

10. Conclusion

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10.1. Abstracts of the Contributions of Part II

The contributions to Part II touch on specific problems relating to the 3rd millennium chronology and historical geography. As the interested reader will easily recognize, the authors often cover similar ground to Sallaberger & Schrakamp in Part I of this book or to another author in Part II, but sometimes the conclusions differ. It is not the intention of the editors to present a harmonized “historical compromise”, since the existing differences are clear signs of the problems that remain in forming a historical chronology of the 25th to 21st centuries MC. We hope that such a presentation will help to identify problematic conclusions more easily.

10.1.1 Toward a Chronology of Early Dynastic Rulers in Mesopotamia (G. Marchesi)

G. Marchesi’s contribution provides a revised relative chronology of the Early Dynastic periods, including the most important Mesopotamian cities of Adab, Kish, Lagash, Mari, Nippur, Umma, Ur, and Uruk (cf. Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Sections 5 and 6 for the same periods). Marchesi’s chronology is based on a combination of genealogical information and synchronism, a palaeographic and linguistic analysis of royal inscriptions, legal and administrative texts, and also considers the archaeological context and the art-historical placement of inscribed artifacts. Marchesi does not use the figures provided by the *Sumerian King List (SKL)*, whose historical value is disputed, but bases his chronology strictly on monumental and administrative texts. New sources lead to a significantly refined sequence of rulers, especially for Umma and Adab.

The most important results of Marchesi’s contribution are almost complete sequences of the rulers of Uruk, Ur, Umma, and Adab, in addition to various proposals for the chronology and history at the end of the Presargonic period, such as the insertion of Urni of Uruk as a contemporary of Urukagina and predecessor of Enshakushana and a considerable shortening of the latter’s reign.

Since the final stage of the Presargonic period in Mesopotamia saw the rise of mightier rulers who extended their dominion far beyond the confines of the traditional city-states, Marchesi introduces a “Proto-Imperial” period between the Presargonic/ED IIIb and the Sargonic periods; it encompasses the reigns of Enshakushana and Lugalzagesi of Uruk, Urukagina of Lagash, Meskigala of Adab, Sargon of Akkad, and their contemporaries.

10.1.2 The Geographical Horizon of the Texts from Fara/Shuruppag (H. Steible)

H. Steible gives an in-depth analysis of the distribution of toponyms attested in the ca. 950 administrative texts from Fara and reconstructs the geographical horizon of ancient Shuruppag (cf. Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 4 for texts from the Fara period). There are also references to toponyms found in other Fara-period and earlier sources, *i.e.* the *Zame Hymns* and several geographical lists.

The geographical horizon of the administrative texts from Shuruppag extends from Kish (and possibly Ebih, *i.e.* Djebel Hamrin) in the north, to Delmun in the south, and ends with Sippar in the west, and the cities of URU×A^{ki} and Uruaz in Greater Elam in the east. Notably, Mari is not referred to, and Ur is only attested twice, once in a list of persons and once in a list of “heralds” (niĝir) from various places. Troop rosters that enlist hundreds of conscripts from the cities of Adab, Nippur, Lagash, Shuruppag, Umma, and Uruk going to battle against an unnamed enemy, have been interpreted as the proof of a supra-regional organization that has hitherto been labelled “Kiengi League”, “Hexapolis of Shuruppag”, and is called “Regio” by Steible. This organization was apparently a continuation of a confederation of cities discernible in archaic texts from Uruk centred around the city of Uruk itself, and a similar organization is documented by the later city seals from Ur. Steible’s contribution now ascertains that this organization also included the cities of AhuTI, Kesh, Kulaba, and Sippar and demonstrates that the members of this organization regularly exchanged goods, persons, and services, among which the conscription of soldiers referred to above is most remarkable.

Scholars assume that that the “Regio” was under the authority of the king of Kish (cf. the contribution of Pomponio, Section 5.1.). It has been suggested that the unnamed enemy of this organization might have been the city of Ur. Steible’s observation that Ur is only rarely referred to in the Fara texts now corroborates this assumption (Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 4.5.3). This marks an important contribution to our knowledge of the historical and political development of mid-3rd millennium Mesopotamia.

