

KARIN BARTL – ABD AL-RAZZAQ MOAZ (EDS.)

RESIDENCES, CASTLES, SETTLEMENTS
TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES FROM LATE ANTIQUITY
TO EARLY ISLAM IN BILAD AL-SHAM

DEUTSCHES ARCHÄOLOGISCHES INSTITUT
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KARIN BARTL – ABD AL-RAZZAQ MOAZ (EDS.)

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Proceedings of the International Conference
held at Damascus, 5-9 November 2006

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Transformation Processes between Late Antiquity and Early Islam in Bilad al-Sham

Proceedings of the International Conference held at Damascus, 2006

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Contents

<i>Bassam Jamous</i> Preface	XI
<i>Abd al-Razzaq Moaz</i> Preface	XIII
<i>Karin Bartl</i> Preface	XV
<i>Oleg Grabar</i> Umayyad Art: Late Antique or Early Islamic?	1
<i>Nasser Rabbat</i> Umayyad Architecture: A Spectacular Intra-Cultural Synthesis in Bilad al-Sham	13
<i>Tilo Ulbert</i> 50 Jahre Forschungen in Resafa/Sergiupolis. Struktur und Kontinuität	19
<i>Dorothee Sack</i> Resafa – Sergiupolis/Rusafat Hisham – neue Forschungsansätze	31
<i>Gérard Charpentier – Maamoun Abdulkarim</i> Une première campagne d'étude sur la mosquée d'al-Bara	45
<i>Christine Strube</i> Al Andarin/Androna: Site and Setting	57
<i>Marlia Mango</i> Baths, reservoirs and water use at Androna in late antiquity and the early Islamic period	73
<i>Michał Gawlikowski</i> Palmyra in the Early Islamic Times	89
<i>Claudia Bührig</i> Gadara/Jadar/Umm Qays. Continuity and change of urban structures from a Hellenistic hilltop site to an Umayyad scattered settlement	97

Ian Simpson

Market Buildings at Jerash: Commercial Transformations at the
Tetrakonion in the 6th to 9th c. C.E. 115

Denis Genequand

Trois sites omeyyades de Jordanie centrale:
Umm al-Walid, Khan al-Zabib et Qasr al-Mshatta 125

Ignacio Arce

Hallabat: *Castellum*, *Coenobium*, *Praetorium*, *Qaşr*.
The Construction of a Palatine Architecture under the Umayyads (I) 153

Ignacio Arce

The Palatine City at Amman Citadel.
The Construction of a Palatine Architecture under the Umayyads (II) 183

Alison McQuitty

Khirbat Faris: a rural settlement on the Karak Plateau during the
Late Antique – Early Islamic transition 217

Barbara Finster

‘Anjar: spätantik oder frühislamisch? 229

Alastair Northedge

The Umayyad Desert Castles and Pre-Islamic Arabia 243

Denis Genequand

The New Urban Settlement at Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqi:
Components and Development in the Early Islamic Period 261

Dina Bakour

The Animal Sculptures at the Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi 287

Muna Mu‘azzin

Safaitic Inscriptions from Jabal Says in the Damascus National Museum 301

Franziska Bloch

Jabal Says – from frontier protecting *Castrum* to cross-frontier *Qaşr*? 309

Michael C. A. Macdonald

Transformation and Continuity at al-Namāra:
Camps, Settlements, Forts, and Tombs 317

Hussein Zeinaddin

Die Inschriften von al-Namara 333

<i>Solange Ory</i> La graphie des inscriptions arabes avant l'islam et à l'époque umayyade	339
<i>Marie-Odile Rousset</i> Hadir, Hadir-Qinnasrin, Qinnasrin, que sait-on de la capitale de la Syrie du Nord au début de l'islam?	357
<i>Thomas F. Leisten</i> For Prince and Country(side) – the Marwanid Mansion at Balis on the Euphrates	377
<i>Claus-Peter Haase</i> Public and domestic architecture – the case of Madinat al-Far/Hisn Maslama	395
<i>Ulrike Siegel</i> Al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqā – die Grundrisskonzeption der frühabbasidischen Residenzbauten	403
<i>Christoph Konrad</i> Raqqā – Architectural Decoration of the Abbasid Residences	413
<i>Jan-Waalke Meyer</i> Die deutsch-syrischen Ausgrabungen in Kharab Sayyar/Nordostsyrien	419
<i>Michaela Konrad</i> Roman Military Fortifications along the Eastern Desert Frontier: Settlement Continuities and Change in North Syria, 4 th –8 th centuries A.D.	433
<i>Markus Gschwind – Haytham Hasan</i> Tall al-Rum. A Late Roman to Early Islamic settlement on the river Euphrates	455
<i>Ghazwan Yaghi</i> Copper Coins minted in Damascus in the First- and Second Century <i>Hijra</i>	473
<i>Stefan Heidemann</i> Settlement Patterns, Economic Development and Archaeological Coin Finds in Bilad al-Sham: the Case of the Diyar Mudar	493
<i>Karin Bartl</i> Settlements in Antiquity and the Islamic Periods: The Plain of Akkar and the Middle Orontes region	517
List of Contributors	539

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Editorial note

Where transliterated Arabic texts or words are cited, the system of transliteration specified in the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies has been followed throughout. This is meant to be understood as a compromise between the competing constraints of simplicity and scholarly rigour. The exceptions to this general rule are few.

