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# Tuṭṭanabšum: Princess, Priestess, Goddess

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**Abstract:** Tuṭṭanabšum, daughter of Naram-Suen, was one of the most powerful women of the Akkadian dynasty. The princess was installed as the high priestess of Enlil at Nippur; she held one of the highest cultic positions for the head of the Sumerian pantheon, in a city whose temple served as the religious capital of Sumer. Now, an administrative tablet from the Iraq Museum shows that Tuṭṭanabšum, like her father, was also elevated to the realm of the divine. Never before has there been evidence that a member of the Akkadian royal family other than the king was given divine status. The tablet demonstrates that the divinity adopted by Naram-Suen after his victory in the Great Rebellion applied not only to the king, but to other members of the royal family. Tuṭṭanabšum, therefore, was not only a member of the royal house and one of the highest cultic officials in the empire, but was also elevated to the divine realm.

**Keywords:** Sargonic Empire, Old Akkadian, high priestess, divine kingship, princess

When Sargon, the king of Akkade, swept down through Sumer late in the 24th century BCE and defeated his rival Lugal-zagesi, the king of Uruk, it was the beginning of what would become the Sargonic Empire. During his reign, Sargon installed his daughter Enheduanna as high priestess of the moon God in Ur.<sup>1</sup> It is not clear why Ur in particular was chosen, but the move was most likely done to assert, and insert, Akkadian power deep in the south (Steinkeller 1999: 124).

The practice of placing family members in high office was carried on by Sargon's successors, especially his grandson Naram-Suen. Naram-Suen began situating his own children in elite positions throughout the empire: his daughter Enmenana succeeded her great aunt as high priestess at Ur, two of his other daughters were established as *ēntum*-priestesses in the cults of Sippar and Nippur, two other daughters are attested at Mari and Urkesh (presumably given in diplomatic marriage), one son became governor at Marad, and another son was

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<sup>1</sup> For her seal and title see RIME 2.1.1.16.

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installed as a governor at Tutub (Foster 2016: 22).<sup>2</sup> Of his offspring, besides the crown prince Šar-kali-šarrē, perhaps one of the most important was his daughter Tuṭṭanabšum.<sup>3</sup> Not only was she already high status as a member of the royal family, but she eventually held one of the highest cultic positions in the Sargonic Empire: *ēntum*-priestess of Enlil.

Tuṭṭanabšum has on occasion caught the attention of scholarship, particularly when inscriptions have established her parentage and titulary, or in discussions of high priestesses in the third millennium.<sup>4</sup> Especially important to discussions of the high priestess has been the seal of Aman-Eštar, a cultic official in the service of Tuṭṭanabšum. On the seal Aman-Eštar stands before her seated mistress, who is seated wearing a long flounced robe, and crown with three points, and with arms crossed before her. The seal is unique not only because it depicts Tuṭṭanabšum and her servant, but it is also one of the few depictions of a high status women of the Akkadian period.<sup>5</sup>

Like many members of the Akkadian royal family, there are few tablets and inscriptions which mention Tuṭṭanabšum or offer much detail about her life. Nevertheless, with the exception of the Akkadian kings, she is perhaps one of the best represented royal figures of the period. Furthermore, a recent tablet publication suggests that the princess, and perhaps by extension the entire royal family, was given the divine determinative.

## 1 Princess

Tuṭṭanabšum is specifically named as the daughter of king Naram-Suen in two dedicatory inscriptions (see RIME 2.1.4.18 and 20). She was one of at least 11 children of Naram-Suen who are known from various cuneiform sources so far; her siblings include: Šar-kali-šarrē, Bin-kali-šarrē, Šumšani, Lipit-ilē, Tarām-Akkade, Enmenanna, Rigmuš-ālsu, Nabi-Ulmaš, Me-Ulmaš, and Ukēn-Ulmaš. While the order of their birth cannot yet be determined, Tuṭṭanabšum may have been among the elder of Naram-Suen's children for two reasons: 1) the important religious position to which she was appointed, and 2) her attendance on a royal journey to Girsu with her

<sup>2</sup> See Frayne (1993: 87) for a list of these individuals and their inscriptions.

<sup>3</sup> Her name means “she is constantly pleasing to him,” contra those who have previously read Tūta-napšum “she has found life.” On the matter see the discussion by Sommerfeld (2011: 291).

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Westenholz and Oelsner (1983); Westenholz and Westenholz (1983); Michalowski (1981); and J. G. Westenholz (2012).

