

Landscape Study of Dar es-Salaam and the Basalt Region North-West of Homs, Syria. Report on work undertaken during 2005-2007

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Abstract

This paper reflects the two seasons of fieldwork undertaken in 2005 and 2006 by a small team in part of the Shin basalt region, or Wa'ar, as it is known locally, to the north-west of Homs. It builds upon initial work undertaken in the basalt region as part of the Settlement and Landscape of the Homs Region Project (SHR Project). The work is focussed on understanding the development of the deserted village variously known as Khirbet Deir Salam or more usually Dar es-Salaam ('House of Peace' or 'Place of Peace').

Keywords GIS, Graeco-Roman, landscape survey, rural settlement, Syria

Introduction

The last few decades have witnessed increased levels of interest and research into understanding the social and economic developments of rural communities of the Near East in antiquity, that is, from around the second century BC until the ninth century AD. Much of this work has been concentrated in two notable areas: the limestone hills (Massif Calcaire, or more popularly known in English as the 'Dead Cities') in the north of Syria and the basalt region of the Hauran, especially the Jebel al-'Arab, in present-day southern Syria and northern Jordan (Fig 1). Remains of buildings constructed of stone and standing up to four storeys high within apparently long-

abandoned villages have attracted the attention of European scholars since the mid-nineteenth century (Butler 1907-49; Tchalenko 1953-58; de Vogüé 1865). Research continues in these areas at an increasing pace and published work since these early days include for the limestone hills: Peña 1996, Sodini et al 1980, and Tate 1992; and for the Hauran: Bopp 2006, Clauss-Balty 2008, Dentzer 1985, Dentzer-Ferdy et al 2003, and de Vries 1998. Furthermore, a number of discussions have sought to present some of the major issues concerning the rural communities of the Classical and early Islamic periods (Eddé and Sodini 2005; Foss 1995, 1997; Gatier 1992, 2005; MacAdam 2002; Tate 1997; de Vries 2000; Walmsley 2007).

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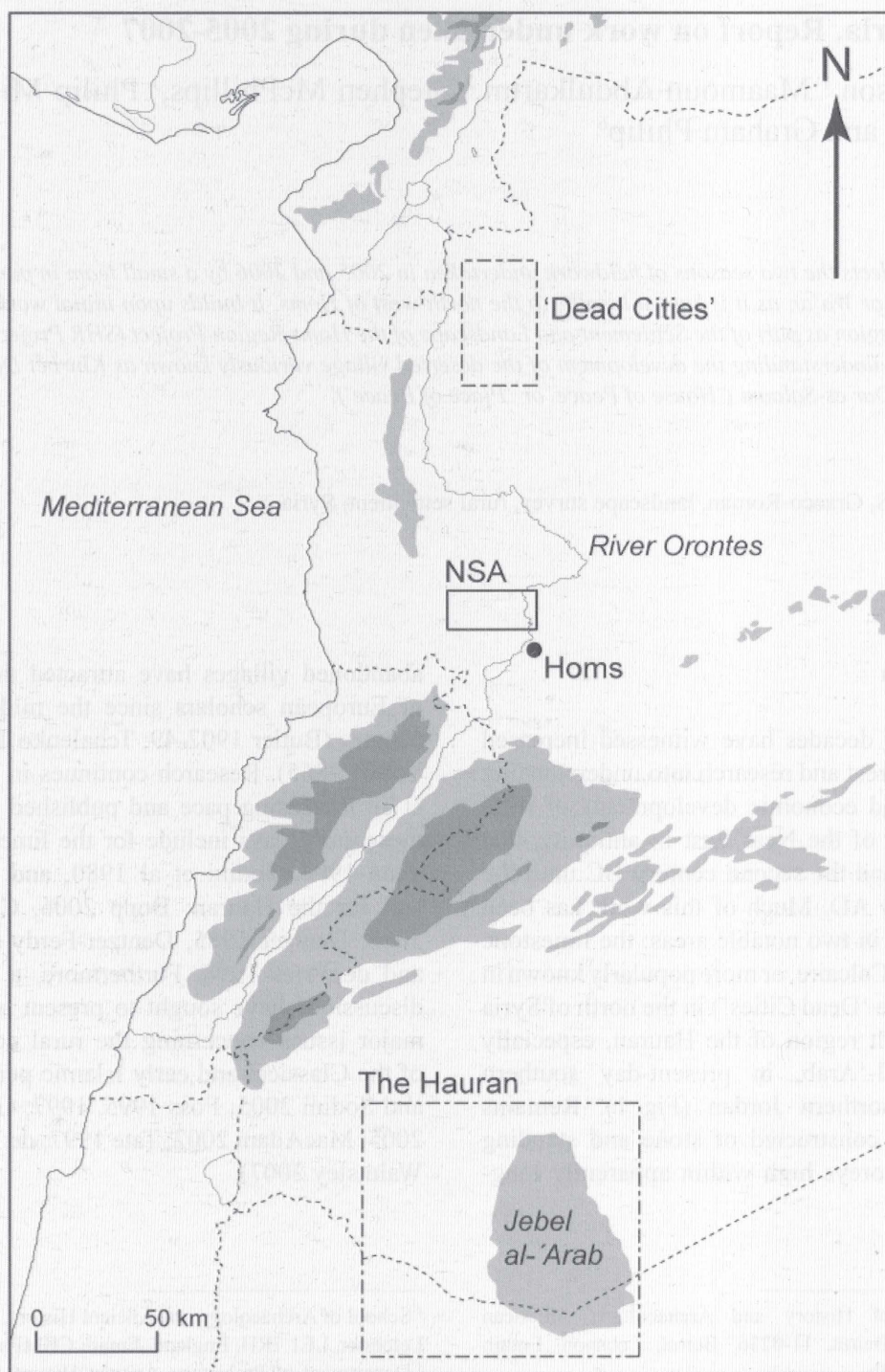


Figure 1 The location of the Wa'ar region and Northern Study Area (NSA) in relation to Homs.

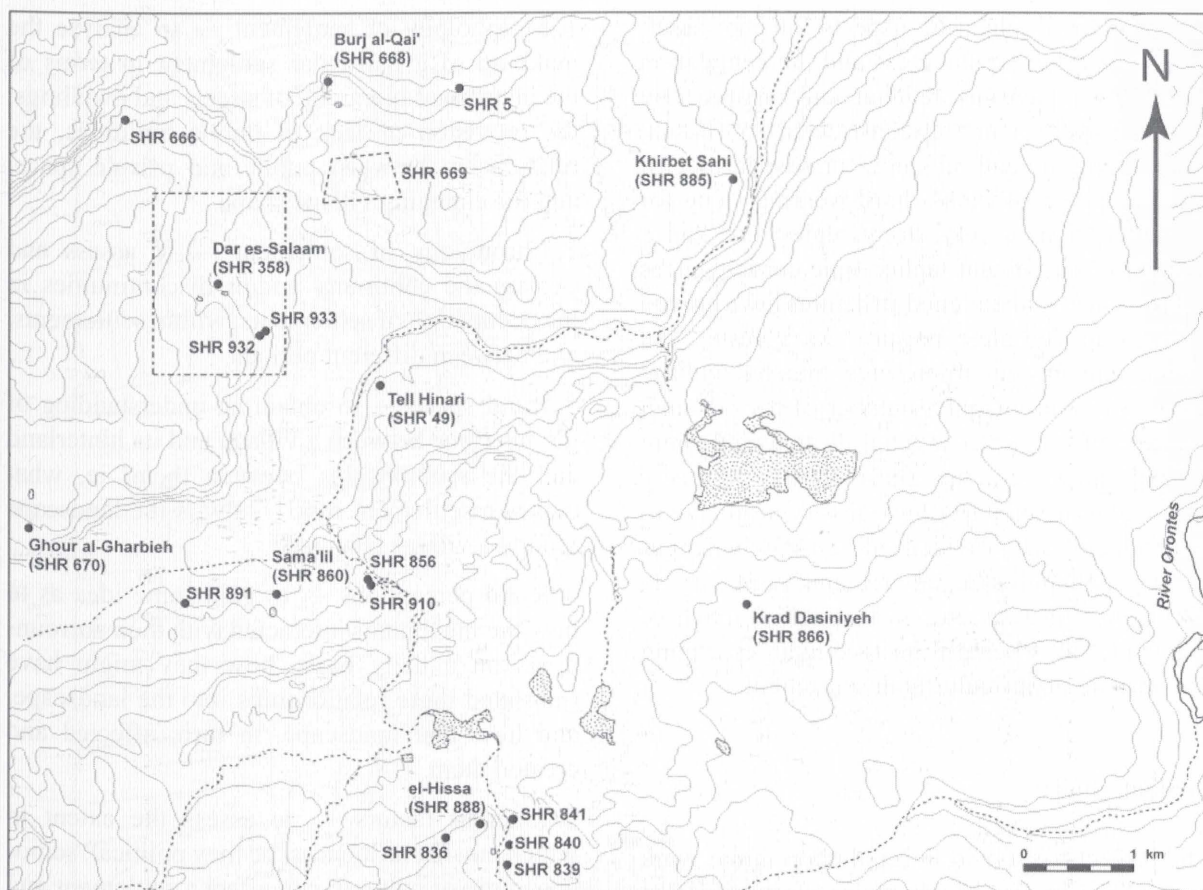


Figure 2 The main village sites of the Northern Study Area and sites mentioned in the text.

