



Micromorphological investigation on ring road sediments of the Early Bronze Age site Tell Chuera, Syria

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Tell Chuera is an Early Bronze Age settlement mound in NE-Syria close to the Turkish border. With a diameter of almost 1 km and a height of 18 m it is one of the biggest tells in the region between the rivers Balikh and Khabur. In 1958 the structures of the city wall were known first by Orthmann (1990). This city wall was built of air-dried mud bricks. The age of the founding of this construction is not yet clear. The earliest pottery from the place is dated around 2500 BC to 2350 BC. Inside the fortification a road was detected, which was first excavated by Novak (1995). We took sediment monoliths in 2004 from a new trench, which shows the same situation of the road. A geomagnetic prospection, that included the whole site, suggests that the road was part of the planned extension of the lower town and serves as a circular road (Meyer, in prep.).

The micromorphological investigation focussed on the question, how the road was used. Did animals have had access to the town?

The thin sections show different indications of the anthropogenic influence. In all samples pseudomorphs after straw are visible. In many parts ash, charred wood fragments, bone fragments, melted material and fragments of basalt and flint were observable, too. These materials are typical for sediments in streets (cf. Goldberg & Macphail, 2006). In some parts of the thin sections faecal spherulites and dung remains with faecal spherulites give an idea that ruminants used the road as well as men. Trampling structures support this assumption.

Moreover, leaching of calcite, its redeposition in mottles, pseudomycels and concretions, hydromorphic stains and the translocation of silt indicate postdepositional pedogenic processes.

Literature

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