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THIRD MILLENNIUM CUNEIFORM TEXTS FROM TELL BEYDAR (SEASONS 1996-2002)

Subartu

XII

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Tell Beydar/Nabada in its Regional Setting

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The Early Dynastic administrative texts excavated at Tell Beydar since 1993 cover only a limited range of activities such as the production and distribution of grain, the organization of labor, and the management of herds of sheep and goats. But it is precisely this perspective on basic transactions that helps us to understand more and more of Tell Beydar's society, economy, and historical situation. Already at the time of the first publication in *Subartu* 2 (1996) the basic facts of the political structure had become clear.[1] Tell Beydar was ruled by the king of Nagar, written en ("lord") as other rulers of Syria in the more or less contemporary texts from Ebla. One of the problems remaining was the ancient name of Tell Beydar, which was still hidden among the more than thirty place names attested in the tablets. External evidence can hardly be expected from the few third millennium texts from other sites of the Khabur region.[2] Old Babylonian texts, either from Mari or from Chagar Bazar, would not apply, since Tell Beydar exhibits no signs of an Old Babylonian occupation.[3] The publication of passages from Ebla texts pertaining to settlements in the kingdom of Nagar (Archi 1998) provided the key for an identification of Tell Beydar's ancient name (Sallaberger 1998b).

Marc Lebeau suggested to Sallaberger to repeat the main arguments for the identification in this publication of Beydar texts. Furthermore, he pointed out the potential of a comparison between the textual data on settlements and the map resulting from the Tell Beydar survey. The data from this survey, directed by Tony Wilkinson in 1997 and 1998, have been evaluated by Ur as part of his Chicago dissertation on "Urbanism and Society in the Third Millennium Upper Khabur Basin". The authors learned about each other's current work on a bus trip from Damascus to Hasseke in September 2002, and an intensive discussion started at Tell Beydar. The contribution of Ur proved to be so substantial that it was soon decided to combine our efforts for this article. Sections 1 and 2 were written by Sallaberger, Section 3 by Ur; the conclusions, based on a text of Ur, are signed by both authors. The perspective of this paper, however, could only be reached through the constant dialogue of philology and archaeology.

1. The Identification of Tell Beydar's Ancient Name

1.1. Place Names in the Texts from Tell Beydar

The ancient name of Tell Beydar is expected among the place names in the tablets found at this site (see Index *Subartu* 2, p. 191 f.). Two possible candidates amongst the most prominent names were soon discarded: Nagar and Suʟum. Nagar's identification with Tell Brak is now well established, so that it can be reasonably excluded as name of Tell Beydar. Another possible candidate was Suʟum, because a month is named after its god, "the Lord of Suʟum" (Ba'l Suʟum), and offerings take place at Suʟum. Especially suggestive was the phrase "income (mu-ku$_6$(DU)) of Suʟum" in **9** and **42**, which however can be related to the delivery of sheep for the cult (see comments to **9** in *Subartu* 2 and p. 86 there).

The identification of Tell Beydar is based on a careful analysis of the texts containing several place names, especially two small groups which deal with agricultural work and with workforce, respectively.

1.2. Place Names in Texts Dealing with Agriculture

Three texts, **3, 39**, and **125**, document agricultural personnel and animals attributed to

a) the five leading agricultural managers: Arrum, Arši-aḫu, ḪAʟʟi, Tabla'alim, Kurilum (cf. *Subartu* 2, p. 90-92)

b) place names: Abalada, Aḫutu, Anmaʟum, Ašma, Išgar, Sikil, Suʟum, Tu'amu.

Apparently, the five managers represent the local institution of Beydar and the place names are settlements in its vicinity, their agriculture (at least partially?) being organized by the urban center.

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[1] See K. Van Lerberghe, *Subartu* 2, p. 121 f.: "Nagar and Beydar"; Sallaberger ibid. p. 105; Sallaberger 1999.
The literature given by Sallaberger 1998a, 23 note 2, can now be supplemented by the following publications of texts from Tell Brak: Eidem *et al.* 2001; Black 2003; Michalowski 2003.

[3] The only tell with Old Babylonian occupation in the area of the Tell Beydar survey (see below) is TBS 39 (Sekar Foqani); see T. Wilkinson 2002, 363. If its name appears in the Beydar tablets, it is the only name that we should also look for in the Mari - Chagar Bazar - Leilan texts (J. U.).

Therefore, none of these place names can represent the ancient name of Tell Beydar. For a more detailed representation of these lists see Section 2.1 below.

The fragmentary text **37**, which lists Nagar in an agricultural context, is excluded from this discussion, since this entry probably refers to grain destined for Nagar (cf. **78**, **99**). Ašma is further mentioned as place of donkeys in **126** besides *É-ad*^{ki} (cf. for donkeys also 1.5. below), SIKIL in the bulla **184**, probably concerning a large amount of grain.

1.3. Place Names in Texts Concerning Workforce

Texts **2**, **10**, **29**, and **40** list men grouped with place names, apparently some kind of conscription of workforce. Of these, **2** and **40** deal with one place each, Aḫutu (**2**) and SUḪUM (**40**), **29** iii 8-iv 11 with U'asi. These texts show the following structure:

2 [ki nita] *a-ḫu-tu* 1.12[+x?]	**40** ki nita *su-Lum*^{ki} 1.30	**29** iii 8-iv 11 ki nita *ú-a-si*^{ki} 1.13	Interpretation Heading: "'Place' of men, (at) Aḫutu: 72[+x?] (men) (**2**) / at ŠUḪUM 90 (men) (**40**) / at U'asi 73 (men)" (**29**)
na-ba$_4$*-da*^{ki} (7 PN's, each 1 to 4; = 11+x)	*na-ba*$_4$*-da*^{ki} (20 PN's, each 1 to 3; = 24 [+x?])	*na-ba*$_4$*-da*^{ki} (3 PN's, each 1 or 3; = 5)	Nabada: list of persons + number
AN-*ma-Lum*^{ki} (2 PN's, each 1; = 2)	AN-*ma-Lum*^{ki} (1 PN, 2; = 2)	*iš*$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki} (1 PN, 1; = 1)	ANMAḪUM: list of persons + number
iš$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki} (1 PN, 1; = 1)	*iš*$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki} (2 PN's, 1 and 2; =3)	AN-*ma-Lum*^{ki} (4 PN's, each 1; = 4)	Išgar: list of persons + number
sikil.sikil	sikil.sikil / *su-Lum*^{ki} 1.02 / na-ba$_4$-da^{ki} 7	(sikil.sikil of rev. v 1 perhaps belonging to following section)	final statement: "free (of work)"(?) (**40**: at SUḪUM 62 and at Nabada 7)

- Table 1: Lists of men at Aḫutu, SUḪUM and U'asi

In these lists, the persons listed by name after each place name are probably the overseers to which the "men" (nita) of the heading are assigned; the numbers following each name apparently represent the number of these men.[4] The total of the numbers for each place name is indicated in table 1.

Whereas **2** and **40** contain only the lists of men, the overall structure of text **29** is not yet clear. The first part (i 1-ii 10) might contain a list of men at SIKIL, suggested by the parallel in **10** i. **29** iii 1-7 shows the same elements as the concluding part of the text in col. vi (ká ^{d}utu, *iš*$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki}, *tu-'à-na-šu*). We are not able to offer a coherent interpretation of these passages.

The place names Nabada, ANMAḪUM, and Išgar appear in all three lists **2**, **29**, and **40** in the same function; their status differs from that of the settlements Aḫutu, SUḪUM, and U'asi. The only reasonable explanation of this evidence is that Nabada, ANMAḪUM and Išgar were the administrative centers managing the workforce of the various (smaller) settlements. In all three lists, Nabada is consistently listed first, with by far the highest number of personal names.

The special status of Nabada is even more apparent when we compare the three lists in table 1 to text **10**. This list deals with 9 place names, among these Aḫutu, SUḪUM and U'asi as in table 1 above, and again their administrative centers and personal names followed by numbers. But **10** gives only the administrative centers ANMAḪUM and Išgar, but not Nabada. As far as the text is preserved, the corresponding sections listing names and numbers are completely identical. In Sallaberger 1999b, p. 123, the lists concerning Aḫutu in **10** v 2-7 and in **2** were given. Here the parallel sections concerning U'asi are presented:

[4] This interpretation is corroborated by the exception of **29** ii 10, *šu-na-na* munus 2+[x]: Šunana is assigned two women instead of the usual men.

10 i 6–ii 5	**29** iii 8–iv 11	
ú-a-si^{ki}	ki nita *ú-a-si*^{ki}	"'place of' men [thus **29**], (at) U'asi"
	na-ba$_4$-da^{ki} URI-*wa-*┌x┐ 1 ┌*ḫa*$^{?}$*-la*┐*-bù* 1 ┌*šu*┐*-be-lim* 3	Nabada: list of PN's followed by a number, probably representing the number of men for whom PN is responsible
iš$_{11}$-gàr^{ki} *i-šu-il* 1[5]	*iš$_{11}$-gàr*^{ki} *i-šu*-diĝir 1	Išgar: same as for Nabada
AN-*ma-*LUM^{ki} ┌ŠÚ.SA┐*-ir* 1 ┌*kùn*-bàd┐ 1 é-gal 1 ┌*íl*┐*-ti-*┌*gi*┐*-mu* 1	AN-*ma-*LUM^{ki} ŠÚ.SA-*ir* 1 ┌*kùn*┐-bàd 1 é-gal 1 *íl-ti-*┌*gi*┐*-mu* 1	ANMAḪ.UM: same as for Nabada

- Table 2: Section concerning U'asi in **10** (Išgar and ANMAḪ.UM) and **29** (Nabada, Išgar, and ANMAḪ.UM)

For our present purpose (see especially section 2. below) it is useful to present an overview of **10**, a list of the workers in several settlements managed by the centers ANMAḪ.UM and Išgar. As in table 1 above, the totals of the numbers following the administrative center or its personal names are indicated.

