



## Ekallatum = Tell Ḫuwaish

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**99) Ekallatum = Tell Huwaish** — Since W. Hallo’s seminal article “The Road to Emar”, *JCS* 18, 1964, the question of the localisation of Šamši-Adad’s capital city Ekallatum was supposed to be solved: Tell Haikal on the eastern side of the Tigris seemed an appropriate candidate. The main argument was the phonetic proximity between the ancient and the modern place names and the neighborhood to Aššur. Since the 1990ies several studies notably based on the documentation from Mari raised doubts about this eastern situation but no suitable candidate for the localisation was definitively chosen in published scientific works. During our study (A. Otto, N. Ziegler & C. Fink, “The Road to Emar Reconsidered”, in press) we also reexamined the question of Ekallatum’s localisation. Finally, the combination of philological evidence with the results of remote sensing as well as newest research on the ground make the identification Ekallatum = Tell Huwaish most convincing. The former candidate for a localisation in Tell Huwaish, Ubase must be looked for in the neighborhood of Qayyara, as already suggested by W. Andrae and several scholars. We presented the arguments for this on the 66th *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* in Mainz (July 2022) in our common talk “Ekallatum lokalisiert! Neue Erkenntnisse zur Lage und Geschichte der Hauptstadt Samsi-Addu”. Unfortunately the publication is still in press: N. Ziegler & A. Otto, “Ekallatum, Samsi-Addu’s Capital City, Localised” (with an appendix by Salim Abdallah Ali & N. Marchetti). Both quoted works will be published in A. Otto (ed.), *Entre les fleuves – III. On the Way in Upper Mesopotamia. Travels, routes and environment as a base for the reconstruction of Historical Geography*, Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient, Gladbeck, 2023.

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**100) Chronology Again** — In the second volume of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, Felix Höflmayer (2022) took on the thankless task of trying to summarise the current understanding of the chronology of the relevant era (the first half of the second millennium BC). He inevitably arrives at the consensus offered by Sturt Manning et al. (2016, 2020) supporting the Middle Chronology, since this is where the evidence (historical, radiocarbon, dendrochronological, etc.) seems to point. There can be no doubt about this.

I just point out that there are some minor problems. First of all, the Middle Chronology is based on astronomical observations of Venus, but there is no solar eclipse for Šamši-Adad compatible with that astronomically based chronology. Second of all, the radiocarbon calibrations are based on dendrochronological measurements but there is no dendrochronological date compatible with the eruption of Thera/Santorini. One would expect the successful chronology to be based on compatible astronomical and dendrochronological dates.

One important item is that recent work indicates that (a) the 1613 +/- BC date for Thera is excluded and that it must have happened sometime after that and before ca. 1540 BC (Manning et al. 2020), with a date of ca. 1580 possible. Curiously, the Porsuk dendrochronological anomaly (possibly compatible with the Thera event) has been dated by Manning et al. (2016) to somewhere around 1681-1673 BC – and even with minor adjustments, that is impossible to relate to Thera as now dated. Obviously, lowering the dendrochronology for Porsuk roughly a century would make it compatible with the radiocarbon date for Thera of ca. 1580 BC. And that would require a reduction in the Middle Chronology of roughly a century as well – which would just happen to be roughly compatible with Gasche’s ultra-low chronology, that is compatible with lunar and solar eclipses as well as the Venus cycles, kinglists, and the pottery. This is, of course, just an observation.

At the moment, the dendrochronology and the astronomy are not unified in favour of the Middle Chronology. Thus, basing claims that the Middle Chronology is chronologically valid (as opposed to convenient) on dendrochronology via radiocarbon is weak. In principle, Manning must simply find another dendrochronological anomaly compatible with the Middle Chronology and the Thera event. If the Middle Chronology is indeed chronologically correct, finding a dendrochronological fix should be no more difficult than finding a solar eclipse.