Whilst the evidence extracted from these areas has been fundamental to our understanding of the processes by which many villages and communities developed during this period, the study of these areas cannot be said to provide us with a complete assessment. This is because the two areas concerned have often been classed as marginal and peripheral to the main centres of population (Foss 1997: 198). Although survey work is at last being undertaken in many areas across Syria, very little has so far been attempted toward making an intensive study of a specified settlement outside the two traditional regions of research (recent surveys include: Bartl 1994, 1996; Haïdar-Boustani et al 2003-04; Jaubert and Geyer 2006; Wilkinson et al 2007).

In some respects a peripheral region itself, the Shin basalt region or, as it has traditionally been called, the Wa'ar (Bell 1908; Naaman 1951) to

the north-west of Homs can serve potentially both as a link between the Hauran and the limestone hills areas and as a contrast to them. Geographically, the region of Homs is placed half-way between the two other regions, whilst historically the region has been at the crossroads of major trade routes: east-west from central Asia through Palmyra to the Mediterranean coast; and north-south, from Aleppo to Damascus and the Yemen. Consequently, the city of Homs and its region have served as an important centre of interaction, particularly during the late Roman period when it served as the power base of the Severan dynasty (Butcher 2003; Levick 2007; Seyrig 1959). Given this, the basalt region has been variously observed and studied in the recent past, though until quite recently neglected in terms of archaeological investigations (Naaman 1951; Vaumas 1957).

The dominant physical aspects of the basalt region, its inherent stoniness and the denudation of tree cover, have ensured that until very recently structures were invariably constructed from basalt, either using the natural stones or shaped blocks. The utilisation of such a hard-wearing stone for construction in a very stony region has had a number of significant taphonomic consequences not least in that abandoned structures have proved resilient to complete erasure. As a result, the region contains an impressive material culture milieu stemming from a number of periods and, overall, reflects a dense, complicated settlement history. However, the survivability of many sites and structures has proved very attractive to research and has provided interesting challenges in the methodological approaches necessary to document these structures. Inevitably, much of this evidence is being destroyed in an escalating programme of agricultural development.

Project aims

The project has aimed to build upon initial work undertaken in the basalt region as part of the Settlement and Landscape of the Homs Region Project (SHR project) (Philip et al 2002a, 2002b, 2005). This work revealed the potential scope within the basalt Northern Study Area (NSA) for understanding and adding to our knowledge of the settlement and landscape processes at work during the Classical and early Islamic periods and, in particular, those affecting the basalt region and central Syria. Until very recently the basalt region was a landscape of nucleated village settlements, due in part to a number of physical and historic reasons. For this reason, any subsequent work needed to take this fact into account and develop its research questions accordingly. Such questions have drawn on recent debates over the continuity of settlement in the Near East, the perceptions of people and their landscapes, and the creation of a defined rural space (Halfacree 2006; Ingold 2000; Walmsley 2007). To understand these processes a number of broad research areas have been established, some of which are interlinked and interdependent:

1. Morphology of settlement — to analyse the make-up of a particular settlement in terms of the layout and hierarchy of streets and dwellings, the provision or lack of public buildings, the relationship between public and private space, and the changing village shape.
2. Chronology of settlement — to assess and explain the continuity and/or discontinuities in the occupation of settlements, within settlements, and between different periods.
3. Rural space — to obtain an understanding of the interface between a village and its hinterland and the relationships between them, ie, what makes a settlement rural – how is the landscape around a village changed?
4. Rural perceptions — to gain some idea as to how the inhabitants interacted with their surroundings on a daily basis, how they might have translated these relationships into the landscape, and how that landscape, in turn, affected and created them.
5. External factors — to assess the extent to which outside influences, be they political, socio-economic or cultural, can affect a settlement and its hinterland.

Project methodology

To achieve the project objectives a two-strand approach methodology was considered to investigate firstly rural structures and secondly rural land use. Whilst the main thrust of the fieldwork was to be undertaken at Dar es-Salaam, other sites were also to be recorded. The fieldwork was undertaken by a small team focussed on the detailed survey of a well-preserved section of the NSA within two square kilometres of the deserted village of Dar es-Salaam (see Fig 3). Other work was undertaken within the wider environs of Dar es-Salaam and within a few chosen neighbouring villages from which it was hoped additional information and comparative details could be collected. As the actual village of Dar es-Salaam is a substantially large site (over 6 hectares) with a number of separate elements, a

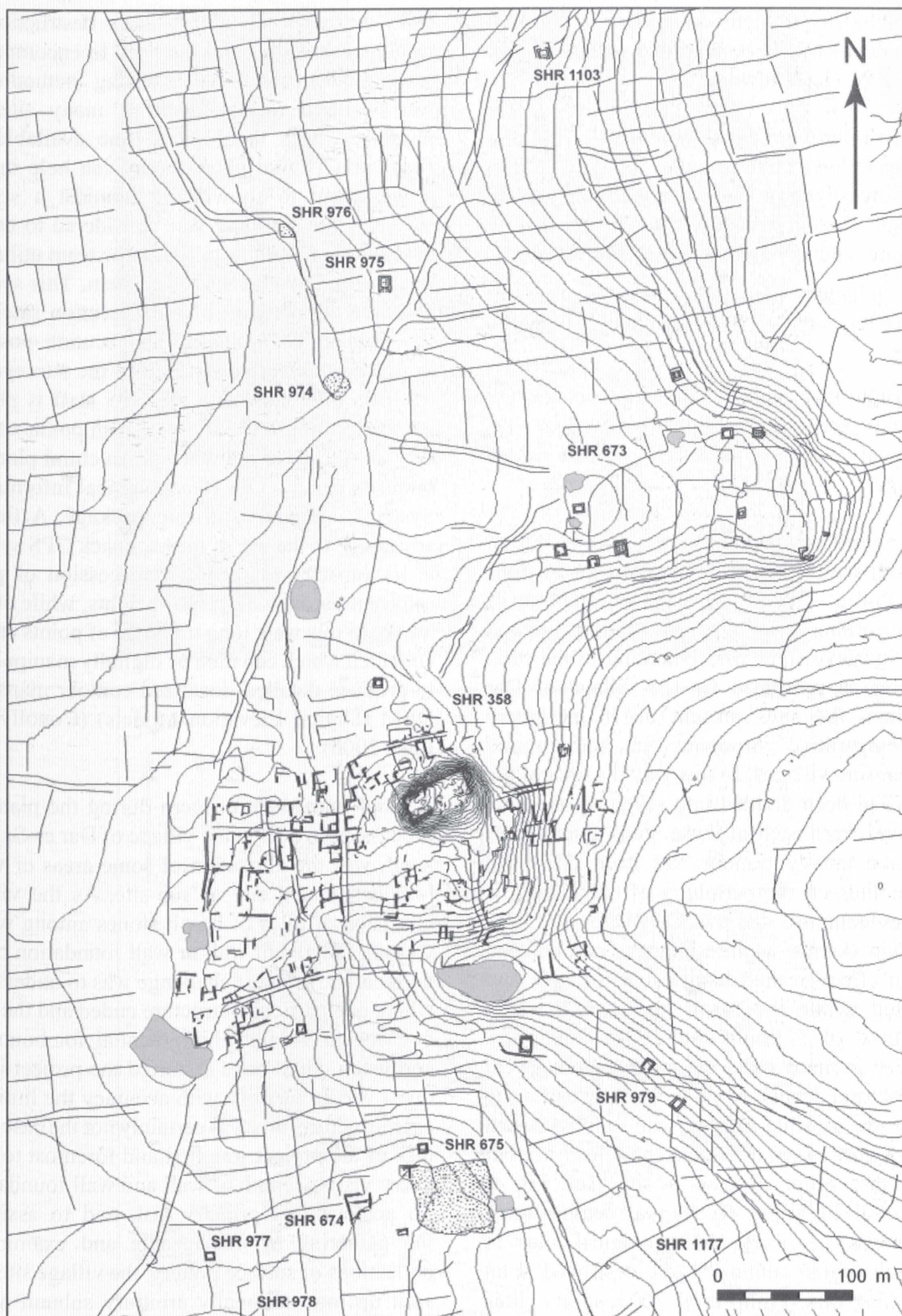


Figure 3 The area of research: Dar es Salaam (SHR 358) and environs.

quick and efficient methodology was required if enough detail was to be recorded within the two short seasons of fieldwork.