Franziska Bloch

Transformation and continuity at al-Namāra: Camps, settlements, forts, and tombs

Michael C. A. Macdonald

1 A DESCRIPTION OF AL-NAMĀRA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The Wādī al-Shām and the Wādī al-Gharz are the two major seasonal water courses which drain the eastern slopes of Jabal al-‘Arab (Fig. 1). They are joined by numerous smaller wadis as they run north-eastwards through the *ḥarra* (or basalt desert) to the alluvial plain of the Ruḥba. Al-Namāra lies at the point where the Wādī al-Shām is joined by a smaller wadi ‘flowing’ from the south. The gorges through which both wadis have flowed, now spread out into a small basin, framed by the high wadi banks, of approximately 800 m east-west x 400 m north-south, in the centre of which there is an ‘island’ rising above the wadi-bed (Fig. 2).

Downstream of the island, the combined wadis run northwards into a wide plain (Fig. 3) some 10 km north-south and between 0.5 and 2 km east-west. This is known as Ishbikket en-Namāra, a name indicating a network of wells and other water-sources. At the northern end of this plain, the wadi banks converge and it is at this point that the barrage of a modern dam was built in the early 1990s. Beyond the barrage, the wadi continues its north-eastwards course until it debouches into the rich alluvial plain of the Ruḥba.

The Wādī al-Shām, in the area of al-Namāra, must always have been extremely fertile. There are still many *ghudrān*, or stretches of wadi where water remains long after the flash floods, and, in the days before the dam was created, the *sayl* (or seasonal flash flood) would have flowed through numerous meanders in the wide plain of Ishbikket en-Namāra, and the water would have remained in these after the flood had lost its force. There are also a number of wells in the section of the wadi north of the barrage, and the Ruḥba – a large area of winter and spring pasture – is not far away. Thus, this must always have been a favourite camping ground for the nomads of the region, as well as a place which, with relatively small modifi-

cations, could be made to support a small permanent population.

We know from the Safaitic inscriptions that the name ‘Namāra’ dates from at least the Roman period¹, and that it was a favourite watering-place for the nomads who carved these graffiti. These nomads believed there was a goddess, ‘*lt h-nmrt*, who guarded the place², and an echo of this belief seems still to have been present in the mid-nineteenth century. Cyril C. Graham – the first western traveller to visit the site – was told that the mediaeval mausoleum on the island (Fig. 4), which, at that time, was adorned with many rags and cloths, had been “the residence at some remote period of a lady who bore the gentle name of ‘Nimreh bint en-Nimūr’ (Pantheress daughter of Panthers)”³.

Such beliefs are understandable, since al-Namāra must always have been a vital *maḥḍar*, or place of permanent water where each year the nomads gather towards the end of the summer to await the first rains. Another such *maḥḍar* is at Jabal Says, and this also had its tutelary goddess in

¹ In the Safaitic inscriptions, it is called *h-nmrt*, in which the *h-* is the definite article, and thus the name is parallel to modern al-Namāra. Many of the inscriptions mention that their authors watered there, or camped there during the dry season because of its permanent water (*ḥḍr*, see Macdonald 1992, 29 and 39, n. 62). One author even dates his text to the year he escaped from “Namārat of the government” (*nmrt h-sltn*, Littmann 1943, no. 540), presumably referring to the Roman military presence there.

² See Macdonald *et al.* 1996, 466.

³ Graham 1858, 240. Seventy years later, little seems to have changed, see Stoeber – Norris 1930, 26. In fact, the name almost certainly has nothing to do with Arabic *nimr* “panther”, but is probably related to Arabic *namir* “pure, healthy” (of water), as was recognized by Wetzstein (1860, 35–36), and cf. Sabaic *nmr* “part of the structure of a dam” (Beeston *et al.* 1982, 97). Note, however, that von Oppenheim (1899, 224) was told that it was “das Grabgebäude eines alten Beduinenschēchs, welcher sich angeblich Nemār nannte und der von den Arabern geschaffene Heros Eponymos des Ortes ist.”

pre-Islamic times⁴. At various periods the natural qualities of al-Namāra have been enhanced by human engineering, the ruins of which still partially function, even though they are now overshadowed by the large modern dam.

