AKKAD
THE FIRST WORLD EMPIRE
Structure, Ideology, Traditions

Edited by
MARIO LIVERANI

Sargonsrl
Padova 1993
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OPERA STAMPATA CON IL CONTRIBUTO
DEL CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE
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The conference “Akkad. Il primo impero universale: strutture, ideologia, tradizioni” was held in the University of Rome “La Sapienza”, Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche Archeologiche e Antropologiche dell’Antichità, on December 5th to 7th, 1990. Funds were provided by the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche and by the Faculty of Humanities, University of Rome. The Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche provided partial funding also for the publication of this volume. It is a pleasure to express here my sincere thanks to the institutions and individuals who made this conference possible.

The present volume contains all the papers presented at the conference, with minor improvements. The lively discussion following each paper has been recorded on tapes, but turned out unsuitable for publication. In addition to the scholars who did participate in the conference, also Irene Winter had been invited to cover the iconographic aspects of the problem; but other engagements prevented her to participate (and even to present a separate lecture on the subject). On the other hand, Harvey Weiss and Marie-Agnès Courty’s paper was not part of the original conference, yet it seemed useful to include it in the volume because of its strict pertinence to the problems treated in it.

The subject of the conference was chosen as an intersection point between my own research programs on early empires and on Mesopotamian historiography. The hope was to produce a comprehensive volume on the Akkad empire, to be used as a reliable reference book, at a point in time when much new work has just been done or is still being done on the subject. Some of the most competent “Akkad” scholars have therefore been invited to contribute to this idea; and I am grateful for their prompt and friendly cooperation. To my sincere regret, the limitation of available funds made it impossible to invite other competent scholars as well, whose names are so often quoted in the volume and whose outstanding contributions we all admire.

Although I bear full responsibility for the organization of the conference and editing of the volume, the help generously provided by a number of friends (colleagues and students as well) was indispensable.
for a positive issue of both. I am glad to gratefully mention here at least M. Giovanna Biga, Barbara Cifola, Gianni Lanfranchi, Lucio Milano, and especially Francesca Albani who made most of the work. All my advanced students were also helpful, for the only reward of being in personal contact with their favourite authors.

Mario Liverani

Rome, February 20th, 1993
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AcOr</td>
<td>Acta Orientalia (Copenhagen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfO</td>
<td>Archiv für Orientforschung (Graz).</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIUON</td>
<td>Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli (Napoli).</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJA</td>
<td>American Journal of Archaeology (Princeton).</td>
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<td>Akk</td>
<td>Akkadica (Bruxelles).</td>
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<tr>
<td>AnSt</td>
<td>Anatolian Studies (London).</td>
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<td>AOAT</td>
<td>Alter Orient und Altes Testament.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AOF</td>
<td>Altorientalische Forschungen (Berlin).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ArOr</td>
<td>Archiv Orientální (Praha).</td>
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<td>ARRIM</td>
<td>Annual Review of the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Project (Toronto).</td>
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<td>ASJ</td>
<td>Acta Sumerologica (Hiroshima).</td>
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<td>AUIL</td>
<td>B.R. Foster, Administration and Use of Institutional Land in Sargonic Sumer, Copenhagen 1982.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BaM</td>
<td>Baghdader Mitteilungen (Berlin).</td>
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FAOS 19 = B. Kienast - K.R. Volk (Pre-Ur III letters, forthcoming).


JA = Journal Asiatique (Paris).


JCS = *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* (New Haven, Philadelphia).

JEOL = Jaarbericht "Ex Oriente Lux" (Leiden).

JESHO = *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (Leiden).


JSOR = *Journal of the Society for Oriental Research* (Chicago).


MAD = *Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary*.


MCS = Manchester Cuneiform Studies (Manchester).

MDOG = Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft (Berlin).

MDP = *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, Paris 1900 ff..


NABU = Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires (Paris).


OA = Oriens Antiquus (Roma).


OIC = *Oriental Institute Communications* (Chicago).

OIP = *Oriental Institute Publications*.


OLP = *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* (Leuven).

OLZ = *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* (Berlin).

Or = *Orientalia* (Roma).


PSD = *The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia 1984-.


RAI = *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Comptes rendus*.


RB = Revue Biblique (Paris).

RGTC = *Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes*.


RSO = Rivista degli Studi Orientali (Roma).

RT = Recueil de Travaux (Paris).


SAAB = State Archives of Assyria, Bulletin (Padova).


SEb = Studi Eblaiti (Roma).

SEL = Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici (Verona).

SMEA = Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici (Roma).

SMS = Syro-Mesopotamian Studies (Malibu).


UF = Ugarit Forschungen (Neukirchen-Vluyn).


VAT = Vorderasiatische Abteilung der Berliner Museen, Tafelsignatur.

VDI = Vestnik Drevnej Istorii (Moscow).

VO = Vicino Oriente (Roma).

WA = World Archaeology (London).


WO = Die Welt des Orients (Göttingen).

WZKM = Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Wien).


ZA = Zeitschrift für Assyriologie (Berlin).
AKKAD: AN INTRODUCTION

Mario Liverani

1. The central role of Akkad: explanations, old and new.

The intellagentia of ancient Mesopotamia had no doubt that the dynasty of Akkad, and its kings Sargon and Naram-Sin, represented a highly significant phase in the history of their country, and an obliged reference-point for later kings. Modern scholars share the same opinion: assyriologists, archaeologists and historians have always awarded the Akkad dynasty a prominent role — the starting point for basic historical experiences, the watershed between different ages, the apex in the developmental process of an entire civilization.

Looking more closely at the reasons of such a centrality, we find that ancient and modern explanations are not coincident, and the modern ones are varied and have often been discarded by later researches. Until a few years ago, a balance thereon would have been quite discouraging: once the mythical or groundless explanations had been detracted, and the documentary gap marking the Akkad period in many fields had been considered, we could get the impression that the relevance and centrality of Akkad were rather a postulate than a documented fact. Only recently a balanced evaluation of data and perspectives became possible. This is in fact the purpose of our conference.

We have to start from the explanations provided by the ancient scribes themselves — at least in order to lay them aside. Or better: in order to ascribe to them all the value they deserve in the frame of ancient historiography, and all the extraneity to our own historiography. The ancient scribes valued the Akkad kings as prototypes, as models for proper (Sargon) or improper (Naram-Sin) behavior, and as authors of unsurpassed achievements, to be challenged by every king eager for perennial fame. The "mythical" nature of such an explanation is evident to the point that it became soon obvious it deserved to be considered as a subject for study in its turn, rather than a reasonable historical interpretation. Yet a problem was left aside: how and why was the Akkad dynasty entrusted with such a role in later Mesopotamian culture.
Modern scholars followed other avenues. When the history of 3rd millennium was firstly reconstructed on the base of some documentary evidence, namely at the beginning of our century, the historical studies were dominated by a positivistic approach (going back to A. Comte’s sociology) considering race and milieu as the main factors for historical development. In such a frame, the importance of Akkad was obviously that of being the first Semitic dynasty, following the Sumerian ones. The rise of Sargon was the result of a migration, the first arrival of the Semites in Mesopotamia, their first well-datable wave from the “original home” in the Arabian desert toward the agricultural lands of the alluvium.

Today, such an explanation and framing arouse a feeling of bother. The documentary base is missing, while the burden of pre-conceived historiographical theories is very heavy — and those theories, explaining the cultural features on an ethnic base and the cultural change on a migratory base, are no longer our own. We know that Semites were settled in Mesopotamia well before Sargon, since the beginning of the onomastic and linguistic documentation. We know that the personal story of the homo novus Sargon has no relation to the history of an entire people (not new at all). We also know (after a seminal article by Th. Jacobsen) that the ethnic factor had a limited and indirect relevance on the organization of states, on their politics and mutual relationships. Lastly we know that the culture and politics of the Akkad dynasty, notwithstanding their marked originality, were the issue of the continuous and coherent development of lower Mesopotamia during a millennium.

The “environmental” explanation of Akkad’s originality is also linked with the ethnic one (cf. the above-mentioned couple of race and milieu). Since the Semites came from the “desert” (i.e, from an ecological and social milieu based on pastoralism and tribe), the characters of the Akkad period and of the Akkad area (an area with high Semitic concentration) were different from those of the Sumerian south, marked by the collective status of labor and property under temple guidance. Following such an approach, the Semitic/Akkadian features are easily pointed out: in the social field, the Akkadian element would assign a greater role to kinship links; in the economic field it would give a larger space to family property and personal enterprise; in the political field it would produce an enlargement of horizons well beyond the borders of the city-state. Sargon’s rise to power would have provided all these trends with heavier strength and success and formal acceptance.

Provided that we set apart some crude schematisms and some assumptions which are often implicit in these positions (such as an anachronistic idealization of “freedom”), we have to acknowledge that some features of this second paradigm are still present as factors in the current explanations. Two qualifications are necessary, however, and not minor ones. The first one is that we are dealing with old differences
between north and south, and not with specific innovations of the Akkad dynasty, which had in case just increased the value of local trends. The second qualification is that such ethnical and ecological pre-conditionings cannot substitute the specific conditions and cultural developments which took place within the space and time coordinates of 3rd millennium Mesopotamia. The forms of family property of the agricultural (and irrigated) land cannot go back to a pastoral environment; and the idea of a "universal empire" cannot go back to the political (or better pre-political) structure of the tribe. Both cannot be imagined before and outside the time and place of their historical development. The different relationships between mode of production, society and environment, which characterize the north vs. the south, can simply and better go back to the actual ecological diversities of valley vs. delta, rather than to those of the presumed and elusive "original homes" of the Semites and the Sumerians.

Later on, in the middle of our century, the development of the political institutions (especially the origin and development of the state) in Mesopotamia was studied from a formal point of view, without reference to its ethnic base, and in the frame of unilineal evolutionary patterns (from simple to complex, from small to great, etc.). The Akkad dynasty was then considered as the first realization of an "empire", the issue of a more or less continuous evolution which led (through progressive enlargements) from village to chiefdom, from chiefdom to city-state, from city-state to regional state, and finally to empire. It is not my intention to lessen the relevance of the Akkad dynasty in the institutional development of early Mesopotamia, if I put forward two criticisms, the former factual and the latter theoretical in nature.

The factual criticism is that empires existed even before Akkad: or more properly that the term and concept of "empire" has been recently applied (on not worse grounds than in the case of Akkad) to other older cases, from the Uruk of the Late-Uruk period to the Ebla of the royal archives, to the very state formations of the Sumerian south in the period called in fact "proto-imperial". In no case is the Akkad empire an absolute novelty, it is rather a point in a process which already had its precedents, and will have its further developments. Obviously, the theoretical formulation of an evolutionary pattern brings about some degree of rigidity, while its application to the historical reality always causes the surprise of entanglements and irregularities.

But here the theoretical criticism finds its place: namely, that the very term "empire" is too often employed in a simplistic manner, without clarifying its specific meaning, as if it designated something obvious, unequivocal and almost physical in nature. On the contrary, the concept has quite different applications through time and space, its typology is varied and complex, and its relationship to the technological and economic
conditions of the time cannot be taken as granted nor as irrelevant. The formula “Akkad, the first empire” is therefore subject to criticism not only as for the adjective “first” but especially as for the noun “empire”.

A more recent (and mostly implicit) proposal is to shift the stress from political structure to political ideology. The originality of Akkad would consist in a “heroic” and warring kingship, quite different from the Sumerian idea of the ensi who administered in the god’s name the large farm that was the city-state. The problem of the king’s divinization, firstly introduced by Naram-Sin, is here pertinent, in its obvious contrast to (if not complete break with) the traditional pantheon. The problem of imperial art is also pertinent here, with its celebrative apparatus set up to substantiate and impose the new type of kingship. This view of Akkadian originality is somehow related to the ancient one, since the celebrative monuments succeeded in prompting (directly or indirectly) Sargon’s and Naram-Sin’s models. Our ideological interest has the advantage of connecting political structure and imperial art, cultic activity and historical traditions, war and religion.

Personally, I would like to push the “ideological” approach a step further, concentrating my attention on the “propaganda” problem. This means to put together royal ideology, celebrative apparatus, and historical traditions. It is therefore a view which involves all the artistic and literary expressions linked to the Akkad dynasty. The formula “the first political propaganda” contains all the faults of the previous labels: “first” sounds mythical, and “propaganda” sounds wickedly ideologized (we could say “the first celebrative apparatus”, but this is not strong enough). Yet also this formula should be completely exploited — before condemning it as coarse and totalizing, just as the previous formulae.

A last observation is relevant regarding the changing trends in our approach to Akkad. It is worth noticing that in the past Akkad was mainly considered the starting point of a process, while today we consider it mainly as a culminating point. The conceptual shift is the outcome of an increased and recently acquired knowledge on Akkad’s forerunners, i.e. on the developments taking place in Mesopotamia and the surrounding areas during the Early Dynastic period. This is not a minor shift, since it helps to rule out the misunderstandings (“mythical” in character) that the first modern scholars inherited from ancient historiography.

Almost a symbol for such a new historical focus is a different evaluation of the characters. Ancient historiography, and also the modern one at its beginning, had no doubts in considering Sargon as the leading character of the dynasty, successful in producing a break with the past and in introducing institutional innovations. Recent historiography has lessened the importance of his role: the idea is gaining favor, that Sargon is still “pre-Sargonic” (only apparently a paradox!), and that the proper Akkadian experience is better represented by the short time lag of
Naram-Sin and Shar-kali-sharri. In this perspective, Naram-Sin with his wide range of enterprises and institutional innovations is no doubt the leading character.

2. Recent acquisitions.

Recently, new data and new approaches have improved our understanding of the Akkad problem. Of course an important contribution derived from the Ebla archives, not so much for the single pieces of information they contain, but more generally for the light they shed on 3rd millennium Syro-Mesopotamian history, along the axis Kish-Mari-Ebla. For the first time, the statements of Sargon and Naram-Sin could be compared with evidences coming from their counterparts. For the first time, a sound documentation became available about what a trade network was at that time, and what an “empire” could have been. For the first time, we can set the Akkad state in the proper frame among its neighbors in space and among its forerunners in time.

From this point of view, the importance of the Ebla texts is only to a limited extent conditioned by the chronological problem, centered as it is on the question whether the Ebla destroyed by Naram-Sin was the same as that of the royal archives discovered in “Palace G”. My personal opinion on this matter (namely, that the two Eblas are in fact the same) is now left rather isolated. Yet I would add an even more “heretical” doubt: that the mentions of Kish in the Ebla archives may refer to a Sargonic entity keeping its commercial and cultural center in old Kish and establishing its military and political center in new Akkad.

The importance of the Ebla texts cannot lessen interest for minor epigraphical finds in the Akkadian periphery, from the Habur triangle to the Hamrin basin. Major contributions recently derived and are still deriving from archaeological activity, which takes place rather in the periphery than in the core of the empire — unfortunately, we dig only where we are allowed to dig, and many areas were inaccessible in the past or are still inaccessible today. While archaeological knowledge in the core of the empire is for the moment forced to a standstill, the one in the peripheries of Upper Mesopotamia, Syria, and south-eastern Anatolia is quickly condensating from sparse slices into a complete picture. I limit myself to the quote of a personal experience: last June I firstly had the possibility of visiting the splendid and freshly-dug Akkadian buildings in Tell Brak, then I had the chance myself of digging a building of the same age in Tell Mozan — a burnt storehouse with dozens and dozens of pots on the floors.

In the meantime, also the textual analyses on the Akkadian economy and administration are leading to a more precise picture. Only in recent
years the Old Akkadian material (too long neglected) has been properly focused. The analysis has provided the first sound information on the Akkadian administrative system, although the available documentary samples are varied and isolated and do not yet allow any generalized picture.

Lastly: royal inscriptions and literary texts. In both sectors, new and very important texts have been recently published; also remarkably improved editions of long-known texts are now available; long-awaited monographs are shortly to be published. I do not have the purpose to slight the importance of the new data, affirming that the most decisive improvements have been those ones recorded in methodology. How to “read” (for the sake of historical reconstruction) a royal inscription or a later literary text, is a paradoxically recent problem. If we come across today the interpretations of historical traditions that were common until a few years ago, we feel that a real “Copernican revolution” took place: it was a revolution that finally took away from the gravitational center the absurd search for the “historical kernel”, and put in its place the search for the author and the environment of the text itself, its purpose, its audience, and the historical knowledge that was really available at that time.

The semiological “treatment” of the texts is by now paralleled by that of the products of Akkadian art — a public and political art, mostly provided with persuasive and celebrative aims. Thanks to the joint contributions of titulary and royal inscriptions, of monuments and glyptics, the Akkadian royal ideology is emerging, on the base of the strictly contemporary evidence — to be eventually compared to its later re-interpretations.

3. The inventory of our ignorance.

But in order to proceed further, we have to establish an inventory of what we still ignore about the Akkad dynasty. First of all, the capital city still remains unidentified (recent proposals pointing to different solutions) and archaeologically unexplored. The case is not unique: suffice it to mention the Mitannian Washukkanni, or even the Babylon of Hammurabi (although well localized!). Therefore we do not have the palace or the archives of Sargon and Naram-Sin, and neither their temples nor their burials. An effective and large-scale improvement of our knowledge about Akkad could only come from digging Akkad. But has there ever been a worse moment to make projects about that?

Since the capital city remains unexplored and we know very few sites that can be labelled as “Akkadian” in a more substantial than merely stratigraphic sense, we are mainly left with large and small works of art
of diverse provenance and uprooted from their context. Other sectors, whose knowledge is more closely dependent on the excavation of well preserved and well datable archaeological contexts, remain like huge "black holes". In my opinion, the most serious case is Akkadian official architecture: we still have to use far-away Brak as a convenient example, lacking better evidence. Which kind of innovations and peculiarities are characteristic of the Akkadian period in the architectural and urbanistic field? We get the impression and perhaps the presumption that they should have been as noteworthy as those ones which clearly mark the official art of the "empire". Nevertheless, such an impression cannot presently be substantiated.

The same holds true for material culture in general. In the present state of knowledge, we have no evidence that the Akkadian period marked a significant stage in the development of domestic architecture or in the ceramic typology or in the techniques of craftsmanship. Is this a matter of fact, or rather an illusion deriving from scarce and inappropriate documentation?

A similar feeling and a similar doubt concern the settlement system itself, as it has been reconstructed from the extensive surveys covering a large part of the Mesopotamian alluvium. The difficulty in pointing out the distinctive "fossils", which should identify the Akkadian period vis-à-vis the preceding one (the end of the Early Dynastic period) and the following one (the elusive Gutian period), results in a mixed picture, necessarily flattened in the sense of continuity.

A first and most obvious explanation is that the documentary problems preclude for the time being any possibility to identify settlement features that could be the result of the political activity of the Akkad kings; but in case we had the adequate data such features would certainly become evident. Yet another explanation is also possible: namely, that the continuity was real, and the advent and the vanishing of Akkad did not bring about any change in the settlement pattern in the core area, while the periphery has different problems.

The question is paramount as for its practical and theoretical relevance. During all the long period from Late Ubaid to Early Dynastic III, when adequate written sources were lacking, the development of Mesopotamian settlement system has provided the guideline for the reconstruction of the political history. When finally we get from the texts the sure knowledge of such an enormous institutional entity as the empire of Akkad, we find that it did not produce (at least in an archaeologically relevant way) either large displacements of population, nor an evident change in the hierarchical relationships among settlements, nor any development from a regional dimension to the imperial one. If we didn't know from the texts that the Akkad empire really existed, we would not
be able to postulate it from the changes in settlement pattern, nor (to go back to the preceding point) from the evolution of material culture.

Either the methods of proto-historical reconstruction (based on the spatial analysis of settlements and artifacts) prove to be fallacious as soon as we have an outer and comparable set of data — and in this case they should be abandoned as instruments for historical reconstruction; or else such methods are in fact adequate, and provide a true picture of reality, obviously at a level accessible to them. And in this case they tell us that the empire of Akkad was some kind of ideological super-structure, with no special impact on the human landscape as for its material configuration (apart from a few official monuments, escaping the statistical evaluation).

A burdensome uncertainty is in fact still attached to the structure and the very nature of the empire — a term to be filled with a specific historical meaning. We are mostly prone to imagine the Akkad empire on the guidelines of the following ones (like the Ur III empire). Why not imagine it on the guidelines of the preceding trade networks, from Uruk to Ebla? Certainly the process of political and administrative unification made some progress, but it concerned only the inner country, and was probably carried on in a non-homogeneous and discontinuous way. Also, the use of force against the outer countries increased in comparison to the previous networks. Yet it is not really clear to what extent the new political options gave birth to a compact and functional entity.

A full set of oppositional terms have been often used (and can still be used) to help us delimit the range of possible solutions and the extent of our ignorance. I will only make a quick mention of them here; but some of our papers will deal with them more extensively. The opposition “Semitic vs. Sumerian” has been once overestimated, to be eventually censored: now we can take it into due account on more objective grounds. The opposition “North vs. South” is especially relevant when considering a political unification which came from the north. The opposition “city vs. empire”, or local autonomies vs. central power, still keeps all its value. The opposition “centre vs. periphery” is also pertinent, and is characterized by a notable disproportion between the small inner country and the enormous extent of its offshoots. And here the typological opposition becomes also relevant: the one between the “territorial” empire and the “network” empire. Lastly the opposition “palace vs. temple” brings about also specific problems like the divinization of the king, the relationship Akkad-Nippur, the Sargonic religious policy in the south.

A last problem remains to be mentioned: Akkad’s politics of aggression against the periphery produced destabilization, but at the end of the dynasty destabilization poured from the periphery over the inner country, in the form of the infamous Gutians. Perhaps a deliberate
attempt to eliminate the rival networks, culminating in the destruction of Ebla in the West and in the raging attacks against Elam and the Gulf countries in the East, started a chain reaction that was eventually impossible to control. This looks like a modern version of the old pattern *hybris/nemesis*, that ancient historiography applied in fact to Naram-Sin. But perhaps the generalized turbulence, resulting in the collapse of the Early Bronze cultures all over the Near East, was something much larger in extent and remote in origin, and the aggressive politics of the Akkadian kings was just a surface manifestation thereof, or even a desperate attempt to survive.

4. The Akkad dynasty in a “world history” perspective.

I have now to summarize the purposes of our conference as for generalized interest and accessibility, for the use of historians that are not specifically assyriologists. Our basic purpose is to focus three problems: (1) the origin and functioning of the first empire; (2) the organization of the first apparatus of political propaganda and celebration; (3) the establishment and development of the first historiographic tradition.

These three “firsts” have obviously to be understood in the light of two qualifications. Firstly, we have always to keep in mind the mythical aspects of the term “first”, and the presence of previous experiences as well as of avenues of approach. Secondly, we are dealing with cases that can be the object of study in the present state of knowledges. The possibility is to be kept in mind that future discoveries may push some of these “firsts” back in time. Also other historical cases, contemporary or even older than Akkad (such as the Egyptian Old Kingdom) are already known, yet are not susceptible of study from our three points of view for lack of a more varied documentation.

The close connection of our three focal points is quite manifest. The establishment of a political structure of “imperial” level, facing the local traditions and city-centered authonomies (both administrative and theological in nature), generated a multifarious celebrative apparatus to complement and sublimate at the same time the use of physical constraint. And the remains of such an apparatus, accessible for a long time to the audience of posterity, generated in their turn the first sizable body of historiographic legends, and in a sense the very beginning of historiography — i.e. the beginning of an evaluation and use of the past events in the perspective of the present needs.

This set of problems is relevant enough in a “world history” perspective, to deserve a generalized attention, well beyond the limited circle of the specialized scholars, and to become a constitutive part in our historical culture, which is still too often limited to its classical
foundations, and too inattentive (apart from occasional and candid excitements) to the contributions coming from the ancient Near East.
PARADIGM AND PROPAGANDA

THE DYNASTY OF AKKADE IN THE 21st CENTURY

Jerrold S. Cooper

Introduction

This paper addresses the literary traditions through which the dynasty of Akkade was known for nearly two millennia in Mesopotamia and neighboring lands. The Roman venue for this discussion reminds us how fundamental have been the legends, epics and histories of Rome, from its origins to its falls, in the moral, intellectual and political unfolding of our own civilization. Indeed, the philologically based historicism that informs the methodology of most of the contributions to this very volume has been shown to have its origin in the 16th century humanist study of Roman law¹. Events and personalities of the past retain their exemplary function into our own day; for us, on the verge of the 21st century A.D., history is no less a teacher and mirror than it was for Babylonians in the 21st century B.C.².

The last decade has seen much work on the traditions of Akkade and its kings in later Mesopotamia³. Akkade was the paradigm⁴ or better,

the prototype, for future dynasties in 1) its scope and power, through the unification of Babylonia and control of the periphery; 2) its elaboration of an imperial bureaucracy; and 3) its new conception of royalty that included, among other things, the deification of the king. Elements of this paradigm can be found in ancient literature, historiography, "scientific" texts, cult and the conceptualization of kingship; in typical Mesopotamian fashion, the paradigm is never presented in its entirety, but must be reconstructed from scattered elements, and when we try to pull it together, it is both incomplete and inconsistent.

For paradigmatic purposes, later tradition exemplifies the Akkade dynasty in the persons of its founder, Sargon, and his grandson, Naramsin, under whom the fortunes of empire reached their zenith. Only in the "Sumerian King List" and divinatory and related texts do we find brief mention of other Old Akkadian rulers. The pioneering work of Güterbock on later traditions of the Akkade dynasty interpreted Sargon and Naramsin in dualistic terms: Sargon was presented by the ancients as the successful founder of the new dynasty, while Naramsin was the "Unheilsherrscher", whose hubristic impetuosity led to the dynasty's demise\(^5\). Recent study has nuanced this interpretation. While the overwhelmingly positive vision of Sargon remains intact, Naramsin is no longer seen as a totally tragic figure, but rather as the focus of ambivalent traditions, in which his successes predominate over his failures\(^6\).

The literary texts that take Sargon and Naramsin as their subjects are to be treated in a multivolume work by Joan Goodnik Westenholz, the first volume of which is about to appear\(^7\). The major elements of the Sargon traditions in these texts are his unusual origins and divinely ordained usurpation of kingship, and his adventures fighting in far off lands. The major elements of the Naramsin traditions are his successful suppression of rebellion within Babylonia and without, his foreign conquests, and his hubristic defiance of the gods which, in one text only, leads to the permanent destruction of Akkade. It will no longer do to lump all of these literary texts together into one "genre" just because they take the kings of Akkade as their subjects. The texts exhibit very different formal features\(^8\), and, especially in the case of Naramsin, can take very different views of their subjects. For example, there are two distinct bundles of Naramsin traditions which remain quite separate from

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7. I would like to thank Dr. Westenholz for placing the proofs of her first volume and the manuscript of the second at my disposal.

8. Galter, in *RAI* 32.
one another. The tradition of the hubristic Naramsin, disregarding divine omens and chastened by barbarian hordes, has no demonstrable historical basis, and, as it is realized in the “Curse of Akkade”, is contrary to the facts as we know them. But evidence published in the last few years has proved that literary texts relating the great rebellion against Naramsin and his foreign conquests are historically based, and, recent skepticism toward these compositions has been proved too extreme.

Babylonia as a Textual Community

Babylonia represents itself to us as a textual community, a nation defined by and through a corpus of shared texts which provided it with moral and spiritual unity when political unity was lacking (as in the Early Dynastic period), and provided the ideological basis for political unity when that unity was actually present. The important components of this textual corpus change over time, and our notion of what was important also changes over time, as new discoveries force us to reassess —often radically— our ideas about early Mesopotamia. Nevertheless, I will hazard a brief characterization of what I consider the texts through which Babylonia defined itself from the beginning of third millennium through the beginning of the second. In the Presargonic periods, lexical texts both formed and expressed the cultural unity of a politically fragmented Babylonia. It was through these texts, and the explication and discussion that they imply, that Babylonia learned not only a uniform system of writing, but developed and learned as well standard systems of classifying language, the material world, and the divine. Common terminology for every conceivable institution and relationship was spread throughout Babylonia and its periphery, and one of the most challenging tasks of

9. Foster, ARRIM 8 (1990); Kutscher, Brockmon.
10. Cooper, CoA, chapter II.
11. For the concept of “textual community”, see e.g. B. Stock, Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past, Baltimore 1990, chapters 1 and 7.
12. See the very important discussion of the relationship between texts, ideology and political control by P. Michalowski, Charisma and Control: Continuity and Change in Early Mesopotamian Bureaucratic Systems, in SAOC 46, pp. 55-68.
13. For the Presargonic lexical tradition, see H. Nissen, Bemerkungen zur Literatur Vorderasiens im 3. Jahrtausend, in LdE, pp. 99-108; A. Cavigneaux, RIA s.v. Lexikalische Listen; M. Civil, The Early History of HAR-ra: The Ebla Link, in EDA, pp. 130-158. There were no doubt moments of political unity over large parts of Babylonia before the Old Akkadian period (J.S. Cooper, RHAI, chapter I), but little more than that can be said. Little, too, can be said just now about the importance of the UD.GAL.NUN texts or the Temple Hymns in the Early Dynastic scribal curriculum, but the latter could certainly have played an important role in expressing and propagating notions of cultural unity.
coming decades will be to define the regional and local variety that is obscured by the unity of this lexical tradition.

Mesopotamia under the Dynasty of Akkade defined itself through a program of inscribed monuments in bas-relief and in the round, whose pitiful surviving remnants are supplemented by a respectable corpus of Old Babylonian copies of the inscriptions and even descriptions of the monuments themselves. The Third Dynasty of Ur, at the end of the third millennium, continued the monumental program of the Sargonic rulers, but at this time there also began to emerge an extensive body of literary texts that expressed coherent theories of political legitimacy. This body of texts was enlarged in the Early Old Babylonian period, and the remainder of this paper will be devoted to the paradigm presented in this corpus for the acquisition and alienation of political legitimacy, using as its example first the rulers of Akkade, and then the rulers of Ur.

The Dynasty of Akkade and the Third Dynasty of Ur

If Akkade from Sargon to Naramsin represented a qualitatively new form of territorial state in Babylonia, it is only natural that it should serve as a model for subsequently emerging states that parlayed integrated centralized control over Babylonia into a successful imperial organization. The bureaucracy and imperial organization of the Third Dynasty of Ur emulated that of Akkade in both form and substance, albeit with considerable innovation. Through titles, epithets and eventually, self-dei-


15. FAOS 7, part I.IV.

16. For Ur III literary texts, see P. Michalowski, *On Some Early Sumerian Magical Texts*, Or 54 (1985), pp. 216-217, with note 3. The tiny number of these texts so far recovered makes it impossible to determine whether most of the known Sumerian literary texts were composed in the Ur III or in the Early Old Babylonian period, except, of course, texts which mention Old Babylonian rulers, or treat known events (like the Ur lamentations) which provide *termini post quem*. Similarly it is reasonable to assume that the hymns for the kings of Ur known from Old Babylonian manuscripts were composed in the Ur III period. A possible Ur III ms. of an Urnammu hymn has been published (M. Civil, *Some Texts Mentioning Urnammu*, Or 54 [1985], pp. 33-37), and Jacob Klein has provided sound philological grounds for such an assumption about the Shulgi hymns; see his *Three Šulgi Hymns*, Ramat-Gan 1981, pp. 64-70 and 131-134, and *Šulgi and ISmedagan: Originality and Dependence in Sumerian Royal Hymnology*, in J. Klein - A. Skaist (eds.), *Bar-Ilan Studies in Assyriology*, Ramat-Gan 1990, pp. 96-100 and cf. note 171. In no way I want to imply that the main concern of Sumerian literary texts is political legitimacy. Rather, if one had to identify the main concern of the Old Babylonian Sumerian literary corpus, it would be theological.
fication, the image of kingship projected by the rulers of Ur imitated that of the Old Akkadian kings. If the kings of Ur never directly invoked the Sargonic rulers\textsuperscript{17}, it was not because of any antagonism toward them, nor was it the product of a Sumerian-Akkadian rivalry that is the invention of modern historians\textsuperscript{18}, as the veneration of deified kings of Akkade during the Ur III period attests. Rather, the kings of Ur chose to harken back to the more remote past of the legendary rulers of Uruk, Lugalbanda and Gilgamesh\textsuperscript{19}. This had a double advantage. On the one hand, the ties to an early dynasty of Uruk could be conceptualized as kinship ties, because of the Uruk origins of the Third Dynasty of Ur\textsuperscript{20}, and kinship was an important, if not determining, source of political legitimacy. On the other hand, by taking as a model a remote legendary dynasty whose end was not remembered, the kings of Ur avoided the anxiety of historical recursion (to paraphrase Lee Patterson's study of the uses of King Arthur as a model\textsuperscript{21}) that mention of the Akkade dynasty, whose ruined capital was surely both visible and visited\textsuperscript{22}, would evoke.

The dynasty of Akkade looms as a deferred presence throughout the textual production of the Ur III court, whether in royal inscriptions or hymns, or in the organizational structures that developed on Old Akkadian models. The silence of these sources on the subject of Akkade, once noticed, is unnerving. For Akkade was most certainly the precedent for unity in a land where political diversity had been the norm, yet the Akkadian prototype held the promise of an unhappy end. To where, then, is the subject, or better, question of Akkade deferred? To a different corpus of texts, produced, no doubt, by members of the same elite that produced the self-glorifying inscriptions and panegyrics for the kings of Ur\textsuperscript{23}.


\textsuperscript{18} See CoA, pp. 9-10; Jacobsen, \textit{AfO} \textit{26} (1978-79), note 36; and now especially the important study of A. Becker, \textit{Neusumerische Renaissance?}, BaM \textit{16} (1985), pp. 229-316.


\textsuperscript{21} L. Patterson, \textit{Negotiating the Past: The Historical Understanding of Mediaeval Literature}, Madison 1987, p. 222.

\textsuperscript{22} G.J.P. McEwan, \textit{Agade after the Gutian Destruction: The Afterlife of a Mesopotamian City}, in \textit{RAI 28}, pp. 8-15.

\textsuperscript{23} Cooper, in \textit{Artistic Environments}, p. 40.
We know almost nothing about how and where royal hymns and inscriptions were composed in the Ur III period, and we know just as little about the scribal schools or academies where we think most of the Sumerian literature preserved on thousands of Old Babylonian tablets from ca. 1800 B.C. was composed. But if Shulgi’s proclaimed patronage of the scribal academies is taken at all seriously, and central government control of temple institutions is taken into account, then royal oversight was ever present in the only possible loci of text production outside the court. We must, therefore consider both court propaganda and other literary texts as expressions of compatible, not conflicting, ideologies, that treat political legitimacy differently in different contexts. It is in literature that was not a direct response to royal commission that we find the rise and fall of Akkade described and explained.

The Curse of Akkade

The 281-line long poem “Curse of Akkade” is attested in manuscripts as early as the Third Dynasty of Ur and its composition can confidently be dated to that period. It begins by describing how the chief of the Babylonian pantheon, Enlil, had taken sovereignty from the cities of Kish and Uruk, and given it to Sargon. The goddess Inana, Sargon’s patron, then establishes her domain in Akkade, the city of Sargon, bringing it prosperity, abundance and joy. But suddenly things go wrong: Disapproval from Ekur, the temple of Enlil in Nippur, leads Inana to abandon Akkade, and other deities, in turn, withdraw from it the tokens of sovereignty. In the fashion all too typical of Sumerian literature, the transition from divine favor to disfavor is so rapid and elliptical that its cause remains obscure. I maintain that Inana wanted to build a new temple in Akkade (l. 56), for which permission from Enlil would be necessary. The negative

27. Cooper, CoA. See the reviews of Attinger (RA 74), Römer (Or 55) and Alster (WO 16); also Wilcke, in Kolloquien, note 19; D.O. Edzard, Das Wort im Ekur oder die Peripetie in ‘Fluch über Akkade’, in St. Sjöberg, pp. 99-105; Michalowski, in SAOC 46, p. 64 and Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur, Winona Lake 1989, pp. 8-9; A. Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 24-29; Glassner, CdA, chapter III.
response from Enlil (l. 57) meant that Enlil had decided to shift sovereignty away from Akkade, and so, as more clearly the case in other Sumerian literary texts, the city-god, Inana, must abandon her city, followed by the withdrawal of support by other deities as well.

The imminent end of Akkade’s rule is confirmed to Naramsin in an ominous dream, which he understands, but cannot accept. He puts on mourning garb, gives away his royal insignia, and sinks into a seven-year depression. Then he sought divine guidance again: Twice he took omens for building the temple of Inana, and twice the omens were negative. In his frustration, Naramsin attempted to alter Enlil’s will by force. Musterling his troops, he attacked and pillaged Ekur, with disastrous results for Akkade. In the words of the poet, “As soon as he (Naramsin) removed the goods from the city (Nippur), political legitimacy was removed from Akkade”.

In revenge for this desecration, Enlil brought the barbarian Guti out of the mountains to scourge Babylonia. After terrible destruction, the survivors gathered to perform a lamentation ceremony, and in response, the great gods sought to pacify Enlil by cursing the city Akkade, the implication being that only Naramsin’s own city should suffer for this sacrilege, not the entire land. Enlil’s response is not given in the text, but the lifting of his anger against Babylonia would have been apparent to any reader/listener of the prosperous Ur III period.

The Sumerian Sargon Legend

If the “Curse of Akkade” describes only briefly Akkade’s rise under Sargon, and dwells rather on its fall under Naramsin, another composition, the “Sumerian Sargon Legend” concerns itself with the circumstances of

29. CoA, chapter III. Edzard, in St. Sjöberg, doesn’t connect line 56 to what follows, and rather sees the object of Enlil’s disapproval to be the hubris of Naramsin, as evidenced in his self-deification (referred to the Bassetki statue). He finds weak echoes of this hubris in the earlier description in “Curse of Akkade” of Akkade’s splendors. For Th. Jacobsen, The Harps That Once... Sumerian Poetry in Translation, New Haven 1987, p. 359, Enlil’s negative response in l. 57 refers to Naramsin’s desire to build Ekur, as do the dreams and divination that follow.
30. Edzard and Jacobsen understand the “temple” that is the subject of the extispicy to be Enlil’s temple Ekur (see the preceding note), but there is no evidence that Naramsin, in this text, is considering rebuilding Ekur.
31. Attinger’s reinterpretation, in his RA 74 review, of lines 94 ff., and especially l. 98, creates as many difficulties as it solves. If, with Attinger 114, it is “theologically unlikely” that Naramsin would try to change Enlil’s oracle by force of arms, how likely is it that Naramsin would attack Ekur as “an act of vengeance?”
32. For dūm-ma used in this sense, see Michalowski, JAOS 103 (1983), p. 244.
Sargon's usurpation of sovereignty under Inana's tutelage. Because of this text's affinities with the "Curse of Akkade", it may well also date to the Ur III period. It opens with a description of king Urzababa on the throne of a prosperous Kish—the traditional north Babylonian seat of kingship—but immediately announces that the gods An and Enlil have ordered that sovereignty be shifted away from that city. Sargon is introduced in a way suggesting unusual and non-royal origins, but the text is broken and then breaks off completely.

When the text resumes, Sargon is in the service of Urzababa, an episode in his curriculum vitae well known in later tradition. Sargon dreams that he, with Inana's support, will replace Urzababa. When Sargon reports the dream to Urzababa, the latter, much like Naramsin in the "Curse of Akkade", understands well the meaning of the dream, but refuses to accept it. He proceeds to set a trap for Sargon, which Sargon, with Inana's help, avoids. Determined to get rid of Sargon, Urzababa next sends him to Lugalzagesi, with what has correctly been seen to be a Uriah-letter, or Bellerophon-letter, depending on what tradition one takes as a point of reference:

"In those days, writing on tablets certainly existed, but covering tablets with envelopes did not exist. King Urzababa wrote for Sargon, chosen of the gods, a tablet which would cause his own death, and dispatched it to Lugalzagesi in Uruk."

The text breaks off again, and picks up in the middle of negotiations involving Lugalzagesi, his wife, a messenger and Sargon. The text breaks off once more, for good, but must have told how Sargon defeated Lugalzagesi and united Babylonia under his rule.


34. Alternatively, it could be a parodistic pendant to the "Curse of Akkade" composed only in the Old Babylonian period. There are only two extant manuscripts (or three, if the three-line bilingual Old Babylonian school exercise VAS 24, 74 is part of it) of the "Sargon Legend", compared to more than one hundred for the "Curse of Akkade", which may suggest that the former was a later composition that was not a regular part of the scribal curriculum.

35. See the discussion of Afanasjeva, Alster and Vanstiphout cited in note 33, above.

36. Certainly Alster cannot be right when he asserts (ZA 77 [1987], p. 173) that this passage means that envelopes hadn't been used up to that moment, and that Urzababa invented the envelope so that Sargon couldn't read the letter. Rather, it must mean that because envelopes weren't in use, Sargon was able to read the letter and thus escape, once more, Urzababa's trap.
The Sumerian King List

The "Sumerian King List" presents a dynastic history of Babylonia from, in some manuscript traditions, antediluvian times through the first dynasty of Isin. Wilcke has recently argued that it was first compiled under Shulgi of Ur, and I am inclined to agree, if not for entirely the same reasons. As is well known, the list is governed by the principle that there was only one legitimate locus of kingship at any one time. Eventually, in wording that can vary from recension to recension, a ruling city was "defeated", "destroyed", or "its dynastic rule was alienated", and kingship passed to another city. Significantly, unlike the poetic texts just discussed, or even actual inscriptions of Babylonian rulers, the "Sumerian King List" never ascribes the transfer of sovereignty to divine intervention.

The list places the dynasty of Akkade immediately after the Kish dynasty that includes Urzababa, and a dynasty of Uruk consisting only of Lugalzagesi, thus conforming roughly to the pattern of the poetic texts just discussed. Also, in one of its occasional anectodal digressions, the "Sumerian King List" refers to Sargon's unusual parentage and service to Urzababa, as did the "Sumerian Sargon Legend". But in the king list, the dynasty of Akkade does not end with Naramsin as it does in the "Curse of Akkade"; here Naramsin is followed, as we know he actually was, by his son Sharkalisharri, and several other kings. The "Sumerian King List", unlike the two previous texts, is not serving up the dynasty of Akkade as a singular exemplar, but rather deploying it in the broader context of the history of political legitimacy. The spare list-format of the bureaucracy and the absence of recourse to divine intervention create an appearance of authority no less effective than the florid poetry and supernatural cast of the "Curse of Akkade" and "Sumerian Sargon Legend".

In addition to providing justification for Ur's hegemony over Babylonia, a land where political diversity had traditionally prevailed over

37. A "dynasty" in early Mesopotamia was not defined by kinship, but by geography. Sumerian b a l a refers to an unbroken succession of rulers exercising sovereignty from one city, who may or may not represent a single kinship line. Cf. M. Ellis, Observations on Mesopotamian Oracles and Prophetic Texts: Literary and Historiographic Considerations, JCS 41 (1989), p. 175.


40. See, in this regard, the discussion of how the list format can be effectively used to express ideology in M. Waldman, The Otherwise Unnoteworthy Year 711: A Reply to Hayden White, in W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), On Narrative, Chicago 1981, pp. 240-248.
unity, the “Sumerian King List” legitimated the conquests and aspirations of the kings of Ur beyond Babylonia’s borders. Wilcke has recently pointed out that the three extra-Babylonian dynasties in the king list—Awan, Hamazi and Mari—mark the limits of the Ur III state. If they were within the ambit of the One Kingship, the “Sumerian King List” implies, then the current locus of that sovereignty, Ur, can legitimately claim their allegiance.

The Akkade Dynasty and the Political Legitimacy of the Third Dynasty of Ur

One might be tempted to make a too facile analogy between the career of Sargon, founder of the Akkade dynasty, as set out by the texts just described, and the career of Urnammu, founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, as described in his own inscriptions. Both were in the service of a king of another city before usurping power. Both are said to have assumed kingship when An and Enlil transferred sovereignty away from their overlords. However, there is an important, if subtle difference. Urnammu was very possibly a member of the royal family at Uruk, whereas all traditions ascribe obscure origins to Sargon. And whereas Ur, the city of Urnammu, is a traditional Babylonian seat of kingship, Akkade, like Sargon himself, emerged from obscurity. The insistent repetition by the “Sumerian King List” of the pattern Kish-Uruk-Ur underscores at once both the legitimacy of Ur and the anomaly of Akkade. The distinct alterity of both Sargon and his city safely distance the fate of the new empire (Ur) from that of the old (Akkade).

When Shulgi, the second and the greatest king of Ur, became a living god, it can only have been in conscious imitation of the greatest

41. Wilcke, in St. Sjöberg.
42. UET 1, 30 is a stele dedicated on behalf of Utuhegal of Ur by Urnammu, when the latter was šagina (“military governor”) of Ur under the former. The title occurs again in a fragmentary context in l. 15 of the Codex Urnammu (J. Van Dijk, Or 50 [1981], p. 93 note 20a); since Urnammu never uses the title while king, lines 1-30 of the Codex cannot be a cartouche, as suggested by Van Dijk (loc. cit.), but must be an introduction referring to Urnammu’s service to Lugalzagesi. If we read l. 24 of the Codex as [du]-rammu-[x], rather than Kramer's -ra (Or 52 [1983], p. 454), then what we have is Urnammu recounting how, when he was Utuhegal’s governor in Ur, he established generous monthly offerings (25-30) for Nanna. Then, when An and Enil awarded Nanna sovereignty for his city Ur, Nanna rewarded Urnammu for his earlier generosity by granting him kingship (31 ff.).
43. But not necessarily, with Wilcke in RAI 19, p. 180 and note 67, Utuhegal’s brother. The last preserved sign discussed there could as easily be the beginning of urtti-ka, in a phrase relating some benefit he brought to Ur, before going on to state his relationship to, or position under, Utuhegal. See the further discussion by Wilcke in St. Sjöberg, pp. 562-566, and the mention there of the late tradition that Urnammu was Utuhegal’s son-in-law.
44. Wilcke in St. Sjöberg, p. 559.
king of Akkade, Naramsin, the first Mesopotamian ruler to assume the mantle of divinity. The image of Naramsin projected by the "Curse of Akkade" can be understood as a palliative for the anxiety of recursion. It was not the hubris of Naramsin's self-deification that caused Akkade's awful fate, but rather his hubris in not submitting to the will of god, to the point of attacking the holiest sanctuary in Babylonia. The Naramsin of the "Curse of Akkade" stands in stark contrast to the kings of Ur, whose excessive piety was daily proclaimed in inscriptions, hymns and the voluminously documented diversion of enormous wealth to cultic ends.

