

# 1

## Sumerian Early Dynastic Royal Inscriptions

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The history of ancient Sumer is reconstructed largely from documentary evidence. Cuneiform texts have been unearthed at numerous archaeological sites in southern Iraq, the heartland of Sumerian civilization. They owe their survival to the materials on which they were inscribed: most often clay, occasionally stone, and, rarely, metal. Extant texts, numbering in the tens of thousands, constitute only a small portion of the ancient scribal output. To date, only a fraction of them have been published.

Sumerian texts fall into several types: those that were employed in the training of scribes (e.g., word and sign lists), those that were consulted and compiled by a variety of specialist practitioners (e.g., lists of omens, medical remedies, and astronomical observations), those that formed the archives (and included, e.g., inventories and records of purchases, sales, and loans) of private persons (like merchants and high officials) and public institutions (like palaces and temples), and those that served the propaganda needs of the society's elite members (e.g., myths, epics, and royal inscriptions), to name some of the most important ones. Of all of these types, archival texts provide the most "objective" data for the reconstruction of Sumerian social and economic history. Reconstructions of Sumerian political history draw more heavily on texts of the "literary"/propagandistic type. One in particular, the so-called Sumerian King List (SKL) – of which numerous and variant examples are attested – furnishes the names and reign lengths of kings in a number of Sumerian and non-Sumerian dynasties. Though the SKL presents a highly and deliberately distorted view of dynastic history (historically contemporaneous dynasties are treated as sequential, and some dynasties – most conspicuously Lagash's – are omitted altogether), properly analyzed it provides a basic chronological framework for Sumerian history. The details of that history, to the extent they may be reconstructed, are assembled largely from another corpus of "literary"/propagandistic evidence: royal inscriptions.

Below is a selection of pre-Sargonic royal inscriptions from five southern (Sumerian) kingdoms (Ur, Uruk, Nippur, Umma, and Lagash) and one northern (Akkadian) kingdom (Kish). In the Early Dynastic period the southern and northern portions of the Mesopotamian alluvium had distinct types of social, political, and economic organization. The south, predominantly Sumerian, was divided into a number of petty kingdoms; the north, predominantly Akkadian, formed a single kingdom centered on the city of Kish. A variety of evidence suggests that Kish was politically dominant in the south in the first and second phases of the period (ED I and II). Royal inscription Ki 3.1 speaks succinctly to the inequality of power relations between the two regions. The text records an offering from Mesalim, king of Kish, to Ningirsu (city-god of Girsu, and chief god of the kingdom of Lagash). That a Kishite king made this offering at all underscores the closeness of political ties between Kish and Lagash. Additional details about Ki 3.1 reveal that Kish was the more powerful of the two. For one, Mesalim is called “Ningirsu’s temple-builder,” that is, the builder of Ningirsu’s temple (in Lagash), a striking epithet for a non-Lagashite king to assume. Mesalim is also designated by the term for “king” (*lugal*; from the Sumerian terms for “man” (*lú*) and “big” [*gal*]). In contrast, the ruler of Lagash, Lugalsha’engur, is designated by the more modest term for “city ruler” (*ensi*<sub>2</sub>; etymology uncertain). Consider, as well, that Ki 3.1 was found in Girsu (indicating that Mesalim dedicated it there), and that it was inscribed on a weapon of war (a stone mace-head). This last suggests that Kish–Lagash relations were established and perpetuated through force of arms. La 5.1 supplies additional evidence of the extent of Kishite power. The very same Mesalim, king of Kish, is credited with fixing the (original?) border between the neighboring kingdoms of Umma and Lagash (“at the command of (*the goddess*) Ishtaran, he measured the field and set up a (*boundary*-)stone there”).

The northern type of kingship – territorial and autocratic – was aspired to by a number of southern rulers. A few would-be imperialists succeeded in establishing short-lived hegemonies over neighboring Sumerian kingdoms, even in extending their influence into the north. In their inscriptions, these rulers took the symbolic title *lugal-Kiš*, “King of Kish” (see Ur 5.2 (not in this volume); elsewhere in their inscriptions, Eanatum of Lagash and Lugalkignedudu of Uruk also took this title). A similarly self-aggrandizing title, *lugal-kalam*, “King of the Land” (see Uruk 4.1 and Um 7.1) denoted hegemony – at least the pretense to it – over all of Sumer.

