

ENHEDUANNA: A FEMININE KEY TO THE REINFORCEMENT OF AKKADIAN POWER IN SUMER

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the importance exercised by Princess Enheduanna during her office as a priestess. Enheduanna will be approached through Mesopotamian visual evidence and her writings, with the aim of understanding her influence on the transformation of the female priesthood and the manipulation of the ideological system of the time for her own benefit and that of the Akkadian empire. In this sense, the text demonstrates how Enheduanna was an important agent in maintaining and reinforcing Akkadian power in the city-states of the Sumerian region.

Keywords

Enheduanna; Inanna; Akkad; literature; material culture.

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Resumo

Este trabalho visa discutir a importância exercida pela princesa Enheduana durante seu ofício como sacerdotisa. Enheduana será abordada por meio da evidência visual mesopotâmica e de seus escritos, com o objetivo de entendermos sua influência na transformação do sacerdócio feminino e na manipulação do sistema ideológico da época em proveito próprio e do império acadiano. Nesse sentido, o texto demonstra como Enheduana foi um importante agente na manutenção e reforço do poder acadiano nas cidades-estados da região suméria.

Palavras-chave

Enheduana; Inanna; Acádia; literatura; cultura material.

Introduction

Enheduana was the daughter of Sargon of Akkad (2334-2279 B.C.E), founder of the Akkadian dynasty, who succeeded in subduing several cities. After his death, his sons Rimush (2239-2230 B.C.E.) and Manishtusu (2229-2214 B.C.E.), and grandson, Naram-Sin (2213-2176 B.C.E.), maintained this control, and it was even expanded in the period of the latter, having reached the empire, its maximum extent. In order to strengthen his power in the southern cities of Sumer, Sargon appointed his daughter to the position of high priestess of the moon god Nanna in Ur. Evidence suggests that Enheduana was named En priestess at the end of her father's reign, at a time when the populations of the Sumerian cities remained rebellious and uneasy in the face of Akkadian power.

The appointment of Enheduana did not violate the Sumerian traditions of appointing members of the aristocracy to the priests and priestesses of temples of great Sumerian gods. In general, the priests were the goddesses, while the priestesses serve the gods, such as the Uruk temples of the goddess Inanna and An. The ritual office to the god Nanna, also known as Suen, is ancient, dating back to the Dynastic III period. Hall (1985: 889) traces Nanna/Suen back to the pre-literate nomadic period. The name Nanna is attested as a personal name on the tablets of the Jemdet Nasr period of Uruk. Nanna also is the preferred moon god name in Sumerian personal names, while the Akkadian-speaking Semitic people preferred the name Suen. A third name for the moon god is Ashimbabbar, which can mean, "who walks alone" or "bull who walks alone" in Sumerian, as well as "rising brightly" in Akkadian.

Enheduana was en priestess in the reign of her father, her two brothers, who ruled, one after the other for a period of more than 22 years, in addition to the period of her nephew, Naram-Sin, who ruled for 36 years. Her powerful intellect, creative gifts, and leadership ability were used as an effective tool through the written word to spread her beliefs. His 42 hymns written for temples throughout the Akkadian kingdom resonated strongly with the religious aristocracy, establishing Enheduana as a voice of authority (Meador, 2000: 49). In addition to the hymns, Sargon's daughter wrote poems to exalt the goddess Inanna, which defined a new hierarchy of the gods. Enheduana used her *gippar*³ to create and promote

³ The *gippar* was a sacred building that was intended to serve as the official residence for the priestess *entu*. This residence was divided into sets, containing: the temple of Ningal, which is the lower section C of the plan; the priestess's private living quarters were in the upper section on the right A; below this section is the cemetery where the

her own point of view, preserving texts of her own, something that had not happened until then. That is why historiography attributes to her the role of the first author of Antiquity (Meador, 2000: 49).

