

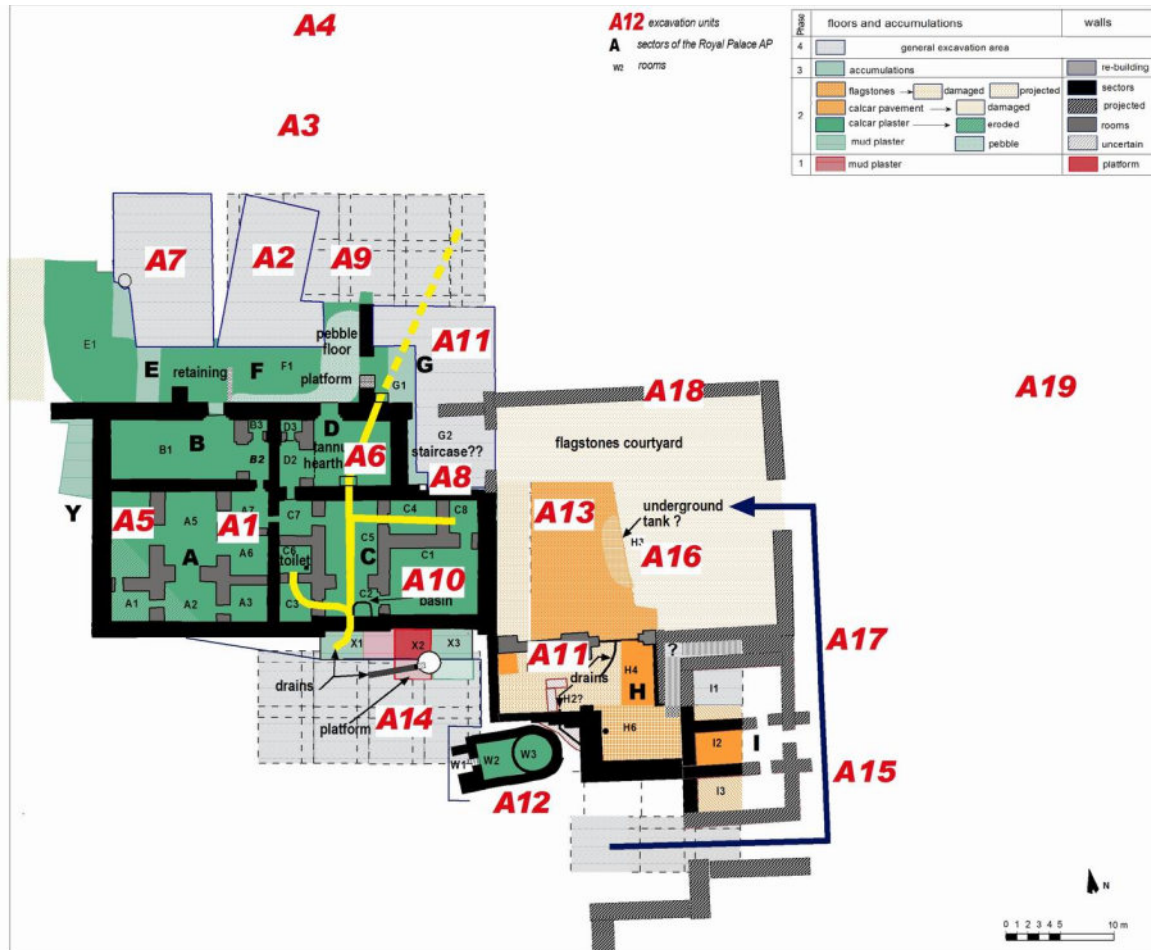
Review of A15 Ceramic corpus

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Introduction to the excavation unit A15

Excavation unit A15 was opened as part of the palace excavation (see Federico Buccellati 2016 Three-Dimensional). It is just southeast of the stone paved courtyard of the palace in what we proposed as the monumental ceremonial section of this building. The palace is dated to the early period of the Agade dynasty, before Naram-Sin. To the period of this first use belong the sealings of Tupkish and his wife Uqnitum as well as servants connected with Uqnitum. They came for the most part from the service wing of this AP palace. We have postulated that service portion of the palace with these sealings belonged to Uqnitum's administration and that a further excavation of the formal area of the palace would yield sealings from the administration of Tupkish. The sealings of Tar'am-Agade, the daughter of Naram-Sin, were deposited in a layer that follows this first use of the palace. She was probably married to the king (endan in Hurrian) who followed Tupkish. .



Palace excavation units showing A15 on the southeast.

One of the main results of the excavation in A15 is the discovery of a room filled with ceramic vessels.