The inscriptions from Ur, all discovered in different graves in the so-called “Royal Cemetery” pose a number of interpretive challenges. Ur 2 marks the cylinder seal on which it is inscribed as being the property of Pu’abi *nin*. Though conventionally translated as “queen” the basic meaning of *nin* is “lady.” The lavishness of Pu’abi’s burial – which included dozens of sacrificed attendants – favors the assumption that she was a queen, but definitive proof (such as the name and title of her husband) are lacking. That Ninbanda, in Ur 5.3 (not in this volume), was a “queen” (*nin*), is confirmed by the fact

that her husband, Mesanepada, is called “king” (*lugal*) in Ur 5.1 and 5.2 (and also in the SKL). Yet, it is not clear whether Ninbanda should be interpreted as a personal name. The terms *nin+banda<sub>3</sub>* mean “young lady/queen.” Ninbanda may have been the queen’s throne name, but it is equally plausible that *nin+banda<sub>3</sub>* was her title, or the name or title of a junior wife of the king. Further complicating the matter, Ur 5.2 identifies a certain *NU.GIG* (capital letters indicate an uncertain reading) as the spouse of Mesanepada. There are several possible solutions to the conflicting testimony of Ur 5.3 and 5.2. The simplest one is that *nin+banda<sub>3</sub>* and *NU.GIG* refer to one and the same person, Nugig being her name and “young lady/queen” her title. Alternatively, *nin+banda<sub>3</sub>* and *NU.GIG* may have been two different persons, possibly the junior and senior wives of the ruler. A third possibility is that *NU.GIG* was not the ruler’s actual wife, but rather a well-known type of priestess (*nu-gig*). If so, then Ur 5.2 would constitute the earliest evidence for a ritual that is otherwise attested only later in Mesopotamian history: the annual “sacred marriage” between the king and the goddess (embodied in the person of her priestess). Such an interpretation is highly tentative, however. Finally, it should be noted, the copper bowl on which Ur 5.4 (not in this volume) (“Ninbanda, the queen”) is inscribed was found in the grave of Mesanepada’s father, Meskalamdug. Did father and son share a spouse? Did their spouses share a title? Or was the bowl simply dedicated by the son’s spouse to her father-in-law? We cannot be sure.

The inscriptions from Uruk speak to the complex geopolitics of the ED IIIb period. Lugalkignedudu (Uruk 1.1) and Enshakushana (Uruk 4.1) both made overtures at empire-building. Though Lugalkignedudu conquered Ur, and ruled both Uruk and Ur for a period, his claims to sovereignty over Sumer (“king of all the lands”) are surely inflated. Several royal inscriptions inform us that Entemena, ruler of Lagash, concluded a treaty (*nam-šeš*, literally, “brotherhood”) with Lugalkignedudu. Uruk 1.1 and 4.1 also highlight the special role of Nippur. As the religious (though never political) capital of ancient Sumer, it was from Nippur and its high god that Lugalkignedudu and Enshakushana sought legitimacy for their imperial ambitions, and to them that they duly paid homage. Note that Enshakushana was ordered to do battle with Kish, but Lugalkignedudu was granted the kingship of Ur. The notion that the conquest of Ur was a bloodless one, indeed, that Enlil simply “had (*Lugalkignedudu*) exercise lordship” there, harmonized with Sumerian conceptions of dynastic history (as reflected, later, in the SKL), and resolved the religious/ideological contradictions that an actual conquest of Sumerians by Sumerians raised.

Ki 1, one of the oldest surviving royal inscriptions, sheds light on the complex interplay between myth and history in ancient Mesopotamia. Mebara(ge)si, elsewhere known as Enmebaragesi, is one of several postdiluvian kings to whom the SKL attributes a fantastically long reign (900 years; long, indeed, but far short of the antediluvian reigns). Enmebaragesi is best known, from the Sumerian literary tradition, as the father of Agga, the king who laid

siege to Uruk and was vanquished by Sumer's most famous hero, Gilgamesh, king of Uruk. Ki 1 illustrates an important principle of historical reconstruction: the historian of ancient Mesopotamia imputes different degrees of credibility to different kinds of sources. Enmebaragesi's place in history – as opposed to legend – is assured by his one surviving royal inscription.

