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*The International Campaign
To Rescue Archaeological Sites in Inundated Regions of the Euphrates Dam
The Syrian Archaeological Expedition to Tell Al-'Abd Zrejehey:
Clay Figurines of the Third Millennium B.C.*

by

Kassem Toueir



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*The International Campaign
To Rescue Archaeological Sites in Inundated Regions of the Euphrates Dam*
**THE SYRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO TELL AL'ABD ZREJEHEY:
CLAY FIGURINES OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM B.C.**

by

Kassem Toueir

Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus*

A catalog of some 239 figurines from the late third millennium occupation at Tell al'Abd in Syria, in the flood area of the Tabqa dam, partly stratified and partly from the surface. While no chronological seriation can be established, a typological classification distinguishes different groups of objects by ware and by representational categories. There are 77 human figurines, 138 animal figurines, and 24 cart fragments or wheels. Comparisons with published and unpublished materials from other sites are offered, as are interpretations on the function of the various types of figurines. A total of 117 examples is reproduced in half-tone photographs.

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In 1971 the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of the Syrian Arab Republic issued an appeal through UNESCO asking the archaeological institutes of all nations to assist the D.G.A.M. in rescuing archaeological sites and historical monuments endangered by submersion upon completion of the Euphrates Dam.

* The author wishes to thank Sherry Vatter of UCLA, for her translation of the text of the article from Arabic.

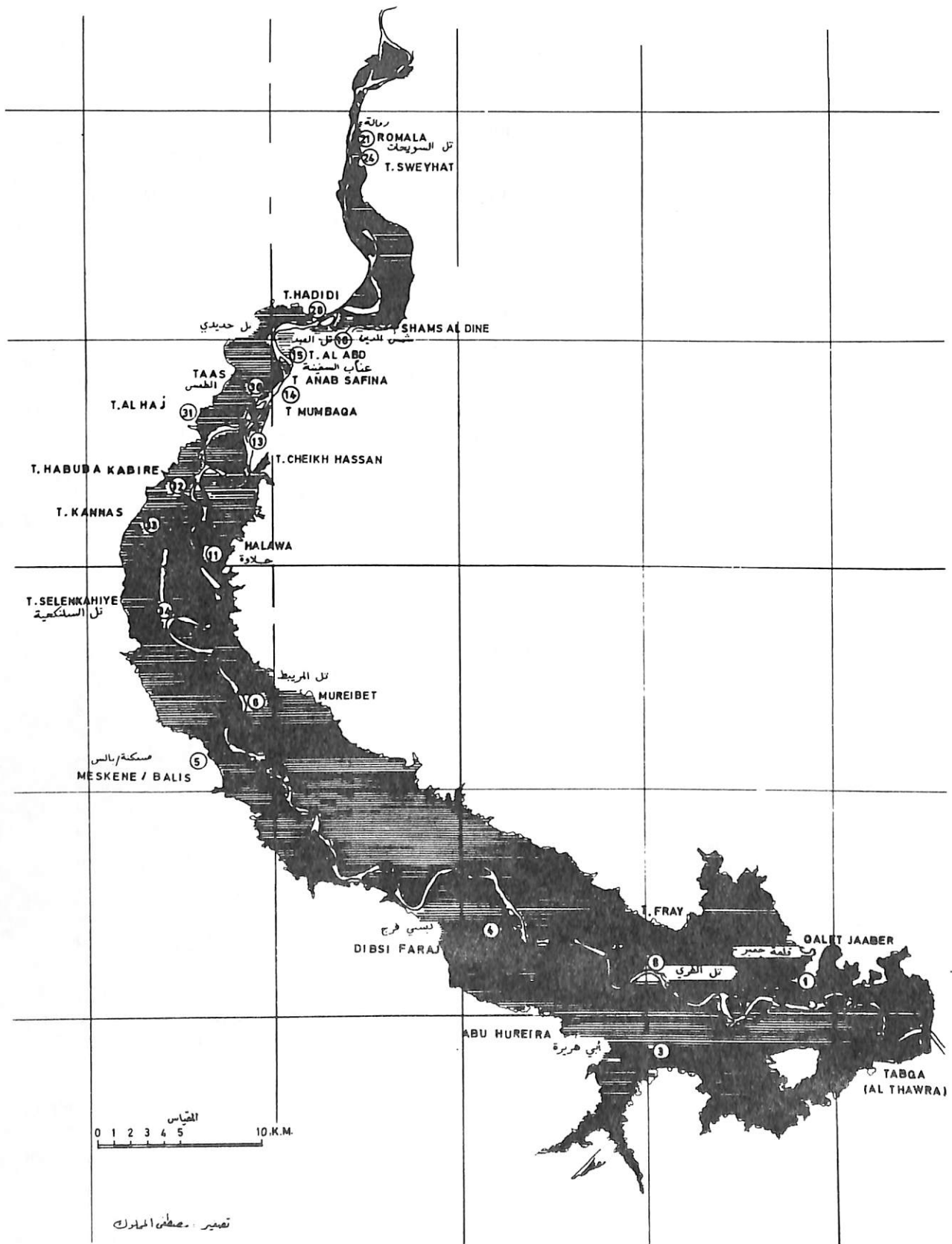


Figure 1.

Nations responding to the plea were Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, and the United States. Approximately twenty archaeological expeditions from these nations joined the Syrians in excavating and rescuing twenty-four archaeological sites and historical monuments in an enclosed region of the upper Euphrates (see map, Fig. 1).

The site of Tell al'Abd on the left side of the Euphrates (see Nr. 15 of the map, Fig. 1) was selected by an expedition from D.G.A.M., headed by Mr. Adnan Bounni, director of the D.G.A.M. Excavation Service, assisted by the author, Mr. Nasib Salibi, and others. This project entailed two long seasons of excavation in 1971 and 1972. Seven 10 by 10 meter squares (L.11, K.11, K.10, K.9, K.8, K.7, and K.6) were excavated (see topographical plan in Fig. 2).

Preliminary results have been published by Mr. Bounni in Arabic in the *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 53-60, and in French in *Antiquités de l'Euphrate — Expositions des découvertes de la campagne internationale de Sauvegarde des Antiquités de l'Euphrate, Aleppo Museum 16. XI. 1974, Publication de la D.G.A.M. de la Syrie*, pp. 25-32, Damas 1974. Another article in English by Mr. Bounni is forthcoming in *BASOR*.