10.1.3 The Chronology of Ebla and Synchronisms with Abarsal, Tuttul, Nagar and Nabada, Mari, Kish (A. Archi)

The series of the kings of Ebla (modern Mardikh) down to the last two rulers, Irkabdamu and his son Ishardamu, is reconstructed according to an offering list (*ARET* 7, 150) and an exercise text (TM.74.G.120), including references to these kings in other sources. The last two kings reigned for about 43-46 years, and with an average reign of 15 years, the dynasty of Ebla, with its 25 rulers, starts around MC 2740/20 (destruction of Ebla around MC 2325/05). The administrative texts can be dated according to the ministers in office, first Arrukum and his forerunners, who served 12 years under Irkabdamu, then Ibrium and Ibbizikir, who were in office 35 years under Ishardamu. Their documents are mainly kept in the central archive L.2769; only ca. 50 tablets stem from the early years of the archive, around 40-50 years before its end, including some important political documents. The main archive covered 40 years, namely the Monthly Accounts concerning the distribution of Textiles (MAT), the Annual Accounts of the distribution of Metals (AAM) and the annual deliveries ("m u - t u m₂" = m u - k u_x [DU]) of the ministers Arrukum (ca. 5 years), Ibrium (18 years), and Ibbizikir (17 years). Archi presents important chronological lists of the annual documents from all ministers, and this order, which is based on a minute observation of textual details and prosopography, offers the backbone for the chronology of Ebla. References to the most important events, which link the AAMs and the m u - t u m₂-documents, can also be read as a concise history of Ebla.

The second part discusses the relationship of Ebla with the most important contemporary city states. Abarsal (Section 3.3), possibly identified with Khuera, and part of a region of similar political structure between Urshu (near Gaziantep) and Harran and beyond, played an important role in the early days of the Ebla archives, the time of Iplu(s)il of Mari. After the conclusion of the treaty, Abarsal appears more rarely in the 35 years of ministers Ibrium and Ibbizikir. Tuttul (modern Bi'a, Section 3.4), always ruled by Mari, appears as a place for merchants and as the cult-centre of Dagan, so the role of the excavated palace is not made clearer by the textual data. Nagar (modern Brak, Section 3.5) becomes a most important ally of Ebla in its later years, culminating in a dynastic marriage 3 years before the fall of Ebla. Concerning the relationship with Mari (Section 3.6), Archi concentrates on the earliest phase, the period of the Mari kings Iplu(s)il, Nizi (max. 3 years), and Ennadagan (4 or 5 years), and the improvement of the relationship after the war with Mari in Ebla's last three years. He furthermore discusses the time between the destructions of Ebla and Mari, which according to Archi cannot be quantified. Finally, the last 3-4 years of Ebla saw an intensification of the relationship with Kish, leading to a dynastic marriage (Section 3.7; cf. Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 6.4).

10.1.4 The Geographical Scope of Ebla: Commerce and Wars. Some Remarks (M. G. Biga)

The documentation in the royal archives (24th century BC) of Ebla contains thousands of references to cities and states in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. Many of the geographical names appear in the context of commerce and wars, and these two poles define the range of influence of the state of Ebla, and the kingdoms connected to it. The geographical horizon of the Eblaite kingdom was wide, including kingdoms far from Ebla, such as Kish in central Mesopotamia, Hamazi east of the Tigris, Nagar and Harran in Upper Mesopotamia, and Mari on the central Euphrates. Nevertheless, the extent of the Eblaite kingdom still cannot be defined precisely, most importantly in its historical development over the 40-50 years covered by the royal archives. Moreover, the cities that belonged to the state of Ebla cannot be located on the map, and sites inhabited at that period are not yet identified by their ancient names. Another obstacle for the historian in sketching the geographical scope of Ebla's administration, lies in the fact that the relative chronological placement has to be defined for each single document, so despite all the admirable results of Archi, Biga and Pomponio this is still a work in progress. Furthermore, the elliptic formulations in the administrative documents can only be elucidated by a detailed study of several hundred relevant documents and thousands of fragments.

Concerning commerce, trading centres existed, for example at Mabarra, where textiles were exchanged. Of Ebla's closest allies, Nirar, Ra'ak, Kakmium, Imar, Dub, Garmu, Lumnan, Burman, were located close to Ebla; north of Ebla were Ursaum, Utigu, Dulu, Iritum, Harran, Sanapzugum, Gudadanum, Sarhu, Arhadu, Hutimu; to the south, Shuragaru and its "brothers", Ibal and Adu, were probably located. Capitals of states that have commercial exchange with Ebla are Mari, Nagar, Harran, Armi (probably Bazi and Banat), Kish, Abarsal (probably on the Euphrates), and Adu.

The wars of Ebla can be grouped chronologically. Under minister Arrukum and king Irkabdamu (up until 35 years before the end of Ebla), Abarsal was defeated. In the first years of Ibrium under Ishardamu, wars were conducted towards the Euphrates region and in the north. These were against Arugadu (close to Ebla), Adabig, Garaman, and Kakmium in the 2nd year, and in year 8 there was a campaign against Gudadanum (north-east of Ebla). For the second half of the 17 years of minister Ibrium, the following campaigns are well attested: Manuwat, situated between Ebla and Mari, in Ibrium 9; Armi, possibly north-east of Ebla; Halsum, probably not too far from Ebla, in the Euphrates region in Ibrium 13, and in the context of this campaign many other cities are mentioned (stretching from the Euphrates to Upper Mesopotamia: Zahiran, Luatum, Zimanu, Du, Harran, Iritum, Kakmium, Akakgilu, Bahunia, Shadab); Kakmium in Northern Syria in Ibrium 14; Zahiran, located towards the Euphrates, in Ibrium 16.

