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**Funerary Customs in the Inner Central and Northern Syria during the Early and
Middle Bronze Ages.**

DOTTORANDO
Ahmad Deb

RELATORE
Prof. Daniele Morandi Bonacossi

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Funerary Customs in the Inner Central and Northern Syria during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages

Index

I-	Introduction	11
II-	Chapter one:	16
	<i>History of Archaeological research in the Inner and Northern Syria.</i>	
III-	Chapter two:	22
	<i>Geographical and historical setting.</i>	
IV-	Chapter three:	31
	<i>Cuneiform texts belonging to the third and second millennium BC related to the funerary customs.</i>	
	1- The burials in the archives.	
	2- The grave goods in the texts.	
	3- Funerary ceremonies; the wailing rite.	
	4- The texts and relation with the other kingdoms and other cities.	
	5- Text and ancestor cult.	
V-	Chapter four	51
	<i>Typology and funerary grave goods in the Inner and Northern Syria during the Early and Middle Bronze Age</i>	
	Part 1: Typology of funerary structure in the Inner and Northern Syria	51
	<i>A- Typology of funerary structure in Inner and Northern Syria during the Early Bronze Age.</i>	
	1- Simple individual burials.....	51
	1-1-Simple pit burials	
	1-2-Simple burials in jars	
	2- Cist graves.....	52
	3- Cairn-Tumulus graves.....	52
	4- Earth or rock-cut shaft tombs EB funerary Structures (tombs/graves).....	53
	4.1 Stone-built chamber tombs.....	53

- 4-1-1- Tomb G4 in Ebla
- 4-1-2- Tomb I in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-1-3- Tomb III in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-1-4- Tomb IV in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-1-5- Tomb V in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-1-6- Tomb VI in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-1-7- Tomb VII in the site of Umm el-Marra
- 4-2- Rock-cut shaft tombs EB funerary rock-cut shaft (tombs/graves).....55
- 4-2-1- One chamber tomb
- 4-2-1-1- Tomb II in the site of Ain Assan
- 4-2-1-2- Tomb III in the site of Ain Assan
- 4-2-1-3- Tomb IV in the site of Ain Assan
- 4-2-1-4- Tomb XV in the site of Ain Assan
- 4-2-1-5- Tomb III in the site of tell As
- 4-2-1-6- Tomb VI in the site of tell As
- 4-2-1-7- Burial ground in the site of Al-Ansari
- 4-2-1-8- Burial ground in the site of Saraqeb
- 4-2-2- Multi-chamber tombs
- 4-2-2-1- Tomb IV in Mishrifeh
- 4-2-2-2- Tomb 0201 in Al-Rawda

*B- Typology of funerary structure in the Inner and Northern Syria during the
Middle Bronze Age*

- 1- Simple individual burials.....58
 - 1-1-Simple pit burials
 - 1-2- Simple burials in jars
- 2- Collective tombs MBA funerary rock-cut shaft (tombs/graves).....60
 - 2-1- One chamber tomb
 - 2-1-1- Tomb II in the site of Mishrifeh
 - 2-1-2- Tomb III in Hama
 - 2-1-3- Tomb VI in Hama

- 2-1-4- Tomb X in Hama
- 2-1-5- Tomb XIII in Hama
- 2-1-6- Tomb XII in Ain Assan
- 2-1-7- Khan Sheikhoun Tomb
- 2-1-8- Tomb I in the site of tell As
- 2-1-9- Tomb II in tell As
- 2-1-10- Tomb II in Bab al-Faraj
- 2-1-11- Tomb in the Al Gameh Al-kabeir
- 2-1-12- Tell Et-Tin tombs
- 2-2- Tomb with two chambers
- 2-2-1- Tomb I in Bab al-Faraj
- 2-2-2- Tomb I in Hama
- 2-2-3- Tomb VII at Mishrifeh
- 2-3- Multi-chambers tomb
- 2-3-1- Tomb I in the site of Mishrifeh
- 2-3-2- Tomb V in Mishrifeh
- 2-3-3- The Royal tomb in Ebla
- 2-3-4- Mourek tomb
- 2-3-5- The Royal tomb in Mishrifeh

**Part two: *Funerary grave goods in the simple individual burials of
Early Bronze Age***

- 1- Simple individual burials.....66
 - 1-1- Simple individual pit burials
 - 1-2-Simple individual burials in jars
- 2- Cist graves.....68
- 3- Cairn-Tumulus graves.....68

Funerary grave goods in the simple individual burials of the Middle Bronze Age

- 1- Simple individual pit burials.....68
- 2- Simple individual burials in jars75

Funerary grave goods in collective tombs in the Early Bronze Age

- 1- Stone-built chamber tombs.....78
- 1-1- Tomb G4 at Ebla
- 1-2- Tomb I at Umm el-Marra
- 1-3- Tomb III at Umm el-Marra
- 1-4- Tomb IV at Umm el-Marra
- 1-5- Tomb V at Umm el-Marra
- 1-6- Tomb VI at Umm el-Marra
- 1-7- Tomb VII at Umm el-Marra
- 1-8- Tomb 8 at Umm el-Marra
- 1-9- Tomb 9 at Umm el-Marra
- 1-10- Tomb 10 at Umm el-Marra
- 2- Rock-cut shaft tombs82
- 2-1- Tomb II at Ain Assan
- 2-2- Tomb III at Ain Assan
- 2-3- Tomb IV Ain Assan
- 2-4- Tomb XV at Ain Assan
- 2-5- Tomb III at tell As
- 2-6- Tomb VI at tell As
- 2-7- Al-Ansari tomb
- 2-8- Saraqeb tomb
- 2-9- Tomb IV at Mishrifeh
- 2-10-Tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda

Funerary grave goods in the collective tombs in the Middle Bronze Age

- 1- One interment chamber tombs:.....85
- 1-1-Tomb II at Mishrifeh
- 1-2-Tomb III at Hama
- 1-3-Tomb VI at Hama
- 1-4-Tomb X at Hama
- 1-5-Tomb XIII at Hama

1-6-Tomb XII at Ain Assan	
1-7-Tomb at Khan Sheikhoun	
1-8-Tomb I at tell As	
1-9-Tomb II at tell As	
1-10-Tomb II at Bab al-Faraj	
1-11-Tomb at the Al Gameh Al-kabeir	
1-12-Tell Et-Tin Tombs	
2- Two-chambered shaft-tombs	86
2-1-Tomb I at Bab al-Faraj	
2-2-Tomb I at Hama	
2-3-Tomb II at Hama	
2-4-Tomb VII at Mishrifeh	
3- Multi-chambered shaft-tombs.....	87
3-1-Tomb I at Mishrifeh	
3-2-Tomb V at Mishrifeh	
3-3-Royal tomb at Ebla	
3-4-The tomb at Mourek	
3-5-Royal shaft-tomb at Mishrifeh	

**Part three: A comparative study about interment types in the
Central and Northern Syria**

<i>a- Interment types during Early Bronze Age.....</i>	<i>91</i>
1- Simple individual pit burials	
2- Simple burials in jars	
3- Simple individual cist burials	
4- Cairn-Tumulus graves	
5- Collective tombs grounds	
5-1- Collective stone-built tombs	
5-2- Rock-cut collective tombs	
A- One-chambered tombs	
B- Two-chambered tombs	

C- Multi-chambered tombs	
<i>b- Interment types during Middle Bronze Age:</i>	101
1- Simple pit burials	
2- Simple burials in jars	
3- Rock-cut collective tombs during Middle Bronze Age:	
A- One-chambered tombs.....	104
B- Two-chambered tombs	105
C- Multi-chambered tombs.....	106
<i>A comparative study about funerary grave goods in burials recorded in the Central and Northern Syria</i>	

1- Funerary grave goods in simple individual burials during the Early Bronze Age	
....	109
A- Simple pit burials	
B- Simple individual burials in jars	
C- Cairn and cist graves	
2- Funerary grave goods in Middle Bronze Age simple individual burials.....	111
A- Simple individual pit burials	
B- Simple individual burials in jars	
3- Funerary grave goods in collective tombs.....	117
4- Funerary grave goods in Early Bronze Age built tombs.....	117
5- Funerary grave goods in Early Bronze Age rock-cut collective tombs.....	121
6- Funerary grave goods in Middle Bronze rock-cut collective tombs.....	123
7- A study of pottery in Early and Middle Bronze Ages tombs/graves in Inner and Northern Syria.....	126

1- A study pottery at the Early Bronze Age tomb/burials	
2- A study pottery at the Middle Bronze Age tomb/burials	
VI- Chapter five	134
<i>Funerary ceremonies and traditions</i>	
1- Ceremonies and burial types	
2- Rites and pottery finds	
3- Ceremonies, finds and other belongings	
4- Ceremonies, enclosures and the remains of animal bones	
VII- Chapter six, Conclusion	143
<i>Death in the social and religious life. Study of the burial typologies focusing on following issues:</i>	
- Reasons for choosing the burial typology	
- Reasons of the diversity of the burials (individual vs. collective tombs)	
- Urban vs. rural sites	
- Short- and long-term use of the collective tombs	
Bibliography	163
Catalogue of typology	183
Catalogue of grave goods	254

I- Introduction:

It is death or rather the realization of death which must have prompted and forced us to look for a solution: a making up for this fatal . tragic and inevitable event. Avoiding death is impossible but accepting it is more impossible. what could have been done from the very beginning. What can be done now and what will be possible to do in the future is to invent, to create and live in the shadow of a symbolic system which gives us the impression of winning victory over death and utter destruction –According to this system death is not absolute; not final but just a transition to another kind of life. to an afterlife. Around this idea so many human beliefs, mythology and activities were centered. Thus studying ritual and ceremonies related to death as well as burials, tombs and the diseased belongings objects is to study the greatest part of the human complicated historical process and demonstrate the special characteristics of a certain cultural group.

Death is an individual concern. The accumulation of which must have changed it into a general concern for ancient human groups. With the development of humanity and the emergence of early societies. The idea that societies persist, while the individuals come to an end became firmly established. Thus, the main criterion for studying societies and the social phenomenon is the extent of the individual life reflection on the group and the extent of his affiliation to it. This is because the society persists and the individuals cease to be, leaving behind nothing save the developments and unique achievements they had given to their societies. In this context the prime achievement lies in the sacrifice for society.

From time to time scholars have studied the ancient interment practices along with the accompanying ceremonial acts. These two aspects give valuable information about ancient man's behavior and ideology. The interment practices, for example, offer evidence about the early societies beliefs related to death, gods and after life. These ancient

religions and beliefs constitute important fields valid for research and examination, since they provide us with fundamental information about the different societies, main ideologies which, in turn, give us a conception about their distinctive traditions and practices.

The belief in another life after death was necessitated by man; an acceptance to this disastrous end imposed on him by the inevitable death the grave presence of which had been prevalent in the Mesopotamian Sumerians literature with the advent of the third millennium BC. The most profound articulation of this can be found in the imclay poetry of the epic of Gilgamesh, where the hero laments the too early death of his beloved friend. Inkidu, and, in vain, searches for eternal life.

Like other Near East societies the ancient people of Syria particularly those of the Orontes and Upper Euphrates were greatly influenced by death during the Early Bronze ago. Like their neighbor, the Sumerians in southern Mesopotamia. They had similar ideas about the causes of death, its nature the role of gods in this event and about what one might expect in the afterlife. For human beings death was represented by the separation of the soul and its independence from the body after death. In its journey this soul would leave to the underworld.

This seriously important event was accompanied by funerary rituals and ceremonies which indicated the effect of death for them as well as their respect and veneration for the deceased according to his social and religious status. These practices contributed to the social solidity and reinforced the stability of the social bonds which was manifested by sanctifying their ancestors through offering sacrifices so that the ancestors souls become satisfied with the successors and support them; a thing which sometimes came to the extent of direct communication with ancestors (*conjuraton*).

The steps taken in the interment process, the burials type, the places they are positioned in as well as the deceased positions inside them and the belongings funerary objects and artifacts which were put in these burials all represent the different fundamental aspects of post death beliefs in the culture of the people in this area. To this rituals and ceremonies related to death, interment and post interment can be added.

The research problem: The studies dealing with funerary traditions in Central and Northern Syria are rare, and those previous studies dealt with the following subject matters:

- A- Early Bronze Age burials discovered In many important sites: Mishrifeh, As, Al-Ansari, Saraqeb ...etc.
- B- Middle Bronze Age burial grounds discovered in the most important archaeological sites: Mishrifeh, tell Mardikh, Al-Ansari...etc.
- C- Funerary structures (Mishrifeh and tell Mardikh), the ancestor cult and the relationship between funerary ceremonies and royal traditions;
- D- Funerary furniture (focusing mainly on pottery): Mishrifeh, tell Mardikh, Al-Ansari, Saraqeb, tell As ...etc.

In any rate, until now there are no attempts which led to the accomplishment of studying the precise comprehensive structure of the archaeological evidence related to death in this part of Syria during Early and Middle Bronze Ages.

The research significance: The research aim is to focus on the Early and Middle Bronze burials discovered in the sites of Central and Northern Syria and to study the funerary records which are kept in these burials.

The research methodology: This research depends on a profound study of the archaeological materials unearthed from Early and Middle Bronze tombs and burials in Central and Northern Syria, as well as comparing these materials with the funerary records and affirming their presence in other parts of Syria (mainly Jezirah, the Euphrates valley and the littoral area).

This research has been prepared for the purpose of throwing light upon interment rituals and traditions in Central and Northern Syria during the third and second millennium BC. This has been carried out through a detailed study which depended mainly on the archaeological data resulting from archaeological excavation works and scientific researches. This research included six main chapters, a preface and an epilogue. Through these chapters we tried to present a comprehensive scientific conception supported by the archaeological excavation carried out in the research area. What we looked for has been to get scientific results which may contribute to throwing light on the funerary practices

adopted by the people of the area. Thus the research was divided into the following chapters:

The research will be divided into six main chapters:

- **Chapter one:** The geographical frame. Study of the geographical and environmental characters of the Inner Central and Northern Syria in order to understand the topographic structure of the region (valleys, plains, mountains, tributary rivers, etc. desert vs. sown).

- **Chapter two:** The historical context of the Inner Central and Northern Syria during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages.

- **Chapter three:** The third and second millennium epigraphic evidence related to burials and funerary customs.

- **Chapter four:** This chapter was divided into the following parts:

1- The Early and Middle Bronze Age funerary evidence discovered in the Inner Central and Northern Syria (Mishrifeh, As, Ain Assan, Saraqeb, Hama, Al-Rawda, Umm el-Marra): burial typologies and their distribution in the sites, the funerary architecture.

2- The grave goods and personal ornaments (pottery, gold, ivory, semi-precious stones, alabaster, bronze/copper finds, objects in perishable materials), the anthropological record.

3- Comparison with the evidence from the coastal region, the Middle Euphrates and the Jezirah.

- **Chapter five:** Study of the burial customs and comparison with those attested to in the coastal region, the Upper and Middle Euphrates and the Jezirah.

- **Conclusion chapter six:** Death in the social and religious life. Study of the burial typologies focusing on following issues:

- Reasons of choosing the burial typology;

- Reasons of the diversity of the burials (individual vs. collective tombs);

- Urban vs. rural sites;

- Short- and long-term use of the shaft tombs;

The concluding section: This part contains the scientific results we attained, hoping that they may help to get better understanding of the rituals and ceremonies which were adopted in Central and Northern Syria during the third and second millennium BC.

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II- Chapter one

History of Archaeological research inner and Northern Syria

Archaeological research and excavations have started in Syria in general since the twenties of the last century. These activities were carried out in many Syrian sites. The first important excavation in the Syria area was that of the Tell Et-Tin in Katena Lake at Homs region. In 1894 M. Buffard from natural archaeology museum in Lyon, The excavation showed that it had been important site from the Middle Bronze Age¹. At Carchemish on the Syrian/Turkish borders, a British archaeological expedition carried out excavation work from 1911 to 1920 and uncovered the settlement which had been established during the seventh and sixth millennia BC, and become a fortified city in the second millennium BC². There are also the excavations and archaeological research in the tell Nebi Mend (ancient Qadesh) on the Orontes, a French expedition, directed by Maurice Pézard, worked at the site in 1921-22³. The excavation and archaeological research resumed again in 1975 by University of London Institute: six actual field seasons have taken place, in order to illuminate the process by which, during the 4th and 3rd millennia, the region became urbanized⁴. Again at internal part of the country in particular, have actually begun since the twenties of the twentieth century through excavations carried out between 1924 and 1929 by Count Robert du Mesnil du Buisson⁵ in many sites in Central Syria such as Mishrifeh, Tell Ass, Khan Sheikhoun, Selimiye, and Dnebi. The exceptional tell of Mishrifeh was identified as the ancient Qatna, and the site was of evident importance as early as the end of the third millennium, but more especially during the Middle Bronze Age and the first part of the Late Bronze Age. At the site of Ugarit, on the Syria coastal area, excavation started when the site was discovered by accident in 1928, when a French expedition headed by the French scientist, the excavation begun in 1929 of the Tell Ras Shamra (Ugarit), a short distance from Lattakia,

¹ Gautier 1895: 5.

² Toueir 1984: 65.

³ Parr 1983: 99. Pézard: 1931.

⁴ Parr 1983: 108.

⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930:145.

at the Mediterranean coast, under the direction of Claude Schaeffer. Archaeological excavations which indicated that the site had been populated since Neolithic period, and had been a prosperous kingdom during both Middle and Late Bronze Ages. The discovery in the very first season, of texts in alphabetic cuneiform of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC. expressing a North-Western Semitic language close to Phoenician. The continuation of the excavations regularly and systematically led to the recovery of a great number of administrative and literary texts and vocabularies in Ugaritic, of many documents, especially administrative and political, in Middle Babylonian and of texts, some very important, in Hittite and Hurrian. But it also gave a complete picture of an important centre of the Late Bronze Age which had been the capital of one of the kingdoms of the North Syrian coastal area⁶. The excavations interrupted in 1939 and resumed after the war under the leadership of Schaeffer. The excavations and archaeological research were begun in 1929 until 1931 at Tell Ahmar, the ancient Til Barsib, capital of the small Aramaean kingdom of Bit Adini and afterwards seat of an Assyrian prefecture, F. Thureau-Dangin recovered some interesting examples of 'Neo-Hittite' sculpture earlier than the Assyrian conquest and to be placed undoubtedly in the cultural and artistic contexts of near-by Carchemish⁷. The Expedition of the Orient Institute of Chicago, under the direction of C. McEwan, worked in a series of tells of the Amuq Plain, Tell Tayanat, Tell Judaida and Chatal Huyuk. The excavations and archaeological research were begun at Amuq in 1931, and put together a new stratigraphic profile applying to the whole Amuq region. The most important of which was the site of Mari (tell al-Hariri), where a stone statue was discovered by accident. This was followed by archaeological excavations carried out by Andre Parrot in 1933, who discovered that human settlement in the site occurred since the mid fourth millennium BC and that Mari had been a strong and important kingdom on the Euphrates during the third and second millennium BC, Mari is today one of the best-known centres of Mesopotamia cultural for the later phases of Early Dynastic Period and the age of Hammurabi of Babylon⁸. Archaeological excavation at the site of tell Brak near al-Hasake in 1937-1938 carried out

⁶ Matthiae 1981: 25.

⁷ *Ibid.*: 24.

⁸ *Ibid.*: 26.

by British School of Archaeology in Iraq, still under Max Mallowan's direction, in 1937-1938, and resumed in 1976 by a British expedition under D. Oates, Unearthed the largest architectural centre in the Khabur area during the third millennium BC⁹. The site, one of the largest of the whole region, proved to have been a flourishing centre of the Uruk period, with a typical 'Polished Red Ware' of local production but related to contemporary wares of Sumer and Elam. Tell Brak also yielded unexpected evidence of the following Jemdet Nasr period¹⁰.

This was followed by excavations carried out by the Danish Expedition of the Carlsberg Foundation, under the direction of Harald Ingholt,¹¹ assisted in particular by p. j. Riis, between 1932 and 1939 in both Hama Citadel and Mourek. The results at Hama citadel defining for this important centre the cultural phases in stratigraphic succession. Sir Leonard Woolley with the exploration of Tell Atchana (Alalakh) in the lower Orontes valley for the first time obtained detailed information about a typical North Syrian centre of the Middle Bronze or Late Bronze, Excavation were begun in 1936, broken off for the duration of the war in 1939, and the exploration then completed in 1949. Tell Atchana was found to correspond with the ancient Alalakh on evidence from the archives discovered in the places from Middle Bronze Age II to Late Bronze Age I¹². Alalakh must have been quite an important centre during Middle Bronze Age I, during Middle Bronze Age II, it was the seat of small kingdom, a vassal of Yamkhad (Aleppo) and governed by an Amorite dynasty related to its ruling family¹³. Those excavations gave primary idea about the Syrian urban society during the Early Bronze Age, the period which was to be more clearly manifested through the excavation and archaeological research carried out in the seventies of the last century (1964) at the site of Tell Mardikh (ancient Ebla) by the Italian scholar Paolo Matthiae,¹⁴ who is still working till present day. the discovery of Ebla is considered as one of the most important discoveries in the twentieth century, it showed that Mesopotamia had not been the only early cultural centre in south-west Asia and that

⁹ Oates *et al.* 1988: 4-5.

¹⁰ Matthiae 1981: 28.

¹¹ Fugmann 1958: 1.

¹² Matthiae 1981: 29.

¹³ Gates 1981: 1 and 32-33.

¹⁴ Matthiae 1965:79-85.

the west region of Syria had also developed its own urban culture, with its complicated and sophisticated art, its strong Royal administration and its language dating back to the third millennium BC¹⁵. A Syrian expedition from the Aleppo Museum brought to light an important group of 'Neo-Hittite' sculptures on the Acropolis of Tell Ain Dara, probably to be identified with the ancient Kinalua, Capital of the kingdom of the Hattina. new important excavations on the cost by a Danish expedition led by P. J. Riis carried out important investigations at Tell Sukas, (certainly the Shuksu of Ugaritic texts). The stratigraphic results were good and important evidence was gained of the settlements of Iron Ages¹⁶. There are also the excavations and archaeological research in the Northern part of Syria carried out by Antoine Suleiman¹⁷ at the site of Al-Ansari near Aleppo between 1973 and 1980 which showed that Al-Ansari was an important settlement during the second millennium BC. Excavation and archaeological research went on in some of these previous sites along with new sites in Central and Northern Syria, particularly the sites of the old kingdoms such as Qatna where excavations resumed in 1994 by the Syrian General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums. In 1999 a new archaeological project started involving a joint Syrian-Italian-German mission co-directed by Michel Al-Maqdissi, Daniele Morandi Bonacossi, (University of Udine) and Peter Pfälzner (University of Tübingen)¹⁸. Qatna had a circular layout of 30 hectares in the third millennium and was later on, at the beginning of the second millennium, extended to take a square shape¹⁹. This site played a fundamental strategic role of the communication roads connecting the coastal area with the steppe and the Euphrates region, because it was located at the crossroad of two of the most important ancient trade routes in the Levant:²⁰

- The route extending from Anatolia in the north to Palestine and Egypt in the south
- The main route connecting Mesopotamia in the east with the Mediterranean coast in the west via the Syrian steppe.

¹⁵ Matthiae ;F.Pinnock; and G. Scandone-Matthiae 1995.

¹⁶ Matthiae 1981: 33.

¹⁷ Suleiman: 1984: 1-16.

¹⁸ Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: 16-18.

¹⁹ Al-Maqdissi 2009a:119.

²⁰ Abdallah 1996: 104-105. Ismail 1996: 99.

The site is also mentioned in the cuneiform documents of the early second millennium BC, where the Mesopotamian; Hittite and Egyptian documents put it in a historical context which exceeds the limits of the region²¹. The excavation and archaeological research was begun at the site of Umm el-Marra north of Syria at 1987 from R. Tefnin and resumed in 1994 with a joint excavation expedition from Amsterdam University and Johns Hopkins University, run respectively by Hans Curvers and Glenn M. Schwartz from Johns Hopkins.

Umm el-Marra had been a small Site revolving around great neighbouring kingdoms such as Ebla and Aleppo (Yamkhad). The site had been populated throughout the Bronze Ages from 2800 to 1200 BC²².

One of the most important sites for the third millennium which occurred in Central Western Syria is the site of Al-Rawda where excavation and archaeological studies was begun in 2000 by a Syrian-French expedition run by Corinne Castel and Nazir Awad. The excavation showed that it had been a city of circular layout and an important settlement which emerged in the steppe during the Early Bronze Age²³.

Excavation and archaeological research in the above mentioned sites resulted in a group of a new different and diverse archaeological data including social, political and economic life, as well as new data in the field of art and different kinds of architecture throughout the Bronze Ages. Since our investigation is dedicated to funerary rituals and ceremonies in Northern and internal Syria during both Early and Middle Bronze Ages, we are going to study the burial uncovered at the above mentioned sites, as well as some individually uncovered burials in other sites in the same region such as Saraqeb, Mourek, Khan Sheikhoun ...etc. This will be done by studying inhumation types adopted in Central and Northern Syria, as well as studying the bronze and pottery funerary grave goods, which will enable us to present a real view of those grave goods essential nature along with the reasons of their presence; are they related to a certain traditions and beliefs which were dominating at that time, or just personal objects, or perhaps gifts to the gods ...?.

²¹ Klengel 2009: 39.

²² Schwartz 2007: 40.

²³ Castel *et al.* 2005: 51-96.

Burial data and information might be the effective determinative of that time predominant social and cultural groups, taking into consideration that these societies are characterized by a state of stability, because they established cities and kingdoms which lasted for a long period of time in Central and Northern Syria, particularly Ebla and Qatna in Central Syria and Al-Ansari and Umm el-Marra in Northern Syria. The study may show these sites relationship with each other and their relation with neighbouring cultural centres. In order to know the cultural distinction it is necessary to carry out comparisons with burial data and grave goods types scattered in the Euphrates valley, particularly upper Euphrates, because it is distinguished by wide diffusion of Early and Middle Bronze Age tombs where many burial types are known from Tell Barsib,²⁴ Jarablus Tahtani,²⁵ Tell Banat,²⁶ and other sites, along with other burial data from sites in western Syria such as Tell Tweini,²⁷ Tell Iris²⁸ and Tell Sukas,²⁹ which date back to both Early and Middle Bronze Ages.

²⁴ Thureau Dangin François and Dunand Maurice 1936: 96 -110

²⁵ Peltenburg 1999b: 427-442.

²⁶ Porter 1995a: 1-50.

²⁷ Al-Maqdissi *et al.* 2006: Poster.

²⁸ see Al-Maqdissi and Suleiman 2003-2004: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Iris.

²⁹ Thrane 1978: 2-3.40-42.

III- Chapter two

Geographic and Historical Setting

Area under consideration includes both internal and Northern Syria. The first is the area confined from the west by the coastal range stretching from the western boundaries of the Homs gap in the south to the boundaries of Lattakia Mountains overlooking the Gab valley in the north and the Syrian steppe beyond the farmlands which depend on the rain water in the east³⁰. The southern area includes the Affrin plain, and the valleys of the Qouweiq, al-Zahab and the Amuq plain, extending northward to al- Jabbul Lake.

Generally speaking, this area is located in Central and Northern Syria, bordered by the area north of Aleppo, the coastal range from the west, the Euphrates and al- Jazera fringes in the north-eastern side, the Syria steppe to the east and south- eastern side and, the fringes of the high mountains (the eastern range of Lebanon mountain) in the south. This area, therefore, includes two main regions: The Aleppo and Northern Shamiyeh steppe and the Orontes basin.

The Aleppo Steppe and Northern Shamiyeh Region:

This Geographical region covers an area of about 20,000 square kilometers, distinguished by sweeping plains of average height ranging from 300-450 meters above sea level, interpenetrated by hills among which flood valleys of wide beds and flat areas of land more smoothly or come to an end with sheer descending edges. The more we come nearer to the Euphrates valley the more the ruggedness of the land and the number of valleys increases, and these valleys become narrower and deeper and their sides- wide and open in their middle and upper water courses become vertical, particularly in the north Shamiyeh region³¹.

What distinguishes this region is the propagation of small hills and mounds in the south. The height of hills ranges from 350 to 450 meters, while the adjacent plains are often gently sweeping. A wide water dividing line separates the Northern Shamiyeh region from al- Jabbul sinkage. Topographic reliefs varies in al-Jabbul region and the Aleppo

³⁰ Castel 2007: 283.

³¹ Abd alsalam 1990:78.

steppe where closed depressions diffused between remains of uplands and low mountains appear along with wide valleys and other deep narrow ones separated by elevated plains. This area constitutes a large closed basin where floor waters coming from the higher lands surrounding it from all sides come to an end. The water of both Qouweiq and al-Zahab rivers also come to an end in this basin in which the most noticeable topographic reliefs is al- Jabbul lake itself (308-315 meters above sea level) and the swamp of Rasm al-Rwam to the south and south-western side smaller closed depressions appear and constitute the swamp of Shbith-al-Maragha and al-Khararij swamp(268-269meters above sea level).The lowest in this region is al-Matkh³² (previously the al-Marj al-Ahmar) swamp located in the western side (in the Aleppo plateau) 249-250 meters above sea level, while the plateau of mount al-Hes (al-Ahas in traditional books) goes up to 500-550 meters and the average height of Shbith Mountain is 450. The surface of these last two elevations is level, their edges are intensively sloping, furrowed by short and relatively deep valleys so that they overlook the adjacent land from a height ranging from 100 to 200 meters. From the eastern side al-Hes overlooks al-Jabbul swamp, from the western side it overlooks al-Mattekh depression and from the southern side it overlooks al-Khararij depression³³. Shbith plateau, located south-east of al-Hes and separated from it by the land of khanaser, overlooks the Shbith swamp in the south-eastern side and Rasm al-Rwam in the north side. Around these depressions there are scattered hills such as Rajm al-Hajjana (401 meters), Tell al-Maragha (376 meters) and mount Obaisan (342 meters)³⁴. With the increase of ascent in the south and south –western side. The difference of height increases between the floor of the long, wide gently-sloping valleys, known as al-Saoun (singular Sain), where the flood water may be collected, and the valleys sides become deep and intensively sloping in some parts where the anticlines contain hard rocks³⁵.

The region other territories which constitute Aleppo/Idlib plains and elevations do not differ so much with regard to the alternation of valleys and sweeping elevated plains separating these valleys from each other. The height of this area increases gradually westward till we come to the feet and fringes of mount al-Zawiye and mount Simeon

³² Abd alslam1990: 81.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Wirth 1971. Abd alslam1990: 81.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

where the height ranges from 500 to 800 meters above sea level³⁶. The area of Aleppo steppe and plains is distinguished by the presence of hills in the north and two strips of low mountains: Jal al-Jurn and two the barren north- west- south- east orientated mountain of Umm Mial, 550-600 meters above sea level³⁷. The area is penetrated by Qouweiq River with its valleys and al-Sajur River which constitutes the north- eastern part of the region and pours its water in the Euphrates.

Geologically this region is a structural unit known as the elevation of Aleppo, confined between the Idleb-Afrin al-Ghab lowland in the west, the Euphrates valley in the east and the palmyrene rifts and anticlines in the south. In the Aleppo elevation there are depressions and small local anticlines the most prominent of which are those which constitute al-Jabbul and al-Matkh sink ages, the region dominant component is the sedimentary rocks dating back to the second period of the cretaceous and the third of the Paleocene diffused mostly in Northern Syria (Northern Shamiyeh and the Northern part of the Aleppo steppe). Layers of lime, soft cretaceous lime, marl and sand lime stone are also predominant. Gypsum, marl, clay and sand limestone from the neogene period constitute the top-levels of both Jal al-Jurn and Umm Mial mountains which surround the Idlib basin from the north side³⁸. Large areas of rocky layers disappear under a thin layer of sediments of river, flood or lacustrine origin as in the case of al-Matkh depression and its extensions in the tributaries of Qouweiq River coming the Idlib plains and in the case of al-Jabbul, al-Muragha, al-Khararij and al-Sakhana depressions³⁹. A basalt stone of volcanic origin also appears above sediment layers in the utmost eastern side such as Tell Treep, al-Hes and Shbith Mountains and Abu-al-Duhour elevation.

This 50-100 meters thick layer is destroyed by corrosion and separated by floor valleys. Scattered spots of this layer also appear in the utmost Northern side of this region⁴⁰.

³⁶ For Example Barsa mountain which up 855 m Northern Azaz and al Shek Barkat mountain which up 870 m beside Darat Azza and 877m in Alzawiye beside Ariha.

³⁷ Abd alsalam1990: 82.

³⁸ Wirth 1971. Abd alsalam1990:83.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Abd alsalam 1990: 84.

The region of the Orontes basin:

It is located in the middle of western Syria between the Syria-Turkey borders in the north and the Syria-Lebanese borders in the south. It is also bordered by the Aleppo and al-Shamiyeh steppe in the east and the western mountains and the coastal region in the west⁴¹. The basin is longitudinally shaped extending from the north to the south where it expands a little toward the east. It is subdivided into smaller regions including the area of Homs, Hama and Idlib in the south; al-Ghab and al-Zawiye in the middle and; Kurd-Dag and Afrin in the north⁴². The southern elevations in and around Qattina area are about 500 meters above sea level, 700-850 meters in the area of al-Wa're and shin elevation and, 650-800 meters east of Homs. The height decreases to 400 meters in the Northern part of al-Wa'er area which end to the north in Masyaf elevation and the Orontes plains to the west of Hama north of al-Rastan lake⁴³.

East of the Orontes the plains of Homs extends on the neogene rocky base which constitutes the upper Orontes plain which borders on al-Rastan area in the north and al-Salamiye basin in the north east. Plains east of the Orontes are penetrated by a number of flood valleys the heads of which are in the high land and high mountains surrounding the region⁴⁴. Most important of these valleys are se'en al-Midani which goes through the town of Ain al-Nasr, al-Malattiye valley which goes through Mishrifeh and se'en al-Aswad which goes through the village of Deir fool. Near the village of Abu Humamah these valleys come together in one course which pours out into the Orontes. To the north and North West the land surface dropping continues along the Orontes axis in the plains of Hama east and west of the river until the average height becomes 250-350 meters above sea level. The surface general sloping keeps being oriented toward the river. The river of al-Sarout (the Orontes left tributary)⁴⁵ comes down from the Masyaf elevation (400-500 meters above sea level). In this area the region goes up again at the elevation of Khan Sheikhoun and the southern feet of al-Zawiye mountains. In the lowland the Orontes goes deeper through narrow winding valleys within semi-horizontal layers of

⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 123.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Abd alslam 1990: 125.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* : 126.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 126.

Marl, lime and cretaceous-lime stones from Here the valley is 75-310 meters above sea level and one kilometer wide⁴⁶.

Going beyond al-Asharna plain between the Masyaf elevation and al-Zawiye Mountains the land becomes a flat plain which constitute al-Ghab with a length of 80 kilometers from the south to the north, an average width of 12 kilometers and, a height of 200 meters in the south and 170 meters in the north. From the west al-Ghab adjoins the coastal range which overlooks it from a height of 1000-1100 meters above sea level and marks the western border of the Orontes basin. From the east al-Ghab adjoins a rift steeping slope which comes up to 600 meters above the plain level and forms the western edge of al-Zawiye Mountains the greater portion of which falls within this region⁴⁷.

Contrary to the almost complete flatness of al-Ghab plain, where sea sediments from the upper quadratic period, mostly covered by swampy quadratic and new river alluvial sediment, we notice that in al-Zawiye mountains, the highlands between Jsr al-Shughur and Darkush and in Parisha, al-Westani and al-Aala ranges, the rugged land rich with topographic relief and rock differences are predominant. The central elevations of al-Zawiye mountains are about 800 meters above sea level, while the heights of the other ranges are about 550- 620 meters above sea level⁴⁸. On the surface of al-Zawiye Mountains is predominated by rugged pits, basins and hills formed by cretaceous works, running water in floor valleys as well as constructive movements and volcanic eruptions⁴⁹. North of al-Ghab plain and al-Zawiye Mountains the region continue as 30 kilometers wide strip of land containing the Orontes valley which runs on a height of 129 meters above sea level at Jsr al-Shughur and 90 meters at the beginning of Amuq plain. This strip goes along with another longitudinal one of hills to the west, intensively furrowed by a number of valleys coming from al- Qsair elevations down to the Orontes⁵⁰. The topographic relief of this part ends to the east with gently sloping declensions which join the Idlib steppe. The surface of kurd-Dagh and Afrin area is full of contrastive sloping and elevated topographic relief, which consists of four parallel longitudinal strips

⁴⁶ Wirth 1971. Abd alslam 1990:126.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Abd alslam 1990: 129.

of south western- north eastern axis. These are the Amuq plain, the valley of al-Aswad river, the Afrin valley and Semion mountain which forms a continuation of both al-Aula and parish mountains and comes to a height of 870 meters at sheikh Barakat while its central heights are 550-650 meters above sea level⁵¹. Semion mountain is characterized by intensively sloping western feet and gently sloping eastern ones. Its surface is rich with cretaceous manifestations which originated from the lime stones of period. Its western edge which overlooks the Afrin river valley keeps in line with a clear rift of north eastern-south western axis where caves rich with the remains of prehistorically man are plentiful. Al-Deideriye cane is the most important⁵².

The land of the Amuq plain and the valley of al-Aswad river become flat plains, and the Aumq lake occupy the lowest part of the valley where the height becomes 81 meters above sea level. From the western side the plain is over looked by the feet of al-Lukam Mountain and by the cliffs of the Kurd mountain from the east⁵³.

In the eastern side there are three north-south orientated mountain strips- al-Westani, al-Aala and Barisha, separated by longitudinal basins which form both al-Rouj and sardine plains. These are two low closed plain which were formed as a result of constructive (fault) and cretaceous works which provided a kind of typical⁵⁴.

Form what have been said we can identify four water basins were formed by the force of nature a long time ago and had been one of the most important reasons for the settlement process and development of sedentary communities in this area. There basins are:

The Orontes basin: It is the most important with regard to the distance (450 kilometers) by the Orontes from its sources north-west of Baalbek to its mouth south of Antioch⁵⁵. In and around this basin there is a large number of important tells and archaeological sites such as Tell Nebi Mend, Homs, al-Shairat, Mishrifeh, Tell al-Sour and Al-Rawda which is the farthest from the basin on the steppe margin. There are also the sites of Hama, Khan Sheikhoun, Tell Mazen, tell As, Mourek, Tell Mardikh as well as a number of sites in al-Ghab plain al-Asharna and Tell Qarqur and Amuq plain, al-Jdeidah and Tell Atchana .

⁵¹ *Ibid.*: 130.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Abd alslam 1990: 131.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*: 129.

⁵⁵ Partel and Al-Maqqdissi 2005: 137.

The Afrin river basin: Its area is smaller than that of the Orontes. It contains the Amuq flat plain and the valley of al-Aswad River. In this basin there is also a number of Archaeological sites most important of which are the sites of Ain Dara, Ginders and al-Dedariye.

The Qouweiq river basin: It contains more than 34 archaeological Tells most important of which are the sites of Aleppo, Tell Rufa`at, Al-Ansari and Ebla which is located on the bank of Qouweiq river and mentioned in the cuneiform tablets as a place where hemp had been cultivated.

Al-Dhahab river basin: It pours its water out into the salty lake of al- Jabbul. This basin contains a number of archaeological Tells most important of which are the sites of Umm el-Marra and Abu Danna.

The discovered archaeological sites show in way the characteristics of the civilization which developed in this area. The geographical diffusion of this civilization in the Northern and internal area had not been stable throughout the history of the ancient Syrian period. While the Syrian Northern culture in the first period predominates all Northern Syria including the upper Euphrates basin, we notice that the ruins of Middle Bronze period are lacking in this region, rather it appears in another place in the sites of Central Syria, the Orontes basin and the coastal region in Byblos and Majdo in Palestine and other sites in the southern coast. If anything, this may indicate that this culture moved from the south-west to the north-west or from the north to the south-al-Momskhin, Tell Sakka, al-Ghezlaniye and then to the west and east. The reason of change seems to have related to specific historical events and factors.

In general, the area under consideration is distinguished by containing arable land, particularly the Orontes plains and the valley of both Qouweiq and al-Dhahab River, where there is no need for special irrigation system to increase the agricultural production as in the case of the Euphrates basin where seasonal floods often take place. This region is also rich with grass and herbs which made it suitable for breeding different kinds of livestock. The area adjacent to the coastal range allowed the cultivation of fruit trees.

On the map (Fig 1) we notice the concentration of the sites under consideration in Certain areas of Northern and Internal Syria. These sites constitute separated groups according to climatic and natural factors predominating this region, such as proximity of rivers and arable lands as well as ancient trade routes. Thus we can say that concentrating these sites in their places within Northern and internal Syria is due to two reasons:

The first is their proximity of rivers, lakes and fertile arable lands the thing which can be easily distinguished in the following sites: Homs, Hama, Qarqur, Ginders, Ain Dara, Al-Ansari, Umm el-Marra...etc.

The second is their presence on or proximity to the ancient transit and trade routes which were well-Known in that period of time. These routes came from Palestine in the south and passed through Damascus, Mishrifeh, Hama, Tell Mazen, Khan Sheikhoun, Tell Mardikh, Amuq plain and, to Anatolia in the north. Other route came from the east to the west through two roads; the first came from the banks of the Euphrates in the east to the Mediterranean shores in the west, and passed by al-Jabbul lake, Tell Mardikh, Aleppo, Tell Barsib and Selankhiye. Like the first the second route which connected Syria with Mesopotamia also started from mid Euphrates area near Mari and went in the Shamiyeh steppe through Palmyra, Qatna, the Homs lowland, and reached the Mediterranean coast (Byblos). Near Qatna the route intersected with the previous one which came from Aleppo in the north and continued to Damascus and Palestine⁵⁶.

In this plain area interposed by low mounds, different demographic group were formed on relatively small Tells most of which did not exceed six hectares (Al-Ansari) this indicates the lack of high demographic density in these sites, yet we do not deny the presence of civil culture, because the Archaeological discoveries including the Royal and collective tombs evidence the civil state in these sites which may have contained agricultural and civil communities or agricultural communities with civil culture (Saraqeb and Mourek). Studying the settlements of Hama may give a clear and more precise idea in this regard. Excavations carried out in the thirties of the last century in the Tell of Hama which is located on a high hill of 16 square hectares on the bank of the Orontes uncovered a

⁵⁶ Mar'I 1996: 137.

chronological and stratigraphic sequence from late Neolithic period to the Islamic period⁵⁷. This tells also provided us with valuable data about the cultures of the third and second millennia within levels K and J. In the area of both Qouweiq and al-Dahab rivers there are more than 34 archaeological tell where levels of the third and second millennia were found (Al-Ansari-Aleppo).

⁵⁷ Partel, and Al-Maqdissi 2005: 137.

IV- Chapter three

Cuneiform texts belonging to the third and second millennium BC related to the funerary system

Recently the archaeological studies laid stress on how the inhumation remains contribute to our understanding of the way according to which a certain society organizes itself. Burial types, ceremonial interment practices choosing the burial gifts and positioning them inside the tomb can provide us with a valuable acute vision regarding the structure of the human groups and their social and economic situations through which we understand the behavior of those who are still alive.

At the beginning of the historical periods (about 3500 BC) we notice that the interment ceremonies in the Arab Levant remained unchanged, and interment under the floor of houses (the oldest phenomenon) went on. Here we notice the phenomenon of interment inside pottery jars. First of all for children and later on for adults. The phenomenon of skull separation from the body is not evidenced from that period, the thing which means that the ancestor cult or even the overturned skull, has not been attested in the archaeological sites up till now. What happened, as a result of the social/economical trend at the beginning of establishing cities and the emergence of the leadership in the form of a political system, is that the (tribal) ancestor cult might have changed into worshipping kings and deifying them after their death, As for the funerary grave goods (a designation which is, as I think, much better than saying funerary furniture) we notice a continuation of had been prevailing before.

Thus, here we are to face with the continuation of the previously prevailing burial ceremonies and practices along with an increase of the development of funerary rituals, particularly at the beginning of the city emergence and the dawn of writing which started off from the ancient Arab Levant. Continuing the investigation about the writing historical periods we might find it necessary to mention the following main points:

First: with regard to death ceremonies and beliefs the historical periods in the Arab Levant are considered as a linking point between pre-historical periods and the modern period, that is, there is an uninterrupted cultural continuity-taking into consideration what the urban (constructional) revolution had given on the one hand and the new values and standards which the invention of writing had added to the social life and to the ceremonies practiced in the field of interment at

that time on the other hand. These, in addition to what our ancestors had written on the tablets led to widening the scope of knowing their rituals and beliefs in such a way that takes us away from supposition to the assertion that there are deeply-rooted ancient ceremonies, beliefs and a symbolic system still existent in our modern life.

Secondly: To know the interment practices adopted during pre-historical periods we depended on studying the finds, the remains of buildings and burial grounds and funerary grave goods. With the invention of writing we have now a double evidence: The first interprets historical and pre-historical symbols and structures through discovered written documents; while the second depends on finds, archaeological remains and funerary grave goods.

Thirdly: We avoided, as much as possible, the use of literary and mythological texts, not because they are not important, but because we wanted to carry out the research about the burial and its rituals according to what had been taking place, not according to what had been imagined. Myths, in spite of their different varieties, are based on symbolic grounds, and we do not think that the symbol, usually charged with emotions, is valid for a scientific research like this one which is founded on life occurrences (see, for example, the epic of Gilgamesh where it is mentioned that "He built the walls of Uruk, the like of which no man had ever seen",⁵⁸ but the archaeological discovery at the site of the city of Habuba Kabira in Syria confirmed that the walls of this latter city is larger than its contemporary in Uruk)⁵⁹.

Through reading some third and second millennia texts, depending mainly on the texts of Ebla, Tell Mardikh, which date back to the second half of the third millennium BC, we will try to know the funerary ceremonies and practices which were adopted during both Early and Middle Bronze periods; we will try to know those practices, dating back to the same period, in Ebla itself. Invoking other texts, particularly those of Mari, Tell al-Hariri, we will also be able to know the funerary ceremonies and practices during the second millennium BC.

The Eblaite archives, uncovered in 1974-1975 brought to light the international relationships and the social, economic and political system in the third millennium BC. The records of Mari, also tablets uncovered in 1934, provided us with important information about a limited period of time, about half century, which lasted from the time of Yahdun-Lîm(1820 BC) till the end of Mari

⁵⁸ For more information about Epic of Gilgamesh see Baker: 1962.

⁵⁹ Strommenger 1984:52.

Kingdom on the hand of Hammurabi (1760 BC). These tablets deal with the social, political, economic and administrative aspects during the second millennium BC⁶⁰.

The Royal texts of Ebla, the Syrian kingdom which played a great role in the history of Syria during the 24th century BC; provided us with a treasure of information related to interment practices in Ebla itself and in the Syrian region as a whole during that time. The Eblaite *administrative* texts mentioned the death of many individuals from the Eblaite royal family including the king, queen, princes and princesses, as well as members of the Eblaite court and other courts in Syria. As for the funerary gifts offered in such occasions, in the mourning rituals and ,later on, during the purification ceremonies for individuals of the family, these tablets left behind many evidences about the monthly statements of textile remittances and the yearly statements of metal remittances⁶¹.

The texts of Mari, in their turn, provided us with a set of texts which mentioned the death of some kings and individuals of its royal family. Some tablets also mention a set of metal and other remittances for preparing and offering for the diseased kings and their entourage.

First of all we will explain some nomenclatures used in this chapter: (ARET) means the royal archive of Ebla (Archivi Reali di Ebla), while the nomenclature which indicates the royal archive of Mari is (ARMT) (Archivi Reali di Mari).

In this context we have to mention the nomenclature (EXPAP) used in the texts of Ebla and agreed upon that it is an indication of the funerary concrete, the tomb, the funerary ceremony or both of them.⁶² It is frequently used in the Eblaite texts as an equivalent to the terms (*kimahhum*) and (*quburum*) used in Mari to delimit the place⁶³. It is necessary to mention that this term is similar to the Arabic word (Qabr: grave) and gives the same meaning.

Studying the written texts from the third and second millennia BC, we came to a set of important data which will be classified according to their subject matter as follows:

⁶⁰ Parrot 1974: 5-76.

⁶¹ Biga 2007-2008: 249.

⁶² *Ibid.*: 251.

⁶³ *Ibid.*: 252.

1-The burials in the archives:

In many places of the Eblaite texts we have indications to the existence of underground burials or other burial monuments which were used to receive the diseased of the royal family or members of the royal court of Ebla.

In these texts special terms were used as an indication to the place of interment. The expression (ud a- ba – I) was translated as the day of the crypt (an underground burial) ceremony. Both Mangiarotti and Pasquali have interpreted the chronicling meaning of the expression as an indication of a ritual or an event which took place in Ebla,⁶⁴ considering it as an event related to the underground burial. Thus, they translated the Semitic expression as a crypt, or an underground burial, it is, therefore, a place of interment for diseased individuals (of the royal family)⁶⁵. Again, the texts of Ebla mention a nomenclature or an expression which might be an indication of a place where some Eblaite rulers were buried. It is the word 'e ma-Tim (also spelled 'è ma - dim) and quoted in the Eblaite ceremony text performed by the king and queen as */Beit emwatim/* (the house of the dead) and translated as "tomb"⁶⁶. Thus we have two expressions through which we can know the Eblaites use of the crypt burial on the one hand and the monumental sepulchers which might have been places for interment, worship or ceremonial practices on the other hand. The ritual text in ARET II shows that some kings of Ebla and ancestors of their dynasty were buried in Nenaš⁶⁷ and that the sepulcher is the place where the cult of these ancestors had been practiced. At least three rulers of Ebla, Sagisu, Ibbini Lîm and Išurt-damu who receive the offerings and sacrifices at different intervals of the ceremony carried out in the sepulcher of Nenaš might have been buried there⁶⁸.

It is also reported that at least some most important royal members, such as the king and his family might have been buried inside the city on a high place which can be clearly seen from a

⁶⁴ See Fronzaroli 1995: 59.

⁶⁵ Biga 2007-2008: 270. Fronzaroli 1995: 59.

⁶⁶ Fronzaroli 1988: 26. Fronzaroli 1993: 144.

⁶⁷ For the identification of Nenaš with the modern town of Binaš, 20 sqkm nord-west of Ebla cfr. *ARES* 2, 178-179; Bonechi 1993, p. 78

⁶⁸ Biga 2007-2008: 257; Pomponio - Xella 1997: 148-150, 155-156, 160-162; Archi 2001: 5. The passages of the texts where other sacrifices to other deceased kings of Ebla are offered (*ARET* 11, 1 [97], *ARET* 11, 2 [107]), are not completely clear but it seems that the sacrifices took place when the king and the queen have already left the mausoleum. cfr. Pomponio - xella 1997, pp. 149-150, 162; for a different opinion cfr. Archi 2001, p. 5.

certain distance such as in the case of the Tell of Umm el-Marra⁶⁹ or Tell Banat which had surely been a burial structure of the same period (Early Bronze Age) of that of Ebla⁷⁰.

The independent monumental burials seen to have appeared in other sites of Syria, such as tell Ahmar (Barsib), Jerablus Tahtani (Karkamish), Tell al-Bia'a (Tuttul), all of which were positioned inside the town. Other monument burials were dug in the cities⁷¹. An example is the monumental burial No 7 at Tell Banat⁷² a structure of five chambers built by polished stone carefully fixed in place and roofed by nine huge slabs of limestone 3×2 meters each. The other example is shaft tomb VI at Tell Mishrifeh, ancient Qatna, which contained forty skeletons and more than 100 weapon pieces as well as ornaments of brass/bronze and lot of pottery⁷³. The last survey and excavation works in the area surrounding the city of Tell Al-Rawda enabled the archaeologist to identify many burials for the population of this third millennium city which is contemporary to Ebla⁷⁴.

Thus, the royal archive of Ebla gives us an idea about the use of monumental burials as we have seen in the burials of Umm el-Marra. The texts also mention the underground burials which are often rock-cut tombs which, according to the texts of Ebla, mostly belong to the ruling families and their entourage during the third millennium BC, the time of writing of the archive of Ebla, Tell Mardikh. The problem is that the archive of Ebla did not identify the places of these burials unlike what emerged in the archive of Mari, dating back to the second millennium BC, where the texts let us know the places of some Royal tombs and inventories of the treasures inside them were taken.

The text of Mari identified by Charpin and Durand shows that the burial of king Yahdun-Lîm is at Terqa, Tell al-Asharna, not at Mari, and that it contained a large quantity of metals⁷⁵. According to Dominik Charpin the text mentions the following expressions:⁷⁶

“...Our lord (=Šamši-Addu) wrote us the following: "In the burial of Yahdun-Lîm Bronze is plentiful !" Bronze is needed for making 1000 spear head . Each spear weighs 6 sicles, 16 Talan,

⁶⁹ See Akkermans- Schwartz 2003: 244; Schwartz 2006: 605-634; Schwartz 2007.

⁷⁰ For this monument and the tombs of Banat see Porter and McClellan 1997: 8-106.

⁷¹ For these tombs and others tombs of this period see Akkermans- Schwartz 2003: 244-250; for Jerablus Tahtani see Peltenburg 1999a and Peltenburg in this volume

⁷² Porter 2002: 1-36.

⁷³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 147-148.

⁷⁴ Cfr. Castel *et al.* 2005: 61-62.

⁷⁵ Charpin and Durand 1989: 18-19.

⁷⁶ Durand 2000: 960-962.

40 Mines (a mass unit which equals 1/60 Talan) of Bronze. However, the Bronze we will be able to bring out from the tomb of out from the tomb of Yahdun-Lîm hardly comes to 30 Mines! Zamri-Adu read to our lord the content of his tablet. Our lord also asked those who know this burial, and they are Lîter-šarrussu and Hamatil. (.....) our lord to make us bring bronze for the purpose of making the spears, about which our lord wrote to us, in the appointed time”.

The text also mentions “ This is what we wrote to the King (=Šamši-Addu). If the king asked our lord (=Yasmah-Add). Our lord will draw the King 's attention and inform him that we could not make the spears because of the lack of Bronze, and that he could not make 1000 boats, and that we will make 300 boats”.

The orders were to make 10000 spear- head, 50 grams for each. Thus, 16 Talents 40 mines, i.e. about 500 kilograms were needed. we can imagine Šamši-Addu's disappointment when he knew that Yahdun – Lîm's burial contained no more than 15 Kilograms of Bronze !.

Taking into consideration that the texts of Ebla talked about the funerary ceremonies for the Eblaite royal family and its entourage it must be noted that, up to now, no collective Royal burials have been discovered, even tomb IV, discovered under the floor of the Royal Palace G in 1993-1996,⁷⁷ which is an underground cemetery consisting of two large connected rooms built by well-cut blocks of limestone, was found completely empty of any remains indicative of using it as a tomb,⁷⁸ and seems to have never been used.

2-The grave goods in the texts :

The number of funerary gifts, the clothes variety, jewelry and other valuable pieces seem to be clearly different according to the disease kind and status⁷⁹.

The kinds of textile offered as funerary gifts are varied and of multi-use in the interment ceremony. The text of Ebla, for example, mentioned the long garments which are similar to the cloaks and the belts accompanying them,⁸⁰ as well as large numbers of shawls and bands in one tomb. Text no 5, which talks about the death of Tarib-Damu, sister of Irkab Damu, mentions, for example , that six shawls and six bands were offered by Dusigu, mother of king (Išar-Damu)⁸¹.

⁷⁷ Matthiae 1997: 268-276.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Biga 2007-2008: 258.

⁸⁰ Archi 2002: 183.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

kinds of different textiles of different types and colors are mentioned as offerings on the occasion of the death of Mrs Tište- Damu,⁸² sister of Irkab-Damu mentioned in the text no 10 which says " three garments (tunics and built) for Igris-Halab an Irkab-Damu; three pieces of cloth and eight silver pins for kesdut, Tarkab-Dulum and Dusigu; four tunics for Tirin-Damu, Giminizatu, Isrut and Tarib-Damu and; a Tunic and a belt four Irkab-Damu"⁸³. This texts gives a clear idea about some kinds of attire and related grave goods which were offered in the funerary ceremonies, and mentions the presence of pins for the purpose of fixing the clothes.

It became clear that there are different pieces to be offered to females and males, some kinds of weapons were offered to the latter. Part (16) of text 4 ARET2 mentions the death of king Iblul-II, king of Mari the thing which took place, as we know, when Arrugum was a vizir. This part also mentions the funerary gifts sent by Mari, and the suggested translation is: " various valuable pieces of gold, including a knife, a belt a sheathe (funerary gifts for males) and clothes from four personal names were handed over for king Iblul-II in the year when he died (and was taken to) the EXPAP"⁸⁴. Correspondingly, the archive of Mari mentioned some kinds of weapons which were put in the burials of the second millennium kings. This is attested by king Zimri- Lim gifts to the burial of Yarim-Lim " one piece of a weapon (*Katappum*) made of silver, its (eyes) and (hell) made of gold for the burial of Yarim-Lim, in Terqa, on the 18th of the month ???."⁸⁵.

Some examples about the most valuable funerary gifts handed over to some of the most important women in the Eblaite court has been previously mentioned,⁸⁶ but it is impossible to know whether these lists contained all the gifts handed over for these ladies: they might have received other pieces made of materials which had not been recorded in the palace stores. What is noticeable is that female objects contained mirrors, combs and wool combs which were not included in the records, though they are very popular in the tombs of Umm el-Marra (tombs I and IV)⁸⁷. Among other valuable materials given to women pieces of Lapis lazuli are also recorded:

⁸² See for example Pasquali 1997, pp. 225-236; Pasquali 2005a: 165-184.

⁸³ Pasquali 1997: 225-236.

⁸⁴ Biga 2007-2008:253.

⁸⁵ Charpin 2001: ARMT XXV 17: 1-4.

⁸⁶ Archi 2002: 187- 199.

⁸⁷ Schwartz and al2003: 333. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 616.Fig.14.

an example is the very valuable gifts, which included some lapis lazuli pieces, for lady Tiabarzo from Ibrum family⁸⁸.

Funerary offering are mostly not very valuable, though they are presented to people who played important roles. The messenger who brought the news of the defeat of Mari to Ebla and, before this, the news of the defeat of Sida'u, both are victories to Ibbi-zikir,⁸⁹ received for example as grave goods for his burial only modest offering mentioned in the text 75.G. 2409+2471 obv:

"1,1 textiles and one bracelet made of brass and gold for Dubuhu-malik from the family of Dadud for his tomb."

Similarly, Gišadu, the wet-nurse of the last king Išar-damu, the woman who spent all her life in the Eblaite court in the service of the king whom she had wet nursed, received a modest cloth for her interment, 75.G.2247 rev: "a cloth for the king 's wet nurse for her Tomb"⁹⁰. Tišalim, queen of Emar who was closely connected to the Eblaite royal family and who attended many event in the Eblaite court, received for her death insignificant funerary offerings from Ebla⁹¹.

According to the text 75.G.1216 obv. Salli, the man who was in charge of beer for the palace of Ebla for some years at the time of the last king and of vizier Ibbi-zikir, receives a modest textile when he dies: "A cloth for Salli: the man who is responsible for the bear, for his burial"⁹².

From the texts of Ebla it is impossible to hypothesis where these treasures, these valuable objects and valuable metals were kept, while the texts of Mari let us know the places of some royal tombs and the treasures inside them which were invented and used as needed⁹³. An Eblaite text gives us an idea about the gifts put in the burial of an important person, whose name could not be identified because of the breakdown of the tablet. The text shows all valuable gifts with their weights and numbers, such as hair pins of 8g for each; golden earrings of 40g for each pair;

⁸⁸ 75.G.1679 obv. IV2-3: 28 *gur-gú-ru* 12 za-gìn 1 *mi-at* 22 *h#a-za-nu* za-gìn, «28 beads in lapislazuli, 122 grain of lapislazuli in shape of cloves». For some comments on the typology of the gifts to women cfr. Pasquali 2005b, pp. 269-271.

⁸⁹ Cfr. Archi 2003: 43.

⁹⁰ For this figure see Biga 2000: 70-73.

⁹¹ In the same text 75.G.1763 the funerary gifts for the king of Burman and then those for the queen of Emar are quoted: 75.G.1763 (king Išar-damu, vizier Ibbi-zikir year 10, month lost) obv. V' 11-VI' 7: 1 'à-da-um-TÚG-III aktum-TÚG1 íb+III-TÚG-sa6-gùn 1 zara6-TÚGšú+ša 5 kù-gi 1 íb-lá 1 *si-ti-çtum* 1 [gír]-kun en *Bur-ma-anki si-in* ÉxPAP1 zara6-TÚGša-pi bar6:kù 2 *bu-di* 2 sag-sù kù-gi *Ti-ša-li-im ma-lik-[tum]* Ī-marki *si-in* ÉxPAP, «1,1,1 textiles, 25 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger to the king of Burman for his burial, 1 textile, 40 shekels of silver for 2 toggle-pins with the head of gold to Tišalim, queen of Emar, for her burial». For this text and its parallel metal text cfr. Biga 1996, pp. 60-61. For examples of funerary gifts to women see Pinnock 2006, pp. 87-111.

⁹² Biga 2007-2008: 259.

⁹³ Charpin and Durand 1989: 18-19.

neckbands and sometimes bands for the head used for men and women with a weight between 157- 292g; chains of gold, bronze or sometimes of silver; beads of gold each weighs 1g and sometime comes to 8g; eardrops weighing between 23-55g as well as silver pins weighing 80-234g for each pair⁹⁴.

It is necessary to mention a tablet which was found in the archive of Level VII in Alalakh. The tablet is clearly related to the treasures in one of the Royal tomb crypts, but because of the short form of the letters of this administrative document it did not clearly explain the size of this burial interment gifts:⁹⁵

“Silver ware *tišnu* (2),

Silver ware *babašarrê* (4),

Silver ware *šannu* (2),

Silver ware *kukalle* (1),

Silver ware *babašarrê* (1), for the tomb when the king dies. It 52 weights of silver,

Silver ware *babašarrê* (1), for Dini- Addu 30 weights,

(Total 555 weights of Silverwares)

27 weights of Silver, the king 's shield presented for the king's burial ,

30 weights of Silver: (des) *šinnu* horses blinders,

37 weights, a wagon wheel,

Total : 130 weights of the statue Silver.

The whole sum: 685 weights of Silver in one place”.

3-Funerary ceremonies; the wailing rite:

The death of any individual was looked at as an occasion for elegizing, but only when the diseased is an important person the elegizing and mourning get out of the family limit, the thing

⁹⁴ Archi 2002: 181-182.

⁹⁵ wiseman 1953 : no366: (1) 2 gal kù-babbar *ti-il-nu* (2) 4 gal kù-babbar *ba-ba-a.i"-Iar-re-e* (3) 2 gal kù-babbar *sa-an-Il!* (4) 1 gal kù-babbar *ku-uk-ka-al-le* (5) 1 gal kù-babbar *ba-ba-af-Jarre- e* (6) *a-di* lugal *im-til-ut a-na qû-bu-ri* (7) 25 su kù-babbar *ki-bi-bi* (8) 1 gal kù-babbar *ba-baal- lar-re-e* (9) *a-na di-ni-a-du* 30 su *ki-hi-bi* (ligne) (10) 11 gal *hi-a* 5 me 55 su kù-babbar (11) *ki-Iâ- bi* kù-babbar *sa gal-hi-a* (T.12) *all-lla* kù-babbar *sa dalam* (lignc) (R.13) 27 SU kùbabbar (14) *i-ir-tit la* lugal (15) *t/-ti* lugal *a-lUI qti-btt-ri / id-di-ml* (16) 30 SU kù-babbar *li-innu* (17) 40 SU kù-babbar *si-lIu-uz-za / Irl* anse-km-ra (18) 37 SU kù-babbar *sa gis umbin? gis gigir* (19) su-nigin2 1 *me-at* 30 kù-babbar (20) *sa clingir dalam* (ligne) (21) su-nigin2- nigin2 6 me 85 SU kù-babbar (T.22) *a-larif-te-en*. Voir en dernier lieu Zeeb 2001 : 54 (avec bibliographie anté11.eUre).

which is indicated in a conditional sentence in a priestly text from the Babylon period: “a famous person died and the consolation will be carried out in the street”⁹⁶.

From the texts of Ebla we can pick up information about the presence of mourning and its ceremonies, though we cannot determine its period of time. The presence of weeping women during the funerary ritual is attested, but it is still difficult to determine the period of mourning and ceremonies before and after interment⁹⁷.

As shown by Pasquali and Mangiarotti, the presence of professional mourners has been attested on a wide scale in the ancient Arab Levant⁹⁸. The text of tablet 75.G.1962 mentions the presence of weepers and professional mourners in the funerary of mother queen Dusigu, and that they receive quantities of wool for their services. Regarding the funerary of mother king the previous text shows clearly that ten weeping women were present⁹⁹. According to text 75.G.1938 wool was given to four crying women at the tomb of Irkab-damu¹⁰⁰. On the occasion of prince Tiste-damu's death other weeping and crying women are recorded¹⁰¹.

In the interment ceremony the presence of singing women, particularly in certain important funerary, and a kind of hired female weepers like (*munabbī-tum, eme-bal, and ra-zimtum*) has been attested¹⁰².

The text 75.G.1938 is certainly written in the month of the death of Irkab-damu or in the month following the death and interment of the king, because some female weepers were still recorded as being present at the tomb of this king for the morning ritual. Although we do not know the period of time of mourning after death or how long the mourning had lasted on the occasion of the death of king Irkab-damu we have a quotation from the text which was read as follows:¹⁰³

"4 measures of wool to four women who are crying on the tomb of Irkab-damu" the presence of the preposition on (a) which indicates a materialistic presence "on" something supports the

⁹⁶ Goetze: 89.

⁹⁷ Biga 2007-2008: 262.

⁹⁸ For some attestations of these different women see Pasquali - Mangiarotti 1999: 9; Archi 2002: 184-186.

⁹⁹ Biga 2007-2008: 262.

¹⁰⁰ Archi 2002: 186.

¹⁰¹ Biga 2007-2008: 262. 75.G.2276 rev. I3-11: 1 TÚG-NI.NI3 na4 siki dam *mu-na-bī-tum* 12 «KIN» siki 6 dam *eme-bal-sù lú ug7 Ti-iš-te-da-mu dumu-mí en.*

¹⁰² Biga 2007-2008: 263.

¹⁰³ 75.G.1938 rev. IX 2'-7': (textile and wool) 4 dam *ra-zi-ma-tum* ÉxPAPen and in rev. XIII14'-17': 4 KINsiki 4 dam *ra-zi-ma-tum al6 ÉxPAPir-kab-da-mu*, «4 quantities of wool to 4 women who are crying on the tomb of Irkab-damu». For more information see Biga 2007-2008:254.

interpretation of the term EXPAP as an embodied place, the Tomb, which does not necessarily lie in a certain cemetery¹⁰⁴.

In many texts related to textiles delivery, which often follows the funerary gifts to an important number of the court individuals we find records of clothes and sometimes gold fixing pins for women, presented to other dead persons from the same family. By rearranging the relative chronology of the Ebla texts, we might be certain that these individuals had died in a previous time, either shortly or several years before. All those family important individuals who are mainly ex-kings and some of their wives' receive textiles on the occasion of the funerary of one of their relatives the exact destination of these textiles is still uncertain and difficult to determine. According to Archi¹⁰⁵ "It is possible that these clothes were used as garments for the persons who represent the most famous ancestors, or for other persons who emerged as people of a high status, who were paraded during the funerary ceremonies". From the texts of Mari we usually find that distress prevails in the country when the death of the ruler is publicized. This manifests itself in events which may take spontaneous character related to highly organized ceremonies. In this context several words are used to express elegizing like the word "*sipttum*"¹⁰⁶ or the most common verb "*sapâdum*"¹⁰⁷ which is equivalent to the Akkadian term "*Bikitu*" or "*Bakitu*"¹⁰⁸ corresponding to lamenting and weeping on the deed in Arabic.

From 1775 BC. we get information of this kind related to the death of Šamši-Addu, the founder of upper Euphrates kingdom. Išar-Lîm wrote to his son Yasmah-Addu:¹⁰⁹ "The king (Šamši-Addu) is seriously ill. Let *Tâb-eli-ummâ[nišu]* ride his donkey and bring you news about the king".

Šamši-Addu seems to have quickly died though there is not any other letter which gives information about this. However the mourning which prevailed the country after the death of Šamši-Addu is described in a letter from Išme-Dagan to his son Yasmah-Addu:¹¹⁰

"Three days has passed since mourning, weeping, lamentation (.....) were held in the country".

¹⁰⁴ Biga 2007-2008: 253.

¹⁰⁵ Archi 2002: 183-184.

¹⁰⁶ Brinkman 1984: 299.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*:150.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*:223.

¹⁰⁹ Charpin-Ziegler2003 .

¹¹⁰ Dossin 1951: 61, Durand 2000: 961.

4- The texts and relation with the other Kingdoms and other cities:

The status and influence of the kingdom of Ebla appears in the third millennium through its strong relation with the other kingdoms which were existent at that time, particularly the strong kingdoms such as Mari, Emar and other kingdoms cities such as Mannwat, Nenaš, Darib and others mentioned in the texts of Ebla and are still unknown up till now¹¹¹.

The text 75.G. 1763, which mention that Vizier Ibbi-zikir on the occasion of the interment of Tisalim, queen of Emar, the queen who is mentioned several times in the texts of Ebla because she often visited the Eblaite court, offered textile to the previously dead vizier Ibrum. from this fact we can assume that she had been a member of Ibrum's family and her close relation with the women of the Eblaite court can be explained¹¹².

Text 75.G. 1324 mentions the funerary gifts sent from the Eblaite court to the funerary of the queen on Mannwat, the state Which had good relation with Ebla¹¹³. When news about the death of the queen of Mannwat reached Ebla, the Eblaite court prepared the funerary gifts which seem to have arrived at the time of the funerary ceremony¹¹⁴. In the same month, but it is impossible to determine after how many Daye following the event, the purification ceremony takes place, and other gifts are sent from Ebla to the king of Mannwat who last his queen. Here, it must be noted that another person is sent with the purification gifts because, ritually, it will not be right that the same person carries both funerary and purification gifts¹¹⁵. For us it is impossible to determine whether those who were sent to Mannwat carried out two different trips in the same month or travelled together and went to the court of Mannwat at two different moments. The other

¹¹¹ 75.G.2369 (king Išar-damu- vizier Ibbi-zikir) rev. I7-III1: 1 'à-da-um-TÚG-II1 aktum-TÚG1 íb+III-TÚG-sa6-gùn 1 gú-li-lum a-gar5-gar5 kù-gi 11 1 gír mar-tu bar6:kù Zi-kir-da-mu en A-da-bí-gúki si-in ÉxPAP7 'à-da-um-TÚG7 aktum-TÚG7 íb+IV-TÚG-sa6-gùn en Ra-'à-akki en Du-ubki en Ì-marki en Lum-na-anki en Gàr-muki en I-ni-buki en çüÜ-ti-gúki 8 'à-da-um-TÚG8 aktum-TÚG8 íb+IV-TÚG-sa6-gùn abbax-abbax-sù in A-da-bí-gúki šu-ba6-ti, «1,1,1 textiles, 1 bracelet of copper and gold of the weight of 11 shekels, 1 dagger of silver to Zikir-damu, king of the state of Adabik for his tomb, 7,7,7 textiles to the king of the state of Ra'ak, the king of the state of Dub, the king of the state of Emar, the king of the state of Lumnan, the king of the state of Garmu, the king of the state of Inibu, the king of the state of Utigu, 8,8,8 textiles for their Elders in the town of Adabik received». For more information see Biga 2007-2008:254.

¹¹² Biga 2007-2008: 264.

¹¹³ 75.G.1324 obv. IV4-13: 1 zara6-TÚGud 1 zara6-TÚGú-h#áb 2 bu-TÚGú-h#áb GIš-ir-zú 2 níg-lá-ZI.ZIú-h#áb ud 2 bu-di GÁxLÁ šu+ša gín DILMUNKù-gi ma-lik-tum Ma-nu-wa-atki ÉxPAPÍr-am6-da-ar di-ku5 A-bu šu-mu-«tak4» «1,1,2,2 textiles, 2 toggle-pins weighing 20 shekels of gold to the queen of Manuwat for her tomb Iram-dar the judge and Abu have delivered».

¹¹⁴ 75.G.1324 obv. XIV18-XV11: 2 gu-zi-tum-TÚG2 aktum-TÚG2 íb+III-sa6-gùn-TÚG2 íb-lá GÁxLÁ 1 ma-na kù-gi ì-giš-sag çenÜ Ma-nu-wa-atki Ba-ga-ma šu-mu-«tak4», «2,2,2 textiles, 2 belts weighing 1 mana of gold for the purification of the king of Manuwat Bagama delivered». For more information, see Biga 2007-2008: 266-267.

¹¹⁵ Biga 2007-2008: 266.

example, where both gifts to the tomb and purification gifts are mentioned in the same text as being carried by two different person, is presented in the text 75.G. 2492+2513¹¹⁶.

The text 75.G.2369 shows the arrival of seven local kings to attend the funerary of one the important kings of Mari ,king Adabig, and Ebla sent gifts to those seven kings themselves¹¹⁷. Of what have preceded the close relation between the different kingdoms of that time becomes clear, particularly in the occasions which seem to have been considered great, the thing which is still going on up till now.

5- texts and ancestor cult:

The *kispum* ceremony, during which a meal is received in honor of the ancestors, was dedicated for those ancestors. It is well – evidenced in texts from Mesopotamia and the Syria environment: it is documented in the texts of Ebla, Mari, Emar and Ugarit. Archaeologically it is now well documented by the finds discovered in many burials in Central and Northern Syria, particularly the last discoveries in the burials of the Royal Palace in Qatna,¹¹⁸ Central Syria.

Yahdun-Lim's burial: The letter no 2177 is considered important because it mentions Qatna and gives details about interment ceremonies during Middle Bronze period, the thing which completes and supports the archeological discoveries. Part of this letter talked about Yahdun-Lim's burial. In this part Šamši-Addu asks for manufacturing ten thousand spears, each weight 48 g. The manufacturer has only 16 weights and 40 bronze pieces, i.e. 480 kg of bronze. There is nothing to confirm that the burial is in Mari: text ARM III 40 makes it possible that it is in Terqa

¹¹⁶ 75.G.2492 + 2513 + *ARET* 12, 669 (5032) obv. I-II6: 1 'à-da-um-TÚG-III aktum-TÚG1 íb+III-TÚG-sa6-gùn TARKù-gi 1 íb-lá 1 *si-ti-tum* 1 gír-kun en *Du-ubki si-in ÉXPAPIn-ma-lik* šu-mu-«tak4» 1 'à-da-um-TÚG1 aktum-TÚG1 íb+III-TÚG-sa6-gùn TARKù-gi [1] íb-lá 1 *si-ti-tum* 1 gír-kun ì-giš-sag en *Du-ubki TÚG-du8* šu-mu-«tak4», «1,1,1 textiles, 30 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger to the king of Dub for the tomb Inmalik delivered, 1,1,1 textiles, 30 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger on the occasion of the purification of the (new) king of Dub Tugdu delivered».

¹¹⁷ 75.G.2369 (king Išar-damu- vizier Ibbi-zikir) rev. I7-III1: 1 'à-da-um-TÚG-II1 aktum-TÚG1 íb+III-TÚG-sa6-gùn 1 *gú-li-lum* a-gar5-gar5 kù-gi 11 1 gír mar-tu bar6:kù *Zi-kir-da-mu* en *A-da-bí-gúki si-in ÉXPAP7 'à-da-um-TÚG7* aktum-TÚG7 íb+IV-TÚG-sa6-gùn en *Ra-'à-akki* en *Du-ubki* en *Ì-marki* en *Lum-na-anki* en *Gàr-muki* en *I-ni-buki* en *çùÜ-ti-gúki* 8 'à-da-um-TÚG8 aktum-TÚG8 íb+IV-TÚG-sa6-gùn *abbax-abbax-sù in A-da-bí-gúki* šu-ba6-ti, «1,1,1 textiles, 1 bracelet of copper and gold of the weight of 11 shekels, 1 dagger of silver to Zikir-damu, king of the state of Adabik for his tomb, 7,7,7 textiles to the king of the state of Ra'ak, the king of the state of Dub, the king of the state of Imar, the king of the state of Lumnan, the king of the state of Garmu, the king of the state of Inibu, the king of the state of Utigu, 8,8,8 textiles for their Elders in the town of Adabik received».

¹¹⁸ Pfälzner 2007: 59.

(al–Ashara). It is also said that Zimri-Lim asked for carrying out the funerary ceremony for Yahdum-Lim in Terqa¹¹⁹.

The ritual displayed in ARET II is a great one for the renewal of the Eblaite kingdom, and the three texts displayed in it are: the first, a description of the ceremony performed by king Irkab-Damu and his queen (whose name is unknown) at the time of vizier Arugum; the second, a description of the ritual performed by the last king Išar-Damu and queen Tabur-Damu in presence of vizier Ibrium and; the third, a short description of the most important texts of the ritual. During this complicated ritual which lasted three periods of 7 days the king and queen come to the city of Nenaš where they prepare offerings for some royal ancestors¹²⁰.

From the ritual text it seems quite possible that some kings of Ebla, ancestors of their dynasty, were buried there, and that the mausoleum is place where the cult of those ancestors had been practiced. At least three rulers of Ebla, Sagisu, Ibim-Lim and Išurt-Damu, who receive offerings and sacrifices during different intervals of the ritual carried out in Nenaš and in the mausoleum, might have been buried there¹²¹.

The word *Amatim* which is always connected to rituals and the town of Nenaš where part of the king's and queen's ritual is performed, is seldom mentioned in the documents of Ebla. The administrative texts of Ebla do not document an ordinary religion or an offering to this mausoleum.

Apart from the ritual, we extract from ARET 3. 858 rer. X1-2 /*é ma-ti NE-na-áš ki36/* and in two administrative texts both associated with the text of the ritual ARET 11.2 and run parallel to it in long parts:¹²²

-The annual metal text "one shekel of silver for the shackle of the scapegoat for purifying the mausoleum of Nenaš". It is the ritual of the scapegoat quoted in this part from the long text where some deliveries of valuable metals for this ritual are recorded¹²³.

¹¹⁹ Charpin and Durand 1989: 18-19.

¹²⁰ Cfr. Fronzaroli 1988: 1-7, 31. The passages of the texts where other sacrifices to other deceased kings of Ebla are offered (*ARET* 11, 1 [97], *ARET* 11, 2 [107]), are not completely clear but it seems that the sacrifices took place when the king and the queen have already left the mausoleum. cfr. Pomponio - xella 1997: 149-150, 162.

¹²¹ Cfr. Pomponio - Xella 1997: 148-150, 155-156, 160-162; *Archi* 2001: 5.

¹²² For this text, joined recently with other fragments, see now Fronzaroli - Catagnoti 2006, particularly pp. 278 (12) and 286.

¹²³ For more information, see Biga 2007-2008: 258.

-The other text in 75.G.2417 a monthly statement where textile deliveries for the ritual performed by king Išar-Damu and his queen Tabor-Damu. This, therefore, is synchronous the text of the ritual and annual metal statement in 75.G.2417: "textiles and two pages of an articular joint of bronze (presented) to a woman who got out from Kura (temple) to go to the mausoleum."¹²⁴.

Why those early Eblaite kings were buried in Nenaš, one of the towns of the Eblaite kingdom, which might not be so far from Ebla, stays an undecided question, since it is not clear whether Nenaš was the place where the dynasty had originated or just a sacred place where some royal ancestors were buried.

We find clothes records and sometime gold fixing pins for women presented to other diseased individuals of the same family. Rearranging the relative chronology of the texts of Ebla, we can be certain those individuals had died in a previous time, either shortly or several years before presenting the gifts. However, all those important individuals of the family, who are mainly ex-kings and their wife's, receive textiles on the occasion of funerary of one of their relatives.

In the text 75.G.1829, running in many of its parts parallel to the text of annual metals 75.G.2429 (=MEE 12, 36); chronologically put well in the tenth year of Ibbi-Zikir and on the occasion of the death of Tesmah-Damu textiles are given to Ibrium and another woman of Ibbi-Zikir who had previously died¹²⁵.

In the text 75.G.1763 (vizier Ibbi-Zikir) on the occasion of burying Tisalim queen of Emar. Who is mentioned several times in the texts of Ebla because she often visited the Eblaite court, textiles are presented to vizier Ibrium who had previously died¹²⁶.

The *Kispum* ritual for the ancestors was followed by a meal in honor of those ancestors¹²⁷. This is well – known from the texts evidence from Mesopotamia and the Syrian environment. It is also documented in the texts of Ebla, Mari, Emar, and Ugarit. Archaeologically, it is now well documents through the last finds in the tombs of Qatna.

¹²⁴ See Biga 1992; Biga 1996: 48 and Biga 2007.

¹²⁵ 75.G.1829 rev. III-III3: 1 zara6-TÚG1 pad-TÚG2 bu-di šú+ša bar6:kù 2 sag-sù kù-gi *Těš-má-da-mu* dam *Iš11-gi-bar-zú si-in* ÉxPAP, 1,1,1 textiles *Ib-rí-um wa* 1 zara6-TÚG2 bu-di bar6:kù *Dab6-du-da-mu* dam *I-bí-zi-kir Těš-má-da-mu* šu-mu-«tak4».

¹²⁶ Biga 2007-2008: 264.

¹²⁷ Biga 2007-2008: 266.

As we have noticed, the ritual performed in Nenaš might have been associated with the *kispum* ritual for some ancestors of the Eblaite royal dynasty. Mentioning the ancestors thrones is a new proof in favor of this supposition¹²⁸.

The tablet ARET 7,150 is, on the other hand, a compulsory ritual performed in Darib. In it the names of ten diseased idolized kings of Ebla are recorded: why is this ritual performed in Darib? Is it possible that this the place where the burials of those ten kings lie in? This might seem possible, but Darib does not seem to greatly venerable or a religious center for worship to which people go very frequently. It is mentioned only in association to the cult of diseased kings. In the text 75.G.1754 gifts to Darib are recorded on the occasion of a trip to it carried out by the king and his vizier, but the cause of the trip is not mentioned¹²⁹.

The document of the list of the ten rulers is of the same kind, not only similar to that which came from Ugarit, and was compared, in advance, with the documents of Ebla,¹³⁰ but also similar those from Emar and Mari.¹³¹ In those rituals as a whole it becomes clear that conjuring the name of the diseased was looked at as a fundamental element of the ritual and consideration of the diseased in general. The tablet ARET 7,150 seems astonishingly similar to that related to the *kispum* ritual in Mari and the ancestors of Šamši-Addu,¹³² which has recently been studied by Durand. There, the ancestors are also included in a list according to a conversed chronological arrangement. As explained by Durand the text of Mari, which is useful as a basis for the list of the Assyrian kings, is a text of a ritual for the ancestors cult which recalls the diseased royal ancestors who are mentioned and conjured up during the *kispum* sacrifice the text is taken from documents which were used during performing rituals for the diseased kings, particularly the *kispum* ritual documented in the text of Mari, but now it seems to have become typical for the western Semitic world since the times of Ebla. The several texts of the tablet ARET which mention the food

¹²⁸ Cfr. ARET 11, 1 (21); 2 (88). The same can be observed at Mari where, as pointed out by Durand 1998, p. 63, the *kispum* ritual has its place in the «salle des sièges», a structure that can be interpreted as a large hall where the king of Mari hosted some illustrious hosts but also as the place where the thrones of the ancestors were placed. See also Aret9, 27 (28).

¹²⁹ For the text ARET 7, 150 see Archi 1986, pp. 213-217; Archi 1988: 103-112; Archi 2001: 1-13; Archi 2007: 49. For Darib cfr. ARES 2, pp. 193-195; Bonechi 1993: 96-97; the proposed identification of Dareb with the modern town of Atareb, 30 km north of Ebla, is considered quite possible. 75.G.1754 (king Išar-damu-vizier Ibbi-zikir) rev. IV1-10: 1 'ā-da-um-TÚG-III aktum-TÚG1 íb+IV-TÚG-sa6 -gùn 1 dib ma-na 1 íb-lá 1 si-ti-tum 1 gír-kun 1 ma-na Zi-mi-na-ma-lik ugula Da-rí-ibki in ud en wa I-bí-zi-kir du-du, «textiles and precious objects to Zimina-malik, the sheikh of Darib, when the king and Ibbi-zikir went (probably to Darib)».

¹³⁰ For these types of texts from Ugarit see most recently del Olmo Lete 2006.

¹³¹ For Emar cfr. Pitard 1996: 129; Schmidt 1996: 141-163.

¹³² Cfr. Durand - guichard 1997: 41-44, 63-70; Durand 2003; Jacquet 2002.

offerings for the diseased kings, are undoubtedly an indication to the *kispum* ritual celebrated in the city of Ebla itself¹³³.

It is also necessary to mention the text of the tablet RS34.126 which was discovered in Ugarit.¹³⁴ It is a text of 34 lines in Ugaritic language and talks about the funerary ceremony for the king before the last king in Ugarit. The text describes the acceptance of this king among the diseased who preceded him and those who will follow him on the throne. It seems that the importance of those kings increased according to their ancientness. The most famous of these diseased kings is king Yaqaru, the founder of the Ugaritic dynasty¹³⁵.

One of the strange things is that one of the Akkadian texts dating back to the third millennium BC. mentions that he who is adopted has to bind himself to offering sacrifices to the soul of the one who adopted him after his death (the adopter) the text reads:

“During my life you feed me and when I die you offer me funerary sacrifices”¹³⁶.

¹³³ Cfr. *ARET* 9, s.v. en-en. In the contemporary Mesopotamia the evidence for *kispum* ritual is slight, see recently Cohen 2005: 106-108.

¹³⁴ Pardi 2000 : 816-825.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Hannon 2006:191.

The funerary texts from the Royal archives of Ebla
(*ARET*)

1	75. G.1348	«1,1 textiles and 1 object of bronze for the king of Kablul Igaišru delivered to the ÉxPAP».
2	75. G.1837 obv	«2 textiles to Idatmu for the tomb of the Saza (the administrative zone of Ebla)». Or «2 textiles to Idatmu of Saza for his tomb».
3	75. G.1938 rev	«4 quantities of wool to 4 women who are crying at the tomb of Irkab-damu».
4	75. G.1221 obv	(king Išar-damu-vizier Ibbi-zikir) the funerary gifts sent by Ebla to the kingdom of Kakmium on occasion of the burial of a daughter of the king of that state are taken to the court of Kakmium by an Eblaité prince, Gaba-damu.
5	75. G.2417 rev	«textiles and 2 toggle-pins of bronze (are given) to a woman who went out from the (temple of) Kura to go to the mausoleum».
6	75. G.2409 +2471 rev	«1,1 textiles, 1 bracelet of copper and gold to Dubuhumalik of the family of Dadud for his tomb».
7	75. G.2247 rev	«1 textile to Gišadu the wet-nurse of the king for her tomb»
8	75. G.1763 obv	«1,1,1 textiles, 25 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger to the king of Burman for his burial, 1 textile, 40 shekels of silver for 2 toggle-pins with the head of gold to Tišalim, queen of Emar, for her burial».

9	75. G.2165 obv	«1,1,2,2 textiles, 1 plate of the weight of 1 mina of gold, 1 belt weighing 1 mina of gold, 1 dagger... to Arrugum for his tomb».
10	75. G.2435 obv	«1 textile 10 shekels of silver for two toggle-pins to Tiludu [woman of Ibrium] for the tomb, textiles (1,1,1) to Ibrium Tiludu has delivered».
11	75. G.10079 rev	«2,1,1 textiles to Rabatum, woman of the king, for the tomb, 1,1 textiles on the statue of Tinud, woman of the king, for the tomb».
12	75. G.1298 obv	«1,1 textiles for the purification of Endaza his brother, 1 textile for the purification of Arsi-aha his father».
13	75. G.1324. IV4-13 obv	1,1,2,2 textiles, 2 toggle-pins weighing 20 shekels of gold to the queen of Mannwat for her tomb Iram-dar the judge and Abu have delivered».
14	75.G.1324. XIV18-XV11obv	«2,2,2 textiles, 2 belts weighing 1 mana of gold for the purification of the king of Mannwat Bagama delivered».
15	75. G.2492 + 2513 + <i>ARET</i> 12, 669 (5032) obv	«1,1,1 textiles, 30 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger to the king of Dub for the tomb Inmalik delivered, 1,1,1 textiles, 30 shekels of gold for 1 belt, 1 sheath, 1 dagger on the occasion of the purification of the (new) king of Dub Tugdu delivered».
17	75.G.2457(=<i>ARET</i> 15, 2) obv	«2,2,1,1,1 textiles for the ÉxPAPof Igi»
18	75.G.1249+ <i>ARET</i> 3, 937+10082 obv	«1,1,1 textiles, 1 bracelet of copper and gold to Adaša of the family of Idanikimu for (his) ÉxPAP, 1,1,1 textiles to Tilai the man of the gifts (a Function Name) for (his) ÉxPAP»

19	75. G.2369 (king Išar-damu- vizier Ibbi-zikir) rev	«1,1,1 textiles, 1 bracelet of copper and gold of the weight of 11 shekels, 1 dagger of silver to Zikir-damu, king of the state of Adabik for his tomb, 7,7,7 textiles to the king of the state of Ra'ak, the king of the state of Dub, the king of the state of Imar, the king of the state of Lumnan, the king of the state of Garmu, the king of the state of Inibu, the king of the state of Utigu, 8,8,8 textiles for their Elders in the town of Adabik received».
20	75. G.1730+ (king Išar-damu, vizier Ibrium year 14) = MEE 7, 34 rev	«1 shekel of silver for the bracelet of the shape-goat for the purification of the mausoleum of Nenaš»
21	75. G.1679 obv	«28 beads in lapislazuli, 122 grain of lapislazuli in shape of cloves».
22	75. G.1763 obv. VI' 4-7	(Vizier Ibbi-zikir) on the occasion of the burial of the Emar's queen Tišalim.
23	75. G.1754 (king Išar-damu-vizier Ibbi-zikir) rev. IV1-10	«textiles and precious objects to Zimina-malik, the sheikh of Darib, when the king and Ibbi-zikir went (probably to Darib)».
24	75.G.1754	«1 textile to the deified king Išar-malik»

V- Chapter four:

Typology and funerary grave goods in Inner and Northern Syria during Early and Middle Bronze Age

Part 1 Typology of funerary structures in Inner and Northern Syria

In this chapter we are going to classify the interment types recorded in Central and Northern Syria from an architectural viewpoint. This classification will be based on scientific essays published in scientific archaeological periodicals and books and official field excavation reports related to those Early Bronze Age sites scattered in Central and Northern Syria. In the following specific classification we will briefly describe each type of well-known tombs in this region along with the information related to their sizes and their presence either in the settlements or the burial grounds. On the basis of the archaeological evidence EB and MB funerary structures can be thus classified as follows:

A-Typology of funerary structures in inner and Northern Syria during

Early Bronze Age:

1- **Simple individual burials:** This type was spread in the Inner and Northern Syria during Early Bronze Age,¹³⁷ particularly the two periods EBA IV and EBA III. A group of these burials were discovered in Hama, Mishrifeh, Al-Ansari and Al-Rawda, and those can be divided into two types:

1-1-**Simple pit burials:** This type dates back to the first half of the third millennium BC. It is an ordinary, simple oval or rectangular pits dug into the ground to accommodate one, or sometimes two or three, individuals. Those pit burials were found in Mishrifeh, Hama and Al-Rawda. They were sometimes surrounded by a mud brick railing¹³⁸.

1-2-**Simple burials in jars:** This type is also plentifully recorded as dating back to the first half of the third millennium BC¹³⁹. The graves contained either storage or cooking pottery vessels which had been used to bury the dead in them and then to be put inside a pit in earth. Those burials were found in many sites in Central Syria such as Mishrifeh

¹³⁷ Fugmann 1958: 19.

¹³⁸ Morandi Bonacossi (eds.) 2009: 152.

¹³⁹ Fugmann 1958: 19.

(Fig 5-6), and Hama (Fig 30). In Mishrifeh this type was found during the French excavation led by Count Robert du Mensil du Buisson¹⁴⁰. There the burial jar was found in the area of the so-called Nin Egal Temple (now Room C in Royal Palace) which dates back to the EBA IV B;¹⁴¹ it is similar to the children burials discovered by the Syria expedition under the floors of the EBA IV houses in the palace southern part, Operation R.¹⁴² This type was also recorded in Hama where a group of children burial jars were discovered under the house floor from the level K3 to K10¹⁴³ and dated back, according to Fugmann, to the first half of the third millennium¹⁴⁴. Similar funerary evidence was also recorded in the settlement of Al-Ansari and dated back to EBA IVB (fig 35)¹⁴⁵.

2-Cist graves: This type has been recorded as dating back to the EBA IV in the site of Al-Rawda near Hama¹⁴⁶. They are simple relatively small graves the walls of which were built with stone slabs. In the site of Al-Rawda 15 graves of this type were recorded. They were mostly built with perpendicular stones (standing posture) and were without stone covers¹⁴⁷. Also in the same site cist graves on top of each other built with perpendicular stones (RW 5040) were recorded (fig 9)¹⁴⁸.

3-Cairn-Tumulus graves: This type was recorded in the site of Al-Rawda as dating back to late third millennium BC (EBA IV). These are graves of circular frame covered with blocks of stone. they are 50 centimeter sometimes two meters deep, like the grave (RW 1261) distinguished by the presence of a mortar stuffing and trimmed stone cover with a height of 2,20 meters, from this type two framed stone tombs (RW 5043) or three framed ones (RW 5040) were recorded in the site of Al-Rawda¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁰ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930:149-153. pls. XXX:2 and XXXII:3, second column from left.

¹⁴¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930, 150–151, figs. 1–2, pls XXX:2 and XXXII:3.

¹⁴² Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225. Mouamar 2009: 68.

¹⁴³ For these phases see the chronology at the end (Table 5).

¹⁴⁴ Ingholt 1940: 19.

¹⁴⁵ Suleiman 1999a: 79.

¹⁴⁶ Castel *et al.* 2005: 75.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: 74.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 80.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: 80.

At Homs region Over 30,000 potential cairns have been identified within the NSA¹⁵⁰ through image data (fig 75). Of these, a sample, 525, have been recorded in the field, these cairns dating back to third millennium BC. Preliminary analysis has shown that these monuments vary considerably in terms of morphology and associated features¹⁵¹. Ranging between 2 m and 20 m in diameter/length and between 0.2 m and 2 m in height, cairns also display clear variation in shape, building material and associated features¹⁵².

4-Earth or rock-cut shaft tombs-Hypogeum: This tomb type represents the collective graves which were scattered in Central and Northern Syria in the two periods of the EBA III and EBA IV. The hypogeum is usually graves/tombs located in palaces and excavated in the bedrock: The entrance shaft of this type of grave is a vertical or diagonal passageway cut from the surface. The shaft leads underground to one or more lateral chambers where the dead were laid to rest. Such tomb chambers can be quite spacious, occasionally extending for several meters in length and having a height of more than 2 m. The entrances to the tomb Chambers were customarily sealed with a capping stone or the doorways bricked up. To facilitate the study of this type we will distinguish the tombs cut in the rocks (Hypogeum) from that dug in earth and built with stones:

4-1-Stone-built chamber tombs:

This type was recorded in Central and Northern Syria in the sites of Ebla and Umm el-Marra. They date back to the Early Bronze Age (EBA III-EBA IV). In Ebla the Tomb G4¹⁵³ belonged to this type as well as in the site of Umm el-Marra a group of tombs (the acropolis tombs)¹⁵⁴ distinguished from other tombs in Central and Northern Syria because of their location on a high place on the acropolis was recorded:

¹⁵⁰ NSA means the Northern Study Area (NSA) extends to approximately 120 km² and consists of an area of basaltic upland to the west of the Orontes river.

¹⁵¹ Philip *et al.* 2005: 34; Philip *et al.* 2002: 16. Philip and Bradbury 2010: 146.

¹⁵² Philip and Bradbury 2010: 146.

¹⁵³ Matthiae 1997 : 268-276.

¹⁵⁴ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 330. Schwartz 2006: 603-641. Schwartz 2007: 39-64.

- **EB funerary Structures (tombs/graves)**

4-1-1-Tomb G4 in Ebla (fig 28): It was uncovered in 1995; it is an earth-cut tomb ground built with processed stones and mud bricks. It is 5.50 meters under the floor of Royal Palace G, near the south eastern corner of the Temple D. This tomb ground consists of two adjacent rectangular-shaped rooms, included two rooms of similar size, with an east-west orientation. The entrance to the Tomb might have been through the east side itself, the east room was 5.20 long along the west-east axis, and was 4m large¹⁵⁵. The second also rectangular-shaped east-west orientated room is 4 meters wide; its length was not correctly known because of damage taking place in this direction, but is surely more 3.5 meters¹⁵⁶. The room of the tomb ground was built above the level which dates back to the EBA I -II. The tomb ground was built with well processed refined stone as well as a wall of mud bricks, each piece of which is 40 by 60 Cm like the mud brick used in building the Royal Palace. This tomb ground dates back to the EBA IVA¹⁵⁷.

4-1-2-Tomb I in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 21): An earth-cut stone-built tomb 2.6 by 3.8 meters uncovered in 2000. It consists of three floors one on top of the other and dates back to the (EBA IVA)¹⁵⁸.

4-1-3-Tomb III in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 22): An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It was found to the west of Tomb 7 and was damaged or sacked perhaps already in ancient times (???). It is 7.7 by 3.5 m with walls between 1.15 and 1.35 high. It dates back to the EBA IVA¹⁵⁹.

4-1-4-Tomb IV in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 23): An earth-cut stone-built tomb. It was found completely intact. It is 6.80 by 4.25 m with walls 2 meters high. Its entrance is thought to have been on the north side, the only candidate being a small irregular opening ca 50 x 50 Cm in the Northern wall near the northeastern corner that had been blocked

¹⁵⁵ Matthiae 1997: 269.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*: 270.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: 268-276.

