

The inhabitants of ancient Assyria identified years by the names of those who held the office of *limu* in the city of Assur. The *limu* was appointed annually at the beginning of a new calendar year, so his name was perfect for distinguishing that year from others. Dates using eponymous names often appear in legal and economic texts but only sporadically in historical ones. This system was created at the beginning of the reign of king Erišum I in the 20<sup>th</sup> century BC and was used without interruption until the fall of the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC. This practice required the creation of eponymous lists—documents enumerating eponyms in chronological order, which helped identify previous eponyms and determine how much time had elapsed since they had held the office. Unfortunately, these eponym lists have been preserved fragmentarily. For a long time, only a section of such a list for the period from 911 to 648 BC, i.e. most of the New Assyrian times, was available. The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century brought at last the publication of fragments of lists from the Old Assyrian period. There are currently seven known lists, which cover about 250 years, from the beginning of the reign of the creator of this dating system, king Erišum I. Thanks to these texts, it was possible to create the Reconstructed Eponym List (REL), published in 2012 by Barjamovic, Hertel and Larsen. It helped to precisely date texts left by Assyrian merchants in their archives in Kaneš in Anatolia, to better understand the dynamics of the development of the Assyrian trade in this area, and to create an outline of the history of this period in Anatolia. Texts dated by eponym names also appear in northern Mesopotamia, in cities conquered at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century BC by the then king of Assyria, Samsī-Addu; many of them used this system almost until the end of that century. However, recent historical studies on this area did not use the data contained in the eponymous lists because they were mostly written before their publication, and there are no more current studies.

The aim of the project is to critically evaluate the reconstruction of the list of eponyms from the Old Assyrian period using all available sources (including those published after 2012). It will be thus possible to date the archives from northern Mesopotamia in which the same system of dating was used (discovered in Tel Bi'a – ancient Tuttul, Tell Chagar Bazar – Ašnakkum, Tell Ḥariri – Mari, Tell Leilān – Šeḫna - Šubat-Enlil, Tell Rimaḥ – Qaṭṭarā, and Qala'at Sherkat – Assur) as well as the archaeological complexes in which these archives were found. As a consequence, an attempt will be made to solve a number of problems concerning the history and chronology of the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC in northern Mesopotamia, namely those related to the course of the reign of Samsī-Addu, king of Assur, the length of the Assyrian reign in Mari, the length and course of the reign of Zimrī-Līm in Mari, as well as the relationship between the reigns of the latter ruler, the kings of Assur and minor rulers of the cities of northern Mesopotamia and the sequence of the kings of Ešnunna and Babylon. Moreover, the latest proposal of the absolute chronology of the period, based on the so-called Lower Middle Chronology (according to which Ḥammu-rapi, king of Babylon, ruled in the years 1784–1742 BC), will be assessed. The outcomes of the project will also help to precisely date the construction and history of several important temples and palaces uncovered at the above-mentioned sites, and to better understand the stages and development dynamics of the Khabur Ware ceramics, a group of vessels with a characteristic painted decoration typical of northern Mesopotamia.

The author of the project, an archaeologist and orientalist with knowledge of cuneiform and Akkadian language, became interested in the potential of using the Old Assyrian list of eponyms to study the area of northern Mesopotamia soon after the publication of its first copies, as evidenced by his publication record and conference presentations. The submitted project strives to systematize, supplement and summarize the results of the author's previous research on the chronology and history of northern Mesopotamia. The results of the project will be presented at an international scientific conference and published by a renowned publishing house as a monograph available in Open Access.