The ideologues of the Third Dynasty of Ur were no fools. Kingship may be divinely assigned, but the assignment is temporary. The unalterable word of An and Enlil cannot be changed by man, but its alteration by the gods themselves was thought to be the primary engine of historical change. The same scribes who ruefully complain in "Urnammu's Death" that "An changed his holy word ... Enlil deceitfully altered the fate that he had decreed" can, a few years later, have Inana say to Shulgi, at the end of a long blessing: "An has done this for you, may he never change it! May Enlil, who decrees the fates, never alter it!". But when off duty and taking a longer view, the scribal ideologues saw the balance of the sovereignty unavoidably passed from city to city at the pleasure of the great gods. No Sumerian text that is not an immediate product of the court —royal inscription or royal hymn— holds out any hope that sovereignty is forever. However, at least for the traditional seats of kingship, Ur, Uruk, and Kish, sovereignty returns in due course, as the "Sumerian King List" so insistently articulates.

If loss of sovereignty is unavoidable, the particular fate of Akkade was to be avoided. In the "Curse of Akkade", no reason is given for Akkade's initial loss of divine support, just as in that same composition, and in the "Sumerian Sargon Legend", no reason is given for loss of sovereignty by Uruk and Kish. But Akkade's unusual end, its curse, is explained by Naramsin's impiety. To avoid following his example is to avoid his end. A poorly preserved composition relating king Amarsin's patient waiting for a period of eight years for favorable omens to build a temple for Enki, a text whose wording echoes the omen passages in

47. See Ellis, JCS 41 (1989), pp. 170 ff. and p. 186, where the Mesopotamian scholar is characterized "both as a producing ... functionary and ... as a man of learning" producing theoretical works. J.A. Brinkman, The Babylonian Chronicle Revisited, in T. Abusch et al. (eds.), Lingering over Words: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Literature in Honor of William L. Moran, Cambridge Mass. 1990, p. 75, discusses the difference between court sponsored and privately produced historiography in the first millennium.
the "Curse of Akkade"\textsuperscript{48}, may have been written as a deliberate counterexample during the years of Ur's decline.

The Early Old Babylonian Period

In the Early Old Babylonian Period, Akkade remained the imperial prototype, but the more recent example of the Third Dynasty of Ur provided an alternative paradigm both for hegemony in Babylonia and beyond, and for the alienation of political power. The model of Ibbisin, the last ruler of the Third Dynasty of Ur, as articulated in the literary letters we know as the "Royal Correspondance of Ur"\textsuperscript{49}, is one of disappointed acceptance of divine will, tempered with hope that divine favor will be restored. This hope is vindicated in the Ur lamentations, in which the destruction which brought the end of the Third Dynasty of Ur is followed ultimately by redemption under the dynasty of Isin, which styled itself as the legitimate successor state to Ur. But while the lamentations served to legitimate Isin, the "Lamentation over Sumer and Ur" contains the more explicit statement of the inexorable principle of dynastic change: "True, Ur was given sovereignty, but it was not given an eternal reign ... Has anyone ever seen a royal dynasty that remained (forever) paramount? Its dynastic sovereignty has been long lasting, but is exhausted\textsuperscript{50}.

The "Curse of Akkade", which in the Ur III period was the sole model of national collapse, becomes, in the Early Old Babylonian period, just one in a series of texts treating the topic, a series from which emerges the contrast of Akkade = permanent destruction, Ur = eventual renewal. The hubristic Naramsin compares unfavorably with the submissive Ibbisin (although we suspect that Naramsin had more fun!). The exemplar of royal humility that develops out of this contrast has the subversive effect so aptly characterized by Michalowski\textsuperscript{51}:

"It functions as a form of antidote against the bombastic claims of the rulers and provides us with a glimpse of another function of the school ... The traditions fostered through the schools provided an ideological continuity for a bureaucratic class, independent, to a degree, from the vagaries of power at the top".

The "Sumerian King List", too, was co-opted by the rulers of Isin, and it is with their names that all copies of the list end. From being a

\textsuperscript{48} Cooper, CoA, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{49} P. Michalowski, RIA s.v. Königsbriefen.
\textsuperscript{50} Michalowski, Lamentation, pp. 58, 368, 370-371.
\textsuperscript{51} Michalowski, in SAOC 46, p. 64.
document that legitimated the notion of hegemony as practiced by the
Third Dynasty of Ur, it became the charter that legitimized Isin as the
successor to Ur. But whether it was so used as substitute for a proper
Amorite genealogy\textsuperscript{52}, or rather the opposite, is difficult to say. The dynasty
of the next great Babylonian hegemonist after Shulgi, Hammurabi of
Babylon, had as its charter a document that combined the old third
millennium concept of geographically based sovereignty, with the Amorite
notion of genealogically established legitimacy\textsuperscript{53}. Can it be a coincidence
that the “Curse of Akkade”, describing Akkade’s decline and fall under
Naramsin, was the most popular composition in the scribal curriculum
in the reign of Hammurabi’s son Samsuiluna, at the very moment when
the widespread conquests of Hammurabi were slipping from Babylon’s
control\textsuperscript{54}?

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52. Michalowski, JAOS 103 (1983).
54. Note Glassner, CdA, pp. 5-9, who sees Samsuiluna’s inscription celebrating his defeat
of a revolt as imitating Naramsin’s “Great Rebellion” inscription.
From the third millennium perspective, management may be divided into four spheres: military, political, economic, and ideological. The Sargonic kings enjoyed considerable success with each of these; the reasons for and degree of this success are among the themes of the present conference. Of the four, military success was best remembered in later Akkadian literary and historical tradition. The administrative apparatus, representing political and economic management, is for us the most richly documented sphere, with additional information on both military and political matters provided by Sargonic commemorative inscriptions. In the realm of ideology, religious policy is best known from commemorative inscriptions and a group of Sumerian literary texts believed to date to the Sargonic period. Ideology can also be evaluated through the remains of official works of art, which exhibit centralized control of subject matter, medium and execution, and style.

Coherent presentation of this wealth of evidence entails documented imagination, as only vague outlines of the history and civilization of the Sargonic period have been achieved. On the positive side, much has been gained since Liverani’s study of Sargon and Diakonoff’s pioneering analysis of Sargonic state and society. No one closely engaged in study of this still quasi-legendary period of Mesopotamian history will want to ignore the challenges presented by this conference. The present contribution does not pretend to offer much that is new; rather, it offers a rapid survey of results of research over the past two decades in answer to the question, what is known of how the Sargonic kings managed their domains?

Management presupposes the possibility of coercion. The Sargonic kings themselves state that the basis for their authority was in the first instance military conquest sanctioned by the Mesopotamian gods. The Sargonic kings portrayed themselves in art and commemorative inscriptions as commanders-in-chief of their armies. The chief military officer after the king was the general, or šagina, presumably a professional soldier under whose command was the standing army (if such there was) and the contingents supplied by cities and lands under the king's control. When a general and his large personal staff passed near a city, they were fed and accommodated there by the local ensi, or city ruler. This suggests that supply of troops may have been undertaken in the same manner. The general's staff here included couriers, aides, a physician and diviner, and in one case the son of an ensi from a far-away city. Was he a captive, hostage, or perhaps receiving field experience? In an administrative record a general is assigned more than 190 hectares of arable land, one of the highest figures known for an individual.

Only a few texts may be identified as possibly concerned with the provisioning of troops. The alleged "garrison records" from Sargonic Girsu are more likely to be records of a provincial administrative center than a garrison as the term is usually understood. Some records from Girsu refer to guard duty, sleeping in buildings or at a wall, and assignment of quarters, but there is no reason to believe that these are military personnel rather than workmen; in any case, their number is small, adding up scarcely to a company of men in a few instances.

The next figure in the military hierarchy was the ensi, or city ruler, who was presumably responsible for levying the city militia and for its supply and equipment. The Sargonic king himself levied the troops of

4. MCS 9 233 = USP, pp. 98-99; BIN 8 333.
5. RGTC 1, pp. 70-71 (Ḫaššānum, precise location unknown, but not in Mesopotamia).
6. STTI 158 (L. 5791); see AUIL, p. 19.
7. AUIL, p. 18; for the alleged garrison, Th. Jacobsen, Early Political Development in Mesopotamia, ZA 52 (1957), p. 137 note 103.
8. ITT I, 1065; ITT II, 4507, 5837.
9. ITT II, 4559; ITT V, 6752; CT 50, 101.
10. ITT I, 1100, 1218, 1287, 1436, 1439; ITT II, 2860, 4590, 5695, 5895, 6752; CT 50, 101, 102. For orders that people be given a place to live, see ITT II, 4700. Other relevant texts include CT 50, 86; ITT I, 1265, 1468; ITT II, 4362; MAD 5, 15, 36; RTC 97; ITT II, 3010; ITT V, 9324.
11. ITT II, 4680 (117 men), 5829 (131 men); CT 50, 99, 100 (248 men). In ITT II, 1149 there are 8 ugula and 1 nu-banda for each of two teams of 210 and 211 men, in ITT I, 1379 1 nu-banda for 198 men. 602 men are accounted for in ITT II, 2830. See also note 59.
12. ensis are frequently mentioned in Sargonic royal inscriptions as leaders of city armies, as in ARRIM 8 (1990), p. 30 line 21 (coalition force of 6 šagina, 17 ensis, 78 rabīnu, 2000 or more nu-banda).
the capital, Agade, which may not have had a separate ensi. A search for records of such levies was not rewarding, unless they are among the many lists of names to be found in third millennium archives. Levy would have been by quarter, village, and district, as known from later periods. Certain records look like muster formations, but in no case can one be certain that soldiers, rather than laborers, are meant.

The field officer serving under the ensi was the nu-bànda, or captain, who, like the šagina, may have been a professional soldier. In inscriptions troops are referred to as GURUS.GURUS (“fighting) men”, but in the administrative records soldiers are called a ga-us “followers of the crown”, and are presumably to be distinguished from the able-bodied workers called GURUS. The a ga-us may have been a small corps of professionals, stationed in detachments at various localities, and supported by allotments of crown land, like the OB rédâ’s. The bulk of the army would therefore have been levied men of military age, who, when the season was over, returned to their homes in the community. Military organization therefore may have consisted of a core of professionals, supplemented by auxiliary units levied from local populations by district or clan, commanded, ultimately, by the king himself, who took the field with them in the springtime.

The main tactical units may have been spearmen and bowmen, the spearmen at least equipped with armor. Administrative records of armor and spears suggest that this equipment was issued from a central storeplace. The mace was carried by the king, and was a frequent dedicatory object. This may have been a weapon for fighting at close quarters; it may also have been the prerogative of high-ranking officers, like the modern general’s sidearm.

A fragment of an itinerary of a royal campaign, perhaps that of Naram-Sin to Azuhinnu, gives the marching distance from town to town.

13. FAOS 7, p. 168 (Sargon C 3), lines 6 ff.
15. USP, p. 125.
16. For the nu-bànda leading troops, see for example FAOS 7, p. 231 (Naram-Sin C 1); BIN 8, 144.
17. BIN 8, 144, see ASJ 4 (1982), pp. 15-18. (Entry F = p. 18). From Sumer, ITT II, 4673 (šuku-land). Other records include ITT I, 1168; MVN 3, 23 (bread); ITT II, 4631 (fish and salt = military rations, see below); ITT I, 1425 (list of records concerning soldiers); see also note 66.
20. V. Scheil, RT 35 (1913), pp. 26 ff.
22. B.R. Foster, A Sargonic Itinerary, in RAI 38, pp. 73-76.
This suggests the presence of military scribes and account-keepers, as known already from the general's staff alluded to above. Artistic evidence for the military has been discussed elsewhere.

Political management was closely bound to the military in the person of the ensi, or city ruler. Although Sargon states that he appointed Akkadians as ensis throughout Sumer, later administrative records from Sumer suggest that most ensi's were local, subservient to noble Akkadians. This may mean the development of a tradition of professional administrators who stayed a long time in one place, as opposed to the practice known in Ur III of rotating ensis to different parts of the empire. A son of Naram-Sin served as ensi in one instance, but this was not in Sumer. Political submission was expressed by destruction of defensive walls, payment of tribute, quartering and supplying members of the crown household and military, erection of royal stelae in conquered areas, forfeiture of certain lands to the crown for redistribution to royal retainers, sporadic use of royal year names in dating, acceptance on the local level of royal administrators, and, in the later Sargonic period, imposition of a cult of deified kings, acceptance of royal family members for high priesthood in important sanctuaries, and ceremonial expressions of fealty in the form of greeting gifts, visits to the capital, oaths using the royal name, and use of a specific type of seal.

In his role as administrator, the ensi fits into the economic hierarchy of the realm as it was organized along household lines. If the king was head of his household and domain, his major administrative officer, parallel to the general, was the šabra-ē, or major domo. This grand personage is known only from occasional references. His staff may have included royal officials whose responsibilities, unlike those of an ensi, were regional in scope and could transcend, perhaps purposely so, the boundaries of traditional city states. Among these may be ranked the

23. See note 4.
25. FAOS 7, p. 159 (Sargon C1 lines 80 ff).
26. OSP 2, pp. 94-96.
28. FAOS 7, p. 102 (Naram-Sin A1); compare RAI 30, p. 50.
29. Destruction of walls and collection of tribute are mentioned throughout the corpus of royal inscriptions; for supply of royal family, see B.R. Foster, Notes on Sargonic Royal Progress, JANES 12 (1980), pp. 29-42; for stele and forfeiture of land, see «Iraq» 47 (1985), pp. 15-30; for royal year names, see FAOS 7, pp. 49-61; for the cult of the king, see note 88; for the priesthood, see note 83; greeting gifts in CT 50, 52 (USP, pp. 133-134); for oaths references will be found in CAD N/2, p. 197b; for seals see R.L. Zettler, The Sargonic Royal Seal, in SaS, pp. 33-39.
30. F. Thureau-Dangin, Encore la dynastie d'Agadé, RA 9 (1912), p. 82 (equal in rank to princess); further references in USP, p. 88.
royal (?) land register (sag-sug), the royal scribe (dubsar lugal), the maškim lugal, or royal inspector and auditor\textsuperscript{31}.

Certain great officers of the realm, including the šabra-é and ensi, were granted large personal estates from the king\textsuperscript{32}. This land was acquired by the king first through conquest and expropriation. Land owned by defeated rulers presumably became the property of the Sargonic king and his family\textsuperscript{33}. Historical tradition and monuments suggest expropriation of land from defeated communities and its redistribution to servants of the royal household\textsuperscript{34}. Manishtusu and Sharkalisharri are known to have purchased land or the userights on land\textsuperscript{35}, so the integrity of private land was recognized in theory at least, and there was no notion of “supreme ownership” of all land in the realm by the king\textsuperscript{36}.

Members of the governing elite, such as Yetib-Mer (šabra-é) and Mesag, high officials of the time of Naram-Sin or Sharkalisharri, disposed of large areas of arable land. For example, Yetib-Mer held about 650 hectares, Mesag about 1,270 hectares (= 40 plowing units = 3,600 iku) in Sumer\textsuperscript{37}. Titled officials, including priests, held smaller plots, but still far more than immediate subsistence needs, and individuals, often without titles, could hold smaller plots down to a few square meters in size\textsuperscript{38}. Whole villages and towns could be included in larger parcels, raising the question of whether the inhabitants of these villages were reduced to unfree status, as known from much later periods. I know of no evidence to answer this question.

Study of the use and administration of land\textsuperscript{39} controlled by the ruling administration suggests that accountability for it need not have corresponded to the actual techniques of its exploitation. Although fields were parcelled out among different people in round numbers, as if each person controlled a certain physical area in that field, it seems likely that the fields were cultivated as units and that the harvest was divided among the land holders on the basis of the area held, field by field. Therefore the records for such land note area held, cultivation expenses,

\textsuperscript{31. BIN 8, 198 = AUUL, p. 63. For engar lugal, BIN 8, 144, i, 15. For dub-sar lugal, USP, p. 18; maškim lugal, BIN 8, 144.}
\textsuperscript{32. CST, p. 18 = AUUL, p. 48.}
\textsuperscript{34. CCK 3, pp. 28-29; Foster, «Iraq» 47 (1985), pp. 15-30.}
\textsuperscript{35. Manishtusu = Diakonoff, Sumer, p. 226; Sharkalisharri = AUUL, pp. 29-30 (ITT II, 5893).}
\textsuperscript{36. Bibliography and discussion by H. Neumann, Zum Problem des privaten Bodeneigentums in Mesopotamien, in GM, pp. 29-48.}
\textsuperscript{37. AUUL, pp. 48, 57.}
\textsuperscript{38. AUUL, passim; PPAC 1, p. 157.}
\textsuperscript{39. AUUL, passim.}
and accountable portion of the harvest. They are less records of agriculture than of division of the harvest, although the management strategy underlying them was one of traditional agricultural practice.

In community agricultural practice, individual families held shares in different fields to distribute evenly risks, labor, and returns from cultivation. To this extent, the Sargonic administration functioned as an extended community or household, apportioning its accountable land in the same way a village community might have. There is no evidence to allow one to estimate what proportion of arable land in Mesopotamia was under the control of the ruling dynasty.

If Mesag who was ensi of Umma was the same person as the Mesag who controlled the estate of Mesag, somewhere near Umma, he would be a good example of an ensi as administrator for the crown and ensi as head of his personal estate. The two archives that illustrate these two roles, Umma C and Mesag\(^{40}\) respectively, show quite different systems of accountability, Akkadian and Sumerian, in use in the same region at the same time, and perhaps involving the same people. One was traditional and local, the other an import with the Sargonic conquest of the region and imposed on the landscape by force\(^{41}\). Since both of these archives have been studied in detail, there is no need to dwell on the particulars here.

Nine areas of economic management by ensi’s may be postulated from the extant records: agriculture, distribution of the harvest, labor and draught animals, human laborers, sheep and goats, hunting and fishing; oils, fats, and aromatics; industrial and food production, and commerce\(^{42}\).

With respect to agriculture, the lands that fell under the ensi’s domain were distributed among parcel holders, some for subsistence, some for lease. The ensi was held accountable for this land. Land tenure and lease obligated the user to pay a portion of the harvest and a cash payment to the landlord\(^{43}\), a portion of which could be considered property of the crown. The effective professional in charge of such matters, corresponding to the nu-banda in the military, was the cultivator (sag-apin or engar)\(^{44}\). Some land use rights could be

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42. Foster, ZA 72 (1982), p. 11.


44. A. Deime, Or 6 (1923), pp. 27-29; Or 20 (1926), p. 9; AWL 122 (Presargonic).
inherited or sold\textsuperscript{45}. In Akkad some land was held directly for the crown and was referred to as the "king’s plowing unit", a term presaging the "palace share" of Middle Assyrian times\textsuperscript{46}. From Sumer there is also evidence for royal interests in land accounted for by the ensi\textsuperscript{47}.

Substantial groups of records cluster around division of the harvest. The relationship among estimated, actual, and accountable harvest has not been fully clarified. Estimated harvests were noted for certain, mostly small plots, by grain ratios written in the records for each plot\textsuperscript{48}. Delivery and threshing of the harvest may be documented in certain enigmatic records that itemize quantities of grain, measure by measure, but this is speculative\textsuperscript{49}. A balanced accounting of the harvest was made with deductions of expenses, but no notation of the non-accountable harvest, meaning that the total productivity is unknown\textsuperscript{50}. The accountable portions were measured, shipped, or stored. Cargos were made up to go to Agade, the capital, along with other products of local estates such as livestock, foodstuffs, and animal products\textsuperscript{51}. Records of inspection and sealing for such cargos survive\textsuperscript{52}. Portions kept locally were documented in such a way as to meet a royal inspection procedure\textsuperscript{53}.

The strength of such an agricultural regime should be noted. While rooted in traditions, the Sargonic practice breaks down local boundaries by reassigning land to dependants of the crown within local city states, in some cases uniting land of two original cities. The ensi was accountable for lands within his domain, but royal officials were accountable for large domains that may have included land accounted for by an ensi. Numerous people were engaged in the economy of the ruling dynasty, but the management of these people was a straightforward matter of identifying large numbers of them with shares in a centrally administered fund of arable land. Redistribution and leasing spread risk over a large segment of the population and saved the dynasty the enormous labor costs that the Ur III dynasty incurred when it undertook to control production directly, by-passing traditional community practice in favor of a higher short-term return\textsuperscript{54}. Sargonic practice allows for the incorporation of private individuals and their families into the royal extended household without their becoming dependants.

\textsuperscript{45} MDP 14, 19.
\textsuperscript{46} Foster, ASJ 4 (1982), p. 21.
\textsuperscript{47} USP, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{48} AU1, passim.
\textsuperscript{49} MVN 3, 56 (plus unpublished, closely related, documents).
\textsuperscript{50} USP, pp. 89-95.
\textsuperscript{51} BIN 8, 267, 276, 280.
\textsuperscript{52} B.R. Foster, Archives and Empire in Sargonic Mesopotamia, in RAI 30, pp. 49-50.
\textsuperscript{53} USP, chapter 2.
\textsuperscript{54} For development of this thesis, see B.R. Foster, Agriculture and Accountability in Ancient Mesopotamia, in OCDF, pp. 109-128.
Accountability for draught animals was closely connected with that of agriculture, though some herding and feeding records occur. Sheep and goats were normally accounted for in herds. The Ur-Šara archive (Umma B) documents herd management in the Sargonic period which can be supplemented by extensive documentation from other periods of Mesopotamian history.

Human labor in Sargonic Mesopotamia was accounted for in small teams. There is no evidence for the mass guruš labor typical of the Ur III period except on construction projects. Expenditure of labor was reckoned in man-days. Expenditures in rations were divided between unprocessed raw materials, such as barley and wool, and finished products, such as bread and beer, the latter sometimes converted into raw ingredients for accounting purposes.

Interpretation of the distribution of rations has led to significant disagreements as to whether rations were for subsistence or were a kind of food allowance for members of the household, whether laborers who received rations had other means of production available to them, whether or not rations were distributed the year round and to whom, as well as other fundamental questions that have considerable bearing on the reconstruction of early Mesopotamian society. The Sargonic evidence needs to be considered apart from the Ur III evidence, as the extraordinary development of Ur III guruš labor appears to be a late phenomenon not typical of the third millennium as a whole. The support of large groups of men with prepared rations may in some instances be for military purposes, although the records themselves give no indication.

Regulation of other subsistence patterns, such as hunting and fishing, is less well known. The Girsu archives include information on great quantities of fish, as much as 60,000 at a time. The catching, processing and distribution of such material suggests a large-scale operation.

55. USP, chapter 2; PPAC 1, pp. 191-192.
56. K. Maekawa, Collective Labor Service in Girsu-Lagash. The Pre-Sargonic and Ur III Periods, in LANE, pp. 62-65; for basic bibliography see P. Steinkeller, in LANE, p. 115. There is in addition an extensive scholarship in the USSR on labor in the third millennium B.C. For the Ur III period, the fullest study is A.I. Tyumenev, Gosudarstvennoe khoziaistvo drevnego Šumera, Moscow-Leningrad 1956, pp. 266 ff. More recent work includes Šarašenidze, Matsue, 1981, No. 4, pp. 75 ff.
59. The group of records treated in USP, chapter 3 group C.3.3 (pp. 109-116) may include rations for troops drawn in bulk. Rather than "private citizens", as argued there, these people may have been soldiers (note a higher proportion of Akkadian names in this group of records than elsewhere in the archive).
60. RTC 129. For other records of fish in large numbers, see ITT V, 9254, 9334.
60,000 fish would be appropriate rations for a large military force; the general’s suite alluded above was, in fact, supplied with fish. Turtles, snails, and other aquatic creatures are documented at Girsu, so one may suggest that this place, which may have been an administrative center for a large Sargonic province in Sumer, was an important center for riverine and maritime acquisition of food. Although hunting and bird-catching are known, there is little in the way of archival information. Their simpler accountability than agriculture is explainable because no outlay of royal assets was involved with fishing; records of income and out-go were sufficient.

Records of oils, fats, and aromatics were often separate from those of other materials, as if they were sometimes a speciality within the administration. Their use as food, cosmetics, offerings, and for industrial purposes was documented, as well as their storage in containers and special structures.

Facilities for mass production of food could only have been responsible for the large quantities of prepared food disbursed in ration records. Documents relating to food preparation are rare, and mostly concerned with feasts or other special occasions. Strict accounting of bread baking and brewing was limited to reckoning ingredients used; there is no documentation for the work itself except indirectly, through assignment of laborers to cooks and brewers. Mass production of pottery is implied by texts which list large numbers of clay vessels, though the purpose of the vessels is not stated. Potters do not appear in ration lists or as landholders, unlike smiths or carpenters, so may not have been identified as professional members of the household. The royal workshops of later periods do not include potters or weavers, so they must have been separate undertakings.

Industrial activities using imported materials such as metal were accounted for by the commodity used rather than labor. Workshop records of the type known from the Ur III period have not been found in

61. CT 50, 173; ITT II, 5750 (record of fish in vessel); ITT I, 1083 (shipment of fish to Agade). For quota on fish, see CT 50, 165.
62. For fish and salt, possibly for military use, see ITT I, 1086, 1454, though in CST 7, dried fish were rations for men and children, so presumably not military in nature.
64. USP, pp. 116-124.
66. RTC 93, rev. 8 (soldiers levied for “kitchen police”).
67. STTI 42 = ITT I, 1299, 3,000 pots delivered from potter; STTI 58 + ITT I, 1379.
document the amount of copper needed for making tools, the distribution of tools to workmen by weight, the return and reworking of the tools. Other records deal with consignment of metals and other valuable materials for manufacturing specific objects. These regimes use the basic mode of income and out-go accounting, rather than the balanced account format typical of agriculture.

Elsewhere I have argued for an "archaeology of knowledge", meaning establishing a typology of the presence or absence of certain categories of information in administrative records, and comparing this to the accounting principles used, the explicitness of the formulary, the shape of the tablets, and the formality of the writing. The results inform us of what was deemed important to account for, the only means of reconstructing reliably third millennium management of institutional resources. A summary of this inquiry appears in the figure marked "levels of accountability". There I propose a schematic relationship between the levels of authority articulated in this essay and what might be called "levels of documentation". The surviving texts and archives, now numerous, fit well into this scheme and can now be treated as historical data by virtue of their place in a reconstructed set of relationships that can be anchored in both time and space.

Local variations and traditions have to be reckoned with. Yet Sargonic administrative records show a remarkable uniformity throughout Mesopotamia such as suggests bureaucratic reform and centralization, perhaps in the reign of Naram-Sin. Examples of local practice include the Umma regime of balanced accounts with supporting vouchers, whereas Girsu favored monster tablets combining dozens of vouchers into large, closely written ledgers. These last may have been referred to as "wide tablets". Explicit balanced accounts are less frequent at Girsu than at Umma. Umma texts are often dated individually with a local dating system, whereas Girsu texts were generally not dated but put in baskets with dated etiquettes, using the royal year names, even though Presargonic Lagash had had, like Umma, a local tradition of dating using regnal years. The Mesag estate did not date its records at all, save for an

69. USP, pp. 32-39; H. Limet, Les métaux à l'époque d'Agadé, JESHO 15 (1972), pp. 3-34.
70. See note 54.
71. ITT II, 3013, 5722; compare 4639.
72. ITT V, 9264.
rather than dates. Texts from northern Mesopotamia used year names if dated at all, though one may wonder if the northern scribal tradition used regnal years as well\textsuperscript{75}.

With respect to private or family sources\textsuperscript{76}, one expects to find little trace of administrative interference in family affairs. It is striking how few titled people or official matters appear in family archives. The major exception is the Ur-Šara archive\textsuperscript{77}, the formal accountability of which suggests a contractual relationship between the family and an institution, unlike the Enlilemaba\textsuperscript{78} and Quradum archives, for example. The Ur-Šara archive is regularly dated and unusually explicit in its formulary. Therefore, to complement the picture of management I have sketched here, it is useful to recall that it created niches or opportunities for private people to gain access to institutional resources on a profit-making basis. This pattern is too well known in Mesopotamian history to require extensive justification, despite occasional doubts.

Special problems of control and management are presented by occupation of non-Mesopotamian areas. From Susa\textsuperscript{79} comes evidence for a Sargonic estate with Mesopotamian staff and Mesopotamian workers, including about 950 men, women, and children on perhaps 444 hectares of land. Were these people, all native Mesopotamians, workers or soldiers with their families, colonists? In any case, there is not an Elamite in the group. The history of Sargonic intervention in southwest Iran is long and bloody; indeed, after Mesopotamia itself the Sargonic kings may have made this region their highest military priority. A high level of local hostility would explain an isolated Mesopotamian enclave there. It was visible enough to serve as model for an essentially Mesopotamian administration in Susiana long after Sargonic control had waned.

There are tantalizing scraps of evidence for a Mesopotamian merchant colony residing at Susa\textsuperscript{80}. Some of these merchants may have hailed from the Umma region; we may meet them at Girsu as well. Their relationship to the military and administrative presence is not clear. The script of the relevant texts is of the usual administrative type, rather than the informal private type. As to what commodities interested them, they include the usual silver, wool, and barley found on domestic Mesopotamian markets, as well as pottery, fruit, spices, and copper. The presence of

\textsuperscript{75} Numerical dating is now known, for example, from Presargonic Mari, D. Charpin, \textit{Tablettes présargoniques de Mari}, MARI 5 (1987), pp. 65-96.

\textsuperscript{76} Foster, ZA 72 (1982), p. 8.

\textsuperscript{77} USP, chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{78} OSP 2, chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{79} B.R. Foster, \textit{Susa in the Sargonic Period} (forthcoming).

\textsuperscript{80} B.R. Foster, "International" Trade at Sargonic Susa, AOF 20 (1993), pp. 59-68.
document leads one to suppose that excellent opportunities for international trade existed there; I have proposed that Susa was a center for overland trade linking Iran and Sumer. It is tempting to superimpose the Susian model as we know it from texts on the enigmatic building from Tell Brak. This contained some bricks stamped with the name of Naram-Sin and fragments of Sargonic administrative texts, so is usually dated to the Sargonic period81. What may be a fragment of a Naram-Sin brick was found at Susa as well82, but the most positivist of historians would hesitate before making much of that.

Concerning ideology, or management of people’s hearts and minds, one approach is through religious policy. An early stage in this process may be represented by the oeuvre of Enheduanna83. Van Dijk has proposed that an official syncretism between Sumer and Akkad, perhaps under the aegis of Ishtar, was being promulgated84. A second stage in this process was the deification of Naram-Sin, perhaps as patron deity of his city Agade. A later, garbled, legend suggests that the city Agade may have been deified for the worship of foreign, barbarian peoples, but this is problematic85. Naram-Sin’s lavish reconstruction of Ekur, now documented by administrative texts86, did not win the heart and the mind of the author of the “Curse of Agade”87. Of all these initiatives, the cult of the Sargonic kings lasted the longest, surviving into the Neo-Babylonian period88.

With respect to points raised by Liverani in his opening essay, one need not labor overmuch the question of “empire”. If by empire is meant a large, multinational state with a heartland and provinces, presided over by a ruler who presents himself as larger than life, with a consistent, centralized pattern of administration throughout its domains, then the Sargonic political achievement can certainly be called an empire, even without the deprecatory quotation marks fashionable in recent times89.

82. MDP 2, Plate 13, no. 1 (see p. 56); I can suggest no other attribution for this puzzling inscription.
86. OSP 2, chapter 1.
87. Cooper, CoA.
89. M. Astour, HSAO 2 (1988), pp. 139 ff. (with trenchant observations on use of the word “empire”).
training, perhaps a bureaucratic reform by Naram-Sin on which Shulgi's better-known reforms may have been modeled. Sculpture and relief work too suggest centralized control of output.

Why was the Sargonic empire remembered with such éclat in later ages? Partly because, like the empire once based in Rome, it worked for a time and people believed in it. Later Mesopotamian historical tradition preserved almost no memory of earlier political achievements, such as may be represented by the "Kish civilization" and the Uruk expansion into Syria and Iran. Therefore we may qualify our title elaborately as "the first (remembered) empire in Mesopotamia with universal pretensions". The origins of this phenomenon are a research frontier: Nissen sees indigenous Mesopotamian development, Steinkeller a northern political tradition intrusive in the south. With respect to the latter, at certain times conditions in the northern, rainfall and well-watered agricultural zone coalesced in such a way as to permit dramatic centralization and political expansion in an environment normally less conducive to such enterprises than was the irrigation zone. The Assyrian empire is only the latest and best-known example. For the Sargonic kings there was an example scarcely known to us, the still shadowy tradition of the kingship of Kish that the early Sargonic kings invoked as their own.

What remains today is scattered fragments of the final phases of the Sargonic empire and an imposing body of later historical tradition that was more concerned with grandeur and fall than with origins. As Liverani reminds us, this was often more responsive to the context in which it was composed than revelatory of the times it invoked, though Mesopotamian literature need not be seen solely as an expression of politics and ideology. To the Mesopotamians, the Sargonic empire seemed a new departure, civilized, and destined to stand against overwhelming, even uncanny threats. The Old Babylonian scholars who studied Sargonic monuments had little earlier material in their repertory: did Naram-Sin's

90. For the historiographical relationships between the Sargonic and Ur III periods, see A. Becker, Neusumerische Renaissance?, BaM 16 (1985), pp. 229-316. For reforms of Shulgi, see P. Steinkeller, The Administrative and Economic Organization of the Ur III State: The Core and the Periphery, in SAOC 46, pp. 19 ff.
91. I.J. Gelb, Ebla and the Kish Civilization, in LdE, pp. 9-73.
94. W. Hallo, Early Mesopotamian Royal Titles, New Haven 1957, pp. 22-26, see also note 91.
reconstruction of Ekur eliminate everything earlier?95 The Old Babylonians, in an era of petty states, could see possibility only for imitation and envy, insofar as the illusion of universal empire was, for the time, gone and unrecoverable. Admiration was both for legendary material success and for what later generations saw as strong self-confidence in comparison to their own uncertainties. These stemmed in part from their knowledge that the Sargonic empire was destined to be destroyed and that Agade was to linger on first as a city-state then as a ruin.

Fig. 1: Levels of accountability

[A]: official art, seals
[B], [E]: accountable only through local ensis
[C]: commemorative inscriptions
[D]: archival records (I-IV)

ensi’s archives: Adab, Girsu, Umma, Ešnunna
estate archives: Mesag, Gasur (?), Pugdan?
regime archives: Umma oil, Nippur onion
private archives: Ur-Šara, Enlilemaba
legal archives: Isin/Nippur group
garrison archives: Susa
MODEL AND ACTUALIZATION

THE KINGS OF AKKAD IN THE HISTORICAL TRADITION

Mario Liverani

1. History of the problem.

1.1. The undifferentiated use of sources.

In the historical reconstruction of the Akkad dynasty, the difference has always been clear between the direct, contemporary sources (mainly royal inscriptions, on original monuments or in careful copies), and those belonging to later historiographical traditions. The second class of sources clearly offers greater problems of reliability if compared with the first one.

To tell the truth, obvious problems can be faced in the historical utilization of both kinds of source. The royal inscriptions are and have always been considered possibly affected by their celebrative purpose, bringing about a tendency to emphasize even to forge the positive aspects, and to understate the negative ones (even to omit them at all, or to transform them into positive). The literary texts are affected by the mythical and fantastic features proper to their genre. Their purpose and bias are often as much distorting as those of the celebrative texts, although less evident and therefore left often unnoticed by the scholars. But an additional difficulty with the literary texts lies in the chronological gap separating them from the events to which they refer, a gap to be filled by pointing out "sources" or by postulating "traditions" — otherwise their historical reliability would be invalidated.

In the first attempts to reconstruct the history of the Akkad dynasty, however, the prevailing circumstances acted against a proper consideration of the problems connected with source reliability. First of all, very few sources were available, and an effort was produced to derive from them

2. J.S. Cooper, CoA, p. 15.
a maximum of information. Secondly, under the enthusiasm of the first discoveries the trend pointed toward the enlargement of the kings' accomplishments and range of action. Thirdly, the formal study of the classes of relevant texts (i.e. both the royal inscriptions and the historical literature) had not yet been started. Lastly, a clear idea of the development of historical traditions (and their relationships with the different historical periods) was still missing.

As a result of these factors, all the different texts were read and used as a mine of data which were too precious to afford the luxury of a critical selection. Although some methodological caution was sometimes inserted in a premise or in a foot-note, practically all kind of information was equally welcome, and treated in an undifferentiated way\(^3\). In a sense, such treatments were late epigons of the very historical tradition of ancient Mesopotamia, therefrom they got and repeated the pieces of information, with the only corrective of some attempt at rationalization, or with some formal caution.

### 1.2. The search for the "historical kernel".

A first turning point toward a critical attitude took place in the '30s, especially with the important work of H.G. Güterbock, the first scholar who faced the problem of Babylonian historical literature in a comprehensive way\(^4\). A more attentive analysis of the features of this literary genre, of the time span separating events and texts, of the very possibility that a sound "tradition" could exist, and above all of the lack of interest on behalf of the ancient authors for historical truth, challenged the habit of an undifferentiated use of the sources. Such a critical approach was nothing more and nothing else than the application to the ancient Mesopotamian texts of the rules of source criticism which were largely applied (mainly in Germany) in the field of ancient (i.e. classical) historiography.

Since irrelevant for this context, now we leave aside the most important problem, namely the search for a "history for the sake of history". We rather take into account only the specific problems of the

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historical traditions on the Akkad kings, and we have to recognize that Güterbock's positions (as well as those of other scholars in the following decades) seem today to be strongly limited by two leading principles as for their judgment about the historical reliability of the literary texts.

The first principle was that an information contained in a literary text could not be accepted unless it was confirmed by another source. This principle earned Güterbock the charge of "hypercriticism", yet it was applied in a very loose way. For instance: since we know from another source that Sargon was active in the West, the information about his expedition against Purushhanda is "confirmed" — although central Anatolia seems too far away and a location along the Euphrates is preferred. If applied in this way, the very notion of "another source" is of course questionable. An omen or a chronicle have to face no lesser problems of historical reliability than an Old Babylonian epic, and their cross-confirmation has no value. The texts of the literary tradition get information from each other, so that a double attestation means nothing more than a dependence. Such a principle is since long well known to textual criticism, where a full set of manuscripts all derived from the same prototype, and all containing the same mistake, has the worth of one, and the mistake is always a mistake even if often repeated.

The second and more developed principle of the literary-historical criticism in the period between the two world wars is centered on the so-called "historical kernel" — and this principle is still in use today, with very burdensome results. Although they have clear the literary and somehow fantastic features of the texts belonging to the historical tradition, most scholars do not conceive that an ancient author could have completely forged an event; they think the author must have based his account on some real fact, perhaps adding his own amplifications, embellishments and connotations. In this way, the problem simply consists

6. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
7. For a recent example of such a faulty application of the methodological principle of "confirmation", cf. K. Grayson - E. Sollberger, L'insurrection générale contre Naram-Suen, RA 70 (1976), pp. 108-111; after a few (and very vague) quotations, the conclusion comes: "Il paraît donc raisonnable de conclure que les événements relatés dans les textes historico-littéraires, et particulièrement dans G-M et L, sont authentiques dans l'essentiel sinon dans les détails, et qu'il est par conséquent légitime d'en tenir compte dans une reconstruction de l'histoire du règne de Naram-Suen".
8. For an extreme case cf. E.F. Weidner, Der Zug Sargon's von Akkad nach Kleinasien, Leipzig 1922, p. 60 where the King chronicle is considered as "confirmed" by the omens (i.e. by its very source!).
9. Güterbock, ZA 8 (1934), p. 22 "Allerdings ist die Entstehung eines solchen Abenteuer-Romans nicht denkbar ohne ein geschichtliches Ereignis, an das sie anknüpfen kann"; id., JCS 18 (1964), p. 6 "even a legend must be based on some
in pointing out or better in postulating a reliable "historical kernel" under literary embellishments. But this search for a historical kernel becomes quite often a rather automatic procedure: once the mythical or fantastic features, the exaggerated or coloured statements are detracted, what is left is considered as being the historical kernel. In this way, the historical reliability of the literary texts is accepted almost completely. All the critical approach is kept on a theoretical level only, while the historical reconstruction goes on according to the old system.\footnote{10}

By the way: in the study of a specific class of the historical tradition, namely the historical omens, a position like that of J.J. Finkelstein\footnote{11}, has been produced and considered as authoritative, who is firmly convinced that a historical omen can be originated only by the historical event to which the omen alludes — not even considering the fact that the earliest historical omens\footnote{12} are so vague that they cannot technically allude to any specific "event". He even quotes as a demonstrative example an omen whose origin is clearly a word-play connected with a particular conformation of the liver.\footnote{13}

In fact all the scholarly interest remains centered on the historical content of the texts, and more precisely on their reliability in order to reconstruct the events of the period to which the narrated facts belong. The critical analysis, which can only deal with the text itself, is in the last finalized to the unique question whether the narrated events are true or not. This means an abrupt change of focus when passing from the analysis to the conclusions. The analysis deals with the text (its author, its aims, its culture); the conclusions deal with the narrated events (their period, their personages, their politics).

historical fact”. Cf. also S. Smith, *Early History of Assyria to 1000 B.C.*, London 1928, p. 87 “Would any cuneiform scribe write a pure romance around a historical figure?” (cf. p. 88 “pure romance, a secular type unexampled in the remaining cuneiform literature”).

\footnote{10} Cf. Smith, *Early History*, p. 88 “it is best to leave criticism on one side and to devote attention to ascertaining exactly what the Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites and others who copied these texts believed about Sargon of Agade”.


\footnote{12} M. Rutten, *Trente-deux modèles de foies en argile inscrits provenant de Tell Hariri* (Mari), RA 35 (1938), pp. 36-70.

1.3. Recent trends.

Recently (an expression that in the humanistic field, with long-persistent paradigms, encompasses twenty years or more) new interests and more advanced positions are to be noticed, mostly by the participants to our conference. These positions are about to assume the form of a new paradigm, that must still be more precisely defined. The courses toward a new methodology in "reading" the historiographical texts are quite varied; pointing out some general features I will assume the responsibility and the risk of a drastic simplification.

A first difference between recent and past studies is a remarkably improved knowledge as for the historical context — both on archaeological and textual grounds. For instance, when considering the possible presence of Sargon in Anatolia, we cannot leave aside the archaeological data on the Mesopotamian penetration in that area: a penetration with a very long development, but which seems to experience its lowest level just in the phase of Early Bronze II. Or else, when studying the presumed destruction of the Ekur by Naram-Sin, we cannot disregard the results of the recent re-examinations of the old excavations in Nippur\(^\text{14}\). The most obvious example is provided by the relations of Sargon and Naram-Sin with Ebla, whose very same location was unknown 30 years ago\(^\text{15}\).

The knowledge improvement refers also to the periods that followed the Akkad dynasty and generated the historical tradition. The time location of the various "readings" of the Akkad dynasty provided by the epics can now be based on a full set of contextual data. Also the amount and the quality of the relevant data which were available in the different periods can now be reasonably traced. Perhaps now the conditions are sufficient in order to write a reliable history of the historiographical traditions (an enterprise still impossible in Güterbock's time).

A second point, largely dependent upon the first one, is very important: the aims and the political context of the literary texts are now attentively considered. Such an analysis is strictly linked with the search for a more precise dating of the texts; and very often the date seems to be the sole aim of the analysis. While this last one is certainly a reductive view, however, the positive fact remains that in dating a text to a certain period we cannot overlook the reasons for which it was written just then, i.e. for those problems that were important enough to induce the author


to write it. The attention paid to the author's aims brings about a reconsideration of the relation between text and narrated event: besides pointing out a distortion, we can also point out its purpose and its direction.

A third relevant point is an increased attention to the specific features of the various literary genres under consideration: from royal inscriptions to omina, from epics to chronicles. The knowledge of the methods adopted to write a celebrative inscription or a literary text allows us to know also what we can get therefrom: we only need to reverse the assembling procedure into a disassembling one. We can now proceed beyond the old distinction between reality and fiction or between historical kernel and literary embellishment: even royal inscriptions contain non-realistic elements, while some realistic or historically plausible elements in the literary texts belong to fiction. After all, historical fiction has always been written, not by adding unrealistic or anachronistic details to a true fact, but by adding realistic and historical details to a forged episode.

All these and other trends have not yet found a melting point able to generate a new interpretive paradigm, which is consciously opposed to the old one, and purposedly trying to exploit its potentialities to their best. In particular, as far as the historical consequences are concerned, up to now the results have been quite limited in range. In the current historical reconstructions, the ghost of the historical kernel is still wandering about, and not only about Europe. Most historians still seem to compete with the ancient scribes in enlarging Sargon's and Naram-Sin's range of action as far as possible, in crediting them with even bigger enterprises than those entrusted by the kings themselves to their own celebrative inscriptions.

2. The new paradigm.

2.1. From personages to authors.

Twenty years ago, I pointed out that in our approach to the historiographical texts of the ancient Near East we should shift our focus from the information they contain, to the texts themselves. While the historical reliability of a text always remains questionable, on the contrary any text is certainly the best source for our knowledge of the text itself, its author and its public, its political frame and the problems which

16. J.S. Cooper, RHAl.
generated it. This is a real "Copernican revolution", which takes away the subject-matter of the text from the gravitational centre, and puts the political aims of the author in its place. Historical information is reconsidered as raw material (either if derived from authentic sources, or if just forged) that the author used to provide his assumptions with narrative substance and with the authoritativeness of tradition.

In the case of the literary texts dealing with Sargon and Naram-Sin, those kings lose their role as protagonists, to assume that of stand-in for personages (mostly unknown to us) of the period in which the texts were composed. The enterprises of the Akkad kings become prestigious "quotations" hinting at political problems which were under debate at that time. Consequently, a lot of assumed information on the Akkad dynasty fades away: actually it was doubtful information, so that the result is not to impoverish but to clarify and improve certainty. On the other side, we get information on quite different matters, i.e. on the political problems at the time of texts composition, and on the use of Akkad as model-dynasty for the succeeding periods. These improvements are solid and reliable, although they are often more difficult to be achieved than the banal extraction of single pieces of historical information.