Ibbizikir (IZ) in his first three years conducted campaigns against Agalish and Bahunu (IZ 1), Sa'aru (IZ 2), Ilwum, and Bagara (IZ 3, implying an extension of territory of Ebla); in the following years against Harzu, Darhati and Nabu, against Ibal and its coalition in the south (IZ 7), Niligau (IZ 10), and finally against the mighty city Mari (IZ 13); this war was concluded by a peace treaty. Ebla was at war every year until the end of its archives. Other military campaigns attested in the administrative documents have to be fitted into the chronology, for example a military campaign against Armi.

10.1.5 The Rulers of Adab (F. Pomponio)

The history of the rulers of Adab is based on synchronisms, observations on changing titles, orthography and palaeography, and draws significantly on sources from Adab which have recently been made accessible. According to administrative texts from Shuruppak, Adab was part of the supra-regional organization or city league that functioned in the Fara period. The unnamed $\text{NI}\hat{\text{G}}_2\text{-en}\text{si}_2$ “governor” of Adab mentioned in Fara could be identified with Lumma, the earliest ruler of Adab known by name. When Ereshkisalsi was $\text{NI}\hat{\text{G}}_2\text{-en}\text{si}_2$ “governor” of Adab, the city was dependent from Mesilim of Kish. Under $\text{ME-ba-RE}\hat{\text{C}}355\text{b}\times\text{TA}$ [=Isibdurba/Medurba], Epae, and Lugalvalu, Adab gained independence, as indicated by the change of title from $\text{NI}\hat{\text{G}}_2\text{-en}\text{si}_2$ to lugal “king”. Paraganedu and Eginimpae are known from dedicatory inscriptions. The sequence of the rulers is confirmed by the designation of the main temple of Adab: it is referred to as $\text{e}_2\text{-SAR}$ in Paraganedu’s votive inscription, while its later name $\text{e}_2\text{-ma}\hat{\text{h}}$ is attested as early as Eginimpae. The latter was succeeded as ensi_2 “governor” by Mugi who is mentioned in an administrative text and a sale contract from Eginimpae’s reign. The order of succession of $\text{EN}\times\text{MENU}$, Ursangkesh, and HAR.TUashgi cannot be determined yet, but one of them must have been the husband of Ereshgeshgenti who exchanged gifts with the Paranamtara, the wife of Lugalanda of Lagash. A conquest of Adab reported to Ebla is attributed to Enshakushana or Lugalzagesi who is attested as overlord of Meskigala, “governor” of Adab, a dependent of Lugalzagesi. The unnamed lugal “king” attested in a large archive dating to Meskigala’s reign is identified with Sargon of Akkad. According to Pomponio, Meskigala possibly allied with Sargon when the latter defeated Lugalzagesi. Meskigala’s expedition to the Lebanon referring to in a year-name from the same archive might therefore refer to a joint expedition of Meskigala and his new overlord. According to Pomponio, it was the same Meskigala who joined an anti-Akkadian rebellion during the reign of Rimush; the destruction of Adab mentioned in an anonymous year name is here attributed to Rimush’s suppression of the revolt.

Administrative texts from the Middle Sargonic period (the later reign of Rimush and the earlier reign of Naramsuen) mention a certain Sharrumali as “governor” of Adab. As he bore an Akkadian name and is mentioned in a tablet with a Naramsuen year name, he could have been installed after Rimush had suppressed the rebellion. He was succeeded by Lugalayangu who was “temple administrator” ($\text{sa}\hat{\text{g}}\hat{\text{g}}\hat{\text{a}}$) of Adab during his reign. A unique Middle Sargonic text enumerating Lugalnirgal, Lugalnuduga, Mugesu, and $\text{SIG}_4.\text{KUR}$ has been interpreted by Pomponio as a list of Sargonic governors of Adab during the reign of Naramsuen on the basis of its subscript. That the leader of Adab during the “Great Revolt” against Naramsuen, Abaenlil, was a mere “captain” ($\text{NU-ba}\text{nda}_3$) is taken as an indication for the reduction in its power after Rimush’s suppression of the revolt.

Sargonic control of Adab lasted through the reigns of Sharkalisharri, when Lugalgesh and UR.TUR exercised the governorship, to the reign of Dudu, whose sealed bulla found at Adab is taken as proof of Akkadian control, and even down to Shudurul, whose accession year is referred to in a recently published year name from Adab. According to Pomponio, the Gutean dominion at Adab lasted from Shudurul’s reign until Utuhengal’s defeat of Tirigan, who is attested as ruler at Adab both in Utuhengal’s triumphal inscription and the Ur III version of the *Sumerian King List* (*USKL*).

