LOWER GÖKSU ARCHAEOLOGICAL SALVAGE SURVEY PROJECT,
THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE FIRST SEASON

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Abstract

This article presents the results of the 2013 survey season which was conducted along the Göksu River Valley in the Mersin Province of Southern Turkey. The project was initiated to document as many archaeological sites as possible before the valley is flooded, due to the planned construction of the Kayraktepe Dam in 2016. The two-week season enabled us to discover several unknown sites and further investigate known sites that will be submerged under the dam lake. This year’s work mainly focused on the alluvial plains where the Ermenek Çay and the Kurtsuyu Rivers join the Göksu River. The discovery of a pre-Classical settlement at Damtepe and the presence of a late-Chalcolithic level at Attepe were the most significant discoveries of the season. A brief summary of the field season is provided here including sections about the investigated sites and a discussion about local settlement patterns. The 2013 season of this Bitlis Eren University project, which is conducted in collaboration with the University of Leicester, was funded by the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. We hope to continue surveying this important area in 2014, as throughout history the Göksu Valley was one of the main routes linking the Mediterranean coast to the Central Anatolian Plateau. We may also consider starting excavations at one or two major sites in the coming years, if the necessary funding is provided by the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works of Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

The Göksu River Valley lies in the Mersin Province of Turkey, in the area which was known as Rough Cilicia in antiquity. It runs between the Central Anatolian Plateau and the Mediterranean Sea, and as such is a natural channel of communication between interior and coast (figure 1). That the river valley was an important channel of communication throughout history is reflected in its rich archaeological record. From the spectacular ruins of the early Byzantine monastery of Alahan to the Hittite-style rock relief known as the ‘Çolakkız’ at Keben, the Göksu River Valley is a landscape rich in both historical resonance and archaeological remains.

The lower part of the Göksu Valley is scheduled to be flooded in September 2016 with the construction of a dam at Kayraktepe, approximately 10km northwest of the town of Silifke (ancient Seleucia ad Calycednum). The Kayraktepe Dam Project will bring new development to the region, but one unavoidable consequence will be that several known archaeological sites will be completely or partially submerged, including Kilise Tepe, Çingga Tepe, Maltepe, Ören Tepe and Attepe. In addition to the loss of these known sites, an unknown number of other sites and monuments, as yet undiscovered, will be lost beneath the waters of the dam lake. In response to this, the Lower Göksu Archaeological Salvage Survey

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Project (LGASSP) was established in 2013. The aim of the project is to document as much as possible of this unique archaeological landscape before the area is flooded, preserving knowledge of the archaeological record, if not the record itself, for posterity.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN THE GÖKSU VALLEY

The archaeological significance of the Göksu Valley has long been established (figure 2). The Byzantine and Medieval standing remains in the valley were documented as early as the start of the nineteenth century, with the monastery at Alahan being lavishly described by Count de Laborde in the 1838 publication of his *Voyage d’Asie Mineure* (Laborde 1838: 123-126). But while the work of early antiquarians demonstrated the significance of the valley in classical and later antiquity, it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the importance of the valley during earlier periods was recognized. This recognition came following the earliest official survey of the region, conducted in 1951-2 by James Mellaart. Mellaart included the Göksu Valley in his wider survey of pre-Classical archaeology in southern Turkey, and remarked at the time that the valley was especially rich in remains (Mellaart 1954: 177). In particular, Mellaart found evidence for Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age activity in the valley, and traced links between the material culture found in the Göksu area and that found in coastal Cilica, the Konya plain, and southwestern Anatolia (Mellaart 1954).

Mellaart’s work formed the basis for a second survey of the valley a decade later, undertaken by David French. French set out explicitly to investigate the valley’s role as a conduit between the societies of the Anatolian plateau on the Konya Plain, and those of the coast around Mersin and Tarsus (French 1965: 177). French’s more detailed survey established the locations of several höyük sites with pre-Classical material, and identified two apparent gaps in the ceramic sequence of the valley – the Middle Bronze Age and the Iron Age (French 1965: 186). These apparent patterns in the material, it was suggested, required further investigation, with detailed and intensive work necessary before any firm conclusions could be drawn.