I would like to thank Mr. Bounni for his kind permission to allow me to study the findings on the clay figurines. Thanks also are due to Mr. Mohamed Roumi for photographing the figurines.

It is a special honor for me to be the first Syrian to publish a small contribution in *Syro-Mesopotamian Studies* thanks to the help and encouragement of Professors Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati.

1. General Remarks

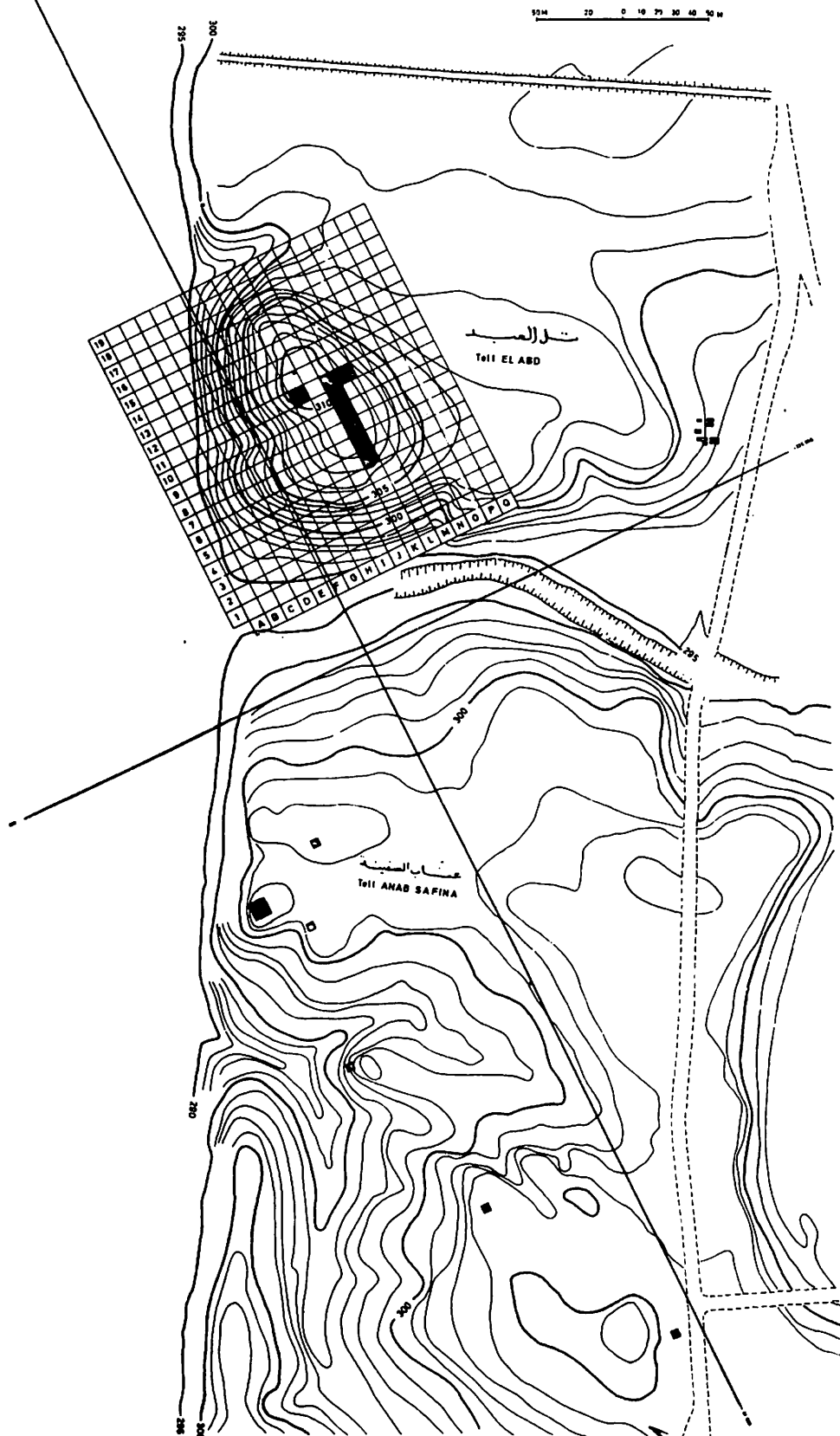
The clay figurines which we collected depict human and animal forms and carts. The great majority are broken and do not complete one another. The total amounts to 251 pieces, 77 of which are fragments of human figurines, 150 fragments of animal figurines, 8 fragments of miniature cart-boxes, and 16 intact and fragmented wheels of carts.

All the figurine fragments were discovered on the surface of the tell, in the first, second, and third levels of areas in which excavation continues and in the deep sounding in area K.8.

They are catalogued according to these levels in the following manner:

	Pieces of Human Figurines	Pieces of Animal Figurines	Pieces of Cart Boxes	Wheels of Carts	Total	Percentage of Total
Surface	54	70	6	10	140	56%
First Level	10	13	0	1	24	10.6%
Second Level	11	48	2	5	66	26.4%
Third Level/Deep Sounding	2	8	0	0	9	3.6%
TOTAL RECORDED	77	138	8	16	239	
Pieces Not Recorded	0	11	0	0	11	
Dual Numbers	0	1	0	0	1	
TOTAL	77	150	8	16	251	100%

Fragments of the terracotta figurines from the surface of the tell constitute more than half of the total number found. Those discovered in the first level comprise 10.6 percent, those of the second level 26.4 percent, and those of the third level and the deep sounding 3.6 percent. Perhaps the reason for these significant differences is that the excavation in the third level and the deep sounding following it was restricted to certain squares and not others.



The excavation confirmed that the first level dates to the Roman, Hellenistic and Achaemenid periods. We mention from among the evidence of those historical periods clay figurines that characterize two periods, the Hellenistic and Achaemenid which will be the subject of a separate article. The presence of some clay figurines whose style, form, and type date to periods much older than those represented in the first level is attributed to the disturbance of the first level as the result of agricultural activities, forces of weather, and various diggings.

In the second level, intact and broken pottery was discovered along with various bronze tools of known types dating to approximately the beginning of the second millennium B.C.

Complete or broken pottery and bronze tools in the third level and the deep sounding are of types known in the second half of the third millennium B.C. This is confirmed by radiocarbon analysis of specimens taken from various locations and elevations with dates falling between 2450 (plus or minus 60) and 2195 (plus or minus 60) B.C. On the strength of this, there is no doubt that the origin of these terracotta figurines from the surface of Tell al 'Abd and from the first level should be attributed to the second and third levels and to the level of the deep sounding.

