

Marek Stępień

From the History of State System
in Mesopotamia –
The Kingdom of the Third Dynasty of Ur

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Introduction

The following work is the first of several monographic studies dedicated to the key states in the history of Mesopotamia in the third and second millennium BC. The future publications will concern the Akkadian, Old-Babylonian and Kassite monarchies. It is not the goal of this series to present a compendium of all available scholarship on every aspect of the history of those kingdoms, and the publications will by no means aspire to this role; the primary goal of the authors and publishers of this series is to outline the characteristic features of the political system, administration and economy of each state against the background of its political history. Thus, by pointing out the similarities and differences between consecutive Mesopotamian kingdoms, it will be possible to demonstrate effectively the evolution and chronological development of the idea of kingdom and, more generally, statehood in the societies of Mesopotamia.

The present volume, dedicated to the Sumerian – or, more precisely, the Sumero-Akkadian kingdom of the Third Dynasty of Ur, is to a large extent based on the author's more substantial monographic study, which was published exclusively in the Polish language¹.

¹ M. Stepień, *Ensi w czasach III dynastii z Ur: aspekty ekonomiczne i administracyjne pozycji namiestnika prowincji w świetle archiwum z Ummy* (Ensi in the period of the Third Dynasty of Ur: economic and administrative aspects of the province governor's office in the light of the Umma Archive), Dissertationes WUW, Warsaw 2006 (540 pages).

Chapter 1.

Outline of political history

Among the numerous aspects of research on the Neo-Sumerian state, its political history has never been presented in a detailed monograph, or in fact even in a more extensive study. What is currently available are mostly large introductory chapters or articles, in which political history is treated as background to the study of political system, economy or social relations². Also, political history of the period in which the Third Dynasty of Ur was in power has a relatively poor source documentation, as the documents relating to economic issues of the era, if fairly abundant, contain little information relating to political history. Other sets of sources include royal inscriptions³, scattered remarks in

² Among the more recent studies, the following (in chronological order) are especially noteworthy: D.O. Edzard, *Das Reich der III. Dynastie von Ur und seine Nachfolgestaaten*, [in:] *Die Altorientalischen Reiche I*, (ed.) E. Cassin et al., *Fischer Weltgeschichte 2*, Frankfurt – Hamburg 1965, pp. 129-164; C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen des Niederganges des Reiches von Ur III*, *ZA 60* (1970), pp. 54-69; C.J. Gadd, *Babylonia, c. 2120-1800 B.C.*, [in:] *CAH 1/2*, (eds.) I.E.S Edwards et al., Cambridge 1971, pp. 595-643; D. Frayne, *RIME 3/2*, (esp. pp. 5-20, 91-110, 235-242, 285-294, 361-368); the often-quoted W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 121-350, 371-390 (esp. pp. 132-178); M. Sigrist, J.G. Westenholz, *Das neusumerische Reich: Geschichte, Kultur und Religion*, [in:] *Von Babylon bis Jerusalem. Die Welt der altorientalischen Königsstädte*, Bd.1, (ed.) W. Seipel – A. Wiczorek, Milano 1999, pp. 163-176; D.O. Edzard, *Geschichte Mesopotamiens. Von den Sumerern bis zu Alexander dem Grossen*, München 2004, pp. 99-106.

³ Their fundamental edition is D. Frayne, *Ur III Period (2112-2004 BC)*, Toronto 1997 *RIME 3/2*.

chronicles and royal letters, hymns glorifying the kings of Ur, and the so-called “literary letters”. The first set includes inscriptions which are, in great majority, standard foundation or votive ones⁴, containing very few references to political issues. Little exact information exceeding the standard ideological and propagandist elements can be gleaned from royal hymns and other literary texts⁵. From among all the hymn texts (five hymns in praise of Ur-Namma, twenty-three of Šulgi, six of Šū-Suen and five of Ibbī-Suen), the three hymns of narrative type (labelled A, D, and X) devoted to Šulgi, are relatively the most valuable⁶.

The “literary letters”, in contrast, provide very detailed data, although limited to particular episodes in the reigns of Šulgi and Ibbī-Suen. These are Old-Babylonian copies of those rulers’ correspondence with province governors and high officials, styled in a stylised literary form⁷. Unfortunately, the credibility of those texts is a matter of serious doubt, even regarding such a very basic question as whether, and to what extent, they are based on authentic royal correspondence, and to what extent they are examples of semi-literary fiction, referring to actual events and their participants only in main narrative themes.

⁴ For this reason H. Steible, editor of royal inscriptions of the Third Dynasty of Ur, titled his publication *Die neusumerischen Bau- und Weihinschriften*, FAOS 9, Stuttgart 1991.

⁵ Fundamental editions: A. Falkenstein – W. von Soden, *Sumerische und akkadische Hymnen und Gebete*, Stuttgart 1953; see also the exposition of a selection in J. Klein, *The Royal Hymns of Šulgi, King of Ur: Man’s Quest for Immortal Fame*, Philadelphia 1981.

⁶ J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns. Sumerian Royal Hymns Glorifying King Šulgi of Ur*, Ramat-Gan 1981, typology and presentation of all Neo-Sumerian hymns with a general commentary, see pp. 21-35, 226-227. An exhaustive historical commentary to the Neo-Sumerian royal hymns, see D.R. Frayne, *The Historical Correlations of the Sumerian Royal Hymns (2400-1900 B.C.)*, Ph.D. Yale University 1981.

⁷ See the fundamental study by P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, Ph.D. Yale University, Ann Arbor 1976, and his synthetic presentation of the entire set, *Königsbriefe*, RIA VI/1-2, Berlin – New York 1980, pp. 51-59 (esp. pp. 56-59 on the historical credibility of the letters). Earlier, a very useful correlation of all fragmentary passages by C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 54-69 (esp. Anhang, pp. 67-69 + tables).

In this situation, those of the “year lists”⁸ of the Third Dynasty monarchs which have been preserved in a satisfactory state, turn out to be of particular importance. Besides the four fragmentary passages from the “year lists” (records of listed yearenames), found in copies dating from the Old-Babylonian Period (two for Šulgi, two for Amar-Suen)⁹, the several thousand extant economic texts provide supplements and additional corroboration which is almost complete (with the exception of the reign of Ur-Namma). They contain records of the most important political events of the period, which additionally are, by definition, very precisely dated. Year lists of the Third Dynasty of Ur have been the subject of several comprehensive or restricted studies, beginning from the classical works by N. Schneider¹⁰ and A. Ungnad¹¹, to the fullest and fairly recent studies by M. Sigrisť – P. Damerow¹² and D. Frayne¹³.

⁸ „Year lists”, or „yearenames” is a system of dating the consecutive years of a monarch’s reign and the entire official documentation, generally used in Sumer and Akkad, and later in Babylonia. These are usually short sentences, informing of the most important political, economic, religious or cult-related achievements of the king. Chronologically, they refer to the events of the preceding year, which only a year after were officially designated by the central administration.

⁹ For Šulgi: fragm.1 = BE 1/2 no. 125, fragm.2 = C. Wilcke, *Neue Quellen aus Isin zur Geschichte der Ur III-Zeit*, OrNS 54 (1985), pp. 299-303 (IB 542a+b+c); for Amar-Suen: fragm.1 = BE 1/2, no. 127, (CB 10799), fragm.2 = C. Wilcke, *Neue Quellen*, (IB 542a+b+c); for Ibbi-Suen fragm.1 = UET 3, pp. 277-278.

¹⁰ N. Schneider, *Die Zeitbestimmungen der Wirtschaftsurkunden von Ur III*, AnOr 13, Roma 1936.

¹¹ A. Ungnad, *Datenlisten*, RIA II/2-3, Berlin-Leipzig 1934-1935, pp. 139-147 (section referring to Ur III).

¹² M. Sigrisť, P. Damerow, *Mesopotamian Yearnames. Neo-Sumerian and Old Babylonian Date Formula*, vol. 1, preprint version, Potomac 1991 (section referring to the Ur III period, pp. 6-14). See also lists of Ibbi-Suen’s yearenames in UET 3, pp. 277-278, and E. Sollberger, *Ibbi-Suen*, RIA V/1-2, Berlin – New York 1976, pp. 4-7.

¹³ With an exhaustive historical commentary appended to the yearenames of particular monarchs, see RIME 3/2, p. 10 (Ur-Namma), pp. 92-110 (Šulgi), pp. 236-241 (Amar-Suen), pp. 285-294, pp. 361-366 (Ibbi-Suen).

1.1. Ur-Namma and the rise of the state of the Third Dynasty of Ur.

It is to this day unclear in what circumstances Ur-Namma (2113-2095 BC), the founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, may have taken power from Utu-hengal of Uruk, the legendary vanquisher of the Gutians, and slightly later defeated Namhani of Lagaš, his main rival to the hegemony in Sumer. No extant sources refer to the conflict between Ur-Namma and Utu-hengal; just the opposite, all the later actions of Ur-Namma and his successors clearly demonstrate that not only the age-old tradition of particularly close political and religious connections between Ur and Uruk was being carefully maintained, but also that Utu-hengal himself, as a forefather of the dynasty, was much venerated. A text from Umma corroborates that the official cult of the divine Utu-hengal functioned already during the reign of Šū-Suen, and that commodities were sent to his temple in Uruk in payment of the **bala** state tax¹⁴. The city itself was guaranteed a special administrative status, since it never was an ordinary province, but (together with Nippur and Ur itself) retained its status of a royal capital and of an important religious centre, strongly connected with creating the ideological image of the king of Ur. Ur-Namma, after all, proclaimed himself to be not only the son of goddess Ninsun, but also the brother of Gilgameš and the consort of goddess Inanna.¹⁵

Thus, everything seems to point out that the silence surrounding the struggle with Utu-hengal results not necessarily from the effectiveness of royal propaganda in creating this image for future generations, but of other, real circumstances. Some source references seem to indicate

¹⁴ MVN 16, 1496.4-8: e₂ ⁴utu-he₂-gal₂, ša₃ unug^{ki}, ki a-gu-ta, kišib ur-dšul-pa-e₃, ša₃ bal-a.

¹⁵ C. Wilcke, *Genealogical and Geographical Thought in the Sumerian King List*, [in:] *DUMU-E₂-BUB-BA-A*, *Studies in Honor of Åke W. Sjöberg*, (ed.) H. Behrens, D. Loding, T.M. Roth, OPSNKF 11, Philadelphia 1989, pp. 563-565.

close family connections between the two monarchs – Ur-Namma is reported to have been either a brother of Utu-hengal¹⁶ or, as it is related in the so-called *Chronicle of Kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur*, his son-in-law¹⁷. He had certainly been appointed by the king of Uruk to the post of the military governor (*šagina*) of Ur, a position which may have been a promising starting point for a career. All the sources agree, however, that as an independent ruler he held power for eighteen years¹⁸. Regrettably, several known yearnames of his reign have so far proved impossible to order chronologically and since the first publications on this topic, by F.R. Kraus and E. Sollberger¹⁹, the progress of research has been negligible²⁰.

Notwithstanding Ur-Namma's continuing efforts in ousting last groups of the barbarian Gutians and taking over the land's northern reaches, it appears that the main battle for supremacy took place at the very beginning of his reign, and his victory over Namhani irrevocably turned Ur and Uruk, instead of Lagaš, into the power centre of the recovering Sumer²¹. It is probably not by accident that Ur-Namma

¹⁶ C. Wilcke, *Zum Königtum in der Ur III-Zeit*, [in:] *Le palais et la royauté*, CRRAI 19, (ed.) P. Garelli, Paris 1974, pp. 192-193, note 67 – interpretation UET 1, 30; *idem*, *Isin – Išan Bahriyat III*, BAW 94, München 1987, pp. 108-111.

¹⁷ This is the record *verbatim*: line 10: *Šul-gi dumu dumu-munus 4utu-he2-gal2 lugal unugki* – „Šulgi, son of the daughter of Utu-hengal king of Uruk”; see H. Hunger, *Spätbabylonische Texte aus Uruk*, I, Berlin 1976, no. 2, pp. 19-20; review and collation C. Wilcke, *BiOr* 39/1-2 (1982), pp. 143-145; J.-J. Glassner, *Chroniques mésopotamiennes*, Paris 1993, chronicle no. 47, pp. 229-230.

¹⁸ This number is unanimously given by *The Sumerian King List*: *uri2ki-ma ur-dnamma lugal, mu 18 i3-ak* and *The List of the Kings of Ur and Isin*: *18 mu 4ur-dnamma lugal*. See Th. Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List*, AS 11, Chicago 1939, pp. 122-123; E. Sollberger, *New Lists of the Kings of Ur and Isin*, JCS 8 (1954), pp. 135-136; A.K. Grayson, *Königlisten und Chroniken. B. Akkadisch*, RIA 6 (1980) 1/2, p. 90.

¹⁹ F.R. Kraus, *Zur Chronologie der Könige Ur-Nammu und Šulgi von Ur*, *OrNS* 20 (1951), pp. 385-398; E. Sollberger, *Sur la chronologie des rois d'Ur et quelques problèmes connexes*, *AfO* 17 (1954-1956), pp. 10-39.

²⁰ See M. Sigrist, T. Gomi, *The Comprehensive Catalogue*, pp. 319-320; M. Sigrist, P. Damerow, *Mesopotamian Yearnames*, pp. 6-7; D. Frayne, *RIME* 3/2, pp. 9-20.

²¹ On the importance of this battle, the chronological correlations of the reigns of both

had this very fact – as the only one among his political successes – commemorated in his *Code*. It is evident that in all the sources (i.e. hymns, royal inscriptions, and chronicles) regarding his reign, which are scant at best, very few references can be found to Ur-Namma's conquests or his foreign policy. This absence does not indicate lack of success in those fields, but clearly suggests that the king wished to be remembered by posterity chiefly as the state's guardian, lawgiver and restorer, as well as a great builder of temples and canals. In this, he succeeded, since Ur-Namma's achievements in rebuilding the state's economic and administrative system after decades of chaos are indeed central to his image. He is the builder of at least eight new canals²², the great walls of Ur²³, and many temples and shrines, among which the chief, the great temple of Nanna(ra) at Ur with its splendid ziggurat, was expanded. Outside the capital, religious edifices were built in many important towns, such as Uruk, Nippur, Larsa, Eridu and Keš.

However, if the relevant passages from the poem *The Death of Ur-Namma* and *Royal Hymns Glorifying King Šulgi*, are indeed correctly interpreted, this heroic monarch probably fell on the battlefield, fighting the Gutians²⁴, and his son avenged his death by repeatedly invading Gutium²⁵. With regard to his foreign policy, two Ur-

those monarchs, and the contemporary role of Lagaš, see W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 134-135, *ibid.* bibliography, pp. 132, note 41.

²² Correlation of sources on irrigation projects, see W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 135-137.

²³ One of his yearnames is **mu bad₃ urim₅^{ki}-ma ba-du₃-a** – „The year the walls of Ur were built”. This is corroborated by hymns and the famous poem *The Death of Ur-Namma*, see S.N. Kramer, *The Death of Ur-Nammu and His Descent to the Netherworld*, JCS 21 (1967), pp. 115, 119.

²⁴ S.N. Kramer, *The Death of Ur-Nammu*, pp. 113, 118 (line 59): **[ki]-lul-la ur-^dnamma dug-gaz-gin, ba-ni-in-tag₄-aš** – literally: “(on) the battlefield, Ur-Namma like a broken vessel was left”.

²⁵ For this interpretation of *The Hymn Glorifying Šulgi*, see D, X: C. Wilcke, *Zum König-tum*, pp. 181-182; J. Klein, *The Birth of a Crownprince in the Temple: A Neo-Sumerian Literary Topos*, CRRAI 33, Paris 1987, p. 105.

Namma inscriptions mention his successful campaign against King Kutik-Inšušinak (or Puzur-Inšušinak) of Elam, his reaching Susa and consequently “liberating” the lands of Awan, Kismar, Maškan-šarrum and the territories of Ešnunna, Tutub, Simudar and Akkad.²⁶ Since, additionally, a certain Gutarla the Gutian²⁷ is mentioned there as the defeated foe, it can be assumed that Ur-Namma crushed an enemy coalition of his neighbours from Elam and the Zagros Mountains who had been threatening the region of Diyala and the northern part of Akkad. It is difficult to determine, however, whether this victory signified a long-lasting subjugation of the territories of Ešnunna and Elam – in the case of Elam this would have been corroborated by a small number of source records²⁸. It is nevertheless certain that this victory cemented the king’s hold over Sumer and Akkad, and increased his prestige in the neighbouring lands. One of the royal inscriptions, known as the *Cadastré of Ur-Namma*, includes a part of the territory freed from the Gutian and Elamite rule, and by delineating the run of the canals in this region allows to trace the main eastern and north-eastern borderlines of the state’s central regions. It included, among others, Kazallum, Marad, Hibaritum, Hirtum, Ušarum, Apiak, Puš and Kigal²⁹. Similarly, the preface to the *Code of Ur-Namma* mentions, in the eastern and north-eastern regions, Umma (Akšak?)³⁰, Marad,

²⁶ RIME 3/2 29: V’11’-22’; 30:II’ 7’-9’.

²⁷ RIME 3/2 30: III’ 4’: **gu₂-tar-la₂ dumu gu-tim-um-ma**.

²⁸ T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East. An Archaeological and Historical Study of Foreign Relations ca. 3400 – 2000 BC*, Oxford 1994, pp. 126-128.

²⁹ RIME 3/2 21 (pp. 50-56). See also the 1st edition of the text and commentary: F.R. Kraus, *Provinzen*, pp. 45-75.

³⁰ Due to the location of Umma, far from the other border cities, some scholars assume that this is a scribe’s error (this passage of the *Code* is preserved in a school text dating from the mid-eighteenth century BC) and that the city in question is actually Akašak, located in the north-eastern Akkad close to the confluence of Diyali and Tigris. This error is easy to explain by the spelling of the two placenames: Umma (**GIŠ. KUŠU₂.KI**) and Akšak (**UD.KUŠU₂.KI**). Written in a careless hand, cuneiform signs **GIŠ** and **UD** look very similar. See Ā. Steinkeller, *The Core and Periphery*, pp. 19-20,

Girikal, Kazallum and Ušarum³¹ as cities within the state. A comparison of those borderlines with the later diplomatic efforts and fortification works of Šulgi and Šū-Suen may indicate that it was Ur-Namma who laid the foundations for a future military defence zone protecting the core of the kingdom.³² Indeed, the ruler of Ur was justified in proudly styling himself “the mighty warrior, king of Ur, king of Sumer and Akkad” (**nita kala-ga, lugal urim₅^{ki}-ma, lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri**).

Moreover, Ur-Namma set course for a dynastic policy which was exceptionally beneficial for the empire, obtaining political gains no lesser than those secured on the path of war and conquest. The best example is that he assured friendly relations with, and perhaps even titular suzerainty over Mari, the key centre of north-western Mesopotamia, which controlled the crucial trade and communication route along the Euphrates to Syria. This economic factor probably prompted the union of the king's son and heir Šulgi with the daughter of Apil-kīn of Mari. The alliance resulting from this marriage was probably the foundation for enduring friendly relations between the two states. A telling proof of those are the celebrations and commemorative libations (**ki-a-nag**) offered in Sumer in honour of Apil-kīn, obviously viewed as a member of the royal house of Ur, even a good few years after his death, for instance in the years AS.6 and IS.1.³³ The ruler (**šakkanakku**) of Mari was obviously accorded the same marks of veneration as Ur-Namma himself, who was by then dead and deified. Another example of how permanent was the relationship between the two royal houses is the

note 1; T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone during the Rule of the Ur III Dynasty*, ASJ 14 (1992), pp. 154.

³¹ The most recent full edition of the *Code of Ur-Namma* (without the normative section), see RIME 3/2 20: 125-130. *Ibid.* commentary and references to earlier literature, pp. 16, 43-46.

³² See T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 135-171

³³ J. Boese, W. Sallaberger, *Apil-kīn von Mari und die Könige der III. Dynastie von Ur*, AoF 23 (1996), pp. 24-39; T.M. Sharlach, *Beyond Chronology. The šakkanakkus of Mari and the Kings of Ur*, [in:] *Proceedings of the 45 RAI*, Part II, Yale University, (ed.) W.W. Hallo, I.J. Winter, Bethesda 2001, pp. 59-60, 62.

career of Prince Puzur-Erra of Mari, the son of Apil-kīn, who probably held in Larsa a responsible and honourable function of the **sanga** of god Utu³⁴. Larsa, as a city with a particular form of administration, was subordinate to the capital itself, and was therefore governed by members of the royal family or men close to it. The local **sanga** was, in effect, the chief administrator, whose rank equalled that of a province governor. Judging by their theophoric names containing the name of Mari's main deity, the storm god Dagan, it is also possible that two more important personages hailed from that city: a certain Nur-Dagan, the **sanga** of god Utu in Sippar, and Iddin-Dagan, later (in the years AS.4-9) the ensi of the same city and the hypothetical father of Queen Abī-simti³⁵.

Commercial and economic gains were also the king's main consideration in his dealings – the details of which are unfortunately unknown – with the faraway state of Magan (presently Oman)³⁶, which from the mid-third millennium BC had been the traditional region where Sumer obtained crucial supplies from the transit trade. In his *Code*, Ur-Namma boasted he had renewed and monopolised trade relations with Magan.

³⁴ A new document published by T.M. Sharlach (HSM 1995.9.3) mentions Puzur-Erra in the text as the **sanga** ^dutu, while in the legend of a seal pressed into the tablet the inscription is found: **šagina, ma-ri₂^{ki}, puzur₄-er₃-ra, dumu-zu, ^dda-gan dingir-zu**; see T.M. Sharlach, *Beyond Chronology*, pp. 62-63 (text) and pp. 63-65 commentary on Puzur-Erra's career.

³⁵ T.M. Sharlach, *Beyond Chronology*, pp. 67-68. The hypothesis on Iddin-Dagan's possible identification as the father of Abī-simti and father-in-law of King Amar-Suen is based on the fact that in the year ŠS.1 he was offered funerary libation sacrifices **ki-a-nag** by Abī-simti's siblings Babati and Bizua. The same type of sacrifice was made to the deceased kings of Ur and to Apil-kīn of Mari, who had been King Šulgi's father-in-law.

³⁶ On the importance of Magan and the transit trade through its territory with the state of Meluhha (in the region of the Indus) and Africa (Somalia and Ethiopia), see T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 34-36.

1.2. Šulgi – the creator of the state’s power.

The true creator of the power enjoyed by the state ruled by Third Dynasty of Ur, however, was Šulgi (2095-2048 BC), Ur-Namma’s son and successor. During his 48-year-long reign he not only strengthened the state created by his father, as well as reorganised its system and territorial administrative structure, but also much enlarged its lands and increased its international prestige, turning it into a dominant power of the region. As his actions are to a large extent the subject-matter of the following chapters, at this point only his foreign policy and his conquests shall be delineated. Those latter, however, were achieved only in the later years of his reign (after Š.23), which is not surprising given the king’s early accession to the throne due to his father’s sudden and untimely death.

The selected yearnames of Šulgi’s reign³⁷ are already quite telling (the initial number means the successive year of the king’s reign):

- | | |
|--|--|
| 18. mu li₂-wir(GIRI₃)-mi-ṭa-šu
dumu-munus lugal nam-
nin mar-ha-ši^{ki} ba-il₂ | The year Liwir-miṭṭašu, daughter of the king, was elevated to the queenship of Marhaši |
| 20a. mu dumu uri₂^{ki}-ma lu₂
gišgid₂-še₃ KA ba-ab-kešda | The year the citizens of Ur were conscripted as lancers |
| 21b. mu BAD₃.AN^{ki} ba-hul | The year Dēr was destroyed |
| 24. mu kara₂-har^{ki} ba-hul | The year Karahar was destroyed |
| 25. mu si-mu-ru-um^{ki} ba-hul | The year Simurru ^{ki} was destroyed |
| 26. mu si-mu-ru-um^{ki} a-ra₂ 2-
kam-ma-aš ba-hul | The year Simurru ^{ki} was destroyed for a second time |

³⁷ Based on the lists by M. Sigrist, P. Damerov, *Mesopotamian Yearnames*, pp. 7-10, and D.R. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 92-110.

27. **mu ha-ar-ši^{ki} ba-hul** The year Harši was destroyed
30. **mu dumu-munus lugal
ensi₂ an-ša-an^{ki}-ke₄ ba-tuk** The year the daughter of the king
was married to the governor of
Anšan
31. **mu kara₂-har^{ki} a-ra₂ 2-kam-
ma-aš ba-hul** The year Karahar was destroyed
for a second time
32. **mu si-mu-ru-um^{ki} a-ra₂ 3-
kam-ma-aš ba-hul** The year Simurru was destroyed
for the third time
33. **mu us₂-sa si-mu-ru-um^{ki} a-
ra₂ 3-kam-ma-aš ba-hul** The year after Simurru was
destroyed for the third time
34. **mu an-ša-an^{ki} ba -hul** The year Anšan was destroyed
37. **mu bad₃ ma-da ba-du₃** The year the wall of the land was
built
42. **mu ša-aš-ru^{ki} ba-hul** The year Šašrum was destroyed
44. **mu si-mu-ru-um^{ki} u₃ lu-lu-
bu^{ki} a-ra₂ 10-la₂-1-kam-aš
ba-hul** The year Simurru and Lullubum
were destroyed for the ninth time
45. **mu ^dšul-gi nita kala-ga
lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma lugal an-
ub-da limmu₂-ba-ke₄ ur-
bi₂-lum^{ki} si-mu-ru-um^{ki}
lu-lu-bu^{ki} u₃ kara₂-har^{ki}-ra
AŠ-eš šu du₁₁-ga šu-tibir-ra
im-mi-ra** The year Šulgi, mighty man, king
of Ur, kin of the four quarters,
having overtaken Urbillum,
Simurru, Lullubum, and
Karahar as a single group, struck
then down
46. **mu ^dšul-gi nita kala-ga
lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma lugal an-ub-
da limmu₄-ba-ke₄ ki-maš^{ki}
hu-ur₅-ti^{ki} u₃ ma-da-bi u₄-
AŠ!-a mu-hul** The year Šulgi, mighty man, king
of Ur, king of the four quarters,
destroyed Kimaš, Hurti, and their
lands in a single day

47. **mu** ^dšul-gi nita kala-ga
lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma lugal an-ub-
da limmu₂-ba-ke₄ ki-maš^{ki}
hu-ur₅-ti^{ki} u₃ ma-da-bi u₄-
AŠ-a mu-hul-a mu us₂-sa-
a-bi in a single day
48. **mu** ha-ar-ši^{ki} ki-maš^{ki} hu-
ur₅-ti^{ki} u₃ ma-da-bi u₄-**AŠ-**
a ba-hul
- The year after Šulgi, mighty man, king of Ur, king of the four quarters, destroyed Kimaš, Hurti, and their lands
- The year Harši, Kimaš, Hurti, and their territories were destroyed in a single day

What emerges is a list of the king's victorious battles with particular cities (states) and his other diplomatic activities (in italics) regarding those cities, e.g. marriages of his daughters to the local rulers. The upper indices specify which subsequent raid on a particular city this was.