¹⁵⁸ Schwartz 2007: 40.

¹⁵⁹ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

with mud bricks¹⁶⁰. It dates back to the EBA IVA (2400 BC). It consists of two levels¹⁶¹. The dimensions of the upper level are the same as those of the above mentioned burial ground, while the lower level, the smaller is just 90 by 80 Cm and its depth from the floor of the upper level is 56 Cm¹⁶².

4-1-5-Tomb V in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 24): An earth-cut stone-built tomb. It was destroyed. Its dimensions are 6.2 by 3.4–4.5 meters with walls 1.5m high. It dates back to mid third millennium (EB III)¹⁶³.

4-1-6-Tomb VI in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 25): An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It is the group largest tomb,¹⁶⁴ though partly destroyed because of the erection of Tomb 7 adjacent to it. Its entrance is thought to have been on the east side. It dates back to the EBA III¹⁶⁵.

4-1-7-Tomb VII in the site of Umm el-Marra (fig 28): As mentioned above, this one is interpenetrated with Tomb 6, and also earth-cut with stone-built walls, but remains of a mud brick wall in the eastern side was noticed;¹⁶⁶ the tomb external dimensions are 9.6 by 4.8 m, while the internal dimensions are 6.4 by 2.9 m, and the height of its Northern wall which consists of seven stone courses is 2.3 m. It dates back either to the end of EBA IVA, Umm el-Marra V, or EBA IVB which corresponds to IV in the site of Umm el-Marra that is about 2300 BC¹⁶⁷.

- **EB funerary rock-cut shaft tombs**

4-2-Rock-cut shaft Tombs: This type was recorded in Central and Northern Syria in many sites such as Qatna, Al-Rawda, tell As, Ain Assan, Al-Ansari and Saraqeb. It dates back to EBA IV (A – B)¹⁶⁸. These are tombs cut in the rocky block to a relatively great

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Schwartz 2007: 41.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606-607.

¹⁶⁴ Schwartz 2007: 41.

¹⁶⁵ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608-609.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*: 623-624.

¹⁶⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 624. and For Umm el-Marra phases see the chronology at the end (Table 5).

¹⁶⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188. Castel and Awad 2006: 10-11. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-143.

depth and their entrances are either from the tomb through one or more stairs, or through a shaft entrance directly to the interment chamber (Tomb IV in Ain Assan)¹⁶⁹. The entrance is often sealed by a big slap stone. The internal layout from one tomb to the other. It sometime consists of one or more than one room. Thus we are going to distinguish this type according to the internal structural layout.

4-2-1-One chamber tomb: As mentioned above it is a rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from the top. It consists of one interment chamber the dimensions of which differ from one tomb to the other. Group of these tombs were recorded in both Central and Northern Syria:

4-2-1-1-Tomb II in the site of Ain Assan (fig 12): A rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above. It consists of one chamber-shaped interment tomb. This tomb was not well-studied when it was discovered in 1931- 1932, yet the available information indicate that it dates back to the EBA IV¹⁷⁰.

4-2-1-2- Tomb III in the site of Ain Assan (fig 13): It is also a rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral entrance from the top. Its access is possible through two stairs which lead to an almost polygon-shaped interment chamber while the entrance looks elliptically-shaped according to the layout. This tomb dates back to the end of the EB IV and seems to have been used also at the beginning of Middle Bronze Age¹⁷¹.

4-2-1-3-Tomb IV in the site of Ain Assan (fig 14): A rock-cut shaft tomb with a perpendicular rectangular-shaped lateral top entrance in the north-west side. The interment chamber is trapezoid-shaped. It dates back to beginning of the EBA IVA (2400 -2250 BC)¹⁷².

4-2-1-4-Tomb XV in the site of Ain Assan (fig 15): This tomb pertains to the rock-cut and stone-built tomb. It consists of one rock-cut chamber and stone-built. The entrance is lateral from the top; the rectangular shaped interment chamber is regularly cut and built.

¹⁶⁹ Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 141-143.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: 141-152.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

This tomb was also not precisely dated when it was discovered in the thirties last century, but it is thought to date back to the EBA IV¹⁷³.

4-2-1-5-Tomb III in the site of tell As (fig 17): A well rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance. It consists of one square-shaped interment chamber. It dates back to the end of the third millennium BC¹⁷⁴.

4-2-1-6-Tomb VI in the site of tell As (fig 17): Also a well rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance. It also consists of one square-shaped interment chamber. It dates back to the third millennium BC (EBA)¹⁷⁵.

4-2-1-7-Burial ground in the site of Al-Ansari (fig 34): An oval-shaped collective tomb, 440 by 320 Cm, cut in the limestone mound. Its roof consists of three large stones. The stone in the middle (220 by 210) Cm is oval, while the other two are smaller and a little bit lower than the one in the middle. The entrance is located in the southern side opposite to the tomb small stone wall. The entrance consists of two thin slabs of stone 80 by 66 by 17 Cm and a depth of 40 Cm. The first slab is vertically installed while the second is horizontally installed. From outside the tomb had been sealed by a solid lime layer to prevent moisture and water leak¹⁷⁶. This tomb dates back to the EBA IV, though it was reused at the beginning of MBA¹⁷⁷.

4-2-1-8-Burial ground in the site of Saraqeb: A collective rock-cut shaft tomb which consists of one interment chamber 250 by 200 Cm and 150 Cm high. It is classified as pertaining to the well rock-cut tombs which date back to EBA IV B, though it differs from them in that it lacks the perpendicular hole.¹⁷⁸

4-2-2-Multi-chamber tombs: It was spread in Central and Northern Syria. It is a collective tomb ground of multi-interment chambers. This type was recorded in both the site of Al-Rawda and that of Mishrifeh during Early Bronze Age.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Suleiman 1984 :1-16.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 93-104.

4-2-2-1-Tomb IV at Mishrifeh (fig 4): A rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral entrance from the top and a central room in the middle constituting a circular open space from which three small lateral half-circular chambers ramification. The tomb is distinguished in that its three side rooms along with the central open space are perfectly cut out. It dates back to the EBA IVA¹⁷⁹.

4-2-2-2-Tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda (fig 10): It is a well tomb which was found amid the western burial ground. The rock-cut shaft tomb consists of three chambers (E1, E2, and E3): two adjacent chambers E1 and E2 from which the third (E3) extends through a relatively narrow entrance. This collective tomb dates back to the (EBA IV). For the first time it had been used for interment, then. After a period of desertion, it was cleaned of the bone remains; particularly chamber E1, sealed with a layer of stone, its floor was paved and used as a residence. Finally the entrance was sealed with trimmed stone¹⁸⁰.

***B-Typology of funerary structures in the Inner and Northern Syria during
The Middle Bronze Age:***

In this chapter and on the basis of the scientific essays published in scientific archaeological books and periodicals and official field excavation reports related to those Middle Bronze Age sites scattered in Central and Northern Syria, we are going to classify the tomb recorded types in Central and Northern Syria.

1-Simple individual burials: This type was spread in Central and Northern Syria during Middle Bronze Age. A large group of these burials was recorded in the site of Mishrifeh (ancient Qatna) and Ebla (Tell Mardikh). Two type of these burials was recorded during Middle Bronze Age:

1-1-Simple pit burials: They consist of a shallow relatively small pit in earth large enough to contain the corpse. This type was recorded in the sites of both Ebla and Mishrifeh. In the latter site a group of individual burials was uncovered in Operation H, where archaeological excavation showed that this area had been dedicated to funerary interment ceremonies. Here fifteen pits for adults and new-born were found along with

¹⁷⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935:144-167.

¹⁸⁰ Castel and Awad 2006: 10-11.

simple funerary furnishings, all of which date back to the beginning of the second millennium BC (MBA I and MBA II A). During the Italian expedition excavations in the seasons 2005-2008, a group of nine pit individual burials dating back to MBA II were also uncovered in sector T2 and T3¹⁸¹.

In the site of Ebla too, a group of burials from MBA were recorded. Some of these burials were attached to private buildings under which the burial was situated. Other burials were found in a different place amid a private section of the lower city near Temple B2,¹⁸² and in its poorest quarter forming the houses adjacent to gate A near the south-western side which also dates back to Middle Bronze Age¹⁸³.

1-2-Simple burials in jars: They are cooking or storage pottery vessels which were used for burying the dead in an earth-cut pit. This type was also abundantly recorded from the beginning of the second millennium BC in the site of Mishrifeh. Early excavation carried out by Count Robert du Mesnil du Buisson resulted in the discovery of a set of interment jars in the foundation of Nin Egal temple (at Room C in the Royal Palace) in the south – eastern part: two jars of the same size, 38 Cm high with a diameter of 36 Cm, an opening of 21 Cm and a base of 26 Cm were found (fig 52). Only one third of one of them was uncovered while the second was still intact. Beside these two jars a brown-colored alabaster saucepan with an opening of 20 Cm was found. In these three vessels bones of infants were found. These are thought by the count to have been a kind of sacrifices offered at the time of laying the foundations of the Temple, were found. Also in the excavations in the site of Lot,¹⁸⁴ complete jars broken in the middle with infant buried in them were found under a pile of stones into two rocks-cut pits, the first semi-circular and the second square-shaped. During excavation carried out by the Syrian expedition in Operation T east of the Royal Palace a group of individual burials were found (fig 53). These were damaged because of later structures. These also were interments inside pottery jars which were of different uses: storage jars and cooking vessels dating back to the MBA II¹⁸⁵. This type was also recorded in Ginders and Ain-Dara in Northern Syria; a

¹⁸¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225. Morandi Bonacossi *et al.* 2009: 73-74.

¹⁸² Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 149.

¹⁸⁵ Al -Maqdissi Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Mishrifeh2007.

group of jar burials from Middle Bronze Age were recorded in western south side of the Temple of Ain-Dara,¹⁸⁶ and one burial jar was recorded in Operation T at Ginders dated to the MBAI (figs 73-74)¹⁸⁷.

2-Collective tombs: Earth or rock-cut shaft Tombs: This type represents the collective tombs which were scattered in Central and Northern Syria during Middle Bronze Age. A large set of these tombs was recorded in the sites of Mishrifeh, Hama, Ebla, Tell As, Ain Assan, Aleppo as well as the tomb discovered in Khan Sheikhoun these were classified as rock-cut tombs because they were cut in the rocky underground agglomeration to a relatively large depth with an entrance from above consisting either of one or more stairs or of a perpendicular entrance leading directly to the interment chamber. This entrance is often sealed with a large slab of stone. The internal layout differs from one tomb to the other. Sometimes it consists of one or more than one chamber. We therefore, are going to categorize this type according to the internal layout:

2-1-One chamber tomb: As mentioned above, it is a rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from the top. It consists of one interment chamber the dimensions of which differ from one tomb to the other. A group of these tombs were recorded in different Central and Northern Syrian sites:

2-1-1-Tomb II in the site of Mishrifeh (fig 50): A Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above in the Northern side. There are three stairs leading to the rectangular-projection interment chamber (58– 62) Cm long and (14 – 27)Cm wide. The tomb was. 1.70 m wide from the western side, 1.42 m from the east and 2.20 m long was un masterfully cut¹⁸⁸.

2-1-2-Tomb III at Hama (fig 39): A Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tomb discovered in 1935. In the south-eastern side it has a top entrance which was sealed with two slabs of stone. There is one stair which leads to the interment chamber. The irregularly cut tomb is

¹⁸⁶ Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara.

¹⁸⁷ Suleiman and Tarakge 1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ginders.

¹⁸⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 19-20. Pl. XIV.

900 Cm long, 280 Cm wide and 180 Cm high in the first part while in the second part it is 350 Cm wide and 250 Cm high¹⁸⁹.

2-1-3-Tomb VI at Hama (fig 40): A rock-cut shaft tomb uncovered in 1935. It consists of one interment chamber 160 Cm long, 145 Cm wide and 220 Cm deep, with a top entrance which was covered with a large slab of stone. It dates back to Middle Bronze Age¹⁹⁰.

2-1-4- Tomb X at Hama (fig 41): A rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance uncovered in 1936. The entrance was sealed with a large slab of stone. The interment chamber dimensions are 510 Cm long, 290 Cm wide and 165 Cm high¹⁹¹.

2-1-5-Tomb XIII at Hama (fig 42): A rock-cut shaft tomb discovered in 1936 with one interment chamber and a lateral entrance. It dates back to the end of Middle and Early LBA 1550 – 1450 BC¹⁹².

2-1-6-Tomb XII at Ain Assan (fig 66): A rock-cut shaft tomb with a top entrance and stair leading to the interment chamber. It dates back to Middle Bronze period I and thought to have been used from the MBA II to the beginning of LBA¹⁹³.

2-1-7-Khan Sheikhoun Tomb (fig 46): A rock-cut shaft tomb with a circular-shaped top lateral entrance. The interment chamber is also circular-shaped with a diameter of 4 meters. It dates back to the MBA IIB period on the basis of the pottery evidence¹⁹⁴.

2-1-8-Tomb I in the site of tell As (fig 67): A rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above. It consists of one rectangular-shaped interment chamber 2.25 – 2.40 m long, 1.70 m wide and 1.15 m high. It dates back to the first half of the second millennium BC. (Middle Bronze Age)¹⁹⁵.

¹⁸⁹ Riis 2007: 22-24.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*: 25-29.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*: 30-32.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*: 33-35.

¹⁹³ Al -Maqdissi 2006 a: 144.

¹⁹⁴ Al -Maqdissi 2006 b: 488.

¹⁹⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

2-1-9-Tomb II at tell As (fig 67): It is a rock-cut shaft tomb which consists of square-shaped interment chamber which can be accessed from above through a shaft entrance leading to the interment chamber 2.50 m wide, 2.70 m long and 0.90 m high. It dates, back to the beginning of the second millennium BC¹⁹⁶.

2-1-10-Tomb II at Bab al-Faraj (fig 44): It is a rock-cut tomb dating back to the second Middle Bronze Age. It has a perpendicular entrance and door sealed with a large stone slab. The interment chamber is access able through five stairs¹⁹⁷.

2-1-11-Tomb in the Al Gameh Al-kabeir: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb dating to the MBA II period. The entrance is perpendicular but there is no other detailed information because of the damage caused when it was suddenly uncovered during urban shoveling away works in the region¹⁹⁸.

2-1-12-Tell Et-Tin Tombs (fig 77): The result of excavation lead to discover a group of collective tombs, one of this Tombs was An rock-cut chamber tomb with stone-built walls. It consists of one rectangular-shaped interment chamber 2 m long, 1.50 m high. dating back to the Middle Bronze Age¹⁹⁹.

2-2-Tomb with a two chambers: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb with a top entrance. It consists of two interment chambers the dimensions of which differ from one tomb to another. A set of tombs dating back to Middle Bronze Age were recorded in different sites of Central and Northern Syria such as Hama and Aleppo:

2-2-1-Tomb I at Bab al-Faraj (fig 44): It is a rock-cut shaft tomb, this tomb accessible through a perpendicular one-meter deep entrance in the southern side which leads to the tomb 80 by 73Cm door which was sealed with a large slab of stone. The main chamber is access able through an entrance of three stairs. The tomb is 175 – 180 Cm high. It is

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: 171-188.PL. XL.

¹⁹⁷ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

¹⁹⁸ Suleiman 1999b: Preliminary Report of the Archeological Excavation at Al Gameh Al-Kabeir.

¹⁹⁹ Gautier 1895: 5, 18-19, fig:8.

divided into two main chambers; the first is 300 by 230 and the second is 210 by 180 Cm .the tomb dates back to the MBA II period²⁰⁰.

2-2-2-Tomb I at the site of Hama (fig 38): It is a rock-cut shaft tomb uncovered in 1935. It consists of two rooms, A and B,²⁰¹ with an entrance from the north along with another entrance to Room B but it is sealed with a stone cover. In the two entrances there is also staircase of two stairs in each of them. The two rooms look as if they had been either independent or connected tombs and seem from the layout. the dimensions of the rooms are 460 m long, 250 Cm deep and 180 Cm high for the north western room A which is divided into two equal parts, while the south eastern room B is 330 Cm long, 360 Cm deep and 170 Cm high.²⁰² The tomb dates back to the MBA II period.

2-2-3-Tomb VII at Mishrifeh : A rock-cut shaft tomb which was discovered in 2009, this is a second tomb below the Royal Palace, It is located below Room DA in the north-western wing of the building and was used at the same time as the earlier use of the palace, during the MB IIB period²⁰³. It is therefore, clearly earlier than the discovered inventory of the Royal Hypogeum, which dates to the LB IIA period. With one rock-hewn double chamber it is much smaller than the Royal Hypogeum²⁰⁴.

2-3-Multi-chambers tomb: These tombs were scattered in Central and Northern Syria. They are considered as collective tombs of multi-interment chambers. These tombs were recorded in chambers. These tombs occur at Mishrifeh and Ebla during Middle Bronze Age.

2-3-1-Tomb I at Mishrifeh (fig 49): It is situated in the limy slope of the church and its main entrance is on the top (shaft entrance) from the Northern side²⁰⁵. It is a well rectangular-shaped tomb, where the interment church is accessible through three stairs. On the right side rock-carved inscriptions were found. The tomb layout indicates

²⁰⁰ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

²⁰¹ Riis 2007: 14-18.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ Pfälzner 2012: 215-216.

²⁰⁴ Pfälzner *et al.* 2011: 76-7, figs 9-1. Pfälzner 2012: 215-216.

²⁰⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 13-14. PL. V-VI.

parallelism in the design: The cutter seems to have wanted to cut two parallel rooms, as we can see on the right side. The design seems to have been changed for some reason and the eastern side was widened, the tomb dates back to mid second millennium BC.(end of the Middle Bronze Age)²⁰⁶.

2-3-2-Tomb Vat Mishrifeh (fig 51): It is a rock-cut tomb, which was discovered in Operation H by the Italian team headed by Daniele Morandi Bonacossi: in 2006, but it had been looted. The tomb consists of four site interment chambers surrounding the main room²⁰⁷. It dates back to Middle Bronze Age, the absence of grave goods hampered further interpretations.

2-3-3-Ebla Royal tomb (fig 69): It is a rock-cut shaft tomb or a complex of tombs with an entrance from above. It is situated beneath the Royal Palace section (Western Palace-Area Q), and was discovered and investigated during the excavation season of 1978–1979²⁰⁸. It is distinguished as being a large complex of tombs, dating back to different periods. It consists of three hypogea. The three Royal tombs identified below the floors of the east-central area of the Western Palace were originally part of a complicated system of caves; they were artificially connected to each other during the Middle Bronze II period. At that time the caves were prepared for funerary use,²⁰⁹ so to speak, the first of which is the Tomb of the Princess, which is also the oldest because it dates back to 1825 – 1750 BC Q 78 A. It was dug by cutting a passage in the rock, and building a stone and mud-brick wall in the north side of the tomb to separate it from the other graves²¹⁰. The second is the Lord of the Goats (Signore dei Capridi) tomb which dates to (1770 and 1760 – 1700) BC. The third wing is the Cistern tomb (cistern), the latest which dates back to Middle Bronze Age (1725 – 1650 BC.) this wing had been originally a store which was reused as a burial ground(Tombs Q79A , Q79B)²¹¹.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: 14.

²⁰⁷ Morandi Bonacossi 2007b: 225.

²⁰⁸ Matthiae 1978: 149-184.

²⁰⁹ Matthiae 1984b: 23.

²¹⁰ Matthiae 1979, 1980: 94-118.

²¹¹ Matthiae 1984b:22-24.

2-3-4-Mourek tomb (fig 32): It is a rock-cut shaft tomb with a top lateral entrance from the south side, accessible through six stairs. It dates back to the end of Early Bronze and Middle Bronze Age²¹². The tomb is 310 Cm long, 285 Cm wide and 290 Cm high. It is divided into three chambers 180–210 Cm wide, 75–85 Cm deep and 80 Cm high²¹³.

2-3-5-The Royal tomb in Mishrifeh (fig 65): We will include this tomb with those of the Middle Bronze in spite of the fact that scholars dated it back to the beginning of Late Bronze Age.²¹⁴ This inclusion has been done for two reasons: the first is the presence of MB II tomb findings reused in this Tomb, such as cylinder seals, golden rings,²¹⁵ as well as serpentine vessel with an Egyptian inscription carrying the name of the Egyptian pharaoh, Amen Amenophis III of the twelfth dynasty (eighteenth century BC),²¹⁶ which was dated back to the eighteenth and seventeenth century BC. Moreover, most findings were dated back to the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. The second reason is the importance and richness of this tomb which gives a good idea about funerary traditions at the end of Middle Bronze Age and the beginning of Late Bronze Age. The Royal tomb in Mishrifeh is distinguished by its long entrance starting from the north wall of the throne hall second room, and then leads, through a staircase, to a long passage leading, in turn, to a large room in the Northern limits of the palace. This room is cut inside natural rock and leads, through a simple passage in its southern parts, to the Royal tombs. A passage of about five meters leads to the entrance which, in turn, leads to the four completely rock-cut interment chambers which consist of a main room 6 by 8 m leading directly to three annexed chambers in the south²¹⁷.

²¹² Riis 2007: 49.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Pfälzner 2007: 59.

²¹⁵ Pfälzner (eds.) 2009: 253.

²¹⁶ Al-Maqdissi 2002: 8.

²¹⁷ Al-Maqdissi 2005: 20.

Part two:***Funerary grave goods in the simple individual burials of Early Bronze Age***

Interment types recorded in Central and Northern Syria have been studied recently, and now, on the basis of the records of the archaeological expeditions who worked at those sites and the scientific papers issued in the Arab and foreign books and periodicals, we are going to discuss the funerary grave goods of these burial grounds.

To facilitate the treatment in this chapter collective burial grounds will be separated from the individual ones because the first type often contains a great deal of funerary finds. Again, burials dating back to Early Bronze Age will be dealt with first and then the burials dating back to Middle Bronze Age. Pursuant to this funerary grave goods in the simple individual burials will be dealt with before discussing those of the collective tombs.

1- Simple individual burials: These are solitary burials either in simple ordinary pits or in pottery vessels which spread through the first half of the third millennium BC,²¹⁸ and were reused throughout Middle Bronze Age²¹⁹. This type of burials spread through Central Syria at the beginning of the third millennium BC. Since large groups of simple individual burial (pit burials or burials in jars burials) under residence floors in Hama dating back to period K were recorded²²⁰.

1-1-Simple individual pit burials: Fugmann mentions that a considerable number of burials dedicated for adults were found under residence floors, though, under level K6,²²¹ there was a common pit which contained extremely fragmented skeletons of fifteen persons without any funerary grave goods. Under level K4 there were two burials containing skeletons buried in earth, and were probably without funerary grave goods²²².

1-2-Simple individual burials in jars: This type has been recorded in levels ranging from K10 to K4.²²³ In level K10 three infant interment jars were found under a residence

²¹⁸ Fugmann 1958: 19.

²¹⁹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225.

²²⁰ For these phases see the chronology at the end of this chapter (Table 5).

²²¹ Fugmann 1958: 26-27.

²²² *Ibid.*: 26.

²²³ Fugmann 1958: 26.

floor²²⁴. Again a group of interment jars was found in level K8,²²⁵ while in level K7 a group of interment jars for children as well as one jar with an adult skull were found²²⁶. In level K6 a group of infants interment jars along with fifteen corpses were found buried beside each other without funerary grave goods²²⁷. In level K5 interment jars for both adults and children were found²²⁸. In level K4 two individual burials (2 and 3) were found. These two burials contained adult, skeletons put in large split jars, accompanied with objects of funerary grave goods, as well as a group of interment jars dedicated for infant interment²²⁹. Under level K3 a skeleton of an adult covered with a split vessel was found without any funerary grave goods²³⁰. At Mishrifeh a group of interment jars dating back to Early Bronze Age were recorded, including an EBA IV jar which was found underneath hall C²³¹. The Syrian team uncovered similar jars dating back to EBA IVA underneath residential floors in the Royal Palace southern part (Operation R). Here two jars were exposed: the first was put into a pit in the floor and covered with stones in a room corner. The jar seems to have been deliberately broken and perforated at opposite points at the edges of the fracture and supposed to have been tied to each other with clay materials. There were a stone and a mud brick at the mouth of this jar which contained an adult's skeleton²³². The second jar contained the remains of a small child (fig 85)²³³. During the National expedition excavation run by Antoine Suleiman in Al-Ansari site, a one jar interment was found (fig 112). This was pottery shreds which belonged to more than one jar put on and under a skeleton of an adult. It was found at a depth of about four meters. It is brown-colored similar to the ones uncovered at Mishrifeh and dates back to the third millennium BC. With the jar shreds parts of a bronze bracelets and incised black

²²⁴ *Ibid.*: 26, Fig. 30a, n: 8,9,10.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*: 29, fig.37b, n: 3, 5. figs. 22, 23.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*: 31, figs. 24, 37b, n: 9-12-13-14-15, 16, 17.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*: 32-33, figs. 25, 46a, n: 14-24, 26, 27.

²²⁸ For child burial look Fugmann 1958: 33-37, figs. 26,46b.

²²⁹ Fugmann 1958: 37-39. figs. 50,49a.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*: 40-41, Figs. 27, 28, 49b.

²³¹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 151.

²³² Morandi-bonacossi 2007: 225. Al-Maqdissi 2008: 11.

²³³ Mouamar 2009: 68.

or scalded brown-colored goblets similar to Hama goblets period J3,²³⁴ and it is related to late pottery period. The burial dates back to the EBA IVB (2100-2000) BC²³⁵.

2- Cist graves: This type was spread at the site of Al-Rawda where a group of cist graves such as the looted grave 1262 were recorded²³⁶. A bead which is uncertainly dated back to EBA IV period,²³⁷ was found of this type the excavators also found the grave 5040 which consisted of two cist burials one on top of other with perpendicularly installed stones on both sides. The upper tomb was empty while the lower contained the skeleton of an adult as well as schist beads²³⁸.

3- Cairn-Tumulus graves: This type was spread at the site of Al-Rawda where a group of tombs such as the looted tomb 0301 were recorded. There were the bones and teeth of one adult as well as the lower part of (goblet of Hama) vessel on the basis of which the burial was dated back to the EBA IV²³⁹.

Funerary grave goods in the simple individual burials of the Middle Bronze Age

1-Funerary grave goods in the Simple individual pit burials:

This is either a semi-circular or rectangular shaped pit with an east-west extension sometimes surrounded by a wall of mud brick. This type had spread in Central and Northern Syria since the beginning of Middle Bronze Age. In Central Syria this type was abundantly recorded at both Ebla and Mishrifeh.

Mishrifeh: A group of simple individual pit burials were recorded at Mishrifeh in the main interment area of the acropolis in the operations H-C-K-T under the Royal Palace (figs 155-161). Here the Italian team exposed a group of burials in the operation H and C under the Royal Palace²⁴⁰ but they were accompanied with relatively few funerary grave goods.

Funerary grave goods in the burials discovered in section H at Mishrifeh:

²³⁴ Fugmann 1958: 74, fig. 93.

²³⁵ Suleiman 1999a:79.

²³⁶ Castel *et al.* 2005: 80.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*: 79- 80.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*: 80.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*: 78-79.

²⁴⁰ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 11.

- Burial 16 (figs 155-156): It was discovered underneath room F1 in the Royal Palace. the burial is a west-east- orientated rectangular-shaped room 126.66 Cm with a mud brick wall on the north and east sides. Here a skeleton of a 25 years adult was found lying probably on his back with the head from the west side (It was in a bad state that its position couldn't be precisely determined). The funerary grave goods were simply three pottery vessels, a jar and two bowls with animal bones in of them, put beside the head. The burial dates back to MBA IIA – MBA IB²⁴¹.
- Burial 17: Found underneath the floor of room CC of the Royal Palace, the burial is west-east orientated semi rectangular shaped of 158*106 Cm with mud brick on both east and west sides. In it a skeleton of a 25 – 35 years old adult was found lying on his back with the head to the west looking southward and without any funerary grave goods. The burial dates back to MBA IIA – MBA IB²⁴².
- Burial 18 (figs 157-158): A skeleton of an almost one year old child was found accompanied with a jar and a bowl. The burial dates back to MBA IIA – MBA IB²⁴³.
- Burial 19: A skeleton of an almost one year old child accompanied with a bowl. The burial dates back to MBA II A – MBA IB²⁴⁴.
- Burial 21: In it a skeleton of an almost 25 year's adult was found (the skull fragmented because of an intense blow). It dates back to MBA IIA – MBA IB²⁴⁵.
- Burial 22: A skeleton of a new-born infant was found without funerary grave goods. It dates back to MBA II²⁴⁶.
- Burial 23: A skeleton of an almost ten years old boy was found in position which was not precisely identified. The burial devoid of funerary grave goods dates back to MBA IB²⁴⁷.
- Burial 24 (fig 160): In it there was a skeleton of 25-35 years old sexually-unidentified adult lying on his back with the head from the west looking southward. A bowl and a copper or bronze toggle pin were found in this burial which dates back to MB AI²⁴⁸.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 14-15.

²⁴² *Ibid.*: 16.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*: 17.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 17 and 20.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*: 20.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

- Burial 25(fig 161): A skeleton of an adult was found accompanied with a bronze toggle pin. The burial dates back to MBA I²⁴⁹.

-Burial 26 (fig 159): A skeleton of a supposedly adult woman 35 – 45 years old was found lying on the right side with the face looking southward. A copper/Bronze disk was found in this burial which dates back to MBA IA²⁵⁰.

- *Funerary grave goods in the burials discovered in operation T at Mishrifeh.*

Operation T2 and T3: During the Italian expedition excavation from 2005 to 2008 a group of individual burials dating back to the second Middle Bronze Age was found²⁵¹.

-Burial 33: A north-south orientated pit containing a bent skeleton of a female lying on the right side with the head to the west. The age was estimated to be 25-35²⁵² and 40-45²⁵³ years old. A needle of wood was found in the burial²⁵⁴.

-Burial 34: Beside burial 33 and in the same pit, a burial of a 15 years old adolescent was found with an incomplete skeleton. The burial is east-west orientated with the head to the east and the face looking northward. The burial is devoid of any funerary grave goods²⁵⁵.

-Burial 35: A pit beneath a room wall containing what seems to be a 25-35²⁵⁶ and 40-50²⁵⁷ years old male adult without funerary grave goods.

-Burial 36: A pit burial in a room corner containing a skeleton in the bent position. It is north-south orientated with the head to the south and the face looking eastward. There are no funerary grave goods²⁵⁸.

-Burial 37: A burial in pit in the north-eastern corner of room C. The skeleton is in a spreading position and without funerary grave goods²⁵⁹.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 20-21.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*:23.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ Morandi Bonacossi *et al.* 2009: 73-74.

²⁵² Morandi Bonacossi *et al.* 2007a: 61-62. Brothwell 1981.

²⁵³ Lovejoy 1985: 68: 47-56.

²⁵⁴ Morandi Bonacossi *et al.* 2007a: 61.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 61.

²⁵⁶ Brothwell 1981. *Digging Up Bones*. Oxford University Press, Oxford. (cite the archaeological report of the Italian mission, in particular A. Canci)

²⁵⁷ Lovejoy 1985: 68: 47-56.

²⁵⁸ Morandi Bonacossi *et al.* 2007a: 62.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*: 62.

At Mishrifeh the bodies were put on their backs with hands raised up and legs often directed to the right. In principle the head was directed westward while the face was almost always turned southward²⁶⁰. In the area around the head they put a number of food vessels which often consisted of a shallow plate or bowl along with a deep bowl and a small bottle. The shallow vessels seem to have contained food for the dead, while the bottles and jugs contained drinks²⁶¹. From few months to one year old infants were buried in semi-circular burials dug in the earth. A number of food vessels were put them from time to time but they were often not accompanied with anything save one plate and one bottle. These finds indicate that putting food in the burial constituted a fundamental part of interment rituals in Syria of that period²⁶².

As for funerary gifts and objects put in the burial metal trinkets were rare. Little number of bronze pins was found, often in the women's burials. Up till now no weapons have been found in simple burials. There are no great differences in interment methods for men and women whether with regard to the tomb shape, interment ceremonies, and objects interred with the dead or personal objects²⁶³. Complete embryos and newly-born infants were usually buried in big pottery, often cooking, vessels without the accompanying objects²⁶⁴.

Ebla: A group of simple individual pit burials were recorded at Ebla as follows:

The first group: burial ground attached to architectural structures:

-Burial D1 (figs 71-171): In contained two skeletons, one of them was in a good state of preservation with the head in the eastern side. The burial was rich with funerary grave goods which included many pottery vessels and three terracotta figurines representing animals, a bronze bracelet and animal bones²⁶⁵.

-Burial D2 (figs 71-172-173): When discovered it appeared in a very bad state of preservation with regard to the decayed human remains because of wearing off in acropolis slope. In the burial two corpses were interred during two consecutive periods,

²⁶⁰ Morandi Bonacossi (eds.) 2009: 152.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ Baffi Guardata 1988: 3.

and on the basis of analyzing the funerary grave goods, we can easily foresee the ancient occupation of one of these two dead persons. In fact, these funerary grave goods included, in addition to the pottery vessels, two molds of (*andésite*) for forming two different types of axes,²⁶⁶ as well as a furnace for melting bronze and two blocks of light yellowish porous stone, the thing which makes us think that the issue is related to a maker of ritual weapons. This is, in fact, the case of axes with openings which could have been produced by these molds and which can be compared with the style of the second millennium BC. relief from Ebla²⁶⁷. Of the vessels found in the burial special significance is given to a small jug. It is part of what is known as the Syrian bottle inside a big jar of the kind known as the combed jars²⁶⁸.

-Burial D3 : It was found under a house paved floor, but the wearing off which hit the tell caused dangerous damage to the human remains of which nothing remained save the skull and parts of the body which are not well-preserved. A bowl, beads and part of a bronze pin were found in the burial²⁶⁹.

-Burial D4: It contained two skeletons buried side by side in such a way that they are turned eastward. The funerary grave goods of the burial consisted only of pottery vessels²⁷⁰.

-Burial D5 (fig 173): It was found in a good state of preservation. The head was in the west side and the legs extended eastward. The grave goods included a small jar and a bowl. On top of that burial there had been an architectural structure²⁷¹.

-Burial D6: It was located beneath the floor pavement. Some bones along with poor grave goods including only two small vessels were found in it²⁷².

-Burial D27 (fig 173): It is distinguished by rich funerary grave goods including seven small and medium sized vessels and a small jar which contained silver bracelets and rings²⁷³.

²⁶⁶ Matthiae 1985: 234.

²⁶⁷ Baffi Guardata 1988: 3.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*: 3.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: 4.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

The second group: burial ground unattached to architectural structures:

Burials unattached, from a structural viewpoint, to the private houses in the section occupied previously by the palace of the EBA IVA are more numerous in Ebla and constitute a consistent group from a stylistic point of view.

-Burial D8: Here long bones of human limbs along with four small vessels were found²⁷⁴.

-Burial D9 (fig 174): A double burial where the first skeleton was extended eastward and the head to the south-western side, while nothing was left of the second, put north of the first, save few greatly damaged bones as well as the teeth. The grave goods constituted of some house wares only²⁷⁵.

-Burial D10 (fig 174): It contained one skeleton with the head in the north, the body in the south and the pelvis in the south-eastern side. The arms were united on the chest while the whole body was covered with some stones. Beside the skeleton there were some small vessels and a bronze pin under the chin²⁷⁶.

-Burial D11 (fig 174): A skeleton lying with the head in the north side and the face looking eastward. Beside the skeleton there were a small bottle, small bowl, small bronze pieces and a toggle pin which had been clearly in mouth of the skull²⁷⁷.

-Burial D12 (fig 174): It was found in a very bad state of preservation, greatly damaged bones and good grave goods of small-sized vessels²⁷⁸.

-Burial D13 (fig 174): It contained a complete skeleton under which there was pit dating back to Middle Bronze Age. The skull was orientated northward and beside it there were small vessels including a small three-cloned jug with bright red paint²⁷⁹.

-Burial D14 (fig 175): A double burial where two skeletons one on top of the other were found. The two heads were in the north side, while the burial was restricted by two mud bricks in the north side and three others in the west. The burial grave goods included five small well-preserved vessels, among which there was a small three-cloned jug decorated with two parallel strips of red paint²⁸⁰.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ Baffi Guardata 1988: 4-5.

- Burial D15 (fig 175): It was very poor containing few overturned bones, a cooking bowl and a small goblet²⁸¹.
- Burial D16 (fig 175): There was a well-preserved skeleton with the head in the south-western side, the left arm in the east and the right arm badly bent under the head. Beside the corpse there were vessels larger than the ones usually found in such burials, a toggle pin under the left hand and the head of an herbivorous animal²⁸².
- Double burial D17: The best preserved burial dug in the wall of the Early Bronze palace. In two skeletons were found with the two heads directed to the north side while the two faces look at each other , the two bodies opposite to each other and the arm of one of them is lying on the torso of other. These couple was buried with grave goods rich with medium-sized vessels. Beside the two bodies a blade, a toggle pin and two small bronze spoons and a small shell were found²⁸³.
- Burial D18: Beside greatly disjoined human remains there were a skull directed to the north and part of the thoracic cavity. Beside these human remains there were three complete small jars, a cooking bowl, a tubular-shaped goblet, another perpendicular-lipped goblet a bronze toggle pin²⁸⁴.
- Burial D20 (fig 176): It was partly destroyed. Three jars and a bowl with a perpendicular lip were found in it²⁸⁵.
- Burial D21 (fig 176): The skeleton was found in a bad state (the face was directed eastward). What remained of the thoracic cavity and the limbs is very few. The funerary grave goods of the burial consisted of four bowls and two jars one of which was made of dough usually unknown among the traditional pottery types in Ebla during the second millennium BC²⁸⁶.
- Burial D22 (fig 176): It was very well preserved with the head exceptionally put in the southern side, the body heaped on the left side while the legs extended to the western aide. Beside the skeleton there were a small cooking bowl, a small jar and a sheep head²⁸⁷.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*: 5.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ Baffi Guardata 1988: 5.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*: 5.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

- Burial D23 (fig 176): It was greatly destroyed because it had been brought down during the erection of a Middle Bronze Age wall. What remained of it is a skull found under the wall foundation stones and beside it there were a small double-lipped jar, a cooking bowl, a bronze toggle pin and some bones of herbivorous animals²⁸⁸.

- Burial D24 (fig 177): It contained three skeletons. The well preserved remains were of an adult woman whose skull directed eastward with the left face clearly visible, her arms extended to the north-eastern side and her feet directed westward. Beside her there were two infants the head of one of them is laying on his mother's arm. Around his neck there was a necklace of white pottery beads. On the mother's thoracic cavity there was a bronze pin, and her knees were leaning on a big stone while another stone to the south covered the second small skeleton of which we could define only the thoracic cavity. The burial was deeply dug in a heap of mud brick which had fallen from the Early Bronze Age palace. The funerary grave goods consisted of four bowls and a small jar²⁸⁹.

-Burial D25: In it a skull of an adult directed west ward was found along with half jar which was used for cooking²⁹⁰.

-Burial D26 (fig 177): It was also in the ruins of the Early Bronze Age palace. It contained few human remains and its grave goods included-beside the typical types of the inherited Middle Bronze Age pottery in Ebla – other less circulated types in this city such as the small jars made of very refined and cleaned clay²⁹¹.

2- Funerary grave goods in simple individual burials in jars :

These are either cooking or storage pottery vessels which were used for interring dead corpses inside them and putting them in a hole dug in earth. This type of interment was spread during Middle Bronze Age in Central and Northern Syria, particularly at Mishrifeh, Ebla, Ginders and Ain Dara.

-Mishrifeh: During the Count's excavations in the twenties of the last century complete jars broken from the middle were found with remains of infants inside them. The jars were put among heaps of stones in two pits dug in the rock, the first was semi-circular and the second was square. In the first jar (the square pit), A skeleton of an infant was found

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Baffi Guardata 1988: 5-6.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*: 6.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

with a bead and a small bowl dating back to mid second millennium BC, and in the second an infant skeleton and small bowl were found²⁹². During the Syria mission: excavation works in Operation T east of the Royal Palace, a group of individual burials in jars, damaged because of structures erected in later periods, were found. These burials were put inside pottery jars which had been previously used for different purposes, storage jars and cooking vessels dating back to Middle Bronze Age MBA II. In some of them simple funerary grave goods were found²⁹³.

Burials discovered in operation T by the Syrian team and their funerary grave goods (figs 153-154):

-Burial 1: Half storage pottery jar of a large size lay on its side inside which an incomplete skeleton of an adult was found²⁹⁴.

-Burial 2: A burial jar in which a skeleton of an infant was found and beside which complete terracotta figurine representing an animal with a jar on its back was found. On the other side two pottery jars, a complete one of the polished type and an incomplete one laid on top of the first were found²⁹⁵.

-Burial 3: An interment jar laid north of the interment jar number 2. In this jar an infant skeleton was found. Completing the discovery, it was shown that the interment process had not been inside a complete pottery jar because the lower part was of a shape different from that of the upper part, the interment process had been completed by using two different jars. West of this burial and adjacent to a small pottery goblet was found²⁹⁶.

-Burial 4: A complete burial jar in which an infant skeleton was found and beside which two small pottery goblets were also found²⁹⁷.

- Burial 5: Beside burial jar number 4 another interment one to the west was found with an infant skeleton in it²⁹⁸.

²⁹² Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 155- 153.

²⁹³ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 4. Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1219.

²⁹⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 5. Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1220.

²⁹⁵ Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1220.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

-Burial 6: An interment jar destroyed as a result of erecting a wall over it in a later period. Here two differently-shaped jars were used: one to put the corpse in and the other to cover the burial²⁹⁹.

-Burial 7: North-east of the interment jar number 6 and the wall dating to recent period another interment jar was found also destroyed because of recent installations. Two differently-shaped jars were used: one for skeleton and the other to cover the burial³⁰⁰.

-Burial 8: About four meters to the south a complete interment jar containing also an infant skeleton was found³⁰¹.

-Burial 9: Southeast of the interment jar number eight, a cooking pot with an infant skeleton inside it was found. This burial was distinguished by finding two bronze earrings, oxidized and adjoining the skull bones, as well as three beads of ivory there were also another small jar and a small pottery jar³⁰².

- **Ginders** (fig 181): During the Syrian team excavations at the site of Ginders in 1996, an individual burial of an infant in a jar as well as funerary grave goods consisting of a vase and two terracotta figurines were found in operation B, dated back to the MBA I³⁰³.

- **Ebla**: Burials in jars were recorded in the houses constituting the south-western quarter at gate A³⁰⁴.

-Burial D 7: It contained an infant buried in a jar³⁰⁵.

-Burial D19 (figs 175-178): It contained the remains of an infant put in a cooking jar and some human bones. The funerary grave goods consisted of a bottle, a bowl, a small bronze ring and a pottery bead³⁰⁶.

- **Ain Dara** (figs 179-180): The cemetery (4×4 m) located opposite the south-western corner of the temple which was discovered at Ain Dara during the 1991 excavation carried out by Antoine Suleiman from the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums contained a set of pottery jars (pots) with a skeleton in each jar. The aperture of

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 6. Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1220.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ Suleiman and Tarakge 1996.

³⁰⁴ Baffi Guardata 1988: 3.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*: 4.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: 5.

each pot is covered by an obtuse-mouthed pottery plate. Each jar had a hole in its base. There is incised decoration on top of the jar belly. Beside the jars there were pottery goblets with bases, some of which were decorated while others were not. The similar pottery vessels discovered in the upper layers date back to the second Middle Bronze or the end of first and the beginning of the MBA II dated at Al-Ansari (IV) between 1700 – 1775 BC³⁰⁷. Among the funerary pottery set we also see a distinctive jar with artistic and animal reliefs on its surface. This jar is similar to what has been excavated in Alalakh Level VII dated back to 1800 BC³⁰⁸.

Funerary grave goods in collective tombs in the Early Bronze Age

In this section we will enlist the contents of the collective tombs the type of which has been previously studied, and according to the same previous sequence:

1-Stone-built chamber tombs:

1-1-**Tomb G4 at Ebla:** It was found without any skeleton or funerary finds.

1-2-**Tomb I at Umm el-Marra** (figs 90 - 95): It consisted of three layers of skeletons with a rich collection of funerary grave goods.

The upper layer : Here four skeletons were found, the first of a woman and the second may have been of a woman, each accompanied by a baby placed at the knee,³⁰⁹ the ages of both ranges from 15 to 20 years, they were on their sides opposite each other in the bending position with the head of each directed to the baby of the other,³¹⁰ ornaments and precious materials such as gold, silver and lapis lazuli as well as the remains of a comb and a jar full of shells containing eyeliner beside the head of one of them (her own beautification set)³¹¹. The middle layer: Here two skeletons of adult males beside each other in the bending position were found with a bracelet and a wreath beside the other. There were also animal bones of sheep and goats. The men funerary grave goods seem to have been less than those of women³¹².

³⁰⁷ For these phases see the chronology at the end of this chapter (Table 5).

³⁰⁸ Suleiman: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at 1991.

³⁰⁹ Schwartz *et al.* 2003:330..

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 330.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*: 332.

³¹² *Ibid.*: 333-335.

The lower layer: Here a skeleton of a sexually unspecified person was found accompanied with pins and a silver goblet as well as sheep bones. In the tomb 69 pottery vessels, jars, bowls and goblets, were found. The pottery examination showed that the tomb dates back to the end of the EBA IVA, to the same period of the Royal Palace C at Ebla, about 2300 BC³¹³. Beside the tomb southern wall two equine skulls were found along with two pottery vessels³¹⁴.

The fine skeletons were put in the western side in a west-east direction and four of them were in the bending position³¹⁵.

1-3-Tomb III at Umm el-Marra (figs 96 - 97): It was destroyed but it contained scattered bones and fragmented pottery. The bones were of a human adult and adolescent³¹⁶ along with a large collection of animal bones (sheep, goats, ducks, geese, dogs, cattle, weasel, and Equids. the fragmented pottery included different types of vessels (62 pottery vessels such as goblets, plates, jugs and jars) either polished provided with a decorative strip (the Euphrates strip), a tripartite base or long-necked jars, there were also short-spouted jars similar to those of tomb I at tell Banat,³¹⁷ along with long-spouted ones and circularly-pelvises ones. The tomb dates back to the EBA IVA³¹⁸.

1-4-Tomb IV at Umm el-Marra (figs 98 - 102): Tomb IV contained two layers or phase of use.

In the lower layer were with adult male, whose bones were piled in the Northern part of the tomb with a collection of pottery vessels beside them. Among the objects found there, there were golden trinkets and two small decorated tables made of basalt stone and one of them on top the other. These two tables may have been used for grinding beautification materials, the second skeleton of an adult male was found in the south eastern part of the tomb with two net-shaped pieces of gold beside it. There were also an ivory comb, a basalt table and a collection of pottery. The third skeleton of an adult female of middle age or older, differed from the other skeletons in that the bones were found in a dense

³¹³ *Ibid.*: 336.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*: 330-335.

³¹⁶ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

³¹⁷ Porter 1995a: fig. 11(Pl I).

³¹⁸ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

cluster ca.9 Cm high, with the skull placed on top, indicative of a secondary burial in which bones were moved from a previous location within Tomb IV or elsewhere. Beside this skeleton an ivory comb and a collection of bronze and silver toggle pins were found. In the tomb north-western corner there were two eyes: decorative padding of eyes of the kind used for statues. Originally, there might have been either a statue made of an enduring material or two separately-buried eyes. The pottery corpus of the lower level was 55 vessels included short, flat-based corrugated cups, shallow ring-based bowls with a short ledge or bead rim, spouted jars, tall-necked jars, globular bottle, date back to the EBA IVA, 2400 BC³¹⁹.

The upper layer: Here also three skeletons were found the first was of a reburied adult male, the second of an adult female and the third of a child, along with a jewelry collection consisting of gold and silver trinkets and a collection of small silverwares. The upper level of the tomb yielded 79 ceramic vessels. The tomb dating back to the EBA IV (2450) BC. Resulted in the fact that women had more funerary grave goods than men³²⁰.

1-5-Tomb V at Umm el-Marra (fig 103): In this destroyed tomb the bones of an incomplete infant and an adult male were found along with a collection of pottery vessels dating back to mid third millennium BC, to EBA III the same period of Umm el-Marra VI. This tomb is distinguished by the presence of goblets of the kind called the Champagne vessels are well, known at Middle and Upper Euphrates Valley as Carchemish³²¹ and tell Qumluq³²² in the beginning and mid third millennium BC. There were also a small, thin-walled globular jar with black, spirally painted horizontal bands, globular jars with everted rims, a flat-based, short-necked jar, and diverse bowls. As well as bones of birds and herbivore animals³²³.

1-6-Tomb VI at Umm el-Marra (figs 104-105): This is the largest of the Early Bronze Age tombs yet documented in the Acropolis Center,³²⁴ though it had been partly destroyed because of the erection of tomb 7 beside it. This tomb contained bones of an

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Ibid.*: 623.

³²¹ Sconzo 2006: 250-266.

³²² Jamieson and Kanjou 2009:22, figs,7-8.

³²³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606-607.

³²⁴ Schwartz 2007: 41.

adult male laid on the remains of a wooden coffin 0.96 meter wide and 1.1 meter long, which was painted with tar like that of tomb 7 at tell Banat³²⁵. The coffin itself was laid on a bed of flagstones put on pebble-paved floor. A heap of animal bones (sheep-goats) was also found with a collection of funerary grave goods such as one gold and one silver toggle pin of the bent spherical-headed variety were found, and 18 lapis lazuli beads, two biconical gold beads, and four carnelian beads. The pottery finds included Metallic Ware, globular, round-based jar, fragments of a Champagne vessel, everted-rim globular jars, and a ribbed conical cup.³²⁶The tomb dates back to the mid third millennium BC³²⁷.

1-7-Tomb VII at Umm el-Marra: This tomb is interlaced with tomb 6. In the southeastern corner were human skeletal remains identified as those of a child or young adolescent found with several broken vessels, include examples of vertical-rim bowls, ring-based corrugated goblets³²⁸. As well as a bronze nail and the pointed end of a silver toggle pin. The tomb dates back to the end of the EBA IVA, Umm el-Marra V or EBA IVB, Umm el-Marra IV, 2300 BC³²⁹.

1-8-Tomb 8 at Umm el-Marra: It a facility of two chambers which contained the remains Of two adults who had been originally put within two wooden coffins painted by tar, the thing which is indicated by the tar remains in the tomb. This tomb dates back to the EBA III, about 2500 BC³³⁰.

1-9-Tomb 9 at Umm el-Marra: It was found in great disorder, yet three skeletons were unearthed from it³³¹.

1-10-Tomb 10 at Umm el-Marra: It was found in the southern half of wrecked building. It contained three skeletons, potteries, a bronze dagger, an ivory handle and a crooked silver neckband or collar similar to the models found in tombs I and IV³³².

³²⁵ McClellan and Porter 1999: 109-110.

³²⁶ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608-609.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*: 608-609.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*: 623-624.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*: 624.

³³⁰ Schwartz 2010:180.

³³¹ *Ibid.*:181.

³³² Schwartz 2007: 41-42.

2-Rock-cut shaft tombs:

2-1-Tomb II at Ain Assan: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb where three skeletons and six funerary pieces were found. It likely dates back to the third millennium BC (EBA)³³³.

2-2-Tomb III at Ain Assan: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above leading through a stair to the interment chamber. Here eight skeletons and 84 funerary pieces were found. The tomb dates back to the end of EBA IVB,³³⁴ and was reused until the MBA I. The unearthed objects which date back to the EBA IVB are similar to those unearthed at Ebla³³⁵ and Hama³³⁶.

2-3-Tomb IV at Ain Assan (figs 86-88): A rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above. Here five skeletons and 89 burial pieces were unearthed. The tomb dates back to Early Bronze Age EBA IVA (2400-2250 BC)³³⁷. The unearthed funerary objects are similar to those discovered at the sites of the Orontes valley such as Ebla and Hama and also upper Euphrates tombs such as Umm el-Marra³³⁸ and tell Banat³³⁹.

2-4-Tomb XV at Ain Assan: An erected rectangular room cut in the rock from one side . It likely dates back to the third millennium³⁴⁰. This tomb is similar to those known at tell Ahmar,³⁴¹ Umm el-Marra, Jearablus Tahtani³⁴² and Mari³⁴³.

2-5-Tomb III at tell As (fig 89): A well rock-cut shaft tomb with a square-shaped interment chamber. Here 84 bronze and pottery vessels were found but they date back to a period earlier than those found in tomb II such as circular-bottomed pottery and a semicircular vessel. This tomb dates to the end of the third millennium BC³⁴⁴.

³³³ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

³³⁴ *Ibid* .

³³⁵ Matthiae 1977: fig. 15-16.

³³⁶ Fugmann 1958: figs. 62 and 65.

³³⁷ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

³³⁸ Schwarts *et al.* 2003: 338-341, fig.23-24.

³³⁹ Porter 1995: fig.11 and Suivantes and Porter 1999: fig. 1-4.

³⁴⁰ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a : 150.

³⁴¹ Thureau-Dangin,F and Dunand 1936: fig. 28.

³⁴² Peltenburg 1999: fig. 1 and fig n 2 from sites (Tell Hadidi, Tawi, Tell Hayaze and Gedikli Huyuk).

³⁴³ Jean Marie 1990 : pl. IV-XIII, Jean Marie 1999: pl.40.

³⁴⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

2-6-Tomb VI at tell As (fig 89): A well rock-cut shaft tomb with a square-shaped interment chamber. Here a collection of 50 pottery vessels,³⁴⁵ distinguished by their small size (no more than ten Cm long) were found. These are fine precisely made vessels, proportionate in shape and size and all with a circular bottom; this tomb is considered as the oldest because it dates back to the third millennium BC³⁴⁶.

2-7-Al-Ansari Tomb (figs 115-118): It consists of two layers: The upper dates back to Middle Bronze Age I and II and the lower to the EBA IVA-B. Near the western wall two skeletons were found in a lying down position on their back, the first eastward and the second westward. The other three skeletons were in a state which did not allow studying their positions correctly. In the tomb there were also a big collection of 300 pottery vessels which included jars, goblets, jugs and bowls as well as bronze bracelets and perforators and stone beads³⁴⁷. The finds are similar to those of tomb IV at Mishrifeh and at Tell Mardikh³⁴⁸.

2-8-Saraqeb Tomb: Here a collection of pottery finds was unearthed. This collection included colored goblets, various jugs and plates and a terracotta figurine representing a girl the bronze finds included a spear head and a bracelet. All the finds date back to Early Bronze Age EBA IVB³⁴⁹.

2-9-Tomb IV at Mishrifeh (figs 78-80): The interment type indicates that we are dealing with a monumental burial where interred, because it contained 40 skeletons with their precious funerary belongings. A big collection of pottery and bronze finds (292 pottery vessels) dating back to the EBA IV³⁵⁰. The pottery finds included bowls, goblets and various jars, while the other grave goods included bronze finds such as bronze\copper weapons, beautification tools which amounted to 100 different pieces, and other pieces such as decorated pottery, Egyption – made goblet and carnelian³⁵¹.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 188.

³⁴⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

³⁴⁷ Suleiman 1984: 3.

³⁴⁸ Suleiman 1999a:79-85.

³⁴⁹ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 93-104.

³⁵⁰ Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: 35-36.

³⁵¹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 145-152. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: 35-36.

2-10-Tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda: It is a collective tomb dating back to the EBA IV. It was used three times, the first of which had been as a burial ground. Then it was deserted and neglected for a certain period after which the bone remains were removed from chamber E1 and outside it, closed by a layer of stones brought from outside, paved and used for residence. In the third stage the entrance was blocked by trimmed stones before the soil filled it. In room E1 pottery finds dating back to the (EBA IV) were unearthed along with a number of beads and three jars of the kind known as the (Hama goblets). A number of (collective) interment levels were found: The skulls, teeth and bone remains indicted the presence of nine skeletons; four at least belong to adults who were found in room E1. Because of interment repetition the bones were found on top of each other near the southern and south eastern walls and therefore no correlated skeletons were found.³⁵² The archaeological levels in room E2, the central room, indicated the presence of stratum accumulation which contained natural sediments of argillaceous soil with pottery fragments in it. The passageway between the rooms E1 and E2, a circular-shaped rock-cut chambers, one meter higher than the floor of room E1, was also excavated and 1400 bone pieces were unearthed³⁵³.

Here also there were natural deposits of argillaceous soil with limestone fragments which had fallen from the tomb roof. In room E2 a skeleton of an Equid was unearthed, and beneath it there was an artificial 50 Cm thick layer of stone paned on archaeological layers dating back to the EBA IV where pottery finds and remains of human bones were unearthed³⁵⁴. In this room 250 pieces of bones were found. The tomb as a whole yielded 2000 bone pieces, out of which 452 were studied, to indicate the presence of seven persons, three adults and four adolescent³⁵⁵.

³⁵² Castel *et al.* 2005: 75.

³⁵³ *Ibid.* Castel Awad: 2006: 10-11.

³⁵⁴ Castel Awad: 2006: 10-11.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.* : 10-11.

Funerary grave goods in the collective tombs dating back to Middle Bronze Age:

These are rock-cut shaft tombs consisting of one or more interment chamber. This is why we classified them according to the number of interment chambers:

1-One interment chamber tombs:

1-1-**Tomb II at Mishrifeh:** In this tomb no skeletons were found: there were different pottery vessels such as jars, jugs, bowls ...etc. dating back to Middle Bronze Age³⁵⁶.

1-2-**Tomb III at Hama** (figs 132-134): Here also there were no bones. What was found is a set of 21 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, goblets, and brazier, as well as a bronze pin, all dating back to Middle Bronze Age³⁵⁷.

1-3-**Tomb VI at Hama** (figs 135-139): Here two skeletons were found accompanied by a set of 64 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, carinated bowls and ordinary bowls, and feminine terracotta figurine as well as a window axes, spear heads, daggers, toggle pins, beads and rings. These finds as a whole dated back to the Middle Bronze Age³⁵⁸.

1-4-**Tomb X at Hama** (figs 140): Here 7 pottery pieces, jar, jug and carinated bowls, as well as a feminine terracotta figurine, bronze finds, spear head, toggle pin, and iron nail. Animal bones were found³⁵⁹. This tomb dates back to the Middle Bronze Age³⁶⁰.

1-5-**Tomb XIII at Hama** (figs 141): In this tomb adult skeletons and animal bones were unearthed. There were also 29 pottery pieces which included jars, jugs, juglet, goblet, and bowls as well as a bronze toggle pin. This tomb dates back to the end of Middle Bronze and the beginning of Late Bronze Age (1550-1450) BC³⁶¹.

1-6-**Tomb XII at Ain Assan** (fig 162): A set of pottery vessels-jars, jugs and bowls dating back to the beginning of the second middle bronze was found³⁶².

1-7-**Tomb at Khan Sheikhoun** (figs 148-151): A large set of funerary grave goods which included 186 pottery pieces – different jars, jugs, bowls, plates and goblets, lamps, and a number of bronze axes were found³⁶³.

³⁵⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927:19-20. Pl. XIV.

³⁵⁷ Riis 2007: 22-24. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

³⁵⁸ Riis 2007: 25-29. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ Riis 2007: 49.

³⁶¹ Riis 2007: 33-35. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X

³⁶² Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 144.

1-8-Tomb I at tell As (fig 163): Here part of a skull as well as a set of pottery finds and bronze clasps were found. There were 50 pottery vessels similar to those discovered in tomb I at Qatna and circular vessels similar to those discovered at the site of Dnibi. The tomb dates back to the first half of the first half of the second millennium BC³⁶⁴.

1-9-Tomb II at tell As (fig 163): Here a set of 51 pottery vessels-jars, jugs, bowls finds are similar to those of tomb I at Dnibi and tomb IV at Mishrifeh: the ceramics date back to the beginning of the second millennium BC³⁶⁵.

1-10-Tomb II at Bab al-Faraj: The interment chamber was found without any skeletons, pottery or bronze finds³⁶⁶.

1-11-Tomb at the Al Gameh Al-kabeir: It was destroyed but bones and a set of 204 pottery pieces jars, jugs, plates, vases ...etc. dating back to Middle Bronze Age were found³⁶⁷.

1-12-Tell Et-Tin Tombs (figs 182-183): Here 20 skeletons were found accompanied by a set of pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, carinated bowls and ordinary bowls, bronze finds, spear head, toggle pins. These finds as a whole dated back to the Middle Bronze Age³⁶⁸.

2- Two – chambered shaft tombs:

2-1-Tomb I at Bab al-Faraj (figs 143-147): Here human skeletons were mixed with a large set of pottery vessels³⁶⁹. There were also bones of tamed animals such as sheep and cows. The number of funerary grave goods in this tomb came up to 351 pieces of which 344 were pottery pieces such as jars, jugs, plates, goblets and vases. The rest were six bronze pieces and a feminine terracotta figurine³⁷⁰.

2-2-Tomb I at Hama (figs 125-127): The skeletons had been destroyed by the thieves who previously entered the tomb. what was found are some bones remains, some golden,

³⁶³ Al-Maqdissi 2006: 481-49.

³⁶⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report of the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

³⁶⁷ Suleiman 1999b: Preliminary Report of the Archeological Excavation at Al Gameh Al-Kabeir

³⁶⁸ Gautier 1895: 5, 18-19.

³⁶⁹ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report of the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

silver, and bronze finds, a cylinder seal, axes, rings, pins, beads, and 19 bronze daggers, as well as a set of 29 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, bottles and carinated and ordinary bowls and six human and animal terracotta figurines all of which dated back to the Middle Bronze Age³⁷¹.

2-3-Tomb II at Hama (figs 128-131): Here a set of 44 pottery pieces such as jars, jugs, goblet, and bowls, as well as four terracotta figurines, three feminine and a terracotta figurine of a donkey, were found along with a silver bracelet and a set of six bronze finds, spear head, toggle pins, bracelets, and beads, all of which dated back to the Middle Bronze Age³⁷².

2-4-Tomb VII at Mishrifeh: A huge number of human skeletons, numbering around 100 or more according to a first preliminary and very rough count, was found. The human remains were deposited in wooden boxes with several persons in each box. Most of the bones were put into the boxes as individual items, detached from their anatomical order³⁷³. In some instances, however, larger parts of a skeleton in anatomical order were retrieved, showing that the decay of the corpse was not yet finalized at the time of the re-burial. Some grave goods were put into the densely packed boxes as well. More grave goods were assembled around the boxes, a big collection of pottery and bronze finds (1027 pottery vessels and different finds) dating back to the MBA II³⁷⁴. The pottery finds included bowls, goblets and various jars, while the other grave goods included bronze finds such as bronze\copper weapons, ivory and golden objects³⁷⁵. The most plausible explanation is that the bones came from the Royal Hypogeum, which was in use as a burial place for a long period of approximately 400 years (from MB IIA to LB IIA) and must have been emptied from time to time in order to make space for new tombs³⁷⁶.

3-Multi-chambered shaft tombs:

3-1-Tomb I at Mishrifeh (fig 152): Most bones in this tomb were found fragmented and dark brown-colored. In front of the entrance various layers of bone remains were found

³⁷¹ Riis 2007: 14-18.

³⁷² *Ibid.* : 59-64.

³⁷³ Pfälzner 2012: 215-216..

³⁷⁴ Pfälzner 2011:107

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

accumulated and mixed with animal bones the thing which indicates a repeated interment process. Sixteen skeletons of adults (men and women) and five skeletons of infants were found. These bones may have been mixed with animal bones which could not be studied because they were greatly fragmented³⁷⁷.

Studying the burial finds evidenced the presence of javelins which indicate men interment and the presence of beads and bracelets which indicate women interment. There was also a large set of pottery proportionate with the number of skeletons. The difference in the pottery types indicates the repetition of the interment process which lasted about 100 years³⁷⁸. The unearthed pottery dates back to mid second millennium BC (The end of Middle Bronze Age) and it is similar to the Syrian/Palestinian pottery of bronze period 2 MBA (2000 – 1500 BC)³⁷⁹. No iron or oxidation was found; rather bronze toggle pins with an opening in the middle, two bronze spears with wood traces on them, another two bronze worn axes, a necklace of orange cornelian beads and a small-sized flint stone³⁸⁰.

3-2-Tomb V at Mishrifeh: A Middle Bronze Age tomb which could not be precisely studied by the work team because it had been destroyed and looted in previous period³⁸¹.

3-3-The Royal tomb at Ebla: Although the tomb of both the Lord of the goats and the Cistern had been previously looted, some pottery finds and other funerary grave goods were found. As for the Princess tomb the wall built in front of it kept it. The finds showed that the tomb of the goat master is richer than that of the cistern. At its outset a number of animal and human bone remains, some pottery and other finds such as cups, an alabaster vase, a golden neckband and a crystal stone were found. In the safes tomb an alabaster, a type found in the MBA II tombs in Syria and Palestine,³⁸² was found along with an ivory pin with an ivory hand and a limestone head all of which were covered with gold and silver.

3-4-The tomb at Mourek (figs 119-124): It contained thirteen skeletons most of which belonged to adult males and children as well as one or more female. the finds provide a

³⁷⁷ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 14.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927:18. Pl. XIV.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*:19. PL.XIII. Fig.56.

³⁸¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 226.

³⁸² Matthiae 1979- 1980: 94-118.

funerary set rich with pottery which amounted to 183 different pottery pieces such as jars, jugs, bowls ...etc. As well as a set of bronze finds – bronze pins and rings, a carriage and seven terracotta figurines all of which date back to (MBAII)³⁸³.

3-5-Royal tomb at Mishrifeh: The preservation state of the skeleton remains, Sediment type and the nature of funerary grave goods indicate that the tomb was used during the fifteenth and fourteenth century BC (First half of Late Bronze Age) along with some finds dating back to the first half of the second millennium BC (Middle Bronze Age) which were kept and put with the funerary grave goods of LBA because of its artistic value, rarity or symbolic importance for the ruling dynasty³⁸⁴. On the basis of the skeletons great number, deposits and historical distribution of the scattered finds it can be easily deduced that the tomb chambers had been used for a long period of time, but the last period during which the tomb had been used is surely associated with time precedent to the destruction caused by Hittite war campaigns. If the palace destruction truly took place around 1340 BC. Under the rule of Shuppiluliuma I,³⁸⁵ this date would mean the end of the tomb, the tomb foyer was completely full with a heap of falling wreckage, the thing which prevented anyone from entering the tomb chambers, and therefore no destruction or looting took place when the palace was destroyed. Again the state of the heap in the tomb foyer, the finds interpenetration in the chamber and the foyer and the state of the tomb use directly before its destruction in mid fourteenth century clearly confirm that, before the archaeological excavation in 2002, no penetration into the underground installation had taken place. Most finds in the chamber correspond in their dates to this estimation. the pottery largest part, many marble vessels and part of the gold jewelry, particularly the gold three-dimensional works, on top of which the quiver case, date back to the fifteenth or fourteenth century BC, the first half of Late Bronze Age. Nevertheless, there are clearly older finds including some Middle Bronze Age pottery, an Egyptian marble vessel from the time of the early 18 dynasty (mid 16 century BC), another Egyptian marble vessel from the time of 12 dynasty (the transition period from 19

³⁸³ Riis 2007: 49.

³⁸⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2006a.

³⁸⁵ Klengel 1969:135.

– 18 century)³⁸⁶ and, in particular, the two late kings, basalt statues which characterize the Syrian ancient carving and which can be dated back to the eighteenth or seventeenth century BC. The stratigraphic structure of the burial complex, including its entrance passageway, cannot be dated back to a time later than that of the palace ejection in the eighteenth or seventeenth century BC³⁸⁷.

³⁸⁶ Al-Maqdissi 2006a.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Part three

A comparative study about interment types and related funerary finds in Central and Northern Syria:

Interment types:

Studying individual burials and collective tombs in the area under consideration we notice that we are dealing with relatively large group of simple burials and collective tombs in this Early and Middle Bronze Ages area.

a- Interment types during the Early Bronze Age:























Sites											
Mishrifeh	+	+								+	
Saraqeb						+					
Tell As					+						
Mardikh	+	+									+
Al-Ansari								+			
Ummel-Marra											+
Ain Assan					+	+	+				
Alrawda	+		+	+					+		
Hama	+	+									
Homs region				+							
Mourek										+	
		Pit Burial		Square shaft tomb		semi- circular					
		Jar burial		rectangular shaft tomb		semi- circular					
		Cist		rectangular shaft tomb		Stone built chamber					
		Cairn		Circular shaft tomb							

Table 1. EBA Typology of funerary structures

1-Simple individual pit burials: The so far available data indicate that this type was slightly circulated during Early Bronze Age in Central and Northern Syria. This type has been recorded underneath Early Bronze floors of houses and residences in Level K4 at tell

Hama,³⁸⁸ where two tombs within the houses floors were found without any funerary grave goods. Fugmann also mentioned the presence of an interment area under the floor of level K6 houses where fifteen persons had been interred. The skeletons were in a very bad state (fragmented) and without funerary grave goods³⁸⁹. Fugmann explains that this might have been a case of collective death and that the interment process which had been carelessly carried out *may indicate that these skeletons belonged to either enemies who had been killed or to victims of a certain epidemic*³⁹⁰.

Cooper describes the historically long-term pit burials in the Syrian Euphrates valley as being the simplest type of tombs, which appeared for the first time, in the phases 1 and 2,³⁹¹ and persisted until period 5 in late third millennium BC³⁹². These pit burials are small either oval or rectangular pits dug into the ground to accommodate one, or sometimes two or three, individuals, and a small number of grave goods³⁹³. According to Carter and Parker pit burials scattered in the Euphrates valley and divided into two kinds: a simple ordinary pit about 50 Cm deep and the second is a pit 150 Cm deep, with a stone cover and one corpse only³⁹⁴. In spite of scarcity of information we notice that pit burials in the area under consideration were contemporary to pit burial in the upper Euphrates Valley.

2-Simple burials in jars: This type was more current than the previous one. It was recorded at the site of Hama under the floor of houses from level K10 to level K3, i.e. from the beginning of the first Early Bronze Age to middle third Early Bronze Age. Unique interment case was recorded in level J7, which dates back to the EBA IV³⁹⁵. Here we have to indicate that settlement at Hama during Early Bronze Age had been in two main levels: level K from K10 to K1 (3000- 2400 BC) and level J from J8 to J1

³⁸⁸ Fugmann 1958: 37.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*: 33.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁹¹ For more information about upper Euphrates valley phases see porter 2007 especially pages 4-7.

³⁹² Cooper 2006: 207. For these phases see the chronology at the end of this chapter (Table 5).

³⁹³ Cooper 2006: 207.

³⁹⁴ Carter and Parker 1995: 105-106

³⁹⁵ Fugmann 1958: 278.

(2400- 2000 BC)³⁹⁶. Burials in jars was plentifully circulated at Hama in level K where in the oldest level K10, four infants buried in jars were found without any funerary grave goods³⁹⁷. In level K8 seven burials for infants in jars were recorded,³⁹⁸ and in level K7 about 15 interment cases of infants buried in jars were found, while an interment case in a jar where parts of an adult skull was recorded³⁹⁹. In level K6 a group of infant interment jars was found,⁴⁰⁰ and in level K5 four interment jars containing skeletons of adult persons were found,⁴⁰¹ and the same thing was repeated with regard to level K4, while in level K3 an interment case of an adult woman was found covered by a split jar with complete absence of infant interment jars in this level.⁴⁰² Only one interment case dating back to Late Early Bronze Age in level J7, late EBA IV, was recorded⁴⁰³.

In level VII at the site of Al-Ansari to the north and during the excavation works carried out by the national expedition run by Antoine Suleiman only one case was recorded. Pottery shards/fragments of more than one jar put above and under a skeleton of an adult male.

These brown-colored pottery shards are similar to the third millennium BC, jars discovered at the site of Mishrifeh. The burial dates back to the EBA IVB (2100 -2000 BC)⁴⁰⁴.

Among Early Bronze burial discovered at the site of Mishrifeh, an EBA IV jar was found under the floor of hall C⁴⁰⁵. The Syrian team also discovered similar jars under the floor of houses in the southern section of the Royal Palace, section R⁴⁰⁶. Two jars were unearthed: The first was put in a pit in the floor and covered with stones in one of the room corners. The jar seems to have been deliberately broken and part perforated at certain apposite points at the ends and supposedly linked to each other by clay materials.

A stone and a mud brick were put at the mouth of jar which contained a skeleton of

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: 278.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*: 27-28.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 37.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*: 31-32.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*: 32-33.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*: 37.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*: 40.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*: 26.

⁴⁰⁴ Suleiman 1999a: 79.

⁴⁰⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 151.

⁴⁰⁶ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225. Al-Maqdissi 2008: 11.

adolescent, while the second contained the bones of a small child, these jars dated back to the EBA IVA⁴⁰⁷.

From what we have previously said we notice that storage jars were used for interment during Early Bronze Age at Hama, and that infants interment jars were predominant from level K4 when a number of storage pits were prepared,⁴⁰⁸ (a level which Ingholt dates back approximately to the first half of the third millennium)⁴⁰⁹.

Interment jars in Syria extended from the phases one and two at the beginning of Early Bronze Age to at least phase five of the same age⁴¹⁰. Throughout Early Bronze Age as a whole, and their use continued throughout second millennium BC⁴¹¹.

During the early period of Early Bronze Age this type of interment was also current in many Euphrates sites, particularly upper Euphrates Valley at Carchemish,⁴¹² Jerablus Tahtani,⁴¹³ Shiyukh Tahtani,⁴¹⁴ Qara Quzaq⁴¹⁵ and tell Hadidi,⁴¹⁶ even to Selenkahiye⁴¹⁷ southward. Most jars discovered at Jerablus Tahtani, Carchemish and tell Banat were in horizontal position while most horizontally- positioned jar burials at Jerablus Tahtani contained not only infant corpses but also adolescent and adults⁴¹⁸.

3-Simple individual cist burials: These are cist- shaped stone-built burials found in the area under consideration at the site of Al-Rawda on the eastern verges of internal Syria. Archaeological excavation at the site of tell Al-Rawda uncovered a burial area (a cemetery) on the western side of the mound overlooking the site outside the farming area, along with another group of burials on the eastern side of the mound⁴¹⁹. Simple individual cist burials were in large number at the site of Al-Rawda during Early Bronze Age, and Topographic map (fig 8) shows their density at this site. During 2003 -2004 excavation season more than 15 cist burials were found. They were built with standing trimmed

⁴⁰⁷ Mouamar 2009: 68.

⁴⁰⁸ Fugmann 1958: 24-48.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*: 28.

⁴¹⁰ Cooper 2006: 212.

⁴¹¹ Carter and Parker 1995: 106.

⁴¹² Woolley and Barnett 1952: 215.

⁴¹³ Peltenburg *et al.* 1997: 3.

⁴¹⁴ Falsoni 1998: 31.

⁴¹⁵ Olavarri 1995: 10. Olavarri and Valdes Pereiro 2001: 20.

⁴¹⁶ Dornemann 1979: 138.

⁴¹⁷ Van Loon 2001: 217.

⁴¹⁸ Peltenburg *et al.* 1995: 25.

⁴¹⁹ Castel *et al.* 2005: 74.

stones and mostly without any cover⁴²⁰. At the end of 2006 excavation season the uncovered tombs amounted to 53 cist burials and 31 square or rectangular tombs,⁴²¹ including the cist burial number (RW 1262) which was called the key tomb because its layout is like a key⁴²². This burial was uncertainly dated back to the EBA IV.⁴²³ The building methods of these burials are similar to those of the Early Bronze Age cist burials discovered at the site of Tell Ahmar⁴²⁴ and Carchemish⁴²⁵ in the upper Euphrates Valley, and similar to those of EBA cist burials discovered at the site of Qana Mabour in Liban⁴²⁶.

4-Cairn-Tumulus graves: At the site of Al-Rawda simple Cist-burials with one or more circular stone frame such as the looted burial (RW 5043) were found. Cist tombs on top of each other which were surrounded by one or more circular frames were also found there were stone tombs with two frames (RW5043) or three frames (RW 5040),⁴²⁷ which contained three external frames and two cist tombs in the middle, one top of the other, (Fig 9): The upper cist burial was empty while the lower contained the skeleton of an adult⁴²⁸.

From what we have previously said we notice the presence of a distinctive interment type at Al-Rawda: A circular structure surrounding a cist structure in the middle. According to Castel this type was prevalent only in places dedicated for interment⁴²⁹. This appears also as a circular burial with a cist burial in the middle like in the case of tomb (RW 0301). The burial was looted and in the middle bone remains and teeth of an adult as well as the bottom of a jar (Hama goblet) were found. The burial ground was dated back to the EBA IVA⁴³⁰. Number of other tombs dating back to the last phase of the third millennium BC (EBA IV) were found. These were burials with circular frame covered with blocs of

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴²¹ Castel *et al.* 2008: 38.

⁴²² Castel *et al.* 2005: 80.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*:79- 80.

⁴²⁴ Thureau Dangin and Dunand 1936: 109.

⁴²⁵ Woolley and Barnett 1952: 221.

⁴²⁶ Steimer-Herbet 2004: 34,35.

⁴²⁷ Castel *et al.* 2005: 80.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁹ Castel *et al.* 2005: 75.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*: 75.

stones. Their depth ranged from 50 Cm to 2 meters such as burial (RW 1261) distinguished by the presence of mortar padding and a cover of trimmed stones 2.20 meters high⁴³¹. This type is similar to the EBA cist burials discovered at the site of (Damiya- Ala Safat) in Northern Jordan⁴³².

5-Collective tombs: This type of collective tombs was abundantly recorded in the area under consideration, but we have to distinguish the collective stone built tombs from the collective rock-cut shaft tombs.

5-1-Collective stone-built tombs: This collective tomb was recorded in Northern Syria at the site of Umm el-Marra where we find a large cemetery in an elevated area (the acropolis). This was found at Umm el-Marra levels IV, V and VI⁴³³.

These unearthed tombs are collective tombs built with ordinary trimmed stones and mud brick within the level dating back to Early Bronze Age (EBA III and EBA IV). The interment method also differed from one tomb to another. For example, we find in the tombs I and IV the presence of more than one interment level; three levels were found in tomb number I and two in tomb number IV, the thing which distinguish them from other tombs which contained only one interment level. The same can be said about tomb XV at Ain Assan; a third millennium tomb consisting of a stone built rectangular room cut in the rock from one side and provided with an entrance passage⁴³⁴. At the site of Ebla a somewhat similar case with regard to the building method was found in the tomb G4: the hypogeous tomb were dug in earth and built with nice rectangular limestone slabs, Very carefully squared. and mud brick, but it differs from the tombs of Umm el-Marra in that it is dug deeply (5,5 meters) under the floor of Royal Palace G near the south east corner of the great Temple D. According to Matthiae this tomb dates back to a late period the EBA IVA, the time of erecting Royal Palace G,⁴³⁵ because the mud brick used for building the tomb are similar typical sizes to those used for building the Royal Palace G⁴³⁶.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*: 79.

⁴³² Steimer-Herbet 2004: 54. Fig: 40.

⁴³³ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 330. Schwartz 2006: 603-641. Schwartz 2007: 39-64.

⁴³⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 150.

⁴³⁵ Matthiae 1997: 270.

⁴³⁶ Matthiae 1997: 270.

tomb G4 is similar to those of Umm el-Marra with regard to the method of building with mud bricks and trimmed stones. According to Matthiae tomb G4 is also similar to the one discovered in Area A at Mari under shakkanakku palace, which dates back to the same period, the second half of the third millennium BC⁴³⁷. These tombs largely similar to that of Ebla with regard to its dimension and shape⁴³⁸. It is also similar to tomb L-12 at Qara Quzaq which dates back to the first half of the third millennium BC.⁴³⁹ Tombs of Umm el-Marra built in the middle of the residential area (the acropolis) are similar to tomb 302 apparently built among the residential structures at Jerablus Tahtani which dates back to the EBA IV⁴⁴⁰. The tombs in the area under consideration are also similar to tomb 7 at tell-Ahmar distinguished by the large stones used for building the walls and the stone slabs used for the roof⁴⁴¹. The same can also be said about tomb L1 at tell Hadidi where large stones were used for its erection⁴⁴². Again tomb XV at Ain Assan is similar to those of tell Ahmar,⁴⁴³ Jerablus Tahtani,⁴⁴⁴ and Mari⁴⁴⁵.

In a later period at tell Tweini in the Syrian coastal area tomb TW 00170 was found within a residential facility. It is a tomb dug in earth and built with untrimmed stones. The entrance from above was closed by large stone slabs. The tomb dates back to the second Middle Bronze Age (about 1700 BC)⁴⁴⁶.

5-2-Rock-cut collective shaft tombs: This type was current during Early Bronze period in Central and Northern Syria. It has been proved that there was more than one internal structural design in the tombs of this period whether with regard to the number of interment chambers or internal structure ranging from circular to square or rectangular shape. We are going, therefore, to classify them according to the number and shape of interment chambers.

⁴³⁷ Margueron 1984: 196-215. See tomb 763, Jean –Marie 1999: 169, pl. 139.

⁴³⁸ Matthiae 1997: 271.

⁴³⁹ Cooper 2006: 244 -245.

⁴⁴⁰ Peltenburg *et al.* 2000: 69-70.

⁴⁴¹ Thureau Dangin and Dunand 1936: 96.

⁴⁴² Dornemann 1979: 118.

⁴⁴³ Thureau Dangin and Dunand 1936: fig. 28.

⁴⁴⁴ Peltenburg 1999: fig. 1.

⁴⁴⁵ Jean- Marie 1990: pl. IV-XIII and Jean-Marie 1999: pl.40.

⁴⁴⁶ Al –Maqdissi *et al.* 2007: 17-19. 83-86.

- A- One-chambered shaft tombs:** These types were abundantly found at the sites of Early Bronze Age such as Al-Rawda, Ain Assan and tell As. The structural design of the rooms of this type is distinctive in that it took different shapes including the circular with an upper opening directly to the interment chamber without stairs such as tomb (RW 0206) at Al-Rawda;⁴⁴⁷ also the square tombs without stairs such as tomb RW 0224 at Al-Rawda;⁴⁴⁸ and tomb II at Ain Assan,⁴⁴⁹ while in the two tombs III and VI at tell As the interment chambers were dug to take the shape of a square with no information with the count about the presence of stairs or not⁴⁵⁰. At Ain Assan the interment chamber in tomb XV is rectangular⁴⁵¹. There are also other tombs where the interment chambers took other geometrical shapes such as tomb RW 0231 at Al-Rawda,⁴⁵² and the two tombs III and IV at Ain Assan with two stairs for the later⁴⁵³.
- B- Two-chambered shaft tombs:** A set of Early Bronze Age two-chambered tombs were recorded at more than one site in north and Central Syria. At Al-Ansari site north of Syria a rock-cut tomb was found. It is a (440×320) Cm oval-shaped collective tomb carved in the limestone mound,⁴⁵⁴ with a roof consisting of three large stones (which seem to have separated from the mother mound), the stone in the middle (220×210) Cm is oval while the other two stones are smaller in size and lower than the one in the middle. The entrance is positioned in the tomb southern side opposite to the tomb small rocky wall. The entrance consists of two thin stone pieces (80× 66×17) Cm, the first is perpendicularly positioned and the second is horizontally positioned. This entrance had been sealed from outside by a solid calcic layer to prevent moisture and water leakage to the tomb interior⁴⁵⁵. This tomb dates back to the EBA IV but it was reused at the beginning of the first and second Middle Bronze period⁴⁵⁶. The plan of Al-Ansari tomb seems to have consisted of two chambers. The eastern one is elliptically or almost circularly-shaped and

⁴⁴⁷ Castel *et al.* 2005: 76.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 76.

⁴⁴⁹ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 141

⁴⁵⁰ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 187-188.

⁴⁵¹ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 141-142.

⁴⁵² Castel *et al.* 2005: 76.

⁴⁵³ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 141-142.

⁴⁵⁴ Suleiman 1984: 3.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 3.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

larger than the western one which takes an almost semi-circular shape. There is a passageway between the two rooms 170 Cm long and 120 Cm wide. The dimensions of the large room positioned in the eastern side are (240×270) Cm and those of the smaller one in the western side are (140×215) Cm. Tomb (RW 0202) is cut in the rock and its entrance from above leads to a foyer (entrance hall) which, in turn, leads to the interment chambers on the left and right. The tomb consists of two rectangular-shaped chambers, the large one is about (400× 200) Cm and the small one is (300×170) Cm, while the height of interment chambers is about 150 Cm. The entrance is lateral and the tomb was dated back to the EBA IV⁴⁵⁷.

C- **Multi-chambered shaft tombs:** A set of multi-chambered tombs from Early Bronze Age was recorded in more than one site in Northern and Central Syria. At Mishrifeh tomb IV was recorded⁴⁵⁸. It is a rock-cut tomb with an entrance from above and a central room in the middle surrounded by three small side rooms. All rooms are almost circular-shaped, even the central one in the middle. The importance of this tomb arises from the mastery of its carving and internal design. The thing which is clearly indicated by its objects which will be studied later. In its architectural plan this tomb is largely similar to that of the collective shaft tomb discovered at Mourek,⁴⁵⁹ which, in turn, is cut in rock with an entrance from above in the southern side, but it differs in that it has six stairs leading to the central room. We can easily notice the great similarity in the design of the interment room's interior (figs 4 and 32).

tomb (RW 0201) is an EBA IV well tomb which was found in the middle of the western interment area.⁴⁶⁰ It consists of three chambers E1, E2 and E3, but the tomb internal plan is not systematic and the carving of walls and rooms is not made as masterly as those of Mishrifeh and Mourek.

The types of rock-cut collective tomb during Early Bronze Age are similar to those of the tombs discovered in the sites of upper Euphrates Valley, because rock-cut shaft tombs in many upper Euphrates sites show marked diversity in size, position and internal

⁴⁵⁷ Castel *et al.* 2004: 74-76.

⁴⁵⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 144-167.

⁴⁵⁹ Riis 2007: 49.

⁴⁶⁰ Castel and Awad 2006: 10-11.

elements.⁴⁶¹ This diversity suggests the presence of a kind of local tombs and interment traditions which prevailed in the Euphrates area. Tombs discovered at Selenkahiye south upper Euphrates and tell es-Sweyhat to the north are distinguished by the presence of one or two side chambers, and the interment chambers often have round elliptical appearance, but they lack any mastery or harmony⁴⁶². The type of one-chambered tomb at Ain Assan and tell As is largely similar to that of es-Sweyhat tomb 1 which consists of one rock-cut interment chamber accessible through a perpendicular entrance followed by stairs which lead to the circular interment chamber⁴⁶³. Two-chambered tombs discovered at Halawa tell A are also rock-cut shaft tombs which contain two interment chambers, tomb H 35 and H 2, and are distinguished by the presence of benches and small trapezoidal niches. A slight change in the design of tomb H-35 can be noticed. In addition to an interment chamber, divided and provided with benches and small trapezoidal niches, cut high up on the rear walls of both the main and adjoining chambers. This tomb was provided with an adjacent chamber accessible from the south wall of the first one and dates back to the first half of the third millennium BC⁴⁶⁴. The tradition of using rock-cut tombs in the area under consideration was not contemporaneous to its use in upper Euphrates valley, or it came shortly after it, because prevalence of this type in upper Euphrates area took place at the end of the first half and through the second half of Early Bronze Age, specifically during phases 3, 4 and 5 Early Bronze, i.e. About 2600 -2100 BC⁴⁶⁵. This means that the interment type which had prevailed in the upper Euphrates area since third Early Bronze period did not come to Central and Northern Syria till the beginning of the EBA IV, when the oldest recorded rock-cut tombs started to appear.

⁴⁶¹ Cooper 2006: 216.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*: 216.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*: 216-217.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*: 215.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

b-Interment types during Middle Bronze period:























Sites											
Mishrifeh	+	+			+		+	+		+	+
Tell As			+	+							
Mardikh	+	+						+			
Ain Assan					+						
Hama	+	+		+	+			+			
Khan Shiekoun						+					
Bab al-Farag					+		+				
Al Gameh Alkabeir					?						
Ginders		+									
Ain Dara		+									
Tel Et-Tin									+		
		Pit burial		Square shaft tomb		Hypogeum semi- circular rooms					
		Jar burial		rectangular shaft tomb		Hypogeum (squared rooms)					
		Semicircular shaft (3 rooms)		rectangular shaft tomb		Stone built chamber					
				Circular shaft tomb		rectangular shaft tomb (2 rooms)					

Table 2. MBA Typology of funerary structures

-Simple pit burials: They are either semi-circular or rectangular-shaped, west-east extended pits surrounded sometime by a wall of mud brick pieces. This type had spread in Central and Northern Syria since the beginning of Middle Bronze Age, and was plentifully recorded at sites such as Ebla and Mishrifeh, where, in the latter. The Italian excavation team found in the two sections, T2 and T3, about nine simple pit burials for adults, including tombs for infants and adolescents, all of which date back to the second Middle Bronze period. In operation H they found fifteen simple pits where adults and newborns were buried along with their funerary grave goods (few grave goods in such burials). These burials were dated back to the (MBA I - MBA II)⁴⁶⁶. With the beginning of the second millennium (1900 and 1800 / 1700 BC.) this part of the site seems to have been dedicated for funerary interment because these tombs were provided with simple funerary grave goods⁴⁶⁷. Topographic map at (Fig 48) demonstrates the burials distribution at Mishrifeh, and Morandi Bonacossi thinks that the necropolis (interment area) is (140.70) meters and was used since late third millennium and during second

⁴⁶⁶ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225.

⁴⁶⁷ Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: 22-23.

millennium BC⁴⁶⁸. This burial ground is actually situated under the Royal Palace which dates back to Late Bronze Age.

As for Ebla simple tombs were recorded in great numbers in the rich residential quarter located in the lower city near Temple B2, and in the poorer quarter located near gate A in the south western side⁴⁶⁹. The tombs show great harmony in type: in fact, the tradition of the dead interment underneath the floors of houses lasted throughout Middle Bronze Age,⁴⁷⁰ It is also similar to those discovered at Sidon in Liban⁴⁷¹.

2-Simple burials in jars: This type was used for interring newborns and fully-grown embryos, and it is spread in great numbers at Mishrifeh, where many interment cases inside big pottery vessels, mostly cooking vessels, were recorded⁴⁷². During the Du Mesnil du Buisson's excavations in the twenties of the last century, many complete jars broken in the middle were used for interring infants and put in stone heaps within two holes in the rock, the first is semicircular and the second is square. In the first jar (square hole) a skeleton of an infant, a small bowl dating back to mid second millennium BC, and a bead were found; while in the second jar a skeleton of a child and a small bowl were found⁴⁷³. During excavation works carried out by the Syrian expedition in Operation T east of the Royal Palace, a group of individuals in jars, damaged because of later structures, were found. These tombs were in pottery jars which had been used for different purposes, storage jars and cooking pots in some of which simple funerary grave goods dating back to Middle Bronze Age were found⁴⁷⁴. This case was also recorded at Ebla in the quarter located near gate A in the south west side⁴⁷⁵. There burial D19 contained the remains of an infant put in a cooking jar and some human bones. The funerary provision of this burial consisted of a bottle, a bowl, a small bronze ring and a pottery bead. Burial D7 contained a child buried in a jar.

⁴⁶⁸ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 26.

⁴⁶⁹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: 6.

⁴⁷¹ Doumet-Serhal 2003:179-183.

⁴⁷² Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 26.

⁴⁷³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 155.

⁴⁷⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 1-25. Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1219-1221.

⁴⁷⁵ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

This type was also recorded in Northern Syria at the sites of Ain Dara and Ginders. The burial ground discovered opposite to the south western corner of the temple at Ain Dara during 1991 excavation run by Antoine Suleiman from the Directorate General of Antiquity and Museums contained a number of jars (pots, interment jars) in each of which a skeleton had been placed. The mouth of each pot was covered by a wide-open plate, and each jar had a hole in its bottom and incised decoration on its body. Beside these jars pottery goblet, some colored and others without any decoration, were found. Pottery vessels discovered in the upper layers of the MBA II or the end of the MBA I dated is similar with the pottery at Al-Ansari (IV) between (1700 – 1775 BC) are similar. Among the funerary pottery we find a distinctive jar – with protruding artistic animal shapes on its surface – similar to what was found at Tepe Kora (IV) and Amuq plain, Alalakh layer (VII) dated back to 1800 BC⁴⁷⁶. At Ginders and during 1996 excavation in Operation B of the first Middle Bronze Age (MBA I) an individual tomb of a child in a jar was found along with funerary grave goods which included a vase and two terracotta figurines⁴⁷⁷.

This Middle Bronze type spread at Mari during the MBA II as evidenced in the burial ground which was erected on the debris of the eastern palace at that city. The Middle Bronze type of jar tombs and interment method discovered at Mishrifeh and Ebla is similar to the interment method which prevailed at tell Tweini⁴⁷⁸ and Iris⁴⁷⁹ during the second Middle Bronze Age on the coastal area. It is also similar to those discovered at tell Dan, Middle Bronze burial ground situated in the residential floors. Ilan suggests that some of them were deliberately put under the walls⁴⁸⁰. It is also similar to those discovered at Sidon in Liban⁴⁸¹.

3-Rock-cut collective tombs at the Middle Bronze Age:

This type spread in Central and Northern Syria in Middle Bronze Age. It became clear that there is more than one internal plan for the tombs of this period whether with regard to the number of interment chambers or the variety of their internal circular, square or

⁴⁷⁶ Suleiman: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at 1991.

⁴⁷⁷ Suleiman and Tarakge 1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ginders.

⁴⁷⁸ Al-Maqdissi *et al.* 2007: 1-7.

⁴⁷⁹ see Al-Maqdissi and Suleiman 2003-2004: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Iris.

⁴⁸⁰ Ilan 1995: 126.

⁴⁸¹ Doumet-Serhal 2003:184-187.

rectangular structure. This is why we are going to classify them according to the shape and number of interment chambers.

A-One-chambered shaft tombs: This type was recorded in a number of Central and Northern Syrian sites. tombs where interment chambers take the circular shape were recorded at Hama, tomb G XIII, which is a rock-cut shaft tomb with one elliptical (semicircular) shaped interment chamber and a lateral entrance. This tomb dates back to the end of the middle and the beginning of Late Bronze Age, 1550-1450 BC⁴⁸². At Khan Sheikhoun shaft tomb B (4 meters in diameter) with its lateral entrance and circular-shaped interment chamber 140 × 58 Cm, was found and all pottery products found in this tomb were dated back to the MBA IIB⁴⁸³. As for the type where the interment chamber takes the square shape several cases were recorded in Central and Northern Syria. In the latter, at Aleppo we have Bab al- Faraj tomb which has vertical passageway cut from the surface and a door closed by a large stone slab. The interment chamber which was empty of any skeletons, pottery or bronze finds is accessible through five stairs. This tomb dates back to the (MBA I- MBA II)⁴⁸⁴. In Central Syria these cases was recorded at Mishrifeh and tell As. At Mishrifeh we have tomb II which has vertical passageway cut from the surface with an entrance from above at the north side, and the interment chamber is accessible through three stairs. No skeletons were found among the debris which contained only pottery⁴⁸⁵. At tell As tomb II, a well rock-cut shaft tomb with a square interment chamber dating back to the second millennium BC, was recorded⁴⁸⁶. The type of tombs where the interment chamber takes a rectangular shape was recorded at Hama, Ain Assan and tell As. At Hama tomb G III was recorded. It is a rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above to the south-western side. This entrance, which was covered by two slabs of stone, leads, through one stair, to the interment chamber. This irregularly-cut shaft tomb is 900 Cm long, 280 Cm wide and 180 Cm high in the first section while in the second section it is 350 Cm wide and 250 Cm high. There were no bones in the tomb, but

⁴⁸² Riis 2007: 33-35.

⁴⁸³ Al-Maqdissi 2006b: 481-283.

⁴⁸⁴ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

⁴⁸⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927:19-20. Pl. XIV.

⁴⁸⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

some pottery vessels and a bronze pin dating back to Middle Bronze Age were found⁴⁸⁷. At Ain Assan tomb XII, a rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above leading through a stair to the rectangular-shaped interment chamber, was recorded. This tomb dates back to the MBA I and is thought to have been used during the MBA II and the beginning of Late Bronze Age⁴⁸⁸. At tell As tomb I, a well rock-cut one with an entrance from above and a rectangular-shaped interment chamber, was recorded. Here part of a skull was found along with a set of pottery and bronze finds, including 50 pottery vessels dating back to the first half of the second millennium BC.(Middle Bronze Age)⁴⁸⁹. Again one-chambered tomb where the interment chamber takes an irregular geometrical shape were recorded At Hama tomb G VI, a rock-cut shaft tomb consisting of one interment chamber was recorded. The tomb entrance which was covered with a slab of stone is from above and the dimensions of the interment chamber are approximately 160 Cm long, 145 Cm wide and 220 Cm deep.⁴⁹⁰ Here two skeletons were found with a set of pottery vessels, bronze weapons, pins and beads all dating back to Middle Bronze period⁴⁹¹. At Hama shaft tomb GX was also recorded. It is a rock-cut tomb with an upper lateral entrance which was sealed with a large slab of stone. This Middle Bronze Age tomb consisted of only one interment chamber the dimensions of which are 510 Cm long, 290 Cm wide and 165 Cm high⁴⁹².

B –Two-chambered shaft tombs: A set of Middle Bronze Age tombs with two rooms were recorded at more than one site in Central and Northern Syria. This type was recorded at Aleppo, Bab al-Faraj tomb I, which contained two rectangular shaped interment chambers accessible through the perpendicular one meter deep entrance located in the south side. This entrance leads to a door (80×73 Cm) which was sealed by a large slab of stone. The rooms are accessible through an entrance of three stairs. The tomb is 175–180 Cm high, and is divided into two main rooms, the first is 300×230 Cm and the second is 300×210 Cm. Inside the tomb there was a layer 30-40 Cm thick in which

⁴⁸⁷ Riis 2007: 22-24.

