

TARTU UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
CHAIR FOR ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

PEETER ESPAK

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN GODS ENKI AND EA:

DIACHRONICAL ANALYSIS OF TEXTS AND IMAGES FROM THE EARLIEST
SOURCES TO THE NEO-SUMERIAN PERIOD

MASTER'S THESIS

Supervised by Prof. THOMAS RICHARD KÄMMERER

Co-supervised by Prof. WALTHER SALLABERGER

TARTU 2006

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The current master's thesis is a continuation of a bachelor's thesis defended in June 2004 at the Faculty of Theology of Tartu University under the title "Diachronical Analysis of the Theological Concept of Enki and Ea."

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Thomas Richard Kämmerer, Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies of the Faculty of Theology at Tartu University, for supervising the thesis and providing me with several critical comments during the preparation of the study. I am especially thankful to Professor Walther Sallaberger, whose suggestions and critical remarks during my six-month stay at the Institut für Assyriologie und Hethitologie in Munich were of especial value for the completion of the thesis. I would also like to thank Tarmo Kulmar, Professor of Comparative Religion at Tartu University, and my colleague in Ancient Near Eastern studies at Tartu University, Vladimir Sazonov, for allowing me their advice and help when ever needed.

The thesis was supported by Kristjan Jaak Scholarship of the Archimedes Foundation for working at the library of the Institut der Assyriologie und Hethitologie of Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München from October 2005 to April 2006.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the master's thesis titled "Ancient Near Eastern Gods Enki and Ea: Diachronical Analysis of Texts and Images from the Earliest Sources to the Neo-Sumerian Period" is to offer an overview of the religious-historical development of the Mesopotamian deities Enki and Ea from the earliest archaeological and written records until the Neo-Sumerian era.

The mentioning of "diachronical analysis" in the title refers to the methodological aim to study all the textual examples and other evidence in a chronological order, as much as it is possible in the case of the Mesopotamian sources.¹ The chronological order of the given examples should enable to detect when and where a specific characteristic of the gods Enki and Ea² appeared during the course of Mesopotamian history. The reason for such a practice stands in the fact that too often the materials concerning the god Enki or other topics from the ancient Near Eastern history of religion and mythology seem to be presented as a unit not directly taking into consideration the possible change of ideas and beliefs during the course of time.

The main concept of the divine figure of Enki/Ea has also at present remained the same as was defined by A. Deimel in 1914: "É-a, deus abyssi et aquae (dulcis?); deus sapientiae et artium; deus magorum."³ Enki/Ea is described as the god of underground sweet water ocean Abzu, god of wisdom and crafts, and god of magic. The current study does not intend to produce an overall Mesopotamian concept of the god Enki/Ea but aims to investigate his characteristics in a row over certain defined periods of history for tracking the evolution and changes in the nature of that god in the minds of ancient Mesopotamians. The task of studying the evidence in a diachronical perspective is made difficult by the fact that most of the myths and other texts composed in the Neo-Sumerian and Old-Babylonian periods concerning the god Enki/Ea probably have their predecessors already in the Early-Dynastic period religion and mythology. It is impossible to say with certainty, which motives are later

¹ Cf. D. O. Edzard, *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon* (1973), pp. 9092-9115.

² The name Enki will be used in cases of Sumerian context, Ea referring to possible Semitic god, and the compound term Enki/Ea will be used to denote the overall Sumerian and Semitic concept of the god.

³ *Pantheon Babylonicum* (1914), p. 111.

additions and what part comes from the older tradition. It might, therefore, not seem justified to claim that when a certain characteristic is missing from older texts but present in newer sources, such a newer element was not already firmly established in the layers of older religion. A missing characteristic from sources of the older periods might simply indicate that the text containing this element is not preserved or not found yet. However, conclusions in this study are made based on the material actually present from a certain period of time and always leaving space to the possibility that a certain characteristic could have been in existence even without a textual proof.

From previous scientific studies concerning the gods Enki and Ea, the most detailed one is offered by H. D. Galter's doctoral dissertation in Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz "Der Gott Ea/Enki in der Akkadischen Überlieferung. Eine Bestandsaufnahme des vorhandenen Materials" printed in 1983. The dissertation presents an overview of all the most important textual evidence about Enki and Ea that were known at the time of the work's composition. However, the aim of the study was not to analyse Ea and Enki directly in light of his historical development but to give summaries of certain features of that god in thematically ordered topics. E. D. van Buren established the connection between the deity with streams flowing out from his shoulders and the god Enki/Ea already in 1933 in her book "The Flowing Vase and the God with Streams." The main results of this pioneering study have proved adequate up to this day. M. W. Green's doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago from the year 1975 "Eridu in Sumerian Literature" offers a detailed study about Enki's city Eridu in archaeology, history, Mesopotamian mythology and literature. The most recent book about the Enki myths and literary tradition is "Myths of Enki, the Crafty God" by S. N. Kramer and J. Maier published in 1989. The book is not a scientific Assyriological research and is meant for the general reader, however it "serves as testimony to the maturing of Assyriology: the field has arrived at a new plateau when a comprehensive survey can be offered for the single Mesopotamian deity among the dozen major ones and the more than five thousand lesser ones that make up the Sumero-Akkadian pantheon."⁴

The topic of Enki and Ea in Sumerian mythology and history of religion has been treated in one way or another by almost every Assyriologist due to the high

⁴ W. W. Hallo, *JNES* 116 (1996), p. 233.

importance of that god in Mesopotamian cultural context. All the major Enki myths and thousands of other texts featuring Enki and Ea have been published during the last fifty years of Ancient Near Eastern studies. However, no larger detailed research about the god in specific has been undertaken during the last twenty five years. The current study tries to present and analyse the choice of texts and representations in art of Enki/Ea starting from the prehistoric periods and concluding with the image of the god in Sumerian epic literature and mythology.

Chapter 1 *Prehistoric Manifestations of Enki* tries to interpret the earliest known manifestations of the deity Enki based on the archeological material known so far from the ancient site of Eridu (Tell Abu Shahrein). A possible interpretation of the early concept of Abzu, known as Enki's underground domain is given. Chapter 2 *Names and Origins of Enki and Ea* discusses the different possibilities of interpreting the etymology of Enki and Ea. A historical overview of different scholars' approach to the problem is given. Possible origins of the divine concepts will also be studied. Chapter 3 *Enki in Old-Sumerian Sources* analyses the textual information preserved to us from the Early-Dynastic period. The discussed texts include royal inscriptions, mythological and literary compositions, god lists, incantations, offering lists, and personal names. Chapter 4 *Enki/Ea in Old-Akkadian Sources* treats Old-Akkadian royal inscriptions and other sources from the period. Special intention is given to the mythological compositions from the third millennium Ebla, where Enki has an important role to play. A selection of Akkadian cylinder seals possibly featuring Enki in mythological context is offered. Chapter 5 *Enki in Neo-Sumerian Sources* tracks the image of Enki in the texts from the Neo-Sumerian period beginning with the sources of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš. The texts revealing most of the information about Enki from the Neo-Sumerian period are the royal hymns of Ur III rulers which will be studied in detail. Incantations and Enki's representations in the glyptic art of the period are discussed. The thematic of the god Ħaia, a deity closely related to Enki/Ea, is also briefly summarised. Chapter 6 *Enki in Sumerian Epic Stories and Myths* represents an overview of the epical and mythological body of literature featuring Enki composed in their final form possibly during the first part of the Old-Babylonian period. The epic stories of Enmerkar, Lugalbanda, and Gilgameš featuring Enki will be studied. The contents of the myths "Enki and NinĦursaġ" and

“Enki and Ninmah” are summarised serving as best and probably among the most ancient examples of Enki mythology.

The time gap between the first Eridu temple and that of the composition of the Sumerian epics and myths treated in the current thesis is more than 3000 years – a period in history as long as it takes from the foundation of the state in Israel by David to the present day. So it must be taken into consideration that even the presentation and analysis of all the possible sources available would only give a fragmentary image about the god Enki/Ea during that period. Therefore, the current study does not pretend to claim to directly recreate a concept “who” and “what” the god Enki/Ea was for the minds of the ancient Mesopotamians but first of all only tries to present systematically the preserved authentic material.

CHAPTER 1

1. Prehistoric Manifestations of Enki

Before giving an overview of the god Enki in written sources of the third and second millennia, some remarks about his city Eridu and his divine domain Abzu are offered in the following chapter. The earliest evidence about the god Enki can be traced to the archaeological finds in his ancient temple in Eridu and will be summarised. The chapter does not aim to be a separate study of Eridu, Abzu, Engur and other related terms, but only tries to give an introductory overview of the concepts related to the god Enki. The same terms will be discussed in the following chapters dealing with Enki in Old-Sumerian, Old-Akkadian, and Neo-Sumerian sources, where they appear in written texts related to the god Enki.

1.1. Eridu Temple

The god Enki is starting from the first written sources associated with the city of Eridu⁵ situated in southern Mesopotamia,⁶ by its modern name Abu Shahrein. The ancient site of Eridu⁷ which has been excavated by four different expeditions has become a model image of how a small village structured around an ancient cultic site became a town.⁸ Based on the findings and information collected during the excavations it can be stated that in the lagoon-based Eridu, “swampy place that can still become a sizeable lake in the months of high water,”⁹ there was an ancient Pre-Sumerian sanctuary (Fig. 1) deepest layers XIX-XVIII of which date from ca. 5000 B.C. corresponding to the Ubaid level I. Among the findings from the layer VIII,

⁵ Cf. E. Unger, *RIA* 2 (1938), p. 467: In Sumerian the name was written using NUN^{ki}. NUN represents a tree or a reed, the word nun meaning “prince” – sign often associated with the deity Enki. Also the city of Babylon is sometimes written NUN^{ki} that might mean a wish to designate the Babylonian capital with the sign of the “first city.” Cf. W. W. Hallo, *JCS* 23 (1970), p. 63.

⁶ Cf. M. Green, *Eridu*, pp. 4-13 for geographical features of the site and pp. 15-22 for the prehistory of the city.

⁷ Cf. M. Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150. It would be possible to translate the name as eri-du₁₀.g meaning “the good city,” “the beautiful city.” Another possibility is to connect the name with urudu, “copper.” The name Eridu(g) might also belong either to an archaic and therefore untranslatable layer of Sumerian speech, or then to the language layer of the alleged Pre-Sumerian substratum of languages, since the Sumerian etymology of the name is not certain.

⁸ Cf. A. M. T. Moore, *Iraq* 64 (2002), p. 69-70; F. Safar – M. A. Mustafa – S. Lloyd, *Eridu* (1981), pp. 41-48.

⁹ G. Leick, *Mesopotamia. The Invention of the City* (2001), pp. 4-9.

below the altar, a number of curious clay coils were found; possibly the representations of snakes, which might indicate ritual usages associated with them. According to P. Charvát, these may have been connected to chthonic cults¹⁰ or an underworld cult.¹¹ Among other finds, layer VI contained bones of fish and small animals. A bowl filled with appliqué snakes was found.¹² During the same period however, fish offerings were common practice in other temples and places of sacrifice, for example in Uruk and Lagaš, suggesting that there is no reason to draw direct parallels between the burnt fish offerings¹³ found in the ancient site of Eridu¹⁴ and later symbol of Enki in Old-Akkadian glyptic art represented by the fish swimming in two water streams coming out from the shoulders of Enki.¹⁵

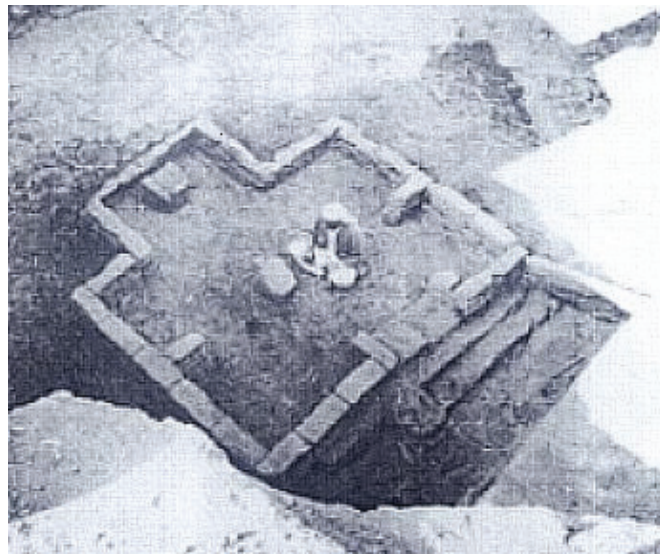


Fig. 1: Eridu Temple XVI

Although Enki, the patron deity of Eridu is starting from the composition of the first known god-lists usually not considered first in rank in the Mesopotamian pantheon, his city Eridu remains the oldest and first mentioned cities almost throughout the

¹⁰ P. Charvát, *Mesopotamia Before History* (1993), p. 47 (= *Ancient Mesopotamia. Humankind's Long Journey into Civilization* (1993), p. 69.)

¹¹ G. Leick, op. cit., p. 7.

¹² P. Charvát, op. cit., p. 47.

¹³ Cf. E. D. van Buren, *Iraq* 14 (1952), p. 76; F. Safar – M. A. Mustafa – S. Lloyd, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁴ Cf. J. Oates, *Iraq* 22 (1960), p. 50: "The finds at Eridu, and at a considerably later period at Lagash, show that in these places the people dedicated to Enki his portion of their goods, not in the form of grain or meat, the basic form of wealth among farming communities, but in fish, the product of river, lagoon and marsh."

¹⁵ Cf. the treatment of Old-Akkadian glyptic art in 4.4. of the current study.

tradition of Sumerian literature.¹⁶ This was true even when the city itself was never a major political power centre during historical periods and lost its importance as a city completely in the middle of the second millennium.¹⁷ Such a “posthumous sanctity”¹⁸ that continued in case of Eridu until the end of the cuneiform culture should underlie the early spiritual importance of the ancient town of Eridu.¹⁹ The pre-historic temple of Eridu must have become a symbol for every later sanctuary and in the construction of the later temple building in Mesopotamia “all the rules laid down at Eridu were faithfully observed.”²⁰ Since the sequence of temples at Eridu show “an attitude towards the preservation of the earlier foundations, which can only be explained in the light of a persistence of religious beliefs,”²¹ it is not hard to imagine that also the ancient divine figure honoured during the first temple period must have given its characteristics to the god worshiped during the next architectural phase. However, there seems to be little grounds on claiming that in its earliest periods the ancient deity was already named Enki sharing the same characteristics with the later figure of the historical periods. By an analogy it could be imagined that the most ancient god in Eridu has in common with the historical Enki figure as much as the first small temple compared to the much huger complex during the Early-Dynastic period. The place was the same,²² the landscape surrounding the temple must have been similar, and the popular collective memory must have been touched by the ancient echo of the first temple. But during the historical periods, the memory of that ancient divine figure must have gone through a considerable change in every aspect, though its first image was buried in the religious subconscious as the first temple of Eridu was hidden deep below the earth.

¹⁶ Cf. 5.2.2. of the current study. In Old-Sumerian sources, the title of the “first city” seems to be attested to Nippur of Enlil.

¹⁷ Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 287.

¹⁸ S. Lloyd, *Iraq* 36 (1974), p. 137.

¹⁹ M. Green, *Eridu*, p. 151: In later literary texts, Enki is associated more intimately with his city and its powers than any other Sumerian god with its dwelling place. Cf. p. 153: Green concludes that Eridu’s position as a “locus of magical powers” might well have been established already during the Ubaid period and could have been the reason for continued maintenance of the shrine at Eridu into the Neo-Babylonian period.

²⁰ E. D. van Buren, *OrNs* 21 (1952), p. 293.

²¹ J. Oates, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

²² Cf. S. Lloyd, *Iraq* 22 (1960), p. 30: When the change from the Al ’Ubaid phase of culture towards the Uruk phase occurred, the influence was drastic economically and socially, but the rebuilding of the shrines gives evidence about unbroken religious continuity.

Another question arising about the ancient deity in Eridu concerns the possible female dominance in early Sumerian pantheon. As believed by P. Steinkeller, during the Uruk period, most of the city states might have had “goddesses as their titulary divine owners.”²³ By Steinkeller, Enki – head of the earliest Sumerian pantheon, must have been paired with most of the female deities of Sumer and complementing them as a male element, “a sort of universal husband.”²⁴ The possibility of female dominance in early and more archaic stages of religion is certainly imaginable. It is possible to assume that also the ancient divine power in Eridu must have been female in gender, and by later developments caused by the growth of male dominance in society general,²⁵ the original female deity was replaced by a male one. However, the statement about Enki being a universal male reproductive element in the early pantheon can not be confirmed to be based on any known source.

1.2. Abzu

Closely associated with the city of Eridu is the region below the earth’s surface – Abzu,²⁶ often interpreted as an underground sweet water ocean.²⁷ Abzu is already mentioned in the lexical lists “Cities”²⁸ from Uruk levels IV-III. In Sumerian, Abzu is usually written phonetically with signs being in reversed order as su/zu-ab of unknown etymology. The original nature of this region is still largely obscure, and possibly no generally fixed understanding about the concept ever existed among the ancient Mesopotamians.²⁹ Sumerian sources reveal no direct information about the

²³ *Priests and Officials* (1999), p. 112.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

²⁵ The spread of mother-goddess figure in almost all the early civilisations known to us might of course draw to the conclusion that the original divine figure in Eridu temple must have also been imagined female in gender. Cf. contradictory opinions of M. Gimbutas, *The Civilization of the Goddess* (1991), where two phases in society and religion are imagined: in the first stage, the dominating force should be the Neolithic goddess cult which is then overthrown by the Bronze Age patriarchal beliefs and social order. Then it would be possible to speculate that Enki as a divine figure must be a later phase of the original female-goddess cult in Eridu. For opposing views to the model offered by M. Gimbutas, cf. P. Ucko, *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete* (1968) where the cultic role of the so-called mother-goddess figurines is doubted.

²⁶ M. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 156: “abzu is often applied to a cosmological region whereas Eridu more precisely designates a geographical site.”

²⁷ W. G. Lambert, *RAI 44* (1997), pp. 75-77 finds no evidence that ancient Mesopotamians ever contrasted fresh waters and salt waters in a way that Abzu would be directly opposed to the sea (a-ab-ba). Cf. B. Alster, *Fs. Klein* (2005), p. 17.

²⁸ *ATU 13*: II, 33 and 60.

²⁹ Cf. W. G. Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

creation of Abzu³⁰ and in the older narratives describing the creation of the world in terms of An and Ki having intercourse and Enlil separating the earth from the sky,³¹ no mention of Abzu occurs. With certainty the term Abzu is used to designate a space or area in lower regions of the world as An “sky” is for the highest parts of the known universe.³²

It can be assumed that the original concept of Abzu must have had something to do with the geographical features of the site of Eridu. The Eridu temple was probably built on a place regarded somehow sacred. Since the authentic landscape in prehistoric periods of the territory is not directly reconstructable it is also hard to imagine what exactly made the place sacred. Some sort of a natural phenomenon is imaginable to have been in existence. Considering that Eridu was situated in a marshy and continuously flooded area, this original *numen* perceived by the ancients could have had something to do with rising and decreasing water in the marshes.

According to several opinions, Abzu was a watery lagoon surrounding the sanctuary of Eridu and so a cult “for the god or goddess of sweet water”³³ must have had its centre there. Th. Jacobsen has concluded that the earliest form of Enki could have been Abzu, “later seen as an opponent vanquished by”³⁴ Enki who then had stepped into the place of Abzu that in turn became his domain.³⁵ Such a change of concepts, where an ancient form of a deity becomes a mere attribute to a more contemporary divine figure can be paralleled for example with “Enūma Eliš” where all the earlier divine forms are described attributed to Marduk. However, the theory seems more to be an artificial product of modern scholarly imagination than actually having taken place in a real religious situation. Divine names containing the element Abzu are

³⁰ Cf. W. Horowitz, *Cosmic Geography*, p. 335. “This apparently indicates that the Sumerians conceived Apsu to be a primordial element, just as the divine Apsu exists at the very start of *Enuma Elish*.” This kind of interpretation is modified by B. Alster, loc. cit., “Abzu might, indeed, have denoted the waters of the marsh areas, as they were available for fishing and traffic by boat, basically without any cosmological connotations.” The composition titled “The Song of the Hoe” (43-45) has a reference to Enki as the builder of Abzu after the É-Kur temple of Enlil was built.

³¹ Cf. 3.4. (Ukg. 15) and 3.5.1. of the current study.

³² Å. Sjöberg, *PSD A/II* (1994), p. 202 concludes, that “abzu/*apsû* is used to designate the very lowest part of the world (opposite to heaven).” Correctness of the claim can be illustrated by the archaic Keš Hymn 35-36: é m[ùš] / an [šà lá] / te-me abzu / [x x] {si-ga} – “temple, (its) surface (area) / (from) the midst of the sky hangs down / (its) foundations (to) the abzu / are placed (?). Cf. Ur-Namma C: 3, where walls of Ur are described growing or rising out from Abzu (abzu-ta mú-a).

³³ G. Leick, op. cit., p. 3.

³⁴ *Mesopotamian Gods and Pantheons*, in *Tammuz*, p. 22.

³⁵ Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 8-9.

attested in Abū Ṣalābīkh and Fāra god lists,³⁶ but Abzu never seems to be a personified divine concept in Sumerian sources.³⁷

Engur is often synonymously used with Abzu from the earliest sources onwards, and in the lexical and bilingual texts from the later periods Engur is translated *apsû*.³⁸ The terms seem to be originally distinct,³⁹ but their exact nature is hard to determine due to a lack of authentic written material.⁴⁰ Sumerian sources use them both do designate a temple dedicated to Enki. As for evidence characterising Abzu and Engur as distinct entities, it must be mentioned that in Sumerian sources there are attestations for the “fish of Engur” (ku₆-engur-ra) but no references for the “fish of Abzu” seem to exist.⁴¹ Only one Old-Sumerian text mentions fish related to Abzu. The fish are probably sent towards the Abzu for magical reasons – possibly as a carrier of an incantation or a prayer to Enki in his domain Abzu:

suhur^{ku₆} abzu-šè gub-gub-ba⁴²

Carp-fish⁴³ that is sent to its Abzu

Clay (im-abzu: “clay of the Abzu”) seems to be characteristic to Abzu and is only rarely used in case of Engur.⁴⁴ In “Enki’s Journey to Nippur” the following statement about the Eridu temple describes Engur and Abzu in parallel but slightly different terms:

é da engur-ra piriḡ abzu šà-ga⁴⁵

Temple at the side of Engur, lion at the centre of Abzu

³⁶ Å. Sjöberg, op. cit., p. 199, 8; M. Green, *Eridu*, p. 161.

³⁷ B. Alster, *Fs. Klein* (2005), p. 7.

³⁸ M. Green, op. cit., p. 158. Cf. p. 160: “From the fact that abzu and engur are both translated *apsû* in Old Babylonian texts, it is clear that already by that time the concept had undergone significant modifications.”

³⁹ Å. Sjöberg, op. cit., p. 202

⁴⁰ M. Green, op. cit., pp. 158-160.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁴² Ean. 1: xix, 17.

⁴³ Cf. E. Sollberger – J.-R. Kupper, *IRSA*, IC5a, p. 52, and note 8, p. 57: “les carpes qui sont au service de l’Apsu.” H. Steible, *FAOS 5/1*, p. 135: “Bei den suhur-Fischen, die für den Abzu (als Opfer) hingestellt sind.” Cf. G. Selz, *UGASL*, p. 119, note 49: “Könnten nicht statt der sonst üblichen Tauben die Suhur-Fische freigelassen werden?” Cf. also Å. Sjöberg, op. cit., p. 184: “Eannatum swore (?) by the carp...for the abzu.”

⁴⁴ M. Green, op. cit., p. 159.

⁴⁵ Enki’s Journey to Nippur: 57.

The temple here seems to be near or at the sides (banks) of Engur. On the other hand, the Eridu temple is described as being inside or in the middle of Abzu. Besides fish, Engur is also connected to reeds growing out of water in Old-Sumerian texts:

gi ġeš-gi-engur⁴⁶

Reed of the canebrake of Engur

When combining the scarce evidence about Abzu and Engur in the earliest sources available, it can be concluded that Abzu refers to a place situated below the surface of the earth being in contact with the foundations of temples metaphorically having their lower parts placed in Abzu and higher parts reaching the heavens.⁴⁷ Engur again seems to be more related to water represented in water lagoons in the marsh areas. The fact that Abzu is associated with clay and no Old-Sumerian text seems to relate Abzu directly with an area of waters might indicate that Abzu originally might have been an underworld domain that was not filled with water. In turn Engur could then be a synonym for the ground waters surrounding Enki's underworld region Abzu. A later reference to the fact that Enki conquered himself a netherworld region and not an under-earth sweet water ocean⁴⁸ can be found in the epic story "Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld" where Enki sets sail to conquer himself the lower regions of the earth – Kur (kur-šè).⁴⁹

However, the fact that Abzu is not associated with water in any Old-Sumerian texts does not prove that in earlier periods Abzu was seen as a cosmic entity empty of water. Texts found so far dealing with mythology from Old-Sumerian and Old-Akkadian periods are too small in number to give any conclusions having probative force.

⁴⁶ Urn. 49: 2.

⁴⁷ Cf. Gudea Cyl. A: xxii 11-13 in 5.1. of the current study.

⁴⁸ Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 122: The descent of Enki "may simply be a mythopoeic explanation of how Enki and his realm, the Apsu, came to be underground where the Ancients knew them to be located."

⁴⁹ Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld: 16. Cf. 6.1.2. of the current study.

1.3. Conclusions

Except for the fact that Eridu was situated in a watery place – marshland, and among other things large quantities of fish and snake figures were probably offered to the god or goddess occupying the temple; nothing can be said about the nature of that Pre-Sumerian divine figure. It should be considered possible, that we are dealing with an early figure or an ancestor of Sumerian Enki known from the Early-Dynastic written sources. Even if Sumerian Enki is not the direct offspring of the deity worshipped already at the times of Ubaid level I, some common points should be imaginable to exist between them. At least the memory of the older divine figure should be preserved in some layers of Sumerian mythology – either directly or then subconsciously. It must be considered possible, that an earlier form of the god could have been more closely associated with the natural phenomena or a sacred place named Abzu. Nature of that Abzu is still largely difficult to conceptualise. At least Sumerian sources do not describe Abzu directly as an ocean of waters or sweet waters. Engur in turn is associated with fish and reeds and should most probably mean the ground waters in the marshland area. Although Abzu and Engur are both used synonymously when referring to the temple of Enki, it should be considered possible that they were originally different concepts.

CHAPTER 2

2. Names and Origins of Enki and Ea

The next evidence in a diachronical perspective about the ancient god worshiped at the temple of Eridu might be found in the etymology of the names of these deities. It is reasonable to believe that both the names of Enki and Ea were already phonetically similarly used hundreds of years before the appearance of these names in cuneiform script. Understanding and interpreting all the possible meanings of the name forms should also allow understanding the more ancient concept of the deity. Every name – personal or divine – has to have an original meaning. This original meaning might be closely connected to concrete objects (for instance a sacred place: stone, marshland, lake, etc.), to a verb (characteristic action), to a toponym (also a name for a cosmic region), or to a natural phenomenon (rain, storm, wind, etc.). One deity might have had several names used for him simultaneously. During the course of time an older name could have disappeared and developed into a new form – a later attribute of a deity could for instance have been his older name. However, it should be taken into consideration that an original meaning of the name of a deity might mean nothing interpretable to a community of people using that name many centuries after the name was first used. The name of the Israelite god YHWH must have had a translatable meaning possibly in the beginning of the first millennium B.C. when the Israelite religion was in an early state of development. The later composed Hebrew Scriptures thus show no firm and unanimous translation in interpreting the name. Possibly the original meaning had no importance for the Hebrews in the fifth century B.C. who used besides YHWH several divine names all possibly referring to some deities of older layers of Israelite religion or neighbourhood. The graphic form and pronunciation of YHWH was although considered sacred as was the deity behind the name itself; and was never changed.

The situation with the name Enki can be imagined to be similar – even if Enki and Ea once had a clearly translatable meaning – understandable to autochthonic people, it is not guaranteed that the original meaning was interpretable for the inhabitants in the middle third millennium city states of Sumer and Akkad. The following chapter tries to understand various existing possibilities for translating the names and possible

origins of Enki and Ea. As was the case with the previous chapter dealing with the archaeological evidence, the etymologies cannot be studied without a reference to the later written material available.

2.1. Enki

The direct translation of the Sumerian name ^den-ki, recorded as a divine name in written sources since the composition of the texts from Fāra and Abū Ṣalābīkh,⁵⁰ would mean “Lord Earth,” and in case of a genitival construction (en+ki+ak), “Lord of the Earth.” As for the name Enki does not seem to refer to a genitival construction in many textual examples, the form en-ki(g) with an amissible -g⁵¹ seems to be a well based possibility for an original form. As for variations in Sumerian sources, Enki’s name possibly also occurs as ki-ki⁵² and *enkid⁵³ in magical texts from Meturan.⁵⁴

2.1.1. Enki in UD.GAL.NUN Texts and Emesal Speech

Some late Early-Dynastic inscriptions from Abū Ṣalābīkh and Fāra, named UD.GAL.NUN texts by R. D. Biggs,⁵⁵ contain an orthographic style for writing the name Enki as UD.GAL.UNU or ^dGAL.UNU.⁵⁶ The name of Enlil occurs as UD.GAL.NUN, so the code could be explained as follows: UD = AN, GAL = en,

⁵⁰ Cf. Chapter 3 of the current study for Enki in Old-Sumerian texts.

⁵¹ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 52 (1989), p. 116.

⁵² A. Cavigneaux – F. N. H. Al-Rawi, *ZA* 83 (1993), p. 189: explained that the title en is not used because the ancient primordial Enki-Nunki gods are involved in speaking considered more ancient and important from the god Enki(k). In turn, when less important personalities speak to Enki, he sometimes is titled with the redoubled en: en^den-ki.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 179, line 30. Magical texts from Meturan contain several variations for writing the name Enki. (Cf. p. 189 for the collection of different different forms.) Analysing the forms used in the texts, it seems certain that (p. 190) “on a à faire à une forme /enkidke/ ou /enkedke/ (à l’ergatif qui se réduit dans certains cas devant voyelle à /e(n)kike/, et devant consonne à /enkid/ attesté dans le datif i-ni-in-ki-id-ra).” The original form of the name in Meturan sources might then be *enkid. The different writings attested in Meturan texts could represent an older tradition but a certain *jeu d’esprit* or esoteric writing as might be the case with the UD.GAL.NUN texts also seems possible.

⁵⁴ Cf. parallel forms for the name Enki in dative in A. Cavigneaux – F. N. H. Al-Rawi, *ZA* 85 (1995), p. 23: text MA 24 has ^den-ki-ke₄-ra, parallel text C 20 has ^den-ki-ra. Cf. p. 35: “La graphie ^den-ki-ke₄-ra (MA) // ^den-ki-ra (C) n’est pas isolée à Meturan; même si c’est une ‘faute’, elle est peut-être intentionnelle.”

⁵⁵ *JCS* 20 (1966), p. 81.

⁵⁶ W. G. Lambert, *OA* 20 (1981), p. 81ff.; *BSOAS* 39 (1976), pp. 430-432.

NUN = líl, and UNU = ki.⁵⁷ The reason for the use of coded language is still not completely explained, although many different interpretations do exist.

W. G. Lambert finds this system to be a *jeu d'esprit*, “and it probably served to jog the memories of scribes who used it.”⁵⁸ H. Sauren suggests possible Pre-Sumerian origins.⁵⁹ A system of cryptographic writing should be considered possible⁶⁰ arising from the need to hide something or give more importance to a sacred or scholarly text by deliberately adding to it an esoteric value. As noticed by R. D. Biggs, the text corpus reflects “a different orthographic tradition in which even a partially different repertory of signs is in use.”⁶¹ A different dialect of the main language has been suggested as an option for UD.GAL.NUN texts instead of the possibility of cryptography. B. Alster gives an opinion that “this peculiar writing system may indicate, namely a specific pronunciation of certain words,”⁶² and the dialect would be emesal.

In emesal speech of later periods, two different forms for ^den-ki are found: umun-ki and am-an-ki. Umun is an emesal form for the en “lord/master.” The form aman is used for the Sumerian en only in case of the divine name ^den-ki:⁶³

ù-mu-un ^dam-an-ki-ra [a]-ra-zu du₅-mu-n[a-ab-bé]⁶⁴

To the lord Enki I shall utter a plea

When in UD.GAL.NUN text a pronunciation different from the ordinary Sumerian versus emesal is meant, then UD.GAL.NUN should correspond to emesal ^dmu.ul.líl and UD.GAL.UNU to emesal ^dam.an.ki of the later periods.⁶⁵ An argument supporting this kind of logic would be the fact that emesal known from the Sumerian texts from the early Old-Babylonian period onward,⁶⁶ should have its predecessor in

⁵⁷ J. Krecher, *BiOr* 35 (1978), p. 155; W. G. Lambert, *OA* 20 (1981), pp. 81-82.

⁵⁸ W. G. Lambert, *OA* 20 (1981), p. 92.

⁵⁹ H. Sauren, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 205, note 21.

⁶⁰ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 39 (1976), p. 432 defined as “a limited system of cryptography.”

⁶¹ R. D. Biggs, *ZA* 61 (1971), p. 195.

⁶² B. Alster, *ASJ* 4 (1982), p. 4.

⁶³ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Inanna and Enki: A/B: 3.

⁶⁵ B. Alster, loc. cit.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

the older layers of the Sumerian language.⁶⁷ One of the probable answers explaining the UD.GAL.NUN system would be, as concluded by J. Krecher – deliberate cryptography that might be caused by cultic taboos or prohibitions for writing down texts of mythological contents of some unknown type.⁶⁸ As summarised by M. Krebernik, the cryptography possibly does not represent any dialect different from the Sumerian language of the period, and no great distinction between the UD.GAL.NUN literature and the literature written in normal orthography seems to exist.⁶⁹

Why this orthographic system is mostly used when dealing with Enlil and Enki only “whereas other gods seemingly are written with the ordinary orthography”⁷⁰ is unclear.⁷¹ P. Michalowski makes an intriguing suggestion claiming that Enlil who was a Semitic newcomer in the Sumerian pantheon had taken away Enki’s place as the leading native deity of Sumer.⁷² When the interpretation of Michalowski would turn out to be correct, then during the times of composition of the UD.GAL.NUN texts a sort of rivalry between the theologies of Enlil and Enki must have occurred. However, theories claiming that Enlil was a newcomer in Sumerian pantheon and for that reason would be a “rival” to Enki and his theology are mainly defended using the argument that Enlil’s name was of Semitic origins⁷³ – proved by Ebla sources where the name was written *i-li-lu*.⁷⁴ Since the name can also be explained to be stemming from the Sumerian language, the option of Enlil being “aus dem semitischen Bereich

⁶⁷ Cf. I. M. Diakonoff, *JAOS* 103 (1983), p. 88, note 40: emesal /umun/, /aman-/ (in /Aman-ki/) for emegir /ên/ < /*ewen/; and p. 89, note 48: emesal ^da-ma-an-ki = emegir ^den-ki, and also emesal u-mu-un = emegir en (/ên/< /*ewen/), with a>u because of the labial. Cf. p. 88 where Diakonoff assumes, that emesal in Sumerian “differs from the language of men in phonetics, in retaining certain archaisms” – so, aman/umun would be an archaism. Cf. A. Alberti, *N.A.B.U.* 1990/4, pp. 102-103 for *emen as an archaic form of en.

⁶⁸ J. Krecher, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 301. W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 39 (1976), p. 432 finds “the motive was hardly to conceal, since the system is so easy.”

⁶⁹ M. Krebernik, *OBO* 160/1, p. 299.

⁷⁰ B. Alster, *ASJ* 4 (1982), p. 2.

⁷¹ Cf. J. Krecher, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 302: “A more detailed study of the Fāra time religious literature will perhaps show that Enlil (and Enki) play more extensive role in the UD.GAL.NUN texts than in texts of the normal orthography.”

⁷² P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), pp. 241-242. For that reason “the usurpation of Enki’s place by the new god may also be the source of the use of the NUN sign (in case of Enlil), a symbol widely associated with the older god, in the UD.GAL.NUN (=dingir.en.lil) writing of Enlil’s name, and in the early writing convention for the name of his city Nippur, which may be found, spelled EN.NUN in the city seal from Jemdet Nasr.” P. Steinkeller, *Gs. Jacobsen* (2002), p. 255, note 29 sees no justification interpreting EN.NUN for Nippur.

⁷² Cf. theories of S. N. Kramer concerning Enki in 2.1.3.1. of the current chapter.

⁷³ Cf. P. Steinkeller, *Priests and Officials* (1999), p. 114, note 36 where it is stated that Enlil was a secondary development in the Sumerian pantheon, and “the cult of Enlil was brought to Nippur from northern Babylonia (though in great antiquity).”