We attempted to divide these figurines into groups with distinctive characteristics according to the level to which each group belongs with the aim of recognizing the development of this craft and of tracing its styles through successive periods. However, through the examination of their formal and technical characteristics only common properties emerged.

All the figurines were hand-made, the fingerprints of the artist are clear in most cases and very few of them are smooth-surfaced. This indicates a slow evolution in the style of this craft throughout the historical periods represented at Tell al 'Abd. At present, these extend from the late Early Dynastic or Pre-Sargonic period (about 2450 B.C.) to the beginning of the first Middle Bronze Age (about 1900 B.C.), passing through the Akkadian dynasty and that of Ur III.

Thus we shall deal with these figurines as if they formed a nearly homogeneous subject and shall disregard the levels from which they originate. We shall proceed to the delimitation of their dating ranges using the dates of the pottery, bronze tools, and other finds discovered in the second and third levels and by the comparisons which we will make with their equivalents discovered in other places neighboring Tell al 'Abd as well as those far from it.

We can distinguish two principal types of clay in all the figurines. The first is rich and brittle, possessing a reddish-orange color both on the interior and the exterior if the figurine was well-fired, and ash colored on the outside if it was incompletely fired. As for the second type of clay, it is yellow-gray on the interior and exterior if completely fired; a reddish stain permeates its outer surface or cross-section if the firing was incomplete. We find among this group figurines whose clay possesses a greenish-gray or greenish color, more or less, if the clay was exposed to the fire more than was necessary for its firing (overfired). In addition, there are some dark green clay figurines, some of which had not been completed (wasters).

Totals for each type of clay are categorized as follows:

Red Clay	Yellow-Gray Clay	Wasters	Total
23	223	5	251

The color and quality of the clay of these figurines resembles that of the pottery recovered in the second and third levels of Tell al 'Abd. It does not differ from the clay of the majority of figurines and pottery discovered in neighboring sites by archaeological expeditions participating in the international campaign to rescue inundated ruins. We would especially like to mention Tell Habuba, Tell Mumbaqa, and Tell as-Salankaheh.¹

Indeed, the incidences of figurines damaged by high temperatures, the resemblance of this clay to that of the pottery, and the discovery of a kiln for firing clay in the second level confirms that these figurines were locally produced and diminishes the possibility that they were imported.

2. Human Figurines

As mentioned before, we do not have any intact figurines, but only fragments which represent a head, a torso, or a pedestal. Likewise, most of the pieces are mutilated. They are categorized as follows:

Head	Torso	Pedestal	Small Earthenware Jar Belonging to Figurine	Total
15	26	35	1	77

On the strength of these fragments, we are able to describe the complete form of the figurine as follows: With the exception of the torso of figurine number 305 and torso number 57, which probably represent male bodies, all the fragments of heads and torsos represent the body of a nude woman. Her head and torso are in frontal position, her hands support her breasts, in most cases one or more ornamental bands encircle her neck and her chest. The flat or cylindrical torso is completed by the pedestal which in cross-section is cylindrical, oval, or rectangular; no hips, legs or feet are indicated. The eyes are represented by two round holes or by two round disks in the middle of which is a hole, which in turn sometimes bears a further rounded incision.

The nose is executed by means of pinching the clay with the fingers. While we do not find any indication of a mouth, there is a disk or two disks on each side of the head indicating either ears or earrings hanging from the ears or perhaps they represent curls of hair.² Some of the heads support a crenelated crown (numbers 125 and 66). The hair is arranged in plaits or notched braids, at times smooth; another hair style falls or is braided down the back. In what follows we will examine these characteristics in regard to each figurine.

2.1. The Head

Field Numbers	Characteristics
21, 90, 143, 195, 311, 313	Eye disks pierced in the middle
66, 125, 192, 312	Eye disks bearing a notch sunk in its central hole
80	Eyes indicated by round holes without disks
21, 80, 90, 312	Long hair hanging down back, raised to top of head and hidden as a square mass
35, 135, 192	Braids around forehead and on sides of face
66, 125	A crown on top of the head
21, 35, 66, 125, 145, 195, 311, 312, 314	Side disks indicating ears or earrings

¹ This observation is based upon a personal inspection of the discoveries of the archaeological expeditions in the above sites, now deposited in the Aleppo Museum.

² Ruth Opificius explains these earrings as an indication of the curling of the hair inward. Ruth Opificius, *Terrakotten; Zweiter Vorläufiger Bericht über die von der D.O.G. mit mittel der Stiftung VW-werk in Habuba Kabira und in Mumbaqa unternehmenen Archäolog. Untersuchungen (Herbst 1969)*, M.D.O.G., no. 102, Berlin, Dezember 1970, p. 56. For Opificius' treatment of them as a representation of earrings, see the same journal, vol. 103, 1971.

The international expeditions to save sites flooded by the lake of the Euphrates Dam³ came across samples resembling the figurines discovered at Tell al'Abd. Although final results for these excavations are not yet published the results are summarized in their entirety in the preliminary reports published in the volumes of the *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* and other journals.

Since the figurine specimens published in these preliminary reports were not sufficient for a comparison with the figurines of Tell al'Abd, we must rely on the photographic catalogs submitted by each expedition to the Service for Excavation and Archaeological Studies in the General Directorate for Antiquities and Museums of Syria. For each example, we cite the catalog and registration number of the figurine and the year it was discovered. We would like to make special mention here of the discoveries of the German Archaeological Expedition at Tell Habuba and Tell Mumbaqaq,⁴ and the Dutch Archaeological Expedition at Tell as-Salankaheyeh.⁵

In regard to specimens with long hair hanging down the back, fastened by a transverse braid, and with gouged eye disks, figurines numbered 80 and 90 from Tell al'Abd resemble figurines numbered 39 and 72 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972). Figurine 80 from Tell al'Abd resembles number 21 from Tell Habuba (photo-catalog 1969); and figurine number 90 resembles figurine Y-78 from Tell Habuba (photo-catalog 1973) and another figurine from Tell Chuera.⁶

Figurine 66 from Tell al'Abd resembles figurines numbered 101, 365, and 630 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972); number 145 from Tell al'Abd resembles number 390 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (the last-mentioned catalog), figurine number 3733/32 from Tell Mumbaqaq (photo-catalog 1973) and the two figurines numbered 259 and Q-14 from Tell Habuba (photo-catalogs 1972 and 1969 respectively); while figurines numbered 136 and 165 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972) and figurine number 125 from Tell al'Abd resemble figurines 151 and 630 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972).