The sources associated with Enheduanna are of three types: archaeological, historical, and literary. The archaeological records associated with the princess describe the role she played in the Mesopotamian religious priesthood. The inscriptions found in Ur demonstrate her royal lineage and how she is at the head of a long succession of *en* priestesses, until the end of Rim-Sin's reign, about five centuries after her appointment. His literary records are the most remarkable documents, considering the strong imprint of his style and convictions in his poems. Although some authors question his authorship in these compositions, Hallo and Van Dijk (1968: 02) point out that the great cycle of Hymns to the Temple of Sumer and Akkad, as well as an important piece related to the Mesopotamian religion are of their own authorship.

The Enheduanna Disc: The Impact on Visual Evidence in the Craft of En

Although few visual images related to Enheduanna have survived over time, its archaeological record is unique. The two seals that mention her name are designed in the classical Akkadian style, and are owned by the servants of Enheduanna: the seal of Ilum-pāl[il, the princess's hairdresser], and the seal of Adda, the overseer of property. In addition, his scribe [x]-kituš-du, possessed a seal impression bearing his name. In these three objects, scenes of competition between animals are depicted, being common in the glyptic catalogs of Boehmer's Akkadian Period (1965: 105). According to Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati (2002: 16), these images were used by royalty and officials directly associated with the royal family.

The image of Enheduanna was found on an alabaster disk, seven cm high and 25 cm in diameter, probably produced between 2240 and 2200 BCE, found in the excavations in the city of Ur, led by Leonard Woolley, in 1927, at the Temple of Ningal. According to the excavator, the disc was deliberately fragmented and it is likely that this occurred during the expulsion of the princess from her *gippar* in Ur, when rebels confronted her nephew Naram-Sin.

priestesses were buried, section B; And to the right of this cemetery is the dining area and below it the kitchen area.

In Sumerian art, the round shape of the disc is unique and can take the shape of Nanna's full moon. In this sense, Enheduanna and Inanna connect to the moon god, Nanna, his high priestess, and Inanna, daughter of the Sumerian moon couple, Nanna and Ningal. On the reverse, Enheduanna wears a garment of shorn wool; her hair is loose, with strands of curls running down her back and shoulders. On his head is a rolled-up brimmed hat. She is accompanied by two priests carrying the ritual paraphernalia, and the priest in front of her appears to be making a libation on an altar. The princess is shown in profile with her right arm raised in a well-known gesture of pious greeting, compared to the scenes depicted on the seals of the Third Dynasty of Ur to the Code of Hammurabi (Fig. 01).



Figure 01: Enheduana Disc, Akkadian Period, 2240 - 2000 B.C.E., Penn Museum, in: <https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/293415>.

The image presented on the disc refers to a kind of ritual performed by Enheduanna and other priests. In the center of the figure, the en sacerdotis accompanies a priest in the act of libation;- 11 - she supervises his performance in front of the ritual. The details provided by the disc do not allow us to identify what the purpose of the ritual would be, nor for which deity it was performed. It is possible to observe that only Enheduanna's head touches the upper margin of the frieze, visually emphasizing her elevated position to the other participants in the ritual. Winter (1987: 193) argues that this correlation between position and relative size first appears in Mesopotamian art in the early period of the Third Dynasty of Ur, with the so-called "Pattern of Ur" and the Umanše plates of Lagash, as well as

on the Enheduanna disk, the primary figures are larger than attendants and associates (Winter, 1987: 193).

A cylindrical seal from the Early Dynastic Period of Ur, it depicts a scene recorded on a single plate: a woman with a kind of cloak and a curled brimmed hat behind a man with long hair holding a pointed-beaked vase before a seated deity and the façade of a temple. Although there are no elements capable of identifying the deity, the animals that were inserted into the feet of the god - a pair of bulls or calves - are known for their association with the moon god, Nanna. In addition, the careful depiction of the curled-brimmed hat of the female figure can be compared to the hat worn by Enheduanna, a special element associated with the office of en priestess. The components present in this stamp seem to follow a tradition both in religious worship and in the clothing and visual representation of the central characters (Winter, 1987: 19).