Marhaši	18	$\left[\begin{array}{ccc} & & \\ & & \\ 24 & & \\ & 25 & 26^2 \\ & & 27 \\ & & \\ 30 & & 34 \end{array} \right]$	$\left[\begin{array}{cc} 31 & 33^3 \\ & 32^3 \\ & & \\ 30 & 34 \end{array} \right]$	$\left[\begin{array}{cc} & 45 \\ & 44 & 45^9 \\ & & 48 \\ 42 & & \\ 44 & 45^9 \\ & 45 \\ & & 46 & 48 \\ & & 46 & 48 \end{array} \right]$
Der	21			
Karahar				
Simurru				
Harši				
Anšan				
Šašrum				
Lullubum				
Urbilum				
Kimaš				
Hurti				

The geographic location of the above places is as follows:

Marhaši location conjectural – a land to the south-east of Elam (sometimes incorporated into it, as its farthest, eastern

part)³⁸, en route to Meluhha; located variously, e.g. in the southern region of the Kuh Rud mountains, between the present Kerman and Tepe Yahya³⁹ in the Fars province of Iran, or more to the south, on the Arabian Sea, in the present region of Makran⁴⁰ at the mouth of the Dašt River.

- Der location certain – (presently Tall ‘Aqar)⁴¹, east of the Tigris at the foot of the Zagros Mountains, on the line of the town of Kuta (Gudua).
- Karahar location conjectural – the Assyrian Harhar, located in the basin of the upper Diyala, in western ranges of the Zagros Mountains (probably Qašr-i-Širīn on the Huwān River⁴²), close to Simurrum.
- Simurrum location conjectural – identified with the later Zabban (capital of Simurrum), probably the present Qal’ah Širwānah, at the confluence of the Pūngla and the Širwān, the main tributary of the upper Diyala, in Zagros’ Jebel Šākal range, close to the east from Jebel Hamrin⁴³.

³⁸ T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 11, 16-18, 27-28 (*ibid.* the summary of earlier discussions on Marhaši).

³⁹ P. Steinkeller, *The Question of Marhaši: A Contribution to the Historical Geography of Iran in the Third Millennium B.C.*, ZA 72 (1982), pp. 237-265; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 160.

⁴⁰ F. Vallat, *La géographie de l’Elam d’après quelques textes mésopotamiens*, [in:] *Mésopotamie et Elam. Actes de la XXXVI^{ème} RAI, Gand, 10-14 juillet 1989*, MHE 1, Ghent 1991, pp. 11-21.

⁴¹ D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 22-23.

⁴² Karahar is located in the vicinity of Simurrum, which is better known and more often mentioned in Neo-Sumerian texts, see D.R. Frayne, *On the Location of Simurrum*, [in:] *Crossing Boundaries and Linking Horizons. Studies in Honor of Michael C. Astour on His 80th Birthday*, (eds.) G.D. Young, M.W. Chavalas, R.E. Averbeck, Bethesda 1997, pp. 243-269, esp. pp. 257-258, 264-265.; D.I. Owen, *Ur III Geographical and Prosopographical Notes*, [in:] *Crossing and Linking Horizons*, p. 379. Earlier findings, see e.g. D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, p. 91.

⁴³ For the most recent findings presented here, see D.R. Frayne, *On the Location of Simurrum*, pp. 243-269 (*ibid.* large literature on the subject). Of the earlier studies, see B. Meissner,

- Harši location conjectural – often mentioned together with Kimaš and Lullubum, and confused with the Old-Babylonian Harši; must have been located to the south of Arrapha, close to the source of the Diyala, to the north of Simurrum⁴⁴.
- Anšan location certain – a city (presently Tell-i-Malyān, to the north of Persepolis) and land in Elam, in the present Fars province, the name often used interchangeably to denote the entire Elam – the so-called “Mountain Elam”⁴⁵.
- Šašrum location certain – identified with the Old-Babylonian Šušarra (presently Tell Šemšāra) at the foot of the Zagros, in the upper Little Zab, one of the cities on the Hurrian frontier⁴⁶.
- Lullubum location conjectural – although the land itself is located, with a large degree of certainty, in the north-central ranges of the Zagros (between the upper Diyala and the Sulaimaniya region), the exact location of the central city

Simurrum, OLZ 22 (1919), pp. 69-70; E. Weidner, *Simurrum und Zabban*, AfO 15 (1945-1951), pp. 75-80; D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 167-168; W.W. Hallo, *Simurrum and the Hurrian Frontier*, RHA 36 (1978), pp. 71-83 (esp. pp. 72-73); Kh. Nashef, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der mittelbabylonischen und mittelassyrischen Zeit*, RGTC 5, Wiesbaden 1982, pp. 279-280 (Zabban); G. Roux, *Mezopotamia*, Warszawa 1999, p. 145 (vicinity of Altun Köprü). Several studies on Šulgi and Amar-Suen's war campaigns discussed the location of Simurrum (see below).

⁴⁴ A. Goetze, *Hulibar of Tuttul*, JNES 12 (1953), p. 118, note 33; D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 74-75; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 131-132. A possible identification with Tuz Kurmatli – G. Roux, *Mezopotamia*, p. 145.

⁴⁵ E. Reiner, *The Location of Anšan*, RA 67 (1973), pp. 57-62; D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 9-11; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 9-12, 14-15, 127-131 (esp. pp. 9, 15). On the geography of Elam and Susiana, see the interesting and controversial article by F. Vallat, *La géographie de l'Elam*, pp. 11-21.

⁴⁶ A. Goetze, *Hulibar of Tuttul*, JNES 12 (1953), pp. 118-121; J. Laessle, *The Shemshāra Tablets: A Preliminary Report*, Copenhagen 1959, p. 70; D.O. Edzard – G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 178-179; W.W. Hallo, RHA 36 (1978), p. 83; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 23, 131-132; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 158.

of Lullubum is unknown (in the vicinity of the present Sarpol-i-Zohab)⁴⁷.

Urbilum location certain – the Assyrian Arbela (presently Irbil), at the foot of the Zagros, between the Great Zab and the Little Zab⁴⁸.

Kimaš two locations possible: (1) one of the cities and a land on the Hurrian frontier, between the Jebel Hamrin range and the Little Zab⁴⁹ or slightly to the south-east; (2) a city and land in the northern part of Elam's sphere of influence, in the western part of the present Kermanšah province, in the vicinity of the towns of Kermanšah and Šahabad⁵⁰.

Hurti location conjectural – often linked with Kimaš (the Hurrian frontier region at the foot of the central Zagros) and, like it, variously located; probably in the vicinity of the present Kirkuk⁵¹ or more to the south east, to the west of Kermanšah⁵².

The location of the above cities and lands is not always certain, but their list nevertheless clearly demonstrates the directions Šulgi's

⁴⁷ D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, p. 112; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 19-21 (esp. pp. 20-21); M. Roaf, *Wielkie kultury świata. Mezopotamia*, p. 97. For the overview of earlier literature and discussions on Lullubum, see H. Klengel, *Geschichte Syriens im 2. Jahrtausend v.u.Z.*, T. 1, Berlin 1965, pp. 349-350. The direct geographic proximity of Simurru, Lullubum and Gutium corroborated by inscriptions of King Erridu-pizir of Gutium, see R. Kutcher, *The Brockmon Tablets at the University of Haifa: Royal Inscriptions*, Haifa 1989, no. BT 2+3; D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, no. E.2.2.1.1, E.2.2.1.2

⁴⁸ D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 217-218.

⁴⁹ D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 100-101; W.W. Hallo, RHA 36 (1978), p. 83; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 158.

⁵⁰ P. Steinkeller, *On the Identity of the Toponym LU₂.SU.(A)*, JAOS 108 (1988), p. 201 (esp. note 31); T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, p. 24 (*ibid.* discussion and more recent literature).

⁵¹ A. Goetze, JNES 12 (1953), p. 118; D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 80-81.

⁵² P. Steinkeller, JAOS 108 (1988), p. 201; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, p. 24.

expansions was taking – towards the Zagros Mountains and Elam. Establishing a large permanent army was a crucial prelude to the wars of conquest, which finds its expression in the yearname of the year Š.20. However, before the war could start, the king had to secure the immediate rear of the planned military front, and to that end he conquered Der. It was probably at that time that two key fortresses (Išim-Šulgi and Šulgi-Nanna)⁵³ were constructed between the Diyala and Taban rivers. Thus, the king turned this land into not only a strong background for further expansion in the Zagros Mountains, but also, naturally perhaps, into one of the main bastions of the military zone protecting the core regions of the state⁵⁴.

The most effort was put into the subjugation of the mountain regions, located roughly eastwards from the middle section of the Tigris. There, his opponents were the valiant Hurrian, Lullubian and Gutian tribes. It was most probably coalitions of those tribes that Šulgi was repeatedly forced to fight in Simurru (nine times, e.g. in the years Š.25, Š.26, Š.32, Š.44, Š.45), Lullubum (nine times, e.g. in the years Š.44, Š.45), Karahar (four times, e.g. in the years Š.24, Š.31, Š.33, Š.45), Šašrum (Š.42), Harši (Š.27, Š.48), Kimaš (Š.46, Š.48), Hurti (Š.46, Š.48) and Urbilum (Š.45). Šulgi's campaigns against Simurru and its allies in the Zagros Mountains are subject of several monographic analyses.⁵⁵ One of the better known episodes of those campaigns, and one well corroborated by the sources (e.g. the Old-Babylonian omen texts⁵⁶),

⁵³ D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, p. 103.

⁵⁴ T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 154-155.

⁵⁵ I.J. Gelb, *Hurrians and Subarians*, SAOC 22, Chicago 1952; W.W. Hallo, RHA 36 (1978), pp. 71-83; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 131-133 (chapter: *The Hurrian Frontier*); R.D. Biggs, *Šulgi in Simurru*, [in:] *Crossing Boundaries and Linking Horizons. Studies in Honor of Michael C. Astour on His 80th Birthday*, (eds.) G.D. Young, M.W. Chavalas, R.E. Averbeck, Bethesda 1997, pp. 168-178; recently D.R. Frayne, *The Zagros Campaigns of Šulgi and Amar-Suena*, [in:] *Nuzi at Seventy-Five*, (ed.) D.I. Owen, G. Wilhelm, SCCNH 10, Bethesda 1999, pp. 141-201.

⁵⁶ On the omen texts, see A. Goetze, *The Old Babylonian Omen Texts*, YOS 10, New Haven – London 1947; *idem*, *Historical Allusions in Old Babylonian Omen Texts*, JCS 1 (1947),

is Šulgi's victory over King Tappa-Darah of Simurru, who was captured⁵⁷. It is, on the other hand, difficult to determine with any precision which of the expeditions into those regions is described as one into Gutium, the land of the Gutians, in the royal hymn D⁵⁸.

However, as it was for the first time correctly observed by W.W. Hallo, the dates of royal expeditions seem to fall into three subsequent large campaigns (illustrated as three sets of large parentheses on the graph above), which he called the First Hurrian War (in the years Š.24-27), the Second Hurrian War (Š.31-33), and the Third Hurrian War (Š.42-48)⁵⁹. They evidence a widening range of penetration into the enemy territories, finally encompassing the entire western Zagros region, from the arc of the Kercha River on the line of Kermanšah to the Great Zab and Lake Urmia in the north. In the final effect, the king most probably managed to more or less permanently extend his suzerainty to the small local states and tribes, although it required constant military presence in the region. This is corroborated by frequent remarks on slaves taken in war (**nam-ra-ak**) and loot, found in the administrative texts⁶⁰, and above all by the fact that tribute and taxes were received from those regions.

The other key direction of Šulgi's armed thrust were Susiana and Elam. His father did manage to subjugate Susiana, yet the suzerainty constantly required either military demonstrations of Ur's supremacy or diplomatic efforts. Šulgi successfully applied either, depending on the circumstances, although in contrast to the Zagros region, he seems to

pp. 259-260. A critique of the historical credibility of the omen texts (although not of the Tappa-Darah episode), see J.S. Cooper, *Apodotic Death and the Historicity of "Historical" Omens* [in:] *Death in Mesopotamia*, (ed.) B. Alster, Copenhagen 1980, pp. 99-105.

⁵⁷ See the catalogue of earlier literature in D.R. Frayne, RIME 3/2, p. 105; for later studies see above, note 55.

⁵⁸ J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, pp. 58-60.

⁵⁹ W.W. Hallo, RHA 36 (1978), pp. 71-83 (esp. the catalogue on p. 82).

⁶⁰ Of the numerous texts, see ones quoted by e.g. D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 104-110, and T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 156-158.

have preferred diplomatic endeavours, obviously mindful of the might of his opponents and the greater distance that separated them from his capital. Hence, as early as the year Š.18, Šulgi's daughter Liwir-miṭṭašu through her marriage to the ruler of Marhaši became queen of this important state, located at the eastern frontier of Elam, and a crucial point on the trade routes to Meluhha. In the year Š.30 another princess of Ur was married to the ensi of Anšan, one of Elam's most important centres. Just four years later (Š.34), however, her father Šulgi did not hesitate to commence an incursion on Anšan, which probably was not diligent enough in fulfilling its vassal duties. The king's third daughter was married to Šuddabani, the ruler of Pašime (Bašime), another state in Elam, on the northern shore of the Persian Gulf.⁶¹ King Šulgi himself was, after all, married to a princess from Ešnunna – the very active Queen Šulgi-simtum⁶², which may be the additional reason for his exceptional interest in the region of the Diyala and the unique position of Ešnunna in the state's organisational system.

The king's martial achievements were cemented by the well-developed system of military settlement (of **eren₂**, the soldier-settlers)⁶³ in the regions of the kingdom's defence zone (equal to the region paying the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute), which ranged from Huhunuri and Susiana to the north.⁶⁴ In this region, T. Maeda, supplementing the data given by P. Steinkeller, quotes no less than eighty-five villages which confirm the fact of being military settlements by paying the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute

⁶¹ P. Steinkeller, ZA 72 (1982), s. 241.

⁶² On Šulgi-simtum, see T. Gomi, *Šulgi-simti and her Libation Place (ki-a-nag)*, "Orient" 12 (1976), pp. 1-14.

⁶³ Extensive studies on the soldier-colonist-labourers **eren₂** were conducted by M. Sigrist: see M. Sigrist, *Erin-un-il*, RA 73 (1979), pp. 101-120; RA 74 (1980), pp. 11-28; his catalogue of military settlement points (**eren₂**) in M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 367-370.

⁶⁴ A. Goetze, *Šakkanakkus*, pp. 1-9 (esp. list p. 4-7); I.J. Gelb, *Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia*, JNES 32 (1973), p. 85; P. Michałowski, *Foreign Tribute to Sumer during the Ur III Period*, ZA 68 (1978), pp. 34-49; P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 30-40; T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, s. 135-143.

or sending details of soldiers⁶⁵. All those efforts proved effective enough to secure for the Third Dynasty of Ur long years of suzerainty over Susiana and strong connections with Elam.

Towards other regions, Šulgi's policy appears to have been more defensive in character. No information whatsoever is found regarding more active endeavours, let alone military actions, undertaken towards the north-west, in the direction of the upper Euphrates. It is difficult to ascertain the reason for this reluctance; perhaps the king wished to avoid the always-possible dilemma of having to fight on two fronts, the Amorite (Martu) tribes were a too-strong, or, from the economic point of view, too-unattractive an enemy, or the land was not an equally coveted economic and political gain. A combination of all above reasons may have come into play⁶⁶; yet two telling facts seem to indicate the true state of affairs. Firstly, still during the kingdom's heyday (Š.37-38), a clear signal of defensive policy is visible in the construction of a military defensive system on the northern borders of the state's central region, the so-called **bad₂ ma-da** – the "Outer Country Wall"⁶⁷ or **bad₃ igi-hur-sag-ga₂** – "Up-Looking Wall" (literally 'mountains' eye'). It most probably extended from the western bed of the Euphrates (known as the Abgal canal) on the line of Bad-igihursanga, through Tigris to the

⁶⁵ See list in the appendix to T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 165-171.

⁶⁶ Core studies on the relations of the Ur III state with the West-Semitic tribes (Amorites) and Syria are G. Buccellati, *The Amorites of the Ur III Period*, Naples 1966; P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, pp. 77-132 (esp. Chapter 4: *The Geographical Horizon of Ur III Letters and the Problem of Mardu*, pp. 101-132); and recently D.I. Owen, *Syrians in Sumerian Sources from the Ur III Period*, [in:] *New Horizons in the Study of Ancient Syria*, (ed.) M.W. Chavalas, J.L. Hayes, *BiMes* 25, Malibu 1992, pp. 107-183 (esp. pp. 109-114).

⁶⁷ The term **ma-da** denotes 'country', 'region' or 'territory', but neither 'homeland' (**ka-lam**) nor 'foreign', 'hostile' or 'mountain country' (**kur**). In this instance, in reference to the defensive wall **bad₃ ma-da**, it denotes a territory included in the state, but outside the core lands (i.e. Sumer and Akkad), located outside the wall – the 'outer territory', 'periphery'; see the historical linguistics study by H. Limet, *Étude sémantique de ma.da, kur, kalam*, *RA* 72 (1978), pp. 1-11 (esp. pp. 2-6).

Diyala on the line of Zimudar.⁶⁸ As corroborated by its late appellation **bad₂ mar-du₂ mu-ri-iq ti-id-ni-im** – “The Wall (against) the Martu (called) *It keeps Tidnum at a distance*”, after renovations conducted by Šū-Suen in the 4th year of his reign, it was supposed to protect the state’s central region against the Amorites from the Tidnum tribes. This may have been forced by the lack of success in the first campaign against them, the fact of which is evidenced by references to royal soldier’s supplies for a military expedition⁶⁹ in contemporary economic texts. The references dating from the period of the so-called Third Hurrian War, after the campaign against Kimaš and Hurti w Š.46⁷⁰, mention spoils and prisoners of war from the Martu tribes, which seems to attest that the Hurrians were supported by the Amorites penetrating the northern frontiers.

The other fact indicative of the nature of the king’s actions towards the north-west is that the cordial relations with Mari, the key city of the central Euphrates, which had been initiated by Ur-Namma, were reinforced by the marriage of Šulgi himself, whose successive wife was Tarām-Uram, the daughter of Apil-kīn of Mari and the future mother of King Amar-Suen.⁷¹ It seems that due to its cooperation with Mari – a city which in any case remained under an overwhelming political and civilisational influence of Sumer – Ur achieved its aim concerning this region: freedom in using the trade and communication route of the Euphrates.

⁶⁸ Building the wall is the main topic of the royal “literary letters” exchanged between Šulgi and his military governor (**šagina**) Puzur-Šulgi; see P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, letters no. 9-11, pp. 187-211.

⁶⁹ TROM 14, 10-13: **mu aga₃-us₂ lugal-ka-še₃, zi-ga, a₂-bi₂-li₂-a, ša₃ kaskal-la**.

⁷⁰ No less than ten texts from Puzriš-Dagān corroborate, for the years Š.46-AS.1, spoils won on the Martu: **nam-ra-ak kur mar-tu**: MVN 15.201 (Š.46); SRD 9 (Š.46.xii); PDT 2.802 (Š.47); Buccellati, *Amorites* 11 (Š.47); JCS 22.57 (Š.47.iii); OIP 115, 336 (Š.47.v); TROM 1.53 (Š.48); Buccellati, *Amorites* 12 (Š.48.vii); OIP 115, 287 (Š.48.vii); RA 62, 8, 11 (AS.1.i).

⁷¹ J. Boese, W. Sallaberger, *Apil-kīn*, pp. 4-39.

The long, forty-eight-year reign⁷² of King Šulgi left the kingdom enlarged threefold, strong, with fortified frontiers and an efficient centralised administrative system, and above all, with an immense international prestige and a large flock of vassal states – or countries persuaded into being friendly – in its sphere of influence. That friendly sphere extended round the entire south-eastern, eastern and northern border of the kingdom: from Marhaši, through Anšan, Huhunuri, Šimaški and Zabšali, to Simānum (i.e. the entire Zagros Mountains, Kurdistan and part of central Iran, from the Arabian Sea to Lake Urmia in the north).

No less importantly, Šulgi left his state strong internally – a monarchy with an ideology revolving round the figure of the king, whose authority was further strengthened by his deification while alive (introduced ca. 20th year of his reign)⁷³. In this, the king undoubtedly followed the example of the Akkadian Narām-Sîn, whose decision to deify himself was dictated by purely political reasons, as one of the main moves to structure and integrate a country which, after a period of sweeping revolt, he had only with the greatest of efforts managed to save from utter ruin. The entire religious and ideological mechanism introduced by Šulgi, together with the administrative/sacral apparatus organised around the cult of his person, and later also his successors and their long-deceased royal ancestors (hence an entire divine dynasty), served to strengthen the position of the king and to integrate the state. Temples of the king-god were built not only in the capitals, but also in the provincial cities and even, as modest chapels, in villages and small settlements. Similarly to the temples of gods, they had their own priestly, administrative and labour personnel, as well as their households⁷⁴. The entire calendar of

⁷² Circumstances and precise dating of Šulgi's death, see P. Michałowski, *The Death of Šulgi*, OrNS 46 (1977), pp. 220-225; see also the more recent commentary, W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 161-163.

⁷³ Extensive literature on the topic is discussed in W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 152-156.

⁷⁴ In the discussion of the temples of Ur's deified rulers, the economic aspect of their operation was especially stressed in the interesting article by H. Limet, *Les tem-*

holy days, celebrations and daily sacrifices connected with the cult of the monarch and his divine ancestors constituted an important part of the official cult⁷⁵. The efficacy and importance of this system in the ideology of Sumerian and Akkadian monarchy is amply evidenced by the fact that it was continued not only throughout the reigns of all the remaining monarchs of the Third Dynasty of Ur, but also by their direct successors, the Amorite First Dynasty of Isin.

Some scholars claim that, as a result of a palace conspiracy⁷⁶, King Šulgi was assassinated amid much violence (Queen Šulgi-simtum and the king's another wife, Geme-Ninlil, also lost their lives). If this was indeed so, in no way did these dramatic events reflect on the empire's international standing. The monarch fully deserved the proud style "divine Šulgi, the mighty warrior, king of Ur, king of the four points of the world" (**d^šul-gi, nita kala-ga, lugal urim₅^{ki}-ma, lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba**), which he had adopted in his 26th year of reign and in which the last element had replaced the earlier "king of Sumer and Akkad" (**lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri**).⁷⁷

1.3. Amar-Suen and Šū-Suen – the period of prosperity

Both sons and successors of the great conqueror: Amar-Suen (2047-2039 BC) and his brother⁷⁸ Šū-Suen (2038-2030 BC) reigned

ples des rois sumériens divinisés, [in:] *Le temple et le culte*, CRRAI 20, 3-7 Juillet 1972 (Leiden 1972), Leiden 1975, pp. 80-94.

⁷⁵ See the core study by W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender, passim* (esp. pp. s. 70-72, 85-87, 105, 143-144, 150-152, 179-191, 230-231, 246, 252-253, 272-273, 287-288).

⁷⁶ See P. Michałowski's hypothesis, *The Death of Šulgi*, pp. 220-225 (*ibid.* E. Sollberger's similar opinion). See communique on the events in W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 161-163.

⁷⁷ See chronological table of the Ur III monarchs' styles in W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 178-180.

⁷⁸ The sources give contradictory data on Šulgi, Amar-Suen and Šū-Suen's family relationship, e.g. according to the *Sumerian King List* Šū-Suen was not the brother, but the son of Amar-Suen. This topic, however, is obviously outside the scope of the

for a relatively short period of nine years each⁷⁹ and their political achievements can in no way equal those of their mighty father. It is possible, however, that the empire had by then already reached the limits achievable in its era and in the given political geography, and to Šulgi's successors was left the challenge of protecting its borders. If so, nothing indicates their failure in their duty. Yearnames of both their reigns imply that their wars were fought in faraway lands, in the hitherto sphere of influence, which seems only a natural reaction to enemy attempts to change a satisfactory *status quo*. Yet administrative documents demonstrate that payment of tribute from the periphery (**gun₂ ma-da**)⁸⁰ was regular, which permits to assume that in those regions power was executed without serious problems. Only a few yearnames indicate that military expeditions were undertaken:

for Amar-Suen: (consecutive years of reign)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2. mu ur-bi₂-lum^{ki} ba-hul | The year Urbilum was destroyed. |
| 6. mu ša-aš-ru-um^{ki} a-ra₂-2-kam
ba-hul | The year Šašrum was destroyed
for a second time. |

present text; for the summary of this discussion, see D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 235-236, 242, 244, 267-268, esp. pp. 285-286. The author leans towards the thesis presented by, among others, B. Lafont and F. Pomponio, that Amar-Suen was Šū-Suen's father. See B. Lafont, *Deux notes sur les règnes de Šu-Sin*, RA 77 (1983), pp. 69-71; *idem*, *L'avènement de Šu-Sin*, RA 88 (1994), pp. 97-119; F. Pomponio, *Le sventure di Amar-Suena*, SEL 7 (1990), pp. 3-14.

⁷⁹ On the disagreement of all available sources on the length of each monarch's reign and the possible co-regency in the years AS.6-9, see D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 235-236, 242-244, 285-286 (*ibid.* earlier literature); W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 165-168.