Intensive investigation was indeed undertaken some time later, in the form of excavations at the multi-period mound of Kilise Tepe in the years 1994-8 (Postgate and Thomas 2007a), and again in 2007-12 (Jackson and Postgate 2009 and 2010). Kilise Tepe is located south of the town of Mut, near the village of Kışla and close to the main Karaman-Silifke road. Both sets of excavations at Kilise Tepe were directed by Nicholas Postgate, with İhame Öztürk and Mark Jackson. This work has been vital in establishing a ceramic sequence for the Göksu area, and for understanding the long-term settlement history of the valley. It has also given us an insight into the Göksu River, not just as a channel of communication between the plateau and the sea, but also as a dynamic and complex region in its own right.

Indeed, the remains at Kilise Tepe now offer a window through which to view the history of settlement in the Göksu valley as a whole. Chalcolithic sherds have been collected from the mound’s surface, although no Chalcolithic levels could be identified during the excavations, and several levels of Early Bronze Age occupation have been unearthed, establishing activity at the site during EB I, II and III (Level V; see Seffen 2007 and Şerifoğlu 2012). There seems to have been a substantial amount of continuity into the Middle Bronze Age (Level VI), although the architectural remains from this period are scant (Postgate 2007a;
The Late Bronze Age is better represented (Level III), with the site undergoing several architectural phases. Excavation has in particular focused on a large multi-roomed building in the NW area of the mound, which was associated with Hittite material culture and administrative practices (Blakeney 2007; Postgate 2007b; Jackson and Postgate 2010: 424-425; Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012: 7-8).

The transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age is also known from the site (Level IIa-c), with the previous administrative building succeeded by the ‘Stele Building’, constructed on a new alignment but fulfilling similar functions to its predecessor (Postgate and Thomas 2007b; Jackson and Postgate 2010: 425-426). Occupation seems to have continued in the Iron Age (Level IId-k), as represented by numerous storage pits, surfaces, partial traces of mudbrick and stone architecture, and the remains of what appears to be a large roundhouse (Jackson and Postgate 2010, 26-29; Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012: 8-9). Following the Iron Age, there may have been a gap in occupation at Kilise Tepe, as the Classical period is represented by a few unstratified sherds and the Hellenistic by disturbed and scrappy levels (Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012: 10). The final phase of the site is the Byzantine period (Level I), during which the stone church was built that has given the site its name (Kilise Tepe means ‘church mound’; Jackson 2007a). In addition to the church, domestic settlement was also uncovered across the mound (Jackson 2007b and c; Jackson and Postgate 2010: 429-430; Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012: 9-10). To date, Kilise Tepe remains the only site which has been excavated in the region.

Whilst work was ongoing at the multi-period mound of Kilise Tepe, detailed investigations and survey work was also being undertaken in the upper reaches of the Göksu Valley under Hugh Elton and James Newhard (Elton 2008). From 2002 until 2007, this project documented the settlement patterns and archaeological remains in the upper valley area (north of the town of Mut). Intensive fieldwalking in the area of Alahan village yielded sherd scatters from the Hellenistic, early Roman, and late Roman or Byzantine periods (Elton et al. 2006: 306). The site was thereby established as a substantial settlement, as opposed to an isolated religious outpost (Elton et al. 2006, 305-306; Elton 2006: 332-334; Elton 2008: 240-242), and a number of standing structures of the Roman and Byzantine period were documented, to include those in Alahan cemetery (Elton et al. 2006: 308-309). More extensive survey work also confirmed the presence of Bronze and Iron Age material at sites in the upper river valley (Elton 2006: 332; Elton 2008: 238-239), and some lithic material which has been dated to the Middle Paleolithic period (Elton 2008: 238).

