From the 21st Century BC to the 21st Century AD:
The Present and Future of Neo-Sumerian Studies

Madrid, CCHS-CSIC, July 22-24, 2010

Abstracts

Thursday, July 22

The Sources

Panel A: Textual Corpora and New Archives

Chair: Steven Garfinkle (Western Washington University)

General Focus of the Panel:

The development of electronic corpora and digital libraries has substantially facilitated access to the epigraphic material of the ancient Near East, most successfully in Ur III studies. Transliterations, images of tablets, bibliographical references and many other tools are now increasingly available, so that the scholar can concentrate his or her efforts on the content of the texts, rather than collecting, classifying and selecting the material needed for his or her research. Nevertheless, these developments face new challenges. This panel will focus on the technical, intellectual property, ethical and administrative difficulties that compilers of digital libraries in Ur III and cuneiform studies in general face, and on what strategies we should consider in order to overcome them. Additionally, attention will be paid to other topics that impact our free access to Ur III source material, such as existing policies governing communications about recently excavated texts; considerations of documenting and/or publication of auctioned tablets; and an assessment on the contribution of these texts to our knowledge of the Ur III period. In addition, particular attention will be paid to the new tablets appearing from Iri-Saĝrig / Āl- Šarrākī as an example of a corpus of texts currently becoming available. Following upon the discovery and publication of the Garshana archives, the discovery and forthcoming publication of a new archive from the city of Iri-Saĝrig / Āl- Šarrākī will provide yet another unique corpus of ca. 1000 texts from the reigns of Amar-Suen, Šu-Suen and Ibbi-Suen. The presentation will highlight some of the major new data and their implications for the history and culture of the Ur III period.

Papers:

Robert K. Englund (University of California, Los Angeles)
Accessing Textual Corpora Online

David I. Owen (Cornell University, New York)
The Archive of Iri-Saĝrig / Āl- Šarrākī

Manuel Molina (CSIC, Madrid)
On the Location of Iri-Saĝrig

Panel B: Lexicon and Literature

Chair: Steve Tinney (University of Pennsylvania)

Gonzalo Rubio (Pennsylvania State University)
Literary and Lexical Texts from Ur III

A number of Ur III literary and lexical tablets and fragments were found at Nippur, mostly during the sixth excavation season (1957-58). Some of them contain earlier versions of Sumerian compositions attested in the Old Babylonian period (Lugalbanda I, The Curse of Akkade, The Temple Hymns, The Fields of Ninurta). Others provide us with completely new compositions that were not transmitted down to the Old Babylonian period, such as a Ninimma Lament and a Nidaba Hymn. Among the latter is a hymnic work on a hitherto unknown character, Enenusi, whose roots are clearly Early Dynastic. Likewise, the lexical fragments include several Ur III witnesses of Early Dynastic lists.

Luděk Vacín (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)
Šulgi Meets Stalin: Comparative Propaganda as a Tool of Mining the Šulgi Hymns for Historical Data

The first part of this paper will argue that the great Šulgi hymns are pieces of literary propaganda meant to inculcate in the Ur III elite´s minds the image of the infallible, omniscient and omnipotent god-king. Proceeding from this premise, the paper will then tackle the persistent issue of the "historical correlations" of these texts from a new viewpoint. I will attempt to show that the striking similarity of modern totalitarian propaganda literature to the Šulgi hymns makes it possible to put the search for history in the Šulgi texts on a more secure footing. The possibilities of comparative method applied to two seemingly incomparable text groups, i.e. the Šulgi hymns and Stalinist paeans, will be discussed in some detail and accompanied by particularly eloquent examples.

Fabienne Huber Vulliet (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)
'Father at the dangerous place'. Family ties in Ur III proper nouns

This presentation will focus on the family ties as described in the Sumerian proper nouns. The Ur III archives give us a great deal of proper nouns formed on kinship terms. By analysing the way they are described, we get inside information on the family unit and on its dynamic.