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the seal imagery and its interpretations see J. G. Westenholz (2011: 327) and Suter (2007: 324–325). Also see Asher-Greve (2006) and Suter (2007) on images of priestesses in the third and early second millennia.

father and two brothers.<sup>6</sup> The latter point is significant because only three children were brought on the excursion: Šar-kali-šarrē, Bin-kali-šarrē, and Tuṭṭanabšum. The inclusion of the crown prince seems an obvious choice, as he was to be the future king of the empire, but the presence of the other two children attracts some attention. For now, little is known of Bin-kali-šarrē and whatever political or cultic roles he may have held, so his inclusion in the royal journey can only be speculated upon. Likewise, Tuṭṭanabšum's presence is difficult to account for as the administrative tablet does not mention if she was already the priestess of Enlil at this time.<sup>7</sup> But, it may be that these children accompanied the royal party because they were among the most prominent of Naram-Suen's children at the time of the event; it is possible that they were the eldest offspring of the king and of an age suitable for public life, such as accompanying the king and queen on a royal tour.

As a member of the royal family, Tuṭṭanabšum would have been surrounded by an entourage that was a part of her own household. To date, at least eight individuals are known to have been a part of that group. These persons are both male and female, and on economic documents called ARAD<sub>2</sub> or GEME<sub>2</sub> "servant" or described with the more opaque Akkadian anaphoric pronoun *šu* "of."<sup>8</sup> The former term seems to denote either one who is in the service of someone else, who is hired or indebted (either economically or socially) in some way, while the latter refers to those who are considered a part of a household or family more intimately.<sup>9</sup> An illustrative example can be seen on the seal of Aman-Eštar, the servant of Tuṭṭanabšum, who is called *šat šabirim* / GEME<sub>2</sub>-sa, "of (the household of) *šabirim*, her servant."<sup>10</sup> The seal inscription demonstrates that by becoming a servant of Tuṭṭanabšum, Aman-Eštar did not lose the household to which she belonged and become a member of Tuṭṭanabšum's household.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, it highlights the difference in the usage of these two descriptive terms, ARAD<sub>2</sub>/GEME<sub>2</sub> and *šu*.

6 For more on the royal trip see Foster (1980) and Kraus (2019).

7 It was suggested by Weierhäuser (2008: 258) that this very trip may have culminated at Nippur, where Tuṭṭanabšum entered the cult of Enlil.

8 The equivalent in Sumerian texts seems to be PN lu<sub>2</sub> PN (Gelb 1979, 53–54).

9 See Gelb (1979) for a discussion of kinship terms and the term *šu* PN as a designation for a member of a particular household in early Mesopotamia.

10 For a discussion of the interpretations of this line on the seal of Aman-Eštar see (J. G. Westenholz (2011: 327)). While there have been several ideas on how to understand this line in the seal, the idea that this most likely refers to her clan/household is the most attractive. The seal is unprovenanced and belongs to a private collection, but its present whereabouts are unknown (J. G. Westenholz (2011: 315)).

11 Indeed, that she has maintained her family connection on her seal suggests that the family may have been a particularly prominent one at court, although this is purely speculative for now, as the name is not recorded in any other text from the Sargonic period.

ARAD<sub>2</sub> and GEME<sub>2</sub> do not in this case denote slavery or the status of a slave, because, while we do not know the particular social status of Aman-Eštar, the seals of other high officials likewise use the sign in reference to their service to another elite. For example, the seal of Lugal-ušumgal, governor of Lagash, reads: lugal-ušumgal / ENSI<sub>2</sub> / LAGAS<sup>ki</sup> / ARAD<sub>2</sub>-su<sub>2</sub> “Lugal-ušumgal, governor of Lagash, his (i.e. the king’s) servant” (RIME 2.1.5.2004). The term has a literal and symbolic meaning: not only that a person is in the service of another, but also stresses that a hierarchical social relationship exists between the two.

