Considered together with other Jerablus-Tahtani finds, these objects emphasize the critical position of the Carchemish area at the interface between Anatolian and Syrian EBA worlds. Thus, the style of the horned animal plaque, the hammer-axe and pithos burials are northern traits, the majority of the pottery, Plain Simple Ware, southern.

Area II: further evidence on the context of high status Tomb 302

Below the northwest corner of T. 302 lay a curvilinear free-standing tauf structure. It is well preserved, with incurving walls currently excavated to a height of 1.9 m. Its exposed perimeter forms an irregular arc, 3.8 m. in length which, if projected, suggests a circular structure some 3.2 m in diameter. Its function and date still need to be resolved. What little sherdage there is belongs to the Uruk and EBA, so presumably it is an early EBA structure. It may be compared to tholos type silos at Mersin, or the domes on rectilinear granaries depicted on Uruk and Jemdat Nasr seals from Susa4. The overlying tomb, therefore, seems to have been founded in an area which had been reserved for radically different purposes. That the area was a communal one is suggested by the unenclosed situation of the silo (?) and its location at the foot of a 1.20 m. high terrace fronted by a battered stone revetment on which was founded a mudbrick wall. The terrace supported pre-Tomb 302 buildings, and was re-built to a total height of 3 m. when the tomb was constructed in front of and parallel to the terrace wall. The southern elevation of this wall has been traced for some 22 m. Washed away by the Euphrates in the east and extending beyond the limit of excavation in the west, it constitutes the protective skin for a large-scale, artifical extension to the site. The stone-lined passage reported in OE 1995/3, 71 was constructed over this terrace and at right angles to it. The stairs which were inserted in the passage enabled pedestrians to negotiate the drop in elevation from the lip of the underlying terrace wall conveniently. These stratigraphic observations make it clear that a public edifice, the terrace, antedates the construction of T. 302. We still need to establish the relationship between these architectural features and the fort wall, and this may be possible in a future season by linking excavation Areas I and II.

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<sup>1</sup> For a summary of the Early Bronze Age deposits at Jerablus-Tahtani, see Jerablus-Tahtani, Syrian-European Archaeology Exhibition: Working together, p. 73-75 (Damas: 1996); for reports of results of previous seasons, see Orient Express 1994/3, p. 73-76; 1995/3, p. 70-72; and Levant 27, 1995, p. 1-28; 28, 1996, p. 1-25.

<sup>2</sup> See L. Woolley and R. Barnett, Carchemish III. The Excavations in the Inner Town (London: 1952) 214-7. The distinction between vertical jars and horizontal pithoi is chronological at Jerablus-Tahtani, and one that may have been confused in the early reports of excavations at Carchemish. There, two late pot burials, 16 and 17, could be horizontal pithoi. They have relatively rich grave goods, another characteristic of later pithos burials. These customs may be quite localized and hence of limited inter-regional chronological value: see E. Carter and A. Parker, Pots, People, and the Archaeology of Death in Northern Syria and Southern Anatolia in the Latter Half of the Third Millennium BC, in S. Campbell and A. Green (eds) The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East (Oxford: 1995), p. 106-107.

<sup>3</sup> A. Jamieson, The Euphrates Valley and Early Bronze Age Ceramic Traditions. *Abr Nahrain* 31, 1993, p. 41-47, 88-89, Fig. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. J. Garstang, *Prehistoric Mersin* (London: 1953) Pl. VIb; P. Amiet, *Glyptique susienne* (MDAI 43) (Paris: 1972), pl. 16, p. 658-663.

## Evidence for a Royal Palace at Tell Mozan/Urkesh

During the ninth season of excavations at Tell Mozan/Urkesh (Summer 1996) our work was concentrated in three main areas of Building AK. We had understood this building to be a Royal Storehouse, and had projected a layout that assumed the presence of administrative quarters to the North. Our three primary goals were: (1) removal of the earliest floor deposit in the Eastern Sector (Area A6);

(2) identification of the Eastern perimeter (Area A8); (3) exploration of the presumed administrative quarter to the North (Area A7).

Discovery of a monumental Entry Way in Area A7

The major surprise came in Area A7. Immediately upon beginning excavations, we found that, in terms of their content, the floor accumulations matched exactly those of the Storehouse, and we also found the Eastern wall and doorjamb of what we presumed to be a room of the administrative quarter. The first unexpected find came with the discovery of a round, brick platform next to the southern wall of Area A7, while the second surprise resulted from our inability to find any trace of either a Western or a Northern wall. We began therefore to expand our excavations in both directions, in a search for either of these two walls. Since there was no evidence of later erosion, the lack of walls became more and more puzzling. Four major new elements came to light in the process of the excavations. (1) A second round, brick "platform" was found within the same

stratum as the previous one, though larger in size and slightly out of alignment. (2) A 4 m wide stone platform was found some 22 meters to the north, jutting out from the line of the presumed perimetral wall. (3) A ramp flanking a flight of steps, each about one meter in width, came to light in front of the platform, aligned with the line of the presumed perimetral wall. (4) We were able to trace continuous floor accumulations running all way from North to South along the same line of the presumed perimetral wall, and extending across this line from East to West. The conclusion is inescapable that we have here all the elements of a monumental entrance, consisting of a stairway leading to a portico. (We call it "Porch" on our plan to retain a more neutral term until the exact architectural arrangement is fully defined.) In turn, such a columned entry strongly suggests that we are dealing with the Royal Palace itself. The following reasons argue in favor of this identification. (1) While not entirely certain, the floor plan of the portico is similar to that of the entry way of the much later bit hilani, which is known as a feature of royal palace architecture in Northern Syro-Mesopotamia. (2) In