It was the sight of the destructive effects on the ancient site caused by the extraction of ballast in building this dam which led me to propose to the DGAM an archaeological and epigraphic rescue survey at al-Namāra. The DGAM immediately arranged with the appropriate Ministry to halt the extraction, and kindly agreed to the Rescue Survey. This began in the autumn of 1996, with Hasan Hatoum, Frank Braemer and Jean-Claude Échallier taking on the archaeological work, and Hussein Zeinaddin and myself the epigraphic. Hussein Zeinaddin's paper on the epigraphic survey will be found elsewhere in this volume. I was asked to discuss the archaeological remains at al-Namāra within the context of the subject of this conference. In order to do so, I have naturally had to rely very heavily on the material in Frank Braemer and Jean-Claude Échallier's Interim Report⁵ and have used many of their photographs. I am most grateful to them for kindly allowing me to use these materials in this paper and, naturally, they are in no way responsible for any misuse I have made of their data and conclusions.

Al-Namāra is remarkable for the extent, density, and variety of occupation at and around the site. This is unusual in the middle of the *ḥarra* east of Jabal al-ʿArab. I will describe each of the different forms of occupation and conclude with some tentative interpretations.

2 CAMPSITES

2.1 CAMPSITES OF NOMADS

These, no doubt, are from many different periods, and are scattered over the plateaux above the wadi and on the wadi banks (Fig. 5). Many of them have been reused over and over again and the remains are very confused. They consist not only of areas cleared of stones, where the tents would have been pitched, but of small structures of various sorts for the storage of equipment and the shelter or isolation of individual animals overnight, as well as larger enclosures for the herds. Alas, no dating evidence for any of these campsites could be discovered.

2.2 U-SHAPED CAMPSITES

However, there are also campsites of a different sort (Fig. 6). On the western and eastern plateaux

above the wadi there are several hundred uniform structures, each consisting of a U-shaped wall about 60 cms high enclosing an area of approximately 6 m x 7 m which has been cleared of stones. Each one is separate but they are spaced at regular intervals with their open sides facing larger areas cleared of stones. Among these structures, and on the fields which I shall describe in a moment, a systematic search revealed pottery only of the Roman and Byzantine periods. I shall return later to a suggested interpretation of these structures.

3 FIELDS

Many, if not all, the large areas cleared of stones, appear to have been fields. Some 300 m west of the Wādī al-Shām, there is, for instance, a field approximately 500 m long by 150 m wide. This has been cleared of stones which have been used to form walls marking the long sides, as well as a dividing wall in the middle (Fig. 7 a). There is a drainage channel in the lower part of the field. We know that the stones were cleared a considerable time ago, because much of the earth has subsequently blown away, revealing the underlying stones. In other cases, fields have been stripped of stones and these have been used to form demarcation walls, but have also been left in piles within the fields (Fig. 7 b). In addition, there are channels bringing water to the fields often from more than a kilometre away, see 4.1 below. There are bands of such fields side by side over an area of approximately 3.25 hectares, often with fairly sophisticated arrangements for irrigation. Field and irrigation systems of this sort are rare in the *ḥarra*, the only other one so far known being a single field 3 km to the north of al-Namāra on the left bank of Wādī al-Shām.

4 HYDROLOGICAL WORKS

4.1 IRRIGATION CHANNELS

There are extensive hydrological installations at al-Namāra. The fields would have been watered

⁴ See Macdonald *et al.* 1996, 466.

⁵ The initial phase of the Archaeological Section of the 'Namārah Rescue Survey' was completed in 1996, and in 1998 an Interim Report on it was produced on CDROM entitled "Projet de sauvetage archéologique et épigraphique sur le site de al-Namara, Syrie", by F. Braemer and J.-C. Échallier. Copies of the CDROM were deposited in the libraries of the French and German Institutes in Damascus and the British Institute in Amman, as well as the Sackler Library, Oxford, and the Centre de Recherches Archéologiques, Valbonne, France. The first season of the Epigraphic Section of the survey took place in 1996, and further seasons are planned.

by the winter rains in a good year but were also irrigated by water channelled from dams in the Wādī al-Shām, when it was in flood. One of these (Fig. 8) is more than 2.5 km long and irrigates a band of fields 100 m wide. A smaller, secondary channel catches any run-off rain-water from the fields.

4.2 DAMS AND WELLS

A second group of hydrological works was intended to arrest the flow of water during the flash-floods long enough for a considerable amount to sink into the ground and enrich the aquifer. This required a basin where the water could stand for some time to allow it to seep down through the earth (Fig. 9). During the *sayl*, the flow of water in Wādī al-Shām is too strong for such a basin to be located in its bed, and it was therefore placed in the tributary wadi, not far from the south-eastern end of the island. However, in order not to lose the water in the Wādī al-Shām, two dams were created at approximately 2 kms and 1 km upstream of the island, with the aim of raising the level of the water trapped behind the dams to the height of channels which then led it some 800 m to the basin in the smaller wadi, south-east of the island. Although the basin seems to have been relatively small (approx. 0.25 km² in area, and of an unknown depth) this would probably have been sufficient in a normal year to provide perennial water in the wells dug a little way to the north⁶ (Fig. 10). Five of these were identified, with diameters up to 5 m, though there may well have been more, since all those identified had been partially destroyed. Fortunately, the bulldozers destroyed only half of the largest well (Fig. 10), and enough remains to see its construction.