⁷⁴ Cf. 4.2. of the current study.

stammender uralter Eindringling im sumerischen Pantheon, müsste mit kräftigeren Argumenten untermauert werden.”⁷⁵

On the other hand, “the usurpation of Enki’s place” could emerge from “the decline of his city Eridu, due to geographical factors, which resulted in Enlil’s emerging supreme”⁷⁶ and then give grounds for rivalry between two theologies. Several indications can be imagined, that approximately in the beginning of the Early-Dynastic period, Sumerian political and religious organisation “underwent a dramatic transformation, by which its focal point was transferred from Uruk to Nippur,”⁷⁷ and instead of Inanna and Enki, the god of Nippur, Enlil became the head of the pantheon.⁷⁸ If the theories about the change of power centres in Babylonia in the beginning of the Early-Dynastic period would turn out to be correct, then at least some special connection between the writing style of the names of Enki and Enlil in UD.GAL.NUN texts and the relations of these gods might seem imaginable.

2.1.2. Enki-Ninki Deities

The name form en-ki is also used for the en-ki – nin/nun-ki⁷⁹ deities who are mentioned already in several Early-Dynastic texts. The original character of the en-ki⁸⁰ – nin-ki deities and their connection to the deity Enki will be studied in more detail in Chapter 3.4. of the current study. As illustrated by a later emesal bilingual

⁷⁵ D. O. Edzard, *Fs. Fronzaroli* (2003), p. 184.

⁷⁶ W. G. Lambert, *MARI* 4 (1985), p. 538.

⁷⁷ P. Steinkeller, *Gs. Jacobsen* (2002), p. 257.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Th. Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 252, note 173: “This deity, whose name denotes ‘Lord Earth’ (en-ki) is a chthonic deity distinct from the god of the fresh waters Enki, whose name denotes ‘Lord (i.e., productive manager) of the earth’ (en-ki (.ak)).” Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 5 (1946), pp. 138-139: “the powers manifest in Earth viewed in their male and female aspects as ^dEn-ki, ‘The earth lord,’ and ^dNin-ki, ‘The earth lady.’”

⁸⁰ For the possible parallelism of the en-ki – nin-ki and the *īgīgū*, cf. S. N. Kramer, *JAOS* 88 (1968), p. 111, note 13: Kramer claims that the ^den-ki – ^den-ki in line 6 of the praise Poem for Išme-Dagan parallels the initial ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne of the preceding line 5 - “it is not unlikely, therefore, that ^den-ki – ^den-ki stands for the *īgīgū* (usually written nun-gal-e-ne)” (Cf. Išme-Dagan A: 5-6: ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne temen-bi / ^den-ki-^den-ki túg zi-ġál-bi: foundation peg of the Anunna gods / life protecting garment of the Enki deities). J. van Dijk in *AOAT* 25 (1976), p. 126, note 7 finds the parallelism possible: “L’assimilation in (= en: in-si = énsi) -ki < ī-ki; (n)in-ki < ī-ki; avant le ‘soundshift’ cela dû être: i-gi-i-gi (-u) < *īgīgū*.” Cf. F. Wiggermann, *NatPhen* (1992), p. 281-282 who believes the equation of *Igigu* and Enki-Enki seems not to fit the larger context of Sumerian or Babylonian mythology.

vocabulary, the similar name form of en-ki and nin-ki they share with the god Enki studied here was already problematical to Babylonian scribes:⁸¹

^dumun-ki = ^den-ki = ^dé-Γa]

^dgašan-ki = ^dnin-ki = ^ddam-ki-n[a]⁸²

2.1.3. Possible Translations of the Name Enki

In light of the previous discussion, two possible forms of the name seem probable – ^den-ki or then ^den-ki(g/k). Assuming the name is Sumerian, different interpretations and direct translations can be taken into account. Another possibility would be that ^den-ki represents an older form of the divine name with no available translation based on the Sumerian language. All the options will be taken into consideration in the following discussion.

2.1.3.1. Enki Translated “Lord of the Earth”

From the beginnings of the scientific sumerological studies, a number of attempts have been made to translate and interpret the name Enki by giving different variations to the direct translation “Lord (of the) Earth.”⁸³ Ch. Jean elaborates further: “En-ki signifie ‘seigneur de *la terre*’, par opposition au ciel AN, ou ‘seigneur du territoire’ au centre duquel il est honoré; ou bien encore ‘seigneur du sol’ et du sous-sol, y compris les nappes d’eau douce que l’on voyait sourdre en certains lieux.”⁸⁴ E. Ebeling clarifies that the Sumerian ki in case of Enki could be understood as a space below, the under-earth sweet-water ocean Abzu, thus translating Enki’s name as “Herr des Unteren.”⁸⁵

Although the translation “Lord of the Earth” might seem at first sight to be the most probable one,⁸⁶ serious problems arise when comparing the idea of the “lord of the

⁸¹ Cf. A. Deimel, *Pantheon Babylonicum* (1914), p. 111: ^dnin-ki is seen as a spouse of Enki.

⁸² *MSL* 4: i 2-3.

⁸³ Cf. A. Deimel, loc. cit., Enki = dominus terrae.

⁸⁴ Ch. Jean, *Religion sumérienne*, p. 45.

⁸⁵ E. Ebeling, *RIA* 2 (1938), p. 375.

⁸⁶ Ch. Jean, loc. cit., “L’*étymologie autorise, sans les imposer, ces trois conceptions.*”

earth” in context with the functions and character generally attested to Enki.⁸⁷ “Selbst wenn man annimmt, der Name sei in den Flussmarschen des Mündungsgebietes von Euphrat und Tigris entstanden, wo Land und Wasser fließend ineinander übergehen, so bleibt doch die Frage ungeklärt, warum dieses Phänomen dann auf die gesamte Erde übertragen wurde.”⁸⁸ Th. Jacobsen sees Enki as productive manager of the soil reflecting the role of water in fructifying earth, and when moistening clay, giving it “plasticity and the ability to assume and hold all manner of shapes.”⁸⁹ So, due to his watery nature Enki can be imagined to be a real “ruler” of the fertile soil, form-giver and master of the clay.⁹⁰ Interpretation of Enki as husband of Ki is given by H. Sauren, who in his approach to the myth “Enki and Ninmah” hypothesises that Namma was taken in marriage by Enki: “Nammu is divided into An = heaven and Ki = earth,” and Enki is “the husband of Ki as his name indicates.”⁹¹ Understanding the deity Enki as a ruler of the cosmic entity Ki – “earth” seems highly improbable in light of the fact that not a single text in Sumerian sources describes Enki married or directly associated to Ki.⁹² C. H. Gordon finds that Enki’s status as the “Lord of the Earth” is proven by his nature as god of fertility. Since in Ugarit, the god of fertility was “Baal ‘the Lord,’ who is specifically *Bʿl-arṣ* ‘Lord of the Earth,’” then he should also be “the precise equivalent of EN-KI.”⁹³ The argument does not seem to be confirmed, since in West-Semitic sources Enki/Ea is possibly equated with deities like El and *Ktr-w-ḥss*, and no direct relation with Baal – dying and then resurrected god, seems to exist.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ S. N. Kramer, *Genava NS* 8 (1960), p. 276: “it seems rather strange that the epithet *en-ki* ‘Lord of the Earth’ should be given to a deity who is primarily the god in charge of waters rather than of the earth.”

⁸⁸ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 8. Cf. B. Groneberg, *Die Götter des Zweistromlandes* (2004), pp. 135-136, who argues that Enki’s element is sweet water that should be represented in his name, and not the earth. However, no Old-Sumerian text exists, where Enki’s element would be the sweet waters – also Abzu as a cosmic region cannot be explained simply as a sweet water ocean.

⁸⁹ *Treasures*, p. 111.

⁹⁰ Cf. K. Butz, *Ebla 1975-1985* (1987), p. 337: “‘Erde’ ist hier zu verstehen als ‘bewässertes Land.’ ‘Erde’ ohne wasser ist ohne Leben und daher ohne bedeutung.”

⁹¹ *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 204. “It is only with Nammu = Ki that Enki begets children, their offspring being the myriads of gods, the *šaršara*.” Sauren therefore considers Nammu Enki’s wife, and not mother. For Nammu as Enki’s mother, cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, pp. 123-124. The view that Damgalnunna/Damkina is a later development and the mother-goddess was the original spouse of Enki is supported also by P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 242. For the role of Damgalnunna/Damkina and also Ninḫursaḡ as Enki’s spouse, cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, pp. 124-125.

⁹² Cf. F. A. M. Wiggermann, *RIA* 9 (1998-2001), p. 138 for the mother-goddess Namma’s relation to Enki and Eridu.

⁹³ C. H. Gordon, *Eblaitica* 1 (1987), p. 20.

⁹⁴ C. H. Gordon, *Eblaitica* 2 (1990), p. 145 tries to combine results from, Sumerian, Eblaite and Ugaritic texts and prove that Baal who is “Lord of the Earth” is also titled “living” – possible name of

The name Enki could originally have been an epithet of a deity claiming his lordship and power over the earth and its inhabitants; and during the course of time the original name of the deity might have been replaced by the epithet “Lord of the Earth.”⁹⁵ According to the hypothesis of Th. Jacobsen, the ancient name of Enki must have been Abzu, under-earth sweet-water ocean, later understood as a domain and living-place of Enki.⁹⁶ H. Sauren also develops the idea: “We find afterwards Apsu (=Enki?) in the *Enuma Eliš* myth as the father of great gods. In the myth of *Atramhasis*, Enki is the lord of Apsu, opposed to heaven.”⁹⁷ S. N. Kramer argues that the complex en-ki was originally an epithet “which may have been substituted by the Sumerian theologians for a Semitic deity – in this case, the god Ea.”⁹⁸ “Here in Eridu there was a local deity by the name of Ea, and the aspiring theologians of that city, eager to make him the supreme deity of the land, pressed forward his claim for lordship over the earth, and in an effort to insure his claim applied to him the epithet en-ki, ‘Lord of the Earth,’ which then became his Sumerian name.”⁹⁹ Here, a power struggle between the Eridu oriented and Nippur tradition theologians is presupposed, so the assumed quest of Enki (Eridu theologians) is making the cult of Enki and Eridu leading power in Sumerian theology instead of Enlil.¹⁰⁰ “The title ‘Lord of the Earth’ seems to point to an effort on the part of the Sumerian theologians to make him a rival of Enlil who ‘had carried off the earth’ after heaven had been separated from it, and would therefore presumably be the real ‘Lord of the Earth.’”¹⁰¹ Th. Jacobsen in turn sees no

Semitic Ea. That in turn should convince toward the conclusion that the name of Enki must also be “Lord of the Earth.”

⁹⁵ Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, pp. 8-9.

⁹⁶ *Tammuz*, p. 21. A similar argument given by S. N. Kramer – J. Maier in *Myths of Enki*, p. 3 claiming the original name to have been En-kur. “His very name, the complex en-ki, ‘Lord of the earth,’ does not correspond to his position as king of the Abzu, the watery deep that was part of the Kur, the cosmic entity below the earth, the home of all kinds of evil demons and terrifying monsters. In fact, it is not unlikely that at an earlier period he was called En-kur, ‘Lord Kur,’ a name he acquired by conquering the monster-infested Kur.”

⁹⁷ *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 204.

⁹⁸ *Genava NS* 8 (1960), p. 276.

⁹⁹ S. N. Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology* (1961), p. xiii. In *Myths of Enki*, p. 3 another way of events is proposed: Some time about 2500 B.C., the Akkadians introduced the name Ea for Enki.

¹⁰⁰ S. N. Kramer, *OrNS* 39 (1970), pp. 103-104; cf. *Genava NS* 8 (1960), p. 276: “All of which may point to the conclusion that Enki was not a ‘native’ to the Sumerian pantheon, but rather a foreign deity.”

¹⁰¹ S. N. Kramer, *Genava NS* (1960), p. 276. Kramer thinks to have found evidence about the rivalry of Enlil and Enki in the so-called “Golden Age” passage, where Enki by the speculation of Kramer developed in *JAOS* 63 (1943) pp. 191-194, and further developed in *JAOS* 88 (1968), pp. 108-111, confuses the tongues of humankind to stop them giving praise to Enlil in one language. The real meaning of the nam-šub of Nudimmud contained in lines 136-155 of “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” epic still contains many uncertainties. For opposite views to Kramer, cf. Th. Jacobsen’s interpretation in *Fs. Talmon* (1992), pp. 403-416. Enki’s inferior position towards Enlil is represented

convincing trace of such a power struggle between Enki and Enlil because “the title en, traditionally translated ‘lord,’ never denotes ‘owner’ in Sumerian but rather ‘productive manager;’ as Enki’s name refers to the role of water in fertilising the earth and making it produce, it implies no challenge to anybody.”¹⁰²

Different interpretations of S. N. Kramer and Th. Jacobsen seem to be rooted in two opposite conceptions of pre-historic Mesopotamian religion. Kramer considers the deities in Mesopotamia to be anthropomorphic since their first appearance as gods, while according to Jacobsen, the Mesopotamian gods originally emerged from different powers and *numina* of nature symbolised in their emblems, and “the anthropomorphic form in which these deities appear in literature and art is a later development.”¹⁰³ The theories of Jacobsen seem to be based on the belief that Enki was an ancient water-deity – a symbol of water later personified in an anthropomorphic form. Water makes clay (of the Abzu) plastic, and then, from clay different forms can be shaped. This should find expression in Enki’s epithet Nudimmud “image fashioner,” “god of shaping.”¹⁰⁴ Jacobsen’s interpretation of the name Nudimmud should again underline Enki’s function as god of artisans and craftsmen.¹⁰⁵ Old-Sumerian and also Neo-Sumerian texts do show Enki in some connection with canals and irrigation, reeds growing out from the Abzu, but nowhere is it seen that Sumerians actually ever saw him as a god who “personifies the numinous powers in the sweet waters in rivers and marshes or rain.”¹⁰⁶ In addition, the cleansing power of the incantation waters¹⁰⁷ seems to be connected to Enki by later influence not attested before the incantations of the Neo-Sumerian period.¹⁰⁸

in one of the epithets of Enki, ^den-lil-bàn-da (Cf. Enmerkar and Lord of Aratta: 128: ^den-lil-bàn-da-ke-en-gi-ra-ke₄: Junior Enlil of Sumer). His status as “younger Enlil” does not reflect his smaller importance directly. However, it states that Enki is seen as an organiser of Earth instead of Enlil. The rivalry motive is however present in the later Flood stories. Cf. W. W. Hallo, *JAOS* 110 (1990), p. 195: “From the perspective of religious history, the Flood originates as a chapter in the struggle between the deities Enki and Enlil or, if one prefers, between the rival theologies and priesthoods of the first city, Eridu and the later center of amphictyony, Nippur. (...) In its ultimate form, it becomes a simple, albeit dramatic, paradigm for divine caprice, for redistribution unmotivated by any particular human delict.”

¹⁰² *Fs. Talmon* (1992), p. 415.

¹⁰³ O. R. Gurney, *BSOAS* 34 (1971), p. 596.

¹⁰⁴ Th. Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 111. Cf. 3.1. of the current study for the epithet Nudimmud.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. M. J. Geller, *BSOAS* 50 (1987), p. 125. In Ebla and Fāra texts, Enlil and goddess Ningirim are instead of Enki and Asalluḫi the main incantation figures. Cf. 5.4. of the current study for the general character of incantations related to Enki in the Neo-Sumerian period.

The theory of Jacobsen about Enki as an ancient water deity is not provable at least by any written source from the third millennium. However, as Jacobsen himself states about Kramer's theory of struggle between Enki and Enlil, no convincing evidence that Enki was ever directly jealous of Enlil can be detected with certainty from Sumerian texts.¹⁰⁹

It cannot be excluded, that the name Enki is an epithet of a deity previously having carried a different name. Whether this hypothetical name is represented in underworld cosmic regions such as Abzu or Kur is impossible to prove, but imaginable. The translation "Lord of the Earth" is doubtful in many ways. First of all, it does not seem to fit the functions of the deity, secondly it poses serious problems for interpreting the name as a genitive complex based on Sumerian grammar. For those reasons, other ways of interpreting the name must be taken into consideration, however, not claiming the translation "Lord of the Earth" has to be erroneous.

2.1.3.2. Enki Interpreted Enki(g/k)

In UD.GAL.NUN texts, the name of Enki was written UD.GAL.UNU. The value UNU is used for the ki of Enki as well as for the ki denoting "earth."¹¹⁰ This aspect seems to indicate the possibility that the composers of the UD.GAL.NUN text might have interpreted ki of Enki as "earth." However, according to W. G. Lambert, ki cannot be a specific value for UNU because ki "earth" and ki(g) belonging to the name ^den-ki are probably different nouns.¹¹¹ The translation "Lord of the Earth" is doubtful, "first because ancient Babylonian scholars seem never to use or imply such a meaning, despite their obsession with etymology of divine names; secondly, because the -ki is not 'earth,' since it ends with an omissible -g. It is properly -kig, of unknown meaning."¹¹² The view has not been generally accepted, since "^den-ki-ak

¹⁰⁹ *Fs. Talmon* (1992), p. 415. However, the motive where Enki saves humankind against the will of Enlil in the Flood stories is an example of direct opposition between these gods.

¹¹⁰ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 39 (1976), p. 432.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* Cf. P. Michalowski, *Gs. Kutscher* (1993), p. 123 argues that AB/UNUG might have been originally a symbol for city, geographical name or a temple. During "one phase in the invention of the writing system it had a value ki, and that ki was the original Sumerian word for 'city.'" When the old word was replaced by a Semitic loan uru, ki "became generalized in the meaning 'place,' and was later used as a classifier for geographical names."

¹¹² W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 52 (1989), p. 116 – statement given in review of C. H. Gordon, *Eblaitica* 1 (1987), p. 19, where it is claimed, that Enki undoubtedly means "Lord of the Earth." Cf. K. Butz, *Ebla*

may have developed ^den-ki(g) by dissimilation,”¹¹³ although there seems to be no direct parallels for such a dissimilation in the Sumerian language.

Concerning the translation of that hypothetical ki(g) in the name of Enki, not many options have been offered. E. Sollberger has understood the ki of ^den-ki as the Sumerian root ki(g) meaning “favour,” “benevolence,” “love,”¹¹⁴ and so in parallel with the name En-lil¹¹⁵ as “seigneur bienveillance.”¹¹⁶ The existence of the verbal construction ki.aĝa “to love, beloved” in the hypothetical ki(g) of Enki is hard to defend in lack of parallels for such an occurrence.

However a deity who is also called “benevolent” can be found from Ugaritic mythology represented by El or Ilu – *lṭpn 'il dp'id*: “the Benevolent, Ilu the Good-natured.”¹¹⁷ *Lṭpn* – possibly vocalised *laṭpān* is not only an epithet or adjective describing the deity El, but “might even be the proper name of Ilu (bearing in mind that Ilu simply means ‘god’).”¹¹⁸ Besides the possible etymological relations between Enki and El, they share similarities also in terms of their cosmic regions, since “according to the Ugaritic myths El lived in ‘the sources of the (two) rivers, within the springs of the (two) seas’ (*mbk nhrm qrb apq thmtm*), which is the nearest Syrian equivalent to the Sumerian Apsû.”¹¹⁹ W. G. Lambert suggests that in Mari El hides under a disguise of Enki/Ea where they share several characteristics, among them both are titled as being leaders of the assembly of gods.¹²⁰ If the equation of several

1975-1985 (1987), p. 337: “Der Auslaut -g in En.ki.ga, er tritt nicht immer auf, findet sich auch in ki.in.dar ‘Erdsplatte.’ Es ist demnach wohl *kig bzw. *ki anzusetzen.”

¹¹³ B. Alster, *ASJ* 4 (1982), p. 6, note 1.

¹¹⁴ *TCS* I, p. 141, 393: “In the name En-ki, god of the (underground, sweet) waters, -ki cannot be ‘earth’ (...); in view of the frequent ending -g (...), and of the well attested rôle of the god as man’s friend, I assume a translation ‘Lord Love,’ parallel to En-lil ‘Lord Breath’ (and, perhaps, En-sun ‘Lord Wisdom’). Verbal construction ki.aĝa would mean “to love, beloved (a verbal phrase constructed with the dative, literally, ‘to mete out ki(g) to someone’). (Sollberger’s interpretation seems to be connected to some ideas of S. N. Kramer, *Belleten* 16 (1952), p. 362 where in one *balbale* for Inanna - ki-ig-ka ‘dear,’ looks like “an unusual writing for ki-āĝ-ĝá.”)

¹¹⁵ Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 8.

¹¹⁶ E. Sollberger – J.-R. Kupper, *IRSA*, p. 301.

¹¹⁷ J. F. Healey, *AOAT* 250 (1998), p. 349.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

¹¹⁹ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 48 (1985), p. 451. Cf. M. Dietrich – O. Loretz, *UF* 29 (1997), pp. 126-127 and 134-139. The problematic aspect that “El kein Wassergott sei” (p. 139) could be answered, that also Old-Sumerian Enki does not seem to be a “water deity” at least by any written source available.

¹²⁰ *MARI* 4 (1985), pp. 537-538 and Puzur-Eštar 1 in 5.2.6. of the current study. Cf. E. Lipiński, *UF* 20 (1988), p. 143: “Ceci dit, il est certain que l’assimilation d’El à Éa ne s’est pas produite à Ugarit, où ces dieux sont bien distincts. Il faut dès lors songer à un autre centre de la Syrie du Nord, qu’il serait vain de vouloir déterminer en l’absence de toute donnée concrète.”

features¹²¹ of Enki and El in West-Semitic mythology might also arise from the fact that Enki's name was understood as "Lord Benevolence" as possibly was considered one of the titles of Semitic El, seems doubtful but not completely excluded.

A use for the ki(g) of the name ^den-ki(g) might be found in the name of Nin-MAR.KI. The element -ki in the divine name ^dnin-MAR.KI seems to have similar characteristics as has the -ki of ^den-ki.¹²² If the -ki in these two names actually has the same meaning is difficult to answer, since the similar components (^den-ki-k(/g) = ^dnin-mar-ki-k(/g)) do not prove it but only suggest that possibility. As the most important function of this goddess having its main cultic centre in Lagašite Niĝin (NINA) seems to be taking care for cattle,¹²³ it seems possible to interpret the MAR of the name as amar – "young (animal)." And if again the interpretation of Sollberger for ki(g) would turn out to be correct, the translation of the name might be "Madam, who makes good for the (young) animals." Considering the fact that Nin-MAR.KI belongs to the circle of Enki in Lagaš, and also Enki is characterised as abundance giver to animals in Old-Babylonian mythological compositions featuring him, the similar etymology of the two gods is not excluded, but remains doubtful. A syllabic reading for Nin-MAR.KI as ^dNin-mar-ki.g/k is hard to defend because in Old-Sumerian Ĝirsu the name was also written ^dNin-MAR without the element ki(g).¹²⁴

Clarifying the name Enki as "good maker" seems intriguing in light of some newer studies interpreting the name Enlil excluding the possibility of líl translated "wind" in his name – a deity most often occurring paired or related to Enki from Old-Sumerian texts onward. D. O. Edzard claims: "Dort wo wir eine Übersetzung '(böser) Wind' nicht vertreten können, bleiben uns die Bedeutungen 'Schemen', 'Phantom', 'Leere', 'Nichts'. Über etwaige ältere Bedeutungen von líl zu spekulieren, ist müßig."¹²⁵ When interpreting Enki as "Lord Good-maker / Love" and Enlil as "Lord Phantom / Nothing" – assuming that both names are etymologically Sumerian – then the

¹²¹ Cf. M. Dietrich – O. Loretz, *UF* 24 (1992), pp. 34-36 for the similar concepts of "wisdom" of El and Enki/Ea.

¹²² P. Attinger, *N.A.B.U.* 1995/2, p. 28.

¹²³ Cf. W. Sallaberger, *RIA* 9 (1998-2001), p. 463-468.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 463: "Man könnte deshalb daran denken, in MAR.(KI)(-g/k) ein noch ungelesenes und nach-altbab. wohl auch vergessenes Graphem zu sehen, in dem -ki (bzw. Fāra -gi₄) als Lautindikator (?) gedient haben könnte, dessen Schreibung bis in prä-sarg. Zeit fakultativ war."

¹²⁵ *Fs. Fronzaroli* (2003), p. 183.

“rivalry” or contradiction between these two most important deities in Sumerian mythology might not come from one god being a newcomer in Sumerian pantheon, but from a sort of a reciprocal opposition between the two concepts existing inside the Sumerian way of thought: one as benevolent, other as not. Or as summarised by Edzard: “Wir empfinden Enlil – ganz im Gegensatz zu seinem Bruder Enki – als einen zutiefst unsympathischen Gott. Wenn die altmesopotamische Götterwelt ihre liebe Not ihm gehabt hat, sollte es uns da besser ergehen?”¹²⁶

The translation “Lord Benevolence” would fit the nature of the deity represented in Sumerian and Old-Babylonian mythology. Parallels from West-Semitic mythology can also be drawn. However, the ki(g) might mean something completely different from the interpretation of Sollberger, and therefore is only one option of translation among the others, though one of the most fitting ones.

2.1.3.3. Possible Pre-Sumerian Etymology of the Name Enki

As stated by H. Sauren “We do not know if the Sumerian name ^den-ki “lord of the earth” is a Sumerian translation or interpretation of older names.”¹²⁷ On the other hand, it is impossible to conclude if there even was a Pre-Sumerian name for Enki attested first in Old-Sumerian texts.¹²⁸ Although not directly proven by the linguistic analysis of alleged Pre-Sumerian toponyms and other terms and archaeological evidence,¹²⁹ the Sumerians might not have been the first linguistic and ethnic group occupying the Southern part of Mesopotamia. A multitude of tribal or regional groups probably speaking different language and honouring different deities might have preceded them there. It would be possible to assume a non-Sumerian etymology and background also for the name Enki. Possible etymologies given to the name Enki described above have all proved to be insufficient for announcing one of them correct. Therefore, one of the options for understanding the name would be to assume that

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 184.

¹²⁷ H. Sauren, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 205, note 21.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 204.

¹²⁹ Cf. G. Rubio, *JCS* 51 (1999), pp. 1-16 for an overview concerning the so-called “Sumerian problem” and the alleged “Pre-Sumerian substratum.” No direct evidence concerning the pre-Sumerian language or ethnic group seems to be possible to indicate based on the current knowledge; p. 11: “All one can detect is a complex and fuzzy web of borrowings whose directions are frequently difficult to determine.” Same could be concluded about the origins, borrowings, and movements of religious ideas during the archaic periods.

Enki originally emerged from the Southern Mesopotamian Ubaidian culture and belonged to the language spoken by the so-called Proto-Tigridian or Proto-Euphratic peoples. The fact that the etymology of Enki's living-place, the Abzu, has proven difficult to explain based on the Sumerian or Akkadian vocabulary, could also be an indicator of the Pre-Semitic and Pre-Sumerian origins of his name.

Without any chance of verifying the assumable Pre-Sumerian etymology due to the lack of linguistic data coming from the hypothetical Pre-Sumerian language, and considering that it is possible to translate the name based on Sumerian language, the most probable options for the name would be "Lord of the Earth" or "Lord Benevolence." As for other options, the possibility that the name Enki comes from an archaic layer of the Sumerian language already not comprehensible for the people of the Early-Dynastic periods, always remains an option.

2.2. Ea

The god Ea is first mentioned in personal names of the Pre-Sargonic era.¹³⁰ The name is most often written using É-A.¹³¹ Because Enki/Ea was considered a water-deity and the presence of the Sumerian a ("water") as a composing element of the name seemed to refer to the characteristics of this deity, a misconception in some early studies had developed that the name must have had an original meaning such as "House of the Water."¹³² Since the possibility of a Sumerian etymology for the name cannot be justified on any grounds,¹³³ and especially because Ea in Old-Akkadian personal names is almost exclusively connected with Semitic elements,¹³⁴ there is a strong basis for concluding that the name Ea is of Semitic origins. However, in some few contemporary studies the connection with "House of the Water" is still considered an

¹³⁰ *OIP 14*: 23, 2: the first known record from Adab - šu-é-a. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 3. Cf. pp. 216-286 for the catalogue of personal names, and p. 266 for the supposedly first record "Der des Ea".

¹³¹ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 4. Cf. J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 20 and p. 79, note 111.

¹³² Cf. Ch. Jean, *Religion sumérienne*, p. 48.

¹³³ S. N. Kramer, *Genava NS* 8 (1960), p. 276, note 19: "Nor does the suggestion that é-a means 'in the water' seem very likely."

¹³⁴ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 3. Cf. E. Ebeling, *RIA* 2 (1938), p. 375; J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 20-21: "since the name is written without the determinative and occurs almost exclusively in Akkadian contexts, it is probably Semitic."

option¹³⁵ in a form of scribal popular etymology.¹³⁶ C. H. Gordon believes the influence of popular etymology in case of the name É-A “because sea is down like earth, rather than up like sky. Moreover Enki’s shrine is surrounded by water,”¹³⁷ and the iconography often presented in cylinder seals “of the watery shrine is thus secondary, prompted by the scribal popular etymology of É-A as “House of Water,” for in Sumerian, É = “house” and A = “water.”¹³⁸ Although in Akkadian cylinder seals Enki/Ea appears emerging from a house or a temple surrounded by waves of water and indeed É = “house” and A = “water” in Sumerian, no ancient scribal etymologies of that nature seem to exist.¹³⁹

2.2.1. Semitic Etymology of Ea

Before his approach to the name, H. D. Galter states that although the religious names tend to preserve their ancient form in a continuous change inside a language, the chance of different readings arising from possible folk-etymology or from other pseudo-renderings allows only hypothetical nature without probative force to any conclusion drawn.¹⁴⁰ As was seen in the case of Enki, no matter how seemingly clear an interpretation of a name might look like at first sight, no certain answers can be given, since the original form and translation of the name is impossible to reach due to a lack of written evidence from archaic periods.

In Sargonic era writing, the sign É was used for denoting the value ’à, and the é value is not attested until the Ur III period.¹⁴¹ ’à in turn should go back to the proto-Akkadian form *ḥa,¹⁴² and the proto-Akkadian form of the full name of É-a must be

¹³⁵ Cf. G. Leick, *A Dictionary of Ancient Near Eastern Mythology* (1991), p. 37: “Ancient Babylonians derived it from Sumerian É.a, ‘house of the water.’”

¹³⁶ Cf. J. Bottéro, *StSem* 1 (1958), p. 37 names this popular etymology “une graphie sumérienne secondaire par laquelle les théologiens auraient cherché à donner, dans leur langage savante, une signification précise au nom de cette divinité: ‘Récidence-de-l’Eau’, ou ‘dans-l’Eau’, font manifestement allusion au domaine aqueux que l’on avait attribué à Éa.” Then Éa would not be original name of the deity but possibly phonetically close to it.

¹³⁷ *Eblaitica* 1 (1987), p. 19.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, note 6.

¹³⁹ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 52 (1989), p. 116. Cf. 4.4. (Fig. 2 and 3) of the current study for Enki represented in a house or a temple surrounded by water.

¹⁴⁰ *Ea/Enki*, p. 3.

¹⁴¹ I. J. Gelb, *MAD* 2, p. 24 and pp. 88-89; cf. J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 20; H. D. Galter *Ea/Enki*, p. 4.

¹⁴² I. J. Gelb, *op. cit.*, p. 119f.; J. M. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 20 and p. 79, note 113. Cf. M. Krebernik, *AfO* 32 (1985), p. 58.

*ha-a,¹⁴³ “which assuming the name is Semitic, would suggest a root *h-x-x.”¹⁴⁴ The alphabetic writing of the name in Hurrian pantheon list from Rash Shamra as ey¹⁴⁵ suggests the pronunciation of ’à-a with internal -y(y)-.¹⁴⁶ This is further supported by a trilingual vocabulary from the same site proving the deity was assimilated to the goddess Ay(y)a in Ugarit.¹⁴⁷ J. M. Roberts finds the existence of the -y(y)- in the name of Ea quite problematic, since in Mesopotamia proper the variant É-ya or É-ya₈ is never attested instead of É-a.¹⁴⁸ However, he supports the element -y(y)- by the argument: “The writing of the divine name was obviously fixed in the tradition quite early, È-a being the only clearly attested variant to this writer, and when traditional orthography dominates to this extent, it is precisely in the peripheral areas where one must look for clues to actual pronunciation.”¹⁴⁹ This evidence is further supported by the information from Ebla: “Les listes lexicaux éblaïtes, en effet, qui donnent l’équivalence ^den-ki = ’à-u₉, indiquent une étymologie sémitique assez évidente, de la racine *hyy, “vivre” (/hayyu(m)/...).”¹⁵⁰ W. G. Lambert however calls ’à-u₉ a declined form of Ea that seems to be unique: “It can be argued that É should always be read ’à at Ebla, but that ignores the fact that the orthography of names may have been fixed elsewhere.”¹⁵¹ The writing è-a is attested in the late Akkad period,¹⁵² and Ur III

¹⁴³ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 20.

¹⁴⁵ E. Laroche, *JAOS* 88 (1968), p. 148, 8: Ey-d = Eya-da. Cf. J.-M. Durand, *N.A.B.U.* 1989/4, pp. 83-84.

¹⁴⁶ J. M. Roberts, op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79: “The assimilation was precipitated by the need to find a masculine counterpart to Ay(y)a, the wife of the Akkadian sun god Šamaš, since the West Semitic Šapšu was a goddess, and therefore needed a husband, not wife, but the choice of É-a was clearly more dependant on the similarity between his name and Ay(y)a than on any resemblance in essential nature.” Cf. J. Nougayrol, *Ugaritica* 5 (1968), p. 248: 137 IVa 19: ^dA-A: e-ja-an: ku-šar-ru; E. Laroche, *Ugaritica* 5 (1968), p. 520 and 525; H. D. Galter, *DDD* (1999), p. 126.

¹⁴⁸ *ESP* p. 20, and pp. 79-80, note 116.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80, and note 116.

¹⁵⁰ F. Pomponio – P. Xella, *AOAT* 245, p. 168. Cf. H.-P. Müller, *Fs. Dietrich* (2002), pp. 505-507; M. Dietrich – O. Loretz, *UF* 31 (2000), pp. 168-170; H. D. Galter, *DDD* (1999), p. 125; C. H. Gordon, *Eblaïtica* 2 (1990), p. 145; G. Conti, *QuSem* 17 (1990), p. 193; B. Kienast, *Ebla 1975-1985* (1987), p. 37; C. H. Gordon, *Eblaïtica* 1 (1987), pp. 19-20; E. Arcari, *OrNS* 53 (1984), p. 443; M. Krebernik, *ZA* 73 (1983), p. 31. Cf. J.-M. Durand in *Annuaire de l’École Pratique des Hautes Études IVe Section (1976-77)* p. 173, note b apud D. Charpin, *Clergé*, p. 352 note 2 summarises: “il y a toutes chances pour que é-a se soit prononcé hay-a, sur le modèle de é-gal donnant haykal en hébreu. À Mari, Hayyâ est bien attesté sous les graphies ha-ya et ha-yâ. Un texte donne de plus pour un nom propre une équivalence a-ya pour é-a. Il est donc possible que les trois graphies soient à ramener à l’unité de ha-ya, a-ya et é-a (a-ya étant d’ailleurs une des graphies de é-a dans le domaine Syro-hittite du milieu du IIe millénaire.”

¹⁵¹ *Bilinguismo* (1984), p. 399.

¹⁵² Cf. W. von Soden, *ZA* 66 (1976), p. 137 who questions the correctness of À’-a for the writing É-a, because also È-a, E-a, and I-a in Old-Assyrian are used as parallel forms.

personal names include, for example, *i-ti-ne-a* and *na-ra-me-a* what might shed some doubt on the interpretation *ḥyy.¹⁵³

Taking into consideration that the divine name arises from Semitic languages, and no other convincing etymology has ever been offered, the original root *ḥyy – if not completely proved, is at least for the moment the most certain and only option for interpreting the name.

2.2.2. É-a Translated “Living”

In case of the original root *ḥyy, “to live,” a relation to the adjective ḥayy(um) is obvious, “which is used in Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic to describe spring fed or running water.”¹⁵⁴ H. D. Galter explains: “Die Form *hajja würde dann einem altsemitischen Status absolutus nach dem Muster pars (< pāris) + a entsprechen,” meaning “der Lebende”¹⁵⁵ which would be unusual for a divine name. However, the final -a instead of the expected nominative -u, which poses some problems, can be explained by the parallels from the Old-Semitic divine names such as Anda, Ab(b)a, Erra, Mama, etc.¹⁵⁶ A better and convincing explanation is given by B. Kienast, who relates the element -ā to an archaic *status determinatus* possibly present in pre Old-Akkadian language in the middle of the third millennium.¹⁵⁷ The function of that archaic *status determinatus* should be identical or close to that of *status emphaticus* in Aramaic: as the ending -ā in case of *malkā* “the king.”¹⁵⁸ Following the interpretation of Kienast, the original meaning of the name would then not be “a Living” but “the Living one (as a deity).”

The fact that the name is also present in the early sources from Ebla might suggest his North-West Semitic origins “appartenant très probablement au vieux fond de la

¹⁵³ J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 20, and p. 79, note 111.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 80, note 117. Cf. *CT* 24: 14, 48: (d).na-aq-bu IDIM = É-a. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 11.

¹⁵⁵ *Ea/Enki*, p. 5. The form pāris + a is not a regular form of *status absolutus* and comes from the feminine.

¹⁵⁶ J. M. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Then the name would be a “Lallname” as H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 6 explains.