The investigation of rural structures

This was to have three strands:

- a. The investigation and detailed planning of structural evidence within the village of Dar es-Salaam, and any associated satellite sites.
- b. The detailed planning of a number of comparative sites on the periphery of nearby villages.
- c. An additional aspect undertaken outside the core study area was the limited recording of a representative number of standing basalt village buildings.

A programme of ground-truthing of sites within the basalt region had been initiated in previous years (Philip et al 2005). This programme of ground-truthing was also the initial method used to achieve some understanding of the rural structures as presented by the village of Dar es-Salaam, the sites present on its periphery and comparative structures in and around neighbouring villages. In this way the area of the village had been divided into seven manageable zones and from each of these areas a sample of diagnostic survey pottery had been collected. For the sites on the periphery of the village, it has been demonstrated that CORONA and high resolution Ikonos satellite imagery can be used to great effect in the identification of sites and was used within the basalt region as a whole (Beck et al 2007; Philip et al 2002a, 2005: 35). However, in many cases an image cannot reveal any structural details: while the presence of a site is clear, the satellite imagery can only represent this as a grey mass, reflecting the piles of basalt rubble that often obscure a site (see Fig 4; Philip et al 2005: Fig 6). As was demonstrated in previous fieldwork, archaeological sites in the basalt region continue to be destroyed at an astonishing rate (Philip et al 2005). Some sites studied in 2002 and 2003 have already been lost, and important sites such as SHR 666, 891 and 910 have been bulldozed.

With the potential of the future destruction of some isolated sites and the need to encompass a substantial area a rapid recording methodology was required to document as many sites as possible within the limited time available for fieldwork. Digital photography can help in this process, but to show clarity amidst a sea of boulders site planning was considered to be the best solution. For this purpose, the team utilised a dual-band Leica GPS 1200 System. This system accesses the network of GPS location satellites to establish very quickly an accurate position on the earth's surface. It allows the surveyor to record a point at which the GPS staff is placed within seconds, and a mass of such points can be digitally stored, from which a structural plan can be made using a GIS (Geographical Information System) computer software package. A further advantage to the use of the backpack GPS system is its capacity to record a succession of point information, including spot-heights, while on the move. In this way, long transects of points can be collected which can then be digitally manipulated to produce detailed, localized contour maps and DEM (Digital Elevation Models) (Conolly and Lake 2006).

A more immediate concern during the planning process, above all in the village of Dar es-Salaam itself, was the allocation of some areas or walls to a designated site or sub-site. As the village consisted of piles of basalt stones among which varying lengths of wall or wall foundation could be seen, the greatest challenge was to understand where one particular structure ended and the next one began. Though this potential for boundary confusion could have distorted the project if the quest was to identify with accuracy the limits of each structure, this was certainly not the case. The task of the project was first and foremost to plan every visible length of wall and wall foundation. To achieve this primary task and to assist in the gathering of manageable and examinable collections of surface pottery, the village site was split up into notionally arbitrary subunit areas. The process by which this was attained involved an initial reconnaissance by the planning team over an area in which each visible length of wall was identified. This process continued until a

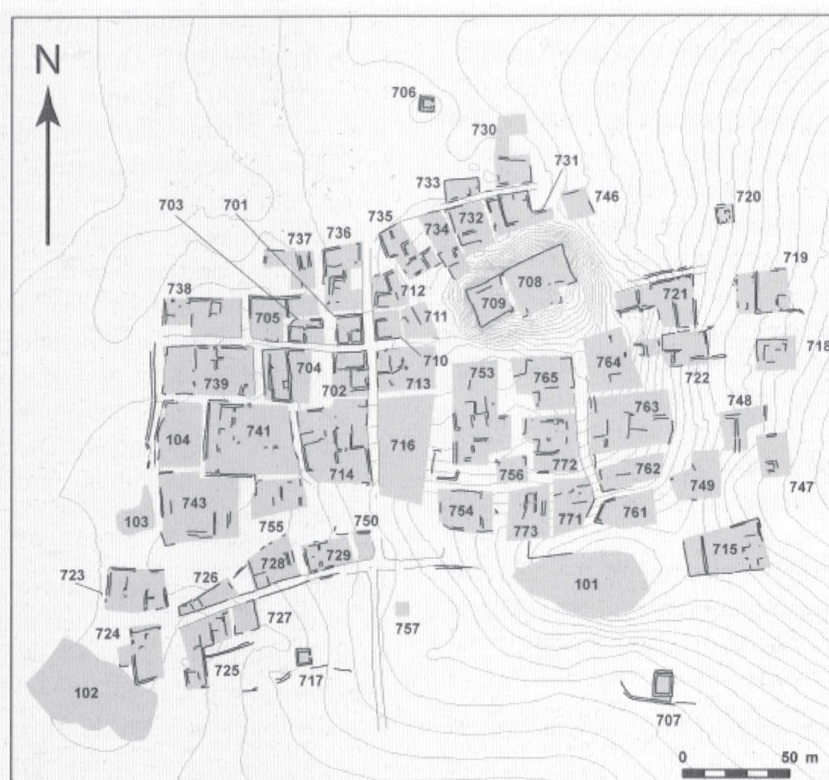


Figure 4 The village of Dar es-Salaam as planned: (a) showing the Ikonos satellite image with planned walls superimposed in white; (b) the walls and features of the village and subunits.

satisfactory area of walls was identified which could then be allocated a subunit identity and within this subunit each wall face was given its own number. Subunits for the planning exercise were allocated numbers in the 700s up, with each wall face being given an individual identity such as 700.01 and following on from this 700.02 and so forth.

Whilst undertaking the reconnaissance, it was often found that after a period of observation the initially opaque and dense rubble mass would resolve itself into a reasonably clear, self-contained and discrete structure plan. So although all these structures had been reduced to low rubble mounds, for many structures clear, readily distinct plans could be made from identifiable lower foundation courses, allowing for the quick planning of such sites. However, problems remained with some areas, particularly parts of the central southern core of the village site, which essentially remained a featureless rubble maze. In conjunction with the planning of a particular site, an effort was made to collect any surface pottery or other surface material, such as flint or glass, on or in the immediate environs of the site as a first step in dating a point or period of occupation for the structure or the location in question. This task was undertaken whilst being fully aware of the inherent problems associated with such an activity, but given these caveats the use of surface pottery as a practical first broad brush indicator outweighs the potential misleading signals (Alcock and Cherry 2004; Francovich and Patterson 2000).

The investigation of rural land use

Again, this other strand of research was to have three foci:

- a. Work centred on a programme of targeted fieldwalking of sample areas in the general environs of the villages of Dar es-Salaam and Sama'lil.
- b. Groups of transects were undertaken in other areas of the NSA with the specific aim of addressing the extent and density of surface pottery around particular sites and in different topographical and environmental areas.

- c. Small samples of field walls were recorded in detail to investigate the potential for dating individual field walls within the survey area.

The other endeavour of this project was an intensive investigation of the surrounding field systems, their relationship to the village and their concomitant development. This was important in order to obtain evidence for the extent to which the people of the village interacted and shaped their environment. It was also important, if the possibility existed, to find out the physical reach of the village, ie, the extent to which a village, through different periods, controlled, organised and farmed its surrounding hinterland. It may have been the case that a village territory was much larger than the area intensively farmed, and/or that both the size of the area the village controlled and the area the village farmed oscillated from period to period. This is an especially interesting aspect to tackle within this particular landscape given the widespread evidence revealed in the satellite imagery of an extensive programme of cadastration or centuriation of the basalt landscape (Abdulkarim 1997, 2002-03; Abdulkarim and Olesti-Vila 2007; Philip et al 2002b). It is hoped that in the future such information will allow us to obtain an idea of the extent to which the land away from the villages was utilised in the past, land which may have been seen as a liminal space, an ideational landscape of the past (Ashmore and Knapp 1999). Such an ideational landscape on the margins may have included areas and sites in which evidence for past occupation still exists today, such as suspected prehistoric sites to the south-east of the village of Dar es-Salaam (sites SHR 933 and 934) and the extensive distribution of prehistoric cairns.

Building on a previously constructed framework of sample fieldwalking undertaken by the ongoing SHR landscape project, a targeted fieldwalking programme was carried out in the 2006 season in two key spatial spheres (Philip et al 2005: 30-32). The purpose of such fieldwalking was to define the density of surface material, particularly pottery, across the landscape and especially in order to assess the extent to which manuring may

have occurred or whether any pottery scatter was an accident of casual discards within and around the village of Dar es-Salaam. In this regard, it was expected that the resultant analyses of the density of surface material would be instructive and provide some answers to questions of land use. The first objective of this fieldwalking was to map the possible intensity of past agricultural activity within the environs of the village of Dar es-Salaam. This task involved the fieldwalking of a dense sample area centred on the village of Dar es-Salaam itself and its satellite sites.

