



**Arcane Program – Regional Group 12 (Western Iran) – 2nd Group Meeting - Berlin, February
15-18 - German Archaeological Institute Berlin, Wiegandhaus**

Scientific Report

Summary

The Second Meeting of Regional Group 12 (western Iran) was attended by seven TCs (plus one organizer), two members of the Steering Committee, two TL of other regional and transversal groups, one database manager and four invited guests. Five TCs were unable to attend, a gap which could partly be bridged through independent communications before the meeting.

The foremost aim of the meeting was to reach an agreement on the 3rd millennium BC chronology, thereby taking into consideration the specific problems that our Western Iran group faced because of bad data quality (old excavations, missing final publications, no access to new data) and because of the high variability of inventories due to the large extension of the working area. A general agreement was indeed reached on the basis of the stratigraphy from the ville royale excavations in Susa, to which the inventories of the other sites will be tied (work still in progress). A problem that had seemed less severe in the beginning is the total deviation of the Northwest Iranian sites from anything known further to the South. In combination with extremely bad data coverage, we will consider separating this area from the overall Western Iran working area.

In addition, technical and logistic issues (reminder on working principles of Arcane by Marc Lebeau and Pierre de Miroschedji; database presented by Stefano Anastasio; publication outline presented by Marc Lebeau) were considered.

The program was completed by reports and statements from the Regional Group 11 (South Mesopotamia, presented by TL Margarete van Ess) and the Glyptics and Arts Transversal Group (presented by TL Holly Pittman); and update on epigraphic research regarding the Proto-Elamite texts, including the recently newly found ones from Tappe Sofalin (presented by Jacob Dahl); a discussion of issues of absolute chronology regarding the beginning of the

Proto-Elamite (presented by Cameron Petrie); and by three lectures introducing recent research in Iran (Kamyar Abdi on the situation of Bronze Age research and NW Iranian rescue excavations; Ali Zalaghi on rescue excavations in the Khoda Farin Dam; Jafar Mehr Kian on rescue works in the Karun 3 Dam).

Topics considered

Chronology issues

Susa chronology: Invited guests Elizabeth Carter and Pierre de Miroschedji provided invaluable firsthand-knowledge about the Susa excavations, especially the work carried out by E. Carter personally at ville royale; inventories from her excavations had been entered into the database by Georg Neumann on the basis of published data. On the basis of an article by E. Carter (*AJA* 83/4, 1979, 451-454) that provides a stratigraphic ordering of the ville royale levels, and taking into account the inventories in the database, a preliminary phasing was worked out. This sequence is the only one available in Western Iran that spans the 3rd millennium BC in its entirety. In order to broaden the basis for comparisons, however, we agreed to add Tappe Musian and Tappe Farukhabad to the database.

Fars and Central Iran: the Mamasani sites (Cameron Petrie), Malyan (John Alden), Arisman and Sialk (Barbara Helwing) can be attached to the skeleton provided by the Susa sequence. Since Malyan and the Mamasani sites do not provide many first-hand inventories, Nurabad and Tol-e Spid will be entered as synopsis only; for Malyan, few inventories will be given and for the remainder, synopsis will be provided. In a small work circle between Elizabeth Carter, Georg Neumann, Cameron Petrie and John Alden, correlations between the sites and with Susa were set up; the beginning of the 3rd millennium is covered fully in all sites; for the end of the 3rd millennium, there is again evidence from Malyan and the Mamasani sites, while the Central Plateau sites are not occupied; the middle of the 3rd millennium seems also be attested at Malyan, but mostly in secondary/tertiary contexts.

Since 14C-dates are available for Arisman, Sialk, Mamasani sites and a few for Malyan, these sites will form the major frame for the absolute chronology.