¹⁵⁷ *Ebla 1975-1985* (1987), p. 39-46. Cf. p. 39: “Das morpheme -ā bezeichnet hier also keinen Kasus, es hat vielmehr determinierende Funktion und scheint somit in einer gewissen Konkurrenz zum status rectus auf -u(m) zu stehen.” (“Abbā ist nicht ‘(irgend)ein Vater’ sondern ‘der (eine) Vater (als Gottheit).’”)

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

tradition religieuse syrienne.”¹⁵⁹ If to consider the root *ḥyy correct in case of Ea, then it seems to refer to the West-Semitic origins of the name since in Akkadian the root denoting “to live,” “alive” is *blt – distinct from its western equivalent.¹⁶⁰ A possible Western Semitic origin of the name, however, does not prove that the god behind the name Ea has to be West-Semitic.

2.2.3. Pre-Sumerian Origins of Ea

However, the Semitic etymology represented in the possible root *ḥyy cannot be proved with complete certainty based only on few textual examples, “and likewise the view that Ea can only be West Semitic.”¹⁶¹ An intriguing idea is proposed by S. N. Kramer who based on the probability that the names of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, *idiglat* and *buranum*, as well as the names of Sumer’s most important urban centres might be of “Ubaidian” origins, concludes that the name Ea might also be “another crucial word which may turn out to be Ubaidian.”¹⁶² Further, he establishes a theory according to which the Ubaidians were those who might have brought the water cult to the Indus Valley civilisations and “Ea could be the name of the god about whom it centred, and it would not be too surprising to find the name in one or another of the Indus seals.”¹⁶³ Kramer’s theory about the “Ubaidians” who moved to the Indus Valley and brought the water cult with them can not be justified on any serious grounds. Nevertheless, it opens some new perspectives for understanding the possibilities concerning the movements of theological ideas from one territory to another. Since the first records about the deity Ea in Sumero-Akkadian territory are at least contemporary to the oldest records found from the West-Semitic Ebla area, it is not impossible to imagine that the Semites actually adopted the deity Ea from the Ubaid or unknown national groups. The “movement” of the water-deity is not limited to only one direction from the western territories to the East. Springs and rivers are usually considered sacred in most of the ancient or archaic religions.¹⁶⁴ To conclude

¹⁵⁹ Fr. Pomponio – P. Xella, *AOAT* 245, p.169.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. C. H. Gordon, *Eblaïtica* 1 (1987), p. 20.

¹⁶¹ W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 52 (1989), p. 116.

¹⁶² S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer* (1986), p. 200.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 202. As concluded by Kramer himself, “all this is theory and hypothesis.”

¹⁶⁴ Although divine figures related to rivers and springs seem to be in most religions only locally important – genies or spirits of the spring or the river in an area populated by a group directly involved with that certain river or spring. By an imaginative speculation, it should be then possible to argue that also Ea – representing “running water” for the Semitic peoples, was actually never a Semitic god of

based on the few textual examples from the western parts of the Near East that the deity Ea must be of western origins, even if the linguistic data seems to confirm the idea, seems highly unjustified.

As noted by S. N. Kramer, the cult of the water-deity was well established also in the Indus Valley civilisations:¹⁶⁵ Nor is it reasonable to think the Sumerians or other groups of people of the region “lacked a god for something as vital for them as water and had to borrow one.”¹⁶⁶ Probably every national or tribal group in ancient Mesopotamia had developed its own water-cult of some sort. It should be justified to conclude that the god Ea in Old-Semitic sources is a representation of a highly synchronised deity having taken many of its characteristics from other deities of the nations the Sumerians and Akkadians had contacts with, and in the same time keeping the characteristics of their own beliefs. This synchronisation inside the deity Ea is most probably complemented with the influence of Sumerian Enki. Therefore, an attempt to see behind the concept of Ea only one or two West-Semitic deities he shares some common features with, seems unproductive.

2.3. Conclusions

The divine name Enki, still most often translated “Lord of the Earth” in contemporary studies, poses several interpretational difficulties related to the inconvenience of the translation when put in context with the nature and characteristics of this god. In UD.GAL.NUN texts Enki often appears together with Enlil. It seems possible that the orthography of these deities in UD.GAL.NUN texts might also have something to do with relations of Enlil and Enki. That might result from a rivalry either due to their differences in nature inside the Sumerian pantheon, or from the fact that one of the deities could be a newcomer from Semitic religions. The similar name form is also used for en-ki – nin-ki deities.

overall importance. But since the Sumerian god Enki had also connections to canals and rivers and to his underworld region Abzu, the Semitic name Ea might have been attributed to the Sumerian god Enki simply as a name of a concept of the “running water.” Then the god Ea would not be a major Semitic (or West-Semitic) god who was “synchronised” with the Sumerian Enki in the third millennium, but only a Semitic name or word given to designate the Sumerian god of high importance in Mesopotamia – Enki.

¹⁶⁵ S. N. Kramer, *In the World of Sumer* (1986), pp. 182-204.

¹⁶⁶ Th. Jacobsen, *Fs. Talmon* (1992), p. 415.

S. N. Kramer or Th. Jacobsen interpreted the name “Lord of the Earth.” They both concluded that the name ^den-ki was not an original name of the deity but an epithet given to the god by later theological speculation. The main reason for such a conclusion was the consideration that the name “Lord of the Earth” does not correspond directly to the functions of Enki. Th. Jacobsen found a solution to the problem by claiming that Enki is the power in water giving shapes to the clay (i.e. Earth). S. N. Kramer in turn believed that Eridu oriented theologians and priests gave the name “Lord of the Earth” to the god in their attempt to secure Enki’s position as the leading deity alongside Enlil.

E. Sollberger and W. G. Lambert took a different position in interpreting the name Enki, and both determined that the last morpheme of the name ki(g) had a different meaning than “earth.” E. Sollberger translated the name as “Lord Benevolence.” This might well fit into the larger context of Sumerian and Semitic beliefs. Also the god El, possibly equated with Enki in sources from Mari, was titled as being “god-willing.” The element ki(g) in the name of Nin-MAR.KI also reveals similarities with the possible ki(g) of Enki.

The etymology of the name Enki remains unclear. “Lord of the Earth” is still widely used in lack of any better convincing etymology, although “Lord Benevolence” also fits the context. Origination from an unknown Pre-Sumerian language and religion might also be an option.

In Old-Semitic personal names, Ea is alongside Ištar, Šamaš and Su’en the most often used,¹⁶⁷ and the meaning of the root *ḥyy can be explained based on Semitic vocabulary. All this leads to the conclusion, that behind the name Ea stands an ancient Semitic deity closely associated with water.¹⁶⁸ The translation “Living-one” seems to be the only option for reasonable interpretation. Possibility of Sumerian origins or then secondary scribal popular etymology for the name is unjustified.

¹⁶⁷ J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 57-58; H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁸ J. M. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 58: “his popularity could reflect the concern of semi-nomadic herdsmen to find water for their animals.”

The suggestion of S. N. Kramer claiming that Ea is an Ubaidian name makes it clear how hypothetical the nature of all the theories attempting to interpret the name can be. Almost every statement made concerning the etymologies is actually only a surmise. One estimate or opinion leads to another guess that in turn produces several more. Assuming that even one guess in a row of them turns out to be mistaken, the final result as well must be defective. However, even if the Semitic origins of the name or its translation based on the root *ḥyy are not certain, the possibility of mistake does not seem great. The assumption that Ea attested in Old-Semitic texts has to be West-Semitic seems doubtful; even if the name form É-a comes from that linguistic area, it does not make the god behind that name attested in Sumerian-Akkadian sources a West-Semitic god.

Enki and Ea were synchronised with all the probability already during or before the Early-Dynastic era, and before the synchronisation of these two gods they both were synchronised with other similar divinities of the region. They both had to have influences from unimaginable number of different national groups and religions. Therefore, Sumerian Enki and Semitic Ea can not be seen as denoting a divine concept from a certain exclusive area or linguistic group. Rather they are concepts in continuous development and change and the main core of their nature is represented in some way or another in every religion of wider Near East and bordering regions.

CHAPTER 3

3. Enki in Old-Sumerian Sources

The aim of the following chapter is to present the most important texts from the Early-Dynastic period mentioning the god Enki, so that it would be possible to offer a summary of the concept of the divine figure based on the earliest written sources available to this date. No texts from the later periods will be taken into consideration when making conclusions about Enki in these early periods of written records in Mesopotamia, although references to later texts are made when relevant. That does not mean that by such a methodology it is claimed that characteristics of the deity Enki present in later texts could not have been existing already in the middle of the third millennium. It is reasonable enough to believe that large part of the mythological body composed during the Ur III or Old-Babylonian periods had its predecessor already in Early-Dynastic literature or popular belief. However, in lack of contemporary evidence, no conclusions will be drawn – leaving space to the possibility that a certain characteristic could have been in existence.

Enki figures in several of Old-Sumerian royal inscriptions, also a number of Old-Sumerian literary sources can be taken into consideration showing Enki already in larger mythological context. Royal inscriptions of Ur-Nanše, Enanatum, Eanatum I, Enmetena, Urukagina, Elili and Lugalzagesi mention Enki in different aspects. Besides the royal inscriptions, a variety of different categories of Old-Sumerian texts give information about Enki, such as Sumerian incantations from Ebla,¹⁶⁹ literary and lexical texts from Abū Šalābīkh, Fāra, and other locations.

3.1. Enki Related to Abzu and Eridu

“The Stele of the Vultures” describing the victory of Lagaš over their Umma neighbours in a long lasting border conflict between these states contains an oath of obedience demanded from the loosing Umma side to the victorious state of Enanatum’s Lagaš, the Son of Akurgal. The first oath is given by the life of Enlil,

¹⁶⁹ W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 1: Although composed in Ebla, the incantations represent Sumerian textual tradition and religious ideas.

then Ninḥursaġ, Enki, Su'en, Utu and Ninki. The oath¹⁷⁰ by the life of Enki describes him as the king of Abzu:

sa^{sa}suš-gal / ^den-ki / lugal abzu-ka¹⁷¹

(by the) great net¹⁷² / of Enki / king of Abzu

zi ^den-ki / lugal abzu-ka¹⁷³

(by the) life of Enki / king of the Abzu

Elili, the king of Ur, titles Enki “king of Eridu” and confirms having built his Abzu:

^den-ki / lugal / eridu^{ki}-ra / é-li-li / lugal-ur^{ki}-ma-ke₄ / abzu-ni / mu-na-dù¹⁷⁴

Enki / to the king / of Eridu / Elili / the king of Ur / his Abzu / has built.

Enmetena claims having built a temple for Enki in Pasir,¹⁷⁵ and É-Engur for Nanše in Zulum,¹⁷⁶ meaning that É-Engur was not exclusively the temple of Enki, and confirms the close relation that must have existed between Nanše and Enki during Early-Dynastic periods:¹⁷⁷

^den-ki / lugal eridu^{ki}-ra / abzu pa₅-sír-ra / mu-na-dù¹⁷⁸

for Enki / the king of Eridu / Abzu of Pasir / has built

^dnanše / é-engur-ra zú-lum-ma / mu-na-dù¹⁷⁹

for Nanše / É-Engur of Zulum / has built

¹⁷⁰ Ean. 1: xviii 23-xix 34.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.: xviii 24-26.

¹⁷² The “great net” here is not an attribute of Enki but of all the deities mentioned.

¹⁷³ Ean. 1: xvii 33-34.

¹⁷⁴ Elili 1: 1-7.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. G. Selz, *UGASL*, p. 121 for the city Pasira and offerings to Enki.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Å. Sjöberg, *PSD 1 A/II* (1994), p. 189, 1.7. for the mentions of other deities than Enki in connection with Abzu.

¹⁷⁷ V. E. Crawford, *JCS* 29 (1977), p. 198: AnLag. 25 mentions Nanše and Enki together. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 127.

¹⁷⁸ Ent. 1: ii 9-12 = Ent. 33: i 4-7 = Ent. 23: 34-36.

¹⁷⁹ Ent. 1: ii 6-8 = Ent. 33: i 1-3 = Ent. 23: 14-16. Cf. Ukg. 16: vi 6-8.

The Zame Hymns mention Enki and his temple Abzu. Enki is called Nudimmud,¹⁸⁰ a later epithet of Enki possibly referring to his role as a form-giver and engenderer. ^dnu-dím-mud can be interpreted containing a nominal prefix nu-, a verbal element dí m and mud, possible to translate “to engender.”¹⁸¹ D. O. Edzard interprets the whole name “der mit Erschaffen (und) Erzeugen zu tun hat,” and “der erschafft (und) erzeugt.”¹⁸² It is not clear if the title Nudimmud had to have a similar meaning during the Old-Sumerian period. The name is written ^den-nu-de₄-mud in the Zame Hymns and for example GAL-nu-te-me-mud¹⁸³ is attested in another Abū Šalābīkh source.¹⁸⁴ Therefore the connection of the name with the verb dí m might be a later etymological speculation that does not represent the original meaning of the name.

Abzu ki kur-gal men-nun-an-ki ^den-nu-de₄-mud zà-me¹⁸⁵

Abzu, place that is a big mountain, princely crown of the heaven and earth. To the lord Nudimmud, (give) praise!

“The Barton Cylinder” has a reference to Enki and Abzu in an unclear context. There Enlil, Inanna, and Enki are said to express anger towards their own sanctuaries or cities:

^den-ki-ra abzu-šè / gig-šè mu-ḡar-ḡar¹⁸⁶

to Enki toward Abzu / caused to pile up troubles¹⁸⁷

3.2. Enki Related to ḡestú

The quality most often given to a king by Enki starting from the Early-Dynastic royal inscriptions is ḡestú. The word is used to denote capability to receive through the ears,

¹⁸⁰ Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 13-14.

¹⁸¹ D. O. Edzard, *ZA* 55 (1963), p. 103 concludes that in the divine epithet Nudimmud, it is the only known example where the nominal nu- is related with a verb; in the case of Nudimmud, with two verbs dí m and mud.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ *OIP* 99: 116, x 21.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. A. Cavigneaux – M. Krebernik, *RIA* 9 (1998-2001), p. 607; M. Krebernik, *OBO* 160/1 (1998), p. 271.

¹⁸⁵ Zame Hymns: 30-32.

¹⁸⁶ Barton Cylinder: iv 8-9 = vi 3-4.

¹⁸⁷ B. Alster – A. Westenholz, *ASJ* 16 (1994), p. 27 and commentary p. 34: “He caused Enki to feel bitterness toward Abzu.” Cf. Å. Sjöberg, *PSD* 1 A/II (1994), p. 185: “For Enki, for the abzu, (...) stored (?) wheat.”

practical skill, understanding, and cleverness.¹⁸⁸ This feature is repeated in relation to Enki throughout the history of Sumerian texts. By the simplest translation *ġestú* means “ear” in Sumerian. Connecting “wisdom” and “understanding” with the ear gives an indication of the auditory nature of the ancient Mesopotamian culture. The human ear was considered as the seat of intelligence.¹⁸⁹ In the same sense the Akkadian *uznu*, “ear,” “wisdom” was used. In lexical lists also *ħassu* “intelligent” and *mūdû* “knowing” are equated with Sumerian logograms *gašam* (NUN.ME.TAG, “skilled in crafts”) and *ġestú* (GIŠ.TÚG.PI).¹⁹⁰ In the following textual examples the word will be translated as “understanding,” “knowledge,” and not “wisdom,” the latter having too much in common with the modern understanding of philosophical or religious learning and knowledge not present in Ancient Near East in the same sense:

*ġestú šúm-ma d'en-ki*¹⁹¹

(to Eannatum) knowledge has Enki given

3.3. Urukagina 4, Ur-Nanše 49, and the Reeds of Enki

In Ukg. 4 the god Enki is associated in a way unclear with reeds. The text known as the “Reforms of Urukagina,” glorifying the so-called reforms he had undertaken to ease the life of his citizens, fixes the amount of tax for a person who had to bring a man to the “reeds of Enki:”

*gi d'en-ki-ka-ka / lú ù-túm / kas-ni 7 dug / ninda 420-nam*¹⁹²

(when) to the reeds of Enki / brought a man / his beer was 7 jars / bread was 420

The reeds of Enki could denote a place name, a burial place outside the city.¹⁹³ The passage about the reeds of Enki is preceded by a text explaining the costs of bringing

¹⁸⁸ H. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, pp. 95-99.

¹⁸⁹ S. Denning-Bolle, *Wisdom in Akkadian Literature* (1992), p. 36.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38. In turn NUN.ME is equated with *apkallu* in some lexical lists (*Ibid.*, p. 36). *Abgal* probably was a profession in the third millennium and in later times “refers to a mythological sage at the court of Enki” (*Ibid.*, p. 53, and note 94).

¹⁹¹ Ean.1: rev. v 51-52. For other occurrences: Ean. 2: ii 6-7; Ean. 3: ii 9-10; Ean. 4: ii 7-8; En. I. 33: ii 2-3; Ent 28 = 29: v 24-25 = vi 5-6; Ent. 42: ii 5-6; Luzag. 3: ii 3-4.

¹⁹² Ukg. 4: vi 15-18 = Ukg. 5: vi 6-9.

¹⁹³ G. Pettinato, *OA* 18 (1979), p. 115: “il luogo cioè di sepoltura degli abitanti di Lagaš.”

a dead person to the cemetery.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, the tax collected for burying a dead person is 7 jars of beer and 420 breads. Therefore, the place called the “reeds of Enki” could be an alternative burial place.¹⁹⁵ Another possibility would be to understand the “reeds of Enki” as a place or territory “an dem ein Beschwörungsritual für einen Kranken vollzogen wurde.”¹⁹⁶ It is not excluded that the person should actually be brought to a temple for medical or magical procedures. P. Steinkeller relates the term *gi^den-ki* with the name of Enegi, the centre of Ninazu’s cult and the centre of the cult of the dead in Sumer, usually written Enegi_x (EN.DÍM.GIG) in third millennium sources.¹⁹⁷ The name possibly occurs as *ki-en-gi₄* in a document dating from the second year of Urukagina, not referring to the city of Enegi but rather denoting the necropolis of Lagaš itself.¹⁹⁸ Steinkeller hypothesises “that the mysterious *gi^dEn-ki*, ‘reed of Enki,’ which designates the locus of elaborate interments in the ‘Urukagina Reforms,’ is a pun on the name Enegi, too, and that, in this context, it likewise denotes the necropolis of Lagash.”¹⁹⁹

The text Ur-Nanše 49 written on a diorite plaque describes one of the building projects of Ur-Nanše and is therefore classified as a royal inscription. The first three columns where Enki as well as the Enki-Nunki deities are mentioned contain “incantation-like material in praise of the reed.”²⁰⁰ The concluding part, however, is a regular building inscription where it is informed that Ur-Nanše has built a temple in Ĝirsu. This composition is unique in terms of the structure of the text. The incantation part might stand for insuring the “efficacy of reeds used in a ground breaking ceremony”²⁰¹ or it might well be explained that the whole text is a scribal exercise.²⁰² A connection between the “reeds of Enki” and the shrine of Ĝirsu (*èš-ĝír-sú*) in Ur-Nanše 49 has been proposed.²⁰³ The “noble reed” could be a metaphor for the temple *èš-ĝír-sú*²⁰⁴ Ur-Nanše is going to build. Many aspects of the text “which has been the

¹⁹⁴ Ukg, 4, vi 4-6 = 5, v 24-26.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. S. N. Kramer, *The Sumerians* (1963), p. 317: “He who brought a citizen to rest among the reeds of Enki.”

¹⁹⁶ J. Bauer apud H. Steible, *FAOS 5/ II*, p. 148.

¹⁹⁷ P. Steinkeller, *JAOS* 115 (1995), p. 542.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 542-543.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ G. Cunningham, *StPohl 17*, p. 6.

²⁰¹ J. C. Cooper, *RA* 74 (1980), p. 104.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ H. Steible, *FAOS 5/II*, p. 148.

²⁰⁴ H. Steible, *FAOS 5/I*, p. 111, v 1.

object of many ludicrous interpretations”²⁰⁵ remain unclear. Following is an attempt of a translation of the first part of the inscription where Enki is mentioned:²⁰⁶

i	gi kù	Pure reed!
	gi ġeš-gi engur	Reed of the canebrake of Engur! ²⁰⁷
	gi pa-zu ₅	Reed, your top (arms)
	su ₄ -su ₄	are growing. ²⁰⁸
	úr-zu ₅	Your root ²⁰⁹
ii	^d en-ki	Enki
	ki u-ġál	(in) the earth has placed. ²¹⁰
	pa-zu ₅	Your top
	u ₄ šùd mu-rá	when (I) bless, ²¹¹
	sun ₄ -zu ₅	your beard
	za-ġin	(is) lapis-lazuli,
	gi kur.mùš túm	brought from the mountain crests. ²¹²
	gi en-ki nun-ki	Reed, Enki and Nunki gods
	du ₁₀ hé-ġá-ġá	may (they) make good (for you) ²¹³ .
iii	^d en-ki	Enki,
	éš-bar-kíġ	the decision / prognostics
	hé-e	let speak out ! ²¹⁴
	ŠEŠ.IB K[Ù]. ṚGĪ	(The pure corner upright (?)) ²¹⁵
	zà-me-bi	its praise.

²⁰⁵ M. Civil, *JNES* 26 (1967), p. 211: the text “is nothing but an incantation about reeds.”

²⁰⁶ Urn 49: i 1-iii 7.

²⁰⁷ Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 5 (1946), pp. 139-140, and note 21: “Here, accordingly, the engur is the subterranean waters as they come to the surface in the marshes.”

²⁰⁸ H. Steible, *FAOS* 5/II, p. 13: “rot-braun“; cf. M.Civil, *JNES* 26 (1976), p. 211, note 33.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Th Jacobsen, *JNES* 2 (1943), p 118: pa-zus and úr-zus are in opposition as “thy top” and “thy root.”

²¹⁰ G. Cunningham, *StPohl* 17, p. 29: “had set in the underworld”. Cf. Th Jacobsen, *JNES* 2 (1943), p 118: “thy root being at one place with Enki.”

²¹¹ G. Cunningham, loc. cit.: ud-sudx (ŠÙD) mu-DU: “he made you bear perpetually.” Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 2 (1943), p 118: “When I bring a prayer to thy top.”

²¹² Interpretation of Th. Jacobsen *OrNS* 54 (1985), p. 67-68. H. Steible, *FAOS* 5/I, p. 111: “Rohr (dein) Antlitz reicht (bis) ins Fremdland.“

²¹³ Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *OrNS* 54 (1985), p. 67 and 69 for lines ii 8-9: gi ki.en(-na) ki.nun(-na-ka) / dùġ hé-ġá-ġá(-an) “may you be settling down, / O reed in a lord’s place, a prince’s place!”

²¹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 70 for the interpretation.

²¹⁵ Following the translation and interpretation (urì-ib kù-ge) of Th. Jacobsen, *OrNS* 54 (1985), p. 67 and 70-71, seeming more probable than J. S. Cooper, *Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Inscriptions I: Pre-Sargonic Inscriptions* (1986), p. 32: The ... , O reed, its praises, Enki has cast his (magic) hoop.”

^den-ki ġeš-bu₁₀
še-šub

Enki the circle
has cast.²¹⁶

It is difficult to see a direct connection between Enki and the “noble reed”²¹⁷ in Urn. 49 since the reed could be a metaphor for the temple suggesting “that the building for incantatory purposes was seen under the image of a reed structure.”²¹⁸ According to Th. Jacobsen “The notion underlying the passage appears to be that the reed, rooted in the waters of the subsoil, Enki’s abode, is able to communicate a prayer addressed to its top to the god Enki at its root below.”²¹⁹ It cannot be excluded that the author of the composition actually considered possible that the top of a reed could carry a prayer to Enki in the watery deep, but the text is still too difficult to understand in order to give clear interpretations. What also might seem possible is that Enki is here probably seen as an organiser of temple building – he gives the order for building it, and the process is described as Enki planting the root of the reed into the ground.²²⁰ Interesting is the occurrence of Enki-Ninki deities in context with Enki. In this case, they are asked to be favorable to the reed possibly symbolising the temple. As for the lines iii 6-7, it would be reasonable to suggest that Enki somehow explains (or then builds) a structure of the temple. A similar passage is present in Gudea Cylinder A, xvii 17 where Enki puts ġeš^{hur} “the plan” of the temple in order. “The circle” can also be understood as a place for symbolic separation from the temporal world – domain in which human contact with divine is possible²²¹ – then maybe denoting a place, where Enki gives his divine instructions for the temple for its builders.

²¹⁶ Cf. M.-L. Thomsen, *Mesopotamia 10*, p. 207: ^dEn.ki ġeš^BÙLUG še-šub “...”; and translation of M. Civil in *JNES* 26 (1976): “Enki will put you in a (magic) circle.” H. Steible, *FAOS* 5/I, p. 111: “...hat Enki für wahr...geworfen!”

²¹⁷ G. Cunningham, *StPohl 17*, p. 29 underlines the reed’s ability to purify by the examples of later incantations.

²¹⁸ Th. Jacobsen, *OrNS* 54 (1985), p. 66.

²¹⁹ Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 2 (1943), p. 118.

²²⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, where Jacobsen offers a parallel from Gudea Cylinder A: xxii 11-13: The temple É-Ninnu also consults with the watery deep and Enki.

²²¹ G. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

3.4. Enki-Ninki Deities and the God Enki in Old-Sumerian Sources

In some textual examples, Enki-Ninki deities seem to be in a certain way related to Enki and his city Eridu and Abzu.²²² Adding to this the fact that they share a similar name form with the deity Enki studied here, a short overview of the concepts of Enki-Ninki will be presented here.

As was defined by Th. Jacobsen, it seems possible that Enki-Ninki deities have something to do with a sort of a chthonic or underworld cult: “This deity, whose name denotes ‘Lord Earth’ (en-ki) is a chthonic deity distinct from the god of the fresh waters Enki, whose name denotes ‘Lord (i.e., productive manager) of the earth’ (en-ki (.ak)).”²²³ The explanation seems to be quite possible in light of two Sumerian incantations from Ebla where roots of a Tamarisk tree are equated with Enki and Ninki:

ḡeš-šinig ḡeš-gi ḡeš-an / úr-pi ki-šè / ^den-ki ^dnin-ki / pa-pi-ta / an gudu₄-nun²²⁴

Tamarisk, unique tree, a tree of heaven / its roots in the earth / are Enki and Ninki / from its branches / An, the priest (?)²²⁵

Based on the example above, it can be imagined that Enki-Ninki are seen here as residing inside the earth just as the roots of a tree. The function of these deities in several mythological texts seems to be giving birth to major deities of the present world, especially being the ancestors of Enlil.²²⁶ This feature of the Enki-Ninki deities seems to be described on a small piece of an Early-Dynastic tablet from Ĝirsu first analysed by J. van Dijk in his article “Le motif cosmique dans la pensée

²²² A. Cavigneaux – F. N. H. Al-Rawi, *ZA* 83 (1993), p. 179, line 26, *La grande texte contre Namtar*. Cf. commentary on p. 188: “le fait qu’ils soient des ad-da eridu-ga-ke₄-ne ‘anciens d’Eridu’, et qu’ils soient familiers avec Enki est assez troublant; cela suggère un lien particulier de ces dieux avec Enki, même si ce lien n’est pas l’étymologie.”

²²³ *Treasures*, p. 252, note 173. Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 5 (1946), pp. 138-139: “the powers manifest in Earth viewed in their male and female aspects as ^dEn-ki, ‘The earth lord,’ and ^dNin-ki, ‘The earth lady.’”

²²⁴ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 96-97, no. 19: i 4 – ii 4 = G. Pettinato, *OA* 28 (1979), p. 339, text a: i 4 – ii 4. Cf. F. Pomponio – P. Xella, *AOAT* 245 (1997), p. 166. For Enki-Ninki equated with the roots of tamarisk, cf. G. Pettinato, *op. cit.*, p. 340 text b.

²²⁵ Cf. G. Pettinato, *op. cit.* p. 340, who interprets ^dgúda-nun.

²²⁶ F. Wiggermann, *NatPhen* (1992), p. 282.

sumérienne.”²²⁷ Action seems to take place immediately before or after the separation of heaven and earth and “avant la théogonie et avant l’existence des ‘luminaria magna’, des corps célestes, et de la végétation.”²²⁸ The text does not concern the deity Enki as J. van Dijk suggests in his translation²²⁹ but “rather the homophonous group of Enkis and Ninkis, primordial gods who reappear in later traditions as the first in a series of ancestors of Enlil and eventually also of An.”²³⁰

an-ki téš-ba SIG₄ an-gi₄-gi₄ ²³¹

u₄-ba en-ki nun-ki nu-sig₇

^den-líl nu-til

^dnin-líl nu-til

An and Ki in union, they are shouting²³²

On that day, Enki-Nunki are not alive (yet)

Enlil is not alive (yet)

The text obviously describes the cosmic marriage between the primordial concepts of male An and female Ki – heaven and earth. The existence of Enkis and Nunkis seems to be coming directly from the union of An and Ki. They are mentioned before Enlil and Ninlil and so are corresponding to their role as primordial ancestors of Enlil.²³³ J. van Dijk confused the Enki and Nunki with Enki and Eridu²³⁴ because NUN^{ki} can also be translated as Eridu, Enki’s city. However, since the verb nu-sig₇ is plural and the use of nun instead of nin in the name form nin-ki is also attested in other textual examples,²³⁵ the possibility of translating “Enki and Eridu” seems highly improbable.

²²⁷ *AcOr* 28 (1965), pp. 39-44.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp 39-40.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²³⁰ P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 239.

²³¹ Ukg. 15: ii 1-4.

²³² M.-L. Thomsen, *Mesopotamia 10*, translates “heaven and earth are shouting together” and adds that the translation is uncertain. J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965), p. 40 translates “An et Ki échangeaient des cris, l’un avec l’autre.” P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 240, note 4: “This is, of course, but a metaphor for sexual union.”

²³³ W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 3 (1971), p. 469.

²³⁴ J. van Dijk in *AcOr* 28 (1965), p. 40 has “Enki (et) Eridu n’avaient pas commence à exister.” The plural form of the verb (ti.l) could then mean either “Enki and Eridu” or “Enkis (pl.) in Eridu.” Cf. P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 239.

²³⁵ Å. Sjöberg, *Gs. Jacobsen* (2002), p. 237, note 14; B. Alster, *RA* 64 (1970), p. 190.

Similar mentions of Enki-Ninki before Enlil and Ninlil are well attested also from god lists from Abū Ṣalābīkh and Fāra,²³⁶ followed then by several en and nin pairs. It is interesting to notice, that the Early-Dynastic god lists (SF 23 and OIP 99: 82) seem not to refer to Enki-Ninki as ancestors of Enlil and Ninlil after the seven pairs of en and nin primordial gods - they are listed before Enlil and Ninlil, but all the other en and nin pairs are following them. This is not the case in later Old-Babylonian lists (TCL XV and CT XXIV) where Enki and Ninki start the list, but Enlil is mentioned after the en and nin pairs designated as his ancestors. This might suggest that Enki mentioned in the beginning of the lists might well be the same Enki present in Fāra list SF 1: an, ^den-líl, ^dinanna, ^den-ki, ^dnanna, ^dutu.²³⁷ However, mythological UD.GAL.NUN texts from Abū Ṣalābīkh and Fāra seem to deny this possibility, because both divine concepts of Enki – Ninki and Enki(g) occur independently in the same passage of the text:

^d[GA]L.UNU ^{ud}nin.ki / ^d[GA]L.UNU a.AMA²³⁸

GAL.ki nin.ki / ^{ud}GAL.UNU a.tu²³⁹

Enki and Ninki bore Enki(g)²⁴⁰

The textual example makes it clear that Enki and Ninki are responsible for giving birth to the deity Enki designated as king of Eridu and Abzu in later royal inscriptions. The whole narrative of the text might describe how Enki and Ninki gave birth to seven pairs of primordial deities, and also to Enlil, Enki, Su'en, and other major deities of the Sumerian pantheon.²⁴¹

It should be concluded, that in the earliest Sumerian mythology, Enki and Nunki deities were seen as a primordial pair who later gave birth to all the major divine

²³⁶ Cf. J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965), p. 6ff.

²³⁷ Cf. 3.6.1. of the current study for the Early-Dynastic god-lists. Cf. P. Espak, *Verbum Habet Sakala 2004: Täienduskõide* (2005), p. 49. When the first pair Enki and Ninki are usually considered not to be related to the god Enki(g), then why should the next pair Enlil and Ninlil be designating the god of Nippur, Enlil. By logical reasoning, the both pairs – Enki and Ninki, Enlil and Ninlil should either designate Enki of Eridu and Enlil of Nippur; or then both should be the so-called primordial pairs of gods. This confusion in early Sumerian mythology might refer to a deliberate scribal speculations (or “playing with names”) rather than to the “real” popular beliefs or mythology of the period.

²³⁸ *OIP* 99, 114: i 11-12.

²³⁹ *SF*: 37 i 7-8.

²⁴⁰ W. G. Lambert, *OA* 20 (1981), p. 84.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 85 and 93.

figures of the pantheon. At least according to the text Ukg 15, they are in turn a result of an intercourse between the concepts of Heaven and Earth. Whether the similar name form and close connections indicate that the two concepts might have been understood as one in earlier periods remains unanswerable.

3.5. Enki in Old-Sumerian Texts of Varied Contents

Different textual evidence exists from personal names, offering lists, mythological texts, and incantations showing Enki in contexts other than Abzu, Eridu, ġestú or reeds of Enki. Those adding a new aspect concerning Enki not categorised in previous topics, will be discussed here.

3.5.1. Mythological Texts

The relatively small number of literary texts found so far does not indicate the actual lack of oral and written traditions about Enki or other mythological narratives in Old-Sumerian times but the existence of even that small number of texts having a lot in common with the later Old-Babylonian tradition only confirms that the tradition of Sumerian literature was well established already in the middle of the third millennium.²⁴² Besides Enlil, who according to some texts separated the sky from the earth, the other male deity, Enki, often appears in the early texts, “but his role is difficult to fathom.”²⁴³ In UD.GAL.NUN myths Enki clearly has an important role to play and with Enlil they are both equally represented in these texts: “There is good reason for suspecting that if we had intelligible Sumerian myths from the first half of the third millennium B.C. Enki would appear as an equal rival of Enlil.”²⁴⁴ P. Michalowski thinks the violent copulation motive of Enki and the mother-goddess, later strongly expressed in the mythological narrative “Enki and Ninġursaġ,” was already a common idea during the Early-Dynastic literature, “but unfortunately in every extant text from this time in which copulation is expressly described, the

²⁴² P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 239: “Third millennium Mesopotamian texts are filled with myth.” Primeval earth and sky were clearly thought of as male and female, different traditions about the origins of the world already existed.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ W. G. Lambert, *MARI* 4 (1985), p. 538.

passages containing the name of the male protagonist are broken away.”²⁴⁵ In the texts where Enki’s name is not broken away, it is hard to understand the role of Enki especially because of the homophonous group of Enkis and Ninkis.²⁴⁶ Motives where Enki and the mother-goddess are both active in the process of engendering are well known from the Old-Babylonian Enki myths but since the early texts do not preserve the name of Enki in relevant context; further discussion would only be hypothetical in nature. A mythological text “The Barton Cylinder” firstly mentions the sanctuary of Nippur just after the description of the cosmic marriage of An and Ki.²⁴⁷ After a break in the text, “we learn that someone, perhaps Enki, made love to the mother-goddess, Ninḫursaĝ, the sister of Enlil, and planted the seed of seven deities in her midst.”²⁴⁸

nin-gal ^den-líl / ^dnin-ḫur-saĝ-ra / ĝèš mu-ni-dug₄ / ne mu-ni-sub₅ / a maš imin / š[à]
mu-^Γna(!)-ni(!)^Γ-ru²⁴⁹

Enlil’s older sister / with Ninḫursaĝ / he had intercourse / he kissed her / the semen of seven twins / he impregnated into her womb.²⁵⁰

Although the text does not give any proof that the impregnator would be Enki, the motive described here seems to be similar enough to the intercourses conducted by Enki in the later myth “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ”²⁵¹ for suggesting the same parties acting also in the Old-Sumerian myth.

From other texts adding a new aspect about Enki during the period, one passage from Fāra texts mentions Enki in context with his two faced vizier Isimu.²⁵²

^den-ki isimu (SIG₈.PAP.NUN) ĝù dé²⁵³

Enki said to Isimu

²⁴⁵ *RAI* 43 (1996), pp. 242-243.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

²⁴⁷ J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965), pp. 36-38.

²⁴⁸ P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 240.

²⁴⁹ Barton Cylinder: ii 5-10.

²⁵⁰ Translation of B. Alster – A. Westenholz, *ASJ* 16 (1994), pp. 26-27.

²⁵¹ Cf. 6.2.1. of the current study.

²⁵² Cf. W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 5 (1976-1980), p. 179.

²⁵³ *SF*: 40 viii 4. M. Civil – R. D. Biggs, *RA* 60 (1966), p. 12.