The richness of the archaeological record in the Göksu River Valley, therefore, has been amply demonstrated by previous research. The Lower Göksu Archaeological Salvage Survey Project seeks to build upon this work, using the information from these earlier projects to put our own discoveries into context. Our project, however, has a particularly specific aim – to focus in particular on the areas which will be flooded by the Kayraktepe dam in 2016, and to document the archaeological remains in this flood zone as fully as possible. The area scheduled to be flooded lies between the modern towns of Mut and Silifke, and stretches over 75km along the length of the Göksu River itself covering an area of approximately 200 km² (figure 3). The project is conducted by a mixed team of scholars from the Universities of Bitlis Eren and Leicester. The official director of the project is Dr. Tevfik Emre Şerifoğlu, and Dr. Naóise Mac Sweeney is the co-director.

The first season of our project was conducted in between 30th September and 13th October 2013, after receiving the necessary permit from the General Directorate of Cultural
Assets and Museums. The government representative was Yasemin Zenger from the Silifke Museum, who participated in the fieldwork at every level with great enthusiasm, and Bengi Bağ Selvi was the field assistant. Dr. Carlo Colantoni is the GIS expert, and Nazlı Evrim Şerifoğlu is the illustrator and photographer of the project. Unfortunately, the project co-director Naoíse Mac Sweeney could not join the fieldwork this year because of health issues.

**METHODODOLOGY**

A two-phase methodological approach was adopted for the project. The first phase consisted of visits to potential archaeological sites, whose candidacy was determined using satellite images and topographical maps. These locations were chosen based on the local topography, nearby water sources and the proximity to modern settlements. Unfortunately, because of the rough topography of this region and the tendency of the ancient inhabitants to settle on top of natural ridges, which makes it hard to differentiate a natural hill from a mound, the level of success was relatively low. Of numerous locations that were visited, only eight yielded archaeological remains. In addition to this, almost all of these sites and features were from the Byzantine and Medieval periods except one multi-period mound, which was inhabited from the Early Bronze Age until the Byzantine period with interruptions.

At and around each site candidate, our team randomly walked to spot finds and remains to check whether the location had anything archaeological or not. The diagnostic sherds that were found were recorded by drawing and photographing, and architectural features were only photographed. GPS points were taken at locations with archaeological remains and these were marked on maps.

Intensive, systematic surveys conducted on and around the previously discovered settlements was the second phase of the fieldwork. Mound type settlements including Çingentepe, Attepe, Görmüttepe and Maltepe were chosen for this work. All these mounds are located in two alluvial plains within the valley, which were formed by the silt brought by the rivers and streams and one located where the Kurtsuyu River and the other where the Ermenek River joins the Göksu. Almost all the ancient settlements located within the valley were typically built on natural hills or ridges, and interestingly, usually not on the very top of these but on their slopes. The summits and slopes of these mounds were divided into two or more transects, each of which were systematically walked and all the diagnostic sherds that were encountered were drawn and photographed. At Çingentepe an even more intensive approach was adopted and the eastern slope of the mound was divided into 2m by 2m grids. Sherds in each grid were counted, and once again diagnostic sherds were drawn and photographed.

**PRE-CLASSICAL SITES (FIGURE 4)**

The only pre-Classical settlement that was discovered using the remote-sensing based extensive methodology was Damtepe, which was probably the most exciting discovery of the season (figure 5). This multi-period mound is located close to the village of Evkaçlıkliği, on top of a natural hill just near the deep canyon formed by the Göksu River at this location. The pottery from the site has shown that Damtepe was first settled at the end of the Early Bronze Age and was inhabited, probably with interruptions, until the Byzantine period. Especially,
one combed ware sherd, which has good parallels from Kilise Tepe, was useful for dating the early beginnings of this settlement (figure 6; Baker et al. 1995: fig.19.5; Postgate and Thomas 2007: fig.377.396). This site, which is the southernmost pre-classical settlement discovered in the Göksu Valley, will not be flooded by the dam lake but it was understood that it may be partially destroyed by the new highway that will be built here.