4.3 ACCESS TO THE LARGEST WELL

There is a well-protected access-route from the top of the island leading to this well (Fig. 11). It runs in a straight line between two carefully constructed walls for a length of 185 m with a width which varies between 6.5 and 7 m. The walls are still at a height of 1.75 m at the gateway where it meets the wall enclosing the top of the island.

5 THE ISLAND

5.1 THE MEDIAEVAL MAUSOLEUM

The summit of the island contains the heart of the settlement at al-Namāra. Nowadays, it is full

of Bedouin tombs constructed from the rubble of earlier structures together with an enclosure of uncertain date (Fig. 12 h). The most striking feature is the mausoleum (Fig. 4, Fig. 12 g), constructed on part of the site of the Roman fort (Fig. 12 a) and incorporating some of its features, notably the Greek inscription and, presumably, the stone doors. A second lintel, uninscribed but with identical holes for the door sockets, was found among the rubble north-west of the fort. Although the supports for two arches survive inside the mausoleum, the roof and the upper parts of the walls have unfortunately collapsed obscuring any burial or cenotaph which the building may have contained. On the western and southern slopes of the island is another wall of uncertain age and purpose (Fig. 12 f).

5.2 THE ROMAN FORT

The plan of the Roman fort can still be discerned (Fig. 12 a). It forms a trapeze, 44 m long, 16 m wide at the northern end and 34 m at the southern. It thus covers approximately 1300 m² or roughly a third of the available space, and it occupies the whole of the southern end of the top of the island. The walls of the fort vary in thickness between 1 m and 2.5 m and its only entrance, which incorporates a chicane, is on the east side facing the gate leading to the passage to the well, nowadays obscured by the mausoleum (Fig. 12 g). At the south-western corner of the fort there is a tower 4 x 4 m square (Fig. 12 b).

5.3 THE ENCLOSURE WALL

The summit of the island was enclosed by a wall (Fig. 12 d) which incorporated the walls of the fort. It is impossible to establish its original height, but its width varies from 1.5 m to 2.8 m. The relationship of this enclosure wall to the walls of the fort shows that they must be contemporary. As well as the gate leading to the ramp down to the well (Fig. 12 c), there is, on the north-western side, a small doorway, 1 m wide (Fig. 12 e).

⁶ W.H. Waddington notes in his journal for Saturday, 12th April 1862, that the area around the island was the "seul endroit où il y a de l'eau toute l'année" (Chabot 1939, 366), see also Waddington 1870, 522. Wetzstein (1860, 35) describes it as "die einzige niemals versiegende Quelle in jenen weiten vulkanischen Gegenden."

5.4 THE POTTERY⁷

The pottery collected within the walls of the fort dates for the most part to the third and fourth centuries AD, a date which ties in well with the date of the unfinished Greek inscription re-used in the mausoleum, see below. However, there were a few sherds which could be dated to the first or second centuries AD and which might point to an earlier occupation of which no architectural traces remain. Outside the walls of the fort, but within the enclosure wall around the summit, the sherds are almost entirely Islamic. A small number are Umayyad and perhaps early Abbasid – suggesting perhaps a reoccupation in the eighth century – and the rest are Ayyubid/Mamluk.

6 ROMAN INSCRIPTIONS

On the north and north-eastern slopes of the island, and on the wadi banks surrounding it, there are a number of Greek, Latin and Safaitic graffiti. Some of the Greek and Latin texts are explicitly by soldiers, and most of the others in these languages are probably of military origin as well. Some of them record the villages from which their authors came, and these are all in the Ḥawrān. So it may be that these men were chosen for their local geographical, social, and possibly linguistic, knowledge. The lintel with the unfinished Greek inscription (Fig. 13 a)⁸ mentioning Caracalla (reigned 198–217) or Elagabalus (reigned 218–222) presumably came from the Roman fort. There are also two Latin graffiti mentioning the III Legion Cyrenaica on the wadi banks⁹, and Waddington and de Vogüé copied a graffito recording the II Legion Parthica¹⁰. We have not yet rediscovered this last text and it may have been lost in the destruction of the early 1990s. There is also a Greek graffito by a *dromedarius*¹¹, as well, of course, as numerous Safaitic inscriptions on the wadi banks and beyond, on which see Hussein Zeinaddin's paper in this volume.