In this sense, the visual influence of Enheduanna's album on the seals that represent the priestess of other times is discussed. According to William Hallo (1976: 29), the institution of priestess "formed a link of cult for all Sumerian city-states, even in periods of disunity." In this sense, the production of Enheduanna's disc may have served to record the dynastic changes, identifying how this dynasty related to the traditional gods of Sumer. Other kings over time followed Sargon's example and appointed his daughters as en-priestess, this is the case of Ishme-dagan who places his daughter Enannatumma as en-priestess. After the dramatic collapse of the end of the Sargonic Empire around 2160 B.C., the rule of Ishme-dagan in the Isin-Larsa period was crucial in showing how the Ishme dynasty ruled according to the will of the gods (Mchale-Moore, 2000: 71).

When King Ishme-dagan installed Enannatumma as priestess of Ur, he gave her the first task: the reconstruction of the gippar, the sacred precinct and house of the gods. This order given by the king was part of a political maneuver, for even with the list of kings of this dynasty, some lamentations were written about "the collapse of civilized life." Only a king who was recognized by the gods could rebuild a sacred building. Just as Ishme-dagan was following in Sargon's footsteps, it is very possible that his daughter was seeking to get closer to her predecessors (Mchale-Moore, 2000: 71).

In this reconstruction process, Enannatumma is believed to have found graves of former Gippar residents. These tombs have been looted over the years, and it is likely that a number of valuables have been taken from the sacred precincts. As the person in charge of rebuilding the gippar,

Enannatumma must have searched the rubble for anything that might have gone unnoticed by the looters. In the process, Enannatumma found pieces of a disc, which despite having no jewels or other riches around it, contained an inscription on the back of Enheduanna, which was probably restored by Enannatumma. Next to the Enheduanna disc was found in the excavations a statue with a long inscription stating that the reconstruction of this disc had been dedicated to Nin-gal by herself Enannatumma (Mchale-Moore, 2000: 74).

The visual influence of Enheduanna's disc on the depictions of other priestesses in later Mesopotamian periods is remarkable. By being appointed by her father as a strategic element in the reinforcement of Akkadian power over the Sumerian city-states, the priestess promoted continuity in the representations of religious cults, serving as a mirror for the next priestesses.

Enheduana's role in the transformation of the priesthood as a way of legitimizing royal power

The sources on Mesopotamian women, while abundant, are limited to elite women. Because of this, we know little about low-ranking women. Regarding the data on women's religious roles, the problems are even greater, since there was a difference between public religion and private religion. Our knowledge of private religion is still scanty. Moreover, even if one has knowledge of the office exercised by women in public religion, one does not have access to documents describing such detailed activities. In this way, we will make a small sketch of the female priesthood, based on the following hypothesis: Mesopotamian women obtained important cultic and ritual roles due to their connections with powerful families, as in the case of Enheduanna, who, upon being chosen by her father to exercise the position of priestess, modified her nomenclature, introducing the term En to the position. According to Gadotti (2016: 65), even though they were influential agents in their own right, they were subordinate to powerful men.

Mesopotamian culture had a very intimate relationship with religion. Each Sumerian city-state had its patron god, the main ones being: An, Ninursag, Enlil, Enki, Nanna, and Inanna. The divine dominated almost every aspect of everyday life, and as a result, the people who mediated the relations between the divine world and the human world exerted great influence in this society. Such people were known as priests and their duties

encompassed daily worship, accompanied by prayers, organizing festivals, and maintaining social and cosmic harmony. In this sense, the religious temples of these cities had the best livestock, the best agricultural products, and beverages for daily delivery to the deities. The priesthood was organized on the basis of a person's gender and status within society (Camilo, 2023: 06).