2.2. The Torso

The majority of torsos are flat in form with the exception of three which are cylindrical, just as the majority represent a woman's body with the exception of numbers 51, 179, and 305, which possibly represent men. The female torsos are distinguished by two hands supporting the breasts and by one, two or three decorative bands attached to the chest or encircling the lower part of the neck. The bands are either smooth or decorated with short incised lines, vertical or oblique. In the remaining cases, a necklace or band hanging perpendicular to the bands on the chest are suspended from the neck.

In light of the mutilated and imperfect state of most of the torsos, it is not possible to ascertain the sex represented. We relied on the existence of breasts and ornamental bands to identify the female sex and restricted torsos lacking these elements to the male sex. As the decorative bands and the breasts were attached to the body, it is possible that some have been lost. The characteristics mentioned above are categorized with respect to each torso in the following way:

Field Numbers	Characteristics
11, 180, 35, 360, 45, 51, 62, 179, 203, 208, 303, 304, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 316, 317, 320, 370	Flat torso
305, 318, 318	Cylindrical torso

³ *Antiquités de l'Euphrate, Exposition des Découvertes de la Campagne Internationale de Sauvegarde des Antiquités de l'Euphrate*, publication de la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées, Damas 1974.

⁴ *M.D.O.G.* No. 101, 1969; no. 102, 1970; no. 103, 1971; no. 105/106, 1973/1974. *A.A.A.S.*, Vol. XX, 1970, pp. 25-44.

⁵ *A.A.A.S.*, Vol. XVII, 1968, pp. 21-36 and Vol. XXIII, 1973, pp. 145-158.

⁶ A. Moortgat, *Tell Chuera in Nord-Ost. Syrien, Vorläufiger Bericht über die Grabungskampagne 1960*, Köln and Opladen 1962, Abb. 7f, et A. Moortgat and U. Moortgat-Correns, *Tell Chuera in N.O. Syrien, Vorläufiger Bericht über die sechste Grabungskampagne 1973*, Berlin, 1975, Abb. 23-e.

51, 179, 305	Male torso
35, 36, 203, 204, 208, 309, 318, 372	Neckbands decorated with vertical strokes
11, 18, 45, 220, 307	Neckbands decorated with oblique strokes
179	Smooth surfaced neckband

Torso number 203 from Tell al'Abd resembles number 255 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972), while torso number 220 from Tell al'Abd resembles numbers 6, 8, and 196 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (also catalog 1972), number 45/14-Q from Tell Habuba (photo-catalog 1970), and a torso from the region of 'Amuq.⁷ Torso number 45 from Tell al'Abd resembles number 318 of Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972), just as torso number 62 from Tell al'Abd resembles numbers 37, 111, 235, 256, and 299 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972).

2.3. The Pedestal

We can distinguish three types among the pedestal fragments. The first is cylindrical in cross-section, the second is oval, and the third is nearly rectangular. All three types have concave bottoms. The classification of individual pedestals in respect to the characteristics cited above is as follows:

Field Numbers	Characteristics
216, 258, 323, 325, 336, 339, 340, 341, 344, 345, 347	Cylindrical cross-section
219, 320, 321, 322, 324, 327, 328, 329, 331, 333, 335	Oval cross-section
326, 330, 332, 334, 337, 342, 346, 372	Rectangular cross-section

The rectangular pedestal number 216 from Tell al'Abd resembles number R-22/18 from Tell Habuba (photo-catalog 1973), oval pedestal number 218 from Tell Habuba (above catalog), a pedestal from Tell Chuera, and pedestal number 143/72 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1973). The pedestal with the oblong cross-section from Tell al'Abd resembles pedestal number 237/72 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (above catalog).

Lastly, we shall look at a small decorated jar (registry number 202) with a height of 3.6 cm and a width of about 2 cm. It has an oval body, a slightly reduced neck, a cylindrical mouth, and a tap which is in imperfect condition. The post is complete, but there is a small hole piercing the edge of the mouth. In the lower part of the body there are traces suggestive of a human thumb and forefingers. These traces reveal that the jar is a fragment of a human figurine, probably a woman carrying a jar or a container in her hand. The Dutch archaeological expedition at Tell as-Salankaheyeh⁸ has discovered a figurine of this type.

⁷ R. and L. Braidwood, *Excavation in the Plain of Antioch*, Chicago 1960, pl. 368, No. 4.
⁸ *Op. cit.*, Note 5, Vol. XXIII, 1973, p. 149 and Fig. 12.



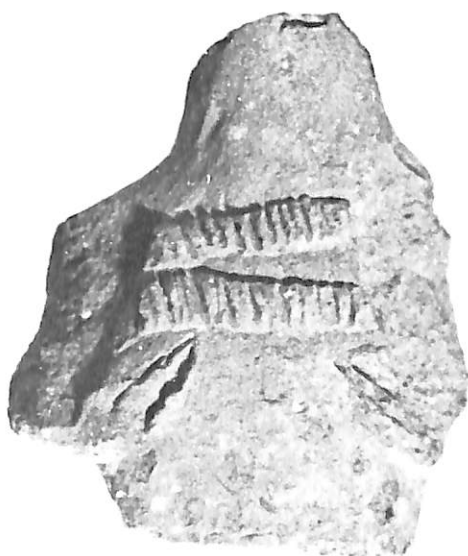
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45



51

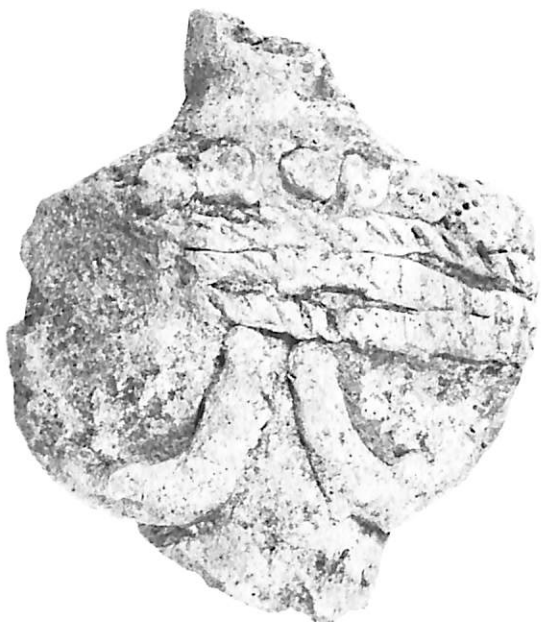


62



179

Torsos of Woman Figurines



203



208



220



305



306



318



319

Torsos of Woman Figurines

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21



21



125



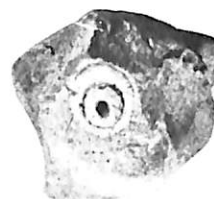
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192