We owe this "Copernican revolution" to research trends that are not recent, and go back to the years culminating in the mythical '68. Among the most important cultural issues of those years, the decoding of political messages is paramount, in the aim of "unmasking" the practical purposes of ideological communication, and of putting in motion an adequate "counter-information".

The principles of such "unmasking" procedure are easily taken from semiological analysis. To understand a message we have to point out: the author, the audience, the apologetical (or other) aims, the political context, the media for communication. In this interpretive grid the subject matter of the message is missing: the arguments employed and the examples quoted belong rather to the surface of the message (the so-called "mask" to be removed) than to its substance — a substance to be kept unperceived at a first reading, since the persuasory message (be it political

or commercial in nature) gets its effectiveness from attaining the emotional and mythical level rather than the rational one.

Such a decoding procedure is quite easy, and almost routine work, if author and audience, aims and context are already well known: this is in fact the case with modern political speeches or commercial advertising, whose wider context is perfectly known to us from an enormous set of first-hand information. But this is not the case with the ancient historiographic literature, especially the cuneiform one. The author or the political consignor of the text is generally unknown. The audience can be postulated only in very general terms. The text itself is the best (and often the only) source on its date, political context, specific aims. Therefore the decoding procedure is to be applied in a reverse way: we have to imagine or to postulate the author, the historical juncture and the communicative aims which best explain the extant message — the only “real thing” we have, and very often in a fragmentary state.

At first this reverse operation may seem even more uncertain and preconceived if compared with the old search for the historical kernel. Yet I think that most historical reconstructions (when belonging to a remote past, devoid of adequate contextual information) are based on similar operations. For demographic or economic calculations, settlement hierarchies, social stratification in cemeteries, etymological studies, and so on the procedure is always the same. We know the general mechanisms of a process, on the base of the well-documented contemporary world; we apply such mechanisms to ancient cases whose final issues are only known; we postulate the starting points and the courses best explaining such issues.

2.2. Akkad as model for kingship.

The almost unique insistence on the Akkad dynasty by the later historical literature, could not be satisfactorily explained only by the relevance and singularity of the personages and their achievements. Other kings and other achievements were equally relevant, but were never quoted by the historical tradition. The Akkad kings were often quoted because they had become the models for kingship, the “prototypes” of a behavior to be imitated (or else to be avoided) by later kings. If we take for granted, as everybody does, such “model” function, consequently all the literary texts dealing with Sargon and Naram-Sin, and all the hints to them in royal titularies, in omens, in building inscriptions, etc., are nothing else than the extant episodes in the history of the use of such a model by later kings.

In fact, the notion of model brings about the notion of imitation and copy. The study of extant copies aiming at reconstructing a lost
original is certainly a legitimate one, which is more successfully feasible the more faithful the copies are. Otherwise the study deals more successfully with the period of the copies, with their style and their characters. This is all the more true, in case we are not dealing with true copies, but rather with imitations or allusions (both in subject-matter and in style). Therefore we use the Old Babylonian copies in order to reconstruct the lost original monuments of Akkadian age\textsuperscript{19}; we can even get from the “cruciform monument” of Manishtusu (a \textit{pia fraus} of late Babylonian age) a clear idea of the original monument which was used as a model\textsuperscript{20}; but we have to use the pseudo-historical epics mainly in order to understand the age of their composition, and to appreciate their Akkadian “quotations” only as far as the original “quoted” monuments are already known to us.

A further progress toward a clarification of our procedure can be made by analysing how the model role for the Akkad kings and their achievements came into being. We can just provide here a few hints, whose full development would take us too far.

As for quality and amount, the celebrative apparatus of the Akkad kings was something incomparable with other, prior and later cases\textsuperscript{21}. It materialized into monuments which remained visible for centuries, especially in the Ekur and also in other temples through all the country. These monuments achieved more or less the purposes for which they had been built: namely to point to the admiration the enterprises they celebrated, and to challenge later rulers to imitate them. When the audience of posterity substituted the one of contemporaries, the monuments themselves were imitated more than the enterprises. The iconic component gave birth to Akkadianizing trends in Babylonian art. The textual component was disseminated in three ways: by means of more or less accurate copies; by means of imitations (i.e. later royal inscriptions); and possibly by means of “popular” interpretations and aetiologies. Everything found its way into literary compositions (the so-called epics) of Old Babylonian date, that became part of the scribal


\textsuperscript{21} Cf. P. Amiet, \textit{Les statues de Manishtusu, roi d'Agadé}, RA 66 (1972), p. 97: “Lors de l'avènement de Sargon, l'art fut pris en main par la monarchie, qui en fit un instrument de sa politique, en lui donnant mission d'exprimer son idéologie impériale”.
tradition, and also into more specific products especially connected to
the interpretation of omens.

Summing up, the Akkadian kings became models for royal behavior
because they had left monuments which succeeded in producing such a
result, and because these monuments remained for centuries at the
disposal of the political and cultural elite of the country. 

Later on the monuments disappeared, during the sacks at the end
of the Kassite period, but the model was by then strongly established
and survived to the monuments. In this second stage, the knowledge of
the Akkadian models was mediated by the Old Babylonian epics, a direct
access to the original monuments being no longer available. But it received
fresh contributions from direct sources (Akkadian inscriptions discovered
in the course of building activities) or from indirect channels (historical
omens).

If this brief sketch of the history of the Akkadian tradition is more
or less correct, then we cannot put the literary texts and the historical
events in direct relation to each other — a relation that would imply
that the Old Babylonian scribes had at their disposal some kind of
additional information. The Old Babylonian scribes had at their disposal
nothing else than a corpus of monuments displayed in the great temples
of the country. Part of this corpus is known also to us, thanks to the
copies made by the Old Babylonian scribes themselves. By its very
nature, this corpus reproduces the most important achievements of the
Akkadian kings. In case Sargon had arrived in central Anatolia, or had
destroyed Ebla, he would have obviously erected a celebrative monument,
this monument would have remained at sight in the Ekur, and the Old
Babylonian scribes would have arranged copies of its inscriptions.

Partly simplifying, and not excluding some exceptions, I think we can
assume a good correspondence between the main enterprises of the
Akkad kings and the celebrative monuments; and a good correspondence
(as for typology if not as for amount) between the data available to the

22. Completely different approach by A. Westenholz, The Old Akkadian Empire in
Contemporary Opinion, in PP, pp. 107-108 (origin of the model-function from the
kings' enterprises that built up an "heroic age" formative of the Akkadian people).
23. The basic material (originally published by A. Poebel and conveniently collected by
H. Hirsch, Die Inschriften der Könige von Agade, AFO 20 (1963), pp. 1-82), has been
recently supplemented by new (often atypical) texts, and has been republished by I.J.
Gelb - B. Kienast, FAOS 7. Recently published texts include both originals (such as
Farber, Die Vergöttlichung Naram-Sin, Or 52 [1983], pp. 67-72) and copies (such as
R. Kutscher, Royal Inscriptions, Haifa 1989, BT 1; Foster, ARRIM 8 (1990), pp.
25-44). The new texts on the one hand suggest that our knowledge of the entire
corpus of Old Babylonian copies is far from complete, but on the other hand confirm
that the Old Babylonian copies were widely representative of the original corpus of
Old Akkadian monuments.
Old Babylonian scribes and the data available to us\textsuperscript{24}. I think therefore that no substantial space is left to imagine lost enterprises, or to postulate "historical kernels" on the only base of the literary texts.

2.3. From "historical kernel" to "political context".

If the Old Babylonian scribes knew more or less what we also know about the kings of Akkad, if they had access to the same kind of data (namely, the celebrative monuments) that we also have, then the search for the "historical kernel" must be abandoned. What passed from the original inscriptions to the literary texts is a phraseological repertory, a generical fame of victories and conquests, the obvious directions of an imperial expansion, and some specific episodes. But a specific episode entered into a literary text only in case it was fitting with the purpose and context of the very text.

In addition and in parallel to the celebrative monuments, another set of data was also taking form: a set of data of critical and anti-celebrative nature, derived not from the statements of the Akkadian kings, but from the reactions in the environment of the old city-states. Of course, I have in mind the memories and reactions (in Nippur and in the South) against the process of self-deification, and against the interferences in the sphere of cult politics, of building programs, and perhaps also of taxes and administration.

All the rest must have been made up. The forgery is not gratuitous, however. First of all, it is motivated by the problems originating the text composition, and secondly it must fit satisfactorily with the characters of the Akkadian kings. In comparison to the old pattern (Akkadian historical kernel, plus Old Babylonian literary form) the upsetting is almost complete: Old Babylonian political kernel, plus Akkadian literary colouring.

In order to recover the aims of the ancient authors, we have to focus our attention on the political problem which originated the text\textsuperscript{25}. The Akkadian "quotations" are just a frame thereon: a selection of personages, of narrative motifs, of phraseological repertories. The study of the literary texts about the Akkadian kings cannot tempt us to increase our inventory of reliable information on the Akkadian age, but can and must tempt

\textsuperscript{24} Although different in approach, the analysis by Foster, ARRIM 8 (1990), pp. 43-44 arrives at similar conclusions ("existing inscriptions may be a sufficient explanation for the later literary-historical texts") — a coincidence all the more valuable since Foster’s article reached me only after the present paper had been written.

us to increase our knowledge of the Old Babylonian (and later) political debates.

In the history of the ancient Near East, a very marginal role is usually reserved to political debate, almost completely overwhelmed by the prejudice of a “despotical” relationship between ruler and governed people — where the former bears all the burden of decision, the latter just that of obeisance. Our texts may help us in perceiving a different situation, in which the decisional mechanism was built up of different and contrasting opinions. These opinions had sometimes to be substained by historical or mythical cases, by prototypes endowed with unquestionable authoritativeness. Besides the omens, which are the Mesopotamian form of expression for different options, also the historiographic literature had a role in this connection. Obviously, such opinions and such debates were restricted to specific circles, close to the king: priestly circles, high officials, scribes and administrators, interpreters of omens.

But it is time to provide a short exemplification. Each case here selected would require a much more extensive space than the entire communication here presented. I will therefore provide only a sketch of analysis, to the only aim of concretely suggesting how our approach should work.

3. Exemplification.

3.1. The “King of Battle”.

The epic or tale of the Šar tamhāri deals with an expedition led by Sargon against the Anatolian city of Purushhanda. In this case, the elimination of a “historical kernel”, insistently postulated since the older studies until quite recently, seems quite easy. From Sargon’s extant

29. Weidner, Zug Sargons, pp. 58-61, 95, 98-99 (our text assures the presence of Mesopotamian trade colonies in Anatolia in the Akkad time); W.F. Albright, The Epic of the King of Battle, JSOR 7 (1923), pp. 6-20: “There is no good reason to doubt that our romance has a historical nucleus. The main events and persons described in the extant fragments are probably historical”; E. Dhorme, Les nouvelles tablettes d’El Amama. IV: La tablette de Sargon l’Ancien, RB 33 (1924), pp. 21-23, 31 and passim. Güterbock, ZA 8 (1934), pp. 21-22, 24, 90-91 qualifies the text as an
inscriptions (or copies) we know for sure that he never reached beyond Tuttul on the Middle Euphrates, and had only indirect or mediated contacts with the lands further far-away in the north-west. From Naram-Sin's inscriptions we know that his further and remarkable expansion toward north-west was a novelty. Also the archaeological documentation confirms that the Akkadian presence in the north-west belongs to Naram-Sin. An expedition by Sargon subsequent to those mentioned in his own texts seems improbable. We had to imagine: (1) that Sargon did not deem necessary to erect any celebrative monument, or else that he did but the Old Babylonian scribes did not consider such a monument worthy enough to be included in their collections; (2) that Sargon’s assumed activity in the north-west was disregarded by Naram-Sin; (3) that it did not leave any archaeological mark. It is wiser to think that in this case Sargon represents just a model to be imitated, but the specific enterprise ascribed to him has been forged — and it was forged in compliance with the lines of the enterprise which was under debate when, the text was written.

The positive identification of the historical frame for the text composition is more difficult than the discarding of the historical kernel. The first serious difficulty is the uncertain reconstruction of the plot of the tale, since the main manuscript (the Amarna one) is of low quality and partly broken, while the Hittite version (not a real translation) does not coincide with the Akkadian one(s) and makes it reasonable to consider


30. FAOS 7, pp. 164-167 (Sargon C 2: 17-35). Güterbock, ZA 8 (1934), pp. 21-22 considered such a passage as evidence in favour of the historicity of the text! This is quite diagnostic about the methodological “revolution” we are illustrating.


32. Besides the Diyarbakir (Naramsin 5 in FAOS 7, pp. 92-93) and Bassetki (Naramsin 1 in FAOS 7, pp. 81-83) inscriptions, cf. the Tell Brak palace (Naramsin 20 in FAOS 7, p. 101).

33. On such a view cf. e.g. S.N. Kramer, The Sumerians, Chicago 1963, p. 61: “the Nippur copies of the inscriptions on Sargon’s statues and steles ..., however, cover only a part of his reign. To judge from the much later legends and chronicles, Sargon’s conquests continued to range far and wide; he may even have sent his armies to Egypt, Ethiopia, and India"
the latter one as having important gaps\textsuperscript{34}. In the course of studies the idea has always prevailed, that Sargon was solicited by his merchants to intervene against Purushhanda. The presence of merchants and the fact that Purushhanda is also attested in the Old Assyrian texts from Cappadocia have often led to establish a relationship between the \textit{Şar tamhārī} and the Old Assyrian trade, meaning that the Old Assyrian trade in Anatolia was preceded by an Akkadian trade in the same area, established by Sargon\textsuperscript{35}.

I have already suggested that the plot should be reconstructed in a different way, and that the theme of the text is basically an opposition between divine and human advices\textsuperscript{36}. Sargon’s enterprise is originated by a dream sent by Ishtar; as a counterpoint an untrustworthy dream is sent by Enlil to Nur-Dagan king of Purushhanda. Before venturing in the expedition suggested by Ishtar, Sargon consulted his merchants (as experts in roads) and his soldiers. The human advices are negative (or perhaps: the soldiers reply in the negative but the merchants in the positive?), but Sargon is not discouraged. Trusting in Ishtar’s suggestion, he executes the enterprise all the same, and has such a fast success as to convince Nur-Dagan to surrender without any resistance. As far as the difficulties are concerned, emphasis is put on the road to be followed, on rivers and mountains to be crossed. As regards the success, emphasis is put on the submissive attitude of Nur-Dagan and on the materials obtained\textsuperscript{37}. Then the return to Akkad takes place; there is no conquest (and there had been no battle).

Such being the plot of the story, the problem originating the text must be related to the possibility of initiating trade relations with Anatolia: the text is suggesting a positive solution of the problem, on the basis of

\textsuperscript{34} The variety in tradition is underscored by Glassner, RA 79 (1985), pp. 115-119, who however mixes two different stories (with a similar plot): the expedition against (and destruction of) Shimurrum, and the expedition to Burushhanda.

\textsuperscript{35} Cf. esp. Weidner, \textit{Zug Sargons}, p. 81 (“eine Delegation der altbekannten babylonischen Kolonie in Kappadokien (Kültepe)”; history of the colony, originally established by Kish, on pp. 97-98); also e.g. Lewy, \textit{Anatolia}, \textit{passim}. On the contrary Garelli, \textit{Assyriens en Cappadoce}, pp. 49-50 is quite critical about the historicity of the “King of the Battle”.


\textsuperscript{37} Cf. the two motifs pointed out by Glassner, RA 79 (1985), pp. 120, 122-125: “les difficultés de la route” and “le charisme de la victoire” (p. 124: “la volonté d’acquérir les richesses”). On the road difficulties, Weidner, \textit{Zug Sargons}, pp. 85-93 suggested that CT 22, 48 (the text accompanying the so-called “Babylonische Weltkarte”) was a detailed description thereof; but the text does not refer to Sargon’s campaign in particular, cf. now W. Horowitz, \textit{The Babylonian Map of the World}, «Iraq» 50 (1988), pp. 147-165.
appropriate omens and following Sargon's model behavior. The travel difficulties can be surmounted (following the steps of the hero), the local kings will have welcoming attitudes (thanks to the sovereign's prestige and deterrence). This kind of situation fits well with the Old Assyrian trade in Anatolia: a pacific trade, yet sustained by the prestige (and possible deterrence) of Assyria; a trade whose main difficulties were the crossing of the Euphrates and of the Taurus range; a trade based on agreements with the local kings.

The best historical context for the composition of the tale is provided by the debates accompanying the establishment of the traffic: not their first establishment (possibly a progressive process, not a politically planned one) but more probably their resumption in the time of Shamshi-Adad, after their interruption under Naram-Sin. The advocates of the resumption were suggesting, by means of the Sar tamhari, that the roads could be travelled (and had been travelled in the past), the natural obstacles could be surmounted, and the political hindrances had been eliminated by the military prestige of Shamshi-Adad — who was the embodiment of the model-hero Sargon. Perhaps the fact that a Naram-Sin (of Assyria/EShnunna) had been responsible for the interruption of trade, may explain why Sargon was chosen as model-hero instead of Naram-Sin (of Akkad), although the latter was the one who notoriously ventured beyond the Euphrates. Notice moreover that Shamshi-Adad's seal impressions have been found in Acem Hüyük, the best candidate for a localization of Purushhanda, so that the choice of this city (instead e.g. of Kanish) could have been motivated by some specific relationships.

Summing up, Sargon's enterprise has been invented in order to "found" a problematic enterprise at the time when the text was composed. The historical kernel does not exist, there is rather a "mythical kernel": the opposition of divine vs. human advices. A reasonable political frame for text composition can be suggested, at least as a hypothesis. I do not

41. Glassner, RA 79 (1985), pp. 115-126 is concerned with the mythical and literary elements; he seems totally uninterested in the historical context and political implications of the various "actualizations".
pretend that my specific solution be exact in all its details; **but I believe** that the logical procedure of this analysis is the right one.

3.2. The "Curse of Akkad".

This is the most demanding text: the events it narrates are of paramount historical relevance, and their acceptance or discarding result in quite different reconstructions of the rise and fall of Akkad. This is also the text upon which the most varied opinions have been expressed: some scholars stress the evident disagreement with what we really know about the activities of the Akkad kings in the Ekur, while other scholars believe that we are dealing with a trustworthy text, contemporary with the events it narrates. An important element is the high date of composition: some fragments are said to belong to the Ur III period. Yet I suspect that a date at the very beginning of the Isin dynasty cannot be ruled out, both from the point of view of palaeography, orthography and grammar (that Cooper studied in detail) and presumably from the point of view of the stratigraphic location of their original finding spot.

The text has a strong theological base, which by itself is badly fitting with a reliable historical record. According to the text, the destruction of Akkad by the Gutians was the divine punishment for Naram-Sin's destruction of the Ekur. (And by the way, still in recent years the text has been so literally understood to believe that the Nippur priesthood really solicited the Gutians to invade Mesopotamia.) Many more motifs are present in the text: e.g. Naram-Sin's hybris regarding the omina, the primary role that Ishtar of Akkad played for a short time, the fiscal politics and the building programs. But in general Akkad's vicissitudes are so abridged and simplified (rise under Sargon, fall under Naram-Sin) to have very few elements in common with the real development of history. A composition in the time of Naram-Sin (or shortly afterwards)

42. For convenient summaries and fresh discussions of date and historical reliability, cf. CoA, pp. 5-12 and passim; CdA, pp. 66-77 and passim.

43. CoA, pp. 41-44. Notice that Kramer, *Sumerians*, p. 62 was against a too early date: "It was composed by a Sumerian poet living several centuries after the Gutian catastrophe when Agade had long been abandoned to ruin and desolation".


45. Kramer, *Sumerians*, pp. 62-66 does not even pose a problem of reliability, and seems to accept the abridged story as historically correct. On the other side, Glassner, CdA, pp. 72-73 pretends that Akkad was never destroyed, properly speaking (but see G. McEwan, *Agade after the Gutian Destruction*, in RAI 28, pp. 8-15 on the scarce attestations in the post-Gutian periods).
seems totally unbelievable⁴⁶: the text is substantially later, in the frame of debates about restoration and rebuilding works in the Ekur, and the most obvious dating should be to the time of Ur-Nammu, the author of the next rebuilding of the Ekur⁴⁷.

The most authoritative scholars have already noticed (A. Falkenstein) that Naram-Sin did not destroy the Ekur but did reconstruct it, and his statues were worshipped there under the Ur III dynasty⁴⁸; and they have suggested (A. Westenholz, Th. Jacobsen) that the very same restoration works by Naram-Sin—necessarily starting with a demolition of the older building—could have been misinterpreted as a destructive activity⁴⁹. I would add two more observations. The first one is that Ur-Nammu’s hymn for his own reconstruction of the Ekur⁵⁰ (following the Gutian destructions, or just the normal degradation) makes no display of any anti-Akkadian attitude, and makes no mention of a destruction by Naram-Sin. Such observation, together with Falkenstein’s ones, demonstrates that in the Nippur circles, in the time of Ur-Nammu, there was no notion of a destruction of the Ekur by Naram-Sin. Therefore the “Curse of Akkad” (a text originated and well known in Nippur) cannot precede or be contemporary with Ur-Nammu⁵¹. Now, the next building intervention in the Ekur was the work of Ishme-Dagan of Isin (ca. 50/60 years after the end of the Ur III dynasty): under this king an anti-Akkadian attitude can be easily conceived, as a mythical retrojection of the actual contrasts with Kish, and in the frame of a notable revival of Sumerian literary activity that had obvious political aspects and background⁵².

⁴⁷. This is in the opinion of Westenholz in PP, pp. 122-123 note 36. Cf. also Glassner, CdA, pp. 70-71 (Utu-hegal?).
⁴⁹. Th. Jacobsen, Iphur-Kishi and His Times, AfO 26 (1978-79), p. 14 “the demolition could well have been reinterpreted in later memory as a hostile act”. Westenholz in PP, p. 122 note 32 and OSP 2, p. 28 note 34 (cf. also p. 25 note 26) “He first demolished the old temple, an operation...which earned him much opprobrium among the Sumerian ‘conservatives’”.
⁵₂. Cf. D.O. Edzard, Die “Zweite Zwischenzeit” Babyloniens, Wiesbaden 1957, pp. 79 and 86-90 for a convenient summary of the evidence about Ishme-Dagan’s restoration of the Ekur (the “Nippur lamentation”) and war against Kish (the Mari liver); more shortly also Stone, Neighborhoods, pp. 20-22; and cf. the recent article by J. Klein, Sulgi und Ishme-Dagan: Originality and Dependence in Sumerian Royal Hymnology, in Bar-Ilan Studies in Assyriology, Ramat Gan 1990, pp. 65-136 (esp. pp. 66-67) for the literary Sumerian revival under his reign. Of course this revival is not explained by
The second observation concerns the exact nature of Naram-Sin's "destruction" as told by the author of the "Curse of Akkad". In general the author's will is evidently that of providing his audience with the impression that Naram-Sin destroyed the Ekur. Yet at the level of the punctual statements, we are especially informed about economic (fiscal, commercial) facts. Also some architectural damages are mentioned, but these seem to have been quite precise and peculiar. It was probably difficult to describe a real destruction of the Ekur and of Nippur, that notoriously had never taken place, to the audience of Nippur itself.

The most specific information seems to hint at facts contemporary with the text composition: on the one side the restitution to Nippur of some older privileges and contributions that had been suppressed; on the other side the technical problems connected with a planned restoration of the Ekur. I would suggest that the works executed by Naram-Sin (and Shar-kali-sharri) had modified the traditional aspect of the Ekur as a dark and inaccessible shrine, providing the cella with a wider accessibility: "The people saw the bedchamber, its room which knows no daylight, Akkad saw the holy vessels of the gods". The question whether the cult cella must be in the dark and excluded from sight of the common people, or must be (at least in part) open and accessible, is not one of small account, on the contrary it is deeply embedded in the general conception of cult. Perhaps the second alternative was a specifically Akkadian conception? It is noteworthy that the name "Akkadians" is mentioned exactly and only in the line in question. The reconstruction works executed by Naram-Sin had probably provided the Ekur with some "Akkadianizing" features in different ways: the cultic procedures, the building pattern, even the fiscal relationships to the central power. We do not know whether Ur-Nammu's complete rebuilding of the Ekur reversed the

Ishme-Dagan's admiration for Shulgi (this is the form, not the origin of an attitude) and should be considered on the background of the political situation of the time.

53. Even Jacobsen, after his important suggestion (cf. note 50 above), keeps summarizing the text as "(Naram-Sin) attacks Nippur and demolishes Ekur".

54. The statement in l. 142 "Though they were not the goods of a plundered city" seems to openly imply that the described "destructions" and "robberies" were such at a metaphorical level only.

55. Notice that the "Nippur lamentation" (belonging to Ishme-Dagan) is more properly lamenting a state of decay than a true and proper "destruction", and is quite elusive about the responsibilities of such an assumed "destruction". For a convenient summary of the content cf. S.N. Kramer, Lamentation over the Destruction of Nippur, ErIs 9 (1969), pp. 89-93.

56. On this characteristic of the Ekur cf. the Ekur hymn (trans. by S.N. Kramer in ANET Suppl., p. 582) "the house of darkness ... the house how knows no light".


58. The rebuilding and furnishing of the Ekur under Naram-Sin and Shar-kali-sharri was mostly executed by Akkadian workmen: Westenholz, in OSP 2, p. 26.
situation; but certainly Ur-Nammu (not an Akkadian, yet a central sovereign, reigning on both Sumer and Akkad) did not deem wise to insist on it, and did not express any anti-Akkadian ill-feeling related to the Ekur.

A reasonable hypothesis is the following: in the early Isin dynasty, and more exactly under Ishme-Dagan, being the Ekur again in need of restoration works, a party or a lobby (or simply an opinion) favoring older cultic and building traditions, being supported by some omens issued on purpose (it was obviously a priestly party), claimed the Akkadian modifications to be impious and equivalent to a proper profanation and destruction. Fiscal and anti-centralistic claims were added to the cultic ones. Our text gives expression to such claims, perhaps resuming centuries-old anti-Akkadian ill-feelings: it warns the king in charge with the restoration works to be mindful of the directions coming from the omens, to remove the impious Akkadian innovations, to restore the old fiscal exemptions and customs benefits. Ishme-Dagan is a good candidate: he did restore the Ekur, he did accord fiscal exemptions to Nippur. All this took place in a political context in which (differently from the Ur III period) an anti-Akkadian position could be freely expressed, since the Akkad area was no longer a part of the central empire (Ur-Nammu was “king of Sumer and Akkad”), but the different and rival (even fighting) kingdom of Kish. The “historical information” that the text contains about Akkad needs to lose its emphasis, as providing a generic and biased picture. The best information provided by the text deals with the polemics on the re-building of the Ekur, and with the hostility between Isin and Kish.

3.3. The “General Rebellion”.

The false Naram-Sin inscription (the so-called Boissier inscription) celebrating his victory on a coalition led by Iphur-Kish is a clear case of pseudo-historical composition based on precise original elements (Old Babylonian copies of Naram-Sin’s inscriptions) which have been recently published. Although celebrating specific events, these and other original inscriptions make use of the generalizing topos “when all the four parts

of the world rebelled against me"\textsuperscript{62}; of the generalizing title “victor of nine battles in one year only”\textsuperscript{63}; of cumulative lists of vanquished countries\textsuperscript{64}. On such a literary and celebrative base, condensating different events into a unified scenery\textsuperscript{65}, the story has been built of a “general rebellion” against Naram-Sin, a story that many scholars are still accepting as historically reliable\textsuperscript{66}.

The more precise and significant information in the Boissier text concerns Kish. Such information, including the name of the rebel king Iphur-Kish\textsuperscript{67}, comes from the original monuments, yet it is noteworthy that the Kish episode has been selected to the exclusion of other passages. In other words: why was the Naram-Sin/Iphur-Kish affair resumed in Old Babylonian times? The Boissier text is typically Old Babylonian, and the Mari exemplar makes us sure of a pre-Hammurabi date\textsuperscript{68}. The mention of a former “freeing” of Kish by Sargon, conferring the characters of ingratitude and oath-breaking on the rebels, is not present in the direct sources (such as BT 1 or N 3539), but its general idea can be traced back to Sargon’s original inscriptions, where it is linked with his victory over Lugalzaggesi and the South\textsuperscript{69}. Not only did Sargon confirm some kind of privileges and exemptions to Kish, he did even continue to use the old town as capital city (while the new Akkad was being built), and to use the title “king of Kish” (not yet “king of Akkad”). This state of things changed under Naram-Sin and the counterposition Kish vs. Akkad

\textsuperscript{62} Bassetki i 5-9 (FAOS 7, p. 81); Foster, ARRIM 8 (1990), pp. 30-31 (ix 15-18, 27-31 = pericope 8 and 9 at p. 33).

\textsuperscript{63} Bassetki: i 13-15 (FAOS 7, p. 81); Statue A: 6-8 (FAOS 7, p. 89; cf. Glassner, CdA, p. 15); N 202+: ii 1 (Michalowski, JCS 32 [1980], pp. 239-240 and note 19; FAOS 7, p. 268). Cf. now also Kutscher, \textit{Royal Inscriptions}, p. 18; and especially Foster, ARRIM 8 (1990), p. 42 on the origin of the “general insurrection” tradition from the “nine battles” motif. But see already Cooper, CoA, p. 17 “the traditions of these grand coalitions were originally inspired by that year of nine battles”.

\textsuperscript{64} On the anachronisms in the Old Babylonian imitations of such lists, Grayson - Sollberger, RA 70 (1976), p. 108: “il est vrai que certains des noms ... sont anachroniques ... mais il est difficile de penser que leur inclusion ne reflète pas une tradition valide” is logically faulty, and quite diagnostic of a different paradigm.

\textsuperscript{65} Cf. already Cooper, CoA, p. 17 “Confusion, too, has probably occurred, with campaigns of many years combined into a mammoth confrontation”.

\textsuperscript{66} Cf. especially Jacobsen’s important treatment in AFO 26 (1978-79), pp. 1-14.


\textsuperscript{69} FAOS 7, pp. 159 (Sargon C 1: iv 28-33) and 173 (Sargon C 4: ix 18-23).
reached the level of armed contrasts (as already pointed out by Jacobsen and eventually proved by the BT 1 text).

These are the model events and the related documentary materials: celebrative inscriptions such as BT 1 (used almost literally), plus other original monuments, plus the generalizing topoi. Now: where is one to locate the actualization? which event provides the best fitting historical context for the composition of the Old Babylonian text? An appropriate turn of time can be easily found: the rise of the Babylon dynasty was obviously characterized by fights against Kish, since the close proximity of the two kingdoms made it necessary for the new center to enlarge its space to the detriment of the old one. This is the phase when the equivalence Akkad = Babylon originated, to eventually meet an unparalleled success and duration. The Akkad model was employed by the Babylonian kings in order to justify their action against Kish, an action endowed with important responsibilities due to the millenary political role and prestige of Kish.

I am even tempted to proceed beyond, by more precisely identifying a Sumu-abum/Sargon who gets a first victory but leaves Kish “free”, and a Sumu-la-El/Naram-Sin who profits of a “rebellion” to definitively annex the rival kingdom. Our text, justifying the annexation and recalling the former victory and freeing, should be dated to the reign of Sumu-la-El.

A last observation: in that period the Akkadian model was used not only by Babylon, but also by Kish itself, to judge from the Ashduni-yarim inscription with its impudent use of the motif “when all the four parts of the world rebelled against me” with reference to a military episode which seems to have been a quite minor one — an episode to which nobody is willing to confer the historicity of a “general rebellion”, as is normally done for its prototype of Naram-Sin.

3.4. The "Legend of Naram-Sin".

The historical reliability of the "legend of Naram-Sin"\textsuperscript{74} has been maintained only in the frame of a specific theory about Indo-Germanic origins and migrations\textsuperscript{75}, and is by now completely disqualified. No "historical kernel" exists, no literary model can be traced to the original inscriptions — apart from the usual cumulative listing of the vanquished countries\textsuperscript{76}. No king would celebrate and commend to future memory the story of his own failures, as the author of this narr\textsuperscript{7} pretends to do.

On the contrary, it has been rather easy to find out literary parallels to the narrative core of the legend\textsuperscript{77}. This is centered on the problem of the negative omens, and of the impious king trying to counteract them through human/technical information. These parallels are so widespread as to stretch from the Old Testament to early Roman history, and prove that our text has a mythical and not historical character.

The historical problems and debates providing the frame for the composition of our text are to be sought for on the basis of the subject matter of oracle consultation: if and how to resist invading hordes. The text suggests that it is useless to fight against them in field battles, and the only thing to do is to entrench oneself behind the city wall and await for the passing away of the danger — either thanks to an expedient (the freeing of prisoners, that also has literary parallels\textsuperscript{78}) or to the self-exhaustion of the enemies. This advice can be compared to documents of varied dates: from a letter of Akkadian period concerning the invading Gutians\textsuperscript{79}, to the letter sent by the Alashiya king to his Ugaritic colleague at the eve of the Sea Peoples invasion\textsuperscript{80}, not to consider later allusions to the same topos\textsuperscript{81}. I do not either believe that the first parallel is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} Cf. the excellent summary by Gurney, AnSt 5 (1955), p. 96 bottom.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Naram-Sin e i presagi difficili, pp. 37-41.
\item \textsuperscript{78} Ibid., p. 40.
\item \textsuperscript{81} Cf. Glassner, CdA, p. 85 for a possible late echo (Ishtar's dream by Ashurbanipal: \textit{ARAB II}, 861) of the advice "don't make war, let the gods settle the problem".
\end{itemize}
pertinent enough to provide our text with a properly Akkadian "origin"; or the second parallel can be effective in displacing its historical background so late in time and West in space. And since it is difficult to imagine the Cypriot scribe able and willing to make a literary quotation, we can only deduce that the advise "entrench yourself behind the city wall, and wait" had a general (also extra-literary) diffusion and was part of the normal repertoire of the possible behaviors in case of danger. An Akkadian origin for the topos (rather than the event) is quite possible on the base of the Gutian letter, and could have been a factor in the composition of our text.

Assuming as probable that the extant opinions are those that won the debates, we should deduce that the historical frame of our text was an invasion neither faced in battle nor won by the central king. Otherwise the text would have been at least modified and provided with a different ending (in order to safeguard the reliability of the omens). Taking for granted that in the Old Babylonian period the equivalence Akkad = Babylon was normally accepted, the situation faced by Naram-Sin can be paralleled by that faced by the last kings of the Hammurabi dynasty, under the pressure of the Cassite tribes. A "date" in the time of Samsu-ditana could be proposed, although it would be rather emblematic than actually demonstrable.

Yet the mention of Shubat-Enlil as the starting (or resting) point of the invaders creates a problem. The role and perhaps the very name of this city seems to be limited to Shamshi-Adad's reign. If this matter is to be taken into account, then the only possible scenery is Hammurabi's Babylon, put under pressure by a coalition stretching from Upper Mesopotamia and Assyria to Eshnunna and Elam. In this case the text would preserve a "losing" advice, because Hammurabi defeated his enemies, proving to be perhaps as disdainful of the negative omens as Naram-Sin, but certainly much more successful.

Lastly, the possibility also exists of a mixed solution, in accordance with some inconsistencies between the narrative core of the text and its wisdom frame. Possibly the original text belonged to Hammurabi/Shamshi-Adad's times, was centered on the omens problem, and arose in the context of the wide-range wars taking place in Mesopotamia with the participation of troops coming from or recruited in the Zagros. The text could have been eventually reworked at the end of the Babylonian dynasty or at the beginning of the Cassite one, with emphasis on the topic "invasion of mountaineers", and with the addition of a wisdom-like finale in line with the pessimistic and anti-heroic trends of that age.

83. Cf. Cooper, CoA, p. 17 "reminiscent of the heterogeneous coalitions that we know actually existed in later periods from the Mari correspondence"
3.5. The geographical text.

This text\(^84\) has produced in the past the most divergent hypotheses, from Sargon of Akkad\(^85\), through Sargon I of Assyria\(^86\) and Shamshi-Adad I\(^87\), down to Sargon II\(^88\). On the one hand it is clear that the author had in mind Sargon of Akkad; on the other hand the text does not belong to the Old Babylonian tradition and is only known from one Neo-Assyrian tablet from Ashur and one Neo-Babylonian tablet\(^89\). In the attempt to date the text, the toponyms have been considered, but these are varied as for origin and time. Some toponyms are certainly fitting into the Old Akkadian period, echoing lists of coalitions or of vanquished countries\(^90\). Other toponyms belong to the Old Babylonian scenery, and would be anachronistic in the 3rd millennium. Lastly, other names and geographical patterns cannot be assigned earlier than the late Neo-Assyrian times (echoing e.g. texts of Sargon II)\(^91\).

In similar conditions\(^92\), as archaeologists know very well, the date is provided by the most recent “fossils”: the text in its extant form cannot be dated earlier than the end of the 8th century\(^93\). Obviously a

85. W.F. Albright, *A Babylonian Geographical Treatise on Sargon of Akkad's Empire*, JAOS 45 (1925) 193-245 (composed under the Isin dynasty, but reliable on the geography of Sargon's empire); Smith, *Early History*, pp. 86-90 (notwithstanding many anachronisms and unreliable details, “the text ... does indicate the extent of Sargon's dominions”, and represents “a sound tradition as to the course of Sargon's conquering campaigns”); cf. more literature in Weidner, AFO 16 (1952-53), p. 2 note 4. These scholars assume that the described empire is that of Akkad, but the text was composed (or underwent substantial reworking) in later times.
88. Still in the '50s, Weidner, AFO 16 (1952-53), p. 2 considered such a late datation as a purely theoretical possibility, obviously to be excluded.
89. The Ashur text was found in the so-called “Haus des Beschworungspriesters” together with hundreds more texts dated to the period from Sargon II to the end of the Assyrian empire. Cf. O. Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur*, II, Uppsala 1986, pp. 41-76 (esp. p. 57 with note 117).
90. On such lists as a source for our text, cf. Grayson, AFO 25 (1974-77), p. 57. Third millennium toponyms unattested in later periods are quite few (e.g. Ebla and Armanum on l. 13).
91. Cf. e.g. the Dilmun/Kaptara pattern (Sargon II), or the mention of Bazu (Esarhaddon).
92. The stratified toponyms had been clearly tabulated already by Albright, JAOS 45 (1925), p. 242.
Neo-Assyrian scribe willing to provide his world map with an Akkadian colouring had at his disposal the Old Babylonian literary texts about Sargon and Naram-Sin, in their turn incorporating Old Akkadian toponyms. In the 8th-7th centuries the original Akkadian monuments had disappeared since long, also the school collections of their inscriptions were no longer copied and kept in the libraries. Who wants to maintain that our text, although Neo-Assyrian in its present form, goes back to a lost Akkadian original (this is in fact explicitly or implicitly maintained by the partisans of its reliability), should bear the burden of proof — since in general terms it is not easy to understand how such a lost original could have been available to the Neo-Assyrian scribes.

(By the way: in this case of stratified materials, the diversity in “paradigms” is clear. According to the older procedure, which focused on the historical kernel, since the text describes the Akkad empire, it must go back in its substance to the Akkadian period, apart from later additions and modifications. According to the new procedure, which focuses on the text itself, the text belongs to the age in which it was composed, apart from sources used by its author. An evaluation of the text, which is basically the same, gives origin to quite diverse historical evaluations in the two paradigms94.)

While most of the attention has been paid to the toponyms, strangely enough no attention has been paid to the most characteristic motif of the text, namely the idea of providing the length (in bēru) of the various countries, ascribing to the great Sargon the project of measuring the entire world95: a project of which our text pretends to be the final result. Now, lengths in bēru are occasionally attested in the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions of any period, but always for short distances or else in stereotyped idioms. Suddenly, under Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, of some congruence in toponyms — that the Old Babylonian Kazallu poem “rapporte aussi à son (= Sargon's) règne un traité géo-politique fameux (= our geographical text) dont l'application demeurait encore discutable”. The congruence simply shows that the author of the geographical text had at his disposal literary texts like the Kazallu legend.

94. E.g. Weidner’s definition of the text (AfO 16 [1952-53], p. 3) as “das Produkt eines assyrischen Priesterschreibers, der vereinigen wollte, was den ihm erreichbaren älteren Quellenerken über die geographische Ausdehnung des Reiches Sargons von Akkad und ihre einzelnen Teile zu entnehmen war” is basically correct, yet its historical use seems completely wrong to me. Cf. p. 23 “Ob ich 'Schweiz' oder 'Helvetia' sage, bleibt sich sachtlich gleich, und so dürften in unserem Text die einzelnen Landschaften, die Sargons Reich bildeten, an sich richtig aufgezählt sein, auch wenn stellenweise ältere Namen durch jüngere ersetzen sollten”.

95. Ll. 31-32 “Sargon, king of the universe, when he conquered all the lands covered by the sky, delimited their borders and measured their magnitude".
systematic and detailed measurements in bēru are recorded, in connection with expeditions in far-away lands: Esarhaddon’s expedition to Bazu, Esarhaddon’s expedition to Egypt and Ashurbanipal’s campaign against the Arabs south-east of Damascus. Clearly, under those two kings military expeditions in far-away lands were used as occasions to take measurements of the roads travelled and consequently of the lands crossed through — roads and lands located outside the long-known territory of Mesopotamia. Differently from previous (mainly 9th century) itineraries, that simply recorded the daily stages, the new measurements were taken in bēru: probably also because the measured roads passed through uninhabited areas, with no fixed stages to be recorded.

Although that was a purely Late-Assyrian program and procedure of measurement, an Akkadian “model” (with the burden of an authoritative old tradition) cannot be ruled out: it is even made probable by the recent publication of a fragment of Akkadian (Naram-Sin?) itinerary, with the length of the road recorded both in stages and in linear measurement. The fragment shows an Akkadian recording of the army’s progress on the road system (inside Mesopotamia), and is a good forerunner of the 9th century Assyrian “itineraries”, probably through Old Assyrian / Old Babylonian mediation. The fragment cannot be used to date back to the Old Akkadian times the project of measuring the entire world. Such a project must be attributed to Esarhaddon, and its completion or interruption to Ashurbanipal. Back to the reign of one of them (I would prefer Esarhaddon) we should date a text celebrating the realization of the project and attributing it to the prototype-king Sargon of Akkad. Being our text a quite literary piece of work, highly stereotyped and also non-homogeneous, the main difficulty is to judge how far does it reflect the measurements that had actually been carried on by the army during its progress through unexplored lands. My impression on this point is rather negative. Perhaps a scribe, who knew the project in general terms but not yet its practical results, tried to

96. R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons*, Graz 1956, p. 56. I do not accept the location of Bazu in North-Western Arabia, proposed by D. Potts (*The Road to Meluhha, JNES* 41 [1982], pp. 279-288) and by M. Astour (paper presented at the 39th RAI, Heidelberg 1992), but this point is irrelevant here.
100. B.R. Foster, *A Sargonic Itinerary*, in RAI 38, pp. 73-76.
complete quickly "on paper" an idea whose technical realization proved long, difficult, expensive — even endless and impossible.

It is hardly necessary to add that such a text cannot in any case represent a source (not even an indirect source) as for the achievements of Sargon of Akkad and on his range of action in distant lands.\footnote{102 The authoritative treatment by C.J. Gadd, \textit{The Dynasty of Agade and the Gutian Invasion}, Cambridge 1963, pp. 15-17, while recognizing the "uncertain authority" of our text, goes on with a lengthy discussion of the most important toponyms, as if they were in fact relevant to the definition of Sargon's military activity (with qualifications like "This list has more importance for its bearing on Sargon's conquests in the north and east than in the direction of Syria and farther west").}
MEMORY AND DEED:

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE POLITICAL EXPANSION

OF THE AKKAD STATE

Piotr Michalowski

The unique status of the Old Akkadian state in ancient and modern historiography creates a particular challenge to historians. It is obvious that the Old Akkadian State is a construct from our interpretations of surviving ancient materials, but the gravity of the traditions concerning "il primo impero universale" has been particularly impressive, as Akkad and its fate acquired a unique place in Mesopotamian ideology and tradition. So much has been written on the Sargonic dynasty—in antiquity as well as in our time—that it is difficult to throw off the mantle of tradition, step aside, and analyze the surviving data without the pressure of received views. Although the way in which these matters were played out in the historical imagination of Sumer, Babylonia, Assyria, and even Hattushash changed over time, modern observers have often leveled them out on a synchronic plane, so as to paint a uniform portrait of a historical period. Contemporary Sargonic propaganda texts, later legends dressed in anachronistic garb, as well as modern ideas about history, language, politics, and ethnicity, have all been infused into this portrait; as a result it is often difficult to unravel all the levels of interpretation that have accrued over the ages. The weight of this combined tradition is so burdensome that it has even led one scholar to pronounce that "with some exaggeration, it might thus be said that the Akkadians regarded Sargon and his successors as a sort of Messiah". Many of our textbooks have immortalized the language of ancient propaganda, as their authors view history as no more than a paraphrase of ancient chronicles and inscriptions.

1. I would like to thank Gary Beckman, Brian Schmidt, Hayim Tadmor, and particularly Geoffrey Emberling for their comments on a draft of this article, as well as David I. Owen and Harvey Weiss for providing me with unpublished manuscripts of their work.
2. For the most recent survey, see Glassner, CdA.
3. A. Westenholz, The Old Akkadian Empire in Contemporary Opinion. in PP n 111
Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the portraits of the period under discussion—in modern as well as in ancient historiography—is the firstness of things Old Akkadian. A mere glance at the scholarship on the subject would lead one to conclude that the kings of Agade were the first to bring together Sumer and Akkad into a unified state, and the first to focus much of their energy on the development of the concept of charismatic kingship. This seems evident from any cursory examination of royal inscriptions, of artistic representations, of architectural remains, and of other contemporary documents. One may wish to grant primacy to Sargon in these matters, but one has to admit, at the same time, that the full scope of the trappings of this new vision of central authority elude us to a large extent. We can discern a grand vision of self-representation in the fragmentary remains of a large textual corpus, but the more important symbols—the contemporary public displays of the kingship— are largely lost to us for ever. Some public activities, such as royal journeys through the kingdom, have left traces in the form of administrative notations, but the scope of the non-textual celebration of kingship in ritual, public displays of worship and loyalty, as well as victory celebrations—displays that were meant for a large untutored public that spoke many languages and dialects, and may have been beholden to a variety of cultural traditions—all of these can merely be conjectured. Even when direct evidence is lacking, one can try to fill out the picture with other information, as is the case with propaganda rituals of the late Roman empire, which must partly be studied not through Roman records but through the survival of rituals and traditions in neighboring and successor states.

