

Plan 194: AL-AL-AM(-AN), 19-20-21 - Overview

No remains of Stratum 5 were uncovered in this area.

Stratum 4 is represented by seven rock-cut installations which may have been cut at this time. There is a kiln which is earlier than 3B, but it cannot be dated to Stratum 4 with any certainty.

Stratum 3C is attested by an 8.0 m long section of the casemate-like wall, several single-stone walls connected to it, and most likely the kiln.

Stratum 3B is represented by a section of the offset-inset wall and remains of five stone-lined bins built in the intramural area.

Walls built out into the intramural area attest to activity in Stratum 3A. Probably many of the single-stone rebuilds and modifications belong to this phase as well.

Stratum 2 is represented by a large 4-Room building, similar in size to several others which post-date Stratum 3. Some fragments of walls may also belong to this phase. The offset-inset wall continued in use.

No remains clearly belonging to Stratum 1 were uncovered.

Evaluation -

This area was excavated in the first half of the 1927 season. The plan of only one building in this area is certain, that of the 4-Room building. The architectural phasing is very complicated, and untangling

it is made doubly so because few artifacts, of any sort, were recorded in this season. Photographic documentation is sporadic. Several features, such as the 4-Room building, the kiln and the casemate-like wall appear in several photographs each. The other rooms and rock-cut installations were not photographed at all. P A388 shows excavation in the intramural area; although shadows next to the offset-inset wall are heavy, it seems that bedrock was reached there. Plan 194 does not use the convention of curving and twisting lines found in plans done in later years to indicate areas where bedrock was reached. There are a fair number of elevations; most features have bottom levels, though there are not enough for the tops of walls. Nor are there any bedrock levels in the intramural area. The lowest elevations are from on top of the kiln.

Building 194.01: Rm 20, Rm 21, Rm 22, Rm 23, Rm 24, Rm 25, Rm 26 -

This is the best-documented building in the area; there are many elevations and several good photographs. Some of the "rooms", such as the three which make up the central court, do not represent architectural units. No evidence for any thresholds was found. Therefore remains here are only foundations, and these are quite deep (see P 90 and P 133). It is probably for this reason that the double-stone walls of this building are almost completely different from those of the other large 4-Room buildings, e.g. Building 110.01. Only a few artifacts were recorded. In the 1947 report this building is referred to as Four-room Building no. 1.⁹⁷⁰

Rm 20 and Rm 21 make up the back room. They are separated by a wall which continues to the NW and SE, beyond the limits of the

⁹⁷⁰I, 211.

building, and is part of a rebuild over the 3C casemate-like wall seen in AK-AL20. It may be that excavation in these two "rooms" did not reach low enough to uncover the 3C wall here. Thus this wall pre-dates the 4-Room building and Rm 20 and Rm 21 are a single unit. The NE end of Rm 21 contains a narrow single-stone wall. This wall likely belongs with the structure(s) of which Rm 33, Rm 34 and Rm 35 are a part. P 87 and P 90 show these walls quite well.

Rm 22 is the S long room. Excavation here reached the depth of 779.05, and P 87 bears this out. The room is built over Bn 97, one in the long series of Stratum 3B storage bins built within the intramural area. Only about half the bin was preserved.

Rm 23, Rm 24 and Rm 25 make up the building's central court. The entrance to Building 194.01 was almost certainly by way of a door in this court's NW wall, with openings leading into the flanking chambers and back room. This means that the walls immediately to the NW of the building must pre-date the building and have been below the exterior street level, otherwise entrance to the Building 194.01 would have been impossible. Rm 23 is partitioned from Rm 24 and Rm 25 by a continuation of the wall which is a rebuild over the early casemate-like wall; this wall thus pre-dates Building 194.01. Rm 24 is separated from Rm 25 by a short section of single-stone wall. Perhaps this fragment is part of a side wall to the back room of a Stratum 3A building. P 87 shows these dividing walls; they are both preserved at, or lower than the tops of the other walls of this building.

Si 100 is evidently a rock-cut installation partially cut by the wall between Rm 23 and Rm 24. This means that the NE face of the 3C casemate-like wall is probably a little to the SW of the silo, if it was not robbed out. This silo was probably cut in Stratum 4.