Walther Sallaberger (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)
The Sumerian Glossary Project

Pascal Attinger (Berne) and Walther Sallaberger (Munich) are working on a Sumerian Glossary based on a selected corpus of texts from the Old Sumerian to the Old Babylonan periods. Whereas Pascal Attinger deals with literary texts, including royal inscriptions, the Munich part of the project undertakes a study of Old- and Neo-Sumerian administrative and legal documents. The report on our work will focus on the selection of the corpus, the procedures, and the goals of the glossary project.

Panel C: Sumerian Language in Ur III Times

Chair: Marcel Sigrist (École Biblique et Archéologique Française, Jerusalem)

Miguel Civil (Oriental Institute, Chicago)
Ur III as a Linguistic Watershed

An examination of the Sumerian language immediately before and after Ur III times will show that in this period written Sumerian underwent the most profound changes of its history. Various aspects of writing, grammar, and lexicon, will be considered, and the textual transmission of Ur-Namma's Law Code, from Ur III to Late Babylonian Sippar, will be presented in some detail as a model case. An exploration of the political and social background will attempt to pinpoint the causes of this linguistic revolution.

J. Cale Johnson (Institut für Altorientalistik, Freie Universität Berlin)
Revisiting topicalization à la Yoshikawa: The role of the *im- prefix in topic-comment structures in Sumerian

Building on recent work on topicalization in several relatively uncommon constructions in Sumerian (XP nam bi- and double object constructions), I argue that, when the same topicalization structures co-occur with the bare {e-}/{i$_3$-} prefix in third millennium materials or the bare {im-} prefix in Old Babylonian materials, these two elements form topic and comment respectively. This topic-comment structure de-emphasizes the agent and significantly restricts the form and meaning of the verbal predicate. This topic-comment structure was first identified in Yoshikawa 1979 and I reframe Yoshikawa's discussion in order to clarify the several constructional templates in which explicit topicalization plays a role.

Fumi Karahashi (Chuo University, Japan)
Hypotaxis and Parataxis in Sumerian

Bertrand Lafont and Raymond Westbrook (2003:184) call the *ditilla*s "trial reports" which "contain an extremely terse account of trial proceedings." Among the verbs that occur the most in the texts are dug$_4$ 'say' and ge-en$_6$/en$_8$ 'confirm, attest', often appearing without the subject and object clearly expressed. Dug$_4$ is a verb of communication, and ge-en$_6$/en$_8$ may also be a member of this class. In this paper I am going to talk about the complementation of these verbs.
Examples (1) and (2) contain ge-en$_6$/en$_8$ and dug$_4$, respectively:

(1) Nik 2, 447 rev. 2-3

    dam ur-ab-zu-ka-ke₄ in-du₈   ba-ge-en₆
    wife Urabzu-ERG   PREF-open   PREF-attest
    '(Daß) die Frau des Ur-Abzu geöffnet hat, ist bezeugt worden' (Englund 1990:41)

(2) NG 2, 202:10-12

    sag-ki-sag₉ dam lugal-me-a-ke₄ ur-ᵈdumu-zi-da-ke₄ lugal-me-a dam-gu₁₀   in-gaz
    Sagkisag   wife Lugalmea-ERG   Urdumuzida-ERG   Lugalmea husband-my   PREF-kill
    bí-dug₄
    PREF-say
    'Sagkiša (= Sagkisag), die Ehefrau des Lugalme'a, hat: "Urdumuzida hat Lugalme's, meinen Ehemann, getötet,"
    erklärt' (Falkenstein's translation)

Translating example (1) in German, Englund supplied the complementizer *daß* in parentheses. This translation reflects the understanding that the clause preceeding the verb ge-en₆ 'confirm, attest' dam ur-ab-zu-ka-ke₄ in-du₈ 'the wife of Ur-Abzu opened' is the verb's semantic complement. This sounds natural and seems logical. Example (2) is understood as containing direct speech on the ground that the possessive pronoun 'my' on dam-gu₁₀ 'my husband' is not replaced by 'her' –a shift that would be expected in many languages if it were an indirect speech construction.