7 A ROMAN ROAD?

A number of travellers and scholars, including Poidebard, have reported clear traces of what they have taken to be a 'Roman' road running from north-east of al-Namāra to the Ruḥba¹². Thus Poidebard wrote,

on comprend que les Romains aient immédiatement songé à établir dans la plaine, à l'est du Djebel Druze et du Şafa, en avant de la frontière, une route-*limes* fortifiée. Cette première ligne tiendrait en surveillance et en

garde les riches pâturages de la Rouḥbé, les point d'eau du Djebel Seis et du Şafa, qui, avec leurs refuges de basalte voisins, pouvaient être un lieu de concentration pour les tribus nomades, tentées d'attaquer Damas ou de gêner les communications commerciales et militaires de Boşra à Palmyre. Ressources et avantages naturels de la contrée qui favorisaient, par ailleurs, l'établissement d'une route fortifiée Boşra-Salkhad-Nemāra-Qaşr el Abyaḍ-Djebel Seis-Palmyre¹³.

There is indeed a cleared track with a consistent width of between 12.60 and 12.80 m., delineated by low walls (made out of the stones cleared from the track), which runs some 20 km from Ishbikket en-Namāra to the Ruḥba (see Fig. 3). However, it does not appear to be part of any road system¹⁴ and there is unfortunately no indication that it is Roman – for instance it has no central line and no camber.

8 CEMETERIES

To the north of the island on the plateau above the wadi within a low enclosure wall are hundreds of single upright stones in regular rows approximately 1.75 to 2 m apart (Fig. 14). Unfortunately, none are inscribed, but they give the very strong impression of a grave-yard for a large number of people who had died at the same time, as, for instance, for those killed in a battle.

⁷ The Namārah Rescue Survey is most grateful to Pierre-Marie Blanc for identifying all the pottery collected by the Survey.

⁸ Cagnat – Lafaye 1906, no. 1255 = Waddington 1870, no. 2264.

⁹ One is Waddington 1870, no. 2281 (see Fig. 13 b), the other is new.

¹⁰ Waddington 1870, no. 2279.

¹¹ Cagnat – Lafaye 1906, no. 1259 = Waddington 1870, no. 2267. First correctly read as two inscriptions in Littmann *et al.* 1915, nos 746 and 747. See Fig. 13 c.

¹² It was first recorded by Graham (1858, 239, and marked on his map opposite p. 227), and de Vogüé – Waddington (Waddington 1870, 522), though none of these attribute it to the Romans. Wetzstein (1860, 35) seems to have been the first to call it "eine Römerstrasse", and was followed in this identification by von Oppenheim, 1899, 225–226.

¹³ Poidebard 1928, 118. The cleared tracks which he took to be Roman roads are shown on his map (1928, Pl. XL) and his aerial photograph of al-Namāra (1928, Pl. XLIV, 1). It should be noted that the 'cross-bar' of the "T, régulier et renversé" at the "Carrefour de Nemara", i.e. the southern end of the track is still visible (see Fig. 3) and is not a road, but appears to be the barrage of a dam or weir.

¹⁴ The track marked "vers Damas" on Poidebard's map (128, Pl. XL) is not visible on the ground nowadays, and neither is the extension of the road which he shows running through the Ruḥba.

9 THE TOMB OF MAR^o AL-QAYS

Due east of the island is a much grander tomb, though sadly in a very ruinous state (Fig. 15). This is the tomb of Mar^o al-Qays which was discovered by Dussaud and Macler in 1901¹⁵. The doorway was at the eastern end and on the lintel was the five-line epitaph of Mar^o al-Qays, written in the Arabic language using the Nabataean script. It is still one of the earliest and longest texts in pre-Islamic Arabic so far discovered. The inscription (now in the Louvre)¹⁶ is rightly famous, but the tomb has been strangely neglected. Despite the fact that it has been substantially plundered for building materials for the Bedouin tombs built up against it, the plan can still be discerned and it was possible to correct the dimensions given by Dussaud and Macler¹⁷. It was a square building with sides of 4.30 m, probably surmounted by a pyramidal roof, as Dussaud had speculated¹⁸. Two capitals are preserved, one with largely undamaged decoration on all four sides (Fig. 16)¹⁹.

10 CONCLUSIONS

Although a second archaeological season is planned and several more epigraphic campaigns will be needed to complete the survey, the work so far has suggested possible new answers to questions which have been debated since the early twentieth century.

The first is why the Romans should have garrisoned this particular place. Until this survey, the mausoleum on the island was generally thought to be the Roman fort²⁰, so this question was complicated by the tiny size of the structure which could not have accommodated more than a handful of men. We now know that the fort was of a size sufficient to accommodate at least 50 men. As noted above, theories that al-Namāra was on a network of Roman roads have not been borne out by the survey.

