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In the Shade of the Palm

Studies on the Ancient Near East in Honor of Simonetta Ponchia

Edited by Luigi Turri, Sebastian Fink, Silvia Gabrieli, Giovanni-Battista Lanfranchi, Robert Rollinger and Silvia Salin

Zaphon

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From "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) to "Sumer-and-the-Land-of-Akkad" (*ki-en-ge.r ki-uri*) in the Third Millennium

Walther Sallaberger

1. Introduction

Terminology for the history of the ancient Near East is changing constantly with new findings and discoveries as well as with the prevailing perspectives. "Sumer and Akkad" was long considered the standard term for the historical area of southern Mesopotamia, the landscape of Babylonia, in the third millennium BCE, in the Early Bronze Age according to archaeological chronology.[1] Today, the term is used less frequently in research, and this may also be due to the fact that the regional terms "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*)[2] and "Akkad" are difficult to delimit. The paper revisits the much-discussed issue of the terms "Sumer and Akkad"[3] thereby focussing on sources from the third millennium BCE in a historical perspective, while various discussions of "Sumer" and "Sumerians" have, in good Assyriological tradition, concentrated on literary texts.[4] The more recent identification of the "land of Akkad" ((*ki*)-*uri*, *Warīum*) has provided a point of reference against which the question of the boundaries of the land of Sumer should be re-examined.

The self-designation of a group of humans as "Sumerians" or "Akkadians" (as inhabitants of the land of Akkad)[5] appears in literary texts as a metonymy of the

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[1] Therefore, I dedicate this article to the historian and Assyriologist Simonetta Ponchia, as a small token of my gratitude for numerous joint initiatives over two decades. The article emerges directly from the work on a history of Mesopotamian religion in the third millennium, which I was able to start in 2016 thanks to a visiting professorship in Verona.

Sumerian words are given in italics, even if with the respective index numbers of the cuneiform signs; transliterations of Sumerian are kept in spaced font.

This study would not have been possible without the digital collections of CDLI (https://cdli.ucla.edu/) and BDTNS (http://bdtns.filol.csic.es/), and especially the concordances provided by Marc Endesfelder in the Writing Sumerian Corpus (https://corpus.writing-sumerian.assyriologie.uni-muenchen.de/).

[2] For the reading *ge* (thus *ki-en-ge*) instead of the more conventional *gi* (i.e., *ki-en-gi*), see below fn. 15. The *Auslaut -r* of *ge.r*/*ge₇.r* is marked when an isolated noun is treated, but missing in transliterations of Sumerian text.

[3] Most relevant are the contributions by Kraus, 1970; Wilcke, 1974; Cooper, 2013.

[4] Cooper, 2010; Cooper, 2016; Rubio, 2016. It is not possible to discuss in detail all the individual differences that arise from the diverging perspectives.

[5] Sargon (RIME 2.01.01.01: 77–78 // 82–83) identified the governors of his empire as "sons (*dumu-dumu*) of (the city of) Akkade", to emphasise their dependence on the capital Akkade; "sons of (the city of) Akkade" appear furthermore as witnesses of a large-scale

regional term;[6] as a descriptive term, "Sumerian" is attested once in the Sargonic period (note 24). The "sons of (the city of) Akkade" referred to persons strongly tied to the king and the royal court (see note 5). The term *saĝ-gegge.g* "black-headed (people)", occasionally translated as "Sumerians", refers to all "humans".[7] *kalam*, the word for the "land", the homeland, is – particularly clearly, for example, in the Utuḫeĝal text (ca. 2130 BCE) – set against *kur*, "mountains"; *kalam* encompasses the entire territory of "Sumer and the land of Akkad" (*ki-en-ge.r ki-uri*).[8]

2. The language term "Sumerian" and the element *ge.r*/*ge₇.r*

The use of the language terms "Sumerian" (Sumerian *eme-ge₇.r*, Akkadian *Šumeru*) and "Akkadian" ((*eme*) *uri*, *Akkadû*) for the corresponding languages does not seem problematic at first. The two terms derived from the regions "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) and "land of Akkad" (*ki-uri*) refer to the languages predominant in the respective region. Although they are only attested as terms for languages from the Old Babylonian period onwards, the Enmerkara epic may refer to the language situation in the Ur III period (see note 21). In the third millennium BCE, the Sumerian and Akkadian languages (in modern terminology) were written and spoken in the area of the Alluvial Plain, the region of Babylonia. The sources from the Early Dynastic period onwards show that one must not adhere to a romantic idea of a Sumerian-speaking area and a separate Akkadian-speaking area, but rather that bilingualism was widespread.[9] However, this general bilingual situa-

land sale in the Maništušu Obelisk; they stem from an inner circle around the king of Akkade (Schrakamp, 2020: 329–331). He concludes: "Thus, the term 'Son of Akkad' is a title and designation for followers of the king, whose loyalty was rewarded through allocations of land from the royal domain regardless of their origin" (Schrakamp, 2020: 331).