The aim of the paper is two-fold. First, it will define dam ur-ab-zu-ka-ke₄ in-du₈ in (1) as a paratactic complement of the verb ge-en₆ and thus will give theoretical support to the analysis and translation hitherto done. At the same time, I will argue that analogous constructions that have been translated without a complementizer can be translated with a complementizer. Second, I will suggest that example (2) as a whole be considered reported discourse and that it employs so-called "mixed quotation."

Friday, July 23

Economic Activity

Panel D: Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Chair: Bertrand Lafont (CNRS, Paris)

General Focus of the Panel:

During the Ur III period, economic activity in the primary (agrarian) sector was based solidly in three areas: cereal cultivation / garden produce in orchards and palm groves / domestic animal husbandry and fishing. These various activities were managed independently from each other. Over the last twenty-five years, considerable progress has been made in the understanding of how this sector of the economy was run and in the interpretation of the many cuneiform texts that document it. Decisive steps have been taken, thanks notably to:

- The work of the *Sumerian Agriculture Group*, established in 1982 by N. Postgate and M. Powell, which led to the publication of *BSA* 1 to 8 (Cambridge, 1983-95).
- The publication by M. Civil of *The Farmer's Instructions* (Sabadell 1991).
- Various works, such as those by K. Maekawa on Girsu and Umma agricultural texts (in *Zinbun* and *ASJ* Japanese journals mainly in the 1980s), by R. K. Englund on fishing (Berlin 1990), or by M. Stepien on Umma livestock (1996), among others.
  While the number of available cuneiform texts on these issues continues to increase, it is hoped that future research will help to further clarify the following:
- Lexicography, terminology and technical vocabulary (tools, tasks, and so on).
- Administrative procedures, predictive control, the agricultural calendar, and the management of the various activities.
- Yields for both agriculture and livestock.
- What part of these economic activities was free from direct state control and the exact role of public institutions.
- Interaction between the city and the countryside.

Papers:

Jean-Pierre Grégoire (CNRS, Paris)
Le Système Après-Récolte dans l'Hydro-Agriculture Mésopotamienne à la fin du IIIe

L'homme mésopotamien avait mis en place des stratégies sociales et économiques spécifiques, permettant sa survie, tout en améliorant des techniques favorisant la préservation et la conservation des principales denrées vivrières.

Ainsi, dans la chaîne agro-alimentaire, l'opération de récolte représente l'étape de passage entre la phase de production agricole proprement dite et celle de conditionnement ou de traitement du produit. La récolte des céréales, effectuée annuellement, ne doit avoir lieu que lorsque le produit a atteint son degré optimal de maturité. Après la récolte, il est nécessaire de procéder à un pré-séchage du produit, avant de le soumettre aux opérations sur l'aire de dépiquage : dépiquage, vannages et décorticage. Les grains obtenus doivent subir des opérations de nettoyage et de séchage, de triage et de mesurage afin qu'ils puissent être stockés ou faire l'objet de transformations ultérieures. Les céréales sont acheminées des entrepôts dans les Greniers ou Silos, et de là aux lieux de consommation, délivrées aux consommateurs directs, aux unités de transformations – par exemple les *Minoteries* – ou autres institutions agro-alimentaires. C'est la redistribution de la production.

L'enchaînement fonctionnel de ces différentes opérations et leurs interactions réciproques contribuent à former un système complexe : le *système Après-Récolte.*

Jacob Dahl (University of Oxford)
Umma Sheep and Goat Herding

This paper investigates the role of the Ur III Umma shepherds taking Robert Adams' recent suggestions about the limits of the Ur III state as its starting point.

Lorenzo Verderame and Gabriella Spada (Università La Sapienza, Rome)
Ikalla, the scribe of (wool) textiles and linen

The aim of this paper is to outline the activity of Ikalla, an important official of the central administration of the Umma province. His dossier, which consists of more than six hundred texts, documents his main role in each and every single stage of textile production, from the collecting of raw wool to the distribution of the finished product.

