

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO E-ANATUM.
THE NARRATIVE OF THE EVENTS IN E-ANATUM'S ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS

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During E-anatum's reign, lists of the king's wars consistently appear for the first time in Sumerian royal inscriptions. The ordering of events in these lists is a long-debated question and the hypothesis of a chronological enumeration has prevailed for a long time. In the present article it is argued that E-anatum's military campaigns were ordered on the basis of a geographical-numerical pattern.

Keywords: E-anatum; Lagaš; Sumerian royal inscriptions; the Stele of the Vultures; burial mounds

1. E-ANATUM'S MILITARY CAMPAIGNS IN SYNOPSIS

E-anatum's inscriptions¹ report many military campaigns. In the synopsis below they are listed according to the order in which they are enumerated in each inscription:

E-anatum 1	E-anatum 5	E-anatum 6	E-anatum 7a	E-anatum 8	E-anatum 9	E-anatum 11
Umma						
Elam						
Subartu						
Susa						
Arawa						
Arua						
Ur						
	Elam	Elam		Elam	Elam	
	Arawa	Arawa		Arawa	Arawa	
	Umma	Umma		Umma	Umma	
	Uruk	Uruk		Uruk		Uruk
	Ur	Ur			Ur	Ur
	Kiutu	Kiutu				
	Uruaz	Uruaz		Uruaz		
	Mišime	Mišime		Mišime		
	Arua	Arua		Arua		
	Akšak	Akšak				
	Elam					
	Kiš					
	Akšak					
	Elam		Elam			
	Subartu		Subartu			
	Arawa					
	Kiš					
	Akšak					
	Mari					

¹ The texts are quoted on the basis of the most recent complete edition: Frayne 2008. I thank Prof. Marcos Such-Gutiérrez for his many suggestions and remarks.

2. THE *STATUS QUAESTIONIS*

Understanding the principle according to which E-anatum's achievements were listed in his royal inscriptions has been a dilemma since the time of the first edition of the texts² and the question still remains disputed.

L.W. King³ was the first to discuss the relative chronology of E-anatum's reign. According to him, E-anatum's achievements are listed on a geographical-hierarchical basis: first the campaigns against the northern confederation, including Umma, Kiš, Akšak and Mari (the campaigns against the South are not explicitly mentioned), then those against the least significant enemies.

Two years later E. Meyer⁴ resumed the topic, arguing that the events recorded in E-anatum's inscriptions were enumerated in chronological order: in other words, the last military campaign mentioned in each inscription was supposed to be the *terminus post quem* for its composition.

In 1914 A. Poebel⁵ resumed Meyer's arguments, rejecting King's conclusions. According to him, «the best proof for the chronological order» in E-anatum's inscriptions was «the internal congruity» of the king's «career».⁶ Poebel established the following relative chronology (from the earliest to the latest inscription): E-anatum 9 and 11, E-anatum 8, E-anatum 6, E-anatum 7a, E-anatum 5.

M. Lambert⁷ confirmed Poebel's conclusions, but followed Meyer, in assuming that the account following Zuzu's revolt, which is reported only in E-anatum 5, was nothing but a series of clarifications («*précisions*») relating to E-anatum's war against Zuzu and his allies.

T. Jacobsen⁸ attempted to reconstruct the relative chronology of E-anatum's reign on the basis of the king's «religious titles». In his reconstruction the narrative of E-anatum's inscriptions seems to follow a chronological order. Nevertheless, according to him the whole passage following Zuzu's revolt (E-anatum 5 VI 12 - VII 2) «contains a geographically arranged summary of defensive victories against invaders from the East and the West».⁹

W.W. Hallo¹⁰ tried to establish the relative chronology of E-anatum's reign on the basis of the king's titles. The starting point of Hallo's analysis was the alternation between *ensi* and *lugal* in the royal titulary during the first dynasty of Lagaš and in E-anatum's inscriptions in particular. Hallo concluded that the narrative of the events in E-anatum's inscriptions did not follow any chronological order. According to him, «the relative regularity» of the order in which the events are enumerated in some inscriptions rather

² See Thureau-Dangin 1907 and, for the Stele of the Vultures, Heuzey - Thureau-Dangin 1909, 42-63. About the chronology of the first dynasty of Lagaš see Sallaberger - Schrakamp 2015.

³ King 1910, 144-152.

⁴ Meyer 1912.

⁵ Poebel 1914, 159-169.

⁶ Poebel 1914, 159.

⁷ Lambert 1952.

⁸ Jacobsen 1957, 130-133.

⁹ Jacobsen 1957, 132.

¹⁰ Hallo 1957.

