

Sumer, Babylon, and Hittites

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Although cereals were being harvested with flint-bladed sickles and ground by limestone in the Nile valley more than 15,000 years ago, plants and animals were not domesticated for food until about 10,000 years ago in the fertile crescent of southwestern Asia and soon after that in Mesoamerica, Peru, and China. While the ice was melting and the climate was warming up, the reindeer and horses retreated to the north, and the mammoths disappeared. Forests spread, and those animals were replaced by red deer, wild pigs, and cattle. Dogs had already been domesticated for a few thousand years. Sedentary communities settled down in southwest Asia about a thousand years before wheat and barley were domesticated, supported by herds of wild sheep, goats, cattle, and pigs, which were all domesticated by 6000 BC.

Women were probably responsible for learning how to cultivate plants, as they seemed to have done most of the plant gathering. Women also probably invented potting, spinning, and weaving. Men used to hunting probably took care of the herds and, after the plow was invented, castrated bulls to use oxen to pull plows and carts, though a Sumerian poem refers to a woman in the fields with the plow. Dug-out canoes were used for fishing and as transportation for trading such items as obsidian, shells, salt, food, and clothing. As more farmland was needed, the invention of the ax enabled people to cut down trees and use wood for building houses. At first houses were round like the communal caves and huts, but soon rectangles were used so that additional rooms could be added. In such villages the family replaced the band as the basic social group.

The oldest city discovered so far is Jericho, which had two thousand people between 8350 and 7350 BC. A large stone wall surrounded the settlement. In the Zagros mountains people living at Ali Kosh hunted gazelles, wild asses, and pigs, fished in the Mehmeh River, and caught wild fowl about 7500 BC. Soon they were growing two-rowed barley and emmer wheat. Between 6250 and 5400 BC Catal Huyuk in the Taurus mountains of Anatolia had a population of about 5,000. Numerous bull skulls and horns found in the houses indicate that people probably engaged in rituals as families. Corpses were put out somewhere to be picked clean by vultures before their bones were buried under the floor in their houses. The simplicity of most grave objects indicates that this probably was a fairly egalitarian society. Before the use of metal there seems to have been little warfare and much greater equality between men and women. Pottery vessels, which have been found in Japan as old as 12,000 BC, became widespread in the Near East by 6500 BC.

The earliest civilization with writing developed in the lands around and between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which flow southeast into the Persian Gulf. Large-scale irrigation began along the Euphrates River as early as 6000 BC, while those living around the Nile and the Indus were only using dikes and ditches to protect their homes and crops from floodwaters. About 5400 BC the first city established in Mesopotamia was Eridu, which a Sumerian creation story credits with being the first city to emerge from the primeval sea. The oldest known temple was constructed there, and what is called the Ubaid culture developed from 5300 to 3600 BC. Soon the stone age was transcended, as people learned how to melt and shape copper, gold, and silver.

Sumer

The city of Uruk had 10,000 people in 3800 BC, and with pottery manufacturing increasing eight hundred years later 50,000 people were protected by defensive walls. Most settlements by this time were fortified, and documents written about 2600 BC describe major conflicts between the city-states of Ur, Uruk, Umma, and others. With cities came civilization and its organized violence - war.

In addition to pottery, other specializations included stonecutters, bricklayers, metalsmiths, farmers, fishers, shepherds, weavers, leather-workers, and sailors. The wheel was invented for carts, chariots, and pottery-making. Iron was smelted about 2500 BC. Seals had been used to stamp a carved insignia on clay before cylindrical seals became widespread for labeling commodities and legal documents. Pictographic writing was first used by the Sumerians about 3400, and by 3000 BC this had evolved into cuneiform words and syllables.

The Sumerian language was not deciphered until the nineteenth century of our era when it was found to be different from both the Indo-European and Semitic language groups. Fifteen hundred cuneiform symbols were reduced in the next thousand years to about seven hundred, but it did not become alphabetic until about 1300 BC. By 2500 BC libraries were established at Shuruppak and Eresh, and schools had been established to train scribes for the temple and state bureaucracies as well as to legally document contracts and business transactions. Schools were regularly attended by the sons of the aristocracy and successful; discipline was by caning.

Religion was the central organizing principle of the city states, each city belonging to a different deity who was worshipped in a large temple. Families also had their own special gods or goddesses, and people prayed by clasping their hands in front of their chests. The temple was built on top of the ruins of the previous temple until in Uruk the temple of Anu, the god of heaven, rose fifty feet above the plain. Eventually these temples became man-made mountains, like the *ziggurats* of Ur, Uruk, Eridu, and Nippur. About a third of the land was owned by the temple which employed many people; some of their land was loaned out at interest or leased for a seventh or eighth of the harvest.

A ruler was called a lord (*en*) and was often deified. Each city had a governor (*ensi*) or a king (*lugal* meaning literally "great man") who lived in a great house (*egal*), and they often had religious duties as well, particularly to build and maintain temples. The wife of the king was called a lady or queen (*nin*), and she might take on important projects such as managing the affairs of a temple goddess.

The aggrandizement of the king was at times taken to an extreme, as indicated by the royal cemetery of Ur from the 26th century BC in which archaeologists found not only extraordinary wealth and precious objects but also the corpses of as many as 74 attendants. As we shall see in the tale of Gilgamesh and other literature, the Sumerians believed in an underworld for the spirits of the dead; and some kings as gods felt they wanted their servants there also. Obviously this was a major violation of life, and this practice seemed to die out after the Early Dynastic period.

Below the king or governor society had three distinct classes: aristocratic nobles who were administrators, priests, and officers in the army rewarded with large estates; a middle class of business people, school teachers, artisans, and farmers; and the lowest being slaves, who had been captured in war or were dispossessed farmers or those sold by their families. Slavery was not stigmatized by race but was considered a misfortune out of which one could free oneself through service, usually in three years.

Some of the young women were married to the god in the temple and were not celibate; some were prostitutes, and their children were often legally adopted. Laws made clear distinctions between the three classes. Though women had some rights, they were not equal to men. Thus from the beginning of civilization the sexism of patriarchal rule in the state and families is seen in the oppression by male dominance. The Sumerians were quite bureaucratic, documenting major transactions and legal agreements of all kinds, being the first to develop a system of laws, which influenced the law codes of Eshnunna and Hammurabi.

How then did these social hierarchies develop? Given the limited knowledge available, our explanations are speculative and uncertain. As the pastoral peoples traded with the farmers and villagers, more complex social organizations could function more productively. The manufacturing of pottery and other products led to specialization and trading by barter, as the Sumerians had no money system except for the weighing of precious metals. As irrigation systems became more complex, planners and managers of labor were needed. Protection of surplus goods and valuable construction was required to guard against raiding parties. Those with the ability to organize and manage more complex activities tended to give themselves privileges for their success, and eventually social inequalities grew, as those who failed lost their privileges. Religion also became a part of this system of inequality, as religious leaders placed themselves above others in their service of the deities.

Laws apparently were devised to prevent abuses and as a way to settle disputes. Cities took the step from police protection under law to the organization of retaliatory attacks by an army. The skills of hunters selected over a long period of evolution seem to have given men (more than women) a tendency to gang up and work together in violent attacks. However, when the objects of these attacks became other men and the valuables found in another city, this tendency became self-destructive for the species. The survival instincts kept it within bounds so that it has not practiced to extinction (so far), but individual leaders who could gain social rewards for initiating such adventures appeared with increasing regularity. Apparently those individuals with better methods of resolving conflicts were not able to persuade enough people all the time to avoid such brutality. Yet the history of Sumer shows that war was counter-productive for most people and eventually led to the decline and fall of their culture.

After the fall of the last Sumerian dynasty about 2000 BC, some Sumerian scribes wrote chronicles of their long past. Although these have been lost, lists of their kings and some accounts edited into later Babylonian chronicles have been found. These claimed that their kings go back more than 240,000 years before the flood and come forward about 30,000 years after the flood. Such figures would take us back before Atlantis to Lemuria, which seems unlikely, though as one of the few agglutinative languages Sumerian does resemble Polynesian. More than five thousand years ago their advanced architecture using vaults, arches, and domes indicated a long development.

The first dynasty after the deluge was in the Akkadian region northwest of Sumer in the city of Kish, ten miles east of what became Babylon. According to Georges Roux, twelve of the kings' names were Semitic rather than Sumerian.¹ Thus from its historical beginnings the Sumerian civilization was mixed with Semitic influences. The first legendary ruler Etana was said to have ascended to heaven on the back of an eagle. The oldest historical king, Mebaragesi, ruled Kish about 2700 BC and apparently overcame the Sumerians' eastern neighbor at Elam, for he is said to have carried away their weapons as spoil.

The second dynasty at Uruk in Sumer itself must have overlapped with the first, because it was the legendary fifth king of that dynasty, Gilgamesh, who was attacked by the last Kish king Agga. An ancient account told the following story: Agga having besieged Uruk sent envoys to Gilgamesh with an ultimatum. Gilgamesh went to his city's elders, suggesting that they not submit but fight with weapons. However, the elders came to the opposite conclusion. So Gilgamesh took his proposal to the "men of the city," and they agreed with him. Gilgamesh was elated and said to his servant Enkidu, "Now, then, let the (peaceful) tool be put aside for the violence of battle."² Gilgamesh then asked for a volunteer to go to Agga. Birhurrence, the head man, went and withstood torture; but when the awesome Gilgamesh ascended the wall and was seen by the foes, the foreigners felt overwhelmed and abandoned the siege.

The Uruk dynasty was well known in Sumerian tradition, as Gilgamesh was preceded by Meskiaggasher, son of the sun-god Utu, Enmerkar also son of Utu who built Uruk, the shepherd Lugalbanda, who was also considered divine, and the fisherman Dumuzi, the legendary vegetation god who married the love goddess Inanna. Tales of Gilgamesh became very popular.