The other two pre-Classical sites investigated in 2013 had been discovered earlier by James Mellaart and David French during their visits to and surveys in this area. Amongst these Attepe is located where the Ermenek Çay joins the Göksu River, and Çingentepe is located where the Kurtsuğu Çay joins the Göksu River.

The most interesting one of these mounds proved to be Attepe, as a number of sherds that might belong to the Chalcolithic period were found during our intensive surveys here (figure 7; French 1965: 180). The concerned sherds were painted with black, dark brown or reddish brown coloured wavy lines and cross-hatchings on a cream surface, the closest parallels for which can be found at the Early and Middle Chalcolithic levels of Tarsus in the Cilician plain and Can Hasan in south central Anatolia, although it should be noted that our sherds seem to be a bit more similar to the Tarsus examples (figure 8; Goldman 1956: fig.219-220, 223, 341.13, 341.L; French 1962: fig.5, 7, 9; 1963: fig.7; 1966: fig.5-6; 1968: fig.2). If we have identified these sherds correctly, this makes Attepe the earliest known settlement of the Göksu Valley. A piece belonging to a red-cross bowl dated to the end of the Early Bronze Age and the base of a red-lustrous ware libation arm from the Late Bronze Age were other important finds, which were valuable chronological indicators, and have close parallels from Kilise Tepe (figure 9; figure 10; Baker et al. 1995: fig.12.8, 17.1, 19.5; Postgate and Thomas 2007: fig.384.525, 384.529-530, 386.561-562). The mound seems to have been inhabited until the Byzantine period with interruptions and there was probably a military post built on top of it which was connected to the Byzantine town located 300m to the west of the mound.

Another pre-classical settlement in the vicinity of Attepe is Örentepe. This site, first discovered and briefly surveyed by David French, was not visited by our team in 2013 as it will not be flooded by the dam lake (French 1965: 180). However, we plan to conduct an intensive survey on and around the mound in 2014 as the settlement may provide important information about the cultural history of this part of the valley.

The settlement at Çingentepe is the southern neighbour of Kilise Tepe (discussed above and the only archaeological site that has ever been excavated in this region), and this mound is located very close to the southern banks of the Göksu River (figure 11; French 1965: 180). Based on the finds, which were collected from the transects and the 2m by 2m grids, it was understood that the site was settled from the Early Bronze Age until the Medieval period (figure 12). A sherd belonging to a red burnished ware bowl from the Early Bronze Age II period, which was painted with white coloured cross-hatchings, was one of the interesting finds as it has an almost identical parallel from Kilise Tepe (figure 13; Postgate and Thomas 2007: fig.369.220). The remains of a fortification wall or a defensive structure of some sort, which was built on top of the mound, is just visible on the surface of the summit.

This mound was badly damaged by illegal excavations and the eastern slope was almost completely demolished by heavy machinery in order to expand the nearby agricultural field (figure 14; figure 15). The sections of the robber trenches and the demolished eastern slope have been useful in that they offer us an idea about the archaeological stratigraphy at
the site. These sections were carefully observed and photographed, and sherds from different layers were recorded and studied. In general terms, the pottery traditions show great similarities to what is known from Kilise Tepe, and this is a clear sign of close relations with that site and can be seen as evidence for the existence of a shared local culture.

**CLASSICAL AND POST-CLASSICAL SITES (FIGURE 16)**

Almost all the settlements and architectural remains found during the extensive remote-sensing based survey phase of our fieldwork were from the Classical and post-Classical periods. One interesting discovery was the remains of a Classical period building, located relatively close to the mound of Görmüttepe, of which only a small number of stone architectural features survived, including capitals and columns (figure 17). This was the only Classical period structure that we came across in 2013.

