



Southern Mesopotamia (RG 11)
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Second international meeting of the Regional Group 11 „Southern Mesopotamia“
Workshop Blaubeuren 5-9 February 2009

Scientific Content

1. Presentation of developments of the ARCANE database

The Chairman of the ARCANE project, Professor Marc Lebeau, presented the latest technical developments of the database used for the project. His presentation especially focused on the possibilities and strategies for queries in the database needed for the second phase of ARCANE. The technical team, METRA, summarized several technical details several members of the Project were not aware or defined in different ways. Some time was spent to adjust data input according to the guidelines of the project which, however, in several cases are not equally applicable or adjusted to the traditions of archaeological methodology of the different regions and therefore were understood partly in different ways. Consistency of data input, nevertheless, is crucial for a subsequent sensible use of the database.

This part of the meeting was held as a common meeting of the three ARCANE groups gathering in Blaubeuren (see program).

2. Update of the presentation and discussion of stratigraphically and chronologically relevant materials

For Southern Mesopotamia, considerable time of discussion was spent to summarize the efforts that have been reached during the last months of work. Well stratified material from Southern Mesopotamia is difficult to obtain because of the difficulty that due to the political situation only few excavations were carried out during the last 30 years and according to the modern technical standards that are prerequisite for a project like ARCANE. On the other hand, epigraphical and historical data relevant for absolute chronological frameworks still are mainly available from Mesopotamia. Therefore, on the one hand a drastic revision of the sites excavated several decennias ago for stratigraphically reliable material had to be carried out and, on the other hand, collection of stratified material from those excavations which were carried out since the 1980ies.

Having contacted several colleagues who either excavated at relevant sites in Southern Mesopotamia or analyzed older excavations reports the former list of formerly 19 possibly relevant sites was shortened to eight sites: SM002 Tell Wilaya, SM003 Abu Salabikh, SM

004 Nippur, 010 Fara, 011 Jokha, 014 Tell Hiba, 015 Uruk, 016 Senkere. All other sites do contribute to 3rd millennium BC history but either do not offer sufficiently stratified material or the material was not available mainly for political reasons connected to the special situation of Iraq.

One of the problems of these sites is that overlap of periods is rather rare. In addition, the amount of reliable material is limited. It is, therefore, difficult to compare material in detail and, consequently, difficult to offer proposals for a revised chronology. The available material was presented and discussed in some detail. Material which has some chronological relevance consists – beside architectural evidence - mainly of pottery, stone vessels, some lithic artefacts and some seal impressions or cylinder seals. Furthermore, problems and challenges of this review of material has be discussed. One result was that the stratigraphical determination especially of epigraphical and textual material is much worse than thought before. In addition, none of the sites offer possibilities for new C14 dates.

It was decided to partly join meetings with the Central Mesopotamian Group in order to raise the number of possible overlaps of periods and in order to discuss with the colleagues the – known – chronological problems between both regions.

3. Attempt at a definition of a periodisation according to ARCANE guidelines and discussion of methodological problems

Jointly with the Central Mesopotamia Group existing periodisations were discussed regarding their problems and recent research which partly revised long established development definitions. One of the periods that needs intensive discussion is the Early Dynastic II period. While from the Diyala region serious arguments have been developped to eliminate that period, in the central region between the Euphrates and the Tigris there are good arguments for the existence and further definition of it.

New data important for Southern Mesopotamia, come from Mari in Northeastern Syria, where data from older excavations have been revised and resulted in new internal periodisations recently.

Exchange of data and views was extremely helpful and should be continued during the next months. One even should think about a joint publication of the results of both groups because this would make the current state of scholarly discussions and problems much more understandable than presenting the material of the two groups in different volumes.

4. Presentation of the regional results; attempt at a preliminary periodisation

Discussions were summarized and presented in common meetings for discussion. While a preliminary periodization for the Southern Mesopotamian and the Central Mesopotamian Group has been developped, focus had to be laid on the fact that this periodization is still preliminary and should be presented to the public yet.

Everybody agreed that all involved scholars now have to go back to the material of the respective sites and re-evaluate what has been discussed during the meetings. Only with in-depth re-evaluation as well of long established and recently re-structured proposals for periodizations it will be possible to gain a substantial and well founded revised periodization for the two regions.

<i>Mainstream</i>	JN	ED I	ED II	ED III a	ED III b	Early Akkad	Later Akkad-Guti (?) a	Ur III
SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIA	ESM 1	ESM 2/3	ESM 4	ESM 5	ESM 6	ESM 7	ESM 8	ESM 9
URUK	K/L 12	K/L 12, Eanna						Eanna
AL HIBBAH		Area G			Area C, A			
FARA	DE 38/39	DE 38/39	DE 38/39	Trench 13 E-G				
ABU SALABIKH	3 G-81	2G 032 G 36, 6 G 54/64, gr 160 GR 193	6 H-82 6G 54/64	Area E Central C	Ash tip Graves			
NIPPUR	I-T 14 -12 c	I-T 11-9	X	I-T 8-7 b WF XIX-XVIII	WF-XVII.....	WF.....XV	WA 50 c WF XIV-XI	WC -9 WF XI-IX
LARSA								
WILAYA				Area 1 5 L			Area 2 7 H	Area 2 7 H
UMMA								Area 1 Shara
CENTRAL MESOPOTAMIA	ECM 1	ECM 2/3	ECM 4	ECM 5	ECM 6	ECM 7	ECM 8	ECM 9
ASMAR	Abu Earliest shrine	Abu Archaic Shrine I-IV, Square Temple I	X	Abu Square Temple II-III	Abu Single Shrine I Earlier NP	Abu Single Shrine II-III, Earlier NP Houses V- c-a	Abu Single Shrine IV Main NP Houses IV b-a	« Akkad » Houses Shu-Sin
KHAFADJE	Sin I-III Houses 12 and below	Sin IV-VII Houses XI-VII	X	Sin VIII-IX Houses 6-3	Sin X Houses 2	Houses 1 Oval 3		
ASHUR				AIT H		AIT G, F, graves	AIT G,F, CTS IIIB 5- 24, graves	AIT , CTS III B 3 ,E, graves
MARI		Ville 1 Chantier L	Tomb 300	Ville 2 Chantier N 1 Maquette F	Ville 2 (later), P1 Massif rouge 3 Nini zaza Temple	Palace P O	Mature Akkad/Ville 3 , Lion Temple, Chantie F, graves	Ville 3, Sahuru, Palais oriental Graves
JOKHA			Jokha 3 5-7 c, D,E 5-8 F, 6-8 G	Jokha 2 5-7 D, E, 5-8 F, 6-8 G				
RAZUK		Round building houses				burials		
ATIQAHA						Atiqah 3-2	Atiqah 1	
GUBBA	Round building VII	VI-IV						
YELKI							Level VIII	
KHEIT QASIM		Graves/ cemetery						
AHMED AL HATTU		X						
KISH				Palace A Burials	Burials	Burials		

X existence discussed at all.

If possible, one therefore should arrange for another internal meeting of the two groups before publishing results.

5. Guidelines for the publications, Deadlines and other organisational questions

The workshop ended with a common meeting of all three ARCANE groups. Recent informations about the guidelines for the publications were presented and discussed (see the relevant written paper). Deadlines as well for the input and correction of data in the database as well as for a publication were presented and the nexts steps for the interregional phase of the ARCANE project outlined and scheduled.