A total of 89 transects were fieldwalked during the 2006 season, the majority of which were located between the sites of Dar es-Salaam and Sama'lil. Each transect was different in length and in the number of rows walked, both these variables being dependent on the size of the field (rows being a standard 10 metres apart). In most cases, the field to be walked was a recently

ploughed field which helped to standardise visibility and lower variables. However, though visibility was often restricted by boulders, stones and vegetation, some unploughed areas were walked on higher ground to establish whether any pottery sherds or other material, such as worked flint, could be retrieved, which would indicate activity within these regions. Fig 5 shows the distribution of transects to which have been added relevant transects completed by the SHR Landscape Project. As this report concentrates on some of the issues surrounding the planning of structural remains, the implications brought about by the fieldwalking will be reviewed in a future publication.

The final part of considering the use of the rural space involved the recording of a small sample of field walls in the environs of Dar es-Salaam to investigate methods for the potential dating of individual field walls located around the village.



Figure 5 The distribution of transects around the village of Dar es-Salaam.

The recording of complex patterns of field walls, as are apparent within the basalt region, can be very problematic for a number of reasons. First and foremost is deciding where a particular wall begins and ends. A second major obstacle is to classify the wall on a particular set of attributes, — attributes which may change gradually every few feet, so that a double-faced wall may transform to a single orthostatic wall, and then to a rubble section, and back to a single face wall and so forth. Similar work had previously been attempted in the environs of the village site of Burj al-Qai' (SHR 668) in an area to the south of this village (SHR 669), which could be seen from the satellite imagery to be divided by a series of linear walls into a very regular grid pattern of fields characteristic of a cadastrated landscape (Abdulkarim 2002-03). By undertaking work on a sample of walls around Dar es-Salaam, it was hoped useful comparisons could be made with the area SHR 669. Using the back-pack GPS to map particular points it was hoped that particular wall characteristics could be mapped within a certain stretch of wall, rather than hoping to give each wall its own fixed identity. In this way, wall characteristics might be mapped over a whole area, and certain characteristics might prove more dominant and lead to issues of dating particular wall types.

The 2005 and 2006 seasons were successful in planning the extensive suite of sites that comprise the village of Dar es-Salaam and all the satellite sites visible from the satellite imagery on the periphery of the village itself. A number of comparative structures were planned around the two neighbouring villages of Sama'lil and el-Hissa. Digital terrain models were constructed for all these sites from the manipulation of mass spot height collections. Furthermore, a large corpus of surface material was collected from the planned sites and detailed site records were made. Together with the information present on the satellite imagery, the results of all this work have been input into a basic GIS model of the region and initial analyses of the material culture and its interrelationships have been undertaken.

Village survey

The survey of the village was very successful in clarifying the structure of the village to a great extent. What appeared to be a mass of rubble, even on the satellite imagery, has now taken on the recognizable configuration of a village plan with a number of distinct elements and structures. Without excavation many of the finer structural plan details will remain unclear, however, the general relationship of structures to each other and the way the village is organised has been clearly defined. Therefore, we can now begin to disentangle to some extent the components which constitute the village in terms of its historical development and even the function of certain structures. This information has been derived from the collected surface material, the structure of the wall fragments themselves, as well as from the structural morphology of the village.

While no structure stands today, the village is known from published sources to have been occupied at the turn of the 20th century, when there were still partially standing ancient buildings (Lammens 1902). Furthermore, local people recall residual habitation in some parts of the village to have continued at least until the early 1930s. Photographic evidence seems to suggest that the site of the village in the early 20th century was much as it appears today and that it has been in this condition for a considerable period (Fig 6; Jalabert and Mouterde 1959: 64-65). Although the early European visitors mentioned some standing structures and inscriptions, the ongoing salvaging of good worked stone for use in the surrounding villages has quickly reduced much of this evidence.

Dominating the village site is a mound partially constructed of large basalt boulders, known by the neighbouring villagers as the *qal'a* (citadel), whose maximum base dimensions are approximately 70 by 40 metres and which on average rises 8 metres above the surrounding rubble remains. The heart of the village, which constitutes a low shelf of mounds of rubble, lies to the south of the *qal'a* on a gentle south-facing

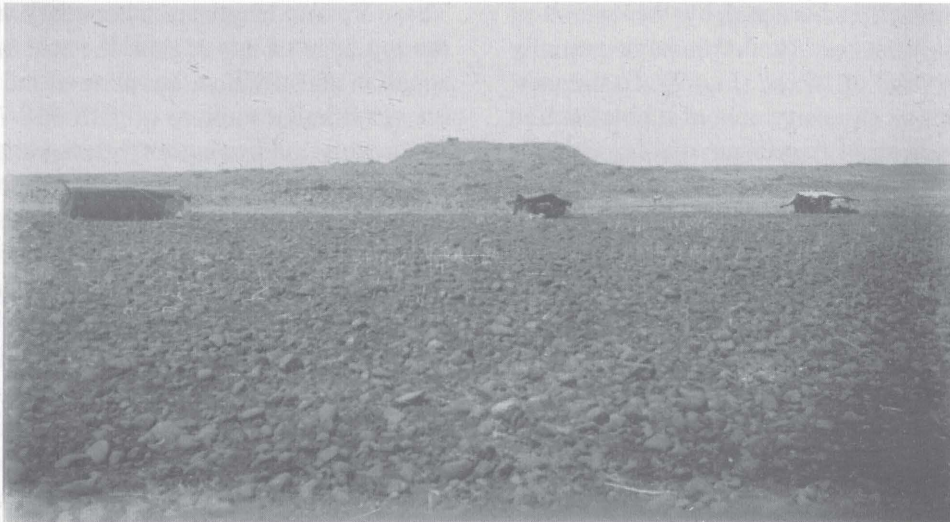


Figure 6 The site of the village in a photograph taken by René Mouterde on a visit to the site in 1928, looking very much as it appears today (see Figure 7). The picture is taken from the low field directly to the east of the village looking west. Note the tents of migratory families and the stoniness of the ploughed field in the foreground. (Photograph courtesy of USJ).



Figure 7 The site of Dar es-Salaam today: the village (mid-foreground) and Qal'a (background) with the large birkeh (SHR 358/101) in the immediate foreground. Photograph is taken from sub-site SHR 358/707 looking north-west.

slope, and which is bordered by the course of a small east–west *wadi* and two large partially natural reservoirs or *birkeh* (Fig 7). To the west of the *qal'a* is an extensive area of rubble centred around a crossing of two linear streets, which is clearly visible on the satellite imagery. There are a number of structure fragments to the north of the *qal'a*, particularly to the north-west, while the area to the north-east is scarcely occupied by rubble at all. The entire remains of this village extend for some 200 metres north to south, and 300 metres east to west, and inclusive of the *qal'a*, presents a total area of around 6 hectares.

Any assessment of the village has to begin with the *qal'a*. Closer examination of the structure revealed three distinct elements (SHR 358/708, 358/709, 358/765). The area at the western end (SHR 358/709) is the most prominent area and marks the original tower itself. This prominence is still bounded on three sides (north, west and south) by large boulder double-faced walls built into the side of the mound. The original east wall is not visible, having been subsumed beneath an extension of the mound platform to the east. However, the exterior edge of this east wall can be seen as a joint line within an extension of the north-facing wall, which bounds the eastern extension. The original tower wall is composed of boulders, on average ca 0.8m in diameter, which drops to ca 0.5m or less beyond the joint line and drops from ca 1.8m down to less than 1m in width. This means the original tower was approximately square with sides of ca 18m in length at the top. The interior is a mix of pits and earth mounds. The exterior walls have partially collapsed over the last few years, an impression reinforced by a much more intact north wall visible within an unpublished photograph taken by Rene Mouterde in 1928.

The slightly lower platform (SHR 358/708) to the east of the tower (SHR 358/709) is a complex subunit with many areas of pitting and some fragments of walls, as well as some large architectural fragments of stone. From the jumble of fragments, it would appear that different buildings may have existed in this spot at different periods, and for some we only have a few clues.

There are also lengths of a boundary wall around the top edge of this region; the east wall is very rough in construction, but parts of the north wall are very similar to those of SHR 358/709, if a bit less regular and using slightly smaller rounded boulders. All the wall fragments were planned, as well as some large worked blocks of basalt stone, thought to be either from a monumental lintel or doorway. One has the partially obscured and very weathered letters of a Greek inscription and cross upon it; whether this signifies a chapel doorway or a Byzantine house remains unclear. The access point to this platform top in past times seems to have been at the south-east point. This interpretation has been arrived at from an examination of the GPS-derived contour map and digital elevation model, as well as from indications on the ground. At the southern base of the *qal'a* a lengthy lintel inscription was discovered and published detailing the construction of a temple *temenos* (Jalabert and Mouterde 1959: 64-65; IGLS 2100).

