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WHO ARE THE WOMEN IN MESOPOTAMIAN ART
FROM CA. 2334-1763 BCE?

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The visual record of ancient Mesopotamia is a highly developed system of communication and contributes to the reconstruction of the ancient world. Because images cannot avoid ekphrastic specification, they can inform us of common knowledge about which texts and other archaeological finds remain mute. Yet, visual media have to be scrutinized as much as other sources. Their information value depends on who commissioned an image, what purpose it served, and whether the extant samples are representative. Single figures and narrative scenes then require interpretation based on a comprehensive compilation and sound analysis of the relevant visual material, together with the examination of other sources on the investigated topic, since we do not share the same cultural background with the senders and receivers of the ancient images in question.

These principles are often neglected when ancient Mesopotamian images are used as a source of information. Approaches to the material and methods of interpretation are rarely made explicit, and too often single images are treated out of context with assumptions left unexamined. We cannot, for example, interpret a female figure as a priestess simply because she is pouring a libation without surveying the extant images of libators, comparing their appearance among one another and with that of similar figures, and consulting textual sources on who participated in such rituals. Moreover, the ancient Near East is a relatively young and small field of study that is still in need of basic classification. While images of women from the earliest phases of urban civilization, namely from the Late Uruk and Early Dynastic periods (ca. 3200-2335 BCE), have been analyzed (Asher-Greve 1985), those of later periods have never been compiled. As a result, there are controversial identifications of numerous of these images, including confusion between women and goddesses.

The present investigation has grown out of a study originally intended to call attention to the visual record on high priestesses from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period (ca. 2334-1763 BCE) when they are attested in texts, and show that a number of anonymous statues that have repeatedly been identified as goddesses must actually represent high priestesses. Aware of contentious identifications of female figures due to the lack of a basic classification, I began to compile images

of all women. Restrictions of space forced me to confine that study to high priestesses (Suter 2007). Here, I will survey the images of all other women with two aims: first, to establish the basic distinction that I believe can be drawn between the two groups; second, to determine who the other women were and what their images tell us about them.¹

The time span under consideration – ca. 500 years – begins where the only comprehensive study on Mesopotamian images of women left off and ends with the disappearance of women from the visual record for several centuries. Even though governments changed during this era and there were some alterations in the repertory of images, other aspects unite it: it witnessed the introduction of central administration under the kings of Akkad and its subsequent expansion under the Ur III kings, which brought changes in the structure of society. Moreover, it coincides not only with the textual attestation of high priestesses, but also with the only time in Mesopotamian history when kings assumed a certain degree of divinity.

During this era, women are represented in sculpture, glyptic and on terracottas. Sculpture and glyptic, which can be considered media of official art, may carry inscriptions that identify human figures by name, affiliation and profession. Terracotta images, on the other hand, remain anonymous and seem to depict types rather than historical individuals. Because my investigation aims first of all at determining whom the women represent, it focuses on official art.² Before proceeding to the images of women other than high priestesses, I will address general issues regarding the media and delineate the distinction between high priestesses and other women.

1. Sculpture and Glyptic as Sources of Information

Mesopotamian sculpture and glyptic differ in function, in the circle of people they represent, in their quantity and quality. Sculpture – be it a statue or an object carved in relief – was usually dedicated to a deity in a temple with the purpose of seeking divine protection for the donor's life, while seals served primarily the purpose of identification and authentication in state administration and expressed legitimacy and authority in social hierarchy. If this is true in general, it is not without certain reservations: some statues of deified Ur III kings were not dedicated to a deity (Suter forthcoming, section 2.2.3), while seals also served as amulets.

1. I am grateful to a number of colleagues who read earlier versions of my investigation on women (see Suter 2007, 317 note 1), in which the part published here was less substantial, and to Tonia Sharlach, Irene Winter, Ligia Ravé and George Contomichalos, who gave me feedback on the present contribution. Special thanks go to Lucio Milano for inviting me to Venice, where I presented this contribution, for offering to publish it in KASKAL, and for helping me to improve the translation of the seal inscriptions in table 2.
2. The compilation of images associated with texts is based on RIME (The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods, published by University of Toronto Press), Braun-Holzinger 1991, Fischer 1997, Mayr 2002 and Mayr – Owen 2004; that of anonymous sculpture on Spycket 1981, Reade 2002 and research I conducted in the Louvre in Paris and the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul; that of other seal images on a variety of publications. I thank Julia M. Asher-Greve for letting me use her file on female statues, and Rudi Mayr for sharing with me unpublished sealings from Umma and Garšana that he is preparing for publication.

In the time under consideration, donors of dedicatory objects belonged to a more restricted segment of society than seal owners. From the Akkad period on, donors of inscribed dedicatory objects were almost exclusively members of a royal house and high officials, and if the donor was not the king himself, the dedication always included a wish for his life, aside from that of the donor (Braun-Holzinger 1991, 18-21). This stands in contrast to the preceding Early Dynastic period, in which stone statuary has survived in much larger number and included variously dressed and coiffured donors of a wide range of professions who rarely claim affiliation with a ruling house. The dedication of statues and other objects to deities obviously became a privilege of the king and his entourage. Seal ownership, on the other hand, was less exclusive. With the growing bureaucracy that central administration brought with it, the number of inscribed seals gradually increased and seal inscriptions became ever more detailed. They show that a wide range of people could own seals. Significant differences in carving quality as well as differences in the preciousness of the material underscore the differences in rank of the seal owners.

There is a relatively small amount of sculpture representing women from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period – just over forty statuettes and only five images in relief – and they are generally of good quality. That many of the statuettes do not preserve an inscription does not necessarily mean that they were not inscribed: their fragmentary state may not preserve the inscription or the inscription was placed on a socle that has not survived. Although seals have survived in much larger numbers than sculptures, there are only about three times as many images of women in glyptic. This reflects the small percentage of women who owned seals compared to men and that not all seals depict the seal owner.

Sculpture is fairly straightforward as a source, because statues represent their donors (Braun-Holzinger 1991, 219-220), and because these donors as well as those of dedicatory objects carved in relief belonged to the upmost echelons of society. There is a limited number of samples, generally of good quality. The difficulties lie in identifying details of garments and precise dating due to the scarceness of inscriptions and comparative material.

Working with glyptic, on the other hand, bears a number of difficulties. The seals today dispersed over museums and private collections around the world are countless and recorded in varying quality in many different places. A large percentage is of unknown provenance and their authenticity not beyond doubt. Differences in quality range from seals custom-made by order of the king to mass-produced merchandise. High quality seals can be astonishingly detailed for such small objects, while seals of low quality may not even permit to identify the gender of figures, much less details of attire and hairstyle. Many seals were re-used, since the precious stones they are made of had to be imported to Mesopotamia. If they were only partially re-cut, the image or details thereof may not make sense anymore.³ Because the seal's inscription became increasingly more important than the image, images of ancient impressions are often incomplete, details of the design indistinct, and many remain unpublished with only the inscription made available. For all these reasons,

3. Two priestesses re-cut from Ur III kings (Suter 2007, figs. 7-8), for example, were probably not supposed to hand a cup to the approaching presentee, since this was, for all we know, a privilege of the king, and while the en-priestess' attire and hairstyle are consistent with other high priestesses, the hairstyle of the ereš-dingir is not.

glyptic is not only less manageable than sculpture, but also less reliable as a source and not all seals can be taken at face-value. Moreover, the identification of figures requires interpretation based on an understanding of the image. The same is true for sculpture in relief.⁴ Since there is only one fragmentary relief, this issue will be addressed before surveying the seals.

Another issue regarding sources of information is the question of whether the extant samples are representative. Textual as well as material remains of ancient societies can offer only small windows into past realities. There are few extended visual narratives for the time under discussion, partly because hardly any wall painting has survived in the climatic conditions of Mesopotamia and partly because royal monuments symbolized power and were, therefore, often destroyed or looted by conquering enemies. Thus, the major stone monuments that have survived of the kings of Akkad, for example, whose capital city has not yet been discovered, come from Susa, to where they had been taken as booty by Elamite kings.

The decrease in stone statuary after the Early Dynastic period is due not only to the above-mentioned changes in the structure of society, but also to a new preference for other materials that did not survive the ravages of time. Ur III to Old Babylonian texts inform us of the use of metals in the fabrication of divine and royal statues and there is similar, if scanty, evidence for the Akkad period (Braun-Holzinger 1991, 232-233). Hardly any such statues have survived, since metal, like precious stones, had to be imported to Mesopotamia and could easily be re-used. The increased use of metal for royal statuary must have begun in the Akkad period, for Gudea of Lagaš obviously reacts to it when he points out in the inscription of his Statue B (7: 49-54) that he had this image made of diorite as opposed to metal, so that nobody could rework it. Indeed, statues of Gudea have survived in larger numbers than for any other early Mesopotamian ruler. Interestingly, more than half of the statues of court women from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period come from Tello and most of them date to the Second Dynasty of Lagaš, while statues of high priestesses are more dispersed in regard to provenance and date. By the Ur III period, more statues of kings were made of metal than of stone,⁵ and there is evidence that also statues of queens were made of metal.⁶

Seals of royal women have survived almost exclusively in ancient impressions. Have their seals not been found because they were re-used or because they accompanied their owners to the grave

4. Reliefs that are confined to a single image depict the same types of images as seals. If they preserve a dedicatory inscription, this can solve the identification of the represented figures as, for example, with the relief of Enheduana (Suter 2007, 321-322, fig. 1) and the door plaque dedicated by Nigdupae (*ibidem*, 324-325, fig. 4). In the case of multiple-scene narratives, ruler figures usually correspond to the dedicant of the object and may, in addition, be labelled, while deities usually correspond to those to whom the object is dedicated. For other figures, one has to rely on the context in which they occur and on comparison with similar figures that are textually identified in other media. This is the case for the only relief depicting women other than high priestesses (Stela 1).
5. Administrative texts record almost exclusively metal deliveries for royal statues (Limet 1960, 200-201), and other textual sources confirm this tendency. For a discussion of the lost monuments of Ur III kings and for a possible connection of the new preference for metal statuary with the deification of kings, see Suter forthcoming, section 2.2.
6. An administrative text from Ur (Legrain 1937, no. 329) records amounts of gold for the plating of various objects, including a copper statue of the queen. I thank Gianni Marchesi for providing me with his translation of the text.

and hardly any intact royal graves are extant from the Akkad to Isin-Larsa period? In view of the discovery of a number of Early Dynastic elite women's seals in the Royal Cemetery at Ur (Asher-Greve 2006, 62), the second explanation is more likely. In general and in contrast to sculpture, images of women are most numerous in Akkad glyptic, they still occur on Ur III seals, but disappear almost entirely from the glyptic repertory thereafter.

2. The Distinction between High Priestesses and Other Women

The distinction between high priestesses and other women requires first a definition of high priestesses. High priestesses were royal daughters who stood at the head of major Mesopotamian temples for a life term and were often symbolically married to the god of their temple. Their office was, I believe, more political than religious (Suter 2007, 318-323). In ancient Mesopotamia, there was neither a general term for priest or priesthood nor a strict separation between secular and cultic spheres. It is not always an easy task to distinguish cult personnel from other temple employees, and the king and his wives also performed rituals. Moreover, temples were not only places of worship, but also economic enterprises. Thus, when a king ruling over a centrally administrated Mesopotamia invested his daughters as high priestesses at the head of major temples, he increased his control of the economy. The symbolic marriage to a deity then sanctioned this political agenda on an ideological level.

High priestesses shared with other royal women several tasks and privileges:⁷ they directed an estate with its economy and staff, took charge of cultic duties, participated in state ceremonies or cult festivals alongside the king, and received rich funerals and regular offerings thereafter. While the cultic activities of high priestesses centered on the god to whom they were assigned, those of royal wives centered on goddesses and women's cult festivals. But there was overlapping and both engaged in rituals in honor of the deified king. What distinguished high priestesses from other royal women and linked them to kings, who had similar tasks and privileges on a higher level, is that they held a symbolically charged office. As dignitaries, they shared with kings regalia and the symbolic marriage to a deity. Their office can thus be considered an offshoot of kingship at the local level.

Based on this knowledge, it is not surprising that high priestesses were distinguished from other women in the visual record. Images on which female figures can be identified with the help of an associated text confirm this. Women identified as high priestesses usually wear their hair loose and are always marked by regalia of their office, including the flounced robe, ultimately borrowed from goddesses, and a special headdress that distinguished them from the latter (Suter 2007, 323-333). Anonymous images of likewise dressed and coiffured women exist only in sculpture and their number is limited (Suter 2007, 333-338). They are almost always represented seated, like images of identified high priestesses. Moreover, they are often given attributes linked to certain aspects of their office. Together with kings, high priestesses were the only humans who were entitled to regalia

7. They are outlined in Suter 2007, 319-320. On other royal women in particular, see Van de Microop 1989; Westenholz 1999, 70-72; Sallaberger 1999, 182-185; Weiershäuser 2006.

in text and image, to other attributes in images, and to the enthroned posture in statuary. The images thus underscore their role as offshoots of kingship.

In contrast, all other women have their hair tied up and are dressed in various fringed robes, rarely pleated ones. Their hair may be covered by a veil and they often wear a flat hair-band. These women are rarely represented seated and, if so, only in glyptic. When their statues preserve an inscription, they are identified as members of the ruling class. On inscribed seals, they also represent servants of royal women and women who are not associated with a ruling house. Anonymous images of likewise dressed and coiffured women occur not only in sculpture, but also in glyptic, and their number in sculpture is higher than that of high priestesses.

In a recently published conference, Frauke Weiershäuser (2006, 264-267) proposes the same basic distinction between high priestesses and other royal women of the Ur III period, while Julia Asher-Greve (2006, 56) contends that no strict rule regulated hairstyle and clothing of women in 3rd millennium Mesopotamian art and that “the only attribute restricted to the office of *ēntu*⁸ was the aga-crown, i.e. the thick, rounded brim or cap”. I cannot agree with Asher-Greve’s assertions. The aga is neither restricted to high priestesses nor is it a brim or cap. Much more frequently than for high priestesses, the aga is attested for kings and deities. Images demonstrate that the term designated function rather than form, since deities, kings and high priestesses wear differently shaped headdresses, which in the case of king and high priestess were standardized only in neo-Sumerian times (Suter 2007, 331-332), i.e. the time including the Lagaš II and Ur III Dynasties. The circlet of Nanna’s *en* then became the standard headdress of high priestesses; it was the only part of their attire that was exclusive to them, and it was apparently made of gold.

Asher-Greve’s assertion that no strict rule regulated hairstyle and clothing is based on three anonymous images that combine a fringed robe with a circlet on loose hair or a flounced robe with a bun and flat hair-band, respectively. There are three more such anomalies.⁹ These, however, should not lead us to the dismissal of the general distinction based on the analysis of two hundred images of women from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period. The exceptions date to the Akkad or Isin-Larsa period when attires were less standardized than in neo-Sumerian times, and re-cutting the seal, local peculiarities, or individual whims in politically unstable intervals can explain them.

One can find irregularities also in texts: the high priestess’ office was not consistently designated by the same term. Aside from *en*, the most important title, there were others, most notably *ereš-dingir*. While some *ereš-dingir* were assimilated to *en*, others were not (Suter 2007, 318-319, 339). The use of this title underwent changes over time and could depend on local particularities. Geme-Lama, *ereš-dingir* of Baba in Lagaš, for example, is dressed and coiffured like a royal lady rather than a high priestess and appears in a context typical for the former, because she stood in a

8. Asher-Greve uses *ēntu* in reference to *en*-priestesses; *ēntu*, however, is the Akkadian equivalent of *ereš-dingir*, see Suter 2007, 319 note 6.