The royal inscriptions from pre-Sargonic Lagash are among the most detailed sources for reconstructing Sumerian history, albeit a narrow slice of it. Spanning the reigns of nine kings (ca. 150 years), the Lagash dynasty is the most richly documented of all the Sumerian dynasties. In addition to dozens of royal inscriptions (many in numerous copies), excavations at Girsu yielded an archive of roughly 1,700 administrative texts. The archive derives from a massive estate that was controlled by at least the last three queens of the Lagash dynasty. Together, the royal inscriptions and the archive offer rich, at times overlapping, insights into the political, economic, and social history of the kingdom. In their inscriptions, the kings of Lagash enumerate building and renovation projects on behalf of various local and “national” gods (see the beginning of La 1.6 and 4.2). Throughout Mesopotamian history, temple-building was a quintessential expression of kings' piety to the gods, and an important means of soliciting divine favor. As proof of having received such favor, kings often elaborated on real or exaggerated military triumphs in their inscriptions. In the royal inscriptions from Lagash, one conflict in particular – an ongoing border dispute with Lagash's upstream neighbor, Umma – is a recurring leitmotif. Already at the beginning of the dynasty, its founder, Urnanshe, battled the allied armies of Umma and Ur (La 1.6), and defeated Pabilgaltuk, ruler of Umma. Urnanshe does not explicitly refer to a “border conflict,” but a number of his successors do. (La 5.1 credits Mesalim, king of Kish, with fixing the border in question.) La 1.6 is unique in naming several high-ranking prisoners of war. The only surviving inscription of Urnanshe's son and successor, Akurgal, does not mention the border conflict. Yet, La 5.1 informs us that a certain Ush, ruler of Umma, initiated hostilities with Lagash sometime before the reign of Lagash's third king, Eanatum. This episode should probably be situated in Akurgal's reign.

The most vivid account of the Lagash–Umma border conflict is found on Eanatum's “Stele of the Vultures” (La 3.1; named for its relief depiction of vultures circling over a heap of enemy corpses). In the inscription, Eanatum sketches the history of the conflict, charging Umma with violating an agreement over the use of an agricultural area called Gu'edena that belonged to Ningirsu (i.e., to the kingdom of Lagash). Upon defeating the leader of Umma – Enakale (see La 5.1) – Eanatum makes him swear that he will “use the field of Ningirsu as an (*interest-bearing*) loan.” During the reign of Eanatum's brother and successor, Enanatum I, Umma is assessed of the staggering debt of 11,833,454 gallons (4,478,976,000,000 liters) of barley (La 5.1). Though practically untenable, we need not assume that this assessment was hyperbolic. Throughout Mesopotamian history, the standard rate

of interest on barley was 33 1/3 percent. Compounded annually, an initial loan of 136,961 gallons (518,400 liters) of barley (La 5.1) would have approached this sum in roughly 50 years, a span of time that accords with the chronology of the Lagash–Umma conflict. It has been argued that the “Stele of Vultures” recounts Eanatum’s second major war with Umma, the first – commemorated in other inscriptions – having been prosecuted early in his reign. As La 5.1 attests, Eanatum campaigned widely in both Sumer and Akkad.

La 4.2 extends the narrative history of the Lagash–Umma conflict into the reign of Enanatum I. Enanatum accuses Urluma, ruler of Umma (identified in Umma 4.1 as the son of Enakale, for whom see above), of falsely claiming Ningirsu’s property as his own. The reference at the end of La 4.2 to Enanatum’s son and successor, Enmetena, is unusual. The fact that Enmetena, himself, took credit for defeating Urluma (La 5.1: “Enanatum, ruler of Lagash, battled with him in Ugiga . . . Enmetena . . . defeated him”) suggests that his father may have died in battle. Enmetena also boasts of routing the next Ummaean ruler, Il (Urluma’s nephew and one-time temple-administrator of Zabalam, an important cult center in the kingdom of Umma).

There is no record of a continuing conflict between Lagash and Umma under Enmetena’s successors, Enentarzi and Lugalanda. Under the last ruler of pre-Sargonic Lagash, UruKagina, the course of the conflict changed profoundly. In his seventh regnal year, Lagash was finally and soundly defeated by an upstart hegemon, Lugalzagesi, ruler of Umma, conqueror of Uruk, and claimant to the title “king of the Land” (i.e., Sumer; see Um 7.1). A lament from Girsu, reciting the litany of devastation wrought by Lugalzagesi on Lagash, concludes with the plea that Nisaba, “the god of Lugalzagesi,” hold the Ummaean ruler, not UruKagina, responsible. Significantly, UruKagina is referred to here – and in a couple of other inscriptions – as the “king of Girsu,” a title that underscores his vastly diminished powers.