Rm 26 is the N long room. Its NE wall cuts Bn 98; P 87 shows Bn 98 preserved at a lower level than the walls of Rm 26. Bn 98 also lies in the way of a NE extension to the wall between Rm 24 and Rm 25. This bin is a rare example of a bin within the line of the Stratum 3C town wall; its date is uncertain but lies within Stratum 3. Si 101 is evidently cut into the bedrock well below the floor level of Building 194.01; it does not appear in any of the photographs. It probably belongs to Stratum 4.

Dating of Building 194.01 -

It is clearly built over and cuts even the latest rebuilds and modifications of Stratum 3. It is not cut by any later features. It is at a completely different orientation than the buildings of Stratum 3 and extends out into the intramural area. Therefore it seems best to assign its beginning to Stratum 2. It probably comes to an end at the end of Stratum 2; far less likely is a continuation into 1.

Function of Building 194.01 -

Badè originally called this building a sanctuary, primarily based on the tripartite arrangement of the three front rooms and the irregular form of the bedrock to the E in AL22, which he termed the "Rock of Sacrifice".⁹⁷¹ Today, after the discovery of scores of these buildings on both sides of the Jordan it is safe to say that this 4-Room arrangement is typical of secure Iron Age buildings, usually dwellings. There is no evidence from the foundations of this building to indicate any more probable interpretation of this building. By the time the 1947 report appeared this theory was already largely discredited, though a cultic use was not ruled out. The "cup-marks" and channels in the bedrock were

⁹⁷¹I, 206-208.

though to have been used for holding offerings and draining blood. In reality the "Rock of Sacrifice" seems to be the result of the collapse of the roofs of one or more cisterns. And the "cup-marks" and channels were used in the processing of agricultural products.

Kiln 106 -

Kl 106 is one of the more interesting, but unfortunately more poorly documented, installations from the site. There are several good photographs (P 72 is the best), but all of these are detail views which show well the kiln's construction technique, but not its relations to the adjacent offset-inset wall or Building 194.01. There are five elevations. No records were kept of associated finds, and no details about it are mentioned in Badè's diary. P A388 shows what may be the wall enclosing the so-called "ash-room", but not the kiln.

Despite the meager evidence there are a few things which may be noted about the kiln's stratigraphic position. The plan shows that the N wall of Kl 106 was double-stone work, at least 50 cm thick. Dotted lines on the plan seem to indicate that the 3B offset-inset wall is built over remnants of the SW wall of the kiln; this is confirmed by one of Bade's preliminary reports.⁹⁷² This in turn means that the kiln must be Stratum 3C or earlier. Therefore it has no direct connection with Building 194.01 of Stratum 2. That the top-most preserved segments of the foundation of Building 194.01 are over 3.0 m above the preserved upper part of the kiln also suggests that the kiln had gone out of use by the time the 4-Room house was built. Since the town wall of Stratum 3C probably lies ca. 3.5 m to the NE, below Building 194.01, the kiln must have lain outside the town. This is not surprising given the noisome

⁹⁷²W.F. Bade, Excavations at Tell en-Nasbeh, 1926 and 1927, A Preliminary Report (Berkeley, 1928), 28.

features of pottery firing.

K1 106 contains six support walls, three on each side of a central chamber, which would have held the floor of the firing chamber, where the pots were stacked. No doubt the fuel was piled in the side chambers and the center aisle. Although its superstructure has not survived its floor plan is suggestive of something "key hole"-shaped. NW of the kiln is a space marked "ash room". Perhaps the potter dumped refuse from the firings here; or is it the charred remains of unused fuel?

Final Note: Since the 3C town's kiln was outside its walls it is quite possible that any kiln of 3B would be similarly located. Perhaps excavation in the area SW of the 3B wall might turn up such traces.

Other Features -

Due to the great amount of rebuilding which took place in the N part of this area, the absence of photographs covering it, and the destruction of some earlier features when Building 194.01 was constructed, it is not possible to offer a coherent plan for any other building. Indeed, many of the spaces given "room" numbers probably had long lives and may have belonged to larger or smaller architectural units.

Several points, however, are clear. First, these fragmentary remains seem to follow a basic orientation toward the NE. Second, they front on the same ringroad as buildings to the N assigned to Stratum 3. Third, Building 194.01 cuts and is on a completely different orientation than the structures N of it. For these reasons these remains may be likewise placed in Stratum 3, with most of the existing walls representing 3A additions to a 3C foundation.

