

of emmer mentioned after the Group A women designated **nin ensi₂-ka-me**. Here again we encounter the problem: to whom does **lukur** refer? Steinkeller (1981: 85) understands that all nine women listed in B except for the **ereš-dingir** were **lukur**. In that case, Bara₂-a-ra-nu₂, the queen's mother Geme₂-ub₅-ku₃-ga, and Lugalanda's sisters were all **lukur**-priestesses.¹²⁾

Ku₃-ge-pa₃, who is listed among Lugalanda's sisters in Group A and is called **lukur** in B, is likely the same person as the Ku₃-ge-pa₃-da who was identified as "wife of the scribe Du-du" (**dam Du-du dub-sar**) and who rented 18½ **iku** of leased fields (**gan₂ apin-la₂**) (HSS 3, 40 = AWAS 39).

Text DP 219, dating from Lugalanda year 4, mentions the slaughter of a ram for Bara₂-ir-nun, wife of the rope-maker Al-la, after she gave birth to a child.¹³⁾ This reminds us of queen Bara₂-nam-tara's childbirth in the same year (see 2.1.3.1). These are the only two women for whom such details have been preserved in Presargonic Lagaš texts. The question therefore arises as to the identity of this Bara₂-ir-nun who in this matter received as much attention as the queen. The most likely answer is that she was the Bara₂-ir-nun who was listed among Lugalanda's sisters in Group A and among the **lukur** in B.¹⁴⁾ Her high status would explain the special attention paid to her childbirth. She was married by Lugalanda year 2, since a document from that year refers to her as the wife of Al-la in a list of **maš-da-ri-a**-gift-givers (VS 14, 159 = AWL 176).¹⁵⁾ If she continued serving as **lukur** even after her marriage and childbirth, we would have additional evidence for Steinkeller's (1981: 85) understanding that the Lagashite **lukur** could be married and have children, which seems to have been the case for Geme₂-ub₅-ku₃-ga, the queen's mother; Bara₂-gišgal-a-DU, mother of the **sanga**-priest of ^dNanše; Bara₂-gišgal-a-DU, wife of Gir₂-su^{ki}-dug₃; and Bara₂-a-ra-nu₂ (see 2.2.1).

Nin-e₂-muš₃-še₃ is identified as the "queen's sister" (**nin munus**), meaning the sister of Baranamtara (DP 170), and allotted 18 **iku** of subsistence land (VS 14, 72). Ki-tuš-lu₂ was another sister of Baranamtara (DP 127). In a text dated to Urukagina **lugal** year 1 (HSS 3, 40), she is identified as the wife of the chief

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scribe Il₂ (**dam Il₂ dub-sar-mah**). She is mentioned in three documents from Urukagina **lugal** year 1 and 2 with 17¾ or 18 **iku** of leased fields (**gan₂ apin-la₂**) (HSS 3, 40; VS 25, 70; VS 25, 93) and in Urukagina **lugal** year 4, with 9 **iku** of field that yields 1440 **silā** per **iku** (**gan₂ 10-tuku**) (DP 592).¹⁶⁾

2.2. Other Elite Women

2.2.1. Bara₂-a-ra₂-nu₂

Bara₂-a-ra₂-nu₂, mentioned with no reference to her family relationship, is prominently ranked between the **ereš-dingir** and the queen's mother Geme₂-ub₃-ku₃-ga in Group B. This points to her remarkably high social status and the strong possibility that she was an important member of the ruling family. Although she was not listed among the ruler's sisters in Group A, she appears as the wife of Lugal-mu-da-kuš₂ (**Bara₂-a-ra₂-nu₂ / dam Lugal-mu-da-kuš₂**) later in the text (DP 127) as well as in a **maš-da-ri-a** text (DP 59). Besides 9 **iku** of leased fields (RTC 75), she held an 1 **iku** of onion field (**ki-šum₂-ma**) (DP 406). As for her husband Lugal-mu-da-kuš₂, several persons bearing the same name are attested, but none of them can be identified with him with certainty.

2.2.2. Female Recipients in the “Pure Milk and Pure Malt” Texts

A group of five “pure milk and pure malt” (**ga-ku₃ munu₄-ku₃**) texts, dating from Lugalanda year 4 (DP 226; VS 14, 173 = AWL 68) and 5 (DP 132) and Urukagina **lugal** year 1 (DP 133) and 2 (TSA 5), are concerned with a gift-giving ceremony of milk and malt and record who gave to whom in pairs (Selz 1995: 73–78; Beld 2002: 204–210 Table 3–3; Prentice 2010: 181–185). Gelb (1975: 72–73) schematically described the ceremony as “offerings by about 50 men to the wives of 50 other men.” Although neither the givers nor the recipients were exclusively of one gender, the recipients were mainly the wives of high-ranking elite persons, including, for examples, wives of temple administrators (**sanga**), chief scribes (**dub-sar-mah**), chief **gala**-singers (**gala-mah**), over-

seers (**nu-banda₃**), the chief minister (**sukkal-mah**), and a trader (**ga-eš₈**). (On the female givers in the ceremony, see 3 below.) Some recipients were related to the royal family by birth and/or by marriage, for example:

- Ama-nagar, wife of the trader (**dam ga-eš₈**). The term **ga-eš₈** was a professional title borne only by Giri₃-ni-ba-dab₅, brother of queen Baranamtara (Beld 2002: 73–74, 134).
- Wife of the temple administrator of the goddess ^dNin-mar^{ki} (**dam sanga ^dNin-mar^{ki}**). The title **sanga ^dNin-mar^{ki}** was held for a certain period of time by A-agrig-zi (DP 59), who was listed among the royal members related to Enentarzi and Lugalanda in some of the **ereš-dingir** texts (Nik 1, 53 = AWEL 53; RTC 61; DP 134). The unnamed woman in question may therefore be identified as the wife of A-agria-zi. In fact, we find the wife of A-agria-zi (**dam A-agrig-zi**) in a text concerning the gift of textiles to the dead members of the royal family (DP 73), so it is conceivable that she herself was of royal blood (Beld 2002: 134). That would explain her elevated rank as recipient number two in the pure milk and pure malt ceremony.
- Wife of the temple administrator of the goddess ^dNanše (**dam sanga ^dNanše**). If Lugalanda's sister Bara₂-gišgal-a-DU (in Group A) was the same person as the mother of the temple administrator of the goddess ^dNanše Bara₂-gišgal-a-DU (in Group B), we may assume that the position of administrator's wife of this temple used to be occupied by a royal sister.

For examples of perhaps less remarkable recipients of milk and malt we may mention the wife of Ur-^dIgi-ama-še₃, the administrator of the royal children (see 2.1.3.1), and the wife of En-ig-gal, the famous administrator of the E₂-MI₂, whose name Hal-hal is known from other texts (ex. DP 86; Nik 1, 172 = AWEL 172).

3. Female Servants of Royal Households

The term **ar₃-tu-munus** (literally “female servant”) was used collectively referring to the female servants of royal households. The **ar₃-tu-munus** seem to have belonged to a different and higher socio-economic category than other female workers (see below). Some among the **ar₃-tu-munus** received a larger amount of rations, were allotted subsistence land, and participated in the important “pure milk and pure malt” ceremony as givers. They enjoyed certain privileges and benefits that other female workers did not have.

The **ar₃-tu-munus** group was headed by a woman named E₂-mete. She is also known to have been in charge of a group of textile workers. Gender-specific female occupations such as wet-nurse (**um-me**), nursemaid (**um-me-da**), and midwife (**nu-gig**) (Civil 2011: 251, 281–284) were included among the **ar₃-tu-munus**. Although we do not know what other than the ones just mentioned did, there are indications that those who worked in the royal children’s households may have been equivalent to male cupbearers (**sagi** = SILA₃.ŠU.DU₈).¹⁷ We have no information about the duties of **sagi** in the texts of our corpus, or about the duties of their female counterparts, but it may be sensible to assume that they were attending royal members in everyday life (Deimel 1929: 126–127).

The barley rations given to the **ar₃-tu-munus** were recorded in Type II and/or Type IV texts (see Table 3). The Type II rubric reads **še-ba igi-nu-du₈ il₂ ša₃-dub-didli** “barley rations given to blind persons, carriers, and those registered in various tablets” (for the Type IV rubric, see 2.1.3). In general, E₂-mete and the wet-nurses Al-tuš, Nin-guru₇, Nin-al-sa₆, and Nin-uru-da-kuš received 72 **sila** each, although not every time, and sometimes less. Some of the **ar₃-tu-munus**, including the nursemaids Gan-ezem and Geme₂-id₂-edin-na, received 36 **sila** and others 24 **sila** (see Table 3). The receipt of 72 **sila** can be considered to have been a privilege both for men and women listed in Type II and Type IV

texts.

A small number of the **ar₃-tu-munus** (E₂-mete, Geme₂-šu-ga-lam-ma the midwife, Nin-u₃-ma, Nin-uru-da-kuš, and Šeš-a-mu) are attested as holding subsistence land (**gan₂-šuku**) of between 2 and 6 **iku** (see Table 3).¹⁸⁾ Six **iku** of subsistence land was what Gišgal-si and ^dNanše-da-nu-me-a, male overseers of female textile workers, received. The male subsistence landholders were supposed to carry out canal maintenance, building, and harvesting work for the community and the king (Maeda 1984), and their barley rations, which were given not monthly but for four or five successive months, were recorded in Type I texts (**še-ba lu₂ šuku dab₅-ba** “barley rations given to those who were allocated subsistence land”), and were meant to support gangs doing the labor for them in the types of work described just above (Maekawa 1987: 51–52, 61). Gišgal-si and ^dNanše-da-nu-me-a are each mentioned with 72 **silā** of barley rations in two Type I texts dated to Urukagina **lugal** year 3 (HSS 3: 10 = AWAS 9; HSS 3: 11 = AWAS 10). The difference between male and female landholders was that while the former appear in Type I ration lists, the latter never appear there (Maekawa 1973–74: 104). This means that E₂-mete and Nin-uru-da-kuš₂ received *monthly* barley rations in addition to subsistence land and that these women had no obligation to do collective work, as the men did. The three women, Nin-u₃-ma, Nin-uru-da-kuš, and Šeš-a-mu, who received only 2 **iku** may have belonged to the socio-economic category corresponding to the artisan group designated as **giš-kin-ti**, such as metalworkers (**simug**), leatherworkers (**ašgab**), fullers (**azlag₃**), carpenters (**nagar**), reed-mat weavers (**ad-kup₄**), and rope-makers (**tug₂-du₈**), many of whom seem to have been allotted 2 to 4 **iku** of subsistence land (Karahashi 2016b: 66–68).

