

## 2. Introduction

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The objects presented in this volume were collected from layers excavated in 75 trenches, mostly 3 x 8-9 m, covering Tell F3 and Tell F6 (figs. 3-4). The layers were horizontal and about 30 cm thick, rarely thinner, and often thicker, 40-60 cm. They were mostly arbitrarily defined, that is, they did not normally correspond to the discrete deposition of materials during the accumulation of the tell. A small part of the objects derives from a specified stratigraphical context, such as being found on or below the floor of a particular room or in a similarly well-defined relation to other structures. Objects, such as seals, copper artefacts, and stone vessel fragments, were, however, normally plotted in three dimensions. All excavated deposits were sieved.

The vertical measurements of layers and objects in Tell F3 were normally taken with the help of a theodolite in relation to a reference point on top of the tell that was assigned the arbitrary value of 10.00, in relation to a datum line approximately 2.90 m below sea level. Thus, levels are always positive above this datum, the lowest culture horizon recorded being level c. 5.30 (with the exception of a lot from level 5.50-4.84 and a lot from level 5.15), and the top of the tell in the excavated area reading level 9.76 (fig. 5). Sometimes the height was measured in relation to the surface of the tell in that particular trench, and this measurement has, if possible, been converted.

In the excavation of Tell F6, the threshold stone of the north gate in the fortress of the adjacent Tell F5 (Mathiesen 1982 p. 10: D/j) was employed as reference point, situated 4.20 m above sea level. Measurements taken above this line are positive, below it negative. The top of the tell in the excavated area read +1.30, the lowest cultural deposit -2.64 (fig. 6).

In the field, the finds were furnished with a field number and entered in the daybook. During registration at Moesgaard Museum, the field number was supplemented by an accession number. The field number always begins with the tell designation, F3, F5 or F6, followed, in the case of F3, by one to three digits (in 1958 with a prefixed asterisk) or by one to three small letters, and in the case of F6 by one to four digits. The accession number starts with the official site number in the Moesgaard Museum register, 881 (= Tell F3), 883 (= Tell F5) or 1129 (= Tell F6) followed by one to three

capital letters. After their return to Kuwait, the objects were furnished with KM numbers.

The numbering system for **Tell F3/881** is as follows:

Season	Field number	Accession number
	<b>F3</b>	<b>881</b>
<b>1958</b>	*1-*68	A-BR
	Trench BB: topsoil, layers 1-8	BS-CB
	Trench AK: Layers 1-5	CC-CH
<b>1959</b>	1-329	CI-PM
	330-331	(-)
	(-)	PN-TO
		(not used: TH-TO)
<b>1960</b>	a-pg	TP-AKC
		(not used: AKD-AKG)
	aaa-auo	AKH-BEY
		(not used: BEZ-BGZ)
<b>1961/62</b>	ph-åå	BHA-BVS
	ava-awa	BVT-BXY
<b>1962/63</b>	awb-bjs	BXZ-CMA

The numbering system for **Tell F6/1129** is as follows:

Season	Field number	Accession number
	<b>F6</b>	<b>1129</b>
<b>1960</b>	1-607	A-XH
<b>1961/62</b>	608-949	XI-AML
<b>1962/63</b>	950-1245	AMM-BAI

The method of excavating in horizontal layers (spits) set certain limits on the chronological reliability of the excavated lots, as each spit may belong to more than one stratigraphic level. Additionally, the ubiquitous use of stone for construction made Dilmun architectural remains vulnerable to stone plundering. Indeed, evidence that old, abandoned and buried buildings were plundered for stone, presumably to be used in new constructions, has often been encountered during recent excavations in Tell F3 and Tell F6.