Not only the concepts of charismatic kingship, but the notion of "empire", or perhaps, more modestly, of the political control of a large area that had previously been in the hands of disparate city-states, is universally ascribed to the rulers of Agade. This is unlikely. We are speaking of a small part of the world, and there were other highly developed state formations in neighboring areas, and in other parts of the globe, whose cultural, political, or military accomplishments may have been comparable. Because of the lack of written records, and as a result

4. A major portion of the surviving monumental art of the period can be seen in P. Amiet, L'art d'Akadê au Musée du Louvre, Paris 1976. One should not omit from the discussion the impressive cylinder seals of Akkad times. These also had an effect on later generations; see M. Trokay, Renaissance thématique accadienne dans la glyptique kassite, in O. Tunca (ed.), De la Babylonië à la Syrie, en passant par Mari, Liège 1990, pp. 87-96.

of the way in which our own archaeology has been done in the past, we lack sufficient information on historical development in these other lands. Thus, by default, we focus here on Mesopotamia and its environs, and we cannot escape a skewed perspective. We do so with full deliberation, not to promote any particular agenda, but to focus attention on specific issues.

As we concentrate our attention on Mesopotamia we cannot avoid inquiring into the difference between the accomplishments of the Sargonic kings and those of their predecessors in Sumer and Babylonia, or in Syria, as we now learn more about the early political history of that area. But due to the nature of our written sources, it is difficult not to see the history of surrounding areas, of Elam, the Persian Gulf, northern Mesopotamia and Syria, not to speak of points as far west as Anatolia, in relationship to the Akkad state. Indeed, sometimes it has seemed logical to ascribe certain forms of secondary state formation in those regions to the influence, direct as well as indirect, of the Akkadian kings. This is not to say that I uncritically espouse the center-periphery concepts that were so popular in the Seventies and Eighties. As many have argued in recent years, this paradigm, which focuses on central cultural nodes and their dominating influence on peripheral societies, can be theoretically limiting as well as enlightening. The notion of periphery is useful as a relational political term, but one must be careful not to overstate the degree of influence and control of so-called “centers”. In Western Asia these relationships were extremely fluid and the contact networks that were sporadically established usually lasted only a few generations. If we do chose to look at the relationships between Akkad and its own periphery, to use that metaphor for practical purposes, we find that it is relatively simple to provide a short synopsis of conventional ideas on the matter. Once one begins to take these concepts apart, they appear to be less obvious than would appear at first glance.


The firstness of Akkad's reach, which I referred to above, is a matter of some debate, and it is not so much the extent of the direct influence of this state that is at issue, as is the profile of its tentacles. We know that there had been earlier short-lived attempts at unification of Sumer under one banner, and that they fell to the ever-present centrifugal forces of city-state organizations. One cannot say more than that as the record is too fragmentary and the details uninformative. More important, we now have a large body of archaeological data on the expansion of the influence of late Uruk civilization upon, or even Sumerian colonization of, surroundings areas—in Iran, northern Mesopotamia, Syria and Anatolia, with influence even reaching the delta of Egypt—more than seven hundred years before the rise of Akkad. The evidence from such sites as Godin Tepe, Habuba Kabira, or Hamman el-Turkman demonstrates that this period of expanded Sumerian presence and influence lasted for no more than about two hundred years, a time span comparable to the length of the Akkad dynasty. The two periods—Uruk and Akkad—have been compared and contrasted for a variety of purposes. The accent has usually fallen on the most striking overall difference in political organization: the independent city-states of earlier times, which shared many cultural features, as opposed to the strong centralized authority of the Akkad kings, who have often been viewed as culturally quite different from "Sumerian" rulers. As important as that may have been, we are still not well informed about the social and economic trends that accompanied political and military action. The differences in kind between the source materials have influenced the analysis of Uruk and Akkad times, but there is a general consensus on certain matters. It may be useful, as a starting point, to cite here an instructive quotation from a recent study by Guillermo Algaze:

"A particularly clear and well-documented example is that of the Akkadian period in the second half of the third millennium B.C., when the sporadic raids and trade expeditions of the late Early Dynastic kings were regularized and institutionalized. This was accomplished by 1) the extension of political control into the neighboring Susiana plain of Khuzestan (Susa and possibly Upper Tigris areas [Nineveh and its environs, Assur]); 2) the establishment of a network of enclaves at focal nodes along the lines of communication crisscrossing the northern Mesopotamian plains (Brak, Mari, and possibly Nuzi); 3) the intensification and

regularization of exchange with an ever-widening circle of peripheral communities along an arc spanning the Persian Gulf coast and beyond (Magan, Meluhha, Dilmun), the Taurus/Anti-Taurus highlands (Silver Mountain, Purushhanda), and the coastal upland ranges of Lebanon and Syria (Cedar Forest); and 4) periodic military expeditions and raids against local polities not amenable to trade (e.g. Ebla, Armanum, Subartu, Lullubu, and Simurrum)."

This appears to be a relatively uncontroversial summation of the general opinions concerning the relationships of Akkad to its peripheries. A closer look at the data pertaining to contacts, to use a neutral term, with the Gulf areas as well as northern Mesopotamia and Syria, indicates that the information we have at present is episodic and incomplete. The available information, when it is stripped of modern commentaries, is sparse at best, and cannot be used for a full description of the nature of these contacts. It may be useful to review these matters once again, beginning with an overview of relationships with the south.

The references pertaining to the lands that the ancients called Magan, Meluhha, and Dilmun have been repeatedly collected and studied in the past two decades, most recently by Wolfgang Heimpel. The classic native statement on these matters is derived from an inscription of Sargon in which the Akkadian ruler boasted that he had ships from Meluhha, Magan, and Dilmun dock at the quay of Agade. A similar claim is found in an inscription of his second successor, Manishtusu. Sargon's grandson, Naram-Sin, fought with Magan and it is apparently confirmed by the existence of inscribed vessels—a goblet, a vase, and a bowl—which purport to be from the booty of Magan. Sargonic economic texts sporadically mention trade with Magan, copper from Magan, people from Meluhha and Dilmun, as well as Dilmun ships and possibly boatmen. Unfortunately, it is presently difficult to correlate any of this information with archaeological or epigraphical material from the Persian Gulf and adjacent areas, even though our knowledge of the early history of these regions has increased considerably in late. Excavations on the island of Bahrain, on the Saudi coast, and in Oman, have revealed a rich culture area that was sustained by its own independent dynamic, as well as by contacts with Mesopotamia, and with points further east in Iran and India. The absolute chronologies of the various centers, as well as their synchronicity, are still a matter of some dispute, and therefore it is

13. This information has been now conveniently brought together by D.T. Potts, The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity. Volume I: From Prehistory to the Fall of Achaemenid Empire, Oxford 1990.
difficult to relate local developments to the history of Mesopotamia. Certain trends can be established: for example, it has been suggested that pottery and other items found in graves in Oman are direct imitations of Mesopotamian artifacts from the Jemdet Nasr period, and therefore one can argue for strong direct contact with southern Mesopotamia. More precisely, we now know that Jemdet Nasr and Early Dynastic pottery found at Hili and Um an-Nar in the United Arab Emirates was actually imported from Sumer. This information is highly suggestive, but one can interpret it in various ways. It does not in any way establish the actual presence of foreign people in the Gulf area, but it does give testament to commercial contacts. A similar situation is encountered on Bahrain at one of the main archaeological sites on the island. In a recent communication Flemming Højlund noted that: “it has been overlooked that around a half of the pottery found in Qal’a I levels is pure Mesopotamian, in ware, shape, decoration and execution”. Qal’at al-Bahrain level I is contemporary to early and classical Sargonic in Mesopotamia, but once again this cannot be used to prove the dominant presence of Mesopotamians in Bahrain.

Discoveries of this kind typically lead to complex questions that cannot be answered without more data and specific interpretive models. If we follow the information further, we find that Qal’a IIa, which is provisionally considered to be contemporary with late Sargonic, does not contain any Akkadian pottery. How we are to interpret this is not clear. Højlund has suggested that this “may be a reflection of Bahrain as the centre of a politically independent state slowly taking control of the trading between the Southeast and Mesopotamia”.

If one compares this documentation with references from previous and subsequent periods, then it is possible to question if this constitutes evidence for “the intensification and regularization of exchange with ... the Persian Gulf coast and beyond (Magan, Meluhha, Dilmun)” as proposed by Algaze. One must keep in mind that our inscriptive evidence does not necessarily indicate new kinds of contacts; one has to take in account the paucity of earlier texts that could be used as evidence.

16. Mynors notes that this was not prestige pottery and therefore the contents of the vessels was the real object of exchange.
in these matters, as well as the new kinds of narrative that were brought into play by Sargon's scribes\textsuperscript{19}. The one characteristic feature of Old Akkadian descriptions of contacts with the Gulf area is the stress on military conflict. As noted above, this region was the object of numerous raids by Sargon, Rimush and Manishtusu, or so it is recounted in the monumental inscriptions composed in their name. At the same time, it is striking that the intensive recent archaeological research conducted on the island of Bahrain, the Saudi coast, and in Oman has not revealed a shred of evidence for any Akkadian martial presence. Indeed, there seems to be no cultural cesure in Oman that could be correlated to Akkadian presence, for, as Daniel Potts has noted in connection with excavations at Tell Abraq, it is not possible to archaeologically distinguish periods that correspond to Old Akkadian and post-Akkadian contexts in Mesopotamia\textsuperscript{20}.

Other events were taking place at the time and it is difficult, if not impossible, to relate processes in different areas of Western Asia. Cleuziou and Tosi have noted that the end of the Akkad period is temporally linked with massive political changes in Iran. "By 2200 B.C. both Shar-i Sokhta and Mundigak are reduced to small villages, while Shahdad in the Kerman region enters a period of greater expansion, although there is no reason at present to relate Mesopotamian aggression and Middle Asian collapse, we may well assume that between 2300 and 2100 B.C. the entire region underwent most dramatic transformations, both from a political and cultural viewpoint"\textsuperscript{21}. Furthermore, as they point out in the same essay, one of the greatest cultural changes of the time is the significant rise in evidence of contact with the Indian subcontinent and with the seafaring merchants from that region. Akkadian "presence" or "influence" is essentially non-existent in the archaeological record, and were it not for the information contained in the Sargonic propaganda texts, we would have never imagined any large-scale military clashes, or occupation of the region by forces from the northern mainland. At most one can speak of severe disruption of native cultures during Akkad times, but even that cannot be documented at present to any significant degree.

It is virtually impossible to assess the extent of Akkadian penetration into Iran. The most conspicuous evidence of permanent Sargonic presence comes from Susa, which had long been in contact with Mesopotamia. The Old Akkadian tablets recovered from that city were produced by

\textsuperscript{19} For a later copy of a possibly pre-Sargonic royal text that mentions imports from the Gulf and beyond, see P. Michalowski, \textit{Magan and Meluhha once Again}, JCS 40 (1988), pp. 156-164.

\textsuperscript{20} D.T. Potts, \textit{Rethinking Some Aspects of Trade in the Arabian Gulf}, WA (in press). I wish to thank the author for kindly placing his manuscript at my disposal.

the occupiers. The personal names in these texts are Akkadian22; they belonged either to the foreign administration or to locals who had changed their names to please the outsiders. The Susa material aside, we have little control over the information concerning Iran that the Akkad kings presented in their inscriptions.

The situation in Syria and Northern Mesopotamia is no less problematical, as the epigraphical and archaeological evidence for Akkadian presence in these areas is extremely difficult to analyze in any conclusive manner. I shall concentrate on the written documentation, as this is where I feel more secure; I shall touch on the archaeological evidence only briefly, leaving it to more experienced hands. Two obstacles provide insurmountable barriers for the uninitiated who are not directly involved in excavations in Syria. The first is terminological. It is impossible to ascertain, on the basis of articles and preliminary reports, what many excavators mean when they claim that Akkadian pottery or Akkadian levels were found at any particular site. One suspects that in most cases this means that they discovered cultural deposits that they consider contemporaneous with the time of Sargonic period in Mesopotamia. It is less clear, however, if any of these materials in any way reflect southern occupation of any given site. The second barrier, which is linked with the first, is chronological. As far as one can ascertain, there is no secure absolute chronology for early Syrian cultures. Much progress has been made in recent years in the analysis of pottery sequences, but it is still difficult to arrange the Amuq and Hama pottery and their counterparts at sites such as Mardikh, Leilan, and Brak in a way which would provide a good match with the chronology of Mesopotamia. Massive changes can be observed at certain large sites in Syria in periods that are either contemporary with, or slightly earlier than the rise of the Sargonic state. The exact dating of these changes is, of course, of crucial importance to our discussion. The problem is apparent from the following statement by Harvey Weiss, the excavator of Shehna/Shubat-Enlil/Tell Leilan23:

"The date of the circumvallation of Tell Leilan, and the date of the contemporaneous ceramic assemblages and settlements at other large sites (Mozan, Hamoukar, Nineveh, Taya Hadhail, Khoshi) is crucial evidence for understanding their emergence as cities. If these cities antedate the well-documented Sargonic incursions into this region, it is possible to understand their development, at least in part, as an endogenous process. If, however, these cities did not appear until after the start of

mid-third-millennium incursions into the region, then these cities must represent the agglomeration and circumvallation of regional populations as a protective or defensive effort against southern attack”.

These are important questions and the excavator has himself begun to answer some of them in light of his own work at Leilan and of surveys and excavation work at other sites in the Habur area. It would appear that Leilan began as a large, planned city at least two centuries before the Old Akkadian period, and that state formation and urbanism can therefore in no way be directly linked in any way with Sargonic presence or influence in the area

The Old Akkadian inscriptions make great claims about raids and expeditions in Syria and Northern Mesopotamia. Briefly stated, here is the data, broken down by reign and by and by the nature of the sources, distinguishing original documents from the period from later copies that may not necessarily all be authentic. For obvious reasons I leave out the later literary traditions about the military exploits of the Akkad rulers. Because of uncertainties concerning the location of many of the geographical names, I have listed all foreign places mentioned in the sources (Fig. 1)

How can we verify these claims? I do not wish to push the limits of skepticism, but the presently available information provides only limited confirmation of the claims of the clerks. On the positive side, one should point out the general agreement on military matters found in the different categories of sources charted above.

The case of Ebla is perhaps the most notorious. For a variety of reasons, archaeologists and historians have been eager to ascribe the destruction of the Early Dynastic city to a specific historical figure, first to Naram-Sin and, more recently, to Sargon. The chronological problems are separate from the textual ones and yet, for reasons that have nothing to do with the ancient data, it has been difficult for many scholars to escape the lure of the propaganda of the Agade kings. Naram-Sin claimed that he had performed a feat never before achieved in history: he had conquered Ebla and Armanum. Small matter that he conveniently forgot

25. The following chart is provided for convenience, without exact references, which can easily be found in RGTC 2, and without digressions on philological matters. The inscriptions from the period have now been collected in FAOS 7.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reign</th>
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| S. | Simurrum  
Uru’a  
Elam  
Mari? | Marhashi  
Uru’a  
Elam  
Mari  
Tuttul  
Jarmuti  
Ebla  
Susa  
Awan  
7 other Iranian cities | |
| R. | Elam  
Marhashi | Elam  
Marhashi | |
| M. | Anshan  
Sherihum  
“32 cities across the sea” | Anshan  
Sherihum | |
| N.S. | Cedar Forest  
Sources of T. and E.  
Maridaban  
Shabburnum  
Simurum  
Kirashniwe  
Arame  
Azuhinum  
Shebirinda | Cedar Forest  
Sources of T. and E.  
Magan  
Lullubum  
Armanum  
Ebla | Cedar Mountain  
Subartu  
Elam  
Marhashi  
Rimusha  
Armanum  
Ebla  
Azuhinum<sup>28</sup> |
| Sks. | Mardu in Bashar  
Elam and Zahara  
around Akshak | | |
| An. | Gutium  
Hasimmar  
Amarnum  
Ashnak | | |

Fig. 1

28. Add to this numerous unlocalized place names from Northern Mesopotamia and Syria from Naram-Sin’s inscriptions.
a claim by his grandfather Sargon, who had boasted of a similar feat, when he conquered Mari, Jarmuti, Ebla, as far as the Cedar Forest. In order to connect the archaeologically attested destruction of the city of Ebla with this textual material, one must assume that no other power was capable of such a feat, which is a very strong assumption, indeed, and one must also give much credence to the modern interpretations of these claims. If later analogy is of any assistance, we should be wary of such statements. The year names of Shulgi, second ruler of the Ur III state that succeeded Agade, provide a vivid illustration of the problem. Shulgi named his twenty-fifth regnal year in commemoration of the “destruction of Simurum”. He named the next year after its second “destruction”, the thirty-second year commemorated its third such defeat, and the forty-fourth year was called “the year Simurum and Lullubum were destroyed for the ninth time”. But that was not enough. His next year name, the most elaborate of all forty-eight, had to top the previous one rhetorical terms: “The year that Shulgi, mighty male, king of Ur, king of the four corners of the universe, smote the head of Urbilum, Simurum, Lullubum, and Karhar, with an axe, as if they were one”. Two things come to mind when one takes into account this well-known information. The first is that the verb “to destroy” (Sumerian ḫu), in such contexts, must not be taken literally, and should really be rendered as “defeat”, or like. The second, although more speculative, is equally interesting. The number nine is not to be taken literally either, as it means “for the final time”, with direct allusion to Naram-Sin’s claim that he was victorious in nine battles in one year, a claim that he made in numerous monuments and inscriptions. Such data is too fragile in nature and cannot be reduced to simple historical information; in this instance one should not connect the burning of the Early Dynastic Ebla palace, whose absolute dates have yet to be precisely set, with the statements of Naram-Sin, as tempting as that may be.

The most decisive data that testify to Akkadian presence in Syria comes, as is well known, from Tell Brak, whose ancient name remains unknown. From Sir Max Mallowan’s early excavations we have known of the monumental building with bricks stamped with the name of

31. For a general overview of the site see D. Oates, Tell Brak, in J. Curtis (ed.), Fifty Years of Mesopotamian Discovery, London 1982, pp. 62-71. Among the many attempts to identify the ancient name of the city one should mention the recent suggestions that it was either Tadum (D. Oates), (N)labshinu (K. Kessler), or Nāgar (J.-M. Durand); see D. Charpin, A Contribution to the Geography and History of the Kingdom of Khat, in S. Eichler et al. (eds.), Tall Al-Hamidiya 2, Göttingen 1990, p. 68.
Naram-Sin, as well as of two fragments of stone vases inscribed with the name of Rimush. More recent British excavations have revealed further extensive Old Akkadian buildings, probably ceremonial in nature, and have provided evidence for at least two Akkad period occupations at the site, which may be indicative of a temporary loss of Sargonic control over the city\(^3\). The excavators of the tell now believe that the major Akkadian constructions on the site should be ascribed to Naram-Sin, that they were partially destroyed in a violent conflagration, and that after a short period of time Akkad was able to restore its presence, possibly under Shar-kali-sharri, albeit on a smaller scale and for a shorter period of time\(^3\).

The powerful presence of a southern garrison at the site, documented by extensive building activity and in the epigraphical remains\(^34\), suggests that Akkadian occupation could not have been limited to the area of Brak, but would have required some support from the surrounding countryside as well as from other cities in the Habur area. The scope and the nature of this support are extremely difficult to gauge, and one must be cautious not to press the limited evidence available at present. Some archaeological evidence for an Akkadian occupation has been discovered at Tell Leilan, ancient Shehna, specifically in the period labeled Leilan II\(^b\)\(^35\). The best epigraphical evidence for Akkadian presence in the Habur area comes from an administrative text excavated at Brak and recently discussed by a number of scholars\(^36\). This laconic administrative document records 178 laborers (\(\text{g} \text{u} \text{r} \text{u} \text{s}\)) who apparently came from Nagar\(^37\), Urkish, Lillabshinmu, Shehna, and Hidar. After the summary, three lines record fifty additional laborers from Tadum, Tagdash, and from another city\(^38\). The geographical span of these place names is remarkable. Although only Shehna, that is Tell Leilan, is securely

37. Kessler and Charpin read \(\text{n} \text{a} \text{h} \text{u} \text{r} \text{K} \text{L}\); the rendering \(\text{n} \text{a} \text{g} \text{a} \text{r} \text{K} \text{L}\) was suggested by Catagnoti and Bonechi; a collation kindly provided by M. Geller does not settle the issue, and only confirms the precise nature of the hand copy.
38. Catagnoti and Bonechi read line 17 as \(\text{a} \text{l} \text{b} \text{u} \text{I} \text{a}\). Geller's collation does not favor such an interpretation. The first sign is damaged; it might be \(\text{h} \text{a} \text{b} \text{u} \text{I} \text{a}\).
identified, we seem to have here the major cities of the Habur area.

The historical significance of the text is a more difficult matter. Various authorities have proposed different scenarios for the activities of these laborers: Charpin suggested that these workers may have been brought to Brak to build the Naram-Sin palace, while Harvey Weiss has more neutrally referred to the "recruitment of Tell Leilan/Sekhna laborers at Tell Brak" as evidence for the extension of direct Akkadian control from the Naram-Sin fortress. Catagnoti and Bonechi have invested this document with more historical significance: for them it marks the maximum territorial expansion of the Sargonic state in this region, and leads one to suspect that much of the Habur triangle and points further south was in Akkadian hands.

This is what the current evidence suggests, as interpreted by the majority of scholars. It is not out of place, however, to question political terms such as "occupation" or "direct control". We can assert some form of Akkadian impact on local states, as one would be hard pressed to argue that a completely independent ruler of Tell Brak would build monumental structures with the bricks of Naram-Sin, but I wonder how much further we can go beyond in defining the nature of this impact. As was the case with the archaeological remains from the Gulf areas, the question is really a theoretical one: what kind of archaeological evidence would one need to assert certain kinds of political relationships? At Brak the argument is made primarily on the basis of monumental architectural remains, since the pottery and small finds are "almost completely of local origin", to quote Glenn Schwartz on the subject. One can easily imagine numerous scenarios of influence and control, ranging from complete independence to total subjugation, but the scale in between can be quite broad. Our histories tend to totalize such matters, and any evidence of foreign presence or influence is sufficient to adduce strong, but loosely defined, political domination. This is not the place for a full discussion of these matters, but they must be kept in mind as one proceeds with a relatively traditional discussion of the matter at hand.

New evidence for the spread of Sargonic influence in this area, to use a neutral term, has recently been made available. Two Old Akkadian tablets were discovered during the 1989 season of excavation at Mozan, although the documents are fragmentary, and their archival context is

39. The important city of Urkish has been tentatively identified as Tell Amouda. Recent excavations have failed to reveal any third millennium occupation of the site (probably Middle Assyrian Kulishhinash); see X. Faivre, Le tell d'Amouda du IIe millénaire à l'époque romaine, «Orient-Express», December 1991/92, p. 15.


uncertain. The large proportion of Hurrian personal names provides some of the earliest evidence for the penetration of speakers of this language in the Near East, and the script is of interest to historians of writing, but one cannot cite these tablets as evidence of Sargonic occupation of the city, as we do not know if they were written by scribes of an Akkadian administration, or by the clerks of some independent local entity.

The cumulative evidence, although not as conclusive as one would like it to be, suggests that for a generation or more the Old Akkadian dynasty controlled most if not all the Habur triangle. Archaeological evidence for this can only be adduced from Tell Brak, but the epigraphical material, weak as it may be, supplements this data. The exact nature of this control cannot be established, but it appears that one can now reject the notion that Akkadian campaigns laid waste to Syria and ended cultural development in the area. The major disturbance in the region came a few generations later in conjunction with the collapse of the Akkadian state. Harvey Weiss suggests that in the context of the disintegration of Sargonic control, Leilan and its environs were abandoned.

East of Brak, at Nineveh, Akkadian occupation is best documented by the claim of Shamshi-Addu that he rebuilt the Emenue temple of Ishtar originally constructed by Manishtusu. Sargonic presence at Assur has been deduced from the discovery of two objects inscribed with Akkadian inscriptions. The first is an inscription of Rimush, the second is a spearhead inscribed in the name of Azuzu, servant of Manishtusu. Although various claims have been made as to the identity of this person, we simply have no idea who he may have been, and there is certainly no evidence that he was a local governor subject to an Akkadian king. All of this proves very little.

At Mari the situation is even more ambiguous. It has been assumed by many authorities that Mari was subject to Mesopotamia in the Akkad and Ur III periods although the evidence to this effect is circumstantial, at best. The primary evidence consists of two inscribed bronze plates, one mentioning Simat-Ulmash, daughter of Naram-Sin, and the other the daughter of a priest, which is also dedicated to the same Akkadian ruler. Durand has recently argued that Mari must have been securely in the hands of Agade if a king were to have allowed his daughter to travel there, but one could also argue that the presence of these two plates

42. Lebeau, ZA 80 (1990), pp. 288-289.
43. See note 58.
44. Rimush 6: FAOS 7, p. 72, text Q.
46. Note, for example, Lebeau, ZA 89 (1990), p. 288: "Les Akkadiens allaient privilégier deux sites, Tell Brak et sans doute Mari, au détriment des tous les autres".
in a hoard of bronze in no way proves that the persons mentioned in the inscriptions actually lived in Mari at any time. Indeed, one could construe an endless number of scenarios to explain the presence of two metal objects in the palace. In the same publication Durand makes available for the first time the ancestral lists of the early rulers of Mari, who bore the title šakkanakku. This native tradition comprised a series of rulers that reached back at least to Sargonic times, but the nature of these lists is such that they cannot be used to prove that the city was subservient to a southern power. None of the Early Dynastic rulers of Mari, known from the Ebla archives and from inscribed statues found at Mari itself, are mentioned in these lists. It may be that the earlier kings were enumerated on an undiscovered tablet, but it is equally possible that the later šakkanakkus only traced their lineage back to Ididish, whose name opens the lists. It is possible that he was appointed to office by Naram-Sin, or, as Durand assumes, by his predecessor Manishtusu, but at present this is only a conjecture. The starting point for the analysis is the dynastic marriage between the houses of Apil-kin of Mari, who is mentioned in the lists, and Ur-Namma of Ur. If we take the numbers at face value, including the sixty-year reign of Ididish, then we must count 134 years back from sometime in the middle of Ur-Namma's reign, give or take a decade, to arrive at the accession year of the first šakkanakku of these genealogies. If we accept Hallo's hypothesis that the so-called Gutian period lasted only half a century or less, then it is even more difficult to arrive at such a date. The single published Old Akkadian economic tablet from Mari does not provide any information that could help determine whether Mari was firmly in the hands of the kings of Agade. We shall have to place our faith in the archaeologists once again, and wait for more conclusive evidence of Akkadian presence in the city.

To sum up our quick survey: there is unequivocal evidence of permanent Akkadian presence at Brak and in the Habur area, possibly at Assur and Nineveh, and less probably at Mari. Otherwise Akkadian presence in Syria and in the West is difficult to determine. The famous Naram-Sin rock inscription from Pir Hussein, near Dyarbekir, close to the Ergani mining district, can only attest to the long reach of the armies

51. The excavators have referred to Akkad period buildings in many publications, most recently in «Orient-Express», December 1991-92, p. 5 (“grande maison de la fin du D.A. et du début de l'époque d'Agadé”). It is not clear whether this is a chronological or cultural characterization.
of the Akkadian monarch, not necessarily to any long-term occupation of the district. The recent chance find of a duck-weight inscribed with the name of the late Akkadian ruler Shu-Durul at Titrish-Hujuk near Urfa in the Balikh drainage likewise cannot be used as evidence for late Sargonic occupation of the region.52

The urban, demographic, and political situation in Syria during the time that the Third Dynasty of Ur reigned in Sumer and Akkad is equally difficult to ascertain. The archaeological criteria for identification of materials from this time are not well established, and the written sources provide limited information. Importantly, the nature of Old Akkadian and Ur III written sources is quite different; indeed, the incommensurate nature of the information available at present must not be underestimated. We learn about the exploits of the Sargonic armies primarily from later copies of royal inscriptions that were intended to focus public attention on these deeds. There are only a limited number of copies of corresponding Ur III inscriptions, and all of them originated in the reign of one king. The administrative and economic texts from the two periods differ substantially. Old Akkadian texts from Mesopotamia record local matters. Foreign affairs, as well as matters of trade with other lands, are never mentioned in the archives that have been recovered. The one text that contains references to places outside of Sumer and Akkad is a private document belonging to a merchant by the name of Qurūdam, who probably ran his extensive financial affairs from Sippar.53 According to this text Qurūdam had accounts in Tuttul, Mari, and Al-Sharaqqa, that is, he worked up and down the Euphrates trade route. The uniqueness of this text only serves to bring home once again our dependence on propaganda texts for the reconstruction of the relationships between the Sargonic state and its neighbors.

The Ur III documentation is different. Most of our information on foreign affairs is derived from the archives stored at Drehem, ancient Puzrish-Dagan, one of the primary tax depots of Sumer. Among the thousands of cuneiform tablets from that site one can find references to the ambassadors or messengers of the independent rulers of Syrian city-states, from as far away as Byblos on the Mediterranean coast, from inland Abarnium, Ebla, Urshu, and Tuttul, as well as from Mari on the Euphrates.54 The cities of Abarnium and Urshu have yet to be securely

52. Personal communication, Elizabeth Carter.
54. For the full documentation see D.I. Owen - R. Veenker, Megunn, the First Ur III Ensi of Ebla, in EDA, pp. 263-291. David Owen has returned to the subject in a study entitled Syrians in Sumerian Sources from the Ur III Period, in M. Chavalas - J. Hayes (eds.), New Horizons in the History of Syria, Malibu 1992, pp. 107-173. Owen kindly sent me proofs of his article when he was putting the final touches on this
localized, and yet one is struck by the local absence of cities of the Habur. Other Ur III sources confirm a lack of activity by Ur-Namma and his successors in this area. Although the extent of Ur control varied during the century of its hegemony, the general military and diplomatic policy appears to have been aimed at similar goals throughout the period. The central lands of Sumer and Akkad were surrounded by buffer areas in Susiana and in the Zagros; further north, on the Tigris, Assur was under direct control for part of the time, as were a few other cities in the area. Outside of that area, independent states such as Mari and Simanum were kept under check through alliances sealed by diplomatic marriages. The main goal was the protection of the flanks of the central lands, and control over the trade and military routes into Iran, as well as over parts of the overland route through Assur towards Syria and the Mediterranean. As far as we know, no attempt was made to plunder or occupy any territory west of Assur. Harvey Weiss and his Leilan colleagues have suggested that the collapse of Akkad domination in parts of this area coincided with a rapid change in climate that led to desertification and to subsequent movement of population into Southern Mesopotamia, leading to dramatic political changes in Sumer. Depending on the nature and severity of the proposed climatic factors, one can equally well imagine that the city population may have moved into the countryside, a scenario too well attested elsewhere to need justification. However, since the evidence for this argument has not been presented in full, an extensive discussion of the matter must be postponed for now. One suspects that the issues at hand are more complex and cannot be explained by climate change alone. For example, one could argue that even though large cities in the Habur triangle may have been abandoned at the time of the collapse of Akkadian hegemony, one cannot automatically assume that this must have been accompanied by large-scale population movements out of the area.

Akkadian influence and control over this peripheral areas lasted less than a century, but the memory of these overlords remained vivid in the minds of local dynasts. One cannot deny that later kings of these regions benefited from the general memories of Agade that survived in cuneiform traditions periodically imported from the south, but there is evidence that local weavers of history had their own views on the matter, and their own sources of information that could be molded and recast for their own purposes.

For the essay, it is encouraging to note that we have independently come to many of the same conclusions.

55. See note 35 above.
The case of Shamshi-Addu is instructive. The details are well known, but will bear rehearsing here. Although every day brings new material to light from Mari, we still know almost nothing about the origins of this king; the city and lineage he came from are absent from his inscriptions and letters. Of his father Ilakabkabu, we know much less. This may be a simple matter of coincidence, but it may also be linked to the ideological foundations of his rule. For decades we have known about the genealogy of Shamshi-Addu that had been inserted into the Assyrian King List, and the publication by Jakob Finkelstein of the parallel genealogical list of the first dynasty of Babylon has added to our knowledge of Amorite royal ideology. We do not know, however, what the original context of Shamshi-Addu’s ancestors list was, since this was inserted into the Assyrian King List hundreds of years after his reign. All the information from contemporary documents points to a different source of official legitimation: the memory of the Akkad rulers. Evidence to this effect has been accumulating during the last decade and thanks to recent publications by Birot and Charpin we can see this in new light. First, the royal inscriptions. One of the few earlier rulers invoked by Shamshi-Addu is Manishtusu who in said to have built the temple of Ishtar in the city of Nineveh. The primary royal title used by the “Assyrian” ruler is šar kāšsatim, “king of the universe”, a title copied directly from the inscriptions of Rimush and Manishtusu. The wording of the stone inscriptions from Nineveh is particularly revealing:"

[Shamshi]-Addu, the strong one, king of the universe, governor of Enlil, vice-regent of Ashur, beloved of Ishtar: the temple Emenue ... which Manishtusu, son of Sargon, king of Akkad, had built, had become dilapidated. The temple which none of the kings who preceded me — from the fall of Akkad until my kingship, until the capture of Nuruggu, seven generations (dāru) had passed — he had rebuilt ..."

The direct line of kingship, from Akkad to Shamshi-Addu is projected here with force and it provides a clever double claim, for, along with descent from the Akkadian idea of kingship, if nothing else, comes to claim to the throne of the city of Assur. Thus the Amorite king was able to combine local and global aspirations through linkage with Agade.


The Mari documents from the so-called Assyrian period provide further examples of the links with Akkad. As Birot has noted, the offerings for the spirits of Sargon and Naram-Sin date from this time. He goes further and specifically suggest that the kispum offerings to these kings are a “form of a rite of legitimation”\(^{59}\). In scribal exercises from Mari we twice encounter the most direct use of this form of legitimation: the title “king of Akkad”, unique to Shamshi-Addu\(^{60}\). A less direct indication of local interests in the Sargonic past is the Mari version of an Old Babylonian literary text concerning Naram-Sin\(^{61}\).

The examples cited above represent the most vivid local usage of Akkad memories for local ideological purposes. The materials that were utilized for contemporary usage are not hard to establish. Considering the number, and the sheer length of Sargonic inscriptions that were available to Old Babylonian scribes and antiquarians in Nippur, Ur, Mari, and elsewhere, one can safely guess that Sumer and Akkad, as well as areas to the north, east, and west were inundated with public monuments, both with and without writing. Contemporary royal propaganda extolled the might of charismatic kingship in innovative ways, and we only have access to a small part of this enormous industry. Just as the later inhabitants of Mesopotamia, we are slaves of textuality, and so we see the primary focus in terms of written sources, but the hearts and minds of contemporaries were influenced, and presumably won over, by a variety of communicative means, most of which functioned only in the here and now, and are forever gone. Within this limited textual sphere we can see some of the trappings of royalty as the officials of Sargon and his successors invented and amended older traditions to create a new kind of charismatic kingship, one that began with the very choice of a throne name by Sargon, and reached its apogee in the divinization of his grandson Naram-Sin. With this came a new emphasis on the royal person in the public plastic arts and public display ceremonies that centered on the person of the monarch. In textual terms, new ideas were expressed in writing, ideas that changed as the very notions of kingship and empire evolved.

Central in this respect was the concept of space as it was manifest in the royal titulary. The propagandists of Sargon first appropriated an earlier title, \(\text{lugal Kiš} \), “king of Kish”, and embodied it with new meaning, or at least expanded its semantic range\(^{62}\). First of all it was a

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59. M. Birot, *Fragments de rituel de Mari relatifs au kispum*, in RAI 26, p. 149.
local title, one that was linked to a strong principality that may have had wide-reaching influence, but was still essentially local and, what is equally interesting, northern from the Sumerian point of view. The title was provided with more extensive scope when the pun between Kiš and kiššatum, “everything”, was fully realized. Hence the local title at once symbolized the transfer of power to a central authority in a specific area, as well as the aspirations of Sargon and his descendants to universal dominion.

Nothing like that had been tried before in Southwestern Asia, as far as we know. But this was not a static element; the ideology changed and with it the titulary. Under Naram-Sin this expression was found wanting and was supplanted by a new concept: “King of the Four Corners of the Universe”, šar kibrātim arba’im63. This title has occasioned much discussion in recent times and various curious interpretations have been suggested. At one point this was connected with Naram-Sin’s supposed conquest of the city of Ebla which, it was proposed, was divided in four parts64. Still another scholar, taking a cue from a line in Glassner’s essay on the subject, has attempted to analyze it as “king of the four river borders (i.e. of the Tigris and Euphrates)”65. More generally, one has assumed that this refers specifically to four directions, and hence is a rough synonym of šar kiššātim, “King of the Universe”. The Sumerian title lugal Kiš was used by certain rulers of the cities of Kish, Lagash, Uruk, and Ur, but Sargon and his two successors expanded the title in an Akkadian language context by eliminating the place name classifier /ki/ and made it the vehicle for šar kiššātim, but they continued to write it with the same sign that was used for the name of city of Kish. In fact, they never wrote it syllabically, as this would erase the visual and traditional association with the older version of the title66. It is not at all certain what the full import of the original title was; certainly

65. G. Buccellati, ‘River Bank’, ‘High Country’, and ‘Pasture Land’: The Growth of Nomadism on the Middle Euphrates and the Khabur, in *Tall Al-Hamidiya 2*, p. 92. One cannot accept this rendition for a variety of reasons; important among them is the fact that the Sumerian equivalent of kibrātim in this title is ub, which cannot refer to river banks. I learn from Mario Liverani that the translation “four river banks/borders” was already anticipated in F. Hommel, *Die vier heiligen Flüsse und Dûr-ilu*, OLZ 9 (1906), p. 662.
66. The first syllabic writing of the title one has to wait for Shamshi-Addu. Later scribes associated this title with Sargon and Naram-Sin; see the Old Babylonian omens that play on this (amût Šarru-kin ša kiššatim ibêlu, “the omen of Sargon who ruled the universe” (YOS 10, 13, 5 and 59, 8-9). A similar omen uses the name of Naram-Sin (YOS 10, 59, 56, iii, 9).
there is evidence that it designated more than just "ruler of the city of Kish". As Maeda has pointed out, southern rulers who bore this title unfailingly received it from Inanna, and one cannot separate this from the cult of Inanna in Kish, and from the later association of Ishtar with the city of Agade. Clearly there was some symbolic association of Inanna/Ištar with the north, more specifically with the area that was to become the center of the Sargonic state. "King of the Universe" was a grandiose claim, but under Naram-Sin a fuller view of dominion was invoked as "King of the Four Quarters" carried a more complex kaleidoscope of meanings. Here history and dominion achieved cosmological heights; the metaphor of šumam šakānum, which was to be explored later in depth in the Babylonian Gilgamesh material, was invoked in spatial terms for history and ideology were projected on a very specific spatial axis. This is not simply "the world"; it is the axes of the world, and hence the unending series of victories in the upper and lower regions, as well as in the east and west, that are the stuff of the inscriptions that begin with the title, are but sample illustrations of the universal claim of an unmatched charismatic king. The title is thus not simply an isolated ideological statement: it is an integral part of the discourse of power and hegemony.

The effects of this manipulation of literate and illiterate alike were not lost on contemporaries nor on later generations. Although Akkad monuments were visible and readable, they acquired different meanings through the ages. There can be no doubt that after the fall, Akkad became a vehicle for textual meditations of history, kingship, and power. I use the term "history" reluctantly because I am convinced that we have often asked the wrong questions when we have inquired "did the Babylonians have a sense on history". The answer to this question depended as much on our interpretations of the word "history" as it has on the study of Mesopotamian world views. For early Mesopotamian civilizations "history" was a space that informed the present, and to this end they rewrote Akkad in various ways throughout the centuries. One could not escape the brutal fact that, despite all of its glory, Akkad was gone, just as the semi-divine heroes of Uruk were dead and buried, and the reigns of mighty kings were reduced to mere mention in a scribal list or two. At times this provided the stuff of meditations on the fleeting nature of success, and of the lasting power of textual memory, as in the Cuthean Legend and in the version of Gilgamesh. During other times the successes of Sargon's family, or rather the traditions concerning their might, surfaced as legitimating or foundation myths of subsequent states, as in the cult of Sargon and Naram-Sin in Ur III Sumer at Mari, or in the adoption of these names by later Assyrian monarchs. The scribes of the later kings even composed new texts that, under anachronistic garb,
glorified the Akkad rulers to support the very institution of kingship, and to provide a charter for their masters. One thinks immediately of the "epic" text concerning Sargon's exploits in Anatolia, and particularly of the "Birth Legend" of the same king⁶⁷, and of the so-called "Geography of Sargon's Empire"⁶⁸.

We shall never be able to completely unravel these complex strands of tradition, and Akkad will always remain an impenetrable semantic concept. Archaeology and epigraphy will undoubtedly add raw data for our contemplation, and we shall be able to add many details to our historical reconstructions, but one doubts that we will ever discard all the accumulated memories that have built up over the ages concerning Sargon and his successors. This, perhaps, was the greatest achievement of these rulers. They attained glory doing the deeds of kings, but they also created images of this glory that succeeding generations could not forget. These images, in various transformations, took hold for almost two thousand years, waited in the dust for another two millennia, and have now once again found their audience.

⁶⁸. For the former see Lewis; the latter was last edited by A.K. Grayson, *The Empire of Sargon of Akkad*, AfO 16 (1972), pp. 56-64.
SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND MATERIAL CULTURE
OF THE AKKADIAN PERIOD:
CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY

Hans J. Nissen

Before entering the discussion, I should make it clear that I am speaking in relative terms: no one would ever talk in terms of total discontinuity or a complete break between the Early Dynastic and the Akkadian periods, since there is no doubt that both rest firmly within the common Babylonian tradition. Rather, the question is, whether at the beginning of the Akkad period new elements arose to a degree which would force us to talk about relative discontinuity rather than continuity.

On the one hand, the decision seems to be easy. There are enough “firsts” connected to the rise of the Akkadian dynasty to make it obvious to everyone why the question of discontinuity should be raised at all. In fact, no historian of Ancient Mesopotamia, especially of Ancient Mesopotamian art, has ever failed to stress the obvious differences between these two periods, although everyone conceded the existence of an underlying cultural continuity. The Akkadian dynasty is the first one to keep all Babylonia under political control for more than a generation; it is the first dynasty of undisputed Semitic affiliation ruling former

Sumerian territory; the language of most documents changes from the earlier Sumerian to the Semitic Akkadian; and finally, representational art has a totally new appearance. Why, then, should there be any doubt that “discontinuity” is the right term to be used?

I shall use the next few paragraphs to show you that, in spite of these “firsts”, continuity is not only the underlying principle, but that also these “firsts” are only steps in a normal continuous development.

Before entering a more detailed discussion I should like to remind you of the situation concerning our sources, particularly, our written sources. We have to keep in mind that writing was used for more than half a millennium almost exclusively as a means of economic control. Only from the middle of the 3rd millennium on did writing start to be used for more than tabulations, i.e. to write longer coherent texts of literary or historic contents. Apart from several original, very short votive inscriptions of earlier date, inscriptions reporting historic events primarily come from the excavations in Tello/Girsu and thus shed some light on the deeds and beliefs of that local dynasty. But we have next to nothing from other places. For the reconstruction even of the late part of the Early Dynastic period for the entirety of Babylonia we have to rely on very scattered information, on the often unreliable so-called “Sumerian King List” and very often we have to use our imagination to an extent which heavily reduces the credibility of our statements.

The situation is a bit better for the Akkadian period. Texts are more informative but still concern only one dynasty, which, however, happens to be the central and most powerful one. Statements on the basis of these sources, therefore, relate to all of Babylonia and not only to one city like before. Yet, the situation is far from satisfactory.

Because of the limited availability of original sources and because of the great importance of this period, scholars have always tried to enlarge our information base. Fortunately, the Akkadian dynasty was famous also in antiquity, so that the names of their rulers and their deeds were the subject of many later writings, which do report on many details not covered by contemporaneous texts. However, using these later texts, one has to be very careful, since in a number of cases it can be shown that the old names were used in propaganda compositions which were supposed to play a role of contemporary politics; the events and situations reported in these texts in fact are those of the later periods.

which, only in order to increase their impact, were connected to the old, prestigious names.

With this uneven situation it should be understood, therefore, that quite a lot of what I am going to say is hardly more than the attempt to combine the little evidence we have with some general ideas. I should also confess that one of my basic concepts is that whenever something new shows up and yet succeeds right from the start, we are bound to look for hidden precursors.

This brings us directly into our subject. While it is true that the Akkadian period witnessed the first political unification of all Babylonia under one rule lasting for more than just some years, it is not true that this was unprecedented. In fact, we know of earlier attempts during the preceding Early Dynastic III period. This period, on the other hand, was characterized by a system of decentralized political power. For some reason, however, this system was apparently not deemed satisfactory, and thus we see repeated attempts to create larger territorial units, which however, never lasted long. This very clearly shows that the idea of central power by no means was seen as the obvious answer to the older deficiencies — whatever they had been.

