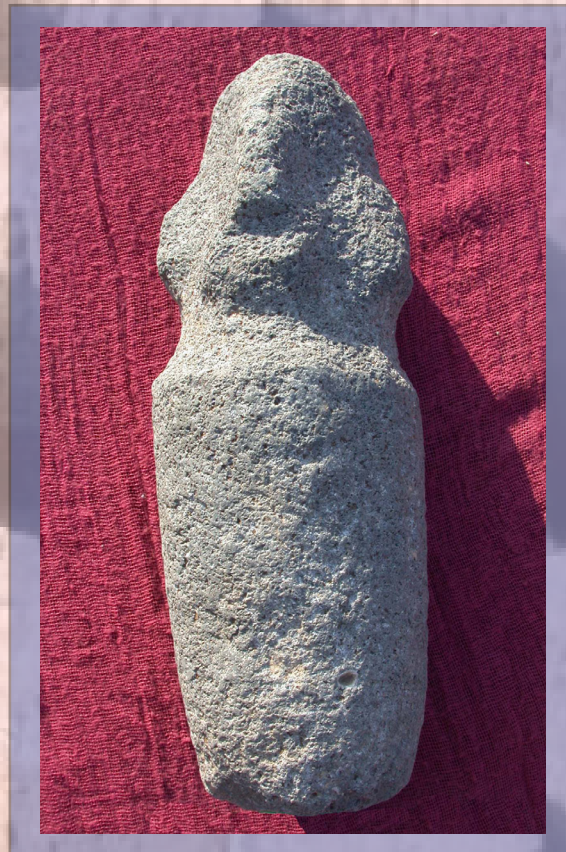


**DAMAGED REPRESENTATION**  
**THE FIGURINES FROM BRONZE AGE**  
**TELL SABI ABYAD, SYRIA**  
**AND THE**  
**ARCHAEOLOGY OF DISREGARD**



Noah Wiener

Cover photos both taken at Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria in 1992 (background image) and 2003 (figurine). The background image shows the 1992 field campaign's excavation of the Late Bronze Age architecture, and the figurine in the center is object S03-810, a 'stone spirit' discussed extensively in this paper.

Damaged Representation: The Figurines from Bronze Age Tell Sabi Abyad,  
Syria, and the Archaeology of Disregard.

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **PREFACE**

<b><u>1. INTRODUCTION</u></b> .....	<b>5</b>
1.1. A GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK .....	5
1.2. THE SITE AND HISTORY OF BRONZE AGE TELL SABI ABYAD.....	6
1.3. OBJECTS EXAMINED .....	9
1.4. RESEARCH METHODS .....	9
1.5. PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP .....	11
1.6. RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS .....	12
<b><u>2. THE STONE SPIRIT TYPOLOGY</u></b> .....	<b>15</b>
2.1. THERESA HOWARD CARTER’S ‘THE STONE SPIRITS’ .....	16
2.2. ‘STONE SPIRITS’ NOT INCLUDED IN CARTER’S STUDY .....	21
2.3. CONCERNS WITH TYPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS .....	26
2.4. DISTRIBUTION AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS.....	28
<b><u>3. THE ‘STONE SPIRITS’ FROM TELL SABI ABYAD</u></b> .....	<b>33</b>
3.1. CATALOG .....	33
3.2. ANALYSIS.....	43
<b><u>4. THE OTHER REPRESENTATIONAL SMALL FINDS</u></b> .....	<b>50</b>
4.1. THE COLLECTION .....	51
4.2. CHALLENGES .....	51
4.3. THE CATALOG .....	53
4.4. DATA ANALYSIS .....	94
4.5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS .....	95
4.6. FUNCTIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS .....	96
<b><u>5. DISCUSSION</u></b> .....	<b>100</b>
5.1. ADDRESSING THE INITIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	100
5.2. METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION.....	102
5.3. TELL SABI ABYAD AS A COSMOPOLITAN <i>DUNNU</i> .....	104
5.4. AGAINST A STATIC VIEW OF THE PAST .....	106
<b><u>ABSTRACT</u></b> .....	<b>110</b>
<b><u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u></b> .....	<b>111</b>
<b><u>LIST OF FIGURES</u></b> .....	<b>121</b>

## Preface

This thesis began as an exciting opportunity to work directly with the material from Leiden University's esteemed excavation at Tell Sabi Abyad in Syria. In doing so, it represented a major academic step from synthesizing and critiquing existing scholarship to making a direct contribution with unpublished data. As the project moved forward, it evolved from mere presentation and contextual analysis to touch on some broader themes at the site that can be extended to the whole discipline of archaeological interpretation. While the study was hampered by the political circumstances that did not allow me to excavate at the site, or to see, analyze, and photograph the studied objects firsthand, it did bloom into a fascinating project that I am proud to submit to Leiden's scholarly community.

This project would never have been possible without the help of several individuals. First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Peter Akkermans, first for directing such a fascinating project, but mostly for his guidance, his depth of knowledge of the site and comparable materials, his supportive additions to my analyses, and his jargon-free, conversationally interpretive, and friendly attitude to archaeology, which will forever shape my approach to the subject. In addition to Professor Akkermans, this project would never have been possible without Merel Brüning's ready support and friendship at the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, with her inexhaustible knowledge of the site documentation, stratigraphy, and excavation materials. Finally, in the professional sphere, I would like to thank all of those academics that took the time to meet with me to discuss comparable sites or my data set; in particular, I would like to thank Dr. Frans Wiggermann of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, Hans-Ulrich Onasch and Friedhelm Pedde of the Assur Projekt in Berlin, and Diederik Meijer of Leiden University. Most importantly, I would like to thank my family for their commentary and editing, but moreover for their eternal encouragement and support of their son/brother's academic progress despite his having moved over 5000 km away from home. Finally, I would like to thank Kathryn and my Leiden community for an incredible year and learning experience, and for bearing with me through one too many conversations about ancient Syria and figurines.

## 1. Introduction

This thesis is a presentation and discussion of unpublished figurines excavated from the Late Bronze Age occupation of Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria, and considers objects excavated between 1988 and 2007. The majority of the figurines fall into two categories: a larger body of clay figurine fragments, both zoo- and anthropomorphic, as well as six crude basalt and limestone anthropomorphic figurines. These six are a type dubbed ‘stone spirits’ by Theresa Howard Carter in 1970; a typology widely attested but poorly understood. While the primary intentions of the study are the documentation and contextualization of new material, by examining typologies, contexts, functionality, and inter- and intra- site distribution, it also considers issues of the Middle Assyrian occupation of Tell Sabi Abyad, the ‘stone spirit’ category, themes of neglect and material detachment, and the broader implications of multiple periods of occupation and the archaeology of re-usage in the Near East. Before a detailed examination, this introduction presents Tell Sabi Abyad, a brief history of its Late Bronze Age occupation, the objects under examination, and concludes with a presentation of the research aims, methods, and questions of this thesis.

### 1.1. A Geographical, Historical, and Chronological Framework

Tell Sabi Abyad is located in Northern Syria in the upper Balikh valley, roughly 30 km from the Turkish border. Fig. 1 maps the site’s location along contemporary and modern political borders, and fig. 2 displays it in a comparison with the broader ancient Near East. This thesis considers its Late Bronze Age occupation,<sup>1</sup> a time characterized by shifting power balances in the region studied (fig. 3, Tell Sabi Abyad indicated in red). For the purposes of this thesis, the Bronze Age in the Near East is divided into the following chronology: The EBA is considered to last from the mid/late fourth millennium until 2000 BCE, the MBA from 2000 until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century BCE, followed by the LBA, lasting until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE. This paper notes that the arbitrary nature of these dates does not reflect regional varieties in development (e.g., iron production took place in Anatolia before the end of the LBA), but considers a referential chronological framework a necessary tool.

Fig. 3 shows the changing power dynamic of the LBA as the Mitanni Empire was swallowed by the expanding powers of the Hittites to the west, and Middle Assyrian Empire to the east. The Mitanni Empire is the most poorly understood power of the

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth to be abbreviated as LBA. Following this, the Early Bronze Age will be referred to as EBA, with the Middle Bronze Age referred to as MBA.

region, due to its unknown origins, Hurrian population and language, and undiscovered capital. Likewise, the Middle Assyrian Empire, while far better attested than the Mitannian through textual, architectural, and material records, has been given less scholarly attention than its Old or Neo-Assyrian counterparts. Not that research on the Near Eastern LBA is lacking: there is an enormous corpus of literature on the expansions of empires, the conducting of war and treaties, and the general imperial decline in the 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Tell Sabi Abyad's LBA occupation tells the story of such imperial conflict, as the expansionist Assyrians built upon the earlier LBA Mitannian site, only to abandon the site in stages during the 12<sup>th</sup> century decline.

## 1.2. The Site and History of Bronze Age Tell Sabi Abyad

Tell Sabi Abyad is a five-hectare site in the upper Balikh Valley in Syria (fig. 4). The site consists of four tells, Sabi Abyad I-IV, with two studied settlement periods: a long occupation in the late Neolithic, and subsequently a shorter settlement in the LBA on Sabi Abyad I, the focus of this study. The site has been extensively excavated and published over the past twenty-five years. Much of the publication has focused on the Neolithic settlement, though several publications (Akkermans 2006; Akkermans *et al.* 1993; Akkermans and Rossmesl 1990; Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*; Duistermaat 2008; Wiggermann 2000) in particular hold special relevance for this examination for their focus on the Bronze Age occupation at Tell Sabi Abyad.

The Neolithic settlement, spanning all four mounds, was deserted in the first half of the sixth millennium BCE, and the bulk of the later occupation material consists of a Middle Assyrian *dunnu*, or fortified farmstead, of the late 13<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. As a *dunnu*, the administration's focus would be control of the surrounding farm areas, and that the bulk of Sabi Abyad's wealth and character derived from its agriculture (Wiggermann 2000). The later settlement stratigraphy has been divided into seven building phases—the Mitanni remains are level 7, the Assyrian are 6-3, while levels 2-1 consist of Hellenistic remains that fall outside the timeframe of this study. Little has been written about the pre-Assyrian LBA occupation on the site, though excavations have revealed at least a large tower that stood for an unknown duration. Akkermans and Wiggermann (*in press*, 3) suggest that it was a Mitanni-period tower, demolished and rebuilt on a slightly different ground plan by the Assyrians around 1225 BCE. As the extent of Mitanni construction outside of the tower cannot be determined, the size, inhabitants, and role of this pre-Middle Assyrian LBA occupation are impossible to establish. Duistermaat suggests that the tower was the only construction of the Mitanni settlement (in Kolinksi 2001, 61) though excavation stratigraphical reports show a



greater deal of level 7 architecture. Survey evidence in the Balikh Valley suggests that in the early LBA, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century BCE, settlement shifted from dense centers of the MBA to smaller rural settlements, and that Middle Assyrian settlement followed a period of abandonment, in an area devoid of preexisting sedentary power structures or recognizable contemporary material culture (Lyon 2000, 104).

The Assyrian settlement is a one hectare site with a central walled fortress of 60 by 60m (Akkermans 2006, 201), one of many *dunnus* created in the western provinces of Middle Assyria under the reigns of Tukulti-Ninurta I and his successors in the late 13<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. Textual evidence gives us a detailed understanding of the owners of the site, the 'grand viziers' of the Assyrian empire, first Aššur-iddin, then Sulmanu-Mušabši, and finally Ili-padâ. The empire was divided into two parts, Assyria proper, with Aššur as the eastern capital, and the west, Hanigalbat, where the grand vizier took on the role of "king of Hanigalbat" (Wiggermann 2000, 171).

The archaeological material (in most cases) is excellently preserved, and the wide range of artifacts uncovered include ceramics, seals, tools, weaponry, and hundreds of cuneiform tablets, discovered inside of well-preserved architecture, in some cases with walls reaching a height of over 3 m (Akkermans 2006, 201). The *dunnu* consists of a walled fortress of 0.36 ha, including the owner's residence, a tower, the residence of the chief steward, a reception court, servants' areas, offices and administration, workshops, domestic architecture, and other structures (Wiggermann 2000, 175).<sup>2</sup> Beyond these other structures, an 80x80m defensible moat was added during the earliest (level 6) Middle Assyrian phase of occupation.

A limited historical account of the Middle Assyrian interactions with Hanigalbat is presented here, as a full account would be too lengthy for this study.<sup>3</sup> During the expansionist reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1233-1197 BCE), the administration of the western part of the empire is well documented, and in this time Sabi Abyad was architecturally expanded and was one seat of the grand vizier. In the first phase, level 6 (fig. 5), the fortress was dominated by the multi-story stone tower in the center, a second monumental building to the west of the tower, and some barracks buildings, with the area between the fortress and moat characterized by houses, workshops, and domestic installations (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, pp. 4-11).

At the turn of the 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE, several buildings had fallen into disrepair, and our building level 5 (fig. 6) consists of a period following renovations to the site.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed treatment of the nature of each of the structures, readers are referred to P. M. M. G. Akkermans' 2006 paper.

<sup>3</sup> Readers are referred to the introduction of Duistermaat 2008, as well as Szuchman 2008, which have more complete accounts of the history.

Entire buildings were demolished and rebuilt, the walls were reconstructed, the tower was reinforced, many new structures were established, new entrance points for the fortress were created, and, as the moat quickly filled with refuse, it began to be built upon. By 1180 BCE, there was extensive destruction by fire at the site, attributed by Akkermans and Wiggermann (*ibid*) to the death of Ili-pada and the ensuing political struggles. Level 4 (fig. 7) of the site involves some new constructions focusing on the NW of the site and re-usage of older walls across the *dunnu*, and level 3 reveals continuing decline, with new floors being laid over debris layers. By the end of the twelfth century BCE, the site was abandoned.

While it would be ideal to categorically place all finds and structures into a neat chronology of levels 7-3, the political dynamic and architectural re-usage blurs the distinctions. One area of ambiguity of central importance for this study lies in the transition of the Mitanni to Assyrian levels (7-6). The Mitanni levels included traces of fire, but it is impossible to know if there was a considerable difference in chronology and site layout between the Assyrian layers and the Mitanni. Was the Mitanni *dimtu* merely a tower for the oversight of the region, or was their settlement rather complete when abandoned, with the Assyrians rebuilding and reappropriating a mostly Mitanni architectural plan? Our textual records are of a purely Assyrian administration, but this does not imply that the preexisting settlement did not contribute to the Assyrian building program, or that all of the residents and workers of the *dunnu* identified as Assyrians. While Sabi Abyad indisputably shows a predominantly Middle Assyrian presence, it is important to note that, as with any border settlement of recent external occupation, caution must be employed when examining all architecture and material culture as a purely Assyrian phenomenon.

The previous inhabitants would have surely left their mark on the *dunnu*, and by examining the names of the site's workers, a largely non-Assyrian populace becomes apparent. Not that this is a unique phenomenon to our site: the Assyrian conquest system with its constantly changing borders, coupled with the forced migrations of prisoners for labor, would have left the Assyrian empire full of workers from diverse cultural backgrounds.<sup>4</sup> Closer to the Assyrian center, deportees would have been used for non-agrarian (construction) jobs, but as Hanigalbat was the primary source of grain at the time, at Tell Sabi Abyad it is fitting that both local and displaced peoples were utilized for farming (Harrak 1987, 272). Wiggermann (2000, 191—all populations given here

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Frans Wiggermann, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, in personal correspondence with the author, suggested that the percentage of ethnically non-Assyrian people was so high in most Assyrian settlements that one cannot necessarily attribute their material trends to an Assyrian program. Given the diverse populations, he suggested only Assur as the heartland of MA material culture, a suggestion that holds great implications for the figurines.

include the families of working people) suggests a total of roughly 60 administrators on the site, roughly 400 *siluhlu* serfs receiving rations, and some 400 *alaju* villagers working sustenance fields. The *siluhlu*, making up roughly half of Sabi Abyad's population, have predominantly Hurrian names, and would have been brought in from the conquered North (Akkermans and Wiggermann in press, 20-1). A picture emerges of the relatively short imperial Middle Assyrian occupation at Tell Sabi Abyad, with cosmopolitan agricultural populations administered from the Assyrian fortifications. Documentation of frequent interaction with neighboring Suteans, along with the ceramic findings, confirm this picture; mainly Assyrian typologies are supplemented by unique 'pilgrim flasks,' Mitanni influenced 'grain measures,' and other types (*ibid*, 14).

### 1.3. Objects Examined

The objects presented in this study are six anthropomorphic stone figurines (the 'stone spirits') as well as a collection of (mostly) clay figurines and fragments from the Middle Assyrian site. The clay collection consists of 86 figurines, almost entirely in small fragments. The majority is zoomorphic in character, followed closely by wheel models. In addition, this study documents a mold and a mold fragment, a lead figurine, and a bronze animal head, as well as a few examples of invasive Neolithic artifacts within Assyrian contexts to use as a comparison to certain non-Assyrian figurines. Comparative examples from other sites will be examined, but the central focus of this study is on the six stone and the clay figurines.

### 1.4. Research Methods

The research methods employed in this study are intentionally limited in scope to focus consideration on the site and the objects themselves, and to derive conclusions from the contexts and site data rather than through the application of external theoretical frameworks. As such, the object files, drawings, and photographs, as well as daily field notes, square summaries, stratigraphic summaries, and artifact/stratigraphy databases are prioritized over external theoretical or comparative frameworks. Unfortunately, given the current political climate in Syria, the author was not able to examine or photograph the objects, all stored in Syria. The primary intention of this study is as a presentation of previously unexamined material. Previous writings on the site form the basis for contextualization, and comparative findings and relevant data sets from other sites are necessarily utilized to understand the objects. In addition, some theory on figurines, the archaeology of heirlooms and memory, and broader archaeological matters are invoked.

The artifacts are organized by their object number, and their location is determined by the square in which they were excavated, and more specifically the locus within the square--a three-dimensional location whose size is determined by the proximity of features. The excavation has been conducted in a series of 9x9 m squares, labeled with letters from west to east, and numbers from north to south. Stratigraphy has been established by both the project coordinators and the author. After the stratigraphy of the site was established, the occupation levels (7-4) of the objects were determined by the author by comparing daily notes, deposition information, and other stratigraphical cues with the broader database compiled after excavation. Object distribution is contextualized by other objects found in the same loci as the figurines, as well as through spatial analysis with regard to the site's architecture.

While the study seeks to present mostly its own material, the second chapter focuses on the 'stone spirit' typology in general, as previous scholarship on the subject is insufficient for the contextualization of our figurines. The objects studied in this paper will be compared to those from Carter's 1970 study, including those from Tepe Gawra, Tell al Rimah, Alalakh, and other sites, as well as more recently published figurines, including those from Tell Hadidi, Ebla, Barri-Kahat, Girnavaz, Umm al-Marra, Satu Qala. The study expands an aesthetically defined typology into one contextualized geographically, chronologically, and culturally.

Despite these comparisons, the author believes that a primarily inward-focused examination is most appropriate for an evaluation of previously unstudied artifacts. With crudely made stone and mostly hand-modeled clay figurines, it is easy to find objects sharing aesthetic traits from the region, as well as from the heartland of Assyria; at the same time, a purely aesthetically comparative treatment can lead to misidentification. For instance, appearance alone would mistakenly liken the figures to Cycladic stone figurines or prehistoric Mesopotamian clay types; as such, iconographical studies are both the best extra-site examples as well as the strongest warning signs of the futility of typological identification.

This study will treat the figurines as two separate object types. The clay figurines, being aesthetically similar to several well-studied artistic programs, and appearing in more abundant distribution at Tell Sabi Abyad, will be contextualized within the site. This inward-looking framework will highlight the distribution, relations to the broader site, and the implications of the conditions of the artifacts. The stone figurines, in smaller quantity, cannot serve the same purposes for site distribution. Instead, their contexts will be shown to reveal their importance (or perhaps lack of importance) to the Assyrians on the site, their functionality, and their implications for the consideration of LBA objects as Middle Assyrian. Before the stone figurines can be

approached, their entire typology needs to be addressed and defined in the second chapter, to reexamine a type not given scholarly evaluation since 1970. Despite the necessity of comparison, it is a fallible means of study, hypothesizing influences that may have never existed. Instead, the comparative data will be utilized to create a background of the plausible material frameworks of the objects. This paper accepts and embraces the uncertainty implied in contextualizing a typology that exists in limited quantity, in diverse archaeological contexts, and outside of cultural boundaries. The hypothetical theoretical frameworks presented for the ‘stone spirits’ are means of reconciling the diverse and complicated data sets that we have for the typology, but are by no means the definitive history of the objects. Instead of approaching a challenging typology from an unassertive post-modern direction, this paper presents plausible backgrounds for the objects, and the author hopes that readers will engage critically with the assessments in order to open a scholarly debate on the subject.

Once the comparative data has been established, the data (contexts, re-usage indications on objects, state of disrepair, etc.) can then become the sole focus for interpretation within the site. After site contexts have been established, the objects will be viewed on a broader external level, and the ramifications of typological appropriation based solely on stratigraphy will come into question.

### 1.5. Previous Scholarship

As stated, this thesis has a predominantly inward-focus, though naturally it relies on the research of many previous archaeological reports. The most critical sources are the publications mentioned above on Tell Sabi Abyad itself, primarily published by Peter Akkermans. Multitudes of publications on figurines exist; only the pertinent ones are mentioned in this study. The most frequently invoked source is Theresa Howard Carter’s definitive paper on the ‘stone spirits’ from 1970. A former Leiden University student, Vincent Van Exel, made a study to update her text, and while his paper was not published, this thesis draws on his categorizations (Van Exel. n.d.). However, both Carter and Van Exel define the typology through aesthetic categorizations, whereas this study focuses on chronological and geographical considerations.

Most reports following Carter’s study have not focused on the figurines themselves, but have been content merely to mention them as fitting into her ‘stone spirit’ typology. One notable exception is Stephania Mazzoni’s 1998 publication on Tell Afis, which includes a compilation of many, though not all, ‘stone spirits’ excavated that were not included in Carter’s publication. While a complete list of publications including ‘stone spirits’ here would be too lengthy for this introduction, the largest

collections of ‘stone spirits’ come from the sites at Selenkahiye and Wreide (Meijer 2001, Van Soldt 2001, and Orthmann 1991).

The Middle Assyrian period is an understudied period in Assyrian history, and is not nearly as well documented as the Old or Neo-Assyrian periods. There is no complete publication of Middle Assyrian figurine typologies, though Hans-Ulrich Onasch and others of the Assur Projekt in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin have compiled a great deal of figurines from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations at Assur, which serve as the largest compendium of comparable clay figurines. This great body of scholarship has not been completed or published, and as such personal correspondence has supplemented traditional research methods. Evelyn Klengel-Brandt’s 1978 study of the figurines is the last publication on the subject, and is referred to extensively. Beyond Assur itself, many sites closer to Tell Sabi Abyad have published figurines, and will be considered in this study, as will publications exhibiting ideal methodologies, such as Rick Hauser’s 2007 publication on figurines from Urkesh.

While this study avoids the imposition of external theoretical frameworks, certain scholarship is necessary for its discussion. The most relevant studies for the consideration of invasive objects, and ancient interactions with the material culture of earlier peoples, come from the recently growing field of the archaeology of memory, best known from the publication *Archaeologies of Memory* (Van Dyke and Alcock, eds. 2003). Despite the growth of the field, memory in archaeology studies have barely touched on the Ancient Near East (surprisingly, considering the acute awareness of the past in this region, and even archaeological investigation conducted by Nabonidus in the sixth century BCE). The ancient interactions with the past are not quite aligned with memory studies, as memory studies involve the appropriation of the past, while the objects presented here appear more stripped of their history.

## 1.6. Research Aims and Questions

The initial aims of this study still stand at its forefront—that is, to establish the contexts, distribution, aesthetics, and possible functionalities of the figurines from the LBA at Tell Sabi Abyad. Implicit in this establishment are myriad other questions.

The first line of questions concerns the state and context of the figurines. What state of preservation are they in? Does their distribution reveal the character of the structures that they were found in? Are they disproportionately represented in some building layers? What functionality do they reflect? Why are the clay figurines in such a state of disrepair? What is the significance of figurines left behind when a site was abandoned? What potential interpretations can be made from the neglect of the stone

figurines, when built into architectural contexts? What interpretations about multi-period usage arise when figurines show signs of having been used as tools?

The second line of questions is rooted in the material culture orientation of the figurines. Simply, do they reflect a Middle Assyrian character, or are they tied to a local or pre-Assyrian typology? While Sabi Abyad flourished as a site with Assyrian government, with markedly Assyrian features, texts, etc. (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*), it was a border settlement in a newly conquered region. As such, it would have incorporated the (material) culture of nearby peoples, and (previous) local traditions. In addition, colonial identity and cultural practice often lead to the formation of independent traditions, separate from imperial or local customs (Blake 2004) -- a distinct possibility in the case of religious practices at Sabi Abyad. Do these figurines relate to literary records of ritual practice? Do they relate to documented Mesopotamian pantheons? Does the crudeness of the figurines imply intentionality of representation, or inaccessibility of skilled craftspeople?

If the objects suggest a non-Assyrian character, what does this imply? Does it suggest that they held value for the Assyrians and were brought onto the site? Or conversely, does their state of disrepair, functionalist re-usage, and low aesthetic value imply that the Assyrians found and devalued them? How would this relate to the concept of the archaeology of memory or heirlooms, a rapidly growing subject often disregarded in Near Eastern archaeology? What would invasive objects in Assyrian strata imply for the sole reliance on stratigraphy in archaeological contextualization? If by building on a previously inhabited site, what could this imply for the role of the Assyrians as archaeologists interacting with past material cultures? Finally, what implications could this have for other multiple period sites in the Near East, where leveling old structures and rebuilding on tells is a commonplace activity, and on Near Eastern archaeology in general?

This study hopes to shed light on some of these ambitiously broad questions in its presentation of figurines, expanding on its inherent problems to stand as a case study for broader Near Eastern archaeology. The study focuses on the figurines and Tell Sabi Abyad itself, but questions concerning re-usage, memory, object devaluation, and ancient interactions with the past inevitably arise from the data. As such, this study raises concerns for many Near Eastern sites, and even calls for a reexamination of accepted archaeological methodology, as cultural attribution based solely on stratigraphy misappropriates invasive objects. It audaciously presents models for the spread of the 'stone spirit' typology, for the state of the figurines at Tell Sabi Abyad, for the implications of the contexts, etc., while recognizing that such a presentation will encourage criticism and deviates from the unassertive post-modern direction of "safer"

studies. The discussions in this thesis should be exactly that: discussions. As such, the thesis seeks to present its data clearly, and hopes to be transparent in its means of arriving at conclusions, to best structure the ensuing dialogue that the author hopes to create.



## 2. The Stone Spirit Typology

In order to examine the figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad, it is necessary to lay a foundation for their typology and the scholarly attention given to the type. This chapter examines the ‘stone spirit’ type through an analysis of Theresa Howard Carter’s publication on the subject, the large corpus of figurines excavated since (or neglected by) her publication, and the geographical and chronological ranges of such figurines, and creates a theoretical model to analyze and discuss the typology’s distribution. Two charts organizing and cataloguing the data are presented in this chapter, the first of Carter’s ‘spirits,’ and the second of the later excavated ones; however, readers should be cautioned that these are not exhaustive catalogs, as many excavation reports may have made only minimal mention of figurines, and as such they may have gone unnoticed in the writing of this thesis.<sup>5</sup> With the wide breadth of the geographical and chronological spread of the distribution, and the loosely defined boundaries of the typology, the author’s discretion was used to determine what fits into the type, while acknowledging that other scholars might consider other figurines part of this type, or disagree with the categorization of ‘stone spirit’ used in this paper.

Theresa Howard Carter’s 1970 publication coined the term ‘stone spirits’ for the crude anthropomorphic figurines found in Northern Mesopotamia, Syria, and the Levantine coast. The central tenet of her study is linkage based on two simple criteria: material (stone) and workmanship (crude). Her geographical and chronological ranges for consideration are loosely defined, allowing for comparison of her figurines from Tell al-Rimah with a broad set of data. Her comparative range of typologies is often surprising, likening the figurines to life-sized statues, as well as iconography from more artistically complex programs, such as Hittite relief work or Syrian bronzes. The collection considered and the division into form types make her paper an excellent point of departure for the consideration of the stone figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad; however, her analyses are incomplete and founded on a small subset of her studied figurines. As such, some scholars reject her term (Matthiae 2006, 425) outright, but this thesis considers it more fruitful to reconsider her classifications rather than rejecting and renaming terminologies. Moreover, the passage of time since her publication calls for it to be revisited, as recent excavations have uncovered relevant findings that aid in understanding the distribution and nature of the type.

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<sup>5</sup> Complete catalogs of each object would be too lengthy for this paper, which focuses on the objects from Tell Sabi Abyad; however, photos of most of the ‘stone spirits’ are included for the reader’s consideration, and citations to the excavation reports are included for those wishing to conduct further study of particular objects.

The ‘stone spirits’ share certain traits: They are crude, made predominantly of basalt and limestone, and they are schematic, and as such do not depict the traits of particular individuals. In some instances, the anthropomorphic features are readily apparent (for instance, figs. 8-10), while in others, these traits are hardly noticeable as the figurines retain the shape of the rock (e.g., figs. 14-17). Beyond these basic features, the delineated body parts often include the shoulders, waist, and head, with a nose highlighted by depressions for eyes serving as the most common facial feature. Arms and fingers are sometimes depicted, often crossed or with bent elbows and upward hands, and, in the instances when gender is indicated, it is usually female, indicated by breasts, though male (bearded) stone spirits are not unknown.

There are many difficulties in labeling general traits of these figurines, evinced by the glaring aesthetic differences visible in our small subset from Tell Sabi Abyad (figs. 8-23). The material, size, iconography, detail, and almost every other feature vary from figurine to figurine. Their distribution spans millennia, from the Early to Late Bronze Age, as well as regions, from the Southern Levant to Northern Mesopotamia. From site to site, their context ranges from burials to residences to shrines to reused stone for architecture or tools. Despite these differences, the author maintains that they do, in fact, represent a set category (however loosely defined) of figurines: they stand well apart from any other known tradition, are usually found in groups on sites, and their chronological and geographical spread does not reveal certain regional particularities, but instead shows a range of diversity within individual sites. While the six examples from Tell Sabi Abyad reveal the great aesthetic differences between figurines of the typology, as a group they are distinct from the rest of the LBA finds, and this ‘shared otherness’ becomes apparent when they are universally grouped together in excavation reports, despite visible differences. In a later section, the dangers of typological association will be revisited, but first this paper examines the available figurine data.

## 2.1. Theresa Howard Carter’s ‘The Stone Spirits’

Initially published in the University of Pennsylvania’s *Expedition* magazine in 1970, her study began as an attempt to contextualize three findings from her excavations at Tell al-Rimah, directed by David Oates (Carter 1970, 22, excavation details in Oates 1965 and 1968). Her narrative continues to the seemingly accidental findings of figurines from Tell Billa and Tepe Gawra, and proceeds into a more academic study as she delineates general forms and the pursuit of other, similar figurines. Early in her paper, Carter gives a concise overview of the shapes of the figurines:

The Philadelphia figurines separate into three general forms: rectangular slabs; amorphous squat lumps; semi-naturalistic corporeal shapes. The cruder examples have stub heads and stumps as limbs; those with heads invariably have discernible noses. The arms are usually modeled along the side contours of the bodies to the waist, where they bend sharply across the front, and often upwards. The other most frequent features are pointed beards, breasts, and hair queues—decorated and undecorated. Clothing is not suggested except for a horizontal ridge (belt?) separating the “waist” from the base when it is so demarked. Several of the figurines appear to be wearing round caps which are frequently linked to the brow ridge-nose-beard on the obverse and the queue on the reverse. Many have no base, and cannot stand alone, indicating that they may have been set in a firm foundation. The bases are of two types--carved rectangular bases on the slab figurines, or a cuboid form, suggesting a seated or enthroned position. No legs or feet are indicated on any example from Gawra, Billa, or Rimah. Carter 1970, 23

The approach taken in the present study differs from Carter’s. Her paper’s goal is to categorize the figurines into different shapes, prioritizing form over context. As such, her paper makes almost no mention of the chronological or geographic distribution of the pieces, focusing instead on which of them are ‘amorphous squat lumps’ or ‘rectangular slab’ types (*ibid* 23). Vincent Van Exel’s study (Van Exel, n.d.) of the figurines follows her approach in a more orderly fashion, extending her database, including references and chronological details, but mostly to classify the shapes of the EBA and the LBA finds. A central reason to downplay aesthetic divisions is that within single sites there are figurines with diverse aesthetic characteristics in the same contexts, and differing functionality can be better witnessed in the diverse contexts across sites, among objects sharing aesthetic traits.

Rather than discussing each of the figurines in detail (readers are referred to Carter’s paper itself for this information), it is important to highlight trends in the distribution, and to examine Carter’s conclusions. Most of the figurines fall into a Late Bronze Age context, though one must be skeptical in assuming it to be a typology from this era, and consider whether Carter only looked for examples from sites with a similar chronology to Tell al-Rimah. Before proceeding to her analysis, this thesis arranges the scattered data of her study, and adds contextual and chronological information from the excavation reports themselves, which Carter does not mention.

Table 1: ‘Stone Spirits’ mentioned by Carter 1970.

Site	Quantity	Chronology	Other Information	External Sources Used	Figures
Tell al-Rimah	3	Late Nuzi-	Two in context:	Oates 1965,	24-29

		Middle Assyrian, 14-13 <sup>th</sup> c.	one on a shrine, the other in temple doorway.	Oates 1968 Spycket 1981.	
Tepe Gawra	3	Early-Mid Bronze Age	Stratum III debris, stratum III floor, stratum IV wall.	Speiser 1935.	30-32
Tell Billa	10	At latest, LBA, c. 1200	Confused chronologies, often from fill, with some from Level I, whose final date is roughly 1200 BCE	Speiser 1932.	33-42
Alalakh	6	Transitional MBA-LBA, early 16 <sup>th</sup> c.	From Alalakh V, two of which are several times larger than our figurines.	Woolley 1955, updated chronologies in Yener 2010, 62.	43, images a-h
Diyarbekir	2	16-15 <sup>th</sup> c.?	Buried in the city gates.	Woolley 1955.	43, images i and j
Qadesh/ Tell Nebi Mend	3/4	MBA to early LBA, uncertain.	Only three of the four resemble the stone spirit type. Chronological questions exist.	Pezard 1931, Bourke 1993.	44
Neirab	2				
Risqeh	Dozens		A large collection of slab stelae, this paper does not consider them to be stone spirits.	Kirkbride 1969	45, 46
Tell Brak	1 (others found not mentioned in her publication)	First half of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> mil BCE--MBA	Immense size makes it fall outside of a figurine category, see fig. 48 for human scale.	Louvre-plaque used for dating, Oates 1997	47, 48

Ras Shamra/Ugarit	1		Too large and stylistically different for consideration here.		
Mari	1	Uncertain-- anywhere from Early Dynastic to second millennium	Statuette of Dagan? Carter suggests it could have served as a model for stone spirits.	Parrot 1962	49
Qatna	1	14 <sup>th</sup> c.	Seated bearded figurine.	Richter 2005	50
Tell Mardikh/Ebla	1	1500	Carter uses it as comparative data, though notes its different function.	Matthiae 1965	51
Hawa Huyuk	1		Unfinished but more complex, not relevant to this study.		52
Megiddo	1	16-15 <sup>th</sup> c.		May 1935,	53
Abu Ireyn	1	13 <sup>th</sup> c.	Stela with stone spirit characteristics.	Matthiae 1962	54

Carter gives a concise description for the sixteen figurines from her three central sites (Rimah, Gawra, and Billa), but the rest of her paper contents itself on following these figurines, contextualizing the entire typology based on the finds from these sites. Yet she spends little time on comparison of contexts or other relevant information, seeking instead to create a catalog of comparative aesthetic attributes. This leads to a short and rushed conclusion focusing on functionality and meaning, a subject not mentioned in the rest of her paper, using data from only a fraction of the sites mentioned. Several issues arise in her attempt. First, her conclusions about the purposes of these figurines are based on the contexts of her chosen group rather than the typology as a whole, which is problematic when she admits that those from Tell Billa and Tepe Gawra do not have

pertinent contextual information. As a result, she derives most of her conclusions on functionality from the contexts of the two *in situ* Rimah figurines.

The next issue relates to geography. Looking at the distribution maps (figs. 55-56), we see that her prioritized figurines, those from Tell al-Rimah, Tell Billa, and Tepe Gawra, are geographical outliers in the general distribution. Most of her other examples come from Northern Syria, and several come from the Levant. While recent archaeological scholarship has correctly moved away from sole reliance on direct cultural-typological associations, it should not be completely disregarded, and her distribution is troubling in that it is not tied to any sort of cultural units, or groups that may have interacted; instead, the distribution merely reflects the entirety of the Near Eastern Bronze Age, spanning the third and second millennia BCE, with a diverse body of cultural groups. Chronology does not factor into her considerations, and she does not hesitate to equate pieces from cultural groups that could not possibly have had contact across millennia. She neatly avoids this issue by rarely mentioning the wide geographic ranges, and almost never mentions the era of the findings that she discusses. She states that the earliest figurines come from 1500 BCE, in contradiction to their excavation reports (for instance, Speiser 1931, 98-9, p. 183 for chronologies), and dismisses the geographical range as “easily explainable, since this is a period of much trade and travel” (Carter 1970, 40). By ignoring these factors, she neglects to mention one of the most interesting, and academically challenging, aspects of the ‘stone spirits:’ their unique dispersal without regard for cultural boundaries.

The next issue with her presentation is the wide range of types that she uses for comparison. While the author of this paper admits to the soft edges of the ‘stone spirit’ categorization, it is one based on stone figurines, and as such, examples such as the tall statues from Alalakh (*ibid*, 24, fig. 43) or relief, orthostat, or stela work from Anatolia (*ibid* 32-3) fall too far outside of the range of the typology to merit consideration, especially given their separate aesthetics.

Carter’s conclusions are particularly problematic. The figurines are extraordinarily crude; several of them have almost no indication of human attributes. Rather than accepting that very little attention was given to some figurines’ particular features, she takes this as a sign of hermaphroditic intentionality, and uses this to define them as guardian spirits (*ibid*, 38-40). She invokes Diana Kirkbride’s interpretations of the open-air stelae from Risqeh, Jordan as ancestors as evidence that the ‘stone spirits’ are ancestors as well. The assemblage from Risqeh is a troubling comparison. Beyond the objects themselves, these are the most geographically distant objects from her targeted area of study; in Kirkbride’s publication on the subject, she only maps and compares the Risqeh assemblage to other finds from Jordan (Kirkbride 1969a), all of

which are outside the range of the ‘stone spirit distribution.’ The ancestor idols mentioned by Kirkbride are a carefully arranged display of a large number of stelae sharing only a few minor attributes with the ‘stone spirits.’ Using them as evidence for open-air sanctuary adoration of ‘stone spirits’, and thus accounting for the surface finds of some figurines, constitutes an indefensible leap in logic.

Carter concludes by stating, “these figurines are in fact guardian spirits who are equally at home at temple doors, in city gates, in house doors, in ancestor shrines, and in palace shrines. The more details rendered the more potent the figurine. They are the antidote *par excellence* against evil and bad magic. The more stone spirits in one’s immediate surroundings, the greater security for mortals” (Carter 1970, 40). The numerous problems with this conclusion are readily apparent. She previously used certain specific contexts to establish the figurines as guardians, then notes the diverse nature of these contexts. The apotropaic nature is both plausible and baseless, and the idea that the greater detail and quantity suggest a more potent functionality runs counter to the basic facts of her paper: that they have diverse locations, that there are never many per context, and that they are marked by their crudeness and lack of detail.

## 2.2. ‘Stone Spirits’ Not Included in Carter’s Study

Whatever issues arise from Carter’s paper, her work brought the category of ‘stone spirits’ into attention, creating a base of comparative information for later scholars to work from. There have been three main consequences of her work. First, some scholars see that their finds fit into an existing category, and merely reference Carter’s article and devote no further discussion to the possible meanings of their figurines (for example, Erkanal 1988, 149). Other scholars, such as Paolo Matthiae, who have written more extensively about figurines, feel obliged to criticize Carter’s paper. Matthiae writes “They were sometimes incorrectly called ‘Stone Spirits’, including also figures from the southern regions of later Syria-Palestine, which probably would have nothing to do with them” (Matthiae 2006, 425). This type of criticism is unproductive. A useful critique could suggest that the southern Syro-Palestinian figurines are of a separate typology, and should not be associated with his finds from Ebla, but by rejecting the term ‘stone spirits,’ he turns it into an issue of semantics, criticizing without suggesting another framework of consideration.

The third usage of Carter’s publication is the direction this thesis takes. It utilizes the list of figurines that she mentioned as a comparative background for a renewed examination. As Carter did not make geographical, cultural, or other similar statements about the orientation of the artistic program, scholars attempting cultural

associations or functional analysis have, in Carter’s presentation, a non-opinionated compendium of information. Scholars have expanded her list, most notably Stephania Mazzoni (1998, 203), and others have made more indirect contributions, such as Winfried Orthmann, who has excavated several sites with ‘stone spirits,’ and has noted inter-site (and often inter-era) connections (Orthmann and Meyer, 1989 and Orthmann 1991).

The table below is a list of the ‘stone spirits’ excavated since (or neglected by) Carter’s paper. Some overlap exists between the two, for example at Tell Mardikh and Tell Brak; from the latter, Carter mentioned the large sculpture, but did not include the three figurines mentioned in Oates’ later publication (Oates *et. al* 1997, 106. Fig. 78). The quantities listed below include only figurines not mentioned by Carter, and for a total count, readers must combine information from the two charts.

Table 2: ‘Stone Spirits’ not included in Carter 1970.

Site	Quantity	Chronology	Other Information	Source(s)	Figures
Munbaqa/Ekalte	12	2 EBA, 10 LBA	Only 3 LBA <i>in situ</i> , in domestic contexts, though Czichon suggests even these are secondary contexts.	Czichon 1998.	58-63
Selenkahiye	10-15	EBA	Found in both burial and domestic contexts.	Van Loon and Meijer 2001, Van Soldt 2001,	64-67
Wreide	30	EBA	Cemetery adjacent to Selenkahiye, the two sites are linked.	Orthmann 1991, Van Loon and Meijer 2001, Van Soldt 2001	68-77
Tell Brak	3	EBA, LBA	Three figurines from Tell Brak not mentioned by Carter.	Oates <i>et al.</i> 1997	78
Tell Mardikh/Ebla	2/3	MBA	One only given a brief mention in the 1987 paper, without an image. The	Matthiae 1987, 1996, 2006	79



			others from temple area.		
Tell Barri/ Kahat	1	MBA	In either domestic or shrine context.	Pecorella 2000 Matthiae 2006	80
Girnavaz	1	Uncertain, probably LBA based on other parts of the site	Out of context.	Erkanal 1988	81
Hazor	3	Late LBA	In temple area.	Beck 1990	82
Tell Hadidi	3	2 EBA, 1 LBA	LBA is the larger figurine to the right in the image.	Dornemann 1979, 1989	83
Tell Halawa	3	EBA	Private Houses.	Pruss 1994, Orthmann and Meyer 1989.	84-85
Gezer	1	LBA		Woolley 1955	
Arpad/Tell Rifa'at	1	LBA	Built into a wall, from earlier period?	Seton Williams 1961, 1967	86
Tell Bi'a/Tuttul	1	EBA	Gate context.	Hemker 1994, Bösze	
Tell Afis	1	LBA		Mazzoni 1998	87
Hama (K)	4	EBA	3 busts and one head.	Fugmann 1958	88
Tell Bayandur	1			Meijer 1986	89
Satu Qala	1	LBA?	Unpublished	Diederik Meijer, personal correspondence 2011 <sup>6</sup>	

The two charts make one aspect stand out immediately: the large number of figurines excavated from Early Bronze Age sites on the second chart. This dichotomy does not imply a different typology included in this thesis and rejected by Carter; the figurines are largely of the same type. The most reasonable explanation would be that Carter assumed the typology to be from sites similar to Tell al-Rimah, and as such, she

<sup>6</sup> For the accompanying map, the coordinates of Tell Satu Qala were obtained from Wilfred van Soldt's The Location of Idu, NABU 2008/55. In the paper, Tell Satu Qala is tentatively considered to be Ancient Idu, though this is of no consequence for the present study. More importantly, it is the find location of the stone spirit, in survey directed by Drs. Diederik Meijer and Wilfred van Soldt.

only sought out figurines from LBA contexts. In addition, most of the EBA figurines come from more recent excavations, and the split can simply be explained by increased archaeological activity on EBA sites in the past four decades, as archaeology has become more focused on examining trends in human development than finding the shiny objects that are more readily available from the sites of the great LBA empires.

With Carter's and this thesis' lists presented above, contexts need to be addressed. The first two maps (figs. 55-56) show the distribution of the objects discussed in Carter's study and the other 'stone spirits' presented by this thesis. The area covered reveals that the 'spirits' are located along the Fertile Crescent, excluding Southern Mesopotamia. The greatest quantities are found in Northern Syria. Matthiae's critique (as well as this thesis' critiques) of Carter's analysis is based on her inclusion of the stelae from Risqeh, not only for their different typologies (not figurines) but also for their geographical distance from the focal area. The implications of this distribution, and its relation to a consideration of the figurines as Middle Assyrian, will be addressed in a later section of this chapter, and in the final discussion chapter.

The most important considerations for analysis are the contexts of the excavated figurines. As Carter noted, they have been found in shrines, domestic settings, gateways, and other diverse contexts. The excavations at Selenkahiye (Van Loon 2001), and the subsequent salvage operations conducted at Wreide (Orthmann 1991), uncovered the greatest quantities of 'stone spirits,' mostly found in burial contexts. The figurines are found buried with the skeletons (see fig. 67 for Burial IX at Selenkahiye, figurines are circled by the author), alongside many other grave goods. There are a limited number of graves inside the settlement of Selenkahiye, and Wreide's cemetery served as an extramural burial site connected to the settlement (Van Loon and Meijer 2001, 218). The sites both feature shaft graves and simple inhumations, and are of a relatively similar character, suggesting that no status difference exists between the extra and intramural graves (*ibid* 219). The status differences are not so focused on the distribution or the markings of the graves, but instead on the quantity of grave goods (*ibid*, 221). The goods are usually in the actual grave, although in some instances, such as Wreide tomb W 054 (Orthmann 1991, 19) there was a secondary or tertiary 'room' inside the grave for gifts. The figurines, as well as the majority of the pottery and other objects, including daggers, pins, and axe blades, are scattered seemingly randomly next to the deceased, though in some instances, such as Wreide tomb 054, the goods are distributed in the other rooms (fig. 77, the figurines from the room are fig. 76). The pottery has not been analyzed to the extent needed to label certain graves as elite, but some graves have dozens of pieces of pottery, along with the 'stone spirits' and other finds.

‘Stone spirits’ have not been found in burial contexts in any other sites, raising questions about the usage of the figurines. These figurines are from EBA burials, yet the other EBA figurines have no burial connections, dismissing notions that funerary objects were later used for other purposes.<sup>7</sup> The figurines from Selenkahiye and Wreide are of the ‘stone spirit’ typology, and while some exhibit differences from any others, such as bitumen indicating hair, the figurines are quite close to many LBA examples. For the present section, it is sufficient to note that the contexts are incredibly varied, and as such, no single functionalist interpretation can be applied to the figurines. Instead, what can be determined is that in some instances they hold a sacred value, being associated with the afterlife and shrines. Moreover, their sheer diversity suggests that they were not reserved for a specific purpose; as they did not require the handwork of an experienced sculptor, their varied nature should be contextualized by the presumable diversity of people creating the figurines, in contrast to the contemporary statuary of temple-contracted sculptors.

