Münchener Abhandlungen
zum Alten Orient 4

Jean M. Evans & Elisa Rossberger (eds.)

in cooperation with Paola Paoletti

Ancient Near Eastern Temple Inventories in the Third and Second Millennia BCE: Integrating Archaeological, Textual, and Visual Sources

Proceedings of a conference held at the LMU Centre for Advanced Studies, November 14–15, 2016

PeWe-Verlag

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Band 4

Münchener Abhandlungen zum Alten Orient

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2019

Der Druck wurde gefördert durch *Distant Worlds* – Munich Graduate School for Ancient Studies.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.dnb.de abrufbar.

Layout und Prepress: PeWe-Verlag, Gladbeck
Umschlaggestaltung: PeWe-Verlag, Gladbeck
Umschlagabbildung: Reconstruction of the Kitītum-Temple at Iščali (OIP 98, frontispiece). In the foreground (clockwise): necklace from Iščali (OIM A17006, photo: E. Roßberger), mace head from Tell Agrab (OIM A18008), stone statue head from Bismaya (OIM A173), stone statue from Tell Agrab (OIM A18108), cuneiform tablet with temple inventory from Iščali (FLP 1167 Vs., photo: P. Paoletti), terracotta plaque (OIM A9356, photo: E. Roßberger), stone bowl fragment from Nippur (OIM A29448). Design: E. Roßberger; © Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the Free Library of Philadelphia (cuneiform tablet).
Druck und Verarbeitung: Memminger MedienCentrum
Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Papier

Printed in Germany

ISBN: 978-3-935012-36-2

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A World of Things. Investigating Ancient Near Eastern Temple Inventories through Space, Objects and Practices

Jean M. Evans and Elisa Rossberger

In November 2016, a group of specialists on ancient Near Eastern cultures convened for two days at the LMU Center for Advanced Studies to discuss Mesopotamian temple inventories. But were they really all considering the same things? What ideas did they have in mind when thinking about Babylonian, Assyrian, Syrian, or Hittite temples? What sources shaped their interest in the constitution and functioning of these architectural and social spaces, about the objects they yielded and the divine beings and people that acted within them?

Unsurprisingly, a philologist and an archaeologist both working on the same temple may end up with rather different ideas, research agendas and conclusions. Despite lamenting the seeming mismatch between archaeological, textual and visual sources, the aim of our conference and the resulting volume was to value such diverging bodies of knowledge and to encourage their mutual stimulation. What we gained from it resulted in not just one but in multiple perspectives on the 'dark place' of the ancient texts whose sacred interiors radiated into the settlements and shaped cultural identity and social practices beyond the temple compound itself.

Originally, our approach organized topics into three thematic sections concerning space, objects (incl. images) and practices. Architectural features, installations and furniture, and image and object worlds can be woven into a comprehensive cult topography, but one with changing functions and meanings. The articulation of sacred **space** relies on archaeological and textual sources that cannot be easily integrated. We still grapple with fundamental questions regarding temple interiors by considering issues of access, visibility, and function. Space itself has fluid boundaries. The spaces surrounding temples and the activities revolving around the coming and going of urban dwellers participating in cultic duties and festivals are often overlooked due to archaeological methodologies emphasizing interiors.

Current approaches stress how **objects** help to construct and define the spaces in which they are located, utilized and, ultimately, deposited. In some instances, we can go beyond general observations about patterns of distribution, preservation, or fragmentation, and gain insights into 'object biographies'—often through surviving inscription(s) or additional information from textual sources. Much of our research must contend with archaeological and written evidence which was excavated long ago whereas more recent excavations are in a better position to produce a greater range of material data and opportunities for scientific analyses. In many instances, the study of temple inventories retrieved in early excavations has yet to be integrated into synthetic overviews or contextualized approaches.

Images occupy a special place within the 'world of things' that made an ancient Near Eastern temple. Autonomous divine agency resided within anthropomorphic ('cult statues') and non-anthropomorphic forms of visualization ('symbols/attributes/standards') alike, both receiving regular cultic attention and 'presencing' the divine on specific occasions. In addition, deterrent and inviting figures adorned gates and entranceways, mediating between

divine and earthly space; and representations of human worshippers, which from the late third millennium BCE onwards were mostly of a royal nature, accumulated in deposits and within large courtyards. These and other sacred gifts have received the greatest consideration among the objects comprising a temple inventory.

Not only the dedication of statues, but also gifting in a wider sense must be contextualized within the broader scope of sacred **practices** that also included offerings, meals, processions, performances, and other activities relating to the regular care and maintenance of both the temple space and its resident divine. The boundaries maintained in modern scholarship among sacred and secular as well as prestige and quotidian objects might also be collapsed on the basis of systematic contextual analysis. Again, inscribed artefacts mentioning the donor, the recipient, and the rationale for dedication often serve as 'missing links' between object-driven and text-based analysis of ritual performance, economy, and social routines. But one should not be limited by a mass of uninscribed objects used for similar purposes.

In the organization of this volume, we did not maintain the thematic subdivision into space, objects, and practice but chose a roughly chronological order, with Dominique Charpin's overarching perspective rounding off a wide chronological and geographical range of contributions.[1] However, these themes remain useful when tracing common threads, such as the increased emphasis on entire assemblages instead of an exclusive treatment of distinct object categories or text genres. Editing this volume reminded us of the wealth of information still dormant in the multi-layered evidence for ancient Near Eastern temples—no matter if excavated long ago or recently. It further demonstrated the amount of work that still lies ahead of us if we want to better understand the entwinement of things, images and practices that changed a physical space into the meeting place between humans and the divine.

* * *

Jean Evans starts off this overall endeavour with a consideration of the so-called Sin Temple at Khafajah, questioning the assumption that sacred gifting inventories are comparable from one temple to the next. The ten levels of the Sin Temple span the Jamdat Nasr to Akkadian periods and reveal the emergence of the standard Early Dynastic categories of sacred gifts: statues, mace heads, and door plaques. A comparison of the Sin Temple assemblage with other Diyala temples, however, reveals unique patterns among these standard categories. Most significantly, representations of female figures dominate the Sin Temple sculpture corpus. If we are correct in understanding that donors represented themselves with the statues they dedicated, Evans argues we must then conclude that Sin Temple patronage was dominated by female donors.

Evans uses the predominance of female figures among the Sin Temple sculpture as a departure point for considering the identity of the temple donor at the intersection of gender. Through an examination of Sin Temple assemblages, she argues that the preponderance of statues of female figures can be linked with earlier assemblages in the Sin Temple that emphasize children and childbirth. Evans ultimately challenges assumptions that gifting practices cannot be distinguished according to gender and suggests that the scope of devotional practice can be addressed by considering object categories that are usually interrogated outside of the sacred gifting categories of inscribed objects, thus blurring the distinctions typically maintained when examining temple inventories. By integrating sacred gifts within larger temple inventories and, consequently, thinking through assemblages, Evans argues that other aspects of the inventory can be illuminated.

Lorenzo Verderame turns towards the 'social dimension of writing' generally and to votive depositional contexts from the Early Dynastic Inanna Temple VIIB at Nippur specifically. His approach, articulated through a consideration of a well-defined corpus of third millennium BCE inscribed artefacts, is termed holistic, for it considers both archaeological and epigraphical qualities in tandem. For Verderame, the inscription is one part of what constitutes the artefact, which is examined both in terms of production as well as function. All the inscribed artefacts under consideration are made of stone and, in comparison to contemporary royal inscriptions, the writing on these artefacts is rudimentary. In some instances, the inscriptions are tantamount to scratches, which he suggests is due to the lack of expertise of the engraver.

Verderame draws several conclusions from a review of the typologies and contents of the inscriptions. To begin, the high number of female donors and the lack of royal inscriptions are noteworthy. In particular, stone bowls are the field of confrontation between gender and social dynamics. The absence of royal inscriptions among the corpus of Inanna Temple VIIB inscribed objects underscores the popular character of the cult of Inanna and

1 Several papers presented at the conference by Julia Müller-Klieser (Mainz), Paul Collins (Oxford), Martin Gruber, Anna Kurmangaliev, and Paola Paoletti (all LMU Munich) were not submitted for publication but contributed important aspects to our discussions in November 2016.

her temple. In addition, Verderame suggests that there is a female element in the cult of Inanna, and his conclusions raise questions regarding who had access to the temple and its dedicatory practices, including in particular the inscribing of objects.

Despite obstacles resulting from the documentation left behind by André Parrot's excavations at Mari, **Sophie Cluzan** sets out to compare the object inventories of three major Early Dynastic temples from that site. Starting with the assumption that these temples belonged to three deities representing different aspects of the goddess Ištar, she argues that the surviving object assemblages reflect their respective characters and/or the composition of the people worshipping in these locales. Excavations at the Ištar-uš Temple, located close to the city's defensive wall and a major city gate, revealed many valuable and exotic goods, a high amount of female statues, which were spatially segregated from male ones (among them the famous statues of king Išqi-Mari and the nu-banda$_3$ Ebih-il), and a substantial amount of jewelry and mother-of-pearl inlays. The Ninni-ZA.ZA Temple, located in the city-centre, housed an even larger, predominantly male group of statues, many of them inscribed with names and titles, as well as numerous shell inlays. The neighbouring Gištarat Temple contained a smaller number of statues, some jewellery, and a significant number of mace heads and intentionally-broken axes.

Cluzan suggests complementary functions for these places in the sacred topography of Mari. She concludes that Ištar-uš's prominently warring and virile character matches the location of her temple and the composition of her inventory interpreted as royal treasury. She defines the role of Ištar-uš as 'goddess of kingship,' ensuring the socio-political power of the Mari kingdom and military success, and uses the predominance of mother-of-pearl inlays displaying scenes of military action and victory to support her argument. The inner-city temples of Ninni-ZA.ZA and Gištarat, on the other hand, were located in close proximity to the palace itself and served predominantly male members of the royal household and family as places for worship.

Elisa Roßberger adopts a phenomenological approach to the temple interior in her examination of assemblages from the Kitītum Temple at Iščali. These assemblages inform 'image-' and 'sense-scapes' that went beyond the everyday visual, acoustic, olfactory, and tactile experiences of visitors. A significant increase in material variety, for example, is detected in the Ninšubur cella and especially the cult niche. The wooden ceiling and panels would have created a unique appearance, smell, and feel. Large quantities of jewelry and amuletic objects from the Kitītum cella and adjacent rooms included older and damaged examples as well as those made from outstanding materials; vessels and mace heads were also concentrated there. As an assemblage, these artefacts participated in the constitution of a space, whose distinct materiality induced the perception of sacredness.

A consideration of clay plaques allows Roßberger to reconstruct the visual impressions created by monumental sculpture and reliefs of guardian figures adorning temple gates and internal passageways. These are loci for the encounters between urban dwellers and the divine. The representation of these fantastic creatures on clay plaques was another means used to radiate the visual and sensory worlds created inside the temple out into the city. Representations of performers and musicians on clay plaques serve as *pars pro toto* for religious festivals, evoking the sights and sounds that characterized these events. Ultimately, Roßberger's approach asks that we consider the perception of the temple from the perspective of the urban dwellers who participated in cultic duties and festivals, an element often overlooked due to the archaeological emphasis on interiors and on architecture as a container which confined the sacred.

Aaron Schmitt's contribution on the Ganunmaḫ building at Ur is another example of the complexity involved in dealing with old, incomplete, later reworked, and occasionally distorted excavation data. He demonstrates how much there remains to discover once we manage to transcend these obstacles. The Ganunmaḫ yielded a fascinating assemblage of dedicatory objects, mostly stone vessels, but also mace heads. Many vessels bore (royal) inscriptions, allowing for precise dating as well as attributions to specific deities and their respective temples. Most vessels originated from the temples of Nanna and Ningal and span from the Early Dynastic to the Old Babylonian periods, suggesting that the Ganunmaḫ functioned as a storage for dedicatory objects over several hundred years. Whether the vessels were still used on certain occasions or simply kept for the sake of remembrance remains open to debate. Schmitt includes a comprehensive catalogue of cuneiform tablets and clay sealings found in the building, attesting to the important economic functions this institution held during the early second millennium BCE.

Remaining at Ur, but turning to the textual record, **Michèle Maggio** considers the 'Gift Texts,' which were excavated by L. Woolley and are now preserved in the British Museum. Dating to the early Isin-Larsa period (ca. 1970–1850 BCE), they provide a rich source of information on worship practices, despite the difficulties that persist in interpretation. The 'Gift Texts,' written in Sumerian with personal names primarily in Akkadian, refer mostly to the Temple of Ningal. Maggio aims to ex-

plore documents within the corpus that refer to religious dedicatory practices in order to make an inventory of all items that were dedicated. In addition to dedications, termed by Maggio voluntary dedications, taxes were also levied in the form of tithes. Both voluntary dedications and taxes appear together in the texts.

According to the texts that were reviewed, objects in materials ranging from gold and silver to shell and wood were dedicated by various officials. The most homogenous group of documents among the corpus describes ornamental stones, dedicated primarily by women. The dedication of ornamental stones has been linked with the production of jewelry, but Maggio argues that such stones were used for the adornment of the divine cult statue, as suggested by ancient textual sources. Maggio ultimately suggests an aspect of recycling, since these stones might have been part of a larger piece of jewelry belonging to the donor.

Moving from the temples of Ur to its houses, **Frances Pinnock** reviews the evidence for private cults primarily through an examination of the spaces designated 'private chapels' during excavations at Ur but also considering evidence from Nippur and Ešnunna. She accepts that cultic activities were being performed in houses, but questions the nature of the cult. Specifically, Pinnock examines the connection argued in scholarship between chapels and ancestor cults. During excavation, L. Woolley associated what Pinnock terms built tombs with the largest covered space of the house and the presence of cult installations ('private chapels') therein. In contrast, Pinnock reviews the archaeological evidence and concludes that, although built tombs may be connected with chapels at Ur, the evidence is meagre and, at Nippur and Ešnunna, no such correlation occurs despite the presence of mudbrick installations identified as altars and tables.

Pinnock highlights problems of interpretation regarding domestic contexts. Not only is there the difficulty of correlating textual evidence with the archaeological record, but the domestic context presents specific obstacles that would be less of an issue in a temple institution. The fluid quality of domestic activities allows most rooms to be considered multi-functional. In particular, Pinnock is cautious about ascribing gender to certain spaces within domestic contexts. She understands the private chapel as a representation of family traditions, possibly related to ancestor cultic practices, but ultimately with a wider audience beyond the family and possibly extending to other social groups that are not related by kinship.

Ilya Arkhipov's contribution stands out by its coherent focus on one particularly important piece of cult furniture known from Old Babylonian Mari: The 'Throne of Dagan of Terqa,' whose dedication was commemorated in Zimri-Lim's twelfth year of reign. Collecting various textual sources, he is able to reconstruct not only the materials and craftsmen involved in its manufacture, maintenance, and repair, but also to gain a better understanding of the complex terminology used for its parts and ornaments.

Shifting the geographical focus northwards, **Helen Gries** deals with the archaeology of religion in the Aššur Temple at Aššur based on the discoveries by the expedition of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft between 1903 and 1914. Specifically, Gries reviews dedicatory practices in the Aššur Temple from the Early Dynastic period to the destruction of the sanctuary in 614 BCE. Dedications consisted of primarily mobile objects but also include some functional building elements. Gries makes a distinction between votive/dedicatory offerings and regular offerings, which considers the latter to be recurring and intended for the provisioning of the gods, while votive offerings were instead fixed to a moment in time perhaps based on a specific event or wish.

As with Mesopotamian temple dedications in general after the Early Dynastic period, dedications to Aššur were made solely by the king and his family or for the life of the king. Very few figural objects and other uninscribed small finds were retrieved from the Aššur Temple. While some objects were hoarded, certain other objects appear to have been kept in circulation long after their dedication. The gifting practices discerned by Gries for the third millennium BCE have good parallels with the assemblages of other temples. During the second millennium BCE, however, when there is a shift in dedicatory practices evident in other temple inventories, particularly in the use of figurines of clay, sintered quartz ('faience'), and metal, Gries finds no comparable finds in the Aššur Temple. Ultimately, the question of audience is raised by Gries, with tending to the cult of Aššur largely a practice occurring in the royal realm and therefore lacking a 'popular' element in the material assemblage.