From Tell Beydar, an Early-Dynastic fragment contains a mythological narrative about Enki, so far the only example of Sumerian Early-Dynastic literature from the Syrian Djezirah.²⁵⁴ The text does not seem to be an incantation or neither a hymnal composition and is therefore interpreted by W. Sallaberger as a mythological tale about Enki.²⁵⁵ All of the five columns of the tablet should have contained approximately 28 lines meaning that more than 20 are missing from the preserved part of every column.

i 1	Γnam-nun ¹ -ni	His princeliness,
	Γnam ¹ -nun-ni	his princeliness,
	saĝ Γnam ¹ -ma-[(x [?])]-dab ₅	the head has been overwhelmed (seized).
	Γnam ¹ -nun-ni	His princeliness,
5	[x x]-ma-[(x [?])]-Γx ¹	...
	[...]	
ii 1	su me nu-me-a	A body that does not have strength,
	sa me nu-me-a	tendons (muscles) that do not have strength.
	^d en-ki Γsu ¹ me Γnu ¹ -me-a	Enki, a body that does not have strength,
	sa me nu-me-a	tendons (muscles) that do not have strength;
5	an a-ne ba-na- Γšum ¹	above, to him was given ...
	[...]	
iii 1	^d en-ki me-lám	Enki, the splendour
	a-ne ba-i-i	has left him.
	géme-kar-ke ₄	A harlot
	ÍL-ta	from carrying (task).
	^d en-ki me- Γlám ¹	Enki, the splendour ...
	[...]	
iv 1	^d en-ki Γme-lám ¹	Enki, the splendour
	a-ne ba-i-i	has left him.
	muš-lah ₅	A snake charmer
	é-simug-ta	from the house of the smith.

²⁵⁴ W. Sallaberger, *Subartu 12* (2002), pp. 37-38.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

5	^d en-ki me-Γlám ⁷	Enki, the splendour ...
	[...]	
v 1	[...]	
	^d Γen ⁷ -[ki me-lám]	Enki, the splendour
	a-Γne ⁷ [ba]-Γi ⁷ -[i]	has left him.
	nagar [...-ta]	A carpenter ... from
5	^d en-Γki ⁷ [me-lám]	Enki, the splendour ...
	[...]	

Since less than twenty percent of the overall narrative is preserved, it is hard to describe its nature. The beginning of the text seems to underline Enki's powers describing him as nun – the prince. Then the beginning of the second column counts that power has gone away from the body and sinews of somebody, possibly Enki himself. First lines of columns iii to v state that power has gone away from Enki followed by a name of profession in a context otherwise not common for the characteristics of this profession. A harlot is described as performing the work of carrying or brick-carrying, then a snake charmer is said to be coming out from the house of a smith that might again refer to the fact that smith's house is not a suitable working place for a snake charmer.²⁵⁶ The text is not attested in any other duplicates known so far, and the preserved part does not allow concluding nothing more concerning Enki than that he is described as princely and powerful, and then again possibly having lost that power.

3.5.2. Incantations

Enki related to a *magur*-boat occurs in a Sumerian therapeutic incantation from Ebla still containing many obscurities and understanding difficulties:

^den-ki má-gur₈ / mun-ù / ^den-ki má-gur₈ / mun-da-a²⁵⁷

Enki the *magur*-boat / drives / Enki the *magur*-boat / sails²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ For possibilities of interpretation, W. Sallaberger, op. cit., pp. 40-42.

²⁵⁷ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 172-175, no. 34: xiii 3-6 = G. Pettinato, *OA* 28 (1979), p. 349, text 25: iv 3-6.

²⁵⁸ Cf. G. Pettinato, op. cit., p. 337: "Enki, sulla nave è salito, una volta che Enki sulla nave è salito."

The passage clearly describes Enki somehow travelling on his boat. A similar motive is known from later Sumerian myths, for example the beginning of the text “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld,” where Enki conducts a campaign against the Kur with his boat. The motive where Enki is sailing on board his boat in the marshlands is especially known from the myth “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ.”²⁵⁹

Two Sumerian incantations from Ebla show Enki and Abzu somehow related to snakes. The snake here could also symbolise illness or troubles coming from Enki.²⁶⁰

muš^d en-ki / KA mu-kú / [] KA²⁶¹

the snake (of?) Enki / the mouth eats / the mouth (?)²⁶²

ki muš-gi₆ / SU.AB-ša²⁶³

place, black snake / inside Abzu

The incantations are hard to interpret, except the fact that here Enki, Abzu and snake (= illness, trouble, a daemon?) occur together. The second incantation might have a reference to Enki coming out of the river Euphrates: bur-nun-ta / ^den-ki,²⁶⁴ and then having something to do with snakes, but the passage is too confusing to give any direct opinions of the content.²⁶⁵ Another Sumerian²⁶⁶ incantation from Ebla mentions Enki possibly as a causer of an illness or trouble:

^den-ki gi / šà mu-kešda / ^dnisaba mu-du₈²⁶⁷

Enki the trouble / bind in the midst / Nisaba let it loose

²⁵⁹ Cf. Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 97ff.

²⁶⁰ Cf. T. R. Kämmerer, *Fs. Kasemaa* (2003), p. 52ff. for examples of Mesopotamian gods as trouble and illness bringers.

²⁶¹ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 176-178, no. 35: xiv 10-11 = G. Pettinato, *OA 28* (1979), p. 350, no. 26: v 10 – vi 1.

²⁶² Following G. Pettinato, *op. cit.*, p. 337: “...il serpente a cui Enki 'mangia la bocca'.”

²⁶³ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 180-183, no. 36: xv 9-10 = G. Pettinato, *OA 28* (1979), p. 350, no. 27, vi 9-10.

²⁶⁴ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, p. 182: bur-nun as a syllabic variant for buranun.

²⁶⁵ G. Pettinato, *OA 28* (1979), p. 337: “Ancora una volta ritroviamo il tema del serpente associate all’Apsu e ad Enki.”

²⁶⁶ M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, p. 150: beginning of the text is Sumerian, end of the incantation in Semitic language.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-152, no. 28: iii 4-6 = G. Pettinato, *AO 28* (1979), p. 347, no. 16, iii 4-6.

The translation follows M. Krebernik who interprets *gi* as a syllabic writing for *gig* “trouble,” “illness.”²⁶⁸ G. Pettinato, however, translates *gi* to mean “reed:” “Enki il cuore della canna ha legato, Nisaba ha sciolto.”²⁶⁹ The situation where Enki himself is a causer of illness does not correspond to his later role as an advice giver to heal illnesses in the incantations of the Neo-Sumerian period.²⁷⁰

Finally a Sumerian incantation from the Sargonic period Susa compares Enki to a *kiškanû*-tree, refers to Enki’s creation in a “pure place,” and mentions Enki filling the earth with abundance:

én. 𒂗𒂗 .nu.ru ²⁷¹	é.nu.ru incantation
[lugal] ġeš-kín-gen ₇	[King], like a <i>kiškanû</i> -tree
ki sikil mú-a	who is created in a pure place.
^d en-ki ġeš-kín-gen ₇	Enki, like a <i>kiškanû</i> -tree
ki sikil mú-a	created in a pure place.
kur-ku-rá-a-ni kur ħé-ġál sud	His flood sinks the land with abundance.
ki DU.DU-ni ġissu-bi	His place of walking is its shadow
múš za-ġin-na-gen ₇	a ground of lapis lazuli just like
ab-šà-ga lá-a	in the middle of the sea stretches out.

The text itself comes from the Sargonic period and is found from Susa, but it certainly should represent an authentic Sumerian incantation tradition. At least no earlier Sumerian source has a reference to Enki being equated with “giver of abundance:” ħé-ġál.

3.5.3. Offering Lists and Personal Names

From “Nanše-offering lists” we learn that Enki (^den-ki-gi-gù-na: Enki of the Giguna sanctuary)²⁷² receives offerings during the main festival day in Niġin (NINA) after his

²⁶⁸ *Beschwörungen*, p. 151: “Enki hat das Übel im Inneren gebunden / Nisaba hat es gelöst.” Also G. Cunningham, *StPohl 17*, p. 41 sees Enki as the causer of illness.

²⁶⁹ *OA 28* (1979), p. 337.

²⁷⁰ Cf. Neo-Sumerian incantations in 5.4. of the current study.

²⁷¹ M. J. Geller, *Iraq 42* (1980), p. 24: obv. 1-10.

²⁷² G. Selz, *UGASL*, p. 120.

daughter Nanše, probably referring to Enki's theological importance.²⁷³ Enki is followed by Ninĝirsu, Nindara, Nin-MAR.KI and Nin-MUŠ₆-bar. The list clarifies some genealogical understandings about Enki's circle in Lagaš area. Enki is probably seen as father of Nanše and mentioned second. Nanše's brother Ninĝirsu follows Enki. Ninĝirsu is followed by Nindara, husband of Nanše. Then come Nanše's and Nindara's daughter Nin-MAR.KI ²⁷⁴ and her husband Nin-MUŠ₆-bar. Another offering list for Nin-MAR.KI festival²⁷⁵ shows ^dnin-MAR.KI, ^den-ki-pa₅-sír-ra, ^den-ki-ki-ĝeš-gi-gíd,²⁷⁶ and ^dnin-ĝír-su occurring together, referring to the importance and close relations those deities must have had in the pantheon of Lagaš.

One personal name relates Enki with abundance in oil and milk producing:

^den-ki ì gará sud²⁷⁷

Enki (makes) oil and cream abundant

3.6. Enki in Listings of Deities

A valuable source of information concerning the relations of the deities, their genealogy, division into pairs, and into larger groups is given by the listings of deities occurring in most cases in a certain order. Two categories of lists of deities exist: lexically or theologically ordered god lists;²⁷⁸ and listings of deities that are mentioned in a certain order inside a text other than a god list. Ch. Jean collected all the listings from the Old-Sumerian period and used them to study the earliest Sumerian pantheon.²⁷⁹ J. M. Roberts found from the similar Old-Akkadian listings that “the fixed order of the list suggests that one is dealing with a partial canonical listing of the imperial pantheon, so it will pay to examine this list in detail.”²⁸⁰ However, when studying the lists where Enki is mentioned, it should be taken into

²⁷³ G. Selz, *ASJ* 12 (1990), p. 114. The ordering of the deities should, of course, also reflect the fact that the festival is dedicated for a female deity.

²⁷⁴ A deity whose main responsibility seems to be taking care for cattle, cf. W. Sallaberger, *RIA* 9 (1998-2001), p. 468.

²⁷⁵ G. Selz, *FAOS* 15/II, p. 607, text 98.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*: “Enki vom 'Platz (des) Langrohres'.”

²⁷⁷ G. Selz, *UGASL*, p. 121: ^den-ki-i-gará¹-sù(g): “Enki lässt Fett (und) Fettmilch reichlich sein”

²⁷⁸ W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 3 (1971), p. 473.

²⁷⁹ *Religion sumérienne*, pp. 32-34.

²⁸⁰ *ESP*, p. 146.

consideration that many other listings do exist where the deity Enki is not mentioned at all, and again in several texts Enki occurs in context with only one or two deities again not mentioned in the god lists in the same context. So the information given about Enki in the following deity listings does not mirror his possible “real” position in the pantheon and popular cult or genuine relations with other deities,²⁸¹ but rather reflects the ideas of the author; in case of royal inscriptions, the political ideology of the composer of the text.²⁸²

3.6.1. Abū Ṣalābīkh and Fāra God Lists

SF 23²⁸³ list from Fāra shows seven divine pairs headed by Enki and Ninki, followed by Enlil and Ninlil, then five en and nin pairs. Similar order is followed in the Abū Ṣalābīkh²⁸⁴ list with slight variations.

SF 23: 1-22		OIP 99: 82, rev. i 1-24	
en-ki	nin-ki	^d en-ki	^d nin-ki
en-líl	nin-KID	^d en-líl	^d nin-KID
en-UḪ	nin-UḪ	^d en-UḪ	^d nin-UḪ
en-bulùg	nin-bulùg	^d en-bulùg	^d nin-bulùg
en-du ₆ -udua _x	nin-du ₆ -udua _x	^d en-udua _x (LAK 777)-x	^d nin-udua _x (LAK 777)-x
en-gukkal	nin-gukkal	^d en-gukkal	^d n[in]- ^Γ gukkal ^Γ
en-á	nin-á	^d ^Γ en-á ^Γ	^d nin- ^Γ á ^Γ
		^d en-an	^[d] nin-an
		^d nin-šubur	
tùr		^d lugal- ^Γ BU ^Γ . ^Γ NUN ^Γ . ^Γ gána ^Γ . ^Γ x ^Γ	
gírid		^d NÁM.K[IŠ]	
NI.NA		^d MÙŠ x PA (=LUḪSU _x)	
^Γ LA ^Γ .TIM		^d lugal- ^{ēēš} asal _x (TU.GAB.LIŠ)	
SAL.KID		^d amar- ^Γ utu ^Γ	
MEN			
AN.inanna			
AN.nisaba			

²⁸¹ Limits of only few chosen texts as sources for analysing the so-called canonical pantheon and drawing conclusions from them are made clear by I. Nakata, *ASJ* 1 (1979), pp. 65-67.

²⁸² G. Komoróczy, *OrNS* 45 (1976), p. 82.

²⁸³ P. Mander, *PAS*, p. 109; J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965), p. 6ff.

²⁸⁴ P. Mander, op. cit., pp. 9-10 = A. Alberti, *SEL* 2 (1985), pp. 12-13.

SF 5-6 and SF 39 VII-VIII both start with Enlil whereas the second place is held by Enki:

SF 5-6: ²⁸⁵ ^den-líl, ^d**en-ki**, ^dgibil₆, ^dnin-kin-nir, ^dsu'en, ^dama-ušumgal, ^dnísaba.

SF 39 VII-VIII:²⁸⁶ Enlil, **Enki**, Nanna, Inanna, Gibil, Ašgi, Nergal, Nisaba.

SF 1 and Abū Šalābīkh god list seem to begin with An and then followed by Enlil, Inanna or Ninlil, and Enki:

SF 1:²⁸⁷ an, ^den-líl, ^dInanna, ^d**en-ki**, ^dnanna, ^dutu, ^dAN.MEN_x, ^dBAR. MEN_x, ^dnísaba.

Abū Šalābīkh list:²⁸⁸ [AN?], [^den-líl], [^dnin-K]ID, [^d**e**n-k[i]], [^dna]n[na], ^dinanna, ^d[IN]ANNA, ^dnin-gír-su, ^dašgi.

The Zame Hymns belong to the same period as the god lists recited above,²⁸⁹ also lists deities in a certain order: ^den-líl, ^dnin-unug, ^dinanna, ^d**en-nu-te-mud**, ^dasar-lú-KAL, ^dnanna, ^dutu, ^dnin-gal, an, ^ddam-gal-nun.

Three different traditions of god list seem to exist at the same time during the composition of Abū Šalābīkh and Fāra texts. The first starts with Enki and Ninki followed by Enlil and Ninlil – altogether seven en and nin pairs. The second group has Enlil and Enki heading the list. And finally the third group starts with An followed by Enlil, then a female deity (Inanna and Ninlil), and Enki having the fourth position. Do they also reflect a different tradition in cosmology for example is difficult to answer,²⁹⁰ since “phrases used to sum up these lists offer great divergences, which suggest that not even the ancient scholars were unanimous in their understanding of these lists.”²⁹¹

²⁸⁵ M. Krebernik, *ZA* 76 (1986), p. 189: 1-7; P. Mander, *PAS*, p. 40.

²⁸⁶ P. Mander, *ibid.* Cf. SF 7: ^den-líl, ^dinanna, NUN, ^dsùd, ^dgibil, ^dlama, ^dnanna, ^dèš, ^d[š]ul?, ^dnísaba, ^diškur.

²⁸⁷ M. Krebernik, *op. cit.*, p. 168: i 1-9; P. Mander, *PAS*, p. 70.

²⁸⁸ Reconstruction of P. Mander, *op. cit.*, p. 40, 1-9 = A. Alberti, *SEL* 2 (1985), p. 7.

²⁸⁹ Cf. P. Mander, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁹⁰ For example in Hebrew Scriptures, coexistence of different parallel genealogies seems never to bother the authors and might be a result of combining different traditions and written sources into one larger work based on the wish to collect together all the existing written or oral traditions, and not on a desire to understand all the logical relations.

²⁹¹ W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 3 (1971), p. 469.

3.6.2. Listings of Deities in Old-Sumerian Royal Inscriptions

Following are the listings of deities from different royal inscriptions of Enanatum, Eanatum I, Enmetena and Lugalzagesi. When the god lists represented a tradition from Fāra and Abū Šalābīkh local pantheons, then in turn inscriptions of Enanatum and Eanatum I, Enmetena reflect the official pantheon of the state of Lagaš.²⁹²

Ean.1, xvi 14- rev. v, 36: Enlil, Ninḥursaĝ, **Enki**, Su'en, Utu, Ninki.

Ean.1, rev. v 45-vi 8: Enlil, Ninḥursaĝ, Inanna, **Enki**, Nanše, Ninĝirsu, Dumuzid-Abzu, Ḥendursaĝ, Lugal-uru.

Ean.2, i 5-ii 13: Enlil, Ninĝirsu, Nanše, Ninḥursaĝ, Inanna, **Enki**, Dumuzid-Abzu, Ḥendursaĝ, Lugal-uru.

Ean.3, i 10-ii 14 = Ean. 4, i 10-ii 9: Enlil, Ninĝirsu, Nanše, Ninḥursaĝ, Inanna, **Enki**, Dumuzid-Abzu, Ḥendursaĝ.

En. I., 33 i 5-ii 5: Enlil, Nanše, Ninĝirsu, Inanna, **Enki**, Lugal-uru.

Ent. 1, i 17-iii 7: Ninĝirsu, Lugaluru, Nanše, **Enki**, Ninḥursaĝ, Ninĝirsu, Gatumdu, Nanše, Enlil.

Ent. 23, 1-41: Ninĝirsu, Nanše, Enlil, Gatumdu, Ninmaḥ, Lugaluru, **Enki**, Ninĝirsu.

Ent. 31: Enlil, **Enki**, Nanše, Ninĝirsu, Šulutul.²⁹³

Luzag 1, i 14-32: An, Enlil, **Enki**, Utu, Su'en, Utu, Inanna, Nisaba, Ninḥursaĝ, Ningirim.

Luzag. 2, 9-15: Ninur, **Enki**, Ištaran, Enlil, Inanna.

Luzag. 3 ii, 2-5: (...) Inanna, **Enki**, Ningirim (...).

An is mentioned only in Luzag 1,²⁹⁴ in other cases Enlil usually has the first ranking. While the Ean.1 mentions the great gods of the larger Sumerian territory probably in canonical order, the other inscriptions of the ruler are mostly concerned with the local Lagašite pantheon dominated by Ninĝirsu and his sister Nanše. The order Enlil, Ninḥursaĝ, Enki, Su'en and Utu is in the Neo-Sumerian times the canonical order in Ur III texts. In four of the lists, Inanna precedes Enki. Also in earlier SF 1 and Abū Šalābīkh god lists as well as in Zame Hymns, Enki comes after Inanna or Ninlil. Nanše and Ninĝirsu, brother and sister, are mostly listed as a pair. Dumuzid-Abzu

²⁹² Cf. W. Sallaberger, *RIA* 10 (2004), pp. 300-303 for the terms "local pantheon" and "state's pantheon."

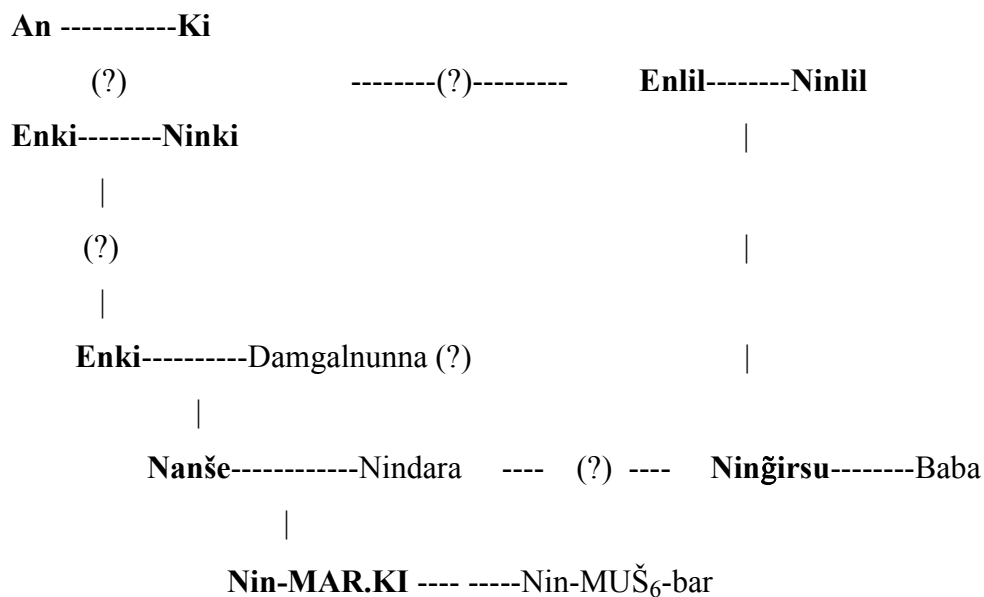
²⁹³ Ent. 28: v 23-vi 2 = Ent. 29: vi 4-14. Cf. the mention of Enlil, Enki, Ninḥursaĝ in Ent. 29: iv 35-37.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Ch. Jean, *Religion sumérienne*, p. 33.

following Enki in Ean. 2 and 3-4 is from later sources known to have been the child of Enki. Listings of deities in the inscriptions of Enmetena and Lugalzagesi mentioning Enki seem not to be systematised following the rules common for the earlier listings of Eanatum. Based on the examples of the deity-listings of Enmetena, no genealogical relations seem to be underlined concerning Enki. In turn the listing occurring in the Luzag. 1, beginning with An, seems to contain the canonical order of the later listings of the Neo-Sumerian period, except that the mother-goddess usually occurring third in most of the Ur III texts, here occupies the eighth place.

3.7. An Attempt of Genealogy of Enki Based on Old-Sumerian Sources

Although the textual evidence showing the genealogical relations between different deities in Old-Sumerian sources is in many ways confusing and the small number of texts available makes the task more complicated, some observations though allow making general conclusions. The material from the state of Lagaš dominated by Ningirsu and his sister Nanše presents only a local Lagašite concept of the relations between the gods. Mythological texts from Abū Šalābīkh and the god lists from Fāra again give views from regions far from Lagaš. The text Ukg. 15 found from Ĝirsu mentions the cosmic marriage of An and Ki followed by Enki – Ninki and Enlil – Ninlil making clear that understandings close to Abū Šalābīkh and Fāra texts were also present in Lagaš.



Text Ukg. 15 shows that An and Ki have intercourse that might result in births of Enki-Ninki deities.²⁹⁵ After them, Enlil and Ninlil are mentioned. The text does not give any evidence whether Enlil and Ninlil are direct offsprings of An and Ki or given birth by Enki and Ninki.²⁹⁶ At least one text shows Enlil separating An from Ki,²⁹⁷ and therefore it seems that two different traditions might have been in existence concerning the genealogies of deities. One relates An and Ki to the birth of all the other gods; the second tradition again places Enki and Ninki first. UD.GAL.NUN texts reveal that Enki and Ninki were responsible of giving birth to Enlil and Enki as well as to other major gods of Sumer. Enki's female counterpart is impossible to name based on Old-Sumerian sources. Damgalnunna is mentioned in god lists, but no direct relation comes forth when examining the Old-Sumerian texts. The SF 1 list has a reference to ^ddam-ga[l[?]-nun[?]] then followed by a deity ^dnun-g[al],²⁹⁸ possibly referring to Enki.²⁹⁹ His daughter seems to be Nanše and possibly then Nanše's brother Ningirsu should also be included in Enki's circle. One solution to the problem is offered by G. Selz, who explains the idea of Nanše and Ningirsu being siblings might be a later invention arising from political reasons. When the originally independent cities of Niġin (NINA) and Ĝirsu became subjects of one central political unit, the patron deity of Ĝirsu – Ningirsu was already married to Baba.³⁰⁰ The only suitable way to stress the equal importance of Nanše's NINA and Ningirsu's Ĝirsu was then to present them as brother and sister.

3.8. Conclusions

From the Old-Sumerian royal inscriptions, only few characteristics of Enki can be established with certainty. Enki is associated with Eridu and called its king; Enki is associated with Abzu and called its king. Several kings have built temples for Enki

²⁹⁵ Earliest evidence of a cult of the sky-god An in Lagaš comes from the Akkad period, G. Selz, *ASJ* 12 (1990), p. 124 and 132, text 4.

²⁹⁶ W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 3 (1971), p. 469.

²⁹⁷ J. Krecher (*RAI* 22, 1975) apud W. G. Lambert, *BSOAS* 39 (1976), p. 431, column iii of *OIP* 99, text no. 136 and B. Alster, *ASJ* 4 (1982), p. 1: UD.GAL.NUN / an UNU-ta bad / ki an-ta bad: "Enlil / to separate heaven from earth / to separate earth from heaven."

²⁹⁸ M. Krebernik, *ZA* 76 (1986), p. 179: xi 17-18. Cf. P. Mander, *PAS*, p. 84, v: i, 16-17.

²⁹⁹ R. L. Litke, *RAGB*, p. 2, note 11.

³⁰⁰ *ASJ* 12 (1990), p. 121. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 126: "Die Frage, ob hier zwei zeitlich differierende Überlieferungsschichten vorliegen, die den Gott dem jeweils wichtigeren Götterkreis zuordneten, oder ob diese Traditionen parallel entstanden sind, lässt sich noch nicht mit Sicherheit beantworten."

outside Eridu meaning that Enki was a god whose cult had spread all over the Sumerian territory, and Abzu did not denote only one specific location in Eridu. Nanše who belongs to the circle of Enki has a temple called É-Engur, name associated with the temple of Enki. Nanše and probably also her brother Ningirsu might have been considered offsprings of Enki in the pantheon of Lagaš.

The texts reveal that the most important quality Enki can offer to a king is “understanding,” “skill,” or “knowledge” (ḡestú). Nature of that “knowledge” is not clear based on the few textual examples. In later texts, ḡestú seems to have its meaning in technical skill. The En-ki – Nin-ki deities are mentioned together with Enki in Ur-Nanše 49 and UD.GAL.NUN texts. Urukagina 15 describes them as the first creatures after the cosmic marriage of An and Ki. Based on these few textual examples, the relation of the En-ki – Nin-ki gods to Enki is difficult to figure out. It is imaginable that some sort of special connection must have been established between the two theological concepts sharing similar names. Based on the lists of gods and a passage from UD.GAL.NUN texts, it seems reasonable to conclude that En-ki and Nin-ki were somehow considered ancestors of all the later deities including Enki.

Enki is also associated with reeds, probably because the reed has its roots in the “clay of Abzu.” Th. Jacobsen summarises “Enki is the numinous inner will to form in the Deep, visualised as a gigantic ibex, the antlers of which showed above the water as reeds.”³⁰¹ As some Sumerian incantations from Ebla show, Enki might also be a bringer of illness and troubles. One text mentions his *magur*-boat; his vizier Isimu is associated with Enki in Old-Sumerian sources. The Zame Hymns call him Nudimmud. Whether the epithet refers to his qualities in creating and birth giving already in Old-Sumerian texts is uncertain, since the etymology of later Nudimmud does not have to stand in the verbs *dím* and *mud*. His powers as an abundance giver to the mankind seem to be underlined in a later Sargonic period Sumerian incantation; one personal name titles him to be a deity who increases production of oil and cream. It is reasonable to believe, that some elements of the Old-Babylonian Enki myths had their predecessors already in Early-Dynastic literature. Whether the copulation motive

³⁰¹ *Tammuz*, p. 7.

represented in the Barton Cylinder concerns also Enki, is still impossible to answer but in no way excluded.

Enki belongs to the most important gods of the Old-Sumerian pantheon, but his lower status compared to Enlil seems to be clear. When combining the evidence from Zame Hymns where Enlil's temple is mentioned first, and the god listings which in most cases are headed by Enlil, there seems to be little doubt about his supremacy over the pantheon in official cult. The nature of relations of Enlil and Enki and their origins during the periods older than recorded by written sources remains unsolvable.

CHAPTER 4

4. Enki/Ea in Old-Akkadian Sources

Except for personal names in sources from Mesopotamia proper, Enki/Ea figures only in a small number of royal inscriptions of the period, most of which reveal limited information related to him. Only one royal inscription adds a new aspect not present in previously discussed Old-Sumerian texts. Information from the third millennium Ebla on the other hand includes two Semitic³⁰² mythological literary compositions mentioning Enki/Ea, offering lists, and few incantations, all of them containing material not previously attested in Sumerian texts. The Šamaš and Nisaba myths (ARET 5, 6 and 7) from Ebla reveal more information about the nature of this god than the Old-Sumerian literary mythological corpus altogether which was still in larger parts difficult to interpret due to lack of knowledge in understanding the UD.GAL.NUN orthography and structure of archaic texts. The chapter is concluded by an overview of the Akkadian motive of flowing water and the god with water streams in the Akkadian period glyptic art – most probably representing Enki/Ea.

4.1. Enki/Ea in Old-Akkadian Royal Inscriptions

An inscription of Narām-Su'en on the pedestal of the “Bassetki-Statue” made of copper representing a seated male figure, possibly meant to represent Narām-Su'en himself,³⁰³ counts that in Agade a temple dedicated to Narām-Su'en was built by his citizens after he had won nine battles against rebellious kings. Inhabitants of Narām-Su'en's city are described as demanding the building from different deities of Sumer and Akkad, who are listed with their temples in a following order: ^dINANNA in Eanna (Uruk), Enlil in Nippur, Dagān in Tuttul, Ninḥursaḡ in Keš, ^dEN.KI in Eridu, ^dEN.ZU in Ur, ^dUTU in Sippar and Nergal in Kutha.³⁰⁴ Enki is titled “king of Eridu”

³⁰² Since parallel texts for the myths found from Ebla are also present in Abū Šalābīkh texts, it is not completely appropriate to call the myths Semitic. They possibly represent literary tradition spread all over the area of influence of the third millennium cuneiform culture. The myths are treated in the chapter treating Old-Akkadian material about Enki/Ea, because the main language of the myths from Ebla is Semitic.

³⁰³ A.-H. Al-Fouadi, *Sumer* 32 (1976), pp. 64-67.

³⁰⁴ Narām-Su'en 10: 25-48.

similarly to Old-Sumerian inscriptions: *iš-te₄* / ^dEN.KI / *in* NUN^{ki}.³⁰⁵ with / Ea / in Eridu. It is difficult to evaluate to what extent ^dINANNA, ^dEN.ZU, and ^dUTU are considered Semitic, or are Sumerian deities meant by these names.³⁰⁶ Both the names of Su'en and also Nanna do not have to be neither Sumerian nor Semitic.³⁰⁷ Therefore it seems unjustified to use the concept of Sumerian-Semitic syncretism when dealing with deities in the Old-Akkadian period. Several reciprocal influences are most probably present from a number of possible religions and cultures. The extent of "syncretism" of Enki and Ea is unclear based on the Old-Akkadian sources and whether a Semitic deity differing considerably from the Old-Sumerian Enki³⁰⁸ is meant in Akkadian royal inscriptions is hard to answer based on few texts available.

A fragment of a Narām-Su'en Stele from Pir Hüseyin, possibly written after a victory during his military campaign in the region of Šimānum, states that Enki/Ea was favourable to Narām-Su'en in his military campaigns for not having given him any powerful enemy opposition:

^dEN.KI / *in* *ki-ib-ra-tim* / *ar-ba-im* / *na-e* / [*i*]r-tim / [*ul i-d*]i-[-*šum*₆]³⁰⁹

Ea / in directions of the world / four / no-one / (for) opposition / was not given (to Narām-Su'en)

Old-Babylonian copies from two inscriptions of Narām-Su'en contain a curse formula, where Enki/Ea's role is underlined at the end.³¹⁰ A text preserved from copies from Ur is about a dedication of a statue for Su'en by Narām-Su'en, possibly after defeating an enemy leader.³¹¹

³⁰⁵ Narām-Su'en 10: ii 12-14; cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 177.

³⁰⁶ Cf. L. J. Gelb – B. Kienast, *FAOS* 7 p. 83: Not Sumerian Inanna but Akkadian Ištar as a patron deity of the dynasty of Akkade stands in the first place. Cf. J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 149 for the equation of Nanna and Utu with Su'en and Šamaš in Old-Akkadian context.

³⁰⁷ Cf. W. G. Lambert, *CM* 7 (1997), pp. 1-2.

³⁰⁸ Cf. J and A. Westenholz, *OrNS* 46 (1977), p. 204.

³⁰⁹ Narām-Su'en 24: ii 1-6.

³¹⁰ It is interesting to notice, that the god Ea/Enki does not occur in the curse formula alongside with the other deities but his role is underlined at the closing part of the both inscriptions.

³¹¹ D. Frayne, *RIME* 2, p. 100. Cf. J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, pp. 145-146.

^dEN.[KI] / ÍD-*śu* / A *li-im-dú-ud* / ù GIŠ.TÚG.PI / a ù-ra-pí-iš³¹²

Ea / (in) his canal / water may block / and his understanding / let him not make wide³¹³

Another Narām-Su'en inscription describing his campaign³¹⁴ to Magan found in two Old-Babylonian copies from Nippur contains almost an identical curse formula:

^dEN.KI / I₇-*śu₄* / *sà-ki-kà-am* / *li-im-dú-ud*³¹⁵

Ea / his canal / with silt / may block

It does not seem clear what exactly is expected from Enki/Ea to do with the person harming the inscriptions except it should somehow be harmful to the canals³¹⁶ – Enki/Ea is described as potentially taking away the moistening water meant for the fields. Enki associated directly with water, rivers, or canals was never directly mentioned in Old-Sumerian sources, though his relation with Abzu and Engur was underlined. It is therefore not impossible to imagine that the name Enki might have been used here within Akkadian context³¹⁷ corresponding to the etymology of his Semitic name behind the root **hyy* – “living,” referring to a water source or running water.

From Elam, a text from a stele of Puzur-Inšušinak mentions Enki included in a curse formula. Sumerian deities are incorporated into a system of Elamite deities in pairs of two. J. M. Roberts finds that the political implications of the Sumerian city gods were such “that even Puzur-inšušinak, the native Elamite *iššiakum* of Susa, includes many of them in his inscriptions along with his own Elamite deities.”³¹⁸

³¹² Narām-Su'en 5: iii 27-31.

³¹³ I. J. Gelb – B. Kienast, *FAOS* 7, p. 260: “Enki soll seinen Kanal nicht ‘voll machen’ und seinen Verstand nicht weit machen.”

³¹⁴ Cf. C. Wilcke, *ZA* 87 (1997), pp. 11-13.

³¹⁵ Narām-Su'en 3: rev. vii 6-9.

³¹⁶ J. M. Roberts, *ESP*, p. 151. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 209.

³¹⁷ M. Green, *Eridu*, p. 27.

³¹⁸ J. M. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

^dNIN.MUŠ.EREN ù ^dUT[U] ^dEn-lí[l] ù ^dEN.KI ^dINANN[A] ù ^dEN.Z[U] ^dNin-ġur-sa[ġ] ù ^dNa-<ru>-t[i]³¹⁹

Inšušinak and Šamaš, Enlil and Enki, Ištar and Su'en, Ninġursaġ and Nanurte.

Inšušinak, an Elamite sun-deity is, paired with Šamaš. Pairing up Enlil and Enki might suggest the prominent status these deities together had in Sumer and Akkad.

4.2. Enki/Ea in God Lists and Offering Lists from Ebla

A bilingual lexical list from Ebla mentions Enki after Enlil. Enki is translated as *ḥayyu(m)*.³²⁰ Enlil and Enki follow each other as was the case in the inscription of Puzur-Inšušinak:

^den-lí[l] / = *i-li-[lu]* / ^den-ki / = *à-u₉* / ^den-TE / = *áš-tá-tár* / ^dinanna / = *aš-tár* / ^dnè-eri₁₀ / = *ra-sa-ap*³²¹

The Semitic underworld deity Rasap is equated with the Sumerian god Nergal³²² in the same list. In two offering lists from Ebla, Enki and Rasap appear together in one text as receivers of goods. As shown by the example of the abovementioned god list, behind the name ^den-ki might stand a Semitic god *à-u₉* in a local cultic context:

1 túg-SAL ³²³	A fine textile
<i>ma-nu-wa-ad</i> ^{ki}	(in) Manuwat,
du ₁₁ -ga	ordered
nídba	(for) offering
^d <i>ra-sa-ap</i>	(to) Rasap
^d EN.KI	(and) Ea,
<i>in</i>	in
<i>du-si-gú</i> ^{ki}	Dusigu,

³¹⁹ Puzur-Inšušinak 2: 67-74.

³²⁰ M. Krebernik, *ZA* 73 (1983), p. 31.

³²¹ *MEE* 4, 47-48: 802-806.

³²² Equating Nergal and Rasap was also common in Ugaritic sources where Ea is usually equated with *ktr*. Cf. J. F. Healey, *SEL* 2 (1985), p. 118 and 122.

³²³ M. G. Biga – L. Milano, *ARET* 4, p. 112, no. 12, 21. Cf. M. Baldacci, *Partially Published Eblaite Texts* (1992), p. 30, no. 0410, where Rasap and then Enki receive offerings.

šu ba₄-ti he received.