Another notable feature of these figurines is the lack of context for most of the finds. Many have been found in topsoil layers, and still more have been found built into architecture, presumably used simply as pieces of stone. None of the architectural contexts of these figurines are reminiscent of intentional/ritual Near Eastern traditions, such as the Assyrian practice of burying *apkallu* figurines as protective spirits below the foundations; instead, they are merely left inside walls as stone. This suggests that the figurines were not held in high regard, in contrast to those seen in burial or shrine contexts, or implies a changing ideology within the site, perhaps as new inhabitants discarded older traditions. A (anachronistic) parallel would be the transition from archaic to classical Athens, when many kouros figures of the wealthy were put into the city walls to be used as simple stone, showing a popular and intentional disregard for the original importance of the statuary. The theme of disregard will be revisited in the analysis section, but should be kept in mind when considering the worth of the figurines and the contexts from Tell Sabi Abyad.

For figurines found in topsoil or above architectural strata, Carter’s following of Kirkbride’s interpretations of the ancestor idols from Risqeh is merely hypothetical, assuming that they are deceased relatives put in open-air sanctuaries by nomadic peoples. While this theory is not necessarily incorrect, it is not grounded in any data. There are myriad other possibilities, none of which are substantiated by archaeological evidence. The explanation could be as simple as later visitors to the sites, after the

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<sup>7</sup> No other EBA site shows any grave orientation for the figurines. At Tell Bi’a, situated in the same region as Selenkahiye, recent excavations and publications focusing on the graves show no ‘stone spirits,’ despite some similarities in pottery types (Bösze 2009).

primary occupation period (or that of the ‘stone spirits’ construction), seeing the figurines as objects of curiosity or worth, only to be discarded and thus decontextualized at a later date. The model presented at the end of this chapter will address the subject.

### 2.3. Concerns with Typological Analysis

Within individual sites, the ‘stone spirit’ figurines are connected by excavators and are published together as a distinct group, as crude schematic figurines are rare in the Bronze Age Near East. The connection to the broader category, however, is made through a typological comparison. While the merits of such an approach are obvious as the only means of connecting a typology coming from varied contexts, there are several concerns that must be addressed. A solely typological associative analysis leads to making links on an individual object basis, creating groupings that do not exist. For example, Vincent van Exel’s unpublished study of the ‘stone spirits,’ which divides the spirits into more categories than Carter’s paper, includes the ‘long pillar type’ of taller crude statues (Van Exel, n.d.). The 1.45m tall statue from Tell Brak (figs. 47-8) shares many attributes with the ‘stone spirits,’ particularly in the cutting of the nose/brows, the shape of the piece, the slight indications of the hips/shoulders, and the lack of inclusion of almost any other feature. It is similar in some of its features to certain ‘stone spirits,’ including Tell Sabi Abyad’s S03-810 (figs. 21-22). It also shares a general shape with a crude statue from Ras Shamra, and with a partially carved stele from Alalakh. As such, it is used as a categorical bridge associating these other tall statues with the ‘stone spirit’ category.

This type of connection is fundamentally flawed for several reasons. At the most basic level, the defining characteristic of the ‘stone spirits’ is that they are figurines, as opposed to full-sized statuary. These larger examples would have rested in a single display location, given their weight, in contrast to the diverse contexts of the figurines. Secondly, only the Brak example is similar to the figurines. The Ras Shamra example has detailed clothing indications, unlike any of the ‘stone spirits,’ and the Alalakh example wears the deified horned crown, and the fact that it is unfinished accounts for its crudeness. The others are likened to the ‘stone spirits’ by a transitive relationship, using the Tell Brak statue as a linkage to the rest of the category. Yet examining the map in fig. 55, Alalakh and Ras Shamra are on the coast, whereas Tell Brak is situated in Northern Mesopotamia. Similarly, the example from Abu Ireyn is used to connect the Risqeh stelae with the rest of the group, but a wider data set, rather than single examples, would be needed to establish a connection between such distant groups.

The similarity of the Tell Brak example to the ‘stone spirits’ does not necessarily indicate a connection. It bears no resemblance to the ‘stone spirit’ figurines found at the same site (fig. 78). The indicated eyes and nose are its main similarities to the figurines, though these are traits common in crude clay anthropomorphic figurines (see Neolithic figurine F07-2 from Tell Sabi Abyad (fig. 90), as the clay could be pinched between two fingers to make the effect of a nose and deep-set eyes. Any child making a representation of the rough shape of a face might use this method, and as such, the projection of clay representation onto stone does not imply similarity between the stone figurines, as it is a trait found in many diverse typologies. The size of the figurines, their crudeness (and thus the ease of creation), and their diverse and often domestic contexts stand too far apart from the larger examples, which require the transport of heavy stone and more invested craftsmanship, as well as a different functional/display purpose. These stark contrasts trump the aesthetic similarities, and show that a transitive association from the large statues to the shared characteristics from the Brak example to the ‘stone spirits’ cannot be employed, and should be cautioned against in typological association. The aesthetic similarities might indicate a connected artistic program, applied to different objects.

The second issue with typological association is that it must be supplemented by boundaries. The ‘stone spirits’ are connected by their aesthetic characteristics, which reveal a ‘shared otherness’ from any other finds. If one simply defines the category by these features, the typology would include all Bronze Age anthropomorphic stone figurines of the Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia that are schematic, small, crude, and whose faces are most clearly indicated by a prominent nose, creating indentations for eye sockets, and bodies most often indicated by shoulders, hips, and crossed or raised arms. This categorization defines the well-documented and published figurines of the Cycladic islands, perhaps the most famous art of the Bronze Age. If one follows Carter in dismissing geographic considerations based simply on the existence of trade and travel, these figurines would surely be linked to the ‘stone spirit’ category. Yet contact must be considered to understand how a typology spreads. In the Early Bronze Age, Cycladic influence extended to the Greek mainland and to Crete, but not far eastward (Renfrew 2010, 83). In the Late Bronze Age, the Cycladic islands show a particularly Minoan influence, once again without much Near Eastern relation (Barber 2010, 163). This is not to suggest that the Greek and Near Eastern worlds did not interact, as LBA Mycenaean pottery was found in Syro-Palestine (including in Ugarit/Ras Shamra) (Mee 2008, 377), but the extent of cultural sharing was extremely limited. While examples of stone figurines do exist in Cyprus in the EBA, they are

rendered differently from the Cycladic and Near Eastern versions, and as such, should not be considered as a possible bridge of cultural connectivity in this regard.

#### 2.4. Distribution and Preliminary Analysis

The distribution of the ‘stone spirits’ is displayed in figs. 55-56: the former indicates the distribution of those included in Carter’s study, and the latter indicates those added by this thesis. As mentioned above, they cover an arc similar to parts of the Fertile Crescent, mainly in Northern Mesopotamia, Northern Syria, and scattered sites on the Syro-Palestinian coast. The majority of the sites are LBA, with many exceptions from the EBA, and very little evidence from the MBA. Many of the finds are uncertain in their chronology, coming from disturbed contexts, architectural reuse, or old excavations with unreliable dating. Those found in context have been uncovered in domestic settings, in shrines, buried in graves, or near gates or walls. The sheer variety of the typology makes functionality difficult to assess, as these figurines must have served a plurality of functions.

As a purely aesthetic-typological approach does not satisfy this study’s analytical needs, other approaches are necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the distribution. The often-standard archaeological approach of direct cultural-typological association does not fit the data of the distribution, as it is not confined to a single culture. The EBA sites are more city-states than those of the LBA period, which were under the influence of greater empires: Mitanni, Assyria, and Egypt. Declaring the objects to be “Middle Assyrian,”<sup>8</sup> for example, does not take into account those from the more western regions, and certainly does not include those from the EBA.

While the exact causation and methods of distribution cannot be firmly established, this paper considers it more fruitful to present a likely model, open to scholarly debate, than to leave the issue unsettled. The emerging pattern seems to be that of a more of a fluidly dispersed folk cultural element, rather than any object related to state religion. The crude and simple nature of these figurines would allow production to take place outside the workshops of skilled craftsmen, in the hands of everyday people. This holds true for the finds both in the smaller settlements that do not have local skilled stone workers and in the larger sites, such as Ebla or Tell Brak, from which we have uncovered highly refined craft products, revealing that while the sites had skilled sculptors, the stone spirits were still produced crudely, presumably by private individuals.

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<sup>8</sup> This example is chosen as several of the LBA examples have been found in relation to Middle Assyrian sites, including at Tell Sabi Abyad.

As the objects are found in sites with particular cultural connections, considerations of appropriation arise. A large number of the ‘stone spirits’ have been found in Middle Assyrian sites. Two possibilities exist: first, that the object type was adopted by the Assyrians and implemented into their folk or state religion, or second, that the objects reveal a non-Assyrian element in the Assyrian culture. Despite the large number of figurines in territory controlled by Assyria, there is no indication that these objects were part of Assyrian ritual or religion. The borders of the Assyrian Empire changed rapidly, and the Assyrian sites had laborers of various non-Assyrian backgrounds (discussed in the introduction chapter; see Wiggermann 2000 for Tell Sabi Abyad examples). The Assyrians could not have established fully Assyrian cultures in each of these sites, which would have consisted of a multiplicity of diverse cultural elements, despite power organized under Assyrian influence.

With the hinterlands and newly expanded areas under the Middle Assyrian Empire reflecting diverse cultures, the only true heartland of Assyrian material culture in the Middle Assyrian period was Assur itself (Wiggerman, personal correspondence 2011). The Assur Projekt, undertaken by the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, is cataloguing vast collections of objects from excavations in Assur carried out in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A member of the project, Hans-Ulrich Onasch<sup>9</sup>, is currently cataloguing the several thousand figurines from the site, none of which are stone and anthropomorphic. No finds from Assur bear any resemblance to the ‘stone spirit’ typology. While negative evidence should not serve as definitive archaeological proof, the absence of these objects at the site is notable, as it was the center of Assyrian culture and has yielded the greatest number of Middle Assyrian artifacts known to scholars. Assur’s collections define Assyrian culture (in the periods before the moving capitals of Iron Age Assyria).

As stated, negative evidence alone is insufficient, and should be supplemented. Assyrian ritual and religion is well documented (for example, Black and Green 1992, Wiggermann 1992), and textual records give a good understanding of the types of spirits invoked in rituals, and have led scholars to fairly accurately label figurines of the *Mischwesen*, *apkallus*, etc., and to relate these figurines directly to rituals and the greater state religion. Frans Wiggermann, a scholar of Assyrian philology and protective spirits, suggested (in personal correspondence 2011) that there was no written record relating to the ‘stone spirits,’ or to ritual that involves them. Between the lack of objects from Assur and the lack of mention in the extensive collection of Assyrian religious

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<sup>9</sup> I am grateful to Hans-Ulrich Onasch and Friedhelm Pedde of the Assur Projekt for taking the time to share information on the finds of Assur and to discuss comparative elements from Tell Sabi Abyad for this thesis.

documents, it is likely that the objects found in Assyrian sites do not reflect Assyrian state ritual and religion.

Geographical outliers are important to consider when establishing a category. For example, the sites of Risqeh in Jordan and Satu Qala in eastern Iraq both fall outside of the main distributive range. This paper maintains that the figurine from Satu Qala should be associated with the ‘stone spirit’ categorization, whereas the stelae from Risqeh are separate. The stelae are carefully arranged outdoors, and as such their context (as well as their shape) bears no similarity to the figurines. The figurine from Satu Qala, however, should be associated with the ‘stone spirit’ typology. It has a roughly anthropomorphic shape, without indications of individual features beyond a lump for a head and somewhat indicated shoulders and bodily curves. The other finds of the same survey suggest that the territory was Middle Assyrian (Workshop ‘The City of Idu in its Transtigradian Environment,’ held at Universiteit Leiden, 21 June, 2011). While most other Middle Assyrian sites with ‘stone spirits’ stand on the western side of the empire, this more eastern site could be seen to reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds throughout the center. Frans Wiggermann (personal correspondence, 2011) suggests that this site would undoubtedly have non-Assyrian imported laborers, and as such the ‘stone spirit’ should not be seen as an indication of Assyrian religion.

So how to account for the contexts of these figurines? As stated earlier, a folk typology is a likely possibility. Since “part of what enabled the success of the Middle Assyrian agricultural network was the movements of populations both within Hanigalbat and between Assyrian and Hanigalbat... [resulting in] local Hanigalbatean populations ... deported to Assyria, or moved to new cities within Hanigalbat” (Szuchman 2007, 26-7), there would have been a large number of displaced peoples. It is likely that the migrants could not afford to employ skilled craftsmen, but still would have made figurines for some ritual purpose. The non-Assyrian laborers would presumably not have lived in the center of these cities (such as at Tell Sabi Abyad, where the fortress’ population was administrative, and the laborers would have lived around the settlement, Wiggermann 2000). Were the figurines used in domestic contexts, they may have been discarded in these peripheral areas, which in later generations are less likely to have been rebuilt upon, and could have been used again for farmland. This could account for the large number of ‘stone spirits’ appearing out of context and as surface finds. Some figurines have been found in Assyrian contexts. One from Tell al Rimah (Carter 1970, Oates 1965) was found *in situ* in a shrine used in the Nuzi period as well as Middle Assyrian. While it was found in the Middle Assyrian shrine, if it was an object relating to the shrine before Assyrian occupation, the Assyrians may have let it remain to



continue local traditions, rather than simply assume that because the shrine was used in Middle Assyrian period it must be a Middle Assyrian artifact.

The lack of Middle Bronze Age 'stone spirits' can be seen as a reflection of contemporary settlement trends. As opposed to the Middle Assyrian expansion, "a relatively high degree of continuity is suggested between the early and mid-second millennia, with about 70% of all early second millennium sites also occupied in the Mitanni period" (Lyon 2000, 102). One likely possibility is that those 'stone spirits' made by Middle Bronze Age peoples were adopted by the early LBA Hurrian occupiers of sites, leaving a diminished archaeological record of MBA 'stone spirits.'

A great deal of the 'stone spirits' have come from sites with an indication of a Hurrian presence, either from more purely Hurrian sites (Alalakh, level 7 of Tell Sabi Abyad), or from sites with attestation of Hurrian names, such as Tell Brak (Wilhelm 1989, 11), Qatna (Richter 2005, 112), and many other sites. While the Hurrian's cultural influence in many sites is elusive at best, often only visible in names, the ethno-cultural group seems to have been present at many 'stone spirit' find sites. The concept of an international but ethnic typology does not hold ground for many sites without Hurrian cultural elements (for example, the Euphrates valley EBA sites), and as such, cannot explain the distribution, but the Hurrians are conspicuously present in much of the LBA distribution, and, if some Hurrian people took up the creation and usage of the 'stone spirits,' they could have been instrumental in the typology's cross-site distribution. Two major periods of voluntary Hurrian population migration would have occurred after the collapse of the kingdom of Shamshi-Adad I in the 18<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and during the spread of the Mitanni Empire in the 15-14<sup>th</sup> centuries (Wilhelm 1989, 16-18).

The EBA examples of 'stone spirits' are all from Northern Syria and Iraq (fig. 57). The greatest concentrations are from the sites around the Euphrates valley in northwestern Syria. It is known that there was trade and contact between northern Syria and Mesopotamia in the EBA (Postgate 2003, Algaze 2004), allowing the typology to spread, on a very small scale. The small scale suggests that these figurines were not part of some large-scale ritual organization, but instead that they could have served varied purposes from site to site. It is not surprising that EBA people made crude representations in stone, with varied intentions. The similarities of the pillar and star-shaped figurines from this period reveal a cultural sharing, though the aesthetic copying bears no relation to the actual usage of the 'stone spirits' in their home sites. That similar objects were created by later generations is also unsurprising. A possible model for their distribution over time is as follows: While the LBA populations undoubtedly had different cultures from the EBA occupants of the same region, they may have encountered the EBA 'stone spirits' as anything from objects of curiosity to ancient

mysterious spirits. Whatever their belief, they recreated the typology, and it was dispersed by individuals rather than empires in a period of frequent migrations.

This model accounts for the diachronic distribution, as well as the typological similarities that spread without regard to national borders or state religion. Their folk spread, rather than codified ritual usage, leads to varied contexts, and their frequent usage by people living outside the center of settlements (both literally and cultural-metaphorically) accounts for their frequent out-of-context finds. Whether or not the folk dispersal was related to an ethno-cultural orientation of the figurines' owners cannot be known for certain, though the prevalence of the figurines in sites with some population bearing Hurrian names, either in Nuzi or Mitanni contexts, or as laborers from forced migrations, suggests that there may be a connection.<sup>10</sup> Ethnicity could be one factor of many accounting for such a diverse spread spanning the borders of nations.

The previous paragraph presents a theoretical model to account for the distribution over time and distance of the 'stone spirit' typology. Its inductive approach is more fruitful for considering the 'stone spirits' than an aesthetic comparison, as done by Carter. A comprehensive accounting for geography, chronology, the contexts of the findings, and possible functionality are necessary for ideal contextualization of archaeological finds. With the 'stone spirit' data set, the sheer diversity of the contexts makes direct cultural associations impossible, but it is important to consider the historical landscape as something broader than just major empires, each with their own material cultural characteristics. The diversity of the 'stone spirits' can only be grasped through an understanding of artifacts existing outside of a set cultural repertoire.

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<sup>10</sup> Publications on Hurrian culture universally note the difficulty in labeling cultural elements as 'Hurrian.' Amelie Kuhrt (1995, 284-5) notes that evidence of Hurrian is exclusively linguistic, and cites Gernot Wilhelm (1982, cited as 1989 in this publication for the English translation) to note that a group defined by a language does not constitute a social group. This paper does not declare the 'stone spirits' as Hurrian material culture, though further publications on Hurrian influence on material culture may aid in understanding of the 'stone spirit' distribution.

### 3. The ‘Stone Spirits’ from Tell Sabi Abyad

With the ‘stone spirit’ typology established, this thesis now turns to the site of Tell Sabi Abyad, and the six anthropomorphic stone figurines from the site. The first of the figurines (F92-7) was uncovered in the 1992 field season, and by the following year, a site publication correctly likened it to Carter’s typology (Akkermans et al. 1993, 29). As the excavation continued, a total of six ‘stone spirits’ were uncovered, calling for greater attention to be paid to the figurines. Studies on the figurines (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 15) expressed interest in their usage as grinders while noting the connection to Carter’s category; however, the authors used a greater caution by merely noting the resemblance to the ‘spirits,’ rather than casting them into a category dominated by Carter’s conclusions about guardians against evil and magic. The six finds from Tell Sabi Abyad have unique enough contexts and features to display more than just a relation to a known category; they reveal site characteristics, the association of the category to chronologies and cultural frameworks, and the loss of initial importance in secondary contexts.

This chapter presents the objects as a catalog with descriptions and excavation contexts, followed by an analysis of the contexts, trends, and distributions, and the implications of the state of the figurines. The analytical section will provide a brief overview of a range of approaches, from interpretation of the physical data of the objects and their locations to theoretical and hypothetical approaches, adapting the data into a comprehensible reconstruction of human interaction with, and the subsequent reevaluation of, the materials. These considerations will then be used to examine the relation of these figurines to the Middle Assyrian site, an analysis that will be returned to in chapter five.

#### 3.1. Catalog

The figurines are labeled here by their master file number, as well as by the square, locus, and lot information (for details, see introduction). The ‘spirits’ are organized by their excavation date. As with any excavation with complex stratigraphy, the association of particular finds with a building phase is not definitive, and this thesis attempts to concisely detail how it arrives at the building levels mentioned, to allow for a transparency of methodology to facilitate individual interpretation by the readers. Moreover, the level 7-4 framework provides an overall picture of the major construction phases, though they should not be taken as the only times of construction, as the determination of individuals or circumstances would have led to other building activities, evinced by multiple floor levels per building level. As such, the study hopes to catalog

the figurines within the established chronology, but it prioritizes the character of the locus and the cultural orientation of the level. Much of the contextual information is left unreferenced, as the data are from unpublished handwritten excavation notes. A visual overview of the distribution can be seen in figs. 91 and 92.<sup>11</sup>

Table 3: ‘Stone Spirits’ from Tell Sabi Abyad.

File Number	Square	Locus/Lot	Level/Context	Material	Height (cm)
F92-7	L11	20/25	7, in Mitanni tower	Limestone	24.6
F96-16	M11	13/108	5, in fill, near floor level	Limestone	22
S02-357	K7	24/89	7—Below a level 6 wall	Basalt	21
S03-401	G7	54/140	5—Base of level 5 wall	Basalt	17.5
S03-810	N11	31/127	5B—on a pile of grinding related objects, <i>in situ</i> under a collapsed level 5 staircase	Basalt	21
F04-24	O9	1/6	Unknown, below topsoil but above architectural remains	Basalt	16.1

#### F92-7

Square: L11. Locus 20, Lot 25. Object number 25. Elevation: 325,52. Excavation date: 16.9.1992.

Figure: 11

Dimensions (cm): 24.6 (h) 15.0 (w) 8.5 (l).

Material: Limestone.

Description: F92-7 is the only ‘stone spirit’ from Tell Sabi Abyad given a detailed description in a publication. As it is thorough and concise, and no photographs exist to supplement the account, this paper defers to Akkermans *et al.* (1993, 28-9) for the object depiction:

This crudely-shaped figurine, most likely representing a male, has a somewhat triangular stub head facing upward. The wide nose is the most dominant facial feature and seems to be an extension of the brow ridge. Eyes and mouth are

<sup>11</sup> Figure 91 shows the objects on a level 6 site map, to show relation to earlier structure and the moat, whereas figure 92 shows the objects on a level 5 map, as the room arrangement changed between levels, changing the find rooms for F96-16 and S03-810. For a more detailed image of those rooms, see fig. 98. The objects in red in fig. 91 are the objects from level 7, and the objects in red in fig. 92 are the objects from level 5 or later, with the green representing figures displayed to show comparative locations, but whose contexts do not correspond to the level of the map.

represented by slight incisions. Some relief on the back of the head may indicate the hair. The arms, cut in slight relief, emerge from the pronounced, rounded shoulders; they bend sharply in at the elbows and then immediately upwards. The fingers of the right hand on the breast are spread and fully delineated. Below a sharp ridge on the lower body the legs are shown, separated from each other by means of a deep depression. The statuette has no true base and cannot stand alone; apparently, it was originally set in some sort of foundation.

The figurine is unique in several aspects. It is the only 'stone spirit' with an upward-facing head, as well as the only one from Tell Sabi Abyad with demarcated hands, fingers, and legs. The cuts for the eyes and mouth are unique for 'stone spirits,' as most only include a nose with deep-set sides to represent eye sockets. In a comparison to the general typology, there are other examples of 'stone spirits' with indicated bent upward-raised arms (e.g. from Tell Billa, figs. 36-8, from Girnavaz, fig. 82, and the stele from Abu Ireyn, fig. 54, which shares some artistic attributes with the 'stone spirits'), though there is no record of other 'stone spirits' with such an upward-facing head. Despite this unique attribute, many examples share a general shape with this object, having a roughly rectangular body (with some curvature) and a blockish triangular head rising from the body (e.g. from Tell Billa, fig. 41, Munbaqa, fig. 60, Wreide, figs. 70, 76, and Hazor, fig. 82). These examples do not have indicated facial features; the sculptor of F92-7 perhaps followed the general 'stone spirit' program, and decided independently to add facial features, based on individual inclination or ease of carving.

Context: The find was in the northern part of room 6 of the fortress (fig. 93), an area whose stratigraphy was documented by R. Spoor in an unpublished study, described by Kolinski (2001, 61) as a latrine. This object was uncovered in a soft brown loam with charcoal, limespots, pebbles, mudbrick fragments, coprolites, and some ashpockets along its western side. From the same locus, a complete pottery vessel, P92-57, (fig IV.7.J in Duistermaat 2008, 469), a pottery fragment, and a small discarded stone object were uncovered.<sup>12</sup>

The excavator writes that the find was below a wall F (level 6/initial Assyrian construction), though the location in drawings shows the locus to be north of the wall, underneath a floor K (elevation 325,76) and above a floor level L (elevation 325,04-325,34). In either case, the find was in fill above a level 7 floor, below a level 6 wall or floor. Publications note this as the pre-Assyrian building level (Akkermans *et al.* 1993, 13; Duistermaat 2008 calls the pottery level 7). Spoor's study of the tower shows that

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<sup>12</sup> P92-57 is described by the excavator as wheelmade, smoothed, with a small flat base; the excavator deferred to J. Limpens, who wrote that the vessel was "a miniature vessel with rounded body and a simple plain rim. Sand Tempered." The shape was unique to the excavations at the time, though later Duistermaat (2008, 63) mentioned it in a note as a rough platter with mineral inclusions.

there were two Mitanni phases visible in the room, the first with the northern room used as a latrine, with a floor L, and a second in which debris collected above the floor level.

When the Assyrians arrived at the fortress, they paved over the Mitanni levels, leaving a thin fill layer below their floor in which F92-7 was found, and in Assyrian reconstruction of the fortress, room 6 was combined into a single room. The fill is a thin layer, unlike several other fill areas that suggest extended usage for waste disposal. The fact that it stands in a Mitanni debris layer, in a small latrine room, suggests that it was already decontextualized before Assyrian arrival, presumably from another tower room, as there would be no reason to bring a figurine into the tower just to discard it. Another possibility is that the fill level was created when the ceiling collapsed, as the original tower would have been multiple stories, and the mudbricks in the fill suggest some architectural collapse. The initial purpose of the second story room is unknown; however, this presents an alternative option to a latrine context. The location stands in contrast to the figurines found in Assyrian strata, none of which were found in the central tower. This subject will be returned to in the analysis.

F96-16

Square: M11. Locus 13, Lot 108. Object number: 62. Elevation: 362.48. Excavation date: 3.9.1996.

Figures: 12-13.

Dimensions (cm): 22 (h), 11.5 (w at widest part), 8.6 (width at base).

Material: Limestone.

Description: This roughly bell-shaped figurine is defined by its indicated head, shoulder curves, nose, and breasts. The stone is quite rough, though the shape is generally rounded. In shape, it is most similar to F04-24 (discussed below), though its features are not as refined. No bodily features are delineated by incisions, as seen in F92-7, but instead by general curvature of the breasts, shoulders, and head. The breasts indicate a female gender; aside from this, it is anonymously schematic; no specific identity cues are given. The nose is the most prominent feature, and is the only facial feature, unlike other examples in which the nose is carved to suggest and shape other features. The stone is chipped in several places, and the base is flattened so that the figurine can stand. The shape and indications of traits are reminiscent of examples from Qadesh (fig. 44d), Ebla (fig. 79), and Tell Bayandur (fig. 89).

The most notable features of the figurine are the grooves cut on one side and on the reverse. Unfortunately, the only photograph of the object is of the obverse, and as such, the grooves can only be seen in the object drawings (fig. 12). In the drawings it is difficult to determine the exact depth of the grooves, but what is notable is their surface.

The excavator notes that the side groove has a smoothed surface, and that the back groove, running the entire height of the figure, is a polished surface. The excavators connected the side grooves to the holes drilled and the grooves of object S96-248, from M11 locus 6 (fig. 94). In addition, there are many other stone objects with similar grooves (figs. 95-97, a few examples of the many others), yet none of these objects has aesthetic or representational features as the ‘stone spirit’ does. These grooves are critical to understanding the Assyrian interaction with the figurines, which will be considered later in the chapter. For the present descriptive section, it is crucial to note that the characteristic ‘stone spirit’ traits are crude and rough, whereas attention was given to polishing and smoothing the grooves, which do not relate to the representational aspects of the figurine. In addition, the flattened bottom is uncharacteristic of the ‘stone spirit’ typology.

Context: Square M11 is located inside the fortress, just east of the tower. F96-16 was found in the Northeastern part of the square, in ‘room 1’ a large room roughly 4 m (N-S) by 10 m (E-W, using data from the walls in square N11, with some spatial irregularities in the eastern part). The excavation revealed consistent walls through multiple strata in the 1996 campaign; the square was returned to in 2003, when an architectural change at the lowest Assyrian level includes a wall cutting through the center of the room. As the room is near the edge of the fortress, these changes are consistent with the renovations between levels 6 and 5, when “the outer defensive walls of the fortress ... were first partially leveled then rebuilt” (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 6).

The object was found just above a grey ashy and bumpy layer, with imprints of reeds or roof remains, suggesting it was just above a reed floor, perhaps with a collapsed ceiling layer. The locus had a great many objects coming from the fill above the reed floor, and this object’s proximity to the floor suggests an in-context, though not necessarily *in situ*, find. Locus 13 produced an abundance of finds, though this can be partially attributed to the excavator’s extended usage of the same locus number, through floors and across a wide area. From nearby locations with similar elevations to the ‘stone spirit,’ the locus had a plethora of utility stone working tools, with a very large concentration of grinding stones and slabs, as well as some pottery, a pierced clay disk, and some flint.

The stratigraphical database presents this object as part of level 5C, which this author finds to be a believable assessment, though it would not rule out the possibility that the object comes from a newer part of level 5, as there was some fill below the floor level of this object, above the level 6 architecture. Most likely, that fill can be attributed to the destruction of some of the level 6 walls in the process of renovation. There is a floor level above the object as well, which indicates level 4 above. The complexity

stems from the multiplicity of floor levels above the level 6 room, reminding scholars that a simple level 7-4 attribution is not always sufficient to explain building chronology.

More importantly, the nearby objects are non-domestic utility goods, suggesting a workshop of some kind. Between levels 6 and 5, utility work had been moved inside the fortress, and the room next to this one was converted to a pottery workshop in this time (fig. 98 for a detail of the context along with the pottery workshop and S03-810). “The extensive potter’s installations in the southern area went out of use, but they seem to have been replaced by a new workshop within the walls of the stronghold itself” (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 8). The abundance of ground stone tools and pottery suggests some storage, processing, or production area. The other stone objects with grooves similar to that of our figurine do not have an established function; one interpretation is as an arrow shaft straightener. One more note on the functionalist context of the figurine is the proximity (just one room or less than 5 m away) to object S03-810, also found in context with a great number of other stone tools, in what would appear to be a workshop setting. Whatever the function of the room in M11, it was not a space oriented for the purpose of ritual, the implications of which will be addressed in the analysis.

S02-357

Square: K7. Locus 24, Lot 89. Object number: 72. Elevation: 325,70. Excavation date: 14.9.2002.

Figures: 14-16.

Dimensions (cm): 21 (h). 3.5 (w. at “neck”) 10.3 (w. at “shoulder”) 11.5 (w. at thinnest point, or “waist”) 14.5 (width at widest part of base, or “end of skirt”).

Material: Basalt, with many inclusions.

Description: S02-357 is the crudest of the figurines, carved out of rough, brownish basalt covered in various mineral inclusions, and with many pores in its surface. No individual facial or bodily features are delineated by carving; only the general form is rendered out of the stone. A squat head emerges from the main slab, and rough curves protrude slightly for shoulders, taper inward a few cm below, and flare outward again, leading to the excavator dubbing these features as a neck, shoulder, waist, and skirt. Following Carter’s aesthetic assessments, the sculptor anthropomorphized the rock while keeping to its general form, paying little attention to bodily details. While the figurine stands out as particularly crude by comparison to others from Tell Sabi Abyad, it can be likened to many of the ‘stone spirits’ from other sites (e.g. Tell Billa, figs. 33 and 41, Munbaqa, fig. 63, Wreide, fig. 73). Its curved base suggests that it would have difficulty standing on its own, in accordance with the general type.



Context: The figurine was found in the northern part of K7, next to the level 6 moat. Akkermans and Wiggermann (*in press*, 4) note that “to the North, set along the moat and partly founded on its revetting walls, was a row of what seem to have been ordinary houses, each with one or two large rooms and several smaller side rooms.” The area appears not to have been built upon during levels 4 and 5, and the excavations produced a good deal of information from the pre-Assyrian period, level 7, including a floor level and two pisé walls.

The figurine was found underneath wall E, which ran along the outside of the level 6 moat, on a floor level K between two pisé walls, which reached down to the bottom of the Mitanni levels to just above prehistoric levels. This stratigraphy places the figurine firmly in level 7 strata. The area above, in the same level (6) as wall E, but to the south, produced a number of goods associated with domestic settings, whereas the level of the figurine (7) yielded a bit of pottery sherds, a single pestle, and little else. While the proximity to the moat digging calls the idea of disturbed contexts into question, one must envision building the moat’s revetting walls before construction of the moat, the logical building order for reduced erosion and architectural stability. If the object was indeed found in the process of moat digging, and displaced before (and under) the construction of wall E, it would still fit the categorization of pre-Assyrian. While the placement under Assyrian walls could suggest some ritual significance as a foundation spirit, this subject was addressed in the previous chapter as being an unlikely usage for the ‘stone spirits,’ given the vastly different appearance of the *Mischwesen* figurines used for such a purpose by the Assyrians (Black and Green 1992).

S03-401

Square: G7. Locus 54, Lot 140 (Wall BE). Object number: 171. Elevation: 325,00.  
Excavation date: 15.9.2003.

Figures: 18-20.

Dimensions (cm): 17.5 (h) 7.5 (w) 9 (l, at widest part in the middle).

Material: Basalt.

Description: This gray basalt figurine has few discernable delineated features. The material is somewhat rough, but is far smoother and more consistent than S02-357, without mineral inclusions or pores. The face is rendered with depressions on its sides to indicate a nose, reminiscent of the previous chapter’s discussion of pinched-clay figurines to depict a nose (fig. 90). The excavator’s drawing (fig. 19, included to show a side view) suggests that the sides indicate ears; this paper considers the flattening on the sides of the face merely byproducts of the depressions created to indicate a nose and the eye sockets. The figurine is notable for the large depression on its lower reverse side,

though it is unclear whether this is a broken section, or intentional in the initial carving. The whole figure is hewn from the stone, showing that the sculptor did not merely keep to the natural contours of the stone. The front section is puffed outwards, resembling a stomach, and the obverse drawing of fig. 18 shows that there are slight indications on the sides of the torso, suggesting barely noticeable (and barely indicated) crossed arms at the center of the body, as seen in figurines from Tell al-Rimah (fig. 26), Tell Billa (figs. 36 and 42), and Munbaqa (figs. 58 and 62). As a whole, the figurine exemplifies many of the standard 'stone spirit' features: a nose as the dominant feature, very few other indicated features and no gender cues, the hint of arms on the sides and front, and a rough basalt stone.

Context: Square G7 is located in the northwest of the mound. In the early Assyrian occupation, level 6, the moat occupied the center of the southern half of the square, and the heavy mudbrick walls in the northern half of the square indicate a reinforced gateway across the ditch, the only excavated crossing point. The moat was filled in during the level 5 renovations, with clay, loam, and mudbrick fillings, as well as some mixed LBA and prehistoric sherds, according to excavation notes. The Assyrians quickly changed the nature of the area, building atop the now-covered ditch, before the eventual abandonment of construction in the area.

The figurine was uncovered in the very southwestern corner of the square, west of the edge of the moat. The excavator wrote that it was found at the bottom of the BE wall, which rested on compact soil just above prehistoric layers; it is unclear whether this implies that the object was below the wall on the floor surface, or whether it was found inside the wall at the bottom. While this holds implications for determining whether there was intentionality in its placement, it does not greatly affect the chronological framework. The BE wall was built during the first construction phase that took place on top of the former moat, making it a level 5 wall, and therefore the figurine should be considered as coming from level 5 context.

The excavator notes that the object was found when mudbricks were removed from the BE wall. There is no clear indication of whether the stone was used as material for the wall. It is highly likely that the figurine was found in a secondary context, as the debris filling the moat would have been created by a large disruption of initial contexts. That does not imply that the structures on top of the moat were of shoddy construction; thick mudbrick walls were used, and in a nearby room, in locus 44, several complete vessels were found. This thesis finds it most likely that the figurine was at the base of or below the BE wall, rather than intentionally inside of it, as the mudbrick wall did not have many random stone inclusions for support. The find location should not be associated with functionality, as it is probably a secondary context after dislocation

during moat construction or filling, and as such, it should not be considered some gateway context; instead, the object should be seen as disregarded. How or why it was left in such a context is uncertain, but the important point is that despite being found in Assyrian contexts, its creation, and intended function, are from some other context.

S03-810

Square: N11. Locus 31, Lot 127. Object number: 236. Elevation: 326,04. Excavation date: 11.10.2003.

Figures: 21-22.

Dimensions (cm): 21 (h), 6.5 (diameter at center), 5 (diameter at bottom).

Material: Basalt.

Description: S03-810 is a head on top of a featureless pillar-like body. The face has a large number of traits depicted; the central feature is the nose; in addition, a mouth, ears, and eye depressions are also indicated. They are all rendered schematically, abstractly, and subtly, making the 'stone spirit' less obviously anthropomorphic than many others that have fewer human characteristics, such as F96-16. The chosen features are familiar from many other sites, though the external comparative examples may be in worse states of preservation, making identification of mouths or eyes more difficult.

The shape of the 'stone spirit' is familiar from other pillar shaped figurines (most prevalent at Selenkahiye/Wreide, though there are examples from other sites), yet the implications of the shape are quite different. S03-810 has traces of grinding on the bottom, and it was clearly used as a pestle. The lower half of the figurine looks completely pestle-like, devoid of any figurine characteristics. While initially interpreted as an anthropomorphized pestle, the figurine seems likely to have been use as a pestle, rather than the other way around. It should be kept in mind that it is possible for the lower part to have been smoothed over for functional purposes, but that it may have had some anthropomorphic or 'stone spirit' characteristics in its initial carving.

Context: S03-810 is the only 'stone spirit' from Tell Sabi Abyad found *in situ* in a diagnostic context. Most significantly, it is in an Assyrian level, in a utility environment. As noted in the contexts of F96-16 above, this object was found less than 5m (and a single room) away from the other 'stone spirit,' whose context appears to be a workshop. Moreover, the adjacent room was a pottery workshop (detail of area in fig. 98). The figurine was sitting atop an arranged pile of large stones, including at least one very worked grindstone, and many river-worn pebbles (figs. 99 and 100).<sup>13</sup> There was a good

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<sup>13</sup> The excavator's notes were particularly poor for this object, not mentioning the figurine in the day notes, and not including contextual information on the form of the 'stone spirit.' The paper's contextual information for this figurine can be attributed to the precise and helpful memory of the

deal of pottery uncovered in the area, as well as worn-down horns and jar stoppers—all suggesting some sort of workshop function for the area, especially considering the proximity of the potter’s workshop. The photography of the context does not include the ‘stone spirit,’ as the grindstones were documented and removed first, and the figurine was found later when clearing away the dirt adjacent to them, in what the excavator had thought was a wall.

The room is situated under a staircase that was built during the renovations in the transition to the level 5 site (compare with square N11 in figs. 5-6). During some later phase, the door to the room was sealed, apparently a common practice on the site during the abandonment phases of levels 4-3 (Akkermans, personal correspondence, 2011). Perhaps the staircase had collapsed partially and the room was sealed for safety, or it had simply gone out of use. Whatever the case, the situation left the figurine *in situ*, with a clear context displaying that it was used in a workshop during the Assyrian occupation of the fortress. Specifically, it is situated above the room’s youngest floor level, under the level 5 staircase, suggesting it is from level 5B. As with the nearby F96-16, all contextual cues suggest a purely utility and non-ritualized context for these ‘stone spirits,’ raising questions of why they are anthropomorphized. This paper suggests that the functionality and the location in a utility area are secondary contexts for the figurine, a theme to be addressed in the analysis.

#### F04-24

Square: 09. Locus 1, Lot 6. Object number: 5. Elevation: 325,13. Excavation date: 16/9/2004.

Figures: 8-10.

Dimensions (cm): 16.1 (h), 6.5 (w at torso), 7.3 (w at shoulders), 4.6 (w at neck) 5.5 (w of head).

Material: Basalt.

Description: F04-24 is the most intricately ornate of the ‘stone spirits’ from Tell Sabi Abyad. The figurine is made of fine basalt, with a rounded egg-shaped head, featuring a somewhat pointed back and a carved-out face. The nose is the dominant facial feature, curving upward on both sides to form brow ridges. Depressions indicate a mouth and eyes. The torso is mostly cylindrical, with curved shoulders, turning down to indicate arms, folded across the center of the torso. The waist is indicated on the reverse, at the same height as the arms. Below the waist there is a slight bump, indicating the buttocks or the knot of a dress. Nothing is carved in acute delineation; instead the figurine shows

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site director, Peter Akkermans, who was able to describe the context as well as provide photography.

a grace not seen in the other ‘stone spirits,’ despite the abundant similar features. It is comparable to examples from Tell al Rimah (face of fig. 24, head shape of fig. 28), Tell Billa (face of fig. 42), Tell Nebi Mend (44d), Munbaqa (body shapes and nose of fig. 61), Tell Barri (the facial features, fig. 80) and Tell Rifa’at (facial features, fig. 86). The visible grace of the figurine suggests that the craftsman was a skilled artisan, though this does not necessarily imply that the object was created for a separate purpose or ritual than the others.

Context: This figurine is out of context. Square O9 was only built upon by the Assyrians during the level 6 settlement; in the ensuing renovation phase, the fortress was improved upon, and many of the external structures fell out of use. Only the southern half of the trench was excavated in order to establish architectural connections with nearby squares.<sup>14</sup> The excavation revealed no architecture from level 5 onward. F04-24 was found below topsoil levels, but above any architectural strata. The only objects found nearby were decontextualized mudbricks, and the excavation continued over several days, down roughly 30 more cm before reaching architecture. While the object’s location gives no details about spatial relationships between architecture and artifacts, or chronological data, its near-surface location is consistent with many of the ‘stone spirits’ cataloged in chapter 2. The hypothetical model presented in the previous chapter suggested that the ‘stone spirits’ might have retained their initial significance in Middle Assyrian sites if possessed by the non-Assyrian inhabitants of the site. If the figurine was owned by a non-Assyrian resident of Tell Sabi Abyad, this would explain its location outside the architectural area, as these foreigners would not have lived in the fortress proper. This hypothesis has ramifications for the analysis of the reworkings of other figurines.

### 3.2. Analysis

The data set of ‘stone spirits’ from Tell Sabi Abyad follows the broader typology in its diversity of aesthetics and contexts. This thesis maintains that the six figurines, for all of their differences, share in the general characteristics outlined by Carter’s paper and this thesis’ second chapter, in that they are rough, mostly cannot stand alone, and have few delineated features-- and of those features, the nose is dominant. The quality of the

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<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, there was a documentation error in the recording of the figurine’s exact location. The excavator mapped it in the northwest corner of the half-trench, but wrote that it was found in the southeastern corner. This thesis assumes that it was found in the northwest, given other notes about its location near the unexcavated half, and that the excavator made an error; however, the exact location cannot be established with certainty. Neither section would be diagnostically contextual, both without architectural orientation, though the northwest location would place the figurine nearer to the scattered mudbricks of similar elevation. As a result, the mapped points on figs. 91 and 92 should be viewed as the most likely find point, rather than hard fact.

craftsmanship and the choice of basalt versus limestone may have been relevant considerations in the initial carving, yet there is no visible trend relating these elements to the objects' excavated contexts. As no 'stone spirits' reveal the mark of a single sculptor, and none have attributes indicating professionalism, a likely interpretation for the diversity of aesthetics would be different crafters making them, with material selected by individual preference or convenience, rather than intentionality. One can hypothesize that the more expertly carved figurines would have attracted greater interest simply by aesthetic merit, leading figurines such as F04-24 to have been taken from its initial context during destruction phases and F96-16 to be moved to a workshop setting; whereas the crudeness of S02-357 gave the inhabitants less initiative to preserve it. Such unsubstantiated hypotheses based on image appearances are interesting considerations when examining the material culture, yet are ultimately unfruitful means of gaining insight into the figurines; as such, this thesis must not approach Tell Sabi Abyad's 'stone spirits' with Carter's aesthetic-typological methodologies.

A contextual evaluation is needed. Akkermans and Wiggermann (*in press*, 15) write that the figurines have been uncovered exclusively in the Assyrian levels 6-4, but the data above show that this is not the case. Were they to come from these layers, this thesis would examine them as an Assyrian material culture group, but given that two were found in level 7 contexts, and that the previous chapter established their mostly pre-Middle Assyrian and generally more Western find locations, the figurines cannot be called an Assyrian type. While calling them pre-Assyrian, it should be noted that there is no evidence connecting the 'spirits' to the major Neolithic habitation of the site. The existence of two figurines in firm level 7 contexts does not explain the four other finds, and this analysis addresses the relation of the figurines to one another and the broader site. Nor does placement into chronological categorizations complete contextualization; this analysis invokes physical and contextual relationships to understand the distribution.

In contrast to Carter's conclusions, there is nothing in the Tell Sabi Abyad data set to indicate a ritualistic context for the figurines. The site as a whole has a conspicuously absent religious center, perhaps due to its brief occupation, cosmopolitan population, or the limited percentage of Assyrian populace on a border *dunnu*. This could imply the downscaling and domesticization of ritual, yet once again, the 'stone spirits' do not show a trend of appearing in particular domestic contexts. If, as will be argued below, most of the 'stone spirits' are from secondary contexts, one may question whether they may have had particular cult orientation, either in private homes or in a more public sphere, in their initial, and presumably pre-Assyrian, settings, or if they always reflected a more mundane function.

The examination of contextual importance is not limited to a search for settings suggesting either religiosity (definition following Bottero 2001) or profanity; centrality, intentionality, and plausible functionality are critical cues for evaluation. F92-7's location inside the Mitanni level tower is the only figurine in a structure of architectural centrality. The Assyrian tower was used as a storage facility, treasury, and probably a jail (Kolinski 2001, 63), and the material remains from level 6 of room 6 consist of mostly mundane utility items.

The Mitanni level tower's relation to the rest of the site is less established, as it appears to be the only major architecture of the Mitannian settlement, so its sheer prominence gives this figurine the closest association to a 'special' context. The designation of at least part of room 6 as a latrine (*ibid*, 61) casts some doubt about the importance of the 'stone spirit's' context, though in the Mitannian abandonment of the site, objects from within the tower would have become disorganized and decontextualized, and structural damage may have led to ceiling collapse, giving the 'stone spirit' a tower context from an unknown tower room on the second story. The 'spirit's' initial context is presumably from inside the tower, as outsiders would not have contributed to the tower's internal debris, making the central find location still 'special.' By considering the figurines in the broader 'stone spirit' typology, special contexts are abundant (while varied) in shrine, burial, or other settings. While the tower's Mitanni-period function is not definitively established, its architectural prominence and complexity associate F92-7 with the more important elements of the site.

The context of S02-357, the other level 7 figurine, does not indicate any functionality. It is on the edge of the *dunnu*, in an area built upon in the first Assyrian construction level. The reason for the object's abandonment is unknown, and the Assyrians constructing above it may have ignored it, or simply dismissed it because of its crudeness. Its location adds to our general understanding by its clearly pre-Assyrian orientation, but little other evidence is given. It may have been decontextualized in the Assyrian leveling and rebuilding of the settlement, removing it from a more relevant context, though there is no conclusive evidence on any initial location.