«suggests a conscious effort by the Lagaš scribes to establish a canon for the history of the reign, and it need not be considered the best possible source for the order of events».¹¹

J.S. Cooper¹² discussed the relative chronology of E-anatum's reign in the framework of his reconstruction of the conflict between Lagaš and Umma. In general, Cooper thinks that the question «cannot be disentangled».¹³

More recently G.J. Selz¹⁴ has reconstructed the relative chronology of E-anatum's reign in the framework of the relations between Sumer and Elam. Assuming that the events narrated in the inscriptions follow one another in chronological order and that consequently the last fact reported represents the *terminus post quem* for the composition of each text, Selz concluded that the narrative (or historical) inscriptions of E-anatum were composed in the following order (from the earliest to the latest): E-anatum 4 (= 60, according to Steible 1982), E-anatum 9 (= 22), E-anatum 11 (= 62), E-anatum 8 (= 11), E-anatum 1 (i.e. the Stele of the Vultures), E-anatum 6 (= 3/4), E-anatum 5 (= 2). The inscription E-anatum 7a (= 5) cannot be dated on the basis of its historical content. According to Selz, the two alleged campaigns recorded in E-anatum 5 were nothing but «eine Zusammenfassung der ruhmreichsten Taten des E'anatum».¹⁵

To sum up, there is no consensus amongst scholars about the following points:

1) the order in which the events were enumerated in the inscriptions: geographical-hierarchical (King), chronological (all the others) or any other order (Hallo)?

2) The interpretation of the events following the revolt of Zuzu, king of Akšak: independent military campaigns (King and Poebel) or summary/clarification of previous campaigns (all the others)?

3) The dating of the Stele of the Vultures: earlier than any other extant inscription (Hallo), at the end of E-anatum's reign, that is after Zuzu's revolt (Cooper), or earlier than Zuzu's revolt (all the others)?

3. THE FRAMEWORK: LANGUAGE, CONTENT AND IDEOLOGY OF THE INSCRIPTIONS

The questions discussed above cannot be easily disentangled regardless of their framework, that is the *corpus* of E-anatum's inscriptions as a whole.

3.1. *Military epithets and formulas*

E-anatum claimed two military epithets:

A) the former - lu₂ ^dNin-ĝir₂-su₂-ra a-ša₃-GANA₂-ki-aĝ₂-ni gu₂-eden-na šu-na mu-ni-gi₄-a, “he who has returned to Ningirsu his beloved field Gu-edena”- refers to the great victory of E-anatum over the rival Umma and occurs as such only in one passage: E-anatum 10 I 9-

¹¹ Hallo 1957, 41.

¹² Cooper 1983, 24-28.

¹³ Cooper 1983, 24.

¹⁴ Selz 1991.

¹⁵ Selz 1991, 36.

II 2 (among E-anatum's titles and epithets, immediately before the epithet B). Some variants of this epithet appear in many other passages.¹⁶

B) the latter - kur-gu₂-ĝar-ĝar^dNin-ĝir₂-su₂-ka, "Ningirsu's subjugator-of(-foreign)-lands" -, which refers to the king's victories over foreign countries and to their submission, occurs in many passages.¹⁷ Some formulas of similar meaning¹⁸ stand in close relation to this epithet.

Concerning these epithets and formulas the following remarks can be made:

- especially in the inscriptions with the longest list of victories (E-anatum 5 and 6, but also 8) the epithet/formula A immediately follows the great victory over Umma, whereas the epithet/formula B is always associated with the king's campaigns against foreign enemies (consequently A usually precedes B);

- as can be inferred from the cartouches upon the Stele of the Vultures, the epithet B identifies E-anatum as the conqueror of the foreign countries on behalf of Ningirsu.

3.2. *The burial mounds after the battle*

The king's victories can be followed by the erection of burial mounds. The formula designating this rite in the texts of the first dynasty of Lagaš reads as follows: City/Country X GIN₂.ŠE₃ bi-se₃ SAHAR.DU₆.TAG₄-bi bi₂/mu-dub, "(the king) defeated the city/country X and erected burial mounds".

The topic of the burial mounds represents a real riddle.¹⁹ In the secondary literature two main questions have been raised and still remain disputed: 1. whether the burials of Lagaš own fallen soldiers or those of the enemies are meant and represented; 2. what burials mounds after the battle were erected for.

Upon the Stele of the Vultures burial mounds are both mentioned in the account of E-anatum's wars and depicted on the reverse of the monument, in the second register from below (the 3rd and 4th registers showing no real burial, but just heaps of slaughtered enemies).

Announced to E-anatum in dream by the god Ningirsu himself (E-anatum 1 obv. VII 21-22: ad₆-bi 3600/ ul₄-he₂ bi-la₂, "their myriad corpses will reach the base of heaven"), the erection of 20 burial mounds is mentioned in the text of the Stele of the Vultures immediately after the victory over Umma: [ĝi^{is}KUŠU₂^{ki}]/ G[IN₂].Š[E₃ bi-se₃] SA[HAR.DU₆.TAG₄-b]i 20/ bi₂-dub (E-anatum 1 obv. XI 12-15).