301



312



313



314



315

Heads of Woman Figurines

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208



216



216



219



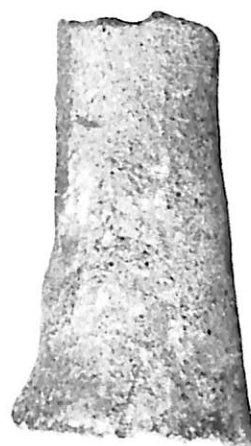
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Pedestals of Human Figurines

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330



333



337



338

Pedestals of Human Figurines

SMS 2, 71



3



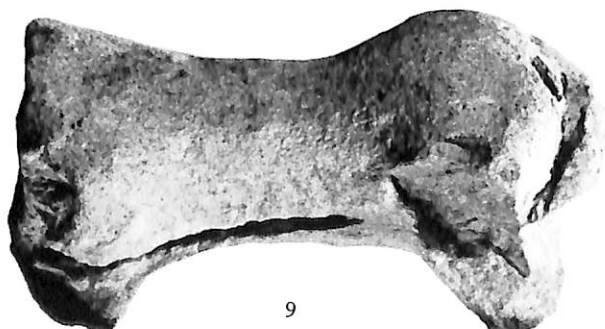
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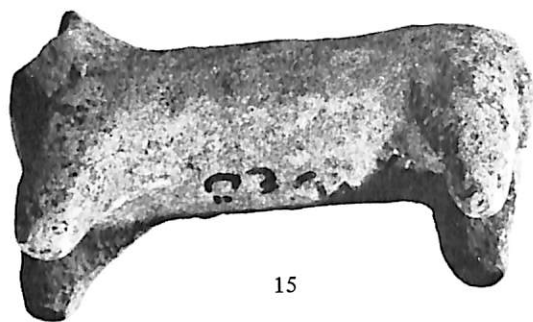
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13

Torsos of Animal Figurines

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25



26



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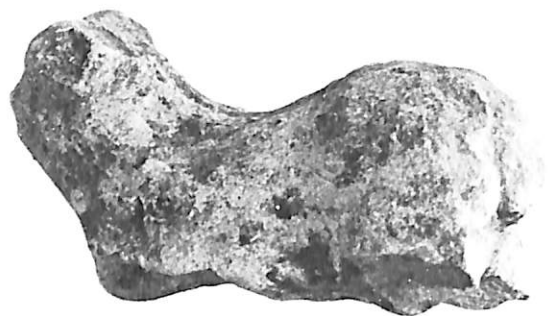


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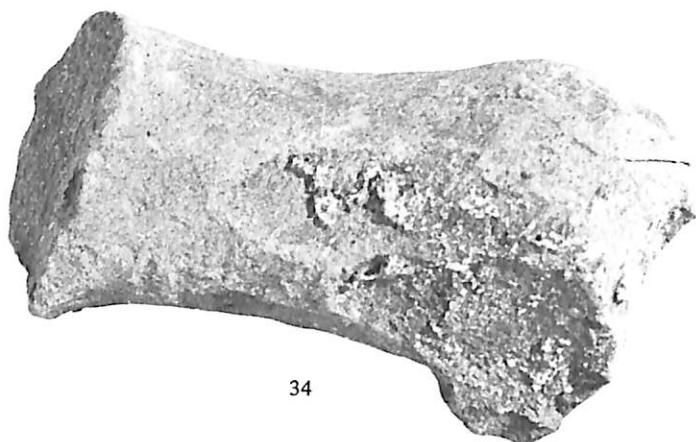


31

Torsos of Animal Figurines



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72

Torsos of Animal Figurines

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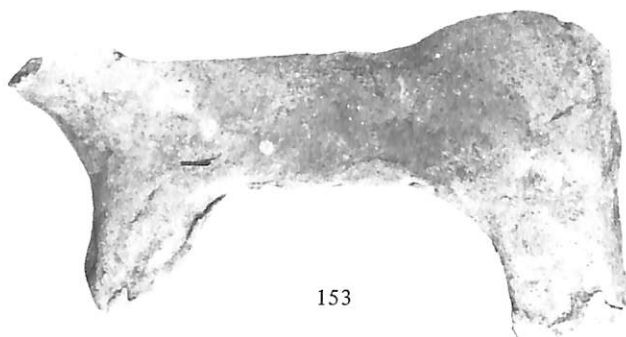
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153



194

Torsos of Animal Figurines



214



217



221



222



240



241

Torsos of Animal Figurines



242



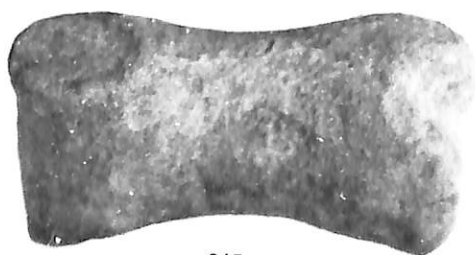
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248