[6] Wilcke, 1974: 225–227.

[7] For the third millennium see an inscription of Šu-Suen (E3/2.1.4.1): Inana was designated as divine helper of the king, "in order to sweep like a huge onrushing flood over its population (u ĝ₃) – (namely of) the enemy country (kur gu₂ erim₂-ĝal₂) which in disobedience to him (Šu-Suen) (engages) in battle and hostilities" (i 40–45), "in order to smite its powerful ones, mischievous (and) inimical" (i 46–48), "in order to destroy the memory (mu "name") of its famous (mu tuku) *black-headed* animate beings" (saĝ-gegge zi-ĝal₂) (ii 1–3) – so the enemies of Šu-Suen to be destroyed are called "black-headed", and since this campaign was directed against Upper Mesopotamia, they are not "Sumerians", but simply "humans".

[8] Sumerologists occasionally translate *kalam* not as "land" or "homeland", but identify it as "Sumer" (e.g., Volk, 1995: 28: *kalam* = "Land (Sumer)"). But note that Sargon of Akkade, the one who was so proud to have finally conquered the region called "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*), called himself the "king of the land" (lugal kalam-ma) which thus comprised both the land of Akkad and Sumer (Kienast, 1994: 139).

[9] See the overview of Sumero-Akkadian bilingualism in third millennium Sumer by Cancik-Kirschbaum / Schrakamp, 2022: 14–16. This has far-reaching consequences, e.g.: "It should be obvious that the native speaker, the scientific paradigm that employs him and

tion[10] should not obscure the fact that archival evidence, freely formulated passages in everyday texts, the language of letters and inscriptions or the testimony of personal names clearly indicate a distribution up to the end of the third millennium: a dominance of Sumerian in the southern part of Babylonia, from Nippur southwards, and a dominance of Akkadian in the northern half. This applies to the Presargonic, Sargonic and Ur III periods in a similar way.[11] Social contexts always determined which languages were used, and thus for example Akkadian appeared in the context of the royal administration of Akkade also in the south of Babylonia. Only with the catastrophe at the end of the Ur III period and the following social movements did the demography of the country change in a very short time and in a dramatic way, so that Sumerian as an everyday language was pushed back to a few regions and usages in the 20th century BCE.[12] It lived on in scribal usage both for literary texts and for archival texts of mainly legal nature.

In the period of the Early Bronze Age city-states and their successors, the provinces of the kingdoms of Akkade and Ur, people were usually referred to according to their origin from their city; otherwise, for example, in the case of

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the grammatical descriptions that grow out of his testimony are a product of politics predicated on linguistic nationalism, 'we – they' distinctions and the need for drawing community boundaries. Equally clear is that a unitary notion of native speaker and the linguistic theory based on it will have problems with stylistic variation, code-switching, code mixing, diglossia, bilingualism, semilingualism, language attrition, language shift, nativized varieties of colonial languages, fluid mother-tongue affiliations and other language-contact phenomena that form the mainstay of sociolinguistic interest. They all have in common that they call for a notion of identity more sophisticated than "p = p, and for ever so …" (Coulmas, Sociolinguistics 2013: 191; apud Mumm, 2018 § 4.2). With this background, I do not dare to discuss the "mother language" of Šulgi again.

[10] The archive of Garšana offers the clearest case in this regard, since here, among scribes with Akkadian names, i.e. perhaps predominantly of Akkadian origin, isolated cases of Akkadian imposition in largely idiomatic Sumerian as well as borrowings of Akkadian nouns in Sumerian phrases can be detected; on this, see the contact linguistic analysis by Sallaberger, 2011.

[11] Sallaberger, 2004; Woods, 2006. If Rubio, 2016: 233 writes: "Ur III documents exhibit a limited inventory of verbal forms and syntactical constructions, which fits quite well the nature of a merely written language with little or no spoken currency", then he simply ignores the arguments collected with regard to this statement by Sallaberger, 2004 and 2005, according to which an active use of Sumerian outside of standard formulas can be proven until the 20th century BCE, after which it ends clearly in the available sources (namely in the free formulations of documents or in letters). Unfortunately, this means that the stimulating remarks by Rubio, 2016 (or Cooper, 2010) can hardly be discussed in a scholarly manner, as they are partly based on outdated premises.