The contribution by **Berthold Einwag** and **Adelheid Otto** expands the regional focus of this volume towards the northwest and offers extraordinary comparative value by presenting the largely unpublished inventory of the Late Bronze Age temple excavated on the citadel of Tell Bazi, which was destroyed around 1350 BCE. The installations in cella Room A were focal points for the deposition of the inventory. Objects such as bucrania, fragmentary antlers, other bones, and grains of barley were found inside the altar, possibly the remains of offerings or intentionally placed there when it was constructed. The inventory of cella Room A, representing a small portion of the original inventory, consisted mainly of smashed pottery and animal bones.

Hundreds of animal bones were associated with a basin that had served for depositing meat offerings and possibly also for libations, but the largest concentration of pottery, animal bones, and objects was found on the floor around the altar. The more than 100 pots restored from Room A had been destroyed deliberately and scattered. Many of the pots had been kept there for centuries. A considerable number of goblets, each distinct from the other, were retrieved. Residue analysis demonstrated they had once contained beer, in such small amounts that they must have been offerings. A heavily-decorated stand is of a type that appears to have been used exclusively in temples and was purposefully destroyed, as was a rectangular basin with figural decoration. The large quantities of pottery, particularly goblets, and of animal bones reveal that large portions of meat, liquids and other comestibles had been brought into the temple. A silver vessel and other items of high material value hint at the wealth of the original inventory, as do the surviving imports and antiquities. Ultimately, Room A had served various functions, archiving royal documents, housing the assembly of the elders in the city, and receiving and storing gifts and offerings.

Suzanne Herbordt offers another comparative perspective by contributing a concise analysis of the extensive inventories discovered in the 29 temples of the Upper City ('Oberstadt') of Hattusa, modern day Boğazköy, dating from the sixteenth to the thirteenth centuries BCE. The layouts of these temples were largely similar, with cellae, ante-cellae and parts of the side wings built with cellars underneath. A wide range of objects was retrieved from the mudbrick collapse and debris filling the cellar rooms, including cultic artifacts, tools, weapons, jewelry, seals and sealed bullae, written documents, and pottery. While none of the artifacts was inscribed, some may have entered the temples as dedicatory objects (e.g. a bronze scale armor and an incised ivory plaque), and others as parts of foundation rituals (bronze nails).

The antechambers to the cellae were particularly rich in objects, while the object distribution in the side wings suggests different functions for these parts of the buildings. Interestingly, the excavation of 37 smaller buildings in the upper city of Hattusa allows for comparisons between temple and non-temple inventories. These comparisons result in the conclusion that the smaller buildings were not of domestic character but instead were workshops, and that the temples were not purely used for religious purposes but equally served economic and workshop functions. Contemporary texts confirm the high relevance of textile and metal-artefact production in temple contexts.

Albert Dietz provides an in-depth look at depictions of one specific deity: the Storm-God of Aleppo. Although archaeological evidence exists from the main temple in Aleppo, Dietz also attempts to clarify in which context and in which manner this god was depicted outside of his temple and city. A primary question is whether the representation of the Storm-God of Aleppo differed from the representation of the cult statue of the god. Dietz argues that the prominent status of the Storm-God of Aleppo during the Middle Bronze Age promoted the spread of his cult and its iconography. A review of the evidence allows him to conclude that the Storm-God ascending his bull-drawn chariot must be identified with the Storm-God of Aleppo. The second-millennium BCE imagery of the god is so consistent that Dietz considers a cult statue as a prototypical image that dictated a standardized representation of the divine in other imagery.

Dominique Charpin brings together various strands of this volume: texts and archaeology, objects and inscriptions, deities and donors in his consideration of dedications to Nergal, Nabu, and Gula. The qualities of deities can be determined through an examination of epithets, prayers, and curses. Charpin, however, integrates further the material remains of temples in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of these deities. Dedicatory objects reflected their function within the pantheon. Unsurprisingly, weapons were dedicated to the warlike Nergal. But this god had a dual aspect, and musicians and instruments were also associated with Nergal in his role as ruler of the Underworld. To Nabu, the god of writing, scribes dedicated tablets.

But the relationship between deity and dedicated object was not always straightforward, as with Gula, the goddess of healing. The problem of finding a concrete form for an abstract event—healing—was resolved through the dedication of body parts, human figurines indicating the part of their body that had been afflicted, and dog figurines. Charpin understands the dedication of dogs to Gula as analogous to the dedication of weapons to Nergal: Gula's dog could bring healing. Charpin cites dog kennels related to the cult of Gula and the large number of dogs buried at Isin, which he understands as a kind of dog cemetery, to dispute the skepticism with which Assyriologists have met the idea that dogs were used to heal wounds. He argues that, just as Mesopotamians recognized the therapeutic effects of certain plants, they would have recognized the healing properties of canine saliva.

* * *

The workshop 'Mesopotamian Temple Inventories in the Third and Second Millennia BCE: Integrating Archaeological, Textual, and Visual Sources' was conceptualized by Jean Evans, Paola Paoletti, and Elisa Roßberger and occurred within the context of the Senior Researcher Residency of Adelheid Otto and Walther Sallaberger at the Center for Advanced Studies (CAS) of the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (LMU). We thank them both for inviting our workshop to be a part of their Senior Researcher Residency, and the staff of the CAS for making it such a pleasurable event. The Munich Graduate School for Ancient Studies 'Distant Worlds' (GSDW, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) generously provided financial support for both the workshop and its publication. Two Doctoral Fellows of GSDW, Albert Dietz and Anna Kurmangaliev, participated in the workshop as speakers, and others joined us for discussions. When the workshop was being organized, Jean Evans was a GSDW Postdoctoral Fellow, and Elisa Roßberger was appointed a GSDW Postdoctoral Fellow in 2017. In addition, we thank the Institute of Near Eastern Archaeology and the Institute of Assyriology and Hittitology at LMU for providing financial support. The publication process, in whose inital phase Paola Paoletti was strongly involved, took longer than expected as it invariably seems to do and we are grateful to all contributors for their cooperation and perseverance. Adelheid Otto kindly agreed to include the volume within the series 'Münchener Abhandlungen zum Alten Orient' (MAAO). Peter Werner from PeWe-Verlag proficiently brought it into its final shape, and we thank him cordially for his support and patience.

Thinking through Assemblages: Donors and the Sin Temple at Khafajah

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Abstract: Representations of female figures dominate the Early Dynastic sculpture corpus of the Sin Temple at Khafajah, revealing that the patronage of the temple was dominated by female donors. The identity of Sin Temple patrons therefore can be approached at the intersection of material religion and gender. The predominance of statues of female figures should be linked also with earlier Sin Temple assemblages emphasizing children and childbirth. Ultimately, the Sin Temple assemblages present an opportunity not only to distinguish sacred gifting practices according to gender but to consider also object categories that are usually situated beyond those practices.

Key words: Diyala Region, Early Dynastic period, gender, Khafajah, Mesopotamia, patronage, sacred gifts, Sin.

Introduction

The 1930s excavations in the Diyala region by the Iraq Expedition of the Oriental Institute have done much to shape our conception of Early Dynastic temple inventories. In particular, no other site in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia affords a dataset comparable to the Diyala site of Khafajah, where five temples, twelve levels of domestic structures, and some 168 associated graves were excavated (**Fig. 1**).[1] Specifically, Khafajah provides an opportunity to study variations in sacred object inventories. The so-called Sin Temple[2] and the so-called Nintu Temple[3] at Khafajah yielded significant inventories in contexts related through proximity and, to some extent, stratigraphy, although the resident deities of these temples are an open question. In addition, the availability of domestic, funerary, and sacred contexts at Khafajah allows for further observations in a cross-contextual perspective, especially now that the full extent of excavated finds has been made available through the online Diyala Archaeological Database.[4]

1 Frankfort 1939; 1943; 1955; Delougaz 1940; 1952; Delougaz/Lloyd 1942; Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967.

2 The resident deity of the Sin Temple is an open question. The identification with Sin was made primarily on the basis of a statue of a standing male figure from Sin Temple IX inscribed with a dedicatory text identifying the donor as "Urkisal, sanga of Sin of Akshak" (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 243, St 18). From this inscription, the deity named in the inscription was designated the resident deity (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: 6; see also Marchesi/Marchetti 2011: 226–27). However, both the deity and the donor seem rather to be associated with Akshak. Marchesi/Marchetti (2011: 21) associated the temple with Shamash.

3 The resident deity of the Nintu Temple was identified on the basis of an inscribed stone door plaque (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: 82, Kh III 1207), the fragments of which were ultimately given findspots of Nintu Temple VII "beneath P 45:6 and 12" (Frankfort 1943: 23), leaving their findspots open to interpretation. Marchesi/Marchetti (2011: 28 fn. 51) associate "Nintu" at the beginning of the inscription instead with the donor.

4 The contribution presented here is part of a book-length project entitled "Sacred Objects, Sacred Spaces: Mesopotamian Religious Practice at Tutub" that examines sacred gifting practice at the intersection of materiality, place, and the sacred. The Diyala Archaeological Database (diyala.uchicago.edu) makes available all archae-

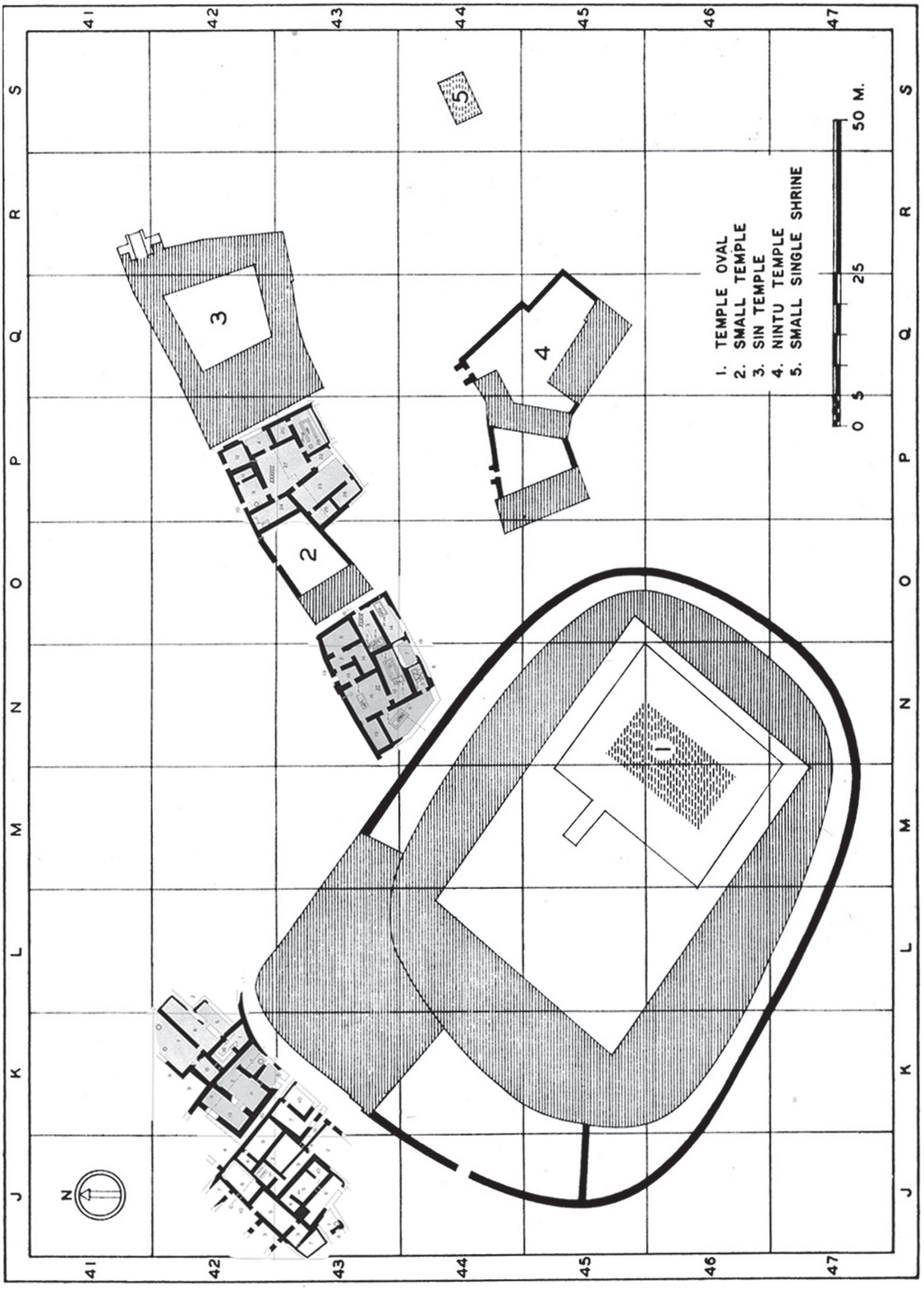

Fig. 1: Khafajah, Mound A with temples and excavated Houses 4 areas.
Adapted by Jean M. Evans after Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: fig. 1; Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: pls. 10–11.

The Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple are what Dittmann (2015) termed neighborhood shrines as opposed to, on the one hand, household shrines and, on the other hand, monumental temple complexes such as the Temple Oval at Khafajah, which wielded a wider scope of influence. While we might think of the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple as having similar neighborhood functions, it would be difficult to assess levels and types of community integration among these smaller Diyala temples—or among most Mesopotamian temples in general. Because of their orientation, Bracci (2009) has observed that two streets in Sounding E at Khafajah ostensibly could have led to the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple, respectively. Although not without its chronological problems, the potential integration of these temples within a larger urban fabric suggests a scope beyond that of a neighborhood. Nevertheless, the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple would not have operated within a socio-economic sphere tantamount to that of the Temple Oval complex. But how big was the discrepancy? In addition, how did the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple operate relative to one another? There are marked differences between the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple. Architecturally, as observed by Heinz (2013), the temples "did not follow an identical figurative language." In addition, while some scholars have maintained that temple inventories are essentially indistinguishable (e.g., Braun-Holzinger 1991: 8–9), I argue here, instead, that it is possible to observe meaningful distinctions. The Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple assemblages are, in fact, very different.

To begin, it is the sacred gift assemblages that distinguish the inventories of these temples. Sacred gifts, also variously referred to as votive or dedicatory objects, were offered to the resident deity by human donors (Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016). Sculpture, mace heads, door plaques, containers, cylinder seals, and jewelry are all established material categories of Early Dynastic sacred gifting practice because some examples found in temples are inscribed with dedicatory texts. More specifically, statues, mace heads, and door plaques were manufactured exclusively for the sacred gifting system because their archaeological context is largely restricted to temples.

Because we accept that temple sculpture is a representation of its donor, a relationship between female donors and the Sin Temple—and male donors and the Nintu Temple—can be established. By integrating Sin Temple and Nintu Temple sculpture within a larger system of sacred gifting practices, other meaningful patterns appear in the archaeological record. Statues, mace heads, and door plaques are found in neither the same quantities nor the same configurations in the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple. Recognizing that sacred gifting practices were not the sole method for procuring the objects retrieved from temples—and leaving aside whether equipment, gifts, and other inventory can truly be distinguished among material remains—variations in other artifactual categories can be considered. Ultimately, gender emerges as a distinguishing factor in the Sin Temple assemblages, even in the levels preceding the appearance of the Early Dynastic sacred gifting industry that revolves around established material categories of inscribed artifacts.[5]

The Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple: Variations in sacred gifting practice

Although Sin Temple IV yielded the earliest-stratified example of Diyala temple sculpture in the form of a standing female figure with clasped hands, sculpture does not appear in quantity until Sin Temple VIII, which yielded a sculpture corpus predominantly of fragments—mostly heads—from female figures.[6] Of the 29 sculpture fragments from Sin Temple VIII representing a human figure with an identifiable gender, 22 are from female figures, and 7 are from male figures.[7] The ratio of male to female figures evens out in Sin Temple IX, but female figures still dominate the sculpture corpus (51 female: 44 male).[8]

ological materials from the Diyala excavations conducted by the Iraq Expedition of the Oriental Institute. Objects referenced in this contribution according to their field number (Ag = Tell Agrab; As = Tell Asmar; Kh = Khafajah) can be consulted using the database.

5 The categories of artefacts dedicated to Early Dynastic temples comprise an industry, particularly those artefacts such as sculpture and mace heads which can be shown to have only been produced as sacred gifts. These artefacts therefore reflect an industry—that is, a manufacturing activity or a distinct group of productive enterprise—organized by and/or for the temple.

6 Sin Temple IV: Kh VI 325.

7 Sin Temple VIII: Kh IV 58, 306, 311, 444, 445, 449, 467 (7 statues (statue fragments) of (from) male figures); Kh IV 307, 312, 321, 346, 347, 348, 349, 351, 352, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 363, 364, 418, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454 (22 statues (statue fragments) of (from) female figures).

