THE AGE OF AGADE

INVENTING EMPIRE IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

BENJAMIN R. FOSTER

The Age of Agade

The Age of Agade is the first book-length study of the Akkadian period of Mesopotamian history, which saw the rise and fall of the world's first empire during more than a century of extraordinary political, social, and cultural innovation. It draws together over 40 years of research by one of the world's leading experts in Assyriology to offer an exhaustive survey of the Akkadian empire.

Addressing all aspects of the empire, including its statecraft and military, territory and cities, arts, religion, economy, and production, *The Age of Agade* considers what can be said of Akkadian political and social history, material culture, and daily life. A final chapter also explores how the empire has been presented in modern historiography, from the decipherment of cuneiform to the present, including the extensive research of Soviet historians, summarized here in English for the first time. Drawing on contemporaneous written and artifactual sources, as well as relevant materials from succeeding generations, Foster introduces the reader to the wealth of evidence available. Accessibly written by a specialist in the field, this book is an engaging examination of a critical era in the history of early Mesopotamia.

Benjamin R. Foster is Professor of Assyriology at Yale University, USA.

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Benjamin R. Foster

Abbreviations, citation conventions, and symbols

BdI Adab	Pomponio, Visicato, and Westenholz 2006
BIN 8	Hackman and Stephens 1958
CT 1	King 1896
CT 19	Campbell Thompson 1904
CUSAS 13	Maiocchi 2009
CUSAS 17	George 2011
CUSAS 19	Maiocchi and Visicato 2012
CUSAS 23	Bartash 2013
CUSAS 26	A. Westenholz 2014
ECTJ	A. Westenholz 1975b
ECTSL	Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature
FM	Gelb 1955
ITT I	Thureau-Dangin 1910
MAD 1	Gelb 1952a
MAD 3	Gelb 1957
MAD 4	Gelb 1970a
MAD 5	Gelb 1970b
MCS 9	Cripps 2010
MDP 14	Legrain 1913
Muses	Foster 2005a
MVN 3	Owen 1975
OSP 1	A. Westenholz 1975a
OSP 2	A. Westenholz 1987
PBS 12	Langdon 1917
PBS 15	Legrain 1926
PUL	Limet 1973
I R	Norris 1861
II R	Norris 1866
IV R	Pinches 1891
RTC	Thureau-Dangin 1903
SCTRAH	Molina 2014
STTI	Foster and Donbaz 1982
TS	Rasheed 1981

UET 8	Sollberger 1965
UTI	Yıldız and Gomi 2001

Citation conventions

Citations using abbreviations are to primary sources. Of these, BIN, CT, ITT, MAD, RTC, STTI, and UET reproduce the original text only, in transliteration or copy, so are of interest only to Assyriologists, whereas BdI Adab, CUSAS, ECTJ, FM, MDP, OSP, SCTRAH, and TS may have translations and comments on the texts and so can be consulted by non-Assyriologists. Unpublished tablets are cited by museum number: L. (Istanbul Archaeological Museums, Lagash Collection) and NBC (Nies Babylonian Collection in the Yale Babylonian Collection).

Special symbols

[ ]	Restoration of broken passage in ancient text.
( )	Explanatory addition to translation of ancient text.
< >	Presumed unintentional omission by scribe of ancient text.
?	Particularly doubtful translation or restoration of ancient text or guess.
*	Philological note below, in bibliography.
. . .	Unclear words or signs in ancient text.

Introduction

The present work surveys the Akkadian period in Mesopotamian history, a century and a half of extraordinary political, social, and cultural innovation as well as of unexampled cruelty, violence, and exploitation on an international scale, which witnessed the founding and collapse of the world's first empire. In later Mesopotamian historical memory, it was both glorified and held up as a moral lesson in pride before a fall. However it was viewed, this brief age never ceased to fascinate educated Mesopotamians over the next two millennia. Any account of it must seek to explain why this was so: what set the Akkadian dynasty and its achievements apart?

The contemporaneous written and artifactual evidence is rich but fragmented, sometimes rewritten and smashed by succeeding generations. Earlier sources may assist with understanding the origins and development of the Akkadian achievement, later ones with tracing its outcomes and afterlife. I have preferred to work with the scattered materials dating to the period itself, but not enough remains from Akkadian times to consider many subjects using that evidence alone. If two or three Akkadian records can be compared to hundreds from a century later dealing with the same topic, then it seems a reasonable strategy to interpret the few on the basis of the many, while avoiding the temptation to cite masses of parallels and relevant studies. Instead, in addition to significant primary sources, I note a choice of general or well-documented publications that will introduce the reader to the wealth of evidence available in the literature of Assyriology.

Historians unfamiliar with cuneiform documents and Mesopotamian archaeology may not be aware that wide differences of opinion are possible among well-informed researchers using precisely the same evidence. Hardly any conclusion advanced here would stand uncontested by others who study and reflect on the relics of this age. I have considered contrasting views carefully, even if I do not refer to them systematically. The notes and bibliography will lead to other opinions.

There are equally good arguments for and against attempting a work like this. The textual record is large and varied, but it is smaller than for many other periods of Mesopotamian history and so can be studied as a whole. The archaeological record is extensive though fraught with major issues of dating and disagreement over what belongs to the Akkadian period and what does not. The more I delved into such matters as surface surveys, floor plans, burials, pottery, and collections

of implements, the more I came to appreciate their importance for a sound interpretation of this phase of Mesopotamian history. Thus I make no apology for introducing them into my narrative, though I am well aware that most historians of Mesopotamia prefer not to use such data.[1] As for Akkadian art, this is the "classical" art of Mesopotamia, a brilliant chapter in the development of iconography and technique. I treat it here as a phenomenon in its historical context; the interested reader may seek appreciations of its wider aesthetic significance in the numerous excellent presentations to which reference is made.

This work is intended to be documentary and descriptive, rather than analytic or constructivist. To me it seemed challenge enough to marshal a coherent choice of facts and interpretations, rather than to propose broad explanations of causes and effects or to probe deep structures.[2] Four questions have guided me: (1) What were some major traits of the Age of Agade? (2) What can reasonably be said about its political and social history, its material culture and daily life, its spirituality, arts, and letters? (3) How and why was it remembered so vividly in later ages, even in those with comparable achievements? (4) How has this memory influenced modern views of the period?

I bear in mind the skepticism voiced by colleagues who believe that present understanding of the Akkadian era is based on little but the bombast of royal inscriptions and the period's long afterlife in Mesopotamian literature, revived with the decipherment of cuneiform.[3] I find these views at once salutary and sterile, the one because a dose of skepticism is always useful in keeping the fervent imagination in check, the other because there is no gain without venture. Recent history, with its ample sources, is laden with its own mythologies, so one need not hold the fragmentary sources for the ancient world to a higher standard than our own. Furthermore, today's mind is cloyed with imperial ideologies, making it a special challenge to go back to a time when imperialism was new and dramatic. The Akkadian rulers who swore before the gods that their written statements were true may well be credible, for the facts and figures at our disposal from everyday records seem to bear out their veracity.

With respect to terminology, by "Akkadian" I generally mean anything pertaining to the period in question, without nuance as to language or ethnicity. Hence, "Akkadian pottery" means pottery made during this period, not necessarily by speakers of the Akkadian language. I also use "Akkadians," as they did themselves, to refer to the ruling elite, bound to the royal house, regardless of their language or ethnic origin; hence an "Akkadian governor" or "notable" could well have spoken Sumerian or some other tongue as his native language.[4]

In antiquity, the city and region that are the focus of this book were both known as "Akkade." However, I use the term "Akkad" to refer to the region and "Agade" to refer to the city. This distinction, like Assur versus Assyria and Babylon versus Babylonia, is purely a modern convenience. "Agade" is derived from a sign-for-sign transliteration of the name as it was usually spelled in Akkadian times, whereas "Akkade" is a phonetic rendering of how the name was actually pronounced.[5] Certain other place names found in this book, such as Syria, Anatolia, and Iran, are likewise used only for convenience and do not correspond to geographical

concepts of the third millennium BCE. Units of measure are converted into the metric system using the approximate equivalents of Kienast and Volk 1995: v–vi.

As for chronology, various beginnings, endings, and subdivisions of the Akkadian period have been proposed.[6] The following terms, which derive more from epigraphy than from other aspects of Akkadian culture, are in current use: Pre-Akkadian, for the late Early Dynastic period, especially Early Dynastic IIIb; Early Akkadian, for the reigns of Sargon and Rimush; Middle Akkadian, for the reign of Manishtusu and the first decades of Naram-Sin; Classical Akkadian, for the later reign of Naram-Sin and the reign of Sharkalisharri; and Post-Akkadian, for the poorly defined span of time between Sharkalisharri and the accession of Ur-Namma of Ur.

Culturally, Pre- and Early Akkadian are two phases of the same period, divided today for political and historical reasons. In many respects, this is also true for the Post-Akkadian and early Ur III periods. It is the cultural and political quickening after the beginning of the Akkadian period, its climax in the middle, and the abrupt disintegration of its political order towards the end that have come to define the Age of Agade and to set it apart from what came before and after.