⁸⁰ See e.g. P. Michałowski, *Foreign Tribute*, ZA 68 (1978), pp. 34-49; T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 163-164 and appendix: pp. 165-171.

7. **mu** ^damar-^dsuen **lugal-e** **bi**₂-**tum-ra-bi**₂-**um**^{ki} **ia**₃-**ab-ru**^{ki} **ma-da ma-da-bi** **u**₃ **hu-uh**₂-**nu-ri**^{ki} **mu-hul** The year Amar-Suen, the king destroyed Bitum-rabi'um, Iabru, and their territories, together with Huhnuri⁸¹

for Šū-Suen (consecutive years of reign):

3. **mu** ^dšū-^dsuen **lugal uri**₅^{ki}-**ma-ke**₄ **si-ma-num**₂^{ki} **mu-hul** The year Šū-Suen, king of Ur, destroyed⁸² Simānum⁸³.

4. **mu** ^dšū-^dsuen **lugal uri**₅^{ki}-**ma-ke**₄ **bad**₃ **mar-du**₂ **mu-ri-iq-ti-id-ni-im** **mu-du**₃ The year Šū-Suen, king of Ur, built⁸⁴ the Amorite wall called "It keeps Tidnum at a distance⁸⁵".

7. **mu** ^dšū-^dsuen **lugal uri**₅^{ki}-**ma-ke**₄ **ma-da za-ab-ša-li**^{ki} **mu-hul** The year Šū-Suen, king of Ur, destroyed⁸⁶ the land of Zabšali.

Thus, in the 2nd and 6th years of his reign Amar-Suen led campaigns in the same Hurrian regions of the north-eastern Mesopotamia in

⁸¹ Huhunuri is located in the present Arrajan in Iran, 8 km north of Behbahan en route from Chuzestan to Fars, see J. Duchene, *La localisation de Huhnur*, [in:] *Fragmenta Historiae Elamicae. Mélanges offerts à M.J. Steve*, (eds.) L. De Meyer, H. Gasche, F. Vallat, Paris 1986, pp. 65-74.

⁸² On the links of the Third Dynasty of Ur with the state of Simānum (sending Šū-Suen's daughter, Kunši-mātum, as a daughter-in-law to the royal court in Simānum, still during the reign of Šulgi) see RIME 3/2 pp. 287-290 and Michałowski, *The Bride of Simānum*, JAOS 95(1975), pp. 716-719.

⁸³ Simānum / Šimānum, known as Asimānum in the Old-Akkadan period, was located somewhere on the Upper Tigris and probably should be identified with the medieval Sinan on the confluence of Batman River and Tigris (near the present Bismil in Turkey).

⁸⁴ On building the *Muriq-Tidnim* wall and the Amorite wars, see Michałowski, *Correspondence*, pp. 20-23, 53-55, 225, 229; Ali, *Sumerian Letters*, pp. 92-98; RIME 3/2 pp. 290-292.

⁸⁵ Tidnum was the name of one of the tribes of (or lands conquered by) the Amorites.

⁸⁶ On the campaigns against Zabšali and Šimaški, see inscriptions E3/2.1.4.5 and E3/2.1.4.6.

which Šulgi had fought before him, and those cannot be interpreted otherwise as punitive expeditions designed to maintain suzerainty⁸⁷. Numerous prisoners and spoils from Urbilum i Šašrum are ample proof of Amar-Suen's martial success, yielded by administrative documents from Puzriš-Dagān⁸⁸. In the case of Šašrum, the yearname AS.6 suggests that this was the king's second expedition (**a-ra₂ 2-kam**) against this minuscule state and all seems to indicate this is indeed true, since several surviving texts dated to AS.4 mention either spoils from Šašrum and the neighbouring Šuruthum (Šuruhtum, Šariphum, Šaribhum) or outright victory over those cities⁸⁹. The concentration of military action in the territory between the Great and the Little Zab seems to indicate that a Hurrian state later known as Arrapha was Amar-Suen's main opponent.

The events of the year AS.7 seem to have been much more serious. The royal expedition reached to Bītum-rabi'um, Jabru and the land of

⁸⁷ D.R. Frayne, *The Zagros Campaigns*, pp. 171-182.

⁸⁸ Only two texts mention spoils (**nam-ra-ak**) from the campaign against Urbilum: AUCT 2, 284 (AS.2.VII) and AUCT 1,28 (AS.3.VII); many more various documents corroborate the victory over Šašrum; see overview with literature and commentary in D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 238-239.

⁸⁹ TD 2,6 and RA 10 (1913), pp. 219,25-26: **u₄ amar-d^dsuen-ke₄ ša-aš-ru-um^{ki} u₃ šu-ru-ut-hu-um^{ki} hul-a** – “when Amar-Suen Šašrum and Šuruthum conquered”; TCL 2:5545,4: **ša₃ mu-DU nam-ra-ak ša-aš-ru^{ki} u₃ šu-ru-ut-hu-um^{ki}** – “delivery of booty from Šašrum and Šuruthum”; YOS 4,6 and RA 15 (1918), 61-62 and RA 24 (1927), 44-45 and ASJ 7 (1985), 191-192 and Fales, *Alfabeto* 33 contain a note: **nam-ra-ak a-ru-a d^dšara₂ uru^{uru}ša-ri₂-ip-hu-um^{ma}^{ki}** – “booty (sacrificed to) god Šara from the city of Šariphum”. See also analysis of economic documents concerning the prisoners, I.J. Gelb, *Prisoners*, pp. 70-98 (on prisoners taken by Amar-Suen in this campaign, pp. 74-76). The city of Šariphum may certainly be identified with Šuruhtum – see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, p. 177; I.J. Gelb, *Prisoners*, p. 76. The version on Amar-Suen's victory over Šašrum in or before the year AS.4 is accepted by, among others, D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 237-238; *idem*, *The Zagros Campaigns*, pp. 179-184.

Several texts corroborate the second campaign against Šašrum. According to Laessøe and Hallo, Šašrum is Šemšara in the Great Zab region; hence Amar-Suen would have subdued the Hurrian Arrapha. This view is shared by, among others, D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 237-238 and *idem*, *The Zagros Campaigns*, pp. 179-184.

Huhunuri. The location of the first two cities is unknown⁹⁰, so Huhunuri remains the key to locating the theatre of war – a place not accidentally styled “the gate to Elam”, or to Anšan (**sag-kul** – literally ‘bolt-lock’). This land was situated between Susiana and the highland part of Elam proper, in the region of today’s Behbahan⁹¹, probably in the vicinity of the present town of Arrajan, in the arc of the upper stretch of the Jarrahi River, on the famous royal road which once linked Susa and Persepolis. Obviously, Amar-Suen was quenching some disturbances on the faraway south-eastern frontiers of his empire, the threat to remove being probably Elam’s highland tribes. The wide range of the operation – three cities with their lands (**ma-da**) – points to the conflict’s considerable scale. Unfortunately, very few references to this campaign have been found in the economic texts, and a record as fascinating as the one informing that a feast for the veterans of the Huhunuri war was given on the “Hill of Seven Heroes”, is a rare find indeed.⁹²

This is as much as can be gleaned from the yearnames. In the case of Amar-Suen, they, and the data contained in economic documents, are in fact the only sources of information on his foreign policy. The few royal inscriptions are totally devoid of relevant information, and he is the only monarch of the Third Dynasty of Ur of whom not a single hymn has survived. With regard to those, his successor Šū-Suen is in

⁹⁰ For Bitum-rabi’um, identified with Egula (whose rulers held the title of **ensi**₂), there are no location indicators; see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 27, 44. Similarly Jabru, always linked with Huhunuri – D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 83.

⁹¹ The core study on the location of Huhunuri (Huhunuri) on the basis of Mesopotamian, Elamite and Persian sources, from which the identification of Huhunuri with the Behbahan region is derived, is by J. Duchene, *La localisation de Huhunur*, pp. 65-74 (*ibid.* extensive polemic with earlier literature and other attempts at identification). At present, J. Duchene’s thesis is generally accepted, see e.g. F. Vallat, *La géographie de l’Elam*, pp. 11-12; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 16-17.

⁹² BIN 3.402 (AS.8.VI.10), 1-3, 6: **1 udu niga, du**₆^d**ur-sag-7, uzu-bi qar-du lu₂ hu-uh₂-nu-ri^{ki}-ke₄-ne ba-ab-gu₇, ..., ša₃ a-ša₃^damar-d^dsuen engar^den-lil₂-la₂** – “one sheep fattened on barley for the Hill-of-Seven-Heroes, its fresh flesh, the soldiers, the Huhunuri men, ate [...] on the field ... Amar-Suen-god-Enlil’s-farmer”.

a much better position, since six of his royal hymns⁹³ and a number of inscriptions mentioning his war campaigns have survived. Among the latter are the “historical collections A and B”, called thus by their first publisher M. Civil⁹⁴.

All the questions connected with the death of Amar-Suen⁹⁵ and the circumstances and exact date of Šū-Suen’s accession (AS.9), including the probability of their co-regency throughout the last three years or Šū-Suen’s earlier takeover of actual power⁹⁶, shall be omitted in the present study. Even if those events were accompanied by upheavals at the royal court and violent changes on the highest levels of provincial administration⁹⁷, they did not have any direct bearing on foreign policy that could be demonstrated. From this point of view, it seems more pertinent to recollect that the prince who was to be the heir to the throne (**dumu lugal**) had considerable experience in government and firsthand knowledge of military affairs, having held for a few years the post of the **šagina** (military governor) at the fortress of Dūrum in the vicinity of Uruk⁹⁸.

⁹³ J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, pp. 226-227 (bibliography and references).

⁹⁴ M. Civil, *Šū-Sin’s historical inscriptions: collection B*, JCS 21 (1967), pp. 24-38 (publication of collection B and description of collection A). Collection B: D.O. Edzard, *Neue Inschriften zur Geschichte von Ur III unter Šūsuen*, AfO 19 (1959/1960), pp. 1-32; Å. W. Sjöberg, *A Commemorative Inscription of King Šūsín*, JCS 24 (1972), pp. 70-73. The most recent and full edition of not only those, but all inscriptions of Šū-Suen containing data on the king’s wars, with a full bibliography and commentary, D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, nos E3/2.1.4.1, E3/2.1.4.2, E3/2.1.4.3, E3/2.1.4.5, E3/2.1.4.6, E3/2.1.4.13, E3/2.1.4.17, pp. 295-312, 323-324, 327-328.

⁹⁵ E.g. according to the Old-Babylonian omen texts (prophecies), Amar-Suen died of some contagious foot disease (probably of dermatological character); see A. Goetze, *The Old Babylonian Omen Texts*, text no. 25:32.

⁹⁶ As assumed by, for instance, B. Lafont, *L’avènement de Šū-Sin*, pp. 97-119.

⁹⁷ K. Maekawa, *Confiscation of Private Properties in the Ur III Period: A Study of é-dul-la and nig-GA*, ASJ 18 (1996), pp. 123-130; *Supplement 1*, ASJ 19 (1997), p. 274 (the case of a family of governors of Umma); M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 273-274 (the case of Puzriš-Dagān).

⁹⁸ P. Michałowski, *Dūrum and Uruk during the Ur III Period*, “Mesopotamia” 12 (1977), pp. 84-89.

Judging by the yearnames, Šū-Suen fought along the entire length of the empire's northern border. His opponents were certainly the Hurrians, Amorites and north-Zagros highland peoples. The already-mentioned Simānum (ŠS.3) and Zabšali (ŠS.7) were on the extremes, western and eastern respectively, of the northern edge of the Ur kingdom's sphere of influence. Simānum, identified with the later Sinān, was most probably located close to the source of the Tigris, at its confluence with the Batman tributary, slightly to the south-east of Lake Van. Being close to the crucial northern trade route, it was of great strategic importance, and still in the Byzantine period was, under the name of Sinas, a notable fortress of the Amida region (presently Diyarbakir).⁹⁹ Zabšali, in turn, associated with the so-called **SU (lu₂ SU.A)** peoples (that is, in agreement with P. Steinkeller's almost-generally accepted hypothesis¹⁰⁰, the state and dynasty of Šimaški), is very variously located, depending on the perception of Zabšali as, geographically, a part of Šimaški (P. Steinkeller) or as a state subjugated by the Šimaški dynasty (F. Vallat), as well as on the location of Šimaški itself¹⁰¹. According to the version which is at present viewed as the most probable, Zabšali was the most northerly point of a large territory controlled by Šimaški and was situated in the northern range of the Zagros Mountains, to the north-east of Lake Urmia, in the land of Manna well-known from the Neo-Assyrian period¹⁰².

⁹⁹ Summary of source data on the location of Simānum, see D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 288-290 (map on p. 289). Earlier attempts at location, see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 165-166.

¹⁰⁰ P. Steinkeller, *On the Identity*, pp. 197-202; *idem*, *More on LU₂SU(A) = Šimaški*, NABU 1990/1, pp. 10-11. Earlier, the land of LU₂SU was linked with Subartu (**SU.BIR₄**), see D.O. Edzard – G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 171-175 (*ibid.* earlier literature).

¹⁰¹ F. Vallat, *La géographie de l'Elam*, pp. 11-13. For the first more successful attempts at locating Šimaški, see M.W. Stolper, *On the Dynasty of Šimaški and the Early Sukkalmahs*, ZA 72 (1982), pp. 42-67 (esp. pp. 45-46); *idem*, *Texts from Tall-i Malyan*, Vol. 1: *Elamite Administrative Texts*, Philadelphia 1984, pp. 20.

¹⁰² Summary of the more recent research on the location of Zabšali and Šimaški, see

As demonstrated by P. Michałowski¹⁰³, the king's campaign against Simānum was provoked by upheavals at the local court, which since the last years of Šulgi's reign was the home of Šū-Suen's daughter Kunšimātum, living there as the 'bride' or 'daughter-in-law' (**e₂-gi₄-a**). It is impossible to determine the extent to which the argument over the princess's hand (Pušam, who ruled Simānum at the time, had two sons: the elder Arib-atal and the younger Iphuh) had led to the conspiracy and outbreak of revolt, in the aftermath of which Pušam lost his throne. Thus, although Šū-Suen's intervention may have had dynastic reasons and a legitimate purpose (as his daughter had been driven from her house)¹⁰⁴, its main aim was certainly to maintain Ur's influence over this important Hurrian centre, the key to the entire region of upper Tigris. According to the royal inscription describing the campaign against Simānum, the city had stood at the head of a revolt of the small local states and tribes (**ma-da ma-da-bi**), among which, apart from Simānum itself, Habūra was the most important¹⁰⁵. The situation was indeed threatening, as the rebels received support from the Amorite tribes of Tidnum (**ti-id-nu-um^{ki}**) and Jamadium (**ia₃-a-ma-di₃-um^{ki}**). In the end, however, Šū-Suen's enemies were annihilated, enormous spoils were taken to the greater glory of Enlil and Ninlil¹⁰⁶, the king restored the peace in the entire region, compelled Simānum and Habūra to obey him, and, no less importantly, reinstalled Princess Kunšimātum.

T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 27-34 (*ibid.* complete literature); earlier findings, see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 242-243.

¹⁰³ P. Michałowski, *The Bride of Simānum*, pp. 716-719.

¹⁰⁴ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.1: III 35-36, IV 8'-10': [**dumu-munus**]-a-ni, e₂ [**ki-tuš-a-ni**]-ta, **sag₂ [im-ta]-eš-(am₃)** - "the king's daughter from her house drove". Variant with an enclitic copula **am₃** in col. IV.

¹⁰⁵ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.1: III 30-34, IV 4'-7': **si-ma-num₂^{ki}, ha-bu-ra^{ki}, u₃ ma-da ma-da-bi, lugal-da gu₂-erim₂-gal₂ ba-an-da-ab-gal₂** - "Simānum, Habura and countries (nearby) against the king with enmity advanced". Habūra was probably located on the west bank of the Tigris, opposite its confluence with the Habūr tributary; see *ibid.* pp. 288-289.

¹⁰⁶ On the spoils and prisoners taken during Šū-Suen's campaign against Simānum, see I.J. Gelb, *Prisoners*, pp. 76-77 (analysis of economic texts).

mātum at her house¹⁰⁷. Many economic texts corroborate, one way or another, the victorious Simānum campaign, to the list of vanquished foes adding Niniveh and the city of Talmuš located probably slightly to the north¹⁰⁸. Šū-Suen's diplomatic efforts in this region are corroborated by the origin of his second wife (**lukur**) Ti'amat-bāštī, who might have been the sister of Tiš-atal of Niniveh¹⁰⁹.

The remark on the participation of the Amorite tribes of Tidnum and Jamadium in this conflict is worthy of attention. In the opinion of I.J. Gelb¹¹⁰ (accepted by D.R. Frayne), the latter may be identified with Jamhad, which later held dominion over Syria, and the presence of both Amorite tribes among Simānum's allies gives substance to the hypothesis that the king undertook an expedition, not evidenced in the yearnames, against the Amorites of north-western Mesopotamia and Syria. It would have reached such countries as Māhāzum, Ebla, Mari, Tuttul and Urkiš, Mukiš and Abarnum. It seems, however, that a political spectrum as broad as is outlined in the inscription is more suited to the military activities of the Akkadian monarchs (Sargon the Great or Narām-Sin), and it is difficult to decisively ascribe this heavily damaged inscription to Šū-Suen¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁷ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.1: IV 26-33: **dumu-munus-a-ni**, **e₂ ki-tuš-a-ni-a**, **im-ma-ši-in-gi₄**, **si-ma-num₂^{ki}**, **ha-bu-ra^{ki}**, **u₃ ma-da ma-da-bi**, **nam-ir₃(?)-da-ni-še₃**, **sag-še₃ mu-ni-rig₇** – literally “his daughter to her house returned, of Simānum, Habūra and the countries (near-by), to obedience their heads (compelled)”.

¹⁰⁸ See examples listed by D. Frayne – RIME 3/2, p. 288.

¹⁰⁹ C. Wilcke, *A Note on Ti'amat-bāsti and the Goddess Ša(w)uš(k)a of Niniveh*, DV 5 (1988), pp. 21-26, 225-227; *idem*, *Ti'amat-bāsti*, NABU 4 (1990), note 36; see also D. Collon, *The Life and Times of Teheš-atal*, RA 84 (1990), pp. 129-136; R. Whiting, *Tiš-atal of Niniveh and Babati*, *Uncle of Šu-Sin*, JCS 28 (1976), pp. 173-182.

¹¹⁰ I.J. Gelb, *Computer-aided Analysis of Amorite*, AS 21, Chicago 1980, pp. 24, 607; D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 290, 300-301 (*ibid.* more recent literature).

¹¹¹ It seems that rather its earlier ascription to Narām-Sin of Akkad ought to remain valid, see D. Frayne, *Sargonic and Gutian Period (2334-2113 BC)*, RIME 2, Toronto – Buffalo – London 1993, E2.1.4.1004, pp. 162-163.

Šū-Suen's second large-scale military campaign was the expedition against Zabšali in the 7th year of his reign. It is well known due to the so-called "collection A" of his royal inscriptions, described as inscriptions from the statues of the monarch¹¹². Assuming those sources are creditable, the entire eastern and north-eastern frontier was burning, and the king's opponents formed a powerful coalition with Šimaški and large states of Zabšali at its head, reaching from the lands of Anšan (Elam) to the Upper Sea (here certainly the Caspian Sea)¹¹³. The inscriptions, although seriously damaged, enumerate many of the hostile states, which have "swarmed like locusts": Nibulmat, Sigriš, Alumidatum, Garta, Azahar, Bulma, Nušušmar, Nušgalenum, Zizirtum, Arahir, Šatilu, Tirmi'um and probably many others beside them¹¹⁴. Šū-Suen apparently defeated his foes in a decisive battle and captured their leaders (**en-en**), among which were the grand princes of the Zabšali states (**ensi₂-gal-gal, ma-da-ma-da za-ab-ša-li^{ki}**) and many other princes of numerous cities (**ensi₂-ensi₂ uru^{ki}-uru^{ki}**)¹¹⁵. All of them, to the greater glory of Enlil and Ninlil, were led in triumph into Nippur. The following passage, unfortunately much damaged, describes the spoils of war. Data gleaned from both inscriptions is corroborated by the colophons which give information on the images of the captured rulers, among whom were Ziringu **ensi₂ ma-da** Zabšali, Indasu **ensi₂** Zabšali, Titi **ensi₂** Nušušmar, Samri **ensi₂ [GN]**, Nu[x]li **ensi₂** Almidatum, Bunirni **ensi₂** Sigriš, Barihiza **ensi₂** Arahir, Waburtum **ensi₂** Lullubum, Nenibzu **ensi₂** Zizirtum, Tirubi'u **ensi₂** Nušganelum, [X]amti **ensi₂** Garta and Dungat **ensi₂** Nibulmat¹¹⁶.

¹¹² The most recent full edition, see D. Frayne, RIME 3/2 nos E3/2.1.4.3, E3/2.1.4.4, pp. 301-308 (inscription from Statue 1); and E3/2.1.4.5 and E3/2.1.4.6, pp. 309-313 (inscription from Statue 2).

¹¹³ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.3: II 15-20: **šimaški (LU₂,SU)^{ki}, ma-da-ma-da, za-ab-ša-li^{ki}, za-an-ša-an^{ki}-ta, a-ab-ba IGI.NIM-ma-še₃, buru₅-gin₇, zi-ga-bi** – literally "Šimaški (and) Zabšali countries, from the border of Anšan to the Upper Sea, as locusts crept out". Por. E3/2.1.4.4: II 21'-23'.

¹¹⁴ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.3: II 21-33; cf. E3/2.1.4.5: Ex.2, 11-20 + Ex.1, VIII 16-28.

¹¹⁵ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.3: 22-29.

¹¹⁶ RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.4.5: colophons.

Economic documents contain much information on the spoils from Šimaški and Zabšali, as well as exacted tributes, most often paid in livestock.

A good corroboration of Šū-Suen's political achievements and the range of his titular suzerainty is found in the foundation inscription of his temple in Girsu, which was dedicated to him by such dignitaries as **sukkal-mah** Ir-Nanna, **šagina** of Ušar-Garšana, **šagina** of Bašime (Pašime), **ensi**₂ of Sabum and the land of Gutebum, **šagina** of Dimat-Enlil, **ensi**₂ of Āl-Šū-Suen, **šagina** of Urbilum, **ensi**₂ of Hamazi and Karahar, **šagina** of Šimaški and the land of Karda. The presence of dignitaries coming from distant reaches of Ur's sphere of influence, including those which had recently rebelled (Bašime, Sabum, Urbilum, Šimaški), eloquently indicates that his possessions had remained undiminished.

Šū-Suen's political passivity, and perhaps even an increasingly defensive stance towards the Amorite threat from the north-west, remain in stark contrast to the military successes and constant capability for offensive action in the north and east. It would be difficult to perceive the extension of the defensive system, finished in the 4th year of Šū-Suen's reign and known as the "Wall (against) the Martu", as merely a continuation of Šulgi's policy. Considering the steadily increasing Amorite infiltration, no longer of only the periphery (the "outer" lands in relation to the wall), but also the core territories of Sumer and Akkad – evidenced by the growing number of West-Semitic names among state officials, even high-ranking ones – the extension of the wall is a clear sign of a growing fear of the dangerous Amorite thrust into the kingdom of Ur. Soon, at the beginning of the next monarch's reign, these fears would come true, and the Amorite menace would mercilessly reveal the long-concealed internal weakness of the state.

1.4. Ibbī-Suen – the period of decline¹¹⁷

At the beginning of Ibbī-Suen's reign (2029-2005 BC) nothing at all indicated how close the state was to collapse. The ritual celebrations of his father's death and his own coronation were observed, with great display of lavishness, in all three chief centres of the state cult (temple of Enlil at Nippur, temple of Inanna at Uruk and temple of Nanna at Ur)¹¹⁸, but in spite of this, the new monarch began his rule – quite in keeping

¹¹⁷ The reign of the last monarch of the Third Dynasty of Ur and the fall of the empire have been described not only in extensive chapters in the more general studies, but also in several interesting monographs. The most important of those, in the chronological order, are: E. Sollberger, *Remarks on Ibbisin's Reign*, JCS 7 (1953), pp. 48-50; Th. Jacobsen, *The Reign of Ibbī-Suen*, JCS 7 (1953), pp. 36-47; Th. Jacobsen, *On the Textile Industry at Ur under Ibbī-Sin*, [in:] *Studia Joanni Pedersen dedicata*, Hauniae 1953, pp. 172-187; C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 54-69; E. Sollberger, *Ibbī-Suen*, RIA V/1-2, Berlin – New York 1976, pp. 1-8; J. van Dijk, *Išbi'erra, Kindattu, l'homme d'Elam, et la chute de la ville d'Ur*, JCS 30 (1978), pp. 189-208; T. Gomi, *On Dairy Productivity at Ur in the Late Ur III Period*, JESHO 23 (1980), pp. 1-42; T. Gomi, *On the Critical Economic Situation at Ur Early in the Reign of Ibbisin*, JCS 36 (1984), pp. 211-242; M. Sigrist, *Le deuil pour Šū-Sin*, pp. 499-505; B. Lafont, *La chute des rois d'Ur et la fin des archives dans les grand centres administratifs de leur empire*, RA 89 (1995), pp. 3-13; see also D.O. Edzard, *Geschichte Mesopotamiens*, pp. 106-109.