The formula City/Country X GIN₂.ŠE₃ bi-se₃ SAHAR.DU₆.TAG₄-bi bi₂/mu-dub still occurs in the following passages of E-anatum's inscriptions:

- E-anatum 5 III 12-16 (victory over Elam);
- E-anatum 5 III 17-22 (victory over Arawa);

¹⁶ E-anatum 1 obv. XI 24-XII 4, rev. X 20-21, rev. X 30-37; E-anatum 2 IV 13-15; E-anatum 4 II 3-6; E-anatum 6 IV 6-9; E-anatum 8 IV 10-V 2; E-anatum 16 II' 1'-3'.

¹⁷ E-anatum 1 rev. V 56-VI 1, cartouche A, cartouche B; E-anatum 2 IV 11-12; E-anatum 4 I 9-10; E-anatum 5 VI 15-16; E-anatum 7a I 5-II 1; E-anatum 10 II 4-5; E-anatum 14 I' 1'-2'.

¹⁸ E-anatum 1 obv. V 20-22, obv. XI 21-23; E-anatum 5 IV 20-24; E-anatum 6 V 5-9; E-anatum 8 V 9-VI 4.

¹⁹ See lastly Selz 2015 and Seminara 2014, where it is argued that the corpses were those of the soldiers fallen on the battlefield and that the burial mounds were meant to mark the border between two city-states after a battle.

- E-anatum 5 III 23-IV 1 (victory over Umma; 20 burial mounds);
- E-anatum 6 III 11-15 (victory over Elam);
- E-anatum 6 III 16-IV 1 (victory over Arawa);
- E-anatum 6 IV 2-5 (victory over Umma; 20 burial mounds);
- E-anatum 8 III 5-9 (victory over Elam);
- E-anatum 8 III 10-IV 5 (victory over Arawa);
- E-anatum 8 IV 6-9 (victory over Umma; 20 burial mounds).

In three cases the number of the burial mounds heaped up after the battle is specified and it is always 20.

This evidence raises the following questions:

- why are burial mounds mentioned only in connection with the first three military campaigns of the king (Elam, Arawa, Umma)?
- Why is the number of burial mounds (20) specified only in connection with the victory over Umma?

3.3. *Words related to victory and triumph in E-anatum's inscriptions*

In E-anatum's inscriptions the king's victory and the defeat of the enemies are expressed by different verbs. There is a certain consistency in the association between these verbs and the defeated countries/cities, as it appears in the following evidence:

1) GIN₂.ŠE₃-se₃ ("to win"): this verb occurs in connection with the first conquests (Elam, Arawa, Umma, Uruk, Ur, Kiutu), with the campaigns mentioned after Zuzu's revolt (first against Elam, Subartu and Arawa, then against Kiš, Akšak and Mari) and in the Stele of the Vultures (wars against Elam, Subartu, Susa, Arawa, Ur);

2) hul ("to destroy"): this verb is exclusively associated with the campaigns against Uruaz and Mišime;

3) ha-lam ("to crush"): it occasionally occurs in connection with the following enemies: kur-kur (E-anatum 1 obv. XI 23), Arua (E-anatum 1 rev. VIII 3', E-anatum 5 IV 19, E-anatum 6 V 4, E-anatum 8 VI 11), Umma (E-anatum 3 II' 5, E-anatum 4 II 2), Zuzu of Akšak (E-anatum 5 V 8, E-anatum 6 VI 5);

4) gu₂-ġar ("to subjugate"): it is associated with the victories over Elam and Subartu only in E-anatum 7a (II 3);

5) kur-ra-na bi-ġi₄, "(the king) drove (the enemy) back to his own country": it refers to the campaigns against Elam and Akšak (perhaps also against Kiš) only in E-anatum 5 VI 8 and 11 (probably in connection with the repression of Zuzu's revolt).

As mentioned above, the connection of some verbs with some specific enemies is rather consistent, apart from a few cases: e.g. E-anatum's inscriptions refer to the king's victory over Umma sometimes with the verb GIN₂.ŠE₃-se₃, other times with ha-lam (unless two different campaigns against Umma are meant).

GIN₂.ŠE₃-se₃ and ha-lam are the most frequent verbs. The semantic difference between these two verbs is evident. The former (traditionally translated as "to win") means a military victory which leaves the defeated enemy standing. In fact, it is related to E-anatum's first victories, which are the only ones to be followed by the erection of burial mounds, probably marking the border between the self-styled winner and the (alleged)

defeated, who evidently was still capable of harming and in possession of his own country/city. Instead, ha-lam is associated with the repression of Zuzu's revolt and his death (mu-gaz/ mu-ha-lam, in E-anatum 5 V 7-8). Therefore, the translation "to crush", that is "to annihilate the power of the defeated enemy", seems more appropriate for ha-lam.