Notes

1 For archaeology and the writing of history in Mesopotamia, Liverani 1999; focus on this problem for the Akkadian period in McMahon 2012.

2 For comments on methodology in writing Mesopotamian history, Van de Mieroop 1997, 1999a, 2013.

3 Liverani, ed. 1993b is a collection of papers balancing positivist and skeptical approaches to the historiography of the Akkadian Empire; further Chapter 12 part 5 and for an analytic study, Buccellati 2013.

4 B. Foster 2000.

5 For transcription versus phonetic rendering, Civil 1973: 33. There is no agreement on this matter. In their comprehensive treatments of the royal inscriptions of this period, Frayne 1993 uses "Agade," whereas Gelb and Kienast 1990 use "Akkade."

6 Nissen 1966: 36–37; 1993; Gibson 2011: 83; for a complex subdivision of the period combining art history with later Mesopotamian historical memory, Boehmer 1965.

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1 The rise and fall of the Akkadian Empire

1. The king's feast

About 2260 BCE, 964 men in the land of Akkad sat down to a royal feast, but they had little to celebrate. True, some had been given new clothes and jewelry. Some boasted new teams of mules and a wagon to go with them, as well as implements and other gifts. A few had sufficient cash to buy and furnish good-sized houses. The food, no doubt, was excellent, probably pork roasted over an open fire and assorted delicacies more typical of the royal table than of private life. Yet these men had just sold their ancestral lands to the king, Manishtusu, son of Sargon. Since portions of these lands bordered on royal domains, their owners could scarcely have refused the king's offer. Using a productivity ratio from irrigated lands farther south, we find that the price paid in grain was only two years' estimated harvest. What farmer would willingly sell his land for that amount?[1]

Forty-nine men, called "Akkadians" in the sale document, were witnesses to the sale. They included scribes, administrators, military officers, governors, and temple staff, all dependent upon the king's patronage. There can be little doubt that the purchase was to provide them with productive land in return for their service to the crown. The beneficiaries of such largesse were, like Manishtusu himself, only the second generation of a new elite, some of them the sons of governors and senior administrators from important cities, who had now assumed a new, Akkadian, identity. They had forsaken their own communities to serve the king, awaiting his command and assignment anywhere in the realm, "from the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea."[2]

The years of recent memory had been eventful ones, filled with repression and bloodshed. Manishtusu's younger brother, Rimush, who had succeeded to their father Sargon's throne ahead of his sibling, had been assassinated in a court conspiracy.[3] The new king needed loyal followers, men he could rely on, in the military and in his administration. This purchase of 3430 hectares of arable land, if evenly divided among the forty-nine Akkadian witnesses, would yield individual parcels of seventy hectares, more than ten times larger than the six-hectare lots typically given to administrators barely a day's journey south, but comparable to the average parcel of sixty-two hectares given to privileged administrators at Girsu, the Akkadian provincial capital of Sumer.[4] So important was this transaction to the king that he had it carved in hard, black diorite, a stone brought by

boat from the land of Magan in the Gulf and hauled upstream, along with shiploads of other exotic goods now pouring into the capital city, Agade. The resulting monument, an impressive obelisk (Figure 1.1), a shape previously unknown in Mesopotamia, was set up in a temple, perhaps at Agade itself or at nearby Marad, where Manishtusu's grandson, Lipit-ili, would one day rebuild the temple of the local god. On it are recorded the prices paid, the gifts the king bestowed, the parcels sold and their locations, the names of the sellers, and the names of the forty-nine Akkadian witnesses and beneficiaries. By this major outlay, Sargon's elder son sought to enlarge his royal domains, to reward his followers, and to "make firm the foundations" of his kingdom, as the Akkadians expressed it.[5]

Figure 1.1 Diorite monument of Manishtusu, recording the king's purchase of lands in Akkad.

2. Sargon the victorious

In his commemorative inscriptions, Sargon proclaims that he was victorious in thirty-four military campaigns. Whatever the reverses of his early career may have been, his triumphs began in Sumer, where he defeated and captured Lugalzagesi, king of Uruk, who had extended his hegemony over many of the Sumerian city-states and marched as far as the Mediterranean seacoast and the "Cedar Forest" of Lebanon. Besides Uruk, Sargon defeated Umma, Lagash, and Ur, and Uruk, enabling him to rule all of Sumer to the headwaters of the Gulf.[6] Sargon also invaded Elam and Susa. Few future Mesopotamian dynasties would rule in this region, protected as it was by the desert, which wore down even the most formidable fighting forces. Sargon's Elamite campaign may be commemorated in a massive diorite victory stele found there, showing Sargon himself and his retinue (Figure 1.2; compare Figure 9.5). At a later date, someone made a determined effort to destroy the stele, battering it with hammers and attempting to break or saw it into smaller pieces (Chapter 9 part 2; Chapter 11 part 2). Sargon's conquests reached to the neighboring territories of Sabum and Awan. He even routed forces from Marhashi, perhaps the region around Kerman, known in Mesopotamia as a source of precious stones, alabaster vessels, and other luxury goods.[7]

Figure 1.2 Detail of a victory stele of Sargon, showing the king holding a battle net, a gash from later vandalism, a label reading "King Sargon," and an attendant carrying a sunshade.

To the north and west, Sargon enjoyed the submission of Mari, which controlled the mid-Euphrates, and Ebla, south of Aleppo, one of Mari's major rivals. By Sargon's own account, Dagan, the god of clouds, bestowed upon him the "Upper Lands," the territories and cities of the Upper Euphrates region and beyond.[8] His armies may have pushed into central Anatolia as well, known to the Akkadians as a land of cedar trees and "silver" or snow-covered mountains.[9] All this we read in his own records of his achievements.

In addition, Sargon wished to be remembered for three other accomplishments: placing Akkadians in governorships in the conquered lands; bringing international trade to his capital city, Agade; and having sufficient resources at his disposal to feed daily 5400 able-bodied men in his service.[10]

No previous ruler had ever made such claims of conquest and kingship. For ambitious conquerors of the future, Sargon posed a challenge to emulate, having changed forever the concept of what one warrior-king could achieve. The name and memory of Sargon remained in Mesopotamian consciousness, just as Alexander's lived on in the Mediterranean; his story was told in new ways to meet the expectations of different generations. Indeed, for a Mesopotamian historian of Alexander's own time, Sargon stood at the beginning of empirical human history, whereas the kings who lived before him were mythological figures whose exploits were performed in a world in which gods and human beings were characters in the same narratives. Sargon, though favored by the goddess Inanna/Ishtar, lived very much in the real world.[11]

Generations of Mesopotamian historians in times to come would wish that they knew more about him. His parentage is obscure, for Sargon's inscriptions, like those of his successors, do not name the father of the ruling king, as was customary in later periods.[12] A list of Mesopotamian kings, compiled a half-century or more after Sargon's death, included him among eight remarkable past rulers who were not of royal birth, but this may not be based on fact.[13] Imagination sought to fill in early incidents of his life.

According to one Sumerian tale, Sargon, charmed at birth, was cupbearer to Ur-Zababa, king of Kish. The cupbearer was a high official responsible for procuring and serving food and drink to the king and his court. As the young Sargon carries out his duties, he becomes aware that the goddess Inanna herself is close at hand, but he keeps his counsel. Inanna then forces the issue, appearing to Sargon in a terrifying dream, in which she covers him with blood. When he tells the king his dream, the king interprets the blood to be his own, so understands that his cupbearer will murder him. He sends a message to his chief smith, ordering him to kill Sargon when he arrives at a temple workshop with certain bronze drinking vessels the king will entrust to him, apparently for melting down. The plan seems to be to throw Sargon into the mold or crucible with the vessels. But Inanna stops Sargon just before he enters the building where the smith waits in ambush:

> Holy Inanna confronted him, she blocked his path.
> "Is the pure house not a holy temple? No man with blood on him may go therein!"

He met the king's master smith outside the door of the house where his doom had been decided,
When he delivered the king's drinking vessels to the master smith,
Belish-tikal, the master smith, secured[?] them from him, cast them in the mold.
Sargon, after five days had passed, maybe ten,
Came in before Ur-Zababa, his king,
Came right in before him in his own palace, built solid as a mountain,
King Ur-Zababa was afraid, shook with fear in his own dwelling.[14]

The true significance of the dream becomes apparent: Inanna had covered Sargon with blood to save him. The smith is awestruck by the goddess's intervention, as is the king, when Sargon returns to the royal palace alive and well. Ur-Zababa realizes, as Sargon already knew, that his cupbearer has divine protection.