¹¹⁸ Many economic texts corroborate that the coronation of the king was repeated in all three centres (5-day celebrations at Nippur, then 6-day ones at Uruk and 16-day ones at Ur) and the solemn progresses of the anointed monarch between the capitals. E.g. the sacrifices at Ur, on occasion of the coronation only, offered at nightfall (a_2-gi_6-ba-a) and daybreak ($a_2-u_4-te-na$), see UDT 100 (ŠS.9.xi): 18-19: $ša_3 urim_5^{ki}-ma, u_4^{di}-bi_2-dsuen aga_3 šu ba-an-ti-a$; JCS 10, 28-4 (ŠS.9.ix): 4-5: $a_2-gi_6-ba-a, u_4^{di}-bi_2-dsuen aga_3 šu ba-an-ti-a$; sacrifices at Nippur and Uruk, and during the ceremonial progress between the two cities for the coronation: JCS 7, p. 48 (ŠS.9.ix): 18-21: $a_2-u_4-te-na, lugal ku_4-ra, lugal nibru^{ki}-ta unug^{ki}-še_3 du-ni, u_4^{di}-bi_2-dsuen aga_3 šu ba-an-ti-a$. See the analysis of and commentary to documents pertaining to the coronation ceremonies: E. Sollberger, *Remarks on Ibbisin's Reign*, pp. 48-50; Th. Jacobsen, *The Reign of Ibbī-Suen*, pp. 36; E. Sollberger, *Ibbī-Suen*, pp. 2; M. Sigrist, *Le deuil pour Šū-Sin*, pp. 499-505; Wu Yuong, *Ibbi-Sin became king before the fifth month of Šū-Sin 9 possibly at the beginning of Šū-Sin 9*, NABU 1996/4, no. 99 (112); W. Salla-berger, *Der kultische Kalender*, pp. 112-113.

with the Ur dynasty's usual practice – from the general cleansing in the central and provincial administration. Numerous cases of confiscation of private properties (**e₂-du₆-la**) in the years ŠS.9 – IS.1 are known mostly from the capitals (Ur and Nippur), but the reorganisation at Umma is probably not unconnected.¹¹⁹

It is impossible to resist an impression that in the case of Ibbī-Suen, the yearnames do not present a satisfactory picture of the king's activity on the international arena – unless their very silence is in itself quite telling. They were, after all, meant to extol the monarch's victories and conquests, definitely not the recurrent defeats. It seems that, since the king would certainly not have overlooked any occasion to spread the positive message, the following events were the only ones worth mentioning:

3. **mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma-ke₄ si-mu-ru-um^{ki} mu-hul** The year Ibbī-Suen, king of Ur, destroyed Simurru
5. **mu tu-ki-in-PA-mi-ig-ri-ša dumu-munus lugal ensi₂ za-ab-ša-li^{ki}-ke₄ ba-an-tuk** The year the governor of Zabšali married Tukīn-hatti-migrīša, the daughter of the king
6. **mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma-ke₄ nibru^{ki} uri₅^{ki}-ma bad₃ gal-bi mu-du₃** The year Ibbī-Suen, king of Ur, built the great walls of Nippur and Ur
9. **mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma-ke₄ hu-uh₂-nu-ri^{ki} sag-kul ma-daan-ša-an^{ki}-še₃ a₂-dugud ba-ši-in-gin [...] ra gin₇ a₂ mah si₃-bi sa bi-in-gar** The year Ibbī-Suen, king of Ur, marched with heavy forces against Huhnuri, the “open mouth” of the land of Anšan, and like a ... his might [having surrounded it, caught it in (his) net]

¹¹⁹ K. Mackawa, *Confiscation of Private Properties*, pp. 134-145; Supplement 1, ASJ 19 (1997), p. 275.

14. mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-
ma-ke₄ šušin^{ki} a-dam-dun^{ki}
ma-da a-wa-an^{ki}-ka u₄-gin₇
ŠID bi₂-in-gi₇ u₄-1-a mu-un-
GAM u₃ en-bi LU₂x<KAR>-a
mi-ni-in-dab₅-ba-a The year Ibbi-Suen, king of Ur,
roared like a storm against Susa,
Adamdun¹²⁰, (and) the land of
Awan¹²¹; made them submit
in a single day; and took their
lord(s) as bound captive(s)
17. mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-
ma-ra mar-tu a₂-IM-ulu₃
ul-ta uru^{ki} nu-zu gu₂ im-ma-
na-na-ga₂-ar The year the Amorites of the
southern border, who from
ancient times have known no
cities, submitted to Ibbi-Suen,
king of Ur
20. mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-
ma ^den-lil₂-le me-lam₂-a-ni
kur-kur-ra bi₂-in-dul₄ The year Ibbi-Suen, king of Ur
– the god Enlil made his fearful
radiance cover the lands
22. mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-
ma-ke₄ a-ma-ru ni₃-du₁₁-
ga dingir-re-ne-ke₄ za₃
an-ki im-suh₃-suh₃-a uri₅^{ki}
URUxUD^{ki} tab-ba bi₂-in-
ge-en The year Ibbi-Suen, king of
Ur, held firm the cities of Ur
and URUxUD which had been
devastated by the ‘flood’ which has
been commanded by the gods and
which shook the whole world
23. mu ^di-bi₂-^dsuen lugal uri₅^{ki}-
ma-ra ugu₂(A.KA)^{ku}-bi
dugud kur-bi mu-na-e-ra The year in which the people (of
its country) brought a ‘stupid
monkey’¹²² to Ibbi-Suen, king of
Ur

¹²⁰ Location unknown. According to F. Vallat, one of Gudea's foundation inscriptions, found in the vicinity of the present Šuštar, tells of the construction of a temple in Adamdun, which may indicate the city was situated in this region, i.e. ca 60 km. S-E of Susa.

¹²¹ Name better known from the Old-Akkadian period (the Rimuša inscription), denoting a city close east of Susa and the Qablutum River (today probably the Diz).

¹²² ugu₂^{ku}-bi – “ape” – the name, used also in the literary letter of Puzur-Šulgi to Ibbi-Suen (see S. Dunham, *The Monkey in the Middle*, ZA 75 (1985), p. 242), is probably an ironic allu-

It is fortunate the yearnames do not constitute the sole source on Ibbi-Suen's reign. Considering the almost-total absence of data from royal inscriptions, the course of events can be roughly sketched only by correlating information gleaned from yearnames with the "literary letters", which are exceptionally useful in this case.

They inform that the key to the seemingly sudden fall of the kingdom is the question of the Amorites, or, more aptly perhaps, the "Amorite factor"¹²³. Those numerous and valiant West-Semitic tribes, nomadic or semi-nomadic, originating probably in the region of the Jebel Bišri mountains (Sum. **Mar-tu, Mar-du**), had been appearing in north-western Mesopotamia since the times of Naram-Sin, in ever greater numbers, steadily pushing towards the south. It ought to be recalled that even in the period of its greatest might, the kingdom of Ur's policy against the Amorites was practically never offensive, nor even directed towards the region of their domination, that is towards the north-west. Economic and military activity of the Third Dynasty of Ur was, due largely to a tradition dating as far back as the Old-Sumerian period, generally directed east, towards either the lands of Elam or the Zagros Mountains; yet it would be difficult to assume that Šulgi, for instance, would not have noticed any benefits in an expansion directed up the Euphrates. Considering the additional fact, evident already by Š.37, that the kingdom separated itself from its Amorite neighbours with a line of fortifications on the very frontier of Sumer and Akkad core lands, and that in the north-western reaches of Mesopotamia, which

sion to the enemy forces. The "mountain land" (**kur**) is probably a reference to Elam and its Zagros allies. The entire phrase seems to allude to an Elamite attack. Å. Sjöberg refers the insulting epithet to Išbi-Erra, another enemy of the king of Ur; see Å. Sjöberg, *The Ape from the Mountain who Became King of Isin*, [in:] *The Tablet and the and Scroll. Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*, (eds.) M.E. Cohen – D.C. Snell – D.B. Weisberg, Bethesda 1993, pp. 211-230.

¹²³ P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, chapter 4: *The Geographical Horizon of the Ur Letters and the Problem of the Mardu*, pp. 101-132; other studies on Amorites in the Ur II Period, see note 191 above.

it held under its own domination, it implemented a policy of, at best, diplomatic restraint and alliances cemented with marriages of its daughters to the local royal houses, the picture that emerges is clearly one of policy dictated by a realistic assessment of the situation and consciously limited to typically defensive actions. It is noteworthy that there was never any attempt to include any state along the Euphrates, even the friendly Mari, into the **ma-da** sphere, or even the system of vassal states, so much so that the kingdom, cushioned from the east by two large buffer zones, in this region, slightly north of Sippar, had an unprotected frontier running between the very core of the state (Sumer and Akkad) and the lands beyond its control; hence the need for and the importance of the "Wall (against) the Martu".

This state of affairs must have grown more acute during the reign of Šū-Suen, who was forced to concentrate all his attention on the protection of the kingdom's "vital interest zone" – the **ma-da** lands and their strategic rear, the vassal states of the entire Zagros region, Susiana and Elam, which were increasingly threatened by the growing power of the Iranian Šimaški. That is demonstrated by the growing range of the king's successive campaigns; it is worth to recall that it was precisely during his northern campaigns that the Amorite peoples of Tidnum and Jamadium, in alliance with the Hurrians and the mountain peoples, for the first time constituted such an intense threat. This may indicate their advancing thrust towards the east, along the route skirting the Sumerian fortifications from the north.

Another characteristic aspect of the "Amorite factor" is the question of their presence in the Third Dynasty's kingdom itself and role they at that time were already playing there. Regardless of the growing threat from the large and hostile tribal confederations such as Tidnum or Jamadium, throughout the entire twenty-first century BC smaller or larger groups of Amorites (tribes or single clans) arrived, usually in peace, into the lands of the periphery (**ma-da**) or even settled in Sumer and Akkad itself. The authorities attempted to deal with this dynamic influx,

or even turn it to advantage, in various ways: by allocating benefices of royal land to the newcomers, employing them as shepherds or other labourers, and finally admitting an ever-growing group of immigrants into the ranks of clerical cadres. It appears that this peaceful process, although it increased the Semitic-language element of the population of a state already peopled by two ethnic groups (mainly Sumerians and the Semitic Akkadians), was not perceived as a threat – and in fact it did not constitute one, save for one aspect of the entire movement.

It appears that the factor which proved detrimental to the future run of events was the curious process of “Amoritisation” of the kingdom’s entire military sector. One way of dealing with the rapid influx of immigrants, and a frequently applied method of assimilation, was a wholesale conscription to the royal army, often of entire clans, who continued to serve under their original chieftains, but to the greater glory of the king of Ur – and often fighting their own kin. Consequently, the largest number of Amorites is found among officers of various levels, and it was due to their military service and position in the army that Amorites reached the highest ranks of administrative officialdom, including those of province governor (**ensi**₂) or military governor (**šagina**). As this state of affairs became more pronounced, an extremely delicate situation evolved, where not only the defence of the kingdom, but also its internal cohesion would depend on the loyalty of new citizens, who often were not yet fully assimilated. It seems that the kingdom of Ur faced the same challenge as the Imperium Romanum after the late fourth century: the state was to be protected from the barbarian hordes by soldiers and armed frontier settlers to whom the invaders were basically kinsmen.

The escalating “Amorite factor”, although it destabilised the internal balance and created a serious external threat, is not the overall explanation for the crisis. It does not explain, for instance, how the system, which was fragile and potentially dangerous but had functioned fairly well for quite a time, could disintegrate so rapidly and violently. It seems

that still too few sources are available to pinpoint the exact reasons for the sudden collapse of the international prestige of the king, his army and the whole state – the collapse which lay at the root of the internal breakdown of the hitherto effective centralised mechanism.

It is hard to tell to what extent the first indications of crisis, which appeared at the very beginning of Ibbī-Suen's reign, were the result of internal disintegration or of external pressure from hostile neighbours. Certainly the Amorites' crossing the Tigris and invading the Diyala region was the direct cause of the loss of Ešnunna – the head city of the region and the key point of the buffer zone in the north east. Already in 2027 BC (IS.3) Šū-ilija¹²⁴, who most probably was the son of Itūrija¹²⁵, the last official governor (**ensi**₂) appointed by the Third Dynasty of Ur, proclaimed himself an independent monarch and adopted the proud style of "the son (favourite) of god Tišpak, the mighty king, king of the Warum land, king of the four points of the world" – **dumu (na-ra-am) ^dtišpak, lugal da-num₂, lugal ma-at wa-ri-im, lugal ki-ib-ra-tim, ar-ba-im**.¹²⁶ At this point economic documents dated with Ibbī-Suen's yearnames ceased to appear in Ešnunna.

The loss of Ešnunna meant the collapse of the whole system of defence in the strategic region of the Diyala. A wave of invaders instantly broke into Sumer and Akkad and soon other governors or military commanders of local garrisons (**šagina**), often men of Amorite extraction, began to rebel against authority, either of their own initiative or under threat of the invading nomads. Two years later, in 2025 BC

¹²⁴ This name, spelt **AN.šū-i₃-li₂-a**, is read in two ways, depending on the perception of the cuneiform sign **AN** as a predeterminative before the name of the deified king: ^d**šū-i₃-li₂-a** (Šū-ilija), or a word element of the name (**DINGIR** = Akkad. **ilu** – 'god' in Nom. or **ili** in Gen.): **DINGIR-šū-i₃-li₂-a** (Ilušu-ilija or Ilišu-ilija). The reading adopted by D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, pp. 433-437, was chosen here.

¹²⁵ A dedication seal is known, devoted to Ibbī-Suen by a certain Šū-ilija, a scribe, son of Itūrija the ensi of Ešnunna: ^d**i-bi₂-^dEN.ZU, [lu]gal kala-ga, lugal uri₅-^{ki}-ma, lugal an-ub-da limmu₂-ba/^dšū-i₃-li₂-a, dub-[sar], dumu i-tu-[ri-a], ensi₂, ir₁₁-zu** (RIME 3/2, E3/2.1.5.2002). Most probably he and the future king of Ešnunna are the same person.

¹²⁶ E.g. RIME 3/2, E3/2.3.1.2002 and E3/2.3.1.2003.

(IS.5), the Amorite leader Naplanum took over power in Larsa – a city in close proximity to Ur, the capital.

The most telling example of the state's disastrous condition is the exceedingly rapid progress of disintegration of the provincial administration structures, not only in the more distant regions, but in the very heart of the state. This disintegration is clearly demonstrated by the way certain provincial archives suddenly "fall silent", either ceasing to exist altogether or offering sporadic texts and discontinuing the Ibbī-Suen yearname dating. It is a clear proof of that the clerkly structure linked to the kingdom of Ur had collapsed. This process can be dated precisely enough, in the years of Ibbī-Suen's reign, at the following centres¹²⁷:

- IS.2 Puzriš-Dagān, Išān-Mizyad
- IS.3 Uruk, Ešnunna, Susa
- IS.4 Umma
- IS.5 Girsu-Lagaš
- IS.8 Nippur

Moreover, this disintegration caused a truly dramatic situation to emerge in Ur itself, where it became a permanent and serious problem to provide necessary supplies of foodstuffs, fodder and raw materials. After the loss of such provinces as Girsu-Lagaš or Umma, the capital, which had never been self-sufficient, was deprived of regular, or indeed of any provisions (grain especially) and faced disastrous famine. The local production of foodstuffs was able to fill the need only to a minimal degree and in a short period¹²⁸. Economic documents from Ur dating from the period of Ibbī-Suen's reign (especially from the years IS.15 to IS.17) prove beyond any doubt that prices of basic foodstuffs soared

¹²⁷ See the fundamental study by B. Lafont, *La chute des rois d'Ur*, pp. 3-13; earlier e.g. Th. Jacobsen, *The Reign of Ibbī-Suen*, p. 38; recent findings, W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 174-176.

¹²⁸ See the study on this topic: T. Gomi, *On Dairy Productivity*, pp. 1-42.

dramatically (e.g. prices of grain increased first by a factor of ten, and then by a factor of forty)¹²⁹.

In this situation, the highest-priority goal of the state was to obtain a stockpile of grain, or even better to hold at least one line of communication open to guarantee steady flow of such supplies for which there was still gold in the royal treasury. At this very moment Išbi-Erra¹³⁰, hailing, according to tradition, from Mari, enters the arena: the man who was destined to push the Third Dynasty's state over the brink. Three stages of the fall of the Third Dynasty of Ur state were distinguished by C. Wilcke¹³¹ precisely in connection with mutual relations between Ibbi-Suen and Išbi-Erra, on the basis of the already-mentioned "literary" correspondence between them¹³² and between the king and Puzur-Šulgi (Puzur-Numušta), the then-loyal ensi of Kazallum¹³³. At the first stage, c. 2021 BC (IS.9)¹³⁴ Išbi-Erra, then a governor of Isin, was entrusted with the vital mission of purchasing large supplies of grain for the starving capital, for the enormous sum of 20 talents of silver. He did buy 72.000 gur of grain (= c. 21.600.000 litres), but citing the danger of Amorite plunderers, he stored it in the granaries in Isin, promising to deliver it by water down the Euphrates as soon as the king sent him the ships. This was no more than an attempt

¹²⁹ T. Gomi, *On the Critical Economic Situation*, pp. 211-212.

¹³⁰ Generally on Išbi-Erra's career, see D.O. Edzard, *Išbi-Erra*, RIA 5, Berlin – New York 1976, pp. 174-175; Å. Sjöberg, *The Ape from the Mountain*, pp. 211-230.

¹³¹ C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 54-69 + tables (esp. pp. 54-67).

¹³² Two letters exchanged between Ibbi-Suen and Išbi-Erra have survived in several Old-Babylonian copies; see P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, no 19 (Išbi-Erra to Ibbi-Suen), pp. 243-249 (text and translation); no 20, p. 252 (Ibbi-Suen to Išbi-Erra), see C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, p. 55 (translation) and P. van der Meer, *The Chronology of Western Asia and Egypt*, Leiden 1955, p. 45 (text).

¹³³ Also two letters in Old-Babylonian copies; see P. Michałowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur*, no 21 (Puzur-Šulgi to Ibbi-Suen), pp. 253-266 (text and translation); no 22, p. 269 (Ibbi-Suen to Puzur-Šulgi), see A. Falkenstein, *Ibbi-Suen – Išbi-Erra*, pp. 59-61 and S.N. Kramer, *The Sumerians, Their History, Culture and Character*, Chicago 1963, pp. 333-335.

¹³⁴ See C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 54-56.

to win time and a pathetic cover for an obvious act of treason – the grain never reached Ur and shortly after, in 2017 BC (IS.13), Išbī-Erra proclaimed himself a sovereign of Isin and seized control over the ideologically crucial Nippur.

At the second stage, c. 2010 r. BC (IS.19)¹³⁵, referred to in the two letters between the king and Puzur-Šulgi, Išbī-Erra is clearly presented as the hegemon of the northern region of Sumer; supported by the authority of the priests of the Nippur temple of Enlil, he was gradually taking over the heritage of the kings of Ur, subduing both the immigrant Amorite tribes and the local dignitaries of Ibbi-Suen's administration, who had revolted against the king. Having received military reinforcements from the king, Puzur-Šulgi was nevertheless troubled with the growth of Išbī-Erra's power and was clearly wavering in his loyalty to the king, who by then could resort only to frantically begging the ensi of Kazallum to remain at his side. Išbī-Erra's betrayal and his later triumphs deprived Ur of the last sources of provisions; at this point the arrival of the final catastrophe was only a matter of time.

At the third stage, in 2008 BC (IS.22)¹³⁶ the final coup was delivered to the virtually defenceless capital by the Elamites in alliance with the Gutians and other tribes of the Zagros. The valiant Ibbi-Suen repulsed the first attack, led probably by Kindattu of the Šimaški dynasty¹³⁷, who had gathered under his command all the eastern states from Marhaši to Zabšali. The yearname of IS.22 makes an allusion to a flood, after which the king strengthened the walls of the capital. To credit the main source for those events, the *Hymn to Išbī-Erra*,¹³⁸ and the yearnames of his reign, the king of Isin, frightened of the Elamite attack, which

¹³⁵ See C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 56-65.

¹³⁶ See C. Wilcke, *Drei Phasen*, pp. 65-67.

¹³⁷ On the basis of a passage in *Hymn to Išbī-Erra*, J. van Dijk, *Išbi'erra*, pp. 189-208 (esp. p. 191-197).

¹³⁸ Compiled from four fragments of the **ki-ru-gu**₂ genre, it was published by J. Van Dijk, *Išbi'erra*, p. 191 (first fragment), pp. 192-194 (second fragment), pp. 197-199 (third fragment), p. 202 (fourth fragment).

was probably an equal threat to his own state, actually gave military support to the king of Ur¹³⁹. The last three years of Ibbi-Suen's reign were filled with repeated frantic attempts to stem the course of the tragedy by playing diplomatic games with Išbi-Erra, the successors of Kindattu in Elam, at odds after fighting for the throne after his death, and their allies¹⁴⁰. In the end, however, having regained the initiative and won back their allies, the Elamites returned in 2005 BC (IS.25), captured and plundered Ur. The last king of the Third Dynasty was taken prisoner, led into captivity to Anšan and nothing was ever heard of him again. The fall of Ur is celebrated, with a shattering awareness of the end of an era, in the famous *Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*¹⁴¹, where in one of the final passages the blame for the tragedy is laid equally on Tidnum, Gutium i Anšan¹⁴².

What is, however, the most surprising fact about the entire reign of Ibbi-Suen – provided of course that his yearnames are not just an element of the propaganda of success – is that given the hopeless situation (i.e. the loss of the state's core lands) the king was for a relatively long time able to conduct an effective military offensive in a very distant territory:

¹³⁹ Yearname of the 16th year of Išbi-Erra's reign is **mu "iš-bi-Ir₃-ra lugal-e ugnim šimaški u₃ elam-e bi₂-in-ra** – "The year Išbi-Erra, the king, armies of Šimaški and Elam defeated" – see M. Sigrist, *Isin Year Names*, Berrien Springs 1988, p. 16.

¹⁴⁰ See J. van Dijk, *Išbi'erra*, pp. 197-206; T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 135-136. In his 15th year of reign, Išbi-Erra, as part of those diplomatic contests, attempted even to strike an alliance with Elam by sending his daughter as a daughter-in-law for the sukka! of Elam. This is mentioned by BIN 9.438, 21-24: **nig₂-ba li-bur-ni-rum dumu.munus / lugal, u₄ išdum-ki-in, dumu hu-ba-si₂-im-ti sukka!, ba-an-tuk-a** – "gifts for Libūr-nīrum, daughter of the king (for) the day (in which) to Išdum-kīn, son of Huba-simti, the sukka!, she shall be married". See text, translation and commentary by M. Van de Mieroop, *Crafts in the Early Isin Period*, OLA 24, Leuven 1987, pp. 108-110, no 24. Huba-simti the sukka! is probably identical with the later "regent" of Elam Humban-šimti son of Hutran-tempt. The alliance probably fell through since a year later the two monarchs fought each other at Ur.

¹⁴¹ Full edition with commentary, see P. Michałowski, *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*, Winona Lake 1989.

¹⁴² Lin. 486-491 – see P. Michałowski, *The Lamentation*, pp. 66-67.

- IS.3 – victory over the north-Mesopotamian Simurru
- IS.9 – assault on the Elamite Huhunuri
- IS.14 – victory and capture of the monarchs of Susiana (Susa, Adamdun¹⁴³ and Awan¹⁴⁴)
- IS.17 – subjugation of the Amorites from the southern border area (region unknown)

It is possible, as some scholars claim, that the short-term economic boom in Ur in the years IS.14 to IS.16, which is demonstrated by a rise in the number of the surviving economic texts, was an effect of an influx of spoils after the successful assault on Susiana¹⁴⁵. The king tried to resort to diplomatic counteroffensive as well, hoping to keep the alliance with, or at least ensure neutrality of, the strong state of Zabšali by continuing the dynastic policy towards it and marrying his daughter Tukīn-hatti-migīša to its ensi (IS.5). Considering that at that point the king no longer controlled even Ešnunna, en route to Zabšali, it is difficult to judge whether those actions brought any effect, e.g. in preventing Šimaški from attacking¹⁴⁶. Extension of the walls protecting both the capitals of Ur and Nippur in the year IS.6 is a clear indication of the king's awareness of an increasing danger to the state's core lands. The later events were to demonstrate that Ibbī-Suen's determination only prolonged the agony of his kingdom.

¹⁴³ Probably the present Šuštār or in its vicinity, 60 km south east of Susa – F. Vallat, B. Groneberg, *Les noms géographiques des sources suso-élamites*, RGTC 11, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 4; earlier locations – e.g. Deh-e nou, see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, pp. 3-5 (*ibid.* earlier literature).

¹⁴⁴ Inscriptions of Rimuš, king of Akkad, informing of his battle upon the Qablitu River, permit to locate Awan close to Susa, towards the north east, in the vicinity of the present Dezful – see D.O. Edzard, G. Farber, RGTC 2, p. 20; M.W. Stolper, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 3/5, pp. 113-114; D. Frayne, RIME 3/2, p. 364.

¹⁴⁵ See B. Lafont, *La chute des rois d'Ur*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁶ A spectacular increase of Šimaški's power in the Neo-Sumerian period, including Ibbī-Suen's, see M. Stolper, *On the Dynasty of Šimaški*, pp. 49-52; F. Vallat, *Susa and Susiana in Second-Millennium Iran*, [in:] CANE (ed.) J.M. Sasson, New York 1995, pp. 1023-1033 – p. 1025.

Chapter 2: Territorial and organisational structure of the state

From the formal point of view, an attempt to present the organisation of the state of the Third Dynasty of Ur in a hierarchic order yields a very simple model, typical not only for the monarchies of the ancient East¹⁴⁷, consisting of five levels¹⁴⁸. At its head was the king, the divine anointed, deified after his death, and from a certain point in time deified already during his lifetime. He was an intermediary between gods and the real world, with certain functions and sacred duties at his disposal, which enabled him to fulfil his mission correctly (level one). The circle of authority and power closest to the king consisted of members of his numerous family¹⁴⁹, to a certain extent also surrounded with divine

¹⁴⁷ See for instance the extremely synthetic and clear outline of the state structures in J.-P. Grégoire, *Archives administratives sumériennes*, (AAS) Paris 1970, pp. XIII-XVIII.

¹⁴⁸ I.J. Winter, *Legitimation of Authority through Image and Legend: Seals Belonging to Officials in the Administrative Bureaucracy of the Ur III State*, [in:] *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*, (eds.) Biggs, R.D., Gibson, Mc.G., SAOC 46, Chicago 1987, pp. 88-91, accepts a four-level division of society in the kingdom of Ur, perceiving the province governors as belonging to the same level as the count and the closes circle surrounding the king.