Another offering list names Ea somehow related to an orchard or calls him gardener: ^dEN.KI / lú ġeš-nu-kiri₆.³²⁴ The term ġeš-nu-kiri₆ possibly refers to a place (garden) where cultic ceremonies were held.³²⁵ Sumerian ġeš-nu-kiri₆ might be an ideogram for closely connected Semitic cultic term or toponym³²⁶ *gú-nu/núm*^(ki) employed only in connection with the name of Rasap.³²⁷ Enki/Ea's unexplained relation to an underworld deity Rasap in Ebla and their common association with orchards or gardens (i.e. shared cultic offering place) might refer to some sort chthonic characteristics attributed to both deities in the region.³²⁸ Based on few texts available, the nature of the relation of Rasap and Enki in Ebla is, however, indeterminable.

4.3. Enki in Old-Semitic Literary and Magical Compositions

A small number of incantations have been found belonging to the third millennium Semitic sources. One incantation from Ebla titles Enki “king of Abzu”- ^den-ki lugal SU.AB.TA.³²⁹ Another incantation from Kiš is meant for a man to gain the love of his desired woman through different magical procedures. The beginning lines mention Enki/Ea and Ištar. The position of Enki/Ea at the beginning of the incantation where he is asked to be favourable to love coming from Ištar might refer to his character as friendly to man in general:

^dEN.KI *ir-e-ma-am / è-ra-[?]-am / ir-e-mu-um* DUMU ^dINANNA³³⁰

Ea the love desire / loves / the love desire, son of Ištar

Two longer literary texts survive from Ebla: a Šamaš myth ARET 5, 6 having parallels from Abū Šalābīkh tablets;³³¹ and ARET 5, 7 – mythological composition

³²⁴ *MEE* 10, 3: obv. v 10-11.

³²⁵ P. Mander, *MEE* 10, p. 26. G. Pettinato, *OA* 18 (1979), p. 115 connects the term with the *gi-d*-en-ki “reeds of Enki” in Ukg. 4: vi 15.

³²⁶ M. Dahood – G. Pettinato, *OrNS* 46 (1977), pp. 230-232.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ F. Pomponio – P. Xella, *AOAT* 245, p. 169. C. Simonetti, *N.A.B.U.* 1993/104, p. 89 has drawn attention that the structure of offerings to Enki is similar to that of a deity of Ganana by the study of offering lists from Ebla.

³²⁹ G. Pettinato, *OA* 28 (1979), p. 349, text 24, iii 7-8 = M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 170-171, no. 33.

³³⁰ J and A. Westenholz, *OrNS* 46 (1977), p. 201, 1-3.

about Nisaba. Enki/Ea has a role to play in both of them. The myths do not represent religious ideas from Syrian Ebla but seem to be Sumero-Akkadian mythical compositions³³² where Šamaš, Enlil, Nisaba, and Enki/Ea act as main figures.³³³ The beginning of the ARET 5, 6 myth gives praise to the sun god Šamaš, who is described as travelling in the sky during the daytime and possibly by night visiting the underground lands of Enki/Ea.³³⁴ In the beginning of the myth, Šamaš is described as being favoured by Enki/Ea:

ŠU.UM / *ne-si-gi-im*³³⁵ / ^dEN.KI / *ì-lú rí-sa-dím*³³⁶

ŠU.ÁG / NÌ.SIG / ^dEN.KI / 𒀭DINGIR𒀭 𒀭AN𒀭.[X[?].] 𒀭X[?]³³⁷

beloved of / *niššiku* / Ea / god of rejoicing

The epithet of Enki/Ea – *niššiku*³³⁸ occurs here for the first time in written sources. It seems probable that the title *ì-lú rí-sa-dím*: “god of rejoicing” might belong to Šamaš and not Enki/Ea.³³⁹ The same text has a passage where Šamaš, Enlil, and Enki/Ea appear in a close context, the nature of which does not allow giving any certain interpretations except for the fact that a place name called “land of Enki/Ea” is mentioned:

[X. [?] E]N ³⁴⁰	[U]D ³⁴¹	Then
<i>na-gàr-ga-ra</i>	GAL.NIMGIR	great herald
ḪUR.SAG	ḪUR.SAG	(of) mountain(s)
<i>ti-ma-u₉</i>	[] 𒀭X [?]	goes around (?).

³³¹ OIP 99: 326 and 342.

³³² W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 3; *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 43.

³³³ W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 25 concludes that Sippar is the obvious place of composition of the myth. Cf. J. Krecher, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 286: “narrations centre around deities Enlil, Enki/Ea, Inanna, (Ama-)Ušumgalanna; incantations are related to Ningirima even if written in a Semitic language.”

³³⁴ B. R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature* (2005), p. 50-51: Titled “The Valorous Sun.”

³³⁵ W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 6 finds that *ne-si-gi-im* refers to the well known title of Ea – *niššiku*.

³³⁶ ARET 5, 6: i 6-7.

³³⁷ OIP 99, 326: i 7-9.

³³⁸ A. Cavigneaux – M. Krebernik, *RIA* 9 (1998-2001), p. 590: *niššiku* is most probably refers to Enki’s Sumerian epithet nun: “prince,” “leader.” Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 12-13.

³³⁹ W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 6.

³⁴⁰ ARET 5, 6: ii 5 – iii 2.

³⁴¹ OIP 99, 326: i 17 – ii 7.

ENGAR AN	NIMGIR AN	Herald oh heavens (An),
ÙĤ KI	KAS.NIMGIR KI	herald of earth (Ki),
^d EN.LÍL	^d EN.LÍL	(of) Enlil (?).
<i>nu-ru</i> _{12-um} DUGUD	「UD」 「X」	Strong light
<i>i-du-wa-ar</i>	AN.NÍGIN	circles around
<i>i-a-ma-am</i> ₆	UD	daytime;
<i>giš-ti-tam</i> (UD)	GI ₆	during the night
<i>i-na-sar</i>	EN.NUN.NAK	guards
TIM.TIM	KALAM	the land;
<i>ti-gi-li</i>	Á.ÁG	orders
TIM.TIM ^d EN.KI		(of) the land (of) Ea.

Whether the text actually refers to Šamaš visiting the underground regions of Enki/Ea during the night period is difficult to answer.³⁴² The idea would be supported by a passage occurring before a mention of the “land of Enki/Ea” where Šamaš is described somehow related to Abzu and being its radiance or light bringer:

à-šum / BIR₅.BÍ.IR / ^{gēš}NÍ.KAS₇.AK / AB.ZU³⁴³
 ĤUŠ / BIR₅.BIR₅ / NÍ.KAS₇ / ABZU (ZU+AB)³⁴⁴
 red / radiance / (for the) terror (?) / (of) Abzu³⁴⁵

Although the interpretation of the lines above presents only one possibility among several others, the connection between Šamaš and Abzu/Enki/Ea seems to be underlined. The text continues with a description of deeds of Šamaš, after which there appears to be a meeting of gods taking place. Then Šamaš is described travelling to meet Enki/Ea in his Abzu.

DINGIR.DINGIR³⁴⁶

The gods

³⁴² P. Steinkeller, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 258, note 39 finds the motive possible based on later texts such as Temple Hymns 15-16, where Enki greets Utu in his Abzu.

³⁴³ *ARET* 5, 6: i 9 – ii 1.

³⁴⁴ *OIP* 99, 326: i 11 – i 12.

³⁴⁵ Cf. W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 33: “shining light: because of the brilliance of the terror of the Apsû.” M. Krebernik, *QuSem* 18, p. 82: “the burning light, the fiery radiance, the splendour (?) of the Apsû.”

³⁴⁶ *ARET* 5, 6: xii 2 – xiv 2.

<i>ti-da-ḫu-ru</i> ₁₂	gathered together (?).
TIM.TIM	The land
GEŠTUG.GESTUG	was listening.
ÉRIN+X ^d UTU U ₅ (MÁ.ḪU)	ÉRIN+X-(bull) ³⁴⁷ Šamaš rode
<i>du-rí-iš</i>	to the wall (fortress)
^d EN.KI	(of) Ea.
<i>zi-la-ti-zu</i>	His (wheel)-pins (?)
BA ₅ .TI	brought near ³⁴⁸
IG AB.ZU	(to) the door of Abzu.
DINGIR.DINGIR	The gods
<i>du-u₉</i>	<i>du-u₉</i> -(creatures?)
GABA	in front of
EN TI.URU.DA-a	lord (of) TI.URU.DA, ³⁴⁹
^d EN.KI	Ea,
<i>a-bí</i> ZU.UG ¹ (ZU+PIRIG).BANDA	father of
	ZU.UG ¹ (ZU+PIRIG).BANDA, ³⁵⁰
<i>ru</i> ₁₂ - <i>zi</i> UR.SAG-a	help of the hero.
<i>du-i</i>	The <i>du-i</i> -(creatures?)
<i>iš-da-du</i>	fought,
<i>i-da-gi-bu_x</i> (NI)	struggled,
<i>wa-da-ar</i> GURUŠ	the pre-eminent youngsters.
<i>u₉-ru</i> ₁₂ - <i>du</i>	Descended
ZU.UG ¹ (ZU+PIRIG).BANDA // [U]G.[BANDA] ³⁵¹	ZU.UG ¹ (ZU+PIRIG).BANDA,
<i>na-zi</i>	<i>na-zi</i> (?) (Nanše?),
AB.ZU-RA // ABZU	to Abzu.
DINGIR.DINGIR // DINGIR.[DINGIR]	The gods
<i>ti-na-ḫu-úš</i> // AL.KÚŠ.SÁ	were tired (in pain).
'A ₅ (NI).NUN.GÚ	Anunna god(s) (?).

³⁴⁷ P. Steinkeller, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 259-263 identifies the creature as gud-alim, human faced bull associated with Šamaš.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 258, note 39: "he took hold of the door of Abzu."

³⁴⁹ M. Krebernik, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 142 offers a possibility that TI.URU.DA might be a toponym or cultic object associated with Enki/Ea in the next line.

³⁵⁰ W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 4 interprets Pirig-banda, and *na-zi* in line xiii 4 as Nanše. M. Krebernik, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 98 denies the interpretation as Pirig-banda, but translates as referring to a personal creature.

³⁵¹ *OIP* 99, 342: i 1 – i 4.

d ⁴ EN.KI // d ⁴ [E]N.KI	Ea
MU.DU	came (brought)
<i>in</i> NE DUGUD	in heavy fire.
<i>en-si</i> IG	He lifted the door (of Abzu?)
<i>du-si</i> KI	<i>du-si</i> (of) earth,
KÚŠ	(who were) tired,
DU ₈	he let loose.
NE.DI	Played
<ÉRIN+>X	the <ÉRIN+>X
d ⁴ EN.KI	Ea
<i>si-la bù-gú</i>	the song (?).

What can be summarised based on the confusing passage of the myth, seems to be that the gods are assembled for an unknown reason. Šamaš then goes to meet Enki/Ea – to the door of Abzu. Next, some unidentified groups of deities have to struggle for some reason. Then ZU.UG¹(ZU+PIRIG).BANDA (and possibly *na-zi*) go down to Abzu.³⁵² Gods are said to be tired or in pain. Enki/Ea, who appears to be titled the leader or one of the (‘A₅ (NI).NUN.GÚ) deities (possibly the Anunna gods), lifts the door of Abzu; and somehow changes the situation. Enki/Ea’s role here seems to be a solver of that pain and trouble.³⁵³ The mythological themes represented in the myth appear to be circling, besides the main character of the myth Šamaš, around Enki/Ea, and Enlil³⁵⁴ who in Ebla is pronounced Ililu. Also the ARET 5, 7 myth has Enlil and Enki/Ea acting as the most important figures besides the patron hero of the text, Nisaba. As was the case with ARET 5, 6 dealing with Šamaš, the text begins with a

³⁵² The same text has a possible reference to Laḡama creatures of Abzu. ARET 5, 6: ix 2: d⁴LA.[ĤA[?]].MA. [AB[?]].ZU ME / iš DINGIR.DINGIR / *da-ḡu-ù*: hundred Laḡama-Abzu / near the gods / were brought.

³⁵³ Although no exact textual parallel comes forth from the text, the myth has some thematically similar characteristics to the Old-Babylonian myth “Enki and Ninmah.” The struggling gods are in pain and revolting. A third party (Namma) goes to contact Enki in his Abzu. Enki finds a solution in creating humans to help the gods in pain. After that a feast of gods begins.

³⁵⁴W. G. Lambert, *JCS* 41 (1989), p. 25 concludes that the mythological body presented in ARET 5, 6 agrees in many terms with the later Old-Babylonian mythology, especially with Atra-ḡasīs narrative, where Ea is also titled *niššīku*, “and Enlil ‘guards the land,’ his cosmic location according to the same Babylonian work.”

praise to Nisaba. Then starts a mythological narrative where Enlil and Ea are involved.³⁵⁵

TU.DA ³⁵⁶	Gave birth
^d A.NIR	^d A.NIR ³⁵⁷
MAḪ ^d EN.LÍL	(to?) great Enlil.
「X」.「TÙR」	consult (?)
[]	[]
DU ₁₂ .「GA」 [?] - <i>ma</i>	spoke
DUMU.NITA-SÙ	(to) his son;
^d EN.KI	Ea
BE	lord
NÍĜ.KI <i>sa-ma</i> -NI	(of) herd (of the earth) and heaven ³⁵⁸
LUGAL	king
<i>iš</i> ₁₁ - <i>gur-ma</i>	he said.
MAḪ [?] <i>il-tum</i>	Great one (of) the gods
^d EN.LÍL	Enlil
^a ₅ -(NI)- <i>na</i>	to
^d EN.KI	Ea
INIM.DI	spoke.
ŠÀ GAL.TE	Heart (of the) GAL.TE (TIRU), ³⁵⁹
NAM.NIR	the important one(s),
MAḪ DINGIR.DINGIR	great one(s) (among) the gods,
A.SI	filled (?)
^d NISABA	Nisaba.

³⁵⁵ The structural development of both myths seems to be similar in nature. They start with the praise to the deity for whom the myth is designated – Šamaš in ARET 5, 6 and Nisaba in ARET 5, 7. Then follows a passage where Enlil and Enki/Ea have a role to play. Texts continue with a description of the deeds of the main figures being associated to larger mythological context of the period still hard to understand. Both of the texts end with the praise to the main figure of the myth.

³⁵⁶ ARET 5, 7: iv 3 – v 4.

³⁵⁷ Cf. M. Krebernik, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 94. By the context, the A.NIR of unknown characteristics seems to be responsible of giving birth to Enlil.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 132: NIN.KI: “life (living beings) of the earth” = NÌ.KI = *nammaštu*, *zemandu*. Interpretation as ^dNIN.KI seems highly improbable here.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 142 interprets as an “official.” The other option would be ŠÀ.GAL TE – then probably meaning, that Nisaba filled the stomachs or gave food to the deities.

Information about Enki/Ea is similar to ARET 5, 6 in respects that he is presented with Enlil as the most prominent figure besides Nisaba. Although the translation is uncertain, it seems that Enki/Ea is called “lord of the animals (of the earth and birds? of the) sky.” The text also mentions Enki/Ea associated with the me-s. Trees and orchards are possibly referred to as Enki/Ea’s symbols or area of responsibility:

^d NISABA ³⁶⁰	Nisaba,
ḪAR- <i>tum</i>	the maiden;
<i>al</i> ₆ - <i>su-nu</i>	upon them
AL ₆ .GÁL	he made (it) to be
GAR	placed
IM.TUM	clay-(tablet?)
<i>al</i> ₆ IM	above clay;
AL ₆ .GAR	AL ₆ .GAR-instrument (?),
GIŠ.GIŠ	trees,
ḡeš ^š KIRI ₆ . ḡeš ^š KIRI ₆	orchards;
ME.ME	the me-s
^d EN.KI	(of? / to?) Ea.
AL ₆ .GÁL	Made (it) to be,
ḪAR- <i>tum</i>	the maiden.

Despite the fact that the vocabulary of the passage does not present great difficulties for understanding, due to the lack of contextual knowledge, it is hard to understand the roles of both – Nisaba and Enki/Ea. Nisaba is involved in doing something with clay or clay tablets, possibly referring to her abilities in the art of writing. Trees and gardens³⁶¹ seem to be the domain of Enki/Ea, possibly part of his fields of duties represented or written down (by Nisaba?) to the tablet of me-s.

³⁶⁰ ARET 5, 7: x 2 – x 4.

³⁶¹ Cf. section 4.2. of the current chapter for the offering list from Ebla where Ea was titled ^dEN.KI lú nu-ḡeš-kiri₆.

4.4. Representations of Enki/Ea in Old-Akkadian Glyptic Art

Not much is known about Early-Dynastic cylinder seals depicting Enki. Only one seal depicting a seated male god holding his legs on an image of fish seems quite suitable for being a representation of Enki.³⁶² Since the seal does not have any other characteristic attributes of Enki and the flowing water motive is missing, the idea of imagining the seated male god to be a representation of Enki, is not easy to defend.³⁶³ The fish is not necessarily an exclusive symbol of Enki.

It is also speculative to associate a certain motive from Early-Dynastic or Sargonic cylinder seal with a known mythological background since Old-Sumerian mythological texts are few in number and Old-Akkadian written sources about contemporary religious ideas are rare and difficult to interpret. However, certain analogies between the mythological iconography of the older periods and later myths and representations in art seem to give enough evidence for allowing to make a relation with at least some elements and scenes with the divine figures of Enki and Ea.³⁶⁴ Of the supreme gods of Mesopotamia An, Enlil and Enki/Ea, only Enki/Ea seems to have a clearly identifiable image represented on the seals of the Agade period.³⁶⁵ The flowing water motive appearing in Akkadian seals was successfully associated with the god Ea by E. D. van Buren already in 1933 in a book “The Flowing Vase and the God with Streams.” Ever since, although different mythological interpretations have been sought, the deity having two water streams flowing out from his shoulders has firmly been identified with Enki/Ea³⁶⁶ in all the contemporary studies. However, the flowing vase motive as well as the streams flowing out from the shoulders of a male deity is occasionally associated with other chief gods of local pantheons as possibly is the case with a cylinder seal of Gudea where he pays homage to a god with streams and a flowing vase – possibly Ningirsu.³⁶⁷ It is difficult to answer if the motives represented in Akkadian seals are representations of Old-

³⁶² R. M. Boehmer, *Die Entwicklung der Glyptik während der Akkad-Zeit* (1965), p. 87.

³⁶³ Cf. E. D. van Buren, *Iraq* 10 (1948), pp. 108-109.

³⁶⁴ Cf. P. Amiet, *OrNS* 21 (1952), p. 149.

³⁶⁵ P. Amiet, *Ancient Art in Seals* (1980), p. 40.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, P. Amiet concludes that the divine figures of the Agade period seals “correspond to types of gods rather than to single divine personalities. It therefore seems preferable to refer to them according to their functions, which are indicated by their attributes, rather than by their traditional names, for example, as the god with streams or the grain goddess.”

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Semitic mythology or belong to narratives common in the overall cuneiform culture of the mid third millennium. The idea for concluding these motives are “Semitic” in origins can be confirmed by the fact that the scenes appear in late Pre-Sargonic times, are especially well attested during the Sargonic era, and disappear almost completely during the Ur III Sumerian context.³⁶⁸

Among the deities represented in the glyptic art of the period, the god with streams seems to be the most prominent one among the other divine figures. This feature is clearly seen on the scenes where other gods seem to pay homage or greet the god with streams³⁶⁹ by “raising a hand in a gesture of reverence or worship.”³⁷⁰ The following seal represents the god with streams sitting inside a space surrounded by waves of water. The god, most possibly Enki/Ea, is paid homage by two solar deities raising their hands, a kneeling nude hero³⁷¹ acts as a doorkeeper:



Fig. 2: Akkadian seal, Baghdad, Iraq Museum

Enki/Ea is possibly seen being seated in his underground region Abzu. Also some fish are swimming near the streams flowing out from his shoulders. The space of Abzu is in turn surrounded by water. The nude heroes as doorkeepers of Abzu are also represented in the following Akkadian cylinder seal:

³⁶⁸ P. Steinkeller, *QuSem* 18 (1992), p. 246.

³⁶⁹ E. Porada, *Iraq* 22 (1960), p. 117.

³⁷⁰ P. Amiet, *Ancient Art in Seals* (1980), pp. 40-41.

³⁷¹ E. Porada, *op. cit.*, p. 121 defines the kneeling god as a conquered enemy rather than as a helpful aide.



Fig. 3: Akkadian seal (BM 89 771), The British Museum

Since the door keepers of Abzu were defined as the Laḥama-Abzu,³⁷² it would be also reasonable to define these creatures behind the two nude heroes represented on the seal and holding two gate posts on their hands as Laḥama-Abzu.³⁷³ Among other scenes representing the god with streams alongside his attributes, a scene where Enki/Ea is travelling in a barge in a river or a marsh area accompanied by two attendants. The plants growing out of the water might refer to his role as fertility bringer for the nature:³⁷⁴



Fig. 4: Akkadian seal, Louvre

³⁷² Cf. W. G. Lambert, *RIA* 6 (1983), p. 431: “This type of monster was associated with gates, presumably as an architectural feature.”

³⁷³ W. G. Lambert, *CM* 7 (1997), p. 6: “nude male divinities with triple-stranded belts around their waists and much facial hair, in particular three curls either side of the face.” Cf. P. Amiet, *La glyptique mésopotamienne archaïque* (1961), pp. 150-157 for an overview of the nude hero associated with Enki/Ea, Abzu and flowing water. The flowing vase motive associated with the nude hero might have its beginning already in the Early-Dynastic glyptic. Association with Enki/Ea, however, dates from the Akkadian period.

³⁷⁴ H. Frankfort, *Cylinder Seals* (1939), p. 124.

The “Cylinder of Adda” (ca. 2300-2200 B.C.) serves as one of the most well known examples of the deity with two streams involved in a scene which clearly has a larger mythological background:



Fig. 5. “The Cylinder of Adda” (B.M. 89115), The British Museum

Theories concerning this particular scene represented in the “Cylinder of Adda” are not uniform. Van Buren believes that the bird descending from the sky is the Anzu bird³⁷⁵ “poised to attack the tree and a god is emerging to defeat him.”³⁷⁶ The rising god should not be the sun-god Utu, but Adad as van Buren thinks.³⁷⁷ The god could as well be “the chthonic figure Ninurta, Enki’s champion who then, in ‘Ninurta’s pride and Punishment,’ attempts his own challenge to the rule of Enki.”³⁷⁸ P. Amiet who sees “a glorious epiphany of the gods”³⁷⁹ behind the scene gives quite a different opinion. A solar god appears from the mountain assisted by the god with streams and a weapon-bearing goddess. An eagle comes down towards the god with streams who unusually has a posture of a conqueror. Among other divine figures, Enki’s double faced vizier Isimu stands behind his back without presenting anyone to him, “an inversion of this official’s usual function.”³⁸⁰ The eagle possibly represents a hostile force; the tree again is a symbol of vegetation. The whole scene then would represent the common manifestation of the forces of life in early spring: the young solar god arises from the mountain at the same time with the tree assisted by Enki/Ea and the winged goddess with weapons.³⁸¹ Only parallels from the written sources of the

³⁷⁵ *Vase*, p. 29f.

³⁷⁶ S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, p. 122.

³⁷⁷ *Vase*, p. 29.

³⁷⁸ S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, loc. cit.

³⁷⁹ P. Amiet, *Ancient Art in Seals* (1980), p. 44.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44. Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, op. cit., p. 123.

³⁸¹ P. Amiet, op. cit., p. 45.

period that might assist on interpreting the scene come from the Šamaš myth from Ebla covered above. Also there the sun-god Šamaš is described meeting with Enki/Ea and coming to the door of Abzu. Whether the mythological scene represented on Adda's cylinder somehow has connections to the Šamaš myth remains unclear.

The bird motive in connection to the deity with streams is also present on another seal titled by van Buren "Judgment of Bird-Man."³⁸² On the seal, a male divine figure leads a captured "bird-man" to the seated god with streams. "If this is an episode from the story of Enki and Anzu-bird we know from the literature, it is significant that the culminating scene is not the theft of the divine *me*³⁸³ but their return to Enki. The divine *me* are back in their proper place."³⁸⁴



Fig. 6: "Judgment of the Bird-Man" (BM 103317), The British Museum.

However, the different interpretations given to both mythological scenes are developed by the speculative imagination of scholars who all have their own specific ideas. No conclusions can be based on them, since the depicted mythological scenes could actually represent myths completely unknown to us. Still, the identification of the divine water-figure with Enki/Ea seems justified enough, if not completely confirmed.

³⁸² *Vase*, pp. 41-50.

³⁸³ S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, p. 121

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

4.5. Conclusions

Except for the mentions of Ea/Enki associated with canals in the inscriptions of Narām-Su'en, an aspect that does not emerge from any Old-Sumerian source, no significant change in describing Enki/Ea emerges from the Old-Akkadian royal inscriptions. As was common in Old-Sumerian texts dealing with Enki, Ea (at least in Ebla possibly pronounced Hayya) is associated with Abzu in several texts; references to ġestú and Eridu are present. In offering lists, he occurs together with a Semitic underworld god Rasap. One incantation mentions Enki/Ea being favourable to “love desire,” son of Ištar.

In the mythological compositions from Ebla, Enki/Ea seems to be among the two most often mentioned gods together with Enlil. The pair Enlil and Enki occurs together also in one royal inscription from Elam, and in a bilingual vocabulary list from Ebla. That gives an impression that at least in written mythology; those two deities seem to be considered most noteworthy in the overall pantheon.

The myth ARET 5, 6 about Šamaš, and ARET 5, 7 dealing with Nisaba reveal at first sight huge amount of new aspects about the god Enki/Ea not present in previously discussed Old-Sumerian texts. However, in spite of the fact that the scale of information about Enki/Ea who is named almost in ten different situations in these myths must obviously be huge, not a single complete phrase can be translated with certainty. Enki/Ea is titled *niššiku* in ARET 5, 6 and possibly “lord of animals (and birds)” in ARET 5, 7. The Šamaš myth ARET 5, 6 where the place name “the land of Enki/Ea” is used, might refer to the fact that Šamaš in the form of the Sun visits the underworld region of Enki/Ea during the night period. In the same myth he is seen coming out from his Abzu and giving solutions for solving some sort of a pain or trouble of gods or other creatures mentioned. In ARET 5, 7 Enki/Ea is discussing with Enlil, nature of the discussion is uncertain due to several difficulties in understanding the text. Another passage associates Enki/Ea with the me-s, divine norms closely associated with Enki/Ea in Old-Babylonian mythology.

Enki/Ea is one of the most often represented gods in the glyptic art of the Akkadian period. He is pictured with two streams flowing out from his shoulders, sitting inside

his cosmic territory Abzu surrounded by waves of water and accompanied by fish swimming in water. Among the well-known subordinate divine creatures of Enki/Ea, the Lahama-Abzu and his vizier Isimu are present already in Old-Akkadian Glyptic art. Some seals picture Enki traveling on board his boat in a watery marshland area. Several of the seals of the period show him in larger mythological contexts. With Enki/Ea in a same scene a solar deity and a bird man are often represented. The exact mythological background of the myths represented remains unclear, for only a few mythological written narratives, all difficult to interpret, are preserved from the period.

CHAPTER 5

5. Enki in Neo-Sumerian Sources

Compared to the previous Old-Sumerian and Old-Akkadian periods, textual material containing information about Sumerian mythology and pantheon preserved to us has grown considerably in the Neo-Sumerian period. Several royal inscriptions and royal hymns reveal new information about Enki starting from the sources of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš. Large corpus of royal hymns of the Ur III period allows investigating the understanding of Enki in royal ideology with much more precision than was possible with the texts of the previous periods made difficult to interpret due to fragmentary state of texts and severe problems of translating them. It is also easy to establish a chronological order for the royal inscriptions and hymns and so track possible changes of concepts of Enki in theology and ideology of the Neo-Sumerian period. In the following chapter, royal inscriptions of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš and Ur III kings and one inscription of Puzur-Eštar of Mari are discussed. Also “The Curse of Agade,” possibly composed during the period in question, is treated under the Neo-Sumerian period. A summary of Enki’s role in Neo-Sumerian incantations is given. A brief overview about the deity Ĥaia, closely associated with Enki and his circle, is included in the chapter, concluded by the representations of the god in the art of the Neo-Sumerian period.

5.1. Second Dynasty of Lagaš

A statue of Ur-Baba listing different temples he had built mentions that Ur-Baba has received ġestú from Enki³⁸⁵ who is titled “king of Eridu.”³⁸⁶ Temples are listed in the following order possibly reflecting their positions in the pantheon of Lagaš: Ninġirsu, Ninĥursaġ, Baba, Inanna, Enki, Nindara, Nin-Á-GAL, Nin-MAR.KI, Ensignun, Geštinanna, and Dumuzid-Abzu. Another inscription lists the temples as follows: Ninġirsu, Baba, Ninkununna, Enki and Nin-Á-GAL.³⁸⁷ Gudea Statue B compares a temple of Ninġirsu with a temple in Eridu built in a “pure place.”

³⁸⁵ Ur-Baba 1: i 12. Cf. Puzur-Mama 1: ii 5-6.

³⁸⁶ Ur-Baba 1: iv 11.

³⁸⁷ Ur-Baba 8. Ur-Baba 4 mentions a temple built for Enki.

é^dnin-ǵír-su-ka / eridu^{ki}-gen₇ / ki sikil-la bí-dù³⁸⁸

The house of Ninǵirsu / as Eridu / in a pure place was built

Enki is titled as a god with “rightful word:” ^den-ki du₁₁-g[a] zi-da-k[e₄].³⁸⁹ The same text contains a curse formula where deities are grouped An, Enlil, Ninḫursaĝ, Enki, Su’en, Ninǵirsu, Nanše, Nindara, Gatumdu, Baba, Inanna, Utu, Ḫendursaĝ, Igalim, Šulšagana, Nin-MAR.KI, Dumuzid-Abzu and Ningišzida. An inscription of Puzur-Mama contains a listing of deities mentioning Enki thirdly after Enlil and Ninǵirsu: Enlil, Ninǵirsu, Enki, Ninḫursaĝ, Inanna, Gatumdu, Ninšubur and Šulutul.³⁹⁰ Lines 12, 26 - 13, 5 from Gudea Cylinder B list the deeds of the great gods supposedly in order of importance. The first place is given to An, followed by Enlil and Ninḫursaĝ. Enki is to be considered fourth in the pantheon, followed by Su’en, Ninǵirsu and Nanše.

One building inscription of Gudea titles Enki “eternal king:”

^d en-[ki] ³⁹¹	(To)Enki
lugal-abz[u]	(to) king of Abzu
lugal da- 𒀭𒀭 -gi ₁₆ -[x]	(to) eternal lord
lugal-a-[ni]	(to) his king
gù-dé-[a]	Gudea
ens[í]	lord
lagaš ki-ke ₄	of Lagaš
é gú- ¹⁷ idi[gna]-ka-ni	his temple at the banks of Tigris
mu-na-dù	has built.

The Cylinders of Gudea describing the building of a temple for Ninǵirsu characterise Enki as the king of Eridu³⁹² living in his temple É-Engur³⁹³ in Abzu. His most

³⁸⁸ Gudea Statue B: iv 7-9.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.: viii 47.

³⁹⁰ Puzur-Mama 1: ii 1 – iii 5.

³⁹¹ Gudea 11.

³⁹² Gudea Cyl. B: xiii 3.

³⁹³ Gudea Cyl. A: xxii 12.

important feature in the text seems to be giving practical advice for the planning and building³⁹⁴ of the É-Ninnu temple dedicated to Ningirsu:

é-a ^den-ki-ke₄ ġeš-ġur-bi si mu-na-sá³⁹⁵

Enki put the plan of the house in order (for Gudea)

é-a ^den-ki-ke₄ temen mu-si-ge³⁹⁶

Enki placed the foundations for the house into the ground

Foundations of the temple Gudea is going to build are described as taking counsel with Enki living in É-Engur.

temen-abzu-bi dim-gal-gal ki-a mi-ni-si-si³⁹⁷

^den-ki-da é-an-gur₄-ra-ka

šà mu-di-ni-íb-kúš-ù

Its foundations of Abzu, big pillars, he (Gudea) placed into the ground,

with Enki in É-Engur

they (foundations) could take counsel.³⁹⁸

The goddess Nanše understood possibly already in the Old-Sumerian times³⁹⁹ as daughter of Enki is described to be the sister of Ningirsu, born in Eridu.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁴ Enki's quality as a patron deity of crafts and construction works is underlined in his title from the Ur III period ^den-ki ġeš-kin-ti – "Enki, the craftsman." W. Sallaberger, *Kalender* I, p. 59.

³⁹⁵ Gudea Cyl. A: xvii 17. Cf. Gudea Cyl. B: xiii 3.

³⁹⁶ Gudea Cyl. A: xx 15. Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *Harps*, p. 413: "Enki was filling in the foundation terrace of the house for him." D. O. Edzard, *RIME 3/II*, p. 82: "Enki was filling in the foundation boxes in the house."

³⁹⁷ Gudea Cyl. A: xxii 11-13.

³⁹⁸ Cf. E. D. van Buren, *Vase*, p. 9: "The foundations of temples penetrated down into the waters, and in that way were brought into relation with the *abzu*, and so with Ea who, for this reason, was considered patron of foundations, and who, in his great wisdom, could impart instructions for the construction of temples."

³⁹⁹ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 127.

⁴⁰⁰ Nanše Hymn A: 61, a text possibly composed during the Neo-Sumerian period (Cf. W. Heimpel, *JCS* 33 (1981), p. 67) titles Nanše "child of Enki." *dumu* ^den-ki-ga-ke₄. Cf. lines 254-255: a-a ^den-ki-ke₄ nam i-ri-in-tar / ^dnanše *dumu* eridu^{ki}-ga tu-da zà-mí-[zu] du₁₀-ga-àm: father Enki has decided you the fate / Nanše, child born in Eridu, your praise is good.

nin₉-zu dumu eridu^{ki}-ge tu-da⁴⁰¹

your (Ninĝirsu's) sister, child born in Eridu

In the same text, Ninĝirsu is titled to be the son of Enlil: dumu ^den-líl-lá-ka.⁴⁰² He is also titled “great in Abzu (Eridu) and respected in Nippur:” ^dnin-ĝír-sú abzu-a [g] al-di / nibru^{ki}-ge nir-ĝa[l].⁴⁰³ This contradiction in the pantheon of Lagaš where Nanše and Ninĝirsu are brother and sister, but Nanše daughter of Enki and Ninĝirsu son of Enlil might arise from political reasons, as was proposed by G. Selz.⁴⁰⁴

5.2. Ur III Period Royal Praise Poetry and Royal Inscriptions

Less than twenty royal hymns supposedly written in honour of the Ur III rulers contain references to Enki. Compared to the royal inscriptions from the Old-Sumerian period, the amount of information concerning Enki is grown much larger, allowing establishing a far clearer picture of the character and functions of Enki. The praise poems are discussed in chronological order of the rulers of Ur III to draw out the most important elements about the deity Enki changing during the course of time. Since the poems are preserved from copies from the Old-Babylonian period, it cannot be excluded that they do not represent an authentic Ur III tradition. However, it is still reasonable to conclude, that at least most of them were already written in their basic form during the period of the reigns of kings they mention.

5.2.1. Ur-Namma

Ur-Namma A, known under the title “The Death of Ur-Namma” describing Ur-Namma's death and his descent to the netherworld, titles Enki “king of Eridu.”⁴⁰⁵ The composition's beginning tells of the panic and horror that had fallen upon the city of Ur due to the approaching death of Ur-Namma. Gods are said to have taken away their favour from the city and are listed in the order An, Enlil, Ninmah,

⁴⁰¹ Gudea Cyl. A: ii 16. Cf. Gudea Cyl. A: xx 16.

⁴⁰² Gudea Cyl. A: vii 5.

⁴⁰³ Gudea Cyl. A: ii 11-12.

⁴⁰⁴ *ASJ* 12 (1990), p. 121. Cf. 3.7. of the current study.

⁴⁰⁵ Ur-Namma A: 180 and 236.

Enki/Nudimmud, Nanna, and Utu.⁴⁰⁶ Enki is described as retreating to his temple, closing its door, and going to his bed, symbolising his favour has abandoned Ur-Namma and his city Ur and so predicting his death.

^den-k[í-k]e₄ ^{ĝeš}[í]g gal eridu^{ki}-ga gú-bi ba-an-ge₄

^dnu-^Γdím^Γ-[m]ud ^Γitima^Γ^{ma}-a-ka ba-an-ku₄ šà(-)ka-tab-ba ba-an-nú⁴⁰⁷

Enki, the great door of Eridu, firmly closed

Nudimmud went in to the bedchamber, lay down fasting

A *tigi* to Enlil for Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma B) describing Ur-Namma's building of the É-Kur temple for Enlil mentions an incantation or spell of Enki that is somehow making the temple building blossom:

nam-(^{ĝeš})⁴⁰⁸-šub galam-ma-na ^den-ki-ke₄ é-e ul ba-ni-in-sig₇-ga⁴⁰⁹

(with) his skilful incantation, Enki made the temple(-building) flourish

A praise poem of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma C) mainly describing the favour of the king among the gods, lists Enki third in a row of deities that have been favourable to Ur-Namma. In the listing of gods, mother-goddess figure is called Nintu and she follows Enki: An, Enlil, Enki, Nintu, [...], Utu, Ningublaga.⁴¹⁰ According to the text, Enki has given irrigation water, wheat, and barley for Ur-Namma:

^dΓen^Γ-ki-ke₄ mí zi mu-un-du₁₁ a-eštub ^deziná / še gu-nu saĝ-e-eš mu-un-rig₇⁴¹¹

Enki having considered (me) rightful, springtime high waters, wheat and barley he gave (for me)

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.: 8-14.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.: 11-12.