Settlement in **10**	administrative center and total of men in **10**	parallel sections in other texts
SIKIL	Išgar 1+x [...]	cf. **29** ii 9 f.
U'asi	 Išgar 1 ANMAḪ.UM 4	**29** iii 8-iv 11: Nabada 5 Išgar 1 ANMAḪ.UM 4
...zimu	Išgar [1]	
Tu'amu	ANMAḪ.UM 3 Išgar 2	
TU	Išgar 9 (SIKIL.SIKIL 3) ANMAḪ.UM 3	
Aḫutu	 ANMAḪ.UM 2 Išgar 1	**2**: Nabada 11+[x] ANMAḪ.UM 2 Išgar 1
SUḪ.UM	 ANMAḪ.UM 2 Išgar 9	**40**: Nabada 24 (+ [x]?) ANMAḪ.UM 2 Išgar 3+[6]
Ra'u	Išgar 3	
Abalada	ANMAḪ.UM 6 <+?> <...>	

- Table 3: Lists of men in settlements, attributed to the centers Nabada, ANMAḪ.UM and Išgar

The totals of the administrative centers in text **10** are: Išgar 27, ANMAḪ.UM 12 (+ 6 at Abalada, an unfinished section).

[5] The figure 1 is missing in the transliteration, as noted by Charpin 1997, 188; in ii 7 add [1].

The special status of Nabada is confirmed by **73**, dealing with 1001+x men in the "country, land" (kalam^{ki}) and 605 men in Nabada (see Sallaberger 1999b, 123f.). Considering the terminology of men (nita), being partly "free" of service (? sikil.sikil), this text **73** can be linked with the group discussed here. Nabada represents the administrative center and the "country" (kalam^{ki}) may correspond to Išgar, ANMAL.UM and the other settlements.

1.4. Conclusion

The lists of workforce (1.3) reveal the existence of three administrative centers, Nabada, ANMAL.UM, and Išgar. Of these, Nabada, is by far the most important. Nabada occupies not only the first, but also a special place, since it does not appear in the summary list **10**.

Some of the settlements managed by Nabada, ANMAL.UM, and Išgar appear again in the lists of agricultural personnel and plow animals (see 1.2). In these agricultural texts, we also meet ANMAL.UM and Išgar, their elevated rank is indicated by the high numbers of personnel and animals attributed to them (see 2.1., table 5). These lists open with the five main administrators of Tell Beydar. As Nabada is not named here, the conclusion is inevitable that Nabada represents the name of Tell Beydar.

1.5. Texts not used

Other texts from Tell Beydar listing several place names are not used in this study. In **23**, which lists donkeys with their fodder, *lu-rí-um*^{ki} (v 6), *la-i-um*^{ki} (vi 4) and UN-gal^{ki} (vi 6) might represent the place where the animals listed with their respective responsibles are stationed.[6] Note that *lu-rí-um*^{ki} may possibly be mentioned in an Old Akkadian fragment from Tell Brak as [...] *lu-rí-im*^{ki} (Eidem *et al.* 2001, 109 text 29; complete text preserved). **133** enumerates donkeys in(?)/from(?) *ma-wa*^{ki} and ES$_5^{ki}$. **64** deals with persons "sitting" in *i-mu*^{ki} and mentions *i-rí-um*^{ki} and IGI^{ki}. The geographical names of the legal document **35** seem to pertain partly to villages in the Euphrates valley (*ḫa-la-bi-um*^{ki}, NE:*mâ*^{ki}, but also *a-ba$_4$-la-da*^{ki}).

In contrast to the evidence of the agricultural texts discussed above, none of these places can be located confidently in the immediate vicinity of the findspot of the tablets.

1.6. Nabada in the state of Nagar: The evidence from Ebla

In his study on "The regional state of Nagar according to the texts of Ebla", A. Archi (1998) cites the evidence from the "Annual accounts of the expenditure of metal" from the time of Arrukum and Ibrium (18 years), covering about 20 years in total. There, Nagar appears at the head of a list of a total of 17 different place names, these standing for the representatives of the more important settlements within the kingdom of Nagar who receive diplomatic gifts from the court of Ebla. No comparable texts stem from the time of Ibbi-zikir, i. e. the last 17 years of the archives of Ebla.

As the Beydar texts have made clear, Nabada was subordinate to Nagar at this time, and the repeated visits of its ruler (en) testify to its elevated rank within this kingdom (see above). One of the names in the Ebla tablets is *na-ba-ti-um*^{ki}, "one from Nabada", without doubt a *nisbe* of the same place name as *na-ba$_4$-da*^{ki} of the Beydar texts.[7] As Tell Beydar was dependent on Nagar and played a certain role in its kingdom, and since Nabada is the *only* geographical name in the Beydar texts found in the Ebla lists of the settlements of Nagar (Sallaberger 1998a), we conclude that Nabada is the name of Tell Beydar. Both ways of reasoning (1.1.-5. and 1.6.) thus lead to the same result: the identification of Tell Beydar with Nabada.

Nabada = Tell Beydar is, as mentioned above, the only place name in the Beydar texts found also in the Ebla lists of the important settlements of the state of Nagar. This corroborates our conclusion that the settlements enumerated in the agricultural and workforce documents are subject to Tell Beydar only. Tell Beydar might therefore be described as the "capital" of a "province" of the Nagar state. The position of Tell Beydar = Nabada can thus be represented as follows (table 4):

[6] The text lists a person by name, the number of her or his donkeys and the amount of fodder (5 sìla per animal). In ii 6–v 2 and in v 6–vi 1 no number of donkeys is given; since most numbers are 0;0.2, representing the fodder for "one team" (1 ÉREN) of 4 donkeys, a more explicit notation of the number of donkeys is not necessary. The place name thus means an additional information about the placement of the donkeys.

[7] The precise spelling of the place name is unknown. In Early Dynastic orthography, DA as well as TI represent any of the three consonants /d/, /t/, or /ṭ/, BA stands for /ba/ and /pa/, neither consonant lengths nor diphongs are represented in writing. Therefore, the transcription Nabada represents a simplification.

Nagar = Tell Brak: seat of ruler (en), capital of regional state
(comparable to Ebla, 'Adu, Abarsal, Mari etc.)
||

Nabada = Tell Beydar: local center of administration
= 1st rank city of the "province" of Nabada
(comparable to Kakkabän near Hasseke, and other cities of the Ebla lists)
||

ANMAŠLUM, IŠGAR: administrative sub-centers (see 1.1.-4.)
= 2nd rank settlements of the "province" of Nabada
||

SUḪUM, AḪUTU, TU'AMU, ŠIKIL, etc.: settlements (of different importance)
= 3rd rank settlements of the "province" of Nabada

- Table 4: Ranking of the settlements at the time of the Beydar tablets

2. The Hierarchic Structure of Settlements in the Environment of Tell Beydar/Nabada

2.1. A Ranking of the Sites Attested in the Beydar Texts

The identification of Tell Beydar's ancient name was achieved by ranking the place names attested in the texts from this site (see 1.1.-3. above). In the following paragraphs, the evidence of the agricultural texts is considered in order to obtain a better picture of rank and, eventually, special function of sites within the Beydar "province".

The texts concerning workforce have been tabulated in 1.3. above. Now we consider the place names in the agricultural texts **3**,[8] **39**, and **125**, dealing with the attribution of personnel and/or draught animals (oxen and donkeys) for ploughing. For comparison, the numbers attributed in the same texts to the five leading agricultural officials which represent Nabada are included (cf. *Subartu* 2, p. 91).

3		**39** iii-vi		**125**	
numbers = draught animals + personnel		numbers = ... (ba-lá) of persons		numbers = oxen (o.) and donkeys (d.)	
Officials:		Officials:		Officials:	
ḪALṬI	36? + 39	ḪALṬI	18 + [x]	ḪALṬI	[x?]
Arrum	30 + 30	Arrum	31?	Arrum	x o. + 1+[x] d.
Tabla'alim	19+[x] + 29+[x]	Tabla'alim	29+[x]	Tabla'alim	3 o.
Aršiaḫu	25 + 11+x	Aršiaḫu	31	Aršiaḫu	6 d.
KUR-ilum	35 + 37	KUR-ilum	34	KUR-ilum	[x?]
total:	145+[x] + 146+[x]	total:	143+[x]	total:	3+[x] o. + 7+[x] d.
Place names (iv 9–viii 4):		Place names (v 4–vi 2):		Place names (ii 1–iii 2):	
[AN-*ma-lum*^{ki}]	20 + 20	*aš-ma*^{ki}	6	*aš-ma*^{ki}	1 o.
iš$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki}	20 + 20	*su-lum*^{ki}	10+[x]	*su-lum*^{ki}	4 o.
su-lum^{ki}	10 + 6+[x]	*a-ḫu-du*^{ki}	7	ŠIKIL^{ki}	1 o.
[...]	[x] + 7	ŠIKIL^{ki}	4	*iš*$_{11}$-*gàr*^{ki}	[x]
a-ḫu-du^{ki}	8 + 4+[x]	*a-ba*$_4$-*la-da*^{ki}	2	*a-ḫu-du*^{ki}	4 o.
[...]	[...]	*tu-a-mu*^{ki}	2+[1?]	AN-*ma-lum*^{ki}	2 d.
tu-a-mu^{ki}	6? + 4+[x]				
[...]	[...]				

- Table 5: Place names in agricultural texts

All place names except Ašma also appear in the texts on work-force in 1.3, which include four additional names (Ra'u, Tu, U'asi, ...zimu). The order of the place names in the texts may not be accidental. In **3**, the place names are apparently grouped according to the number of animals and personnel. In **39** and **125**, however, the order does not depend on the numbers. Do these texts follow a geographical order, and could this also be true for **10** (see 1.3. above)? A comparison of these lists does not lead to a conclusive answer:

[8] For a more detailed tabulation of **3** see K. Van Lerberghe, Subartu 2, p. 115f.