A total of 14 persons identified as **ar₃-tu-munus** appear in the “pure milk and pure malt” texts (see Table 3). In the ceremony, these women were not recipients like the wives of high-ranking men, but rather were givers of items. It should be noted that the rest of the givers were all men. The givers are called “**igi-nigin₂-people**” (**lu₂-igi-nigin₂**), whose precise meaning is unknown.¹⁹⁾ After

the year when Urukagina changed his title from **ensi₂** to **lugal**, a new designation, “great **igi-nigin₂**-people” (**lu₂-igi-nigin₂ gal-gal**), was given to certain of the **lu₂-igi-nigin₂** (DP 133; TSA 5). That new designation is likely to have referred to “the most important or highest ranking people among the donors” (Beld 2002: 131). In these texts the **ar₃-tu-munus** were listed second to this group of **lu₂-igi-nigin₂ gal-gal**, which may speak for the relative importance of this female group in the E₂-MI₂ institution (Beld 2002: 137–141).

4. Female Barbers/Hairdressers, Rope-Makers, and Doorkeepers

In the Presargonic Lagaš corpus, female barbers/hairdressers (**š_u-i₂-munus**), rope-makers (**tug-du₃-munus**), and doorkeepers (**i₃-du₃-munus**) are attested, as well as their male counterparts. Sometimes the word **munus** (“woman, female”) is not explicitly written in texts. Each professional group was composed of two categories of people: men who were allotted subsistence land, and thus listed in Type I ration lists, and men and women who held no land but received barley rations every month, and thus were listed in Type II or IV lists (Karahashi 2016a).

5. Unskilled Female Workers

The occupation of men and women identified as **il₂** is usually translated “carrier” but actually seems to have been more broadly “unskilled manual labour” (Prentice 2010: 28).²⁰ The total number of these **il₂** who are mentioned in the texts of our corpus is variously around thirty or forty, of whom about half are women. The **il₂** account for about twenty to forty percent of the workforce whose rations were recorded on Type II texts. They were divided into three to five teams under male supervisors. Barley rations for the female **il₂** were mostly 36 **sila**, while a certain male **il₂** exceptionally received 72 or 80 **sila**. At the lower end there were a few male and female **il₂** who received only

24 **sila** (Prentice 2010: 26–29).

6. Female Musicians

The **ereš-dingir** texts (discussed in 2.1.4) contain the names of men and women who were involved with music. They were four “men and women of holy drums” (**lu₂-geme₂ ub₃-ku₃-ga**), three of whom were women, two musicians (**nar**), a chief musician (**gal-nar**), and a **gala**-singer (**gala**) (see Table 2; and for the term **geme₂**, see below). The three women, Usar₃-ama-mu, Sa₆-sa₆, and Nin-tur, received the same amount of rations as the **nar**-musicians and the **gala**-singer, namely 36 **sila** of barley and 36 **sila** of emmer. The chief musician’s rations were double, 72 **sila** of barley and 72 **sila** of emmer. If we put these figures into perspective, we find that the chief musician was given the same amount as the majority of the ruler’s sisters or **lukur** (see Table 1), while 36 **sila** of barley and 36 **sila** of emmer were also given, for example, to Bara₂-ir-nun’s future husband Al-la the rope-maker (DP 134).

7. Female Dependents of Lower Class

The term **geme₂** is usually translated “female slave,” but seems to have been used in a rather fluid way, referring to women of different social status depending on the context. Hence, this paper opts for the less specific translation “female dependents.” The **geme₂** groups whose rations were recorded in Type III texts include female wool textile workers (**ki-siki**), female linen textile workers (**ki-gu**), women doing some brewing tasks, grinding women (**geme₂ kikken**), female pig feeders (**geme₂ šah₂ nig₂ gu₇-a**), women looking after goats (**geme₂ maš**), and so forth (Prentice 2010: 52–64; for female textile workers, see especially Maekawa 1980). The labor of these women, especially grinding flour (Stol 2016: 350–353), was hard and physically taxing. Workers identified as **geme₂**— not only a female **gala**-singer who is listed among them — also