On the other hand, šu is far less explicit about the relationship between two individuals and puts them on more equal standing. While šu is typically used between two personal names (PN<sub>1</sub> šu PN<sub>2</sub>), it is also, although far less commonly, used in reference to animals, professions, places, or objects, such as PN šu ANŠE, šu <sup>GIS</sup>TUKUL, šu GAL<sub>5</sub>LA<sub>2</sub>, šu ENSI<sub>2</sub>, etc.<sup>12</sup> In some cases this is a reference to a person who holds a specific title, such as Ur-sa<sub>6</sub> šu NIN (CUSAS 27, 174), which can only mean that Ur-sa<sub>6</sub> is an agent of the queen. Other instances remain ambiguous, but may denote an ancestral profession that became the household name, a family business, or possibly a sigil adopted by that household (Gelb 1979: 48–49). That being said, in some cases someone who is šu +profession is probably be a member of that professional group, rather than one who belongs to a family/household that has assumed it as a name, such as Dakum šu <sup>GIS</sup>TUKUL (HSS 10, 176), Šu-Mama šu <sup>GIS</sup>TUKUL (CUSAS 27, 48), and Ilak-nu’id šu <sup>GIS</sup>TUKUL-LUGAL (HSS 10, 81). These individuals are probably men who are soldiers or guards of a sort called <sup>GIS</sup>TUKUL, and not all members of a clan with that name.

There are a total of eight individuals who can be considered either part of Tuṭṭanabšum household, or are in her service. Of those personnel, there are two individuals who were her household administrators and held the title šabra: Re’um-innissesi and Ba’li-ilum. Two factors suggest that Re’um-innissesi probably held the position prior to Ba’li-ilum: 1) the paleography of the tablets on which each individual is attested, and 2) Ba’li-ilum appears on a tablet belonging to the Šu-ilisu archive which is roughly dated to the reign of Šar-kali-šarrē.<sup>13</sup> The individuals who are part of her household are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

As a member of the royal family and high priestess, Tuṭṭanabšum would have had significant resources at her disposal. From administrative sources it appears that she owned date orchards somewhere in Sumer and her own branded sheep flocks in

<sup>12</sup> Further examples can be found in Gelb’s (1979, 45) study of ancient kudurrus, particularly the Maništušu Obelisk.

<sup>13</sup> A. Westenholz in particular discusses the dating of the archive (see Milano and Westenholz 2015: 13).

**Table 1:** Persons attested as servants or members of the household of Tuṭṭanabšum.

Household		Attestation	Provenance
Ilisu-dan	Šu T.	MAD 1, 179	Ešnunna
Dadi	Šu T.	TCBI 2/1, 59	Adab
Re'um-innissesi	ŠABRA E <sub>2</sub> T.	MVN 3, 1	Unknown
Ba'li-ilum	ŠABRA T.	CUSAS 27, 147	Maskan-ili-Akkade
Ur <sup>2</sup> -Enlil <sup>14</sup>	LU <sub>2</sub> T.	CUSAS 26, 50	Unknown
<b>Servants</b>			
Ali-ahu	ARAD <sub>2</sub> T.	ITT 4, 7089	Girsu
Iliš-takal	ARAD <sub>2</sub> T.	CUSAS 27, 206	Maskan-ili-Akkade
Aman-Eštar	SAL.U <sub>2</sub> .HUB <sub>2</sub> ; GEME <sub>2</sub> T.	RIME 2.1.4.2017	Unknown

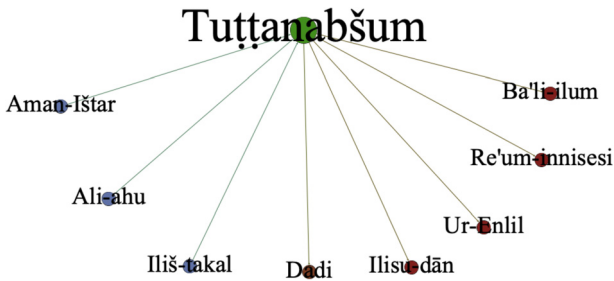
Girsu. In addition, she had agents spread throughout the empire who were recipients of various goods, such as grain, clothing, and silver, and were also involved in the sale of livestock (see Table 2).

Because many of the administrative texts from the Sargonic period are undated, it becomes almost impossible to separate the resources of Tuṭṭanabšum as a princess from those she managed once she entered the cult. That should be of little concern, however, as the distinction between the two would not have been considered separate by her contemporaries in the same way we might today. Nevertheless, we are limited to that two dimensional view of her network of influence and resource management.