[12] Sallaberger, 2004; Woods, 2006 argues for a Sumerian everyday vocabulary that entered the lexical lists and drill exercises under the early Isin rulers (in the 20th century BCE).

distant origin (*Elam*,[13] *Subur*/*Subartu*,[14] *Gutium*) and/or in the case of a different way of life (*Ĝardu*/*Amurrû*), according to the group of people. So how did the southern Mesopotamians designate something that was common to the entire region of "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*)? Here, interestingly, the language designation "Sumerian", literally "of noble tongue/language" (*eme-ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r*) was used frequently in the third millennium (see Table 1 below). The element *ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r*, which is shared by the region and by the language designations, meaning literally "noble", probably including the notion "free",[15] was not always sufficient alone as a term of gentility. It was used also in combinations that originally correlate with the meaning "Sumer, Sumerian", namely in the designation of men fit for service as *dumu-ge$_7$.r*, "free",[16] and of "(domesticated) dogs" (*ur-ge$_7$.r*, *ur-ge.r*).[17] It meant "Sumerian" when referring to the wool (*siki ge.r*) of "Sumerian sheep" (*udu eme-ge.r*, *udu ge.r*).[18]

When the language term *eme-ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r*, literally "noble language", was chosen for the regional term "Sumerian", a metonymy was made from the speakers of "Sumerian", the inhabitants of the land of "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*, literally perhaps "noble-lord place"), to animals and things in their care; the element *ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r* indicates that language and regional term belong together. For other language designations known from sources of the third millennium, the ethnic term was chosen; the clearest examples from archival texts are the references for an "interpreter for Gutium(-people/language)" (Sargonic)[19] and an "interpreter for Amorite (people/language)" (Ur III).[20] The complete absence of an "Akkadian" or a "Sumerian interpreter", on the other hand, should not be seen as a coincidence, given the large number of documents and the numerous names of persons from many places

[13] Michalowski, 2008

[14] Bartash, 2018

[15] Cooper, 2013: 294 with a selection of further literature; Attinger, 2021: 402; Attinger l.c. prefers the conventional reading gi, gi$_7$, but admits that ge$_7$, ge is the better reading; for the third millennium, the sign GI represents *ge* and hardly allows a reading *gi*, a value expressed by the sign GI$_4$. A transliteration ki-en-ge can be found occasionally in the Sumerological literature (e.g. by Sjöberg in TCS 3).

[16] Koslova, 2008; a Presargonic reference is OSP 1 27 iv′ 2′. NB: The personal name gi$_7$-ra "from Sumer/noble descendance" appears a few times in Presargonic Nippur, mostly as a patronym, or as name of a man from Ešnuna.

[17] The opposite term is ur-bar-ra "wolf", the "dog from outside".

[18] For the *Auslaut* in *-r* see SAT 2 177 o.3: 1 bar-si siki ge-ra-be$_2$ "its 1 *barsi* garment of 'Sumerian' wool".

[19] eme-bala gu-ti-um OIP 14 80: 3, Sargonic Adab

[20] eme-bala ĝar$_7$-du$_2$ Trouvaille 81 r.15, Ur III Puzriš-Dagān; see also 3 men as "adjutants and interpreter, placed for the Marḫašians" sugal$_7$ eme-bala lu$_2$ mar-ḫa-ši^{ki}-ra gub-ba ŠA 85 18 o.i 18′ Ur III Puzriš-Dagān.

contained therein over about four centuries (from about 2350 to 2100), but rather as confirmation of the extensive bilingualism of the inhabitants of Babylonia.[21]

3. "Sumerian" persons, animals, objects in third millennium documents

There is no obvious explanation or apt analogy why *ki-en-ge.r*, "Sumer", in archival texts only exceptionally denoted objects from the region of Sumer (see Table 1). The language term *eme-ge₇.r*, "Sumerian (language)", was the most common way for scribes in the last quarter of the third millennium to designate people and goods belonging to the region of Sumer. That the terms *ki-en-ge.r* "(region) Sumer", *eme-ge.r* "(from) Sumerian-speaking (region)" and *ge.r*/*ge₇.r* "noble, Sumerian" could be used synonymously is shown by the designations of the "Sumerian" sheep from the Sargonic to the Ur III periods (Table 1).[22] They are contrasted with the "mountain sheep" (udu kur-ra), also called "fat-tailed sheep" (GUKKAL), as well as other sheep taxa. The translation as "Sumerian" sheep, however, obscures for the modern reader that this was the standard variety throughout the Babylonian lowlands.