Nor does it seem very likely that the military post was intended to control, or even prevent, movement from the desert into the settled regions of the Ḥawrān. The fort at al-Namāra is far too isolated and too far out in the desert to do any such thing – anyone wishing to reach Jabal al-ʿArab could easily bypass al-Namāra and join the Wādī al-Shām further upstream, or follow the Wādī al-Gharz. Instead, I would suggest that the motives for placing a small fort here, as at Jabal Says, Burqu^c, Azraq, and probably Dayr al-Kahf, was to control these *mabādir*, or semi-permanent sources of water, on which the nomads relied during the dry season (*al-qayz*) after the pasture has dried up, and at which they gather to wait for the

October rains. Without such places, the nomads and their herds die. It was for exactly this reason that, in the 1930s and 1940s, Glubb Pasha placed similar small forts at the *mabādir* in Jordan and it was one of the key reasons for his success in bringing the Bedouin there more or less under government control.

Having made firm friends of all the nomadic tribes of Trans-Jordan, one step remained in order to make government control permanent. This was to build a fort on every permanent well. ... Four such forts were erected, at Azraq, Bair, Juffer and Rum. At Mudawara, we occupied an old fort built by the Turks. ... Our forts were not made to resist artillery, but might conceivably be attacked by a force of several thousand Ikhwan raiders from central Arabia. These men were often fearless and might try and climb the wall on one another's shoulders. We accordingly designed our forts to enclose an open space some twenty

¹⁵ Dussaud – Macler 1903, 26–27 [428–429] Pl. IV, 2. This is not Imru^o al-Qays ibn Huḡr, the famous pre-Islamic Arab poet of the sixth century, but Mar^o al-Qays ibn ʿAmr, of two centuries earlier, who was almost certainly the second king of the Lakhmid dynasty at al-Ḥira in southern Mesopotamia, see Shahīd 1984, 32–33.

¹⁶ Registration no. A.O. 4083. See most recently Bordreuil *et al.*

¹⁷ Dussaud – Macler 1903, 26 [428], “édifice rectangulaire (3 m. x 4 m. 40)”.

¹⁸ Dussaud – Macler 1903, 27 [429]. “Il est difficile de dire si cet édifice était surmonté d’une pyramide comme beaucoup de monuments similaires en Syrie.” I am most grateful to Denis Genequand for kindly supplying the following note on similar tombs. “Only one tomb with a pyramidal roof is known from the Ḥawrān and that is the tomb of Amrath/Ḥamrat in Suwaydah. It is no longer standing but was recorded by Bankes (see Sartre-Fauriat 2004, 96 [V G 7], 267) de Vogüé, Brünnow and Domaszewski, and others (see Dentzer-Feydy 1986, 263–265 and references there, and the reproduction of de Vogüé’s drawing on p. 264). The roof appears to have been in the form of a step-pyramid. Another, of roughly the same date i.e. first century B.C./A.D., in which the roof was a standard pyramid, was the tomb of Sampsigeramus recorded (as the “Cœnotaphe de Caius Caesar”) near Ḥoms by L. F. Cassas (1799, I, nos 21 and 22). In northern Syria, pyramid-roofed tombs are common in late antiquity, but elsewhere they are usually dated to the first century B.C./A.D.”

¹⁹ Dussaud – Macler published a drawing of one side of this, all that was visible from its position built into a modern Bedouin tomb (1903, Pl. II, 3 opposite p. 14 [416]).

²⁰ For example, de Vogüé 1865, 69 “les Romains avaient choisi ces deux points [Jabal Says and al-Namāra] pour y faire des établissements militaires; celui de Némara n’était qu’un poste de quelques hommes, qui n’offre aujourd’hui aucun intérêt architectural ...” see also de Vogüé 1868–1877, 146, and Stoeber – Norris 1930, 26. Heinz Gaube describes it as the Roman fort as planned it as such, though he expresses doubts as to whether it is in its original form (1974, 4–5 Abb. 2 and Taf. I). Note that what he marks as ‘North’ on this plan is actually East.

yards square [roughly 16.72 m²], surrounded by walls twelve feet high [3.65 m]. At diagonally opposite corners we built towers two storeys high, with loopholes to shoot in enfilade down the walls²¹.

It is interesting to note that the total area of each of Glubb's forts was less than 50 m², whereas the Roman fort at al-Namāra had an area of 1300 m². It would therefore have been able to accommodate the sizable body of men needed to guard a *maḥḍar* spread over approximately 25 km².

The second question, which has also been discussed for over a century, is why Mar^o al-Qays was buried at al-Namāra. When one visits al-Namāra, one realises that the square tomb with its pyramidal roof must have looked totally out of place in a landscape whose only features are the millions of basalt rocks littering the desert floor. The tomb, like the script of the epitaph, looks like an import from the settled interior of the Province, not a manifestation of desert society. If the tomb and the epitaph reflect Mar^o al-Qays' self-view, it is difficult to believe that he would have chosen to be buried in an empty plain a kilometre east of a *maḥḍar* and a Roman fort. However, what if he had been killed in battle here – presumably a battle he had lost since it is not mentioned in the

epitaph? The campsites mentioned above with their rows of almost identical tent clearances and protecting walls could have been military encampments, and the pottery collected among them would not exclude a date in the early fourth century. Similarly, the regular rows of hundreds of apparent grave stelae, might suggest that there had been a battle here, though only further exploration will reveal whether or not this is correct, and here, as yet, we have no dating evidence. If Mar^o al-Qays was killed in a battle here, he must surely have been on the same side as the Romans, since, if not, they would hardly have permitted his tomb to be built so close to their fort, and had the fort been abandoned by that time, it is surely more likely that the tomb would have been built in a prominent position on the top of the island.

