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The Roman fort at Qubur al Bid, Mesopotamia

George A. Wood[†]

The Roman fort at Qubur al Bid was discovered by the writer utilizing satellite imagery prospection during the course of a survey of Mesopotamia (fig. 1). The fort is located in the Jazira of NE Syria, a few kilometers south of the Turkish border close to the modern town of Qubur al Bid (fig. 1). The region is watered by several perennial tributaries of the Jaghjagh and forms part of an alluvial plain averaging 400 m elevation. The fort lies c.30 km east-southeast of Nisibis (Nusaybin, Turkey) along a small tributary of the wadi Djarrah. Wheat, barley, and cotton are grown today in the local alluvium with the aid of modern irrigation. Ancient agriculture was limited by rainfall; dry-farming required an annual reliable minimum of 200 mm and can be defined as 'marginal' as high as 300 mm¹ Unfortunately, modern irrigation across

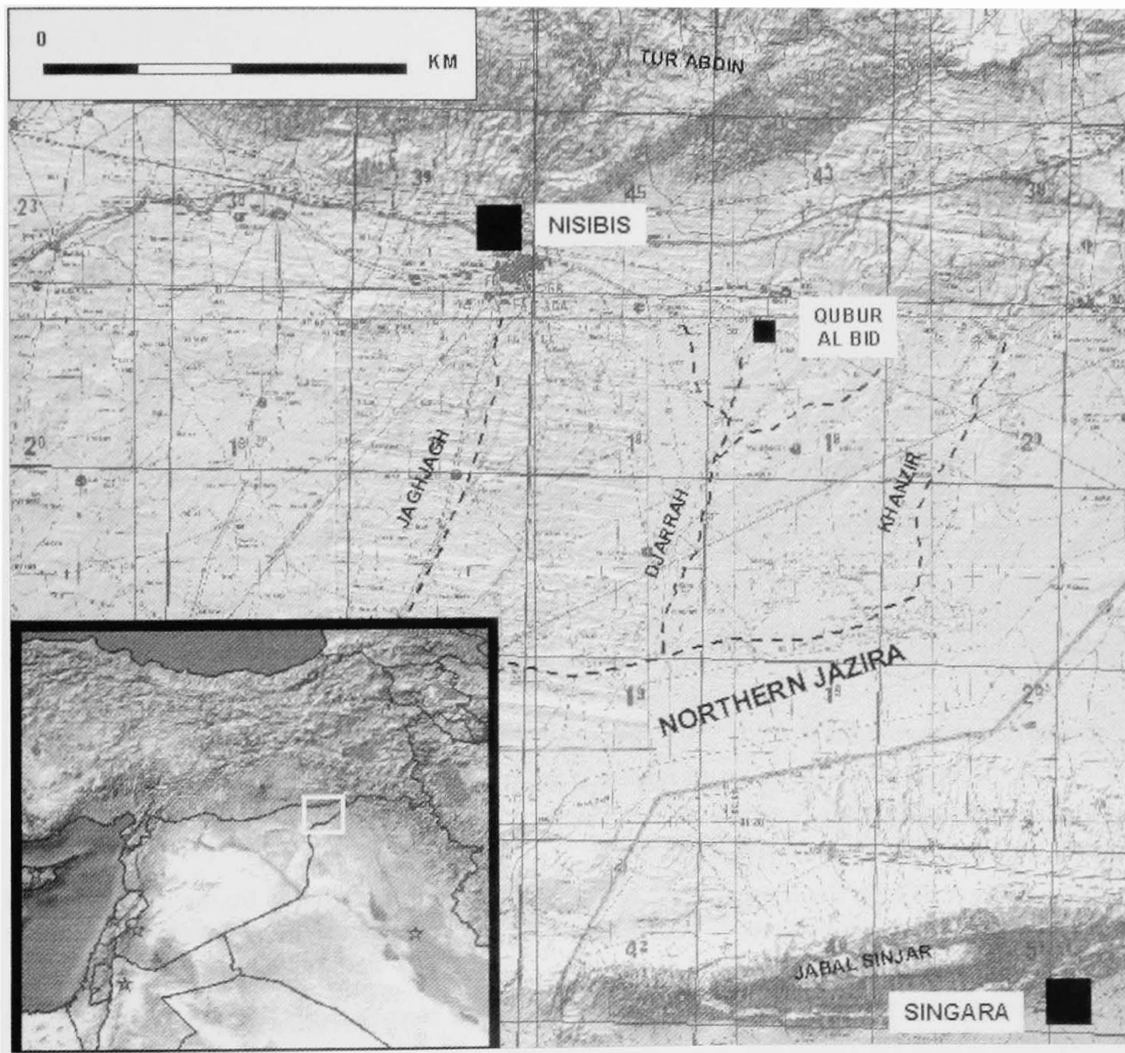


Fig. 1. The inset map defines the area of the larger map. The map of western Mesopotamia incorporates digital terrain elevation and displays information on contour and water-courses. The legionary sites at Nisibis and Singara are marked.

1 D. J. W. Meijer, *A survey in northeastern Syria* (Istanbul 1986) 1-2; W. Ball, D. Tucker and T. J. Wilkinson, "The Tell al-Hawa Project: archaeological investigations in the North Jazira 1986-87," *Iraq* 51