## 2 Priestess

As a royal daughter, Tuṭṭanabšum already belonged to an elite social group that made her fit for high social office. She was appointed as *ēntum*-priestess of Enlil in Nippur during the reign of her father Naram-Suen; her title is attested in several inscriptions, most of which originate from Nippur: EREŠ.DINGIR <sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub>, <sup>en</sup>EREŠ.DINGIR <sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub>, and EN<sup>-na-at</sup> <sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub> (see RIME 2.1.4.18, 2.1.4.19, and 2.1.4.2017 respectively).<sup>15</sup> That her title EREŠ.DINGIR is in one case prefixed with a the phonetic complement *en-* and in another EN has the complement *-na-at*, demonstrates that the underlying Akkadian word for two titles was *ēntum*. The

<sup>15</sup> In the last two decades scholarship has preferred the reading EREŠ.DINGIR over NIN.DINGIR. That being said, the evidence for reading EREŠ in this title dates to the mid-second millennium at the earliest (see Steinkeller 1999: 120 n. 53 and cited lit.).



**Figure 1:** Graphic of the servants and members of the household of Tuṭṭanabšum. Blue nodes indicate servants (ARAD<sub>2</sub>/GEME<sub>2</sub>) and red nodes indicate household members ŠU.

spelling and interchangeability of her titles, also seen in the years named for her appointment, demonstrates, as Steinkeller (1999, 129) pointed out, that EREŠ-DINGIR and EN had become virtually identical offices by this time in the Sargonic period; in Tuṭṭanabšum’s case, they were most likely the very same office.<sup>16</sup>

Tuṭṭanabšum was not alone among the women of the family to be appointed to the priesthood: her sisters Šumšani and Enmenana were likewise inducted as high priestesses into the cults of Sippar and Ur. While Šumšani held the title EN<sup>na-at</sup> d<sup>UTU</sup> (RIME 2.1.4.50), Enmenana served as *ziru*(MUNUS.NUNUZ.ZI) d<sup>INANNA</sup>, DAM d<sup>NANNA</sup>, and EN d<sup>EN.ZU</sup> (RIME 2.1.4.33). The latter title is particularly important because it highlights that while Nanna and Su’en were still distinct in the Sargonic period, the daughter of the Akkadian king was the earthly consort of both. While Enheduana was called *ziru* d<sup>INANNA</sup> and DAM d<sup>NANNA</sup>, Enmenana’s titulary represents another step toward Akkadianization of the south, namely the prominence given to Suen.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the inscriptions that illustrate her religious titles, a mention of Tuṭṭanabšum appears on school tablet from Gasur, HSS 10, 218, which reads: 9. LUKUR / 10. *tu-da-na-ab-šum*. While Tuṭṭanabšum is otherwise never known to have been called by the title LUKUR and a professional title should always follow a personal name, the co-occurrence of the two words seems less than coincidental.

The appointment to the priesthood was clearly a significant event for the empire, as an entire year name was devoted to the event: **mu en d<sup>en-lil</sup> maš<sub>2</sub>-e i-dab<sub>5</sub>-ba** “year the en of Enlil was chosen by extispicy.”<sup>18</sup> At Nippur the event was used in two administrative documents as a memorandum as well: **u<sub>4</sub> tu-da-na-ab-šum mu-ku<sub>4</sub>-a** “when Tuṭṭanabšum entered” (OSP 2: 178), and **dumu-munus**

<sup>16</sup> There is still much debate about the development of the offices of EN and EREŠ.DINGIR in the third millennium. For more on the discussion see J. G. Westenholz (2012); and Winter (1987).

<sup>17</sup> Suter (2007, 321) has argued that the title EN for a high priestess in the cult of Nanna may have been introduced by Naram-Suen and perhaps extended to other cults in Sumer.

<sup>18</sup> For the year name see Sallaberger and Schrakamp (2015: 49).

**Table 2:** Economic activities of Tuṭṭanabšum and her household.

Activity	Location	Attestation
Branded sheep	Girsu	RTC 133
Dates	Isin(?)	JNES 12, 37–38
Clothing	Maškan-ili-Akkade	CUSAS 27, 148
Silver	Maškan-ili-Akkade	CUSAS 27, 206
Grain delivery	Maškan-ili-Akkade	CUSAS 27, 147
KAD <sub>4</sub> -SI <sup>2</sup>	Isin(?)	MVN 3, 1
Sale of a donkey	Adab	TCBI 2/1, 59
Sheep delivered	Girsu	ITT 4, 7089
Sale of livestock	Ešnunna	MAD 1, 179

**lugal e<sub>2</sub> den-lil<sub>2</sub>-[še<sub>3</sub>] im-gen-<sup>r</sup> na<sup>1</sup>** “(when) the daughter of the king went to the temple of Enlil” (OSP 2: 170). While it is possible that the second could be a reference to a different daughter of the king, such a particular choice of words in an administrative document is unlikely to be anything other than a note concerning the initiation of Tuṭṭanabšum as priestess.