⁴⁸⁸ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 144.

⁴⁸⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

⁴⁹⁰ Riis 2007: 28.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*: 25-29.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*: 30-32.

skeletons badly preserved because of moisture were accumulated. This tomb was used during the MBA I and II (about 400 years)⁴⁹³. At Hama the rock-cut shaft tomb GI A-B was recorded. Here the interment two chambers A and B take a geometrically–irregular shape⁴⁹⁴. It is provided with two entrances, one in the north side of chamber A and the other in chamber B was closed with stones. There are two stairs in each entrance which were closed by stone walls. The two chambers seem to have been independent or linked to each other in a certain way and the plan shows that each of them consisted of two chambers. The dimensions are 460 Cm long, 250 Cm. wide and 180 Cm .high for the north-western tomb A, and (330×360 ×170 Cm) for the south – eastern tomb B⁴⁹⁵. The geometrically-irregular shape of interment chambers was also recorded in tomb I at Mishrifeh⁴⁹⁶. This shaft tomb which has vertical passageway cut from the surface with a main entrance from the Northern side and the interment chamber is accessible through three stairs⁴⁹⁷. The tomb layout suggests a parallelism in planning and the digger seems to have wanted to dig two parallel chambers as we can notice on the right side, but the plan seems to have been changed for some reason and the eastern side was widened. Pottery discovered in this tomb dates back to mid second millennium BC, (end of Middle Bronze Age) and is similar to the Syria/Palestinian pottery during the Middle Bronze Age (2000 – 1500) BC⁴⁹⁸.

C –Multi-chambered shaft tombs: A set of multi-chambered shaft tombs dating back to Middle Bronze Age were recorded at more than one site in Central and Northern Syria. This tomb was recorded in Northern Syria at the site of tell Mardikh and in Central Syria at the site of Mishrifeh. The Royal tomb at tell Mardikh, situated under the Western Palace was discovered and its objects were studied during the seasons of 1978 and 1979⁴⁹⁹. It became clear that it is a rock-cut shaft tombs assemblage with an entrance from

⁴⁹³ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

⁴⁹⁴ Riis 2007: 14-18.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁶ Tomb I at Mishrifeh looks like a three chambered room but actually a more careful examination reveals that it is a two chamber burial.

⁴⁹⁷ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 13-14. PL. V-VI.

⁴⁹⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 18. Pl. XIV.

⁴⁹⁹ Matthiae 1978: 149-184.

above and a stairway leading to the interment chambers which consisted of three semi-independent tombs:

The cistern tomb: This is the newest which dates back to Middle Bronze Age (1725-1650 BC)⁵⁰⁰. Originally, these were tanks reused as tombs Q79 A and Q 79 B, where the interment chambers take the circular shape.

The Lord of the Goats tomb: It dates back to the (1770 and 1760 – 1700 BC) Q78 B – Q 78 C.⁵⁰¹ The Tomb of the Lord of the Goats, in contrast, had a vertical entrance shaft to the north. It included a square hypogeum (number Q.78.B2), a short gallery (number Q.78.B1), and a semicircular hypogeum (number Q.78.C) sealed by a massive wall of large stones. This tomb was originally the richest. It belonged to a king who died around 1750 BC, or slightly later⁵⁰². The interment chamber C is half circular, while the second takes a geometrically irregular shape.

The princess' tomb: Tomb of the Princess included a short dromos, or entranceway, with steps descending from the south to the north plus a small chamber (number Q.78.A). The tomb was closed to the north by a thin mud brick wall which probably collapsed as a result of water infiltration⁵⁰³. It dates back to (1825 – 1750 BC.) Q 78 A⁵⁰⁴. Here the interment chamber takes a geometrically irregular shape. Although the tanks and the goat master tombs had been previously looted, some pottery finds and other funerary grave goods were found, but the princess tomb was saved by the wall built in front of it.

At Mishrifeh the rock-cut shaft tomb V, discovered in section H in 2006 by the Italian team, was destroyed and looted⁵⁰⁵. It consists of four side interment chambers surrounding the main room and an entrance from above. This tomb dates back to Middle Bronze Age (MBA I B - II A)⁵⁰⁶. This tomb in which the interment chambers did not take a regular shape could not be precisely studied by the work team because the looting operation deprived it of its contents. At Mishrifeh the Syrian/German team recorded in

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰² Matthiae 1984b: 23.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*: 23.

⁵⁰⁴ Matthiae 1979 - 1980: 94-118.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁶ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 27-28.

2002 the Royal tomb which consists of four rock-cut chambers accessible through a side entrance from the north. These four rooms are a main room (8×6) meters leading directly to another three smaller square rooms almost (3×3) meters in the west, south and east directions.

From what have been said we notice the continuity of the tradition of using rock-cut shaft tombs during Middle Bronze Age in most sites of the area under consideration. These tombs are almost always similar with regard to the perpendicular entrance as well as the method of digging and planning interment chambers we find great similarity between the Early Bronze tombs at Ain Assan and the tombs dating back to Middle Bronze, which are also similar to those discovered at tell As, Mishrifeh and Hama. The type of these tombs is also similar to Middle Bronze rock-cut shaft tombs at many sites in the coastal area. They are similar to the two tombs discovered in 2003 and 2004 at tell Iris⁵⁰⁷ in the Northern coastal area and also the rock-cut shaft tombs discovered at tell Dan in the south⁵⁰⁸.

⁵⁰⁷ For more information see Preliminary Report Al-Maqdissi, M., Suleiman, A., 2003-2004.

⁵⁰⁸ Ilan 1995: 124. Figs 15-8: 125.

A comparative study about funerary grave goods in burials recorded in Central and Northern Syria:

1- Funerary grave goods in simple individual burials during Early Bronze Age:

A- **Simple pit burials:** Early Bronze pit burials discovered in the area under consideration are very few, since this type, as we have seen earlier, was recorded only at the site of Hama (the ancient tell). Fugmann mentions that a considerable number of burials dedicated for adults were found under residential floors, though, under level K6, There is a common pit which contained severely fragmented skeletons of about 15 people without funerary grave goods.⁵⁰⁹ Under level K4 there are two individual burials which contained skeleton buried in earth, probably with some funerary grave goods⁵¹⁰.

B- **Simple individual burials in jars:** This type was more current than simple pit burials, since it was recorded at the sites of Hama, Mishrifeh and Al-Ansari in Aleppo. From the burials discovered at Hama it became clear that:

- The case of infants interment in jars was widely spread in levels from K10 to K4 during the first half of the third millennium BC,⁵¹¹ while in level K3 the infant funerary interment stores seems to have completely disappeared. Again no funerary stores for adults buried among split jars were found. Only in level K3 the floor of a funerary store contained the skeleton of a woman about 30 to 40 years old covered by two half jars⁵¹².

- Funerary grave goods in interment jars were only rarely recorded, because most burials were mentioned without funerary grave goods. In level K4 a set of handmade cups was recorded,⁵¹³ and similar cups were found in levels K5 and K8. These seem to have been used in funerary ceremonies as sacred cups, and were possibly put in a certain burial⁵¹⁴.

-Multi-appearance of interment cases for adults in split jars: a one case appeared in level K7, three cases in level K5 and 2 cases in level K4, while in level K3 a skeleton of an

⁵⁰⁹ Fugmann 1958: 33.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*: 37-39.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*: 26.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*: 40.

⁵¹³ Fugmann 1958: 37. Fig: 49.7A 617 ζ.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 37.

adult women between 30 and 40 years old was covered by split vessels,⁵¹⁵ the like of which was found at Jerablus Tahtani where a set of jars containing not only infants but also adults and adolescent was found⁵¹⁶.

-The presence of these burials in the floor of houses and buildings dating back to the same period of time. The more the architectural density increased, the more the interment cases increased, such as in level K6 where the number of interment jars came to more than twelve ones⁵¹⁷.

From what have been said we find that simple individual burials in jars dating back to Early Bronze period at Hama were with few funerary grave goods which were nonexistent in most burials.

Early Bronze Age burials discovered at Mishrifeh were few; a jar dating back to Early Bronze Age (EBA IV) was found under Hall C⁵¹⁸. Another two jars dating back to the EBA IVA were found under the houses floors in the south area of the Royal Palace, Operation R⁵¹⁹. The first, a jar put in a hole in earth and covered with stones in a room corner,⁵²⁰ seems to have been deliberately broken and the fractures were perforated in opposite points at the end and were supposedly tied to each other by clay materials. A mud brick and a stone were found in the mouth of the jar which contained an adolescent skeleton⁵²¹. The second jar, which was also like the first without any funerary grave goods, contained bone remains of a small child. In Northern Syria at the site of Al-Ansari the national expedition run by Antoine Suleiman discovered a tomb in which they found one burials in jars interment case: pottery parts belonging to more than one jar were put under and on an adult skeleton four meters deep. These pottery parts are brown-colored like the third millennium jars discovered at Mishrifeh with these parts an incised burnt

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*: 40.

⁵¹⁶ Peltenburg *et al.* 1995: 25.

⁵¹⁷ Fugmann 1958: 32.

⁵¹⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 151.

⁵¹⁹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225. Al-Maqdissi 2008: 11.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵²¹ Mouamar 2009: 68.

brown or black-colored class similar to Hama goblets period J3 was found⁵²². It is related to late pottery period and dates back to the EBA IV B, 2100 – 2000 BC⁵²³.

C- Cairn and cist graves: This type was recorded in the area under consideration only at the site of Al-Rawda and at Homs region, Moreover most of these tombs had been previously looted and destroyed and, therefore, we don't have enough data to know precisely how many skeleton or burial finds had been there or even the interment method followed in these sites of the discovered cist burials is the looted burial (RW 1262)⁵²⁴ in which a piece of bead dated back uncertainly to EBA IV period,⁵²⁵ and burial (RW5040) which consisted of two cist tombs one on top of the other and on both sides there are stones in perpendicular position. The upper burial was found empty while the lower contained the skeleton of an adult and beads of (schist) stone⁵²⁶. In the looted heap burial (RW 0301) there were bones and teeth of an adult as well as the lower part of a vessel (gobelet from Hama) dating back to the EBA IV.

2- Funerary grave goods in Middle Bronze Age simple individual burials:

A large set of simple individual burials in the area under consideration was recorded at Mishrifeh and Ebla. These burials are in good state of preservation and this allowed studying them in a way better than other individual burials or collective tombs discovered in internal and Northern Syria.

A- Simple individual pit burials: This type was plentifully recorded in Central Syria at the sites of Mishrifeh and Ebla.

Mishrifeh: A set of individual pit burials with simple funerary grave goods were recorded mostly in Operations H, G, K and T which were excavated under and south of the Royal palace⁵²⁷. A set of burials dating back to Middle Bronze Age were discovered by the Italian team in Operations H and G. Simple individual pit burials from 16 to 19 and from 21 to 26, of which only 18,19 and 22 for infants and 23 for adolescent, were recorded. Funerary grave goods were few small jars, bowl and

⁵²² Fugmann 1958: 74.fig.93.

⁵²³ Suleiman 1999a: 79.

⁵²⁴ Castel *et al.* 2005: 80.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*: 80.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*: 80.

⁵²⁷ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 11.

bronze toggle pins⁵²⁸. The bowl discovered in burials 19 and 24 are similar to those discovered at Hama level H5⁵²⁹ and tell Mardikh level IIIA which date back to first Middle Bronze Age MBA IA,⁵³⁰ while the bronze pin discovered in burial 25, which may date back to the same period MBA IA, has counterparts at Byblos,⁵³¹ Ugarit⁵³² and Alalakh⁵³³.

The deceased were laid on their backs, hands raised up, legs mostly directed to the south, the head, principally, directed to the west, while the face was almost always turned southward⁵³⁴. In the burial at the area of the head they put a set of food vessels which often consisted of a plate or shallow platter as well as a deep platter and small bottle.⁵³⁵ The shallow vessels seem to have contained food for the dead while the bottles and jugs contained drinks⁵³⁶. Infants, whose ages ranged from few months to one year, were buried in semi-circular burials dug in earth, like burial 22 at Mishrifeh which contained a newborn infant⁵³⁷. With them in the burial a set of food vessels was put from time to time but mostly nothing was put except one plate and one bottle. These finds indicate that putting food in the burial constituted a fundamental part of burial ceremonies in Syria of that period⁵³⁸.

Ebla: Here the burials were recorded in the quarter of rich houses in the lower city near Temple B2 and in the adjacent poorer quarter near gate a south-west of the city⁵³⁹. The recurrence of burials or interment cases often related to dead couples, who died at the same time, or mothers with their children, makes us think that a semi catastrophic event led to these deaths⁵⁴⁰. Because of this the city had been in urgent need to establish a special sector as a cemetery, though the interment type in this case did not differ from interment types followed outside this emergency case. The dead

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*: 11-37.

⁵²⁹ Fugmann 1958: fig. 109:3B995,3B297, 3C75 (H5); fig. 110: 3B913 (silo 16).

⁵³⁰ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 20. Nigro 2002: pl. 46:2. Nigro 2002: pl. 46:5-6.

⁵³¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 20.

⁵³² *Ibid.*: 22-23.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*: 23.

⁵³⁴ Morandi Bonacossi (eds.) 2009:152.

⁵³⁵ Morandi Bonacossi 2007: 225.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*: 225

⁵³⁷ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 20.

⁵³⁸ Morandi Bonacossi (eds.) 2009:152.

⁵³⁹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*: 6.

were often laid with the heads directed to the north or the west and, in each time, they were accompanied by funerary grave goods which consisted of different numbers of vessels. Animal remains evidence the tradition of providing the dead with meat which may have been accompanied by other different kinds of food put in bowls and other small vessels⁵⁴¹.

The presence of small animal terracotta figurines of burnt clay may attest to the replacement of actual meat by these small animal figurines⁵⁴². In addition to the pottery vessels there were few simply objects related to the dead as in the case of the burial of the perforated axes maker or those of the silver jewelry maker which were found in the jar at burial D27⁵⁴³. These pieces constituted part of the dead shrouding or part of his clothes, the thing which explains the repeated presence of bronze pins used for fastening clothes or even beads used as simple ornaments for women and small girls we can find similar for this case in the tomb princess which tailor the clothes in tell Kashkashouk which back to the Early Bronze Age, seven bronze toggles pin and 43 bone ring and many beads found on the women dress, as the excavator this women was tailor the dresses⁵⁴⁴.

The documented objects in these burials are generally small-sized vessels chosen to be buried with the dead so that they didn't occupy a large area. Being primarily intended for containing the dead's food and drinks the largest percentage of these vessels are represented by types designed for food consumption and not for food preservation⁵⁴⁵. This opinion is confirmed by Morandi Bonacossi who considers that this kind of pottery finds indicates that they were used for providing the burial with the food which constituted a fundamental part of interment ceremony in Syria at that time⁵⁴⁶. As for the first group of burials (*burial ground attached to architectural structures*); the clearly confirmed shape is that of the out-turned oblique or double-rim jar (There

⁵⁴¹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 6.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*: 6.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*: 4.

⁵⁴⁴ Suleiman:1988, Bagdo 2009: 188.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 6.

⁵⁴⁶ Morandi Bonacossi (eds.) 2009:152.

are thirteen example), along with two very small types of what is called the Syrian bottle (Figs 171 and 173).

As for these miniatures we notice the presence of the three middle-sized jugs with the three-lobed lip; two of them are similar to those of tell el-Yahudiyeh distinguished by incised decoration (fig 173). The high-bodied, medial-bodied or vertical rimmed bowl is also documented in large number (19 types); 11 for the first kind, 6 for the second and three for the third (figs 174-187). In the burials of the second group (*burial ground unattached to architectural structures*) there were 20 jars, 7 of which of the type called the Syrian bottle, only two jugs decorated with paint, 20 medial-bodied jars and, 15 perpendicular-rimmed bowls. The types of bowls in the two groups, therefore, have the same percentage of high-bodied and medial-bodied ones, while in the second group, the presence of the perpendicular-rimmed bowls, corresponding, in Ebla to first Middle Bronze period (Mardikh III A)⁵⁴⁷ is so high. In the two groups there is one example of the funnel-shaped bowl which was widely spread in Ebla during the first Bronze period (figs 173-174). It seems, therefore, that there is no great gap of time between the two groups; the thing which is evidenced by the common pottery confirmed with regard to open and some close jars and jugs at Mishrifeh.⁵⁴⁸ At Hama we find products corresponding to such bowls in the two levels H2 and H3,⁵⁴⁹ (Figs 126 and 130) though jars can be compared to objects found in the same level. It can also be added that there is a marked similarity to the objects discovered at the Syrian coastal sites such as Ugarit and Byblos⁵⁵⁰. Imported pottery is represented by a limited quantity of vessels which can be certainly included within the same chronological order of the other Eblaite vessels corresponding to them, though they manifest formal characteristics or a kind of fabric which confirm the presence of differences, such as in the case of the two large bowls of burial D 17, which are distinguished by perpendicular rim and not very compacted pasta (fig 172). We find very similar clay in broken vessels from burial D 12, where decoration is represented by undulated shapes on the outer surface, as also in the case of a small jar

⁵⁴⁷ For these phases see the chronology at the end of this chapter (Table 5).

⁵⁴⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 42, pls, VIII. X. XII 1.

⁵⁴⁹ Fugmann 1958: figs. 117. 120. 124.

⁵⁵⁰ Amiran 1973: 118-120 pl. 36.

from burial D 21 which, on the other hand, has a kind of very similar clay. Jugs are somewhat different from this common pottery: That type with the three – cloned rim from burials D 13 and D14, decorated with horizontal strips of red paint and the pear – shaped jug with incised surface, found in burial D2 at tell el-Yahudiyeh,⁵⁵¹ chronologically this latter belongs to the product which spread during early second Middle Bronze period from the Nile delta to Palestine as a whole,⁵⁵² to the Syrian coastal sites and, interruptedly, to internal Syria⁵⁵³.

As for the gifts and other funerary objects put in the burials metal (ornaments/jewelry) were rare.

A few bronze pins, mostly in women's burials, were found, and, up till now, no weapons were found in simple burials. There are no great differences in interment methods for men and women, whether with regard to the shape of the burial, interment ceremonies, objects buried with the dead or personal objects⁵⁵⁴.

B- Simple individual burials in jars: During du Mesnil du Buisson's excavation at Mishrifeh in the twenties of the last century complete jars broken in the middle were found with infants buried in them. The jars were put amid heaps of stones in two rock-cut pits, the first is semi-circular and the second is square. In the second jar (the square pit) an infant's skeleton was found with a small bowl and a bead dating back to mid second millennium BC, and in the first jar there were an infant's skeleton and a small bowl⁵⁵⁵. During excavation works carried out by the Syrian team in Operation T east of the Royal Palace a set of individual burials in jars burials, damaged because of structures of later periods, were found in pottery jars of multiuse in some of which simple funerary grave goods were also found dated back to MBA II⁵⁵⁶. These burials were often used for newborns or completely grown embryos who were usually interred in big pottery vessels, mostly cooking pots,⁵⁵⁷ without grave goods. Burials discovered by the Syrian team in section T were mostly for infants and newborns

⁵⁵¹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 7.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*: 7.

⁵⁵³ Schaeffer 1948: fig. 48, 56. Baffi-Guardata 1988: 7.

⁵⁵⁴ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 7

⁵⁵⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 155-153 .

⁵⁵⁶ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 1-25, Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1219-1221.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

except burial 1 which contained the skeleton of an adult⁵⁵⁸. Interment in split jars is repeated in burials 3,6 and 7 where, in each burial, two different jars were used; the skeleton was put in the first while the second was used as a cover. Here we notice the continuity of using split jars in Middle Bronze period after we have seen their use in Early Bronze period at tell Hama. Funerary grave goods were simple: small bowls (burials 3 and 4), animal-shaped Terracotta figurines (burial 2), small jars, jugs, bronze earrings and ivory beads (burial 9)⁵⁵⁹. This type was also recorded in Northern Syria at the sites of Ain Dara and Ginders. The cemetery found opposite the south western corner of the Temple at Ain Dara during the 1991 excavation carried out by Antoine Suleiman contained a set of pottery jars (pots) with a skeleton in each of them. The mouth of each pot was covered with an open –mouthed plate⁵⁶⁰. Each pot had a hole in its base and incised decoration on top of the belly. Beside these jars there were pottery goblets, some with colored bases and others without any decoration. The similar pottery vessels discovered in the upper layers date back to the second Middle Bronze period or the end of first and the beginning of the MBaII, dated at Al-Ansari (IV) between 1775 and 1700 BC (Table 5) Among the funerary pottery set there is a distinguished jar with an artistic relief of animal shapes on its surface, similar to what was found at Teppet Kora (Level IV) and at Alalakh, layer (VII) dated back to 1800 BC⁵⁶¹.

During 1996 excavations at Ginders, in Operation B of the first Middle Bronze Age (MBA I) level, an individual burials in jars burial of an infant was found along with funerary grave goods which contained a vase and two Terracotta figurines⁵⁶².

This case was also recorded at Ebla in the residential quarter near gate A in the south – western side⁵⁶³. There was burial D19 which contained the remains of an infant in a cooking jar and only some human bones. The funerary grave goods of this burial

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 1-25,. I-Maqdissi 2009b:1219-1221.

⁵⁶⁰ Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶² Suleiman and Tarakge1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ginders.

⁵⁶³ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

consisted of a goblet, a bowl, a small bronze ring and a pottery bead⁵⁶⁴. Burial D7 which contained an infant interred in a jar was also found there⁵⁶⁵.

3-Funerary grave goods in collective tombs:

Regarding the grave goods of collective tombs discovered in Central and Northern Syria there are two problems which must be discussed:

The first is, unfortunately, the lack of anthropological information about most (at tell As, Ain Assan, Mishrifeh and Hama) tombs discovered during the first half of the last century and the lack of precise statistics about the objects of these tombs.

The second problem is that, since ancient time, tombs have been a target for illegal excavations supported by a market for archaeological artifacts. At many Middle East sites, archaeological objects have often been threatened by complete loss because of looting archaeological sites, particularly collective tombs at these sites, especially when these professional looters knew that these tombs contain precious things, and did not take interest in pottery finds because, for them, they have no material value in the market of archeological objects.

Pottery vessels constitute the tomb most present materials in collective tombs. Most built and rock-cut collective tombs, which had not been looted, yielded a large quantity of pottery vessels. Even looted tombs contained a large quantity of broken potter vessels because of pillage and destruction. The fact that each of these tombs contained a number of deceased persons may explain the vessels abundance in them as long as each individual had been provided with his/her funerary set. Other tomb finds, most of which had disappeared from looted tombs, caused a real problem with regard to understanding their true state of affairs precisely. Presenting the funerary grave goods which remained in the looted tombs in the area under consideration, we will try to come to the essence of the collective tombs.

4- Funerary grave goods in built tombs:

This type was recorded in Northern Syria at the site of Umm el-Marra where, in a high area of the acropolis, an EBA III-IV a large cemetery was found in Umm el-Marra levels

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*: 5.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*: 4.

IV, V and VI. This type was also recorded at Ebla fourth Bronze period tomb G4 which was empty. Umm el-Marra cemetery was rich with diverse funerary grave goods which will be studied and classified in this paper.

Item	T I	T IV	T VI	T VII	T IX	T X
Gold/Silver:						
Toggle pins	X	X	X	X		
Bracelets	X	X				
Torques		X				X
Beads	X	X	X			
Pendants	X					
Plaques		X				
Frontlets	X	X				
Silver vessels	X	X				
Silver handle		X				
Spirals		X				
Bronze:						
Toggle pins	X	X				
Bracelets	X					
Torques	X					
Spirals		X				
Crescent	X					
Beads	X	X	X	X		
Pendants	X					
Cylinder seal	X					
Bronze pegs		X				
Shell disk	X	X				
Bone star	X					
Bone/ivory combs	X	X				X hand
Other artifacts:						
Cosmetic shells	X					
Dagger	X		X			X
Spearhead	X	X				
Basalt tables		X				
Clay cones		X				

Table 3. grave goods in tombs I, IV, VI, VII, IX, X. at Umm el-Marra.

Funerary grave goods: In tomb I at Umm el-Marra a large set of diverse pottery vessels came to 69 pieces was recorded. These vessels included different jars, jugs, plates, bowls and goblets, similar to those found at tell Mardikh (Ebla), which date back to the EBA IV, corresponding to Mardikh II B1 and Mardikh II B2,⁵⁶⁶ contemporary to palace G at Ebla, and therefore, may date back to 2300 BC⁵⁶⁷. The same can be said about tomb III which contained different kind of broken pottery which came to 62 pieces: goblets,⁵⁶⁸ plates,

⁵⁶⁶ Matthiae 1981: 95-111. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 336.

⁵⁶⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 336.

⁵⁶⁸ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

jugs and jars either polished, provided with a decorative strip (Euphrates strip), triple – based or long – necked there were also jars with a short spout like those in tomb one at tell Banat,⁵⁶⁹ or long –spouted jars in addition to jars with circular pelvis. The tomb as a whole dates back to the EBA IVA⁵⁷⁰. Tomb V contained a set of pottery finds distinguished by the presence of a kind of goblets called the "Champagne-Cups" known at Middle and Upper Euphrates Valley as Carchemish⁵⁷¹ and tell Qumluq⁵⁷² from the beginning and mid third millennium BC, as well as global – shaped jars level – based jars, bowls and bones of birds and herbivores⁵⁷³. Tomb IV, the objects of which were dated back to the beginning of mid third millennium BC, EBA IVA, contained a set of different pottery vessels, 134 pieces,⁵⁷⁴ some of which are similar to the pottery discovered at Ebla,⁵⁷⁵ Hama levels J2 and J3⁵⁷⁶ and tell Banat in the upper Euphrates area,⁵⁷⁷ tomb VI at Umm el-Marra distinguished by a set of pottery finds which included jars, plates and goblets (Champagne-Cups), dates back to mid EBA III⁵⁷⁸.

Other grave goods: Tomb I at Umm el-Marra was distinguished by the presence of a large set of trinkets and diverse funerary finds: jewels, ornaments, precious materials such as gold, silver and lapis – lazuli, the remains of a comb were recorded. There was also a jar full of shells containing kohl and laid near the head of a female skeleton (she had been accompanied by her own beautification set)⁵⁷⁹. In its lower level tomb IV contained a set of golden trinkets (jewelry), two miniature basalt tables one on top of the other,⁵⁸⁰ which might have been used for grinding cosmetics, two pieces representing a gold suit, ivory combs and a set of bronze and silver pins. In the tomb north-western corner there were two inlays representing two eyes of the kind used for statues. Perhaps there had been originally a statue made of clay materials or the eyes were individually buried there. The

⁵⁶⁹ Porter 1995a: fig. 11(pl I).

⁵⁷⁰ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

⁵⁷¹ Sconzo 2006: 250-266.

⁵⁷² Jamieson and Kanjou 2009:22, figs,7-8.

⁵⁷³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606-607.

⁵⁷⁴ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 616 and 622.

⁵⁷⁵ Mazzoni 2002:the ceramic parallels to Ebla IIB1.

⁵⁷⁶ Fugmann1958: fig. 93.

⁵⁷⁷ Porter 1995a: figs. 15. 16.

⁵⁷⁸ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608-609.

⁵⁷⁹ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 332.

⁵⁸⁰ Similar miniature basalt tables have been found at Hama (periods J5-J4) fugmann 1858.

pottery finds in this level date back to the EBA IVA, 2400 BC⁵⁸¹. In the upper level there was a set of gold and silver jewelry which belonged to an adult woman. The result concluded from tombs I and IV is that women had more funerary grave goods than men, as we have just seen in tomb 1 above which dates back to the EBA IV, about 2450 BC⁵⁸². In tomb VI at Umm el-Marra there were grave goods such as gold and silver clasps and pins as well as lapis, agate and silver beads,⁵⁸³ from what have been previously said we notice the large and distinguished availability of non – pottery funerary grave goods in the tomb of Umm el-Marra, particularly multi-shaped kinds of trinkets (jewelry), which were not so widely spread in the Early Bronze Age sites in Syria at that time.

Number of interment cases at Umm el-Marra: Tomb I at Umm el-Marra consisted of three levels in the first of which four skeletons were found. The first skeleton is that of a woman and the second might be of another woman,⁵⁸⁴ the age of both ranges between 15 and 20 years, laid opposite each other in the bent position on their side and the head of each directed to the infant of the other,⁵⁸⁵ because beside of each there was a skeleton of a suckling baby. The second level contained two skeletons of adult males in the bent position and animal bones of goats and sheep. The third level contained a skeleton of a sexually non defined person and animal bones of sheep. The five skeletons were laid east – west in the west side of the tomb, but four of them were on their side in a bent position⁵⁸⁶. Tomb III contained human bones of an adult and adolescent as well as a large set of animal bones (sheep, goat, ducks, geese, dogs and horses)⁵⁸⁷. Tomb IV also consisted of two levels of skeletons three of which were the lower level, the first was of an adult female whose bones were piled in the north part of the tomb, the second skeleton was of a male whose bones were in the south eastern side of the tomb and the third was also of a female whose bones seem to have been brought from another place because they

⁵⁸¹ Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁵⁸² Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 623. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 332.

⁵⁸³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006:608-609.

⁵⁸⁴ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 330.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*: 330.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*: 330-335.

⁵⁸⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

were piled up⁵⁸⁸. In the upper level there were also three skeletons, the first of an adult person who had been reburied, the second of a woman and the third of a boy⁵⁸⁹. Tomb V was found destroyed, but it contained a skeleton of an adult male and another skeleton of a adolescent. Tomb VI, the largest in the group,⁵⁹⁰ though it had been partially destroyed because of building of tomb VII beside it, contained the bones of an adult person on the remains of a wooden coffin 96 Cm wide and 110 Cm long. This tar- painted coffin is similar to that of tomb V at tell Banat⁵⁹¹. The coffin was laid on a bed of stone slabs put, in turn, on a pebble – paved floor, inside the area demarcated by the coffin were a human femur, sacrum, humerus, and radius, while other human bones and a skull were distributed outside, there were also a pile of animal bones (sheep–goat bones)⁵⁹².

5- Funerary grave goods in Early Bronze rock- cut collective tombs:

site	Tomb n	Pottery	Skeletons	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Iron	Bone	Ivory	Other artifacts
Mishrifeh	IV	292	40	100 #	?	?	-	+	-	
Sarageb		+	+	+	-	-	-	?	?	
Tell As	III	84	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	VI	50	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
Mardikh	G4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Al-Ansari		300	5	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Umm el-Marra	I	69	5+2baby	10	2	1	1	+	1	copper
	III	62	2	-	-	-	-	+	-	
	IV	134	6	+	+	+	-	+	+	
	V	+	2?	-	-	-	-	+	-	
	VI	+	1?	2+fr	+	+	-	+	-	
	VII	+	1?	-	-	-	-	+	-	
Ain Assan	II	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	III	84	8	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	IV	89	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	XV	+	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
Al-Rawda	201	+	16?	?	?	?	?	+	-	
Aleppo	B	9	?	7	-	-	-	+	-	

Table 4. Grave goods in EBA collective tombs.

⁵⁸⁸ Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁵⁸⁹ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 623.

⁵⁹⁰ Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁵⁹¹ McClellan and Porter 1999: 109-110.

⁵⁹² Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608.

Pottery grave goods: The EBA IV tomb IV at Mishrifeh contained a large set of pottery finds, 292 pottery vessels,⁵⁹³ which included different kinds of jars, bowls, goblets, platesetc. Among the one- chambered collective tombs at tell As we have tomb III where 84 bronze and pottery vessels as well as pottery vases with circular bottoms and a half circular pot, similar to those of Palestine tombs, dating back to the end of the third millennium,⁵⁹⁴ were found. Again in tomb VI, a set of 50 pottery vessels, distinguished by their small proportional size and shape (no more than ten Cm), and by their fine precisely made pottery and circular bottoms were found in this tomb which dates back to the third millennium BC⁵⁹⁵. and, therefore, it is considered the oldest at tell As. The same can be said about tombs at Ain Assan: In tomb III, which dates back to the end of EBA IVB and was reused till the first Middle Bronze, 84 pieces were found⁵⁹⁶. Those unearthed pieces are similar to the ones discovered at Ebla⁵⁹⁷ and Hama⁵⁹⁸. As for tomb II at Ain Assan there were a few number, six pieces, of pottery, which probably date back to the third millennium BC⁵⁹⁹. While in IV at the same site there were 89 pieces dating back to Early Bronze 2400- 2250 BC⁶⁰⁰. All unearthed pieces are similar to the ones discovered at the sites of the Orontes basin such as Ebla and Hama as well as the ones discovered in the upper Euphrates such as Umm el-Marra⁶⁰¹ and tell Banat⁶⁰².

In the tomb at the site of Saraqeb we also found a set of pottery finds which included colored goblets, jugs, plates, painted goblet, and jars of different kinds and a terracotta figurine representing a girl all of which date back to the Early Bronze period EBA IVB⁶⁰³. In the collective tomb at Al-Ansari we found a large set of pottery vessels, 300 pieces,⁶⁰⁴ which included jars, goblets, jugs and goblets all of which are similar to those discovered

⁵⁹³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 147. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: 35-36.

⁵⁹⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁶ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-144.

⁵⁹⁷ Matthiae 1977: fig. 15-16.

⁵⁹⁸ Fugmann 1958: fig. 62 and 65.

⁵⁹⁹ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 144.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*: 141-142.

⁶⁰¹ Schwarts *et al.* 2003: 338-341, fig.23-24.

⁶⁰² Porter 1995b: fig.11. Porter 1999: fig. 1-4.

⁶⁰³ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 93-104.

⁶⁰⁴ Suleiman 1984: 3.

in tomb IV at Mishrifeh⁶⁰⁵. From what have been previously said we notice the presence of a large number of different pottery finds in the Early Bronze rock-cut collective tombs.

Other grave goods: In tomb IV at Mishrifeh we notice the presence of a set of bronze finds which included copper/bronze weapons and toilet ware (more than 100 different pieces), and other foreign finds such as the Egyptian goblet, decorated pottery and a carnelian necklace⁶⁰⁶. In tomb III at tell As a set of bronze vessels was found, and in Al-Ansari tomb there were bronze axis and bracelets as well as stone beads,⁶⁰⁷ while at Saraqeb the interment finds included a spearhead, a bronze bracelet, both date back to Early Bronze period EBA IVB⁶⁰⁸.

Number of interment cases: In Tomb IV at Mishrifeh 40 skeletons were recorded; at Ain Assan 5 skeletons were found in tomb IV, 8 skeletons in tomb III and 3 skeletons in tomb II. In the tomb of Al-Ansari 5 skeletons were recorded and in tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda there were about 16 skeletons⁶⁰⁹. However, a precise study about these tombs can't be carried out because of the lack of information since they were discovered in the twenties and at thirties of the last century. Al-Ansari tomb discovered in the eighties of the last century is distinguished by the presence of two levels of bones and pottery remains which date back to two different periods, the thing which suggests a repeated interment process and a long use of the tomb which lasted throughout the EBA IV period and the beginning of Middle Bronze Age⁶¹⁰.

6- Funerary grave goods in Middle Bronze rock- cut collective tombs:

Pottery grave goods: Tomb I at Mishrifeh contained a large set of diverse pottery funerary grave goods the differences of which suggest a repeated interment case which lasted 100 years⁶¹¹. This tomb unearthed pottery date back to mid second millennium BC, 2000 – 1500 MBA⁶¹². In tomb I at Bab al- Faraj, Aleppo, a large set of pottery finds (350

⁶⁰⁵ Du Mesnil du Buisson 1935: 145-152.

⁶⁰⁶ Du Mesnil du Buisson 1935: 153-157. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: Pp.35-36.

⁶⁰⁷ Suleiman 1984: 3.

⁶⁰⁸ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 93-104.

⁶⁰⁹ Castel and Awad 2006: 11.

⁶¹⁰ Suleiman 1984: 1.

⁶¹¹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 17-18.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*: 18. Pl. XIV.

pieces) which included jars, vases, jugs and plates, dating back to the first and second Middle Bronze period, was found. The accumulated layers of skeletons and pottery grave goods the long use of the tomb which lasted about 300 years.⁶¹³ In the tomb at the site of Mourek funerary grave goods rich with pottery, which included different jars, bowls, goblets and plates, was found. In tombs I, II, III and VI at the site of Hama sets of different numbers of diverse pottery finds, jars, jugs, bottles, polygonal and ordinary bowls and mortar human and animal terracotta figurines were recorded. In tomb I at Hama 29 different pottery pieces similar to those discovered in level H4 and H5,⁶¹⁴ also at Hama and the ones discovered at tell Nebi Mend were recorded⁶¹⁵. In tomb II, 44 different pottery pieces including jars, jugs and bowls, some of which are similar to those discovered at tell Nebi Mend,⁶¹⁶ and at the tomb of the Lord of the Goats at Ebla were also recorded.⁶¹⁷ In tomb III at Hama 21 different pottery pieces such as jars, bowls and jugs some of which are similar to those of tell Nebi Mend,⁶¹⁸ and the ones of Mardikh II B level at Ebla were recorded⁶¹⁹. Finally, the number of pottery pieces discovered in tomb VI at Hama came to 64 similar to the late Middle Bronze ones discovered at tell Nebi Mend,⁶²⁰ and some vessels discovered in tomb I at Mishrifeh⁶²¹. In the tomb at Khan Sheikhoun 186 different pottery vessels were found⁶²². In tombs I and II at the site of tell As 50 pieces were discovered in each of them and those vessels, which date back to the first half of the second millennium BC, are similar to the ones discovered in tomb I at Qatna and the circular ones discovered at the site of Dnibi⁶²³. From what have been said we notice the presence of large and diverse quantities of pottery finds in the collective tombs dating back to Middle Bronze period. The Royal tomb at Mishrifeh which dates back to the end of Middle Bronze and the beginning of late Bronze contained a large set of pottery finds most of which date back to late Bronze and some are dated back to the

⁶¹³ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

⁶¹⁴ Fugmann 1958: 90. fig. 110, 95. fig.117.

⁶¹⁵ Bourke 1993: 170. fig. 10. 5. 186. and p176. fig. 19.12; p.187.

⁶¹⁶ Bourke 1993: 177 fig.20.12; 184. and p.178 fig.21.4; 185.

⁶¹⁷ Matthiae 1984a: 76.

⁶¹⁸ Bourke 1993: 173 fig.16.6; 182 and 177 fig.20.8;184.

⁶¹⁹ Matthiae 1984a: pl.76a.

⁶²⁰ Bourke 1993: 179.fig.22.4; 185-fig22.5; 185. and p.176.fig.19.1.

⁶²¹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.33.col. 7-9.

⁶²² Al-Maqdissi 2006b:490.

⁶²³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

first half of the second millennium (Middle Bronze) which had been kept and then put with the funerary grave goods of late Bronze period because of their artistic value, rarity or symbolic value for the ruling dynasty⁶²⁴. The greatest part of pottery, many alabaster vessels and part of the gold trinkets, particularly the quiver, date back to the fifteenth or fourteenth century, i.e. the first of late Bronze period. Some finds are clearly much older and these include some Middle Bronze pottery, an Egyptian alabaster vessel from the time of the early eighteenth dynasty (mid sixteen century BC) and another Egyptian alabaster pot from the time of the 12th Dynasty (the transition period from eighteenth to nineteenth century BC)⁶²⁵.

We have to mention the presence of a large set of human and animal terracotta figurines spread in large numbers in the tombs at Hama, where six terracotta figurines (three human and three animals) were found in tomb one; four (three human and one animal) in tomb II; two human in tomb VI and another human terracotta figurines in tomb X. In the tomb at Mourek six human and animal terracotta figurines as well as a wagon were recorded, one terracotta figurine in tomb II at tell As and another terracotta figurines in the tomb of Bab al-Faraj. Terracotta figurines are, therefore, widely spread in Middle Bronze tombs in Central and Northern Syria.

Other grave goods: In most tombs discovered at Hama there were bronze pieces represented by perforators and bronze pins and the two tombs I and VI at Hama were distinguished by the presence of a set of bronze weapons, pins and beads which date back to Middle Bronze period⁶²⁶. The presence of spears in tomb I at Mishrifeh suggests men interment while beads and bracelets suggest women interment. In this tomb bronze clasps with openings in the middle, two bronze spears with wood remains and another two worn spears, a necklace of orange-shaped beads of cornelian and a small-sized stone of flint were found⁶²⁷. In the Royal tomb at Ebla a set of diverse ivory, silver and gold trinkets was recorded. Again in the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh, which dates back to the outset of Late Bronze Age, a large set of ivory, silver and gold pieces were found.

⁶²⁴ Pfälzner 2007: 61-62.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*: 61-62.

⁶²⁶ Riis 2007: 25-29. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

⁶²⁷ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927:19. PL.XIII. Fig.56.

Number of interment cases: In most Middle Bronze tombs discovered in the area under consideration the number of skeletons was not clear, but the number of skeletons appears precisely in four interment cases. In tomb IV at Hama two interment cases were recorded; one case in tomb I at tell As, sixteen cases of adult interment and five of infant interment in tomb I at Mishrifeh which was used for 100 years,⁶²⁸ and 13 cases in the tomb at the site of Mourek. As for the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh the bones accumulated remains and bringing them together in different places suggest that the tomb had been used for long time. There are 23 persons including infants, men and women were found⁶²⁹.

7- A study of pottery in Early and Middle Bronze Ages tombs/graves in Inner and Northern Syria:

1- A study of pottery in Early Bronze Age tombs: A diverse collection of pottery vessels, including different kinds of vases, jars, cups, Beakers, plates, bowls ...etc. were found in the collective tombs dating back to the Early Bronze Age. The goblet, standardized in a cylindrical form and wide-open Beakers from inside and outside with a level base (fig 88) occurred in tomb IV⁶³⁰ and (fig 114) III⁶³¹ of Ain Assan. The first is similar to the beakers of Al- Ansari⁶³² and tomb I at Umm el-Marra (fig 94),⁶³³ while the second (fig 88)⁶³⁴ is similar to those unearthed from tomb I at Umm el-Marra (fig 94)⁶³⁵ and tomb IV also from Umm el-Marra (fig 101)⁶³⁶. These Beakers, which date back to 2400 BC (EB IV ???), are also common in Level I of the Amuq sequence⁶³⁷.

The painted pottery from tomb I at Umm el-Marra is similar to the pottery Saraqeb cemetery,⁶³⁸ and the jars are also similar to those of Saraqeb⁶³⁹. It is known that tomb I at Umm el-Marra covers that period of the Early Bronze Age (EBA IVA-B), that is 2400-2000 BC. The three jars (fig 94 15-14-13) attests to the presence of the

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*:17-18.

⁶²⁹ Carsten Witzel 2009: 209-210.

⁶³⁰ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 149.

⁶³¹ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 146.

⁶³² Suleiman 1984: 7-8.

⁶³³ Schwartz *et al.* 2003.

⁶³⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: fig 10, p.148.

⁶³⁵ Schwartz *et al.* 2003

⁶³⁶ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 617, fig: 16.

⁶³⁷ Braidwood 1960.

⁶³⁸ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 99.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

Euphrates pottery, while tomb III contains jars with three-legged bases and other vessels with red strips,⁶⁴⁰ traits that are typical of the upper and mid Euphrates tradition. The Euphrates influence is almost non-existent at Ain-Assan. The exceptions come from tomb III which contained a jar (number 1 on the upper shelf to the left fig 114)⁶⁴¹ and some painted jars similar to those of Saraqeb⁶⁴² and Hama tombs (fig 125 G1 5A 976),⁶⁴³ which are dated back to the end of the third millennium (EBA IVB) by chance we found in this tomb an Gublite Bowls (fig 114) which dates back the first Middle Bronze while at Ebla and Al-Ansari it dates back to 1900 BC. This suggests that the assemblage is composed by a mixture of both the Euphrates and the Orontes basins (painted pottery vessels- Gublite Bowls, a painted jar (fig 114) and another jar painted with geometrically intersecting strips (fig 113) and inclining to the greenish ashy color similar to those of Hama⁶⁴⁴. All these traits indicate that this tomb as a whole dates back to the end of the third millennium with the exception of the Euphrates pottery in it which dates back to EBA IVA??. This collections of pottery from tomb III at Ain Assan indicated that the Tomb III at Ain Assan was in use as for long period during EB IVA and B.

Pottery vessels unearthed from tomb III at Ain –Assan,⁶⁴⁵ which date back to the end of Middle Bronze and the beginning of Middle Bronze Age, are similar to those of Saraqeb⁶⁴⁶ and Al-Ansari⁶⁴⁷.

The individual jar burial of Al-Ansari contained a notched cup (fig 112)⁶⁴⁸ similar to types found in Hama⁶⁴⁹. It is made of black pottery and its smooth surface painted with horizontal lines. This cup is not considered as belonging to Al-Ansari technique but can be linked to the vessel discovered at Hama.

⁶⁴⁰ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 612, fig: 10.

⁶⁴¹ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 146.

⁶⁴² Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983.

⁶⁴³ Riis 2007 : G1 5A976.

⁶⁴⁴ Fugmann 1958: Fig 93 J3, 5A67, Fig 98 J2, 3A879.

⁶⁴⁵ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: figs 7-9, pp.145-147.

⁶⁴⁶ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 99.

⁶⁴⁷ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1987: 232-233.

⁶⁴⁸ Suleiman 1999: 79.

⁶⁴⁹ Fugmann 1958: Fig 93 J3 3F583.

2- A study of pottery in Middle Bronze Age tombs: A diverse collection of pottery vessels, including different kinds of vases, jars, plates, bowls as well as human and animal terracotta figurines, dating back to Middle Bronze Age, were found in collective tombs. Jars discovered in tomb G1 in Hama, polished black jars with circular horizontal grooves on the shoulder (fig 125) are similar to those discovered in Al-Ansari⁶⁵⁰ (fig 116-62), Bab al-Faraj⁶⁵¹ (fig 145) and tell Mardikh⁶⁵² (fig 167). They were accompanied with Gublite Bowls such as the case of those discovered in the areas of Al- Ansari,⁶⁵³ Aleppo, Bab al-Faraj⁶⁵⁴ and Mardikh (fig 166 -11). Those are considered as early types of Middle Bronze Age pottery, around 1900 BC MBA IB⁶⁵⁵.

The vases discovered at Murek (fig 123) are similar to those discovered by the Syrian team at Mishrifeh tomb, Operation T,⁶⁵⁶ and dated back at Al-Ansari to level V, second layer MBA 1850-1800 BC⁶⁵⁷. The wide-open plates with lips turned back outside discovered at Bab al-Faraj (fig 145) are similar to those discovered in level IIIA at Ebla,⁶⁵⁸ level V at Al-Ansari⁶⁵⁹ and level (H5-4) at Hama⁶⁶⁰. This kind of pottery belongs to the first Middle Bronze Age (MB1). The plates with rims turned back to the inside are similar to those unearthed at Al- Ansari IV, Ebla III B⁶⁶¹ and Hama level H3⁶⁶² and date back to the MBA IIA⁶⁶³.

In the tomb of Bab al-Faraj (fig 144-12) we find a globular vessel painted with circular graded strips interposed by other broken strips situated on top of the shoulder. It has a double protruding ring situated on top of the shoulder. The colors used are

⁶⁵⁰ Suleiman 1984: 3.

⁶⁵¹ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj.

⁶⁵² Matthiae 1977: fig. 15-16.

⁶⁵³ Suleiman 1999: 79.

⁶⁵⁴ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj.

⁶⁵⁵ Nigro 2002: 105.

⁶⁵⁶ Al-Maqdissi 2007b:1-25. Al-Maqdissi 2009b: fig. Iib, 1213.

⁶⁵⁷ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1987: 232-233.

⁶⁵⁸ Nigro 2009: fig 3:9,P.101.

⁶⁵⁹ Suleiman 1987: Table LXIV 1987 .

⁶⁶⁰ Fugmann 1958 : Ha 4.

⁶⁶¹ Matthiae 1977: fig 34-1.

⁶⁶² Fugmann 1958: fig 110, 3K 163.

⁶⁶³ Nigro 2002: 109.

black and red the thing which makes it similar to the vessel 5B 485 from shaft tomb G II at Hama⁶⁶⁴ (fig 142) and the one from shaft tomb I at Mishrifeh⁶⁶⁵ (fig 83).

The jar (12) and jug (6) along with other rare scanty painted pottery vessels of Bab al-Faraj⁶⁶⁶ are similar to those from Mardikh⁶⁶⁷ (fig 169-2), (fig 176-D21-6) and (fig 177 D26-6-D24-1).

Studying the Royal tomb of Ebla that the jars with circular turned back rims (fig 68-10) are similar to those from tomb G III and G IV at Hama⁶⁶⁸ and Murek⁶⁶⁹ (fig 121-8M21). These are found in level four, second layer at Al-Ansari and dated back to MBA IIA 1775-1700 BC (Middle Yemkhad);⁶⁷⁰ That is the Royal tomb of Ebla and tombs G III⁶⁷¹ and G IV⁶⁷² of Hama are synchronous till the beginning of the second Middle Bronze Age (MBA II).

We also find that the plates unearthed from the Royal tomb at tell Mardikh (fig 164 - 2) are similar to those unearthed from level V first layer at Al-Ansari⁶⁷³ and tomb G VI at Hama (fig 137-5B 377). Globular jars with a handle on the shoulder discovered at Ebla,⁶⁷⁴ including small and large ones which are all made of light-painted pottery (fig 165-2), are similar to those from Murek (fig 121 8M 79),⁶⁷⁵ from tomb G II of Hama⁶⁷⁶ (fig 129, 5B 485) and Bab al-Faraj⁶⁷⁷ (fig 144 11-12). Beakers of the Ain Dara burial are somewhat similar to those of Ain Assan tomb XII⁶⁷⁸ and Hama tomb GX III⁶⁷⁹. The difference lied in the pasta, the manufacturing technology and rarity of these Beakers.

⁶⁶⁴ Fugmann 1958: Pl: X.

⁶⁶⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: Pl. XXIII, column 3 from the left.

⁶⁶⁶ Suleiman 2000: figs. 143-144, Al-Maqdissi 2006c.

⁶⁶⁷ Matthiae 1979- 1980.

⁶⁶⁸ Riis 2007: Fig 59 – 5A983for Burial G III. Riis 2007: Fig 59 – 5A398 for Burial G IV .

⁶⁶⁹ Riis 2007: Fig 28 – 8M21.

⁶⁷⁰ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1987: 234.

⁶⁷¹ Riis 2007: 99, Pl: VIII. 100, Pl: IX.

⁶⁷² Riis 2007: 102, Pl: XI.103, pl. XII. 104, pl. XIII.

⁶⁷³ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1987: pl,1-51-52 and55.

⁶⁷⁴ Nigro 2009:123.

⁶⁷⁵ Riis 2007: Fig 28 – 8M79.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.* :5B485.

⁶⁷⁷ Suleiman 2000: Fig. 55-56,P.15-16.

⁶⁷⁸ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 149.

⁶⁷⁹ Riis :2007: 108, Pl: XVII.

The Piriform juglets (fig 177-13) unearthed from the individual burial D26 at Ebla is similar to the ones unearthed from Iris tombs (tombs 1 and 873)⁶⁸⁰.

The pottery vessels discovered at Khan Sheikhoun are small jugs (fig 149-a-b) similar to those discovered at tell Arqa,⁶⁸¹ while the big bottles (fig 149-c) are similar to those unearthed from tell Mardikh IIIA,⁶⁸² and tombs G II and G VI of Hama.⁶⁸³ The smaller globular jar (fig 149-d) are similar to those unearthed from tomb XII at Ain Assan⁶⁸⁴. The small jar e-g (fig 149-e-g) are similar to those unearthed from tombs G I, G III and GVI at Hama⁶⁸⁵. The big cups discovered at Khan Sheikhoun (fig 150- a) are similar to the ones unearthed from tell Mardikh,⁶⁸⁶ while the small ones (fig 150- c) are similar to those unearthed from tomb G II at Hama,⁶⁸⁷ and the small pottery vessels (fig 151- a) are similar to those discovered at tell Mardikh⁶⁸⁸. The brazier (fig 151- c) is similar the ones discovered in the levels H5-H2 at Hama⁶⁸⁹. The jar (fig 125-5A 843) unearthed from the tomb GI A-B at Hama is similar to the one discovered at tell Nabi Mend,⁶⁹⁰ and the jar (fig 125-5A 844) is similar to the one discovered at tell Mardikh IIIB (1800-1750),⁶⁹¹ while the jar (fig -5B 684) is similar to the jar discovered at tell Nabi Mend⁶⁹². The pitcher (fig 126 – 5B 653) is similar to the one unearthed from tomb G VI at Hama (fig 136- 5B 386-389), while the pitchers (fig 125-5B 690 and 5B 185) were prevailing at Mishrifeh and Othmaniye⁶⁹³. The bowls (fig 126 – 5A 798 – 5A 801) are similar to the ones discovered at Mishrifeh and date back to the first Middle Bronze Age⁶⁹⁴.

⁶⁸⁰ Al-Maqdissi and Suleiman 2003-2004. The most representative is the specimen 5B167 from Tomb VI of Hama.

⁶⁸¹ Thalmann 2006: Pl.109.

⁶⁸² Nigro 2002: Pl. LVI.

⁶⁸³ Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

⁶⁸⁴ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 149. Fig.11.

⁶⁸⁵ Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

⁶⁸⁶ Nigro 2002: Pl. LVII.

⁶⁸⁷ Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

⁶⁸⁸ Nigro 2002: Pl. LI.

⁶⁸⁹ Fugmann 1958: 89-90.fig.117 and 101.fig.124.

⁶⁹⁰ Bourke 1993: 171

⁶⁹¹ Matthiae 1984: pl.76a.

⁶⁹² Bourke 1993:176 fig. 19.1;182.

⁶⁹³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: Pl.XXXIII.7-9.

⁶⁹⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.XXXIV. col 7.

Human terracotta figurines discovered at Hama,⁶⁹⁵ Saraqeb⁶⁹⁶ and Bab al-Faraj⁶⁹⁷ are all quite similar and thus belong to the same horizon. The terracotta figurine of Bab al-Faraj, of the kind which was wide spread during the first and second Middle Bronze, is similar to the ones discovered in the level AIII at tell Mardikh (Ebla),⁶⁹⁸ and been attested in Hama H⁶⁹⁹ and Ginders in the level of the first Amorite palace, level VI⁷⁰⁰. The figurine represents a nude woman with legs in close contact with each other, hands laterally extended and protruding breasts, along with triangle-shaped ornament on the pelvis she is carrying a crown on her head and adorning herself with a necklace and an earring in her right ear. This figurine dates back to the first Middle Bronze Age. The animal figurines discovered at Mishrifeh (fig 133) is similar to the ones discovered at Al- Ansari⁷⁰¹ (fig 118) and Hama,⁷⁰² and date back to the MBA II.

From this brief study of pottery vessels unearthed from both the royal and collective tombs spread in central and northern Syria we notice a homogeneity of the pottery horizon, which is an indication of the synchronization of their manufacture and spread over large areas of the Orontes basin, the Qouweiq basin and Palestine (Jericho), along with and a clear influence of the Euphrates pottery during the EB IV. This appears particularly clear in the northern sites (cf. the case of Umm el-Marra). It seems thus also likely that Umm el-Marra is located on the edge of two cultural areas, the Euphrates basin and that of the Orontes basin. The position of the site along a likely a trade route as well as its location on the watercourse of al-Dahab river which flows from the north to the south and comes to an end at al-Jabbul lake further suggests the mixed horizon of the pottery tradition of Umm el Marra. Thus, it is not a surprise to find ceramic grave goods at Umm el Marra that reflect the occurrence of these different influences.

⁶⁹⁵ Riis 2007: 30-32. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

⁶⁹⁶ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 95.

⁶⁹⁷ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab El- Farag.

⁶⁹⁸ Matthiae 1977 M. liverani MAIS 1966 P. fronjaroli mais 1966.

⁶⁹⁹ Fugmann: 1958: (3A661)PL.X, Ha GI, II, VI, 5A805, 5A806, 5A847); (H2, 4A570, 3A661).

⁷⁰⁰ Suleiman 2000: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab El- Farag.

⁷⁰¹ Suleiman 1984: Pl, V.

⁷⁰² For more information about this bowls see P. Riis 2007, pl. III, VII, XIII and XXIV, and Al-Maqdissi 2009b: fig. IIb, 1213.

The great similarity in manufacturing the pottery vessels discovered in the tombs/burials of Central and Northern Syria during Middle Bronze Age throws light upon the extent of the cultural and historical progress and mutual cultural relations between the cities and kingdoms which were spread in Central and Northern Syria and the neighboring kingdoms, particularly those located south and west of the Orontes valley.

In collective tombs we can see a difference of occurrences between closed and open forms: plates, bowls and beakers are more frequent than jars especially in the MBA, and we can see only small vessels in the individual burials. The prevalence of the first indicate more ritual meals whereas the prevalence of the second suggest the intention to preserve goods for the afterlife.

Similar ceramic grave goods suggest also similar rituals and beliefs in Inner and Northern Syria, and thus it seems that there is a homogeneous cultural horizon that goes from the Orontes Valley to the upper Euphrates⁷⁰³.

⁷⁰³ In this respect see also Iamoni 2012: 182-188.

Period	Qatna ⁷⁰⁴	Hama ⁷⁰⁵	Ebla ⁷⁰⁶	Al-Ansari ⁷⁰⁷	Umm el-Marra ⁷⁰⁸	Approximate
EBA III	Mishrifeh II	K 5-1	-	-	VI (2700-2500)	2800-2500 BC
EBA IVA	Mishrifeh IIIA	J8-J7-J6	II BI	VIII	V	2500-2300 BC
EBA IVB	Mishrifeh IIIB	J5-J1	II BII	VII	IV	2300-2000 BC
MB IA	Mishrifeh IVA, Phase J 18	H5	IIIA1	V-VI	IIID	2000-1850 BC
MB IB	Mishrifeh IVA, J 17 ↓	H4 H3	IIIA2			1850-1770 BC
MB IIA	Mishrifeh IVB ↓	H2 H1	IIIB1	III-IV	IIIA-C	1770-1700 BC
MB IIB	Mishrifeh IVB, J 13-11	-	IIIB2 ↓			1700-1600 BC
MB III	Mishrifeh IVC, J10		----- ↓	-	-	1600-1500 BC
LB I	Mishrifeh VA, T10-9	G3	IVA	-	-	1500-1400 BC
LB IIA	Mishrifeh VB, J7	G2-1	IVB	-	-	1400-1300 BC
LB IIB	Mishrifeh VB, T1	-	-	-	-	1300-1200 BC

Table 5. Chronology at Qatna, Hama, Ebla, Al-Ansari and Umm el-Marra.

⁷⁰⁴ Morandi Bonacossi 2008, tab.1, Iamoni 2012:169, Tables VI-1;VI-2.

⁷⁰⁵ Fugmann 1958: 278.

⁷⁰⁶ Mattiae 1995:361.

⁷⁰⁷ Suleiman 1999: 83.

⁷⁰⁸ Schwartz 2003: 328.

VI- Chapter Five

Funerary ceremonies and traditions

For human beings death is a confusing and dangerous event. It is unavoidable and no one can make it is in evitable advent changes its direction albeit imploring goods, fate or natural forces. From ancient times human beings were completely aware of death certainty. With the advent of the third millennium BC. Its grave presence predominated the Sumerian literature, as evidenced in the imclay epic of Gilgamesh, who lamented the untimely death of his beloved friend, Enkidu, and started looking for eternal life, during the early bronze period in the population of the Orontes and the upper Euphrates valley were, like all other near east communities, greatly affected by death. Like their neighbors, the Sumerians, in southern Mesopotamia, they had similar ideas about the nature and causes of death, as well as the god's role in this event, and what one can expect in the afterlife.

In spite of the change in the settlement types, life and survival strategies, the occupations and works of those who resided in the agricultural rural areas indicate that some Early Bronze sites had had characteristics similar to urban societies, especially with reference to funerary customs. The presence of the collective tombs was common in urban as well as in rural sites (e.g. Saraqeb, Khan Sheikhoun and Al-Rawda which may have thrived around the neighboring large kingdoms such as Ebla and Qatna). We have more information evidencing that the southern Levant communities of the EB IV practiced all types of economy: sedentary life and agriculture practices formed the main part of life and survived strategies. Yet the nature of settlement recorded tends to confirm in most cases the nomadic nature of the community.

The abundance of interment artifacts and interment types preserved in the archaeological recorded show that the ancient people of Central and Northern Syria treated death with suitable respect and ceremonial behavior: for example, we notice the careful way in which they prepared burials for their deceased, as well as the presents and ceremonial gifts they put in their tombs.

The ancient interment practices and accompanying ceremonial works provide valuable information about the ideology and behavior of the ancient man. The interment practices, for example, provide an indication to the belief of the ancient society with regard to death, gods and afterlife. Studying these ancient religions forms important fields valid for consideration and investigation: it provides us with fundamental information of the societies main ideologies which give form to their distinguished traditions and practices.

The types of tombs, the ceremonial interment practices and the choice of the tomb gifts and the way they were positioned within the burial can give us a clear important view about the social and economic structure of the human groups. Thus, studying the practices related to death helps us to understand the behavior of those who are still alive.

A large quantity of archaeological materials from Central and Northern Syria was recorded. These materials shed light on the interment practices in this area, and on the construction of the people who developed these practices. The interment recorded from the Early Bronze Age in the third millennium throughout the Middle Bronze Age is relatively rich, and contains a number of interment places, interment monuments, artifacts and other related interment materials, as well as the graphic records discovered in Ebla which provided us with valuable information about those ceremonies which were followed in the third millennium in Central and Northern Syria. This was followed by the records of Mari written in the second millennium BC. which provided us with important information in this regard.

Rock-cut and earth-dug collective tombs provided us with the richest group of tomb gifts. These materials are usually pottery vessels, metal weapons, shells, stones, silver and gold jewelries, animal bones, carved stone statuettes, and pottery models.

The tangible components such as burials, tomb makers, tomb gifts and remains of ritual activities are not only an expression of interment behavior but they also may have had a transformational power, through defining and redefining the social roles and cultural identities. We will see below a number of fundamental examples about these materials in the noticeable interment remains from Central and Northern Syria of both Early and Middle Bronze Ages. We will see that these monuments played a very important role for the living population who found and preserved them. It is necessary, therefore to raise a

number of questions through which we may know the followed funerary practices depending on the used burial kind or type as well as the tangible funerary pottery or non-pottery gifts that is other finds such as jewelry...etc.

- 1- **Ceremonies and burial types:** In Syria in general and in Central and Northern Syria in particular a number of individual and collective tomb types were common. A large part of these burials had been collective burials distinguished by being special monuments of a royal stamp, or more strictly, specialized for the royal family, the dignitaries or the upper classes in the societies of the Early and Middle Bronze Ages. The tradition continued also during Late Bronze Age as in the case of the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh. During Early Bronze Age these monuments were of two types, conspicuous monuments above the earth surface and other hidden ones cut in rocks or within underground hidden chambers. The conspicuous monumental burials in the site of Umm el-Marra in Northern Syria were so clear, central and constructed on a high spot that they ensured a permanent visual landmark. The possibility of seeing these monuments and their domination on the natural scene implicitly indicate they continued to play a role in society a long time after the death of the people buried in them. Taking this into consideration Schwartz sees that these monuments probably indicate a kind of ancestors veneration among the local elites⁷⁰⁹. Sometimes, we find the offerings but in the tombs after the interment of the deceased. The evidence on the importance of venerating the royal ancestors appear clearly in the texts coming from Ebla, were the king and queen ruling at that time offer sacrifices and votive for the deceased previous kings⁷¹⁰. Through interring deceased rulers and dignitaries in conspicuous monuments, the still alive rulers and noticeable can acquire a high status and keep their prestige through their connection on the venerated deceased. They can also call for their right in the high status depending on their descendance from their famous ancestors who are still venerated and present in the life of society⁷¹¹. The conspicuous monuments mentioned in the text of Ebla have not appeared in Ebla yet. Rather they,

⁷⁰⁹ Schwartz 2010: 183.

⁷¹⁰ Cfr. Pomponio - Xella 1997: 148-150, 155-156, 160-162; Archi 2001: 5. The passages of the texts where other sacrifices to other deceased kings of Ebla are offered (*ARET* 11, 1 [97], *ARET* 11, 2 [107]), are not completely clear Pomponio - xella 1997: 149-150, 162; for a different opinion cfr. Archi 2001, p. 5. Biga, 2007-2008: 266.

⁷¹¹ Schwartz 2010: 181-182.

something like them or an indication to them appeared on the site of Umm el-Marra. Based on the results of excavations carried out in the Euphrates upper basin. We realize that this way of constructing funerary monuments for the elites in conspicuous sites was also prevalent at a number of sites in the Euphrates valley such as Jerablus Tahtani⁷¹² and Tell Banat⁷¹³. This tradition of interment was also common in the Mesopotamia culture, namely in the site of the city of Ur in the south of Iraq where three underground adjacent independent burials were discovered. These were dedicated for interring the king of Ur third dynasty⁷¹⁴ and date back to the end of the third millennium. Above these burials three shrines were erected which, according to Kramer, were dedicated for funerary rites carried out for the Kings, not gods⁷¹⁵. The evidence on the importance of venerating the ancestor elites seems also clear in these cases. The site of Umm el-Marra is distinguished from other sites by the elite large memorial tombs, by the large number of tombs, by the excellent preservation of tombs 1 and 4 and by the unique installations which contained Sirenia burials from the Equids subfamily which appeared also in the texts of Ebla without indicating any sacrifice of any kind⁷¹⁶. As we have seen in the previous chapter, four (underground) burial monuments are collective tombs which spread through Central and Northern Syria during Early and Middle Bronze Ages. These tombs were precisely cut in the rocks often with a top entrance that can be sealed by stone slabs and solid lime layer to prevent moisture and water oozing from the one hand and to protect these tombs from destruction on the other hand. The broad diffusion of this type in Central and Northern Syria more than the conspicuous monumental type diffused in Northern Syria and the Upper Euphrates Valley during Early Bronze Age explains the general concept of interment tradition prevailing in the area, which is based on a main idea: hiding the collective tombs which often belong to the elite in the Syrian ancient society to protect them from theft and destruction from the one hand and to confirm the idea of their connection to the underworld from the other hand. This idea was prevalent in the beliefs

⁷¹² Peltenburg *et al.* 2000: 69-70.

⁷¹³ McClellan and Porter 1999: 108-109.

⁷¹⁴ One of the kings buried in these cemetery is Ur-Nammu, founder of the third Ur dynasty, his son Shalgy is the one who built the shrine with bricks up this cemetery, Woolley 1963: 150.

⁷¹⁵ Kramer 1964: 217.

⁷¹⁶ Archi 2002: 176-177, Biga 2007-2008: 261.

and traditions of the people of this area in general. As for the conspicuous monumental tombs we notice the presence of new data abundance in the site of Umm el-Marra, which, according to Schwartz, enable us to formulate our ideas about the Syrian early civil culture, particularly the beliefs and behaviors of the elites who headed that culture. Now we can notice that the Syrian rulers different from their follows in Mesopotamia with regard to erecting prominent explicit graves dominating the centers of their societies. Unlike the case in Syria, the Royal tombs in Mesopotamia were erected completely hidden underground⁷¹⁷. The Syrian rulers, particularly in Northern Syria, confirmed continual connection to their deceased ancestors. Schwartz suggests that the relation bonds and relative organization, tribal organization in the Syrian society are more important than they are in Mesopotamia. This newly discovered culture had a lot of communications with Mesopotamia but it seems to have had its greatly distinguished identity and personality. The presence of these conspicuous monumental tombs at the site of Umm el-Marra, positioning them at the center of the city acropolis, their distinction by a large quantity of interment precious and unique finds and, the possibility of their relation to what was mentioned in the text of Ebla about the monumental burials which were prevailing during Early Bronze Age, supports Shwartz's idea with regard to the distinguished identity of that area population and their distinction from other neighboring societies.

Simple individual burials spread widely in Central and Northern Syria, particularly within the residential areas and under the floors of houses during Early and Middle Bronze Ages, indicate a fundamental idea which seems to have been prevalent among the people of the area in general, they were unwilling to depart with their beloved deceased, believing that this is a kind of communication between the deceased and his family. The presence of the tomb inside the family houses represent the best way to protect him/her from destruction which disturbs the deceased in the underworld. This trend might have been an expression of the living emotion toward the deceased⁷¹⁸. It is necessary to confirm the distinction between the type of jar interment which often belong to children and pit burials during Early and Middle Bronze Ages.

⁷¹⁷ Schwartz 2010: 184. Kramer 1964: 217.

⁷¹⁸ Hannon 2006:19.

2- **Rites and pottery finds:** Pottery is the best expression of technical and economic relations which extend beyond racial and cultural limits. We have previously mentioned the fact that the number of pottery vessels in each tomb is connected to the number of the buried deads. In other words the vessel abundance may explain the idea that each deceased individual had been provided with his/her interment collection. This needs a profound study because it is not possible to set a precise enumeration of the parts which might have accompanied each individual. We take for example the Early Bronze Age tombs built at the site of Umm el-Marra, where we find in the tomb I seven persons (five adults and two children) accompanied by 69 pottery pieces, while in tomb IV at the same site there are six persons accompanied by 134 pottery pieces. Again in the Early Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tombs at Mishrefeh we find in tomb IV 40 buried persons accompanied by 292 pottery pieces. In the tomb of Al-Ansari we find five persons accompanied by 300 pieces. Thus we cannot set a certain standard of the skeletons number and their proportionality to the pottery pieces accompanying them. It is still uncertain how one has to understand these interment pottery collections. From the one hand we can accept the traditional explanation that such vessels were filled with food and drinks to sustain the deceased in his/her after life, or they were used as offerings to the gods of the underworld.⁷¹⁹ The alternative explanation, however, is that many of or all these vessels were used by the living partners in a funerary banquet in honor of the deceased buried in the tomb. The fact that the vessels were found piled up⁷²⁰ the thing which indicates that they had been empty when they were arranged in the tomb, may support the idea of the funerary banquet as in the example of tomb 9 at Selankheye⁷²¹. The pottery vessels and other tomb offerings which were found in earth and debris on a level higher than that of the tomb floor can also be an indication to memorial funerary banquets which took place on occasions after the deceased interment, and the debris accumulated in the tombs⁷²². This idea is confirmed by the offerings and sacrifices for the

⁷¹⁹ Cooper 2006: 221.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*

⁷²² Meyer 1991: 21.

deceased person mentioned in the records of Ebla⁷²³. This sacrifice requires deferent pottery vessels which had been used and left in the burial. The quantity of present pottery vessels, therefore, may explain the size of the funerary banquet held in honor of the deceased. Some food might have been left in them upon belief that the deceased may need it in the underworld. In general all types of vessels are represented in large burial, and these include large classes, cups, bowls, small jars as well as large vessels. Cooking vessels are often present, though their number is less than that of the other vessels. What has been noticed is the use of bowls, jars and bottles, all decorated with wavy polishing, undulations and red-painted strips. Taking into consideration the astounding absence of such fine vessels in non-burial context we concluded that these vessels were produced especially to be used in interment rites,⁷²⁴ but this idea cannot be generalized on all interment type in Central and Northern Syria. We can see especial production ware used in interment rites at the Ur burials as shallow containers (lamps) and spouted vessels,⁷²⁵ Winter; suggested that these vessel-types may represent neither potential gifts nor personal provisions, but rather the functional residue of ritual performances associated with the moment of burial.⁷²⁶ At the site of Hama we found simple individual burials in jars which were not special but of the same kind found at houses and used for other purposes, the same can be said about the jars discovered at the site of Qatna. They are also cooking and storing jars used for interment, though they are not originally produced for this purpose. Again the same can be said about the jars discovered at the sites of Ebla, Ginders and Al-Ansari. Thus jar interment in Central and Northern Syria during both Early and Middle Bronze Ages have been in jars which originally were prepared for houses usage.

- 3- **Ceremonies, finds and other belongings:** A variety of metal weapons, especially daggers, spear heads, and axes, accompanied the deceased in collective tombs. These weapons were often found *in situ* near the deceased shoulder: this indicates that they had

⁷²³ Cfr. Biga 2007-2008: 257; Pomponio - Xella 1997: 148-150, 155-156, 160-162; Archi 2001: 5. The passages of the texts where other sacrifices to other deceased kings of Ebla are offered (*ARET* 11, 1 [97], *ARET* 11, 2 [107]), are not completely clear but it seems that the sacrifices took place when the king and the queen have already left the mausoleum.

⁷²⁴ Cooper 2006: 221.

⁷²⁵ Woolley 1934: 282-283.

⁷²⁶ Winter 1999: 231.

been private belongings. Unfortunately, it is difficult to confirm the relation between the presence of the metal weapons and the deceased gender because of the scarcity of studies and analyses carried out on bone remains of collective tombs (such as the ones at the sites of Qatna, Hama, Tell Et-Tin and Tell As), in order to identify the sex of deceased. A strong relation between the dead and the weapons is anyway likely: Philip suggested other name for the burials which contain weapons (dagger, spearhead and axe): he speaks of “Warrior burials as defined here are burials interred with artefacts whose design indicates weapon as their primary function”⁷²⁷.

Jewels and other precious belongings in collective tombs dating back to both Early and Middle Bronze Ages were more abundant than in simple individual burials, these were distinctively recorded in relation to individual females. In the tombs at the site of Umm el-Marra we found that the jewels and make up materials were more abundant in the case of women⁷²⁸.

Among all metal artistic pieces, bronze and brass pins were the greatest in the number in collective tombs along with a small number of sharp and globular-headed golden pins,⁷²⁹ globular-headed pins with straight or curved blade were the most common, and were recorded mainly in the Early Bronze Age tombs at the site of Umm el-Marra, tombs I and IV. These pins were mostly found in pairs, sometimes intersected, and more often but on the head or in the area of the thoracic cavity or under the feet of the deceased individual. These pairs of pins might have been used for fastening grave-clothes. Pairs of pins found near the shoulders or upper chest of some deceased individuals might have been for fastening a muffler of a kind similar to the intersected adorning pins discovered in the site of Mari⁷³⁰. Such intersected pins discovered in tomb 5 at the site of tell es-Swehat along with decorated flat gypsum ring and a necklace of gypsum as well as an onyx beads are mentioned to have been used as personal trinkets for the deceased and not for fastening grave clothes⁷³¹. However, the diffusion of these pins in general, whether in collective, Royal or simple individual burials confirm the idea using them for fastening grave

⁷²⁷ Philip 1995:140.

⁷²⁸ For more informations See Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 332-335.

⁷²⁹ Look Schwartz 2006: 616, fig: 20.

⁷³⁰ Zettler *et al.* 1996: 20. Fig: 9.

⁷³¹ Zettler 1997: fig 3.18.

clothes, cloaks, cloaks, shawls and garments. This idea is also supported by what have been mentioned in the texts of Ebla, particularly TM. 75.G. 2334 obv. iv 17-vi 3 which shows the direct connection between the garments and clothes offered to the tomb of Arkab-Damu and the silver pins⁷³². Their presence near the shoulders, neck or chest confirms the supposition that they were used for fastening more than being used as trinkets. In this context it becomes clear than the people of the area used different kinds of clothes to cover the deceased, that is, as shrouds the remain of which appeared in many Early and Middle Bronze Age burials in Central and Northern Syria. These shrouds were fastened by using the above mentioned pins. There were also wooden coffins as the ones discovered at the site of Umm el-Marra⁷³³.

- 4- **Ceremonies, enclosures and the remains of animal bones:** Animal bone remains from interment ceremonies spread through both collective and individual burials dating back to both Early and Middle Bronze Ages. These bone remains often belong to kinds of tamed animals which lived in the area in that time, goat, sheep, dogs, ducks, ...etc. The presence of these bone remains in burials is believed to be part of the funerary banquet held in honor of the deceased, because the remains of such a banquet were left behind along with the vessels, or they might have been the remains of the funerary banquet which had been left for the deceased who may need it in his afterlife, according to the beliefs of the people of the area. What is remarkably controversial is the presence of some kinds of kunga in the tombs of Early Bronze Age in Central and Northern Syria, particularly the presence of special tombs for this kind of Sirena in the acropolis at the site of Umm el-Marra. Near the tombs of the elite. Schwartz explains this case saying that the Equids⁷³⁴ were precious and highly valued by the people of the area and by the Mesopotamia. These animals were used for drawing the elite carts and carrying out works of a high status. As for interring these animals in the area singled out for the elite Schwartz sees that this is a kind of sacrifice which aims to confirm the size of wealth and power enjoyed by those who are buried in the acropolis. They might have been understood as securing a transport means in

⁷³² Archi 2002: 184-185.

⁷³³ Schwartz 2010: 180.

⁷³⁴ The researchers provide that the Kunga, kind of Equids is a hybrid between the Onagers and Donkey, Schwartz 2010: 183.

the afterlife⁷³⁵. It is necessary to note that the Equids were mentioned in the Eblaite writing of the third millennium BC⁷³⁶. Mentioning them in the texts and archive of Ebla which recorded the events related to the kings, princes and their entourages supports Schwartz idea about the status of these animals and their significant importance for the high classes in Central and Northern Syria.

VII- Chapter VI: Conclusions

1- The typology in the EBA and MBA individual burials:

Generally speaking, we notice the absence of simple burials in the Northern sites during Early Bronze period; this type was recorded only at the site of Al-Ansari, while it was widely spread throughout Early Bronze period in Central Syrian sites such as Hama (Hama ancient tell), where a large set of simple individual burials in earth and in jars were found within levels K10-K3. In Middle Bronze period we find more widespread of burials in jars or in pits at the sites of Central and Northern Syria such as Ebla, Mishrifeh, Ginders and Ain Dara (Tables 10-11). From what have been said we can conclude the following:

-Simple pit burials were either rectangular-shaped of about 1.5×1 meters and 50, sometimes 85 Cm deep,⁷³⁷ or semicircular with a diameter of about 150 Cm (burial 22 at Mishrifeh)⁷³⁸. Simple burials in jars were put in symmetrical pits the dimensions of which are not much more than those of the interment jar itself. Sometime they were surrounded by heaps of stones as in the case of the jars discovered at Mishrifeh by Du Mesnil during the excavation at the site of Coupole de Loth at Qatna,⁷³⁹ where the pits were 45-53 Cm high and 36 Cm in diameter. Cist individual burials and tumuli surrounded by one or more circular stone frame were found only at the site of Al-Rawda in the area under consideration. The dimensions of these latter Early Bronze tombs were much larger than

⁷³⁵ Schwartz 2010: 183.

⁷³⁶ Biga 2007-2008: 261.

⁷³⁷ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 151.

⁷³⁸ Morandi Bonacossi 2011:20.

⁷³⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 153.

the pit or burials in jars simple tombs. Sometimes their external diameter came to 10 meters, as in tomb 5043 at al-Rawda,⁷⁴⁰ and their depth came to two meters⁷⁴¹.

- Building and digging burials in jars and pit burials during Early and Middle Bronze Age were not so carefully executed, though Middle Bronze pit burials were often rectangular-shaped and sometimes circular or semicircular.

- Sometimes we notice the presence of a construction or a wall of mud brick or ordinary stones encompassing either the whole or parts of simple pit burials of Middle Bronze period as in burial D14 at Ebla (Table 6) and the two burials 16 and 17 in Operation H at Mishrifeh.

- Jars were mostly used for infants and newborn; but they were rarely used for adolescents and adults. In level K3 at Hama we found a skeleton of an adult woman covered with a split jar,⁷⁴² and in level K6 an interment case in an Early Bronze jar containing parts of adult skull was found.⁷⁴³ In the individual burial discovered at Al-Ansari, north of Syria, pottery fragments of more than one jar were put under and above a skeleton of an adult male buried in this EBA IVB 2100 (2000-1900)⁷⁴⁴. As for pit burials these were mostly used for adolescents and adults and rarely for juniors and infants, as in the case of burial 22, which was found containing a newborn in a pit under the floor of room CB of the Royal Palace at Mishrifeh,⁷⁴⁵ and burial 19 found with one year old child in a pit under room CC of the Royal Palace at Mishrifeh (Table 7). The last two burials date back to MBA II A – MBA I B⁷⁴⁶.

- Split jars⁷⁴⁷ were used for interment during Early Bronze period and we have many examples in Level K at Hama⁷⁴⁸. They were also used during Middle Bronze as we have seen in the jars discovered in Operation T at Mishrifeh (Fig 53). Two types of split jars were used; in the first type part of the jar contained the corpse and the second part was

⁷⁴⁰ Castel *et al.* 2005: 80.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 79.

⁷⁴² Fugmann 1958: 40.

⁷⁴³ Fugmann 1958: 31-32.

⁷⁴⁴ Suleiman 1983: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Al-Ansari.

⁷⁴⁵ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 22.

⁷⁴⁶ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 20.

⁷⁴⁷ Split jars, means two different half jars used for burying.

⁷⁴⁸ Fugmann 1958: 31-40.

used as a cover like in “burials 3, 6, and 7” (Figs, 52 and 55)⁷⁴⁹. The second type is the only distinctive Early Bronze case discovered at Al-Ansari where pottery fragments of more than one jar were put under and above a skeleton of an adult male⁷⁵⁰.

Nu	Burial	date	type	age	sex	orientation	position
1	D1	1979-82	pit	MBA II	2 ?	E-W	?
2	D2	1984	pit	MBA II	2 ?	?	?
3	D3	1984	pit	MBA II	1 ?	?	?
4	D4	1984	pit	MBA II	2 ?	?	?
5	D5	1984	pit	MBA II	1 ?	W	?
6	D6	1984	pit	MBA II	?	?	?
7	D7	1984	jar	MBA II	1 In	?	?
8	D8	1979	pit	MBA II	1 ?	?	?
9	D9	1982	pit	MBA II	2 ?	S-W	?
10	D10	1982	pit	MBA II	1 ?	N	?
11	D11	1982	pit	MBA II	1 ?	N	?
12	D12	1982	pit	MBA II	?	?	?
13	D13	1982	pit	MBA II	1 ?	N	?
14	D14	1982	pit	MBA II	2 ?	N	?
15	D15	1982	pit	MBA II	?	?	?
16	D16	1982	pit	MBA II	1 ?	S-W	?
17	D17	1982	pit	MBA II	2 ?	N	?
18	D18	1982	pit	MBA II	1 ?	N	?
19	D19	1982	jar	MBA II	1 In	?	?
20	D20	1982	pit	MBA II	2 ?	?	?
21	D21	1983	pit	MBA II	1 ?	face to east	?
22	D22	1983	pit	MBA II	1 ?	S	?
23	D23	1983	pit	MBA II	1 ?	N-W	?
24	D24	1983	pit	MBA II	1 fe + 2 In	face to east	?
25	D25	1984	pit	MBA II	1 ad	face to west	?
26	D26	1983	pit	MBA II	?		?
27	D27	1984	pit	MBA II	?	?	?

Table 6. Simple individual burials at Ebla.

⁷⁴⁹ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 1-25.

⁷⁵⁰ Suleiman 1983: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Al-Ansari.

Grave	area	date	type	age	sex	orientation	position	grave goods
G 16	DA	MBA IB-IIA	Pit	ad	m	E-W	supine	2 Bowls-1 bottle
G 17	CC	MBA IB-IIA	Pit	ad	m	E-W	supine	no
G 18	CC	MBA IB-IIA	Pit	b	?	?	?	1-Bowl-1 bottle
G 19	CC	MBA IB-IIA	Pit	b	?	?	?	1 Bowl
G 21	CC	MBA IB-IIA	Pit	ad	m	E-W	?	no
G 22	CB	MBA II	Pit	b	?	?	?	no
G 23	CC	MBA IB	Pit	in	m	E-W	supine	no
G 24	CC	MBA I	Pit	ad	f ?	E-W	supine	1 Bowl
G 25	CC	MBA I	Pit	ad	?	?	?	bronze toggle pin
G 26	CC	MBA IA	Pit	ad	f ?	E-W	R-S	copper/bronze disk
adult=ad north=n male=m infant=in south=s female=f baby=b east=e flexed=fl west=w								

Table 7. Simple individual burials at Operation H at Mishrifeh.

grave	area	date	type	age	sex	orientation	position	g-good
33	T2	MBAII	pit	ad(25- 35)-(40- 45)	f	(n-s)w	fl	
34	T2	MBAII	pit	in-1.5	?	?	?	
35	T2	MBAII	pit	ad(25- 35)-(40- 50)	m	(e-w)	fl	no
36	T2	MBAII	pit	ad-35- 50	?	(n-s)e	fl	
37	T2	MBAII	pit	ad-20 ?	f ?	?	fl	
38	T3	MBAII	pit	Ch.(7+- 2)y	?	(w-e)s	fl?	1bottle- 1pin
39	T3	MBAII	jar	Ch. 2.5y?	?	face(s)	?	2v
40	T2	MBAII	pit	?	?	?	?	1bottle- 1lamp
41	T2	MBAII	jar	in	?	?	?	no
42	T3	MBAII	pit	17-20y	m?	?	?	
44	T3	MBAII	jar	b	?	?	?	
45	T3	MBAII	jar	in 1.5 - 2 y	?	?	?	
46	T3	MBAII	jar	few days	?	?	?	

47	T3	MBAII	pit	in 1 y?≈	?	face(n-w)	fl	
adult=ad	north=n	male=m						
infant=in	south=s	female=f						
child=Ch.	east=e	flexed=fl						
baby=b	west=w	year=y						

Table 8. Middle Bronze Age simple burials in Operation T2-T3 at Mishrifeh.

2- The grave goods in the EBA and MBA individual burials:

From what has been said about funerary grave goods in simple individual burial in Central and Northern Syria we conclude:

-As for Early Bronze simple individual pit burials we have few examples discovered at the site of Hama. Unfortunately, these burials do not throw enough light on this type of interment in this period, but on the basis of information available to us, we can say that funerary grave goods in this type of burials were rare or even non-existent, at least as far as the area under consideration is concerned.

-Funerary grave goods in interment jars during the Early Bronze Age were rarely recorded: most burials at Hama were mentioned without funerary grave goods, in Level K4 a set of hand- made cups were found,⁷⁵¹ and similar cups ,which seem to have been used as sacred cups in funerary ceremonies,⁷⁵² were also found in levels K5 and K8. These cups might have been put in a burial at Mishrifeh, though the three simple burials in jar burials discovered there were without funerary grave goods. In a later phase of Early Bronze period a black or burnt brown-colored incised goblet, similar to those of Hama period J3,⁷⁵³ was found among interment jar fragments at Al-Ansari, related to late pottery period , EB IVB 2100 – 2000 BC⁷⁵⁴.

- Early Bronze Age cairns and cist graves were recorded in the area under consideration only at the site of Al-Rawda and at Homs region. Moreover, most of these burials had been previously looted and destroyed; and few funerary grave goods which were nonexistent in most burials.

In Middle Bronze period funerary grave goods in simple burials in jars burials became more present: four burials (2-3-4-9) out of the nine discovered in Operation T at Mishrifeh contained funerary grave goods which included bowls, small jars as well as earrings and ivory beads found

⁷⁵¹ Fugmann 1958: 37. Fig: 49.7A 617 ζ.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*: 37.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid.*: 74.fig.93.

⁷⁵⁴ Suleiman 1999a: 79.

in burial 9 (figs. 153-154)⁷⁵⁵. At Ebla we also notice that funerary grave goods in Middle Bronze simple burials in jars were relatively few. There were a bottle, a bowl, a small bronze ring and a pottery bead in burial D19,⁷⁵⁶ while burial D7 did not contain any funerary grave goods.

On the contrary, during Middle Bronze Age we find a large quantity of funerary grave goods in pit burials at Ebla which sometimes number even ten pieces in one burial, while at Mishrifeh we find that funerary grave goods in such type of burials were relatively few, as we have seen in the burials discovered in Operation T and H where only three funerary objects were found.

-We notice the absence of bronze weapons in most simple burials dating back to Early and Middle Bronze Ages.

-We notice an increase in the number of objects in the burial whenever the number of the persons interred in them increases, as in the case of burials D1, D2 and D17 and Ebla.

-By comparing Middle Bronze simple individual burials discovered at Mishrifeh with those discovered at Ebla we notice that, in the latter, funerary grave goods are more abundant and more diverse in simple burials in general (pit or burials in jars), with the distinction regarding the presence of a triple interment case (burial D24), six cases of double interment in burials D17, D14, D9, D4, D2 and D1, and 18 individual burials with one skeleton (Table 9). bowl

⁷⁵⁵ Al-Maqdissi 2007b: 1-25.

⁷⁵⁶ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 5.

no	grave	jar	bottle	jug	bowl	pot	goblet	stopper	bracket- support
1	D1	3	1	3	9	4			
2	D2	3	1	2					
3	D3				1				
4	D4	1			3	1			
5	D5	1			1				
6	D6	1				1			
7	D7	1							
8	D8	1			1				
9	D9		1		4			1	
10	D10	1			2				
11	D11		1		2		1		
12	D12	1			4	2			
13	D13		1	1					
14	D14	2	1	1	1				
15	D15				2	1			
16	D16	1			3	2			1
17	D17				5				
18	D18	3			2				
19	D19	1	1		1	2			
20	D20	2	1		1				
21	D21	2			4				
22	D22	1				1			
23	D23	1				1			
24	D24	1			4				
25	D25					1			
26	D26	2	1		5	1		1	
27	D27	4			5				

Table 9. Grave goods in simple individual burials at Ebla

3- The Typology in the EBA and MBA Collective tombs:

Here is an explanation about what has been mentioned in Tables 10-11, and 12 about the characteristics of built and rock-cut collective tombs:

-The size: The average dimensions of built tombs are about 7 × 4 × 2 meters at the site of Umm el-Marra. These are one-chamber built tombs with a number of interment levels as we have seen in tombs I and IV. Tomb G4 at Ebla consisted of two interment rooms the dimensions of which are 5.20 × 4 + 4 × 3.50 meters. The average dimensions of large rock-cut shaft tombs are 5 × 4 meters, but they may come to 10×8 meters as in the EBA IV tomb (0201) at the site of Al-Rawda. The dimensions of the same room in the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh are 8×6 meters, while those of the three side rooms are about 3×3 meters each. This tomb dates back to the beginning of Late Bronze Age. The internal design of the rooms of those tombs differed from one tomb to another: There displayed circular, square or rectangular design.

-The entrance: In constructed tombs the entrance is usually in or next to one of the four corners as we can see in the tombs at Umm el-Marra, where the entrance of tombs I, III and V was in the eastern side,⁷⁵⁷ while the entrance in rock-cut tombs was often perpendicular from above or slightly tilted and mostly provided with stairs as we have seen in the collective tomb discovered at Mourek.⁷⁵⁸ In rare cases we find a side entrance as in the Royal Palace at Mishrifeh, but sometime we find a second entrance in the same tomb as in the case of the Early Bronze tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda and Middle Bronze tomb I at Hama. The entrance is usually sealed by a large slab of stone or more, perhaps to protect it as in the case of Al-Ansari tomb which was sealed with a layer of lime to prevent moisture and water oozing⁷⁵⁹. Similar case At Ebla, the tomb of the Princess included a short dromos, or entranceway, with steps descending from the south to the north plus a small tomb chamber (number Q.78.A). The tomb was closed to the north by a thin mud brick wall which probably collapsed as a result of water infiltration⁷⁶⁰.












-Passageways and chambers: Built collective tombs are often without passageways, as we have seen in the tombs at Umm el-Marra, because they consist of only one interment chamber; there is a passageway between the two rooms in tomb G4 at Ebla, but it was not exactly clear because the tomb had not been used for interment. As for the rock-cut tombs the passageway often disappears from one-chamber tombs as in the case of the tombs at Tell As, Ain Assan and Al-Rawda, which date back to the Middle and Early Bronze periods, and in which the entrance leads directly to the only interment chamber. In multi-chambered tombs the passageway leads directly to the interment chambers as in tomb 0202 at Al-Rawda in which the passageway leads to the two right and left interment chambers, while in tomb I at Hama the passageway leads to the first interment chamber after which there is another low and narrow passageway leading to the next interment chamber. In the tomb at Bab al-Faraj (Aleppo) a gallery appears directly after the entrance and leads to the two right and left interment chambers. Things are not much different in the Royal tombs at Mishrifeh and Ebla where, in the latter, we find passageways linking all interment chambers which date back to different Middle Bronze period of time, while in the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh we find that the main room after the entrance was used for ceremonies and as a gallery which leads to the three interment chambers.

⁷⁵⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2006 628.

⁷⁵⁸ Riis 2007: 49.

⁷⁵⁹ Suleiman 1984: 2-3.

⁷⁶⁰ Matthiae 1984b: 23.

Sites											
Mishrifeh	+	+								+	
Sarageb						+					
Tell As					+						
Mardikh	+	+									+
Al-Ansari								+			
Umm el-Marra											+
Ain Assan					+	+	+				
Alrawda	+		+	+					+		
Hama	+	+									
Homs region				+							
Mourek										+	




















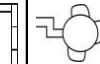


	Pit Burial		Square shaft tomb		semi-circular
	Jar burial		rectangular shaft tomb		semi-circular
	Cist		rectangular shaft tomb		Stone built chamber
	Cairn		Circular shaft tomb		

Table 10. Early Bronze Age collective tombs

Sites											
Mishrifeh	+	+			+		+	+		+	+
Tell As			+	+							
Mardikh	+	+						+			
Ain Assan					+						
Hama	+	+		+	+		+				
Khan Shiekoun						+					
Bab al-Farag					+		+				
Al Gameh Alkabeir					?						
Ginders		+									
Ain Dara		+									
Tel Et-Tin									+		












	Pit burial		Square shaft tomb		Hypogeum semi-circular rooms
	Jar burial		rectangular shaft tomb		Hypogeum (squared rooms)
	Semicircular shaft (3 rooms)		rectangular shaft tomb		Stone built chamber
			Circular shaft tomb		rectangular shaft tomb (2 rooms)

Table 11. Middle Bronze Age collective tombs

nu	Site	Tomb	Date	One Ch	Two Ch	Three Ch	Four ch	Five Ch
1	Ain Assan	IV	EBA	+				
		II		+				
		III	EBA - MBA	+				
		XII	MBA	+				
		XV	EBA		+			
2	Alrawda	RW 0201	EBA			+		
3	Ansari		EBA - MBA		+			
4	As	III	EBA	+				
		VI	EBA	+				
		I	MBA	+				
		II	MBA	+				
5	Bab al-Farag		MBA	+	+			
6	Ebla		EBA					+
7	Hama	I	MBA		+			
		III	MBA	+				
		VI	MBA	+				
		X	MBA	+				
		XIII	MBA	+				
8	Khan Sheikoun		MBA	+				
9	Murek		EBA - MBA				+	
10	Qatna	IV	EBA				+	
		I	MBA			+		
		II	MBA	+				
		V	MBA					+
		VII	MBA		+			
		Royal Tomb	MBA - LBA				+	
11	Saraqeb		EBA	+				
12	Umm el-Marra	Tomb1	EBA			Three layers		
		Tomb III	EBA	One layer				
		Tomb IV	EBA		Two layers			
		Tomb V	EBA	One layer				
		Tomb VI	EBA	One layer				
		TombVII	EBA	One layer				
13	Tell Et-Tin		MBA	+				
14	Aleppo	Tomb B	EBA	+				

Table 12. Early and Middle Bronze Age collective tombs

4- The grave goods in the EBA built and rock-cut collective tombs:

The number of Early Bronze collective tombs in the area under consideration, inner and Northern Syria, is seventeen built and rock-cut collective tombs, out of which seven are built at the sites of Umm el-Marra and Ebla and ten at the sites of Mishrifeh, Tell As, Ain Assan, Al-Ansari, Al-Rawda and Saraqeb. These tombs provided us with important information because, unlike most Middle Bronze tombs, they were not stolen and looted.

In general we can say that pottery finds in collective tombs were so diverse and numerous that, in some of them, it came to three hundred pottery pieces as Tomb IV at Mishrifeh contained about 400 funerary grave goods included 292 pottery vessels. There are other collective tombs, such as tombs III and VI at tell As and Ain Assan tombs, which contained between 40 to 90 pottery pieces (Tables 14-15). The difference in the number of pottery finds in these tombs can be associated with the number of skeletons in the tomb, with the long use of some of these tombs or perhaps because of the social status of the persons buried in them. The information we obtained from these tombs enables us to put forward the following conclusions:

- The quantity of Early Bronze pottery finds in rock-cut collective tombs is large.
- Bronze finds are spread in most tombs within the area under consideration; for example at southern earea, in tomb IV at Mishrifeh we notice the presence of a set of bronze finds which included copper/bronze weapons and toilet ware⁷⁶¹. And in the Northern Syria at Al- Ansari and Umm el-Marra tombs there were bronze axis and bracelets as well as stone beads,⁷⁶² while at Saraqeb the middle, interment finds included a spearhead, a bronze bracelet, both date back to Early Bronze Age EBA IVB⁷⁶³.
- Other precious finds differ from one area to the other. We notice that they occur easily in the tombs of the Northern area (Umm el-Marra) than those of the central area during Early Bronze Age.

As for the built tombs we notice that those of Umm el-Marra are the only ones in the area under consideration which contained funerary grave goods: according to Matthiae, the

⁷⁶¹ Du Mesnil du Buisson 1935: 153-157. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005: Pp.35-36.

⁷⁶² Suleiman 1984: 3.