Especially during the 2008-2012 excavations in Tell F6, where solid clay or plaster floors covered

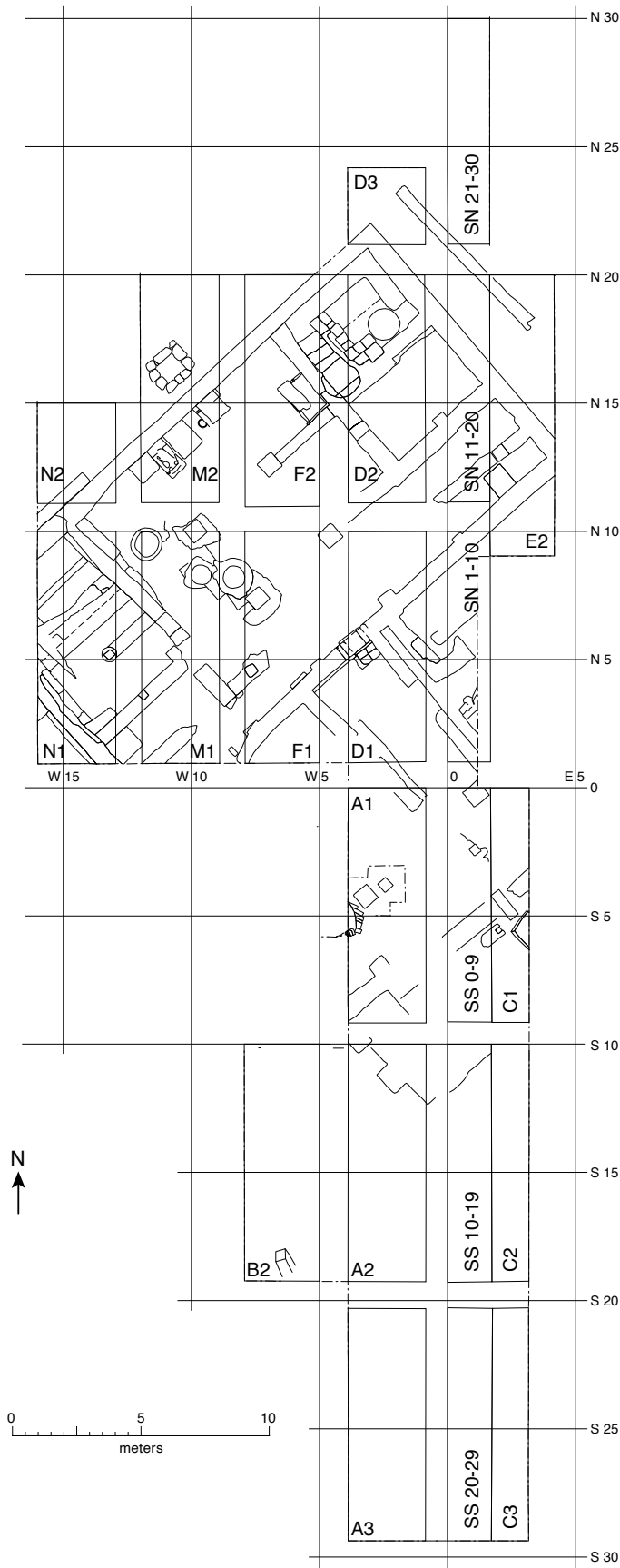


Fig. 4. Plan of Tell F6 with excavation trenches.

large stretches between the “Palace” and the temple, stone plundering holes were easily noted (Højlund & Abu-Laban 2016 p. 59-60, figs. 70 and 72), and the contents of such holes could be distinguished from that of the levels they broke through.

Stone plundering holes were also noted in the 2012-2017 excavations of Tell F3 (Højlund & Hilton 2021 figs. 104-105), but less often, perhaps because of less solid floors or less plundering activity in Tell F3 due to the use of smaller, less valuable stones in the walls. During the 1958-1963 excavations the stone plundering pits were rarely recognized in the field, and this has inevitably led to disturbances in the find contents of the excavated layers.