A15a34 Jar Cache



N919 ibk.jw

This one room in A15 yielded over 40 vessels of which about 33 could be restored. With this discovery we have a very important inventory of ceramics since they are well stratified and consist in a large and varied corpus. In this corpus there are many conical cups of a type that we have already excavated from other areas of the palace. These cups are typical both for the Urkesh palace and the later non-palace use of the same building. Relatively few bowls were found in the room (10 out of the total of about 40). These larger bowls could have also been used for storage. But for the most part the room was filled with jars. This is to be expected for a space we have interpreted as a storeroom. However the variety of the vessels in our jars category is very interesting. They ranged in size from very small narrow necked jars to jars with a 50 cm rim diameter. We have concluded from this and the evidence from large bowls that the room was used to store a variety of goods. That it was not a formal storeroom with jars lining the walls can be concluded also from the placement of the vessels. When we first discovered the deposit only the largest jars, a few cups and some small bowls were visible on the surface. As we removed the vessels it became clear that smaller vessels had originally stood near the larger jars in no discernible order. Also it was apparent that the large jars and bowls were not positioned so that they were stabilized to give them support, especially during use.

In the field it was not clear if the room dated to the palace period of Tupkish or to the later

period of Tar'am-Agade. With the in-depth review we are making of the whole A15 ceramic corpus we can better determine the date of the storeroom as well as the later strata of the excavation unit.

The A15 ceramic corpus

The ceramic corpus from the A15 excavation is the largest thus far from the Mozan excavations. Smaller units such as OH2, a rescue operation in the Lower City, had only a total of just over 600 body and shape sherds. A9, a service courtyard in palace AP had approximately 15 thousand sherds including body and shape sherds while J5, the western part of the monumental temple mound, yielded a total of about 18 thousand sherds. A large unit, A16, had over 60 thousand sherds; the number of body and shape sherds from A15 total around 65 thousand.

Methodology of review

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following data columns:

sherd #	ware	shape	decoration	Measurements	Ware Variations
1	CH	b o		30	ZeaA1
2	CH	b d		24	ZeaA1
3	FC				ZeaA1
4	CH	b c s	K 9	18	ZeaA1
5	FC	j n s		13	ZeaA1
6	CH	j n s		18	ZeaA1
7	CH	b r		12	ZeaA1
8	CH		f		ZeaA1
9	CH		i		ZeaA1
10	CH	j n f		10	ZeaA1
11	CH	b d		24	ZeaA1
12	CH	j n f		8	ZeaA1
13	RC		sq		ZeaA1
14	CH		sq		ZeaA1
15	CH		sq		ZeaA1
16	CH		sq		ZeaA1
17	RC		sq		ZeaA1
18	CH		sq		ZeaA1
19	CH		t		ZeaA1
20	FC		sp		ZeaA1
21	CH		sq	14	ZeaA1
22	RC		sq	12	ZeaA1
23	FC		sq	16	ZeaA1
24	CH		sq	10	ZeaA1
25	CH		x		ZeaA1
26	CH	b c s	K 9	22	ZeaA1
27	CH	b c s		20	ZeaA1
28	FC	j o		12	ZeaA1
29	CH	b d		22	ZeaA1
30	CH		f		ZeaA1
31	P	j o		14	ZeaA1

In our ongoing review of the A15 shape sherds in this excavated corpus, Jessica Scashiga and I began checking the entries in a large cumulative file. This file was generated from a handwritten file based on the results of the analysis by the main assistant in the Mozan sherd yard (Hammade Hamza) and his team. They analyzed the corpus after they had been washed and numbered sherd by sherd. This analysis is based on categories of ware and shape which are found in the UGR Ceramics book; there they are listed and described in the Left Hand side under the categories of Roster and Lexicon.

Our work on the inconsistencies in the generated excel file are being slowly resolved. If they could not be resolved the record was deleted by putting it into a file which contained these deletions; in this way if in the future these inconsistencies could be resolved they could again be added into the field

record. Our work is continuing in cleaning up this large excel A15 cumulative file which is in the log format, so easily read by Bernardo's program. At the same time we are also checking that all the pencil drawings made in the field had vector drawings produced subsequently and these had been inserted in the A15 book. A graduate student in archaeology at the Cotsen Institute, Zichan Wang, is converting the pencil sherd drawings to vector drawings where needed.

We still need to check that old codes have not been used in the A15 ceramic corpus. The last large task is checking the sherd descriptions in the A15 book with the drawing of the sherd. We will also check the larger cumulative log file of body sherds analyzed in the field. This is a comprehensive file of over 50,000 sherds because in the field we analyze ALL the ceramics coming from the excavation, not just the sherds and whole vessels that appear important to us at the time. For the body sherd analysis there are many fewer categories since usually we have no information to judge the shape of the vessel. In these cases only the ware can be described.

With all this data we will be able to run these files with the new programs Bernardo Forni has written so all this very important excavated evidence will be included in the UGR narrative.