosaics can also be viewed as part of a much broader phenomenon stretching across Anatolia. For example, Young's expedition to Gordion in the mid-1950s brought to light a developed Phrygian tradition of mosaic

floors, e.g., the well known geometric mosaic in the "West Phrygian House" (Young 1965). Indeed, the color and intricate Phrygian mosaics of Gordion were in Young's opinion far superior in design and execution than the Assyrian floors at Arslan Tash and Tell Ahmar (Young 1965: 12-13). However, as recent excavations in the east have shown, mosaic floors are also important throughout Assyrian sites and examples include those from the capital at Ashur.

Although only preliminarily studied, the ceramics found in Operation G did not resemble the other well stratified Late Assyrian levels from the 2000 and 2001 seasons at Ziyaret Tepe (see Fig. 24). The jars and storage jars found broken *in situ* on the floors of the checkerboard building in the outer town are not particularly diagnostic in themselves. Unfortunately, the more distinctive Late Assyrian torpedo jar rim forms, with swollen rims and ridges on the neck, do not seem to be found in the Ziyaret Tepe region (for types see Curtis and Green 1997: fig 42: 188-193). Apart from the storage jars, an almost complete medium jar (ZT 6007) similar to one of the Khatuniyeh vessels: Curtis and Green 1997: fig 38:160) was found resting on one of the floors near a pithos and a rim sherd of an Early Iron Age handmade black burnished spouted vessel, which may be residual, was found in fill close to one of the floors.

The remainder of the ceramic material from this area is in the form of sherds in topsoil and fill below topsoil. Many of these are bowl rims are shapes familiar from other Late Assyrian sites, such as rims with single grooves on them (cf. Oates 1959: pots 21, 32; Curtis and Green 1997: figs. 35: 118, 124, 125; fig. 36: 145; fig. 37: 156). However, although the shapes are familiar, the ware of the Ziyaret Tepe pottery is different. Those from further south have a buff, generally gritty fabric with occasional vegetal inclusions whereas the examples from Ziyaret Tepe are a red-brown heavily burnished fabric. There is nothing in the ceramics of this building precluding a date in the Late Assyrian period, although, on the other hand, there is nothing that conclusively proves such a date either. At the present time the checkerboard mosaic floor is the most distinctive datable feature of the building.

Operation H

During the 2001 season, we were notified that there existed a possible external cemetery to Ziyaret Tepe, located near the Tigris River, 1700km north of the high mound. Here more than a dozen graves marked by stone settings were clearly visible on the surface of a very low mound. The mound was bordered by a ditch on all four sides and was virtually devoid of surface artifacts, except two eroded featureless sherds. With the permission of our government representative, an area 2m by 3m was investigated where a large rectangular worked basalt slab was seen sticking out of the mound surface.

Excavation revealed a large pit (H-0006) measuring at least 1.20m by 1.50m and approximately 1.45m deep that extended into the western and southern edges of the trench. This pit is clearly modern and the edges of the pit are marked by the claw marks of the backhoe that dug it. Several worked stone slabs had been dumped into the pit. Pit H-0006 itself cut into

a deeper grave (H-0005) which was so badly disturbed that only the feet of the skeleton survived, along with a clear cut made originally for the narrow grave. There were no associated grave goods. Below Grave H-0005 was a lower grave (H-0007) at a depth of 1.65m below the mound surface, which was much better preserved. The cut for the body was approximately 60cm wide and 2.20m long. The top of the cut had been removed, leaving a preserved depth of only 15-20cm. The body was laid on its back with the skull slightly tilted forward. Arms, hands and ribs were all *in situ* and well preserved. Below the pelvic area, the skeleton appears to have been disturbed. Dilek Erdal, a physical anthropologist from Hacettepe University, suggested that this might have been an early Islamic burial because of the orientation of the body and the lack of grave goods. In any case, it is clear that we did not find in Operation H an extramural cemetery for Ziyaret Tepe during its urban period.

Operation I

In 2001 a series of eight small sondages was excavated, four in the northwest corners of grid squares N1080 E1010 to N1080 E1070 and four in the north-east corners of squares N1080 E1100 to N1080 E1160, running down the slope from near Operation B across the gully which may have marked an early entry route into the settlement and eastwards up the slope towards the area of Operation E. Each trench measured 1m N-S and 2.5m E-W. The aim of this operation was to open windows into the mound in order to learn more about how the mound was constructed and to develop our understanding of the settlement history of the site. The sondages were excavated to a depth of c. 1.5m below the surface, or to the first substantial building level if one was encountered. Since this work was undertaken at the end of the 2001 season the pottery and finds have not yet been studied in detail and only a few provisional remarks may be made.

The westernmost sondage in N1080 E1010 produced only sloping layers of ashy fill probably washed down from higher up the mound. Further east in N1080 E1030 an area of baked brick paving with small stones between them was revealed about 1.2 m below the surface. The baked bricks are not rectangular but trapezoidal and so were probably made for some other purpose and re-used for the paving. The sondage in N1080 E1050 contained loose ashy fill down to a depth of c. 1.4m below the surface where a patchy white floor (like those commonly found at the bottom of pits) was found. It is possible that the whole sondage lay within a large pit and the floor represents the bottom of this pit. In N1080 E1070 an Islamic glazed sherd was found under the foundation stones of a wall and beneath this, at a depth of about 1.1m below the surface, a mudbrick structure covered almost the whole area of the trench. The size of the bricks and the nature of the construction is not inconsistent with a Late Assyrian date and it might have been part of a substantial wall or, given the rather irregular lay of the bricks, more probably some sort of terrace platform like that excavated in Operation A. The sondage in N1080 E1100 was dug into the east slope of the gully and the deposits contained much sand and small stones and may have been redeposited. In N1080 E1120 part of a possible pit was excavated though the identification

is not certain. In N1080 E1140 parts of two *tannurs* probably dating to the Islamic period were found and below these an area of stone paving of uncertain date was uncovered. In N1080 E1160, the easternmost of the sondages excavated in Operation I, part of a stone lined pit was excavated as well as possible surfaces beneath the bottom of the pit. The dating of these features is not certain.

General Conclusions

The 2000 and 2001 excavation seasons at Ziyaret Tepe have documented the importance of the site in the 2nd and 1st millennia BC when the city functioned as an important border city during the Middle Assyrian and Late Assyrian periods. The excavations in Operations A, D and G are especially salient on this point since they provide evidence of monumental construction dating to the Late Iron Age. While Operations A, D and G represent wide exposures of Late Assyrian architecture, earlier *in situ* material is limited to Operations C and E. The ceramics from Operation C, a possibly early 2nd millennium BC building terraced into the western side of the high mound, are briefly described above. Operation E, the far more extensive step-trench on the eastern edge of the high mound has produced an interesting sequence of material dating from the Late Assyrian periods down to the late 3rd millennium BC and promises to be the foundation of the chronological sequence at the site.