Women called priestesses in Mesopotamia held high positions and played a role in religious worship. The high priestesses were called Entu in Akkadian, a modeled form of the Sumerian word En. By 3,000 B.C., the term En was the Sumerian title of the ruler of the city of Uruk, the man next to Inanna, the patron goddess of the city. About five hundred years later, in the Akkadian period, the high priestess of the moon god Nanna in Ur assumed this masculine title and this fact triggered the birth of a new institution. The woman who was named as the servant and bride of the moon god Nanna, would be given a new Sumerian name that would always begin with En. Priests who served the female goddesses could also assume the term En in their names, as in the eighth year of Ur-Nammu in which their son was chosen as en of Inanna of Uruk (Stol, 2016: 555-556). Westenholz (1992: 35) distinguishes three stages to the ritual of naming priestesses: The first being selection through divination, separating it from the profane world; the second would be the novitiate, a way for her to become familiar with the rituals; and the last one deals with the incorporation of the priestess into the sacred world, culminating in her enthronement.

In the Akkadian period, the priestess of the moon god Nanna in Ur was known as zirru, a Sumerian combination of cuneiform signs alluding to the moon god. The word zirru indicated a female bird making a connection with the goddess Ningal, also represented by a bird, the wife of Nanna (Stol, 2016: 558).

Sargon, the king of Kish, in conquering all the cities-states of Mesopotamia established a centralized system of government, with Akkad as the political center of his empire. He weakened the power of the elites of the southern cities-states, including the temples, seeking to establish control of religious life and economic, ideological, and military resources throughout the region. Nevertheless, this centralized power would not be strengthened only by dissensions, as it was necessary to integrate its government with local norms and beliefs, especially in the religious sphere (Carvalho, 2020: 348). Thus, one of his most powerful actions in this regard was to place his daughter, Enheduana, to exercise the office of high

priestess in the temple of Ur for the political purpose of strengthening his power in Sumer. According to Ottermann (2007: 88), it is "with Enheduana [that] the word en appears for the first time for the office of high priestess". According to Amanda Camargo, it is possible to consider that the self-nomination of Enheduana generates a new anthroponymic fashion of renaming the priesthood of the Ur region. Furthermore, what Ottermann (2007: 38-39) perceives is that the identifying word for the position, en, will appear from then on in lists of religious offices in Ancient Mesopotamia.

Since then, the term en indicates that all women who come to exercise this position will bring this term in their name, reinforcing the social role of the elites in this function, that of high/high priestess, since only the daughters of kings were qualified to assume this position.

The term "en" refers to the priestly stewardship of the fruitfulness of the earth. Her title designates a purpose: she is the lady who generates abundance, the ruler of prosperity. As a priestess, Enheduana managed an extensive agricultural enterprise on the land located around the temple. These properties provided the high priestesses with considerable savings, since various types of work were carried out in the temple, such as: the cultivation of crops, the care of the cattle and even fishing. Many townspeople were employed to carry out such activities. Records after Enheduana indicate that the priestesses were active in various economic and social activities, being able to own property and do business in different temples (Meador, 2000: 52).

According to the image provided by the disc of Enheduana, the priestess does not offer the libation directly to the god, but supervises this action. In this sense, its function was to ensure the proper functioning of the cults and some rituals. The high priestess directly cared for the statue of the moon god Nanna, and it was her responsibility to keep the god satisfied and fed, such actions were carried out for the benefit of the people (Camilo, 2023: 07). Princess Enheduana also organized the activities around the cult year of the moon, led a large team of officials—priests, priestesses, weavers, scribes, cooks, gardeners, and merchants—in carrying out the preparations and tasks necessary in staging the ritual. All this effort took place to ensure the generosity and kindness of the moon god and goddess, Nanna and Ningal. In her office as a priestess, Enheduana directed rituals pleasing to the gods and thus kept people safe in an orderly and prosperous universe (Meador, 2000: 52-53).

Over time, there has been a certain continuity in the religious roles of women, with a few innovations. Powerful religious offices are attested in

the ereš.dingir priestesses, the Tuta-napsum priestess was called ereš.dingir which means "the lady of the god" as well as en. Another priestess who shared the same importance was the engiṣītu akka-dian. The last title that appears for priestess was ugbabtu, an Akkadian word that is hardly found written phonetically. In the Babylonian period, the office nadītu, translated as "fallow field," suggested that such a woman had no children. Generally, these priestesses belonged to the wealthy families and their appointment as nadītu was intended to alienate the family's assets, since these women could not marry or have children and after their death the assets belonging to her would return to the family (Stol, 2016: 566-568).

