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Volume 1

GILGAMESH AND AKKA

Dina Katz

PREFACE

The origin of this study is an edition of the Sumerian epic-tale "Gilgamesh and Akka", which I prepared as M.A. thesis under the supervision of Prof. Raphael Kutscher and which I submitted to Tel Aviv University. In 1985 I was studying the governmental institutions of Early Dynastic Sumer and returned to this text in search of historical clues. By this time, Römer's edition of the text as well as reviews of his edition by Cooper and by Michalowski had already appeared. While working on the text I had the impression that it was not just another epic tale about Gilgamesh, as it had been generally considered, but a composition with historiographic overtones. That is to say, the events described in this tale are arranged so as to serve a political or propagandistic purpose. This idea called for a re-evaluation of the literary properties of "Gilgamesh and Akka" and of its historical value. A literary analysis of the composition appeared to reveal a process of redaction in which a story about Uruk's war of liberation from the hegemony of Kish was adapted to create a tale focused on Gilgamesh and his glorification. Following this, I wrote a paper on the subject of the description of the two assemblies narrated in the composition (RA 81 [1987], 105–114). The edition presented here differs from my first edition mainly in the literary treatment of the text, and in the use of literary analysis for a better understanding of the development of the composition and its significance.

The manuscript of this book was written in 1987. Since then, some more material on "Gilgamesh and Akka" has been published by various scholars. I have tried to include all this material here, and I acknowledge the help of Dr. F A. M. Wiggermann.

I wish to thank those who inspired and encouraged me to continue my work on the composition, especially Prof. Nadav Na'aman of Tel Aviv University with whom I had long discussions about the possibility of tendentiousness in this text. His views on historiography inspired me to analyze the composition in search of intentional literary elaboration. Later on, I was much encouraged by Thorkild Jacobsen, with whom I further discussed the literary stucture of the composition and its significance. I also wish to thank Dr. F. A. M. Wiggermann for his useful comments while he was editing the book.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1 THE TALE

The composition *Gilgamesh and Akka* is a short narrative poem in Standard Literary Sumerian dealing with a conflict between Kish and Uruk which results in Uruk's freedom from Kishite dominance. The tale seems to be based on historical events, and thus might be supposed to shed light on the political history of Sumer in the Early Dynastic period.

According to the tale Akka, the ruler of Kish, sent his messengers to Gilgamesh, the lord of Uruk, with the demand that the Urukeans dig wells for Kish. Gilgamesh, determined to refuse Akka's demand, appears before the assembly of the elders of his city to gain their consent to declare war against Kish. The elders, however, reject his proposal, and Gilgamesh repeats it to the assembly of the guruš, 'the able-bodied men', of his city. They assent, appoint him lugal (a military commander), and declare war. The Kishite army lays siege to Uruk, and unable to initiate a battle in the open Gilgamesh tricks Akka by distracting his attention from the city gate and enabling Enkidu to break through the gates and take Akka captive. In a long speech addressed to Akka, Gilgamesh expresses his indebtedness to Akka for helping him in the past. Akka, after acknowledging Gilgamesh' superiority, asks for his freedom as a reward and is sent back to his city.

2 HISTORY OF PUBLICATION

Gilgamesh and Akka appears in literary catalogues of the Old Babylonian period under the title lu_2-kin-gi_4-a aka, its incipit. The composition, consisting of 114 lines only, is reconstructed from 16 fragments representing nine manuscripts, all of them Old Babylonian.

It became first known in 1935 when T. Fish published one manuscript(a),[1] and noted the existence of two further ones. In 1936 M. Witzel published three more fragments.[2] The first edition was published by S. N. Kramer[3] in 1949; using 11 fragments, he was able to give an almost complete reconstruction of the text. Apart from a transliteration and translation his edition also contained his interpretation and a philological commentary, as well as an appendix with philological notes by Th. Jacobsen. The publication of this edition and, six years later, of the translation and interpretation in *ANET*,[4] made the composition available to scholars and those interested in the ancient Near East.

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[1] Fish, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* XIX (1935) 369–372.
[2] Witzel, *OrNS* 5 (1936) 336–341.
[3] Kramer, 1949.
[4] *ANET* pp. 44–46.

The interpretation of the tale, however, remained controversial. Major contributions towards a better understanding of the text were made by Jacobsen[5] in 1957 and by A. Falkenstein[6] in 1966. Both scholars solved a number of grammatical problems, but differed in matters of interpretation, mainly those concerning the nature of the relations between Gilgamesh and Akka. Jacobsen concentrated on the activity of the assemblies, and used the text as a source for reconstructing the development of political institutions in Early Dynastic Sumer. Falkenstein treated the text from a purely philological point of view. He questioned its historicity on the one hand, and clarified the vague description of the war on the other.

As some new fragments had been identified since 1949, a new edition of the text was published in 1980 by W.H.Ph. Römer.[7] This edition gave rise to a new interest in the composition, and was followed by two important review articles, both containing collations, one by J. Cooper in 1981[8] and one by P. Michalowski in 1982;[9] Jacobsen's translation was published in 1987.[10]

Apart from the publications just mentioned, quite a few contributions were made by different scholars seeking to clarify specific literary and grammatical problems. We shall refer to the different treatments of the text in more detail in the pertaining chapters.[11]

3 LITERARY STRUCTURE OF THE COMPOSITION

Thematically the plot is divided into two parts. One (lines 3–39) presents the activity of Uruk's governmental institutions, and one (lines 1–2, 40–114) describes the military activities and the encounter between Gilgamesh and Akka. Formally each part is shaped as a circle, and thus the plot forms two concentric circles. The inner circle pertains to the events inside Uruk leading to Gilgamesh' appointment as lugal (military commander), and the outer circle treats the relations between Uruk and Kish and between Gilgamesh and Akka. The circular form of the second part also serves as the framework of the composition and finds expression in the direction of Akka's movements, starting from Kish towards Uruk and ending in his return from Uruk to Kish.

As much of Sumerian literature *Gilgamesh and Akka* is characterized by parallel repetitions: Gilgamesh' speech to the elders and their answer parallels his speech to the able-bodied men and their answer (3–14; 18–29); the officer on the city wall and Birḫurture's meeting with Akka parallels Gilgamesh on the city wall and Enkidu's meeting with Akka (59–81; 84–99). For more refined observations on the literary structure of the poem and the way in which the parallelisms help to highlight the

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[5] Jacobsen, 1970c pp. 137–145 and note 55 on pp. 381–382.
[6] Falkenstein, 1966.
[7] Römer, 1980.
[8] Cooper, 1981.
[9] Michalowski, 1982.
[10] Jacobsen, 1987 pp. 345–355.
[11] Lambert, 1980; Heimpel, 1981; Klein, 1983; Shaffer, 1983; Vanstiphout, 1986, 1987, 1989

turning points of the story we refer to the recent studies of Cooper, Vanstiphout, and Katz. [12] The present study utilizes observations on literary structure to establish the meaning of doubtful passages and to separate the truly historical elements from those due to literary elaboration.

4   THE MATERIALS OF THE PLOT

One of the main characteristics of the tales about Gilgamesh, king of Uruk, is their use of legendary and mythical material. This material furnishes the tales with epical qualities and endows Gilgamesh, their hero, with supernatural dimensions. Scholars have defined *Gilgamesh and Akka* as an epic tale, like all other compositions about him. In respect to its literary form *Gilgamesh and Akka* is indeed structured as an epic tale. The plot forms an organic whole through the linear development of the episodes, while the end, Akka's movement from Uruk towards Kish, mirrors the beginning, his movement from Kish towards Uruk, and thus defines the events in between. The composition, however, lacks some typical features of the epic genre. The setting is narrow in scope, the protagonists act like ordinary human beings, and there is no involvement of gods or demons. Furthermore, there are no philosophical or moral implications. Thus *Gilgamesh and Akka* is not only the shortest tale about Gilgamesh, but also the only one lacking mythical or legendary elements.

The material of the plot seems to be taken from reality, the internal and foreign affairs of Sumerian city states. All the actors are ordinary human beings, and their deeds do not exceed normal human abilities. *Gilgamesh and Akka* is also unique among the Gilgamesh tales in regard to the role played by Gilgamesh: he is not its only or central actor.

Two other men are introduced by name and rank, and play an important part in the development of the plot. The first, Akka, is initially superior and then equal in rank to Gilgamesh. The second, Birḫurture, is inferior to Gilgamesh in rank, but no less important in the narrative; thirty lines, one fourth of the composition, are devoted to Birḫurture's contribution to Uruk's victory.

Even Enkidu who usually followes Gilgamesh in his adventures is depicted differently here. Though titled 'servant' as elsewhere, he lead an Urukean war band, broke through the Kishite siege and took Akka captive. Thus he played a major part in bringing about the dramatic turn on the battle field, while Gilgamesh stood on the city wall radiating his godly splendour. The image of Gilgamesh himself lacks the mythical elements that characterize it elsewhere. His portrayal as an ordinary human being creates the impression of authenticity that distinguishes *Gilgamesh and Akka* from the other Gilgamesh tales.

Lacking mythical and legendary elements as it does, the tale was considered to document an historical event and thus to be an appropriate source for the study of early Mesopotamian history. A closer look at the structure of the story, however,

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[12]   Cooper 1981, 226–228 and the diagram on p. 240; Vanstiphout 1986; Katz 1987.

reveals a measure of literary elaboration that casts doubt on its admissibility as an historical source.

5 TEXTUAL PROBLEMS

When Kramer published his edition of the tale, the text was almost fully known and presented only some grammatical problems. Nevertheless its meaning was far from clear. Most of the difficulties are related to the descriptive style of the composition. Firstly, the narrative is concise and the narrator inconsistent in his identification of the speakers: a passage that seems to be a monologue can, in fact, be a dialogue. Secondly, the text uses repetitions, parallelisms and formulas, which, although common devices of Sumerian literature, are not always easily identified and ready to yield their implications for the meaning of the composition. The plot was gradually unveiled by the efforts of several scholars over a number of years.

The first problem is found at the very beginning of the narrative: what did the messengers of Akka demand of Gilgamesh that would constitute a *casus belli*? Although it is not explicitly marked as such, Gilgamesh' speech to the elders of his city (lines 5–8) seems to contain Akka's demand:

> To finish the wells, to finish all the wells of the land,
> To finish all the shallow wells of the land,
> To finish all the deep wells with hoisting ropes,
> (Let us not submit to the house of Kish. . .)

This strophe is repeated three times in the text (lines 11–14, 20–23). The main components of these lines are attested in two other texts; one of them, a proverb or saying, indicates that they are formulaic and therefore only general in meaning. Nevertheless, since no other line expresses Akka's demand and the strophe is repeated whenever Gilgamesh addresses the assemblies, it is likely that the formula was employed to express something specific. In 1980 W.G. Lambert suggested that Akka's demand, translated by him as 'to drain dry the wells … etc.', meant that the citizens of Uruk would be compelled to become drawers of water unendingly, and that in fact it denoted slavery. Since the integration of a formulaic expression (proverb or saying) into a poetical text must be based not only on a common general meaning but also on subject matter, I suppose that Akka's words do not just encode his demand that the Urukeans submit, but precisely that they 'drain dry' or 'finish' wells.[13]

The strophe ends with a phrase concerning the initiation of a war against Kish:

> Let us not submit to the house of Kish, let us smite it with weapons!

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[13] 'Drain dry' and 'finish' are two alternative translations of the same Sumerian verb. Several other translations are possible, so that the exact literal meaning of this phrase remains in doubt.

The phrase consists of two antithetical sentences. The first expresses the position taken with regard to submission, the second with regard to resistance. Therefore the first sentence should be in the negative and the second in the affirmative. The phrase is repeated four times in the text: twice by Gilgamesh himself while addressing the assemblies (lines 8, 23), once by the elders (line 14) and once by the guruš (line 29). Thus the affirmative and the negative positions of the twofold phrase should alternate with the speakers, but the grammatical elements marking affirmatives and negatives are confused in most of the manuscripts and the phrase tends to appear in one form throughout the text. The logical order was established already by Kramer in his first edition of the text.

Another puzzling passage occurs at the beginning of the answer given by the assembled guruš (able-bodied men) to Gilgamesh (lines 25–28):

> As they say: To stand up, and to sit down,
> To protect the king's son,
> And to hold back the donkeys,
> who has breath for that?

This passage ends in the guruš' consent to declare war against Kish and replaces the three line strophe which presumably expressed Akka's demand. Jacobsen, in his appendix to Kramer's edition of the text,[14] drew attention to the possibility that these lines are a 'common saw'. In fact this passage is now attested in a Sumerian proverb collection.[15] Its meaning, however, remains obscure. The verbs 'to stand' and 'to sit' are sometimes used in connection with the participants of the public assembly,[16] and we assume that they give expression to the public role played by the guruš, for the concluding phrase is an unequivocal rhetorical question formulating their intention to challenge Akka. Structurally this passage corresponds to the answer of the elders interpreted as Akka's demand and quoted to establish his claim on authority over Uruk (lines 9–13). Both answers begin with a strophe demonstrating the authority to make demands, and conclude with a decision concerning the war. The elders consider Akka as authority, quote his demand and reject Gilgamesh' proposal, whereas the guruš by implying their intention to challenge Akka make manifest their own authority. Accordingly, they accept Gilgamesh' proposal and appoint him lugal.

A point of interest is the use of a proverb for the purpose of demonstrating the guruš' authority in Uruk. Since Akka's demand was found in a proverb collection as well, the answer of the guruš is not only functionally parallel to Akka's demand, but also formally, since it is made of the same literary material.

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[14] Jacobsen, *AJA* 53 (1949) 17 (in Kramer 1949 pp. 16–18).
[15] 3 *N–T* 487. See Cooper, 1981, p. 234, and R.S. Falkowitz, *The Sumerian Rethoric Collections*, Philadelphia 1980 p. 145. Proverbs quoted in epic are discussed by W.W. Hallo in *HSS* 37 *(Studies W.L. Moran)* (1990) 203–217, see p. 214 for *GA* 25–28.
[16] Both in Sumerian and Akkadian, cf. *CAD* A/II, 390f.; *AbB* I , 37: 9–10; *En.el* IV: 15; *BASOR* 94 (1944) 8: 70.

Following the g u r u š' consent to declare war against Kish, there is a description of Uruk and its sanctuaries in which it is announced that the city was entrusted to Gilgamesh, its l u g a l (lines 30–35). This passage is in part repeated at the end of the text (lines 107–110) and thus forms another formula. Jacobsen maintained that this passage is a formula for appointing a l u g a l, originally a temporary military commander but later a title denoting the ruler.[17] Attention should be called, however, to the difference between the two preserved manuscripts for the second occurence of this formula. While manuscript h simply repeats the formula as it was the first time, b omits the mention of a l u g a l and ends the formula with 'entrusted to you'. Since the last episode took place after the war had ended, and l u g a l is probably a war-time leader, there is no longer a point in nominating a l u g a l. If this formula indeed represents a formal act performed in historical reality, it seems that we have here a general formula for appointing or acknowledging an independent ruler. In case of war an entry concerning l u g a l-ship was probably added as was done in its first occurrence.

The use of this formula at the end of the composition caused a dispute over the identity of the speaker. Jacobsen, taking the linear development of the narrative literally, maintained that it was pronounced by Gilgamesh.[18] Falkenstein, considering the development of the plot to end with Akka's defeat, thought that Akka pronounced the formula.[19] Kramer's translation implies that he attributed the formula to the narrator.

The difficulty can only be solved when two other matters have been clarified: who was victorious in the conflict (and how did he win this victory), and what were the relations between Gilgamesh and Akka prior to the war?

Nowhere in the composition is there a direct description of the war. A battle in the open is inferred from a set of questions addressed by Birhurture to Akka (lines 76–81) and repeated later in the affirmative (lines 94–99), but there is no indication as to how the Urukeans broke through the gates of their city. The first step towards the understanding of what actually happened was made by Jacobsen. He rendered lines 81/99:[20]

Akka, king of Kish, at his (place in the) centre of the army, he took captive.

This rendering, widely accepted now, explains both the end of the military activities and the final episode in which Akka is set free to return to Kish.

Further contributions were made by Falkenstein,[21] who was the first to appreciate the literary nature of the narrative and use literary analysis to establish meaning and function of the two almost identical passages. He maintained that the first was a conditional irrealis, part of a series of rhetorical questions addressed by Birhurture to Akka and serving to introduce the battle (lines 76–81), while the second, in the

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[17] Jacobsen 1970c, p. 145.
[18] ibid., p. 381 no. 55
[19] Falkenstein, 1966, p. 49
[20] Jacobsen 1970c, p. 381 no. 55.
[21] Falkenstein, 1966, p. 48.

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affirmative, narrates the events of the war as it happened. Jacobsen's rendering of lines 81/99 was rejected by Falkenstein on grammatical grounds. Attributing these lines to the narrator and separating them from the description of the battle, he translated line 81:

> Agga, der König von Kiš, unterdrückte nicht seinen Zorn als Krieger,

and line 91:

> Gegenüber Agga, dem König von Kiš, unterdrückte er (d.i. Gilgamesh) seinem Zorn als Krieger.

According to this translation Uruk did win the war, but Akka was not taken captive, which conflicts with line 112 stating that he was set free. It is worth noting that no other line can possibly allude to his capture. Recently Klein proposed a rendering slightly different from Jacobsen's:[22]

> Agga, the king of Kish, was captured at his center-of-the-army.

This translation (and Klein's comments) settles the last grammatical and contextual problems concerning the question who won the war.