¹⁴⁹ For the multiplicity of Ur III royal family members and the range to which they participated in public life, see for instance the very telling lists in D. Frayne, *RIME* 3/2, pp. XXXVII-XL (entire dynasty), p. 85 (Ur-Namma's family), pp. 167-169 (Šulgi's family), pp. 267-268 (Amar-Suen's family), pp. 336-337 (Šū-Suen's family), p. 375 (Ibbī-Suen's family); also the chronological table of royal wives, W. Salla-

splendour (the queen – **nin**, other wives or concubines, termed **lukur** in Sumerian, the firstborn heir¹⁵⁰, the sons, the princess-daughters, other children, sometimes brothers and various family members by adoption or marriage¹⁵¹) and a group of the highest state officials, holding either leading positions in the central government (with the vizier **sukkal-mah** at the fore) or specific court functions (level two).

Level three consisted of province governors, holding various positions with a varying range of power and duties, depending on their province's location in one of the three organisational zones of the state. As a rule, those were province governors (**ensi**₂) or military governors (**šagina**). The next, fourth level – essentially the foundation for the state structures – consisted of clerks of various levels, who created the totality of the administrative apparatus both in the provinces and in the central offices. This group includes the temple bureaucracy, structurally and economically connected with the state (the crown), with the priestly hierarchy at its fore, as well as the highest officials of the local government – the heads (**bazānnum**) of small towns, settlements and villages. The latter form a level of administrative structures by the sheer fact of being the representatives of local communities before the official administration.

The last, fifth level is the populace – the inhabitants of the kingdom, regardless of their financial or professional status and the presence or absence of economic links with one or another organisational sector of the state's economy. From the point of view of social stratification, the

berger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 183. See also the interesting analysis in M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 357-363 and in a survey approach in I.J. Gelb, *Household and Family in Early Mesopotamia*, [in:] *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East*, I, (ed.) E. Lipiński, OLA 5, Leuven 1979; pp. 65-68.

¹⁵⁰ For the analysis whether, and to what extent a formal institution of the crown prince (Kronprinz) – heir apparent existed in the times of the Third Dynasty of Ur, see W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 182.

¹⁵¹ Numerous examples of careers in the highest state offices of the royal family members by blood or by marriage were listed by e.g. T.M. Sharlach, *Beyond Chronology*, pp. 65-68.

common people included, firstly, freemen, who were both socially and economically independent and active in the private sector and in the local government, secondly, all categories of labourers in the economic entities of state or temples (including the free hired workers and the "half-free" men, bound to labour duty for those entities), and finally the slaves (**urdu₂**)¹⁵². Due to their small number, however, throughout the entire period of the Third Dynasty of Ur the last group formed the demographic and economic margin of the society¹⁵³. In the present

¹⁵² Marked with the cuneiform sign **IR₁₁** (**NITA₂xKUR**) with the readings **ir₁₁**, **urdu₂** or **arad₂**, or more rarely with the cuneiform sign **IR₃** with the reading **ir₃** – for the meaning "slave", see R. Labat 50, p. 59; R. Borger, AOAT 50-51, p. 66. It is also possible, although there are no source proofs to corroborate it, that already in the Neo-Sumerian period there existed a category of "hostages" (akkad. **nipūtum**), that is people given, or giving themselves, in thrall (serfdom) for the period until their debts were paid by labour or service. This phenomenon must have been common in the societies of the Old-Babylonian era, considering that Hammurabi devoted so much attention to it in his Code (§§ 115-118).

¹⁵³ Social stratification of various population groups (also as a category of the employees of the state/temple sector), including slaves, has merited polemical literature so enormous that it is impossible even to cite it here in its entirety. One of the more vigorously discussed issues were the forms of remuneration for work in the state/temple sector. The following are selected studies, which contain also bibliographic references to earlier studies on the topic: I.M. Diakonoff; *Obszczestwiennyj i gosudarstwiennyj stroj*, pp. 249-268 (earlier literature, chiefly in the Russian language, e.g. studies by A.I. Tiumieniev and V.V. Struve, p. 252, no 10); V.V. Struve, *Some new data on the organization of labour on social structure in Sumer during the reign of the IIIrd Dynasty of Ur*, [in:] *Ancient Mesopotamia: Socio-Economic History, A Collection of Studies by Soviet Scholars*, (ed.) I.M. Diakonoff, Moskva 1969, pp. 127-172; I.M. Diakonoff, *Slaves, Helots and Serfs in Early Antiquity*, ActAnHun 22 (1974), pp. 45-78 [translation of the article *Raby, iloty, kriepostnyje w ranniej driwnosti*, VDI 1973/4, pp. 3-29]; idem, *The Structure of Near Eastern Society before the Middle of the 2nd Millennium B.C.*, [in:] *Oikumene. Studia ad historiam antiquam classicam et orientale spectantia*, vol. III, Budapest 1982, pp. 23-97; I.M. Diakonoff, *Problemy ekonomiki. O strukturie obszczestwa Bliźniego Vostoka do sieriediny II tys. do n.e.*, VDI 1967/4, 13-35; 1968/3, 3-27, 1968/4, pp. 3-40; *Mesopotamia*, ed. I.M. Diakonoff, Moskwa 1983, pp. 269-280; idem, *Slave-Labour vs. Non-Slave Labour: The Problem of Definition*, [in:] *Labor in the Ancient Near East*, (ed.) M.A. Powell, AOS 68, Winona Lake 1987, pp. 1-4; I.J. Gelb, *Terms for Slaves in Ancient Mesopotamia*, [in:] *Societies and Languages of the Ancient Near East. Studies in Honour I.M. Diakonoff*, (eds.) M.A. Dandamajew,

work, however, of interest are those elements of the kingdom's social and political system which are directly related to the post of the ensi. Hence all the following chapters, in presenting the problems indicated in their titles, are limited to issues selected exclusively for their relevance to this matter.

I. Gershetitch, H. Klengel, G. Komoróczy, M.T. Larsen, J.N. Postgate, Warminster 1982, pp. 81-98; idem, *From Freedom to Slavery*, [in:] *Gesellschaftsklassen im Alten Zweistromland und in den angrenzenden Gebieten*: 18. RAI München, 29 Juni bis 3. Juli 1970, (ed.) D.O. Edzard, BAWph. 75, München 1972, pp. 81-92; idem, *The Ancient Mesopotamian Ration System*, JNES 24 (1965), pp. 230-243; idem, *The Arua Institution*, RA 66 (1972), pp. 1-32; idem, *Prisoners*, pp. 70-98; idem, *Definition and Discussion of Slavery and Serfdom*, UF 11 (1979), pp. 283-297; K. Maekawa, *New Texts on the Collective Labor Service of the Erin-People of Ur III Girsu*, ASJ 10 (1988), pp. 37-94; K. Maekawa, *The erin-People in Lagash of Ur III Times*, RA 70 (1976), pp. 9-44; K. Maekawa, *Rations, Wages and Economic Trends in the Ur III Period*, AoF 16 (1989), pp. 42-50; M. Sigrist, *Erin-un-il*, RA 73 (1979), pp. 101-120; RA 74 (1980), pp. 11-28; P. Steinkeller, *The Foresters of Umma: Toward a Definition of Ur III Labor*, [in:] *Labor in the Near East*, (ed.) M.A. Powell, AOS 68, New Haven 1987, pp. 73-115; D.M. Sharashenidzhe, *K voprosu o racjonie administrativnogo piersonata gosudarstva epochi III dinastii Ura*, VDI 159 (1982), pp. 99-109; idem, *Formy eksploatacji roboczej siły w gosudarstvennom chozajstve Szumiera II poł. III tys. do n.e.*, Tbilisi 1986; idem, *Juridiczeskij status geme i dietiej rabov w epochu III dinastii Ura*, VDI 1975/3, pp. 96-101; idem, *Najemnaja raboczaja sila w gosudarstvennom chozajstve epochi III dinastii Ura (2132-2024 gg. do n.e.)*, KBS 6 (1980), pp. 32-47; idem, *Osobiennosti oplaty truda raboczego piersonata gosudarstvennogo chozajstva Szumiera epochi III dinastii Ura*, "Macne" 4 (1981), pp. 75-84; idem, *Jeszcze raz o poniatii raboczzej siły u szumierow*, KBS 7 (1984), pp. 49-56; K. Maekawa, *Collective Labor Service in Girsu-Lagash: The Pre-Sargonic and the Ur III Periods*, pp. 49-72; H. Waetzoldt, *Compensation of Craft Workers and Officials in the Ur III Period*, pp. 117-141; H. Klengel, *Non-Slave Labour in the Old Babylonian Period: The Basic Outlines*, pp. 159-166; H. Limet, *Complexité salariale et complexité sociale à l'époque néo-sumérienne*, AoF 15 (1988), pp. 231-242; A. Uchitel, *Erin-ěš-didli*, ASJ 14 (1992), pp. 317-338; idem, *Eriin-ěš-didli (II): patterns of conscription and work assignment during the years AS 8 – ŠS 1*, ASJ 18 (1996), pp. 217-228.

2.1. The territory of the state and its division in three regions

The kingdom of the Third Dynasty of Ur, as it had been finally shaped territorially and organisationally by Šulgi's conquests and reforms, encompassed territories which were, especially in the reality of the late third millennium BC, nothing short of enormous. It was the largest and the most powerful state of its era – the only one which in those respects may have been its equal, Egypt of the pharaohs, from roughly the mid-twenty-second century BC was plunged into the permanent turmoil of the First Intermediate Period. The Neo-Sumerian kingdom with the territory of its satellite (vassal) states stretched on the west-east axis from the Euphrates (slightly to the north from the Tigris) to the Markazi and Isfahan provinces of today's Iran (including their western regions), and on the north-south axis from Kurdistan (including) and Lake Urmia to the Iranian provinces of Kerman and Fars (including). Hence, it encompassed the entire eastern part of today's Iraq and the western, mountainous part of Iran.

From the point of view of the state organisational structure and the character of the political and economic integration within the empire, this territory consisted, as it has been noted by P. Steinkeller, of three very diverse zones: the core, the periphery and the vassal states¹⁵⁴.

The core, that is the historical and geographical Sumer and Akkad, was divided into provinces, with their capitals in the old Sumerian

¹⁵⁴ Although earlier many scholars made similar assumptions in their approach to the issue of the territorial differentiation of the Third Dynasty of Ur's lands, the first to propose that consistent a division into three zones and demonstrate the essence of their differentiation was P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 19-41 (map p. 38). This conception has been generally accepted, see e.g. T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, pp. 136-142; J.N. Postgate, *Royal Ideology and State Administration*, p. 395-411 (esp. p. 402, 410); W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 190-199; T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, passim (esp. p. 6-8); T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 135-172 (development and supplement to P. Steinkeller's data).

city-states dating from the pre-Sargonic era or, sporadically, in newly established centres. Judging by the lists of the **bala** tax payers, those were at least eighteen provinces: Adab, A.HA (Tiwe?)¹⁵⁵, Apiak, Babylon, Girsu-Lagaš, Isin, Kazallum, Kiš, Kuta (Gudua)¹⁵⁶, Marad, Puš, Zimbir (Sippar), Šurupak, Umma, Ur, Uruk, Urum and Uru-sagrig.¹⁵⁷ This list should probably be extended by further five: Dabrum, Ereš, Nippur¹⁵⁸, Girtab i IŠ.ŠU, in reference to which the records of paying the **bala** tax did not survive, but their **ensi**₂ governors are known from elsewhere¹⁵⁹. Apart from the capital city, the territory of a province included small towns, villages and settlements, sometimes numerous indeed, and dozens or hundreds of the smallest territorial/economic units known simply as "fields" (**a-ša**₃). For instance, the province of Umma with its capital in this city (presently Jokha) encompassed the following centres, all described with the post-determinative KI, which in this sense indicates a territorially separate toponym: Amrina, Apišal (Akasala)¹⁶⁰, Asarum-dagi, Dintir, Garšana, Garkuruda, Id-dula, Kamari, Kardahi,

¹⁵⁵ Possible identification, see. P. Steinkeller, *A Rediscovered Akkadian City?*, ASJ 17 (1995), pp. 275-281.

¹⁵⁶ Monographic table of data regarding the ensis of Kuta (Gudua): Ur-sagamu, Namzitarra, Gudea, Pilah-iš, Lu-Šara, see D.I. Owen, *The Ensis of Gudua*, ASJ 15 (1993), pp. 131-152 (chronological list of documents from Puzriš-Dagān referring to their activity, pp. 133-136).

¹⁵⁷ See the lists by P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 22-23 (map, p. 23) and earlier by W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 92, 94-95 (table).

¹⁵⁸ One instance of the ensi of Nippur having paid the **bala** tax has survived. This text was published in M. Tanret, *Nouvelles données à propos de l'amphictyonie néo-sumérienne*, „Akkadica” 13 (1979), pp. 28-45 (pp. 28-29 text edition). On the possibility of an error or identification of Ahuma the **ensi**₂ of Nippur with the concurrently active Ahuma the **ensi**₂ of Puš, see *ibid.*, pp. 35-37.

¹⁵⁹ P. Steinkeller's data was corrected and supplemented by a comparison regarding **bala** payment and the presence of ensi by T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 6-8.

¹⁶⁰ Similarly to the case of Kidingir, several readings of the toponym written in cuneiform signs **A.KA.SILA**₃.KI: **a-KA-sala**₄^{ki}, **a-KA-sal**₄^{ki}, **a-pi**₄-**šal**₂^{ki} are accepted; see J.-J. Grégoire, AAS, text no 63 and commentary, pp. 91-92 (analysis of the reading).

Karkar, Kidingir (KI.AN)¹⁶¹, Maškan, Nagsu, Šarbat and Zabalam¹⁶². Each of those had its assigned, definite territory, delineated mainly with the fields (a-ša₃). To stay with the example of the Umma province: at least thirty-four different a-ša₃ belonged to Apišal, and in its territory there were about twelve different cult centres, some of which certainly temples with their own households¹⁶³. The entire Umma province held at least 238 a-ša₃, equal to c. 1000 km² of arable land, apart from other types of land (pastures, woods, rushlands, canals and other types of economic infrastructure)¹⁶⁴. To compare, the Girsu-Lagaš province, the largest (or the one having the most arable land), had as much as 485 a-ša₃, which, depending on the various conversion units of the "field", equals from 3000 to 5000 km² of farmland.¹⁶⁵ Of course, not all provinces were as large as Umma and Girsu-Lagaš, and their economy was not centred on farming to the same extent as that of those southern provinces.

It is a matter of discussion whether the core zone included the southern part of the Diyala River region, with such key cities as Ešnunna and Išim-Šulgi, as well as Susiana with Susa. In his list and description, P. Steinkeller includes both the Diyala cities into the core, whereas the

¹⁶¹ Several readings of the town name written in cuneiform signs **KI.AN.KI: ki-dingir**^{ki}, **ki-an**^{ki}, **KI.AN**^{ki} are accepted, depending on the decision of how to interpret the meaning of the signs used in the toponym; see J.-J. Grégoire, AAS, text no 39 and commentary.

¹⁶² P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 24. The territorial analysis of the Umma province is the topic of the monographic study by H. Sauren, *Topographie der Provinz Umma nach den Urkunden der Zeit der III. Dynastie von Ur. Teil 1: Kanäle und Bewässerungsanlagen*, Bamberg 1966 (further in this text: TUU).

¹⁶³ An exhaustive description of the territory of Apišal, with detailed economic and territorial units, see J.-J. Grégoire, AAS, pp. 90-100.

¹⁶⁴ G. Pettinato, *Untersuchungen zur neusumerischen Landwirtschaft. I/1, Die Felder*, Napoli 1967, (further in this text: UNL) pp. 11-12.

¹⁶⁵ G. Pettinato, UNL I/1, pp. 11-12. See also the very detailed description of the structure of the southern Girsu-Lagaš province with an analysis of its development from the Old-Sumerian period in the large monograph by J.-P. Grégoire, *La province méridionale de l'état de Lagash*, Paris 1962, pp. 42-135 (Third Dynasty of Ur Period).

map locates them, similarly to Susa, clearly within the periphery zone¹⁶⁶. Throughout his article, however, this author clearly seems to regard both cities as part of the core, a view shared by W.W. Hallo¹⁶⁷ and W. Sallaberger¹⁶⁸. The issue, however, is problematic, given the fact that the governors of all the three cities (Ešnunna, Išim-Šulgi and the distant Susa) in some cases are mentioned as payers of the **bala** tax, in others – as payers of the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute, which is the main determinant of inclusion into the periphery zone. T. M. Sharlach may be correct in assuming, in accordance with the source materials, that the status of those centres changed depending on the political situation¹⁶⁹. The *Cadastré of Ur-Namma*, which has already been mentioned earlier in this text¹⁷⁰, in describing the extent of Ur-Namma's conquests, does not mention any of those cities as freed from the power of Anšan (Elam). This does not necessarily mean, however, that Šulgi did not include any of the newly subjugated cities into the core zone, and that the situation could not have changed dynamically in the course of time. Considering the traditional relations of the Diyala River region with Sumer and Akkad, it would probably not be erroneous to include Ešnunna and Išim-Šulgi into the core zone of the Third Dynasty of Ur state. The fact that Susa paid the bala tax should, in turn, be viewed as an exceptional situation and should not be regarded as basis for its inclusion into the core.

The "peripheries" are, generally speaking, the regions subjugated and organised by Šulgi, nearly twice as large as the core of the state, which they surrounded from the north-east and east. They encompassed the land at the foot of the Zagros Mountains and partially the western mountain ranges, from the line of the Tigris and the Great Zab in the north to the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf, up to the Zohreh River,

¹⁶⁶ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 22 (description and list), p. 38 (map).

¹⁶⁷ W.W. Hallo, *The Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 92-93, 94-95 (table).

¹⁶⁸ W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 190-191.

¹⁶⁹ T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁷⁰ See above, Ch. 2.1.1.

perhaps even to the Šapūr River. This area corresponds in general to the entire eastern Iraq (from Tigris) and the western Iran provinces of Kordestān (Kurdistan), Lorestān (Luristan) and Khūzestān (Khuzestan). Geographically and strategically, this area was the natural buffer zone, the core's defensive zone against foreign states.

Accepting the fact of paying the gun_2 (**ma-da**) tribute by a city, land or population of a given region as the criterion of its inclusion into the periphery, as much as eighty-nine city-states are known to be part of it: Abal (**a-ba-al^{ki}**), Abibana (**a-bi₂-ba-na^{ki}**), Adamdun (**a-dam-dun^{ki}**), Agaz (**a-gaz^{ki}**), Arami (**a-ra-mi^{ki}**), Arman (**ar-ma-an^{ki}**), Arraphum (**ar-ap-hu-um^{ki}**, **ar-ra-ap-hu-um^{ki}**), Ašur (**aš-šur^{ki}**), Azaman (**a-za-ma-n^{ki}**), Ba'a-NE, BAD₃.AN-kizi (**BAD₃.AN-ki-zi^{ki}**), Badariš-[x], Balue (**ba-lu-e^{ki}**), Barman, Bidadun (**bi₂-da-dun^{ki}**), Daltum (**da-la-tum^{ki}**), Dašinewi, Dēr (**BAD₃.AN^{ki}**), Durebla (**dur-eb-la^{ki}**), Durmaš (**dur-maš^{ki}**), Ebal (**e-ba-al^{ki}**), Eduru-Šulgi (**e₂-duru₅-d^{ki}šul-gi^{ki}**), Erud, Ešnunna* (**aš₂-nun^{ki}**), Gablaš (**gab₂-la-aš^{ki}**), Gar-NE.NE (**gar₃-Ne.NE^{ki}**), Gu(na)rašina, Habura (**ha-bu-ra^{ki}**), Hamazi (**ha-ma-zi^{ki}**), Harši (**ha-ar-ši^{ki}**), Hurti/Hu'urti (**hu-ur₅-ti^{ki}**), Hubi'um (**hu-bu-um^{ki}**), Hubni (**hu-ub-ni^{ki}**), Innaba, Ilšu-rabi, Išim-Šulgi* (**i-šim-d^{ki}šul-gi^{ki}**), Išim-Šū-Suen (**i-šim-d^{ki}šū-d^{ki}EN.ZU^{ki}**), Išum (**i-šum^{ki}**), Ja'amiš (**i₃-a-mi-iš^{ki}**), Kakkulatun (**gag-gu-la-tum^{ki}**), Kakkum, Karahar (**kara₂-har^{ki}**), Kismar (**ki-is-mar^{ki}**), Kišgati (**ki-iš-ga-ti^{ki}**), Kimaš (**ki-maš^{ki}**), Likri, Lulubu (**lu-lu-bu^{ki}**), Lululu (**lu₂-lu-lu^{ki}**), Māhāzum (**ma-ha-zum^{ki}**), Marman (**mar₂-ma-an^{ki}**), Mašatum, Maškan-abi (**maš-kan₂-a-bi^{ki}**), Maškan-garaš (**maš-kan₂-ga-raš^{ki}**), Maškan-kallatum (**maš-kan₂-ga-la-tum^{ki}**), Maškan-šarrum (**maš-kan₂-šar-ru-um^{ki}**), Nēbir-Amar-Suen (**ne-bi-ir-d^{ki}amar-d^{ki}ENZU^{ki}**), Nēbirum (**ne-bi₂-ru-um^{ki}** / **ne-bi-ir^{ki}**), Ni-darašwi (**NI-da-ra-aš-wi^{ki}**), Nihi (**ni-hi^{ki}**), Ninua / Niniwa (**ni-nu₂-a^{ki}**), Nugar (**nu-ga-ar^{ki}**), PI-il (**PI-il^{ki}**), Puhzigar (**pu-uh₂-zi-gar^{ki}**), Pūt-šadar (**pu-ut-ša-dar^{ki}**), Pūt-tuli'um (**pu-ut-tu-li-im^{ki}** / **pu-ut-li-im^{ki}**), Ra-NE (**ra-NE^{ki}**), Sabum (**sa-bu-um^{ki}**), Sallanewi, Simurru (**si-mu-ru-um^{ki}**), Si'ummi (**si-um-mi^{ki}**), Suza (**MUŠ₂.ERIN^{ki}**), Šami

(ša-mi^{ki}), Šanidat (ša-ni-da-at^{ki}), Šetirša (še-ti-it-ša^{ki}), Šu'ahi / Šu'ah (šu-ah^{ki}), Šu'irhum (šu-ir-hu-um^{ki}), Šunti / Šumti'um, Šurbum (šu-ur₂-bu^{ki}), Šū-Suen-nihi (^dšu-^dEN.ZU-NI.HI^{ki}), Tablala (tab-la-la^{ki}), Tabra (tab-ra^{ki}), Tašil (ta₂-ši-il^{ki}), Terqa (ti-ir-ga^{ki}), Tiran (ti-ra-an^{ki}), Tumbal (tum-ba-al.^{ki}), Tutub (tu-tu-ub^{ki}), Tuttul, U₂-[ra?]-e (u₂-[ra?]-e^{ki}), Urbilum (ur-bi₂-lum^{ki}), Urguhalam (ur-gu-ha-lam^{ki}), Urua (URUxA^{ki}), Wanum (wa-nu-um^{ki}), Zababa (^dza-ba₄-ba₄^{ki}), Zatum (za₃-tum^{ki} / za-tum^{ki}) i Zimudar (zi-mu-dar^{ki})¹⁷¹. Even though only some of the above could have been located precisely on the basis of existing data, they quite sufficiently corroborate the area of the periphery as described in the preceding paragraph.

The third zone, which it would perhaps be most correct to term the "sphere of influence", consists of a system of vassal (satellite) states. Their territories were, in relation to the periphery, a surrounding zone in a similar manner that the periphery surrounded the core lands, and protected the periphery along the entire eastern and northern border. Geographically, this even wider arc ran from the present Turkish-Iraqi border and Lake Uri in the north, to somewhere around the line of Bakhtegān – Mahārlu – Tašik lakes in the south, encompassing almost the entire region of Kurdistan mountains and the Zagros Mountains, with the Iranian province of Fars in the south. It consisted of states which remained in the orbit of influence of the Kingdom of Ur (e.g. through dynastic marriages), but did not pay the **gun₂ ma-da** tax (for the detailed list see below, Ch. 2.4.).

¹⁷¹ P. Steinkeller's list in *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 36-37, note 56, was supplemented, with source corroboration, to include Karahar, Kišgati, Kimaš, Maškan-abi, Ninua, Šū-Suen-nihi and Tutub, by T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, Appendix, pp. 165-177. The cities where the original spelling of the name is not given in parentheses, according to T. Maeda do not have corroboration in the available source material. Earlier lists, less detailed due to a smaller number of available sources, was compiled by: A. Goetze, *Šakkanakkus*, pp. 4-7; P. Michałowski, *Foreign Tribute*, pp. 48-49. Asterisks mark the cities which may have belonged to the core.

2.2. The centre – organisation of provinces in the territory of Sumer and Akkad

The character and organizational structure of the core has been described, at least partially, while delineating its territory. In general, provinces, into which the entire Sumer and Akkad were divided, were governed by the ensis, civilian governors, who held the highest civil, judiciary and strictly administrative power in the social and economic dimension¹⁷². In the last aspect, they were superior also to all the temple households in their province, at the head of which stood the priest-officials **sanga** or **šabra**. The position of an ensi was a resultant of two factors. Appointed and recalled by the kings of Ur¹⁷³, they governed the province in their name, as a part of the kingdom; at the same time, however, very often hailing from the local aristocracy, they continuously maintained an element of traditional leadership of the community resident in their territory – a territory which was often identical with the territory of a once-independent city-state. To state it simply, an ensi represented the authority and power of the king in front of the population and provincial institutions, as much as he represented the latter in front of the central authorities. The fact that boundaries

¹⁷² Concise, synthetic characteristic of the position of ensi in the Third Dynasty of Ur Period can be found in: P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 24-27; J.-P. Grégoire, AAS, pp. XIII-XIV; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 191-192; see also the large monograph in Polish: M. Stępień, *Ensi w czasach III dynastii z Ur: aspekty ekonomiczne i administracyjne pozycji namiestnika prowincji w świetle archiwum z Umy*, Dissertationes WUW, Warszawa 2006.