Glyptic representations⁴ of priestesses demonstrated their great relevance in Mesopotamian visual evidence. These women were presented in special garments; hence, the insignia of their craft, with their hair loose in a flowing tunic, just like the goddesses. They had postures enthroned in statutes, just like kings (Dupla, 2020: 319). Unlike them, ordinary women were depicted with their hair tied up with a sash and their robes had fringes, they were rarely pleated. They were rarely depicted seated (Popa, 2016: 06). Women of high status, such as priestesses and royals, had considerable administrative authority, including having their own seal and managing officials, as well as being literate, as in the case of Enheduanna (Popa, 2016: 07).

The priestesses who lived within the gippar's building had to lead a chaste life, or else they could be severely punished. In a fragmentary law of King Ur-Nammu we have the following inscription: "If anyone sleeps with a high priestess (ereš.dingir), the high priestess and that man shall be burned." The act of burning offenders meant that this crime had been fully expunged and no stain would remain. The priestess Enheduana calls herself "the pure (dadag) en de Nanna", possibly symbolizing the vow of chastity of this office. The birth legend of King Sargon depicts an irregular relationship of an enutu - possibly an entu - with an unknown man (Stol, 2016: 570-574). Narrating the facts of his own birth, Sargon says the following:

I am Sargon, the mighty king, the king of Akkad. My mother was enetu, my father I didn't know.
She brought me into the world in secret. She put me in a little reed basket.

4 The word Glyptic derives from the Greek verb "γλυπτώ", which means the art of engraving gems or figures. The remote glyptic is an art capable of engraving on precious stones, which includes carving and sculpture dug in high relief. Its term is applied to the art of carving the cylinder seals of Ancient Mesopotamia.

She threw me into the water of a river so I couldn't get out of it (Stol, 2016: 572).

This narrative indicated that Sargon was illegitimate, his mother being a priestess who gave birth in secret and had to abandon her son to the river so as not to suffer a severe punishment for his crime (Stol, 2016: 572).

Texts dating from the naditu priestesses of the god Marduk in Babylon reveal another mindset regarding the chastity of these priestesses. These women were allowed to marry, but were not allowed to have children. An omen obtained from the liver points to a deliberate way to avoid pregnancy: "The priestess must allow herself to sleep with her behind so she doesn't get pregnant".

Some processes from Babylonian times refer to naditus who had children, in one case the priestess had her son adopted by her brother. The record points out that the child was roughly torn from the mother's womb and then the mother paid a wet nurse to feed her child. Apparently, this situation did not result in a severe penalty; after all, chastity might not be valued so much. The key issue would be the priestess's non-legitimization of this son (Stol, 2016: 573-574).

In view of this, it is possible to consider the diversity presented by the office of the female priesthood. Women played different roles in the religious worship of deities depending on their social standing and their connections to powerful elite families. The appointment of Enheduanna, by her father Sargon, marked a new hierarchy in this office. Enheduanna took Ningal's place and became the wife of the moon god Nanna. The term *en* was incorporated into the name of the high priestess and this spawned a new institution, as other kings followed Sargon's example. During many Mesopotamian dynasties, the priestess was the main religious agent of the temples. Enheduanna was an important milestone in the installation of the office of high priestess, as well as being a stabilizing force within the Akkadian empire.

The Writings of Enheduanna: The Weight of Written Evidence in Strengthening Akkadian Power in Sumer

According to Winter (1987: 189), Mesopotamian women had limited roles in Mesopotamian epic literature. Their participation was favorable when they assisted men in their struggles and search for success. These women were especially valued when they worked to maintain the norms of this society, through rituals and socially integrative actions. Two roles that

allowed for great public visibility were the acting ensi wife or local administrative chief; and the other, through the office of en priestess in the worship of a male deity.