Torsos of Animal Figurines



249



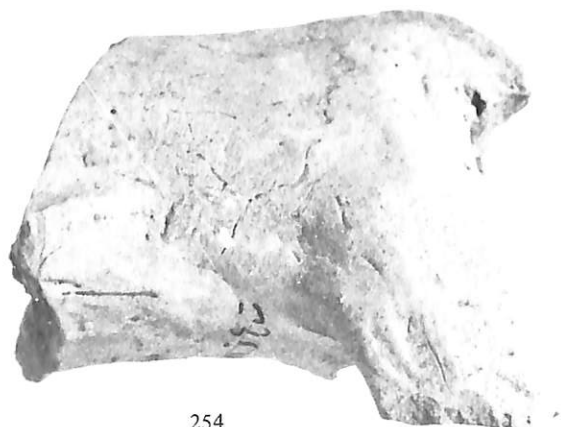
250



251



252



254



256

Torsos of Animal Figurines

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257



258



259



275



359



361

Torsos of Animal Figurines

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8



22



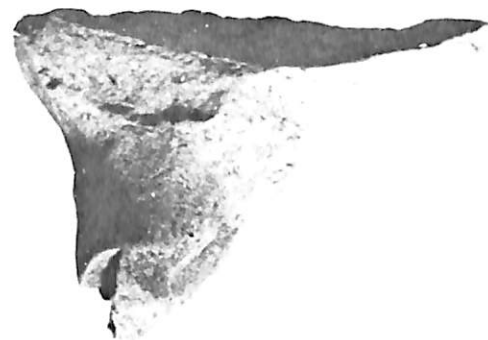
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73



83



107



111



115

Heads of Animal Figurines

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128



148



191



269



283

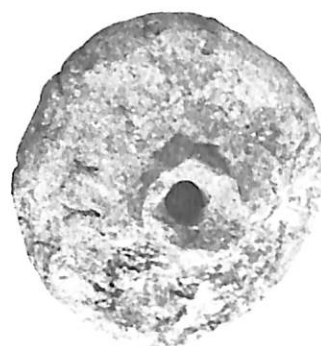


359

Heads of Animal Figurines



46



57



61



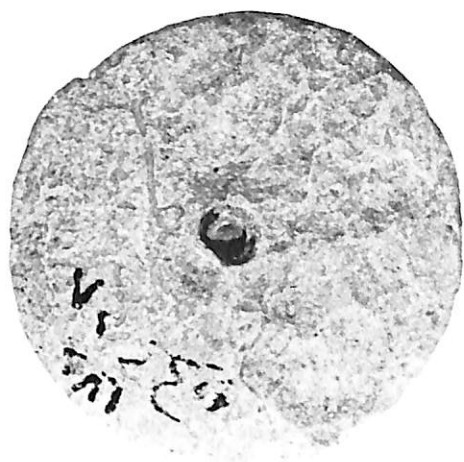
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146

Wheel Carts

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286



287



288



289



290

Wheel Carts

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291



292



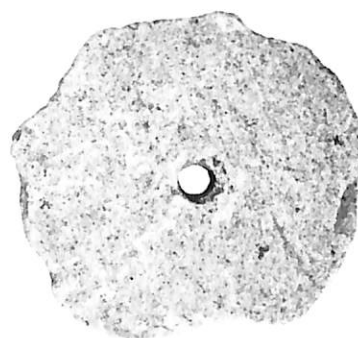
293



294



349



374

Wheel Carts



59



81



106



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Cart Boxes*SMS* 2, 85



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297



298



299



300

Cart Boxes

3. The Function of Human Figurines

The careful and detailed study which Mrs. Barrelet has undertaken⁹ provides us with minute details concerning the manufacture of clay figurines, their dates, the development of their styles, and the means by which they were produced. However, she stops short in the conclusion of her study. She wonders, just as we do, what prompted their production and what function they performed.

Barrelet agrees with prehistorians (see page 54 ff., *ibid.*) that the female figurines are representations of the Mother Goddess (Magna Mater) whose actual names we do not know for each specific region where these figurines were produced during prehistory. In the East we have the representation of the Mother Goddess in the seventh millennium in the locality of Jarmo¹⁰ and in the West in the late seventh and sixth millennium at Catal Hüyük, and in the eighth millennium at Hacilar.¹¹ Syria, which until recently had occupied a late place by virtue of the appearance of the Mother Goddess at Tell Halaf¹² in the fifth millennium B.C., now occupies one of the earliest places with the discovery of a Mother Goddess figurine dated to the beginning of the eighth millennium at Tell Mureibet on the Euphrates.¹³

This is not the place to discuss details of historical development of figurines nor to refer to the numerous detailed studies on this topic. However, we should like to mention the generally known fact that the personalization of deities, beginning with the Mother Goddess, was synchronous with the early development of human societies. Anthropomorphic deities are known by their names or emblems from the dawn of history. These deities held an official status recognized by the state; they retained or changed their names and status with the changes of states and the succession of historical periods. If we closely examine the human figurines which are the subject of this study and all similar figurines discovered in various parts of Syria and outside it, we conclude that:

1. The figurines do not carry any distinguishing attribute or emblem sufficient to give them a firm identity.

2. They appear in a variety of regions and historical periods in a form distinctly unlike the official gods who had fixed names and were limited to specific functions and to a definite state and period.

3. Their development was slow, taking place over the centuries in a variety of locations, but the human figurine, no matter how much the manner of its treatment varied in technical and formal details, remained a portrayal of a nude woman holding her hands near her chest or perhaps supporting her breasts.

4. They are frequently found in dwellings but only rarely in temples.¹⁴ In spite of this, one does not question their role in the faith and beliefs of the people. One only asks why they were found in the society of official gods, why they lacked a special identity, and why archaeologists cannot agree on the function the figurines served nor their symbolic content. R. Opificius¹⁵ suggested a number of possibilities without supporting any one of them. She theorized the human figurines are pieces of "the Holy Bride," a god, a particular ruler, or that they might be an extension of the deities worshipped officially in the temple, but serving magical ends as omens for wellbeing and fertility. On the other hand, Van Loon proposes¹⁶ that they are representations of one of the deities, but he does not determine a

⁹ M. Th. Barrelet, *Figurines et Reliefs en terre cuite de la Mésopotamie Antique*, Paris 1968.

¹⁰ R. Braidwood, *Prehistoric Investigations in Iraqi Kurdistan*, S.A.O.C. 31, Chicago 19--.

¹¹ J. Mellaart, *Excavation at Hacilar, Fourth Preliminary Report 1960*, *An. St.* 11, London 1961, The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. J. Mellaart, *Catal Hüyük*, London and Southampton 1967.

¹² M. Von Oppenheim, *Der Tell Halaf die Prehistorischen Funde*, Berlin 19--.

¹³ J. Cauvin, *Tell Mureibet*, see reference in footnote 1, pp. 45-47, Fig. p. 50.