8 Sin Temple IX: Kh IV 53, 67, 98, 99, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 110, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 126, 129, 134, 143, 151, 192, 212, 213, 220, 233, 237a–b, 242, 243, 248, 249, 251, 261, 264, 269, 272, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 323 (44 statues (statue fragments) of (from) male figures); Kh IV 66, 100, 104, 108, 109, 113, 115, 131, 152, 157, 207, 214, 215, 216, 240, 241, 244, 245, 246, 247, 250, 252, 253, 262, 265, 266, 268, 286, 287, 288, 289a–b, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 300a–b, 301, 302, 303, 304, 335, 341, 342, 360, 361, 362, 365, 366, 466 (51 statues (statue fragments) of (from) female figures).

The heavily–looted Sin Temple X yielded only one sculpture fragment, that of a female figure.[9]

In contrast to the predominantly female figures represented among Sin Temple sculpture, the Nintu Temple yielded primarily statues of male figures. Nintu Temple V yielded 14 fragments of sculpture, all from male figures.[10] In Nintu Temple VI, 22 male figures and 4 female figures can be distinguished among the sculpture fragments.[11] Comparable quantities are attested in Nintu Temple VII (21 male: 4 female).[12] Therefore, in all levels of the Nintu Temple, the sculpture fragments represent predominantly male figures.[13]

Some observations therefore can be made by comparing the sculpture dedicated to these temples. These observations remain valid regardless of which levels of these temples are considered contemporary with one another—a chronological correlation that, despite the proximity of these temples to one another, remains open.[14] On the basis of inscriptions, it is accepted that donors represented themselves with the statues they dedicated to temples (Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016: 29). The sculpture from the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple therefore suggests that the patronage of these temples—at least through the dedication of sculpture—was distinguished by gender. That is, the Sin Temple with its statues of predominantly female figures enjoyed the patronage of female donors. In contrast, the Nintu Temple with its statues of predominantly male figures enjoyed the patronage of male donors.

As for mace heads, it is unclear whether the Sin Temple yielded mace heads. Five objects from Sin Temple III and IV were catalogued as mace heads, but some of these objects are smaller than other Early Dynastic mace heads.[15] These only possible examples of mace heads in the Sin Temple are from levels ranging Jamdat Nasr—Early Dynastic I in date (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942; Wilson 1986) and therefore precede the later levels in which the sacred gifting industry is well attested (ie. Sin Temple VIII and later). In contrast, the Nintu Temple yielded some 84 mace heads. The earliest-stratified mace heads are from Nintu Temple V and coincide with the appearance of sculpture. Mace heads continue to appear in Nintu Temple VI and VII, with the majority from Nintu Temple VI.[16]

Braun-Holzinger (1991: 28) cautioned against interpreting mace heads as belonging to a male donor sphere because a small number of inscribed Ur III mace heads were gifted by female donors.[17] Nevertheless, such broadly-stated conclusions are difficult to maintain when the inventories of individual temples are examined. The scarcity of Early Dynastic mace heads in the Sin Temple and the abundance of Early Dynastic mace heads in the Nintu Temple must be contextualized within the larger systems of sacred gifting practices respective to those temples. The gendered distinction among the donors of these two temples, observable in terms of sculpture, begs the question of whether it can only be a coincidence—at least in terms of sculpture—that mace heads are abundant in a temple patronized predominantly by male do-

9 Sin Temple X: Kh IV 170.

10 Nintu Temple V: Kh VIII 71, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 269, 272, 275, 276 (14 statues (statue fragments) of (from) male figures).

11 Nintu Temple VI: Kh VIII 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 25, 45, 97, 114, 115, 116, 160, 201; Kh IX 62, 63, 68, 174, 175, 176, 179 (22 statues (statue fragments) of (from) male figures); Kh IX 117, 177, 178, 195 (4 statues (statue fragments) of (from) female figures).

12 Nintu VII: Kh III 911, 912, 913, 914, 919, 920, 923, 971, 1002, 1003, 1006, 1008, 1012, 1016, 1019, 1020, 1021, 1022; Kh VIII 19, 202, 221 (21 statues (statue fragments) of (from) male figures); Kh III 916, 1000, 1017, 1018 (4 statues (statue fragments) of (from) female figures).

13 There do exist additional sculpture fragments for which the gender of the representation cannot be determined; were they to be assigned a gender, the quantities in this section would of course change slightly, although the overall association of the Sin Temple with statues of predominantly female figures and the Nintu Temple with statues of predominantly male figures would not change.

14 Nintu Temple VI was considered contemporary with Sin Temple IX on the basis of the correlations established by the excavators (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: table at end of volume). The excavators also assumed that Nintu Temple VII was destroyed in the same event represented by the ashy layer covering Houses 3, thus providing a *terminus ante quem* for dating the final building period of the Nintu Temple (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: 125). But correlations were determined by absolute levels, and the published sections (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: plate 18; Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: plate 15) are composite reconstructions (Gibson 1982: 535–536 n. 44; 2011: 67), which makes the conclusions of Marchesi/Marchetti (2011: 29) problematic; see also Braun-Holzinger 1977: tab. 1–2. Delougaz/Lloyd (1942: 249–50, 261–65) ultimately dated Nintu Temple V to ED II on the basis of geometric-style sculpture; see Evans 2007: 601. Sculpture styles, however, are not chronologically diagnostic (Evans 2007). The Nintu Temple cannot be dated by either pottery (Delougaz 1952: B.001.200a, B.416.371, C.504.367) or cylinder seals (Frankfort 1955: nos. 277–283, Kh VIII 16, 230); see also Evans 2007: 601 fn. 14.

15 Mace heads (?) from the Sin Temple: Sin Temple III: Kh VII 142, 187; Sin Temple IV: Kh VI 378, 379, 380.

16 Mace heads from the Nintu Temple: Nintu Temple V: Kh VIII 245, 247, 248, 252, 254, 277. Nintu Temple VI: Kh VII 153; Kh VIII 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 22, 24, 27, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 244, 256; Kh IX 80, 81, 82, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122. Nintu Temple VII: Kh III 820, 948, 1010, 1011; Kh VIII 196, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212; Kh IX 53.

17 See also Lion (2011: 94), who explicitly rejected that sacred gifts in general could be offered according to gender.

nors but largely absent in a temple patronized predominantly by female donors.

The temple inventories of the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple are further distinguished. To cite another example, what the Sin Temple lacks in mace heads, it makes up for in containers. Some 182 containers were excavated from the Sin Temple; in contrast, only 16 containers were retrieved from the Nintu Temple.[18] The Sin Temple, with its sculpture of predominantly female figures, few or no mace heads, and large quantity of containers, is different from the Nintu Temple with its sculpture of predominantly male figures, large quantity of mace heads, and relatively few containers. The scarcity of containers in the Nintu Temple, moreover, would appear to caution against assuming that all temples generally maintained large quantities of containers for various purposes.

It should be noted that in the Ištar-uš temple at Mari, Cluzan (this volume) also observed a predominance of statues representing female figures. However, this characteristic of the Ištar-uš temple is different from that of the Sin Temple because the two very holy places of rooms 17 and 18 in the former are themselves distinguished according to gender, whereas no such pattern of distribution is observable in the Sin Temple.[19] The sacred gift assemblage of the Sin Temple also has parallels with the Inanna Temple at Nippur, for which a special female patronage has also been observed (see Verderame, this volume). The Early Dynastic levels of the Inanna Temple yielded a large number of containers, and just over half of the inscribed examples of stone containers were dedicated by female donors.[20] The Early Dynastic levels of the Inanna Temple also yielded a significant quantity of statues of female figures and few mace heads (Wilson/Zettler/Biggs/Evans forthcoming). The Sin Temple and the Inanna Temple, with their corresponding assemblages, are similar to one another but different from the Nintu Temple.

The Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple: Variations in systems of imagery

When comparing the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple, it is also possible to think about other distinctions among the inventories. For example, overall systems of imagery in the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple vary from one another and can be observed here through door plaques.[21] These stone plaques, comprised of a square, relief–carved area with a central hole, were part of a locking device and form another material category of sacred gifting practice (Zettler 1987: 210–21). Among the handful of plaques retrieved from the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple, the common banqueting iconography is attested.[22] But among the twelve door plaques/fragments catalogued from the Nintu Temple, none bears a representation of a female figure.[23] This is noteworthy particularly because the banquet characteristically occurring in the upper register of door plaques most commonly consists of a seated female figure and a seated male figure at either end, as occurs on Diyala plaques from the Shara Temple, Abu Temple, Sin Temple, and Temple Oval (Boese 1971; Frankfort 1939: nos. 185, 186, 187; 1943: no. 318).

18 Some 92 of the Sin Temple containers were stone: Kh VII 210 (Sin Temple II); Kh VII 84, 144, 167, 169, 170, 171, 179, 217, 224; Kh IX 201, 202 (Sin Temple III); Kh VII 45, 46a–c, 48a–b, 140; Kh VI 229, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 324, 326, 327, 338, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 454, 466, 467, 468 (Sin Temple IV); Kh V 194, 267, 272 (Sin Temple V); Kh IV 46, 51, 314, 315, 316, 329, 344, 390, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472 (Sin Temple VIII); Kh IV 59, 59a, 65a–b, 69, 84, 95, 96, 127, 132a–b, 136, 141, 142, 144, 156, 177, 180, 189, 267, 270, 271, 277, 331, 409, 410; Kh V 278a–b (Sin Temple IX); Kh VI 323 (no level). Some nine containers from the Nintu Temple were stone: Kh IX 19 (Nintu Temple III): Kh VIII 273 (Nintu Temple V); Kh VIII 10, 43, 46, 233a–b (Nintu Temple VI); Kh III 1013, Kh VIII 225; (Nintu Temple VII).

19 The observations here regarding the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple do not rely on distribution patterns. Of the Nintu Temple building periods (I–VII), only sanctuary Q 45:4 and its immediate surroundings were excavated below Nintu Temple VI. Despite the problems in correlating the levels of these temples with one another, a study comparing only finds from the Sin Temple sanctuary with those from the Nintu Temple Q 45:4 sanctuary would yield similar observations although in smaller quantities. Regarding the Ištar-uš temple at Mari, it will be valuable to understand the details of the distribution of the quantities of mace heads and intentionally-broken axes, as well as the additional artefacts characterized as militaristic by Cluzan (this volume); of the mace heads published by Parrot (1956), for example, only one (M.523) was from holy place 17, characterized as "female."

20 Some 36 inscribed Early Dynastic stone containers were retrieved from the Inanna Temple at Nippur. Of those, some 22 preserve the gender of the donor; of these, 11 were gifted by female donors; 2 were gifted by male and female donors together; and 9 were gifted by male donors. See Verderame, this volume; see also Goetze 1970; Braun-Holzinger 1991: G73–G75, G86–G114, G131–G132, G144–G144A; Evans 2016.

21 This topic is developed more fully in my book-length project; see footnote 3.

22 The Diyala door plaques were published in Frankfort 1939; 1943, with additional unpublished examples at diyala.uchicago.edu. For an overview and catalogue of door plaques, see Boese 1971.

23 Some of these Nintu Temple fragments joined to one another; others are comprised of multiple fragments joined in the field and catalogued together. See Kh VIII 267a–b (Nintu Temple V); Kh VIII 26, 183 (Nintu Temple VI); Kh III 793, 906, 959, 1005, 1009, 1015, 1207; Kh IX 75 (Nintu Temple VII).

Fig. 2: Khafajah, Nintu Temple VI, door plaque. Published courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Kh VIII 183/UM 37-15-26.

Unusual imagery further distinguishes the Nintu Temple door plaques. For example, the large upper register of one Nintu Temple door plaque has a standing bull man grasping a snake in the right hand and a rearing quadruped in the left hand (**Fig. 2**).[24] In the smaller lower register, a standing male figure—a bull man?—appears to combat a quadruped. Such combat imagery is unique among Diyala door plaques although attested elsewhere. Similarly, another Nintu Temple plaque is unusual because a scene of male figures wrestling occupies the entire lower register, whereas wrestling is contextualized within other festivities (?) on the lower register of a Sin Temple plaque (Frankfort 1943: no. 313; Boese 1971: K7). The Nintu

24 Kh VIII 183 (Nintu Temple VI).

Fig. 3: Khafajah, Sin Temple VIII, door plaque fragments with boating imagery. Adapted by Jean M. Evans after Frankfort 1939: nos. 109, 190. Kh IV 389, 392/Iraq Museum.

Temple also produced the singular example of copper alloy wrestlers supporting a pair of containers (Frankfort 1943: no. 305).

In contrast, two Sin Temple door plaque fragments also have imagery unique in the Diyala region (**Fig. 3**).[25] The imagery is best known from an unprovenanced plaque first attested in the Erlenmeyer collection in 1957 and depicting in the bottom register a boating scene (Boese 1971: K2). Fish and birds appear in the compositional field. In the middle register, rams in contorted poses flank the central perforation. As discussed below, fish are prominent among the large quantities of pendants that were retrieved from the Sin Temple. Rams are also attested among Sin Temple theriomorphic sculpture and figurines, and birds are attested among pendants, theriomorphic sculpture, and containers.[26] Birds and rams are also depicted on the "house model" side of the Sin Temple VIII wheeled vessel.[27] Thus, it is possible to suggest that a system of imagery evoking an animal world of fish, birds, rams, and so forth was prominent in the Sin Temple.

Despite the numerous open questions and qualifications, a comparison of the Sin Temple with the Nintu Temple indicates that the material assemblages of these temples do not correspond with one another also in terms of imagery. Rather, each temple had its own distinct characteristics. The predominance of male figures among the sculpture of the Nintu Temple finds a parallel in the male imagery on door plaques, showing combat and wrestling, and on the singular example of the cop-

25 Kh IV 389, 392 (Sin Temple VIII).

26 For rams, see Kh IV 128, 254, 276, 280 (Sin Temple IX); for birds, see Kh VI 333 (Sin Temple III); Kh VII 45 (Sin Temple IV); Kh V 86 (Sin Temple VIII).

27 Kh IV 476; see also Delougaz 1952: C.99.

per alloy wrestlers supporting containers. It may be that such a distinction, as well as that of the animal world portrayed in the Sin Temple, is a reflection and therefore also an extension of the gendered patronage observable in terms of sculpture.

The imagery discussed in this section, however, potentially moves beyond the sacred gifting assemblage organized around a small number of inscribed examples. Although material categories of sacred gifting have been determined by inscribed examples, the corpus of sacred gifts must have been more varied than the established categories of objects bearing dedicatory inscriptions. The problem, then, becomes one of identification (Evans forthcoming). Temples could have acquired objects such as containers, pendants, and theriomorphic sculpture by various means and for various usage. Nevertheless, the general trends observed in the next section support that donor agency is one factor that determined these assemblages, and it would therefore follow that we cannot discount classifying such objects as sacred gifts.

Comparing funerary, domestic, and temple contexts at Khafajah

It has been maintained that the possessions of the gods often do not differ from those of human beings beyond the statues, mace heads, and other stone artifacts that dominate most Early Dynastic sacred gift assemblages (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 5, 6). That is, only few object typologies were restricted to temple use. But this notion can be challenged when contemporary temple, funerary, and domestic contexts are available for study, as they are at Khafajah. Among the distinct qualities of the Sin Temple inventory, cosmetic containers as well as pendants and beads forming a general category of personal adornment will be highlighted here. As I will argue, cosmetic containers and objects of personal adornment as they appear in the Sin Temple inventories are different from those that appear in domestic and funerary contexts at Khafajah—where cosmetic containers and objects of personal adornment were the possessions of human beings.

Fig. 4: Khafajah, Sin Temple X, stone cosmetic container with four compartments. Published courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Kh IV 267/OIM A12408.

Among the Sin Temple containers, a type of stone compartmented container is described as a cosmetic container because some examples preserve traces of pigments in the compartments (**Fig. 4**). That compartmented stone containers were part of sacred gifting practices is confirmed by an inscribed example—inscribed "(to/for) Inanna"—from the Inanna Temple at Nippur (Evans forthcoming). Compartmented stone containers are widely distributed throughout Mesopotamia, but the quantity retrieved from the Sin Temple—some thirteen—is unusual and surpassed only by the Inanna Temple at Nippur, which yielded over 30 examples.[28] These quantities are even more striking because only one multi-compartmented stone container was retrieved from the Nintu Temple.[29]

Keeping in mind that the criteria for identifying any of these items as cosmetic containers is the pigment preserved in a small number of examples (Hauptmann et. al. 2016), it can be observed that different types of cosmetic containers are associated with the Khafajah temples, on the one hand, and the Khafajah Houses and graves, on the other hand. In the Houses and graves, small stone cosmetic pots appear in earlier levels and then are replaced by bivalve shell cosmetic containers and their imitations in stone and metal.[30] Therefore, at Khafajah, local worshipers were not gifting the small pots and later bivalve shells that they used for cosmetics in their homes and with which they were buried. Instead, they gifted a distinct compartmented container found primarily in temples and probably manufactured for the sacred gifting industry.[31] In other words, the cosmetic containers of the gods were different from the cosmetic containers of human beings.

