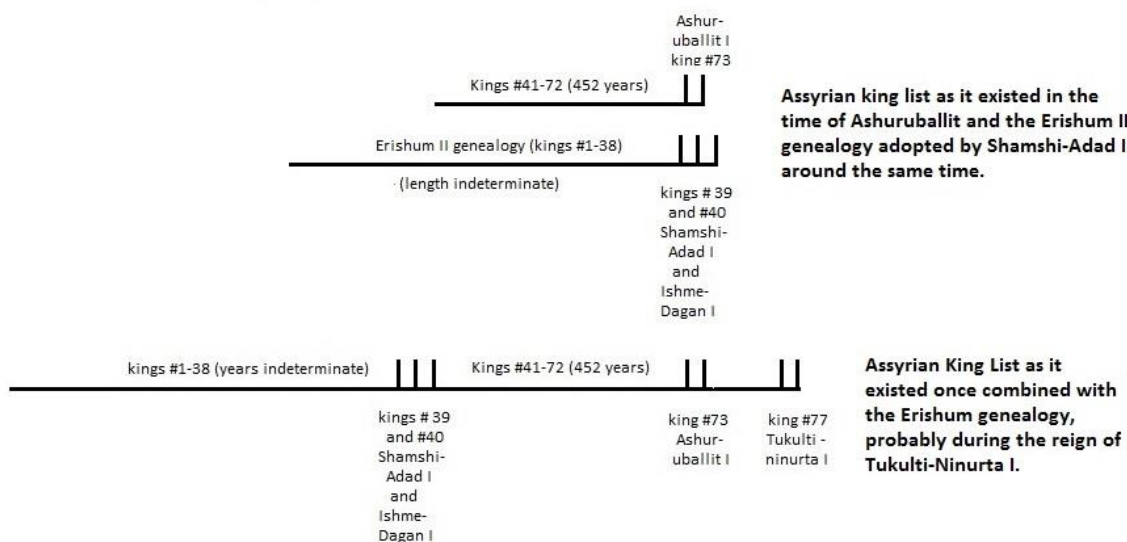


## Paper #11b – Hammurabi: a defense of his 14<sup>th</sup> century BC dates. Part 2

In our previous paper (11a), part 1 of our defense of the dates 1351-1309 BC for Hammurabi [hereafter we use the dates 1352-1310, for reasons that will become transparent], we presented two separate but related proposals. On the one hand we claimed that both Shamshi-Adad I, suzerain of Assyria and bordering states, and Ashuruballit I, vassal king of Assyria, were contemporaries of Hammurabi, the 6<sup>th</sup> king of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Amorite) dynasty of Babylon. On the other hand we suggested that the first 38 kings named in the Assyrian King List might properly be identified as a single “genealogy of Erishum II” - assuming that the connectives linking each of the four constituent groups of kings (#1-17; 18-26; 27-32; 33-38) were correct. We then argued that these 38 kings, along with the usurper Shamshi-Adad I and his son Ishme-Dagan, were not the earliest kings of Assyria as argued by the traditional history based solely on their positioning in the Assyrian King List. Instead we hypothesized that the *Assyrian King List* ought to begin with kings #41-73) on the existing AKL and that this list of Assyrian kings and the kings belonging to the “genealogy of Erishum II” (kings #1-40) overlapped one another as diagrammed in our Figure 1 below. We reasoned furthermore that the “genealogy of Erishum II” was adopted by Shamshi-Adad I and his son Ishme-Dagan in order to lend legitimacy to their reigns and preserve their names for posterity. From that moment on, two separate lists of “ancestor kings” came into being, one citing the names of Ashuruballit I (king #73) and his predecessors back to king #41, the legitimate “kings of Assyria”, and one claimed by Shamshi-Adad I, suzerain of Assyria. Later, whether by design or by mistake, the “Erishum II genealogy” with Shamshi-Adad and his son added, was prefixed to the existing AKL, creating the prototype or *vorlage* of the document which exists today, diagrammed as a single timeline on the bottom of our Figure 1, which is here duplicated from our previous paper 11a.

**Figure 1 - Assyrian King List interpreted as a synthesis of two distinct “king lists”**



Our intention in this part 2 of our paper #11 is to modify this hypothetical structure ever so slightly, and then to provide documentation and discussion supporting the modified thesis.

In this reappraisal of our previous analysis we make a single alteration to the AKL, removing the one name that connects sections 2 and 3 of that document. But first we set the stage for this procedure by briefly outlining the major source documents which have been used by scholars to collate the existing *Assyrian King List*.

**The composite Assyrian King List.** When the reader accesses an online version of the [Assyrian King List](#), such as the Livius version we used consistently throughout the earlier paper, it is imperative that he/she recognize the one major shortfall of the source documents used to collate the ultimate version. Without exception they were all composed multiple hundreds of years after the death of the majority of kings whose reigns they itemize, and we know very little about the processes involved in their composition. If based on a common *vorlage* we can only guess at the criteria used to create that single document. All we know is that the existing text of the AKL is collated from three lengthy documents known respectively as the Nassouhi Kinglist (NaKL), the Khorsabad King List (KhKL) and the SDAS (or Seventh Day Adventist Seminary) King List, each with its own idiosyncracies. Additional information is provided by two fragmentary texts, AsKL = VAT 11554 (published as KAV 15), and NiKL, a kinglist fragment from Nineveh, (= BM 128059), published by Millard in *Iraq* 32 (1970) 174-176. The three major kinglists have been discussed at length by modern scholars. We mention only three from among the hundreds of published articles, beginning with J.A. Brinkman's relatively recent paper entitled "[Comments on the Nassouhi Kinglist and the Assyrian Kinglist Tradition](#)" in the journal *Orientalia* 42 (1973) 306-319, the source of much of the information in this paragraph. The other two are the classic publication of the Khorsabad Kinglist in a massive article by A. Poebel entitled "[The Assyrian King List from Khorsabad](#)" published in three sections in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, i.e. JNES 1 (1942) 247-306 & 460-492 and JNES 2 (1943) 56-90; and finally, the long awaited publication of the SDAS kinglist by I.J. Gelb in an article contrasting the SDAS and the KhKL entitled "[Two Assyrian King Lists](#)", published in JNES 13 (1954) 209-230.

The dates of composition of the three major kinglist versions, as deduced largely from the dates of the last king included in the document, are best summarized by Brinkman in his *Orientalia* paper.

The second topic I would like to touch on is the relative age of the five currently published examples of the Assyrian Kinglist. One, KhKL, is dated exactly by its colophon to 738 B.C. Two more, NaKL and SDAS, may be dated with reasonable accuracy by their concluding portions: NaKL ends with the reign of Tiglath-pileser II (died 935 B.C.) and SDAS ends with the reign of Shalmaneser V (died 722 B.C.); and each should presumably be dated within a few years after these events. Most difficult to date are the two fragmentary exemplars of the list: AsKL and NiKL. Poebel argued [JNES 1 (1942) 251] that AsKL is the oldest known fragment of the list; and his conclusion was accepted, among others, by Landsberger [JCS 8 (1954) 39 note 48] and Grayson [AOAT 1 109]. The date proposed by Poebel would probably lie around the middle of the eleventh century B.C. [op.cit. 251]. Millard tentatively dated NiKL to sometime in the tenth century, roughly around the time of NaKL. (Brinkman, op. cit., 315) [footnotes in square brackets added from the bottom of page 315]

In this paper we have only marginal interest in when the source documents were themselves composed. Instead we are interested in when the AKL first took its present form, with kings #1-40 prefixed to king #41 and his successors. From the discussion above we know only that the event must have taken place prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century BC. Later we will remark on the fact that the present structure was definitely in place at least as early as the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207 BC). And one small detail in the existing version of the AKL allows us to date its creation later than 1290 BC, our revised history date for the invasion of Babylonia by the Kassites and the ensuing change of the name of the country from Babylonia to Karduniash. Brinkman makes the observation that in the existing AKL there exists a consistent use of the term Karduniash for Babylonia, a usage which extends back to the time of the entry Shamshi-Adad I, where the chronicle-like addition to the name of this 39<sup>th</sup> “Assyrian king” twice uses the revised name Karduniash.

[39] Šamši-Adad[I], son of Ila-kabkabi, went to [Karduniaš](#) in the time of Naram-Sin. In the eponymy of Ibni-Adad, Šamši-Adad went up from Karduniaš. He took Ekallatum, where he stayed three years. In the eponymy of Atamar-Ištar, Šamši-Adad went up from Ekallatum. He ousted Erišum, son of Naram-Sin, from the throne and took it. He ruled for 33 years.

We have no problem with this entry. In our revised chronology Shamshi-Adad I was a contemporary of both Hammurabi (1352-1310) and Ashuruballit I (1352-1318). Momentarily we will assign him the dates 1368-1336 BC. Assuming that the *vorlage* of the existing AKL was created soon after the year 1290 BC, and that this comment was composed and added at the time, it is not surprising that the scribal author used the current revised name of Assyria’s southern neighbor. An anachronism to be sure, but not so egregious an error as would be the case if the traditional history is correct in dating Shamshi-Adad I to the years 1808-1776, or thereabouts. Advocates of that history must assume that the scribe who united the two timelines, and composed the addendum, placed Shamshi-Adad in Karduniash over two hundred years before Karduniash existed. Not just an innocent and understandable anachronism, but an outright blunder.

It is time to introduce our modified interpretation of the structure of the initial 40 kings of the Assyrian King List.

**The structure of the existing Assyrian King List.** In part 1 of this paper #11 we examined the make-up of the first 40 kings in the Assyrian King List, where we grouped the 40 kings into five subsections for ease of reference. We duplicate the relevant portion of the King List we used for reference at the time, and position it below as our Table 1, adding section numbers for greater clarity.

**Table 1: The first 40 “Assyrian kings” on the [Assyrian King List](#)”  
(copied from the online Livius translation with section no’s added)**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | [1-17] Tudija, Adamu, Janqi, Sahlamu, Harharu, Mandaru, Imsu, Harsu, Didanu, Hanu, Zuabu, Nuabu, Abazu, Belu, Azarah, Ušpia, Apiašal.  |
|       | Total: 17 kings who lived in tents.  |
| ----- |  |
| 2     | [18-26] Aminu was the son of Ilu-kabkabu, Ila-kabkabi of Yazkur-el, Jazkur-ilu of Yakmeni, Jakmeni of Yakmesi, Jakmesi of Ilu-Mer, Ilu-Mer of Hayani, Hajanu of Samani, Samanu of Hale, Hale of Apiašal, Apiašal of Ušpia.   |
|       | Total: 10 kings who were ancestors.  |
| ----- |  |
| 3     | [27-32] Sulili son of Aminu, Kikkija, Akija, Puzur-Aššur [I], Šalim-ahum, Ilušuma.   |
|       | Total: 6 kings named on bricks, whose number of <a href="#">limmu-officials</a> is unknown.  |
| ----- |  |
| 4     | [33] Erišum [I], son of Ilušuma, [...] ruled for 30/40 years.  |
|       | [34] Ikunum, son of Erishu, ruled for [...] years.   |
|       | [35] Sargon [I], son of Ikunu, ruled for [...] years.  |
|       | [36] Puzur-Aššur [II], son of Sargon, ruled for [...] years.   |
|       | [37] Naram-Sin, son of Puzur-Aššur, ruled for N+4 years.   |
|       | [38] Erišum [II], son of Naram-Sin, ruled for [...] years.   |
| ----- |  |
| 5     | [39] Šamši-Adad[I], son of Ila-kabkabi, went to <a href="#">Karduniaš</a> in the time of Naram-Sin. In the eponymy of Ibni-Adad, Šamši-Adad went up from Karduniaš. He took Ekallatum, where he stayed three years. In the eponymy of Atamar-Ištar, Šamši-Adad went up from Ekallatum. He ousted Erišum, son of Naram-Sin, from the throne and took it. He ruled for 33 years. (1813-1781) |
|       | [40] Išme-Dagan [I], son of Šamši-Adad, ruled for 40 years.  |

As stated above, in our earlier paper we were careful to insist that the twenty-one kings numbered 18-38, all listed as father-son pairs, should be accepted as such, and that the connections between sections 1-4 be maintained awaiting evidence to the contrary, treating verses 1-38 of the AKL as a “genealogy of Erishum”. Lacking contradictory evidence we assumed that when Shamshi-Adad deposed Erishum II, he simply adopted that kings’ genealogy as his own and affixed his name to it. Only two aspects of that earlier discussion were critical. On the one hand it was necessary to assume that Shamshi-Adad’s fabricated genealogy had nothing to do with the Assyrian King List, which existed as a separate and independent entity. On the other hand we insisted that the king Erishum II was not an Assyrian king in the strict sense of that term, a fact that remains to be proved.

In this paper we choose instead to disregard the existing link between the second and third sections of the Shamshi-Adad genealogy, and equate the king Ilu-kabkabu in section 2 and Ila-kabkabi, the father of Shamshi-Adad in section 5, thus treating the entirety of section 2 as the “genealogy of Shamshi-Adad”, and the whole of section 1 as the ancestors of that dynasty, with or without the connective. And we accomplish this “about face” by simply following and quoting the well-respected Canadian historian John Van Seters, writing in his 1983 volume entitled [“In Search of History: historiography in the ancient world and the origins of Biblical history”](#). We highly recommend to readers of this paper that they peruse the sub-section entitled “King Lists”, located on pages 68-76 of that volume, part of a chapter entitled “Mesopotamian Historiography”. At minimum we recommend reading [the brief excursus specifically related to the first 40 kings of the Assyrian King List beginning on the last line of page 72 and continuing through page 76](#). This will summarize what may be the consensus view of current scholarship on the sections we are most interested in. Alternatively, the reader may simply read on, since we will be quoting extensively from these few pages.

We should perhaps state at the outset that while we do agree with most of what Van Seters has to say, we should preface his remarks by insisting that the kings being discussed, ie. Erishum II and his immediate predecessors, are not Assyrian kings. They do not reside in Assyria, and they certainly cannot be described ethnically as Assyrians, and therefore do not deserve a place on the AKL. We will argue later in this paper that they are either Amorite or (more likely) Akkadian intruders, their dynasty being a legacy of the [kingdom of Akkad](#), dated ca 2334–2154 BC by the traditional history, and ruled by the famous conqueror [Sargon the Great](#), dated 2334 to 2279 BC (middle chronology) by traditional scholars, but tentatively ca 1894-1839 BC by our revised history. Sometime in the early history of the Erishum dynasty of 12 kings (= sections 3 and 4 of our Table 2) the existing tiny temple state of Assur was either “inherited” or “conquered”, probably during the reign of Sulili and probably also in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Akkadian kingdom. It was held subsequently as a vassal state by the descendants of Sulili for almost four hundred years. But here we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Van Seters does an excellent job in summarizing the contents of the relevant sections of the *Assyrian King List*, beginning on page 73 of the aforementioned book.