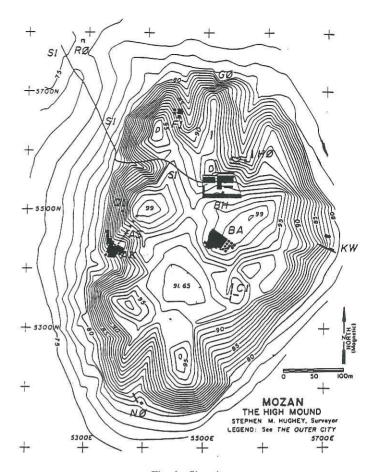


Fig. 1: Site plan.

Area A7, a total of 110 seal impressions were excavated this season, of which eleven were duplicates of ones found previously in the Storehouse; additionally, there may be a new seal of the queen. This points clearly to a correlation of function and chronology between the two parts of the building, just as the inscribed material from the storehouse speaks for a direct royal presence in the building. (3) We can now project a much larger size for the building, which certainly extends to the East and the North. We are considerably fortunate in this respect, since in those two directions there is no evidence of later erosion, so that we ought to be able to uncover in the course of the coming years the full extent of the "Palace". (4) This is the only place in the tell where we can assume that the early third millennium city wall was razed to make room for the stairway and to open up a vista towards the west — an urban restructuring on a scale which would be in keeping with royal planning.

The Eastern Sector of the Storehouse (Area A6)

In contrast to Area A7, excavations in Area A6 matched closely our expectations. We reached the earliest floor of the building in the smaller rooms,

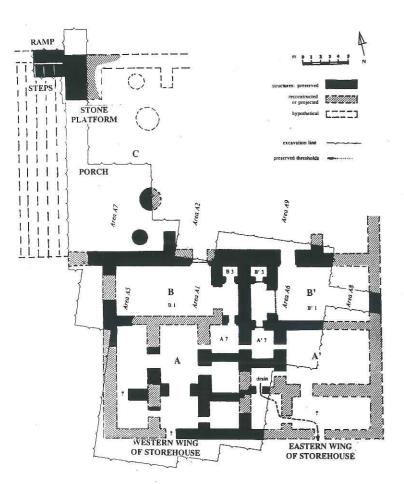


Fig. 2: Mozan/Urkesh "Palace" AK, Stratum B12 (9th season, 1996.

The excavation line delimits stratum B12;
additional excavation lines are not indicated).

whereas we could not proceed to the desired end in the larger room (one reason was that we had to divert workmen and staff to the excavation in Area A7, which became much larger than originally anticipated). Since we expect, on the analogy with the Western Sector B, that the most important artifacts, especially seal impressions, would be precisely in the part that remains to be excavated to the East, the major finds from this area may still elude us. Nevertheless, about 107 seal impressions were found in this area, of which two were exact matches of those excavated in the Western Sector.

We were also able to make some minor modifications to the layout and circulation patterns we had projected. (1) The two small rooms A7 and A'7 serve as reciprocal antechambers between the Eastern and Western wings, and between the Northern and Southern sector of each wing; they are thus very important nodes in the circulation within the Storehouse. (2) There appears to be no direct passage between the sectors to the south (A and A') and the large rooms B1 and B'1, as we had assumed in our

earlier reconstruction. (3) The slight offset between the Southern walls of B and B' seems to be the result of the Eastern perimetral wall being slightly closer than expected to the central partition: the room is narrower along its East-West axis, and larger along its North-South axis, resulting in an equivalent overall dimension of floor space. What remains uncertain is whether this perimetral wall defines the Storehouse within the Palace, or the Palace itself. The former seems more likely; in other words, we assume that other sectors of the Palace may extend to the East of the Storehouse.

A Khabur residential area in Area A8 In Area A8 we have found our first remains of a Khabur period private house at Tell Mozan/Urkesh. It is a modest structure, with walls made of gray mud brick; the original brickfall was preserved relatively near the surface, and we articulated it with care before removing it and the remains of the single room which was exposed. Nothing of significance was found inside the house. Since we know that Urkesh was a minor

kingdom during the Mari period, we were particularly interested in finding the first identifiable remains of a residential structure datable to this period.

Of particular importance among the remains of what was excavated below the level of the private house was a completely preserved, corbelled vault burial chamber, of a type already known from our own site and from Muhammad Dhiab. The corbelled roof was almost intact. The burial shaft for this structure is cut into the accumulation contained by the third millennium Storehouse AK, alongside a wall which we interpret as the Eastern perimetral wall of the Storehouse.