¹⁷³ Possible examples of perturbations in holding the office of province governors (in e.g. Girsu-Lagaš, Umma or Nippur) in connection with the changes in administration after a new monarch had assumed the throne, see K. Maekawa, *Confiscation of Private Properties*, pp. 103-168; ASJ 19 (1997), pp. 273-291 (Supplement 1) (instances of Girsu-Lagaš and Umma); M. Tanret, *Nouvelles donnees*, pp. 36-40 (instance of Nippur). Also the insurances when Gudea replaced Namzitarra as the ensi of Kuta (Gudua) in the year AS.2, whereas Lu-Šara replaced Pilah-iš in IS.2, may be a trace of such actions, see data compiled by D.I. Owen, *The Ensis of Gudua*, pp. 131-152 (esp. p. 133-136).

which were to a large extent similar were maintained both by the Old-Akkadian and the Neo-Sumerian monarchs resulted most probably from the similarity of economic factors that lay at the foundation of the process in which the city-state's territories were shaped – usually around a single religious and economic centre – in the initial process of their creation, which began with the “city revolution” and continued even in the late fourth and early third millennium BC¹⁷⁴. They arose as a result of a gradual development of the local irrigation networks and usually encompassed a territory which from this point of view formed a natural economic unit. A disturbance of such unit always caused social unrest and unnecessary costs of more problematic economy and administration, and hence it was an exception introduced only for vital political reasons.

¹⁷⁴ Among the very many studies devoted to this issue, see the already classic works by V.G. Childe, *The Urban Revolution*, „The Town Planning Revue” 21 (1950), pp. 3-17; R. McC. Adams, *The Evolution of Urban Society*, Chicago 1966; idem, *The Study of Ancient Mesopotamian Settlement Patterns and the Problem of Urban Origins*, “Sumer” 25 (1969), pp. 111-123; M.B. Rowton, *The Role of Watercourses in the Growth of Mesopotamian Civilization*, AOAT 1, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969; R. McC. Adams, H. Nissen, *The Uruk Countryside, The Natural Setting of Urban Societies*, Chicago 1972; G.A. Johnson, *Spatial Organization Of Early Uruk Settlement Systems*, [in:] *L'archéologie de l'Iraq du début de l'époque néolithique à 333 avant notre ère. Perspectives et limites de l'interprétation anthropologique des documents*, (ed.) M.-Th. Barrlet, Paris 1980, pp. 233-263; R. McC. Adams, *Heartland of Cities: Surveys of Ancient Settlement and Land Use on the Central Floodplain of the Euphrates*, Chicago – London 1981; J.-P. Grégoire, *Production, pouvoir et parenté*, Paris 1981; R. McC. Adams, *Die Rolle des Bewässerungsbodenbaus bei der Entwicklung von Institutionen in der altmesopotamischen Gesellschaft*, [in:] *Produktivkräfte und Gesellschaftsformationen in vorkapitalistischer Zeit*, (ed.) J. Hermann, Berlin 1982, pp. 119-140, and recently E.C. Stone, *The Development of Cities in Ancient Mesopotamia*, CANE I, New York 1995, pp. 235-248; J.-J. Glassner, *Les petits Etats mésopotamiens à la fin du 4e et au cours du 3e millénaire*, [in:] *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures. An Investigation Conducted by the Copenhagen Polis Centre*, (ed.) M.H. Hansen, Copenhagen 2000, pp. 35-53. See also the article in Polish, presenting a summary of a stage of research: J. Targalski, *Formowanie się miast-państw w południowej Mezopotamii*, PH 71 (1980), pp. 295-323.

Regardless of the presence of the ensi, in each province there resided at least one military governor (**šagina**), whom with regard to the core regions it would be perhaps more appropriate to call a "commander". In the particularly large and important provinces, in which several separate garrisons were stationed (e.g. Umma), there may have been more than one **šagina**. His main tasks were to command the local garrison, consisting of the professional soldiers (**aga-uš**) and the reservist soldier-workers (**eren₂**) living in the barracks, as well as to manage the royal estates in the given province. In both spheres of his activity he was independent from the ensi and, similarly to him, was responsible directly to the central administration (the king or the vizier **sukkal-mah**). As it has been correctly observed by P. Steinkeller¹⁷⁵, the fact that the **šagina**, a direct representative of the king and leader of the "enforcement resort", had been granted such powers, in the core provinces was undoubtedly motivated by the need to limit the ensi's freedom of manoeuvre and to guarantee the coherence and internal security of the kingdom. It has to be added that, since the ordinary division of power into civil and military (a division which would once and for all remove the danger of disproportionate growth of the province governor's powers) is clearly not an issue here, the very position of the **šagina** in relation to the ensi is an indication that the latter was perceived by the central authority more as a leader of the local community than as a royal deputy, and that the **šagina** was to be the guarantor of the ensi's loyalty. It was even more so considering that the **šagina** usually hailed from outside the local community, most often from the families or clans which were altogether new to the region (typical *homines novi*), even in the ethnic sense (Amorites). Having been sent to the province from outside, the **šagina** linked his entire career with advancement in loyal service to the king. It is not by accident that a significantly larger percentage of non-Sumerian names (Akkadian, Amorite, and even Hurian and Elamite) is

¹⁷⁵ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 24-26; on the **šagina**, see also J.-P. Grégoire, AAS, p. XIV; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 194.

found among the **šagina** than among the ensis¹⁷⁶. Recently discovered texts of Garšana, presented by David I. Owen's team during the RAI 52 conference in Münster, corroborate this view beyond any doubt¹⁷⁷. On the other hand, many of those men simply belonged to the royal family by birth or by marriage¹⁷⁸.

As has been demonstrated by I. J. Winter¹⁷⁹, as a mark of their personal favour (and as a method of ensuring the loyalty of key governors, military governors and officials of the central administration) the monarchs of Ur very consciously used the act of granting the right to use the royal "dedication" seal, especially one recalling the personal connection between the king and the given official: seal of the **urdu₂-da-ni-ir in-na-ba** type ("to his servant [the king personally] gave it"). This glorious fact was commemorated on the seal with an audience scene, in which the owner of the seal was introduced to the seated king's presence by his protective deity. All the above protective measures must have been growing in importance in a situation when the tendency to inherit the function of the ensi of a given province within one aristocratic house was growing. This process can be observed in Umma, Girsu-Lagaš, Šurupak, Nippur, Babylon and Marad, and hence can be viewed as a general one¹⁸⁰.

Due to their direct connection to the royal court and their special, state-wide religious and cult importance, the "capitals" of the kingdom, Ur, Uruk and Nippur, had a separate political and administrative status. The region of the capital of Ur, which was the permanent residence of

¹⁷⁶ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 25.

¹⁷⁷ For a more detailed discussion of the conclusions drawn from the Garšana texts, see below, Ch. 3.1.

¹⁷⁸ A list of royal sons (**dumu lugal**) holding the post of **šagina**, A. Goetze, *Šakkanakkus*, p. 30; see also emphasis on this fact as part of a conscious personnel policy, P. Michałowski, *Charisma and Control*, p. 58. and examples in footnote 149.

¹⁷⁹ I.J. Winter, *Legitimation of Authority*, pp. 69-116 (esp. pp. 72-76, and lists of holders of such seals pp. 95-106).

¹⁸⁰ See examples compiled by P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 24, note 15.

the king, his court and the central government, was administered by the temple administrator **šabra** or **sanga** (of the temple of Nanna), who in this capacity was also a payer of the **bala** tax¹⁸¹. Similarly, an exceptional, and rather complicated, system of administration was in force in the second capital, Uruk¹⁸², probably due to the ideology of the double source of monarchy that had been shaped already by Ur-Namma. There present are both the **šagina** – a post at some point held by three consecutive sons (**dumu lugal**) of Šulgi: Šū-Enlil (probably identical with Šū-Suen, the future king), Ur-nigar and Ur-Suen¹⁸³, and the **ensi**, also the king's son Šarrum-ilī¹⁸⁴. Additionally, as the payer of the **bala** tax in the name of Uruk appeared one of temple administrators (**šabra**) of the temple of Anu-Inanna or Nanna¹⁸⁵. In his studies on Uruk, P. Michałowski, considering the active role of the king's sons in the administration of Uruk and the role of this city in the state, assumed that it was a kind of a "Dauphiné", and later the residence of Queen Abī-sīmti¹⁸⁶. In one of his recent works, P. Steinkeller, having the widest source material at his disposal, assumed that Uruk was administered personally by the king, since it was he that held the function of the arch-priest **en** at the temple of Eanna¹⁸⁷.

¹⁸¹ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, p. 92; T.M. Shalrach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 9-10. On the exceptional role of Ur and the state ceremonies held there, see M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 381-389; W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender*, pp. 59-208; its economic role, see H. Limet, *Ur et sa région*, pp. 29-36.

¹⁸² See the views on the issue collected by T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 10-11. On the cult role of Uruk and the state ceremonies held there, see W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender*, pp. 209-221.

¹⁸³ See list of source corroborations D. Frayne, *RIME* 3/2, pp. 168-169.

¹⁸⁴ W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 192.

¹⁸⁵ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, p. 92.

¹⁸⁶ P. Michałowski, *Dūrum and Uruk during the Ur III Period*, "Mesopotamia" 12 (1977), p. 88-90; idem, *Charisma and Control*, p. 58.

¹⁸⁷ P. Steinkeller, *On Rulers, Priests and Sacred Marriage: Tracing the Evolution of Early Sumerian Kingship*, [in:] *Priests and Officials in the Ancient Near East*, (ed.) K. Watanabe, Heidelberg 1999, pp. 103-137.

Nippur was also governed by an ensi, but his position was exceptional, since his city was the location of the main centres of the state cult (temples of Enlil and Ninlil) and the periodical sojourns of the king and his court at the palace in the nearby Tummal (**e₂-gal tum-ma-al^{ki}**). The unique situation of the ensi of Nippur is demonstrated by the fact that he was not a payer of the **bala** tax¹⁸⁸. In Nippur, the function of the ensi was practically hereditary in the Ur-Meme family, whose members combined it with a function, also inherited, of the priest-administrator of the local temple of Inanna¹⁸⁹.

To conclude, from a certain point in time – possibly from the second half of Šū-Suen's reign, as demonstrated by the example of Apillaša, governor of Kazallum¹⁹⁰, in three cities: Kazallum, Marad and Apiak the posts of the ensi and **šagina** were held by a single man. According to T. Maeda, in the provinces which were close to the protective wall, this accumulation of power may indicate a growing threat and increasing militarisation of the northern regions of the core within the framework of the entire protective zone¹⁹¹.

With regard to their economy, the central provinces created a very coherent and centralised organism, linked with the rotational **bala** system (see below, Ch. 4) in which the parts were mutually interdependent due to the central government's decisions that some provinces ought to specialise in a given branch of economy.

¹⁸⁸ T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, p. 12.

¹⁸⁹ On Nippur and the role of the Ur-Meme family, see W.W. Hallo, *The House of Ur-Meme*, pp. 87-95 and studies by R.L. Zettler, *The Genealogy*, pp. 1-9; idem, *Administration of the Temple of Inanna*, pp. 117-131; idem, *Sealings as Artifacts of Institutional Administration in Ancient Mesopotamia*, JCS 39/2 (1987), pp. 197-240; extensive monograph, *The Ur III Temple of Inanna*.

¹⁹⁰ R. Kutscher, *Apillaša. Governor of Kazallu*, JCS 22 (1966), pp. 63-65.

¹⁹¹ T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, p. 155 (instances of sources for NE.NE of Marad and Šarrum-bani of Apiak).

2.3. The peripheries – the “outer lands” (**ma-da**)

The scholars seem in agreement with regard to both the range and the actual role of peripheries within the framework of the empire, yet they differ with regard to the formal issue of whether the periphery lands ought to be perceived as an integral part of the state's territory or only as conquered lands, only temporarily included into the state, for which they were no more than a protective buffer zone.

In the latter dimension they were perceived by P. Michałowski on the basis of his analysis of the meaning and usage of the term **gun₂**, especially in the compound **gun₂ ma-da**, applied since ŠS.3, which he translated as “impost on the unincorporated territories”, and thus ultimately “foreign tribute”¹⁹². In this sense, he saw it in a strict opposition to the bala tax system, which applied to the core provinces. This assumption finds a corroboration, to a certain extent, in manner the monarchs of Ur perceived the practical role and the propagandist significance of the great system of fortifications erected by Šulgi (Š.37) and probably extended by Šū-Suen (ŠS.4), initially known, certainly not by accident, as **bad₃ ma-da** – “the wall of the **ma-da** (territory)”. In this expression, the term **ma-da** denotes the „outer land”, located outside the core of the state, literally outside the “wall”. Logically linked to the above is the consistent application of the term **ma-da** in yearnames and royal inscriptions to denote the lands which were foreign, rebellious, conquered or raided by the armies of the Ur monarchs. Having conducted a thorough overview of the application of the term and its linguistic analysis, H. Limet described two possible meanings: “a region in the vicinity, a rural region (in contrast to the city)” or “a foreign region/country”, located on the plains rather than in the mountains (**kur**), as the latter by virtue of its mountainous nature would be denoted as a “hostile” land¹⁹³. While in the first meaning

¹⁹² P. Michałowski, *Foreign Tribute*, pp. 34-49 (conclusions of the article), pp. 34-35 (translation of the terms).

¹⁹³ H. Limet, *Étude sémantique*, pp. 1-11, esp. pp. 2-6, 11-12.

the term could be applied to any city (including a Sumerian one), in the contexts presently under discussion it was certainly used in the second meaning. Also, analysing the perception of the "foreigners" by the inhabitants of Sumer and Akkad, H. Limet finds references to "foreigners" with regard to both the inhabitants of the third zone (vassal states) and the periphery¹⁹⁴.

It remains a matter of debate, however, whether these readings of the term **ma-da** should determine the non-inclusion of the **gun₂ ma-da**-paying lands to ones constituting the integral territory of the state. A different view is expressed by, for instance, P. Steinkeller in his programmatic article on the three zones of the empire. Steinkeller's stance is clearly that the integral territory comprises of both the core and the periphery, albeit to different degrees¹⁹⁵. W.W. Hallo, who was the first to analyse texts regarding the **gun₂ ma-da**, perceived it simply as a "territorial tribute", paid not by the core provinces, but by the entire regions from outside the core¹⁹⁶. An interesting aspect of this tribute was first pointed out already by I. J. Gelb, who demonstrated the obvious geographic coincidence between the lands and cities paying the **gun₂ ma-da** with the areas of military settlement of the colonists known as **eren₂**¹⁹⁷,

¹⁹⁴ H. Limet, *L'étrangere dans la société sumérienne*, [in:] *Gesellschaftsklassen im Alten Zweistromland und in den angrenzenden Gebieten*. XVIII RAI, München, 29. Juni bis 3. Juli 1970, BAWph, München 1972, pp. 123-138 (esp. appendix regarding geography, pp. 135-138).

¹⁹⁵ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 30-40.

¹⁹⁶ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 88-89.

¹⁹⁷ General studies on the soldier-colonist-labourers, not only in the peripheries, but also in core provinces, see M. Sigrist, *Erin-un-il*, RA 73 (1979), pp. 101-120; RA 74 (1980), pp. 11-28; K. Maekawa, *The erin-People*, pp. 9-44; idem, *New Texts on the Collective Labor*, pp. 37-94; P. Steinkeller, *The Foresters of Umma*, pp. 73-75; A. Uchitel, *Erin-èš-didli*, pp. 317-338; idem, *Erin-èš-didli (II)*, pp. 217-228. The phenomenon of employing groups of **eren₂** in farming is well researched since the study by A. Salonen, *Agricultura Mesopotamica nach sumerisch-akkadischen Quellen*, AASF B 149, Helsinki 1968 (further in this text: AASF B 149), see esp. lexical commentary to **eren₂**, pp. 366-371 and translation of the term as "Soldat, Arbeiter, Arbeitergruppe". In the following section of the present study, in the analysis of provincial texts from Umma in particular, I have accepted the translation of this term as "reservist", because

which were located outside Sumer and Akkad¹⁹⁸. Following this lead, P. Steinkeller demonstrated, firstly, a strict connection between the paying of the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute and the entire groups of soldier-settlers, and secondly, the existence of certain stable rules and amounts of the tribute relating to the settlement status of a given location and the size of its **eren₂** contingent¹⁹⁹. Relative to the above factors was the military rank of the direct payer of the tribute, who may have been the commander of the troop, who represented his men before the higher authorities, the commander-governor of the given settlement, or governor of the entire military district.

As has been demonstrated by P. Steinkeller, texts provide the following data regarding the value of the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute, where the first three categories additionally point to the existence of garrisons of three different sizes, with leaders of appropriate rank:

<u>number of cattle</u>	<u>number of goats or sheep</u>	<u>tribute payer</u>
10	100	šagina (more rarely yensi₂)
2	20	nu-banda₃ – “captain”
1	10	nu-banda₃ ²⁰⁰
1/20 (part of an ox)	1/2	ugula geš₂-da – “commander of sixty soldiers”
1/300	1/30	eren₂ (calculated from ugula geš₂-da) ²⁰¹

it seems best to reflect the manifold aspects of his everyday existence in the core provinces, and the various aspects of his social position and function (during war: a soldier, a member of the local garrison, probably in some way attached to the barracks; during peace: a labourer, detailed to particular labour as needed, and, especially in the peripheries, a soldier-colonist).

¹⁹⁸ I.J. Gelb, *Prisoners*, pp. 84-85.

¹⁹⁹ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 31-35.

²⁰⁰ It is probably the case when an officer of the same rank commanded a unit of half the size.

²⁰¹ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 31; W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, p. 197.

Linking the issues of **gun₂ ma-da** payment with military settlement flawlessly develops our knowledge of the extent of this phenomenon²⁰², earlier researched by A. Goetze²⁰³, and above all permits to correctly describe the organisational character and function of the periphery territories within the framework of the state. The periphery, with its network of military settlement, was not only a protective zone surrounding the core, but also an economic unit linked to the core. In other words, the periphery created, demographically and economically, the core's strategic background. If the deliveries from the **ma-da** lands were indeed the foundation for the supply of herds in the central department of livestock distribution in Puzriš-Dagān, it indicates a large degree of structural and economic integration of Sumer and Akkad with the periphery.

Due to the military character of the periphery, main administrators of local territorial units were the **šagina**, military governors, standing at the head of districts of varying sizes and with varying numbers of settlements commanded by subordinate officers. It is very rarely that an administrator of a periphery region held the title of an ensi and it appears purely a matter of tradition that he was granted a title associated with the representation of one's own country; such instances were indeed found in places where loyal representatives of local royal families were allowed to retain power. This is corroborated by a list of those centres, which are evidently the most important lands with their own tradition of statehood: Adamdun, Ašur, Hamazi, Sabum, Simurru, Susa and Urua. It does not seem, however, that apart from a certain differentiation in the title's meaning, such ensis had any different powers and capacities than "military governors" **šagina**, as demonstrated by, for instance, the career of a certain Zariqum, ensi and **šagina** of Ašur, later transferred as an ensi to Susa²⁰⁴.

²⁰² See above, table in Ch. 2.1. and quite up-to-date by M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 367-370.

²⁰³ A. Goetze, *Šakkanakkus*, s. 1-31 (esp. p. 4-7, the list of **eren₂** garrisons).

²⁰⁴ See W.W. Hallo, *Zariqum*, JNES 15 (1956), pp. 220-225; R. Kutscher, *A Note on the Early Careers of Zariqum and Šamsi-illat*, RA 73 (1979), pp. 81-82.

The issues of this tribute were viewed in a different light by T. Maeda in his comparison of the two taxes: the ordinary **gun₂** (transliterated **gu₂-na**), paid by e.g. the foreign or more distant lands, and the **gun₂ ma-da** (**gu₂-na ma-da**), paid by the lands closer to the core (mainly those on the eastern bank of the Tigris). He concluded that the existence of two taxes was absolutely not a question of a mere change in terminology in the year ŠS.3, but that there was a very clear difference between them: the latter should be viewed as a kind of evidence of "obedience and loyalty to the monarchs of Ur" paid by regions crucial to the kingdoms' protective zone²⁰⁵.

The direct supervisor of the whole periphery was the highest official in the state after the king: "the (great) chancellor, vizier" (**sukkal-mah**)²⁰⁶, who acted through a system of his subordinate intermediaries (**sukkal**). The **sukkal** were his plenipotentiary inspectors rather than mere emissaries, and they controlled the quality of administration in a given region and the degree to which it fulfilled its obligations towards the crown. If need arose, they were entitled to take independent, immediate decisions within the bounds of their authority; in this they resembled the *missi dominici* of the monarchy of Charles the Great.

2.4. The sphere of influence and the vassal states

A close analysis of the territory encompassed by the vassal states was conducted by T. Maeda²⁰⁷, who made the formal assumption to apply the term not only to states mentioned in this context by the royal inscriptions, but to all whose emissaries known as **lu₂ kin-gi₄-a** or administrators with the title of **ensi₂** came to Sumer and to meet

²⁰⁵ T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 138-149 (Ch. 2: **gu₂-na** from foreign lands; Ch. 3: **gu₂-na** and **gu₂-na ma-da**).

²⁰⁶ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 26, note 21.

²⁰⁷ T. Maeda, *The Defense Zone*, pp. 143-149.

the expense of their maintenance were allocated cattle from the royal herds at Puzriš-Dagān. Applying those criteria, T. Maeda specified the following as vassal states: Abarnium (**a-ba-ar-ni-um**^{ki}), Anšan (**an-ša-an**^{ki}), Duduli (**du₈-du₈-li**^{ki}), Egula (**e₂-gu-la**^{ki}), Ebla (**eb-la**^{ki}), Gigibinum (**gi-gi-bi-ni-um**^{ki}), Gubla (**gu-ub-la**^{ki}), Harši (**ha-ar-ši**^{ki}), Habura (**ha-bu-ra**^{ki}), Hurti (**hu-ur-ti**^{ki}), Jabru (**i₃-a-ab-ru**^{ki}), Jabtum (**i₃-ab-ti-um**^{ki}), Inbu (**in-bu**^{ki}), Kumi (**ku-mu**^{ki}), Mari (**ma₂-ri₂**^{ki}), Magan (**ma₂-gan**^{ki}), Mardaman (**mar-da-ma-an**^{ki}), Marhaši (**mar-ha-ši**^{ki}), Rimuš (**ri-muš**^{ki}), Simānum (**si-ma-nu-um**^{ki}), Šari-AM₃ (**ša-ri-A.AN**^{ki}), Šigriš (**ši-ig-ri₂-iš**^{ki}), Šimaški (**lu₂-SU.A**^{ki}), Šudae (**šu-da-e**^{ki}), Tutula (**tu-tu-la**^{ki}), Urúm (**u₃-ra-um**^{ki}), Ūl (**u₃-ul**^{ki}), Urkiš (**ur-kiš**^{ki}) and Zidanum (**zi-da-num**^{ki}).

The territory delineated in this manner is much larger than the geographic zone described in the preceding chapter. According to T. Maeda²⁰⁸, its boundaries were Gubla and Ebla in Syria, Abarnium, Mardaman and Simānum at the sources of the Tigris in the north, Mari and Tutul on the line of the Euphrates, Šimaški in the east, Anšan and Marchaši in the south-east, and Magan in the south. Thus perceived, the vassal states of the kingdom of Ur would have stretched over a huge tract of land, reaching from the Mediterranean Sea to the plains of Iran and from Kurdistan to Oman (Magan) and the Iranian provinces of Fars or Mekran (Marchaši). In view of P. Steinkeller's generally accepted delineation of this zone, the inclusion of additional states, such as Mari, Tuttul in the west, and even the distant Marhaši in the east, bordering Elam, is still conceivable within the geopolitical reality of the kingdom of Ur and coincides with the directions of its natural expansion. It would be, however, difficult to accept without question that the Syrian Ebla, Gubla (Byblos), or the overseas Magan could have belonged to the zone of vassal states. There are no sources which might corroborate the Ur monarch's military activity so far to the north-west, with the

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148; see also T. Potts, *Mesopotamia and the East*, p. 140.

exception of one fragmentary royal inscription, which, additionally, is ascribed to Šū-Suen without any certainty²⁰⁹.

In this situation it seems that the criteria regarding the maintenance granted to local emissaries or princes, which have been accepted by T. Maeda, may be sufficient to define the range of the Ur empire's diplomatic links, but not necessarily to delineate the zone of vassal states. Not every foreign state, the emissary of which was allotted a support from Puzriš-Dagān, must have been a vassal one. The custom of granting hospitality to foreign emissaries and maintaining them at the expense of the monarch was then a generally accepted diplomatic practice, and as demonstrated by the Old-Babylonian letters from Mari, it concerned even emissaries of the countries which the host's relations were strained or straightforwardly hostile²¹⁰. Moreover, if the titular suzerainty of the Ur monarchs indeed stretched as far as Gubla and Ebla (and this is a condition for describing a given state as a vassal one), why did they not manage to create a buffer zone in that direction (up the Euphrates), that is a "periphery" obliged to pay a fixed tribute, in the same manner as they did in the east? On the other hand, Magan, which for a long time was in the Mesopotamian rulers' sphere of interests and was often described (e.g. by the Akkadian king Man-ištūsu) as subjugated, due to its overseas location could never be put under enough pressure to justify applying the term of a vassal state to it.

It is also crucial that the military power was not the only, and definitely not the most important factor shaping the mutual relations between the empire and the dependent states, especially with the stronger and more distant neighbours. In order to achieve their political and economic (commercial) goals, the kings of Ur skilfully applied various diplomatic means, e.g. the policy of dynastic marriages, which has so often been mentioned earlier in this text. This policy of

²⁰⁹ See above, Ch. 1.3.

²¹⁰ See for instance the correspondence of Jarim-Addu of Babylon, D. Charpin, F. Joannès, S. Lackenbacher, B. Lafont, *Archives épistolaires de Mari*, I/2, ARM 26, Paris 1988, pp. 159-186.

alliances, which has correctly if bluntly been termed "Heiratspolitik"²¹¹ by many scholars, was a pillar of the Third Dynasty of Ur state's foreign policy, implemented with much success precisely in relation to the vassal principalities and independent neighbours, in order to assure their friendship and loyalty. The mechanism at work here was in many respects the same as the one used by the royal house to establish family connections, by adoption or by marriage, with the families of the state's head officials.

²¹¹ See e.g. W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 159-161, with an interesting table arranging the marriages in relation to the geographical directions of the kingdom's expansion (pp. 160-161).