Panel E: Crafts and Material Culture

Chair: Franco D'Agostino (Università La Sapienza, Rome)

General Focus of the Panel:

A craftsman can be defined as a worker whose skill is to use raw material in order to obtain objects of the most varied nature, and in the documentation of the Ur III kingdom a great number of different professionals dealing with a wide spectrum of materials (stones and metals, both precious or not, wood, reeds) are attested. Administrative tablets describing the sphere of activity of workers like nagar, simug, adkup, bur-gul, šidim and others represent a considerable percentage of the economic documentation of Ur III period, and testify to the economic importance and professional skills of the craftsmen of the various provinces.

The main problem to be solved, from the point of view of the reconstruction of the position these workers had inside the society of the Ur III state, is to determine the administrative relationship of the "central office" - (king's) palace or temple - with these professionals. Did they belong to "families" of specialized people, hired or contacted when necessary by the central government, or were they directly dependent on the State (see H. Neumann, "Zum privaten Werkvertrag im Rahmen der neusumerischen handwerklichen Produktion", AoF 23, 1996)? The answer to this question would be fundamental to understanding the social and political status of these workers. Moreover, nothing, or very little, is known nowadays about the "families" of craftsmen inside the structure of the Ur III state. This is in contrast to the wealth of information we have from the following Old Babylonian Period (see as a reference the works of M. Van De Mieroop on Isin and the general considerations of R.McC. Adams, "Old Babylonian Networks of Urban Notables", in CDLJ 2009, 7).

Our panel intends to focus on this documentation in order to highlight the above mentioned and other questions involved in these records, and aims to be a reassessment of this topic after almost 20 years from the second revised edition of the seminal study of H. Neumann on the subject.

Papers:

Hans Neumann (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)
Crafts and Material Culture in Ur III Times: Craftsmen between state-controlled production and private handicraft

The purpose of the paper is to deal with the importance of the crafts and the social status of artisans of the Ur III period in the light of the need for luxury and consumer goods, taking into account the connection between the commercial activities and crafts. Using selected examples of the craft organization (particularly in relation to luxury goods production and metal processing) in the various provinces of the Neo-Sumerian empire of Ur, the respective structural differences in the state-controlled craft production are discussed. In addition, it will be shown how state production and private handicraft were mutually conditional. The latter is also discussed in the light of a visible social differentiation in the area of specialized crafts in the Ur III period.

Franco D'Agostino and Francesca Gorello (Università La Sapienza, Rome)
The control of copper and bronze objects in Umma in Ur III

It is known that the central office of Umma exercised a strong control over wool and metal objects. While the case of the wool has been studied by L. Verderame (*Il controllo dei manufatti tessili ad Umma*), we intend to present here the procedure for control of copper and bronze objects. It is clear from the documentation that the central office of Umma and Apisal was in charge of controlling, by weighing, the metal objects going out of the workshop of the blacksmiths (simug), but after being weighed the objects themselves were kept by the simug, who was in charge of their delivery. The technical aspects of the work of the blacksmiths were expressed by the formulae kin til-la and kin dub$_2$-ba, which according to us must be intended as "finished work" and "restored work".

Paola Paoletti (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)
The manufacture of a statue of Nanaja and the crafting of jewellery in Mesopotamia at the End of the Third Millennium B.C.

Regarding the crafting of jewellery in Sumerian a certain ambiguity still prevails, as some terms and their meaning are not (or cannot be) clearly discerned from each other. In particular concerning the ornamentation techniques, like metal inlay, hard stone carving, cloisonné or engraving, one is tangled in a jungle of translations and technical terms, which deserve at least an attempt at explanation.

By means of Neo-Sumerian administrative texts, primarily from the Ur craft archive and the treasure archive of Drehem, and with the help of a detailed description of jewellery techniques, I will attempt to associate these with Sumerian Terms, like šub, ĝar or si$_3$.g. Examples from the archaeological findings should illustrate the use of the discussed techniques on ancient oriental jewellery.