The first section is a list of seventeen names that are called “17 kings who dwell in tents.” The second section then lists “10 kings who are ancestors” and gives them in genealogical order with the formula  $RN_1$ , son of  $RN_2$ ;  $RN_2$ , son of  $RN_3$ . This produces a list in reverse chronological order from the rest of the text. The last two names in section two, Apiashal and Ushpia, are repeated in reverse order from the last two names of section one, thus connecting the two sections. Section three lists six kings and begins with “Sulili, son of Aminu” but then gives five names without a genealogical designation. As earlier, the filiation in the first line is intended to make a connection with Aminu, of the previous section. Section four follows with a series of names using the formula  $RN_2$ , son of  $RN_1$ , he ruled x years. These are given in correct chronological

order and tied to the last name of section three. The formula for section four becomes the fixed formula for the rest of the text. (op. cit. p. 73)

Thus far Van Seters has added little to our brief outline of the first 38 kings of the AKL provided in our paper 11a. But now he does away with some (though not all) of the links between sections and reinterprets the entirety of sections 1, 2, and 3.

The list is interrupted again after the first six names in section four by the name “Shamshi-Adad (I), son of Ilu-kabkabi,” and a chronicle like account of how he seized the throne from the previous rulers. Now Ilu-kabkabi, Shamshi-Adad’s father, occurs at the beginning of the list of the ten ancestors in section two along with Aminu, who was probably Shamshi-Adad’s brother and immediate predecessor. Section two is thus a genealogy of Shamshi-Adad. Aminu’s name cannot, therefore, stand at the head of section three as the beginning of a line of thirteen rulers before Shamshi-Adad. The duplication of the names Apiashal and Ushpia in sections one and two is also suspect. *This means that the first three sections, which have their own distinct styles, were originally independent, and that the connections made between them were artificial.* (italics added)

But Van Seters is not finished, suggesting in the next two paragraphs that section 1, the 17 kings who lived in tents, bears a remarkable similarity to the initial 19 kings listed on a recently translated tablet found in the British Museum collection. That list of 19 kings preceded the listing of the initial kings of Hammurabi’s Amorite dynasty in precisely the same way that the 17 kings in section one of the AKL precede the listing of ten kings of Shamshi-Adad’s Amorite dynasty family. The close similarity between the two lists suggests, if it doesn’t prove, that the first and second sections of the existing AKL consist of kings rooted in the Babylonian tradition. By no means can they be classified as Assyrian kings. Van Seters continues this argument.

The task of unfolding the “tradition-history” of AKL, by which these various blocks of material were brought together, is complex. One important control in this discussion, however, must be the utilization of extant historical and inscriptional information. The texts must also be compared with other relevant king-list and genealogical traditions. Compared with SKL [the *Sumerian King List*], AKL says nothing about the antediluvian and postdiluvian kings or the period of Assyria’s domination by the Akkad dynasty and the Neo-Sumerian rulers of the third dynasty of Ur. Furthermore, the pattern of kingship transferred from one state to another is not recognized. Instead, kingship is traced back to the hoary antiquity of the tent-dwelling kings, and the whole list is associated with one place, the city of Assur. On the other hand, the first section of AKL must be related in some way to the recently published Babylonian genealogy of Hammurabi’s Amorite dynasty, which also has at the beginning a list of eleven or twelve names that parallel rather closely the first twelve names of the AKL. Since most of these names are tribal or geographic, the list has the character of a group of eponymous ancestors. A rather widespread opinion is that the names represent a common, oral, West-Semitic (“Amorite”) tribal heritage which became the traditional basis for both Babylonian and Assyrian kingships. Shamshi-Adad, the “Amorite,” is then credited with introducing this tradition into Assyria.

One aspect of Van Seter's previous comment is noticeably out of place, namely his insistence on bringing Assyria and the city of Assur into the picture, this because, unlike yours truly, he remains throughout a firm believer in the temporal structure of the existing AKL, i.e. the fact that king's #1-40 without exception temporally precede king's #41 and following. The reader will surely acknowledge that in the first two sections of the AKL Assyria plays no part. And we will demonstrate later in this paper, as stated earlier, that in sections three and four Assyria continues to play no part, save for the fact that the Assyrian state is a vassal of the Erishum dynasty kings who reside elsewhere. Van Seters is merely reflecting his bias, or rather the bias of the traditional history, which accepts that the first 40 kings must have some connection with the tradition of Assyrian kingship, else why would they be included at the start of the AKL? Why indeed?

When Van Seters refers to a "recently published genealogy of the Amorite dynasty he is referring to an article entitled "[The Genealogy of the Hammurabi Dynasty](#)" published by J.J. Finkelstein in the *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* [JCS 20 (1966) 95-118], in which that author discusses at length the similarities between the kings listed in positions 1-19 on a king list contained on tablet BM 80328 in the British Museum, and the kings numbered 1-17 that begin the existing *Assyrian King List*. And since the 19 Amorite ancestors are followed immediately on the tablet by the names of the first 9 of the 11 Amorite dynasty kings (i.e. Sumu-abum to Ammiditana), it follows that these ancestors reigned from sometime in the remote past to the approximate year 1830, when the traditional history dates the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Amorite) dynasty of Babylon, or 1451 BC if we follow the chronology of the revised history (see Table 5 on page 12 of our paper #10). And since the similarity between the two lists is inescapable, it follows that the section 1 kings in the Shamshi-Adad genealogy ended their reigns around that approximate date, and were followed immediately by the section 2 ancestors of Shamshi-Adad. If the reader wonders why the Hammurabi dynasty appears to end after the naming of its 9<sup>th</sup> king Ammiditana, omitting the names of final two kings, the answer is not hard to find. The document BM 80328 was authored by the 10<sup>th</sup> Amorite dynasty king Ammisaduga.

For ease of reference we have created a chart (see Table 2 on the next page) that itemizes the kings under consideration and summarizes some of the arguments made by Finkelstein. At minimum he clearly identifies kings #4, 6 & 7 of the AKL with three kings on the Hammurabi document. The other associations are more complex, and we leave it to the reader to follow the argument by reading Finkelstein's article, if interested. Meanwhile, we simply take Finkelstein at his word, as expressed on page 99 of his article:

If these two last equations [GHD 5 = AKL (SDAS) 5 and GHD 8 = AKL SDAS 6] are ultimately proved valid, then we shall have accounted for the first eleven names in GHD (counting two names in each of the first three lines) with the first eleven names in AKL. But even if these two equations are to be rejected, nine out of the eleven names in AKL are accounted for in GHD beyond any reasonable doubt. There can therefore be no question but that *the genealogical traditions of the Hammurabi dynasty and those of the Assyrian King List – the first two sections of which must almost certainly be identified as the "[Ahnentafel](#)" of Shamshi-Adad I – are one and the same insofar as they represent a consciousness of tribal origins.* (op. cit. p. 99) (italics are a part of the original text but the hyperlink is added)

**Table 2: Names in sections 1 & 2 of the Assyrian King List (AKL) compared to Names #1-19 of the Genealogy of the Hammurabi Dynasty (GHD)**

| <u>king no.</u> | <u>AKL</u>            | <u>GHD</u>                               | <u>king no.</u> | <u>AKL</u>                      | <u>GHD</u>         |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| <u>1</u>        | <u>SDCS 1 Tudija</u>  | <u>Aram-mardura</u>                      | <u>14</u>       | <u>Belu</u>                     | <u>Asmadu</u>      |
| <u>2</u>        | <u>SDCS 1 Adamu</u>   | <u>Tubti-Yamuta cf. SDCS 1 composite</u> | <u>15</u>       | <u>Azarah</u>                   | <u>Abiamuta</u>    |
| <u>3</u>        | <u>SDCS 2 Jangi</u>   | <u>Jamqu-uzu-halama cf. SDCS 2 comp.</u> | <u>16</u>       | <u>Ushpija</u>                  | <u>Abiditaam</u>   |
| <u>4</u>        | <u>SDCS 2 Sahlamu</u> | <u>Heana (cf AKL 10)</u>                 | <u>17</u>       | <u>Apiashal</u>                 | <u>damaged</u>     |
| <u>5</u>        | <u>Harharu</u>        | <u>Namzu cf SDCS 4 composite</u>         | <u>18</u>       | <u>Hale</u>                     | <u>damaged</u>     |
| <u>6</u>        | <u>Mandaru</u>        | <u>Ditanu (cf AKL 9)</u>                 | <u>19</u>       | <u>Samanu</u>                   | <u>damaged</u>     |
| <u>7</u>        | <u>SDCS 4 Imsu</u>    | <u>Zummabu (cf AKL 11)</u>               | <u>20</u>       | <u>Hajanu</u>                   | <u>Sumuabuum</u>   |
| <u>8</u>        | <u>SDCS 4 Harsu</u>   | <u>Namhuu cf SDCS 6 composite)</u>       | <u>21</u>       | <u>Ilu-Mer</u>                  | <u>Sumulait</u>    |
| <u>9</u>        | <u>Didanu</u>         | <u>Amnana</u>                            | <u>22</u>       | <u>Jakmesi</u>                  | <u>Zabium</u>      |
| <u>10</u>       | <u>Hanu</u>           | <u>Yaahrarum</u>                         | <u>23</u>       | <u>Jakmeni</u>                  | <u>Apil-Sin</u>    |
| <u>11</u>       | <u>SDCS 6 Zuabu</u>   | <u>Iptiyamuta</u>                        | <u>24</u>       | <u>Jazkur-ilu</u>               | <u>Sinmuballit</u> |
| <u>12</u>       | <u>SDCS 6 Nuabu</u>   | <u>Bahazuum</u>                          | <u>25</u>       | <u>Ila-kabkabi</u>              | <u>Hammurabi</u>   |
| <u>13</u>       | <u>Abazu</u>          | <u>Sumaliki</u>                          | <u>26</u>       | <u>Aminu &amp; Shamshi-Adad</u> | <u>Samsuiluma</u>  |

It is at least interesting to note in our Table 2 that the two lists appear to be approximately the same length, at least in terms of generations. On the AKL list Shamshi-Adad is situated in the 26<sup>th</sup> generation (along with his brother) while on the GHD Hammurabi occupies the 25<sup>th</sup> position, a rather remarkable synchronism since these two kings are known to be contemporaries.

Considering the prior discussion we arrive at the conclusion that the first 73 names of the AKL represent not two, but three distinct genealogies – one representing the Assyrian ancestors of Ashuruballit I (kings #41-72), one the ancestors of Erishum II, probably ethnic Akkadians (kings #27-38), and the third, the Amorite ancestors of Shamshi-Adad I (kings #1-26). It follows that our earlier Figure 1 needs to be corrected via the addition of a third constituent timeline, as diagrammed in our Figure 2 on the following page.

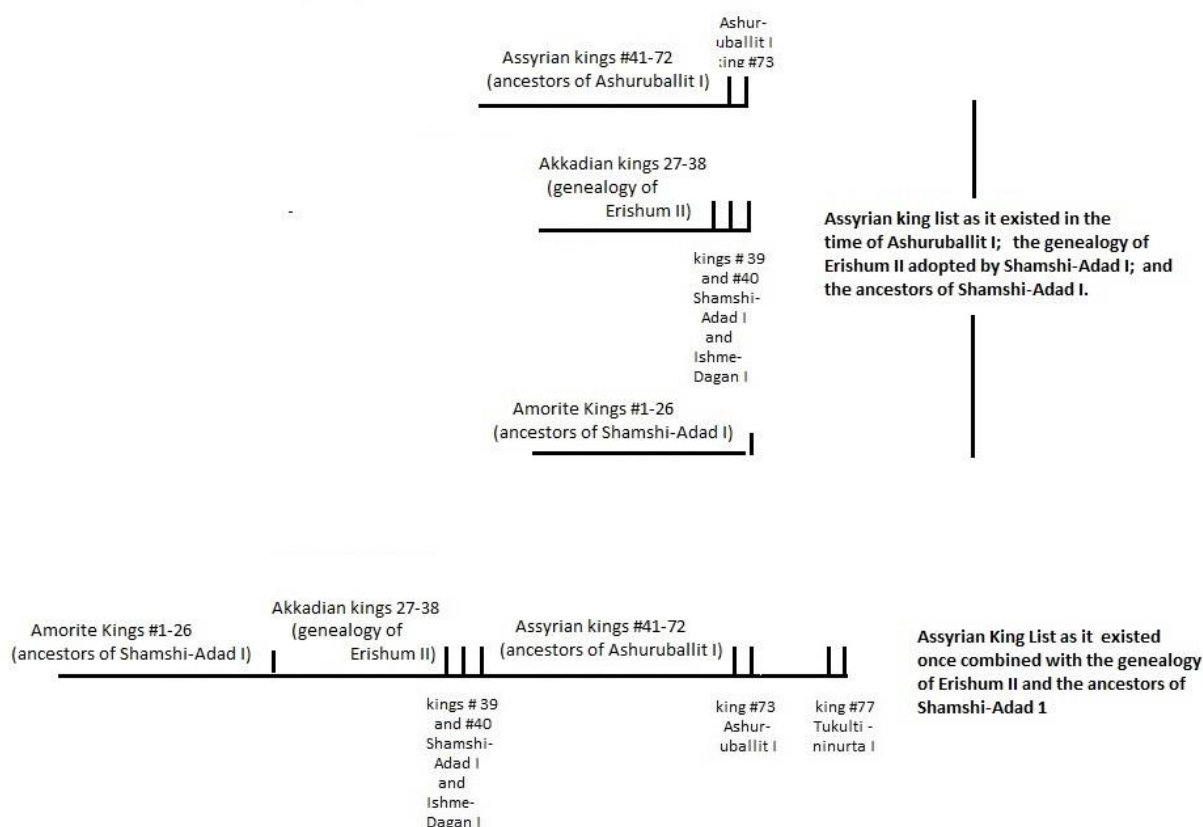
On page 6 above we quoted John Van Seters's opinion regarding the process by which the Assyrian King List came into being. We quote a portion of that opinion again.