28 Compartmented cosmetic containers from the Sin Temple include: Kh IV 51, 127, 136, 267, 314, 344, 468, 472; Kh VI 316, 317, 376; Kh VII 140, 210. For the Inanna Temple, see Wilson/Zettler/Biggs forthcoming.

29 Kh VIII 46.

30 See the examples catalogued in Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967; see also Woolley 1934: 245; Martin 1988: 57.

31 A small number of compartmented cosmetic containers were, however, found in the Houses at Khafajah; see Kh I 608, Kh III 784, 1320, Kh V 27. For a more complete discussion of cosmetic containers as sacred gifts, see also Evans forthcoming.

As for personal adornment, the object type described here as a pendant was generally classified as an "amulet" in the Diyala excavations. What unites pendants is that they are pierced, allowing them to be strung and suspended or affixed to another item. Classifying these items as pendants does not prevent them from assuming also the apotropaic properties traditionally ascribed to amulets and known from later texts.

Theriomorphic pendants have been retrieved from a variety of contexts throughout Mesopotamia. At Khafajah, however, theriomorphic pendants are associated primarily with the Sin Temple. The popularity of primarily theriomorphic pendants in the Sin Temple is striking in comparison to the Nintu Temple. Only three pendants overall were retrieved from the Nintu Temple in comparison to some 220 examples from the Sin Temple, and the majority are theriomorphic.[32] In the Houses at Khafajah, less than half of the some 80 pendants are theriomorphic, and only four of the some 168 excavated graves at Khafajah yielded theriomorphic pendants.[33]

To give one specific example, fish are a popular theriomorphic pendant in the Sin Temple but are rarely attested elsewhere in the Diyala region.[34] Different forms and shifts in materials from level to level demonstrate that fish pendants continued to be produced throughout the history of the Sin Temple rather than being held over as heirlooms.[35] In Sin Temple III, for example, many fish pendants are carved from shell. In the succeeding Sin Temple IV, many of the fish pendants appear to have been carved from steatite that has been "glazed" or subjected to heat high enough to render it white.[36]

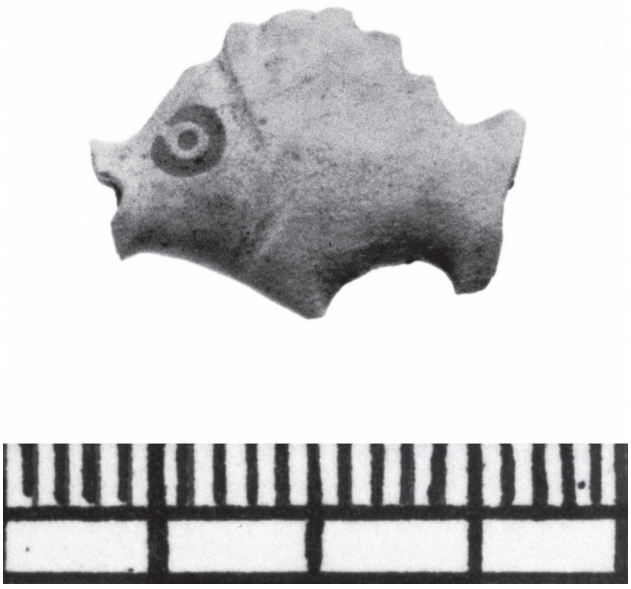

Fig. 5: Khafajah, Sin Temple IV, glazed steatite fish pendant. Published courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Kh VII 6/OIM A21328.

Virtually no fish pendants were retrieved from either domestic or funerary contexts in the Diyala region. If fish pendants were being gifted to the Sin Temple by local worshipers, they were not bringing them from their homes. Rather, it can be argued that fish pendants were manufactured for the sacred gifting industry. About half of the cylinder seals from Sin Temple IV were also carved from steatite in the so-called glazed steatite style. Many of the glazed steatite pendants are tiny, around one centimeter in length (**Fig. 5**). It would not be difficult to imagine that the pendants had been carved from the waste by-product of the seal carving.

The appearance of large quantities of theriomorphic pendants in the Sin Temple corresponds to the appearance of large quantities of cylinder seals and beads. Almost half of the hundreds of examples of these items retrieved from the Sin Temple were concentrated in Sin Temple IV. The large quantities of beads retrieved from the early levels of the Sin Temple are obscured because,

32 Kh VIII 268 (Nintu Temple V); Kh IX 57 (Nintu Temple VI); Kh VIII 223 (Nintu Temple VII).

33 Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: grave 6 (Kh IX 165), "adult" grave 35 (Kh IX 110), disturbed grave 91 with "three skulls and some fragmentary bones" (Kh V 268), and grave 168 with "no skeletion" (Kh III 624).

34 Of the 37 fish pendants catalogued from the Diyala excavations, 32 are from the Sin Temple (Kh VII 160, 194, 198, 229; Kh IX 1, 2, 3 (Sin Temple III); Kh V 302, 303, 305; Kh VI 257, 258, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 280, 281, 291, 298, 299, 300, 386; Kh VII 6, 58, 82, 241 (Sin Temple IV); Kh V 263 (Sin Temple V); Kh V 103, 104 (Sin Temple VIII)), one is from the Temple Oval at Khafajah (Kh I 637), and two are from the Shara Temple at Tell Agrab (Ag 35:186a, Ag 35:1075b). One fish pendant was catalogued from the surface of Khafajah (Kh V 17) another from the Houses at Khafajah (Kh III 544), but it was not assigned a level and is from the P 42:2 locus exterior to but adjacent with the Houses architectural remains and the Sin Temple; see Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: pl. 14.

35 In addition, new subjects appear among pendants, albeit in smaller quantities, later in the Sin Temple sequence, particularly once Early Dynastic sacred gifts appear in quantity with the sculpture corpus in Sin Temple VIII. By Sin Temple X, recumbent bearded bulls—often carved from lapis lazuli—are the most popular type of theriomorphic pedant; see Kh IV 50 (Sin Temple VIII); Kh IV 147a, 148, 154, 155, 229, 385a (Sin Temple X).

36 The identification of glazed steatite was based on visual criteria in most instances, but a small number of these pendants in the collections of the Oriental Institute Museum were identified as steatite using handheld x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy.

in some instances, beads found together were strung into modern necklace arrangements and catalogued as a single find. For example, Kh VI 13a represents beads from Sin Temple IV strung into nine necklaces by the excavators. Similarly, one of the graves yielding theriomorphic pendants was an "infant" burial for which a single catalogued item consisted of "77 shell and stone beads" at the neck in addition to two "fly amulets" (Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: grave 6).

At Khafajah, child—or, more accurately, sub–adult—burials are more heavily adorned than adult burials. Roughly half the burials at Khafajah with skeletal remains identified as sub-adult contained beads and/or pendants.[37] In contrast, less than one–fifth of the burials with skeletal remains identified as adult contained beads and/or pendants.[38] Theriomorphic pendants and beads in general have been associated with sub–adult burials also at Tell al–Raqa'i and Tell Rad Shaqrah in northern Syria (Dunham 1993; Szelag 2014: 154–55).

Perhaps it is possible to think about the large quantities of beads and pendants in the Sin Temple vis-à-vis children. Other evidence which strengthens an association of children or more accurately childbearing with the Sin Temple are two unpublished shell pendants from either Sin Temple III or IV—only one of which was photographed (**Fig. 6**).[39] Both depict squatting females reaching with the hands between spread legs, a type well-known from contemporary Jamdat Nasr examples (Battini 2002: 24–25, 34). The Sin Temple examples are perhaps identifiable as pendants that would have been strung through the breasts for suspension.[40] These squatting females suggest that at least some of the contemporary "frog" pendants in the Sin Temple have been incorrectly classified. At least some of these "frogs" could be re-interpreted as squatting females reaching with the hands between spread legs.[41]

Fig. 6: Khafajah, Sin Temple III or IV, shell pendant (?) of a squatting woman reaching with the hands between spread legs. Published courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Kh VIII 57/IM 41575.

Mazzoni (1984; 2002), who returned to the image of the squatting woman several times in her scholarship, has elaborated upon "its symbolic value related to fertility" which is "as unequivocal as the posture of the figure itself" and should be situated in "the realm of human rituals and actions" (Mazzoni 2002: 367). Battini (2002: 27) identifies squatting women reaching with the hands between spread legs with childbirth, suggesting such images had apotropaic qualities. Were such images gifted to the resident deity? Here, one is reminded of the later examples of vulvae gifted in the Ishtar Temple at Ashur as

37 Some 38 graves of sub-adults were identified as infant (graves 6*, 42, 139*), child (graves 1*, 2, 20, 25*, 27, 32, 37, 45, 50, 60, 64, 71*, 72, 74*, 80, 102, 105, 112*, 124*, 143*, 145, 149*, 150*, 155*, 165*), or youth (graves 34, 36*, 39, 66*, 81, 126*, 127*, 138, 141*, 147*) graves. Of these 38 sub-adult graves, 19 (marked here with an asterisk*) contained beads and/or pendants. See also Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: table I.

38 Some 83 graves were identified as belonging to an adult or adults (graves 3*, 4*, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29*, 30, 31, 33, 35*, 38, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49*, 51, 52*, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 62, 63, 65, 67*, 69, 72, 73*, 75, 76, 77, 78, 82, 83, 85, 93*, 95, 98, 99, 107, 109*, 113, 115, 120, 121, 122, 123, 128, 129, 136, 140, 142, 144*, 146*, 153, 156, 157*, 160, 161*, 162*, 166). Of these 83 graves, 15 (marked here with an asterisk*) contained beads and/or pendants. See also Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: table I.

39 Kh VIII 57, under which the Field Register notes "also a fragment of a second" (Iraq Expedition 1937).

40 Conversely, it may be that these squatting females were inlays for which the breasts would have been added using a different material.

41 For example, see Kh VI 295, 297; Kh VII 203.

Fig. 7: Khafajah, Sin Temple II, squatting ceramic figure. Published courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Kh VII 252/Iraq Museum (?).

well as those recorded in the delivery texts of the Temple of Ishtar-Kititum from primarily female donors.[42]

Related to the imagery of childbirth is a remarkable unpublished ceramic fragment from Sin Temple II, also dated to the Jamdat Nasr period. The fragment, preserved to a height of 22 cm, preserves part of a human figure. It was catalogued in the Field Register as a "squatting boy" but described more generally as a "squatting child" in the final Diyala report for temples (**Fig. 7**).[43] As an object, the best contemporary parallels are theriomorphic ceramics (Delougaz 1952: C.95, C.96). Had the squatting figure, which is hollow, been a container?

Perhaps because of 1930s decorum, the squatting figure was never photographed from a frontal view. There exist only two photos—a three-quarter view and the back. The sketch of the figure in the Field Register is cursory. That the identification of the figure was changed from "boy" to "child" in the text of the final report suggests some ambiguity. It is therefore unclear why the figure should have been identified not only as a boy but as a child, in particular because children are rarely represented in Mesopotamia.

The identification of the figure as a child is doubtful. Instead, squatting female figures reaching with the hands between spread legs provide contemporary parallels for the Sin Temple II squatting ceramic figure. Had the genitalia of the squatting figure prompted its identification as a boy rather than a man? If so, it would seem possible that the pubic mound of a woman is represented rather than the small(?) penis of a child. Instead of being a singular figure of a squatting child with no parallels, the ceramic figure is well situated within contemporary Jamdat Nasr iconography if identified instead as a squatting female in a birthing position.

The squatting ceramic figure was found in locus Q 42:45, a long corridor that led to the irregular courtyard of Sin Temple II. The Q 42:45 corridor was preceded on the southeast by a partially excavated area assigned locus Q

42 For the inscribed vulvae from the Ishtar Temple at Ashur, see Bär 2003: Ass 19624a–b; for the inscription, see also Kryszat 2017. See also the later uninscribed vulva identified by Schmitt (2012: cat. nos. 694–697). For the delivery texts from the Temple of Ishtar-Kititum, see Paolotti 2016, with reference also to a temple inventory from Tell Haddad.

43 Iraq Expedition 1937: Kh VII 252; Delougaz and Lloyd 1942: 18, 137. The figure may be in the Iraq Museum, since the field register is annotated with a "B," but no museum number is given.

42:46. A mudbrick structure identified as an altar was excavated against the east wall of locus Q 42:46. According to the final report, the squatting figure was found "near this altar and the doorway" leading from Q 42:46 into Q 42:45 (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: 18). Positioned near an entrance to the long corridor leading into the Sin Temple and associated with an altar, the squatting ceramic figure would have been a prominent representative of the temple, potentially visible to individuals passing by. One is reminded here of the Early Dynastic sculpture of female figures found lying on a bitumen-coated pavement that surrounded a well just inside a secondary entrance to the Inanna Temple at Nippur (Evans 2012: 192, 197).

Conclusion

To summarize, the special association of the Sin Temple with female donors is made evident by the statues of female donors that dominate the sculpture assemblage. With its statues of female figures and large quantities of containers, particularly compartmented cosmetic containers—but lack of mace heads—the Sin Temple has parallels with the Early Dynastic inventory of the Inanna Temple at Nippur but markedly contrasts with the Early Dynastic inventory of the Nintu Temple at Khafajah, with its statues of male donors, large quantities of mace heads, and relatively few stone containers.

It would be plausible to associate the theriomorphic pendants and beads in the Sin Temple inventory with children—more generally sub-adults—since theriomorphic pendants and beads are associated with sub-adults in the graves at Khafajah. That is, sub-adults were more heavily adorned than adults in these contemporary burials. More explicitly, the imagery of childbirth is present in the Sin Temple in the form of squatting female figures reaching with the hands between spread legs, with which the squatting ceramic figure at the entrance altar of Sin Temple II is best identified.

Obviously, there are many questions that cannot be answered. Is the Sin Temple imagery evoking an animal world of fish, birds, and rams meant to complement the fecund world of human beings? Are the theriomorphic pendants retrieved from the Sin Temple indeed a reflection of sacred gifting practice? Were pendants, then, an appropriate sacred gift for seeking divine protection for a child—or childbirth? Seeking protection for children, at least, is well established in the rhetoric of inscribed dedications: some sacred gifts are dedicated not only for the life of the donor but also for the life of the donor's children.

The choice of sacred gift is typically aligned with the divine recipient. This is clearly demonstrated by Charpin (this volume) in his analysis of sacred gifts for Nergal, Nabu, and Gula. As noted above, the resident deity of the so-called Sin Temple is an open question. But it would follow that a quality of the Sin Temple resident deity is manifest through animal imagery as well as through images of squatting females reaching with the hands between spread legs in reference to childbirth and in the large quantities of beads and pendants aligned with sub-adults.

Despite an alignment of sacred gifts with divine recipients, it would be a mistake to eliminate the donor from the equation completely when examining variations in sacred gift assemblages. The evidence would suggest that variations in sacred gifting practices cannot be isolated from donors. That is, the resident deities of the Sin Temple and the Nintu Temple—were they known—cannot provide the sole explanation for variations in the sacred gift assemblage if a meaningful distinction—here, gender—can be maintained among the donors. Of course, the nature of the resident deity must have intersected with patronage. Just as scribes dedicated to Nabu and individuals suffering from an illness dedicated to Gula (Charpin, this volume), individuals concerned with childbearing, children, and fecundity (?) dedicated to the resident deity of the Sin Temple. In addition to divine agency, however, Sin Temple sacred gifting practices have the potential to reflect specifically female donors, to judge by sculpture, and male donors—whom we know from inscribed artefacts gifted also for the lives of their children in other temples—tended not to patronize the Sin Temple.

I have argued above that the fish pendants and cosmetic containers in the Sin Temple were manufactured for the sacred gifting industry. These gifts are less easily identifiable than, for example, statues, mace heads, and door plaques because pendants and cosmetic containers are not always restricted to temples and tend not to be inscribed. However, in the Diyala region, fish pendants and cosmetic containers are found primarily in the Sin Temple, which therefore indicates their sacred quality and suggests their classification as sacred gifts. This is one benefit of integrating sacred gifts within larger temple inventories and, consequently, thinking through assemblages. That is, the remaining inventory, which we admittedly risk treating as miscellaneous, in fact connects in a meaningful way with sacred gifting practices.