39: Ašma - SUḪUM - Aḫutu - SIKIL - Abalada - Tuamu
125: Ašma - SUḪUM - SIKIL - Išgar - Aḫutu - ANMAḪUM
10: SIKIL - U'asi - ...zimu - Tu'amu - TU - Aḫutu - SUḪUM - Ra'u - Abalada

Could the pairs Ašma - SUḪUM and SUḪUM - Aḫutu (separated by the pair SIKIL - Išgar in **125**) represent neighboring settlements?

Furthermore, the grouping of place names in the lists could provide another clue for the localisation of the subcenters of Tell Beydar. There, two principles of organisation can be expected: an hierarchical and a geographical order. If we look at the texts listed in table 3, **10** and the duplicate passages in **2**, **29**, and **40**, we notice that some of the settlements list the administrative subcenter Išgar first, others ANMAḪUM (both 2nd rank of Nabada). The places mentioning Išgar first are SIKIL, U'asi, and TU. SIKIL and Išgar are also related in the agricultural texts.

2.2. Other Information on Place Names

Further information about the place names of the "province" of Nabada comes from documents recording fodder for the ruler's donkeys and texts listing offerings.

The Beydar texts stem from an institution which was among other things obliged to feed the donkeys of the ruler (en) when he stayed at Tell Beydar (*Subartu* 2, 103-105). In three texts, fodder was also provided for a trip by the ruler to other settlements, which we have already encountered in the text groups discussed above.

47: kalam^{ki} ("in the country", see 1.3. above on **73**), AN-*ma-ḫum*^{ki} (cf. ANMAḪUM and kalam also in the fragmentary **69**)
122: en *na-gàr*^{ki} ("the ruler of/from Nagar"), UR-BAR^{ki} (a place attested only here), [*su*]-*ḫum*^{ki}, AN-*ma-ḫum*^{ki}
200: *in* kalam^{ki}, *a-ba*$_4$-*la-da*^{ki}

A handful of texts (see comments in *Subartu* 2 on **42** and add **148** in this volume) lists sheep and goats delivered for sacrifices, often under the patronage of the ruler. Also animals "brought in", mu-ku$_x$(DU), are related to the offerings.

42: mu-DU *su-ḫum*^{ki}, *ra*^{ki}, cf. **9**: udu mu-DU *su-ḫum*^{ki}
94: AN-*ma-ḫum*^{ki} (fragmentary text, only place name)

Thus, of the place names known from the text groups discussed above, ANMAḪUM (second rank in table 4), Abalada, and SUḪUM (both third rank) were visited by the ruler. Offerings are known for ANMAḪUM and twice for SUḪUM. An otherwise unattested name is URBAR of **122**.

2.3. The province of Nabada according to the evidence of the administrative texts

According to the lists discussed in 1.3 and 2.1, the administration of Nabada organized the agriculture and workforce of twelve different settlements, which therefore belonged to the "province" of Nabada (within the state of Nagar). Due to the often fragmentary state of preservation of the texts[9] and the limited range of activities attested, this number of course represents an absolute minimum of the settlements which were dependent on Nabada.

Other place names attested in the Beydar tablets do not necessarily belong to the province of Nabada, although the placement of donkeys or persons there would point in this direction. For the context of the place names we refer to the discussion in 1.5 (*lu-rí-um*^{ki}, *la-i-um*^{ki}, and UN-gal^{ki} in **23**, *ma-wa*^{ki} and EŠ$_8$^{ki} in **133**, *i-mu*^{ki}, *i-rí-um*^{ki}, and IGI^{ki} in **64**) and 2.2. on UR-BAR^{ki}. The inclusion of these place names would raise the total number attested for the Nabada province to 22.

The textual evidence discussed above provides clues for the internal organisation of the province. The texts on workforce (see 1.3) show that the organization was not centered exclusively at Nabada, but that two sub-centers shared the responsibility for other settlements. It is reasonable to assume that these sub-centers, as seats of the respective local officials, would have been distinguished by a greater population and spatial extension. As a summary of the data from the administrative texts, the settlements of the Nabada province can be grouped according to their rank in the following manner:

The main and only center was Nabada which is assigned the first rank within the province.

The two most important administrative centers of second rank were ANMAḪUM and Išgar; both served as sub-centers for the management of workers (see 1.3 and 2.1 and table 5). Of these, only at ANMAḪUM are offerings and visits of the ruler attested (2.2). Išgar was not situated on the ruler's way to and from Beydar.[10]

[9] Note especially that **10**, the key document for the administration of workforce, is unfinished; it could have included one or perhaps even two more place names.
[10] Note that Išgar does not appear in **39** in table 4, too, although it is listed in **125**.

The group of third rank settlements consisted of all the other settlements which were subordinate to Nabada. Among these, Sul.um and Aḫutu should be singled out, since both of them show relatively high numbers (in table 4), but were still subordinate to Anmal.um and Išgar (1.3). Sul.um was an important religious center with offerings and visited by the ruler (see 2.2). Its god, the "Lord of Sul.um" (Ba'l-Sul.um) gave the name to one of the twelve months of the local calendar of Nabada (*Subartu* 2, p. 85 f.). Of the other settlements, only Abalada was mentioned in connection with the ruler's stay. A further ranking of this more inhomogenous group cannot be founded on unequivocal evidence, since differences in numbers might depend on other factors (such as distance, differing obligations or duties) besides importance and influence.

rank	place name	commentary	number of place names (total = 13+9)
1	Nabada	= Tell Beydar, capital of province (see 1.6)	1
2	Anmal.um, Išgar	administrative subcenter (see 1.3)	2
3	Sul.um, Aḫutu	settlements of greater importance (see 2.3)	2
	Abalada, Ašma, Sikil, Tu'amu	administration of agriculture *and* (except Ašma) workforce (see table 5)	4
	Ra'u, Tu, U'asi, ...zi-mu	only administration of workforce (see 1.3)	4
	ES_5, Igi, Imu, Iri'um, La'i'um, Luri'um, Mawa, Un.gal, Ur.bar	affiliation doubtful	9

- Table 6: Settlements of the province of Nabada

The administration of agriculture in the hinterland of Nabada was certainly intrinsically linked to the political organisation. Although the designation and extent of the central institution of Tell Beydar which exerted political and economic control remains unknown, some thought might be given to this point. The archive stems from the area surrounding the official block, the institution reflected in the archive deals with various parts of the economy, controls several hundred workers and distributes the draught animals and persons needed in farming even in several smaller settlements. The internal administration was well represented, whereas exchange and interaction with the capital at Nagar was only scarcely documented.[11]

The highest level of administration represented in the texts consists of the five leading officials Arrum, Arši-aḫu, Ḫal-ti, Tabla'alim and Kur-ilum, discussed in *Subartu* 2, pp. 90–92. They are responsible for the personnel of 75 to 235 persons of various professions (*Subartu* 2, pp. 89–98), control draught animals, female and male workers, dispose of grain, flour or copper tools and provide animals for offerings. The titles of these men are not given nor do we know if they act in charge of the palace or a local provincial governor, of a temple or of the city. For the sake of clarity it must be mentioned that ownership of arable land is not documented in the archive, although the central organisation of field work suggests that at least a substantial part of it was institutionally owned.[12]

The listing of the five leading officials together with place names in the agricultural texts (see 1.2) leads to the following conclusions. The provincial capital Nabada controlled not only its surrounding farmland but also the land of the entire province,[13] represented by some prominent settlements.[14] More importantly, these settlements assumed responsibility for their own surrounding farmlands, including smaller villages

[11] On the few documents listing grain for Nagar see in general Sallaberger 1999; cf. also **37**. The corresponding case from the view of the capital is attested at Ebla, where the deliveries of grain from the single settlements are noted; cf. e. g. Archi 1993, 14.

[12] The numbers of oxen and men in **3** (see table 5), to a lesser extent also those of the other texts, seem to indicate that the central institution of Nabada is organizing only a part of the agriculture of the dependent villages. In this regard, a careful calculation of the arable land available for Tell Beydar and the smaller sites would be desirable.

[13] No conclusion on the extent of the control of Nabada is possible, and in this regard the authors suppose slightly differing, though partly compatible models. The lists of plow teams suggest to J. Ur that while the Nabada institution controlled all of the land in its own hinterland, it provided teams to the other settlements in quantities which would have only accounted for a portion of their own hinterlands. He concludes from this that the Nabada institution directly administered only some of the land surrounding the other settlements. W. Sallaberger, on the other hand, would interpret the evidence as testimony of institutionally owned arable land both at the center and in the villages.

[14] There are more place names listed in the texts concerning workforce than in the agricultural texts (see above), but this does not imply that only a smaller area was concerned. As we have argued above, the hierarchy of the settlements of the province is rudimentarily known; in the agricultural texts we meet the subcenters Išgar and Anmal.um as well as the other more important settlements Sul.um and Aḫutu. This implies that the area of the whole province was covered by the settlements named and that it included also the smaller villages known from other texts, especially those on workforce.