The theme that Sargon was charmed at birth and favored by the goddess Inanna was taken up more than a thousand years later, in an Akkadian composition that purports to be Sargon's narrative of his own infancy. In it, we read that he was exposed as a newborn by his mother, a high priestess, making Sargon the first instance of the story, told also of Moses and Cyrus, of the foundling who later returns to claim his rightful inheritance. Sargon's mother, as a high priestess, could have borne for the king an heir to the throne, but she might have given up the child to hide him from rival claimants, if his father had died.[15]

Although no literary works explicitly about Sargon or his exploits survive from the time of his dynasty (for the poetry by his daughter Enheduanna, whom he appointed high priestess at Ur, see Chapter 9 part 5 and Appendix II), heroic legends of his deeds were composed in Akkadian during the first half of the second millennium (Chapter 11 part 6).[16] Some scholars consider these based on older epic poems, whereas others suggest that they were original compositions of their own time. In favor of the latter is their choice of setting, the north and west, that is, Assyria, north Syria, and the Anatolian plateau, rather than Sumer or Iran, the two areas stressed in authentic third-millennium texts. One of these legends praises combat and ends with a challenge:

Yes, this is the encounter of valiant men,
Tomorrow Akkad will go to battle,
The celebration of the manly will be held,
The writhing ranks will writhe back and forth,
Two women in labor, bathed in their own blood!
Where are true comrades who just look on at the celebration?
Only the [coward] will stand aside. . .
Sargon informed the army,
"So there, any king who would rival me,
Let him go where I have gone!"[17]

In sum, Sargon played a vivid role in Mesopotamian literature and historical memory down to the Hellenistic period, as the type of the great conqueror. In the mid-second millennium, with the spread of Akkadian as an international language from Iran to the Mediterranean, Sargon's fame even reached the land of the Hittites, and from there Akhenaten's Egypt, where Egyptian scribes studied a simplified, abbreviated version of a legend about Sargon's attack on an Anatolian city famed for its wealth.[18]

3. Sons of Sargon

Sargon died in the fifty-sixth year of his reign. When Rimush acceded to the throne of his father, he faced a rebellion in Sumer, which had clearly resented Sargon's rule. In a series of brutal campaigns, Rimush re-established his father's dominion there, boasting that he killed in battle more than 23,000 men and took twice that number captive, presumably killing them too.[19] He also expelled thousands of men of fighting age from the defeated cities and subjected them to cruel punishment, mass execution, or forced labor (Figures 1.3, 1.4). A group of records

Figure 1.3 "They rounded up their finest fighting men for captives" (poem of Enheduanna). Victory stele of an early Akkadian king.

Figure 1.4 Stele attributed to Rimush, depicting (top to bottom) campaign against Sumer, victory in battle and massacre of unarmed prisoners, and destruction of city walls?. Two other fragments record redistribution of fourteen square kilometers of land in the region of Lagash.

from Umma, one of the rebellious cities, documents citizens and slaves working and dying in some labor-intensive activity in Iran, possibly cutting stone (Figure 1.8a).[20] Rimush faced opposition in Babylonia too, but quickly suppressed it, carrying out the same bloody policies as in Sumer.

Among his other punitive measures, Rimush expropriated some 134,000 hectares of prime agricultural land near Lagash and Umma to create a royal domain to distribute to his retainers, thereby endowing a new landed class in Sumer, which had, in principle, no ties to the old city-states nor to the great temples of the region. This is the largest single land transaction recorded in a Mesopotamian formal document (Figure 1.4).[21] For the two cities involved, which had fought bitterly

for generations over a strip of land between them, this was humiliation and catastrophe.[22] They had no choice but to look on helplessly as Akkadian officials organized their manors in the surrounding countryside.

By this time a seasoned campaigner, Rimush next followed up on Sargon's invasion of Elam. A coalition led by the ruler of Marhashi, who had extended his authority west into Elam, formed a strategic alliance intended to counterbalance any Akkadian influence in Iran or the Gulf. Rimush's forces routed the coalition and captured its commanding officers, bringing Elam and Susiana once again under Akkadian influence or direct rule. The booty from this campaign was substantial. At the sanctuary of Nippur alone, Rimush dedicated 30 pounds of gold, 3600 pounds of copper, and 300 slaves (Chapter 6 part 5). Stone bowls, vases, seashells, mace heads, and other objects were inscribed with his name and dedicated at sanctuaries throughout the land, examples of which have turned up at Assur, Kish, Nippur, Sippar, Ur, Shuruppak, and Tutub, even as far away as the Khabur region.[23]

Rimush proudly recorded that his craftsmen produced a statue of himself made of tin, the rarest industrial metal in the Mesopotamian world.[24] This puts Rimush at the head of a line of Mesopotamian despots who vaunted their technological achievements. The statue was set up before the god Enlil in Nippur. In its dedication, Rimush says that he "accounted himself among the gods." Perhaps this extraordinary expression was tantamount to the self-deification that his nephew Naram-Sin would later proclaim. A generation or two after his reign, an ambitious courtier, eager to please the ruling family and grateful for his memory, took the name Ili-Rimush, "Rimush-is-My-God."[25]

Rimush's immediate successors, Manishtusu and Naram-Sin, followed his example of boasting about battle casualties in their campaigns by giving precise counts of the dead, a practice unknown in Mesopotamia before or after. Rimush even swore to the accuracy of his numbers before Enlil at Nippur, the central shrine of Sumer. In the later legends about Naram-Sin, these grim statistics were reversed to become fantastic losses of Akkadian troops (Chapter 11 part 6).

According to Mesopotamian historical tradition (Chapter 11 part 4), Rimush was assassinated by courtiers using cylinder seals. When people in authority carried cylinder seals, they suspended them around their necks on lanyards or pinned them to their cloaks. This may have suggested to some murderous mind that courtiers close to the king could kill him by strangling him with the cords or stabbing him with the long, sharp pins.[26]

Small wonder, then, having come to power after such a tumultuous reign and in violent circumstances, Manishtusu was eager to shore up his position. His brother had ruled at least nine years, though his inscriptions at Nippur stop earlier than that, leaving us to wonder what was happening in the years immediately preceding Rimush's assassination. Was there a civil war? Accounting for his own accession, Manishtusu stated simply that the god Enlil had called him to power.[27]

The new king continued where his brother had left off. His standard military inscription tells us that he conquered the lands of Anshan and Shirihum, in Iran east of Susa, and that he vanquished thirty-two cities "beyond the sea," that is,

along the Gulf coast.[28] This gave him access to diorite, which was rarely seen in Mesopotamian sculpture until the Akkadian period, when it was used for royal figures during and after Manishtusu's reign, especially for funerary images of deceased kings. There are no private dedications in diorite, so the stone was perhaps reserved for royalty.[29] Because only a standard inscription of Manishtusu's campaigns is known, and because statues of the king were evidently widely distributed in the realm (Figure 1.5; Chapter 9 part 1), one may propose that most

Figure 1.5 Manishtusu, wearing a tasseled garment, upon an unusual chair, perhaps for feasting or receiving obeisance.

of Manishtusu's reign was peaceful and devoted to consolidation of the monarchy and its claims.

In the absence of pertinent inscriptions, indirect evidence suggests that Manishtusu was active in Assyria and the Khabur region. A later king of Upper Mesopotamia, Shamshi-Adad, credits Manishtusu with construction of the temple of Ishtar at Nineveh and refers to inscriptions his Akkadian predecessor had set up there.[30] At Assur, a spear point dedicated by a servant of his was found, as well as a decapitated statue plausibly dated to his time (Chapter 9 part 1; Figure 5.5). Manishtusu's reign may correspond to an early phase of Akkadian domination at Nagar (Chapter 3 part 5). A post-Akkadian forgery made at Sippar, conceivably based on a genuine Manishtusu commemoration, was composed to justify benefactions to the temple of Shamash there.[31] It seems likely, therefore, that Manishtusu's reign was considerably more important than the surviving commemorative evidence and Mesopotamian historical tradition suggest. After ruling for fifteen years, Manishtusu was, according to later Mesopotamian memory, murdered in a palace conspiracy, leaving the throne to his eldest son, Naram-Sin, whom he had already entrusted with military commands.[32]

4. Naram-Sin, campaigner

Naram-Sin's long reign of at least thirty-seven years was the apogee of the Akkadian Empire. No other ruler of the third millennium, save Sargon himself, made such an impression on Mesopotamian historical tradition. The shattered remnants of the elaborate commemorative prose of this reign give us only a glimpse of the extraordinary military achievements of this archetype warrior-king.