The task of unfolding the "tradition-history" of AKL, by which these various blocks of material were brought together, is complex. One important control in this discussion, however, must be *the utilization of extant historical and inscriptional information.* (italics added)

Here we follow his advice. Assuming that a scribe in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century was privy to three separate documents, each recording a distinct dynastic list of kings as per our Figure 2 diagram, all three centered geographically in the area of the Tigris between Nineveh and Assur, how



**Figure 2 - Assyrian King List interpreted as a synthesis of three distinct “king lists”**



would we expect him to proceed, assuming his objective was to record the separate king lists on a single tablet. We have already reviewed the anticipated response in part A of this paper. Regardless of the degree of overlap of the separate dynasties he would simply list the three in succession, as if they followed one another sequentially, beginning with what he perceived to be the oldest, precisely as we find them listed in the existing AKL and as diagrammed on the single timeline at the bottom of our Figure 2. *Our template for understanding this procedure was and still is the Babylonian King List A.*

We have spent this time outlining the structure of the first five sections of the *Assyrian King List*, and explaining how the constituent dynasties came to be positioned as they presently are on that document, for one reason only. This entire paper sets out to prove that Ashuruballit I, Shamshi-Adad I and Hammurabi were all contemporaries, as they are in our three separate Figure 2 timelines. It is imperative therefore that the reader be convinced by our thesis of three separate overlapping dynasties, rather than be influenced by the existing structure of the AKL which gives the false impression that they ran in succession and were separated from one another by multiple hundreds of years.

Before leaving this section behind, we raise several questions and look at yet one more document that seems to reinforce our argument that the existing structure of the AKL is flawed.

Our first question relates to the incongruity that apparently exists between the listing of the first 40 kings of the AKL and the kings in positions 41-47 which follow immediately. The first five sections of the King List clearly describe cultural development within Assyria, progressing from king's living in tents, to king's involved in building activities (evidenced by their recording for posterity their names inscribed on bricks), to a well- developed social structure, both literate and highly organized, capable of developing the advanced "eponym dating system" which served to keep track of the nation's history and foster contractual/legal commercial processes, such as are necessary to regulate trade with neighboring countries, and enforce laws to regulate societal affairs. Finally with Shamshi-Adad we have clear evidence of a well-developed military and the political skills with which to forge an empire. Then, suddenly and without warning, king #41 and the six kings contemporary with him appear out of nowhere in the King List. All "sons of a nobody", these seven kings appear to be living in a much more primitive world. Once again we quote the relevant section of the Assyrian king list.

[41] Aššur-dugul, son of a nobody, who had no title to the throne, ruled for 6 years.

[42-47] In the time of Aššur-dugul, son of a nobody, Aššur-apla-idi, Nasir-Sin, Sin-namir, Ipqi-lštar, Adad-salulu, and Adasi, six sons of nobodies, ruled at the beginning of his brief reign.

The presence of seven kings all governing Assyria at the same time gives the impression at least that the country is divided into seven "city states" or seven "tribal regions", hardly what we would expect to emerge following the death of Shamshi-Adad I. But this puzzling scenario raises an even more serious question.

While it is strange to see a foreign conqueror such as the Amorite king Shamshi-Adad I and his eldest son Ishme-Dagan included in a list of "Assyrian kings", such an eventuality is not impossible. But the situation does raise several questions, all related to the known facts that Shamshi-Adad's reign ended when Assyria was overrun by Hammurabi in that king's 18<sup>th</sup> year, and that Ishme-Dagan's brief tenure in control of Assyria (assuming that he did in fact inherit his father's throne) was ended by that same Babylonian king. Thereafter, for the balance of his reign, Hammurabi wisely governed the vassal Assyrian province. Assuming these facts, we wonder why the AKL ignores Hammurabi and clearly states that Ishme-Dagan was followed by Aššur-dugul, son of a nobody, and six other non-descript "kings". Something is clearly amiss if this king list is recording an uninterrupted sequence of kings. What is happening? And we ask one further pertinent question regarding this situation. Why is it that Shamshi-Adad and Ishme-Dagan, both Amorite intruders, are accorded a privileged position on the AKL while the Amorite intruder Hammurabi, who governed Assyria much longer than did Ishme-Dagan, and may well have governed more benevolently than either of his predecessors, is omitted from the king-list? If the first 40 kings are actually correctly positioned, we leave it to the reader to provide reasonable answers to these questions.

The document we promised to produce is the tablet fragment BM 98496, attributed with confidence by scholars to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I, though that king's name is absent from the text. The tablet BM 98496 was excavated at Nineveh in 1905, published by L.W. King in 1914, and virtually ignored thereafter until in the 1960's [R. Borger HKL I (1967) 659] it was observed that it had something to say about the structure of the initial portion of the AKL. The next translation of the document to appear, the one followed here, is contained in an article entitled "[Tukulti-Ninurta I and the Assyrian King List](#)" published in 1976 by W.G. Lambert in the journal *Iraq* 38 (1976) 85-94]. We referred to this document earlier in this paper when we argued that by the time of Tukulti-Ninurta 1 (1233-1197), the 78<sup>th</sup> king of the existing AKL, the three timelines on our Figure 2 were already positioned in succession to one another, making his reign the [terminus ad quem](#) for the formation of the *vorlage* of the present AKL. It is unfortunate that the most relevant section of the text, the first four lines on the obverse, is only partially preserved, but enough remains to suggest that the royal author of the text agrees substantially with our "multiple dynasties" interpretation of the first five sections of the AKL. To assist our analysis we quote below Lambert's translation of the first ten lines on the obverse of the document

- 1 . . . their dynasty . . .
- 2 To the dynasty of six kings . . .
- 3 With their 77 names . . .
- 4 In their total of 40 kings 24 filiations . . .
- 5 From the beginning to the "going out" of the dynasty of Sulili, up to the dynasty of [ . . . ]
- 6 In their administration the duties of the "overseers" in the presence of Assur were pleasing to him, and he confirmed them forever.
- 7 In my administration the regular offerings to the gods were established:
- 8 I added to them and did not diminish, I multiplied and did not reduce.
- 9 By the wisdom which Ea decreed for me, truth, the . . . of the gods, was born with me;
- 10 People did what was pleasing to the gods.

That this document is discussing the AKL is immediately apparent. The reference to 40 kings, to 24 filiations, and to at least two "dynastic" listings of kings, one beginning with the name Sulili, is sufficient to convince scholars that we are dealing here with the first 40 kings on the AKL. The 24 filiations assumes that the five names which follow that of Sulili on the AKL (i.e. kings 28-32) are each "sons" of the preceding name. The number 24 is otherwise correct. The reference to 77 names in a document identified on other grounds as one authored by Tukulti-Ninurta I, the 78<sup>th</sup> king named on the existing AKL, further confirms the identification. The King List being examined has apparently not yet been recopied by scribes to include the name of Tukulti-Ninurta himself.

What particularly interests this author is the inclusion of four references to "dynasties", clearly allusions to the constituent sections of the list of 40 kings. We regret the fact that the damaged text precludes our determining whether the same dynasty is being referenced multiple times,

although it is clear in line 5 that the author of the text is referring to at least two successive dynasties, the first which we interpret as a reference to our sections 3 & 4 kings which begin with Sulili and end with Erishum II (i.e. kings #27-38 on the AKL) and the second consisting of Shamshi-Adad, his son Ishme-Dagan and his Amorite predecessors. What is perfectly clear in the next line (line 6) is that Tukulti-Ninurta is privy to details about these dynasties of kings, or at least the most recent kings of these dynasties, that are not included in the AKL text. In particular he comments on their management of the temples in the land, noting that they have introduced some unwelcomed changes to the temple procedure. While not itemizing these changes in verse 6, he does add, perhaps sarcastically, that they must have pleased the god Assur since they were subsequently sanctioned, in perpetuity, for all “kings” to follow, including himself. We surmise that Tukulti-Ninurta has been informed by the temple priests concerning the most recent of these changes, and that these functionaries have credited the latest kings of the two dynasties with introducing them. Apparently the changes involve a reduction in the food (?) items allocated to the gods, understandably considered an offensive change by the priests who actually consumed said items. In lines 7 and 8 Tukulti-Ninurta boasts that his administration has negated those earlier changes, and reestablished the former allocations.

7 In my administration the regular offerings to the gods were [re-]established:

8 I added to them and did not diminish, I multiplied and did not reduce.

Several aspects of this brief text argue persuasively for our interpretation of the structure of the AKL and our dating of the two dynasties. In our view of history Erishum II and Shamshi Adad governed Assyria in the time frame 1388-1336. Their governance of the country, and “oversight” of the temples, ended approximately a century before the 1233 beginning of the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I. From the standpoint of the revised history we accept the fact that the Assyrian kings who ruled during this century tolerated the changes introduced by the “foreigners”, and we can in fact suggest reasons why. But we cannot fathom why those changes would persist in vogue for five and a half centuries without being challenged, which must be the situation that prevailed according to the timeline of the traditional history. And the fact that Tukulti-Ninurta calls the two groups of foreign kings “dynasties” is at least consistent with our suggestion that he does not regard them as part of the Assyrian heritage. They are interlopers, not Assyrian ancestors. He may or may not be privy to information that the latest of these “kings” must be dated at most a century prior to his reign, but he would certainly know that the naming of dynasties at the head of a list of Assyrian kings need not imply that those dynasties were actually “Assyrian”, or that they necessarily preceded the reign of the earliest Assyrian kings in the list.

We leave this matter there for the time being. It is time to assign some “revised history” dates to Shamshi-Adad and the Erishum II dynasty that he brought to an end. Only by doing so will we be able to argue effectively that these kings belong to the 14<sup>th</sup> century where we have positioned them, and by extension prove that they are contemporaries of Hammurabi and Ashuruballit I.

**The dates for Shamshi-Adad I and the kings Erishum I – Erishum II.** The existing AKL makes a point, when listing the genealogy of Sulili, son of Aminu, in section 3 that the total number of limmu-officials who served during the reigns of any of these six kings is unknown. Since the only means by which scribes could determine the precise reign length of a given king was by means of a listing of *all* of the limmu officials who served during that king's reign, a so-called "limmu list" or "eponym list", it follows that none of the kings of this portion of the Erishum II dynasty could be assigned "reign lengths" on the AKL. Fortunately this is not the case for the six kings who succeeded them. The fact that all kings from Erishum I through to Erishum II were at one time assigned reign lengths in the *vorlage* of the existing AKL tells us that such lists were at one time accessible. Unfortunately only the reign length number for Erishum I is preserved/legible in any of the three major source documents reviewed earlier in this paper. The number 30 remains visible on the KhKL, though this contrasts with the number 40 provided elsewhere on another document. That being the case, no accurate chronology of these kings could be created in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when scholars were totally dependent on only the few existing AKL source documents.

Fortunately, archaeology has come to the rescue since the middle of that century, and multiple "limmu lists" have surfaced, including those belonging to the initial five kings of the Erishum II dynasty of kings. These lists, six in number, are referred to by scholars as Kultepe (or Kanesh) Eponym Lists [KEL], and are enumerated by the letters A through F. By late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these lists allowed scholars to assign reign lengths to Erishum I (40), Ikunum (14), Sharru-kin (40) and Puzur-Ashur II (8). They also provided the eponym names for the first 27 years of the reign of Naram-Sin. Another document (KEL G), discovered in 2001 and published in 2008, provided another 126 consecutive eponym names, overlapping most of the existing eponyms of Naram-Sin and extending over 100 years into the future. Unfortunately the listing of these limmu names provides no clear indication which names beyond the 27 already assigned to Naram-Sin also belong to that king, and which to his successor Erishum II, though scholars were already able to identify the eponym year Idnaya as the first year of Shamshi-Adad, thus demonstrating that the combined reigns of Naram-Sin and Erishum II must have totalled 64 years. The identification of the 33 names beginning with Idnaya and ending with Tab-silli-Assur on KEL G were already known to scholars as belonging to the reign of Shamshi-Adad, since those names were employed by the kings of the city-state of Mari to create an historical document entitled the "Mari Eponym Chronicle" [MEC], a tablet inscription which includes a year by year accounting of significant events in the life of that state, including many allusions to the military actions of Shamshi-Adad I. Thus within the last decade scholars have retrieved the eponym names of all regnal years of the six section four Erishum dynasty kings, plus the complete list of names related to the reigns of Shamshi-Adad (33), and beyond. There are, of course, minor disagreements among scholars on the assignment of the later names on the KEL G list, but nothing which seriously affects our use of these names. For the moment we are only concerned with the approximate results, summarized for us by Klaas R. Veenhof, K.R. Veenhof, and Jesper Eidem, on page 29 of a book entitled [Mesopotamia: The Old Assyrian Period](#),

published in 2008. The regnal years for the eight kings are summarized in Table 4 below, copied from page 29 of that book, with absolute dates assigned them by the three named authors using the ANE “middle chronology”. We have added a column converting these “traditional history dates” into “revised history dates”. Explanation follows.

**Table 3: Absolute dates for kings #33-40 of the composite AKL (middle chronology)**

| king no. | name           | son of         | regnal years | traditional history dates (middle chronology) | revised history dates |
|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------|---|-----------------------|
| 33       | Erishum I      | Ilushuma       | 40           | 1974-1935                                     | 1534-1495             |
| 34       | Ikunum         | Erishum I      | 14           | 1934-1921                                     | 1494-1481             |
| 35       | Sharru-kin     | Ikunum         | 40           | 1920-1881                                     | 1480-1441             |
| 36       | Puzur-Assur II | Sharru-kin     | 8            | 1880-1873                                     | 1440-1433             |
| 37       | Naram-Sin/Suen | Puzur-Assur II | 44           | 1872-1829                                     | 1432-1389             |
| 38       | Erishum II     | Naram-Sin/Suen | 20           | 1828-1809                                     | 1388-1369             |
| 39       | Shamshi-Adad I | Ila-kabkabuhu  | 33           | 1808-1776                                     | 1368-1336             |
| 40       | Ishme-Dagan    | Shamshi-Adad I | 40           | 1775-1761                                     | 1335-1321             |

Given the regnal years for the eight kings, absolute dates could be easily calculated by the creators of the above table, this from the point of view of the traditional history. It is well known that in his 18<sup>th</sup> year Hammurabi invaded Assyria and deposed Shamshi-Adad I. And since Hammurabi is dated 1792-1750 BC by traditional scholars following the middle chronology, his 18<sup>th</sup> year - and thus the end of the reign of Shamshi-Adad I - must be dated ca 1776 BC in that system. Working backwards from this date, using the regnal years in the 4<sup>th</sup> column, absolute dates could be assigned to all 8 kings in a matter of minutes, with the exception of Naram-Sin and Erishum II, where the apportioning of the 64 available years was largely guesswork, aided only by the facts that already the reign of Naram-Sin was known to have lasted 27 years and that one King List source suggests that his reign length may have ended with a “4”. To simplify the chart we have merely assumed that his reign lasted for 44 years and that of Erishum II for 20 years. Regardless, the dating of the dividing line between the two kings has no effect on our argument.