The term "Sumerian" is attested for people, capacity measures, sheep and textiles in the Classical Sargonic period (c. 2250–2180) and for sheep and wool in Ur III texts (c. 2050–2020).[23] An interesting feature of the respective documents are the complementary terms that confine the range of the term "Sumerian" (Table 1).

---

[21] See above note 10. Based on some indications, the Sumerian composition of "Enmerkara and the Lord of Arata" may reflect the historical situation of the Ur III period, when the three languages "Sumerian", "Akkadian" and "Amorite" were seen as "corresponding to each other", "convertible into each other" (ḫa-mun). Enmerkara and the Lord of Arata 141–144, from Mittermayer, 2009:

> [141] u₄-ba kur subur^{ki} ḫa-ma-zi^{ki} / [142] eme ḫa-mun ki-en-ge kur gal me nam-nun-na-kam / [143] ki uri kur me-te ĝal₂-la / [144] kur ĝar₇-du₂ u₂-šal-la nu₂-a
>
> [141] "Damals wandten sich (sowohl) die Gebiete Subur und Ḫamazi, [142] (als auch) die mit den (ineinander) übersetzbaren Sprachen, (die da sind) Sumer, der ‚Grosse Berg der fürstlichen Normen', [143] Akkad, das Land, das zur Zierde gereicht, [144] und das Gebiet der Ĝardu, wo man auf üppigen Weiden ruht, …"

According to Mittermayer, 2009: 89–92, the epic probably stems from the Ur III period rather than the early Isin period, even though she always speaks cautiously of the period around the turn of the second millennium.

[22] The data presented in Table 1 prove the equivalence of ge and ge₇ in a diachronic and diatopic perspective for the third millennium; various writing habits then differentiated between ge and ge₇ in OB literary Sumerian texts, as discussed by Attinger, 2021: 402 n. 1053.

[23] This was already considered an important aspect by Wilcke (1974: 218f., 226f.), but noted only in passing by Cooper (2013: 294).

Table 1: "Sumerian" (*eme-ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r*, *ge$_7$.r*/*ge.r*) or "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) or "Sumer" and "land of Akkad" as qualifiers for persons, animals and objects in third millennium archival texts.

determined noun	**"Sumerian", "Sumer"**	**contrasted with**	**period**	**provenance of documents**
"men" lu$_2$	eme-ge$_7$	a$^?$ uri^{ki} "land Akkad/Warīum"	Sargonic	unknown (Umma?)
"sheep" udu	ge$_7$		Sargonic	Adab, Umma[24]
capacity measure "liter" sila$_3$	eme-ge$_7$	a-ga-de$_3^{ki}$ "(capital) Akkade"	Sargonic	Umma
textiles tu$_9$	eme-ge$_7$		Sargonic	Umma
textiles tu$_9$		uri	Sargonic	Ĝirsu
"bow" ^{ĝeš}pana		uri	Lagaš II	Ĝirsu
"sheep" udu	ki-en-ge	Lullubum	Ur III	Puzriš-Dagān
"sheep" udu	ge	Šimaški, Lullum (lu$_2$-lu$_7$-um), GUKKAL, e. a.	Ur III	Puzriš-Dagān
"sheep" udu	ge, eme-ge	GUKKAL "fat-rumped sheep"	Ur III	Ĝirsu
"sheep" udu	eme-ge	GUKKAL	Ur III	Irisaĝrig, Nippur, Ur
"sheep" udu	eme-ge	kur "mountains"	Ur III	Umma
"wool" siki	ge	kur	Ur III	Ĝirsu, Puzriš-Dagān, Umma
"wool" siki	ge		Ur III	GARšana,[25] Irisaĝrig, Nippur, Ur

A single Sargonic document, perhaps from Umma, names persons collectively those of "noble tongue", i.e. "Sumerians", or "seed of the land of Akkad/ Warīum".[26]

The "Sumerian litre" (sila$_3$ eme-ge$_7$) is a unit to measure the precious commodity oil in Sargonic documents from the southern Mesopotamian city of Umma. It is distinguished from the "litre of (the city of) Akkade" (sila$_3$ a-ga-de$_3^{ki}$). The "Sumerian litre" thus referred to the local unit of capacity measures, the "Akkade litre" to that of the political capital, a unit which was already widely used for dry bulk goods. Thus, according to the evidence, in addition to the royal measure, there existed also a measure in the land of the "Sumerians" which, ac-

[24] Reference for Adab: CUSAS 20 165 o.1; for Umma: TIMA 1 28 r.3. RTC 239 r.i 2 (Lagaš II) was read "kuš udu gi$_7$" by CDLI instead of ^{kuš}lu-ub$_2$ "leather bag".