S03-401, from level 5 but located next to the level 6 gateway across the moat, would have also been decontextualized by the moat construction activity. While Carter (1970, 40) notes the locations in gate contexts, presumably following the finds from Diyarbekir (Woolley 1955), it is in association with broader points made about domestic and temple doorways, in order to make a connection to protective entrance spirits. S03-401 was found outside the former Assyrian gates, on the far side away from the mound. The level 5 context dismisses notions about its being associated with the gate, which was no longer used once the moat was filled in. Nothing about the context suggests

intentionality of placement, but instead indicates a dislocation from the initial context during the construction. Most likely, the ‘stone spirit’ was part of the refuse that the Assyrians filled the former ditch with. This implies both a missing primary context and a complete Assyrian disregard for the aesthetic, and certainly for any ritual, associations with the figurine. That the Assyrians were ready to dismiss its importance can be seen to imply its non-Assyrian nature, either as a pre-Assyrian figurine from the settlement, or one belonging to a non-Assyrian on the site that lost its value, either in the eyes of its owner or when entering Assyrian hands.

The two most interesting contexts when considering the Assyrian relationship with the figurines come from the two figurines found in Assyrian utility/workshop settings, F96-16 and S03-810. Both were found in level 5, in the eastern part of the *dunnu*, nearby each other and the pottery workshop (fig. 98). The workmanship on both suggests a primary function outside of the aesthetics. Akkermans and Wiggermann (*in press*, 15) call them “basalt grinders in the form of stylized human figures,” though this description should only be applied to S03-810, as there is no evidence suggesting a grinding usage for the other ‘stone spirits.’ S03-810 was clearly used as a pestle as evidenced from the grinding traces at its bottom, and its location atop other grinding tools. Ritualization of daily activity is an appealing explanation, yet the existence of F96-16 and the general trends of the ‘stone spirits’ contexts yields an alternate explanation. F96-16 has smoothed and polished grooves along its side and back, yet the anthropomorphic parts remain unpolished. The prioritization is of the utility over the aesthetic, as the grooves are quite similar to those found on many other tools (figs. 94-97). While the function of such grooves is uncertain, they are certainly utility items, and no others indicate ritualization. As such, the most likely explanation is that the Assyrian workers found the ‘stone spirit’, and, not knowing its initial function, simply changed its usage from an idol to a tool. If the ‘spirit’ held no spiritual value for the worker, it is a good material and a handheld size to use as a tool. With the ritual aspects abandoned, the workers could have made any other changes to the figurine, including straightening the base to allow it to stand. A disregard for initial importance and a utility based appropriation for the figurine could explain its contexts, the indications of preference for the grooves over the aesthetics, as well as for the deviation from the general ‘stone spirit’ type, with its straight base allowing it to stand.

The same logic can be applied to S03-810. The utility of its role as a grinder is the most apparent functionality, over any ritualistic indications, made apparent by its context. Once again, the deviation from the general ‘stone spirit’ form can be viewed as a means of easing craftsmanship. The form of the object is certainly that of a pestle, with the area below the head bearing no relation to the general ‘stone spirit’ form. There



would be reason for a worker wanting a functional or easy-to-hold pestle to wear down the sides for ease of use. The pillar ‘stone spirit’ form is close to pestle-shaped, and as such, the work required for a full transformation into a pestle would not be labor-intensive. The head may not have been problematic for the functionality, or perhaps the worker liked the anthropomorphic rendering—perfection in shape is not seen in many grinding stones anyway.

This reuse shows a disregard for the initial purposes of the figurines. If these figurines were made by the Middle Assyrians, they would presumably hold too much value to be used as simple tools. As a result, the most likely interpretation is that they are non-Assyrian objects, whose value was disregarded, but whose useful form was noted. Whether this is a purely utilitarian reuse or a hostile disfigurement of a non-Assyrian tradition cannot be ascertained. This logic can be extended to the decontextualized figurines as well: perhaps the Assyrians encountered them, declared them outside of the Assyrian tradition, and intentionally decontextualized them for use in architecture. This line of thought is speculation, but it is important to consider why intentional distancing from previous (spiritual) material culture would have happened. This is not a consistent Assyrian theme, as the Assyrians on the *dunnu* utilized prehistoric pottery, and gave Neolithic figurines a significant burial context, as discussed below.

F04-24 was uncovered outside of Assyrian building levels, and was found in the greatest state of preservation. It was left in its context after the level 5 building renovations, when many of the structures were moved inside the fortress, away from the *dunnu*’s edges and F04-24’s location. As the primary orientation of a *dunnu* was agricultural (Wiggermann 2000), the administrative and non-agrarian activities appear to become more centralized in this rebuilding, which would have led to more non-administrative (and therefore, likely, more ethnic non-Assyrians) people working in the area formerly by the moat. As a result, there is a likelihood of this figurine existing at the Middle Assyrian Tell Sabi Abyad with a non-Assyrian owner. This would explain its state of preservation and lack of reworking. Being outside the Assyrian center and architecture in its find period suggests that it existed outside a space of Assyrian reworkmanship, and could retain its original aesthetics, and perhaps even its function.

Once again, this thesis notes the necessity of an interpretively speculative approach to understanding the contexts and states of preservation of the figurines; while the theories are based in the data, they are intentionally left open for discussion and critique. The indications given by the figurines are of a non-Assyrian character; the general typology is more related to the pre-Middle Assyrian Hurrian local populations than to the Assyrians themselves, the interaction with Assyrian culture seems to be a

dismissal of initial importance in favor of a functionalist reworking, or a discarding into architectural space, and the best preserved figurine is one found outside of the main Assyrian working contexts. Beyond Assyrian devaluation of the figurines, one can view the two decontextualized level 7 figurines as exhibiting similar discarding (if the latrine context of F92-7 is viewed as intentionally left in debris, rather than accidental through ceiling collapse), suggesting that even the pre-Assyrian people discarded the figurines. In this case, the figurines would most likely have filled some sort of function, perhaps for a particular ritual, only to become worthless chunks of stone upon completion of the function.

These findings raise some further questions for consideration, some of which will be addressed again in the discussion chapter. What is implied by the non- or pre-Assyrian objects? Are the objects necessarily tied to the inhabitants of the level 7 fortress, the only other major non-Neolithic settlement? Would a more extensive excavation of the level 7 settlement yield more ‘stone spirits?’ If the non-Assyrian nature instead reflects contemporary inhabitants or neighboring communities, what continuity existed between the inhabitants of the level 7 site and the nearby communities of Hanigalbat? Or do the ‘stone spirits,’ a typology spread from the Early Bronze Age, reflect an older material presence in the region than the level 7 fortress, passed down through time to be finally disregarded by the Assyrians, or even by the Mitannians who left stone spirits in debris layers? Did the LBA spread of major empires with more codified religious systems contribute to the discontinuation of the ‘stone spirits,’ which (as suggested by this thesis) spread through a more informal folk tradition?

The disregard of pre-existing material culture is a subject not often addressed in archaeological studies. The intentional adoption of earlier cultures has recently become a well-published subject as the field of the archaeology of memory has expanded, yet the Assyrian (and perhaps also the Mitannian) population at Tell Sabi Abyad seems to have done just the opposite with the ‘stone spirits.’ Still, the population was not altogether immune to the influence of the past at the site: the highlighted pottery in fig. 101 shows Halaf Ware pottery reused by the Assyrians, along with other Halaf Ware from Middle Assyrian contexts, F01-5 (fig. 102) is a Neolithic amulet figurine found in an Assyrian grave (fig. 103), and figs. 104-105 show an Early Dynastic seal and an Egyptian scarab amulet/seal found in Assyrian levels. These objects show the diversity of Assyrian interaction with older and foreign objects on the site—the Halaf Ware was found to be a functional bowl,<sup>15</sup> the amulet figurine was given enough importance to become a grave

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<sup>15</sup> This complete Balikh IIIC vessel was found in a Middle Assyrian domestic context, unlike the other Halaf pottery from fig. 101, which was found in a good state of preservation in Bronze Age mudbricks. It seems as though the Assyrians built over a Halaf settlement on the eastern part of

good, and the seals were in Assyrian contexts without indications of functionalism, suggesting Assyrian curiosity toward the items. The appreciation of earlier material culture seen in the Assyrian settlement, suggests that there is intentionality in the discarding of the ‘stone spirits;’ it is unknown whether they stand in contrast to Assyrian ritual, represent a cultural orientation that the Assyrians find hostile or competitive, or had finished serving their ceremonial purpose, and ought to have been discarded.

The archaeology of disregard is a theme visible in the ‘stone spirits,’ though the evidence is only made available through a study of the greater typology to show the non-Assyrian character, and through visible reworkings by the Assyrians. Are there many other objects found in Assyrian strata, of lesser-known typologies, that were made before, or outside of, the Assyrian tradition? As tells were formed in the broader Near East, later people would rebuild upon them, and questions of the interaction of people with earlier material culture rise in the evaluation of the ‘stone spirits,’ a theme to be revisited in chapter 5.

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the tell, reusing the area for brick production. The complete vessel was presumably kept for curiosity or functionality, as a quality and in tact jar (Niewenhuyse 1997, 233).

#### 4. The Other Representational Small Finds

While the ‘stone spirits’ from Tell Sabi Abyad shed light on an understudied typology in Near Eastern archaeology, the larger collection of mostly clay representational figurines is more difficult to classify in the broader Near Eastern artistic program. Variances in hand-modeled depictions can be seen to convey differing functionality, regional variety, individual aesthetic tastes, or simply accidental or methodological variation in creation. Previous studies take a range of approaches, from creating cultural/typological associations to using context to promote or diminish the finds’ importance to focusing on the artistic merit of the works. The Cambridge Archaeology Journal’s viewpoint discussion “Can We Interpret Figurines?” (Hamilton 1996) touches on themes of ideal representation, crafting personal identities, the politics of figurine creation and interpretation, and the multiplicity of potentially correct interpretations.

Many figurine studies are conducted with agendas, and even the best scholarship prioritizes certain approaches while neglecting others. Some deemphasize the importance of figurines with summary judgments, citing crudeness as a reason to disregard their study, in deference to more resplendent or monumental finds (e.g., Goff 1963). Moorey (2001, 7-10) discusses the inherent problems with the common dismissal of figurines as toys, unworthy of critique. Many publications evade analysis of usage, content with cataloguing and searching for iconographical similarities from the same period (e.g., Rossmeisl and Venema 1988). Harold Liebowitz’s analysis of the figurines from Selenkahiye (1988, 27-32) insists that all anthropomorphic figurines are deities or worshippers, and all animal representations are related to sacrifice and other ritual, without find contexts to support the claim. Evelyn Klengel-Brandt’s (1978) study of figurines from Assur creates a neat chronology for figurines by association with depictions in Assyrian relief work, but downplays the detailed observation given to the anthropomorphic figurines when discussing the zoomorphic. Rick Hauser’s (2007) laudable study of the zoomorphic figurines from Tell Mozan uses detailed measurements and careful observations to evaluate figurines by genus, and understands typologies as an idealized standard, from which artisans had room for deviation. This study combines and utilizes the methodologies established by these and other papers, while keeping its intra-site focus and excavation data as the main basis for analysis. The specific challenges of typological inter-site comparison are discussed below; however, this study relies heavily on the precedent set by earlier scholarship.

#### 4.1. The Collection

This chapter catalogs and analyzes 86 clay wheel models and figurine fragments,<sup>16</sup> two stone figurines/amulets, and two metal zoomorphic figurines. None of the clay figurines are complete; some are merely a fragment of a leg or horn, while others show a full torso or head. They are in various states of preservation, though from the sheer quantity of broken goods, there is intentionality visible in the breakage, not caused by destruction layers or the passage of time. The representational collection is dominated by zoomorphic figurine fragments, consisting almost entirely of animals domesticated for their meat, though there are three anthropomorphic heads, some torsos, and a mold for creating a two-person figurine. In addition to the zoo- and anthropomorphic figurines, there are 33 wheel models, a typology well known from many other sites (Hammam et-Turkman, Selenkahiye, Assur, Tell Brak, etc.). The wheel models are in various states of preservation, but none are accompanied by a corresponding wagon or chariot model; these are conspicuously absent at Tell Sabi Abyad. While the wheel models are not the central focus of this presentation, their prevalence at the site necessitates their consideration, and similar trends appear in the wheel and figurine distributions. There are additionally two other representational models, one likely depicting a trough, and another fragment that may have been part of a house model.

Three Neolithic items found in Assyrian contexts are presented in the catalog as well. Two mushroom-shaped drilled amulets mentioned in the previous chapter are included; the burial context of one reveals their significance to the Assyrian people. A painted clay anthropomorphic female torso is included to contrast the Neolithic and LBA styles, as well as to continue the previous chapter's discussion on the continued usage of invasive objects.

Finally, two metal zoomorphic figurines are included. They both appear to be carnivorous animals, exhibiting different posture/body motion from any of the clay findings, in contrast to the clay livestock representations. Graphical representation on pottery is not analyzed, as it has been published (Duistermaat 2008), and the main aim of the chapter is the presentation of undocumented material.

#### 4.2. Challenges

The presentation and analysis of the clay representations from Tell Sabi Abyad is fraught with complication. The catalog presented below cannot be exhaustive for

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<sup>16</sup> From this point forward, the term 'figurines' will refer to the zoo- and anthropomorphic set, and 'models' will refer to the wheels, etc.

several reasons. The collection started with an examination of all objects labeled ‘LBA’ and ‘figurines’ in the Sabi Abyad field database, though many results did not fit the two categories. On the other hand, many LBA figurines were not labeled as such, and many came from loci whose designation as LBA has not been established. In an excavation spanning over two decades and producing tens of thousands of artifacts, it is beyond the scope of this study to examine every object form to determine if it is a figurine, and to conduct the necessary stratigraphical evaluations to confirm an LBA attribution. However, many objects not recognized by the initial collection have been investigated, added, and are included below.

Much of the data presented below relies on the discretion of the individual excavator. While certain areas undoubtedly have a larger collection of figurines than others (for instance, the dump in fortress room 1), very often an area will be under- or overrepresented by the excavators’ perception—some label every misshapen bit of clay as a figurine, whereas others only include figurines with articulated diagnostic features. Given that the author of this paper was not able to travel to Syria to evaluate the objects himself, and that most were not photographed or drawn by the professional draftsman, much interpretation rests on the excavators’ judgments and the cruder drawings of the object forms. The drawings were evaluated on their own merit and by comparison to published figurines. The object forms ranged in detail from analysis of the material to basic descriptions and measurements; the varied quantity of detail below reflects the variation in field note quality. Because the material descriptions of the clay types are noted infrequently, it was impossible to determine the locality of the material against Kim Duistermaat’s 2008 pottery study.

A major challenge of interpretation comes from comparative information. Beyond the variety and the agendas of the approaches of previous studies, typological associations are nearly impossible to make based on the available drawings, as many small fragments did not merit the attention of the site’s draftsman, and simple field drawings form the basis for identification. Moreover, many excavations hardly publish their figurines; Hauser (2007, 43) visited a second millennium site where a large collection of horse heads were discarded and left unrecorded. Most importantly, the clay objects are mostly crude, and many fragments do not include diagnostic traits. If the torso of a cow figurine looks similar to another found in the Near East, could a link be made between the two? Or do similar renditions exist because two artisans of different traditions are crafting the same species? If artisans from different communities attempted to make figurines with the same functionality and typology, would they appear similar, or would the individuality of clay shaping styles make them appear distinct, especially in the cruder pieces? At the same time, it would be mistaken to study a

Middle Assyrian site and not examine Assur for Assyrian typologies, and the broader Near Eastern figurine tradition. In this paper, comparisons are used sparingly, prioritizing patterns in production over the similarities of individual pieces.

#### 4.3. The Catalog

In light of the above-mentioned challenges, the catalog presented below cannot be completely exhaustive. However, it does detail a very high percentage of the LBA figurines, and several patterns become apparent in its presentation. When possible, it invokes descriptions or comparisons from published material. Each object was given careful contextual scrutiny, establishing exact locations, stratigraphy, and general distribution. As a result, it is a mostly complete compendium that highlights any trends in the styles or distribution of the figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad.

This section includes the critical features of the finds, both those most pertinent to the analysis in this thesis (context, dimensions, description) and those most important for future scholars who want to draw their own conclusions from the data (excavation date, elevation, locus, lot). This thesis is a full presentation and interpretation of the data set from Tell Sabi Abyad, but it also aspires to spur on future studies and debates, and as such, it presents the data in a transparent fashion, so that others can use it as a starting point for future examinations. In addition, the catalog is included in the main text, rather than a supplementary appendix, because it not only constitutes the main body of research and presentation for the present chapter, but also includes comparisons and early-stage analyses.

F02-3

F9, Locus 37, Lot 60, Object Number 85, Elevation: 325,22, Excavation date: 27.08.2002.

Figure: 107

Level: 6-5 transition

Length: 2.1 cm, Diameter: 0.75 cm.

Description: This conical clay object appears to be the horn from an animal figurine. The excavator did not distinguish between baked and unbaked clay, though he/she noted the smoothness of the surface. The edges are rounded, and it tapers on one end.

Context: This fragment was found in F9, on the western edge of the *dunnu*, inside the Assyrian ditch. This object was found in the western edge of the half-trench excavated. While located near the edge of the ditch at similar elevation to Neolithic objects, the nearby objects reveal the layer to be Assyrian fill, and considering the depth in the fill,

the object comes from the level 6 to 5 transition, once the ditch was only partially filled in.

O02-147

G7, Locus 20, Lot 82, Object Number 83, Elevation: 325,02, Excavation date: 29.09.2002.

Figure: 108

Level: 6-5 transition.

Height: 4.0 cm at center, 1.0 cm at rim, and 1.7 cm near axle hole. Diameter: 0.9 cm hole, total diameter would be 11 cm if not fractured.

Description: This fragment of a wheel model is tempered with organic materials and lime. It has a wide rim protruding from a raised center cylinder that contains the axle hole. The rim is fractured in multiple places. The typology can be characterized as “tapering towards the rim with a protruding axle-socket. These models have a wide distribution; similar ones, ranging in date from the third till the late second millennium B.C., were found at e.g. Nuzi in Iraq, Korucutepe in central Turkey and at Hawa, Sweyhat and Tell Hammam et-Turkman in Syria” (Akkermans *et al.* 1993, 31). As most of the wheel models from the site share their basic characteristics, further descriptions of the wheels will be abbreviated, focusing on the condition, material, and any variances from the broader type.

Context: Square G7 is in the northwestern part of the site, and includes the level 6 entrance through the moat. O02-147 was uncovered in a hard gray layer in the southern center of the square, inside the Assyrian moat. Given the surrounding features, it was uncovered between square strata 3 and 4, above prehistoric but below ashy fill layers, implying the earliest phase of ditch fill.

F01-1

G9, Locus 2, Lot 2, Object Number 4, Elevation: 326,98, Excavation date: 12.09.2001.

Figure: 109

Level: Unknown, topsoil

Length: 2.8 cm, Width: 1.2 cm, Diameter: 2.0 cm.

Description: This fragment depicts the front half of the torso/neck of a zoomorphic figurine, with broken sections where the head and forelegs would have protruded. It may depict a sheep, though the fragmentary state makes direct identification impossible.

Context: G9 is on the western part of the *dunnu*, on the inside of the moat. The object was found in topsoil two days' excavation above architectural levels in the southeastern part of the trench, inside the *dunnu*. Despite the distance above architectural strata, it



was found along with a sizable quantity of other Bronze Age objects, including pottery and bronze objects.

O01-75

G9, Locus 12, Lot 17, Object Number 54, Elevation: 326.57, Excavation date: 17.9.2001.

Figure: 110

Level: 4

Length: 6.8 cm, Width: 3.2 cm.

Description: This wheel model fragment has a slightly off-center rim, which is fractured in several sections. It is made of beige baked clay with lime and vegetal tempering.

Context: O01-75 was found in the southern part of the trench, east of the former moat. It was found in a level that contained no new architecture but did show evidence of burning, mudbrick remains, and a good deal of displaced LBA objects, suggesting contemporary inhabitation. The stratum comes from after the level 5 construction activities, but below abandonment or topsoil levels.

F02-15

G9, Locus 60, Lot 133, Object Number 67, Elevation: 325,75, Excavation date: 20.08.2002.

Figure: 111

Level: 6 (early)

Length 2.8 cm, Width 2.2 cm, Height 1.9 cm.

Description: F02-15 is a small fragment without diagnostic information, made of a hard dark clay (unknown if baked) with traces of dark minerals. One side is fractured.

Context: In the Assyrian ditch at the bottom in a channel cut into prehistoric layers.

Though the locus has mixed prehistoric and LBA objects, the provenance of the object suggests an Assyrian early level 6, before the shallow channel was filled.

F02-2

G9, Locus 63, Lot 139, Object Number 36, Elevation: 324,73, Excavation date: 22.08.2002.

Figure: 112

Level: 6 (early)

Height: 3.2 cm, Diameter: 2.4 cm (average).

Description: This sundried clay fragment's shape does not reveal its function, and is possibly a figurine fragment. It has slight organic inclusions and fingernail impressions.

Context: F02-2 was found in the fill of the Assyrian ditch, near the bottom/prehistoric layers, during a deep section cut. The object has a clear level 6 connection, in the early part of the level, as there was a large amount of fill above the object before reaching the level 5 stratum.

#### B02-55

H6, Locus 26, Lot 37, Object Number 34, Elevation: 325,74. Excavation date: 23.09.2002.

Figure: 113

Level: uncertain, primary context Neolithic

Length: 2.9 cm, Width: 1.4 cm, Height: 0.3 cm, Diameter of holes: 0.15cm.

Description: This Neolithic obsidian object has two holes drilled into it. The flat side is fractured, and one face of the object has deep scratches. It resembles the upper half of objects F92-13, F93-14 and F01-5 (fig 102), which are mushroom-shaped objects, and the fractured part of this object suggests a similar initial shape. F93-14 and F92-13 were uncovered in Neolithic contexts, and F01-5 was uncovered in a secondary context in an Assyrian grave, suggesting that B02-55 is a Neolithic artifact in an Assyrian context.

While the function is unknown, it may have served as an amulet (see description of F01-5 below).

Context: B02-55 was found in the northwestern part of the *dunnu*. Due to the lack of major architectural levels in the square, the object cannot be placed into an Assyrian building level, though the nearby objects include Assyrian pottery sherds, despite the object's Neolithic typology. Given that a similar object was found in an Assyrian grave, it would suggest that the Assyrians found some value in this Neolithic type, and perhaps this object's decontextualization stems from its fractured side—that it was discarded upon breaking.

#### O97-351

H8, Locus 4, Lot 25, Object Number 24, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 30.09.1997.

Figure: 114

Level: 4

Length: 2.7 cm, Width: 2.5 cm, Height: 2.7 cm, Diameter: 1.5 cm.

Description: A fragment of unbaked clay with a flat base, tapering upwards—uncertain as to whether this is a figurine fragment or part of an unbaked vessel.

Context: This object was found in the northwestern part of the fortified area, and can be placed in a level 4(B) context by the surrounding architecture, which was altered during

each of the Assyrian building levels. During the levels 4-3 decline, these areas were some of the more repaved and reused sections of the fortress (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 10).

O97-353

H8, Locus 4, Lot 33, Object Number 30, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 2.10.1997.

Figure: 115

Level: 4

Length: 5.2 cm, Width: 4.6 cm, Height: 4.2 cm, Diameter: 1.1 cm.

Description: O97-353 is a wheel model. The rim is broken on all sides, and sits in the center of the widened axle socket.

Context: This wheel model was found in the same room but below O97-351, just above floor E. Its relation to the temporary wall context D gives a precise picture of its chronology at the start of level 4, and D separates it from a midden deposit in the room during this level.

O96-152

H9, Locus 12, Lot 29, Object Number 13, Elevation: 327.50, Excavation date: 21.9.1996.

Figure: 116

Level: 4-3 transition

Height: 1.7 cm, Diameter: 2.8 cm (wheel), 3.5 mm (hole).

Description: This well-preserved wheel model is significantly smaller than most in the collection. It has minor fractures on one edge of the rim.

Context: This wheel was uncovered in a large room above the westernmost part of the fortified area, between strata 2-3, equivalent to the level 4-3 transition and the time that the area went out of use. While there are several LBA objects in the area, there is no concentrated dump content, and lot 29 appears to be the earliest part of a slow accumulation of fill over time.

F96-25

H11, Locus 35, Lot 61, Object Number 54, Elevation: 326.77, Excavation date: 02.10.1996.

Figure: 117

Level: 5

Length: 4.4 cm, Width: 3.3 cm, Height: 1.8 cm.

Description: This fragment of unbaked brown clay is a part of a zoomorphic figurine. Two ears, part of the head, and the neck are preserved. The body is not preserved. By comparison to figurines from Assur (Klengel-Brandt 1978) the shape appears bovine.

Context: This object was found in the long room on the western side of the fortified area, inside one of the small alcoves created during the level 5 renovations. These alcoves were toilet and bath facilities, coated with watertight gypsum plaster (Akkermans 2006, 205). The area fell out of use in the later period, giving a clear chronological context, though nearby objects and finds are scarce.

F01-5

H12, Locus 113, Lot 315, Object Number 258, Elevation: 324.80, Excavation date: 24.10.2001.

Figure: 102-103

Level: 6-5 (uncertain), Assyrian burial. Primary context Neolithic.

Length: 2.5 cm, Width: 2.4 cm, Height 0.4 cm.

Description: Already mentioned in the previous chapter and in the description of B02-53, this mushroom-shaped object is a dark stone with two holes drilled through the top, and two more drilled partially below. The 'stem' of the figurine is fractured. Once again, it bears great similarity to F93-14, the Neolithic object, and this earlier object was clearly esteemed given its location in an Assyrian grave. It could have been worn as an amulet.

Context: This object was found in the grave of an Assyrian child, dug into prehistoric depths. The burial goods included two bowls and six bronze rings. The rings suggest an ornamental function for this find, and the location of the object near the head/neck of the deceased (fig. 103) suggests that this object served as an amulet or necklace.

O01-76

H13, Locus 21, Lot 69, Object Number 63, Elevation: 323,71, Excavation date: 19.9.01.

Figure: 118

Level: Uncertain

Length: 4.3 cm, Width: 4.1 cm, Height: 5.3 cm, Hole Diameter: 0.8 cm.

Description: This fragmented wheel model's rim is broken on all sides. O01-76 is mostly just a protruding axle area, tempered with lime and vegetal inclusions.

Context: H13 is just southwest of the fortified area, on the inside of the moat, and contains almost no LBA architecture outside of its northeast corner. O01-76 was uncovered in a LBA pit dug into prehistoric levels in the western part of the square. The only other objects in the pit are stone tools, and they give no indication as to the intention behind digging the pit, or the relation of the context to O01-76.

O01-173

I6, Locus 65, Lot 153, Object Number 75, Elevation: 324,78, Excavation date: 10.10.2001.

Figure: 119

Level: 5-4, uncertain

Length: 7.2 cm, Width: 6.2 cm, Height: 3.2 cm, Hole diameter: 0.8 cm.

Description: This wheel model contains the axle and a long and thin rim, broken in multiple side fractures. The material has rather large lime inclusions and multicolored spots on the fractures.

Context: O01-173 was uncovered in I6, in the northern part of the former moat. A wall was built through the gully with a drain pipe inserted, dividing it into two parts; the west was filled with refuse, then covered with a floor level, and the east (locus 65) was filled with ash. This area was not built on, and as the wheel shows no sign of fire damage, it was probably put into the area when debris was dumped onto the preexisting burn layer.

O02-45

I7, Locus 25, Lot 58, Object Number 57, Elevation: 326,44, Excavation date: 14.9.2002.

Figure: 120

Level: 4

Length: 4.1 cm, Diameter: 3.0-4.3 cm (based on part of rim). Hole Diameter: 1.0 cm.

Description: This wheel model is heavily damaged, with most of the rim broken, as well as a large portion of the axle socket. The surface is covered with small finger impressions.

Context: I7 includes the northwestern portion of the fortified area and the level 6 passage from the moat bridge to the fortress. O02-45 comes from the northeastern portion of the square, just above architectural strata. This area was built upon during levels 5 and 6, and its location just above the architecture gives a level 4 designation.

O98-379<sup>17</sup>

I8, Locus 64, Lot 248, Object Number 158, Elevation 326,03, Excavation date: 30.9.1998.

Figure: 121

Level: 4 (second half)

Length: 8.2 cm, Width: 6.5 cm, Height 1.7-3.6 cm.

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<sup>17</sup> This object was additionally recorded as O98-182.

Description: This wheel model is broken at the axle hole, and the fragment consists of roughly 80 degrees of the initial perimeter circumference. In its complete form, it would have been one of the larger LBA wheel models. The crack shows a partially oxidized black core, and the clay is tempered with calcite and vegetal inclusions.

Context: This object was found in the open space of the central courtyard of the level 6-5 *dunnu*, though in several stages of level 4 construction, the northern part of this courtyard was sectioned by a series of walls. O98-379 was found in the fill of pit AO, which contained a large quantity of pottery, and was surrounded by a larger concentration on the floor nearby. The building north of this find context was one of two new level 4 domestic structures, with a large, open yard, and “a small, one-roomed building with fireplaces and other installations... probably this structure served as a kitchen” (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 10). O98-379 comes from this kitchen.

F98-6

I8, Locus 73, Lot 257, Object Number 175, Elevation: 326.77, Excavation date: 3.10.1998.

Figure: 122.

Level: 4 (strata 7-8, early half of level 4)

Height: 4.9 cm, Diameter: 2.2 cm.

Description: This roughly cylindrical piece of red-brown clay is handmade with an irregular surface, containing a deep incision at the lower part, with a broken top. It is either the body or foot of a figurine.

Context: This fragment comes from the same room as O98-379, in a lower stratum. The room continued its functionality as a kitchen after paving over debris. This context is recorded as square strata 7-8, equivalent to the earlier half of level 4.

O98-309

I8, Locus 81, Lot 306, Object Number 223, Elevation not recorded, Excavation date: 14.10.1998.

Figure: 123.

Level: 6-5

Length: 5.3 cm, Width: 1.6 cm, Diameter: 8.1 cm.

Description: This wheel model is made of orange-yellow clay. The rim is entirely broken off on one end and has minor fractures on the other, while the protruding axle area is better preserved.

Context: O98-309 was found in the courtyard area on the floor context AZ, which consists of mostly charcoal and ash, as well as mudbricks with reed impressions that

suggest mats. The area featured a good deal of pottery, a cuneiform tablet, whetting stones, and other diverse goods. It is unclear whether this is a level 6 or 5 floor as it is the lowest excavated layer, and it is possible that the same floor was reused between levels.

F96-17

I9, Locus 48, Lot 107, Object Number 56, Elevation: 327.14, Excavation date: 16.9.1996.

Figure: 124.

Level: 5

Height: 3.9 cm, Length: 4.3 cm, Width: 0.5 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay object is tempered with organic material. The clay is pressed flat and irregularly rounded. A part sticking out of the top could indicate a head, and two protrusions near the middle could be interpreted to indicate hands. If so, this would be an anthropomorphic representation unlike any others from Sabi Abyad; perhaps it was to be attached to pottery.

Context: Square I9 includes the palace courtyard, the room or area between the central courtyard and inner palace rooms. It was found above floor level AD, south of wall AA, leading to an association with the square's stratum 8, corresponding to building level 5. It was found above the level of burned grain, stored in bulk for an "incidental or temporary" purpose (Akkermans 2006, 206).

F96-18

I9, Locus 49, Lot 92 Object Number 61 Elevation: unrecorded. Excavation date: 11.09.1996.

Figure: 125

Level: 4

Height: 6.7 cm, Width: 4.3 cm, Length: 6.7 cm.

Description: This pinkish baked clay fragment was tempered with organic materials and lime. It is likely the lower part of the leg of a cow, with half of the hoof broken off.

Above the hoof are two round appliqué bubbles representing the residual hoof. Given that it is a leg fragment, the complete figurine would be larger than most found at Tell Sabi Abyad.

Context: This object was found north of the start of the AA/AC wall, outside of the palace courtyard wall, in the fortress' inner courtyard. The excavation notes confuse the AA and AC walls, one is an earlier wall on the same axis, making this object one full stratum above the wall context, giving it a stratum 7/level 4 context.

F96-15

I11, Locus 17, Lot 29, Object Number 7, Elevation 327,21, Excavation date: 19.08.1996.

Figure: 126.

Level: 4-3

Length: 2.9 cm, Width: 0.7 cm

Description: This dark gray burnt clay is twisted into a cylindrical/conical shape, and would probably have been an animal's horn or a leg. The coloration is presumably from a secondary burning.

Context: This object was found in the upper levels of the palace. The location is in the central hall of the palace, yet it was found in the uppermost rubbish levels of the palace, when the major walls just began to be visible on the surface. As such, a level 4-3 designation is most appropriate, as the room was occupied in several phases, but only these latest phases include such an accumulation of debris.

F07-43

J3-S, Locus 2, Lot 5, Object Number 5, Elevation: 325,60, Excavation date: 14.06.2007.

Figure: 127.

Level: Unknown

Length: 1.4 cm, Width: 0.7 cm, Height: 0.7 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay cylindrical fragment has a hard black surface. One side is fractured, and judging by its shape, it appears to be the leg of a zoomorphic figurine.

Context: The J3-S half-trench sits north of the given site maps, and was excavated in 2007. The object was found below topsoil in a stratum above architectural layers, off of the *dunnu*.

F07-39

J3-S Locus 2 Lot 5 Object Number 3 Elevation 325,70 Excavation date: 14.06.2007.

Figures: 106i, 128.

Level: unknown

Length: 4.5 cm, Width: 2.2 cm, Height: 1.5 cm.

Description: This baked clay zoomorphic figurine depicts a sheep, and features a smooth, hard surface. Sheep are often rendered with a characteristically fat tail taking up one third to a quarter of the rear of the figurine (Hauser 2007, 25), and the slender body of this figurine suggests that it was a sheep domesticated for milk and meat, rather than one kept for wool, which in Assur were often fatter with incisions showing the wool fluff (Klengel-Brandt 1978). The face and legs/feet are fractured off, though a neck and leg



stumps are visible.

Context: Same as F07-43—North of *dunnu*, in an unbuilt stratum.

O98-102

J7, Locus 55, Lot 106, Object Number 79, Elevation: not recorded, Excavation date: 17.9.1998.

Figure: 129.

Level: 4-late.

Length: 8.7 cm, Width: 3.6 cm, Height: 3.9 cm.

Description: This wheel model fragment has a full diameter fracture, through the axle hole, leaving less than one half preserved.

Context: The square J7 is just north of the fortress, containing the area just inside of the level 6 ditch, the main level 5 fortress entrance, and the renovated northern houses of level 4. This wheel model was found in the open area north of the fortification walls. It is in a contemporary stratum to the level 4 closure of the former fortress entrance; however, as this area was left as open space in the following period, it may be mixed with later material.

F99-2

J7, Locus 81, Lot 153, Object Number 5, Elevation: 326,44, Excavation date: 15.09.1999.

Figure: 130.

Level: 4C (find level/secondary context)

Length: 5.1 cm, Width: 2.90 cm, Height: 4.0 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay zoomorphic fragment depicts the back, stomach, two hind legs, and tail-like bump of a cow. The roughly 120° angle between the hind legs and stomach, and the approximately 90° degree angle between the legs is generally seen only on cattle figurines, best described at Urkesh (Hauser 2007, 23 and 89). The clay is broken in the center of the animal's body, and on one side, near the break, there are four ridges carved into the cow's side.

Context: This object comes from the fill of an oven (K), in what appears to be the 6<sup>th</sup> stratum or contemporary with the level four architecture, located north/outside of the main walls. The kiln was packed with other artifacts (pottery, jar stoppers, a bronze pin, a hammerstone). Given the deposit and the lack of relation to the objects to the kiln, it is clear that this is not a primary context.

F99-8

J7, Locus 81, Lot 153, Object Number 30, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 15.09.1999.

Figure: 131.

Level: 4C (find level/secondary context)

Length: 4.40 cm, Width: 3.10 cm, Height: 2.20 cm.

Description: This baked clay object depicts the torso of a human, with the legs and head broken off. The arms, depicted as bulges, are crossed and may have held something that has since broken off. Just above the waist there is a raised triangular surface, though it is unclear if this depicts female genitalia, broken-off male genitalia, or neither. The figure does not have visible breasts, and the wide shoulders and slim waist may imply a male figurine.

Context: Same as F99-2, in kiln K.

O99-135

J7, Locus 99, Lot 194, Object Number 56, Elevation: 326.0, Excavation date: 26.9.1999.

Figure: 132

Level: 6

Width: 2.0 cm, Diameter: 4.6-4.7 cm.

Description: This wheel model is mostly complete, with some minor fractured sections and cracks all along the surface. In this wheel, the hole tapers inwards, implying that it was pierced from only one side. This model is smaller than most at the site.

Context: O99-135 was found in the northern portion of the square, between walls W and X, nearby the location of a cuneiform tablet, in what is considered a domestic structure (Akkermans 2006, 204). The presence of architecture in the same stratum accounts for the level 6 attribution; during level 5, the area by the new entrance would have been cleared, and by level 4, the new northern construction did not stray north of the fortified area.

F02-5

J7, Locus 122, Lot 232, Object Number 23, Elevation: 326,17, Excavation date: 05.09.2002.

Figure: 133

Level: 6

Length: 2.2 cm, Width: 1.3 cm, Height: 0.9 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay figurine fragment has no definitively diagnostic features, and though the excavator describes it as anthropomorphic, it is unclear that this is the case. The fragment has a circular bottom, extending upwards first as a cylinder, then

widening at the top to some fractured areas.

Context: This figurine is from the northern part of the J7 trench. It was found near a bowl and some unworked clay, in a level 6 northern domestic structure built up against the inside of the moat. Similarly to O99-135, the stratigraphical relationship to the northern architecture accounts for the level 6 attribution.

F02-6

J7, Locus 125, Lot 234, Object Number 27, Elevation: 326,12, Excavation date: 07.09.2002.

Figure: 134.

Level: 6 (late)

Length: 3.2 cm, Width: 1.7 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay fragment of a zoomorphic figurine depicts an animal's leg or foot. The rough surface is tempered with visible organic material.

Context: The fragment was found just below a level 5 floor level repaving, in an area with ash and lime spots. It was discarded into the uppermost part of a level 6 fill, presumably shortly before repaving.

F02-7

J7, Locus 131, Lot 246, Object Number 37, Elevation: 326,01, Excavation date: 09.09.2002.

Figure: 135.

Level: 5-3

Width: 1.0 cm, Height: 1.6 cm.

Description: F02-7 is a small burned clay fragment with a smooth surface and several fractured areas. Despite a few depressions in the surface, the fragment is not diagnostic, and could have belonged to an anthropo- or zoomorphic figurine.

Context: This object was found above a level 6 building built against the ditch, beside an ash pit and alongside a mortar fragment. The surrounding area contains many pits of charcoal spots and stones, suggesting that this stratum comes from level 5 or later, when the building's initial use had expired, and it may have become an open-air cooking area.

O98-208

J8, Locus 72, Lot 192, Object Number 132, Elevation: 327,10, Excavation date: 10.10.1998.

Figure: 136.

Level: 4 (early)

Thickness: 2.2 cm, Diameter: 4.4 cm, Hole Diameter: 0.55 cm.

Description: This small wheel model is made of unbaked clay, and has a fracture on one side of the rim. There are finger indentations, and the construction is not symmetrical, with the axle hole pierced at an irregular angle.

Context: O98-208 was found in the northwest corner of J8, in an area divided into several rooms during level 4 renovations. It comes from bin AL in room 2, on the same spot as the later bin AT, both of which contain loose soil and bones. This bin is in stratum 6, which is the first phase of level 4.

F99-19

J8, Locus 103, Lot 248, Object Number 23, Elevation: 327,00, Excavation date: 03.10.1999.

Figure: 137.

Level: 4

Length: 2.20 cm, Diameter: 0.8 cm.

Description: This cylindrical object is made of partially baked clay, and tapers slightly from one end to the other. The wider fractures on both ends suggest that it is an animal's leg rather than a horn.

Context: This object was found south of the level 5 fortress entrance, in the shallow pit BE, containing dark ash and charcoal. The pit was located just outside of the thin wall AI from stratum 6B, equivalent to the level 4 renovations of the northern section of the fortified area, south of House 1.

O98-28

J9, Locus 18, Lot 37, Object Number 110, Elevation: not recorded, Excavation date: 27.08.1998.

Figure: 138.

Level: Post-LBA

Length: 9.4 cm, Width: 7.2 cm, Height: 4.1 cm.

Description: This fragment of a baked clay wheel model has one half of the axle socket preserved, and roughly one quarter of the rim preserved out to its full radius. It has some lime and vegetal inclusions, and the fracture is discolored red.

Context: J9 is located in the northern part of the palatial courtyard, though O98-28 comes from a stratum above any LBA architectural levels, contemporary to many surrounding pits. The soil is mixed and ashy, and its distance above the level 4 remains suggests a post-LBA context.

#### H-1

J10, Locus 4, Lot 7, Elevation: unknown. Excavation date: 20.08.1988.

Figures: 106f, 139.

Level: 4-3

Height: 7.2 cm, Width: 2.3 cm, Thickness: 1.5 cm.

Description: This baked clay object depicts a male head with a long pointed cap and a beard. The clay is an orange-pink color. The face includes pierced eye holes, an incised mouth, and a protruding nose. The beard and cap are both articulated by incised lines. There are several examples of Near Eastern figurines wearing pointed hats, but none bear stylistic similarities to H-1—from Assur there are examples from the 2<sup>nd</sup>-1st millennium BCE transition, (Klengel-Brandt 1978, objects 294, 366, and 371) as well as several later examples associated with Parthian levels (*ibid* object 509), all of which have appliqué eyes and no incision marks. Earlier pointed figurines exist, such as at Hammam et-Turkman (Rossmesl and Venema 1988, objects 39 and 40), with equally dissimilar characteristics. H-1 is shaped more like a clay nail than any other figurines found, and may represent a soldier, as pointed military helmets have been found in Assyria and on Neo-Assyrian relief work.

Context: This object was found in the tower, in what Spoor (1996) describes as fortress room 1, the northwesternmost room of the tower. Akkermans and Rossmesl (1990, 20) note that this room showed evidence of a violent fire, and was repaved and plastered. In the brown, ashy soil of locus 4, many sherds and pottery vessels were found, and as the excavator noted that H-1 was found in the sherd layers, this is an appropriate contextual identification for H-1. In the following days, the high density of sherds continued until the excavation was halted by the proximity of an Islamic burial. The surrounding objects in the room place H-1 in the same pottery dump context as those below from K10 lot 5, in a late LBA (4-3) level, after extensive site destruction.

#### W-14

J10, Locus and lot unknown, Object Number 8, Elevation unknown, Excavation date unknown.

Figure: 140.

Level:

Height: 2.5 cm, Diameter: 8.3 cm.

Description: This thin baked clay wheel model is complete. The axle socket protrudes minimally, and one side (the outer face) has a smoothed and finished surface.

Context: W-14 was found in 1992 in a box of 1988 material labeled J10. While the exact designations are unknown, the 1988 campaign only excavated the corner of J10 located in the tower structure. Therefore, this object is probably from a similar location to H-1, though there is no reason to associate their stratigraphy.

F96-3

J11, Locus 29, Lot 122, Object Number 21, Elevation unknown, Excavation date: 27.08.1996.

Figure: 141

Level: 5

Length: 3.1 cm, Width: at top 1.9 cm, at bottom 1.2 cm.

Description: This smooth figurine fragment is damaged on several sides, suggesting that it may have been the torso of an animal or human, with the arms, legs, and head broken off.

Context: F96-3 was found in a small corridor adjacent to the tower wall, on the exterior side. It was found above floor AN, giving it a stratum 2b context, equivalent to building level 5. It was found in a soft red brown fill with mudbrick debris, charcoal pieces, and burnt grain, which filled the area during the late level 5 fire that destroyed much of the area.

O99-217

J12, Locus 24, Lot 78, Object Number 84, Elevation: 326.04, Excavation date: 4.10.1999.

Figure: 142

Level: 5

Height (center): 5.4 cm, (rim's edge): 0.6 cm, Diameter: 9.5 cm, Diameter: (hole) 0.7 cm.

Description: This baked clay wheel model is cut in half at the center, through the axle hole. It has vegetal and lime inclusions, and the outer edge of the rim is flattened.

Context: O99-217 was found in J12, south of the palace/tower, in an area characterized by workshops (Akkermans 2006, 207). It was found north of wall O and south of P.

This part of the *dunnu* was modified architecturally in all Assyrian levels; as such, O99-217 can be stratigraphically linked to architectural renovations to reveal a level 5 context.

O99-389

J13, Locus 21, Lot 48, Object Number 119, Elevation: 325.13, Excavation date: 30.10.1999.

Figure: 143

Level: 5-late

Height: 4.2 cm, Diameter: 7.4 cm, Hole Diameter: 0.8 cm.

Description: This baked clay wheel model is well preserved, with slight damage on either side of the slightly off-center rim. The axle hole on O99-389 was pierced from one side and does not fully penetrate the clay, with the hole extending through roughly three quarters of the wheel.

Context: O99-389 was found in J13, a square containing the southern walls of the fortifications. It comes from the gray ashy fill of pit Q, located inside the fortification walls. This area is characterized by workshops, and lot 21 is located next to the bakery (*ibid*). The excavation of J13 only established the stratigraphy of levels 6 and 5, so the pit can only be contextualized as having been dug and filled after the level 5 renovations.

O02-7

K6, Locus 8, Lot 17, Object Number 16, Elevation: 326.36, Excavation date: 22.8.2002.

Figure: 144.

Level: Uncertain

Height: 3.7 cm, Diameter: (wheel) 5.5 cm, (axle hole 'mouth') 0.5-0.8 cm, (hole) 0.2 cm.

Description: This wheel model is fractured on one side of the rim. The axle socket protrudes widely by comparison to the small rim, and the hole was pierced from both sides, visible from its crookedness and narrowing at the center. The clay has visible lime traces.

Context: A narrow trench was cut to investigate the moat at the southern part of K6.

Locus 8 is the top of the ditch's revetment wall, and O02-7 was uncovered in the southwestern part of the locus, amidst mudbrick debris. It is uncertain whether this is in surrounding ditch fill, on top of the wall, or within the wall's architecture; in any case, it appears a dump context, whether in ditch fill or on the wall after the area was filled. K6 is north of the late LBA northern construction, and so there is no architectural record to use for comparative stratigraphy.

O93-56

K7, Locus 4, Lot 26, Object Number 12, Elevation: not recorded, Excavation date: 28.8.1993.

Figure: 145.

Level: 5-4

Width: 3.2 cm, Diameter: 5.1 cm, Hole Width: 0.5 cm.

Description: This wheel model is well-preserved and unfractured. It has a relatively small rim and wide axle area. As with other models, it is handmade, and the rim is not evenly crafted.

Context: The 1993 excavation of K7 consisted of a trench in the southwest corner, cut to expose the architecture of the outer walls of the levels 5/4 fortress/houses from K8.

Locus 4 is located just north of the fortress wall, in the same stratum as the nearby mudbrick wall. The area contains both open spaces and pits, though the exact find context of O93-56 was not recorded. As the find context is from the outdoor space, it cannot be linked to the stratigraphy or the varying functionality of the nearby structures.

F93-22

K8, Locus 26, Lot 47, Object Number 116, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 26.08.1993.

Figure: 146.

Level: 4-3

Length: 6.5 cm, Width: 3.5 cm, Height: 2.5 cm.

Description: This baked clay fragment is the torso of a zoomorphic figurine, with three broken edges. The clay is red with brown spots and lime accretions, and tempered with organic material. The stoutness of the torso could be seen to depict a cow.