In terms of the pottery, the sheer number of sherds kept from the 1958-1963 excavations (c. 25.000 from Tell F3 and Tell F6) ensured that these disturbances were of minor significance. Comparing the pottery from each excavated layer, trench by trench, it was still possible to detect the typological changes through time and to delimit a periodic system for the two tells consisting of seven periods, 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, and 4B (Højlund 1987 fig. 707) (fig. 7).

The following scheme (fig. 8) summarises the pottery datings of the excavated layers in Tell F3, trench by trench, in relation to vertical levels. This gives a date for the pottery found at a certain level, but there is no certainty that the context is undisturbed. Accordingly, these datings should be treated with caution and can only indicate trends in the material. Based on these dating indications the architectural phases of Tell F3, identified by Kjærøum (1986a), were dated to Periods 2, 3A, 3B, 4A, and 4B (Højlund 1987). The subsequent excavations in 2012-2017 revealed three additional occupation phases dating to Period 3B (figs. 5 and 7).

The stone plundering disturbances of Tell F6 were more severe than those of Tell F3, perhaps due to the larger sizes and greater amounts of building stone that could be quarried from the “Palace” (Kjærøum & Højlund 2013 p. 99-101). A similar scheme showing the typological changes in pottery, trench by trench, could therefore not be made. Instead, the dating of the architecture took advantage of several assemblages of complete, datable pots that had survived the stone plunder (Højlund 1987 p. 138-149).

Based on the 1960-1963 excavations, the occupation of Tell F6 was separated into a Pre-“Palace” phase dating to Period 1, the construction of the “Palace” in Period 2 or 3A, followed by two further occupation phases in the “Palace” dating to Period 3B and 4A, and a phase post-dating the “Palace” and Period 4A (figs. 6-7) (Højlund 1987). The excavations in 2008-2012