[25] CUSAS 3 616.

[26] MAD 4, 161, published only in transliteration (see, e.g., Wilcke, 1974: 205 B.4; Cooper, 2013: 293): 21* 6c lu$_2$ / a? uri-me / 4* 2c eme-ge$_7$ "21 (present) + 2 (absent) men: they are of Akkadian descendancy; 4 (present) + 2 (absent) (men): of Sumerian tongue".

cording to the term, was widespread beyond a city-state or province. However, this coherence of the region regarding the exchange of goods does not imply a political unity of "Sumer".[27]

"Sumerian" garments appear once in the Sargonic Mesag archive from the province of Umma.[28] Only indirectly can they be compared with "Akkadian garments", or better: "garments from the land of Akkad/*Warīum*", because these are known from the neighbouring province of Girsu,[29] not from Umma. The designation of garments and fabrics according to a local style has been well known since the archives of Ebla (especially the textiles "from Mari / in Mari style" there). Mention can also be made in this context of the "bow in the land-of-Akkad-style" recorded in the palace of Gudea's dynasty (c. 2150–2120) at Girsu (ĝeš pana uri, RTC 222 v 9).

"Sumerian sheep" (*udu ge.r*, *udu eme-ge.r*) are attested in the Sargonic period and especially in the Ur III period. Much less frequently they are called "sheep from Sumer" (*udu ki-en-ge.r*): in three documents from Puzriš-Dagān[30] this name was given to some of the animals that came as a levy from the flocks (šu-gid$_2$) of Irisaĝrig, a town located to the east of Nippur (Steinkeller, 2021). In the respective lists, the "sheep from Sumer" were distinguished from the "sheep from Lullubum" (udu lu-lu-bu), i.e. from the area of the Diyala tributaries Tanjero and Sîrwan, roughly around the present-day province of Sulaymaniyah. The term "Sumerian" (*udu ge.r*, *udu eme-ge.r*) was more commonly used to identify sheep. Such sheep are found in documents from Irisaĝrig and Nippur in middle Babylonia, and from Umma, Ĝirsu and Ur in the south. The evidence from Irisaĝrig at least indirectly confirms the obvious equation of the "sheep of Sumer" (*udu ki-en-ge.r*) with the "Sumerian sheep" (*udu eme-ge.r*). The "Sumerian sheep" (*udu eme-ge.r*) were usually differentiated from the "mountain sheep" (udu kur(-ra)), which correspond to the "fat-tailed sheep" (GUKKAL). Additionally, Puzriš-Dagān documents also name "Šimaški sheep"[31] or "Lulum (= Lullubum?) sheep" or "*a-lum* sheep".[32] The two most important regions after which taxa of domesticated sheep were named were thus the "mountains" (*kur*) and "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*), the latter in this pairing representing the entire lowland of Babylonia.

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[27] On the contrary: Schrakamp, 2020: 644–645 underlines the good connections of the archive's head Mesag, later governor of Umma, to the Sargonic king.

[28] tu$_9$ eme-ge$_7$-ra BIN 8 286 o.1

[29] tu$_9$ uri CUSAS 27 192:2–3 (provenance unknown); ITT 1 1460:5 (Girsu), tu$_9$ bar-dul$_5$ uri RTC 203 o. 2 (Girsu).

[30] AUCT 1 405 (Šulgi 46/04/00) and BIN 3 350 (Šulgi 47/09/00) udu ki-en-ge vs. udu lu-lu-bu, delivery (šu-gid$_2$) from Irisaĝrig; also MVN 20 194 (Šulgi 46/08) from the zabar-dab$_5$, the governor of Irisaĝrig at that time.

[31] Amorites 24 o. 4′, 5′ (Puzriš-Dagān, date not preserved).

[32] Steinkeller (1995) discusses the sheep terminology; the present overview is based on his list on pp. 53–54 and adds some references from more recent publications.

In summary, people, capacity measures, garments, sheep and their wool were called "Sumerian", literally "noble" (*ge.r*/*ge$_7$.r*) or from the "noble-speaking" (*eme-ge$_7$.r*/*-ge.r*) area. In the Sargonic period they were distinguished from those of "the land of Akkad/*Warīum*" (*ki-uri*: people, textiles) or the city of "Akkade" (capacity measure) and in the Ur III period from those of the "mountains" (*kur*) (sheep, wool).