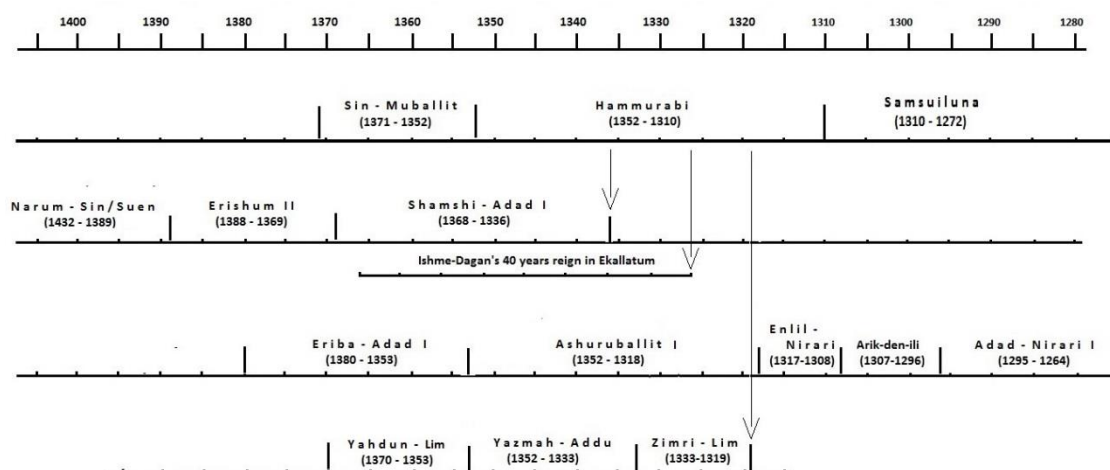
Converting the middle chronology traditional history dates into “revised history” absolute dates takes even less time. In the middle chronology the date for the end of Hammurabi’s dynasty is determined to be 1595 BC., and as noted above the dates for Hammurabi himself are reckoned to be 1792-1750 BC. In our 10<sup>th</sup> paper we remarked on the fact that subtracting 440 years from these numbers yields the dates 1352-1310 for Hammurabi and 1155 BC for the end of his dynasty. That entire paper was concerned with proving that those numbers are absolutely correct. So convincing was the argument there that we were sorely tempted to let the matter here rest. If those dates for Hammurabi were substantially correct then there really was no

need to prove them correct again. And if Hammurabi belonged to the mid to late 14<sup>th</sup> century, and Shamshi-Adad I was his contemporary, then both must be synchronized with the reign of Ashuruballit I, who is also known to have lived in that identical time frame. As we proceed the reader should perhaps keep in mind the fact that we have already proved our case. But here we proceed to argue our thesis from a different perspective.

Our reasoning in the previous paragraph served to point out the fact that middle chronology Babylonian and “Erishum genealogy” dates need only be reduced by 440 years to convert them into “revised history” absolute dates. That is precisely how the 6<sup>th</sup> column numbers were derived from those in the 5<sup>th</sup> column, with one exception. There is considerable debate on how to interpret the limmu names which follow the name associated with the death of Shamshi-Adad I on the recently published KEL G. The AKL records the number 40 as the length of the reign of Ishme-Dagan I, but it is not known whether this number relates to his reign following the demise of his father, or whether the number includes his lengthy reign as an associate king of Ekallatum during the reign of his father. The authors of our Table 3 chart have assumed the latter and we have followed their lead, both in Table 3 and in our Figure 3 which follows.

Having said that we are now able to transfer the Table 3 revised numbers into timelines, one depicting the 1<sup>st</sup> dynasty Amorite king Hammurabi, his father, and one son; one representing Shamshi-Adad I, his son Ishme-Dagan, and two of the latest Erishum dynasty kings who governed Assyria before them; and finally, one positioning Ashuruballit I, his father Eriba-Adad I and a few successors named on the composite *Assyrian King List*. For good measure we include a timeline for the terminal “Lim dynasty” kings of Mari, a city state which enters the picture in multiple ways. Once that is accomplished we are ready to revise history once again.

**Figure 3: Revised history timelines for kings #37-40 on the AKL (Naram-Sin – Ishme-Dagan, kings #5-7 of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Amorite) dynasty of Babylon (Sinmuballit - Samsuiluna), Kings #72-76 on the AKL (Eriba-Adad – Adad-Nirari I), and the terminal “Lim dynasty” kings of Mari.**



**A brief history of the reign of Shamshi-Adad I.** With the timelines in front of us we are now in a position to outline a brief history of the reign of Shamshi-Adad I, providing a context in which we can discuss precisely where the king Erishum II and his ancestors actually lived in the north of Mesopotamia. We do this with a specific purpose in mind. Constantly we read in current scholarly literature that the kings Erishum I through to Erishum II were Assyrian kings, domiciled in Assur until deposed by Shamshi-Adad when he overran that small Assyrian state around the year 1808 BC (= 1368 BC revised history). Unfortunately that summary statement completely misrepresents the facts. We argue instead that while these six kings were definitely suzerains of the vassal state of Assur, the land of Assur was not their home. They resided elsewhere, as did their ancestors, the descendants of Sulili. Precisely when Assur was conquered and became a vassal state of this dynasty is unknown, but the event must certainly be dated prior to the reign of Erishum I, possibly during the reign of Sulili, perhaps earlier by the dynasty of Sargon of Akkad (in which case Sulili merely inherited the vassal state). But we have no quarrel with scholars who document the care and attention accorded the city of Assur by these kings, and particularly their devotion to the god Assur, patron deity of the city. The many inscriptions of Erishum I attest to his allegiance to many gods, both Babylonian and Assyrian, including Assur, the god after whom the city is named. But nowhere do we find a reference to a palace, or any other detail that would indicate permanent residence in the country. And as we argued in our earlier papers revising Babylonian history, suzerains such as the Kassites seldom permanently occupied the countries they held as vassal states. And with few exceptions they left in place the native rulers of those vassal states. The *crux interpretum* of our argument in this paper is that Assuruballit and his ancestors on the AKL continued to occupy the city of Assur all the while that their overlords, Erishum II and his predecessors functioned as “absentee landlords”, to use a phrase we employed frequently in the case of Kassite rule over Karduniash.

In order to condense our review of the history of Shamshi-Adad I, rather than compose our own summary of events, we simply borrow an existing history produced by Marc Van De Mieroop on pages 115-116 of his book [A History of the Ancient Near East, ca. 3000-323 BC](#). This excellent summary suffers from the deficiency that it is written from the point of view of the traditional history and thus will need to be corrected from time to time. But it will serve well as a base from which we can launch our corrections.



## 6.1 Shamshi-Adad and the Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia

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The early history of King Shamshi-Adad is vague to us. We cannot even establish when and where he first ascended any particular Mesopotamian throne. Most likely around 1830 he inherited rule from his father, Ila-kabkabu, in Ekallatum, a city still unlocated but certainly in the vicinity of Assur. There he governed for about ten years, until he had to flee to Babylon when Naram-Sin of Eshnunna conquered Ekallatum. Seven years later Shamshi-Adad took advantage of Naram-Sin's death to return from exile, and three years later he conquered Assur as well. There he integrated his ancestors into the list of city-rulers, and is said to have been king for thirty-three years (for a list of early Assyrian rulers, see Section 18 of the King Lists at the end of the book). This allows us to date his accession to Assur's throne to 1807.

At that time he was still only a minor player in the region. Soon, however, he extended his influence westward into northern Syria, where he clashed with Yahdun-Lim of Mari. Shamshi-Adad took control over the northern Habur valley and annexed kingdoms such as the land of Apum whose capital, Shehna, he turned into his own royal seat and renamed Shubat-Enlil. The mighty kingdom of Mari to his south became easy prey when Yahdun-Lim was assassinated, and probably in 1792 Shamshi-Adad captured its capital. He ruled now an area from Assur on the Tigris in the east to Tuttul on the Balikh in the west. The entire region to the north of Babylonia was incorporated in his state, which we will here call the "Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia" (figure 6.1).

Shamshi-Adad was very tolerant of existing practices in the various states he had united. At Assur he took on the customary royal title there, "governor of the god Assur," and in Nineveh he restored the Ishtar temple said to have been built by Manishtushu five centuries before. Certain cities, such as Qattara, retained their former rulers, who now became his vassals. Local administrative procedures survived, although officials used seals that indicated that they were in the service of Shamshi-Adad. Perhaps his administration imposed one crucial change – the dating of documents with Assur's eponym system to indicate the years (see box 6.1). Under Shamshi-Adad's rule it came into use in such varied places as Mari, Tuttul, Shubat-Enlil, and Terqa. This "Assyrian" system of dating thus became official practice for the Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia.

Having to control this large kingdom, Shamshi-Adad, who resided in Shubat-Enlil, placed his two sons in strategic locations. The eldest, Ishme-Dagan, ascended the throne at Ekallatum, the ancestral home, while the younger,

Yasmah-Addu, was instated at Mari. The southeastern and southwestern frontiers were thus given direct attention. In the east the Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia bordered on Eshnunna and states at the foothills of the Zagros, in the west it bordered Yamkhad and the Syrian steppe controlled by semi-nomadic groups. The two sons in turn were given supervision of a number of districts with governors to represent them: Ishme-Dagan looked after those between the Tigris and the Zagros, Yasmah-Addu those along the Euphrates, lower Balikh, and Habur rivers. Shamshi-Adad directly governed the region of Shubat-Enlil, while military governors were in charge of cities to its south. Ishme-Dagan clearly had more authority than his younger brother, and often scolded Yasmah-Addu for his inaction.

At this point we interrupt Van De Mieroop's historical summary to make a few comments of our own. Our objections begin with the first paragraph, though not with the initial history of Shamshi-Adad, but rather with the declaration that three years after returning from exile in Babylonia this king conquered Assur. We challenge the reader to find any ancient document that refers to a conquest of Assur by Shamshi-Adad. That event simply did not happen. That conclusion is clearly based on a flawed syllogism that goes something like this: "Shamshi-Adad ousted Erishum II from the throne and took it. Erishum II was the "king of Assur". Therefore Shamshi-Adad conquered Assur." We have no problem with the first premise in this [syllogism](#), assuming the accuracy of the AKL which makes precisely this claim following the mention of the name of Shamshi-Adad (I). But nowhere does the AKL define which throne held by Erishum II was being referenced. We also agree with the second premise, but only if we replace the phrase "king of Assur" with "suzerain of Assur" or qualify the term with a clarifying statement. But it is completely illogical to conclude from these two flawed premises that Shamshi-Adad I conquered Assur. This will become painfully obvious once we determine conclusively that Erishum II did not reside in Assur when overrun by the army of Shamshi-Adad I. In fact **neither Erishum II, nor any of his eleven ancestors in the Sulili dynasty, was ever resident in Assur!** Let the critic prove otherwise. By conquering Erishum II, Shamshi-Adad acquired possession of the kingdom ruled by Erishum II, which happened to include Assur. The reader should carefully distinguish the two eventualities. The argument that Erishum II did not reside in Assur will follow shortly.

A second objection relates to the claim made in the third paragraph that Shamshi-Adad (and associated kingdoms) utilized "Assur's eponym system" for dating purposes. That statement is just blatantly false, as future discussion in this paper will demonstrate. Shamshi-Adad used a system of eponyms which originated from a trading community in Kultepe in Anatolia, which must be distinguished from the system operative in the city state of Assur.

Finally, we object to yet another statement in Van De Mieroop's third paragraph to the effect that Shamshi-Adad restored the Ishtar temple in Nineveh, "said to have been built by Manishtushu five centuries before." The inscription relied upon by Van De Mieroop does not, in fact, state that Manishtushu's restoration work took place five centuries prior to Shamshi-Adad's reign. It states only that "seven generations have passed" from the fall of the Akkad dynasty, to the conquest by Shamshi-Adad I". At the end of this paper (page 38) we provide timelines which date this time lapse as approximately 350 years. Correcting the language issue involved will serve a double purpose, since the relevant inscription also serves to demonstrate conclusively that Erishum II did not reside in Assur when conquered by Shamshi-Adad in 1808 BC (= 1368 BC. revised history), thus validating our first objection.

The stone inscription referred to in the previous paragraph is published by A.K. Grayson in his volume [Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: From the beginning to Ashur-resha-ishi I](#), Volume 1 on pages 22-24. In a moment we will quote the whole of the text. But first we listen to Grayson's description of the item in question.

Stone inscriptions found at Nineveh record the reconstruction of the temple Emenue by Shamshi-Adad I. Particularly noteworthy in this text is the interest in and knowledge of past history. There is mention of the Old Akkadian king Manishtusu as an earlier builder of the temple and a statement that “seven generations have passed” since the Old Akkadian dynasty. *It is also evident from this passage that Shamshi-Adad I dates his own rise to preeminence from the capture of the city Nurrugum.* (italics added)

Grayson divides the text of the stone inscription into six sections numbered consecutively 139-144. We leave his numeration scheme intact in our quotation, this for ease of reference.

139. [Shamshi]-Adad, the strong one, king of the universe, governor of the god Enlil, vice-regent of the god Ashur, beloved of the goddess Ishtar:

140. The temple Emenue – which (is) in the district of Emashmash, the old temple – which Manishtishu, son of Sargon, king of Akkad, had built, (that temple) had become dilapidated. The temple which none of the kings who preceded me – from the fall of Akkad until my sovereignty, until the capture of Nurrugu, seven generations have passed – had rebuilt and  
Lacuna

141. I, [Shamshi]-Adad, [king of] the universe, *abandoned* it and . . . and the ziqqurat [. . . . .] and a ziqqurat, a great . . . , whose workmanship was greater and more skillful than before, I built. I laid the threshold of the temple, the equal of which for perfection no king had ever built for the goddess Ishtar in Nineveh. I raised its ziqqurat. (Thus) I eminently completed it and named it Ekidurkuga, “The Storehouse of Her Treasure”.