Information on the history of Adab during the Ur III period is scarce. Habaluge and Urashgi served as governors of Adab during the reigns of Shulgi, Shusuen, and Ibbisuen. In the year IS 5, at the latest, Ur lost control of Adab, and it may have become part of Ishbierra’s state. A short outline of the history of Adab during the Old to Middle Babylonian periods concludes the contribution.

10.1.6 Geographical Horizons of the Presargonic and Sargonic Periods (I. Schrakamp)

I. Schrakamp examines the distribution of toponyms in Pre- and Early Sargonic archives (from Adab, Isin, Lagash/Girsu, Nippur, Umma/Zabalam, and Ur) and in Sargonic texts (from Adab, Eshnunna, Gasur, Isin, Kish, Lagash/Girsu, Mugdan, Nagar/Tell Brak, Nippur, Sippar, Susa, Tell Agrab, Tell Suleimah, Tutub, Umma, and Ur).

The geographical horizon of the Presargonic period extends to Mari in the west, Subir in the north, places in Greater Elam in the east, and Delmun in the south. Since distant regions in the north and west, like Akshak, Subir, the Cedar Forest, Mari, and the Upper Sea, are only referred to in royal inscriptions in the context of unique military expeditions, the geographical horizon of the Presargonic period was in fact delimited by Kish, Elam, and Delmun.

Toponyms in texts from Adab and Umma/Zabalam indicate that the political ties between Kish and the members of the Kiengi city league of the Fara period still existed, with the notable exception of Lagash, which is rarely mentioned. Lagash itself seems to have controlled large parts of long-distance trade with Greater Elam

in the east and the Gulf in the south, and thanks to its strategic location had become one of the most powerful Presargonic states, which remained prominent during the subsequent Sargonic and Gutean periods.

The distribution of toponyms in Presargonic/Early Sargonic texts from Adab, Lagash, Umma/Zabalam, and Ur also reflects the political development and testifies to the rise of mightier rulers. The archives from Lagash and Umma/Zabalam demonstrate that Lagash successively lost its affiliation with places in Babylonia proper and its commercial contacts to the east and south during Urukagina's reign and the rise of Lugalzagesi, while texts from Adab shed light on the war between Sargon and Lugalzagesi. The geographical horizon of Nippur, notably, includes places from all over Babylonia and there are few references to Greater Elam, which might be explained by Nippur's overriding religious importance.

The rise of the Sargonic empire led to a dramatic expansion of the geographical horizon of Mesopotamia proper. The geographical scope of the Sargonic archives extends from Ebla in the west to the sources of Euphrates and Tigris in the north, to the Transtigris region and Greater Elam east of the Gulf, and ends with Meluhha (Indus valley). Groups of people such as Amorites, Elamites, Guteans, Lullubeans, Meluhheans, and Subareans are mentioned frequently. On the other hand, places in the west, *i.e.* Mari, Tuttul, and Ebla, are only rarely mentioned. That the city of Akkad is the most frequently attested toponym reflects its role as political capital. The Akkadian homeland between the Diyala and Transtigris area connected Babylonia with Upper Mesopotamia. At Nagar, the outpost of Sargonic rule in the northwest, settlements in the Habur triangle are mentioned that are known partly from the Ebla texts. Susa, the easternmost Sargonic archive, served as a hub for overland trade-routes to highland Iran and maritime trade routes in the Gulf. The Classic Sargonic governor's archive from Girsu displays the largest geographical horizon, and frequent references to the capital and to governors of other cities demonstrate its special role in Sargonic administration, whereas attestations of places in Greater Elam and the Gulf bear evidence to its superior role in long-distance trade. This special role is also discernible in Lagash II texts from Girsu which display a comparable geographical horizon and indicate Girsu's independence during the Gutean overrule. This background is in agreement with its special status during the Ur III period.

10.1.7 The Transition from the Old Akkadian Period to Ur III in Lagash (W. Sommerfeld)

W. Sommerfeld re-evaluates recent proposals on the interval between the death of Sharkalisharri and the accession of Urnamma of Ur that constitutes a core problem in 3rd millennium chronology. Previous investigations argue for a time span between each generation of up to no more than 100 years, thereby drawing on the *SKL*, on postulated synchronisms in royal inscriptions and in administrative texts, and on prosopographic observations in administrative texts from Girsu (see also the contributions of Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 8, and of Steinkeller, this volume).