Context: Square K8 contains the northern rooms of the fortified area in levels 5 and 4, and contains one of the two main northern entrances to the fortified area in level 6. This object was found in the fill of room 1. Given the absence of contextual cues in the excavator's notes, this paper defers to the database's levels, which indicate that this context could either be level 2 (after the LBA) or level 4. The object was not in a primary context, and could have been moved to the debris at any period of the LBA collapse, in an area with no new floor levels and therefore with inexact stratigraphy.

F93-21

K8, Locus 60, Lot 135, Object Number 110, Elevation: 326,86, Excavation date: 29.09.1993.

Figure: 148

Level: 4/5

Length: 12.5 cm, Width 3.7 cm, Height 9.5 cm

Description: This baked clay zoomorphic/goat figurine is one of the better-preserved LBA pieces from Tell Sabi Abyad. The figurine is missing all but its right hind leg, and only one horn remains. The figurine has an indicated short tail, penis, and testicles, and



the mouth and nose are incised on the snout, with appliqué bulges indicating the eyes and ears. The figure's form does not show any movement, but instead is an idealized figure with the head facing forward. The material is a whitish clay. Evelyn Klengel-Brandt (Klengel-Brandt 1978, objects 651-9) notes the similarities of the lean figures to goats and dogs, but the upright and slightly curved back horns visible in F93-21 specify the genus. From Tell Mozan, Hauser's (Hauser 2007, 310-1) analysis of the general shape and triangular forequarters confirms the analysis.

Context: This object was found in fill in the room under wall O, lying against the wall.

The stratigraphy of the room is unclear, leaving the object between strata 6-8, corresponding with levels 4 and 5.

F97-23

K8, Locus 90, Lot 192, Object Number 122, Elevation: 327,99, Excavation date: 29.09.1997.

Figure: 147.

Level: 4-3

Length: 9.0cm, Width: 5.0 cm, Height: 4.0 cm.

Description: This lime and mineral tempered baked clay figurine depicting the head and neck of an animal figure. The head shows the beginning of ears on both sides. The eyes are indicated by two holes poked by a cylindrical object, and the circular nose is punctuated by a hole in the middle. The head is convex, and the forehead proceeds directly into the snout, possibly showing the figurine to be a horse. The figurine is fractured at the back of the head and neck. It is a roughly made figurine, with a red head and whiter neck.

Context: This object was found in the fill of room 1, in gray soil with mudbrick debris and limespots, just under floor AG. This places the figurine into a level 4 or later context, in levels associated with the destruction and decay of the LBA settlement. This is in accordance with its location in the northern part of the *dunnu*, one of the areas inhabited until the end of the LBA occupation.

F97-3 a+b

K8, locus 71, Lot 149, Object Number 4, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 07.09.1997

Figure: 149

Level: topsoil

Length (a): 11.1 cm, Width: 5.7 cm, Height: 5.8 cm. Dimensions of b unrecorded.

Description: F97-3a is the torso of a zoomorphic figurine, most likely a bull or cow by

the body structure and the bulging rear torso above the hind legs (Hauser 2007). The legs, tail, and head are missing. The body is rounded with the front parts broken off, and the beginning of a tail present in the rear. The behind is convex, with a concave underside and a flat back. F97-3b is a possible fragment of a horn of the same figurine, due to the location and similar material, a very light creamy brown baked clay with some organic inclusions

Context: These objects were found in the topsoil of K8, just south of the wall Z.

F96-11

K9, Locus 106, Lot 418, Object Number 30, Elevation: 326 (roughly), Excavation date: 11.09.1996

Figure: 150

Level: 4-3

Length: 9.1 cm, Width: 7.3 cm, Height: 4.1 cm.

Description: This handmade light brown baked clay fragment shows the back of a zoomorphic figurine. The tail is indicated, as is a stylized depiction of the genitalia, although it is unclear whether it is male or female. The material is tempered with vegetal inclusions, and the fractured section reveals a darker brown. The legs are cylindrical.

Context: This figurine comes from a disturbed context, found in the debris when cleaning out the square. K9 is located just north of the central tower and was its central access point. The find is from the northern part of the square, in the fill of pit AH, in a grey ashy loam. The exact context of the pit is unknown, though it would appear to be a late Middle Assyrian post-destruction context.

F96-19

K9, Locus 105, Lot 431, Object Number 29, Elevation: 326,91, Excavation date: 16.09.1996.

Figure: 151

Level: 5

Length: 3.1 cm, Width: 1.6 cm, Height: 1.1 cm.

Description: This dark brown unbaked clay fragment has a cylindrical upper part above a drop-shaped lower half. It is rather rectangular with rounded sides and corners. On one side an incision runs from the cylindrical top to the drop part and then curves back upwards. It is unclear which part of a figurine is depicted, and it may be prehistoric and invasive.

Context: This object was found in a loam with ashpockets, mudbrick debris, charcoal and limespots, adjacent to a wall J. Its placement east of wall J puts the find in a smaller

level 5 room, rather than on the main path leading to the tower, in a kitchen context (Akkermans 2006). The proximity to a floor context mixed with the evidence of fire/destruction in the locus suggests a room suddenly destroyed without any abandonment or debris accumulation before, fitting our image of the late level 5 fire damage.

O91-164

K10, Locus 5, Lot 24, Object Number 38, Elevation: 328.83-328.40, Excavation date: 24.09.1991.

Figure: 152

Level: 4 (late)

Length: 5 cm, Height: 5 cm.

Description: This lightly baked clay object has a rough top surface and smooth sides, with a protruding rim on top. It might be a part of a model house, and while it falls outside the anthropo- and zoomorphic focus of this study, its context with the objects below merits consideration.

Context: This object was found in the western part of K10, which is fortress room 1.

The object was found several days' excavation above the plastered floor E, which was built atop the debris of the destruction and ceiling collapse at the end of level 5 (Spoor 1996). At this point, the official purposes of the tower would have been forsaken for a domestic/dump usage. Locus 5 is part of a thick level of sloping debris, equivalent to the stratum of locus 4 of J10 from 1988 (see above), called a "massive dump of broken ceramics and other domestic debris" (Akkermans *et al.* 1993, 31). The stratum is 3A, equivalent to the last phase of building level 4.

F91-7

K10, Locus 5, Lot 26, Object Number 52, Elevation: 328.40-328-15, Excavation date: 25.09.1991.

Figures: 106b, 153

Level: 4

Length: 3.6 cm, Width: 4.9 cm, Height: 9.3 cm.

Description: This baked clay figurine was described by Akkermans *et al.* (*ibid*): "The terracotta bull representation, of which only the front part is preserved, showed a carefully modeled head with (partly broken) horns turning inwards and ring-shaped eyes, placed upon a massive, hunchbacked body. The legs are hardly indicated but are incorporated in the solid body. The snout is broken but a groove is still visible at the broken part."

Context: Same as O91-164.

O91-172

K10, Locus 5, Lot 26, Object Number 47, Elevation: 328.40-328.15, Excavation date: 25.09.1991.

Figures: 106b, 154

Level: 4

Height (disk): 1.6 cm, Diameter: 6.9 cm, 'leg' knob Diameter ranges from 0.8-1.3 cm.

Description: This coarsely finished, sundried clay object presumably represents a table, and is fractured into two pieces in the center. It has four irregular knobs pointing downward, suggesting table legs, and the reverse (top) side is flatter but not smooth.

Akkermans *et al.* (*ibid*) suggest that it may have been a child's toy.

Context: Same as O91-164 and F91-7.

O91-186

K10, Locus 5, Lot 26, Object Number 48, Elevation: 328.4-328.15, Excavation date: 25.09.1991.

Figure: 155

Level: 4

Height: 1.5-2.0 cm, Diameter: 3.5 cm.

Description: These two wheel models were found together and are the same size, suggesting that they belonged to the same model. This is the only instance of two wheels from the same model found together at Tell Sabi Abyad. As they were handmade, they are not identical; on one, the curve from the axle area to rim is convex, on the other, concave.

Context: Same as O91-164, F91-7 and O91-172.

O91-176

K10, Locus 19, Lot 30, Object Number 65, Elevation: 328.15-327.70, Excavation date: 26.09.1991.

Figure: 156

Level: 4

Length: 4.4 cm, Height: 3 cm, Width: 5.3 cm, Diameter: 3 cm, Protruding Rim Width: 1.5 cm, Hole Diameter: 1 cm.

Description: This wheel model has a very wide axle socket with a minimally protruding rim, making it appear almost barrel-like. The small rim is centered.

Context: Same as O91-172, O91-164, F91-7, and O91-186. Locus 19 is the lower half of locus 5, as at a certain level, the southern half of the area covered by lot 5 was covered by wall fall (locus 20), and the northern half (19) consisted of the same pottery and domestic dump as above.

O91-384

K10, Locus 23, Lot 50, Object Number 93, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date: 13.10.1991.

Figure: 106b, 157

Level: 5 (early)

Height: 1.8 cm, Diameter: 7.6 cm, Central Axle Area Width: 2.4 cm.

Description: This wheel model is fractured on one side of the axle socket, making the rim appear off-center. The rim shows evidence of burning related to its find context, and has fractures along its outer parts.

Context: This object was found in the southern part of fortress room 1 on the burned floor H, which covered the entire room. The burn layer is stratum 4C, equivalent to the earliest part of level 5. The room was repaved soon after, and the nearby objects include a burnt jar stopper and a grinding stone. It was found alongside a large container K, the dominant feature of the room, whose function is uncertain.

F92-12

K10, Locus 17, Lot 69, Object Number 7, Elevation: 327.39, Excavation date: 21.09.1992.

Figure: 106g, 158

Level: late LBA

Length 3.5 cm, Width 2.9 cm, Height 4.7 cm

Description: This baked clay anthropomorphic figurine has been described in a publication. "Only the 4.7cm high, worn head is preserved. This wide head shows carefully rendered facial features: large, oval eyes, a distinct brow ridge and pronounced lips. The nose is broken. The long, curling hair covers the ears and extends to the shoulders. On the front side, the hair shows some cross-hatched incisions, perhaps indicating the hairdress... a date around 1200 B.C. for this sculpture seems warranted.

Some remote parallels can perhaps be found at Assur, albeit in a Late Assyrian context.

A small terracotta head from Assur, dated around 750 B.C. and now in the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, shows some facial traits comparable to our figurine, as does a much larger, limestone or marble statue in the Baghdad Museum, probably dating from the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C." (*ibid*, 29).

Context: This figurine was found in pit L of building 2 of the fortress. The stratigraphy suggests that this was a very late feature, perhaps from after the Late Bronze Age, though Akkermans *et al.* (*ibid*) correctly note the large amount of characteristic Middle Assyrian pottery. This would suggest that in a post-Middle Assyrian settlement, this area was used as a dump. The stratigraphy and comparative examples from Assur suggest a later date than the LBA for this figurine; however, the nearby finds suggest a Middle Assyrian context for the figurine. As there is not evidence of any Late Assyrian occupation, it is more likely that this figurine's primary context is Middle Assyrian, merely bearing similarity to the later type, and that it was dumped into room 2 at some point after the Middle Assyrian occupation.

F93-5

K10, Locus 47, Lot 92, Object Number 4, Elevation 325,74, Excavation date: 15.08.1993.

Figure: 159

Level: 7

Length: 3.9 cm, Width: 3.1 cm, Thickness: 1.5 cm.

Description: This sundried clay dark gray zoomorphic figurine is tempered with organic material and lime, and after the sundrying it may have been secondarily fired. Part of the body and the legs are missing from the figurine. Parts of the front legs are visible, but the entire rear side of the body is broken off, as is some of the head. It is unknown what animal is depicted; however, the slim body suggests that it is most likely a goat or dog.

Context: This object comes from the oldest (Mitanni) level of the palace in room two.

Due to this context, the excavator labeled the object prehistoric, though there is no indication that this is the case. The object rests above floor R, and the room has a different layout from the succeeding Assyrian levels, with the southern wall in place, but a different alignment of the other walls (Spoor 1996). This room has some small finds, and featured two hearths in this early stage. Its functions are unclear, and interpretations rest on a general understanding of the Mitannian settlement as a full *dimtu* or only a tower.

F93-1

K11, Locus 20, Lot 60, Object Number 5, Elevation: 325,88, Excavation date: 09.08.1993.

Figure: 160

Level: 7

Length: 5.4 cm, Width: 2.0 cm, Thickness: 1.8 cm.

Description: This cylindrical unbaked clay object has flared sides near the top and a damaged base. The flared ends seem to have circular sections themselves, which could be interpreted as shoulders or other joints. There are breaks near the top and the bottom, and as such a neck and (hind) legs could have been broken off from there. It cannot be certain if this is anthropo- or zoomorphic.

Context: The figurine was found on floor N of tower room 5, the uppermost of several floors laid in the oldest (Mitanni) tower phase. The room had two concentrations of sherds, and this object was found near a stone concentration near the northern wall of the room. The pre-Assyrian designation is confirmed by the surrounding pottery and the architectural renovations in the layers directly above locus 20.

F96-9

L9, Locus 49, Lot 70, Object Number 29, Elevation: 328.15-327.92, Excavation date: 09.09.1996.

Figures: 106e, 161.

Level: 3

Length: 5.0 cm, Width: 4.8 cm, Height: 6.5 cm.

Description: This figurine head is made of baked clay tempered with organic material.

The figurine is fractured at the neck, and traces of burning are visible, likely from a secondary firing in the pit in which it was found. It depicts a bull or cow, with broken horns and a possible yoke above the neck/damaged area. The eyes and ears are indicated by a series of incisions, accentuating the shaping of the clay. The animal has a very pronounced snout, and has holes/depressions on the back, as well as decorative incisions on the partially broken yoke. The eyes are created by pinching or incising the top of the snout area. A torso of a cow from Assur (Klengel-Brandt 1978, object 602) shows a cow with a full yoke on it, dating to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, giving an indication of what the full figurine may have looked like.

Context: This object was found near the bottom of pit AH/AI in the southern part of L9, above wall AJ, in the area northeast of the tower within the fortified area. AJ belongs to the last LBA phase of architectural development in the square, located on the southern part of the level 4 rebuilding program. F96-9 was found in a cooking pit of the last LBA occupation level (3). In this time, the southern half of the square contained open air cooking pits, and the figurine head was found at the bottom of one of these, among smaller stones.

O91-44

L10, Locus 2, Lot 21, Object Number 3, Elevation: unknown, Excavation date:

11.09.1991.

Figure: 162

Level: above LBA strata

Width: 3.3 cm, Height: 4.6 cm, Diameter: 5.6 cm, Protruding Rim Width: 1.4 cm.

Description: This wheel model's rim is fractured on all sides and is reduced to a slight protrusion. At the fracture, a black core is visible, in contrast to the buff colored exterior. The rim is off-center in the axle-cylinder.

Context: This object was found in topsoil, in the arbitrary locus 2 near Islamic graves. The location is directly above the northern wall of the tower.

F02-16

L12, Locus 507, Lot 513, Object Number 515, Elevation: 325.95, Excavation date: 21.09.2002.

Figures: 106h, 163.

Level: 5

Length: 2.7 cm, Width: 2.1 cm, Thickness: 2.5 cm.

Description: This baked clay anthropomorphic figurine head depicts a woman wearing a necklace. Her pointed nose is delineated by pinched clay, her eyes by pressed clay rings.

The hair is indicated on the sides of the head in bundles, and the top of the head appears schematically star-shaped. The necklace is decorated by incisions on the front, and does not wrap around the figurine completely, stopping in the back. The back of the head has a large flattened protrusion resembling a stand, as if the figurine was initially intended to lie on her back, explaining the lack of attention given to the back of the necklace. The figurine is broken at the neck, on both sides of the 'stand,' and on one side on the hair. Female representations wearing jewelry are quite common in the Near East. Many similar comparisons can be made from Assur and other sites, though none are so specifically similar to merit a definitive association.

Context: F02-16 was found in the *Hofhaus* style building identified as the house of the scribe Belu-erish, a lower-ranking official (Akkermans 2006, 208). It was found in the open yard area, which contained a number of diverse objects including beads, a bronze pin, animal bones, a bowl, etc. This area was renovated between levels 6-5, and the surrounding architecture shows a level 5 attribution for the artifact, with all of locus 507 below the disrepair of the level 5 destruction.

O93-170

L13, Locus 8, Lot 24, Object Number 13, Elevation: 325.50, Excavation date: 19.9.1993.

Figure: 164



Level: 5

Height (center): 4.8 cm, (rim): 0.8 cm. Diameter: 8.8 cm. Hole Diameter: 0.8 cm.

Description: This wheel model has major fractures on one side of the rim, minor fractures on the other, and some fractured sections on the axle socket. The rim is markedly off-center on this piece. The baked clay is a greenish buff.

Context: O93-170 is from the western part of room 2 of L13, which contains some southern rooms that may have been open-air graveled yards (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 7). O93-170 was found in the same level as the top of pit N, which continued down throughout the entire lower occupation. It was uncovered in a time of contemporary usage of the area, leading to the level 5 designation for the wheel model, as the area continued to be used in a later (level 4) stratum.

F01-6

M7, Locus 19, Lot 95, Object Number unrecorded, Elevation: unrecorded, Excavation date: unrecorded

Figures: 106a top left, 165

Level: 5?

Length: 5.2 cm, Width: 5.0 cm, Height: 3.0 cm.

Description: This well-preserved zoomorphic terracotta head is made of a light gray clay with mineral inclusions. It depicts a sheep (or possibly a bull), with scratches along the surface. The head is hollow, and broken roughly at the neck and down the center of the head. The sheep designation is determined by the horns curving along the side of the figurine's head, as seen on multiple examples from Assur (Klengel-Brandt 1978, objects 606, 614) and other sites. The eyes are created with small bulbous appliqué clay balls, and the long snout is treated with a slightly incised mouth and a curved nose.

Context: Despite the many photographs taken of this figurine fragment, its context is poorly documented, suggesting that it might have turned up in the finds from its lot, without documentation of its excavation. It has no object number, and the daynotes for the locus do not include any information regarding this figurine. The lot yielded no artifacts, though locus 19 was excavated over the following few weeks, yielding only minor bronze objects and grinding tools. Square M7 is in the northeastern part of the fortress area, and was continually renovated and used throughout the Middle Assyrian occupation. The square straddles the level 6 moat and contains renovated exterior structures of levels 5 and 4. Locus 19, in the northwest of the square, was excavated over a long period and throughout many construction changes, all of which can be associated with level 5. Lot 95 was used as a designation at the start of the locus, suggesting a very late level 5 date, slightly below the level 4 renovations.

P01-88

M7, Locus 20, Lot 137, Object Number 142, Elevation: unrecorded, Excavation date: 3.10.2001.

Figure: 166.

Level: 5

Height: 5.5 cm.

Description: This broken spout represents a sheep or goat's head. As a pottery vessel fragment, it stands outside the main scope of this study, though the spout designation is from the excavator's notes, and it may have been a hollow freestanding terracotta figurine. The material is buff colored and lime tempered, and the fracture is a shade of gray. The spout hole is the mouth, located on the elongated snout. The appliqué eye resembles that of F01-6, and the broken horn may have had a similar initial curvature. In addition to the fractured horn, the neck is fractured, and the break leads up towards the snout.

Context: Locus 20 is a level 5 room in the northern part of the square, just east of the location of F01-6. This object was found amongst a small scattering of domestic tools, and the architectural data places the object in level 5, in one of the structures expanded and lived in after the site became more condensed inside the fortified area.

O97-148

M8, Locus 36, Lot 69, Object Number 62, Elevation: not recorded. Excavation date: 11.9.1997.

Figure: 167.

Level: 5 (late)

Length: 5.3 cm, Width: 4.0 cm, Height: 2.7 cm, Diameter (hole): 1.0 cm.

Description: This wheel model's rim is broken on all sides. The cylinder extending around the axle hole is chipped in places, and it cannot be determined whether the rim was centered.

Context: O97-148 was found in an eastern open area in M8, a square in the northeast of the fortress area, initially marked by domestic architecture, and taken into the fortified area during the expansion and centralization of the level 5 reconstructions. The wheel was found east of the area Q, bounded by walls E to the south and M to the west, in the open space contemporary to the mid-level 5 renovations of nearby structures.

O97-280

M8, Locus 51, Lot 110, Object Number 102, Elevation: not recorded, Excavation date: 24.09.1997.

Figure: 168.

Level: 5 (early)

Height: 3.3 cm, Diameter: 8.3 cm, Diameter (hole) 0.9 cm.

Description: This wheel model's rim is only fractured on one side. The cylinder supporting the axle hole is convex on one side, and concave on the other, with a highly decentralized rim. Despite the quantity of clay on one side of the rim, the hole is fully pierced through the wheel. The material has lime inclusions, and small holes of burnt organic material.

Context: Locus 55 rests on top of the hard surface AA, below a thick gray ashy layer in the northeast of the square, north of any contemporary architecture. The area has some small pottery fragments, but is mostly devoid of other finds. The surface below the ash layer is square stratum 5a, equivalent to site level 5.

O02-20

M8, Locus 96, Lot 240, Object Number 33, Elevation: 325,56, Excavation date: 01.09.2002.

Figure: 169.

Level: 6

Thickness: 5.5 cm, Diameter: 10.6 cm.

Description: This large wheel model has minor fractures on the exterior of the rim, which sits off-center in the axle socket. It is a buff colored piece with a smooth surface finish.

Context: This wheel model was found in the north of M8, just south of oven BQ. While the oven was filled with ash and sherds, the soil to its south was gray-brown with mudbrick fragments, characteristic for M8's strata 8-9, both part of the level 6 occupation. During this period the square was situated outside of the walls with architecture independent from the fortification; as such, it had a radically different spatial orientation from the later strata seen in the above two wheels' contexts.

F96-4

M10, Locus 2, Lot 7, Object Number 4, Elevation: 327,36, Excavation date: 05.09.1996.

Figure: 170.

Level: 4-3?

Length: 6.4 cm, Diameter: 2.2 cm.

Description: This tapered baked clay shaft appears to be the leg of a figurine, showing

evidence of shaving the tapered parts. Presumably zoomorphic, as most anthropomorphic figurines do not have such delineated legs.

Context: The object was found just under the topsoil of M10, in the north of the open area. Other LBA objects were found in this elevation.

F96-5

M10, Locus 3 Lot 8, Object Number 5, Elevation: 327,26, Excavation date: 05.09.1996.

Figure: 171

Level: 4-3?

Length: 3 cm, Diameter: 2.3 cm.

Description: This circular/cylindrical clay object is probably a figurine's leg. One side is broken, while the other side is flattened slightly, presumably to let the figurine stand.

Context: Also just under the topsoil of M10, in the southern part of the square, nearer to a post-LBA burial.

F96-20

M10, Locus 1, Lot 40, Object Number 27, Elevation: unrecorded, Excavation date: 15.09.1996.

Figure: 172.

Level: 5

Length: 5.5 cm, Width: 2.9 cm. Height: 7.2 cm.

Description: F96-20 is a zoomorphic figurine's leg. It is made of earthen clay with vegetation and white stone inclusions, though the excavator did not record whether the material was baked. The break is a vertical and none of the main body is visible.

Context: The precise location and elevation were not recorded, but the locus is the fill of a level 5 open area. Locus 1 is in the northwestern portion of the square, containing the least architecture and most open space of anywhere in the fortified area, despite the domestic, administrative, workshop, and tower contexts of the surrounding squares. This area could have been used for a multitude of purposes, and the surroundings show that this stratum had not yet suffered destruction, but was not in the earliest Assyrian architectural stratum, leading to a level 5 designation.

F96-2

M11, Locus 13, Lot 51, Object Number 24, Elevation: 326.75, Excavation date: 25.08.1996.

Figures: 106d, 173.

Level: uncertain.

Length: 3.9 cm, Width: 0.9cm, Height: 2.5 cm.

Description: This small worn figurine is made of a grayish lead, and is a representation of a dog or lion. The ears and snout are indicated, with possible detail given to the inner ears and mouth, though corrosion leaves it difficult to determine. The hind legs are more damaged, as is any indication of a tail. This is one of two metal figurines found on site, both depicting different animal types from the clay.

Context: This object was found in locus 13, the fill of an open area above the large room in the northern half of M11. The locus was begun in an open space, but continued down into a full room context (containing the 'stone spirit' F96-16). While the lower space is considered a workshop, this object should be considered a separate, later context, given the quantity of fill between it and the lower level, despite the same locus attribution. It was found in an area disturbed by Islamic burials, though it comes from the non-burial fill. This fill is either the latest LBA (level 3) occupation, or from an earlier building level, fallen from an upper story. The fill below contained a good quantity of mudbricks, and it was located nearby the collapsed staircase of N11 discussed in chapter 3.

O96-51

M11, Locus 6, Lot 99, Object Number 53, Elevation: 326,62, Excavation date: 01.09.1996.

Figure: 174

Level: 5 (late)

Height: 3.8 cm, Diameter: 8.5 cm.

Description: This wheel model has two fractures on the outer part of the rim, which is decentralized on the axle socket. The material is orange clay with vegetal and sand inclusions, and the outer part has an orange slip.

Context: This wheel was found in the gray fill of an open area in the southwest of the square, in the courtyard in front of Belu-erish's house (mentioned above in the description of F02-16, and in Akkermans 2006, 204). This area's stratigraphy is contemporary to stratum 4 changes to the nearby wall R, equivalent to late level 5 renovations.

O96-88

M11, Locus 33, Lot 135, Object Number 100, Elevation: 326.3, Excavation date: 08.09.1996.

Figure: 175

Level: 5

Width: 0.7 cm, Width (rim): 2.4 cm, Width (hole): 0.7 cm, Diameter: 9.3 cm.

Description: This baked clay wheel is made of orange clay with a yellow buff and some lime spots. The rim is quite wide, with a narrower axle area than seen in most examples. This area is fractured on both sides, making it unclear whether the hole went through both ends, or if the rim was centered. Perhaps the relative thinness of this region led to weakness and thus its current condition.

Context: O96-88 was found relatively near a floor level alongside a large quantity of undecorated pottery. This is the northernmost section of the pottery workshop room (Akkermans 2006) discussed extensively in chapter 3. The whole surrounding area has been considered industrially oriented by this thesis and Akkermans' publications. The many surrounding finds coupled with the nearby architectural renovations give the locus a clear level 5 designation.

O96-223

M11, Locus 33, Lot 158, Object Number: unrecorded, Elevation: unrecorded,

Excavation date: 14.09.1996.

Figure: 176.

Level: 5

Height: 7 cm, Diameter: 18 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay object is not a figurine, but a model, perhaps of a trough.

It is circular, with flat sides, a raised rim, and a smoothed top. There is a broken section, though the complete trough would have been circular. The exact designation as a trough is uncertain, to the point where this piece could have served a function on its own, not as a representation but as a plate, tray, or other object.

Context: The exact context of O96-223 was not recorded, but the locus is the same as O96-88, although from a lower floor level. The object is from level 5, from an earlier part of the level than O96-88. This area is again associated with the pottery workshop, and this object may have served a function in the shop, or may have been partially completed, as it is unbaked.

O93-193

M12, Locus 2, Lot 26, Object Number 55, Elevation: 324.70, Excavation date:

29.09.1993.

Figure: 177

Level:

Length: 2.2 cm, Width: 1.8 cm, Height: 1 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay fragment is roughly triangular in shape, with rounded edges. The material is gray-brown, and there is a break near the top. The smoothed

surface and broken section suggest that this is the leg of a figurine.

Context: This context is confused because the lot and locus numbers do not match up, and by the recorded excavation date, these lots and loci were already closed. The master file database declares this object to have been found between walls B and C, relating to the east doorway of Belu-erish's house (see above). However, given the lack of information, this context is unclear.

F03-25

M12, Locus 500, Lot 509, Object Number 509, Elevation: 325,20, Excavation date: 07.10.2003.

Figure: 178.

Level:

Length: 3.5 cm, Width: 2.7 cm, Height: 1.3 cm.

Description: This zoomorphic figurine is made of an unbaked light brown clay. The surface is smooth and there are no major scratch marks. It shows an animal's torso, with a fracture below the neck, fractured front legs, and a fractured back before reaching the legs or tail. This could represent any quadruped, though the thick body appears most similar in stomach structure to cattle from Urkesh (Hauser 2007).

Context: This fragment was found between the fortress wall, wall AM, and wall C in the eastern portion of the main room of the square. It was uncovered just above a floor level, in the oldest Assyrian stratum of the room, leading to a level 6 designation. This is once again the room associated with the later pottery workshop, though in level 6 the bulk of the pottery production would have been conducted closer to the moat, outside of the fortified area.

O99-341

N10, Locus 8, Lot 28, Object Number 8, Elevation: 326.24, Excavation date: 11.10.1999.

Figure: 179.

Level:

Length: 9.1 cm, Width: 6.3 cm, Height: 3.9 cm.

Description: This baked clay mold is unique to the clay collection. The mold is for making an anthropomorphic couple, either of a woman holding a baby in her arms, or a man lying on top of a woman. The clay is tempered with lime, and the back surface is smoothed with small, black spots. There is no hole present for pouring in the material, and the top part is flat, so the material would have been poured directly onto the mold, creating a flat backed surface (the female would lie on her back). Evelyn Klengel-

Brandt (Klengel-Brandt 1995, 115, object 95) notes that there was only one mold-made figurine from Assur, depicting a woman holding a child. She considers the object imported, and despite the shared late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium chronology, it bears no stylistic resemblance to O99-341.

Context: This object was found in the north of the N10 half-trench excavated in 1999 (the eastern part remained unexcavated). The thick level 5-4 exterior fortress wall dominated the square, and as a result, a deep northern trench was cut to find objects below. The excavator notes that it was found near a floor level, in room fill, implying an early level 5 or level 6 context, before the thicker wall was built. However, with only the narrow trench dug, comparative stratigraphy is impossible. It is certain that this is an Assyrian level, presumably from before the level 5 fortification renovations.

### F03-3

N11, Locus 6, Lot 9, Object Number 8, Elevation: 326.23, Excavation date: 26.08.2003.

Figure: 180.

Level: 4-3

Length: 2.0 (a) 1.9 (b) cm, Diameter: 1.1-1.2 cm (a) and 1.1-1.4 cm (b).

Description: These two figurine fragments are made of burned clay, and presumably belong to the same original piece. They both have several fractures, and together could represent the torso of a zoomorphic figurine. They have lines and scratches, though the surfaces of the undamaged sides are smooth.

Context: These objects were found in the southwestern portion of square N11, just under the uppermost LBA floor level. At this level there are still few artifacts, suggesting that this is level 4-3, below the final repaving of the stairwell area. This is several strata above the 'stone spirit' S03-810 from the same area, but in a level 5 context.

### F03-7

N11, Locus 8, Lot 16, Object Number 21, Elevation: 326.17, Excavation date: 30.08.2003.

Figures: 106a bottom right, 181.

Level: 5-4 transition

Length: 5.2 cm, Width: 5.8 cm, Height: 4.7 cm.

Description: This burned clay sheep's head has a pierced mouth that may have formed a spout. The rendition is schematic, with stylized incisions around the curving horns, a smoothed snout, and appliqué eyes. The clay has visible organic inclusions inside the fractured neck. This is one of the most detailed zoomorphic representations, with the horns especially receiving decoration beyond representational necessity, curled



stylistically rather than realistically around the ears, comparable to other examples, such as objects 633 and 644 from Assur (Klengel-Brandt 1978).

Context: The object was found in the narrow space on the western side of N11, determined to be a staircase (see chapter 3). Due to the stairwell's collapse, the exact stratigraphic progression is difficult to determine. This object comes from above the level 5 stair collapse, either from the story above, or a later level. The preservation of the walls and the lack of dump fill suggest that this object was from the level 5-4 transition, as the area appears not yet to have fallen out of use, despite the collapse.

F03-11

N11, Locus 25, Lot 63, Object Number 59, Elevation: 325.29, Excavation date: 14.09.2003.

Figure: 183

Level:

Length: 3.4 cm, Width: 1.5 cm, Height: 1.0 cm.

Description: This terracotta cylindrical fragment shows traces of fire, and there are depressions on the already irregular, gray-brown, fine surface. The fragment most likely is a figurine leg.

Context: F03-11 was found in the eastern part of N11. This area was not heavily built upon and was left to the open air, partially bounded by a curving wall. In its earliest phase an oven dominated the space, and in the later phases, it fell out of usage. The closest approximations with relation to the fortress' architecture would be late level 6 or early level 5.

O03-47

N12, Locus 19, Lot 37, Object Number 30, Elevation: 324.71, Excavation date: 03.09.2003.

Figure: 182

Level: 6

Length: 12.5 cm, Width: 5.5 cm, Diameter (if complete): 15.5 cm, Thickness: 1.4 cm.

Description: This large wheel model fragment does not include the axle hole, though from the size of the fragment, it would have been one of the largest found on the site. The material is light brown, with reddish traces in the fractures. O03-47 is smooth with one convex and one concave side curving towards the center, suggesting a decentered rim on an asymmetrical piece.

Context: This model was found in a stratum contemporary to building activity in the western part of N12, just outside the pottery area outside of the fortifications. While it is

not in a specific building context, it was found on a compact floor F, which includes lime spots, large stones, and an oven nearby. The presence of stone-working tools nearby suggests contemporary usage on this floor level, perhaps as an open-air workshop. As the area was not used in levels 5-3, when the Assyrians opted to move more production inside the fortress proper, the location of this object reveals its level 6 context.

F03-9

N12, Locus 23, Lot 55, Object Number 51, Elevation: 329.89, Excavation date: 10.09.2003.

Figures: 106a bottom left, 185

Level: 6

Length: 4.6 cm, Width: 5.9 cm, Height: 5.2 cm.

Description: This baked clay cow head is fractured at both ears and its neck. The neck surface shows a great deal of calcite crusting. The fabric is fine, and there are very few inclusions. The snout is rounded but not incised, and the appliqué eyes are likewise unincised.

Context: This figurine was found in the eastern part of N12, which was excavated separately after the western. Similarly to O03-47, it was found in relation to architectural strata, but inside a building considered a pottery workshop. The fine clay without inclusions, the smooth surfaces, and the general beauty of the piece can be seen as a relation to the pottery-working area, where presumably skilled artisans worked a higher quality clay.

O03-79

N12, Locus 26, Lot 57, Object Number 54, Elevation: 324.88, Excavation date: 13.09.2003.

Figure: 184

Level: 6

Length: 4.0 cm, Diameter: 9.0 cm.

Description: This wheel model is the most aesthetically detailed of the collection from Tell Sabi Abyad. It has subtle fingertip depressions depicting spokes in relief on one side. It has a medium-fine fabric, and no accrustation. The rim is centered in the axle cylinder, though the axle hole is not centered in the cylinder. Like F03-9, the quality can be attributed to its relation to a pottery workshop. As the typologies of both figurines and wheels do not get a consistently aesthetic treatment, the exceptions found in pottery workshop contexts reveal the creators of these particular pieces.

Context: Similarly to F03-9, this was found in the excavation of the eastern portion of N12, in the same level 6 pottery workshop. O03-79 was found closer to floor contexts, in an area with an increasing density of pottery sherds and stone tools.

O03-90

N12, Locus 26, Lot 59, Object Number 67, Elevation: 324,63, Excavation date: 14.09.2003.

Figure: 186

Level: 6

Length: 7.5 cm, Width: 6.2 cm, Height: 3.5 cm, Diameter (if complete): 15 cm.

Description: This wheel fragment is a partial rim, showing the curvature on one side towards the axle area, while fractured on the other. It is a piece of fine-fabric terracotta, with a reddish-brown color, and few inclusions. Similarly to O03-79, the quality reflects the find context.

Context: Same locus as O03-79, but at a lower level, very close to the floor level F.

M04-4

O11, Locus 5, Lot 14, Object Number 11, Elevation: 325.39, Excavation date: 31.08.2004.

Figure: 187

Level: 3-post LBA

Length: 5.1 cm, Width ('head' and 'body'): 1.3 cm, Thickness: 0.2 cm (tail) 0.5 cm (head).

Description: This lead object is most likely a zoomorphic representation, depicting a leaping quadruped, perhaps a lion or dog. The features are greatly eroded, making identification difficult. The material is a blueish gray lead with some lighter gray-brown pockets. This is the only figurine from Tell Sabi Abyad exhibiting motion, and given its unique material, this figurine served a different purpose from the rest of our collection.

Context: M04-4 was uncovered in the southern part of O11, in the eastern part of the *dunnu* by the moat, still built upon during the level 5 site contraction. The object was found in an upper stratum, though not directly on the architecture, and it belongs to the excavator's phase IV, characterized by several pits dug into the ash layer below. This phase is the very late LBA occupation (level 3) or post-LBA. It is likely that this object is either post-Assyrian or has a primary context in an earlier period, as this decline period was not marked by craftworking metallurgy.

F04-5

O11, Locus 12, Lot 28, Object Number 20, Elevation: 325.40, Excavation date: 02.09.2004.

Figures: 106c, 188.

Level: 4- post LBA

Length: 4.5 cm, Width: 3.5 cm, Mouth Hole Diameter: 0.5 cm.

Description: This baked clay sheep's head is one of the best-preserved and most intricately detailed figurines from LBA Tell Sabi Abyad. The two horns are stylized by incisions and curve around the head to meet back in the center at an appliqué point, decorated almost as if they were a hairstyle. The space between the horns and the eyes is demarcated by a triangle, and the eyes are small holes articulated by raised rings around the edges, creating spaces that were possibly decorated with small colored grains of stone. Incisions pattern the way down to the snout, given two small indentations for nostrils, and proceeds to a drilled-hole mouth, resembling the holes seen in the spout figurines. The figurine is damaged in the back of the head/neck, leading from the back of the horns down to the base of the snout.

Context: This object was found in pit Y on the western edge of O11. Again, this belongs to the pits of O11's phase IV, a younger phase than the ash and destruction layer. This object is from levels 4-3, if not post-LBA.

F04-8

O11, Locus 11, Lot 32, Object Number 31, Elevation: 324.98, Excavation date: 05.09.2004.

Figure: 189.

Level: 4

Length: 3 cm, Height: 2.7 cm, Width: 1.8 cm.

Description: This baked clay zoomorphic figurine head is broken in several places, though the general shape of the animal's head is well preserved. The main break is at the neck, though both horns are broken, as is the end of the snout. The head shape appears bovine.

Context: F04-8 comes from the mudbrick debris near floor level Q and wall M in the northwestern portion of the square. This area is characterized by alternating red-brown loam and ash layers, in early level 4, in an area reused but not significantly rebuilt upon after level 5.

O03-222

O12, Locus 31, Lot 158, Object Number 176, Elevation: 324,40, Excavation date: 07.10.2003.

Figure: 190.

Level: 6

Height: 1.7 cm (rim), 3.2 cm (center), Diameter: 6.5 cm.

Description: This small wheel model is made of unbaked clay, and while on one side the axle socket protrudes normally from the rim, on the other, the rim extends pointedly out from the top of the axle cylinder (see image). It appears to be an only partially molded wheel model, as one side appears unworked and it is not baked.

Context: O03-222 was found in O12, whose only significant building phase was level 6, during which it was a pottery production center (Akkermans 2006). This is confirmed by an overwhelming density of objects found in the fill of the room (over 60 finds in the main room on 7.10.2003 alone). This object is from the northern room of the square, in a fill laden with pottery, not very far above the floor level.

F03-26

O12, Locus 62, Lot 176, Object Number 229, Elevation 324.25, Excavation date: 11.10.2003.

Figures: 106a top right, 191.

Level: 6

Length: 6.2 cm, Width: 3.5 cm, Height: 4 cm.

Description: This unbaked clay zoomorphic figurine head is an uncertain animal type, likely a sheep, dog or cow. The ears are more pronounced than many of the other figurines, and like some other examples, raised circular areas indicate the eyes, perhaps having previously been filled in. The tall snout has a dent indicating an area for nostrils and a mouth, though the mouth does not have the deep hole of other figurines (e.g., F04-5). It looks quite similar to a sheep snout figurine from Urkesh (Hauser 2007, 181).

Context: F03-26 was found in the same room as O03-222, in a level still covered in pottery. The whole fill of the level 6 remains of the room consist of a massive pottery dump, with a density of objects rarely seen in the rest of the site. Both objects are unbaked, showing the abandonment/destruction of the workshop as rather sudden, with unbaked but molded objects left behind before being fired.

F91-19

P10, Locus 8, Lot 10, Object Number 21, Elevation: 324.71, Excavation date: 10.10.1991.

Figure: 192,

Level: 6-5

Length: 4.3 cm, Width: 2.2 cm.

Description: This lightly baked orange-brown clay object is an animal's torso, broken at the neck, legs, and tail. The cut of the neck appears to be at a similar angle to many of the other 'decapitated' zoomorphic figurine heads. By comparison with examples from Urkesh, the body is most likely a cow because of the dip in the center of the stomach, though it is unclear.

Context: This object was found nearby architectural remains in the southwest corner of P10. Architectural production ceased in this area after the filling in of the moat, meaning that the architecture is level 6, but the locus has disturbed and mixed soils, containing ash, loam, and some brick. This object could be contemporary to the nearby architecture, or from a slightly later phase.

F91-20

P11, Locus 24, Lot 62, Object Number 75, Elevation: 324.80, Excavation date: 13.10.1991.

Figure: 193.

Level: Prehistoric Origin, Level 6 context

Height: 5.5 cm, Diameter: 1.4-2 cm.

Description: This baked clay anthropomorphic figurine is prehistoric in origin, but was found in LBA levels. It is the lower half of a body covered in a dress, with broken feet and a broken upper half. There are several circular paint traces. While it is not an LBA object, it is noted here as a contrast to the unpainted LBA types, to remind of the interaction with previous material culture,<sup>18</sup> and to question whether invasive artifacts were treated separately, or whether they were used by the Assyrians similarly to their own objects.

Context: F91-20 was found in a soft soil with ashy spots and burned materials south of wall Q. This area was the courtyard of the building east of the level 6 moat, and other objects uncovered are mostly domestic and functional, making the painted figurine unique in its surroundings.

W-9

P12, Locus 40, Lot 52, Object Number 11, Elevation: not recorded, Excavation date 28.8.1988.

Figure: 194.

Level: 4-late.

Height: 4 cm, Diameter: 6.4 cm (rim), 0.75 cm (hole).

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<sup>18</sup> While it is likely that other objects listed here are invasive/prehistoric, only ones with such diagnostic features such as this can definitively be considered invasive.

Description: This wheel model has a stubby rim and the axle hole is not driven through the wheel perpendicular to the rim, so that the complete model would not have stood properly. It is a beige-green material, with plant and sand inclusions.

Context: P12 is located east of the moat, and this object comes from the eastern edge of the square. It was found just below topsoil, in an area directly above wall N. Wall N is a level 5 construction, so the wheel comes from a late LBA occupation.

A-1

P12, Locus 55, Lot 71, Object Number 16, Elevation: unrecorded, Excavation date: 04.09.1988.

Figure: 195.

Level:

Length: 4.8 cm, Width: 5.8 cm, Height: 4.1 cm.

Description: This baked clay zoomorphic figurine fragment shows a head with broken horns and neck, similarly to F04-8. The material is tempered with straw and lime, and is yellowish on the exterior, with reddish areas showing in the fractures.

Context: A-1 comes from the western edge of the P12, adjacent to the moat wall. It was found in a pit filled with loose greenish rubble and many LBA sherds, suggesting dumping in the ditch and the surrounding area during and after its filling.

F97-5

S12, Locus 51, Lot 76, Object Number 26, Elevation: unrecorded, Excavation date: 30.08.1997.

Figure: 196.

Level:

Length: 3.2 cm, Width: 3.2 cm, Height: 2.1 cm.

Description: This baked clay anthropomorphic figurine fragment depicts a woman's torso. It is made of clay with gypsum inclusions, and the black coloration under the surface indicates a secondary burning. The torso has one breast and is broken below the neck, on the right half of the chest, and just above the waist. There are very slight protrusions for the shoulders.

Context: Square S12 features a Bronze Age gully in its northeastern corner. This figurine comes from this gully, located in a square dominated by Neolithic remains. The contents of the gully are mostly utility and domestic dump products. The square is notably distant from the main *dunnu* area.

#### 4.4. Data Analysis

The catalog above presents the data in shorter or more detailed sections, based on the quality of the excavators' notes and the importance or preservation of the object. As the catalog includes descriptions from publications, relationships to other objects on the site, comparanda, and contextual information, the analysis can proceed directly into evaluation of trends in the distribution. The most visible trends in the figurine distribution are the broken condition of *every* figurine, the dominance of livestock in the zoomorphic group, the generally Assyrian building levels (as opposed to the Mitanni), the frequency of secondary contexts, the break at the neck in many zoomorphic figurines, the lack of wagons or chariots accompanying the wheels, the different animals depicted on the metal examples, and the seemingly random distribution.

All of the clay figurines are broken. While the passage of time is known to damage artifacts, it is notable that *all* are broken, and that there are no destruction levels with multiple pieces belonging to the same original figurine and sharing a break point. Were the objects destroyed by (for instance) ceiling collapse, one would find many corresponding fragments together. As this is not the case, there must be intentionality in the breaking, with the parts of the figurines not uncovered crushed and ground. Most of the objects are broken at the neck and the legs. While these appendages are expectable breaking points, a closer examination of the neck breaks reveals a pattern. There are no anthropomorphic fragments with the head still attached to a body, and more striking still, the zoomorphic breaks at the neck are nearly identical, with the break going from the lower part of the back of the neck upwards toward the front/chin/snout.<sup>19</sup> While there is the possibility that the heads were created separately, and were the natural breaking points, there is no direct evidence of this, and probability suggests that not all figurines would be broken in the same way, without visible remains of both pieces. It appears instead that the figurines were beheaded, a subject to be returned to in the functional analysis section.

The next visible trend is that the zoomorphic clay figurines are all domesticated livestock, without any carnivores, birds, or beasts of labor. While the quality of the artisans' work differs from simple to elaborate, none exhibit motion. The two metal figurines, on the other hand, may both depict dogs, and M04-4 shows an aggressive jumping unseen in the rest of the data. The material, choice of animals, and style indicate that these artifacts are of a different typology, implying differing functionality.

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<sup>19</sup> See examples F97-23, F96-9, P01-88, F03-7, F03-9, F04-5, F04-8, F03-26, and torsos broken at the neck in F96-25, F07-39.



The wheel models show less intentionality in their fractures, but it is notable that none are accompanied by chariot or wagon models. Aside from O91-186, no wheels are found in pairs, revealing a separation from the primary context/usage, when they would have existed in combination with similar wheels and a model vehicle, as seen at many other sites. All of the wheels are handmade, and they exhibit a diversity of detail and artisan attention.

The distribution of the materials appears randomly scattered. Unlike other sites with prioritization for [e.g.] temple contexts, there are no ‘special’ contexts for our figurines. The palace area is neither under- nor overrepresented in the distribution, and the vast majority of those found in the tower are from dumpsites, surrounded by other broken pottery. If the figurines were intentionally broken, and had served their purpose, their frequency in this waste area is unsurprising. The disproportionate quantity found in pottery production areas should also be expected, as is the finer fabric of the clay used in such areas. Unlike the ‘stone spirits,’ the clay finds come from dominantly Assyrian or later layers, appearing almost entirely in secondary/dump contexts. The number of objects found in post-Assyrian layers are almost entirely in debris/fill with decontextualized Assyrian objects. The only object given a special context appears to be the drilled mushroom shaped F01-5, discussed in the previous chapter. Even the painted Neolithic anthropomorphic figurine is not given special function, presumably dismissed similarly to the ‘stone spirits.’