142. The steles and clay inscriptions of Manishtishu were not removed but [restored] to their [places]. I deposited [my steles and clay inscriptions . . .] beside his [steles] and clay inscriptions. Therefore the goddess Ishtar, my mistress, has given me a term of rule which is constantly renewed.

143. In the future when the temple becomes old, when Ekidurkuga which I built has become dilapidated, and the king whom the god Enlil appoints restores (it): May he not remove my steles and clay inscriptions but restore them to their places as I did not remove the steles and clay inscriptions of Manishtishu.

144. If, (however), that king *wrongly* discards my steles and clay inscriptions, (if) he does not restore them to their places but his steles and clay inscriptions he deposits (in their place): That king has done what is offensive to gods and kings. May the god Shamash, the great judge of heaven and underworld, hand his over to a king who is his enemy as one who gives up a murderer (to the relatives of the slain). May the goddess Ishtar, mistress of Nineveh, take away his sovereignty and term of rule and [give] (them) to another.

A brief description of the city state of Nurrugum mentioned in section 139 is provided by Trevor Bryce on page 516 of [The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia](#).

**Nurrugum** Middle Bronze Age city and country located in northern Mesopotamia. According to J. Eidem (1985: 101, with n. 84), the country so called extended north of Ekallatum along the banks of the Tigris and included Nineveh. In his view, **Nurrugum** city probably lay east of the river. D. Oates, however (1968: 31, 39), placed it west of the river, in the region of the Jebel Sinjar. In the early decades of C18, **Nurrugum** was conquered by Ishme-Dagan, elder son of the Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad I and viceroy of Ekallatum. Subsequently the country became one of the administrative districts of the Old Assyrian kingdom, probably with **Nurrugum** city as its centre. Its governor was a man called Shashsharanum, who had served in the Assyrian campaign against Qabra and **Nurrugum**. Large numbers of recruits from **Nurrugum** were conscripted into the ranks of Shamshi-Adad's military forces. Fugitives arriving in Mari from **Nurrugum** were to be shared between Ishme-Dagan and his brother Yasmah-Addu, Assyrian viceroy in Mari.

\*LAP0 18: 206, no. 1034 (= \*LKM 280); 270–2, no. 1089, *Mesop.* 170.

Once again we need to interject several corrections, this time to Bryce's description of the city-state of Nurrugum. While we totally accept the opinion of Eidem that "the country so called extended north of Ekallatum along the banks of the Tigris and included Nineveh" we reject his opinion that the city of Nurrugum itself is to be located to the east of the Tigris. The city could well be located west of the Tigris and in fact we favor that location, which better fits with Shamshi-Adad's later transference of his capital to Shubat-Enlil (see map in Figure 4 on page 22 below). Needless to say, the ruins of the city have not as yet been found, though we tentatively identify its location within the ruins of Mosul, on the right (west) bank of the Tigris opposite Nineveh. More troublesome is Bryce's opinion that the city was first conquered by Ishme-Dagan, elder son of the Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad I and viceroy of Ekallatum. Bryce has several sources for this opinion regarding the conquest of Nurrugum. One consists of several letters contained in an archive of correspondence from late in the reign of Shamshi-Adad I known as the *Shamshara Archives*, translated by Jesper Eidem and Jørgen Læssøe in the volume entitled [The Shemshāra Archives 1: The Letters](#). He also depends on references to the conquest contained in the Mari Eponym Chronicle (MEC) which inform us that the invasion force led by Ishme-Dagan against Nurrugum was conducted in the limmu year of Aššur-malik (see 11<sup>th</sup> line down from the top of page 46 of "The Shemshara Archives"). Since the MEC is known to have utilized the same Kultepe/Kanesh Eponym List years as did Shamshi-Adad I, this year can be precisely dated to the 28<sup>th</sup> year of Shamshi-Adad I, hardly the time when this king "rose to prominence", to use Grayson's stated opinion of the initial conquest of the city state of Nurrugum. Besides, we cannot imagine what possessed Trevor Bryce (and others) to think that Shamshi-Adad would tolerate for upwards of 25 years an independent city state only a few miles north of his vassal state of Assur, a few miles east of his adopted home in Shubat-Enlil, and bordering, on the north, his patriarchal homeland of Ekallatum, now governed by his eldest son Ishme-Dagan (again see map in Figure 4 following on page 22).

Instead we argue that in year 28 of Shamshi-Adad both Nurrugum and the city state of Ahazum on the Lower Zab River, have defected from his rule. In the Shamshara letters it is clear that military manoeuvres are underway to restore the two provinces, Shamshi-Adad himself investing the eastern province of Ahazum while Ishme-Dagan retook Nurrugum. Bryce himself apparently understands the situation vis-à-vis Ahazum. His confusion centers on Nurrugum, where he incorrectly regards this conquest as the initial capture of that city state.

We reproduce below his article describing Ahazum, once again from the book [The Routledge Handbook of the Peoples and Places of Ancient Western Asia](#) (page 10).

**Ahazum** (map 10) Middle Bronze Age vassal state of the Old Assyrian kingdom, attested in texts from Mari and Shemshara. It was located in northern Mesopotamia in the region of the Lesser Zab r., between the countries of Qabra and Shusharra (Shemshara) within the area between the Rania plain and mod. Arbil. In early C18, its ruler Yashub-Addu had allied himself with the Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad I (1796–1775), fearful of the latter's growing power and influence in the region. However, within a few months Yashub-Addu had broken his ties with Shamshi-Adad and formed a series of other alliances, with the Turukkeans who were located to the north-east, with Shimurru and finally with Kakmum to the southeast. Shamshi-Adad retaliated by dispatching an expeditionary force against Ahazum, as he reports in his correspondence with his ally Kuwari, ruler of Shusharra. Ahazum's capital, Shikshabbum, was placed under siege, and despite the support of a troop of Gutians who were in the city at that time, and some Turukkean refugees, the city fell to the besiegers led by Ishme-Dagan. Yashub-Addu was removed from power and replaced by a new king called Halun-pi-umu.

\*Lacoste and Jacobsen (1990), Eidem and Lacoste (2001: 22–3, \*44–52, \*70–6), *Mesopot.* 170–1.

Even the renowned Babylonian scholar J.A. Brinkman has an opinion on the matter, giving every appearance of agreeing substantially with this author. His opinion is contained on page 316 in the [Orientalia](#) article we utilized earlier in this paper.

One minor topic or textual query which, to my knowledge, has not yet been raised concerns the place where Erishum II, son of Naram-Sin, ruled. According to the wording of the section of the Kinglist dealing with Shamshi-Adad I, Shamshi-Adad, after proceeding north from Babylonia to Ekallate, then “came up” (*ēlā*) [in the sense of going upstream] further north to depose Erishum. This, taken literally, would imply that Erishum was ruling north – or upstream – of Ekallate and not, as Landsberger and David Oates have implied, at Assur. Was the capital north of Ekallate at this time, perhaps removed thither temporarily because of Shamshi-Adad's invasion? Or should *ēlā* be taken simply as a repetition of the customarily used verb without intended geographical precision? In any case, it is worth observing that the normal sense of the verb seems to require that Erishum was deposed from a seat north or upstream of the now agreed on location of Ekallate. [f.n 63] (Brinkman, *Orientalia* 42 (1973) 316)

A concluding footnote adds specificity to Brinkman's stated opinion, and singles out the area of Nurrugum as the target of the 1368 BC attack by Shamshi-Adad I.

[f.n. 63] Nineveh and Shubat-Enlil come to mind as possibilities, though the latter is probably not directly upstream from Ekallate and is suggested principally because of Shamshi-Adad's later connection with the town. (op. cit. p. 316)

This discussion leads us to make additions to the map we used in paper 11a, a map purporting to represent the political situation existing during the reign of Zimri-Lim of Mari, by which time Shamshi-Adad I is deceased, and the region entitled “Mari”, once a possession of Shamshi-Adad I and governed by his son Yazmah-Addu, is now back in the hands of the Lim dynasty of Mari. The map with additions is shown in Figure 4 on the following page.



Returning briefly to Bryce's brief description of Nurrugum we need to underscore one statement he makes regarding the conquest of Erishum II by Shamshi-Adad. He notes that "Shamshi-Adad was very tolerant of existing practices in the various states he had united." That statement accurately reflects the situation as we understand it. And it follows from that fact, in conjunction with our argument that Nurrugum was the first of the many states conquered by Shamshi-Adad I, that the existing trading empire of Erishum II, ruler of the state of Nurrugum, would be continued intact by Shamshi-Adad I, as apparently it was. The status quo in the Kanesh karum would also be maintained, including the use of *limmus* (eponyms) to assist in the trading operations. It also follows that Shamshi-Adad would have no quarrel with the existing "vice-regent of Assur" (*išši'ak aššur*) at the time of the conquest, also known by the title "governor" (*ensi*), whose name is regrettably never mentioned in any of the source documents related to his rule. Life in Assur would proceed "as is". And if we are correct, this would imply that Eriba-Adad I, the existing vice-regent/ensi of that vassal state, would be left to regulate the provincial capital as previously, including *his* use of "limmus" to assist in the governance of the tiny state.

**Figure 4: Map of the kingdom of Mari at the time of Zimri-Lim (1333-1319 BC)**  
The map is borrowed from the Wikipedia article entitled [Mari](#).



Unlike the current generation of scholars, we are absolutely convinced that two independent eponym systems existed simultaneously throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, a conclusion based in part on the fact that the two uppermost timelines in our Figure 2 chart on page 9 ran parallel to one another for that length of time. But even if we were to disregard the timelines we would still argue strongly that the Kanesh and Assur eponym processes *must be distinguished*. They existed in communities almost six hundred miles distant from one another; the limmus involved were selected from two distinctly different ethnic groups, one consisting of

Akkadian traders domiciled in Kanesh, the other from ethnic Assyrian religious dignitaries domiciled in Assur; and the functions of these limmus (eponyms) were so completely different we cannot comprehend why scholars would insist on equating them. But they do, and so we expend a few pages continuing to argue this aspect of our thesis.

As far as the question of priority is concerned, we are convinced that the Erishum dynasty copied the use of limmus from the Assyrians, not the reverse as argued by advocates of the traditional history. In table 3 on page 14 above we determined that Erishum I began his reign in 1534 BC. Using the regnal lengths still visible on the existing AKL we can determine that Belu-bani, Assyrian king number 48, reigned during the years 1631-1621 BC at the latest, this without accounting for the reigns of the kings Ashur-nadin-ahhe I and Ashur-rabi I, whose reign lengths are recorded in damaged sections of the three primary AKL source documents. If known, those reign lengths would push the reign of Belu-bani back even further in time. There is no question but that at least a dozen Assyrian kings following the reign of Belu-bani utilized the eponym procedure before Erishum I arrived on the scene. The genius of Erishum I was to employ the system as a tool for commerce, not the creation of the system itself. A brief look at the procedure he created is clearly in order, if only to distinguish it from the system employed in Assur.

**The Kultepe Eponym List.** We promised earlier to describe the source of the eponym lists which allowed for the production of our Table 4 dates for kings Erishum I through to Shamshi-Adad I and beyond. To this point in time we have only stated that the dates are derived from eponym lists contained on tablets excavated at Kultepe. The details were left for examination at a later time. Now is the time.

It is important that the reader appreciate the fact that the ancient city bearing this name is located in the central part of present day Turkey, a distance of about 600 miles east and slightly north of the ruins of Assur, the religious capital of Assyria.

**Figure 5: Map of central Turkey showing the location of ancient Kanish.**



According to the Wikipedia article entitled [Kültepe](#) it is today an archaeological site located about 20 km northeast of the modern city of Kayseri. The site “consists of a [tell](#), the actual Kültepe, and a lower town where an [Assyrian](#) settlement was found”. Its name in Assyrian texts from the 20<sup>th</sup> century BC was Kaneš. The Assyrian settlement was an important trading center in antiquity, referred to in excavated documents as a “karum”. It is the excavations at this karum which yielded the tablets which contained the eponym lists which furnished the reign lengths from which our dates in table 3 were derived.

**Figure 6: Arial view showing the ongoing excavations at the sites of ancient Kanesh and the associated trading settlement / karum.**



The Wikipedia article entitled [Kültepe](#), which earlier furnished us with data concerning the site of ancient Kanesh and its associated karum, also includes a summary of the excavations conducted at the karum, and a listing of its [stratigraphy](#). The author sums up the history of excavations at the site in three brief sentences:

In 1925, [Bedřich Hrozný](#) excavated Kültepe and found over 1000 cuneiform tablets, some of which ended up in Prague and some in Istanbul. Modern archaeological work began in 1948 when Kültepe was excavated by a team from the Turkish Historical Society and the General Directorate of Antiquities and Museums. The team was led by [Tahsin Özgüç](#) until his death in 2005.



He then goes on to itemize the four strata at the site, supplying a few important details related to each. We reproduce the description of the four strata below, following which we add a few comments of our own.

**Level IV-III.** Little excavation has been done for these levels, which represent the *kârum*'s first habitation (Mellaart 1957). No writing is attested, and archaeologists assume that both levels' inhabitants were illiterate.

**Level II,** 1974 BC - 1836 BC (Mesopotamian Middle Chronology according to Veenhof). Craftsmen of this time and place specialized in earthen drinking vessels, in the shapes of animals, that were often used for religious rituals. During this period, Assyrian merchants established a merchant colony (*kârum*) attached to the city, which was called "Kaneš". Bullae of **Naram-Sin** of **Eshnunna** have been found toward the end of this level (Ozkan 1993), which was burned to the ground.

**Level 1b,** 1798 BC - 1740 BC. After an interval of abandonment, the city was rebuilt over the ruins of the old and again became a prosperous trade center. This trade was under the control of **Ishme-Dagan**, who was put in control of Assur when his father, **Shamshi-Adad I**, conquered Ekallatum and Assur. However, the colony was again destroyed by fire.

**Level 1a.** The city was re-inhabited, but the Assyrian colony was no longer inhabited. The culture was early **Hittite**. Its name in Hittite became "Kaneša", but was more commonly contracted to "Neša".