The last of the inscriptions under consideration is the so-called “UruKagina Reform” text (La 9.5). The text opens with a list of building projects that UruKagina conducted on behalf of different gods. It then recounts a number of alleged abuses from bygone days. Inter alia, UruKagina inveighs against the state, of yore, for levying grain taxes on certain priests, against funereal professionals for extracting hefty fees from mourners, and against wealthy persons for exploiting poor ones (by forcing them to dig wells and do other irrigation work on their fields). Most damningly, however, he indicts his own predecessors for appropriating the property of the gods – their plough animals, their choice fields, and their grain. This last accusation – a particularly striking one – is widely regarded as evidence that UruKagina was a usurper. In this light, the Reforms are seen as a special plea for legitimacy. While it is true that UruKagina was not in direct succession to the throne (in archival texts dating to his immediate predecessor’s reign he is identified as a type of high-ranking official), there is no evidence that he came to power on the heels of a coup, and some evidence to the contrary. Be that as it may,

UruKagina's royal Reform was not necessarily empty rhetoric. There is no direct evidence that UruKagina's social reforms were ever enforced, but there is some evidence that he took measures to restore the property of the gods. The archival texts from Lagash derive from an institution that was called "House(hold) of the Woman" (i.e., the queen) in texts dating to the reigns of Enentarzi and Lugalanda. In texts dating to UruKagina's reign it was renamed "House(hold) of (*the goddess*) Ba'U." Moreover, fields and other forms of moveable and immovable property that had hitherto been explicitly designated, in the archival texts, as property of the queen, were newly designated as property of the goddess. On the surface, such data seem to imply that UruKagina did, as he claims, enact a substantial reform. A close comparison of all of the archival texts, however, yields little evidence that the "House(hold) of Ba'U" and the "House(hold) of the Woman" differed in anything other than in name. This raises the question whether the most far-reaching of UruKagina's purported reforms was merely symbolic, or whether it entailed a substantial reconfiguring of political and economic power in the state, one benefiting temples to the detriment of the palace. The general scholarly consensus favors the first of these views, but the evidence is inconclusive.

The UruKagina Reform text is the earliest example of a justice decree, a type of edict that Mesopotamian kings customarily issued at the beginning of their reigns. Common themes in such decrees were the fixing of certain prices, the remission of debts, and the pledge to protect widows and orphans. Many of the UruKagina Reforms redress the problem of excessive taxation. In the closing section of the Reforms, UruKagina cancels the obligations of debt slaves. (Such a measure, if enacted, would have had profound social and economic consequences. Not surprisingly, there is very little evidence, from any period of Mesopotamian history, that royal debt cancelations were actually and widely enforced. Note that the Lagash texts furnish an earlier example of the freeing of debt slaves: in one of his inscriptions, Enmetena claims to have canceled the debts of his own subjects, and to have freed the citizens of other cities – Uruk, Larsa, and Padtibira – from the obligation to perform conscript labor.) At the end of the Reforms, UruKagina promises Ningirsu that he will not let the widow and orphan fall prey to the powerful.

## Pre-Sargonic Royal Inscriptions

### A. *Ur*

#### 1. *Pu'abi*

(Ur 2, Cooper) *Pu'abi, the queen*. Possible alternatives: (a) *Pu'abi, queen*, (b) (*This cylinder seal belongs to*) *Pu'abi, the queen*.

## 2. Mesanepada

(Ur 5.1) *Mesanepada, king of Ur, son of Meskalamdug, king of Kish, dedicated (this lapis lazuli bead) to (the god) Lugalkalama\** (a more literal rendering, reflecting the underlying Sumerian syntax, would foreground the dative clause [*To Lugalkalama, Mesanepada*]).

## B. Uruk

## 3. Lugalkiginedudu

(Uruk 1.1) *When (the god) Enlil favorably summoned him (Lugalkiginedudu) and combined the kingship and the lordship for him, Enlil, king of all the lands, had Lugalkiginedudu exercise lordship in Uruk, had him exercise lordship in Ur. In great joy, Lugalkiginedudu dedicated (this stone vessel), for (the sake of) his (own) life, to Enlil, his beloved king.*

## 4. Enshakushana

(Uruk 4.1) *For (the god) Enlil, king of all the lands, Enshakushana, lord of Sumer and king of the “Land” (i.e., Sumer) – (who), when the gods ordered him, destroyed Kish and seized Enbi’eshtar, the king of Kish – returned to(?) the leader of Akshak and the leader of Kish, whose cities were destroyed, their [ . . . ] in their(?) [ . . . ], (but) he dedicated their statues, their precious metals and lapis lazuli, their wood, and their treasure to Enlil, for Nippur.*

## C. Nippur

## 5. Nammah

(Nippur 1) *Pakalam, spouse/wife of Nammah, the ruler of Nippur, dedicated (this stone vessel) to (the god) RUKalama.*

## D. Umma

## 6. Urluma

(Umma 4.1) *For (the god) Enkigal, Urluma, king of Umma(!), son of Enakale, king of Umma(!), built (his) temple.*

## E. Kish

## 7. Mebaragesi

(Ki 1, Cooper) *Mebara(ge)si, king of Kish*

Possible alternatives: (a) *Mebarasi, (the) king of Kish*, (b) [*For(?) (the god(?)) . . . ] Mebarasi, (the) king of Kish, [dedicated(?) (this stone vessel(?))]* (the inscription

derives from fragments of two different stone vessels. The first preserves only the PN, on either side of which there may have been additional text in the original. The second preserves both the PN and the royal title, after which [though not preceding, if Steible and Behrens's transcription is correct] there may have been additional text in the original. It is unclear what the full text of the originals was, and whether they were the same.)

