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ARCANE PROJECT – RG 09 Group Meeting, WARSAW, 17.03-19.03.2006
SCIENTIFIC REPORT

Summary

For three days, from March 17 till March 19 took place in Warsaw first meeting of the ARCANE Project Tigridian Group (RG 09). The meeting was hosted by Warsaw's University Institute of Archaeology where all proceedings have taken place. In this round table meeting participated finally 16 scholars (from: Italy, Turkey, USA, Germany, Belgium, Iraq, UK and Poland), while the seventeenth (dr. A. Green) whose presence was several times confirmed couldn't come for health reasons and send his contribution by fax, The complete list of participant is included as separate document. The main goals of the meeting were as follows:

a) general presentation of the aims and spirit of the ARCANE Project and its ***modus operandi***,
b) presentation of the ARCANE Project main tool, that is of its Database with comments concerning its application for particular kinds of archaeological artefacts,
c) presentation of an introductory outline of the present state of research on relative chronology of the IIIrd millennium BC within the Tigridian region of Upper Mesopotamia and on chronology and typology of particular categories of archeological findings from this area.

During the first two days were presented : four contributions concerning general problems of the ARCANE Project, seven communications presenting archeological data coming from excavations on particular sites within the Tigridian region and finally five papers dealing with chronology of various categories of archaeological objects coming from this area and dated to the IIIrd mill. The discussion was concentrated on such problems as proposed definitions of archeological assemblages and their components, geographical limits of Tigridian region and details of presented archeological materials. On the third day of the Warsaw "round table" there was only meeting of the team leaders and topic coordinators. They discussed further steps for realization of RG 09 tasks and established provisional list of archaeological sites from which the materials should be taken into further consideration. Summing up results of the first meeting of ARCANE Regional Group 09 it is necessary to mention:

a) invited excavators accepted presented modus operandi of the project as whole and of the Tigridian group and agreed to participate in further stages of the project,
b) Tigridian Group after discussions established provisional list of sites and assemblages which should serve as basis for further analyses.

Thus the principal goals of the meeting were achieved.

Description of the scientific content and discussion during the meeting of RG 09 group in Warsaw

The main topic of the first part of the Warsaw "round table meeting" of Tigridian group was the ARCANE Project itself and its details. General aims of the project, its structure and main steps leading to its realization were presented by Dr. M. Lebeau. In his speech he stressed the role of international scientific cooperation in functioning of such complex research project as ARCANE. He mentioned also the problem of use of still unpublished material coming from recent excavations suggesting that inclusion of such material into ARCANE Project Data Bases will constitute a sort of publication. Next P. Bielinski introduced participants into main problems

of data gathering and explained roles and duties of excavators and other researchers during the basic stage of the project. Elaboration of raw data for the ARCANE Data Base will be the main duty excavators. Work of Topic Coordinators depends entirely of data provided by excavators. It is necessary to understand that only the material coming from clear stratigraphic contexts may bring the needed chronological information, For several archaeological sites in Tigridian region finding assemblages of artefact coming from such contexts may be difficult, as some very important ones were excavated several years ago. For this reason were invented special kinds of inventories ("artificial") permitting to take into account also materials from the museum collections. One of the most important problem the excavators will face is the selection and description of material. The Data Base will be less useable (operational) if it will be overloaded with minor details or subtypes, limiting thus possibility of comparisons between materials coming from different sites or areas.

An introduction to the system and functioning of ARCANE Data Base was presented by prof. E. Rova. As the participants received at their arrival in Warsaw a set of documents describing the ARCANE Data Base it was possible to limit the presentation to some crucial points and discussion. To show how ARCANE Data Base works dr. Lebeau and prof. Rova demonstrated how the material from the Belgian excavations was inserted into our Data Base, giving explanation concerning such problems as: synoptical tables, definitions of different inventories, number of possible inventories per Region etc. In the following discussion, in which took part among others dr. W. Ball, dr. C. Reichel, dr. R. Koliński, were mentioned several problems like: participation of Iraqi archaeologists in proceedings of Tigridian Group, number of objects within a single inventory, methods of description of architectural units and features, relations with Regional Group dealing with chronology of central and southern Mesopotamia, limitation of excavators copyright as far as yet unpublished archaeological material inserted into ARCANE Data base is concerned and chronological framework of Tigridian Group research.