In a summary account of his conquests, Naram-Sin states that they stretched from Marhashi in the east as far as the Cedar Forest, presumably the slopes of the Amanus or Lebanon; from the Mediterranean to the "lands beyond the sea," perhaps as far as Oman, a claim fully justified by administrative documents from his reign (Chapter 3 part 6). The few extant records of individual campaigns include references to a march against the Lullubi, peoples of the northern Zagros (Figure 1.6), and against the land called Simurrum, somewhere in the Trans-Tigris or beyond the mountains on the Iranian plateau. In what is now Armenia, Naram-Sin traced the Tigris River to its source. He advanced up the Khabur River and through the passes into the uplands, reaching the source of the Euphrates as well. Naram-Sin also claimed to be the first king to have conquered Ebla, south of Aleppo, of which Sargon had said only that it "served" him. He was the first Mesopotamian king to boast of his hunting exploits.[33] Unlike Sargon, Naram-Sin makes no reference in his inscriptions as to how he governed such a diverse territory, but the plentiful administrative records of the time suggest military colonization in Susa and also in Syria, where Akkadian buildings and mass-produced, standardized clay bowls that may date to his reign have been discovered (Chapter 3 parts 2, 4, 5).[34]

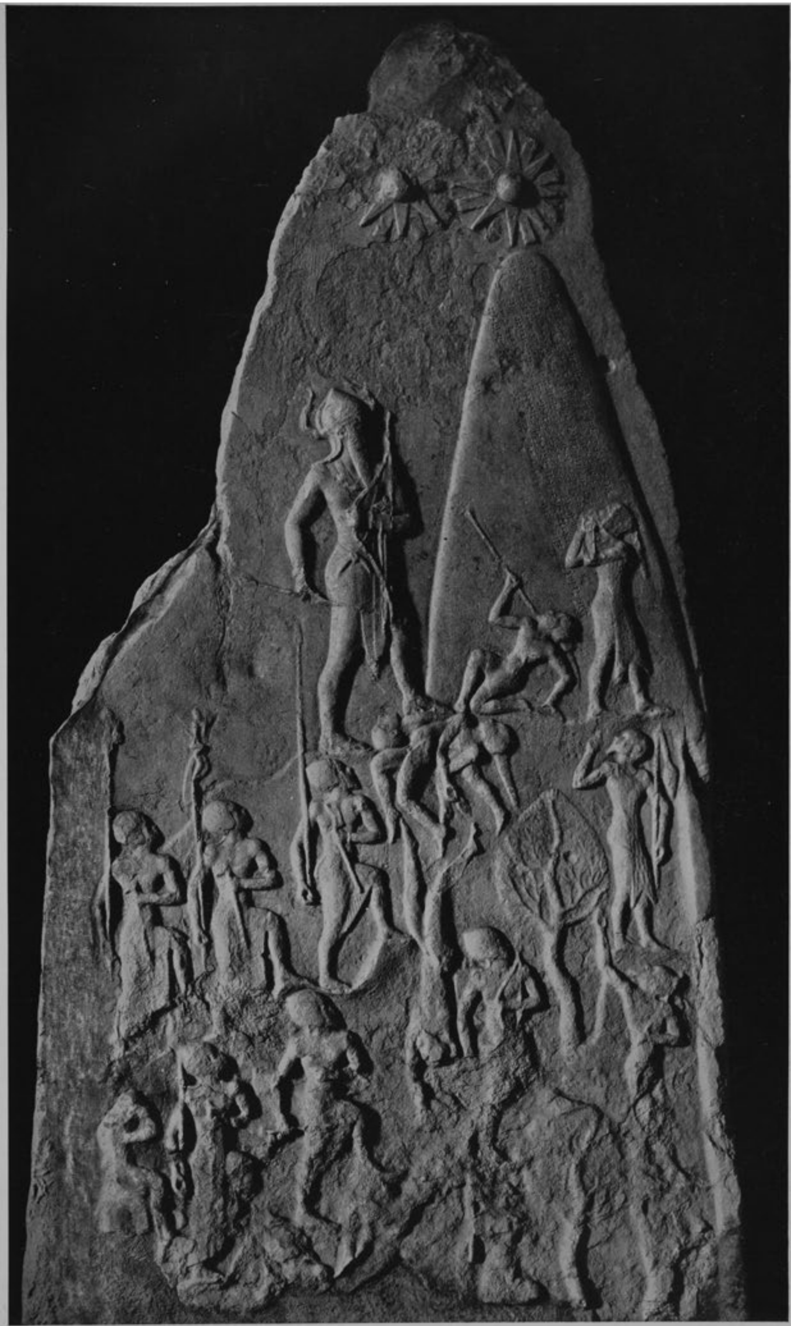


Figure 1.6 Victory stele of Naram-Sin, commemorating his defeat of Lullubum. Shutruk-nahhunte, an Elamite King, carved his own inscription on the mountain when he took the monument to an Elamite King Susa nearly 1000 years later.

Whereas the cities of Sumer had sent out armies to fight the Akkadians in the open, those of Syria relied on their massive fortification walls and payment of tribute to keep the invaders at bay. A later epic poem about Naram-Sin expresses this difference by comparing him to a lion, seeking his prey in the plain, whereas a Syrian king was like the cowardly fox, hiding and boasting in his burrow.[35] It was thus a particular pride of Naram-Sin that he mastered the art of siege craft, penetrating the triple walls of the great fortress at Armanum, where the ruler made a valiant but futile stand in the doorway of his own palace. According to a later, defective student copy of Naram-Sin's inscription describing this siege, in which captions to images of the fortress were preserved, the wall near the waterfront stood twenty cubits high, the inner wall thirty cubits, the citadel wall forty-four cubits, and the distance from the waterfront to the citadel was 404 cubits.[36]

The most dramatic event of Naram-Sin's reign was a revolt that began in Mesopotamia itself, at Kish and Uruk, where pretenders chosen by the citizenry rebelled against the descendant of the divinely chosen Sargon, "[In Kish], they raised up [Iphur]-Kish to kingship, and in Uruk, they raised up Amar-girid to kingship as well."[37] Of the two, Kish was the greater threat. Not only was it closer to the capital, but Iphur-Kish had allied with other major cities nearby, including Borsippa, Cutha, Dilbat, Eresh, Sippar, and Kazallu, as well as with the Amorite tribesmen, perhaps from the Jebel Bishri region. Akkadian rule in northern Babylonia was profoundly unpopular.

According to Naram-Sin's account, he closed the gates of Agade and made a passionate speech to Shamash, god of justice and treaties. In it, one may surmise that he reminded the god of the great benefits the rule of his family had brought to Kish, lifting it from dishonorable servitude (to whom is unclear, perhaps Lugalzagesi) and making the title "King of Kish" resound once more. Now the ungrateful Kishites had turned against him. After appealing to Shamash, Naram-Sin rallied the men of Agade and marched out to battle, where he routed the Kishite army and its allies, taking many distinguished captives, whom his inscription lists by name. Iphur-Kish retreated to Kish, where Naram-Sin pursued him, and they fought a second battle, in which Naram-Sin was again victorious. The Euphrates River was choked with the bodies of defeated soldiers. Another 2500 Kishites fell in desperate street fighting in the city. Resolved to obliterate Kish, Naram-Sin dismantled its walls and diverted the river to flood it.

In the meantime, Amar-girid of Uruk had rallied to his cause many of the most important cities of Sumer, including Adab, Isin, Lagash. Nippur, Shuruppak, and Umma, together with various cities in the Gulf region. From this one can gauge the deep unpopularity of Akkadian rule in the south as well. He also sent messages to the rulers of the cities of the Upper Euphrates region and Assyria, begging them to join him, but most hesitated to do so. Fresh from his triumph at Kish, Naram-Sin marched north up the Tigris, then westward to the Euphrates, to punish the Amorite tribesmen whom Amar-girid had succeeded in bringing over to his side after the defeat of Kish. Naram-Sin met Amar-girid and his main force,

defeated them, and took Amar-girid himself captive. Turning next to Sumer, he carried out harsh reprisals against Uruk, including flooding the city, as he had Kish. He followed up his victory over the Sumerian coalition with an invasion of the cities along the Gulf, booty from which he dedicated at various sanctuaries in the land.[38]

From the perspective of Agade, the capital had been surrounded by enemies in all directions, but Naram-Sin had delivered his city at every turn. Indeed, nine times in a single year the king had been forced to call up the troops of Agade to fight battles throughout Mesopotamia. In an inscription written on the base of a statue of a protective spirit, perhaps originally guarding a temple for his worship, at some point forcibly mutilated (Chapter 11 part 2; Figure 9.4), Naram-Sin tells what happened next:

> Naram-Sin the mighty, king of Agade, when the four quarters of the earth attacked him together, through the love Ishtar bore him was victorious in nine battles in a single year and captured the kings whom they had raised up against him. Because he defended his city in crisis, the people of his city asked of him that he be god of their city Agade, with Ishtar in Eanna, with Enlil in Nippur, with Dagan in Tuttul, with Ninhursag in Kesh, with Enki in Eridu, with Sin in Ur, with Shamash in Sippar, with Nergal in Cutha, and they built his temple in Agade.[39]

Thus the warrior-king Naram-Sin joined the ranks of the great gods.