(see fn. 9). The documents characteristically list place names and not e.g. temples or agricultural managers responsible for the whole province. This point becomes even more interesting if we compare this picture to that which emerges from the documentation of Southern Mesopotamia. There, in the zone of irrigation agriculture, the centers manage enormously large areas of land with considerable variation in their internal set-up. On the other hand, at Nabada in the dry-farming zone the settlements directly worked their surrounding fields even if this work is ultimately controlled and sponsored by the provincial capital.[15]

2.4. Textual Data on the Population Size of Nabada

The discussion of the archaeological evidence below deals among other things with the population size of the settlements, the province and the kingdom of Nagar. Therefore the most important textual data pertaining to this question are assembled here for a preliminary evaluation. More specific results can be expected from the ongoing excavations in the living quarters at Tell Beydar.[16]

The ration lists cover 75 to 230 persons (Sallaberger, *Subartu* 2, p. 89), of which only about one fifth are women (see pp. 43 f.). The ration lists are headed by the five main officials (*Subartu* 2, pp. 90 f.). If they represent five different "households", the lists would add up to 1000 persons (ibid. p. 92). This conclusion agrees with the largely parallel numbers of the agricultural professions lú-ĝiš-DU and *ba-rí* udu in **39** i-ii (ibid. p. 91 table 2; cf. p. 92). To the numbers of the men in the ration lists must be added the members of their families, for which we would estimate at least + 800 women (if all are married) + their eventual children. This high number agrees with the number of workers "of the fortress/wall, (for) harvesting" in **102**, listed with the five main officials: the numbers add up to 1102 persons (the possibly missing figures in the breaks could increase this by ca. 100). The presence of the five officials and the link with the term bàd "wall" could point to persons from Nabada itself, but one cannot exclude the possibility of additional workers from other settlements. If, however, we are dealing with one "household" managed by one official at a time, the numbers of the ration lists would become less important for our calculations.

Text **73** iii 2-4 lists 605 "men" (nita) at Nabada and 240 "free(?)" (sikil-sikil; iii 5-iv 2). There is no indication, if the 240 are part of the 605 or have to be added to these, thus representing a group of 845 men, divided into active and passive workers. These are opposed to 1001+x (but not more than 1091) in the "land" (i 1-4). The 605 or 845 "men" of "Nabada" have to be multiplied by at least 2.5 (representing women, babies, ill; assuming that even children and old persons are included) = 1513 or 2113. This suggests a similar population size for Nabada as do the ration lists and the harvester text **102**.

Although all these calculations are based on many assumptions and are therefore to be handled with the utmost caution, the basic textual evidence concerning the numbers of persons has to be considered seriously. The possible number of more than 1500 inhabitants means a very dense population in the living quarters of Tell Beydar, since a substantial part of its surface is covered by monumental buildings. Under the assumption that all persons receiving rations live in Nabada or at least in villages very close to the city,[17] there remains hardly any place for people independent of the central institution. This discovery that the institution to which we owe the Beydar tablets is not any institution, but the central institution of Beydar is surely one of the most important results of the evaluation of the textual data in the light of the archeological evidence.

Other texts are more difficult to understand. **52** lists 162 persons as "substitutes" (? ki nita egir$_4$) from six city quarters; **49** deals with plowmen (engar) with various cereals; the interpretation of the high numbers, 5400+1240+1240, which could indicate days of work, remains uncertain, however (see *Subartu* 2, p. 146).

Finally, the available numbers for the villages of the Nabada province have to be considered. The numbers of "men" (nita) of table 1 for some 3rd rank sites are not very revealing, however: 72+x (but probably not more than 92) for Aḫutu, 90 for SuLum, 73 for U'asi. These sites (with the possible exception of SuLum) should fall into the range of 1 to 4 ha villages (see below 3.3) which would correspond to 100/200 to 400/800 inhabitants (see note 33). These relatively high numbers suggest that the Beydar institution administered a substantial portion, if not all, of the able-bodied men from these villages. Several aspects of this administration remain unclear, most importantly the nature of this relationship and its duration.

Our conclusion concerning the character of the institution to which we owe the archive has important consequences for an understanding of the society and economy of Nabada, as the number of persons

[15] The difference between the organization of arable land in the southern alluvial plain and Northern Mesopotamia was recently underlined by Steinkeller (1999); note that he distinguishes between northern "palaces" and southern "temples"; the Beydar evidence seems to favor an important role of the communities instead of the palace.

[16] The research conducted by Alexander Pruß and Sallaberger on the "Social structure of Tell Beydar/Nabada" will, among other things, also be devoted to the population size.

[17] Note the uninhabited belt surrounding Tell Beydar and the relative distance of larger centers; see below.

involved corresponds by and large to the estimated population size of Tell Beydar. This important aspect deserves a detailed discussion, which cannot be offered here.

Besides agricultural activities, a wide range of professions is documented in the ration lists (*Subartu* 2, pp. 93-98), but other activities must have taken place in the town like food production, textile manufacturing, and metal work (only indirectly attested by **6**; cf. Van Lerberghe, *Subartu* 2, p. 112). The latter professions are linked to the palace or other large institutions, but their absence in the accidentally discovered remains of an archive leaves room for several interpretations.

At the time of the tablets, early urban culture in Northern Mesopotamia was, on a very general scale, largely comparable to that of Southern Mesopotamia: large institutions dominated the organization of manpower, and agricultural work was a collective labor. The ultimate role of the dominant institutions might differ: whereas in the South temples played an important, though not exclusive role, we lack comparable information for the five leading officials of Nabada. The inhabitants of ancient Beydar have left their traces both in the textual and archaeological record. Whereas ration lists comparable to those from Beydar are known from most archives of Early Mesopotamia, no site with textual record offers a comparable archaeological evidence. We hope that the ongoing excavations at Tell Beydar will reveal more about the living conditions of the persons who were dependent on the central institution.[18]

3. Archaeological Survey of the Province of Nabada: The Tell Beydar Survey

The discovery of 216 administrative tablets at Tell Beydar between 1993 and 2002 provides a unique opportunity to integrate textual data on ancient settlement and land use with archaeologically documented sites and landscape features for the EJ IIIb Upper Khabur Basin. Archaeology can serve to ground the abstract words, names and figures of the texts as well as our modern interpretations of them, while the study of epigraphic materials can add a heightened chronological and historical acuity to vague archaeological materials. Any interpretation which synthesizes both data sources is much stronger than one that ignores or prioritizes one over the other.

3.1. The Limitations of Archaeological Survey Data

Before we attempt such a synthesis, it is important to recognize the limitations of archaeological materials. Archaeology has great advantages: unlike the case with textual records and the chances of their discovery, almost all social elements leave some recoverable trace in the archaeological record (although non-sedentary pastoral groups are very difficult to detect). However, these physical traces are often subject to a much wider range of interpretations than textual records.

The most significant limitation is one that is not unique to survey but central to all archaeological assemblages. Whereas epigraphers have chronologically sensitive tools such as palaeography, prosopography, and sometimes even historical calendar datings at their disposal, archaeologists rely on relatively dated sequences of various types of material culture, often exclusively ceramics. Ceramics are not very sensitive chronologically, and they have never evolved in tandem with the political events which define the Mesopotamian historical chronology. The excavations at late 3rd and 2nd millennium Tell Brak and Tell Rimah, where dated tablets and historical inscriptions have been found in close association with ceramics, have demonstrated that few if any ceramic types can be limited to a single historically defined period (Oates *et al.* 1997, 2001a; C. Postgate *et al.* 1997). Potters were probably part-time craft specialists who were unattached to elite political institutions;[19] as such their products are unlikely to reflect political changes (Stein and Blackman 1993; Sallaberger 1996).[20]

Relative dating using ceramics faces an additional problem in surface assemblages. In excavated contexts, the archaeologist can make use of diachronic fluctuations in type frequencies through stratified deposits, but the sherds which comprise a site's surface assemblage have gone through multiple post-depositional transformations which make type frequencies very difficult to interpret; sherds of all periods of occupation are combined in a single surface unit.

For these reasons, the sites around Beydar cannot be dated as precisely as the excavated strata at the

[18] See the research program mentioned in note 16 above.

[19] Note that potters are employed by the central institution of Tell Beydar; see *Subartu* 2, pp. 95–97.

[20] There are considerable differences in ceramic repertoires between the western, central, and eastern zones of the Upper Khabur basin throughout the third Millennium BC (Lebeau 2000; Milano/Biga 2000). Even when forms are distributed across the entire basin, there are differences in opinion regarding dating. For example, the recessed-rimmed tall beaker is an 'Akkadian' (EJ IV) diagnostic at Beydar (Lebeau 2000, 177) but a "Post-Akkadian" (EJ V) type at Brak (Oates 2001a, 193f.). See Ur (2002, 70f.) on the difficulties involved in distinguishing ED III and Akkadian ceramics in surface assemblages.

site itself, particularly when tablets are included. The textual records give a "snapshot" of the economic workings of an administrative institution at Tell Beydar, whereas the archaeological survey has revealed a palimpsest of settlements built upon settlements, some of which may be contemporary with the Beydar tablets but some of which might just have chronologically indistinguishable surface pottery.

A final issue to bear in mind when interpreting survey data is how we judge the political and economic "importance" of a site. In other geomorphological contexts, material traces of ancient political power such as palaces, temples, and ritual spaces are visible without excavation, allowing a plausible political hierarchy to be reconstructed from survey data alone (for example, Montmollin 1989 on the Maya); such is not possible on the plains of northern Mesopotamia, where mudbrick palaces erode just the same as humble dwellings. As a result, this and other studies of Near Eastern archaeological survey data have relied disproportionately on the size of sites to serve as the primary indicator of importance. In an economic sense, this practice is generally justified; large sites had larger populations which would have required more provisioning than villages. However, it is an oversimplification to assume that small sites were politically unimportant. Chagar Bazar was a mere 12 hectares in the early 2nd millennium, but it served an important administrative function in the kingdom of Shamshi-Adad (Talon 1997). The 5 hectare site of Sabi Abyad was the site of a Middle Assyrian fortress and agricultural estate (*dunnu*) on the empire's western frontier (Wiggermann 2000). Tell al-Raqa'i on the Middle Khabur was only 0.5 ha in the early 3rd Millennium but has monumental architecture which may have served as a center of agricultural surplus storage and shipment (Schwartz 1994; see critiques in Hole 1991; Pfälzner 2002). On size criteria alone, none of these sites would have warranted undue attention from archaeologists.[21]

3.2. The Tell Beydar Survey

The Aweidj region has been subjected to archaeological survey twice in recent years. Bertille Lyonnet investigated several of the larger tells in the area as part of her extensive survey of the western Upper Khabur basin (Lyonnet 1996; 2000). An intensive full-coverage approach was adopted by the Tell Beydar Survey (TBS), which operated in 1997 and 1998 with the goals of documenting the history of settlement and land use of the Beydar area and to put the excavations at Beydar into a regional context (Wilkinson 2000; 2002).[22] The Beydar region is focused around the Wadi Aweidj, a south-flowing seasonal watercourse with a 20–30m wide floodplain; other more ephemeral wadis drain the area to the northwest and east. Occupying the southwestern quadrant of the survey area is a raised basalt plateau with very thin soils. The area receives an average of 300 mm of rainfall per year but this total fluctuates dramatically from year to year.