As discussed in previous preliminary reports (Matney 1998; Matney and Somers 1999; Matney and Bauer 2000), surface survey and intensive sherd collection have provided evidence for an occupational history at Ziyaret Tepe spanning the late Neolithic through the Islamic periods with the heaviest concentration of the material dating from the early 2nd through the mid-1st millennia BC. Three specific modifications to that earlier published site history have been discussed above: (1) the documentation of a small third millennium BC mound in the lower town to the east of the high mound; (2) growing evidence of a significant early 2nd millennium BC occupation and (3) recognition of a long, if ephemeral, use of the high mound in medieval times. Future excavation seasons will clearly continue to augment and improve our understanding of the settlement history of Ziyaret Tepe.

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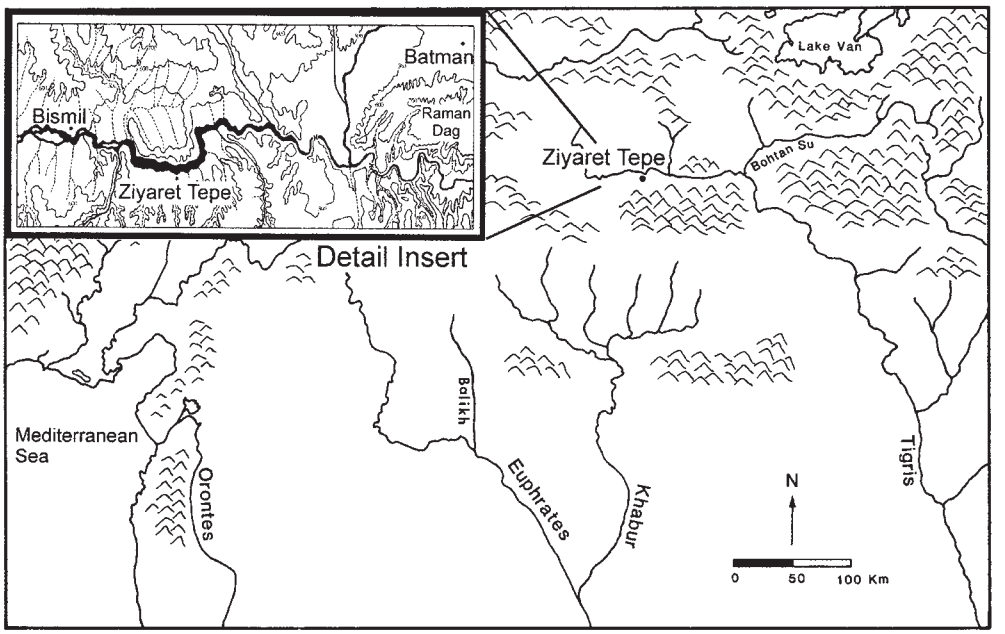

Fig. 1. Regional map showing location of Ziyaret Tepe.

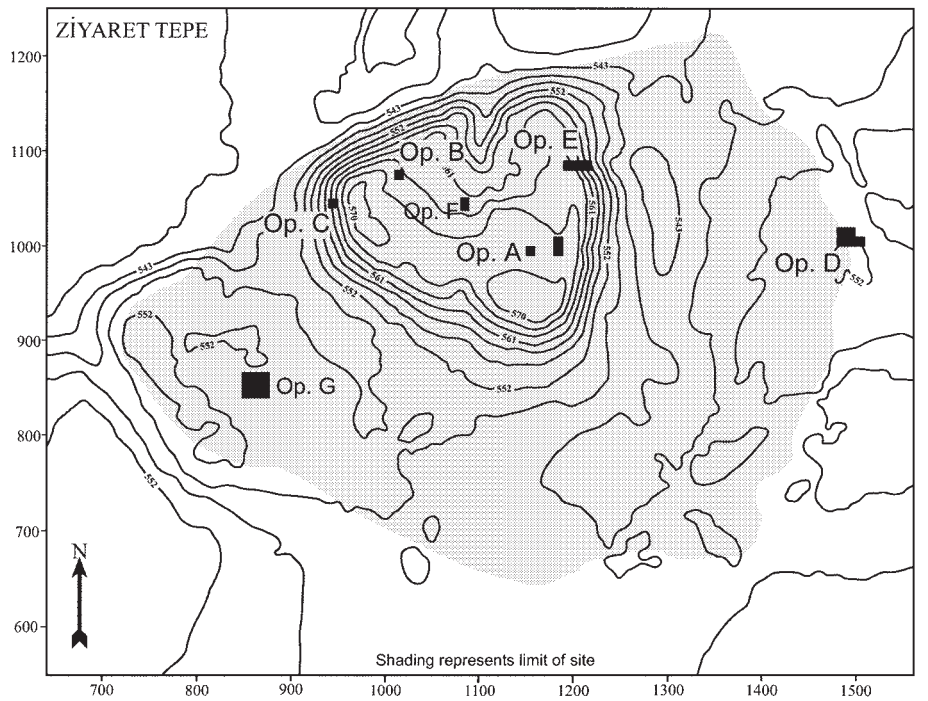

Fig. 2. Topographic plan of Ziyaret Tepe showing areas of excavation in 2000-2001.

Fig. 3. High mound of Ziyaret Tepe facing north.

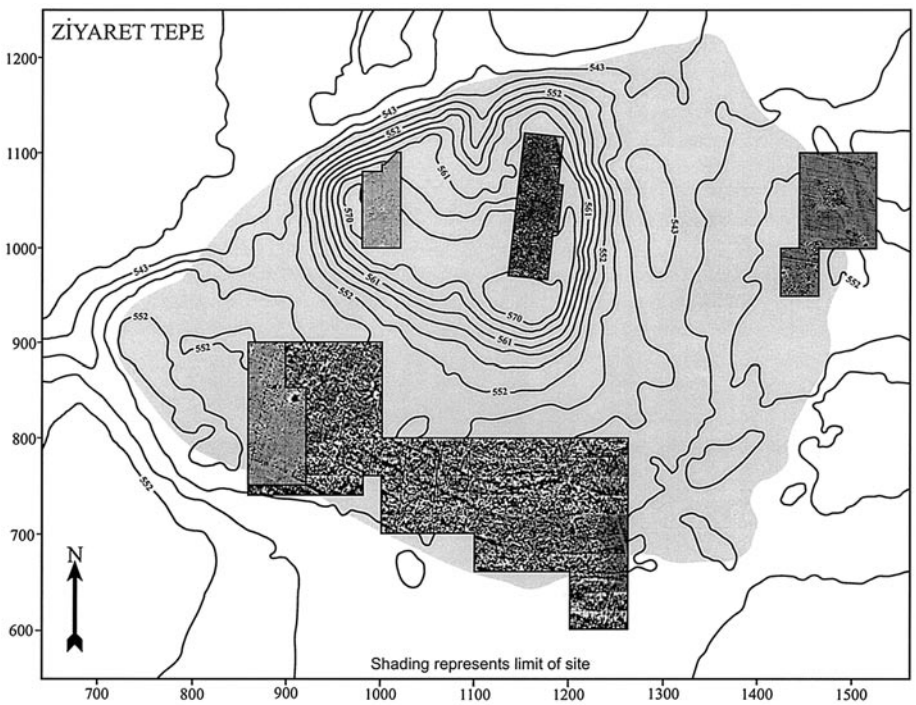

Fig. 4. Topographic plan showing results of gradiometry survey in 1998-1999.

