The stadium at 'Amrit has been known since Renan's excavation (see above). It stands at the northern bend of the Nakht and is 230 m long and 30 m wide. There are seven tiers of seats (each 55 cm deep) on both sides that end in a semicircle with two corridors for passage. On the southern side were foundations for small houses. Stamped handles from Rhodian amphorae were found in test trenches. Roman tombs were hollowed out of the rock. The stadium dates to the fourth century BCE, with continued use through the third century BCE.

The spindles are hypogia topped by funerary monuments. The pyramidal hypogea consist of cubic base on which stands a cylinder topped by an eight-sided pyramid. Two irregular steps descend into it, followed by three more leading to the bottom. The interior consists of two chambers, the first with local and the second meant to hold the founder of the hypogea. The pyramidal hypogea is contemporary with the 'Amrit temple, but the objects found in it date to the period between the fourth and first centuries BCE, indicating that the hypogea was in use for a long period of time.

The dome hypogeo is a 2.5-meter-high cylinder flanked by four lions and topped by a dome. The upper part has decorative friezes similar to those from the temple. It is 9.5 m high, plus the base. The interior is reached via a slope ending in three steps before the entrance. The internal organization is similar to that of the pyramidal hypogea. A plan and a section executed during the 1976 restoration recollected the results previously published by Renan (1864).

Across the centuries the builders of the town of 'Amrit found their stone at a quarry whose material is golden in color. The ruins of the town later served as a quarry for construction at Rual and Tarra. 'Amrit was destroyed in the first century BCE. What remains constitutes a unique Phoenician site, which clearly shows the assimilation of Oriental and Occidental in its architecture and ceramic artifacts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AMULETS. The Latin term amuletum ("an object used as a charm to avert evil") was possibly derived from the Arabic word hamsul (something "worn, worn") by the first century CE because the term first appears in the work of Pliny the Elder (Nat. Hist. 26.66, 33:70-18). Amulets are objects made of various types of materials, either uninscribed or inscribed, and supposedly charged with supernatural power. The magical properties believed to be inherent in particular plants, animals, stones, and metals often determined the selection of a certain material for an amulet. Amulets function like prayers; they are intended to offer protection from disease, misfortune, or attacks from supernatural beings or to guarantee wealth, success, and victory. In the ancient Near East, they were usually worn on the neck or on a cord or chain, but some types of amulets were affixed to houses and places of business. Lamellae, a special type of amulet, are thin pieces of inscribed (and, lead, bronze, silver, or gold that were rolled up, placed in small tubes, and then worn on a cord around the neck. Frequently magical letters, words, symbols, or pictures were engraved on semiprecious stones (e.g., hornstone, chalcedony, quartz), which are generally called "magical gems." Amulets were also made of perishable animal and vegetable material, such as leather, bone, wax, wood, herbs, roots, linum, and papyrus, and many of these have also survived because of the very dry climate. Amulets of various types were widely used throughout the ancient Near East, although it is frequently difficult to determine whether small uninscribed objects and statuettes actually functioned as amulets. Furthermore, some items may have had dual functions, serving as amulets in addition to their original function. For example, cylinder seals (en-
AMUQ

AMUQ, a well-watered and extremely fertile plain more than 1,400 m (4,600 ft) s.l., is located in area bounded to the north by the Taurus Mountains and on the west by the Knidias extension of the Arcadian Mountains. To the northeast the Kirt Düği rises to the Anatolian plateau; on the east and south the hills of Jebel Sim'a and Jebel 'Ali rise to the Alpeko plateau and on the southeast, behind the ruins of Antioch on Osroene, rises Jebel Alou. The 'Afrin and Kaza plains lie to the east of the Amuq from where they reach a marshy area around the Lake of Antioch. This point is north of a major bend in the Orontes River that flows for more than 60 km (40 miles) north and turns at a sharp bend there to the sea. Major connecting roads traverse the area and are well documented throughout history—from the Alpeko area and points south and east, to the coast along the course of the Orontes River. Connections to the Anatolian plateau and Cilicia are made possible through the Hulas Pass through the Amuq Mountains.

The 'Amuq plain is dotted with numerous tells, a strategic selection of which have been investigated. Archaeological remains before the Neolithic period are not well documented and the first significant sequence begins from that period to the present. The archaeological sequence has been blocked out in phases by the excavations of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago carried out between 1933 and 1937 at the important sites of Tell Yarim'lu (30'15' N, 37°32'5'E) on the Orontes 2 km (1 mile) north of the modern town of Al-Aziziyeh, Akita northeast of Antioch (37°37'N, 37°23'5'E) at Tell el-Jadiddeh, Catal Hoyuk, Tell Dhaba, and Tell Kurda. The excavators designated phases A-Q from the Neolithic to early Hellenistic periods. Phase A was studied by Mountjoy, and Phase Q by Al-alakh was excavated by a British expedition in 1937-1939 and 1939-1940 which culminated in the identification of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages and the Osroene-Cilician (Oriental Institute excavation sequence). [See Alakha.] The British expedition also excavated at Tellu el-Atrak, Tell ash-Shihab, and al-A'ana on the Mediterranean coast. The classical periods were documented primarily through the efforts of the Princeton University excavations at Antioch. [See Antioch on Orontes.] Excavations further south along the Orontes river at al-Ain and Tell el-Dama have yielded assemblages very closely related culturally to the Amuq in the specific periods that have so far been investigated there. [See Antioch on Orontes.] The Neolithic sequence in the 'Amuq begins with the Pottery Neolithic phase that includes the final inventory and such pottery as