The second part of Regional Group meeting was devoted to presentation of an outline of Tigridian area relative chronology in III rd mill. BC and to presentation of archaeological inventories from some sites situated within this area. The opening paper containing report on the present state of research on archaeology of the III rd mill. in the Tigris area was prepared by dr. E. Rova. In her paper she proposed to divide Tigridian area into 4 subregions : a) area bordering central Mesopotamia, b) area situated to the east of Tigris valley, c) Tigris valley area from South of Mosul to the Turkish border including Sinjar region, and d) Tigris valley area to the north of Turkish border. In her opinion the most valuable data come from the subregion "c" where is a concentration of quite recently excavated and well documented sites, while from the subregion "b", which is certainly very important an interesting the data are scanty and probably useless for ARCANE . She proposed therefore to consider subregion "c" as a core area for the relative chronology of the whole Tigridian region. As a base for further considerations dr. Rova proposed also to use provisionally the periodization she published in "The Origins of North Mesopotamian Civilisation" suggesting same time that in periodization on which our group intends to work it will be better to use such "neutral" labels as Early Tigridian 1, 2, 3 etc. instead of names of particular archaeological cultures of Northern Mesopotamia. She also pointed out that the archaeological periodization currently in use is based on development of the Ninevite 5 culture and her links with the Uruk culture period, while the post-Ninevite 5 phases are still badly known. It may be really difficult fill this gap as in the Tigridian region not much explored sites have post-Ninevite layers. Ending with problems concerning chronology dr. Rova proposed provisional chronological framework for the Tigridian Group ranging in calendar years from 3100 to 1900 BC. As a separate problem difficult to solve our Group is facing she mentioned the state of documentation made during the older excavations in the area and the fact that even some quite recent explorations are still not properly published. It means that sometimes even important materials but published without documented stratigraphic context couldn't be considered as

primary inventories. The fact that in Iraqi part of Tigridian region there was not regular excavations in last 15 years is severely complicating the situation. Discussion which followed paper presented by dr. Rova showed that her propositions were generally accepted by the invited excavators. Other comments concerned mainly problem of "borders" of ARCANE Tigridian Region area, some sites which are not included into but which are considered as important for regional chronology (Tell Leilan) and the sites excavated not a long time ago by Iraqi archaeologists. Among those who participated in this discussion were: dr. R. Gut, dr. W. Ball, dr. C. Reichel, dr. R. Kolinski, C. Schmidt, dr. M. Lebeau and P. Bieliński.

In the next part of the round table meeting participants presented III rd mill. materials from the sites they or excavated themselves or published. As the first typical inventory from the Tigridian region was presented a Ninevite burial from Tell Rijim and pottery coming from destroyed graves found on this site. The presentation was done by P. Bieliński. The next presentation was the ceramic sequence from Tell Karrana 3. Those data, elaborated by dr. Rova were important for construction of the relative chronology of the transition from the end of Uruk to the beginnings of Ninevite 5 culture. Third presentation was prepared by dr. C. Schmidt and contained analysis of the pottery from the last centuries of the III rd millennium BC found in Assur. Next dr. R. Gut was talking about III rd mill. pottery from Tell Taya and dr. C. Reichel gave an extensive presentation of recent discoveries at Tell Hammoukar. After every paper there was a short discussion. It concentrated mainly on minor details of presented material (pottery and glyptics), its chronology and stratigraphy as well as on relations between particular sites as for example between Tell Taya and Hammoukar, Assur and Mari, between Tell Brak and Taya etc. Discussed were also problems of composition of particular inventories. Separate block of site presentation was formed by three contributions given by Turkish archaeologists about materials coming from their explorations in the upper Tigris area. Dr. A. Özfýrat presented materials from Üçtepe, while dr. Y. Şenyurt the results of his excavations at Aşaği Salat. More general picture of the III rd mill. BC archaeological remains found in the upper Tigridian region which has to be flooded after achievement of Ilisu Dam was presented by dr. T. Ökse. All these contribution provoked numerous questions from archaeologist specialized mostly in typical northern Mesopotamian material. They concerned presence of specific kinds pottery like metallic, Karababa, painted Ninevite 5 and Late Uruk wares.