All this, of course, is pure speculation based on disconnected fragments of evidence, though it is hoped that the coming seasons of the Survey may provide some more data. Discussions about the transformations at al-Namāra will continue for many years, but it is hoped that the Rescue Survey has at least provided a little more ammunition for all sides in the debate.

²¹ Glubb 1983, 104–105.

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Fig. 1 A satellite photograph showing al-Namārah in its geographical context.

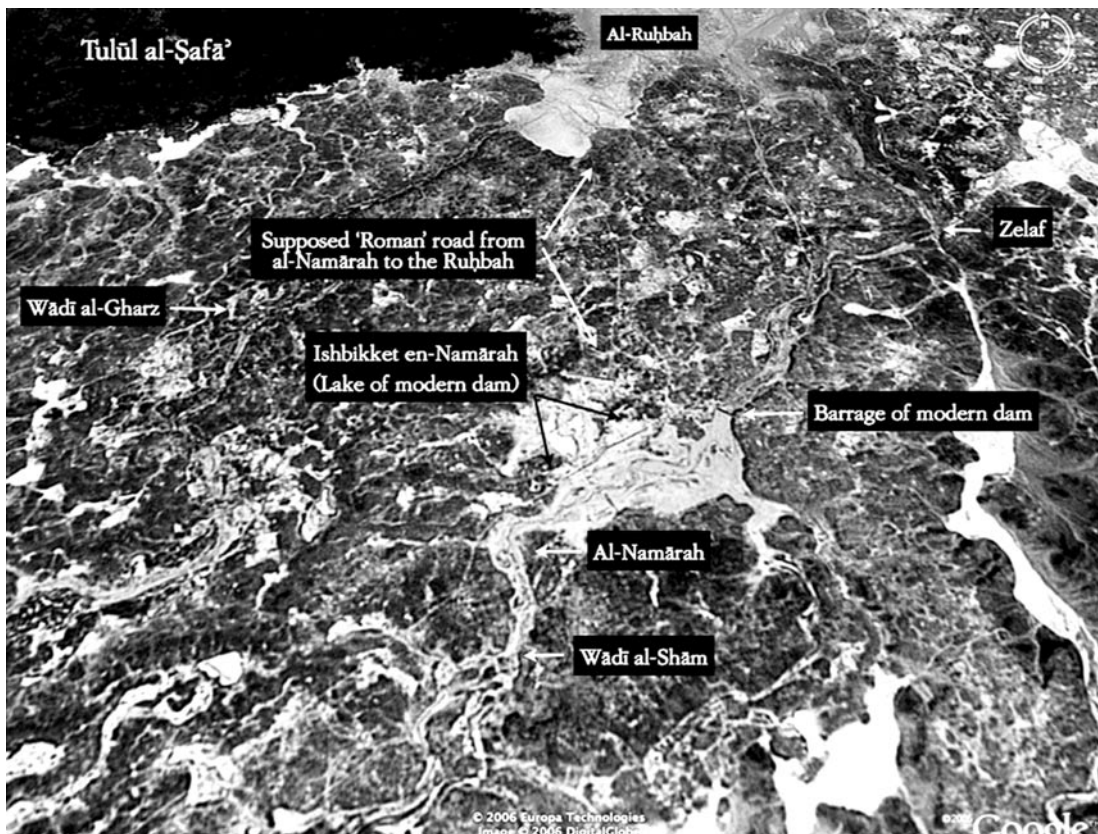


Fig. 3 A satellite photograph showing the area surrounding al-Namārah.



Fig. 2 The 'island' of al-Namāra in the basin formed by Wādī al-Shām and its tributary, looking west.



a



b



c

Fig. 4 The mediaeval mausoleum on the summit of the island at al-Namāra. – a: the east side showing the re-use of the stone doors and inscribed lintel from the Roman fort. – b: the south side with an arched entrance. – c: Detail of the arched entrance.



Fig. 5 A Bedouin campsite at al-Namāra.



a



b

Fig. 6 U-shaped campsites at al-Namāra.



a



b

Fig. 7 Fields at al-Namāra. – a: a field with a dividing wall. – b: a field with piles of stones within it.



Fig. 8 An irrigation channel more than 2.5 km long.



Fig. 9 A water-catchment basin south-east of the island.



Fig. 10 A Roman well in the bed of the small wadi east of the island, accessible via an enclosed ramp.



Fig. 11 The enclosed access route from the top of the island to the well shown on Fig. 10.