#### 4.5. Comparative Analysis

While there are unlimited potential comparisons to be drawn, this thesis has already discussed the dangers of associations based solely on imagery. With the objects coming from Middle Assyrian levels, some comparison with the well published set from Assur must be made. Hans-Ulrich Onasch and Friedhelm Pedde of the Assur Projekt (personal correspondence, 2011) noted that about one half of Assur’s figurines are anthropomorphic, with horses as the second most common type, then cows and sheep, and the rest only appearing in small quantities. Some chariots and furniture models were also excavated.

Evelyn Klengel-Brandt’s 1978 publication explains the different quantities. For the zoomorphic objects, her study notes that the horses in Assur are entirely from the Neo-Assyrian period, accounting for their absence from the Middle Assyrian Tell Sabi Abyad. Conspicuously absent from Tell Sabi Abyad are the myriad of female figurines so well studied in the Near East. Perhaps their (debatable) relationship with religious and temple contexts makes them unnecessary in a site without a temple or religious

center. Klengel-Brandt (1995, 115) notes that the Assur figurines were mended with bitumen when broken, quite differently from those at Sabi Abyad. This paper finds it unfruitful to discuss the individual artistic similarities or differences between the cows and sheep from the two sites, as such factors are as likely accidental as they are typological; there are enough similarities to call the two the same typology and enough differences to cast them apart. There are few zoomorphic finds at Assur from the Middle Assyrian period. As for the anthropomorphic, there are no similarities to H-1 or the mold, some Neo-Assyrian similarities to F92-12, and many that share features with F02-16.

The most readily available comparative items from Tell Sabi Abyad are the wheel models, excavated in many sites from Northwestern Syria to Southern Mesopotamia across the entire span of the Bronze Age. The inter-site similarities are striking for such a wide range. The cultural associations inherent in typology studies cannot be employed in such a case, as the type existed in many cultures and the regional varieties have never been studied. However, comparative materials do indicate that many of the zoomorphic figurines (especially the pre-Neo-Assyrian from Assur) were not given legs, but instead, a base with holes drilled into them, presumably to put the figurines onto wheels (Klengel-Brandt, 1978). While Assur and other sites have many chariot models to go along with their wheel sets, Sabi Abyad does not, and perhaps some of the wheels were accoutrements for the zoomorphic figurines, rather than as parts of wagons unseen by the excavation. Another possibility is that the wheels were attached to chariots or wagons made of wood or another perishable material, so the wheels are the only portion represented in the archaeological record. However, as the wheels are not found in pairs, the presence of single unique wheel models is not accounted for by perishable wagon material. As the wheel model is a typology known from many regions over a great period of time, it is possible that some wheels are pre-Assyrian, and were adapted by the Assyrians as spindle whorls or loom weights.

Finally, the metal objects have the least contemporary comparable items; a silver stag of roughly the same size from the Middle Assyrian occupation of Tell Brak (Oates *et al.* 1997, 115) is the closest stylistic and chronological comparison, though it is not a carnivorous beast nor does it show motion. The lack of comparative material coupled with the contexts could suggest a post-LBA type, though two objects are not a sufficient quantity to base such judgments on.

#### 4.6. Functional and Interpretive Analysis

Assyrian figurines have been given much attention in their relation to liturgical texts, as *apkallus* or demons in building foundations, and in relation with other rituals. However, the data set from Tell Sabi Abyad shows no similarity to the ritualized *Mischwesen* in those circumstances. Frans Wiggermann (personal correspondence 2011) notes that the intentional damaging of figurines is part of Assyrian ritual, but the only evidence of this practice is the dissolving of unbaked figurines into water, bearing no relation to the damage types witnessed at Sabi Abyad. There is no literary connection between our figurines and the Assyrian state religion, and while some authors are tempted to draw conclusions on figurines to indicate household cult, there is no evidence for that in the data set.

Considerations of the objects as toys cannot work, as the objects are not found solely in domestic contexts, and official administrative usage is equally unlikely due to the extensive usage of textual records. Instead, the zoomorphic and wagon wheel distribution may likely be symbolic accounting tokens for the illiterate among the inhabitants of Tell Sabi Abyad. Hauser makes a highly appealing hypothesis for the functionality and breakage of the figurines from Urkesh:

I propose that the figurines were a means of record-keeping, control of stock, both in numbers and kind... Expanding on this, I would suggest that a sheep figurine would represent so many head of sheep, a bull so many head of cattle. While the stock were being sheared or harvested or otherwise processed, the figurines “held their place,” stood in for the real livestock or animals in the course of domestication.

Such usage would offer a possible explanation of the universal breakage—all or most appendages missing. Say that as part of the flock was returned, claimed by its owner, an appendage of the figurine was broken off. This would serve as a visible reminder that the owner had claimed part of his stock. Once the transaction was terminated, the head was broken off—crushed or powdered—and the torso was discarded on the storeroom floor, as were the sealings that secured containers. (Hauser 2007, 47)

With some modification, this seems plausible for Tell Sabi Abyad. The figurines from Urkesh are from an administrative building, whereas those from Sabi Abyad have a wider distribution. At Urkesh, there would be a higher degree of illiteracy than in the Assyrian administration at Sabi Abyad, where a great deal of cuneiform tablets reveal extensive written records. However, the non-administrative (and probably illiterate) inhabitants likely owned animals, to be given to pastoralists for some portion of the year. Unlike Urkesh, the model that this thesis proposes for Tell Sabi Abyad is one for common people rather than administrative, using the figurines as personal receipts or records. Many animal heads were found at Sabi Abyad, suggesting a likely alternative of crushing the torso, rather than just the head. The act of beheading a livestock figurine

could indicate the slaughter of the animals, rather than just a terminated contract. Why some portion of the figurines remained uncrushed is not clear, perhaps as a record, but from the dumpsite contexts of so many figurines, the remaining pieces held little value.

The next major category of figurines is the wheel models. The previous section noted that they might have been used at the base of some figurines, yet the number of animal legs uncovered suggests that most of the zoomorphic figurines had legs, rather than drilled bases. More likely, these objects were part of wagon models. They could have served an identical unofficial economic accounting role for the transactions of the non-administrative and illiterate people. Perhaps one wagon represented a wagon full of some sort of produce, documenting quantities of agricultural production or goods traded. As the figurines often had a head without body, or vice versa, suggesting that parts were crushed and powdered, perhaps the standard part of a wagon model to crush would be the wagons, with the wheels being kept for a receipt or token. The absence of the wagon but the remaining wheel is quite similar to the partially available zoomorphs, and the wagons are equally likely to represent non-administrative economics.

The presence of the anthropomorphic figurines is less likely to fit this system, mostly because the distribution is so small. While human labor/servants/*eiluhlu* were exchanged on the site (Wiggermann 2000, 174), were this practice to be commonly reflected in figurines, there would be a larger quantity uncovered. The figurines do not seem schematically rendered; they could have represented specific individuals. They would have been made for whatever purposes anthropomorphic figurines are made for -- gifts, memories of the deceased, rituals, toys, etc. -- the possibilities are infinite and our contextual and visual data set do not provide the details necessary for academic speculation; any functionality conclusions would be unfounded guesswork. There have been many scholarly debates on the universality of anthropomorphic figurine representation, the intentionality of the artistry, etc.; the data set from Tell Sabi Abyad is not extensive enough to open new avenues in this highly published discussion.<sup>20</sup>

The representational figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad reveal a small spectrum of uses. The condition of the clay artifacts and their presumably powdered sections reveal intentionality in the destruction, most likely after the completion of an economic transaction. The metal zoomorphic figurines are more fierce and lively, but are too small of a data set to merit evaluation. The anthropomorphic figurines show a great range of styles and choices in a tiny data set, ranging from a pointy-hatted possible soldier to a jewelry-wearing woman to a stylized face. They do not share a typology, and therefore

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<sup>20</sup> Of the conversations on figurine interpretation, a standout discussion is in Cambridge Archaeology Journal 6 (2) from 1996. It is referenced in this thesis under the discussions moderator, Naomi Hamilton.

their functionality is best addressed individually, rather than with a blanket statement for the distribution. The Neolithic artifacts get a varied treatment, from a broken and dumped anthropomorphic terracotta to a funerary-related stone amulet. The varied functionalities presented in this chapter reflect the presumably bustling daily life in the *dunnu*, creating an image of the common economic and daily life conditions of Tell Sabi Abyad, outside of the official or administrative character dominating the textual and architectural record.

## 5. Discussion

This thesis has undertaken to present, contextualize, and analyze the figurines from LBA Tell Sabi Abyad. In doing so, it has extensively codified and evaluated the ‘stone spirit’ typology, trends in figurine studies, and relevant comparable material from both Tell Sabi Abyad and the broader ancient Near East. At the start, the study aspired to understand the relationships between the figurines and the site and between their function and preservation, and to expose the cultural-typological orientation, the implications of chronologically or culturally invasive materials, and the broader archaeological implications of the figurines. It pursued connectivity: to buildings on the site, to Assyrian liturgy, to themes of memory, to the overlap between the Mitanni and Assyrian occupations.

Each previous chapter offered a presentation of the data, the trends both in the data and in possible interpretive frameworks, and interpretive conclusions and theoretical models based on distribution and inter- and intra-site analyses. This discussion chapter will examine the research questions presented in the introduction and the relevance of the methodologies utilized. Beyond this, it will further explore the need to observe the ancient world as cosmopolitan rather than static, ways for archaeologists to reconcile ancient damage and contemporary material evaluation, the significance of interpretive analysis for those people not reflected in the historical literary record, ancient interactions with the past, and, finally, archaeological approaches to typologies, cultural units, and figurines.

### 5.1. Addressing the Initial Research Questions

The primary intention of the study was the presentation and contextualization of the figurines from LBA Tell Sabi Abyad. This thesis was able to offer a comprehensive descriptive, contextual, analytical, and theoretical understanding of the figurines studied. As there is a broad base of information concerning Near Eastern terracotta figurines, and the distinctions of individual cultural typologies within this sphere of figurine production are difficult to define, this study was able to delve directly into context- and preservation-based analyses. This is not the case with the ‘stone spirits,’ so the second chapter was devoted to an extensive analysis of the corpus of comparanda in order to expose the geographic, chronological, and cultural orientations of the typology. In doing so, the type was shown to pass through multiple cultures and time periods, without regard for national promotion, and therefore existing outside official state ritual practice known from textual records. It appeared to be oriented to individual folk usage and

transmission. When this background was applied to the ‘stone spirits’ from pre-Assyrian levels, as well as to the clear lack of interest paid to the objects by the Assyrians, we gained an understanding not only of ancient material interaction, but also of an intentionality of disregard.

The study now turns to the specific questions posed by the introduction. The figurines are mostly in a poor state of preservation, ranging from the intentionally ‘beheaded’ clay animal figurines and visibly reworked ‘stone spirits’ to the discarded and worn down general group. The ‘stone spirits’ distribution was discussed extensively in the third chapter, with the most important components being the two found in level 7 contexts, and the two used as tools in Assyrian workshop contexts. The clay figurines were found mostly in dump contexts, with a relatively even distribution in other areas, though there were slightly higher proportions in pottery workshops. The disrepair, functionality, reuse, and abandonment are all closely allied themes, reflecting usage by common people rather than the state. The clay figurines show an economic rather than ritual functionality, and their disrepair suggests a function fulfilled. The ‘stone spirits’ ritual functionality can be extrapolated from comparative sites, though at the *dunnu*, the ‘spirits’ appear as an alien type to the Assyrians, discarded or reworked, for either practical or hostile purposes.

The cultural orientation of the ‘stone spirits’ is older than the Middle Assyrian Empire, and while they have been found at several of these sites, the typology does not reflect Middle Assyrian characteristics. As a border colony interacting with Hurrian neighbors and predecessors, as well as having a cosmopolitan cultural makeup, the integration of foreign material cultures (whether accepted or not) is unsurprising on the site. The clay objects are more difficult to contextualize, as clay representation is a prevalent characteristic of many ancient cultures, and variances in aesthetic are as likely accidental as intentional. They are in line with Assyrian cultural practice, though just as likely in line with many other cultures. They show no relation to official Assyrian practice, and more to informal economic usage, and as such the question of their cultural orientation is of little relevance to understanding functionality and material interaction. As for questions of treatment of invasive objects, several pre-Assyrian objects have been studied in the paper to reveal the manifold responses to foreign objects, from disregard to curiosity to functional usage.

Issues of inherent memory turned out to be less relevant to the study than anticipated; instead, the study was able to paint a diachronic image of material interaction, from usage and potential veneration to devaluation both intentional and gradual. Almost all of the initial hypotheses have been addressed, though the analysis of the figurines did not further an understanding of the functionality, architecture, or spatial

orientation of the site. Instead, the figurines allowed us to depict a cosmopolitan Tell Sabi Abyad, and to explore unexpected themes of non-elite symbolic representation. Outside the site, the establishment of the ‘stone spirit’ typology was able to paint a similar picture on a macro scale, of a non-liturgical or state ritual element prevalent over time and distance, represented by nothing more than folk persistence and belief. As such, it drives imagination of the ancient Near East away from a world organized on an imperial cultural level, and toward one with a thriving and understudied populist artistic and ritual culture. These implications, not addressed by the research questions, frame the discussions at the second half of this chapter.

## 5.2. Methodological Discussion

This thesis has given priority to a select few factors when evaluating figurines. The second chapter considered geography, chronology, contexts, and possible functionality to be the primary means of identifying a typology. The subsequent two chapters utilized multiple separate steps, the first of which emphasized objectivity in data presentation and transparency in data synthesis (e.g., when adapting stratigraphic information into relative object chronologies). The analysis of these data was carried out in two steps of increasing subjectivity and interpretation, first noting trends (e.g., beheaded clay figurines, pre-Assyrian and workshop contexts for ‘stone spirits’) and then moving on to interpretive analysis regarding functionality and hypothetical modeling for the spread and implications of a distribution.

In setting off the subjective from the objective, the study allows readers to use the contextual information at face value, and to question the analyses themselves. The analyses are presented separately from the data presentation, and the analytical models are thus easier to apply to other sites and data sets. The thesis presents ancient interaction with figurines as a system of diachronic evaluation, as the figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad filled their purposes or moved to secondary contexts in an administration with its own state, rather than folk, approach to ritual. These theories surely apply to other sites and object types, as no symbolic material culture maintains a static meaning to different owners during periods of cultural change.

The separation has allowed for a data-focused approach, instead of an examination filtered through the current archaeological theoretical debates. Rather than adopt a processual or post-processual attitude and fit Tell Sabi Abyad into a mold, this paper has avoided the debate and the accompanying jargon by demarcating its more strictly scientific stances from its interpretive and empathetic approaches to the past. Processualist readers may deride conclusions based in hypothetical modeling, while



post-processualists might ask for less space accorded to locus and lot numbers, and more time for an appreciation of what the data *mean* for the past. This paper hopes to have walked the line (without blurring it) between both schools by maintaining such a separation. For *this* study, it is unfruitful to question the interaction of meta-structures with imperial ones when using the term ‘folk spread,’ or to introduce hermeneutical ponderings into the analysis sections. These considerations can be useful, and applications of particular frameworks can facilitate interpretation; however, for an initial presentation of new material, a single theoretical approach closes many doors of potential interpretation.

As soon as data began to show the presence of earlier invasive artifacts, this paper sought to work with themes of the archaeology of memory. The burgeoning field recognizes “how memory becomes historicized through linked activities that engage with materials” (Mills and Walker 2008, 22). The worthy examinations undertaken in the reconciliation of memory studies and archaeology are unfortunately inapplicable to the data set from Tell Sabi Abyad. Rather than utilizing the goods of past cultures to create a history through individual or collective memory, the people from Tell Sabi Abyad quickly erased any initial or retrospective value of the invasive materials. The dislocation from the past is less linked with memory studies than it is with Maurice Godelier’s conception of progress as societies move from mythical to logical worldviews:

“Generally speaking, progress, as far as knowledge of Nature and history is concerned, has consisted in erasing from the surface of things, the network of intentions which man had initially ascribed to them in his own image; in destroying fragment by fragment, level by level, the imaginary representations of ‘intentional’ causes and replacing these with the representation of unintentional and inevitable relationships.” (Godelier 1977, 218).

The preference for the utility functionality of the ‘stone spirits’ over the intentionality of the aesthetic or ritual makes this cultural anthropological statement uncannily relevant. Perhaps materiality can be used to create and further a social memory, but the ideology of imperial advancement and modernity (read: progress) is all that is needed to erase memories (as well as to erase the relevance of memory studies for the understanding of life on the *dunnu*).

Beyond relevant external frameworks, the internal framework of this thesis must be questioned. Is the data set indicative of material representation at Tell Sabi Abyad? For the most part, yes. The data set revealed the interaction between the site’s inhabitants and its figurines. The inclusion of Neolithic invasive artifacts exposed concepts of Assyrian interaction with past materials beyond the ‘stone spirits,’ and contextualized issues of contemporary value given to zoomorphic and anthropomorphic

representation. In the end, however, the clay objects showed different typology from the metal, both of which were utilized and appreciated differently from the ‘stone spirits.’ As a diversity of meanings and functions were uncovered from our data, this study should be readdressed to include all representations, from stylized pottery to seal impressions. This thesis has cast aside understandings of representation as reflections of a single purpose (ritual) and as such could be a starting point for the study of the breadth of possible meanings of representation in the ancient Near East.

The final methodological concern relates to the sources used. The second chapter of this paper, beyond establishing a typology, made several assessments of what a typology is, and how figurines should be studied. Geography, intra-site distribution, and functionality were stressed. The two chapters addressing objects from Tell Sabi Abyad both explored contexts with the aim of highlighting functionality. While these approaches are considered optimal by the author of this paper, should they be a standard for other figurine studies? Or does the interpretive chaos of a multiplicity of agendas and viewpoints actually create a varied and therefore comprehensive approach? Once standards are set, they become precedents and applicable models, rather than letting the research agenda evolve out of the data set, as has been done in this paper. Naturally, studies should be dismissed that call for meaning without supportive data, but a varied approach is always healthy for academia. Several examples that are clearly successful and merit praise—the publications on Tell Sabi Abyad are notable for the seamless inclusions of site data and a full interpretive process on the meanings of buildings; Rick Hauser’s study of figurines at Urkesh highlights the detail that can be given to figurine studies; Stephania Mazzone’s study of ‘stone spirits’ shows remarkable research dedication for a single page aside in her Tell Afis report.

### 5.3. Tell Sabi Abyad as a Cosmopolitan *Dunnu*

Publications on LBA Tell Sabi Abyad highlight its architectural legacy, its role in Assyrian imperialism, its ownership by the grand vizier, and its rise and fall. During the writing of this thesis, a major research project has begun under the title “Consolidating Empire: Reconstructing Hegemonic Practices of the Middle Assyrian Empire at the Late Bronze Age Fortified Estate of Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria, ca. 1230 – 1180 BC,” under the direction of Universiteit Leiden’s Bleda Düring. The textual record gives a detailed image of the elite and administrative class, and the preserved architecture shows the *dunnu* without archaeologically visible traces of the surrounding population.

This is standard in archaeology, not because of an old-fashioned inclination toward an elite retelling of history or a focus on museum-worthy pieces, but instead because the archaeological and philological data are more prevalent for the elites. Their buildings were made of more durable materials, and they had better access to metallurgy, owned more lasting products, and were more likely literate. A forced attempt to use the existing data to paint a cross-class comprehensive socio-economic picture would often be an unscholarly rebellion against the data set. Yet as archaeology is the “past tense of cultural anthropology,” which itself is the study of human culture and society (definitions following Renfrew and Bahn 2008, 12), it is the moral imperative of the field to reflect all classes/statuses that comprise a society when the data allow for such a spectrum.

The material in this figurine study is thus critical for an understanding of daily life at Tell Sabi Abyad. Some publications (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, Wiggermann 2000) have already shown that Tell Sabi Abyad was a cosmopolitan society when examining the ethnicity of the names of the *siluhlu* serfs and the *alaju* villagers, but proceed to focus on the larger data set, that of the official functioning of the *dunnu*. This thesis’ in-depth examination of the figurines offers the unique ability to focus entirely on an aspect of material culture related to the common people of the settlement. The reflection of the aesthetic, the inclusion and dismissal of foreign elements, the illiterate economics, and the prioritization of the utility are all indicative of the lives of commoners on the *dunnu*.

An appreciation of a multi-class system allows for a better empathetic connection to the society at Tell Sabi Abyad. Any student of the Old Testament immediately pictures Babylon as a multi-ethnic society, because of the literary tradition of the migrant Jews. As such, Babylon has captured the imagination of scholars and artists for millennia, because of an appreciable vision of the past. For the illiterate, such a story can only be exposed by archaeological research. Larsen notes that “around the middle of the second millennium B.C. we find what Oppenheim called a “strange reversal” in the development of the script. ... This trend, which led to literacy becoming the prerogative of a restricted class of highly trained professionals, appears to be linked to a political and economic centralization process which marked the late second and early first millennia.” (Larsen 1987, 220). These professionals are a clerical class reserved for administration and religion, leading to too much emphasis on an economic and liturgical understanding of Assyrian society. Even in times of more widespread

literacy,<sup>21</sup> the common people are often not represented or remain archaeologically invisible, to the detriment of our understanding of the past. On a micro level, the utility artistic traditions of the commoners from Tell Sabi Abyad are reflected in the figurine collection from the site, and the contextualization of the broader ‘stone spirit’ typology over time and across the ancient Near East shows a similar folk cultural representation by common people on a macro level.

A cosmopolitan view of Tell Sabi Abyad is not only more vivid and empathetic, but a means of extending study to a broader target group. Themes of representation and symbolism are usually considered in the esoteric or cult spheres, but this paper has been able to address them in the common arena as well. Foreigners and locals are often regarded in their role in an imperial work force, but in this instance, their role in the dissemination of a folk typology and its overall neglect reveals the power dynamic within imperialist states. The remnants of older typologies remind us that populations under imperial domination do not necessarily belong to that culture group. A focused study on the transition between the Mitanni and the Assyrian populations and on the continuity of architecture between levels 7-6 would further our understanding of the society.

We term the site ‘Middle Assyrian’ by governance, but historically, what border territory of a large empire has ever reflected the culture of the mainland of that state? It is only natural that the material culture of Tell Sabi Abyad reflects both Assyrian and local material culture, and the objects and their intentional destruction tell a tale of an inevitable imperial cultural clash that is overlooked when the site is considered simply ‘Middle Assyrian.’

#### 5.4. Against a Static View of the Past

By presenting a comprehensive analysis of the figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad, this thesis has expanded on themes of disregard, artistic representation in the common rather than esoteric sphere, the multiplicity of factors needed to define and utilize object typologies, and the implications of invasive artifacts. In such a presentation, three understudied views of the population have been adopted: those of ancient peoples interacting with and living amid (literally) layered history, that of the *dunnu* as a cosmopolitan center in which commoners conducted agricultural and economic transactions while prioritizing utility and functionality tools over arcane and ritual

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<sup>21</sup> Some scholars disagree about illiteracy as a product of complexity. Vanstiphout (1995, 2189) uses modern Japan to show that high complexity of writing systems has little to do with the literacy of a population. However, no scholar claims a widespread Assyrian literacy extending to commoners in any period.

aesthetics, and the multiple levels of intentional disregard by site inhabitants of representative material culture.

The image of the Assyrians as archaeologists uncovering Neolithic artifacts every time they wanted to build a new structure is complicated by the varied treatment given to earlier artifacts. A complete Halaf vessel was reused functionally, a drilled stone amulet was given as a burial ornament, ‘stone spirits’ were discarded or used as tools, and “prehistoric material is found in bricks from all Bronze Age occupation phases” (Nieuwenhuys 1997, 232). The varied treatment can be accounted for by the quality of the goods found, the individual curiosities of those who found them, and a multiplicity of other reasons.

This ancient interaction with the past is not restricted to Tell Sabi Abyad. The field of archaeology of memory, whose tenets were not applicable in this study, should be immensely relevant for the Near East, yet it is a region of archaeological research unexplored by memory studies. As tells formed over previous settlements and became obvious places for construction by their elevation, many ancient Near Eastern societies built directly on top of older settlements, and must have interacted with the earlier material culture. In such circumstances, material displacement is inevitable. Archaeologists are ready to declare objects as belonging to the cultural stratum in which they were found, and only by conducting extensive typology studies (such as that of the ‘stone spirits’) can invasive artifacts be understood as such. Once objects are recognized as alien elements, the intentionality of their treatment must be addressed, to understand contemporary evaluation or disregard.

This is not an attack on stratigraphic methodology; without it, relative site chronologies would be impossible to establish. Nevertheless, in order to understand potential diachronic usage, a greater focus must be placed on whether the usage within a find context matches the original intended functionality visible in the form, the broader typology, or the aesthetics, depending on the object type in question. Most Near Eastern archaeological sites exhibit multiple occupation periods, and interaction with previous material culture is inevitable. Social memory is a critical factor in evaluating interactions with the past. How does the archaeological record reflect a difference in treatment between objects of known past societies versus alien objects? For example, how differently would the Assyrians treat Neolithic (alien) objects versus Akkadian or Old Assyrian (part of the Assyrian historical narrative) objects versus Mitanni/Hurrian (a known hostile part of the historical narrative) objects? How can ancient object damage be used to understand contemporary material evaluation? How can the intentionality of disregard be rendered more visible in the archaeological record? Such a line of questioning would broaden archaeological appreciation of the complex diachronic

material interactions on tells, and foster a better understanding of the way that ancient peoples constructed their own historical narratives.

In addition to ancient interaction, the presentation of the figurines exposed symbolic representation existing in a common sphere, with emphasis on utility and economy. Archaeological examination of symbolism in the ancient world is usually linked with studies of ritual or the arcane, and is almost always connected to elite, religious, or administrative organization, and logically so. Elites have the ability to fund aesthetic material culture, and representational aesthetics are most likely to be imbued with symbolic value. Religious administrations require the creation of symbolic meaning in the items they use. Moreover, the elite classes have greater access to more durable materials, and more skilled craftsman. The artifacts from Tell Sabi Abyad do not fit into this trend, as the workmanship is mostly crude and the materials common, giving a rare glimpse of archaeological visibility of an entirely non-elite artistic tradition. They offer a unique view into common symbolic representation, and ordinary functionality should be a consideration in future figurine studies.

The nature of our figurines reflects the unique characteristics of the site itself. It is a fortified farmstead with a large administrative capacity, likely due to its border location and custom post (Akkermans and Wiggermann *in press*, 21). It was established upon a previous settlement with a different imperial leadership, and the local population was not Assyrian. The site has no (archaeologically visible) religious center, perhaps due to the multiplicity of beliefs of its diverse but small population, and no assimilated culture would have formed during the brief and tumultuous Middle Assyrian occupation. As the border of an imperial culture with an administrative and military presence, relations between the Assyrians and the other populations would presumably have been tense, and the material cultures would clash. In this zone of mixed cultural orientation, it is no wonder that there would not be a state-guided religious center, and that a folk typology would be the dominant trace of esoteric material culture. The Assyrian inclination to reshape foreign symbolic items evinces the nature of the relations between the imperial and local inhabitants. The ‘stone spirits’ were found mostly in early levels, though the clay figurines were found more in later occupations. This may reflect a normalizing of relations, as older traditions were discarded and priority was placed upon economic well-being, symbolized by the usage of clay representational economic tokens.

Imperial settlements are a common place for excavation activity, both because of the historical-cultural value of understanding empires and because empires had the economic capability to produce grand and therefore archaeologically visible sites. Yet scholars must be cautious when applying an imperial cultural framework to the population of border settlements, because these societies were more likely cosmopolitan

groups with mixed feelings about their foreign governance than colonists from the empire's heartland. Citing Tell Sabi Abyad's culture as 'Middle Assyrian' ignores a large demographic interacting with the material culture. In doing so, the material culture will be misappropriated, and the cosmopolitan nature of the *dunnu* will be overlooked.

This study has used the figurines at Tell Sabi Abyad to tell several stories. It has utilized a comprehensive accounting for inter- and intra-site distribution, chronology, contexts, and functionality to explore a diverse corpus of figurines from Tell Sabi Abyad, and to shed light on a poorly understood but widely attested typology. In doing so, it explored the *dunnu* in its function as a cosmopolitan settlement under an imperial administration, reflecting a population that included a variety of socio-economic classes and cultural identities. It exposed representation and symbolism as existing not solely under the domain of an elite class, but also in everyday economic and folk-cultural usage, both in the site and across the ancient Near East. It has questioned all possible approaches to figurine studies, settling on a priority of functionality, intentionality, and usage as the key means of understanding material culture. In the end, it focused on a diachronic consideration of material culture to remind archaeologists that nothing retains a static meaning, and that representation serves a multiplicity of purposes in both the arcane and common arenas.

## Abstract

This paper utilizes unpublished excavation data from Leiden University's excavation at Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria to examine two types of figurines from the site's Late Bronze Age Middle Assyrian occupation in the late 13<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. Beyond the contextual and analytical presentation of new material to the archaeological community, it reestablishes an understudied typology through the promotion of a geographical, chronological, cultural, and functional frameworks. This study uses the figurines as a base to explore issues inherent in their find contexts and preservation. After establishing typologies and object catalogs, it explores the archaeological visibility of intentional material disregard, the dynamism of contemporary value attributions to representative material culture, and the interplay of ancient peoples with their local histories. In highlighting the functionality of a symbolic material culture that existed outside the settlement's imperial sphere, this thesis uses the figurines to reveal the cosmopolitan nature of the common people at Tell Sabi Abyad. The study establishes one typology as non-Assyrian and invasive, and uses the context and fracture patterns of the others to show that they reflect utilitarian rather than ritual usage.



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## List of Figures

Figures shown at the end of the text are listed below with their page numbers and references. For more detailed references (actual page/plate numbers in initial publications) see the individual captions. Unreferenced material is either created by the author, or taken from internal Sabi Abyad notes, field drawings, photographs, or later drawings by the team's draftsman.

Note: Many images shown in the following gallery were drawn for internal documentation by the excavator rather than a professional draftsman, and were never intended for publication. When possible, photography or high quality drawings were used. Figures 19, 107-115, 117-123, 134-138, 141-149, 151-152, 156, 159, 161-162, 164, 167-172, 176-178, 180, 182-183, 186-187, 189-190, 192, 194, and 196 were field drawings by the excavator, included in this thesis as the only available reference for readers. Please excuse the lower quality of these drawings.

- Fig. 1, p.124. Map of Syria, showing the kingdoms of Assyria and Hanigalbat in the 13th-12th century BC and the site of Tell Sabi Abyad. (Duistermaat 2008, fig. I.1)
- Fig. 2, p.124. A highlight of the studied region within the broader ancient Near East. (after Sasson 1995, inside cover).
- Fig. 3, p.125. The shifting power dynamics of the Near Eastern Bronze Age. (after Liverani 1990, p.299-300).
- Fig. 4, p.126. Contour map of Tell Sabi Abyad, showing the areas of excavation (Duistermaat 2008, fig. III.1).
- Fig. 5, p.127. Plan of level 6 architecture.
- Fig. 6, p.128. Plan of level 5 architecture.
- Fig. 7, p.129. Plan of level 4 architecture.
- Figs. 8-10, p.130. F04-24, 'Stone Spirit' from square O9.
- Fig 11, p.131. F92-7. Drawings of the 'stone spirit' from square L11.
- Figs. 12-13, p.131. F96-16. Drawing and photo of the 'stone spirit' from square M11.
- Figs. 14-16, p.132. S02-357. Drawings of the 'stone spirit' from square K7.
- Fig. 17, p.132. S02-357. A coupled photo of the 'stone spirit' from square K7.
- Figs. 18-20, p.133. S03-401. Drawings and photos of the 'stone spirit' from square G7.
- Figs. 21-22, p.134. S03-810. Photo and drawing of the 'stone spirit' from square N11.
- Fig. 23, p.134. Photographic comparison of S03-401, S03-810, and S03-357.
- Fig. 24, p.135. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah (Oates 1965, plate XX).
- Fig. 25, p.135. Context of 'stone spirit' in figure 24 (Oates 1965, plate XX).
- Fig 26, p.135. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah (Oates 1968 plate XXV).
- Figs 27-29, p.135. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah, in temple doorway context (Carter 1970, 36).
- Figs. 30-32, p.135. 'Stone spirits' from Tepe Gawra (Carter 1970, 24, 34).
- Figs. 33-42, p.136. 'Stone Spirits' from Tell Billa (Carter 1970). Billa 1-9 and the Billa "fake."
- Fig. 43, p.137. Figurines from Alalakh (a-h) and Diyarbekir (i and j) (Woolley 1955, plate XLIV).
- Fig 44, p.137. Figurines from Qadesh (Carter 1970).

Figs. 45-6, p.137. 'Ancestor idols' from Risqeh (Kirkbride 1969, p. 191, 120), first shown in context, then in detail.

Figs. 47-48, p.138. Stela from Tell Brak. Photo by the author. Fig. 48 for human scale, featuring Louvre visitor Kathryn McDaniel.

Fig. 49, p.138. Figurine from Mari (Parrot 1962, Plate X, #4).

Fig. 50, p.138. Figurine drawing from Qatna (Carter 1970, 37).

Fig. 51, p.138. Figurine from Tell Mardikh/Ebla (Matthiae 1965, plate LIX).

Fig. 52, p.138. Figurine from Hawa Huyuk (Carter 1970, 38).

Fig. 53, p.138. Figurine from Megiddo (Carter 1970, 38).

Fig. 54, p.138. Stela/statue from Abu Ireyn (Carter 1970, 27).

Fig. 55, p.139. Map of 'stone spirits' listed by Carter 1970, created by the author.

Fig. 56, p.139. Map of 'stone spirits' added by this thesis, created by the author.

Fig. 57, p.140. Map of 'stone spirits' from EBA sites, created by the author.

Figs. 58-61, p.141. 'Stone spirits' from Munbaqa/Ekalte (Czichon 1998)

Figs. 62 and 63, p.142. More 'stone spirits' from Munbaqa/Ekalte (Czichon 1998).

Figs. 64-66, p.142. 'Stone Spirits' from Selenkahiye (Orthmann 1991).

Fig. 67, p.142. Burial from Selenkahiye with 'stone spirits' indicated by highlights (after Van Loon and Meijer 2001)

Figs. 68-70, p.143. Collections of 'stone spirits' from Wreide (Orthmann 1991).

Fig. 71, p. 143. Two 'stone spirits' from Wreide (Van Loon and Meijer 2001).

Fig. 72, p.144. A 'stone spirit' from Wreide (Van Loon and Meijer 2001).

Fig. 73, p.144. 'Stone Spirits' from Wreide (Orthmann 1991).

Fig. 74, p.144. 'Stone Spirits' from Wreide (Van Loon and Meijer 2001).

Figs. 75-76, p.144. 'Stone Spirits' from Wreide (Orthmann 1991).

Fig. 77, p. 144. Plan of Wreide grave W 054, showing 'stone spirits' (after Orthmann 1991).

Fig. 78, p.145. Three Tell Brak 'stone spirits' unpublished by Carter (Oates *et. al.* 1997).

Fig. 79, p.145. Two 'stone spirits' from Ebla (Matthiae 1996).

Fig. 80, p.145. Two views of a 'stone spirit' from Tell Barri-Kahat (Pecolla 2000).

Fig. 81, p.145. 'Stone spirit' from Girnava (Erkanal 1988).

Fig. 82, p.145. The 'stone spirits' from Hazor (Beck 1990).

Fig. 83, p.146. Three 'stone spirits' from Tell Hadidi (Dornemann 1989).

Figs. 84-5, p.146. 'Stone spirits' from Tell Halawa (Pruss 1994).

Fig. 86, p.146. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Rifa'at (Seton Williams 1967).

Fig. 87, p.146. Four views of a 'stone spirit' from Tell Afis (Mazzoni 1998).

Fig. 88, p.146. 'Stone spirit' from Hama (Fugmann 1958).

Fig. 89, p.146. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Bayandur (Meijer 1986, fig. 7).

Fig. 90, p.146. Neolithic F07-02 from Sabi Abyad, a clay figurine shown as an example of pinching a clay nose as a dominant facial feature.

Figs. 91-92, p.147. The distribution of the 'stone spirits' at Tell Sabi Abyad. See captions for greater detail.

Fig. 93, p.148. Detail of the tower at Tell Sabi Abyad.

Figs. 94-97, p.149. Stone objects of unknown function with grooves comparable to those of the 'stone spirit' F96-16.

Fig. 98, p.150. Detail of the area in which F96-16 and S03-810 were excavated, nearby each other in a 'workshop context.'

Figs. 99-100, p.150. The *in situ* context for the 'stone spirit' S03-810, in N11.

Fig. 101, p.151. Halaf ceramics from Bronze Age strata. The highlighted item was reused for utility purposes by the Assyrians (after Nieuwenhuys 1997).

Fig. 102, p.151. Object F01-5, a Neolithic amulet (?) buried in an Assyrian grave.

Fig. 103, p.151. Middle Assyrian grave with several grave goods, including F01-5.

Fig. 104, p.151. Early Dynastic (3rd millennium) seal in Middle Assyrian context (Akkermans 1997).

Fig. 105, p.151. Scarab from necklace in an Assyrian cremation (Akkermans 1997).

Fig. 106 a-h, p.152.: Photography of some representational figurines from chapter 4. Objects shown: F01-6, F03-26, F03-9, F03-7, F91-7, O91-172, O91-384, F04-5, F96-2, F96-9, H-1, F92-12, F02-16, and F07-39. Each object shown again later in the image gallery as a drawing rather than photograph. See catalog in chapter 4.

Figs. 107-115, p.153. Objects F02-3, O02-147, F01-1, O01-75, F02-15, F02-2, B02-55, O97-351, and O97-353.

Figs. 116-124, p.154. Objects O96-152, F96-25, O01-76, O01-173, O02-45, O98-379, F98-6, O98-309, and F96-17.

Figs. 125-133, p.155. Objects F96-18, F96-15, F07-43, F07-39, O98-102, F99-2, F99-8, O99-135, F02-5.

Figs. 134-142, p.156. Objects F02-6, F02-7, O98-208, F99-19, O98-28, H-1, W-14, F96-3, and O99-217.

Figs. 143-148, p.157. Objects O99-389, O02-7, O93-56, F93-22, F97-23, and F93-21.

Figs. 149-156, p.158. Objects F97-3 (a+b), F96-11, F96-19, O91-164, F91-7, O91-172, O91-186, and O91-176.

Figs. 157-163, p.159. Objects O91-384, F92-12, F93-5, F93-1, F96-9, O91-44, and F02-16.

Figs. 164-171, p.160. Objects O93-170, F01-6, P01-88, O97-148, O97-280, O02-20, F96-4, and F96-5.

Fig. 172-180, p. 161. Objects F96-20, F96-2, O96-51, O96-88, O96-223, O93-193, F03-25, O99-341, and F03-3.

Figs. 181-185, p.162. Objects F03-7, O03-47, F03-11, O03-79, and F03-9.

Figs. 186-191, p.163. Objects O03-90, M04-4, F04-5, F04-8, O03-222, and F03-26.

Figs. 192-196, p.164. Objects F91-19, F91-20, W-9, A-1, and F97-5.

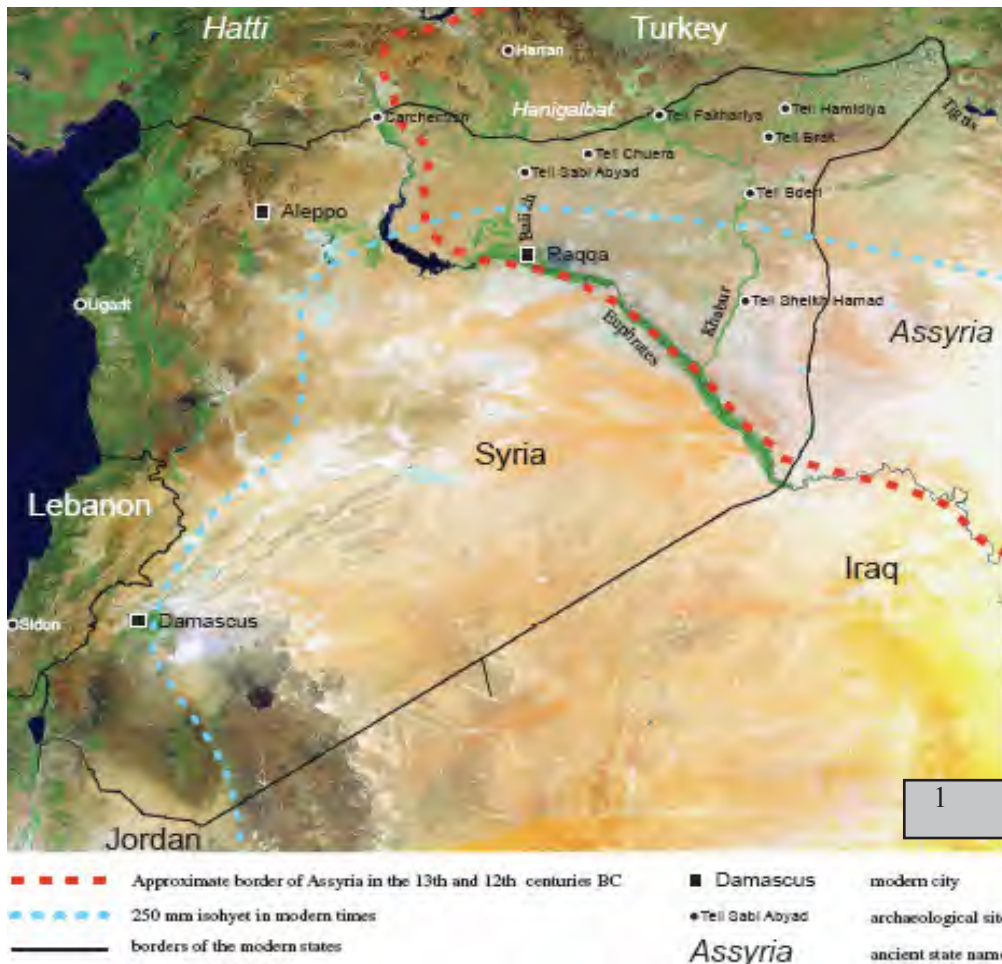
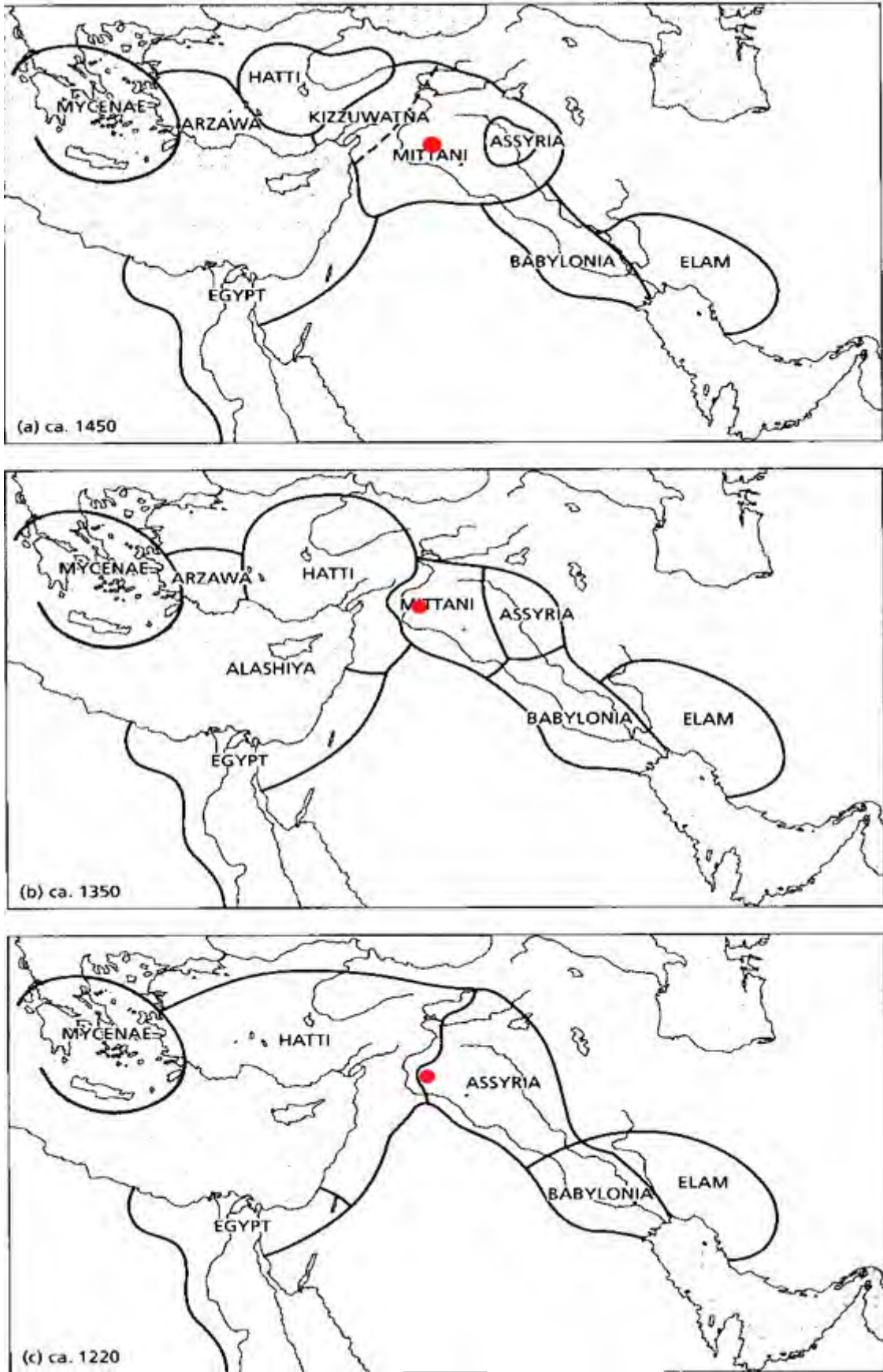


Fig. 1. Map of Syria, showing the location of the kingdoms of Assyria and Hanigalbat in the 13th-12th century BC and the site of Tell Sabi Abyad. (Duistermaat 2008, fig. I.1)

Fig. 2. A highlight of the studied region within the broader ancient Near East. (after Sasson 1995, inside cover).



3

Fig. 3. The shifting power dynamics of the Near Eastern Bronze Age. Sabi Abyad indicated in red. (after Liverani 1990, p.299-300).