The last part of the meeting consisted of reports given by Topic Coordinators of Tigridian Group on various aspects of material culture of the region in III rd mill. BC. The papers were showing an outline of the present state of research based on extensive study of the materials published up till now. The report prepared by dr. D. Ławecka contained information about the architectural remains found in the Tigridian area. Ławecka pointed out that except one site (Taya) there are no other published site giving us more complete data concerning III rd millennium urbanism in the area. From the other sites come usually only fragments of structures exposed in bad state of preservation. It may be really difficult to work out a complete characteristics of this period architecture. Much more can be said about construction techniques. Analysis of Tigridian region glyptics represents another kind of challenge as it was suggested by the contribution of P. Bielinski. There is not much seals found in well stratified context, which can offer more solid base for studies on their chronology. As for the Ninevite 5 culture we know much more sealings than seals themselves. Further problems are caused by scarcity of seals from the later part of the IIIrd mill BC. M. Tonussi presented a provisional typology of figurines, while L. Rutkowski dealt with various kind of metal artefacts ranging from weaponry through tools to pins and jewellery. Metal object are generally scarce among the IIIrd mill. findings in the Tigridian area and the best preserved are coming from graves, At the end came report of M. Zambello who provisionally made an extensive analysis of the lithic material which in most cases is very difficult to date more precisely, especially the most numerous sickles. As dr. A. Green couldn't join the Regional Group meeting because come of an unexpected illness his

report on burials from the Tigridian region prepared was not read but it was circulating among participants. Discussion which followed this part of the meeting was focused on such problems as difficulties caused by insufficient dating criteria for certain categories of objects, problems with identification of raw materials and long use of particular forms of artefacts what diminish their value for chronological studies. Generally it was accepted that the papers presented by topic coordinators show what sort of archaeological materials other than pottery can be used for elaboration of coherent relative chronology and what limitations of its use we can expect.

At the very end of the Warsaw round table there was a closing meeting of the Team Leaders and Topic Coordinators during which was discussed the further strategy of research and the list of archaeological sites with possible primary inventories. The team Leaders should try to contact those from among the excavators who couldn't come to Warsaw but are willing to participate and those who up till now did not respond to ARCANE invitation. Of 52 sites on which were found layers dated to the IIIrd mill. 43 were selected as those which can have inventories important for relative chronology. Number of attributed inventories corresponds closely to importance of the site for the chronology of the IIIrd mill. BC. Thus sites as Assur, Tell Muhammad Arab and Telul eth Thalatat are supposed to "offer" up to 12 inventories while the smaller ones like Kutan or Chenchi only 3. With these decisions the Warsaw meeting was closed.

Assessment of the results and impact of the event on future direction of the field

In case of the first workshop of Tigridian ARCANE Project it not possible to talk about an "impact on future direction of the field" but scientific results of the meeting are important. Leaving aside the problem of introducing participants into the spirit and *modus operandi* of the ARCANE Project among important scientific results at first should be mentioned the establishment of the list of archaeological sites which can bring data valuable from the chronological point of vue. Attribution of the certain number of inventories to particular sites reflects its estimated significance for chronological studies. This estimations based on prior knowledge of Regional Group Team Leaders was tested during discussion with other participants. Interesting and important was also the provisional outline of Tigridian region relative chronology offering the first attempt to construct a more general picture of the III rd mill. chronology for the whole area. Participants realized to which degree our knowledge is concentrated on studies of the Ninevite 5 culture while the later periods are or badly represented in this region or in a way neglected by scholars. Introductory reports on state of research on various kinds of atrefacts lead participants to conclusion that for Tigridian region archaeologist were concentrating their research only on pottery and on some types of glyptics while the other sort of material is still awaiting more synthetic elaboration.