Of the site candidates that were visited, two in the vicinity of the village of Köselerli, and one in the vicinity of Hisar were understood to be modestly-sized Byzantine farmsteads (figure 18; figure 19; figure 20). All these sites were located on top of low hills, which were aligned along streams, and contained only small numbers of sherds. These settlements are good indications of the changing socio-economic system in the region during this period, when people settled at small settlements across the valley.

In addition to these farmsteads, a medium-sized Byzantine town was discovered close to the village of Miharhor, not far from the multi-period mound of Attepe (figure 21). The town was built on top of a natural rise, and its extent can be traced in the high density of the sherd scatters. Unfortunately, none of the sherds that were found here were diagnostic pieces, but the fabrics of these predominantly coarse ware sherds allowed us to date them to the late Roman or Byzantine period. As mentioned earlier, there was probably a military post on top of the mound of Attepe itself, which would have guarded this settlement.

Görmüttepe, which we initially misidentified as Örentepe, is located just across Attepe on the other side of the Göksu River (figure 22; French 1965: 181). Our work on this site has shown that the mound was probably first settled during the Classical period (which is also supported by the existence of the remains of the Classical period building in its vicinity mentioned above), and inhabited until the Byzantine period. Several Byzantine building features were found during our work at the site including pillars, lintels and numerous tiles (figure 23). Like Attepe, there was probably a military post built on top of this mound. The pottery scatters across the fields just near the mound of Görmüttepe allowed us to spot yet another Byzantine town here, which was probably attached to the nearby Byzantine military post.

Some interesting post-Classical architectural remains that we encountered during our surveys along the Göksu River Valley include the walls of a Medieval fortification wall, probably belonging to a castle, at a location very close to the village of Karahacılı (figure 24), and a bridge which was built on a stream just below the mound of Maltepe (figure 25). Maltepe is located close to the village of Anamurlu and the walls of a Byzantine or Medieval castle built on top of the mound are still visible today. These walls were partially destroyed by illegal excavations conducted here and only a few sherds could be found on top of the mound, which all belong to large storage vessels (figure 26; figure 27).
THE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

The survey area, as previously mentioned, covers approximately 200 km² along the length of the lower Göksu River Valley. The area under investigation in this project presently ends at the mouth of the Göksu gorge, to the east it opens out onto the flat plain of the river’s delta.

It should be noted that the Göksu river is a fast flowing river. It rises at two separate sources in the Taurus mountains to the north and southwest (the river Ermenek) forming a confluence just to the south of the modern town of Mut. A further tributary, the Kurtsuyu, joins the Göksu 15 km or so to the south of Mut. Between these two points, the lower Göksu River Valley opens into a broad, flat valley floor of agriculturally fertile alluvial soil. This area formed the focus of the 2013 survey season’s work.

This broad valley floor allows the Göksu to change course and meander within the confines of the steep limestone sides of the valley. This characteristic, in all likelihood, played a role in determining the siting of settlements; all of which are at elevations above possible flooding and areas of marshy land and, as discussed earlier, tend to be on small hills on the valley floor or along the valley sides. Most of the terrain of the valley lies below the 325m topographic contour (Postgate and Thomas 2007a: 9). Settlements are also located in side valleys, off the main-stem Göksu valley. Unsurprisingly, settlements are predominantly located in close proximity to a perennial water source; whether a spring, feeder stream, tributary or the Göksu river itself. A number of sites are located near to springs -for example, Kilisetepe, Örentepe and possibly Çingentepe (French 1965:180)- and remnants of water-management (two tracts of canals) have been recorded. Probably dating to the post-Medieval period, they were identified in the vicinity of Evkaf Höyük (Damepe) and Anamurluç. Emerging from its flanks, the valley has a number of springs -presumably reflecting a spring horizon- along its length. The valley is agricultural fertility, verdant in the spring with sufficient rainfall for reliable crops, although with low rainfall in the summer months (Postgate and Thomas 2007a: 9). The valley sides are an agriculturally marginal zone with poor soil coverage, yet the area was known for olive and wine production in the late Roman period, and many stone presses have been recorded (Postgate and Thomas 2007a: 10; Elton 2005: 336). In the modern era it is a mixed agricultural landscape with wheat, olives and market gardens on the valley sides and orchards on the valley floor. Water can easily be drawn from the Göksu, making this a productive and appealing location for ancient settlements.

