



Middle Euphrates (RG07)

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Preparing the Chronology of the Middle Euphrates Region

Third Regional Workshop in Blaubeuren

5th – 9th February, 2009

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

The team of the Regional Group 07 met this year in Blaubeuren together with the regional groups 10, Central Mesopotamia, and 11, Southern Mesopotamia. This common workshop was planned for 3 full days with the main goal of establishing regional periodizations as for the Jazirah region. The following topic coordinators and guests attended the meeting:

TOPIC COORDINATORS

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Institution & Country</i>	
1	Bouso, Mónica	Burial customs	Univ. of Barcelona	E
2	Felli, Candida	Glyptics	Pisa University	I
3	Finkbeiner, Uwe	Team leader and Stratigraphy	Tuebingen University	D
4	Helwing, Barbara	Pottery	DAI, Eurasienabteilung, Berlin	D
5	Novák, Mirko	Team leader and Architecture	Tuebingen University	D
6	Sakal, Ferhan	Terracotta figurines	Tuebingen University	D
7	Sconzo, Paola	Pottery	Tuebingen University	D
8	Squadrone, Fausta	Metal	I.M.I. Istanbul	TR

GUESTS

9	Anastasio, Stefano	Database management	Siena University	I
10	Engin, Attila	Pottery from Southern Turkey	Cumhuriyet University, Sivas	TR
11	Fenù, Pino	Database	Metra Soc. Coop.	I
12	Lebeau, Marc	Chairman of ARCANE	Europ.Centre of Upper Mesop. Stud.	B
13	Marchetti, Nicolò	Speaker	Università di Bologna	I
14	Saliola, Francesco	Database	Metra Soc. Coop.	I

The following topic coordinators had to cancel their participation:

Choyke, Alice	Bone objects	Central European Univ., Budapest	H
Coqueugniot, Eric	Lithics	CNRS, Lyon	F
Deckers, Katleen	14C-Dating	Tuebingen University	D
Porter, Anne	Pottery	Univ. of Southern Calif., Los Angeles	USA

Among the Topic Coordinators of the Middle Euphrates Group I had the pleasure to welcome Barbara Helwing replacing Catherine Marro as specialist for the pottery from the Karababa dam area.

Originally, a third meeting was not envisioned but came about as a common workshop of Regional Groups, RG 07, RG 10 and RG 11, with a focus on the application of the Database. Almost a complete day was scheduled for problems of entering the data and of data retrieval. The problem of the belated delivery of the “standalone files” for the individual inventories was discussed anew. A solution was found that enables to finish the database for a Regional Group and, nevertheless, reserve the possibility for adding files that may have become available at a later time

2. Description of the scientific content and discussion

The programme consisted of three main parts:

- a. Lectures by four guests on subjects of common interest (plenary meeting)
- b. Presentation of the development stages of the database, problems and first results (plenary meeting)
- c. Establishing regional periodizations for Regional Groups 7, 10 and 11 (separate meetings).

2a The lectures

The lectures held on Friday afternoon dealt with the relations of the Middle Euphrates Region towards the West, with new results especially at the so-called “Massive Rouge” in the centre of Mari, one of the main key sites for the Central Mesopotamian Region, and with problems of the chronology of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia. The lecture on the pottery from Oylum Höyük illustrated the pottery from the westernmost area of the Middle Euphrates Region announcing four additional inventories from that site. The titles and speakers were as follows:

PASCAL BUTTERLIN (Univ. de VERSAILLES ET ST. QUENTIN), “*New results from Mari 2008.*”

NICOLÒ MARCHETTI (UNIV. DI BOLOGNA), “*The chronology of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia: a problem of method, vision and cooperation.*”

ATTILA ENGIN (SIVAS ÜNİVERSİTESİ), “*The Early Bronze Age Pottery from Oylum Höyük, Turkey.*”

2b The Database presentation

Upon a proposal by chairman Marc Lebeau, Stefano Anastasio and two members of the Metra Group were invited, who are developing the database for our project. The common

workshop of three Mesopotamian Regional Groups offered the opportunity to inform them about the state of the art of the database and to describe the problems that had resulted from a faulty entering of data in to the “standalone files” and to ask for strict observation of the rules. The IT persons were also very much interested to get an exact idea of the kind of questions the archaeologists want to put to the database.

2c The new periodization of the Middle Euphrates Region

In the first place, the separate meeting of the ME Group on the second day of the workshop aimed at establishing a regional chronology with a division into phases that should be meaningful for all object groups.

Based on the pottery development, Paola Sconzo, Topic Coordinator for ceramics, had put together a chart with the comparative stratigraphy of all key sites. The subdivisions were assessed by the other Topic Coordinators with regard to their respective object group and, in a few cases, modified.

Starting from the comparative stratigraphy, caesuras in the material development were singled out in a second step leading to a division into phases. It showed that a division into six grades – as already proposed by A. Porter – is the most meaningful one for the 3rd millennium. In the following, the grades will be named “Early Middle Euphrates (EME) 1–6”. It is true that not all divisions into phases appear to the same degree in all object groups, but overall they show a significant and convincing presence.

It is striking that, within the Middle Euphrates region, smaller regional unities can be defined the material developments of which may differ distinctly. In the first phases (EME 1–3) only few ceramic shapes are distributed throughout the larger region. A more pronounced cultural unification is only observable in the second half of the 3rd millennium (EME 4-6). Overall, a clear cultural separation is observable between the northern section (Karababa and Birecik reservoirs to northern Tishrin area) and the southern one (southern Tishrin and Tabqa area).