## 8. Mesalim

(Ki 3.1) *Mesalim, king of Kish, (the god) Ningirsu's temple-builder, placed (this stone mace-head) (for) Ningirsu. Lugalsha'engur is the ruler of Lagash.*

## F. Lagash

## 9. Urnanshe

(La 1.6) *[Urnansh]e, [king of Lagash, son of Gunidu], son of Gursar (or, citizen of Gursar), built the Bagara (temple) out of baked brick. In(?) the Bagara, he dug the . . . SAR. The name(?) of the temple is "Bagara, Endowed with Justice(?)." The name(?) of the shrine is "Bagara, Endowed with Justice(?)."*

*He built the Ibgal (shrine); built the temple of (the goddess) Nanshe; built the sanctuary of (the city of) Girsu; built the Kinir (sanctuary); built the temple of (the goddess) Gatumdug; built the Tirash (sanctuary); built the Ningar (sanctuary); built the temple of (the goddess) Ninmarki; built the Edam (sanctuary); built the ME-gate; built the Abzu'e (sanctuary); and built the wall of Lagash. He dug the Saman-canal and dug the Asuhur(-canal). He fashioned (a statue of the goddess) Ninmarki; fashioned (a statue of the goddess) Ninesh . . . ; fashioned (a statue of the goddess) Ningidri; fashioned (a statue of the god) Shulsha; fashioned (a statue of the god) Kindazi; fashioned (a statue of the god) Gushudu; fashioned (a statue of the goddess) Lama'u'e; and fashioned (a statue of the god) Lugalurtur.*

*[The leader(?)] of Lagash waged war with the leader of Ur and the leader of Umma.*

*The leader of Lagash defeated the leader of Ur; took Mu[ . . . ], the . . . , captive; took Amabarasi and Kishibgal, the commanders, captive; [took] Papursag, son of U'u [captive]; took [ . . . ], the commander, captive; and heaped up a burial mound (for them).*

*He defeated the leader of Umma; took Lupad and Bilala, the commanders, captive; took Pabilgaltuk, ruler of Umma, captive; took Urpusag(!), the commander, captive; took Hursagshemah, the chief merchant, captive; and heaped up a burial mound (for them).*

*The leader of Umma.*

## 10. Eanatum

(La 3.1) *[ . . . ] He reduced(?) their sustenance field(s)(?). A grain rent was imposed on them. The king of Lagash [ . . . ]. The leader of Umma spoke angrily with him and defied Lagash. Akurgal, king of Lagash, son of Urnanshe, [king of Lagash . . . The leader of Umma spoke] angrily [with him] and defied Lagash on account of its (Lagash's) own*

property. At(?) PirigZA[ . . . ]girnunshaga (the god) Ningirsu spoke (saying) "Umma has [ . . . ed] my pasture(?), my own property, the fields of the Gu'edena."

[ . . . ] Ningirsu, warrior of (the god) Enlil [ . . . ] Ningirsu planted the [seed] of (i.e., that would engender) Eanatum in the [womb] and [ . . . ] rejoiced over [Eanatum]. (The goddess) Inanna took him by the arm and named him Eana'Inanna'Ibgalkaka'atum ("In the Eana (temple) of Inanna of the Ibgal (shrine) he is worthy") and sat him on the fine lap of (the goddess) Ninhursag. Ninhursag [offered him] her fine breast. Ningirsu rejoiced over Eanatum, the womb-implanted seed of Ningirsu. Ningirsu laid his span on him. His cubits being five (in height) he laid on him. (In all he stood) five cubits and one span (tall) (approximately 9 feet 2 inches / 2.79 meters). With great joy Ningirsu [gave him] the kingship [of Lagash . . . ]