Later developments show a constant to and fro between centrality and particularism as the dominant feature of the political system, situations which under the influence of political thought of 19th century A.D. and because of the parallelism to Ancient Egypt, have been named “main” and “intermediate” phases, suggesting that only the periods of political unity constituted the normal development while the periods of decentralism were regrettable setbacks. Instead, as I will show presently, centrality and particularism should be regarded as two sides of the same coin; they

7. A case in point is the epic poem “The Curse of Akkad“ which I take to connect an alleged sin of Naramsin’s with the invasion of the Guti in order to deter a later ruler from committing the same sin. That Naramsin had destroyed the Ekur in Nippur is most probably a false allegation; on the contrary, we have evidence that Naramsin rebuilt the Ekur, both from brick inscriptions found at the site and from a year-name (Hirsch, AFO 20 [1963], p. 22 Cl). In addition, it should be noted that Naramsin apparently took great effort to completely (re-)build the city-wall of Nippur (C.S. Fisher, Excavations at Nippur, Philadelphia 1905, pp. 30-32). For a comprehensive discussion of the historical implications of the poem, see J.S. Cooper, CoA. While agreeing with Cooper that the poem does not intend to render the historical events faithfully, I go one step further in assuming that the reported destruction of Naramsin is not a real one but refers to the demolition of Ekur’s economic base by administrative measures taken by the central ruler (Nissen, Early History, pp. 173 ff.). More recently, the idea has been proposed that the alleged destruction may refer to Naramsin’s razing of Ekur before he built it anew (A. Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 25 and 28).

were interchangeable systems with their respective advantages and disadvantages. I shall try to name these advantages and disadvantages.

I suppose I do not have to mention that with Babylonia we are studying an area where all sedentary life depends on artificial irrigation of the fields. Yet, I should recall some peculiarities of the region which forced Babylonian culture to take a particular direction.

Irrigation water is taken primarily from the Euphrates by means of large feeder canals which would stretch like fingers into the arable plain. These canals may have several branches and break off into several courses which then will be the source for smaller channels leading the water onto the adjacent fields. Such a system is called dendritic because it branches out like a tree. Differing in size and length, such main canals would branch off from the Euphrates at several points along its course through the Babylonian flood plain. For any such system, the main branching point is the crucial spot because its control decides how much and how regular the water intake would be for the entire system. And obviously, this was the salient point for the living conditions in the area of each system. It is only logical that these nodal points become the sites of political concentration, that is, of cities and city states.

The importance of these nodal points cannot be overestimated, particularly in view of a situation in which the overall availability of water might change from one year to the next because of changing precipitation patterns in the collecting areas. This was supposedly superseded by a constant decrease of precipitation rates originating from a climatic shift as far back as the first half of the 4th millennium.

Supposedly, the decrease of water and thus the shrinkage of the irrigation systems led to an abandonment of the marginal areas and a flocking of the population to or close to the nodes. Expressed in terms of settlement patterns: during these phases we find the abandonment of a number of small villages and the growth of the cities. In most cases, the old centers served as those aggregation points, but, in addition, new centers grew in former buffer areas between the old centers, infringing upon the areas of influence of the old cities. To be sure, there had been territorial conflicts before as well as armed resolutions, but both the emergence of those “second generation cities” and the decrease of irrigation water must have created problems well above the former level.

This became even more a problem because both the territorial and water conflicts proved impossible to resolve between the conflict partners, as is shown by the Umma-Lagash conflict. Written sources permit us to follow over several generations a conflict between the neighboring cities.

10. Nissen, *Early Historv. chapter V.*
of Umma and Lagash over territorial and water rights; although at several points solutions promised to be lasting, hostilities broke out again and again\textsuperscript{11}. Pressure rose constantly, therefore, to find more permanent solutions. Among different ways, such as bilateral diplomacy or war, we find initiatives to create higher levels of authority, or of decision making. As such I would register the calling of a referee (Mesalim) to mediate between the rivalling parties in the case of the Umma-Lagash conflict\textsuperscript{12}, or the increasing attempts by individuals to create larger territorial units and to thereby install themselves as this higher authority\textsuperscript{13}.

From the above discussion, the pair of advantages and disadvantages becomes clear. The principle of particularism provides optimal care for the local needs of the irrigation and settlement system but is unable to provide schemes for the solution of built-in interlocal conflicts. Centrality, on the other hand, provides such a higher level of conflict resolution but is less effective when it comes to answer local problems.

We normally assume that the principle of particularism is the older one, but we should admit at the same time that we have no firm evidence for this assumption, primarily because we are dealing with times before any written historical information. Our assumption is supported, however, if we return to our former discussion. If we see the development of central power as resulting from the increase of territorial and water conflicts following a certain environmental development, then we should be able to conclude that before the emergence of these conflicts there was no, or less need for a central solving agency. Therefore, the organizational scheme suiting best the needs of local irrigation and settlement system should have been the system putting all emphasis on local power.

Fortunately, archaeological information can partially fill the gap left by inadequate written evidence. The study of changing settlement and canal patterns reveals that the problems causing territorial and water conflicts arose during the Early Dynastic I period, gained some acuteness in Early Dynastic II and certainly were the most crucial problems in Early Dynastic III. We should assume, therefore, that any ideological conflict between the two opposing principles should have originated at the latest in Early Dynastic III, i.e. well before the Akkadian period. But is there any evidence for this assumption?

I have to concede that there is no explicit evidence. But at the same time, we can name systematic reasons why such conflict of ideologies would not have found its way into writing. First of all, there is the trivial

\textsuperscript{11} Cooper, RHA1.
\textsuperscript{12} For a different evaluation of the role of Mesalim see Cooper, RHA1, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{13} Jacobsen, ZA 52 (1957), pp. 91-140; Nissen, Datierung, part 2.
reason that for the longest part of that period of time we are still in the phase before writing was used for items other than economic records. Secondly, since we are allegedly at the very beginning of such developments they are not fixed ideologies yet, but ideologies in statu nascendi, slowly diverging out of a common set of political ideologies. One certainly should not expect anything like formal statements rejecting the other way of thought, and it is highly questionable whether we can expect to find hidden indications. All we could hope for is to find reports on different ways of handling certain situations; and even then we are largely left alone, meaning that we can hardly do more than speculate.

In fact, there is not much more than a basic rule for such processes, some general observations and several minor pieces of contemporary information which one might fit together. The basic rule which I should like to apply is that if you have two different strands of thought developing out of a common strand, this means for the earlier state that both later developments had been there in nuce and that both later strands are different from the previous one and are opposed to each other. Or in other words, it is impossible that out of a common strand one different strand would branch off while the original one would continue uninfluenced.

To come back to our material: I assume that during the early periods there was a common set of political thought and behavior. This may only be a result of our total ignorance because there are no documents, but I feel secure in this assumption because of the steady development of Babylonian culture during Late Uruk, Gemdet Nasr and probably Early Dynastic I. Once we come to the Akkadian period, on the other hand, we see the full-fledged system of a central state in existence which constantly is challenged by proponents of particularistic power. Obviously, the two models of concentration of power do exist at the same time, though at this point the mode of central power has the advantage. Shortly before, at the end of Early Dynastic III, it had been the reverse. The situation was similar only that the decentralized mode had the advantage, with the mode of central power obviously still being at a less developed stage. I therefore assume that the two modes of power grew out of a formerly common pattern, and that this happened in the time between Early Dynastic I and the Akkadian period, with the first actual signs of differentiation in late Early Dynastic III.

If I am right and if I adhere to my rule mentioned above, this should have two consequences: first, the mode of decentralized power as we find it in many inscriptions of Early Dynastic III cannot be a mere continuation of the earlier common mode. And second, we have to assume that in the same way that the concept of central power is taking one line of thought out of the previous bundle of thoughts, emphasizing and augmenting it until in an enriched form it is turned into a new
concept, this is also what happened with the concept of decentralized power. This, in brief, is the basis of my conviction that the concept of "temple city", or "temple economy", which we find governing some of the late Early Dynastic III documents is a late development of that very period and is no help in reconstructing the political system of earlier periods.  

If seen this way, the change from the politically stronger system of decentralized power of the Early Dynastic III period to the political system of the Akkadian period in which the concept of central power held sway, is nothing but continuity. What remains to be discussed is what finally triggered this flipping of the coin. I do not hesitate seeing the actual catalyst in the deterioration of the water situation and thus the mounting of internal problems, necessitating the creation of a higher authority for conflict resolution. Yet, there must have been other reasons as well.

Certainly, there is the trivial advantage involved of quick military movement which always would be with the aggressor sitting upstream in a country in which the communication network consisted almost exclusively of the main rivers and canals. And we know that the Akkadians had their center in northern Babylonia. But there is also the aspect of foreign relations. For the first time, the power basis was created for large military actions against neighboring areas. Such actions were advantageous in more than one way, since for instance the influx of rare goods, be they booty or tribute, was most welcome. But such actions also created a diversion to foreign action, a vent was created for internal problems and internal coherence was strengthened.

Why the Akkadians succeeded with the new system is hard to answer. It is tempting to revive the old discussion of a Sumerian-Akkadian controversy and let such opposition figure among the many controversies and tensions present in Early Dynastic times. By no means, however, is it intended to revive the idea of an innate proximity of the Akkadians to the centralistic idea, as has been suggested. Still, this entire discussion needs to be reopened. F.R. Kraus' conclusion that there cannot have been any major conflicts because there are no explicit signs for them in texts, cannot be the final answer.


16. F.R. Kraus, *Sumerer und Akkader: ein Problem der Altmesopotamischen Geschichte*, Amsterdam 1970. His conclusion that there was no explicit sign for an outspoken ethnic identification, let alone for any violence, allowed the former contestants in this controversy to save face; consequently, no one wanted the discussion to be reopened.
But whether we find allusions to such differences in the textual material or not, the fact is that we rarely find Semitic names among the ruling families and the administrators of the Early Dynastic III southern Babylonian cities, although we know of the presence of Akkadians. The differences certainly did not go unnoticed. Similarly, we hear of nearly the opposite situation under the dynasty of Akkad. Rather than concluding from the non-existence of such texts that there were no tensions, we should be looking for systematic reasons why such tensions were never expressed in the texts.

Whatever the reasons, it certainly is to be rejected that the Akkadians propagated the idea of centralism because of natural affiliations. If nothing else this is shown by the fact that the initial attempts to politically unite Babylonia were made by Eannatum, Mesanepada and Meskiagnuna of undoubted Sumerian background. Yet, I would not dismiss entirely the notion that the Akkadians sided with the idea of central power, with the same argument which I used before: the ethnic difference between Sumerians and Akkadians is yet another pair of opposites of the Early Dynastic period which could have converged with the other pairs of opposites mentioned earlier.

When it comes to the question of why the Akkadians were able to proceed so quickly and keep their realm for some time I would propose a mixture of possible reasons: the advantage of being situated upstream with its potential for quick military movement within Babylonia, the learning from prior abortive attempts, and the foreign successes.

To end this first part, I would like to stress the underlying total continuity. What looks to us like signs of discontinuity results from different political concepts alternating in coming to the official surface—and for obvious reasons, we know only the official surface.

Now, I should like to change my subject to the material culture. Again, I will not limit my discussion to the Akkadian period but shall include the preceding Early Dynastic III period as well. And again, I should start by commenting on the very poor situation of our sources. In rough terms, the material culture can be divided into three main categories: art, architecture and products of daily or normal use.

It cannot be the final answer that the difference between these two ethnic units should have had no impact on the political and social situation. I have the suspicion that this proposal of Kraus was readily accepted because it fit nicely the idealistic mood of the 50s and 60s, that it only takes an intellectual and emotional awareness to overcome ethnic differences. The friendly and harmonic symbiosis of Sumerians and Akkadians was an idyllic picture of how one wished the actual world to be.

17. Yet, the idea of the peace-loving, subdued Sumerians as opposed to the vigorous, violent Akkadians brought forward by Aage Westenholz at this conference seems to be equally unacceptable since it stretches the evidence of the texts used.

Unfortunately, there are but few sites excavated dating to the Akkadian period, and there are even fewer if we insist on the exposure of architecture. In fact, we do not know any central building in Babylonia of this period, and only little private architecture is available from Nippur and Tell Asmar. The question must remain entirely open whether in architecture there were any changes tied to the beginning of the Akkadian period. This is all the more unfortunate because the canonical shape of the ziggurat with its stages and threefold staircases suddenly appears with Urnammu, the founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, seemingly without forerunners. This has given rise to suspicions that in fact this may be an Akkadian innovation, but there is no evidence, so far.

The problem with private quarters rests in the fact that we have little earlier material to compare with the Akkadian houses of Tell Asmar and Nippur. Still, they adhere so much to the general rules of Mesopotamian private houses centered around a central courtyard, the entire unit being closed off from the surroundings, that we can be reasonably sure that in this case we find nothing but continuity.

The same can be said about pottery and other items of daily use. Except for normal changes in shape and frequency which are found in any normal ongoing tradition, there are no sudden changes or breaks at all which would warrant the term of discontinuity.

On pottery, I should be a little more explicit, since our ability to date pottery surface finds more or less closely delineates the limits of reliability of archaeological surface reconnaissances. Only if a sufficient number of sherds are found on the surface of an ancient site of a pottery type which can be closely dated to a short period of time, will it be possible to argue for the site having been inhabited during that period.

As far as we know from the available evidence, there are hardly any items in the pottery assemblage which can be dated exclusively to the Akkadian period, and if at all, they are so insignificant in number that one would not expect them on the surface of every site inhabited during this period. Instead of sudden changes, we find a long and gradual change.

19. A possible exception is the building of Tell Wilayah, which, however, is not preserved to the extent that one might reach a final decision. Cf. E. Heinrich, *Die Paläste im alten Mesopotamien*, Berlin 1984, pp. 29-31.


in the corpus of pottery shapes from Early Dynastic III (and earlier) through the Ur III period and later. This change manifests itself in the gradual decrease of certain types, while others emerge and then increase in number. A close dating by means of pottery thus would require extensive quantitative data of the relative amounts of the various types. Obviously surface surveys are unable to provide such data.

I therefore distrust any statement that such and such a site was abandoned after, or founded in the Akkadian period. It is a matter of course, therefore, that it is a highly problematic undertaking to differentiate between settlement patterns of the Early Dynastic III, the Akkadian and the Ur III periods, let alone, within the Akkadian period. This may change with increasing knowledge; yet I doubt that the level of differences in settlement behavior between these three periods will ever reach a height that we would be obliged to speak of more than normal, gradual changes.

As in the Early Dynastic III period the pattern is characterized by a large number of major settlements and a comparatively very minor number of small settlements, or in other terms, there are only very few settlements below 10 ha and a large number of a size of more than 50 ha. This still reflects the situation whereby we have to account for increased social, economic and political strain on the population because of close living conditions for most of the population.

Art remains as the third complex to be considered. And it is here that we find ample evidence for overt changes which have been taken by everyone as the main witnesses for radical changes from the Early Dynastic to the Akkadian period. To be sure, there has never been a denial of a strong underlying tradition, but there are enough differences from the previous period, both in the way of rendering old themes as well as in introducing new themes.

24. K. Karstens, *Typologische Untersuchungen an Gefäßen aus altakkadischen Gräbern des Königsfriedhofes in Ur*, München 1987, proposes to be able to differentiate between Early Dynastic and Akkadian pottery and to attribute certain types of pottery more closely to specific time-ranges. He greatly stretches the evidence, however, since Woolley's types are highly artificial and there is no way of comparing them to the original material. See Nissen, *Datierung*, p. 21. Although I am aware of a certain tendency with some of my colleagues to be less cautious in attributing sherds, and thus sites, to the Akkadian period, I still would like to see the evidence before I change my rather pessimistic view.


26. For a discussion of the social and political implications of the lay-out of the settlement systems of Early Babylonia and the changing patterns, see Nissen, *Early History*, chapter V.

27. Much of the following discussion can be found already in my article 'Sumerian' vs. 'Akkadian' Art. Art and Politics in Babylonia of the Mid-Third Mill. B.C., in St. Porada, pp. 189-196.
The best genre to be considered are the cylinder seals, since they are available in large quantities for both periods under consideration and since because of their destination they are the first to take up and mirror new developments in religious, social and political thought. In addition, they have the advantage of being datable within a rather close range both because of their find circumstances, because of the numerous inscriptions found on them and because of their peculiar style.28

Looking at the themes, obviously one of the differences is the multiplication of themes in use during the Akkadian period versus the Early Dynastic III period. While earlier the main topic had centered around the traditional motif of the contest between animals and between animals and man, in a large number of variants we find less frequent ones like symposium, the “god in the boat”, as well as rows of animals and geometric motives. All are continued into the Akkadian period but with significant changes.

Two examples of seals of the animal contest scene of both the Early Dynastic III and the Akkadian periods may serve to demonstrate some differences (Pl. 1a and 1b). The obvious difference results from differences in the kind of relief: soft transition of the figures into the background against sharp delineation of the figures of the Akkadian period which lets the figures stand in front of the background; in the kind of rendering the human or animal form with the careful, though schematic depiction of muscles and folds in the seals of the Akkadian period; in the shape of composition: emphasis of symmetric groupings contrasting the avoidance of symmetry in the Early Dynastic period.

One particular scheme may be mentioned here, carved out of the contest scene: two pairs of contestants on both sides of an inscription filling the entire band (Pl. 1c).29 To be sure, there are also variants within this group but the principle is maintained. Furthermore, most of these seals bear an inscription, or at least an empty space designed to take up an inscription. This makes sense, since a study of these inscriptions reveals that where attributable these seals belonged to members of the royal family or higher officials.30 For the first time we have clear evidence

29. As can be seen from seal impressions, for the users the seal inscription seems to have been the more important part of the seal since often we find the inscription impressed with only remains of the figures on either side. We should conclude that the inscription was seen as the central part with the pictorial representation flanking it. This is very obvious with the well known Sharkalisharri seal with the inscription on the backs of two bulls watered by naked human figures (Moortgat, Kunst, Taf. F, 1). Yet, when publishing seals with the aid of modern impressions, most archaeologists seem to be so fascinated by the pictorial representation that the inscription is pressed to the side.
that a certain motif is tied to a social status. This has been surmised for older groups as well—take for instance the certain type of symposium seals found almost exclusively in the Royal Tombs of Ur\textsuperscript{11}—but judging from our material, never before had it been as obvious to the viewer from both the motif and the inscription. I take it as a sign for a development in which the area and public became larger within which seals were circulating and had to be identifiable\textsuperscript{12}.

While during the reign of Sargon himself significant changes appear still within the frame of the former Early Dynastic tradition, the sharp increase in the number of new themes characteristic for the glyptic art of the Akkadian period appears shortly thereafter. These new themes can be divided into two larger groups, both of which normally involve the representation of gods:

1. the so-called presentation or introduction scene, and
2. the illustration of myths.

Some examples have to suffice here because an attempt to be exhaustive would keep us occupied for while.

Pl. 2a gives an example of the so-called introduction or presentation scene in which basically a human supplicant is introduced or presented to a higher god by a divine helper. This topic seems to gain ground towards the end of the Akkadian period, thus anticipating to some degree the situation of the Ur III period when the majority of seals bear this motif.

The following examples are only a short selection of the large number of different topics which probably all depict characteristic scenes or

\textsuperscript{31} A recent discussion is found in S. Pollock, \textit{Of Priestesses, Princes and Poor Relations: The Dead in the Royal Cemetery of Ur}, «Cambridge Archaeological Journal» 1/2 (1991), pp. 1-19, plus commentaries.

\textsuperscript{32} It seems worthwhile investigating the question of the significance of the emerging of inscriptions on seals. With the exception of one seal of Late Uruk date (U. Moortgat-Correns, \textit{La Mesopotamia}, Torino 1987, p. 34, fig. 1) the first seal to bear the owner’s name is still the End-Early Dynastic II seal from Fara, formerly known as \textit{Indugud-Sukur}, or now AN\textsuperscript{u} \textit{dSud}, a person of unknown status. It is only from Early Dynastic III on, however, that we find the habit of adding an inscription becoming more widespread. To be sure, the number is still very limited but it nevertheless seems to be no pure chance that such inscriptions mention either names of rulers or members of their families, or that find circumstances denote the owners as people of higher status (e.g. if found in “Royal Tombs”). Proceeding on the assumption that the identification of the owner can be done both from the seal and the inscription, and furthermore, that the difference lies in the range of people who had to be able to identify a person (while the seal itself was identifiable only by members of a specific community, inscriptions could be used by everyone who was able to read), one may venture concluding that adding an inscription was necessary for those higher officials whose economic transactions covered a wider range than that of the local community; who therefore needed a non-locally bound possibility to be identified. Or was the addition of an inscription merely a matter of prestige?
moments of myths. Unfortunately we cannot name them except in very few instances, one being the so-called Etana seals (Pl. 2b). We are probably asking the wrong questions: instead of looking for a rendering of the scene which in our mind is the most characteristic one of a myth, we should start finding out what in the minds of the ancients may have been the scene, the depiction of which would answer their religious or social needs best.

Another common theme is that of sun-god rising between two mountains (Pl. 2c). Though we cannot tie this theme to a specific myth, it nevertheless represents the common belief that during the night the sun-god travels below the earth from west to east where every morning he had to cut through the earth in order to be able to rise to heaven where he travels to the west during daytime. In the process of breaking through the earth in the morning he is helped by two minor deities who open the final gate, as depicted on the seals.

Just as the sun-god is easy to recognize because of the sun rays emerging from his shoulders, also the identification of the water-god is not difficult because of the wavy lines and fishes connected with that god. Although depicted in a large number of combinations with servant deities or other figures (Pl. 3a), we are again unable to point to one or more specific myths dealing with this god. Yet, it is obvious that every single picture must have had a specific connotation.

We are at a complete loss when we attempt to explain the theme which goes under the heading of "the bull carrying a winged gate on his back" (Pl. 3b). To judge from the relative stability of this theme and the large number of seals, it must have stood for a quite popular notion. Most probably, it singles out a scene which was felt characteristic of a popular myth.

The same may be true of another theme, the fighting between figures which are identified as gods because of their horned crowns (Pl. 3c); but various attempts to identify the myth concerned remain speculations. Thus it has been put in connection to the well-known topic of the Enûma elîš, the "Creation Epic" of the fighting between two generations of gods with the final victory of the young god Marduk and his followers. Likewise, it was suggested that it calls to mind the conflicts between Sumerian and Akkadian gods, on the old assumption that a real conflict between

34. One such attempt connects a specific group of seals with the myth of Etana: Boehmer, Glyptik, pp. 122-123.
Sumerians and Akkadians was transposed into the world of the gods. Be that as it may, what remains significant is the fact that for the first time gods are not represented as statuary, venerable figures but in very human actions. More than other representations the depiction of the fighting between gods indicates a change in the attitude towards the gods.

I may be excused for not adducing other objects of art such as statues and reliefs; but although magnificent pieces of art, their discussion would add little to our argument, and in fact only support it. Only the well-known proponents of narrative reliefs of both Early Dynastic III and Akkad shall be mentioned here, the stelae of Eannatum (Pl. 4a depicts one of the larger fragments) and Naramsin (Pl. 4b) because the respective rendering of the army brings to a culmination the tendencies visible elsewhere.

While on the stela of Eannatum the army is depicted as a block, intentionally not giving the viewer a chance to single out individual figures, Naramsin’s army is entirely dissolved into individuals. While we admire the freshness and the skill applied in the Naramsin stela, we have to admit that the idea of the force of a marching army certainly is carried better by Eannatum’s stela. This is often attributed to different levels of artistic value and ability; yet, we rather should see these two pieces as expressions of different ideas.

Adding up all differences between Early Dynastic III and Akkad art, we certainly end up with more than what would account for a normal continuity. So what does this change stand for? Is it really the reflex of the change between the Sumerians and Akkadians as the dominant ethnic group, as some people have postulated in the past? For a different approach let us ask where those differences actually lies. In spite of what I said before about differences between the ethnic groups of the Sumerians and the Akkadians, I see no reason to reintroduce the concept of ethnically bound art.

From the previous discussion I hope it has become reasonably clear that there are two main differences: the depiction of man as part of


37. Moortgat, Kunst, fig. 119; for a recent discussion see I. Winter, After the Battle is Over: The Stele of the Vultures and the Beginning of Historical Narrative in the Art of Ancient Near East, in H.L. Kessler - M.S. Simpson (eds.), Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Washington D.C. 1985, pp. 11-32.

38. Moortgat, Kunst, fig. 155.

39. For an assessment of the artistic techniques employed see Nissen, Early History, p. 176.
multitude vs. the emergence of the individual, and secondly, the different attitude towards the gods. While before gods were never individualized, gods were individualized from the Akkadian period on by carefully rendering their specific attributes. It also was deemed necessary to differentiate between the various ranks. Of special interest is the fact that this applies only to the higher gods, while a host of servant gods is hardly ever so differentiated that they may be identified. This is seen best in the vast number of introduction scenes where the servant gods can be interchanged while the main gods can not.

If we ask for possible reasons for these changes, then obviously the answer can neither be that before the Akkadian period people were no individuals, nor that only from this period on were gods ranked and individualized; after all, the first god lists representing a pantheon date from the time of the Fara texts40, or the beginning of Early Dynastic III. So the reason must be found somewhere else. I assume that the change happened in the underlying concept of art, probably as a consequence of the change of the prevailing ideology. If so, we should be able to deduct from art the elements of the ideological background.

As far as we can do this, we see that in the case of the older period man figures not as individual but as part of the multitude while in the other, man is seen as the active individual. While according to the one ideology gods would be depicted rather rarely, and, if so, then only in a very statuary, non-individualized manner, the other one does not hesitate to depict gods in all kinds of situation, both in illustrating popular scenes of myth, or fighting with each other, as well as in the more statuary position of receiving supplicants. Part of this latter ideology seems to be the concept of personal, tutelary gods who as servants of the higher god would serve as well as mediators between the human being and the individual god.

To take up the latter point, I think there can be no doubt that the concept of personal god existed before (for instance, take ŠUL.UTUL as the personal god of Urnanshe, Eannatum and Entemena41), but in Early Dynastic times it did not show up in art because it did not belong to the prevailing ideology. To be sure, without being able to present good evidence, I am nevertheless convinced that all of what I mentioned before, seeing man as individual or as part of the multitude, seeing gods as landlords, or individuals acting in myths etc., was part of the range of possibilities of thought during both periods (and beyond). But it was the prevailing ideology which fixed the canon of what would make up the

41. FAOS 6.
themes in art of a given time. If the basic ideology changed, then also the part which delineated the range of possibilities in art.

In the first part of this discussion, I tried to show that the change from Early Dynastic III to Akkad, the change from the city states to the central state, primarily was a change in the governing political ideology. I do not hesitate to see here the reason for the change in art as well. This does not occur as abrupt as on the political level, which may be the reason that, when on the political level the pendulum swings back to the concept of decentralization, the development of art does not follow suit, neither immediately nor entirely. Yet for the little we have from the following decentralized phase, i.e. the art of Gudea, we get the feeling that art loses some of the openness and inclination to fabulate.

Continuity or discontinuity: are these terms at all helpful? I would prefer to speak of an underlying broad but nevertheless limited range of possibilities on all levels which form the basis for every new combination. In this sense, I cannot see anything but continuity in the development towards the Akkadian period. Discontinuity would be applicable only as far as certain local and temporal adaptations are discontinued and replaced by a new set of adaptations from within the same general framework.

Though this synopsis tried to pull together as much information as possible in order to create a feeling that things were ultimately more complex then is suggested quite often by our material, I am sure that what I suggested is still too simplistic. Even if I succeeded in showing that the time of the Dynasty of Akkad was within a continuous development, there are enough elements which leave the impression of the uniqueness of the Akkadian period and its art. Apart from all rationalistic explanations, it remains one of the most fascinating periods of Ancient Near Eastern history.
EARLY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MESOPOTAMIA
AND THE ORIGINS OF THE SARGONIC EMPIRE

Piotr Steinkeller

1. Roughly in the year 2300 B.C., Sargon of Akkade defeated a coalition of Sumerian city-states led by Lugal-zagesi, thereby securing for himself complete mastery over southern Babylonia. This event marked the beginning of what is known in history books as the Sargonic or the Old Akkadian empire.

It is the fortunes of that empire that is the topic of this meeting, and, indeed, most of the submitted communications, while varying in subject-matter, adhere to the timeframe of the Sargonic period. My paper, in contrast, looks back in time at what preceded the defeat of Lugal-zagesi at the hands of Sargon, in hope that such an undertaking will not only help us to understand how the Sargonic development came about, but that it might also shed light on various critical aspects of this development.

But before I come to the specifics, one observation of general importance needs to be made. When dealing with the early history of Mesopotamia, it is of crucial importance to distinguish, within Lower Mesopotamia, between the upper and the lower sections of the alluvium or, to use historical terminology, between southern and northern Babylonia. The reason such a distinction is necessary is that from at least as early as the ED I period these two regions followed markedly different courses of political and socio-economic development. In fact, down to the

1. I am grateful to Glenn R. Magid for reading the manuscript of this paper and offering valuable editorial assistance.

2. Although this is not the place to go into the complex question of why the lower and upper portions of the alluvium followed such different courses of development, one of the causes that needs to be considered is the geomorphological differences between these two regions. This point has recently been argued by J. Zarins, *Early Pastoral Nomadism and the Settlement of Lower Mesopotamia*, BASOR 280 (1990), pp. 31-65. Note, especially, his observations on p. 55: "It is apparent that in the northern alluvium the sites are fewer, more linear in pattern, and less dense than in the southern alluvium, suggesting a distinctly different utilization of the plain. If we apply the historic term 'Akkad' to define the northern alluvium, Abu Salabikh seems to lie clearly on the border. The site represents the frontier of Semitic influence to the south. (...) The
unification of Babylonia by Sargon, it is even possible to talk of the existence of two different systems in Lower Mesopotamia. The differences in the organization of the south and north proved enduring, and it will not be an exaggeration to say that the subsequent history of Babylonia, down to at least 1500 B.C., was shaped to a large extent by the contrasting nature of the two systems.

2. My discussion must necessarily begin with the question of the “Uruk expansion”, for this phenomenon offers the earliest glimpse of interregional historical dynamics within the territories that later formed the possessions of the Sargonic empire. As we shall see, this evidence has important implications for subsequent historical developments throughout this whole region, and, ultimately, for the birth of the Sargonic empire itself.

As understood by archaeologists, the label “Uruk expansion” describes the network of enclaves that were established by the Uruk people in the periphery of Babylonia, including the Susiana plain in Khusistan, northern Syria, most of Upper Mesopotamia, and sections of Anatolia. The degree of influence these enclaves exercised over the periphery was apparently uneven, ranging from outright colonization to symbiotic arrangements with local populations. As for the underlying chronology, the Uruk expansion is believed to have experienced its *floruit* during the Middle Uruk period, with a terminal date no later than Uruk IV.

The Uruk expansion has been the subject of a recent study by G. Algaze, which offers the fullest and most cohesive treatment of this issue to-date. Therefore, this study may serve as a convenient point of reference for my remarks. Because of restrictions of time, my discussion of Algaze’s views is highly selective, being mainly limited to those aspects of his reconstruction which I find questionable. The areas of our agreement will become obvious in the course of my presentation.

distinctive ecology of Akkad favored—as it does now—a dimorphic approach to society. In that way the pastoral populations and settled farmers and urban dwellers together created a unique settlement pattern in the northern alluvium”.

A very different approach to this issue is used by H.J. Nissen, who treats Lower Mesopotamia as an essentially homogeneous entity, and tends to interpret early Mesopotamian history in terms of a single unified development. See his *Die Tempelstadt*: *Regierungsform der frühdynastischen Zeit in Babylonien?*, in H. Klenge (ed.), *Gesellschaft und Kultur in alten Vorderasien*, Berlin 1982, pp. 195-200; ‘‘Sumerian’’ against ‘‘Akkadian’’ *Art: Art and Politics in Babylonia of the Mid-third Millennium B.C.*, in St. Porada, pp. 189-196; and the contribution to this volume. Since Nissen’s and my own positions are diametrically opposite, I have not attempted systematically to address his views in this paper. It seems best to leave it to the reader to compare the two viewpoints, with hope that such a comparison will stimulate a broader discussion of this problem.


4. For earlier discussions, see the bibliography in Algaze, CA 30 (1989), pp. 601-608.
The main thrust of this stimulating and important article is that, due to the absence of natural resources in the alluvium and because of the pressures resulting from internal economic growth, Uruk society was forced to expand territorially. This expansion led to the creation in the Mesopotamian periphery of an “informal empire” or “world system”, which was based on asymmetrical exchange and a hierarchically organized international division of labor, and whose operations were regulated by a highly articulated system of control.

In my opinion, the main problem with this reconstruction is that it is based on a number of premises that seriously misread the dynamics of Mesopotamian history. One of those premises is that the imperial phases of Mesopotamian history were simply episodes of especially intense activity aimed at securing the procurement of resources. This view is certainly too simplistic since we know that whenever Babylonia embarked on the course of territorial expansion the economic cost of expansion always vastly exceeded any gains she made from obtaining direct access to resource areas. This demonstrates that the procurement of resources, though unquestionably one of the aims of imperial policy, was not the primary reason why the expansion took place. Moreover, it is characteristic that during non-imperial phases, which in fact constituted the norm in Babylonian history, Babylonians met no difficulty in securing the inflow of strategic resources, primarily through reliance upon long-distance trade arrangements, but also by the application of selective and limited expansion aimed at specific source-areas, as was the case in Pre-Sargonic and Kassite times, and even during the Ur III period.

I also cannot agree with Algaze’s view that imperial expansion occurred only at those junctures when a growing economy required the taking of active and expensive steps for its maintenance, or, in other words, that the expansion was an inevitable consequence of the dynamics of internal growth. While the connection between the growth of economy and territorial expansion is self-evident, our evidence strongly suggests, contrary to what Algaze asserts, that in Babylonia the causal relationship between these two forces was just the opposite: namely, that during each imperial phase the expansion always preceded and, indeed, was a prerequisite for the creation of a centralized socio-economic system.

Yet another weakness of Algaze’s model is that it necessarily requires the existence, in pre-historic Babylonia, of a political system that possessed the organization, ideology, and economic and military resources sufficient to penetrate, colonize, and secure the control of the whole region affected by the Uruk phenomenon. Algaze uses here the Old Akkadian empire as a possible historical parallel, but I find this comparison to be completely inappropriate. So far as one can determine from the evidence of Uruk
III tablets, and, by inference, from the archaic material from Ur, the socio-economic order which operated at that time in southern Babylonia was but a more pristine form of the conditions existing in the same region during the ED III period: a system of independent city-states, built around the institution of the temple-household, and characterized by the semi-communal mode of ownership and production, and by the weak, distinctly theocratic, type of kingship. What this means, of course, is that in Uruk times southern Babylonia simply lacked an infrastructure capable of generating and, even more important, of maintaining the model of expansion posited by Algaze. Algaze recognizes this difficulty to some extent, and remedies it by suggesting the existence of not one but of several cores in Babylonia, with each core dominating a different portion of the enclave network. However, this solution makes his hypothesis even more difficult to accept.

Thus, as I see it, Algaze's explanation of the Uruk expansion finds little corroboration in later Mesopotamian history. I also find it unfeasible from the economic point of view since it could be argued, through historical parallels, that the mere control of Khusistan and the Zagros foothills would have been sufficient to provide the Uruk society with access to all the strategic resources it required, making any deeper penetration of the periphery not only unnecessary but also economically wasteful.

Still, the Uruk expansion is an established fact and thus some plausible explanation should be found for it. In trying to arrive at such an explanation, my first step will be to consider whether the Uruk expansion finds corroboration in textual data, and if so, what this evidence tells us about its geographic extent. The answer to the first part of this question is in the affirmative, though with an important qualification. Since the Uruk expansion, as we presently understand it, is a purely archaeological phenomenon, the task of correlating the pertinent material record with the testimony of written sources, and of trying to develop a single scenario for them both, is wrought with great uncertainty, especially as far as chronology is concerned. Because of this, all one can safely say at this time is that a Sumerian intrusion into the outlying regions is indicated textually at some point before the ED I period. Although there is no assurance that this event was identical with the Uruk expansion as understood by archaeologists, such a possibility seems nevertheless likely.

As for the extent of this prehistoric Sumerian expansion, there is persuasive evidence that the region of Susiana was penetrated and colonized by the southern Babylonian settlers. Here our chief datum is

the name of Inshushinak, the patron god of Susa, which, because of its undeniable Sumerian pedigree, appears to offer iron-clad proof of the Sumerian intrusion into Susiana at some very early point in time.

Further, our data show, quite conclusively I believe, that sometime before the advent of early Early Dynastic times the Sumerians also succeeded in colonizing northern Babylonia and the Diyala Region. The evidence on which such an argument can be based is as follows: 1) the fact that the Uruk III tablets excavated at the sites of Jemdet Nasr and Tell 'Uqair are identical with the Uruk material, and, because of this, that they are almost certainly written in Sumerian; 2) the fact that both in northern Babylonia and in the Diyala region we find a proliferation of toponyms ending in -k, such as Api'ak, Akshak, Ashnunak, and Kazaluk, paralleling such southern toponyms as Larak and Shuruppak, which should quite likely be analyzed as Sumerian genitival compounds; 3) the existence in northern Babylonia of place-names that possibly are borrowings from the southern toponymy, and which may, therefore, be witnesses to an early Sumerian migration from the south into northern Babylonia; and 4) the fact that within the Akkadian pantheons of northern Babylonia and the Diyala region one can discern an earlier, clearly Sumerian, religious substrate.

6. Among the possible examples of such place-names, we can mention:

1) Ku'Pab(a) of northern Babylonia, as compared with Ku'Pab(a), a district of Uruk. For the former toponym, see P. Steinkeller, VO 6 (1986), p. 40 notes 64 and 66; TTIM, p. 105. To the evidence collected there, add the following Sargonic occurrence: "Jh-zi-zum ĀRAD Da-kum ši Gī-lā-āb <kī>" (F. Rasheed, The Ancient Inscriptions in Nineveh Area, Baghdad 1981, 3, ii, 14 - iii, 1); for the construction, cf. Zu-me-er DUMU ši Akšak<ki> (ibid., iv, 10-11).

2) Kunaru, a district or satellite of Babylon, as compared with Kuwara. For Kunaru, see, most recently, P. Steinkeller, JCS 32 (1980), pp. 28-29. The connection between these two toponyms — apart from their formal similarity — is suggested by the use of related writings to record their names: ḤA.A (= Ku6-a) for Kuwara, and AḪA, for Kunaru. Further evidence of such a connection may perhaps be sought in the equation of Asaluḫu of Kuwara with Marduk of Babylon (as suggested to me many years ago by M.J. Geller).

3) Urum(u) of northern Babylonia, as compared with Urim (= Ur). For Urum(u), probably identical with Tell 'Uqair, see M.W. Green, ASJ 8 (1986), pp. 77-83; ELTS, pp. 40-41.

An analogous phenomenon is the existence of identical toponyms in Upper Mesopotamia and in northern Babylonia/Diyala Region, which very likely attests to an early Semitic migration from Upper into Lower Mesopotamia. The most convincing example here is Terqa on the Euphrates, as compared with three places called Terqa in the Diyala Region (RGTC 3, p. 236).

7. The prime datum here is the cult of Ninazu at Eshnuna, which, in the Sargonic period or earlier, was replaced by or syncretized with that of Tishpak. See Th. Jacobsen, Philological Notes on Eshnuna and Its Inscriptions, Chicago 1934, p. 28; F.A.M. Wiggermann, in O.M.C. Haex et al. (eds.), To the Euphrates and Beyond: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Maurits N. van Loon, Rotterdam 1996, p. 110.
The observation that in Uruk times northern Babylonia and the Diyala region supported an intrusive Sumerian population is of great significance, since this situation contrasts sharply with the conditions prevailing in the same geographical area during the Early Dynastic periods, when the Sumerian presence was confined to southern Babylonia, with northern Babylonia and the Diyala region being inhabited by the Akkadians.

There are also certain linguistic data which may point to an early Sumerian presence in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, but, admittedly, such an argument remains highly speculative. If, as I suggest, the toponym Shubir, or Shubar, which is the Sumerian term for Northern Mesopotamia, is identical with the word Shumer, or Shumar⁸, the Semitic designation of the population of southern Babylonia⁹, one could speculate that this

8. The fact that the Akkadian word Šumeru (RGTC 1, p. 153; 3, p. 228; 5, pp. 252-253; 8, pp. 296-297; AHw., p. 1271) —also Šuweru (MSL Suppl. Ser. 1, p. 24 l. 30)— cannot be convincingly derived from any known Sumerian vocable or southern Babylonian toponym, and, further, that it was never used by the Sumerians themselves, makes it quite certain that this term, whatever its derivation, originated outside of southern Babylonia. The earliest recorded spelling of this appellative is Sum-ar-rān⁸, which appears, together with ŠUBUR⁸ and DILMUN⁸, in the Ebla literary text ARET 5, 7, xii. 1. As for Shubir, this term is attested, in Sumerian texts, under the spellings Su-birx(BAPPIR)-a (RGTC 1, p. 146), Su-birx (RGTC 2, p. 174; 3, p. 224; 8, p. 273), and ŠUBUR, the last glossed Su-bar and Šu-bar in lexical sources (I. Gelb, in Studies I.M. Diakonoff, Warminster 1982, pp. 89-90). As is indicated by these data, the first appellative had the variant forms /sumer/ and /sumar/, and the second, /subir/, /subar/, and /subur/. The possibility that all these forms are genetically related finds support in the fact that /m/ often interchanges with /b/ in Sumerian, probably in reflection of the hypothetical phoneme /mb/. See P. Steinkeller, «Aula Orientalis» 2 (1984), pp. 141-142 and note 34.


Although it has been speculated by some scholars (e.g., C. Wilcke in RAI 19, p. 230) that, because of the lexical evidence equating ŠE (read as ēgir or gir15) with nubū and nubātu, girx/gir15 should be translated “princely” or “noble”, with dumu-gir15
development came about as the result of an early contact between the Semites and the Sumerians in Upper Mesopotamia, through which the designation Shubir or Shumer, originally applied by the Semites to the Sumerian settlers living in Upper Mesopotamia, i.e., in Shubir, was later extended by them to describe the inhabitants of the Sumerian homeland as well.\(^9\)

Having discussed the data implying an early Sumerian presence beyond the confines of southern Babylonia, whose date very likely coincided, at least in part, with that of the archaeologically defined “Uruk expansion”, I shall now consider the purpose of this phenomenon. If I am correct that the Uruk expansion was not motivated by a need to secure the inflow of strategic resources, the only other plausible explanation is that this phenomenon was a purely commercial enterprise, in many ways comparable to the system of trade enclaves created, over a millennium later, by the city of Assur in northern Syria and Anatolia. It was the objective of the Old Assyrian enclave network not to procure resources for the city of Assur, but simply to reap profits from the international trade. Not being producers themselves, the Assyrians became consumate middlemen, dealing in whatever raw materials and finished products they were able to procure, and taking every opportunity to exploit, on the meaning “princely son” or “aristocrat”, such an interpretation is most unlikely, in the absence of any evidence of \(\text{g}ir_{15}\) standing for \(\text{rubu}\) or \(\text{nbatu}\) in third millennium sources. In fact, the value \(\text{egir}\) of \(\text{SE}\) (Proto-Ea 60) is probably a secondary development, with \(\text{egir}\) being artificially derived from \(\text{egir} = \text{SAL} + \text{SE}\) (Proto-Ea 422). Further, it needs to be emphasized that the translation “native son/daughter” of \(\text{dumu-gir}_{15}\) is the only one that accommodates all the documented occurrences of this term, both in legal/economic and literary sources. For the former, see the examples in A. Falkenstein, \textit{Die neusumerischen Gerichtsurkunden, III, München} 1956, p. 103. For the latter, see, e.g., “Lamentation over Sumer and Ur” lines 167, 179, 362a, 363, 371, 372 (\(=\) P. Michalowski, \textit{The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur, Winona Lake} 1989), where \(\text{dumu-gir}_{15}\) is used as a description of various deities, to emphasize the horror of their (unprecedented) dislocation from their native surroundings. See, especially: \(\text{dNanske dumu-gir}_{15} \text{uru-bar-ra nu-un-na-tus-\-am}\), “Nanshe, (even though being) a native daughter, settled outside the city!” (l. 167); \(\text{Ki-[nu]-nir-\-\-\-ki} \text{uru nam-dumu-gir}_{15} \text{ra-ka-ni}, “Kinunirsha, her (of Dumuzi-abzu) native city” (l. 179). The neutral translation “native”, rather than “Sumerian”, also removes the difficulty, noted by J.S. Cooper, \textit{CoA}, p. 240, of \(\text{dumu-gir}_{15}\) describing the (clearly non-Sumerian) citizens of the city of Akkade in “Curse of Agade” l. 249.

10. It hardly needs pointing out that such shifts in ethnic/geographic terminology are well-documented throughout history. A good case in point is the history of the Old German appellative \textit{Walh}-, which derives from the name of \textit{Volcae}, a Celtic tribe in southern France. Originally, \textit{Walh}- was a Germanic term for the Celtic population of northern Italy, but later it came to designate the Romans, and eventually, the Italians. \textit{Walh}- underwent still further evolution in Slavic languages and in Hungarian, which, while preserving \textit{Walh}- as a term for the Italians, introduced a derivative \textit{Walah}, which became a designation of the Romans (i.e., Walachia).
interregional and local level, the variables of supply and demand. Equally important, it is certain that, rather than being a consequence of the economic expansion of Assur, this trade network was the product of a long interregional development, whose beginnings very likely went back to the Old Akkadian period and perhaps even earlier. Moreover, its operation, rather than being predicated on the existence of instruments of imperial control, was supported by an intricate system of cooperative arrangements with local populations.

An analogy between the Uruk expansion and the Old Assyrian enclave network is valid, in my view, since the former phenomenon likewise seems to have been the product of a long development. As argued by D. Sürenhagen\textsuperscript{11}, the Uruk expansion was preceded, in roughly the same geographical area, by a similar but considerably smaller expansion in the Obeid period. It should not be unreasonable, therefore, to consider the Uruk enclave network as merely an expanded and perfected version of a system that had been put in place by the Obeid people. This explanation may find corroboration in the fact that, as Sürenhagen suggests, the Uruk expansion was in full bloom already in the Middle Uruk period. If correct, this would mean that foreign expansion preceded, instead of following, the growth of urbanism in southern Babylonia. Consequently, one could argue that it was the success of Uruk commerce that enabled, or at least made a major contribution to, the growth of Babylonian cities, a process that is well-documented in world history, just to mention the examples of Venice and Amsterdam.

