

TP Area

The zooarchaeological examination in 2008 concentrated on study of select bone materials excavated in previous seasons. They come from Spaces 325 (15810) and 326 (15261, 15803) of Building 74, as well as Space 320 (15267, 15269) and midden deposit (15222). In total 6429 bone remnants were recorded.

A cluster of stones of similar size (15810) was placed directly on the floor (15809) of Space 325 in Building 74. Many were fragments of (possibly deliberately) broken stone tools and grinding stones. Animal bones were also connected with this cluster, chiefly some cow-size fragments of a probable scapula (15810.X1). The flotation sample includes shaft splinters of sheep-size long bones and ribs. Some pieces are burnt (carbonized, calcined), similarly to some of the stones, which in the north part of the cluster were lying on a very thin layer of ash. A cattle horn core and mandible (15261.X10, 15261.X12) were located directly on the edge of the cluster. It seems that 15810 is a part of an abandonment deposit along with a number of a cattle bones recorded in infill (15261) in Space 326. The special finds from this unit were described last year (Archive Report, 2007). Together with them were found bone fragments, mainly indeterminate.

The rest of the material from this infill deposit is mostly sheep-size fragments, 2-3 cm long shaft splinters, but large pieces are also present: cattle mandible and femur. The range of taxa is great; the bones are good condition show moderate coherence. Three tools, bird bone, human bone, mussel and eggshell were also recorded. Diagnostics come from sheep/goat (horn core, scapula, humerus, radius, ulna, metacarpal, carpal, pelvis, femur, tibia, tarsals, metatarsal, phalanges, skull, maxilla, mandible, teeth - mostly upper), cattle (humerus, metacarpal, carpal, pelvis, femur, phalanx, maxilla, mandible, teeth, including articulated incisors), boar (tooth fragment, tibia, metapodial), fox (tooth, metapodial) and equid (tooth fragment). The sheep:goat ratio is 11:3. Generally sheep-size and cow-size shaft splinters, ribs, and vertebra fragments predominate. Indeterminate pieces of mandible, maxilla, scapula, teeth, skull with marks of digestion and burning (mostly carbonized, but also calcined) are also present. Body part distribution is fairly even. All of these bones (except the sheep/goat and cattle teeth) were fragmented. Teeth of equids and boar are fragmented. Compact bones such as phalanges and carpals are not fragmented, except digested pieces (calcaneus, astragalus, phalanges). The general size range of pieces is 1-4 cm, mostly 2 and 3 cm. There is a range of ages from young (sheep/goat humerus and metapodial, pieces of sheep-size long bones), foetal, infantile, through infantile/juvenile through subadult/ adult. Taphonomically we note a few dismembering cut marks, ca. 15 % burning at mixed low and high temperatures, a very little gnawing, digestion (somewhat more frequent than gnawing), one trampled fragment and very slight-slightly degraded surface condition, with some moderately degraded. There are very heavily worn sheep teeth, indicating advanced age. Overall, the deposit has moderate coherence, a large range of taxa and articulated teeth.

In the eastern part of Building 74, directly on floor (15807) in Space 326, (15803) contains a cattle maxilla (X12) and skull (X13), a cervid antler (X3), and tools (bone points X2, X4, X8, X10). This infill contained many construction elements such as brick fragments. This deposit also filled the doorway in the southern wall of Space 326. The bone assemblage is rich, with mostly sheep-size pieces, some of them trampled. Most specimens are in good condition, with some worked pieces. Along with the mammal bones, there were also bird bones and eggshell, human bones, and mussel shell. Most were sheep-size shaft splinters, with some cow-size and pig-size, and rib and vertebrae pieces. Diagnostic fragments include sheep/goat (horn core, hyoid, scapula, humerus, radius, ulna, metacarpal, pelvis, femur, patella, tibia, tarsals, metatarsal, phalanges, skull, mandible, teeth), goat (phalanx, femur, metacarpal), cattle (femur, phalanx, skull, mandible, teeth, ulnar carpal), boar (tooth, skull, calcaneus), deer (antler), equid (tibia, distal sesamoid), fox (tooth), small carnivore-mustelid (two articulated metatarsals and femur- possibly from one individual). The size range of remnants is 1-7 cm, chiefly 2-3 cm. The high fragmentation made it hard to identify such remnants as tooth fragments, skull, mandible, maxilla, pelvis, scapula to taxon. Some pieces are burnt: a sheep/goat mandible, boar and cattle teeth and cow-size long bones, sheep-size and cow-size ribs (in total about 10 % material) at mixed high and low temperatures. Very few have carnivore gnawing marks or are digested. Bones come from animals in age ranges: young, fetal, infantile, infantile/juvenile, juvenile/subadult, subadult and subadult/adult. Surface

condition is generally good, but several fragments have worn surfaces and rounded edges. 11 sheep-size long bones were trampled. There are cut marks on the surface of sheep-size and large mammal ribs, a sheep-size metacarpal (skinning), and a sheep/goat tibia (dismemberment).