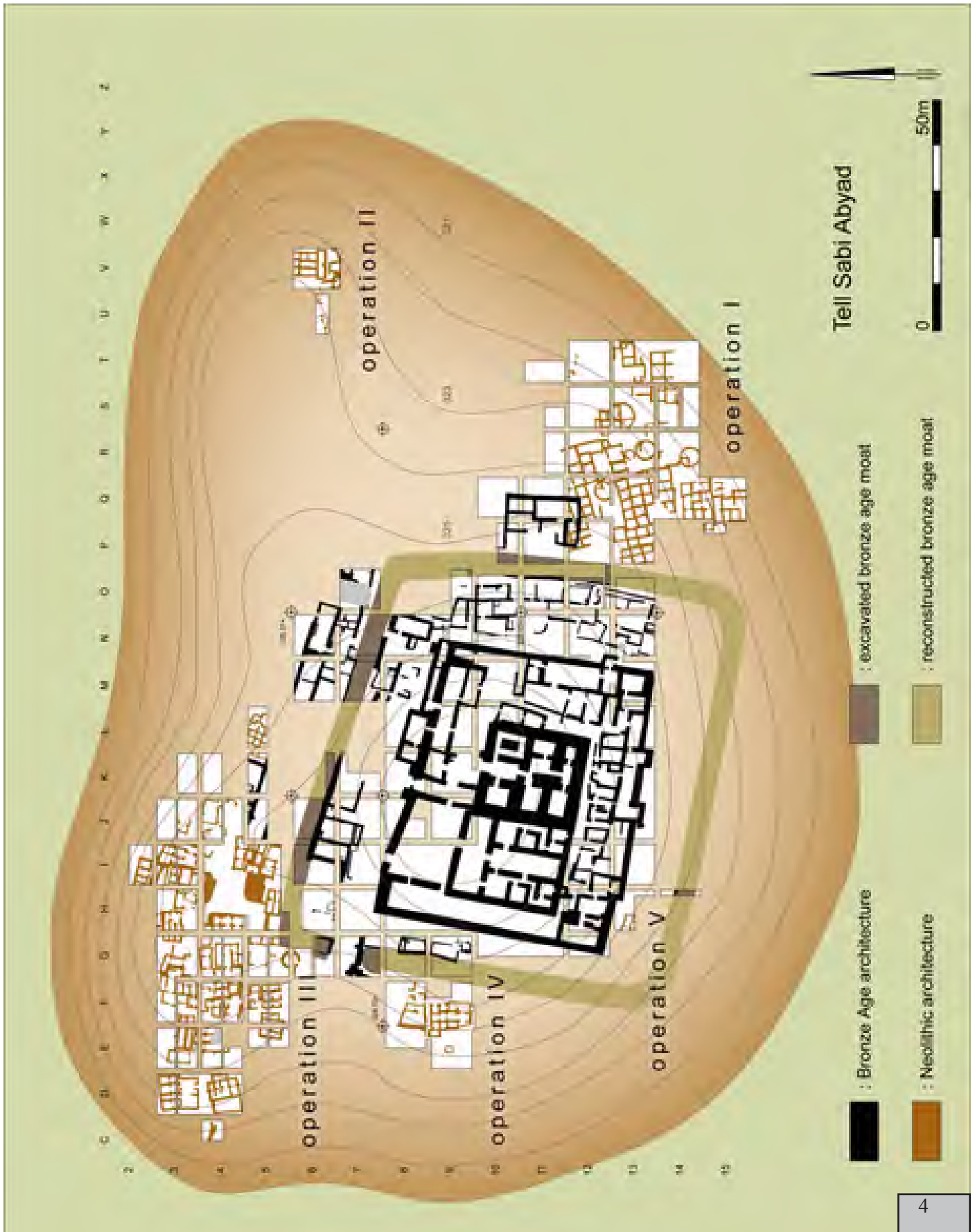


Fig. 4. Contour map of Tell Sabi Abyad, showing the areas of excavation (Duistermaat 2008, fig. III.1).



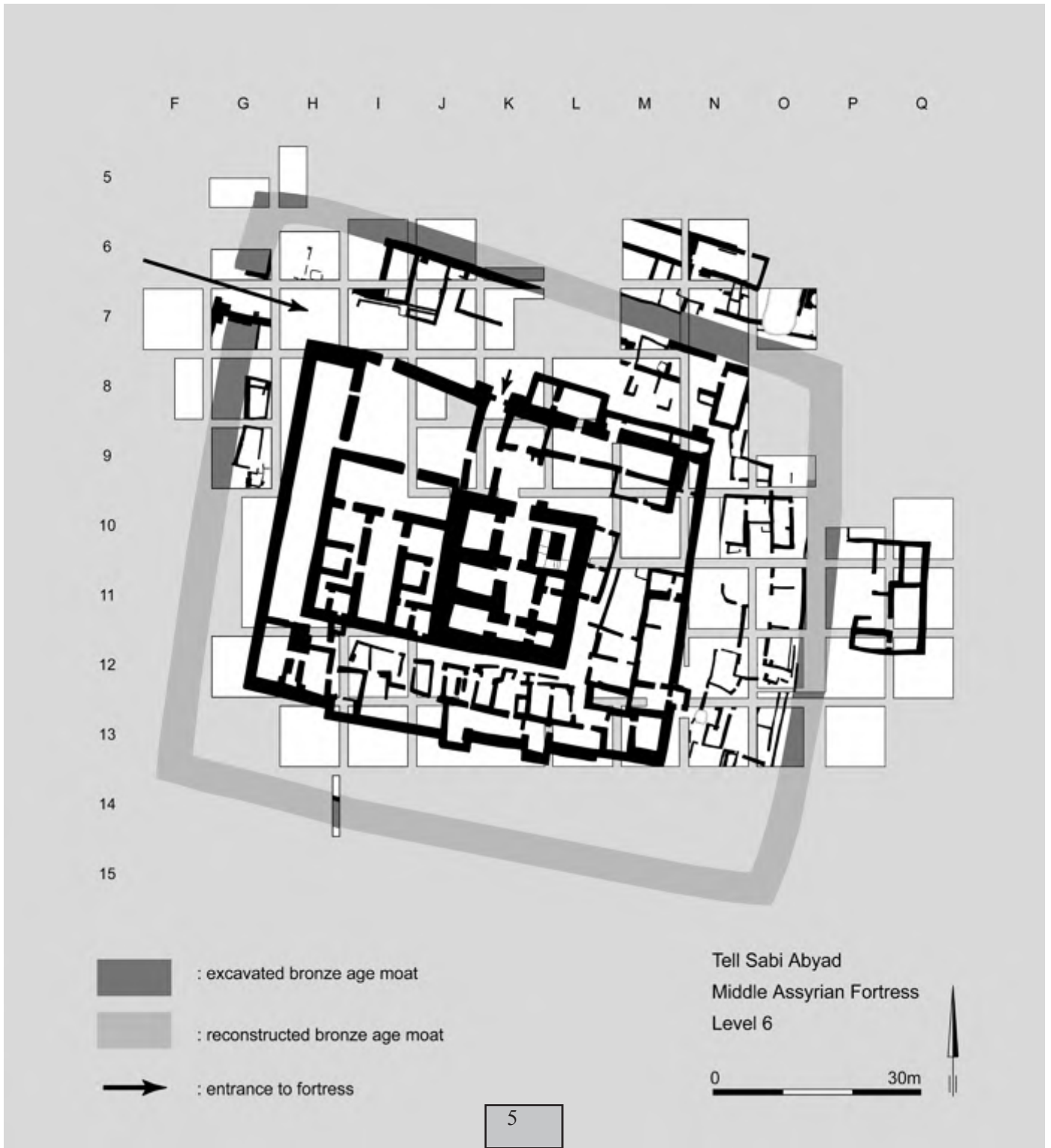


Fig. 5. Plan of level 6 architecture.

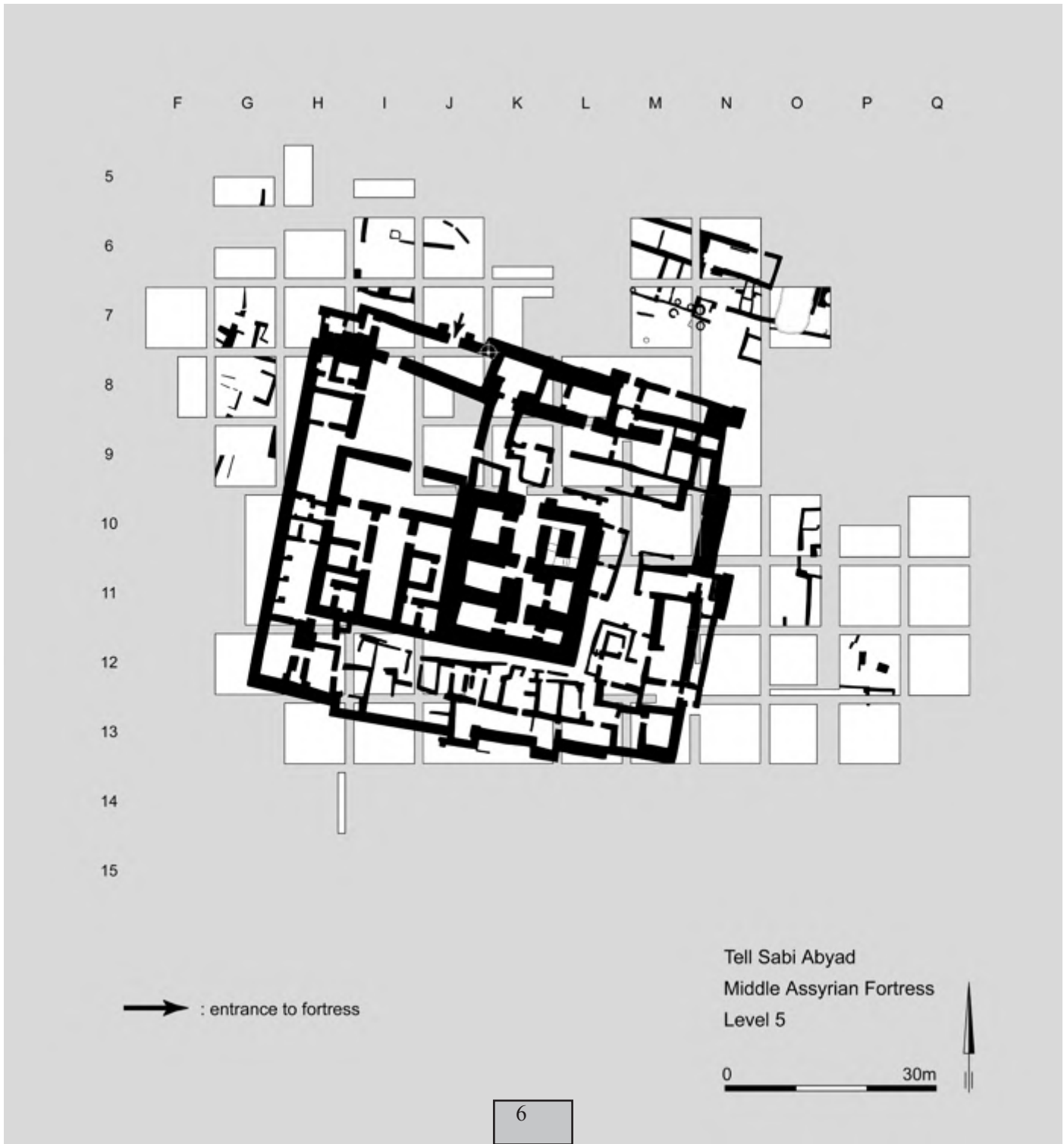
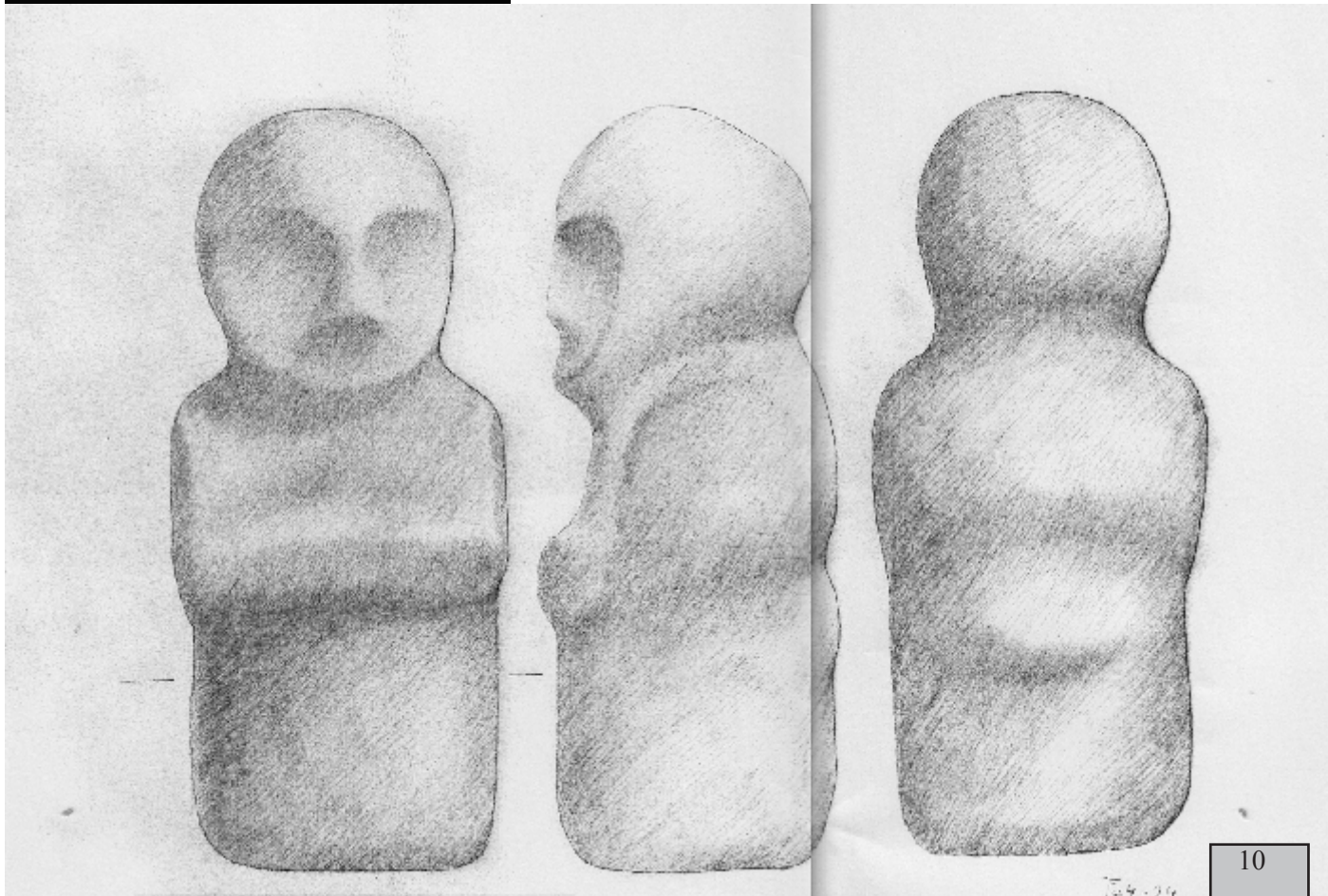


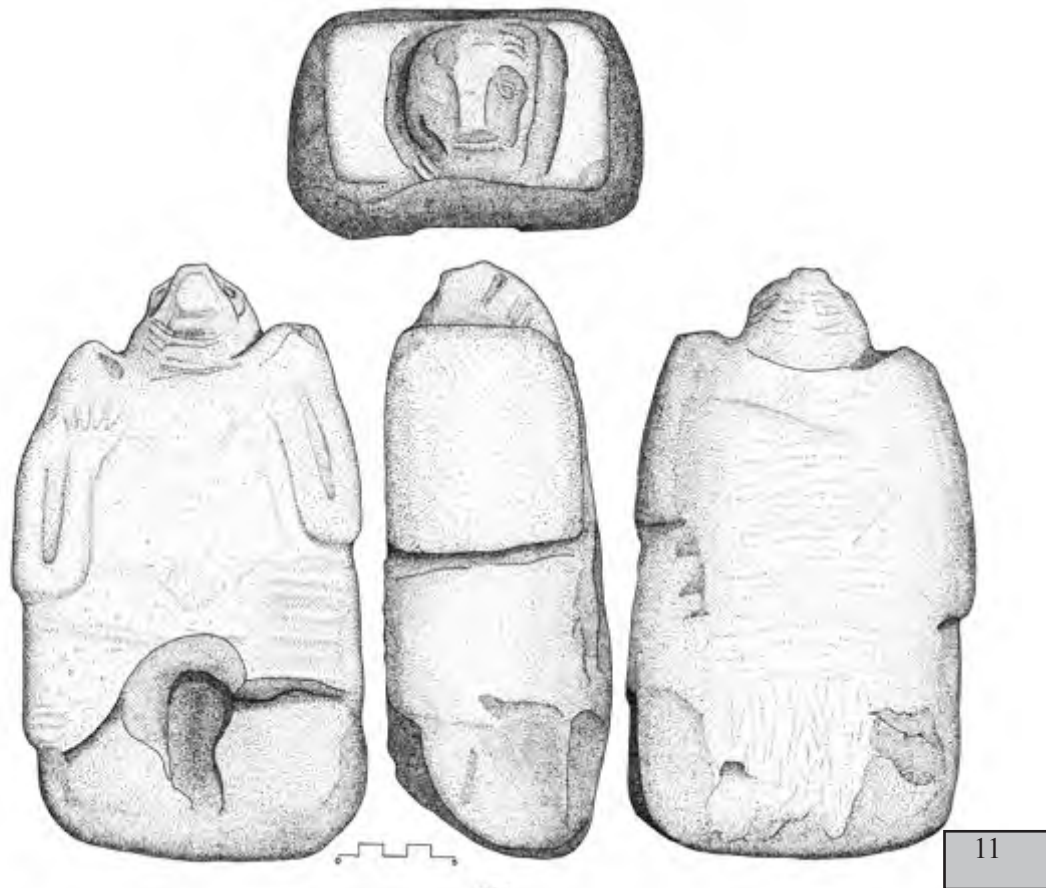
Fig. 6. Plan of level 5 architecture.



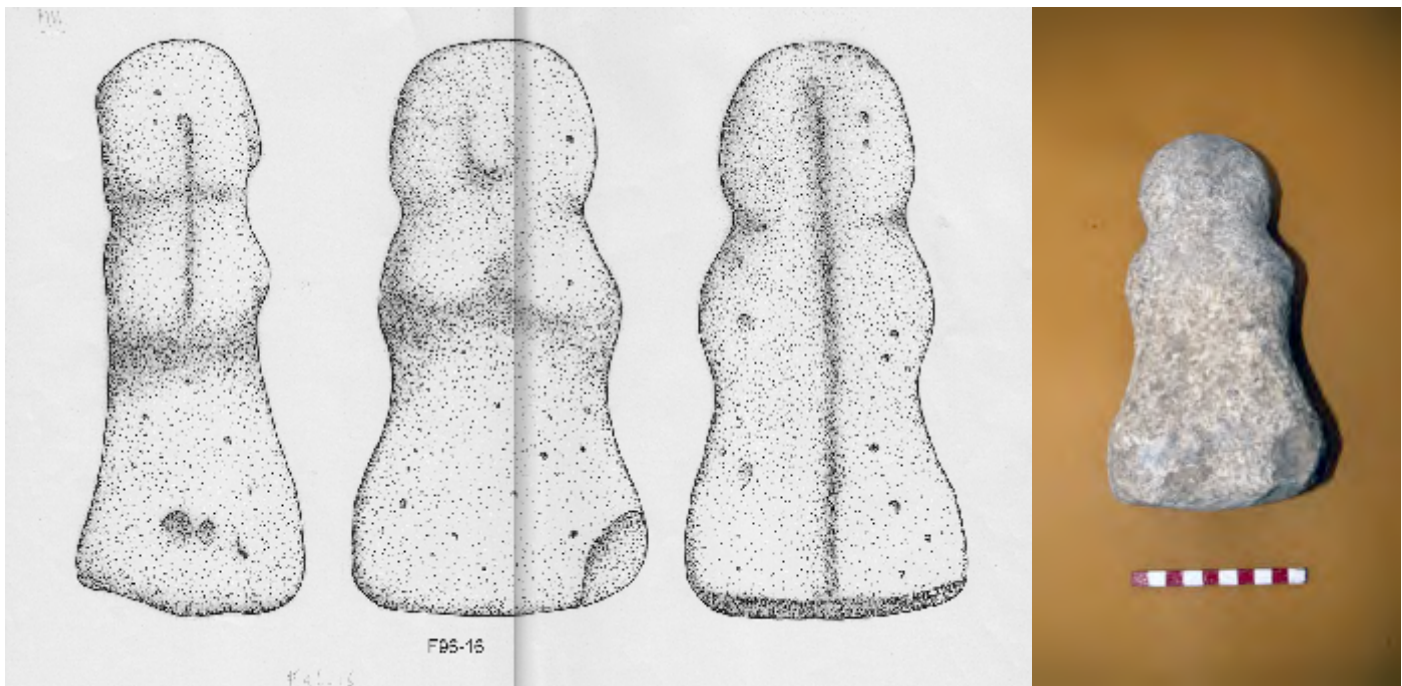
Fig. 7. Plan of level 4 architecture.



Figs. 8-10. F04-24, 'Stone Spirit' from square O9.



11



12

13

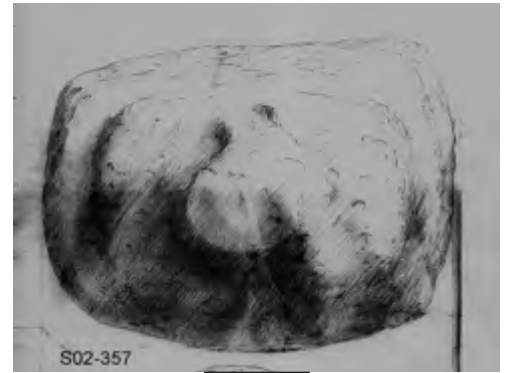
Fig 11. F92-7. 'Stone Spirit' from square L11.  
 Figs. 12-13. F96-16. 'Stone Spirit' from square M11.



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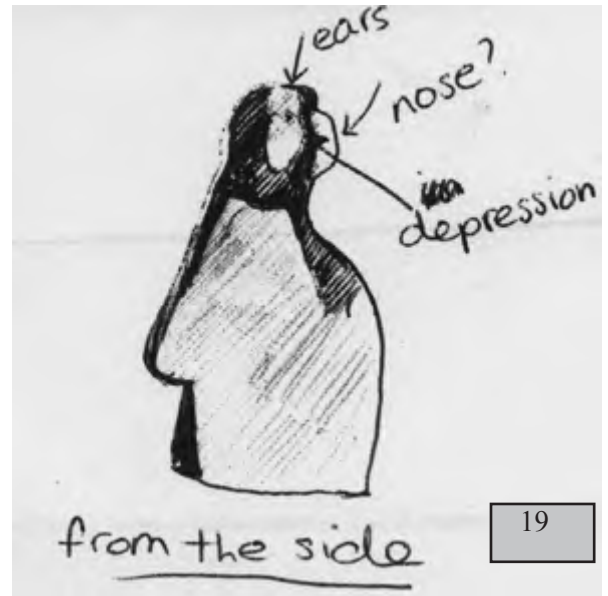


16

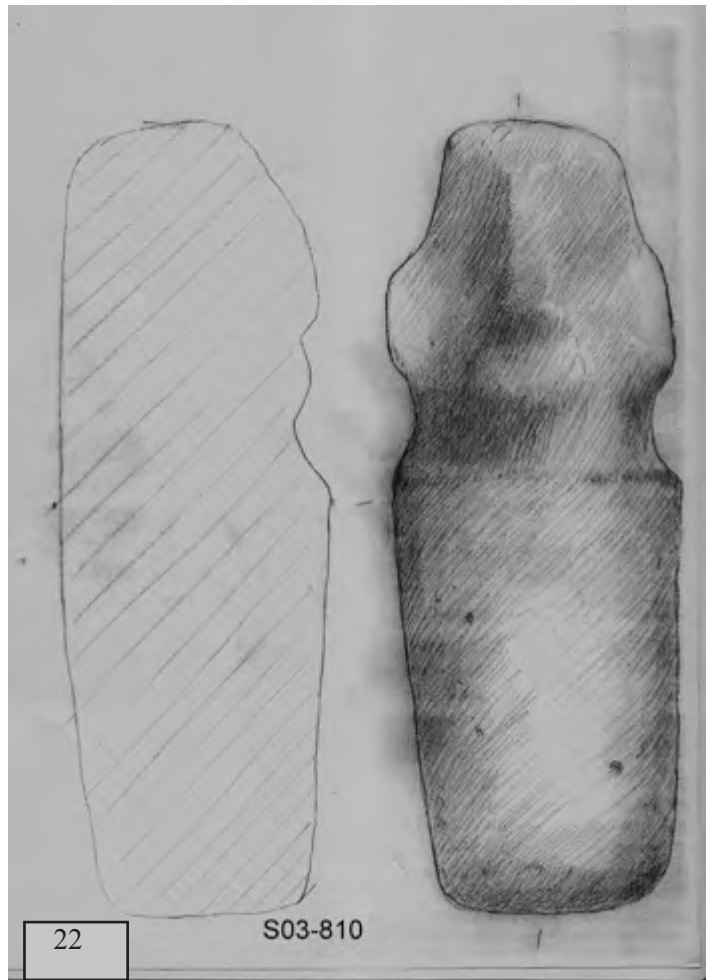


17

Figs. 14-16. S02-357. Drawings of the 'Stone Spirit' from square K7.  
Figs. 17. S02-357. A coupled photo of the 'Stone Spirit' from square K7.



Figs. 18-20. S03-401. 'Stone Spirit' from square G7.



Figs. 21-22. S03-810. 'Stone Spirit' from square N11.  
Fig. 23. Comparison of S03-401, S03-810, and S03-357.





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Gawra #1. In Baghdad.

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Gawra #3, of terracotta, 20 cm. h

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Figs. 24-25. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah in shrine context (Oates 1965 plate XX).

Fig. 26. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah (Oates 1968 plate XXV).

Figs 27-29. 'Stone spirit' from Tell al-Rimah, in temple doorway context (Carter 1970, 36).

Figs. 30-32. 'Stone spirits' from Tepe Gawra (Carter 1970, 24, 34). Left to right: Gawra 1, Gawra 2, Gawra 3 (Object numbers follow Carter 1970).



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Figs. 33-42. 'Stone Spirits' from Tell Billa (Carter 1970). Top left figure Billa 1 moving on to Billa 9. Bottom right image is the so-called Billa 'fake.' All object numbers follow Carter 1970.



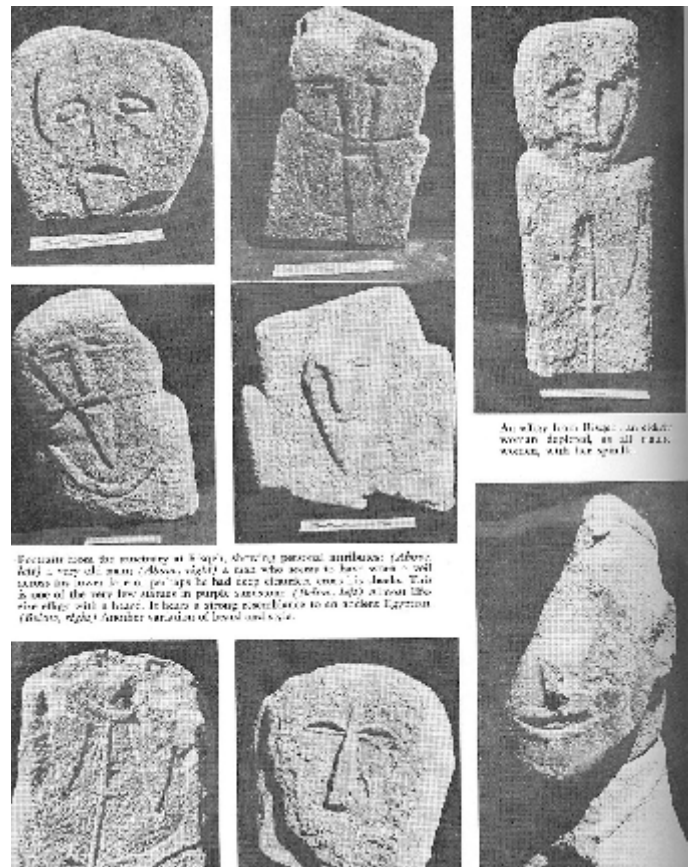
43



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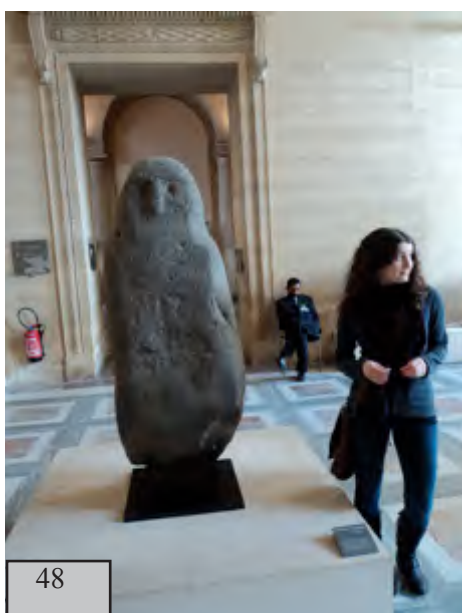
Fig. 43. Figurines from Alalakh (a-h) and Diyarbekir (i and j) (Woolley 1955, plate XLIV).

Fig 44. Figurines from Qadesh (Carter 1970).

Figs. 45-6. 'Ancestor idols' from Risqeh (Kirkbride 1969, p. 191, 120). Fig. 45 first shows the arrangement of the stelae in the open air sanctuary. Fig. 46 shows a small collection of the ancestor idols, bearing little relation to the 'stone spirits.'



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Figs. 47-48. Stela from Tell Brak. Photo by the author. Fig. 48 for human scale, Louvre visitor Kathryn McDaniel.  
Fig. 49. Figurine from Mari (Parrot 1962, Plate X, #4).  
Fig. 50. Figurine drawing from Qatna (Carter 1970, 37).  
Fig. 51. Figurine from Tell Mardikh/Ebla (Matthiae 1965, plate LIX).  
Fig. 52. Figurine from Hawa Huyuk (Carter 1970, 38).  
Fig. 53. Figurine from Megiddo (Carter 1970, 38).  
Fig. 54. Stela/statue from Abu Ireyn (Carter 1970, 27).



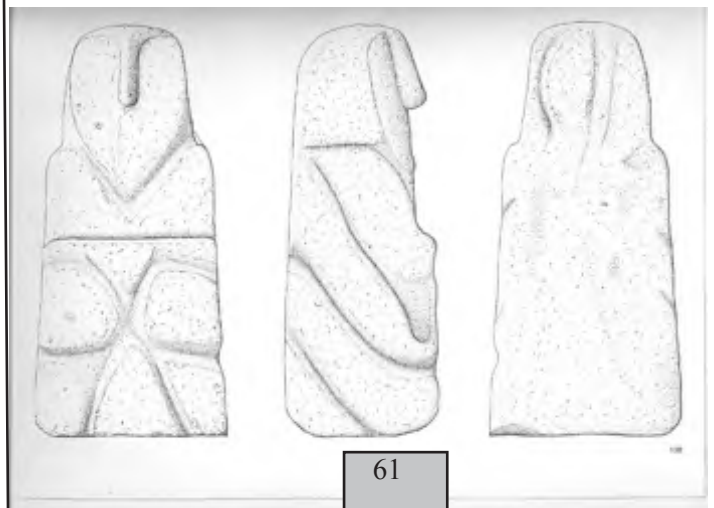
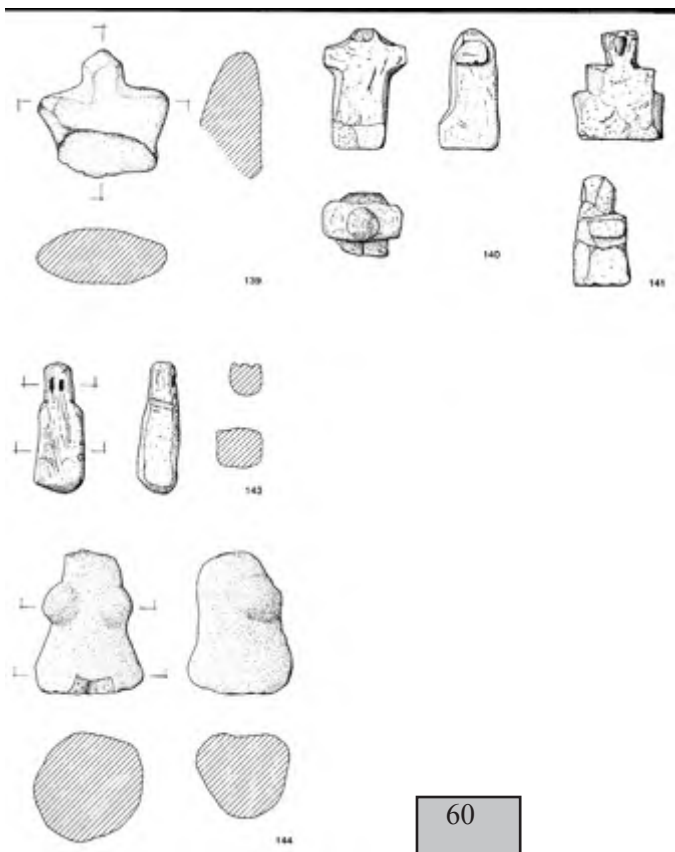
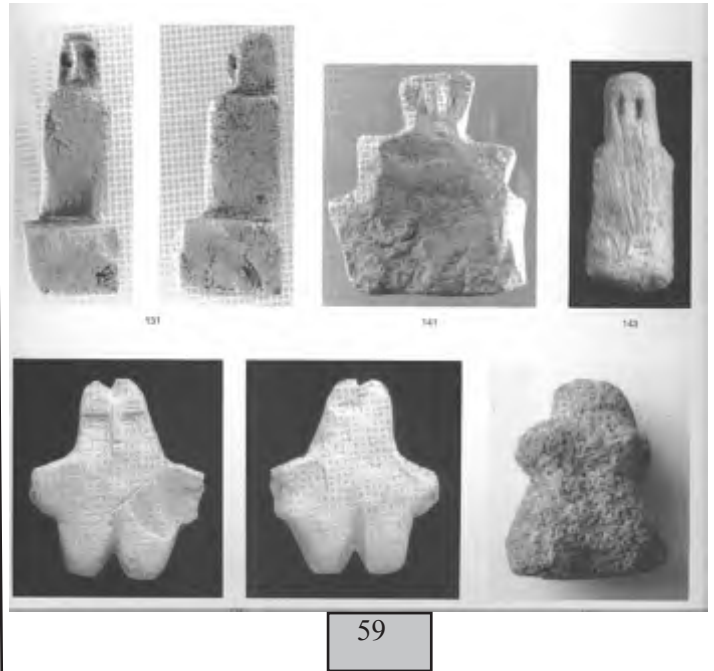
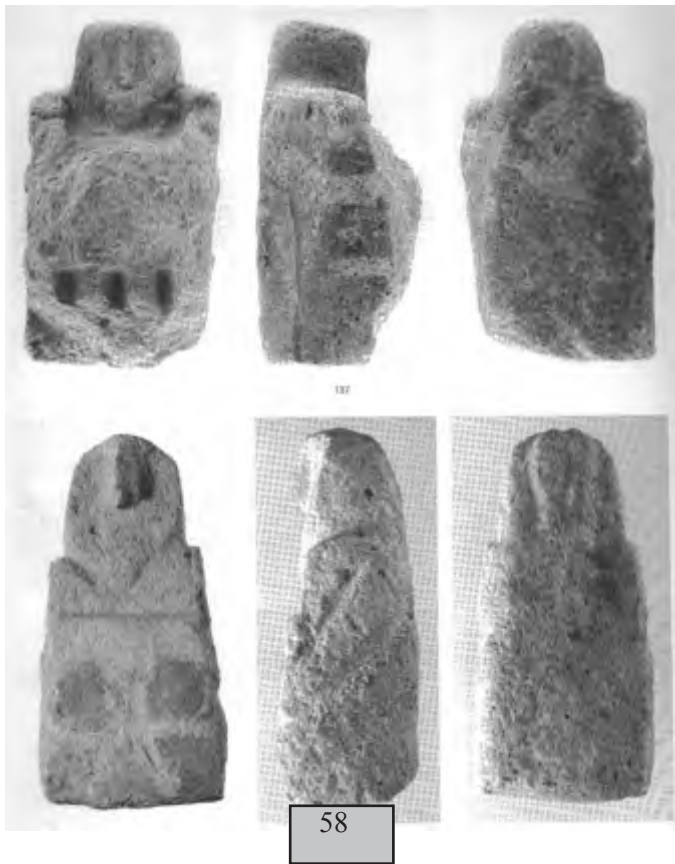
Fig. 55. Map of 'stone spirits' listed by Carter 1970.

Fig. 56. Map of 'stone spirits' added by this thesis.

Both maps made on Google Earth by the author. Note that several of the indicated sites do not have listed captions, as the software does not list overlapping sites/illegibly layered script. For instance, under the label for Tell Bi'a on fig. 56, there is a high density of sites, not all reflected in the accompanying labels.

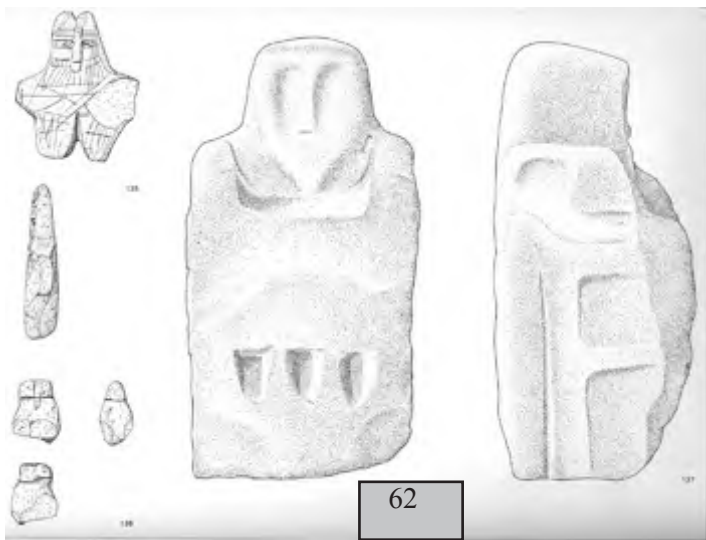


Fig. 57. Map of 'stone spirits' from EBA sites. Red indicates those mentioned by Carter, green indicates sites added by this thesis.

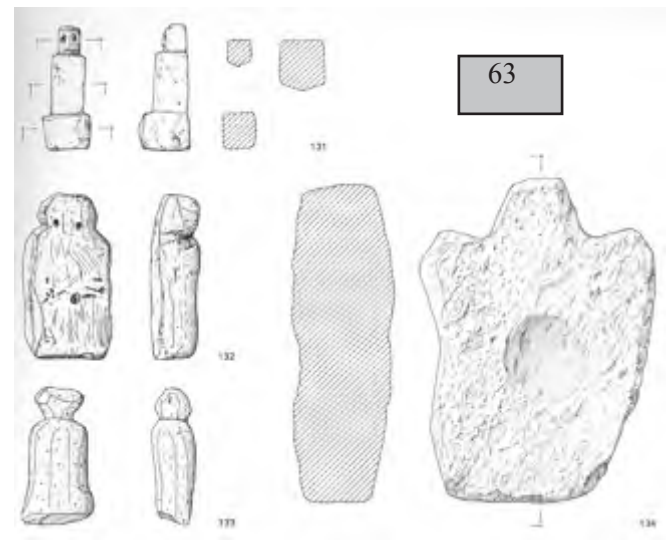


Figs. 58-61. 'Stone spirits' from Munbaqa/Ekalte (Czichon 1998, Fig. 58 is table 190, Fig. 59 is table 189, Fig. 60 is table 56, Fig. 61 is table 55).

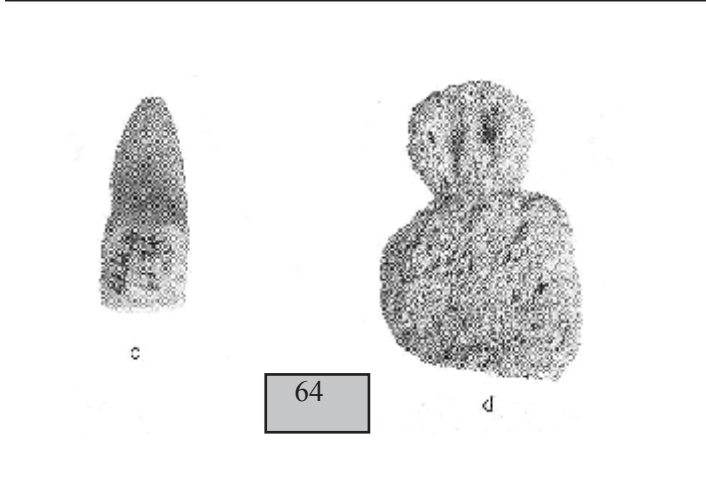
Fig. 60 edited by the author, removing irrelevant finds from the bottom right of the table.



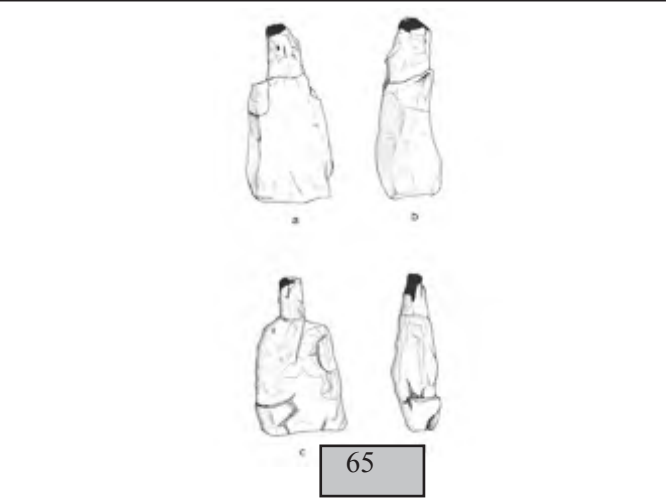
62



63



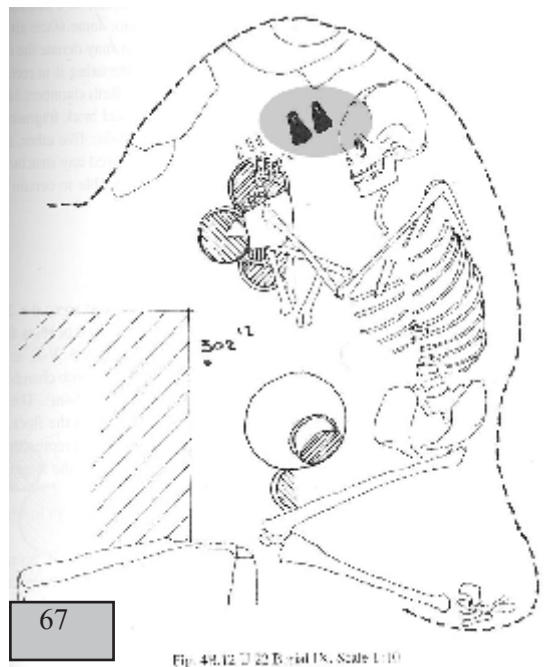
64



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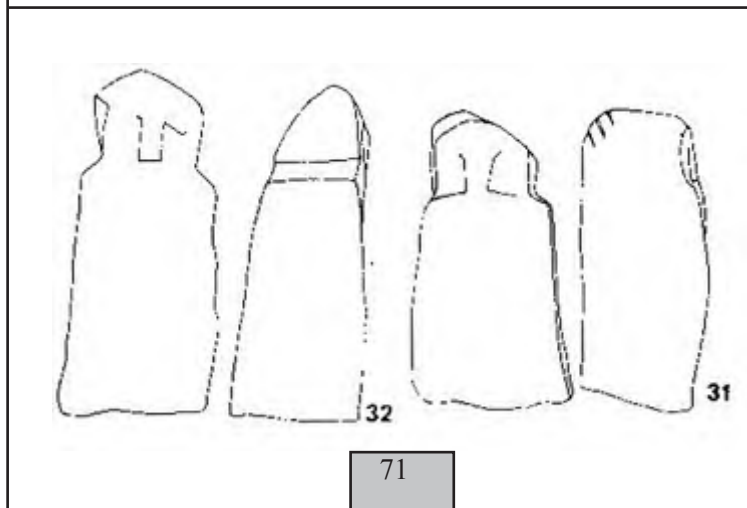
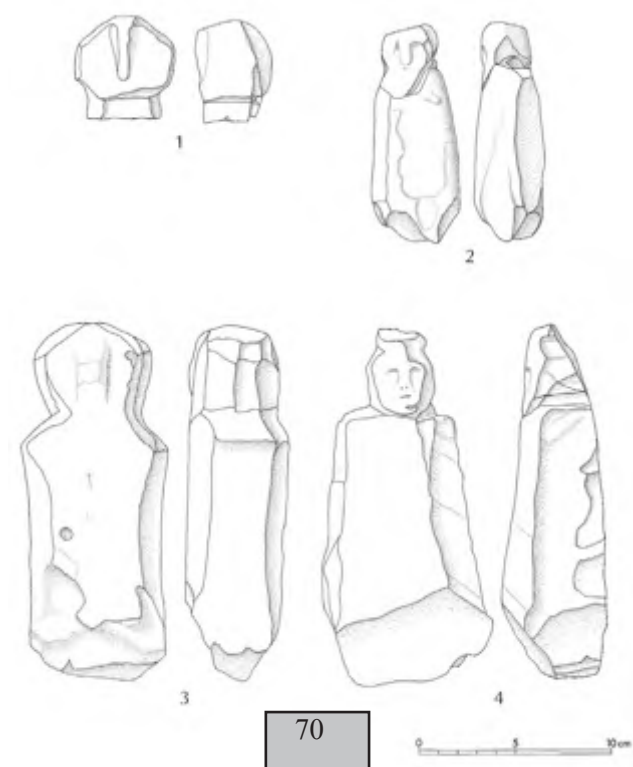
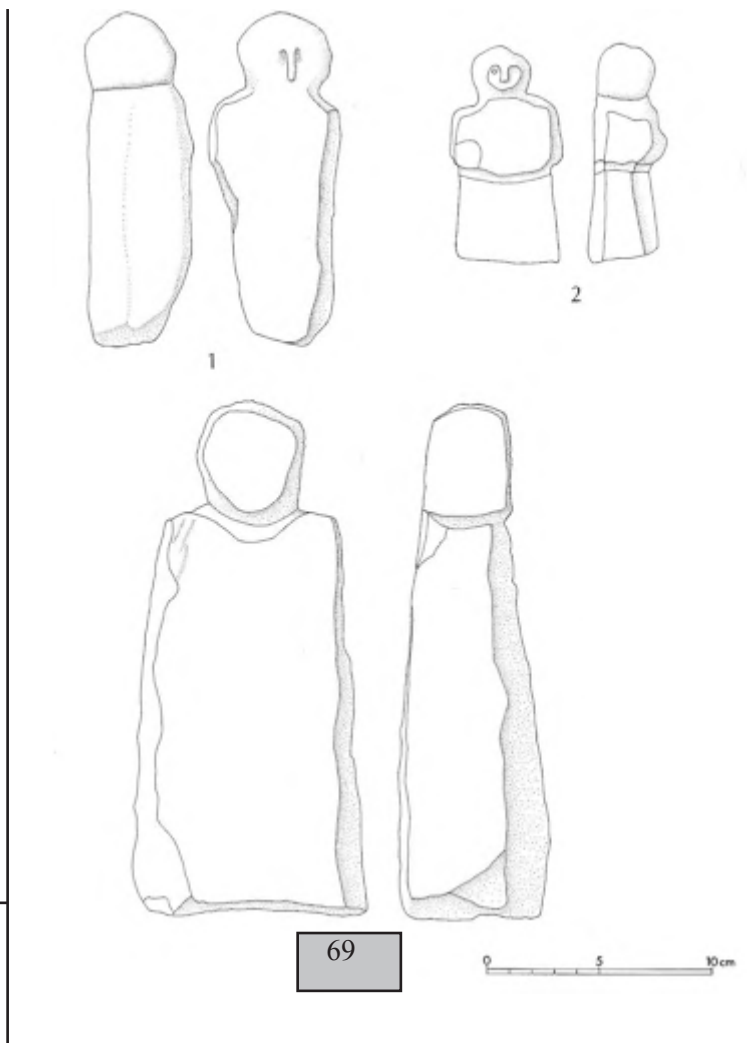
Fig. 44.12 U22 Burial IX, Scale 1:10

Figs. 62 and 63. More collections of 'stone spirits' from Munbaqa/Ekalt (Czichon 1998, tables 54 and 53, respectively).

