

The protocol of the sealed doors

From their shape we can tell that these were all door sealings. Doors had been sealed in the name of the queen and her dignitaries, and when the doors were opened, and the seals broken, the fragments were discarded together in a part of the Palace which was no longer important – right here in front of you!

The sealings were not locks. They only guaranteed that the guard in charge of the room had done his duty, and no one had entered without authorization.

You can tell from poor condition of the floor that this building was no longer used as a royal residence. In the larger box to your left there are the remnants of a bread oven that was used after the residence status was lost.

But it remained a building under the control of the royal administration: there were no changes in the organization of space (e.g., no doors were blocked), but none of the earlier installations (such as the sewer) were any longer in use.

So this was the appropriate place where to discard “documents” (the sealings) which retained a certain importance and thus could not be thrown out in a public open space.

الأبواب المختومة

نستطيع أن نميّز من خلال أشكالهم أنهم كانوا أختام أبواب. أبواب كانت قد خُتّمت باسم الملكة وأصحاب السمو، وعندما كانت تُفتح الأبواب، وتُكسر الأختام، كانت الكسر تُرمى في مكان معين من القصر لم يعد ذو أهمية. مثل هذا المكان الذي أمامكم!

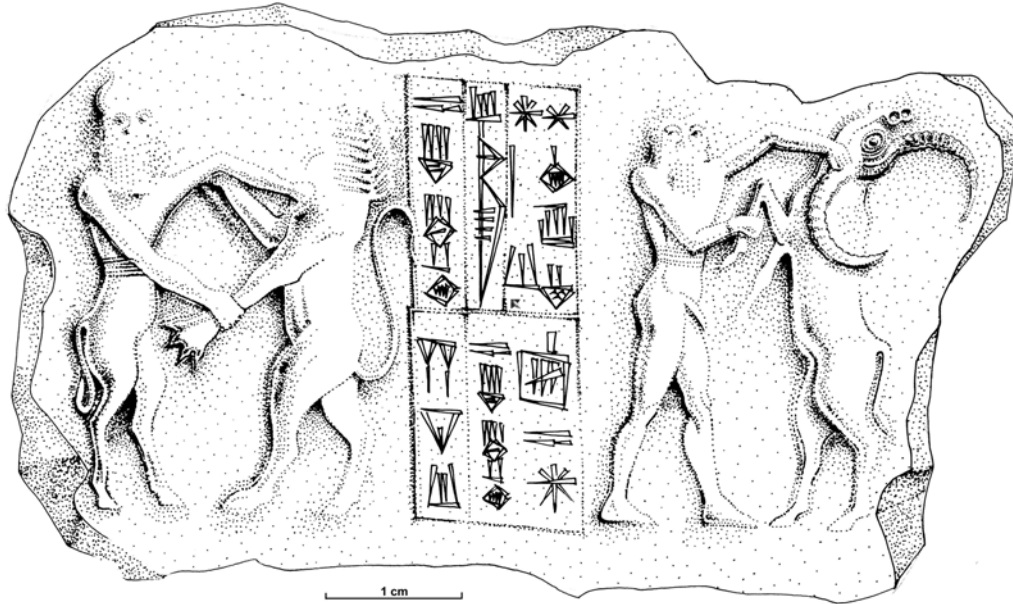
الأختام لم تكن أقفال.

بل إنهم فقط ضمانات على أن الحارس المسؤول عن الغرفة قد قام بواجبه، وأنه لم يدخل أحد بدون تفويض.

يمكن أن تلاحظوا من الحالة السيئة للأرضية أنّ هذا البناء لم يعد يُستخدم كمكان للإقامة الملكية. في العتبة الأكبر إلى يساركم هناك بقايا لفرن خُبز كان قد استخدم بعد ضياع مركز الإقامة.

لكن بقي كبناء تابع للإدارة الحاكمة: وعندها لم يحدث أي تغيير في تنظيم المكان (مثلاً لم يكن هناك أبواب محظورة بعد ذلك)، لكن لا شيء من المنشآت السابقة (كالصرف الصحي) بقي يُستخدم.

إذاً هذا هو المكان المُخصص الذي تمت فيه عملية التخلص من الوثائق (أي الأختام) والتي احتفظت بأهمية معينة فذلك لم تكن تُرمى في مكان عام أو مفتوح.