¹⁴ As the majority of human and animal figurines were collected from the surface or from a level other than that in which they originated, the number of figurines found in their original layer is small and does not permit accurate statistics on the ratio from inhabited houses and temples. In regard to Tell al 'Abd, the small area in which the excavation was conducted did not uncover any complete buildings. Consequently, we do not know the exact identity of the buildings which were only partially excavated. However, it is worth noting that the Dutch archaeological expedition at Tell as-Salankaheyeh on the Euphrates (see footnote 5, above) excavated a number of female figurines above and beneath the floors of inhabited houses, while the German archaeological expedition at Tell Chuera discovered animal and human figurines in the temple and in some secular buildings. (See footnote above for the year 1960, p. 1, and what follows.)

¹⁵ *Op. cit.* number 2, pp. 53-54.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.* number 5, p. 148.

specific identity. It is conceivable that these figurines were likenesses of a deity who protected the home and its family inasmuch as they were buried beneath the floors of inhabited rooms. Others presume they were portrayals of priestesses of the temple or its prostitutes.

I am inclined to agree with Opificius' proposal that the figurines served a magical function as fertility symbols. In other words, they were related to popular hereditary beliefs rather than to an official worship which changed and developed with each succeeding period.

The Mother Goddess may have disappeared with the Neolithic as numerous gods with specialized functions took her place with the rise of the state. While the names and functions of male gods increasingly were connected with the state, it seems that the Mother Goddess did not disappear, but remained a symbol of fertility and propagation in the minds of the people. Over the course of millennia she was transformed into a domestic amulet, or more explicitly, a popular traditional amulet.

4. Mesopotamian or Syrian Types?

Barrelet¹⁷ notes that the majority of human figurines produced in Syria during the Middle Bronze Age portray nude women while only a few figurines represent men. This ratio fits our discoveries at Tell al 'Abd where the great majority of figurines are female. Indeed, the main levels (the second, third, and deep sounding) in which the figurines of Tell al 'Abd occur have radiocarbon dates corresponding to the end of the early dynastic period and the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, i.e., overlapping the periods of Akkad and of Ur III.

It is worth noting the differences between the characteristics of figurines from Tell al 'Abd and those of Mesopotamia for three periods. The figurines of the early dynastic period in Mesopotamia differ from the figurines of Tell al 'Abd in that the former are attached to pottery. That is to say, they are incised or executed in relief on vessels or appear as anthropomorphized spouts.¹⁸

If the form of the nude woman which is part of the handle of a pot discovered at Ur¹⁹ is related to Akkadian types, then other human forms may be distinguished by two mutilated hands taking the shape of bird wings.²⁰ Furthermore, the Akkadian figurines are distinguished from the figurines of Tell al 'Abd in that one hand rests on the chest or on the upper waist, the other hand at the side.²¹ Barrelet states²² that the Akkadian figurines of northern Mesopotamia differ in many decorative details from Akkadian figurines of central and southern Mesopotamia. This distinction matches the figurines of Tell al 'Abd, for example, in that many are embellished with decorative neckbands.

The figurines of Ur III can be distinguished from those of Tell al 'Abd by a number of details: violin-shaped torsos, mutilated hands, and legs indicated by a vertical incision from the lower part of the abdomen to the base of the statue. The lower portion of Ur figurines tend to have a tapering silhouette.²³ Contrary to these differences with Akkadian and Ur III figurines, a definite similarity is evident among the figurines of Tell al 'Abd and those excavated in the region of the Euphrates Dam as well as those of Tell Chuera (in the northernmost part of Mesopotamia) and those of Hama and al 'Amuq to the west of the Euphrates.

It seems appropriate, therefore, to consider with some reservations a Western School—if not to say Syrian School—which stands apart for its characteristics from the pure Mesopotamian School of the same historical period.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 76.

¹⁸ Barrelet, *op. cit.*, p. 61 ff.

¹⁹ Barrelet, *op. cit.*, Fig. 30, p. 66.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, Fig. 37-A.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

²² *Op. cit.*, p. 70, fn. 1.

²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 85, Figs. 42-43.

5. Animal Figurines

A small number of the animal figurines are complete, but for the largest part they are in an imperfect or mutilated state. The extensiveness of the breakage does not permit us to describe the animal group in a conclusive way. Nevertheless, we are able to recognize, albeit tentatively, the bull, the sheep, the goat, and the dog. The bull is identified by virtue of long or bent horns and a long tail either separated from or attached to the rump; the ram is recognized by its horns curved like a snail. We are unable, however, to distinguish between the goat and the dog (both have upright tails), just as it is difficult in many cases to discern the bull from the sheep except when the short fat tail and fat back haunches of the sheep are depicted. Although we were unable to calculate exact numbers for each of these animals, it is obvious that the bulls and sheep account for the great majority. Concerning the animal which may be either a dog or a goat, I am inclined to call it a dog for reasons to be discussed below. The remainder of animal heads remain anonymous because of the craftsman's failure to indicate the details of the nose and mouth in all but a few exceptions in which the eyes are indicated by two holes or two attached disks.

The specific characteristics of animal figurines and fragments are classified by their catalog numbers in the following:

Field Numbers	Characteristics
8, 13, 22, 47, 77, 128, 169, 191, 265, 283, 366	Eyes indicated by hole or attached disk
6, 8, 12, 13, 29, 31, 77, 83, 148, 265, 268, 270	Cone-shaped face (perhaps a sheep)
47, 92, 128, 149, 190, 191, 268	Elongated face (perhaps a bull)
6, 13, 29, 83, 148, 149, 169, 190, 191, 268	Two long horns bent upward or toward the front (perhaps bull horns)
31, 47, 77	Two short horns
4, 5, 6, 7, 25, 30, 32, 53, 55, 68, 85, 87, 88, 94, 96, 101, 107, 149, 153, 201, 221, 242, 246, 249, 252, 264, 276, 361	Long legs
3, 7, 15, 19, 34, 37, 68, 69, 75, 84, 91, 110, 114, 116, 123, 211, 214, 217, 240, 243, 245, 248, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 264, 281, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363	Relatively long cylindrical torso (perhaps the torso of a bull)
4, 7, 9, 14, 25, 28, 32, 33, 56, 74, 82, 85, 87, 88, 101, 102, 107, 112, 113, 143, 151, 153, 201, 212, 222, 241, 244, 246, 247, 251, 252, 260, 274, 275, 277, 282, 364	Short, condensed torso
3, 5, 28, 55, 96, 97, 105, 149, 151, 194, 241, 242, 250, 251, 260	Long neck
31, 77, 111, 191, 193, 217	Ears, mouth or other details indicated

All figurines with the exception of 101
and 102

Attached tail

87, 112

Tail pointing upward

Animal figurines numbered 55, 69, 73, 75, 77, 99, 92, 101, 102, 105, 221, 217, 190, 149, 110, 115, and 97 from Tell al 'Abd resemble animal figurines numbered 2733/29, 2331/8, 2733/6, 2733/7, 2733/35, 2733/14 (photo-catalog 1973) from Tell Mabaqat.