One move in this war is not made explicit: how did the Urukeans break through the siege, and how did they initiate a battle in the open? This question was treated by Heimpel[23] who suggested that Birḫurture's sortie was a trick played on Akka to draw his attention from the city gate. Thus, while Birḫurture engaged Akka and his army, the Urukeans broke through and attacked the Kishite army.[24] Tricking opponents as a means to attain a dramatic turn in the development of a plot is a common literary device of Sumerian poetics.[25] It is not implausible therefore that in this story too the dramatic turning point consists of a trick.

The last major textual problem is found in the final episode of the composition (lines 100–114). The importance of this episode lies in the fact that it narrates the confrontation between Gilgamesh and Akka and portrays the nature of their relations. The whole episode seems to consist of a speech made by Gilgamesh to Akka: first, he addresses him with a series of military and official titles (lines 102–103), then he expresses his gratitude for the mercy Akka had shown him in the past (lines 104–106). Immediately after this follows the nomination formula (lines 107–110). In view of the earlier events this speech is confusing on several accounts. Since Uruk won the war and since Akka is his prisoner, why would Gilgamesh nominate Akka, or acknowledge his rulership; why does Gilgamesh address Akka as 'my lieutenant' etc. and as his past benefactor; and what is the nature of their relations?

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[22] Klein, 1983.
[23] Heimpel, 1981.
[24] It should be noted, however, that according to line 88 it was not an Urukean army, but Enkidu alone who broke through and took Akka captive.
[25] A famous example is Enki's trick to release Inanna from the netherworld. Inanna herself tricked Enki to obtain the me, and in another myth she was tricked by the gate-keeper of the Netherworld to undress herself.

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These matters have been disputed ever since Kramer's first edition of the text.

Kramer thought that Gilgamesh was Akka's superior, and that he was thanking him for raising the siege of Uruk. He separated the nomination formula from Gilgamesh' speech and saw it as an interpolation to be attributed to the narrator.[26] A different interpretation was suggested by Jacobsen.[27] He speculated that Gilgamesh had once been a refugee in Kish, and that Akka had appointed him as his vassal in Uruk. Later, motivated by heroic pride, Gilgamesh instigated a rebellion. By capturing Akka he satisfied this pride. He then submitted to Akka, his past benefactor, voluntarily and in fulfillment of an heroic code. He acknowledged Akka's rulership, and set him free. Obviously by treating the whole section as a monologue Jacobsen tried to stay with the text; the result is that Gilgamesh is the one who pronounced the nomination formula and thus acknowledged Akka's rulership in the future as well as in the past. However, in order to stay with the text Jacobsen had to introduce the concepts of heroic pride and heroic code, concepts not attested nor even alluded to in any other Sumerian literary or historical text.

Falkenstein was of the opinion that since the war ended in an Urukean victory, it should be Akka rather than Gilgamesh who pronounced the nomination formula. As to the absence of any mark for the change of speaker, he pointed out that this phenomenon occurres elsewhere in the text. Contrary to Jacobsen he maintained that the way Gilgamesh addresses Akka indicates that Akka was Gilgamesh' subordinate.[28] In order to disentangle the relations between Gilgamesh and Akka we will make two assumptions: firstly that the narrative, though concise in style, follows an uninterrupted and logical sequence of events; and secondly that, although the composition is a hymn in praise of Gilgamesh[29], it focuses on political and military events rather than on him personally. It follows that an evaluation of the relations between the two protagonists must be based not solely on the last episode, but on the composition as a whole.

The relations between Gilgamesh and Akka are presented on two levels, personal and public. Both levels are interlocked in a linear plot of successive events. The personal level finds its most obvious expression in the last episode: Gilgamesh' address to Akka. The public level is implied by Gilgamesh' political relation with Akka and the assemblies, and finds expression in his speeches to his compatriots and their answers.

Since the last episode narrating the encounter of the protagonists is ambiguous, the clue for disentangling the nature of their relations has to be found in the first part of the composition (the inner circle), which narrates the political struggle leading to the declaration of war against Kish. Two events testify to the political status of Gilgamesh in Uruk. The first is Akka's sending an ultimatum to Gilgamesh; by this very act Akka demonstrates his superiority over both Gilgamesh and Uruk. The second event is Gilgamesh' appearance before the elders' assembly to gain their

[26] Kramer, 1949.
[27] Jacobsen, 1970c, pp. 381–382.
[28] Falkenstein, 1966, pp. 49–50.
[29] line 113f.

consent to fight Kish. Although he held the position of en and was determined to fight, Gilgamesh is evidently not authorized to make the decision by himself. The elders' rejection of his proposal testifies to his weak political status, and to the superiority of his opponent.

In view of Gilgamesh' weakness implied by the first part of the composition, the last episode is less ambiguous. The passage 102–106, consisting of Gilgamesh' address to Akka as his officer and benefactor, describes their mutual relations in the past; according to Gilgamesh, Akka gave him shelter and saved his life. Consequently it is reasonable to assume that while addressing him with military titles such as 'Akka, my lieutenant', Gilgamesh was referring to his past position as Akka's soldier and subordinate. A similar interpretation was suggested by Jacobsen, who at *the same time tried to reconstruct the background of the narrated events.* Jacobsen thought that Gilgamesh was forced to flee Uruk and take refuge with Akka, who later entrusted him with the en-ship of Uruk as a vassal.[30] Jacobsen's idea that Gilgamesh was Akka's vassal in Uruk accords with the details examined so far.

A family relation between Gilgamesh and Akka has been suggested on the basis of a literary text: a passage in *Gilgamesh and the Cedar Forest* introduces an Enmebaragesi as Gilgamesh' elder sister. In an article published in 1983 and devoted primarily to this passage, A. Shaffer suggested that this Enmebaragesi was en of Kish, whose main deity was male. It is indeed evident that in cities such as Kish, whose main god was male, the en was female. Such a female en, however, was not necessarily the ruler, and the Enmebaragesi, sister of Gilgamesh, not necessarily identical with the Enmebaragesi, king of Kish and parent of Akka. Admittedly the only queen mentioned by the *Sumerian King List*, Kubaba, reigned in Kish, but contrary to Enmebaragesi the text adds a note defining her as female. Nevertheless, since the sources do not allude to the gender of Enmebaragesi the king of Kish while queens of such stature are rare and would deserve to be revealed as such, and since *Gilgamesh and the Ceder Forest* is a literary text, the historicity of the details given in this passage needs further corroboration.[31]

There is one last question: Who pronounced the nomination formula, Gilgamesh, Akka, or the narrator? The last possibility can be ruled out since the formula, phrased in direct speech (second person singular) and inserted into the speech, cannot be distinguished from its immediate context and interpreted as an interpolation. For both other solutions a foudation could be found in the text.

Jacobsen, who was the first to attribute it to Gilgamesh, maintained that the tale focuses on Gilgamesh' dilemma whether to rebel and prove himself a capable, independent king, or to fulfill his moral obligations towards Akka. Jacobsen thus remains loyal to the formal structure (no change of speakers) of the last episode, and by introducing a typically heroic dilemma justifies the classification of the composition as an epic tale. However, considering the thematic relations between the components of the narrative as a whole and Gilgamesh' role and image as they

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[30] Jacobsen, 1970c, p. 381.
[31] See now also D.O. Edzard, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* s.v. Mebaragesi. Note that Enmebaragesi is a lugal, 'king', not a nin, 'queen'.

emerge in each successive scene, such a view is difficult to bring in line with the plot. A large part of the text is devoted to the political conflict inside Uruk, and the events described imply Gilgamesh' weakness as a political figure. The section describing the preparations for the war emphasizes Birḫurture's courage and devotion, whereas Gilgamesh is depicted ironically.[32] One fourth of the composition is devoted to Birḫurture. During the battle Gilgamesh indeed radiates his terrifying aura, but standing on the city's wall, while it was Enkidu who broke through the gate and took Akka captive. Apparently , although he instigated the war, Gilgamesh was not its central hero. Furthermore, apart from the last episode, the narrative does not hint at any moral dilemma troubling the protagonists. Hence, in spite of its native classification as a hymn in praise of Gilgamesh,[33] it seems that the central theme of the composition is the attempt to liberate Uruk from the yoke of Kish. Therefore Gilgamesh submitting to Akka would imply a shift of subject from the war and its objective to Gilgamesh and his moral values. Although it is in line with the formal structure of the last episode, this unexpected shift conflicts with the main body of the narrative.

The alternative is that Akka pronounced the formula, although the narrator failed to mark a change of speaker. As Falkenstein pointed out, however, proper introduction of the speaker is omitted elsewhere in the text (lines 70, 91, 111). Akka acknowledging Gilgamesh' rulership agrees well with the development of the plot. Since Kish was defeated, Gilgamesh could manipulate Akka into acknowledging his independence, thereby achieving two objectives:

- The relief of Uruk from the Kishite threat and the abolishment of Kish' hegemony in Sumer, and
- His own freedom of any moral obligation towards Akka by releasing him once his threat had become ineffectual.

Akka's release was not an act of generosity but a response to Akka's demand to repay him for his favours in the past. Thus the composition is a hymn in praise of Gilgamesh, not on account his apparent generosity, but because he liberated Uruk from the yoke of Kish.

With regard to Gilgamesh' image this interpretation results in a symmetry of the inner and outer circles constituting the narrative. In both circles his image develops from inferiority to superiority. The inner circle demonstrates his emergence from the position of an e n with limited authority whose demands are rejected by the assembly, to one of a l u g a l who is entrusted with the mission to protect Uruk and its gods. The outer circle presents the change in his political status in relation to

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[32] Compare lines 46–47: 'That when he comes my great terror overwhelms him, that his wits become confused and his judgement falters' with line 50: 'Uruk's wits were confused'. It is worth noting that the very same phrase was put in Birḫurture's mouth (line 58). However, unlike Gilgamesh he kept his word and indeed confused Akka, thus enabling Enkidu to break through and capture him. This use of the phrase all the more emphasizes the ironical representation of Gilgamesh.

[33] Actually, albeit classified as hymns of praise, z a 3 - m i 2 compositions are not always focused on the figure praised: Ereškigal is praised in *Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld*, the heroine of which is Inanna, and in *Damu in the Netherworld* where she is hardly mentioned.

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Akka, both on the personal and the public level, from probably a vassal ruler to an independent king.

Thus the attribution of the nomination formula to Akka rather than to Gilgamesh fits the development of the plot both thematically and structurally.

6   THE HISTORICITY OF THE COMPOSITION

The use of material taken from historical reality and the impression of authenticity created by the presentation of Gilgamesh have led scholars to view *Gilgamesh and Akka* as a legitimate source for the study of certain aspects of Sumerian history during the Early Dynastic II period.

The conflict between Uruk and Kish and the relations between Gilgamesh and Akka seemed to cast light on intercity politics and on the nature of governmental institutions, the citizens' assembly and the emergence of kingship. Some scholars regarded the tale as a reflection of the relations between Sumerians and Semites, a potentially important but as yet obscure issue of early Mesopotamian history.

However, in view of the scarcity of contemporary documents and the narrative's literary character, its value as an historical document still needs to be established.

6.1   *Are the protagonists historical figures?*

Gilgamesh, Akka and Enmebaragesi, Akka's father, are listed in two compositions of a historiographical nature: the *Sumerian King List* (SKL)[34] and the *Tummal Inscription*,[35] both known from copies of the Old Babylonian period. The *Sumerian King List* enumerates in chronological order the names of the kings who ruled Sumer since kingship descended from heaven until the end of the Isin dynasty (c. 1800 B.C.). The list reflects an historical concept according to which kingship could exist at a given time in one city only. Thus the political history of Sumer was defined as a chain of successive kingdoms ruling the whole of the land. It is worth noting that not all the Sumerian kings and dynasties known from historical documents are accounted for by the list. Enmebaragesi and his son Akka appear as the last two kings of the first dynasty of Kish, the first dynasty established after the flood. In the form of short notes the *Sumerian King List* transmits biographical lore concerning twelve of the kings mentioned. These notes were probably based on stories current in their former cities. Of Enmebaragesi it is reported that he vanquished Elam.

From Kish kingship passed to Uruk. The list names Gilgamesh as the fifth king of Uruk's first dynasty. Gilgamesh too was honoured with a biographical note, but it merely reports that his father was a lil_2, a ghost. Since the concept underlying the *Sumerian King List* is that of successive dynasties, it is not impossible that both dynasties were actually contemporaneous.

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[34]   Jacobsen, 1939.
[35]   Sollberger, 1962.

The second composition, the *Tummal Inscription*, probably dates to the time of Ishbi-Erra, the founder of the first dynasty of Isin (2017 –1985 B.C.). The *Tummal Inscription* lists the names of the rulers who built Enlil's temple in Nippur and Ninlil's temple Tummal. The names appear in pairs of father and son. The father built Enlil's temple and the son built Tummal. In all manuscripts the first rulers listed are Enmebaragesi and his son Akka. As to the second couple, the manuscripts vary: one has Gilgamesh and his son Urlugal,[36] another Mesannepada and his son Meskiagnunna, kings of Ur, while Gilgamesh and his son appear as the third pair.[37]

Two fragments of alabaster vessels bear dedication inscriptions of Mebaragesi, king of Kish. As Mebaragesi is to be identified with Enmebaragesi, this evidence proves that Enmebaragesi was an historical figure.[38] One of the fragments was found in the first building level of the Oval Temple in Khafaje and thus allowed (En)mebaragesi to be dated to the end of the Early Dynastic II period, somewhere in the 27–26 century B.C. The other fragment is unprovenanced.

Khafaje lies in the Diyala region, more than 100 km. from Kish. (En)mebaragesi's dedication inscription exemplifies his interests outside the capital, and hints at the wider political aspirations of the Kishite king. It is of much interest that the two historiographical compositions mentioned earlier testify to Enmebaragesi's political aspirations as well. However late or legendary these sources as a whole may be, both the *Sumerian King List* and the *Tummal Inscription* indicate that Enmebaragesi acted far beyond the boundaries of his city-state. According to the biographical note in the *Sumerian King List* he conducted a successful military campaign against Elam. In view of the Mebaragesi inscription found at Khafaje the possibility that he organized such a campaign cannot be excluded. It should be stressed that only few of the kings listed in the text had biographical notes added to their names.

The *Tummal Inscription* credits Enmebaragesi with building the first temple for Enlil in Nippur. This again is an important operation, not so much because of the distance between Kish and Nippur, but rather because of the implied political significance. Kingship was conceived as having descended from heaven and hence its realization was due to divine election. Each king needed divine legitimation to rule, and kings usually claim to be chosen by the head of their local pantheon. Nippur, however, was the religious centre of Sumer and the residence of Enlil, the highest divine authority. Unlike election by a local god, which authorized one to rule over this deity's city, recognition by Enlil legitimized a ruler to reign over Sumer in its entirety. The most explicit symbol of having gained Enlil's recognition were building activities carried out in Nippur. Building Enlil's temple there signifies Enmebaragesi's claim for hegemony over Sumer. Listing him as its first builder (*Tummal Inscription*) implies that, in historical memory, he was recognized as the first king who exercised hegemony over the whole of Sumer.

The *Tummal Inscription* is an historiographical source. It must be dated to the

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[36] *UET VIII*, 58.
[37] *UET VIII*, 59.
[38] Edzard, 1959.

early Old Babylonian period, and there is no way to verify its data and assess its historical validity. As far as the image of Enmebaragesi is concerned, however, both historiographical sources (*Tummal Inscription* and *Sumerian King List*) congrue: he is a king with high aspirations for territorial expansion. This agrees with the historical evidence from Khafaje.

Since Enmebaragesi is an historical figure, scholars were led to believe that Gilgamesh and Akka were historical figures too, although there are no contemporary documents to prove it.

6.2   *Synchronism: Gilgamesh, Akka, Enmebaragesi*

Gilgamesh and Akka and a passage in *Shulgi Hymn O* present Gilgamesh, Akka, and Enmebaragesi as contemporaries. According to the *Tummal Inscription*, however, Gilgamesh (and Mesannepada)[39] succeeds Akka as builder in Nippur.

Kramer, trying to harmonize all sources, suggested that Enmebaragesi, Mesannepada and Gilgamesh were contemporaries differing only in age: Enmebaragesi built the temple when he was old and Akka completed the work; then Akka was defeated by Mesannepada. Gilgamesh fought Akka when he was still young and defeated Meskiagnunna (Mesannepada's son in the *Tummal Inscription*) in his old age; then he engaged in building Enlil's temple which was completed by Urlugal, his son.[40] Kramer, however, overlooked an inscription from Ur in which Aannepada claimes to be Mesannepada's son.[41] Since this inscription is original it should be considered to be more reliable than the *Tummal Inscription*. In that case the tradition mentioning Meskiagnunna as Mesannepada's son is corrupt. The former was presumably the grandson of the latter.[42]

Jacobsen and Edzard are of the opinion that Gilgamesh, Enmebaragesi, and Akka are contemporaries, and that Mesannepada lived a few decades later, roughly contemporary with Urnanshe of Lagash. According to Jacobsen Eannatum ruled in Lagash at the end of Aannepada's reign in Ur, and during that of his successor Meskiagnunna. His grandfather, Urnanshe, was a contemporary of Aannepada and of Mesannepada.[43] Edzard assumes a gap of three generations between Gilgamesh and Urnanshe, and again a gap of three generations between Enmebaragesi and Urnanshe. Mesalim, a famous 'king of Kish', was a contemporary of Lugalshaengur, ruler of Lagash according to his own inscription. This ruler does not appear as a member of the Urnanshe dynasty, and must have been earlier. The chronological sequence according to Edzard is therefore Enmebaragesi – Akka – Mesalim/Lugalshaengur – Urnanshe. [44]

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[39]   In one source from Ur the order is reversed (see note 37).
[40]   Kramer, 1960.
[41]   *UET I*, 126.
[42]   See Jacobsen, 1939, p. 93 notes 145–146.
[43]   Jacobsen, 1939, Table II, and pp. 184–186 (in *TIT* p. 397 no. 2 Jacobsen lowered the dates by 275 years); Jacobsen 1970c, p. 387 no. 77, p. 393 no. 90.
[44]   Edzard, 1959, pp. 24–26, with further remarks concerning the relative chronology of Mesalim and other rulers of Kish.