A make-up layer (15267) of floor (15268) in the northern part of Space 320 includes mostly sheep-size and cow-size 2-3 cm long shaft splinters and rib fragments. There is no coherence, with trampled pieces but most fragments in generally good condition. Taxa include sheep/goat (horn core, scapula, ulna, tooth, skull), fox (metatarsal), and equid (tooth). All bones except teeth are fragmented. Three pieces of sheep-size long bone are burnt. Some fragments are gnawed (sheep-size shaft splinters), digested, or trampled (fragment of sheep-size rib). Surface condition is good.

A fire installation of unspecified character (15269) in Space 320 below a bricky layer (13020) contained a small animal bone assemblage that has mostly sheep-size and cow-size shaft splinters and indeterminate bones. Diagnostic bones include sheep/goat (scapula, radius, ulna, skull pieces, phalanx III, teeth) and cattle (sesamoid, mandible). All are fragmented except teeth and a sesamoid. The general size range is 1-3 cm, with most ca. 2 cm. Few phalanges are complete due to digestion. Ca. 10% of the bone is burnt: partly carbonized (sheep/goat radius), carbonized (tooth fragments, cow- and sheep-size ribs and long bones), and calcined (sheep- and cow-size shaft splinters). Only a cow-size long bone fragment has carnivore gnaw marks. Very little of the bone is digested. The surface condition of the bones is generally good. There are some trampled pieces of sheep-size long bone. Two bird bones and one human specimen are also present. This unit seems to have multiple origins; that is, it is redeposited material. Originally this unit was interpreted as an oven by the excavators, but there was neither a clear base nor a significant amount of charcoal. Hence, they now think that the fragmented mudbricks originally thought to be the remains of an oven superstructure are actually construction rubble mixed with brownish soil.

Between walls (13088), (13089), and (13093), and under the east part of midden layer (15217), described last year (Archive Report, 2007) was another midden deposit (15222), related to Space 318. This deposit is part of a large midden layer recorded as units (13570), (15217), and (15220). The (15222) faunal assemblage is relatively homogeneous. It contains mostly sheep/goat bones with some cattle and one boar skull fragment. Bird and human bones are also present. All body zones are represented (scapula, humerus, radius, ulna, carpals, metacarpal, pelvis, femur, tibia, metatarsal, phalanx, pieces of skull, maxilla, mandible, teeth). All the bone is fragmented, except carpals, phalanges, and teeth. Long bones (mostly sheep-size) are present as shaft splinters. Half the material is diagnostic (sheep/goat, cattle, boar). Ca. 10% of the bone is burnt, mostly at low temperatures, but there is also some calcined bone. Some carbonized at only one end (similar to unit (13570)). Very few bones have gnawing marks or are digested. Surface condition is reasonably good, with most bones heavily processed. Two cattle teeth are articulated. Sizes range from 1-5 cm, with most ca. 2 cm.

West Mound Trenches 5 and 7

Trench 5

A number of spaces were defined during the 2008 season; including several with relatively secure and undisturbed Chalcolithic fills. Only part of the material from one such fill unit (16898) was processed in time for preliminary assessment during the 2008 season. This unit represents the upper fill of Space 310, overlying (17214). As such, most if not all of the material are likely to be redeposited, and indeed variability in fragmentation, colour and texture points to multiple taphonomic histories. The unit therefore has limited potential for faunal study, but nonetheless gives a first tentative impression of taxonomic composition from a sieved Chalcolithic unit in this area: the portion examined thus far is dominated by caprines and sheep-size specimens, but a surprisingly large number of fragments derive from larger taxa (15-20%; cf. Table 4), including both cattle and equids.

Trench 7

Excavation in this area was restricted to cleaning for photography, but assessments were conducted for a number of units from the 2007 season ((15104), (15107), (15109), (15111),