4. The regions of "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) and of the "Land of Akkad" (*ki-uri*) in the third millennium

The regional distribution of the attestations for labelling objects as "Sumerian" (in Table 1) corresponds to the dominantly Sumerian-speaking area in this period. One is therefore initially inclined to believe that the land of "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) also encompassed the same area from Nippur to the Gulf. The crown witness for the border of Nippur is the statement in the Temple Hymns about Enlil's temple of Ekur that "on his right and left lie Sumer and Akkad", which is regarded as explaining the distribution of the regions.[33] That the area from Nippur to the Gulf was considered to be "Sumer" can be illustrated with numerous examples for the third millennium. They are neatly listed by Wilcke 1974 and Cooper 2013, so that only selected evidence needs to be repeated here.

In the Fāra documents (26th century), troops from Uruk, Ĝirsu, Umma, Adab, Šuruppag, Nippur (from south to north) were grouped together as "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*).[34] Keš, identified as Tulūl al-Baqarāt to the northeast of Nippur, was also described as the source of life for Sumer in the Abū Ṣalābīḫ version of the Keš Temple Hymn.[35] About two centuries later, Enšakušana of Uruk (mid-24th century) held the title "Lord of Sumer, King of the Land" (en ki-en-ge-ra, lugal kalam-ma).[36] Even though the title *en* was associated with the city of Uruk, the distribution of the titles may well have been done for phonetic reasons (phonetic echoes and the powerful principle of increasing constituents) and not necessarily contain the statement that *ki-en-ge.r* "actually" denoted the territory of Uruk, *kalam* that of Ur.[37]

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[33] Temple Hymns line 28 (cited after Wilcke, 1974: 206 C.1; see Cooper, 2013: 201): zi-da-be$_2$ gabu$_2$[^{bu}-be$_2$] ki-en-ge ki-uri "to its right and left are Sumer and the Land of Akkad". Therefore, Nippur is surrounded by the region of Sumer and the Land of Akkad.

[34] *Pace* Cooper, 2013: 294, this writing can hardly refer to the regional city Enegi near Ur, in a far distance from Šuruppag and not of the overarching importance reflected in the lists of men from the main centres of Sumer.

[35] Keš Temple Hymn line 30 (after Biggs, 1971): OB version a-ga-be$_2$-ta zi ki-en-ge-ra // Abū Ṣalābīḫ version B ii […] / [zi ki]-en-[ge], "(Temple), from whose back (comes) the life for Sumer".

[36] RIME 1.14.17.01 and 03.

[37] As could be deduced from the parallel with the title of Lugalkigubnedudu ("Lugal-kigine-dududu") as "*en* of Uruk, *lugal* of Ur" (RIME 1.14.14.01). Lugalkisalsi, on the other hand, bears the title "*lugal* of Uruk, *lugal* of Ur" (RIME 1.14.15.01). On the afore-

For the Early Dynastic period, however, no term is known for the area north of "Sumer" in the Alluvium. The city of Kiš, which one might perhaps think of, is used as a city name in exactly the same way as other city names. The title "King of Kiš" (lugal kiš^{ki}, alternating with lugal kiš) reflects the ancient supremacy of the city; but when kings of the Presargonic period (ED IIIb) from Ur, Uruk or Ĝirsu bore it, it hardly meant a dominion over the city of Kiš.[38] To my knowledge, however, no source attests to the fact that Kiš did not belong to Sumer. Rather, the role of Mesilim, "king of Kiš", as demarcating the border between Umma and Lagaš and as donor in Adab and Ĝirsu, as well as the adoption of this title by kings from southern cities, show that the entire country was seen as a unit. This entire region may have been referred to as "Sumer" in the Fāra period and in the Presargonic period.[39]

The word "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) appears prominently in the time of the Akkade dynasty. Kings of Akkade, especially Šarkališarrē, went down "to the region of Sumer"; documents from Umma record expenses for such a royal journey. Rīmuš defeated "Sumer"; enumerated elsewhere are Ur and Lagaš, Adab and Zabalam, Umma and KI.AN.[40] Where was the northern border of "Sumer" in Sargonic times? The fact that Rīmuš destroyed the place Kazallu (to be sought for in the vicinity of Babylon) when he "returned from Sumer" does not yet allow a demarcation of the borders.

In the times of the Akkade dynasty, the term that delimited "Sumer" in the north, namely the "land of Akkad", (*ki-*)*uri*, appeared for the first time. By now, the long-held assumption that *uri* is the Sumerian form of the country name *Warīum* has been confirmed.[41] This area is to be located around Ešnunna and the capital Akkade, i.e. between the rivers Diyala, Tigris and Udheim, in the area from Baghdad to Samarra. Traditionally, (*ki-*)*uri*/*Akkadûm* is translated in research as "land of *Akkad*" (ending in *-d*), although one should speak of *Akkade* (with *-e*) as regarding the city. The "land of Akkad" is confined by the foothills in the east, the steppe zone adjoins it in the north and west, but the southern border of *uri*, the "land of Akkad", is unknown. Did it extend south beyond the territory of Baghdad?

