

Inshushinak

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NAME AND SPELLINGS

Inshushinak is a Sumerian name which comes from Nin-Shushinak, meaning “Lord of Susa,” which clearly identifies him as a principal deity of that city. The name of Inshushinak appears in two different ways in texts from Elam: logographic and syllabographic.

The logographic spellings are ^dMÚŠ.EREN/^dMÚŠ.EREN (Akkadian: Old and Middle Elamite period), ^dMÚŠ.HU.LAM (Elamite: Middle Elamite (once)), ^dMÚŠ.LAM (Elamite: Neo-Elamite), and ^dNIN.MÚŠ.EREN (Akkadian: Old Elamite period; Elamite: Old and Middle Elamite (once)).

The syllabographic spellings are ^dIn-su-uš-na-ak (Elamite: Old, Middle and Neo-Elamite), ^dIn-sú-uš-na-ak (Elamite: Middle Elamite), In-sú-uš-nak (Akkadian: Old Elamite period (once)), ^dIn-šu-ši-na-ak, the most frequent spelling of the name (Elamite: Middle and Neo-Elamite), ^dIn-šu-uš-na-ak (Akkadian: Middle Elamite period; Elamite: Middle and Neo-Elamite), and Šu-ši-na-ak (Akkadian: Middle Elamite period).

HISTORY AND ROLE

One can compare Inshushinak's career to that of Marduk in Babylonia. As he was the main Susian divinity, his career developed along with the historical importance of Susa (Hinz 1976–80: 117).

His first appearance is in a Mesopotamian god list from Abu Salabikh, dated to ca. 2500 BCE (Potts 2016: 81). The oldest spellings of his name are ^dNIN.MÚŠ.ŠÉŠ and ^dNIN.MÚŠ.EREN (Krebern timer 2006: 69). Some centuries later, he is present in the Old Elamite Naram-Sin Treaty (EKI 2), a text found at Susa, where he

occupies the sixth place in the list of divinities/witnesses, after Pinenkir, Humpan, Ampa, Zit, and Nahhunte. This is the oldest attestation of Inshushinak in an Elamite text.

Originally the city god of Susa, he soon became the national god of the Elamite state, the principal divine protector of the Elamite kingdom. The first active Susian king in this respect is Puzur-Inshushinak (ca. 2120 BCE), who built various monuments for Inshushinak in Susa, thereby promoting him to the god *par excellence* of the Susian state (cf. Potts 2016: 113). The next king to build and restore a temple to him was the Ur III king Shulgi, who called it *Arkesh*.

After Shulgi's death, the building activities in favor of Susa's god remained in use. Various *sukkalmah*-kings of Susa claim to have built/restored the Inshushinak temple at Susa: Kindattu, Hutran-tepti, Idaddu I (who called the temple *Ekikuanna*), Tan-Ruhurater, Temti-halki, Kuk-nashur, Kuk-kirwash, etc.

At that time, the Elamite state's center was Susa and the surrounding area, meaning that Inshushinak was the uncontested leader of the gods. Yet, when the Middle Elamite kings extended Elam's territory and incorporated the region around Anshan, Napirisha regularly appears as first of the gods, before Inshushinak. This development is clearly visible in the reign of the Middle Elamite king Untash-Napirisha (ca. 1340–1300 BCE), who constructed the temple complex of Chogha Zanbil, about 45 kilometers south of Susa, as an exponent of the new imperial theology. Untash-Napirisha dedicated the well-known ziggurat to Napirisha, who represented the highlands of Fars (Anshan), and Inshushinak, who represented the lowlands of Khuzestan (Susa). Next to the ziggurat, each of the deities had another smaller temple in the complex.

Despite this hierarchical setback on a national level, Inshushinak kept his high rank in Susa. Various Middle Elamite kings restored his temple at Susa or dedicated other objects to him, e.g., statues: Inshushinak-shar-ilani (ca. 1425 BCE), Tepti-ahar (ca. 1400 BCE),

Pahir-ishshan (ca. 1375), Untash-Napirisha, Shutruk-Nahhunte I (ca. 1185–1155), Shilhak-Inshushinak I (ca. 1150–1120), and Hutelutush-Inshushinak (ca. 1120–1100). Particularly interesting are some inscriptions of Shilhak-Inshushinak I where he mentions previous kings having restored Inshushinak's temple at Susa.

In the Neo-Elamite period, Susa again became the main center of the Elamite state and Inshushinak's primacy in that city remained unchallenged. Not surprisingly, Neo-Elamite monarchs continued to build or restore temples for him: Shutruk-Nahhunte II, who also built a smaller temple for Inshushinak in Susa, Hallutush-Inshushinak II, and Tepti-Humpan-Inshushinak II. Inshushinak also appears in the administrative Acropole Archive from Susa, which includes references to manufactured objects for, among others, Inshushinak. Interestingly, the same archive also has three mentions of local appearances of Inshushinak: Inshushinak of Amperi, Inshushinak of Halumirashi, and Inshushinak of Haran. This feature occurs exclusively in the Neo-Elamite period.

After the integration of Elam in the Achaemenid Empire, Inshushinak disappears from the historical record, perhaps because Susa lost some of its importance and because many Achaemenid sources (e.g., the Persepolis Fortification Archive) come from the highlands, which were not the natural habitat of Inshushinak.