#### Objects

A number of very beautiful new seal impressions have been found in the early floor accumulations of AK. Included here are the drawings of the three most important ones. (1) A single piece (A1.406) is very likely to reproduce the head of king Tupkish, known to us as the endan of Urkesh from the inscribed royal seal impressions found previously. While we have no

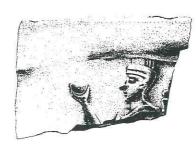


Fig. 3: Head of King Tupkish? (A1.406).

direct evidence for such an identification, we assume this to be so because of two concomitant factors. First, the person is shown as wearing a very distinctive headdress, which resembles a crown, and which is similar to the one worn by the individual we have identified as the crown prince (shown on the cover of Orient Express 1995/3). Second, the person is a seated male, facing left and holding a cup in his hand, in just the position where the king is shown on the seal impression of the royal family of Urkesh (ibid.). (2) A second seal impression (A6c1) is a composite of four different seal impressions, and it shows two standing deities, facing right, where a seated individual (presumably another deity) is seated on a throne, placed above a stylized pattern probably representing a mountain or a grain heap. The detail of the faces of the two standing deities is remarkable. Also

interesting is the presence of what appear to be three sprigs of wheat jutting out from the gown of the first standing deity, making him a vegetation god. (3) A third impression (A6q385.3), although incomplete, shows two unusual figures probably standing before an enthroned deity indicated by the crescent in the field. The first is a man offering what appears to be a cup resting on both outstretched palms. Behind him is a female figure grasping a bucket and with the other raised hand holding an oval shaped object. In Akkadian seals, figures with various shapes of containers with handles are known in a variety of contexts, but this combination with a raised object is unusual. Behind the female figure there appears to be a hillock with a plant growing from it; from the single impression we have of this seal it is unclear whether this figure is divine.

Of particular interest among the ceramics is a group of *conical cups* which were found in

their original emplacement in the porticoed entrance to the "Palace" at its southern end. Our evidence appears to point to drinking arrangements at or near the palace entrance. This may have been in conjunction with ceremonial actions (possibly as depicted on many of the seal impressions), but may simply be part of the hospitality offered by the palace in a climate where dry hot weather is the rule for about half of the year.

After seal impressions and pottery, the largest category of objects is that of the *figurines*. For the most part, they represent animals (especially ovids and caprids, cattle and equids), but several human figurines are also found. A very thorough new typology is being established by Rick Hauser, with particular regard to their emplacement and possible functional interpretation.

#### Date

In stylistic and epigraphic terms, we had assigned our glyptic assemblage a tentative date of 2250/2200 B.C., and the new evidence of the same type from the 9th season confirms this interpretation. On the other hand, the results of Carbon 14 analysis of four samples from the earliest floor deposit would somewhat push down the date to about 2175 B.C. Our analysis of the ceramic inventory is still underway, and needs particular attention because few sequences are known from this area for this period. This question has a bearing on the theory by Weiss and Courty



Fig. 4: Divine Procession with God of Grain (A6C1).

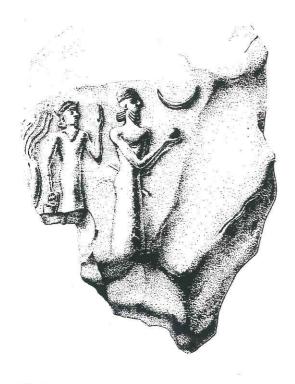


Fig. 5: Standing Figures with Offerings (A6q385.3).

which proposes a general abandonment of the Khabur region following cataclysmic events at about 2200 B.C. Since there is a continuous sequence of floor accumulations within the building (including at least one reconstruction) up to a depth of some 3 m, and since there is later third millennium material on top of these remains, no longer connected with the "Palace" we clearly have at Mozan/Urkesh a continuous occupation which goes to the end of the millennium and beyond into the early second millennium. The later the date of earliest floor, the more compact does this sequence become.

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# Tell Mohammed Diyab (Syrie), huitième campagne (1996)

La huitième campagne de fouilles à Tell Mohammed Diyab (Syrie du nord-est) s'est déroulée à l'automne 1996 sous la direction de J.-M. Durand. Les recherches ont porté sur les trois chantiers principaux: opérations 1, 3 et 5.

### Opération 1

Les travaux de l'opération 1 menés cette année ont permis d'achever la fouille d'un îlot de maisons d'habitation du Bronze Moyen (période pendant laquelle est attestée la céramique dite « du Khabur »). Il pourra donc désormais être publié dans son intégralité.

Sous la couche de surface, vierge de toute occupation, a été atteint dans l'ensemble du secteur ouvert un niveau d'époque mitannienne. Deux pièces d'un bâtiment et une cour adjacente ont été mises au jour. L'épaisseur des murs de la construction permet de l'interpréter comme un édifice public. Il est malheureusement extrêmement érodé, notamment à