The only clue is provided by the statement in the Temple Hymns that Enegi, located in the vicinity of Ur, is referred to as "Kutha of Sumer" (if the phrase from Sargonic times has survived here). Kutha itself, situated north of Kiš, was there-

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mentioned kings of Uruk, most recently Sallaberger, 2021; on the title *en*, recently Marchesi in Marchesi / Marchetti, 2011: 105–107.

[38] Marchesi, 2015: 139–40; Marchesi apud Marchesi / Marchetti, 2011: 97–99.

[39] Cooper, 2013: 292 refers to the Nisaba text known from Ebla ARET 5, 7, which enumerates the regions Subartu (= northern Mesopotamia), Sumer (in its Akkadian/Eblaite form written *šum$_2$-ar-rum$_2$*) and Dilmun.

[40] Cooper, 2013: 292; Schrakamp, 2020: 627.

[41] Schrakamp, 2014 with further references.

fore no longer part of "Sumer" properly for this text, which considered all the sanctuaries from Eridu in the south to Akkade in the north as a coherent whole. Thus, a clear northern boundary for the territory of "Sumer" is missing even in the time of the Akkade dynasty. Sargon's title "King of Kiš" instead of "king of (the city of) Akkade" cannot be taken as an argument that Kiš belonged to the "land of Akkad" (*uri*), because the old title "King of Kiš" was also held by rulers from Southern cities in the decades before Sargon.[42]

Ur-Namma, founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, had coined the new title "King of Sumer and the land of Akkad/Warīum" (lugal ki-en-ge ki-uri) and thereby documented his claim to a larger territory considering the expansion of his empire into the Diyala region.[43] However, *ki-en-ge.r ki-uri* always appears as a fixed phrase, as a "Sumer-and-Land-of-Akkad" or "Sumer-Akkad". Ur-Namma's son and successor Šulgi took over the title, while Amar-Suen reverted to the older "king of the four regions of the world" (lugal an-ub-da limmu$_2$-ba). While no contemporaneous sources exist for *uri* or *ki-uri* in the Ur III period that would indicate its geographical confines at the time, there are at least indications for *ki-en-ge.r* that indicate which area was understood to be "Sumer" at that time. A somewhat fragmentary Old Babylonian copy of an Ur-Namma text mentions his early deeds, the assumption of kingship and the building of the wall of Ur:

ur-^{d}namma / in-dub ki-en-ge-⌜ra⌝ / ka ba-ge-na-ba
"Ur-Namma, after the borders in Sumer were established"
(RIME 3/2.1.1 v 11′–13′).

The terminology chosen here clearly refers to Ur-Namma's new division of provinces in his empire. This legal regulation, handed down in the so-called "cadastral text", is described in the same words: "for the god DN, he (Ur-Namma) established it" (DN-ra ka in-na-gi-in).[44] The preserved sections of the cadastral text deal, among others, with the provinces of Marad, Apiak, Kiritab or Puš, towns in the vicinity of Kiš. If one combines the two texts, "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) in the broader sense thus also encompassed the area of Kiš in the north.

The same understanding of the region of "Sumer" is found in the city lament, which directly takes up the situation of the Ur III period, the so-called "Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur". Here, too, the sanctuaries from Ur and Guaba in the south to Kiš, Marad, Kazallu in the north are referred to as "Su-

[42] I follow the arguments of Marchesi (2015: 139–140; apud Marchesi / Marchetti, 2011: 97–99) that the title "king of Kiš" of Sargon refers to the city of Kiš which was often written without the classifier ^{ki}. The distribution in Sargon's inscription RIME 2.01.01.01 is noteworthy (without ^{ki} in the title, with ^{ki} when referring to the city).

[43] Predecessors for the expression of territorial rule were Narām-Suen's title "king of the four regions", which Utuḫeĝal of Uruk had also adopted, but which only Urnamma's son Šulgi was to take up again.

[44] RIME 3/2.1.1.21 with the new duplicates CUSAS 17 20 and 21.

mer" (*ki-en-ge.r*).[45] Cooper (2013: 292) has shown that in the city laments written up to the time of Išme-Dagān of Isin, Babylonia was sometimes referred to as "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*), sometimes as "Sumer and the land of Akkad" (*ki-en-ge ki-uri*). The element "and the land of Akkad" had thus become an almost meaningless appendage, for *ki-uri* "land of Akkad" no longer occurred alone, but only in conjunction with *ki-en-ge.r*.