The river valley lies in the Mut basin, deeply trenched by the Göksu, and is characterised by a number of fluvial terraces (Elton 2005: 336). These are distinguishable as steep scarps and valley sides of conglomerate overlying roughly a sequence of clastic sediments, sandstone, and limestone sloping down to the valley floor, with small hills and conglomerate-capped bluffs and promontories (Elton 2005: 335-336; Şafak et al 2005; Maden Tektik ve Aram Genel Müdürlüğü 2002). The stratified limestone, exposed and easily accessible, is the predominant local construction material supplying limestone blocks used for wall foundations and footings through all periods, as evident from excavations at Kilise Tepe (Postgate and Thomas 2007a; Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012).
Site Identification

As already mentioned, the identification of archaeological sites by the sole use of satellite imagery (a combination of Bing and CORONA) has not been as fruitful as initially hoped. Sites are often placed on hills, ridges, and promontories making them in most cases very difficult to distinguish from the natural topography. Compounding these difficulties, as noted by Elton (2005: 336), the friable nature of the limestone leads to scree covering the hillsides and obscuring potential site candidates. Plans in the 2014 LGASSP survey season are to pay special attention on the ground to the relationship between settlements, springs, and perennial water sources, as a means of locating small sites that are difficult to identify solely employing remote sensing techniques.

Preliminary survey results

A total of 17 sites, monuments, and structures were recorded during the autumn 2013 survey season. A number of these sites have been noted in previous surveys (see above). Site numbers according to chronological period are shown in Table 1. Figure 28 shows all of the sites and features recorded in 2013. Man-made features include a bridge (Maltepe), canals, and a rock relief (Keben). In figure 28 the outline surrounding the valley floor represents the predicted extent of the scheduled dam’s lake waters and the chevron symbol, in the direction towards Silifke, is the planned location for the hydro-electric dam itself.

Expanding on the discussion above of the ‘pre-Classical’ and ‘Classical and post-Classical’ settlement patterns, site distributions will be described in more detail.

The first season’s work concentrated on the upper part of the Lower Göksu River Valley and fertile plains (see figures 2 & 3). The results have produced insights into the occupation in this sector of the valley and potential settlement patterns along the entire valley. Although further research is necessary to establish a sufficiently large dataset to begin drawing anything other than simple inferences from the settlement distribution pattern, a few tentative insights into local settlement trends can be made.

The earliest occupation in this part of the valley dates to the late Chalcolithic with the site of Attepe. Small amounts of ceramics dating to this period have also been recovered at Kilise Tepe (see above). It may be the case that the later occupational overburden on multi-period sites, especially those with a Bronze Age component, may be obscuring traces of Chalcolithic occupation at other sites along the valley.

The Bronze Age sees the first peak in occupation in this part of the valley with 5 sites recorded in the survey. Preliminary dating of collected ceramics suggests that these Bronze Age sites tended to be settled, perhaps without interruption, from the Early through to the Late Bronze Age. They also share a number of common traits: being prominently located on natural hills and in the most agriculturally fertile areas of the valley; they were mounded and multi-period; and where abandoned, reused in later periods. In fact, all but one Bronze Age site has later Byzantine occupation. All are less than 2 hectares in size, although the extent of occupation in each period is still to be established.