The priestess Enheduanna, considered the first author of the ancient world with identified texts, influenced the Sumerian theology and psychology of her time, her popularity being attested by the number of copies of the hymn entitled "Exaltation of Inanna". His poems and hymns circulated throughout Babylon, especially in the schools of scribes, and had an enormous reach among the literate population of Mesopotamia. Enheduanna's three poems to Inanna established a new divine hierarchy and elevated the goddess to a new level in the Mesopotamian pantheon, creating a role for Inanna never before explicitly stated. Although Inanna figures as the subject of older myths, such as "Inanna's Descent into the Underworld", and songs, such as those of the sacred literature of marriage, Enheduanna placed her above all other gods (Meador, 2000: 73).

Enheduanna's writings reflect the profound changes in the human spirit that have taken place in the last five hundred years of Sumerian civilization. The Sagonic age experienced a change in the perception of the gods. Enheduana expressed in literature transformations already present in works of art, in which gods are more vulnerable and disputing their dominions among themselves. In this sense, the author creates and explores a new image of the gods, in particular, of Inanna. In several images of the time, the gods are depicted alongside humans, demonstrating a personal relationship between individuals and deities. In the midst of these transformations, Enheduana presents herself as the bride of Inanna (Meador, 2000: 74-75).

Her poetry is marked by two characteristics: she brings together an infinity of images about Inanna, products of tradition and of her own imagination. Another element of her poetry is the emotional charge attributed to the goddess, which brings her closer to her, present in an extremely personal narrative, close to a diary (Meador, 2000: 76-77). Enheduanna seeks to reach the psyche of people through the emotional elements attributed to the goddess. In her enigmatic and paradoxical description of Inanna, she brought together her sense of the power of these forces and her interpretation of their significance. His devotion to the goddess was the reason for his being, overcoming all past trials in his existence.

This intimate relationship between Enheduanna and the goddess Inanna has deep roots and dates back to the birth legend of her father Sargon. After being abandoned by his mother in a river to die, Sargon is found Aqqi,

styled as the Water Crane. Aqqi raised Sargon as his son and assigned him to work as a gardener. During his work as a gardener, Sargon gains the love of the goddess Ištar and consequently becomes king. After founding the city of Akkad, Sargon sought to establish a political narrative through mythology in order to assert his legitimacy as sovereign. Next, Sargon promotes this goddess as the main referent of the Mesopotamian pantheon. His successors perpetuated this practice by signaling the dynasty as the "Ištar". This goddess, so important to the Akkadian empire, is called Inanna in Sumerian. Thus, it is only natural that Princess Enheduanna would have such a close connection to the goddess Inanna, since this goddess was part of her father's rise to power (Stol, 2016: 564-565).

In the poem *Nin me šár-ra*, which means "The exaltation of Inanna", preserved on ninety plaques from different cities of Sumer, Enheduanna glorifies the goddess Inanna. Then the author relates, in a very personal way, what was happening to her at that moment. Forced to abandon her gippar and prevented from performing her sacred duties, Enheduanna uses the poem to manipulate the ideological system in order to ensure her success with the rebel Lugal-ane, who forced her to leave her temple. This individual, who led a rebellion against Naram-Sin, challenged the legitimacy of Enheduanna as the priestess of the temple of Nanna because she was desecrating and seconding the image of the moon god to the detriment of the goddess Inanna. In the poem, Enheduanna cries out for Inanna's help, denouncing her captive state. She claims to be not only Inanna's daughter, but also her new bride, who pours out devotion and passion for committed love. In addition, the poem also shows that Enheduanna influences the feelings of the goddess, because of her kidnapping, Inanna's heart finds no relief when her priestess is suffering. Inanna's anger is heightened because Enheduanna is a captive in the desert. Therefore, an intimate, mutual and intertwined relationship is established between the two.

Daughter of yours I am, a captive bride of yours
I'm a captive it's because of me
Your rage fumes
Your heart finds no relief
(Meador, 2000: 77).