Eanatum, the strong one, declares, ". . . !" For Eanatum he (Ningirsu(?)) [established] (as his) name the name which Inanna had given him: Eana'Inanna'Ibgalkaka'atum. [ . . . ] (Addressing) a timeless (conflict)(?), Eanatum, the strong one whose name was chosen by Ningirsu, Eanatum who [declared(?)], ". . . !" proclaimed, "Where is the ruler of Umma recruiting? With (other) leaders [ . . . ] he consumes the Gu'edena, the beloved field of Ningirsu. I will strike him down!" [ . . . ]

He followed after him. Towards the sleeping one, towards the sleeping one, he approaches (his) head. Towards Eanatum, the sleeping one, [his] beloved king [Ningirsu approaches his head . . . ] "Umma, it being Kish . . . At your right side Utu (the sun-god) will rise, and a . . . will be bound to your forehead. Eanatum [ . . . ] you will kill there. Their myriad (literally, 3,600) corpses will reach the base of heaven. [In] Umma [ . . . the people of his own city] will raise arms against him. He will be killed inside Umma. You will [ . . . ]"

He did battle with him. Someone shot an arrow at Eanatum. He was shot through(?) with the arrow, and he broke(?) the arrow. He cried out before it. The [ . . . ]-man [ . . . ] Eanatum released a deluge like an evil rainstorm in Umma. [ . . . ] Eanatum, being a man of just words, measured the boundary [from(?) . . . ], left it towards the side of Umma, and set up a (boundary)-stone on it. The leader of Umma [ . . . ] He defeated [Umma(?)] and heaped up 20 burial mounds for it. Eanatum, the one over whom (his personal god) Shulutul cried sweetly, Eanatum [ . . . ed] Eanatum destroyed the foreign lands [for Ningirsu]. Eanatum restored his beloved field, the Gu'edena to Ningirsu. [ . . . ] The Dana field, the Kihara of Ningirsu [he . . . ed] In the Emah (temple) of [(the goddess) Nanshe] he set up a stele. [ . . . ] of Ningirsu Eanatum, the [ . . . ] of Ningirsu – (Shulutul) is his (personal) god. The fields [(named) . . . Eanatum], whose [name] was chosen by Ningirsu, restored [to Ningirsu].

To the leader of Umma Eanatum gave the great battle net of Enlil, and made him swear by it. The leader of Umma swore the (following) oath to Eanatum: "By the life of Enlil, king of heaven and earth, I shall (only) use the field of Ningirsu as an (interest-bearing) loan. I hereby declare (its) irrigation channels . . . For [evermore] I shall not transgress the boundary of Ningirsu. I shall not alter its irrigation channels and canals. I shall not rip out its (boundary)-stones. If I do transgress, may the great battle net of Enlil, king of heaven and earth, by which I have sworn, fall upon Umma." Eanatum was also very wise. He smeared kohl on the eyes of two doves, adorned their heads with cedar (resin), and released them towards Nippur, to Enlil, king of heaven and earth, in the Ekur (temple), (saying): "Having (thus) spoken], having (thus) pled to Enlil, my lord, if any leader of Umma, in violation of the agreement, should renege against or oppose the agreement, or should overturn the agreement, may the great battle net of Enlil, by which he has sworn, fall upon Umma!"

(The same oath is sworn before, and doves are released to, the mother-goddess Ninhursag, in Kesh; the god of wisdom, Enki, in Abzu; the moon-god, Su'en, in Ur; the sun-god Utu, in Larsa; and the netherworld-goddess Ninki. With the exception of Ninki, the aforementioned gods are summoned to release their battle nets (downwards) in the event a leader of Umma violates the agreement. In contrast, Ninki is summoned to release snakes (upwards) to bite the trespasser's feet.)

*Eanatum, king of Lagash – the one granted strength by Enlil, fed fine milk by Ninhursag, given a good name by Inanna, granted wisdom by Enki, chosen in (her) heart by Nanshe, the powerful lady, Ningirsu's subjugator of foreign lands, beloved of (the goddess) Dumuzi'abzu, whose name was chosen by Ninhursag, beloved friend of (the god) Lugalurub, beloved spouse of Inanna – [defeated] Elam and Subar, lands of wood and treasure [...] defeated [...], defeated Susa, [defeated] the ruler of Uru'a, who stood with the (city-)emblem at the head (of his army), [defeated . . . ], smashed (the city of) Aru'a, . . . Sumer, defeated (the city of) Ur. [...]*

*[Eanatum] who restored the [Gu'edena to Ningirsu], Eanatum [...] of Ningirsu, who erected (the stele on which this text is inscribed) for Ningirsu [...] The name of this stele – it is not a man's name – he declared: Ningirsu'enmenlumananti'i'pirigedena ("Ningirsu, the lord, crown of Luma (=Eanatum), is the life of the Pirigedena canal"). (For Ningirsu) Eanatum set up the (boundary-)stone of the Gu'edena, the beloved field of Ningirsu, which Eanatum had restored to Ningirsu.*