4. ANALYSIS OF E-ANATUM 5 (AND 6)

E-anatum 5 and E-anatum 6, besides being very similar to each other in content, are the only inscriptions of E-anatum in which the account of Zuzu's revolt and its repression is recorded. Assuming that the revolt had not taken place yet at the time when the other inscriptions were composed, one can conclude that E-anatum 5 and E-anatum 6 were both written at the end of E-anatum's reign. Their lateness could account for these two inscriptions apparently rethinking and rewriting the events of E-anatum's reign in retrospect.

4.1. *The account of the king's achievements in E-anatum 5*

By combining text content with lexical choices and the map of the king's conquests, E-anatum 5 can be reconstructed as follows:

TEXT LINES	CONTENT
I 1 – III 11	The king's name with his titles, epithets and attributes. E-anatum's peaceful works for Ningirsu and Nanše.
III 12 – IV 1	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃) over Elam, Arawa and Umma and erection of burial mounds (SAHAR.DU ₆ .TAG ₄ -bi mu-dub).
IV 2-5	E-anatum takes back the Gu-edena.
IV 6-11	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃) over Uruk, Ur and Kiutu.
IV 12-19	E-anatum destroys (mu-hul) Uruaz and Mišime and crushes (mu-ha-lam) Arua.
IV 20-24	E-anatum subjugates (sag e-da ₅ -sig ₃) the foreign countries (kur-kur).
IV 25 – V 8	Revolt (i ₃ -zi-ga) of Zuzu, king of Akšak, and its repression (mu-ha-lam).
V 9-19	Digging of the new canal (LUM-ma-ġin ₇ -du ₁₀).
V 20 – VI 5	Inanna gives the kingship (nam-lugal) of Kiš to E-anatum.
VI 6-11	Restoration (kur-ra-na bi-ġi ₂) of the old borders with Elam, Kiš and Akšak.
VI 12-20	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃) over Elam, Subartu and Arawa, starting from Asuhur. E-anatum claims to be kur-ġu ₂ -ġar-ġar. ^d Nin-ġir ₂ -su ₂ -ka.
VI 21 – VII 2	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃) over Kiš, Akšak and Mari, starting from Antasura.
VII 3-13	Building of the reservoir (ġiš-keš-ra ₂) of the canal LUM-ma-ġin ₇ -du ₁₀ .
VII 14 – VIII 7	E-anatum's personal god and genealogy. Building of the Tiraš palace.

4.2. *The political-ideological message*

In his earlier three campaigns E-anatum defeats his enemies (Elam, Arawa and Umma) and heaps up burial mounds with the corpses of the soldiers fallen on the battlefield. These mounds are likely to have symbolically marked the borders between rival city-states.

In the following campaigns E-anatum turns his attention to the South (Uruk, Ur, Kiutu). This time there is no mention of burial mounds after the victory, maybe because the three defeated cities were just politically annexed to Lagaš, in which case no border was necessary.

The account of the following three campaigns is consistent both on geographical and on linguistic grounds: in fact, on the one hand, the three defeated cities (Uruaz, Mišime, Arua)

are likely to be all located on the north-eastern coast of the Persian Gulf (see below); on the other hand, these enemies were not just defeated, but destroyed (hul) or crushed (ha-lam).

The difference between this and the previous wars is also evident in the fate reserved for defeated rulers. In the first two phases of E-anatum's wars only once the enemy ruler (that of Arawa) is mentioned (III 17-20), and he is simply defeated (GIN₂.ŠE₃ bi-se₃). Even in the third phase only one ruler, that of Uruaz, is mentioned (IV 14-15), but in this case he is killed (mu-uš₂).

Zuzu, ruler of Akšak (which probably had succeeded Kiš as ruling city in northern Mesopotamia), revolts against Lagaš. E-anatum moves from the Antasura and puts down the revolt. Zuzu's destiny is worse than that of the other defeated leaders: after the battle, he is chased to Akšak, his city, and is butchered there (mu-gaz). Akšak itself is crushed (mu-ha-lam), exactly like the non-Sumerian cities. After this victory, E-anatum digs a new canal. As a result of his success, Inanna grants E-anatum, already ensi of Lagaš, the prestigious kingship (nam-lugal) of Kiš, symbol of hegemony over the whole northern Mesopotamia.