⁴⁰⁸ J. Klein, *ASJ* 11 (1989), p. 54: ^{ĝeš} here should be a scribal error or a pseudo determinative and is omitted in one parallel text. Cf. E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO* 166, p. 201 interprets nam-^{ĝeš}-šub (^{ĝeš} missing in C₂ obv. 6') alternating with nam-šub in Enki's Journey to Nippur: 125. G. Castellino, *ZA* 53 (1959), p. 113 however translates "portion of fate."

⁴⁰⁹ Ur-Namma B: 19.

⁴¹⁰ Ur-Namma C: 20-29.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.: 23.

However, exactly the same phrase describing Enki here as a granter of agricultural abundance occurs in a *balbale* to Enlil for Ur-Namma where Enlil is the subject.⁴¹² So it must be taken into consideration that a characteristic seemingly attributed to one deity might stand for a general feature or title of honour occurring in case of several gods.

“Ur-Namma, the Canal-digger” describing the construction works of an irrigation canal by Ur-Namma mentions Enki who has given *ḡeštú* for the process.⁴¹³ Enki is called “king of the canal” Ur-Namma is building:

lugal-bi lugal eridu^{ki}-ga PA-a-zu SÙ-àm⁴¹⁴
^dnu-dim-mud lugal eridu^{ki}-ga PA-a-zu SÙ-àm
 Its (canal’s) king, king of Eridu, it is full of your PA-a-cry⁴¹⁵
 Nudimmud, king of Eridu, it is full of your PA-a-cry

A hymn to Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma I) summarises the different qualities given by the gods to a king. Enki is mentioned fourth, the female god usually occurring after Enlil is here Ninlil:

an-né igi sag₉ / ʽxʽ-¹bar / ʽKA ḡúl-laʽ maʽ ʽxʽ-[x]⁴¹⁶
 ur-^dnamma / dumu ^dnin-sumún-ke₄
 lugal ^den-líl-le / á sum-ma
^dnin-líl-le / mí zid-dè-eš / dug₄-ʽgaʽ
^dnin-ḡur-ʽsaḡ inimʽ - / ma <x>-ga-na / ʽḡuḡʽ-ḡá
^den-ki-ke₄ / ḡeštú ma[ḡ (x)] / sum-ma[a?]
 An is looking with a favourable eye, ... a sound of joy?
 Ur-Namma, son of Ninsun
 King, whom Enlil has given strength

⁴¹² Ur-Namma G: 7-8.

⁴¹³ Ur-Namma D: 21.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.: 35-36.

⁴¹⁵ E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO 166*, p. 239 and 258 considers Enki a “lord of the canal,” and the canal again is filled with Enki’s exclamation (pa-a) – probably then represented in the noise of flowing waters. Cf. S. Tinney, *JCS* 51 (1999), p. 41: “Its king, the king of Eridu, your foliage is a joy.”

⁴¹⁶ Ur-Namma I: ii 6 – iii 5.

Who is taken faithfully care for by Ninlil
Ninḥursaġ's word, that makes calm down his hearth
Whom Enki has given great understanding

Three royal inscriptions⁴¹⁷ of Ur-Namma record that Ur-Namma has built or restored a temple for Enki.

ur-^dnamma / lugal uri^{ki}-ma / lú é / ^den-ki / eridu^{ki}-ga / mu-dù-a⁴¹⁸

Ur-Namma / the king of Ur / the man (who) the house / Enki's / in Eridu / has built.

^den-ki / lugal-a-ni / ur-^dnamma / nita kala-ga / uri^{ki}-ma / lugal ki-en-gi-ki-uri-ke₄ / é-a-ni / mu-na-dù⁴¹⁹

Enki / (to) his king / Ur-Namma / powerful man / king of Ur / king of Sumer and Akkad / his house / has built.

One of the inscriptions titles Enki uncommonly “the flood storm of heaven and earth,” which is not in accordance with the character usually attested to Enki since the epithet “deluge” is mostly used describing “warrior” deities such as Ninurta, Nergal, Marduk or Ištar.⁴²⁰ This title necessarily does not mean that Enki is associated with floods or warrior deities in this context. It most probably occurs as an honorary title for a deity as an expression of his strength and importance:

^den-ki mar-uru₅ an ki-ra / lugal-a-ni / ur-^dnamma / nita kala-ga / lugal urí-ma / lugal ki-en-gi-ki-uri-ke₄ / é-a-ni / mu-na-dù⁴²¹

To Enki the flood(-storm) of heaven and earth / his king / Ur-Namma / powerful man / king of Ur / king of Sumer and Akkad / his house / has built.

⁴¹⁷ Ur-Namma 20 contains Enki, Iškur and Ezinu mentioned together in a curse formula.

⁴¹⁸ Ur-Namma 10.

⁴¹⁹ Ur-Namma 31.

⁴²⁰ O. R. Gurney, *Iraq* 44 (1982), pp. 143-144.

⁴²¹ Ur-Namma 32.

5.2.2. Šulgi

One royal hymn from the times of Šulgi is dedicated to Enki. Since the only major cultic event from Šulgi's reign associated with Enki was the installation of the en-priest of Enki in Eridu in the 27th or 28th year of his reign recorded as “the year when the en-priest of Eridu was put in office,”⁴²² it should be considered possible that the hymn as well is composed for the same occasion. The hymn calls Enki “Lord of holy me-s, who gives counsel:” en 𒀭me¹-[kù²-k]ù-[g]a² 𒀭sá¹ gar-ra.⁴²³ He is also titled Nudimmud and Junior Enlil: nu-dím-mud ^den-líl-b[andà...].⁴²⁴ His most often mentioned characteristics in the hymns are thus governing the me-s and being important among the Anunna deities:

en-gal me-nun an-ki šu-du₈⁴²⁵
^den-ki gaba-gál a-nun-ke₄-ne
sag-kal diġir-gal-gal-ne gal-di an kù-ga
nu-dím-mud gu₄-gal abzu-a me-sikil-la sa₇-ga
great lord, the princely me-s of heaven and earth, holds
Enki, foremost one of the Anunna-gods
Important one of the great gods, exalted one of the holy An
Nudimmud, great bull of the Abzu, glorious for his pure me-s

lugal en-gal-ne-er šu-luḥ pà-dè⁴²⁶
nam-tar-re-dè gal-bi gub-b[a]- 𒀭x¹
^{ġeš}gestug^{túg} gu₄ me-gal me-kù-ga mí zi dè-é[š du₁₁[?]]
𒀭en¹[?]-gal en- 𒀭maḥ¹[?] nam-nir-da zà ša-mu- 𒀭da¹ -[KEŠ]
King, who for the great en-s cleansing rites calls forth
When deciding fate, standing great
The wise one, bull caring for the great me-s, the holy me-s steadfastly taking care
Great lord, important lord; authority you clasp at your side

⁴²² M. E. Cohen, *Fs. Klein* (2005), p. 73-74. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 202.

⁴²³ Šulgi Hymn to Enki: obv. 1.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*: obv. 5.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*: rev. 28-31.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*: rev. 32-35.

The concluding lines of the hymn call Enki “light of Eridu,” and praise him for being counsel and advice giver for the king and gods. Enki is said to give “abundance and plenty” in the sparkling waters for his fateful shepherd Šulgi.

lugal-mu sud-rá-ág eridu^{ki}-ga⁴²⁷
en sá-galam-ma-zu šu nu-ti
a-a ^den-ki sipa-zi šul-gi-re
nu-dím-mud h́e-gál nam-h́e a-dalla ša-mu-na-ni-è
My king, brilliant light of Eridu
Lord, there is no one who does not take your skillful advice
Father Enki, to the faithful shepherd Šulgi
Nudimmud, abundance and plenty in the shining waters you bring forth

A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi A) describes Šulgi’s relation to the most important gods. Among them is Enki, described as giving ġeštú to Šulgi.⁴²⁸ The order of mentioning the deities is (Ninsun), An, Enlil, Ninlil, Nintu, Enki, Nanna, Utu and Inanna.⁴²⁹ Praise poem Šulgi C records that Šulgi had performed purification rituals with water in the city of Eridu, possibly connected to Šulgi’s accession to the throne.⁴³⁰ From there also “branches of seven wisdoms”⁴³¹ represented in different scribal, constructional, and agricultural knowledge emerge:

eridu^{ki}-ta a nam-išib-ba-ka ní-mu mi-ni-dadag⁴³²
ġeštú 7-bi mu-da-su₈-su₈-ge-éš
From Eridu purification rites (for) myself I did perform
Seven knowledges of it (Eridu) went together with me

The praise poem Šulgi D figures Enki, titled Nudimmud, who is the great lord of Eridu walking with Šulgi, described as destroying enemy lands for him.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.: rev. 40-43.

⁴²⁸ Šulgi A: 12.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.: 7-15.

⁴³⁰ G. R. Castellino, *StSem* 42 (1972), p. 273.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 274 defined as the “academical curriculum.”

⁴³² Šulgi C: 29-30.

u₄-ba abzu-ta ba-ra-ta-[è] ⁴³³
 lugal ^den-ki-ke₄ abzu-ta igi aš mu-í[l]i
 [ki?]-gub-ba-ni kur mu-na-gul?-[e]
 ki-t[u]š-a-ni-ta uru mu-na-gul-e
 du₁₁-ga zi-da inim ki-bi-šè ġar
 nu-dím-mu[d] en gal eridu^k[ⁱ-ga]
 šul-gi [sipad]-z[i ki-en-g]i-r[a]-da x [x x]

Then from Abzu comes out.

King Enki from Abzu (with) one eye (has) to look
 (that) from his place where he stands (for Šulgi) enemy lands to destroy
 (that) from his seat (for Šulgi) the city (of the enemy) to destroy.
 (He) of the righteous command, establishes his word firmly.

Nudimmud, great lord of Eridu

(with) Šulgi, the righteous shepherd of Sumer, [he walks?].

Bitumen used in the constructions of Šulgi's royal *magur*-boat is understood to be emerging from Abzu and so belonging to Enki:

esír-bi esír igi-su ^den-ki-ka ⁴³⁴
 abzu-ta mí-zi du₁₁-ga-àm

Its (of the boat) bitumen (as if) bitumen of Enki
 (that) from Abzu was generously provided.

The praise poem Šulgi E mentions Enki as an author of songs and hymns (inim ^den-ki-ke₄ mu-ši-ġá-ġá-a-àm) ⁴³⁵ written to praise him. The praise poem Šulgi O glorifies Eridu's shrine as being expert in decreeing the fates and having divine powers. ⁴³⁶ A composition titled “Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge” (Šulgi R) sees Enki decreeing good fate for the boat built in the honour of Ninlil. It is interesting to notice that Enlil is mentioned second after Enki – firstly Enki decrees an abundant fate for the boat, then it is stated that Enlil looked upon the boat with good will.

⁴³³ Šulgi D: 312-318.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.: 357-358.

⁴³⁵ Šulgi E: 243.

⁴³⁶ Šulgi O: 8: eridu^{ki} èš-kù-zu-nam-tar-ra me-nun me-sikil-la ki-ús-sa: Eridu, a shrine expert in determining fates; the princely me-s, the pure me-s, firmly founded.

[má-g]ur₈ ^den-ki-ke₄ kar 𒀭-ĝál nam-šè ma-ra-ni-in- 𒀭tar^{ar} 437

[a]- 𒀭a^{ar} (?) ^den-líl-le igi-zu mu-ù-ši-bar^{ar}

magur-boat, Enki decreed abundant harbour to be your fate

Father Enlil looked upon you with benevolence

The uncommon mention of Enki first preceding Enlil might arise from Enki's close relation to canals. In other cases, Enki is always mentioned before Enlil when his city Eridu, considered the most ancient and sacred among the cities, is involved. A composition describing Šulgi's cultic journey to the shrines of the most important deities in Sumer starts with Eridu and Enki while Enlil and Nippur are mentioned in the second place. That does not seem to be in accordance with the Old-Sumerian understanding,⁴³⁸ where for example, in the Zame Hymns Enlil's sanctuary in Nippur gets the highest praise and is mentioned first in the introduction to the hymns.⁴³⁹

[lugal]-ĝu₁₀ eridu^{ki}-šè na-ĝen⁴⁴⁰

My King went to Eridu

n[un gal] a-a ^den-ki ħúl- 𒀭la-a^{ar}

Be happy, great prince, father Enki!

^dš[ul-g]i-re eridu^{ki}-šè na-ĝen

Šulgi went to Eridu

nun gal [a]-a [^de]n-ki 𒀭ħúl-la-a^{ar}

Be happy, great prince, father Enki!

lugal-ĝ[_{u10} E]N.LÍL^{ki}-šè na- 𒀭ĝen^{ar}

My King went to Nippur

kur gal a- 𒀭a^{ar} [^den-l]íl ħúl-la-a

Be happy, great mountain, father Enlil!

^dšul-gi-r[e E]N.LÍL^{ki}-šè na-ĝen

Šulgi went to Nippur

kur gal a-a ^den-líl ħúl-la-a

Be happy, great mountain, father Enlil!

The same concept of considering Eridu the most ancient city of Sumer finds its expression in the mythological-historical composition "The Sumerian King List." It is quite possible that the text originally was created under the rule of the Ur III kings. The idea is supported also by I. M. Diakonoff, who explains the missing of Lagaš

⁴³⁷ Šulgi R: 1-2. In line 76, a species of fish are mentioned in connection unclear to Enki.

⁴³⁸ Cf. A. Annus, *The God Ninurta in the Mythology and Royal Ideology of Ancient Mesopotamia* (2002), p. 13ff. for Nippur of Enlil as the first and most important city in the early history of Mesopotamian kingship.

⁴³⁹ Cf. M. Krebernik, *Fs. Hrouda* (1994), pp. 152-154 for the translation of the introduction to the hymns.

⁴⁴⁰ Song of Šulgi: 5-12. Cf. D. Frayne, *ARRIM* 1 (1983), p. 6: gods and their cities are mentioned in the following order: Enki in Eridu, Enlil in Nippur, Ninurta in Ešumeša, Ninĥursaĝ in Keš, Ašimbabbar in Ur, Utu in Larsa, Ninerigal in Kullab, and Inanna in Zababa.

from the list of cities by the fact that at the beginning of Ur III period there was a military conflict between the two states, and there would be no reason in earlier or later periods to exclude the city of Lagaš from the text.⁴⁴¹ “The Sumerian King List” claims that the principle of kingship was lowered down from the heaven and given first to the city of Eridu.

[nam]-lugal an-ta èd-dè-a-ba⁴⁴²

[eri]du^{ki} nam-lugal-la

When the kingship from the heaven was lowered down,
in Eridu (was) the kingship.

The praise poem Šulgi Y shows Enki giving assignments to Utu for securing the kingship and abundance during the reign of Šulgi. A motive where Enki gives orders to Utu later occurs in the myth “Enki and Ninḥursaĝ,” where Enki asks Utu⁴⁴³ to grant water for Dilmun. In Šulgi Y, Utu seems to be assigned as an aid or advocate to Šulgi for giving him support:

nam-lugal-ĝá u₄-bi sù-d[a]⁴⁴⁴

bala-ĝá ḥé-ĝál pa é-é-dam

^den-ki en du₁₁-ga-ni nu-kúr-ru saĝ-íl ba-ni-kur₉

^dutu inim-ma-ni saĝ-ba du maškim-šè ba-an-šúm

So that the days of my kingship (could be) long-lasting

So that in my reign abundance (could) come forth

Enki, whose commands cannot be broken, entered inside there proudly

Utu, who knows the words, he installed as an advocate (for Šulgi)

Among other texts of Šulgi mentioning Enki, a *tigi* to Ninurta for Šulgi has a reference to Enki paired with Ninurta: ^dnin-urta nun gal ^den-ki-d[a ...]:⁴⁴⁵ Ninurta

⁴⁴¹ *История Древнего Востока* (1983), p. 164: “Нам известно о вражде Ура с Лагашем в начале правления III династии Ура (XXI в. до н.э.), но ничего не известно о причинах, которые заставили бы исключить Лагаш из ‘Списка’ в более ранний или поздний период. Поэтому нам кажется невозможной более поздняя дата ‘Царского списка’, предлагаемая некоторыми исследователями.”

⁴⁴² Sumerian King List: 1-2.

⁴⁴³ Enki and Ninḥursaĝ: 42-43.

⁴⁴⁴ Šulgi Y: 3-6.

⁴⁴⁵ Šulgi T: 6.

with the great prince Enki. According to royal inscriptions, Šulgi built or restored a temple for Enki,⁴⁴⁶ and another for his spouse Damgalnunna.⁴⁴⁷

5.2.3. Amar-Su'en

A composition titled “Amar-Su'en and Enki's Temple” describes a situation where Amar-Su'en had possibly decided to destroy an Abzu temple for Enki for building a new shrine instead without Enki's own permission and against the given omens.⁴⁴⁸ The following year he was unable to rebuild the temple because no such divine order was given by Enki. In the second year Amar-Su'en puts on a mourning garment to ease the anger of the gods. A similar situation occurs in the composition “The Curse of Agade” where Narām-Su'en does not receive omens for rebuilding the É-Kur temple for Enlil and puts on a mourning garment to calm down the gods.⁴⁴⁹ In the seventh year Enki speaks something to Amar-Su'en about the temple.⁴⁵⁰ Possibly he did not grant permission for the rebuilding works. However, in the ninth year Amar-Su'en builds the É-Uduna temple for Enki. Whether Amar-Su'en acted against the will of Enki or not, seems unclear based on the following lines:

u₄-ba en-e é ní-te-na-ka⁴⁵¹
en gal ^den-ki [k]i-bi ba-da-an-ḫul?
Then the lord in his own house,
the great lord Enki its place destroyed (?)

Amar-Su'en's composition referring to a ruler having troubles with reconstructing a certain temple and so being in conflict with the gods indicates the beginning of the so-called “Unheilsherrscher” tradition in Mesopotamian literature concerning “the calamitous ruler who by his impiety brings destruction upon the land.”⁴⁵² From the

⁴⁴⁶ Šulgi 10.

⁴⁴⁷ Šulgi 9.

⁴⁴⁸ The beginning lines of the text are not in the condition of giving a precise translation, but it seems reasonable to suggest, that Amar-Su'en had started to demolish the temple of Enki without a precise divine order for building a new temple instead.

⁴⁴⁹ Curse of Agade: 90.

⁴⁵⁰ Amar-Su'en A: 21.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.: 25-26.

⁴⁵² P. Michalowski, *Gs. Finkelstein* (1977), pp. 156-157. Cf. B. Hruska, *ArOr* 47 (1979), pp. 10-11.

literature possibly composed during the Ur III period, “The Curse of Akkade” has a similar thematical development and structure.

Royal inscriptions of Amar-Su'en record that he had built the beloved Abzu for Enki: ^den-ki / lugal ki áġ-áġ-ni-ir / abzu ki áġ-áġ-ni / mu-na-dù.⁴⁵³ The eighth year of Amar-Su'en's reign is identified as the year when En-nun-gal-an-na was given the office of en-priest in Eridu by Amar-Su'en.⁴⁵⁴

5.2.4. Šu-Su'en

Among the inscriptions of Šu-Su'en one hymn mentions Enki who is described as a god who determines destinies and has “wide understanding” as his characteristic element. The status of being a “determiner of fates” is also given to Enlil, meaning the title is not a specific honorary title for Enki, but a formula used for several gods symbolising importance and power:

a-a ^den-líl en nam tar-re á-tuku-n[i ħ]é-me-en⁴⁵⁵

^dutu-gen₇ hé-du₇-ni ħé-me-en ^dnin-[líl] èš maḥ-a-kam

en sig₇-ga ^den-ki nam tar-re a-a ġeš[tú daġal]-la-kam

Of the father Enlil, lord who decrees the fates, you are his powerful one

Like Utu, his ornament you are. – Of Ninlil of the great shrine

of the comely lord Enki who decrees the fates, father of wide understanding.⁴⁵⁶

Among other records of Šu-Su'en, one titles his second year by mentioning a ship made for Enki: mu má-dàra-abzu ^den-ki-ka ba-ab-du₈.⁴⁵⁷ The year when *dara*-Abzu boat was pitched.

⁴⁵³ Amar-Su'en 5: ii 2-5.

⁴⁵⁴ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 202.

⁴⁵⁵ Praise Poem of Šu-Su'en: 23-25.

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. the commentary of S. N Kramer, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p 311.

⁴⁵⁷ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 202.

5.2.5. Ibbi-Su'en

A *tigi* to Su'en for Ibbi-Su'en witnesses a change in paradigms in dealing with Enki when compared to earlier compositions. Enki is titled to be the eldest brother of the gods. Enki has the third position in the row of gods following Enlil, the mother-goddess figure in most of the previous texts having the third position, is mentioned fourth behind Enki:

an^den-líl pap-gal^dnu-dím-mud⁴⁵⁸

ama^dnin-tu kalam-ma šir-ra-ni maḥ-ám me-téš ḥé-i-i

To An, Enlil, the big (eldest) brother Nudimmud,
mother Nintu of the land, his song that is great, let for them all come out.

When Šulgi D mentioned seven ḡeštú-s of Eridu, Ibbi-Su'en B has a reference to seven me-s related to Enki called nun "the Prince:"

me 7-na LAGABx? gal-le-eš ḡar-[ra-àm]⁴⁵⁹

me še-er-ka-an nun-e abzu-ta nun [x x] še-er-ka-an du₁₁-ga-[àm]

The seven me-s ... grandly established
adorned with me-s, (by) the prince from Abzu, ... adorned, ordered

In an *adab* to Su'en for Ibbi-Su'en Enki is mentioned in connection with the flooding of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Qualities of the most important deities given by the king are described as follows: An gives divine powers and a royal scepter for Ibbi-Su'en, Enlil lordship and qualities of a warrior, Enki abundance of vegetation and flooding, Nintu increases fertility of human and animal birth, Nanna confirms the divine plans and gives light of glory, and Utu produces justice. Enki's role here should be granting the water and prosperity for agriculture by means of flooding the rivers:

^den-ki-ke₄ nam-ḥé u₄ giri₁₇-zal mú-mú

ⁱ⁷idigna ⁱ⁷buranun-na a-ù-ba daḡal-x⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ Ibbi-Su'en A: 24-25; 27-28.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibbi-Su'en B: rev. 2-3.

Enki, abundance, days of (splendour) of vegetation (which are) growing,
the Tigris and Euphrates (in) their high water wide (makes).

As was in Ibbi-Su'en poem A, the order of the gods in the listing is An, Enlil, Enki, Nintu, Nanna, and Utu.⁴⁶¹ Except Ur-Namma C, this kind of ordering was not common in the texts of previous periods, where Enki occupied the fourth position in the row. The change of places of gods in royal hymns also indicates a change in royal ideology – possibly shifting in favour of the male deities and dominance.

5.2.6. Puzur-Eštar

From Mari a Semitic inscription on a statue of Mari's governor general Puzur-Eštar, contemporary of Šulgi, mentions Enki/Ea as “lord of the assembly.” The statue is dedicated to Enki/Ea “for the life” of Puzur-Eštar: *a-na* 𒂗 𒀭 [EN.KI] / *be-al* [UNKEN]⁴⁶²: To Enki/Ea / lord of the assembly. The final curse formula against the removing of the statue which promises to tear out the foundations of the wrongdoer contains deities in the following order: ^dINANNA / ^d*da-gan* / ^ú ^dEN.KI / *be-al* UNKEN: Inanna, Dagan, and Enki/Ea, lord of the assembly.⁴⁶³

“Lord of the assembly” was a title usually associated with El in West-Semitic mythology. And as was previously discussed, both Enki and El share common features concerning their cosmic region and character.⁴⁶⁴ Was the name EN.KI a direct cover name for the Semitic El in Mari, as suggested by W. G. Lambert,⁴⁶⁵ remains hard to answer, even if several common features seem to indicate towards the possibility.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibbi-Su'en C: 45-46.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.: 42-56.

⁴⁶² Puzur-Eštar 1: 7-8.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.: 15-18.

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. 2.1.3.2. of the current study.

⁴⁶⁵ W. G. Lambert, *MARI* 4 (1985), pp. 537-538.

5.3. “The Curse of Agade”

The text most likely to have been composed during the Ur III period representing the Sumerian understanding concerning the destruction of the Dynasty of Agade and the concept about “Unheilsherrscher” sees Enlil in É-Kur the preeminent deity. In one of the listings of deities occurring in the text, Su’en as the city god of Ur heads the list of gods:

u₄-ba d^dsuen d^den-ki d^dinana d^dnin-urta d^diškur d^dutu d^dnusku d^dnisaba diġir gal-gal-e-ne⁴⁶⁶ / ħé-
em-me-eš⁴⁶⁷

Then Su’en, Enki, Inanna, Ninurta, Iškur, Utu, Nuska, Nisaba, the great gods / all the gods whosoever.

The choice of other gods in the listing remains obscure. The explanation that the deities mentioned represent the southern pantheon of Sumer is not convincing since several of them are missing and several deities can be associated with northern cities as well.⁴⁶⁸

Rest of the textual examples in “The Curse of Agade” describes how Enki expresses his anger towards the city, caused by the misdeeds of Narām-Su’en. He takes away Agade’s ġeštú – feature usually granted by Enki:

ġeštú-bi d^den-ki-ke₄ ba-an-túm⁴⁶⁹

Enki took away its (Agade’s) knowledge

Enki is described as pulling down into his Abzu the mooring pole of Agade, possibly symbolising the temple or the city itself:⁴⁷⁰

ġeš^ttargul kù im-dù-dù-a-bi⁴⁷¹

d^den-ki-ke₄ abzu-a mi-ni-in-bu

⁴⁶⁶ Curse of Agade: 210.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.: 222.

⁴⁶⁸ J. C. Cooper, *The Curse of Agade* (1983), p. 254.

⁴⁶⁹ Curse of Agade: 71.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. J. C. Cooper, op. cit., pp. 242-243.

⁴⁷¹ Curse of Agade: 74-75.

Its (well) fixed holy mooring pole
Enki tore down in (inside) abzu

Enki is asked to curse the clay of Agade that should “return to its Abzu.” ab-zu-bi-a – meaning that the clay used for bricks and construction should go back to the place it originated from – Abzu. So the literary translation of the line could also be “May the buildings/structures of the city be demolished:”

im-zu abzu-ba ḫé-eb-gi₄⁴⁷²
im ^den-ki-ke₄ nam ku₅-rá ḫé-a
May your clay return to its Abzu!
May it be the clay that is cursed by Enki!

5.4. Enki in Neo-Sumerian Incantations

More than twenty incantations are known at the moment from the Neo-Sumerian period, several of them featuring Enki.⁴⁷³ Deities invoked in the incantations of the period tend to be more related to the pantheon of Eridu. Also Asalluḫi and Namma⁴⁷⁴ appear for the first time in the incantation literature of Mesopotamia.⁴⁷⁵ Asalluḫi is titled “son of Enki.” As is common in case of later Marduk-Ea type incantations,⁴⁷⁶ his role seems to be asking advice from his father Enki on behalf of a person who needs help. In the following case, Asalluḫi “sends a man” to consult Enki:

^d[as]al-lú-ḫi-e⁴⁷⁷
a-a-ni ^den-ki-šè lú mu-ši-gi₄-gi₄
Asalluḫi
To his father Enki, a man sends

⁴⁷² Ibid.: 231-2.

⁴⁷³ Cf. G. Cunningham, *StPohl 17*, p. 64.

⁴⁷⁴ His association with Enki is underlined by the fact that her name is written with the sign ENGUR. In the later myth of “Enki and Ninmah,” Namma appears as mother of Enki. Cf. Cf. G. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 76-77.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, pp. 100-102.

⁴⁷⁷ G. Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 68: incantation no. 71: 16-17; incantation no. 66: 4-5.

The other option is that instead of sending a messenger to Enki,⁴⁷⁸ Asalluḫi himself goes to meet him to receive advice for the troubled person, “their conversation takes place in the temple, the place of mediation between the temporal and divine domains.”⁴⁷⁹

^dasal-lú-ḫi igi im-ma-z[i]⁴⁸⁰

a-a-ni ^den-ki-ra é-a 𒂗𒀭 -an-[di]-in-ku₄

gù mu-un-na-dé-e

Asalluḫi took notice,

his father Enki in the temple approached,

spoke to him.

When Asalluḫi has described the problem of the troubled person to his father, Enki is described as saying that he does not know anything his son Asalluḫi already does not know. Afterwards he gives advice how to deal with the problem or illness of the person in need:

^den-ki-ke₄ du[mu-ni ^dasal-lú-ḫi] mu-un-n[a-ni-ib-gi₄-gi₄]⁴⁸¹

dumu-ḡu₁₀ a-na [nu-zu] a-na [a-ra-ab-daḫ-e]

^dasal-l[ú-ḫi a-na nu-zu] a-na a-[ra-ab-daḫ-e]

níg-ì-zu-a-[ḡu₁₀] ù [za-e in-ga-e-zu]

Enki his son Asalluḫi answers:

My son, what do you not know, what can I add for you?

Asalluḫi, what do you not know, what can I add for you?

What I know, you know.

Enki then explains to Asalluḫi what kind of procedures and magical activities should be performed to change the situation. From the Ur III period on, the term “incantation

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 80: a more frequent format in the earlier incantations.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 74.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 70: incantation no. 62: 16-18.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.: 33-36.

of Eridu.” nam-šub-NUN^{ki} often occurs in the incantations, in the following case as a part of a divine legitimation formula of an incantation:⁴⁸²

du-an-LAK 397-nu-ru

nam-šub-NUN^{ki}-ga puzur₅-puzur₅ mu-silig-e abzu-a

nam-mu-da-[bú]r-e

May the incantation formula,

the incantation of Eridu, the secrets, mighty speech in Abzu

not be undone.

One incantation describes “a chaos monster” bringing illness. It is explained how powerful the monster is: the monster is sent like a weapon, it crosses over like a plague, and it is like a lion roaring in the flood. Fifty Anunna gods of Eridu are mentioned to be fleeing from the monster:

a-nun-na NUN^{ki} ninnu-bi šu₄-din-mušen-dal-la-gen₇ du₈-e ba-da-ab-ra-aš⁴⁸³

Its 50 Anunna gods of Eridu like fluttering birds flee to the mound.

One incantation mentions Agrun and Abzu occurring in the same context. Seven sons of Abzu are somehow asked to assist the person in trouble:

dumu-ab-zu 7-na-ne-ne dag-agrun-na-ka ki-gig-šá-ga-na ḥé-em-du₈-du₈-ne⁴⁸⁴

Let the seven sons of Abzu in the dwelling place of Agrun undo the sickness of his belly.

Agrun is probably used here as a synonym or an epithet for Enki’s domain Abzu.⁴⁸⁵ In general, Agrun is “the underworld, conceived as the chamber of Enki, but also the locus of demonic forces and of the heavenly bodies, when they are not visible at the sky.”⁴⁸⁶ Its written form É.NUN⁴⁸⁷ already reflects the connection with the circle of

⁴⁸² Cf. P. Michalowski, *OrNS* 54 (1985), pp. 223-224. Cf. nam-šub of Enki in Ur-Namma B: 19 in 5.2.1. of the current chapter.

⁴⁸³ G. Cunningham, *StPohl* 17, p. 90: incantation no. 63: 4.

⁴⁸⁴ Å. Sjöberg, *PSD* 1 A/III (1998), p. 65.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁴⁸⁶ R. Caplice, *OrNS* 42 (1973), p. 305.

Enki but the term is additionally used to refer to the underworld region from where the sun sets and rises.⁴⁸⁸ Thirdly, Agrun is simply used as a common noun to designate a chamber, a cella, or a temple – in Akkadian *kummum* that can be used in case of a temple of any god.⁴⁸⁹

Although the incantations do not provide any large amount of information about Enki's nature or the mythology related to him, some certain features can be summarised. Firstly, it is clear that in the Neo-Sumerian period, Asalluḫi is considered the son of Enki. Secondly, the incantations underline Abzu's and Eridu's role as the seats of divine and magical power. Enki's connection with the incantation waters⁴⁹⁰ is also firmly established based on the incantations of the period⁴⁹¹ – feature that was not directly expressed in any Old-Sumerian or Old-Akkadian text.

5.5. The God Ḫaia

Since the names of Ḫaia and Ea seem to share common features, and Ḫaia is also closely associated with the circle of Enki in Sumerian sources, a brief summary about this god is given in the chapter concerning Enki in Neo-Sumerian sources.

His name is written ḫa-ia⁴⁹² and “originally the name may have been a variant spelling of é-a, and therefore identical with Enki,”⁴⁹³ as M. Civil states. However, it would be more accurate to claim that originally the name may have been identical to Ea since based on the Old-Sumerian and Old-Akkadian sources there is no reason to believe that Ea and Enki were originally identical divine concepts. In the Old-Babylonian period, Ḫaia and Enki are with certainty different deities as is shown by a hymn to Ḫaia for Rīm-Su'en (Rīm-Su'en B). What makes the identification of Ea and Ḫaia seemingly probable is the fact “that while offerings are made to Ḫaia, especially

⁴⁸⁷ The term is attested already in Pre-Sargonic texts (Cf. Å. Sjöberg, op. cit., pp. 65-68), but the connection to Enki and Abzu is difficult to fathom out based on the early texts. Cf. M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, pp. 41-43.

⁴⁸⁸ R. Caplice, op. cit., pp. 302-303.

⁴⁸⁹ D. Charpin, *Clergé*, p. 213; R. Caplice, op. cit., p. 299.

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. W. Sallaberger, *Kalender I*, p. 66 for Enki related to purification rituals of the period.

⁴⁹¹ G. Cunningham, op. cit., pp. 82-85.

⁴⁹² Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 6 and pp. 134-136; D. Charpin, op. cit., pp. 353-354.

⁴⁹³ M. Civil, *JAOS* 103 (1983), p. 44.

in Ur, in the Ur III period, at that time Ea appears only in personal names.”⁴⁹⁴ Therefore, it would not be unimaginable that the offerings were given to the deity Ḫaia but instead the deity Ea, whose name appeared in the personal names, was meant. Ḫaia may have been an official name of the god Ea in written sources during the Ur III period. M. Green argues that the names Ḫaia and Ea could represent two different renderings of a Pre-Sumerian divine name “adopted into both the Sumerian and the Akkadian pantheons, Haja persisting as the name of a separate but closely related deity after the form Ea became assimilated to Enki.”⁴⁹⁵ According to M. Green, Ea would be a Pre-Sumerian deity whom the Sumerians adopted as Ḫaia and the Semitic nations as Ea. While Ea and Enki became assimilated, the Sumerian Ḫaia would have persisted as a separate deity. This kind of logic seems possible, but in lack of written evidence impossible to prove. Not much is known about the unidentifiable Pre-Sumerian god in question, and the assimilation of the two names Ea and Enki is also hard to date with precision.

A hymn to Ḫaia for Rīm-Su’en, so far the only known text dealing directly with Ḫaia, pictures him mainly as a god of writing and purification rituals.⁴⁹⁶ His relation to Enki and Eridu is underlined in the Rīm-Su’en hymn where Ḫaia is titled ḫé-du èš-e-abzu-a⁴⁹⁷ (an ornament to the temple of Abzu) and en ḡeštú maḡ šu-du⁴⁹⁸ (lord, having great understanding).⁴⁹⁹ Ḫaia’s subordinate status to Enki is stated in the text. He has received all his powers and knowledge from Enki.⁵⁰⁰ One inscription on a cylinder seal dating from the period of Rīm-Su’en’s reign⁵⁰¹ titles him ^dḫa-ià za-bar-dab₅ ^den-ki (*zabardabum* of Enki⁵⁰²) meaning that he was a high official at the temple of Enki. Genealogically Ḫaia was husband of Nidaba and father of Sud. Sud in turn after

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid. Cf. H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 134 for a catalog of personal names, and p. 135 for occurrences in the offering lists.

⁴⁹⁵ *Eridu*, p. 75.

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. D. Charpin, *Clergé*, p. 354.

⁴⁹⁷ Rīm-Su’en B: 8.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.: 1.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. D. Charpin, op. cit., p. 353 for the list of epithets.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid., pp. 236-241 for the functions of *zabardabum*.

marrying Enlil becomes Ninlil.⁵⁰³ Although ̒aia was a subordinate divine figure to Enki, he was at the same time considered also the father-in-law of Enlil.⁵⁰⁴

If accepting the idea according to which the deity ̒aia was a variant of the name Ea, he might have taken its separate existence due to regional differences or theological speculation. He may have been an adoption of a Semitic name into the Sumerian pantheon. However, “die ähnliche Form der beiden Namen mag auch auf reinem Zufall beruhen,”⁵⁰⁵ and therefore based on the few scholarly speculations and withonly limited textual material concerning ̒aia, no conclusions can be summarised about the problem. The only information that could be presented with certainty is the fact that ̒aia was related to Enki circle and he received offerings in the Ur III period. The fact that Ea was used only in personal names in the written sources of the period does not necessarily mean that he received offerings under the name of ̒aia.