## 11. Enanatum I

*(La 4.2) For (the god) Hendursag, chief herald of the Abzu, Enanatum, ruler of Lagash – the one granted strength by Enlil, fed fine milk by (the goddess) Ninhursag, chosen in (her) heart by (the goddess) Nanshe, ensigal-priest of (the god) Ningirsu, specially summoned by (the goddess) Inanna, whose name was chosen by Hendursag, son borne of (the god) Lugalurub, son of Akurgal, ruler of Lagash, beloved brother of Eanatum, ruler of Lagash –*

*When he built the Ibgal (shrine) for Inanna, made the Eana the preeminent (temple) in all the lands for her, and decorated it for her with gold and silver; built his palace of Urukug for Hendursag and decorated it for him with gold and silver; restored (the god) Nindar's temple for him; built Ningirsu's and Ba'u's(?) Giguna (temple) for them; built Lugalurub's palace of Urub for him, and decorated it for him with gold and silver; built (the goddess) Amageshtinana's Esagug (temple) for her, built a brick well for her, and [...]; [built Ningirsu's] Eshdugru (shrine) [for him]; (then) [he . . . ]*

*[When Enlil(?)] relinquished control of Umma to Ningirsu and placed it in Enanatum's charge, Urluma, ruler of Umma, [recruited (soldiers from) the foreign lands] and transgressed the boundary-channel of Ningirsu. "Antasura is mine! I shall exploit it as my (rightful) property(?)," he said. At the hill of Urgiga he stood his ground.*

*Ningirsu spoke angrily (saying): "Urluma, ruler of Umma, has said, 'Antasura is mine!' He who has marched into my own inner sanctum must not raise arms against Enanatum, my powerful male!"*

*Enanatum beat back Urluma, ruler of Umma, to the boundary-channel of Ningirsu. At the . . . of the Lumagirunnta(-canal) he . . . ed his . . . and stripped(?) him of his cloak.*

*Enanatum, the one who built the temple of Hendursag – his (personal) god is Shulutul. He (Enanatum) had (this inscription) inscribed on the copper standard and the . . . of the copper standard set on (a pole made of) wood.*

*[ . . . ] Shulutul, loyal [ . . . ] of Enmetena (son and successor of Enanatum) checked it. He (Hendursag(?)) is the owner of the standard.*

## 12. Enmetena

*(La 5.1) Enlil, king of all the lands, father of all the gods, by his firm command, fixed the border (between the god) Ningirsu (i.e., the kingdom of Lagash) and (the god) Shara (i.e., the kingdom of Umma). Mesalim, king of Kish, at the command of (the goddess) Ishtar, measured the field and set up a (boundary-)stone there.*

*Ush, ruler of Umma, acted haughtily. He ripped out that (boundary-)stone, and marched toward the plain of Lagash. Ningirsu, warrior of Enlil, at his (Enlil's) just command, made war with Umma. At Enlil's command, he threw his great battle net over it and heaped up burial mounds for it on the plain.*

*Eanatum, ruler of Lagash, uncle of Enmetena, ruler of Lagash, fixed the border with Enakale, ruler of Umma; made the (boundary-)channel extend from the Nun canal to the Gu'edena; left a 1,411 yard / 1,290 meter length of Ningirsu's field, toward the side of Umma, and established it (as) an ownerless field. At that (boundary-)channel he inscribed (new boundary-)stones, and restored the (boundary-)stone of Mesalim. He did not cross into the plain of Umma. On the (boundary-)levee of Ningirsu – the Namnundakigara – he built a shrine of Enlil, a shrine of (the goddess) Ninhursag, a shrine of Ningirsu, and a shrine of (the god) Utu.*

*The leader of Umma consumed 136,961 gallons (518,400 liters) of barley of (the goddess) Nanshe and barley of (the god) Ningirsu as an (interest-bearing) loan. It bore interest. (A total debt of) 44.78976 [mult] 10<sup>11</sup> liters accrued. Because he could not repay the barley, Urluma, ruler of Umma, made irrigation water flow in the boundary-channel of Ningirsu and the boundary-channel of Nanshe; torched and tore out their (boundary-)stones; destroyed the . . . shrines of the gods that had been built on the Namnundakigara; recruited (soldiers from) the foreign lands and crossed the boundary-channel of Ningirsu.*