Later Mesopotamian literary tradition took an altogether different view of these events (Chapter 11 part 6). Why this was so is a fascinating literary, rather than historical, problem.[40] Already in the early second millennium, an imaginary inscription of Naram-Sin was composed, which mixed phrases from genuine monuments of that king with outlandish names of enemies and figures of casualties. Successive versions of this composition added ever more dramatic and fantastic episodes. Naram-Sin, uncharacteristically, suffers massive defeats. The number nine recurs, taken from the authentic texts vaunting nine victories in a single year, but now they are setbacks: "Nine times they rebelled against me, nine times I let them go free!"[41] As the story grows increasingly improbable, 360,000 of Naram-Sin's soldiers die in a series of battles, leaving the king "at a loss, exhausted, anxious, and reduced to naught," while his land is decimated.[42] The enemy armies gradually become uncanny, "neither flesh nor blood."[43] In a version of the story from Hattusha, the capital of the Hittite Empire, Ea, the god of wisdom, pronounces a destiny for the enemy horde:

> Let it eat no food to sustain it,
> Let it smell no aroma of beer,
> Let it drink water.
> Let it wander all day,
> At night, let it lie down but find [no sleep].[44]

By the first millennium, the putative inscription had become an imaginary stele set up for the admonition of future generations. According to this, Naram-Sin's enemies were monsters, like those Tiamat, mother of all the gods, fashioned in the *Babylonian Epic of Creation*. Here she suckles the host, who are humans with the faces of ravens. Led by seven kings, 360,000 of these troops and their allies devastate all the lands around Mesopotamia, from Anatolia to the Gulf. Naram-Sin sends out a soldier to prick one of the enemy soldiers with a pin to see if it bleeds, then takes omens to learn what to do. The omens say that he should not oppose the horde, but he does so anyway, dispatching first 90,000 troops, not one of whom returns alive, then 60,700, with the same result. Naram-Sin concludes by recommending that rulers should withdraw behind ditches and walls (the very tactic the real king disdained), and he counsels prudence:

> Wrap up your weapons and [lean] them in a corner,
> Restrain your valor, take care of your person.
> Though he raids your land, go not out against him,
> Though he drives off your livestock, go not nigh him . . .
> Be moderate, control yourself,
> Answer them, "Yes, my lord!"
> To their wickedness, repay kindness,
> To kindness (add) gifts and gratification.[45]

This strays so far from its historical subject as to anticipate the tortuous fantasies of the medieval *Alexander Romance*. Naram-Sin, a brilliantly successful, supremely self-confident sovereign, had been wholly transformed into a chastened failure, parodying his own inscriptions. Among the many explanations that have been offered for this development, the most convincing is a later desire for historical symmetry, pairing a great empire builder (Sargon) with a hapless empire loser (Naram-Sin), thereby teaching that no dynasty can last forever, no city can rule the land forever. Perhaps too there was an element of wishful thinking or envy.[46]

5. Naram-Sin, builder

As befit the patron goddess of his dynasty, Naram-Sin paid particular attention to the temples to Ishtar throughout Mesopotamia. He ordered construction on her temples at Nineveh in Assyria, where his father had done work before him, at Zabala in Sumer, using logs of cedar brought from the Amanus range, at Adab, and possibly at Babylon, not to mention at the capital, Agade. He also began projects on the temple of Sin at Ur, where he was to install his daughter, Enmenanna, as high priestess and successor to his aunt, Enheduanna (Chapter 9 part 5).[47]

The king further claimed special favor from the god Enlil. Crowned at Nippur, Naram-Sin attributed his accession to the throne and continued victories to Enlil's will, at least so he says in his inscriptions published in Sumer. At Nippur he presented in neck stocks the defeated and captured leaders of the coalitions against him, among them Amar-girid of Uruk, as Sargon had long ago treated Lugalzagesi. Rimush's benefactions to Ekur, Enlil's temple in Nippur, were surpassed by Naram-Sin's decision to rebuild Ekur entirely in a splendid imperial style, no doubt as a showpiece for his rule.

A fortunate chance has preserved a group of administrative records dealing with his reconstruction of Ekur, the only such corpus of its kind from the period. The documents give us an extraordinary glimpse of the day-to-day activities of Naram-Sin's workmen, under the direction of his son, the crown prince Sharkalisharri. The texts record expenditures of hundreds of kilograms of bronze, silver, and gold, as well as tons of copper. Large numbers of workmen were conscripted for the task. One tablet lists seventy-seven woodworkers under seven foremen, eighty-six goldsmiths with six foremen, ten sculptors with one foreman, fifty-four carpenters under three foremen, as well as engravers and other workers in fine materials, many of these workers drawn from various places in Mesopotamia and quartered on the local population.[48]

Some of the ornate fittings of the new Ekur temple may be visualized thanks to these documents. Flanking the main entrance, two great protective spirits of copper with gold-plated faces held standards. There were also four gold-plated bison figures set up on either side of the portal along the enclosure wall. The gateway itself was guarded by two large copper figures of winged dragons with gold plating in their open, snarling mouths. The doors were studded with copper nails with gold-plated heads and could be locked with heavy door-bolts fashioned as dragons or water buffaloes. The doorways of the inner shrines were flanked by smaller protective deities holding standards. These, too, had gold-plated faces.

Inside the temple buildings, the cultic implements included 100 large sun-disks and 100 large moon-crescents, containing in all about twenty-nine kilograms of gold. The various implements of silver belonging to a single shrine totaled about 200 kilograms. There were also votive statues of noble Akkadians, plated with gold. Ekur must have been a dazzling sight.[49] At Naram-Sin's death, the project was unfinished, but his son and successor, Sharkalisharri, took up the work and probably brought it to completion.

Yet a later Sumerian poem, *The Curse of Agade*, views the rebuilding of Ekur in quite a different light. The poet tells us that Naram-Sin had a dream of Agade's loss of glory. Hoping to win back the favor of Enlil, he therefore razed the old sanctuary to build a new one:

Like a sieger storming a city,
He laid tall ladders against the temple.
To stave in Ekur like a mighty ship,
To open its fabric, like mining a silver mountain,
To quarry it, like a mountain of lapis, (110)
To make it collapse, like a city before a hurricane . . .
People (of Sumer) saw the inner chamber, a room that
never sees the light,
Akkad saw the sacred vessels of the gods. (130)
Its guardian figures that stood by the ceremonial entryway,
Though they had done no forbidden thing,
Naram-Sin threw them into the fire.
Cedar, cypress, juniper, boxwood,
The woodwork of the god's dwelling he made
ooze out in the flames. (135)
He put its gold in coffers,
He put its silver in sacks,
He heaped up its copper at the harborside, like a massive yield of grain.
The metal worker was to rework its precious metal,
The jeweler was to rework its precious stone, (140)
The smith was to rehammer its copper.[50]

Clearly the preservationist poet saw the demolition of the old temple and the salvage of its materials in preparation for construction of a new one as rash and sacrilegious acts (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.7 "Like a sieger storming a city, he laid tall ladders against the temple" (*The Curse of Agade*).

6. Naram-Sin, administrative reformer

Naram-Sin confronted complex problems in administering his far-flung realm. The Akkadian kings portrayed themselves as warriors and hunters, whose wealth came from tribute and booty. But, as we see in Rimush's land appropriation and Manishtusu's land purchase, they had a definite agrarian policy, so were well aware of the twin pillars of the Mesopotamian economy – agriculture and animal husbandry. Sargon's installation of Akkadians as governors throughout the territories he had conquered points to the creation of a class of people fully dependent upon royal patronage for their maintenance and advancement. We find, therefore, a parallel military and civil structure, both headed by the king. Next after the king in the military hierarchy came generals and subordinate ranks. The chief civil administrator was the *shaperum*, "majordomo" or "steward of the royal household." No comparable office existed in Sumer, so the Akkadian word and concept were borrowed into Sumerian at this time.[51]

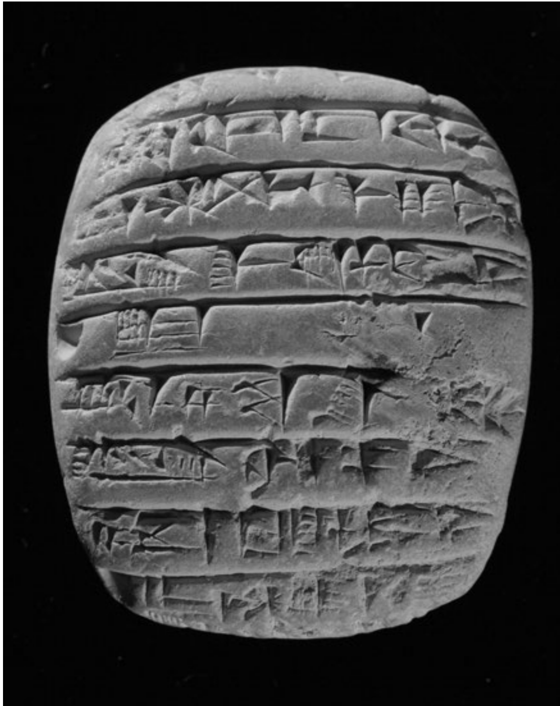
A key civil figure after the steward of the royal household was the land registrar, the man accountable for the extensive arable districts controlled by the royal household and used to maintain its officialdom. Important local officials, such as governors, received land by virtue of their office, and could also purchase use rights to more land, if they could afford it, by giving the royal household a "present" in cash. The record keeping for accountable land and the surveying of subdivisions and plots fell to the land registrar and his staff of scribes and surveyors. Each season, the scribes calculated the areas of arable land, depending on how far the irrigation water had flowed out into the long, narrow fields, then calculated the return due the patron or owner of this land from its users and their subordinates.[52]

Sumer and Akkad had quite different approaches to agricultural administration: the Akkadian based on extensive cultivation of large areas and the Sumerian on intensive cultivation of small ones. The Akkadian approach began with a broad vision of the total resources to hand and the systematic mathematical schemes for apportioning them. The details were then fitted into the scheme. Sumerian administration, on the other hand, began with the details, adding them up and carrying them forward. Like many agrarian cultures, Sumer knew a patchwork of local standards for measuring land and harvest. Sumerian management depended on dense concentrations of workers at the disposal of temples and other large institutions, minutely graded into teams and sets of entitlements. There were no such labor teams in Akkad, which depended instead on the use of patronage and the availability of lucrative opportunities to attract people willing to work the land.[53]

Akkadian administrators, therefore, brought to Sumer and other conquered territories, such as Susiana, their own ideas about effective management. They implemented a new, universal standard of measure for the accountable portion of the harvest, using the measure of Agade. If the grain was measured by a local standard as it was brought in from the field, when it was processed, stored, or delivered to royal officials, the figures had to be converted into the Akkadian standard. This was, so far as we know, the first time that anyone attempted to impose a unified standard on Sumer once a certain level of accountability was reached.