Hallo's assumption that Urnanshe reigned in the time of the Fara tablets does not change Edzard's conclusions;[45] there remains a gap of three generation between Enmebaragesi and Urnanshe. In the Fara tablets Gilgamesh is already a god, which justifies the assumption of a gap of about two generations between his death and the Fara god list.

7   THE LITERARY TRADITIONS CONCERNING THE WAR

There are two literary traditions concerning the war between Kish and Uruk. The first, *Gilgamesh and Akka*, is a detailed report featuring Akka as Gilgamesh' opponent. The second is a brief description of the war contained in *Shulgi Hymn O*, which praises Gilgamesh poetically for defeating Kish.[46] According to this tradition his opponent was Enmebaragesi, Akka's father. The varying identity of Gilgamesh' adversary in a war against the same city raises the question whether Gilgamesh fought it twice or that we are dealing with two different traditions about one and the same war. In the historical scene of the Early Dynastic period a long intercity war including more than one battle is quite conceivable. The best example is the prolonged war between Lagash and Umma, known from the inscriptions of five consecutive Lagashite rulers.

The assumption that we are dealing with two different wars is difficult to uphold, mainly because Gilgamesh emerges as victorious in both. In view of the events narrated in *Gilgamesh and Akka* one would expect that fighting both father and son consecutively would imply defeat and submission after the first war. The way Gilgamesh addresses Akka in lines 102–103 strongly alludes to some sort of military relation between them in the past, and since in lines 104–106 Gilgamesh expresses his indebtedness to Akka for giving him shelter and saving his life, the conclusion can hardly be escaped that Gilgamesh was dependent on Akka previously. This conclusion conflicts with the assumption that he won a previous war against Kish.

The alternative is that both traditions refer to the same war. In that case the question is why the traditions vary on the point of the identity of Gilgamesh' opponent, which calls for an examination of their origins. On the basis of the extant manuscripts there is no reason to assume that the different traditions originated in different parts of Sumer or in different periods of time. Therefore the origin of this variation must be sought in the texts themselves and in the personalities of the protagonists. Enmebaragesi is the key figure here; since at present he is the only one known both from contemporary and historiographical sources, his image can be evaluated more reliably than those of Gilgamesh or Akka.

The brief poetical description of the victory over Kish and its king Enmebaragesi in *Shulgi Hymn O* is interwoven with other themes.[47] In this hymn Shulgi praises

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[45] Hallo, 1973.

[46] Klein, 1976, lines 49–59.

[47] Royal hymns are poems in praise of kings. Twenty-three Shulgi hymns are known, cf. J. Klein, *Three Shulgi Hymns*, Ramat Gan, 1981, p. 37ff. Shulgi, the second king of the third dynasty of Ur (2094–2047

himself, but mainly Gilgamesh whom he calls 'a brother and friend'. Apart from the war against Kish there is also a fragmentary account of Gilgamesh' expedition to the cedar forest and his encounter with Ḫuwawa. These themes are the subject of two separate and elaborate literary compositions both known from Old Babylonian manuscripts, namely our tale, *Gilgamesh and Akka*, and *Gilgamesh in the Cedar Forest*. Since the hymn is not completely preserved, it is not impossible that its missing part contained themes from other tales, such as *Gilgamesh and the Bull of Heaven*. In any case, the appearance of these themes in the hymn indicates that these tales about Gilgamesh were already in existence in Shulgi's time, although perhaps only as an oral tradition. We may assume that the Gilgamesh material was borrowed from the tales for the purpose of the hymn.

The victory over Enmebaragesi of Kish is the first episode of Gilgamesh' exploits presented in *Shulgi Hymn O*. It serves to glorify him as a warrior, a prevalent property of his image. In view of its location in the hymn this particular victory was probably thought to have been a major contribution to his fame. The preexisting tale, however, which presumably was known to the author of the hymn, presents Akka instead of Enmebaragesi as Gilgamesh' opponent. It follows that it was the author of the hymn who introduced the change, and it seems reasonable to assume that it was made in order to adjust the event to the function of this episode in the hymn.

The reputable king of Kish was Enmebaragesi, as is evident from the historiographical sources, that is from the note added to his name in the *Sumerian King List* and from his place as the first builder of Enlil's temple in the *Tummal Inscription*.[48] Both sources are later than the hymn, and testify to Enmebaragesi's image as it was handed down to the Old Babylonian period. His son Akka is mentioned in these sources, but only as his successor and without special reference. In Akka's time, according to the historiographical traditions, Kish lost its hegemony over Sumer, a hegemony which according to the same traditions was first established by Enmebaragesi. Apparently the tradition represented by *Gilgamesh and Akka* holds him responsible for that loss. The fact that the tale, narrating the entire event in detail, has Akka rather than his famous father Enmebaragesi, indicates that this was the earlier and more original tradition. In historical perspective the defeat of Akka would be less impressive than the defeat of his prestigious father, who therefore served the purpose of the hymn far better and added to the quality of Gilgamesh' victory over Kish. Since Enmebaragesi's name was deliberately inserted to replace Akka's, the hymn does not reflect a separate tradition: the tale and the hymn are variants of one literary tradition.

B.C.), regarded Gilgamesh as his patron deity.

[48] We may assume that different Sumerian cities maintained traditions concerning their early rulers. It is not inconceivable that epic traditions concerning historical figures such as Enmebaragesi, Mesalim, and others were transmitted independent of mainstream literature. Remnants of such traditions can be found in the 'historical notes' of the *Sumerian King List* (see Jacobsen, 1939, pp. 142–143). Such traditions, however, have not yet been found in literary texts; since most of the Sumerian literature known to us originates in Nippur or Ur, we assume that they did not interest the scholars of Nippur or Ur, and therefore were not written down and lost.

7.1 *The conflict between Kish and Uruk in the light of Sumerian political history*

Archaeological evidence from all over Mesopotamia reveals that during the Early Dynastic II period the developing cities were encircled by massive fortifications. Their wide spread and the fact that from then on fortifications became a constant and characteristic feature of urban architecture imply that the cities were in permanent danger of enemy attacks. The earliest written evidence on this point originates in pre-Sargonic Lagash, approximately three generations later than Enmebaragesi. Urnanshe, the founder of a Lagashite dynasty, claims in one of his inscriptions that he defeated Ur and Umma.[49] Lagash and Umma were neighbouring cities, and a military conflict between them was the subject of a detailed account from the days of Eannatum, Urnanshe's grandson.[50] Eannatum's inscriptions contain an historical tradition according to which Mesalim had acted at one time as arbitrator in this dispute. Mesalim is known from his own inscriptions as a king who exercised hegemony in Sumer, and probably ruled one generation before Urnanshe and one generation after Akka. This particular tradition concerning war and peace in the Early Dynastic II period is still in need of contemporary confirmation, but fits the impression gained from the archaeological sources, that intercity hostilities did occur in Mesopotamia in that period.

The written evidence for intercity politics contemporary with the protagonists of *Gilgamesh and Akka* is indirect, and consists of the dedication inscription of Enmebaragesi found at Khafaje in the Diyala region. As was pointed out above, all sources mentioning (En)mebaragesi emphasize his political as well as his military power. There is no way to find out what form his political activity in the Diyala region took, and whether it met with any local opposition. At the same time there are no means to evaluate the historicity of his campaign against Elam mentioned in the *Sumerian King List*. The traces of his activity in Khafaje, however, establish the fact that a king's interests were not limited to neigbouring cities alone, as in the case of Lagash and Umma, but could expand to distant cities as well. Thus the written sources for intercity politics during the Early Dynastic II-III periods have one feature in common: a king of Kish is involved, be it Enmebaragesi, Akka or Mesalim.

The archaeological evidence from Kish shows that in Early Dynastic II, that is in in the time of Enmebaragesi and Akka, the city was flourishing. To that period archaeologists attribute 'palace A', which is considered the most ancient palace in Mesopotamia. In Early Dynastic III the palace was deserted and the city declined rapidly. Presumably the clearest manifestation of the importance of Kish is the royal title 'king of Kish'. This title was widely used by kings of cities other than Kish soon after its decline. Among the kings who bore the title are Mesannepada king of Ur, Eannatum of Lagash, Sargon, the founder of the Akkadian empire, and his successors Rimush and Manishtushu. 'King of Kish' was a most prestigious

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[49] A stone slab from Lagash, see Steible, *ABW* Urn. 51, Cooper, 1983, p. 13 no. 10, p. 44 no. 1.
[50] On the Lagash-Umma conflict and relevant inscriptions see in detail Cooper, 1983.

title and is the origin of the Akkadian title 'shar kishshati', 'king of the universe'. It expressed a claim to rule the whole of Sumer, and surely would have had no political basis unless ruling Kish was indeed considered an outstanding achievement.

The historiographical and literary sources imply that in the historical memory of the Sumerians Enmebaragesi was recognized as the founder of the Kishite political power. The contemporary and archaeological evidence supports this impression, and indicates that in his time Kish indeed was at its peak and that its political influence extended far beyond the city's territory. Kish's role in Early Dynastic II politics constitutes the framework for investigating the reality in which the Uruk-Kish relations of *Gilgamesh and Akka* were anchored.

Gilgamesh caused the war between Kish and Uruk, but Akka acted first, provoking Gilgamesh by his demand. Following Gilgamesh' refusal Akka laid siege to Uruk and thus started the actual hostilities. The function of Akka's demand in the narrative is to justify the outbreak of war to both parties and thus to motivate the plot. Akka's demand, expressed indirectly by Gilgamesh (lines 5–7), by the elders (lines 11–13) and by the guruš (lines 20–22), is worded as a highly stylised saying, something applicable in many different situations (see above). In view of its function in the narrative, however, it should have a concrete meaning as well. This meaning cannot be too far removed from the literal meaning of the words, and we assume therefore that Akka's demand concerned 'finishing wells', or, somewhat less literally, irrigation works.

The irrigation system was pivotal to life in southern Mesopotamia. Agriculture depended upon artificial irrigation and drainage, and the canals served for transportation. A vivid example for the importance of canals is found in the *Stele of Vultures*, erected by Eannatum of Lagash to commemorate a success in the long conflict between his city and neigbouring Umma.[51] The conflict evolved around the control of Guedina, a field on the common border between the two cities. After describing the hostilities and his victory, Eannatum relates in detail the oath taken by the king of Umma. The oath formula contains an entry concerning the irrigation system:[52]

> I shall not shift its irrigation canals and channels.

Since the construction and maintenance of the irrigation system were of vital importance, the object of Akka's demand is related to the very reality of existence in southern Mesopotamia. Akka's wish to impose the work on the Urukeans implies that he required foreign labour to carry it out.

Two possible types of foreign labourers are prisoners of war and citizens of subjugated cities. There is, however, as yet no contemporary textual evidence for either type. Later texts from pre-Sargonic Lagash as well as texts from the Akkad period reveal a practice of mass killings of war prisoners.[53] Entemena of Lagash in

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[51] Eannatum was a grandson of Urnanshe and probably lived five generations after Enmebaragesi's time. For a translation of the stele see Cooper, 1983 pp. 45–47.
[52] Cooper, 1983, p. 46 cols. xvi, xvii, xviii, xxi, r. i, r. iv.
[53] The earliest evidence for mass killings is probably documented in Urnanshe's stone slab from Lagash

his account of the conflict with Umma relates that the king of Umma in violation of the treaty between the two cities recruited foreigners.[54] Entemena does not give any details as to their identity, origin, and the method of their recruitment. Whether Umma in reality did exploit foreign forces is less important than the fact that they are mentioned. It proves that recruiting foreigners to strengthen the city's forces was not unknown. Entemena's text does not specify whether the foreigners were contracted for labour or forced to work, but the pre-Sargonic evidence indicates that hostilities between states were inspired by the expectation of tribute and spoil, rahter than by want of labourers. Thus there is no unequivocal evidence indicating that Akka's wish to exploit the Urukeans as forced labourers is based upon the reality of his time. On the contrary, since Akka's demand is stylised and highly poetical, it may well reflect the reality of the period in which the tale found its literary form.

Enmerkar, Lugalbanda and Gilgamesh, kings of the first dynasty of Uruk, were the heroes of a series of Sumerian epics composed during the Ur III period. The intention to impose forced labour on a subjugated city is the subject of one of them, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*.[55] The epic focuses on Enmerkar's demand that the people of Aratta, a state in the Iranian mountains, do construction work for Uruk. While the historicity of Enmerkar and his exploits remains to be established, the political concepts embodied in the epic reflect those prevalent in the Ur III period, the period in which also *Gilgamesh and Akka* found its literary form.

Thus, while the goal of Akka's demand, namely irrigation works, is inherent in the nature of Mesopotamian life in all periodes, his method, the imposition of forced labour, seems to reflect a political reality by half a millennium later than the events narrated in the story; hence the relations between Kish and Uruk recorded in *Gilgamesh and Akka* represent the Ur III interpretation of those recorded in an earlier tale concerning the overthrow of Kishite hegemony in Sumer, the liberation of Uruk, and the establishment of its independent dynasty.

7.2   *A reflection of the 'Sumerian-Semitic conflict'?*

A different approach to analyzing the background of this war is the one which considers it as depicting in poetical terms a conflict between members of the different races or cultural groups inhabiting Mesopotamia. Several scholars have subscribed to this view, though in varying degrees. Since, roughly speaking, the Sumerian population element was centered in the South and the Semitic in the North, the hostile relations between Kish and Uruk narrated in *Gilgamesh and Akka* could serve to support those who assume a racial conflict between the two.

(Steible *ABW* Urn. 51).
[54] Cooper, 1983, p. 50 col iii.
[55] S. Cohen, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, Ph. D diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1973 (Ann Arbor, University microfilm).

Until the end of the Thirties it was generally believed that the Sumerians ceased to exist as a national entity as a result of a fundamental ethnic conflict between them and the Semites. The first to challenge this view, and the most critical, was Jacobsen who published an article on this question in 1939.[56] Jacobsen argued that if such a racial confrontation really took place, it should be reflected in the texts. A systematic examination of the texts, mainly of the pre-Sargonic and Sargonic periods, did not uncover any trace of such a confrontation; nor could racial or ethnic motives be discovered behind Sargon's activities in the South. On the contrary, a comparison between Sargon and Lugalzagesi, the contemporary king of Uruk, showed that the titles used by both kings were of a purely political nature. Furthermore, the deities leading Sargon's hosts into battle were Sumerian: Inanna, Enlil and An. He himself claimed to have gained Enlil's consent for his kingship. The Semitic deities known to us from the texts are not adduced as support in his struggle against the Sumerian South, and on the whole it seems that his religious sympathies inclined towards deities with Sumerian names. Conversely Lugalzagesi, a Sumerian king, wrote a dedication inscription in Akkadian; and Shulgi, the Sumerian king of Ur and reviver of the Sumerian cultural heritage, gave Akkadian names to some of his sons and to a newly founded administrative centre (Puzrish-Dagan). If the nation were rented by an ethnic or racial conflict, such phenomena would seem very much out of line. Jacobsen's conclusion was that the wars were motivated by politics, and that the written sources in either language do not contain any ethnic antagonisms or racist ideas.

I.J. Gelb in an article published in 1960[57] took issue with Jacobsen and claimed that the disappearance of the Sumerians as a national entity was indeed the result of an ethnic conflict between the Sumerians and the Semites. According to Gelb the origin and development of political structures are a communal interest, and rooted in an ethnic identity; and since the defining characteristic of an ethnic identity is language, it is inconceivable that a political conflict between the speakers of different languages does not have an ethnic component as well. One of the proofs he adduced for the common roots of ethnic and political entities is the fact that in the Sumerian writing system a single character served to express the word for land and that for people.

Falkenstein thought that the war between Gilgamesh and Akka was part of a struggle between the Sumerian South and Akkadian Kish, but he regarded its background as socio-economic rather than as ethnic or racial.[58] Cultural superiority or inferiority, something which may change by scholing, was not at issue. The Akkadians, according to Falkenstein, objected to the Sumerian economic regime of the 'temple-city', and preferred private or tribal ownership of land. Indeed, during the Old Babylonian period this principle became the basis of the whole economy and

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[56] Jacobsen, 1970a. Jacobsen treated the subject again in 'Iphur-Kishi and his Times', AfO 26 (1978/79) 7–10. In this article he clarified some points treated in his previous article (first published in 1939), and answered Gelb's criticism published in 1960.
[57] Gelb, 1960.
[58] Falkenstein, 1974, p. 17–18.

the 'temple-city' regime disappeared. However, as Falkenstein admitted, the principles of the Akkadian economic system in Early Dynastic times are difficult to establish and its relation to the Sumerian economic system remains unclear.

In 1970 F.R. Kraus published his view on the matter.[59] Kraus analyzed the Sumerian and Akkadian terms defining the people, the city, the state and the language of Akkad, as well as those defining Sumer and Sumerian. By evaluating the terminology Kraus hoped to trace the views held by the inhabitants of Mesopotamia with regard to their national affiliation. He concluded that, whereas we can recognize the existence of a Sumerian and an Akkadian people, we have no means to delineate the role of ethnic or racial identities in the history of the Early Dynastic period.

Cl. Wilcke, in an article published a year later,[60] argued against Kraus' conclusions. Using some new source material he claimed that signs for a conflict between Akkadians and Sumerians appear in texts of the Akkad period. Wilcke even tried to demonstrate the existence of two national entities in the Ur III period. The nature of the conflict between them, however, is not clarified by his researches.