Once the outcome of the revolt and its consequences have been reported, the account of the war against the rebels is resumed from its very beginning and developed into three parts. This narrative scheme is unusual in Sumerian royal inscriptions,²⁰ but, as will be seen later, it perfectly fits with the logic of the text and with its internal symmetry. In the first part, Elam, Kiš and Akšak, frightened by E-anatum, are driven back into their respective territories. In the second part, E-anatum moves from the Asuhur and defeats Elam, Subartu and Arawa. In the third part E-anatum moves from the Antasura and defeats Kiš, Akšak and Mari. As a result of this last achievement E-anatum can claim the epithet "Ningirsu's subjugator-of(-foreign)-lands", featuring the king as lord of the whole world (on behalf of his god Ningirsu) and his city Lagaš as the center of the world.²¹

4.3. *The numerical pattern*

Upon close examination of the text, it is hard to escape the impression that the account of the king's achievements in E-anatum 5 is based on a numerical pattern. In fact, on the basis of both the content and the verbs referring to the king's victories and conquests, E-anatum's military campaigns are clearly to be divided into groups of three (or triplets):

²⁰ According to some scholars (King 1910; Poebel 1914), the events recorded after the account of Zuzu's revolt (V 9 - VII 13) are as many achievements of E-anatum's reign. Instead, the whole section is more likely to be a sort of expanded version of the war against Zuzu and his allies, based on two toponyms occurring in both sections: 1. the Antasura is mentioned as the starting point of E-anatum's campaign both in V 2 (Zuzu's revolt) and in VI 23 (victory over Kiš, Akšak and Mari); 2. the canal LUM-ma-ġin₇-du₁₀ occurs both immediately after Zuzu's revolt (V 15-19) and immediately after the victory over Kiš, Akšak and Mari (VII 3-13). Besides, if E-anatum had really conducted three military campaigns after Zuzu's revolt (the first one repelling the invading enemies, the second one starting from the Asuhur, the third one from the Antasura), it would be very strange that they were recorded only in E-anatum 5.

²¹ A-suhur-ta and An-ta-sur-ra-^dNin-ġir₂-su₂-ka-ta have been generally translated as «at Asuhur» and «at Antasur(a) of the god Ningirsu» respectively, assuming that «the decisive battle was fought within Lagash's borders» and that «Lagash undoubtedly was on a defensive» in these conflicts (Steinkeller 1998, 78). According to this interpretation, «Eanatum's success did not amount to much more than repulsing the enemy and saving his kingdom» (Steinkeller 1993, 118, n. 20).

TRIPLETS OF VICTORIES	CONTENT/VERBS COMMON TO EACH TRIPLET
1. Elam - Arawa - Umma	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃) and burial mounds (SAHAR.DU ₆ .TAG ₄ -bi mu-dub)
2. Uruk - Ur - Kiutu	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃)
3. Uruaz - Mišime - Arua	The enemies are destroyed (mu-hul) or crushed (mu-ha-lam)
4. Elam- Kiš - Akšak	The enemies are frightened (sag e-da ₅ -sig ₃) and/or repelled (kur-ra-na bi-gi ₄)
5. Elam - Subartu - Arawa	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃), moving from Asuhur
6. Kiš - Akšak - Mari	Victory (GIN ₂ .ŠE ₃ bi-se ₃), moving from Antasura

Between the first three triplets (1, 2 and 3) and the last three (4, 5 and 6), Zuzu's revolt together with its outcome is recorded.

Even with some variations, the same numerical pattern also occurs in the other E-anatum's inscriptions, almost without exception:

- in E-anatum 6 only the first three triplets occur, the text ending with the account of Zuzu's revolt and the digging of the new canal;
- in E-anatum 8 only the first and the third triplet appear (in the latter one, between the destruction of Uruaz and Mišime and the annihilation of Arua, the fear of the countries and the king's personal god are mentioned); the second triplet does not appear entirely, but is represented only by Uruk (Ur and Kiutu being missing);
- in E-anatum 9 only the first triplet is mentioned in its entirety, whereas of the three cities of the second triplet only Ur is mentioned;
- other inscriptions report military campaigns related to different triplets: in E-anatum 7a, the sequence Elam - Subartu is likely to be related to the fifth triplet, whereas in E-anatum 11 the sequence Uruk - Ur is part of the second triplet;
- In E-anatum 1 (the Stele of the Vultures) each of the last three campaigns represents one of the first three triplets: Arawa is related to the first triplet, Arua to the third and Ur to the second (the third triplet exceptionally preceding the second one).

To sum up, in most of E-anatum's inscriptions, the king's achievements have been rethought in retrospect and ordered according to a numerical pattern based on the number three.

However, there are some exceptions. For instance, E-anatum 7a focuses almost exclusively on the Tiraš palace, the very building the inscription was composed for. E-anatum 11 reports only the campaigns against Uruk and Ur, but it is very badly preserved. E-anatum 1 mainly focuses on the victory over Umma, whereas the other king's campaigns are just shortly mentioned.