Is there, however, any evidence that would lend support to the thesis that the Uruk expansion was, by and large, a commercial venture? I would argue that such evidence may be sought in a unique sealing which appears on several tablets from Jemdet Nasr and Tell ‘Uqair, dating to the Uruk III (Jemdet Nasr) period. This sealing, whose significance was first recognized by P.R.S. Moorey\textsuperscript{12}, records the names of ten cities, five of which can be read with certainty. These are Uruk, Ur, Larsa, and Zabalam in southern Babylonia, and Urum, in all probability identical with Tell ‘Uqair, in northern Babylonia. Now, the only way in which the existence of this sealing can be justified is to assume that the cities in question held certain goods in joint ownership, which in turn implies a community of interests and some form of economic cooperation among these cities. Referring to a group of similar seals, which stem from Ur and date either to the ED I or ED II period, but name only southern

\textsuperscript{11} D. Sürenhagen, \textit{The Dry-Farming Belt: The Uruk Period and Subsequent Developments}, in OCDF, pp. 7-8.

\textsuperscript{12} P.R.S. Moorey, \textit{The Late Prehistoric Administrative Building at Jamdat Nasr}, \textit{Iraq} 38 (1976), pp. 103-104.
Babylonian cities, H.T. Wright suggested that these seals may reflect "a system by which a storehouse in a town is related to those in several nearby towns, and which can build up into chains of interrelated towns stretching from one end of the alluvium to the other". Moving one step further, one could see in this system a pan-Babylonian cooperative organization, of essentially economic character, which controlled a common fund of resources. It appears quite probable that the origins of this organization belong to a considerably earlier period (Middle Uruk?), and, if so, that it was precisely this body that was responsible for the coordination and maintenance of the Uruk expansion.

There is general agreement among archaeologists that the Uruk expansion came to an end no later than the Uruk IV period. According to Algaze, the main cause of its demise was the growth of native political structures in the peripheral areas impacted by the Uruk colonization, and this certainly is a very persuasive explanation, for we know that imperial expansion has often acted as a catalyst of political change in peripheries, as shown by the origins of the states of Shimashki and Urartu. Moreover, there is every reason to believe that it was precisely this type of development that put an end to the Sumerian presence in the Susiana. Yet, this explanation seemingly fails to account for the collapse of the Uruk enclaves in northern Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, since in those regions advanced political systems did not come into being until the Early Dynastic III period. However, I would argue that much of this difficulty disappears if one considers the implications of certain historical developments that should be posited for the Jemdet Nasr and the beginning of the ED I period. As can be inferred from various types of data, during this transitional phase there occurred, probably in several waves and over an extended period of time, a major intrusion of Semitic peoples into Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. One of those peoples, probably the ancestors of the Akkadians, migrated into the Diyala Region and northern Babylonia, eventually settling there and adopting the urban mode of life. These processes resulted, sometime

18. The name of this people and the territory they occupied apparently was Wari or War in Semitic, and Uri in Sumerian. As late as the Old Babylonian period, this term continued to describe the Diyala Region. See Th. Jacobsen, OIC 13 (1932), p. 44; F.R. Kraus, Sumerer und Akkader: Ein Problem der altmesopotamischen Geschichte,
during the ED I period, in the formation, in this region, of a new political
and socio-economic system, which was distinctly different from the one
that operated at that time in southern Babylonia.

Now, if this reconstruction should prove correct, it would provide us
with a highly satisfactory explanation of the demise of Uruk enclaves in
Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, and, with it, of the termination of Sumerian
presence in the territories north of Nippur. Doubtless, the movement of
new peoples into Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, which may have begun
already in the Uruk IV period, would have been sufficient a factor not
only to disrupt but also to put an effective end to the operations of the
enclaves. This is especially so if one assumes that the Uruk expansion
was a commercial venture, by definition a fragile and essentially
opportunistic phenomenon. Though Sumerian presence came to an end
in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia already in the Uruk IV period, it
apparently continued, though in a diminished form, in northern Babylonia
and the Diyala Region down to the ED I period, when the new Semitic
institutions came fully to the fore. Thus, the history of these territories
in the Jemdet Nasr period involved a process similar to the amoritization
of Babylonia toward the end of the third millennium: a gradually increasing
Amorite presence during the 21st century, with the Amorites taking over
the political system at ca. 2000 B.C.

3. Leaving behind the issue of the Uruk expansion, I wish to
concentrate on the characteristics of the postulated northern system, which
appears to have come into being in the beginning of Early Dynastic
times. Starting with the question of the political organization of northern
Babylonia, the most striking fact is that the north seems never to have
developed the system of independent city-states that was typical of
southern Babylonia. In order fully to appreciate this contrast, an outline
of the southern organization must first be given.

The southern city-state was a clearly demarcated territorial unit,
comprising a major city— the state’s capital— and the surrounding
countryside, with its towns and villages. The city-states bordered
contiguously on one another, with little, if any, neutral space between
them.

According to the official ideology, the city-state was the private
property of an extended divine family. The chief god, as the head of
that family, was the de-facto proprietor of the whole state. At the same
time, he— together with his spouse and children— owned as his exclusive

Amsterdam 1970, pp. 37-39. Among the early attestations of this designation, note
the ED personal names Il-URI and Il-sû-URI, and the Sargonic DINGIR-Wa-ar, which
invoke the deified War(i) (ELTS, p. 113).
domain the capital city and its surroundings. Junior deities owned respectively smaller domains, centered around towns and villages.

The divine families of all the city-states were united into one super extended family, with Enlil, chief god of Nippur, occupying the position of the *paterfamilias*. Because of his rank, Enlil exercised overlordship over the entire south. In this capacity, he served as an arbitrator in conflicts, especially border disputes, between city-states.

From a historical perspective, the salient feature of the city-state ideology is its viewing of the south as a closed and highly balanced political system, wherein permanent, divinely-sanctioned borders separate the city-states. This tenet made any form of territorial expansion within the system exceedingly difficult; any notion of unification was theoretically unthinkable.

Rule over the city-state was exercised by an official called ens i k, whose office combined both secular and religious duties. The ens i k functioned as an earthly representative of the city-god, in a relationship comparable to the one between the steward of an estate and its absentee owner. In theory, the ens i k was selected by the god from among the whole citizenry of the city-state, and he had to be divinely reappointed each year.

Turning to the political organization of the north, we find a considerably different picture. First of all, there are strong reasons to believe that during most of the Early Dynastic II and III periods northern Babylonia formed a single territorial state or, perhaps more accurately, a single political configuration. This configuration probably also included the Diyala Region, certain trans-Tigridian territories, and perhaps even the middle course of the Euphrates as far north as Mari. The apparent focal point of this hypothetical northern state was the city of Kish, with

19. As is well known, the existence of this political and cultural entity was first postulated by I.J. Gelb, primarily on the evidence of writing, language, and culture. See his *Thoughts about Ibla*, SMS 1/1 (1977), pp. 1-28; *Ebla and the Kish Civilization*, in *LaE*, pp. 9-73; *The Language of Ebla in the Light of the Sources from Ebla, Mari, and Babylonia*, in EDA, pp. 49-74; *Mari and the Kish Civilization*, in G.D. Young (ed.), *Mari in Retrospect*, Wuona Lake 1992, pp. 121-202. This hypothesis has since then been embraced by a number of scholars. Note, especially, S. Parpola's statement in HSAO 2, p. 295: "It has become increasingly clear archaeologically that in Early Dynastic times the whole of Upper Mesopotamia was under the control of a political power fully comparable to the later Akkadian Empire. The rise of this ED empire, which there is every reason to associate with the first dynasty of Kish of the Sumerian king list, coincides with a period of favourable climatic conditions in lower Mesopotamia in the early third millennium B.C. Nothing certain is known about the organization of this empire nor of the reasons for its collapse. In any case, it would have lasted long enough to spread its language, writing system, culture and institutions all over the area under its control". In the following discussion, I limit myself to historical arguments, referring the reader to Gelb's writings for other types of data.
its secondary power-centers at Akshak and Mari, both of which competed with Kish for control of northern Babylonia. If we can trust the testimony of the Sumerian King List, on at least two occasions, Mari and Akshak did achieve ascendency over Kish.

What are the grounds for postulating the existence of such an expansive and powerful political entity in northern Babylonia prior to the reign of Sargon? The conclusion is inescapable, I believe, when one considers the paramount position that Kish is known to have occupied in the power-play of early Babylonia. Here it will suffice to mention such facts as the involvement of the Kishite king Mesilim in the affairs of southern Babylonia, the tradition of a conflict between the First

20. For this trio of powers, see, especially, the joint operation of Kish, Akshak, and Mari against Eanatum of Lagash, which is described in several of Eanatum’s inscriptions (CIRPL, Ean. 2, iv, 25 - vi, 8; vi, 21 - viii, 2; Ean. 3, v, 10 - vi, 5). Since these sources attribute the leadership of the enemy coalition to the ruler of Akshak (mu lugal Akšak\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\)ka i-zi-ga-a Ê-an-na-túm ... An-ta-sur-ra d\(\text{Nin-gir-su-ka-ta}\) Zu-zu lugal Akšak\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) Akšak\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\)-šē mu-gaz mu-ḫa- lam), Akshak may have been in control of northern Babylonia at that time. Although this episode is universally interpreted as Eanatum’s great military victory (see, e.g., Cooper, RHAI; Gelb, in Mari in Revospect, p. 127), the fact that, by Eanatum’s own admission, the war was fought in the territory of Lagash (Kig\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) Akšak\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) Ma-ri\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) An-ta-sur-ra d\(\text{Nin-gir-su-ka-ta}\) GIN.ŠE bi-sig₂) assures that Eanatum’s success did not amount to much more than repulsing the enemy and saving his kingdom. In spite of Eanatum’s claims of having beaten Zuzu back to Akshak, the mention of Antasura (of Lagash) and the vague language of the passage (mu-gaz mu-ḫa-lam “he smashed (and) destroyed” — is the object Zuzu or Akshak?) make it most unlikely that he followed Zuzu all the way to Akshak. It seems certain that, had Eanatum taken Akshak, he would have stated it in quite unequivocal terms. Accordingly, there is no basis for assuming that Eanatum achieved, even a temporary, hegemony over northern Babylonia (as thought, e.g., by Cooper, RHAI, p. 26). For the political and military ties between Kish and Akshak, note that Kish and Akshak operated in tandem also against Enshakushana of Uruk (FAOS 5/2, pp. 293-294, Enšakusuanna 1, 8-15).


22. The evidence here is the testimony of the Pre-Sargonic royal inscriptions, which credit Mesilim with mediating a border dispute between Lagash and Umma, and setting of his own stele along the Lagash-Umma border (RHAI, p. 22), and the survival of Mesilim’s dedicatory inscriptions to the deities of Lagash and Adab (FAOS 5/2, pp. 215-217 Mesahim 1-3). That Kish enjoyed influence at Adab (or perhaps even ruled over it at one time) is further indicated by the Abu Salabikh ms. of the “Kesh Hymn”, where the king of Kish is presented as a benefactor/protector of the Kesh temple: ēlugal Kiš\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) burt a₄₄ ma-gub, “the king of Kish set(s) up a bowl in the temple” (OIP 99, 308, iii, 4'-6'; R.D. Biggs, ZA 61 [1971], p. 202). Note that the later version of the same hymn omits Kiš\(\text{Ki}^{\text{ki}}\) (TCS 3, p. 174 l. 107), reflecting either a political bias of the time of its composition (Ur III?) or, more simply, the failure of the scribe to understand the archaic manuscript he was using as his model.
Dynasty of Uruk and Kish\textsuperscript{23}, in which Uruk was clearly on defensive, and the testimony of the Sumerian King List, according to which Kish produced the first "historical" dynasty\textsuperscript{24}, and was itself the source of Babylonian kingship.

In this connection, it seems highly significant that, while Kish is mentioned fairly frequently in Ebla economic sources as her commercial partner\textsuperscript{25}, the only other northern Babylonian city that is attested in this role is Akshak\textsuperscript{26}. Equally telling is the fact that, apart from Adab\textsuperscript{27}, no other southern Babylonian city is ever named in Ebla documents. The obvious inference must be that during the period in question all the commercial exchanges between Lower and Upper Mesopotamia were conducted via Kish. This, in turn, presupposes the mastery of Kish over northern Babylonia.

Finally, it should be pointed out that Kish and Akshak are the only northern Babylonian cities to be included in the Sumerian King List, the former being credited with four separate dynasties\textsuperscript{28}. This, at the very least, implies the primacy of Kish vis-à-vis other northern Babylonian cities during Early Dynastic times.

Our speculation that this early northern kingdom also comprised the Diyala Region and certain trans-Tigridan territories is, admittedly, largely suppositional, though the survival of a dedicatory inscription of (En)mebaragesi at Khafajah\textsuperscript{29} may be taken as an indication that Kish controlled at least portions of the Diyala region in Enmebaragesi’s time. Another source which is potentially of great significance for this question is the Early Dynastic geographical list\textsuperscript{30}, known from two manuscripts, from Abu Salabikh and Ebla. As I have shown elsewhere\textsuperscript{31}, this important document, which undoubtedly originated in northern Babylonia, most likely at Kish, is primarily concerned with two geographical areas: northern Babylonia and the adjacent northeastern territories. The latter include

\textsuperscript{23} As reflected in the literary composition "Gilgamesh and Akka". For the most recent edition, see W.H.Ph. Römer, \textit{Das sumerische Kurzepos 'Gilgamesh und Akka'} (AOAT 209), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1980.

\textsuperscript{24} Jacobsen, \textit{King List}, pp. 77-85.


\textsuperscript{26} See Steinkeller, \textit{Observations}, p. 244.

\textsuperscript{27} See A. Archi, MARI 4 (1985), p. 76 no. 62, p. 77 no. 110.

\textsuperscript{28} Jacobsen, \textit{King List}, pp. 71-111.

\textsuperscript{29} FAOS 5/2, p. 213 Mebarasi 1.

\textsuperscript{30} MEE 3, pp. 219-241, no. 56.

the Diyala region, Assyria, and the Zagros foothills extending as far east as western Susiana. It is striking that the only southern Babylonian toponyms included in this list are Nippur and, possibly, Isin, both of which were situated within the border area between southern and northern Babylonia, an area which we know remained under strong northern influence. Equally significant is the absence in this list of any Syrian and northern Mesopotamian toponyms. In view of this particular geographic distribution, and the fact that the toponyms named form a single connected area, I suggest that this document may actually be a gazeteer of the Kishite kingdom.

In comparison to southern kingship, which, as I noted earlier, was weak and had a distinctive theocratic character, northern kingship appears to have been strong, authoritarian, and predominantly secular. A persuasive proof of the authoritarian character of the northern kingship is provided by the history of the title lugal Kiš, “king of Kish”. As is well known, this title was claimed by several Pre-Sargonic southern rulers, such as Eanatum of Lagash and Lugal-kiginedudu of Uruk. It is generally thought that those rulers had actually achieved ascendency over Kish, and so earned the right to use this title. However, since there is no evidence that any of the southern bearers of the title ever succeeded in establishing hegemony over northern Babylonia, a better explanation is that, in its southern application, lugal Kiš was a generic term that described a particular form of kingship, namely, an autocratic and hegemonistic type that was unknown in the south, one which the southerners associated with the Kishite kingdom.

Another suggestive indication of the authoritarian nature of the Kishite state and its kingship is the history of the word Kiš itself. It is quite likely that the Akkadian verb kaššu, “to hold sway, to master”, and the related nouns kiššatu, “power”, kiššatu, “totality, entire inhabited world”, also “the status of a person remaining under the control of another”, and kiššu, “strength”, all derive from the name of Kish.

32. ELTS, p. 13.
33. For this title, see most recently T. Maeda, “King of Kish” in Pre-Sargonic Sumer, «Orient» 17 (1981), pp. 1-17; Cooper, RHAI, p. 7.
34. See, e.g., Cooper, RHAI, p. 7.
35. Note that a generic sense of this title is assured at least as early as the reign of Sargon. This is shown by the fact that in the inscriptions of Sargon and his followers the sign KIŠ, when appearing as a part of the title, is never provided with the indicator KI, in contrast to its occurrences as a toponym, in which KI is always present. See, especially, the occurrences of the title and the toponym in the “Manishtushu Obelisk” (ELTS, pp. 116-140, no. 40); and passim in Sargonic royal inscriptions. This makes it absolutely certain that, already at Sargon’s time, lugal KIŠ stood for šar kiššatu. Cfr. Maeda, «Orient» 17 (1981), pp. 13-14.
36. See CAD K, s.v. Cf. also kaškašu, “overpowering”. Apart from the formal similarity between kiššatu, kiššatu, kiššu, and Kiš(i), such a derivation is favored by the fact
Although northern kingship may have had its ultimate roots in tribal reality\textsuperscript{37}, its more immediate source was probably a city-based oligarchy of the type known from Ebla and later from Assur. While extended families were a conspicuous feature of the social landscape of northern Babylonia, tribes were not. This characteristic attests to the antiquity and strength of urbanism in that region.

Differences between north and south in the early historical periods were not limited to government, but extended equally to the sphere of social and economic institutions. In the south, the society was essentially as an all-inclusive temple community, with all its members standing in the same subservient relationship to the chief god. Class and social distinction were comparatively insignificant, with stratification based on wealth rather than on origin. These features, together with a high level of social mobility, gave the south a distinctly egalitarian character.

In the north, by contrast, the society appears to have been more rigidly stratified. In particular, we have convincing evidence that the institutions of chattel slavery and villeinage had been known in northern Babylonia long before they appeared in the south. This conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the Sumerian words for “slave” and “client” are both Semitic loanwords\textsuperscript{38}. An obvious corollary is that these borrowings were necessitated by the absence of comparable institutions in the early southern society.

that kištatu is written with the logogram KIS already in the inscriptions of Sargon (see the preceding note), which strongly suggest a genetic connection between the two words. Further, the verb kaššu, because of the identical second and third radicals, has all the marks of an expanded two-consonantal root. If kaššu is in fact a denominative verb, its base was either kištītu or kištatu or kištū, rather than directly Kiš(i).

37. Cf. P.R.S. Moorey, \textit{Kish Excavations 1923-1933}, Oxford 1978, p. 165: “If a West Semitic tradition was paramount at Kish from very early, the precocious emergence there of a powerful secular kingship may have derived more immediately from the exploitation of a tribal system by singularly forceful individuals in the ruling family or group; a political pattern familiar in more recent Arab history”.

38. The Sumerian word for “slave”, variously pronounced as /ardu, /urdū, and /arad/, is undoubtedly a loan from wardū (the contrary claims of J. Krecher, \textit{url “Mann”, femel “Frau” und die sumerische Herkunft des Wortes urdu(d) “Sklave”}, WO 18 [1987], pp. 7-19, have no basis, in my opinion). The earliest writing of this loanword, attested in Fara and Pre-Sargonic sources, is ār-tu (or urš-tu), describing male slaves, and ār-tu-SAL, describing female slaves. Note also the personal names Ār-tu-\textsuperscript{389}Sūd (F. Pomponio, \textit{La prosopografia dei testi presargonici di Fara}, Roma 1987, pp. 117-119) and Ār-tu-\textsuperscript{4}Nisābā (OIP 99, p. 35). For the later writings of /ardu/ and its relation to /er(e)/, “servant”, see provisionally my comments in FAOS 17, p. 130 note 389; an exhaustive study of this problem is in preparation. The Sumerian word for “client” is maš-ga₂(GAG)-e₃, a loan from muška₃nu; see, most recently, my discussion in TTim, p. 20.
In the south, the economy depended upon a decentralized system of largely self-sufficient temple-households which controlled most of the resources of the city-states, including nearly all of their agricultural lands. Private ownership of land was insignificant and seems to have been confined mainly to orchards\(^3^9\). In fact, the private sector was poorly developed and played little importance in the economy of southern city-states. It was only during the Sargonic period that private land-holdings and, with them, royal estates, made their first significant appearance in the south\(^4^0\).

This picture contrasts sharply with the economic conditions that prevailed in northern Babylonia. There, the dominant economic institutions were the royal domain and private households. Conversely, the temple domain, so characteristic of the southern economy, seems to have been of only marginal importance in northern Babylonia\(^4^1\). Private ownership

41. While the surviving Early Dynastic and Sargonic sources from northern Babylonia, the Diyala region, Awal (modern Tell as-Suleimeh), and Nuzi yield rich information on the activities and land-holdings of royal and private households, they make virtually no mentions of temple households and temple-owned land. The activities of royal/private households are illustrated especially well by the Mukdan archive, which was discussed by B.R. Foster, *An Agricultural Archive from Sargonic Akkad*, ASJ 4 (1982), pp. 7-51 (with important conclusions on pp. 36-37). For example, the Mukdan text MAD 5, 57 records the distribution of 1,830 iku of land, in fourteen fields in four different locations, made by a city governor (P[A.TE.SI] in iv, 13) on behalf of such functionaries as SABRA (twice), a servant of the queen (\(\_i\) NIN), NU.BÀNDA, and SIMUG. A similar document is MAD 5, 12, from Kish, recording 3,132 iku of land in ten different towns or villages. Because of their huge size, these two territories must have formed part of royal estates. On the other hand, MAD 5, 66, from Mukdan, illustrates the activities of a single private household, which involved the acquisitions of fields and houses and extensive lending operations. Private households are also the focus of economic activity in the sources from Awal: É Šu-An-tam (Rasheed, Himrin 1, vii, 10; 7, iii, 3), É Pù-su-GI (Himrin 1, iii, 14), É Šu-ri-im-kum (Himrin 1, iii, 17), and É A-šu-DINGIR (Himrin 7, iii, 7). In Himrin 42, which records the expenditures of a certain Ilum-damiq, 21.1.5 of barley was spent to purchase land in the town of Batirë, while another 12.2.3 of barley was expended as food-rations for Ilu-damiq's five slaves or servants (ÁRAD É in-hu-na). The same Ilum-damiq purchases 17+x iku of land in Himrin 44. Two other Awal citizens who owned substantial land-holdings were III-aši and Dudu. The properties of III-aši amounted to over 44 iku of land, comprising arable land, orchards, uncultivated orchard land (GIS.SAR.KI.SUD), vineyards (GEŠTIN), canebrake (Glš.GI), meadows (GÁNA-u-sal-lum), houses, and unbuilt house-lots (E KI.GAL) in the towns of Zurbu and Illi (Himrin 47). As for Dudú, he owned a total of 49 1/2 iku of land in the town of Ababi (Himrin 36). As far as I can tell, the only reference to a temple-household in all this documentation is the listing of thirty-seven individuals designated as GURUŠ.ŠÉME ÁRAD dEN.KI in MAD 5, 56, but even this example is uncertain, because of the existence of a personal name ÁRAD-É-a (MAD 5, 80, 5), which raises the possibility that a private household may in fact be meant. As for the temple-owned land, the only possible examples of such holdings are provided by ELTS nos. 38, i, 10 and 41, v, 5'; vi, 20';
of land was widespread. The role of the private sector in the north is quite striking, and must be considered a characteristic feature of that region's economy.

Our description of the southern and northern economies must be qualified, for the conditions that existed in southern Babylonia were far from uniform. The importance of temple-households was greatest in the far south, at places such as Uruk, Ur, Lagash, and Umma. Farther north, at Shuruppak, Adab, Isin, and Nippur, their significance was markedly less and declined still further across the border with northern Babylonia.

Coupled with the diminishing importance of temple households from southern to northern Babylonia, was the subsequent increasing importance of private or alienable land within the same geographical area. In the far south, private land was virtually non-existent, its ownership limited to the top echelon of the state's officialdom. However, moving farther north, towards Adab, Shuruppak, Isin, and Nippur, private/royal ownership of land became drastically more pronounced. Still farther, in northern Babylonia, it was the dominant form of land tenancy.

These facts suggest that the institution of private landed property originated in the north and spread to the south. Conversely, the temple household and its peculiar system of land tenancy appears to have been a southern phenomenon. Though it was eventually transmitted to the north, it never superseded the system of royal and private households there.

These deep-rooted differences between the southern and northern economies, though progressively less and less distinct, survived well into the second millennium, and, in some places, much later. The dominance of temple households in the south, as contrasting their comparative insignificance in the north, continued during Old Babylonian times, and survived, at Uruk, until the end of the Neo-Babylonian period. Even more telling is the fact that, as late as the Old Babylonian period, private ownership of arable land was rare and of little economic importance in southern Babylonia.

Although the organizing principle of northern Babylonian institutions contrasts sharply with that of southern ones, it shows close affinities with that of Pre-Sargonic Ebla. At Ebla, too, the dominant economic institution was the palace, which controlled extensive areas of agricultural land

42. See the data collected in ELTS, with conclusions on pp. 24-26.
43. See ibid., p. 25.
44. For the dominant position of royal domain in the economy of Ebla, see the informative article by A. Archi, About the Organization of the Eblaic State, SEb 5 (1982), pp.
and was the main center for the production and distribution of goods. Apparently of comparable importance, especially in the countryside, were private households. While we know that there were numerous temples at Ebla, in the city proper and throughout the kingdom, it is clear that they did not play a significant role in Ebla's economic life. That is to say, the institution of the temple household, known from southern Babylonia, did not exist at Ebla.

Another characteristic feature of the Ebla organization, which I would suggest can also be detected in the organization of early northern Babylonia, is the markedly stratified nature of the Ebla society. This is demonstrated by the presence at Ebla of a fully developed aristocratic ruling class, the likes of which was unknown in southern Babylonia. Although the Ebla aristocracy was city based, its origins were likely tribal, as is strongly implied by the active involvement of its members in the economic and political life of the countryside. In fact, it is not unreasonable to speculate that many of the individuals whom we find in positions of power in Ebla sources, especially those officials designated LUGAL, were the heads of tribal groupings, who continued to exercise full control in the affairs of their rural lineages.

This urban oligarchy, which comprised the most important families of the realm, not only shared political power with the king and his family, but also controlled a significant portion of the state's economic resources. A similar type of social organization is discernible, many centuries later, at Alalakh and Ugarit, in northern Syria, and, closer to Babylonia, at the city of Assur, where the power was shared by “the king and the City”.

The similarities between northern Babylonia and Ebla extend to land-tenure practices as well. It appears that at Ebla the chief proprietors...
of arable land were the king and the members of his extended family. As amply attested by the surviving documentation, the royal domain comprised land-holdings scattered throughout the Eblaic kingdom that were managed directly by the palace.

A good illustration of the operations of the royal domain at Ebla is provided by five texts concerning a group of small rural settlements in the vicinity of the capital city. As these demonstrate, the palace allocated seed-barley, tools, draft animals, and animal fodder to the farmers, and oversaw the progress of the entire agricultural cycle. The income from such holdings was used to support the royal family, the state and palace officialdom, and the work-force. This modus operandi closely parallels the way in which Sargonic royal estates of northern Babylonia were managed.

There also survive numerous records of land—some of which had been acquired through royal grants—held by the members of the royal family. What is remarkable about these documents is the large areas of craftsmen of the palace (SA.ZA.x.KI) and the suburbs (URU.BAR); (b) 29,560 units (or 12 + %) — the palatial officialdom (UR.x and MAŠKIM.MAŠKIM UGULA.È.UGULA.È); (c) 19,020 units (or ca. 8%) — the chief families of the realm (ABxÂŠ.ABxÂŠ), probably including the royal family. One can confidently surmise that all these holdings formed part of the royal domain.

The other text, ARET 2, 26, tallies the land-holdings of the town or village of Arimamu, totaling 14,320 units of land. Of it, 7,000 units (nearly 49%), designated as KU URU.KI, apparently represented the land owned or possessed by freeholders. The second largest portion, amounting to 3,600 units (ca. 25%) and designated as KU SA.ZA.x.KI, seems to have provided sustenance for the local palatial organization and its craftsmen. The remaining portions were: 700 units (nearly 5%), called SE.BA, which probably served to support the workforce of the palace; and 3,000 units (nearly 21%), the holdings of the sons or descendants (DUMU.NITA.DUMU.NITA) of a certain Igi, who was either a local chieftain or the king's representative (the governor of Arimamu?). Assuming that both the land designated as KU URU.KI and the holdings of the family of Igi constituted outright private property (and not prebendal holdings), the properties of the royal domain would account for only ca. 30% of the arable land available in Arimamu, with the remainder being held in private ownership.


50. See the sources discussed in note 48.

51. See ARET 2, 27a, recording 9,000 units of land, the holdings of Tiš(a)-Lim (the queen of Emar, and possibly an Ebla princess). Cf. Seb 7 (1984), pp. 2-4 (TM 75.G.2396), in which Irkab-Damu, the ruler of Ebla, grants to Tiš(a)-Lim various territories. ARET 7, 155 lists 7,600 units of land held by the sons or descendants of Irik-Damu, son of Ibrün. Other examples of the land-holdings of Ebla princes are: 22 towns or villages held by Nap-ha-NI, son of Ibrün (ARET 7, 152); 5 towns or villages held by the same Nap-ha-ni (ARET 7, 153, iii, 8 - iv, 4); [x]+15 towns or villages and other territories held by Irtu, son of Ibrün (SEb 4 [1981], p. 10 [TM 75.G.1625]; cf. ARET 7, 153, ii, 2 - iii, 7); 6 towns or villages held by Gir-Damu, son of Ibrün (SEb 4 [1981], p. 9 [TM 75.G.1470]; cf. ibid., pp. 36-46 [TM 75.G.1444]; ARET 7, 153, i, 1 - ii, 1); 6(?J towns or territories held by Amur-Damu son of
of land they record, and the fact that such holdings included, in addition to arable land and orchards, whole towns and villages, together with their resident populations. Since there also survive records of the land-grants made by persons other than the king, it appears fairly certain that at Ebla the ownership of agricultural land, and the concomitant right to alienate it, extended to private individuals as well. Temples, on the other hand, are never identified as the proprietors of land in Ebla documents.

It is unnecessary to point out that the system of land tenure just described, in particular, the private ownership of entire towns and villages, finds no analogy in southern Babylonia, at least not until the Kassite period. However, this system shows close similarities to the agricultural practices at later Alalakh and Ugarit. Moreover, I would argue that at least some of its features, such as the paramount role of the royal domain and the conspicuous presence of land held in "private" or familial ownership, can also be discerned in northern Babylonia.

As far as it can be determined, the socio-economic system in effect during Pre-Sargonic times at Mari closely resembled that at Ebla. At Mari, too, the dominant institution appears to have been the royal palace, with temples playing no significant economic role. Admittedly, however,

Ibbi-zikir (SEb 3 [1980], pp. 65-66 [TM 75.G.1430]). See also the holdings of the sons or descendants of Gi-a-Lim (ARET 7, 154), who quite probably was likewise a member of the royal family.

52. The attempts of F. Pomponio, Notes to TM.75.G.2230 (= ARET 2, 51), OLP 14 (1983), p. 9, and Milano, Barley for Rations and Barley for Sowing, ASJ 9 (1987), pp. 186-187, to calculate the size of the Ebla land-unit (GÁNA.KÉS or KI) remain highly conjectural. In my opinion, both the figure proposed by Pomponio (1/10 of i k u) and that of Milano's (1/6 of i k u) are too low. But, even if either estimate is accepted, the land-holdings of the Ebla royal family would have been very substantial.

53. See, e.g., SEb 3 (1980), pp. 34-36 (TM 75.G.1452), which concerns a grant or transfer of five towns, three villages, and four rural territories, together with their personnel, by Tahir-Lim, a DAM.DINGIR priestess, daughter of Irik-Damu, son of Ibririm, to a certain Uti: wa ḫa-NA-SUM [Da-hiḫ-Li-in Ut-iti in UD HUL-sù āš-da UD.ZAL.UD.ZAL-sù "on the day of his festivities, Tahir-Lim gave (these properties) to Uti in perpetuity(?)". The holdings in question are designated as Tahir-Lim's NĪ.GĀ.GĀ, which should perhaps be interpreted as the Ebla term for "inheritance share" (n.b. the cifers found in association with this term very likely are ordinal numerals: 1st share, 2nd share, etc.).


55. Note that the Pre-Sargonic tablets from Mari mention the palace (Ē.GAL or Ė.LUGAL) quite frequently, as a destination point of various deliveries (MARI 5 [1987], pp. 107-113 nos. 8, ix, 4 [Ē LUGAL]; 10, ii, 1, 4; iii, 3; v, 3; 12, v, 5 [Ē LUGAL]; 17, i, 2; iv, 2). The same documents also record the deliveries or offerings for various gods and temples (Ē DINGIR.DINGIR) (ibid., pp. 105-15 nos. 6-10, 12, 17, 19, 20). The fact that both types of deliveries are combined in one and the same account suggests the existence of a single dispositional center at Mari, which, as I would
relevant written documentation from Mari is too meager to allow any firm conclusions.

It should be emphasized at this point that our attempts to reconstruct the conditions that obtained during the same period in northern Babylonia are hindered by similar difficulties. Because of the scarcity of written documentation from this region prior to the reign of Naram-Sin, the only way such a reconstruction can be made is by tracing the influences of northern institutions on the border area between south and north, as reflected in the Pre-Sargonic sources from places like Nippur and Isin, and by extrapolating from later, especially Sargonic, documentation. This, I admit, is a highly tentative undertaking.

Still, the conclusion seems unavoidable that, in terms of its political and economic institutions, the pre-Sargonic north showed much closer links with northern Syria than with southern Babylonia. Moreover, it would appear that the traditions of northern Babylonia and those of Syria shared a common origin. The question as to whether these traditions originated in northern Babylonia or in Syria is difficult to evaluate, especially in view of our near-complete ignorance of the history of interactions between these two regions prior to the reign of Sargon. Personally, I would tend to think that the societal and economic features that can be identified as common to both northern Babylonia and Syria developed outside of Babylonia, either in northern Syria itself or somewhere in Upper Mesopotamia.

Should this prove correct, then the development which occurred within greater Mesopotamia during the third millennium would, to a large extent, be the result of an interaction between two distinct traditions: the southern, or Sumerian tradition, and the northern, or Syrian tradition, with northern Babylonia being the locus of their direct contact. I submit that such an assumption is not as radical as it may seem at first glance, since the role of northern Babylonia as melting pot for the religious, cultural, and artistic ideas that emanated northward from Sumer and southward from Syria, is generally acknowledged.

speculate, was the palace. Such a supposition may find support in the inclusion among this group of documents of two clay labels, which originally accompanied the deliveries of garments for the king (ibid., p. 111 nos. 14 [4 A.SU.TUG LUGAL] and 15 [2 TUG LUGAL]).

56. It needs to be stressed, however, that the surviving documentation, while scant, is consistent with the postulated picture. For example, the economic tablets from Abu Salabikh (OIP 99 nos. 490-515; «Iraq» 40 [1978], pp. 111-114, nos. 516-519, 528-532), contain no references to temple households, though they mention the king (nos. 494, iii, 2; 505, rev. 4'-5'), the queen (no. 506, ii, 4'), and the king's brother (no. 503, v, 1), as well as royal slaves or servants and the herds of royal equids: ARAD LUGAL (503, ii, 2), ANŠE.BAR.AN LUGAL (503, v, 3), and ANŠE ŠE KÚ, LUGAL, ŠE.BA ARAD (no. 494, iv, 2-4). Note also the occurrence of É.GAL in no. 513, ii, 3.
4. I will conclude this paper with a brief sketch of the political development in Babylonia during the Early Dynastic periods that emphasizes the contacts between south and north\textsuperscript{57}. We may speculate that the northern system, whose main features I tried to reconstruct earlier, became operative sometime during the Early Dynastic I period. To roughly that time one should also date the founding of the Kishite kingdom\textsuperscript{58}. Based on such evidence as the fact that the Sumerian King List names Kish as the first dynasty after the flood, and the historical tradition describing the struggles of Uruk with the Kishite kings Enmebaragesi and Akka, one can conclude that Kish exercised considerable influence in the south during the Early Dynastic II period. The case of the Kishite king Mesilim, who, two or three generations before Ur-Nanshe of Lagash, arbitrated a territorial dispute between Lagash and Umma, suggests that at times Kish even succeeded in establishing suzerainty over the south.

Apparently, the immediate effect of this early Kishite domination was that it brought the south into direct contact with northern institutions, leading eventually to important systemic changes in southern society. As a result, southern institutions, most notably, its kingship, became stronger, and thus better suited to compete with the north. Moreover, it was probably in response to the Kishite challenge that the concept of southern unity achieved its full formulation. Whether or not this concept ever materialized in any formal political arrangement, such as a league or amphictyony, it provided the south with a considerable measure of balance and internal security, thereby making it more resilient to outside threats.

However, while the short-term result of the northern influence was to strengthen the original southern structures, its long-term effect was destabilizing, for it familiarized the south with a model of kingship that was too attractive an alternative not to be tried at home. Thus, once the Kishite threat had been checked, there inevitably began attempts in the south at assuming ascendancy over neighboring states. First at Ur, then at Lagash, several rulers made important inroads toward accomplishing that objective.

Attempts at hegemony grew progressively bolder. By the Early Dynastic IIIb period they crystalized in the drive toward unification. By that time, the center of power had shifted to Uruk, which assumed

\textsuperscript{57} This historical sketch is based on my Mesopotamia in the Third Millennium B.C., in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. 4, New York 1992, pp. 724-732.

\textsuperscript{58} In this connection, it is interesting to note that Mari was founded, in the ED I or ED II period, as a completely new site. See J.-C. Margueron, Mari ou la 'naissance' d'une ville neuve, in Cités disparues: Découvreurs et archéologues au Proche-Orient, «Autrement, Série monde», H.S. no. 55 (Sept., 1991), pp. 133-142. Is it possible that Mari was founded by the rulers of Kish, as Kish's outpost controlling the trade routes to Syria and the Habur triangle?
ascendancy over Ur and was then able to claim a limited hegemony over the south. Such was apparently the implication of the title *lugal kalam-ma*, "king of the land", which was used by the Uruk ruler Enshakushana and, slightly later, by Lugal-zagesi. At the same time, however, these kings were careful to stress that their territorial claims were confined to the states of Ur and Uruk, and that, in that position, they held two separate kingships. This underscoring of the separate character of the kingships of Ur and Uruk is highly significant, for it attests to the enduring strength of the city-state ideology. In this light, Uruk's hegemony could have amounted to little more than a position of primacy within the existing power structure.

Uruk's rise to supremacy culminated with the reign of Lugal-zagesi. Stemming, apparently, from Umma, Lugal-zagesi succeeded, either by force or through a dynastic arrangement, in establishing himself at Uruk and Ur. He then added Lagash to his possessions and, by securing for himself the recognition of the Nippur priesthood, became the first southern ruler to achieve an effective hegemony over the entire south. Despite Lugal-zagesi's claim to have spread his influence all the way to the Mediterranean, his rule hardly extended beyond the strict confines of southern Babylonia. It is also unlikely that he ever succeeded in turning his possessions into a single uniform state, or, for that matter, that he even harbored such ambitions. Given existing ideological constraints, such a step would clearly have been too radical for a southerner to contemplate. Psychologically, however, Lugal-zagesi's achievement constituted a dramatic break with the past and irrevocably changed the course of southern history. When, a few years later, the unification of Babylonia was finally carried out, the person responsible for it was, not surprisingly, a northerner.

5. And now the final conclusion. As is surely evident, the main purpose of this presentation was to show that the Sargonic empire was less of an innovation than one might conclude based on the study of Sargonic sources alone. Many of the systemic traits that are usually associated with the Sargonic period, such as autocratic kingship, centralized government, land-tenure practices, and, no less important, its ideology of conquest, were part of the northern reality long before Sargon. What was truly new about the Sargonic empire was the ability of Sargon and his successors to forge these traits into the instruments of total power. The story of how this was accomplished, however, is beyond the scope of this paper.
THE GENESIS AND COLLAPSE OF THE AKKADIAN EMPIRE:
THE ACCIDENTAL REFRACTION OF HISTORICAL LAW

Harvey Weiss and Marie-Agnès Courty

“However many the emperor slew
the scientific historian
(while taking note of contradiction)
affirms that productive forces grew.”
E.P. Thompson, Powers and Names,
«London Review of Books».

Introduction

A new model of the Akkadian empire results from recent archaeological fieldwork on the Habur Plains. The model situates the Akkadian empire at the end of a lengthy period of southern Mesopotamian state economy evolution and experimentation. The evolution and experimentation were the product of the southern Mesopotamian economy's politically determined need for increasing quantities of convertible wealth in the face of local growth constraints. The Akkadian empire was, therefore, the product of a specific conjunction of southern Mesopotamian environmental, developmental and geographical/locational constraints and potentialities in the last half of the third millennium B.C..

The new archaeological data which both suggest and lend support to this model are derived from Habur Plains archaeological research for the period ca. 2600-1800 B.C.. The dry-farming urbanized landscape of the Leilan-Mozan-Brak triangle which developed suddenly at 2600 B.C.

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was subjected 300 years later to an elaborate Akkadian imperial apparatus implanted across the rain-fed agriculture belt of northern Mesopotamia. The purpose of this apparatus was to increase northern agricultural production and to transfer the increased production to the imperial capital.

This elaborate extractive system was, however, very short-lived. Its collapse was not due to inherent inefficiencies, nor to decreasing returns of agro-production, nor to “its own weight” and inattention to southern Mesopotamian administrative needs. The collapse is, however, susceptible to archaeological analysis. A region-wide abrupt climatic change severely disrupted agriculture, settlement, and politic-economic systems from SE Europe to the Indus Valley, ca. 2200-1900 B.C.. One effect was the desertification and desertion of the Habur Plains, and the collapse of imperialized dry-farming agriculture. Another was the displacement of Habur Plains populations, sedentary and transhumant, “down” the Euphrates and Tigris into southern Mesopotamia. A third effect was the collapse of southern Mesopotamian irrigation agriculture, ca. 2100-2000 B.C., during the Ur III dynasty.

The Late Uruk collapse: 3000-2900 B.C.

For three or four hundred years, from ca. 3400-3000 B.C., the early, urban-based, Late Uruk period civilization of southern Mesopotamia both sustained itself and expanded into adjacent rain-fed northern plains, piedmont and plateau regions with “colonies” and colony-related settlements. The object of this expansion remains an enigma, but the lines of colony settlement through the Zagros to Godin, and along the Euphrates to Habuba and Jebel Aruda, are likely to have retrieved for the south “inessential” status-enhancing exotica for nascent elites. Suddenly, however, at about 3000 B.C., and for still unknown reasons, Late Uruk society collapsed in the south and, synchronously, as suddenly as they had appeared, the Late Uruk colonies and related piedmont and plateau settlements also collapsed.

6. N. Postgate, *The Transition from Uruk to Early Dynastic*, in U. Finkbeiner - W. Röllig (eds.), *Gamdat Nasr, Period or Regional Style?*, Wiesbaden 1986, pp. 91-106. Some variability within this process, is evident, for instance, on the Habur Plains where an
Isolation and Insulation: 2900-2600 B.C.

The collapse, or Jemdet Nasr, period, lasted for about 100 years. For the next 300 years, from ca. 2900-2600 B.C., the cultures of southern and northern Mesopotamia, Sumer and Subir, remained isolated and insulated from each other. To judge from the limited data available for this period, the Sumerian landscape was dominated by cities ranging in size from 20 to 400 hectares, each dominated by temple-based elites, but loosely coordinated, perhaps economically, within an inter-city confederation.

In Subir, northern Mesopotamia, settlements during this period were small, widely distributed villages situated along the perennial streams of the Habur River, the affluents of the Tigris, and the Tigris itself. Only villages and towns, less than ten hectares, are known for this period, and there is no evidence within individual settlements for social stratification or political organization at the state level. The distinctive cylinder seals used during this period in northern Mesopotamia unite the region with the dry-farming stretches of the Zagros piedmont and the proto-Elamite culture area of southwestern Iran. Very few sealings from these northern seals have been retrieved in southern Mesopotamia.

2600 B.C. and Secondary State Formation

At 2600 B.C., after 300 years of effective isolation from each other, the insular worlds of southern Mesopotamia (Sumer), northern Mesopotamia (Subir), and the Indus Valley (Meluhha) were launched upon a regionally interactive trajectory which, of course, transformed each (Figure

isolated Tell Brak settlement remained inhabited during this period, as reported by J. Oates, *Trade and Power in the Fifth and Fourth Millennia B.C.*, WA 24 (1993), p. 415. A partial explanation for the collapse of the Susa-inner Zagros-Godin line, and the replacement of the Godin VI/V settlements around Godin Tepe in this period, may reside within the Khirbet Kerak intrusion which cut the trade routes exploited by some of the Uruk colonies; see Weiss - Young, «Iran» 13 (1975), pp. 1-17. For further illumination of the Late Uruk colony collapse, see G. Schwartz, in O. Rouault (ed.), *L'Eufrate e il tempo*, Roma 1993, pp. 34-39.

9. The contact is manifest in the archaeological record of Ninevite 5/“piedmont Jemdet Nasr” seals. Six glazed steatite examples of these have been retrieved at Kish (B. Buchanan, *Catalogue of the Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum, I: Cylinder Seals*, Oxford 1966, nos. 74-78, 80). Such seals and sealings are documented, as well, in the Diyala, but are otherwise “extremely rare in Sumer” (P.R.S. Moorey, *Kish Excavations 1927-1933*, Oxford 1951).
1). In Sumer, palaces suddenly appeared within at least seven of the major city-states which previously had only known the politic-economic rulership of temple-based priests. This suggests a radical realignment of internal urban forces in Sumer. The scale and magnitude of the alteration are evident in the urban growth, long-distance trade, and especially expanded agricultural labor deployment documented for the period beginning at ca. 2600 B.C.10

A series of Tell Leilan radiocarbon-dated excavations indicates a radical transformation of social, economic, and political life in Subir at this same time. Three very large cities, with secondary towns and third-level villages, suddenly developed across the Habur Plains landscape formerly occupied only by villages. The synchronous adoption of Sumerian iconography on local-use cylinder seals suggests that contact with Sumer played a role in this secondary state transformation.

New south Asian radiocarbon dates indicate that at ca. 2600 B.C. the Indus flood plain was also suddenly urbanized at Mohenjo Daro, Harappa, and Ganwariwala. In this transformation these cities also adopted the administrative tools of southern Mesopotamia11. Here, again, the Sumerian expansion is linked with “secondary state formation”12.