The TBS identified possible sites from SPOT and CORONA satellite imagery; these sites were then visited on the ground. Site boundaries were estimated via a combination of mounding, sherd density, and soil color (Wilkinson/Tucker 1995, 15–17; Ur 2002, 61). Site size was determined through pacing and later confirmed through GPS readings and measurement on satellite imagery. Ceramic collections were made in topographically defined sub-units of the sites and then dated with reference to a ceramic chronology based on the Iraqi North Jazira Survey (Wilkinson/Tucker 1995) but with modifications and additions based on recent excavations in northern Mesopotamia.

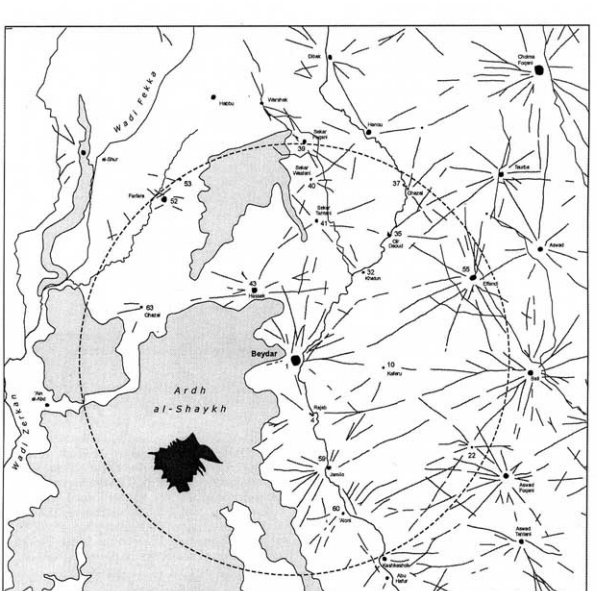
Our general ceramic indicators of EJ III-IV settlement in the Beydar area consisted of Chuera-style metallic wares, fine ware cup and beaker rims and bases, and band- or grooved-rimmed storage jars (Lebeau 1993, types JR 3, JR 5, and JR 6). A particularly common and robust diagnostic form which appears in the Aweidj and Middle Khabur areas is a storage jar with a groove or depression inside the rim, perhaps to hold a lid (Lebeau 1993 JR 8-10, GJ 2; Curvers/Schwartz 1990, Fig. 6 nos. 10 and 13).

Within the 452 km^2 survey region, the TBS recovered seventeen sites for a total of 65.8 hectares of settled area in the mid to late 3rd millennium BC (Fig. 1 and Table 7). At the apex of the TBS settlement hierarchy is of course Tell Beydar itself at 22.5 ha.[23] This topographically complex *Kranzhügel* site consists

[21] In fact, Chagar Bazar was chosen for initial excavation by Mallowan precisely because it was smaller, and therefore more manageable, than Tell Brak (Mallowan 1977, 125).

[22] The Tell Beydar Survey was directed by Tony Wilkinson of the University of Chicago Oriental Institute. The 3rd Millennium BC tells were predominantly collected in 1998 by a team consisting of Patrice Vandorpe (Leuven), Sheikhmus Ali (University of Damascus), and Jason Ur (University of Chicago). We must thank the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums in Damascus, Marc Lebeau (ECUMS), and Karel Van Lerberghe (Leuven) for their advice and support. We are also indebted to Bertille Lyonnet for her cheerful willingness to make her survey notes available to us in advance of publication.

[23] This figure excludes the extensive 40 ha Mitanni and Mid- to Neo-Assyrian lower town (Beydar II). Note that others have estimated these sizes differently. Beydar has been estimated from 29 ha (Lebeau and Suleiman 1997) to 14.5 ha (Lyonnet 2000). Lyonnet has attributed substantially smaller sizes to all of the sites she visited in the Beydar area. For example, Effendi and Hassek were both measured at 1.50 ha; the TBS estimated these sites at 8.5 ha and 7.4 ha, respectively.



- Fig. 1. Map of EJ III-IV settlement in the TBS Area with hollow ways

of a 9.6 ha central acropolis and a 7.4 ha mounded outer wall for a total of 17.0 ha of settled space. A backhoe section through the northern portion of the 5.5 ha internal circular depression revealed a sequence of thin lenses of water-laid clay to a depth of at least 4 m, which suggests that this area was seasonally flooded and unlikely to have been used for residential purposes. When one considers that a substantial part of the central acropolis was occupied by a public building which included at least four temples and several storage units, so that less space was left for the residential population of Nabada, it appears that a larger site size should not directly correspond to an increasement of the population by the same factor.

Settlement Type	*Site Name*	*EJ III-IV Site Size*
Provincial Capital (> 15 ha)	Tell Beydar (TBS 1)	22.5 ha (17.0 ha)
Town (ca. 7–10 ha)	Tell Effendi (TBS 55)	8.5 ha
	Tell Hassek (TBS 43)	7.4 ha
	Tell Farfara (TBS 52)	7.1 ha
Village (ca. 2.5–4.0 ha)	Tell Sekar Foqani (TBS 39)	3.9 ha
	Tell Jamilo (TBS 59)	3.8 ha
	Tell Sekar Tahtani (TBS 41)	2.7 ha
	Tell Rajab (TBS 4)	2.5 ha
	Gir Daoud (TBS 35)	2.5 ha
Small Village/Hamlet (<2 ha)	Tell 'Aloni (TBS 60)	1.8 ha
	Tell Khatun (TBS 32)	1.7 ha
	Tell Ghazal (TBS 63)	1.4 ha
	Tell Sawadich (TBS 53)	1.3 ha
	Tell Sekar Wastani (TBS 40)	1.2 ha
	Tell Kaferu (TBS 10)	1.2 ha
	Tell Ghazal (TBS 37)	1.2 ha
	Bergui al-Buz (TBS 22)	1.1 ha

- Table 7: Archaeological settlement hierarchy in the TBS area. Site size refers to the spatial extent of surface sherds dating to the EJ III-IV periods, based on controlled site collection.

Three sites clustered in the general range of 7-9 ha (Effendi, Hassek, and Farfara), and five clustered around 2.5-4 ha (Sekar Foqani, Jamilo, Sekar Tahtani, Rajab, and Gir Daoud). At the base of the hierarchy were eight small villages or hamlets, all less than 2 ha.

It is possible to sketch mid-late 3rd millennium BC settlement in the region beyond the boundaries of the 12 km radius which arbitrarily defined the limits of the TBS (Fig. 2).[24] Immediately to the south, salvage excavations at Tell Kashkashok 3 (4.2 ha), Tell Abu Hujayra (2.4 ha), and Tell Abu Hafur (2.0 ha) have documented other contemporary villages and hamlets. Just beyond the edge of the TBS are the important sites of Tell Hanou (6.4 ha), Tell Bati (6.6 ha), and Tell Aswad Foqani (6.6 ha). Further toward Brak and Mozan are the important but unexcavated sites of Tell Bazari (8.0 ha) and Tell Cholma Foqani (22.2 ha). Sites are smaller and less frequent in the western basin, on the opposite side of the basalt plateau. However, there are several substantial tells in this area, including two sites larger than 20 ha on the Syrian-Turkish border.[25] However, only one other site exceeds 10 ha (Tell Abu Rassine); the others cluster around 1–2 ha.

Almost all of the mid-late 3rd millennium sites in the TBS area and in the Upper Khabur basin in general are associated with shallow linear depressions which are generally 50–100 m in width. These features often radiate out from tells in a spokelike pattern, and are best interpreted as the traces of the ancient roads which conducted human and animal traffic between settlements and to and from fields and pasture (Van Liere and Lauffray 1954–55; Wilkinson 1993; Ur 2003). These "hollow ways" cannot be dated directly; it is likely that they were used in many periods, and it cannot be established that any two were in use simultaneously. However, their close spatial association with sites of the mid to late 3rd millennium is striking. While bearing in mind the above caveats, we can suggest that the distribution of hollow ways in Fig. 2 approximates the road network in the time of the EJ IIIb Nabada archives. As physical traces of the movement of farmers, herds and herdsmen, traders, and kings, they are important for understanding both subsistence economy and political economy of the Kingdom of Nagar.

3.3. The Hinterland of Tell Beydar and the 'Province' of Nabada

There are two major difficulties in synthesizing the archaeological and epigraphic record of the Beydar/Nabada region. The first is the pressing issue of contemporaneity. The workforce and agricultural accounts indicate that at least thirteen settlements (including Nabada itself) were administered by the institution at Nabada. An additional nine settlements are mentioned in contexts which are less clear;

[24] The measurements in this paragraph are the result of a GIS-based assessment of CORONA satellite photographs of these sites and have not been confirmed by ground observation or formal site collection and recording.

[25] The westernmost (30 ha) is called Tell Chanafes on Moortgat-Correns' map of the Jazira (1972, Karte II). Both appear to have Kranzhügel morphology, based on CORONA satellite photographs.

Fig. 2. Map of EJ III-IV settlement in the western and central Upper Khabur Basin, with hollow ways.

therefore we estimate that between thirteen and twenty-two settlements were within the province (see section 2.3). Were all seventeen EJ III-IV sites in the TBS area occupied at that time? Given the problems of relating ceramic sequences to a historical chronology and the specific problems of the Khabur sequences, we cannot be certain that the "snapshot" created from the tablets is absolutely equivalent to the palimpsest revealed by the TBS.