⁷⁶³ Suleiman and Gritsenko 1983: 93-104.

tomb (G4) discovered at Ebla was not used for interment, i.e. it was prepared but not used⁷⁶⁴. The built tombs at Umm el-Marra constitute a collective necropolis distinguished by being in the acropolis area (the higher part of the city) from the one hand, and being in the upper level and not dug deeply like other Early Bronze tombs on the other hand. The location of the tombs of Umm el-Marra at the center of the acropolis directly in the middle and in a place higher than the other parts of the site is an indication of their distinction and particular nature. These tombs were central and clear in a high point materialized on the surface, providing, therefore, a permanent visual landmark. Seeing such a monument and landmark which dominated the natural scene indicates that it went on playing an important role in society after the death of those who were buried in these tombs. These monuments might have been an expression of ancestors of the local elites, as mentioned in the text of Ebla. This opinion is evidenced by the quality and high value of the funerary finds in these tombs: some funerary grave goods are jewelry and trinkets difficult to be obtained by laymen, among which lapis lazuli brought from Afghanistan (Table 13). The non- existence of other individual burials or tombs of adults at the site suggests that there might have been a necropolis outside the site⁷⁶⁵. Other similar tombs are tomb 302 at Jerablus Tahtani in the upper Euphrates valley which was located at the same architectural⁷⁶⁶ level of the neighboring buildings, and at tell Banat. Yet, Umm el-Marra is a particular case study, since it is distinguished by the large number of tombs and their good state of preservation. I have another opinion: according to the prevailing tradition in the Levant in general and in Syria, particular tombs were often placed in hidden places either to make it difficult for looters to reach them or because of social and religious beliefs which prevailed throughout Early Bronze, Middle Bronze and even the beginning of Late Bronze Age. The tomb complex at Umm el-Marra, therefore, allows us to put forth a new idea based on the existence of a state of stability or urban life, so to speak, which was not present outside it. This is evidenced by the presence of a monument or a memorial in the area of the tomb complex at Umm el-Marra. According to Schwartz this early third millennium complex is thought to indicate a special status and a probable

⁷⁶⁴ Matthiae 1997: 268-276.

⁷⁶⁵ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 629.

⁷⁶⁶ Cooper 2006: 232-234.

ritual importance which has something to do with the cult and ancestors worship⁷⁶⁷. Schwartz also thinks that the Syrian rulers differed from their Mesopotamian counterparts in the use of remarkable sepulchers which had been previously built in hidden places. This, therefore, gives us an idea about the behavior and beliefs of those rulers who led this cultural process and confirms their relation with their ancestors⁷⁶⁸.

Item	T I	T IV	T VI	T VII	T X
Gold/Silver:					
Toggle pins	+	+	+	+	
Bracelets	+	+			
Torques		+			+
Beads	+	+	+		
Pendants	+				
Plaques		+			
Frontlets	+	+			
Silver vessels	+	+			
Silver handle		+			
Spirals		+			
Bronze:					
Toggle pins	+	+			
Bracelets	+				
Torques	+				
Spirals		+			
Crescent	+				
Beads	+	+	+	+	
Pendants	+				
Cylinder seal	+				
Bronze pegs		+			
Shell disk	+	+			
Bone star	+				
Bone/ivory combs	+	+			+ hand

⁷⁶⁷ Schwartz 2010 :183

⁷⁶⁸ *bid*

<i>Other artifacts:</i>					
Cosmetic shells	+				
Dagger	+		+		+
Spearhead	+	+			
Basalt tables		+			
Clay cones		+			

Table 13. Occurrence of specific goods in Early Bronze Age tombs at Umm el-Marra.

Site	Tomb n	Pottery	Skeletons	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Iron	Bone	Ivory	Other artifacts
Mishrifeh	IV	292	40	100 #	?	?	-	+	-	
Saraqeb		+	+	+	-	-	-	?	?	
Tell As	III	84	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	VI	50	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
Mardikh	G4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Al Ansari		300	5	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Umm el-Marra	I	69	5+2baby	10	2	1	1	+	1	copper
	III	62	2	-	-	-	-	+	-	
	IV	134	6	+	+	+	-	+	+	
	V	+	2?	-	-	-	-	+	-	
	VI	+	1?	2+fr	+	+	-	+	-	
	VII	+	1?	-	-	-	-	+	-	
Ain Assan	II	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	III	84	8	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	IV	89	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
	XV	+	?	?	-	-	-	-	-	
Alrawda	201	+	16?	?	?	?	?	+	-	
Aleppo	Tomb B	9		7	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 14. Occurrence of specific goods in EBA build and rock-cut shaft tombs.

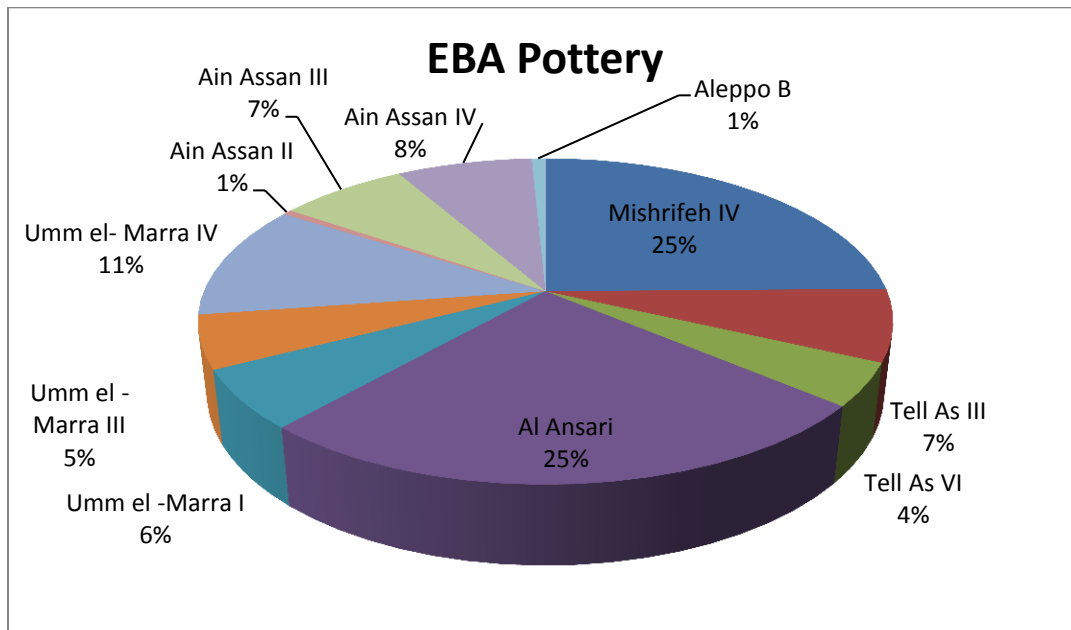


Table 15. Percentage of EBA pottery in the grave goods of collective tombs,

5- Conclusions about the grave goods in the MBA rock-cut collective tombs:

The number of tombs on which we will depend to get new data about the area under consideration, Central and Northern Syria, came to 18 rock-cut shaft tombs all of which date back to Middle Bronze Age, as well as the Royal tomb at Mishrifeh which dates back to the beginning of Late Bronze Age. Studying these 19 tombs we get the following results and proportions (Tables 18-19-20):

-Pottery finds were present in 17 out of 19 tombs, because tomb II at Bab al-Faraj was empty of any skeletons or funerary grave goods, i.e. it had been prepared for use but was not used until the moment of its discovery and tomb V at Mishrifeh had been destroyed and looted to an extent that no pottery finds or bones were found, except for a few scattered pottery fragments which helped to date it. Although some of the other seventeen rock-cut shaft tombs such as the ones discovered at Hama were looted, they contained some pottery, bronze and bone finds which gave good information about them. In general we can say that pottery finds in collective tombs were so diverse and numerous that, in some of them, it came to three hundred pottery pieces. There are other collective tombs, such as tombs II and VI at Hama and I and II at tell As, which contained between 40 to 70

pottery pieces. There are also tombs, such as I, III and X at Hama, where few pottery finds ranging from 10 to 40 pieces were found (Table 19).

Tombs	G IA-B	G II	G III	G VI	G X	G XIII
Jars	+	+	+	+	+	+
Jugs	+	+	+	+	+	+
Aryballos	+	+		+	+	+
Bowls	+	+	+	+	+	+
Miniature jar		+				
Situla		+				
Goblet		+				+
Brazier	+		+			
Pilgrim bottle			+			
Oinochoai		+		+		
Juglet						+
Terracotta figurines	+	+		+	+	
Faience (pyxis)					+	

Table⁷⁶⁹ 16. Pottery in Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tombs in Hama.

The difference in the number of pottery finds in these tombs can be associated with the number of skeletons in the tomb, with the long use of some of these tombs or perhaps because of the social status of the persons buried in them. This point needs more archaeological evidence from Middle Bronze tombs in this area, because the data from the discovered tombs seems to be not enough to understand the social structure of Middle Bronze societies in this area, but the information we obtained from these tombs enables us to put forth the following:

- The quantity of Middle Bronze pottery finds in rock-cut collective tombs is large.
- Bronze finds are spread in most collective tombs in the area under consideration; in the collective tombs as Hama tombs G I and G IV in Central Syria. Tomb G IV in particular produced one fenestrated axe, a dagger with central groove and two spearheads, another MB II tomb is known from Till Et-Tin in Homs region, the material includes fenestrated axes, spearheads and one dagger with ribbed blade. According to Philip, it is possible to identify

⁷⁶⁹ Riis 2007: 12-45.

distinctive items of warrior equipment, in some cases even complete sets, occurring in grave contexts throughout the Levant⁷⁷⁰.

Finds	Material	G IA-B	G II	G III	G VI	G X	G XIII
Plate	Gold	+					
Beads	Silver	+					
Bracelet	Silver		+				
Spiral	Copper	+					
Window axes	Bronze	+			+		
Toggle pins	Bronze	+	+	+	+	+	+
Rings	Bronze	+			+		
Beads	Bronze	+	+		+		
Spear head	Bronze		+		+	+	
Arrow heads	Bronze		+				
Bracelets	Bronze		+				
Bowl	Bronze		+		+		
Daggers	Bronze				+		
Neck ring	Bronze				+		
Nail	Iron					+	
Sylinder seal		+					
Wood		+	+		+		
Class beads					+		

Table 17. Grave goods in Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tombs in Hama.

- Other precious finds differ from one area to the other. We notice that they occur more easily in the tombs of the central area than those of the Northern area during Middle Bronze period.
- The numerous occurrences of human and animal figurines in most Middle Bronze tombs are noticeable (Tables 18-19).

Materials	G IA-B	G II	G III	G VI	G X	G XIII
Pottery	29	44	21	64	7	29
Figurine	6	4		2	1	

⁷⁷⁰ Philip 1995:143-144.

Bronze	19	6	1	21	2	1
Silver	1	3				
Gold	1					
Cylinder seal	1					
Copper	1					
Class				1		
Iron					1	

Table 18. Quantity of grave goods at Hama Rock-cut shaft tombs.

site	Tomb	Pottery	skeletons	Bronze	silver	gold	iron	bone	ivory	terracotta figurines	other artifacts
Mishrifeh	II	+	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	-	
	I	+	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	-	
	Royal	+	19-23	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	
Mardikh	Royal	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-		
Ain Assan	XII	+	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	-	
Tell As	I	50	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	-	
	II	51	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	1	
Hama	I	29	+	19	1	1	-	+	-	6	cylinder seal- wood
	II	44	+	6	3	-	-	?	-	4	wood
	III	21	?	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	VI	64	+	21	-	-	-	-	-	2	class beads- wood
	X	7	+	2	-	-	+	+	-	1	
	XIII	29	+	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Khan Sheikhoun		186	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Murek		183	+	3	-	-	-	-	-	7	
Bab el-Farag	I	344	+	6	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Al Gameh Alkabeir		204	+	?	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Table 19. Quantity of specific grave goods in Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tombs.

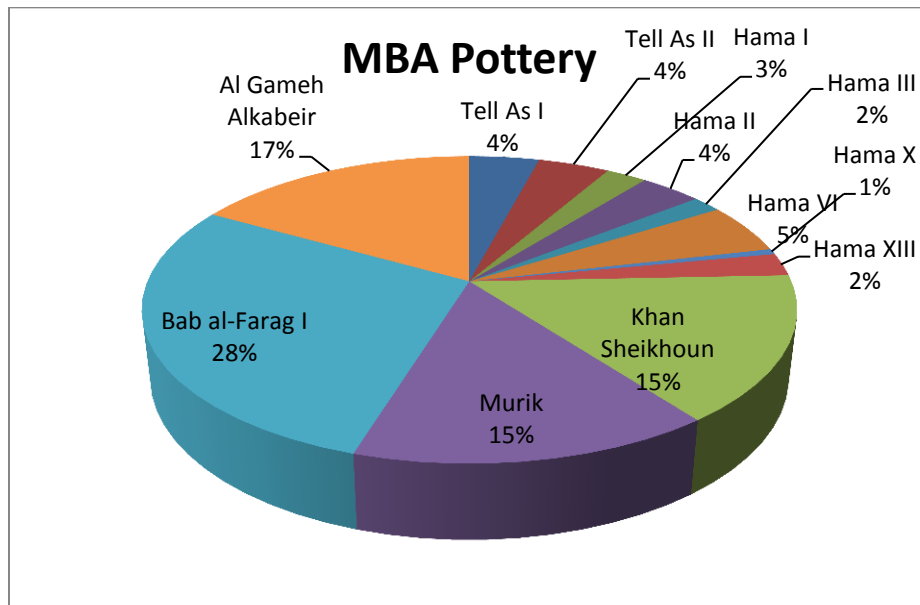


Table 20. Percentage of MBA Pottery in the collective tombs

Short and long-term use of the burials/tombs: At Early Bronze Age collective build tombs as tomb I at Umm el-Marra consisted of three levels in the first of which four skeletons were found,⁷⁷¹ the second level contained two skeletons and the third level contained a skeleton. Tomb IV at Umm el-Marra also consisted of two levels of skeletons three of which were the lower level⁷⁷². In the upper level there were also three skeletons⁷⁷³. Rock-cut shaft tombs such as Tomb I at Mishrifeh contained a large set of diverse pottery funerary grave goods the differences of which suggest a repeated interment case which lasted 100 years⁷⁷⁴. This tomb unearthed pottery dating back to mid second millennium BC⁷⁷⁵. In tomb I at Bab al-Faraj, Aleppo, a large set of pottery finds (350 pieces) dating back to the first and second Middle Bronze period was found, the accumulated layers of skeletons and pottery grave goods attest to the long use of the tomb which lasted about 300 years⁷⁷⁶. The same can be said about shaft tomb III at Ain Assan which dates back to the end of EBA IVB and was reused until the MB I⁷⁷⁷. At Al-Ansari site north of Syria a rock-cut shaft tomb was found: this tomb dates back to the EBA IV but it was

⁷⁷¹ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 330.

⁷⁷² Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁷⁷³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 623.

⁷⁷⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927: 17-18.

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*: 18. Pl. XIV.

⁷⁷⁶ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al-Faraj. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:15-27.

⁷⁷⁷ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-144.

reused throughout the Middle Bronze period⁷⁷⁸. A number of (collective) interment levels were found at the collective tomb 0201 at Al-Rawda that dates back to the EBA IV. The tomb consists of three chambers (E1, E2, and E3)⁷⁷⁹; due to the repeated interments, the bones were found on top of each other near the southern and south eastern walls and therefore no correlated skeletons were found⁷⁸⁰.

From what has been said about short- and long-term use of the tombs in Central and Northern Syria we conclude that we have many cases from collective tombs with long-term use during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages⁷⁸¹. This prevailing tradition was known throughout Early and Middle Bronze Ages, and even during the Late Bronze Age as the Royal Hypogeum at Mishrifeh. The number of collective tombs on which we depend to get new data about the area under consideration are 35: these are early and Middle Bronze Age build and Rock-cut shaft tombs. Seventeen tombs from the EBA and 4 Hypogeum date back to EBA IV and were reused until the beginning of the MBA and were consequently used longer than the other which dates back to EBA. We then have 17 tombs from the MBA: of these it is noteworthy Tomb VII in Mishrifeh. Pfälzner suggests the occurrence of different four burial phases⁷⁸² in this tomb: The burials in the tomb are in his opinion the result of a systematic transfer of bones from another place to this tomb. The most plausible explanation is that the bones came from the Royal Hypogeum, which was in use as a burial place for a long period of approximately 400 years (from Middle Bronze IIA to Late Bronze IIA) and must have been emptied from time to time in order to make space for new burials⁷⁸³. The transfer could have been made either out of necessity, because there was no space left in the Royal tomb, or deliberately, because a new dynasty might have seized power at Qatna, which neglected the line of descent of the former dynasty⁷⁸⁴.

The collective tombs are thus the best available example of continuous use of the same burial structures during the Early and Middle Bronze Age in inner and northern Syria.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁹ Castel and Awad 2006: 10-11.

⁷⁸⁰ Castel *et al.* 2005: 75.

⁷⁸¹ The number of burials on which we depend to get new data about the area under consideration was 35 early and Middle Bronze Age build and Rock-cut shaft tombs.

⁷⁸² For more information about the primary, secondary and tertiary burial see Pfälzner 2012.

⁷⁸³ Pfälzner 2012:215.

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Catalogue

The Catalogue consists of two parts:

- The first part is the typology of the burials in the research area.
- The second part is the grave goods in the burials had been discovered in the graves.

Part one: The interment types in Central and Northern Syria during the Early Bronze Age:

Table figures:

Mishrifeh: General description of the site

Fig. 1: Geographical distribution of EBA burial types in inner and northern Syria.

Fig. 2: Topographic map. Morandi Bonacossi 2011:fig.1.

Fig. 3: The Royal Palace map with location of EBA Grave in Mishrifeh. Morandi Bonacossi 2011:fig.2.

Fig. 4: Tomb IV, plan and section. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935a: pl. XXXVIII, XXXIX.

Fig. 5: Jar burial from EBA, hall C. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 153, fig.2.

Fig. 6: Jar burials from EBA, sector R. Mouamar 2009: 68.

Al-Rawda: General description of the site

Fig. 7: Topographic map. Castel *et al.* 2005: 53, fig.2a.

Fig. 8: Burials map.

Fig. 9: Tomb 5040, Castel *et al.* 2005.

Fig. 10: Tomb 0201, Plan and section. Castel *et al.* 2008:33, fig.13.

Fig. 11: Tomb 0202, Plan and section. Castel *et al.* 2005: 76.

Ain Assan: General description of the site

Fig.12: Tomb II, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 143, fig 1.

Fig. 13: Tomb III, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 143, fig 2.

Fig. 14: Tomb IV, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 143, fig 3.

Fig. 15: Tomb XV, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 143, fig 6.

Tell As: General description of the site

Fig. 16: Tell As, Map. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: fig 11.

Fig. 17:, Tell As, Plan. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: pl. XXXVIII.

Aleppo

Fig. 18: Aleppo, tomb B, section. Kanjou and Naser 2009: 54.

Umm el-Marra: General description of the site

Fig. 19: Topographic map. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 605, fig. 2.

Fig. 20: Plan with location of EBA Grave in Umm el-Marra. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606, fig. 3.

Fig. 21: Tomb I, plan. Schwartz G 2010:180.

Fig. 22: Tomb III, Plan. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 611. Fig. 9.

Fig. 23: Tomb IV, Plan. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 614. Fig. 12.

Fig. 24: Tomb V, Plan. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 607. Fig. 4.

Fig. 25: Tomb VI, Plan. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 609. Fig. 7.

Fig. 26: Tomb VII, Plan. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 609. Fig. 6.

Mardikh, Ebla: General description of the site

Fig. 27: Topographic Map of Ebla. Matthiae 1976: 148.

Fig. 28: Tomb G4. Plan1 Matthiae 1997: 275

Hama: General description of the site

Fig. 29: Topographic Map of Hama. Riis 2007: 50. Fig: 17.

Fig. 30: Jar burials of Hama. Fugmann 1958: 27. Figs: 22-25.

The interment types in Central and Northern Syria from the Early Bronze Age and reused in the Middle Bronze Age:

Ain Assan:

Fig. 31: Tomb III, plan and section. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 143. Fig. 2.

Mourek: General description of the site

Fig. 32: Mourek tomb, Plan and section. Riis 2007: 45. Fig. 14.

Ansari: General description of the site

Fig. 33: Topographic Map of Ansari. Suleiman 1984 : 1-16. pl. I.

Fig. 34: Ansari tomb Plan and section. Suleiman 1984 : 1-16. Pl. I.

Fig. 35: Ansari, Jar burial, Plan. Suleiman 1999: 79.

The interment type in Central and Northern Syria during The Middle Bronze Age:

Hama:

Fig.36: Geographical distribution of EBA burial types in inner and northern Syria

Fig. 37: Topographic Map of Hama. Riis 2007: 50. Fig: 17.

Fig. 38: Tomb G1 A-B, Plan and section. Riis 2007: 15. Fig: 2.

Fig. 39: Hama tomb GIII, Section. A-A: C-C. Riis 2007: 23. Fig: 4.

Fig. 40: Hama tomb G VI, Plan and section. Riis 2007: 27. Fig: 7.

Fig. 41: Hama tomb GX, plan and section. Riis 2007: 31. Fig: 8.

Fig. 42: Tomb XIII, Plan. Riis 2007: 33. Fig: 9.

Bab al- Faraj in Aleppo:

Fig. 43: Map Ansari and Bab al- Faraj. Suleiman 1999: 79

Fig. 44: Tomb Bab al-Faraj, Plan and section. Suleiman 2000: 2-3

Khan Sheikhoun: General description of the site

Fig. 45: Topographic Map of Khan Sheikhoun. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: pl. XXXII.

Fig. 46: Khan Sheikhoun, tomb B, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006: 489. Fig: 5.

Mishrifeh:

Fig. 47: Topographic Map of Mishrifeh. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: fig.1.

Fig. 48: The Royal Palace map with location of MBA Grave in Mishrifeh. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: fig.2.

Fig. 49: Tomb I, Plan. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 14. Pl.V.

Fig. 50: Tomb II, Plan and section. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 14. Pl.XIV.

Fig. 51: Tomb V, Plan. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 29.

Fig. 52: Jar burials, under the Church. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 153, figs: 3-4.

Fig. 53: Excavation area in Operation T. Al-Maqdissi 2007b:24.

Fig. 54: Burial1, operation T. Al-Maqdissi 2007b:7-8.

Fig. 55: Burial 6, operation T. Al-Maqdissi 2007b:18.

Fig. 56: Burial 16, Plan. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 4.

Fig. 57: Burial 21. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 14.

Fig. 58: Burial 23. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 16.

Fig. 59: Burial 24. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 18.

Fig. 60: Burial 24. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: Fig: 15.

Fig. 61: Burial 33-34 in Operation T. Morandi Bonacossi 2007c: 62. Fig. 14.

Fig. 62: Burial 34 in Operation T. Morandi Bonacossi 2007c: 62. Fig. 15.

Fig. 63: Burial 36 in Operation T. Morandi Bonacossi 2007c: 63. Fig. 17.

Fig. 64 : Tomb VII, plan. Pfälzner, P. 2011.p.76, fig.7.

Fig. 65 : Royal tomb, plan. Al –Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005b:71.

Ain Assan :

Fig. 66: Tomb XII, plan and section. Al -Maqdissi 2006 a: 143. Fig: 5.

Tell As:

Fig. 67: As tombs, Plan and section. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188. Fig. pl. XL.

Tell Mardikh, Ebla:

Fig. 68: Topographic map Matthiae 1976: 148.

Fig. 69: Royal tomb, Plan Matthiae 1979-1980: 99.

Fig. 70: Topographic Map of tombs. Baffi-Guardata1988:pl I. fig.1.

Fig. 71: Burials D1-D2. Baffi-Guardata1988:pl II. fig.1-2.

Fig. 72: Burials D14-D22. Baffi-Guardata1988:pl I. fig.2-3.

Ain Dara:

Fig. 73: Ain Dara, Jar burials area. Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara.

Fig. 74: Jar burials of Ain Dara. Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara.

Homs:

Fig. 75: Cairns in Homs area. Philip et al. 2002: 16.

Fig. 76: Tell Et-Tin. Gautier 1895: 5.

Fig. 77: Tell Et-Tin tomb. Gautier 1895: 18.

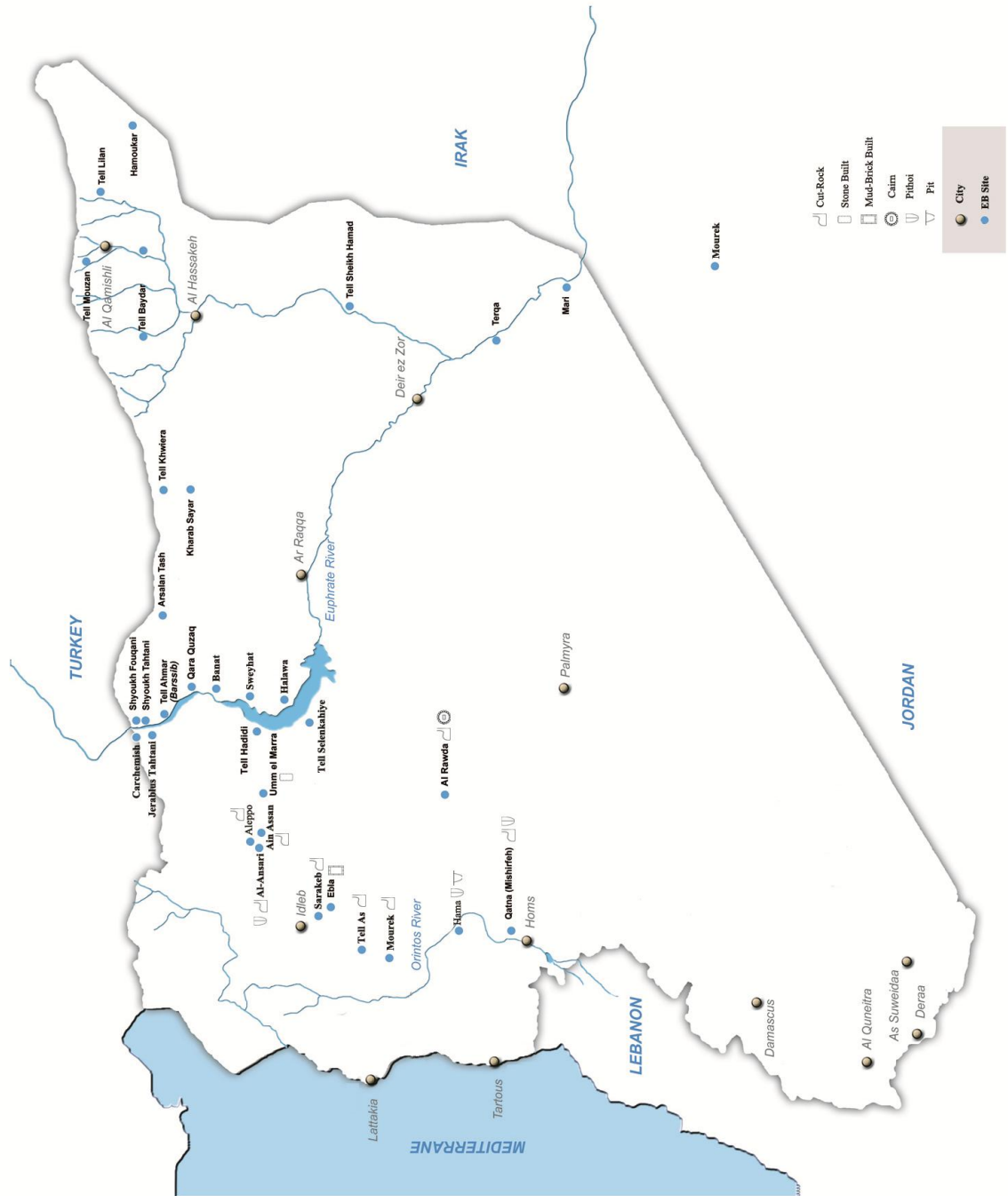


Fig.1 Geographical distribution of EBA burial types in Inner and Northern Syria

Mishrifeh

Mishrifeh (ancient Qatna) is located in central Syria on the eastern side of the Orontes valley: an area which gradually transformed into semi-arid barren steppe known as al-Shamiyah. Because of its site, this place became the connecting link between different environments, distinguished by different types and systems of settlement and land use. There was an irrigated farming system with permanent settlement type opposite to an unwatered farming system interlaced with a third type closer to a nomadic pastoral economy in the semi-arid area east of Mishrifeh.

Qatna is a strategic site on the trade routes connecting the coastal area with the steppe and the Euphrates region. It is located on the crossroad of two of the most important ancient trade routes in the Levant⁷⁸⁵:

- The route extending from Anatolia in the north to Palestine and Egypt in the south.
- The main route connecting Mesopotamia to the east with the Mediterranean coast in the west via the Syrian steppe.

Mishrifeh is 18.5 km north east of Hama 35 kilometers south–west of Selamiye, a geographically fertile farming area with various watercourses, including both Azzur and al-Ghasbiye valleys⁷⁸⁶, which lead to the Orontes west of al-Rastan .

The site layout is square-shaped with a side of one km long and an area of one hundred hectares. The wall is reinforced by a number of outer ditches and penetrated by four main gates⁷⁸⁷.

The site organizational layout divides it into an upper city (acropolis) located near the main entrance and a lower city.

⁷⁸⁵ Durand 1990 and 1998. Abdallah 1996.

⁷⁸⁶ Al -Maqdissi *et al.* 2002: 8.

⁷⁸⁷ Al -Maqdissi 2003: 1489.

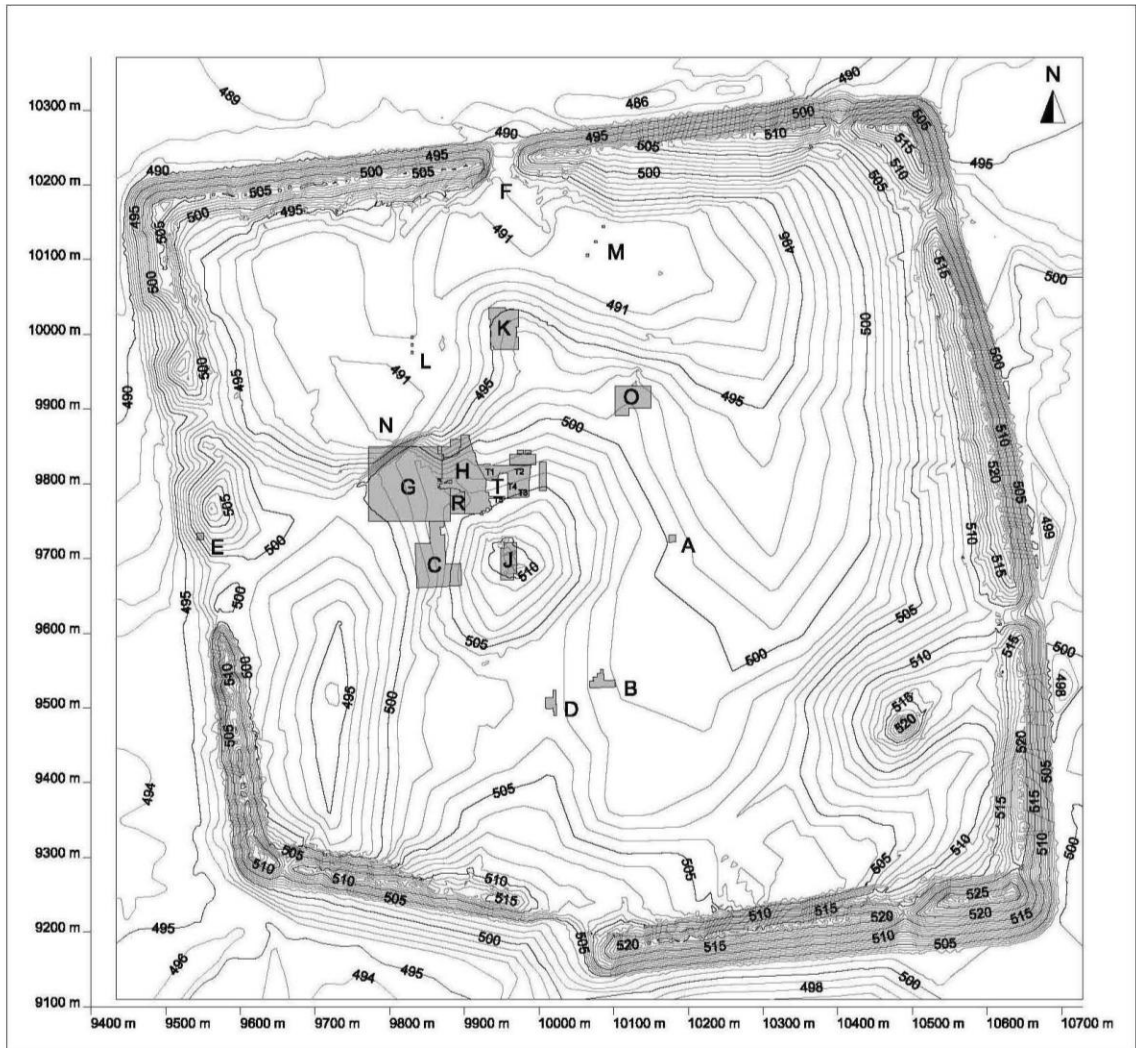


Fig. 2: Topographic map.

Early Bronze tombs:

The main burial ground is located in the north section along the acropolis slope (fig. 2). In this area a number of Early Bronze interment types, include a rock-cut shaft tomb dating back to EBA IV A, were discovered.

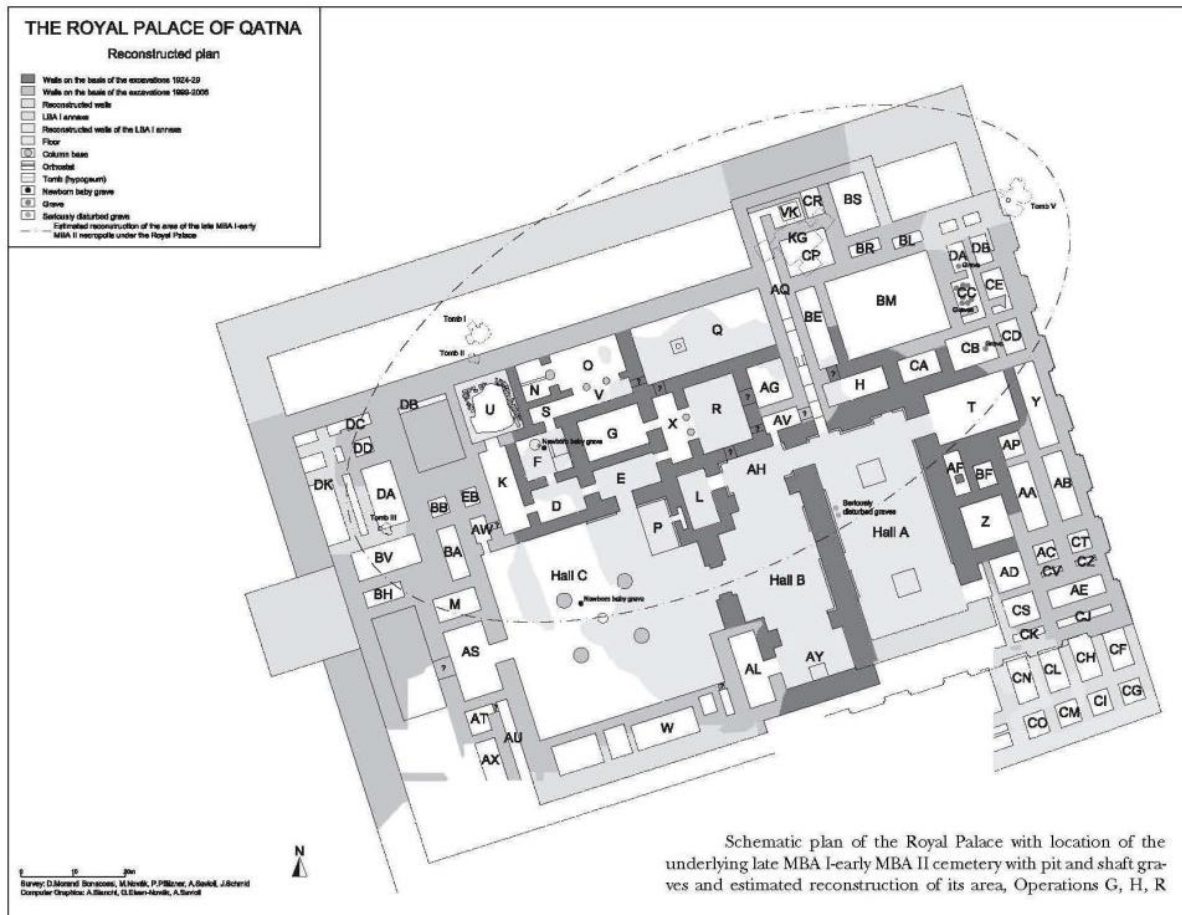


Fig. 3: The Royal Palace map with location of EBA Grave in Mishrifeh.

Tomb IV in Mishrifeh : A rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral entrance from the top and a central room in the middle constituting a circular open space from which three small lateral half-circular chambers ramification. The tomb is distinguished in that its three side rooms along with the central open space are perfectly cut out. It dates back to the EBA IVA⁷⁸⁸.

⁷⁸⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935a: 144-167.

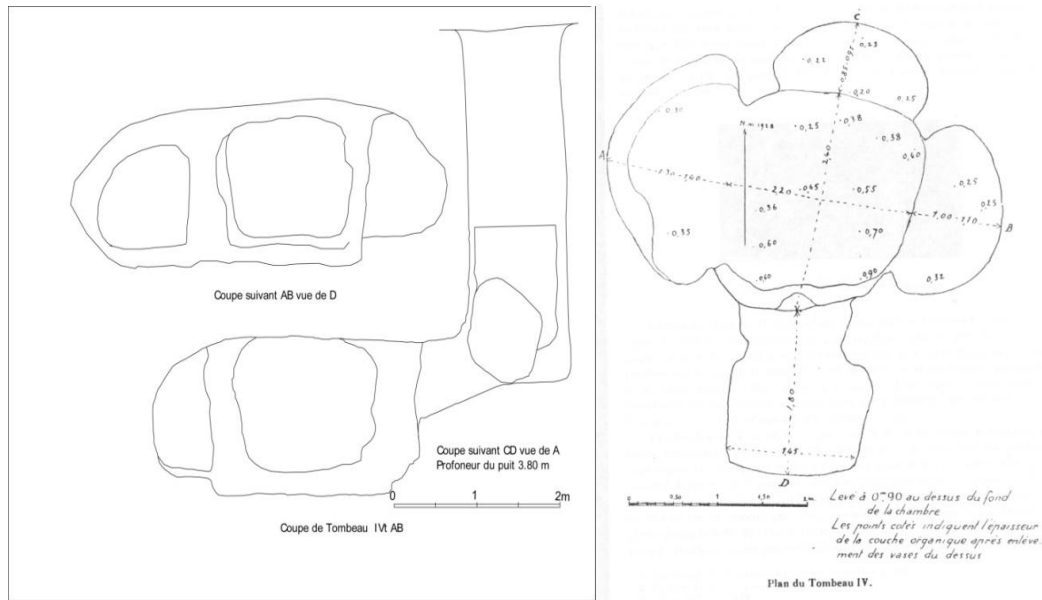


Fig. 4: Tomb IV, plan and section.

Early Bronze Age jars burials:

In Mishrifeh this type was found during the French excavation led by Count Robert du Mensil du Buisson⁷⁸⁹. There the burial jar was found in the area of Nin Egal Temple (at room C in Royal Palace) which dates back to the EBA IV B;⁷⁹⁰ it is similar to the children burials discovered by the Syria expedition under the floors of the EBA IV houses in the palace southern part, Operation R⁷⁹¹.

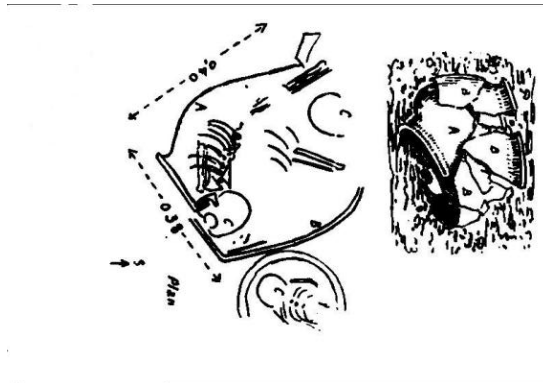


Fig. 5: Jar burial from EBA, hall C.

⁷⁸⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: 149-153.

⁷⁹⁰ Morandi Bonacossi 2007b: 225.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*

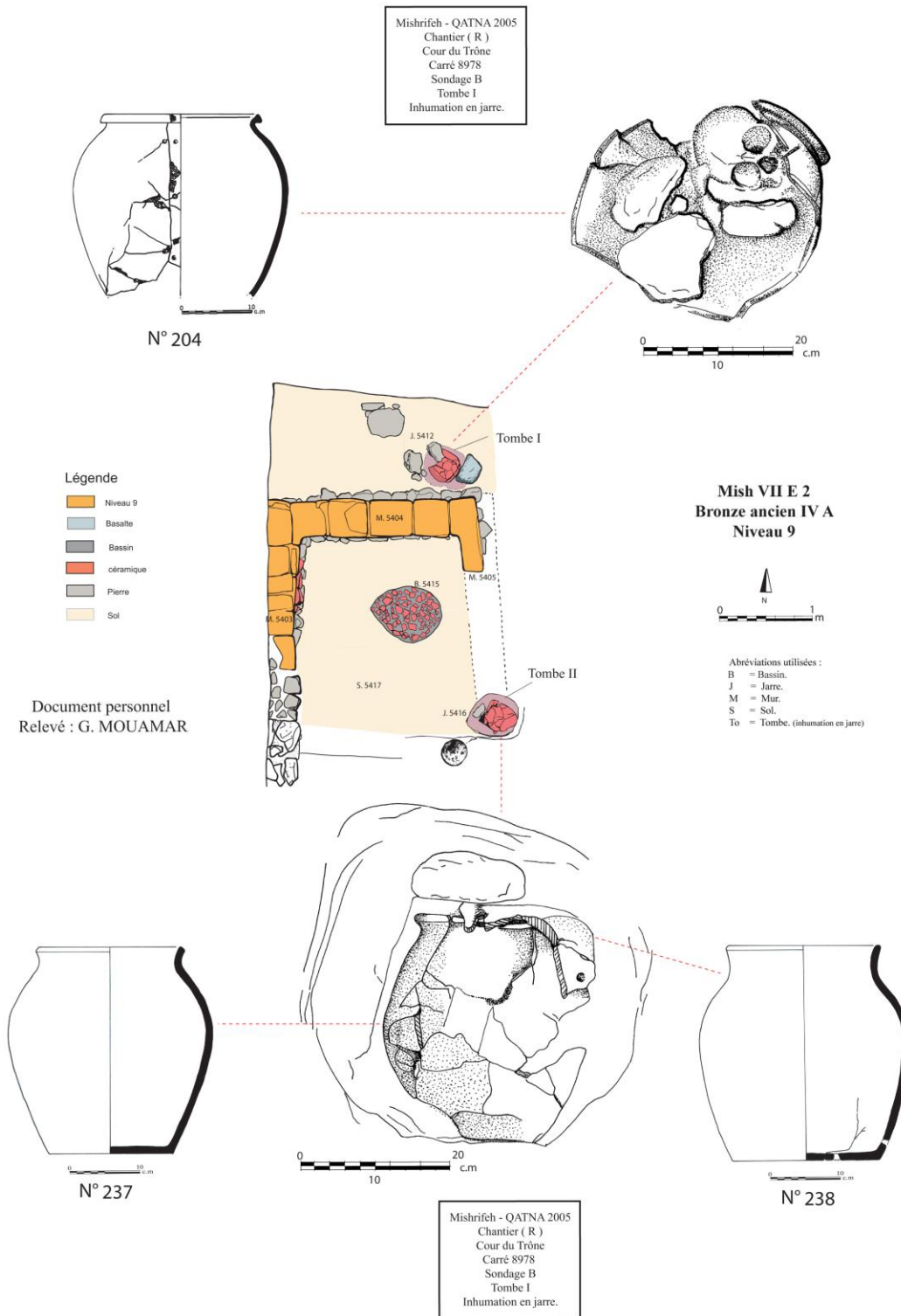


Fig. 6: Jar burials from EBA, Operation R.

Al – Rawda:

Tell al- Rawda is located north of the Palmyrene Mountains in the steppe area known as al-shamiye beyond the farm lands which depend on rain water⁷⁹². This site is 50 kilometers east of al- Salamiye city, 70 kilometers north – east of tell Mishrifeh (ancient Qatna).

This settlement appeared in the steppe area at the zenith of Early Bronze Age.

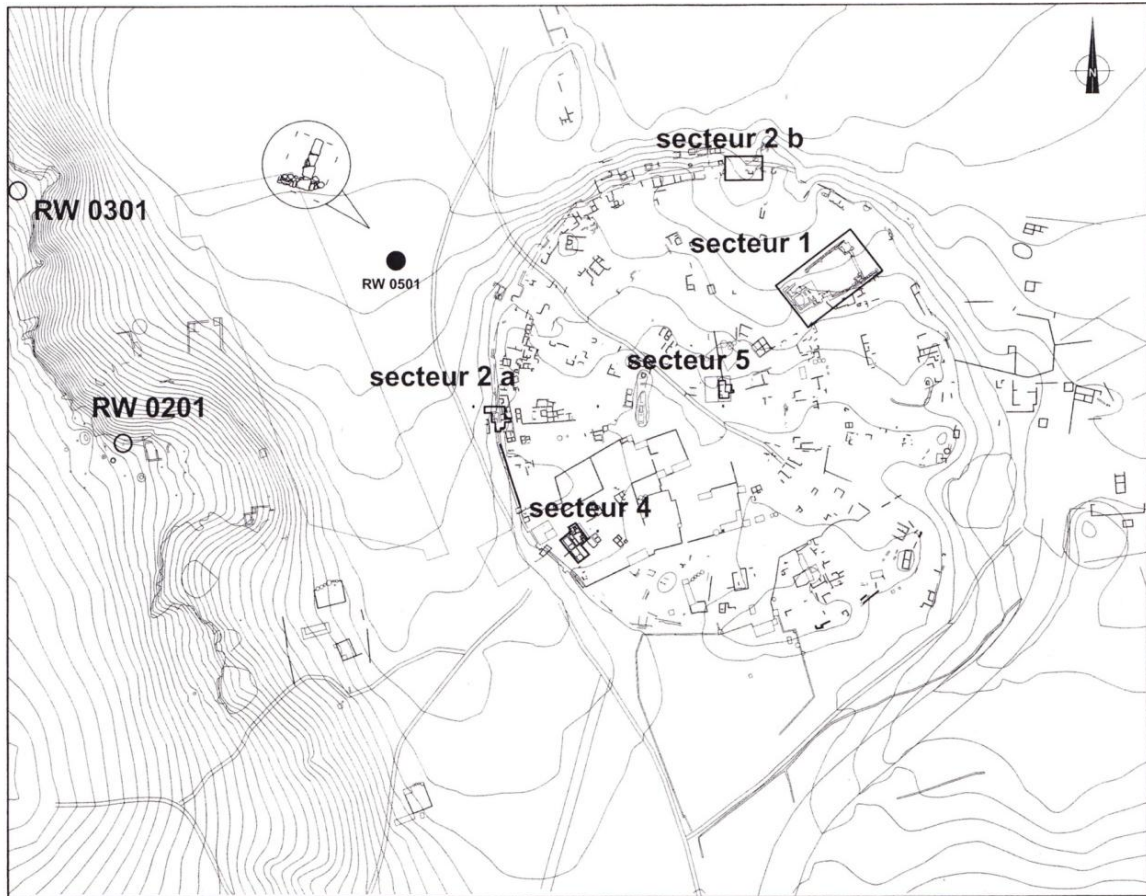
The city is distinguished its circular layout the area of which amounts to ten hectares as well as 2-3 hectares annexed to them around the city⁷⁹³ (fig 7). The site had been chosen because of the presence of water in the nearby valley (al-fayda) in an unpopulated area.

Excavation in the site has begun by a Syrian – French joint expedition since 2002. A number of excavation seasons and archaeological surveys carried in the subsequent years have shown that this middle – sized city came into being around 2400 BC, and was deserted before 2000 BC⁷⁹⁴.

⁷⁹² Castel 2007: 283.

⁷⁹³ Castel *et al.* 2005: 51-96.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*: 92.



0 50 100 150 200 250 m

Mission archéologique
franco-syrienne d'AL-RAWDA
campagne 2004
Localisation des secteurs de fouille

C. Duvette, P. Rieth, L. Vallières.
Décembre 2002
P. Courbon, L. Martin.
Octobre 2003
R. Roux Pierrat.
Octobre 2004

RW 1 Fouilles *intra muros*
secteur 1 Complexe religieux
secteur 2 a Rempart
secteur 2 b Porte Nord
secteur 4 Habitat
secteur 5 Centre de la ville
RW 0201 Tombe à puits.
RW 0301 Tombe à ciste
RW 0501 Aménagement hydraulique : répartiteur

Fig .7: Al-Rawda, Topographic map.

The tomb is located on the western side of the highland overlook tell from outside the farming area. Another group of tombs were identified on the eastern sides of the highland⁷⁹⁵.

The tombs were discovered during the excavation seasons from 2003 to 2006, and the number of the discovered tombs amounted six hundreds most of which were looted⁷⁹⁶.

Fig 8 shows us the place of the tombs and their types which varied from simple ordinary to circular, square, well. And other tombs.

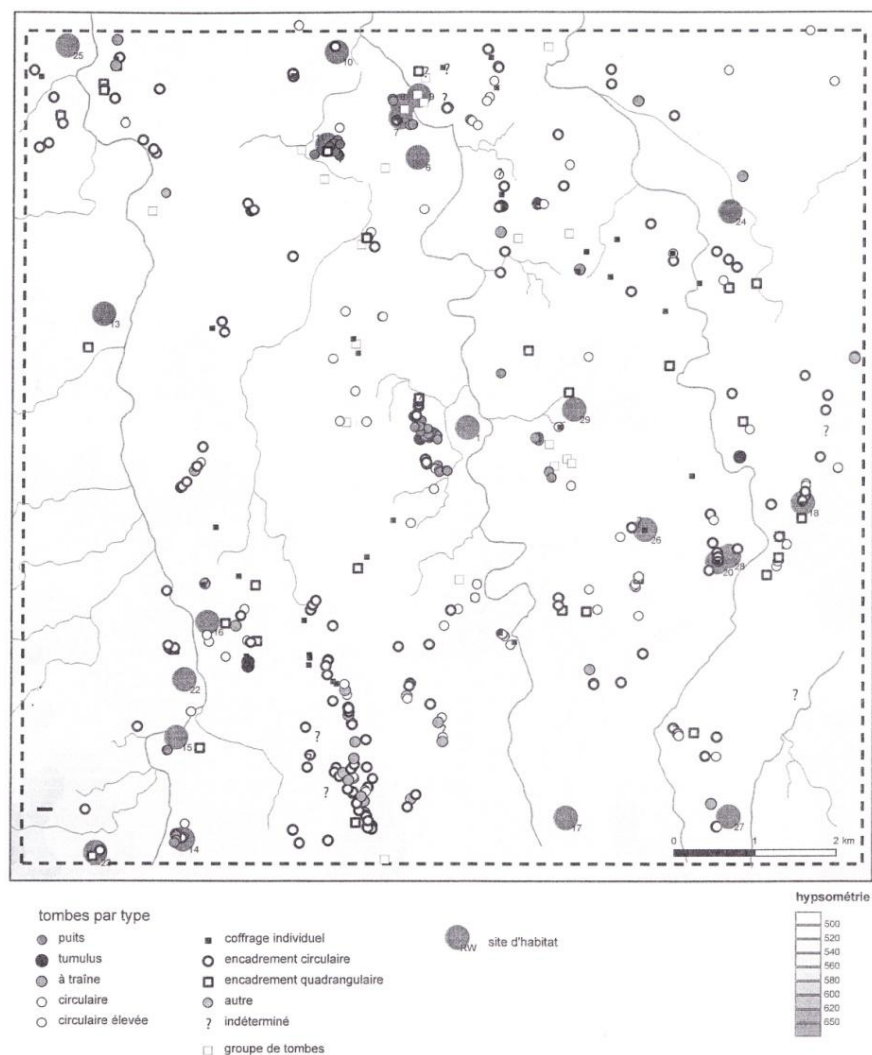


Fig. 8: Al-Rawda, burials map.

⁷⁹⁵ Castel *et al.* 2005: 74.

⁷⁹⁶ Castel *et al.* 2006: 10-11.

Cist grave 5040 in Al-Rawda: Cist graves on top of each other built with perpendicular stones (RW5040) were recorded.

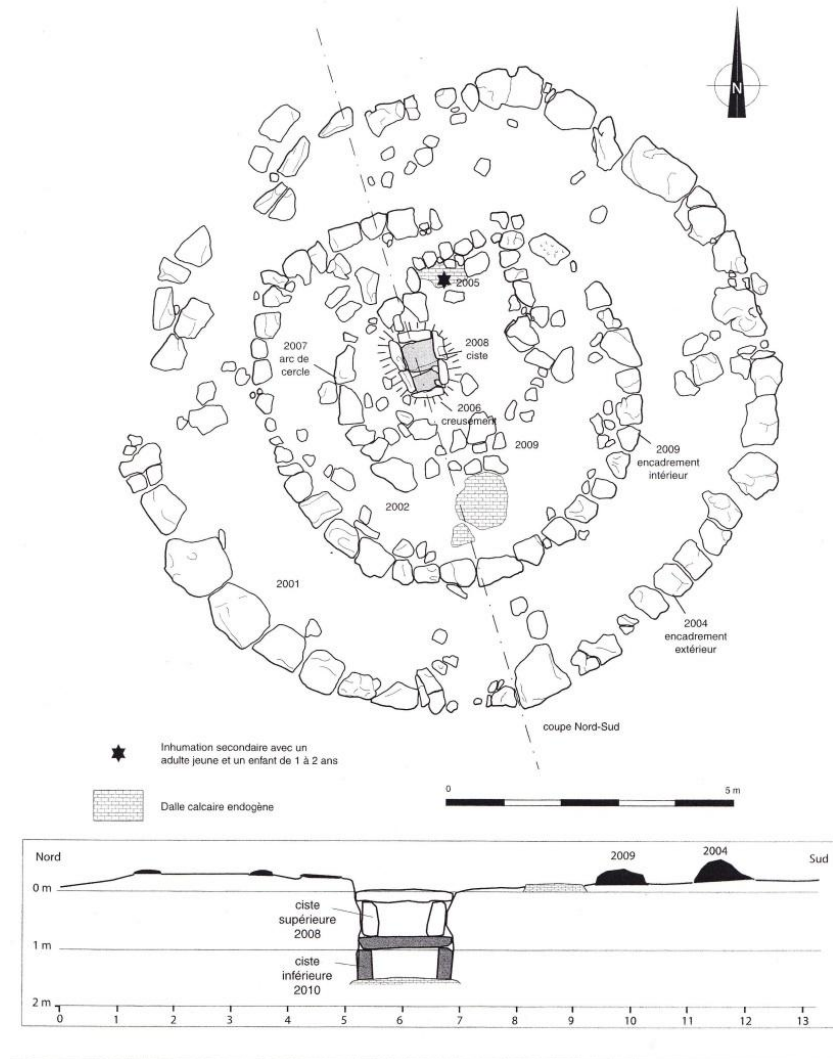
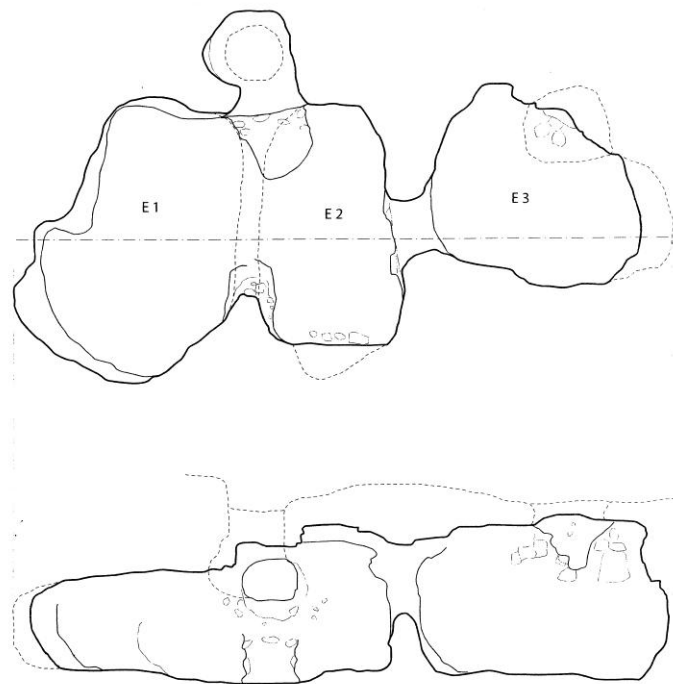


Fig. 9: Tomb 5040.

Tomb 0201 in al-Rawda: It is a well tomb which was found amid the western tomb ground. The tomb consists of three chambers (E1, E2, and E3): Two adjacent chambers E1 and E2 from which the third (E3) extends through a relatively narrow entrance. This collective tomb dates back to the (EBA IV). For the first time it had been used for interment, then. After a period of desertion, it was cleared of the bone remains; particularly chamber E1, sealed with a layer of stone, its floor was paved and used as a residence. Finally the entrance was sealed with trimmed stone⁷⁹⁷.



AL - Rawda nécropole - Tombe en puits RW0201
Relevé et DAO Y. Ubelmann

0 1 5m

Fig. 10: Tomb 0201, Plan and section.

⁷⁹⁷ Castel and Awad 2006: 10-11.

Tomb 0202 in al-Rawda: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb consists of two rectangular rooms with an entrance from the top, extends through a relatively narrow entrance. This collective tomb dates back to the (EBA IV)⁷⁹⁸.

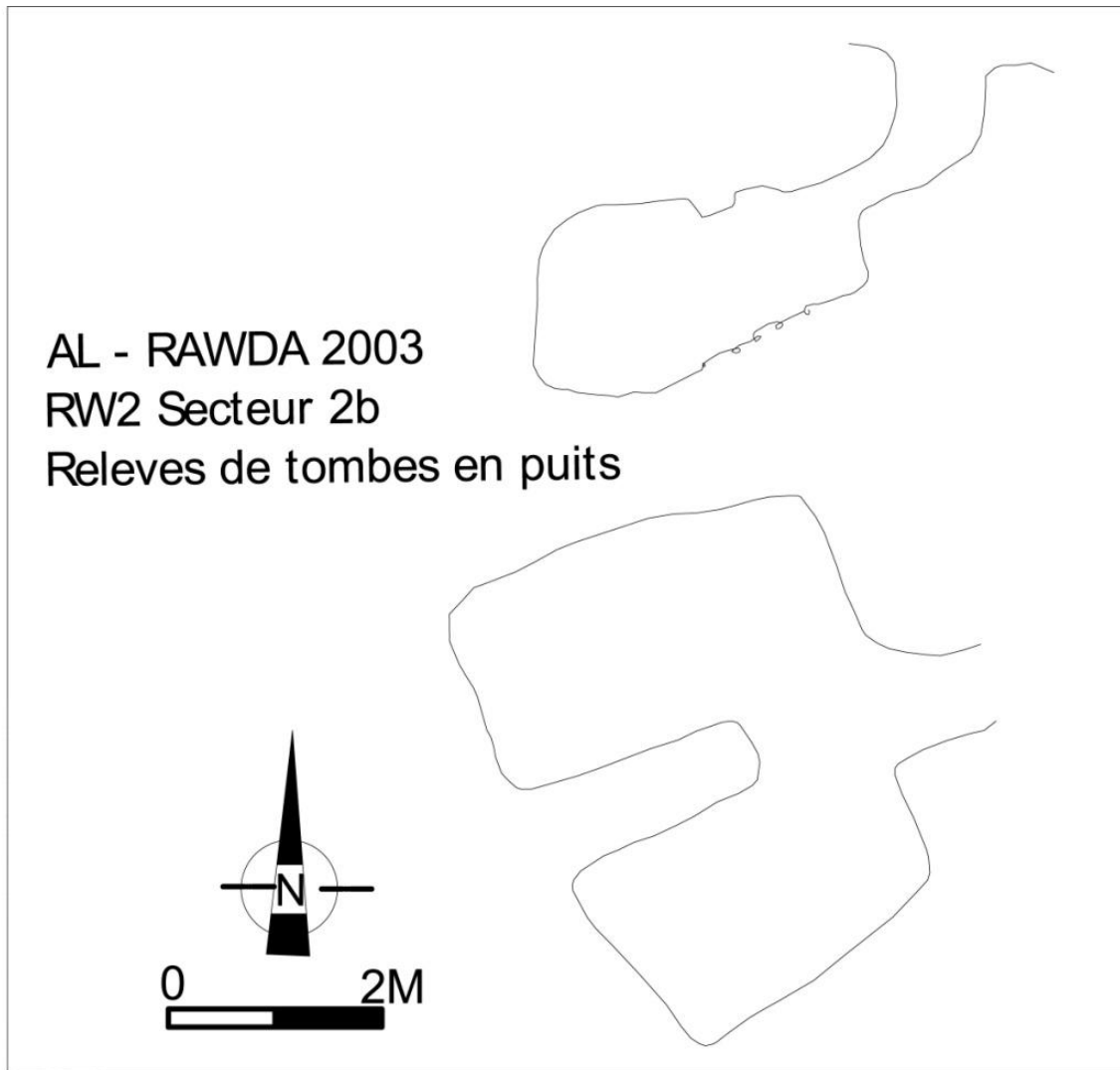


Fig. 11: Tomb 0202, Plan and section.

⁷⁹⁸ Castel *et al.* 2005: 75-76.

Ain Assan:

Ain Assan is located to the north of al- Ahash mountain 26 kilometers north- west al-Sfire city⁷⁹⁹. A national archaeological expedition from the museum of Aleppo worked at this site in 1931 and 1932, and discovered 19 tombs dating back to the EBA and MBA periods. These well tombs were imprecisely photographed and classified and were not studied or described. From the obtained information we can mention five tombs:

Tomb II in the site of Ain Assan: A rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above. It consists of one chamber – shaped interment tomb. This tomb was not well-studied when it was discovered in 1931- 1932, yet the available information indicate that it dates back to the EBA IV⁸⁰⁰.

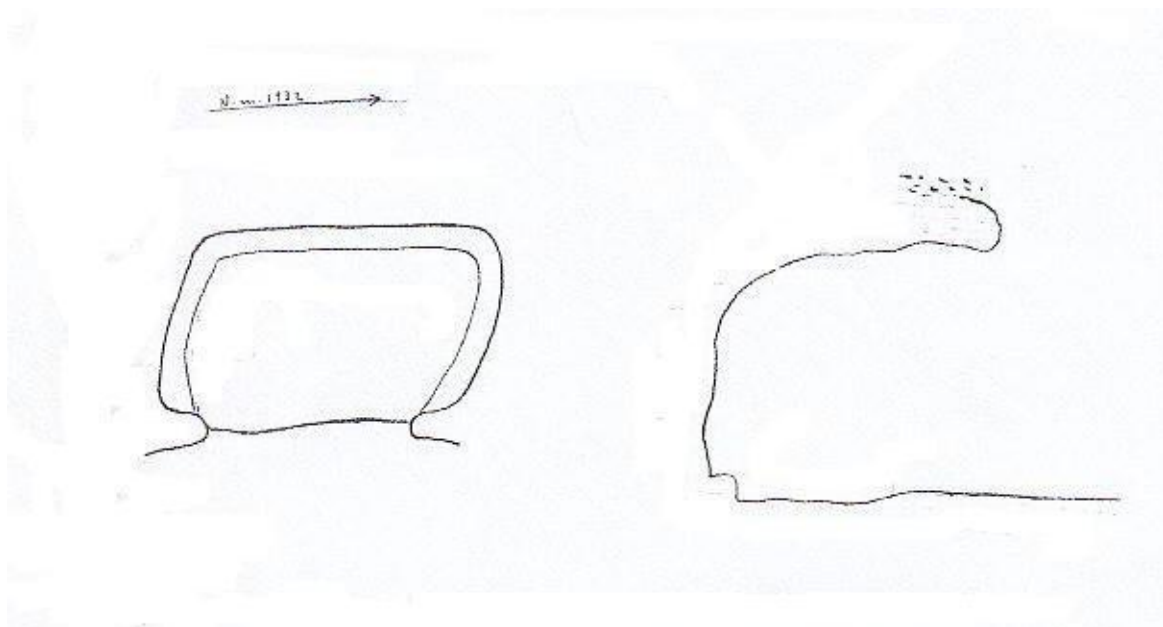


Fig. 12: Tomb II, plan and section.

⁷⁹⁹ Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Tomb III in the site of Ain Assan: It is also a rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral entrance from the top. Its access is possible through two stairs which lead to an almost polygon-shaped interment chamber while the entrance looks elliptically-shaped according to the layout. This tomb dates back to the end of the EB IV and seems to have been used also at the beginning of Middle Bronze Age (EBA IV-MBA I)⁸⁰¹.

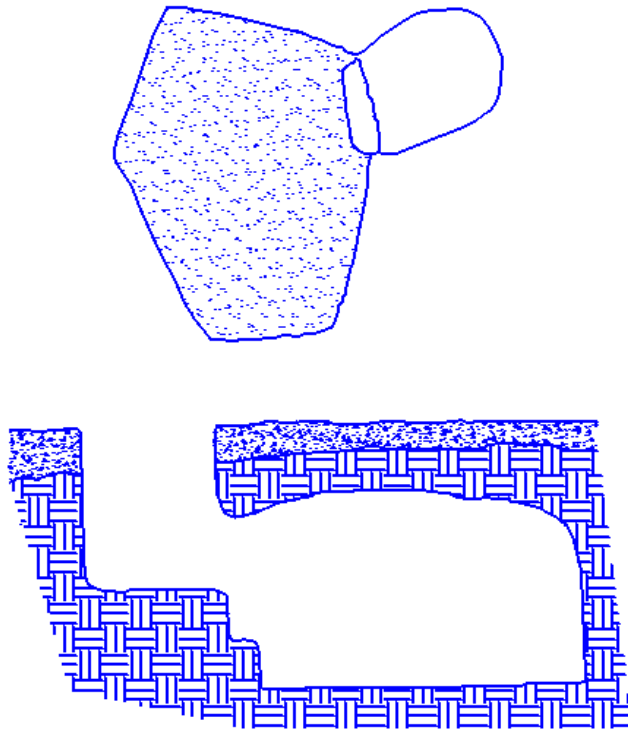


Fig. 13: Tomb III, plan and section.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Tomb IV in the site of Ain Assan: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a perpendicular rectangular-shaped lateral top entrance in the north-west side. The interment chamber is trapezoid-shaped. It dates back to beginning of the (EBA IV A- 2400 -2250 BC)⁸⁰².

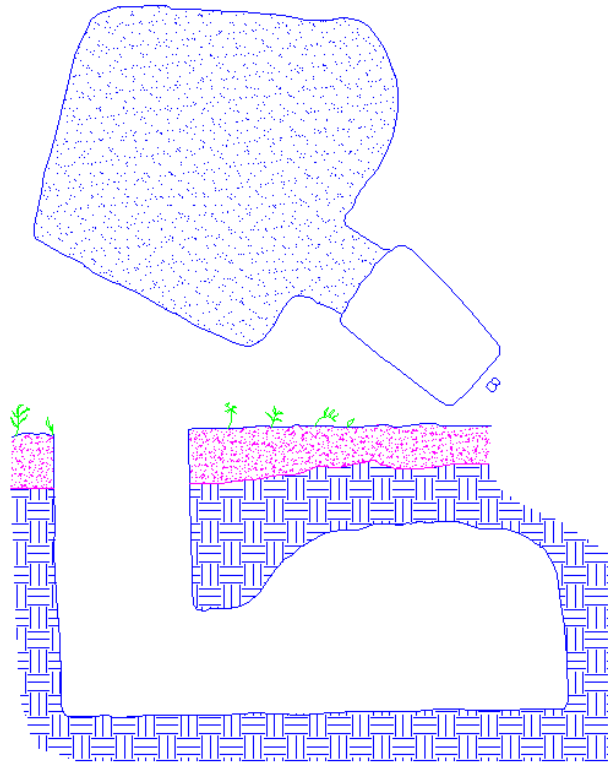


Fig. 14: Tomb IV, plan and section.

⁸⁰² Al -Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

Tomb XV in the site of Ain Assan: This tomb pertains to the rock-cut and stone-built tomb. It consists of one rock-cut chamber and stone-built. The entrance is lateral from the top; the rectangular shaped interment chamber is regularly cut and built. This tomb was also not precisely dated when it was discovered in the 1930s, but it is thought to date back to the EBA IV⁸⁰³.

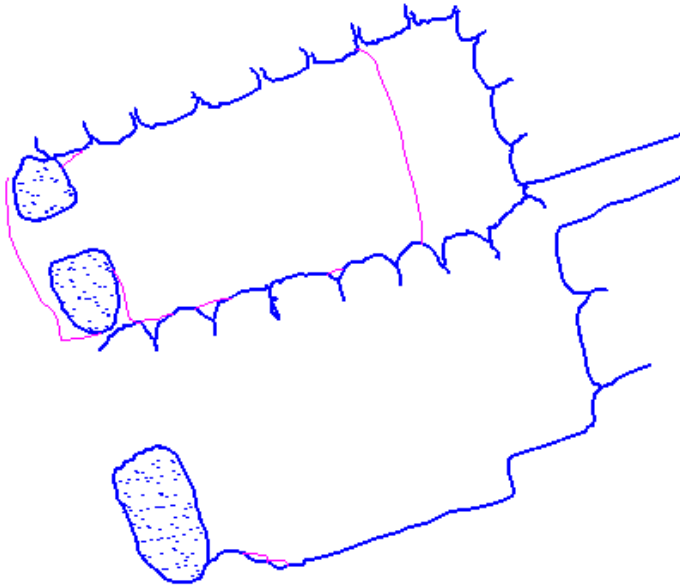


Fig.15: Tomb XV, plan and section.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*

Tell As:

It is located in an unpopulated plain four kilometers west of Khan Sheikhoun on the road of al-Madiq citadel. The tell layout is semi-circular with two entrances. One from the north and the other from the south (fig 16). The interment area is 800 meters south – west of tell⁸⁰⁴.

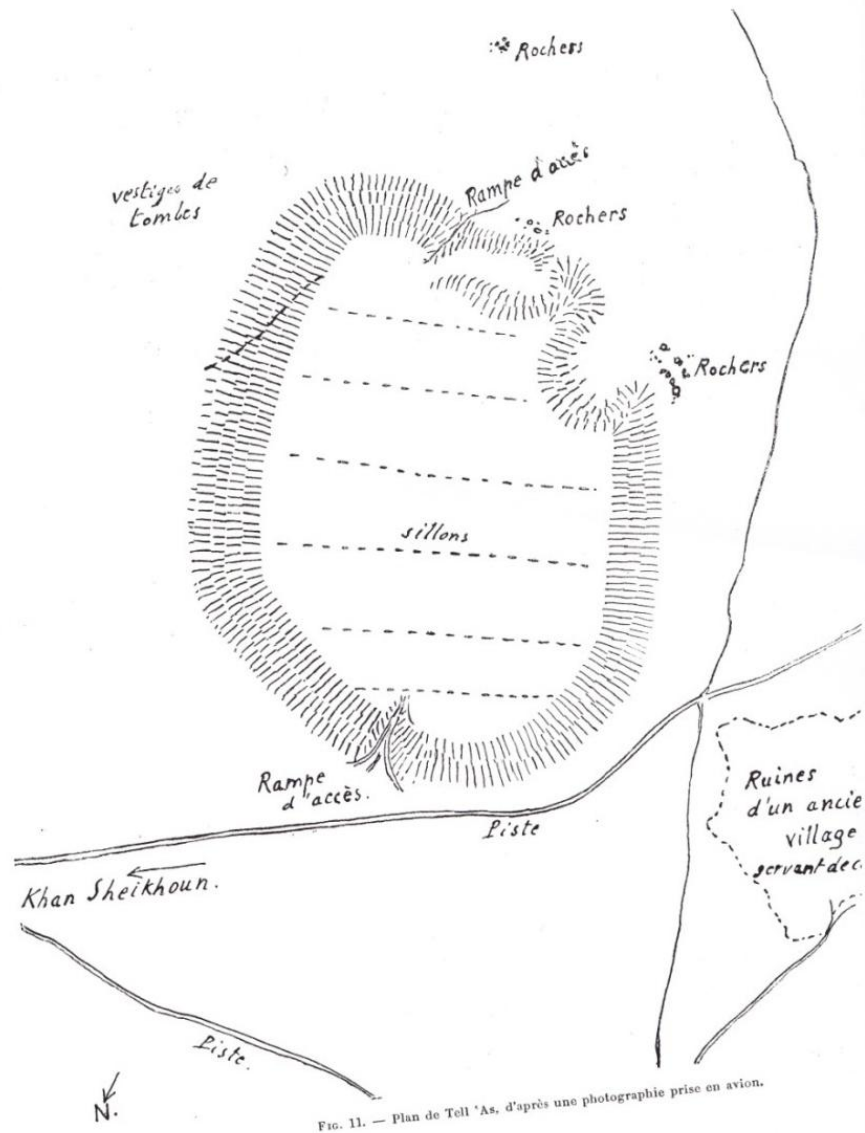


Fig.16: Tell As. Map.

⁸⁰⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

Tomb III in the site of tell As: A well rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance. It consists of one square-shaped interment chamber. It dates back to the end of the third millennium BC⁸⁰⁵.

Tomb VI in the site of tell As: Also a well rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance. It also consists of one square-shaped interment chamber. It dates back to the third millennium BC (EBA)⁸⁰⁶.

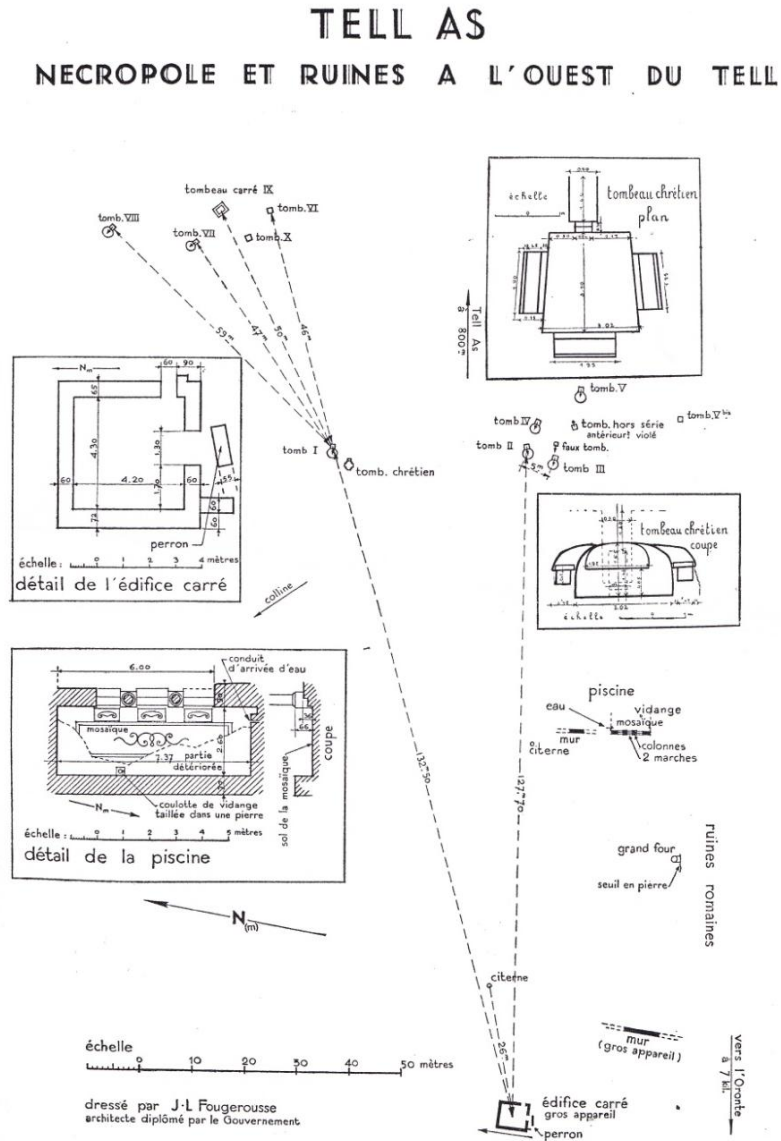


Fig.17: Tell As, plan.

⁸⁰⁵ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Aleppo:

Aleppo is 350 kilometers north of Damascus and 185 kilometers east of Latakia. The archaeological discoveries have indicated the presence of caves dating back to the Early Bronze Age, as well as settlements in the north and north-eastern part of the city dating back to both Early and Middle Bronze Ages. The site was the capital of Yamhad Kingdom in the second millennium BC.

Tombs A and B in Aleppo: In 2009 two rock-cut shaft tombs (A and B) uncovered accidentally in the industrial town of Aleppo city, this tombs dating back to the Early Bronze Age⁸⁰⁷.

Tomb A: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a perpendicular rectangular-shaped lateral top entrance which was sealed with a different size of stones. The interment chamber is elliptical-shaped by 360 Cm diameter and 200 Cm high. It dates back to the EBA⁸⁰⁸.

Tomb B: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a perpendicular rectangular-shaped lateral top entrance. The interment chamber is elliptical-shaped by 200 Cm diameter and 150 Cm high, dates back to the EBA⁸⁰⁹.

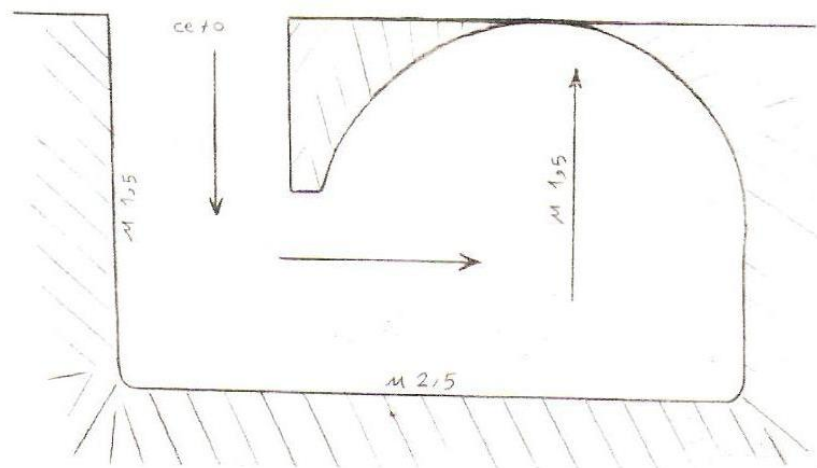


Fig.18: Aleppo, tomb B, section.

⁸⁰⁷ Kanjou and Naser 2009: 52.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*: 53.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*: 54.

Umm el-Marra:

It is located midway between Aleppo and the Euphrates. This tell is an elliptical– shaped one the area of which amounts to an almost 25 hectares (fig 19), and therefore, the largest bronze site in al-Jabbul area⁸¹⁰.

A joint American-Dutch expedition run by Glenn M. Schwartz from Johns Hopkins University in America and Hans Curvers from Amsterdam University has been working in the site since 1994. Archaeological excavation has shown that the site had been a small kingdom revolving around larger neighboring kingdoms such as Ebla and Aleppo (Yamhad). It had been populated throughout Bronze Ages from 2800 to 1200 BC⁸¹¹.

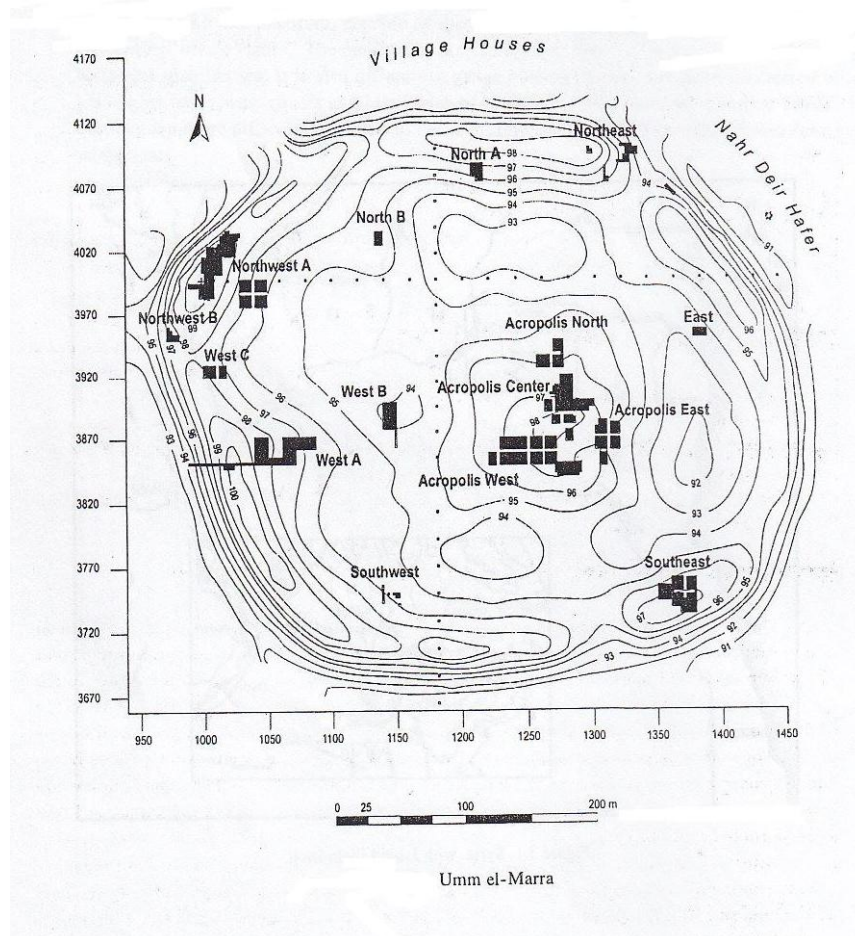


Fig.19: Topographic map.

⁸¹⁰ Schwartz 2007: 40.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*

The tombs at Umm-el-Marra were located on a high point in the Center of the site Acropolis,⁸¹² a feature ca. 150× 150 meters in area in the south central part of the site⁸¹³.

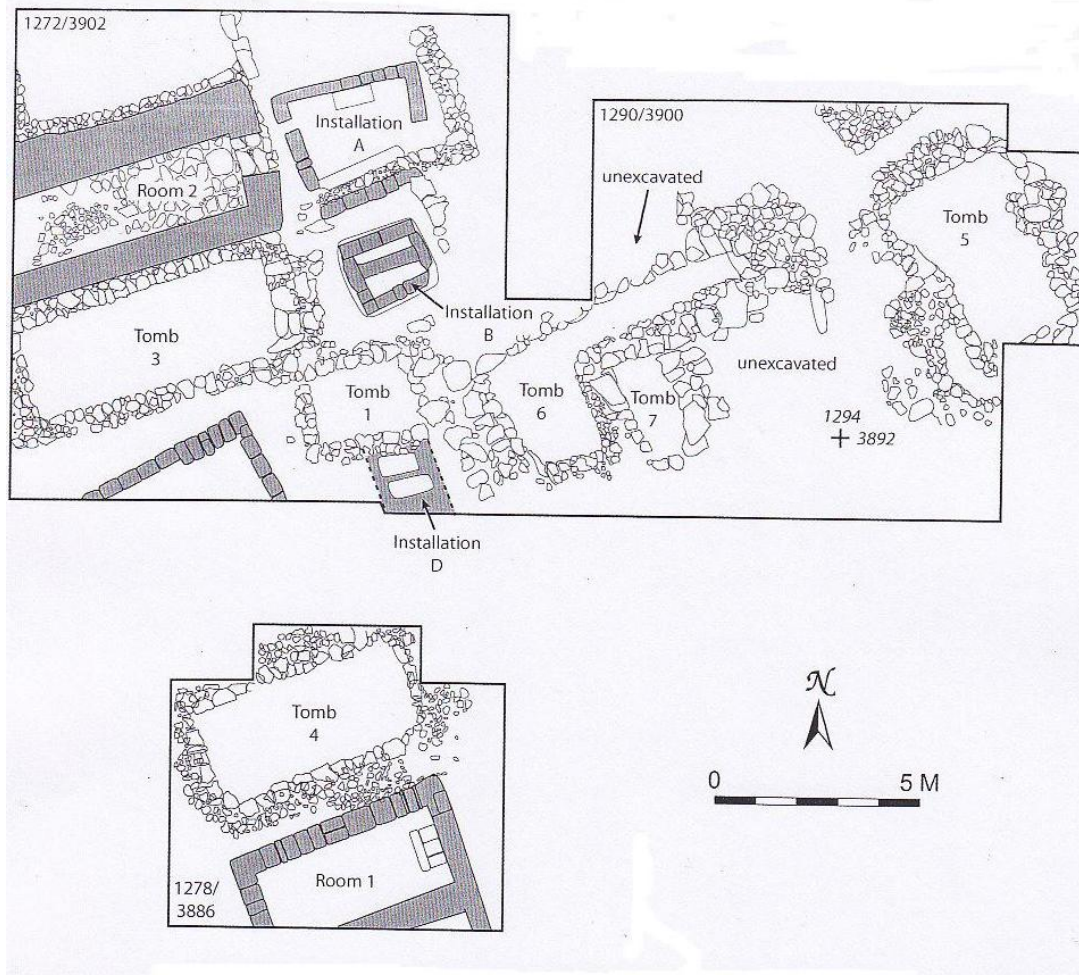


Fig.20: Plan with location of EBA Grave in Umm el-Marra.

Tomb I in the site of Umm el-Marra: An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls, 2.6 by 3.8 meters uncovered in 2000. It consists of three floors one on top of the other and dates back to the (EBA IVA)⁸¹⁴.

⁸¹² Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 604.

⁸¹³ Schwartz 2007: 41.

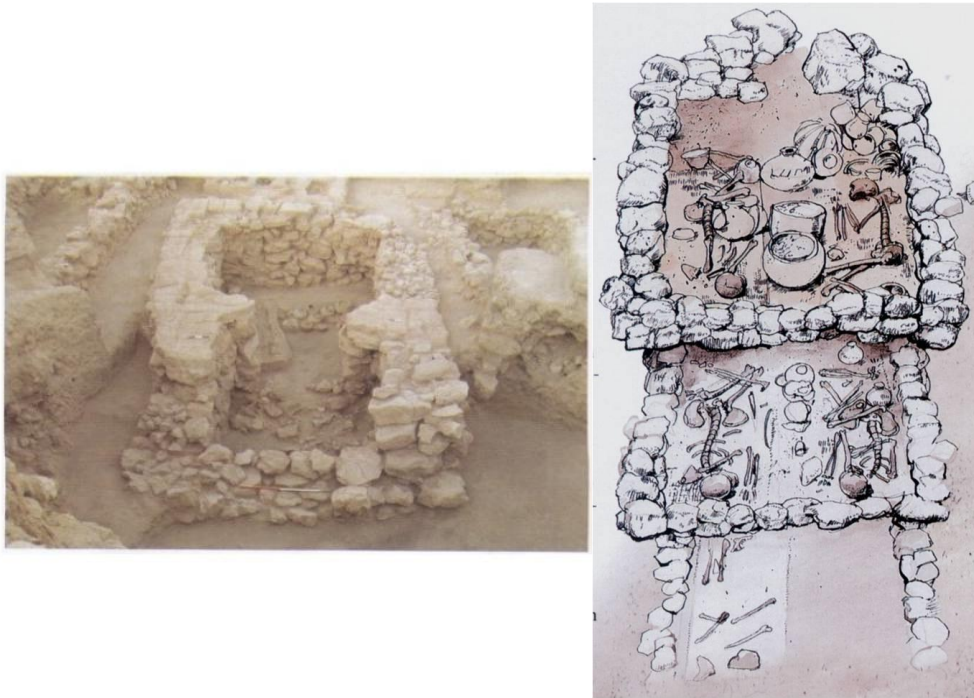


Fig. 21: Tomb I, plan.

Tomb III in the site of Umm el-Marra: An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It was found to the west of tomb 7 and was destroyed. It is 7.7 by 3.5 m with walls between 1.15 and 1.35 high. It dates back to the EBA IVA⁸¹⁵.

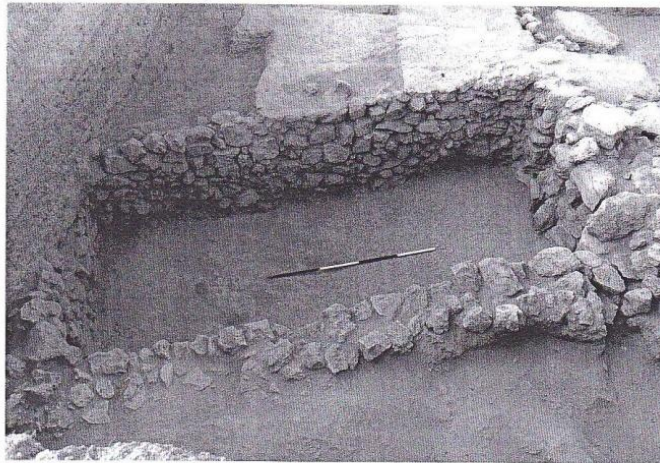


Fig. 22: Tomb III. Plan.

⁸¹⁴ Schwartz 2007: 40.

⁸¹⁵ Schwartz *et al.* 2006 : 610.

Tomb IV in the site of Umm el-Marra: An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It was found completely intact. It is 6.80 by 4.25 m with walls 2 meters high. Its entrance is thought to have been on the north direction near its north-eastern corner which was destroyed because of the presence of a mud brick wall above it since the entrance looks narrow m just 50 by 50 Cm. It dates back to the EBA IVA (2400 BC). It consists of two levels⁸¹⁶. The dimensions of the upper level are the same as those of the above mentioned tomb ground, while the lower level, the smaller is just 90 by 80 Cm and its depth from the floor of the upper level is 56 Cm⁸¹⁷.

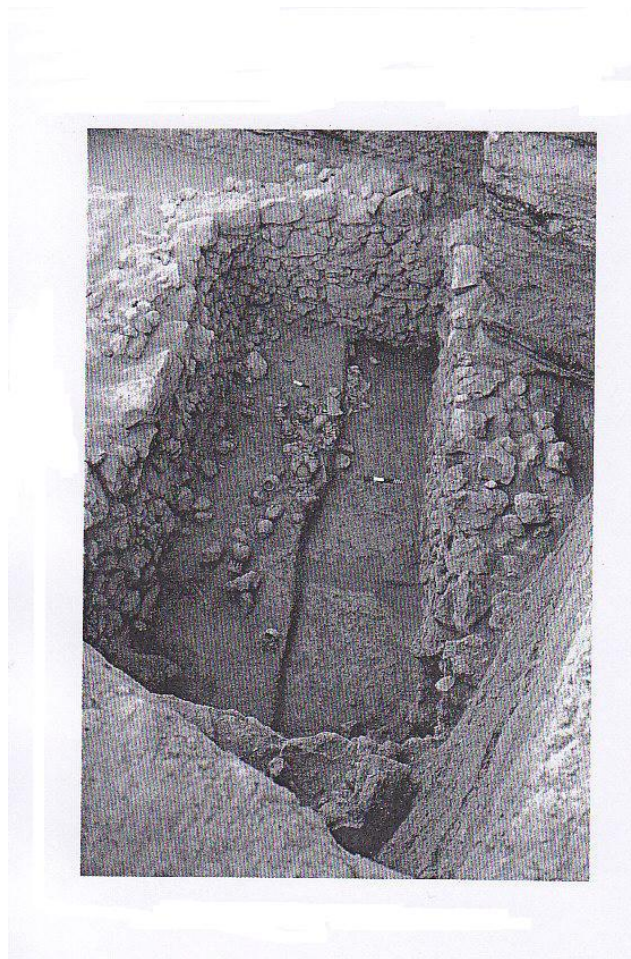


Fig. 23, Tomb IV, Plan.

⁸¹⁶ Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid*.

Tomb V in the site of Umm el- Marra: An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It was destroyed. Its dimensions are 6.2 by 3.4–4.5 meters with walls 1.5m high. It dates back to mid third millennium; that is EB III, the same period of Umm el- Marra⁸¹⁸.

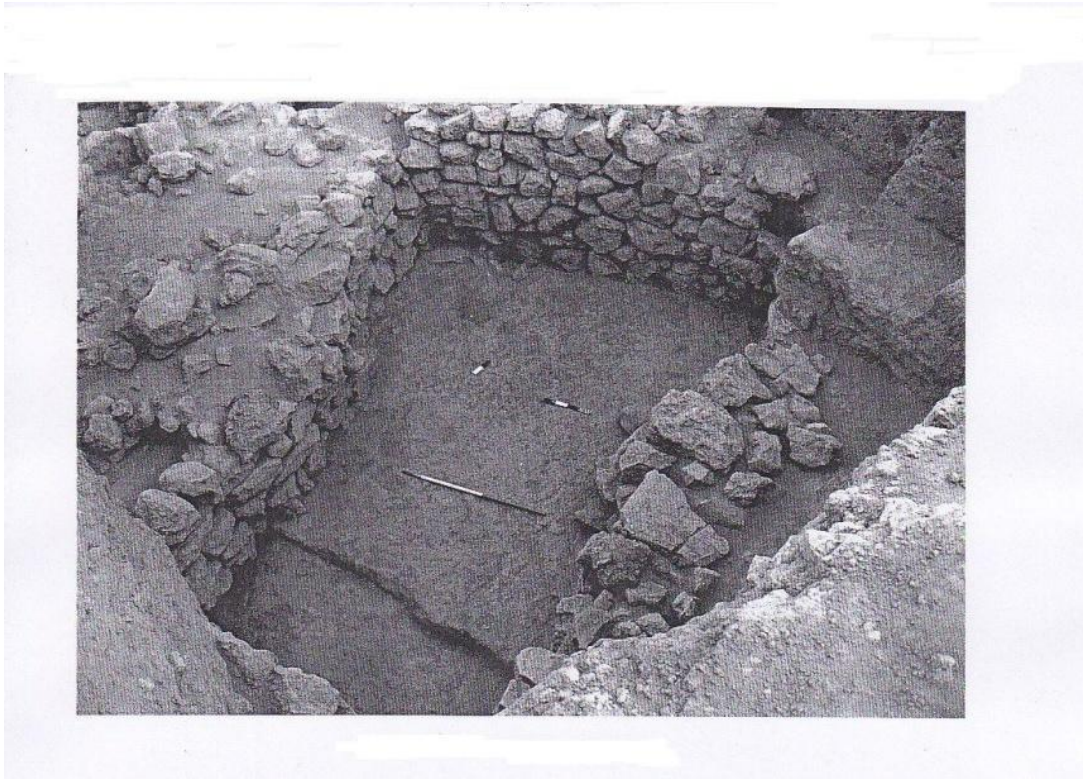


Fig. 24: Tomb V, Plan.

Tomb VI in the site of Umm el-Marra: An earth-cut tomb with stone-built walls. It is the group largest tomb,⁸¹⁹ though partly destroyed because of the erection of tomb 7 adjacent to it. Its entrance is thought to have been in the east direction. It dates back to EBA III⁸²⁰.

⁸¹⁸ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606-607.

⁸¹⁹ Schwartz 2007: 41.

⁸²⁰ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608-609.

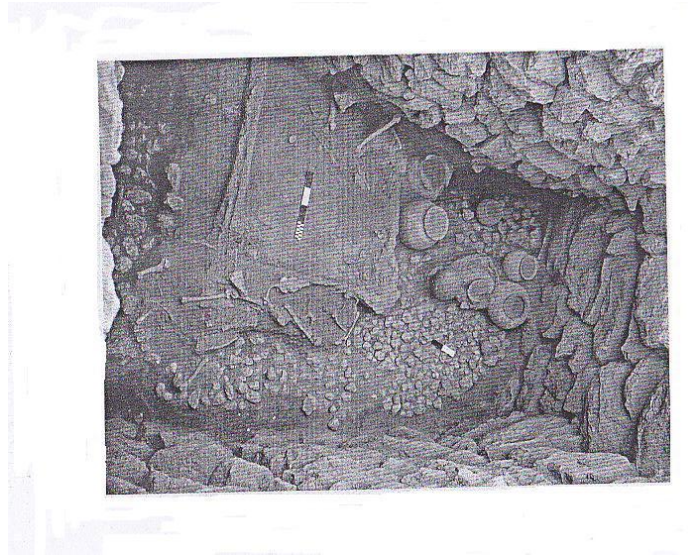


Fig. 25:Tomb VI, Plan.

Tomb VII in the site of Umm el-Marra: As mentioned above, this one is interpenetrated with tomb 6, and also earth-cut with stone-built walls, but remains of a mud break wall in the eastern side was noticed⁸²¹, the tomb external dimensions are 9.6 by 4.8 m, while the internal dimensions are 6.4 by 2.9 m, and the height of its northern wall which consists of seven stone courses is 2.3 m. It dates back either to the end of EBA IVA, Umm el-Marra V, or EBA IVB which corresponds to IV in the site of Umm el-Marra that is about 2300 BC⁸²².



Fig. 26:Tomb VII, Plan.

⁸²¹ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 623-624.

⁸²² Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 624.

Ebla (Mardikh):

The site of Ebla is 60 kilometers south of Aleppo, 28 kilometers from Idled. The area of the tell is sixty hectares while the area of the acropolis in the middle is just three hectares. The city is surrounded by an elliptical-shaped earth wall which dates back to the beginning of the second millennium BC (fig 27). The city had four gates of which only the of Ebla was initiated in 1964 by an Italian archaeological mission headed by Professor Paolo Matthiae, who is still working at the site up till now. The recovery of a Palace (Mardikh Phase II) of the EBA IV together with an archive composed of more than 17000 texts throw light on an independent Syrian culture previously completely unknown.