Finally, it can be posited that the Sin Temple inventories already reveal a female element before the appearance of sculpture assemblages dominated by female figures. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the Sin Temple inventory, then, is the female element evident in earlier levels. We accept the *longue durée* of temple traditions. Temples occupy the same sacred space through-

out their history, and they often retain the same architectural characteristics from one level to the next. It is plausible to connect the Sin Temple inventory not only with the resident deity of the temple but also with the patronage of female donors. It is thus possible to conclude that patronage was another tradition that remained consistent, even though the gifts being offered to the temple changed over time.

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Text, Context, and the Social Dimension of Writing: A Case Study from the Early Dynastic Inanna Temple at Nippur[1]

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Abstract: In this article, I propose a holistic interpretation of a well-defined corpus of third millennium BC inscribed artefacts, focusing on the relationships between text (format and content), the artefact, and its original destination and deposition. I aim to underline the social dimension of inscribed objects and, in general, of writing in votive depositional contexts. As a case study, I have focused on the inscribed artefacts found in level VIIB of the Inanna Temple at Nippur. This small corpus of approximately twenty-two objects shows many peculiarities, most prominent of which are the high number of female donors and the lack of royal inscriptions.

Keywords: Mesopotamia, inscriptions, third millennium BCE, Inanna, Nippur, Early Dynastic, Nin-sar, gender, materiality of writing.

1. A holistic approach to inscribed objects

The aim of this paper is to apply a different approach to a well-known class of artefacts: Early Dynastic inscribed objects. The approach is neither new nor innovative, but it seems that scholars have preferred other methodologies so far. In dealing with these documents, the

1 A preliminary version of this study was presented as a paper at the 5th International Congress of Archaeology of the Ancient Near East held in Madrid, 3–8 April 2006. The study later became part of a larger analysis of third millennium inscriptions within a research funded project on different aspects of writing in four main areas (Mesopotamia, Syria, Mycenaean and Greek world) called 'Writing Techniques vs. Writing Technologies.' While the main structure and conclusions of the paper as presented at the Munich conference remained unchanged from the earlier manuscript, the publication of Evans' study (Evans 2016) has enriched the present version, particularly in regard to further archaeological information on the findings. Two other studies published in the same volume (Balke/Tsouparopoulou 2016) as Evans have provided or substantiated and grounded theoretical approaches and analysis perspectives on non-royal inscriptions (Marchesi 2016; Andersson 2016). Unfortunately, the volume appeared when the article was almost completed and I have not been able to consider and discuss in depth all of the data and observations of my colleagues; in order to do this, I have an article in preparation (Verderame in press b). My gratitude goes to Jean Evans for precious information on some of the pieces here discussed and to Daniele Morandi Bonacossi, who has brought to my attention the cases of intentionally broken votive objects from Syrian sites (see fn. 13). Numbers in bold refer to the inscriptions as edited at the end of this article. Abbreviations follow those used in the 'Chicago Assyrian Dictionary' and R. Borger 'Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur,' Berlin, 1967–75; a complete and updated list is available from the CDLI (http://cdli.ucla.edu/Tools/abbrev.html).

different kinds of information provided by the archaeological and epigraphical assemblages have been often considered separately.[2] For the historian, the epigrapher, and the philologist, these documents are "texts," i.e. inscriptions (royal or otherwise). Their approach focuses on the content of the text or, specifically, on those parts of the texts which may provide historical or philological information. Archaeologists, on the other hand, have approached these objects from an art historical perspective.

The aim of this paper is to propose a holistic analysis of these objects considered primarily as archaeological artefacts. In my analysis, the inscription is only part of the complex of elements that constitute the artefact, valued in its two phases: the fashioning and the function/aim of the object.[3] From this point of view, we can infer that the inscription could not be the most relevant feature of the object.[4]

What follows is an effort to apply this approach to a known archaeological context:[5] the findings from the Early Dynastic Inanna Temple at Nippur. I have focused on the inscribed objects found in level VIIB of the temple in order to have as coherent a sample as possible to develop valid considerations on the archaeological, religious, and social context of these objects. This small corpus shows many features that distinguish it from the other inscribed artefact assemblages of third millennium BC Mesopotamia. From an archaeological point of view, these objects show a regular distribution; furthermore, the way they have been deposited offers several hints for a reflection on the function and ritual practices of votive objects. As for the donors and their inscriptions, the inscribed objects from the Inanna Temple at Nippur are the main corpus of "private" inscriptions of third millennium BC Mesopotamia, with the highest proportion of female donors and evidence that indicates a particular social and religious milieu.[6]

2. Level VIIB of the Inanna Temple at Nippur

In 1960–61, during the seventh campaign of the joint expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the American Schools of Oriental Research at Nippur, a small treasure was unearthed in the Early Dynastic levels of the Inanna Temple. The objects discovered are mainly bowls of precious stones together with statues, gypsum furniture and other artefacts (**Fig. 1**).[7] Most of them bear a dedicatory inscription to the goddess Inanna, who was worshipped at one or both of the chapels within the sacred area.

Dated to Early Dynastic IIIA, the structure of the Inanna Temple of level VIIB is

> "a long narrow complex with the main axis approximately northwest-southeast. The chief entrance, at the northwest end, led into a series of open courtyards and small rooms, and finally into a large porticoed court with circular columns of mud brick. Access to the two sanctuaries it contained was afforded by a small door in the south corner of the porticoed court."[8]

2 Important exceptions are the works of Braun-Holzinger (1977; 1991). J.S. Cooper devoted several articles going into the relation of the epigraph and its support; see, among others, Cooper 1980; 1985. Not dealing specifically with inscriptions, but with administrative records, is R.L. Zettler's monograph on the Inanna Temple at Nippur during the Ur III period (Zettler 1992) and his seminal paper on written documents as excavated artefacts (Zettler 1996); in the same perspective and devoted to the same type of documents is the catalogue of the Ur III tablets from Woolley's excavation at Ur by D'Agostino/Pomponio/Laurito (2004) and the researches of Laurito/Mezzasalma/Verderame (2006; 2008). The renewed interest in a holistic approach to inscribed artefacts — under the label of materiality of writing — is proven by the several stimulating articles collected in Balke/Tsouparopoulou 2016.

3 A further phase is that of the "afterlife" or secondary uses of the object, which, in a projection toward modern times, consider their history as archaeological findings; see, for example, the work of Evans 2012 on the reception of Sumerian sculpture and some of the articles collected in Rutz/Kersel 2014.

4 In a group of objects where the common denominator is the same inscription, the discriminants are the artefacts, their features, the way and place where they have been deposited, etc.

5 For how relative this assumption could be, see Zettler 1996: 88–89; for the specific case of the Inanna Temple excavation, see fn. 8.

6 These features were already highlighted by the first editor of these inscriptions (Goetze 1970: 39–40).

7 The findings are scattered between the collections of the Iraq Museum and the Oriental Institute of Chicago. The Metropolitan Museum of New York keeps the bowl **12** together with several other objects from the Nippur excavation (see fn. 48). The objects reported by Braun-Holzinger 1991 as belonging to the "American School" (**5**, **7**, **14**) ended up, according to CDLI catalogue, at the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto), where many other objects from different levels of the Nippur excavations are kept. The location of one of the statues (**15**) and of the diorite peg (**22**) was unknown (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 250 and 326), but according to Jean Evans (personal communication), **15** and **22** are kept in the Iraq Museum and other unlocated findings from the Nippur excavation are kept in the collections of the Oriental Institute of Chicago.

8 Hansen/Dales 1962: 76–77. As far as I know, no further publications or detailed accounts on the archaeological findings and their context have appeared after Hansen's articles in the *Illustrated London News* and *Archaeology*. The long-awaited publication of the Inanna Temple excavation will be finally realised in the form of several volumes of the Oriental Institute Publications, edited by Richard Zettler, Karen Wilson, and Jean Evans (Evans 2016: 165).

The structure, with minor changes, is the same as the previous level VIII and the successive level VIIA.[9]

Object (cat. no)	Material	Donor's gender	Quantity
Bowls 14 (**1-14**)			
	stone		10 (**1-10**)
	alabaster		3 (**11-13**)
	?		1 (**14**)
		♀	6 (**4**, **5**, **7**[?], **11**, **13**[?], **14**)
		♂	5 (**2**, **3**, **8**, **10**, **12**)
			1 (**9**)
			2 (**1**, **6**)
Statues 4 (**15-18**)			
		♂	3 (**15**, **17**, **18**)
		?	1 (**16**)
Vessels 2 (**19-20**)			
	stone	♂	1 (**19**)
	steatite	?	1 (**20**)
Others 2 (**21-22**)			
	votive plaque	♂	1 (**21**)
	diorite "peg"	♂	1 (**22**)
Total 22			

Fig 1: Overview of the inscribed objects from the Inanna Temple level VIIB (see the catalogue in **Appendix 1** for more details)..

2.1 Findspots

The artefacts unearthed during the seventh campaign were found in three major concentrations. One group had been buried beneath the floor of the larger shrine, another beneath the periodic replasterings of a table or altar nearby, while the third had been built into a structure which served for ablutions. With the latter, the broken statues had been neatly laid out in a row and covered with bitumen and mud plaster.[10]

In her study on early third millennium BC altar deposits, Bjorkman (2008: 361) challenges Hansen's proposal of these objects as included in the periodical replastering of the altars[11] and criticizes the usual definition of these depositions as "hoards".[12] What Bjorkman (2008) underlines is the ritual aspect of these "deposits". Among the other evidence, she discusses the fact that the votive plaque of Lumma (**21**) was intentionally broken in four and deposited in two different spots, a practice known from at least one other case in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia.[13]

2.2 The dedicatee of the two shrines: Inanna and Nin-sar

Inanna is the divine recipient[14] of most of the dedicatory inscriptions of level VIIB,[15] and this has led researchers to identify the temple as devoted to this goddess, as it is in successive periods.[16]

Studies of the level VIIB archaeological findings have been published by Dolce 2008 and Evans 2016.

9 For the development of the Inanna Temple at Nippur, see Zettler 1992.

10 The findspots correspond to the floor and the benches at the right of the entrance of one of the sanctuaries (IT 179) and a structure for ablutions situated at the right of the main entrance (IT 173) to the sanctuaries precinct; see Hansen/Dales 1962: 79, Braun-Holzinger 1991: 9–11, Dolce 2008: 664–666, Evans 2016: 168–70, Marchesi/Marchetti 2011: 34–36.

11 See also Evans 2012: 191–192.

12 Bjorkman 2008: 361 prefers the term "building deposits" and points at the non-utilitarian deposit *contra* the utilitarian function meant by the term "hoard." The term hoard has continued to be used, while the term *favissa* has been adopted by some scholars; so Dolce 2008: 664 fn. 9 and Marchesi/Marchetti 2011: 34, *passim*. It should be noted that there are differences between the two findspots below the floor and on the benches of one of the sanctuaries (IT 179) and the structure for the ablutions (IT 173). The latter is placed outside of the sanctuaries precinct, i.e. at the right side of the main entrance. Moreover, "the objects built into the IT 173 installation were also reused as construction material, whereas the objects below the IT 179 floor appear to have served no additional function" (Evans 2016: 168 –169). For the arrangement of votive offerings in early third millennium BC Mesopotamian temples, see Evans 2012. For general considerations on votive deposits, see Garfinkel 1994 and Osborne 2004.

13 Bjorkman 2008: 364–365; the parallel case mentioned is the clay snake found in the Temple VII in Eridu; see Bjorkman 2008: 361. For intentionally broken objects in votive and ritual deposits, see Marchetti/Nigro 1997: 31–34 and Morandi Bonacossi 2012: 557–559 and fn. 46.

14 See below and Fig. 11.

15 The divine recipient is not preserved in any of the inscriptions earlier than level VII of the temple.

16 The structure was first identified as the Inanna Temple from the inscriptions of Šulgi who rebuilt it; see Frayne 1997: 127–30 E3/2.1.2.19–20 and Zettler 1992: 16. Šulgi does not mention the name of the temple, which is known to be e_2-$bara_2$-dur_2-ĝar-ra from later sources (Zettler 1992: 16 fn. 39; George 1993: 71 –72), thus from Old Babylonian period onward, at least.

2.2.1 Nin-SAR, craftsmanship and procreation

The inscription of the chief stone-cutter Lumma, found on two different objects (**3**, **21**), is dedicated to Nin-SAR,[17] who could be the dedicatee of one of the two shrines.

Nin-SAR, whose name is read as nin-sar or nin-mu_2,[18] is a tutelary deity of craftsmanship and possibly procreation. Several clues indicate the relation of these two aspects, which are both represented in the Inanna Temple in Nippur. Procreation and craftsmanship, particularly of pottery, are closely related in mythopoetic thought.[19] The argument does not require further discussion, and we can briefly mention that clay is the main material in anthropogony, where Enki and the mother goddesses mould the shape of the first human being as if they were potters; furthermore, the womb is often compared to a vessel.[20]

Several mother goddesses appear as patrons of craftsmanship and procreation. This is the case with Nin-mug and Nin-zadim, with whom Nin-SAR is closely related in Šuruppag and Abu Salabikh sources (CAVIGNEAUX/KREBERNIK 2001: 484). "Chisel/carpenter of the womb" ($^{(d)}$ $bulug_4$/nagar-$ša_3$-ga) is an epithet of the mother goddess.[21] Nin-SAR bears the title of nin-nagar/$bulug_4$ "lady of the carpenters" or "lady of the chisel"[22] and nagar/$bulug_4$-an-ki-a "chisel/carpenter of heaven and heart."[23]

Ateliers and craft production areas are well documented within and around the perimeter of the Inanna Temple.[24] Among the donors of the inscribed objects found in level VII of the temple are a chief-stonecutter (Lumma, the gal-zadim; **3**, **21**) and a midwife ($ša_3$-zu, **14**).

The two shrines may be dedicated to Inanna and Nin-SAR; the latter may well be a local hypostasis of Inanna related to craftsmanship and procreative aspects.

In 'The Canonical Temple List' a shrine of Nin-SAR is called e_2-šu-luh-ha-tum_2-ma "temple suitable of the cleansing ritual" (GEORGE 1993: 13 l. 115, 147). It is not clear if the name is that of the goddess's temple in Nippur; the latter is listed without name in the 'Cadaster of Ur-Namma'[25] and in a Middle Babylonian metrological text.[26] Other temples of Nin-SAR are known from third millennium BC sources. The goddess is mentioned in two economic texts from Šuruppag (TSŠ 629: iv 3; WF 153: iv 6). She had a temple in Ĝirsu since the Early Dynastic period, as the inscriptions of URUKAgina document,[27] and she is recorded in two lists of offerings to the gods from Ur III Ĝirsu (ITT 2, 833: 3; MVN 6, 78: 6). However, Nin-SAR seldom appears in the Neo-Sumerian sources: in three documents from Umma, a list of animal offerings (TCL 5, 6053: ii 14) and two regular deliveries (sa_2-du_{11}) to the gods (YOS 4, 260: ii 35; MVN 21, 287: 3), the second of which is associated to Nin-ur_4-ra; only once in a documentary Nippur source, in a fragmentary text (ZA 101, 41 (6 NT 205): ii 9'). An inscription of Šulgi from the Enunmah (= RIME E3/2.1.2.2) seems to document an otherwise unknown cultic place of Nin-SAR in Ur.[28]

In a later inscription dedicated by Esarhaddon on the occasion of the restoration of the Inanna/Ištar Temple in Nippur,[29] the Assyrian king calls the goddess *ma-al-kat*$_2$ UZU.MU_2.A^{ki} "queen of the *Uzumu'a*." The association of Inanna/Ištar with the chamber where, according to the Sumerian composition 'The Song of the Hoe,'[30] Enlil created man through emersion (mu_2) did not escape the

17 For Nin-SAR, see CAVIGNEAUX/KREBERNIK 2001 and SELZ 1995: 261–262. An unprovenanced Early Dynastic stone bowl from the Spurlock Museum of the University of Illinois (SMUI 1900.53.0143) bears the inscription "Property of Nin-SAR" (niĝ$_2$-u_2-rum ^{d}nin-sar) and may come from the Inanna Temple in Nippur.