Mesalim, who called himself King of Kish, erected a temple to Ningirsu in Lagash, for which he arbitrated a territorial dispute with Umma and set up a stela marking the border. However, he was overthrown, as was the last king of Uruk, by the founder of the Ur dynasty, Mesannepadda, whose name meant the hero chosen by An. He and his successor rebuilt the Tummal temple at Nippur which had fallen into ruin. The peace between Lagash and Umma was maintained for about a century as Lagash king Ur-Nanshe built temples, dug canals, and imported wood from Dilmun. Meanwhile Mesannepadda sent gifts to the distant Mari. The rulers of Ur became extraordinarily wealthy as indicated by their royal tombs in the mid-27th century. A royal standard shows four-wheeled chariots pulled by asses and rows of prisoners presented to the king.

Eventually Kish was occupied by mountain people from Khamazi, while the Elamites encroached on Sumer. In Lagash Ur-Nanshe's grandson, Eannatum, who also built temples and

dug canals, became a warrior, fighting back against the Elamites, conquering Ur and Uruk, and taking the kingship of Kish. Closer to home was the local conflict with Umma. Claiming his god commanded it, the governor of Umma raided the disputed field of Gu-edin, removed the marker set up by Mesalim, and invaded the territory of Lagash. However, Eannatum won the battle with the help of his god Enlil and captured in a great net his enemies, who begged for life. A peace treaty was agreed upon with Enakalli, the next governor of Umma, and Mesalim's stela was restored to its former place. Umma was required to pay heavy taxes in barley, and Eannatum's victory was commemorated by a stela depicting vultures tearing up the corpses of the defeated. Eannatum boasted of killing 3,600 men of Umma and had to bury twenty heaps of his own men.

Later Eannatum had to fight a coalition of forces from Kish and Mari led by the King of Akshak; though he claimed victory, his little empire was declining. Umma once again seized the disputed canal, destroyed the stela of the vultures, and defeated Eannatum. However, his nephew, Entemena, regained the canal from Umma even though they were backed by foreign kings (probably from Mari), and he assigned his own governor to control the irrigation Lagash needed. Entemena also constructed new canals, attained a "brotherhood pact" with Lugal-kinishe-dudu who had united Uruk and Ur, and for a reign of peace and prosperity was deified by a grateful people with statues for nearly a thousand years. A second Eannatum was succeeded by a highpriest of the warrior god Ningirsu, and for a time peace prevailed as the people of Umma were allowed to live in Lagash with religious and civil liberties.

However, conditions deteriorated as they were ruled by the distant kings of Kish who appointed the local governors, and the priesthood became corrupted and greedy for land and taxes. Finally a strong leader arose named Urukagina, who threw off the allegiance to Kish, proclaimed himself king of Lagash, and instituted sweeping reforms directed against the extortion of the priesthood. A priest was no longer allowed to "come into the garden of a poor mother and take wood" nor to take fruit as tax.³ Burial fees were greatly reduced. Temple officials were forbidden to take the god's revenues or to use temple lands and cattle as their own. Owners could refuse to sell their houses unless they got the price they asked. Widows and orphans were protected, and artisans did not have to beg for their food. At the same time as Urukagina was reforming the temple, he was rebuilding it and other shrines in Lagash.

Unfortunately after only eight years of this rule by the world's first known reformer, the army of Umma led by its governor, Lugalzagesi, attacked Lagash possibly unresisted by Urukagina, burnt the shrines, and carried off the divine image of Ningirsu. Assuming the existence of moral justice the chronicler lamented, "The men of Umma, by the despoiling of Lagash, have committed a sin against the god Ningirsu.... As for Lugalzagesi, *ensi* of Umma, may his goddess Nidaba make him bear his mortal sin upon his head!"⁴ Lugalzagesi went on to conquer and become king of Uruk and claim all of Sumer under the god Enlil from the lower sea (Persian Gulf) including the Tigris and Euphrates all the way to the upper sea (Mediterranean). However, to do this he had to ally himself with the cup-bearer of Kish, where Lugalzagesi had begun life himself as a vassal. His reign of 24 years was to mark the end of that Sumerian empire in about 2390 BC, for the name of that Akkadian cup-bearer was Sargon. ⁵

Sargon the Akkadian

According to legend Sargon did not know his father and claimed his mother was a "changeling," though some have assumed she was probably a temple prostitute. A Neo-Assyrian (7th century BC) text recounted how his mother bore him in secret, put her baby in a basket of rushes sealed with bitumen, and cast it upon the Euphrates River. The river carried him to Akki, a drawer of water, who reared Sargon as a son and appointed him as his gardener. As a gardener Sargon claimed he received the love of the goddess Ishtar. More ancient inscriptions described him as the cup-bearer of Ur-Zababa, the King of Kish, whom either he or Lugalzagesi overthrew.

Sargon marched against Uruk to attack Lugalzagesi, who, though he had fifty governors under his command, was defeated, captured, and brought to Kish where he was yoked by the neck to Enlil's gate. Having consolidated his power in the north, Sargon went down river to attack and tear down the walls of Ur, Lagash, and Umma, not stopping until his warriors had "washed their weapons" in the lower sea (Persian Gulf). He built a new capital called Agade on the Euphrates with temples dedicated to Ishtar and the warrior god Zababa of the Kish. Semitic speakers were given authority over the Sumerians as he appointed Akkadian governors in all the major cities. The Akkadian language became as official as Sumerian, but following Sumerian religious traditions he appointed his daughter priestess of Nanna, the moon god of Ur, and called himself the anointed priest of Anu and the great governor of Enlil.

Ambitious to expand his new empire and gain material resources, Sargon crossed the Tigris River and attacked four rulers in Iran, eventually defeating them and making the kings of Elam, Barhashe, and others his vassals. He then went northwest where he prostrated himself before the grain-god Dagan who "gave" him the upper region of Mari, Iarmuti, and Ebla to the cedar forest (Lebanon) and the silver (Taurus) mountains, thus gaining ample timber and precious metals. This must have been a major war, because at that time Ebla was ruling over all of Syria and Palestine. Some even believe that Sargon crossed the western sea and landed on Cyprus and Crete. Sargon ruled over this vast empire until his death, but even at the end he was still fighting battles against a major revolt, destroying a vast army.

He was succeeded by his son, Rimush, who put down the revolts in Sumer, Iran, and Elam; but his battles involving tens of thousands of troops may have angered his administrators because after only nine years they "killed him with their tablets," showing that in those days even the written word could be a lethal weapon. His brother Manishtusu continued these wars and boasted how he had secured silver mines and diorite for statues from southern Elam.

His son, Naram-Sin, also chose war for the northwestern copper and tin needed for bronze as well as the southern silver. He not only aggrandized his title from King of Agade to King of the Four Regions and King of the Universe, but he also added the star meaning god before his name. Naram-Sin ruled until 2274 BC and fought numerous wars even against the local Kish and Uruk and as far away as Ebla, Lebanon, the Zagros mountains, and in a major war with the Lullubi east of the Tigris. Later the first philosopher of history criticized Naram-Sin for morally bringing about the destruction of Agade by the Gutti, because he had devastated the temple at Nippur.

Puzur-Inshushinak, the governor of Elam, fought the southern tribes of Zagros on behalf of Naram-Sin, but after the latter died, Puzur-Inshushinak declared himself King of the Universe, and the new king of Agade, Shar-kali-sharri, busy with Sumerian revolts and other far-flung wars, could not object. A palace revolution also ended his reign in 2249 BC, and in the next three years the list of kings had four names, asking, "Who was king? Who was not king?"⁶ Like the Elamites, the Lullubi became independent, and eventually the Gutu invaded from the north and put an end to the Akkadian empire.

For the enrichment of a few these wars were fought for bronze, silver, wood, and stone and the cheap labor of slaves captured in battle. Trade had been expanded, perhaps as far as the Indus valley, but at what a cost! Small city-states were overcome by centralized kingdoms, and Akkadian emphasis on private property resulted in large estates for royalty and military nobles and a lessening of the power and domains of the temples in Sumer.

Sumerian Revival

The Gutu ruled over Mesopotamia for nearly a century; but the trade routes were open, and local governors seemed to be autonomous. One of these in a city near the capital called Girsu was Gudea, Governor of Lagash from 2197 to 2178 BC. Lugalzagesi of Umma had burned down Girsu, but Gudea rebuilt it with fifteen or more temples, inspired by a dream he had in which a man as tall as the sky and as heavy as the earth told him to build a temple. A woman also appeared holding a stylus of flaming metal and a tablet with the good writing of heaven. To understand this, Gudea consulted his "mother," the goddess Gatumdug, and he went by boat to the temple of the goddess Nanshe, who interprets dreams. Nanshe explained that the man was the god Ningirsu and the woman the goddess of science, Nisaba. The wisdom of Ningirsu, the son of Enlil, would reveal to him the plan of his temple.

Gudea obeyed and tried to unite the people of Girsu "as sons of the same mother" by purifying the city with encircling fires, putting clay in a pure place; making bricks, he purified the foundations of the temple and anointed the platform with perfume. The city was also purified morally: complaints, accusations, and punishments were to cease; mothers were not to scold their children nor should children raise their voices against their parents; slaves were not to be struck. Then workers from Elam and Susa collected timber from their mountains and brought it to Girsu. Cedars were cut with great axes and like giant snakes were floated down the river. Stone was brought in large blocks, copper from Kimash, silver from distant mines, and red stone from Meluhha (possibly Ethiopia or the Indus). Construction took a year, and then the god could enter the temple. Statues of Gudea portray a calm and pious ruler, but in attaining all these building materials there was at least one war with the Elamites of Anshan.

About 2176 BC the governor of Uruk, Utu-hegal, revolted against the Gutu "serpent of the hills" and with the help of other cities defeated the foreigners. However, Uruk was not able to hold the power, as seven years later Ur-Nammu, the Governor of Ur, proclaimed himself King of Ur, Sumer, and Akkad. This Third Dynasty of Ur lasted just over a century until 2060 BC and is considered the final glory of Sumerian civilization.