Sommerfeld considers the *SKL* an unreliable source for reconstructions of the chronology. The alleged synchronisms in favour of a short interval between Sharkalisharri and Urnamma are discussed critically. According to common opinion, Puzurmama, known as an independent "king of Lagash", began his career as a subordinate governor of Lagash under Sharkalisharri of Akkad, declared independence after the latter's death, fought against Dudu of Late Akkad, was the immediate predecessor of the Lagash II rulers and a contemporary of Puzurinshushinak. Puzurinshushinak, in turn, would have been defeated by Urnamma. Sommerfeld demonstrates that the alleged synchronisms of Sharkalisharri – Puzurmama, Puzurmama – Dudu, Puzurmama – Puzurinshushinak are based on epigraphically impossible or highly doubtful restoration, and considers the assumption that Puzurmama was succeeded by Urningirsu I as highly speculative. He also argues that the synchronism between Puzurinshushinak and Urnamma is based on an inscription beset with epigraphical and philological difficulties. So the alleged synchronisms do not contribute to solving the problem of the period between Sharkalisharri and Urnamma.

A recent proposal to fix the period between Sharkalisharri's death and Urnamma as one generation on the basis of prosopographical data is looked at critically. This study, first, neglects the fact that Sargonic, Lagash II and Ur III tablets from Lagash stem from different findspots and consequently belong to different archives datable by year-names. Secondly, the alleged identity of bearers of common names can only be corroborated with certainty when embedded in clusters of personal name that co-occur regularly. Sommerfeld concludes that the administrative archives from the Sargonic and Lagash II dynasties do not help to solve the issue.

10.1.8 The Gutean Period in Chronological Perspective (P. Steinkeller)

For the chronology of the "Gutean Period", *i.e.* the time-span between the death of Sharkalisharri and the reign of Urnamma of Ur, earlier discussions often started with the Old Babylonian version of the *SKL*, according to which the Dynasty of Akkad was followed by the dynasties of Late Akkad, Uruk IV, the Gutean dynasty, and Uruk V with a combined reign of ca. 200 years. Most scholars agree that these dynasties were almost contemporary and Hallo argued for a period lasting ca. 40 years (for the same period, see also Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 8, and Sommerfeld, this volume).

Conclusion

Steinkeller presents arguments for a longer Gutean period of up to ca. 100 years. He bases this on new sources, namely the Ur III version of the *SKL*, according to which the dynasty of Late Akkad was succeeded by a Gutean dynasty named Ummanum “the horde”, not connected to any urban centre, and a Gutean Dynasty of Adab with Tirigan as its last ruler. The length of their reigns combined can be estimated at ca. 100 years. New sources pertaining to Gutean chronology also include a recently published year name from Adab that demonstrates that Adab was under Akkadian control when Shudurul accessed the throne. A bowl with Shudurul’s dedicatory inscription that bears a later inscription of Yarlagan is taken as evidence that the Guteans must have ruled after the Late Akkad rulers. Gutean dominion over Babylonia (bala), finally, is referred to in later literary tradition as well as a new manuscript of the *Urnamma Code*.

On the basis of these and other contemporary sources post-dating the reign of Naramsuen, Steinkeller argues that the Guteans first adapted to the sedentary Babylonian culture, then made Adab their capital and established their dominion in an area including Adab, Karkar, Urusangrig [= Irisangrig], Kesh, Nippur, and Dabrum. The Guteans succeeded in extending their rule as far to the north as Kish, Sippar, the Diyala region and, finally eliminating the Late Akkadian rulers, to the city of Akkad itself, as possibly indicated by inscriptions of Erridupizir and La’arab. In the south, Gutean dominion was formally recognized at Umma, while the dynasties of Lagash II and Uruk IV kept their independence. Though the Gutean dominion over Northern Babylonia cannot be dated with certainty, this must have been before Puzurishushinak’s conquest of Akkad. Utuhengal’s defeat of Tirigan at Adab set an end to the Gutean dominion.

10.1.9 Susa in the Late 3rd Millennium: From a Mesopotamian Colony to an Independent State (MC 2110-1980) (K. De Graef)

On the basis of administrative and legal texts from Susa, K. De Graef provides a reconstruction of the events in the course of which Susa was eventually conquered by Shimashki. The first group of texts consists of 38 tablets excavated in the 1960s that once belonged to the archive of the scribe Igibuni. The archive, the only coherent group of fully stratified Ur III texts from Susa, dates to the years between Shusuen 4 and Ibbisuen 1. It was found in level 7 of *Ville Royal Chantier B* that shows traces of a destruction layer. Around 500 administrative and legal texts in Sumerian and Akkadian were excavated in the first half of the 20th century. This group includes texts that are dated by Ur III year names or refer to Ur III rulers and officials, furthermore it includes texts with prosopographical links to the Igibuni archive, and Shimashki year names.