braced with designs, inscriptions, or both), sometimes worn suspended on a cord around the owner's neck occasionally functioned as amulets. Mithraeum science seems to date from the last half of the second millennium BCE probably functioned as both jewelry and amulets. On the other hand, the function of two small seventh-century BCE limestone objects inscribed with Aramaic inscription are inscribed with inscription of Aram-Tashib (between
carved in Syria and Harran in Syria is clear. One depicts a winged sphinx and a crouching lion with a serpent's tail swallowing
inhabitants and would have been fashioned from bronze. The main amulets, inscribed with an inscription to protect the bearer from the strangling nocturnal demons, while the other depicts a person with a big eyes and scorpions feet and has two inscriptions, one for protection against the evil eye, and the other to obtain rain. (translations in Beyerl, 1978, pp. 147-
57 pictured in Pritchard, 1960, p. 216, no. 662). During the Persian period (550-330 BCE), many glass amulets in the shape of human heads (both bearded male and female), have been found in tombs in Cyprus, Egypt, and the Syro-
Palestinian coast (as well as Spain, Carthage, and Sardinia). This distribution suggests that they were produced and dis-
bursed by Phoenicians.

Egyptian Amulets. More amulets are preserved from ancient Egypt than anywhere else in the ancient Near East. Three Egyptian terms for amulet are sx ("amulet"), mœh ("protector") and wadj ("health-maintaining object"). Amulets for the dead were essential features of Egyptian funerary practice. The Book of the Dead contains incantations that, when recited, were thought to endow the amulets with magical powers. Sometimes larger than amulets were worn by the living and were mentioned as found on dif-
ferent parts of the body, not just around the neck. Many amulets were wrapped under the bandages. There was an appropriate form for the deceased. There were at least 275 types (Pettic, 1914).

Lebbeh were small funerary statuettes inscribed with the names of the deceased, and magical spell from the Book of the Dead. These statuettes were intended to take the place of the deceased when the gods desired work in their fields to be performed. Sarabu, representing a type of bee, was similar in size and form to the Lebbeh. A plaster plaque of stone or faience (glazed blue, green, or turquoise), were symbols of the god Khepr (the rising sun), promising the renewal of life in the afterlife. Many of these plaques represented various parts of the human body and were intended to protect those parts from misfortune or disease.

Greceo-Roman Amulets. The three general Greek terms for amulets are phylactery ("safeguard," "preservative"
peripetion, and periesma (both meaning "attached," "tied out"). Thousands of Greco-Roman amulets from the first few centuries BCE to the first century AD are catalogued on gem-
stones. These gemstone amulets have been frequently, though mistakenly, called "Gnostic" amulets in the past be-
cause of their distinctive form (such as a commonly occurring rooster-footed, snake-footed figure) and of seven

magics, that is, "magical words" made up of meaningless,
though traditional, strings of vowels and consonants that made no sense in another language" (Thomas 1995). These glass-
stone amulets were worn in rings, bracelets, or as parts of
necklaces (Borner, 1950; Delattre and Derchain, 1964).

Some of these objects contained on the Beth She'arim inscription ("Book of Mysteries") and the Harika h-Neubis ("Sword of Moses") containing instructions for the preparation of amulets.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bartho, Carol. "The Divine Name Found in Jerusalem." Biblical Ar-

Benoit, Pierre. Et les Grands de Ma'ram. Discoveries in the Ju-

Beyerl, William. Ritual Etiquette in the Early Talmudic Jeru-

Borner, Joachim. "Kleine Amulett-Sammlung. Chrestome Greco-Egyp-
tischer Arte. Amster. Mich., 1990. Important discussion of Greco-Roman am-
ulets and magical gems (starting from ca. 200 B.C.-100 CE). Bokhors, Campbell. "Amulets Chiefly in the British Museum: A Sup-


Daumant, Claudine. "A Greco-Egyptian Magical Amulet from Mas-

Davies, Charles. Ancient Egyptian Inscriptions: Corpus and Concen-

Debeir, M., and Philippe Derchain. Les amulettes magiques gré-


Diagne, M., and Philippe Derchain. Les amulettes magiques gré-


ian magical objects.


Wagner, Margaret. Amulets and Alphabet. Magical Amulets in the First Book of Corinthians. Amsterdam, 1987. The Corpus is an ancient encyclopedia of magical lore compiled in the first or second century CE. Some of these objects contained inscriptions ("Book of Mysteries") and the Harika h-Neubis ("Sword of Moses") containing instructions for the preparation of amulets.