Ur-Nammu is credited with freeing the land of thieves, robbers, and rebels, and using "principles of equity and truth" he promulgated the oldest known code of laws. According to the ancient text Ur-Nammu established "equity in the land and banished malediction, violence, and strife."⁷ Not as harsh as later laws of Hammurabi and Moses, crimes involving physical injuries were not always punished by death or mutilation but often by paying compensation in silver instead. However, the double standard of sexism was already established:

4. If the wife of a man followed after another man and he slept with her, they shall slay that woman, but that male shall be set free.
5. If a man proceeded by force, and deflowered the virgin slavewoman of another man, that man must pay five shekels of silver.⁸

If a defending witness refuses to testify by oath, the lawsuit must be paid; and the fine for perjury was fifteen shekels of silver, a shekel being a half ounce.

Ur-Nammu promoted extensive building in canals and temples, erecting large ziqqurats in Ur, Uruk, Eridu, Nippur, and other cities, but he died abandoned on the battlefield in an unknown war and was succeeded by his son, Shulgi, who ruled for 47 years. The first half of his reign was spent completing the temples and ziqqurats, reinstating the gods in their shrines with newly appointed highpriests, supporting the schools, and reforming the calendar and the standards for measuring grain. Then Shulgi began a series of military campaigns in the plains and mountains north of Diyala. He pacified other regions by marrying his daughters to governors in Barshashe, Anshan, and Susa. He built temples for the gods of Elam, called himself King of the Four Quarters, and was worshipped as a god.

In a self-praising poem Shulgi described himself as the trustworthy god of all the lands, claimed to be endowed with wisdom by Enki and accomplished in it, loving justice and hating evil words. He boasted of straightening the highways, making travel safe by building big houses, planting gardens along them, and establishing resting places. He took charge of the music in the temple and brought bread-offerings, claiming as his spouse the maid Inanna, queen and vulva of heaven and earth. Claiming he destroyed all the foreign lands, he believed he had made the people secure.

From 2150 to 2094 BC Shulgi and his son, Amar-Sin, ruled over an empire more unified than the Akkadian empire of Sargon. The city-states became administrative districts governed by officials observed by royal inspectors and replaced by royal commands. Military affairs were controlled by the monarch and the generals he appointed. Fortresses guarded the main roads, and royal couriers were given rations of food at each stop.

From thousands of administrative tablets scholars have learned that the state had now overwhelmed the importance of the temple and private property. The government owned and operated large factories, workshops, and trading posts, and oversaw thousands of laborers in agriculture, industry, public works, civil service, and police. Workers were either freemen who paid taxes in corvées and military service, lesser paid serfs under the king's protection, or slaves. Officials received free meat, beer, and clothes and could own houses, fields, asses, and slaves.

Governors and generals who were paid by taxes could be quite wealthy. In a middle class between these two extremes were some merchants and small land owners who farmed by borrowing at one-fifth to one-third interest rates.

Amar-Sin was succeeded by his brother, Shu-Sin, who ruled for eight years, coming into conflict with an uncivilized people in the northwest called the Martu or Amorites, who were contemptuously described as not knowing about grain or agriculture or houses or burials but were mountain boors eating raw meat.

When Shu-Sin was succeeded by his son, Ibbi-Sin, the empire soon disintegrated. Eshnunna and Susa in the southeast became independent, and then the Amorites attacked from the north. One of the king's generals, Ishbi-Irra in Mari, wrote to him that he could not deliver the grain Ibbi-Sin wanted from Nippur and Isin, because the Amorites had cut off the roads. Ibbi-Sin was depressed by the bad omens and believed that Enlil hated him. Ishbi-Irra asked his sovereign for permission to defend the two cities, and he defeated the Amorites. Believing he was favored by Enlil, in 2073 BC Ishbi-Irra proclaimed himself king of Isin, and his dynasty there lasted until 1850 BC.

An Amorite had already been crowned in Larsa near Ur. When the Elamites invaded Sumer, Ibbi-Sin facing a famine and enemies on two fronts tried to ally himself with the Amorites against Ishbi-Irra and the Elamites. However, this too failed, and in 2060 BC the glorious city of Ur starving under siege was attacked and burned down, a catastrophe the scribes attributed to the wrath of Enlil. Ibbi-Sin was captured and died in the foreign land of Anshan he had once himself devastated. A Sumerian writer lamented how the walls of Ur were breached as the people groaned; where people had before promenaded and feasted now dead bodies were lying scattered and in heaps.

Ur - its weak and its strong perished through hunger;
 Mothers and fathers who did not leave their houses
 were overcome by fire;
 The young lying on their mothers' laps,
 like fish were carried off by the waters;
 In the city, the wife was abandoned, the son was abandoned,
 the possessions were scattered about.
 O Nanna, Ur has been destroyed,
 its people have been dispersed!⁹

Eventually Ishbi-Irra drove the Elamites out of the garrison they established at Ur, and his successor Shu-ilishu recovered the statue of Ur's moon god Nanna the Elamites had carried off. Though its positive aspects were to influence its successors, Sumerian civilization had failed to contain the contagion of war, and it would never rise again.

Sumerian Literature

In Sumerian cosmology life seemed to begin in a primeval sea (goddess Nammu). The god of heaven An joined with the earth goddess Ki to produce the air god Enlil. The universe was thus known as *an-ki*. Enlil impregnated Ninlil, who gave birth to Nanna the moon, who begot the sun-god Utu. Humans were created out of clay in order to free the gods from working for their sustenance. This was before the gods knew of the grain-god and cattle-god.

Like mankind, when first created,
 They knew not the eating of bread,
 Knew not the dressing of garments,
 Ate plants with their mouths like sheep,
 Drank water from the ditch.¹⁰

A myth tells how the god Enlil favors the farmer Enten over his complaining brother Emesh, because Enten has gained the knowledge of cultivating the soil and domesticating animals. In a poem explaining where cattle and grain come from, Enki, the god of water and wisdom, persuades Enlil to set up a sheepfold for the cattle god Lahar and give a plow and yoke to the grain god Ashnan. Another story honors the invention of the pickax.

A paradise is portrayed in Dilmun as a place clean and bright where Enki lays with his wife, the lion does not kill nor does the wolf snatch the lamb, where sickness and old age do not exist, and where flows the water of the heart, which Ninhursag receives from Enki giving birth to Ninsar, who gives birth to Ninkur, who gives birth to Uttu, the goddess of plants, each having been impregnated by Enki. When Enki impregnates Uttu, she produces eight plants which Enki eats. Finally Ninhursag curses Enki, saying that she will not look upon him with the eye of life until he is dead; she then disappears. The gods don't know what to do, but the fox offers to bring back Ninhursag for a reward. Enlil promises the reward to the fox. Enki by now is hurting in eight parts of his body. Ninhursag comes back and gives birth to a god to cure each of these body parts, the Sumerian poet using puns based on the body parts for each of these healing deities. This poem shows us perhaps how important fertility and agriculture was for the Sumerians. Also their healing methods tended to be herbal and naturopathic, and they believed in magic and psychological causes of diseases and consequently magical and psychological cures.

A poem described Enki bringing the blessings of animal husbandry, agriculture, and irrigation to Ur, and another praised the blessings from Enki in the ancient city of Eridu. Enlil's city of Nippur was also a spiritual center, and his temple there, Ekur, was a place of pilgrimage to receive Enlil's blessing. One myth described Nanna's journey there with gifts on behalf of his city of Ur.

Another poem told how the queen of heaven, Inanna, went to Eridu to gain the divine decrees essential for civilization from her father Enki so that she can take them to her beloved city of Uruk. Enki instructs Isimud to greet her with barley cakes and butter, cold water, and date wine. Being relaxed Enki then presents Inanna with more than one hundred divine decrees (*me*) including lordship, the crown and throne of kingship, shrines and priestly offices, truth, descent to and ascent from the underworld, sexual intercourse and prostitution, legal and illegal speech, art, music, power, enmity, straightforwardness, destruction of cities, rebellion, sorrow, rejoicing, falsehood, goodness and justice, carpentry, metal work, writing, leatherwork, masonry, basket-weaving, wisdom and understanding, purification, fear, fire, weariness, strife, peace, victory shouting, counsel, judgment and decision, and exuberance.

Inanna happily loads the gifts on her boat of heaven and starts off for Uruk. When he sobers up, Enki realizes that the decrees are gone; so he instructs Isimud to send sea monsters after her to seize the boat of heaven but allow Inanna to proceed on foot. Inanna complains that Enki has spoken falsehoods to her and instructs her messenger Ninshubur to save the boat of heaven which he does at seven stopping places along the way to Uruk, where they jubilantly unload the

decrees. The text of Enki's final speech to Inanna is damaged, but it is clear that the poem is to explain the local pride of Uruk in their civilization.

Kur is a mysterious figure in Sumerian myths who seems to have been a primeval force in the underworld who abducted the goddess Ereshkigal. In one story Enki takes a boat to get her back and fights with Kur. The hero of a second story is the warrior god Ninurta, son of Enlil, whose personified weapon Sharur convinces him to attack Kur. At first Ninurta flees like a bird; but Sharur encourages him to attack again, and they destroy Kur. However, this affects the primeval waters and causes a famine. By piling up stones over the dead Kur, Ninurta is able to redirect the waters and irrigate the fields. Hearing of his heroic success, his mother, Ninmah, can't sleep and visits Ninurta, who gratefully suggests that she be queen of the mountain Hursag which is perhaps how she got called Ninhursag. Hursag is then blessed with herbs, wine, honey, trees, gold, silver, bronze, cattle, sheep, and so on.

A third myth shows how Inanna was not only the goddess of love but of battle as well. In spite of a warning from An she attacks Kur, which in this poem is the mountain Ebih northeast of Sumer and thus probably an enemy land. With numerous weapons Inanna destroys Kur, boasting of her triumph.

A long poem describes Inanna's descent into the underworld. Afraid of being killed by her elder sister Ereshkigal, she instructs Ninshubar to notify the assembly of gods if she is not back in three days. He is to go to Enlil at Nippur, that failing, then to Nanna at Ur; if that fails too, Ninshubar is to go to Eridu where Enki knowing the food and water of life will restore her. Inanna having fastened the seven divine decrees to her body is stopped by Neti, the gatekeeper of the underworld. As an excuse to get in, the queen of heaven says that her sister Ereshkigal's husband has been killed. Ereshkigal tells Neti to open the seven gates; but as each gate is opened, one of the divine decrees is stripped off of Inanna's body until finally she is naked. Then the seven judges pronounce judgment and fasten upon her the eyes of death and hang her up.