As for the question of when she was chosen as high priestess, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact year during the reign of Naram-Suen. Still, that year can be narrowed down relatively within the period of his reign because an administrative tablet records a succession of three year names: 1) *in 1 MU* <sup>r</sup>NIN<sup>1</sup><DINGIR> <sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub>-LA<sub>2</sub>; 2) *in 1* <sup>r</sup>MU<sup>1</sup> [...]; and 3) *in 1 MU* <sup>d</sup>na-ra-am-<sup>d</sup>EN.ZU KAS.ŠUDUN SUBIR<sup>ki</sup> *in a-zu-hi-num*<sup>ki</sup> *i-ša-ru da-hi-ša-ti-li ik-mi-u<sub>3</sub>* (see Foster 1982: 22–23). From these year dates two observations can be made regarding Tuṭṭanabšum: 1) Tuṭṭanabšum was appointed two years prior to Naram-Suen’s victory over Subir in Azuhinum; and 2) Tuṭṭanabšum’s appointment to the cult occurred after the Great Rebellion. The latter is supported by the fact that Naram-Suen’s name is written with the divine determinative in the third year name, which demonstrates that this tablet must have been written after the Great Rebellion, and therefore the investiture of Tuṭṭanabšum must have occurred after that pivotal event.<sup>19</sup> Weierhäuser (2008: 258) has suggested that the cultic appointment of Tuṭṭanabšum may have been part of the reason for the trip to Girsu by Naram-Suen and his family (as mentioned previously). Indeed, a grand tour of Sumer by the royal family would be an

<sup>19</sup> Unless, in the very unlikely situation, the second year name of these three is a reference to the Great Rebellion. The dating of the Great Rebellion itself remains a matter of debate, but the most recent scholarship advocates for a date that is around the second decade of Naram-Suen’s reign (see Sallaberger and Schrakamp 2015: 109).

appropriate event for the induction of Tuṭṭanabšum into the cult of Enlil, but that remains a matter of speculation for now.

As high priestess, Tuṭṭanabšum would have been amongst a staff of priests and clergy members in the temple, such as NU-EŠ<sub>3</sub>, GUDU<sub>4</sub>, and IŠIB.<sup>20</sup> If the activities of priestesses from later periods can serve as an example, Tuṭṭanabšum would have not only participated in cultic functions and rituals, but also oversaw the administrative staff within the institution (Suter 2007, 320). Among them was probably Aman-Eštar, who seems to have been a cultic functionary with the title SAL.U<sub>2</sub>.HUB<sub>2</sub>, and belonged to the family/clan of *šabirum*.<sup>21</sup> During the reign of Naram-Suen a man by the name of Uru-na-bad<sub>3</sub>-bi is known to have held the position of sanga of Enlil (see RIME 2.1.4.2001). In an inscription commemorating the Goddess Ninlil, Uru-na-bad<sub>3</sub>-bi mentions a contemporary scribe of his sanctuary, a certain Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga **dub-sar eš<sub>3</sub>**(ABXDIŠ-tenu)<sup>22</sup> “scribe of the shrine.” The latter individual is then attested as a recipient of onions in the Onion Archive from Nippur (see OSP 2: 125). It stands to reason then that Tuṭṭanabšum was not alone as a leader of the cult of Enlil, but that Uru-na-bad<sub>3</sub>-bi was her contemporary and served alongside a sanga of the same temple.

As for other mentions that pertain to the high priestess, an interesting tablet describes onions that were given to a certain *a-ba*-<sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub> **dumu en** (OSP 2: 126). The text is not otherwise unusual, but indicates that an EN-priest/ess in Nippur was permitted to have children.<sup>23</sup> While the archive roughly dates to the period when Tuṭṭanabšum served as high priestess, which might suggest that this *Aba-Enlil* was a child of Tuṭṭanabšum, it cannot be ruled out that he was not the son of another high priest/ess at Nippur, such as the EN<sup>d</sup>NANNA (mentioned in OSP 2: 143).