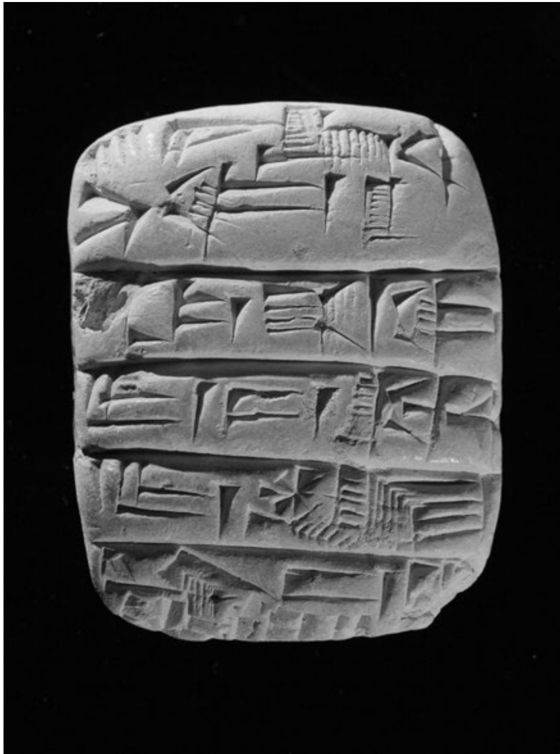
They also attempted to impose a unified system of weights and liquid measures throughout the empire.[54] In addition, Akkadian administrators were accustomed to mathematical models for agricultural management and production, for example, a standard ratio of how much land could be plowed by one team.[55] They used these in Sumer and in their own domains, but local institutions were permitted to keep their internal records in their traditional ways.[56]

There was a record-keeping and script reform as well. Sumerian administrative tablets had generally been round or rounded at the corners, with a flat obverse, a convex reverse, and varying degrees of thickness in proportion to their size. There were regional handwritings, tablet shapes, and record-keeping techniques. During the reign of Naram-Sin, a new type of tablet came into use. It was square or rectangular for composite records or ledgers, though more rounded shapes could be used for single transactions, or vouchers, so they were easily distinguishable. The new rectilinear tablets were thinner than most earlier records in proportion to their size (Figure 1.8d). Furthermore, a new style of handwriting became standard



(a)

Figure 1.8 Evolution of Akkadian administrative documents: (a) account of death of citizens and slaves doing forced labor, attributed to reign of Rimush; (b) account of oils and aromatics, Middle Akkadian; (c) autograph list of expenses of the notable Mesag for a journey to Agade, Classical Akkadian; (d) record of dedication of children to a temple in Eshnunna, some to become singers, dated to the reign of Naram-Sin.


(b)

(c)

Figure 1.8 (Continued)

(d)

Figure 1.8 (Continued)

throughout the realm for official documents. This tended to be broadly spaced, written with finesse and attention to detail. A very formal, elegant version was used for documents at a high level of authority, and a more informal hand was used for everyday records. This Akkadian hand had to be learned by anyone who wished to advance in the administration, and there is evidence that older scribes retooled their skills so they could write in the new style.[57]

For reasons unknown, these innovations apparently led to an even more radical change: the angle of orientation of the cuneiform signs. These were now rotated 90° counterclockwise, with the earlier orientation retained only for glyptic and monuments.[58] Spelling was reformed to make Akkadian easier to read, and the old inventory of Sumerian word signs used to write Akkadian words was updated.[59] Overall, one has the impression of a major effort at standardization at the middle and upper levels of accounting and reporting.

Akkadian administrators expected beautifully written, summary ledgers, with easy to read and understand broad schemes of accounting, to be filed in every locality, ready for examination by the royal inspector (Figure 1.9). One may suppose that this person was an independent auditor who went from place to

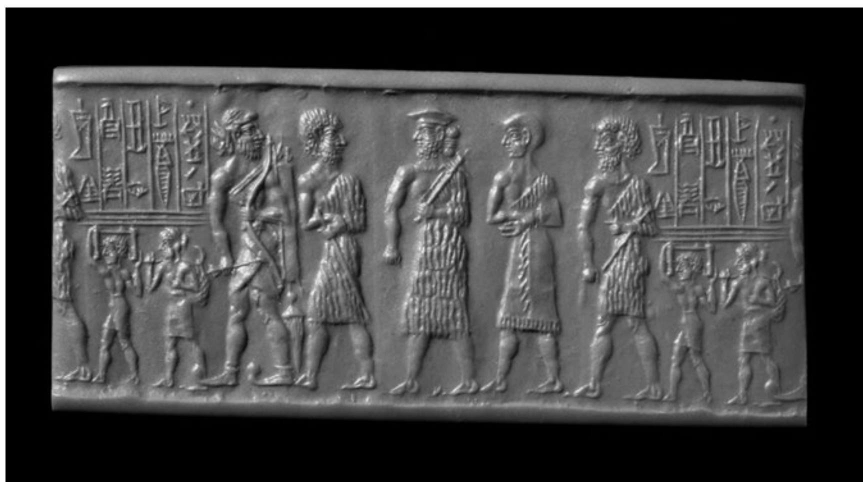


Figure 1.9 Seal of Kalaki (second from right), scribe to Ubil-Ishtar the "king's brother" (center), shown inspecting troops, symbolized by three soldiers, and attended by a chair-bearer.

place to ensure that the king's interests and rights were being maintained. There was no requirement that records be kept in a specific language; in Sumer they tended to be in Sumerian, though written in the new Akkadian script, whereas in Akkad, they tended to be in Akkadian. Sometimes both languages appeared in the same record, suggesting that the administration considered itself bilingual (Chapter 9 part 7).[60]

There were also changes in sealing practices. Previously in Sumer, sealing and writing were complementary actions, with seal use restricted to surfaces that had not been written on. In the Akkadian period, in both Sumer and Akkad a seal was rolled over the back of a letter of introduction, on formal contracts, or on other important records, adding another dimension of authority and identification.[61] During Naram-Sin's reign, a distinctive type of flat, sealed bulla came into general use, in response, perhaps, to the growing practice of senior Akkadian administrators to use personal cylinder seals, especially with combat scenes on them (Chapter 9 part 3; Figure 9.9).[62]

In summary, Naram-Sin's reign was a watershed in the development of Mesopotamian accounting and record-keeping techniques, setting the standard for the rest of the third millennium.

7. The royal family and matrimonial alliances

Naram-Sin had at least ten children, to whom he gave major roles in his realm. The crown prince, Sharkalisharri, campaigned with him, as Naram-Sin had with his father, and was entrusted with supervision of the reconstruction of the Ekur

Temple at Nippur. Another son, Nabi-Ulmash, was governor of Tutub in Akkad. Seals or sealings of other sons and their servants point to important duties for them as well.[63]

Naram-Sin placed three of his daughters in key cultic positions. One of them, Tutanabshum, became high priestess of Enlil at Nippur; so important was this event that a year was named after it, which states that she was chosen by divination.[64] A second, Enmenanna, became high priestess of the moon-god at Ur, successor to her great-aunt, Enheduanna. A third, Shumshani, became high priestess of the sun-god at Sippar. Since these three sanctuaries are among the eight listed in Naram-Sin's inscription recording his deification, it is tempting to speculate that progeny or close relatives of Naram-Sin may have served in the other five, creating a network of family alliances linking Naram-Sin with the gods. Because of the language and imagery of intimacy between Naram-Sin and Ishtar, he himself may well have assumed some comparable role at the Eulmash, her temple in Agade, after which two of his sons and one of his daughters were named.

Naram-Sin evidently followed the practice, attested first at pre-Akkadian Ebla,[65] of arranging dynastic marriages. Sealings in the name of a daughter, Taram-Agade, have been found at Urkesh, strongly suggesting that she was married to a member of the royal family there.[66] It is noteworthy that her seal (Figure 9.9a) gives only her name and her father's name, but makes no reference to her new status as presumed queen or princess at Urkesh. Her name, "She-Loves-Agade," whether given at birth or assumed at marriage, was a constant reminder of her Akkadian loyalty. By contrast, a Mari-born wife of Shulgi, king of Ur, took the name Taram-Uram, "She-Loves-Ur," at marriage, thereby focusing on her new loyalty rather than on her birth allegiance.