After three days Ninshubar cries for her in the house of the gods. He enters Ekur, the temple of Enlil, to plead for Inanna, but Enlil does not stand by him on this matter. So he goes to the temple of Nanna in Ur, but he does not support him either. In Eridu before Enki he weeps, and her father Enki provides the water and food of life to sprinkle on the corpse; Inanna arises and ascends from the underworld. The end of the Sumerian version is lost, but in the Akkadian story Ereshkigal instructs the gatekeeper to return to Ishtar (Akkadian name for Inanna) the clothes she lost at each of the seven gates beginning with her breechcloth and ending with her crown; then the underworld goddess allows Tammuz, the lover of Ishtar's youth, to be washed, anointed, clothed, and given a flute.

A hymn praising Inanna is attributed to Encheduanna, the daughter of Sargon, whom he appointed high-priestess of Nanna, the god of Ur. She calls her "radiant light" and "queen of all the *me*," the divine decrees of civilization. She could be terrible by destroying vegetation, bringing floods from the mountain, fire over the land, destroying foreign lands, attacking like a storm, burning down gates, causing rivers to run with blood so that people had nothing to drink, driving off adult males as captives, and in cities which were not hers she kept her distance so that its women did not speak of love with their husbands nor whispered to them nor revealed the

holiness of their hearts to them. Calling Inanna a "rampant wild cow," daughter of the moon, she goes on though to praise her thus:

Queen, greater than An, who has paid you homage!
 You who in accordance with the life-giving *me*,
 great queen of queens,
 have become greater than your mother
 who gave birth to you,
 as you came forth from the holy womb,
 knowing, wise, queen of all the lands,
 who multiplies living creatures and peoples -
 I have uttered your holy song.
 Life-giving goddess, fit for the *me*,
 whose acclamation is exalted,
 merciful, life-giving woman, radiant of heart,
 I have uttered it before in accordance with the *me*.¹¹

This ancient feminist then declares that "the kingship of heaven has been seized by the woman."¹² Encheduanna greets her in peace even though she is known by her destruction of rebel lands, her massacring of people, and her devouring of the dead like a dog as well as for her heaven-like height and earth-like breadth.

Another story depicting the conflict between farmers and shepherds has Inanna preferring to marry a farmer, but the shepherd complains so much that eventually the farmer offers him gifts including Inanna herself. Even goddesses could be treated as pawns in this mostly male-dominated society.

In exalting and praising their gods poets could also lament their sufferings, believing that a man without a god would not obtain food. One poet complained that he has to serve a deceitful man, has a herdsman who seeks out evil forces against him, who is not his enemy, and has a companion, who says no word of truth to him, while his friend gives the lie to his honest words. He bemoaned the bitterness of his path, and in his tears, lament, anguish, and depression realized that a malignant sickness-demon was in his body. He believed that the sages were right when they said that never was a sinless child born. Now he has seen his sins and admitted them before his god, and with this prayerful confession the encompassing sickness-demon has taken flight and dissipated. His suffering turned to joy, and he exalted his tutelary god.

A piece called "The Curse of Agade" comes to us from the end of the Sumerian period. The poet gave his religious interpretation of the history of Agade. After Enlil frowned on Kish and Uruk, he gave Sargon lordship and kingship over the new city of Agade he founded, establishing a shrine there to Inanna. Overseeing the building of houses, storing up dependable food and water, and creating beautiful festivals, Inanna did not allow herself to sleep. Agade was filled with gold, silver, copper, lead, and lapis lazuli. Old women counseled; old men spoke eloquently; young men had strong weapons; children had joyous hearts and played; music was heard; boats were busy at the docks; and the people were happy.

Their shepherd king, Naram-Sin, was like the sun on his throne. Inanna opened the gates, and the Sumerians brought in their goods; the Martu brought grain, cattle, and sheep; wares came from Meluhha, Elam, and so on. Then Inanna left the shrine of Agade and went into battle against the

city. The sun-god Utu carried away eloquence, Enki wisdom, An awe, and its battles were a bitter fate. Naram-Sin was prostrate, but he had a vision of which he said nothing to anyone. For seven years he remained firm.

Then Naram-Sin sought an oracle from the Ekur temple in Nippur, but there was none. So he defied Enlil, mobilized his troops, and destroyed Ekur, turning it to dust like a mountain mined for silver. Axes of destruction leveled it to its foundation. He broke down its gate of peace with a pickax. He carried away its gold, silver, and copper. As he took away the city's possessions, its counsel departed. As the boats departed, the good sense of Agade became folly.

Seeing his beloved temple Ekur in Nippur attacked, Enlil became destructive. The Gutians who were like dogs he brought down from the mountains like locusts covering the earth. Brigands were on the roads. Cities were struck down; the fields produced no grain, the streams no fish, the gardens no honey or wine. There was no rain. Those sleeping on the roof died there; those in the house were not buried; the people drooped helplessly from hunger.

The old men and women cried out to Enlil, but he went into his holy shrine and laid down. Then the great gods, Sin, Enki, Inanna, Ninurta, Ishkur, and Utu prayed to him that the city which destroyed his temple should become like Nippur, and so they cursed Agade. The next day the curses came to pass, and Agade was completely destroyed.

This poem expresses an early theology or philosophy of history, showing the divine retribution for violent acts against a sacred city. Apparently the city of Agade, which was founded by the conqueror of Sumeria, Sargon, was destroyed by the Gutians, and so far modern archaeologists still have not been able to find any remnant of Agade.

Epic of Gilgamesh

Several Sumerian tales of the legendary Gilgamesh were combined together into an epic poem more than four thousand years ago. A Semitic Akkadian version was found in the archives of the Hittite capital at Boghazkoy in Anatolia. It was also translated into Hittite and Hurrian, and several Akkadian texts were found in Ashurbanipal's library at Nineveh from the seventh century BC. With the exception of the more historical account already discussed, the twelve tablets of the Gilgamesh cycle will be treated synthesized as they have been by modern translators into the earliest masterpiece of literature.

Gilgamesh is introduced as knowing all things and countries including mysteries and secrets who went on a long journey and had his story engraved on stone. He was endowed with beauty by the sun god Shamash and with strength and courage by the storm god Adad, making him two-thirds god and one-third man. The seven sages laid the foundations, and he built the walls and temples of Uruk for Eanna, the heavenly Anu, and the love goddess Ishtar.

Gilgamesh ruled Uruk so powerfully that his arrogance was resented, for he enjoyed any virgin or wife that he wanted. The gods heard the people's complaints and decide to create his equal to challenge him. So the goddess of creation produces Enkidu, who lives with wild animals. One day a trapper encounters the one who has filled in his pits and torn out his traps. The trapper's

father suggests that he get Gilgamesh to give his son a woman to tame Enkidu, and he does. When she sees Enkidu in the hills, she strips herself naked and teaches him her woman's art. Enkidu lays with her for a week.

When Enkidu goes back to the animals, he is weaker; and they run away from him. The woman says that he is wise and has become like a god. Why should he live with animals? She offers to take him to the temples of Anu and Ishtar in Uruk, where he could challenge Gilgamesh. Meanwhile a dream came to Gilgamesh of a star falling from heaven leaving a meteor so heavy he could not lift it, and his mother Ninsun explains that this was a strong friend he would meet. In another dream Gilgamesh found in Uruk an ax he loved like a woman, and Ninsun interprets that this brave man would rescue him.

When Enkidu arrives in Uruk, Gilgamesh is about to exercise his privilege of being the first to sleep with a bride. But Enkidu blocks his way, and they fight like two bulls locked together. Gilgamesh throws Enkidu down, and then in mutual respect for each other's strength they become friends. They decide to confront the monster Humbaba who guards the cedars in the sacred forest. Gilgamesh prays to the sun god Shamash for protection and receives an amulet from his mother. After the counselors of Uruk ask Enkidu to bring their king back safely, they set out on the long journey.

Entering the forest gate, Gilgamesh dreams that a mountain fell on him, but he was saved by a beautiful light. Then Enkidu has an ominous dream of a rainstorm. When Gilgamesh chops down a cedar with the ax, Humbaba hears the sound. Knowing the monster, Enkidu is afraid; but Gilgamesh encourages him. Calling on Shamash, Gilgamesh fells seven cedars, and each time Humbaba roars louder. When the two heroes reach Humbaba, he pleads with Gilgamesh for mercy, offering to serve him. Gilgamesh is moved, but Enkidu convinces him to kill the monster; so they cut off his head.

Gilgamesh cleans himself up and is asked by the divine Ishtar to be her husband, but he scorns her for having been faithless to so many lovers. Enraged Ishtar retreats to heaven and asks her father Anu to create a bull of heaven to torment the earth with a famine. The bull charges Enkidu, and he seizes it by the horns so that Gilgamesh can kill it with his sword. Ishtar curses them, but Enkidu defiantly tears out the bull's right thigh and throws it in her face. Enkidu then dreams that the gods have decided that one of them must die for having killed Humbaba and the bull of heaven. Soon Enkidu gets sick and dies. Gilgamesh mourns for him for seven days until a worm appears in his nose.

In despair at the death of his friend and realizing now that he must die too, Gilgamesh decides to find Utnapishtim, who has lived in Dilmun since before the flood. Coming to a gate guarded by scorpion men, Gilgamesh is allowed to pass where no human has ever gone. Passing through darkness he enters a garden with bushes like gems. The sun-god tells him that he will never find eternal life. Gilgamesh comes to a woman of wine who asks him why he is searching for the wind. He explains that he is afraid of death, and she suggests that he eat, drink, dance, and enjoy life. He only asks the way to Utnapishtim, and she tells him that he must take the ferry of Urshanabi across the ocean. Making Gilgamesh cut six score poles so that his hands won't touch the deadly water, Urshanabi agrees to take him.