Rm 33, Rm 35 and Rm 34 (on Plan 195) are spaces marked off by fragments of single-stone walls. They may perhaps be associated with the single-stone wall in Rm 21 and have been part of a single building. Note that the wall between Rm 35 and Rm 34 seems to be found again in AK22 of Plan 195. The wall crosses the line of the road, but similar cross walls have been noted above as possible "steps" in the road, so this is not an obstacle to assigning it to Stratum 3. If so, Rm 34 and Rm 35 may be reconstructed as long rooms, and Rm 33 as a back room. Si 102 might have been connected with such a Stratum 3 building, but if so it was probably in reuse, since most similar rock-cut installations with clear stratigraphy belong initially to Stratum 4.

Rm 46, Rm 47, Rm 49 and Rm 55 are large spaces built primarily in the intramural area. P 132, P 133 and P A388 show this area. These photographs document the nature of a very low wall which is at least 2.0 m wide, on top of which is built a ca. 1.0 m wide double-stone wall which forms the E side to the spaces under discussion. The E face of the wide wall is not shown on the plan; either it lies below the double-stone wall, or excavation did not reach deep enough to find it. The E face of the wide wall is visible at the NW end of AK20. There it is 1.8 m wide. This means that the double-stone wall is founded on the wide wall only at its S end, if it was at all. This wide wall is probably the outer wall of the casemate-like wall.

These rooms also contain remains of two storage bins. Rm 46 contains Bn 131, and Rm 135 contains Bn 129. These bins are part of the series of similar storage facilities ringing the town's S intramural area. They are dug into the debris poured between the two wall systems. Note that Bn 129 is built on the W edge of the outer wall of the casemate-like wall. These four rooms are probably later constructions, but it cannot be determined if the bins went out of use when the walls

around them went up.

Rm 46 and Rm 47 seem to be part of one large enclosed space. The wall shown dividing them is built over that wall that marks the E limit of these spaces. If so, it should be a fragment of a later building. The wall between Rm 46 and Rm 49 is mixed construction. The N wall of Rm 47 is apparently made of a single line of cobbles only ca. 10 to 20 cm in size. The W wall of both rooms is primarily built of large single stones. There is a gap in the line of this wall near Bn 131. If the walls continued their present course they would not meet. Perhaps the gap represents an entry into the enclosure. Similar enclosure walls have been noted along the SW side of the town, and also in the NW. They may represent rough open storage areas, or animal pens. Alternatively they may be extra protection for the bins. Rm 49 may have been a similar enclosure, but it has been damaged by the construction of Building 194.01. In the NE corner of Rm 49 is a fragmentary L-shaped wall built over the outer wall of the casemate-like wall. Its purpose and position within Stratum 3 is uncertain.

Rm 55 is slightly different. Its N wall seems to be part of a complex of rooms extending for 20 m to the N; its W wall is similar to those for Rm 46 and Rm 47, but it is slightly offset to the E and seems to be faced with cobbles similar to those which mark its S limit. Its E limit is the same double-stone wall. The plan of this space is not very clear. Did it originally belong with Rm 46 and Rm 47, or does the narrow cobble wall mark a definite partition between the two? If it is the latter, its original N limit may have been farther N and have been subsequently destroyed by the construction of the rooms now there.

Bn 74 and Bn 75 are two more of the intramural storage units noted above. They are constructed in the debris dumped between the two wall

systems and belong to Stratum 3B. Bn 75 was almost cut by the foundation of Building 194.01, and is preserved ca. 1.2 m deep. The average width of the five bins in the intramural area was ca. 1.1 m. Two bins to the NW were preserved to a depth of ca. 2.0 m. If this was true of most bins then the average bin in the intramural area of Plan 194 was 1.9 cubic meters, and the five together could hold ca. 9.5 cubic meters.

Rm 42, Rm 44, Rm 62 and Rm 66 have N walls on the same orientation as those of Building 177.05 to the NW. For this reason they are discussed under that plan.

The building remains discussed next seem to contain elements which originally formed part of one structure. The number of rebuildings, alterations to, and removals of earlier features make it impossible to trace a coherent development. No sign of any threshold, floor or pillar base appears on the plan.