Cooper's view, widely accepted now, is that the Sumerians did not preceed the Semites in Mesopotamia. This view is supported by a linguistic analysis of Sumerian and Akkadian language contacts. It seems that already in Early Dynastic III the population of Mesopotamia was bilingual, Sumerians and Akkadians mutually influencing each other. This mutual influence contradicts the alledged ethnic rivalry between the two.[61]

Any attempt to elucidate the early history of this 'conflict' by means of *Gilgamesh and Akka* is doomed to remain unfruitful. *Gilgamesh and Akka* is a literary composition, and the historicity of its plot is doubtful; furthermore, as was argued above, there is a distinct possibility that it reflects views later than the narrated events and originating in the Ur III period. In any case one must admit that no ethnic differences are implied by the composition: Firstly, although earlier rulers of Kish bore Semitic names, those of both Enmebaragesi and Akka, rulers of the same 'Semitic' dynasty, are Sumerian; and secondly, Akka's demand hints at political or economic reasons for the war. If a conflict between Sumerians and Semites were based on ethnic motives, they should have been reflected in *Gilgamesh and Akka*. The poem was probably composed under the Ur III dynasty whose kings considered themselves the successors of the first dynasty of Uruk; and although at that time Sumerian 'nationalism' was at its peak, it shows no trace of ethnic rivalry.

We are left with scanty evidence. It is true that the Semitic population of northern Babylonia in Early Dynastic II–III was denser than that of the South, and it may be assumed that the Kishite dynasty whose earliest rulers have Semitic names was Semitic. Even so this does not necessarily imply a racial or ethnic hostility between the North and the South; notwithstanding Gelb's pertinent remarks, the written

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[59] Kraus, 1970.
[60] Wilcke, 1971.
[61] Cooper, 1973

sources including *Gilgamesh and Akka* do not support the assumption of racial or ethnic conflicts as a major motive in Mesopotamian history.

In view of the evidence for a Kishite hegemony in Enmebaragesi's time, and the lack of such for any racial or ethnic conflict, we may assume that the background of the Uruk-Kish conflict in Gilgamesh and Akka was economic and political.

8 THE GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR HISTORICITY

The importance attached by scholars to *Gilgamesh and Akka* is in part explained by the relatively detailed description of political decision-making in Uruk. In the absence of contemporary documents containing descriptive information on the structure and nature of governmental institutions in the Early Dynastic period, the tale seemed to fill a lacuna. Since the political institutions described in *Gilgamesh and Akka* were generally accepted as historical, this topic deserves a detailed treatment.

The declaration of war against Kish was the final step in a series of political decisions. From the moment Akka's messengers presented the ultimatum to Gilgamesh until he was appointed lugal, Uruk witnessed a political conflict over the response to Akka's demand. Three political entities seem to emerge from the description, the ukkin (assembly), the en, and the lugal. Whereas the offices of en and lugal are fulfilled by Gilgamesh himself, the assembly described in the poem was a bipartite body consisting of an assembly of elders and an assembly of guruš, the able-bodied men. Consequently the political system presented in *Gilgamesh and Akka* is quite different from that known from later sources, especially with regard to the structure of the assembly and the function of the lugal.

What are the functions of the assemblies, the en and the lugal? Does the political system as described in *Gilgamesh and Akka* reflect the historical reality of Early Dynastic Sumer, and can it serve to characterize its political institutions and their development? These questions will be addressed in the following paragraphs.[62]

8.1 *The assembly*

The earliest texts containing useful[63] information on the social structure of the Sumerian city-state are those from Fara and Abu-Salabikh, dating to the beginning of Early Dynastic III (c. 2500 B.C.). By then society was already professionally and socially stratified and led by a king. An assembly appears in the texts, but its composition and function are not specified. More detailed historical sources dealing with the activities of the assembly date to the Old Babylonian period. According to the

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[62] See also Katz 1987.

[63] The information contained in early third millennium texts is in its present state of elaboration not yet usable for the reconstrucion of the political system. Apparently though, the institutions here discussed did exist in some form already then, see provisionally M. W. Green - H. J. Nissen, *Zeichenliste der Archaischen Texte aus Uruk* (1987), no. 580 (UKKIN), 134 (EN), and 334 (LUGAL).

Old Babylonian documents the king exercised full political authority; in addition we find some public political organizations such as *puḫrum*, 'assembly', *ālum*, 'city' and *šībūtum*, 'elders' (all terms are Akkadian). The extent of their authority was limited and confined to the local affairs of a single community.

The existence of public political organizations in the Old Babylonian period and the discrepancy between the political role they played then and in *Gilgamesh and Akka*, raise the question of the original role of the assembly in public life.

Comprehensive studies of the political development of Sumer were published by Jacobsen in 1943[64] and 1957.[65] Since historical sources from Early Dynastic times are scarce, Jacobsen made use of mythological texts as well. He based the use of literary texts for the purpose of extracting historical information on the assumption that myth, since it describes the gods as having human characteristics such as love and hate, bases its description of their social organization on worldly models as well. Jacobsen also observed that divine society differs widely from its presumed human model as reflected in archival texts and royal inscriptions of the late third millennium and later, and resolved the contradictory evidence by assuming that the myths preserve traditions older than the other texts and originating in the social reality of small proto-urban communities.

Jacobsen used *Enūma Elish* to demonstrate the function of the assembly at a time when it was the only political organization. The poem, composed in the second half of the second millennium, relates in detail how the assembly of the gods reached the decision to fight Tiamat.[66] He concluded that:

– A meeting of the assembly is called by the head of the pantheon;
– The assembly is authorized to nominate one of its members as l u g a l, and that the nomination is carried out by the pronounciation of a special formula;
– The office is granted for a limited period of time only.

According to a recurrent pattern the divine assembly met in times of crisis in order to appoint one of its members as a temporary leader; if the crisis was of a military nature, the temporary leader would be called l u g a l, as Marduk in *Enūma Elish*. When the crisis was over, the assembly was authorized to invalidate the appointment. As an example for the nomination formula Jacobsen referred to lines 30–36 of *Gilgamesh and Akka*.

Jacobsen maintained that *Enūma Elish* reflects the assembly as it functioned in pre-history, and assumed that the actual political institutions of the Sumerian city-states developed from the leadership patterns of small proto-urban communities. He termed the hypothetical earliest form of government 'primitive democracy', which implied that the citizens' assembly administered all affairs of the community. This assembly was authorized to appoint a leader for a definite mission and a limited term of office.

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[64] Jacobsen, 1970b.
[65] Jacobsen, 1970c.
[66] *Ee* II: 125–127; III.

8.2   *The assembly according to Gilgamesh and Akka*

Most of the elements characterizing the working of the divine assembly appear in *Gilgamesh and Akka* as well: Gilgamesh' refusal of Akka's ultimatum brought about a political crisis; he was not authorized to assume the office of lugal by himself and declare war; he then went to the assembly to gain its consent and his nomination. When the decision to fight was made, he was appointed lugal with the appropriate formula which vested him with authority and power. *Gilgamesh and Akka*, however, deviates on one important point. According to this composition there were two assemblies in Uruk, one of elders and one of guruš (able-bodied men). The assembly of the elders turned down Gilgamesh' proposal to resist; the assembly of the guruš consented and nominated him lugal.

Jacobsen maintained that *Gilgamesh and Akka* represents a stage in which the political power of the assembly was in decline and its right to appoint a leader limited to occasions of rebellion.[67] He connected this development with the growth of the population within the cities and the increasing diversity of its interests. According to Jacobsen a general assembly of citizens befits a small community whose members share a common interest. Only such a community can administer its affairs through an organization consisting of all its members. Jacobsen associated the decline of the assembly with the emergence of a new political concept, that of divine election. Political figures, instead of seeking legitimation from the assembly, now tended to claim election by the patron deity of the city. The belief in divine election greatly diminished the political power and influence of the assembly. Basing himself on contemporary and historiographical sources and *Gilgamesh and Akka*, he dated this development to the time of Enmebaragesi and Gilgamesh.

Speiser's view on the assembly is deduced primarily from our narrative. He took the assembly of the guruš as one of warriors, and the assembly in general as playing a vital political role in the life of the Sumerian city-state.[68]

Diakonoff distinguished a council of elders representing the estate owning nobility, and one of guruš representing the common members of the community, those who cultivated small family plots.[69] Both political organizations shared power with the ruler in matters other than the affairs of the temple estates, irrigation and building programs. Diakonoff's historical approach is socio-economic and his view is based mainly on the archival texts from pre-Sargonic Lagash. By this time, however, kingship was already firmly established, so that his conclusions concerning the function of the assembly are not necessarily applicable to the time of Enmebaragesi, Akka and Gilgamesh.

Kramer is of the opinion that the Early Dynastic assembly was a bicameral political body in which all free citizens of the community participated, an Upper House

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[67]   Jacobsen, 1970c, pp. 144–147.
[68]   Speiser, 1967, p. 288f.
[69]   Diakonoff, 1974, pp. 9-10.

of elders and a Lower House of 'men'.[70] This view is based solely on the evidence of *Gilgamesh and Akka*.

Falkenstein in his essay on the Sumerian temple-city (first published in 1954)[71] argued that the assembly had neither controlling nor directive powers, but only an advisory role, as evident from Gilgamesh' disregard for the elders' decision. In a contribution to *Gilgamesh and Akka* made in 1966 Falkenstein suggested that the guruš' assembly was not an institution parallel to that of the elders, and that the governmental system was not bicameral. He argued that the constitution described in *Gilgamesh and Akka* implies that the men of the city could act against the 'Senat', a very unlikely construction. Falkenstein went on to suggest that the guruš' assembly is a literary creation introduced to illustrate Gilgamesh' determination, and he supported his assumption by pointing out a parallel involving the Old Testament king Rehabám (Kings 12:1–19; Chron. 10:1–19).[72] It must be noted, however, that a chronological gap of at least one millennium separates the two stories and that consequently they were probably independent creations.

Indeed, as a result of the bipartite structure *Gilgamesh and Akka* is ambiguous as to the working of the assembly. Surely Gilgamesh was determined to fight Kish; that he did not take the decision to do so by himself but sought the consent of the assemblies, implies that their role was more than just advisory. Conversely, if the assemblies did have a specific authority, then how could Gilgamesh ignore the elders' decision. Falkenstein was the first to doubt the historical validity of the narrative by pointing out a solution involving its literary structure and the use of fictional elements.

Since both elders and guruš are well documented outside the literary texts, the range and nature of their functions can be defined in terms of historical reality. By examining their role in the plot and comparing it with their function in historical reality (albeit of a later period), we should be able to isolate the *materials of the plot* and thus to define the *materials of the story*. The *materials of the plot* constitute the narrative, the final literary form of the described events. The *materials of the story* are the raw material of the narrative, that is an existing tradition reworked to form the narrative. Each type of materials represents a different literary level; since the plot forms the final version, its materials represent a purely literary level. If the narrative reflects an historical reality, then the elements based on this reality would appear in the *materials of the story*.

According to the *plot* the assembly of the elders coexisted with the assembly of the guruš and had the same authority. If, however, the authority of the guruš equalled that of the elders and even exceeded it in matters of war, Gilgamesh should not have turned to the elders first only to ignore their decision, but have gone directly to the guruš. The sequence of steps taken by Gilgamesh, as presented by the *plot*, seems illogical.

Both elders and guruš are terms defining status or age. Contrary to *Gilgamesh*

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[70] Kramer, 1963, p. 74.
[71] Falkenstein, 1974, p. 13.
[72] Falkenstein, 1966, p. 47, following a theory set forth by Malamat in JNES 22 (1963), 247–253.

and Akka, however, there is in historical reality only one public political body defined by status or age: the elders. Hence, the *plot* representation of an assembly of elders next to one of g u r u š is not based on reality but on a literary mechanism, probably that of parallelism, a device widely applied in Ancient Near Eastern literature. The materials for this parallelism were taken from the Sumerian city's reality, where both the elders and an assembly functioned as separate political organizations; the g u r u š, on the other hand were but an element of the city's population functioning in military units or working gangs. These materials were arranged by the narrator in the form of a stylized parallelism: the activities of the elders and the g u r u š form a synonymical parallelism and the titles of the two bodies an antithetical parallelism.

The two types of parallelism employed here are essentially different and therefore disclose the working of literary elaboration. Synonymical parallelism extends the text without extending the plot. By contrast, antithetical parallelism not only extends the text but also adds to the plot, since the second member opposes to the given material. If both members of the parallelism already exist in the materials of the plot, one member might need modification in order to be harmonized with the second. Application of these observations to *Gilgamesh and Akka* may reveal the fictional or factual nature of the materials comprising the parallelism, and the way in which they were harmonized.

Since there is no documentary evidence for the existence of a g u r u š-class or its assembly as an institutionalized political organization, the 'assembly of the g u r u š' and its act of conferring l u g a l-ship on Gilgamesh would appear to reflect the use of fictional material. Both the elders and an assembly are attested outside the poem, and must reflect actual material. The phrase u k k i n - g a r - r a - a b - b a - u r u - n a - k e₄, 'the convoked assembly of his city's elders' (line 9), uniting the two separate institutions, implies that elders and assembly are the same political entity, which seems to contradict historical evidence. The conclusion is that the entity defined by this phrase should be considered a product of fiction. This raises the question why the narrator should have transformed the authentic detail of the 'city's elders' (line 3) into a fictional product, 'the asssembly of the city's elders'. The answer lies in the necessity to preserve the harmonious balance of the plot's literary pattern, its parallelism. The narrator seems to have created u k k i n - g a r - r a - a b - b a - u r u - n a - k e₄ to harmonize antithetically with u k k i n - g a r - r a - g u r u š - u r u^{ki} - n a - k a, 'the convoked assembly of his city's able-bodied men' (line 24). Consequently what emerges is, surprisingly, that the fictional 'g u r u š' assembly' was the starting point for the parallelism and not the factual elders or assembly. In other words, despite the fact that the concept 'g u r u š' assembly' is literary and thus represents the *plot material*, it lays the groundwork for the parallelism from which the 'elders' assembly' springs. Therefore the term 'g u r u š' assembly', although fictional, must contain traces of the *story material*, of the existing tradition which is the core of the narrative. The only element in this term which can reflect *story material* is g u r u š.

Since elders, g u r u š and assembly are all historical entities, and since the narrator already used the expressions a b - b a - u r u - n a - k (line 3) and g u r u š - u r u - n a - k

(line 18) which form a perfect parallelism, one is puzzled why he altered the names of these entities, presented them as two different assemblies and turned reality into fiction. It seems reasonable to assume that, while the elders and the assembly were legitimate governmental institutions, the guruš were but the members of work gangs or military units whose decisions on public matters had no legal status. In order to represent the guruš' decision as legal, the narrator had to join the term guruš to a recognized governing body and create an 'assembly of the guruš'. As a consequence the actual term 'elders' had to be transformed into a parallel literary term, 'assembly of the elders', to harmonize with it. Both members of the parallelism then, the elders and the guruš, are present in the story material.

When searching for the reality behind the literary elaboration, two possible roles for the guruš can be suggested:

– either the guruš were not an institutionalized political body, but part of the Uruk general assembly, organized on an ad hoc basis. For this reason they are not known from other sources. Assuming that the assembly was divided according to age or status, the definition of one part as guruš would define the remainder as elders. In that case the guruš would have assumed the authority to appoint a lugal because they were members of the assembly, not because they were soldiers;
– or the guruš were Gilgamesh' private military unit. Following his insistence on resisting Kish they appointed him contrary to the explicit wish of the elders or the assembly.

If the parallelism was indeed created along the lines analyzed above, there are grounds to assume that the second alternative is the correct one. It was argued that decisions of the guruš did not play a part in the regular political process, and that they assumed the image of a legitimate political institution by a literary intervention that created an 'assembly of the guruš' balancing the power of the elders.

The arrangement of the plot in the form of parallelism completely changed the meaning of the story. According to the story Gilgamesh assumed his lugal-ship against the public wish, while according to the plot he was appointed legally. It may be concluded that the parallelism was not created for stylistic reasons, but to serve as the redactor's vehicle for organizing the materials of the story according to his views. This conclusion is confirmed by lines 15–17, which cut into the sequence of the narrative between the events in the two assemblies. In these lines the narrator states:

Since Gilgamesh, the lord of Kulaba, had placed his trust in Inanna, he did not take to heart the words of his city's elders.

These lines represent an explanatory or interpretative interpolation by the narrator. The function of this clause is to provide the listener with a reasonable ex-

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planation for Gilgamesh' rejection of the elders' decision. The narrator therefore opposes his disregard for the elders to his confidence in Inanna, implying that he will have the goddess' approval. The invocation of divine approval to dismiss the elders' decision indicates that it was indeed binding, which was indicated already by the fact that he asked for their decision first.

This analysis shows a distinction between two types of material, each representing a different reality. The material of the *story's* reality, represented by the illegal act of the guruš, reflects an earlier tale of an historical nature, the basis of the composition. The material of the *plot's* reality represents a level of later redaction in which the details of the earlier tale were adapted to the image of Gilgamesh prevalent at the time of redaction.