E-anatum 9 seems to be a separate case. This text, recording the construction of a well, just mentions the king's campaigns against Elam, Arawa, Umma (i.e. the first complete triplet) and Ur, which appears elsewhere as the second city of the second triplet, after Uruk. In the light of this text one might think that the numerical pattern was based not on the 3 but on the 4. In other inscriptions, in fact, the account of E-anatum's military campaigns is preceded and/or followed by that of his building activities in Lagaš. Therefore, Lagaš could be the fourth geographical element of each group.

Some other numbers occurring in Lagaš royal inscriptions are likely to fit into this pattern, confirming our assumption. As mentioned above, in three cases out of four (i.e. in E-anatum 5, 6 and 8, but not in E-anatum 9), after the first three victories of the king (i.e. the first triplet) burial mounds were heaped up. Only in connection with the victory over

Umma (i.e. the last campaign of the first triplet), the text specifies that exactly 20 burial mounds were heaped up (SAHAR.DU₆.TAG₄-bi 20 mu-dub).

En-metena 1 provides a crucial clue for understanding why exactly 20 burial mounds were heaped up. According to this text, E-anatum erected a barrier (called Namnunda-kigara) on the border between Umma and Lagaš and built four chapels (bara₂) above it, consecrated respectively to the gods Enlil, Ninhursaga, Ningirsu and Utu (II 11-18). After some time, however, the king of Umma resumed hostilities (II 19 - III 4), set fire to the stele (na-ru₂-a), destroyed the chapels of the Namnunda-kigara, and finally got over the border dam (eg₂). After an unsuccessful attempt of revenge at the time of En-anatum, En-metena managed to defeat Umma's ruler, Ur-LUMma (III 15-18). With the bones of the enemy soldiers scattered throughout the Gu-edena, En-metena heaped up burial mounds in five different places: nam-lu₂-ulu₃-ba/ ġiri₃-PAD.DU-bi/ eden-da e-da-tag₄-tag₄/ SAHAR.DU₆.TAG₄-bi/ ki-5-a/ i₃-mi-dub (III 22-27). The number five is not likely to be a coincidence: in fact, the five burial mounds probably had to replace the stele and the four chapels of the Namnunda-kigara destroyed by Ur-LUMma.

Assuming, on the basis of En-metena 1, that the border with Umma was marked first by the stele and the 4 chapels, then by the 5 burial mounds, one might argue that the 20 burial mounds heaped up by E-anatum at the end of his first war campaign (the one corresponding to the first triplet in most of his inscriptions) served to mark Lagaš borders in four different directions.

No matter where exactly the burial mounds were heaped up, the political and ideological meaning of their number (20) is unquestionable: as a result of his conquests in the four corners of the world, E-anatum could claim to rule over the whole world, a four-sided world.

5. THE GEOGRAPHICAL PATTERN AND E-ANATUM'S CLAIMS OF WORLD HEGEMONY

According to a well-known passage of the epic text *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, the so-called *Spell of Nudimmud* (lines 134-155), the people of 3rd millennium Mesopotamia believed that at one time (it does not matter here, whether in the past or in the future) the world was divided into four parts or regions: Šubur, Hamazi, Sumer and Akkad and finally Martu. This division was both linguistic and geographical: in fact, each region is likely to have corresponded to one corner of a four-sided world.

According to C. Wilcke, also in the *Sumerian King List* the world was imagined as four-sided. This text is based on a geographical pattern, whose main rule is that kingship moves from the North (represented each time by a different city or political power, in the order: Kiš, Akšak, Akkad, Gutium) to the South (first Uruk, then Ur, finally Adab and Isin). These two geographical areas, North and South, correspond approximately to Akkad and Sumer respectively. The handover of power between Akkad and Sumer is interrupted only in three cases by as many foreign dynasties: Awan (geographically corresponding approximately to Elam), Hamazi and Mari (dynasties 4, 6 and 10 of the *Sumerian King List* respectively). According to Wilcke,²² «if we mark these cities [that is, Awan, Hamazi and Mari] on a

²² Wilcke 1989, 561.

map, it becomes immediately clear that they form three corners of a rectangle aligned with the four major wind-directions, a rectangle enclosing the state of the Ur III Kings. The fourth corner is missing, but there, in the southwest, is only desert».

In E-anatum's inscriptions some important aspects of the *Sumerian King List* are anticipated: the opposition between the North and the South, the passage of hegemony from Kiš to Akšak in the North, the hegemony of Ur and Uruk in the South, the handover of kingship from Kiš to a southern city, namely Lagaš (deliberately omitted in the *Sumerian King List*), and finally the idea of a four-sided world. However, the geo-political map of E-anatum's inscriptions is not identical to that of the Ur III or Isin dynasties: first of all, Lagaš is the centre of the world; instead of Awan we find Elam (as in the *Spell of Nudimmud*) and Arawa; instead of Hamazi, perhaps, Subartu (as in the *Spell of Nudimmud*); in the South-East (roughly corresponding to the coasts of the Persian Gulf), instead of an empty space (or the «desert», according to Wilcke), Uruaz, Mišime and Arua.