Like her sister Taram-Agade, another of Naram-Sin's daughters, Simat-Ulmash "Pride-of-Ulmash," may have kept or assumed her name when she was married to a prince or ruler of Mari, because an inscribed copper platter with just her name and parentage was found there, along with a similarly inscribed bowl of her sister, Shumshani. Since the latter was high priestess of the sun-god at Sippar, there may have been a sanctuary of Shamash at Mari among the complex of Akkadian-period structures there called "les temples anonymes."[67] One may further speculate that possible matrimonial alliances of Naram-Sin with the "lords of the Upper Land" may have been a factor in their decision not to participate in the "Great Revolt," despite the pleas of the rebel king of Uruk, according to Naram-Sin's own account of that event. Naram-Sin may also have taken a Susian princess as wife to cement an alliance there (Chapter 7 part 5). One of his sons may have married a princess from Marhashi.[68]

8. Sharkalisharri and the fall of the empire

Naram-Sin's son and successor, Sharkalisharri, inherited the empire built by the three generations of his forebears. His own reign began auspiciously enough with coronation at Nippur and a royal progress through Sumer, where he and his court

were lavishly entertained at each stage of the journey. The new king appointed a general, Puzur-Ishtar, to supervise the continuation of the Ekur project at Nippur. He also carried out work at Babylon on the temples of Ishtar and Ilaba, tutelary deities of the dynasty. Babylon, first referred to in the reign of Sharkalisharri, may have begun to develop as a major urban center at this time, perhaps taking advantage of Naram-Sin's harsh treatment of neighboring Kish. Like Manisthusu, he purchased arable land, perhaps to reward his followers.[69]

Enemies pressed, however, on every front. Sharkalisharri campaigned successfully against the Amorites in the Jebel Bishri region, marched to the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris, and brought back cedar logs from the Amanus, just as his father had done. Perhaps some of these were in fact joint expeditions with his father, which he then claimed for himself. Closer to home, Sharkalisharri confronted an attack by the Elamites in Babylonia. New, persistent enemies were the Gutians, a people of the central Zagros region, whom the Akkadians despised as barbarians and cattle thieves, but who in fact could muster a redoubtable army under royal command.[70]

Unlike Sargon and Naram-Sin, Sharkalisharri was not remembered in later Mesopotamian historical tradition (Chapter 11 part 4), and the commemorative inscriptions of his own time are very sparse. Thus we do not know whether he held the empire together until his death, after which there was a period of anarchy, or if his twenty-five-year reign ended in disaster and collapse. The abrupt downfall of the Akkadian Empire was, in any case, cause for rejoicing in Sumer and in other lands that had experienced its brutal treatment and exploitation.[71]

This opened the way for the opportunistic and ambitious. One such was Puzur-Mama, a high-ranking military officer. He cannily took over the Akkadian administrative center and domains in the Lagash region and proclaimed himself "King of Lagash," though this was not the historic title of the rulers of Lagash. Another was Ili-ishmani at Susa, who seized power there.[72] The Gutians entered the Diyala region and Sumer, ruling at Umma and posing a threat to Adab, Uruk, and other cities; they too declared themselves kings.[73] At Agade itself, various short-lived rulers prevailed in a period of anarchy, which the Sumerian King List sums up as "Who was king? Who was not king?"[74] One of these ephemeral rulers, Irgigi, sent a letter to Lagash insisting that he was king in Agade and so had the right to decide capital cases concerning Akkadians.[75]

For the Sumerian poet who deplored Naram-Sin's rebuilding of the temple of Enlil at Nippur, the matter was simple yet far more dramatic: the Gutians were instruments of Enlil's divine wrath, sent to destroy the Akkadian Empire and Agade itself:

> Gutium, a race who know no order,
> Made like humans but with the brains of dogs, the shapes of apes,
> These Enlil brought down from the mountains!
> Like a plague of locusts they scoured the land,
> He let them stretch out their arms over it, as if corralling livestock.[76]

The poet paints a grim picture of famine, criminality, and disorder in Agade, ending his work with maledictions:

> People fought among themselves for hunger . . .
> The blood of the scoundrels running over the blood of the honest man . . .
> May the man who knew that city peer down into the clay pit where it was,
> May the man who knew a man there find no trace of him at all . . .
> May that city die of hunger,
> May your citizens who dined on finest foods lie down in the grass (like beasts),
> May your man who rose from a meal of first fruits
> Eat the binding from his roof,
> As for the grand door of his family home,
> May he gnaw its leather hinges.[77]

The reasons for the collapse of the Akkadian Empire are debatable. Weiss has argued that a decline in rainfall forced an abrupt evacuation of the Akkadian presence in much of the Khabur and the dislocation of the population to areas where water was available. This drought may also have been a consequence of a cataclysm in the late third millennium (about 4000 BCE) that was originally thought to be volcanic but is now identified as an "air blast" event, such as could have been caused by a major meteorite fall. This event burned off vegetation, resulting in wind erosion and dust bowl conditions.[78]

While the archaeological evidence presented in support of this thesis is strong and, according to Weiss, largely consistent throughout the Khabur region, it is not clear that the Akkadian Empire depended upon that area, rather than on Sumer, for its grain (Chapter 4 part 4). Therefore a retraction of Akkadian presence in the Khabur could have been a shock, rather than a decisive blow. In addition, certain major centers, such as Nagar and Urkesh, as well as their supporting hinterlands, seem not to have been affected by the alleged cataclysm, the traces of which are hard to date.

Nevertheless, any reduction in the Euphrates flow would have reduced the amount of arable land in Sumer that could be irrigated, causing a decline in production there at the same time as desertification in the north, especially in the large rural tracts reclaimed by Akkadian agrarian policy and redistributed to dependents of the Akkadian elite. If so, the Akkadian ruling class in Sumer might have felt the consequences of a drought sooner than the longer established population.[79] If, furthermore, the Akkadian Empire had weakened local forms of self-government, then marginal peoples could have forced their way into the settled areas more readily in time of drought and famine, causing social stress and disturbances directed against the ruling elite.[80] To summarize: drought and dislocation of population may have been significant, if indirect, factors in its collapse.

In Yoffee's discussions, he suggests that, because the Akkadian state promoted unprecedented social and economic mobility, it undermined the traditional city-states, draining their resources and fanning resistance among their ruling elites. In his view, the Akkadian ruling family failed to integrate traditional leadership into

the new order of a territorial state and its expansionist programs, largely because they were too preoccupied with costly foreign ventures. Ironically, it is precisely these foreign ventures and the dramatic imperial downfall that have captured the minds of Mesopotamian and modern writers about the period.[81]

After the period of anarchy at Agade, a certain Dudu came to the throne and ruled for 21 years. Whether or not he was descended from Sargon is unknown. Agade became the center of a small but aggressive state that shared the horizon with several others, including Gutium, Lagash, Umma, and Uruk to the south. Dudu, who at his accession ruled as far south as Adab, attacked Umma and Lagash and may have invaded Elam, but otherwise nothing is known of his reign. He may have lost control of Sumer to a resurgent Uruk.[82] His son, Shu-Durul, ruled for fifteen years in northern Babylonia and the Diyala region, but seems in his turn to have lost territory to Puzur-Inshushinak of Elam, who was actively building his own kingdom.[83] With Shu-Durul, the political history of the Akkadian Empire comes to an end.

Notes

1 Text: Gelb, Steinkeller, and Whiting 1991: 116–40; study of the prices paid: Milano 2003: 28. For early Mesopotamian land tenure in general: Bottéro 1970/71, 1971/72; Glassner 1985a, 1995; Renger 1995a; Steinkeller 1988c, 1999b, 1999c; Cripps 2007; Milano 2008; Pomponio 2013: 28, who remarks of the Akkadian period, "We can infer that a substantial part of communal or private land of Northern Babylonia and of the neighbouring region beyond the Tigris changed into a network of allotment fields of property of the king." For land tenure as a source of social conflict in the Akkadian period, Selz 2002: 185–87.

2 King 1910: 208–9; Gadd 1971: 449–50; Glassner 1986: 12; Liverani 1988b: 247–48; B. Foster 2000; for Upper and Lower Sea, Chapter 11 part 7 and note 164; in general, Yamada 2005.

3 Glassner 2004: 122–23; for the essential information about Manishtusu, Steinkeller 1987/90; A. Westenholz 1999: 44–46; for the name type "Who-Is-With-Him?" (meaning he has no rival), compare Sumerian Aba-indasa "Who-Is-Equal-to-Him?" and Aba-indane "Who-Came/Comes-Forth-with-Him?" (to be his comrade in arms(?), with Limet 1968: 90–91) versus the proposal that this could be the name of a twin and refer to coming out of the womb, Jacobsen 1939: 112 note 249; Liverani 2001/2: 180–81.