*Enanatum, ruler of Lagash, battled with him in Ugiga, Ningirsu's beloved field. Enmetena, beloved son of Enanatum, defeated him. Urluma fled, but he (Enmetena) killed him in Umma. His (Urluma's) asses – forming 60 teams – were abandoned on the bank of the Lumagirununta canal. The bones of their attendants were strewn about the plain. He (Enmetena) heaped up their burial mounds in five places.*

*At that time Il – being (a high) temple administrator of (the city of) Zabalam – fell back from Girsu to Umma. Il assumed the rulership of Umma. He made irrigation water flow in the boundary-channel of Ningirsu and the boundary-channel of Nanshe, in the (boundary-)levee of Ningirsu – toward the bank of the Tigris river in the area of Girsu – and in the Namnundakigara of Enlil, Enki, and Ninhursag. Of Lagash's barley he paid back (only) 18.6624 [mult] 10<sup>8</sup> liters.*

*When, on account of those (boundary-)channels, Enmetena, ruler of Lagash, sent representatives to Il, Il, ruler of Umma, the field thief, speaking wickedly, said: "The boundary-channel of Ningirsu and the boundary-channel of Nanshe are mine! I will divert the (boundary-)levee from Antasura to Edimgalabzu." (But) Enlil and Ninhursag did not give (it) to him.*

*Enmetena, ruler of Lagash, whose name was chosen by Ningirsu, at the just command of Enlil, at the just command of Ningirsu, and at the just command of Nanshe, built that (boundary-)channel from the Tigris river to the Nun canal. The foundations of the Nammundakigara he constructed in stone for him (Ningirsu), and restored it to Ningirsu, the lord who loves him, and Nanshe, the lady who loves him.*

*Enmetena, ruler of Lagash, given the scepter by Enlil, given wisdom by Enki, chosen in (her) heart by Nanshe, ensigal-priest of Ningirsu, who heeds the commands of the gods – may his (personal) god, Shulutul, stand forever before Ningirsu and Nanshe (advocating) for the life of Enmetena.*

*The leader of Umma who crosses the (boundary-)channel of Ningirsu and the (boundary-)channel of Nanshe to take fields by force – be he an Ummaean or a foreigner – may Enlil smite him! After Ningirsu throws his great battle net on him may he crush (him) from on high with his mighty hands and mighty feet! May the people of his city, after raising arms against him, kill him in his city!*

## G. Umma

### 13. Lugalzagesi

*(Um 7.1) For Enlil, king of all the lands – to Lugalzagesi, king of Uruk, king of “the Land” (i.e., Sumer), išib-priest of (the god) An, lumah-priest of (the goddess) Nisaba, son of U’u, ruler of Umma and lumah-priest of Nisaba, the one looked on favorably by An, king of all the lands, the ensigal-priest of Enlil, the one given wisdom by Enki, whose name was chosen by (the god) Utu, great vizier of (the god) Su’en, general of Utu, provider for (the goddess) Inanna, son borne of Nisaba, fed fine milk by (the goddess) Ninhursag, man of (the god) Messanga’unuga, raised by (the goddess) Ningirim, lady of Uruk, chief steward of the gods –*

*When Enlil, king of all the lands, gave kingship of “the Land” to Lugalzagesi, pointed the eyes of “the Land” toward him, set all of the lands at his feet, from sunrise to sunset (i.e., east to west) subordinated (them) to him – at that time, from the Lower Sea (i.e., the Persian Gulf), (along) the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the Upper Sea (i.e., the Mediterranean), he (Enlil) put their paths in order for him. From east to west Enlil let him have no rival. Under him, all the lands lay in lush pastures. “The Land” made merry under him. All the sovereigns of Sumer and the rulers of all the lands . . . to him at Uruk.*

*At that time, under him, Uruk passed the days in rejoicing; Ur, like a bull, raised its head; Larsa, beloved city of Utu, made merry; Umma, beloved city of Shara, raised its mighty horns; the territory of Zabalam cried out like a ewe separated from its lamb; and Kidingir raised its neck.*

*Lugalzagesi, king of Uruk, king of “the Land”, . . . brings sumptuous food offerings and pours sweet water, in Nippur, for his lord Enlil.*

*. . . “May Enlil, king of all the lands, say a prayer for me to An, his beloved father! May he (An) add life (to) my life! Under me, may the lands lie in lush pastures; may the population become as widespread as the grass; may the teats of heaven function well; may the people look upon a good land (only). May they (An and Enlil) not change the good fate they have decreed for me! May I always be the . . . shepherd!*

*For his life he (Lugalzagesi) dedicated (the object on which this text is inscribed) to Enlil, his beloved lord.*

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