features were excavated in the middle of the site. The excavated houses have similar plans, consisting of a large rectangular room divided by a platform into two rooms. The narrow entrance consists of two large blocks placed edgewise.

The pottery found in the houses and during the surveys is quite homogeneous and dates to the period between the end of Early Bronze III and the end of EB IV.[81] Comparisons are mainly with Yabroud/Rachidah, Mishrifé, Hama, Zalaquiyate, Saraqib, Tell Mastouma, Tell Mardikh, Tell Qarqur, Ansari/Aleppo, Tell Simiriyan, and the sites on the plain of Antioch.[82] The local variations in the decorated pottery contribute to an understanding of ceramic production and distribution at the end of the Early Bronze Age in inner Syria, and especially the interaction between a regional site and a large production center. Moumassakhin marks the southernmost site within the distribution of this type of pottery.[83]

Mozan. Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati, University of California, Los Angeles, report:

The fifth and sixth season of excavations at Tell Mozan took place in the spring of 1988 and the spring of 1990.[84] A major characteristic of Mozan is that third-millennium material is found immediately below the surface at most locations of the tell. We will concentrate here on three building complexes of this period, all located on the High Mound, in the east (area B), the west (area A), and the north (area F).

Excavations in the interior of temple BA have been completed, except for a small deposit in the corner of the cella. Located at the summit of the tell, on top of one of five prominences surrounding a central low depression, it dates to the middle and late third millennium. It is not inconceivable that the five hillocks may correspond to five distinct building complexes, and that the present configuration of the tell may correspond in some way to the ancient urban layout. At any rate, temple BA appears to have been, because of its prominent location and its size, one of the major religious buildings of the ancient city.

Four major building phases have been distinguished. On the western side of the structure, the slope of the hillock cut away all traces of walls, and the sod layer on top of the tell came to rest directly over the top of the stone foundations of phase 1, dated to the mid-third millennium. The slope is highest at its opposite end, on the east: here the deposit reaches a maximum height of 1.5 m. The four phases of the building are thus stratified within a relatively thin layer of cultural deposit.

Phase 1 is the only one for which a complete floor plan is preserved. It is dated, both typologically and through ^{14}C analysis, to the late Early Dynastic period. This is the most important phase of the temple, the only one for which we have a complete architectural layout of the building. During its first period of occupation, which we have labeled 1a, the temple does not exhibit any dividing walls. The floor is made of a very hard and thick white plaster, which is very well preserved for the entirety of the temple area. In fact, on the western side, where the walls have completely disappeared on account of the erosion, it is the edge of white floor that marks the location of the walls.

In phase 1b, partition walls were built. They have no foundations, and sit directly on top of the white floor of phase 1a. The temple is entered through an asymmetrically stepped ramp, which leads to a doorway in the southwest corner. Once entered, the bent-axis articulation of the temple points the visitors to the right, where they would face a monolithic stone table, with a narrow curtain wall behind it. A partition wall, further back, separates an interior space, which would presumably have served as a cella. This is the only part of the temple that has not been fully excavated, so that further clarification of the function and layout of this area may still be obtained. The walls are about 1.6 m wide, and they rest on large stone foundations. The two narrow sides have a double row of foundations, with brickwork on top (only minimally preserved to the west). It is possible that these outside walls did not reach the full height of the building. In

[81] Disagreeing with our assessment, J.W. Hanbury-Tenison proposes a date, based on architectural comparisons with Jebel Mutawwaq and Jawa (Jordan), at the beginning of Early Bronze (EB IA) in "Desert Urbanism in the Fourth Millennium?" *PEQ* 121 (1989) 55–63.

[82] For a detailed bibliography, see Al-Maqdissi (supra n. 80) 6–7.

[83] Bounni (supra n. 80) and M. Al-Maqdissi, "Les gobelets syriens décorés du BA IV, bilan provisoire et nouveaux éléments" (in Arabic) *AAS* 40 (1990).

[84] Excavations are funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, and the S.H. Kress Foundation. Among the members of the staff were Mario Liverani and Lucio Milano of the Università di Roma and Jon Ericson of the University of California, Irvine. Muhammad Muktash and Ali Ali were the representatives of the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums.

For previous publications on the site, see G. Buccellati and M. Kelly-Buccellati, *Mozan* 1. *The Soundings of the First Two Seasons* (Malibu 1988); "Three Seasons of Excavation at Tell Mozan," in Eichler et al. eds. (supra n. 54) 119–32.

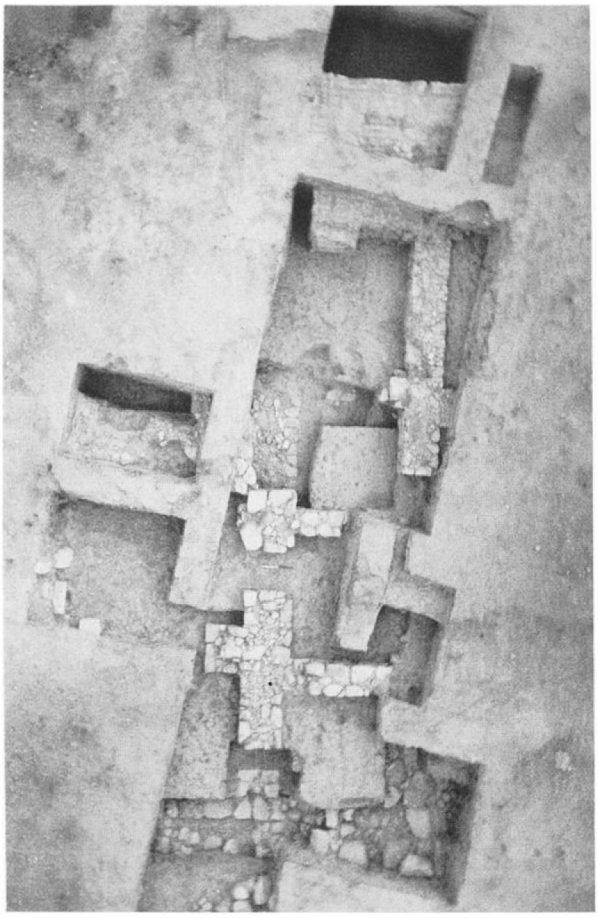

Fig. 20. Mozan. Public building A1, from above.