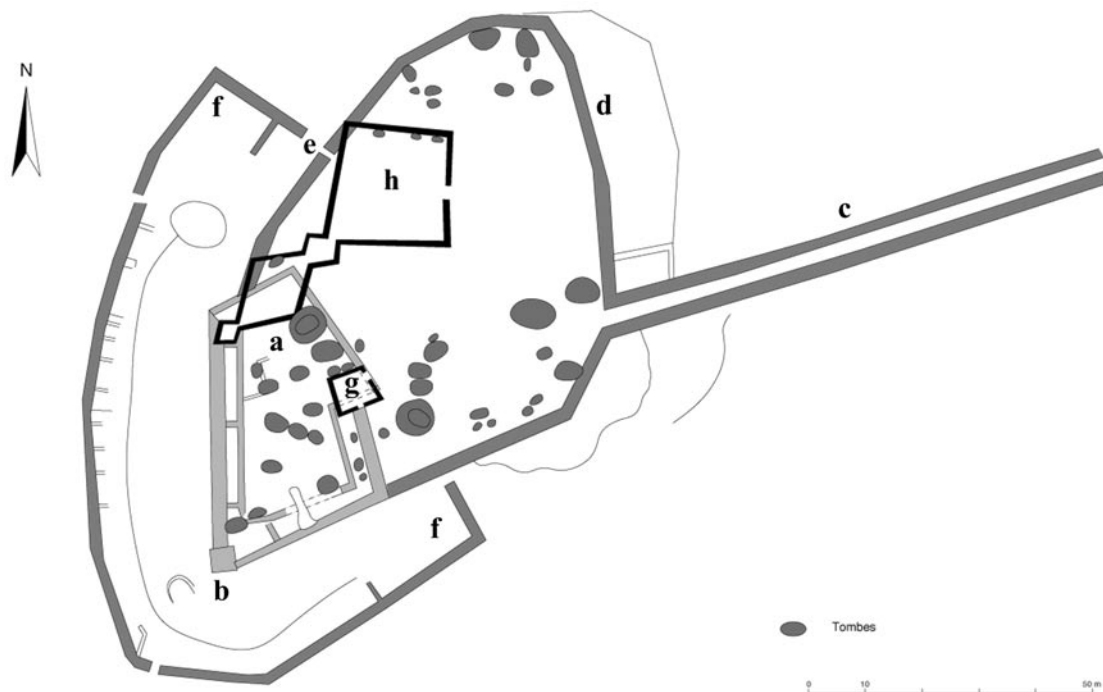
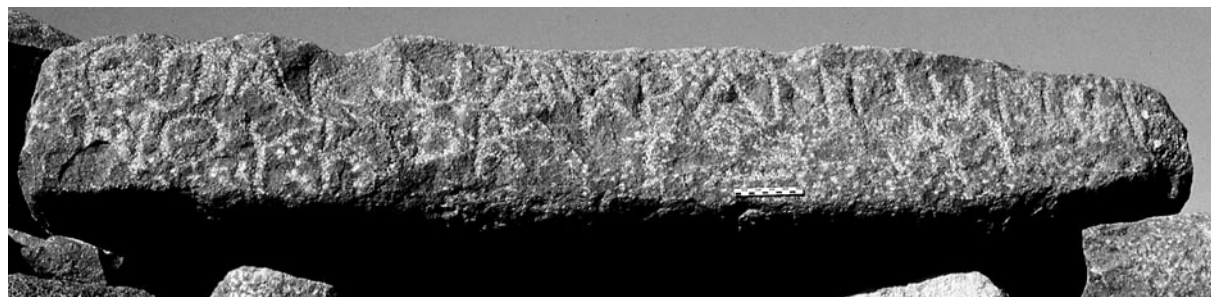


Fig. 12 A plan of the structures on the summit of the island. – a: Within the grey lines, the plan of the Roman fort. – b: The square tower at the southern end of the fort. – c: The enclosed ramp to the well(s). – d: The wall of uncertain age around the perimeter of the summit. – e: The small north-western opening in the perimeter wall. – f: An enclosure wall of uncertain age or purpose half way down the western and southern slopes of the island. – g: The mediaeval mausoleum. – h: A large enclosure of uncertain date.



a



b



c

Fig. 13 Roman inscriptions and graffiti on and around the island. – a: The Greek inscription reused as the lintel to the mausoleum. Cagnat/Lafaye 1906, no. 1255. – b: A Latin graffito of the *Leg[io] III Cyrsenaica*] (Waddington 1870, no. 2281). – c: A Greek graffito by a *dromedarius* (Litmann *et al.* 1915, no. 747).



Fig. 14 Rows of headstones in a necropolis on the plateau north of the island.



Fig. 15 The tomb of Mar^o al-Qays, near al-Namāra, looking east.



a



b



c



d



e

Fig. 16 Details of the capitals from the tomb of Mar' al-Qays. – a–d: The four sides of Capital A, running consecutively left-to-right. – e: Capital B with no surviving decoration.