The path from the *qal'a* leads directly down to the major *birkeh* (SHR 358/101) at the foot of the village and, from this, links with a network of paths, the partial remains of which were discerned through the mapping of stone curb lines in the planning exercise. These paths were traced wherever possible and can be seen to access all parts of the village and beyond (Fig 3). An initial assessment of the path network through orientation and widths would suggest different periods of development. Noticeable by their grid regularity are the north-south oriented paths in the western part of the village, indicative of purposeful planning though they do not appear to be linked with the centuriation of the surrounding fields. An intriguing length of pathway was that leading directly towards the *qal'a* on its eastern side, this was formed by parallel lines of large orthostatic boulders.

In terms of recorded structures, the village could be divided up into a number of areas which had elements with similarities in preservation, wall structure and plan. The region immediately south of the *qal'a* covering SHR 358 subunits 716, 753, 754, 756, 761-65, 771-773 contained

the least number of discernable wall features, though there appeared to be the base of a good, square ashlar stone tower in SHR 358/772. The structures of the region to the west of the *qal'a* were, on initial analysis, the most homogenous in terms of wall construction and regularity of plan (SHR 358 subunits 701-705, 710-14, 736-39). Some of the clearest plans were obtained from this region, as there were fewer areas of rubble masking the individual sites, particularly in the area near the crossroads, where even room/cellar foundations were planned. In SHR 358/705 were what remained of the lower courses of a well-built tower situated beside the east-west pathway. A significant number of amphora fragments were collected in the northern subunits of this region.

Beyond these two key regions of densely packed buildings were two smaller collections of buildings (to the north: SHR 358/730-735, 746; to the south-west: SHR 358/725-729, 750) and two regions of less densely packed ruins. On the west, the sites SHR 358/723, 724, 741, 743, 755, and on the east SHR 358/715, 718, 719, 721, 722, 747-749 covered large areas within which concentrated areas of rubble contrasted with open areas of ground, with evidence for courtyard walls. In the case of SHR 358/741, much of the site appeared to be a courtyard fronting a pathway on the east with the substantial building structures ranged down the western edge and with a shallow *birkeh* to the rear. In contrast to most subunits, very little pottery was recovered from this subunit; there is thus a possibility this served a public function and warrants further investigation. A similar situation occurs on the eastern side with SHR 358/715, though on this occasion the rectangular mass of rubble is situated on the western edge of the subunit area, with only shallow ditches appearing in lieu of robbed out walls over the rest of the site.

The two smaller collections of buildings shared similar characteristics in many respects, being composed on the whole of more compact sequences of linear structures on either side of a pathway. There were differences in the perception of the physical presence of buildings in some subunits based on the amount of rubble

or the solidness or otherwise of some of the wall structures; examples of potentially substantial structures are those of SHR 358/725, 729 and 731. The question of perceived differences in structures was particularly heightened for the structures within subunits SHR 358/711, 712, 734 and 735. These subunits were distinguished from most other units by the number of massively constructed walls they contained in comparison to elsewhere (Fig 8). For the other subunits, wall construction alternated between single-faced or double-faced with the size of ashlar or roughly dressed basalt blocks varying within a size range of 0.3 to 0.5m along the longest length. However, within the area to the north-west of the *qal'a*, a very interesting complex of distinctive and very large rounded double-faced boulder walls up to 1.5m in width was recorded, oriented in line with the tower (SHR 358/709) and forming on the whole a regular pattern of square rooms.

A number of isolated structures forming an outer ring around the village were also recorded. The largest in terms of dimensions and the most impressive in scale was the rectangular structure of SHR 358/707. In contrast, SHR 358/706, 717 and 720 were smaller and square in plan, with SHR 358/717 and 720 being set within the centre of their own walled enclosures. Beside SHR 358/706 were the remains of a well or cistern, complete with a circular basalt cover. Other wells or cisterns were also located across the area of the village along with other features, including large T-shaped supports, rotary mills and cylinder-shaped basalt stones, (some of which were perhaps for rolling flat turf roofs). In addition, an area of suspected burials was located abutting onto the *wadi* stream edge in SHR 358/754. At other locations near the course of the *wadi* and *birkehs*, specifically in the environs of SHR 358/724 and 757, other possible burial sites or early activity sites in association with prehistoric basalt-inclusion pottery sherds were located. It was also in this region, to the immediate south of the *wadi* near the *birkeh* SHR 358/101, that a number of large orthostatic stone wall lines were observed and recorded, incorporated into the boundaries of walls which enclose a network of small paddocks and fields around this *birkeh*.



Figure 8 (a) The large boulder wall 735.2 of SHR 358/735 looking south, in the background is the north wall of the Qal'a. (b) In comparison SHR358/741 wall 741.7 revealing on its internal face roughly ashlar stones of ca 45x20cm.

Rural space

Dar es-Salaam Satellite sites

Site SHR 673

A number of sites on the village periphery were also planned: perhaps the most interesting, serving as a representative of many other sites, is SHR 673. This extensive site comprises a large complex of walls, structures and *birkeh*/quarries on a low bluff which strikes out to the immediate north-east of Dar es-Salaam (Figs 3 and 9; Table 1). Amongst the many different sub-sites of this area, a number of well-built structures stood out. While these structures varied in size, being either square or rectangular, they shared common attributes in terms of construction: all were composed of double-faced basalt block walls with the exterior square face being roughly dressed. Each structure had a single entrance, contained an even distribution of pillar or floor supports, and at several sites there was fragmentary evidence for a plastered interior. In addition to these structures, two previously noted but still impressive basalt funerary sculptures were present (Jalabert and Mousterde 1959: 65). One of these sculptures appears to be that of a soldier in Greek dress, but no inscription is present (Fig 10); the other is a sculpted figure reclining on a sarcophagus lid. There is a fragmentary inscription along the base of this lid which has been interpreted as indicating a date of AD 121 (*IGLS* 2101). It seems likely, therefore, that most of the sub-sites of SHR 673 would prove to be various forms of structure associated with burial. From observations of similar structures and from the collected surface material, it follows that many of the other sites surrounding the village were also associated with burials from this period, however there is also some evidence of re-use and occupation in later periods.

Sites SHR 674 and 675

These two closely related sites, which may in fact have been part of the same complex in antiquity, are to be found located to the south of the village on a low rise dominating the site beyond the two *birkehs*. Though separate from the village this complex is clearly a part of the village. Together the two sites form quite a large complex. Site SHR

674 is formed of a number of partially obscured rectangular structures, which are oriented north-south, parallel to those of site SHR 675. Site 675 forms the major component, consisting of a number of distinct structures situated around the central square rubble mass (SHR 675/705). This central site could not be planned in detail for lack of walls, but surface finds were collected, as they were at the other surrounding sites. Using the GPS, a close detail contour map was created for this site to obtain more information as to the character of the buildings within the complex. Using these methods, a composite plan of the site as a whole could be prepared. The complex was made more notable by a distinct lack of pottery compared to structures in the village of Dar es-Salaam.

Outer sites

Both to the north and the south of the village, a number of generally small discrete sites were recorded. It is noticeable that these sites were located in close proximity to the path of walled trackways. There are a number of walled paths and tracks which lead out in a radial pattern from the village site, some leading to various fields while a number of others can be traced forming lines of communication with all of the surrounding villages. SHR sites 977 and 978 were singular square basalt structures to the south-west of the village and present similarities in construction to structures within SHR 673. SHR 979 proved to be more complex in that it was comprised of two square structures linked by a small area of inhumations. As with other sites, all presented very little in terms of surface pottery, though basalt floor supports were noted and mortar and tile fragments were collected.