It is also obvious that the earliest phases of the 3rd millennium, especially phases EME 1 and 2, which follow immediately upon the Late Chalcolithic, are considerably better documented in the northern section of the Middle Euphrates Region than in the southern one – where, on the other hand, the developments of the late phases EME 5 and 6 are more easily observable.

The first phase (EME 1) and the last phase (EME 6) can be defined as transitional phases: EME 1, registered at a few places of the northern section, only (e.g. Hassek Höyük), is the transitional phase from the Late Chalcolithic to the beginning Early Bronze Age. In the southern section this phase exists hardly at all. EME 6 is better documented in the southern section; it corresponds to a period which, in the course of several workshops conducted, before the ARCANE project had begun, in Blaubeuren, Rotenberge and Lyon, was defined as “EB-MB-Transitional-Phase”.

The intermediate phases EME 2 to EME 5 cover the time span which, according to the traditional Mesopotamian terminology, is called the Early Dynastic and the Akkad periods. Artefacts that definitely belong to the Akkad period occur in phase EME 5, only.

It is striking that general cultural developments may be demonstrated: Two separate phases of urbanisation can be defined at the beginning of EME 2 and of EME 4, both characterized by varying object groups or shapes (building types, pottery shapes, terracotta figurines).

In the southern section of the region two comprehensive destruction horizons are registered that are not restricted to local events: They mark the end of phases EME 4 and EME 5,

respectively. Whether those destruction horizons can be connected to historical events, e.g. the wars between Ebla and Mari or Naram-Sin's campaigns, remains to be further investigated and discussed.

3. Assessment of the results

The reported new periodization system (see above 2c) is certainly the main success of this workshop, for our region Middle Euphrates as well as for the Regional Groups 10 and 11 which equally came to well-accepted chronologies. Parallel to the periodical system of the Jazirah Group naming their phases EJZ I to EJZ V we call our phases EME 1 to 6. In any case, we now have a chronological frame that can be used and further refined in the continued evaluation of the object groups.

4. List of addresses

For the addresses of the participants see separate list as annex 1.

F-67510 Obersteinbach

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March 9, 2009

Dr. Uwe Finkbeiner

PD. Dr. Mirko Novák

FINAL PROGRAMME

(as realized in Blaubeuren)

Thursday, February 5, 2009

ARRIVAL IN BLAUBEUREN

Friday, February 6, 2009 (plenary meeting)

MORNING	1. Words of welcome by Chairman Marc Lebeau
09:00 - 10:30	2. Organisational remarks (Uwe Finkbeiner)
	3. Presentation of the development stages of the database (Metra group).
10:30	Coffeebreak
11:00 – 12:30	4.1 The current updated version with its basic searchable features (Metra group).
12:30	Lunch
AFTERNOON	4.2 Presentation of the data of the Middle Euphrates Region.
14:00 – 16:00	Preliminary version of the ME database (Metra group); discussion
16:00	Coffeebreak
16:30 – 18:30	5.1 Lecture by Pascal Butterlin, “ <i>New results from Mari 2008</i> “. 5.2 Lecture by Nicolò Marchetti, <i>The chronology of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia: a problem of method, vision and cooperation</i>
18:30	Dinner
EVENING	Opportunity to discuss general and individual problems with the people from Metra (Stefano Anastasio, Pino Fenù and Francesco Saliola)

Saturday, February 7, 2009

MORNING	(separate meetings)
09:00 - 10:30	1.1 Presentation by Paola Sconzo of a chronological chart based on the stratigraphy of the sites and the pottery belonging to them. Discussion
10:30	Coffeebreak
11:00 – 12:30	Presentation of the object groups, in relation to the periodization proposed by Paola Sconzo 1.2 Stratigraphy, occupation history 1.3 Architecture 1.4 Terracotta figurines 1.5 Glyptics 1.6 Metal 1.7 Graves, funerary customs
12:30	Lunch
AFTERNOON	(separate meetings)

- 14:00 – 16:00 2. Attempt at a correlation of the sites and their levels by way of the characteristic object groups assembled in the charts; proposal of a periodization
- 16:00 **Coffeebreak**
- 16:30-18:30 3. Presentation of a seriation of the radiocarbon dates from the Middle Euphrates Region, that have been assigned to definite levels; attempt at a correlation with the results of the archaeological object groups
- 18:30 **Dinner**

Sunday, February 8, 2009

MORNING (meetings of the Topic Coordinators of the three Regional groups)

- 09:00 - 10:30 1. Presentation of the regional results
- 10:30 **Coffeebreak**
- 11:00 – 12:30 2. Presentation of the regional results, continued; attempt at a multi-regional correlation
- 12:30 **Lunch**

AFTERNOON (plenary meeting)

- 14:00 – 16:00 1. Presentation of the periodization of the Regional group Jazirah (M. Lebeau), discussion
2. Proposal of a periodization by Regional group 7 (U. Finkbeiner and M. Novák)
- 16:00 **Coffeebreak**
- 16:30 – 18:30 Presentation of the periodizations by Regional groups 10 (C. Reichel) and 11 (M. van Ess).
3. Guidelines for the publications of the Regional groups
4. Deadlines and other organisational questions
5. End of the Workshop
- 18:30 **Dinner**

Monday, February 9, 2009

DEPARTURE AFTER BREAKFAST