Figs. 64-66. Collections of 'stone spirits' from Selenkahiye (Orthmann 1991). Fig. 64 (plate 9.9) shows objects SLK74-H35 and SLK74-H177, fig. 65 (plate 9.11) shows objects SLK74-X3 and SLK74-X5, fig. 66 (plate 9.12) shows objects SLK 75-S25 and SLK75-S26.

Fig. 67. Burial from Selenkahiye with 'stone spirits' indicated by highlights (after Van Loon and Meijer 2001, 4B.209. U22 Burial IX, with figurines SLK 75-S26 and SLK 75-S27).





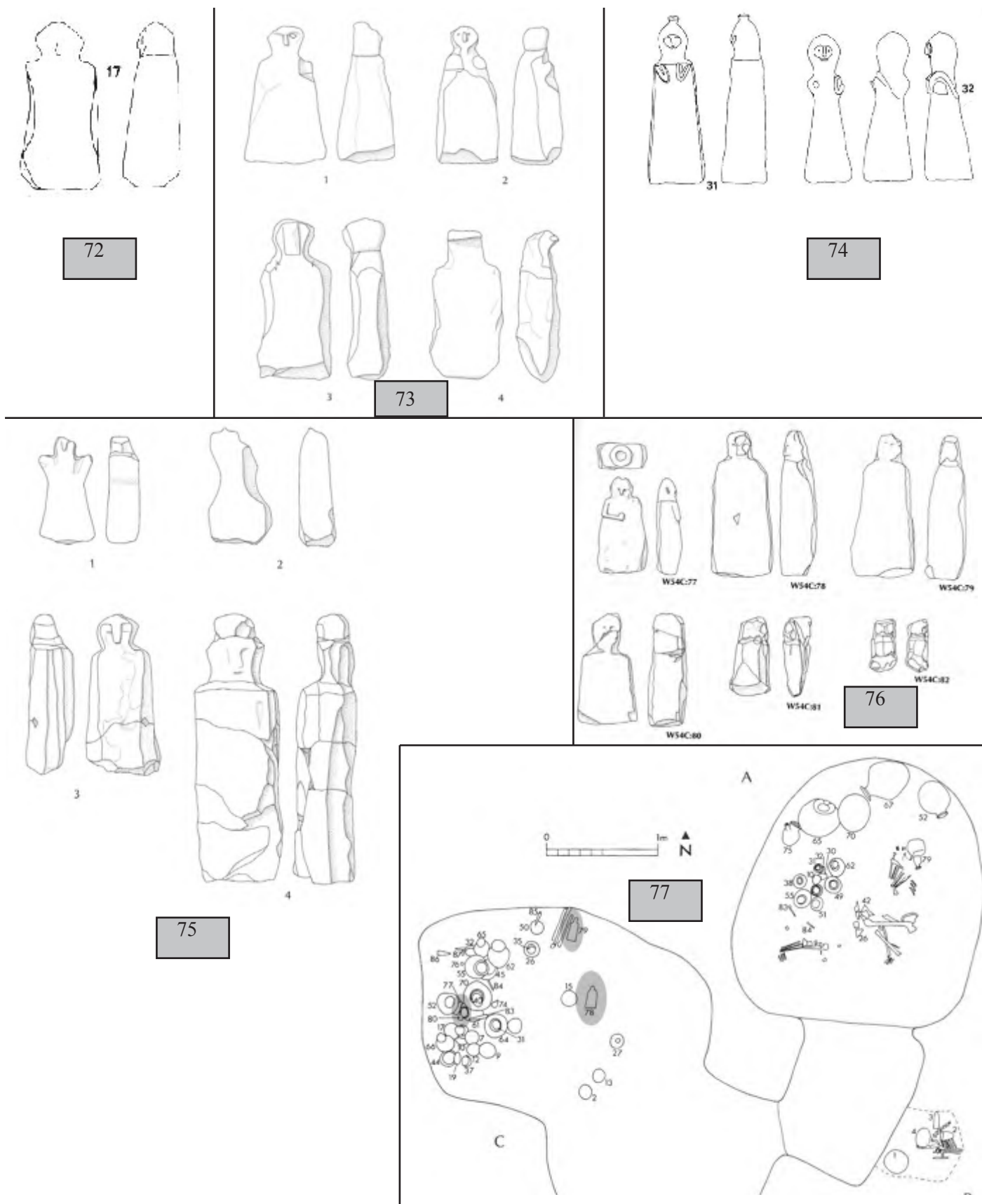
Figs. 68-71. Collections of 'stone spirits' from Wreide.

Fig. 68. Orthmann 1991, fig. 30. Objects W02.01, W02.02, W04.01, W04.02, W04.04, W04.03

Fig. 69. Orthmann 1991, fig. 31. Objects W09.01, W09.01, W09.03

Fig. 70. Orthmann 1991, fig. 34. Objects WR79.XX09, WR79.XX.15, WR79.XX.21, WR79.XX.22

Fig. 71. Van Loon and Meijer 2001, p. 4A.163. Wreide Tomb N, WRD67-504 and WRD67-505



Figs. 72-77, Collections of 'stone spirits' from Wreide.

Fig. 72. Van Loon and Meijer 2001, 4A.158. Object WRD 67-451.

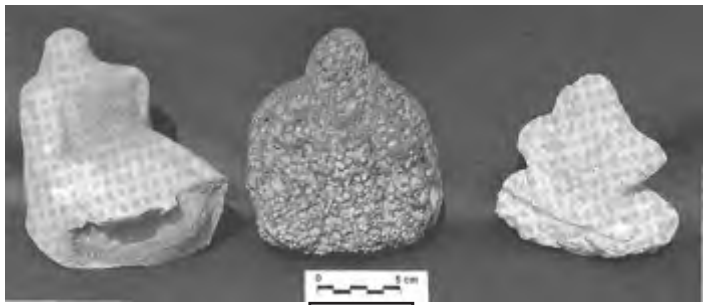
Fig. 73. Orthmann 1991, fig 32. Objects W09.02, W09.04, W09.05, W09.06

Fig. 74. Van Loon and Meijer 2001, p.4a.170, Wreide tomb P, SLK67-806, Object SLK67-805.

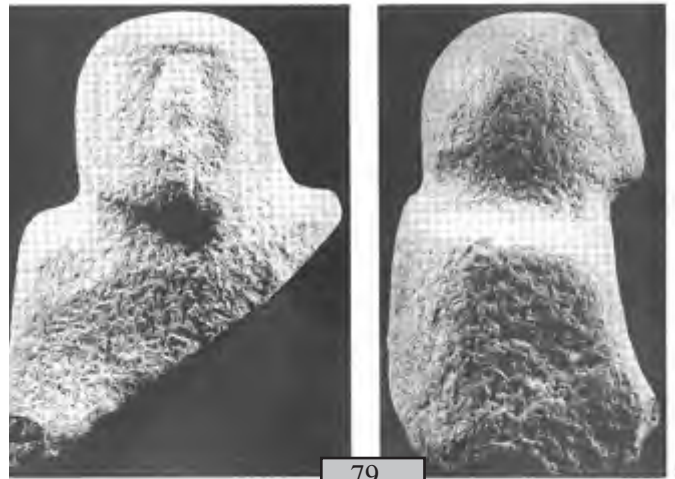
Fig. 75. Orthmann 1991, fig 33. Objects WR59.01, WR59.02, W101.01, WR79.XX.07

Fig. 76. Orthmann 1991, fig 24, figurines from W 054. Objects W54C:77-82.

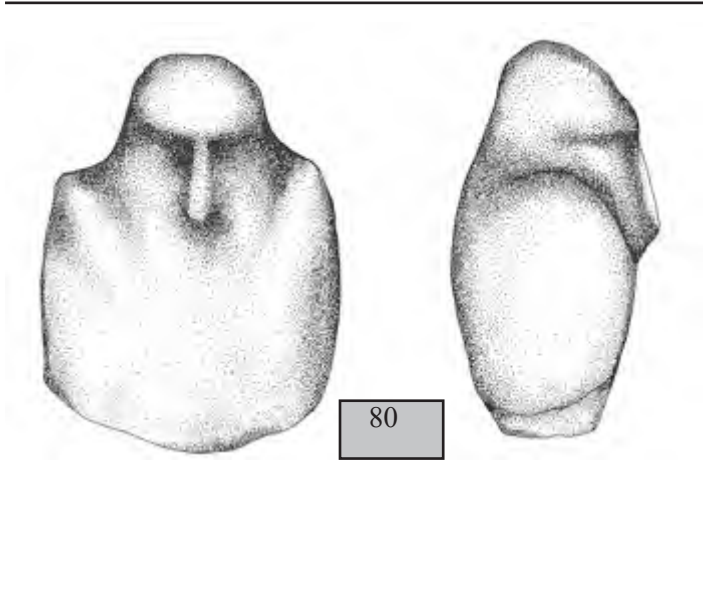
Fig 77. After Orthmann 1991, p.19, fig 6, plan of grave W 054. Some 'stone spirits' highlighted by the author.



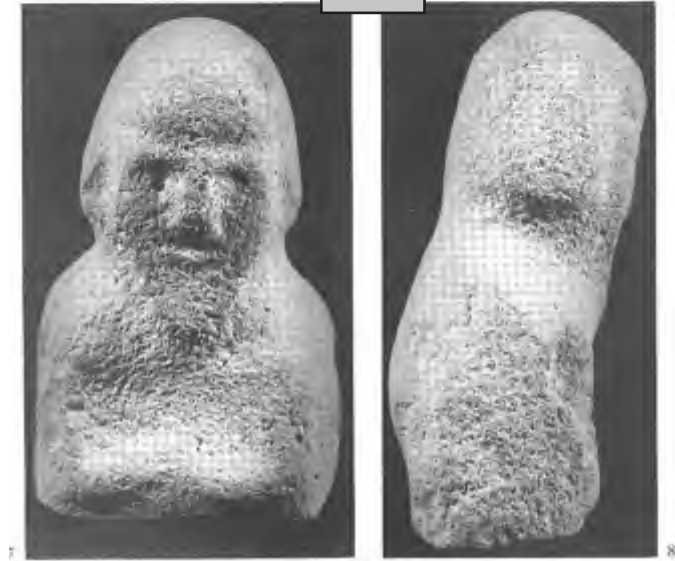
78



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Fig. 78. Three 'stone spirits' from Tell Brak unpublished by Carter (Oates *et. al.* 1997, p.106, figure 136).  
 Fig. 79. Two 'stone spirits' from Ebla (Matthiae 1996, 203. Objects TM90.P.175 and TM95.P.469).  
 Fig. 80. Front and side view of a 'stone spirit' from Tell Barri-Kahat (Pecolla 2000, fig.5).  
 Fig. 81. 'Stone spirit' from Girnavaz (Erkanal 1988, fig.8).  
 Fig. 82. The 'stone spirits' from Hazor (Beck 1990, p.92, fig. 1).

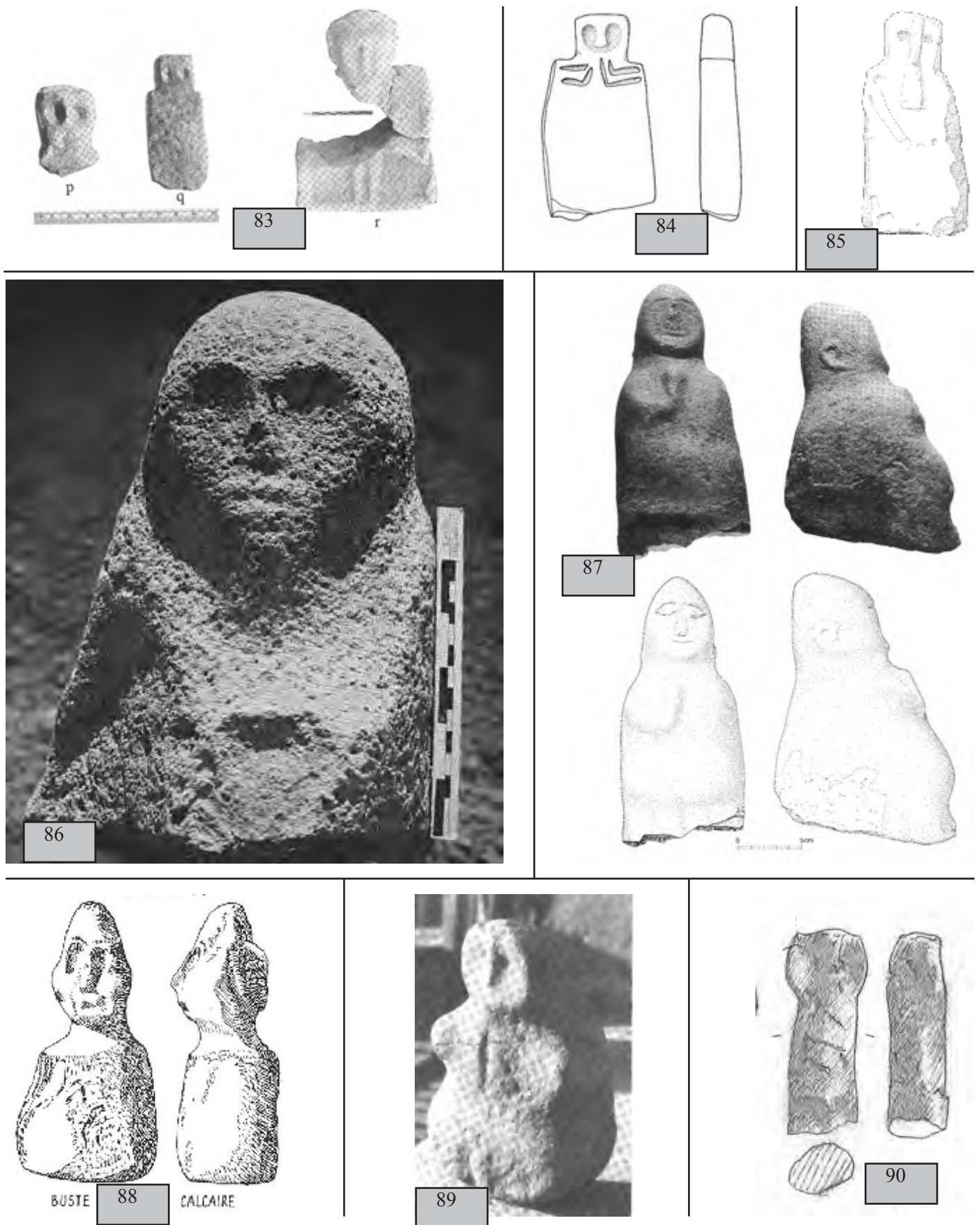


Fig. 83. Three 'stone spirits' from Tell Hadidi (Dornemann 1989, plate XI).

Fig. 84. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Halawa (Pruss 1994, fig.68).

Fig. 85. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Halawa (Pruss 1994, fig. 65).

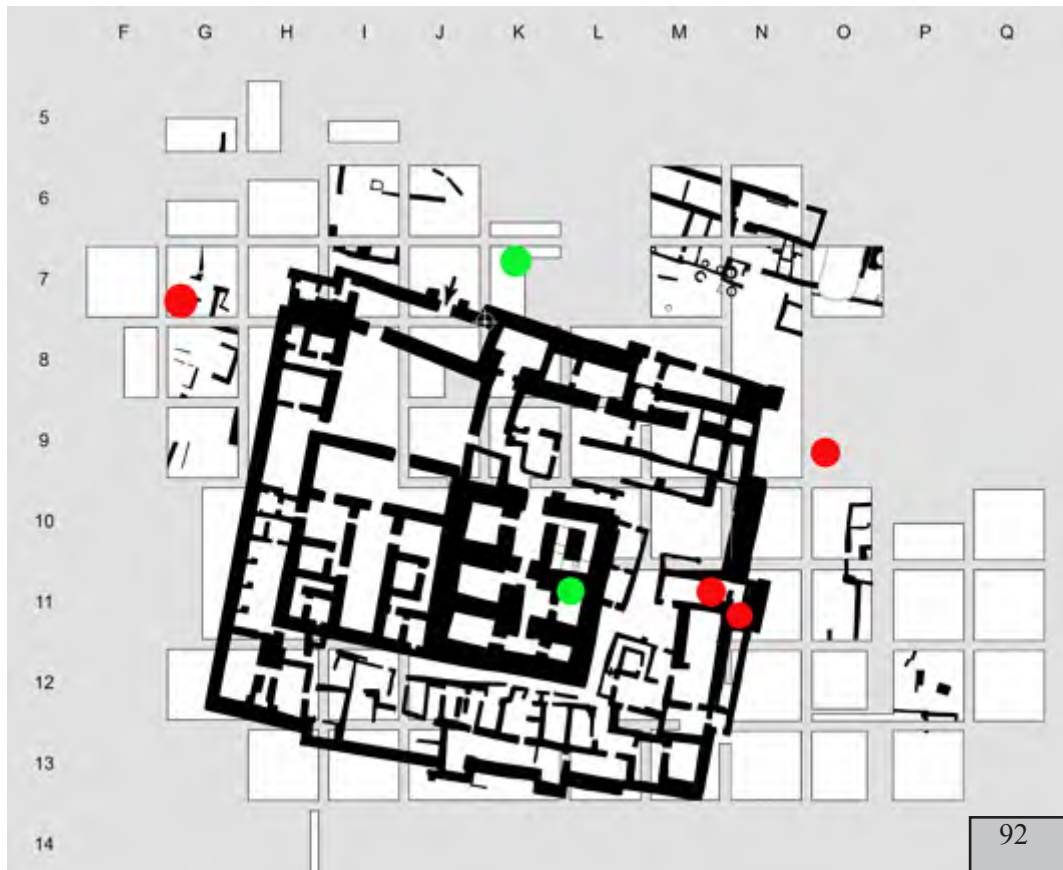
Fig. 86. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Rifa'at (Seton Williams 1967, plate IX).

Fig. 87. Four views of a 'stone spirit' from Tell Afis (Mazzoni 1998, p. 208 fig. 4).

Fig. 88. 'Stone spirit' from Hama (Fugmann 1958, 35, fig.37, Object 7A 366).

Fig. 89. 'Stone spirit' from Tell Bayandur (Meijer 1986, fig. 7).

Fig. 90. Neolithic F07-02, a clay figurine as an example of pinching a clay nose to shape a face.



Figs. 91-92 show the distribution of the 'stone spirits' at Tell Sabi Abyad. Figure 91 shows the objects on a level 6 site map, to show relation to earlier structure and the moat, whereas figure 92 shows the objects on a level 5 map, as the room arrangement changed between levels, changing the find rooms for F96-16 and S03-810. For a more detailed image of those rooms, see fig. 98. The objects in red in fig. 91 are the objects from level 7, and the objects in red in fig. 92 are the objects from level 5 or later, with the green representing figures displayed to show comparative locations, but whose contexts do not correspond to the level of the map.

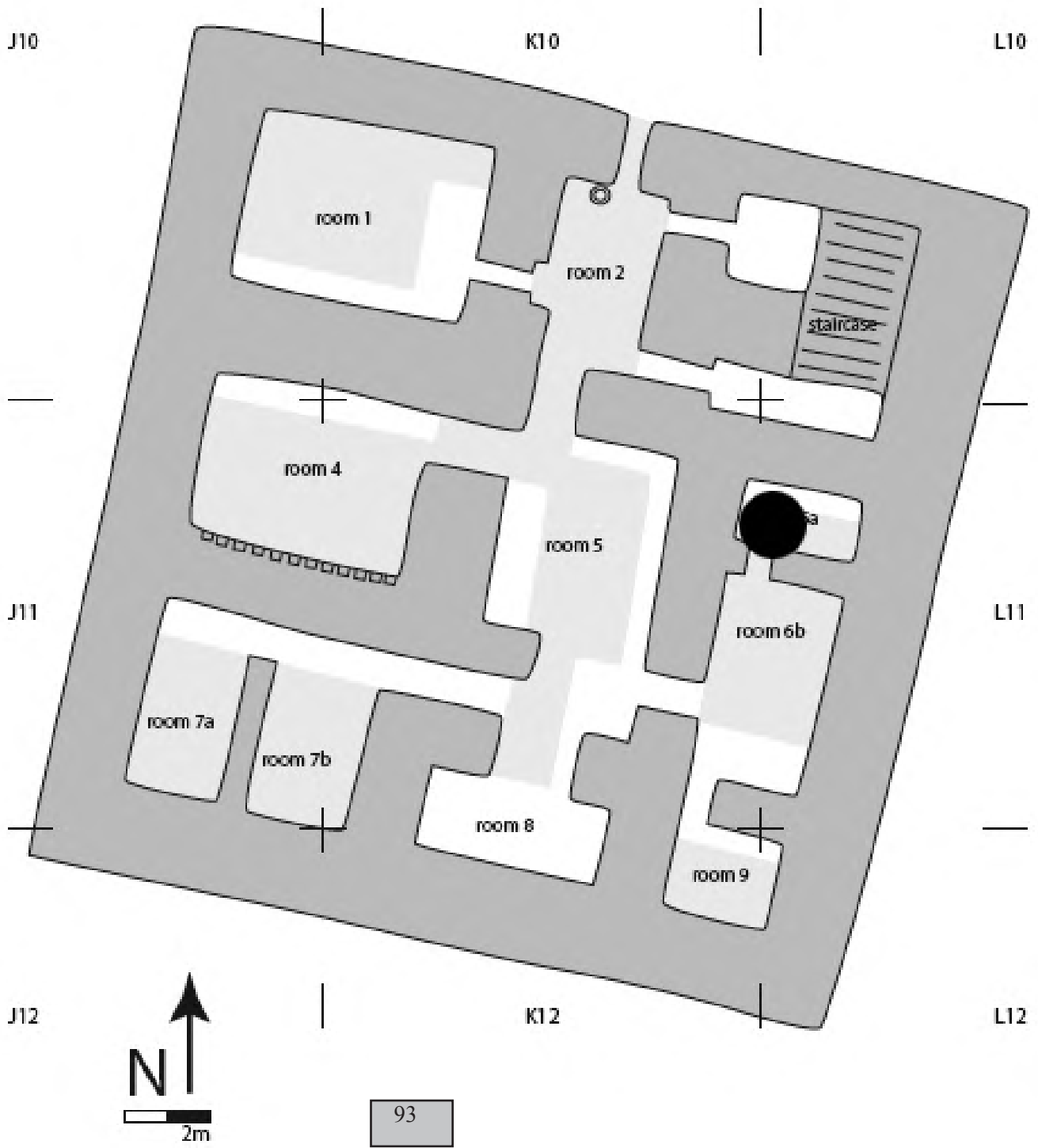
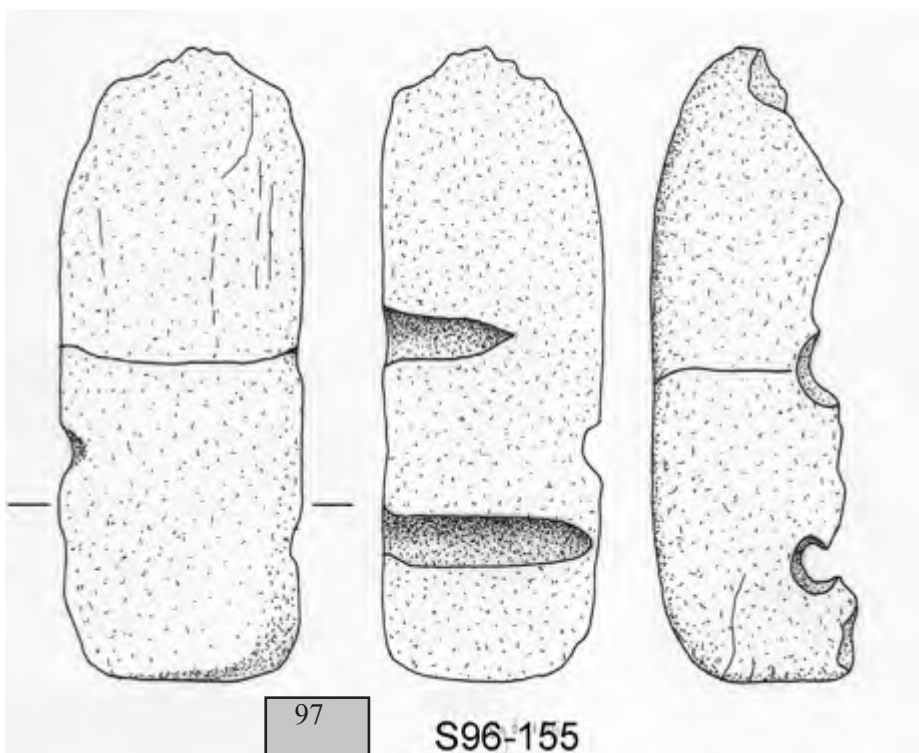
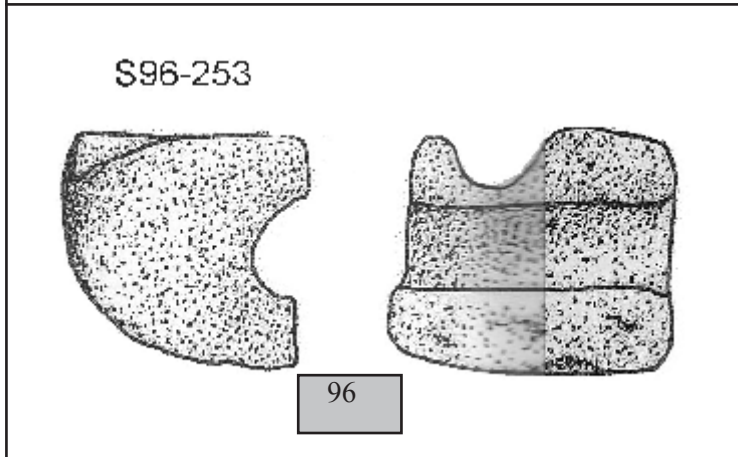
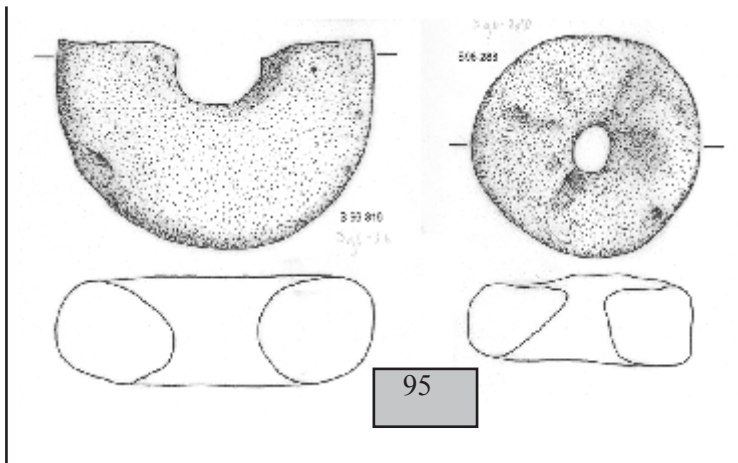
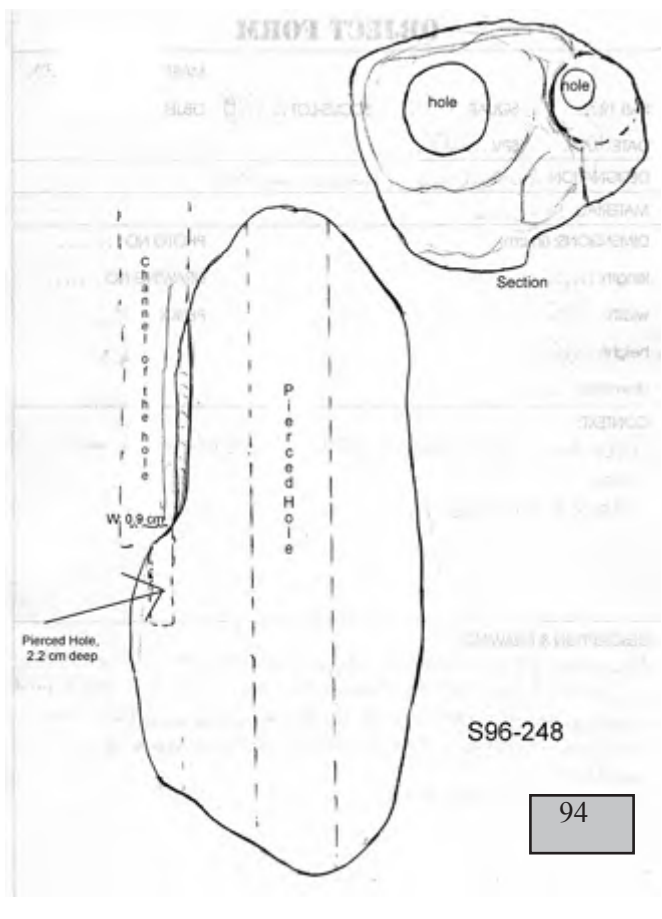


Fig. 93. Detail of the tower at Tell Sabi Abyad, showing the organization of rooms, as well as the find location of F92-7.



Figs. 94-97. Stone objects of unknown function with grooves comparable to those of the 'stone spirit' F96-16. Figure 94 shows a stone with a drilled hole in the center, and another side groove that the excavator believed to correspond with that from the 'stone spirit.'

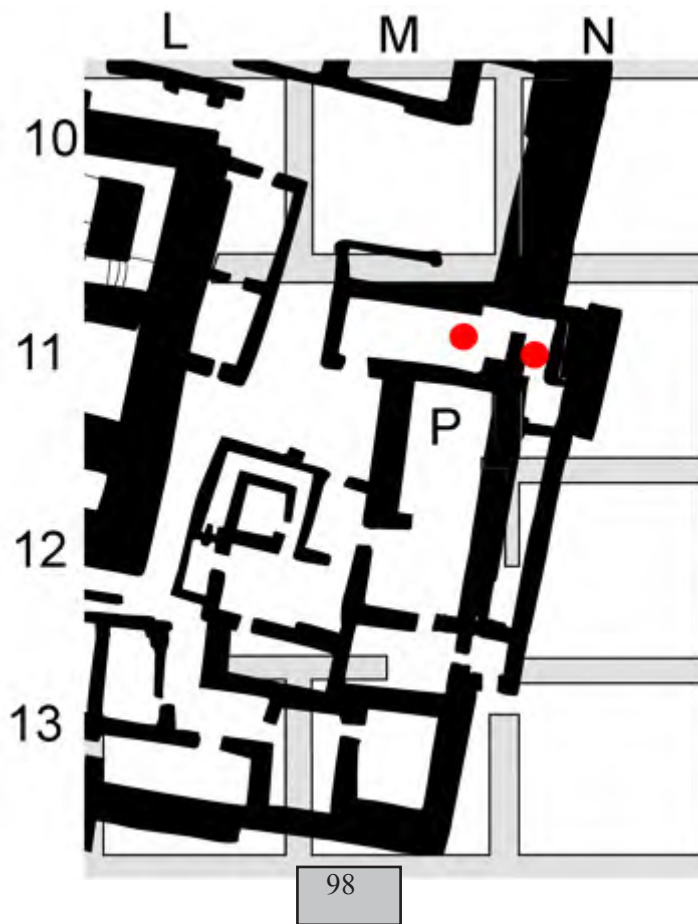
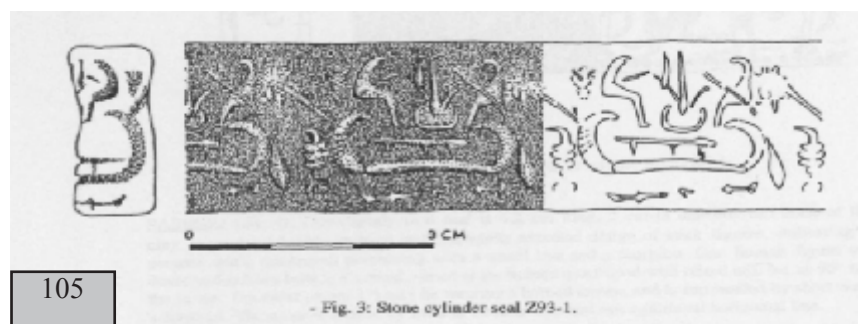
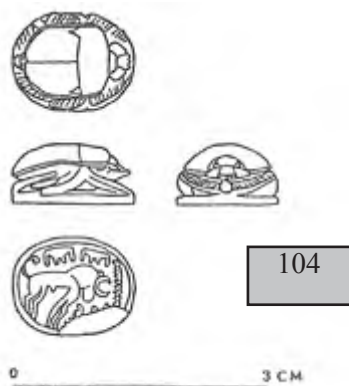
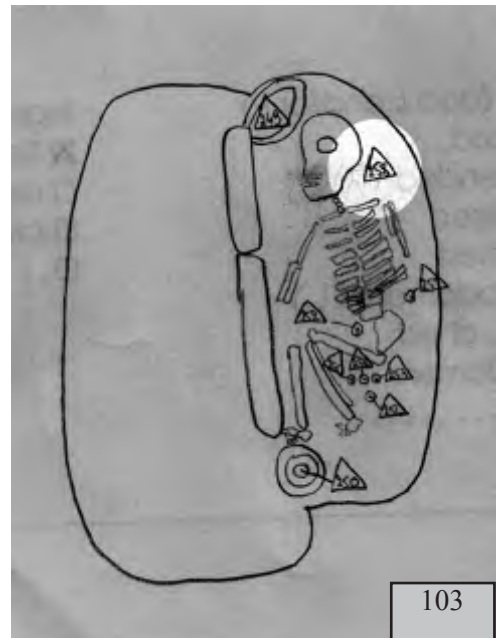
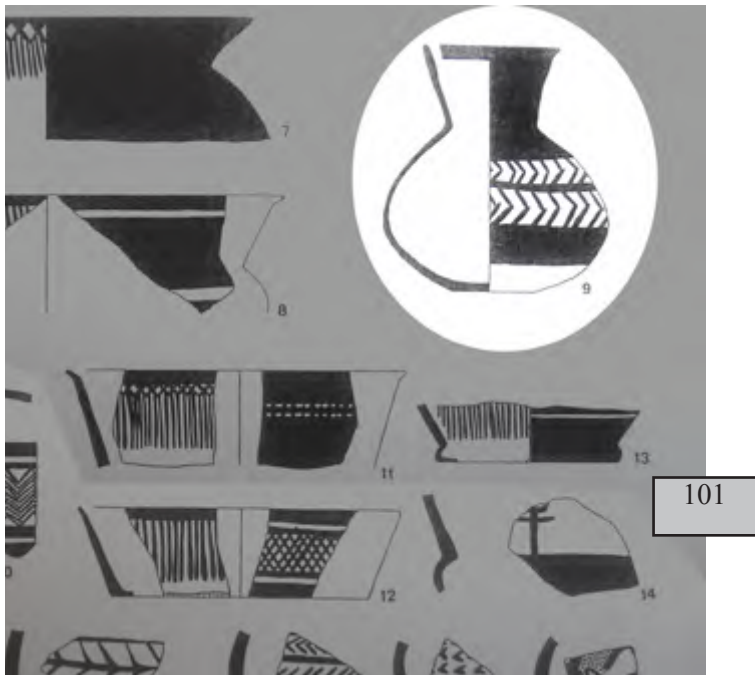


Fig. 98. Detail of the area in which F96-16 and S03-810 were excavated, nearby each other in a ‘workshop context.’ Figs. 99 and 100. Photographs of the *in situ* context for the ‘stone spirit’ S03-810, in N11.





- Fig. 3: Stone cylinder seal 293-1.

Fig. 101. All objects in this image are Halaf ceramics from Bronze Age strata. The highlighted item was reused for utility purposes by the Assyrians (after Nieuwenhuyse 1997, 241 fig. 8). Highlighted object number 9.

Fig. 102. Object F01-5, a Neolithic amulet (?) buried in an Assyrian grave.

Fig. 103. Middle Assyrian grave with several grave goods, including the highlighted F01-5.

Fig. 104. Early Dynastic (3rd millennium) seal in Middle Assyrian context (Akkermans 1997, fig. 3).

Fig. 105. Scarab from necklace in an Assyrian cremation (Akkermans 1997, fig. 7).

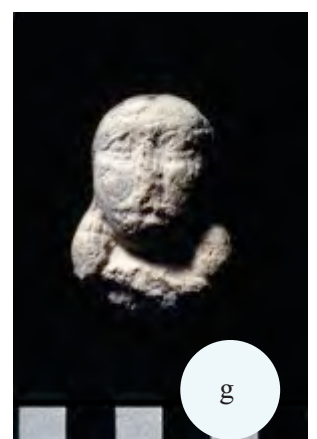
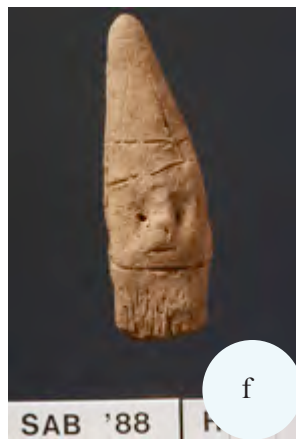
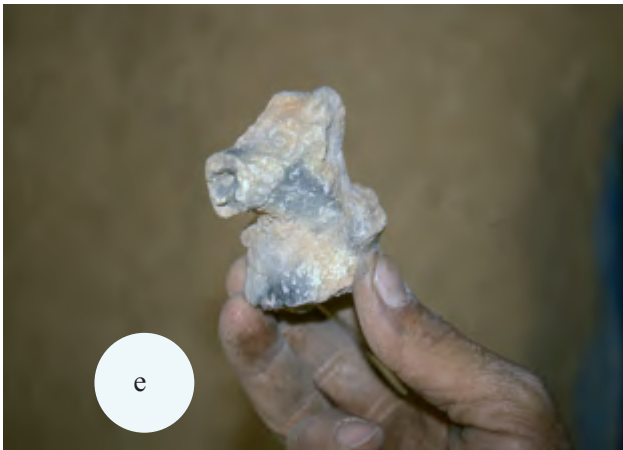
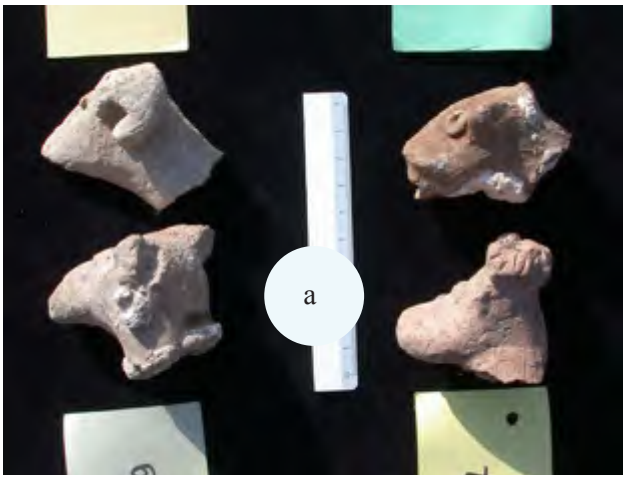


Fig. 106 a-h.: Photography of some representational figurines from chapter 4.

a. zoomorphic figurine heads: F01-6, F03-26, F03-9, and F03-7.

b. Objects from K10: F91-7, O91-172, and O91-384.

c. Sheep head F04-5.

d. metal object F96-2.

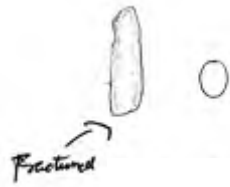
e. Zoomorphic head F96-9.

f. Anthropomorphic head H-1

g. Anthropomorphic head F92-12.

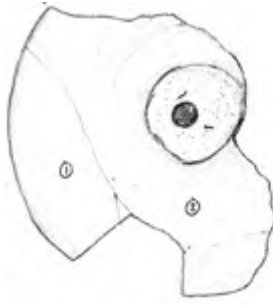
h. Three views of anthropomorphic head F02-16.

i. zoomorphic torso F07-39



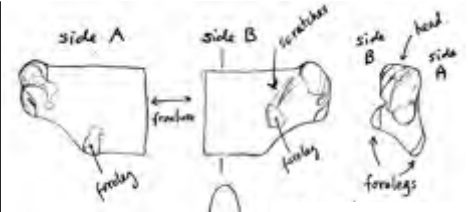
F02-3

107



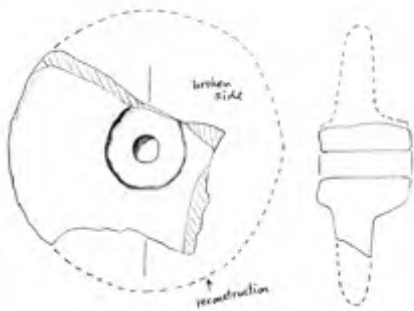
O02-147

108



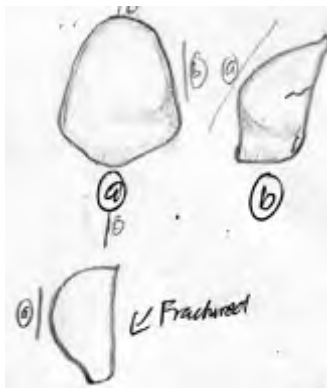
F01-1

109



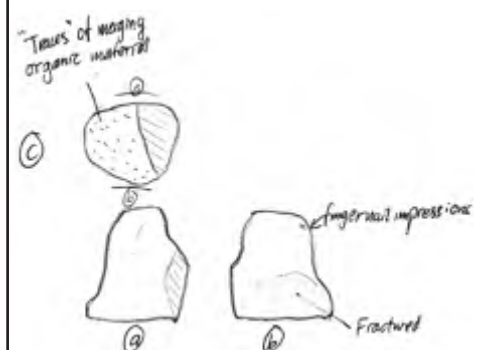
110

O01-75



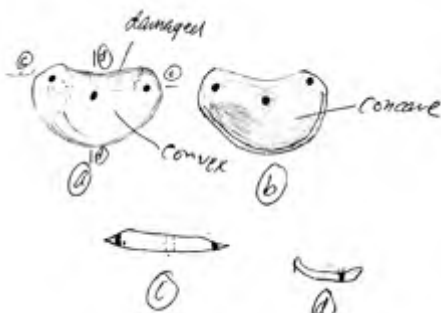
F02-15

111



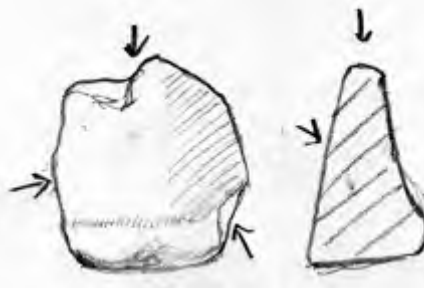
112

F02-2



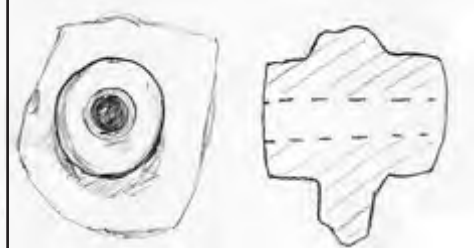
B02-55

113



O97-351

114

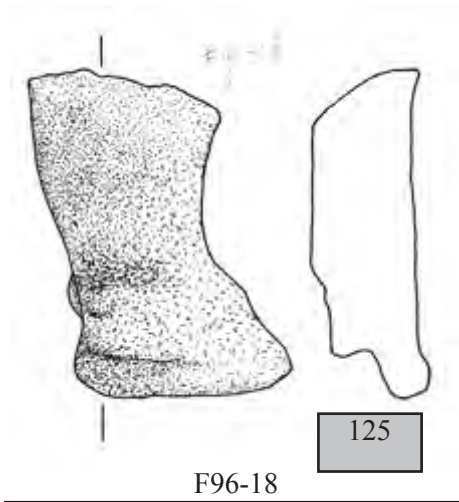


O97-353

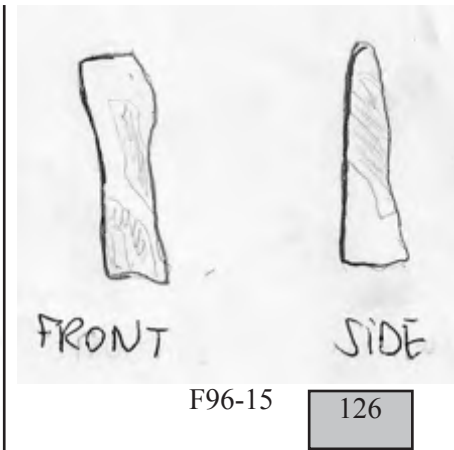
115

Figs. 107-115. Objects F02-3, O02-147, F01-1, O01-75, F02-15, F02-2, B02-55, O97-351, and O97-353.