Sites SHR 975 and 1103 to the north of the village were more impressive in construction and dimensions, both structures facing onto the main trackway leading north-east from the village which can be said to link the important village of Ghour al-Gharbieh with Burj al-Qai' to the north via Dar es-Salaam. SHR 975 was set back from the trackway within its own enclosure and is a large rectangular structure aligned north to south. When closely examined, the remaining courses

<i>Subunit</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Comments</i>
673/701	Large rectangular structure	12.43m x 9.10m	Ashlar double-faced walls and 6 square column supports basalt eagle to the south
673/702	Subterranean rectangular structure	4.58m x 4.95m internal chamber	Large boulder slab walls
673/703	Large square structure	8.73m x 9.22m	Ashlar walls
673/704	Large square structure	6.56m x 8.59m	Ashlar walls
673/706	Large square structure	7.71m x 8.36m	Ashlar walls
673/707 and 721	Burial complexes	c. 49m x 17m	Several burial pits excavated in stone covered area
673/708	Large square structure	6.78m x 7.47m	4 column supports and east entrance – double-faced walls
673/712	Burial complex	c. 9m x 32m	Several burial pits excavated in stone covered area
673/713	Partially exposed structure	5.96m x 5.97m	Partially subterranean – two column supports
673/714	Rectangular structures	2.66m x 4.45m	Large basalt blocks enclose an open square pit
673/715	Large square structure	7.24m x 5.74m	Rough ashlar walls
673/717	Burial complex	c. 18m x 24m	Several burial pits excavated in stone covered area
673/720	Large square structure	8.69m x 8.94m	Double-faced ashlar walls and internal partitions for <i>loculi</i>
673/722	Large basalt wall associated walls and birkets	109m in length x 5.5m width x c.1. 25m height	The main wall section is formed of packed basalt cobbles forming a long bank

Table 1 The main elements of site SHR 673.

of basalt walling revealed a rectangular structure with a portico and two columns in antis (full length 11.6m; max width 8.7m). Thus the exterior form presented a building type often identified as a temple and, more importantly, a structural plan commonly used in tomb architecture of the Graeco-Roman period (Sartre 1989: 436). The interior chamber, now full of rubble, contained six supports and two large T-shaped basalt support capitals. The walls are very thick (front south wall 1.5m, west wall 1.55m, back north wall 1.5m) and are double-faced with a rough dressing on the outer facade. Plaster was found around in the vicinity of the site, as well as some pottery and tile fragments. This site constitutes a notable temple-tomb, which would have been noticeable both from the track and the northern environs of the village.

SHR 1103 was a substantial, square structure, with walls built of large roughly dressed stones double-faced providing a width of ca 1.5m. and of around 5.0m in length. Again, in terms of construction and the surface pottery, tile, and mortared plaster recovered, the site proved very similar in style to other structures (ie, within SHR 673 and SHR 977-79). The importance of this structure is that the structure and indeed entrance was directly oriented onto the line of the still existing and walled track between Dar es-Salaam and Burj al-Qai' (Fig 3) with important implications for the network of trackways, which can still be delineated connecting the villages throughout the region.

Area SHR 1177 (Figs 3 and 5)

The area SHR 1177 to the south-east of Dar es-Salaam contains a number of interesting field boundary walls and field shapes. Indeed the morphology of a number of fields in terms of size, shape and angle of orientation are at odds with the predominant north-south, east-west alignment of most of the fields in the vicinity (which relates to the past centuriation/cadastration of the region during the Classical period). With closer investigation, a number of the walls forming boundaries to these anomalous fields were found to contain sections of contiguous lines of large orthostatic boulders. In a few

cases the whole boundary wall was seen to be primarily composed of orthostats. These lengths of orthostatic boulders are a distinctive feature of construction not common in the majority of field walls. Fragments of these orthostatic boulder walls could be seen incorporated in some of the walls in the environs of the *birkeh* SHR 358/101. As a potentially informative exercise the distributions of particular examples of these were subsequently mapped.

Pottery

Graeco-Roman pottery and tile

In terms of the pottery from the Graeco-Roman period the analysis consisted of cataloguing the material picked up from the sub-sites of Dar es-Salaam (SHR 358), as well as the rapid assessment of pottery from SHR sites 65, 675, 860, 867, 973, 1102, 1110, and 1145. Time was also taken to compile a full assessment catalogue of all the Ceramic Building Material (CBM). The material was quantified by number of sherds (no), weight (Wt) and minimum number of rims (MR). The size of the assemblage from Dar es-Salaam allowed a more detailed analysis to be attempted. This suggested that 358 had been a relatively wealthy site, with some 5% by MR slipped or gloss table wares and 4% by MR imported amphora demonstrating connections with a wider economic structure. Initial spatial survey results suggested that the gloss and slipped wares were concentrated in the ancient core of the village, as well as the *birkeh* SHR 358/104 to the west of unit SHR 358/741.

It would appear that the earliest use of terracotta roofing in the region recovered from the survey dates to the Hellenistic period. There is also evidence of Roman use of roof tile (interestingly the majority of red roof tile). The majority of material in this assemblage probably dates from the later Byzantine period, with yellow roof tiles being used in a form of a variant of the Corinthian style of roofing. The main supply of CBM would appear to have some links with Christian tile makers, if not actually products of church estates, as suggested by a XRho stamp on

a *tegula* from site SHR 336. The same source was also supplying roofing for the public buildings in Beirut in the fifth and sixth century, including the imperial *thermae* and the nearby colonnaded street (Mills 2006), and is probably Cilician.

Islamic Pottery

In addition to an examination of the surface pottery from Dar es-Salaam (site SHR 358), a summary of the material from the entire basaltic zone has been included here. Much of this material was assessed during two consecutive study seasons in 2006 and 2007. In total, 126 sites or sub-sites were analysed (of those 73 are within SHR 358). 819 sherds can confidently be ascribed to Islamic periods, while a further 799 belong to less diagnostically sound brittle ware and calcareous white ware groups that may also be Late Roman or Byzantine in date.

Table 2 is intended to give a preliminary breakdown of sites into five arbitrary chronological divisions based on the occurrence of pottery classes dated by reference to excavations elsewhere in Bilad al-Sham. Publications dealing with Islamic pottery in Syria concentrate primarily on glazed material, while the majority of the survey pottery is unglazed, and for this region of Syria little known: the apparent decline in number of sites occupied, reaching a culmination in the Ottoman period, must at this stage be considered only a

very general guide. Relatively small quantities of glazed material were found in the basaltic zone, and in considerably less variety than in areas surveyed in the Orontes valley and to the east of Lake Qatina. These date principally to between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, with oxidised lead glazed cooking pots and slip painted bowls predominating, but small quantities of lead and alkaline glazed earthenwares from the eighth or ninth to eleventh centuries also occur in some parts of site 358 and peripheral sites, and attest to the presence of occupation from early Islamic periods otherwise difficult to visualise. Perhaps surprisingly, hand-made pottery did not dominate in any of the chronological divisions; in fact just 205 hand-made sherds belonging to Islamic periods were identified in total, possibly indicating a higher degree of contact or integration between rural and urban economies in this region in comparison to other inland and southern parts of Bilad al-Sham. A handful of sherds may represent importations from the Eastern Mediterranean region, the majority of the assemblage being consistent with a Syrian origin. Initial analysis of the pottery from the Wa'ar basalt region demonstrates continuity of material culture through the Islamic periods; further study has the potential to enable a deepened understanding of human activity in this landscape between late antiquity and the present day.

<i>Period (guide)</i>	<i>SHR Sites</i>
1. Umayyad (and/or Pre-Islamic) (660-750CE)	5 358(certain sectors) 673 669 838 839 841(?) 868 888 894 900(?) 910 947(?) 978
2. Abbasid/Hamdanid/Fatimid (750-1078CE)	6 49 60 64 358 363(?) 501(?) 668 674 675 677 679 839 859 860 861(?) 866 867 885 888 894(?) 899(?) 910(?) 911(?) 932(?) 933(?) 973(?) 975 979 1103
3. Saljuq/Frank/Zangid/Ayyubid (1078-1260CE)	6 60 64 358 668 677 859 860 866 867 885 888 973(?)
4. Mamluk (1260-1517CE)	6 358 668 833 838(?) 860 866 885(?) 888 932(?) 972 973
5. Ottoman (1517-1918CE)	358 (limited sectors) 668 679(?) 833 838 860 866 888(?) 972 973

Table 2 Preliminary indication of Islamic sites.

Settlement aspects

The planning exercise, in conjunction with surface collection, the fieldwalking and recording of other information has produced a wealth of new material. As was to be expected, while clarifying a number of issues, the planning and recording of structures both in the village and in the village hinterland has begun to reveal a complex narrative in terms of the organisation and development history of the village and its environs. Whilst the work has demystified the shapeless piles of rubble which previously characterised the different sites, and has given shape and structural form to the majority (and even function to a minority) of structures, new questions have been generated. It would appear the existence of natural reservoirs, possibly later enhanced by human activity, attracted people to this location prior to the Graeco-Roman period. The presence of basalt-tempered pottery in the vicinity of the pools lends weight to this idea, and could suggest some pre-Hellenistic period settlement subsumed beneath later structures. There now follow a number of initial thoughts on some aspects of the evidence collected.