Alessandro di Ludovico (Università La Sapienza, Rome)
Symbols and Bureaucratic Performances in Ur III Administrative Sphere. An interpretation through data mining

Ur III administrative tools and documents bear a number of traces of both customary and unusual acts that were performed within a quite complex organization. Very likely, much of the symbolic systems and implicit references of this organization still need to be understood and can very hardly be interpreted by modern scholars. In this contribution an attempt will be made to carry out a philological investigation of artistic and handicraft products (i.e., cylinder seals and their impressions) and a parallel research on written administrative documents from an archaeological perspective. Mathematical models will be employed to investigate the basic logic of Ur III administrative behaviour and to look for clues that could allow a better comprehenshion of well known documents and findings.

Panel F (3:15pm – 5:00pm): Administrative Organization

Chair: Pietro Mander (Istituto Orientale di Napoli)

Franco Pomponio (Università di Messina)
The Ur III Administration: Officials, Workers, Messengers, and Sons

In this paper three questions concerning the Neo-Sumerian administration are touched on. The first concerns the difficulties in establishing the differences between the categories of the workforce; the second is a new subdivision of the groups of the Umma messenger texts, three against the twelve of the R. McNeil dissertation and a proposal of relation between these groups with both the pyramidal tags and the resthouses of the province; the third regards the meaning of the term dumu as a

characterizing element of the names of officials in the administrative tablets and in the seal legends. And lastly I hint at a fourth problem that I should like our combined efforts to solve.

Yuhong Wu (Northeast Normal University, Changchun)
The Fixed Offerings to Deities of Nippur

Among the Drehem archive, the daily lamb or ram offerings for Enlil, Ninlil, king and queen of the deities, Nusku and Ninurta, their two sons, Utu-Sun, Nanna-Moon, Inanna-Venus and other related deities in Nippur are recorded in the withdrawal documents, the zi-ga texts of the anonymous general manager of the Animal Center of King Šulgi during his 40th year to 47' ii'=47 vii/13th and the ba-zi texts of Nasa, the general manager from Šulgi 47' ii'/16th to AS 1. The anonymous manager was possibly identified with Nasa, who worked on the zi-ga documents during the earlier period of the Animal Center in the anonymous accounting way, and in Šulgi 47' ii', he changed the term from zi-ga to ba-zi with his name on the texts.

The lambs or other livestock for the deities of Nippur were at first delivered to the Animal Center from the hundreds of nobles, officials and attached Amorite chieftains of the dynasty and also from the rulers and people of conquered and allied foreign lands around the empire, for accounting and managing, and then charged to certain official, mainly the zabar-dab$_5$ "Bronze Holder", with the substitute of Nanše-ul$_4$-gal, the cupbearer, as a royal deputy (maškim), for the sacrifice processing. There were some regular entries among the numerous offering deliveries recorded in the texts: mainly, two lambs for the couple of Enlil are from Šeš-Dada, the bishop of the temple of Enlil in Nippur, two for Enlil and Inanna or one for Inanna from the en-priest of Inanna, and one lamb for a certain deity was delivered from the majordomo of that deity.

Sergio Alivernini (Università La Sapienza, Rome)
The Management of an Administrative Structure in Ur III Mesopotamia: the Case of mar-sa

The mar-sa represented one of the so called "industrial complexes" built during Šulgi's reign, and its activities are documented in texts between the 25th year of reign of this king, until the 3rd year of reign of Ibbi-Suen. These texts record the presence of mar-sa in eight different places: in the cities of Ĝirsu, Gu'abba and Nina (province of Lagaš); in the city of Apišal and in the Guedenna (province of Umma); in the cities of Ur and Drehem; there was also probably a mar-sa in Nippur that has never been recorded in the published texts of this city, but is mentioned in a text from Ur. The main activity of mar-sa seems to have been the building of boats (in order to transport food using rivers or canals from one city to another), but it was also a deposit for materials (for building boat but also for other different activities) and a sorting station for workers who were sent from the mar-sa in others places based on the needs of other institutions. In particular there was a strict relationship among the mar-sa, the mill (e$_2$-kikken$_2$), the fields (a-ša$_3$), and the orchards (^{giš}kiri$_6$): these four institutions seem to work togheter in order to produce, refine, and carry the food.