9. The combination of a flounced robe with a bun and flat hair-band occurs on two statuettes from the Akkad period (Spycket 1981, pl. 112 and fig. 52), one from the Isin-Larsa period (Barnett 1960, pl. 25-27), and a re-cut seal from the same period (Suter 2006, fig. 8); the combination of a plain or fringed robe with the circlet on long loose hair on a late Ur III or Isin-Larsa stone vase (Suter 2007, fig. 15) and a terracotta of the same period (Barrelet 1968, no. 482).

local tradition of Lagašite royal wives heading Baba's estate (Suter 2007, 328). This ereš-dingir was neither a Mesopotamian king's daughter nor a god's wife.

In 1998, Frances Pinnock suggested to identify the famed *Femme à l'écharpe* and identically dressed women as en-priestesses, based on the hypothesis that Lagaš II office holders "might have wished somehow to mark a gap with respect to the presumed obscure period of Akkad rule, through the introduction of completely different elements of clothing and, possibly, of the cult itself" (Pinnock 1998, 343). Although the Second Dynasty of Lagaš reacted to the declined "first empire" and set new trends,¹⁰ I doubt that it changed the attire of en-priestesses, much less the cult. Identified Ur III and Isin-Larsa en-priestesses wear the same attire as their Akkad predecessors, and there are anonymous statuettes of equally dressed high priestesses from Tello that probably date to the Second Dynasty (Suter 2007, 333-334). The dress of the *Femme à l'écharpe*, on the other hand, is neither restricted to the Second Dynasty of Lagaš, nor is it as unique as Pinnock believes.¹¹ Moreover, none of the three inscribed statuettes so clothed is identified as a priestess, nor can the two identically dressed women on an anonymous relief represent en-priestesses, since en-ship was held by one individual at a time.¹²

3. Statuettes of Court Women

I have compiled 29 statues of women from the Akkad to Isin-Larsa period that are not dressed and coiffured like high priestesses (Table 1).¹³ One is made of metal and this is the only complete one. All others are made of stone and are fragmentary, body and head usually separated. The metal statuette measures just 11.2 cm in height and none of the stone statuettes was originally higher than 50 cm. Most women are standing with their hands clasped in front of their body; three are squatting. None is enthroned as are almost all statuettes of high priestesses.

10. Pinnock left her hypothesis unexamined. I subscribe to the view that the Lagaš II rulers did deliberately not follow in the footsteps of the kings of Akkad: they reverted back to Sumerian as official language, did not officially claim control over territory other than their city-state, commemorated almost exclusively civilian achievements, and avoided or down-played any mention to military victories. Regarding media and form chosen for the commemoration of their deeds, they relied on Early Dynastic as well as Akkad traditions and set some new trends to become standard for the next several centuries as, for example, the royal hymn, foundation figurines in the shape of a basket-carrier, or the brimmed cap for the ruler figure.
11. There are nearly twice as many statuettes than Pinnock mentions, and the dress is a type of fringed robe, which is the standard dress of human figures from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period; see section 3 below.
12. These images are discussed in sections 3-4 below (St 7-9, Stela 1). In addition, Pinnock (1998, 341) brings in evidence three seals (S 64, S 73-74, discussed in sections 6 and 9 below) on the assumption that they were sovereigns' gifts. However, she confuses seals depicting presentation scenes with what Judith Franke (1977, 65) termed "presentation seals", i.e. in-na-ba-seals, which state that the seal was a gift of the king. Only one is inscribed, and it identifies the represented woman as a governor's wife rather than a priestess. Even if Ninhilia were identical with her namesake in a list of lukur, she would not necessarily be a priestess, see section 6 below.
13. I have not included a seated statuette in the Burrell Collection (Peltenburg 1991, no. 39), because I doubt its authenticity.

Nearly half of these statuettes were excavated at Tello, ancient Girsu, the capital of Lagaš, and another six probably come from the same site as they were acquired at times when Tello was looted between regular expeditions (Parrot 1948, 14-33). Ur produced one head and Susa a headless statuette, which is also of southern Mesopotamian origin. In addition, there are three samples from Assur and one from Mari. Dating the statuettes must rely mainly on details of garments and hairstyles based on the statuettes dated by an inscription, since hardly any find contexts were adequately recorded and those which were are not necessarily primary.

Seven statuettes and a wig, all from Tello, bear inscriptions. The donors of the statuettes are identified in terms of their male kin. Four of them were members of the Lagaš II ruling house (St 1-2, 7-8): two daughters of Ur-Baba, who were wives of Gudea and Ur-GAR, respectively; a woman whose name and affiliation are lost but who dedicated her statuette with a wish for Gudea's life; and Nin-Kagina, who was Kaku's daughter and probably Nammahni's mother.¹⁴ A statuette that corresponds in posture and attire to the one with a wish for Gudea's life is identified as Agugi, wife of Lu-duga, two individuals not otherwise known, and is dedicated with a wish for both their lives (St 9). Another donor was Hala-Lama, daughter of Lu-girizal, governor of Lagaš, who dedicated her statue with a wish for Šulgi's life (St 20). What remains of the last inscription is but the statuette's name (St 17).

In contrast to these statuettes, the donor of the wig is identified by profession: Baba-Ninam, cup-bearer of Ur-Ningirsu, a prominent en-priest of Nanše in Lagaš, dedicated the wig to Lama with a wish for Šulgi's life (St 29). Because of its straight bottom line and the high placement of the bun, the wig cannot have been attached to a statuette worked in separate parts. Eva Braun-Holzinger (1991, 373) suggests that it was by itself the gift for Lama and finds corroboration in the second to last line of the inscription, which refers to the dedicated object and is generally understood as referring to Lama's hair, while Baba-Ninam is generally taken as a man.¹⁵ The basic meaning of *hi-li*, however, is charm, allure (Winter 1996, 13-15), and the wig bears no trace for the possible attachment of a horned crown which I would Lama expect to wear. Therefore, and because statues represent their donor, the wig is more likely to represent the cup-bearer *pars pro toto*, who then must be female. The name does not speak against a woman, and at least one female cup-bearer is attested (Westenholz 1999, 72 note 346). Thus I propose to interpret the last two lines of the inscription in the sense that Baba-Ninam had the charm of her own femaleness fashioned for Lama.

Garments and hairstyles of female statuary from the Akkad to Isin-Larsa period are less varied than in the preceding Early Dynastic period. This is probably due to changes in the structure of society, restricting the circle of donors of dedicatory gifts and leading to an increasing standardization of attires. All statuettes of court women that have survived from this time are

14. She dedicated several objects, including this statuette, with a wish for Nammahni's life. The statuette inscription identifies her as Nammahni's *ama-tu-da*, which has variously been translated as "Haustochter" or "cousin", although it literally means "birthgiving mother". Other inscriptions identify her as Kaku's daughter (RIME 3/1.1.12.7-10). If Kaku was Ur-Baba's brother (Renger 1976), Nin-Kagina could well have been Nammahni's mother.

15. Most recently, RIME translates "*hili nam-munus-ka-ni mu-na-dím*" in the sense that Baba-Ninam fashioned Lama's "lady-like wig" for her.

depicted in fringed robes, with their hair tied up. Differences exist in the way the fringed fabric was draped around the body, in the elaboration of fringes and hems, and in the way the hair was tied up. Based on the inscribed samples, these differences allow us to arrange the statuettes in a relative chronology.

Fringed robes consist of a large piece of fabric with at least one fringed border that was wrapped several times around the body. To identify the precise draping is a complex process, because sculpture in the round is often fragmentary, while reliefs render only one side. Few scholars have studied garments and Eva Strommenger's contribution from 1971 still remains basic. She identifies two fringed robes for women: the two-corner robe (Strommenger 1971, 50-51 no. 13), which is draped over both shoulders so that two fringed corners end up falling down the front;¹⁶ and the one-corner robe (Strommenger 1971, 52 no. 14), which is also draped over both shoulders, but has only one fringed corner down the front, while another corner is affixed on the left shoulder so that a fringed border extends down the back.

Thirteen statuettes, including the contemporary of Gudea, Nin-Kagina and Agugi (St 7-9), wear two-corner robes, a high quality example of which is the *Femme à l'écharpe* (St 10). This robe was still in fashion in Ur III and perhaps even Isin-Larsa times, since two anonymous samples (St 18-19), one of which found in the Isin-Larsa level of Assur's Ištar Temple, wear the necklace with a counter-weight extending down the length of the woman's back, which is typical of the Isin-Larsa period but first attested under Šulgi (Strommenger 1960, 83). The modeling of a squatting statuette from Tello (St 14) also suggests a post-Lagaš II date. The two statuettes whose head is preserved (St 10, 15), wear their hair tied up in a bun on the nape and covered by a veil that is fastened with a flat hair-band. The same applies to two identically dressed women on a stela fragment probably of Gudea (Stela 1) and the statuette from the Akkad-period level of Assur's Ištar Temple (St 3).

The one-corner robe is attested for Šulgi's contemporary Hala-Lama (St 20), a bust from Mari (St 22) and a headless shell statuette from Susa (St 21). All examples have tasseled fringes, like garments of the kings of Akkad. This is one of several Akkad features that were revived under the Third Dynasty of Ur (Spycket 1981, 211). While the Susa statuette apparently wore her hair tied up in a bun, the bust from Mari exhibits a braided hairstyle in the back. Spycket (1981, 251-252) tentatively dates the latter to the Isin-Larsa period, together with three stone wigs from Tello, Ur and Uruk that exhibit a comparable hairstyle. These, however, lack a datable find context as much as the Mari bust.¹⁷ If the metal statuette from the Ur III level of Assur's Ištar Temple (St 23) wore the same braided hairstyle, as the shape of her head and faint traces of braids seem to indicate, this hairstyle was introduced in the Ur III period.

Seven statuettes wear other fringed robes. The shape of the metal statuette from Assur (St 23) suggests that this woman wore the fringed robe typical of men, even if the fringed border is not visible due to erosion. This robe was draped over the left shoulder and tucked in under the right arm with a fringed border falling over the left arm to the bottom, continuing at a ninety degree

16. So also Spycket 1981, 199.

17. Spycket suggests that the statuette in Philadelphia dressed in a two-corner fringed robe (St 19), whose eyes and hair once were inlaid in a different material, wore such a wig. If so, this statuette, too, suggests an earlier date.

angle across the back and ending up under the right arm (Strommenger 1971, 46-47 no. 9). The fragmentary statuette from the Akkad-period level of the same temple (St 3) may have worn the same robe, since it exhibits a fringed border along the bottom and another curving up from there.

Nin-alla, daughter of Ur-Baba and wife of Gudea, also wears a fringed robe draped over the left shoulder that leaves the right arm bare (St 1). This robe, however, neither covers the entire left arm, nor is it tugged in under the right arm. Instead, it has a fringed border from the left shoulder down the back, in addition to the frontal one, and a decoration of simple rectangles along the top and bottom hems, like some two-corner robes, as, for example, St 7. Although only a small fragment has survived of the statuette of the other daughter of Ur-Baba (St 2), the analogy with Nin-alla's statuette of two cases of inscription with one garment border to their left and another below suggests that she wore the same dress as her sister (Spycket 1981, 203). The bottom hem of her dress shows a decoration of S-shaped lines, like the two-corner robe of the *Femme à l'écharpe* (St 10).

Two headless statuettes from Tello (St 4-5) wear a robe covering both shoulders that combines features of the fringed robe typical of men and of the one-corner robe: the left arm is covered and a plain border extends to the bottom from there, while a fringed corner falls down the right side of the front. A headless statuette of unknown provenance, whose back remains unpublished (St 6), apparently wears another variant of the one-corner robe: it exhibits both a fringed corner and a fringed border down the front; the fringed border issues from the left shoulder rather than from the arm, as if the border on the back of the one-corner robe was taken to the front.¹⁸ The plain fringes and simple hem decorations of these three anonymous statuettes suggest a pre- or early Ur III date.

All five isolated heads have the hair tied up in a bun fastened by a flat hair-band. While three are veiled (St 24-26), except for a row of locks on the front, the other two are unveiled (St 27-28), like the wig of Šulgi's contemporary Baba-Ninam (St 29). The veiled heads are all from Tello and can be dated to the Second Dynasty of Lagaš: they resemble the women dressed in two-corner fringed robes and wearing either no necklace or one without a counter-weight (St 10, St 15, Stela 1). The bun of some of these women is more scalloped on either side of the hair-band than that of others. The veiled head of the above-mentioned Akkad-period statuette (St 3) is similar in shape to the latter, but had the front hair originally inlaid rather than carved in relief, like the head with a more scalloped bun (St 25).

The unveiled heads come from Tello (St 27) and Ur (St 28). Spycket (1981, 201) attributes the former to the Second Dynasty of Lagaš, since it shares affinities with the veiled heads: its ears are exposed, its bun is close in shape to the veiled heads with a more scalloped bun, and the necklace seems to be the same as that worn by veiled women. In contrast, the head from Ur and Baba-Ninam's wig have delicately undulated hair covering the ears and a much flattened bun. However, because the head from Tello is not veiled, I am inclined to attribute it to the Third Dynasty of Ur, too, and explain the affinities it shares with Lagaš II sculpture with the overlapping of the reigns of Gudea and Ur-Namma (Suter 2000, 17), and the features that distinguish it from the other unveiled heads with differences between the reigns of Ur-Namma and Šulgi.

18. This way of draping may correspond to Strommenger 1971, 49-50 no. 12, which she classifies as a variant of the fringed robe of men.

In conclusion, the two-corner fringed robe was introduced in the Lagaš II period, possibly under Gudea, and the one-corner fringed robe in the Ur III period, possibly under Šulgi, while the fringed robe of men attested since the Akkad period was apparently also worn by women. In addition, there existed three other types of fringed robes in the Lagaš II period, which may still have been in fashion in the early Ur III period. The usual hairstyle was the bun fastened by a flat hair-band; the hair was apparently covered by a veil in the Akkad and Lagaš II period, and bare in the Ur III period. A braided hairstyle was probably introduced in the late Ur III period. Although one cannot exclude the possibility that court women were still represented in statuary in Isin-Larsa times, no statuette can securely be dated to that period.

4. Court Women on Dedicatory Reliefs

I am not aware of any court women in stone relief other than the already mentioned stela fragment (Stela 1), which preserves the upper bodies of two women facing right and clapping their hands. They wear the two-corner fringed robe and their hair in a bun covered by a veil. Based on style and its likely provenance from Tello, the fragment can be attributed to a stela of Gudea concerned with temple building. In this context, clapping women dressed like court women in statuary best fit into a musical performance on the occasion of the temple inauguration, in which the court participated (Suter 2000, 194).

5. The Identification of Human Figures on Seal Images

The rich repertory depicted on Akkad seals is almost exclusively reduced to presentation scenes in neo-Sumerian glyptic. At the same time, anthropomorphic figures become ever more standardized: rulers wear brimmed caps, high priestesses circlets, deities almost exclusively flounced robes and multiple horned crowns, while humans usually wear fringed robes; flounced robes are also worn by high priestesses and, occasionally, kings. Presentation scenes continue into the Isin-Larsa period. During this and the following Old Babylonian period, however, figures who had previously represented historical individuals came to represent protective spirits. This is the case for the “figure with mace”, whom Frans Wiggermann (1987, 23-28) identifies with the protective spirit Uduĝ and who in Ur III times represented the deified king as warrior (Suter forthcoming, section 2.5.4). The same may have happened to female figures that resemble Ur III royal women but who seem to have taken on the role of the protective spirit Lama (Collon 1986, 31, concerning her types B.8.b and B.9).

In the glyptic from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period, human figures occur predominantly in presentation scenes, although we can find them also in libation and banquet scenes. They are differentiated from deities in anthropomorphic shape by the lack of a horned crown, the marker of divinity since Early Dynastic times (Boehmer 1972-75), not unlike the divine determinative in texts. Their identification with historical individuals is possible only on inscribed seals, when text and image can be correlated. The best correlation is found on seals that Ur III kings bestowed on high

officials of their administration: they name the king and the official in the inscription and depict a king receiving a human figure in audience. If the king represents the king mentioned in the inscription, then the presentee standing before him must represent the seal owner.