The question of the qal'a

The project has served to confirm the importance of the *qal'a* and its position in relation to the history and development of the village. On present evidence it would seem that the development of the village (the village whose visible remains are encountered today) began with the construction of the square tower now contained within the western portion of the *qal'a* (SHR 358/709). There is substantial evidence to suggest this tower was not unique within the landscape, as data on a number of tower-like structures of varying size have been collected within the survey area and beyond (Philip et al 2005). Significant among these is site SHR 005, which is situated 2.8km to the north-east of Dar es-Salaam and which exhibits substantial similarities in terms of massive boulder wall construction and dimensions (each of the walls of the square measure along the top edge of the wall ca 18m). The phenomenon of these structures is not restricted to the Wa'ar: similar

basalt glacis constructions have been recorded in the al-Ala' basalt region 50km to the north-east (Butler 1907: 6-7, 16-17); and, more importantly, a wide variety of basalt-constructed towers have been studied in the Hauran (Braemer et al 1999; Butler 1907-49). Several of the towers within the Hauran possess a number of close similarities to the square tower at Dar es-Salaam, both in terms of size, construction, physical/geographical location and relationship to other associated structures. The date of construction for the majority of the Hauran towers remains open to question, though many examples suggest a foundation date prior to the Roman era (Braemer et al 1999: 176). Whilst further evidence is required, it would be reasonable to suggest that the square tower dates at least to the Hellenistic period and perhaps even to the later periods of the Iron Age. Judging by the surface pottery, the larger, eastern section of the *qal'a* would seem to be a later accretion to the square tower, though there is no guarantee that the lower levels of this area might yield evidence for an older occupation of the site.

The purpose of the qal'a

Allied to questions of construction date are further questions as to the purpose of the *qal'a*. Some speculation on the function of the Hauran towers has been undertaken with the principle roles of ritual or defensive use being suggested (Braemer et al 1999; Butler 1907-49: 433). For those Hauran towers (such as Damit il-Alya and Safiyyeh) which stand in comparison with the original tower of Dar es-Salaam, in terms of position overlooking a village, a primarily defensive role was felt to be preferable (Braemer et al 1999: 174). These authors also suggested that such towers might serve as high altars given their relative position close to temples — this is a feature of many Near Eastern sanctuaries (1999: 172-73). Given the evidence for a later temple on the site of the *qal'a*, this function cannot be discounted. However, it would seem that the main preliminary roles of the tower at Dar es-Salaam were in the spheres of defence, control and symbolic power. As well as defending any settlement which may have been located adjacent to the square tower at Dar es-Salaam (see below), an additional key role which could

be considered may be that of control if account is taken of its commanding position above the reservoirs of water and on inter-settlement lines of communication.

On present evidence, it would appear that the outward role changed in later periods from fortified protection and symbolic power to religious ritual and symbolic power. Although some clues were discovered during fieldwork and in planning, the main evidence for this change in role comes from the description of the Jesuit priests who visited the site in the early 20th Century (Jalabert and Mouterde 1959: 64-65; Lammens 1900: 300). Prior to 1928, it appears that the *qal'a* was surrounded by an enclosure or *temenos* within the southern region of which stood a line of columns upon which rested a lintel of more than 3m in length inscribed with a dedication by donors to construction work undertaken between AD 322 and 337 (*IGLS* 2100). Just beyond this gateway and within the enclosure, the path was bordered by four more columns. All of this evidence has long disappeared, though a substantial basalt block decorated with intricate patterns, which formed a door jamb to an additional gateway, still remains at the south-west base of the *qal'a*, to the north of subunit SHR 358/753. The monumental nature of this evidence would strongly suggest a religious building, the main sanctuary building of which was undoubtedly positioned upon the *qal'a*. The appearance of large lintels with more than one cross carved upon them could indicate later conversion to a chapel. It is not known what use was made of the *qal'a* during the Islamic period, but the collection of pottery, notably glazed finewares has indicated that it was the primary focus in the village of activity (perhaps higher status and administrative) during the later Islamic periods.

Associated with the square tower SHR 358/709, some of the structures to the north-west of this building (SHR 358/711, 712 and 735) must be considered. In terms of wall construction and the evidence of pottery, it would seem that major elements of the structures within these subunits certainly are contemporary with the square tower. The planning exercise has reinforced this

argument in that it has revealed structures with vestiges of rooms arranged almost in a regular grid and of a consistent regular square size which are uncommon in later periods and have certainly not been realised in other subunits of the site. In addition, all the wide, double-faced, large boulder walls are in close alignment to the walls of the square tower (at ca 12.5° West of North). Again, this is not the case for the walls in the other subunits which are on the whole arranged north-south/east-west. If these structures are contemporary with the tower, it would suggest a sedentary settlement was certainly established by the Hellenistic period. It would also bring to mind other strands of evidence which might be linked to this settlement.

Field walls

Of major importance are the orthostatic walls to the immediate south of the village concentrated near the *birkeh* SHR 358/101, and a significant number of similarly constructed walls within area SHR 1177 (see Fig 5). Many of the major walls within the general area of SHR 1177 can be seen in the satellite imagery to be very different in their orientation compared to the majority of walls within the vicinity of Dar es-Salaam. Consequently, while the majority of east-west running walls have an orientation of on average 82.3° East of the true North azimuth and can be related in some way to the Classical period centuriation of the landscape, there are several major walls within the area SHR 1177 whose orientation is quite different. For example, three of the longest and most prominent walls which cross this region have a north-east – south-west orientation (being oriented 67.2°, 60.1° and 56.72° East of true North). As well as contravening the general orientation of the majority of walls, a number of the walls within SHR 1177 also display distinct differences in construction. As mentioned above, these utilise larger size boulders and many of these are in orthostatic lines or double-faced lines. Various factors can be entertained to explain these variations from the general conventions which seem to govern the majority of pre-modern field walls within the basalt region. Such factors include a greater degree of fragmented basalt pavement in this

area, or a steepness of local topography resulting in the need for walls to take heed of local contours more closely. The proximity of the settlement at Dar es-Salaam, as well as a number of large cairns, and other sites, including a pre-classical tower mound (SHR 932) would strongly suggest that in this location at least are the remnants of a pre-classical landscape with strong connections to other features of Dar es-Salaam.

The planning of the evidence for the pathways across the village, has also demonstrated that these are at variance with the orientation of the centuriation of the majority of fields beyond the immediate environs of the village. This evidence for centuriation is particularly clear for the area of fields to the north and north-west of the village, which show a marked regularity in both their orientation and morphology (see Fig 3). The orientation of this centuriation is centred on an axis of around 7.7° West of true North, which compares to an oriented axis of near true North (between 2.5° West of true North and true North) for the major pathways in the west and southern regions of the village (see Fig 5). The incompatibility of the village with the pattern of centuriation is an interesting piece of information which suggests there have been different processes at work in the formation of the landscape. These processes may have been in terms of different timescales at work with a centuriated village subject to a greater pace of evolution and the disruption of earlier planned streets. An alternative notion is the village as an entity being outside any schemes for the organisation of the landscape beyond its boundaries. As for the tracks between the villages, it would seem that in the majority of cases the path that they trace is ancient. Certainly, in the case of the Dar es-Salaam – Burj al-Qai' track, it can be seen to be contemporaneous in use with, while pre-dating the construction of, the structure SHR 1103. The walls that line such tracks are, without further evidence, to be considered Classical in date. Nevertheless, in some cases the track walls may predate the establishment of the centuriated walls by many years as may be hinted at in the relationship of trackway to cist-cairn SHR1152, east of Dar es-Salaam (see Fig 5). What the planning of such areas has shown is that

the field walls are not simply of one period, but are in fact a complex matrix of wall construction accumulated perhaps over many periods.

Funerary monuments

In planning the sites around the village of Dar es-Salaam we have been able to obtain some idea of the burial distribution of the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine village. It is now clear that beyond a distance of ca 300m all of the sites with ashlar walls surviving outside the boundaries of Dar es-Salaam are monuments to the dead. For the other villages, other similar mausolea can be distinguished, though there are other building types: outside the village of Sama'lil, a watermill was recorded (SHR 856); and the village of el-Hissa has two isolated large dwellings (SHR 836, 839) and a possible mill (SHR 840) as well as a number of large, impressive mausolea. These include SHR 841/701, 841/702, 841/703, 980, which are set within a possibly ancient cemetery that continues to be used for burial by the local population today. The main outcome is that all these villages have prominent areas of high ground specifically dedicated to the commemoration of the dead. Dar es-Salaam has so far produced the single largest area of burials — SHR 673 — and this area contains the highest concentration of Graeco-Roman style mausolea. Furthermore, within the NSA as a whole, the village environs have revealed the most architecturally substantial Graeco-Roman style mausolea (SHR 358/707, 673/701, 673/703, 975, 1103).