Saturday, July 24

Institutions and Society

Panel G: The Organization of Work

Chair: Natalia Koslova (State Hermitage Museum)

General Focus of the Panel:

Studies of the organization of work and the stratification of the workforce belong to the most controversial parts of the socio-economic history of the Ur III period. The well-known Gelb–Diakonoff discussion of the social and economic status of workers in the public institutions gave impetus to further investigations of these complex problems. Beginning from the end of the 1970s through 1990s the discussion was brought, to cite Steinkeller, "to a more specific level": research based on prosopographical analysis and studies of terminology and typology of the documents made it possible to create a more detailed picture of the organization of work, the compensation for work, and the accounting for work time in different spheres of the Ur III economy (agriculture, forestry, pottery production, textile and milling industries, etc.). The investigation of the collective labor system and the principles behind the conscription of labor for corvée projects revealed two basic categories of population in the Ur III society differing from each other in the duration of their corvée service and the type of payment they received from the state. Besides, studies of the accounting terminology and principles of book-keeping used by officials responsible for working teams played an extremely

significant role in our understanding of the organization of work. Thousands of labor records published in recent decades as well as the above mentioned results of research allow for comparative studies of the organization of work in different provinces of the Ur III state, and for creating general models of the Ur III society.

Here is a short list of types of problems for future research and questions for discussion:

- The organization of work in different industries (reed-working, carpentry, metallurgy, stone-working, goldsmithery, etc.): how did the organization depend on the kind of raw materials (local/ imported) used in a given industry?
- Professional and non-professional labor: is it possible to outline the sphere of non-professional labor as a separate branch of economy with its own management and accounting principles?
- Hired labor: its sources and characteristic features in Ur III times.
- Variations in typology of labor records depending on an archive/ province. Variations in accounting terminology depending on a type of a document.
- Interdependence between belonging to a certain category of workforce ($eren_2$=dumu-gi$_7$ / UN.IL$_2$, etc.), character of labor (professional/ non-professional), principles of accounting for work time, and ways of compensation for labor. Was it possible for a worker/ an official to change his category? Under what circumstances could the type of payment have been changed? Different kinds of barley payments (še-ba, še šuku-ra, etc.); additional payments to land allotment holders. Who, and by what means, cultivated the allotment plots?
- The structure of a working team; the status and functions of a supervisor (ugula) of a working team. The presense and absence of a worker at his working place. Fluctuations of workforces: did belonging to a certain category influence the frequency of transferring a worker from one working team to another?
- Labor obligations (bala) of different public institutions to the central administration of a province/ of different provinces to the state.

Papers:

Piotr Steinkeller (Harvard University)
The Use of Corvée Labor in Ur III Times

The paper reviews the data bearing on the corvée works in Ur III times. First, definitions of the corvée and the categories of laborers liable for the corvée will offered. Second, cases of the specific corvée projects — such as the building project at Tummal during the second half of Šulgi's reign – will be studied in detail.

Natalia Koslova (State Hermitage Museum)
Absence at Work in Ur III Umma: Reasons and Terminology

One of the main concerns of the Ur III state was the organization of work and control over labor resources. The Ur III administration had the tools to account not only for work time of the laborers but also for the time of their absence from work, expected or even unexpected. From the standpoint of a foreman who was responsible to the state for the work time of his team, there were the following reasons for the absence of a worker from his working place:

1) *Free time,* i.e. days-off (Sumerian: u$_4$ du$_8$-a in Umma, u$_4$ KU-a in Ĝirsu);
2) *Cases of emergency*, i.e. sickness (Sumerian: du$_2$-ra), or flight (Sumerian: zah$_3$), or death (Sumerian: uš$_2$);
3) *Working at another place*, i.e. receipt of a worker by another foreman or transferring him to another industry.

In this paper I will discuss the accounting principles that underlie calculating the time of absence from work for different categories of workers in different spheres of the economy as reflected in records coming from the province of Umma.