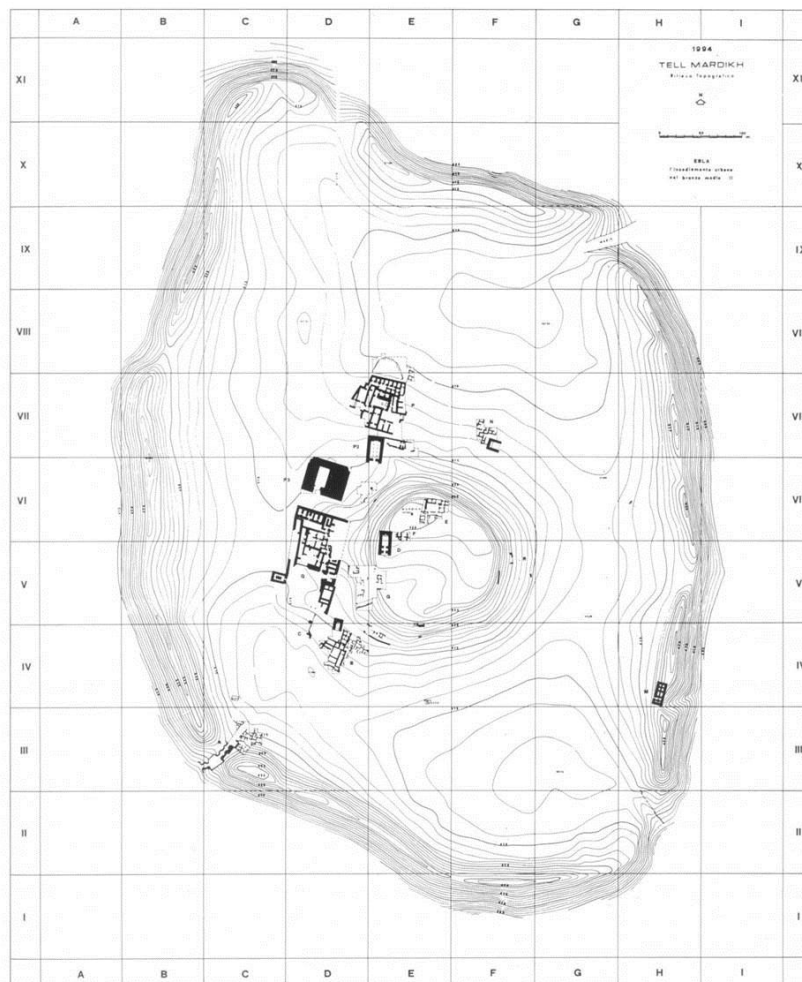


Fig. 27: Topographic Map of Ebla.

Tomb G4 in Ebla: It was uncovered in 1995; it is an earth-cut tomb ground built with processed stones and mud brick. It is 5.50 meters under the floor of Royal Palace G, near the south eastern corner of the Temple D. This tomb ground consists of two adjacent rectangular-shaped rooms with an east-west orientation. The first room 5.85 meters above the burial floor. The second also rectangular-shaped east-west orientated room is 4 meters wide; its length was not correctly known because of damage taking place in this direction, but is surely more 3.5 meters⁸²³. The room of the tomb was built above the level which dates back to the early first and second Bronze Age EBA I-II. The burial ground was built with well processed refined stone as well as a wall of mud brick each piece of which is 40 by 60 Cm like the mud brick used in building the Royal Palace. This tomb dates back to the EBA IV A⁸²⁴.



Fig. 28: Tomb G4. Plan1.

⁸²³ Matthiae 1997: 270.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*

Hama:

The ancient tell of Hama, known as Hama citadel, is located in the middle of the modern city, ten meters from the Orontes turn (fig 29). It is an almost triangular-shaped tell with a side of 420 meters and a base of 300 meters and an area of about 8 hectares. Archaeological researches and excavation were carried out by a Danish mission run by Harald Ingholt in the period between 1931 and 1938. The excavation works have showed that the tell consists of 12 archaeological levels covering a period of time from the fifth millennium BC to the Islamic period⁸²⁵. Early Bronze settlement appeared in the two 3000 -2400 BC. And 2400 – 2000 BC respectively⁸²⁶.

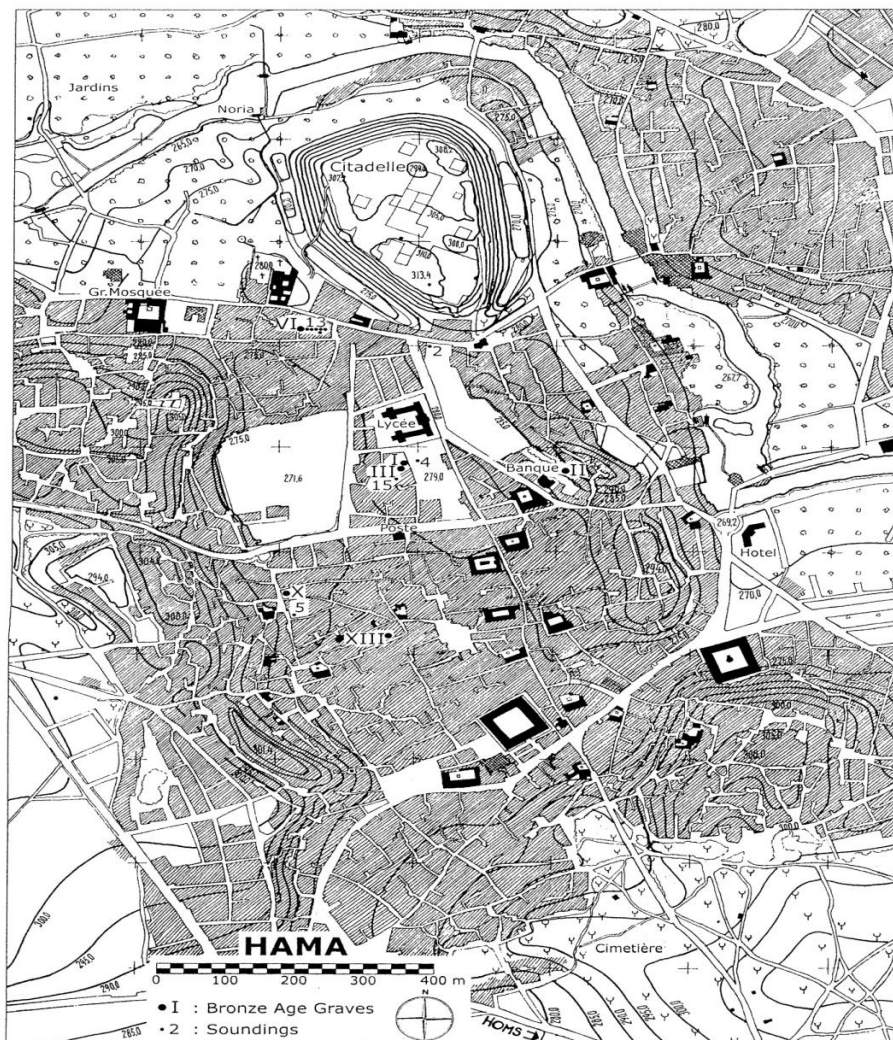
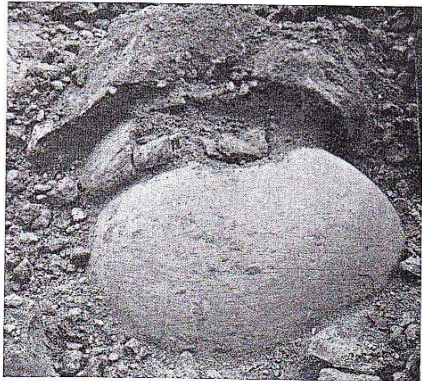


Fig. 29: Topographic Map of Hama.

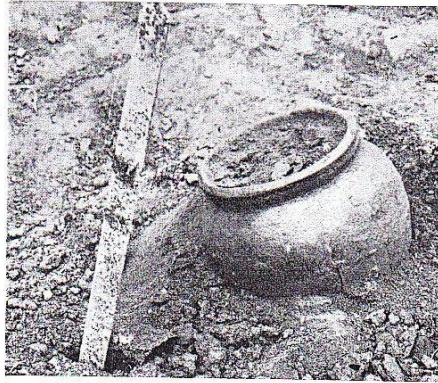
⁸²⁵ Ingholt 1940 : 29-48.

⁸²⁶ Fugmann 1958: 19.

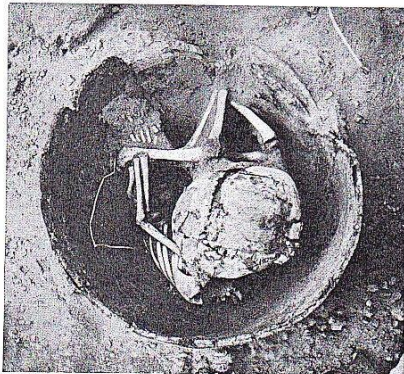
Infants interment jars under the floors of houses were recorded from level k 10 to level k3⁸²⁷(fig 30), which date back according to Fugmann, to the first half of the third millennium BC.



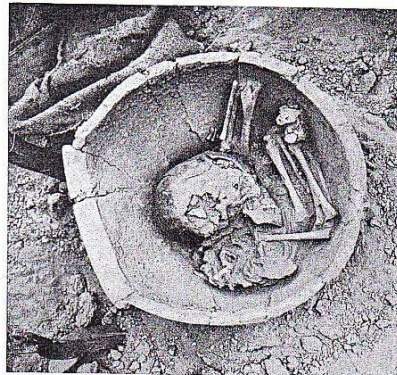
Jarre funéraire no. 5/1935. Niveau K 8.



Jarre funéraire no. 3/1935. Niveau K 8.



Jarre funéraire no. 33/1934. Niveau K 7.



Jarre funéraire no. 16/1934. Niveau K 6.

Fig. 30: Jar burials from Hama.

⁸²⁷ Ingholt 1940 : 24-48.

The interment types in Central and Northern Syria from the Early Bronze Age and reused in the Middle Bronze Age:

Ain Assan:

Ain Assan settlement is located in the south-western end of the city Aleppo. The area of the site with the adjacent cemetery is six hectares. Archaeological excavation at this site started in 1973 and resulted in the discovery of a collective tomb which had been used during both Early and Middle Bronze Age.

Tomb III in the site of Ain Assan: It is also a rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral entrance from the top. Its access is possible through two stairs which lead to an almost polygon-shaped interment chamber while the entrance looks elliptically-shaped according to the layout. This tomb dates back to the end of the EB IV and seems to have been used also at the beginning of Middle Bronze Age (EBA IV-MBA I)⁸²⁸.

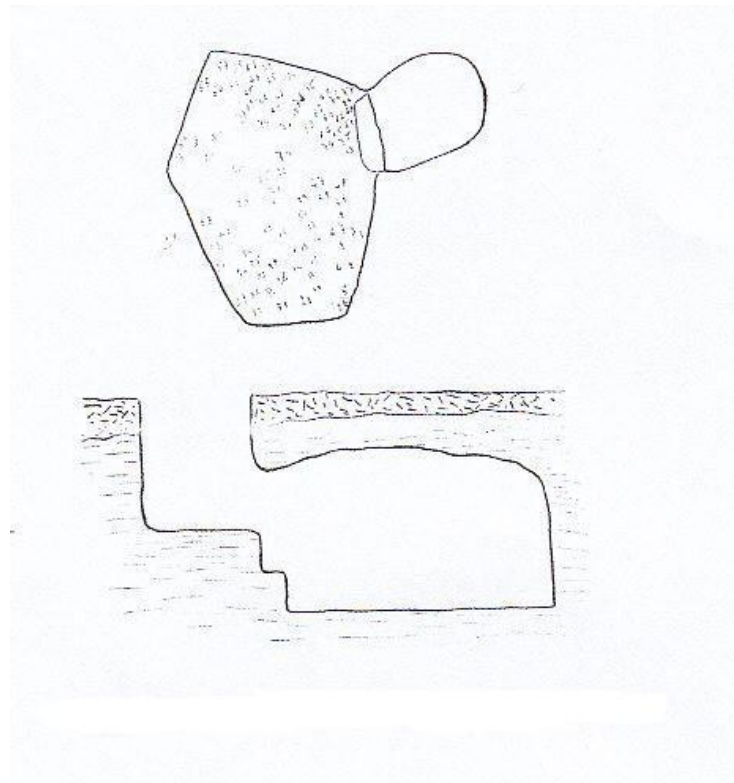


Fig. 31: Tomb III, plan and section.

⁸²⁸ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

Mourek:

Mourek is 30 kilometers north of Hama and 8 kilometers from Khan Sheikoun. The Danish mission working at Hama was informed about the existence of a tomb.

Mourek tomb: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb with a top lateral entrance from the south side, accessible through six stairs.

It dates back to the end of Early Bronze Age and the beginning of Middle Bronze Age⁸²⁹. The tomb is 310 Cm long, 285 Cm wide and 290 Cm high. It is divided into three chambers 180 – 210 Cm wide, 75 – 85 Cm deep and 80 Cm high⁸³⁰.

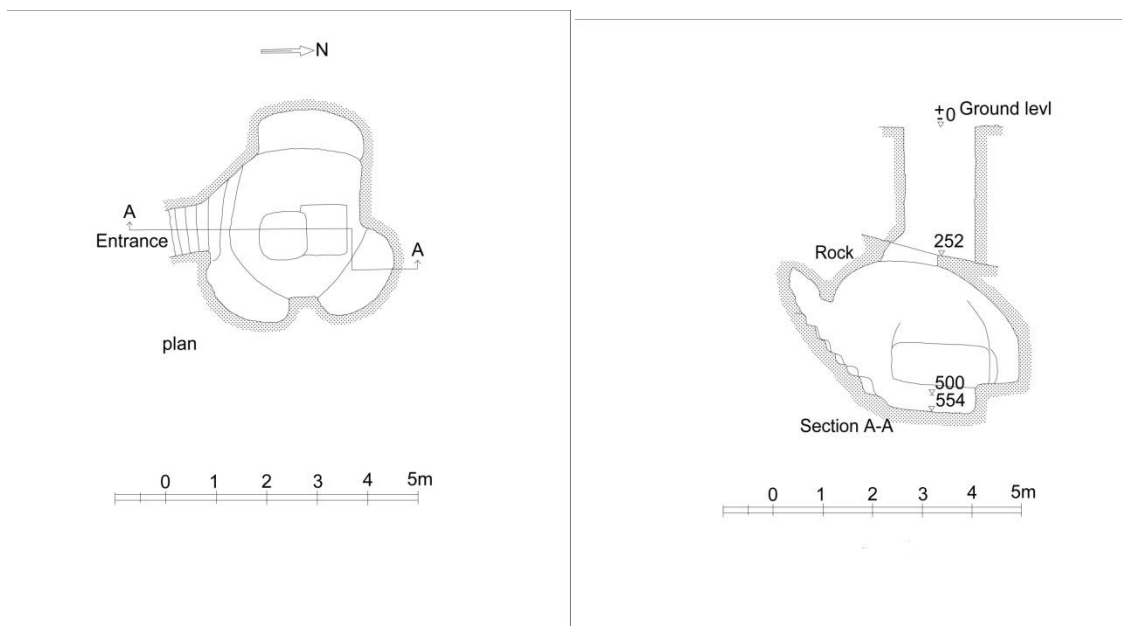


Fig. 32: Mourek tomb. Plan and section.

⁸²⁹ Riis 2007: 49.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid*.

Ansari:

The Ansari Settlement excavation where started during the fall Season 1973, is situated on the south-west side of Aleppo⁸³¹. The surface of the ancient city of Ansari is about six hectares (fig 33). The finds indicated that Ansari civilizations on this land from the ancient bronze age until the end of the Middle Bronze Age, namely between 2400-1550 BC⁸³².

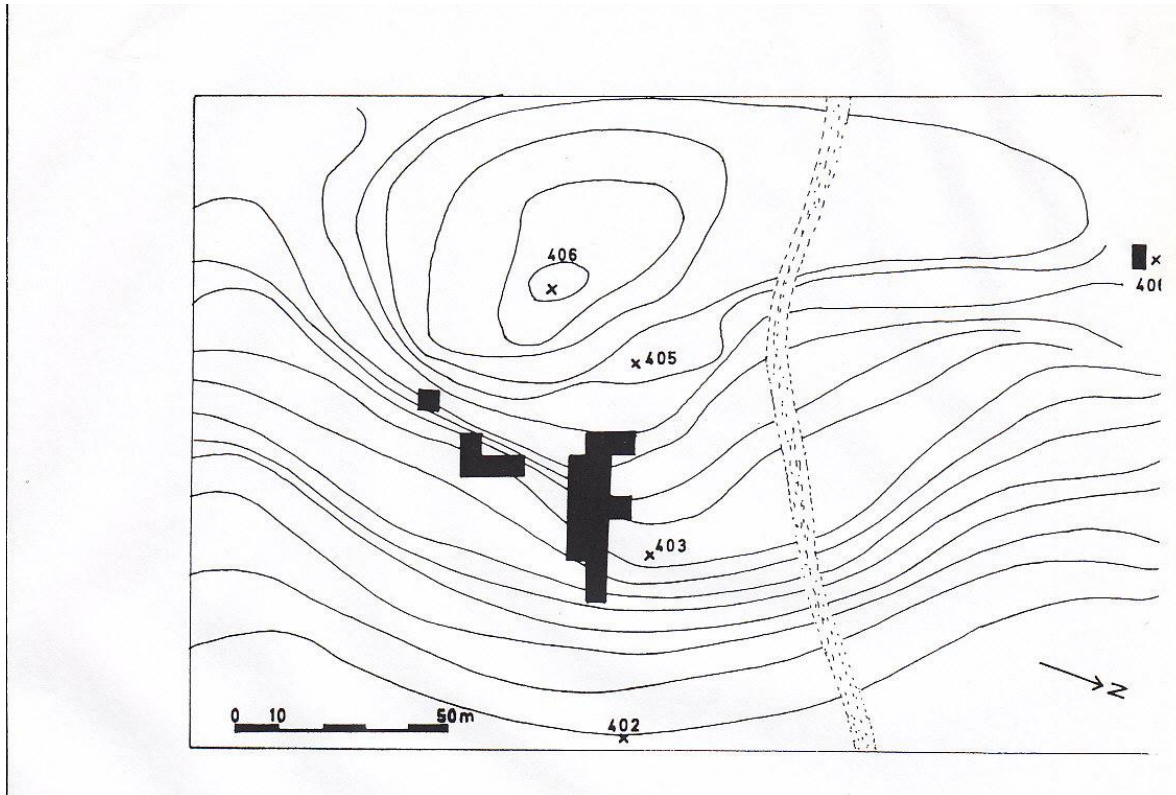


Fig. 33: Ansari Topographic Map.

Ansari tomb: An oval-shaped collective tomb, 440 by 320 Cm, cut in the limestone mound. Its roof consists of three large stones (seem to have broken away from the block (the mother mound). The stone in the middle (220 by 210) Cm is oval, while the other two are smaller and a little bit lower than the one in the middle. The entrance is located in the southern side opposite to the tomb small stone wall. The entrance consists of two thin slabs of stone 80 by 66 by 17 Cm

⁸³¹ Suleiman 1984 : 1.

⁸³² Suleiman 1987 : 231.

and a depth of 40 Cm. The first slab is vertically installed while the second is horizontally installed . from outside the tomb had been sealed by a solid lime layer to prevent moisture and water leak⁸³³. This tomb dates back to the EBA IV, though it was reused at the beginning of MBA⁸³⁴ .

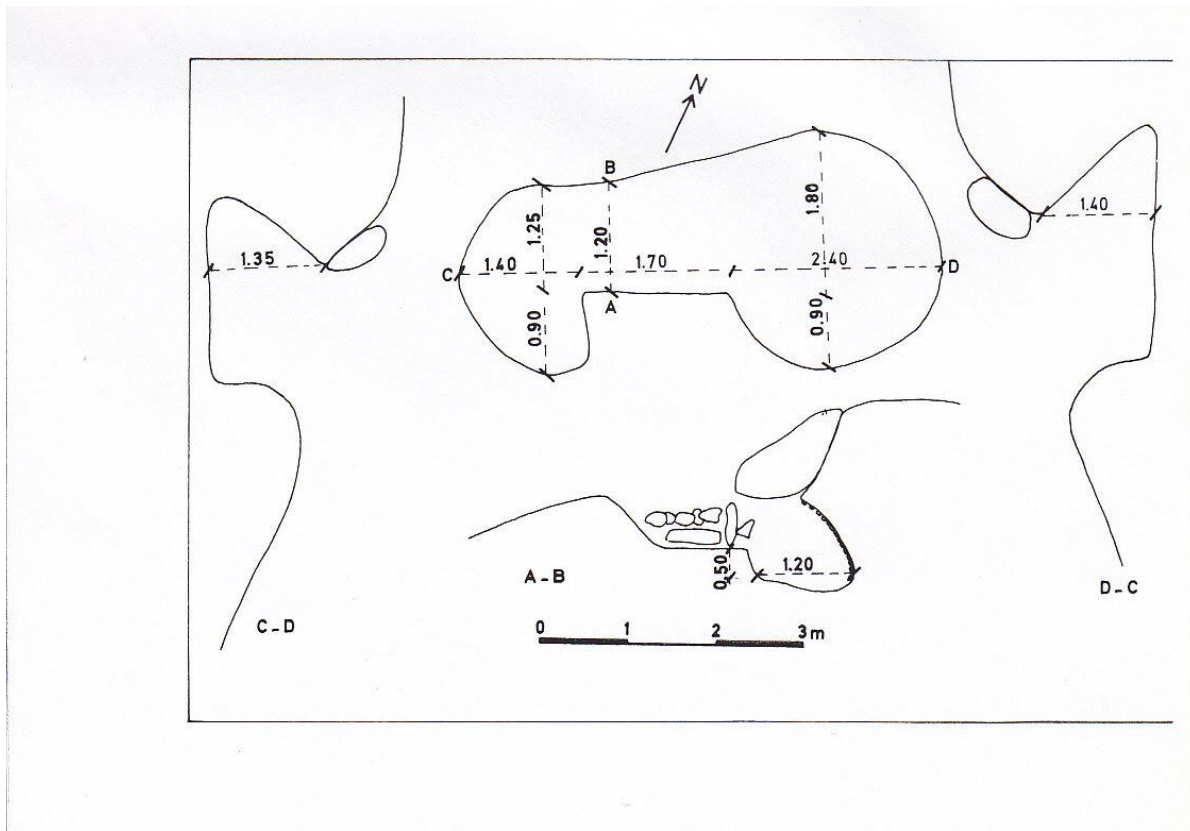


Fig. 34: Ansari tomb, Plan and section.

⁸³³ Suleiman 1984 : 1-16.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid* .

During the National expedition excavation run by Antoine Suleiman in Ansari site, a one jar interment was found. This was pottery shreds which belonged to more than one jar put on and under a skeleton of an adult. It was found at a depth of about four meters. The burial dates back to the EBA IVB (2100-2000) BC⁸³⁵.

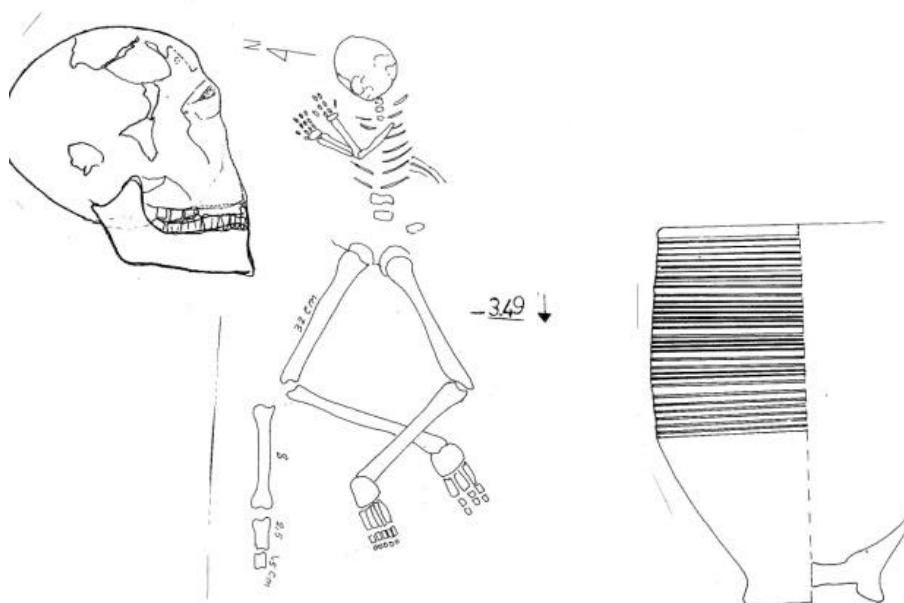


Fig. 35: Ansari, Jar burial, Plan.

⁸³⁵ Suleiman 1999: 79.

The interment type in central and northern Syria during the Middle Bronze Age:



Fig.36: Geographical distribution of MBA tomb types in Inner and Northern Syria.

: Hama

During the excavation of Bronze Age graves outside the ancient town mound in Hama 1935-1938 by the Danish Archaeological Expedition, which directed by Dr. Harald Ingholt, Six rock-cut tombs had been uncovered. This tombs dating back to the Middle Bronze Age⁸³⁶.

50

BRONZE AGE GRAVES IN HAMA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

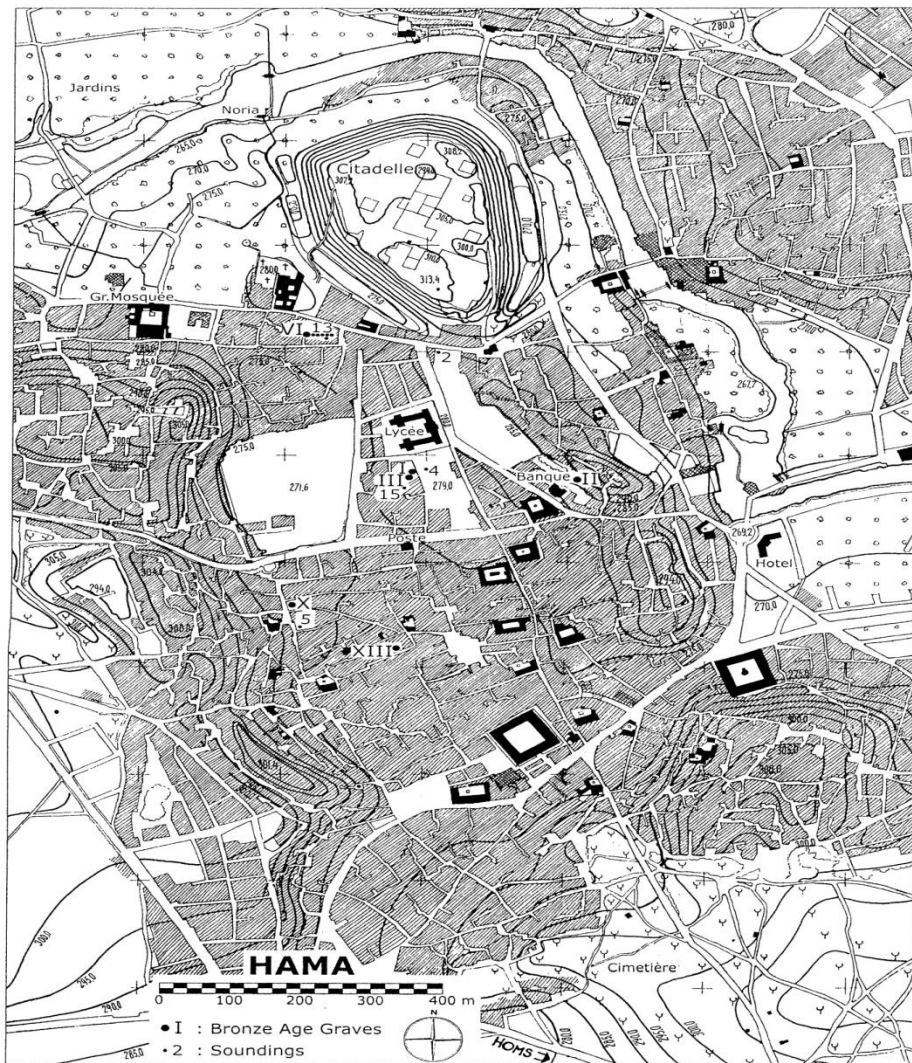


Fig. 37: Topographic Map of Hama.

⁸³⁶ Riis 1948: 13.

Tomb I in Hama: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb uncovered in 1935. It consists of two rooms, A and B,⁸³⁷ with an entrance from the north along with another entrance to Room B but it is sealed with a stone cover. In the two entrances there is also staircase of two stairs in each of them. The two rooms look as if they had been either independent or connected tombs and seem from the layout. The dimensions of the rooms are 460 m long, 250 Cm deep and 180 Cm high for the north western room A which is divided into two equal parts, while the south eastern room B is 330 Cm long, 360 Cm deep and 170 Cm high⁸³⁸. The tomb dates back to the MBA II.

15

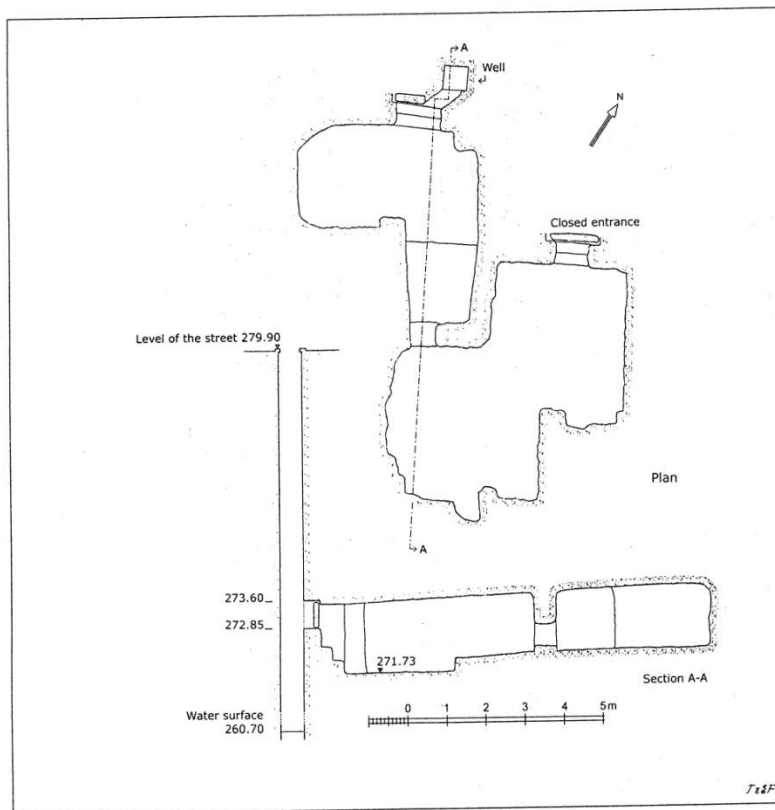


Fig. 38: Tomb G1 A-B. Plan and section.

⁸³⁷ Riis 1948: 14-18.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*

Tomb III in Hama: A Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tomb discovered in 1935. In the south-eastern side it has a top entrance which was sealed with two slabs of stone. There is one stair which leads to the interment chamber. The irregularly cut tomb is 900 Cm long, 280 Cm wide and 180 Cm high in the first part while in the second part it is 350 Cm wide and 250 Cm high⁸³⁹.

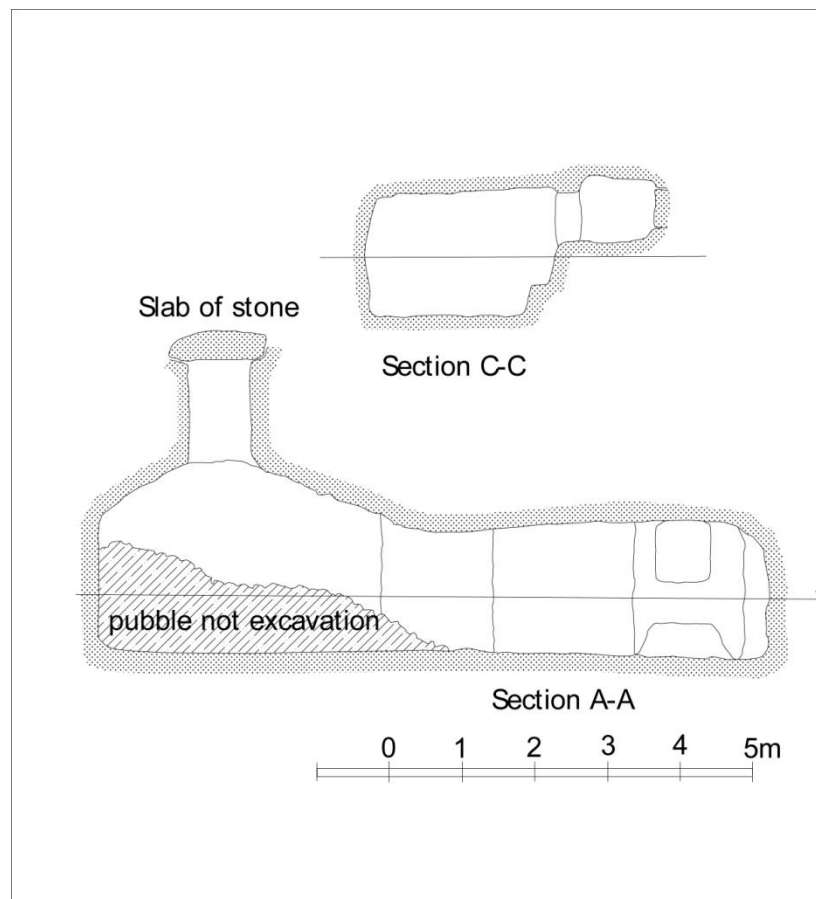


Fig. 39: Hama tomb GIII. Section. A-A: C-C.

Tomb VI in Hama: A rock-cut shaft tomb uncovered in 1935. It consists of one interment chamber 160 Cm long, 145 Cm wide and 220 Cm deep, with a top entrance which was covered with a large slab of stone. It dates back to Middle Bronze Age⁸⁴⁰.

⁸³⁹ Riis 1948 : 22-24.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*: 25-29.

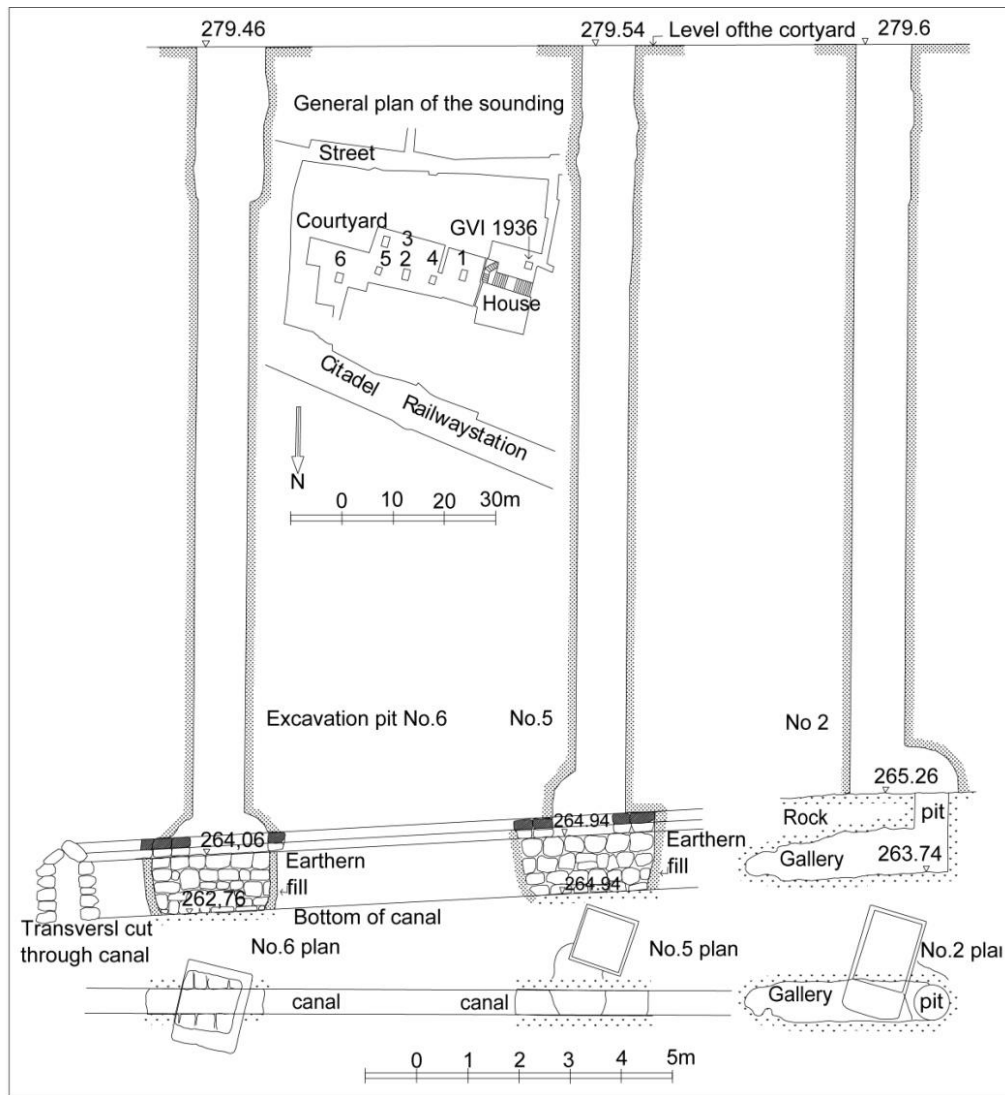


Fig. 40: Hama, tomb G VI. Plan and section.

Tomb X in Hama: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a lateral top entrance uncovered in 1936. The entrance was sealed with a large slab of stone. The interment chamber dimensions are 510 Cm long, 290 Cm wide and 165 Cm high⁸⁴¹.

⁸⁴¹ Riis 1948: 30-32.

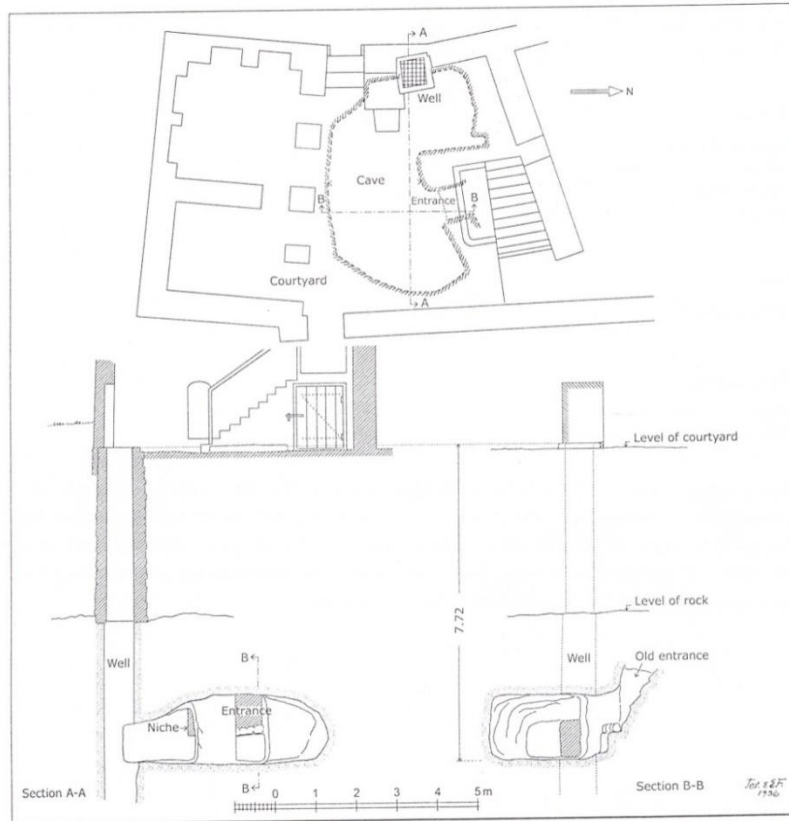


Fig. 41: Hama tomb G X, plan and section.

Tomb XIII in Hama: A rock-cut shaft tomb discovered in 1936 with one interment chamber and a lateral entrance. It dates back to the end of Middle and Early LBA 1550 – 1450 BC⁸⁴².

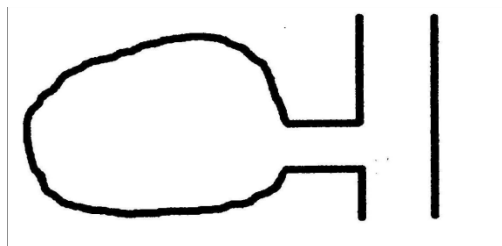


Fig.42: Tomb XIII. Plan.

⁸⁴² Riis 1948: 33-35.

Aleppo:

Aleppo is 350 kilometers north of Damascus and 185 kilometers east of Latakia. The archaeological discoveries have indicated the presence of caves dating back to the Paleolithic Age, as well as settlements in the north and north-eastern part of the city dating back to both Early and Middle Bronze Ages. The site was the capital of Yemkhad Kingdom in the second millennium BC. Remains of the walls of the old city were discovered at the site of Bab al – Faraj (fig 43).

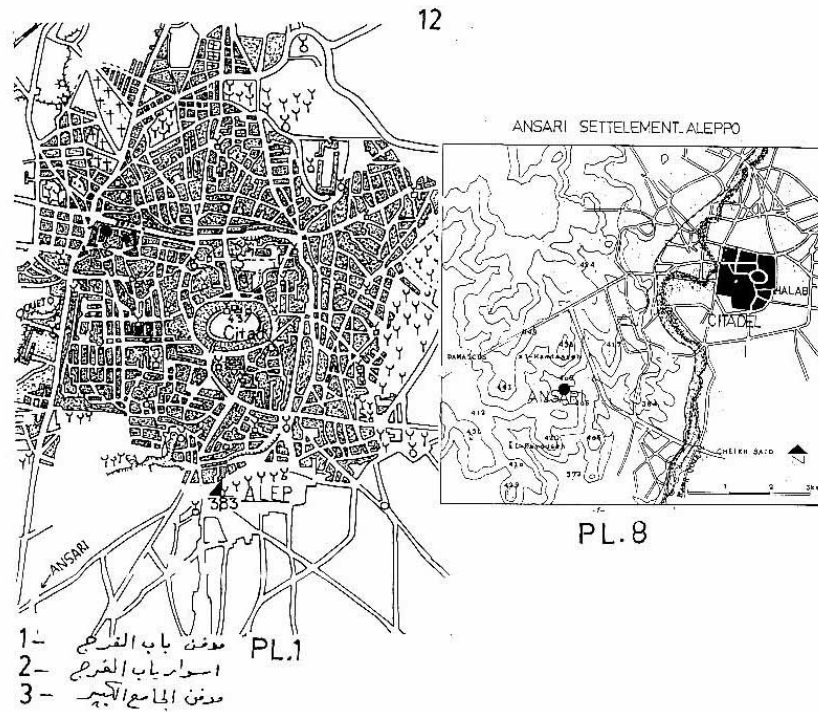


Fig. 43: Map, Ansari and Bab al- Faraj.

Tomb I in Bab al-Faraj : A rock-cut shaft tomb, it is access able through the perpendicular one – meter deep entrance in the southern side which leads to the tomb 80 by 73 door which was sealed with a large slab of stone. The main chamber is access able through an entrance of three

stairs. The tomb is 175 – 180 Cm high. It is divided into two main chambers; the first is 300 by 230 and the second is 210 by 180 Cm. The tomb dates back to the MBA II⁸⁴³.

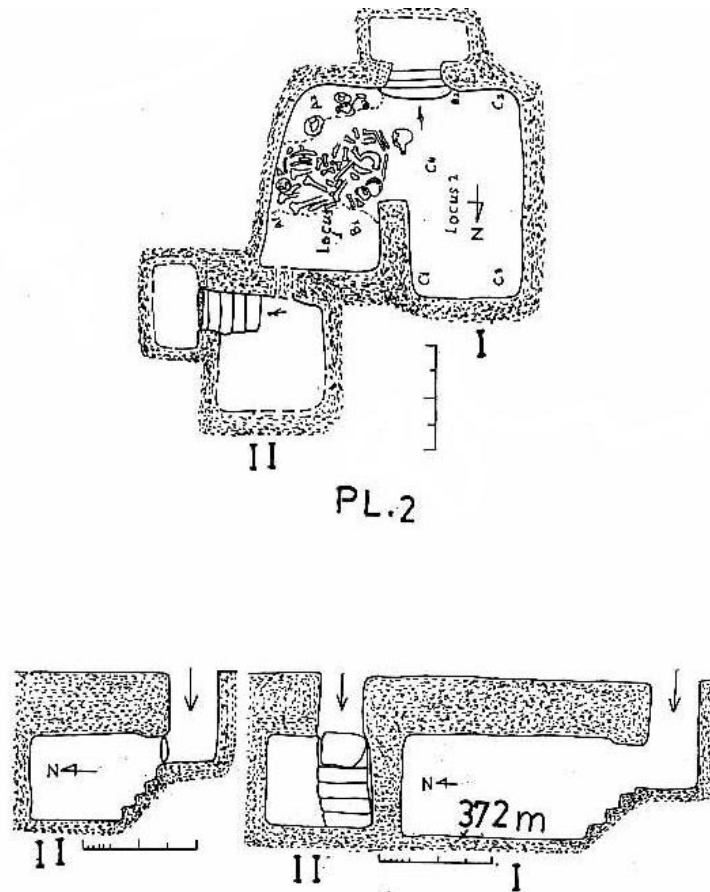


Fig. 44: Tomb Bab al-Faraj, Plan and section.

Khan Sheikhoun:

It is located beside Hama-Aleppo highway, 35 kilometers north of Hama, 100 kilometers from Aleppo and 70 kilometers from Idleb. It is an elliptical shaped tell dating back to the Bronze Age period (fig 45).

⁸⁴³ Suleiman 2000: 2-3. Al-Maqdissi 2006d: 16.

In 2006 the national mission discovered two rock-cut tombs, A and B: which date back to the Middle Bronze Age⁸⁴⁴.

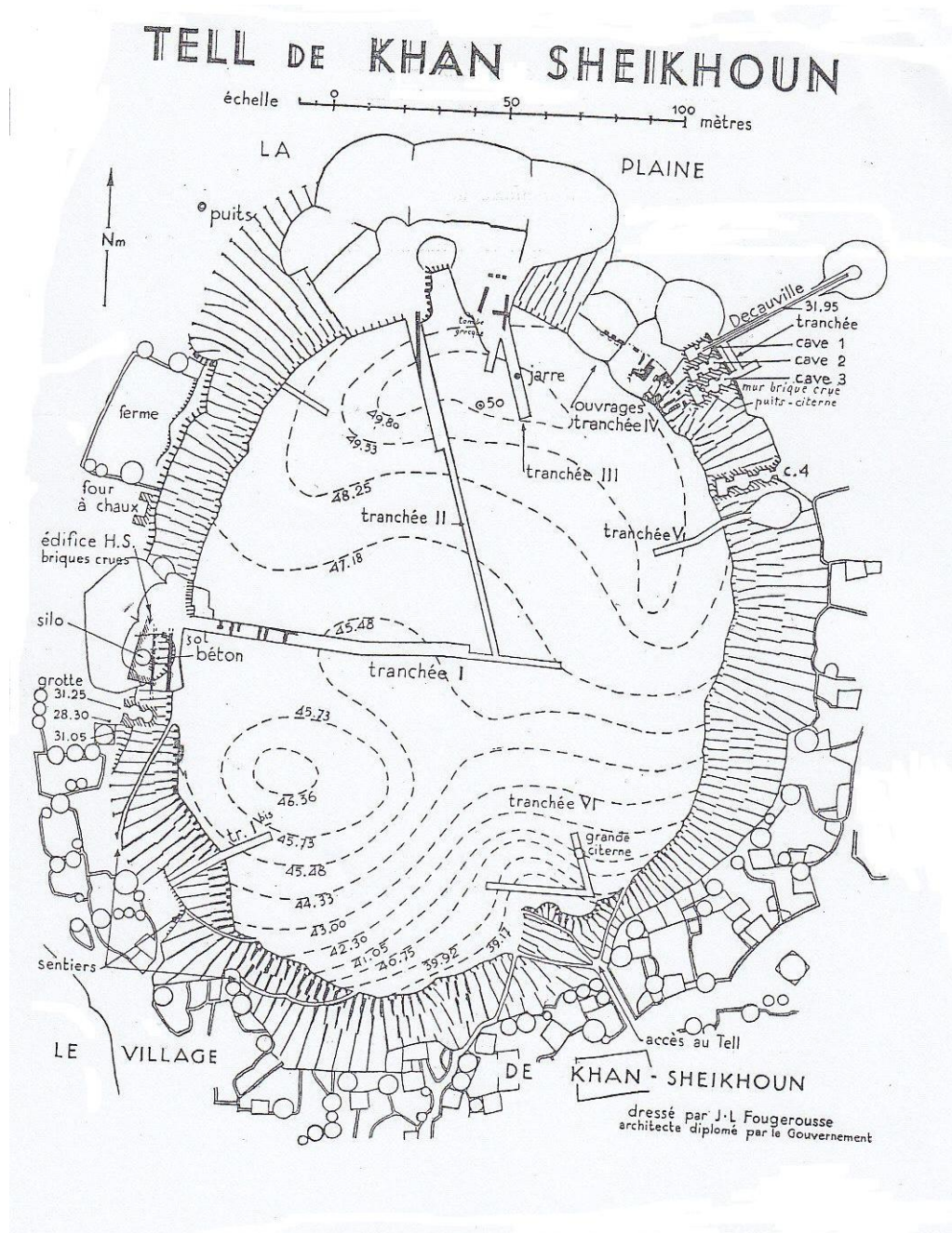


Fig. 45: Topographic Map of Khan Sheikhoun.

⁸⁴⁴ Al -Maqdissi 2006b: 488.

Khan Sheikhoun tomb: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a circular-shaped top lateral entrance. The interment chamber is also circular-shaped with a diameter of 4 meters. It dates back to the MBA IIB period on the basis of the pottery evidence⁸⁴⁵.

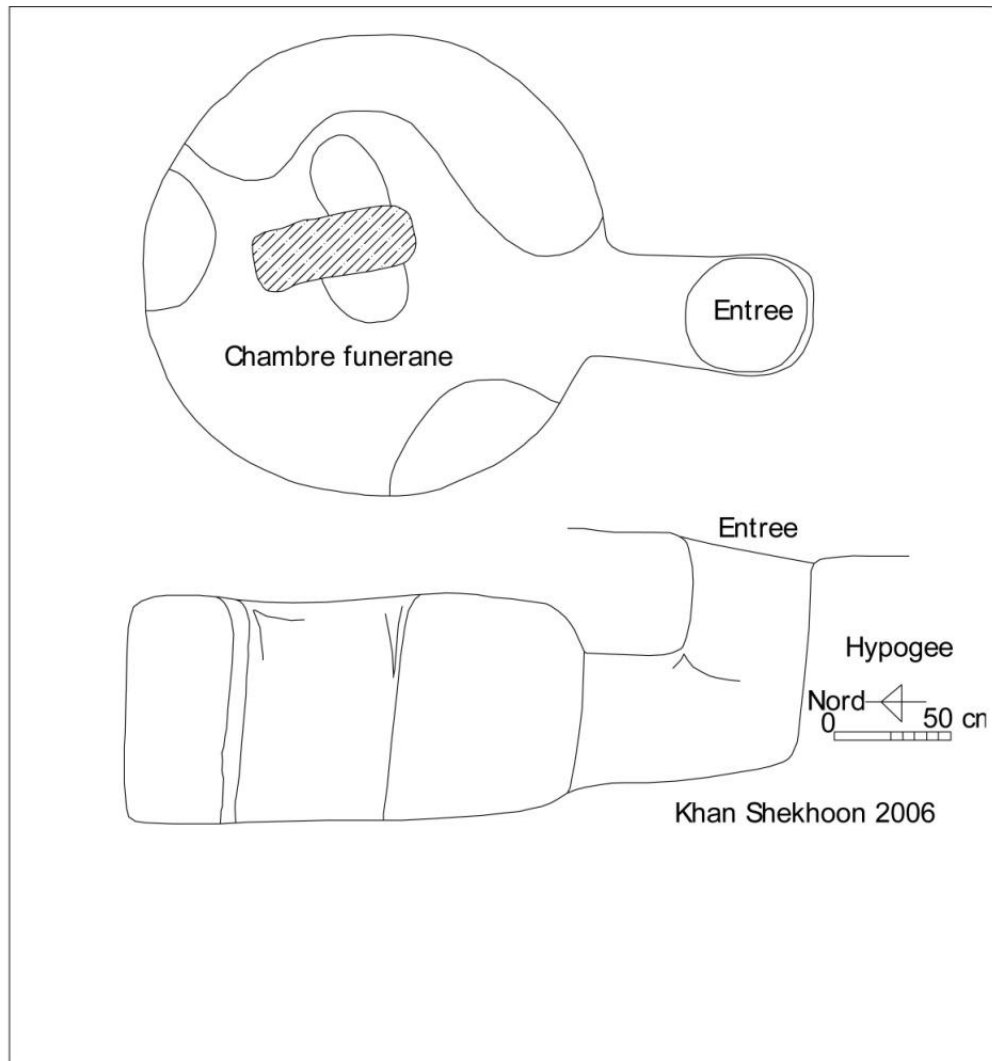


Fig. 46: Khan Shekhoun, tomb B plan and section.

⁸⁴⁵ Al-Maqdissi 2006 b: 488.

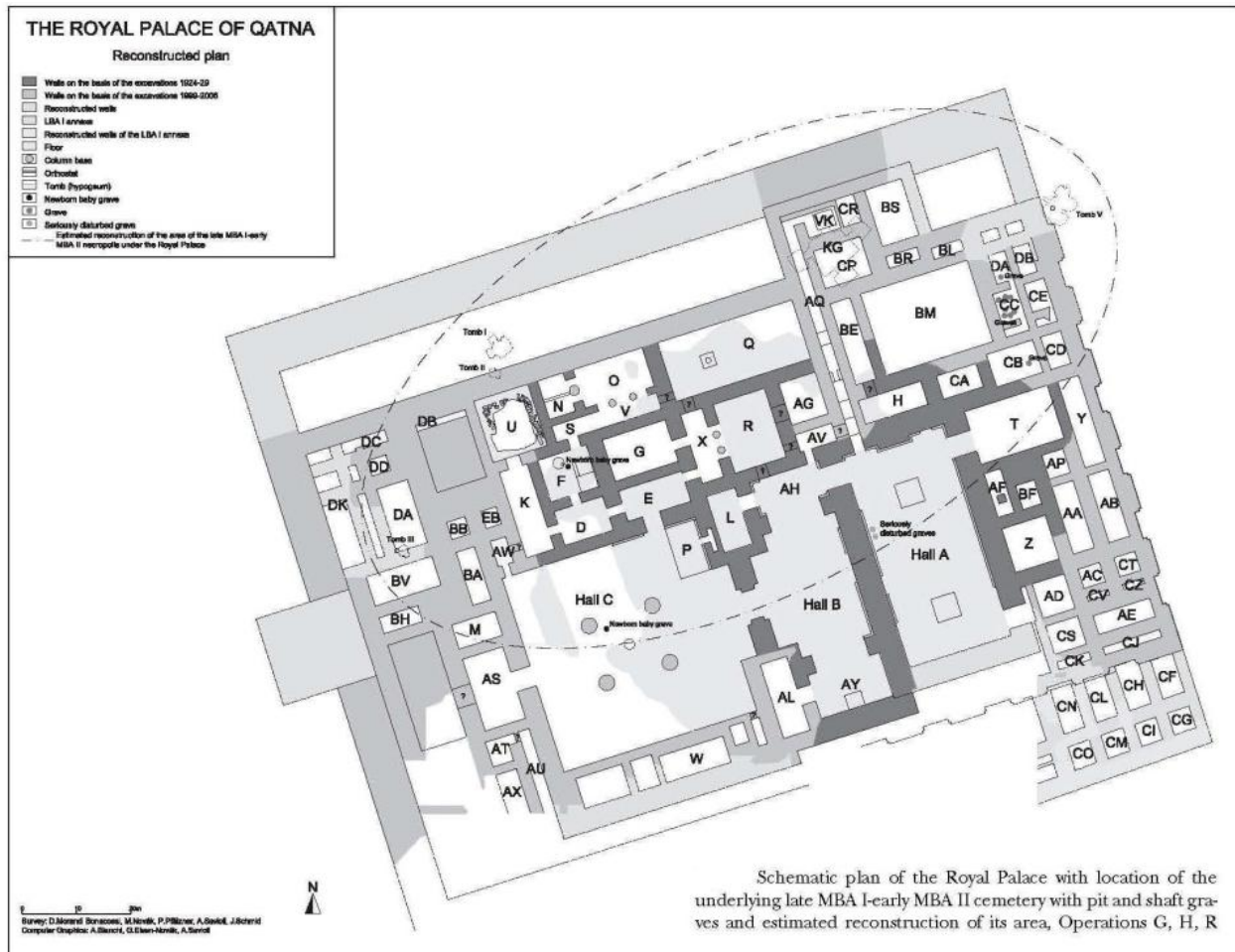


Fig. 48: The Royal Palace map with location of MBA tombs in Mishrifeh.

Tomb I in the site of Mishrifeh: It is situated in the limy slope of the church and its main entrance is on the top (shaft entrance) from the northern side⁸⁴⁶. It is a well rectangular – shaped tomb, where the interment church is accessible through three stairs. On the right side rock-carved inscriptions were found. The tomb layout indicates parallelism in the design: the cutter seems to have wanted to cut two parallel rooms, as we can see on the right side. The design seems to have been changed for some reason and the eastern side was widened, the tomb dates back to mid second millennium BC (end of the Middle Bronze Age)⁸⁴⁷.

⁸⁴⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 13-14. PL. V-VI.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: 14.

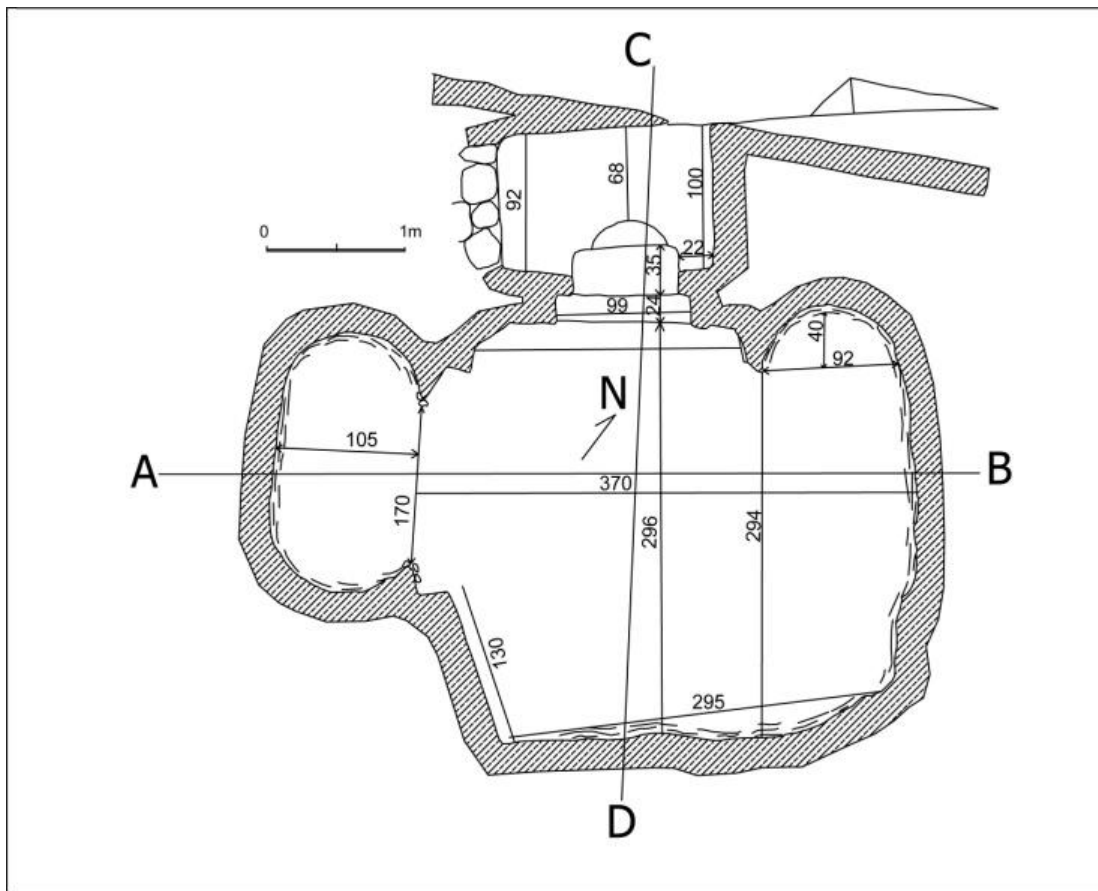


Fig. 49: Tomb I, Plan.

Tomb II in the sites of Mishrifeh: A Middle Bronze Age rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above in the northern side. There are three stairs leading to the rectangular – projection interment chamber (58– 62) Cm long and (14 – 27) Cm wide. The tomb was 1.70 m wide from the western side, 1.42 m from the east and 2.20 m long was un masterfully cut⁸⁴⁸.

⁸⁴⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 19-20. Pl. XIV.

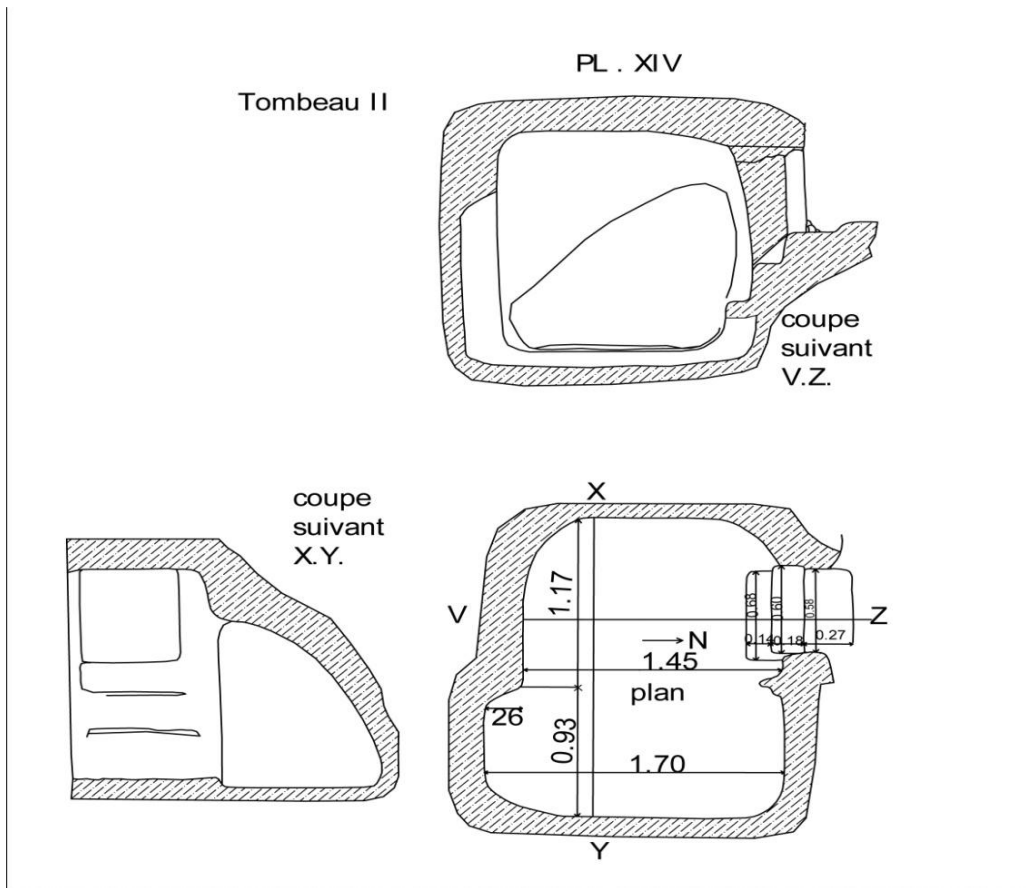


Fig. 50: Tomb II, Plan and section.

Tomb V in Mishrifeh: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb, which was discovered in section H by the Italian team headed by prof Daniele Morandi Bonacossi: in 2006, but it had been looted. The tomb consists of four site interment chambers surrounding the main room⁸⁴⁹. It dates back to Middle Bronze Age. The work team could not precisely study it because of the absence of its contents.

⁸⁴⁹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007b: 225.

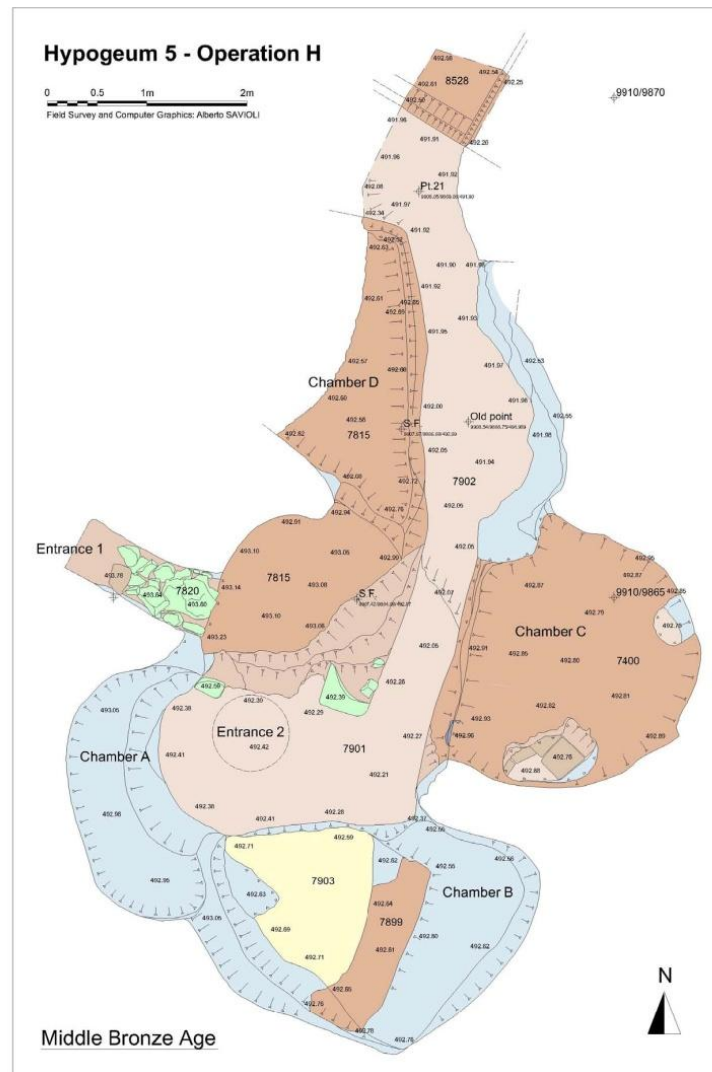
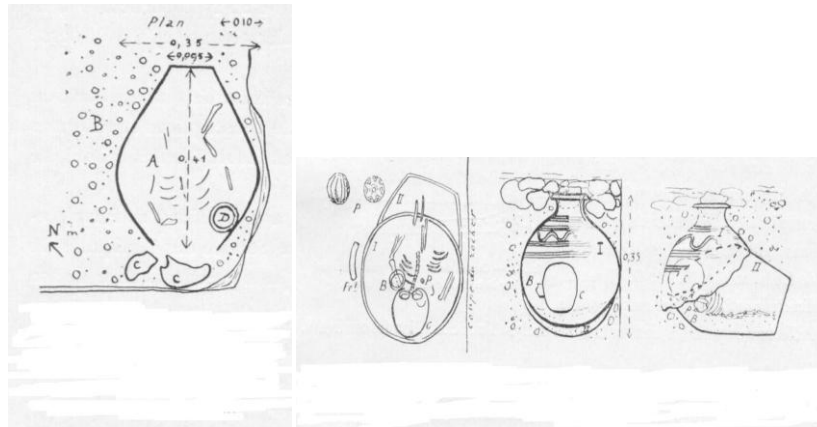


Fig. 51: Tomb V, Plan.

Jar burials:

Early excavation carried out by Count Robert du Mesnil du Buisson resulted in the discovery of a set of interment jars in the basement of Nin Igal Temple (at room C in the Royal Palace) in the south-eastern part: two jars of the same size, 38 Cm high with a diameter of 36 Cm, an opening of 21 Cm and a base of 26 Cm were found. Only one third of one of them was uncovered while the second was still intact.



1- Jar burial.

2- Jar burial.

Fig. 52: Jar burials, under the church.

During excavation carried out by the Syrian expedition in Operation T east of the Royal Palace a group of individual burials were found. These were damaged because of later period's structures. These also were interments inside pottery jars which were of different uses: storage jars and cooking vessels dating back to the MBA II⁸⁵⁰.



Fig. 53: Excavation area in Operation T.

⁸⁵⁰ Al-Maqdissi 2009b:1210-1211.



Fig. 54: Burial 1, Operation T.



Fig. 55: Burial 6, Operation T.

Pit burials:

In the latter site a group of individual burials was uncovered in Operation H, where archaeological excavation showed that this area had been dedicated to funerary interment ceremonies. Here fifteen pits for adults and new-born were found along with simple funerary furnishings, all of which date back to the beginning of the second millennium B.C (MBA 1 and MBA II A).

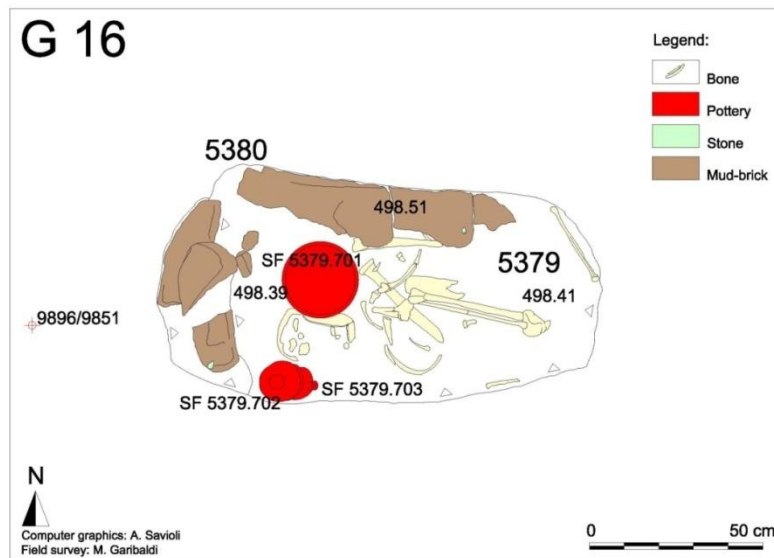


Fig. 56: Burial 16, Plan.



Fig. 57: Burial 21.

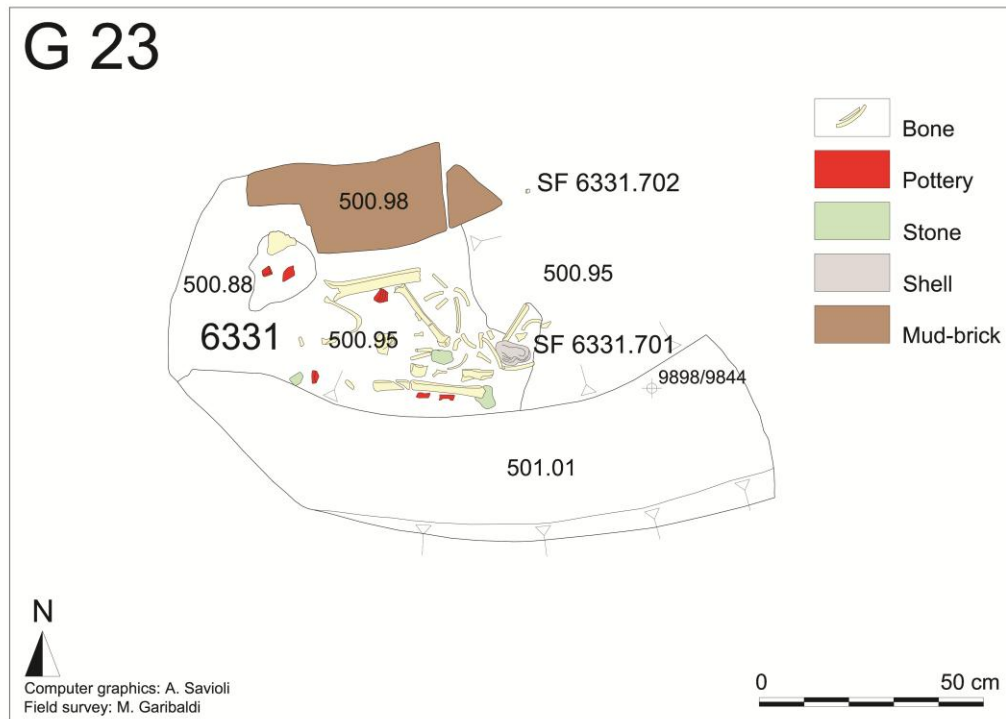


Fig. 58: Burial 23.

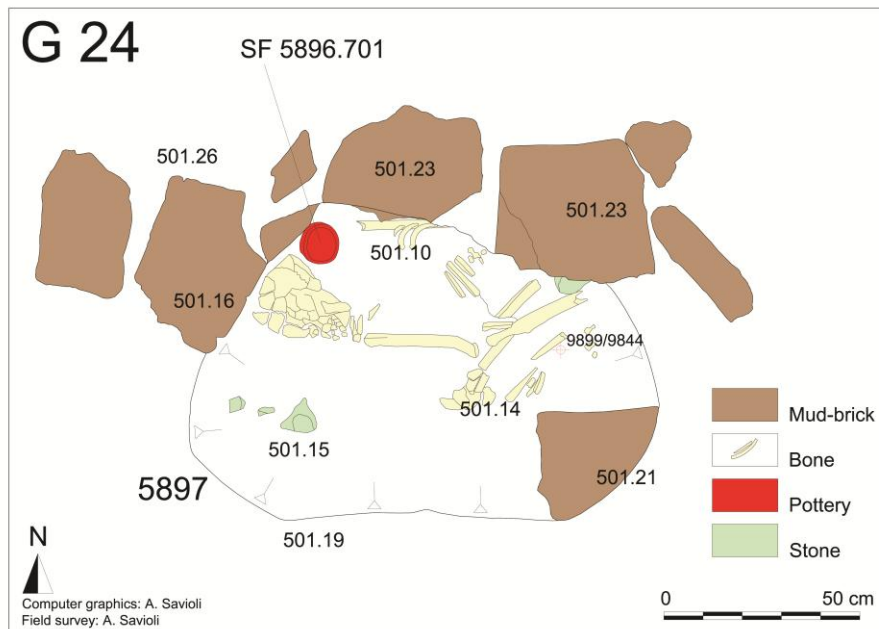


Fig. 59: Burial 24.



Fig. 60: Burial 24.

During the Italian expedition excavations in the seasons 2005-2008, a group of individual burials dating back to MBA II were also uncovered in Operations T2 and T3⁸⁵¹.



Fig. 61: Burials 33-34 in Operation T.

⁸⁵¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2007b: 225.



Fig. 62: Burial 34 in Operation T.



Fig. 63: Burial 36 in Operation T.

Tomb VII at Mishrifeh: Rock-cut shaft tomb which was discovered in 2009, this is a second tomb below the Royal Palace, It is located below Room DA in the north-western wing of the building and was used at the same time as the earlier use of the palace, during the MB IIB period⁸⁵². It is, therefore, clearly earlier than the discovered inventory of the Royal Hypogeum, which dates to the LB IIA period. With one rock-hewn double chamber it is much smaller than the Royal Hypogeum⁸⁵³.

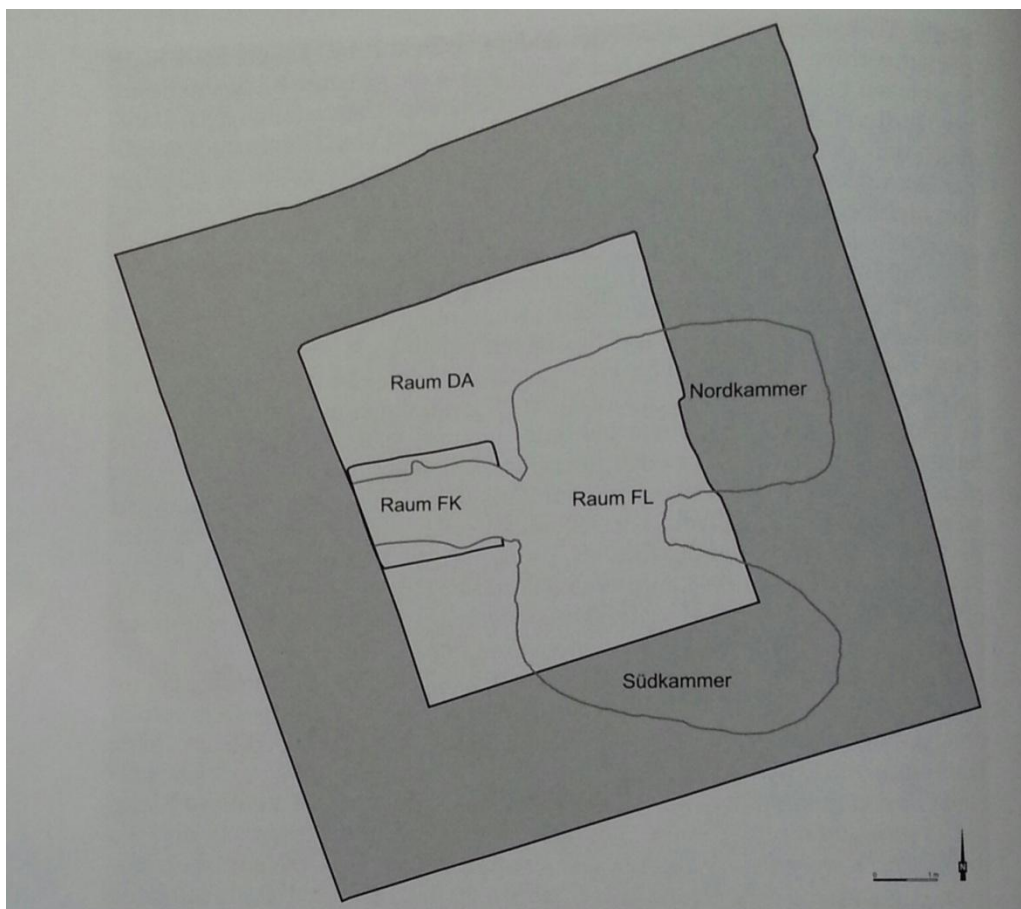


Fig. 64: Tomb VII, plan.

The royal tomb in Mishrifeh: We will include this tomb with those of the Middle Bronze in spite of the fact that scholars dated it back to the beginning of Late Bronze Age. This inclusion

⁸⁵² Pfälzner 2012: 215-216.

⁸⁵³ Pfälzner *et al.* 2011: 76-7, figs 9-1. Pfälzner 2012: 215-216.

has been done for two reasons: the first is the presence of burial findings, such as cylinder seals, golden rings,⁸⁵⁴ as well as serpentine vessel with an Egyptian inscription carrying the name of the Egyptian pharaoh, Amenmehat III of the twelfth dynasty (eighteenth century BC.),⁸⁵⁵ which was dated back to the eighteenth and seventeenth century BC. Moreover, most findings were dated back to the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. The second reason is the importance and richness of this tomb which gives a good idea about funerary traditions at the end of Middle Bronze Age and the beginning of Late Bronze Age.

The Royal tomb in Mishrifeh is distinguished by its long entrance starting from the north wall of the throne hall second room, and then leads, through a staircase, to a long passage leading, in turn, to a large room in the northern limits of the palace. This room is cut inside natural rock and leads, through a simple passage in its southern parts, to the royal tombs. A passage of about five meters leads to the entrance which, in turn, leads to the four completely rock-cut interment chambers which consist of a main room 6 by 8 m leading directly to three annexed chambers in the south⁸⁵⁶.

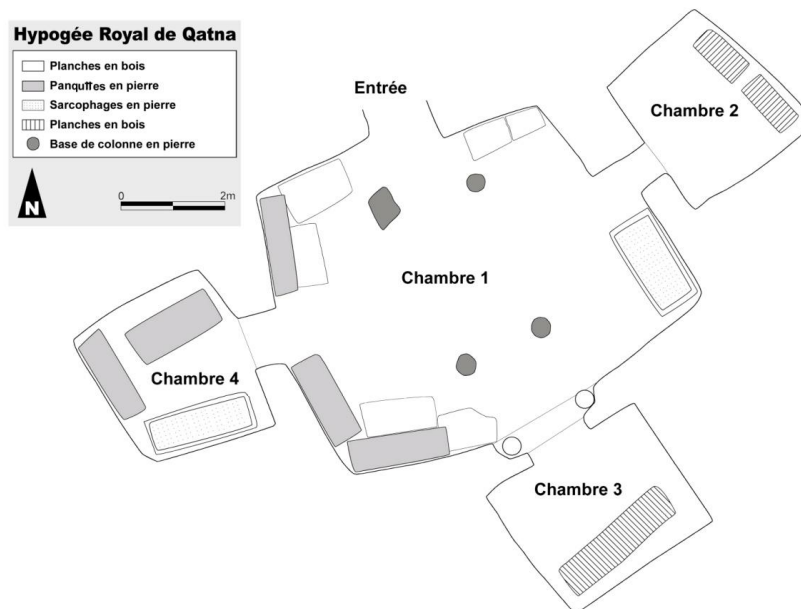


Fig. 65 : Royal tomb, plan.

⁸⁵⁴ Dohmann, Pfälzner. H., Pfälzner 2009:P.235.

⁸⁵⁵ Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005b:70.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*:32-33.

Tomb XII in Ain Assan: A rock-cut shaft tomb with a top entrance and stair leading to the interment chamber. It dates back to Middle Bronze Age (MBA I) and thought to have been used from the MBA II to the beginning of LBA⁸⁵⁷.

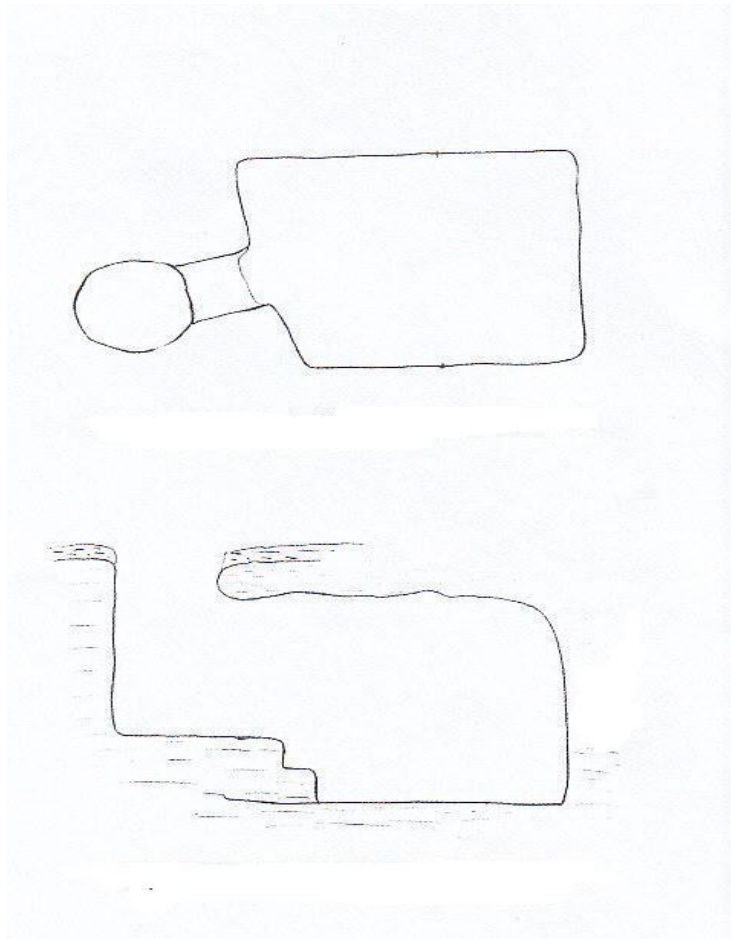


Fig. 66: Tomb XII, plan and section.

Tomb I in the site of tell As: A rock-cut shaft tomb with an entrance from above. It consists of one rectangular-shaped interment chamber 2.25 – 2.40 long, 1.70 wide and 1.15 high. It dates back to the first half of the second millennium B.C (Middle Bronze Age)⁸⁵⁸.

⁸⁵⁷ Al-Maqdissi 2006 a: 144.

⁸⁵⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

Tomb II in tell As : It is a rock-cut shaft tomb which consists of square-shaped interment chamber which can be accessed from above through a shaft entrance leading to the interment chamber 2.50 m wide, 2.70 m long and 0.90 m high. It dates, back to the beginning of the second millennium BC.

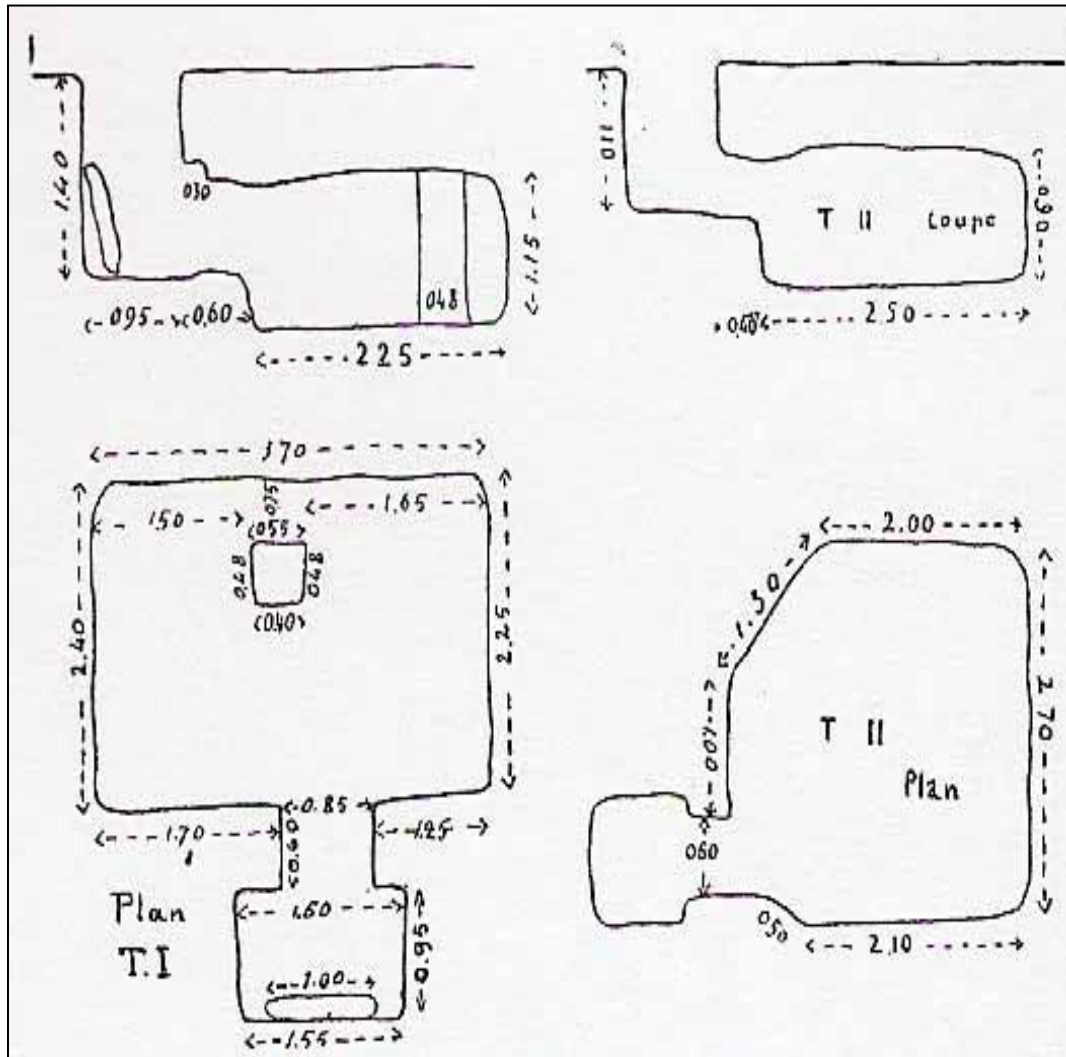


Fig. 67: As tombs, Plan and section.

Ebla

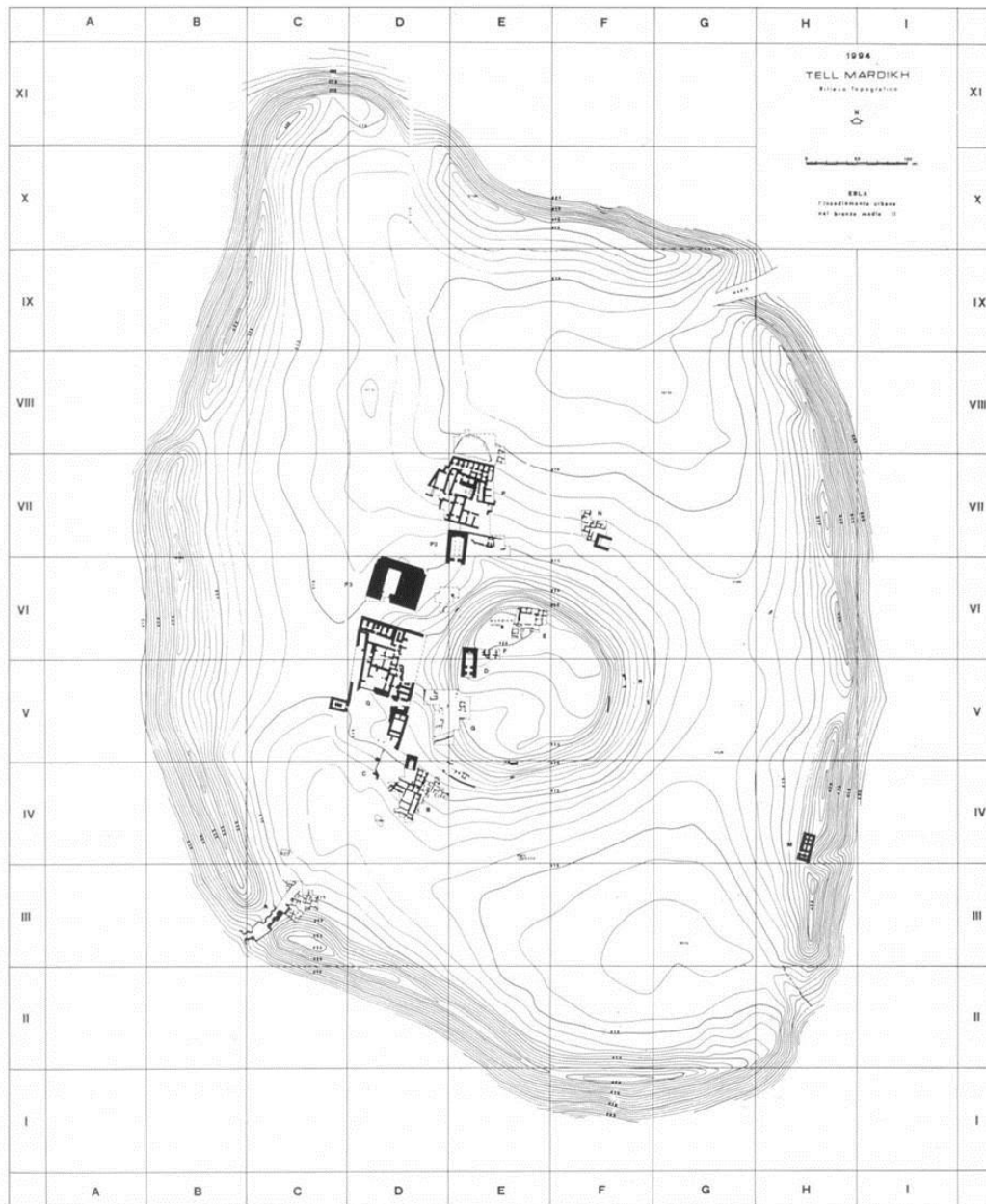


Fig. 68: Topographic map.

Ebla, Royal tomb: It is a rock-cut shaft tomb or a complex of tombs with an entrance from above. It is situated beneath the Royal Palace section (Western Palace – Area Q), and was

discovered and investigated during the excavation season of 1978 – 1979⁸⁵⁹. It is distinguished as being a large complex of tombs, dating back to different periods. It consists of three wings, so to speak, the first of which is the Princess's tomb (Principessa), which is also the oldest because it dates back to 1825 – 1750 B.C Q 78 A. It was dug by cutting a passage in the rock, and building a stone and mud-brick wall in the north side of the tomb to separate it from the other graves⁸⁶⁰. The second is the Lord of the Goats (Signore dei Capridi) tomb which dates to (1770 and 1760 – 1700) BC. The third wing is the Cistern tomb (Cisterne), the latest which dates back to Middle Bronze Age (1725 – 1650 BC.) this wing had been originally a store which was reused as a burial ground.

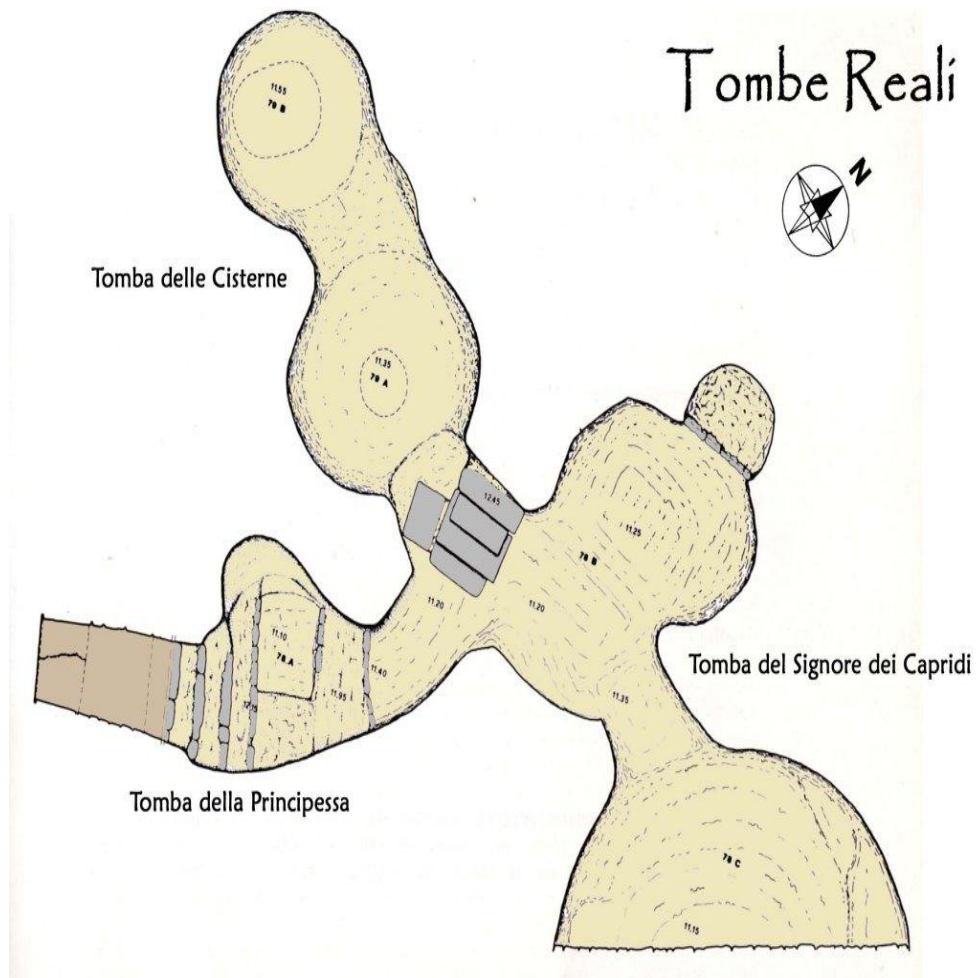


Fig. 69: Royal tomb, Plan.

⁸⁵⁹ Matthiae 1978: 149-184.

⁸⁶⁰ Matthiae 1979-1980: 94-118.

Simple burials In the site of Ebla: A group of burials from MBA were recorded. Some of these tombs were attached to private buildings under which the burial was situated. Other tombs were found in a different place amid a private section of the lower city near Temple B2⁸⁶¹, and in its poorest quarter forming the houses adjacent to gate A near the south –western side which also dates back to Middle Bronze Age⁸⁶².