From this correlation it is deduced that the presentee represents the seal owner in all types of presentation scenes (Winter 1987b; Fischer 1997, 138; Mayr 2002, 359). Some corroboration for this general rule is found on seals belonging to women and depicting a female presentee and on seals belonging to ministers and depicting a male presentee with a staff, the insignium of ministers. If a seal of a woman exceptionally depicts a male presentee or vice versa,¹⁹ the seal was probably re-used and only partially re-cut. Nevertheless, whether this general rule based mainly on Ur III seals can be applied to all Akkad presentation scenes has never been verified. By far not every Akkad seal is inscribed and the extant inscriptions are generally not very detailed. It also remains to be verified whether libation and banquet scenes represent the seal owner. A major difficulty in determining whether or not a named seal owner is represented, lies in the phenomenon that most Sumerian and some Akkadian names are not gender-specific (Van de Mieroop 1989, 57, 68-69). The same applies to the Sumerian terms used for the seal owners' affiliations: *dumu* = child and *dam* = spouse; although *dumu* can be followed by *munus* = woman to mean daughter, it seems that *dumu-munus* was not consistently used.

In the time under consideration, women not identified as high priestesses wear their hair tied up in a bun on the nape, held by a hair-band, which is rendered only on good quality seals. Their typical dress is a fringed robe, usually draped over the left shoulder, which hardly differs from that worn by men. In Akkad glyptic also occurs, even if very rarely, a pleated robe. The plain robe on seals of low quality, especially on post-Akkad seals, is probably meant to represent the common fringed robe.

I have compiled 141 seal images from the Akkad to Isin-Larsa period that depict women not identified as high priestesses either by the inscription or by attire and hairstyle (Table 2). The sample is largely representative even if it is not exhaustive.²⁰ More than half of the seals, 79, date to the Akkad period, 35 are post-Akkad, 20 are Ur III, and only 7 date to the Isin-Larsa period. Although post-Akkad seals can be distinguished from "classical" Akkad or Ur III style seals, it is difficult to assign them either to the Akkad or to the neo-Sumerian period. They are generally of

19. See Fischer 1997, 139 note 252, though not all her examples are convincing; Delaporte 1920, no. T.160 and MVN 12, no. 455 cannot be verified, because the seal images have not been published; Parrot 1954, nos. 129, 140, and Tomabechi 1984, no. 107 (= S 53-55) are of such low quality that I would not exclude the possibility that the seal cutter intended to represent women and just did not clearly indicate their bun; Buchanan 1981, no. 701 (= S 78) is a low quality Isin-Larsa seal whose image looks degenerated; only Collon 1982, no. 385, certainly represents a male petitioner, while Moortgat 1940, no. 265 belonged to a man and may represent a woman. I have not included the latter, because the case is not clear and the presentee, who wears a pleated robe, may have been re-cut from an Akkad or early neo-Sumerian Lama figure. In addition, S 70 represents a woman and most likely belonged to a man.

20. I have not included seals of low quality on which the gender of human figures remains ambiguous. For the banquet scene, for example, I have included only those which Selz 1983 identifies as female with a solid triangular head in her catalogue. There are more seals that may depict women, especially low quality post-Akkad seals, that show similar scenes as seals depicting women, for example, Legrain 1951, nos. 247-290; Collon 1982, nos. 283-318, 331-355.

low quality and may represent a different group of people rather than a chronological development in glyptic art. In the following, I shall first review seals depicting royal women who are identified by an inscription, since these seals were custom-made by order of the king or the royal woman, and then the other seals arranged by theme of the representation.

6. Textually Identified Royal Women

Royal women include wives and daughters of kings of a united Mesopotamia as well as of local rulers. While the terminology for princesses is straightforward (*dumu-munus lugal*), there are several terms for the wife of a ruler (Sallaberger 1999, 182-183): aside from the common *dam* = spouse, she can be designated *NIN* = lady, which implied that she was the chief wife or reigning queen. In addition, the term *lukur* was used in reference to wives of deified Ur III kings and was then, by extension, also applied to wives of their highest officials.²¹ This term, translated by Tonia Sharlach (2008) as “junior wife or concubine (of a god)”, designated from Early Dynastic into Old Babylonian times a variety of different priestesses thought of as a god’s concubines. When Šulgi deified himself, he applied it to his junior wives. Although we ignore whether this entailed new or different religious roles for those royal women, Tonia Sharlach finds it is absurd to describe them as priestesses of the king.

Royal women are represented on their own seals or on those of their servants, though not all seals belonging to royal women or their servants depict them. Only impressions of seals depicting textually identified royal women have survived and they do not preserve much detail regarding their attire. It is clear, however, that, with the exception of an Akkad-period queen of North Syria, they do not wear flounced robes and have their hair tied up in a bun on the nape.

The only extant seal image of a female member of the Akkad ruling house is that of Naramsin’s daughter Taram-Agade, married to a ruler of Urkeš, which depicts a combat scene (Buccellati – Kelly-Buccellati 2002, 13-16). Several seals of servants of female members of this ruling house also depict combat or mythological scenes.²² Two, however, depict a royal woman receiving her servant in audience – much like Ur III kings later receive their subordinates – namely Tuta-napšum, daughter of Naramsin and high priestess of Enlil, whose image I have already described (S 92), and Tuta-šar-libbiš, chief wife of Šar-kali-šarri (S 91).²³

21. But see also note 27 below.

22. Those of three servants of Enheduana (Bochmer 1965, figs. 53, 56, 114 = RIME 2.1.1.2003-5), a servant of Enmenana (Bochmer 1965, figs. 548 = RIME 2.1.4.2019) and two servants of Tuta-šar-libbiš (Bochmer 1965, no. 560 and Buchanan 1981, no. 429 = RIME 2.1.5.2001-2). Although the banquet depicted on the seal of another servant of Enmenana seems to include only divine figures, the female banqueteer can be interpreted at the same time as Ningal or Enmenana (Suter 2007, 325-326, fig. 3).

23. While this seal identifies Tuta-šar-libbiš as “beloved” of the king, seals of other servants (RIME 2.1.5.2001-2) designate her as *NIN*.

As its inscription indicates, Dada, the estate administrator of Tuta-šar-libbiš, received his seal from the king.²⁴ The image depicts a man standing before an enthroned woman with a female attendant behind her throne. Each figure is rendered in a different size, expressing their rank in relation to one other. The inscription is allocated over four legends, and Dada's name is placed behind the man, while that of Tuta-šar-libbiš is placed behind the enthroned woman. This leaves no doubt that the man represents Dada and the enthroned woman Tuta-šar-libbiš (Zettler 1977, 35). Tuta-šar-libbiš wears a robe that leaves both arms free and may have been pleated, as traces of pattern on her lap seem to indicate.

Impressions of several seals of the peripheral queen Uqnūtum, wife of king Tupkiš of Urkeš, and one of her children's wet-nurse that includes the queen in the image, were found at Tell Mozan, ancient Urkeš (S 34-39). They depict the queen enthroned and surrounded by her children and servants; two include her husband also enthroned. The queen wears a flounced robe leaving her arms bare and her hair in a braid down her back. These images are unique in style, as well as in iconography, which explains the unusual attire and hairstyle of the queen.

In Ur III glyptic, there are four royal concubines and three governors' wives represented on their seals. No seals of other royal women (NIN, dam lugal, dumu-munus lugal) of the Ur III ruling house have yet been discovered and neither they nor the concubines seem to be represented on seals of their servants.²⁵

The four concubines are: Ea-niša, traveling concubine of Šulgi (S 132); Geme-Ninlila, another concubine of Šulgi (S 133);²⁶ Me-Ištaran, who received her seal from Šu-Suen and probably was his sister and Šu-Kabta's concubine (S 134);²⁷ and Anaya, concubine of Šu-Suen's minister Nawir-illum (S 135). The first three seals were gifts of the king, while Anaya's seal was evidently made in the same workshop as Me-Ištaran's, since it closely resembles it in size, design and the addition of caps.

24. On IR₁₁-*zu*-seals being seals of office given to the seal owner by his/her superior mentioned in the inscription, much like in-na-ba-seals later, see Zettler 1977, 33.
25. Numerous seals of subordinates of royal women are known, but most of them are preserved in ancient impressions, of which often only the inscriptions have been published (RIME 3/2 1.1.51, 1.2.67-71, 1.2.73-74, 1.2.76-77, 1.2.90-91, 1.3.20, 1.4.30-31, 1.5.6). The few images made available depict the seal owner before a deity or king rather than before his or her female superior. This is the case for three male subordinates of princesses (Legrain 1925, no. 237 = RIME 3/2.1.1.53; Delaporte 1920, no. D.26 = RIME 3/2.1.6.1042; Delaporte 1923, no. A.255 = RIME 3/2.1.2.86) and for two male servants of Šulgi's concubine Ea-niša (Sigrist 1988, no. 321-322 = RIME 3/2.1.2.78-79, while the seal of another male servant of Ea-niša apparently did not include an image (Sigrist 1988, no. 412 = RIME 3/2.1.2.80). With one exception, the same holds true for male subordinates of high priestesses (Suter 2007, 328-329).
26. Although Geme-Ninlila is never called lukur and her seal identifies her simply as "beloved" of Šulgi, textual evidence indicates that she was Šulgi's concubine (Michalowski 1979).
27. Marcos Such-Gutiérrez suggested this at the Garšana workshop held during the 52nd RAI in 2006 in Münster. Šu-Kabta may have been mentioned in the broken first two lines of the second column of the seal inscription. If so, the lines following Me-Ištaran's name, which characterize her as nin₉ ki-[ág], lukur-a-[ni-ir], may refer to Šu-Kabta or Šu-Suen or both. Since the seal of a servant (S 136) calls her Šu-Suen's beloved sister, nin₉ ki-[ág] may refer to Šu-Suen and lukur-a-[ni-ir] to Šu-Kabta, but "sister" can also be understood as a poetic paraphrase for lover as it does in contemporary love lyrics. N.B. whether Anaya's characterization lukur-a-ni in S 135 refers to the aforementioned Nawir-illum or to the king mentioned before his minister also remains ambiguous.

All four seals depict the concubine standing before the king. As far as it can be made out, she wears a fringed robe draped over the left shoulder. Geme-Ninlila and Anaya are adorned with the necklace with counter-weight.

Three concubines – Ea-niša, Me-Ištaran and Anaya – stand before the enthroned king with cup and are followed by a Lama with raised arms. As opposed to presentees led by Lama to the enthroned king, this composition was reserved for high-rank officials who were in direct contact with the king (Fischer 1997, 131; Mayr 2002, 363). While male officials either raise the right arm or hold both hands to the waist, the concubines hold one hand to the waist and extend the other toward the king with the lower arm in a horizontal position. Me-Ištaran and Anaya extend their right hand toward the king, while Ea-niša extends her left, which is positioned over an axe implanted next to Šulgi's feet.

In contrast, Geme-Ninlila stands alone before a noticeably taller Šulgi, whose posture, dress and shouldered weapon are reminiscent of warrior gods (Suter forthcoming, 2.5.3). A stag rearing up a tree behind the king denotes a mountainous landscape and may allude to the foreign lands (*kur-kur*) the king subjugated. While Šulgi extends his right hand toward Geme-Ninlila, she holds a small two-handled pot in her out-stretched right hand. This is one type of vessel usually balanced on the fingertips of Ur III kings receiving subordinates in audience (Winter 1986, 260). Michalowski (1994, 36-37) suggests that the king offered the vessel to his subordinate as a symbol of sovereignty and patronage.²⁸ Geme-Ninlila's seal lends further support to his thesis: she has obviously just received the vessel. Šulgi may be represented as heroic warrior on her seal because she accompanied him on a military campaign. If so, the axe on the seal of Ea-niša, who is explicitly identified as a travelling concubine if this is what *lukur kaskal-la* implies, may be a battle axe and allude to a military campaign, too.²⁹

The seals of two governors' wives – Nin-hilia, wife of Ayakala of Umma (S 64), and a wife of Ur-Lama of Lagaš, whose name remains obscure (S 65) – depict the seal owner's introduction by Lama to an enthroned goddess (Winter 1987b, 190).³⁰ Although neither of the enthroned goddesses is given idiosyncratic attributes, they probably represent the wives of the respective city-state patron; the lion depicted below the legend on Nin-hilia's seal can be understood as a reference to the warrior god Šara, divine patron of Umma. Both governors' wives wear fringed robes. While Pinnock (1998, 341) identifies Nin-hilia's dress as a two-corner fringed robe, I can see only one fringed border, whereas the dress of Ur-Lama's wife exhibits two fringed borders falling vertically down the front, though the right shoulder is bare. Nin-hilia probably wore the common fringed

28. On this subject, see also Suter forthcoming, section 2.5.2.

29. Fischer (1997, 140) proposed that the axe symbolized authority of office by analogy with ancient Roman *fascēs*. Mesopotamian regalia, however, do not include an axe, nor does *lukur* necessarily designate an office when referring to royal wives.

30. Another seal of Nin-hilia known from ancient impressions preserves only the inscription and part of an enthroned deity, probably a goddess (Parr 1974, 111, seal A; RIME 3/2.1.4.2014; Mayr forthcoming, no. 582). Rudi Mayr informs me that the ancient impression of a seal of Nin-Melam, wife of Ur-Lisi, another governor of Umma, also shows an introduction to a seated goddess, but does not preserve the presentee (Sigrist 1983, no. 206; Mayr forthcoming; no. 584).

robe and Ur-Lama's wife the two-corner fringed robe slightly misunderstood by the seal cutter or the illustrator of the ancient impression.

As mentioned above, Geme-Lama, ereš-dingir of Baba, probably was a governor's wife, too. She is dressed and coiffured like other court women and appears in a presentation scene that combines features of the seals of royal concubines and governors' wives (S 76): she stands petitioning before an enthroned Baba, who offers her a flowing vase, symbol of abundance, and is followed by a Lama with raised arms. Kazuya Maekawa (1996, 172-173), who deduces from Ur III administrative documents that the wives of the governors of Lagaš held the title ereš-dingir of Baba,³¹ does not venture into individual cases. Based on dated impressions of her and her servants' seals (Fischer 1997, 125-128) and other administrative texts mentioning her (Sallaberger 1993, 96, 282), Geme-Lama must have been the wife of Ur-Lama, who governed Lagaš from Šulgi 32 at the latest to Amar-Suen 3 (Maekawa 1996, 177). This raises several questions, since other wives are attested for this governor: Hala-Baba, who dedicated an agate bead to Lama with a wish for Amar-Suen's life (Braun-Holzinger 1991, no. P 15),³² and the one whose seal I just described (S 65) and whose name, although difficult to read, differs from the other two.

Did Ur-Lama have three wives at the same time or one after the other? Hala-Baba could have followed Geme-Lama, since the latter died in Amar-Suen's first year (Sallaberger 1993, 96), while the impression of the third wife's seal is not dated. One also wonders why one of Ur-Lama's wives mentions her husband rather than a title in her seal inscription, while Geme-Lama mentions her title rather than her husband, and why the two women used different types of presentation scenes. If Geme-Lama, who headed Baba's estate, was the chief wife next to secondary wives, this would explain her giving priority to title over wifehood and her direct access to Baba as opposed to an introduction. If, however, Ur-Lama was monogamous, fluctuations in power during his tenure may have been responsible for the differences. Geme-Lama's seal would then have belonged to his powerful period when he used a seal depicting him directly before the king, while the other wife's seal would have belonged to the period when he used a seal depicting his introduction to the king.³³ This example demonstrates the complexity of individual cases.