Through her verses, Enheduanna narrates events in which her nephew's adversary appears as a person who does not respect religious traditions. Enheduanna, deftly cries out for the God An, a god who would have been disrespected by the rebel, and for Inanna to punish Lugal-Ane.

By changing the purification rites of the An, which determines fate,
he Lugalane altered everything for him,
he ripped the Eana from An!
He showed no admiration for the venerable God AN!
This house, the abundance of which he [43:AN] was not satisfied,
whose beauty he had not tasted,
he [44:Lugalane] has turned this house into a home despised by him!
All the while, as you enter, as if you were your companion,
He came to me with envy!
My wild, divine, driven cow!
You must push that "someone" away,
You must capture that "someone"!
In this place where life becomes possible –
What am I?
This rebellious territory, despised by its Nanna:
An should force them to surrender!
(Hallo; Van Dijk, 1968: 24-27).

Enheduanna resolves the impasse in her writings by saying that the God An orders her to return to her gippar, accepting the power of Inanna in Ur, the reason for the rebel's contention. The triumph of Inanna and Enheduanna reflects the triumph of Akkad, who through the writings of the priestess transforms the ideological system in favor of a deity of Akkadian origin.

The composition of Enheduanna: in-nin-me-husa "Inanna & Ebih", is considered to be his first writing on the goddess Inanna. This poem tells the story of a conflict between a rebellious mountain known as Ebil and the goddess Inanna:

(...) The land of the high mountains, the land of carnelian and lapis lazuli, bowed before you, but Ebih did not bow before you and did not greet you. Breaking him down in his anger, as desired, you crushed him like a storm. (...) (Black, 2004: 97).

According to Hallo and Van Dijk (1968), the event recorded in this poem alludes to a revolting action of the territory of Ebil against the Sargonic Empire, probably at the time of Naram-Sin. Inanna's feat in this region served as political and religious propaganda, establishing the explicit rule of the empire and the personal goddess of the Akkadian kings. The figure of the goddess Inanna is portrayed as devastating, ruthless and warlike, characteristics present in the rulers of the third millennium: After her successful victory Ebih, the goddess Inanna installs her throne in a temple in the region and establishes unique rituals in her cult, demonstrating an exceptional union between politics and religion:

(...) When the time came, you destroyed the place you had in your thoughts, you made the place shake. Nothing compares to his purposes (?); Who can oppose his great deeds? You are the mistress of heaven and earth! (..) (Black, 2004: 97).

After her successful victory Ebih, the goddess Inanna installs her throne in a temple in the region and establishes unique rituals in her cult, demonstrating the union between politics and religion:

(...) I build this splendid temple. I stormed the rope fence of the mountain I triumphed Ebih (...) (Meador, 2000: 102).

In the poem IN-NINSA-GUR-RA: "Lady with a Big Heart", Enheduanna gives a very detailed description of the very aggressive personality and all the anger of the goddess Inanna:

She stirs confusion and chaos against those who are disobedient to her, (...) there is despair, a south wind which has covered Inanna sits on harnessed (?) lions, she cuts to pieces him who shows no respect (Enheduanna, A hymn to Inanna, v. 18-28).

The statements made about the goddess Inanna throughout this writing, highlight her supremacy among the other gods, portraying her possession over all:

At her loud cries, the gods of the Land become scared. Her roaring makes the Anuna gods tremble like a solitary reed (...) (Enheduanna, A hymn to Inanna, v. 11-17).

At the end of the poem, Enheduanna writes:

(...) An and Enlil have determined a great destiny for you throughout the entire universe. They have bestowed upon you ladyship in the assembly chamber. Being fitted for ladyship, you determine the destiny of noble ladies (...) (Enheduanna, A hymn to Inanna, v: 264-271).

These verses depict Inanna as the caretaker of the universe and a ruling goddess; she must determine the fate of princesses as Enheduanna. The expansive aspect of Inanna's rule included meeting Enheduanna's personal needs. Consequently, Inanna's close relationship with Enheduanna elevated the importance of the princess in Mesopotamian society.