The earlier tale, in keeping with the view of the *Sumerian King List*, contains a tradition connecting Gilgamesh with usurpation. According to the *Sumerian King List* his father was a lil_2, 'ghost', which blurs his descent and could imply that he was an usurper.[73] The *Sumerian King List* makes it quite clear that Gilgamesh was not the son of his predecessor Dumuzi, nor of the latter's predecessor Lugalbanda, but that Gilgamesh himself was the founder of the first true dynasty of Uruk.[74]

This view, shared by the *Sumerian King List* and the earlier tale,[75] is diametrically opposed to the one that acknowledges Lugalbanda as Gilgamesh' father and endowes him with a noble descent, not only on the side of his mother Ninsun, but also on that of his father. This view originates in the Ur III dynasty, which considered the members of the Uruk I dynasty and particularly Gilgamesh as its patrons and predecessors. Apparently it guided the redactor in organizing the plot of *Gilgamesh and Akka* to the effect that the guruš' acts were legitimized and, as a consequence, their nomination of Gilgamesh as lugal. If this reasoning is correct, the earlier tale antedates the Ur III period.

At the moment we cannot reconstruct the earlier tale with certainty, but since the elders are antithetically parallel to the guruš, they seem to be a literary product pertaining to the later redaction. Consequently it seems that in the story's reality the public political body to which Gilgamesh went first was the assembly (not necessarily of elders). In any case the literary pattern, the parallelism, indicates that there is no basis for the assumption of a bicameral political structure in Uruk, and that therefore the narrative cannot serve as a source for the reconstruction of Early Dynastic governmental institutions.

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[73] The link between divine legitimation and the dynasty gave rise to the principle of heredity. Usurpers, of course, would not be able to base their claim to rulership on heredity, and would naturally tend to obscure their descent. According to the *Sumerian King List* this principle did play a role in the time of Gilgamesh and Enmebaragesi. It was firmly established by the second half of the third millennium, as demonstrated by royal inscriptions, particularly those from Lagash.

[74] Jacobsen, 1939, pp. 88–90

[75] Lines 104–106, describing Gilgamesh as a refugee in Kish, imply that prior to the events of *Gilgamesh and Akka* Gilgamesh was engaged in a struggle for the rulership of Uruk.

En and l u g a l are the two official titles given to Gilgamesh in the narrative. Both titles appear in the Sumerian myth *Inanna and Enki* which lists the m e, the social norms and offices of the Sumerians. The first item on this list is the m e of e n-ship, while that of l u g a l-ship appears in fourth position.[76] Their order in the list probably indicates their relative importance in Sumerian thought.

The nature of e n-ship was treated by many scholars.[77] The problem, however, remains that while the religious aspect of this office is known, its secular aspect is far from clear. What were the e n's duties and authority, how did he assume office, and what were the relations between the e n and l u g a l? The term l u g a l, literally l u$_2$-g a l, 'big man', does not seem to have had originally a cultic connotation. It is not clear, however, how the l u g a l assumed governmental authority, and how the term came to mean 'king'. The offices sometimes occur together; in *Gilgamesh and Akka* they are both fulfilled by Gilgamesh. Since *Gilgamesh and Akka* underwent a literary elaboration probably during the Ur III period, the use made of the titles in the tale may reflect its latest literary level. Nevertheless the possibility that these titles appeared in the earlier tale cannot be excluded; this question will occupy us below.

The assesment of the original nature of these offices remains problematical, since the terms occur as components of personal names, and in archaic texts (as early as Uruk IV–III, see note 63) that are as yet but imperfectly understood. Edzard, basing himself on Early Dynastic II–III administrative and economic texts, maintains that the office of e n is older than that of l u g a l. The first text in which a ruling l u g a l can be identified is (En)mebaragesi's inscription from Khafaje.[78] Hallo assumes that when e n appears alone, it probably denotes the holder of an office, but he is not certain that it was a royal title outside Uruk. In view of En-shakushana's inscription he suggests that the status of e n (of Uruk) equalled that of l u g a l (of Ur).[79]

The use of these titles in *Gilgamesh and Akka* reveals a clear-cut distinction between the contexts in which Gilgamesh is called e n and those in which he is called l u g a l. When Gilgamesh is quoted in direct speech, he is introduced by the narrator as 'Gilgamesh, e n of Kulaba'; and when he is referred to or addressed by

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[76]   The list of m e appears four times in the myth, cf. G. Farber-Flügge 1973, pp. 26–27, line 17, and her commentary on p. 97.

[77]   Jacobsen, 1970c, p. 141 and note 30; Falkenstein, 1974, p. 10; Diakonoff, 1974, note 14; Edzard, 1959, p. 23f; Id., 1971 pp. 143–145; Hallo, 1957, pp. 3–10; Kramer, 1963, p. 141; Speiser, 1967, p. 287 and note 41; *CAD E*, 177a and discussion p. 174. From the Old Babylonian period onwards the title appears in (traditional) literary texts only.

[78]   Edzard, 1971 p. 143f. In the texts from Uruk IIIb L U$_2$+G A L appears in a personal name, but Edzard assumed that this name is of the same type as Grossman or Biggs, i.e. 'big man', and not yet one word denoting 'king' as in later periods. Names with the component l u g a l appear in the archaic texts from Ur and later in Abu Ṣālabīkh; they were influenced by names of the same type with the component e n, which indicates that l u g a l in such names is an official title as well.

[79]   Hallo, 1957, pp.3–10.

his soldiers or by Akka, he is titled lugal.[80] The contrastive use of these titles in one and the same composition can hardly be accidental, and from their distribution two conclusions may be drawn:

- – en of Kulaba is Gilgamesh' official title; each time Gilgamesh is going to speak, the narrator introduces him by his name and official title.
- – lugal is Gilgamesh' title in time of war, and therefore he is called lugal by his soldiers and by Akka, the enemy leader.

After the battle, when Akka acknowledges Gilgamesh' independent rulership in Uruk, the entry concerning his lugal-ship is omitted (line 110, as compared to line 35), which reinforces the assumption that lugal here denotes a military office. In the closing formula, lines 113–114, he is titled en again. Before the question of the historicity of *Gilgamesh and Akka* regarding the use of these terms can be settled, we must first review the historical development of en-ship and lugal-ship.

During the second half of the third millennium lugal was the title of the city ruler in all independent Mesopotamian states except Lagash, where his title was ensi$_2$, and Uruk, where it was en.

The en is first of all the high priest, whose main religious role it was to participate in the sacred marriage rite. This annually performed rite was the central part of a fertility cult aimed at bringing abundance and plenty, and thus of vital economical importance to a Mesopotamian city. It is of interest that en-ship appears as the first of the me in the list of *Inanna and Enki*, which underscores the essential role of the en in this function.

Any attempt to trace the function of the en as a worldly ruler calls for a distinction between those cities of which the patron god was male and consequently the en-priest female, and those of which the patron god was female and consequently the en-priest male. The latter was the case in Uruk, where Inanna was the city goddess, and the en male. Contrary to women who all through Mesopotamian history were excluded from politics, men holding the office of en had, in years of plenty, the opportunity to gain political status. Years of plenty proved their ability as en, and indicated their good relations to the world of the gods. Acknowledgment of the male en's closeness to the gods, and hence of his superhuman power to bring about economical success, resulted in endowing him with permanent political power.[81] The case of Uruk, the city of Inanna and Gilgamesh, demonstrates the development of en-ship from a religious function to rulership. In Gilgamesh these two distinct aspects were united; whereas the epic tales preserve his memory as the legendary ruler of Uruk, the superhuman aspect of his figure brought about his inclusion in the pantheon. After his death he was revered as a netherworld deity, and addressed in prayers and incantations.

Unlike the en, whose authority derived from his cultic role, the lugal originally was appointed for military and civil tasks. The example for the way a lugal

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[80] en in lines: 15, 18, 51, 100, 113; lugal in lines: 35, 56, 69–71.
[81] Jacobsen, *JNES* 12 (1953) 180–181, Speiser 1967, 287.

was elected is the Babylonian Epic of Creation, *Enūma Elish*, in which Marduk was appointed lugal since he was believed to possess the qualities to slay Tiamat. The case of Marduk shows that an appointment was valid for a limited period of time. Whether the original office of lugal was temporary, as indicated by the epic, is not certain. However, in case it was originally temporary, it seems that we may date the change into a permanent office to Early Dynastic II, since in this period the cities were encircled by fortifications, proving that acts of hostility became common and consequently the need for military as well as civil leadership more pressing. Presumably following this change, the lugal began to assume authorities which originally did not pertain to his military duties, and to centralize governmental activities around himself.

The contrastive use of the titles in *Gilgamesh and Akka* is in line with the foregoing assumptions regarding the development of en-ship and lugal-ship. For the purpose of leading the war against Kish and protecting the integrity of Uruk, Gilgamesh was appointed lugal in addition to his office as en in which function he took care of the permanent cultic and economic needs of the city. Since Gilgamesh needed a special appointment to lugal, his status and authority as a military leader were apparently not self-evident. Therefore the narrative, in spite of being an edited version of historical reality, seems to preserve the original meaning of the titles.

9   LITERARY AND CHRONOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Presumably the main theme of the earlier tale was Uruk's war of liberation from the yoke of Kish, which structures the poem.[82] The Sumerians apparently attributed important historical consequences to this war, which was not just one between two cities but marked the end of the hegemony of Kish, and thus went beyond intercity relations.[83] The historiographic literature contains echoes not only of Kish' hegemony, but also of its disruption by Uruk: the succession of Kish by Uruk is implied by the order of rulers in the *Sumerian King List* and the *Tummal Inscription*. These two compositions express the notion that Sumer is a single, united entity, whose history can be described as a sequence of dynasties ruling the land in an orderly succession. Whether this view was held by Gilgamesh, Akka and Enmebaragesi is doubtful, but it certainly existed at the time of Utuḫegal, king of Uruk, to whose reign Jacobsen dates the earliest version of the *Sumerian King List*.[84] Utuḫegal,

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[82] The movement of Kish towards Uruk, the siege of Uruk, and the return of Akka to Kish are the beginning, middle (49) and end of the poem respectively, and thus constitute its framework. See also Vanstiphout 1986, 43.

[83] The widely used royal title 'King of Kish', expressing a claim to national rulership owes its prestige to the fact that once Kish did rule the entire nation, see W.W. Hallo, *Early Mesopotamian Royal Titles*, (1957) 21–92, Cooper 1981 229.

[84] Jacobsen, 1939, pp. 128–141, especially pp. 140–141. Others date the *SKL* to the Isin period, see, for example, M. Civil, 'Les limites de l'information textuelle', in: *L'Archéologie de l'Iraq: Perspective et limites de l'interpretation anthropologique des documents*. Colloques internationaux du C. N. R. S. No. 580, Paris 1978, p. 230. For dating it to the Ur III period see: C. Wilcke, 'Genealogical and Geographical Thought

who chased the Gutians out of Sumer and liberated Uruk, expressed this notion in the inscription commemorating his victory: ^{d}En-lil$_2$-le nam-lugal ki-en-gi-ra [š]u-ba gi$_4$-gi$_4$-de$_3$, 'Enlil (ordered me) to give kingship back to Sumer'.[85]

In the same inscription he declares: ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes du[mu] ^{d}nin-sun$_2$-na-ke$_4$ maškim-še$_3$ ma-an-sum,[86] '(Enlil) has given Gilgamesh, the son of Nin-sun, to me as deputy.' The appearance of Gilgamesh in this context indicates not only that Utuḫegal knew the tale of Gilgamesh' war of liberation, but also that his achievement was an inspiration for Utuḫegal in his own war.

While the liberation of Uruk from foreign rule is found in Utuḫegal's inscription as well as in *Gilgamesh and Akka* and the *Sumerian King List*, Uruk's hegemony over Sumer appears only in Utuḫegal's inscription and the *Sumerian King List*; there is no trace of it in *Gilgamesh and Akka*. On the contrary, the final version implies the equality of Gilgamesh and Akka after the latter's acknowledgement of Gilgamesh as an independent ruler. Therefore the earlier tale on which the poem is based may antedate the idea of Sumer as a united political entity, and precede Utuḫegal's victory inscription.

The notion that Gilgamesh was an usurper is found only in the earlier tale of *Gilgamesh and Akka* and in the *Sumerian King List* (see above, 8.2). Since the biographical notes of the *Sumerian King List* are based on tales current at the time of its composition this indicates that it was the earlier tale of *Gilgamesh and Akka* (in which Gilgamesh was an usurper) that was used by the compiler of the *Sumerian King List* as his source for the biographical note concerning Gilgamesh.[87] The relation between the two compositions also sheds light on the date of (this part of) the *Sumerian King List*, for if the *Sumerian King List* really was compiled as late as the Isin period, as the end of the list seems to imply, it could only have voiced the perception of Gilgamesh' descent current at that time and have presented him as the son of Lugalbanda, or at least as his successor.

In view of the above it may be suggested that the earlier tale originated at some point in time prior to Utuḫegal's war against the Gutians. The version of *Shulgi Hymn O*, which names Enmebaragesi as Gilgamesh' opponent and not his son Akka, suggests that the earlier tale underwent its literary elaboration prior to this hymn. The Ur III dynasty originated in Uruk[88] and considered itself as the successor of the first dynasty of Uruk. The presentation of their predecessor Gilgamesh as a legitimate and independent king is of great importance to this dynasty, since it legitimizes its early kings and founds their rule in a historical model. Presumably some time after Utuḫegal's war or in the early Ur III period, when the kings of the first dynasty of Uruk and especially Gilgamesh were idealized and stories about them were composed and compiled, the earlier tale was elaborated and adapted

in the Sumerian King List', in: H. Behrens et al. eds., *dumu-e$_2$-dub-ba-a. Studies in Honor of Ake Sjöberg (Philadelphia, 1989), pp.557–571*

[85] *RA IX* (1912) 112–113 col. i: 29, see Römer, OrNS 54 (1985), 274–288

[86] ibid., col. iii: 3–4.

[87] Jacobsen, 1939, pp. 141–147

[88] Wilcke 1971, p.180 and note 67 on p.192 ff

to the image of Gilgamesh then current. It is this version of the tale that legalizes the appointment of Gilgamesh as lugal and justifies his position at the centre of the events. The poem may have undergone a further literary elaboration during the Old Babylonian period. To this period we attribute the versions represented by sources α and β.

THE TEXT

1   THE MANUSCRIPTS

The text is reconstructed from sixteen tablets and fragments. Following Römer's edition of the text these are labeled with the letters A–O. The fragment N 1250, here labeled P, was known to Römer but not used in his reconstruction of the text:[1]

A   *BJRL* 19 (1935) 369–372, lines: 1–17; 32–49; 82–96; 111–114.
B   *HS* 1485 *TMH NF* 4 no.5, lines: 1–61.
C   *CBS* 10355 Kramer 1949 fig.1, lines: 1–24; 88–114.
D   *HS* 1515 *TMH NF* 4 no.6, lines: 1–12; 68–82.
E   *Ni* 2302 *AASOR* 23 (*SLTNi*) 3, lines: 1–12; 52–61.
F   *Ni* 9743 Kramer 1949 fig.5 = ISET 2 53, lines: 1–12; 73–82.
G   *Ni* 4396 Kramer 1949 fig.3 = ISET 2 20, lines: 1–8; 47–56.
H   *Ni* 4351 Kramer 1949 fig.4 = ISET 2 54, lines: 4–10; 47–57.
I   *CBS* 4564 *PBS* X/2, no.5, lines: 16–66.
J   *Ni* 4448 Kramer 1949 fig.2 = ISET 2 54, lines: 21–42.
K   *Ni* 2334 *SRT* no.38, lines: 58–66.
L   *CBS* 6140 *SEM* no.29, lines: 61–114.
M   *Ni* 4402 Kramer 1949 fig.6 = ISET 2 53, lines: 61–66; 113–114.
N   *N* 4236 Römer 1980, pl. ix, lines: 8–24; 34–46
O   *CBS* 15164 Römer 1980, pl. x–xi, lines: 76–107.
P   *N* 1250 published in transliteration only, see, J.S. Cooper 1981, 234 and
     Vanstiphout 1989, lines: 49–59.

Possible joins between these fragments have been noted by several authors, and were discussed in detail by Vanstiphout.[2] The most plausible joins are between fragments kept in different museums (Istanbul, Jena, Philadelphia), and exist only on paper (G+N+J, D+F). The other 'joins' are likely, but lack physical proof because the fragments do not touch (C(+)K(+)P; M(+)O; D+F(+)I). The 'joined' fragments form nine manuscripts labeled with the letters a-i:

a =   A   1–17...32–49...82–96...111–114
b =   C (+) K (+) P   1–24...49–66...88–114
c =   B   1–61
d =   E   1–12...52–61
e =   G + N + J   1–56
f =   D + F (+) I   1–12...16–66...68–82

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[1] Vanstiphout 1987 and 1989 labels this manuscript X. Contrary to our edition which counts 114 lines, Römer's edition counts 115 lines. The difference is due to the inclusion of the spurious s a g - l u m - l u m line from h (110, variant)
[2] Vanstiphout 1987; 1989

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g  =  H              4–10. . . 47–57
h  =  L              61–114
i  =  M (+) O        61–66. . . 76–107. . . 113–114
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All the manuscripts are Old Babylonian and originate in Nippur, except for a of which the provenance is unknown. Only a and b are complete one-tablet editions of the whole text, a in four and b in two columns. The other tablets contain only part of the composition, and may be either abstracts or part of two-tablet editions. Vanstiphout argues that h and i, containing the second part of the composition, belong to respectively c (or g) and d containing the first part, and accordingly labels them c_3 and d_2. The fragmentary MS g he considers a duplicate of the edition represented by c, and accordingly labels it c_2. The fact, however, that c-h and d-i supplement each other proves only that these tablets belong to the same type of edition, not that c(or g)-h and d-i form one manuscript.[3]

The variations found in the texts are mostly of an orthographic or grammatical nature, and a thorough analysis of these variations might result in a distinction between the different branches of the written Old Babylonian tradition of the text. Since, however, most of the text stems from fragmentary manuscripts, and in absence of comparative material, the variations indicating separate traditions cannot always be identified with certainty. Nevertheless, one case allows a fruitful analysis and may serve as a starting point for the discussion of manuscripts branches: the formula expressing the position taken towards the war against Kish.[4]

This formula appears in the text four times (lines: 8, 14, 23, 24), and is present in most of the manuscripts. It consists of two antithetical sentences, the one affirmative and the other negative. Most of the manuscripts confuse the affirmative and negative grammatical elements, and the only one which preserves the logical order is b. In manuscripts a and b both verbal forms are *marû* whereas in all other manuscripts they are *ḫamṭu*. On this basis it seems that the manuscripts split into two main branches, the one represented by a and b and the other by c, d, e, and f. Therefore we may assume the existence of an earlier source which we mark ω.