Finally arriving Gilgamesh asks his question of Utnapishtim, but he declares there is no permanence. When Gilgamesh wonders how he has lived so long, Utnapishtim reveals a secret of the gods, the story of the deluge. Perturbed by the clamor of humans, the gods decided to let loose a flood on them, but Ea warned Utnapishtim to build a large boat and load it with supplies and animals. After the boat was ready, the storm came. The boat weathered the deluge and rested on a mountain. Sending out a dove, it came back, as did a swallow, but then a crow was released and did not return.

Enlil was angry that a human had survived, but Ea suggested that he should punish sin and transgressions, but not with a flood. Utnapishtim, though a mortal, was allowed to live in the distance. Utnapishtim challenges Gilgamesh to stay awake for a week, but instead he falls asleep for that long, which is proved to him by the decaying seven loaves of bread baked each day by Utnapishtim's wife. Utnapishtim does offer Gilgamesh an herb, which eaten, will bring youth back. Gilgamesh dives underwater to get it, but on his way back to Uruk a serpent steals it from him, eats it, and sheds its skin. Gilgamesh returns to Uruk and must realize that he too is not exempt from death.

One can imagine the influence of such an archetypal story. Gilgamesh represents the achievements of mankind who now wonders about death. His arrogance is criticized, and the primordial custom of the dominant male being allowed sexual license seems to be a throwback from our pre-ethical evolution as primates. Dreams are perceived to be symbolic guides and often prophetic. A woman, his mother, seems to be most skilled at interpreting them. Another strong male is needed to challenge a strong male, but female charms are able to tame him. The shift from living in the wild is accomplished by sexual lovemaking, which leads Enkidu to civilization after he is no longer one with the animals.

The invention of the ax enabled humans to use timber for building, but once again a oneness with the spirit of the forest is lost in the process. The love goddess is not treated very sympathetically in this story, perhaps because she has become a goddess of battles in the human strife that now abounds. Enkidu's throwing of a bull's thigh into her face may be an implied criticism of the ancient rites of animal sacrifice. Of course the keeping of animals was a hedge against famine, because they could be slain and eaten in an emergency.

Enkidu is the one to die, perhaps because he was the one who insisted on killing Humbaba and the bull of heaven. The worm coming out of his corpse is a graphic symbol of the grim reality of physical death. Gilgamesh going through a scorpion-guarded gate and passing through darkness before emerging into a paradise symbolizes the spiritual side of death, as he comes out in a kind of astral world where even the plants glow. To really find out the secrets Gilgamesh must be willing to transcend hedonistic temptations.

His passage across the ocean to learn Utnapishtim's story of the flood is suggestive of Atlantis, since it was separated by an ocean from the land mass of Europe, Asia, and Africa. His account is quite similar to the Hebrew story of Noah. Unable to find immortality, a magical herb is offered as a consolation; but the serpent which seems able to rejuvenate itself by shedding its skin steals this away from humanity. Sleep and Gilgamesh's inability to stay awake is an analog

of death, suggesting that life, like waking consciousness, needs a time of rest and renewal in death and rebirth.

Isin, Larsa, Eshnunna, Mari, Assur, and Babylon

As Sumerian literature was being collected and appreciated, little kingdoms like Isin and Larsa competed in the south, while Assur rivaled Eshnunna in the north. The Semitic-speaking rulers from the west freed people from their obligations to the city-states and their temples by relieving them of those taxes and forced labor. Encouraging private property, a society of large farms and enterprising merchants reduced the temples to competing landowners and taxpayers to the state. Sumerian religion declined along with the power of Enlil's city of Nippur. After a dynasty emerged in Babylon in 1950 BC under the Amorite Samu'abum, the new god Marduk replaced Enlil in the creation story.

Iddin-Dagan, named after the wheat-god Dagan of Mari where his grandfather Ishbi-Irra had begun his conquests, occupied Sippar and ruled over the entire southern Euphrates region. This Semite ruler used the Sumerian language in official inscriptions and gathered Sumerian literature into a library at Nippur.

Lipit-Ishtar, whose moderate law code regulated inheritance, real estate business, hiring contracts, and privately owned slaves, described himself as "the humble shepherd of Nippur, the stalwart farmer of Ur." Here is an example of one of his laws showing how responsibility was based on awareness:

If a man without authorization bound (another) man
to a matter to which he (the latter) had no knowledge,
that man is not affirmed;
he (the first man) shall bear the penalty
in regard to the matter to which he has bound him.¹³

Lipit-Ishtar ruled Isin from 1990 BC until 1880 when Isin was attacked by the King of Larsa, Gungunum, who also conquered Ur, Lagash, Susa, and perhaps Uruk. He was followed by usurpers so afraid of divine wrath that Irra-imitti crowned his gardener but died himself from swallowing boiling broth. The gardener Enlil-bani went on to rule over a greatly reduced kingdom of Isin for 24 years until 1853 BC. Three years later the king of Larsa was killed in a war with Babylon and was replaced by an Elamite official, Kudur-Mabuk, who gave his two sons Semitic names. One of these, Rim-Sin, defeated a Babylonian coalition and finally took over Larsa's old rival city of Isin in 1850 BC.

In the north Eshnunna was under the god Tishpak, probably a form of the Hurrian god Teshup. This city had become independent back in 2083 at the beginning of the Sumerian decline under Ibbi-Sin. Two centuries before Hammurabi the law codes of Eshnunna were formulated by its King Bilalama. These laws fixed the prices of barley, sesame oil, and wool, and for hiring a wagon or a boat. If a boatman was negligent he must pay for what he caused to be sunk. A man must get permission of a woman's parents to marry, and the sentence for raping her without it was death, as it was for a wife who committed adultery. Depriving another man's slave-girl of her virginity was punished by a fine. Business transactions must be established legally, or the

person was considered a thief. Injuring another person's body parts were compensated for by fines in silver instead of by retaliatory maiming. Compared to later laws capital punishment seems to have been rare, and all capital cases were brought before the king. People were responsible for vicious dogs and oxen known to be dangerous, but even if an ox gored a man or a dog caused his death, the penalty was still only a fine. However, if the authorities made the builder aware that a wall was threatening to fall and he did not strengthen it but it fell and killed someone, then it was a capital case under the king's jurisdiction. Once again increased awareness brought added responsibility.

In the nineteenth century BC Eshnunna was expanded by Ipiq-Adad II as far north as Assur on the Tigris, but soon Assur joined with Nineveh to form an Assyrian kingdom, which along with Mari, Babylon, and Larsa, surrounded Eshnunna. The kingdom of Mari was extended as far west as the Mediterranean Sea. The son of a ruler near Mari named Shamsi-Adad began as an outlaw and was exiled in Babylon, but when his brother succeeded, he gathered a force to take Ekallatum from Eshnunna and attacked Assur, replaced his brother, and led his army to the west as far as Lebanon.

When the ruler of Mari was murdered, Shamsi-Adad installed his son Iasmah-Adad there and another son Ishme-Dagan as viceroy of Ekallatum. The latter was a bold warrior like his father, proud of his military victories, who tried to get his docile brother Iasmah-Adad to obey him instead of their father. Shamsi-Adad criticized his son Iasmah-Adad for being a child, laying around with women, and exhorted him to be a man with his army and make a name for himself like his brother.

However, while the father was kept busy campaigning in the north and the bold Ishme-Dagan was fighting tribes and petty rulers in the Zagros mountains, Iasmah-Adad gave away land and plows during famine, gave boats to shepherders to cross the Euphrates, and kept on such good terms with neighbors through trade that the King of Carchemish sent his "brother" food, wine, ornaments, fine clothing, gave him control of his copper mines, and offered him whatever he wanted. Iasmah-Adad married the daughter of Qatanum's ruler who allowed him pasture. With his sons' help Shamsi-Adad ruled the first Assyrian empire from 1869 to 1837 BC, overlapping with the reign of Babylon's Hammurabi. Iasmah returned a caravan delayed in Mari to Babylon, and someone warned him about Hammurabi; but another advised him not to worry.

Hammurabi's Babylon

As indicated by Rim-Sin's rule from Larsa in the south and the extensive territory controlled by Shamsi-Adad and his sons in the north, quite limited in size and power was the Babylon Hammurabi inherited from his father in 1848 BC.⁵ After being king for five years Hammurabi began to attack his neighbors, capturing Isin, moving down the Euphrates to Uruk, and expanding in other directions. When Shamsi-Adad died in 1837 he left his kingdom to his warrior son, Ishme-Dagan, who promised to protect his weaker brother, Iasmah-Adad; but the latter was almost immediately overthrown by a nationalist Mari dynasty led by Zimri-Lim, who ruled more firmly than Iasmah-Adad but continued his policies. Zimri-Lim and Hammurabi became closely allied, assisting each other with information and even soldiers.

In 1820 BC Babylon was attacked by Elamites, Guti, Assyrians, and Eshnunna, but Hammurabi was victorious "through the great power of the gods," and "encouraged by an oracle" the next year he invaded and defeated Rim-Sin in Larsa. The year after that a new coalition of the same old enemies formed and was again defeated by Hammurabi's forces. Apparently caught up in a warlike mode, the very next year Hammurabi attacked his ally Zimri-Lim and took control of Mari and parts of Assyria, making them his vassals. However, they must have revolted two years later, because Hammurabi returned then and destroyed the city of Mari, and a few years later he overcame the Assyrian armies and defeated all his enemies in that country. In less than ten years Babylon had conquered almost all of Mesopotamia.