18 The reading nin-sar is found in BIGGS 1974: 56, following W.G. Lambert's suggestion, who, at least for the later tradition, reject the reading nin-mu_2, on the base of the An = Anum list; see LAMBERT 1992: 135; nin-mu_2 in GOETZE 1970: 42–43, STEIBLE 1982b: 240, and SELZ 1995: 261–262; nin-nisig and nin-sig_x in CAVIGNEAUX/KREBERNIK 2001 and MARCHESI/MARCHETTI 2011: 225 fn. 47. See also PETERSON 2009: 66.

19 CIVIL 1983: 65.

20 See, among others, LAMBERT 1992; FOSTER POLINGER 2010: 142 –143; COUTO-FERREIRA 2013: 105–110.

21 An = Anum 90, 101; Lugal-e 412.

22 BIGGS/ZETTLER 1990: no. 1 ($^{1)}$ nin-sar $^{2)}$ ad-da-t[ur] $^{3)}$ nin-^{r}$bulug_4$$^?$).

23 BIGGS 1974: 51, 56 ($^{177)}$ ab-$bulug_4$ $^{178)}$ $bulug_4$ an-ki $^{179)}$ nin-sar za_3-mi_2).

24 For the Neo-Sumerian period, see ZETTLER 1992 and VAN DRIEL 1995.

25 "From the Ekur to the Nin-SAR temple; from the Nin-SAR temple to the KA-IGI" (e_2-kur-re-ta e_2-^{d}nin-sar-ka-$še_3$ e_2-^{d}nin-sar-ka-ta KA-IGI-$še_3$); see FRAYNE 1997: 53 E3/2.1.1.21 Ex. 2 l. iii 4–7.

26 BERNHARDT/KRAMER 1975: 98 l. 41 (5 sar e_2-^{d}nin-sar). According to this text, the temple of Nin-SAR measuring approximately 18,000 m^2 is one of the minor shrines of Nippur. Furthermore, it is listed separately from the shrine of Inanna.

27 STEIBLE 1982a: 280–281. Ukg. 1 l. ii 15, 322f. Ukg. 6 l. v 22', 329 Ukg. 11 l. 21 = FRAYNE 2008: 267 E.1.9.9.2 l. ii 15, 275 E.1.9.9.3 l. v 22'. In these inscriptions, Nin-SAR bears the title "Ninĝirsu's butcher" (ĝir$_2$-la$_2$-^{d}nin-ĝir$_2$-su-ka) which parallels the goddess's epithet "Ekur's butcher" (ĝir$_2$-la$_2$-e_2-kur-ra) found in the Šulgi's inscription from Ur (= RIME E3/2.1.2.2).

28 See FRAYNE 1997: 112, who remarks also the possible vicinity of the temple of Nin-SAR and Ennugi in Nippur.

29 GOETZE 1963.

30 uzu-e_3-a (var. uzu-mu_2-a) saĝ mu_2-mu_2-de_3 "*Uzu'e'a*/*Uzumu'a* where the men (lit. head) sprout," l. 6; see also l. 18. In the text, the terms uzu-e_3-a ("(the place where) the flesh comes forth") and uzu-mu_2-a ("(the place where) the flesh sprouts") are almost interchangeable.

editor of the text (Goetze 1963). Here we can add as further evidence for Inanna's association with the *Uzumu'a* and the procreative process the mention of Nin-sar as divine recipient in inscriptions from the earlier phase of the same temple. The goddess's name, composed with the ideogram sar, recalls the vegetable realm (sar "garden plot," kiri$_6$ "plantation, orchard," nisig "greenery") and the idea of sprouting and growing plants (mu$_2$). According to Goetze (1963: 131), *Uzumu'a* "is part of Dur. an.ki which itself is in Nippur, is in fact the area where the Inanna Temple is located [...] The passage indicates that *Uzu.mu$_2$.a* is to be looked for within the precincts of the Inanna Temple." This statement, which finds no parallel in the available sources, may be corroborated by the mention in two Neo-Sumerian documents from the Inanna Temple in Nippur of a Ur-Su'en "doorkeeper of the *Uzu'e* and of the house of the *kiškanû*-tree" (i$_3$-du$_8$ uzu-e$_3$ u$_3$ e$_2$-ĝiš-kin$_2$/gun$_3$-ka).[31]

3. The inscribed objects of level VIIB of the Inanna Temple

Among the artefacts unearthed in the Early Dynastic levels of the Inanna Temple, 38 bear an inscription (see **Appendix 1**).[32] 11 are catalogued as belonging more generally to level VII. These are:

- 7 stone bowls (6N-391, 392, 393, 394, 419; 7N-189, 238),[33]
- 2 statues (7N-136+155, 137),
- 1 tablet (7N-T4),[34]
- 1 vessel (7N-639).

Other objects out of context have been dated to the Early Dynastic period on the basis of different criteria.[35]

22 inscribed objects come from level VIIB (see **Appendix 2**). The major group constitutes fourteen stone bowls, followed by four stone statues, two vessels, a votive plaque, and a diorite "peg."[36] In the following discussion, I will only refer to the objects found in level VIIB.

3.1 The objects[37]

All the inscribed objects are made of stone. Bowls are the most basic and common form of votive object (**1-14**).[38] A large number were found in level VIIB of the Inanna Temple.[39] Furthermore, it is the only type of object under analysis that may bear only the name of the divine recipient, or be completely uninscribed, whereas the other precious objects, as statues, always bear an inscription with the name of the donor. One of the exemplars has inscribed the sign "bowl" on the top of the inscription (**8**).[40]

The inscribed statues (**15-18**) are all of men.[41] They all represent a standing worshipper with a shaved head,[42] except for 17, which is a statue of a seated man with long hair.

Two vessel fragments have been recovered in level VIIB (**19**, **20**). One is a fragment of a high conical cup or vessel (h. 19 cm; **19**). The other is the fragment of a richly decorated vessel of the so-called "intercultural style"

31 Zettler 1992: 273 (6 NT 190: v 12–13) and 274 (6 NT 195: iii 1'–2'), see also 262 (4 NT 213: ii 18); for the equivalence of uzu-e$_3$-a and uzu-mu$_2$-a, see the previous footnote.

32 The following analysis is based on the information provided by Goetze 1970, which remains the only comprehensive edition of this corpus. Goetze's descriptions are sometimes precise, while others are vague. For example, he attributes the alabaster bowl 8N-4 to a generic level VII (Goetze 1970: 46), but Buccellati/Biggs (1969: 5) specify that it comes from "IT 205, Level VII A, on top of horizontal drain in west wall of room;" see also Braun-Holzinger 1991: 128 G 75.

33 One of the alabaster bowls (7N-238) bears the inscription of ama$^{!}$(engur)-a-zu$_5$, wife (dam) of Lugal-uri, the scribe, and can be related to inscription no. **10**. The bowl 7N-147 and the vessel 7N-120 are here considered as belonging to the level VIIB and edited respectively as no. **5** and **20**. Two other objects coming from the antiquarian market may be related to the Inanna Temple level VII or VIIB: one kept in the Spurlock Museum of the University of Illinois (SMUI 1900.53.0143; see fn. 17) and the other in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts at Boston (MFA 1980.71; see fn. 61).

34 See fn. 48 and the discussion *sub* **18**.

35 5N- T676; 7N-45, 89, 152 (bowls); 5N-T452, 7N-119, 399 (vessels); 7N-191 (statue); 7N-309 (fragment with inlay, see no. **4**).

36 Evans 2016: 168 notes the absence of inscribed mace heads. These objects are usually found as offerings in temples of male gods, thus this absence "should be linked with the special relationship that female patrons had with the temple," according to Evans 2016: 168. Note, however, that Evans 2016: 168 mentions the presence of two uninscribed mace heads in level VIIB of the Inanna Temple.

37 For an overview of the findings, see Dolce 2008 and Evans 2016.

38 This assumption is obviously based on the available data and does not consider perishable material for which we have no archaeological traces. For bowls and vessels as votive offerings, see in general Braun-Holzinger 1991: Chap. IV.

39 The exact number is unknown. Evans 2016: 170 groups together vessels and bowls and, referring to the forthcoming publication of the reports by Zettler, gives the number of 100 from the level VIIB; of these only a quarter were inscribed.

40 See the discussion below *sub* Palaeography (3.2.1). For further references to the name of the object mentioned in the inscription, see Andersson 2016: 60–62.

41 The donor, however, may be a woman, i.e. in the case of no. **16** and possibly no. **15**; see below the discussion *sub* The gender of the donors (3.3.2.1).

42 **15** is a headless statue, but similar in its main features to **18**.

(**20**).[43] This vessel was produced on the Iranian plateau.[44] It brings to light one of the major features of the study of Early Dynastic votive objects, which is the circulation in Mesopotamia of (semi-)finished artefacts imported from abroad.[45]

The last two objects found in level VIIB of the Inanna Temple are a stone plaque (**21**) and a stone peg (**22**). The plaque[46] is typical of this period: square-shaped, with a central hole. Only one of the two main faces is decorated: its surface is divided into three registers, the middle of which is further divided into two separate scenes by the central hole. The stone peg ends in a bovine protome and had several elements (eyes, eyebrows, and a decorative triangle on the forehead) inlaid, now lost. The inscription is engraved on the left side of the protome. It is possible that both objects were part of the same piece of furniture, possibly a door plaque and its knob.[47]

3.2 The inscriptions

3.2.1 Palaeography

Level VIIB of the Inanna Temple has been dated to Early Dynastic IIIA on the basis of about twenty cuneiform tablets,[48] which show similarities with the *ductus* of Fara and Abu Salabikh documents.[49] The writing direction of the inscription is always perpendicular to the orientation of the object, i.e. the lines must be read from top to bottom and from right to left.

Compared with contemporary royal inscriptions, those on the objects from Inanna Temple VIIB are very rudimentarily engraved, in some cases limited to scratches. This is partly due to the hard stone surface or, probably, to the lack of expertise or diligence of the engraver (**Fig. 2**).[50]

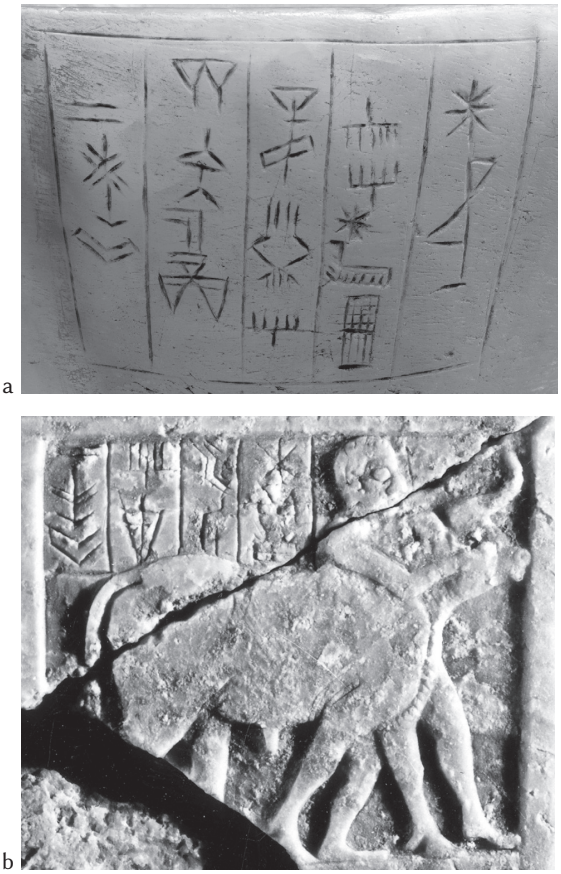

Fig. 2: Details of the inscriptions of a) Aka-Enlil (**12**) and b) Lumma (**21**) (a: photo by author, b: courtesy of the Nippur Publication Project).

43 "The decoration on this vessel depicts a contest scene involving a spotted feline — either a leopard or a cheetah — and a coiled snake, one of the favorite motifs of the 'inter-cultural style.' A two-line inscription is engraved in the empty triangular space between the tail of the feline and the coils of the snake" (Marchesi 2016: 97).

44 See Marchesi 2016 for a discussion of the different interpretations and previous literature.

45 See Howard Carter 1989 and Marchesi 2016 (with further bibliography). Sometimes the inscription mentions the foreign origin of the object; see, for example, the reference to a bur-mah kur-ta … e_{11} "huge vase brought down from the mountains" in two inscriptions from Nippur, one of the Lagaš ruler Enmentena and the other of an unknown donor (CBS and CBS 9626 = *PBS* XV, 1 and 13; Steible 1982a: 247f. Ent. 32; Steible 1982b: 260 AnNip. 63; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 116f. G 8, 137 G 129; Frayne 2008: 222f. E1.9.5.18). Marchesi (2016: 102) has convincingly argued that "for the inhabitants of Mesopotamia the 'intercultural style' vessels were merely exotica with bizarre and meaningless decorations. Their value lay in the fact that they were foreign goods coming from a distant country."

46 Hansen 1963:147; Evans 2016: 174-7; however, the interpretation of these objects as door plaques is not universally accepted and the peg may well be another piece of furniture (Verderame, in press a).

47 See Hansen 1963; Evans 2016: 174–176.

48 Most of these documents are still unpublished. Four (7N-T9, 12, 15, 19), kept in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, have been published by Biggs 1988. Two others (7N-T11, 13) are mentioned by Biggs *apud* Zettler 1992: 37 fn. 16 and described as "written in the Abu Salabikh 'late script'." The tablet 7N-T4, as already stated by Goetze 1970: 46, is a "copy on clay of a dedicatory inscription;" see Goetze 1970: 46 and 54; Steible 1982b: 251 AnNip. 47; see also the discussion *sub* **18**.

49 Goetze 1970: 39 and fn. 5; Westenholz 1975: 3–4; Biggs 1974: 26; Biggs *apud* Zettler 1992: 37 fn. 16; and McMahon 2006: 165. For a general discussion of the palaeography of this period, see Biggs 1973, Braun-Holzinger 1977: 24 –25 and 27 –28; Frayne 2008: 14.

50 One may wonder if the incision was made by a non-skillful hand and consider what this might mean for the general interpretation of the use of writing. In particular, in those inscriptions limited to the goddess's ideogram alone (inanna, 7N-119) or preceded by the star for the divine determinative ($^{d(+)}$inanna, 7N-45, 89, 191, 309), may the donor himself be the engraver of the inscription reproducing the sign as seen on other objects? See also the comments of Andersson 2016: 53–54.

In general, for the entire corpus of Early Dynastic inscriptions from the Inanna Temple we can note that:

1. when limited to a few signs, these are freely disposed on the surface;
2. in some cases, where the inscription is limited to two signs, one for the divine determinative and the other for the goddess name, these are not aligned and, in one instance, even perpendicular (**6**; **Fig. 3**);

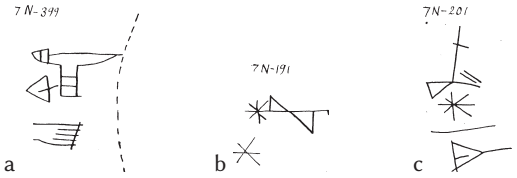

Fig. 3: Details of the inscriptions a) 7N-399, b) 7N-191, and c) no. **6** (7N-201) (after Goetze 1970: 54, 52, 53).

3. in short inscriptions, the lines may or may not be divided by a horizontal line; this, instead, is the custom for longer inscriptions;
4. the frame appears only in longer inscriptions, but even in these cases it may be omitted;
5. distribution of the signs according to the reading sequence is not always followed;
6. in at least one case (**22**) the order of the lines is inverted, the donor preceding what we presume to be the divine name (**Fig. 4**).

Fig. 4: Stone peg **22** with inscription (courtesy of the Nippur Publication Project).

In one inscription (**8**), the name of the goddess is not at the beginning but just before the verb a mu-ru; this is, however, less rare than we tend to think. What is more interesting in this exemplar is the fact that, in a second instance, after the inscription was engraved and closed by a frame, the ideogram for bowl (bur) was added at the top, partly overlapping the upper line of the frame (**Fig. 5**).

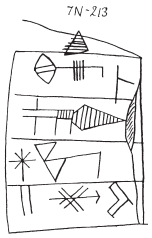

Fig. 5: Copy of the inscription on the bowl **8** (after Goetze 1970: 53).

Regarding the containers, both vases and bowls, the inscription is usually engraved next to the rim[51] on the outer surface of the object. The only exception is a fragment of a stone bowl richly decorated with a mosaic on the surface and bearing the inscription inside (**4**).[52] As for the statues, the inscription, limited to one (**16**) or two lines (**15**, **17**, **18**), is written on the right part of the back (**15**, **18**), on the right arm (**16**), or on the right thigh (**17**). **15** and **18** have a line separating the two lines (**Fig. 6**).