4 B. Foster 1982a: 110; B. Foster 2011a: 127–31.

5 For Marad, Appendix Ia 23; Frayne 1993: 112; Stol 1987/90a. For further discussion of royal acquisition of land, Chapter 4 part 1. The "Sippar Stone" (Gelb, Steinkeller, and Whiting 1991 no. 41) may also record a purchase by Manishtusu since it evidently mentions a style of garment that came into fashion during his reign and disappeared thereafter, B. Foster 2010a: 130–31.

6 Appendix Ib 1–8; Frayne 1993: 9–22; A. Westenholz 1987/90. For various proposed reconstructions of events in Sumer just prior to Sargon's rise to power, Liverani 1966a: 11 (Lugalzagesi destroys Kish, Sargon becomes king of Akkad, defeats Lugalzagesi, and restores Kish); Michalowski 1998b; Sallaberger 2004a; in general, Sallaberger and Schrakamp 2010. An important issue in any reconstruction is the meaning of "Kish" in the Ebla texts (Archi 1981, 1987a), including whether or not it means "totality" or "the world" rather than "Kish" and whether or not in some instances it could refer to the Akkadian kings, since Sargon called himself "king of Kish/the world"; further,

both for and against this understanding, Thureau-Dangin 1912: 34; Seux 1965; Maeda 1981; Durand 2012: 130; Steinkeller 2013c: 146 note 51. For the essential information about Sargon, Sommerfeld 2009/11. For his taking of Lugalzagesi's title, Chapter 6 note 83. The defection of Meskigal, ruler of Adab, from the hegemony of Uruk brought Sargon major support and guaranteed that strategic city an important place in the new order, as suggested by Schrakamp forthcoming: 199; further on Adab, chapter 3 part 3; further on Meskigal, Edzard 1993/97; Visicato 2010.

7 Appendix Ib 6; Frayne 1993: 24–27; Steinkeller 1982a, 2006, 2014; Glassner 2005b; for the problem of whether or not Marhashum was the same place as Parahshe, A. Westenholz 1999: 91–93 (skeptical, but not followed here).

8 Appendix Ib 2, 7; Frayne 1993: 15, 28.

9 Frayne 1993: 28–29. Liverani 1966a: 8 and Maeda 2005, studying Sargon's titles, conclude that they show the same geographical concepts as those of Lugalzagesi and that only with the reign of Naram-Sin do royal titles change from a southern Mesopotamian city-state tradition to a universal claim; further, Glassner 1984b; Liverani 1988b: 253, 2011: 146. For the Mesopotamian perspectives on (snow-covered) mountain ranges, Rollinger 2010: 13–15; Durand 2012: 127 with note 31. In favor of "snow-covered" for KÙ is their dramatic appearance when seen from the Mesopotamian or Syrian plain. In favor of "silver," as generally understood, is that the poet of the *Curse of Agade* evidently knew the expression and understood it to refer to mountains as places silver was mined (Appendix 3b, line 109). Manishtusu refers to "silver mines" in Iran, Appendix Ia 8, Ib 19.

10 Appendix Ib 7; Frayne 1993: 28–29.

11 J. Westenholz 1983a. Few administrative records certainly from the time of Sargon are known. One, BdI Adab 63, refers to a journey he made; others cite offerings in his name (ECTJ 85) and his military campaign against Simurrum (ECTJ 151). Among the many modern studies of Sargon and interpretations of his career are Diakonoff 1959: 201–27; Liverani 1966a, 1988b: 232–36, 2011: 133–35; Gadd 1971; A. Westenholz 1999: 34–40; Tricoli 2005; Heinz 2007; further, Chapter 12. One historian writes that Sargon was "peut-être le personnage central de l'histoire mésopotamienne," Garelli 1982: 85; further Chapter 12 part 4.

12 According to the *Sumerian Sargon Legend* (Chapter 1 part 2), his father was named La'ipum, Cooper and Heimpel 1983; Appendix IIIa.

13 Jacobsen 1939: 142–43.

14 Cooper and Heimpel 1983, with discussion of the major difficulties of this passage; ECTSL 2.1.4, for an integral translation, Appendix IIIa. For documentary evidence for the importance of the cupbearer, Chapter 4 part 7; further Chapter 6 note 83.

15 Lewis 1980; *Muses*, 911–13.

16 J. Westenholz 1997.

17 *Muses*, 109, 111.

18 *Muses*, 338–42; Beckman 2001.

19 Appendix Ib 1–17; Frayne 1993: 41–50; for the essential information about Rimush, Sommerfeld 2006/8.

20 B. Foster 1982b: 46–50; this interpretation is disputed, A. Westenholz 1999: 41 note 126 vs. Neumann 1989: 88 and Selz 2014: 270–71.

21 B. Foster 1985, 2011a. There is no unequivocal evidence that Rimush expropriated the land but it seems most unlikely that he acquired it any other way (further Chapter 4 note 8). Thureau-Dangin 1897c: 170 commented, "Les conséquences de la conquête furent considérables: le partage des terres détermina un afflux de population nouvelle; en même temps se créa un mouvement très actif d'échanges entre Shirpourla [= Lagash] et Agadé." Thureau-Dangin also noted that the recipients of these parcels, so far as preserved, had Akkadian names. He dated the monument earlier than Naram-Sin and later than Eannatum II and believed that the inscribed portion "probably" belonged with the relief (Figure 1.4). The two fragments were found in the same

season and the excavator himself believed that they were parts of the same monument, Heuzey 1893. The two Louvre fragments were accessioned together with consecutive museum numbers. It would be a remarkable coincidence if fragments of two early Akkadian stelae were found in close proximity at the same time, which did not belong to the same monument, but no traces of any other Akkadian monuments. The second inscribed fragment (B. Foster 1985) matches the Louvre inscribed fragment in chemical analysis, the width of its columns, and the size of the cases of writing.

22 Cooper 1983b.

23 Porada 1992; Appendix Ia 4–6; Frayne 1993: 60–67.

24 Appendix Ib 18; differently Frayne 1993: 68 ("meteoritic iron"); further J. Westenholz 1998: 46.

25 ITT I 1096.

26 Goetze 1947: 256; further Chapter 11 part 4.

27 Appendix Ib 21; Frayne 1993: 77; for a possible reference to civil war extracted from a genuine inscription of Manishtusu, Al-Rawi and George 1994: 148.

28 Appendix Ia 8; Ib 19; Frayne 1993: 76.

29 Using "diorite" broadly to refer to Moorey's "category 4" (Moorey 1994: 22); Eppihimer 2010.

30 Grayson 1972: 22–23; Reade 2011.

31 Gelb 1949; Sollberger 1967/8. Powell 1991 noted that the expression of metrological units in this text was characteristic of the late seventh century BCE or later.

32 According to an early second-millennium omen (Chapter 11 part 4), Manishtusu was killed by his "palace," but Goetze suggests a slight emendation to "his officers" (Goetze 1947: 257 note 27); further Chapter 11 part 4. A fragment of a praise poem, evidently in honor of Manishtusu (Chapter 9 part 5), suggests that Naram-Sin campaigned already as crown prince, CUSAS 26 270; Naram-Sin may likewise have included his son and successor, Sharkalisharri, on expeditions, part 8, this chapter.

33 Appendix Ib 24; Frayne 1993: 163; for the essential information about Naram-Sin, Frayne 1998/2001; A. Westenholz 1999: 46–55; for general accounts of his reign, Liverani 1988b: 236–41, 2011: 135–37; for a more skeptical approach, Michalowski 1980: 233. Frayne's chronology is based on his assumption that the presence or absence of the divine determinative in writing the king's name is decisive, whereas there appear to be regional factors at work in the choice of whether or not to use it (more regularly in Sumer than in Akkad); differently Farber 1983: 69 (trying to explain its absence in the Bassetki inscription commemorating Naram-Sin's deification) and below, note 39. For Naram-Sin as hunter of wild beasts and the possible influence of that on his depiction in art, Chapter 4 note 56 and Chapter 9 notes 47 and 48.

34 Oates, Oates, and McDonald 2001: 172; Senior and Weiss 1992.

35 *Muses*, 116.

36 Appendix Ib 26; Frayne 1993: 132–35; Otto 2006 (identifies with Tell Bazi); Archi 2011a (identifies with Simsat).

37 Appendix Ib 28; Frayne 1993: 104; Jacobsen 1978; in general Sommerfeld 2000.

38 Appendix Ib 28.

39 Appendix Ia 18; after that, Naram-Sin was referred to as "the god of Agade," e.g., CUSAS 23 122; further B. Foster 1979a; Chapter 2 note 66; Chapter 6 note 28; Beaulieu 2002/36. "House" and "temple" are the same word in Akkadian. Some scholars translate the inscription differently, understanding *ište*, rendered "with" here, as "from." This would mean that the citizens asked "from" the gods that Naram-Sin be their god, rather than, as here, that the citizens asked Naram-Sin that he a god "with" the other gods; for example Farber 1983; Frayne 1993: 104, versus Gelb and Kienast 1990: 83 and Kienast and Sommerfeld 1994: 220. Against Farber and Frayne, the Akkadian verb "to ask somebody for something" normally takes the accusative case of the person asked and the thing asked for, not a preposition "from." The passage is, however, difficult.

40 J. Westenholz 1997; Liverani 2011: 148–53.