The large site, SHR 673/701, is perhaps the best preserved, and must be from its design and position a temple tomb of the Roman period; as such it is similar in design to that of SHR 975. Other sites within SHR 673 represent the remains of hypogea (SHR 673/702, 713 and 714) and areas of inhumation cemeteries (SHR 673/710, 712, 717, 721). Similar shapes have been recorded in the Hauran and the limestone hills and, taking into account the practice of internment, it would seem likely that many of these mausolea date to the first to third centuries AD (Sartre-Fauriat 2001: 77-80, 2002-3; Tate 1992: 67-69; Tchalenko 1953-58: 33-39). Such information has supplemented our initial impressions gained

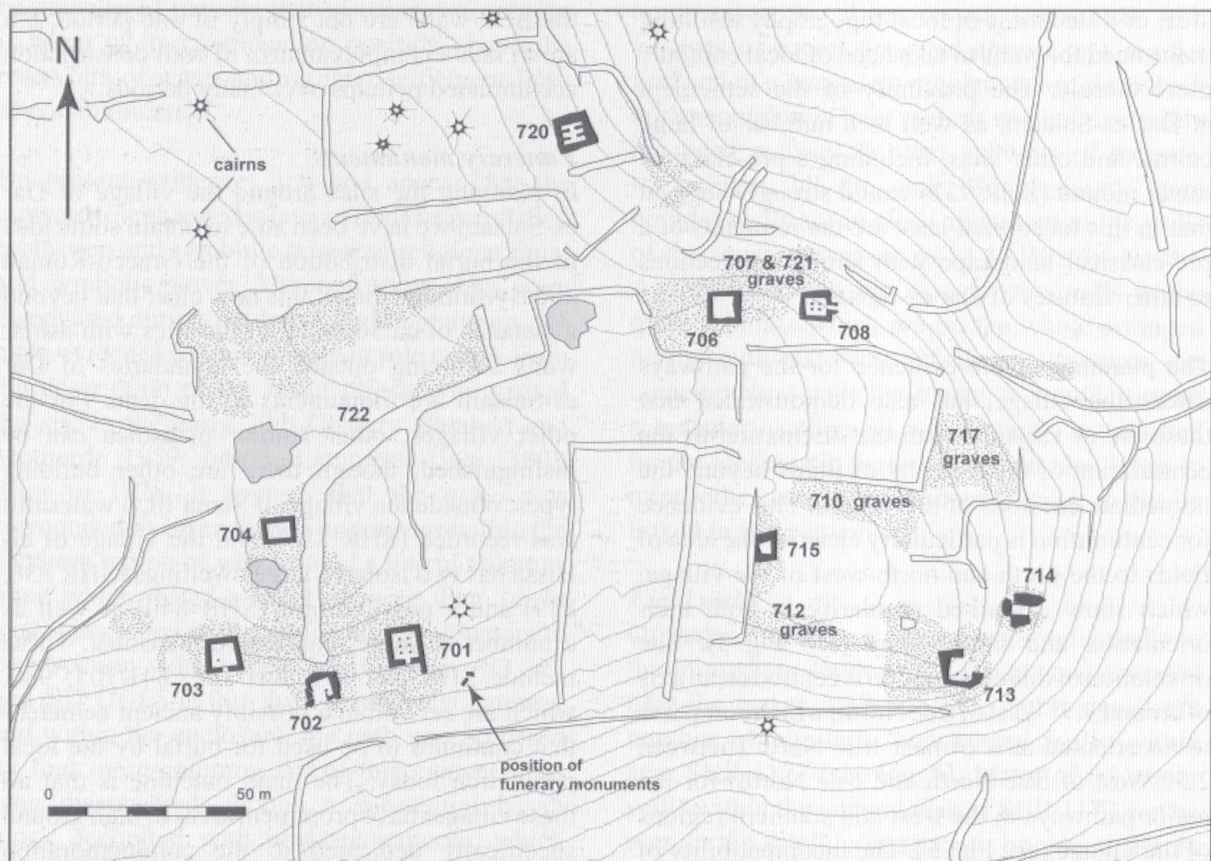


Figure 9 The site SHR 673 showing the position of the main structural elements within it.

from the presence of the two early second century AD funeral sculptures of Graeco-Romans at this site. It follows that many of the other sites are also from this period (eg, SHR 977-979), however there may be some re-use and occupation in later periods. There is the possibility that some of the structures may represent a re-modelling of earlier pre-Roman burial structures, for example subunit SHR 673/710.

Village structures

The planning of structures within Dar es-Salaam has helped to assess the structural organization of the village, and has allowed us to estimate the number of dwellings present (ca 40-50) and perhaps even to identify candidate subunits for public and/or administrative buildings (SHR 358/708, 709, 741). What has not been clearly revealed is the site of a later Byzantine church(es) or later mosque(s); several churches are common

to every village in the limestone hills or the Hauran (e.g. Dentzer 1985; Tchalenko 1953-58). It may well be that the *qal'a* was the site of a chapel, at least, but more evidence is required. The walls that have been recorded have revealed diversity in construction techniques and the resultant plans have provided differences in the size and shape of buildings across the village site. Whilst these plans are by no means complete, they have given an idea of the possible greatest extent of the village size. To go beyond this requires the extensive spatial analyses of the surface pottery collected in conjunction with comparative analyses of the fragmentary building footprints allied with the results of a more in-depth recording of the wall structures.

In terms of the chronological development of the village through the Graeco-Roman period and into the Islamic period, it would seem that the village

changed in size and area, with the central area to the immediate south of the *qal'a* serving as the core of residential occupation throughout. The anomalous wall alignments of structures to the north-west of the *qal'a*, the imposition of a grid of streets to the west of the *qal'a*, and the string of structures leading out to the south-west may suggest outlying parts were developed, occupied and abandoned at different times. Throughout the history of the village, it would seem the *qal'a* always remained the focus of the village. As the *qal'a* changed its function, it is possible that new towers could have been constructed at certain points around the edge of the village to maintain a watch-over the approaches to the village (SHR 358/706, 707, 717, 720). The idea that these sites could be towers is based partly on their small square plans and roughly-ashlared but solid basalt wall construction, and also their relative positions at key locations around the village. The other possibility is that these structures were used as burial mausolea, in particular this may be the case for the rectangular 358/707. Towers also seem to have been built as part of some dwellings (structure candidates include SHR 358/705, 741, 719, 772). The existence of towers within villages has been noted in both the limestone hills and the Hauran, where certain examples still survive to full-height (Sartre-Fauriat 2001: 66-68). There are

also a number of wells, or more probably cisterns, situated at certain locations around the village, which indicate that the survival of the village was not dependent on there being water within the *birkeh*. The presence of rotary mills confirms the main focus for the inhabitants was in agriculture; however it seems from evidence now lost that the village was rich enough to outlay money on the building of a temple complex. It is not yet certain to what period the majority of structures date, though from the different constructions some structures may have had a long occupation. Future analyses of the pottery distribution and wall types across the village may help to clarify this further.

Continuity versus discontinuity

At some point the village was abandoned by permanent sedentary inhabitants and became ruins. It is not yet known when exactly this occurred; the village may have been occupied and abandoned many times since the early Islamic period. Certainly the initial analysis of the Islamic pottery indicates some form of occupation of parts of the village in periods after the early Islamic period. The reference to Kurds in the village name of Krad Dasiniyeh, and the occupancy of adjoining villages by Turkmen, Alaouites and settled Bedouin reflects the shifting



Figure 10 Basalt relief statue from site SHR 673 of a male figure in Graeco-Roman dress.

patterns of settlement, the complex issues of land ownership and tenure, and the changing relationship between state, village and tribe (see Khalidi 1984). This certainly has been the case since the beginning of the Ottoman period, when this area formed part of a transitional zone utilised by a confusing and changing mix of settled villagers, migratory farmers, wandering peasants and migratory groups of Kurds, Turkmen, local Bedouin sheep herders and long distance camel-rearing transhumants (Douwes 2000: 20-25). In tax sources and European travellers' accounts from the early 19th century, some of the villages in the vicinity of Dar es-Salaam are listed as being occupied, though not Dar es-Salaam itself nor a number of other villages occupied today (Douwes 2000; Douwes and Lewis 1992; Smith 1846). The real expansion of sedentary settlement came following the application of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858, which reformed land ownership and taxation rights, creating the right incentive for many previously migratory groups to settle on a more permanent basis (Douwes 2000: 39; Sluglett and Farouk-Sluglett 1984).

Future directions

The planning exercise has produced a wealth of new material which now has to be effectively repackaged, assessed and analysed. The planning of structures within Dar es-Salaam (358) has clarified the size of the village, and has helped to provide some initial thoughts on its internal organisation and development and its relationship with its hinterland. It is also clear that the *qal'a* has proved to be the focus of change across several time periods, and has probably had defensive, ritual and administrative purposes in many of these periods.

Achieving these objectives (whilst continuing to enrich a unique record of an endangered resource) will add to the detailed exploration of data collected within the first season and will generate new synergies from which, consequently, a deeper understanding of the region can be produced. This report has only been able to touch on a few of the issues the project has raised, and it is hoped future analyses of the plans and surface finds will produce a more detailed history of development and a deeper understanding of the relationship of a village to its environs and the wider region.

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