Luristan: since Ernie Haerinck and Bruno Overlaet were not able to attend, a meeting was held between them and Barbara Helwing on Thursday February 11 in Gent. With the final publications of the Kalleh Nesar and the Mir Khair cemetery, representative inventories for the beginning and the end of the 3rd millennium BC exist; the mid-3rd millennium is a problems due to continuous re-occupation of the graves. The early and late 3rd millennium BC inventories can be linked to the general sequence from Susa; the middle remains open so far.

Northwestern Iran: we have almost no data (except for the old Yanik Tappe Excavations which are entered into the database); Godin and Hasanlu are in the process of re-working

and the responsible persons do not share information; we will still enter for Godin what can be gained for Godin from Robert Henrickson's 1983 dissertation; we will ignore Hasanlu; and we will add two grave inventories from recent rescue work in the Khoda Farin Dam area provided by Ali Zalaghi, and possibly another material from a neighboring site, Kohne Pasgah Tappe, where 14C-dates have recently been obtained (contact through Kamyar Abdi).

Neighbours and specific topics

Regional Group 12, South Mesopotamia: Margarete van Ess (TL South Mesopotamia) presented the status of work of the Southern Mesopotamia Regional Group; the problems there are comparable to our own (old excavations etc.; in the end, the total of sites considered shrank to 8 sites), which served nevertheless as an encouraging example of what can still be achieved. Parallel to the way we had decided in 2007, the South Mesopotamian Group as well begins with ED I rather than with Jamdat Nasr. The problem of lack of inventories to cover ED II is another result of their work.

Transversal Group Glyptics and Art: Holly Pittman (TL Glyptic) talked about the methodological aspects her group has to consider, and asked us specifically to consider inventories that contain glyptic; again, an appeal was made to still include Tappe Yahya into the working area, in order to provide inventories that later-on will allow to tie in Jiroft/Konar Sandal and thus establish the link with Southern Mesopotamia; it was thus decided to still add Tappe Yahya; Cameron Petrie indicated the necessary inventories, data entry will be carried out by Georg Neumann. A specific entry will be the inclusion of wall painting residues from Malyan.

Epigraphy: Jacob Dahl presented the most up-to-date view on the chronological development of writing in Iran; he included the recently found material from Tappe Sofalin, a site close to Tehran where hundreds of sealings and a group of texts have recently been found; a group of texts is already available at CDLI; unfortunately no clear information on the find context is provided. However, the site is crucial with regard to the beginning of the Proto-Elamite period on the Central Plateau, and seems to cover consecutive stages in the development of writing in Iran. We will provide a site entry for Sofalin, although no inventories can be considered.

Absolute chronology: Cameron Petrie, TC for absolute chronology (14C), presented the relevant data for the beginning of the Proto-Elamite period and discussed the problem of late 4th millennium calibration.

Technical issues and schedules

Database: Stefano Anastasio from the METRA group presented a demo version of one finalized regional database; in the afternoon of Wednesday, a small group met with him to discuss and solve database-specific problems.

Publication: Marc Lebeau introduced the publication guidelines for the future book. In the case of the Western Iran Regional Group, most chapters will have to be written in sections by several TCs, due to the large extension of the working area. During the closing session, we agreed on the distribution of workload throughout the individual chapters and wrote up a preliminary outline.

Schedule: The database entries will be completed in march 2010, after that date no further entries will be accepted; writing of the manuscript should start immediately upon completion of the data entry and it is aimed to finish this until end 2010.