The second major difficulty is the uncertain size of the "province" of Nabada. For example, if our seventeen sites are all contemporary with the tablets, then the province, with a minimum of thirteen settlements and a likely maximum of 22, may be even smaller than the surveyed area. On the other hand, if the archive does not record every town and village in the province (i.e. it selectively mentions some places but not others), then the province could be larger than the surveyed region. Given the small labor contributions of (or expenditures to) some settlements in the texts, it appears that even the least populous hamlets in the area were part of the administrative reach of the Nabada officials; therefore we assume that the tablets do reveal a reasonable approximation of the number of settlements within Nabada's administrative purview.

Using the textual material from Beydar/Nabada and archaeological survey data from the TBS area and the basin in general, we can arrive at an estimation of the size of the 'province' of Nabada. Seventeen EJ III-IV sites were found in the 452 km^2 TBS region, for an average of 26.6 km^2 per site (or 18.6 km^2 per site if we subtract the 136 km^2 of basalt plateau). These figures agree with Wilkinson and Tucker's (1995) mid-late 3rd millennium settlement density from the Iraqi North Jazira (20 sites in 475 km^2 for an average of 23.8 km^2 per site) and a sample area in the central Khabur basin between the Wadi Aweidj and Wadi Khanzir (38 tells in 875 km^2 for an average of 23.0 km^2 per site). If we assume an even 23.0 km^2 per settlement, Nabada province would have covered between 299 km^2 and 506 km^2, if it contained thirteen and twenty-two settlements, respectively.[26]

Nabada province was thus roughly equal to, or slightly smaller than, the size of the TBS area. This is not to say that the TBS area is spatially coterminous with Nabada province, only that the arbitrarily defined survey region contains roughly the same number of EJ III-IV sites as our higher estimate of the number of settlements administered by Nabada.

The textual and archaeological settlement hierarchies correspond fairly well (Table 8). While Nabada was a unique administrative center, Beydar is uniquely large in the TBS area, being more than twice the size of the second largest site. Išgar and Anmalum serve as administrative sub-centers; Tell Effendi, Tell Hassek, and Tell Farfara (between 7 and 9 ha) are all roughly twice the size of the sites of the third rank. The number of larger villages and the relation of larger villages to hamlets both in the textual and the archaeological record (see tables 6 and 7) are well comparable; this corroborates our assumption that both sets cover a comparable set of sites including the smallest hamlets.

Rank	*Textual Hierarchy*	*Archaeological Hierarchy*
1	**Nabada** (provincial "capital"; unique administrative center)	**TBS 1 Beydar** (largest site; twice as large as any other site in TBS)
2	**Anmat.um** and **Išgar** (administrative sub-centers)	**TBS 55 Effendi, TBS 43 Hassek, TBS 52 Farfara** (all larger than 7 ha)
3	Many settlements which contribute and receive less; **Sulum** and **Abutu**	Many small settlements; five sites 2.5 ha or larger (**TBS 4, 35, 39, 41, 59**)

- Table 8: Comparison of textually-based and archaeologically-based settlement hierarchies.

Thus far we have considered the archaeological hierarchy of the TBS area from the criteria of size alone. An alternate approach is to consider the intensity of human movement associated with these sites, in the form of archaeologically attested hollow ways (see section 3.2). They are generally found in radial patterns which often terminate without connecting to another site; these features mark the tracks to and from the settlement's agricultural fields and the pasture beyond them. Other intersite hollow ways represent local movement of surplus agricultural production, interregional trade in manufactured and luxury goods, and social and political movement for various reasons, including the visits of the ruler (en) of Nagar to the towns under his control, as documented in the Nabada archive. A site with a strong radial pattern and abundant interconnections with surrounding sites was probably an economically productive site with possible administrative functions.

[26] Assuming the lesser density (26.6 km^2 per site), Nabada province would have been between 345.7 and 585.0 km^2; assuming the greater density (18.6 km^2 per site), it would have been between 241.7 and 409.0 km^2.

The sites with the most associated hollow ways tend to be the largest sites (Table 9). For example, the two largest sites (Beydar and Effendi) have the most roads, in both quantity and aggregate length. However, the hollow way hierarchy diverges from the size hierarchy in several interesting ways. Tell Effendi has an elaborate radial network, with more preserved hollow way distance than Beydar itself.[27] On the other hand, the large town of Tell Farfara (7.1 ha) can be associated with only one eighth the quantity of hollow ways as the similarly sized Effendi. This discrepancy suggests that population alone (as derived from site size) cannot explain the presence or absence of elaborated networks; Farfara was probably not a significant center of agricultural production or administration. The other TBS sites on the western side of the Ardh al-Shaykh are also associated with few hollow ways, a pattern seen throughout the entire western basin which suggests that real differences in economy may have existed between the western and central-eastern parts of the Upper Khabur basin.

Site	No. HWs	Total Len (m)
55	21	44,773
1	26	30,075
59	18	26,404
22	11	17,455
43	14	15,224
4	13	14,230
60	13	11,883
35	5	10,042
10	5	8,483
37	6	8,135
41	6	7,994
39	5	6,864
40	6	6,830
63	3	2,786
32	2	2,578
52	4	2,345
50	0	0

- Table 9: Sites and associated hollow ways in the TBS area.

4. Nabada Province within the State of Nagar: Some Conclusions

4.1. Nabada and its Province

The identification of Beydar with ancient Nabada is strong, but any other proposed correlations of textually attested settlements with archaeologically known sites are highly speculative at this point.

Regarding the socio-economic organisation, perhaps the most important result of our comparison of textual data with the archaeological remains is the conclusion that most of the population of Nabada was apparently dependent directly on the central institution to which we owe our texts (see 2.4. above). The central institution managed not only the town itself, but also played an important role in the management of labor and agriculture of other settlements in the region. We assume that these are surrounding settlements belonging to the province of Nabada. The extremely laconic formulation of the administrative texts renders it difficult to make more precise statements about the central institution, the dependent settlements of Nabada, or interaction between them.

Some general statements can be made, however. The hierarchy of the settlements is apparent both from the archaeological map as from the texts (see above). Larger settlements (like Tell Effendi or Aswad Fauqani) are situated at a distance of ca. 10–12 km from Tell Beydar. Within this circle, larger settlements are absent. The situation of the arable land surrounding Tell Beydar can be correlated with the information from the agricultural texts, which demonstrate that the greatest part of the institutional agriculture was managed by the city's five leading agricultural officials. The difference in rank between Nabada and the other settlements becomes also apparent from the relations of numbers in the workforce lists (see table 3).[28] A part of the region's agricultural production was organized at the local level, and this local organization manifested itself in the radial patterns of hollow ways which surround small villages.

[27] This discrepancy may be because Beydar is so close to the Ardh al-Shaykh, a broad basalt plateau with thin unproductive soils; this area probably served as pasture where movement was unconstrained by agricultural fields, and therefore hollow ways may not have formed.

[28] This conclusion was already drawn by Karel Van Lerberghe, *Subartu* 2, p. 117.

It is most tempting to suggest locations for Išgar and ANmaLum at Hassek and Effendi, respectively, as both were large and closely connected to their satellites via roads. The ruler (en) of Nagar visited ANmaLum but not Išgar, so it may be that ANmaLum was on the route between Nagar and Nabada but Išgar was not (see section 2.3). On the other hand, sites of similar size and with elaborate preserved radial road networks exist just outside the eastern TBS limits at Tell Bati and Tell Aswad Foqani (both 6.6 ha and with 30 or more associated hollow ways); these sites were equally on the road to Nabada.

Another settlement that is significant in the texts is SuLum, a religious center whose god lent his name to one of the months of the local calendar (*Subartu* 2, p. 85f.). We might therefore expect to locate SuLum at a site with a long history of continuous settlement up to the EJ IIIb period; unfortunately no less than eleven of the seventeen EJ III-IV sites in the TBS area were occupied in both the mid-late fourth and 3rd millennia BC. The "Lord (*ba'lum*) of SuLum" is the only deity attested at Beydar named after a specific place. The role of SuLum could well be based on the cultic significance of some specific topographical feature, and here only the basalt plateau of the Ardh al-Shaykh comes to mind, featuring hundreds of small rock carvings of the 4th-3rd millennium along its edge and a former volcano as its highest peak. This consideration is based upon the religious role attributed to mountains in the Khabur region in the third millennium.[29] Clearly more textual data is needed before even the most tentative identifications for Nabada's dependent settlements can be proposed.

On a more general level, we can make some broad statements about the Nabada area. Demographically, it probably carried a relatively low population: 6,000 to 13,000 persons, and certainly closer to the low end of that range, with 1,000 to 2,000 residing at Nabada itself.[30] Although the labor accounts from Beydar are too fragmentary to allow a more precise demographic estimation (see 2.4.), it is clear that relatively small numbers of persons were involved. The close correlation between the textually-derived estimate of the size of the central institution at Nabada and the archaeologically-based estimate of the population of the entire settlement is striking. We conclude that, in some capacity, this institution subsumed most, if not all, of the entire population of Nabada, although there remain great uncertainties regarding the degree to which it managed their economic and social lives.

Also significant is the issue of the control of the agricultural labor of its dependent settlements. Labor was one of the major limiting factors in the extensive 3rd millennium dry-farming economy (Wilkinson 1994). Since large parts of Nabada were either seasonally flooded depression or occupied by non-residential institutional buildings such as palaces, temples, and storerooms, its residential population density may have been low; the use of the labor force of other settlements may have been a prerequisite for fully utilizing its agricultural hinterland.

Spatially the province was small as well, probably less than a day's walk from Nabada to its furthest dependent settlement. The extent of the "province" of Nabada is not apparent from a look at the map of this region, as clear topographical boundaries are missing. From the data at hand, we cannot determine if the province was confined by the Ardh al-Shaykh in the west or if it stretched along the Wadi Aweidj.