Hammurabi ruled through provincial governors but also allowed cities to make local decisions and collect taxes by councils of elders. Although Marduk was made the chief god, diverse religious traditions were tolerated, and many temples were rebuilt, even at Nippur. Hammurabi is best known for the code of laws he promulgated near the beginning of his reign and had carved in stone in temples shortly before he died. The noble purposes of these laws were

to cause justice to prevail in the country,
to destroy the wicked and the evil,
that the strong may not oppress the weak.¹⁴

The actual precedents of real cases which made up the code will show us more clearly what his concept of justice was. The code referred to three classes of people: *awelu* who were free, *mushkenum* or commoners who were dependent on the state, and *wardu* who were slaves. Crimes against *awelu* were more severely punished, but an *awelu* also was expected to be more responsible. The first law is that if an *awelu* accused an *awelu* of murder but did not prove it, the accuser was to be put to death. Similarly with a charge of sorcery, but in this case the proof was determined by throwing the accused into the river. If he survived this, the accuser was put to death; and the accused took over his estate.

Those who steal property from the temple or the state were put to death as were those who received such property from the thief. In some cases the thief could pay thirtyfold restitution to the temple or state or tenfold to an individual, but if he did not have it he was put to death. The penalty for having property without a witnessed contract or for cheating or lying about it was death.

Death was also the penalty for harboring a slave or helping one to escape. A soldier could be executed for hiring a substitute. A priestess could be burned for entering a wineshop. If an *awelu* could not pay an obligation and had to sell the services of his wife, daughter, son, or himself, three years were required before their freedom was reestablished. Adulterers were bound and thrown into the water; but if the husband spared the woman, the king might spare his subject. If an *awelu* committed incest with his widowed mother, both were burned. If an adopted son denied his foster father or foster mother, his tongue was cut out. If a son struck his father, his hand was cut off.

If an *awelu* destroyed the eye of a noble, his eye was to be destroyed; or if he broke an *awelu's* bone, his bone was broken. Yet if it was the eye or bone of a commoner, the fine was one *mina*

of silver, which equaled sixty *shekels*. If it was a slave's, he must pay half his value. The same pattern holds for a tooth, except the fine was only one-third of a *mina*.

If an *awelu* struck a superior *awelu*, he was given sixty lashes in the assembly; but if they were of the same rank, he paid one *mina*. However, if a commoner struck a commoner, he paid only ten *shekels*. If a slave struck a noble, his ear was cut off. However, if an *awelu* injured another *awelu* in a brawl, he could swear it was not deliberate and pay only for the physician; and even if the man died he only had to pay a half *mina* or a third for a commoner. If an *awelu* struck an *awelu's* daughter and caused a miscarriage, he paid ten *shekels* for her fetus; but if she died, his daughter was put to death. Yet if she was a commoner's daughter, the fine for miscarriage was five *shekels* and for her death only one-half *mina* and even less for a slave.

If a physician while performing surgery caused an *awelu's* death or loss of his eye, his hand was cut off. If a builder constructed a house that collapsed and killed the owner, that builder was put to death. If it caused the owner's son to die, the builder's son was put to death.

Such crude retaliations appear absurd to us today, and it is obviously unjust to punish the children for the crimes of their parents. This law code is more severe than previous Sumerian ones. Originally the laws were to settle quarrels and private conflicts by means of arbitration; now the king's decisions had become law for everyone, instituting a system to resolve private conflicts by generally recognized and published standards. Yet the laws reflected the social and economic inequalities as well as the penchant for using retaliatory violence as a reaction to problems.

With the exception of Marduk the Babylonians continued to worship the Sumerian gods, though with their Semitic names. Temples were still important and contained the usual lodgings, libraries, schools, offices, workshops, stores, cellars, and stables. Religious ceremonies were performed every day with musical instruments, hymns, prayers, and sacrifices. Priests had sons who were taught in the schools. Clergy included chanters, exorcists, and dream interpreters. Priestesses could marry but were not allowed to bear children in the temple where sacred prostitution continued.

Houses were still built in the Sumerian manner with enclosed courtyards and a family chapel for the statuettes of the household gods and a place for burials. Kings such as Zimri-Lim in Mari built large palaces surrounded by enormous walls. Interior walls were thick and tall and had no windows, but light came in through doors and openings in the ceiling. Numerous letters have been found by which kings communicated with their officials. Hammurabi intervened in Larsa to make legal judgments, appoint officials, summon them to his court, and order the digging of canals. Iasmah-Adad and Zimri-Lim after him both conducted a census among the nomads.

Hammurabi died about 1806 BC and was succeeded by his son, Samsu-iluna who ruled until about 1768, but he had to handle numerous revolts. In the south Larsa rebelled for two years, and then Iluma-ilu claimed the independence of Sumer south of Nippur, fighting a bloody war against Babylon in which several cities including Ur were burned down. The northern Assyrians regained their independence under Adasi. Samsu-iluna was also attacked by Kassites, Amorites,

Sutaeans, and Elamites. Although he fought them off, his empire was reduced to Akkad. The next four rulers of Babylon held on to this area as Kassites were moving in and settling.

Ammissaduqa, who ruled Babylon for twenty years from 1702 BC, left us an edict indicating he tried to reform economic conditions by decreeing justice for the land, ordering the cancellation of most debts and back taxes. Officials who had collected by constraint had to give refunds or die, as could creditors who sued for payment of a loan on a house, though merchants still had to keep commercial agreements. Governors who gave barley, silver, or wool for forced labor were to die, and the workers could keep what they had been given. Those who were in service because of debts they could not pay were released to freedom by the king's edict. It is not known how these orders were carried out, but as with Urukagina the intent to correct past injustices is clear.

Kassites, Hurrians, and Assyria

Babylon was invaded and captured by the Hittite king Mursilis in about 1650 BC, but he soon left Babylon and returned to Hattusas. The Kassite ruler, Agum II, filled this power void establishing the Kassite dynasty in Mesopotamia that was to last until about 1157 BC. Agum II continued Babylonian traditions, and 24 years after the Hittites had carried it off he brought back and restored the statue of Marduk in his temple. The Kassites had been settling in the Babylonian area from the time of Hammurabi. Since little conflict is recorded during most of the Kassite period, it is likely that they were relatively peaceful as they adopted Babylonian traditions.

The Kassites may also have absorbed some Aryan influence earlier, since some of their gods' names resemble Vedic deities such as Surya and Marut.

In the early fifteenth century BC King Ulamburiash defeated Ea-gamil, King of the Sealand (Persian Gulf), recovering Sumer for Babylon. Kassite king Burnaburiash I made peace with Assyria in 1490 BC which separated the two kingdoms around Samarra, and it was re-affirmed 75 years later. The Kassites restored the ancient temples of Nippur, Larsa, Ur, and Uruk, while their scholars were preserving the literature in Akkadian, the standard language of the Near East for a millennium.

For several centuries Hurrians had been moving south into northern Syria. Like the Kassites, they made extensive use of horses with faster chariots and wagons, affecting warfare and commercial transportation. In the sixteenth century BC the Hurrians established themselves from Alalakh through the kingdom of Mitanni north of the Euphrates River across the Tigris to Arraphka. Shortly after 1500 BC Idrimi, the son of an Aleppo king, wandered among the Sutu Bedouins and the Habiru in Canaan. Eventually he became king of Alalakh and reigned for thirty years of prosperity, showing particular concern for the nomadic Sutu in his realm, though Idrimi himself was probably a vassal to the Mitannian king Parattarna.

For more than a century after this, Assyrian kings were also vassals of Mitanni. When Egyptian king Thutmose III crossed the Euphrates and defeated the Mitanni, their large empire was reduced somewhat; but the two powers became friendly, as several Mitannian princesses married Egyptian pharaohs. Amenhotep III and Akhenaten married Kassite princesses as well, sending gold and gifts to Babylon. About 1370 BC the Hittite Suppiluliumas plundered the Mitanni

capital of Wassukkanni and conquered the western region of Aleppo and Kadesh, which had been at the northern edge of the Egyptian empire.

Mitanni was suffering a civil war between Tushratta and his brothers. Artatama and his son Shutarna II gave gifts and concessions to the Assyrians for their help. About 1360 BC Tushratta was murdered by a conspiracy that included his son Kurtiwaza, as the "trial before Teshub" (supreme God of the Hurrians) between Tushratta and Artatama as rightful Hurrian ruler had been decided. Kurtiwaza fled to Babylon where Burnaburiash II refused him asylum, and he ended up at the Hittite court. Ashur-uballit I declared himself Great King of Assyria, called Akhenaten his brother, and gave his daughter to Burnaburiash; but the grandson of this match was murdered in Babylon, causing a civil war and Ashur-uballit's intervention, resulting in Kurigalzu II becoming king of Babylon; he later attacked Elam. The strain of the cooperation between Assyria and Babylon in fighting off Sutu and Aramaean tribes was eventually resented in Babylon and led to continued rivalry and frequent battles between the two kingdoms.

Suppiluliumas returned to north Syria, making his sons kings in Aleppo and Carchemish to consolidate Hittite hold on the area. The Assyrians turned against the Hurrians, advanced to the Euphrates and eventually wiped out the Mitannian kingdom. The greatest defeat was administered by the Assyrian Shalmaneser I (r. 1274-1245 BC) who claimed he destroyed 180 of their cities and blinded 14,400 captives. The Kassites tried to make new boundary agreements with the encroaching Assyrians, but in the second half of the thirteenth century BC Kashtiliash IV was caught between Elam and the Assyrian Tukulti-Ninurta I (r. 1244-1208 BC). An epic glorified the Assyrian conquest of Babylon and blamed the war on Kashtiliash for breaking an agreement, but on an inscription found in Assur Tukulti-Ninurta frankly declared, "I forced Kashtiliash, King of Kar-Duniash, to give battle."¹⁵ (Kar-Duniash is the Kassite term for Babylon.)

After seven years of Assyrian domination, the nobles of Akkad and Kar-Duniash revolted and put the rightful Kassite heir on the throne. Tukulti-Ninurta, who was thought to have brought evil on Babylon, was punished when his son and the Assyrian nobles revolted and killed him in the palace. Finally about 1160 BC Elam invaded and after three years of struggle took Babylon, carrying off the statue of Marduk as the Hittites had a half millennium before.

Babylonian Literature

A creation story known by its first words as *Enuma Elish*, meaning "when above" was recited on the fourth day of Babylon's New Year's Festival held annually at the beginning of spring. Its seven tablets are almost complete and reveal a Babylonian cosmogony still influenced by the Sumerians but clearly new in its assertion of the new god Marduk.