The evidence of Ur III year names, royal inscriptions and the data provided by the Susa texts demonstrates that Ebarat I conquered Susa shortly after the year Ibbisuen 3 and was in control of Susa during the years Ibbisuen 4-8. According to the Igibuni archive data, Susa was part of the Ur III empire during Shusuen’s reign. Therefore an earlier theory, according to which Ebarat I held the city of Susa during the years Shusuen 5-6, based on an erroneous interpretation of “lu₂ su” as an acronym for Susa (instead of a spelling for “Shimashki”), is rendered impossible. The year names Ibbisuen 9 and Ibbisuen 14 are named after the attacks of Ibbisuen against Susa and Adamdun. Hitherto unattributed year names can be assigned to Ebarat I’s successors Idattu I and Tanruhurater, and thus demonstrate that Shimashki gained permanent control of Susa soon afterwards. The destruction layer in level 7 can therefore probably be dated to Ibbisuen’s early reign and it may be attributed to the conquest of Susa either by Ebarat I or by Ibbisuen’s following attempt to recapture the city. After the conquest of Susa, Ebarat II installed there the rulership of the *Sukalmah*, “Grand Vizier”, around MC 1980.

10.2. General Conclusions

10.2.1 Chronological Table

The various studies gathered in this book have contributed to reconstruct the historical chronology before MC 2110, the accession of Urnamma of the Ur III dynasty. Although various degrees of uncertainty remain regarding exact year dates, these are within the realm of a few decades between the beginning of the Lagash I dynasty with Urnanshe and Urnamma, *i.e.* between ca. 2475 and 2110 BC.

Mainly, two critical phases have been identified in the chronology of the 3rd millennium, namely the exact time span between the last year of Sharkalisharri and Urnamma of Ur, the so-called Gutean period, and the end of the Presargonic period. Concerning the Gutean period, which includes the dynasty of Gudea of Lagash, the contributions by Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Sommerfeld, and Steinkeller agree that there is no compelling evidence for a short Gutean period of 40 years. The relevant sources, however, do not permit an unambiguous reconstruction, in particular for so long as the thorny problem of the chronology of Gudea’s dynasty remains unsolved. For the Gutean period plausible estimates of ca. 80 years (Sallaberger & Schrakamp) or even up to 100 years (Steinkeller) have been proposed. Although the lower values tend to be less conclusive, the possible time span has been indicated in the table below as a difference of ± 30 years, *i.e.* a Gutean period between 40 and 100 years with 70 years as the median.

Concerning the Dynasty of Akkad, independent evidence is missing which can either confirm or refute the length of the reigns given by the *SKL*, including its Ur III predecessor (*USKL*). The distribution of relevant sources (year names, historical deeds, prosopography and palaeography) and synchronisms (*e.g.* with local governors) do not invalidate the *SKL*'s data, but we would like to stress the fact that the dates of the Akkad dynasty thus serve to provide not more than a point of reference for the reader. We have argued for the high number of 56 years for Naramsuen's reign, tend to prefer the traditional sequence for Sargon's sons, Rimush before Manishtushu (against *USKL*), but follow *USKL* with 40 years for Sargon of Akkad.

Attributing the higher number of ca. 55 years to Sargon (after the Old Babylonian *SKL*) would probably help to lift the Presargonic dates by around 10^{±5} years. This is only one facet of the many uncertainties concerning the exact sequence of rulers and political events at the end of the Presargonic period, including the destruction of Ebla, the destruction of Mari and the end, first, of Urukagina of Lagash and, then, Lugalzagesi of Uruk. The reconstruction presented here by Sallaberger & Schrakamp at least includes the data that have been presented in this respect and discusses them critically. Some continuing existing problems become evident by comparing the contribution by Marchesi in this volume. In terms of relative time spans, however, the two proposals may not differ too much.

Table 10.1: Historical chronology for the 3rd millennium based on the Middle Chronology (MC) and the lower Middle Chronology (reduced by 8 years, rMC₈).