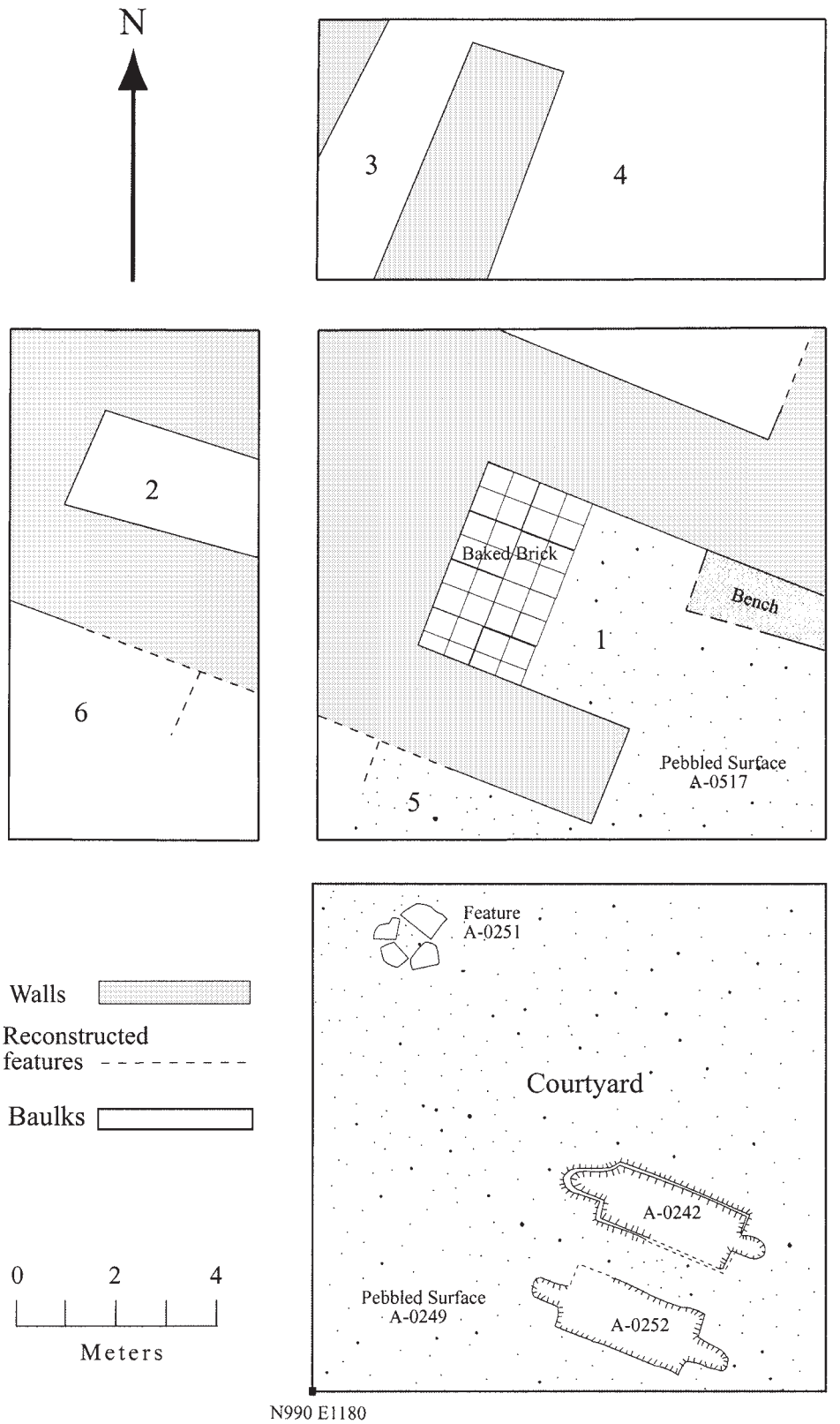

Fig. 5. Principal architectural remains in Operation A.

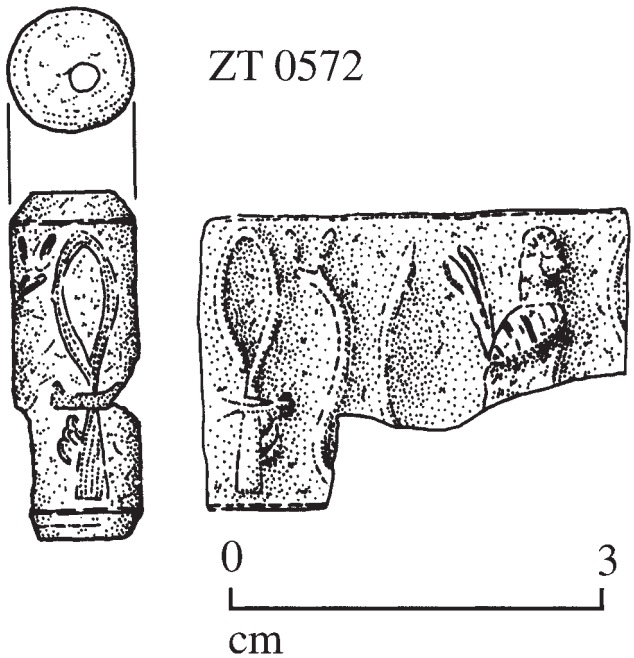

Fig. 6. Cylinder seal from Operation A (ZT 0572).

Fig. 7. Foundation deposit in Operation A (A-0251).

Fig. 8. Metal-working kilns in Operation A (A-0242 and A-0252).