List of participants in the first workshop of the ARCANE Project Tigridian Group , Warsaw, 17.03-19.03. 2006

1) Abbas al-Hussayini
2) Warwick Ball – U.K.
3) Piotr Bieliński - Poland
4) Claudia Beuger – Germany
5) Renate Gut – Germany
6) Rafał Koliński – Poland
7) Marc Lebeau – Belgium
8) Dorota Ławecka – Poland

9) Tuba Őkse – Turkey
10) Aynur Őzfýrat – Turkey
11) Clemens Reichel – USA
12) Elena Rova - Italy
13) Łukasz Ritkowski – Poland
14) Yűcel Şenyurt – Turkey
15) Monica Tonussi – Italy
16) Marta Zambello

PROGRAMME OF THE FIRST MEETING OF TIGRIDIAN GROUP

***Thursday**, March, the 16th afternoon/evening arrival in Warsaw- Warsaw University Assistant's Hotel "SOKRATES"- Smyczkowa Street 9*

Friday, March the 17thf, Institute of Archaeology, Warsaw University, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28 - "Szkoła Główna", room no 118- ground floor

10^{00} – 13^{30} Morning Session:

Generalities

Welcome by Director of the Institute prof. Kazimierz Lewartowski

General introduction to ARCANE Project by Marc Lebeau
Introduction to Modus Operandi by Piotr Bieliński
Introduction to ARCANE Database by Elena Rova

Discussion

13^{30} – 15^{00} Lunch break

15^{00} – 19^{00} Afternoon Session

Introduction into |regional Chronology and Sites Presentation - each presentation not longer than 20 minutes and some 10 minutes for discussion after each presentation

Introduction into regional chronology by Elena Rova
Tell Rijim -- (P. Bieliński)
Coffee break – 15 min.
Tell Karrana 3 -- (E.Rova)
Assur -- (C. Schmidt) - "Late Third Millennium Pottery from Assur"
Hamukar -- (C. Reichel))
Dinner

***Saturday**, March 18th Institute of Archaeology, Warsaw University, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28 – "Szkoła Główna", room no 209 – first floor*

10^{00} – 13^{30} Morning Session

Sites Presentation – continued

Upper Tigris Area – Ilisu Dam Region -- (T. Ökse) - "An Archaeological View of the Upper Tigridian Region to be Flooded by the Ilisu Dam"
Üçtepe -- Aynur Özfýrat
Aşağı Salat -- Yucel Şenyurt
Coffee break – 15 min.

Discussion (with short presentation by the topic coordinators) of different materials and related problems – each presentation not longer than 20 minutes and some 10 minutes for discussion after each contribution

Architecture -- (D. Ławecka)

Glyptics -- (P.Bielinski)

13^{30} – 15^{30} Lunch break

15^{30} - 19^{00} Afternoon Session

Continuation of topics presentation

Figurines and small finds -- (M. Tonussi)

Metal -- (Ł. Rutkowski)

Lithics -- (M. Zambello)

Burials and funerary practices ("Burials of the Third Millennium in the Tigris Region: Problems of Identification and Chronology") – A. Green

Coffee break – 15 min.

Concluding discussion

Dinner

Sunday, March the 19th, Institute of Archaeology, Warsaw University, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28 – "Szkoła Główna"

10^{00} – 12^{00} Morning Session

Concluding meeting of the group – team leaders + topic coordinators