We should add the fact that excavations of level 1b (dated 1798-1740 BC) and the older level II (dated 1974-1836 BC) were extremely productive, especially in recovering inscribed materials. Level 2 yielded well over 20,000 tablets, including the six eponym tablets (KEL A-F), which are contemporary with the reigns of Erishum 1, Ikunum, Sharru-ken, Puzur-Assur, and the first half of the reign of Naram-Sin. Level 1b excavations, while yielding only around 400 tablets, furnished the tablet KEL G, recently published, a critical source document for the dating schema which we outlined earlier, especially for completing the year names assigned to the reigns of Naram-Sin and Erishum II, not to mention Shamshi-Adad I and his son. These 20,000 plus tablets are at present housed in museums, libraries of academic institutions, national archives and private collections around the world. It is estimated that at least 75% of the tablet inscriptions have yet to be translated and published, though the process is ongoing as we speak.

We reproduce below a table detailing precisely which limmu names are contained on each of the seven known eponym lists excavated at the Kanesh karum. The table is copied from the online *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative* (CDLI) site entitled [The Old and Middle Assyrian limmu officials](#). As the name implies, this web page provides a comprehensive listing of all of the limmu names from the reigns of Shamshi-Adad I & Ishme-Dagan as well as Erishum II and his five predecessors. The site also provides an excellent summary of the key publications

related to each of the eponym lists as well as the three existing versions the *Mari Eponym Chronicle*. It may be advisable for the reader to bookmark the webpage.

**Table 4: The Kultepe Eponym Lists KEL A-G**

| <b>Kings of Aššur (years of reign) dates of reigns</b> | <b>KEL A</b> | <b>KEL B</b> | <b>KEL C</b> | <b>KEL D</b> | <b>KEL E</b> | <b>KEL F</b> | <b>KEL G</b> |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Erišum I (40)</b> 1972-1933                         | 1-40*        | 1-40*        | 1-20*        | 1-40*        | 1-40*        | 1-7*         |              |
| <b>Ikūnum (15)</b> 1932-1918                           | 41-55        | 41-55        |              | 41-55        | 41-55        |              |              |
| <b>Šarru-kēn (40)</b> 1917-1878                        | 56-95        | 56-95        |              | 56-95        | 56-95        |              |              |
| <b>Puzur-Aššur II (8)</b> 1877-1870                    | 96-103       | 96-103       |              | 96-103       | 96           |              |              |
| <b>Narām-Suen (34+0 to 20)</b> 1869-                   | 104-130      | 104-106      |              | 104          |              |              | 111-         |
| <b>Erišum II (7+0 to 20)</b> -1809                     |              |              |              |              |              |              | -164         |
| <b>Šamši-Adad I (33)</b> 1808-1776                     |              |              |              |              |              |              | 165-197      |
| <b>Išme-Dagan (40?)</b> 1775-1736?                     |              |              |              |              |              |              | 198-237      |
|  |              |              |              |              |              |              | 238-255      |

The reason for our interest in the Kanesh karum has already been noted. It is of fundamental concern to this paper that its unique features be documented and its use of limmus distinguished from the eponym process existing in the contemporary vassal state of Assur.

We begin to distinguish the Kanesh and the Assur eponym systems by objecting to the use of the term “Assyrian” use by scholars to describe both the Kanesh settlement and the traders who were permanent residents at the site. Almost all of the 20,000 plus tablets excavated at the site of Kanesh in level II were found in approximately 100 private homes once occupied by the extended families of prominent traders at the site, most of whom had their own private archives documenting the multitude of transactions related to their trading business. It was from among these traders that the yearly “limmus” were selected, and assigned the task of collecting duty and taxes related to trade at the site, and assessing fines and other penalties also related to the trading operations. And we argue that few, in any of these traders were necessarily of Assyrian origin. Evidence of their ethnicity is completely lacking at the Kanesh settlement.

Certainly the limmu names at Kanesh do not betray the ethnicity of the holders of that important office. We have not bothered to count the divine names contained on the entire list of eponyms, most of which also include the name of the father of the limmu, but of the first 200 names observed, twenty included the name of Assur. Ten others furnished the name of Ishtar, jointly worshipped in Assyria and Babylonia, and five incorporate the name of the Akkadian god Adad. The name of Assur, almost completely absent at first, increased in frequency over time, as we expected it might, since Assur was the dominant god in Upper Mesopotamia. But the Akkadian deities Ishtar and Adad continued to be prominent among the occupants of Kanesh, as we might expect since the traders, probably without exception, were

sponsored by the Erishum dynasty kings, domiciled in a city state once part of Sargon's Akkadian dynasty.

What then has led scholars to the opinion that Kanesh was an Assyrian enclave? Only one fact can account for this dominant opinion. Many of the archived letters at Kanesh conclusively identify the six Erishum dynasty kings as the central authority in the operation of the karum. And scholars consistently reference these six "kings" as "kings of Assur", giving the false impression that they are Assyrians resident in that city, not Akkadian kings residing in Nurrugum. But the ethnicity of the Erishum dynasty kings is not in doubt, and neither is their residence, as we have already argued. Not only did their city state encompass Nineveh, once the domicile of Manishtushu, son of Sargon the Great, but two of these kings, Sharru-kin (Sargon) and Naram-Sin, bear names that betray their Akkadian ancestry. That and the fact, previously mentioned, that the end of the Akkad dynasty is dated only seven generations prior to the reign of Shamshi-Adad I, which suggests a strong connection between the Akkadians and the Erishum dynasty kings. In our Figure 7 on page 37 below we demonstrate conclusively that the reign of Sulili followed immediately the end of the Sargon's Akkadian empire. In any case, it follows that many if not most of the occupants of the Kanesh karum were at one time residents of Nurrugum, not Assyria. Thus our earlier reference to the trading settlement at Kanesh as an Akkadian trading center.

We should make it absolutely clear that none of the several hundred limmu names found in the eponym lists KEL A-G (and double that number if we include the names of their fathers) had anything at all to do with the daily operations of tiny city state of Assur, in spite of claims to the contrary by authors such as Mogens Trolle Larsen, who interprets the frequent references to a "(home) City" (*alum<sup>ki</sup>*) in the Kanesh letters as a reference to Assur, mere wishful thinking on his part, based largely on the misconception that the Nurrugum kings, and the inhabitants of the trading community in Kanesh had Assur as their base of operations. The Akkadian term *alum<sup>ki</sup>* is the generic word for "city". To regard it as a unique designation of Assur is totally unwarranted. [For this bizarre interpretation see page 196-7 in that author's book entitled [Ancient Kanesh: A Merchant Colony in Bronze Age Anatolia](#).] We examined an extremely limited sample of 18 letters and legal texts translated and published by this same Mogens Trolle Larsen on pp 92-128 of the volume [Cuneiform Texts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Volume 1: Tablets, Cones and Bricks of the Third and Second Millennia](#) (edited by Ira Spar). Even this limited sampling furnished several unambiguous references to limmu names which occur on the Kultepe Eponym Lists and several dozen others, absent the names of their fathers, which might otherwise be identified with names on those same KEL lists. These letters without exception are descriptive of long standing residents of the Kanesh community, not inhabitants of a city 600 miles distant temporarily transplanted to central Anatolia. And those few letters furnished two clear examples of the "limmu" executing some of his assigned duties in Kanesh, not Assur. Line 47 of letter #75 is a case in point. The letter records the arrival of a trade caravan in the Kanesh karum, and near its conclusion it is stated that 5 minas of silver was paid "to the eponym (*ana limim*)". As mentioned earlier one of the primary duties of the limmus in

the Kanesh karum was the collection of taxes and duty on traded commodities. They also functioned to assign penalties/fines for violations of “fair trading practices” and participated in the adjudication process for settling disputes among traders. We fail to see any correlation between these clearly defined responsibilities and those of the limmus of Ashuruballit in Assur, who functioned as part of the temple operations. Any reader still confused regarding this issue should perhaps read the translation of letter #84a beginning on page 118 where lines 64-106 record a lengthy legal dispute which makes frequent references to “the primary assembly of the Kanesh harbor”, “the City” (alum<sup>ki</sup>), and the “assembly of the City”, all operative in the vicinity of the Kanesh karum. The City in this context is clearly a reference to Kanesh itself as it undoubtedly is everywhere else, unless otherwise qualified. It is also recommended that the reader peruse lines 6 & 7 of letter 78a (page 107) where there does exist a rare reference to the “city of Assur” (alum<sup>ki</sup> Assur), the proverbial “exception that proves the rule.” In this instance a trader makes reference to Assur as the residence of a sister of a fellow worker from whom he has received some jewelry items for trade. It should be painfully obvious that when the Kanesh letter writers choose to reference a city other than Kanesh itself, they spelled out the name of the city in question.

One final letter needs to be mentioned before we leave Kanesh behind. While unrelated to the eponym process we have been discussing, this letter, or rather the seal impression on the letter, has some bearing on an historical issue we will be discussing in the concluding section of this paper. Letter #92 on page 135ff, while undated, is part of the Kanesh archive, and therefore at the earliest must be dated after the first year of Erishum I, to whom we have assigned the dates 1534-1495 BC. The seal belongs to Ibbi-Sin, the terminal king of the [Ur III dynasty](#) one of the peripheral kingdoms we will be examining briefly at the conclusion of this paper.

Before we leave the subject of eponyms behind and turn our attention to matters more directly related to the city state of Assur and its sequence of vice-regent governors (i.e. kings #41-73), we must discuss briefly the one major problem confronting scholars who believe that the Kanesh eponym lists predate the use of eponyms by the Assyrian ancestors of Ashuruballit I. We refer to the fact that the AKL, when describing the return of Shamshi-Adad I from his self-imposed exile in Karduniash, utilizes eponyms to record his progress. We quoted the AKL entry earlier on page 3. Here we quote it again.

[39] Šamši-Adad[I], son of Ila-kabkabi, went to [Karduniaš](#) in the time of Naram-Sin. In the eponymy of **Ibni-Adad**, Šamši-Adad went up from Karduniaš. He took Ekallatum, where he stayed three years. In the eponymy of **Atamar-Ištar**, Šamši-Adad went up from Ekallatum. He ousted Erišum, son of Naram-Sin, from the throne and took it. He ruled for 33 years. (emphasis added)

The sense of this quote is perfectly clear. The return of Shamshi-Adad I from Babylonia to his patriarchal home in Ekallatum, three years prior to his defeat of Erishum II in Nurrugum, is dated to the eponymy of Ibni-Adad, which in context must be the fourth year from the end of the reign of Erishum II. Three years later, in the eponymy of Atamar-Ishtar, the last year of Erishum's reign, he led his army north to Nurrugum and "ousted Erishum (II) from the throne and took it". It follows that the eponym name of Erishum's final year must be Atamar-Ishtar.

The problem arises via a search for the eponyms Ibni-Adad and Atamar-Ishtar on the Kanesh Eponym List G, which alone provides the Kanesh eponyms for the reign of Erishum II. In theory KEL G ought to furnish the requisite names. Surprisingly, at least from the perspective of advocates of the traditional history, those names are not present in the requisite positions in the Kanesh List. In fact, they do not occur at all during the reign of Erishum II, though there are several instances of the name Ibni-Adad elsewhere in the KEL documents, though these are decades removed from end of the reign of Erishum II. And even more problematic is the fact that the name Atamar-Ishtar is completely foreign to all of the KEL lists. Even the most sympathetic follower of the traditional history must admit that this is a serious problem, so much so that since the publication of KEL G in 2008 serious efforts have been made to explain the absence of the two limmu names. We mention only one very recent attempt. In 2014 Yigal Bloch wrote a 20 page article in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* [JNES 73 (2014) 191-210] entitled "[The Conquest Eponyms of Šamši-Adad I and the Kaneš Eponym List](#)", in which he examined all the possible reasons why the two AKL limmu names are not found in the KEL G eponym list. We will not review his conclusions here, save to say that he rejected every known proposal made by scholars to date, and ended up arguing that the author of the Assyrian King List has misread the KEL G name Inbi-Ishtar as Ibni-Adad, the KEL G name Amur-Assur as Athamar-Ishtar, and though the two names Inbi-Ishtar and Amur-Assur do not occur late in the reign of Erishum II as they should, the AKL author has mistakenly assumed that they do correspond to the time of the re-conquest of Ekallatum and the conquest of Erishum II by Shamshi-Adad I. Quite frankly, the argument is not just a stretch, it makes absolutely no sense, but it does serve to underscore the seriousness of the problem.

For the revised history there is no need for these linguistic gymnastics. The fact that the two limmu names on the AKL are not to be found on KEL G is precisely what should be expected. We have argued consistently that at all times throughout the duration of the Erishum dynasty, two distinct sets of limmu officials existed, one in Kanesh, and one in Assur. We believe that the author of the AKL *vorlage*, writing sometime between the years 1290 and 1243 BC, was correctly dating the Ekallatum and Nurrugum invasions, but that he was using the Assyrian, not the Kanesh eponyms. That fact should not surprise anyone. He was likely an Assyrian scribe. We would be surprised if he was even aware of the existence of the Kanesh system, a system largely restricted to that remote trading community, 600 plus miles to the north and east of Assur. And since the end of the reign of Erishum II (1388-1369 BC) is synchronized on our Table 2 timeline chart with the reign of Eriba-Adad I (1380-1353 BC), scholars should search the inscriptions of that Assyrian king to find the names Ibni-Adad and Athamar-Ishtar. To date less

than a dozen eponym years of Eriba-Adad I have been identified, or so we are informed, though this author is not privy to the whereabouts of most of the alleged source documents. The names Ibni-Adad and Athamar-Ishtar are apparently not attested. But Eriba-Adad I reigned for 28 years. There remains the distinct possibility that one or both names will surface in the future, not only solving the problem presently under discussion, but absolutely confirming our hypothesis of parallel dynastic timelines.

We leave that matter behind us and now journey from Kanesh to Assur, to argue one last time that the governing authorities in that tiny religious enclave in the days of Erishum I through to Erishum II were the ancestors of Ashuruballit I, and that Ashuruballit himself was the vice-regent of Assur in the latter half of the reign of Shamshi-Adad I.

