Breviter

There are two premises at the base of Boris Banjevic's chronological analysis in *Akkadica* 126 (2005), pp. 169-193. The first is that chronological proposals can no longer be legitimately constrained by the 56/64 Venus-cycles (which are the base of the High, Middle and Low chronologies previously recognized), as these cycles cannot be reliably established in the existing sources. The second premise is that the 8-year cycles can be extracted from the Venus Tablet. Both premises were shown in our work (Gurzadyan 2000).

Based on the historical records, the Ultra-Low chronology (Gasche *et al.* 1998) satisfied the 8-year Venus cycle condition, which is recognized by all concerned. Furthermore, this was independently anchored via the lunar eclipses, and thus with complementary astronomical sources linked to the condition of the interval between the eclipses known from historical sources. It was the final phase information of the records of the Ur III lunar eclipses of EAE 20 IIIA and EAE 21 XII, including both the watch times and the additional condition in EAE 20 IIIB about the ''weakly shining stars'' (showing the absolute importance of the exit information), which allowed the chronology to be fixed precisely.

In contrast to this procedure, Banjevic does not provide any new anchors of similar strength. To discuss ΔT in order to fit the lunar eclipse of -1960 of twilight to the second Ur III eclipse seems unreasonable in principle, particularly given the absence of an alternative link to historical events. Furthermore, e.g., the recently reported lunar eclipse of -382 seems to pose new problems for our understanding of ΔT (Steele, 2005). Thus this subtle issue must be approached cautiously.

Individual solar eclipses, as discussed previously in the literature, can hardly act as anchors, without unambiguous information associating to history. Similarly, the Assur Solar eclipse of -1764 even though compatible to Ultra-Low chronology (unaffected by ΔT!), has never been used as a crucial argument for the latter.

As an astrophysicist, one of us (V.G.) only commented on astronomical aspects, where it would seem that additional astronomical support compatible with the historical givens should be expected.

Making a contribution in this respect requires an interdisciplinary effort combining a profound knowledge of texts, language, religion, history and archaeology. Thus, caution might be advised when placing too much confidence in statistical probabilities aligned with some possible correlations. Banjevic highlights the difficulties in noting that even according to his own interpretation (which needs not correspond to the calculations of others), his proposal involves a discrepancy of ''only 3 years'' with respect to the Assyrian *Distanzangaben*. In fact, however, the size of the gap is immaterial, as it demonstrates (as Eder 2004 has already shown) that the *Distanzangaben* are not compatible with any known astronomical data — even Banjevic's.

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