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                    ω
                    |
          ┌─────────┴─────────┐
         a,b               c,d,e,f
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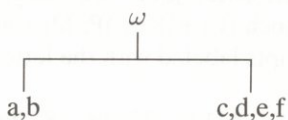
All manuscripts except b show two types of repetition: horizontal and vertical. Source a repeats line 8 in line 14, although their meanings should be diametrically opposed (vertical repetition). In d line 8 both verbs have the same negative

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[3] Vanstiphout 1987 links h to c and i to d (rather than h to d and i to c) on the basis of an orthographic variation in the catchline 61.

[4] Cf. Cooper 1981 225f., and the chart on 239; Vanstiphout 1987 and 1989. The designations ω, α and β are chosen in order to facilitate comparison with the discussion and stemma of Vanstiphout, who uses the same designations.

form, n a m - b a - a n - *ḫamṭu*, while the first should be negative and the second affirmative (horizontal repetition). The same is true for f lines 8, 23, and 29, but in this text we have both horizontal and vertical repetition. The horizontal repetition confirms that manuscripts d and f belong to the same branch, while a and b without it belong to another. A further comparison of the versions of d and f yields other divergencies:

d: 8.   [e$_2$-kiši ^{k}]^i-⌈še$_3$⌉   gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-de$_3$-en

                           ^{giš}tukul   nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-en-d[e$_3$-en]

f: 8.   [e$_2$-kiši ^{k}]^i-a   gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en

                           ^{giš}tukul   nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-e[n-   ]

Firstly, important and indicative variants are the postpositions used after the first nominal complex: the terminative -š e$_3$ in d, and the locative -a in f. Manuscript f is consistent in the use of the locative -a, as can be seen in lines 23 and 29. The use of the terminative -š e$_3$ is shared by manuscripts a and b on the one hand, and by c, d, and e representing the second branch on the other. Therefore, we may assume that the terminative -š e$_3$ was present in the earlier source ω. The second difference is found in the form of the first verb. Whereas both d and f use the plural of the *ḫamṭu*-stem, d has the first person, while f has the second person. When expressing the answer of the g u r u š to Gilgamesh this verb should be in the first person plural as in d. Therefore, in line 29 f is mistaken. The use of the first person plural is shared by d, a and b. Although the latter two use the *marû*-stem, we may assume that the shared correct number-form represents the earlier source ω. On the other hand, some variants shared by manuscripts f and a or b (lines 3, 41: f=a, line 17: f=b) probably preserve the tradition of the earlier source ω as well, but since the horizontal repetition and the verbs conjugated in the *ḫamṭu*-stem imply that d and f pertain to the same branch, we conclude that both d and f derive from a common source (β) which should be placed between them and the earlier source ω. Source β probably used the terminative -š e$_3$ and the first person plural, present in d, a and b, and also the *ḫamṭu*-stem as well as the horizontal repetition which appears in all manuscripts except a and b. Since lines 14, 23, 29 are not preserved in d, it is impossible to tell whether the vertical repetition originates in source β as well. It is worth noting, however, that the vertical repetition is common to both c and f.
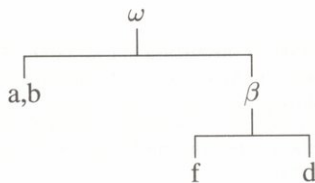
Interesting variants appear in c in which the formula is attested four times. This manuscript belongs to the group d, e, f according to the verbal forms with the *ḫamṭu* stem. The first verb, however, is always affirmative and the second negative. Since only line 14 is so phrased, it seems that lines 8, 23, 29 are wrong, and that we have a vertical repetition. Yet if this is a vertical repetition, its origin should be in line 14 and not in the erroneous line 8, since it is inconceivable that line 8 was copied from line 14. Comparing line 8 in c with line 8 in d one can easily observe that the second sentence in both is the same: ^{giš}t u k u l n a m - b a - a n - s i g₂ - g e - e n - d e₃ - e n 'Let us not smite it with weapons'. In both manuscripts this version in the negative is wrong, since in this line Gilgamesh is actually exhorting the audience to fight Kish and to smite it with weapons. This line indicates that d and c had a common source in which horizontal repetition did occur.

However, comparing the first sentence of the formula in all manuscripts belonging to this branch, one observes that the only difference between c and the others is that c omits the negative preformative n a m - throughout:

8.	others	gu₂	nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-de₃-en
8.	c	gu₂	ba-an-gar-re-en-de₃-en

Considering the omission of the preformative n a m - in the wrong place and the further resemblance of c to manuscripts d and f, we may deduce that horizontal repetition indeed appeared in the source of c, but that n a m - was omitted deliberately by the scribe since the formula consisting of two negative sentences did not make sense. The scribe, however, preserved the vertical repetition, and therefore line 14 is accidentally correct.

According to this analysis c is later than d, and is based on a manuscript in which horizontal as well as vertical repetition occured. Another variant of c which can be related to the state of affairs discussed above is found in line 23. In this line c appears to use both postpositions at the end of the first nominal complex, the terminative - š e₃ (as in d) and the locative - a (as in f): e₂ - k i š i^{ki} - š e₃ - a ... This variant indicates that manuscript c was actually based upon two different manuscripts, one similar to d and the other similar to f, perhaps even these two. This conclusions is reinforced by more examples of variants common to c and either d or f.[5]

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5 The spelling Birḫurture in f contrary to Birḫurtura in c and d; in line 3 c and d have the terminative postposition in common, while f (and a) has a locative; in line 58 c and f spell the suffix - a - n i , while d has - n i - N I ; in line 59 c and d have b a - r a - e 3, while f has, according to the copy, b a - a n - ⌈e₃⌉. In line 57, however, d and f have the same version, while c adds l u g a l - m u at the beginning of the line. This must be a later addition to the text, since the modification of c in the first half of lines 8, 14, 23, 29 proves that this manuscript is later than d.

ω

a,b   β

f   d

c
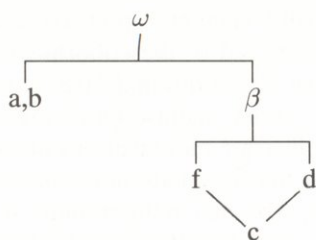
Manuscripts h and i contain the second half of the composition. The variants in lines 86 and 90 and the order of lines 104–106 distinguish h and i from the other manuscripts, and indicate that they belong to the same branch. Since line 104 'Akka, you have given me breath, Akka, you have given me life' should be either the opening or the closing of the strophe, it seems that the place of this line in h and i (105) has been changed, and that the tradition of b is better. Lines 107–110 (the nomination formula pronounced by Akka) are copied in h as they appeared in lines 30–35 (preserved in c, e, f). Manuscript b, however, cuts the formula in the middle of line 110 and adds š u - m [u g i$_4$ - m a - a b], '[repay me m]y favour'. Although we have no means to verify the original version, the tradition attested in b makes more sense. The version attested in h may reflect the text tradition of source β. The spelling of the name Birḫurture in h relates this manuscript to f (cf. note 5). On the other hand, the version of h in lines 79 and 80 (second person) differs from that of f (genitive), and in line 81 f has a wrong form of the verb (affirmative) against the correct form of h and i. Hence, either both manuscripts stem from the same source, or f stems from h. Since manuscript f seems more corrupted than h (note also the unique use of the locative suffix - a in lines 8, 23, 29), the latter is tentatively placed between manuscript f and source β (see the stemma at the end of this paragraph).

Manuscript i has the spelling Birhurturra (with -a) as c and f, and may represent the second part of the edition of which d is the first part (see note 3). That spelling occurs also in b and therefore may represent the spelling of the earlier source ω.

Manuscript e has the same nomination formula (in lines 33–35) as c, f and h (in lines 108–110). In lines 14 and 23 e has the terminative - š e$_3$ as manuscript a, b, c and d but the second person plural (lines 23, 29) as f. Some mistaken variants in e indicate that it cannot have been the source of c and f (note especially line 27 with r i - r i instead of d a b$_5$ - d a b$_5$ -), but manuscript f with the locative - a cannot have been the source of e. Since the suffix - š e$_3$ is common to all manuscripts but f, and the use of the second person plural is common to e, f and c (in lines 23–29), we may conclude that they all derive from a common source. This source was probably h, since, as pointed out above, there is ground to assume that h is earlier than f. If this conclusion is correct, h had the suffix - š e$_3$ as the earlier sources ω and β, but the second person plural contrary to d.

We observed above that manuscript c was based on sources similar to d and f. Since f is the only manuscript using the locative - a (lines 8, 23, 29), manuscript c should be connected with f.

Of manuscript g only a small fragment is preserved. The preserved second half of line 8 with the negative instead of the cohortative indicates that g goes with manuscripts c-i (see note 3). The additional l u g a l - m u at the beginning of line 57 shows that g is close to c. Since manuscript c looks as if compiled from both d and f, and in view of the delibarate modifications made by c to lines 8, 14, 23, 29, the addition of l u g a l - m u may originate in manuscript c as well. Therefore g is probably based on c (see the β branch in the stemma at the end of this paragraph).

Manuscripts a and b are based on the same tradition, as is clear from the evidence adduced so far and a number of further cases.[6] Some variations between a and b, however, can be found as well. Most of them are of a grammatical or orthographical nature and unimportant. Considering that these manuscripts hardly overlap, one variant only can be of interest. In lines 5 and 11 a has t u l₂ - k a l a m a as c, d, f and unlike b which has t u l₂ - t u l₂ - k a l a m a. It seems that the version common to a, c, d, and f, represents the tradition of the earlier source ω. Some more additions to the text are made by b: line 18 adds Gilgamesh' title. Comparing this to the parallel line 3, the addition appears to be unique to b and probably does not reflect source ω. For lines 99a and 102a there are only manuscripts h and i to compare, and thus it is hard to tell whether these lines are original, in particular 99a. Line 102a repeats the title š a g i n a of line 103 and may represent an addition of b rather than an omission of h and i. The variants in lines 5 and 11 indicate that a is close to the earlier source ω. However, the vertical repetition in a lines 8 and 14 indicates that a was not the source of b. In view of the variants found in a and b, we may assume the existence of a further source between the earlier source ω and manuscripts a and b (as is assumed for the other branch). This source which we label α was probably the parent of both a and b. Note that since manuscript a did not originate in Nippur as b-i, there may have been an additional source between a and α.
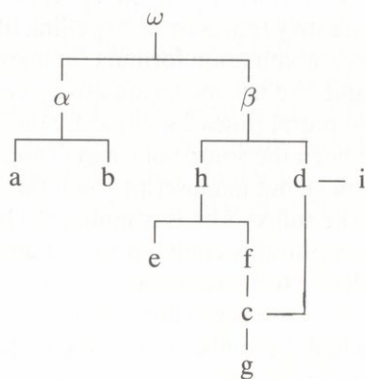
[6] Note especially the use of the *marû* stem, the order of lines 104–106 and 111–114 which is different from h and i, and probably reflects the correct version, and line 90 in which both texts add i g i - b a r - r e - d a - n i contrary to h.

1 lu$_2$-kin-gi$_4$-a ak-ka$_3$-dumu-en-me-bara$_2$-ge$_4$-si-ke$_4$
2 kiši^{ki}-ta ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes-ra unug^{ki}-še$_3$ mu-un-ši-re$_7$-eš
3 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes igi-ab-ba-uru-na-ka
4 inim ba-an-gar inim i$_3$-kin-kin-e
5 tul$_2$ til-le-da tul$_2$-kalama til-til-le-da
6 tul$_2$-nig$_2$-ban$_3$-da-kalama til-til-le-da
7 tul$_2$-buru$_3$-da eš$_2$-la$_2$ til-til-le-da
8 e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-ga$_2$-ga$_2$-an-de$_3$-en
   ^{giš}tukul ga-am$_3$-ma-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en
9 ukkin-gar-ra-ab-ba-uru-na-ka
10 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes-ra mu-na-ni-ib-gi$_4$-gi$_4$
11 tul$_2$-til-le-da tul$_2$-kalama til-til-le-da
12 tul$_2$-nig$_2$-ban$_3$-da-kalama til-til-le-da
13 tul$_2$-buru$_3$-da eš$_2$-la$_2$ til-til-le-da
14 e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ ga-am$_3$-ga$_2$-ga$_2$-an-de$_3$-en
   ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en
15 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes en-kul-aba$_4$^{ki}-a-ke$_4$
16 ^{d}inanna-ra nir-gal$_2$-la-e
17 inim-ab-ba-uru-na-ke$_4$ ša$_3$-še$_3$ nu-um-ma-gid$_2$
18 min$_3$-kam-ma-še$_3$ ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes igi-guruš-uru^{ki}-na-še$_3$
19 inim ba-an-gar inim i$_3$-kin-kin-e
20 tul$_2$-til-le-da tul$_2$-kalama til-til-le-da
21 tul$_2$-nig$_2$-ban$_3$-da-kalama til-til-le-da
22 tul$_2$-buru$_3$-da eš$_2$-la$_2$ til-til-le-da
23 e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ ⌈nam-ba-ga$_2$⌉-[ga$_2$-an]-⌈de$_3$-en⌉
   ^{giš}tukul ga-am$_3$-ma-sig$_3$-⌈ge-en⌉-[de$_3$-en]
24 ukkin-gar-ra-guruš-uru^{ki}-na-ka ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes-[ra] mu-na-ni-ib-gi$_4$-gi$_4$
25 gub-gub-bu-de$_3$ tuš-tuš-u$_3$-de$_3$
26 dumu-lugal-la da ri-e-de$_3$
27 ḫaš$_2$-anše dab$_5$-dab$_5$-be$_2$-e-de$_3$
28 a-ba zi-bi mu-un-tuku-e-še
29 e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ nam-ba-ga$_2$-ga$_2$-an-de$_3$-en
   ^{giš}tukul ga-am$_3$-ma-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en
30 unug^{ki} giš-kin-ti-dingir-re-e-ne-ke$_4$
31 e$_2$-an-na e$_2$ an-ta e$_{11}$-de$_3$
32 dingir-gal-gal-e-ne me-dim$_2$-bi ba-an-ak-eš-am$_3$
33 bad$_3$-gal muru$_9$ ki-us$_2$-sa-a-ba
34 ki-tuš-maḫ an-ne$_2$ gar-ra-a-ba
35 sag mu-e-si$_3$ za-e lugal-ur-sag-me-en
36 sag-lum-lum nun an-ne$_2$ ki-ag$_2$
37 gin-a-ni-ta a-gin$_7$ ni$_2$ mu-ni-in-te
38 erin$_2$-bi al-tur a-ga-bi-ta al-bir-re
39 lu$_2$-be$_2$-ne igi nu-mu-un-da-ru-gu$_2$-uš
40 u$_4$-bi-a ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes en-kul-aba$_4$^{ki}-ke$_4$

1 Akka, the son of Enmebaragesi, sent envoys
2 From Kish to Gilgamesh, to Uruk.
3 Gilgamesh before the elders of his city
4 Laid the matter, seeking for words:
5 'To finish the wells, to finish all the wells of the land,
6   To finish all the shallow wells of the land,
7   To finish all the deep wells with hoisting ropes,
8   Let us not submit to the house of Kish,
         Let us smite it with weapons'.
 9 The convoked assembly of his city's elders
10 Answered Gilgamesh:
11 'To finish the wells, to finish all the wells of the land,
12   To finish all the shallow wells of the land,
13   To finish all the deep wells with hoisting ropes,
14   Let us submit to the house of Kish,
         Let us not smite it with weapons'.
15 Since Gilgamesh, the lord of Kulaba,
16 had placed his trust in Inanna,
17 He did not take to heart the words of his city's elders.
18 Gilgamesh before the able-bodied men of his city again
19 Laid the matter, seeking for words:
20 'To finish the wells, to finish all the wells of the land,
21   To finish all the shallow wells of the land,
22   To finish all the deep wells with hoisting ropes,
23   Let us not submit to the house of Kish,
         Let us smite it with weapons'.
24 The convoked assembly of his city's able-bodied men answered Gilgamesh:
25 'As they say: to stand up, and to sit down,
26   To protect the king's son,
27   And to hold back the donkeys,
28   Who has breath for that?
29   Let us not submit to the house of Kish,
         Let us smite it with weapons.
30 Uruk, the handiwork of the gods,
31 Eanna, the temple descended from heaven
32 Whose parts the great gods created,
33 Its great wall standing on the ground (like) a cloud,
34 Its lofty abode established by An,
35 They are entrusted to you, you are king and warrior.
36 One smashing heads, a prince beloved of An,
37 His coming would inspire such fear
38 That its (of Kish) army will dwindle, and scatter in retreat,
39 And its (of Kish) men be unable to confront him'.
40 Then Gilgamesh, the lord of Kulaba,