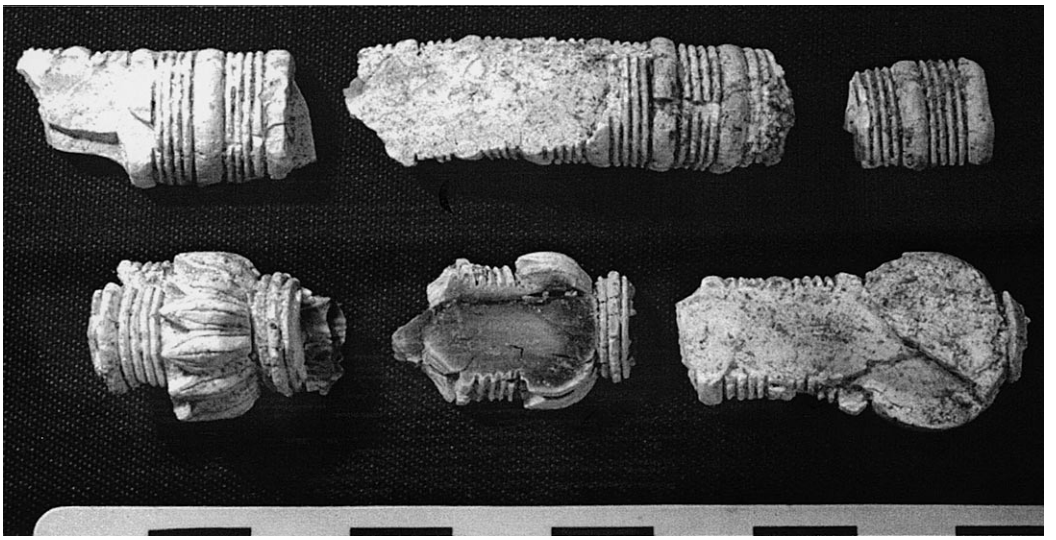

Fig. 9. Burnt ivory fragments from Operation A kilns (ZT 7236).

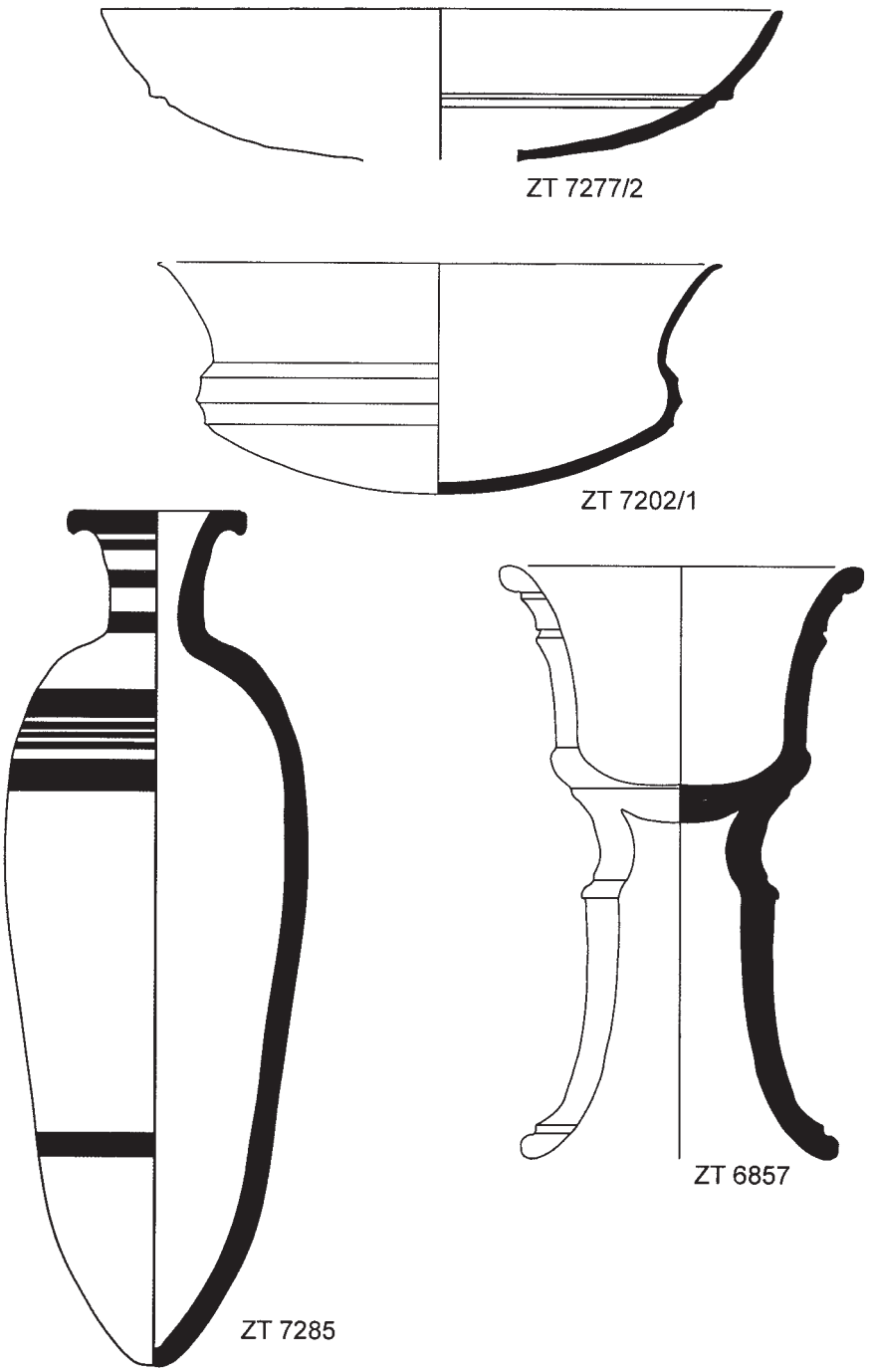

Fig. 10. Pottery from Operation A.

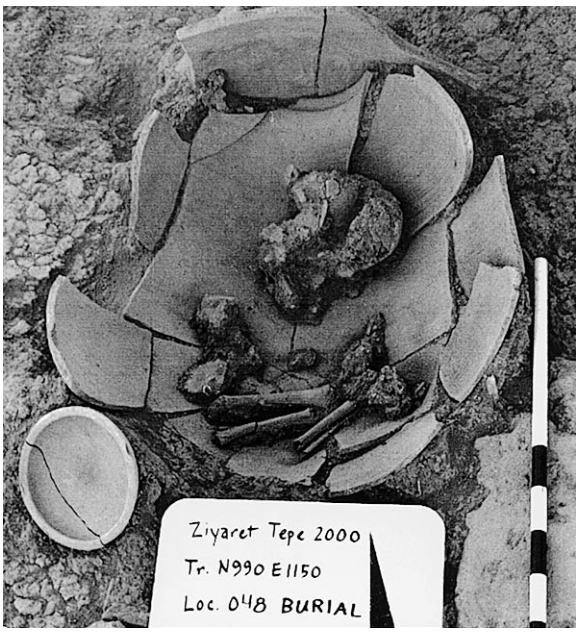

Fig. 11. Pot burial of child in Operation A (A-0048).
Note associated bowl to southwest of burial.