Participants

Name	Function and sites	Institution	Country
Group members			
Barbara Helwing	TL, TC pottery; sites Sialk, Arisman	German Archaeological Institute, Eurasia Dept.	D
Judith Thomalsky	TC lithics; practical organization	German Archaeological Institute, Eurasia Dept.	D
John Alden	TC Fars; site Malyan	University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology	USA
Stephan Kroll	TC Architecture - City planning; sites Hasanlu, Gijlar etc in the Northwest	Universit of Munich	D
Cameron Petrie	TC 14C; Tol-e Nurabad, Tol-e Spid	Cambridge University	GB
Georg Neumann	TC Datamanagment; Susa	University of Tübingen	D
Jacob Dahl	Associated TC epigraphy	University of Oxford	GB
Hamid Fahimi	Practical Organisation	Free University Berlin	D
Guests			
Holly Pittman	TL for Transversal group Glyptic and Art	University of Pennsylvania	USA
Elizabeth Carter	Specialist for Susa excavations	University of California, Los Angeles	USA
Kamyar Abdi	Specialist for Iranian Archaeology, site Malyan	Research and Science University Tehran	IR
Jafar Mehr Kian	Specialist for Iranian Archaeology, sites in Karun Dam rescue area	Iranian Cultural Heritage Organisation and Ayapir Archaeological Association	IR

Ali Zalaghi	Specialist for Iranian Archaeology, Northwestern Region, site Kohne Tappe	University of Frankfurt	D
Margarete van Ess	Guest, TL of South Mesopotamian Group	German Archaeological Institute, Oriental Dept.	D
Pierre de Miroshedji	Chairman, Member of the Steering Committee	Directeur de recherche au CNRS, Paris Nanterre	F
Stefano Anastasio	Database manager	Siena University	I
Marc Lebeau	Chairman, Member of the Steering Committee	E.C.U.M.S., Bruxelles	B
Group members who could not attend			
Daniel Potts	TC Stratigraphy; sites Tol-e Nurabad, Tol-e Spid	University of Sydney	AUS
Roger Matthews	TC Glyptic and iconography; site Yanik Tappe	University of London	GB
Karim Alizadeh	TC Stratigraphy; site Haftavan	Harvard University	USA
Ernie Haerinck	TC Burial rites; Lorestan sites	University Gent	B
Bruno Overlaet	TC Burial rites and Lorestan sites	Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels	B

2ND MEETING OF THE REGIONAL GROUP 12 – WESTERN IRAN

BERLIN, FEBRUARY 15-18

LOCATION: GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE BERLIN, WIEGANDHAUS –
PODBIELSKIALLEE 69-71, 14195 BERLIN, GERMANY

FINAL PROGRAM

The foremost aim of the meeting is to work out a chronology for the 3rd millennium BC in our region of work, Western Iran. In order to do so, we must collect the information available and pre-processed so far, and decide upon types and items that we agree to be chronologically relevant. It is therefore expected that every group member brings a list of chronologically relevant items/types/objects originating from secure contexts in the sites he/she is responsible for, preferably also in a somehow electronic format to facilitate communication (powerpoint is available). We will have to form small working groups to discuss all these types one by one and site by site, until in the end we will hopefully be able to agree on a chronological subdivision that works for the whole region.

The following topics shall be considered separately and possible/partly in smaller parallel groups:

Chronology issues

- TOP 1: Susa chronology - Elizabeth Carter and Pierre de Miroschedji will attend as invited guests with firsthand-knowledge about the Susa excavations; Georg Neumann has processed the data entries from ville royale excavations; Holly Pittman knows the seals; I suggest a pre-workshop meeting for Sunday afternoon, and a second session for Monday afternoon.
- TOP 2: Northwestern Iran – we have a problem here, since we have almost no data and almost no attendants for Northwestern Iran; Stephan Kroll is, in fact, the only one working in this region who can come; he will prepare a list of relevant items to be definitely included in the chronological discussion.
- TOP 3: Fars and Central Iran – Mamasani sites (Cameron Petrie), Malyan (John Alden), Arisman and Sialk (Barbara Helwing): Malyan and the Mamasani sites provide data to cover the third millennium BC; Arisman and Sialk are only occupied at the very beginning of the 3rd millennium BC.

TOP 4: Luristan: Ernie Haerinck and Bruno Overlaet are unfortunately not able to attend; Barbara Helwing will meet with them on Thursday February 11 and will present their proposal for a chronology for Luristan at the meeting.