Tuṭṭanabšum’s appointment to the cult of Enlil must have had a deep impact. Not only was it a direct affront to the autonomy of Nippur, but it was another sign of Akkadian hegemony in Sumer; the daughter of the king was now head of the cult of the king of the gods in the holy city of Sumer, and her father had elevated himself to the divine realm. Symbolically, the whole move shifted the focus of Sumerian religion away from Enlil and Nippur, and placed Naram-Suen as the *pater familias* of the pantheon.

<sup>20</sup> For an idea of the structure of the clergy of Nippur around this time see J. G. Westenholz (1992).

<sup>21</sup> See fn. 10 for references to the discussion of the titles of Aman-Eštar.

<sup>22</sup> In this inscription the sign ABXDIŠ-tenu has been read ABXLAK178 by Frayne (1993: 243). Although, given that the sign AB can be read EŠ<sub>3</sub>, the diagonal wedge inscribed in AB is most likely a phonetic complement to the sign and indicates the reading of the AB sign should be EŠ<sub>3</sub>.

<sup>23</sup> Already pointed out by A. Westenholz (1987: 137) and (J.G. Westenholz (1992: 303).



### 3 Goddess

The divination of living kings has been a captivating topic for some time in Mesopotamian studies.<sup>24</sup> Steinkeller (2017: 107–164) has recently summarized much of the discussion on the concept of divine rulership, particularly as it relates to the Akkadian and Ur III kings. Above all, he has emphasized the novelty of the Naram-Suen's divine status versus the divine relationships claimed by earlier kings; the evidence from pre-Sargonic and Lagash II kings does “not even remotely indicate a divine status of kings, not even in some incipient form” (Steinkeller 2017: 115). Selz (2008: 25) on the other hand, has argued that divinity in the third millennium should be considered a spectrum. The divine realm was an intrinsic part of the composite nature of mankind, and a ruler, being a preeminent human being, was thus in greater proximity to the divine than others. In his view, the assertions by some Early Dynastic kings that they were sired, birthed, or related to deities, therefore, is not extraordinary.<sup>25</sup> Still, the divinity claimed by Naram-Suen should be considered as separate, especially because Naram-Suen is the first to use a divine determinative before his name, and to have a cult established in his name as a member of the pantheon.

Inherent to the concept of a divine ruler is a fundamental difference between southern and northern perceptions of rulership. In the south it was the deity who existed as the supreme ruler of a city state, while the ensi is merely a steward for that God's household (i.e. the city and its territory). Moreover, it is the office of ensi that was significant ideologically rather than the individual who held it.<sup>26</sup> Whereas in northern Babylonia, kingship “was strong, authoritarian, and expressly secular in character,” and based on ancestry, contrary to the religious stewardship of the ensi (Steinkeller 2017: 121).

The novelty of Naram-Suen's deification then, should be understood within this religious and political framework. By elevating himself to the divine level, Naram-Suen effectively raised his own power above all other ensis in Sumer; Naram-Suen, as a member of the divine pantheon, was thereby as important as the gods from whom the authority of Sumerian ensi-ship derived (Steinkeller 2017: 123). Furthermore, he accomplished this act within the religious framework that the people of Sumer could comprehend: having protected the people and the temples of the land during the Great Revolt, the people requested that the gods elevate Naram-Suen to

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<sup>24</sup> Especially the volume dedicated to kingship and religion edited by N. Brisch (2008).

<sup>25</sup> See Selz (2008: 20–21) for examples of these claims to divine relations made by Pre-Sargonic rulers.

<sup>26</sup> To be clear, there was certainly a succession for the ensi-ship, and it tended to be passed from father to son. But, kinship was not an intrinsic and essential part of the office.

the divine realm.<sup>27</sup> Yet, by making himself a member of the divine pantheon and establishing his cult in the capital, Naram-Suen brought Akkade into direct competition with the religious significance of Sumer, especially Nippur, which was the cult center of the head of the Sumerian pantheon. In one stroke, Naram-Suen annihilated all political resistance to Akkadian rule and elevated himself to the pantheon, so that Akkade eclipsed any political and religious authority in Sumer.

In light of this upheaval, a tablet from the Iraq Museum, IM 203756, is of special interest because it records the name of Naram-Suen's daughter, Tuṭṭanabšum, with the divine determinative.<sup>28</sup> The tablet (Figure 2) is a mašdaria payment that was given by Tuṭṭanabšum:

Obv.

1. [x] **la**<sub>2</sub> **1 nunuz u**<sub>5</sub>-**a**
2. [x]-<sup>f</sup>**amar**<sup>1</sup> HU-KU-BU
3. [...] PI PI NIG<sub>2</sub> [x<sup>2</sup>] <sup>f</sup>BUR<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup> RI<sub>2</sub>
4. **[en]-lil**<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup>

Rev.