The 2600 B.C. “expansions” to the Habur and to the Indus seem to mark, therefore, the first of three third millennium southern Mesopotamian “expansions”. The second expansion, towards western Syria, occurred approximately 150 years later, and can be seen in the sudden consolidation of the Eblaite state13, and its adoption of southern Mesopotamian (“Kish civilization”) cultural attributes14. The second expansion probably transformed, as well, Tell Bi’a (ancient Tutul) on the Euphrates River15 and

the Orontes River cities of Qatna, Hama and Asharné. The third southern expansion occurred during the Akkadian dynasty which destroyed the distant urban centers engendered by its predecessors, and imperialized the rain-fed agriculture belt on the periphery of southern Mesopotamia.

Subir: The Four Stages

From its genesis to its collapse, a four stage model of the history of third millennium Subir based upon the Leilan-defined developmental chronology for Subir can now be projected. “Subir: The Four Stages” provides the foundation for the analysis of Akkadian imperialism and its collapse.

**SUBIR: THE FOUR STAGES**

**Stage 1. Leilan IIId (ca. 2600-2400 B.C.): SECONDARY STATE FORMATION:** Urbanization and state formation; Leilan Acropolis “palace” and storerooms; administrative iconography/technology change from “piedmont” to local “Subarian” style.

**Stage 2. Leilan IIa (ca. 2400-2300 B.C.): CONSOLIDATION OF STATE POWER:** Acropolis fortification; ceramic technology change to mass production.

**Stage 3. Leilan IIb (ca. 2300-2200 B.C.): IMPERIALIZATION:** Akkadian conquest and reorganization of regional production from nodal Brak imperial administrative center; Leilan City wall construction; sila bowl production; channelization.

**Stage 4. Habur Hiatus 1 (ca. 2200-1900 B.C.): COLLAPSE:** Desertification and desertion.

**Stage 1. Leilan IIId (ca. 2600-2400 B.C.): Secondary State Formation**

In stage 1 settlement at Leilan suddenly expanded more than six fold within one or two hundred years, growing from a less than 15 hectare Acropolis-based settlement, to approximately the 100 hectares now
comprising the Lower Town and settled areas outside its walls. This is documented across and around the following seven Leilan loci: the Lower Town South, Operations 2 and 3 on the East, Operation 7 and 8 on the North, Operation 6 (the SW “lobe”), and D3 (the “island”) on the West (Figure 3).

To judge from the Lower Town South, Leilan settlement at the initial IIId period was a planned city; that is, straight streets, 4.5 meters wide, were laid out with straight street walls providing only limited access to cross alleys (Plate 5)\(^{16}\). On the Leilan Acropolis, at the same time, small domestic structures of the earlier Leilan IIIc period were now replaced by large storerooms filled with cylinder seal impressions of a new type and, as well, a related large building, still to be excavated, which seems to have been the administrative center for the storerooms and the city at large, i.e., the “palace”\(^{17}\). The new “Subarian” cylinder seals, local Habur Plains imitations of Sumerian late Early Dynastic II / early Early Dynastic III banquet scenes, have replaced earlier “piedmont Jemdet Nasr” seals at this juncture\(^{18}\). It seems probable that this emulation of southern iconography served to legitimate nascent state power\(^{19}\).

Across the Leilan Lower Town, as well as on the Leilan Acropolis, the ceramics in use during this period were those of the late Ninevite 5 incised tradition. The radical social and economic alterations of the period were not accompanied by synchronous changes in traditional ceramic manufacture technologies\(^{20}\).

**Habur Triangles**

Although this initial stage of Subarian state development has been explored relatively extensively at Leilan, evidence exists for defining, as

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16. H. Weiss, *Tell Leilan 1989: New Data for Mid-Third Millennium Urbanization and State Formation*, MDOG 122 (1990), pp. 193-218. Apart from Tell Taya, there are few contemporary samples of urban residential areas. The Leilan Lower Town traffic/population control expressed here is duplicated at Mohenjo-Daro where B. and R. Alchin, *The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan*, Cambridge 1982, p. 178, note that “a distinctive feature of the construction was ... that the roadward side of a block presented a plain blank façade broken only where drainage chutes discharged”.


19. Symbol emulation for this purpose is common in such contexts, e.g., at Piedras Negras where “Maya kings, beginning in the Early Classic, used the symbols of a dominant foreign power to declare their ‘disconnected’ superior status over the people” (A. Stone, in R.A. Diehl - J.C. Berlo [eds.], *Mesoamerica after the Decline of Teotihuacan, A.D. 700-900*, Washington D.C. 1990, p. 178).

well, the Leilan IIId Habur region landscape. By Leilan IIId times, the eastern Habur triangle had been transformed into an urban landscape dominated by three equidistant centers, Leilan, Mozan and Brak, each ca. 75-100 hectares in size, situated on the perennial Jarrah, Jaghjagh and Khanzir drainages (Figure 2). Territorial control, extending up to 25 kilometers round each center, was probably equivalent for each city if Nisibin and the Jaghjagh prove to have been the territorial border between Leilan and Mozan. To judge from the series of Leilan regional surveys (Figure 4), a tight 15 kilometer ring of cereal agriculture settlement, including second and third order towns and villages, surrounded each urban center. A second ring, extending from 15 to 25 kilometers around the primary center, was probably devoted to state controlled sheep and goat herding.

Although some village level settlement is documented along the stream beds west of the Khanzir, the only urban level settlement systems presently known on the Habur Plains during the third millennium developed around Leilan, Mozan and Brak. Leilan and Mozan were situated to maximize cultivable lowland terrain with annual rainfall greater than 400 mm/annum. Brak, which receives ca. 280 mm rainfall/annum, probably supplemented its rain-fed cereal harvests with irrigation agriculture along the middle Habur River, where contemporary grain storage depots, such as Raqai and Atij, have been identified.

**Climate**

A deterioration of climatic conditions during this period complicates explanations for Subarian state formation and the southern Mesopotamian role within it. While in the century prior to period IIId Leilan was situated in a wide active flood plain with meandering channels, after 2600 B.C. the flood plain stabilized by natural channel entrenchment as


22. We ignore for the moment the still problematic *Krauzhilgen*, such as Beidar, now the subject of a research project led by M. Lebeau, the possibly similar Bati, and the Jebel Abd al-Aziz fringe sites of Magher, Muezzar, and the Mathlus, east and west. H. Kühne, *Tall Maštät ed-Deru, eine Station auf dem Weg nach Kappadokien?*, in R.M. Boehmer - H. Hauptmann (eds.), *Beiträge zur Altertumskunde Kleinasiens*, Mainz 1983, p. 301, dates the sites to the pre-Akkadian urban culture of the Jezira (i.e., Leilan IIIId-IIa).

a result of reduced water discharge in the Jaghjagh catchment basin in the northern Tur Abdin mountains. Local rainfall declined as well; pedogenic carbonates in the soil samples indicate a reduction in soil water percolation and an increase in evapotranspiration. Centrally administered urban economics and mixed land-use strategies may have presented adaptive advantages for maximizing production under such circumstances of increased rainfall/harvest risk. These reductions in precipitation suggest similar reductions in Anatolian plateau precipitation, and therefore a reduction in Euphrates flow within Sumer.

Stage 2. Leilan period IIa (ca. 2400-2300 B.C.): Consolidation of State Power

Stage 2, the consolidation of state power within the cities of Subir, is marked by the first construction of a defensive wall around the Leilan Acropolis, its storerooms and administrative buildings, to protect and isolate the elite, their wealth, and their administrative power from the residents of the Leilan Lower Town and Leilan region villages. The Acropolis wall, of mudbrick, was 2.5 meters wide. The ca. 100 hectare Lower Town, however, still remained without a wall through this period. Wheel transport of cereal production across the settlement hierarchy was probably horse, mule, or onager drawn, as a tooth from one has been identified by Richard Meadow within the Lower Town street debris.

Stage 2 is the first Subarian state formation period to witness a substantial change in ceramic technologies: the ca. 400 year old tradition of Ninevite 5 period incising disappears almost completely during this period, and ceramic production moved towards "mass production", i.e., simplified, less labor intensive, presumably more efficient production techniques.

This period of state power consolidation remains to be explored, at Leilan, Brak, and Mozan, the Leilan region secondary centers of Do Gir and Mohammed Diyab, and the villages of the surrounding countryside. The abandonment of traditional ceramic production techniques suggests that containers were now serving new purposes influenced or controlled by state authority because ceramic vessels not only served as containers but also as measures. Louise Senior (University of Arizona) is analyzing alterations in Leilan IIId-IIb ceramic production technology, vessel standardization, and vessel function.

24. For the drainage and sources of the Jarrah, see L. Dillemann, Haute Mésopotamie orientale et pays adjacents, Paris 1962, p. 60.
27. See Weiss - Calderone, in Weiss, Origins, for the definition of period IIa ceramics.
28. M. Powell, Masse und Gewichte, RIA 7 (1990), pp. 457-517. Louise Senior (University of Arizona) is analyzing alterations in Leilan IIId-IIb ceramic production technology, vessel standardization, and vessel function.
imply the appearance of state standards of measurement — standard capacities and areas for agricultural production, distribution, collection, taxation, payment, storage, and reinvestment. Limited as the data appear at the moment, it is this period of Subarian state power consolidation, and state culture congealment, which will soon draw considerable research attention. To judge from the Sumerian inscriptions of Eanatum, it was probably at the end of this period that the conflict between Subir and Sumer was launched.

Stage 3. Leilan period IIb (ca. 2300-2200 B.C.): Akkadian Conquest and Imperialization

Stage 3 is marked by the southern conquest of Subir/Subartu by Naram-Sin, although earlier Akkadian dynasts may have also “conquered” and extracted booty. In marked contrast to distant Akkadian conquests, or possibly earlier Habur Plains “conquests”, the conquest of Subartu by Naram-Sin was followed by construction of an Akkadian imperial emplacement at Tell Brak. How was Akkadian control of the Habur Plains effected and towards what ends was this control directed? In the Tell Leilan region five features of Akkadian control have been identified:

1. population redistribution: Tell Mohammed Diyab, the large secondary center only 8 kilometers SE of Leilan, was reduced in size from 50 to 10 hectares, its population probably nucleated within Leilan. Do Gir, the comparable satellite site to the north of Leilan, may have suffered a similar fate. Village level settlements appear to have been maintained in place to sustain imperialized production. This redistribution may, therefore, have been directed at removing local second-level centers and elites from the administration of production.

2. regional population control: Regional control to prevent insurrection, to protect imperial administration, and to protect imperial stores, required the deployment of local populations for defensive/protective and

29. FAOS 5, 1, pp. 143, 150.

legitimizing construction works. Substantial numbers of laborers were, therefore, for the first time, deployed to construct a massive city wall around Tell Leilan. At the eastern edge of the Leilan Lower Town settlement the rock hard calcitic virgin soil was first excavated to depths of 0.5 to 1.5 meters. Then two concentric walls of mud brick, each 8 meters wide, a casemate wall, were set into these excavations. A one meter wide middle wall was constructed perhaps to serve as a walkway between the inner and outer walls. On the northern side of the city, where a natural depression and rise afforded protection, an imposing earthen rampart was constructed by excavating a 10 meter wide ditch and then mounding the excavated virgin soil upon the surface of the Lower Town.

3. agricultural redistribution: Systematic flotation retrieval of botanical remains within 50 to 100% samples of each Leilan Lower Town South's house floor's debris has generated a data base for Wilma Wetterstrom's analysis of agricultural production and distribution during Leilan IIb Akkadian imperialism. Wetterstrom notes the virtual absence of nodal stems, rachises, and non-seed plant parts from the Lower Town botanical assemblages. The domesticated cereals and pulses —mostly barley and lentils— have already undergone primary and secondary processing — they are clean, ready for storage, cooking and consumption, suggesting that they are the remains of rations previously processed and stored elsewhere prior to distribution. It remains to be determined if a similar labor system was already in existence prior to the Akkadian imperialism.

4. introduction of Akkadian mensuration and Leilan sīlā bowls: An extensive analysis of the pottery retrieved from the Akkadian period Leilan Lower Town settlement has revealed a bowl type distinctive for both its appearance and for its standardized capacities. The bowl is dark green, with no visible temper, wheel made, has a flat base and simple rim, straight sides. Along with 557 sherds of this vessel type which have been retrieved and measured, 27 complete or fragmentary stacked kiln wasters (SKWs) of these vessels have also been retrieved and measured (Plate 6). The SKWs have a tri-modal capacity distribution: ca. 55% range between 0.2 and 0.4 liters, 38% between 0.8 and 1.2 liters, and 6% 1.5 liters. The rim sherds of the fragmented vessels, in general, however, suggest that most derive from vessels of 1 liter capacity. These vessels are the only vessels within the Leilan IIb assemblage for which wasters have been retrieved. It seems likely that they are an administrative artifact of Akkadian imperialism: standardized sīlā bowls for ration distribution according to the Akkadian imperial standards³². Exposure of

indigenous, pre-Akkadian imperialization occupations of the Leilan Lower Town have failed so far to retrieve similar bowls; larger exposures may retrieve the administrative artifacts of the earlier, indigenous, Subarian system of metrology.

5. the Akkadian intensification of agro-production: As part of the Akkadian reorganization of production, water courses were stabilized by channelization—deepening and straightening water course channels—to counter the effects of rapid siltation and maintain an efficient water flow. In Trench D, on the western side of Tell Leilan (see Figure 3), this water management is recorded within a 4 meter sequence of repeated entrenchments into calcic virgin soil, embankments of large basalt blocks, and masses of water borne silt and pebbles cleared from the channel. Leilan period IIb potsherds, stratified on the beds of the stabilized channels, date these labor intensive projects to the period of Akkadian imperialization. The effects of channelization, in spite of the large labor costs, prevented wasteful, if not destructive channel meandering, and may have permitted the planting and harvest of a summer crop to supplement winter wheat production. Akkadian canal construction and management experience may have been applied to this innovative intensification of northern agro-production.

Stage 4. “Habur Hiatus 1” (ca. 2200-1900 B.C.): Desertification and Desertion

The extractive organization imposed upon the Habur Plains by the Akkadian dynasty was interrupted by its unexplained collapse in the south, and the collapse of its imperial control centers in the north. The succeeding interregnum is of still uncertain duration, the time for which the Sumerian King List records control of southern Mesopotamia passing briefly to the “Gutians”. However, the successor Ur III southern state never reestablished, during its 100 year reign, extractive or political control over the Habur Plains.

There is, in fact, no evidence for settlement at Tell Leilan between periods II and I, i.e., between 2200 and 1900 B.C. Similarly, there was no sedentary settlement at Tell Chuera, Tell al-Hawa, Tell Taya, Tell Khoshi, Chagar Bazar, Garmir, Tell Mohammed Diyab, Gawra, Billa, Bderi, Melebiya, Abu Hgeira 1, and the hundreds of other settlements within northern Mesopotamia. On the Habur Plains, apart from one structure at Tell Brak (Mallowan’s “red libn building”) possibly dating to a time within this 300 year period, no archaeological project has ever published a building of this period, nor a stratified assemblage of ceramics
from an exterior living surface. This assessment applies to settlements of all sizes: cities, towns and villages. Only a few sherd types retrieved through regional surface surveys, some unassignable with certainty to other periods, document perhaps some remnant sedentary human activity.

The epigraphical data for this period is also quite uncertain. The Akkadian collapse and the subsequent abandonment of Tell Leilan coincide with some documentation for local Habur Plains rulers, with Hurrian names, using the title “king of Urkish and Nawar”, and for persons from Urkish and Nineveh, and possibly a few other northern cities, noted in contemporary (dependent upon the chronology selected) southern Ur III records. A reduced local power emerged perhaps at this time to control briefly the remnant populations of Mozan and Brak.

The desertion of the Habur Plains, synchronous with the collapse of Akkadian imperialized settlement, surfaces as a rare example of archaeological documentation for massive population movement. A fundamental series of questions is thereby raised within the Mesopotamian historical record:

1. why was Akkadian control disrupted by invading Gutians?

33. For the Brak area FS house sequence, see D. Oates, Excavations at Tell Brak 1985-86, “Iraq” 49 (1987), p. 179; Mallowan, “Iraq” 9 (1947), p. 23, noted that Brak “shrunk to one half of its original area” during this period.

34. B. Lyonnet, Reconnaissance dans le haut Habur, in Mémoires de NABU, 2, Paris 1992, fig. 4. Some surface retrieved ceramics assigned to this period are found in Akkadian contexts, e.g. “comb-impressed” rows of dots at Taya (J. Reade, Tell Taya 1967, Summary Report, “Iraq” 30 [1968], pl. LXXXIV: 9, 12, 13), and Khoshi (C. Kepinski, Hoši, AJA 94 [1990], p. 276, fig. 21).


36. B. Anderson, Imagined Communities, London 1983, illuminates the social process of post-imperial state formation for the modern period in ways that suggest ancient analogies.

37. Gutium might be located immediately north of the Habur Plains and/or Diyarbakr Plains to judge from (1) the Gutian population and/or cultural legacy remnant there as late as the 19th century B.C. documented by J.J. Finkelstein, The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty, JCS 20 (1966), pp. 95-118, and (2) its frontier identified, as early as the reign of Samsuiluna, with Idamaras (J.D. Hawkins, Idamaraz, RIA 5 [1980], p. 29) on the Habur Plains (M. Anbar, Les tribus ennemies de Mari, Freiburg 1990, p. 102), between the Habur and the Jaghjagh (M. Falkner, Studien zur Geographie des alten Mesopotamiens, AfO 18 [1957-58], pp. 12, 36 and D. Charpin, Mohammed Diyab, une ville du pays d’Apum, in Cahiers de NABU, 1, Paris 1990, p. 118). The localization of Gutium adjacent to Subir/Subartu/the Habur Plains resolves perhaps the long-standing historical geographical cruxes of the equation of Gutium with Subartu and ARM VI, 27, “the ‘queen’ of Nawar” (Tell Brak) and her “10,000 Gutian troops” in the “land of Subartu”, in spite of reservations expressed by B. Groneberg, RGTC 3. p. 176.
2. why was the southern successor state, the Ur III dynasty, unable/uninterested to reinstate southern control of the Habur Plains after the Gutian interregnum?
3. why is this period of collapse on the Habur Plains synchronous with other unexplained population movements and increases in southern Mesopotamia?
4. why was this period of "collapse" on the Habur Plains synchronous with similar large-scale "collapse" phenomena in the Aegean, Egypt, Palestine, southern Mesopotamia, and the Indus?
5. why did Habur Plains sedentary settlement resume in the 19th century, but now under Amorite political leadership at Tell Leilan/Shubat Enlil?

Toward an understanding of the Leilan hiatus, which can be termed "Habur hiatus number 1", soil micromorphology studies—thin sections of datable pedostratigraphic units—have been undertaken at Tell Leilan and sites within the surrounding countryside. These studies have revealed an abrupt climatic change characterized by:
1. a rapid intensification of wind circulation
2. an increase in atmospheric dust
3. the establishment of arid conditions.

This "desertification" of the Habur Plains explains its "desertion". Two populations were displaced:
1. sedentary agriculturalists, including perhaps 14,000 sedentary inhabitants of the Leilan sustaining area alone, and totalling perhaps three times that number when adjacent Habur drainage and settlement systems are considered.
2. pastoral nomads, Amorite-speaking Hanaean tribal units, who moved between the Euphrates in winter and the Habur Plains in summer when the Habur Plains were no longer useful for summer post-harvest foraging.

40. Weiss, NABU 1992, pp. 91-94; for quantification, see note 20.
41. Anbar, Tribus amurrites.
These groups stayed along the Euphrates River and gradually moved along its banks southward to Sumer and Akkad (Figure 5).

Remarkably, the colonial observers of the early 20th century recorded similar seasonal transhumant responses as were experienced 4000 years earlier. At systemic drought intervals, the same geo-climatic determinants forced the pastoral tribal population of the Euphrates-Habur seasonal exploitation route to remain on and along the Euphrates, exploiting riverain vegetation. For this “trickling in” (or “down”) to southern Mesopotamia, the Euphrates River banks were an excellent vehicle: seasonal flooding and deep-rooted perennial weeds provided the necessary forage for sheep and goat flocks.

The abrupt climatic change and the desertion of the Habur Plains, therefore, explain the previously unexplained historical “events” of late third millennium southern Mesopotamia:
1. the sudden Gutian invasion of Mesopotamia;
2. the sudden increase in the incidence of Hurrian personal names within contemporary documents;
3. the sudden increase in the incidence of Amorite personal names within contemporary documents;
4. the sudden construction of the 180 km long muriq Tidnim (“Repeller of the Amorites”) wall from Badigihursaga on the Euphrates to Simudar on the Diyala (Figure 5) to halt Amorite infiltration into Sumer and Akkad;
5. the sudden doubling of sedentary occupation in the south, with most of the increase occurring within settlements of village size, an increase explicable only as the product of an immigration into the southern region;
6. the sudden decline in agricultural productivity detailed within mid-Ur III dynasty administrative records and the agricultural collapse at the dynasty’s end.

44. See note 37. Apart from the localization of Gutium, the role of Diyarbakr Plains populations will need to be incorporated into any detailed model of Habur hiatus 1 collapse.
The synchronous agricultural and economic collapse in the Aegean\(^50\), in Egypt\(^51\), in Palestine\(^52\), suggests the hemispherical, perhaps global, extent of this abrupt climatic change\(^53\). Although these region-wide disturbances have been attributed to invasion\(^54\), earthquakes\(^55\), and still larger disasters\(^56\), our new data confirm Liverani's identification of climatic change as the cause of these disturbances\(^57\).

In Syria, this period also sees the emergence of the remarkable water conserving towns in the Hauran at, for instance, Khirbet al-Umbashi\(^58\), the abandonment of Ebla and its replacement by Tell Tuqan at the edge of the Madekh Lake\(^59\), and the disappearance of much of the settlement along the Balikh River\(^60\). In adjacent Turkey, settlement was abandoned along the Euphrates River above Bireçik\(^61\). Further east, settlement

however, that the texts that Jones cites may not derive from the same archive. But the disastrous crop yields of the period are also noted by Adams, *Heartland*, pp. 146, 151, 152, and there was little barley in the granaries of Ur by Ibbi-Sin years 7 and 8.


59. Matthie, *Ebla*, p. 34.


suddenly collapsed at Seistan phase Shahr-i Sokhta and Mundigak, and throughout the Harappan phase Indus Valley.

Only at the end of this desertification period, with the reestablishment of favorable climatic conditions in the 19th century B.C., was sedentary settlement reestablished upon the Habur Plains by those previously displaced. Amorite chiefs, acculturated in southern Mesopotamia after decades of sedentary life there, led the resettlement of the Habur Plains, and under the paramountcy of Shamshi-Adad selected the abandoned urban center at Tell Leilan to be the new Habur Plains regional administrative center.

An Explanation of the Akkadian Empire

This new explanation for the Akkadian empire's collapse suggests new explanations for its genesis. If the collapse of Akkadian control of the Habur Plains was only due to "accident", i.e., climatically conditioned abandonment of the dry farming zone, what were the functions, purposes, and goals of the Akkadian control of the Habur Plains prior to the collapse? We suggest that Akkadian imperialization extended intensified agro-production into an available, adjacent, eco-niche: the broad dry-farming belt surrounding the narrow irrigation agriculture strip of the lower Euphrates floodplain. Why the Akkadians did this, however, remains an undeveloped research problem. Here an attempt can be made to sketch an explanatory model of this phenomenon.

Euphrates flow was the constraint on the extension of third millennium irrigation agriculture in southern Mesopotamia. Euphrates flow was a function of (1) the intensity of snow melt on the high Anatolian plateaus of the upper Euphrates drainage and (2) precipitation in that region during the rainy season. Euphrates flow was therefore a function of third millennium climatic conditions, which we suggest varied considerably. Hence it is not yet possible to determine the amount of Euphrates

64. We assume that the third millennium Mediterranean cyclone paths responsible for both central plateau and Tur Abdin precipitation were similar to those of the present (see E. Wirth, Syria, Darmstadt 1971, pp. 73-87, and P. Beaumont - G.H. Blake - J.M. Wagstaff [eds.], The Middle East, a Geographical Study, Chichester 1976, pp. 52-66).
flow available for irrigation agriculture at different intervals during the third millennium.

The available data suggest the hypothesis, however, that at the beginning of late Early Dynastic III times southern Mesopotamian settlement limits had been reached. Essentially, only Ur III period settlement and its overflow into the Old Babylonian period, inflated by Habur-central Euphrates immigration and flirting with disastrous production levels, exceeded the late Early Dynastic population levels. Not until the Sassanian deployment of the Tigris were such population levels reached again.

Under maximizing conditions such as these, which tested the margins of production, successive stages of politico-economic experimentation ensued. Initially, local inter-city warfare over water rights, as well as long range conquest and booty-taking, were able to satisfy urban elites. This period extended from the reigns of Ur-Nanshe and Eanatum through Sargon. The rearrangement of water rights could only provide short term relief, however, and the wealth obtained by the plunder of hoards amassed over years could only be taken once, a lesson learned similarly by late 15th and 16th century Europeans as well.

The potential politico-economic conflict between decreasing per capita yields and expansive secular elite demand was resolved in a second stage of experimentation during the reigns of Rimush, Manishtushu and Naram-Sin: imperialization and intensification of rain-fed agro-production, and appropriation and centralization of adjacent irrigation agriculture territories.

... a decrease in Tigris-Euphrates stream flow from ca. 2500 B.C. - 2000 B.C. utilizing published studies of Lake Van varve thickness, sedimentation and oxygen isotope variations.

65. Adams, Heartland, p. 6, estimates 12,000 or 8,000 square kilometers, "or even less", as the area which the Euphrates flow might have irrigated under some circumstances.  
67. Adams, Heartland, pp. 210-211.  
68. D.L. Johnson - H. Gould, The Effect of Climate Fluctuations on Human Populations: a Case Study of Mesopotamian Society, in A.K. Biswas (ed.), Climate and Development, Dublin 1984, pp. 117-138, develop a potential collapse model ("IRRIG") for southern Mesopotamian civilizations based upon relationships between climate change, as represented by alterations in Euphrates stream flow, and other variables such as population growth. Their general conclusion, "that within the constraint of a fixed resource base, climate variability leads to collapse", accompanies the insight that "historically, irrigation civilizations of the Tigris and Euphrates lowland were able to reduce their vulnerability to environmental risk by gaining access to outside resources by trading activities or military conquest" (pp. 134, 136).  
69. J. Cooper, Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Inscriptions, I, New Haven 1986; RHAI.  
The scale of the Akkadian imperialization of the Habur Plains can be understood from the Leilan, Brak and related data:
1. a sukkal-headed administration of the three Habur Plains urban centers and their hinterlands,
2. guruš-workers receiving standard rations,
3. intensification of agricultural production through channelization and perhaps irrigation,
4. equid transport of imperialized production to central stores at the Brak fortress,
5. grain shipment down the Habur River to Akkadian controlled Mari, and subsequently Akkad.

If confined solely to the urban triangle of the Habur Plains, the Akkadian administration at Brak controlled ca. 6,000 sq. kms.; if adjacent western Habur Plains drainages (Awedj, Zergan, and Djirdjib) were tapped as well, the area under Akkadian imperialization would have been twice that amount. It remains to be seen if the Kranzhügel, utilized perhaps for range herding of sheep, continued to be used by the Akkadians. Variants of this imperial apparatus were implanted across the dry-farming belt at Nineveh, probably Arbílum, Gasur, and Susa. This was, however, only the complement to the Akkadian imperialization of Sumer, within which "imperial domains", ranging from 1,270 hectares (Me-ság) to 129,000 hectares were created. In Sumer individual royal domains

73. The inscribed bulla from Chagar Bazar (AOAT 3/1, p. 68) notes grain quantities and a boat. Following Habur hiatus 1, Habur region shipments of grain to Mari were not unusual; see A. Fine, Le Habur dans les archives de Mari, in Symposium international, Histoire de Deir ez-Zor et ses antiquités, Damascus 1983, pp. 89-97 and J. Marguerou, Mari, l'Euphrate et le Khabur au milieu du IIIe millénaire, BSMS 21 (1991), pp. 79-100. Akkadian period reorganization of settlement along the middle Habur consolidated smaller sites within Melebiya and B'eri, sites without evidence of large scale cereal storage at this time; see Schwartz - Curvers, AJA 96 (1992), p. 418.
75. See note 22.
76. Manishtushu's construction of the temple of Emenue, within which he deposited his "monumental and clay inscriptions", probably accompanied construction of a storage depot similar to the one which accompanied the Akkadian religious structures at Brak. For the Akkadian period wall of the city, see now D. Stronach, UC Berkeley's Excavations at Nineveh, "Biblical Archaeologist" (1992), p. 229.
77. For the recalculation of local into Sargonic capacities at Gasur, see B. Foster, People, Land and Produce at Sargonic Gasur, in NH 2, pp. 89-105.
79. B. Foster, The Sargonic Victory Stele from Telloh, "Iraq" 47 (1985), pp. 15-30; AU1L.
were three times the size of the entire Leilan-Mozan-Brak sustaining area.

The intensified, imperialized, agricultural production of Sumer and Subir, their convertible wealth, was transferred at negligible water-borne cost to the imperial capital at Akkad, where it was transformed through labor deployment of several kinds to secure and further increase imperial wealth:

1. the administration of the complex imperial system through officials, messengers, roads, standing armies, and equid transport,
2. generation of increased imperial surpluses for additional conversion both local and external, probably in textile factories and Tigris region extension of irrigation agriculture,
3. “paving the road” for private commercial trade and investment,
4. providing expendable wealth for non-productive imperial consumption.

This model of Akkadian imperial formation, process, and collapse, forces consideration of two categories of questions. First, archaeological tests of this model's fundamental assumptions might be developed, including (1) quantification of the variability of Euphrates and Euphrates effluents' flow through the early historic period and (2) quantification of Habur hiatus climatic changes.

Secondly, this model raises questions of evolutionary process. The mechanics, and surely the dynamics, of third millennium West Asian economies are still ill-defined. The systemic relationships between (1) southern Mesopotamian ration-labor, both in the fields and the “factories”, and (2) neighboring economies, some similarly structured, others less developed, also remain ill-defined. Nevertheless, the fundamental limitation on subsistence, agricultural production, and economic and settlement growth, remained the Euphrates flow.

80. The massive deployment of female weavers in the Ur III period was likely modeled after Akkadian innovations; see K. Maekawa, Female Weavers and their Children, ASJ 2 (1980), pp. 81-125, and pp. 93 ff. for female weavers and their children at Sargonic Susa, and “gur of Agade” barley rations to weavers and their children in post-Sargonic and early Ur III Lagash. The role of textile production in the development of early capitalist Europe is well known; for the central role of textile manufacture in the transformation of agricultural production within pre-capitalist imperial economies, see J. Schneider, Was there a Pre-capitalist World System?, «Peasant Studies» 6 (1977), pp. 20-29. The large Sargonic excavation/agricultural project undertaken at Sabum was, possibly, a canal construction project; see S. Monaco, OA 24 (1985), pp. 310-315.
We assume that the post-2600 B.C. palace-dominated society of Sumer was growing in scale and complexity, but may have reached the limits of Euphrates flow extensions of irrigation agriculture by ca. 2400 B.C. Would it have been possible for population, technology and niche expansion to have stabilized thereafter, as apparently were the case, for some 1000 years, in the Basin of Mexico? Or, were economic and population growth a correlate feature of southern Mesopotamian political economy, generating an incessant demand for increases in agricultural production? Or, was secular diminution in Euphrates flow ca. 2600-2200 B.C. the accidental accelerator of imperial expansion, much as the abrupt climatic change of 2200-1900 B.C. was its accidental refractor?

The case of Sumer and Subir suggests that some ancient agricultural systems, at specific junctures, experienced local growth constraints which, in the absence of immediate, yield-increasing technological innovation, required expansionary activity. The genesis and collapse of the Akkadian empire suggest that, as in the development of earlier Mesopotamian socio-economic formations, both causality and chance require historical definition.


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<td>IIId (Lower Town: 8-12)</td>
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<td>IVB</td>
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<td>late Uruk</td>
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Fig. 1: Southwest Asia Third Millennium Chronology.
Fig. 2: Habur Plains settlement ca. 2600 B.C. and modern rainfall (mm.; ≥500 meters above sea level en hachure).
Fig. 3: Tell Leilan: Topographic map and Excavations through 1991.
Fig. 4.
Tell Leilan region settlement, ca. 2600-2300 B.C.
Fig. 5: Syro-Mesopotamia ca. 2300-2000 B.C.
THE WORLD VIEW OF SARGONIC OFFICIALS

DIFFERENCES IN MENTALITY BETWEEN SUMERIANS AND AKKADIANS

Aage Westenholz

Among the Old Akkadian letters that have survived to our day, some stand out by their vivid style and imperious tone. When the writers can be identified, they are among the highest officials of the Sargonic Empire under Naram-Sin and Sharkalisharri. The following four letters¹ may serve as examples of their style:

1. JRAS 1932, p. 296 = FAOS 19, Gir. 19, collated. “From somewhere in the Montefik Area”.

“Thus Ishkun-Dagan to Lugal-ra: Do the field work, and guard the cattle! And, please, don’t say, ‘The Gutians! I couldn’t do the field work!’ You should post my guards every five kilometers, so that you can do your field work. When the soldiers send up the smoke signals², they can fend off the attack for you, while you have the cattle brought into the city.

You might say(?), ‘The Gutians took away the cattle’ — and I should say nothing about it? Give you money? Look! I swear by Sharkalisharri: If the Gutians took away the cattle, you will certainly pay for it yourself. When I come to town, I shall give you money indeed! Now, won’t you guard the cattle?

I have asked you for the regular deliveries. You should know ...”

Ishkun-Dagan’s instructions what to do in case of an enemy raid would be familiar to any child among the Arabs of Southern Iraq a hundred years ago. Even allowing for more civilized conditions in third-millennium Mesopotamia, his scorn for his subordinate is obvious. He had even

¹. Given here in translation only. For the full text, with philological and prosopographic details, see B. Kienast and K.R. Volk’s forthcoming edition of all pre-Ur III letters in FAOS 19. I have benefited much from discussions, both with Dr. Volk and with Dr. Sommerfeld.

². As suggested by J.-J. Glassner, CdA, p. 40.
provided Lugal-ra with some troops for the purpose ("my guards"), but apparently Lugal-ra had failed to put them to any effective use.

I take the sentence "I shall give you money indeed" (line 35) to be sarcastic for some horrible punishment. Otherwise, I can't make sense of the text.


"Thus Ishkun-Dagan to Puzur-Ishtar: May you be under oath by Ishtar and Il-aba, by Ashgi and Ninkhursaga, by the life of the King and the life of the Queen, that until you have seen my eyes, you must touch neither food nor drink, and until you have hurried here, you must not sit down on a chair!"


"Thus Dada: Tell Pu-Meher: They should [bring PN], the City Elder, there. He (i.e. Pu-Meher) should take his staff and his weapons and have him make a declaration before Shakkan and Shamash. I am surely not going to run around because of some phony (?) sheep of a City Elder! He should also bring Puzrum forward (?)"

This translation is not without uncertainties, but it is the most plausible I can suggest. Apparently, the City Elder had claimed that some sheep of his had been stolen, possibly by Puzrum. Dada does not believe much in the story, and in any case considers it beneath him to bother going to the scene. Instead, he sends Pu-Meher instructions.


"[Thus X] to Milik-ilisu(?): When I heard (your letter), I rejoiced. I thought, 'He will cling to my feet'; but now, he has taken his affairs into his own hands. But why is he turning into an enemy? Please come here and [...]"

(large gap)

"[... he gave life to [...] His retainers have indeed gone to Uruk: he himself should come and see me. I swear by Ishtar and Il-aba that I shall surely spare him, the weapon of blood I shall not put upon him [...] He should send me [...] oxen and 3,600 of the City's sheep, and he [himself] should come and see me"
I believe this letter was sent from Akkade to a local Akkadian official at Lagash, and the subject matter of the conversation was none other than Lugal-ushumgal, the ensi of Lagash. The writer had thought him incapable of doing anything on his own responsibility ("he will cling to my feet"; but he then showed himself quite independent—a bit too much. He must have done something terrible, described in the missing two-thirds of the letter; but the writer promised under oath to spare him and invited him to come without fear (but with 3,600 oxen and sheep!) to a personal interview. The writer may have been the King himself.

Who are these people? At least, Ishkun-Dagan, the writer of nos. 1 and 2, is known: the inscription on his seal reads, "Sharkalisharri, king of the people entrusted to him by Enlil; Tutasarlibbis, the queen: Ishkun-Dagan, the scribe, major-domo of her house, her servant". In short, he was the Queen’s major-domo. The same is true of Dada, the author of n. 3, if he is identical with the one in RTC 161. Of the recipients of the letters, Puzur-Ishtar (n. 2) is almost certainly a local Akkadian bureaucrat resident at Adab, whose archive was found in the "Semitic Quarter" of that town. Likewise, Lugal-ra (n. 1) appears to have been a middle-level Akkadian official resident somewhere in the Lagash province, though the findspot of the letters addressed to him is unknown.

If these four letters are a fair sample of the way the highest noblemen of the Akkadian Empire saw fit to write to their local officials and perhaps even the ensi of Lagash, their conversations at Sharkalisharri’s court must have been peppery indeed. One gets the impression of a group of highly competent people, secure in their power, who felt free to say exactly what they thought. The world was theirs to do with as they pleased.

However, I think it would be wrong to attribute this outspoken style entirely to their powerful positions. After all, they and their predecessors had themselves created the positions. They lived in an exciting age, full of momentous events that would be remembered in song and saga for thousands of years; but it was they who made the age exciting. Rather, I think that the style of their letters was a natural expression of the


mind-set of the Akkadians as a people, an attitude to the world that was quite different from that of Sumerians.

I suggest that the Sumerians were a people of law and order; everything in the Universe, including Man, had its rightful place, duty and purpose, defined by the gods from the beginning. The backbone of this divine order of the world was the various me, "existences". But the Sumerians were also a people endowed with a surpassing poetic genius. The rich metaphoric imagery of their literary language is extremely difficult to grasp, not only for us, but also for the Akkadians who, unlike us, had direct knowledge of it.

The Akkadians, on the other hand, had a well-developed sense of drama and of individual personality, and strong temperamental outbursts were as much a matter of course with them, as they were exceptional among the Sumerians.

To avoid misunderstandings, let me protest my innocence: I do not think that these traits were somehow innate, inherent characteristics of the two peoples, any more than I think that, say, the Prussians of the last century were innately more authoritarian, humorless and efficient than the French. I believe we are dealing with distinctive cultural patterns which it would be unwise to ignore, no matter how great the danger of prejudiced stereotypes may be.

The differences in mentality suggested here reveal themselves in many aspects of Sumerian and early Akkadian culture, such as social organization, religion and mythology, history, and art. I shall discuss each of these in turn.

The typical Sumerian city-state was an unbelievably intricate network of interlocking functions, rights and duties. Its central bureaucracy was a compact administrative structure of an amazing diversity of officials and institutions. Even "private" citizens -i.e., people not connected with

5. Cf. the pitiful 'translations' gur-á-nu-n-gi-a = qarrádu ša la innaḫḫaru, "(Iškur), bull, whose horn cannot be turned back = irresistible hero"; ama-ra-gi-Š-n-Š-a = māru ellen, "calf of lapis-lazuli = pure son"; ūz-sag or māš-sag = asardu, "first goat" or "first sheep = leader" (see W. Heimpel, Tierbilder in der sumerischen Literatur, Roma 1968, pp. 16-19 for references). It is perhaps not only for prestige reasons that all temples have Sumerian names. Some of them, such as "White Eagle", would sound nonsensical in Akkadian.

6. The vast literature on this subject is not unlike the subject matter itself! Each of the following authors have contributed several studies, mostly dealing with ED Lagash: A. Deimel (mostly in Or, but also in AnOr 2 [1931]); V.V. Struve, A.I. Tyumenev and I.M. Diakonoff (in I.M. Diakonoff [ed.], Ancient Mesopotamia, Moscow 1969); M. Lambert; Y. Rosengarten; T. Maeda (in ASJ 4 [1982], 6 [1984]); K. Maekawa (in ASJ 2 [1980] and LANE); S. Yamamoto (in ASJ 1 [1979], 3 [1981]). For the Fara period, a beginning has been made by D.O. Edzard (ZA 66 [1976], pp. 156 ff.; OLA 5, pp. 153 ff.); F. Pomponio (in ASJ 5 [1983], pp. 127 ff.). The Sargonic period has been studied by B.R. Foster in USP and AUIL, besides numerous articles. This survey is
the civic administration—were organized in corporate trade guilds or family structures. The Sumerians appear indeed to have considered bureaucracy a Good Thing, and the Sumerian bureaucrat “owed his allegiance to the rules, not the ruler”.

Sargonic Akkadian civic administration is poorly documented; but what is known indicates that it was much more of the “patrimonial” type, based more on loyalty than on statutes. Sargon surrounded himself with 5,400 troops devoted to him personally, and he tried to appoint his own Akkadians as ensis in the Southern cities—unsuccessfully, it seems. During the reigns of Naram-Sin and Sharkalisharril, the northern cities were managed as royal domains; more often than not, their ensis were the king’s own family; and the King and his sons dispensed justice personally. The Akkadian officials, including the authors of our letters, were educated as scribes, and their training included a solid dose of what we would call Sargonic propaganda.

7. As suggested by the “Enlilemaba archive” from Nippur, see A. Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 59-60. The guild-like structure of the trade is also suggested by the lexical texts from the Uruk period onwards, notably MSL XXII, ED Lu A, with its many g al-Prf. compounds.


9. Michalowski, ibid.

10. But see the remarks by G. Selz, NABU 1989, pp. 67-68, on possibly similar phenomena in ED Lagash.

11. See FAOS 7, p. 159, VO4, 13-19. It is very likely that this was only a short-lived experiment. The archival evidence for it is vanishingly small, i.e. the mere fact that Ennalum, mentioned in two texts as the ensi of Umma during Sargon’s (?) reign, had an Akkadian name: see RA 8 (1911), p. 158, AO 5656; G. Frame et al., Cuieiform Texts in the Collections of McGill University, Montreal, ARRI 7 (1989), pp. 3-4; cf. Foster, USP, p. 150, and A. Westenholz, AFO 31 (1984), p. 78. And even Naram-Sin, who is not known otherwise for his respectful attitude to Sumerian tradition, did not repeat the experiment. Given the intricacies of Sumerian bureaucracy, one can understand that to be the director of that bureaucracy, you had to have grown up with it. No outsider would have the personal connections, the intimate knowledge of who, where, and what.


15. So at least Ishkun-Dagan, the author of letters nos. 1 and 2 above, according to his seal. See further D.O. Edzard, Die Inschriften der altakkadischen Rollseigel, AFO 22 (1969), pp. 16-17, sections 24 and 25; Zettler in SaS, pp. 33 ff., for numerous “scribes” in the service of the King and his immediate family, whereas other professions are rare.

16. A. Westenholz, Old Akkadian School Texts, AFO 25 (1977), pp. 95-110, esp. p. 107. We should not forget that what we have of Akkadian school texts come from provincial towns; but the King’s officials were presumably educated in Akkade itself. For the
There is nothing to suggest that the Sumerians viewed the Universe as any different in structure from their own society. Sumerian popular religion was mainly concerned with the local pantheon of the home city, which they imagined pretty much in analogy with an extended family of landed gentry, complete with staffs of servants. On a more sophisticated level, much effort was spent on integrating the various local traditions into a well-organized assembly of gods who met in (regular?) sessions and directed the course of the events. Each god, no matter how obscure, had his place, his carefully measured allotment of importance and power.

Many Early Dynastic Sumerian myths and hymns, as far as they can be understood today, describe the origin and the organization of the world, including the gods, their temples, and their cities. Duplicate manuscripts of most of these texts have been found in Fara, Abu Salabikh, and Nippur. Whatever the explanation of this fact may turn out to be, it too indicates a conscious effort to integrate the local religious traditions. The characteristic Sumerian metaphorical language and other poetic devices are very much in evidence, not only in these early literary texts but also in some royal inscriptions.

training of their Sumerian counterparts, see B.R. Foster, Education of a Bureaucrat in Sargonic Sumer, ArOr 50 (1982), pp. 238-241.

17. For ED Lagash, see G. Selz, The Development of the Pantheon in Lagaš, ASJ 12 (1990), pp. 111-142. An exhaustive analysis by the same author, Untersuchungen zur Göterwelt des altsumerischen Staates Lagaš, has been announced to appear shortly.


19. See W. Rollig, RIA, s.v. Götterversammlung, for references to second-millennium sources and secondary literature. Both Urukagina and Lugalzagesi testify indirectly to the same belief, cf. CIRPL Ukg. 16, vii, 10 - ix, 3; BE I, 87, iii, 14-36.


22. I.e., all the sites that have produced Fara-period literary texts at all, see J. Krecher, Sumerische Literatur der Fara-Zeit, BO 35 (1978), pp. 156-157. The unpublished Nippur tablet known to Biggs from "an 1890's" field photograph (see R. Biggs in LdE, p. 126) was found in 1893 by Haynes in a deep stratum in the Ekur courtyard. It is a duplicate of IAS 116, etc. (W.G. Lambert, personal communication).

23. So especially in Lugalzagesi's great inscription BE I, 87, e.g., ii, 30-42: "under him, Ur raised its head towards heaven like a bull, ... Umma, Shara's beloved city, raised its huge horns"; but also CIRPL Ean. 1. vi, 25-30 has a distinctly literary flavor.
Akkadian religion was much more universal in outlook, it seems. In the Early Dynastic period, only one male and one female deity were of any consequence, to judge from the personal names\textsuperscript{24}. Sargonic Akkadian religion (which is more relevant here) knew of a great number of gods; but they could hardly be described as orderly. Sargonic Akkadian mythology remains painfully unknown; but to judge from the cylinder seals, it must have been full of drama and fury. In no other period do we find such a profusion of combat scenes between gods\textsuperscript{25}. The type showing a mountain god being defeated and slain, sometimes by Ishtar alone, sometimes by several gods (including Il-aba?)\textsuperscript{26}, may have its literary counterpart in various Sumerian compositions about Inanna (notably "Inanna and Ebikh"), at least some of which are attributed to Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon\textsuperscript{27}. It is probably not very wrong to see this as the mythological expression of Akkade's military dominion over the barbarian lands. The general spirit of the seals is well echoed in the only fragment of an Old Akkadian hymn known so far\textsuperscript{28}:

"Deputy of the Sea, fierce warrior, arise!  
Tišpak, deputy of the Sea, fierce one, arise!  
God, king of [...]"