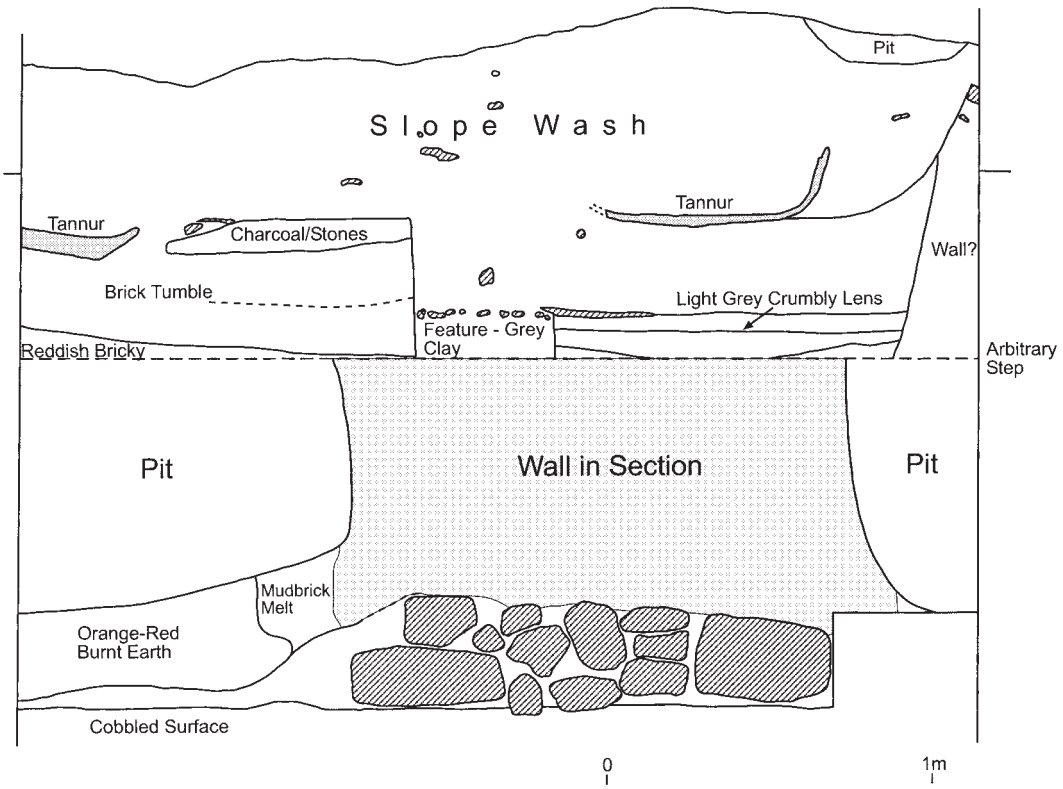

Fig. 12. Eastern section of Operation C.
Arbitrary step marks the change in elevation between the two floors.

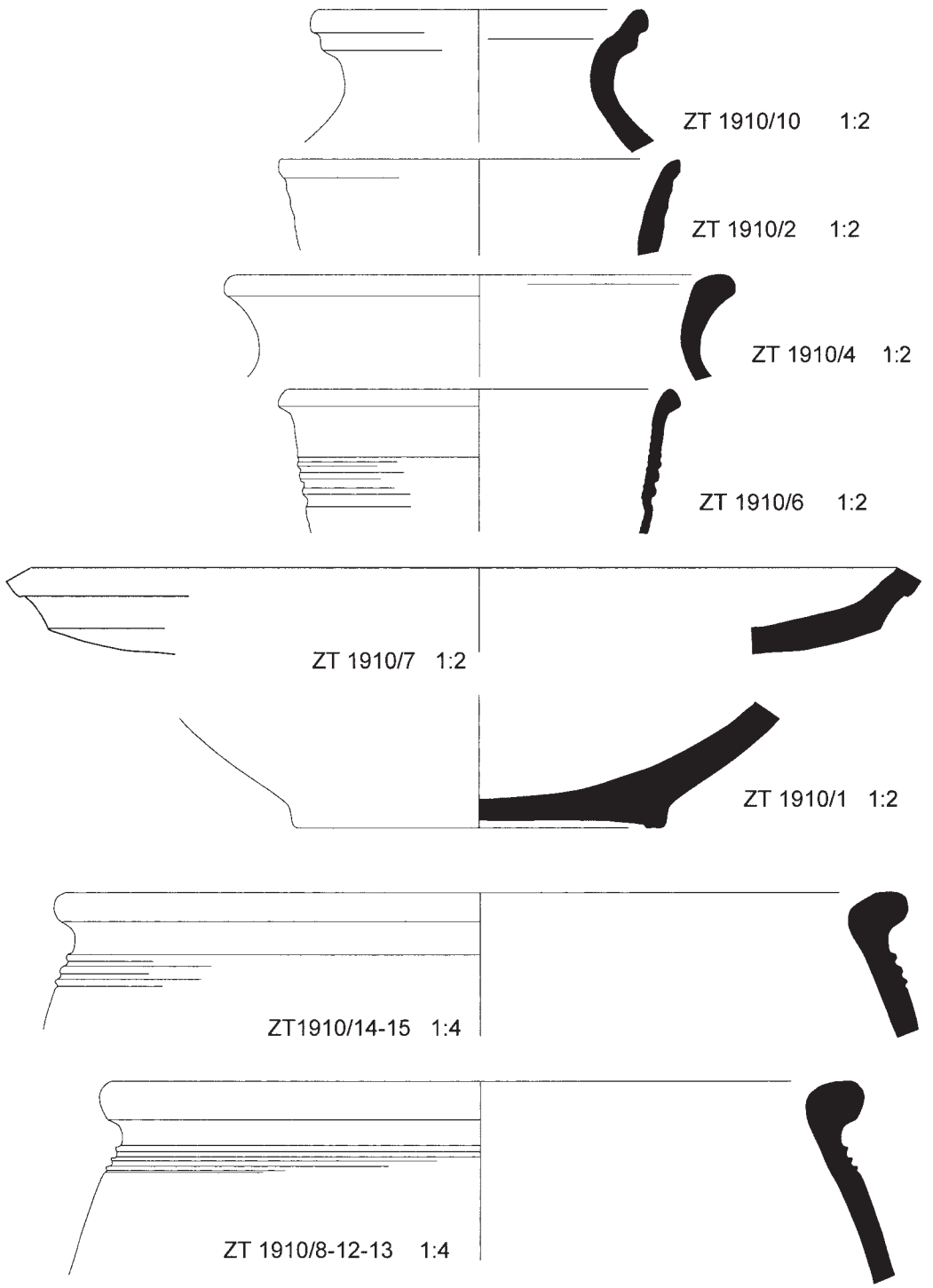

Fig. 13. Pottery group from floor deposit, Operation C (ZT 1910).