Rm 41 actually marks the S end of a road traceable from as far N as AC16. The wall which blocks it in AK22 is the N extension of the S wall of Rm 37. Note also that this double stone wall turns a corner and runs to the NW parallel to what is likely the original wall of the building to the SW. The two openings to Ci 127 are partially covered by the single-stone wall between Rm 37 and Rm 41 (P 104 shows that one of its mouths was found covered). Note especially that the plan shows two stones extending out from the wall, making almost a curb along half the mouth. This means that though the wall crosses the cistern mouth, the cistern continued in use with the wall. If the wall is originally 3C, then the cistern is that date or earlier. Water from the road may have collected in this cistern, and since its mouths are in the road they may have been for public use.

Rm 37, as it appears on the plan, is an irregularly shaped chamber. This irregularity is probably a result of post-construction additions and alterations. Only its single-stone NE wall is likely original. As mentioned above, its SE wall is late, and is part of a structure extending several meters to the NE. Its NW wall may have followed that of Rm 39; possibly that wall too was original. The greatest confusion lies in determining its original S limit. The curving wall between it and Rm 36 might represent the construction of a later small open enclosure. The SW wall of Rm 36 could be Rm 37's limit, but this wall is bonded into the wall which cuts Rm 37 on the SE. It could be that the wall cutting Rm 37 on the SE incorporates the SW wall of Rm 36 even if the latter is part of the original building operations, but the evidence is just not there. Perhaps the SW wall of Rm 38 is a better candidate for Rm 37's limit? It is on the same alignment and of the same construction technique (P 106 shows these three rooms). The wall perpendicular to it on the SE seem to have been built to fit around this short wall. Unfortunately the relation of this short wall to the thick wall between Rm 39 and Rm 40 is not clear.

Rm 36 contains Ci 128, which the 1947 report suggests was bottle-shaped (P 105 shows that Ci 128 was found sealed).⁹⁷³ On the assumption that every dwelling had its own cistern, which holds true for most of the buildings on the W side of the town, it may be reasonable to suggest that Rm 36 and Ci 128 belong to the same building as Rm 37. Rm 36 shares with Rm 37 the same late wall on the SE; this wall and the SE wall of Rm 36 were discussed above. No explanation can be offered for the short wall in the N part of this space. It is difficult to trace the NW wall of Rm 36 where it reaches the S wall of Rm 39. It seems that Rm 39's wall was in place first, and that the wall of Rm 36 was put in later,

⁹⁷³I, 129 n. 1.

the small irregular space left in between being filled with rocks.

Rm 38 is an odd space. Its bottom level is very close to those for Rm 36, Rm 37 and Rm 39. Since rock-cut installations were found in Rm 36 and Rm 39 this signifies that excavation reached bedrock in at least a few points, which may also be the case for Rm 38, though this is only a suggestion. Its single-stone SE wall may be original, but that to the SE crosses far out into the intramural area to the SW, marking it as likely of 3A.

Rm 39's position is difficult to gauge. On the one hand, the NE wall of Rm 37 runs parallel to its own NE wall, as if both belonged to the same building. There is no sign of a wall extending NE to block the SE portion of Rm 37 from that area NE of Rm 39. On the other hand, Rm 39 shares a very thick SW wall with Rm 42, as if they belong to the same building. This wall will be discussed further below. Rm 39 also contains Si 130 and Rm 43 which would be more accurately described as a bin. Its NE and NW walls are narrow mixed work; its SE wall is double-stone, and its SW wall could be characterized as triple-stone work.

Rm 40 is separated from Rm 39 by the triple-stone wall, and is separated from Rm 44 by a wall almost as thick. Originally this room was probably connected to the casemate-like wall seen in Rm 46 and Rm 47, though no trace of these connecting walls survive. Later the double-stone wall replaced the casemate-like wall to the SW and was in turn replaced, or reinforced(?), by a narrow double-stone wall. It is clear that the partition wall which separates Rm 40 from Rm 45 is earlier than this last narrow double-stone wall, for it appears that the narrow double-stone wall reaches the NW wall of Rm 45. Perhaps Rm 45 is a bin-like storage unit within Rm 40. Rm 45's SE wall has been discussed in connection with Rm 38. It is interesting that the NE wall of Rm 45 does

not continue S of this wall; rather there is a fragment of a 1.3 m wide wall which is cut by Building 194.01. This means that Rm 45 was installed only after its SE wall was in place,

Rm 44 has a similar constructional history to Rm 40. Its W, E and S walls are all continuations of walls belonging to Rm 40. Its N wall seems to be narrow single-stone work. These three shared walls suggest that these two rooms belong to the same structure.