The daughter of Naram-Sin

*Of Naram-Sin, king of Agade,
Tar'am-Agade, his daughter.*

Thus reads the cuneiform
legend on this beautiful seal.

Had there been a bell in Mozan,
it would have tolled loud and clear
when we came upon the first of
many fragments of sealings with
the impression of this seal. On it,
the word "Agade" was showing. It
was one of the few moments when
we became emotionally involved
in our finds!

For Agade was the uncontested
power in all of Syro-Mesopotamia,
and to find its name and that of its
great ruler Naram-Sin was like
finding the name of Napoleon in
some remote corner of Europe.



The findspot

If you open the small metal box in front of you, you will wonder what it is that we are trying to protect – since noting at all is showing...

If you look a little closer, you will see an iron nail. It is a modern nail. We put it there as we were triangulating the individual fragments you see in the photo.

You see us “digging” with dental tools as we gently remove some of the few hundred sealing fragments of Tar’am-Agade and her courtiers – all found in this spot.

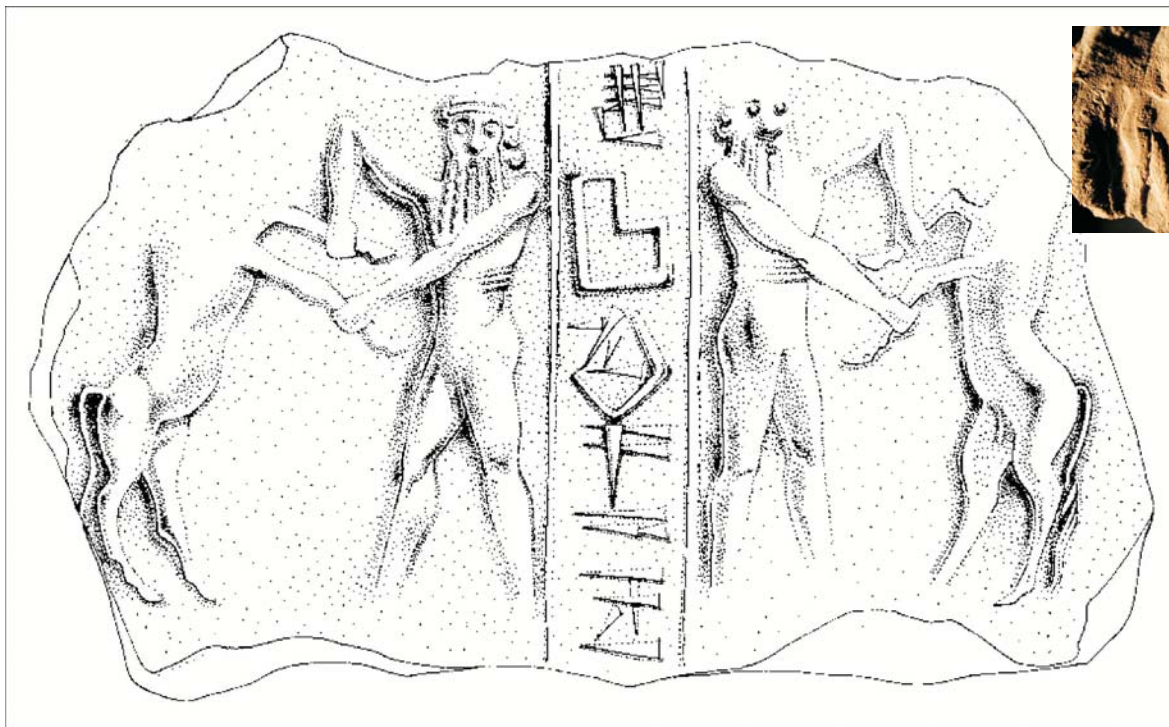
You see how important the context is. We can tie this all important evidence to a moment in the life of this building when it as no longer used as a royal residence but was still under the direct control of the royal administration.