The importance of animals in the tablets (see pp. 13–21) accords well with the Beydar hinterland; the Ardh al-Shaykh and the high inter-wadi ground to the east of the Aweidj floodplain would have been of low value for cultivation but an excellent pastoral resource. In particular, the well developed set of hollow ways leading from Tell Jamilo up onto the plateau to its west (Fig. 1) suggests that the site may have been heavily involved in animal production.

The historical dimension of this political situation remains largely unknown. Nabada's management of subordinate settlements might well have its roots in a former independent city-state, comparable for example to the city-states of Early Dynastic Babylonia incorporated as provinces in the empires of Akkad or Ur III. That this might have been the case is perhaps also suggested by the archaeological evidence: the official block of the "palace" of Tell Beydar situated on the top of the city includes a throne room in its phases 1 and 2. But in phase 3, the time of the tablets, this throne room was given up and filled in and replaced by a residential unit.[31]

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[29] Cf. the case of the Kawkab, the Djebel Sinjar = Saggar, the monumental statues from Djebelet el Beda (Moortgat-Correns 1972 and cf. Meyer 1997) [See now P. Michalowski, *Fs. Fronzaroli* (2003) 403–410.]

[30] These figures assume 65.8 hectares of settled area and between 100 and 200 persons per hectare of occupied site. Since 65.8 ha includes EJ III and EJ IV, total settled area for either period was surely lower. The lower population estimate for Beydar/Nabada takes into consideration the large administrative complex on the central tell, which was mostly non-residential.

[31] We thank Marc Lebeau for this information.

4.2. The Geographic Extent of the EJ IIIb Kingdom of Nagar

According to the lists of silver expenditures from the palace at Ebla, Nabada was only one of at least seventeen towns within the kingdom of Nagar (Archi 1998). A plausible identification can be made of *Da-ti-um*^{ki} from the Ebla texts with Tadum in the Akkadian period workforce list from Tell Brak (Eidem, *et al.* 2001, 101. 107) and Mittani period Ta'idu; these place names are either to be associated with modern Tell Hamidi, on the Jaghjagh roughly 15 km upstream from Brak or with Tell Farfara to the North-East of it (Wäfler 1995; Guichard 1994, 242. 244). The Ebla texts' *Ga-ga-ba-an*^{ki} is probably Kakkaban, also known from the same Akkadian list and almost certainly to be connected with the modern Jebel Kawkab, an extinct volcano east of Hassake at the confluence of the Khabur and Jaghjagh Rivers (Catagnoti/Bonechi 1992; Eidem, *et al.* 2001, 107). A likely location of this town would be at one of the larger sites in its vicinity, such as Tell Aswad (8.7 ha) to the northeast or Tell Bazari (8.0 ha) to the northwest. Abulium is situated to the north of Nagar (Archi 1998, 8); because of the appearance in the Old Akkadian list of workers from Tell Brak, *zàr-'à-ni-um*^{ki} and *ḫi-la-zi-un*^{ki} are also to be sought for in the Eastern part of the Khabur triangle (Sallaberger 1998b, 124; Eidem; *et al.* 2001, 101. 107 and 110 text 31). This concentration of identified place names in the eastern Khabur triangle is due to the fact that only Tell Brak has provided Sargonic texts for comparisons; during this time the administrative reach of Nagar (Tell Brak) apparently did not include Nabada (Tell Beydar), which was of only minor importance then (M. Lebeau, personal communication).

In all likelihood, the seventeen towns listed with Nagar were at one time small neighboring polities that were gradually subsumed into the expanding Nagar state. As such, the persons from these towns who received gifts of metals and other luxuries from the Ebla state would not have been 'officials' appointed by the ruler of Nagar as provincial governors but rather local burgomasters, shaykhs or lineage heads who had been co-opted into the administration of the Nagar state but still maintained a considerable local autonomy, to the extent that they could directly receive gifts from a foreign ruler, rather than such gifts being centrally redistributed from Nagar by its ruler. According to Archi (1998, 8), the tribal nature of these towns can be seen in the frequent GN ending *-ium*; place names such as this, formed out of personal names, suggested to Archi that the Upper Khabur basin was characterized by both small states and tribal groups in the Ebla period as in the 2nd millennium (similarly Milano/Rova 2000, 727f.). The evidence for the name Nabada = Nabaḏium shows, however (see 1.6 above), that the nisbe *-ium* designates persons coming from these places.

Thus, the kingdom of Nagar can be seen as a kind of confederacy of small polities which remained economically autonomous. The obligations of the province at least included the obligation to feed the donkeys of the ruler during his visits to the province (*Subartu* 2, p. 103–06) and some transactions of grain to Nagar seem to be documented (Sallaberger 1999, 399 A = **78**). As long as the status of the lú-ĝiš-DU cannot be identified more precisely, any final conclusions about the relationship between capital and province would be premature (ibid. 399f.). Basically, the state of Nagar seems to have been comparable to other early Mesopotamian states such as the the Ur III state: they were made up of several largely self-sufficient unities and obliged to sustain the needs of the kingsdom's central institutions.[32]

With this model in mind, the province of Nabada was probably typical of the other small polities which now comprised the administrative units of the kingdom. If we apply the simple square kilometer-to-settlement ratio we developed for the Nabada area to the entire kingdom of Nagar, we could arrive at a rough hypothesis for the scale of the state. Assuming that each of the eighteen "provinces" of Nagar (the seventeen mentioned in the Ebla texts plus Nagar itself)[33] administered thirteen to twenty-two towns and villages as did Nabada, then the kingdom would have contained 234 to 396 settlements. This results in a total area of 5,382 to 9,108 km^2, assuming 23.0 km^2 per settlement.

If such territorial areas are mapped as circles with Brak/Nagar at the center, the lower estimate would stretch from Beydar to the Radd marsh area, and the upper estimate would reach beyond Mozan and Leilan (Fig. 3). However, these territories assume a geomorphologically, economically, and politically flat landscape, which was not the case. Since neither Urkeš nor Šeḫna are listed as dependencies of Nagar in the Ebla metal expenditure accounts, these large cities probably controlled independent polities in competition with Nagar (Archi 1998, 3).[34]

The region to the west has been defined both on archaeological and textual evidence (Lyonnet 2000, Milano/Rova 2000). The kingdoms of a large region to the south of the foothills of the Taurus mountains,

[32] Although there is overwhelming evidence for deliveries of the provinces to the state institutions in Ur III, there is much less information for Beydar, especially because textiles and metals, the dominant sectors for taxes at contemporary Ebla, are not present in the Beydar file. Thus only the expenses for the travels of the ruler of Nagar (*Subartu* 2, pp. 103–106) and occasional grain deliveries to Nagar (Sallaberger 1999) can be mentioned.

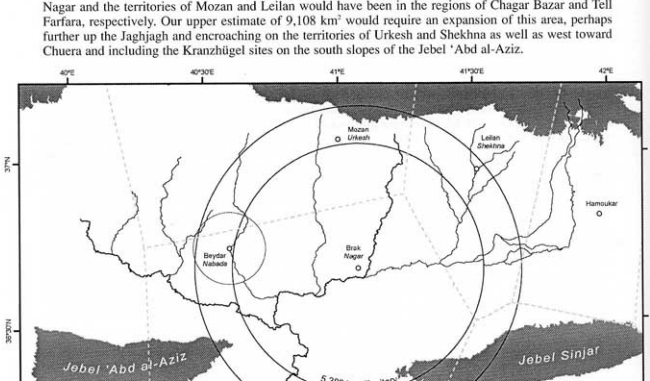
[33] Milano/Rova 2000, 727f. note 37, add EN.NE^{ki}; read with Eidem *et al.* 2001, 101, EN.*šar*$_x$(NE)^{ki} = EN.*šar*^{ki}.

[34] Both Urkeš (Mozan) and Šeḫna (Leilan) are attested in the Old Akkadian texts from Tell Brak (Eidem *et al.* 2001, 120). There is no apparent reason to assume a different name for Tell Mozan in the EJ III period.

extending from the Euphrates eastwards, were characterized by the office of the *badulum* (Archi 1988). Tell Chuera has been tentatively identified with the town of Abarsal (Archi 1998, 4; see also Archi 1989), which was an independent kingdom in its own right, featuring a *badulum*, and therefore not part of the Kingdom of Nagar. Whether this identification is correct or not, at more than 60 ha Tell Chuera was certainly a significant economic power if not an independent political one.

Together, Mozan, Leilan and Chuera present rough limits on the area controlled by Nagar. By applying a Voronoi tesselation distance allocation (Wheatley/Gillings 2002, 149–151) to all of the major 3rd millennium urban centers, we can propose a speculative divison of a large segment of Northern Mesopotamia into states (Fig. 3, dashed lines). This map serves as only a heuristic device, a rough idea of what these polities may have looked like if distance were the sole factor.[35]

A more useful approach is to map out the estimated territory of Nagar while respecting the basin's geomorphology as well as the probable territories of neighboring polities. Using the distance allocation of Fig. 3 as a guide, the kingdom of 5,382 km^2 would have included the entire central basin and Middle Khabur valley, as well as the Ardh al-Shaykh plateau and slightly beyond (Fig. 4). The boundaries between Nagar and the territories of Mozan and Leilan would have been in the regions of Chagar Bazar and Tell Farfara, respectively. Our upper estimate of 9,108 km^2 would require an expansion of this area, perhaps further up the Jaghjagh and encroaching on the territories of Urkesh and Shekhna as well as west toward Chuera and including the Kranzhügel sites on the south slopes of the Jebel 'Abd al-Aziz.



-Fig. 3. The Upper Khabur Basin with circular territories (solid line) and Voroni tesselation territories (dashed line)

Obviously such territorial assignments are highly speculative, being based on a number of suppositions, some of which may be disproven with further research. These hypothetical territories do demonstrate the size of the Nagar kingdom and give us an idea of the scale of these early urban states. In absolute terms, these early states are small. Compared to other kingdoms mentioned in the Ebla texts, the influence and importance of Nagar in the politics of Syro-Mesopotamia at the time of the Ebla archives was much greater than its small spatial extent would suggest (cf. Milano/Rova 2000; Archi/Biga in print).