5. **maš**<sub>2</sub>-**da-ri-a**
6. <sup>d</sup>*tu-da-na-ab-šum*

Notes

- 2) The interpretation of the profession HU-KU-BU, perhaps to be read **hu-bu**<sub>7</sub><sup>-bu</sup> (by Civil 1989: 147), remains disputed. Molina (2001: 144) points out that there are several variants of the same word written with the sign LU, as in **hu-LU-bu**, which suggests that the reading of KU should be **dab**<sub>5</sub>/**dib**<sub>2</sub>. The profession, therefore, could be read **mušen-dab**<sub>5</sub><sup>bu</sup> and refer to a type of bird catcher. In the present context it would make sense that someone whose profession was the care of birds should offer eggs as part of a mašdaria.
- 3) There are several difficulties with this line, confounded by the damage to the text. PI-PI may be related to a perfume or scented material called **šim-PI-PI** (attested in ED IIIb admin texts: DP 514; Nik 1: 301; VS 27 and 86). Another possibility is a

<sup>27</sup> For the text relating this event see the Bassetki inscription (RIME 2.1.4.10).

<sup>28</sup> The tablet was previously published by Shnawa (2014) as a study of five Old Akkadian unpublished administrative texts in the Iraq Museum.

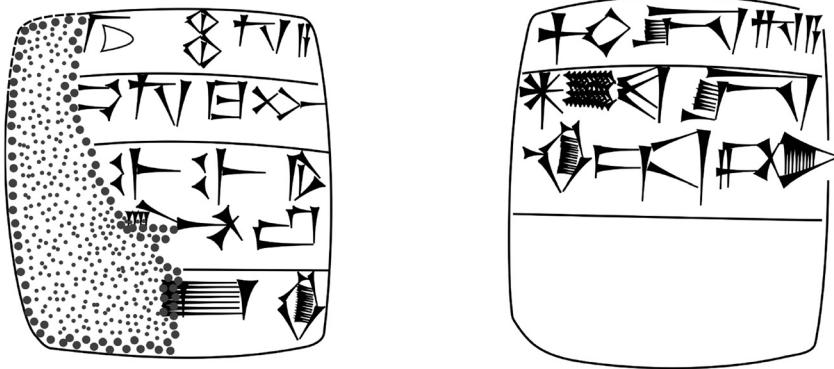


Figure 2: Mašdaria of Tutṭanabšum. Copy produced from photograph in Shnawa (2014).

plant called  $ges_1$ tal<sub>2</sub>-tal<sub>2</sub><sup>sar</sup> or  $u_2$ aš-tal<sub>2</sub>-tal<sub>2</sub> which is attested in the lexical list ED Plants.<sup>29</sup> As for the lower line, bur<sub>2</sub> is attested as a type of garment: **tug<sub>2</sub>-bur<sub>2</sub>** (e.g. OIP 14: 181; CUSAS 13: 151 and 208; CUSAS 20: 247) or **tug<sub>2</sub>-bur<sub>2</sub>-sag** (CUSAS 20: 231 and 233), but this solution is not very attractive in the context.

- 5) It has been suggested that mašdaria are not gifts but rather levies or a tax of sorts that are given to the king or the state (Sallaberger 1993: 160–161 and cited lit.).<sup>30</sup> Such an understanding is in keeping with the evidence from the Akkadian period, which shows that mašdaria are usually given by high officials and elites. A mašdaria was typically paid in livestock (mainly sheep and goat) or silver, but on rare occasions other goods appear to have been given, such as: wool (STTI 1: 137), clothing (CUSAS 11: 226), slaves (RTC 238), dates and fruit (ECTJ 166), and even weapons (JCS 55: 49). The value of a mašdaria could also be paid in lieu of the animal itself, as indicated by an Adab text (TCBI 2/1: 57) which reads: **r 3'. 1 sila<sub>4</sub> / 4'. maš<sub>2</sub>-da-ri-a ku<sub>3</sub>-ga-kam / 5'. ku<sub>3</sub>-bi nin-sa<sub>6</sub>-e / 6'. šu ba-ti** “one lamb, it is a mašdaria payment, Nin-sa<sub>6</sub> has received its value”.
- 6) It would be difficult to construe the divine determinative given to Tutṭanabšum here as anything else; the determinative cannot be an error meant to refer to her cultic title, EN or EREŠ.DINGIR <sup>d</sup>EN-LIL<sub>2</sub>, which always appears after a personal name (e.g. RIME 2.1.4.19; 2.1.4.20).