Rm 48 is most uncertain. Some undeterminable part of it was cut by Building 194.01. Its thick NE wall is a puzzle, though it was likely built after the wall between it and Rm 45 was put in place.

Rm 42 has thin, mainly single-stone walls on the NW, NE and SE, while its SW wall is triple-stone. There are two gaps in the NW wall. It is uncertain if either of these represents a doorway, or if the wall is just poorly preserved.

Rm 66 is similar to Rm 42 in that it has essentially single-stone walls on three sides: NW, SW and SE, while its NE wall is double-stone. Also like Rm 42 there are two gaps in its NW wall. Here, however, the SW gap may be marked by a meter high pillar, though it is difficult to be certain because of the lack of a photograph.

The interpretation of this series of rooms is vexing. If Rm 66 or Rm 42 possessed a doorway into the courtyard Rm 64 it would be natural to associate these two rooms, and Rm 44 which is on the same line, with Building 177.05. But since Rm 39 and Rm 40 share walls with their neighbors to the NW it might then be assumed that they too belong to Building 177.05. This would make Building 177.05 ca. 10.0 m wide; not impossible, but large for a Stratum 3 building. And if these rooms are

so assigned, it is difficult to understand how Rm 36, Rm 37, Rm 38 and Rm 45 fit into the Stratum 3 plan. Conversely, if the gaps in the NW walls of Rm 42 and Rm 66 are accidents of preservation it might be possible to group Rm 66, Rm 42, Rm 44, Rm 39 and Rm 40 into a 3-Room building. But this again leaves the rooms to the SE "hanging", unless they are assigned to the same structure. This would again make for quite a large building, on the scale of Building 142.01. If this arrangement of rooms were accepted, it might be that such a building faces SE, toward Rm 35, rather than onto road Rm 41. It may be, of course, that Rm 36, Rm 37, Rm 38 and Rm 45 were never enclosed, roofed spaces, but were irregular open areas or small "sheds" attached to a building, or that over time the space they now occupy was altered along those lines.

Si 138 is a rock-cut installation just S of the late wall which cuts Rm 37 on the SE. Since this wall has a slight bend, it may be that the wall was built so as to go around the installation. Like other rock-cut installations to the NE it was probably cut in Stratum 4.

As mentioned above, the amount of rebuilding in Stratum 3 and the destruction caused by the construction of Building 194.01 makes impossible any conclusive interpretation of this area. The most which can be stated with confidence is that these remains are all likely limited to Stratum 3.

The Offset-Inset Wall -

The wall here varies in width between ca. 4.7 and 3.6 m and contains one offset and two insets. Unfortunately there is only one elevation along this entire stretch. Photographs of the wall are rare, except for the tower in AN20-21. The wall itself was not protected by any special defenses, neither revetment/glacis or moat. There are no

seams in the wall which might show different construction stages.

Two towers were added to the wall, one in AK18-19, the second in AN20-21. The N tower is ca. 2.5 m thick, including the wall it is ca. 1.5 m wide. The revetment/glacis is ca. 3.2 m thick, yielding a total width of ca. 9.7 m. The tower is ca. 9.5 m long, ca. 15.5 m wide including the revetment/glacis. The S tower varies in width between ca. 1.6 and 2.5 m; with the wall it is ca. 5.8 to 7.0 m. The revetment-glacis adds another ca. 4.0 m making for a total thickness of almost 10.0 to 11.0 m. Its length is ca. 8.5 m, 16.3 m with the revetment/glacis. There is no sign of a moat around either tower. The towers were built separately from the wall, but probably as sub-phases of the same construction program.

As mentioned above, the offset-inset wall cuts the W wall of Kl 106, showing that the kiln is earlier (3C at least) than the wall.

In AM21 is a fragment of a wall built against the 3B offset-inset wall. This wall is matched by another a few meters to the E in AM22. Perhaps these walls represent a small storage unit ("shed") built some time in 3A or later.