This epic began on high when nothing existed but Apsu, Tiamat, and their son Mummu. These parents brought forth Lahmu and his sister Lahamu and then Anshar and his sister Kishar. The latter pair surpassed the previous in stature and gave birth to Anu the sky-god who engendered Nudimmud, also known as Enki or Ea, a god of wisdom. The younger gods were noisy and rambunctious, disturbing the rest of their grandparents, Apsu and Tiamat. Unable to sleep Apsu wanted to destroy them, but Tiamat cried out in anguish, though Mummu agreed with Apsu.

Ea understood everything, and using magic he caused Apsu to sleep so that he could remove his crown and splendor. Then Ea killed the subdued Apsu, locked up Mummu, and established his abode on Apsu with his wife Damkina. She gave birth to Marduk, who Ea made equal to the gods. Clothed with the rays of ten gods, Marduk was powerful and majestic.

Anu created four winds which caused waves and disturbed Tiamat, upset at hearing that Apsu was slain. Tiamat was restless and put Kingu in charge of an army of gods to avenge Apsu. When Ea heard of it, he went to his grandfather Anshar who told him to go to battle. In the destroyed portion of the text apparently Ea failed. So Anshar turned to his son Anu, advising him to speak to Tiamat; but perceiving her plans he had to turn back. Then Anshar, the father of the gods, told the assembly that the valiant Marduk would be the avenger of his father, Ea, who called Marduk into his private room and told him the plan of his heart.

Marduk assured Anshar that he would trample on the neck of Tiamat and asked him to convene the assembly of gods to proclaim his new supremacy. Anshar sent Kaka to Lahmu and Lahamu to bring the gods to him for a banquet. Having enjoyed the food and swelled with wine, they declared that Marduk's destiny was unequalled and his commands not to be changed, giving him kingship over the whole universe. They told him to preserve the life of those who trust in him but not those who espouse evil. Marduk demonstrated his new power by destroying a garment and restoring it in front of them by the power of his word. Rejoicing they did homage to Marduk as their king, saying, "Go and cut off the life of Tiamat."¹⁵

Taking the weapons they gave him, Marduk harnessed his terrible storm chariot and went to challenge Tiamat to single combat. He enmeshed her in his net; when she opened her mouth, he drove in the evil wind which distended her belly. Then he shot an arrow which split her heart. When her life was destroyed, he stood on her carcass. Marduk imprisoned her followers and broke their weapons. Then binding Kingu and taking from him the tablet of destinies, Marduk put his seal on it and fastened it on his breast. He split Tiamat into two parts, half in place as the earth and half for a roof as the sky. He crossed the heavens, and as the counterpart of Apsu he established Esharra where Anu, Enlil, and Ea could live.

Marduk created stations for the great gods, setting up the stars in the signs of the zodiac, dividing the year into twelve months with three constellations in each. He caused the moon to shine as the ornament of the night. He set up humans so that they could serve the gods. Marduk assembled the gods, and they decided to punish Kingu for having caused the revolt. With his blood they created humanity, imposing services to set the gods free. For a sanctuary they made Babylon. Then they all enjoyed a banquet with music and praised the fifty names of the divine Marduk.

This war of the gods is a terrible projection of human strife. The younger generation of gods is favored to justify Babylon's having overthrown those who came before. Once again woman is trampled under the foot of male dominance, Tiamat in this case symbolizing the primordial chaos which has been overcome by divine power. This violent poem was surely used to foster Babylonian patriotism and the worship of their god Marduk.

The origin of astrology is indicated by the twelve signs of the zodiac plus the additional thirty-six constellations which represent the ten-degree decanates, making a total of forty-eight

constellations which have been passed on to this day as the basis of astrology. The Sumerians had been observing omens for centuries and comparing human experience to their astronomical observations from their ziqqurats. Adding the sun and moon to the five planets they observed, the number seven became significant, and they were used for the days of the week.

The planet Venus was represented by Ishtar whose positive attributes are praised in a hymn from about 1600 BC which contains the following lines:

Ishtar is clothed with pleasure and love.
 She is laden with vitality, charm, and voluptuousness.
 In lips she is sweet; life is in her mouth.
 At her appearance rejoicing becomes full.
 She is glorious; veils are thrown over her head.
 Her figure is beautiful; her eyes are brilliant.
 The goddess - with her there is counsel.
 The fate of everything she holds in her hand.
 At her glance there is created joy,
 power, magnificence, the protecting deity and guardian spirit.
 She dwells in, she pays heed to compassion and friendliness.
 Besides, agreeableness she truly possesses.
 Be it slave, unattached girl, or mother, she preserves her.
 One calls on her; among women one names her name.¹⁷

The story of Adapa tells how Ea created a sage to whom he gave the divine plan but not eternal life. Adapa was not only the best priest in Eridu but their baker and fisherman as well. Once during a new moon Adapa's boat was blown by the south wind which sent him overboard. Adapa vowed to break the wing of the south wind, and for seven days the wind didn't blow.

The lord Anu heard about this and ordered Adapa to be brought before him. Ea knowing the ways of heaven predicted how he would be met by Tammuz and Gizzida whom he could win over by noting that two gods had disappeared from the land, pleasing them so that they would cause Anu to favor him; but when Adapa is offered the bread and water of death, Ea advised him not to eat nor drink, though he was to wear the garment and anoint himself with the oil they offered him.

When Adapa arrived in heaven and was greeted by Tammuz and Gizzida, he flattered them by noting that two gods seemed to be missing on earth. The king Anu asked Adapa why he broke the south wind's wing and was told by him how the wind had submerged him while he was fishing so that in anger he cursed it. Speaking up, Tammuz and Gizzida put in a good word for him. Anu wondered why Ea had shared the plan of heaven and earth with Adapa, but he ordered that the bread and water of life be brought to him along with a garment and oil. However, Adapa did not eat nor drink but put on the garment and anointed himself with the oil, explaining to Anu when asked why that Ea had so commanded him. Then Anu ordered him to be taken away and returned to his earth, laughing at Ea for making his commands exceed those of Anu.

The fragmentary ending indicates that in this way Adapa brought humanity ill and disease upon their bodies, though the goddess of healing would allay them. This ironic story laments how an opportunity to gain eternal life was missed by following the advice of a god who was not the god who had eternal life to give.

An ancient Akkadian text gives some counsels of wisdom which include religious exhortations to worship your god every day, give offerings, pray and supplicate so that you will be in harmony with your god. Let us conclude this section then with a few of its wise remarks.

Let your mouth be restrained and your speech guarded;
That is a man's pride - let what you say be very precious.
Let insolence and blasphemy be an abomination for you;
a talebearer is looked down upon....
Do not return evil to your adversary;
requite with kindness the one who does evil to you;
maintain justice for your enemy;
be friendly to your enemy....
Give food to eat, beer to drink;
grant what is requested; provide for and treat with honor.
At this one's god takes pleasure.
It is pleasing to Shamash, who will repay him with favor.
Do good things; be kind all your days.¹⁸

Hittites

Though people had been living in Anatolia for several millennia, little is known of its history until Assyrian traders settled on the central plateau about 1900 BC. Aryan influence can be seen in the name of the ruling city Purushhattum, which is very close to the Sanskrit word meaning "highest person." In an ancient document Anittas described how a king of Kussara took the city of Nesa at night by force but did not harm anyone. He followed his father in putting down revolts and reclaimed a statue of the God Siu that had been taken from Nesa to Zalpuwa. Anittas took Hattusas by force, fortified Nesa, and campaigned against Salatiwara. Purushanda sent him gifts, and he made one of their men his advisor.

About 1700 BC King Hattusilis I moved the capital from Kussara to Hattusas and fought several wars to expand his kingdom and gain much silver. He first took control of the north to the Black Sea and then raided Alalakh in north Syria and Arzawa in the west; but then Hurrians attacked from the east, and only his capital at Hattusas remained loyal. Praying to a sun goddess Hattusilis went out to battle again in north Syria, destroying Ulma, Zaruna, and Hassuwa, which was aided by troops from Aleppo. After three battles he took Hahhum and claimed that he freed their slaves and gave them to his sun goddess Arinna along with silver in carts pulled back to Hattusas by the captured kings of Hassuwa and Hahhum. Discovering a plot by the heir apparent, his nephew and the latter's mother (his sister) whom he called a snake, Hattusilis did not kill them but designated his grandson Mursilis as successor, counseling him to consult the assembly (*panku*).

Mursilis continued the war policies, destroying Aleppo, capturing Babylon about 1650 BC, and fighting the Hurrians; but Mursilis left Babylon and was assassinated by his brother-in-law Hantilis. Zidantas, who had plotted with Hantilis, later murdered Hantilis' sons and grandsons; but when Zidantas became king, his own son Ammuna murdered him. Amidst this violence the land became hostile, and the soldiers were often defeated. When Ammuna "became a god" (died), Zuru, the commander of the body-guard, murdered the Tittiya family and had Hantilis and his remaining sons murdered.

Huzziyas then became king, and Telepinus, the author of this murderous history, married his sister, staved off murder attempts without killing in return, and became king. Although the assembly sentenced Huzziyas and his brothers to death, Telepinus asked, "Why should they die?" Instead he took their weapons and put them to the yoke as peasants. Telepinus told the assembly no one should do evil to a royal son, and they established rules for succession and trials for murder. A royal son could be executed if guilty of murder, but no harm was to be done to his family; henceforth evils were to be dealt with by the assembly. Telepinus began his reign by destroying Hassuwa and then battled hostile lands, reconquering lost territory, establishing secure frontiers, and making a treaty with the Hurrians in Kizzuwadna (Cilicia).

During the fifteenth century BC the Hittite law code was developed while the Mitannian kingdom spread into north Syria. About the time Egypt's Thutmose III invaded Mitanni the Hittites regained control of Kizzuwadna and began sending tribute to Egypt, including people from Kurushtama. When Mitanni and Egypt became allied by the marriage of a Mitannian princess to Thutmose IV, the Hittites were attacked from Gaska in the northeast, Arzawa in the west, and they lost control of Kizzuwadna in the south. While his father Tudhaliya III was still king, Suppiluliumas regained some of the eastern lands and eventually the lost capital at Hattusas, which he fortified about the time he became king in 1380 BC.