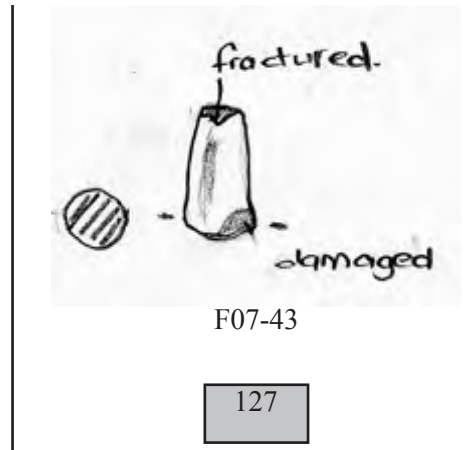




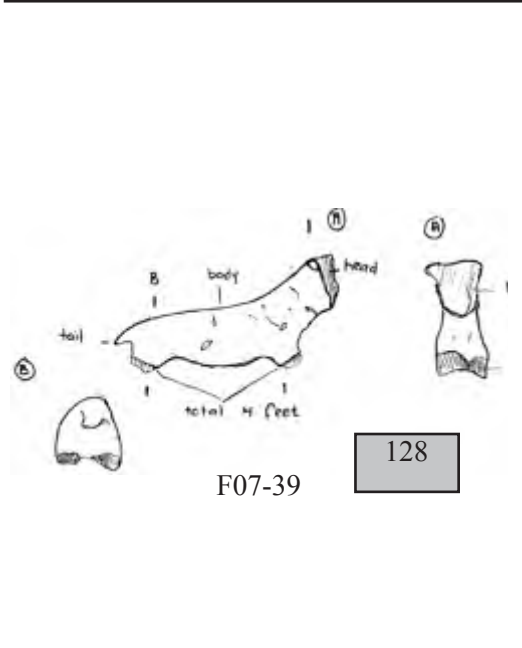
F96-18



F96-15



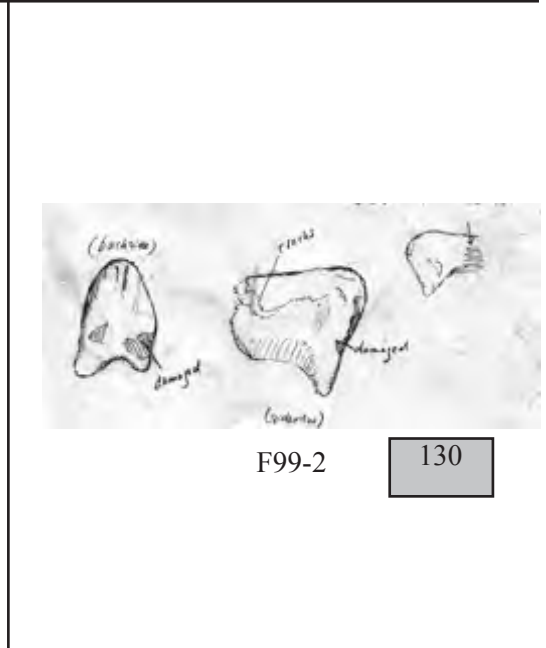
F07-43



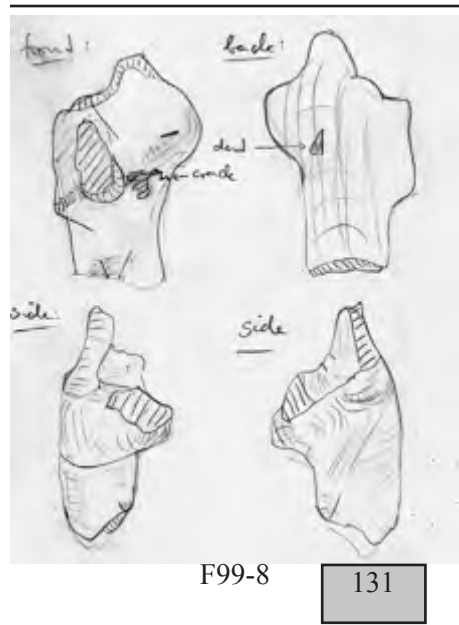
F07-39



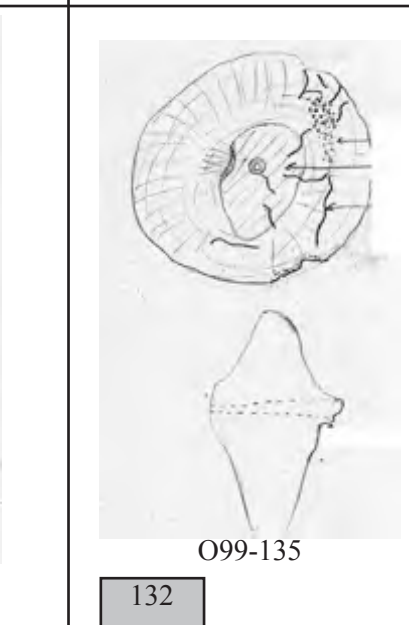
O98-102



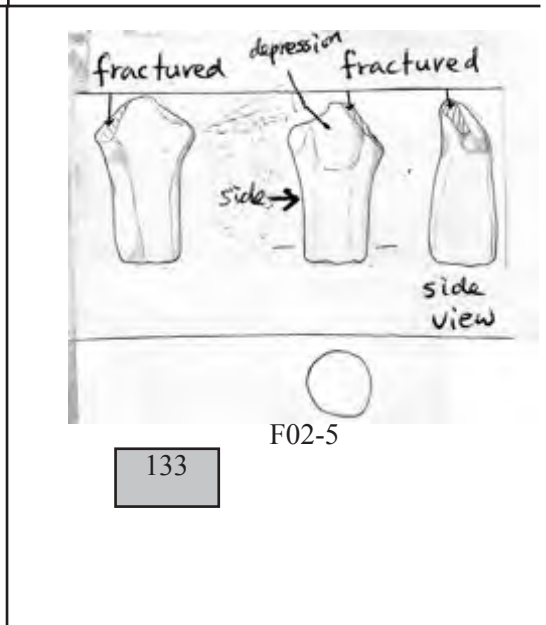
F99-2



F99-8

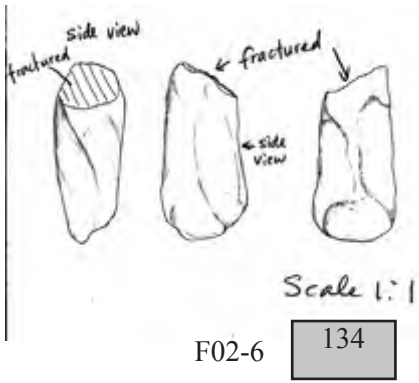


O99-135



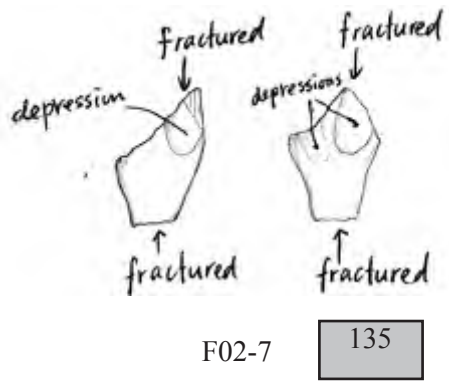
F02-5

Figs. 125-133. Objects F96-18, F96-15, F07-43, F07-39, O98-102, F99-2, F99-8, O99-135, F02-5.



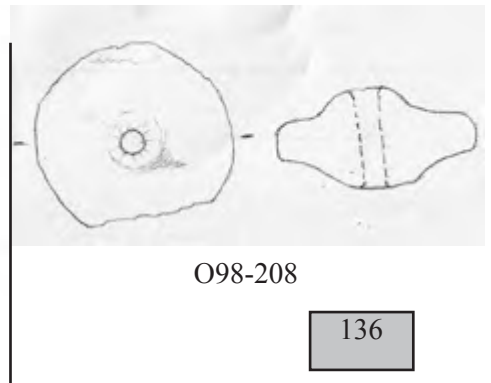
F02-6

134



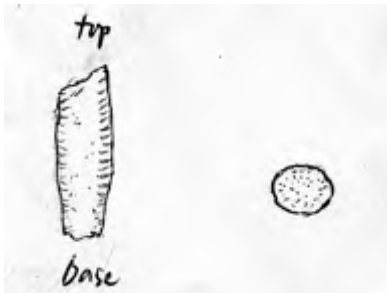
F02-7

135



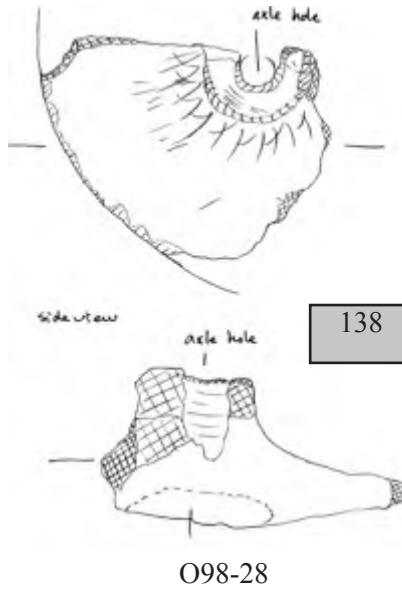
O98-208

136



F99-19

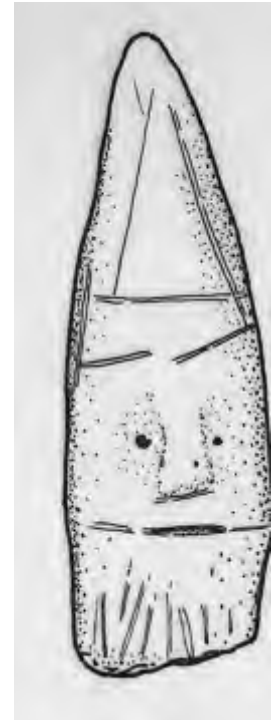
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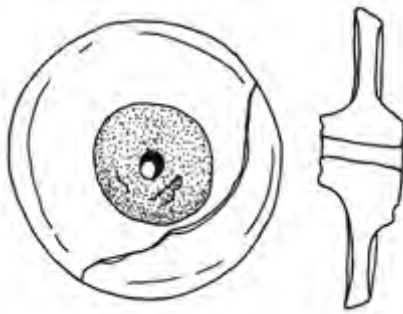
O98-28

138

139



H-1



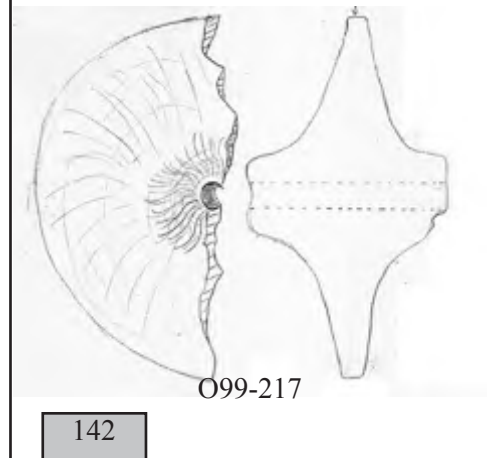
W-14

140



141

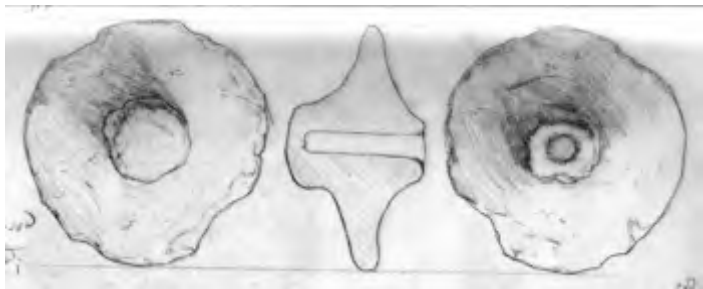
F96-3



O99-217

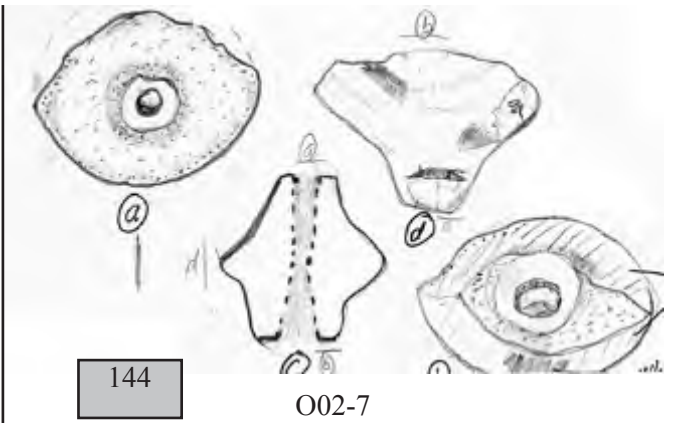
142

Figs. 134-142. Objects F02-6, F02-7, O98-208, F99-19, O98-28, H-1, W-14, F96-3, and O99-217.



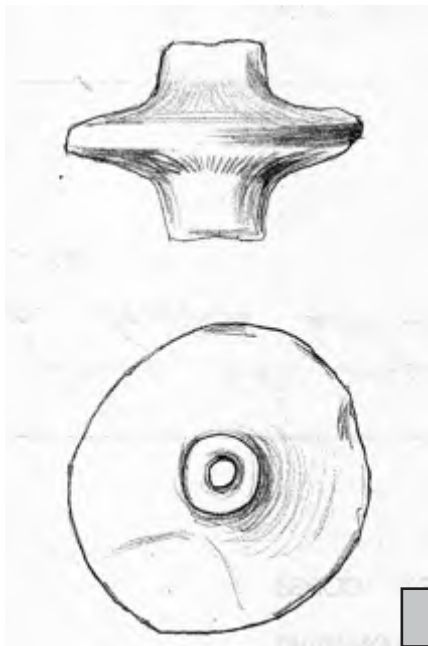
143

O99-389



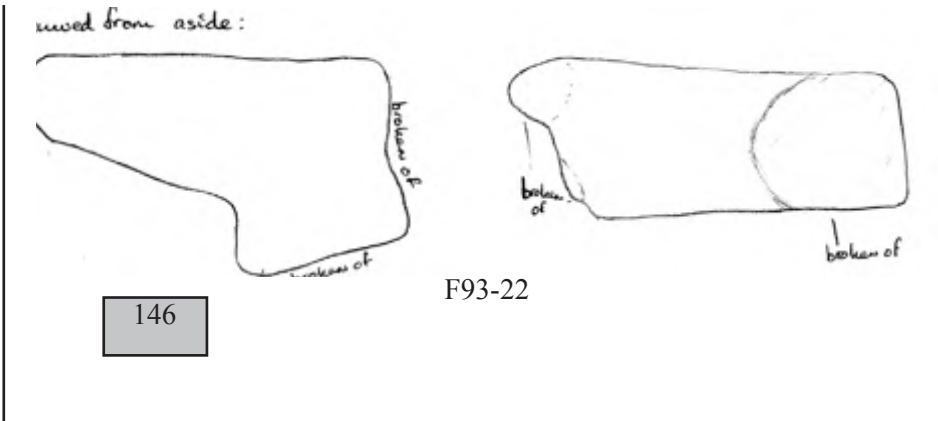
144

O02-7



145

O93-56



146

F93-22



F97-23

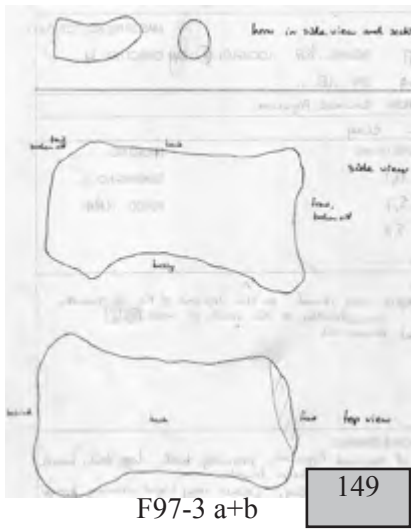
147



148

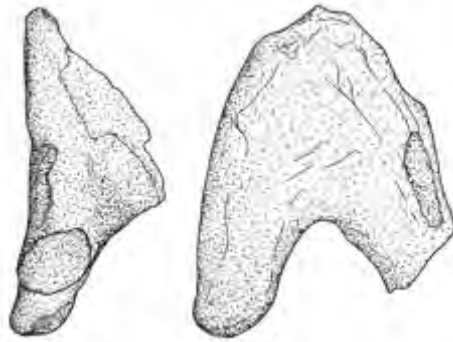
F93-21

Figs. 143-148. Objects O99-389, O02-7, O93-56, F93-22, F97-23, and F93-21.



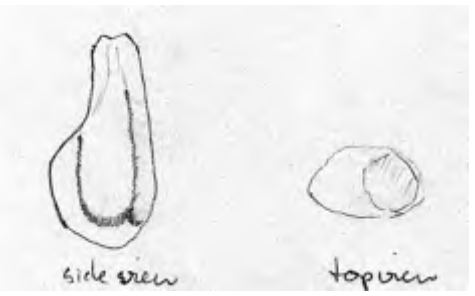
F97-3 a+b

149



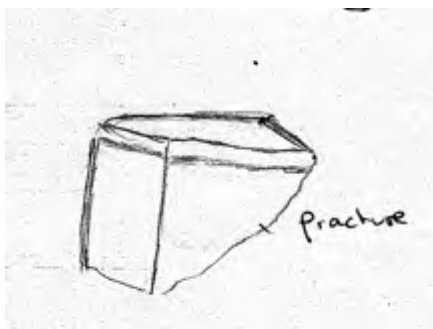
150

F96-11



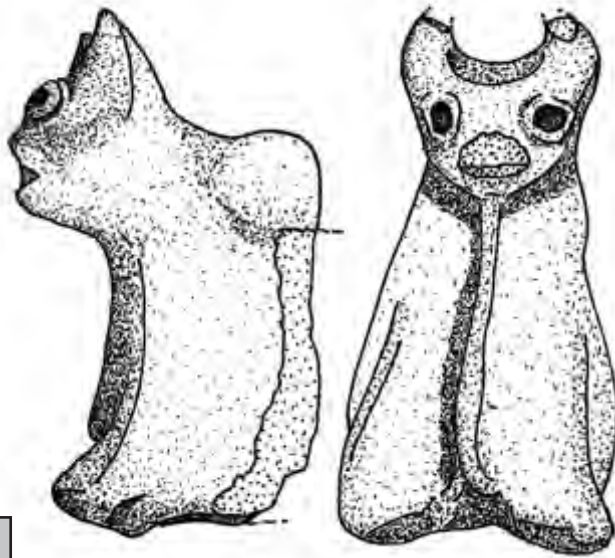
F96-19

151



O91-164

152



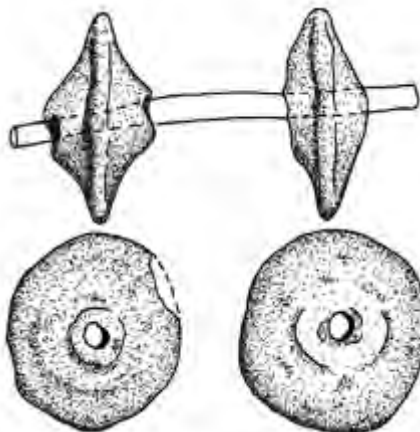
153

F91-7



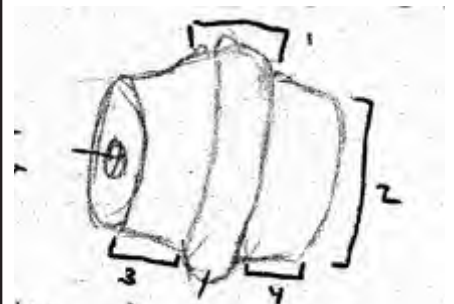
O91-172

154



155

O91-186

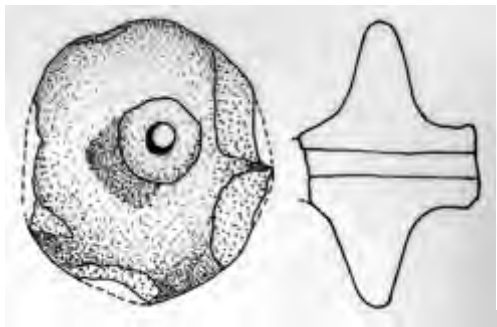


156

O91-176

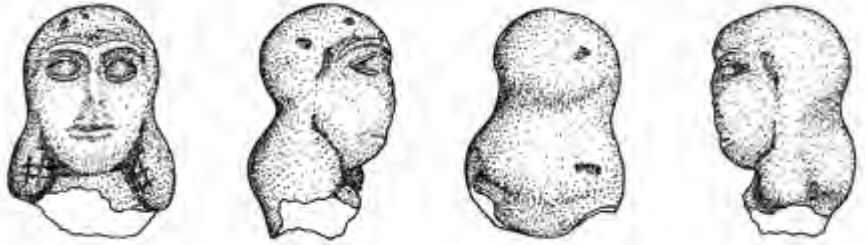
Figs. 149- 156. Objects F97-3 (a+b), F96-11, F96-19, O91-164, F91-7, O91-172, O91-186, and O91-176.





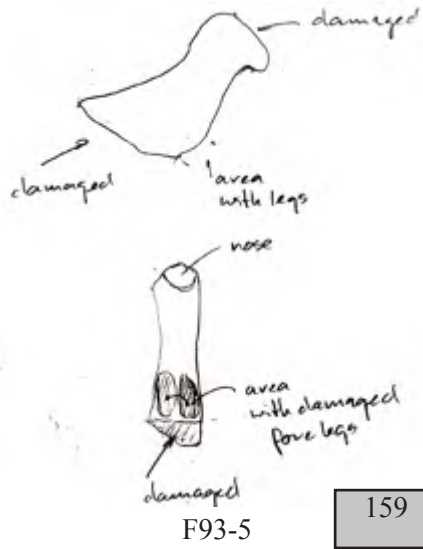
O91-384

157



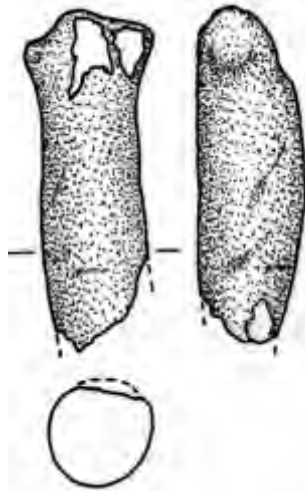
158

F92-12



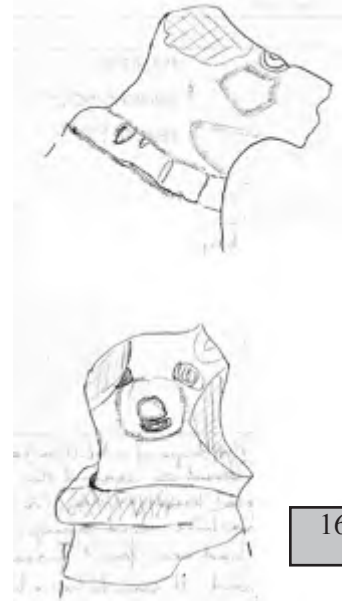
F93-5

159



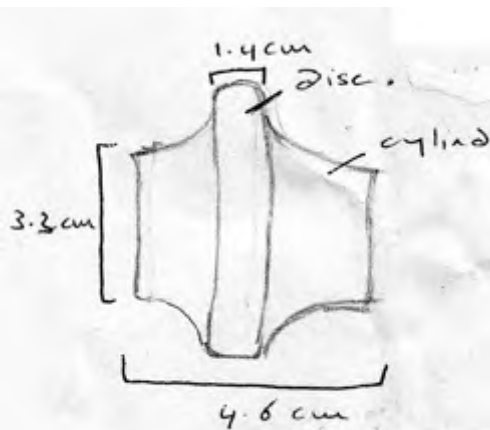
160

F93-1



161

F96-9



O91-44

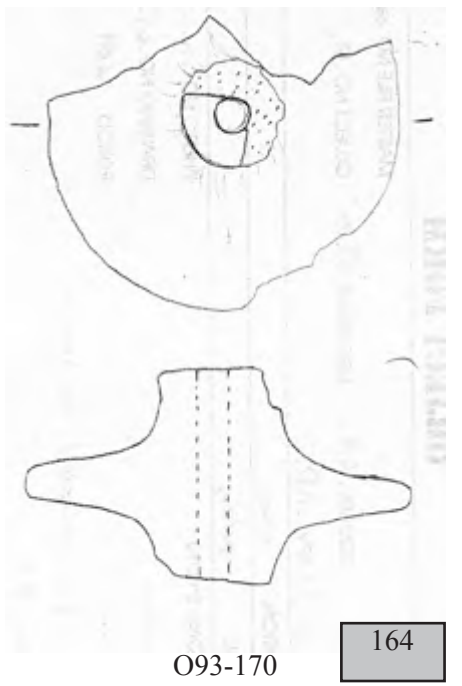
162



163

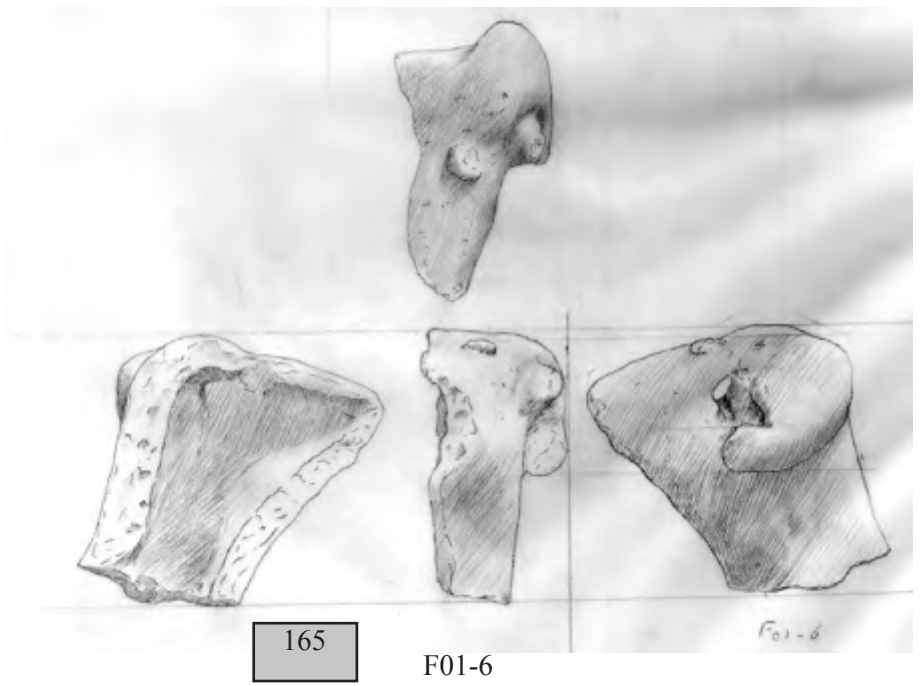
F02-16

Figs. 157-163. Objects O91-384, F92-12, F93-5, F93-1, F96-9, O91-44, and F02-16.



O93-170

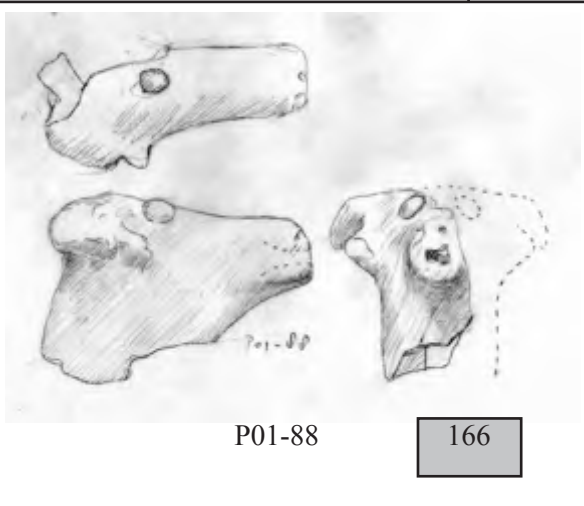
164



165

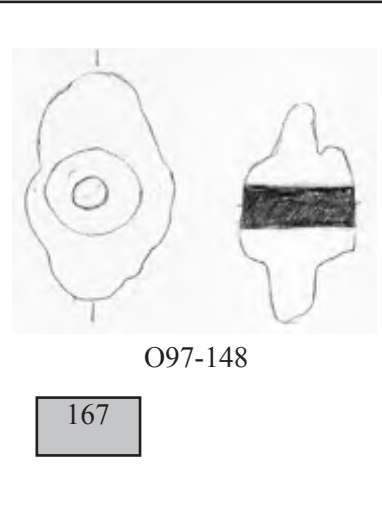
F01-6

F01-6



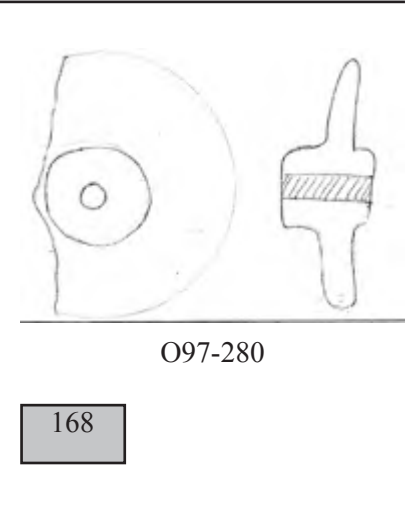
P01-88

166



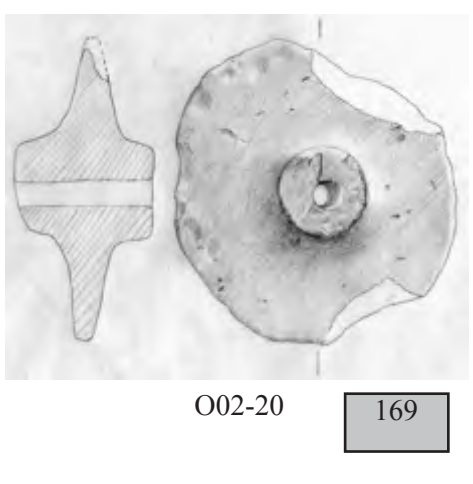
O97-148

167



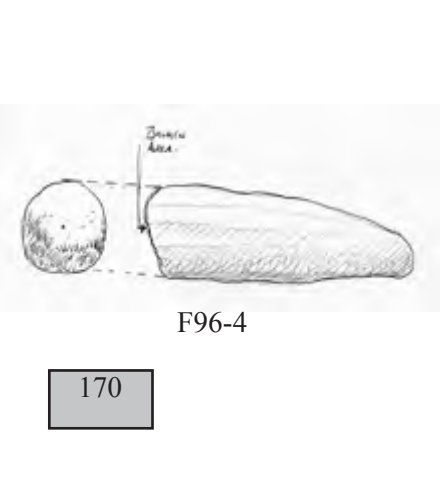
O97-280

168



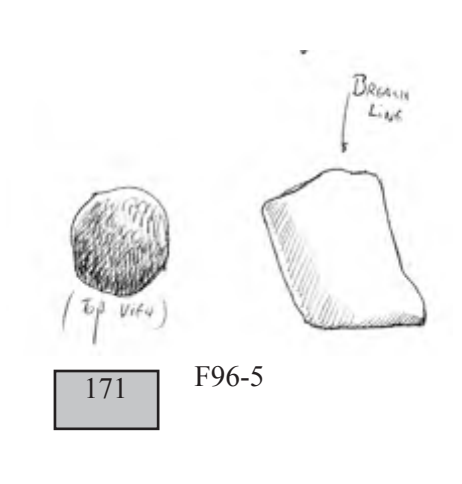
O02-20

169



F96-4

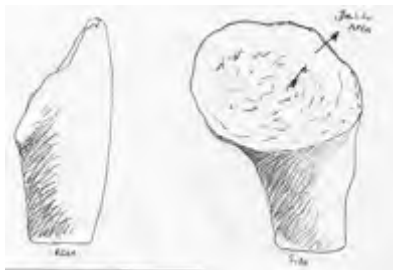
170



171

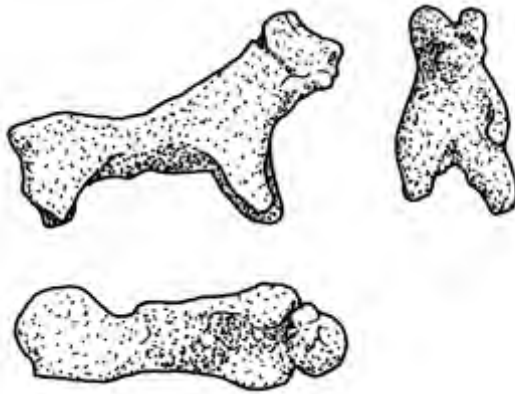
F96-5

Figs. 164-171. Objects O93-170, F01-6, P01-88, O97-148, O97-280, O02-20, F96-4, and F96-5.



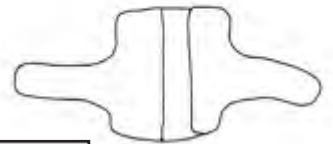
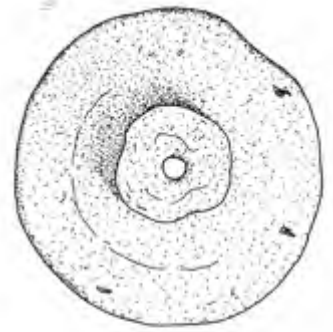
F96-20

172



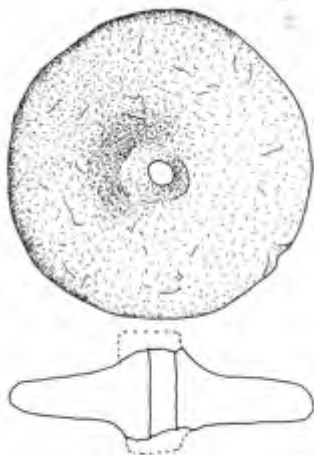
F96-2

173



174

O96-51



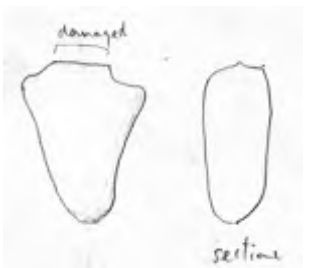
O96-88

175



176

O96-223



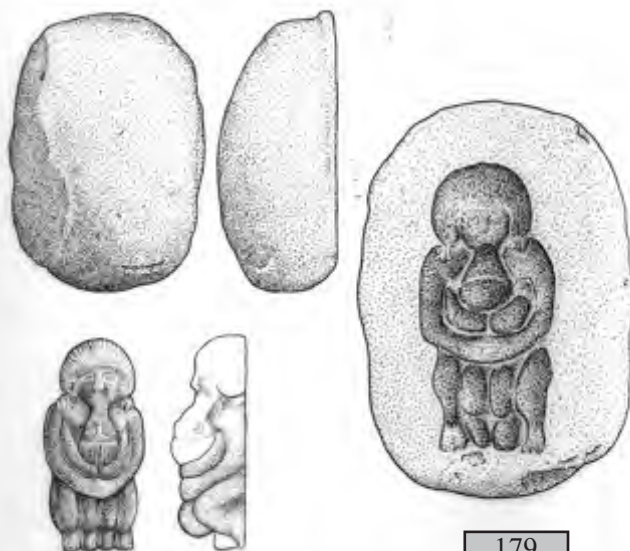
O93-193

177



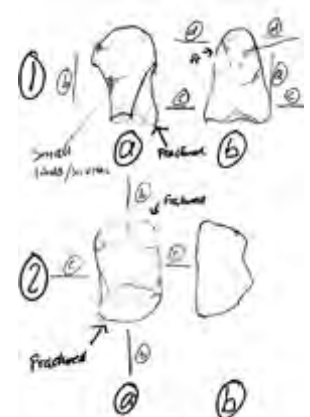
F03-25

178



O99-341

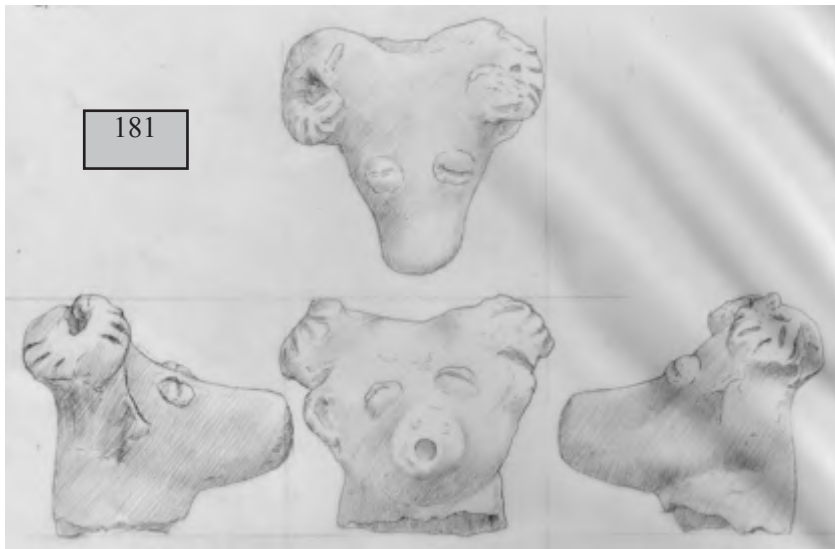
179



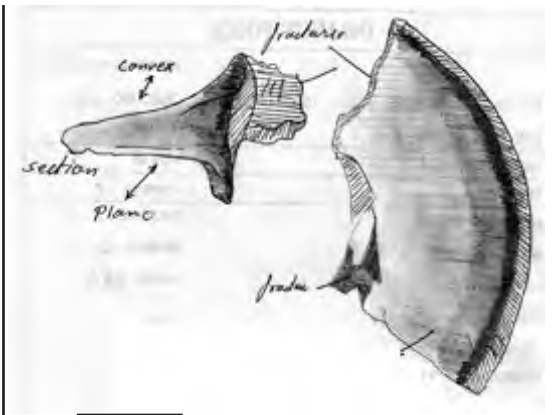
F03-3

180

Fig. 172-180. Objects F96-20, F96-2, O96-51, O96-88, O96-223, O93-193, F03-25, O99-341, and F03-3.



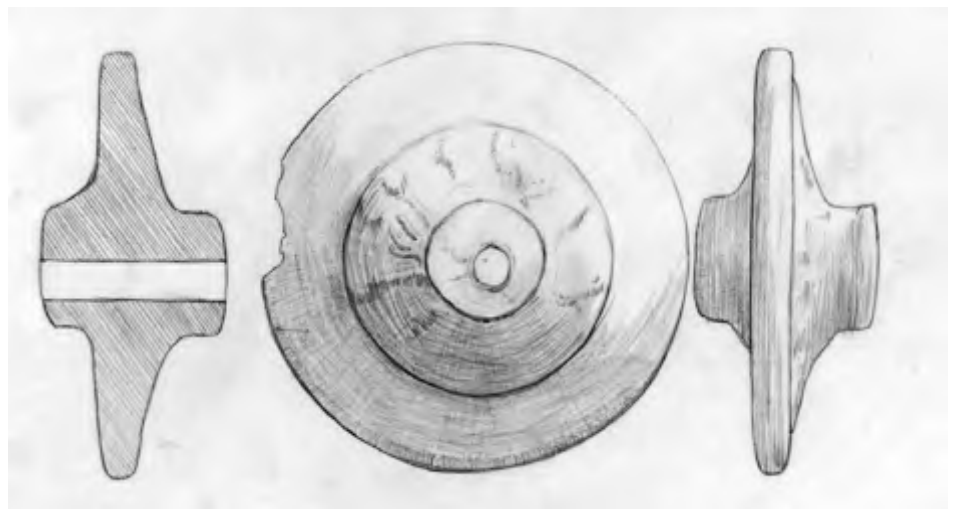
F03-7



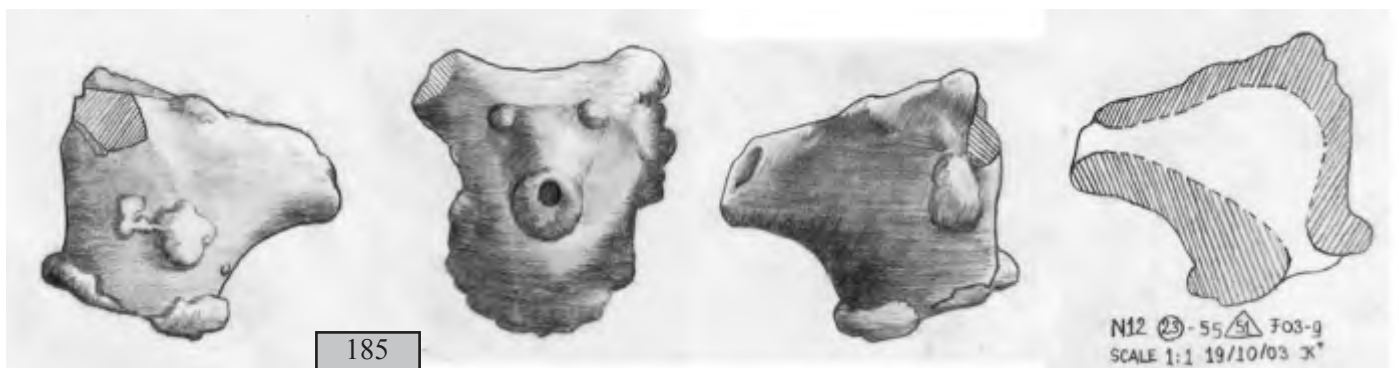
O03-47



F03-11

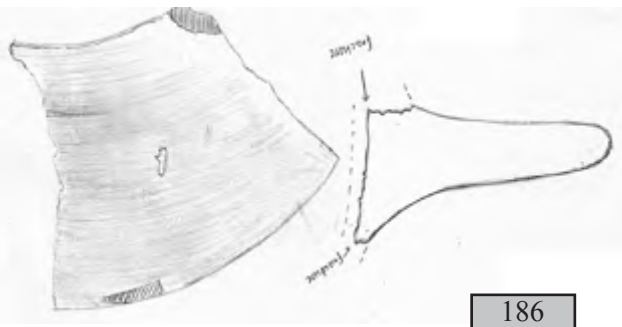


O03-79



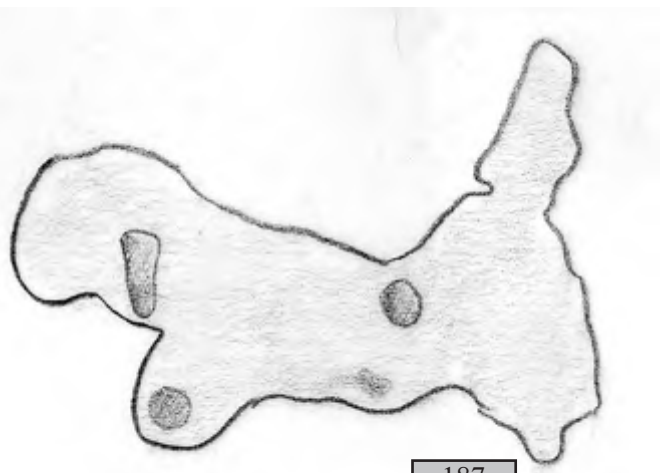
F03-9

Figs. 181-185. Objects F03-7, O03-47, F03-11, O03-79, and F03-9.



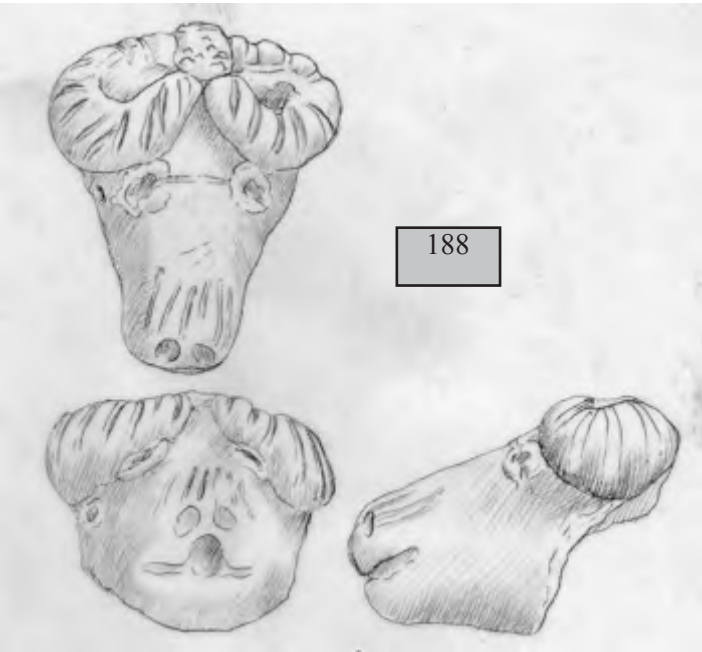
O03-90

186



M04-4

187



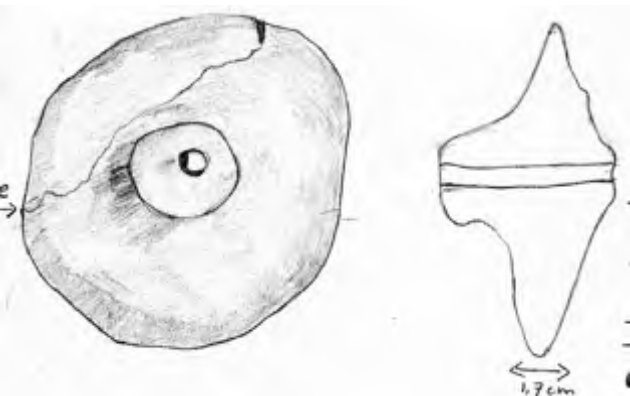
F04-5

188



189

F04-8



O03-222

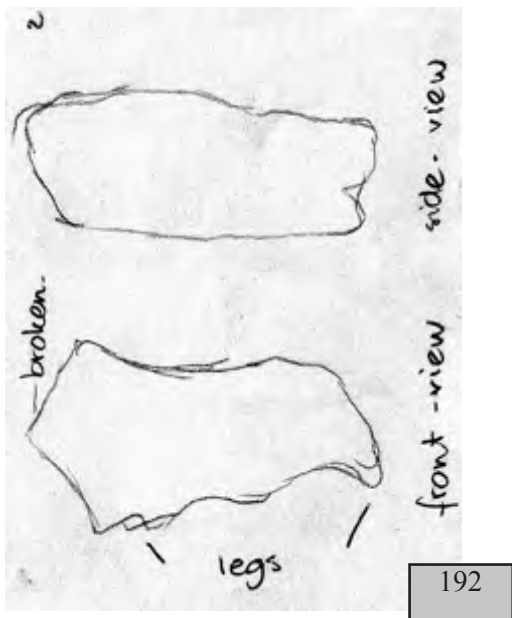
190



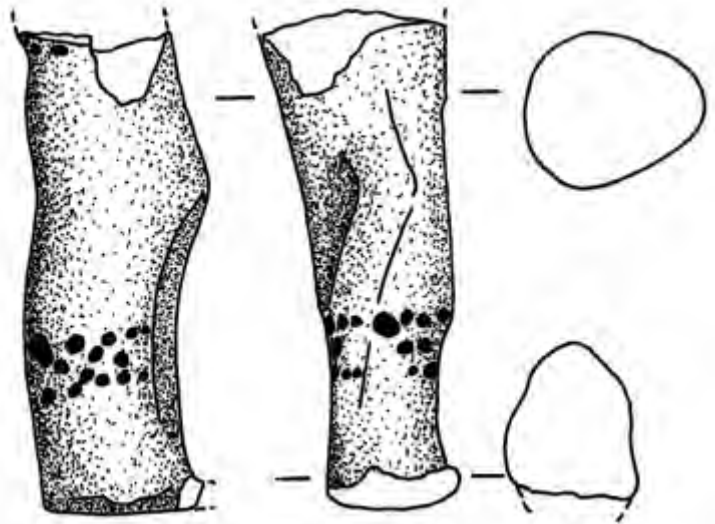
F03-26

191

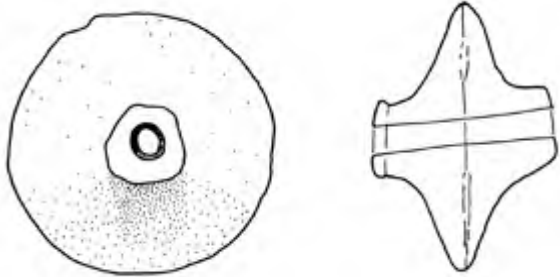
Figs. 186-191. Objects O03-90, M04-4, F04-5, F04-8, O03-222, and F03-26.



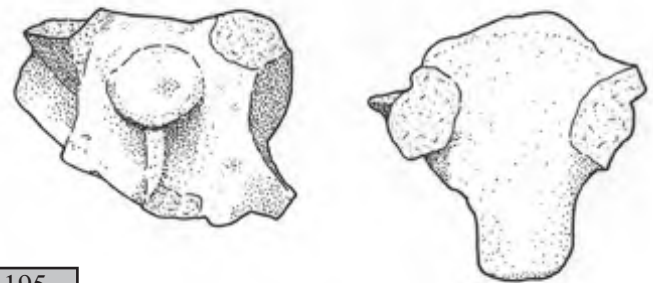
F91-19



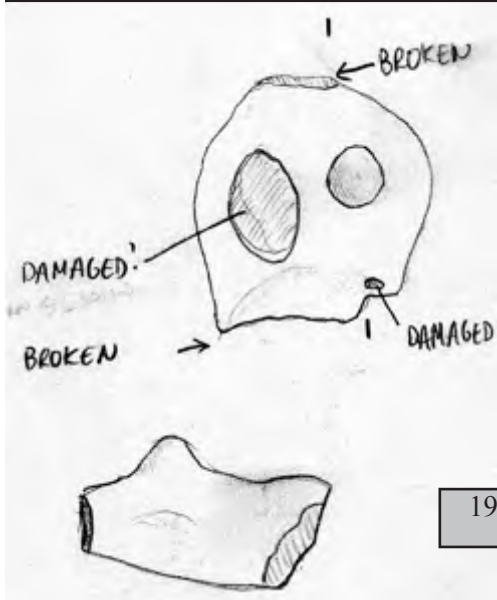
F91-20



W-9



A-1



F97-5

Figs.192-196. Objects F91-19, F91-20, W-9, A-1, and F97-5.