the packed rubble behind the stone table, in the area corresponding to what may have been a cella, we found a stone statue of a lion.[85]

After phase 1 was destroyed by an intense fire, the burnt rubble was packed and leveled in the back part of the structure (where the lion was found), while the front part of the structure remained at a lower level. This packing and leveling, for a new structure erected on top of the old, represents phase 2 of the building's history. Given the limited amount of actual floor remains for phase 2, we have no way of determining whether or not the building was still used as a temple. As for the date of the structure, pottery types associated with it place it toward the end of the third millennium.

What is left of phase 3 are only traces of a massive intervention, possibly for the construction of a building that we do not have and that may in fact never have been built. The most noticeable feature was the excavation of a large and deep trench, which cut through the deposits of phases 2 and 1 down to just above the original white floor; the trench was presumably in the shape of a rectangular frame (of which only three sides are preserved, giving it a U-shaped appearance), at a slight offset from the perimeters of both the phase 1 temple and the phase 2 building. The trench was packed with very clean, gray fill. Some rubble, associated with this trench, contained a complete Ḫabur ware jar that dates phase 3 to about 1800.

The trench, whatever its intended function, may not have been used, because it was covered by a series of laminations that constitute phase 4. Located immediately below the modern sod layer, which follows their contour, these laminations appear to have been deposited in antiquity, and may correspond to the period of decline and abandonment at the end of the Ḫabur period.

A large stepped trench was opened in area A, where the most significant feature was the large public building A1 (fig. 20). The wide walls, the overall width of the building, and the great number of doorways all indicate that this was a major building, which extends in the unexcavated areas to the east and the west. The walls have a high stone base above the foundations (preserved up to a meter and more in several portions), on which a mudbrick wall rested: at its northern end, where the wall stands at its highest level, the mudbrick with its stone base stands up to 2.5 m in height. It would appear that this is one of the largest stone-based buildings known from third-millennium Syria, because those from Tell Chuera do not have as many rooms, and those from Tell Brak, Mari, and Ebla do not have stone bases. Since we have concentrated on articulating the outline of the walls, this season we only reached the top of the floor accumulations.

Another new excavation area was opened on the northern slope of the tell, called area F1. There are two major strata, both of the mid- to late third millennium, that have appeared immediately under the topsoil. While beginning to excavate the floor deposits of this upper area in F1 we came across the most important finds of the season, two cuneiform tablets, preserved for only about half their original size, which was fairly large (some 12 × 20 cm). They are the first stratified epigraphic remains from Mozan (an inscribed sherd had been found earlier on the surface).

[85] For a stylistic analysis of this and other Mozan sculpture, see M. Kelly-Buccellati, "A New Third Millennium Sculpture from Mozan," in A. Leonard, Jr., and B.B. Williams eds., *Essays in Ancient Civilization Presented to Helene J. Kantor* (Chicago 1989) 149–54.

From both palaeography and stratigraphy it appears that the texts are to be dated to about 2300–2200, which would make them the first third-millennium texts of the Upper Ḫabur Plains, and the only ones from northeastern Syria except for those from Tell Brak. They are, at any rate, the northernmost third-millennium cuneiform texts ever found. Lucio Milano's preliminary conclusions are that the tablets, administrative in character, are probably written in Akkadian (because of the presence of the conjunction and the preposition *in*), that there are several profession names written logographically (including a scribe), and that the onomastics include Hurrian as well as Sumerian and Akkadian names.

Mulla Matar. Dietrich Sürenhagen, Universität Konstanz, reports:

In the course of nearly five years international rescue excavations have been carried out on the Lower Ḫabur River in northeastern Syria. The immediate reason for these operations is the construction of a dam ca. 35 km southwest of Hasseke, capital city of the province. Upon completion, the dam will cause the inundation of at least 60 ancient sites in the area.

In 1989 the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft (DOG) began participation in the pressing archaeological investigations. The site chosen was Tell Mulla Matar, situated on the west bank of the Ḫabur River, about 8 km southwest of Hasseke.[86] The mound itself covers an area of 90 × 60 m and has an average height of 9 m. This particular site was selected for three reasons: 1) the mound had to be relatively small, in order to be able to achieve representative results within a short period of time; 2) accordingly, the archaeological periods, as indicated by sherds on the surface, also had to be limited in number; and 3) the principal periods represented should be prehistoric (fourth–third millennia). Of primary importance was the question of continuity or discontinuity between the end of the Protosumerian period (ca. 3200) and the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. Two intensive surface surveys showed that of the 60 endangered sites referred to above, only four were inhabited during the Protosumerian and EBA periods. Tell Mulla Matar was the only site whose dimensions were comparatively less extensive.

Actual work at the site took place from 13–25 May 1989 and 9 October–24 November 1989. In the course of field survey of the area in May 1989, it soon became clear that the summit as well as the landward slope of the mound should not be excavated. Here

Fig. 21. Mulla Matar. Step trench in the eastern slope.

[86] The area and the site were previously surveyed by H. Kühne and J.-Y. Monchambert: *AfO* 26 (1978–1979) 181ff, esp. 186, and *Akkadica* 39 (1984) 1ff, esp. 5 (table, no. 1).