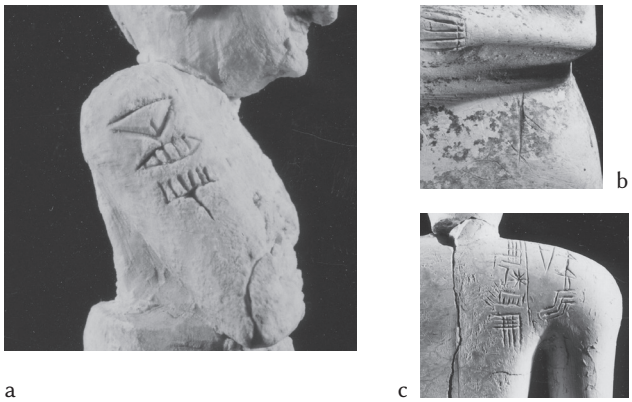

Fig. 6: Details of the inscriptions on the statues a) **16**, b) **17**, and c) **18** (courtesy of the Nippur Publication Project).

On the Lumma plaque (**21**), the external frame enclosing the inscription is only partially engraved; in fact, its upper and right borders coincide with the raised vignette's frame, while the lower border is interrupted by the relief-carved back of the bull in the vignette (**Fig. 2b**).

The sign for Inanna shows many variants, partly because it is the most frequent sign and partly due to the fact that it is often crudely engraved (**Fig. 7**).

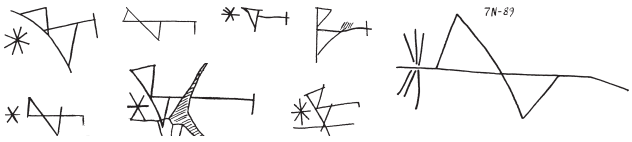

Fig. 7: Variants of the Inanna sign in inscriptions from the Early Dynastic Inanna Temple at Nippur (collage based on the copies of Goetze 1970).

51 No. **20**, for example, is engraved between two figures; see fn. 43.

52 Cooper 1986: 20 (Ki 3.3 n. 1, 91 Ni 3 n. 1) has drawn attention to the other only known parallel of an inscription on the interior surface of a container, i.e. a fragment of Mesilim's vessel from Adab (A 192); see Steible 1982b: 217 Mes. 3; Cooper 1986: 20 Ki 3.3. Marchesi 2016: 96–97, while discussing vessels of the "intercultural style," states that when "inscriptions do appear, they are usually engraved on the inside of vessels, where they cannot be seen except by peering inside;" the exemplar from Nippur (**20**), however, bears the inscription on the exterior of the vessel.

For the other signs, we can note the standard forms of the Early Dynastic *ductus*.[53] In general, the signs are not precisely engraved (one line often continues over another), and both their size and disposition are inaccurate (**Fig. 8**).

Cat. no.	Exc. no. (7 N)	No. of lines	Non-ordered signs	Separation line(s)	Frame
1	4	2?		x	x
2	99	3	x	x	x
3	122	4		x	
4	128	6		x	
5	147	6'?		x	x
6	201	2		x	
7	212	4		x	x
8	213	(1+)4		x	x
9	219	5'?		x	x
10	299	2	?	x	
11	150	4		x	x
12	153	5		x	x
13	236	5		x	
14	91	3		x	x
15	170	2	x	x	
16	171	1			
17	202	2			
18	205	2	x	x	
19	250	4	x	x	x
20	120	2		x	
21	133+134	4		x	x
22	199	2	?	x	

Fig. 8: Palaeographic features of inscribed objects from the Inanna Temple VIIB.

3.2.2 Inscription typologies[54]

3.2.2.1 One/two line inscriptions

As for the content, the elementary dedicatory inscription constituted by the name of the goddess or of the beneficiary is documented only once (**16**) among the findings of level VIIB and is substituted by an extended two-line version.

In the case of the dedication to Inanna, we assume that the second line following the name of the goddess contains a divine epithet, or perhaps the name of the donor (**1**, **6**, **20**). Regarding the hypothesis of an inscription constituted by "divine name + epithet," it should be noted that the case under investigation would be unique. The use of an epithet to qualify a deity in an inscription is limited to the long and composite votive inscriptions, i.e. the "royal" ones.

As for a two-line inscription beginning with a personal name, the second line contains the worshipper's title or profession.[55] This type is attested only on statues (**15**, **17**, **18**), all dedicated by men except for, possibly, one (**16**).[56]

3.2.2.2 The a … ru type inscription

The most common inscription type consists of the name of the divine recipient and the donor/beneficiary's data, and ends with the expression a … ru "dedicated (the object)." Inscriptions from male and female donors show different features in the data accompanying the personal name. In male inscriptions, after the divine name, the donor's name is followed by his title or profession, and in one case by his patronymic (**Fig. 9**).

Female inscriptions, instead of their title or profession after the donor's name, bear a reference to the closest male relative,[57] the husband, with the expression dam "wife of …" (**4**, **11**), together with (**5**) or substituted (**7**)[58] by the patronymic (dumu "daughter") (**Fig. 10**).

The only exception is the inscription on the fragment of a bowl (**14**), bearing what seems to be a standard four-line dedicatory inscription. The author is a woman qualifying herself by the title of "midwife" (ša_3-zu), without any male relationship. In another inscription (**13**), the identity and gender of the donor is blurred by his/her qualification as $\text{NIG}_3.\text{HI}_{gunû}$.ŠA.LI of Inanna-ursaĝ, and the relation with the latter.

In general, assuming we are correct in our identification of the gender of the donors, we can state that in male donors' inscriptions the qualifier is the man's title or profession; however, in female donors' inscriptions the name of a male relative (father, husband) is usually mentioned.

53 A chart of the signs and their variant in the Early Dynastic inscriptions from the Inanna Temple is provided by Goetze 1970: 55–56.

54 See Goetze 1970: 40; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 16–17.

55 See the discussion below *sub* Donors titles (3.3.2.2) and fig. 3.

56 For doubt about the donor gender of **15**, see below *sub* The gender of the donors (3.3.2.1).

57 Donbaz/Hallo 1976: 2–3; Marchesi 2002: 178–179. For female inscriptions in third millennium BC inscriptions, see the recent overview by Nowicki 2016.

58 The gender of the donor of **7** remains doubtful; see below the discussion *sub* **7**.

Male donors (**2**, **3** = **21**, **8**, **10**, **12**, **19**):
A) Divine name
B) Donor's data:
1) name
2) qualification:
a) title/profession (omitted in **10**)
b) patronymic (only in **12**)
C) a … r u "dedicated (the object)" (omitted in **2**)

Fig. 9: The structure of the inscriptions from male donors.

Female donors (**4**, **5**, **7**, **11**, **13**, **14**):
A) Divine name
B) Donor's data:
1) name
2) qualification:
a) "wife of …" (d a m; **4**, **5**, **11**)
b) "daughter of …" (d u m u; **5**, **7**)
C) a … r u "dedicated (the object)"

Fig. 10: The structure of the inscriptions from female donors.

Cat. no.	Exc. no. (7 N)	Inanna	Nin-SAR	No divine recipient	Fragm.
1	4	x			
2	99	x			
3	122		x		
4	128	x			
5	147				x
6	201	x			
7	212	x			
8	213	x			
9	219				x
10	299	x			
11	150	x			
12	153	x			
13	236	x			
14	91				x
15	170				x
16	171			?	
17	202			x	
18	205			x	
19	250	x			
20	120	x			
21	133+134		x		
22	199			x	

Fig. 11: Divine recipients mentioned in the inscriptions.

3.3 Analysis of the general contents of the inscriptions

3.3.1 Divine recipients

All the inscriptions are dedicated to the goddess Inanna, with two exceptions. These are a bowl (**3**) and a gypsum plaque (**21**). Both are dedicated to Nin-SAR by the chief-stonecutter, Lumma; these two are also the only cases in this corpus where two different objects bear the same inscription (**Fig. 11**).

3.3.2 Donors[59]

The only relationship[60] among the names recorded in the inscriptions is on two objects, two bowls (**4**, **5**), dedicated by the same donor, Aja-uĝ(du). She is qualified as

59 The donor, i.e. the one who devotes the object, may be different from the beneficiary of the votive gift. This differentiation may also explain some incongruence, such as a female name inscribed on a male statue, as possibly seen in **16**.

60 However, note the possible relation between the Lugal-uri of **10** and that of 7N-238; see fn. 33.

the wife of (the *ensi*) Abzu-kidu in both cases.[61] It is relevant to note the family adscription used by Aja-uĝ(du) in her inscriptions: in **4**, she qualifies herself as "wife of Abzu-kidu, the *ensi*," while in **5** she uses first the patronymic ("daughter of Amar-Iškur") and then adds her relationship with Abzu-kidu, whose title is not specified.[62] In this second inscription (**5**), the relation with her father is clearly perceived as more socially relevant at the moment the object is offered. We may wonder if by that time Abzu-kidu was not yet or no longer *ensi*. However, all these considerations remain hypothetical due to a lack of further information.

3.3.2.1 The gender of the donors

According to the inscriptions, it is possible to group the donors by gender. Although most of the donors are male, the proportion of female donors is very high in comparison to other *corpora*. Compared to eleven objects dedicated by ten male donors, we have six objects commissioned by five women. In both groups, there is a donor who dedicates two objects (Lumma, **3** and **21**; Aja-uĝ(du), **4** and **5**). It is impossible to determine the identity of the donor for five inscriptions.

Approximately half of the stone bowls are commissioned by women. Instead, almost all the other types of inscribed objects come from male donors. First, we could infer that while most of the objects are the prerogative of male donors, the bowls are the field of confrontation of gender and social dynamics. This may be due to the fact that bowls are the most common votive objects. The act of consecrating of a votive object, a … ru "to pour water," seems to corroborate the basic idea of a close relationship between libation and bowls, and we should bear in mind that several uninscribed bowls have been found in the same context.[63]

Although this consideration may be correct, we must consider that other uninscribed objects from level VIIB may have been commissioned by women. The large number of female donors dedicating bowls, however, indicates that this type of object was shared equally by the two genders.

3.3.2.2 Donors' titles and profession

As discussed above, female donors are qualified by referring to a male relative, i.e. their father or husband. This is different for male donors,[64] whose names are usually followed by a title or a profession. This happens in less than half of the entire corpus (ten cases of the over twenty-two inscriptions) and only for male donors, except for **14**, and possibly **13**. The highest official is the *saĝa* of **18**, while no royal inscriptions have been found in the Early Dynastic levels of the Inanna Temple (**Fig. 12**).

Title/profession		Gender	Object	No. of lines	Inscription
dam-gar$_3$-gal	chief merchant	♂	bowl	5	**12**
gal-zadim	chief stone-cutter	♂	bowl / plaque	4	**3** **21**
mu$_6$-sub$_3$	shepherd	♂	bowl	4+1	**8**
NIG$_2$.HI$_{gunû}$.ŠA.LI	?	?	bowl	5	**13**
nu-banda$_3$	overseer	♂	bowl	3	**2**
		♂	statue	2	**17**
saĝa	*saĝa*	♂	statue	2	**18**
SAR-gal(?)	chief engraver(?)	♂	peg	2	**22**
simug	smith	♂	vessel	4	**19**
ša$_3$-zu	midwife	♀	bowl	3+?	**14**

Fig. 12: Donors' titles and professions mentioned in the inscriptions.

5 Conclusions

From the overall analysis of the data from the Inanna Temple, some facts contrast with other *corpora* of inscribed objects from the Early Dynastic findings:

1) The absence of royal inscriptions, which underlines the popular character of Inanna's cult and temple, as also attested in later periods;[65]

61 Abzu-kidu's name is restored in **5**, see the discussion below *sub* **5**. Marchesi 2016: 100-2 has extensively discussed an inscribed vessel kept in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA 1980.71), bearing the inscription "[…] E-ama[…]amaĝu, mother of Abzu-kidu, presented it [to] ([…] / e$_2$-ama-ĝu$_{10}$ / ama$^{!}$(A×AN) / abzu-ki-du$_{10}$ / a mu-ru); the reference to Abzu-kidu may relate this object to the Inanna Temple level VII or VIIB, see fn. 33.

62 A similar case from the 'Royal Tombs' of Ur has been discussed by Marchesi 2002: 176 and 178f.

63 See fn. 39.

64 The only certain case is **12**.

65 The nearby Ekur temple may have attracted the main devotion of the rulers. The first royal inscription from the Inanna Temple is the mace-head dedicated by Narām-Sîn (6N-128), while an Ur III tablet (6N-T264) found in the temple itself bears the text of two Rīmuš' inscriptions, one of which mentions the dedication of the booty to the goddess Inanna; for both inscriptions, see Goetze 1968: 54f.

2) Inanna's cult appears particularly related to the female element, judging by the high numbers of women attested as donors and considering the relation that the goddess Inanna or Nin-SAR had with procreation;
3) the lack of royal inscriptions and the presence of women and donors who are for the most part well-positioned professionals mark the different social context of the Inanna Temple inscriptions with respect to other *corpora*.

All these elements raise the question of who had access to the temple, to writing, and to dedicatory practices. The evidence coming from the Inanna Temple at Nippur points to a private cult (and not to a public royal devotion) practiced by well-to-do individuals of the society who dedicated objects to the deity for their own benefit or on behalf of family members.

Some interesting questions remain open, such as the ritual function played by bowls and other objects from the Inanna Temple and the reasons why inscribed objects shared the same archaeological and religious context with uninscribed objects, and vice versa, and what this fact may reveal about the social and cultic use of writing. These issues are the subject of future research.

By taking all the different pieces of philological, epigraphic, and archaeological information into consideration, and by giving prominence to the holistic nature of inscribed objects, it is possible to reconstruct aspects such as the aim and the context of production and use of such votive materials. Furthermore, such an all-encompassing approach allows us to explore the life and afterlife of artefacts in their entirety, from the initial stages of production in the workshops to the final phase of deposition, or even discard, once the object lost its primary social use.[66] In all, I hope this paper will serve as an epistemological reflection regarding how the discipline of Assyriology has been carried out, as well as in what ways scholars relate to the object of analysis depending on their academic background and training.

66 For theoretical considerations on the social life of objects and on votive objects, see APPADURAI 1988 and FABIETTI 2014.

Appendix 1: Catalogue of the inscriptions

Bowls

Stone

1. 7N-4 (= IM 66121)

Bibl.: GOETZE 1970: 42, 48 (copy); STEIBLE 1982b: 237 AnNip. 16; BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1991: 131 G 93.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) NE / [(...)]

"To Inanna, ... [(...)]."

The text is broken after the second line, which is complete and occupied only by the NE sign. The latter may be well be the name of the donor; see **6**, **20**, and the discussion *sub* One/two line inscriptions (3.2.2.1).

2. 7N-99 (= A 31478)

Bibl.: GOETZE 1970: 42, 50 (copy); STEIBLE 1982b: 238–239. AnNip. 22; BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1991: 132 G 98.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) ur-^{d}inanna 3) nu-banda$_3$

"To Inanna, Ur-Inanna, the overseer."

3. 7N-122 (= IM 66062)

Bibl.: HANSEN 1963: 154ff.; GOETZE 1970: 42–43, 50 (copy); STEIBLE 1982b: 239–240 AnNip. 24 A; BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1991: 132 G 100.

1) ^{d}nin-sa[r] 2) lum-ma 3) gal-zad[im] 4) a m[u-ru]

"To Nin-SAR, Lumma, the chief stone-cutter, dedicated (this)."

Same inscription as no. **21**. For the personal name Lumma, see GOETZE 1970: 42–43; STEIBLE 1982b: 62 no. 103, 67f. no. 13; MARCHESI 2006: 79–80.

Lumma might well be the head of the stone-cutters working in or for the Inanna Temple. The only other stone-cutter inscription from the Early Dynastic period is from Lagaš, see STEIBLE 1982a: 365 AnLag. 15. For the inscription of another artisan, a smith (simug) from the Inanna Temple see no. **19**.

4. 7N-128 (= IM 66123)

Bibl.: GOETZE 1970: 43, 50 (copy); STEIBLE 1982b: 223 Abki. 1; COOPER 1986: 91 Ni 3; BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1991: 127 G 73, pl. 6; FRAYNE 2008: 355 E1.11.3.1.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) aja$_2$-uĝ$_3$ 3) dam-abzu-ki-du$_{10}$ 4) ensi$_2$-5) Nibru^{ki} 6) a mu-ru

"To Inanna, Aja-uĝ(du), the wife of Abzu-kidu, *ensi* of Nippur, dedicated (this)."