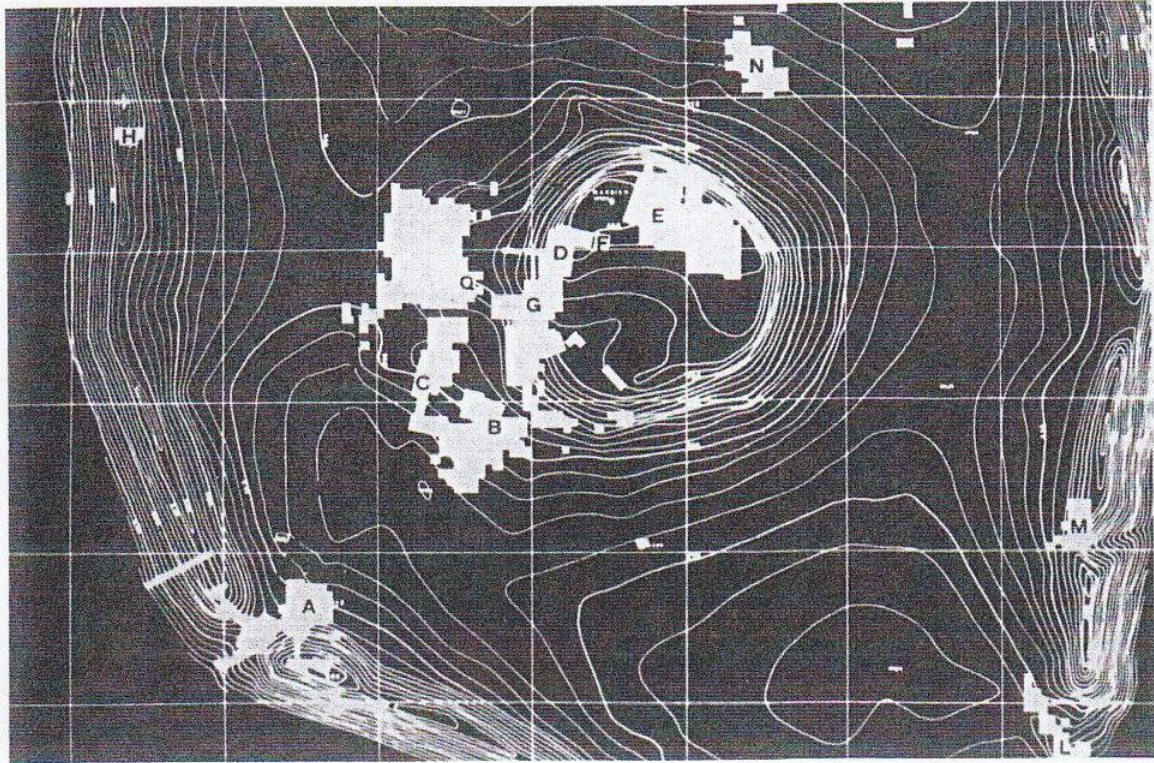
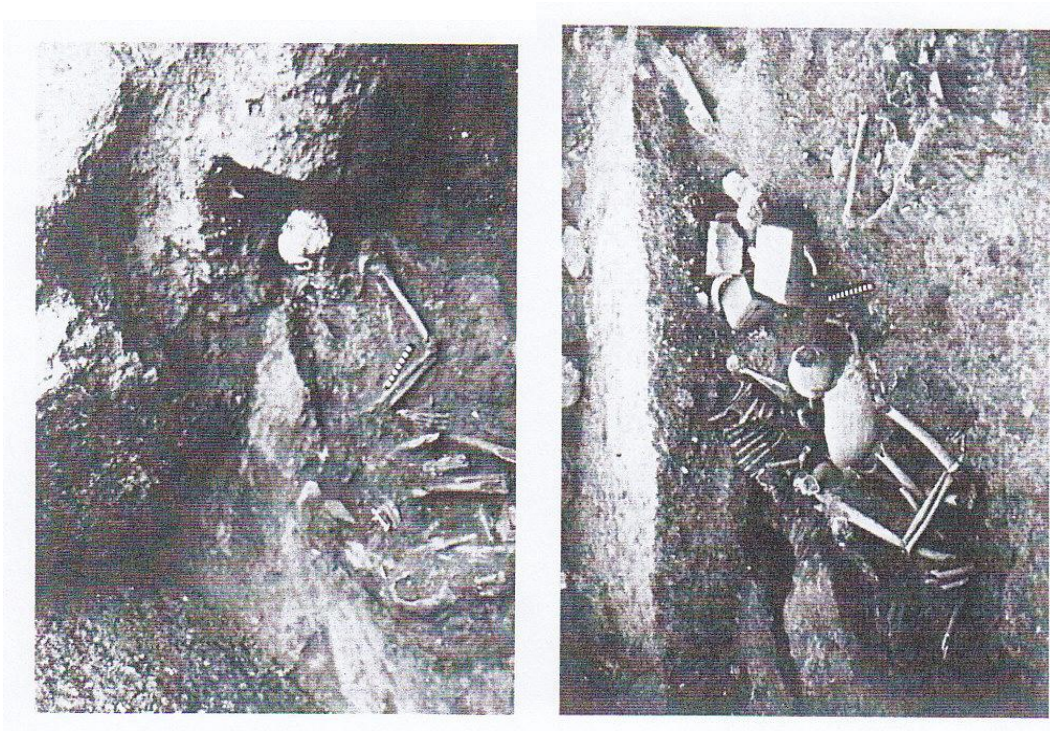


Fig. 70: Topographic Map of tombs.

⁸⁶¹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

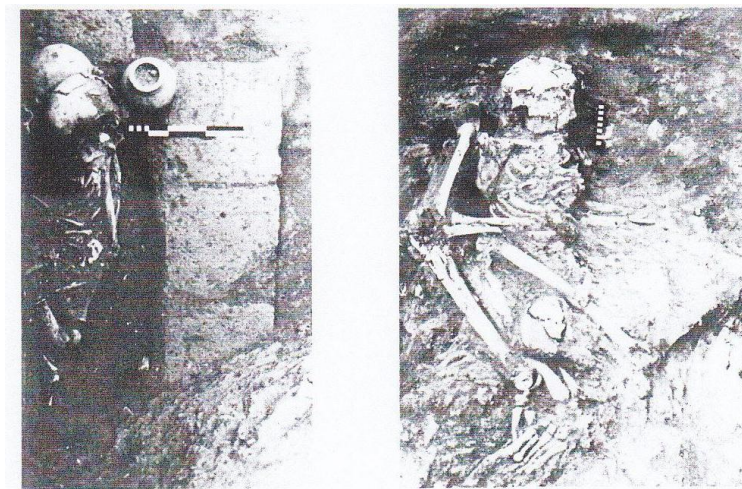
⁸⁶² *Ibid.*



Burial D1.

Burial D2.

Fig .71: Burials D1-D2.



Burial D14.

Burial D22.

Fig. 72: Burials D14-D22.

- Jar burials are recorded in Ginders and Ain-Dara in northern Syria; a group of jar burials from Middle Bronze Age were recorded in western south side of the Temple of Ain-Dara,⁸⁶³ and one burial jar were recorded in sector T at Ginders dated to the MBAI⁸⁶⁴.

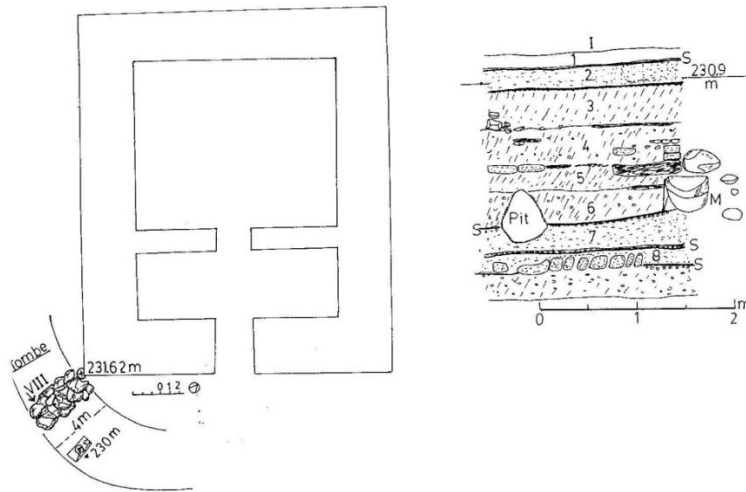


Fig. 73: Ain Dara Jar burials area.

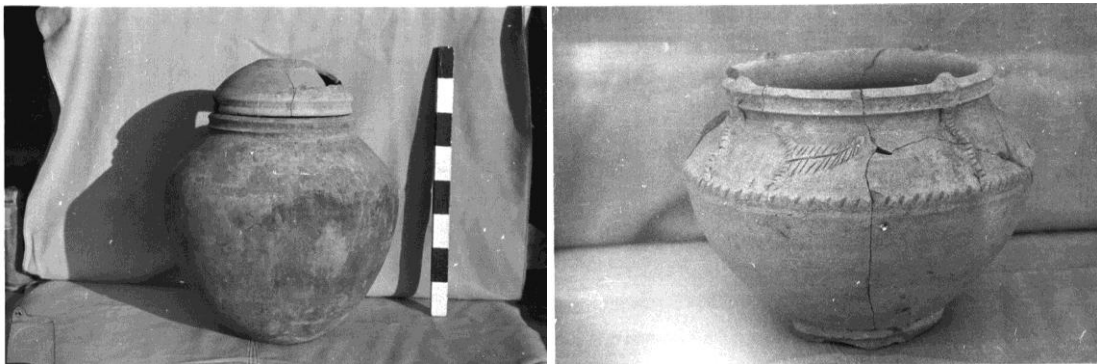


Fig. 74: Jar burials of Ain Dara.

⁸⁶³ Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara

⁸⁶⁴ Suleiman and Tarakge 1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ginders.

Homs: Throughout 2006-7 research began examining the Homs cairns (tumuli). Whilst, observations had been made during previous seasons concerning the presence of these monuments within the NSA⁸⁶⁵, the absolute number of cairns, and thus their density and distribution across the landscape could not readily be established from ground observation alone. Rather the identification of potential burial cairns was established using satellite imagery which rapidly highlighted the vast extent of these monuments within the study area (Fig 75). Moreover comparison of 1960s Corona space photography with more recent IkoCnos imagery highlighted the speed with which these monuments were being destroyed by efforts to improve agricultural returns. Settlement and Landscape Development in the Homs Region, Syria (SHR) is a multidisciplinary, multi period regional survey project that is run jointly between the University of Durham and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums. Over 30,000 potential cairns have been identified within the NSA through image data. Of these, a sample, 525, have been recorded in the field. Preliminary analysis has shown that these monuments vary considerably in terms of morphology and associated features⁸⁶⁶.



Fig. 75: Cairns in Homs area.

⁸⁶⁵ Philip *et al.* 2005: 34; Philip *et al.* 2002: 16.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Tell Et-Tin: Is located inside Qatina Lake island at Homs region, the site was excavated for one season (1894) by French archaeological expedition supported by the natural history museum in Lyon, directed by M. Buffard. According to this mission, the old name of Tell Et-Tin was the old Qadish, which probably was the capital of Hittits in this region⁸⁶⁷.

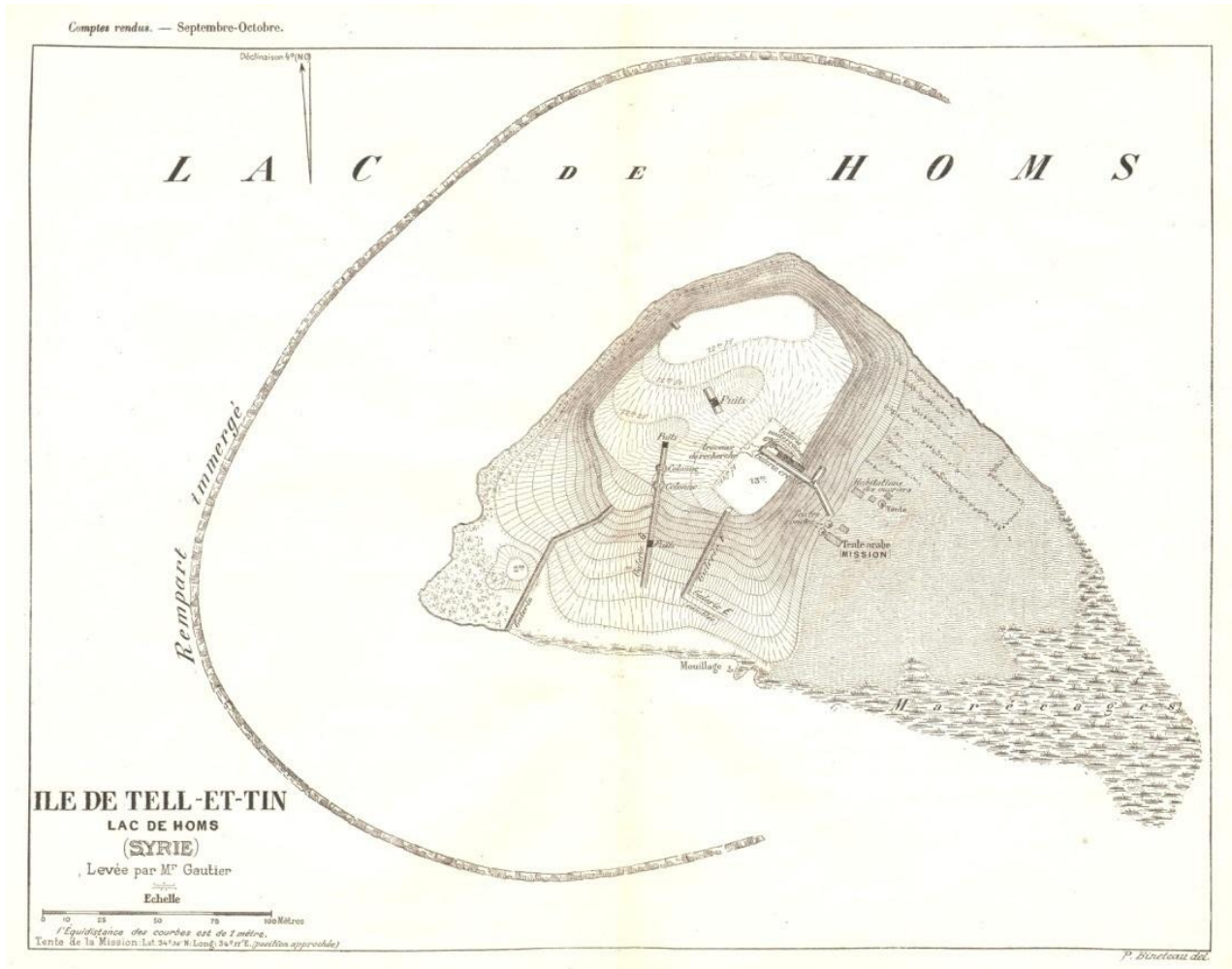


Fig.76: Tell Et-Tin

⁸⁶⁷ Gautier 1895: 5.

The result of this excavation lead to discover a group of collective tombs dating back to the Middle Bronze Age⁸⁶⁸.

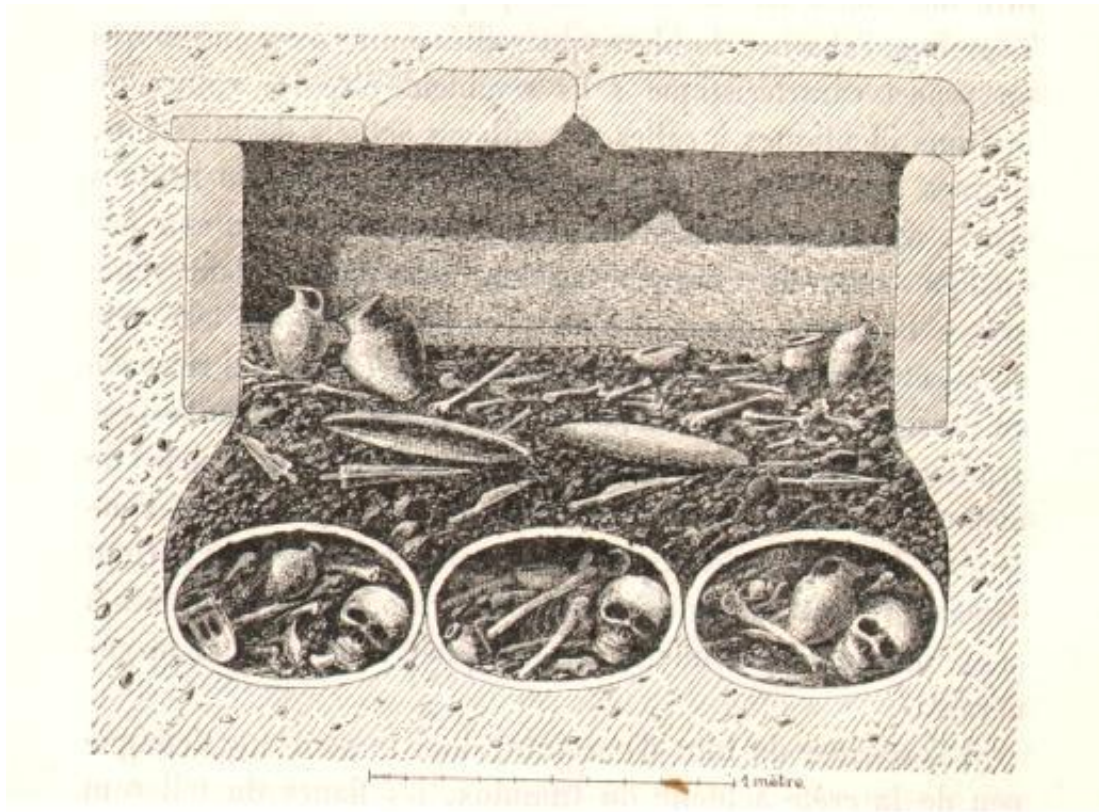


Fig.77: Tell Et-Tin tomb.

⁸⁶⁸ Gautier 1895: 5.

Part two: Grave goods in the tombs/burials had been discovered at Inner and Northern Syria.

Accompanying grave goods in Central and Northern Syria tombs/burials during the EBA:

Table figures:

Mishrifeh:

Fig. 78: Pottery from tomb IV. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: pl. XLV.

Fig. 79: Pottery from tomb IV. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: pl. XLVI.

Fig. 80: Grave goods from tomb IV. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: pl. XLVII.

Fig. 81: Pottery from Mishrifeh, Dnebi and Selimiye. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.XXXI.

Fig. 82: Pottery from Mishrifeh, Dnebi and Selimiye. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.XXXII.

Fig 83: Pottery from Mishrifeh, Dnebi and Selimiye. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.XXXIII.

Fig. 84: Pottery from Mishrifeh, Dnebi and Selimiye. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1930: pl.XXXIV.

Fig. 85: EBA funerary Jar from Mishrifeh. Mouamar 2009: 68.

Ain Assan:

Fig. 86: Pottery from Ain Assan tomb IV. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 148.

Fig. 87: Pottery from Ain Assan tomb IV. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 147.

Fig. 88: Pottery from Ain Assan tombs IV-XII. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 149.

Tell As:

Fig. 89: Pottery from tomb III-VII Tell As. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: pl. XL.

Umm el-Marra:

Fig.90: Tomb I, the upper layer. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: fig.6:331.

Fig. 91: Tomb I, the middle layer. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 336, fig:19.

Fig. 92: Tomb I, the lower layer. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 338, fig: 22.

Fig. 93: Large vessels from tomb I. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 340, fig: 24.

Fig. 94: Pottery from tomb I. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 339, fig: 23.

Fig. 95: Grave goods from tomb I. Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 333, fig: 10. 334, figs: 13, 14, 15. 337,fig: 21.

Fig. 96: Larger vessels from tomb III. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 613, fig: 11.

- Fig. 97: pottery from tomb III. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 612, fig: 10.
 Fig. 98: Tomb IV, the lower layer. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 615, fig: 13.
 Fig. 99: Pottery from tomb IV. Lower level. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 617, fig: 16.
 Fig. 100: Tomb IV, the upper layer. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 619, fig: 19.
 Fig. 101: Pottery from tomb IV. Upper level. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 621, fig: 21.
 Fig. 102: Grave goods from tomb IV. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 616, figs: 14, 15. 623, fig: 24.
 Fig. 103: Pottery from tomb V. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608, fig: 5.
 Fig. 104: Tomb VI with coffin remains. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 609, fig: 7.
 Fig. 105: Gold and silver toggle pins from tomb VI. Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610. Fig: 8.

Aleppo:

- Fig. 106: Pottery Vessels of tomb A. Kanjou and Naser 2009: 53.
 Fig. 107: Pottery Vessels of tomb B. Kanjou and Naser 2009: 55.
 Fig. 108: Bronze objects of tombs A-B. Kanjou and Naser 2009: 54.
 Fig. 109: Pottery Vessels of tomb B. Kanjou and Naser 2009.
 Fig. 110: Pottery Vessels of tomb A-B. Kanjou and Naser 2009.
 Fig. 111: Pottery Vessels of tombs A-B. Kanjou and Naser 2009.

Ansari:

- Fig. 112: Ansari, Jar burial. Suleiman 1999: 79.

Accompanying grave goods in Central and Northern Syria tombs/burials during the Early Bronze Age and reused in the Middle Bronze Age:

Ain Assan:

- Fig. 113: Pottery from tomb III. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 145.
 Fig. 114: Pottery from tomb III. Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 146.

Ansari:

- Fig. 115: Pottery from Ansari tomb. Suleiman 1984: Pl, II.
 Fig. 116: Pottery from Ansari tomb. Suleiman 1984: Pl, VI.
 Fig. 117: Pottery from Ansari tomb. Suleiman 1984: Pl, VIII.
 Fig. 118: Grave goods from Ansari tomb. Suleiman 1984: Pl, V.

Mourek:

- Fig. 119: Pottery from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 110, Pl: XIX.
 Fig. 120: Pottery from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 111, Pl: XX.
 Fig. 121: Pottery from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 112, Pl: XXI.
 Fig. 122: Pottery from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 113, Pl: XXII.
 Fig. 123: Pottery from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 114, Pl: XXIII.
 Fig. 124: Grave goods from Mourek tomb. Riis 2007: 115, Pl: XXIV.

Accompanying grave goods in central and northern Syria tombs during the Middle Bronze**Age:****Hama:**

- Fig. 125: Pottery from tomb GI A-B. Riis 2007: 92, Pl: I.
 Fig. 126: Pottery from tomb GI A-B. Riis 2007: 93, Pl: II.
 Fig. 127: Grave goods from tomb G1 A-B. Riis 2007: 94, Pl: III.
 Fig. 128: Pottery from tomb G II. Riis 2007: 95, Pl: IV.
 Fig. 129: Pottery from tomb G II. Riis 2007: 96, Pl: V.
 Fig. 130: Pottery from tomb G II. Riis 2007: 97, Pl: VI.
 Fig. 131: Grave goods from tomb G II. Riis 2007: 98, Pl: VII.
 Fig. 132: Pottery from tomb III. Riis 2007: 99, Pl: VIII.
 Fig. 133: Pottery from tomb III. Riis 2007: 100, Pl: IX.
 Fig. 134: Pottery and Grave good from tomb III. Riis 2007: 101, Pl: X.
 Fig. 135: Pottery from tomb VI. Riis 2007: 102, Pl: XI.
 Fig. 136: Pottery from tomb VI. Riis 2007: 103, Pl: XII.
 Fig. 137: Pottery from tomb VI. Riis 2007: 104, Pl: XIII.
 Fig. 138: Grave goods from tomb VI. Riis 2007: 105, Pl: XIV.
 Fig. 139: Grave goods from tomb VI. Riis 2007: 106, Pl: XV.
 Fig. 140: Pottery and Grave goods from tomb X. Riis 2007: 107, Pl: XVI.
 Fig. 141: Pottery and Grave goods from tomb XIII. Riis 2007: 108, Pl: XVII.
 Fig. 142: Pottery and Grave goods from tombs of Hama. Fugmann 1958: Pl: X.

Bab El-Faraj:

- Fig. 143: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb. Suleiman 2000: 8.

Fig. 144: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb. Suleiman 2000: 4.

Fig. 145: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb. Suleiman 2000: 5.

Fig. 146: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb. Suleiman 2000: 6.

Fig. 147: Grave goods from Bab El-Faraj tomb. Suleiman 2000: 7.

Khan Sheikhoun:

Fig. 148: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:491.

Fig. 149: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:493.

Fig. 150: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:492.

Fig. 151: Pottery and grave goods from Khan Sheikhoun tomb. Al-Maqdissi 2006c:490.

Mishrifeh:

Fig. 152: Pottery from tomb I. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 15. Fig: 45.

Fig. 153: Burial jar no.2. Al-Maqdissi 2007b:12-13.

Fig. 154: Burial Jar no.9. Al-Maqdissi 2007b:23-24.

Fig. 155: Grave goods from burial 16. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 15.fig.7.

Fig. 156: Grave goods from burial 16. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 15. fig.6.

Fig. 157: Grave goods from burial 18. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 18.fig.11.

Fig. 158: Grave goods from burial 18. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 18: fig.11.

Fig. 159: Grave goods from burial 26. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 26.fig 26.

Fig. 160: Bronze toggle pin from burial 24. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 22. figs.18-19-20.

Fig. 161: Bronze toggle pin from burial 25. Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 15.fig.22.

Ain Assan:

Fig 162: Pottery from tombs IV-XII Ain Assan. Al-Maqdissi 2006 b: 149.

Tell As:

Fig 163: Pottery from tombs I-II Tell As. Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: pl.XXXIX.

Mardikh:

Fig 164: Pottery from Royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980:fig.M.

Fig 165: Pottery from Royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980:fig.O.

- Fig 166: Pottery from Royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980:fig.I.
- Fig 167: Pottery from Royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980:fig.N.
- Fig 168: Pottery from Royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980:fig.L.
- Fig 169: Grave goods from royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980.
- Fig 170: Grave goods from royal tomb. Matthiae 1979- 1980.
- Fig 171: Pottery from burial, D1. Baffi-Guardata 1988: 9, fig: 1.
- Fig 172: Pottery from burial D2. Baffi-Guardata 1988: Ta III, 1.
- Fig 173: Pottery from burials, D2-D5, D27. n (1-4 D2), n(5 D5), n(6-11 D27). Baffi-Guardata 1988: 11, fig: 2.
- Fig 174: Pottery from burials D9-13. Baffi-Guardata 1988: 13, fig: 3.
- Fig 175: Pottery from burials D14 (1-4)-D15 (5-6)-D16 (7-11)-D19 (12-14). Baffi-Guardata 1988: 15, fig: 4.
- Fig 176: Pottery from burials D20 (1-5)-D21 (6-11)-D22 (12-13)-D23 (14-15). Baffi-Guardata 1988: 17, fig: 5.
- Fig 177: Pottery from burials D24 (1-5)-D26 (6-14). Baffi-Guardata 1988: 19, fig: 6.
- Fig. 178: Pottery from burials D19, n (12-14). Baffi-Guardata 1988: 15, fig: 4.

Ain Dara:

- Fig 179: Pottery from Ain Dara burial. Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara
- Fig.180: Jar burials of Ain Dara. Suleiman 1991. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara

Ginders:

- Fig.181: Grave goods from burial of Gendiris. Suleiman and Tarakge1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Gendiris.

Tell Et-Tin:

- Fig.182: Pottery from Tell Et-Tin tomb.
- Fig.183: Grave goods from Tell Et-Tin tomb.

Accompanying grave goods tombs during the Early Bronze Age in collective tombs:

:Qatna

Tomb IV at Mishrifeh: 40 skeletons with their precious funerary belongings. A big collection of pottery and bronze finds (292 pottery vessels) dating back to the EBA IV⁸⁶⁹. the pottery finds included bowls, glasses and various jars, while the other enclosures included bronze finds such as bronze\copper weapons, beautification tools which amounted to 100 different pieces, and other pieces such as decorated pottery, Egyption – made glass and carnelian⁸⁷⁰.

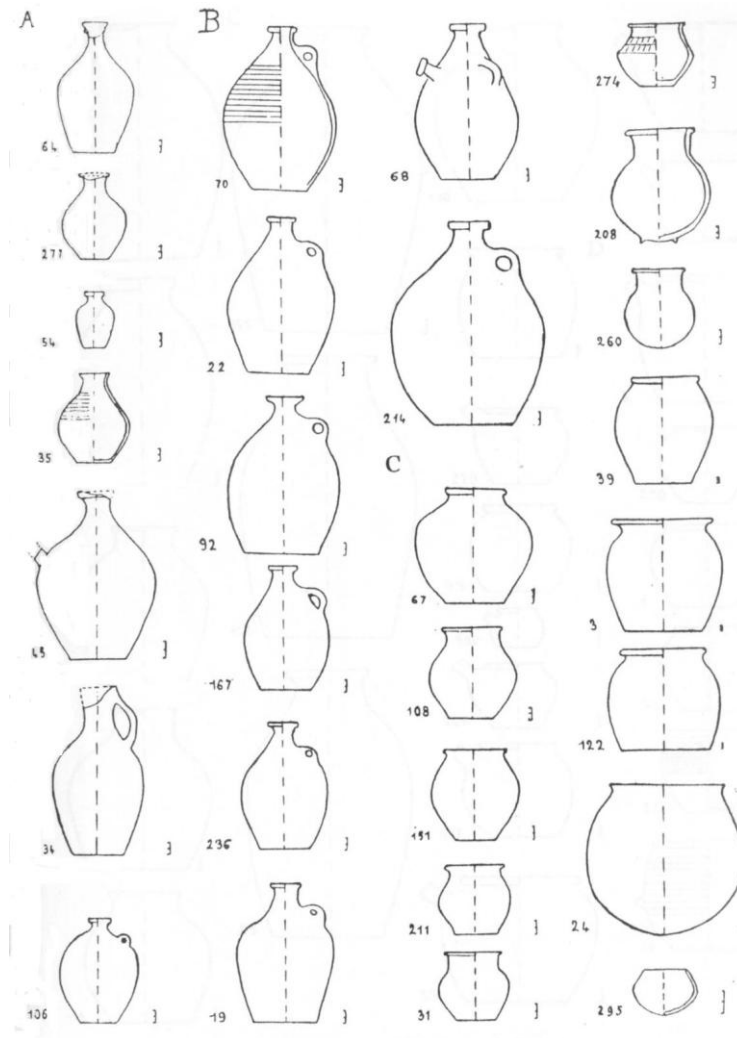


Fig.78: Pottery from tomb IV.

⁸⁶⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 152. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005a: 35-36.

⁸⁷⁰ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1935: 147-152. Al-Maqdissi and Morandi Bonacossi 2005a : 35-36.

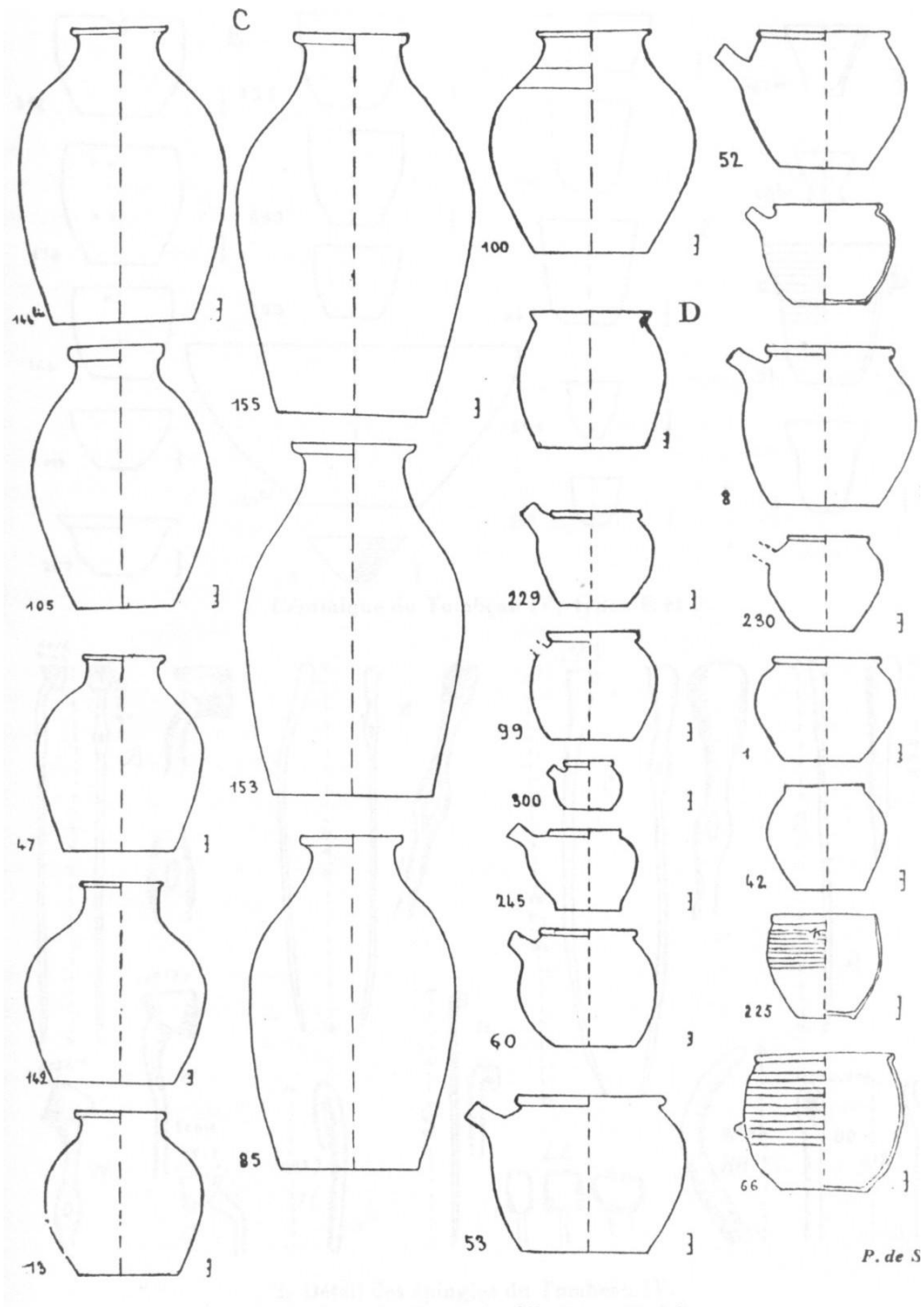
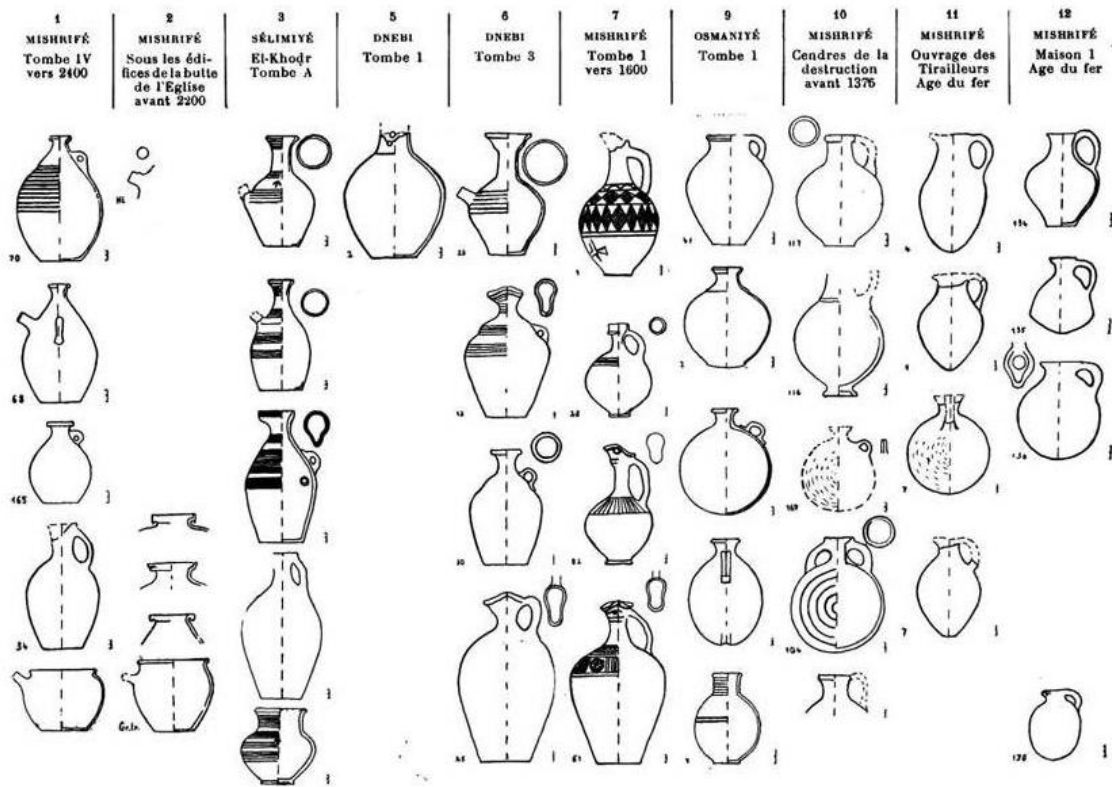
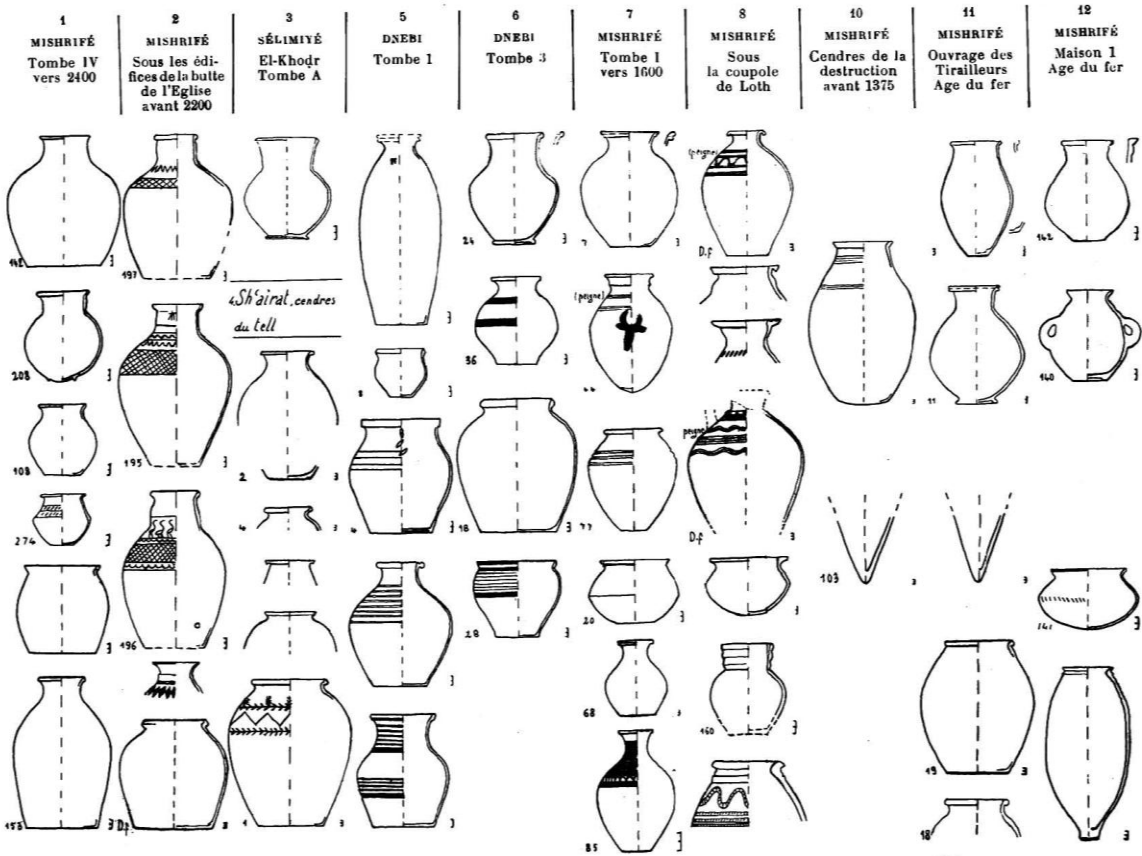


Fig. 79: Pottery from tomb IV.

Collection of EBAIV A-B burials was found during the French excavation led by Count Robert du Mensil du Buisson between 1924 and 1929 in many sites in Central Syria such as Selimiye (El-Khdr), Mishrifeh, and Dnebi.





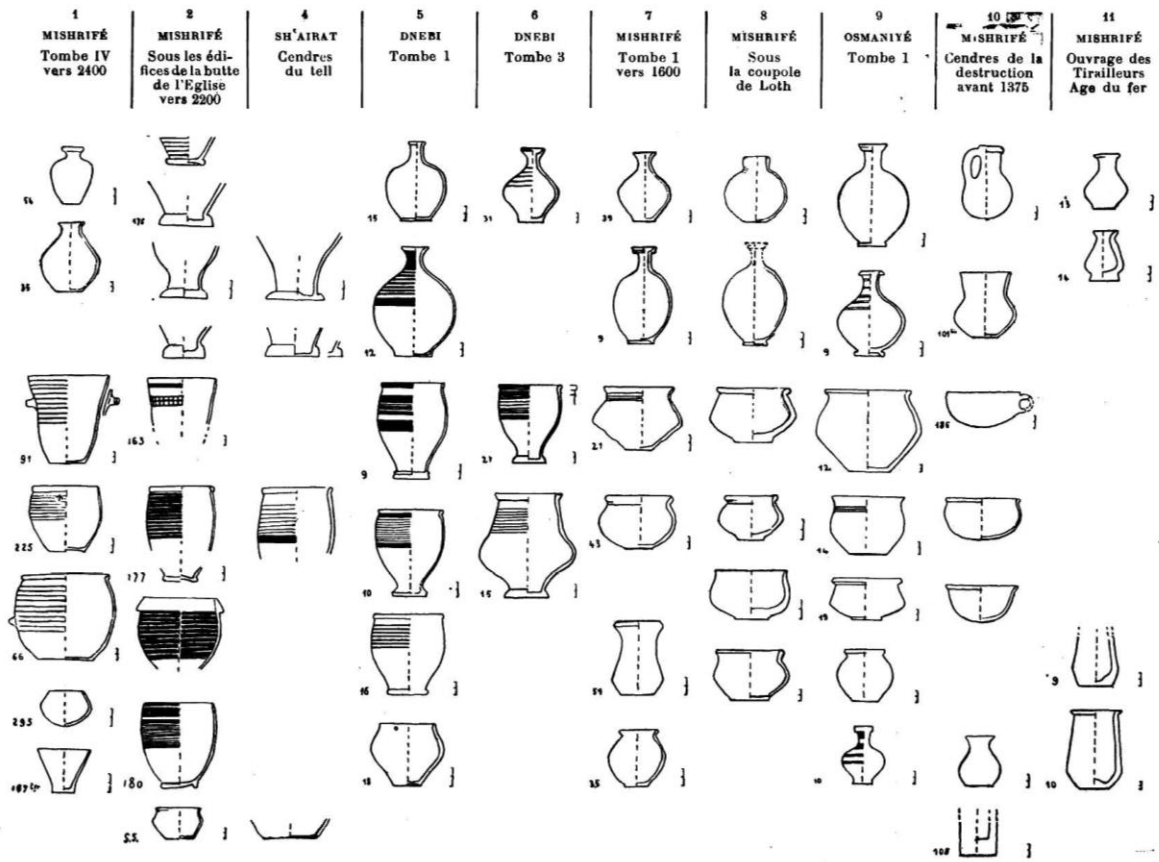


Fig. 83: Pottery from Mishrifeh, Dnebi and Selimiye.

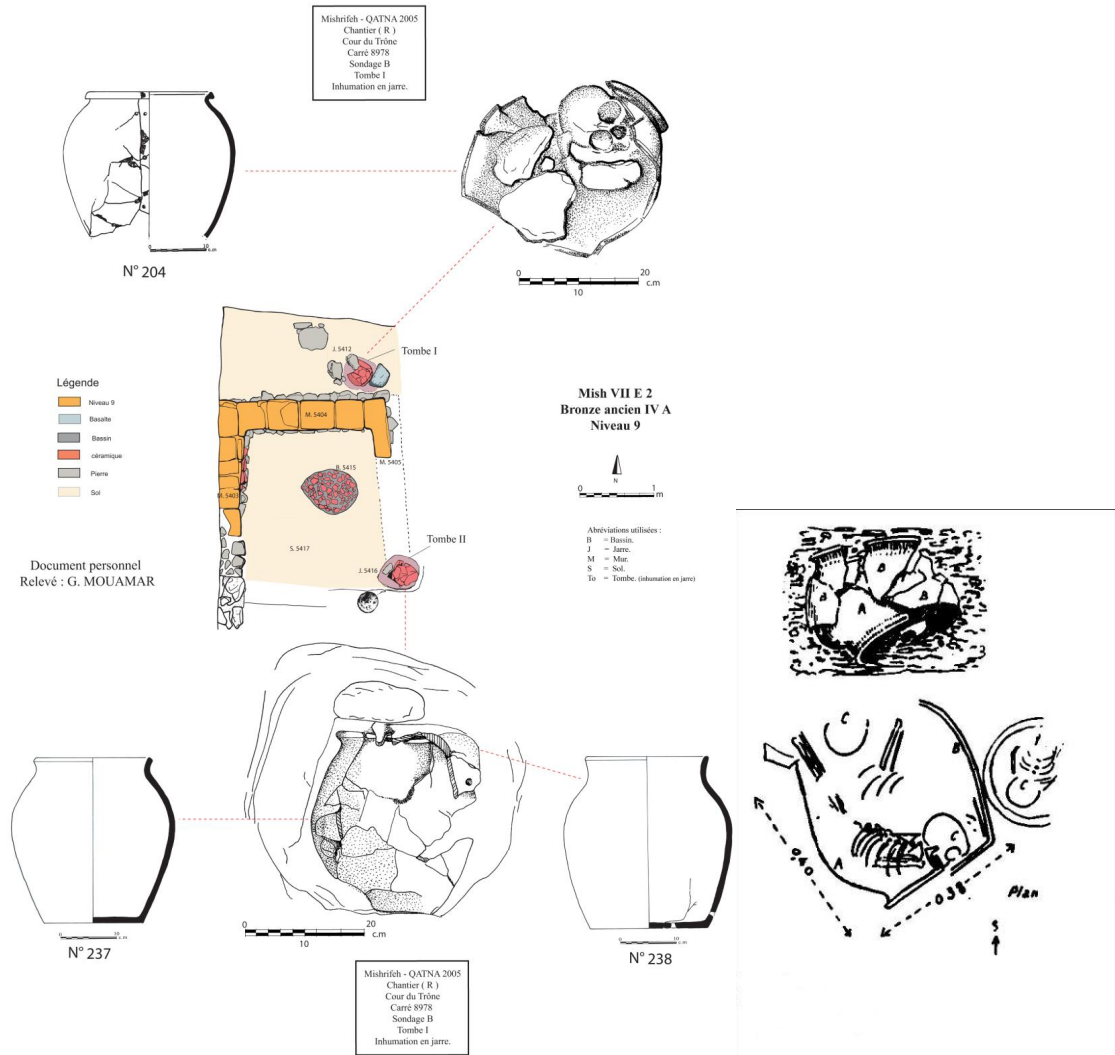


Fig. 85: EBA burials Jar from Mishrifeh.

Ain Assan :

Tomb IV: Five skeletons and 89 burial pieces were unearthed. The tomb dates back to Early Bronze Age (EBA IVA) (2400-2250 BC)⁸⁷³.

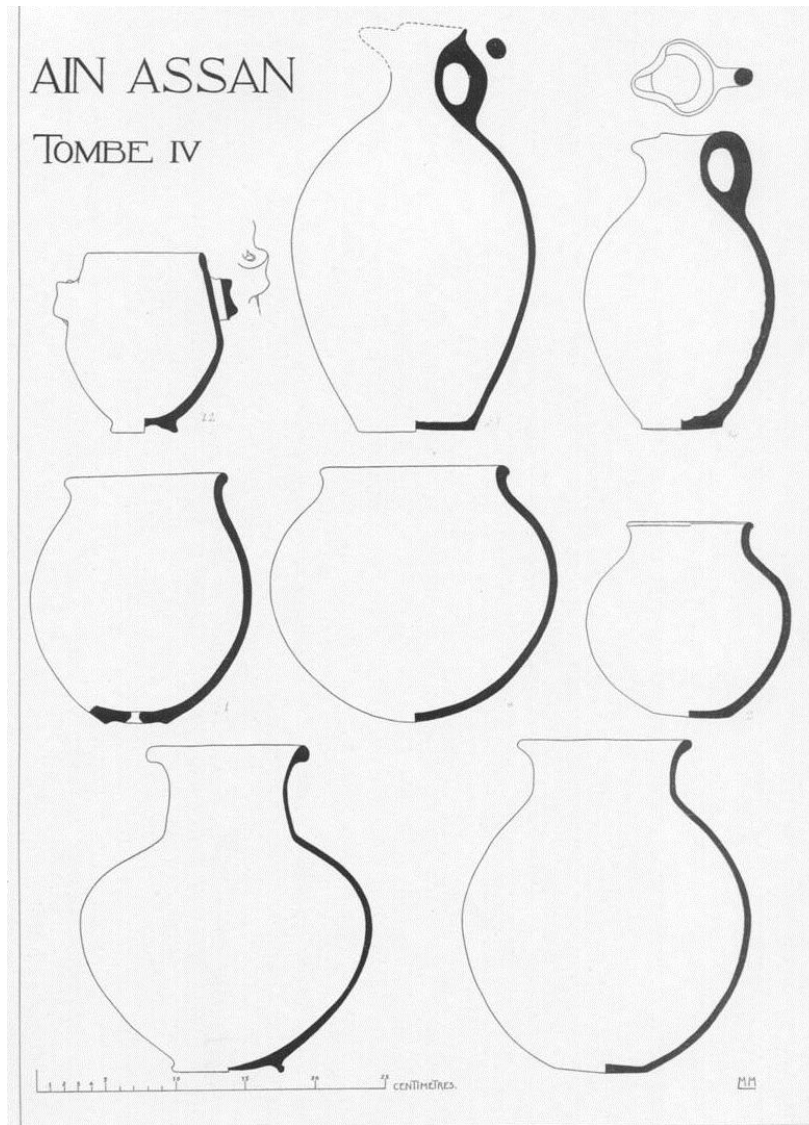


Fig. 86: Pottery from Ain Assan, tomb IV.

⁸⁷³ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141-152.

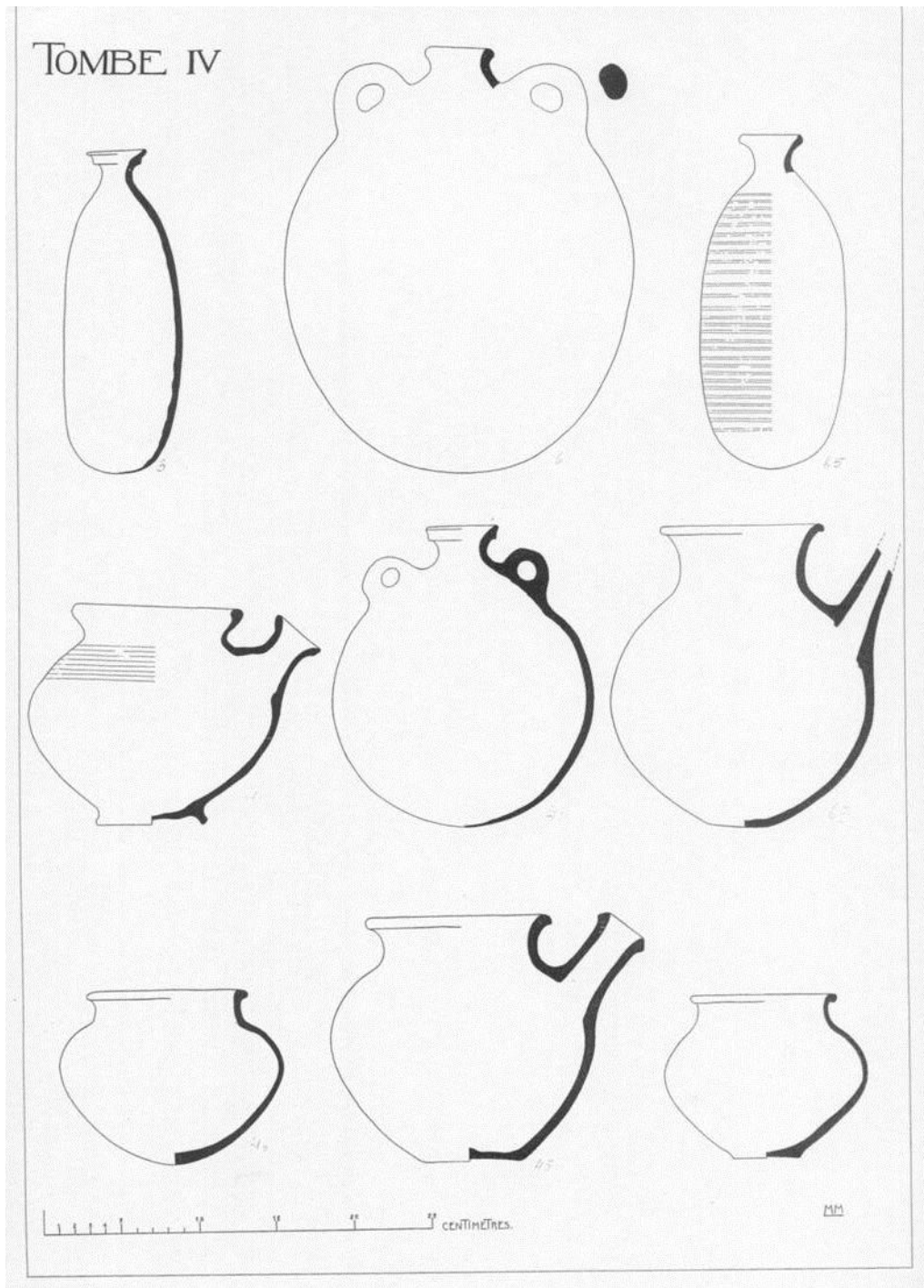


Fig. 87: Pottery from Ain Assan, tomb IV.

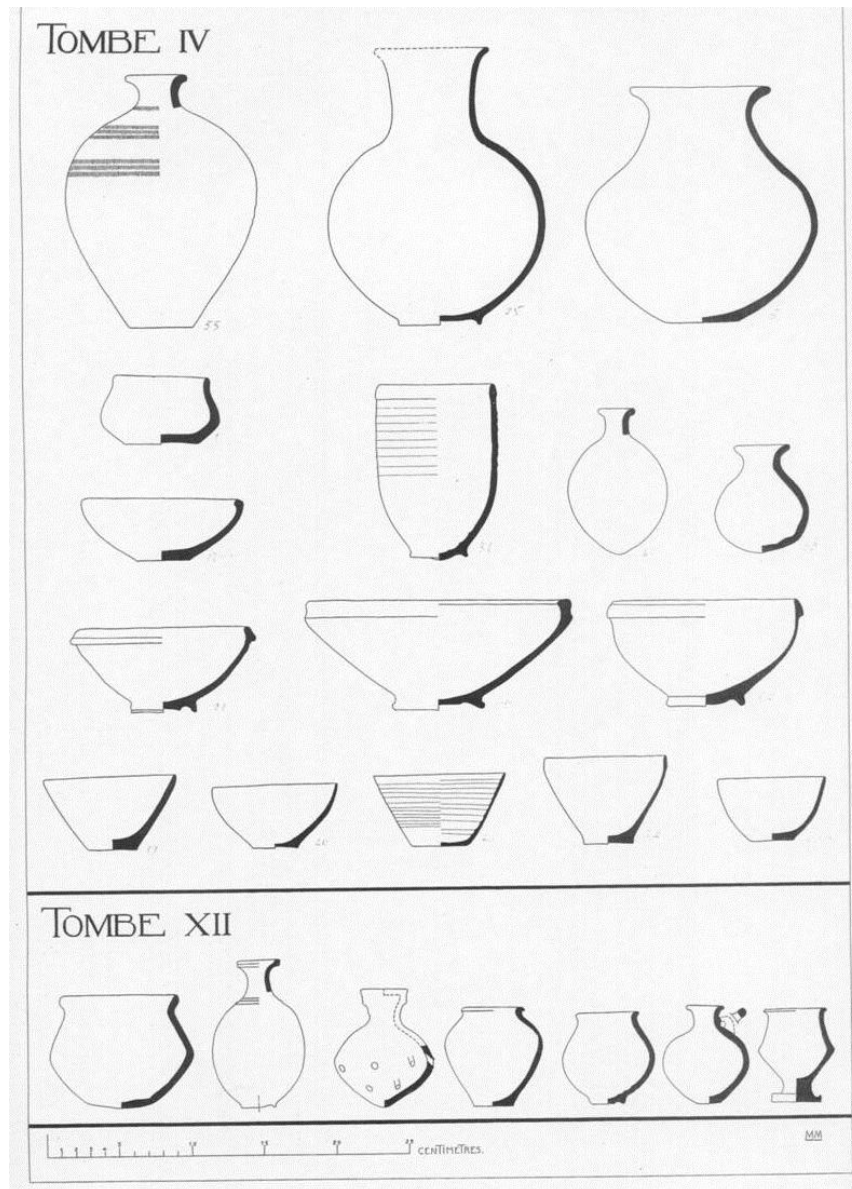


Fig.88: Pottery from Ain Assan, tombs IV-XII.

- 89 various burial pieces.

- Five skeletons.

Tell As:

Tomb III at tell As: 84 bronze and pottery vessels were found, This tomb dates to the end of the third millennium BC⁸⁷⁴.

⁸⁷⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

Tomb VI at tell As: A collection of 50 pottery vessels,⁸⁷⁵ distinguished by their small size (no more than ten Cm long) were found. These are fine precisely made vessels, proportionate in shape and size and all with a circular bottom; this tomb is dates back to the third millennium BC⁸⁷⁶.

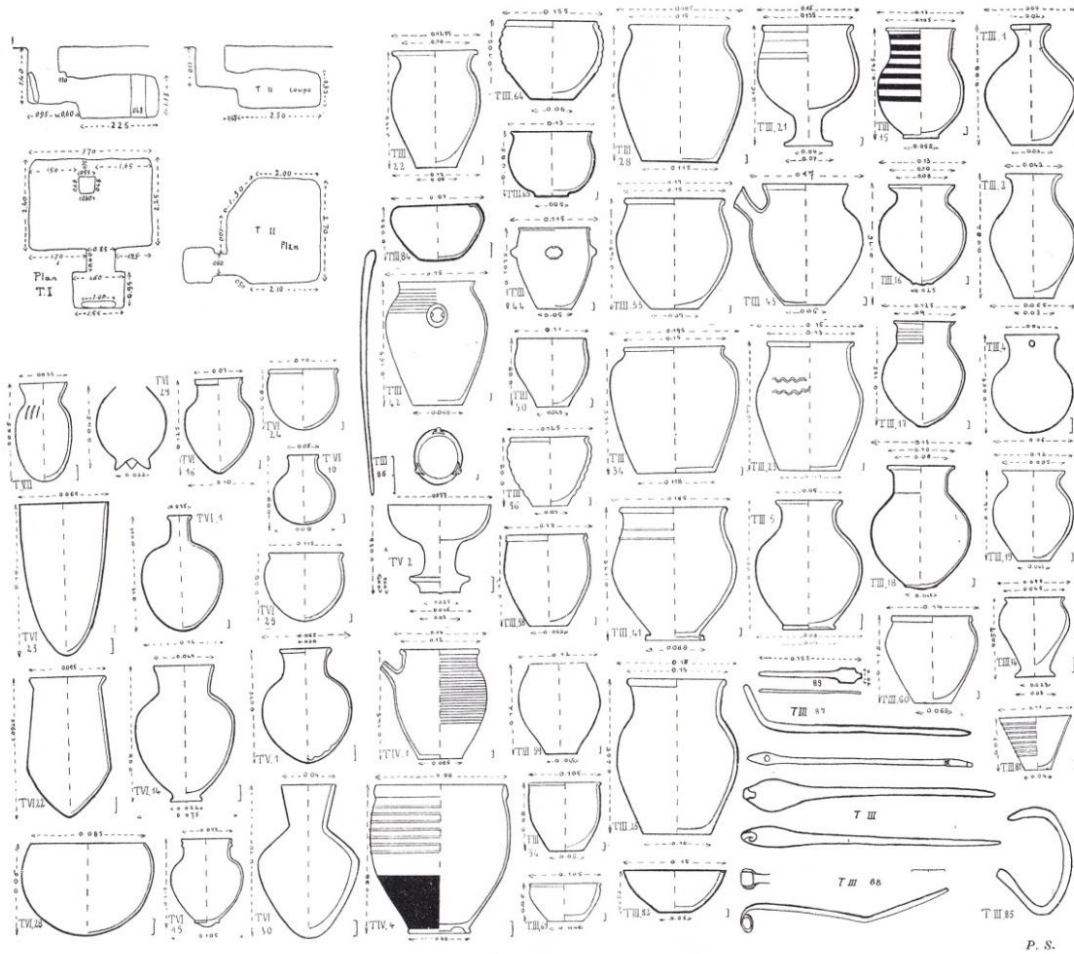


Fig. 89: Pottery from tombs III-VII, Tell As

- Tomb III: 84 bronze and pottery vessels.
- Tomb IV: 50 pottery vessels.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*: 188.

⁸⁷⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: pp. 171-188.

- Umm el-Marra:

- **Tomb I at Umm el-Marra:** In the tomb 69 pottery vessels, jars, bowls and glasses, were found.⁸⁷⁷ The pottery examination showed that the tomb dates back to the end of the EBA IVA It consisted of three layers of skeletons with a rich collection of funerary enclosures.

The upper layer : Here four skeletons were found, the first of a woman and the second may have been of a woman,⁸⁷⁸ each accompanied by a baby placed at the knee, the ages of both ranges from 15 to 20 years, they were on their sides opposite each other in the bending position with the head of each directed to the baby of the other,⁸⁷⁹ ornaments and precious materials such as gold, silver and lapis lazuli as well as the remains of a comb and a jar full of shells containing eyeliner beside the head of one of them (her own beautification set)⁸⁸⁰.

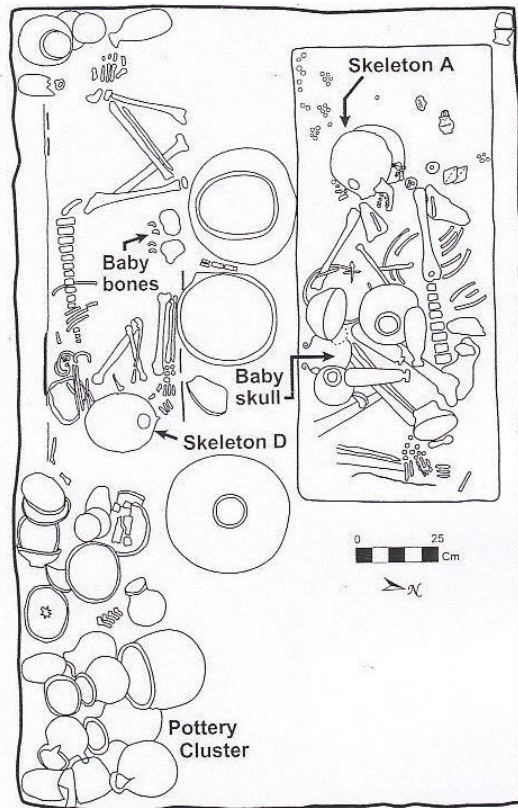


Fig.90: Tomb I, the upper layer.

⁸⁷⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2003: 336.

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: 330.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: 332.

The middle layer: Here two skeletons of adult males beside each other in the bending position were found with a bracelet and a wreath beside the other. There were also animal bones of sheep and goats. The men funerary enclosures seem to have been less than those of women⁸⁸¹.

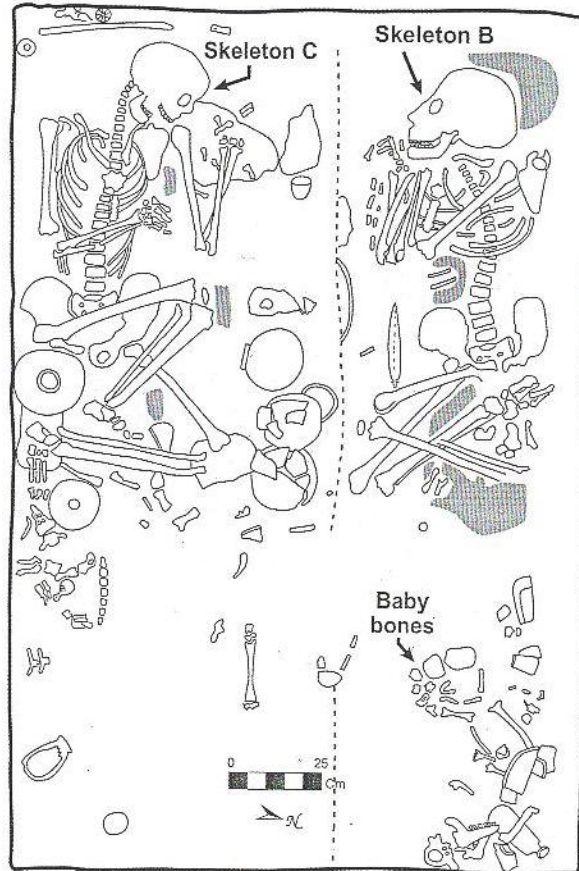


Fig. 91: Tomb I, the middle layer.

The lower layer: Here a skeleton of a sexually unspecified person was found accompanied with pins and a silver glass as well as sheep bones. In the tomb 69 pottery vessels, jars, bowls and glasses, were found. The pottery examination showed that the tomb dates back to the end of the EBA IVA, beside the tomb southern wall two equine skulls were found along with two pottery vessels⁸⁸².

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*: 333-335.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*: 338.

The fine skeletons were put in the western side in a west-east direction and four of them were in the bending position⁸⁸³.

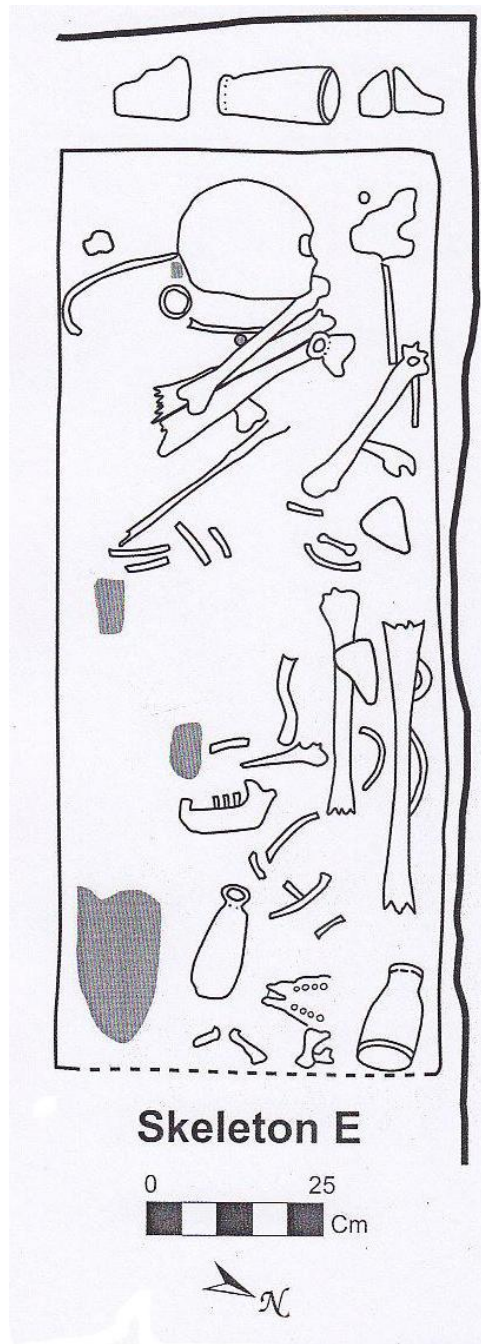


Fig. 92: Tomb I, the lower layer.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.* : 330-335.

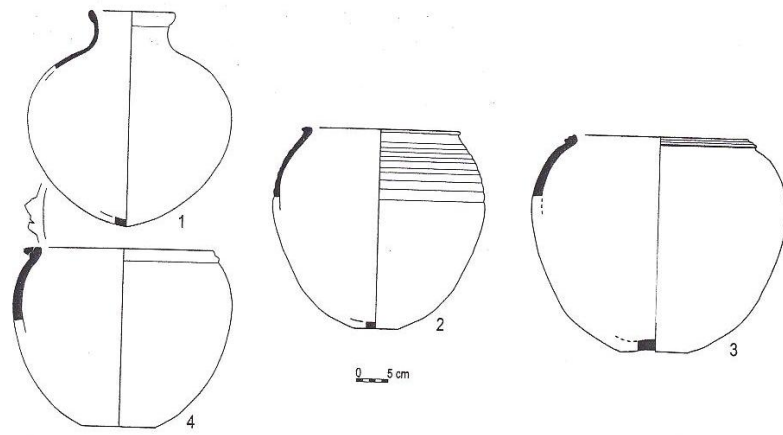


Fig.93: Large vessels from tomb I at Umm el- Marra.

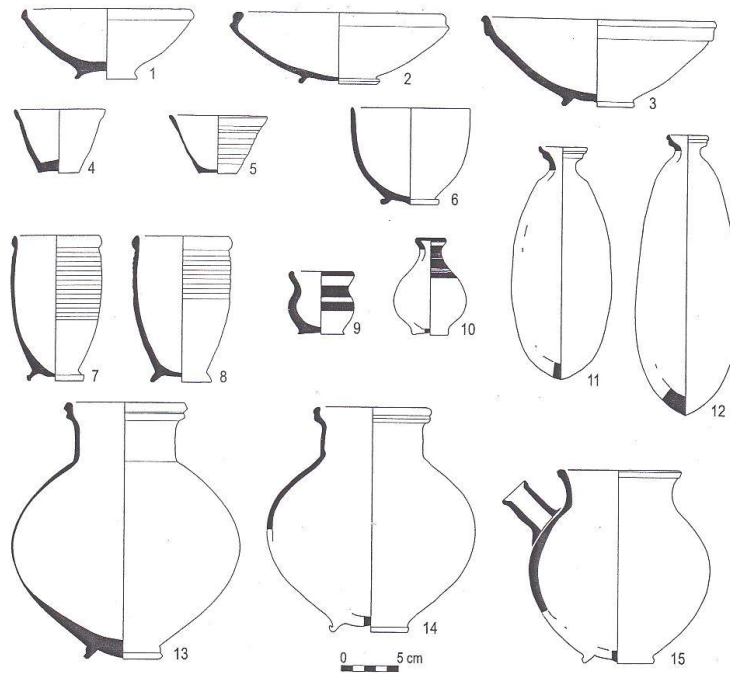
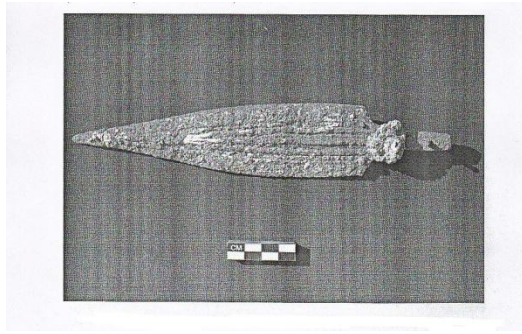


Fig.94: Pottery from tomb I at Umm el- Marra.



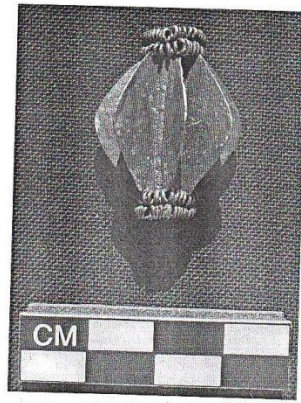
Copper/bronze dagger, tomb I.



Cylinder seal, tomb I.



Gold pendant, tomb I.



Gold flanged, tomb I.



Gold bracelet, tomb I.

Fig.95: Grave goods from tomb I at Umm el-Marra.

- 69 pottery vessels.
- Rich collection of funerary enclosures.
- Five skeletons and two babies.

Tomb III at Umm el-Marra: It was destroyed but it contained scattered bones and fragmented pottery. The bones were of a human adult and adolescent⁸⁸⁴ along with a large collection of animal bones (sheep, goats, ducks, geese, dogs, cattle, weasel, and equids. the fragmented pottery included 62 different types of vessels such as glasses, plates, jugs and jars either polished or provided with a decorative strip, a tripartite base or long-necked jars, there were also short-

⁸⁸⁴ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

spouted jars similar to those of tomb 1 at tell al-Banat,⁸⁸⁵ along with long-spouted ones and circularly-pelvises ones. The tomb dates back to the EBA IVA⁸⁸⁶.

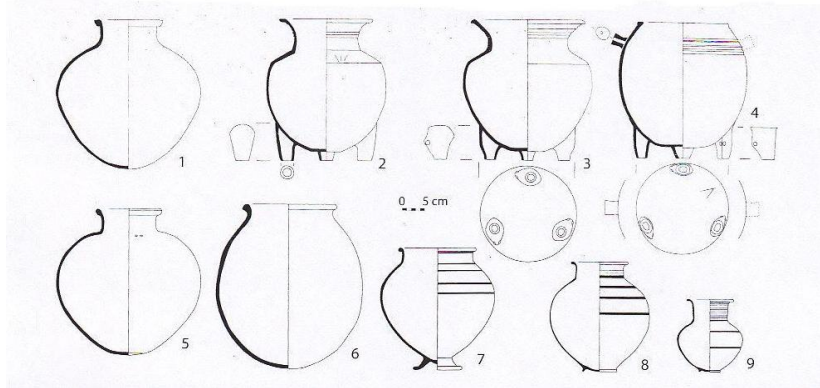


Fig.96: Larger vessels from tomb III at Umm el- Marra.

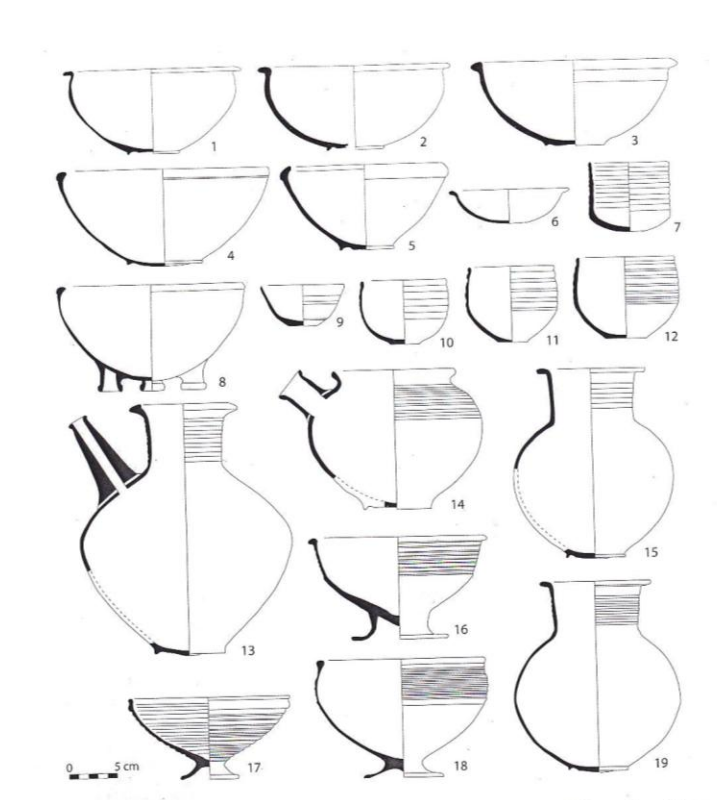


Fig. 97: pottery from tomb III at Umm el- Marra.

- 62 pottery vessels.
- Two skeletons.

⁸⁸⁵ Porter 1995a: fig. 11(pl I).

⁸⁸⁶ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

Tomb IV at Umm el-Marra: Tomb IV contained two layers or phase of use.

In *the lower layer* were with adult male, whose bones were piled in the northern part of the tomb with a collection of pottery vessels beside them. Among the objects found there, there were golden trinkets and two small decorated tables made of basalt stone and one of them on top the other. These two tables may have been used for grinding beautification materials, the second skeleton of an adult male was found in the south eastern part of the tomb with two net-shaped pieces of gold beside it. There were also an ivory comb, a basalt table and a collection of pottery. the third skeleton of an adult female of middle age or older, differed from the other skeletons in that the bones were found in a dense cluster ca.9 Cm high, with the skull placed on top, indicative of a secondary burial in which bones were moved from a previous location within tomb IV or elsewhere. Beside this skeleton an ivory comb and a collection of bronze and silver toggle pins were found. In the tomb north-western corner there were two eyes: decorative padding of eyes of the kind used for statues. Originally, there might have been either a statue made of an endurable material or two separately- buried eyes. The pottery corpus of the lower level was 55 vessels included short, flat-based corrugated cups, shallow ring-based bowls with a short ledge or bead rim, spouted jars, tall-necked jars, globular bottle. *The upper layer* of the tomb yielded 79 ceramic vessels. The tomb date back to the EBA IVA⁸⁸⁷.

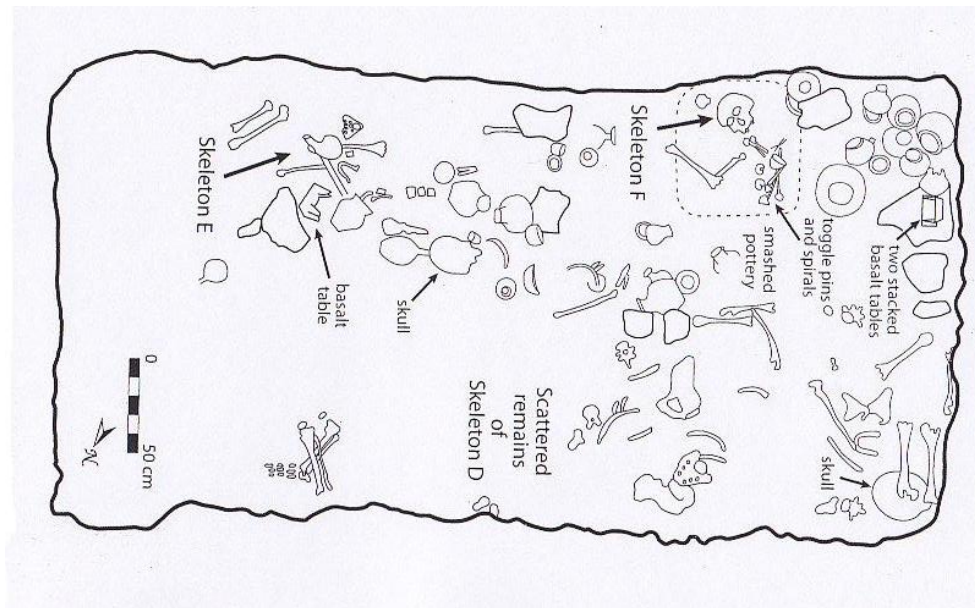


Fig. 98: Tomb IV at Umm el- Marra, the lower layer.

⁸⁸⁷ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 610.

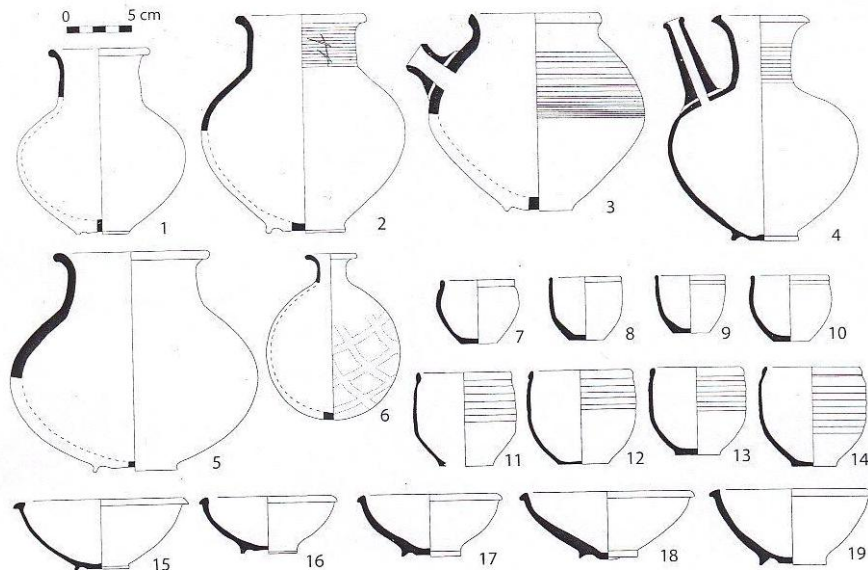


Fig. 99: Pottery from tomb IV at Umm el- Marra. Lower layer.

The upper layer also three skeletons were found the first was of a reburied adult male, the second of an adult female and the third of a child, along with a jewelry collection consisting of gold and silver trinkets and a collection of small silverwares. The upper level of the tomb yielded 79 ceramic vessels. Tomb 4, dating back to the EBA IV (2450 BC)⁸⁸⁸.

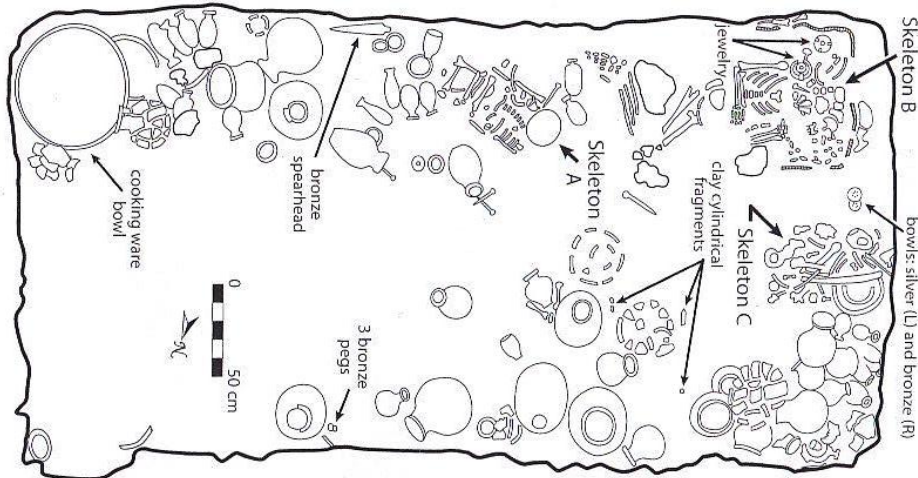


Fig. 100: Tomb IV at Umm el- Marra, the upper layer.

⁸⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: 623.

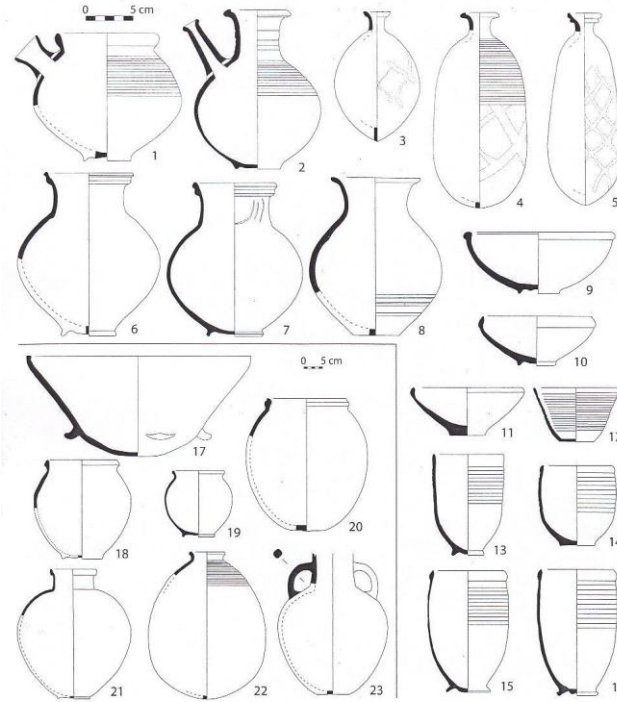
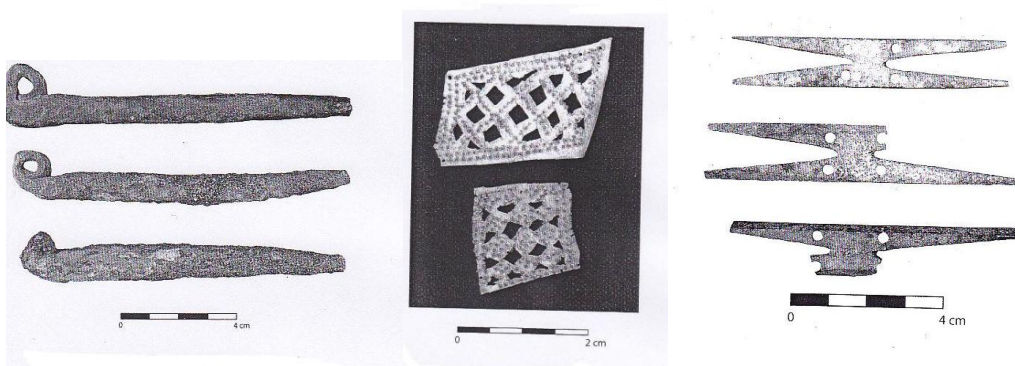


Fig. 101: Pottery from tomb IV at Umm el- Marra. upper level.



Bronze pegs, tomb IV. Gold ornaments, tomb IV lower level Ivory combs, tomb IV, L. level

Fig. 102: Grave goods from tomb IV at Umm el-Marra.

- 134 vessels (79 in upper level and 55 in lower level).
- Big collection of grave goods.
- 6 skeletons.

Tomb V at Umm el- Marra: In this destroyed tomb the bones of an incomplete infant and an adult male were found along with a collection of pottery vessels dating back to mid third millennium BC, to EBA III the same period of Umm el- Marra VI. This tomb is distinguished by the presence of glasses of the kind called the champagne vessels are well known at Carchemish in the beginning and mid third millennium BC⁸⁸⁹. There were also bowls globe-shaped jars and tabular-based jars⁸⁹⁰.

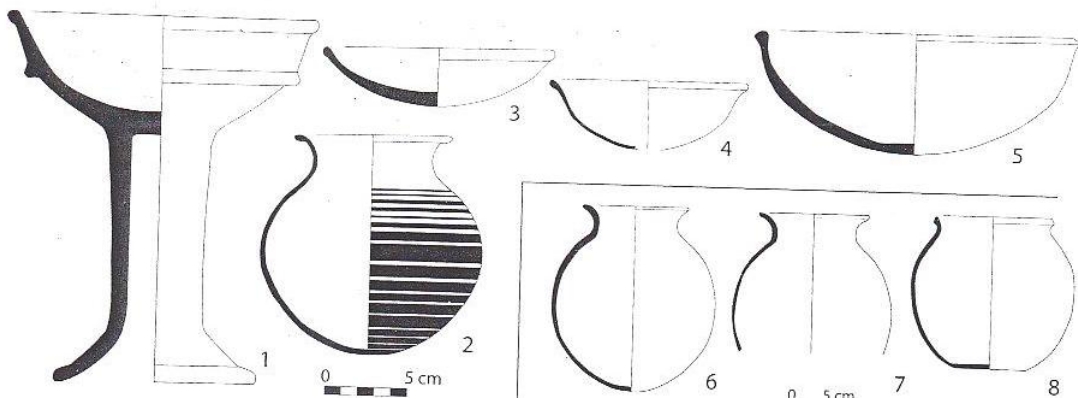


Fig. 103: Pottery from tomb V at Umm el- Marra .

Tomb VI at Umm el-Marra: This tomb had been partly destroyed because of the erection of tomb 7 beside it. this tomb contained bones of an adult person laid on the remains of a wooden coffin 0.96 wide and 1.1 meter long, which was painted with tar like that of tomb 7 at tell Banat⁸⁹¹. The coffin itself was laid on a bed of flagstones put on pebble-paved floor.

⁸⁸⁹ Sconza 2006 :250-266.

⁸⁹⁰ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 606-607.

⁸⁹¹ McClellan and Porter 1999: 109-110.

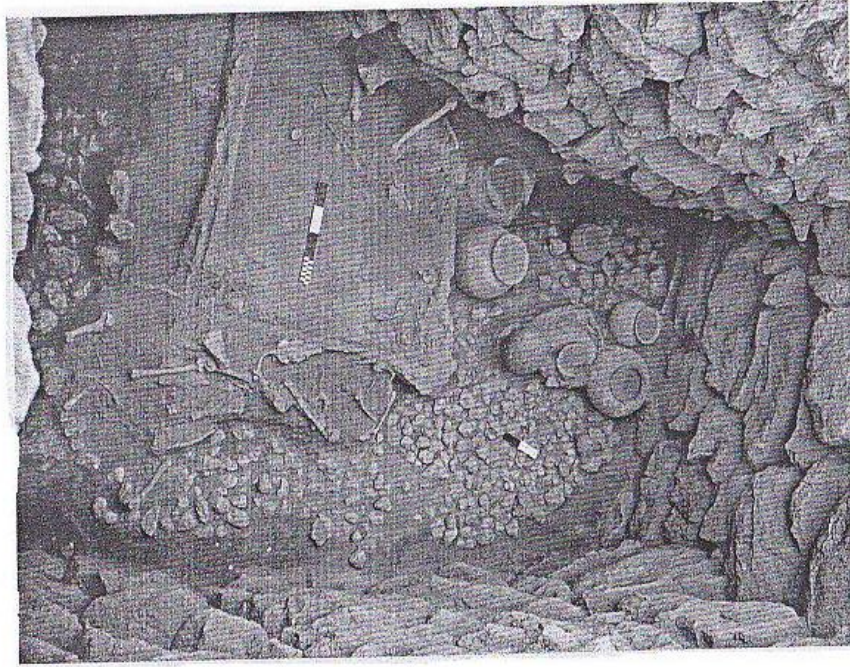


Fig. 104: Tomb VI at Umm el- Marra with coffin remains.

A heap of animal bones (sheep, goats) was also found with a collection of funerary enclosures such as pins, silver and gold fasteners and beads of lapis-lazuli, gold and carnelian. The pottery finds included jars, plates and glasses (*champagne*). The tomb dates back to early MBA III⁸⁹².



Fig. 105: Gold (top) and silver toggle pins from tomb VI at Umm el- Marra .

- Collection of pottery vessels.
- Collection of grave goods.
- 2 skeletons.

⁸⁹² Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 608-609.

Tomb VII at Umm el-Marra: This tomb is interlaced with tomb 6. In the south-eastern corner were human skeletal remains identified as those of a child or young adolescent found with several broken vessels, include examples of vertical-rim bowls, ring-based corrugated goblets⁸⁹³. As well as a bronze nail and the pointed end of a silver toggle pin. The tomb dates back to the end of the EBA IVA (Umm el-Marra V) or EBA IVB, (Umm el- Marra IV), 2300 BC⁸⁹⁴.

Aleppo:

Tombs A and B in Aleppo: In 2009 two rock-cut shaft tombs (A and B) uncovered accidentally in the industrial town of Aleppo city, this tombs dating back to the Early Bronze Age⁸⁹⁵.

Tomb A: Four pottery vessels were found included jar, bowl, class, jug, and some bronze ornaments. It dates back to the EBA⁸⁹⁶.



Fig.106: Tomb A.

⁸⁹³ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 623-624.

⁸⁹⁴ Schwartz *et al.* 2006: 624.

⁸⁹⁵ Kanjou and Naser 2009:52.

⁸⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: 53.

Tomb B: A rock-cut tomb with a perpendicular rectangular-shaped lateral top entrance. The interment chamber is elliptical-shaped by 200 Cm diameter and 150 Cm high, dates back to the EBA⁸⁹⁷.

- 4 pottery vessels.
- Bronze ornaments.

Tomb B: Nine various pottery vessels included jar, bowl, class, jug, and some bronze ornaments dates back to the EBA⁸⁹⁸.



Fig. 107: Pottery Vessels from tomb B.

⁸⁹⁷ Kanjou and Naser 2009: 54.

⁸⁹⁸ *Ibid.*



Fig. 108: Bronze objects from tombs A-B

- 9 pottery vessels.
- 7 Bronze ornaments.

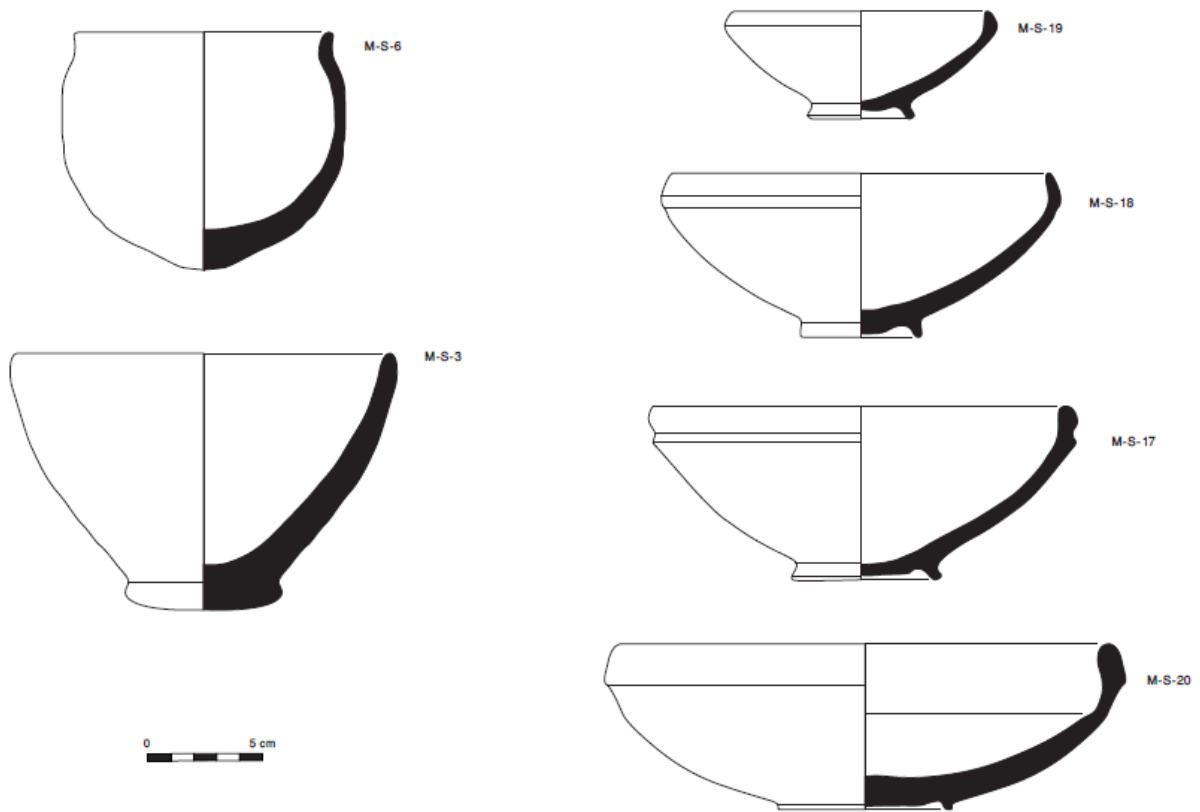


Fig. 109: pottery, tomb B

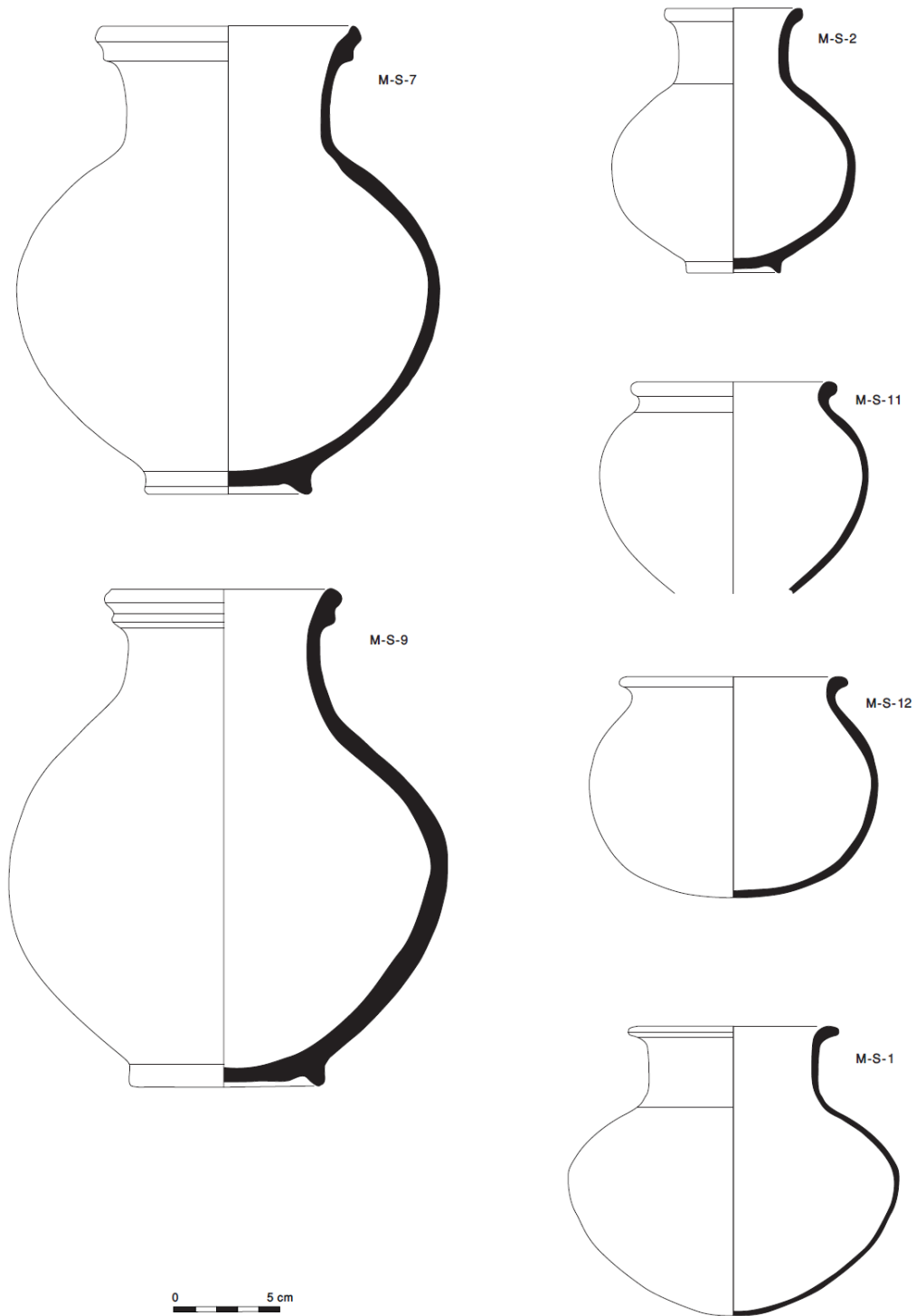


Fig. 110: pottery, tomb A – B.