5.6. Enki’s Representations in Neo-Sumerian Art

The flowing water motive is also present in the glyptic art throughout the Neo-Sumerian period. Only the particular convention of fish swimming near the streams seems to disappear after the time of the Dynasty of Akkade.⁵⁰⁶ The flowing vase can occur as a separate entity or as an illustration as one fragment of a limestone bas-relief found at Tello from the times of Gudea shows:⁵⁰⁷



Fig. 7: Fragment of a limestone bas-relief, Louvre.

⁵⁰³ M. Civil, *JAOS* 103 (1983), pp. 43-44.

⁵⁰⁴ He is also connected to Enlil and Nippur – in Rīm-Su’en B: 7 he is in service of Enlil. Cf. D. Charpin, *Clergé*, p. 353.

⁵⁰⁵ H. D. Galter, *Ea/Enki*, p. 7.

⁵⁰⁶ E. D. van Buren, *Vase*, p. 2.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

Most of the attributes and cult objects are usually depicted on the seals dealing with the god with streams.⁵⁰⁸ As an example from the Neo-Sumerian period, a seal titled “The Enthroned Enki”⁵⁰⁹ distributes two of the symbols associated with Enki/Ea. The water streams are flowing out from a vase held by a male deity. In that particular seal, the creature defined as the goat-fish, one of the symbols of Enki/Ea is also represented.



Fig. 8: “The Enthroned Enki” (B.M. 103232), The British Museum.

Confirming the idea that the bearded male figure on a throne is Enki/Ea is the occurrence of both his symbols together. The idea behind the symbolism seems to be the same as in earlier periods – gift of fertility from divine to human.

U. Seidl gives further developments concerning the motive where Enki is represented alongside his symbols. She interprets the symbolism in connection with Enki’s role as the main patron of incantations. According to Seidl, the fish should deliver the incantation to Abzu, the bird represented in the seals to the heavens. Role of the goat-fish should again be the task of carrying the incantation to the desert. Whether this is the case with the seal impressions of the Old-Akkadian and Neo-Sumerian periods, is hard to answer.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, p. 123.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ U. Seidl developed the idea in a paper *Magische Funktionen des Fisches im Spiegel der neuassyrischen Glyptik* presented at the 6th Assyriological Symposium at the University of Tartu, 2004.

5.7. Conclusions

The sources from the Second Dynasty of Lagaš usually list Enki after the mother-goddess figure Ninḫursaĝ as the fourth god in the row of deities. Enki's name also occurs in the listings that are not systematically ordered or represent the local Lagaš pantheon. "The Cylinders of Gudea" see Enki as a deity who can draw plans for temple building and put the foundation pegs of the temple on the right place. The foundations of the temple are described as being in contact with the under earth domain of Enki – Abzu. "The Curse of Agade" in turn testifies that Enki also expresses his anger toward a city and can destroy its buildings and curse its clay.

One development clearly detectable from the Ur III texts considered is Enki's change of rank in the listings of deities. In the beginning of the period, Enki has the fourth place after the mother-goddess figure, while only Ur-Namma C lists Enki third and preceding the mother-goddess figure Nintu. Texts of Ibbi-Su'en see Enki, in the third place; Nintu now has the fourth rank. S. N. Kramer stated, "It is only with the Early Post-Sumerian period – contemporary data from the Ur III period are lacking at the moment – that Enki begins to precede Ninḫursaĝ."⁵¹¹ Based on the royal hymns of Ibbi-Su'en it would be reasonable to conclude, that the change in the pantheon took place somewhere at the closure of the Ur III period or shortly after. This change may be due to the "shift in power from female to male from the third millennium to the beginning of the second millennium,"⁵¹² and so represent the overall shift towards the male dominance in Mesopotamian society.

Enki who is often titled Nudimmud is related to his city Eridu, his domain Abzu, and he is characterised as a giver and holder of ĝestú – "knowledge," "understanding." Cleansing rites (šul-uh) and incantations (nam-šub) are mentioned related to Enki. He is associated with canals and boats. His ability as an abundance giver represented in water and flooding is also underlined – Enki "brings forth abundance and plenty in the shining waters."⁵¹³ Enki is characterised as holder of the holy me-s – divine norms of

⁵¹¹ S. N. Kramer, *OrNS* (1970), p. 106.

⁵¹² S. A. Meier, *JAOS* 111 (1991), p. 544. "The fluctuating socio-political mystique of the mother-goddess, which underwent a transformation in the course of Mesopotamian history, may be directly related to a shift in orientation from female to male priority in institutionalized learning."

⁵¹³ Šulgi Hymn to Enki: rev. 43.

civilisation. He is called pap-gal ^dnu-dím-mud: “eldest brother (of the gods), Nudimmud,” and also nu-dím-mud ^den-líl-bandà: “junior Enlil.” Enki’s adobe Abzu is characterised as provider of bitumen – important construction material in Mesopotamia. His city Eridu is mentioned first among all the other cities of Sumer, while Enlil’s city Nippur is named after Eridu in literary compositions. This was not the case with the listings of gods, where Enlil always preceded Enki. Also “The Sumerian King List” tells that Eridu was the place where at the beginning of time the kingship was given from heaven. Eridu is characterised as holder of seven ġeštú-s. Incantations underline the role of Abzu (also equated with Agrun) and Eridu as seats of divine and magical power. The invoked deities tend to be more related to the pantheon of Eridu. Ur III incantations testify the beginning of Marduk-Ea type incantations, where Enki’s son Asalluġi acts as mediator between the person in trouble and his advice giving father Enki. Enki’s connection to the incantation waters and water in general seems to be underlined in the royal hymns and as well as in incantations. This feature was missing from the known Old-Sumerian and Old-Akkadian sources.

The name Ea is reserved for the personal names only⁵¹⁴ and for that reason plays no part in the official pantheon of the Ur III period. Offerings to the deity Ĥaia are recorded from this period. It should be considered possible, that Ĥaia might have been a representation of Ea. From sources outside Mesopotamia, one text of Puzur-Eštar titles Enki *be-al* UNKEN “Lord of the Assembly” – title usually given to El. This might mean that El and Enki were in some extent equated in the official cult of Mari.

The water-god motive in Neo-Sumerian art is mostly identical to that of the previous periods; however the Old-Akkadian mythological scenes are missing from the glyptic art of the Neo-Sumerian period. Enki’s symbol, the goatfish, also occurs on the cylinder seals of the period; the flowing vase and water-streams are widespread symbols of the god.

⁵¹⁴ Ch. Jean, *Religion sumérienne*, p. 47.

CHAPTER 6

6. Enki in Sumerian Epic Stories and Myths

The Sumerian epic tales about Enmerkar, Lugalbanda, and Gilgameš were with all the probability in their first form composed during the Ur III period when taking into consideration the obvious obsession of the rulers of the period towards these ancient and possibly historical rulers of Sumer.⁵¹⁵ Most of the stories also feature the god Enki and his role in these epic tales will be summarised in this chapter.

The myths of Enki are the best examples of the theology of Eridu that was probably not systematised in its fullest form before the middle of the Old-Babylonian period and the rise to prominence of Babylon.⁵¹⁶ When dealing with the myths of Enki, a serious chronological problem of the Sumerian literature arises, because it is not possible to give an exact dating for a piece of literature based on the approximate date of composition of a tablet. In case of the myths where a larger body of religious ideas is assembled, it turns out impossible to detect the real date of origins for the mythological narratives. For example, the myth “Enki and Ninmah,” the oldest textual examples coming from the Old-Babylonian period, might have had its original prototype already in the Old-Sumerian theological speculation.⁵¹⁷ On the other hand, the myth can well contain large influences coming from the worldview of the Semitic Old-Babylonian scribes who adopted it into the frames of the Sumerian literary tradition. The Sumerian language was probably not alive as a spoken language in the final period of the composition of the Sumerian myths and was used in the *eduba* by “the scholars and the more advanced students, who learned it, however, as a foreign language.”⁵¹⁸ For that reason, all the major Enki myths seem to be mixture of theological clichés having their roots in the Old-Sumerian thought, assembled together by the Semitic scribes in a manner suitable for the theological ambitions of the time the myths were composed.

⁵¹⁵ C. Wilcke, *Das Lugalbandaepos* (1969), p. 1.

⁵¹⁶ W. W. Hallo, *JAOS* 116 (1996), p. 232.

⁵¹⁷ Cf. H. Sauren’s treatment of “Enki and Ninmah” in *Fs. Hallo* (1993), pp. 198-208.

⁵¹⁸ M.-L. Thomsen, *Mesopotamia* 10, p. 17.

6.1. Enki in Sumerian Epic Stories

6.1.1. Enmerkar and Lugalbanda

The epic “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” tells about the abilities of Enki as a destroyer. Here Enmerkar asks his messenger to frighten the city of Aratta with the words also containing the mention of Enki:

aratta^{ki} á-dam ^den-ki-ke₄ nam ba-an-kud⁵¹⁹
k[i b]i-in-gul-la-gen₇ ki nam-ga-bí-ib-gul-en

Let the city of Aratta be a like settlement meant to be doomed by Enki
and destroyed – I as well shall destroy.

The same text titles him “Junior Enlil of Sumer” ^den-líl bàn-da ki-en-gi-ra-ke₄⁵²⁰ and Nudimmud, who is glorified for his “pure me-s.”⁵²¹ The epic contains a mysterious “incantation of Nudimmud” (nam-šub ^dnu-dím-mud-da-ke₄)⁵²² discussed previously in 2.1.3.1. of the current study in relation to the supposed rivalry between Enki and Enlil. Although the context of the passage is still obscure, it is stated that once upon a time all the mankind gave praise to Enlil in one tongue. Then Enki decides to mix the tongues for the “ambitious kings and lords.” The meaning of the text is hard to interpret and the passage seems out of the context in the composition of the overall narrative of the epic. It might echo the rivalry between the two theologies of Enlil of Nippur and Enki of Eridu. But the text seems more likely to be a threat to the rulers of Aratta demanding their obedience. The nam-šub of Enki might show the power and abilities of Enki – he “changes the speeches” of the rulers who are becoming too ambitious. The text also describes Enki as being “lord of abundance,” “lord of wisdom,” and “the expert or leader among the gods:”

^den-ki en hé-ğál-la en du₁₁-ga zi⁵²³
en ġeštú-ga igi-ğál kalam-ma-ke₄

⁵¹⁹ Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta: 119-120.

⁵²⁰ Ibid.: 129.

⁵²¹ Ibid.: 130. Line 58 mentions the me-s brought from Eridu.

⁵²² Ibid.: 135.

⁵²³ Ibid.: 150-153.

mas-su diġir-re-e-ne-ke₄

ġeštú-ge pà-da en eridu^{ki}-ga-ke₄

Enki, the lord of abundance and of rightful orders

Lord of the understanding, knowing one of the land

Expert (leader) of the gods

Chosen (one) for (his) knowledge, the lord Eridu

“The Lugalbanda Epic” associates Enki with an “eagle-tree” where the Anzu bird has made its nest: giri₁₇-zal ġeš-ĥu-rí-in ^den-ki-ke₄.⁵²⁴ splendid “eagle-tree” of Enki. Another motive from the same epic explains that Enki was helpful to Lugalbanda in irrigation works. He is said to have drained the water for Lugalbanda and removed the dead reeds from the drained area possibly to build a city on the site. The passage underlines Enki’s role as the god of marshland areas, he is again mentioned together with reeds as in many older texts:

^den-ki lugal eridu^{ki}-ga-ke₄

gi úš-bi ĥa-ma-an-zé a-bi ĥa-ma-an-til⁵²⁵

Enki, the king of Eridu,

tore up the decaying reeds for me, drained its waters for me.

The text also mentions the Laḥama gods, the gate keepers of Abzu, who are described as able to come out from there:

la-ĥa-ma abzu-ta re₇-e-gen₇⁵²⁶

Like Laḥama gods going out from Abzu

“Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave” mentions a banquet organised by Lugalbanda to probably four of the most important gods of the period. The gods are mentioned in the following order: An, Enlil, Enki, and Ninḥursaġ.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁴ Epic of Lugalbanda: 28.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.: 300-301; 366-367.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.: 221.

⁵²⁷ Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave: 364; 376. The ordering of the gods is similar to that in the royal hymns of the end of the Ur III period.

6.1.2. Gilgameš

The opening passage of the Sumerian text “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld” beginning with the creation narrative describing the separation of An and Ki continues with a mention of Ereškigal who had been taken hold by (or who had received the netherworld as her cosmic region in the beginning of times) the netherworld named Kur.⁵²⁸ The composition develops by a description of Enki sailing in his boat to attack the netherworld which in turn is described as fighting him back.⁵²⁹ The text continues with the description of the *huluppu*-tree growing on the banks of Euphrates and the results of the fight of Enki against the Kur are not mentioned in the story.⁵³⁰

During the epic, Gilgameš makes himself two objects $\check{g}e\check{s}$ ellag and $\check{g}e\check{s}$ E.KID-ma⁵³¹ (possibly musical instruments) from the wood of the *huluppu*-tree he had cut down previously. Somehow these two objects fall down into the netherworld. His friend Enkidu descends down to the netherworld to rescue the objects but the netherworld takes hold of him because Enkidu did not obey the instructions of Gilgameš of how to act there. Gilgameš goes to Nippur to ask the advice of Enlil who does not help him. Then Gilgameš goes to Eridu to meet Enki who is offering his help. Enki assigns Utu to open the hole of the netherworld and so Enkidu or his spirit is somehow able to communicate with Gilgameš.⁵³² It is interesting to notice that the same motive where Enki assigns Utu to perform a task given by him is also present in Šulgi Y (covered in 5.2.2. of the current study) and in the myth “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ” where Enki assigns Utu to grant water for Dilmun (covered in the current chapter). When considering the fact that Enki and Utu were closely associated in the Ebla myths (4.3. of the current study) and also the solar deity often occurred together with the god with streams in Old-Akkadian glyptic art, some special relation between these deities is imaginable. One explanation would be that Utu visits Enki in his underground domain during the night period that might explain the relation and maybe the subordinate status of Utu in relation to Enki.

⁵²⁸ Cf. 1.2. of the current study for Abzu and Kur.

⁵²⁹ Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld: 1-26; 52-69; 96-113. Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), pp. 122-123 for possible interpretations.

⁵³⁰ Cf. R. J. Clifford, *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and the Bible* (1994), pp. 23-24 for possible explanations of the passage.

⁵³¹ Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld: 149-150.

⁵³² *Ibid.*: 230-242.

The composition titled “The Death of Gilgameš” describes the dying process and burial rituals of Gilgameš. Enki’s role in the story seems to be among the most important ones. He seems to be the god who decides the fate of Gilgameš. Enki’s intimate role in relation to Gilgameš is also stated in “Gilgameš and Ĥuwawa” version B, where Gilgameš titles Enki “my personal god, lord Nudimmud:” diġir-ġu₁₀ ^den-ki en ^dnu-dím-mud-e.⁵³³

The story’s first part describes describes two dreams of Gilgameš where his future death is predicted. The dream is possibly sent by Enki titled Nudimmud.⁵³⁴ Enki also reveals the content of the dream “by a simple movement of his head.”⁵³⁵ In his dream Gilgameš sees an assembly of the gods gathered to decide his fate. It looks like An and Enlil would like to save the life of Gilgameš because of his heroic deeds in Sumer. However, Enki answers to them that when the assembly of gods had decided to send a flood, only Ziusudra was meant to be saved and afterwards Enki was somehow made to swear that from that day on, no man will ever gain eternal life.⁵³⁶ Enki states that he had sworn so, and there should be also no escape for Gilgameš. Even his descent from the goddess Ninsun cannot save him because he is still of human nature. But as a price for his deeds, Gilgameš is given a status of a divine figure in the netherworld; he can give orders and decisions there and will be highly respected.⁵³⁷ It seems probable that in contrary to saving the mankind in the Flood stories, Enki himself makes a decision that Gilgameš has to die.⁵³⁸

6.2. Myths of Enki

Enki is undoubtedly the most important and most often treated hero of the Sumerian mythology. As noticed by H. Limet in his approach to the major Enki myths: “Seul les divinités dont les exploits sont racontés dans des mythes acquièrent une personnalité un peu moins floue. Enki est de celles-là.”⁵³⁹ Contrary to hymns and

⁵³³ Gilgameš and Ĥuwawa B: 16; 87; 110; 139.

⁵³⁴ Death of Gilgameš: 139 M₂ iii.

⁵³⁵ Ibid.: 237 M₇.

⁵³⁶ Cf. the commentary of A. Cavigneaux – F. N. H. Al-Rawi, *CM 19*, p. 41. The mention of the flood in this Sumerian story is unique since the later Sumerian Flood myth probably does not represent an authentic Sumerian tradition.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.: 156 M₃ iii-173 M₃ iv; 66 M₂ ii-83 M₂ ii.

⁵³⁸ N. Veldhuis, *JCS* 53 (2001), p. 134.

⁵³⁹ *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 357.

prayers where only some specific aspects or characteristics of one deity are mentioned,⁵⁴⁰ mythological narratives show the divine figure acting in a row of specific characteristic situations permitting us to follow how the ancient scribes understood the nature of Enki in its full complexity.

Starting his approach to the major Enki myths, H. Limet proposes a method for the analysis in literary studies called narratology offering a means to build up a modern literary analysis of the myths.⁵⁴¹ However, detecting the logic of composition of a myth by dividing the story into sub-sequences, describing the initial situations, development and the final situation does not help to reveal the real intentions and motives of the ancient scribes living approximately four thousand years ago and writing and thinking in a language without any known relatives today.⁵⁴² S. N. Kramer has often detected a power struggle between Enki and Enlil in several Enki myths, and concludes that theologians of the Eridu tradition wrote larger part of the mythological body to justify their god's rise into prominence. J. S. Cooper in turn considers Enki's phallocentricity one of the leading motives in the myths "Enki and Ninḫursaĝ" and "Enki and Ninmah." H. Limet applies the results of modern literary studies to a myth written four thousand years ago. H. Sauren thinks to have found two layers of mythological thinking from the myth "Enki and Ninmah," the oldest layer being an authentic Old-Sumerian one. When combining all these results, the myths of Enki would be narratives written according to an inner logic of the contemporary literary studies, containing one older layer of thought, and whose protagonist is a phallocentric hero suffering from an inferiority complex⁵⁴³ ameliorated by his propagating theologians from the Eridu school. The problem is summarised by P. Michalowski who confesses that he is "still struggling to understand not only Mesopotamian myths but myth in general, for I cannot help but suffer from the

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 357-358: "Ce sont des récits, il faut les traiter comme tels, selon la recommandation de Cl. Lévi-Strauss: 'les mythes sont d'abord des histoires'. Ils ont un début, une fin, avec des rebondissements qui ménagent l'intérêt. L'action doit progresser sous l'effet des sentiments que les personnages éprouvent, ou à cause d'événements et d'incidents imprévus qui créent de nouvelles situations; celles-ci, à leur tour, demandent une solution et, ainsi, l'action va vers son dénouement."

⁵⁴² Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, p. 1: "On the one hand, we cannot understand exactly and exhaustively the messages sent by the persons closest to us – those with whom we share a common language and a common culture. How, then, can we hope to understand complex literary works written three, and in some cases four, thousand years ago – in the case especially of Sumerian, which has no relatives among the thousands of languages known to us today?"

⁵⁴³ Cf. S. N. Kramer's title "Enki and his Inferiority Complex," *OrNS* 39 (1970), pp. 103-110.

disease of modernity that afflicts us all.”⁵⁴⁴ The following is an attempt to give a brief summary of the two major Enki myths “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ” and “Enki and Ninmah,” both possibly having their forerunners already in the Early-Dynastic thought.

6.2.1. “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ”

The myth “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ”⁵⁴⁵ is usually subtitled “The Sumerian Paradise Myth.”⁵⁴⁶ Thematically the myth can be divided into three parts: Enki and Ninsikil in Dilmun, Enki and his sexual adventures, and at the end of the myth – the irregular pregnancy of Enki and his healing by Ninḫursaĝ.⁵⁴⁷ The initial situation of the first part of the myth describes the primordial conditions of life in Dilmun. The place is without water; two gods Enki and the mother-goddess figure here called Ninsikil are sleeping – a situation symbolising the world before its cultural organization.⁵⁴⁸ Dilmun, possibly the modern Bahrain, is called holy, virgin, and clean.⁵⁴⁹ The missing water might symbolise missing sexual relations between male and female concepts.⁵⁵⁰ Also the word for semen and water in Sumerian is the same – a, possibly explaining why the topic of irrigation waters and a series of intercourses featuring divine semen is treated in the same myth. The missing water in Dilmun is a type of situation that desperately needs and has to develop towards some sort of amelioration.⁵⁵¹ Enki then is said to have had intercourse with Ninsikil.⁵⁵² Afterwards the description of Dilmun continues with an explanation that it is a land “where there are no wild animals preying on their victims; a land unfamiliar with sickness, aging, or (perhaps) death.”⁵⁵³ Most importantly, the water is still missing. Then follows a fragmentary

⁵⁴⁴ P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 239.

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. D. O. Edzard, *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon* (1973) p. 9108 according to whom “dieser Mythos zu solchen (gehört), die Zeugung, Geburt und Heirat von Göttern zum Gegenstand haben und die vielleicht als Götter-Ätiologien aufzufassen sind.”

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁴⁷ Cf. J. S. Cooper, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 87: Until the last few decades, the humorist character of the story was usually left unnoticed, as was the case with the direct renderings of the lines containing the names of reproductive organs

⁵⁴⁸ B. Alster, *UF* 10 (1978), p. 16.

⁵⁴⁹ Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 1-4.

⁵⁵⁰ B. Alster, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁵¹ H. Limet, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 358.

⁵⁵² Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 7-11. Cf. Enki and the World Order: 238-239 where Enki places Ninsikil in charge of Dilmun.

⁵⁵³ S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *op. cit.*, p. 23; Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 13-30. A certain pre-creation or pre-civilisation period seems to be described. The lack of the phenomena probably considered

passage containing a plea from Ninsikil to Enki, whom she calls her father,⁵⁵⁴ and where she complains about the lack of water and farming in Dilmun.⁵⁵⁵ Enki having heard the complaint assigns Utu to provide water for Dilmun and blesses the island with several precious goods and abundant foreign trade.⁵⁵⁶ So the initial situation is solved by an intervention from Enki who orders Utu to organise civilising waters for Dilmun.⁵⁵⁷ The primordial world in sleep has come to an end. The sexual intercourse of Enki and Ninsikil is probably paralleled by the motive of water moistening the land. Ninsikil's demand for water might therefore be understood as an invitation for Enki to become involved in reproductive activities.⁵⁵⁸ The introducing scene of the second part of the myth describes Enki's intercourse with another mother-goddess figure called Nintu:

^den-ki-ke₄ ġeštú-ge tuku-a ^dnin-tu ama-kalam-ma-šè⁵⁵⁹

ġèš-a-ni ég-a ba-an-ši-in-dun-e

ġèš-a-ni gi-a gir₅-gir₅-e ba-an-ši-gir₅-gir₅-e

ġèš-a-ni bar-túg-maḥ-ḥe ša-ba-ra-an-zi-zi⁵⁶⁰

gù bí-in-dé ambar-ra lú nu-mu-un-dib-bé

Enki, towards understanding, towards Nintu, the mother of the land,

His phallus into the dikes is digging,

His phallus into the reeds is cutting,⁵⁶¹

His phallus pushed out against the *tugmah*-robe,

(and) cried: No man is catching me in the marshes.

characteristic to the world order and to the civilisation in general does not indicate that the initial state of affairs should be considered corrupt. However, it states that the will to change came from the female part, ability to make the change from the male element.

⁵⁵⁴ Enki and Ninḥursaġ: 31: ^dnin-sikil-la a-a-ni ^den-ki-ra gù mu-na-dé-e: Ninsikil spoke to her father Enki. That does not have to mean that she was considered a daughter of Enki. (Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, p. 209, note 3). a-a in Sumerian literature is frequently used for major gods as a title of honour.

⁵⁵⁵ Enki and Ninḥursaġ: 31-36.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.: 42-65.

⁵⁵⁷ H. Limet, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 358.

⁵⁵⁸ Cf. B. Alster, *UF* 10 (1978), p. 17.

⁵⁵⁹ Enki and Ninḥursaġ: 66-70.

⁵⁶⁰ M. W. Green, *JCS* 30 (1978), p. 150: “his erect penis pushed out against the tugmah-robe.” Maḥ in the text could stand for Ninmaḥ. Th. Jacobsen comments the play of names used in the passage in *Harpis*, pp. 190-191, note 17. So the translation could actually be “He pulled his phallus out from Ninḥursaġ.”

⁵⁶¹ Cf. P. Attinger, *ZA* 74 (1984), p. 15: “avec son pénis, creuse un fossé pour l'eau / avec son pénis, fait baigner les roseaux dans l'eau.”

Enki's semen impregnates Ninḫursaĝ and a goddess named Ninsar is born.⁵⁶² Enki then has intercourse with Ninsar, his daughter. Ninsar gives birth to Ninkura, who is again impregnated by Enki. Uttu, the goddess of weaving is born from their union.⁵⁶³ Before every impregnation, Enki consults his vizier Isimu, and then they travel together in their boat towards the women. Uttu however, having taken counsel from Nintu about the matter; demands cucumbers, apples, and grapes as a gift from Enki before allowing herself to him. This interrupts the series of impregnations conducted by Enki. Followingly, Enki is involved in filling the ditches and canals for a gardener, who then promises to bring the demanded products for him. After having received all the demanded goods, Uttu accepts Enki joyfully and receives his semen.⁵⁶⁴ Ninḫursaĝ who seems to be against the sexual actions of Enki,⁵⁶⁵ removes the semen from her body. From that same semen, eight different plants are grown. Enki travels through the marshlands with his vizier Isimu, and decrees a fate to every new plant previously unknown to him after having eaten from their fruit. Ninḫursaĝ in turn, angered by the actions of Enki, curses him somehow and Enki then becomes fatally ill.⁵⁶⁶ This seems to worry the Anunna gods. Even Enlil comes to help, and promises to erect two standards in honour of a fox that has come to offer his services to change the mind of Ninḫursaĝ about the curse. Somehow, the fox persuades Ninḫursaĝ to remove the curse. Ninḫursaĝ places Enki into her vulva making Enki able to give birth to eight deities all corresponding to the different hurting body-parts of Enki.⁵⁶⁷ It seems that Enki, after having eaten his own semen impersonated in the eight different plants grown by Ninḫursaĝ, became pregnant. This must have been the nature of the curse given by Ninḫursaĝ. In the concluding passage, Enki gives different assignments to newly born deities. The last one, Enṣag, is given the lordship over Dilmun.

⁵⁶² Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 73-88. Lines 74-75 state that it was semen meant for Damgalnunna, Enki's wife. B. Alster, *UF* 10 (1978), p. 17 seems to think that Enki did not intend to have an intercourse with Ninḫursaĝ who steals Enki's semen to impregnate herself.

⁵⁶³ Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 90-127.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*: 128-186.

⁵⁶⁵ H. Limet, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 358: "Le comportement d'Enki compromet la quiétude de la région. Dans cet épisode, le dieu constitue lui-même un obstacle et trouve, dans la personne du jardinier qui cultive les vignes et les abricotiers, un allié qui l'aide à trouble l'ordre social. Celui-ci est provisoirement rétabli par Nin-tu."

⁵⁶⁶ Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: 187-219.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*: 220-278. The gods and corresponding body-parts are: Abu – the skull, Nintulla – the jaw, Ninsutu – the teeth, Ninkasi – the mouth, Nazi – the throat, Azimuna – the arm, Ninti – the rib. Cf. Ninkasi A: 9-10 where Enki is said to be the father of Ninkasi, the goddess of beer and Ninti her mother: a-a-zu^den-ki en^dnu-dím-mud-e / ama-zu^dnin-ti nin abzu-a.

Suggestions have been given, that the myth could actually be “an archaic myth in Old-Babylonian clothing.”⁵⁶⁸ As was noticed previously, the copulation motive where the mother-goddess figure was involved was present already in the Old-Sumerian text on the Barton Cylinder (covered 3.5.1. of the current study). Whether the male god having intercourse in the text was Enki is unknown because the tablet was poorly preserved. However, the two motives are too similar in nature to deny that possibility. What stands behind this copulation motive between Enki and Ninḫursaĝ should be the underlying concept of fertility imagined in male and female having intercourse. In general, the motive is in Mesopotamian literature and mythology represented in the copulation of An and Ki or Inanna and Dumuzid.

6.2.2. “Enki and Ninmaḥ”

The main theme of the myth “Enki and Ninmaḥ” seems to be the creation of humankind to liberate the gods from their hardness of physical work. The second main part of the story involves the contest between two drunken deities in creating a series of handicapped human beings ending in the creation of the mysterious Umul. H. Sauren has sought to separate the original form of the myth from later Akkadian version of the text.⁵⁶⁹ Some of his proposals will be considered in the following approach, but since the reconstruction of the possible original and older narrative is only a hypothesis; the myth will be discussed in its final form.

The story begins with the description of the initial situation starting with the *in illo die* motive, titled so by Jan van Dijk.⁵⁷⁰ After the creation of gods, they had to dig canals and perform all the construction works. That brings about a revolution among them.⁵⁷¹ Namma, titled the mother of Enki,⁵⁷² is described as a primeval mother and creator of

⁵⁶⁸ P. Michalowski, *RAI* 43 (1996), p. 242.

⁵⁶⁹ H. Sauren, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), pp. 198-208.

⁵⁷⁰ J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965). Cf. H. Sauren, op. cit., p. 198. In his quest to reconstruct the original prototype of the Old-Babylonian myth, Sauren concludes that the introduction was not included in the original myth. Cf. M. Dietrich’s development of J. van Dijk “*ina ūmī ullūti, An jenen (fernen) Tagen*” in *AOAT* 240, pp. 57-52.

⁵⁷¹ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 1-11.

⁵⁷² H. Sauren, op. cit., p. 203 considers Namma the husband of Enki: “If Nammu is afterwards named mother, she is not the mother who bore Enki, but the mother with whom Enki begot his children.”

all the great gods⁵⁷³ carries the complaint of the deities to her son Enki, who is sleeping deep below the earth in his Engur:

u₄-ba ġeštú daġal mud diġir šár-šár gál-gál⁵⁷⁴

^den-ki-ke₄ engur b̀uru a sur-ra ki diġir na-me šà-bi u₆ nu-um-me

ki-nú-ni ì-nì ù ku nu-um-zi-zi

On that day, (the one of the) wide understanding,⁵⁷⁵ creator of all the great gods

Enki in Engur, the deep hole that pours out the water; place, the inside of which no god was laying eyes on;

is sleeping on his bed, will not wake up.

Enki listens to his mother's word who asks him to create a new category of creatures to substitute the gods in pain.⁵⁷⁶ Enki rises up from his sleep,⁵⁷⁷ and creates seven Sigensigdu, probably birth goddesses. Namma reminds his son Enki, that he himself had created the gods who are revolting:

d̀im-mi-ir šu d̀im-d̀im-ma-zu x gú[?]-bi im-tu₁₀-tu₁₀-ne⁵⁷⁸

The gods that you have created, they are destroying (their work)

ġeštú ġizzal èn tar [kúš-ù]⁵⁷⁹ nam-kù-zu mud me-d̀im niġ-nam-ma

SIG₇.EN.SIG₇.D̀UG im-ta-an-é⁵⁸⁰

Understanding and intelligence, the care-taker, the skilled one, fashioner of the form of all the things, turned out the Sigensigdu.

Then Enki asks his mother Namma to give form to the creatures made by the clay of Abzu “nipped off” by the Sigensigdu. The Sigensigdu and Ninmaḥ are asked to assist

⁵⁷³ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 17.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.: 12-14.

⁵⁷⁵ It seems that Enki is seen as “understanding/knowledge personified.” He is actually called ġeštú daġal. Cf. C. A. Benito, “Enki and Ninmah” and “Enki and the World Order” (1969), p. 22, line 12, and commentary on p. 49.

⁵⁷⁶ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 23.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.: 15-24. Line 25 may contain an allusion to an offering made before the action of creating the Sigensigdu. Cf. H. Sauren, *Fs. Hallo* (1993), p. 201: “he cut the holy lamb, (the lamb) of appeasement.”

⁵⁷⁸ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 21.

⁵⁷⁹ Cf. S. N. Kramer in *Myths of Enki*, p. 212, note 18.

⁵⁸⁰ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 26.

Namma in the process of forming the humanity. The only intention of the creation of the humankind seems to be the need to free the gods from their hard work.⁵⁸¹ The second part of the myth begins with the banquet organised for the gods by Enki, now called Nudimmud.⁵⁸² All the gods give praise to Enki for his achievement, for his knowledge and for his me-s:⁵⁸³

a-a tud-da-gen₇ me nam tar-tar-ra me za-e al-me-en-na⁵⁸⁴

Like a form giving father who decides over the me-s, you are the one who is the me.⁵⁸⁵

Then follows an event which could be titled a beer-drinking banquet or even a contest between Enki and Ninmaḥ.⁵⁸⁶ Ninmaḥ who has consumed plenty of beer makes a proposal to Enki to create new living beings using clay. Enki should then decide their destiny – meaning to assign their place in the human society. The situation could be called a contest, because the intention seems to be the creation of a living thing whose destiny should be impossible to decide. Or, as stated by B. Alster: “Enki and the mother-goddess compete to see if he or she alone can create a living being without the help of the other.”⁵⁸⁷ Ninmaḥ forms a series of humans who have different deformations and illnesses. Enki finds a place for all of them in the Sumerian society.⁵⁸⁸ For example, the blind man is destined to be a musician in the king’s court.⁵⁸⁹ After Enki has managed to decree its position in the society for every single creature formed by Ninmaḥ, he himself forms two creatures.⁵⁹⁰ A. D. Kilmer discusses the problem concerning the forming of these two creatures in her article

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.: 27-43.

⁵⁸² Used here after Enki had created the humankind, maybe denoting his role as a creator and form shaper.

⁵⁸³ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 44-51.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.: 51.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. G. Farber-Flügge, *Der Mythos “Inanna und Enki” unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der ME* (1973), pp. 116-153 for a discussion about the me-s in Sumerian context. Me can be translated “to be,” “that what is,” is a divine principle of order, a divine law.

⁵⁸⁶ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 52-78.

⁵⁸⁷ B. Alster, *JNES* 53 (1994), p. 223.

⁵⁸⁸ The creation of human misfits might have been understood by the author and maybe in the mythology in general as a fault of the misdeeds of the drunken deities. However, to every deformed person a means of earning their living is given (ninda mi-ni-in-šúm) in lines 103-108.

⁵⁸⁹ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 63-65.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.: 82-88.

“Speculations on Umul, the first Baby.”⁵⁹¹ Enki most probably creates the first woman and also the female reproductive organs:

^den-ki-ke₄ me-dím saḡ-ḡá X-ga[?] ka šag₄-ba a-ma-ni-dím⁵⁹²

After Enki had fashioned the form of the head,...(and) an opening (lit. mouth) in its womb⁵⁹³

A. D. Kilmer then proposes that Enki himself inseminated the created female, as no capable human male existed, and no other male god is present.⁵⁹⁴

a ḡèš-ak šag₄ munus-a-ka ri-a / a gan šag₄ munus-a-ka a šag₄-ga-na munus-bi mu-un-ù-tu(d)⁵⁹⁵

The phallus-made semen poured into the woman’s womb had made that woman give birth in her womb⁵⁹⁶

A parallel leading to the conclusion that a divine figure somehow takes part in the process of impregnating the first female in the context of the Ancient Near East is found also in Genesis 4: 1, where the first female Eve states, that she had given birth to a man with the help⁵⁹⁷ of YHWH: קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת-יְהוָה .

⁵⁹¹ *AOAT* 25 (1976), pp. 265-270. Kilmer also argues that several of the six adult creatures made by Ninmah were defective with respect to their ability to reproduce.

⁵⁹² Enki and Ninmah: 83.

⁵⁹³ Translation of A. D. Kilmer, op. cit., p. 266.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., note 5. The argument that no male yet capable to impregnate the female existed cannot be justified, especially because Enki had just created the totality of the humankind in the first section of the story of the myth.

⁵⁹⁵ Enki and Ninmah: 85. Cf B. Alster, *JNES* 53 (1994), p. 223: “All the creatures produced are defective. It is only after a woman has been impregnated by Enki’s phallus (this is the important implication of line 85, p. 35), that a normal baby can be created.”

⁵⁹⁶ Translation by S. N. Kramer in *Myths of Enki*, p. 35.

⁵⁹⁷ Cf. I. M. Kikawada, *Iraq* 45 (1983), p. 44. Kikawada further establishes a theory according to which in Ancient Near East there was a tradition of counting the creation of humankind in two phases. The first story usually tells about the creation in general terms, the second story in detail. The second account also explains how the mankind will reproduce themselves afterwards. The evidence can be found from the myth “Enki and Ninmah,” “Atra-ḡasīs,” and also from the creation accounts of Genesis 1-2.