Chapter 3

3. Administrative and economic sectors of the state's economy in the period of the Third Dynasty of Ur

It has been traditionally accepted that the final shape was given to the administrative and economic system of the Third Dynasty's state by the reforms of Šulgi, introduced mainly in the years Š.20-21. P. Steinkeller, developing to a certain extent the assumptions of E. Sollberger²¹², specified ten reforms which the monarch apparently introduced in a relatively short period of time²¹³:

1. Deification of his own person (not later than Š.20)²¹⁴
2. Establishment of permanent army by conscription (Š.20)²¹⁵

²¹² E. Sollberger, *Sur la chronologie des rois d'Ur*, pp. 17-18.

²¹³ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 20-21. The author assumes also that the *Code of Laws* constituted an element of those reforms, and that its real creator was not Ur-Namma but Šulgi. This hypothesis, however, does not find sufficient corroboration in the sources.

²¹⁴ As to the precise dating of the deification of his own person by Šulgi, see P. Steinkeller, *More on the Ur III Royal Wives*, ASJ 3 (1981), p. 81, note 48 – reasoning based on the concurrent appearance of the predeterminative DINGIR before the name of the king, and on the presence of the priestess **lukur**, as his wife. The latter argument does not seem definitive, since the governor of Umma, Ur-Lisi, had a wife-concubine **lukur** – see below.

²¹⁵ Yearname Š.20: **mu dumu uri₂^{ki}-ma lu₂^{gi}gid₂-še₃ KA ba-ab-kešda** – 'The year the citizens of Ur were conscripted as lamcers'.

3. Reorganisation of temple households (Š.21)²¹⁶
4. Introduction of an unified system of provincial administration in the entire Babylonia
5. Establishment of the **bala** system, combined with establishment of redistribution centres, for instance in Puzriš-Dagān, where the state's resources were collected and distributed
6. Establishment of an enormous clerky apparatus and a state-school training system for clerks
7. Radical reform of the writing system
8. Introduction of new procedures of economic accounting
9. Reorganisation of the system of measurement
10. Introduction of a new state calendar (Reichskalender)²¹⁷

According to H. Waetzoldt, only the reforms no. 1, 5, 10 do not arouse doubts concerning their introduction, nos. 6 and 8 do not have any source corroboration, and the others are very doubtful²¹⁸. It appears that at least with regard to the reforms no. 3 and 4, which are the most interesting in the context of the present study, H. Waetzoldt's criticism may be perceived as excessive. The yearname of Š.21 is a clear and probable, if not equivocal, corroboration of the reform identified by P. Steinkeller – the more probably since together with the introduction of the **bala** system (reform 5), it would be a part of a comprehensive settlement of the mutual relations between the administrative/economic sectors on the central and temple/local levels.

²¹⁶ Yearname Š.21a: *mu* ^dnin-urta *ensi*₂ *gal* ^den-lil₂-*la*₂-*ke*₄ *e*₂ ^den-lil₂ ^dnin-lil₂-*la*₂-*ke*₄ *e*₂ *ēš* *bar-kin* *ba-an-du*₁₁ *-ga* ^dšul-gi *lugal* *uri*₅^{ki} *-ma-ke*₄ *GANA*₂ *ni*₃-*kas*₁ *šuku* *e*₂ ^den-lil₂ ^dnin-lil₂-*la*₂-*ke*₄ *si* *bi*₂-*sa*₂ *-a* – 'The year the god Ninurta, the great 'field-manager' of the god Enlil, pronounced an oracle in the temples of the gods Enlil and Ninlil, (and) Šulgi, king of Ur, put in order the fields (and) accounts, the sustenance of the temples of the gods Enlil and Ninlil'.

²¹⁷ See e.g. R.M. Whiting, *Some Observations on the Drehem Calendar*, ZA 69/1 (1979), pp. 6-33.

²¹⁸ H. Waetzoldt (Recension), *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*, Eds. R.D. Biggs – McG. Gibson, SAOC 46, Chicago 1987, JAOS 111 (1991), p. 638.

3.1. The central (royal) sector: significance and organisation

The reforms introduced a clear division between the central sector (a state one, in the strict sense of royal, crown-related) and the local sector, the most typical economic units of which were the temple households. This in no way signified that the king relinquished his right to derive financial gains from both sectors, but only that the burden of current administrative duties and the associated risks were transferred onto the representatives of the local administration. They had to settle the accounts with the royal (central) sector by means of paying various duties, services and taxes, with the **bala**, already frequently mentioned in this text, at the fore.

The separation of the central from the local sector, in view of the fact that the king did not resign from profits from the temple households, indicated nothing else but establishing the king's (or the crown's) direct ownership of certain areas of arable land and manufacturing works, which became managed by an administrative apparatus separate from the provincial one and subordinate directly to the central government. It is difficult to ascertain whether, and to what extent, this sector encompassed any former temple lands, or whether it was established on lands newly reclaimed as a result of large-scale irrigation projects initiated already by Ur-Namma²¹⁹.

The central sector functioned in two clearly delineated zones: first, in the areas which, with regard to administration, were included into this sector in their entirety, and secondly, in the central provinces, in the shape of a separate administrative/economic sector. The first encompassed a large section of the economic activity of the capitals, with regard to both production and distribution of goods arriving from the provinces, as well as the separate administrative/economic centres

²¹⁹ See list of Ur-Namma's irrigation ventures with source corroboration, W. Sallaberger, *Ur III-Zeit*, pp. 135-137.



established by Šulgi, such as e.g. Puzriš-Dagān with respect to livestock. Like Puzriš-Dagān, they were usually geared towards a specialised branch of production or manufacture (e.g. the royal weaving workshops at Ur).

The second zone of the central sector was in all probability distributed over all provinces of Sumer and Akkad in the form of the above-mentioned royal estates, comprising arable land, pastures, herds and manufacturing works. Located in the provinces and neighbouring temple, municipal or private households, they were nevertheless managed by administrative personnel independent of the *ensi* and his provincial administration, and subordinate directly to the *šagina*. This arrangement appears to have been most natural, considering the character of the military governor's function as a direct representative of the power and authority of the king and of his designated *sukkal-mah*, as well as his resulting responsibilities in his region and in relation to the local governor. On the other hand, the simple soldiers, officers and functionaries, or the employees of the royal sector, must have been among the main holders of plots of royal land. In this respect, the system much resembled the later, Old-Babylonian *ilkum* system²²⁰.

The recently discovered texts from Garšana, which have already been mentioned elsewhere in this study, belong to source materials which perfectly demonstrate the complex, multidimensional nature of the royal estates' autonomy, as elements of the central sector in relation to the entirety of the given province. The settlement of Garšana was one of the central sector administrative/economic units in the province of Umma. From the political and military point of view, it was the residence of a provincial garrison subordinate to the *šagina*, whose role towards the province governor (*ensi*₂) and the local community have already been

²²⁰ The essence and evolution of the Mesopotamian prebendal system was recently presented in a wide overview by G. van Driel, *Elusive Silver. In Search of a Role for a Market in the Agrarian Environment. Aspects of Mesopotamia's Society*, Istanbul – Leiden 2002, esp. pp. 54-128.

described above. From the administrative and economic point of view, in turn, Garšana was a fully developed and independent economic unit, with its own labour force (mainly the “soldier-reservists” **eren₂**) and full staff of middle- and lower-level officials. The settlement comprised arable lands (for farming and fruit-growing) and pastures (for animal husbandry), and above all numerous manufacturing workshops and craft workshops. Existing excerpts from the Garšana documentation may indicate, for instance, that it was particularly specialised in the production of building materials, mainly brick. Yet the most important corroboration derived from the Garšana texts – and one most vital to the present considerations – concerns two very evident conclusions. Firstly, Garšana, in spite of being located in the province of Umma and in the close vicinity of the city itself, is practically absent (with the exception of single, scattered mentions) in the rich documentation of Umma (c. 18,000 published texts); the same applies to the very name of the settlement²²¹ and to the wide circle of Garšana’s administrative functionaries. This proves beyond any doubt that the differentiation, or rather the organisational and economic separation of the two sectors: central (i.e. Garšana) and local (i.e. Umma), was consistently maintained, even if administrative units belonging to either were located in close proximity. Secondly, a comparison of the personal names of functionaries and employees of the Garšana and Umma archives demonstrates, again beyond any doubt, that the ethnic composition of the local population of the province (Umma) was different from that of the inhabitants, employees and functionaries of Garšana. In the first case Sumerian names predominate, the percentage of Akkadian names is small and the Amorite, Hurrian and others – minimal, which is typical for the southern part of Sumero-Akkad. The Garšana documentation presents a diametrically different image: Akkadian names clearly predominate, and with the percentage of Sumerian

²²¹ Of c. 20 texts of Umma which mention Garšana, nearly half concerns single animals sent there for royal sacrifices to god Nergal of Garšana, which in itself is very symptomatic.

names not exceeding 20%, the incredibly high percentage of Amorite names is indeed noteworthy; Hurrian and other names also appear much more frequently. Notwithstanding all the formal reservations that a name does not necessarily have to reflect the ethnic identity of its bearer, it seems that the conclusion is clear: the population living and working in Garšana was generally alien (immigrant) in relation to the native population of the province, and had been settled there as a result of the decision of central authorities. In particular, this may indicate that the central (royal) sector in its every dimension (political, military, administrative and economic) engaged the immigrant Amorite population and groups of captives taken during royal expeditions.

All the above presents the situation and operation of the royal sector components in the state's core provinces, but for obvious reasons, which have already been stated earlier, the periphery zone, which from the economic point of view was also settled by the military, must have belonged to this sector almost in its entirety. Independent of the fact that organisational structures adopted in this zone differed slightly, which resulted naturally from the periphery's function within the state (i.e. its more evident military objective), the basic instrument regulating the relationships in that zone were still the **gun₂** and **gun₂ ma-da** tributes.

Income yielded by the central sector was allocated directly to meet the requirements of the king, the royal family, the court (both in the dimension of the economic needs and the cult)²²², the central state apparatus, the army, and also the state in general, e.g. to meet the cost of foreign policy and wars. The exceptional public activity of the queens (**nin**) is worth stressing here, since in itself it had a vital economic dimension. The queens, as royal mothers or wives, to a significant degree participated in fulfilling the state duties (the queens, omitting here the

²²² See the interesting study by M. Sigrist, devoted to the expenses and needs (including those cult-related) of the king, his closest family and the court – M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 265-391; the analysis of the cult calendar in the Ur III Period and the related festivals and cult celebrations – extensive monograph by W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender* (*ibid.* earlier bibliography on the topic).

second wives **lukur**, are: Watartum, Tarām-Urâm, Geme-Suena, Šulgi-simti, Abī-simti, Kubātum and Geme-Enlila)²²³.

3.2. The local sector and the economy of the temples: structure and management

The local economic sector, especially in agriculture – its fundamental division, in overwhelming majority consisted of temple households. This is amply demonstrated by the typically agricultural province of Girsu-Lagaš, where in operation were several large and separate economic units related to temples²²⁴. As P. Steinkeller correctly observed²²⁵, the reform of temple households was the ruler's key move in his attempt to impose order on the economic structure of the state, pertaining equally to the numerous and ubiquitous temple households themselves and to the sector of the state (royal) property in the strict sense. In the ultimate dimension, all those households in a given province became subordinate to the head authority of the ensi, even though formally the temple households retained their territorial and administrative autonomy in its earlier organisational form (with their own management, headed by the **šabra** or **sanga**). In some respects, the ensi was perceived as a representative of the local community, especially in view of the parallel existence of an entire sector, identified with the king, which was subordinate to the šagina. The ensi was, therefore, able to guarantee

²²³ See e.g. P. Michałowski, *Royal Woman of the Ur III Period. Part I*, JCS 28(1977), pp. 169-172; idem, *Royal Women of the Ur III Period. Part II*, JCS 31(1979), pp. 171-176; P. Steinkeller, *More on the Ur III Royal Wives*, pp. 77-92; P. Michałowski, *Royal Women of the Ur III Period. Part III*, ASJ 4(1982), pp. 129-142; G. Frame, *A New Wife for Šu-Sîn*, ARRIM 2 (1984), pp. 3-4; M. Sigrist, *Kubatam*, RA 80 (1986), p. 185.

²²⁴ See table in K. Maekawa, *Cultivation of legumes and mun-gazi plants in Ur III Girsu*, BSAg 2 (1985), p. 112.

²²⁵ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, p. 21.

the interests of the crown in the sphere of the local temple economy in a less ostentatious manner.

In Sumer, the separation of temple property from palace property and the related conflicts and system transformations had a long history. It has to be remembered that in the Sumerian city-states the leading role of the temple, as the main centre of the cult, the economy and for a long time also of the political power, was strongly linked to the very origin of those city-states: the city revolution and the role of irrigation projects at the close of the prehistoric era. In the conditions of southern Mesopotamia, it was a temple that constituted the centre around which the social and political structure of the city-state's system coalesced, and it is not by accident that even quite recently the political entities of the Old-Sumerian era were still being described with the general term "temple city-state" (cité-temple, Tempelstadt). The institution of the monarchy itself arose from, and for a long time remained part of, the internal evolution of the priestly and administrative hierarchy of the temple.

Only the emergence of a new, and initially competitive, centre of power – the palace – and the formation of its property, separate from the then-dominant temple property gave rise to problems in the later eras. The reforms of Uru-KA-gina, and the decrees of Sargon of Akkad and then Šulgi in the Neo-Sumerian era, were symptoms in this conflict. Additionally, the king of Ur had to take under consideration not only the traditional conditions, but also the fact that in the framework of the state's administrative and economic structure, the temple households, *ex definitione* linked with the territories of the old city-states (through the local gods that represented those political entities), were the natural representatives of the local economy. This was the motivation behind the choice of the method of subordinating them to the interests of the monarchy: by imposing the highest supervisory authority on the level of a province governor. In was also the ensi, as the chief administrator of the temple/state sector in his region, that was personally responsible

for settling its tax duties towards the crown (i.e. the central sector) in form of the rotational system of duties (taxes) **bala** (see below), which thus acquired the character of provincial taxation.

Interestingly, the source data do not corroborate the fact of the ensi, in connection with his holding the highest regional authority, having at his disposal or directly managing any larger landed estates, neither as a royal prebend nor property transferred to his ownership from the local resources. As has been demonstrated by H. Limet, the palace (**e₂-gal**) of the ensi was a local centre of product management rather than of production itself²²⁶.

The other, equally important element of the local sector, in its full social and economic dimension, were the communal property, self-governed by the local administrative body, and private property. Unfortunately, the almost-total absence of relevant source material (with the exception of Nippur) permits to draw merely secondary conclusions (e.g. from state and temple texts) regarding its acreage and role in the province's economy. For instance, the fact that a significant portion of the employees of the state/temple sector was employed long-term, but only on a part-time basis (**a₂-1/2**, **a₂-1/3**, **a₂-2/3** and others) permits to conclude that they had stable income from private property²²⁷. It is thus even more difficult to determine the extent of duties and economic relationships between the private/communal sector and the state sector in both its local and central aspects.

²²⁶ H. Limet, Le rôle de palais dans l'économie néo-sumérienne, [in:] *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East*, E. Lipiński (ed.), Leuven 1979, pp. 245-248.

²²⁷ See e.g. D.M. Sharashenidze, *Formy eksploatacii raboczei sity*, esp. pp. 90-97; H. Waetzoldt, *Compensation of Craft*, pp. 137-140.

Chapter 4.

The bala system as the state economy's integrative mechanism

The **bala** system of rotational duties, introduced in its final form by Šulgi and in that form known to present scholarship, constituted the fundamental element of structure regulating the overall economic relationships between the central (royal) sector and the local, provincial sector (mainly the temple one). It is beyond doubt that among all the features of the Neo-Sumerian state system, this is the most characteristic, and at the same time the most exceptional. A very special role in the operation and coordination of the **bala** system was played by accounting and redistribution centre at Puzriš-Dagān, which was concerned mostly with livestock. The main entities participating in this system were the core provinces, personally – the governors who represented them, chiefly the ensis.

Since the publication of the classic study by W.W. Hallo²²⁸, the **bala** system has been relatively well researched and described in practically every aspect²²⁹. Recently T.M. Sharlach²³⁰, in her newest, extensive

²²⁸ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 88-114.

²²⁹ See e.g. the most important analyses of the essence of the **bala** system: P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 19-41 (esp. pp. 28-30); M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 339-356 (chapter "Tour de service – bala"); T. Maeda, *Bal-ensí*, pp. 115-164; idem, *Šà-bal-a in Umma Tablets*, pp. 145-174; W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender*, pp. 32-34.

²³⁰ T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*.

monograph, discussed it mainly from the perspective of Umma and Girsu-Lagaš provincial archives. For this reason the present chapter has been limited to the most essential information on the **bala** system, the more so since the analysis of the position of the *ensi* allows to touch upon this subject.

4.1. The Sumerian term **bala** and its meaning in reference to the tax system in the state of the Third Dynasty of Ur

The Sumerian term **bala** in its most basic nominal sense signifies as much as 'change', 'exchange', 'rotation' or 'return', or in its verbal sense, 'to turn', 'to change' or 'to exchange'; yet in the sense of the Akkadian *palû(m)* it is 'the term of duty or responsibility' and 'the period of holding office' (even 'of being in power')²³¹. It appears that both those semantic elements are present in the understanding of this term in the Neo-Sumerian administrative documents, where it was used to denote the form of duties due from the provincial governors to the central authorities. With reference to material goods, it was used to describe various commodities (including labour) delivered by the provinces to the central collection and redistribution points, or supplied to the centres of the royal sector within the province itself; thus, a type of 'tax', 'fee' or 'tribute'. From the organisational point of view, the term denoted the period in which a province was obliged to supply those commodities, duties or services. It has to be emphasised that this period of time was strictly determined (usually one month in a year) and

²³¹ A. Deimel, ŠL 9,16 ('Turnus, Amstzeit, Regierungszeit'); AHw, p. 817 (Regierungszeit, Regierungsjahr, Amtsperiode); E. Sollberger, TCS 1, p. 103 (term of duty, of office); A. Falkenstein, NSGU III, p. 94 (im Turnus wechselndes Amt, turnusmässiger Dienst, Pfründe); Hübner, B., Reizammer, A., *Inim Kiengi. Sumerisch-deutsches Glossar in zwei Bänden*, Bd. 1-2, Marktedwitz 1985, p. 105 (Amtsperiode, Amstzeit, Regierungszeit, Wechselamt).

cyclically assigned to the given province by central authorities. This is as much as can be gleaned from the term itself, and upon this much all the scholars are in agreement. The opinions are far more divided with regard to what exactly the **bala** system was in its essence, and on what administrative and economic mechanisms it relied in its operation.

W.W. Hallo²³², who was the first to attempt an overall analysis of the Neo-Sumerian **bala** system on the basis of the Puzriš-Dagān source materials, perceived it as a tribute mechanism encompassing the entire state, aimed at providing steady supplies for the kingdom's central temples at Nippur and, to a lesser extent, at Ur; hence the role of Puzriš-Dagān as the centre for collecting the tribute, which was paid mostly in livestock. The term *amphictyony* was proposed by W.W. Hallo since the system was, in his opinion, similar to an institution which functioned in the states of ancient Greece²³³. W.W. Hallo was also the first to correctly compile a list of **bala** "payers" and make the observation that those were administrators (mainly the ensis) of central provinces²³⁴. He also asserted that although the typical period of the **bala** duty was one month in a year, some larger provinces, like Girsu-Lagaš, in some years fulfilled it even for up to three months²³⁵. The smaller payers (provinces = their governors), on the other hand, sometimes had to join forces; in some cases a few governors needed to band together to cope with one-month worth of the **bala**²³⁶.

²³² W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 88-91.

²³³ A similar stance with regard to the **bala** and the role of Puzriš-Dagān was adopted by M. Tanret, *Nouvelles donnees*, pp. 28-45 (esp. pp. 32-33).

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 94-95 (table with chronological list).

²³⁵ Example of Girsu-Lagaš for the year Š.42 / AS.6 – TCL 2:5544, 7-9: **iti diri sze-KIN-ku₅-ta, iti szesz-da!-gu₇-sze₃, bala gir₂-su^{ki} iti 3-kam** – "from month XII to month II, **bala** Girsu, three months is".

²³⁶ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 90, 96. W.W. Hallo quotes a text from Puzriš-Dagān (RSO 9, 472) which registered the fact that as much as six payers (incl. **ensi₂** of Ešnunna, **šabra** of Zinam, three other **ensi₂** of Išim-Šulgi and **šabra** of goddess Nanaja) united to pay the **bala** due for one month

P. Steinkeller viewed the **bala** system as a much more complex fiscal and economic institution, perceiving it in a slightly different manner than the one proposed by W.W. Hallo, and defining its three basic features:

1. the **bala** was a sum of commodities and services supplied by provinces in relation to their size and capability, usually in products in which a given province specialised;
2. the overall value of those commodities and services was for a type of **bala** capital (assets) a given province, to the value of which it could expect to receive in exchange the commodities and services it required;
3. the **bala** contribution was delivered to the redistribution centres (e.g. Puzriš-Dagān) or straight to the province requiring this type of commodities (and which received it in return for its own **bala** capital).

Additionally, the majority of the **bala** commodities from a given province was collected and distributed locally, to meet the requirements of its own section of the central (royal) sector²³⁷. The author noticed also that the majority of commodities delivered by the provinces of Sumer and Akkad as their **bala** were not farm animals at all, but rather just the opposite – those provinces received livestock from Puzriš-Dagānas as part of their **bala** capital. Livestock must have been, therefore, a part of the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute and must have come from the periphery zone²³⁸. In his perception, “the bala institution functioned as a central redistribution system, integrating all the provinces into one interdependent whole”²³⁹. Thus, by virtue of its character, it was a powerful administrative and economic machine which integrated (and fostered its dependence on the formal intermediation of the royal administration) not only the core, but also, by the fact that it was linked to the system of the **gun₂ ma-da** tribute, the vast periphery zone of the state.

²³⁷ P. Steinkeller, *The Core and the Periphery*, pp. 28-29.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

In his monographic study on Puzriš-Dagān, M. Sigrist²⁴⁰ defined the **bala** system as the “order of (rendering) service” (*tour de service*), which bound the great “landlords” – province governors and chief administrators of temples, to fulfil their obligations towards the official cult with its centre in Nippur. The author points out, however, that it is impossible to determine whether those duties were paid from their private properties, or rather properties which were entrusted to them as prebend in connection with their holding state functions.

Similarly, in his two important articles T. Maeda²⁴¹, on the margin of his more detailed analysis of the functioning of the term **bala** in texts from Puzriš-Dagān and Umma, to a large extent returned to W.W. Hallo’s proposition regarding the essence of the system. His interesting findings concern the frequency and period of participation of particular core cities in the **bala** system. For instance, some cities (e.g. Kiš and Adab) are mentioned only sporadically and over short periods, others in Š.46.vi appear together, but in AS.4 are separate (Adab in month III and Kiš in XI), while before the year Š.39, that is before the Puzriš-Dagān centre was completed, only two cities, Umma and Kazallum, appear in the **bala** system²⁴². All this points to yearly decisions on the sequence and leads T. Maeda to question the stability of the rotational system. The author demonstrated also that the **bala** operations were supervised by a small group of highly-specialised personnel delegated by the administration of Puzriš-Dagān²⁴³.

Another aspect of the **bala** mechanism was pointed out by W. Sallaberger. In his opinion, the ensi supplying animals to the Nippur temples, while fulfilling a tax duty, nevertheless did so in their own name, retaining in a sense their formal right to them as sacrificial animals given to the temple as its due benefice. In this manner, the

²⁴⁰ M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, pp. 339-356 (definition of the term pp. 339-340).

²⁴¹ T. Maeda, *Bal-ensí*, pp. 115-164; T. Maeda, *Šà-bal-a in Umma Tablets*, pp. 145-174.

²⁴² T. Maeda, *Bal-ensí*, pp. 117-118.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-130.

bala would be a kind of “Pfründensystem” reinforcing the system of dependencies, but at the same time a justification of the ensis’ power before the gods. The author emphasised that the term **bala** had precisely this meaning in Old-Babylonian texts from Nippur²⁴⁴.

Finally, T.M. Sharlach, correlating all the views on the character of the **bala** institution, assumed that each hypothesis contains correct elements, and that the nature of the system included multiple functions and meanings²⁴⁵. This multitude of relevant factors and complexity of the system is to a large extent corroborated in her extensive monograph, based chiefly on texts from Umma and Girsu-Lagaš. The author notices, for instance, that if in a certain year some ensi closed his **bala** account with a deficit, that is e.g. received more livestock than was his due in relation to the value of commodities and services he had delivered, he began the following year with settling this debt by delivering increased duties²⁴⁶.

4.2. Governors of provinces as the main payers of the **bala** “tax”

It has been repeatedly stressed in this text that whereas the provinces obliged to pay the **bala** tax were the core provinces of the state (Sumer and Akkad) and periodically Ešnunna and Išim-Šulgi in the Diyala region, the actual “payers”, in both the accounting records and in reality, were the province governors personally. Considering the administrative structure of the core, those were predominantly the ensi. If, therefore, the above hypothesis regarding the existence of a certain “**bala** capital” is accepted, it would still have been the “capital”, or perhaps rather the “**bala** account”, of concrete people – the province governors, although

²⁴⁴ W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender*, p. 33.

²⁴⁵ T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 20-21.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

it concerned goods produced and supplied or received by various provinces. This seems to have been not just a formal accounting device, but a very real perception of the manner of settling the “assets” and “liabilities” on the “**bala** accounts”. This is corroborated by the manner in which the typical **bala** texts from Puzriš-Dagān are worded. The following are some eloquent examples.