Period/Ruler	Duration	MC dates	MC II/rMC ₈ dates (adapted to rMC _{5/10} for estimated dates)
Fara period		ca. 2575-2475 ^{±30}	ca. 2570-2470 ^{±30}
Presargonic rulers of Lagash I // Umma	ca. 175 years	ca. 2475-2300^{±30}	ca. 2470-2292^{±30}
Urukagina of Lagash	10 years	ca. 2324-2315 ^{±30}	ca. 2316-2307 ^{±30}
Lugalzagesi of Uruk	25 years	ca. 2324-2300 ^{±30}	ca. 2316-2292 ^{±30}
Akkad Dynasty	ca. 180 years	2324-2142^{±30}	2316-2134^{±30}
Sargon of Akkad	40 years	2324-2285 ^{±30}	2316-2277 ^{±30}
Sargonic period beginning in Babylonia		ca. 2300 ^{±30}	ca. 2290 ^{±30}
Destruction of Ebla		ca. 2310 ^{±30}	ca. 2300 ^{±30}
Destruction of Mari		ca. 2295 ^{±30}	ca. 2290 ^{±30}
Rimush & Manishtushu	23 years	2284-2262 ^{±30}	2276-2254 ^{±30}
Naramsuen	56 years	2261-2206 ^{±30}	2253-2198 ^{±30}
Sharkalisharri	25 years	2205-2181 ^{±30}	2197-2173 ^{±30}
Gutean Period	70 ^{±30} years	2180 ^{±30} -2111	2172 ^{±30} -2103
4 kings (of Akkad)	3 years	2180-2178 ^{±30}	2172-2170 ^{±30}
Dudu (of Akkad)	21 years	2177-2157 ^{±30}	2169-2149 ^{±30}
Shudurul (of Akkad)	15 years	2156-2142 ^{±30}	2148-2134 ^{±30}
Gudea of Lagash	ca. 20 years?	ca. 2130-2110?	ca. 2122-2102?
Ur III Dynasty	109 years	2110-2003	2102-1995
Urnamma of Ur III	18 years	2110-2093	2102-2085
Shulgi	48 years	2092-2045	2084-2037
Amarsuena	9 years	2044-2036	2036-2028
Shusuen	9 years	2035-2027	2027-2019
Ibbisuen	24 years	2026-2003	2018-1995
Isin Dynasty	226 years	2019-1794	2011-1786
Ishbierra of Isin		2019-1987	2011-1979
Erishum I of Assur		1972-1933	1964-1925
Rimsin of Larsa		1822-1763	1814-1755
Hammurapi of Babylon		1792-1750	1784-1742
Ammisaduqa		1646-1626	1638-1618
End of Babylon I		1595/1597	1587/1589

This chronological table represents only a framework for dating texts, archives, historical events or archaeological contexts. In this volume much effort has been laid on the regional aspect, namely the historical chronology in the various cities and regions of larger Syro-Mesopotamia, and the interregional connections at given periods. The entanglements of the cities, states and regions basically support the historical sketches drawn here, and they should also prove useful for further studies on the political history, archaeology, economy or cultures of the Early Bronze Age in Mesopotamia and neighbouring regions.

10.2.2 Historical, Absolute and Archaeological Chronology

The historical chronology discussed in this volume is basically a relative chronology linking regions around the Mesopotamian lowlands from Ebla and Mari in the west to Susa in the east. Concerning the absolute chronology, the latest discussions have rendered the Lower Middle Chronology (MC II or LMC, 8 years below the MC, Hammurapi of Babylon 1784-1742) as the most reasonable candidate.¹ At the same time it is impossible to neglect the impressive sun eclipse of 1833 BC, which would lead to a chronology 12 years below the MC (rMC₁₂) according to the best currently available, but still disputed, reconstruction of the Old Assyrian eponym lists (see Sallaberger & Schrakamp Section 1.3). It cannot be discounted that arguments will be found to harmonize the latter two dates and thus to establish an astronomically fixed absolute chronology at 8 years below the traditional MC, the MC II.

This chronological uncertainty of 8 to 12 years below MC is in a way balanced by the uncertainties of a historical reconstruction of 3rd millennium chronology. Leaving aside the problems of dates based on the *SKL*, the possible variation in the length of the Gutean period between the extremes of 40 and 100 years balances the uncertainties of the astronomically fixed chronologies. The concluding chronological tables use a figure of 70^{±30} years for the Gutean period, our considerations lead to a period of ca. 80 years (Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Sections 8.5 and 8.8). In order to represent the results of this volume in numbers in Table 10.1, we have worked from a combination of various plausible arguments, without being able to determine exactly the possible variations. The traditional MC is probably too high by 8 (to 12) years; and an absolute chronology within these limits agrees furthermore with the dendrochronological data from Anatolia, which by their very nature are correlated to the radiocarbon based dating (Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 1.3). Thus, demonstrating that the MC covers 70 years of the Gutean period, which may be too short by ca. 10 years, may represent a fair compromise for a 3rd millennium absolute chronology before the Sargonic period. But already, within the limits of plausibility as discussed in this volume, this chronology may easily be off by 10-20 years, perhaps even more.

Although in the end the resulting chronology does not deviate substantially from earlier historical tables, the argument behind this proposal is much more refined, and far more philological data from cuneiform texts and various archives, and pertaining to specific rulers, have been linked to the reconstructed chronology. In this way we have made a step toward the goal expressed by Marc Lebeau that “[a]rchaeologists and historians should be encouraged to collaborate in order to reduce or suppress the discrepancy between radiocarbon dates and historical dates.”²

In this endeavour to combine absolute, historical and archaeological chronologies, Lebeau (2012) has presented a correlation of the destruction of Ebla and Mari based on the knowledge available at the time. Today, the basis for the absolute chronology has been strengthened, and the historical dates used are based on stronger evidence (most importantly the ca. 80 years of the Gutean period) or have come under discussion again (such as the time span between the destructions of Mari and Ebla as ca. 15-20 years). As this example shows, chronologies have been shifting during the years of discussion within the ARCANE project, and so, in the end, we will simply test whether the results are comparable.