The myth “Enki and Ninmah” continues by the creation of a being called Umul⁵⁹⁸ by Enki. The Umul is characterised as being unable to move his legs or hands in a coordinated way, having weak or sick head, eyes, neck, ribs, lungs and bowels.⁵⁹⁹ Enki now asks Ninmah to determine the fate of the Umul, but Ninmah finds no suitable assignment for a thing unable to sit down, lie down, build a house or eat bread, and concludes that the Umul is neither alive nor dead.⁶⁰⁰ After a self-praise from Enki for having been able to decree its fate for all the misfits created by Ninmah, Enki asks Ninmah again to decree the fate of the Umul. Lines 109-122 are almost completely destroyed, in line 123 follows the speech of Ninmah accusing Enki for not having helped her when her temple was destroyed, her city attacked and her son, the king of her city taken captive. Because Ninmah mentions herself being a refugee who had fled the É-Kur, it is reasonable to assume, that Enlil was somehow involved in the troubles of Ninmah. Now Enki gives praise to Ninmah and mentions Umul in a context unexplainable due to the fragmentary state of the tablet.⁶⁰¹ From the following line, Kilmer states having found proof that Enki fathers the first baby:⁶⁰²

u₄-da ġèš-ġu₁₀ me-téš ħa-ba-i-i ġeštú rig₅-ge-zu/šè ħé-ġál⁶⁰³

Let now my penis be praised, and serve as a reminder to you!⁶⁰⁴

In addition to Kilmer’s view, a phenomenon called Enki’s phallocentricity by J. S. Cooper, could find its expression here, and “after initiating human sexual reproduction and creating, as A. Kilmer has shown, the first human baby, he proclaims his triumph over the mother-goddess Ninmah.”⁶⁰⁵ The concluding lines of the myth also support this view, where Enki states his superiority over Ninmah.

⁵⁹⁸ u₄-mu-ul can be translated as “my date is remote” meaning “a very old man” or then “a new born baby.” Cf. A. D. Kilmer, *AOAT* 25, 265: “It was and is clear, to the present writer at least, that Umul is not, as generally accepted previously, a failure of an old man, but is simply a new-born baby with the normal lack of physical abilities.” Cf. S. N. Kramer – J. Maier, *Myths of Enki*, pp. 211-212 the reading u₄-mu-du₇ meaning “my storm the attacker” or “my storm attacked” is considered possible.

⁵⁹⁹ Enki and Ninmah: 86-91.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.: 92-100.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.: 129-133.

⁶⁰² A. D. Kilmer, op. cit., p. 266.

⁶⁰³ Enki and Ninmah: 134.

⁶⁰⁴ Translation of J. S. Cooper, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), p. 89.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

^dnin-maḥ-e en gal ^den-ki-ke₄ zag nu-mu-ni-in-du
a-a ^den-ki za-mí-zu dūg-ga⁶⁰⁶

Ninmaḥ could not rival the great lord Enki.

Father Enki, your praise is sweet!

A. Kilmer continues her argument over the creation of the first baby and identifies the Umul with the flood hero Ziusudra, then with Atra-ḥasīs and Utnapištim. “The son of Enki/Ea is man’s saviour. Enki’s warning of the flood to man may be more meaningful if we understand that he warns his own son.”⁶⁰⁷ Unfortunately, the lines in Old-Babylonian “Atra-ḥasīs” epic where the analogous version of the creation of the Flood Hero could be standing has not preserved.⁶⁰⁸ The story preceding the lacuna in the epic is clearly in close relation to the similar story in the myth “Enki and Ninmaḥ” – humanity is created after the gods had rebelled. When the text in “Atra-ḥasīs” becomes fully understandable again after the damaged lines, Enlil’s discontent about the humankind is stated. Finally, the flood of Enlil attempts to destroy the men, but humanity is saved by Enki’s warning to Atra-ḥasīs. According to the information found so far, the attempt to see Umul as a prototype Mesopotamian Flood Hero cannot be confirmed. The close relation of the main ideas concerning the creation of mankind in these two myths is however clearly detectable.

6.3. Conclusions

The epic stories about Enmerkar, Lugalbanda, and Gilgameš characterise Enki as a powerful god who is used to threaten the enemies of the ruler. He is said to have mixed the tongues of humankind, the reason for such an action is not clear. Enki is also associated with the irrigation works and reeds. He is titled “Junior Enlil of Sumer” ^den-líl bàn-da ki-en-gi-ra-ke₄. In the epic story “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld” he assists Gilgameš to meet his friend Enkidu who had been seized by the netherworld. He assigns Utu to open the entrance to the netherworld. The motive where Enki gives assignments to Utu was already known from the previous periods and also from the myth “Enki and Ninḥursaḡ.” In the story describing the death of

⁶⁰⁶ Enki and Ninmaḥ: 140-41.

⁶⁰⁷ A. D. Kilmer, *AOAT* 25 (1976), p. 267.

⁶⁰⁸ Atra-ḥasīs: 306-327. Cf. W. G. Lambert – A. R. Millard, *Atra-ḥasīs. The Babylonian story of the Flood* (1969), pp. 61-65 for the parallels to the myth “Enki and Ninmaḥ.”

Gilgameš, Enki however decides against the will of An and Enlil that Gilgameš (who titled Enki his “personal god”) must die and go to the netherworld as one of its rulers.

The two great Enki myths “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ” and “Enki and Ninmaḥ” that were covered in this chapter probably have both their beginnings in some way or another in the older layers of Sumerian mythology. The copulation motive where Ninḫursaĝ takes part is also present in the Old-Sumerian Barton Cylinder. The myth “Enki and Ninḫursaĝ” describes Enki’s powers as a male reproductive element. He assigns Utu to grant water for Dilmun which impregnates the earth in a way he himself impregnates the mother-goddess figure. Connection between Enki’s sexuality and the irrigation of the land seems to be very strong.

According to “Enki and Ninmaḥ,” Enki is the creator of the humankind. The humans were created to liberate the gods from the task of physical work. The creation process is not clear; several birth goddesses and mother-goddess assisted the process, clay of Abzu was used in the creation. In the second part of the story, Enki possibly creates the first woman. The woman is probably impregnated by Enki himself. A creature called Umul is given birth; that Umul may well be the first child born. Enki’s role as creator of humankind was never mentioned in any earlier source. Namma and Enki were also referred to as creators of other gods in existence. This feature was previously attested in case of Enki and Ninki gods or An and Ki in Old-Sumerian mythology but never in case of Enki. The high importance of Enki in the myths testifies the fact that the theology of Eridu must have started to gain more importance than was usual in earlier periods.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The objective of the current master's thesis was to track the religious-historical evolution of the theological concept of the deities Enki and Ea in Mesopotamian sources from the first available records to the Neo-Sumerian period. Larger part of the textual material available featuring Enki in Old-Sumerian, Old-Akkadian, and Neo-Sumerian periods was assembled and analysed. In addition, the myths "Enki and Ninhursaĝ" and "Enki and Ninmah" were briefly considered in the concluding part of the study.

From the archaeological evidence, only few aspects can be deduced concerning the deity Enki in the prehistoric period. The importance and great age of his temple in Eridu suggest that Enki or his more ancient predecessor must have been among the most important gods in early Sumerian religion. The character of that ancient deity is not accessible due to the lack of written material. Not much can be concluded based on the snake figurines and fish offerings which were brought to the god worshipped there. It is not certain whether the ancient deity was female or male in gender or what were his or her functions. The cosmic underworld region Abzu is considered to be Enki's domain from the beginning of written materials. Also the original character of the Abzu remains uncertain – whether it was already conceived to be an underground region of waters or a kind of cosmic underworld space is also impossible to claim with certainty. A term often used synonymously with Abzu – Engur seems to be more connected with the ground waters, fish, and reeds. Abzu in turn is more associated with clay.

Concerning the etymology of Enki, three possibilities were offered – all of them possible but none of them proved with certainty. By the direct translation of en and ki, the name Enki might mean "Lord (of the) Earth." Since the name form ^den-ki poses difficulties for interpreting it as a genitival complex, it seems more than probable that the original name would be ^den-ki(g). The meaning of the hypothetical ki(g) is uncertain and no waterproof translation is available. By the speculation of E. Sollberger, the name might mean "Lord Benevolence." That kind of translation would fit Enki's function and character as abundance bringer and "friendly" god in opposition to Enlil. However, the translation of ki(g) as "benevolence," "love" is hard

to defend based on philological parallels from the Sumerian language. The difficulty of establishing a certain etymology for the name Enki might give ground to the idea that the name originates from the Pre-Sumerian language layer spoken by the nation or nations that allegedly habited the Southern Mesopotamian territories before the arrival of the Sumerian populations. If this would be the correct possibility, no reasonable etymology for Enki can ever be established, since the hypothetical Pre-Sumerian language is unknown from written sources in Mesopotamia.

The name Ea is most possibly of Semitic origins and based on the evidence from Ebla translating ^den-ki with à-u₉, it seems obvious enough for concluding a Semitic root *ḥyy for the name Ea to be possible to translate as “The Living One.” Such an interpretation would suggest Ea’s connection with running water and springs. Since the root *ḥyy possibly comes from the West-Semitic linguistic area, it might seem that also the deity Ea or at least the name form of the god originates from the West-Semitic religious atmosphere. This claim is, however, impossible to prove – the movements of religious ideas from one region to another cannot be established based on the etymologies of the names. Most likely every ethnos in the wider Mesopotamian cultural and religious sphere of influence had developed a divine concept sharing similarities with the god Enki of Sumer. Claiming that Ea comes from the West-Semitic area and Enki from the Southern Mesopotamia is therefore erroneous because there is every reason to believe that no overall Mesopotamian concept of Enki and Ea ever existed. For every culture and religion the concept Enki or Ea must have contained several differences as well as several common features.

Early-Dynastic royal inscriptions describe Enki as king of Abzu and king of Eridu. He is mentioned to have given ḡestú “understanding,” “knowledge” to the rulers of Sumer. His connection with the reeds growing out from Engur appears to be underlined in some textual examples. Enki also often occurs together with the primordial Enki and Ninki gods. According to UD.GAL.NUN texts, these gods are considered to be birth givers to Enki and possibly also to all the other major Sumerian deities. According to the text Ukg. 15, Enki and Ninki gods are in turn begotten by An and Ki. Za-me hymns title Enki Nudimmud – whether the epithet represents his abilities as “abundance giver” and creator god, as is possibly the case in the texts of later periods, remains uncertain. Enki also features in several Sumerian incantations

but he is not the patron deity of them, as is the case already in the Neo-Sumerian incantations. It appears that Enki can also be responsible for sending or causing an illness to a person, not only for healing them. Enki's role in mythological texts is hard to describe because of the difficulties in understanding the UD.GAL.NUN orthography or poorly preserved tablets. In the lists of gods, Enki usually comes after the mother-goddess figure and never precedes Enlil. The goddess Nanše is most possibly considered to be Enki's daughter, the possible father-son relationship of Enki and Ningirsu remains unclear. Among other divine figures, he is mentioned together with his vizier Isimu.

Old-Akkadian royal inscriptions associate Enki/Ea with Eridu and mention him in relation to irrigation canals and relate him to *ḡestú*. One lexical list from Ebla translates his name *à-u₉*, referring to a Semitic root associated with running water. In the offering lists from Ebla, he occurs together with the local underworld god Rasap. In the ARET 5, 6 and ARET 5, 7 myths the god ^dEN.KI, in Ebla translated as Hayya, is often mentioned. He is titled *niššiku* referring to his Sumerian epithet nun. He is often represented somehow to be associated with the sun-god, who visits him in Abzu. Old-Akkadian glyptic art represents the god Enki/Ea in several mythological scenes. His symbols are streams of water flowing out from his shoulders accompanied by fish. He is represented as sitting or coming out from the underground region Abzu. Enki/Ea is also represented with his double faced vizier Isimu and the gate keepers of Abzu named Laḥama-Abzu. One scene represents a boat ride of the god with streams. His position among the other gods seems to be of high importance because often other gods are seen paying their respects to him in Akkadian seals.

Texts from the Second Dynasty of Lagaš portray Enki as a god who gives advice in temple construction. Foundations of the temples are described as being laid inside his underground domain Abzu. Neo-Sumerian royal hymns see him as an abundance giver, the abundance seems to be represented in high waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. He is also associated with boats and canals. Cleansing rites and incantations are mentioned in relation to Enki. This is in accordance with the information from the Neo-Sumerian incantations, where Enki and his son Asalluḫi are now main patrons of the incantation literature. Cleansing power of waters seems to be related to Enki and his city Eridu. Among his new titles dating from the period are

pap-gal “eldest brother (of the gods)” and ^den-líl-bandà “junior Enlil.” One royal inscription of Puzur-Eštar from Mari titles him “lord of the assembly (of the gods)” – this feature indicates he might have been equated with the god El in Mari. In the beginning of the period, Enki is usually fourth in the listings of the gods. Near the end of the Ur III dynasty, he however, gets the third rank in the row and precedes the mother-goddess figure. The name of the god Ĥaia might be closely related to that of Ea, however their relations remain unclear. In glyptic art, Enki is represented by the flowing water streams as was the case with the Akkadian seals. Also his symbol – the goat-fish – starts to appear on the seals.

From the myth “Enki and Ninĥursaĝ” two motives can be associated with Enki during the earlier periods. One is the possible copulation motive with the mother-goddess figure, the other is Enki associated with the sun god. This motive is expressed also in “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld” where Enki assigns Utu to open the passage to the Netherworld.

When Enki’s powers as abundance giver were in some extent underlined in Old-Sumerian and Neo-Sumerian texts, the motive where Enki is responsible for creating the humankind and also titled as creator of other gods seems to be missing from all the previous materials studied. In Old-Sumerian texts the creation of man was not covered. Based on few textual examples, Enki and Ninki or then An and Ki were responsible for giving birth to the divine figures and not Enki and Namma, as it seems to be stated in “Enki and Ninmaĥ.”

This study represented only the material available of the older periods of Mesopotamian history concerning the gods Enki and Ea. When the archaeological material from Eridu revealed only few hints about the ancient inhabitant of Eridu temple, then Old-Sumerian sources showed Enki in different magical, official, and mythological contexts. The sources available were not numerous but rich enough to give an overview of the most important characteristics of the god. The material of the Old-Akkadian period was as fragmentary as was the case with the Old-Sumerian period. It was only during the Neo-Sumerian period when larger works of literature posing not so many difficulties of interpretation appeared. The appearance of Enki as the main hero in Sumerian mythology and also the growth of Enki’s role in the

incantation literature compared to the previous periods show the vitality and great spiritual influence of the Eridu school theologians in the beginning of the Old-Babylonian period.

A study of Enki and Ea in the sources of Isin-Larsa and Old-Babylonian periods would not allow representing the whole textual material concerning Enki/Ea to be gathered together in one specific study since the preserved material featuring that god has grown considerably in comparison with the earlier periods. As was the case already in Old-Sumerian times, Enki/Ea remains one of the most often mentioned and highly respected divine figures throughout the Mesopotamian history until the end of cuneiform culture.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Eridu Temple XVI. F. Safar – M. A. Mustafa – S. Lloyd, *Eridu* (1981), p. 90: Fig. 40, p. 11.
2. Akkadian seal, Baghdad, Iraq Museum, p. 75.
3. Akkadian seal (BM 89771), The British Museum, p. 76.
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5. “The Cylinder of Adda” (B.M. 89115), The British Museum, p. 77.
6. “Judgment of the Bird-Man” (BM 103317), The British Museum, p. 78.
7. Fragment of a limestone bas-relief, Louvre, p. 103.
8. “The Enthroned Enki” (B.M. 103232), The British Museum, p. 104.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AcOr** *Acta Orientalia*
- AfO** *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Vienna, 1923ff.
- Ancient Art in Seals** Edith Porada (ed.), *Ancient Art in Seals: Essays by Pierre Amiet, Nimet Özgüç and John Boardman*. Princeton University Press, 1980.
- AOAT** *Alter Orient und Altes Testament*. Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1969ff.
- AOAT 245** Francesco Pomponio – Paolo Xella, *Les dieux d'Ebla. Étude analytique des divinités éblaïtes à l'époque des archives royales du IIIe millénaire*, 1997.
- ARET** *Archivi reali di Ebla. Testi*. Rome.
- ArOr** *Archív Orientální*, Prague.
- ARRIM** *Annual Review of the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Project*, Toronto, 1983ff.
- ASJ** *Acta Sumerologica*. Hiroshima, Japan, 1979ff.
- ATU 13** R. K. Englund – H. J. Nissen, *Die lexikalischen Listen der Archaischen Texte aus Uruk. Ausgrabungen der deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka 13*, Berlin, 1993.
- AuOr** *Aula Orientalis*. Barcelona, 1983ff.
- BASOR** *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*. New Haven, 1919ff.
- Belleten** *Türk Tarih Kurumu, Belleten*. Ankara, 1937ff.
- Beschwörungen** Manfred Krebernik, *Die Beschwörungen aus Fara und Ebla: Untersuchungen zur ältesten keilschriftlichen Beschwörungsliteratur*, Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik, Bd. 2; Hildesheim, Zurich, New York, 1984.
- Bilinguismo** Luigi Cagni (ed.), *Il bilinguismo a Ebla: Atti del convegno internazionale (Napoli, 19-22 aprile 1982)*. Instituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Series Minor XXII, Napoli, 1984.
- BSOAS** *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. London.

- BiOr** *Bibliotheca Orientalis*. Leiden, 1943ff.
- Clergé** Dominique Charpin, *Le Clergé d'Ur au siècle d'Hammurapi*. Bibliothèque des histoires. Gallimard/NRF, Paris, 1986.
- CM 7** I. L. Finkel – M. J. Geller (ed.-s), *Sumerian Gods and their Representations*. Cuneiform Monographs 7, Styx Publications, Groningen, 1997.
- CM 19** Antoine Cavigneaux – Farouk N. H. Al-Rawi, *Gilgameš et la mort. Textes de Tell Haddad VI avec un appendice sur les textes funéraires sumériens*. Cuneiform Monographs 19, Styx Publications, Groningen, 2000.
- Cosmic Geography** Wayne Horowitz, *Mesopotamian Cosmic Geography*. Mesopotamian Civilizations 8, Eisenbrauns, 1998.
- CT** *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*. London, 1896ff.
- DDD** Karel van der Toorn – Bob Becking – Pieter W. van der Horst (ed.-s), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. E. J. Brill, 1999.
- Ea/Enki** H. D. Galter, *Der Gott Ea/Enki in der Akkadischen Überlieferung. Eine Bestandsaufnahme des vorhandenen Materials*. Dissertationen der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, 1983.
- Ebla 1975-1985** Luigi Cagni (ed.), *Ebla 1975-1985: Dieci anni di studi linguistici e filologici: Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Napoli, 9-11 ottobre 1985)*. Istituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Series Minor XXVII, Napoli, 1987.
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ABBREVIATIONS OF TEXTUAL MATERIAL⁶⁰⁹

Amar-Su'en, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, 2045-2037 B.C.

Amar-Su'en A: B. Hruška, *ArOr* 47 (1979), pp. 4-14; P. Michalowski, *Gs. Finkelstein* (1977), pp. 155-157.

Amar-Su'en 5: *FAOS* 9/II, pp. 227-228; *StOr* 58, pp. 75-76.

AnLag. 25: *FAOS* 5/I, p. 368; V. E. Grawford, *JCS* 29 (1977), p. 198.

Barton Cylinder: B. Alster – A. Westenholz, *ASJ* 16 (1994), pp. 18-32.

Curse of Agade: J. C. Cooper, *The Curse of Agade* (1983).

Death of Gilgameš: A. Cavigneaux – F. N. H. Al-Rawi, *CM* 19 (2000), pp. 13-64.

Elili, ruler of Ur ca. 2450 B.C.

Elili 1: *FAOS* 5/II, p. 278.

Ean. = Eanatum, ruler of the First Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2470 B.C.

Ean. 1 = Stele of the Vultures: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 120-145.

Ean. 2: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 145-151.

Ean. 3: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 152-156.

En. I = Enanatum the First, ruler of the First Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2440 B.C.

En.I. 33: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 204-207.

Enki and Ninḫursaĝ: P. Attinger, *ZA* 74 (1984), pp. 1-52.

Enki and Ninmah: C. A. Benito, "Enki and Ninmah" and "Enki and the World Order" (1969), pp. 21-33.

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Enki's Journey to Nippur: A.-H. Al-Fouadi, *Enki's Journey to Nippur: The Journeys of the Gods* (1969).

Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta: S. Cohen, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta* (1973), pp. 65-91.

Ent. = Enmetena, ruler of the First Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2430 B.C.

Ent. 1: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 211-214.

Ent. 23: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 223-224.

Ent. 28 – 29 = 31: *FAOS* 5/I, pp. 230-245.

Ent. 33: *FAOS* 5/I, p. 249.

⁶⁰⁹ Chronology based on M.-L. Thomsen, *Mesopotamia* 10, pp. 342-348.

Ent. 42: *FAOS 5/I*, pp. 257-258.

Epic of Lugalbanda: Claus Wilcke. *Das Lugalbandaepos* (1969), p. 90-222.

Gilgameš and Ħuwawa B: *ETCSL 1.8.1.5.1*.

Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld: A. Shaffer, *Sumerian Sources of Tablet XII of the Epic of Gilgameš* (1963).

Gudea, ruler of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2144-2124 B.C.

Gudea Statue B: *FAOS 9/I*, pp. 157-179.

Gudea 11: *FAOS 9/I*, pp. 264-265.

Gudea, Cyl. A and B: *RIME 3/II*, pp. 68-101.

Ibbi-Su'en, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, 2028-2004 B.C.

Ibbi-Su'en A: Å. Sjöberg, *OrSu 19-20* (1972), pp. 144-145.

Ibbi-Su'en B: Å. Sjöberg, *OrSu 19-20* (1972), pp. 141-144.

Ibbi-Su'en C: Å. Sjöberg, *OrSu 19-20* (1972), pp. 147-149.

Inanna and Enki: G. Farber-Flügge, *JNES 54* (1995), pp. 287-292.

Išme-Dagan, king of Isin, 1953-1935 B.C.

Išme-Dagan A: *ETCSL 2.5.4.01*.

Keš Hymn (archaic): R. D. Biggs, *ZA 61* (1971), pp. 200-2003.

Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave: W. W. Hallo, *JAOS 103* (1983), pp. 165-180.

Lugalzagesi, king of Uruk ca. 2350 B.C.

Luzag. 1: *FAOS 5/II*, pp. 310-325.

Luzag. 2: *FAOS 5/II*, pp. 325-336.

Luzag. 3: *FAOS 5/II*, p. 336-337.

Nanše Hymn A: W. Heimpel, *JCS 33* (1981), pp. 65-137.

Narām-Su'en, ruler of the Dynasty of Akkade, 2254-2218 B.C.

Narām-Su'en 3: *RIME 2*, pp. 95-99 = Narāmsîn C 1 in *FAOS 7*, pp. 234-238 and 242-243.

Narām-Su'en 5: *RIME 2*, pp. 100-103 = Narāmsîn C5 texts B and C in *FAOS 7*, pp. 253-254 and 257-60.

Narām-Su'en 10: *RIME 2*, pp. 113-114 = Narāmsîn 1 in *FAOS 7*, pp. 81-83.

Narām-Su'en 24: *RIME 2*, pp. 128-129 = Narāmsîn 5 in *FAOS 7*, pp. 92-93.

Ninkasi A: M. Civil, *Fs. Oppenheim* (1964), pp. 67-89.

Puzurinšušinak, ruler of Elam ca. 2230 B.C.

Puzurinšušinak 2: *FAOS 7*, pp. 325-327.

Puzur-Mama, ruler of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2225-2190

Puzur-Mama 1: *RIME 3/I*, pp. 271-272; *FAOS 9/I*, pp. 336-337.
Rīm-Su'en, king of Larsa, 1822-1763 B.C.
Rīm-Su'en B: D. Charpin, *Clergé*, pp. 344-351.
Sumerian King List: Th. Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List* (1939).
Šulgi, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, 2094-2047 B.C.
Šulgi Hymn to Enki: M. E. Cohen, *Fs. Klein* (2005), pp. 73-84.
Šulgi A: J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns* (1981), pp. 188-203.
Šulgi C: G. R. Castellino, *Two Šulgi Hymns (BC)*, *StSem* 42, pp. 248-294.
Šulgi D: J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns* (1981), pp. 70-123,
Šulgi E: *ETCSL 2.4.2.05*.
Šulgi O: J. Klein, *AOAT 25* (1976), pp. 271-292.
Šulgi R: J. Klein, *Fs. Artzi* (1990), pp. 80-130.
Šulgi T: Å. Sjöberg, *AOAT 25* (1976), pp. 416-419.
Šulgi Y: A. Falkenstein, *Iraq* 22 (1960), pp. 139-150.
Song of Šulgi: D. Frayne, *ARRIM 1* (1983), pp. 6-9.
Šulgi 9: *FAOS 9/II*, pp. 162-163; *StOr* 58, pp. 32-33.
Šulgi 10: *FAOS 9/II*, p. 163; *StOr* 58, p. 33.
Šu-Su'en, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, 2037-2029 B.C.
Praise Poem of Šu-Su'en: S. N. Kramer, *Fs. Sjöberg* (1989), pp. 303-316.
Ukg. = Urukagina, ruler of the First Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2355 B.C.
Ukg. 4 = 5: *FAOS 5/I*, pp. 288-312; P. Steinkeller, *JAOS* 115 (1995), p. 543.
Ukg. 15: Å. Sjöberg, *Gs. Jacobsen* (2002), pp. 230-231; J. van Dijk, *AcOr* 28 (1965), pp. 39-40.
Ukg. 16: *FAOS 5/I*, pp. 333-337.
Ur-Baba, ruler of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš ca. 2164-2144
Ur-Baba 1: *FAOS 9/I*, pp. 135-140.
Ur-Baba 4: *FAOS 9/I*, p. 142-143.
Ur-Baba 8: *FAOS 9/I*, pp. 147-148.
Ur-Namma, king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, 2112-2095 B.C.
Ur-Namma A: E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO 166*, pp. 93-182
Ur-Namma B: E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO 166*, pp. 183-203; J. Klein, *ASJ* 11 (1989), pp. 44-56.
Ur-Namma C: E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO 166*, pp. 204-227

Ur-Namma D: E. Flückiger-Hawker, *OBO 166*, pp. 228-259; S. Tinney, *JCS* 51 (1999), pp. 31-54.

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Ur-Namma I: M. Civil, *AuOr* 14 (1996), pp. 163-167.

Ur-Namma 10: *RIME 3/2*, p. 30-31 = Urnammu 4: *FAOS 9/II*, p. 97-98; *StOr* 58, p. 3.

Ur-Namma 20: *RIME 3/2*, p. 43-49.

Ur-Namma 31: *RIME 3/2*, p. 68-69 = Urnammu 12: *FAOS 9/II*, p. 106-107; *StOr* 58, p. 7

Ur-Namma 32: *RIME 3/2*, p. 69 = Urnammu 46: *FAOS 9/II*, pp. 148-149 = Urnammu 44: *StOr* 58, p. 27.

Urn. = Ur-Nanše, ruler of the First Dynasty of Lagash ca. 2520 B.C.

Urn. 49: *FAOS 5/I*, pp. 110-111; G. Cunningham, *StPohl* 17, p. 29; Th. Jacobsen, *OrNS* 54 (1985), pp. 66-67.

Zame Hymns: Å. Sjöberg, *PSD 1 A/II* (1994), p. 185; R. D. Biggs, *OIP* 99 (1974), p. 46-53.

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RESÜMEE

Magistritöö pealkirjaga *Ancient Near Eastern Gods Enki and Ea: Diachronical Analysis of Texts and Images from the Earliest Sources to the Neo-Sumerian Period* („Vana Lähis-Ida jumalused Enki ja Ea: Tekstide ja kujutiste diakrooniline analüüs varajasimatest allikatest Uus-Sumeri ajastuni”) eesmärgiks on anda ülevaade Mesopotaamia jumaluste Enki ja Ea usundiloolisest arengust alates esimestest arheoloogilistest andmetest Eridu linnast (ca. 5000 e.Kr.) kuni Uus-Sumeri perioodi lõpuni (ca. 2000 e.Kr.).

Töö esimeses peatükis käsitletakse iidsest Eridu linnast kogutud arheoloogilisi andmeid ja nende seost muistse jumalusega, kes oli oletatavasti hilisema sumerikeelsetes tekstides kajastuva jumal Enki eelkäija. Sellest eelajaloolisest jumalusest ei ole teada muud, kui et tema auks püstitatud tempel on üks vanimaid Mesopotaamias ning selle templi jumalusele toodi erinevaid ohvriande, muuhulgas ka kalaohvreid ja madusid kujutavaid savifiguriine. Arutluse all on ka Enki/Ea maa-aluse valitsuspiirkonna Abzu algne olemus. Vanasumeri tekstidest ei ole otseselt teada, kas Abzut kujutletakse vetevallana juba varajasimates arusaamades või on selle piirkonna algne iseloom seostatav mingi muu allilma vormiga. Selge on aga see, et tegu on maa all asuva piirkonnaga, mida on juba kõige esimestest kirjalikest tekstidest alates seostatud jumal Enkiga. Sellele piirkonnale lähedaseks või sünonüümseks nähtuseks on Engur. Abzu ja Engur olid algselt oletatavasti kaks eri terminit, mis aja jooksul sulandusid ühte. Nende erinevus oleks välja toodav muuhulgas sellega, et Abzut on tekstides rohkem seostatud saviga, Engurit aga näiteks kaladega.

Järgnevalt on käsitletud Enki ja Ea oletatavat pärinemislugu ja nende algset iseloomu, mis esmajoonel peaks väljenduma nende nimede tähenduses. Enki nime puhul on kahtluse alla seatud traditsioonilise tõlke „Maa isand” tõlevastavus. Analüüsitakse võimalust tõlkida nime kui „Isand Heatahtlik”. Kuid kuna ka see variant ei ole otseselt tõestatav, ehkki jumalus Enki olemusega kokkusobiv, ei ole välistatud ka võimalus, et nii nimi kui ka jumalus pärinevad eelsumeri ajastust. Jumal Ea nime arusaadav interpreteering ei paku hetkel enam suuri raskusi. Üsnagi kindlalt võib väita, et nimes kajastub semiidi tüvi *hyy – „elav”, mida annab seostada voolava veega. Rääkides

nende jumaluste algsest päritolust, ei ole aga korrektne väita, nagu pärineks Ea lääneseemiidi mõttemaailmast ja Enki Sumeri Lõuna-Mesopotaamia piirkonna usundist. Oletatavasti oli igal Mesopotaamia ümbruse rahval olemas oma ettekujutus Enkile ja Eale sarnaste funktsioonidega jumalusest ning teatava nime oletatav päritolu mingist keelkonnast ei pea kahtlemata näitama selle nime taga oleva jumaluse otsest päritolu antud keelkonna algseks peetavalt maa-alalt.

Töö kolmandas osas käsitletakse jumal Enkit vanasumeri tekstides. Selgub, et Enkit seostatakse enim tema linna Eridu ja tema maa all asuva valitsuspiirkonna Abzuga. Kõige sagedamini nimetatakse Enkit seoses nähtusega *ĝeštú*, mis sumeri keeles tähendab „kõrv”, „arusaamine”, „tarkus”. Enkit on lisaks seostatud ka Engurist välja kasvava pillirooga. Kohati selgusetu on Enki seos algjumaluste Enki ja Ninkiga. Mütoloogiliste UD.GAL.NUN tekstide kohaselt on need jumalused nii Enki kui ka kõikide hilisemate suurte Sumeri jumaluste esivanemad. Ühe teksti kohaselt on Enki ja Ninki omakorda An'i (taevas) ja Ki (maa) järeltulijad. Enkit tituleeritakse ka kui Nudimmud, mis hilisemates tekstides kajastab tema olemust loojajumalusena. Pole selge, kas sama mõte kajastub ka vanasumeri tiitlis. Loitsudes ei ole Enki peamiseks jumaluseks, kelle poole abi saamiseks pöörduakse. Muuhulgas on teda aga tõenäoliselt kujutatud ka haiguste ja hädade toojana, mitte aga äravõtjana, nagu see on tavaks hilisemates loitsudes. Jumalate loetelus on Enkile tavapäraselt omistatud koht emajumaluse kuju järel, Enlil on aga enamasti esikohal. Juba varajastes allikates peetakse Lagaši riigis tähtsal positsioonil olnud jumalanna Nanšet Enki tütreks. Selgus puudub aga Lagaši peajumaluse Ningirsu ja Enki suhetes – teda tituleeritakse pigem Enlili pojana, kuid ka Nanše vennana.

Neljandas peatükis käsitletavate Vana-Akkadi riigi kuninglikes raidkirjades seostatakse Enkit endiselt tema linna Eriduga ja mainitakse ka Enkit seoses niisutuskanalitega. Süüria aladel asuva Ebla linna tekstides tõlgitakse Enki nimi kui *à-u₉*, mis peaks vastama semiidi tüvele *hyy. Seega võib oletada, et kuigi kirjalikes tekstides kasutati nimekuju Enki, mõeldi selle all Ead. Eblast pärit ohverdusnimekirjades on Ead seostatud kohaliku allilmajumalus Rasapiga. Eblast leitud müütides mainitakse teda rohkem kui kümnel korral. Kuna neid müüte on tänaseni raske interpreteerida ja tõlkida, jääb üsnagi selgusetuks ka jumal Ea roll neis.

Aru on saada, et ta kohtub päikesejumalusega ning eluneb oma allilmaterritooriumis Abzus. Vana-Akkadi ajastu mütoloogiliste stseenidega silinderpitsatitel on kujutatud jumalust, kelle õlgadest voolavad välja veejoad, kus omakorda ujuvad kalad. On põhjust oletada, et tegu on jumal Enki/Eaga, kuna lisaks veejugadele esineb ta neil ka koos oma hilisematest tekstides tuntud abilise kahenäolise Isimuga.

Töö viies peatükk käsitleb jumal Enkit Uus-Sumeri ajastu allikates. Teise Lagaši dünastia tekstide kohaselt on tegu jumalusega, kes annab praktilist nõu templiehituses. Templi vundamenti kirjeldatakse aga Enki maa-aluse Abzuga kontaktis olevana. Ur III ajastu kuninglikes hümnides mainitakse Enkit seostatuna vete poolt toodava viljakuse ja heaoluga. Kirjeldatakse ka Enkit kui jumalike normide *me*-de valdajat. Teda tituleeritakse kui „jumalate vanemat venda” ja „nooremad Enlili”. Enkit seostatakse ka loitsude ja puhastusriitustega. Uussumeri loitsudes omandavad Enki ja tema poeg Asalluḫi suurima tähtsuse teiste jumaluste seas. Enkit seostatakse haigustest puhastavate loitsuvetega. Ühes Mari linna valitseja Puzur-Eštari raidkirjas on Enkit tituleeritud kui „jumalate nõukogu isandat”. Selline nimetus annab alust oletada, et teda võidi seostada semiidi jumaluse El’iga, kellele see tiitel oli tavapäraselt omistatud. Jumalate loeteludes on Enki perioodi alguses neljandal kohal järgnedes emajumalusele. Ur III dünastia lõpuks on aga Enkit saanud panteoni kolmas jumalus An’i ja Enlili järel. Uussumeri silinderpitsatitel kujutatakse teda endiselt veejugadega jumalusena. Peatükis käsitletakse ka jumal Ḫaia teemat, kelle algne nimi võib olla jumal Ea nime üks erikujusid.

Magistritöö viimases osas on käsitletud Enki rolli sumerikeelsetes eepilistes lugudes Lugalbandast, Enmerkarist ja Gilgamešist ning müütides „Enki ja Ninḫursaḡ” ja „Enki ja Ninmaḡ”. Eepilistes lugudes on Enkit kujutatud võimsa jumalusena, keda iseloomustatakse ohtlikuna ka sõjalise vastasena. Samas leiab rõhutamist tema roll heaolu andjana. Lugulaulus „Gilgameši surm” ei ole Enki aga nõus andma Gilgamešile igavest elu, vaid määrab ta igaveseks allilma surnuteriiki ning seab Gilgameši sinna kohtumõistjaks. Müüdis „Enki ja Ninḫursaḡ” kajastatakse Enkit eelkõige meessoost viljakuse sümbolina, kelle käsul rikastatakse maa veega ning saab alguse tänane tsivilisatsioon. Jõuliselt kajastub selles müüdis Enki sugutung, mis väljendub emajumaluse kujuga ning tema enda tütardega paaritumises. Müüt “Enki ja Ninmaḡ” on lugu inimkonna loomisest jumal Enki poolt. Inimkond luuakse tööjõuks

jumalatele, kes ise füüsilisest tööst keelduvad. Oletatavasti kajastab müüt ka esimese naise loomist Enki enda poolt, nende ühtest aga omakorda sünnib esimene laps.

Kui kõige varasemate raskesti tõlgendatavate allikate põhjal leidis jumal Enki/Ea kohta vaid fragmentaarset teavet, siis uuritava perioodi lõpuks on võimalik taastada küllaltki terviklik pilt selle jumaluse funktsioonidest, olemusest ja rollist mesopotaamialikus mõttemaailmas.