The table below shows a sort of mental map of the geo-political horizon at the time of E-anatum based on the king's inscriptions. Lagaš is part of Sumer, but also, on ideological grounds, the centre of the world; Umma, located along the route leading to Elam and the North-East, was, as a result of the king's victories, part of Lagaš kingdom; Arawa is perhaps to be identified with the Elamic city of Urua, in north-western Huzistan;²³ Kiutu is likely to be located between Sumer and Elam, probably in the territory of Marada;²⁴ Uruaz or Iriaza (an Elamic city, close to URUxA),²⁵ Mišime (perhaps on the north-eastern coast of the Persian Gulf)²⁶ and Arua are likely to be located north of the Persian Gulf.²⁷

NORTH-WEST	NORTH-EAST
Mari	Elam
Akšak	Subartu
Kiš	Arawa
Lagaš (and Umma?)	
SUMER	SOUTH-EAST
Uruk	Uruaz
Ur	Mišime
Kiutu	Arua

In conclusion, the account of E-anatum's conquests in his latest royal inscriptions was divided into major wars, each of them corresponding to one of the corners into which the world was believed to be divided (and obviously excluding the corner corresponding to Lagaš), so as to form an ideal quadrilateral. As each war was supposed to symbolically

²³ Steinkeller 1982, especially 244-246.

²⁴ See Selz 1991, 35, n. 54; Schrakamp 2015, 203, n. 68.

²⁵ See Edzard - Farber - Sollberger 1977, 181; Schrakamp 2015, 202, n. 66.

²⁶ See Steinkeller 1982, 240-243; Schrakamp 2015, 203, n. 69.

²⁷ Selz 1991, 36.

represent the conquest of the whole world, in the longer inscriptions each of them was in turn divided into three military campaigns (ideally corresponding to as many corners of the world).

Rethinking and rewriting the history of his reign as a succession of military campaigns aimed at conquering each of the parts in which the world was divided, E-anatum claimed to rule over a universal empire. This claim is mirrored in his epithet “Ningirsu’s subjugator-of(-foreign)-lands”.

6. THE NAME OF THE “NEW CANAL” AND THE LUMMA-QUESTION

The digging of the new canal is mentioned twice in E-anatum 5: first (V 9-19), immediately after the victory over Zuzu of Akšak and before E-anatum’s claim to the “kingship of Kiš”; then (VII 3-13), after the account concerning the repression of Zuzu’s revolt.

The passage V 9-19, relating to the name of the “new canal”, has been a dilemma for various reasons. It reads as follows:

u₄-ba/ E₂-an-na-tum₂-ma/ E₂-an-na-tum₂/ mu-u₂-rum-m[a]-ni/ mu-ĜIR₃.ĜIR₃-ni/ L[U]M-ma-a/ ^dNin-ĝ[ir]₂-su₂-[r]a/ a-gibil/ mu-na-dun/ LUM-ma-ĝin₇-du₁₀/ mu mu-na-sa₄.

This controversial passage has been translated in the last two text editions as follows:

Steible: «Damals hat E’anatum, dessen eigener Name E’anatum, dessen Tidnum-Name Lumma (ist), dem Ning[ir]su einen neuen Kanal gegraben (und) ihm (= Ningirsu) Lummagimdu (als) Namen genannt».²⁸

Frayne: «At that time E-anatum, whose personal name is E-anatum and whose battle(?) (or Tidnum[?]) name is LUM-ma, dug the “New Canal” for the god Ningirsu, and named it LUM-ma-ĝim-du (“Sweet Like LUM-ma”) for him».²⁹

According to the current interpretation, therefore, LUM-ma is E-anatum’s second name and the name of the canal alludes to the king’s name.

Recently, Marchesi,³⁰ partly following Steiner,³¹ has radically questioned the current interpretation, suggesting the following translation: «At that time, when E’annatum’s own name (lit., of E’annatum, his own name) and *fame* (lit., and his *fame*) *flourished/grew*, he (= E’annatum) dug a new canal for Ningirsu, and named it Lummagendu (“As Sweet as the Lusty One”) for him (Ningirsu)».

According to Marchesi, LUMma has nothing to do with E-anatum, being neither the king’s second name nor his deified hypostasis. LUMma in Lagaš texts rather designates an epithet (“the Lusty One”) of Ningirsu³² or of a Lagaš ruler who reigned during the Gutian period and whose name remained connected with the digging of canals.³³

²⁸ Steible 1982, 149.

²⁹ Frayne 2008, 148.

³⁰ Marchesi 2006, 120-126.

³¹ Steiner 1975-1976, especially p. 15.

³² Marchesi 2006, 120.

³³ Marchesi 2006, 126-130.

