

PREFACE

This publication is a result of archaeological excavations at Tell Arbid, a site in north-eastern Syria. The Tell Arbid excavations were launched in 1996 by the Polish-Syrian Archaeological Mission headed by Piotr Bieliński (University of Warsaw). The archaeological excavations at Tell Arbid would not have been possible without the collaboration and support of the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums in Damascus, headed at the time of the Polish-Syrian Archaeological Mission at Tell Arbid by Sultan Muhhesen, Bassam Jammous and Michel al-Maqdissi.

The publication presents the research results from one of the regions of Tell Arbid: Area D, where a housing district dated to the late EJZ 2-EJZ 3 was uncovered. Due to the fact that the archaeological research was interrupted by the war in Syria, the Area D project could not be completed either, with the results of some studies presented in this publication being preliminary out of necessity.

The micro-history of Area D has been presented in the macro-historical perspective of the Syrian Jezirah. The archaeological research on Area D provided new data for one of the key moments in the development of the Syrian Jezirah (EJZ 2-EJZ 3): a period of socio-economic transformations and an increase in the size and complexity of sites.

The house and its inhabitants are one of the focal points of this publication. The Area D research was a unique opportunity to discover various aspects of how people lived in a medium-sized town, as that is what Tell Arbid was in the late EJZ 2-EJZ 3. The house, its inhabitants and their daily life are the key in understanding the past societies. The exploration of a house in its architectural form and of a household as a socio-economic unit comprised a study of architecture, artefacts and domestic features, along with the social and economic organization. The analysis of faunal and botanical remains was also applied in order to reconstruct the subsistence practices of the Area D people. A classification of Area D pottery provided a better understanding of the changes which took place in the Syrian Jezirah in the late EJZ 2-EJZ 3.

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