The broader horizon and specific topics

TOP 5: Work in neighboring regions: Margarete van Ess (RG South Mesopotamia) represents the Southern Mesopotamia Regional Group working in the ARCANE project; for South Mesopotamia, the problems are comparable to our own (old excavations etc.), and Margarete will briefly introduce the methods and results of the work of her group.
And work in the overarching fields: Holly Pittman of the glyptic group will attend the meeting and can present the current status of this groups work – and problems – to the group.

TOP 6: Writing: Jacob Dahl agreed to attend the meeting for one day to present the most current view on the chronological development of writing in Iran (Tuesday)

TOP 7: Absolute chronology: Cameron Petrie is out topic coordinator for absolute chronology (14C) and can present the analysis of the Mamasani data; Barbara Helwing can add the Arisman and Sialk data.

TOP 8: Current status of research on Early Bronze Age in Iran: Kamyar Abdi and Jafar Mehr Kian may present some information on current and ongoing research in Iran that may broaden our perspective.

Technical issues

TOP 9: Database problems and demo version from other groups. Stefano Anastasio from the METRA group has agreed to come for one day and provide the necessary information for the database work; he will be here on Wednesday and thus, his presentation will be Wednesday morning; his attendance provides us in addition with the possibility to discuss (and solve!) any remaining problems with the database.

TOP 10: Publication guidelines: Marc Lebeau will present the publication guidelines for the book that we are expected to produce within the coming year. Since this will certainly influence our perspective on how we can construct the chronology, he will present that at the beginning on Monday morning, before we enter the chronology issues discussion

Monday, February 15

- 09:00 Welcome (B. Helwing)
- 09:10 Report on the status of work of the group (B. Helwing), followed by discussion on this
- 10:00 **TOP 10: Presentation of the publication guidelines (M. Lebeau)**
- 11:00 coffee break
- 11:30 **TOP 5: Southern Mesopotamia (M. van Ess)**
TOP 5: Glyptic group – short report (H. Pittman)
- 13:00 Lunch (walking lunch at the institute's venue)
- 14:00 **TOP 1: Susa (E. Carter, G. Neumann, P. de Miroschedji)**
- 16:00 coffee break
- 17:30 **TOP 8: New research in Iran, presented by Kamyar Abdi**
- 19:00 Dinner (Restaurant, Piazza Michelangelo, Breitenbachplatz)

Tuesday, February 16

- 09:00 **TOP 3: Fars and Central Iranian Plateau (J. Alden, B. Helwing)**
- 11:00 coffee break
- 11:30 **TOP 4: Luristan (reported by B. Helwing)**
TOP 2: Northwestern Iran (St. Kroll)
TOP 8: New research in Iran/Khoda Afarin, presented by Ali Zalaghi
- 13:00 Lunch (walking lunch at the institute's venue)
- 14:00 **TOP 6: Writing (J. Dahl)**
- TOP 7: Absolute chronology (C. Petrie)**
- 16:00 coffee break

16:30 **TOP 8: New research in Iran/Karun 3 rescue work, presented by Jaffar Mehr Kian**

Flexible – TOP 1 Susa cont.? or group discussion, depending on progress

19:00 Dinner (Restaurant Markthalle, Pücklerstr. – subway Görlitzer Bahnhof)

Wednesday, February 17

09:00 Summing up: Chronology of Western Iran – as agreed upon by the group members; includes agreement on selection of leitfossil types etc.

11:00 coffee break

11:30 **TOP 9: Database presentation** and possibility to solve problems (**St. Anastasio**)

Timeline, time schedule, Distribution of workloads for the publication

13:00 Lunch (walking lunch at the institute's venue)

Farewell to all those leaving after lunch

Afternoon for those staying on: possibility to visit the Berlin Neues Museum St. Anastasio and whoever wants to attend (G. Neumann, B. Helwing) – database issues.