MVN 8.98 (Š.41)

1. 32 gu₄ niga 30 la₂ 1 gu₄
2. zi-ga bala ensi₂ ka₂?-dingir^{ki} u₃ **ensi₂ didli**
3. iti ezem ^dnin-a-zu
4. 146 gu₄ [niga] 36+ gu₄
5. iti ezem ^dšul-gi
6. 58 gu₄ niga 16 gu₄
7. iti šu-eš-ša
8. 44 gu₄ niga 70 gu₄
9. iti ezem mah
10. 34 gu₄ niga 70 gu₄
11. iti diri še-kin-ku₅
12. bala ur-^dlamma ensi₂ gir₂-su^{ki}

Reverse

13. šu-nigin₂ 314 gu₄ niga
14. šu-nigin₂ 293 gu₄
15. šu-nigin₂ 607 gu₄ hi-a
16. **bala ensi₂-ke₄-ne**
17. zi-ga ^den-lil₂-la₂
18. mu us₂-sa PU₃.ŠA-iš-^dda-gan ba-du₃-a
19. mu us₂-sa-bi

Six hundred and seven heads of cattle were handed over to some ensis; the ensis and their provinces are of course meticulously detailed in particular entries. Yet the summary note (line 15-16), the element that

is always the crux of the matter in Sumerian book-keeping, contains the following: **šu-nigin₂ 607 gu₄ hi-a, bala ensi₂-ke₄-ne** – „altogether 607 of various cattle, (as) **bala** of the ensis”. Also in one of the detailed entries (line 2), apart from the main recipient defined by his province (Babylon), there is a note mentioning other beneficiaries collectively: **zi-ga bala ensi₂ ka₂?-dingir^{ki} u₃ ensi₂ didli** – “handed over (as) **bala** of the ensi of Babylon and other ensis”. This points to the real, from the formal point of view, active entity and the side of the transaction.

Below is the famous text, published as early as 1900 by H. Radau²⁴⁷, the analysis of which led to the discovery of the entire **bala** mechanism²⁴⁸. This document, one of the first known texts to touch upon the matter, particularly stresses the “personal” element of the financial accounts in the **bala** system. It obviously contains a defined order in which the **bala** was to be rendered in a given year by particular ensis. If it was not for the necessity of personalised accounting, so typical for the Neo-Sumerian book-keeping, the names of cities (= provinces) would have sufficed. Instead, each sequence is clearly based on a phrase “month X, **ensi₂ GN**”. Exceptionally, line 18 mentions the **šabra** of Ur, but this is only the result of differences in administrative structure of the capital district, which has already been stressed in the preceding chapters. Below Radau’s list, there is an example of an analogous text from the year AS.4, published by W.W. Hallo, in which this sequence is expanded to include an additional term explaining the purpose for issuing the list: “month X, **bala ensi₂ GN**”.²⁴⁹ The texts clearly come from different years, since the order of fulfilling the **bala** obligations is similar only in part.

²⁴⁷ H. Radau, *Early Babylonian History down to the End of the Fourth Dynasty of Ur*, New York 1900; re-edition in D.C. Snell, *The E.A. Hoffman Collection and Other American Collections*, MVN 09, Roma 1979. See text analysis by W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, p. 92.

²⁴⁸ In this aspect, the first to notice this document was B. Landsberger, *Der kultische-Kalender der Babylonier und Assyrer*, LSS 6/1-2, Leipzig 1915, p. 65, note 4.

²⁴⁹ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, p. 113.

MVN 9.124 = Radau, EBH 299 EAH 134

1. iti še-KIN-ku₃
2. iti maš-ku₃-gu₇
3. ensi₂ gir₂-su^{ki}
4. iti DUN-da-gu₇
5. ensi₂ umma^{ki}
6. iti u₅-bi₂^{muszen}-gu₇
7. ensi₂ KA₂.DINGIR^{ki}
8. iti ki-siki^dnin-a-zu
9. ensi₂ mar₂-da^{ki}
10. iti ezem^dnin-a-zu
11. iti a₂-ki-ti

Reverse

12. ensi₂ gir₂-su^{ki}
13. iti ezem^dšul-gi
14. ensi₂ EZEM-^dšul-gi / ZU!-mu u₃ KU!-da-LUM-še₃
15. iti šu-eš-ša
16. ensi₂ adab^{ki}
17. iti ezem mah
18. šabra urim₅^{ki}
19. iti ezem an-na
20. ensi₂ šurupak^{ki}
21. iti ezem me-ki-gal₂
22. ensi₂ ka-zal-lu^{ki}

JCS 14, 113,21

1. iti maš-da₃-gu₇
2. iti szeš-da-gu₇
3. bala ensi₂ gir₂-su^{ki}
4. iti u₅-bi₂-gu₇
5. bala ensi₂ adab^{ki}
6. iti ki-siki^dnin-a-zu

7. bala ensi₂ mar₂-da^{ki}
8. [iti] ezem ^dnin-a-zu
9. [bala] ensi₂ ka-[zal-lu]^{ki}

[...]

Reverse

[...]

- 1'. bala ensi₂ gir₂-su^{ki}
(blank space)

- 2'. mu en-mah-gal-an-na en ^dnanna ba-hug

It appears that the principle of “personalising” **bala** accounts is to a certain extent in agreement with the aspect, noticed by W. Sallaberger, of cult validation (confirmation) of the governors’ power, and this could have referred only to their person, not to the province they represented. The most obvious substantiation of the personal aspect are the existing references to the payer that mention only his name and position, with no reference whatsoever to the city (province) of which he was a representative. Of course the scribe who wrote the tablet and the officials who oversaw the payment being made were perfectly aware in the name of which province the payer settled the accounts, but that does not alter the fact that the brief note contained only that information which was the most vital from the point of view of calculating the **bala** “capital” – the person of the “account owner”. Some examples are listed below.

RSO 9,472	no date	bala ... ^d nin-lil ₂ -e šabra ^d na-na-a
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala lugal-nir-gal ₂
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala en-um-i ₃ -li ₂
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala du-du
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala še-lu-uš- ^d da-gan
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala lugal-pa-e ₃

MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala ^d nanna-lu ₂ -[du ₁₀](sanga ^d šul-gi-ra) ²⁵⁰
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra ^d nanna
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra an
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra ^d nin-ezem
AUCT 1.66		AS.3.x bala lu ₂ ^d -nanna šabra
OrSP 47/49.81	AS.4.ix	^d nanna-ki-ag ₂ šabra ^d nanna
TRU 36		AS.4.ix bala za-ri ₂ -iq

The case of the **šabra** of Ur who appears in MVN 9.124 does not contradict the rule that the **bala** payers were functionaries who stood at the head of province administration: also in the name of Uruk, for a similar reason of differences in the managerial structure, the **bala** was paid not by the ensi, but, as an exception, the **šabra** of the temples of the most important gods venerated in the city (Inanna, An and Nanna). The following are examples of the appearance of the šabra of either city in the role of a **bala** payer:

TROM 1. 95	AS.3.ix	bala šabra unug ^{ki} -ke ₄ -ne
TRU 36	AS.4.ix	bala šabra uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma
BIN 3.198	AS.4	bala šabra [GN]
BIN 3.540	AS.7.x	bala šabra uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma
PDT 2.1122	AS.7	bala šabra uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma
OrSP 47/49.111	AS.7.x	bala šabra uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma
SAT 2.1176	AS.9	bala šabra uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma

What is surprising, however, is the appearance of the **sanga** of Marad, as nothing seems to indicate a special form of management in this province; the more so since it is the ensi who is most often mentioned as the payer of the **bala** for Marad, even in the same accounting period as the **sanga**. For comparison:

²⁵⁰ Known in this function from PIOL 19.398 (Š.44).

TCL 2.5577	Š.46.iii	bala sanga mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
TRU 294	Š.46.iii	bala sanga mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
AUCT 1.683	Š.46.iii	bala ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
JCS 14,113,21	AS.4.i	bala ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
JCS 14,110,13	AS.9	bala im-lik-e ₂ -a ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
MVN 20.100	ŠS.2	bala ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
CT 32 BM 103436	ŠS.3	bala im-lik-e ₂ -a ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}
TRU 357	ŠS.6	bala ensi ₂ mar ₂ -da ^{ki}

Since this regards only one cycle in the third month of the year Š.46, it is possible that for some reason an exceptional situation may have arisen. The appearance of other **šabra** and **sanga**, and sporadically even the **šagina** in the role of **bala** payers should be regarded as similarly exceptional, although not impossible, since there were obviously several such instances:²⁵¹

RSO 9,472	no date	bala ... lugal-nir-gal ₂ šabra zi-nam ^{ki}
RSO 9,472	no date	bala ... ^d nin-lil ₂ -e šabra ^d na-na-a
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra ^d nanna
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra An
RA 9.42 = ŠA 17	Š.45.ix	bala šabra ^d nin-ezem
MVN 11.178	Š.44.viii	bala ^d nanna-lu ₂ -[du ₁₀] (sanga ^d šul-gi-ra)
OrSP 47/49.81	AS.4.ix	^d nanna-ki-ag ₂ šabra ^d nanna
TRU 36	AS.4.ix	bala za-ri ₂ -iq ²⁵²

Altogether, the surviving source material permit to reconstruct the chronological order of the **bala** payments only for some months and years. Even this incomplete picture, however, indicates that as a rule,

²⁵¹ See table in M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, p. 343.

²⁵² Probably the same who later was the ensi of Susa – see PDT 1.557,20: bala za-ri₂-iq ensi₂ šušin^{ki} (AS.4); after M. Sigrist, *Drehem*, p. 343 – and at that time still held the function of the šagina and/or ensi of Ašur. According to W.W. Hallo, *Zāriqum*, p. 221, the change of the region that Zāriqum administered from Ašur to Susa took place in AS.4.xii.

it was the ensi who fulfilled this obligation, and that only sporadically, in the cases described above, the duty fell to other administrators: to the **šabra** or **sanga** of the temple, or to the **šagina**. The table below is based on data compiled in succession by W.W. Hallo²⁵³, T. Maeda²⁵⁴ and, in her most recent publication, by T.M. Sharlach, corrected and supplemented with the information on the payer representing the given province, that is the person who from the formal point of view had the **bala** “capital” at his disposal. The entries are based on records found in concrete tablets and are not formally supplemented on the basis of external knowledge concerning a given ensi’s period of office. Thus, if a name of an ensi has been provided, it has indeed appeared in at least one source informing of his having delivered the **bala** tax payment in a given month of a given year. If, however, the entry mentions just the city, it means that in the text or texts which constitute its source basis there appeared only the remark “**bala** GN”. The last column contains data from those tablets which do not state the month of the given year. Several entries in one box mean that in the given month the duties were paid by more than one administrator.

²⁵³ W.W. Hallo, *A Sumerian Amphictyony*, pp. 94-95 (chronological table), pp. 97-100 (list of corroborative sources); T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*, pp. 364-369 (chronological table with corroborative sources).

²⁵⁴ T. Maeda, *Bal-ensí*, pp. 115-164 (esp. pp. 156-162 – list of texts; pp. 163-164 – chronological graph).

The data from H. Radau's text are entered in the last line of the table. Since it is not known which year was at issue, it has been marked not with the year, but the symbol of the last publication. W.W. Hallo, not taking under consideration the shift by one month in the Puzriš-Dagān state calendar²⁵⁷, interpreted the sequence from the month **iti še-KIN-ku₅** to **iti ezem me-ki-gal₂** as the list from months XII to XI. However, although the tablet does not have the year date, it seems improbable that the yearly list of months should have been made in this sequence. If it is assumed, on the other hand, that the text dates from after the year ŠS.3, that is after the reform of the calendar at Puzriš-Dagān, the correct order of **bala** payers is obtained: from the month I (**še-KIN-ku₅**) to the month XII (**ezem me-ki-gal₂**).

The above examples of texts and chronological table of the **bala** payers constitute only a general outline of documentation regarding the role of the ensi in the framework of the institution, selected according to the criterion of the appearance of the term **bala**. To achieve a true image, it would be necessary to analyse not only the remaining Puzriš-Dagān documentation on the topic²⁵⁸, but above all the texts from provincial archives, which show all the actions undertaken by the governors in their months of **bala** payment. As it has already been mentioned, such analysis, for the provincial archives of Umma²⁵⁹ and Girsu-Lagaš,

²⁵⁷ On the so-called Reichskalender (state calendar) used at Puzriš-Dagān and Ur, and on its reform during the reign of Šū-Suen, see e.g. T. Gomi, *Ein gewöhnliches Jahr mit einem Schaltmonat*, BiOr 34 (1977), idem, *The Calendars of Ur and Puzriš-Dagān in the Early Ur-III Period*, ASJ 1 (1979), pp. 1-11, pp. 275-281; R.M. Whiting, *Some Observations on the Drehem Calendar*, ZA 69/1 (1979), pp. 6-33;; M.E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*, Bethesda 1993, pp. 131-160; W. Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender*, pp. 5-14 (esp p. 8-9).

²⁵⁸ See, for instance, the example of how many more remarks in the Puzriš-Dagān archive refer to e.g. the ensis of Kuta (Gudua) – D.I. Owen, *The Ensis of Gudua*, pp. 131-152.

²⁵⁹ The first to attempt this for the Umma archive was T. Maeda, *Šà-bal-a in Umma Tablets*, pp. 145-174.

which best document the bala system, was recently conducted by T.M. Sharlach.²⁶⁰

²⁶⁰ T.M. Sharlach, *Provincial Taxation*.

Conclusion

In creating the system and organisational structure of their state, the monarchs of the Third Dynasty of Ur undoubtedly modelled them on the kings of Akkad. Additionally, their situation was simpler, insofar as after nearly a hundred years of general chaos, which separated their times from the Akkadian monarchy, they were only spatially “reconstructing” the organisation of the kingdom with its system of provinces. At that time, the Sumerian and Akkadian city-states, under pressure from the barbarian Gutians and Lullubians, did not have the ability to regain the power and level of autonomy which they enjoyed in the pre-Sargonic period; for this reason, it was probably much easier for Ur-Namma and his successors to bring the ensis back to the role of provincial governors.

It is, however, difficult to state unequivocally how innovative was the system they introduced, which divided the administrative and economic structures of the state into two entirely separate sectors: central (royal) and local (to some extent “self-governing”). Some traces of this system are certainly found already in the Akkadian monarchy of Sargon the Great and Naram-Sîn, but in the Old-Akkadian period it seems to have had a chiefly political and military nature, in which the position of **šagina**, the “military governor” independent from the ensi, served mostly too keep the recently-subdued Sumerian city-states in line and was thus crucial to the political cohesion of the kingdom. In the period of the Third Dynasty of Ur, on the other hand, the presence of military garrisons of “reservists” (**eren₂**) in the Sumero-Akkadian provinces

certainly had a similarly military dimension, but those garrisons made the development of huge multi-functional royal estates, built around them and thanks to them, possible, and thus had an additional economic aspect which was actually far more essential. This, as has already been indicated, was probably possible due to the fact that Ur-Namma and Šulgi created their state in a different political situation than Sargon of Akkad. Hence the division into the central and local sectors can be assumed to have been an original achievement of the Third Dynasty of Ur monarchs, especially, or perhaps exclusively, in the fact of giving the system its crucial economic and administrative aspect.

In contrast to the above, it is absolutely certain that the **bala** „tax” system which they introduced was an entirely novel systematic solution, especially in its key dimension of the mechanism regulating mutual economic relations between the two sectors and to a certain extent integrating the country's economy into one administrative and economic organism. It is also possible that the introduction of such fiscal and economic mechanism became a necessity at the point when the monarchs of the Third Dynasty of Ur conferred such extensive economic functions upon the central sector, which earlier had a chiefly military and political orientation. Hitherto too little is known, however, about the practical functioning of the royal estates in the Neo-Sumerian Period (despite even the discovery of the Garšana texts), to effectively compare it to the Old-Babylonian *ilkum* system.

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Abbreviations

AAS	J.-P. Grégoire, <i>Archives administratives sumériennes</i> , Paris 1970
AASF	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae, Series B (Helsinki)
ActAnHun	Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae (Budapest)
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung (Graz-Wien)
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia (Roma)
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn)
AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen (Berlin)
AOS	American Oriental Series (New Haven)
ARM	Archives royales de Mari (Paris)
ASJ	Acta Sumerologica (Hiroshima)
AS	Assyriological Studies (Chicago)
BAWph	Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl. Abhandlungen (München)
BE	Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts (Philadelphia)
BiMes	Bibliotheca Mesopotamica (Malibu)
BiOr	Bibliotheca Orientalis (Leiden)
BSAg	Bulletin of Sumerian Agriculture (Cambridge)
CAH	The Cambridge Ancient History (Cambridge)
CANE	Civilisations of the Ancient Near East, (ed.) J.M. Sasson, New York 1995

CM	Cuneiform Monographs (Leiden-Boston)
CRRAI	Compte rendu, Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
DV	Drevnij Vostok (Erevan)
FAOS	Freiburger Altorientalische Studien (Stuttgart)
HSM	Harvard Semitic Museum
IB	Institutum Biblicum
IEHC 10	Tenth International Economic History Congress, Leuven 1990, Session B-16
IK	Hübner, B., Reizammer, A., <i>Inim Kiengi. Sumerisch-deut- sches Glossar in zwei Bänden</i> , Bd. 1-2, Marktredwitz 1985
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society (Boston)
JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies (New Haven)
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient (Leiden)
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies (Chicago)
KBS	Kavkazsko-bliznievostocznyj sbornik (Tbilisi)
LSS	Leipziger Semitistische Studien (Leipzig)
MHE	Mesopotamian History and Environment, Occasional Publications (Ghent)
MVN	Materiali per il Vocabolario Neosumerico (Roma)
NABU	Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires (Paris)
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis (Freiburg – Göttingen)
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications (Chicago)
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta (Leuven)
OLZ	Orientalische Literaturzeitung (Berlin – Leipzig)
OPSNKF	Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund (Philadelphia)
OrNS	Orientalia, Nova Series (Roma)
PDT	Die Puzriš-Dagan-Texte der Istanbululer Archäologischen Museen
PH	Przegląd Historyczny
RA	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale (Paris)

RAI	Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
RGTC	Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes (Wiesbaden)
RHA	Revue Hittite et Asianique (Paris)
RIME	Royal Inscriptions from Mesopotamia. Early Periods (Toronto)
RIA	Reallexicon der Assyriologie (Berlin)
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization (Chicago)
SCCNH	Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians (Winona Lake)
SEL	Studi Eblaiti (Roma)
SRD	W.M. Nesbit, <i>Sumerian Records from Drehem</i> , Columbia University Oriental Studies 8, New York 1914
ŠL	Deimel, A., <i>Šumerisches Lexikon</i> , 1-3 Teil, Roma 1925-1934
TROM 1	M. Sigrist, Neo-Sumerian Texts from the Royal Ontario Museum, 1. The Administration at Drehem, Bethesda 1995
UAVA	Untersuchungen zur Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie (Berlin – New York)
UDT	J.B. Nies, <i>Ur Dynasty Tablets - Chiefly from Tello and Drehem, Written during the Reign of Dungi, Bur-Sin, Gimil-Sin, and Ībi-Sin</i> , Leipzig 1920 (UDT)
UET	Ur Excavations, Texts (London)
UF	Ugarit-Forschungen. Internationales Jahrbuch für die Altertumskunde Syrien-Palästinas (Neukirchen-Vluyn)
VDI	Vestnik Drevnej Istorii (Moskva)
ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie (Berlin)



	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	dirig	without iti
Š.26								ensi ₂ Umma						
Š.27														
Š.28					<i>Ititi ensi₂</i> Kazallu									
Š.29														
Š.30														
Š.31														
Š.32														
Š.33			<i>Izarik ensi₂</i> Kazallu					ensi ₂ Umma						
Š.34						<i>Izarik ensi₂</i> Kazallu								
Š.35						Ur-Lisi ensi ₂ Umma								
Š.36														
Š.37														ensi ₂ Kazallu
Š.38											<i>Abua</i> šabra			
Š.39														
Š.40														
Š.41					ensi ₂ Babili ensi ₂ didli		Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu			Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu		
Š.42	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu						Ur-Lisi ensi ₂ Umma	ensi ₂ Adab			Girsu	Girsu	
Š.43			ensi ₂ Puš				ensi ₂ Agade	Ur-Suen ensi ₂ Urum ²⁵⁵						
Š.44		ensi ₂ Puš	ensi ₂ HA.A		Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu		sanga šulgi ^d				Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Umma ensi ₂ Kazallu
Š.45				Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu	Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu		ensi ₂ Gudua		šabra ^d Nanna šabra An šabra ^d Nin- ezen					ensi ₂ Adab
Š.46		ensi ₂ Babili ensi ₂ Puš ensi ₂ A.HA Adalal šabra	sanga Marad ensi ₂ Marad				ensi ₂ Adab ensi ₂ Kiš	Namzitarra ensi ₂ Gudua			Ur-Lama ensi ₂ Girsu			

²⁵⁵ The city name written $Ur_2xU_2^{ki}$ is read and identified with Urum ($urum_2^{ki}$).

Š.47		<i>Abuma ensi₂</i> Puš			Habaluke <i>ensi₂</i> Adab		Namzitarra <i>ensi₂</i> Gudua			<i>Šu-Mama ensi₂</i> Kazallu	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu		
Š.48						Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu				Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lisi <i>ensi₂</i> Umma		
AS.1					Habaluke <i>ensi₂</i> Adab	Namzitarra <i>ensi₂</i> Gudua		<i>Abuma ensi₂</i> Nibru Ur-Suen <i>ensi₂</i> Urum		Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu				
AS.2	<i>Aršiah ensi₂</i> Babili		Habaluke <i>ensi₂</i> Adab	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Gudea <i>ensi₂</i> Gudua	<i>ensi₂</i> Šurupak							<i>Abuma ensi₂</i> Puš
AS.3			Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu			Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu		Gudea <i>ensi₂</i> Gudua	Lu-Nanna <i>šabra</i>	<i>Šu-Mama ensi₂</i> Kazallu Ur-Lama <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu			
AS.4	Nanna-zišagal <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Nanna-zišagal <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	<i>ensi₂</i> Adab	Lešanum <i>ensi₂</i> Marad <i>Šutirum ensi₂</i> Apiak	<i>ensi₂</i> Kazallu		Lu-Ninšubur <i>šabra</i> An-na	Nanna-kiag <i>šabra</i> ^d Nanna	Nanna-zišagal <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu <i>Zariq ensi₂</i> Šušān <i>šabra</i> Ur		Ugula <i>ensi₂</i> Kiš <i>šabra</i>			
AS.5	Šara-kam <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Habaluke <i>ensi₂</i> Adab	<i>Šarrum-bani ensi₂</i> Apiak	<i>Šu-Mama ensi₂</i> Kazallu	Šara-kam <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu			Šara-kam <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lisi <i>ensi₂</i> Umma		<i>Aršiah ensi₂</i> <i>Babili</i>	<i>šabra</i>		Šara-kam <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu
AS.6							Šarakam <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Liši <i>ensi₂</i> Umma	<i>ensi₂</i> Šurupak		<i>Aršiah ensi₂</i> <i>Babili</i>			
AS.7				<i>Apilaša ensi₂</i> Kazallu <i>Šu-Mama ensi₂</i> Kazallu	<i>Nur-Dagan ensi₂</i> Sippar	<i>Kallamu ensi₂</i> Ešnunna Ur-šašaga <i>ensi₂</i> I Išim- Šulgi	Gudea <i>ensi₂</i> Gudua	Ur-Lisi <i>ensi₂</i> Umma		<i>šabra</i> Unug	<i>Aršiah ensi₂</i> <i>Babili ensi₂</i> A.HA <i>ensi₂</i> Puš	Urdu-mu <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu		
AS.8				<i>Apilaša ensi₂</i> Kazallu	<i>Nur-Dagan ensi₂</i> Sippar		Urdu-mu <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu	Ur-Lisi <i>ensi₂</i> Umma Ur-Ninkurra <i>ensi₂</i> Šurupak	<i>Abum-bani ensi₂</i> Kiš	Ur-Šulgira <i>šabra</i> ^d Nin-gal	<i>ensi₂</i> <i>Babili</i> <i>(Ilallum ensi₂)</i> ²⁵⁶ Uru-sagrig)	Urdu-mu <i>ensi₂</i> Girsu		

²⁵⁶ Clearly, in the name of the *ensi₂* of Babylon the delivery was made by the *ensi₂* of Uru-sagrig – see JCS 14, 110, 12, line 1-3: 10-la₂-1 udu niga, mu bala en[s₂] KA₂.DINGIR^{ki}-š[e₃], ki i₃-lal₃-lum *ensi₂* uru-sagrig^{ki}-ta.

AS.9			<i>Imlī-Ea ensi₂</i> Marad				Urdu-mu ensi ₂ Girsu	Aakalla ensi ₂ Umma			<i>Murteli ensi₂</i> <i>Babili</i>	Urdu-mu ensi ₂ Girsu Ur-Eanna ensi ₂		
ŠS.1							Aakalla ensi ₂ Umma		ensi ₂ Ešnuna		ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Girsu		
ŠS.2			<i>Šamaš-bani</i> ensi ₂ Sippar				Ur-Ninkurra ensi ₂ Šurupak		Habaluke ensi ₂ Adab ensi ₂ Ešnuna	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Girsu		
ŠS.3								ensi ₂ Ešnuna	ensi ₂ <i>Babili</i>				<i>Imlīk-Ea ensi₂</i> Marad	
ŠS.4	ensi ₂ Uru-sagrig Urdu-mu ensi ₂ Girsu		<i>Šamaš-bani</i> ensi ₂ Sippar				Ur-Ninkurra ensi ₂ Šurupak	ensi ₂ Ešnuna	ensi ₂ Adab			ensi ₂ Isin		
ŠS.5	Ur-mes ensi ₂ Uru-sagrig													
ŠS.6						ensi ₂ Puš X-Nanna ensi ₂ Urum					ensi ₂ Marad			
ŠS.7	ensi ₂ Sippar													ensi ₂ Girsu
ŠS.8	Unabatal ensi ₂ Babili				ensi ₂ Kazallu									
ŠS.9	ensi ₂ Sippar			Ku-Ningal	šabra	<i>Ituria ensi₂</i> Ešnuna	ensi ₂ <i>Babili</i>		Urtur		ensi ₂ Uru-sagrig	ensi ₂ Šurupak (?)		
IS.1	ensi ₂ Sippar						ensi ₂ <i>Babili</i>							<i>Ituria ensi₂</i> Ešnuna
IS.2						ensi ₂ Babili			ensi ₂ Kiš	Urmes ensi ₂ Uru-sagrig				ensi ₂ Marad
IS.3			Dadaga ensi ₂ Umma											
MVN 9.124	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Umma	ensi ₂ <i>Babili</i>	ensi ₂ Marad	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Girsu	ensi ₂ Išim- Šulgi	ensi ₂ Adab	šabra Ur	ensi ₂ Šurupak	ensi ₂ Kazallu		