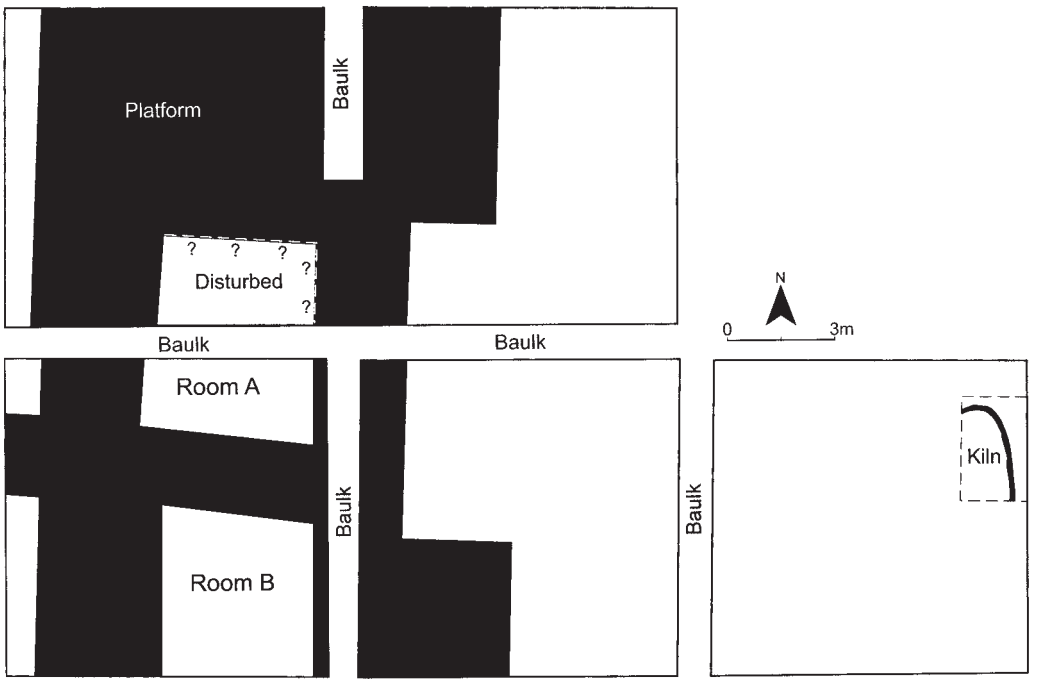

Fig. 14. Principal architectural remains in Operation D.

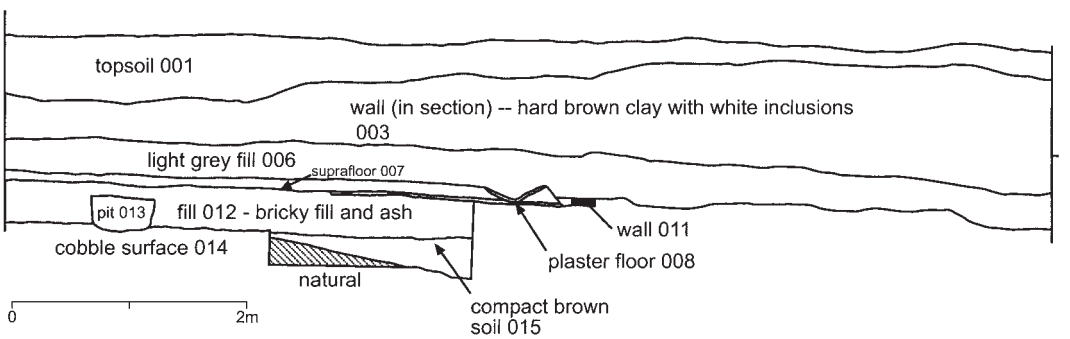

Fig. 15. Western section of grid square N1000 E1490, Operation D.

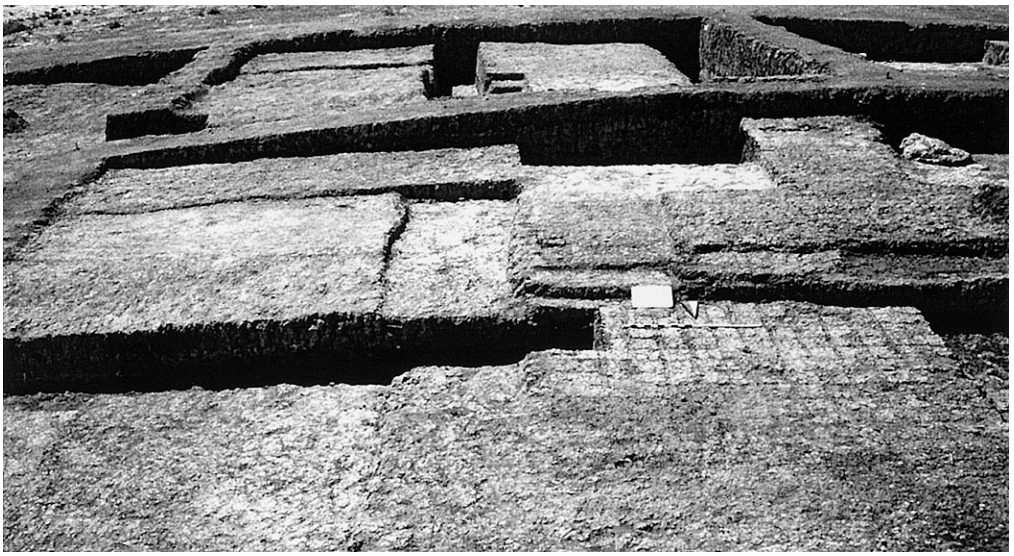

Fig. 16. Mudbrick platform, Operation D.

Fig. 17. Floor associated with gateway complex in grid square N1000 E1480, Operation D.