Our test case in presenting a possible correlation between historical-absolute and archaeological-radiocarbon chronologies, are the data in the ARCANE volume on the Jezirah (JZ).³ There, cuneiform tablets found at various places have been dated roughly according to palaeographic styles which can be linked to certain historical periods.⁴ The archaeological contexts of these tablets were dated to certain phases using radiocarbon data.⁵ The resulting table thus represents a very rough scheme in order to understand whether historical and archaeological data can be reconciled, thus, indirectly, confirming or refuting any of the subsets of the argument.

¹ See the summary by Roaf 2012, and articles by De Jong, and Nahm mentioned there.

² Lebeau 2011: 378.

³ Lebeau ed. 2011.

⁴ Sallaberger 2011.

⁵ Ristvet 2011, and now Weiss et al. 2012. Contrary to the evaluation by Sallaberger (Sallaberger 2011: 340 sub 12.2.2.5), the later tablets from Tell Leilan are palaeographically probably not „Late Sargonic“ (or Late Akkad), but more probably Classic Sargonic. The fragmentary state of the tablets, however, does not allow a good palaeographic dating.

Table 10.2: Correlation of historical and radiocarbon data based on archaeological dates for selected text groups from the JZ. The MC dates are based on a Gutean period of 70 years and thus correspond exactly to the more probable Lower Middle Chronology (MC II, reduced by 8 years) with a plausible Gutean period of 80 years. Textual evidence after Sallaberger 2011: 341-342; ¹⁴C dates after Ristvet 2011: 311 table 2, 322.

Text group	Historical date	MC date (Gutean period of 70 years)	EJZ phase (and end date after Ristvet 2011 and Weiss et al. 2012 at 1σ)
(1) Beydar, early texts from field I	One generation, perhaps 50-20 years before main archive	Perhaps MC 2440-2380	Beydar 3a-3b, ending cal. 2440-2364, end EJZ 3a
(2) Beydar, main archive	Ca. 50 (80/70-45) years before end of Ebla (MC 2310 ^{±30})	Ca. MC 2360 (2390/80-2355)	Beydar 3b, ending cal. 2385-2298 BC, EJZ 3b
(3) Leilan, Shehna, Akkadian Administrative Building, Leilan Period IIb2-1	Early Sargonic (<i>i.e.</i> Rimush-Manishtushu)	Ca. MC 2285-2260	Leilan IIb, ending cal. 2271-2191, EJZ 4a (Ristvet 2011), end of IIb2a: cal. 2254-2220 (Weiss et al. 2012:176, 184)
(4) Mozan, Tupkish palace	Early Naramsuen or before	Ca. MC 2270-2240	EJZ 4a, ending cal. 2298-2203
(5) Brak/Nagar, Area TC	Classic Sargonic (later Naramsuen, Sharkalisharri)	Ca. MC 2230-2180	EJZ 4b, ending cal. 2268-2157

A glance at the table shows that all historical-absolute dates can be reasonably well harmonized with the archaeological contexts as dated by radiocarbon. From a broader perspective, this can be seen as a confirmation of the general trend of the chronological discussion, and another argument in favour of a MC. But the table also indicates that much work remains to be done to correlate more exactly the archaeological contexts with historical periods, and vice versa. On the one hand, in the table we have to refer to phases like “EJZ 4a”, since the general practice of phasing the archaeological evidence hardly differentiates between various single contexts ascribed to one “phase”. On the other hand, the large and vague archaeological phases hardly allow a direct comparison with the more precise-looking historical dates. Furthermore, the correlation should also take into account the regional situation and our definition of periods (see Sallaberger & Schrakamp, Section 1.1); so for example, as shown in Table 10.1 above, the Sargonic period starts in Babylonia ca. MC 2300^{±30}/MC II/rMC₈ 2290^{±30} according to our model, in the JZ perhaps even later; the date of Sargon’s first year is thus not relevant here.

This example of a correlation can, therefore, represent only the beginning of establishing more refined ones between archaeological contexts based on radiocarbon dates and a historical chronology.⁶ In this regard, ¹⁴C dates for archaeological assemblages with exact historical dates given by textual finds are of the utmost importance. Ultimately, this serves the goal of including more easily both philological and archaeological evidence in order to arrive at a wider understanding of the histories of the ancient Near East.

⁶ E. Boaretto and W. Sallaberger presented a joint paper on the correlation of the historical data and the radiocarbon evidence, based mainly on the destructions of Ebla and Mari and data from al-Hiba/Lagash, at the 7th International Symposium „14C & Archaeology”, Ghent, April 11, 2013.