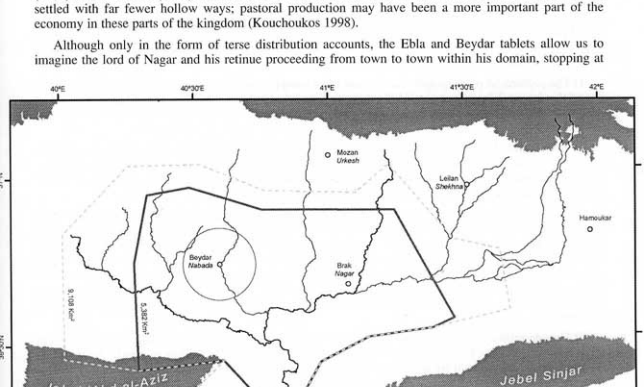
[35] For a similar approach, see Weiss (1992), to which can now be added Hamoukar and Tell al-Hawa.

The remaining uncertainties highlight directions for further archaeological and historical research, particularly regarding the political and cultural sphere of the Kranzhügel settlements, the location and extent of the Abarsal polity, and the Middle Khabur zone of contact between 'Adu, Mari and Nagar. The agricultural territories of Mozan, Leilan, and Hamoukar would have been constrained by the Tur Abdin foothills to the north and the Nagar kingdom to the south. These are, however, some of the wettest parts of the basin, and may have been able to support a denser population through greater agricultural yield.

As we did with Nabada province above, we can draw some very generalized conclusions about the demography and economy of the Nagar state. If we derive a figure for settled ha per km^2 from the TBS area and apply it to the estimated territory of Nagar, we could estimate an overall population of between 100,000 and 275,000 persons.[16] The Beydar region was probably less densely settled than northern parts of the territory with higher annual rainfall, and along the banks of the perennial rivers where irrigation may have been practiced; on the other hand, it was probably more densely populated than the western basin and the dry areas on the flanks of the Jebel 'Abd al-Aziz, so our estimate can serve as a coarse average.

The very regular pattern of radial road networks around tells on the plain between the Wadi Aweidj and the Jaghjagh River suggests that the core of the Nagar kingdom was characterized by extensive and sustained agricultural production (Ur 2003), which lends further support to the earlier models of Weiss (1986) and Wilkinson (1994). However, the western basin and the 'Abd al-Aziz areas were less densely settled with far fewer hollow ways; pastoral production may have been a more important part of the economy in these parts of the kingdom (Kouchoukos 1998).

Although only in the form of terse distribution accounts, the Ebla and Beydar tablets allow us to imagine the lord of Nagar and his retinue proceeding from town to town within his domain, stopping at



- Fig. 4. The Upper Khabur with hypothetical Nagar territories

[16] As with our demographic estimates of the Nabada area, these figures are based on 100 to 200 persons per hectare. In the future it should be possible to develope estimates based on more sophisticated demographic models of the ancient Near Eastern household (Schloen 2001, 117–33) in combination with the results of broad exposures of 3rd millennium residential quarters, such as at Raqa'i (Schwartz 1994), and Melebiya (Lebeau 1993) and the future program of excavations in the residential areas of Tell Beydar itself.

various settlements along the way in order to visit small shrines and to cement the personal ties of loyalty with local elites, upon which the cohesion of his kingdom was based. We can see this movement in the surviving traces of intersite hollow ways (Fig. 2). Despite its importance, there is no direct road from Nagar to Nabada, or to any of the other large contemporary sites. A traveller would have to cross the plain by moving from settlement to settlement. These patterns are indicative of the development of locally cohesive settlement systems; the ruler, based at Nagar, represented a final and possibly short-lived top layer of political control which had to respect pre-existing road networks and, more importantly, the agricultural systems and social networks which produced them.

Appendix: Excursus on some chronological problems (W. Sallaberger)

The comparison between the texts from Ebla and those from Tell Beydar forces us to tackle again the difficult question of the dating of the tablets. The dating of the Tell Beydar tablets is based on the palaeographic evidence and the layout of the tablets, which points to a date before Enšakušana of Uruk, about contemporary with the archaic tablets of Ebla; a certain "Paba", who is listed in **23** even before the ruler (en) of Nagar, might have been the wife of Iblul-il of Mari (Sallaberger 1998a).

The chronology of Ebla and Mari before Sargon has been drastically reformulated by Archi and Biga (in print), who base their link between Ebla and Mesopotamia on the proposal of Sallaberger (in print). If the assumptions and conclusions of these two articles hold true, the historical dating of the Beydar tablets would have to be defined more precisely. In this undertaking one faces serious problems, especially since some of the assumptions on which the dating of the Beydar tablets was based have proven to be wrong or more complex than initially perceived.

1) The problem of palaeography has become more complex with the discovery of the literary tablet in one of the drains of the palace (see M. Lebeau, p. 2); palaeographic criteria would date the literary tablet later than the administrative texts (see above pp. 37–38), whereas the find spot points in the opposite direction.

2) The possible Paba synchronism (Sallaberger 1998a, 36) is based on links between Nagar and Mari shared by Nabada/Tell Beydar. One element, the alleged presence of a "daughter of the king" (sc. of Mari), must be discarded because of the improved reading of **143**; see comments to **150**. Note, however, the particular place names in text **23**, the text of Paba (see 1.5. above).

3) If the Ebla texts listing gifts to the kingdom of Nagar (time of Arrukum and Ibrium; Archi 1998) are contemporary with the Beydar tablets, these should be dated about 17 years (= time of Ibbi-zikir) before the end of Ebla (ca. middle of reign of Lugalzagesi, time of Sargon); this corresponds to the time of Enšakušana of Uruk or to the very first years of Sargon of Akkad. The references to Nabatium in the Ebla texts date to the time of Arrukum and the second and third year of Ibrium and then again to Ibrium 15–16, always in the lists of towns in the state of Nagar discussed by Archi 1998. Nabatium's final appearance was six years later, 13 years before Ebla's destruction, as the place of the purchase of a kúnga-equid in Ibbi-zikir 4.[37]

4) Despite military campaigns, no "end" of the kingdom of Nagar is reflected in the Ebla texts. The close relations between Ebla and Nagar were in the last years of Ebla (Archi/Biga in print).[38] So if there is no interruption, why should we not place the Beydar tablets into the last phase of the palace of Ebla and into the last phase of the kingdom of Nagar? But if the Beydar tablets were contemporary with the last years of Ebla, the palaeographic arguments would have to be given up completely; the name of Paba would be sheer coincidence.[39] The methodological implications were hard to defend, however.

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[37] Our sincere thanks are due to Alfonso Archi, who placed at our disposal the references to Nabatium in the "Annual Accounts of Metals" (see the updated list of these texts in Archi/Biga in print). Lists of towns of Nagar date to Arrukum ([TM].75.[G].1872+), Ibrium 2a (75.10077), 3a (75.2464, see Archi 1998), 15 (75.2502), and 16 (75.2465). The reference from Ibbi-zikir 4 is 75.10201.

[38] Archi/Biga in print, section 6 ad TM.75.G.2250 // 75.2401, time of Ibbi-zikir: a long section on Nagar includes *a-bù-la-du*^{ki} which Archi/Biga equate with *a-ba$_x$-la-da*^{ki} of the Beydar tablets, and a place *nu-ba-da*^{ki}, perhaps = Nabada? The identification of Abullatu with the village Abalada of the province of Nabada remains improbable because of the obvious difference in rank; see Archi 1998a, 6 no. 4; Bonechi 1993, 14; Archi et al. 1993, 92.

[39] These chronological problems force us to reconsider the historical situation. In this regard it should be noted that even the equation Nabada (Beydar texts) = Nabatium (Ebla texts) has to be subject to a new discussion and reevaluation, if contemporaneity can decisively be excluded. In such a case, we would have to assume two similar place names within the Khabur basin; the identification of Tell Beydar's ancient name would rest on the internal evidence alone; the discussion of the size of the province of Nabada could remain unchanged and the estimates concerning the state of Nagar would need only slight adaption.

5) All of the tablets from Tell Beydar have been found in secondary contexts; therefore they probably form the remains of dead archives. Also the documents found in a small room (L.6966) in the northern part of the monumental center (see M. Lebeau, p. 1) were dispersed on the floor, but had apparently not been stored in a container. Would this situation explain a discrepancy between the "early" palaeographic dating of the tablets and a "later" date of the history? Such a scenario would also explain the younger palaeographic dating of the literary text; later administrative texts would in this case have been kept in the archival rooms which have not yet been discovered. Note in this regard that the sealings of the bullae and found together with the texts do not find parallels among the texts from the other parts of the palace (see the contributions of L. Milano and G. Jans in this volume).

6) The Ebla documents allow an outline of the history of Syria for its last 35–40 years, albeit seen from the perspective of Ebla (Archi/Biga in print). The final flourishing phase of Tell Beydar and its end should be fitted into this historical frame. Could the end of Nabada/Tell Beydar as a regional center be correlated with the evidence for a victory of Mari against Nagar in the year 7 of Ebla's official Ibrium (Archi/Biga in print, section 4 *ad* TM.75.G.1904), a dating which could be in accordance with the palaeographic evidence? In this case the much more modest continuation of Beydar would fall in the time of the close relations between Ebla and Nagar. The appearance of Nabada again in Ibrium 15–16 would pose a problem then. The reference of Ibbi-zikir 4, however (see3) above), is not conclusive: a donkey can be bought also in a settlement of reduced size.

Although no easy solution for the chronological and historical problems seems possible at the moment, the relevance of the Ebla annual accounts of metals for the identification of Nabada = Tell Beydar remains intact; the argument that Nabada is the only place name of these lists also found at Beydar still holds true.