### **The state of Assur during the Erishum dynasty, the rule of Shamshi-Adad I, and beyond.**

This section is added for one reason only. Many (if not most) of the readers of this paper will have difficulty accepting the fact that the Erishum dynasty kings in Nurrugum, and the Assyrian ancestors of Ashuruballit in Assur, could possibly co-exist within miles of one another for several hundred years, if not twice that length of time, with no apparent signs of conflict. Assuming that this incredulity exists, we assume further that it results, at least in part, from two fundamental misconceptions. The first relates to our lack of knowledge about precisely what transpired during those many centuries. The reader may be of the mistaken impression that because we know the eponym name of every year in the two hundred year history of the Erishum dynasty, and have limited information about miscellaneous historical events that occurred in the approximately four hundred years during which the descendents of Sulili governed Nurrugum, that we ought to know what transpired between these Akkadian overlords and their vassal states. That opinion would be a mistake. The second misconception concerns the size and strength of the Assyrian state and the status of the Assyrian “kings” during this time frame. If we can convince the reader that all of the ancestors of Ashuruballit, and Ashuruballit himself, functioned as mere “caretaker priests of a minuscule city state only miles in circumference” then most of the difficulty ought to disappear. With that in mind we proceed to correct these two misconceptions.

**1) Relative lack of inscriptional evidence attesting the relations between Nurrugum and Assur.** We begin by emphasizing the fact that we do not anticipate finding any clear reference to any of the rulers of the Assyrian state in the extant letters of the Erishum dynasty kings. For example, it would be extremely fortuitous if we were to stumble on a late inscription of Erishum II or an early inscription of Shamshi-Adad I that mentions the existence of either Eriba-Adad I or Ashuruballit I as vice-regent of Assur, or conversely an inscription of an Assyrian “king” who alludes to the co-existence of an Erishum dynasty counterpart (though one possible example of the latter will in fact be mentioned below). There is simply too little existing documentation of any of these “kings” to engage in such “wishful thinking”. Only a handful of inscriptions are extant from the reign of Erishum I, and almost none from his predecessors or successors. As for the Assyrian rulers we are in the midst of what scholars refer to as the

“Assyrian dark age”. When Grayson wrote volume I of his *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* in 1972 he acknowledged the fact that not a single contemporary inscription could be found for kings #41-58 (Ashur-Dugul to Ishme-Dagan II), nor for any of the kings #63-68 (Nur-ili to Ashur-Nirari II) named in the existing AKL. That leaves only eight kings to examine leading up to the reign of Ashuruballit I, and these kings provide us with at most a combined two dozen inscriptions, mostly one liner’s recording some building activity or preserving a genealogy on some artifact. The only contemporary inscription in this small collection which contains an historical reference of significance is an inscription of Puzur-Ashur III, king #61 on the AKL, found on limestone slabs at Assur and translated by Grayson on [page 35 of his ARI](#).

208. Puzur-Ashur, vice-regent of the god Ashur, son of Ashur-nerari (I), (who was) also vice-regent of the god Ashur:

209. The room of the šuḥuru of the temple of the Assyrian Ishtar which Ilu-shuma, the prince, had built and Sargon (I), my forefather, son of Ikunum, had restored – (that structure) had become dilapidated and I rebuilt (it).

It is immediately apparent that in this brief inscription the Assyrian king Puzur-Ashur III is referencing repairs to an enclosure (šuḥuru) within a temple of Ishtar at Assur. The initial construction of the enclosure is credited to Ilu-shuma, father of Erishum I, to whom we have assigned the dates 1534-1495 (see table 3 on page 14 above). It follows therefore that the enclosure was built sometime shortly prior to 1534 BC. The initial repairs of the šuḥuru are credited to Erishum’s grandson Sargon I (1480-1441). Clearly this enclosure, whatever its function, was used frequently and thus required frequent repair. In the present case as little as 55 years separate construction and repair of the original enclosure. But this fact raises two serious questions for advocates of the traditional history, for whom the reign of Ilu-shuma ended in the year 1975 BC and for whom the initial repairs by Sargon I (1920-1881) may be dated as early as the year 1920, 55 years after the construction. According to our inscription the next repair following that of Sargon I did not take place until the reign of [Puzur-Ashur III](#), whose reign can be dated at the earliest in the years 1503-1479 BC (on the assumption that he ruled for 24 years), or 1493-1479 BC (assuming he ruled for only 14 years). On the one hand we wonder why the initial construction, which we assume would be the most secure, lasted as little as 55 years, while the repair by Sargon II lasted well over 400 years? And a related question inquires how the Assyrian king Puzur-Ashur III was even cognizant of which kings were involved in the initial construction and the ensuing repair? The construction or re-construction of enclosures such as this were generally not acknowledged by the original builder or subsequent repairer via the placement of cones or other testimonial tablets, and certainly this brief inscription makes no mention of any. But Puzur-Ashur is not only aware of who constructed and who first repaired the enclosure, he even addresses Sargon (I) as his “father” (lit. *abi* = “my father”), which Grayson explains away by paraphrasing the term as “my forefather”.

The much more reasonable interpretation of this inscription is forthcoming from the revised history, which considers that the 12 Erishum dynasty kings and the sequence of *Assyrian King List* “kings” #41-73 ran parallel to one another, and that in these two parallel dynasties the suzerain Sargon I ruled between the years 1480-1441 BC, while the vassal Puzur-Ashur III governed (at the earliest) during the years 1503-1479 BC or 1493-1479 BC. And while their respective reigns overlapped by only a single year in this scenario, we have yet to comment on the interpretive irregularities which have moved the BC dates for Puzur-Ashur III back in time by at least 30 years. To arrive at the assigned dates for Puzur-Ashur III traditional scholars have assigned 18 and 15 years respectively to kings #65 (Ashur-rabi I) and #66 (Ashur-nadin-ahhe I), whose dates are situated in damaged sections of all three source documents of the existing AKL, and whom we cited earlier as kings for whom absolutely no contemporary inscriptions exist. Both of these kings are virtual unknowns, both were involved in coups, and the sum total of their reigns is likely closer to three than the thirty-three years assigned them. In fact, the king Ashur-Shaduni, whose reign immediately preceded that of Ashur-rabi, is credited with only a single month on the throne of Assur, before being replaced by Ashur-rabi via a coup. This was a volatile time in the history of Assur, hardly a time to credit two unknown kings with ruling longer than almost any predecessor or any successor up to the time of Eriba-Adad I. Reducing their combined reign lengths by thirty years would move the dates of Puzur-Ashur III forward in time by thirty years, and other minor alterations might move them forward even more. While the dates for Sargon I remain fixed in the years 1480-1441, the reign of Puzur-Ashur III will now be dated in the years 1463-1449 BC. In this scenario all of our interpretive questions find ready answers. Dating the repairs by Puzur-Ashur III around 1449 BC they would follow those by Sargon I by around 30 years, a reasonable lapse of time considering that the initial construction by Ilu-shuma might be expected to last longer (55 years) than would the reconstruction by Sargon I (30 years). And since Sargon and Puzur-Ashur III were contemporaries, and in constant communication (as we might expect when the two parties were in a suzerain/vassal relationship) there is no problem understanding whence Puzur-Ashur came to know about the initial construction and repair of the Ishtar temple’s šuḥuru enclosure. And finally, it is a well-known fact that the vassal in such long term relationships *always* addressed the suzerain as “my father” (*abi*).

If we are correct in the previous analysis, this one inscription should serve to prove that Sargon (I) and Puzur-Ashur (III) were contemporaries, that our assumption of parallel dynasties is absolutely correct, and that Assuruballit I and Shamshi-Adad I, who head the two dynastic lists in our Table 2, ruled their respective domains simultaneously.

But we are not yet finished. On page 30 above we stated that two misconceptions on the part of readers hinder their acceptance of our thesis of parallel dynasties in Nurrugum and Ashur. The first misconception has been addressed. The second, related to the size of the “city state of Assur” and the status of its “kings” remains to be clarified.



2) **The miniscule size of the “city state of Assur” and the status of its “kings”.** The reader of this paper needs to constantly bear in mind that when we refer to the “state of Assur” we are not speaking of an extensive territorial domain, governed by kings residing in palaces and in possession of an army. Nothing could be further from the truth when our focus is on “kings” #41-73 on the AKL. In the first place not a single one of these individuals ever identifies himself as a “king” though we continue to employ the term consistent with modern usage. Instead, it is instructive to read a single inscription authored by Ashuruballit I in relation to this subject.

281. Ashur-uballit, vice-regent of the god Ashur [*išši'ak aššur*], son of Eriba-Adad (I); Eriba-Adad (I), vice-regent of the god Ashur, (was) the son of Ashur-bel-nisheshu; Ashur-bel-nisheshu, vice-regent of the god Ashur, (was) the son of Ashur-nerari (II); Ashur-nerari (II), vice-regent of the god Ashur, (was) the son of Ashur-rabi (I); Ashur-rabi (I), vice-regent of the god Ashur, (was) the son of Enlil-nasir (I); Enlil-nasir (I), vice-regent of the god Ashur, (was) the son of Puzur-Ashur (III), vice-regent of the god Ashur:

282. Ashur-uballit, governor [*ensi*] of the god Enlil, vice-regent of the god Ashur, [for his life] and the well-being of his city the [. . .] of New City [which previously] had been built outside but now was situated within the city – which Puzur-Ashur (III), my forefather, the prince, had previously built – had become dilapidated; I (Ashur-uballit) rebuilt (it) from top to bottom. I deposited my clay cone.

283. The gods Ashur, Adad, and Bel-sharri will listen to the prayers of a later prince when that house becomes dilapidated and he rebuilds (it). May (the same prince) restore my clay cone to its place.

284. Month of Muhur-ilani, eponym of Enlil-mudammīq. (Grayson, ARI, Volume 1 (1972) 44) [Items in square brackets added.]

We notice in this inscription that Ashuruballit bears two titles. On the one hand he and all his named ancestors bore the title *išši'ak aššur*, which Grayson translates as “vice regent of Assur”, as do all modern scholars, and early Assyriologists such as Luckenbill ([ARAB Vol. 1, p. 22 sect. 591](#)) translate as “priest of Assur”. Ashuruballit is also referred to by the title *ensi*, translated here as “governor”, but since the Assyrian term is often written in Sumerian logograms as PA.TE.SI, it was just as often simply transcribed as *patesi* by scholars in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both of these terms clearly describe the bearer of the title as under the authority of the god with whom the title is associated. Neither one identifies the bearer as the “head of state” of anything approaching a “kingdom”. **The state of Assyria as we know it from the exploits of later “kings” had not yet come into being!**

The point we are making in the preceding paragraph should be clear to the reader. Ashuruballit and his ancestors were at most “petty governors of a petty kingdom”, albeit a well-respected religious center, home of a multitude of gods worshipped not only by Assyrians, but also by Amorites, Akkadians, and Babylonians generally. The fact that these Assyrian “vice-regents/priests” existed for multiple hundreds of years as vassals of other kings, including the

rulers of the dynasty of Sargon of Akkad, the Akkadian descendants of Sulili, and the Amorite kings Shamshi-Adad I and Hammurabi, is confirmation that we are on the right track when we argue that in the time frame under consideration (i.e. the first two-thirds of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium) they are hardly deserving of mention in the inscriptions of their overlords. And it is therefore not surprising that the names of Ashuruballit and his ancestors have not surfaced in the inscriptions of their contemporaries. They would be considered of no more consequence than the chief-priests of the local gods in Assur.

The preceding appraisal of Ashuruballit depends, of course, on the treatment accorded many of the Ashuruballit inscriptions by our revised history. Without exception every tablet inscription which treats Ashuruballit I as anything more than a “religious functionary” has been assigned by the revised history to the (unnumbered) Ashuruballit who acted as an associate king of Adad-Nirari II in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century BC. But even if the critic chooses to disregard our reassignment of these inscriptions, he/she will have to admit that even the traditional history admits that all of the other Assyrian kings named on the AKL preceding Ashuruballit were deserving of our title as “petty kings of a petty kingdom”. It is the considered opinion of traditional historians that Ashuruballit I rose to power “out of nowhere”, and is consequently regarded as the first true king of the land of Assur (*DINGER mat Assur*). Thus in many listings of Assyrian kings he and his father Eriba-Adad I are cited as the first kings of the Middle Assyrian Empire, the first authentic “kings of Assyria” as we have come to understand that phrase.

With respect to Ashuruballit I, this will not be the first time that traditional scholars have blundered by assigning titles denoting greatness to undeserving kings. In “Piankhi the Chameleon”, the second book of our *Displaced Dynasties* series, we proved that the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty king Menkheperre Thutmose, identified by scholars as “the greatest military leader in Egyptian dynastic history”, who supposedly ruled Egypt with unprecedented military might for upwards of fifty years, was in fact a pathetic non-descript “nobody” who died a cripple at a very young age. Let the reader decide in the present instance whether or not the “Ashuruballit inscriptions” have been correctly reassigned, relegating to Ashuruballit I mere priestly governance/oversight of the tiny religious state of Assur.

While we are on this theme we should perhaps point out how, when, and why Assyria did finally emerge as a world-governing power. The exercise will be worth-while, supporting as it does our positioning of the Assyrian time-line in relation to the others in our Figure 3. While Assyria did not emerge as an independent and powerful Near Eastern nation during the reign of Ashuruballit I, it did do precisely that within twenty-five years of his death. And our timeline charts explain how when and why that happened. And since in our discussion we make constant recourse to our Figure 3 timeline chart (bottom of page 15), it would be helpful if the reader had ready access to a copy of that diagram.

We note in the first place that mid-way through the reign of Ashuruballit I (1352-1318), his suzerain Shamshi-Adad I was deposed by Hammurabi (1336 BC), and less than a dozen years later, still within the tenure of Ashuruballit I, Ishme-Dagan was deposed in Ekallatum (ca 1328

BC), also by Hammurabi. Though remaining a vassal state, with Ashuruballit functioning as its vice-regent and ensi, Assyria was at long last free of the confines imposed by near-neighbor overlords in Nurrugum and Ekallatum. Hammurabi, meanwhile, was a benevolent landlord, and may even have encouraged the expansion of the Assyrian state in order to provide a buffer against the enhanced fortunes of Mari, now back in the hands of the Lim dynasty, and in control of much of the land-mass formerly held by Shamshi-Adad I and his sons. Later kings, specifically the grand-son and great-grandson of Ashuruballit, Arik-den-ili and Adad-Nirari I respectively, attribute to him military excursions to the north and east of Assur, which can in no way have taken place prior to the demise of Shamshi-Adad and his sons, nor without the blessing of (and probably the assistance of) Hammurabi. They also refer to him as a “king”, something he refrained from calling himself during his lifetime, assuming of course that we have correctly removed the few inscriptions that refer to him as such.