<sup>29</sup> For the list see the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts at <http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/corpus>.

<sup>30</sup> See Prentice (2010: 188–195) for an overview of the discussions of mašdaria in ED IIIb Girsu. Many scholars have connected the giving of mašdaria to the cult and celebrations, but Prentice believes them to be gifts of reciprocity exchanged between high ranking elites and institutions.

The text demonstrates that at some point, presumably during her tenure as priestess in Nippur, Tuṭṭanabšum was given divine status.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, it illustrates two important points about divine status during the Sargonic period: 1) that it was not limited to the Akkadian king, and 2) that the title could apply to female members of the royal family. The only other family member to have also used the divine determinative was the successor to Naram-Suen, Šar-kali-šarrē: it appears in some of his royal inscriptions (e.g. RIME 2.1.5.2; 2.1.5.4; 2.1.5.6; and 2.1.5.10), in seal impressions belonging to his servants and those of his queen (e.g. RIME 2.1.5.2001; 2.1.5.2010; 2.1.5.2012; and 2.1.5.2015), as well as a single year name (CT 50: 51). Still, there is no evidence that shows that Šar-kali-šarrē claimed that divinity while he was crown prince. Moreover, no other children of Naram-Suen are known to have had divine status, not even the other high priestess daughters of Naram-Suen. Šar-kali-šarrē's divinity, therefore, has always been assumed to have derived from the office, the kingship, which he inherited.

In spite of the paucity of evidence, the most attractive solution is to imagine that Naram-Suen's divinity extended to the entire royal family. To understand why we must revisit the underlying differences between Akkadian and Sumerian rulership, namely that in Akkadian kingship the important figure is the person, the family, and the ancestry. Naram-Suen's divinity is based on his great achievement, his victory in the Great Rebellion. So when Naram-Suen divinized himself it was his personhood that became divine and *not* the office of kingship. This becomes even clearer considering that Šar-kali-šarrē's own divinity was never based on any achievement (that we know of); Šar-kali-šarrē won battles, put down rebellions, and campaigned to foreign lands, but these accomplishments were not used to explain his divinity. Therefore, his divinity probably originated from another source: his parentage. That in turn implies that Tuṭṭanabšum's divinity was likewise derived from her father, Naram-Suen. It should come as no surprise then if further texts reveal that other members of the royal family were given the divine determinative. That being said, it is also of little concern that evidence for a divine royal family has not appeared more regularly, as Naram-Suen's and Šar-kali-šarrē's divine determinative appears to have been used intermittently.

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<sup>31</sup> While there are instances of posthumous deification in the Ur III period, such as Šulgi's mother (for which see Steinkeller 1981, 78), there is no cause to believe that a *mašdaria* would be made on behalf of the dead. Therefore, there is no cause to believe that the text applies to a cult set up for Tuṭṭanabšum.

## 4 Conclusion

Naram-Suen's dissemination of his children throughout the empire was a calculated move. It meant that the royal family was set in key social and political positions, well suited to oversee the administration of important local institutions and intervene in the affairs of elites. Tuṭṭanabšum, therefore, served in one of the most pivotal roles of that web as high priestess of Enlil. When Sargon conquered Mesopotamia, he raised Akkade to the political center of the Mesopotamian world. Sargon installed his daughter Enheduana as priestess at Ur as a deliberate insertion of Akkadian power in Sumer. Naram-Suen expanded that work by positioning most of his family throughout his empire. There was no sphere of life that was impervious to Akkade during Naram-Suen's rule. Thus, when Naram-Suen became divine, he was not only the political authority of the empire, but he shifted the traditional religious landscape too. The royal family was then not only in high political office, but they were also part of the pantheon. The concept of Sumerian rulership, as a steward of the God, would have been thrown completely as the royal family was elevated to the divine realm; they were no longer seen as stewards or earthly counterparts for the gods, but were themselves gods, and part of the very source from which Sumerian authority derived. Tuṭṭanabšum's placement in the cult of Enlil, therefore, was a powerful message to the people of Sumer: even Nippur, holy city of Sumer, site of the cult of Enlil, king of the gods, and the symbolic heart of Sumerian religion, was subject to the Akkadian imperial machine.

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