Conventions

Transliterations

All text transliterations follow CDLI conventions; all readings not in Borger (1978) and Ellermeier (1979–80) are explained. Akkadian and Sumerian are transliterated with the same font and type. Signs with unknown readings are transliterated using capitals. The sign-name is given in parenthesis when a new reading is proposed. Signs not in Borger or Ellermeier are numbered following Schneider (1935), and prefixed KWU. Index numbers are always given with numerals. Broken signs are indicated with half-brackets. Breaks are indicated by square brackets: square brackets are never placed inside a sign. If it is useful to indicate in the transliteration which part of a sign is broken, this is done in the notes to the texts. Standard Assyriological fonts are used in both transliterations and transcriptions. However, sade (ṣ), tet (ṭ), and nasalized g (ŋ) are not rendered in the transliterations. Although the sign *ze*$_2$ in some cases is to be read *ṣe* it is always transliterated *ze*$_2$; similarly, although *ga*$_2$ is always used for *na* it is transliterated *ga*$_2$, etc. Transliterations within the body of the text are spaced for Sumerian and italicized for Akkadian.

When texts or text excerpts are transliterated in the footnotes, they are, as a rule, given in a running format, using / as a line separator, and // as a surface separator (for example, obv. l. 1 / obv. l. 2 // rev. l. 1 / rev. l. 2 // seal l. 1, etc.).

Translations

All texts are translated into English, except those appearing only in the Appendix. Sexagesimal numerical notations are transcribed into the decimal system; all other notations are given using the original system of values. Numerical notations have been translated only when a one-to-one semantic correspondence with an English term can be found (gi = reed; kuš$_3$ = cubit; gu$_2$ = talent; gin$_2$ = shekel; še = grain). Capacity notations have been translated into liters in the discussions only. Sumerian words have been translated throughout this study, whenever possible. The Sumerian form and any necessary discussion are to be found either in the notes or between brackets in the main text (not in repeated instances). Certain words such as *sukkalmaḫ* (sukkal-maḫ, a high-ranking title in the imperial administration), or *nam-šatam* (nam-ša$_3$-tam, a certain administrative function or office) have been left untranslated, but pseudo-transcribed, for the sake of convention.

Personal Names

Names are not distinguished in the transliterations. Names are transcribed in the translations and in the body of the text with attention to the presumed language of that name. Akkadian and Sumerian names are transcribed with the same font and type. Names are capitalized in the transcriptions but not in the transliterations. Akkadian names have been transcribed as closely as possible to the standard conventions of Akkadian (see, for example, von Soden 1952: 8–9 §6c–d). Sumerian names are transcribed in a reader-friendly way that does not attempt to render any phonetic qualities of the names. All personal names presumably had a meaning to their owners, whether we understand them or not. The system of transcribing names in this book intends to render them in a way that illustrates the meaning of the name. I will not attempt to translate any names, many of which were abbreviated forms. In ambiguous cases footnotes are used to explain the choice of transcription. The name lu$_2$-kal-la has thus been transcribed Lu-kala, since it is understood to mean something like "the precious man," and since the double writing of the final "l" is understood to be a result of scribal conventions rather than an expression of the phonetic value of the signs. ur-e$_{11}$-e has been transcribed Ur-E'e,

since E'e is a divine name (a god in the local pantheon of Umma). The apostrophe does not relate to pronunciation; it is inserted only to indicate that the name is spelled with two signs, each transliterated "e" (similarly in the transliteration of the numerical signs geš'u and bur'u, see below). A name such as gu-du-du has simply been transcribed Gududu, since it remains impossible to isolate the meanings of components of such names beyond reasonable doubt. Names of unknown reading have not been transcribed.

Numbers and Metrology

Numerical notations are transliterated using CDLI standards (digits or fractions followed by a qualifier between brackets). Apart from sexagesimal notations, no numerical notations are transcribed into modern systems except in the discussion. Below is a quick reference for conversion of the numerical notations found in the texts published here.

The basic unit in the sexagesimal system, used when counting discrete objects is 1(diš).