Neither wives nor daughters of Isin-Larsa kings are depicted in glyptic. The only seal that has survived of a female member of these ruling houses is that of Bēltani, wife of Rim-Sin, the last independent king of Larsa, which depicts Udug and Lama facing one another (Moortgat 1940, no. 322 = RIME 4.2.14.22). This is a very popular motif in Old Babylonian glyptic and recurs on the seals of several royal women of that period.³⁴

31. See now also Sallaberger – Huber Vulliet 2003-2005, 636.

32. The inscription identifies Hala-Baba's husband Ur-Lama as scribe rather than as governor. His identification with the homonymous governor is suggested by ancient impressions of Ur-Lama's first seal, which are labelled "seal of the governor", while the seal inscription identifies him as scribe (Fischer 1997, 141-142).

33. For Ur-Lama's seals, see Fischer 1997, 141-142.

34. RIME 4.2.14.2021; 4.6.8.6?; 4.6.12.7; 4.27.2.2001; 4.28.4.2002; 4.32.1.1; 4.32.1.2001.

There is a candidate for the representation of a peripheral ruler's wife of this time, namely the wife of Ibal-pi-El I of Ešnunna (S 138).³⁵ The fragmentary ancient impression preserves two standing figures facing one another. One wears a long robe and her hair tied up, while the other, whose head is lost, wears a fringed robe. Although the female's head is broken on top, Franke (1977, 64) suggests that she represented a woman rather than a goddess. The image may then have depicted the seal owner and her husband, not unlike Geme-Ninlila's seal (S 133). However, since the female is reminiscent of the Old Babylonian figure that resembles Ur III royal concubines in attire but Lama in gesture, one cannot exclude the possibility that this seal depicted protective spirits, like that of Bēltani.

7. Women in Banquet

The banquet scene is a hallmark of Early Dynastic art, which persisted in Akkad glyptic. Its participants – seated banqueteers and standing attendants – are usually human; only a small percentage of Akkad seals depict divine participants or a combination of divine and human participants. These should not lead us to wonder whether all Akkad banquets are staged in a divine sphere (Boehmer 1965, 117; cf. Selz 1983, 527-528), since deities and humans are differentiated and S 8 clearly distinguishes a divine banquet in the upper register from a human banquet in the lower register. There is no consensus on the implications of the banquet scene. None of the hypotheses that propose to limit this motif to a single rite (most recently: Kaelin 2006) are convincing me. Textual evidence suggests that banquets were celebrated on a variety of occasions. The considerable variance in details and complements of the banquet scene supports Pierre Amiet's view that also the images reflect a variety of celebrations (Suter 2000, 10). These may have been historical events, such as military victories or temple inaugurations, as well as regular cult festivals.

In Akkad glyptic, banquet scenes are reduced to two banqueteers with up to four optional attendants. In about half of the dozen scenes that combine a divine with a human banqueteer (Selz 1983, 526-527), it is hard to determine whether the latter was intended to represent a human or simply misses a horned crown due to poor carving. Only three seals may depict a woman in banquet with a god (S 1-3). Because details of attire and hairstyle are difficult to identify on them, and since it seems that only high priestesses were depicted in banquet with a god (Suter 2007, figs. 3-5, 14?), I would not base any conclusion on these seals.

In human banquets, the banqueteers are usually a man and a woman and the attendants can be of either sex, although there are also some banquets of only men or women, respectively (Selz 1983, 492-496, 518-535). While posture and gesture denote the difference in rank between banqueteers and attendants, they are usually not distinguished from one another in attire. In the sample included here (S 4-32), most wear fringed robes. Rarely men or all figures wear pleated robes (S 7, 11, 16), women or all figures wear plain robes (S 7, 12, 32), or all figures wear flounced robes (S 9, 14).

35. Reichel (2001, 300 no. 47.1) claims that there is no room for the last line restored by Jacobsen. The seal was, therefore, not a royal gift. Its owner's name remains difficult to read.

Three out of 29 seals (S 18, 25, 29), one of which from Ur, distinguish banqueteers in flounced robes from attendants in fringed or plain robes.

Who are the banquet participants? In Early Dynastic times, the media depicting banquets, the materials they were made of, inscriptions, as well as iconography prove or suggest that the banqueteers represent royals (Selz 1983: 441-462). This seems to be the case also in Akkad glyptic, although the seal owners are not necessarily of the elite anymore. The two inscribed Early Dynastic seals that belonged to women and depict a banquet, for example, come from the Royal Cemetery at Ur, are of high quality and belonged to a queen and a high priestess, who are probably represented in the image (Asher 2007, 63-64). In contrast, the four inscribed Akkad seals that depict a human couple in banquet (S 4-7) are, except for one from a private grave, of unknown provenance, are of mediocre quality and belonged to otherwise unknown individuals, who neither indicate their profession nor claim affiliation with a ruling house. The banqueteers on these seals are, therefore, more likely to represent royals whom the seal owners regarded as their superiors rather than the seal owners themselves. The banquet may then reflect the annual celebration of the marriage of a divine couple celebrated on the earthly plane by the king and queen or a local ruler couple (Sallaberger 1999, 155).

8. Women Libating

Six Akkad seals depict a woman libating before a seated goddess (S 40-45). On three of them the goddess is Ištar, identified by weapons protruding from her shoulders. The women wear either a fringed or pleated robe draped over the left shoulder. While one is unaccompanied, three are followed by a Lama and two by a woman carrying a pail.³⁶

Three of the six seals are inscribed. S 42, with the solitary woman before Ištar, belonged to an A.Ištar.X.DUG, who is further identified by her father's and husband's names. In this case, it is possible that the libating woman represents the seal owner. S 40 belonged to a supervisor called Iku-Parakkum, who is generally taken to be a man. Even if Iku-Parakkum was a woman, it seems unlikely that this high quality seal represents a simple supervisor. The inscription of S 41, which reads "Ša₆-ša₆, NIN-na-ni, Ur-mes", can be interpreted in several ways: either the man called Ur-mes gave this seal to his sister Šaša (Edzard 1968, 15 note 43), which would entail a rare orthography and a unique case of dedication, or he was the seal owner and subordinate of a royal Šaša. Based on these inscriptions and given that two high-quality and custom-made Ur III libation scenes depict the king libating rather than the seal owner,³⁷ I expect the female libator on the six seals under consideration to represent a ruler's wife, who, at least in some cases, was the seal owner's superior. In any event, neither inscriptions nor iconography suggest identifying the libating women as high priestesses (cf. Asher 2007, 67).

36. On this figure, see section 9.

37. Tallon 1992, 39 fig. 9 and Zettler 1987, 60 fig. 1; both are discussed in Suter forthcoming, section 2.5.1.

9. Women before a Deity

Women appear in three other ways before a deity: they can be introduced by a minor deity to a goddess, like governors' wives (S 64-65); stand unaccompanied or followed by Lama before a goddess, like Geme-Lama (S 76); or be equipped with a pail and follow behind a woman or a man who is introduced to a deity, stands before a deity or libates before a deity.

The introduction to a goddess is attested on two Akkad seals, becomes predominant in post-Akkad and neo-Sumerian glyptic and ceases to exist thereafter.³⁸

One Akkad seal belonged to Takunai, wet-nurse of the daughter of Timmuzi, female estate administrator (S 48).³⁹ Its extraordinary carving quality, the precious lapis lazuli it is made of and the high-rank offices of the two women mentioned in its inscription suggest that it was custom-made in a court milieu.⁴⁰ The image shows Lama leading a woman, who is followed by another woman with a pail, to Ninhursag, who is identified by the scale pattern signifying mountains in her horned crown and on her throne and foot-stool. Both women have their hair tied up in a bun and are clearly not veiled. The first wears a pleated robe draped over the left shoulder and covering the left arm, while the second wears the common fringed robe. Two interpretations are possible: either the first woman represents Timmuzi and the second Takunai (Lambert 1988; Asher-Greve 2006, 67), or the first represents Takunai while the second remains anonymous (Nougayrol 1960, 212; Collon 1987, no. 642). The latter scenario not only agrees with the general rule that the presentee represents the seal owner, but also makes more sense for the custom-made seal of a wet-nurse, since Ninhursag is the nurturing goddess. The draping of Takunai's dress is unusual in Akkad glyptic, but well attested in Early Dynastic statuary from the north (Strommenger 1971, 45-46 no. 8). Therefore, and because her name was common at Nuzi (Nougayrol 1960, 212), her dress may have marked her origin from the north.⁴¹

The other Akkad seal (S 49) is not inscribed and depicts a divine couple leading a woman dressed in the common fringed robe to a standing, en-face Ištar.

38. Haussperger 1991, 221 produced five possible Isin-Larsa examples, but admitted that their carving was very coarse. On the published photos, the figures' gender can hardly be determined, although the presentees look rather male to me.
39. This understanding of the seal inscription follows Steinkeller 1988 and Westenholz 1999, 73; for a less likely interpretation, see Nougayrol 1960, 211 and Lambert 1988. Winter (personal communication) doubts the authenticity of this seal, based on the "very sharp cutting" and the "hair curls;" the inscription, however, rather speaks for an original, unless the faker was an Assyriologist.
40. At Mari, Timmuzi's title (MUNUS.AGRIG = *abarakkatum*) designates the female administrator of the queen's household (Stol 1995, 137). A good example for the high rank wet nurses held at court is Kubatum (Sigrist 1986), though she need not be identical with the chief wife of Šu-Suen (Sallaberger 1999, 184); wet-nurses are also attested at the courts of Ebla (Biga 2000) and Urkeš (Buccellati – Kelly-Buccellati 1995-96, 21-23).
41. According to the dealer in whose possession the seal was when Nougayrol published it, it comes from Urkeš (Nougayrol 1960, 213). Nougayrol found support for this origin in part of the inscription which, however, he misinterpreted. Meanwhile Tell Mozan is being excavated and its identification with Urkeš has been proved correct, but the glyptic of the royal household found there is of a very different local style; see Buccellati – Kelly-Buccellati 1995-96 and perhaps also Buccellati – Kelly-Buccellati 2002, 18 no. AFc4.

On the 14 post-Akkad and 12 neo-Sumerian seals depicting a woman's introduction to a goddess (S 50-75), the scene becomes increasingly stereotypical: it does not include more than the three essential figures; the introducing deity is always a Lama; and the receiving goddess is, except for one standing one (S 51), always seated and never identified by idiosyncratic attributes. Neither animals, plants, objects added to the scene or the row of water birds in the lower register of some post-Akkad seals, nor the crescent with star on neo-Sumerian seals allow us to name her. Aside from the difference in these additional motifs, garments are more standardized on neo-Sumerian seals than on post-Akkad ones, although this difference may in part be one of quality. While neo-Sumerian women always wear a fringed robe and their Lama a flounced one, the fringed border of the woman's robe on post-Akkad seals is rarely indicated, the bottom hem simply rendered by a line, and their Lama may wear the same plain robe or a pleated one.⁴²

Half of the post-Akkad and nearly all of the neo-Sumerian seals are inscribed. The inscriptions suggest that the female presentees represent the seal owner. Most of them are identified by their own name plus their husband's (S 50-54, 64-66) or father's name (S 55, 59, 67-68) or both (S 69). Aside from the already discussed governors' wives (S 64-66), three other Ur III women can be further identified: Inana-ka (S 66) was a member of the influential family of Ur-meme, who ran the Inana Temple at Nippur (Westenholz 1992, 306), while Ningal-namNINhedu and Dadaga (S 67, 69) were daughters of servants of Ayakala of Umma. In addition to these wives and daughters, two Ur III seal owners were female servants (*gême*) of high-rank women (S 71-72); one of them was a supervisor of weavers, who first worked for a certain Abuni and then for the concubine Me-Ištaran. Another Ur III seal belonged to a scribe called Urzu (S 70). Was Urzu a woman or a man who reused a woman's seal? The first part of his name (*ur*), together with the absence of *munus* after *dumu*, suggest a man.

The female presentees in introductions to a goddess thus include elite women, such as the wet-nurse Takunai, governors' wives and Inana-ka of the Ur-meme family; servants of elite women; daughters of governors' servants; and other women not affiliated with a royal house. Together with the anonymous, low quality post-Akkad seals, this suggests a wider segment of society than the elite.

Only one Ur III and two Isin-Larsa seals, all belonging to women identified by their own and their husband's names, do or may depict a woman directly before a goddess. The Ur III candidate is an ancient impression of the seal of Nin-agrigzi (S 77), which preserves only the arms of a figure – right raised, left on the waist – before a seated goddess. The scene on Nin-pad's seal (S 78) as well as the allocation of its inscription between figures are unusual, and its poor quality hampers a clear identification of the figures. Two figures, who are followed by a rampant animal, raise their right arm before a seated deity. Although the first looks like a woman with a bun and the second like a bald-headed man, one cannot exclude that the first was meant to represent Lama and the second a woman whose bun was not clearly carved. The seal of Ayalatum (S 79), wife of a great minister of Gungunum, king of Larsa, is unusual, too, and may be partially re-cut: it depicts a woman with the

42. N.B. The distinction between post-Akkad and neo-Sumerian seals is not always easy and may be arbitrary in some cases of low quality seals or faint seal impressions.

same arm gesture as Nin-agrigzi before a standing goddess who offers her “rod and ring”, the insignia of rulership, which are normally bestowed only on kings.

The woman carrying a pail occurs only in Akkad glyptic. This secondary figure can accompany a female libator (S 40-41) or a female presentee (S 48, 97, 102-105, 113). More often, however, she accompanies a bearded man with a kid on his shoulders to a high-rank deity, who is usually identified by attributes and typically a god (S 46-47, 80-90). The kid-carrier is introduced by a minor god or goddess, though he can also stand directly before the high-rank deity. S 47 shows him libating and adds a second woman with a box behind the one with a pail, while S 46 depicts the kid-carrier and the woman with a pail behind a beardless, kilted man who pours the libation.⁴³

The association of the woman carrying a pail with libations suggests that the pail contained the liquid for a libation. Her association with the kid-carrier further supports this thesis, for the kid was another offering brought to the deity. The kid-carrier, who occurs from Early Dynastic to Old Babylonian times in various media including statuary and relief, is, when identified by an inscription, a ruler (Suter 1991-93). It is highly likely then that the woman accompanying him with another offering for the deity they are approaching together was also royal. S 33, which combines a divine banquet with a presentation scene, depicts a similar royal couple. I propose, therefore, that the woman accompanying the kid-carrier represents this ruler’s wife, while the woman with a pail who accompanies a ruler’s wife or a high-rank woman (S 40-41, 48) represents another member of the royal family or entourage.

The inscribed seals featuring the kid-carrier and the woman with a pail belonged to an equerry (S 80), an interpreter of the Meluhhan language (S 82), and to two persons not identified beyond their names (S 46, S 81). If the kid-carrier and the woman with a pail were royal and the seal owner was not, then they, like banqueters and libators, must represent the seal owner’s royal superiors rather than the seal owners themselves. Some seals discussed here (S 83, 90) include a figure half the size of the others. Such half-size figures also occur on other Akkad seals (e.g., S 107). Since they stand out by their size on the one hand, but are dispensable for the understanding of the image on the other, they are the obvious candidates for representing the seal owner.

10. Women before a Superior Woman

In Akkad glyptic, queens can receive their servants in audience, as does Tuta-šar-libbiš (S 91), and the same is true of high priestesses up into Isin-Larsa times. In both cases, the seals belonged to their subordinates. While all seals depicting an audience with a high priestess are inscribed, this is not the case for those with a royal woman. The former I have described in detail elsewhere (Suter 2007, 324-329, figs. 2, 7-8); here included are the two examples that belonged to women (S 92-93).

43. On S 90, the kid-carrier is not only followed by a woman with a pail, but is also preceded by one, and the seated female looks like a woman rather than a goddess; either the scene was misunderstood by the seal cutter or this seal is a fake. This assessment is further substantiated by the simplified shape of the throne and the fact that a star is placed underneath a crescent rather than inside it.