41 inim-guruš-uru-na-še$_3$ ša$_3$-ga-ni an-ḫul$_2$
        ur$_5$-ra-ni ba-an-zalag
42 arad$_2$-da-ni en-ki-du$_{10}$-ra gu$_3$ mu-na-de$_2$-e
43 ne-še$_3$ ^{giš}šu-kara$_2$ a$_2$-me$_3$ sa ḫe$_2$-em-mi-gi$_4$
44 ^{giš}tukul-me$_3$ a$_2$-zu-še$_3$ ḫe$_2$-em-mi-gi$_4$
45 ni$_2$-gal me-lam$_2$-ma ḫe$_2$-em-dim$_2$-dim$_2$-e
46 e-ne gin-a-ni-ta ni$_2$-gal-mu ḫe$_2$-eb-šu$_2$
47 dim$_2$-ma-a-ni ḫe$_2$-suḫ$_3$ galga-a-ni ḫe$_2$-bir-re
48 u$_4$ nu-ia$_2$-am$_3$ u$_4$ nu-u-am$_3$
49 ak-ka$_3$-dumu-en-me-bara$_2$-ge$_4$-si-ke$_4$ unug^{ki} za$_3$-ga ba-an-dab$_5$-be$_2$-eš
50 unug^{ki}-ga dim$_2$-ma-bi ba-an-suḫ$_3$
51 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes en-kul-ab^{ki}-a-ke$_4$
52 ur-sag-be$_2$-ne-er gu$_3$ mu-ne-de$_2$-e
53 ur-sag-mu-ne igi mu-un-suḫ-suḫ-en-ze$_2$-en
54 ša$_3$-tuku ḫe$_2$-en-zi-zi-i ak-ka$_3$-še$_3$ ga-an-ši-gin
55 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re lu$_2$-sag-lugal-a-ni
56 lugal-a-ni-ir za$_3$-mi$_2$ mu-na-ab-be$_2$
57 ga$_2$-e ak-ka$_3$-še$_3$ ga-an-ši-gin
58 dim$_2$-ma-ni ḫe$_2$-suḫ$_3$ galga-a-ni ḫe$_2$-bir-re
59 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re abul-la ba-ra-e$_3$
60 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re abul-la e$_3$-da-ni
61 ka$_2$-abul-la-ka mu-ni-in-dab$_5$-be$_2$-eš
62 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re sukud-du-ni mu-ni-in-kum-kum-ne
63 igi-ak-ka$_3$-še$_3$ mu-ni-in-te
64 ak-ka$_3$-še$_3$ gu$_3$ mu-na-de$_2$-e
65 inim-ma-ni nu-un-til zabar-dab$_5$-unug^{ki}-ga-ke$_4$ bad$_3$-še$_3$ im-me-e$_{11}$-de$_3$
66 bad$_3$-da gu$_2$-na im-ma-an-la$_2$
67 ak-ka$_3$ igi im-ma-ni-in-du$_8$
68 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re gu$_3$ mu-na-de$_2$-e
69 arad$_2$ lu$_2$-še lugal-zu-u$_3$
70 lu$_2$-še lugal-mu in-nu
71 lu$_2$-še lugal-mu ḫe$_2$-me-a
72 sag-ki-ḫuš-a-ni ḫe$_2$-me-a
73 igi-alim-ma-ka-a-ni ḫe$_2$-me-a
74 su$_6$-^{na_4}za-gin$_3$-na-ka-a-ni ḫe$_2$-me-a
75 šu-si-ša$_6$-ga-ni ḫe$_2$-me-a
76 šar$_2$-ra la-ba-an-šub-bu-uš šar$_2$-ra la-ba-an-zi-ge-eš
77 šar$_2$-ra saḫar-ra la-ba-an-da-šar$_2$-re-eš
78 kur-kur-du$_3$-a-bi la-ba-da-an-šu$_2$-a
79 ka-ma-da-ka saḫar-ra la-ba-da-an-si
80 si-^{giš}ma$_2$-gur$_8$-ra-ka la-ba-ra-an-kud
81 ak-ka$_3$ lugal-kiši^{ki}-a ša$_3$-erin$_2$-na-ka-ni šaga-a la-ba-ni-in-ak
82 mu-ni-ib-ra-ra-ne mu-ni-ib-sig$_3$-sig$_3$-ge-ne

41 His heart rejoiced at the words of his city's able-bodied men,
         his spirit brightened.
42 He said to his servant Enkidu:
43 'Now, let the implements and arms of battle be made ready,
44 Let the battle mace return to your side,
45 May they create great fear, terrifying splendour,
46 That when he comes my great terror overwhelms him,
47 That his wits become confused and his judgement falters'.
48 Not five days, not ten days had passed,
49 When Akka, the son of Enmebaragesi, (and his army) laid siege to Uruk.
50 Uruk's wits were confused,
51 And Gilgamesh, the lord of Kulaba,
52 To its warriors said:
53 'My warriors, you look alarmed,
54 (but) let one stout of heart stand up (and say) 'I will go to Akka'.
55 Birḫurture, his royal bodyguard,
56 praised his king (and said):
57 'I will go to Akka,
58 That his wits become confused and his judgement falters',
59 And Birḫurture went out through the city gate.
60 As soon as Birḫurture went out through the city gate,
61 They captured him at the entrance of the gate,
62 And gave Birḫurture a thorough beating.
63 He was brought before Akka,
64 And to Akka he spoke,
65 But before he had finished speaking the cup-bearer of Uruk mounted the wall
66 And peered out over the wall.
67 Akka saw him,
68 And said to Birḫurture:
69 'Slave, is that man your king?'
70 'That man is not my king!
71 Were that man my king,
72 Were that his dreadful brow,
73 Were those his bison eyes,
74 Were that his lapis lazuli beard,
75 Were those his delicate fingers,
76 Would not multitudes be cast down, multitudes be raised,
77 Would not multitudes be smeared with dust,
78 And would not all foreign troops be overwhelmed,
79 Would the mouths of the land not be filled with dust,
80 Would the prows of the ships not be cut,
81 And would Akka, the King of Kish, not be taken captive in the midst of his
     troops?'
82 They hit him, they strike him,

83 bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re sukud-du-ni mu-ni-in-kum-kum-ne

84 egir-zabar-dab$_5$-unug^{ki}-ga-ke$_4$ ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes bad$_3$-še$_3$ im-me-e$_{11}$-de$_3$

85 ab-ba-di$_4$-di$_4$-la$_2$ kul-aba$_4$^{ki}-a-ke$_4$ me-lam$_2$ bi$_2$-ib-šu$_2$-šu$_2$

86 guruš-unug^{ki}-ga-ke$_4$ ^{giš}tukul-me$_3$ šu-ne-ne b[i$_2$-in-si]

87 ^{giš}ig-abul-la-ka sila-ba bi$_2$-in-gub

88 en-ki-du$_{10}$ abul-la dili ba-ra-e$_3$

89 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes bad$_3$-da gu$_2$ im-ma-an-la$_2$

90 igi-bar-re-da-ni ak-ka$_3$ igi ba-ni-in-du$_8$

91 arad$_2$ lu$_2$-še lugal-zu-u$_3$

92 lu$_2$-še lugal-mu i$_3$-me-a

93 bi$_2$-in-du$_{11}$-ga-gin$_7$-nam

94 šar$_2$-ra ba-an-šub-bu-uš-am$_3$ šar$_2$-ra ba-an-zi-ge-eš-am$_3$

95 šar$_2$-ra saḫar-ra ba-an-⌈šar$_2$-re-eš-am$_3$⌉

96 kur-kur-du$_3$-a-bi ba-an-da-šu$_2$-am$_3$

97 ka-ma-da-ka saḫar-ra ba-da-an-si

98 si-^{giš}ma$_2$-gur$_8$-ra-ke$_4$ ba-ni-in-kud

99 ak-ka$_3$ lugal-kiši^{ki}-a-ke$_4$ ša$_3$-erin$_2$-na-ka-ni šaga-a ba-ni-in-ak

99a [···]unug^{ki}-ga-ke$_4$ erin$_2$-bi [···]

100 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes en-kul-aba$_4$^{ki}-ke$_4$

101 ak-ka$_3$-a gu$_3$ mu-na-de$_2$-e

102 ak-ka$_3$ ugula-mu ak-ka$_3$ nu-ban$_3$-da-mu

102a ak-ka$_3$ ensi$_2$-mu ak-ka$_3$ šagina-mu

103 ak-ka$_3$ šagina-erin$_2$-na-a-mu

104 ak-ka$_3$ zi mu-e-sum ak-ka$_3$ nam-ti mu-e-sum

105 ak-ka$_3$ lu$_2$-kar-ra ur$_2$-ra bi$_2$-in-tum$_2$-mu

106 ak-ka$_3$ mušen-kar-ra še bi$_2$-ib-si-si

107 unug^{ki} giš-kin-ti-dingir-re-e-ne-ke$_4$

108 bad$_3$-gal muru$_9$ ki-us$_2$-s[a-a-ba]

109 ki-tuš-maḫ an-ne$_2$ gar-ra-a-ba

110 [sag mu-e]-si$_3$ šu-m[u gi$_4$-ma-ab]

111 igi-^{d}utu-še$_3$ šu-u$_4$-bi-ta e-ra-an-gi$_4$

112 ak-ka$_3$ kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ šu ba-ni-in-ba

113 ^{d}bil$_3$-ga-mes en-kul-aba$_4$^{ki}-a-ke$_4$

114 za$_3$-mi$_2$-zu du$_{10}$-ga-am$_3$

83 And give Birḫurture a thorough beating.
84 After the cup-bearer of Uruk, Gilgamesh climbed up the wall,
85 The terrifying splendour overwhelmed young and old of Kulaba,
86 It made the able-bodied men of Uruk take up the battle mace,
87 and throw wide open the city gate's doors.
88 Enkidu went out through the city gate alone,
89 Gilgamesh peered out over the wall.
90 When he looked, Akka saw him (and said to Enkidu):
91 'Slave, is that man your king?'
92 'That man is indeed my king (Enkidu answered)'.
93 Just as he (Enkidu) said that,
94 Indeed multitudes were cast down, multitudes were raised,
95 Multitudes were smeared with dust;
96 And indeed all foreign troops were overwhelmed,
97 The mouths of the land were filled with dust,
98 The prows of the ships were cut,
99 And Akka, the king of Kish, was taken captive in the midst of his troops.
99a [   ] of Uruk, its army[   ]
100 Gilgamesh, the lord of Kulaba,
101 said to Akka:
102 'Akka my lieutenant, Akka my captain,
102a Akka my governor, Akka my general,
103 Akka my army commander,
104 Akka, you have given me breath, Akka you have given me life,
105 Akka, you have taken the refugee on your lap,
106 Akka, you have nourished the fleeing bird with grain'.
107 (Akka:) 'Uruk, the handiwork of the gods,
108 Its great wall standing on the ground (like) a cloud,
109 Its lofty abode established by An,
110 They are entrusted to you. [Repay me m]y favour!'
111 (Gilgamesh:) 'By Utu, I now repay you the former favour.'
112 He set Akka free (to go) to Kish.
113 Gilgamesh, lord of Kulaba,
114 Praising you is sweet.

3   VARIANTS[1]

1   c: aka for ak-ka$_3$; d: ka.

2   c: mu-un-⌈ši⌉-DU-eš.

3   so a (Cooper 1981); c, d: -uru^{ki}-na-še$_3$; f: -uru^{ki}-na-k[a].

5   b: tul$_2$-tul$_2$-kalama (also lines 11 and 20); a, c, d: -kalam-ma; d: ti-ti-le-dam (also in 6, but not in 7 and 11).

6   c: -kalam-ma

8   so a (Cooper 1981), b;
   c: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ ba-an-gar-re-en-de$_3$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en;
   f: [^{k}]^i-a gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-sig$_3$-ge-e[n   ];
   d: [^{k}]^i-⌈še$_3$⌉ gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-de$_3$-en [   ] nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-en-d[e$_3$-en];

9   b, c, f: -ka; a: -ke$_4$

13   for buru$_3$-da in c see Cooper 1981 and Michalowski 1982 (also in line 22).

14   so b; c: gu$_2$ ba-an-gar-re-en-de$_3$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en;
   a: ga-am$_3$-ma-sig$_3$-ge-en-de$_3$-en (Cooper 1981).

16   all manuscripts preserving the end of the line (a, b, c) have -e.

17   a: [nu-u]m-ma-gid$_2$; b: nu-um-gid$_2$; c: nu-mu-na-gid$_2$.

18   b adds after bil$_3$-ga-mes: en-kul-ab^{ki}-a-ke$_4$, 'the lord of Kulaba'; end: a: not preserved; b: -ke$_4$; c: -še$_3$.

19   in line 4 all manuscripts have i$_3$-kin-kin-e (a, c, d); in line 19 b has i$_3$-kin-[ki]n-e (contrary to Römer 1981, who reads i$_3$-k[i]n-e) and c i$_3$-kin-kin-ne.

23   so b (restored after the parallel lines, cf. also Cooper 1981); c: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$-a gu$_2$ ba-gar-re-ze$_2$-de$_3$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-en-⌈de$_3$-en⌉;
   f: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-a gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-de$_3$-en;
   e: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ g[u$_2$ ... ba]-an-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en [   ] nam-ba-sig$_3$-ge-en-ze$_2$-en.

24   -ra after bil$_3$-ga-mes is restored after a and b in line 10; in 24 b is not preserved, and the other manuscripts omit (c, e, f) -ra.

27   so c, f; e: [   ] ri-ri-be$_2$-de$_3$.

29   the affirmative answer of the able-bodied men as reconstructed here is identical to Gilgamesh' proposal in line 8.
   c: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-še$_3$ gu$_2$ ba-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en ^{giš}tukul [   ];
   f: e$_2$-kiši^{ki}-a gu$_2$ nam-ba-an-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-an-sig$_3$-ge-de$_3$-en;

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[1] 'Cooper 1981' and 'Michalowski 1982' refer to the collations of these authors on p. 233 and 578 respectively. Since a full score edition of the text can be found in Römer 1980, simple orthographic variants are incompletely noted here. The minor variations in the spelling of the name of Gilgamesh are ignored throughout. The composite text is, where possible, based on the two best manuscripts, a and b.

e: [a]n-gar-re-en-ze$_2$-en ^{giš}tukul nam-ba-⌈sig$_3$-ge⌉-en-de$_3$-en.

33 so a; c, f: bad$_3$-gal bad$_3$ an-ne$_2$ ki-us$_2$-sa, 'Great wall, founded by An'.

34 so a; d, f: gar-ra-ni.

35 so a; e: za-e, f: za (Michalowski 1982); e,f: lugal-ur-sag-bi.

37 a: gin-a-ni, -ta from c and f; e, f: ni$_2$ ba-an-te.

40 last four signs in a broken, restored after c, e, f, cf. line 18 (b).

41 a omits ša$_3$-ga-ni an-hul$_2$; c: -ka for -še$_3$

42 so a (-de$_2$-e restored); c, e: šubur-a-ni; f: ⌈šubur⌉-ni (Cooper 1981), and at
    the end probably -de$_2$-e; c: gu$_3$ mu-na-e-de$_2$-e.

43 so f; a omits ḫe$_2$-.

44 so f; a: a$_2$-zu ḫe$_2$-mi-g[i$_4$]; c: ⌈ḫe$_2$⌉-mi-gi.

50 so b, c; f: ba-suḫ$_3$.

51 b: kul-ab^{ki}-a-ke$_4$; c: kul-ab-ba$^?$-ke$_4$ (Cooper 1981).

52 so c, f; e: ur-sag-e-n[e-er]; b: mu-ne-de$_2$-[e]; c, f: mu-na-de$_2$-e.

53 b: [ ]-suḫ(text DU)-⌈suḫ⌉-en-ze$_2$-en; c: mu-un-suḫ-suḫ-u$_3$-ne; f: mu-un-suḫ$_{10}$-
    suḫ$_{10}$-u$_3$-ne (line omitted in copy, photo Römer 1980 Taf. IV); c, f: 'My war-
    riors look alarmed'.

54 so c; b: ga-an-gi$_4$; f: ga-am$_3$-ši-gin (also in 57).

55 c, d, f: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-ra; e: AŠ$_2$-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-[ ]; c and f end the line with lugal-a-ni,
    b with [-lugal-la]-ke$_4$.

56 so f; c, d: lugal-a-ni.

57 so d, f; c and g add lugal-mu at the beginning of the line: 'My king'; b ends
    [g]a-na-gu$_4$-gu$_4$-ud, 'Let me strut (to Akka)'; c: ga-gin.

58 so f; d: dim$_2$-ma-ni-NI, galga-ni-NI; b: [ḫe$_2$]-bir.

59 c, d: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-ra; f: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re; c, d: ba-ra-e$_3$; f: ba-an-⌈e$_3$⌉.

60 b, c, d: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-ra; f: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re.

61 f and h omit -la-; final verbal form as in c, f (end broken) and h; d: mu-un-
    dab$_5$-be$_2$-eš.

62 f, h (Michalowski 1982): bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re; b, i: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-ra.

65 f: [inim-m]a-ni nu-un-til (Michalowski 1982); h: inim-ma-ni nu-un-ti .... im-
    me-e$_{11}$-de$_3$ (Cooper 1981, Michalowski 1982).

68 so h (Cooper 1981, Michalowski 1982).

73 so h; f: igi-alim-ma-ka-ni.

74 so h; f: -na-ka-ni.

76 so h; f: la-ba-šub-bu-uš.

77 so h; f: saḫar-ra ⌈x⌉ la-ba-an-da-an-[š]ar$_2$-re-e[š]; i: [ ]-šar$_2$-⌈re⌉-eš (Cooper
    1981, Michalowski 1982).

78 so f; h: la-ba-an-da-.

79 so f; h: ka-ma-da-zu (Cooper 1981, Michalowski 1982), 'The mouths of your
    land' (-zu instead of expected -za-ka).