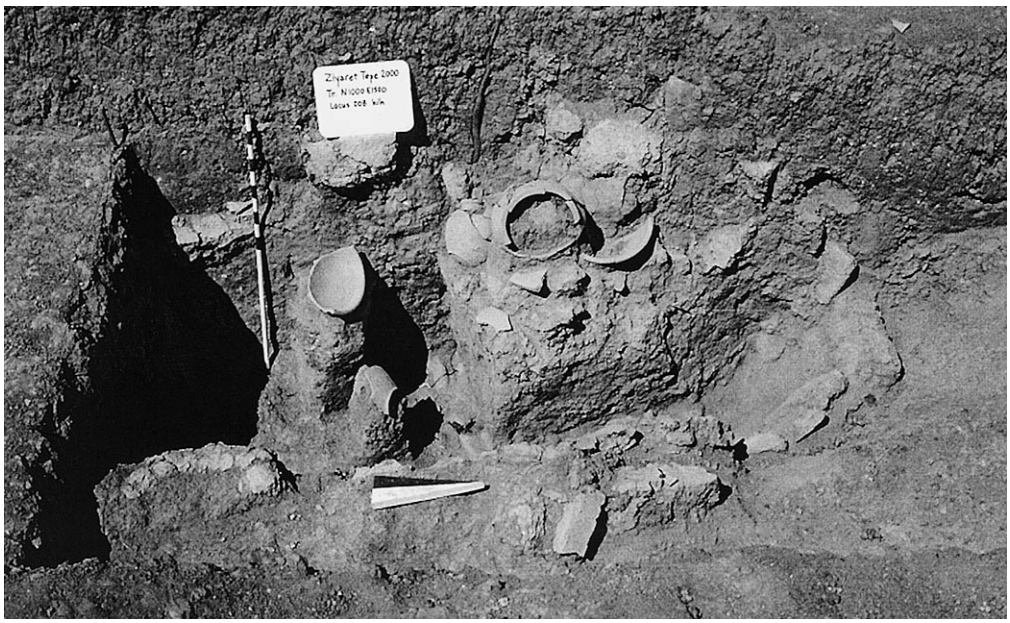

Fig. 18. Pottery kiln in grid square N1000 E1490, Operation D.

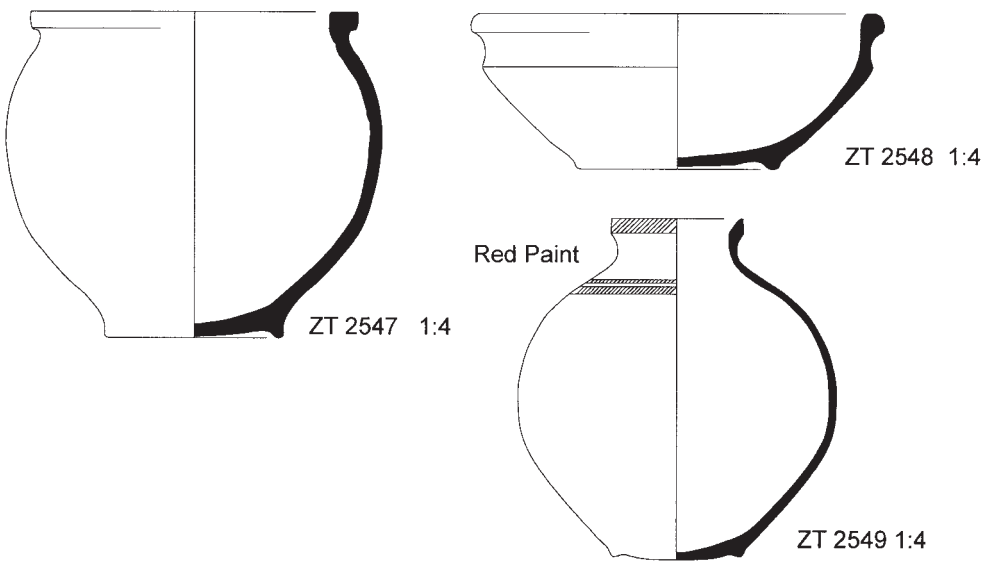

Fig. 19. Ceramic vessels from pottery kiln, Operation D (ZT 2547, ZT 2548 and ZT 2549).

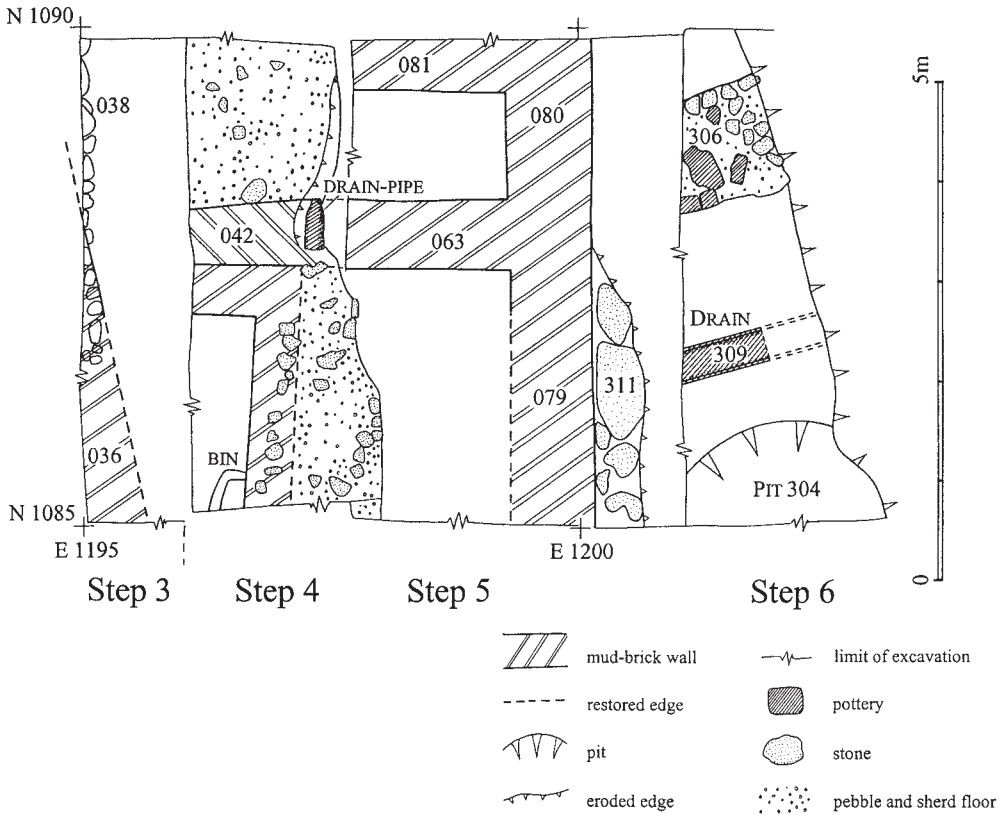

Fig. 20. Plan of principal features excavated in Steps 3 to 6 of Operation E.

Fig. 21. Brightly Burnt Building in Operation E.