1 $šar_2$ = 6 geš'u
1 geš'u = 10 $geš_2$
1 $geš_2$ = 6 u
1 u = 10 diš

Fractions of the smallest unit are expressed by either subdividing 1(diš) into 60 gin_2, and further by subdividing each gin_2 into 180 še, or by a system of reciprocal notations referred to as the "igi-*n*-gal_2" system.

igi-6(diš)-gal = 1/6
igi-4(diš)-gal = ¼
etc.

The basic unit in the capacity system is 1(diš) $sila_3$. Notations of 300 $sila_3$ or larger were recorded in the sexagesimal system. 300 $sila_3$ equal 1 gur, which was recorded with a horizontal wedge (aš) rather than a vertical wedge (diš). Notations above 6(geš'u) are notated with 1($guru_7$) and so forth (lit. one granary), rather than 1($šar_2$).

1 gur = 5 barig
1 barig = 6 ban_2
1 ban_2 = 10 diš

As with the smallest notation in the sexagesimal system, so too the $sila_3$ can be subdivided, first into 60 gin_2 and further each gin_2 into 180 še.

The basic unit of the weights system is 1(diš) gin_2 (Akkadian *šiqlum*):

1 gu_2 = 60 ma-na
1 ma-na = 60 gin_2
1 gin_2 (shekel) = 180 še

The basic unit of the area measure system is 1(diš) iku. The iku can be subdivided into 100 sar. Fractions of the iku can be expressed with ½(iku) (written with the U sign) and ¼(iku) (written with the DIŠ sign).

1 $šar_2$ = 6 bur_3
1 bur'u = 10 bur_3
1 bur_3 = 3 $eše_3$
1 $eše_3$ = 6 iku
1 iku = 100 sar

Below is a list of the approximate conversions of the basic units to units in the metric system:

1(diš) $sila_3$ = 1 liter
1(aš) gur = 300 liters
1(diš) gin_2 = 8 ½ grams
1(diš) ma-na = ½ kilogram
1(diš) sar = 36 square meters
1(bur_3) = 6.48 hectares

In transliterations the notations are described as multiples of the numerical sign. For example, the following notation, from text No. 91 obv. 5:

1(aš) 1(barig) 1(ban_2) 2(diš) ⅔(diš) $sila_3$ 8(diš) gin_2 gur

Represents 1 gur, 1 barig, 1 ban_2, 2 ⅔ $sila_3$ and 8 shekel (of lard). This notation can be converted into a notation of 372 4/5 $sila_3$ or about 372 4/5 liters of lard.

Or in the following example, from text No. 155 obv. iv 12–13:

2(bur_3) 1($eše_3$) 5(iku) ½(iku) GAN_2 geš a-ra_2 3($aš_{45}$) ⌜4(iku)⌝ ½(iku) GAN_2-ta / a_2 $erin_2$-na-bi ⌜u_4⌝ 1($geš_2$) 3(u) 5(diš)

Here 2 bur_3, 1 $eše_3$ and 5 ½ iku of field is harrowed three times at a rate of 4 ½ iku daily, by a team of three workers, resulting in an expenditure

of workdays of 1 geš$_2$ and 3 u and 5 diš, or 95 workdays in a decimal notation.

Calendrical Information

Dates, mostly the terminal dates of administrative documents, are given in the following format: (1) abbreviated ruler-name (Š = Šulgi, AS = Amar-Suen, ŠS = Šu-Suen, IS = Ibbi-Suen) followed by (2) a year-count in Arabic numerals, (3) the month number in Latin numerals, and (4) the day number in Arabic numerals.

Examples:

AS 5–v–12 = Amar-Suen, year 5, month 5, day 12.

ŠS 9 = Šu-Suen, year 9, no month or day information.

X vi = Unknown ruler, month 6.

Question marks and comments are added when necessary.

Catalog Information

Catalog information concerning texts published in this volume is provided in the following form, where the first number represents the publication number of the text when it is published here for the first time:

n. MS nnnn(/nn) (provenience, date)

The first text published in this volume is therefore described in the following way:

1. MS 1719 (Drehem, ŠS 4–i to ŠS 6–xiii)