80 so f; h: si-^{giš}ma$_2$-gur$_8$-zu la-ba-ra-an-kud (Michalowski 1982), 'The prows of
    your ships' (-zu instead of expected -za).

81 so h, i; f: i-ni-in-ak; in line 99 the generally correct b has -ke$_4$ after the first
    nominal complex.

83 a, h: bir-ḫur-tu$_{19}$-re.

84 for the verbal form at the end of the line see Cooper 1981; i: [i]m-me-e$_{11}$-de$_3$; h: im-x-de$_3$.

86 so a; h, i: a$_2$-ne-ne bi$_2$-in-si (Michalowski 1982).

87 so h, i; a: -ke$_4$ instead of -ka.

88 so h, i; a: abul.

89 so a; h, i: gu$_2$-na.

90 so a, b; h, i$^?$ omit igi-bar-re-da-ni.

94 so b; a: -a instead of -am$_3$ (twice), h and i omit.

95 so b; a: ba-an-šar$_2$-šar$_2$-re-eš-am$_3$; h: ba-an-da-šar$_2$-re-eš; i: ba-da-šar$_2$-re-eš.

96 so a; h: kur-kur-du$_3$-erasure-a-bi Cooper 1981) ba-an-da-šu$_2$; i: ba-da-an-šu$_2$.

97 both b and h have ka-ma-da-ka; i: broken.

98 b: -gur$_8$-ra-ke$_4$; h: -gur$_3$-ra-ni; b: ba-ra-[   ] or ba-ab-[   ]; h, i: ba-ni-in-kud.

99 so b; h: lugal-kiši^{ki}-a.

99a line only in b; h and i omit.

101 so h, i; b: [ak]-ka$_3$-aš sa$_2$ mu-na-ni-ib-be$_2$, 'Approached Akka'.

102 so b; h: ak-ka$_3$-a ugula-a-mu.

102a line only in b; h and i omit.

104 so b; h, i = 105; h and i have ma-an-sum instead of mu-e-sum.

105 h, i = 106; b: tum$_2$-tum$_2$-⌈x⌉ (Cooper 1981); h: bi$_2$-in-tum$_2$-mu; i: [t]um$_2$-mu.

106 so b (Cooper 1981); h, i = 104.

108 so b; h: bad$_3$-gal bad$_3$ an-ne$_2$-ki-us$_2$-sa; b 108-110 is restored after 33-35.

110 beginning of line restored after 35 and b; h: sag mu-si$_3$ za-e lugal-ur-sag-bi, followed by sag-lum-lum nun an-ne$_2$-ki-ag$_2$ (line 111 in Römer's edition; repetition of 35-36).

111 so a, b; h inverts 111 and 112.

112 so a, b; h: kiši^{ki}-a šu ba-ni-in-bar.

For other recent translations see Römer 1980, 38ff. (German), Cooper 1981, 235ff., and Jacobsen 1987, 346ff. (both English). The text as we have it shows many deviations from classical Sumerian grammar (especially in the use of the genitive), which makes it sometimes ambiguous. Variants that are not just orthographical (18, 33, 53, 57, 79, 80, 101) are translated above under "Variants", while those that have a bearing on the history of the composition are discussed in the General Introduction. In view of the very full commentary of Römer 1980, 41ff. our remarks here are kept to a minimum.

5   The assonance with t i l decides in favour of a reading t u l_2 rather than p u$_2$.

15   Infinitive construction, with -e at the end of 16 standing for -ni (pronominal conjugation).

26   d a - r i = *ḫatanu*, to protect, cf. W.W. Hallo, *HSS* 37 (1990) 215[114].

27   ḫ a š$_2$ - d a b$_5$, to detain, restrain, cf. P. Michalowski, *JCS* 30 (1978) 116, B. Alster, *Studies in Sumerian Proverbs* (1975) 92:28.

36   The meaning of s a g - l u m - l u m is not clear. The translation is based on the assumption that this expression describes Gilgamesh as a warrior, the quality for which he was nominated lugal.

87   "To place a door in the passage of a gate" means "to open", cf. Edzard-Wilcke, *AOAT* 25, 144, 13.

88   For the reading d i l i, alone, instead of - a š, see Cooper 1981, 237 and note 50, Vanstiphout 1987, 140.
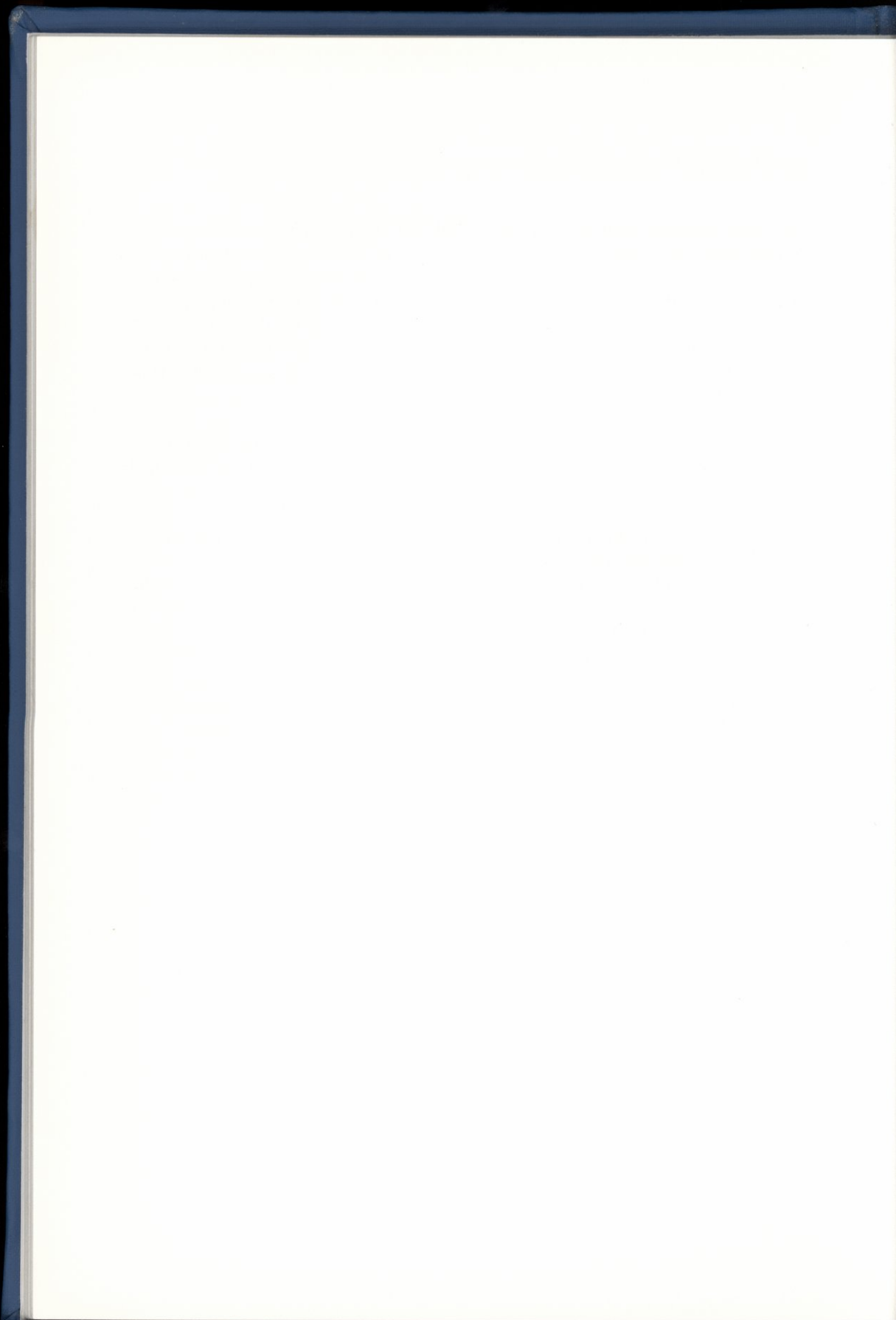
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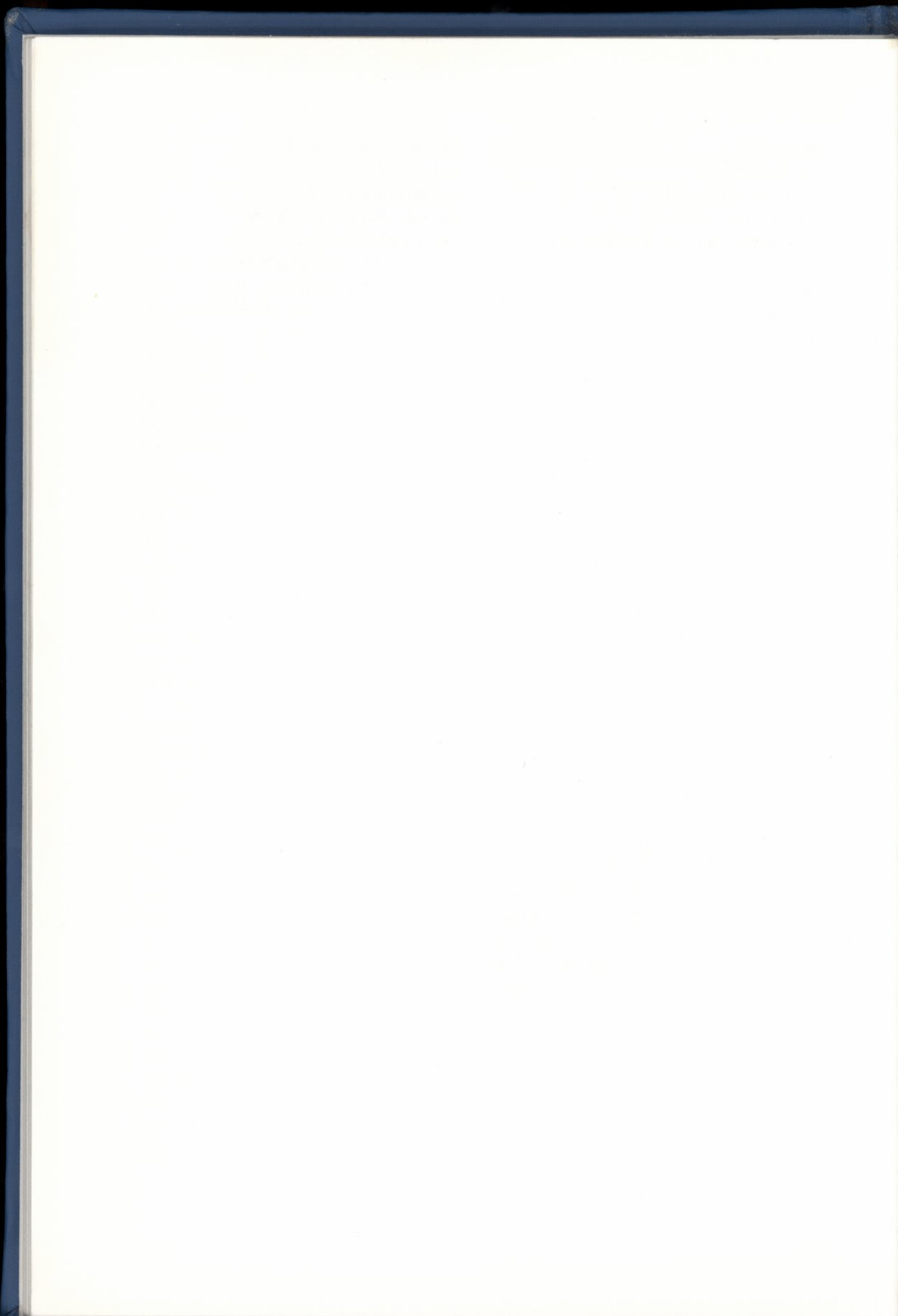Wilcke, Cl. 1971, Zum Königreich in der Ur III Zeit, *CRRAI* XIXe, 177–232. Paris.
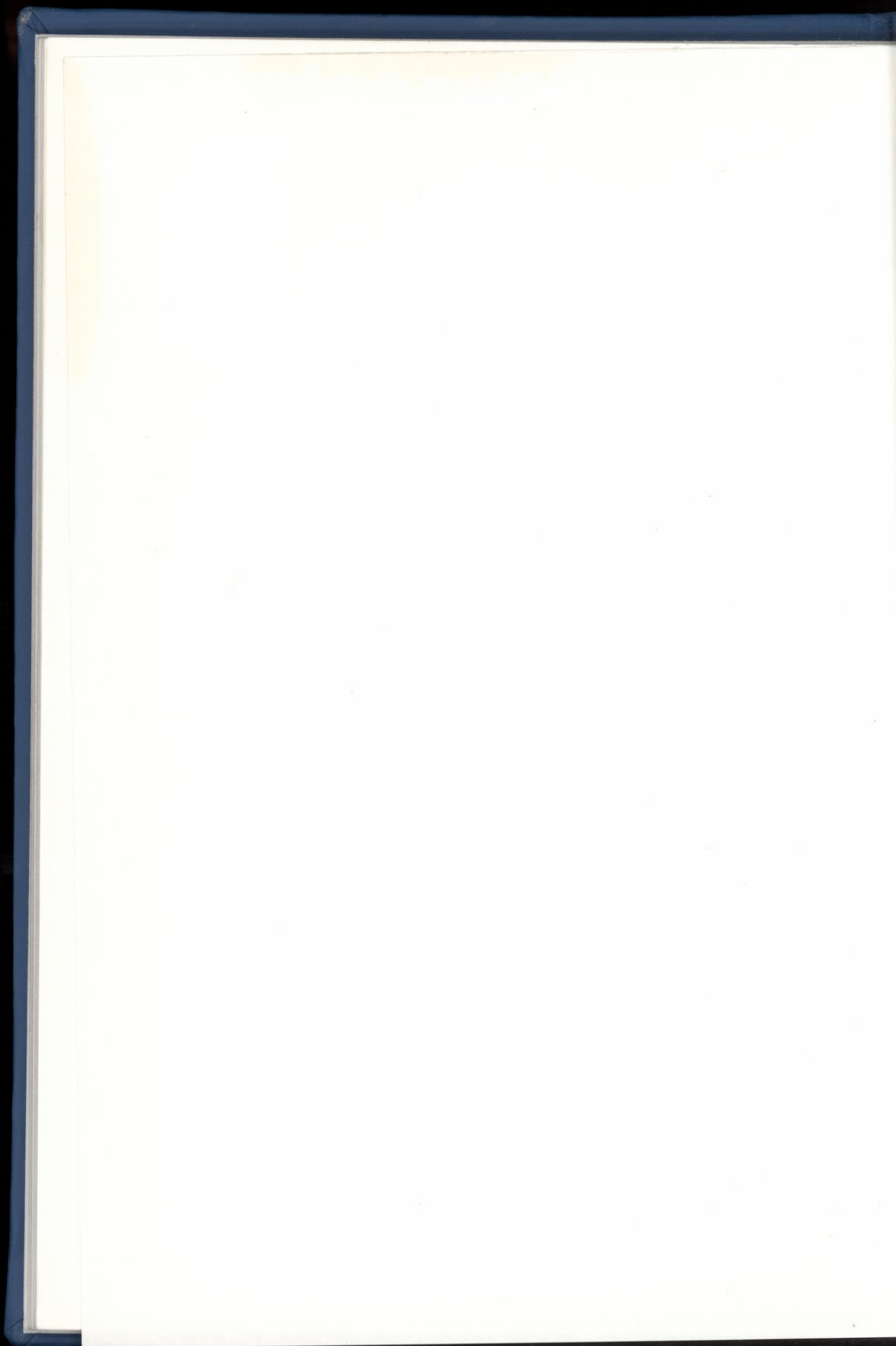
GLOSSARY

a$_2$ arm, might 43, 44, 86 var.
a-ba who? 28
a-ga behind, rear 38
a-gin$_7$ how, so 37
ab-ba elder 85
ab-ba-uru(-k) elders of the city 3, 9, 17
abul gate 59, 60, 61, 87, 88
ak to do, to make 32, 81
alim bison 73
an heaven, sky(-god) 31, 34, 109
anše ass 27
arad$_2$ slave 42, 69, 91
bad$_3$ wall 33, 65, 66, 84, 89, 108
ban$_3$-da small 6
bir to scatter, to disperse 38, 47, 58
buru$_3$(-d) deep 6, 13, 22
da–ri to protect 26
dab$_5$ to seize, capture 27, 49, 61, 86
di$_4$-di$_4$-la$_2$ young, small 85
dili alone 88
dim$_2$ to create, to fashion 45
dim$_2$-ma plan, wits, counsel 47, 50, 58
dingir god 30, 32, 107
du$_3$-a all 78, 96
dug$_3$ good, sweet 114
dug$_4$ to speak (ḫamṭu) 93
dumu son 1, 49
dumu-lugal-la(-k) king's son 26
e to say (marû) 56
e$_2$ house, temple 31
e$_2$-kiši^{ki}(-k) the house of Kish 8, 14, 23, 29
e$_3$ to go out 59, 60, 88
e$_{11}$(-d) to go down/up 31, 65, 84
egir after 84
en lord, high priest 15, 40, 51, 100, 113
ensi$_2$(-g) governor 102a
erin$_2$ troops, army 38, 81, 99, 99a, 103
eš$_2$-la$_2$ hoisting rope 7, 13, 22
ga$_2$-ga$_2$ to place (marû) 8

gal big 32, 33, 108
galga counsel, judgement 47, 58
gar to place, establish (ḫamṭu) 4, 19, 34, 109
gi$_4$ to return, to answer 10, 24, 44
gi$_4$ var. of gin 54
gid$_2$ to be long, to draw 17
gin to go/come (ḫamṭu, singular) 37, 46, 54, 57
gin$_7$ as, like; while, as soon as 37, 93
giš wood
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