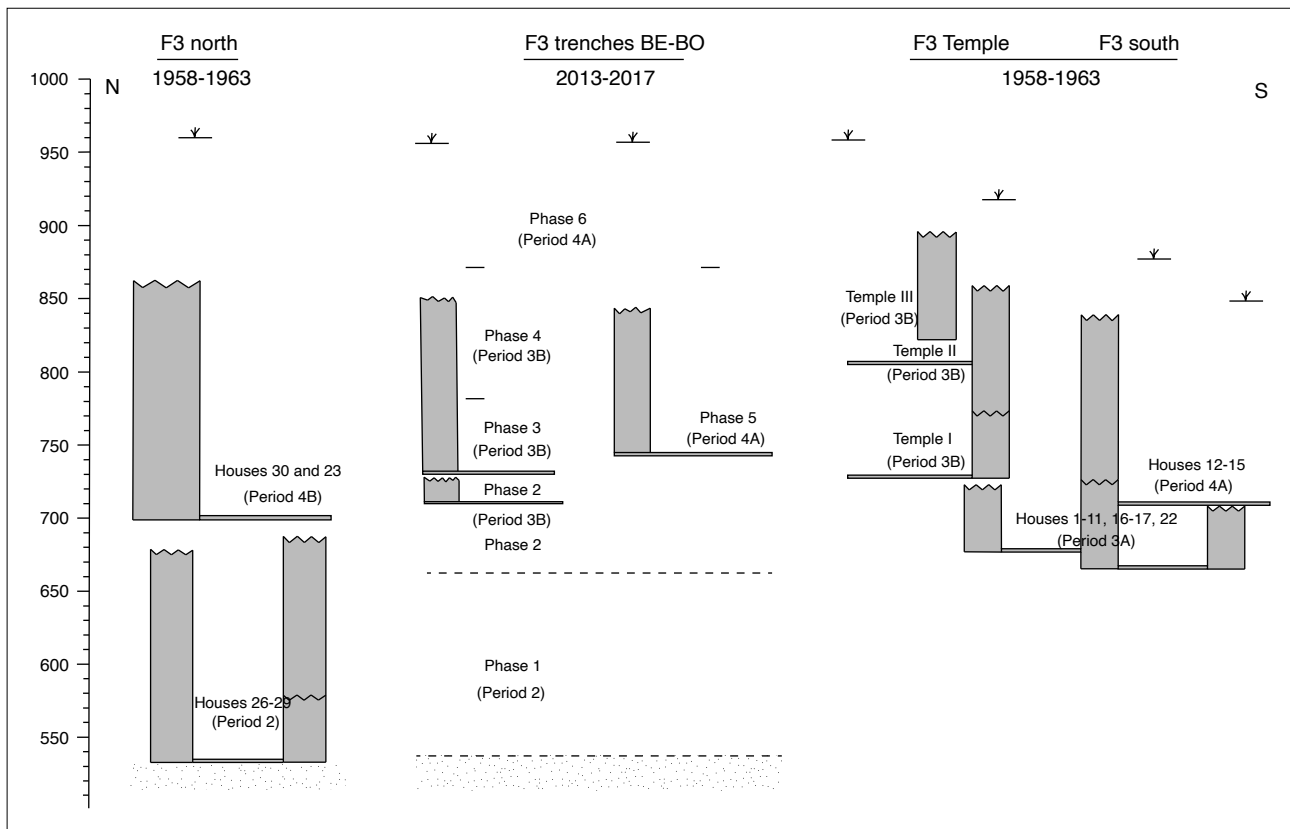


Fig. 5. Main stratigraphy of Tell F3 (Højlund & Hilton 2021 fig. 49).

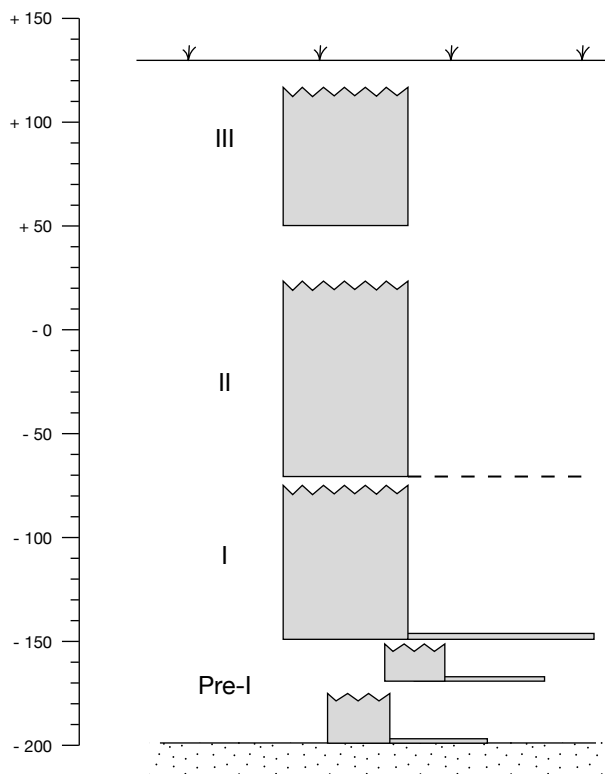


Fig. 6. Main stratigraphy of Tell F6 (Kjærnum & Højlund 2013 fig. 132).

supported this chronology and narrowed down the dating of the construction of the “Palace” to Period 2 (Højlund & Abu-Laban 2016 p. 43, fig. 6).

With regards to the non-ceramic finds from the 1958-1963 excavations, the problems of dating are great. Because of the excavation method and the plundered and therefore disturbed nature of the site, it is not possible to date single finds based on their find contexts alone, because of the risk that they may have intruded into their find positions from later contexts or be residual from earlier contexts.

The following chapters will present the remaining finds from the 1958-1963 excavations in Tell F3 and F6, divided according to type of objects. Not all objects were available at the writing of this manuscript; some have been described on the basis of drawings, photos or day-book entries. The dating of the associated pottery, if available, is given after each find, however, for the reasons given above, these datings should only be viewed as indicative.

The following abbreviations are used: L length, W width, Th thickness, D diameter, PD perforation diameter.