Thirteen anonymous Akkad seals depict a scene that is composed of a row of two to four women approaching an enthroned woman, who is occasionally attended by a servant standing behind her throne and twice has a child on her lap (S 94-106). All women wear fringed robes and have their hair tied up. Although the enthroned woman neither wears a flounced garment nor a horned crown, she has been interpreted as a goddess. In consequence, several scholars conclude that goddesses could be rendered without horned crowns in Akkad glyptic.⁴⁴ However, while the flounced garment was not yet standard for deities in the Akkad period, the horned crown was. Its meaning was so well established that Naramsin, who began to write his name with the divine determinative, could make use of the symbolism of horns by having himself depicted with a horned helmet. Therefore, I cannot accept that a goddess could be depicted without the horned crown in an entire group of seals from that period. Moreover, a two-registered seal (S 45) that combines the here discussed scene with a libation before a goddess clearly distinguishes between the enthroned goddess wearing the flounced robe and multiple horned crown and the enthroned woman wearing a fringed robe and no headdress.⁴⁵

The incentive for interpreting an enthroned female without any markers of divinity as goddess springs from a widely spread misconception regarding the presentation scene, namely the identification of human figures standing before an enthroned figure as worshippers. Twenty years ago, Irene Winter (1986, 1987b) demonstrated that the presentation scene was not limited to a religious context, but expressed a general relationship of authority rooted in the structure of society. On the seals under discussion, the standing women pay homage to an enthroned woman, who is characterized as superior in rank by her seated position, by the occasional attendant behind her throne and by being the focal point of the scene. Their situation is not unlike that of Dada before his queen Tuta-šar-libbiš or servants of high priestesses and kings before them. By analogy, I propose to identify the enthroned woman as a royal woman and the women standing before her as her subordinate court women. The occasional child on the lap befits a royal wife, since her most important task was to give birth to heirs of the throne (Sallaberger 1999, 185). Moreover, the only seals showing a textually identified woman with a child on her lap represent a queen (S 35, 39). The occasion for the gathering of several women before a royal woman may have been a women's cult festival, since the two-registered seal combines this scene with a libation before a goddess (S 45),

44. Boehmer 1965, 98: "Es ist auffällig, dass sich die Beter direkt ohne vermittelnde Gottheit an die Göttin wenden. Ihr geringer Rang, der daraus hervorgeht, wird auch dadurch erkenntlich, dass sie oft ohne Hörnerkrone und zwar dann im gleichen Fransengewand wie die Beter abgebildet wird". Collon 1982, 28: "It is interesting to note that, in many cases, the 'deity' who wears a fringed robe does not wear a horned headdress, and only the presence of worshippers makes such an identification probable"; 30: "Often, however, a woman who should, judged by the context, be a goddess, is shown bare-headed; the hair-style then visible is that adopted by women in general". Haussperger 1991, 95-96: "Gelegentlich tragen Gottheiten das Schalgewand, das sonst nur Menschen benutzen ... Zu diesem Gewand wird die einfache Hörnerkrone oder das Stirnband getragen; Göttinnen bevorzugen letzteres".

45. Furthermore, Akkad presentation scenes presided by an enthroned goddess with a child on her lap noticeably differ from the scene under discussion (S 82, and Boehmer 1965, figs. 555, 558, 560): the goddess wears a flounced robe and horned crown, the principle presentee is male and the scene includes a man handling a large pot on a tripod. Similarly, the only goddess with child on an Ur III seal (Fischer 1997, no. 1) presides over the introduction of a male presentee.

and because other seals include the above discussed woman carrying the pail that probably contained the liquid for a libation (S 97, 102-105, 113).

Two more Akkad seals may belong to this context. One (S 107), owned by a certain Nin-KA-zida, child of Nergal-Abzu, lacks a seated figure, but depicts a row of five women dressed in the pleated robe draped over the left shoulder, one of whom is only half the size of the others. The other (S 108) is a fragmentary seal from Diquqqeh that depicts a woman with a towel standing behind a smaller woman on a stool who apparently washes the feet of an enthroned woman with a drinking cup; all three women wear fringed robes and have their hair tied up.

The audience scene before a royal woman continued on post-Akkad seals, most of which are two-registered and of poor quality (S 109-117). The lower register can either depict a similar scene (S 109-111), a row of water birds or scorpions (113-115), or simply a geometric pattern (S 112). Since some of these audience scenes include a date palm or another tree (S 111, 116, 117), the two-registered post-Akkad seal depicting a row of three women in the upper register and two women flanking a date palm in the lower register (S 118), probably belonged to the same context. The same may be true of post-Akkad seals depicting two women flanking a date palm altar (S 119).⁴⁶ Scorpions as well as the date palm were symbols of fertility and thus fit in the context of a women's cult festival.

Another group of post-Akkad seals, most of which are two-registered and show a row of water birds in the lower register (S 120-131), depict a scene that combines features of the introduction to a goddess and the audience before a royal woman: while the composition follows the former, the leading and the seated females are characterized as women rather than goddesses. On two of the seals, the seated female seems to wear a flounced robe but no horned crown (S 122-123). It seems, therefore, that on this group of seals, the seal cutter confused the Akkad audience scene with the image that became predominant on seals of women in Ur III glyptic. Two of them are inscribed: one (S 121) belonged to an unnamed ereš-dingir identified through her husband, who may be identical with an Akkad-period governor of Lagaš,⁴⁷ while the other (S 120) belonged to a certain Sagša, child of Lugal-bi.

Although only three of thirty-eight seals depicting one or more women before an anonymous superior woman are inscribed and only one of them positively belonged to a woman, the female sphere of their imagery suggests that these seals belonged to women. Whether they represented the seal owner, however, is questionable. The best candidate for a seal owner is the small woman on Nin-KAzida's seal (S 107). If so, this seal belonged to an elite woman's female servant rather than to an elite woman herself. The anonymity of the other Akkad seals and the poor quality of the post-Akkad seals also suggest female owners who did not belong to the upmost echalons of society but probably stood in the service of an elite woman.

46. I have included only this seal in the catalogue because it is the only one that positively depicts female figures. For other seals that may depict the same scene, see Collon 1982, nos. 336-358 and Legrain 1951, nos. 259-276.

47. A Lugal-ušumgal ruled Lagaš under Naramsin and Šarkališarri, see RIME 2.1.4.2004, 2.1.5.2004, 2.12.3.2001.

11. Women before a King

There are only two partially preserved impressions of Ur III seals that may have shown a female seal owner received in audience by the king, similar to Ur III concubines (S 132-135): Nurušeli, who apparently was a servant of Me-Ištaran, seems to have been introduced by Lama to a seated king (S 136), while Geme-Ašar, a priest's wife, seems to have stood, followed by Lama, before a seated king (S 137).

Three Isin-Larsa seals depict a female looking like a royal concubine on Ur III seals before a male figure looking like an Ur III king as a warrior (S 139-141). Their composition, however, differs from Ur III seals and the seals do not belong to royal women. One (S 139) belonged to Tulid-Šamši, daughter of Bur-Adad, and includes a male presentee behind the female. Another (S 140) belonged to Ninšubur-bani, who was supervisor of the *lukur*-women in the Ebabbar at Sippar, and depicts the male on the left and the female on the right, just like the classical Old Babylonian motif of Udug facing Lama. The third is not inscribed (S 141) and shows the same couple as one of several groups of figures. The human-looking figures on these seals must represent protective spirits rather than historical individuals.

12. Conclusions

The two media in which the discussed images of women were fashioned – sculpture and glyptic – differ in their dispersal over the ca. 500 years under consideration. Most statuettes as well as the one relief date to the neo-Sumerian period with a preponderance of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš; only one peripheral statuette can be attributed to the Akkad period, while none are securely dated to the Isin-Larsa dynasties. In contrast, over half the seals date to the Akkad period, fewer than a quarter are post-Akkad or Ur III, respectively, while only a hand-full are Isin-Larsa, some of the latter representing protective spirits rather than women.

Does this distribution of data reflect the chance of archaeological finds or the actual state of affairs? Seals suggest that the near absence of women in sculpture of the Akkad period is more likely to fall in the first category, while the preponderance of stone statuettes of the Second Dynasty of Lagaš and the disappearance of women from the visual record in the Isin-Larsa period may fall in the second. In other words, it is probable that statuettes of women were more often made of metal than of stone in the Akkad and Ur III periods,⁴⁸ while the disappearance of women's images

48. In addition to the statue of a queen made of copper and plated with gold that I mentioned above, there are other statues of Ur III royal women known from texts that may have been made of metal: an administrative text mentions a statue of Kubatum, chief wife of Šu-Sin, which was set up at the gate of Enlil (Steinkeller 1981, 80), and two texts on a tablet that contains a collection of abbreviated copies of monumental inscriptions from Šulgi's reign pertain to statues of his concubines Eaniša and Nin-kalla (RIME 3/2.1.2.81 and 84, and Suter forthcoming, section 2.2.3, for a discussion).

in the Isin-Larsa period occurs both in sculpture and glyptic and seems related to growing patriarchal structures.

Sculpture and glyptic also differ in regard to detail: the variety of fringed robes attested in sculpture has no counterpart on seal images, and many seals remain indistinct in regard to whether the woman's hair was covered by a veil or not. In part this is due to the small size of seals and their varying quality, in part to the fact that many Ur III seals are preserved only in ancient impressions. It seems, however, that most Akkad women wore the common fringed robe; a few wore a pleated robe, while neo-Sumerian women wore variously draped fringed robes. The looped shape of the bun of women in Akkad glyptic suggests that, contrary to the one contemporary statuette (St 3), women were not veiled in this period. This finds corroboration on high quality seals as, for example, that of Takunai (S 48). It seems, therefore, that the veil was a short-lived fashion under the Second Dynasty of Lagaš and that the statuette from Assur represents either a local particularity or a forerunner of the Lagaš II veil.

While sculpture was reserved for elite women, female figures in glyptic represent a wider segment of society. Determining the rank of women depicted on seals must rely mainly on their inscription, since the image only differentiates subordinates from superiors in posture and hardly ever in attire and hairstyle. This must be due to the medium rather than the state of affairs. Texts inform us that garments differed in fabric and whether they were dyed or otherwise elaborated (Waetzoldt 1980-83). Since certain fabrics were more expensive than others and dying as well as other elaboration made the garment more precious, these differences must have been decisive in determining rank. Garments dyed red, for example, were reserved for deities, kings and high priestesses. Fabric, color and elaboration, however, could not be rendered adequately or at all on seal images. Low quality seals, in particular, necessarily depict a much simplified version of the variety of robes that actually existed.

Not all women depicted on seals represent the seal owner. On Akkad seals, banqueteers, libators, the enthroned women holding audience, as well the woman who approaches a high-rank deity in the company of the kid-carrier, seem to represent royal women in whose service the seal owner stood. One exception may be A.Ištar.X.DUG (S 42), who libates alone before Ištar, though she may have been a local ruler's wife. Some of these seals include a small figure, only half the size of the others (S 82, 83, 90, 107), who may well represent the seal owner. Because of the existence of such half-size figures I think it less probable that full-size secondary figures, such as banquet attendants, figures following behind presentees or libators, or one of the group of women received in audience by a royal woman, represent the seal owner. The only female seal owners represented in Akkad glyptic are women introduced to a goddess or to a high priestess who was her superior, and the peripheral queen Uqnitum (S 34-38, 48-49, 92-93). Post-Akkad glyptic follows the same pattern: the seal owner does not seem to be represented in group audiences to a royal woman, but is introduced to a goddess; she is perhaps also represented on the seals that depict a cross between these two scenes. In neo-Sumerian glyptic, by contrast, all types of presentation scenes represent the seal owner, and the same seems to apply to the four Isin-Larsa presentation scenes that were either recut from Ur III seals or imitated them (S 78-79, 93, 139).

Aside from queens and high priestesses, who are depicted and named on seals of their subordinates, female seal owners represented on their own seal included elite women, such as

concubines and governors' wives, servants of elite woman, daughters of governors' servants, and probably also women who belonged to the free citizenry conducting business (Foster 1987, 54; Westenholz 1999, 70-71; cf. Fischer 1997, 138). A problem that remains even if the seal is inscribed and the seal owner is represented, is that some individuals who happen to be attested in administrative texts, can be identified with more precision in terms of rank than others who are otherwise unknown.

Once the women depicted in official art are identified as far as possible, one can proceed to study the contexts in which they are depicted. Royal couples in banquet as well as in presentation and libation scenes before high-rank deities must epitomize moments of state ceremonies or cult festivals, in which, as we know from Ur III texts, royal wives and princesses participated alongside kings and high priestesses. Images show that this was already the case in Akkad times. The clapping court women on a Lagaš II stela probably participated in celebrations on the occasion of a temple inauguration.

Images of queens and high priestesses receiving subordinates in audience reflect their role as head of estate. Akkad-period royal wives also receive groups of female subordinates in audience, probably on the occasion of a women's cult festival as attested for Ur III times. Again, these seals inform us that such festivals already existed in Akkad times. Banquets in an exclusively female sphere may belong to the same context. While royal women can pour a libation on such an occasion, high priestesses only preside over this ritual act performed probably by the *lagar/l*, their male assistant (Suter 2007, 324, fig. 1).⁴⁹ This teaches us that the ritual act in itself does not allow for interpreting the agent as a priest or priestess.

Presentations of women to goddesses corroborate their textually attested preference for the worship of goddesses as opposed to gods, while audiences of concubines and possibly also other elite women with the deified king show them as highly privileged subordinates. The seals of two concubines seem to tell us, beyond textual information, that they could accompany the king on military campaigns.

In conclusion, royal women were represented in public in the form of statuettes set up in temples and they were depicted on public monuments, such as a stela. On seal images that circulated within state administration, they participate in state ceremonies or cult festivals alongside the king, are received in audience by a deified king, receive themselves subordinates in audience and direct women's cult festivals. Non-royal women – some of the elite, others not necessarily – are received in audience by a royal superior, participate in women's cult festivals and pay homage to goddesses. So, even if the Third Dynasty of Ur did not have as publicly representative queens as Egypt (Weiershäuser 2006, 276-7) and “there certainly was in Mesopotamia nothing like the public visibility of women of the royal household in Republican and early Imperial Roman art” (Winter 1987a, 201), women were able to be seen in Mesopotamian official art in the about 500 years here considered.

49. Similarly, in present-day India the libation is poured by an officiant rather than by the chief priest; see Winter 2000: 145.