There then follows reduced settlement numbers in the Iron Age, Hellenistic, and Roman periods (see Table 1). The most prominent settlement in this part of the valley during
these periods was the continued occupation at Kilise Tepe (Postgate and Thomas 2007a: 34-35). Notably, Kilise Tepe most probably possessed a local administrative function from at least the first half of the Late Bronze through to the end of the Bronze Age, and may have been of continued significance in later periods (Postgate 2007b: 142; Jackson and Postgate 2010: 424-425; Jackson, Postgate and Şerifoğlu 2012: 7-8).

On initial inspection, this sector of the valley during the Iron Age through Roman periods appears virtually deserted, although this could be misleading and there may have of existed small, yet so far hard to identify, settlements ranged above the valley floor. The Göksu Archaeological Project (GAP), directed by Hugh Elton (2005; 2008) which undertook a systematic intensive survey of the Upper Göksu Valley, recorded just under a dozen sites with probable Roman to late Roman occupation. These “Roman sites spanned most of the available ecosystems, ranging from the valley floor at c. 200 m above sea level to over 1300 m” (Elton 2008: 245). Furthermore, the low level of Roman period occupation along the Lower Göksu Valley is surprising especially when taken against the backdrop of the Roman period centres of Mut (Roman Claudiopolis) and the port at Silifke at the northern and southern ends of the lower valley, respectively.

The second peak in settlement numbers belongs to the late Roman-Byzantine period, which has the highest number of sites (11) recorded in the survey so far. Continuity in settlement location re-use is suggested by the fact that four of these sites had previously been occupied in the Bronze Age, and it is their well-placed locations and access to water sources that presumably ensured the popularity of these locales. Five of the recorded Byzantine sites were new foundations: those sites occupied from the Byzantine period onwards are usually located on valley slopes, having moved from the valley floor possibly due to environmental or socio-economic factors.

The Byzantine period settlement pattern in the survey area is complicated by a mix of settlement types, with a number of predominantly religious (Christian) sites in or close to the valley, such as the church and associated settlement at Kilise Tepe (see above), fortifications at Akkale and Maltepe, and the small rural communities (an estimated 80% of settlement numbers) that presumably played a supporting role. It is also worth noting that close to the northern edge of the survey area and overlooking the Göksu valley are the early Byzantine Alahan Monastery and cave-church of Aloda. A testament to the religiously complex landscape to the north of the LGAPP survey area is the fact that Elton (2008: 245) recorded 12 churches in the GAP survey.

From the end of the Byzantine period there began a slow decline in the survey area’s settlement numbers during the Islamic/Medieval and post-Medieval periods (see table 1). Continuity in settlement occupation is visible with 5 out of the 6 Islamic/Medieval period sites having been previously occupied in the Byzantine period. Occupation persisted through the post-Medieval period with the 2 sites recorded in the survey appearing to have been occupied continuously from the Byzantine period onwards. All other recorded post-Classical sites in the survey area appear by then to have been abandoned.
Brief discussion

Drawing from the preliminary findings of the first survey season, a number of general observations can be made. Initial analysis suggests a settlement cycle with two clear periods of increased settlement in the valley. Starting with at present only a single confirmed Chalcolithic site, settlement numbers rose in the Early through Late Bronze Ages. A subsequent decline in numbers is visible in the Iron Age, Hellenistic and Roman periods, then rising to the largest number of recorded sites in the Byzantine period. There then follows a slow decline in the Islamic-Medieval and post-Medieval periods. An explanation for the variability of site numbers could be that of cycles of nucleation or dispersal of sites in number and density. However, all sites are relatively modest in size—all less than 2 hectares—and settlement patterns (resulting from factors such as dependency, function and socio-political variability) are as yet not complete. The phenomenon of centralisation (see Çevik 2007 for an Anatolia-wide discussion for the Early Bronze Age) that can occur at small physical scales, may have played a factor in the emerging settlement patterns, site longevity and transit routes through the valley. These questions are to be further explored.

This summary is understandably an incomplete picture of settlement patterns in the valley, but as a sample it leads to interesting questions regarding agricultural exploitation, the various functions and roles of settlements in different periods and the changing fortunes of the valley as a transit route through the Taurus mountains from the Mediterranean coast to the Anatolian interior.