Throughout his divine career, Inshushinak was a god intensively connected to kings and kingship. In the Naram-Sin Treaty we find the statement: "To the god Inshushinak a king is subject" (*Inšušinak hurtur zukir*). Puzur-Inshushinak tells us about "the year when Inshushinak looked at him and gave to him the four regions." Other kings profiting from Inshushinak's generosity were Humpan-u-mena and his son Untash-Napirisha.

The very close relationship between royalty and Inshushinak also becomes visible in the

large number of royal names which contain the word Inshushinak, and in some epithets (cf. infra). Middle Elamite kings called him "My god" (*napir ur*) or themselves "(Loved) servant of Inshushinak" (*lipak hanik Inšušinak*), taking up an older habit: Idaddu II called himself "Beloved hero of Inshushinak" and Attahushu bore the epithet "Shepherd of Inshushinak."

As well as his royal aspect, Inshushinak had judicial authority, both in the world of the living and in the world of the dead. His judicial character is at the origin of the fact that in the Old and early Middle Elamite period oaths were regularly sworn in his name, sometimes together with that of a king. In addition, Inshushinak was also active in curse formulas.

In the netherworld, he appears as a judge in some Akkadian funerary texts from Susa (ca. 1500 BCE): "Inshushinak, in the pit, will proclaim the judgment" (Koch 2011: 66; Tavernier 2012: 475–84). His logogram ^dMÜŠ.LAM also refers to the netherworld, as *lam* developed to Akkadian *lammu*, a designation of the netherworld.

The main sanctuary of Inshushinak was his old ziggurat temple on the Acropolis of Susa. It stood in the middle of a sacred grove and one of the four gates of the complex to which it belonged was dedicated to Inshushinak. This was, however, not his only temple. Shutruk-Nahhunte II (717–699 BCE) built a small one-room temple on the Acropolis. Furthermore, in the *apadana* of Susa stood an "external chapel" (*kumpum kiduya*). Outside Susa, Middle Elamite inscriptions mention at least twenty temples of Inshushinak at Chogha Zanbil, Chogha Pahn West, etc. Finally, Inshushinak shared a temple (called *siyan tarin* "temple of the alliance") with Napirisha, Kiririsha, and Simut in Anshan (Lambert 1972). Together with one personal name in an administrative archive, this is the only attestation of Inshushinak in Anshan.

As well as temples, Inshushinak possessed other objects: Middle Elamite inscriptions and Neo-Elamite documentary texts name his chariot, a gate, a columned hall, and stelas

dedicated to him; Assurbanipal claims to have taken his statue as booty to Assyria.

Some of Inshushinak's epithets are: "The great god," "Lord of the kings," "Protector of the king," "He who is hidden in the temple," "Lord of the Acropolis (of Susa)," "Great Lord," "Lord of the Holy Place," "Creator of All for the princes of my offspring," "Protector who assembles the name." Assurbanipal calls him "Their mysterious god, who dwells in seclusion, (the god) whose divine features nobody was allowed to see" (Prism A vi 30–2). His main attribute was an ophidian or a dragon-headed snake.

Finally, in Mesopotamia, Inshushinak saw himself assimilated into the Mesopotamian deities Ninurta (War God) and Adad (Storm God). One text calls him "Ninurta of the silence." In the incantation series Shurpu (II 161) he is one of the releasing gods, explicitly linked to Susa. His name appears here as ^dMÚŠ.EREN.

INSHUSHINAK IN ONOMASTICS

Unsurprisingly, Inshushinak occurs in various personal names. As protector of the Elamite kings, he is often one of the elements of royal names: Old Elamite Puzur-Inshushinak and Idaddu-Inshushinak; Middle Elamite Inshushinak-shar-ilani, Shilhak-Inshushinak I, and Hutelutush-Inshushinak; Neo-Elamite Hallutush-Inshushinak II, Shilhak-Inshushinak II, Atta-hamiti-Inshushinak, and Tepti-Humpan-Inshushinak.

In addition, Inshushinak is regularly found as part of an anthroponym in the Old and Middle Elamite period, with the remarks that most sources of these periods come from his city Susa and that the names mostly occur in Akkadian texts. Some examples are Aksir-Inshushinak, Hali-Inshushinak, Kuk-Inshushinak, and Utuk-Inshushinak. In the Neo-Elamite period, his onomastical role remains limited to royal names.

Interestingly, the divine name also appeared in an abbreviated way in anthroponyms. In the Old Elamite period, the name was often abbreviated to In-sú (Hinz and Koch 1987: 763–4). Various such names occur in the Akkadian texts from Elam, e.g., Insu-mena and Zal-Insu. Note also the peculiar name Šu-uš-na-ki-ul in an administrative text from Anshan, dated to the end of the Middle Elamite period. Possibly this spelling renders Inshushinak-il[ī] "Inshushinak is my god," but that would be the only Akkadian name in this archive (Stolper 1984: 54, n.5). The three Inshushinak names in the administrative text RA 25, 40 (Middle Elamite), as well as one name in an administrative text from Anshan, are all spelled with ^dIn-šu-uš.

The onomastical sources corroborate that Inshushinak was not an Anshanite god. In the Middle Elamite administrative archive from this town, only two names possibly contain his name.

SEE ALSO: Ishme-karab; Puzur-Inshushinak; Shilhak-Inshushinak I; Shutruk-Nahhunte I; Shutruk-Nahhunte II; Tepti-ahar; Untash-Napirisha.

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