Table 1: Sculpture ⁵⁰

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Description, Material & Height	Dress	Hair	Bibliography
St 1 Fig. 1	AO 227	Tello	Nin-alla : headless standing, alabaster, 17 cm	CFRv	-	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 22bis: 2a-b; Spycket 1981, 203 note 94, pl. 139; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 133; RIME 3/1.1.7.99
St 2	Unknown	Tello	Ur-GAR's wife : fragment of lower body	CFRv	-	de Sarzec 1884, p. 349 (drawing); Spycket 1981, 203 note 97; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 140; RIME 3/1.1.9.2
St 3	VA 6980	Assur: Ištar Temple G (= Akk)	Head, 7.2 cm, & body fragments, gypsum	CFR?	BV	Spycket 1981, 166 note 110, pl. 113 & fig. 51
St 4	AO 2112	unknown (acquired 1891)	Headless standing, alabaster, 10.2 cm	1CFv	-	Spycket 1981, 203 note 95 (unpublished)
St 5	AO 241	Tello	Headless standing, limestone, 15 cm	1CFv	-	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 21bis: 4; Spycket 1981, 203 note 96, pl. 140
St 6	Ash 1931-51	Uruk?	Headless standing, limestone, 14 cm	1CFv	-	Moorey 1976, pl. XXI; Spycket 1981, 211 note 136
St 7 Fig. 2	AO 226	Tello	for Gudea's life : headless squatting, limestone, 13 cm	2CF	-	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 22bis: 3a-b; Spycket 1981, 198 note 74, pl. 134; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 132; RIME 3/1.1.7.94
St 8 Fig. 3	Unknown	Tello	Nin-KAgina : lower body standing	2CF	-	de Sarzec 1884, p. 347 (drawing); Spycket 1981, 200 note 80; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 141; RIME 3/1.1.12.6
St 9	VA 4856	Tello? (acquired from David alias Géjou)	Agugi : lower body squatting, gypsum, 4.8 cm	2CF	-	Marzahn 1987, no. 18, pl. 6; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 149
St 10 Fig. 4	AO 295	Tello	Femme à l'écharpe: upper body standing, steatite, 17 cm	2CF	BV	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 24bis: 2; Spycket 1981, 200 note 83, pl. 136
St 11	AO 43	Tello	Torso standing, limestone, 24 cm	2CF	-	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 22: 3a-b; Spycket 1981, 200 note 82
St 12	AO 297	Tello	Torso, limestone, 6 cm	2CF	-	Spycket 1981, 200 note 82, pl. 135
St 13	EŞEM 443	Tello	Torso standing, limestone, 11 cm	2CF	-	-
St 14	EŞEM 6425	Tello	Headless squatting, alabaster, 8 cm	2CF	-	Cros 1910, pl. XI: 3a-b; Spycket 1981, 199 note 75
St 15	BM 120480	Tello? (acquired 1896)	Torso, head & feet, diorite, originally ca. 45 cm	2CF	BV	Reade 2002, 284-285, no. 17, fig. 13
St 16	BM 115643	Tello? (acquired 1896)	Torso standing, diorite, 18 cm	2CF	-	Spycket 1981, 200 note 79, Collon 1995, 84 fig. 64
St 17	BM 114400	Tello? (acquired 1896)	Inscribed body fragment, limestone, 10.8 cm	2CF	-	Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 162, pl. 17; Reade 2002, 284-285

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Description, Material & Height	Dress	Hair	Bibliography
St 18	IM	Assur: Ištar Temple D (= IL)	Torso, gypsum, 6 cm	2CF	-	Andrae 1922, no. 160, pl. 58e-h; Spycket 1981, 251 note 130
St 19	CBS 8960	unknown (acquired 1890 in Babylon)	Hairless standing, limestone, 8.7 cm	2CF	-	Legrain 1927, 235-237; Spycket 1981, 251 note 131, pl. 173
St 20	AO 44	Tello	Hala-Lama: fragment of lower body, diorite, 11 cm	1CF	-	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 21: 4; Spycket 1981, 211 note 133; Braun-Holzinger 1991, St 153; RIME 3/2.1.2.2012
St 21 Fig. 5	Sb 2746	Susa	Headless standing, shell, 9.4 cm	1CF	-	Spycket 1981, 211 note 135-136, pl. 143; Harper et al. 1993, no. 59
St 22 Fig. 6	AO 17554	Mari: palace	Torso, steatite, 11 cm	1CF	BH	Parrot 1956, pl. XLV; Spycket 1981, 211 note 138, 251
St 23	VA 21766	Assur: Ištar Temple E (= Ur III)	Complete statuette, copper, 11.2 cm	CFR	BH?	Braun-Holzinger 1984, no. 185, pl. 37
St 24	AO 34	Tello	Head, limestone, 6 cm	-	BV	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 25: 2; Spycket 1981, 201 note 87, fig. 61
St 25	AO 4113	Tello	Head, alabaster, 4 cm	-	BV	Cros 1910, pl. II: 3; Spycket 1981, 201 note 88
St 26	VA 2911	Tello? (acquired 1898)	Head, diorite, 9 cm	-	BV	Spycket 1981, 200 note 84; Jakob-Rost et al. 1992, no. 36
St 27	VA 3297	Tello? (acquired 1898)	Head, diorite, 5 cm	-	BU	Spycket 1981, 201 note 86, pl. 137
St 28 Fig. 7	BM 118564	Ur: Ningal Temple, IL fill	Head, diorite, 8.3 cm	-	BU	Woolley 1955, pl. 43; Spycket 1981, 212 note 142, pl. 144
St 29 Fig. 8	BM 91075, formerly BM 12218	unknown (acquired 1928 or before)	Baba-Ninam: wig, diorite, 5.7 cm	-	BU	Hall 1928, pl. VIII: 7; Spycket 1981, 212 note 141; Braun-Holzinger 1991, Varia 1, pl. 24; RIME 3/2.1.2.2030
Stele 1 Fig. 9	AO 10235	Tello? (acquired 1925 from Gejou)	upper bodies of two clapping females, limestone, 16 cm	2CF	BV	Parrot 1948, 185; Orthmann 1975, pl. 112b (photo); Suter 2000, ST.15 (drawing)

Table 2: Glyptic ⁵¹

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
1	IM	Uruk (W 24896)	jug sealing	Akk	Samium, the child of Talim-ilum	Banquet of female & god (plain robes?) + god? with plow (flounced robe)	Boehmer 1996, no. 14
2	unknown	unknown	diorite	Akk	-	Banquet of female & snake god + female & male attendant	Danmanville 1965, 58, fig. 17; Selz 1983, no. 574
3	BM 89326	unknown	chlorite	Akk	-	Banquet of female & god (plain robes)	Collon 1982, no. 302; Selz 1983, no. 607

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
4	IM 18925	Ur: PJ, Sargonid grave 123 (U.18949)	steatite	Akk	Ur- ^d X.TUR.AN.KA/SAG, the child of Ur-Inana-pada	Banquet of female & male + female attendant	Legrain 1951, no. 298; Boehmer 1965, no. 1635; Edzard 1969, 17; Selz 1983, no. 546, pl. 44
5	unknown, previously Coll. Erlenmeyer	unknown	calcite	Akk	Ur-edu	Banquet of female & male + female attendant	Selz 1983, no. 547, pl. 44
6	OIM A.4112	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	Lú-Inana	Banquet of female & male + 3 female attendants	Williams 1927, 240 fig. 20; Boehmer 1965, no. 1598; Edzard 1969, 13; Selz 1983, no. 582
7	AO 22011	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	Nin-melila, the spouse of Ur-dada	Banquet of female (plain robe) & male (pleated kilt) + female attendant (plain robe)	Amiet 1976, no. 115; Selz 1983, no. 451; Collon 1987, No. 110
8 Fig. 10	NBC 5991	unknown	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of divine couple (flounced robes) + divine female (pleated robe) & male (fringed robe) attendant + tree – below: banquet of female & male + 2 female attendants + date palm	Buchanan 1981, no. 463; Selz 1983, no. 615
9	MFA 65.1456	unknown	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + attendant (all in flounced robes)	Selz 1983, no. 450, pl. 39
10	PML	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male, each holding a horizontal stick, + female & male attendant (all in pleated robes)	Porada 1948, no. 251; Boehmer 1965, no. 1240; Selz 1983, no. 458
11	unknown, previously Coll. Erlenmeyer	unknown	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + male & female attendant (males in pleated robes) – below: boat scene	Boehmer 1965, fig. 599; Selz 1983, no. 468, pl. 40
12	IM 61177	Tell al-Wilaya: palace	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & female? + 4 attendants – below: coitus scene? (all in plain robes)	Boehmer 1965, fig. 691; Selz 1983, no. 476
13	unknown, previously Coll. Erlenmeyer	unknown	shell?	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + tree	Selz 1983, no. 498, pl. 42
14	MRAH 0.448	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male (flounced robes) + date palm	Speleers 1917, fig. 448; Boehmer 1965, no. 1610; Selz 1983, no. 501, pl. 43

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
15	IM 4346	Kiš	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + tree	Rashid & Ali-Huri 1969, no. 72; Selz 1983, no. 505, pl. 43
16	IM 4182	Ur: PG 525 (U.9117)	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + male attendant (all in pleated robes or kilts)	Woolley 1934, no. 142; Boehmer 1965, no. 1645; Selz 1983, no. 513, pl. 43
17	IM 18924	Ur: PJ, Sargonid grave 100 (U.18926)	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + male attendant	Legrain 1951, no. 131; Boehmer 1965, fig. 677; Selz 1983, no. 514, pl. 43
18	OIM A.7159	unknown (acquired in the Diyala Region)	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male (flounced robes) + female attendant w/pail	Frankfort 1955, no. 981; Boehmer 1965, no. 1644; Selz 1983, no. 520
19	OIM A.11382a	Tell Asmar: Houses 4b (As 32:31)	hematite	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant	Frankfort 1955, no. 586; Boehmer 1965, no. 1633; Selz 1983, no. 539
20	OIM A.11397	Tell Asmar: Houses 4a (As 32:602)	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant	Frankfort 1955, no. 615; Boehmer 1965, fig. 675; Selz 1983, no. 540
21	IM	Tepe Gawra	marble	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant	Speiser 1935, pl. 60,60; Boehmer 1965, no. 1634; Selz 1983, no. 542
22	Coll. Sissa, Mantua	unknown	limestone	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant + tree	van Buren 1959, no. 215; Boehmer 1965, no. 1630; Selz 1983, no. 551, pl. 44
23	NBC 6017	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant + tree	Buchanan 1981, no. 461; Selz 1983, no. 555
24	BM 89578	Layard Expedition	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female attendant + date palm	Collon 1982, no. 241; Selz 1983, no. 556
25	CBS 17024	Ur: PG 681 (U.9721)	hematite	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male (flounced robes) + female & male attendant	Woolley 1934, no. 192; Boehmer 1965, no. 1602; Selz 1983, no. 562
26	IM 15619	Tell Asmar: Houses 4a (As 32:595)	shell	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + 2 female attendants	Frankfort 1955, no. 620; Boehmer 1965, no. 1625; Selz 1983, no. 564
27	Coll. Sissa, Mantua	unknown	limestone	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female & male attendant	van Buren 1959, no. 243; Boehmer 1965, no. 1627; Selz 1983, no. 567, pl. 45
28	PML	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female & 2	Porada 1948, no. 250E; Boehmer 1965,

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
Fig. 11						male attendants	fig. 673; Selz 1983, no. 579
29	MRAH 0.605	unknown	green stone	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male (flounced kilt) + 2 female & male (plain kilt) attendants	Speleers 1917, fig. 605; Boehmer 1965, no. 1623; Selz 1983, no. 581, pl. 46
30	IM 15609	Tell Asmar: Houses 4a (As 32:1233)	blackstone	Akk	-	Banquet of female & male + female & 2 male attendants	Frankfort 1955, no. 639; Boehmer 1965, no. 1599; Selz 1983, no. 584
31	unknown, previously Coll. Erlenmeyer	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Banquet of female playing harp & male + 2 male attendants	Boehmer 1965, no. 1606; Selz 1983, no. 601, pl. 46
32 Fig. 12	BM 120558	Ur: PG 345 (U.8965)	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Banquet of 2 females + 2 female attendants (all in plain robes)	Woolley 1934, no. 253; Collon 1982, no. 301; Selz 1983, no. 563
33	AO 22309, previously Coll. de Clercq	unknown	agate	Akk	Ninessa, en-priestess of Pisangunu, the child of Lugal-TAR	Banquet of 2 goddesses (flounced robes) + divine male attendant + male & female presentees	Boehmer 1965, fig. 670; Selz 1983, no. 583; RIME 2.13.3.1001; Suter 2007, 327-328, fig. 5
34	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Uqn̄tūm, the queen	Fragmentary: 3 working figures	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 14f, fig. 6, pl. 9
35 Fig. 13	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Uqn̄tūm, the spouse of (king) Tupkiš	Banquet of female (flounced robe) w/child on lap & male? (head lost, plain robe) w/cup & child (plain robe) + ram below inscription	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 16f, fig. 4b, 6, pl. 10
36	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Uqn̄tūm, the spouse (of king) Tupkiš	Banquet of female (flounced robe) & male? (not preserved) + female & male attendant + pig below inscription	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 17, fig. 6, pl. 11
37	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Uqn̄tūm, the spouse (of king) Tupkiš	Banquet of female w/cup & child + 2 female attendants + 2 female musicians below inscription	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 17f, fig. 6, pl. 14(-16)
38	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Uqn̄tūm, the spouse (of king) Tupkiš	Banquet of female w/cup & child + 2 female attendants + 2 female musicians below inscription	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 19f, fig. 7, pls. 17-21
39	Syria	Urkeš: royal storehouse	container sealing	Akk	Seal of Zamena, the wet-nurse (in the service) of Uqn̄tūm	Banquet? of female w/child on lap + 2 female attendants + human-headed bison below inscription	Buccellati & Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, 21f, fig. 8, pls. 22-24

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
40 Fig. 15	Private Coll. New York	unknown	nephrite	Akk	Iku-Parakkum, the supervisor	Libation: female w/raised arm, followed by female w/pail, libates before seated, en-face Istar w/attendant	Boehmer 1965, fig. 384; Edzard 1968, 14; Orthmann 1975, pl. 135h
41	OIM A.7123	unknown	alabaster	Akk	Šaša, his sister/queen?, Ur-mes	Libation: female w/raised arm, followed by female w/pail, libates before seated goddess	Frankfort 1955, no. 987; Boehmer 1965, fig. 646; Edzard 1968, 15; Collon 1987, no. 825
42 Fig. 14	IM	Ur: NB level (U.18208)	steatite	Akk	A. Istar X.DUG, the daughter of Il-bani (and) spouse of Dayan	Libation: female w/raised arm (plain robe) libates before seated Istar	Legrain 1951, no. 245; Boehmer 1965, fig. 388
43	Aleppo Museum	unknown	limestone	Akk	-	Libation: female (pleated robe), followed by Lama, libates before seated goddess + crescent w/star + tree	Orthmann 1975, pl. 138c
44	BM 103329	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Libation: female, followed by Lama, libates before seated Istar	Collon 1982, no. 225
45 Fig. 16	CBS 16856	Ur: PG 35 (U.7956)	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Libation: female, followed by Lama, libates before seated goddess – below: audience: 3 females, 1 st extends arm, others raise it, before seated female	Woolley 1934, no. 188
46 Fig. 22	YBC 16396	unknown	serpentine	Akk	Daqum	Libation: beardless male, followed by kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, libates before twin gods	Buchanan 1981, no. 455
47	PML	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Libation: kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail & female w/vessel, libates before seated goddess w/mace + tree behind throne	Porada 1948, no. 245; Boehmer 1965, fig. 648
48 Fig. 17	BLM 383	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	Timmuzi, the female estate administrator: Takunai (is) her daughter's wet-nurse	Introduction of female, followed by female w/pail, to seated Ninhursag	Nougayrol 1960, 209-214; Muscarella 1981, no. 46; Collon 1987, no. 642; Steinkeller 1988; Lambert 1988; Westenholz 1999, 73
49	IM 59978	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Introduction of female by divine couple to standing, en-face Istar	Rashid & Ali-Huri 1969, no. 20
50	Ash 1952.26	unknown	calcite	post-Akk	Nin-dada, the spouse of Baša, the good shepherd	Introduction of female (plain robe) to seated goddess + crescent + fill motifs	Buchanan 1966, no. 391
51	IM	Diqdiqah	shell	post-	Hetud, the spouse of Ur-mes	Introduction of female to standing	Legrain 1951, no. 524