The incantations bring out the differences very clearly. Sumerian incantations\textsuperscript{29} tend to be lyrical orations to natural phenomena, while the Akkadian ones — the few we have\textsuperscript{30} — are filled with fire and brimstone. Consider the following examples:

CIRPL, Urn. 49, i, 1 - ii, 7\textsuperscript{31}:

"Holy reed, reed of the canebrake of the marshes: Reed, your top is speckled with red, your base is with Enki in the post-hole(?), your top greets the Sun, your beard is of lapis-lazuli ..."


\textsuperscript{25} R.M. Boehmer, \textit{RIA}, s.v. Götterkämpfe.


\textsuperscript{28} Westenholz, \textit{AOF} 25 (1977), p. 102, from Eshnunna.

\textsuperscript{29} See Krebernik, \textit{Beschwörungen}, for the Early Dynastic ones. Sargonic Sumerian incantations are MDP 14, 91 (with later echo in CT 16, 46, 183 ff.); OSP 1, 6 (see B. Alster in \textit{AOAT} 25, pp. 14-15); also MAD 1, 333, still unpublished.

\textsuperscript{30} The only certain examples are OSP 1, 7 (Nippur?) and MAD 5, 8 = Or 46 (1977), p. 200 (Kish). Further examples may be R. Biggs in \textit{St. Sjöberg}, p. 35 (Umm-el-Hasfiyat) and MDP 14, 90, though both of these may rather be ritual texts.

OSP I, 7 (unfortunately very fragmentary):

"[...] you shall lie in blood, your head you shall smash like a pot [...] I will seize her and [...] flames [...]"

The histories of the Sumerians and the Akkadians also show characteristic differences. According to later anecdotal tradition\(^32\), three of the five great Sargonic kings were murdered by their courtiers. We have no means to prove or disprove the truth of that tradition. But the fact that such was believed in Old Babylonian times to be true, and that such was told only about the Sargonic kings, probably does indicate something of the ambience at the Sargonic court. On the other hand, Sargon and especially Naram-Sin were considered to be more than ordinary mortals by many of their fellow Akkadians\(^33\). Hero-worship is probably the best description of their attitude. Hardly anything of that sort is known among the Sumerians. To be sure, the lugal\(^1\) was very important to them\(^34\); but it is evidently his office, his function in the divine order of things that counts, not his person as an individual, since he is never mentioned by name in the onomasticon. It is also typical of the Sumerian world view that, when Lugalzagesi went around in the Lagash countryside vandalizing sanctuaries—an unforgivable sacrilege crying out to be punished—Urukagina, the ruler of Lagash, duly filed a complaint\(^35\) against him with Ningirsu. The indictment enumerates each and every offence as meticulously as any account tablet, which indeed is exactly what the text looks like. It was then expected that the gods would settle the affair among themselves and mete out punishment to the wretched ensi of Umma. However anguished he may be, Urukagina knows his place. Not so Naram-Sin. He probably was a bit over-confident in himself, even for the taste of his own son\(^36\); but to the Sumerians, he

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34. Westenholz, *ibid.*, p. 109 and note 8. Along with the Queen (nin) and the en, he is the only human being of any stature in the personal names, apart from the nearest kin.

35. CIRPL Ukg. 16.

appeared as Superbia Incarnata. With him, Akkade's good sense was lost; he and his Akkadians behaved no better than the worst barbarians, and he called down utter destruction on his city.

The arts, finally, give the same impression of deeply rooted differences. By far most Sumerian works of art show the kings engaged in quite traditional ceremonial acts, such as carrying bricks to build temples, feasting at the great festivals, or standing piously before the god in perpetual prayer. Even when they do depict warfare, the Sumerian artists prefer to show it as schematized as possible — for all the gory slaughter, war was just as much part of the divine order of things as anything else, and the king only fought as the deputy of his god. The only Sumerian work of art known to me portraying the king as anything like a hero in his own right is Eannatum's “Stele of Vultures” — also the inscription on that magnificent monument is quite unusual — but the real hero is still Ningirsu. The Early Dynastic Sumerian cylinder seals show the same imagery of ceremonial activities, banquets, wrestling, and fights between animals, possibly features of public entertainment at the festivals. The overall impression given by Sumerian art is a marked striving for generalization, not only of the actors but the acts as well — they are shown as ever-recurring incidents of ideal prototypes that had existed from the beginning of the world. And in that respect, even the Stele of Vultures is no exception.

The Akkadian art, especially under Naram-Sin, depicts with consummate mastery dramatic and specific events. The best example, justly famous, is the stele celebrating Naram-Sin's victory over the Lullubens, a mountain tribe to the east of Mesopotamia. Even though the artist followed certain conventions, there is nothing standardized about that monument. Here, the king himself is clearly the central figure, everybody looks toward him. The gods are only present as onlookers in the shape of disembodied emblems. Behind the king, order reigns; before him, everything is confusion and despair; and the whole drama in the victory

37. Thus according to Sumerian wishful thinking, see Cooper, CoA, pp. 52-53, 40 ff., and cfr. B. Alster, WO 16 (1985), pp. 159 ff., esp. p. 161. The desecration of Ekur imputed to the Akkadians (Curse over Akkade, lines 105-145) is almost identical to those wrought by Elamites, Subariaus and other “destructive peoples” (see Cooper, CoA, p. 23). Of course all this is fantasy, but a fantasy no doubt inspired by a very real anti-Akkade animosity among the Sumerians during the reign of Naram-Sin.


39. See most recently D.P. Hansen, The Fantastic World of Sumerian Art, in A.E. Farkas et al. (eds.), Monsters and Demons in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds, Mainz 1987, pp. 53-63. Some of these animals hardly reproduce natural models, and it might be suggested that the wrestlings were done by men wearing masks and costumes, as in Hansen, The Fantastic World of Sumerian Art, pp. 57-63.
of order over anarchy is condensed in the lines that converge on the point just before the king's foot. The same penchant for drama in Akkadian art is evident in many Akkadian seals, as already said. Also in some Akkadian seals, we find for the first time individuals clearly shown as such, not as stereotypes. However, as Naram-Sin's victory stele shows, the drama and violence is only one side of the coin. The other is the order behind the king, emanating from him, as it were. This order—the king's order, not the gods'—is also forcefully expressed in the famous copper head from Nineveh, most likely a portrait of Naram-Sin. There is no harshness or fury here, only a perfect, almost serene power which the barbaric mutilations of the head cannot affect.

In view of all this, it is not surprising that even some ordinary Akkadians vent their emotions in ways unknown from contemporary Sumerian letter writing, as in the following example:

MAD 5, no. 2 = FAOS 19, Ki. 1:

"Thus Abbaya to my Dudu: What is this, that you are not my father, that you don't even trust me with ten gur of barley? Is the firm broke? If they want money from you, I can send you silver for up to 20 gur at [2/3] shekel per gur; but if I am to send you something for something, you have to make the first move. Or send your son, that he may hear it himself".

The offer of 2/3 shekel of silver per gur barley is hardly a fair price, the ordinary rate being one shekel per gur. The writer, apparently a junior business partner, is furious with his boss ("father") for showing such lack of confidence—and at the same time, he takes advantage of his superior's temporary shortage of cash!

There is quite a number of Old Akkadian letters like this one. They are exchanged between common citizens and may deal with personal matters, like "Let me know how you are! Alala is fine, and both your sisters are fine", or "Why do you and Ibbi-ilum fight at home? Live

40. It is certainly the best example but by no means unique. Even though the fragmentary victory stele from Lagash (see recently B. Foster, «Iraq» 47 [1985], pp. 15 ff.) may lack the genius of composition, it is every bit as dramatic, and its affinity to the combat scenes on the seal cylinders is evident. I am unable to follow Foster in his dating of the stele specifically to Rimush, though an Early Sargonic date seems likely.


42. For an analysis of the metal, see E. Strommenger, «Sumer» 42 (1986), p. 115.

43. This is the highest possible reading of [x].SA; a reading 1/3 is also possible.

44. MAD 1 185 = FAOS 19, ES. 5; similarly CT 50, 70 = FAOS 19, Di. 4, 12-16.
peacefully together!"45. They indulge in drastic hyperbole, such as “Look, my own servants are dying from starvation, but the King knows that even the Gutians receive their due rations”46, or the frequent complaint, “I am in really dire straits!”47. One looks in vain for similar sentiments among the fifty or so Sumerian letters collected by Konrad Volk. He would even say that the letter as a genre is an Akkadian innovation48. The Sargonic Sumerian letters typically deal with the assignment of land, animals, commodities or personnel, or with juridical matters, almost all in an extremely dry, matter-of-fact style49, as in the following example:

BIN 8, 157 = FAOS 19, Is. 2:

“Tell Inima what Ur-lugala says to him: Ur-sipada and Nin-imah, wife of the nešakku-priest Un-il, both citizens of Nippur, have a lawsuit against me. He should mention this to Nam-mah, theensi (of Nippur), so that he can issue a sealed document and pronounce a verdict in the case”.

Since the two opponents are citizens of Nippur, theensi Nam-mah is the highest judicial authority. Ur-lugala, most likely living in Isin, tries to influence the workings of the bureaucracy through his connections — a perfectly lawful procedure.

I do not expect the above examples to be taken as proof for the hypothesis that Sumerians and Akkadians differed from each other in “national character” — in fact, such a hypothesis, even if correct, would most likely be impossible to prove. I have merely cited these examples as illustrations, though of course my hypothesis was formed on the basis of some of them in the first place. I am also aware both that I have shot above the mark and to some extent compared apples to oranges. But to understand and explain what happened in the history of the age, I do believe that this hypothesis may offer a better tool than the opposite hypothesis: the two peoples differed in language only50.

46. AFO 31 (1984), p. 79 = FAOS 19, Um. 3.
47. aṣeṣ ymax-ne daāni š daāni š, and similar expressions: MAD 1 298; CT 50, 69; Veenhof, JEOL 24 (1975-76), p. 105 (with discussion); and a letter from the Pottesman Collection to be published by Irving Finkel in ASJ.
48. Personal communication.
49. As Konrad Volk points out, the only exception, PPAC 1, p. 287, A 636 = FAOS 19, Ad. 8, was written by such a good Sumerian as Iššakal!
50. Ever since the appearance of Jacobsen’s article The Assumed Conflict Between Sumerians and Akkadians, JAOS 59 (1939), pp. 485-495, this has been the prevailing assumption. See F.R. Kraus, Sumerer und Akkader: Ein Problem der Altemesopotamischen Geschichte, Amsterdam 1970, passim; J.S. Cooper, Sumerian and Akkadian in Sumer
Proceeding on that basis, we may reconstruct the factors that shaped the outlook of the Sargonic officials: They grew up among a people, for whom marked individual personality and headstrong temper were facts of life. As apprentice scribes and future servants of the King, they imbibed a feeling of personal loyalty to their master, to whom they owed all their prestige and power — a loyalty which may not have prevented them from murdering him, should circumstances require it. They shared this view of the world as subjugated to Ishtar, the warrior goddess of Akkade, and her protégé, the Akkadian king⁵¹. They saw their fellow human beings, including their subordinates, as individual characters, and found out about their strengths and weaknesses by sizing up their psychology⁵². They had no patience with incompetence or timid lack of initiative, and said so in the most vitriolic language⁵³. They appear to have dealt with each case on an ad-hoc basis, mostly in terms of personal relations, and they certainly preferred face-to-face contact over communication by messengers⁵⁴. Fortunately for us, that was not always possible.

Much of Ur III culture was an unmistakable reaction against the ways of the Akkadians, at least officially — but a good deal of what the Akkadians had achieved was allowed in through the back door, so to speak⁵⁵. The almost total suppression of Akkadian as the language of record is well known. The Ur III kings exploited to the utmost the potential of Sumerian bureaucratic technique⁵⁶, but they made the ensîs even more dependent on royal favor than the Akkadians had ever done.

and Akkad, Or 42 (1973), p. 240; A. Becker, Neusumerische Renaissance? Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Philologie und Archäologie, BaM 16 (1985), pp. 229-316; P. Michalowski in SAOC 46, p. 60, for some recent formulations. It is evident in Jacobsen's and Becker's articles that their understanding of ancient history has been influenced by their revulsion at Nazi ideology.

⁵¹. The tutelary deity of Akkade was ʾāštar amnīmītu, “the warlike Ishtar”, see J.J.M. Roberts, The Earliest Semitic Pantheon, Baltimore 1972, p. 147. Note the oaths by Ishtar and Il-aba in letters nos. 2 and 4, and by the King in nos. 1 and 2 above. See Å. Sjöberg, In-nin-ša3-gur4-ru. A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna, ZA 65 (1975), pp. 161-253, esp. 178-201, describing Ishtar as mistress of the world and everything that happens in it; B. Kienast, Or 59 (1990) pp. 196 ff., on Naram-Sin as “Ishtar’s man”; «Sumer» 32 (1976), pp. 63 ff., i, 10-14, on Ishtar’s love for Naram-Sin helping him to victory.

⁵². Letter no. 4 above.

⁵³. Letters nos. 1 and 4, possibly also no. 3 above.

⁵⁴. Letters nos. 2 and 4 above; also HSS X, 7.

⁵⁵. See Westenholz, in PP, pp. 113 ff. One of the most striking expressions of the “Sumerian Renaissance” is found in an inscription of Puzur-Mama, the first independent ruler (Iugal) of Lagash after Sharkalisharri (see H. de Genouillac, «Revue de l'histoire des religions» 101 (1930), p. 221). There, he uses the well-known titulary of Eannatum and other Early Dynastic rulers. See Volk, Puzur-Mama und die Reise des Königs, forthcoming in ZA 81.

⁵⁶. On Ur III bureaucracy, see most recently the articles by M. Civil, P. Michalowski, and R. Steinadler in SAOC 46.
At their appointment as ensis, each of them would receive his seal cylinder from the king. Both the pictorial representation and the inscription on the seal commemorated that occasion, lest the ensi forget his overlord. The statues of Gudea and Ur-Nammu are even more stereotyped and lifeless than anything of the Early Dynastic period which evidently served as a model, but the technical perfection is in the best Akkadian tradition. In the seals of the period, the dramatic fights between gods are replaced by the "presentation scene," where human affairs are settled in orderly bureaucratic procedure between the gods. The literature, mostly known to us in Old Babylonian copies, carries on the Early Dynastic tradition, but hymns glorifying individual kings were also written on a massive scale.

It would be interesting to follow the developments in later Babylonian culture, and to explore the differences between the Babylonians and the Assyrians; but that must be left to more competent hands than mine.

58. This type is found only rarely in the Sargonic period: Boehner, **Entwicklung**, figs. 542 (Naram-Sin), 642, 644-646, 651; I. Winter in *St. Porada*, pl. 62, 2 (undated, some of them Ur III?).
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE SARGONIC PERIOD

Benjamin R. Foster

The purpose of this bibliography is to provide orientation in the sources, issues, and evidence for current research on the Sargonic period, especially for those who are not specialists in the areas covered, with primary focus on Babylonia and Assyria. The citations given should lead to further reading on the problems they deal with, and are intended to be representative rather than comprehensive.

I. Landscape, Cities, Towns, Sites

Whereas various greater Mesopotamian sites have yielded evidence that can be dated, grosso modo, to the Sargonic or “Akkadian” period, in the absence of epigraphic finds, this dating can be problematic. This is in part because the period has been defined more on the basis of written historical tradition than specific cultural indicators. The transition Early Dynastic to Sargonic and Sargonic to Post-Sargonic (or “Gutian”) is usually impossible to distinguish ceramically with any precision. A traditional view, frequently found in older handbooks of Mesopotamian history and archaeology, that the Sargonic period is defined by the spread of southern Mesopotamian culture to the north and northwest, has now been generally discarded in favor of a complex cultural interchange across the regions, since it is now known that the north had a literate, urban civilization prior to the political expansion of the Sargonic kings. For material culture of the Sargonic period, see below, IX f. [The essay by E. Porada in R.W. Ehrich (ed.), Chronologies in Old World Archaeology, Chicago 1992, I, pp. 113-116 appeared after this work went to press].

A. Sumer

McCown - R.C. Haines - D.P. Hansen, Nippur I: Temple of Etil, Scribal Quarter, and Soundings (OIP 78), Chicago 1967; private houses of the Sargonic period were found in the Scribal Quarter (pp. 40 ff.), but the reconstruction by Ur-Nammu obliterated any traces of the Sargonic phase of the Ekur (for which however, important archival evidence survives, see Part V); D.E. McCown - R.C. Haines - R.D. Biggs - E. Carter, Nippur II: The North Temple and Sounding E (OIP 97), Chicago 1978; the north temple evidently had a Sargonic phase, see pp. 23 ff. The Inanna-Temple also had a Sargonic phase, so far as can be gleaned from preliminary reports, see D.P. Hansen - G.F. Dales, «Archaeology» 15 (1962), pp. 75 ff. and R. Zettler, OIC 46 (1987), p. 117, note 1. Umm al-Hafriyyat: This site, near Nippur, yielded Sargonic material, but has not been definitively published; see M. Gibson, Oriental Institute Annual Report 1977-78, pp. 20-26, and Current Oriental Institute Excavations in Iraq, BSMS 3 (1982), pp. 20 ff.

B. Akkad

Kish: M. Gibson, The City and the Area of Kish, Coconut Grove (FLA) 1972, contains scattered references to the Sargonic period, for example pp. 47 ff., plus Akkad survey by Adams, pp. 182-208. M/Pugdan: M. Gibson, Urnum el-Jir, a Town in Akkad, JNES 31 (1972), pp. 237-294, a report on excavations of a rural town of the period. Agade: The location of this "lost" city has been often discussed. Earlier literature is cited by H. Weiss, Kish, Akkad, and Agade, JAOS 95 (1975), pp. 434-453, who proposed Išhān Mizyad, a large site near Kish. Iraqi excavations at the site, in the hope of identifying Agade, turned up a few modest remains and a group of administrative tablets from the Ur III period. The excavators decided that the site was not Agade on the basis of epigraphic finds, which mention a toponym Bab-Ea (see F. Rashid, «Sumer» 43 [1983], Arabic portion, pp. 183 ff.). References to the place from the first millennium B.C., well into the Achaemenid period, have been collected by G. McEwan, Agade after the Guti Destruction: The Afterlife of a Mesopotamian City, AFO Beiheft 19 (1982), pp. 8-13, who proposed a location not far from Sippar, perhaps near the confluence of the Diyala and the Tigris. Additional late materials have been published by J.-M. Durand - F. Joannes, Contract néo-babylonien d'Agadé, NABU 1988, pp. 51-52 and P. Beaulieu, Agade in the Late Babylonian Period, NABU 1989, pp. 44-46. A Trans-Tigridian location has been argued by C. Wall-Romana, An Areal Location of Agade, JNES 49 (1990), pp. 205-245.

C. The Diyala Region

R. McC. Adams, Land Behind Baghdad. A History of the Settlement on the Diyala Plain, Chicago 1965: Sargonic period discussed, e.g., pp. 42 ff.; see further M. Gibson, A Re-evaluation of the Akkad Period in the Diyala Region on the Basis of Recent Excavations at Nippur and in the Himrin, AJA 86 (1982), pp. 531-538. Eshnunna: A large building was excavated here that was widely described in the literature as an "Akkadian Palace", for example H. Frankfort, OIC 17 (1934), pp. 23 ff. The final publication of the building by P. Delougaz - H. Hill - S. Lloyd, Private Houses and Graves in the Diyala Region (OIP 88), Chicago 1967, pp. 181 ff., incorporated a redating of the structure by Delougaz (pp. 196 ff.), and this has found acceptance, for example, by Margueron, Palais, pp. 120 ff. The pottery sequence of the Diyala sites is widely used as an indicator for Sargonic stratigraphy; see P. Delougaz, Pottery from the Diyala Region (OIP 63), Chicago 1952, pp. 109 ff., as are the contents of some graves and houses treated in OIP 88.

D. Himrin Valley

M. Gibson (ed.), Uch Tepe I, Chicago 1981, publishes three sites, some with Sargonic remains, together with a brief historical survey of the region by P. Steinkeller, pp. 167 ff. The mound of Tell Suleimâli may have been a Sargonic administrative center, and is perhaps to be identified with ancient Awal; see F. Rashid, Himrin 4, Baghdad 1981, pp. 3 ff. (in Arabic). For maps showing Sargonic sites, see R. Killick (ed.), Excavations at Tell Ruheidîh, Warminster 1988.
E. Assyria

Assur: Although Mesopotamian historical tradition knew of construction at Assur by Manishtusu, son of Sargon, no substantial remains of this period have been identified at the site. The "Old Palace", for which see W. Andræ, Das wiedererstandene Assur, Leipzig 1938, pp. 94 ff., and C. Preussers, Die Paläste in Assur, Berlin 1955, pp. 6 ff., was dated to the Sargonic period by M.E.L. Mallowan, "Iraq" 9 (1947), p. 26, but this dating has been rejected in subsequent research, for example Margueron, Palais, pp. 390 ff. and E. Heinrich, Die Paläste im alten Mesopotamien, Berlin 1984, pp. 38 ff.

Gasur: The site of Nuzi (identified with Sargonic Gasur) yielded Sargonic remains (in some cases) on virgin soil, see R.F.S. Starr, Nuzi, I, Cambridge (MA) 1939, pp. 18 ff.

Gawra: Levels VI and V held pottery and glyptic with "Akkadian" parallels from further south, as well as a temple and private houses, see, for example, E.A. Speiser, Tepe Gawra, I, Philadelphia 1935, pp. 179, 183. [Differently now Porada in Chronologies, II, p. 98.]

Tell Taya: This town, located on the western fringes of Assyria, preserves the plan of an Akkadian period city, including a citadel, an industrial area, a group of large public structures, and numerous private houses; see J. Reade, Tell Taya, "Iraq" 30 (1968), pp. 234-264; 33 (1971), pp. 87-100; 35 (1973), pp. 155-188.

F. North Syria

Tell Brak: Here has been excavated a massive building usually dated to the reign of Naram-Sin (on the basis of some inscribed bricks incorporated in the masonry), see M.E.L. Mallowan, Excavations at Brak and Chagar Bazar, "Iraq" 17 (1947), esp. pp. 26 ff. and 63 ff., with further discussion of this structure by Heinrich, Paläste, p. 37 and Margueron, Palais, pp. 150 ff. Additional buildings and objects of the Sargonic period have been discovered by D. and J. Oates, Akkadian Buildings at Tell Brak, "Iraq" 51 (1989), pp. 193-212 and Excavations at Tell Brak 1990-91, "Iraq" 53 (1991), pp. 127-145. From these finds the excavators propose that Brak (perhaps Sargonic Nagar) was a regional administrative center during the Sargonic empire. Recent epigraphic finds include a Sargonic administrative text; see I. Finkel, "Iraq" 51 (1989), p. 205.

Tell Leilan: The Sargonic period has been identified at this site, ancient Shehna, see H. Weiss, Tell Leilan 1989: New Data for Mid-Third Millennium Urbanization and State Formation, MDOG 122 (1990), pp. 193-218; L. Senior - H. Weiss, Tell Leilan 'sila bowls' and the Akkadian Reorganization of Suburban Agricultural Production, "Orient-Express" 1992/2, pp. 16-23.

Tell Mozan: Discovery of a Sargonic Administrative text suggests that this site belongs within the Sargonic cultural complex in the Khabur Region; see L. Milano, Mozan 2: The Epigraphic Finds of the Sixth Season, SMS 5/1 (1991).

II. Art

Most art of the Sargonic period has been discovered out of contemporaneous archaeological context, so art objects are normally discussed separately from other aspects of material culture, which have to be gleaned from the excavation reports cited above.

A. Glyptic

R.M. Boehmer, Die Entwicklung der Glyptik während der Akkad-Zeit, Berlin 1965: this authoritative treatment of Sargonic seals fits their periodization into the traditional historical framework of the Sargonic period, even to legendary phases within the lifetime of Sargon. It brings into one volume Sargonic seals from numerous scattered publications; D. Collon, Catalogue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum, Cylinder Seals II. Akkadian-Post Akkadian, Ur III Periods, London 1982: a detailed description and analysis of a major group of Sargonic seals; H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, London 1939, pp. 80 ff.; this classic study exemplifies the attempt to recover mythological motifs from a "cultural vacuum."

B. Sculpture and Relief

1. Imperial Style


2. “Provincial” or Derivative Style


III. Ethnicity

An extensive literature has grown up around the problem of ethnicity in late third millennium Mesopotamia. The Sargonic period is rarely discussed separately, but a contrast is frequently drawn between the “Semitic” or “Akkadian” domination of the Sargonic empire, and the “Sumerian” Ur III state, for example. This contrast may be challenged on a variety of grounds. The following selection of studies lead into this question.

A. Ethnic Evidence and Historiography

B. Onomastics


C. Hurrians and Subarians


D. Gutians


IV. Language and Writing


V. Archival Sources and Studies

For a survey of Sargonic record-keeping practices and accountability, see B. Foster *Archives and Record-keeping in Sargonic Mesopotamia*, ZA 72 (1972), pp. 1-27, which provides information on additional archival sources not mentioned here, as well as typology and definitions of terms (“family”, “household”, “great household” archives).

A. Umma

Umma A (time of Rimush): records of an early Sargonic city ruler and a large, forced-labor project at a place called Sabum; see B. Foster, *Umma in the Sargonic Period (= USP)*, Hamden (CT) 1982, pp. 8 ff., with lists of sources. This interpretation has been challenged, e.g., by A. Westenholz, AfO 31 (1984), pp. 77-78, but the writer maintains his view. Among many comments on individual texts, stimulated by the appearance of Foster, USP, see in particular S. Monaco, OA 24 (1985), pp. 310-315 and below, to Umma C. Few new sources have appeared since 1982; note D. Frayne, ARRIM.7 (1989), p. 3 note 1; W. Farber, JCS 32 (1980), p. 123 notes 1, 2; and the study by P. Carroué, *Un autre prince sargonique d’Umma*, ASJ 7 (1985), pp. 89-96. Umma B (time of Naram-Sin or Sharkalisharri?): archive of a married couple engaged in land lease and animal husbandry; see Foster, USP, pp. 52 ff. Additions to the corpus include, e.g., MVN 10 121 (see F. Pomponio, AIUON 43 [1983], p. 528) and TTIM nos. 13-21. The interpretation of the archive as an example of “free enterprise” has been challenged, e.g., by N.V. Kozyreva, VDI 1985/3, pp. 177-178, note 3, but the writer maintains his view. Umma C (time of Sharkalisharri?): two or more archival groups from offices of the city ruler of Umma; see Foster, USP, pp. 79 ff., earlier M. Lambert, *La vie économique à Umma à l’époque...*
d’Agadé, RA 59 (1965), pp. 115-126. Numerous additional texts and comments on the texts treated by Foster have appeared, 1982-1992, list with further examples to be published by the writer. None of these changes significantly the results of 1982 study, though correcting it and augmenting it in details.

B. Mesag Archive

This archive is of particular importance as it documents the operation of an Akkadian estate in Sumer under the control of a certain Mesag, perhaps a contemporary of Sharkalisharri. For definition and discussion of this archive, see Foster, ZA 72 (1982), p. 6; AU1L, pp. 52 ff.; OCFD, pp. 109 ff.; and RAI 33, pp. 54 ff.. An analysis of the then-known text material, as defined by statistical parameters based on prosopography, was carried out by S.J. Bridges, The Mesag Archive: A Study of Sargonic Society and Economy (dissertation, Yale University, 1981). Unfortunately this dissertation was never revised in monograph form, so this archive has not received the close attention it deserves. Additions to the corpus include Foster, RAJ 33, pp. 57 ff.; TTIM nos. 33-45; and M.deJ. Ellis, JCS 31 (1979), p. 51 note 51. Additional sources will be published by the writer.

C. Adab

A study of the Sargonic texts from Adab, with publication of new material, is Yang Zhi, Sargonic Inscriptions from Adab (Institute for the Study of Ancient Civilizations, Periodic Publications in Ancient Civilization 1), Changchun (PRC) 1989.

D. Nippur

“Akkadian” texts (OSP 2 nos. 1-43; OSP 1 no. 7; ECTJ nos. 13, 51, 126, 205): These are the records of an Akkadian royal establishment concerned with the reconstruction of Ekur, temple of Enlil at Nippur. This remarkable group of documents has been studied by Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 21 ff.. Enlilemaba: This is a family archive spanning perhaps two generations at Nippur; see Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 59 ff.. “Onion” archive: This is the records of an office dealing with distribution of “onions”, turnips, coriander, etc., with a wide regional horizon in Sumer; see Westenholz, OSP 2, pp. 87 ff.. Ration lists: To be published by Westenholz, OSP 3 (forthcoming).

E. Girsu

Extensive archives from Girsu span the reigns of Naram-Sin, Sharkalisharri, the Post-Sargonic, the Ur III periods, and remain the largest discovery of cuneiform tablets ever made. A provisional list of Sargonic sources was offered by Foster, ZA 72 (1982), p. 6, with a typology and profile of the archive (p. 11). The most important additions to the corpus include STTI. For further details, see also A. Westenholz, CGNP, p. 18. Girsu appears to have been the palatial center of a Sargonic province embracing much of Sumer, and perhaps stretching into Susiana. This could help explain its prominence in the Post-Sargonic and Ur III periods; see B. Foster, «Iraq» 47 (1985), p. 29; M. Lambert, OA 13 (1974), pp. 1 ff.; RSO 49 (1975), pp. 159 ff..

F. Sumer, Minor Sites

Various little-known sites in Sumer have produced small groups of Sargonic texts, for example, E-ī begins; see B. Foster, in St. Sjöberg, p. 158.

G. Isin

Several family archives, including important groups of contracts and legal material, may have come from Sargonic Isin. See further Foster, ZA 72 (1982), pp. 6-7; P. Steinkeller, in TTIM, pp. 5 ff.
H. Diyala Region

Important archival groups, both household and private, come from Eshnunna and Tuttub. Some were excavated by the Chicago expedition (I.J. Gelb, MAD 1); other were purchased on antiquities trade (I.J. Gelb, OAIC). For more details, see Foster, ZA 72 (1982), p. 7; Westenholz, in CGNP, pp. 18-19; P. Steinkeller, Or NS 51 (1982), pp. 356-366. These archives have not been analyzed in detail beyond the studies of A.I. Tyumenev, *Sumera*, pp. 232 ff., and 236 ff., and A. Jawad, *The Advent of Townships in Northern Mesopotamia*, Leiden 1965, pp. 76 ff. Important additions to the corpus include ELTS 43, 44, TTIM 50, 51.

I. Gasur


J. Himrin Valley

Tell el Suleimeh (possibly ancient Awal) has yielded Sargonic administrative texts similar to those from the office of Zuzu, the agricultural administrator at Gasur. The documents have been treated (in Arabic) by F. Rashid, *Himrin 4*, Baghdad 1981. For the archival type and mode of accountability, see above, I. Gasur and JCS 35 (1983), p. 136.

K. Susa

The tablets from Susa (see M. Legrain, MDP 14) include most importantly: 1) the records of an Akkadian administrative unit or estate with exclusively Mesopotamian labor personnel; 2) records of Mesopotamian merchant(?) families residing at Susa with connections to Umma, Lagash, and elsewhere in Sumer. The writer has collated and in some cases joined some of this material. A study of 1) will appear as *Susa in the Sargonic Period*; a summary study of 2) is "International Trade" at Sargonic Susa, AOF 20 (1993), pp. 59-68. The treaty with Naram-Sin has been treated by W. Hinz, *Elans Vertrag mit Naram-Sin von Akkade*, ZA 58 (1967), pp. 66-96. The alleged early Sargonic Epirmupi (see R.M. Boehmer, ZA 58 [1967], pp. 302 ff.; H. Hirsch, AOF 20 [1963], p. 81) has been disposed of by collation (Foster, USP, p. 49), so Epirmupi remains a Sargonic governor who stayed on as an independent ruler at Susa after the recession of Sargonic power there. It is for the most part impossible to separate documents from his administration as governor from those of the post-Sargonic period at Susa.

VI. Monumental, Commemorative, and Dedicatory Inscriptions

H. Hirsch, *Die Inschriften der Könige von Agade*, AIO 20 (1963), pp. 1-82, for the most part superseded by the following, but still contains much useful information; I.J. Gelb - B. Kienast, *Die alattakadischen Königsinschriften des dritten Jahrtausends v. Chr. (= FAOS 7)*, Stuttgart 1990, the first comprehensive treatment of the Sargonic royal inscriptions; D. Frayne, *Sargonic and Gutian Period, 2333-2113 B.C. (Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods 2)*, Toronto (in press). For inscriptions on seals, see above, II A.

VII. Letters

105-110; B. Foster, AnSt 32 (1982), pp. 43-44, plus various treatments of Sargonic letters or passages therefrom in scattered places, e.g. B. Foster, ASJ 4 (1982), pp. 33-34 (MAD 5 75, 81, 83); C. Wilcke, JCS 29 (1977), pp. 185-186 + B. Foster, RA 73 (1979), p. 179 (MCS 9 252); A. Westenholz, AfO 31 (1984), p. 79 (MCS 4, p. 13 no. 3); B. Foster, NABU 1990, p. 31 (Gutian letter). A comprehensive treatment of all Sargonic period letters is expected from K. Volk.

VIII. Literature, Scholarship, Magic

A. Literature and Magic

1. Akkadian


2. Sumerian

The most important Sumerian literary texts believed to have originated in the Sargonic period are the works ascribed to Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon. For a discussion of this woman, see J. Westenholz, Enheduanna, En-Priestess, Hen of Nanna, Spouse of Nanna, in St. Sjöberg, pp. 539-556. See also below, VIII e, and study by I. Winter (above II b 1). W.W. Hallo - J.J.A. van Dijk, The Exaltation of Inanna, New Haven 1968. A.W. Sjöberg, The Collection of the Sumerian Temple Hymns (TCS 3), Locust Valley N.Y. 1969. A.W. Sjöberg, In-nin ša,gur-er-a. A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna, ZA 65 (1975), pp. 81-92. “Inanna and Ebih”, also ascribed to Enheduanna, remains unedited. Sumerian incantations from the Sargonic period are not included here.

B. Scholarship and Education


IX. Society and Economy

In addition to the works cited above, IV, there are numerous studies that touch on matters of importance to the Sargonic period, or which use Sargonic sources, A brief selection of these is given below to illustrate the various points of view and major contributors.

A. Individual, Family, Household, Community

I.M. Diakonoff, The Structure of Near Eastern Society before the Middle of the 2nd Millennium B.C., «Oikumene» 3 (1982), pp. 7-100; Socio-Economic Classes in Babylonia

B. Government and Royal Family


C. Temple, Cult, Religion


D. Agriculture and Husbandry

Most studies of the third millennium agriculture and husbandry concentrate on the Ur III period and Presargonic Lagash. Incidental remarks may be gleaned from the works cited above, IV. In general, readers should consult the «Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture», the main outlet for recent research in this area. Animal husbandry in the Sargonic period has not been the subject of specialized research; for orientation see B. Foster, USP, chapter 3; B. Foster, Agriculture and Accountability in Ancient Mesopotamia, in OCDF, pp. 109-128; id., Administration and Use of Institutional Land in Sargonide Sumer (= AUIL), Copenhagen 1982, collects evidence for land use and tenure and discusses problems of productivity: it remains the only study focused on Sargonic evidence; K. Mackawa, Cereal Cultivation in the Ur III Period, BSA 1 (1984), pp. 73-96, although dealing mostly with evidence of a later period, contains a wealth of information and bibliography; P. Steinkeller, The Renting of Fields in Early Mesopotamia and the Development of the Concept of 'Interest' in Sumerian, JESHO 24 (1981), pp. 113-145.

E. Industry, Crafts

No study exists for the Sargonic period comparable to H. Neumann's Handwerk in Mesopotamien, Berlin 1987, focused on Ur III sources, and no archive has been found comparable to the later workshop archives, for example, M. Van de Mieroop, Crafts in the Early Isin Period: A Study of the Isin Craft Archive from the Reign of Isbi-Era and Šu-ilišu, Leuven 1987. An analysis of a group of records concerning smithy work will be found in Foster, USP, Chapter 2, and a survey of selected Sargonic texts referring to metals will be found in H. Limet, Les métaux à l'époque d'Agadé, JESHO 15 (1972), pp. 3-34.

F. Labor

No study exists for labor in the Sargonic period and an unfortunate misconception has grown up that the “guruš labor” known for the Ur III period was typical of the Sargonic
period, even though this is not the case. A useful group of studies for earlier and later periods is M. Powell (ed.), Labor in the Ancient Near East, New Haven 1987. The long-standing debate over slavery, serfdom, and dependent labor in early Mesopotamia mostly focuses on Ur III sources; see for example the studies of Gelb and Diakonoff, above IX a. The nisku-people in Sargonic sources have been discussed by B. Foster, RA 75 (1981), pp. 189-190.

G. Legal, Juridical Practice

D.O. Edzard, Sumerische Rechtsurkunden des Dritten Jahrtausends, Munich 1968: in this volume will be found editions of Sargonic witnessed sale contracts and court proceedings. Numerous contracts and legal documents have appeared since, a partial list of which will be found in ELTS (see for example, M. Cohen, JCS 28 [1976], pp. 227 ff. and B. Foster, JCS 35 [1983], pp. 147-175); in the latter volume analysis of Sargonic sale formulae will be found. See also J.-J. Glassner, Aspects du don, de l'échange et formes d'appropriation du sol dans la Mésopotamie du IIIe millénaire, avant la fondation de l'Empire d'Ur, 1A 273 (1985), pp. 11-59; D.O. Edzard, Zum sumerischen Eid, OIC 20 (1975), pp. 63-98; B. Foster, Notes on Sargonic Legal and Juridical Procedures, WO 13 (1982), pp. 15-24; Another Sargonic River Ordeal?, NABU 1989, p. 56 (with reference to other studies); I.J. Gelb - P. Steinkeller - R. Whiting, Earliest Land Tenure Systems in the Near East: Ancient Kudurrus (= ELTS) (OIP 104), Chicago 1989; D.I. Owen, A Unique Late Sargonic River Ordeal in the John Frederick Lewis Collection, in A Scientific Humanist. Studies in Memory of Abraham Sachs, Philadelphia 1988, pp. 305-311.

H. Trade and Commerce


X. Mesopotamian Literary and Historiographical Works concerning the Sargonic Period

Numerous post-Sargonic literary and historiographical texts deal with the Sargonic period, especially with Sargon and Naram-Sin. The bibliography below gives a selection of these, and is intended for non-Assyriologists who wish to find reliable access to this rich material. Akkadian literary texts listed below are translated with notes and bibliography in B. Foster, Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature, Potomac (MD) 1993, where further details and bibliography may be found; a survey of the narrative poetry is offered by J. Westenholz, Heroes of Akkad, JAOS 103 (1983), pp. 327-336.

A. Sargon

campaigns of Sargon. a) Two Old Babylonian poems preserve parallel versions of a story, only one of which has been edited (see J. Nougayrol, RA 45 [1951], pp. 169-180). Both of these are translated in Foster, Before the Muses, II.12a. b) A composition known as "The King of Battle" tells of an invasion of Anatolia by Sargon. This exists in second and first millennium manuscripts, all translated in Foster, Before the Muses, III.7a, where further bibliography will be found. 7. "Weidner Chronicle": see F.N.H. Al-Rawi, The "Weidner Chronicle": A Supposititious Royal Letter Concerning a Vision, «Iraq» 52 (1980), pp. 1-13.

B. Rimush

The later Mesopotamian historical tradition concerning Rimush is scanty; see Hirsch, AfO 20 (1963), p. 13.

C. Manishtusu

The later Mesopotamian historical tradition concerning Manishtusu is scanty; see RIA s.v. Manishtusu.

D. Naram-Sin

Few Mesopotamian kings have such a rich literary tradition as Naram-Sin. Although brilliantly successful in his own time, he was remembered in later tradition as a "hapless sovereign" (see H. Güterbock, ZA 42 [1934], pp. 1 ff.). For discussion and bibliography on the latter issue, see H. Gelter, Probleme historisch-ierhafter Dichtung in Mesopotamien, in RAI 32, pp. 71-79 and T. Longman, Fictional Akkadian Autobiography, Winona Lake (IN) 1991; for Naram-Sin in particular, see J. Cooper, The Curse of Agade (= CoA), Baltimore 1983, pp. 15 ff. (below 4.). 1. General Insurrection: A group of Sargonic inscriptions and later narrative poems deal with one or more rebellions against Naram-Sin. These are generally divided by Assyriologists into two groups, the "General Insurrection" group, based on narrative poems known from the Old Babylonian period, and the "Cuthaean Legend", a first-person narrative by Naram-Sin known from the Old and Middle Babylonian poems and a first millennium Assyrian narrative. Two texts of the "General Insurrection" were edited by A.K. Grayson - E. Sollberger, L'inSimection generale contre Naram-Suen, RA 70 (1976), pp. 102-128, English translation of both, with bibliography, by Foster, Before the Muses, II.13b (I). A second, unedited, version is translated there as II.13b (II). A study of the insurrection has been made by Th. Jacobsen, Iphur-Kishi and His Times, AfO 36 (1978-79), pp. 1-14. 2. Cuthaean Legend: All three versions of this text are translated in Foster, Before the Muses, III.7b. Recent discussion includes B. Landsberger, SAAB 3/1 (1989), pp. 42-44 and M. Liverani, Naram-Sin e i presagi difficili, in F.M. Fales (ed.), Sopranaturale e potere nel mondo antico, Milano 1985, pp. 31-45. Another translation will be found in Longman, Autobiography, see pp. 103 ff. 3. The Siege of Apishal: This text has only been partially published (see H. Güterbock, AfO 13 [1939/41], pp. 46-49); the tablet has been rediscovered and will be published by I. Finkel. An English translation will be found in Foster, Before the Muses, II.13a. For discussion of this complicated tradition, see J.-J. Glassner, Naram-Sin poliorcète, les avatars d'une sentence divinatoire, RA 77 (1983), pp. 3-10 and B. Foster, Naram-Sin in Martu and Magan, AARRIM 8 (1990), pp. 40-44. 4. The Curse of Agade: A Sumerian narrative poem tells of the destruction of Agade by the Gutians, a barbarous mountain people, because of the gods' anger at Naram-Sin. See CoA, with discussion and bibliography.

E. Sharkalisharri

F. Period of Anarchy

See Hirsch, AfO 20 (1963), p. 31. The letter MCS 9 252 may refer to Irgigi, a king of Agade in this period (suggestion C. Wilcke).

G. Dudu

For this little-known king, see C. Wilcke, AfO 25 (1974/77), pp. 84-85. The inscription published by A. Goetze, JAOS 88 (1968), p. 57 NT 264 is an Old Babylonian copy of an inscription of this king (D. Frayne).

H. Shu-Durul


XI. Historical Studies

A. Chronology

The years of reign for the Sargonic kings are derived from the Sumerian King List; see Th. Jacobsen, The Sumerian King List, Chicago 1939, pp. 23 ff. (differently Foster, USP, pp. 152 ff.). The absolute chronology has been treated by P. Huber, Dating by Lunar Eclipse Omina with Speculations on the Birth of Omen Astrology, in J.L. Berggren - B.R. Goldstein (eds.), From Ancient Omens to Statistical Mechanics, Copenhagen 1987, pp. 3-13. This notes that three changes of reign are correlated with eclipses matching the description of the ominous Nisan eclipse presaging the death of the king of Akkad in the omen series Enuma Anu Enlil. This extraordinary coincidence of events yields an accession date for Sargon (using Jacobsen’s length of reign) at -2380.

B. Political and Social History

J. Bottéro, Das erste semitische Grossreich, in Fischer Weltgeschichte 2, Frankfurt 1965, pp. 91-128, English version in Delacorte World History, New York 1967, pp. 91-132; I.M. Diakonoff, Obshchestvennyj i gosudarstvennyj stroj drevnego dvureč’ja: Šumer, Moscow 1956, although dated in many details, remains one of the most original and comprehensive assessments of the Sargonic period; C.J. Gadd, The Dynasty of Agade and the Gutian Invasion, in Cambridge Ancient History, V/2, pp. 417-463; J.-J. Glassner, La chute d’Akkadé. L’événement et sa mémoire (= CdA), Berlin 1986, with extensive bibliography and evaluation of Sargonic and post-Sargonic sources; for a detailed review by a Sargonic specialist, see A. Westenholz, OLZ 87 (1992), pp. 39-48; A.I. Tyumenev, Gosudarstvennoe hozjajstvo drevnego Šumer, Moscow-Leningrad 1956: detailed assessment of the then-known Sargonic administrative archives as exemplifying a transition from a “temple economy” to a “state economy”.
PLATES

b. Akkadian seal of a servant of Enheduana from Ur. From Boehmer 1966, Abb. 53.


c. Akkadian seal depicting the sun-god rising from the mountains. From Boehmer 1966, Abb. 399.
a. Akkadian seal of gods and bird-man before the water-god.
From Boehmer 1966, Abb. 519.

b. Akkadian seal depicting the winged gate on a bull.

c. Akkadian seal with a scene of fighting gods.
From Boehmer 1966, Abb. 303.
a. Main fragment of the "Stela of Vultures" of Eannatum. From Nissen 1988, fig. 61.
b. Stela of Naramsin. From Nissen 1988, fig. 65.
Tell Leilan Lower Town South, 1989, period IIb, view from the south (photo: H. Weiss).
HW#3, L85 Op3A 38, V = 0.265 liters.

HW#9, L87 Op5, 76G20 30, V = 1.052 liters.

HW#5, L89 Op5, 76F20 143, V = 1.522 liters.

Tell Leilan “sila bowl” stacked kiln wasters.