French (1965) established the presence of 6 sites with pre-Classical material in the LGASSP’s survey area and, as already stated, identified apparent gaps during the Middle Bronze Age and Iron Age in the ceramic sequence of the valley (French 1965:186). The results of the 2013 season (as well as the excavation results from Kilise Tepe) are beginning to re-inhabit these occupational hiatuses, although site numbers remain low at present.

Supplementing the results of the LGASSP 2013 season, the Göksu Archaeological Project recorded traces of Chalcolithic material at Kırkan Kayası (Elton 2008: 242) and mentions the finds of three Bronze Age sites: Çömlük tepesi, Kesmetepe (Elton 2005 and 2008) and small amounts of Bronze Age ceramics at Kıran Kayası (Elton 2008: 242). In addition, the growth in the number of sites recorded by the LGASSP in the late Roman and Byzantine periods followed by a decline in the Medieval period is a phenomenon similar to that seen by the GAP, with comparable site numbers recorded. As work progresses a more detailed synthesis of the results of previous surveys in the Göksu Valley will be made.

As previously mentioned, the valley is considered to have acted as a long-term communication route. Within the survey area sites, extant structures and memorials, such as the Hittite or Late Iron Age rock relief at Keban (in association with a late Roman track), defences at Maltepe and Akkale (both dating to the Byzantine/Medieval periods) and late Roman/Byzantine bridges at Kişlaköy and Maltepe, indicate transit routes utilising the valley. This role has been much debated (see Mellaart 1954; French 1965: 177; Baker et al 1994: 143; Elton 2005: 334-335; Postgate and Thomas 2007a: 9-10, Newhard, Levine and Rutherford 2008). Although not deemed a route of primary importance, its status has been called into question by the use of spatial modelling employing least-cost path and social network analyses (Newhard, Levine and Rutherford 2008; Bikoulis 2012), it arguably acted as an important route for local movement and trade, and as a direct means of reaching central Anatolia from the Mediterranean coast (Elton 2005: 334-335; Newhard, Levine and
Combining this role with its inherent agricultural fertility, the valley should possess a complex history of use and occupation. As we build upon the results of the first survey season a more extensive picture will emerge of settlement patterns along the entire Göksu River Valley.

**Final Remarks**

The first season of the Göksu Archaeological Salvage Survey Project allowed us to document various sites along the valley from prehistory to the Medieval period. These initial investigations have provided important information about the local settlement patterns, and have also allowed us to push the cultural history of the region back to the Chalcolithic Period.

If the necessary permit can be acquired, we hope to continue our fieldwork along the Göksu River Valley in 2014. In this second season of our project, we will continue visiting site candidates, which will be determined mainly using newly acquired satellite imagery. In addition to this, we hope to conduct intensive surveys in areas around the recorded archaeological sites by systematic field walking. The intensive surveys will be accompanied by geophysical surveys on and around the archaeological settlements and we are also planning to prepare topographical maps of the mounds.

The intensive surveys, geophysical work and topographical mapping will mainly focus on the two plains, where the Göksu River is joined by the Kurtsuyu Çay and the Ermenek Çay, as the terrain is relatively flat, covered with less vegetation and mounds are easier to spot in these areas. We may investigate the low multi-period mound of Öreentepe in 2014, as it may provide some important information about ancient local cultures, even though it will not be flooded by the dam lake.

It should also be mentioned that we informed the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works about the results of our first field season and requested them to provide financial support for future archaeological salvage excavations, as this is their legal duty. The initial reply from the Directorate has been positive but the General Directorate of Cultural Assets and Museums will have to organize these excavations and their funding, mediating between the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works and us. Therefore, if the necessary permit is given, it is possible that we may also start excavating in this area in collaboration with the Silifke Museum in the near future, probably in 2015, if not in 2014.

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