In a letter to Amenhotep III the Mitannian king Tushratta claimed he crushed an invading Hittite army. However, Suppiluliumas used diplomacy in getting the king of Kizzuwadna back under Hittite influence, made an agreement with Tushratta's Hurrian rival Artatama, and congratulated Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) on his accession to the throne of Egypt. Then Suppiluliumas invaded Mitannian areas of north Syria, establishing his son in Kumanni and making Aleppo a vassal. This stimulated Amorite revolts against Egyptian hegemony by Abdi-ashirta and, after his death, by his son, Aziru, who was called to Egypt; but after returning, Aziru made a treaty with Ugarit and joined the Hittite camp.

Provoked by Mitannian attacks, Suppiluliumas also made a treaty with Ugarit and invaded the Mitannian capital at Wassukkanni; Tushratta fled and was murdered by a plot involving his son Kurtiwaza. Suppiluliumas then ravaged north Syria as far as Apina (Damascus) which was under Egyptian influence then. Suppiluliumas established feudal states, taking some reigning families to his Hittite land, returning them to Syria later. After a siege the city of Carchemish was taken, and his son was installed there as King Shar-Kushuk; Telepinus, another son, was made king of Aleppo. When Tutankhamen died in Egypt, his widow wrote to Suppiluliumas asking to marry one of his sons; but after some questioning and delay, the son that was sent was murdered.

Shar-Kushuk marched with the Mitannian prince Kurtiwaza, and overcoming Mitannian and Assyrian resistance they established the latter as a vassal king in Wassukkanni. Much of the reign of Suppiluliumas was spent in fighting in the north and west as well. Hittite soldiers returning from an attack on Egypt brought a plague which killed Suppiluliumas and probably his son Arnuwandas II, who ruled for only one year. Mursilis II became occupied in responding to revolts in Arzawa described in the "Ten Year Annals of Mursilis II." In the north Mursilis II recorded campaigns in ten of his 26 years as king, and the capital was moved south to Tarhuntassa. When Shar-Kushuk died of illness, Carchemish was captured; but eventually his son was made king there.

Muwatallis became king of the Hittites about 1320 BC and made his son Hattusilis commander of the armies and governor of the Upper Land. About 1300 BC a major military confrontation occurred at Kadesh between the empire of Egypt led by Ramses II and the Hittites. Both sides claimed victory, but the result was a stand-off, which was ratified in a treaty sixteen years later between Ramses II and Hattusilis III, who had replaced Urhi-Teshub after seven years of internal strife. Hattusilis III mocked Assyrian King Adad-Nirari I for calling himself Great King and his brother.

Tudhaliyas IV came to the Hittite throne about 1265 BC and claimed that he was king of the world, but he occupied himself mostly with reforming religious festivals. Probably fearful of Assyria, in a treaty with Amurru he prohibited them from trading with Assur. In this treaty Egypt, Assur, Kar-Duniash, and Ahhiyawa are named, though the last name has been erased. This latter power from the west may be related to Troy, Cyprus, or Achaeans. Struggles with the Ahhiyawa continued in the reign of Arnuwandas, while Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria deported Hittites across the Euphrates to Assyria. Hittite power declined, and about 1200 BC the mysterious Sea Peoples invaded and destroyed the Hittite empire.

Primarily an agricultural and pastoral people in spite of all their military adventures, the Hittites developed detailed laws that described hypothetical cases probably based on precedents from the courts of the king's officers. Involved cases were referred to the king who headed the administration of justice as well as the military and religion. Violation of an officer's decision could mean death; if it was a royal decree, punishment could affect the whole household. Rape, adultery by the wife, and sodomy with animals were also capital crimes. Only slaves were mutilated. For other offenses including assault, witchcraft, and even homicide traditional retribution was replaced by fines and reparation to the victims, though a slave could be executed for sorcery. In regard to murder the Edict of Telepinus stated that the "lord of blood" might command death; but he could also demand restitution; the king had nothing to do with it. Restitution in such cases usually involved giving people as slaves.

In marriage and family the usual patriarchy was the rule, but the woman could have some independent power as indicated by the Hittite custom that the queen retained her position after her husband's death while her son usually became king, and in some diplomatic letters she is addressed independently of the king. Laws were strict against incest with a mother or daughter and even among in-laws except after a death, but a brother could marry a sister. Land tenure was based on the feudal system.

In religion as the Babylonians had accepted most of the Sumerian deities, the Hittites garnered both of these mostly by way of the Hurrians, who gave them the weather-god Teshub to add to their own sun goddess Arinna, who could also be a supreme God. Mursilis II thanked the sun goddess for helping him to destroy his enemies, and Hattusilis III justified his taking of the throne from Urhi-Teshub to the omniscient Ishtar, explaining that he was provoked and how Ishtar told his wife in a dream that he would be king. Long festivals were celebrated every spring and autumn, and it was important for the king to be present. As usual in ancient cultures divination and magic were common.

A favorite Hittite story told how the god Telepinu got angry because of the evil in the world and stalked off with his sandals on the wrong feet, causing the earth to dry up, plant life to wither, animals to become barren, and humans to die of hunger. Seeing the desolation the sun god called together the gods to search for Telepinu but in vain. The queen of heaven suggested they send a bee to find Telepinu. The other gods laughed, but the bee nearly exhausted finally found Telepinu asleep. When the bee stung him and woke him up, Telepinu was even more angry and began to destroy everything he saw. The bee returned and asked for an eagle to carry Telepinu back while the queen arranged for a magic spell to drive out Telepinu's evil spirit. Kamrusepa, the goddess of magic, soothed Telepinu's mind with cream, sweetened his disposition with honey, cleansed his body with oil, and eased his soul with ointment to put him in harmony with people, gods, and the world. Telepinu's anger left him, and the earth came to life again. People cleaned their homes and prepared for the new year, as they hung the fleece of a lamb on a pole in the court of the temple. This archetypal story of the annual renewal of spring also shows how loving care can heal the spell of anger.

Another story has Anu overthrowing the king of heaven Alalu after serving him for nine years. After Anu was king for nine years Kumarbi fought with him and bit his genitals swallowing some seed. Kumarbi boasted that he had destroyed the manhood of Anu, but the latter predicted that Kumarbi would give birth to three monsters. The god Ea helped deliver one from his side and a second from his loins, who as god of the wind helped Anu to defeat Kumarbi in battle. Kumarbi turned to the Lord of the Sea for help, and a child of black stone was born and placed on Kumarbi's knee. Then the goddesses took the child and placed it on the right shoulder of the giant Upelluri in the depth of the sea; but the child, Ullikummi, grew quickly to the water's surface and then to the floor of heaven.

Ishtar tried to seduce him, but he was deaf and blind. The storm god ordered the seventy gods to battle him, but they failed also. Then Tasmisu went to consult with Ea, who took them to Enlil, who had previously held him on his lap and could not oppose him. So Ea went to Upelluri, who did not know anything about the problem nor about the earth being separated from heaven by a magic knife. With this clue Ea returned to the old gods, who had been present at the creation of the world to recite the ancient mystic verses. This time with the magic knife Ea was able to cut off the giant's feet and cut up his body. Thus Kumarbi never did rule over the gods. This story affirmed the ancient gods and allowed the king to rule for more than nine years.

Another story of cosmic combat has a dragon named Illuyankas defeating the storm god. In revenge he invites the dragon to a banquet prepared by Inaras, who goes to the city to get help from Hupasiyas. He tells her that if she has sexual intercourse with him he will have the strength needed. She agrees, and after the banquet Hupasiyas ties up the dragon with a rope when he is too large to get into the opening of his cave; then the storm god is able to kill him. Inaras realizes that if Hupasiyas goes home to his wife, she and her children will gain the supernatural power, which could not be allowed. So she builds a house on a lonely cliff and takes Hupasiyas there, forbidding him to look out the window lest he see his wife and children. However, after twenty days he looks out and sees them. He begs to be allowed to go home, and her only solution is to kill him by burning the house down. This story describes the power sexual union was believed to have as well as a reluctance to share divine power with lowly humans.

In a later version the dragon plucks the heart and eyes out of the storm god, and he goes to earth to marry a humble woman, who bears him a son. When the son falls in love with the daughter of the dragon, he tells his son to ask her father for the heart and eyes of the storm god as the marriage gift. Thus the storm gets his heart and eyes back and is fighting more successfully with the dragon when his son sees what has happened. Realizing that he has betrayed his father-in-law and host, he calls to the storm god that he is with the dragon. So the storm god kills both Illuyankas and his own son. This story reflects the custom of respecting one's host even to the point of self-sacrifice.

Notes

1. Roux, Georges, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 115.
2. Kramer, S. N., *The Sumerians*, p. 188.
3. Woolley, C. Leonard, *The Sumerians*, p. 69.
4. Roux, Georges, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 138.
5. These dates, which are 56 years older than the middle chronology, are the long chronology based on a recent analysis of ancient Babylonian astronomical observations in the Venus tablets. See *Cambridge Ancient History* Vol. 3 Part 2, p. 280.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
7. *The Ancient Near East*, Volume 2, ed. James B. Pritchard, p. 31-32.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
9. Roux, Georges, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 168.
10. Kramer, S. N., *Sumerian Mythology*, p. 72-73.
11. *The Ancient Near East*, Volume 2, p. 128-129.
12. *Ibid.* p. 129.
13. Kramer, S. N., *The Sumerians*, p. 338.
14. "Code of Hammurabi" Prologue, I, 32-39 quoted in Roux, p. 190.
15. Roux, Georges, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 243.
16. Heidel, Alexander, *The Babylonian Genesis*, p. 37.
17. *The Ancient Near East*, ed. James B. Pritchard, p. 232.
18. *The Ancient Near East*, Volume 2, p. 145-146.