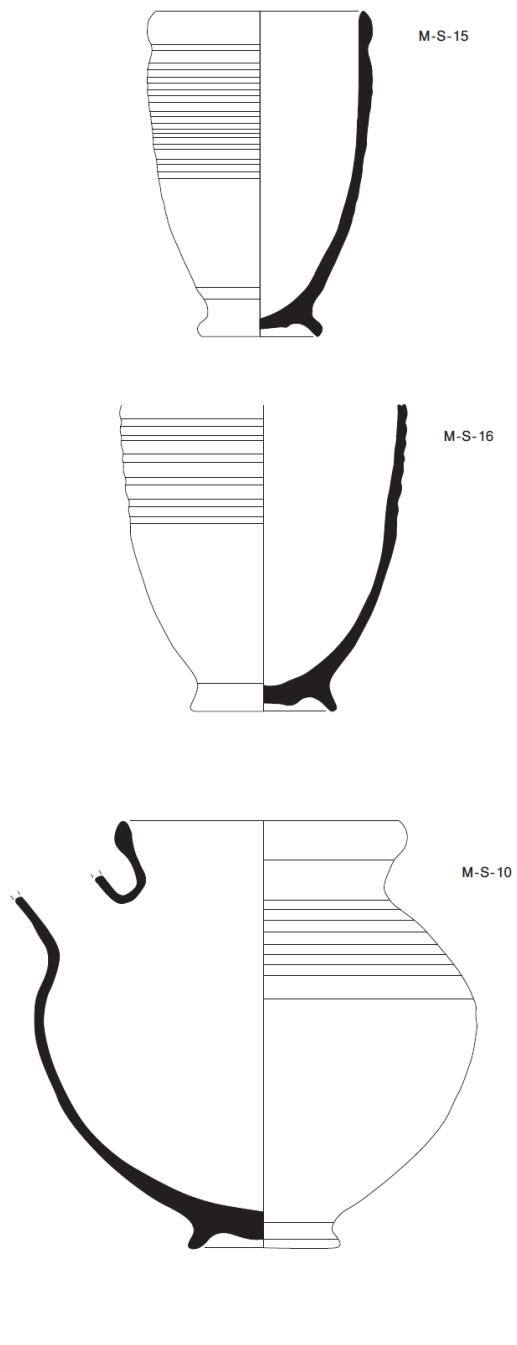


Fig. 111: pottery, tomb A – B.

Ansari:

In Ansari site, a one jar interment was found. This was pottery shreds which belonged to more than one jar put on and under a skeleton of an adult. It was found at a depth of about four meters. With the jar shreds parts of a bronze bracelets and incised black or scalded brown-colored glass similar to Hama glasses period J3,⁸⁹⁹ and it is related to late pottery period. The burial dates back to the EBA IVB (2100-2000) BC⁹⁰⁰.

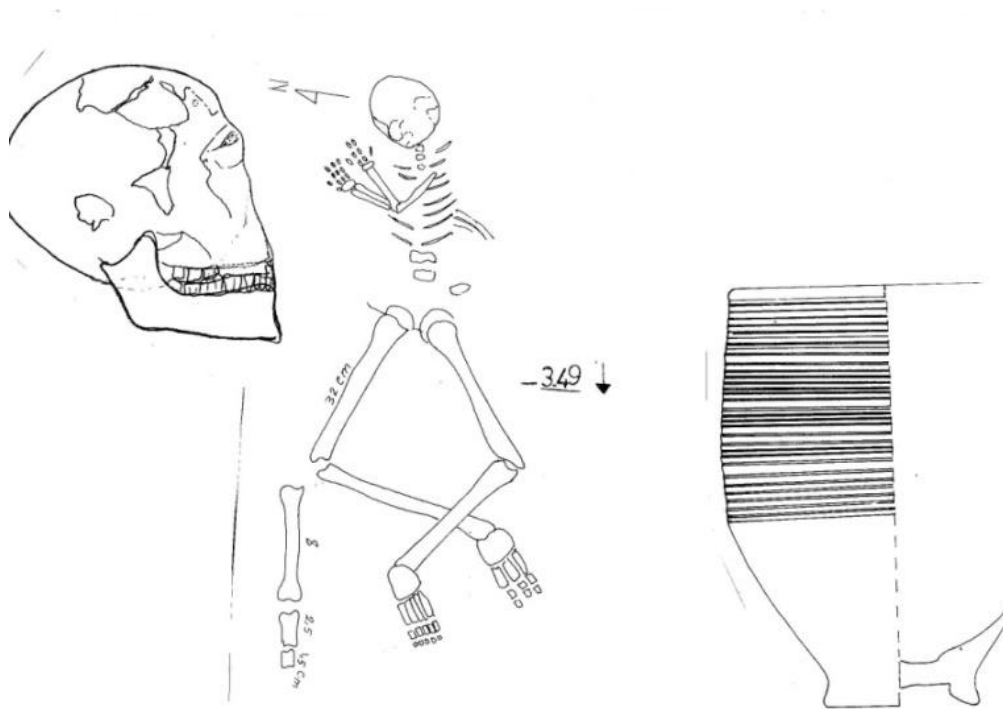


Fig. 112: Ansari, Jar burial.

⁸⁹⁹ Fugmann 1958: 74.fig.93.

⁹⁰⁰ Suleiman 1999: 79.

Accompanying grave goods tombs during the Early Bronze Age and reused in the Middle Bronze Age:

Ain Assan :

Tomb III at Ain Assan: Here eight skeletons and 84 funerary pieces were found. The tomb dates back to the end of EBA IVB,⁹⁰¹ and was reused until the MBA I. The unearthed objects which date back to the EBA IVB are similar to those unearthed at Ebla⁹⁰² and Hama⁹⁰³.

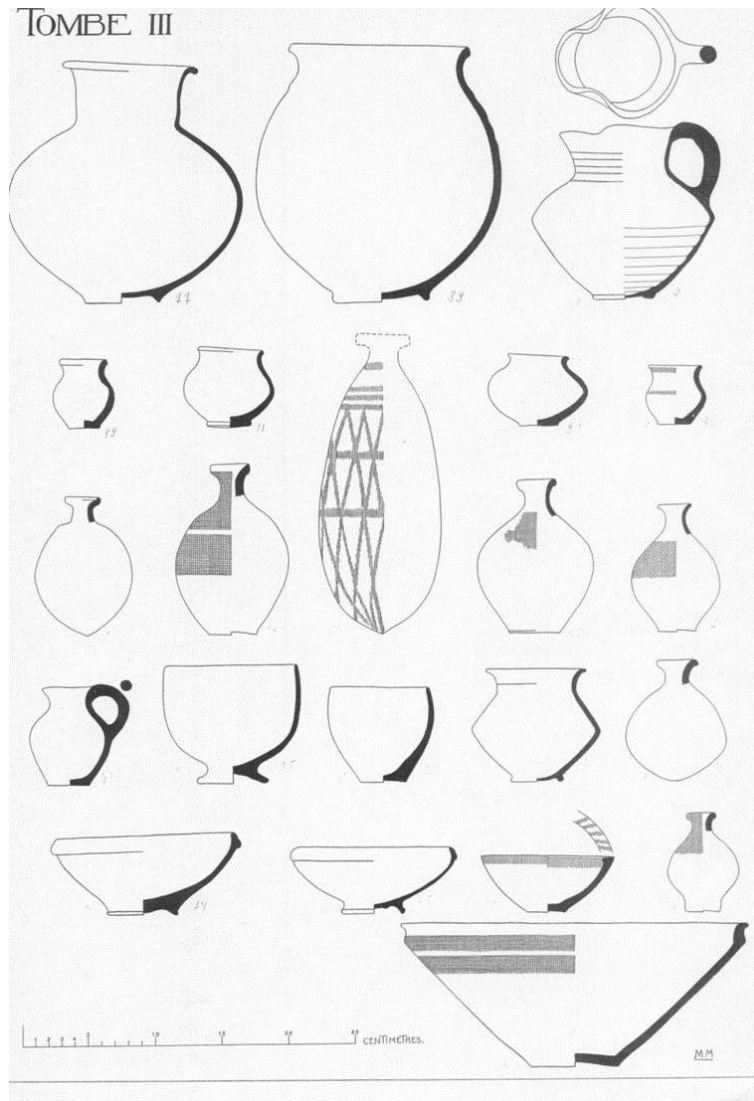


Fig. 113: Ain Assan, Pottery from tomb III.

⁹⁰¹ Al-Maqdissi 2006a: 141.

⁹⁰² Matthiae 1977: fig. 15-16.

⁹⁰³ Fugmann 1958: fig. 62 and 65.

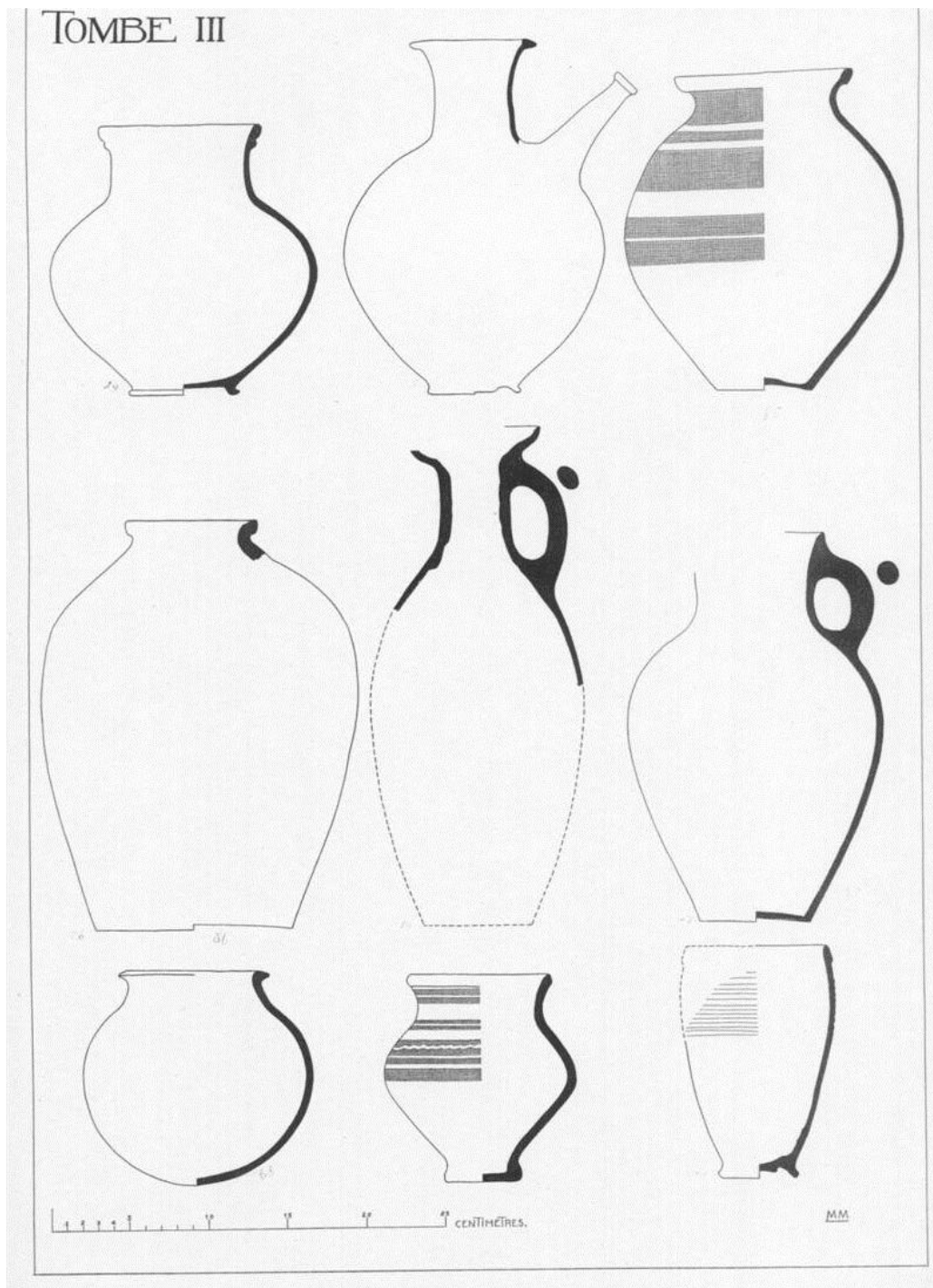


Fig. 114: Ain Assan, Pottery from Tomb III.

- 84 pottery vessels.
- 8 skeletons.

Ansari :

Ansari Tomb: It consists of two layers: the upper dates back to Middle Bronze Age I and II and the lower to the EBA IVA-B. Near the western wall two skeletons were found in a lying down position on their back, the first eastward and the second westward. The other three skeletons were in a state which did not allow studying their positions correctly. In the tomb there were also a big collection of 300 pottery vessels which included jars, glasses, jugs and bowls as well as bronze bracelets and perforators and stone beads.⁹⁰⁴ The finds are similar to those of tomb IV at Mishrifeh and at Tell Mardikh⁹⁰⁵.

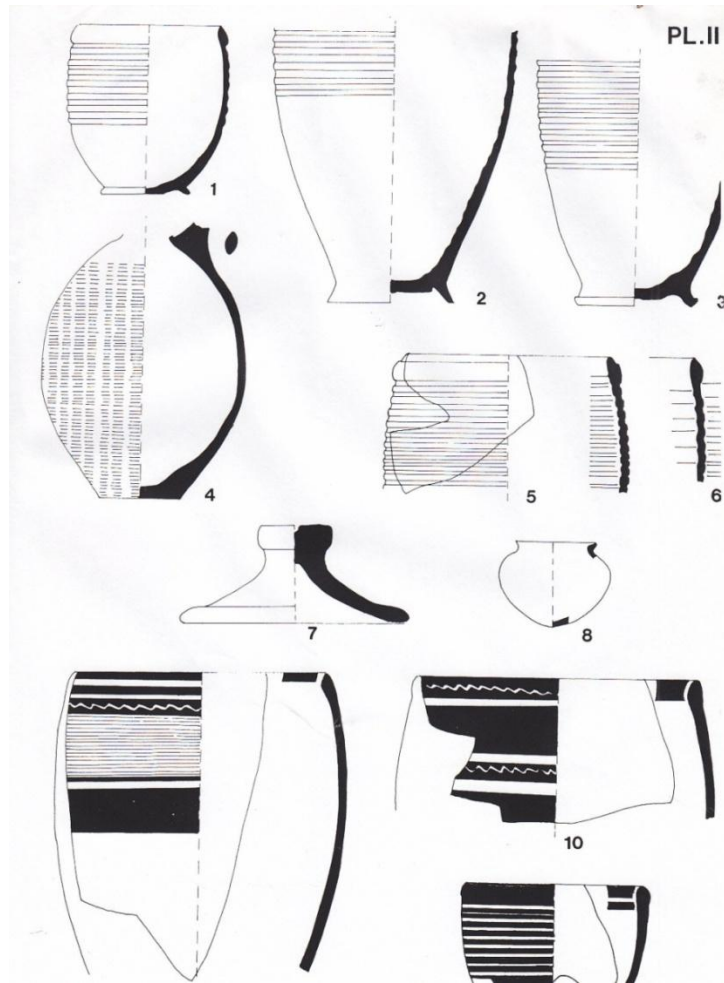


Fig. 115: Pottery from Ansari tomb.

⁹⁰⁴ Suleiman 1984: 3.

⁹⁰⁵ Suleiman 1999: 79-85.

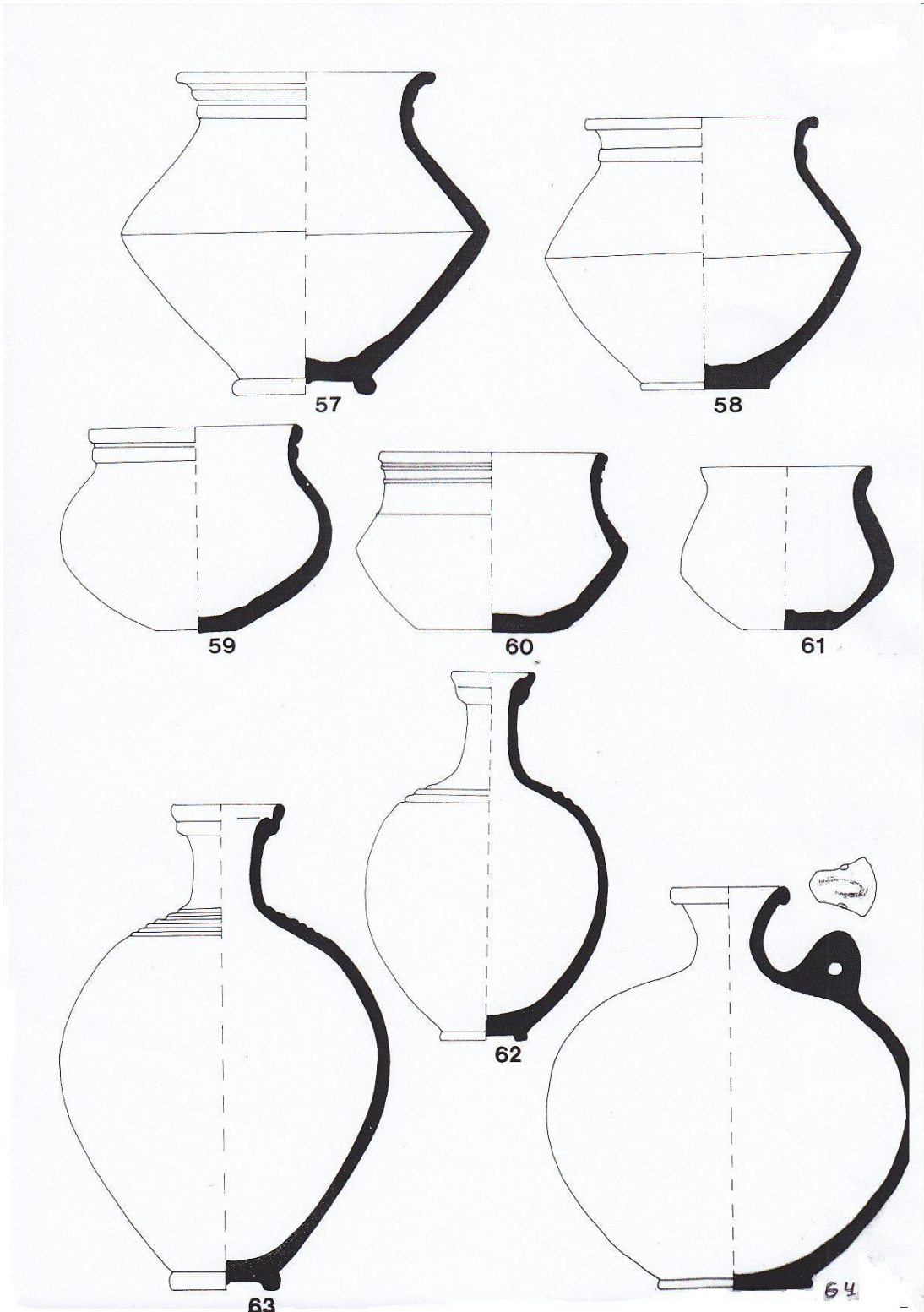


Fig.116: Pottery from Ansari tomb.

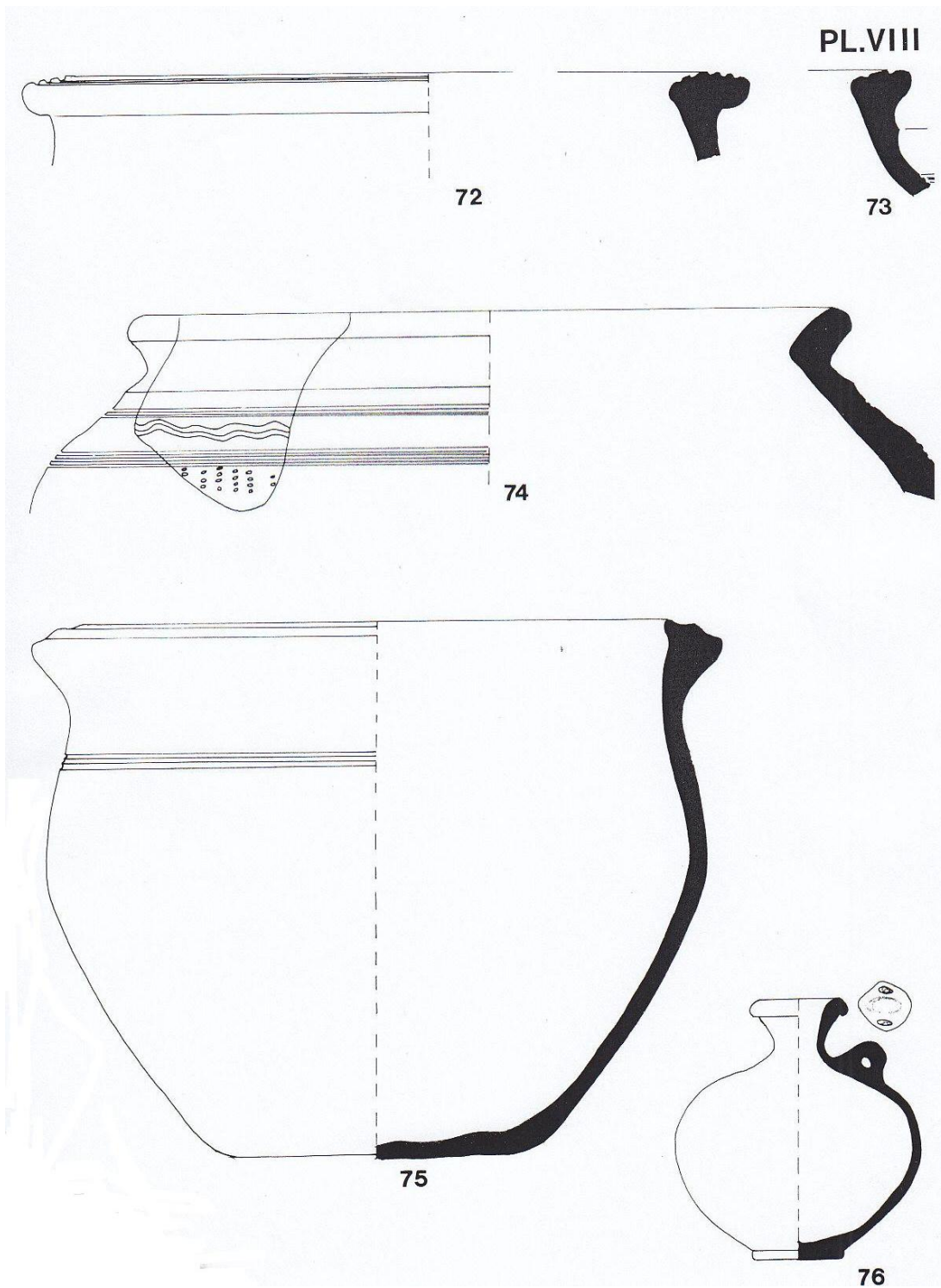


Fig. 117: Pottery from Ansari tomb.

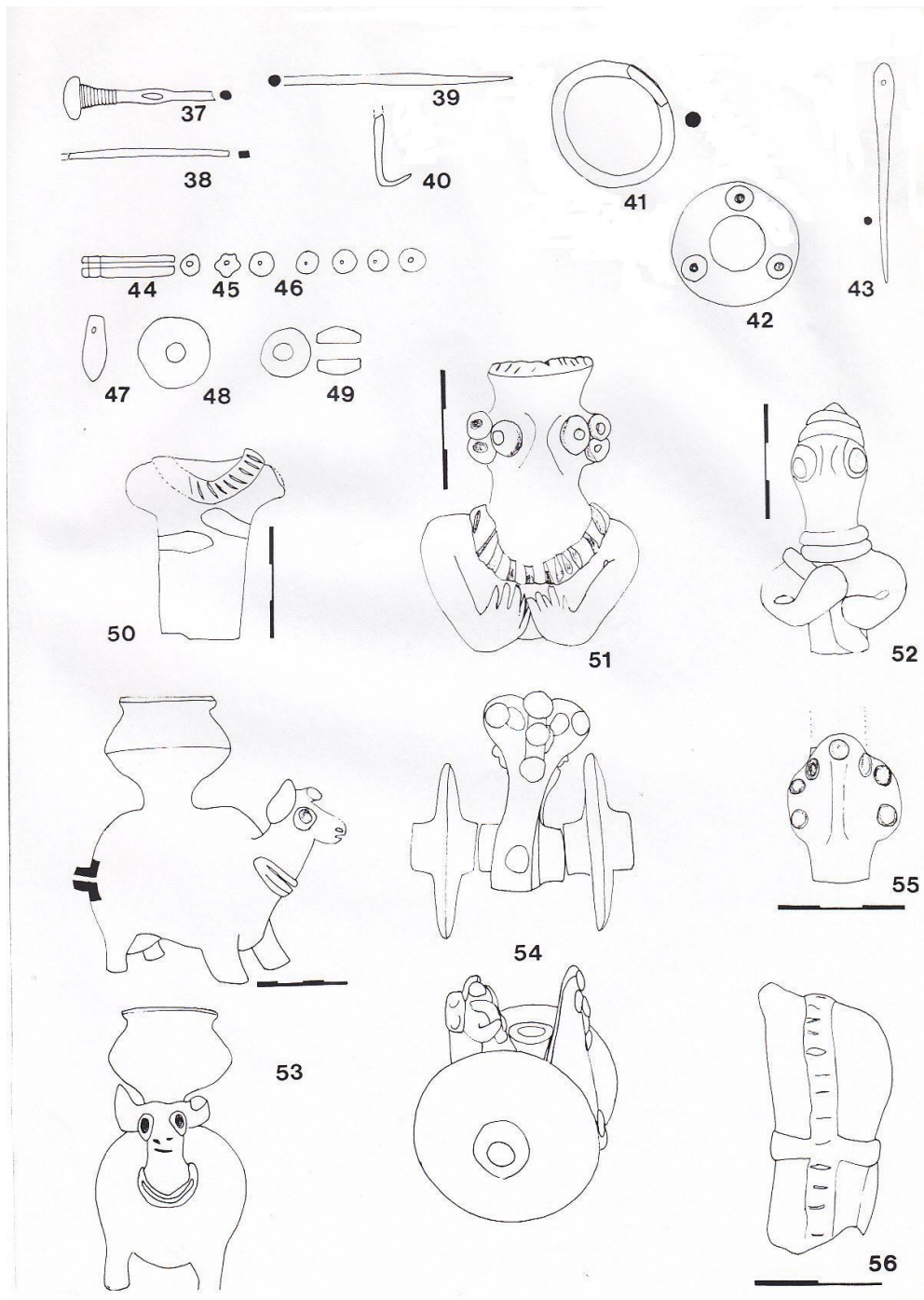


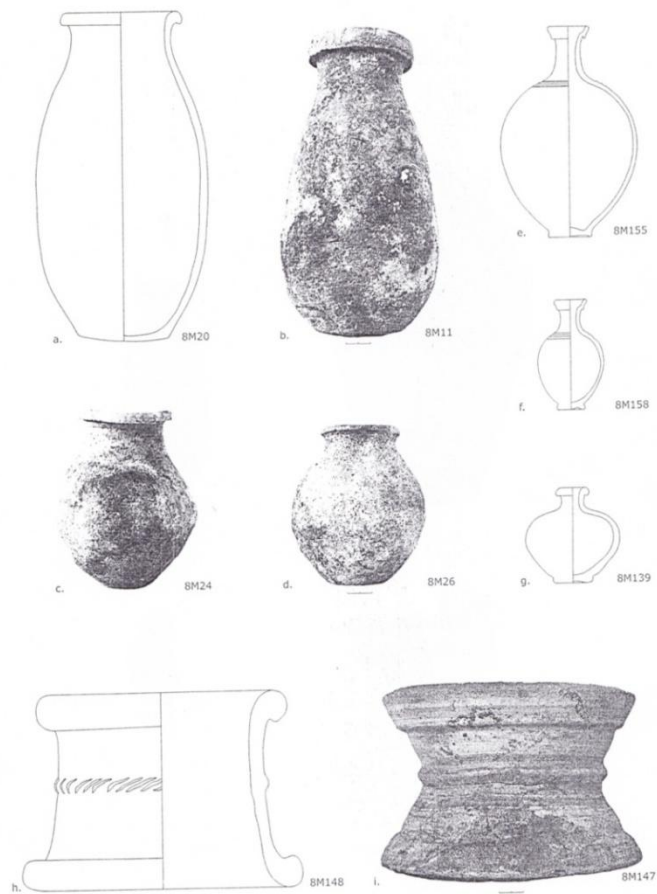
Fig. 118: Grave goods from Ansari tomb.

- 300 pottery vessels.
- Collection of Bronze objects.
- 5 skeletons.

Accompanying grave goods tombs during the Middle Bronze Age in collective tombs:

Mourek :

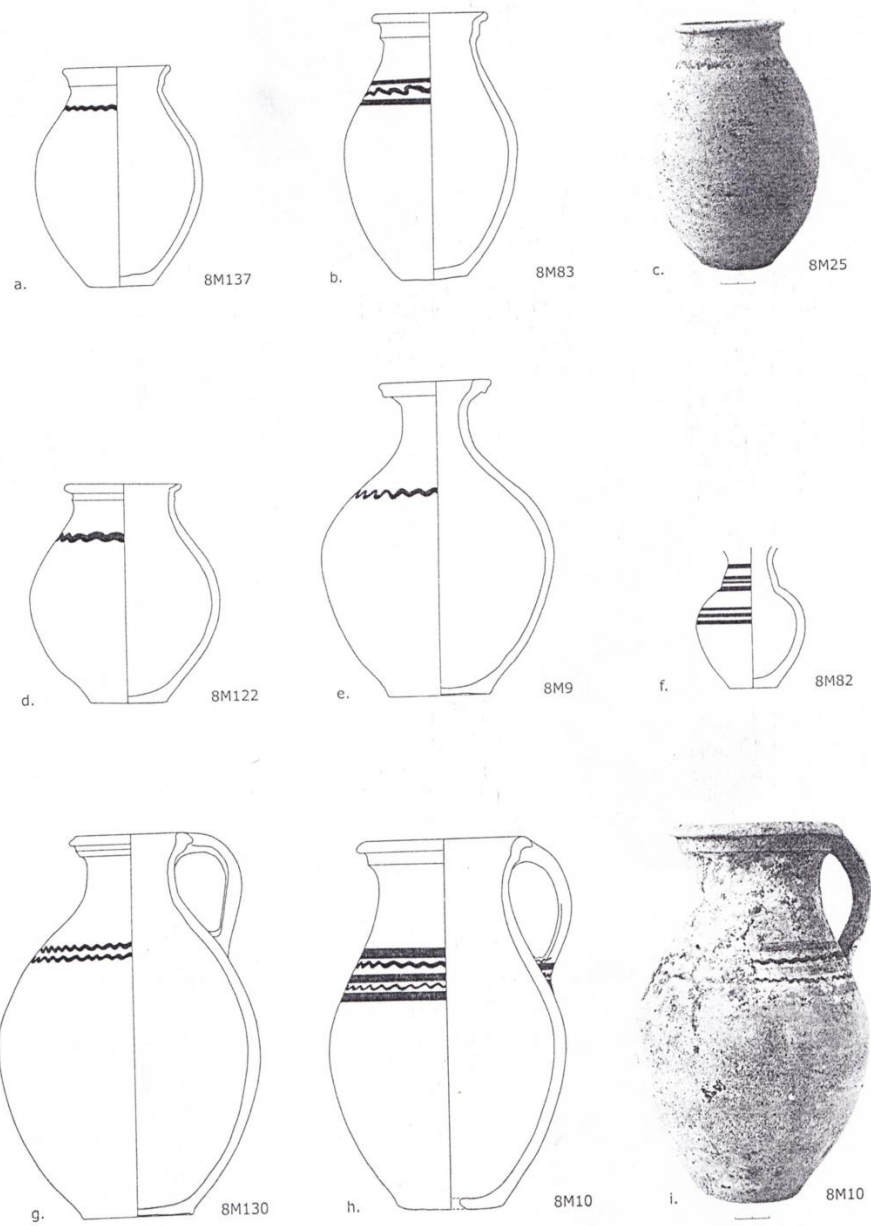
The tomb at Mourek: It contained thirteen skeletons most of which belonged to adult males and children as well as one or more female. The finds provide a funerary set rich with pottery which amounted to 183 different pottery pieces such as jars, jugs, bowls ...etc, as well as a set of bronze finds (bronze pins and rings), a carriage and seven terracotta figurines all of which date back to MBaII⁹⁰⁶.



1:3

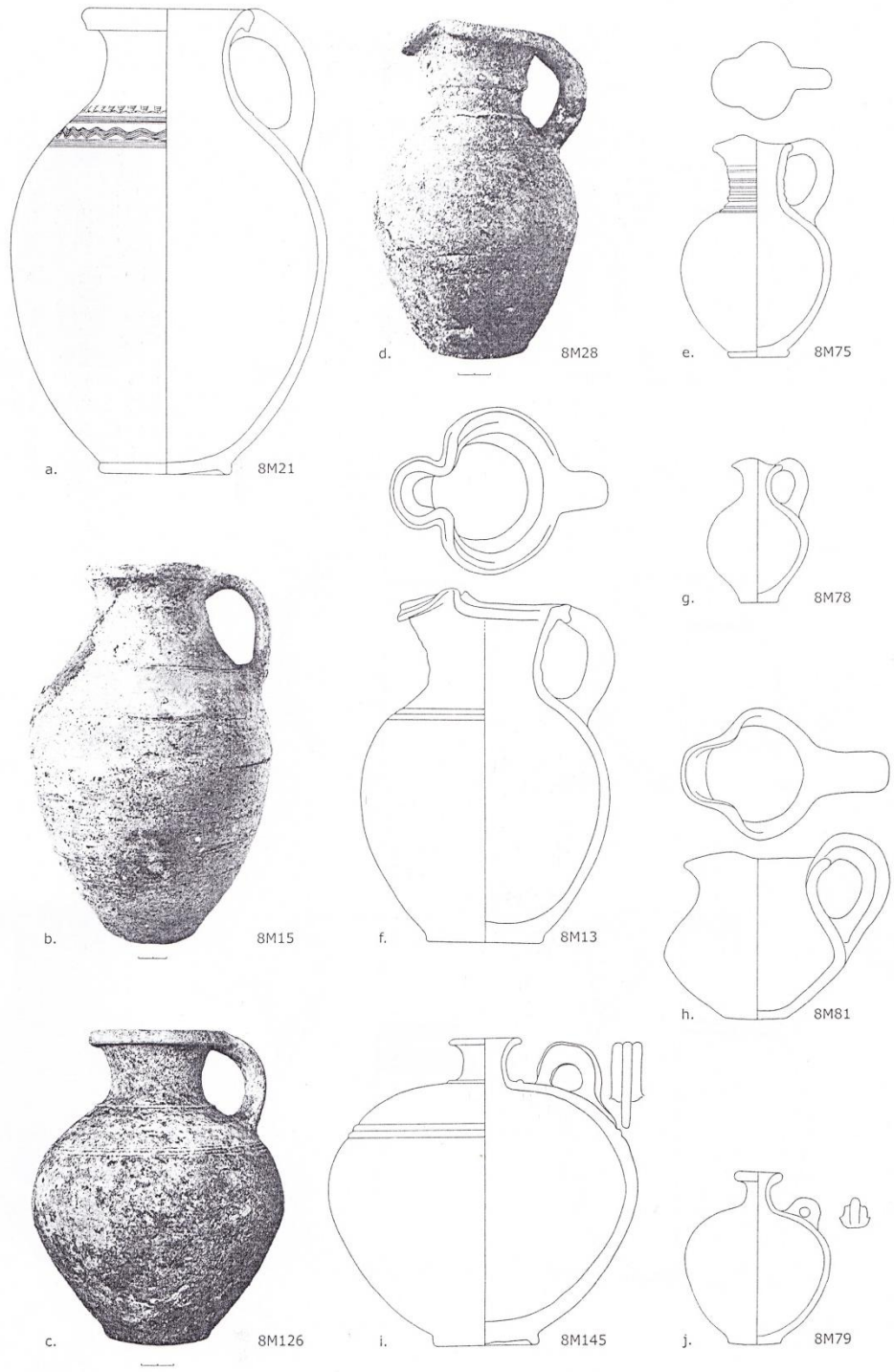
Fig. 119: Pottery from Mourek tomb.

⁹⁰⁶ Riis 2007: 49.



1:3

Fig. 120: Pottery from Mourek tomb.



1:3

Fig. 121: Pottery from Mourek tomb.

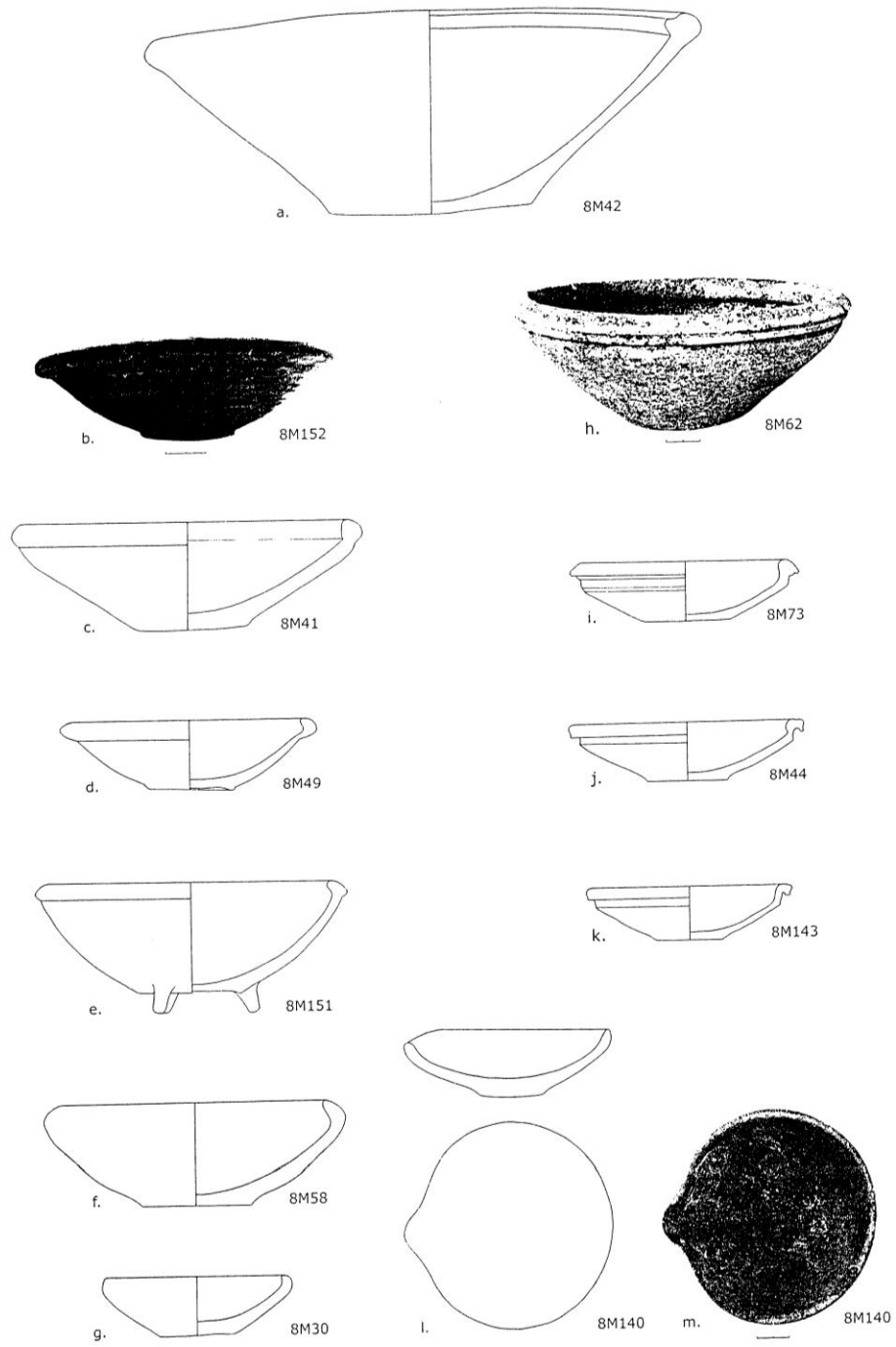
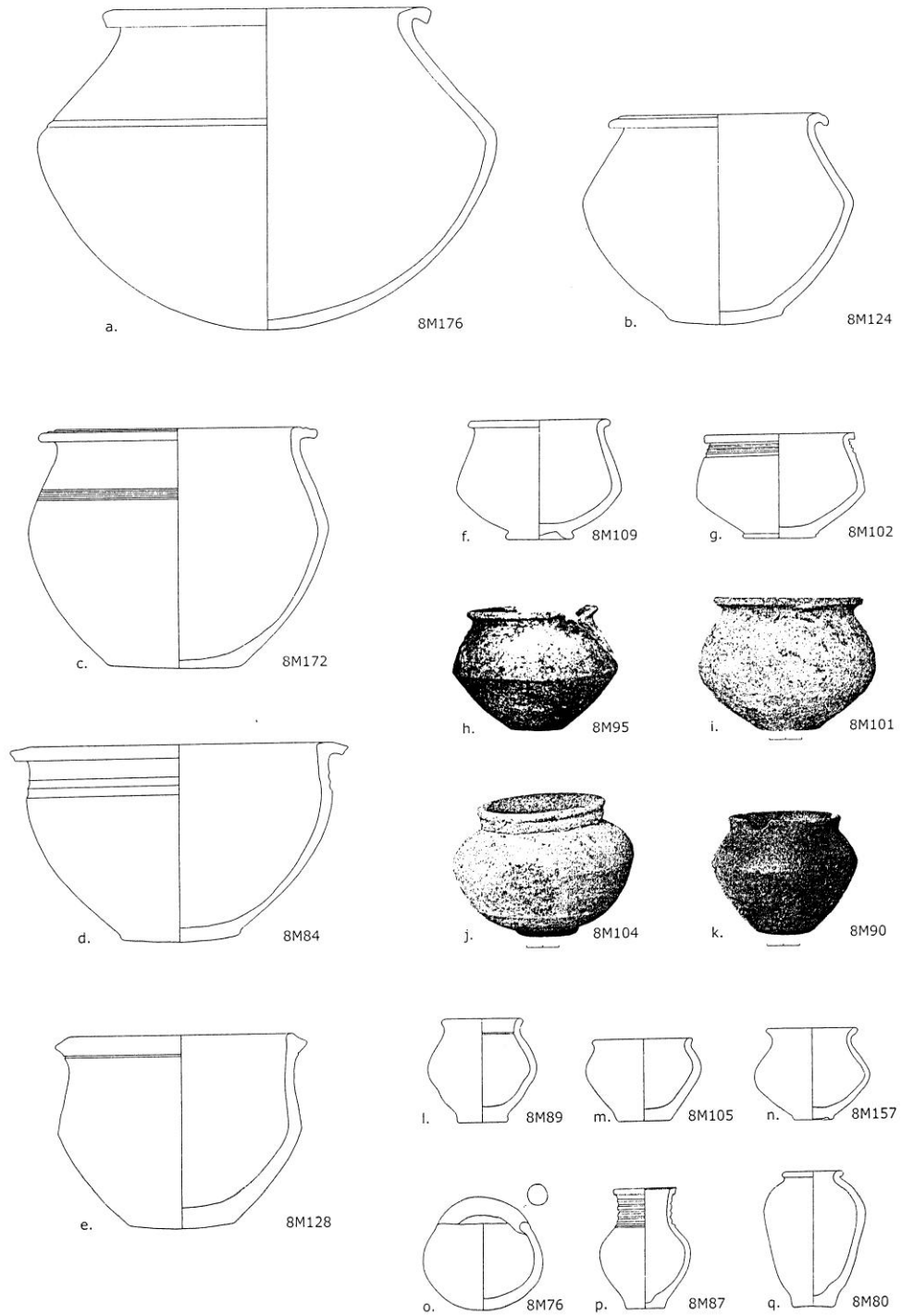


Fig. 122: Pottery from Mourek tomb.



Bowls and miniature vessels from tomb in Mürk.

1:3

Fig. 123: Pottery from Mourek tomb.

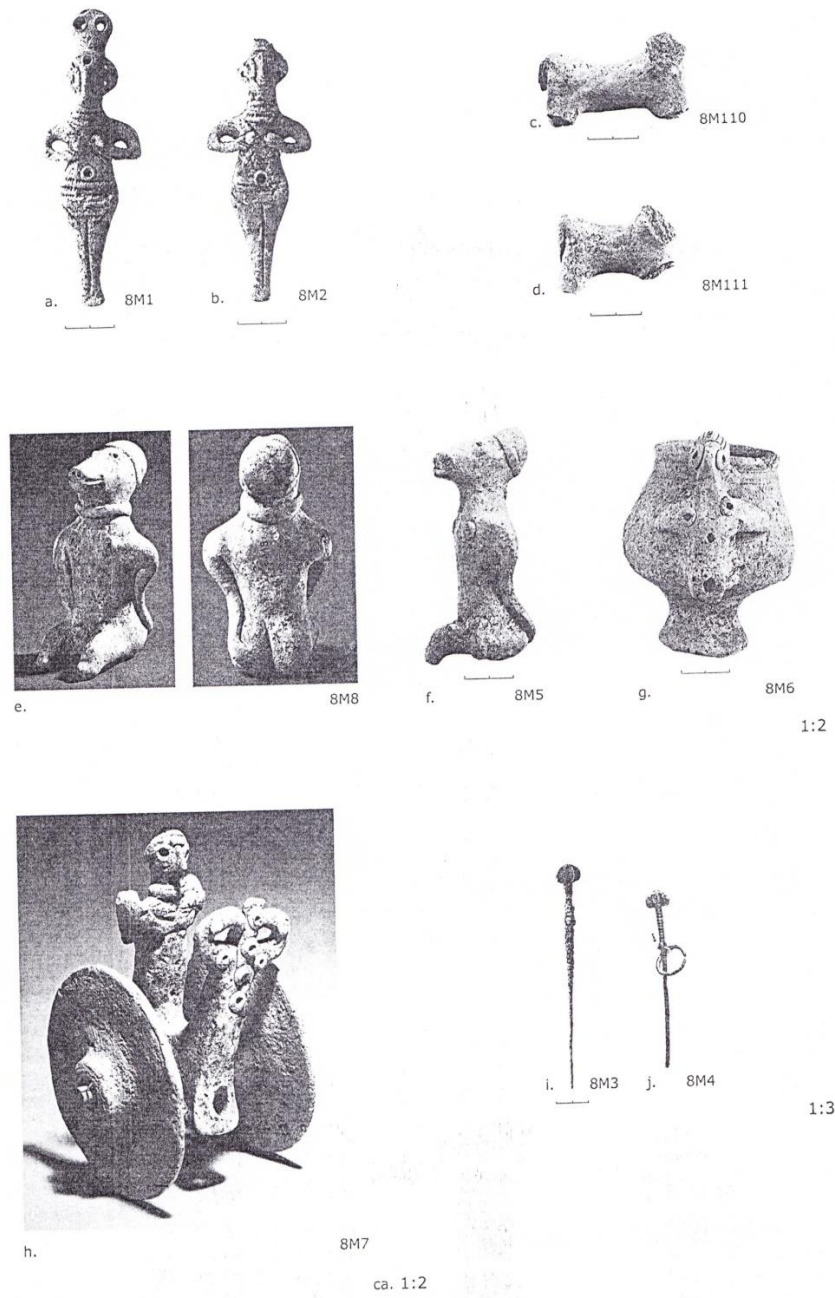


Fig. 124: Grave goods from Mourek tomb.

- 183 pottery vessels.
- 3 bronze objects.
- 13 skeletons.
- 7 terracotta figurine.

Hama :

Tomb I at Hama: The skeletons had been destroyed by the thieves who previously entered the tomb. what was found are some bones remains, some golden finds, a cylinder seal, pins, beads, a Terracotta figurine and 19 bronze daggers, as well as a set of 29 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, bottles and polygonal and ordinary bowls and six human and animal terracotta figurines all of which date back to Middle Bronze Age⁹⁰⁷.

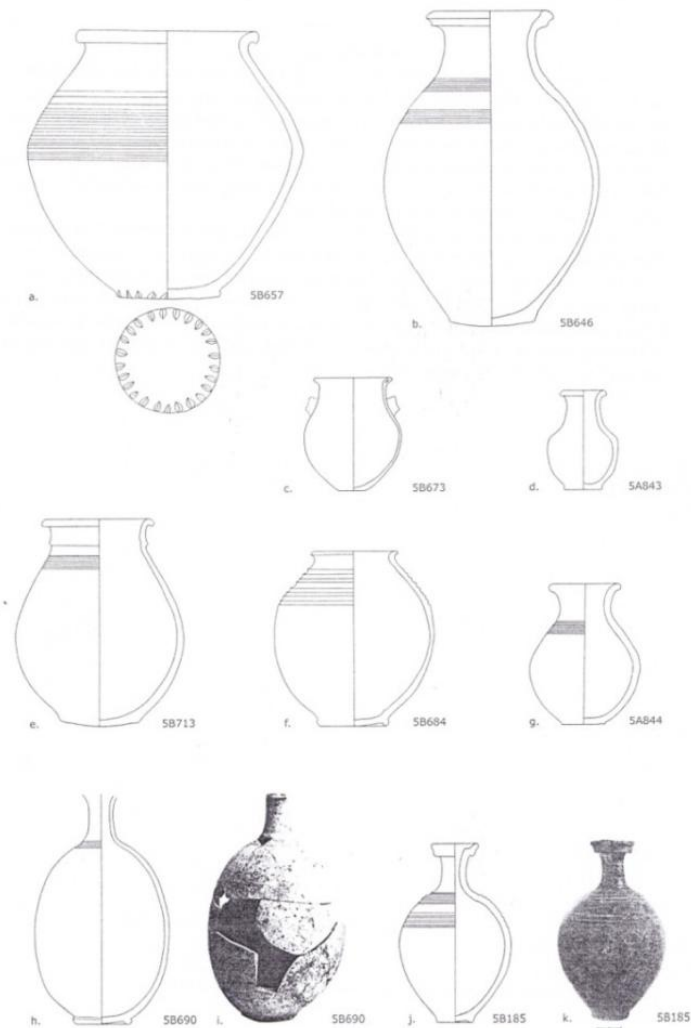


Fig. 125: Pottery from tomb G1 A-B.

⁹⁰⁷ Riis 2007:14-18.

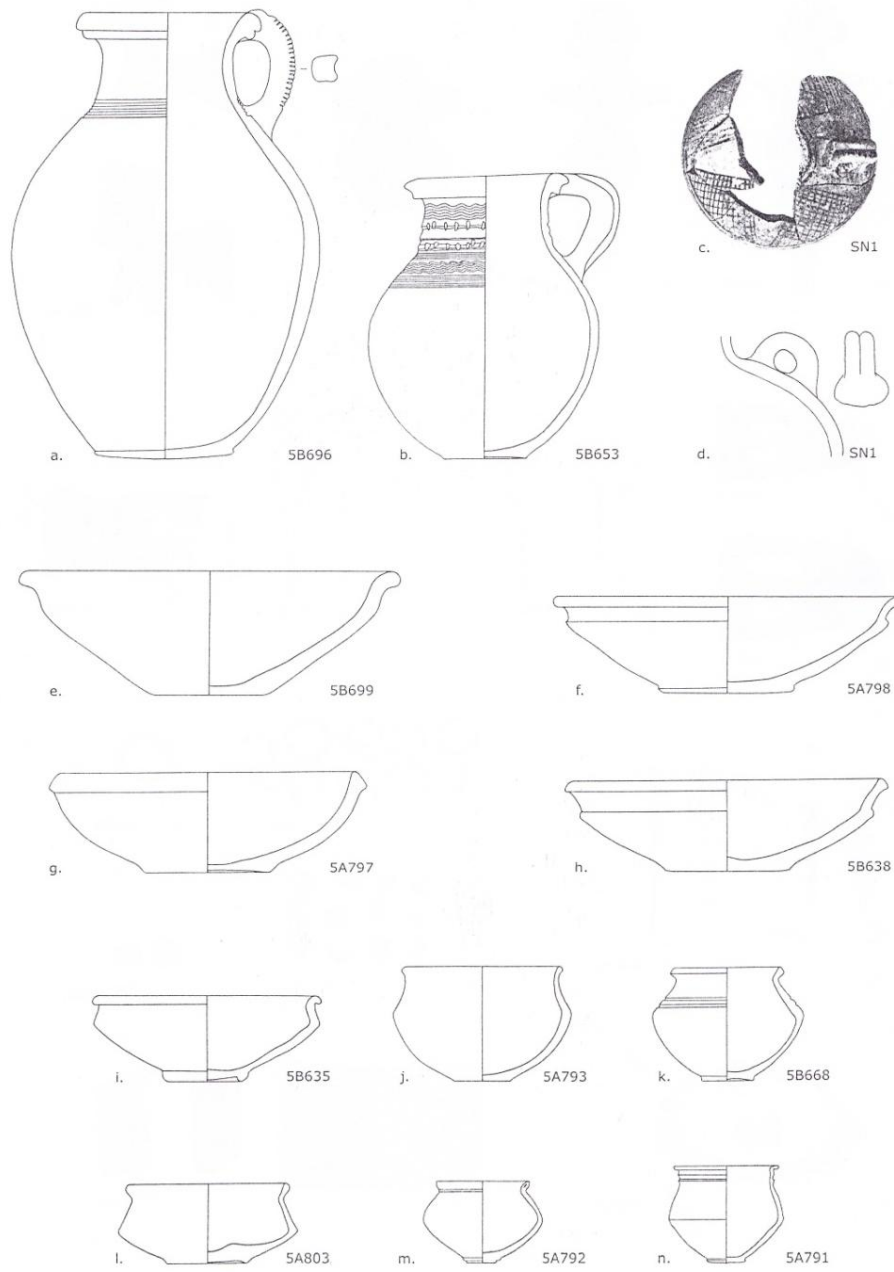


Fig. 126: Pottery from tomb G1 A-B.

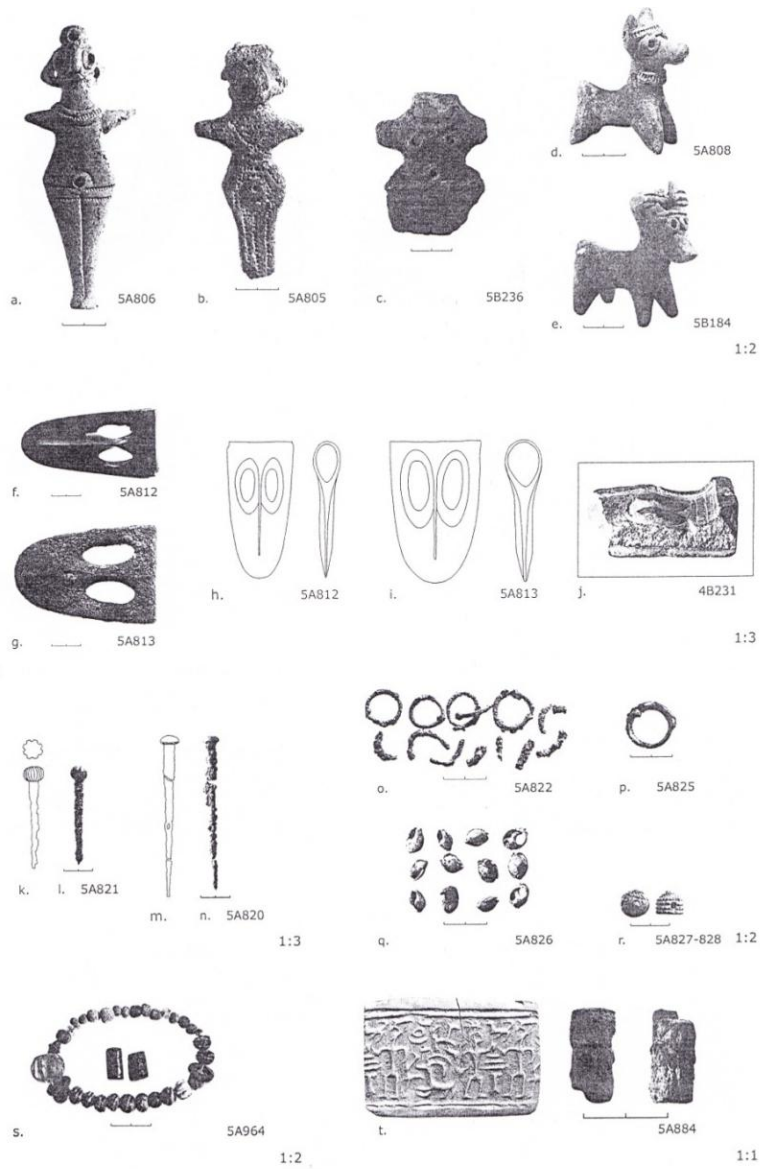
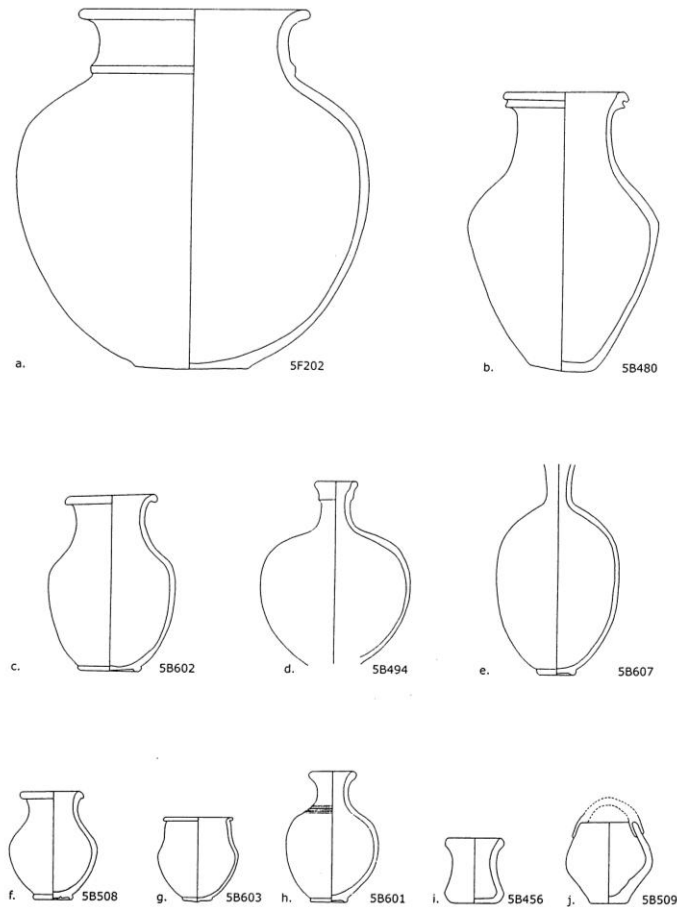


Fig. 127: Grave goods from tomb G1 A-B.

- 29 pottery vessels.
- 19 bronze objects, 1 silver, 1 gold.
- 6 terracotta figurine.

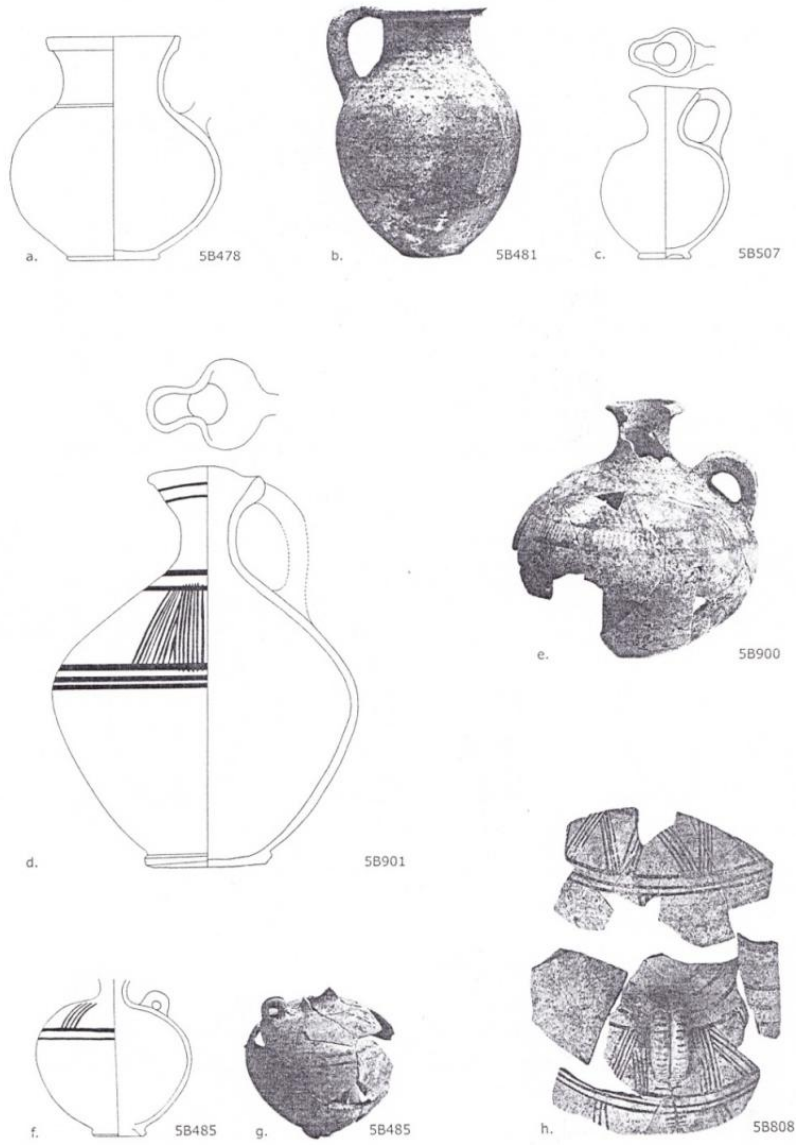
Tomb II at Hama: Here a set of 44 pottery pieces jars, jugs, goblet, and bowls as well as four terracotta figurines, three feminine and a terracotta figurine of a donkey, were found along with a silver bracelet and a set of six bronze finds, spear head, toggle pins, bracelets, and beads, all of which dated back to the Middle Bronze Age⁹⁰⁸.



1:

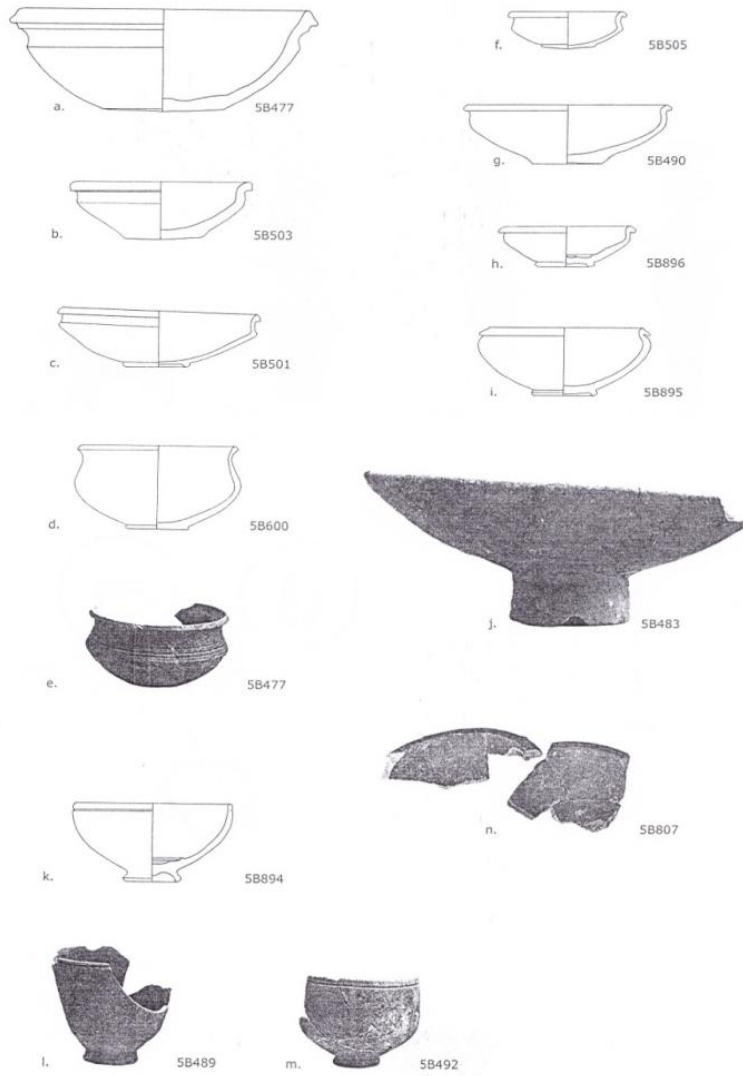
Fig. 128: Pottery from tomb G II.

⁹⁰⁸ Riis 2007: 59-64.



1:3

Fig.129: Pottery from tomb G II.



1:3

Fig.130: Pottery from tomb G II.

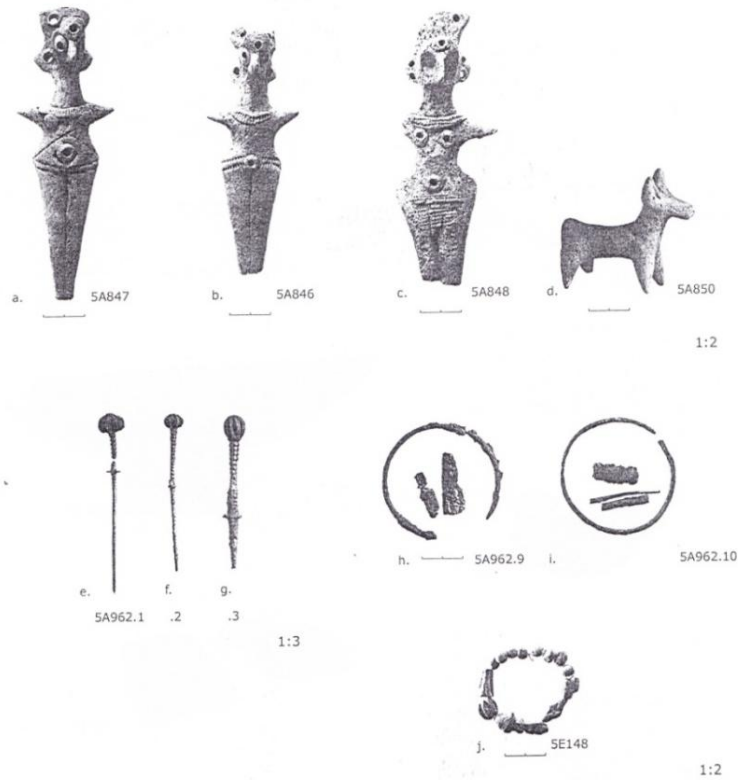


Fig.131: Grave goods from tomb G II.

- 44 pottery vessels.
- 6 bronze objects, 1 silver.
- 4 terracotta figurine.

Tomb III at Hama: Here also there were no bones. What was found is a set of 21 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, goblets, and brazier, as well as a bronze pin, all dating back to Middle Bronze Age⁹⁰⁹.

⁹⁰⁹ Riis 2007: 22-24. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

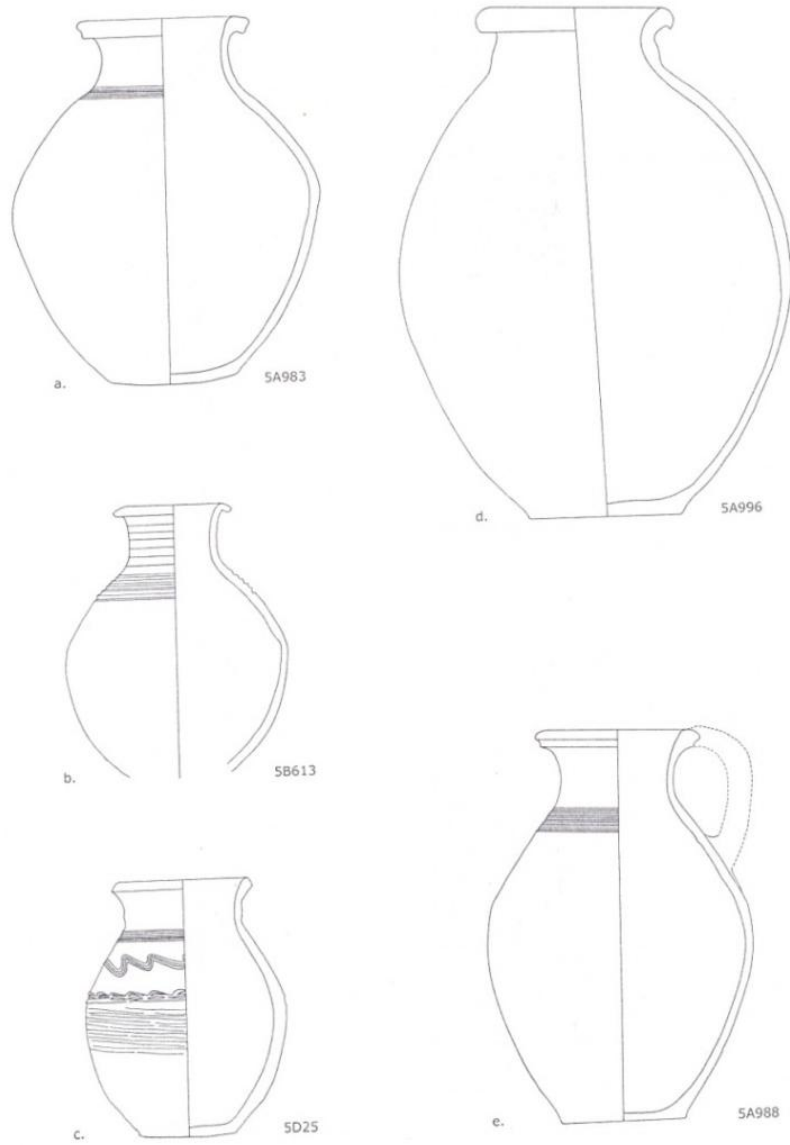


Fig.132: Pottery from tomb III.

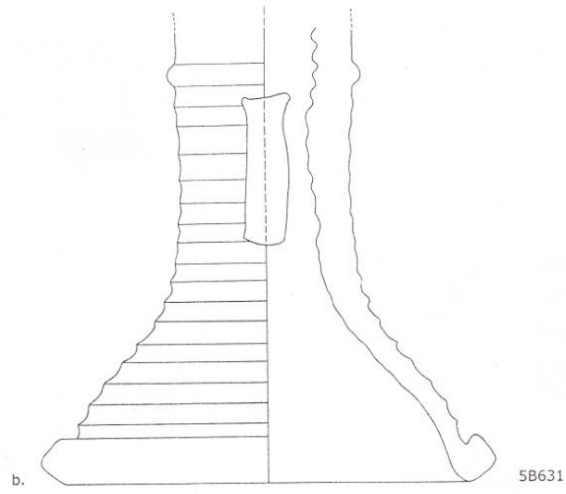
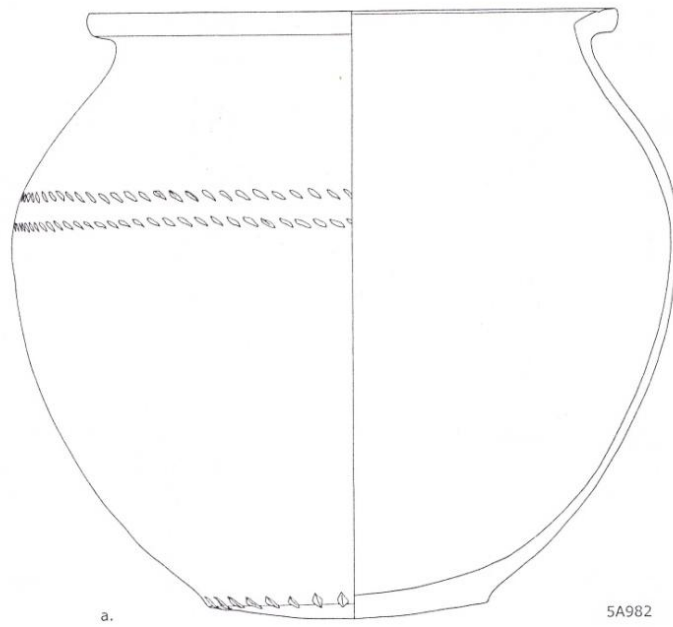


Fig. 133: Pottery from tomb III.

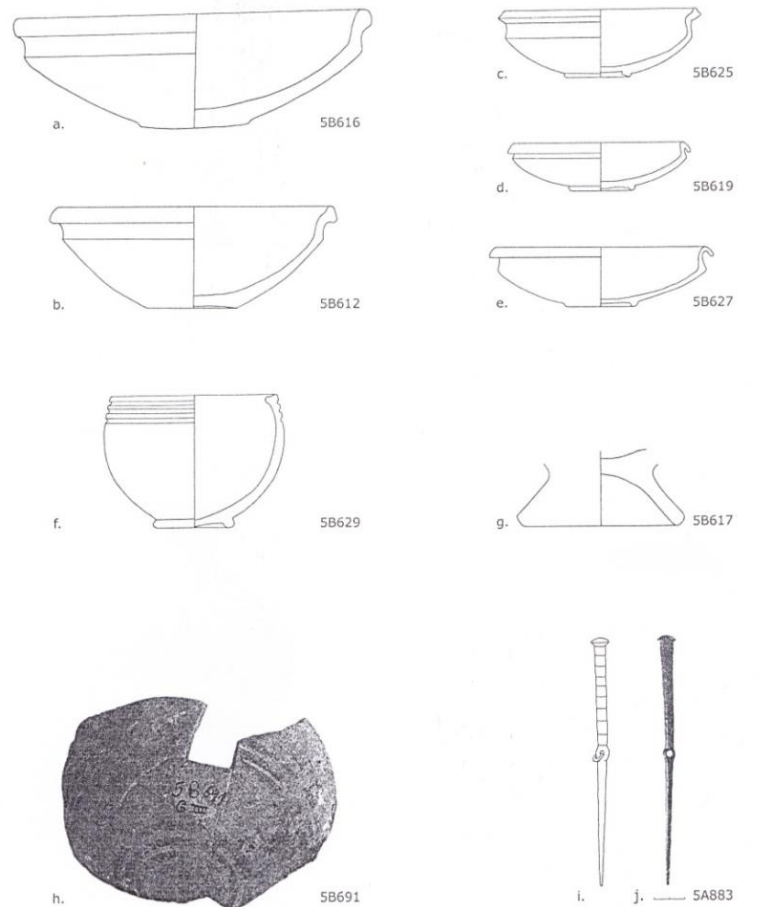


Fig. 134: Pottery and Grave good from tomb III.

- 21 pottery vessels.

- 1 bronze object.

Tomb VI at Hama: Two skeletons were found accompanied by a set of 64 pottery vessels which included jars, jugs, carinated bowls and ordinary bowls, and feminine terracotta figurine as well as a window axes, spear heads, daggers, toggle pins, beads and rings. These finds as a whole dated back to the Middle Bronze Age⁹¹⁰.

⁹¹⁰ Riis 2007: 25-29. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

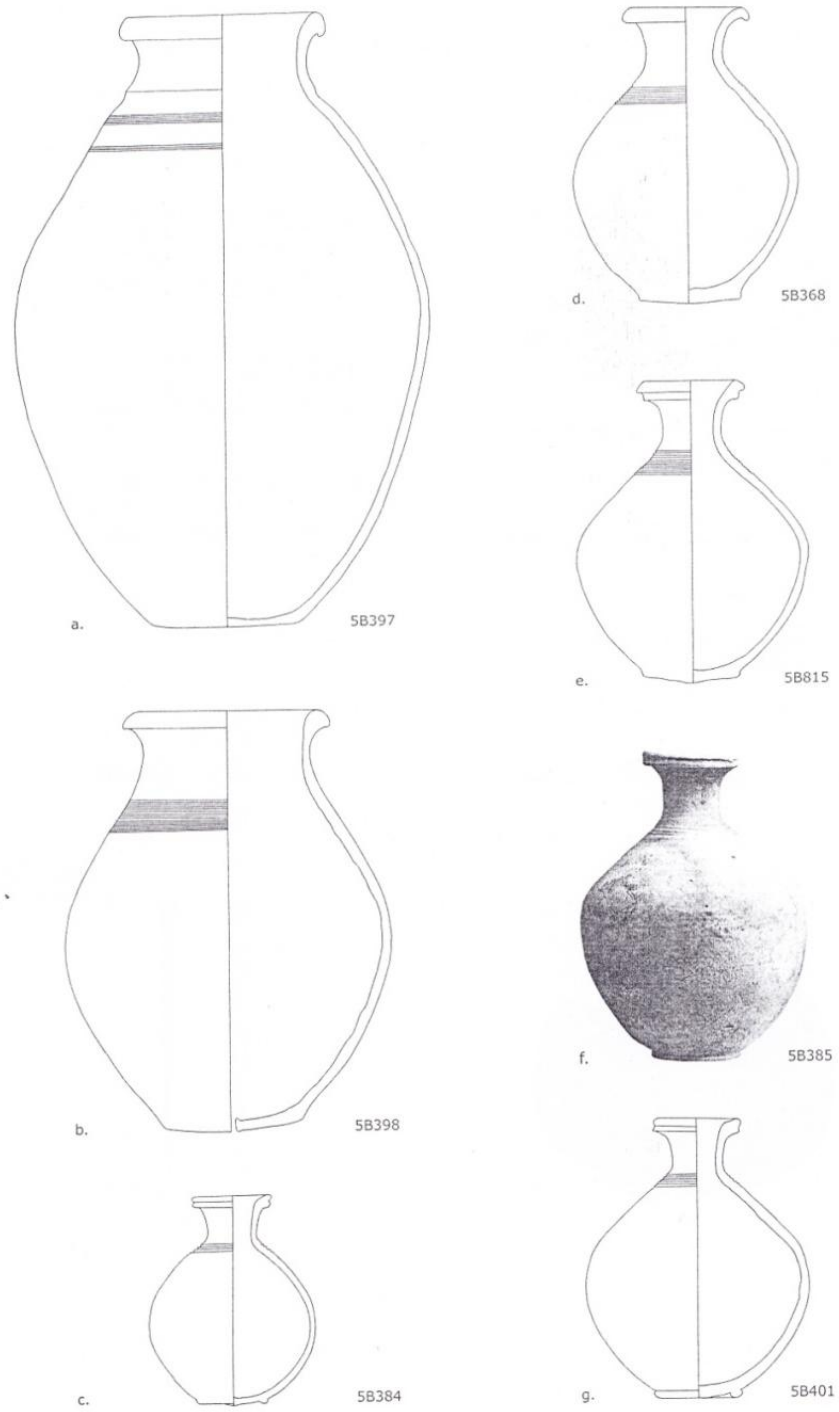


Fig. 135: Pottery from tomb VI.

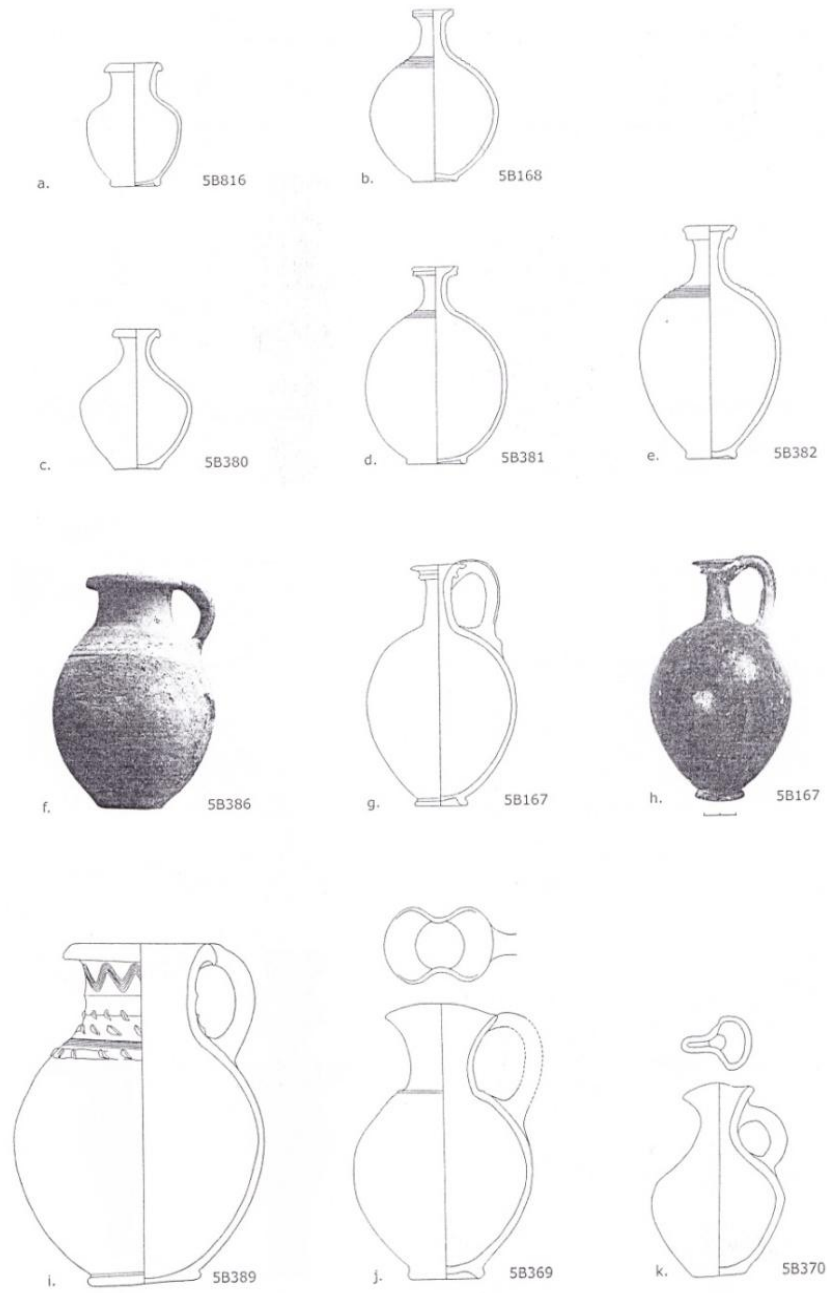


Fig. 136: Pottery from tomb VI.

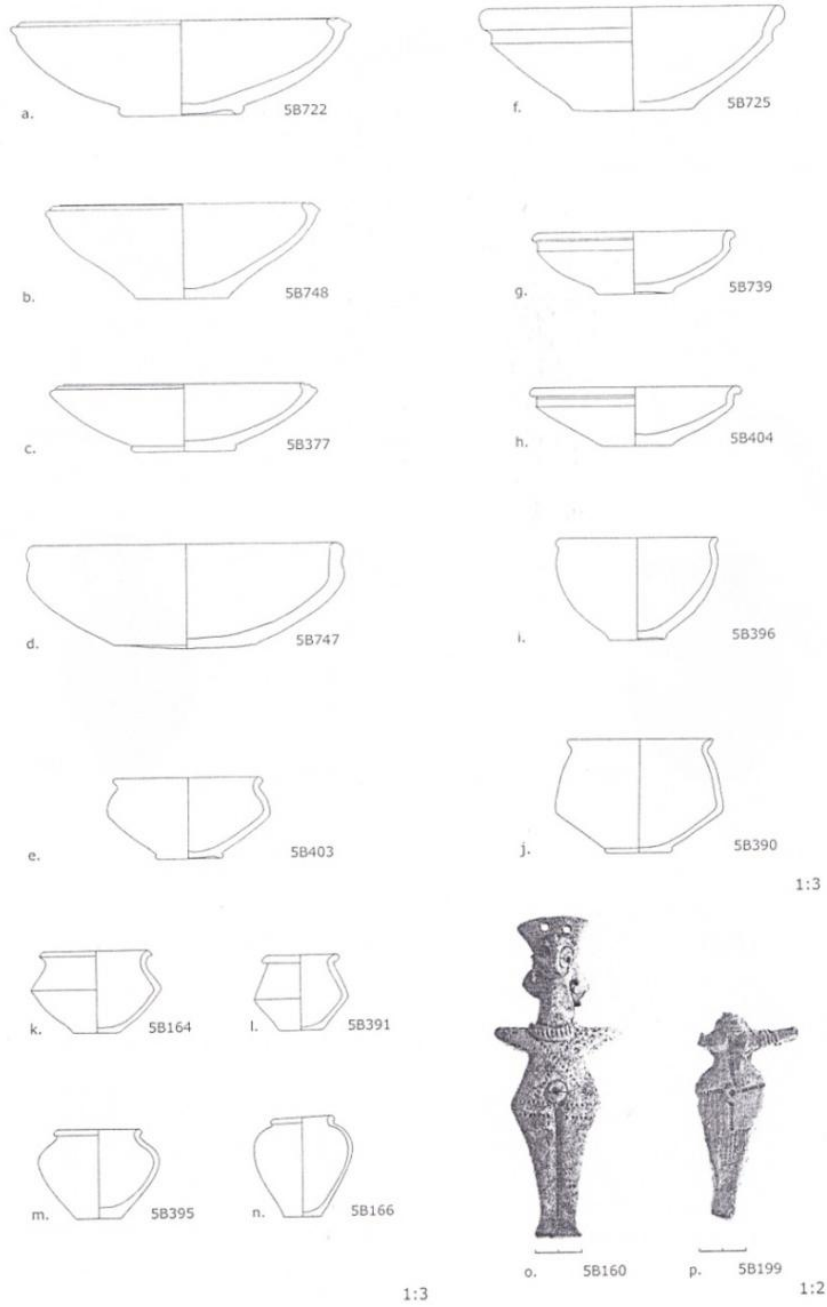


Fig. 137: Pottery from tomb GVI.

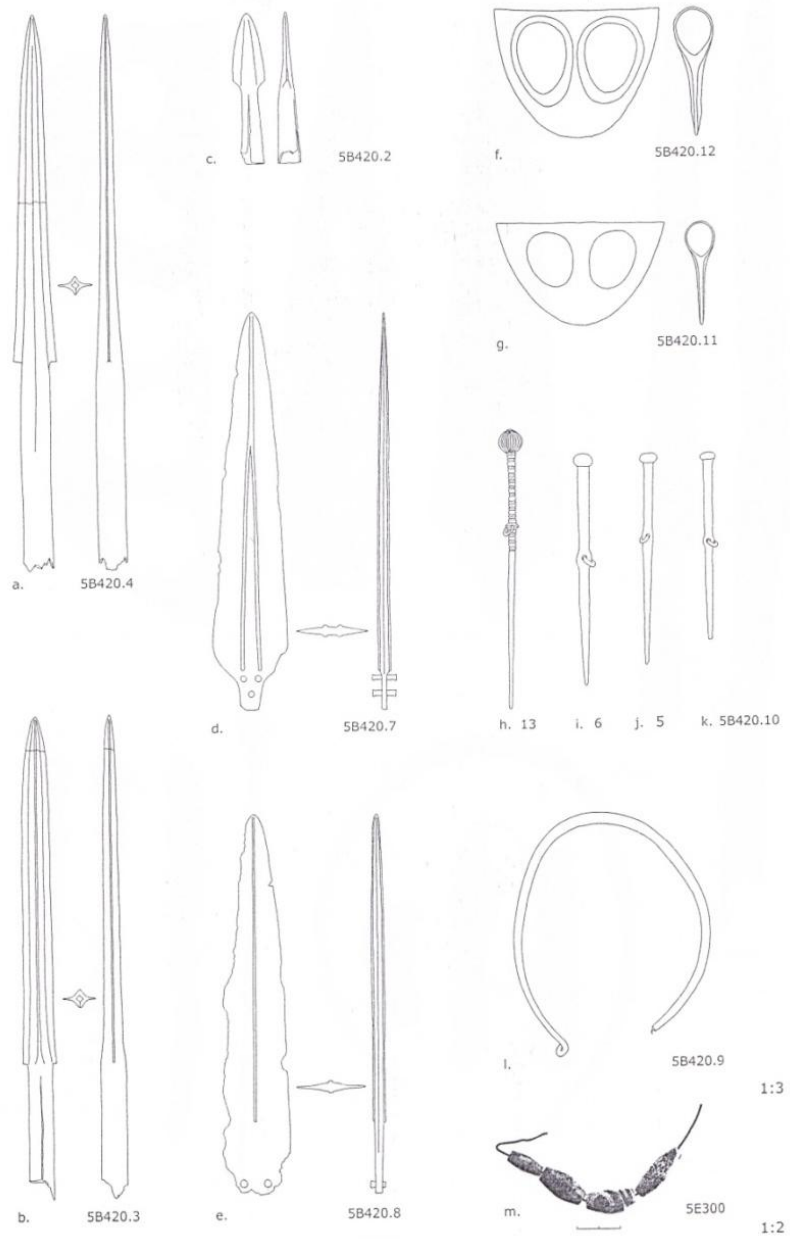


Fig. 138: Grave goods from tomb GVI.

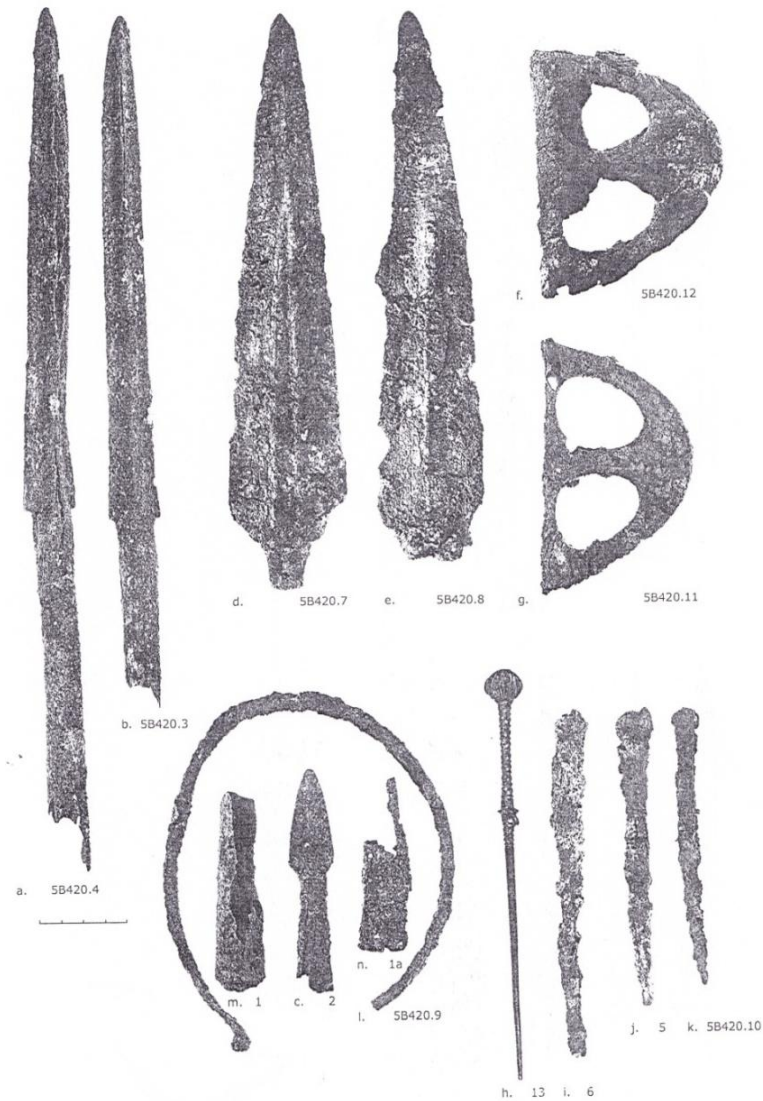


Fig. 139: Grave goods from tomb VI.

- 64 pottery vessels.
- 21 bronze objects.
- 2 skeletons.
- 2 terracotta figurines.

Tomb X at Hama: 7 pottery pieces, jar, jug and carinated bowls, as well as a feminine terracotta figurine, bronze finds, spear head, toggle pin, and iron nail. Animal bones were found⁹¹¹.

⁹¹¹ Riis 2007: 30-32. Fugmann 1958: Pl.X.

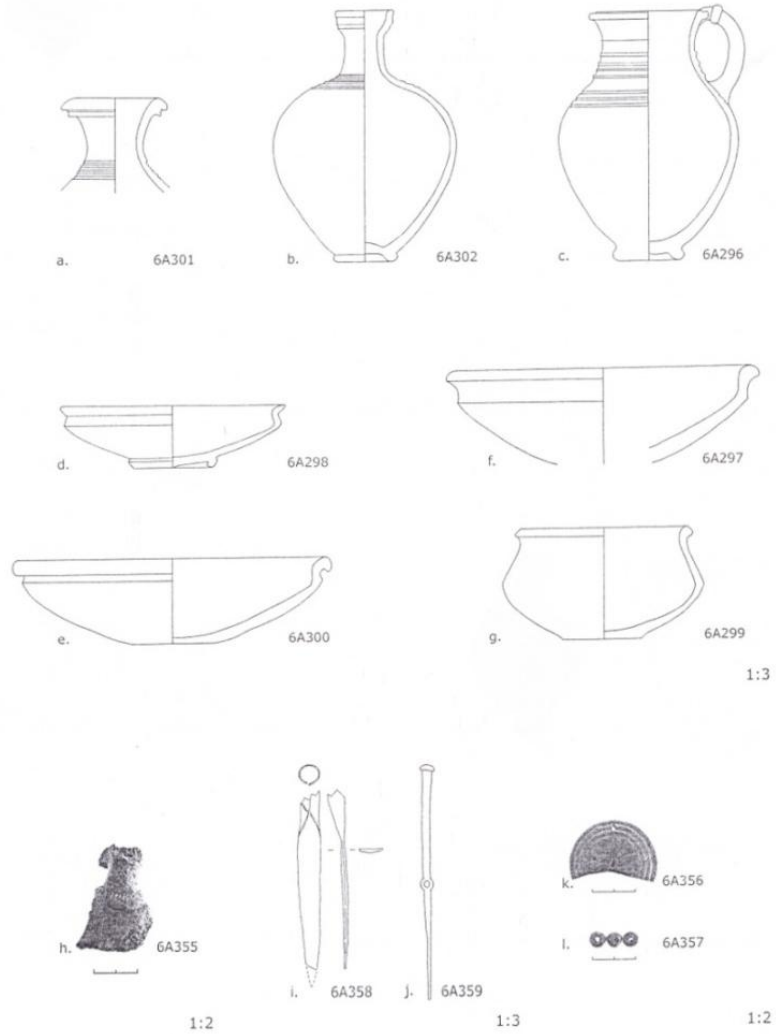


Fig. 140: Pottery and Grave goods from tomb GX.

- 7 pottery vessels.
- 2 bronze objects.
- One human terracotta figurine.

Tomb XIII at Hama: In this tomb adult skeletons and animal bones were unearthed. There were also 29 pottery pieces which included jars, jugs, juglet, goblet, and bowls as well as a bronze toggle pin. This tomb dates back to the end of Middle Bronze and the beginning of Late Bronze Age (1550-1450) BC⁹¹².

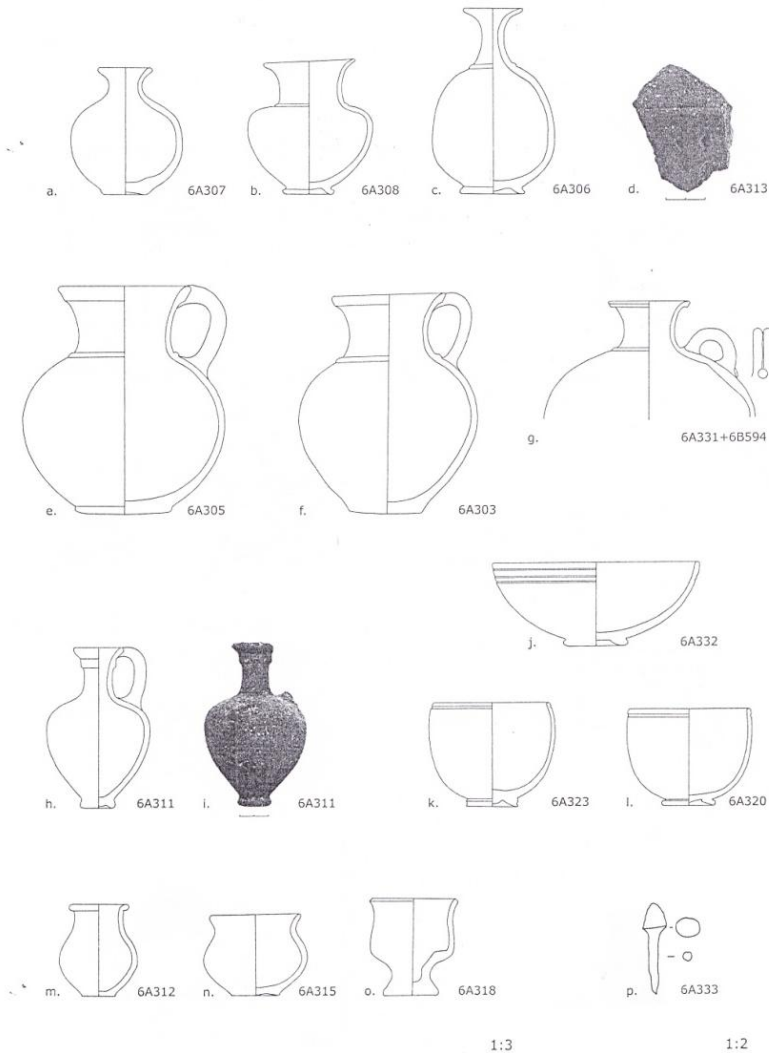


Fig. 141: Pottery and Grave goods from tomb GXIII.

- 29 pottery vessels.
- One bronze object.

⁹¹² Riis 2007: 33-35. Fugmann 1958: Pl. X.

Bab al- Faraj :

Tomb I at Bab al Faraj: Here human skeletons were mixed with a large set of pottery vessels⁹¹³. There were also bones of tamed animals such as sheep and cows. The number of funerary enclosures in this tomb came up to 351 pieces of which 344 were pottery pieces such as jars, jugs, plates, glasses and vases. The rest were six bronze pieces and a feminine terracotta figurine⁹¹⁴.