Tell al 'Abd figurines numbered 55, 69, 75, 76, 88, 91, 92, 96, 105, 148, 217, 190, 149, 110, 111, 113, 143, 182, and 97 resemble Tell as-Salankaheyeh figurines numbered 22, 151, 262, 124, 21, 304, 535, 77, 258, and 51 (photo-catalog 1972). Tell al 'Abd figurines numbered 76, 88, 101, 102, 148, 214, 107, and 111 resemble those from the plain of al 'Amuq (see footnote 7 above) figure 237, numbers 2, 9, and 10, and figure 289, numbers 2 and 4.

Animal figurines numbered 55, 56, 60, 73, 76, 78, 96, 105, 116, and 182 from Tell al 'Abd resemble some animal figurines from Hama.²⁴ Tell al 'Abd figurines numbered 88, 92, 222, 107 and 182 resemble animal figurines from Tell Mardikh.²⁵ Tell al 'Abd figurine number 191 resembles an animal figurine from Tell Bersib ²⁶ and number 111 from Tell al 'Abd resembles an animal figurine from Apamea.²⁷

6. The Function of Animal Figurines

As mentioned before, the imperfect condition of most of the animal figurines does not allow us to precisely identify the type of each represented animal. Nonetheless, we are able to distinguish three animals: the bull, the sheep, and the dog (or goat). The bull and sheep constitute the great majority of figurines; whereas the dog (or goat) accounts for a small percentage. The three groups are domestic animals, thereby reflecting the realities of socio-economic life at Tell al 'Abd. It is possible to deduce from this material that subsistence was based on agriculture (favoring the keeping of cows) and on herding (favoring the raising of sheep). In other words, the economy relied simultaneously upon sedentary agriculture and upon semi-nomadic pastoralism.

As for the third animal with upward pointed tail, I am inclined to consider it a dog by reason of the dog's connection with sheep in a guarding capacity. I reject the goat because this animal was found in the mountains more than in the plains and secondly because it is a serious enemy of the cultivation of wheat and barley which was the basis of agriculture on the Euphrates.

Mindful of the plethora of animal figurines produced by craftsmen, we cannot keep from wondering what function they performed in the lives of the people at that time.

Barrelet ²⁸ states that in most cases the animal sculptures exhibit mystical qualities that make them more than simple copies of actual animals. This applies to all groups of animals except horses. It is possible to interpret domestic animals ²⁹ as a holy flock for the temple, or to see one of them, the ewe for example, as the epitome of the worshipped god or goddess.

It is difficult to determine the function of the animal form it is was neither part of a shrine nor accompanied by emblems. The same questions asked about the female figurines must be applied to the animal sculptures: did they belong to the official pantheon or were they part of the popular faith in magic? were they idols of the temple or amulets of the home?

²⁴ H. Ingholt, *Rapport Preliminaire sur sept campagnes, de fouilles a Hama en Syrie*, Kobenhavn, 1940, p. I XII, no. 2. Also see E. Fugmann, *Hama, Fouilles et Recherches de la Fondation Carlsberg. Nationalmussets Skrifter*, Kobenhavn, 1958, Fig. 64, no. 3-D/484, 495 et Fig. 74, no. 3-C/597.

²⁵ *Missione Archeologica Italiana in Syria. Rapporto preliminare*, Rome, 1965, Pl. 45, no. 5, 6 et 8.

²⁶ F. Thureau Dangin and M. Dunand, *Tell Barsib*, Paris 1936, pl. 24, Fig. 16.

²⁷ J. and J. Ch. Balty, eds., *Colloque Apamée de Syria*, Bruxelles 1972, Pl. XII, Fig. 2.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 300.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 300.

7. The Carts

We do not have a complete cart, but only fragments of wheels (their number totaling 16) or cart bodies (their number totaling 8). The characteristics of each are classified as follows:

The Wheels

Field Numbers	Characteristics
46, 57, 61, 95, 103, 181, 288, 289, 293	Hand-made wheel crudely produced, its axis embossed
65, 119, 122, 146, 286, 287, 290, 291, 292, 294	Hand-made wheel, smooth surfaced, skillfully produced, its axis smooth with little distortion at the sides.

Carts Bodies of Various Sizes

Field Numbers	Characteristics
299	Body with embossed center
296, 298	Body constructed of two parts

Tell al 'Abd wheels numbered 57, 146, 61 and 95 resemble wheels numbered 154, 146, 285, 32, 129, 254, and 319 from Tell as-Salankaheyeh (photo-catalog 1972), wheels numbered 4/2331, 16/2733, and 39/2733 from Tell Mumbaqt (photo-catalog 1973), wheels numbered D-492/3 and M-817/3 from Hama (see footnote 16, Fig. 64), wheels numbered 45 and 166 from Tell Habuba Kabira (photo-catalog 1969), and a wheel from Tell Chuera (see footnote 6, 1960, Fig. 8).

Although the fragmentary state of the carts from Tell al 'Abd does not permit us to envision exactly the overall cart, we nevertheless notice the majority of cart bodies have two side holes, indicating the carts possessed only two wheels.

Most scholars agree that the function of the cart was related to worship, but they do not define the precise role it played in the act of worship. Barrelet mentions a cart from Khafajeh, Iraq,³⁰ containing two vessels, a cup, and attached animal figurines. Barrelet agrees with H. Frankfort's proposal³¹ that the cart was a liturgical instrument used to present a god with olive oil and water. The two vessels were the receptacles of oil and water, the cup between them was used to mix the liquids. Consecrated rituals for oil and water perhaps also pertained to grain. If this hypothesis which Barrelet suggests is correct, it still does not hold true for most of the carts from various regions because they do not contain any objects in their bodies.

In conclusion, the whole subject of figurines and their place within the contemporary culture calls for an in-depth study in which archaeologists are joined by linguists, historians, and anthropologists.

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 64, illustration 28.

³¹ Barrelet, *op. cit.*, p. 64, n. 3.

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