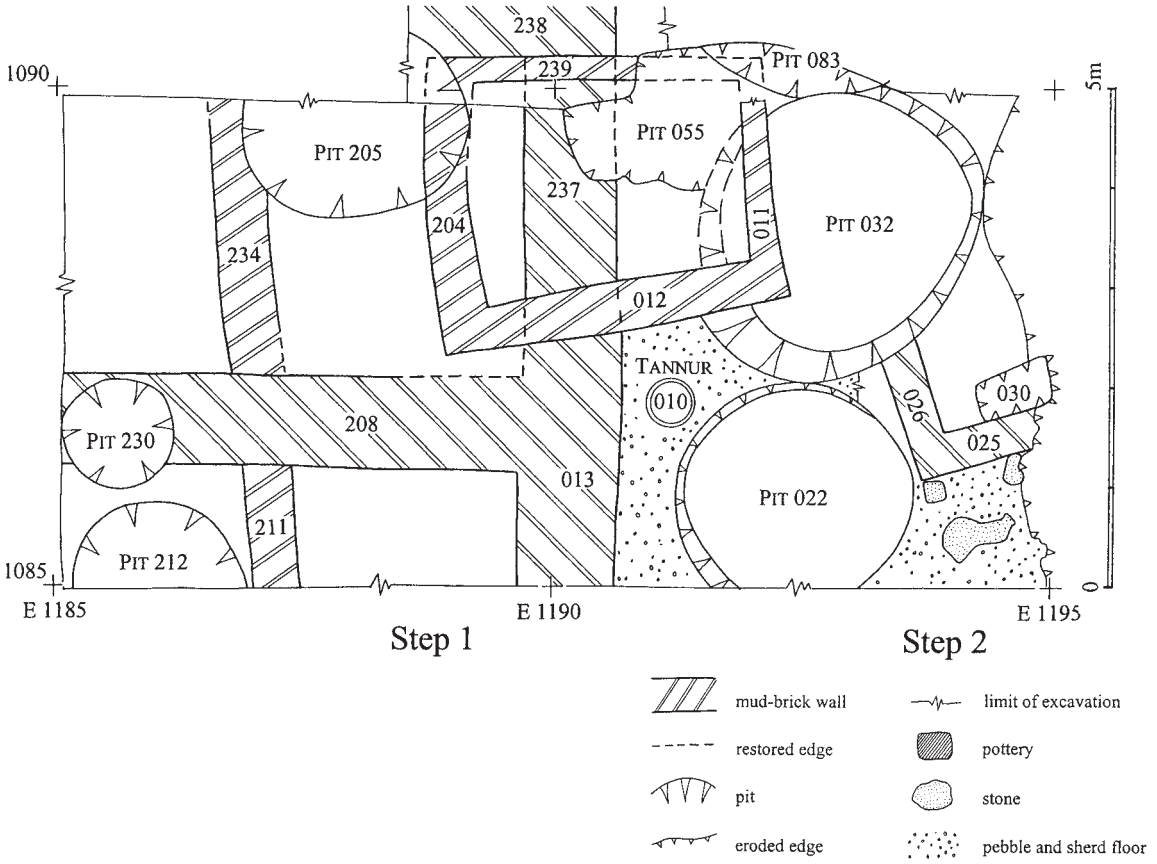

Fig. 22. Plan of principal features excavated in Steps 1 to 2 of Operation E.

Fig. 23. Location of Pit E-0032 sealed by later architecture.
Operation E. Facing east.

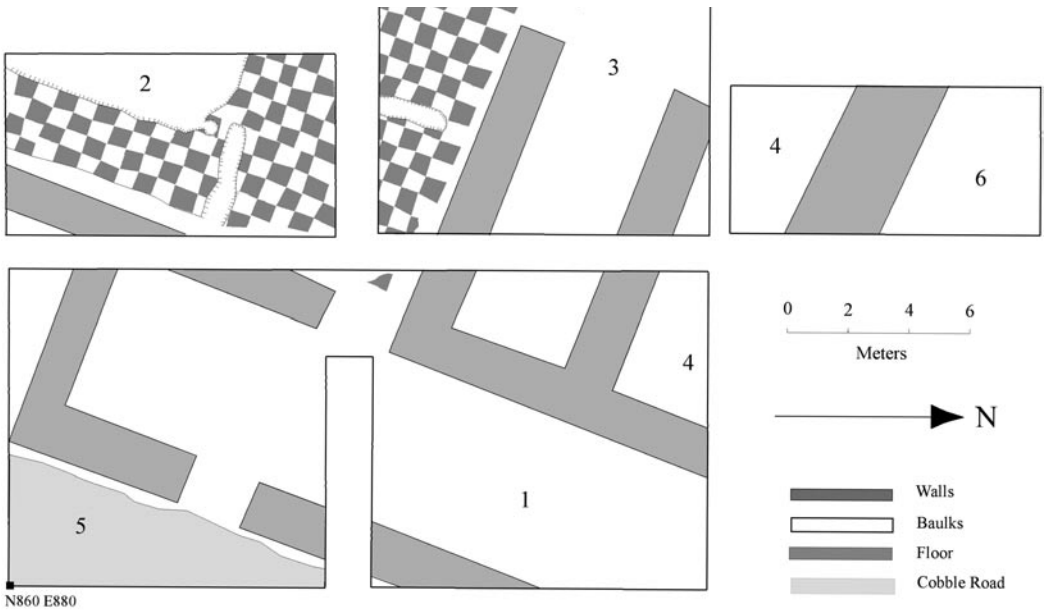

Fig. 25. Principal architectural remains in Operation G.

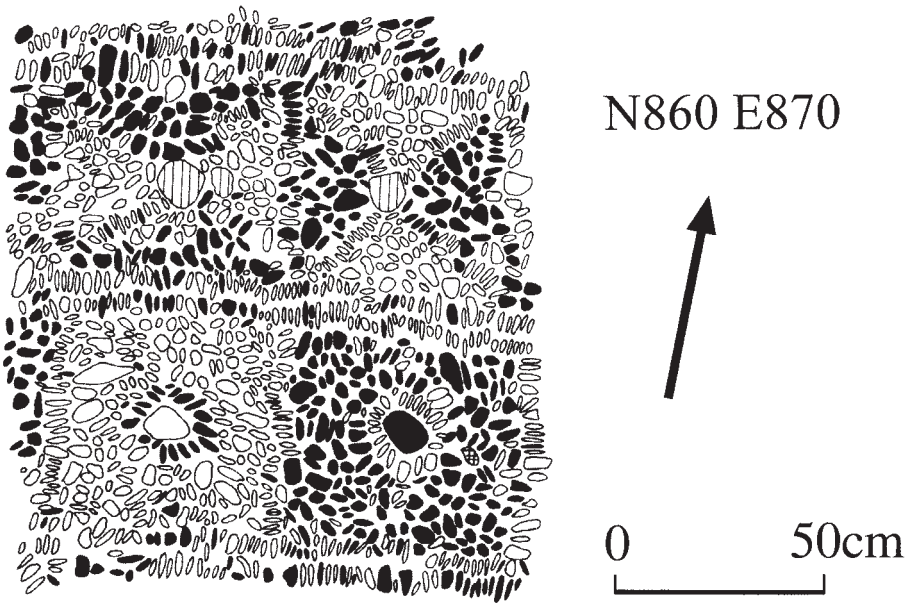

Fig. 26. Detail of pebble mosaic floor in lower town.
Operation G.

Fig. 27. Building with pebble mosaic floor.
Operation G.