Some of Marchesi's doubts about the current interpretation of the passage are plausible, but his translation is somewhere problematic on the basis of both philological reasons and the context:

1) from a philological point of view, Marchesi has to force the text to support his translation: on the one hand, following Steiner (1975/76), he expunges E₂-an-na-tum₂ at line 11; on the other, he suggests a temporal clause not opening with u₄ ("when"), which is quite unusual in third millennium royal inscriptions (in fact, it is no coincidence that the only parallel reported by Marchesi is left untranslated in Steible 1982);³⁴

2) the distinction between «literary texts» and «prosaic dedicatory inscription» to deny the chiasm of lines 11-14 makes little sense in Sumerian;³⁵

3) above all, Marchesi's interpretation does not fit with the meaning and the context of the passage: first, the claim that «E'annatum's own name (lit., of E'annatum, his own name) and fame (lit., and his fame) flourished/grew» is unparalleled in royal inscriptions (in fact Marchesi does not quote any parallel), and does not make much sense in the context (the digging of a new canal and its name); secondly, according to Marchesi's translation, the sign LUM would have a meaning at line 14 ("fame") and a completely different one after a few lines, at line 18 ("Ningirsu", in the form LUM-ma), which is also very unlikely.

An important clue for understanding the passage in question can be provided by a parallelism between E-anatum 5 V 9-19 and E-anatum 1 rev. X 23-29, mentioning the erection of the stele and its "baptism": na-ru₂-a/ mu-bi/ lu₂-a nu-mu-bi ši-e/ ^dNin-ĝir₂-su₂/ en men-LUM-ma/ nam-ti-¹⁷Piriĝ-edena.

The two passages show some similarities: in both, the king names one of his works (a new canal in the former, a stele in the latter); in both, LUMma appears as part of the given name; finally, in both passages the name of the king's work is preceded by a sort of explanatory parenthesis, relating the name of the work to the king's name.

In E-anatum 5, the name of the canal is explained through its connection with a king's second name, obscurely characterized as "ĜIR₃.ĜIR₃ name". I suggest for the passage the following translation: «At that time - E-anatum being the proper name of E-anatum (and) LUMma (being) his ... name - (he/E-anatum) dug a new canal for Ningirsu (and) called it LUMmagindu (= "As good as LUMma")».

The name of the king's work (a stele) is provided with an explanatory parenthesis also in the passage of the Stele of the Vultures, for which the following translation is proposed here: «(E-anatum) proclaimed the name of the stele, this name being not (that) of a human being: "Lord Ningirsu, the crown of LUMma (is) the life of the Pirig-edena canal!"». The name of the stele means therefore that E-anatum, here called LUMma, is the one who created the canal and who guarantees its survival by defending it from Umma's attacks.

Apart from these two passages, the explanatory parenthesis is unparalleled and consequently not convincing. The need for explanation could mean that the text is affirming something new, that is the identification between the king and LUMma.³⁶

³⁴ Marchesi 2006, 125, ns. 634, 636.

³⁵ Marchesi 2006, 124.

³⁶ Following Steinkeller (2017, 110-117) the identification with LUMma could be but a «poetic metaphor».

7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the narrative of the events in E-anatum's royal inscriptions is based on a partly geographical, partly numerical pattern. Whatever the actual, that is chronological succession was, the ordering of events in the 'historical' account had to support the core idea that E-anatum, as a result of his victories and conquests in the four parts of the world, legitimately claimed to rule over the whole world, idea which is mirrored in his epithet "Ningirsu's subjugator-of(-foreign)-lands". This means that, even if the first world empire was the Akkadian one, the idea of a universal empire was not born out of nothing at the time of Naram-Sin of Akkad, but rather had been developing in Mesopotamia during the 3rd millennium.³⁷ Therefore, this idea cannot be taken as a dividing line between two different geo-political orientations: the Sumerian, allegedly based on the city-state model, and the Akkadian one, supposedly imperialistic and universalistic.

Like stelae, canals and burial mounds, the royal inscriptions marked the map of the kingdom and updated it, as the king's conquests progressed. The word (especially the written word, that is the sign) plays a crucial role in shaping reality. On the one hand, the word is a starting point: since the world is conceived and represented as a four-sided figure, the king has to fight and win in each of its four corners, if he wants legitimately to claim to rule over the whole world. On the other hand, the word is an end point, as well: in fact, once the account has been arranged in order to show that the king has successfully fought in the four corners of the world, he automatically becomes the lord of that world. The word must not persuade (therefore, it would be improper to speak of propaganda), it rather brings reality into being.

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³⁷ According to Steinkeller (1993, 129): «Many of the systemic traits that are usually associated with the Sargonic period ... and, no less important, its ideology of conquest, were part of the northern reality long before Sargon» and date back to the so-called Kiš civilization. Cp. also Steinkeller 2013.

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