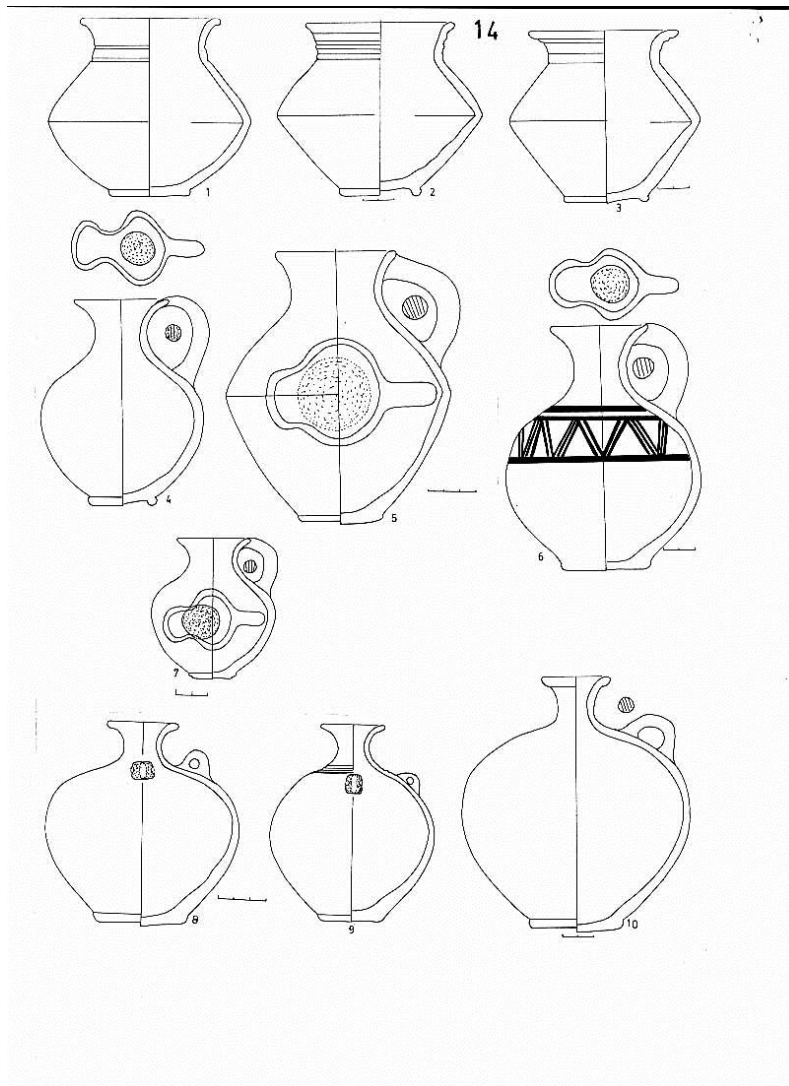


Fig. 143: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb.

⁹¹³ Suleiman 2000. Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Bab al- Faraj.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid* .

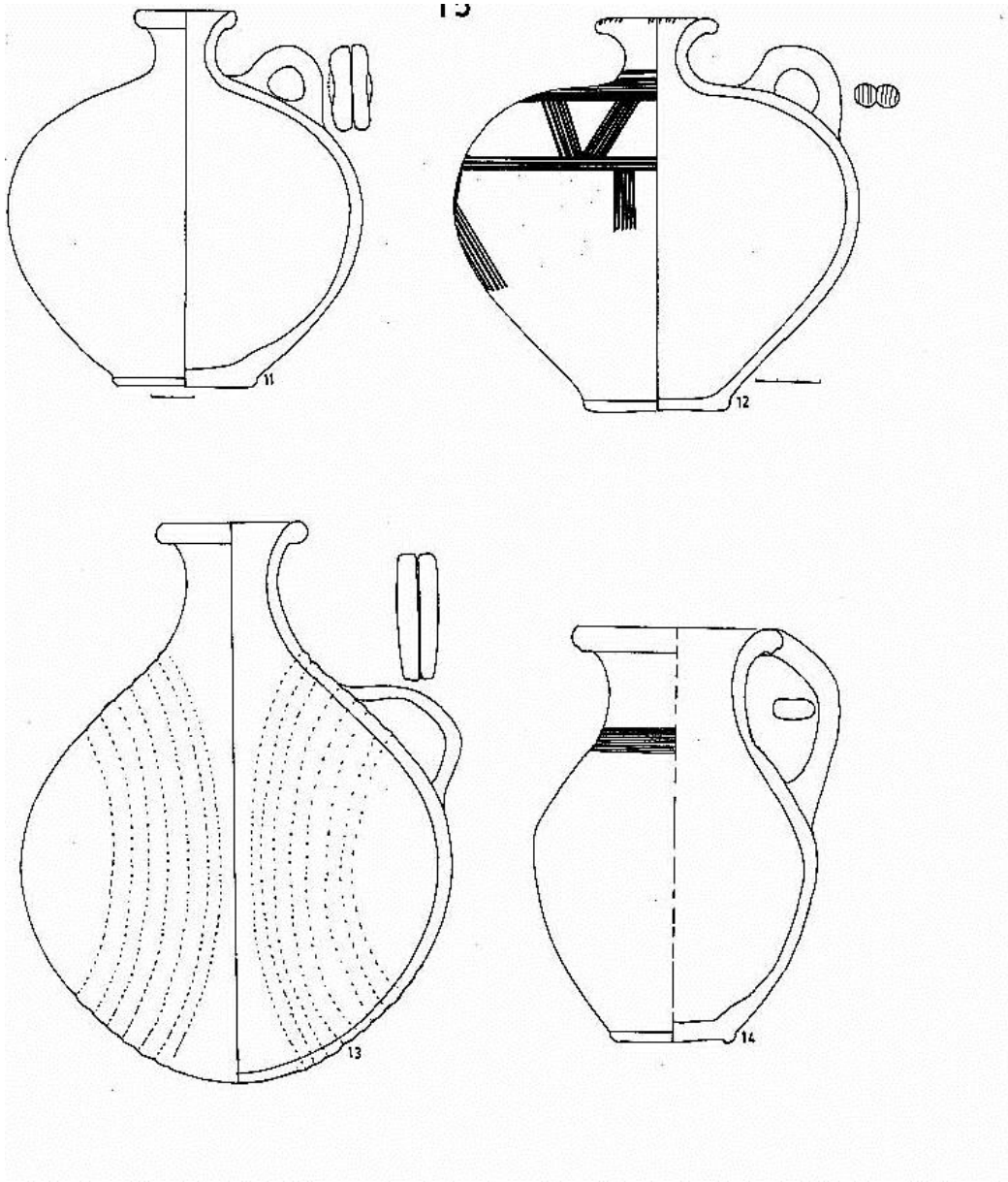


Fig. 144: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb.

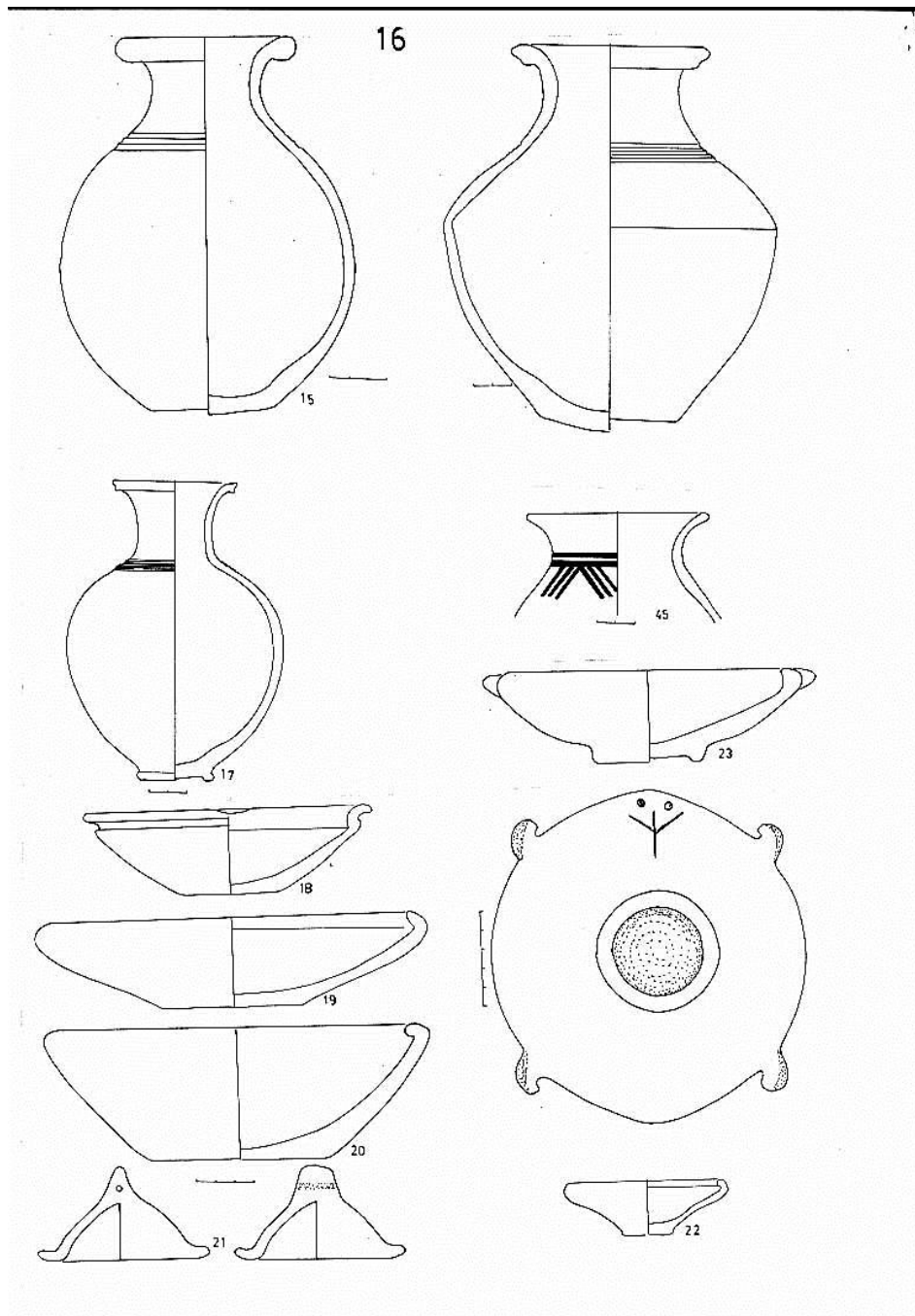


Fig. 145: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb.

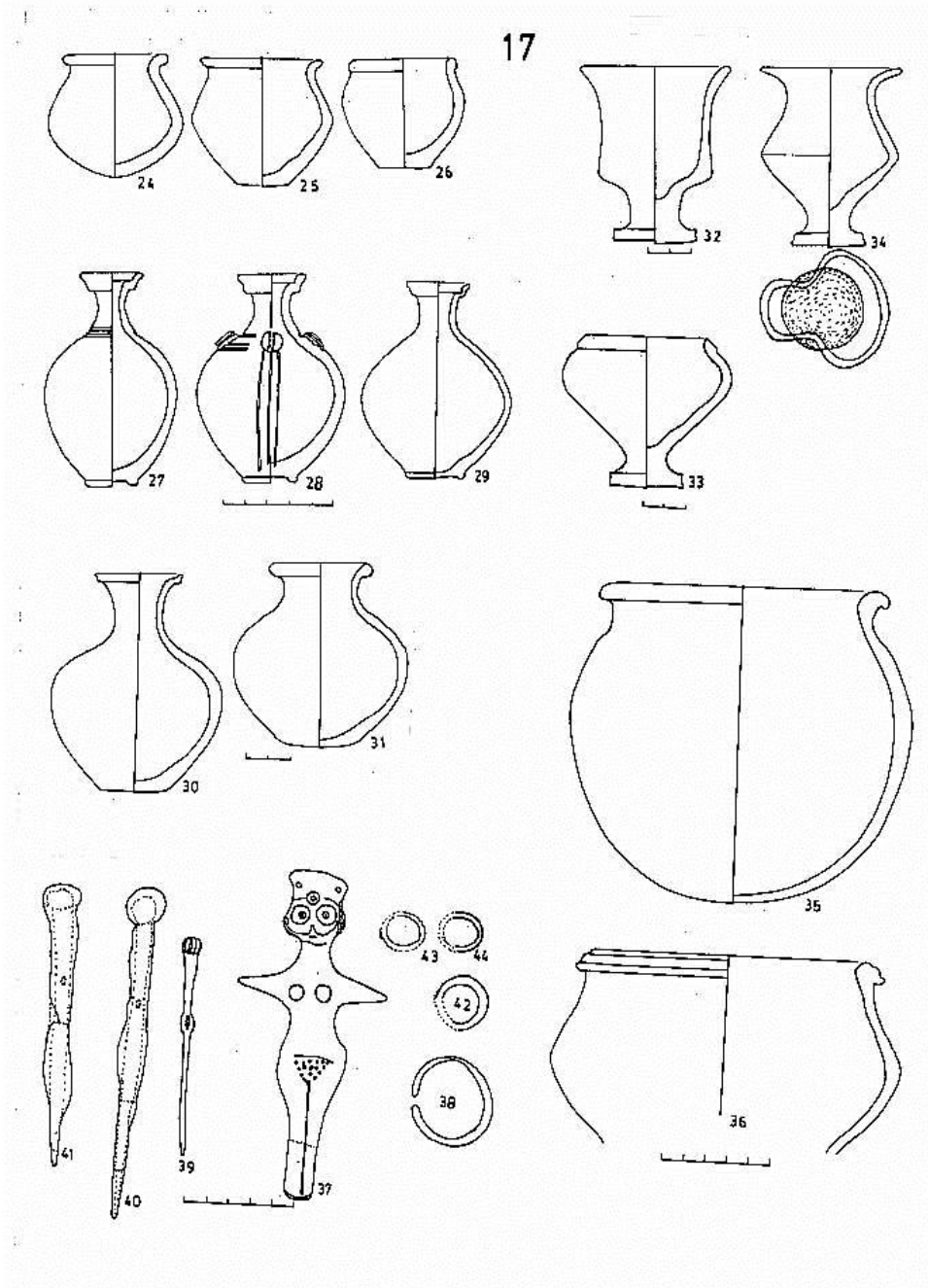


Fig. 146: Pottery from Bab al-Faraj tomb.



Bronze objects.

Terracotta figurine

Fig. 147: Grave goods from Bab al-Faraj tomb.

- 344 pottery vessels.
- 6 bronze objects.
- 1 human terracotta figurine.

Khan Sheikhoun :

Tomb at Khan Sheikhoun: A large set of funerary enclosure which included 186 pottery pieces, different jars, jugs, bowls, plates and glasses, lamps, and a number of bronze axes were found⁹¹⁵.

⁹¹⁵ Al-Maqdissi 2006c:488 .

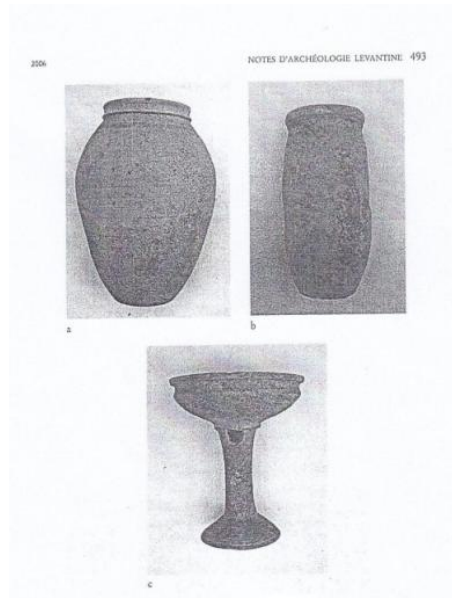


Fig. 148: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb.

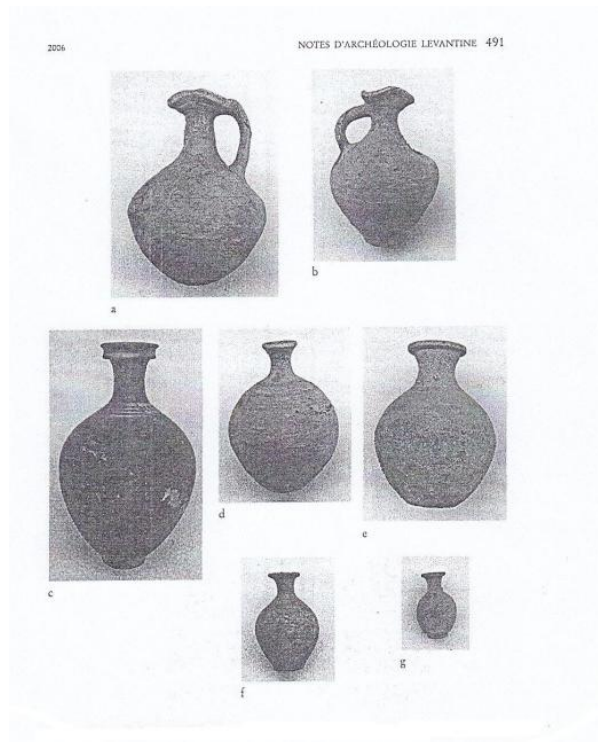


Fig. 149: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb.

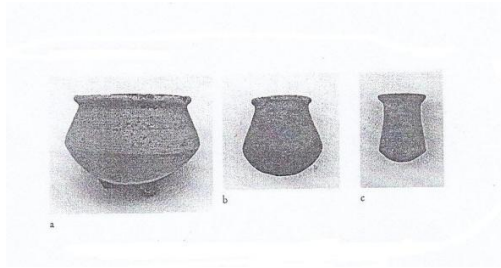


Fig.150: Pottery from Khan Sheikhoun tomb .



Fig. 151: Pottery and grave goods from Khan Sheikhoun tomb.

- 186 pottery vessels.
- Collection of bronze objects.

Mishrifeh :

Tomb I at Mishrifeh: Sixteen skeletons of adults (men and women) and five skeletons of infants were found. These bones may have been mixed with animal bones which could not be studied because they were greatly fragmented⁹¹⁶.

Studying the burial finds evidenced the presence of javelins which indicate men interment and the presence of beads and bracelets which indicate women interment. There was also a large set of pottery proportionate with the number of skeletons. The difference in the pottery types indicates the repetition of the interment process which lasted about 100 years⁹¹⁷. The unearthed pottery dates back to mid second millennium BC⁹¹⁸. No iron or oxidation was found; rather bronze toggle pins with an opening in the middle, two bronze spears with wood traces on them, another two bronze worn axes, a necklace of orange cornelian beads and a small-sized flint stone⁹¹⁹.

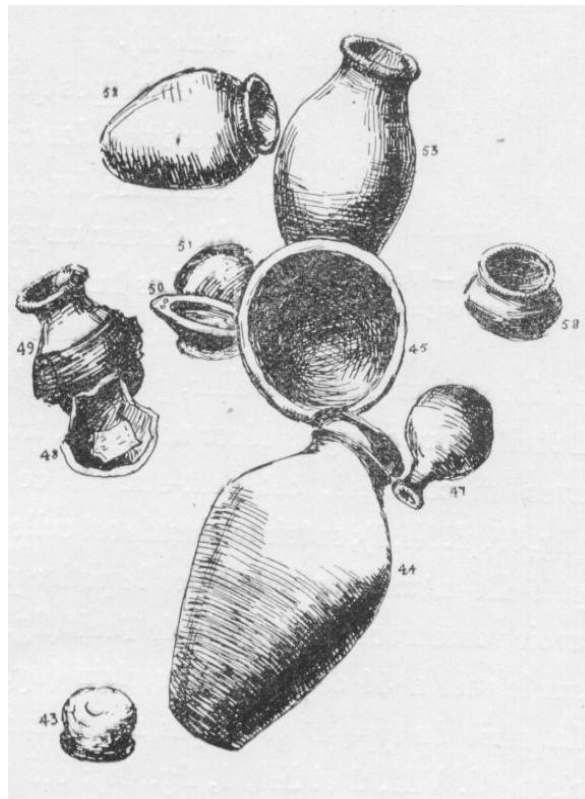


Fig. 152: Pottery from tomb I.

⁹¹⁶ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a:14.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁸ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 18. Pl. XIV.

⁹¹⁹ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1927a: 19. PL.XIII. Fig.56.

- Collection of pottery vessels.
- Collection of grave goods.
- 21 skeletons.

- Individual tombs at Mishrifeh:

A group of simple individual pit burials were recorded at Mishrifeh in the main interment area of the acropolis in the operations H-C-K-T under the Royal Palace.

During the Syria mission excavation works in Operation T east of the Royal Palace, a group of individual pithos burials, damaged because of structures erected in later periods were found. These burials were put inside pottery jars which had been previously used for different purposes, storage jars and cooking vessels dating back to Middle Bronze Age MBA II. In some of them simple funerary enclosures were found⁹²⁰.

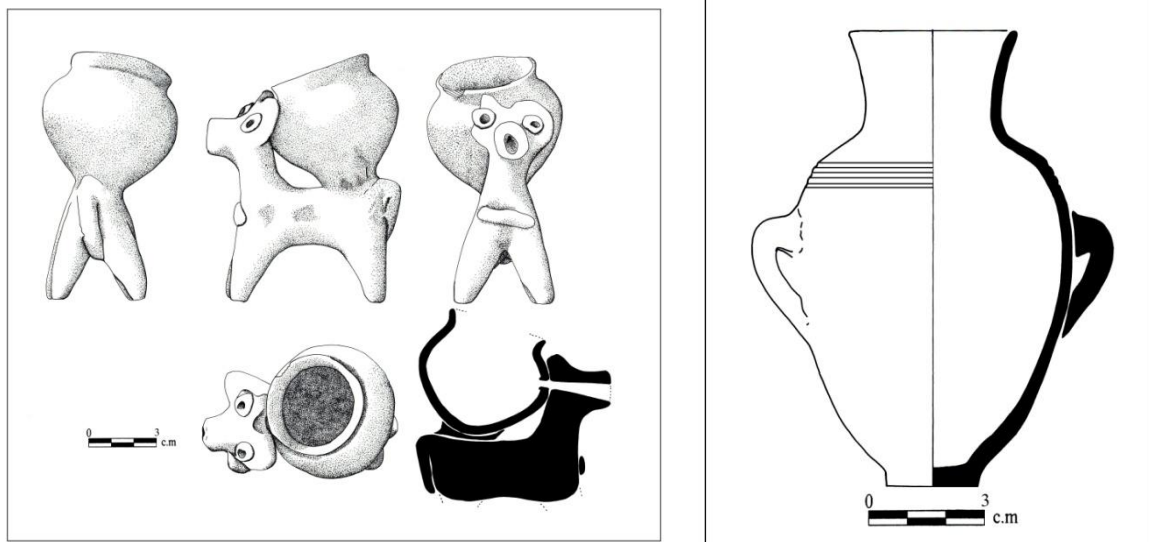


Fig. 153: Burial jar no.2.

⁹²⁰ Al-Maqdissi 2007b:1-25. Al-Maqdissi 2009b: fig. IIb, 1213.

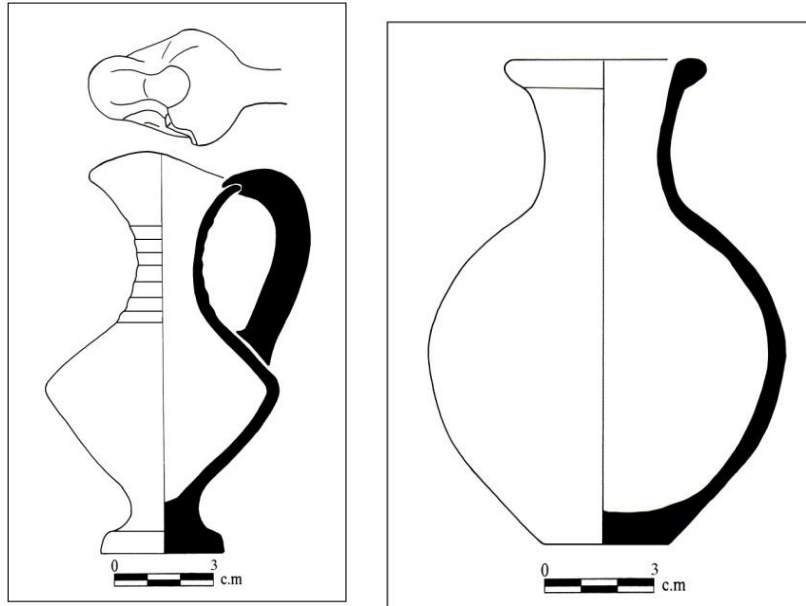


Fig. 154: Burial jar no .9.

A group of simple individual pit burials were recorded at Mishrifeh in the main interment area of the acropolis in the operations H-C-K-T under the Royal Palace. Here the Italian team exposed a group of burials in the operation H and C under the Royal Palace⁹²¹ but they were accompanied with relatively few funerary enclosures.



Fig. 155: Grave goods from burial 16.

⁹²¹ Morandi Bonacossi 2011: 15.

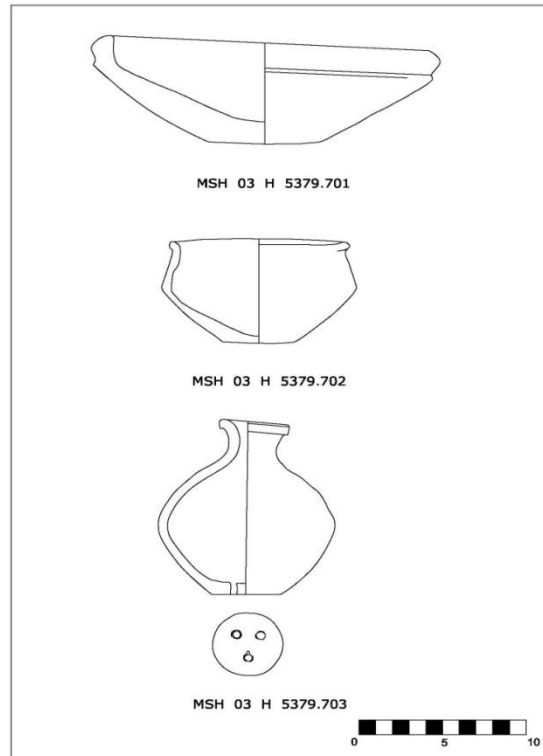


Fig. 156: Grave goods from burial 16.



Fig. 157: Grave goods from burial 18.

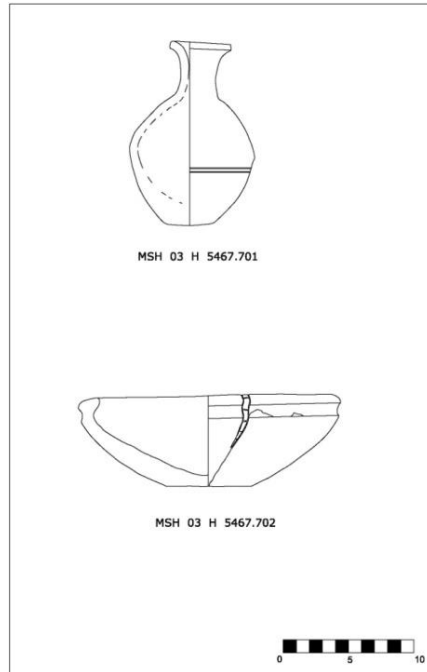


Fig. 158: Grave goods from burial 18.

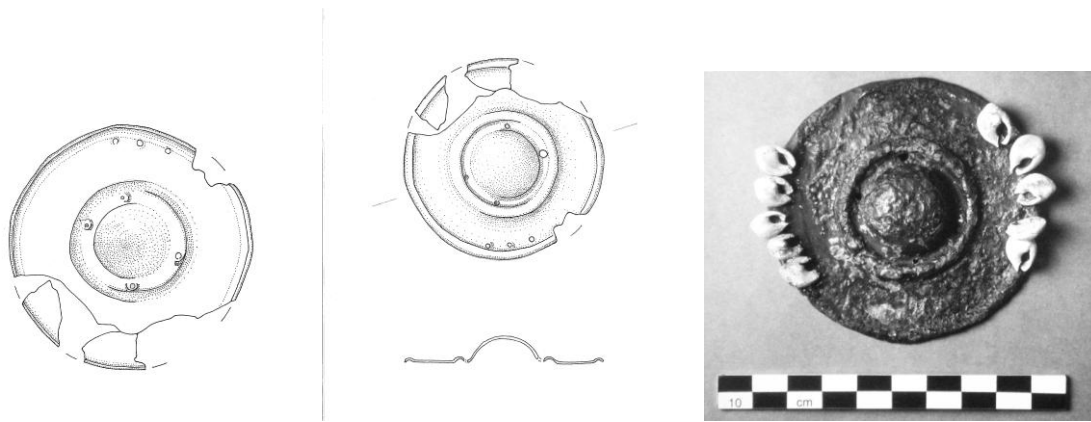


Fig. 159: Grave goods from burial 26.



Fig. 160: Bronze toggle pin from burial 24.



Fig. 161: Bronze toggle pin from burial 25.

Ain Assan :

Tomb XII at Ain Assan: A set of pottery vessels which included jars, jugs and bowls dating back to the beginning of the second middle bronze was found⁹²².

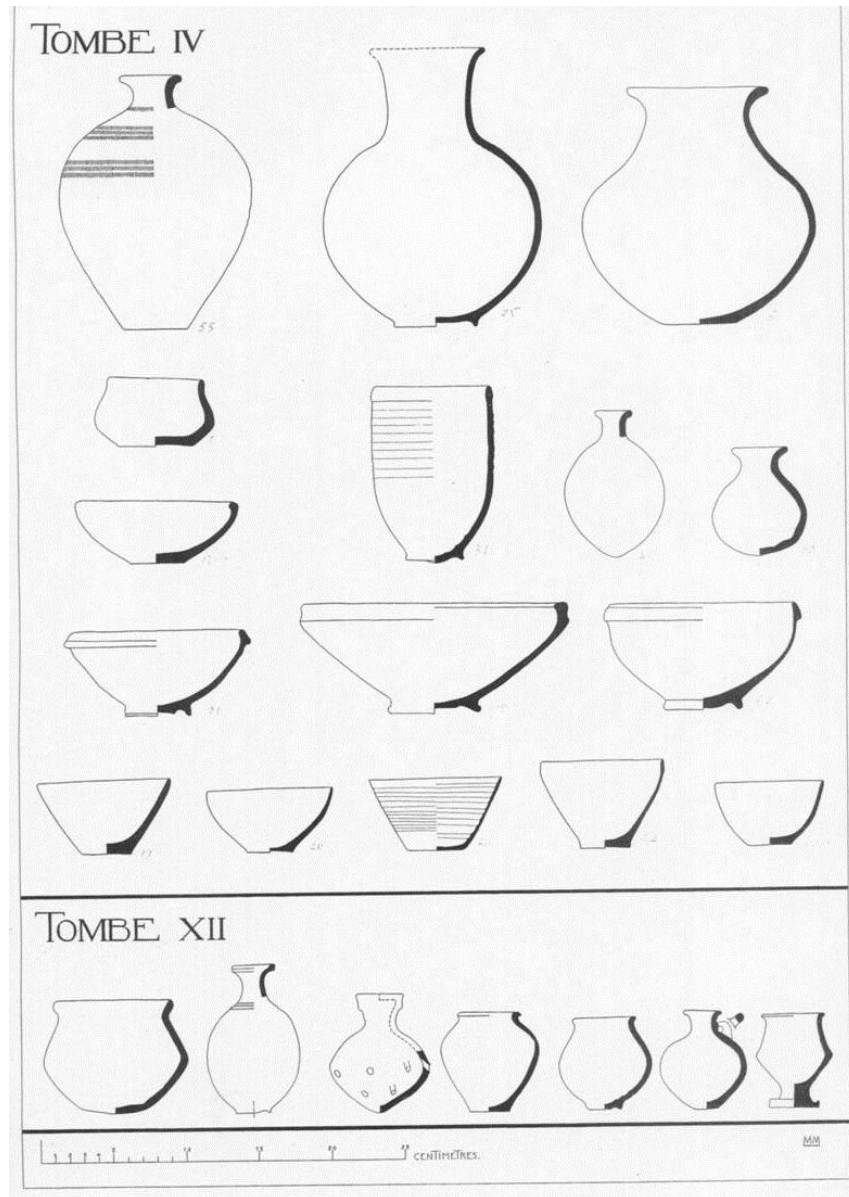


Fig. 162: Pottery from tombs IV-XII Ain Assan.

- Collection of pottery vessels.

⁹²² Al-Maqdissi 2006 b: 144.

Tell As :

Tomb I at tell As: Here part of a skull as well as a set of pottery finds and bronze clasps were found. There were 50 pottery vessels. The tomb dates back to the first half of the first half of the second millennium BC⁹²³.

Tomb II at tell As: A set of 51 pottery vessels, jars, jugs, bowls. The tomb I date back to the beginning of the second millennium BC⁹²⁴.

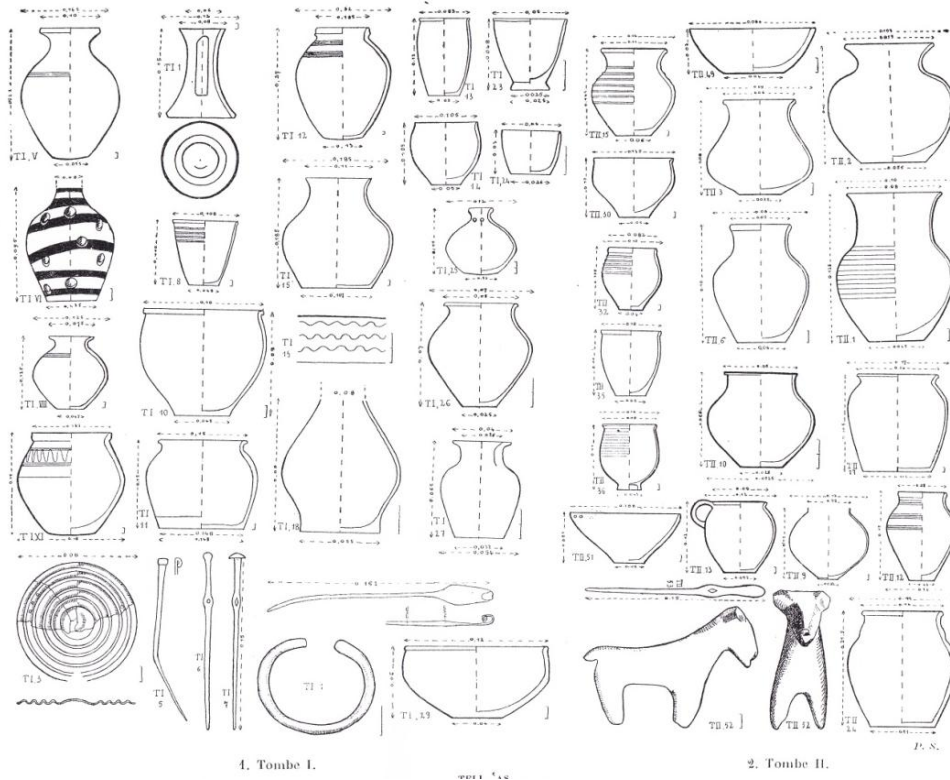


Fig. 163: Pottery from tombs I-II Tell As

- At tomb I: 50 pottery vessels.
- At tomb II: 51 pottery vessels.

Ebla :

The Royal tomb at Ebla: Although the tomb of both the goat master and the cistern had been previously looted, some pottery finds and other funerary enclosures were found. As for the princess tomb the wall built in front of it kept it. The finds showed that the tomb of the goat

⁹²³ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

⁹²⁴ Du Mesnil Du Buisson 1932: 171-188.

master in richer than that of the cistern. At its outset a number of animal and human bone remains, some pottery and other finds such as cups, an alabaster vase, a golden neckband and a crystal stone were found. In the safes tomb an alabaster,⁹²⁵ was found along with an ivory pin with an ivory hand and a limestone head all of which were covered with gold and silver.

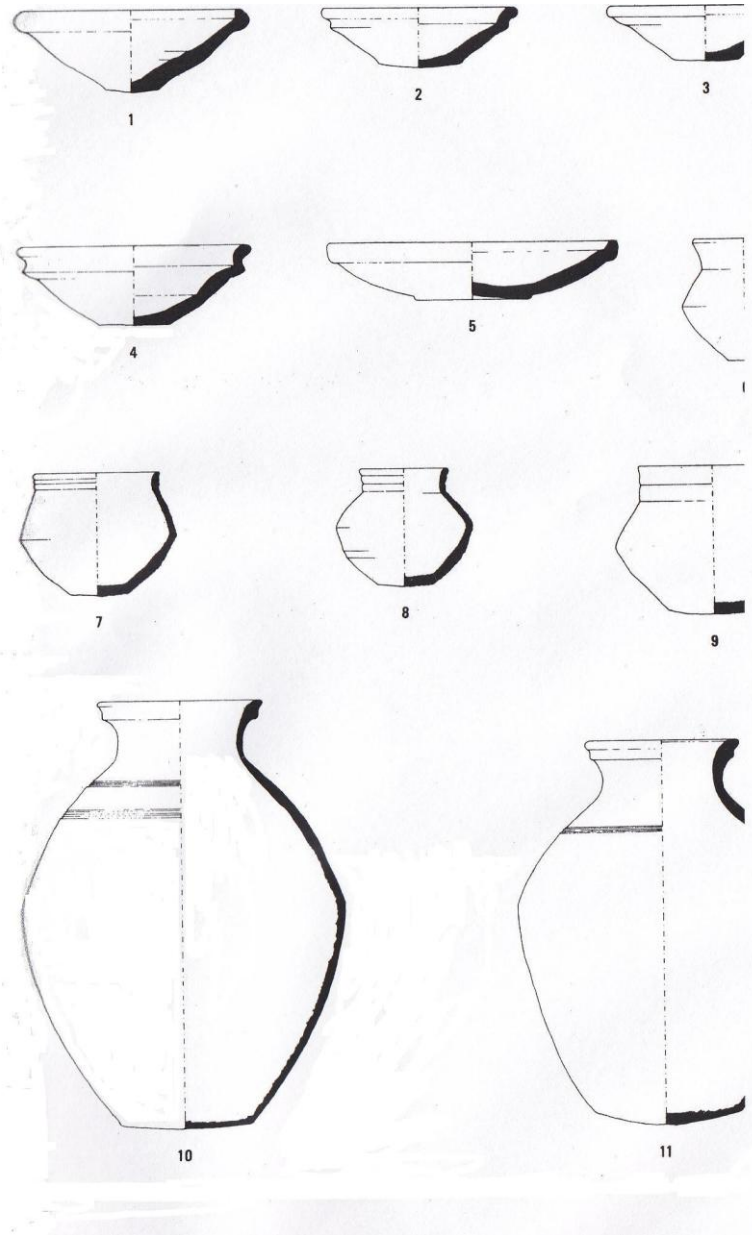


Fig. 164: Pottery from Royal tomb.

⁹²⁵ Matthiae 1979- 1980: 94-118.

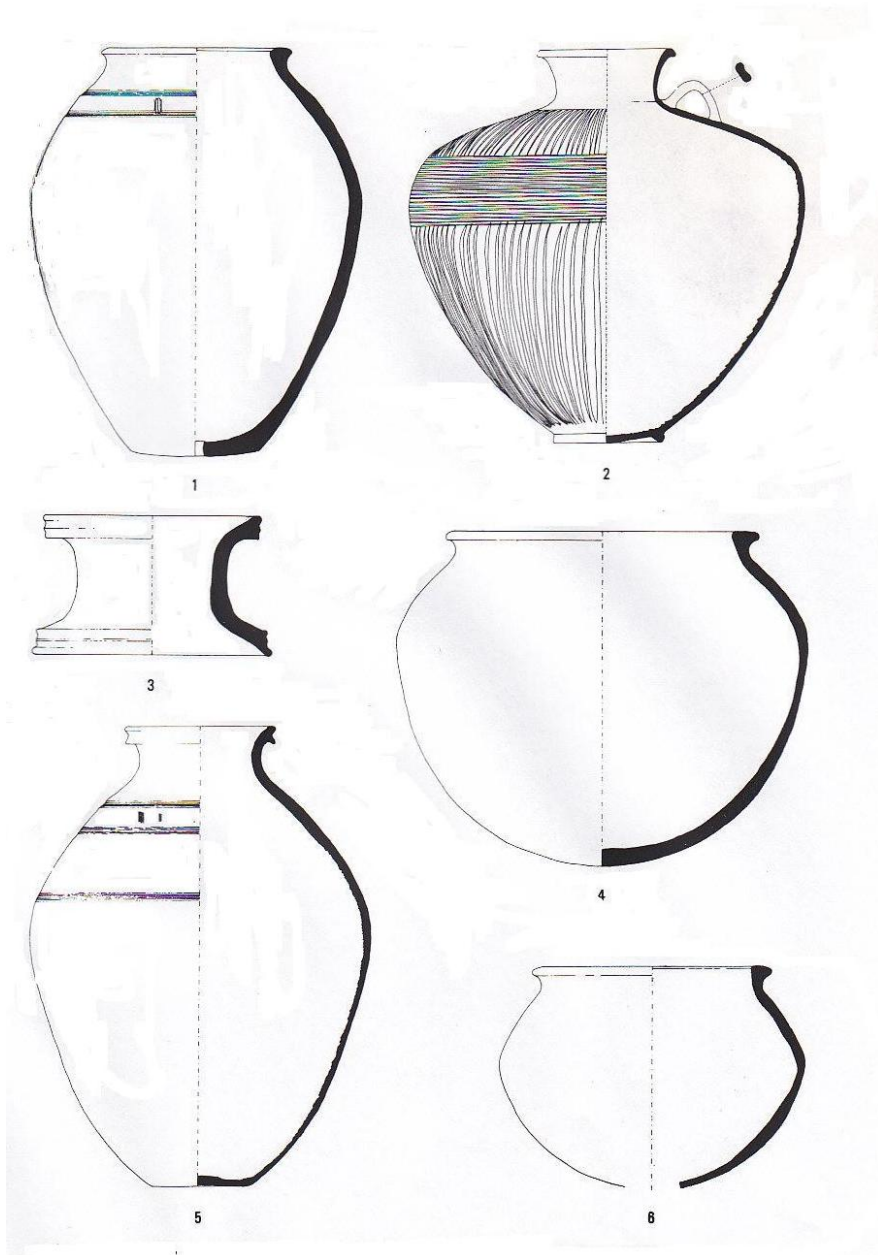


Fig. 165: Pottery from Royal tomb.

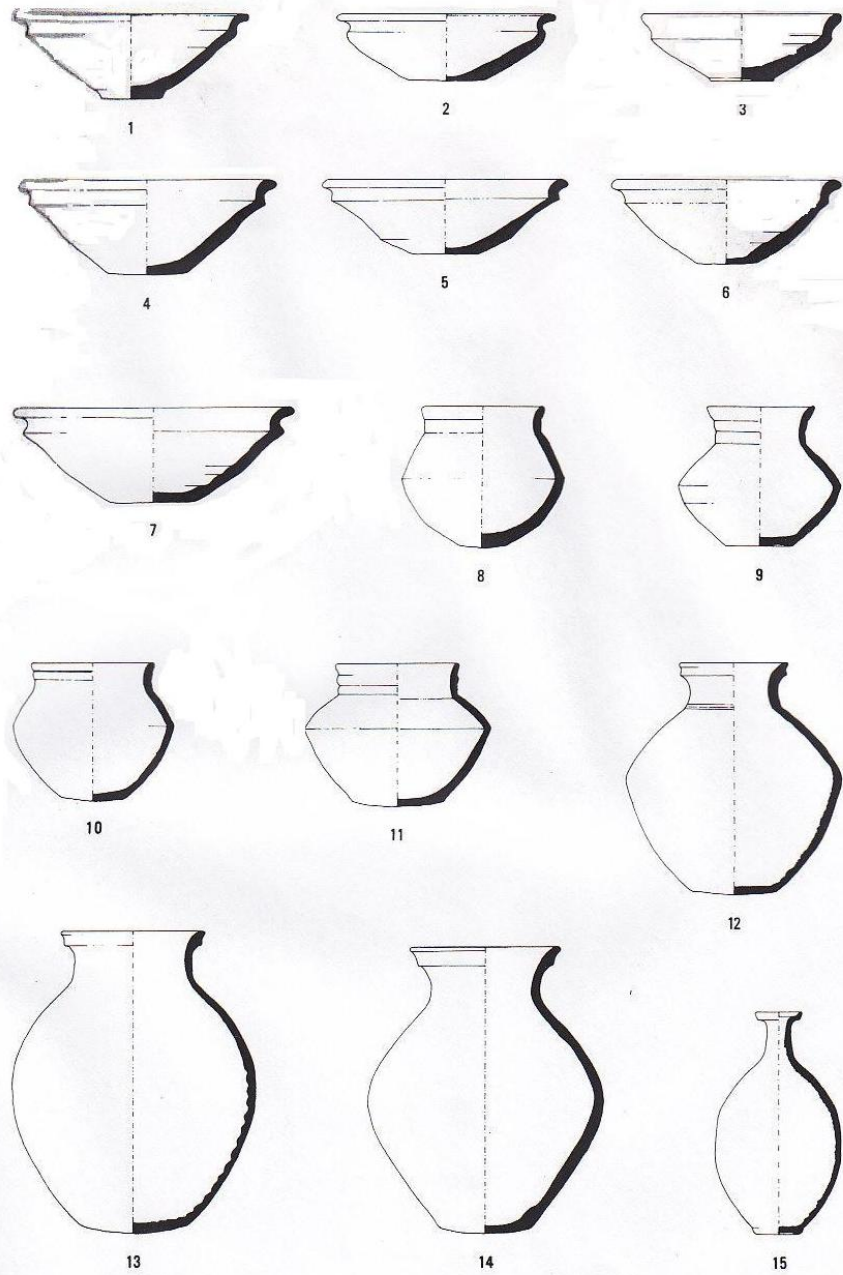


Fig. 166: Pottery from Royal tomb.

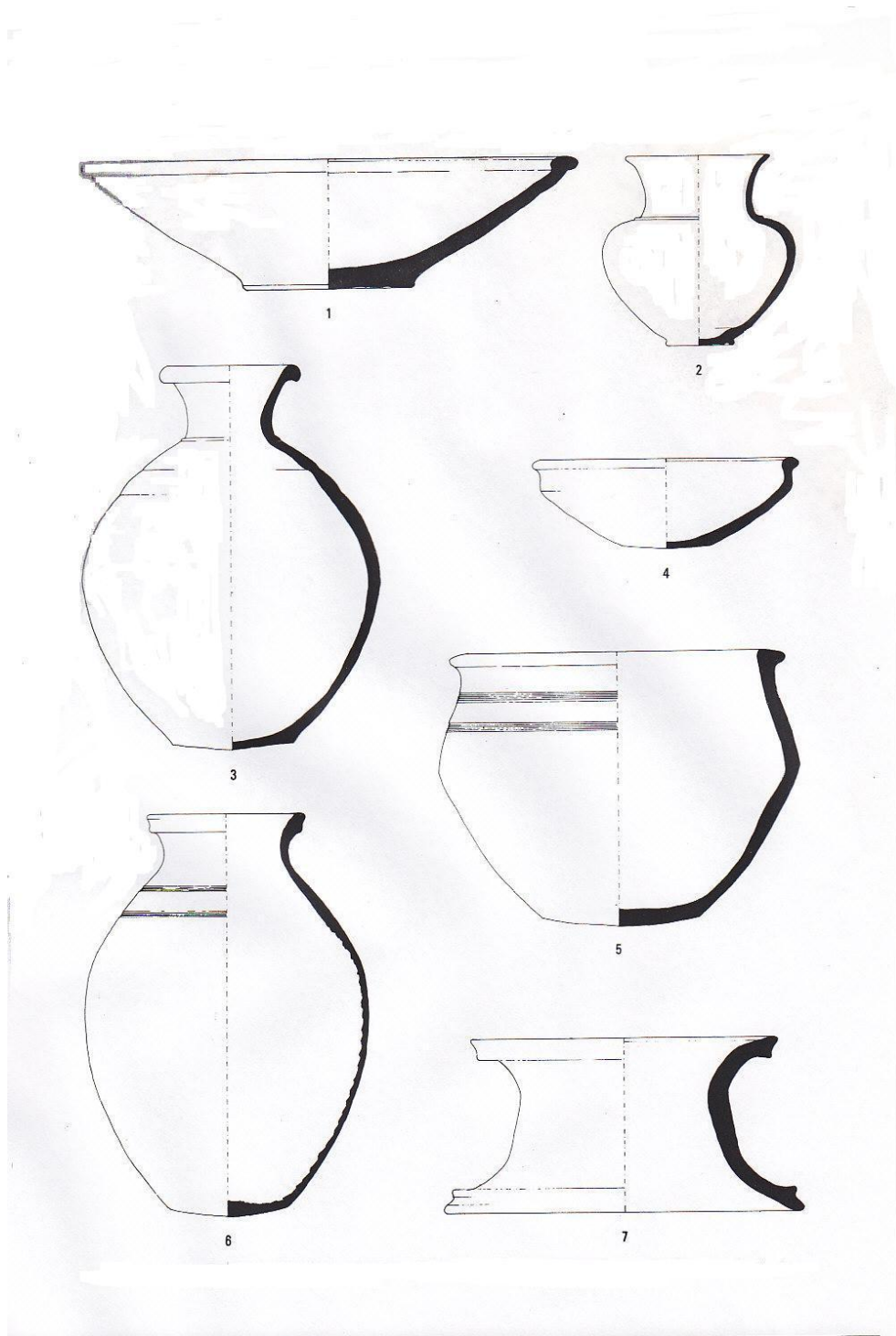


Fig. 167: Pottery from Royal tomb.

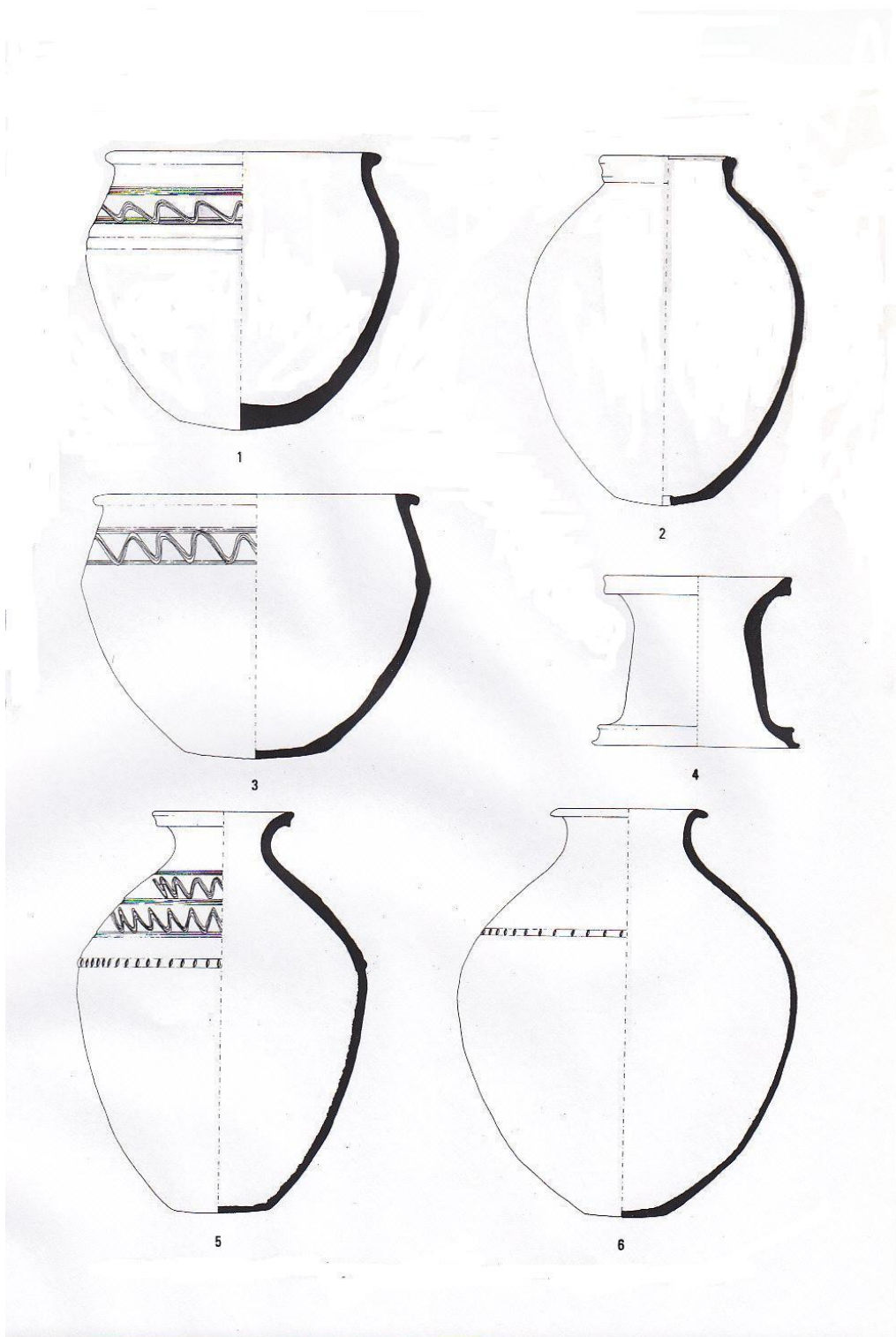


Fig. 168: Pottery from Royal tomb.



Fig. 169 : Grave goods from Royal tomb.





Fig. 170: Grave goods from Royal tomb.

- Collection of pottery vessels.
- Collection of grave goods.

Accompanying grave goods in individual burials during the Middle Bronze Age:

Ebla:

The first group: burial ground attached to architectural structures:

-Burial D1: In contained two skeletons, one of them was in a good state of preservation with the head in the eastern side. The burial was rich with funerary furniture which included many pottery vessels and three terracotta figurines representing animals, a bronze bracelet and animal bones⁹²⁶.

⁹²⁶ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

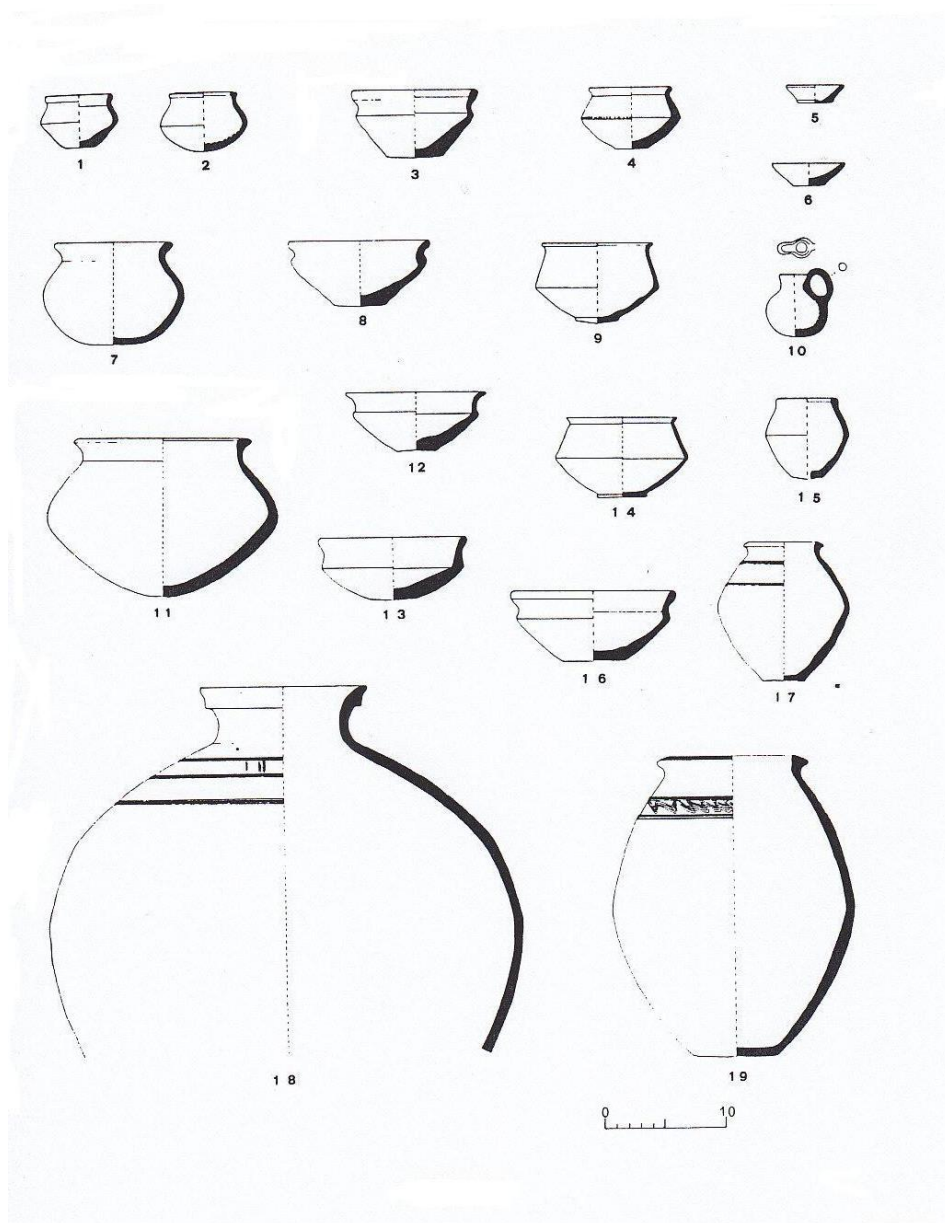


Fig. 171: Pottery from burial, D1.

-Burial D2: In the burial two corpses were interred during two consecutive periods, and on the basis of analyzing the funerary furniture, we can easily foresee the ancient occupation of one of these two dead persons. In fact, this funerary furniture included, in addition to the pottery vessels⁹²⁷. Of the vessels found in the burial special significance is given to a small jug of the

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.*

same kind found at tell al-yahodiya. It is part of what is known as the Syrian bottle inside a big jar of the kind known as the combed jars⁹²⁸.

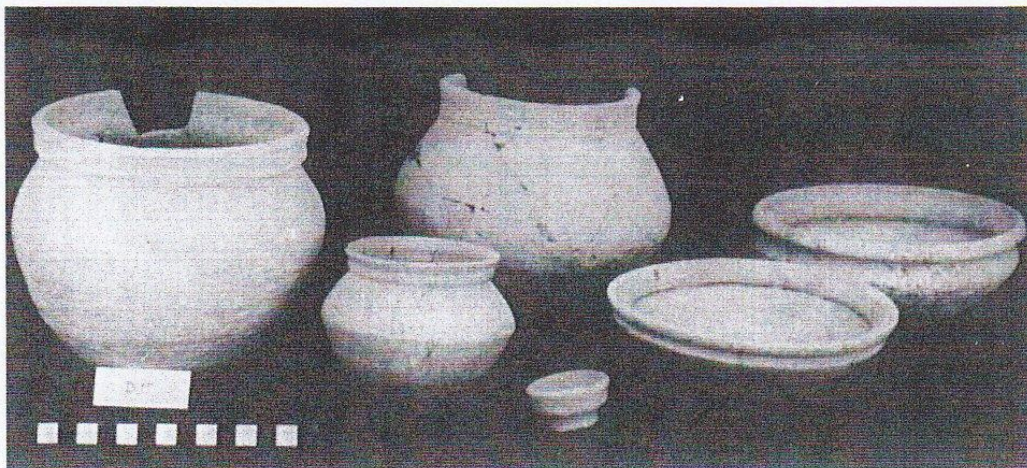


Fig. 172: Pottery from burial D2 up and D17down.

-Burial D3: Skulls and funerary furniture consists of bowl, beads and part of a bronze pin were found in the burial⁹²⁹.

-Burial D4: It contained two skeletons buried side by side in such a way that they are turned eastward. The funerary furniture of the burial consisted only of pottery vessels⁹³⁰.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹²⁹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3 .

-Burial D5: One skeleton with furniture included a small jar and a bowl. On top of that burial there had been an architectural structure⁹³¹.

-Burial D6: Some bones along with poor furniture including only two small vessels were found in it⁹³².

-Burial D27: It is distinguished by rich funerary furniture including seven small and medium-sized vessels and a small jar which contained silver bracelets and rings⁹³³.

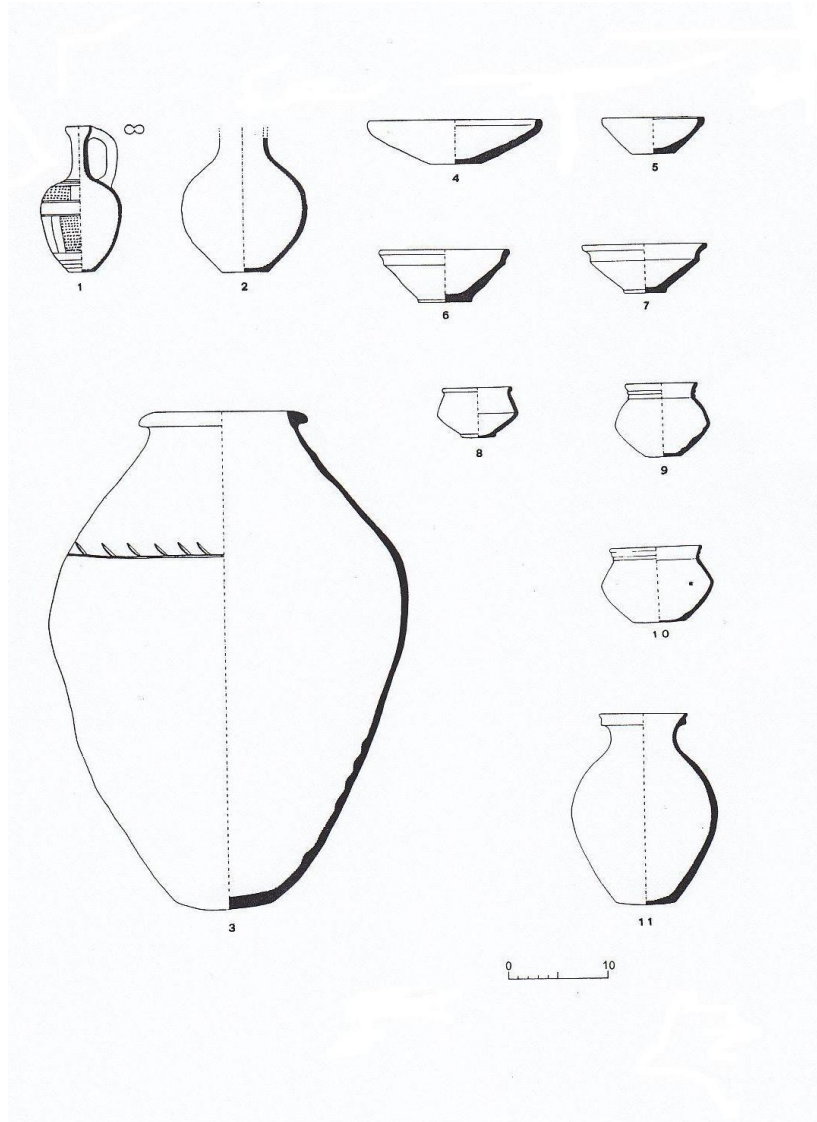


Fig. 173: Pottery from burials, D2-D5, D27. n (1-4 D2), n(5 D5), n(6-11 D27).

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.* : 4.

⁹³¹ *Ibid.*

⁹³² *Ibid.*

⁹³³ *Ibid.*

The second group: burial ground unattached to architectural structures:

- Burial D8: A long bones of human limbs along with four small vessels were found⁹³⁴.
- Burial D9: A double burial where the first skeleton was extended eastward and the head to the south – western side, while nothing was left of the second, put north of the first, save few greatly damaged bones as well as the teeth. The furniture constituted of some house wares only⁹³⁵.
- Burial D10: It contained one skeleton with the head in the north, the body in the south and the pelvis in the south – eastern side. The arms were united on the chest while the whole body was covered with some stones. Beside the skeleton there were some small vessels and a bronze pin under the chin⁹³⁶.
- Burial D11: A skeleton lying with the head in the north side and the face looking eastward. Beside the skeleton there were a small bottle, small bowl, small bronze pieces and a toggle pin which had been clearly in mouth of the skull⁹³⁷.
- Burial D12: Greatly damaged bones and good furniture of small – sized vessels⁹³⁸.
- Burial D13: It contained a complete skeleton under which there was pit dating back to Middle Bronze Age. The skull was orientated northward and beside it there were small vessels including a small three- cloned jug with bright red paint⁹³⁹.

⁹³⁴ *Ibid.* : 4.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁹ *Ibid.*

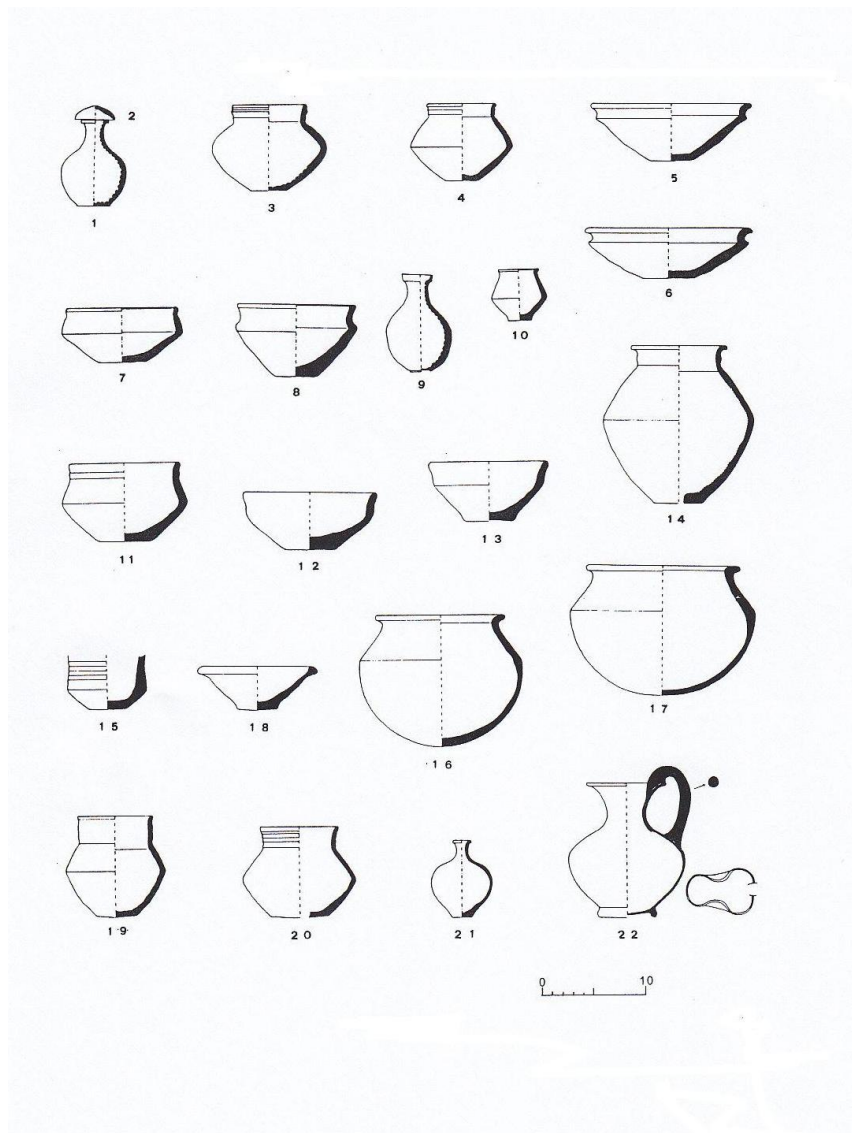


Fig. 174: Pottery from burials D9-13.

D9 (1-6)-D10 (7-8), D11 (9-10), D12 (11-17), D13 (18-22).

-Burial D14: A double burial where two skeletons one on top of the other were found. The two heads were in the north side, while the burial was restricted by two mud bricks in the north side and three others in the west. The burial furniture included five small well-preserved vessels, among which there was a small three-lobed jug decorated with two parallel strips of red paint⁹⁴⁰.

⁹⁴⁰ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 4-5.

- Burial D15: It was very poor containing few overturned bones, a cooking bowl and a small glass⁹⁴¹.

-Burial D16: There was a well-preserved skeleton with the head in the south-western side, the left arm in the east and the right arm badly bent under the head. Beside the corpse there were vessels larger than the ones usually found in such burials, a toggle pin under the left hand and the head of an herbivorous animal⁹⁴².

- Double burial D17: In this burial two skeletons were found with the two heads directed to the north side while the two faces look at each other, the two bodies opposite to each other and the arm of one of them is lying on the torso of other. These couple was buried with a furniture rich with medium-sized vessels. Beside the two bodies a blade, a toggle pin and two small bronze spoons and a small shell were found⁹⁴³.

-Burial D18: Beside greatly disjoined human remains there were a skull directed to the north and part of the thoracic cavity. Beside these human remains there were three complete small jars, a cooking bowl, a tubular-shaped glass, another perpendicular-lipped glass a bronze toggle pin⁹⁴⁴.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid* : 5.

⁹⁴² *Ibid* : 5.

⁹⁴³ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 5.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid* : 5.

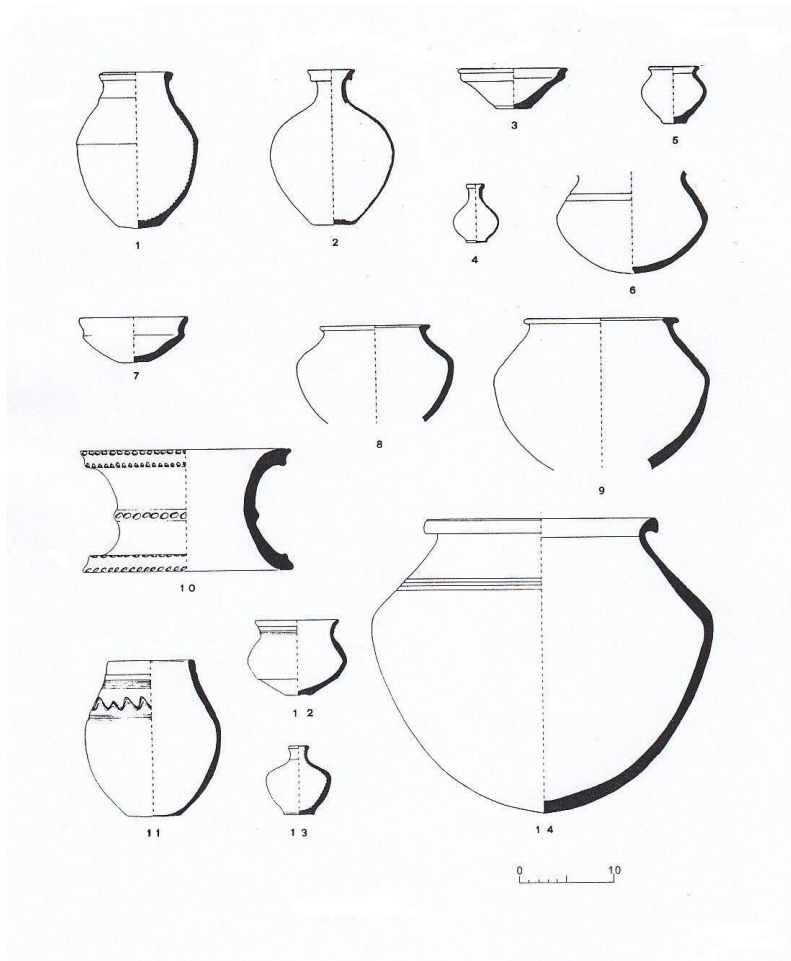


Fig. 175: Pottery from burials D14 (1-4)-D15 (5-6)-D16 (7-11)-D19 (12-14).

-Burial D20: It was partly destroyed. Three jars and a bowl with a perpendicular lip were found in it⁹⁴⁵.

- Burial D21: The skeleton was found in a bad state (the face was directed eastward). The funerary furniture of the burial consisted of four bowls and two jars⁹⁴⁶.

- Burial D22: The body heaped on the left side while the legs extended to the western aide. Beside the skeleton there were a small cooking bowl, a small jar and a sheep head⁹⁴⁷.

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 5.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

- Burial D23: What remained of it is a skull found under the wall foundation stones and beside it there were a small double-lipped jar, a cooking bowl, a bronze toggle pin and some bones of herbivorous animals⁹⁴⁸.

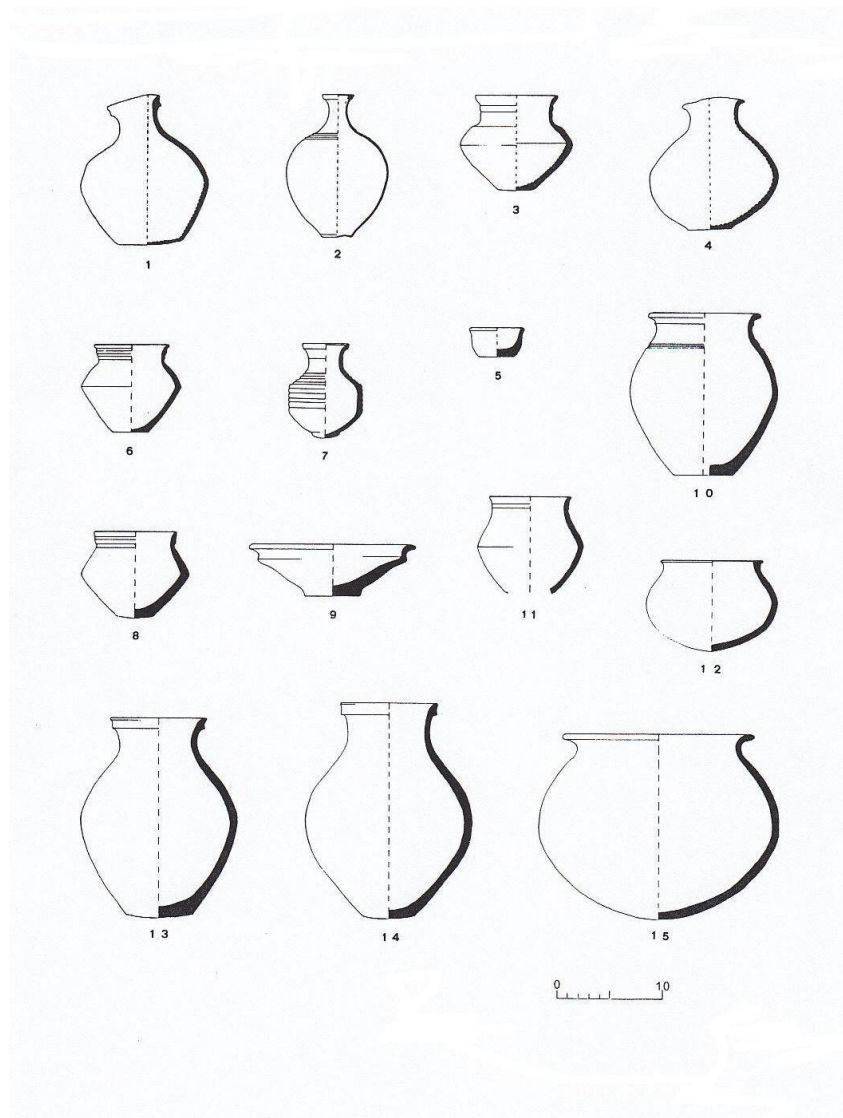


Fig. 176: Pottery from burials D20 (1-5)-D21 (6-11)-D22 (12-13)-D23 (14-15).

- Burial D24: It contained three skeletons. The funerary furniture consisted of four bowls and a small jar⁹⁴⁹.

⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁹ Baffi-Guardata 1988: 5-6.

-Burial D25: In it a skull of an adult directed west ward was found along with half jar which was used for cooking⁹⁵⁰.

-Burial D26: It contained few human remains and its furniture included – beside the typical types of the inherited Middle Bronze Age pottery in Ebla – other less circulated types in this city such as the small jars made of very refined and cleaned mortar⁹⁵¹.

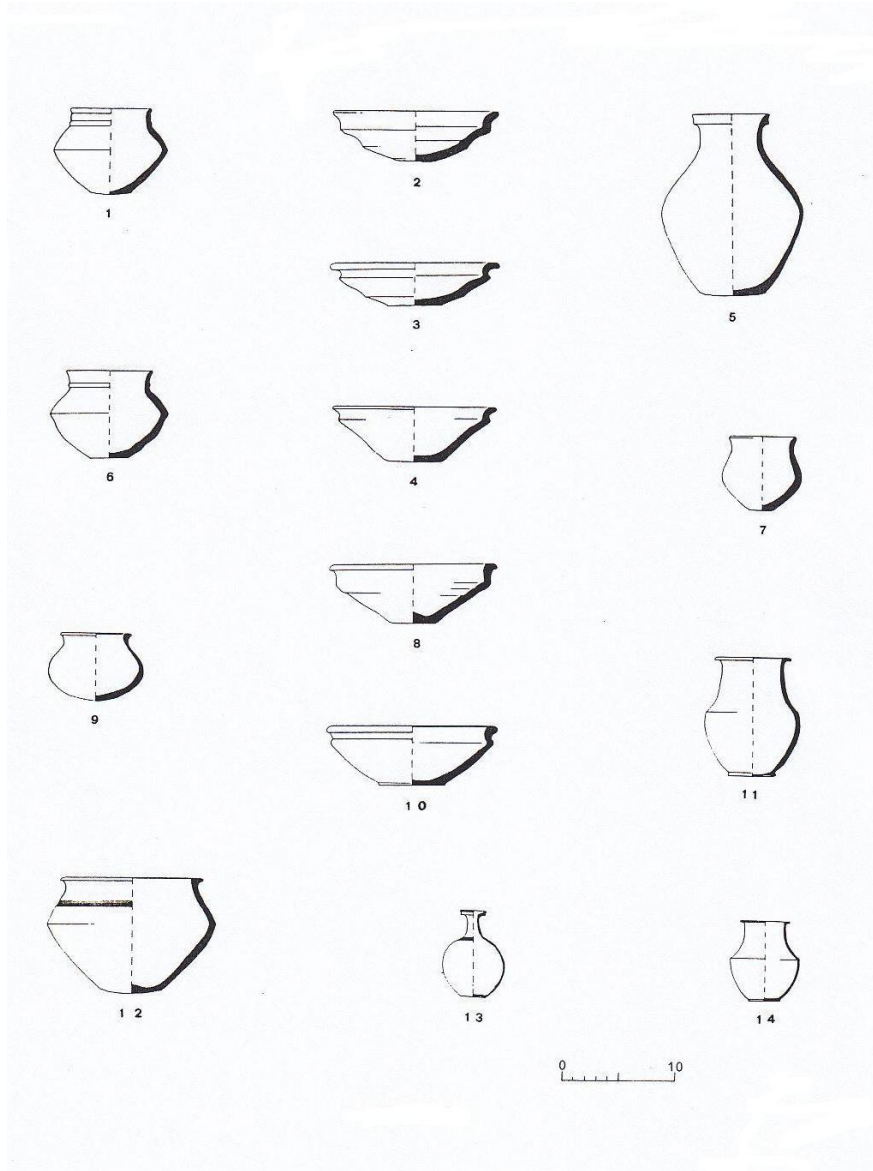


Fig. 177: Pottery from burials D24 (1-5)-D26 (6-14).

⁹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* : 6.

⁹⁵¹ *Ibid.* : 6.

Burials in jars were recorded in the houses constituting the south-western quarter at gate A at Ebla⁹⁵².

-Burial D 7: Contained an infant buried in a jar⁹⁵³.

-Burial D 19: This burial contained the remains of an infant put in a cooking jar and some human bones. The funerary enclosures consisted of a bottle, a bowl, a small bronze ring and a pottery bead⁹⁵⁴.

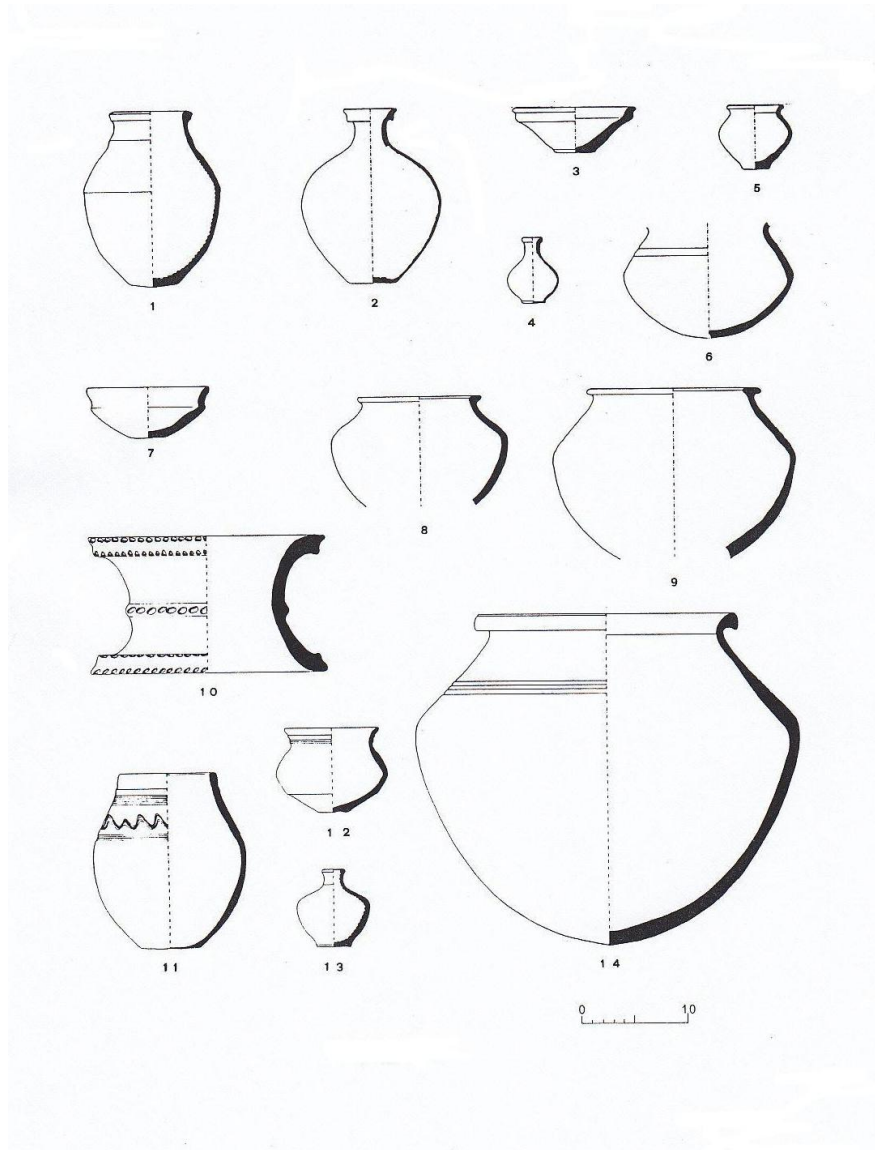


Fig. 178: Pottery from burial D19, n (12-14).

⁹⁵² Baffi-Guardata 1988: 3.

⁹⁵³ *Ibid.* : 4.

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* : 5.

- **Ain Dara:** The cemetery contained a set of pottery jars (pots) with a skeleton in each jar. The aperture of each pot is covered by an obtuse-mouthed pottery plate. Each jar had a hole in its base. There is incised decoration on top of the jar belly. Beside the jars there were pottery glasses with bases, some of which were decorated while others were not. Among the funerary pottery set we also see a distinctive jar with artistic and animal reliefs on its surface. This jar dated back to 1800 BC⁹⁵⁵.

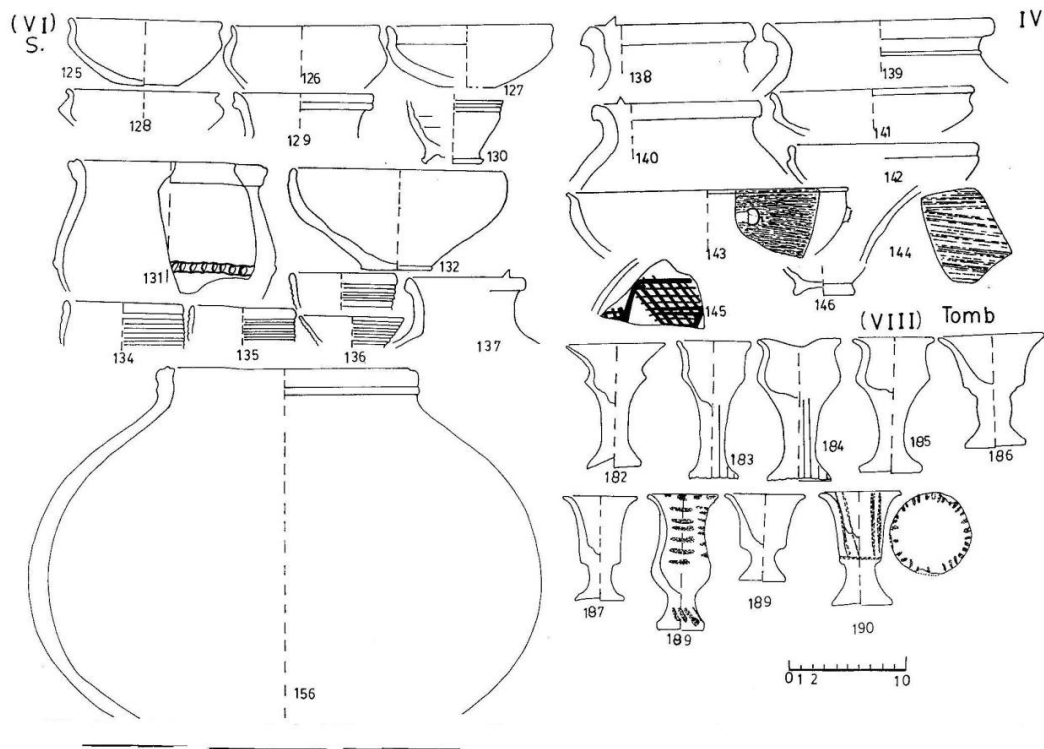


Fig. 179: Pottery from Ain Dara burial.

⁹⁵⁵ Suleiman 1991: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ain-Dara

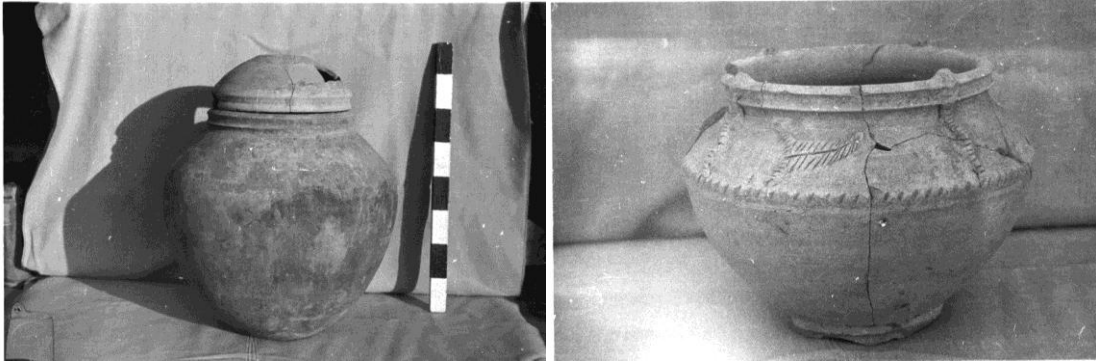


Fig. 180: Jar burials of Ain Dara.

- **Ginders:** An individual burial of an infant in a jar as well as funerary enclosures consisting of a vase and two terracotta figurines were found in section B, dated back to the MBA 1⁹⁵⁶.

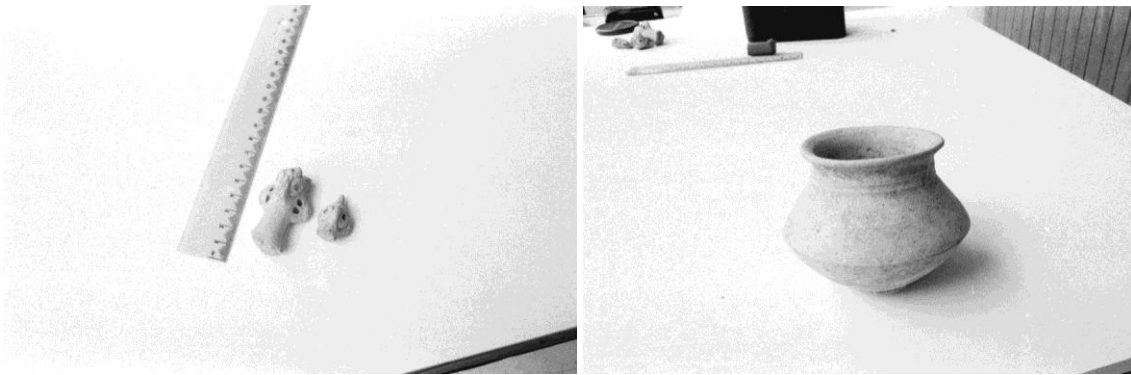


Fig.181: Grave goods from burial of Genderes.

⁹⁵⁶ Suleiman and Tarakge1996: Preliminary Report on the Archeological Excavation at Ginders .

Tell Et-Tin: Here 20 skeletons were found accompanied by a set of pottery vessels and bronze finds. These finds as a whole dated back to the Middle Bronze Age⁹⁵⁷.

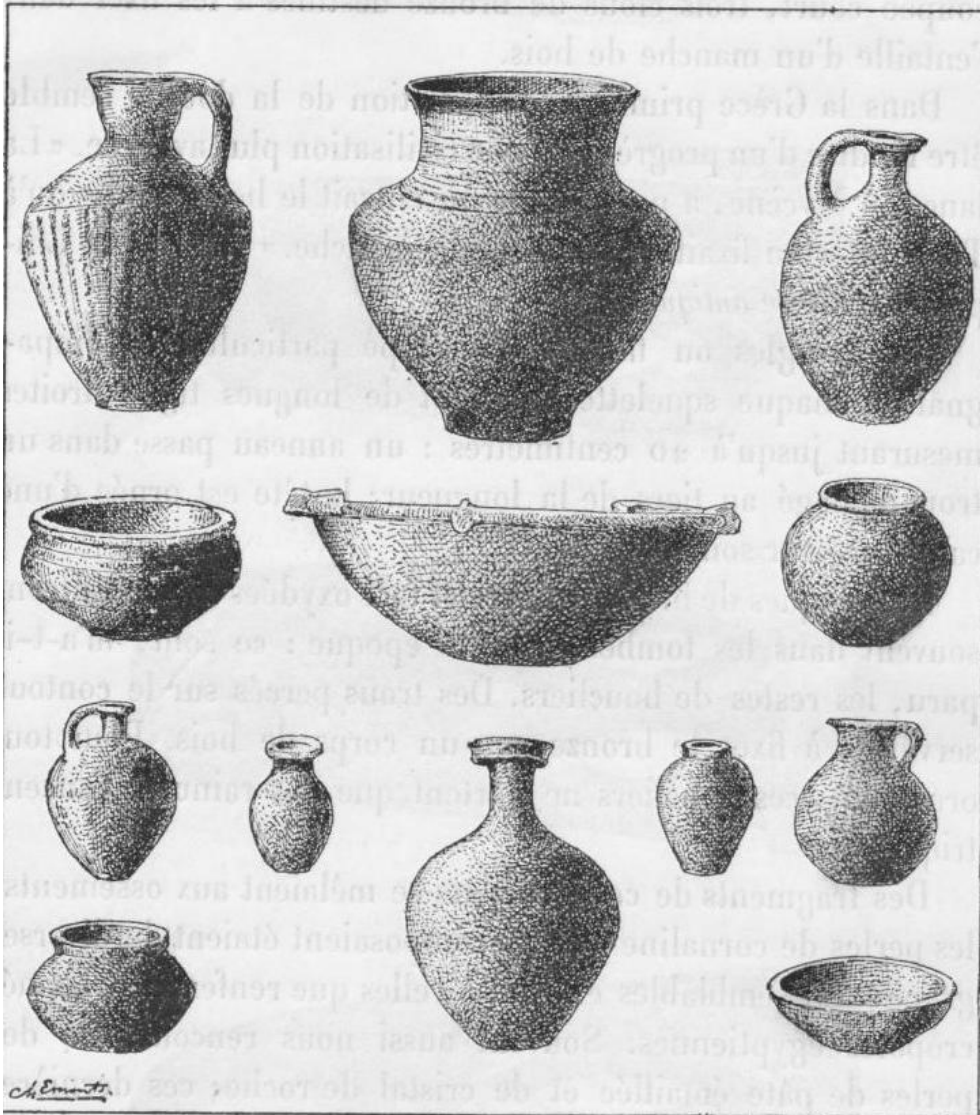


Fig.182: Pottery from Tell Et-Tin tomb.

⁹⁵⁷ Gautier 1895: 5, 18-19.

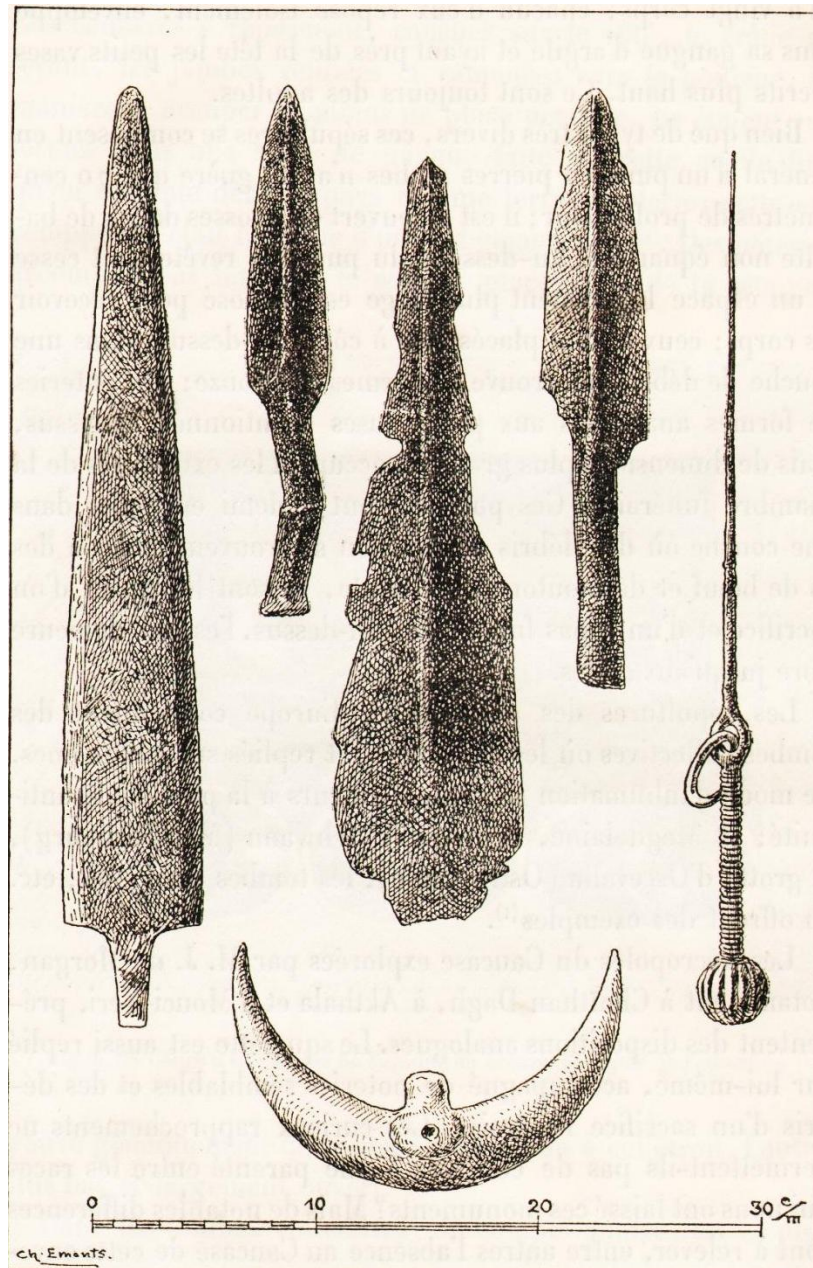


Fig.183: Grave goods from Tell Et-Tin tomb.

- Pottery vessels.
- Collection of Bronze objects.
- 20 skeletons.

Bibliography:**Journal and series abbreviations**

AAAS Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes

AASOR Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research

AJA American Journal of Archaeology

AKKADIKA

ANTIQUITY

AFO Archiv für Orientforschung

ARM Archives Royales de Mari

AuOr Aula orientalis. Revista de estudios del Próximo Oriente Antiguo, Barcelona

BAH Bibliothèque archéologique et historique

BaM Baghdader Mitteilungen

BAR British Archaeological Reports International Series

BERYTUS Archaeological Studies published by the Museum of Archaeology of the American University of Beirut

CRAI Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscription & Belles-Lettres

DaM Damaszener Mitteilungen

DAS Documents d'archéologie Syrienne

LAPO Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient

Levant Supplementary Series

MARI Mari, Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires

MDOG Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin

MSAE Materiali e studi Archeologici di Ebla

NABU Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires

RSOu Ras Shamra-Ougarit

SAQ Studi Archeologici su Qatna

SEB Studi Eblaiti

SMS Syro-Mesopotamian Studies

SO Studia Orontica. « Bulletin du Centre Syrien de la recherche archéologique vallée de l'Oronte Palais Tabet »

SUBARTU

SYRIA

TMO Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient

UG Ugaritica

VO Vicino Oriente

ZA Zeitschrift für Assyriologie

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