"Sumer" thus generally included not only southern Babylonia but the entire Babylonian alluvium south of Baghdad, an area united in many ways by its way of life and the common centre of Nippur. The extension of a united territory to include "the land of Akkad/*Warīum*" (*ki-uri*) happened in the Empire of Akkade. Ur-Namma may well have consciously included the region of northern Babylonia around and north of Baghdad[46] when introducing the title "King of Sumer and the land of Akkad", but the word pair "Sumer-and-the-Land-of-Akkad" became a fixed term interchangeable with "Sumer" by the end of the Ur III period at the latest. In any case, there were not two regions called "Sumer" and "Akkad" into which Babylonia would have been divided. The title "King of Sumer-and-the-Land-of-Akkad" (lugal ki-en-ge ki-uri) was later adopted by kings of Isin, Larsa, and Babylon, although the population and settlement structure of Babylonia had changed fundamentally in the meantime.

5. Conclusions

Thus, when historians speak of "Sumer and Akkad", they are ultimately adopting the terminology of the Ur III kings Ur-Namma and Šulgi (and the kings of Isin, Larsa and Babylon who followed them). At that time, the title undoubtedly explicitly referred to the territory of the kings of Akkade, for whom "the land of Akkad"/*Warīum*, situated between Samarra, Baghdad and Diyala, had acquired a special significance. Concerning the history of the Early Dynastic period, the Fāra and Presargonic periods, a modern use of the term "Sumer and Akkad" is therefore actually an anachronism. Kiš may already have belonged to "Sumer" at that time, as is then attested for Ur-Namma and after Ibbi-Suen of Ur III. "Sumer" in a broader sense encompassed the alluvium south of Baghdad, the province of ʿIrāq in the Islamic empire of the Umayyads, which is often referred to as "Babylonia". There is no question that regional differences in many practices, customs and

[45] This is confirmed by the composition "Curse of Akkade", a composition known already in the Ur III period, lines 45–50: "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*), the Amorites, Meluḫḫa (= Indus region), Elam and Subartu (= northern Mesopotamia) delivered goods; Cooper, 2013: 292. "Akkad(e)" is not found in this list.

[46] See in this sense Wilcke, 1974: 230–31 (with further references). However, in my view it is not compelling to see "Sumer" as more than a regional term, it did not denote a political entity. Furthermore, despite the terminology (see above), a geographic region cannot be strictly equated with the area in which one language was used; it is more probable that the terms "Sumer" and "Sumerian" were chosen *a potiori*.

norms existed in this vast lowland plain with its irrigation agriculture, of which Nippur was the religious centre.

Linguistically, because of the common element *ge.r*/*ge₇.r*, literally "noble", the term for "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*) cannot be separated from the language "Sumerian" (*eme-ge.r*/*ge₇.r*), which was also transferred from the inhabitants of Sumer, those "with Sumerian language" (a Bahuvrihi construction) to animals and objects of this region. At least in the case of sheep and their wool, the origin was shortened to the element *ge.r*/*ge₇.r*, "noble" > "Sumerian". If "Sumer" and "Sumerian" thus prove to be well-defined parameters for a description of Babylonia in the third millennium BCE, then the term "Sumerian" can be used, with good reason, for the inhabitants of the historical region of "Sumer". The cuneiform sources, on the other hand, usually identified inhabitants of Sumer as the inhabitants of a specific city. However, as is necessarily the case in the bilingual situation of the region, a "Sumerian" in this historically founded regional sense will not necessarily have spoken or written only Sumerian; people with Akkadian, Elamite or Hurrian names and writers of Akkadian texts thus also belong to the category of "Sumerians".[47] For the modern readers, such a definition of a "Sumerian" seems perhaps strange, as they like to orientate themselves by the language; a use of the term "Sumerian" defined as the inhabitant of the region called "Sumer" in third-millennium texts can therefore quite easily be misunderstood.

This article has dealt with the third millennium alone, but it should be recalled in the end that the terms "Sumer" (*ki-en-ge.r*, *Šumeru*) and "Akkad" (*ki-uri*, *Akkadû*), "Sumerian" and "Akkadian" referred to different entities in the second and first millennia, and moreover, new terms also appeared for the region and people of Babylonia.

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[47] That the term "of Sumerian language" (*eme-ge.r*) can be understood not only as identifying a language, but in a broader sense designates the origin from the region called "Sumer", is shown by its use with capacity measures or sheep.

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