Enheduanna is credited with forty-two hymns devoted to the temples of Sumer and Akkad. These hymns not only emphasize the creative art of the poet Enheduanna, but also present examples of Sumerian ritual practice regarding the perception of individual goddesses and gods and the theology of ancient Mesopotamia. The hymns are written for the various temples, seen as the sacred house, the abode of the divinity. For each one

she named with different qualities: "a watery sanctuary", "accumulator of power of heaven, navel of earth and sky", "wild cow", crown of the highlands". The temple of Ebabber of the sun god Utu is described as follows: "his shining horns, silver and lapis lazuli, his lustrous lapis lazuli beard hangs in profusion" (Meador, 2000: 69-70). The first forty hymns conclude with the following sentence: "(name of the deity) built his house on his radiant spot, and set his seat on his dais." In the last hymn, there was a slight change in the last sentence:

The person who connected (this) tablet is Enheduanna.
My King
Wasn't the thing that gave birth to the thing that gave birth to her?
(Enheduana, *The Temple Hymns*, v: 543-544).

Almost all extant copies of the hymns come from the Ancient Babylonian period, four to five hundred years after Enheduanna's death, written throughout the Akkadian period. The "Temple Hymns" became part of the literary canon of Ancient Babylonia, present in the tradition of later scribes with a profound impact on the religious heritage of Mesopotamia. The use of hymns in temples and in society is not very clear. It is possible to infer that some parts of the hymns were sung and that Enheduana went to the cities where the various temples were located in order to present the hymns in a ritualistic way (Meador, 2000: 70-71).

Some phrases in the hymns are centered on the figure of the woman. Enheduana incorporates in her writings a feminine sensibility hitherto unheard of in Akkadian Sumerian literature. In the hymns, this feminine prominence appears through the various characteristics of the goddesses of the Mesopotamian pantheon, extending these characteristics to the temples under their rule.

One of the possibilities of this characteristic is the ancestral approach to the land and its processes. In the hymn to Ninhursag, the chief mother goddess of Sumer, she says of the temple, "its interior is a dark and deep womb." In the hymn of the temple of the goddess Shuzianna, for example, the poet writes: "she sows flowers in profusion in your luminous place . . . the upper house closed to consecrated women" (Meador, 2000: 71-72).

The political motivation of the hymns attributed to Enheduanna is not disputed by historiography (Halla; Van Dijk, 1968). The hymns of Enheduanna were mostly directed at the temples of southern Mesopotamia; a territory conquered by her father and kept under the tutelage of her heirs during the Akkadian empire. In this sense,

Enheduanna's writings are prominent in linking Sumerian and Akkadian temples (Halla; Van Dijk, 1968: 10), as she writes in this verse:

O house of Enki at Eridug.

O sanctuary where destiny is determined, foundation, erected with a ziqqurat, settlement of Enlil, his right and his left are Sumer and Akkad.

(Enheduana, The Temple Hymns, v: 25-33).

Aage Westenholz (1999: 76-77) argues that although Enheduanna's works are written in Sumerian, they contain an "Akkadian spirit." Enheduana's poetry was somewhat balanced between the two languages, portraying a mixture of traditions stemming from the turbulent times of the Akkadian empire. Therefore, the great novelty of his writings is the linking of Sumerian and Akkadian traditions in a specific historical context.

Conclusion

Enheduanna plays a very important role in the political strategy of the Akkadian dynasty. Her father, by placing her as a priestess of UR, sought to establish a powerful bridge between Akkadian and Sumerian cultural practices, anchored in religion. The Sumerian tradition of political polycentrism and cultural production in the city-states was present in the work of Enheduanna, who produced hymns for different temples. However, it manages to achieve a cultural syncretism for the benefit of the empire, even in a troubled historical context. Among her attributes, the way she explored the role of the goddess Inanna, transformed by Enheduanna into a more popular goddess in Mesopotamia, stands out. In this sense, the strategies of Akkadian power go beyond the military sphere, having a woman as the protagonist of such strategy, acting in the political-religious and cultural fields.

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