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
		(U.17762)		Akk		goddess + crescent + bird	
52	YBC Newell 124	unknown	steatite	post- Akk	Nin-kalla, the spouse of I.AZ? TI.II	Introduction of female (plain robe, Lama pleated? robe) to seated goddess + snake + eagle + bird + scorpion	Buchanan 1981, no. 565 (not illu)
53	AO 15439	Tello (T.668)	green stone	post- Akk	Nin-liaba, the spouse of Ur- Baba	Introduction of female? (bun not indicated, Lama in pleated robe) to seated goddess + eagle	Parrot 1954, no. 129
54	IM	Tello (T.1547)	steatite	post- Akk	X.AN.X, the spouse of Ku- Nanna	Introduction of female? (bun not indicated, Lama in pleated robe) to seated goddess + crescent	Parrot 1954, no. 140
55	Lowie 9-1940	unknown	serpentine	post- Akk	Tabitum, the daughter of Ikunum	Introduction of female? to seated goddess	Tomabechi 1984, no. 107
56	IM 9561	Ur: PG 1847 (U.17815F)	shell	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female (plain robe, Lama in pleated robe) to seated goddess (plain robe w/seam) + tree behind throne	Woolley 1934, no. 293
57	IM 9140	Ur: PG 1850 (U.17912F)	lapis lazuli	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female to seated goddess (all in plain robes w/seam)	Woolley 1934, no. 294
58	IM 4087	Ur: PG area (U.8912)	light green stone	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female to seated goddess (all in plain robes) + concave vessel	Woolley 1934, no. 256
59 Fig. 18	BM 123281	unknown	chlorite	post- Akk	Ku-Baba, the child of the house of Adad-rēmi	Introduction of female to seated goddess – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 331
60	BM 119205	Diqqiqqeh (U. 2859)	chlorite	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female (plain robe w/seam; Lama, too) to seated goddess + crescent + scorpion – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 334
61	BM 128560	Ur	chlorite	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female (plain robe w/seam; Lama, too) to seated goddess – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 333
62	IM	Ur (U.7664)	lapis lazuli	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female (plain robe w/seam, Lama in pleated robe) to seated goddess – below: row of water birds	Legrain 1951, no. 251
63	IM	Diqqiqqeh	steatite	post- Akk	-	Introduction of female (plain robe)	Legrain 1951, no. 252

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
		(U.17708)		Akk		w/seam, Lama in pleated robe) to seated goddess + crescent – below: row of water birds	
64 Fig. 19	BM 106533, 106686, 106711, 106801, 106830, 107157, 107318, 107673, 110813, 110896, 112443	Umma	tablet sealings	Ur III	Nin-hilia, the spouse of Ayakala, the governor of Umma	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent w/star + lion below inscription	Parr 1974, 111;; RIME 3/2.1.4.2013; Mayr 2002, 360 fig. 1C; Mayr forthcoming, no. 261
65	BM 20180	Lagaš-state	tablet sealing	Ur III	X.X.𒀭Nin.X.TA, the spouse of Ur-Lama, the governor (of Lagaš)	Introduction of female (2CF-robe?) to seated goddess	Fischer 1997, no. 8
66	OIM A.30568	Nippur: Inana Temple (5N 236)	lapis lazuli	Ur III	KA-kugani, en-priest of Enlil, Inana-ka (is) his spouse	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent w/star	Haines 1956, 269 fig. 18; RIME 3/2.1.2.2025; Suter 2007, 319 note 3
67	CBS	Ur: PG area, Larsa rubbish (U.15043)	lapis lazuli	Ur III	Ningal-namNINhedu, the child of Lu-dingira, the scribe	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent w/star	Legrain 1951, no. 348
68	-	Umma	sealing	Ur III	Za-Dumuzi, the spouse of Lú-TUR[-x?], the child of Gú?-OX	Introduction of female to seated goddess	courtesy Rudolf Mayr
69	-	Umma	sealing	Ur III	Dadaga, the child of Ur-Sulpa'e (and) spouse of Gú?-tar-lá, the child of Lugal-iti-da-K[A]	Introduction of female? (not preserved) to seated goddess	courtesy Rudolf Mayr
70	-	Umma	sealing	Ur III	Urzu, the scribe (and) child of Azida	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent w/star	courtesy Rudolf Mayr
71	Cornell University	Garšana	sealings	Ur III	Aštaqar, the supervisor of the weavers (and) female servant of Abuni / Me-Ištaran	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent	courtesy Rudolf Mayr

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
72	Cornell University	Garšana	sealing	Ur III	Nin-gugal, the lú-?-GUM, Šubultum (is) <her/his?> female servant	Introduction of female to seated goddess + crescent	courtesy Rudolf Mayr
73	unknown	Ur: PG 1850:3 (U.17904)	lapis lazuli	Ur III	Erased	Introduction of female (2CF-robe) to seated goddess (all wear necklaces)	Woolley 1934, no. 295
74	VA 2057	unknown (acquired 1886/7 in Surgul)	steatite	Ur III	Erased	Introduction of female (2CF-robe) to seated goddess + crescent w/star + goose	Moortgat 1940, no. 271
75	IM	Abu-Kumbarah (U.6859)	steatite	Ur III	-	Introduction of female (pleated robe w/seam) to seated goddess + goose + eagle	Legrain 1951, no. 367
76 Fig. 2	BM 18207A	Lagaš-state	envelope sealing	Ur III	Geme-Lama, ereš-dingir-priestess of Baba (and) beloved hub? of Baba	Presentation of female, followed by Lama, to seated, en face Baba offering her a flowing vase	Fischer 1997, no. 4; Suter 2007, 328, 339, fig. 6
77	-	Umma	tablet sealing	Ur III	Nin-agrigzi, the spouse of Lugal-ubie, the overseer	Presentation of female? (only arms preserved), followed by Lama? (not preserved), to seated goddess	Mayr 2002, fig. 3C; Mayr forthcoming, no. 580
78	NBC 3016	unknown	limestone	IL	Nin-pad, the spouse of Ur-mes	Presentation: female w/raised arm, followed by male w/raised arm, before seated goddess? w/cup + rampant animal	Buchanan 1981, no. 701
79	Rosen Coll., New York	unknown	tablet sealing	IL	Ayalatum, daughter of Abisadaya (and) spouse of Etenum, the great minister of Gungunum	Presentation: female before standing goddess offering her rod & ring	courtesy Rudolf Mayr
80	YBC Newell 668	unknown	serpentine	Akk	Šešbe-musiga, the equery	Introduction by Isimu of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to seated Ea	Boehmer 1965, no. 1164; Buchanan 1981, no. 472
81	MNB 1945	unknown (acquired 1880)	steatite	Akk	Nin?-ešensi	Introduction by god of kid-carrier (pleated kilt), followed by female w/pail, to seated god + stars	Delaporte 1923, no. A.167
82	unknown, previously Coll.	unknown	porphyre	Akk	Šu-ilisu, interpreter of the language of Meluhha	Presentation of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to seated goddess w/child	Boehmer 1965, fig. 557; Edzard 1969, 15

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
	de Clercq					on lap + half-size male attendant w/vessels	
83 Fig. 21	BM 89487	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Introduction by god of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail & half-size female, to seated Šamaš	Collon 1982, no. 159
84	BM 102990	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Introduction by 2 gods w/extended arms of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to seated vegetation god	Collon 1982, no. 212
85	VA 253	unknown (acquired in al-Hiba)	serpentine	Akk	-	Introduction of male, followed by female w/pail, to deity (broken away)	Moortgat 1940, no. 206; Boehmer 1965, fig. 642
86	VA 3303	unknown	limestone	Akk	-	Introduction by 2 gods of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to god w/mace standing on Mušhuš w/snake & gatepost behind + 2 maces	Moortgat 1940, no. 211
87	PML	unknown	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Introduction of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to Šamaš w/vessel & ball staff	Porada 1948, no. 190
88	INO 20	unknown	hematite	Akk	-	Introduction by god? of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to seated god w/snake behind throne	Boehmer 1965, fig. 644
89	IM 3647	Ur: PG 59 (U.8093)	steatite	Akk	-	Introduction by god of kid-carrier, followed by female w/pail, to seated god w/plant behind throne	Wolley 1934, no. 353
90	NBC 6016	unknown	limestone	Akk	-	Presentation of kid-carrier, preceded & followed by female w/pail & half-size female w/clasped hands, before seated female + star below crescent	Buchanan 1981, no. 475
91 Fig. 23	AO 288 = AOTb 375	Tello (T.107)	bullae sealing	Akk	Sar-kali-šarri, the mighty, king of Akkad: Tuta-šar-libbiš, (is) the beloved of the king: Dada (is) her estate manager (and) her male servant	Audience: male raises arm before seated female w/clasped hands (pleated robe?) & attendant + tree behind throne	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 32bis.6; Boehmer 1965, fig. 657; Amiet 1976, no. 117 (foto), fig. 23 (draw); RIME 2.1.5.2003
92	unknown	unknown	unknown	Akk	Tuta-naṣṣum, 𒂗ntu-priestess	Audience: female w/object before seated	Collon 1987, no. 530; RIME 2.1.4.2017;

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
					of Enlil: Aman-Aštar, <daug>hter of Uhub of the Zabirum (clan is) her female servant	female w/clasped hands (flounced robe & crown) + tree behind throne	Suter 2007, 324-325, fig. 2
93	IM 27351	Ishchali: Kititum-Temple III? (Is 35.72)	lapis lazuli	IL	Oiptiya, daughter of BA.AS [?] .NA.BI.A [?] , the ereš-dingir-priestess of 'DA [?] .ŠI [?] .MA	Audience: female extends arm before seated female w/cup (flounced robe & circlet)	Frankfort 1955, no. 913; Suter 2007, 329, fig. 8
94 Fig. 24	Ash 1949.889	unknown	diorite	Akk	-	Audience: 4 females, 1 st extends arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/cup & attendant	Buchanan 1966, no. 375
95	CBS 7310	unknown	diorite	Akk	-	Audience: 4 females, 1 st extends arm, others clasped hands, before seated female w/cup	Legrain 1925, no. 205
96	CRMH 25	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: 4 females, 1 st extends arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/raised arm + crescent w/star + concave vessel	Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1952, no. 25; Boehmer 1965, fig. 658
97	IM 4066	Ur: PG 481 (U.8793)	steatite	Akk	-	Audience: 4 females, 2 nd w/pail, others w/clasped hands, before seated female? (looks like bearded male) w/cup	Woolley 1934, no. 255
98	BM 123571	Ur: PJ, Sargonid level (U.18972)	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st raises arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/cup + plant + snake + crescent + mace	Collon 1982, no. 217; Legrain 1951, no. 294
99	Ash Liddon Coll. 4	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st raises arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/cup	Buchanan 1966, no. 373
100	BM 123581	Ur: PJ, Sargonid grave 98 (U.18916)	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: 2 females & 1 male, 1 st female & male raise arm, 2 nd female w/clasped hands, before seated female w/cup + tree + crescent	Collon 1982, no. 216; Legrain 1951, no. 307
101	unknown	Ur: PG 1422 (U.12471)	lapis lazuli	Akk	-	Audience: 2 females, 1 st raises arm, other w/clasped hands, before seated	Woolley 1934, no. 292

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
						female w/raised arm	
102	MNB 1339	Tello (T.93)	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: female, followed by female w/pail, raises arm before seated female w/raised arm & 2 attendants w/clasped hands + tree	de Sarzec 1884, pl. 30.7; Delaporte 1920, no. T.93
103	CBS 5004	unknown (acquired 1890 in Bagdad)	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: female, followed by female w/pail, extends arm before seated female + male holding stick in vat	Legrain 1925, no. 208
104	PML	unknown	serpentine	Akk	-	Audience: female, followed by female w/pail, extends arm before seated female w/cup, table, & attendant + crescent + star-standards	Porada 1948, no. 252
105	CBS 16924	Ur: PG 871 (U.10757)	carnelian	Akk	-	Audience: female, followed by female w/pail, raises arm before seated female w/child on lap & attendant	Woolley 1934, no. 291
106	BM 89343	unknown	shell	Akk	-	Audience: 2 females w/lasped hands? before standing female before seated female w/child on lap & behind throne	Collon 1982, no. 142
107	YBC Newell 222	unknown	quartzite	Akk	Nin-Kazida, the child of Nergal-Abzu	Row of 5 females, one half-size, w/clasped hands (all in pleated robes) + fill motifs	Buchanan 1981, no. 1197
108	BM 119210	Diqdiqqeh (U.2714)	rock crystal	Akk	-	Fragmentary: small seated female, followed by female w/towel, washes feet of seated female w/cup	Boehmer 1965, fig. 692; Collon 1982, no. 143; Collon 1987, no. 632
109	BM 120552	Ur	lapis lazuli w/golden caps	post-Akk	-	Audience: 4 females before seated female, all raise arm – below: 2 females w/raised arm before lacuna before standing female w/extended arm + crescent-standard	Collon 1982, no. 298
110	BM 122570	Ur: PG 1094 (U.11580)	lapis lazuli	post-Akk	-	Audience: 2 females w/raised arm before seated female w/raised arm & attendant – below: 2 females w/raised arm or clasped hands, respectively.	Collon 1982, no. 299; Wolley 1934, no. 333

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
						before seated female w/cup + table + crescent + star-standard	
111	YBC 12630	unknown	lapis lazuli	post-Akk	-	Audience: 3 females before seated female w/attendant, all raise arm – below: 2 females before seated female + date palm (all in plain robes)	Buchanan 1981, no. 495
112	YBC 12764	unknown	light green stone	post-Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st raises arm, 2 nd w/hanging arm, 3 rd w/clasped hands, before seated female w/cup (all? in pleated robes) – below: geometric pattern	Buchanan 1981, no. 460
113	PML	unknown	shell	post-Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st extends arm, 2 nd w/clasped hands, 3 rd w/pail, before seated female w/raised arm – below: row of scorpions	Porada 1948, no. 259
114	PML	unknown	flint	post-Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st raises arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/raised arm (all in plain robes) – below: row of water birds	Porada 1948, no. 258
115	BM 132835	unknown	chlorite	post-Akk	-	Audience: 2 females before standing female, all raise arm (all in plain robes w/seam) – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 287
116	IM 4222	Ur: PG area (U.9186)	steatite	post-Akk	-	Audience: 3 females, 1 st raises arm, others w/clasped hands, before seated female w/raised arm (all in plain robes w/seam) + tree	Woolley 1934, no. 264
117	PML	unknown	serpentine	post-Akk	-	Audience: 2 females w/clasped hands before seated female w/raised arm (all in plain robes w/seam) + tree	Porada 1948, no. 257
118	NBC 9345	unknown	nephrite	post-Akk	-	Row of 4 females w/hanging arm + tree – below: 3 females around date palm (one in pleated robe)	Buchanan 1981, no. 494
119	BM 123188	Diqlaqgeh (U.18192)	chlorite	post-Akk	-	Date palm altar flanked by 2 females w/raised arm	Collon 1982, no. 340

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
120 Fig. 25	YBC Newell 118	unknown	lapis lazuli	post-Akk	Sagša, the child of Lugal-bi	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robe) – below: row of water birds	Buchanan 1981, no. 561
121	CBS	Diqdiqqeh (U.1268)	steatite	post-Akk	ereš-dingir-priestess, the spouse of Lugal-ušumgal	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes) – below: row of water birds	Legrain 1951, no. 249
122	BM 136857	unknown	lapis lazuli	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female (in plain robes) to seated goddess? (flounced robe, crown worn off?) – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 332
123	AO 1902	unknown (acquired 1889)	serpentine	post-Akk	Illisible: surface worn or erased	Introduction of female by female to seated goddess? (flounced robe & crown?) – below: row of water birds	Delaporte 1923, no. A.190
124	PML	unknown	serpentine	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to female seated on goose – below: row of water birds	Porada 1948, no. 260
125	AO 4416	unknown (acquired 1905)	lapis lazuli	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes) – below: row of water birds	Delaporte 1923, no. A.189
126	BM 132834	unknown	chlorite	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes w/seam) – below: row of water birds	Collon 1982, no. 288
127	IM	Ur (U.1173)	steatite	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes w/seam) – below: row of water birds	Legrain 1951, no. 247
128	IM	Diqdiqqeh (U.18146)	steatite	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes) – below: row of water birds	Legrain 1951, no. 248
129	CBS	Diqdiqqeh (U.6065)	steatite	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes) – below: row of water birds	Legrain 1951, no. 250
130	CBS	Ur: PG area (U.11405)	shell	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes w/seam)	Woolley 1934, no. 260