Alexandra Kleinerman (Cornell University)
The Barbers of Iri-saĝrig

The texts from Iri-saĝrig document the activities of individuals representing over sixty different professions, many of which are poorly attested elsewhere in the Ur III corpus. This paper focuses on the tasks and responsibilities of those bearing the title šu-i, conventionally translated "barber," in an attempt to better understand the role of these individuals. In particular, barbers at Iri-saĝrig frequently appear in the numerous messenger texts associated with this site. As such, in conclusion I will offer a preliminary investigation into the nature and purpose of these unusual messenger texts.

Panel H: Military and Political Organization

Chair: Walther Sallaberger (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

General Focus of the Panel:

Politics under the Ur III kings consists of two components: the internal organization of the state with its various provinces, and foreign policy with both its peaceful and military aspects. For the internal organization, we think of studies on the division of provinces, the city rulers (ensi$_2$) and their family background, or the obligations of the city rulers (deliveries and manpower for the state organizations). Although the provinces, the former city states of Babylonia, enjoyed considerable independence in internal matters as regards e.g. the cult of the main sanctuaries and jurisdiction, the unity of the state was defined by its foreign policy which was directed by the king. In this regard significant investments were needed for the royal army.

State policy is most clearly reflected in the royal archives of Puzriš-Dagan. Here we can note general tendencies on the flow of commodities and the groups of people involved, e.g. messengers of foreign allies, important personalities of the state or high military leaders. On the other hand, these archives also allow one to deal with single persons and to investigate the royal family. The topic of the army and foreign policy has been largely neglected in the past decades, where research concentrated on the subsistence economy. Some recent studies (e.g. by Lafont, Michalowski, Notizia, Owen, Sallaberger, Steinkeller) have shown the potential of the Ur III archives to discuss the international relationships of the state and the main actors therein.

Papers:

Piotr Michalowski (University of Michigan)
Networks of Authority and Power
Power and its avatars—authority, charisma, domination, and prestige--have been largely absent from Assyriological debates. Indeed, much too often we acquiesce uncritically to the hypnotic spell of ancient political self-representation and admire the power of ancient states and their leaders. It is admittedly difficult to penetrate the defensive barriers of official pronouncements, which often depict a monolithic state with absolute power that rules absolutely from the top down. In this paper I will discuss approaches to these issues, concentrating on understanding power as an elusive multistranded network. In Ur III terms, the role of the largest province of the state, Lagaš, will serve as a testing ground for some of these ideas.

Steven Garfinkle (Western Washington University)
The Third Dynasty of Ur and the Limits of State Power

The extensive documentation that survives from the institutions of the Ur III kingdom has created the impression of a highly organized state. This has led to assumptions about the intrusiveness of state control in this era. Indeed, the label of a totalitarian state adheres to the Third Dynasty of Ur in some of the general historical literature on early antiquity. A closer examination of the economic records of this period indicates that the state's control was much more tenuous and was tempered by local and regional organizations on which the court relied for much of its authority. In this paper I will survey some of the evidence from the economic records of the Ur III state in order to discuss the experimental nature of state formation in this period and in particular the limits of state power.

Palmiro Notizia (Istituto Orientale di Napoli)
Etel-pû-Dagan, son of Šulgi

During the Ur III period several people were named "son of the king" (`dumu lugal`). Most of them are poorly documented in texts pertaining to the state-run administration and never held important military positions or civil offices. This paper aims to investigate the figure and depict the career of Etel-pu-Dagan, son of Šulgi, by using the data from the royal archives of Puzriš-Dagan and the corpus of the messenger texts from Girsu-Lagaš.

Lance Allred (University of California, Los Angeles)
The Tenure of Provincial Governors: An Overview

With but a few exceptions, the tenures of the provincial governors of the Ur III state —particularly those outside of our best-documented provinces of Girsu, Nippur, and Umma— have received little attention since their treatment in W. W. Hallo's M.A. Thesis "The Ensi's of the Ur III Dynasty" that appeared some 57 years ago. In this paper, I will present an update of these data and show how they shed light on several aspects of Ur III history and culture.