We note, secondly, that Enlil-Nirari (1317-1308), son and successor of Ashuruballit I, continues to designate himself only as *išši'ak aššur*, predictable since his reign fell almost entirely within the last decade of the reign of Hammurabi, his overlord, and especially so since in ca 1319 BC Hammurabi had attacked and defeated Zimri-Lim in Mari, incorporating that kingdom into his enlarging empire. But suddenly and without warning, after multiple centuries of waiting, kingship finally arrived in Assyria during the reign of Arik-den-ili (1307-1296), grandson of Assuruballit I. While this king, presumably early in his abbreviated ten year reign, continued to refer to himself and his ancestors as *išši'ak aššur*, other inscriptions, arguably dated later in his reign, designate him as “king of Assyria” and posthumously assign that status to his two predecessors.

Thus we read on three clay cones from Ashur,

Arik-den-ili, vice-regent of the god Ashur, son of Enlil-narari, vice-regent of the god Ashur, son of Ashur-uballit, who (was) also vice-regent of the god Ashur, ... ([Grayson ARI \(1972\) 356 #5,6,&7](#))

while an inscription on a brick, almost certainly from late in this king's brief reign, reads

Property of the palace of Arik-din-ili, king of Assyria, son of Enlil-narari, king of Assyria, son of Ashuruballit (I), king of Assyria ([Grayson ARI \(1972\) 356 #4](#))

In the traditional history there is no need to explain this emergence of kingship in Assyria during the reign of Arik-den-ili, since historians of that persuasion have mistakenly assumed that kingship actually began two generations earlier, during the reign of Ashuruballit I. But even that supposed earlier eruption of political power has yet to be explained by traditional scholars. For the revised history there is a ready explanation for the rise to power of Arik-den-ili (1307-1296). A glance at our Table 3 timelines quickly tells the story. In 1310 Hammurabi died, leaving the Amorite kingdom he had forged to his less than competent son Samsuiluna (1310-1272). We spent considerable time in our paper #10 detailing the disintegration of Hammurabi's kingdom that took place in the early years of Samsuiluna. Territories adjacent to Babylonia quickly defected, including the Sealand dynasty. Suzerainty over more distant

territorial possessions soon followed. Almost certainly included in the latter was the loss of Assyria. And the beneficiary of that territorial loss was Arik-den-ili, who promptly built himself a palace.

The rest of the story vis-à-vis Assyria has already be discussed in earlier papers in our Chronology section. Freed from external restraint for the first time in close to four hundred years, Assyria quickly evolved into the powerful state our readers have come to associate with the term “Assyria”. Grayson, in his ARI, remarks on the “explosion” of inscriptional evidence attesting the expanded role of the Assyrian king Adad-Nirari I (1295-1264) in the affairs of the Ancient Near East, as Assyria, less than twenty years after the death of Hammurabi, came into possession of much of Hammurabi’s kingdom north of Babylonia. And the renewed strength of Assyria could not have come at a more opportune time, since in 1290 B.C., five years into the reign of Adad-Nirari I, the Kassites invaded and conquered Babylonia, and might well have extended their dominance to include Assyria, but for the renewed strength of the Assyrian state. As we have argued earlier in this revision, Babylonia, now called Karduniash, still ruled by the descendants of Hammurabi, not only became, but remained a vassal state of the Kassites for the balance of “Hammurabi’s dynasty”, thus until the year 1155 B.C. when the raid by Mursilis I brought that dynasty to an end.

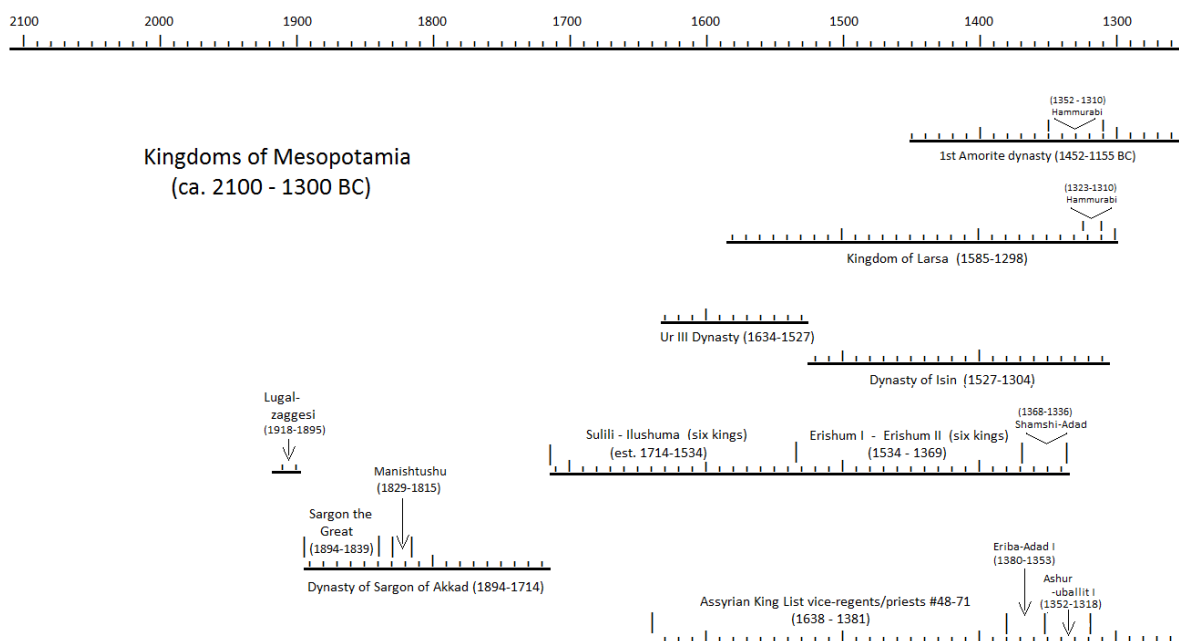
We have come full circle. Our timeline chart on page 15 above has been linked to all of our Babylonian revisions outlined in papers #3-10. In the opinion of this author the absolute dates provided in that chart are probably accurate to within a half-dozen years.

Only one promised item remains to be discussed.

### **Summary of the Chronology of the Ancient Near East in the 1<sup>st</sup> Two-Thirds of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC.**

Several times in this paper we have had cause to mention the chronology of Ancient Near Eastern kingdoms other than those that are the subject of discussion in this paper. Thus we mentioned briefly the kingdom of Sargon of Akkad and the name of Manistushu, the 3<sup>rd</sup> king of his dynasty, claiming the fact that Sulili and his descendants inherited Sargon’s legacy. We also recently commented on the presence of a seal of Ibbi-Sin, the last king of the Ur III dynasty, on a tablet which was part of the Kultepe Eponym archives, thus presumably to be dated early in the reign of Erishum I. We would be remiss if we did not make some attempt at providing specific dates for these kingdoms, and others which existed adjacent to the Assyrian and Sulili/Erishum dynasty timelines discussed in this paper. This we have done, if only to provide future scholars with the beginnings of a comprehensive revision of Ancient Near Eastern history encompassing the whole of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. The results of our analysis are depicted in the Figure 7 timeline chart on the following page. The chart is followed by a very brief outline of the reasoning on which the timelines are based.

**Figure 7: 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium Kingdoms Adjacent to our Assyrian and Erishum Dynasty Timelines Depicted in Figure 3 on page 15.**



The timelines in Figure 7 represents our first attempt at providing dates for a multitude of Mesopotamian kingdoms that existed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Those representing the 1<sup>st</sup> (Amorite) dynasty of Babylon (i.e. Hammurabi's dynasty), the Akkadian descendants of Sulili (aka "the Erishum dynasty"), and the Assyrian ancestors of Ashuruballit I (AKL "kings" #41-73), are already known to readers of this paper. The additions to date consist of the five "dynasties" named in the following table, with links provided to assist the reader in accessing a related Wikipedia article for each. The revised dates assigned to these dynasties are consistent with data presented in this paper.

**Table 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium Mesopotamian kingdoms added to our Figure 7 timelines**

| Dynasty or Kingdom                             | Revised History Dates |
|--|-----------------------|
| <a href="#">Kingdom of Larsa</a>               | (1585-1298)           |
| <a href="#">Ur III dynasty</a>                 | (1634-1527)           |
| <a href="#">1<sup>st</sup> dynasty of Isin</a> | (1527-1304)           |
| <a href="#">Dynasty of Sargon of Akkad</a>     | (1894-1714)           |
| <a href="#">Lugalzuges of Umma</a>             | (1918-1895)           |

The kingdom of Larsa overlapped much of “Hammurabi’s dynasty”. It was, in fact, the dominant power in Sumer until finally conquered by Hammurabi late in that king’s reign. Thus the revised dates assigned to Hammurabi determine the revised time frame for the Larsa kingdom, and for this reason the reader can be assured that the dates 1585-1298 BC we have assigned to this dynasty of kings is reasonably accurate. When Hammurabi died in 1310 BC the kingdom of Larsa was bequeathed to his son Samsuiluna, who lost control of the city state by 1302 BC. Control of Larsa then reverted to Rim-Sin II and within four years was lost again to Babylon, at which time the kingdom ceased to exist as an independent entity.

The Ur III dynasty and the 1<sup>st</sup> dynasty of Isin existed in succession, when Ib-bi-Sin, the terminal king of the Ur III kingdom lost a power struggle with Ishbe-Erra of Isin, a former official in his administration. An assortment of dates are assigned to these two kingdoms in the traditional history. Needless to say those dates would all need to be reduced by upwards of 400 years, since both kingdoms are known to have overlapped to some extent the kingdom of Larsa. Rather than simply reduce traditional dates by some as yet indeterminate number, we have chosen here to follow a different tactic, since on page 28 above we discussed the fact that a sealed document of Ib-bi-Sin was unearthed in level II at Kultepe, synchronizing his reign, and in all likelihood that of Ishbe-Erra, with that of Erishum I, and most likely dating the transition from one dynasty to the other very early in Erishum’s reign. Thus we have placed the end of Ur III and the beginning of the dynasty of Isin in the year 1527, seven years after the onset of the reign of Erishum I in 1534. And since the Ur III dynasty lasted approximately 107 years (other sources say 115 years) and the dynasty of Isin 223 years, we arrive at the revised history dates for the two dynasties cited in our table 5.

Without doubt the most critical kingdom added to our timelines is that of Sargon’s Akkadian dynasty. Unlike the other three we have referenced above, Sargon’s kingdom was not local. His rule encompassed not only the Babylonian territories of Sumer and Akkad, but northward through the whole of upper Mesopotamia and beyond. We leave it to the reader to peruse the Wikipedia article related to his reign. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> page of that article we find a table recording the seven known kings belonging to this dynasty, together with the dates of each king as determined by traditional historians following the “middle chronology”. While we know that these dates must be reduced by approximately 440 years to bring them into line with reductions applied earlier to middle chronology dates for the Amorite dynasty of Hammurabi and the “Erishum dynasty” of Nurrugum, we should point out the fact that the 440 year reduction does not necessarily apply to all “middle chronology” dates. In the case of Hammurabi that number was proved to be accurate by the argument in the whole of paper #10. The reduction was then applied to “Erishum dynasty” middle chronology traditional dates, since these had been determined in relation to the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Hammurabi. But in the case of the “kingdom of Akkad” we are frequenting new territory. We do not know precisely how the dates in the table on page 3 of the Wikipedia article were derived. Thus our dilemma.

In the final analysis we decided that the 440 year reduction must be close to the truth and thus we proceeded to apply it to the Wikipedia table, which fortuitously had left a blank column to be filled with revised history dates. The result is shown in our Table 6 below, according to which Sargon's Akkadian kingdom should be assigned the revised dates 1894-1714 BC. These are the dates already included in our table 5 above.

**Table 6: Traditional and Revised History dates for Sargon's Akkadian kingdom.**

| Ruler              | Middle Chronology | Revised Chronology |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Sargon of Akkad    | 2334-2279         | 1894-1839          |
| Rimush             | 2278-2270         | 1838-1830          |
| Manishtushu        | 2269-2255         | 1829-1815          |
| Naram-Sin of Akkad | 2254-2218         | 1814-1778          |
| Shar-Kali-Sharri   | 2217-2193         | 1777-1753          |
| Interregnum        | 2192-2190         | 1752-1750          |
| Dudu               | 2189-2169         | 1749-1729          |
| Shu-durul          | 2168-2154         | 1728-1714          |

It goes without saying that the remarkable connection in our timeline chart between the end of the Akkad dynasty in 1714, and the beginning of the reign of Sulili in 1714, is entirely artificial. There being no means whereby specific dates could be assigned to the reigns of the six kings Sulili-Ilushuma in our Table 7 above, we simply approximated the total by comparing these six kings with the six kings who succeeded them (Erishum I – Erishum II), who reigned a combined 165 years, spanning the time frame 1534-1369 BC. Adding 165 years to the year 1534 BC suggests that Sulili began his reign around the year 1700 BC. Based on our assumption, repeated several times in the course of this paper, that the Sulili dynasty arose from the ashes of the Akkad kingdom, we have arbitrarily changed the figure 1700 BC to 1714 BC to reflect that assumed fact.

We have added the reign of the Sumerian king Lugalzugessi of Umma (1918-1895) for two reasons. On the one hand it was the conquest of the realm of this lone king which launched the career of Sargon the Great. On the other hand the introduction of this king, the last of the known kings belonging to the post-diluvian world exposed by the Sumerian King List, reminds us that we are rapidly approaching the third millennium, in the middle of which, following the numbers recorded in the Hebrew Bible, the entire globe was engulfed by a flood of such massive proportions that its memory persisted for several thousands of years afterward in cultures around the world. According to the Hebrew Bible Noah, 600 years old at the time of the flood, lived for 350 years afterward, and probably died only two or three hundred years before Lugalzugessi. Civilization as we know it was only just beginning when this king reigned. In Egypt the 3<sup>rd</sup> dynasty is just emerging and the Israeli genius Joseph ben Jacob (alias Imhotep)

is engaged saving that nation from massive starvation and in planning the construction of the first pyramid. As always, let the reader decide if we are right.