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
131	CBS	Ur: PJ, Sargonid grave 106 (U.18927)	steatite	post-Akk	-	Introduction of female by female to seated female (all in plain robes w/seam)	Legrain 1951, no. 288
132 Fig. 26	BM 85399A, Ash 1971-346	Drehem	envelope sealing	Ur III	God Šulgi, mighty man, king of Ur, king of the universe, gave (this seal) to Ea-niša, his travelling consort	Audience: female, followed by Lama, extends arm before seated king w/cup	Fischer 1997, fig. 8; RIME 3/2.1.2.75; Mayr & Owen 2004, no. 1
133 Fig. 27	Herm 14933	Drehem	envelope sealing	Ur III	God Šulgi, mighty man, king of Ur, king of the universe, gave (this seal) to Geme-Ninlila, his beloved	Audience: female holds vessel before ascending king w/scimitar + goat rearing up tree	Fischer 1997, 139 note 256; RIME 3/2.1.2.82; Mayr & Owen 2004, no. 2
134 Fig. 28	Cornell University	Garšana	envelope sealing	Ur III	God Šu-Suen, mighty king, king of Ur, king of the universe, [gave] (this seal) to Me-[Ištaran], beloved sister (and) consort [of his male servant Šu-Kabta?]	Audience: female, followed by Lama, extends arm before seated king w/cup	Mayr & Owen 2004, no. 8
135	Cornell University	Garšana	tablet sealing	Ur III	God Šu-Suen, mighty king, king of Ur, king of the universe: Nawir-ilum (is) his minister and his male servant: Anaya (is) his consort	Audience: female, followed by Lama, extends arm before seated king w/cup	Mayr 2002, fig. 6C
136	Cornell University	Garšana	tablet sealing	Ur III	God Šu-Suen, mighty king, king of Ur: Me-Ištaran (is) his beloved sister: Nurušeli [(is) her female servant?]	Introduction? (Lama not preserved) of female to seated king	Mayr 2002, fig. 2B
137	-	Umma	tablet sealings	Ur III	Geme-Ašar, the spouse of Bayati, the gudu ₄ -priest of ʾInana ² -MUŠ ² -x	Audience: female? (not preserved), followed by Lama, before seated king	Mayr 2002, fig. 2A; Mayr forthcoming, no. 155
138	IM	Tell Asmar: IL palace (As 30:T.119)	door sealing	IL	Ibāl[piel], governor of Ešnunna: A.NA.NIR.NA ² .TUM ² (is) his spouse	Audience?: female raises arms? before standing king? or Lama facing Uduḡ?	Franke 1977, 64, pl. C 12; RIME 4.5.13.2; Reichel 2001, 300 no. 47.1

No. Fig.	Whereabouts	Provenience	Material or Type of Sealing	Date	Inscription	Image	References
139	YBC 12822	unknown	limestone	IL	Tulid-Šamši, the daughter of Bur-Adad	Presentation: female, followed by male w/raised arm, extends arm before standing king (short kilt) w/cup	Buchanan 1981, no. 716
140	BM 92656	Sippar	envelope sealing	IL	Ninšubur-bani, the child of Burnunu, the supervisor of the lukur-women of Utu (and) male servant of Ebabbar	Audience?: female (1CF fringed robe & hat) before standing king as warrior or Lama facing Uduḡ?	Blocher 1992, no. 126
141	BM 17435	Sippar	envelope sealing	IL	-	Kid-carrier, followed by Lama, before standing sun god + female before standing king as warrior or Lama facing Uduḡ?	Blocher 1992, no. 23

50. The following abbreviations are used in tables 1-2: 1CF = one-corner fringed robe; 2CF = two-corner fringed robe; Akk = Akkad; AO = siglum of the Louvre, Paris; Ash = Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; BH = braided hairstyle; BLM = Bible Lands Museum, Jerusalem; BM = British Museum, London; BU = unveiled bun; BV = veiled bun; CBS = siglum of the University Museum, Philadelphia; CFR = common fringed robe; CRMH = Cabinet Royal des Médailles, Den Haag; ESEM = Archaeological Museum, Istanbul; Herm = Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; IL = Isin-Larsa; IM = Iraq Museum, Baghdad; INO = Instituut vor het Nabije Oosten, Leiden; Lowie = Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, Berkeley; MFA = Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; MNB = siglum of the Louvre, Paris; MRAH = Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Bruxelles; NBC = siglum of the Yale Babylonian Collection, New Haven; OIM = Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago; PML = Pierpont Morgan Library, New York; Sb = siglum of the Louvre, Paris; St = Statuette; v = variant; VA = Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin; YBC = Yale Babylonian Collection, New Haven.

51. Unless otherwise indicated, human figures wear fringed robes, females have their hair tied up in a bun, and the presentee in introduction scenes is led by a Lama. If my translation of an inscription differs from previous publications, I comment it in the main text. For abbreviations, see the previous note.

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Fig. 1: St 1: Statuette of Nin-alla (after Spycket 1981, pl. 139).



Fig. 2: St 7: Statuette of Contemporary of Gudea (after Spycket 1981, pl. 134).

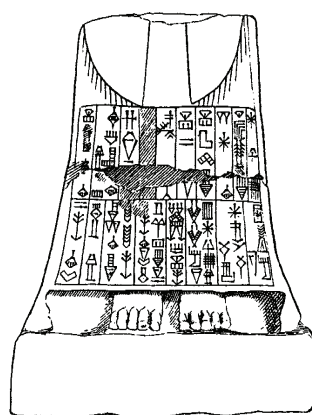


Fig. 3: St 8: Statuette of Nin-Kagina (after de Sarzec 1884, 347).



Fig. 4: St 10: Femme à l'écharpe (after Strommenger 1960, pl. 18).



Fig. 5: St 21: Statuette from Susa (after Strommenger 1960, pl. 19).



Fig. 6: St 22: Torso from Mari (after Parrot 1956, pl. XLV).



Fig. 7: St 27: Head from Ur (after Spycket 1981, pl. 144).

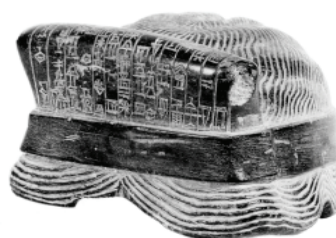


Fig. 8: St 29: Wig of Baba-Ninam (after Braun-Holzinger 1991, pl. 24).



Fig. 9: Stela 1 (after Orthmann 1975, pl. 112b, and Suter 2000, ST.15).





Fig. 10: S 8 (after Buchanan 1981, no. 463).



Fig. 11: S 28 (after Boehmer 1965, fig. 673).



Fig. 12: S 32 (after Woolley 1934, no. 253).

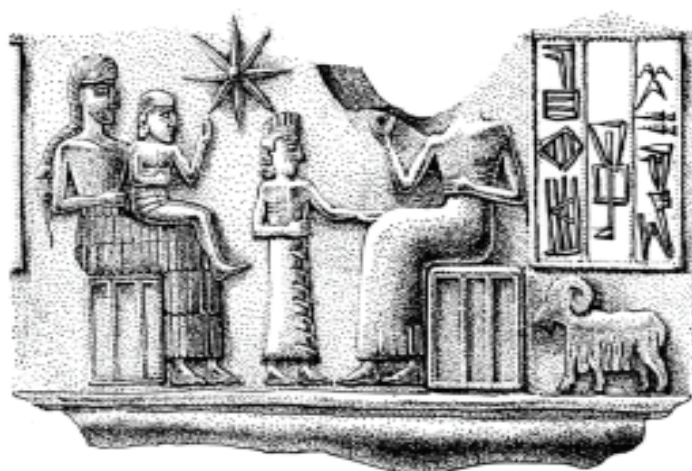


Fig. 13: S 35: Seal of Uqnītum (after Buccellati – Kelly-Buccellati 1995/96, fig. 4b).

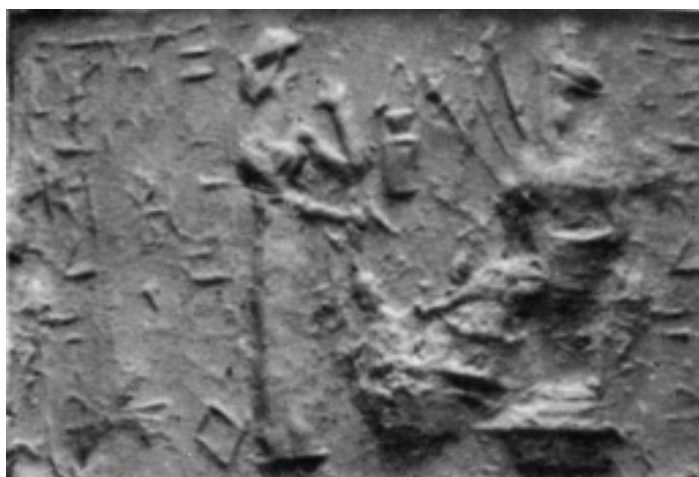


Fig. 14: S 42: Seal of A.Istar.X.DUG (after Legrain 1951, no. 245).



Fig. 15: S 40: Seal of Iku-Parakkum (after Orthmann 1975, pl. 135h).



Fig. 16: S 45 (after Woolley 1934, no. 188).



Fig. 17: S 48: Seal of Takunai (after Muscarella 1981, no. 46).



Fig. 18: S 59: Seal of Ku-Baba (after Collon 1982, no. 331).

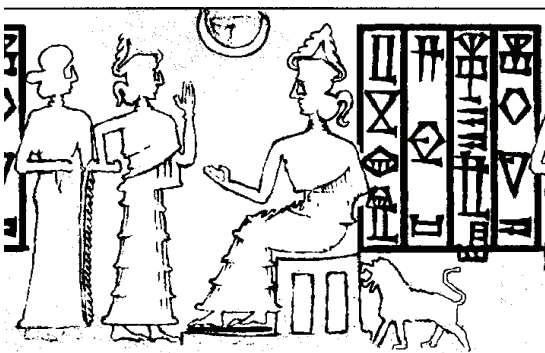


Fig. 19: S 64: Seal of Nin-hilia (after Mayr 2002, 360 fig. 1C).

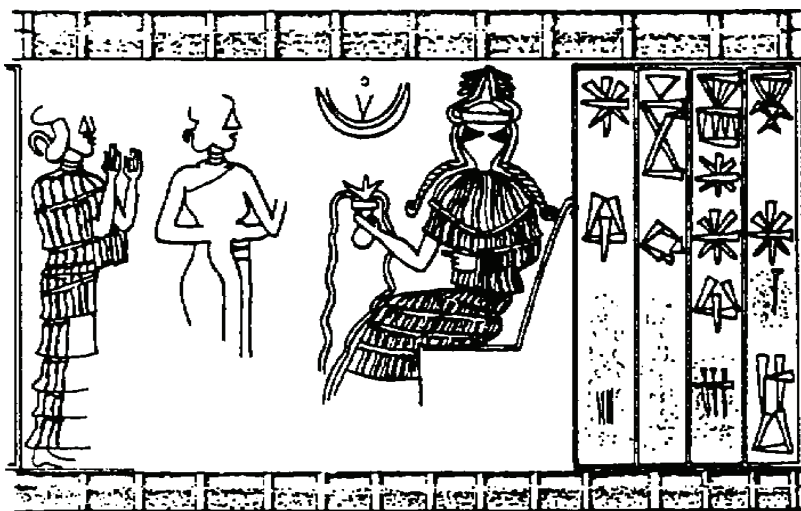


Fig. 20: S 76: Seal of Geme-Lama (after Fischer 1997, no. 4).



Fig. 21: S 83 (after Collon 1982, no. 159).



Fig. 22: S 46: Seal of Daqum (after Buchanan 1981, no. 455).



Fig. 23: S 91: Seal of Dada (after Amiet 1976, fig. 23).



Fig. 24: S 94 (after Buchanan 1966, no. 375).



Fig. 25: S 120: Seal of Sagša (after Buchanan 1981, no. 561).

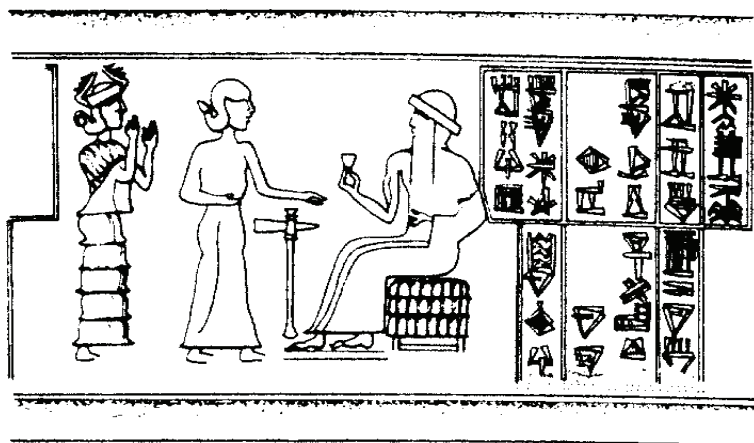


Fig. 26: S 132: Seal of Ea-niša (after Fischer 1997, fig. 8).

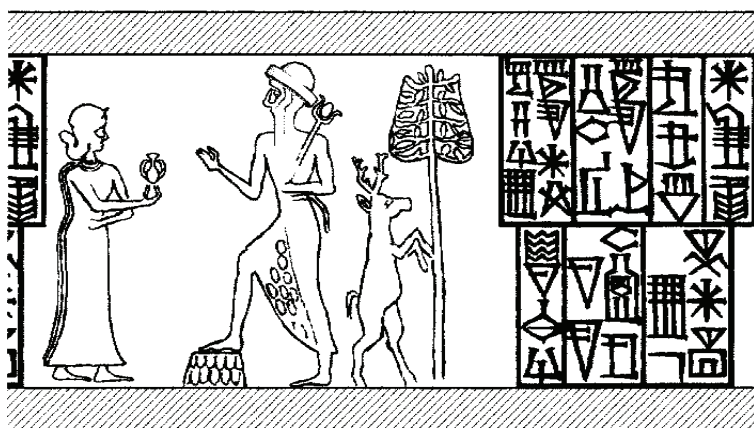


Fig. 27: S 133: Seal of Geme-Ninlila (after Mayr – Owen 2004, no. 2).

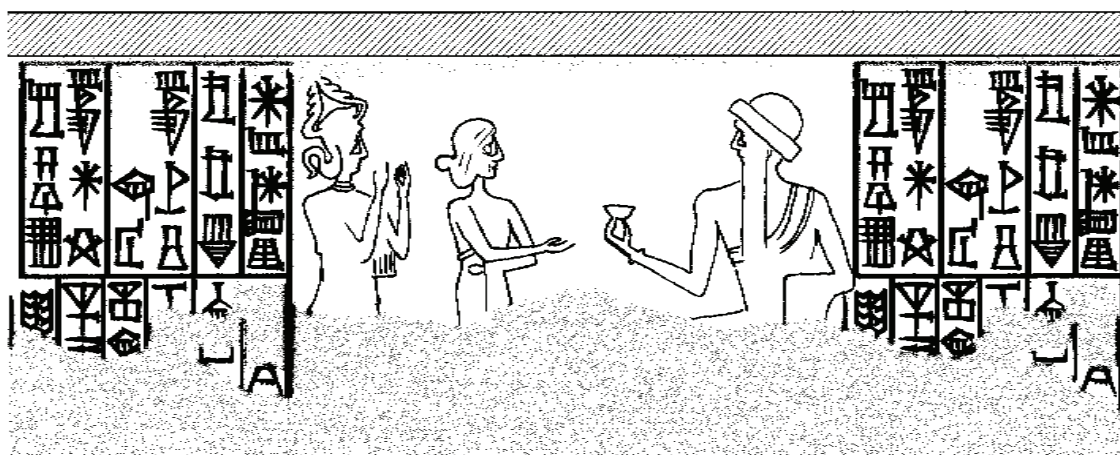


Fig. 28: S 134: Seal of Me-Ištarān (after Mayr – Owen 2004, no. 8).