The courtiers of Tar'am-Agade

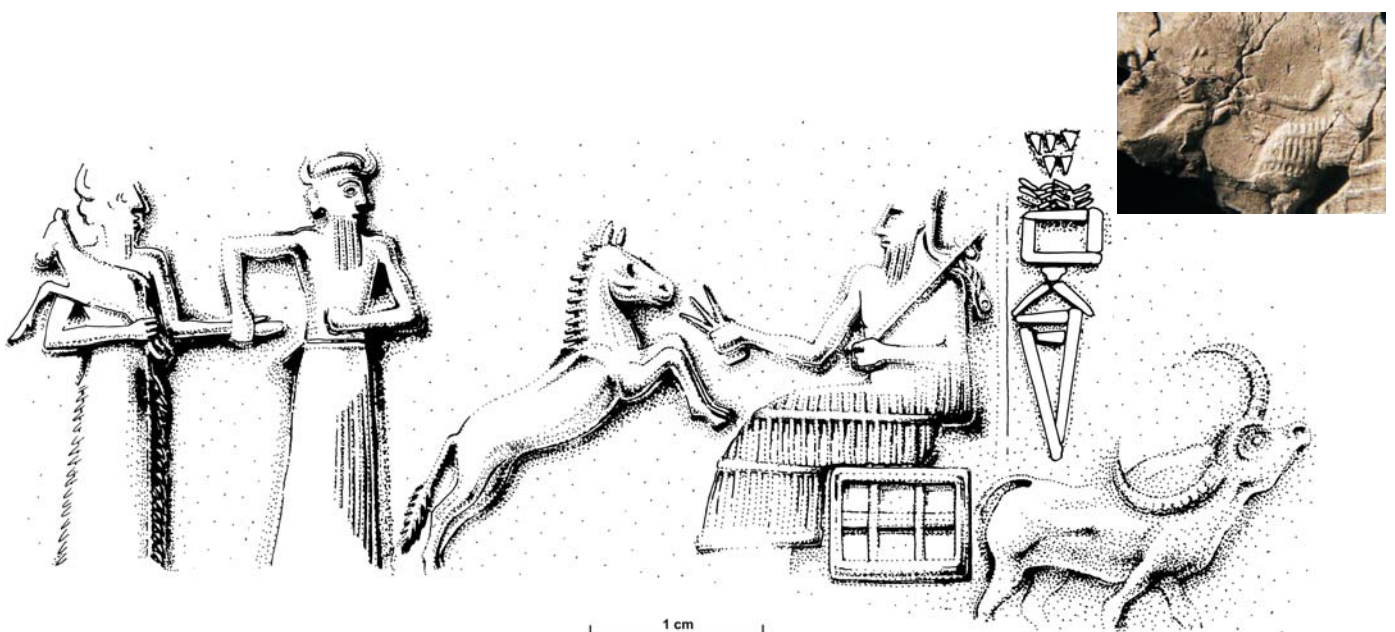
حاشية تارام-أغاد

Along with the sealings bearing the impression of the seal of the daughter of Naram-Sin we found several more, including those of two of her courtiers. The first had an Akkadian style seal for a man with a Hurrian name (Ewrim-atal). The other has a northern motif (the equid), but it is for man with an Akkadian name (Ishar-beli).

مع الأختام التي تحمل طبعة لخدم ابنة نارام-سين
عثرنا أيضاً على أختام متنوعة كهذان الخنمان
لحاشيتها. استوحت على الأول الطليحة الأكادية
للأختام لرجل باسم حوري (إوريم-أتال). أما الآخر
أخذ النموذج الشمالي (الحصان)، لكن الرجل باسم
أكادي (إيشار بيلي).



1 cm



1 cm

The *altanni*

Later Hurrian texts tell us that snakes were used in divinatory rites to predict events from their movements in water. In the floors immediately above the Palace, we found this jar (broken in more than 100 pieces), and from the Palace we have many more sherds with similar decorations. The Hurrian name of the vessel is *altanni*. Can we then give a name to the vessel, and imagine it in use in the Palace?

الآلتاني

النصوص الحورية القديمة تخبرنا بأن الأفاعي كانت تستخدم في طقوس الجرافة للتنبؤ بالأحداث من خلال حركتها في الماء. عثرنا على هذه الجرة فوق أرضية القصر مباشرة (مكسورة أكثر من مئة كسرة) و لدينا من القصر كسر متعددة يدور مثلشابه وأطلق الحوريين على هذه الجرة اسم ألتاني: فهل بإمكاننا إذا إعطاء اسم للجرة، ونخيل الطريقة التي كانوا يستخدمونها فيها بالقصر؟