The inscription is written on the inside of a stone bowl, richly decorated on the outside with a mosaic. This unique position might suggest a symbolic value vis-a-vis a practical use of the bowl, a hypothesis that should be considered for the other exemplars.

For the name abzu-ki-du$_{10}$ and the ...-ki-du$_{10}$ type name, see Alberti/Pomponio 1986: 49–50; for aja$_2$-uĝ$_3$, abbreviation of aja$_2$-uĝ$_3$-du$_{10}$ "the father is pleasing to the people," see Marchesi 2002: 193 e 194 fn. 235.

5. 7N-147 (= ROM 962.143.022.a?[67])

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 43, 51 (copy); Steible 1982b: 223–224 Abki. 2; Cooper 1986: 91 Ni 3; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 128 G 74; Frayne 2008: 355f. E1.11.3.2.

(0?) [dinanna])? 1') [aja$_2$-uĝ$_3$] 2') du[mu-munus?]- 3') amar-dišk[ur] 4') dam- 5') abzu-ki-du$_{10}$ 6') a mu-ru

"[(To Inanna?) Aja-uĝ(du)], daughter of Amar-Iškur (and) wife of Abzu-kidu, dedicated (this)."

The integration and interpretation of this inscription is based on the hypothesis that the Abzu-kidu of line 5' is the same as 4: 3. This hypothesis is sustained by the scarcity of references to the personal name Abzu-kidu and the presence of the name on two objects from the same context, which may or may not be considered a coincidence. A different interpretation of the inscription may be advanced if we assume that Amar-Iškur is a female name; see Limet 1968: 69, 327, 375. In this case, the integration of lines 0-3 would be superfluous, and Amar-Iškur, wife of Abzu-kidu, would be the donor. This interpretation is corroborated by the uniqueness of an inscription with the name of the father and that of the husband; see above the discussion *sub* The a ... ru type inscription (3.2.2.2).

6. 7N-201 (= IM 66125)

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 44 ("mycaceous bowl"), 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 245 AnNip. 35; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 133 G 105.

1) dinanna 2) munus(-)dili

"To Inanna, the *singular woman*."

The second line might be the name of the donor as well as an epithet of the divine recipient; see **1**, **20**, and the discussion *sub* One/two line inscriptions (3.2.2.1).

7. 7N-212 (= ROM 962.143.027?[68])

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 246 AnNip. 38; Bauer 1985: 12; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 133 G 106.

1) dinanna 2) munus-šu-me 3) dumu ur-šubur 4) a mu-ru

"To Inanna, Munus-šume, the *daughter* of Ur-šubur, dedicated (this)."

The gender of the donor is far from certain. The statement of Goetze 1970: 45: "As in the great majority of these bowls it has been assumed that this bowl too was dedicated by a woman," is confuted by the number of bowls dedicated by male donors. The absence of the munus (sal) sign after dumu, to express the term "daughter" (dumu-munus) should not be surprising, since this common term (dumu-munus) is unattested in the Early Dynastic inscriptions; it is hypothetically restored in 5: 2' (du[mu-munus?]). On the contrary, the sign sal appears as an element of the otherwise unattested personal name munus-šu-me, but also in this case it seems not to be decisive evidence for the identification of the gender of the donor.

For šu-me as a writing for šurmen "cypress," see ePSD *s.v.*; Bauer 1976: 7 and Bauer 1982: 6. For a similar name, see ur-(d)šu-me-ša$_4$ (*ECTJ* 127: 2; *OSP* 2, 158: 3).

8. 7N-213 (=A 31498)

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 247 AnNip. 39; Bauer 1985: 12; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 G 107.

0) bur 1) di-abgal 2) mu$_6$-sub$_3$ 3) dinanna 4) a mu-ru

"Bowl. Di-abgal, the shepherd, to Inanna dedicated (this)."

For the reading of pa.usan as mu$_6$-sub$_3$ (= *na-gi-du-um*, *nāqidum*) see Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 "der Hirte(?)," following Bauer 1972: 498 and Bauer 1985: 12. The term is documented in a list of offerings from Nippur (ED IIIb), TMH 5, 164 (= ECTJ 164).

The sign bur has been scratched over the upper line of the frame that encloses the inscription (**fig. 5**), in what seems to be a secondary addition.

9. 7N-219 (= IM 66126)

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 247 AnNip. 40; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 G 108.

1') an-ub-˹x'[...] 2') har.du$_8$?.dur$_2$ 3') dumu ni [...] 4') nin-men [...] 5') [...]

C. Wilke *apud* Steible (1982b: 247) proposed the reading nin-me[n ...] for the name in l. 4'. For the name nin-men, see the text from Fara TSŠ 150: i 5-7 (nin-men ˹dam' šim-mu$_2$ geme$_2$-kar-kid).

10. 7N-299 (= IM 66128)

Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 46; Steible 1982b: 249–250 AnNip. 44; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 G 112.

1) dinanna lugal:uri$_3$ 2) a mu-ru

"To Inanna, Lugal-uri, dedicated (this)."

There is no separation line between Lugal-uri and Inanna. Lugal-uri may be related to another inscription from the Inanna Temple (7N-238), see fn. 33.

67 Kept in the "American School," according to Braun-Holzinger 1991: 128.

68 Kept in the "American School," according to Braun-Holzinger 1991: 133.

Alabaster

11. 7N-150 (= IM 66083)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 43, 51 (copy); Steible 1982b: 241 AnNip. 27; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 133 G 101.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) gan-^{d}en-lil$_2$ 3) dam u$_2$-tum 4) a mu-ru
"To Inanna, Gan-Enlil, wife of Utum, dedicated (this)."

12. 7N-153 (= MMA 62.70.10)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 43f., 52 (copy); Steible 1982b: 242 AnNip. 29; Bauer 1985: 12; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 133 G 103.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) ^{d}en-lil$_2$-aka 3) dam-gar$_3$-gal 4) dumu he$_2$:ti 5) a mu-ru
"To Inanna, Enlil-aka, chief merchant, son of Heti, dedicated (this)."

Westenholz *apud* Steible 1982b: 242 proposes the reading aka-^{d}en-lil$_2$ for the name in line 2, and also the reading bala$^{?}$-he$_2$ for TI.HE$_2$ (Westenholz 1975: 79); note, however, the same shape of the ti in the name *i$_3$-di$_3$-lum* in **18**: 1 and that he$_2$-ti is a common name in Neo-Sumerian documents.

13. 7N-236 (= IM 66084)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 248 AnNip. 41; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 G 109.

1) ^{d}inanna 2) inim-ma-zi 3) NIG$_2$.HI$_{gunû}$.ŠA.LI$^{?}$
4) ^{d}inanna- ur-saĝ 5) a mu-ru
"To Inanna, Inimmazi, ... of Inanna-ursaĝ, dedicated (this)."

The name in line 2 may be read inim-ma-<ni->zi, a common name, particularly in the Sargonic period. It is not possible to clarify the gender of the donor and their relationship with Inanna-ursaĝ, because of the *hapax* NIG$_2$.HI$_{gunû}$.ŠA.LI. Different is the interpretation of Steible 1982b: 248, who assumes NIG$_2$.HI$_{gunû}$.ŠA.LI is a personal name. In this case, we would have the divine recipient (l. 1), three donors (ll. 2-4), and the closing verb (l. 5).

Stone vessel fragment

14. 7N-91 (= ROM 962.143.014?[69])
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 42, 48 (copy); Steible 1982b: 238 AnNip. 21; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 132 G 97.

1) ⌜x⌝-[(x)]-na-na 2) ša$_3$-zu 3) a-mu-ru
"[...]-nana, the midwife, dedicated (this)."

69 Kept in the 'American School,' according to Braun-Holzinger 1991: 132; in the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology (Toronto), according to CDLI (P222777).

The X-na-na name-forms are very rare in the ED period (and totally absent in Nippur), regarding the later period, especially the Neo-Sumerian; on the other hand, the name na-na is quite common at Nippur.

Statues

15. 7N-170 (= IM 66177)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 44, 52 (copy); Steible 1982b: 242–243. AnNip. 30; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 43f., 72, 79, pl. 13d-e; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 250 St 59.

1) ur-dumu-zi$_3$-da 2) x (x)
"Ur-Dumuzida, ..."

The sign(s) of the second line is clear, but difficult to interpret. Different hypothetical readings have been proposed: lukur (SAL.ME), x.ME, gudu$_4$ (AH.ME), GAL(!).ZADIM(!); see Steible 1982b: 243. Braun-Holzinger 1977: 72 chooses the reading lukur, a female title that refers to the donor, rather than to the beneficiary, the statue representing a male subject.

16. 7N-171 (= A 31491)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 44; Steible 1982b: 243 AnNip. 31; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 38, 44, 72, 79, pl. 4c; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 251 St 60.

munus-ki-gal "Munus-kigal."

This name is a *hapax*, but the reading here proposed is supported by the anthroponyms constructed with ki-gal(-la) "the broad land," a term for the Netherworld, as the quite common lugal-ki-gal-la and e$_2$-ki-gal-la, but also mes-ki-gal-la, lu$_2$-ki-gal-la; for nin-ki-gal-la, see the late Sargonic text OSP 1, 39: iii 9.

17. 7N-202 (= IM 66182)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 44–45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 245f. AnNip. 36; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 38, 44, 72, 79, pl. 4f; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 251 St 62.

1) šeš-ki-na 2) nu:banda$_3$
"Šeškina, the overseer."

18. 7N-205 (= IM 66183)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 45, 53 (copy); Steible 1982b: 246 AnNip. 37; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 38–39, 44, 72, 79 pl. 6c-d and 12c; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 251 St 63.

1) *i$_3$:di$_3$:lum* 2) saĝa ^{d}en-lil$_2$
"Idilum, the *saĝa* of Enlil."

The reading Idē'ilum has been proposed by Braun-Holzinger 1977: 72. For other *saĝas* of Enlil, see Goetze 1970: 45 and Westenholz 1975: 107 *sub* En-líl, to which should be added the alabaster vessel of Zur-zur (CBS 9650), see Steible 1982b: 260f. AnNip. 64. The tablet

7N-T4 (see fn. 48) is a "copy on clay of a dedicatory inscription" (Goetze 1970: 46) of a wife of the saĝa of Enlil.[70] The name of the latter is not mentioned and he could be Idilum himself.

Vessels

19. 7N-250 (= A 31507)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 46, 54 (copy); Steible 1982b: 249 AnNip. 43; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 G 111.

1) [d]ʳinanna' 2) [x]:ʳa$_2$?':nu-kuš$_2$ 3) simug 4) a mu-ru
"To Inanna?, [x]-anukuš, the smith, dedicated (this)."

Braun-Holzinger 1991: 134 does not restore the first line ("To Inanna") and read the second line (that is to say the first) ʳnu?'-ki?-ʳx'-kuš$_2$. I prefer the reading of a personal name of the ...-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$ type such as a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, bil$_x$-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, dumu-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, munus-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, pa$_4$-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, šeš$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$, common in the ED documents, particularly from Fara, see Pomponio 1987. The name pa$_4$-a$_2$-nu-kuš$_2$ is found in another inscription from the Inanna Temple belonging to level VII.[71]

20. 7N-120 (= IM 66071)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 42, 50 (copy); Steible 1982b: 239 AnNip. 23; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 132 G 99; Marchesi 2016: 97–100.

1) dinanna 2) pa$_4$-nun
"To Inanna, Panun(?)."

The second line might be the name of the donor as well as an epithet of the divine recipient;[72] see **1**, **6**, and the discussion *sub* One/two line inscriptions (3.2.2.1). The vessel comes from a generic level VII, but it has been attributed to the level VIIB on the base of archaeological evidences; see Dolce 2008: 663 fn. 7.

Others

21. 7N-133+134 (= IM 66157)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 43, 51 (copy); Boese 1971: 184 N 6; Steible 1982b: 239–240 AnNip. 24; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 311 W 13.

1) dnin-sar 2) lum-ma 3) gal-zadim 4) a mu-ru
"To Nin-sar, Lumma, the chief stone-cutter, dedicated (this)."

Gypsum votive plaque of Lumma with the same inscription of **3**. The plaque has been broken into five pieces, which were buried in two different places; see the discussion *sub* Findspots (2.1). For a stylistic analysis of the plaque, see Pelzel 1977: 70–71; for other uninscribed votive plaques from the Inanna Temple, see Hansen 1963; Evans 2016: 174–176.

22. 7N-199 (= IM 66070)
Bibl.: Goetze 1970: 44, 52 (copy); Steible 1982b: 244–245 AnNip. 34; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 326 T 12; Evans 2016: 176–177.

1) sar-gal 2) an-da$_5$-si
"Andasi, the sar-gal(?)."

Diorite peg ending with bovine head (ca. 17~18 cm). Goetze 1970: 44 following the lines order has hypothesized the sequence divine recipient (sar-gal) donor (Andasi); a connection of sar-gal with Nin-sar would be possible, see the discussion *sub* Nin-sar, craftsmanship and procreation (2.2.1). Westenholz 1975: 78, followed by Steible 1982b: 245, proposes the inversion of the lines order. Thus, Andasi would be the name of the donor and sar-gal his title/profession. This reading is corroborated by the fact that sar-gal appears as name of profession in the Fara texts, see Pomponio 1987: 212f. The ideogram sar can be related to the idea of writing and engraving and other profession terms such as dub-sar "scribe" and gab$_2$-sar "engraver." A possible interpretation is thus sar-gal "chief engraver."

Appendix 2: Lists of the inscribed objects from level VIIB of the Inanna Temple at Nippur

According to Braun-Holzinger 1991, the objects **5**, **7**, **14** (*) are kept in the 'American School', while the CDLI catalogue records these objects as part of the Royal Ontario Museum.

70 1) dinanna 2) ʳka×x'.sar 3) dam 4) saĝa den-lil$_2$ 5) a mu-ru "To Inanna, ...-sar, wife of the *saĝa* of Enlil, dedicated (this)" (Goetze 1970: 46, 54). The artefact could be interpreted as a copy as well as a draft of an inscription to be engraved.

71 6N-392 = Goetze 1970: 41, 59 (copy); Steible 1982b: 234–235. AnNip. 12; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 131 G 89.

72 See Marchesi 2016: 97-100 with previous bibliography and a discussion of the evidences.

Cat. No.	Exc. No. (7 N)	Museum No.
1	4	IM 66121
2	99	A 31478
3	122	IM 66062
4	128	IM 66123
5	147	ROM 962.143.022.a
6	201	IM 66125
7	212	ROM 962.143.027
8	213	A 31498
9	219	IM 66126
10	299	IM 66128
11	150	IM 66083
12	153	MMA 62.70.10
13	236	IM 66084
14	91	ROM 962.143.014
15	170	IM 66177
16	171	A 31491
17	202	IM 66182
18	205	IM 66183
19	250	A 31507
20	120	IM 66071
21	133+134	IM 66157
22	199	IM 66070

Fig. 13: Inscribed objects from the Inanna Temple level VIIB ordered according to the numbering of the present publication.

Exc. No. (7 N)	Cat. No.	Museum No.
4	1	IM 66121
91	14	ROM 962.143.014
99	2	A 31478
120	20	IM 66071
122	3	IM 66062
128	4	IM 66123
133+134	21	IM 66157
147	5	ROM 962.143.022.a
150	11	IM 66083
153	12	MMA 62.70.10
170	15	IM 66177
171	16	A 31491
199	22	IM 66070
201	6	IM 66125
202	17	IM 66182
205	18	IM 66183
212	7	ROM 962.143.027
213	8	A 31498
219	9	IM 66126
236	13	IM 66084
250	19	A 31507
299	10	IM 66128

Fig. 14: Ordered according to excavation numbers.

Museum No.	Exc. No. (7 N)	Cat. No.
A 31478	99	**2**
A 31491	171	**16**
A 31498	213	**8**
A 31507	250	**19**
IM 66062	122	**3**
IM 66070	199	**22**
IM 66071	120	**20**
IM 66083	150	**11**
IM 66084	236	**13**
IM 66121	4	**1**
IM 66123	128	**4**
IM 66125	201	**6**
IM 66126	219	**9**
IM 66128	299	**10**
IM 66157	133+134	**21**
IM 66177	170	**15**
IM 66182	202	**17**
IM 66183	205	**18**
MMA 62.70.10	153	**12**
ROM 962.143.014	91	**14**
ROM 962.143.022.a	147	**5**
ROM 962.143.027	212	**7**

Fig. 15: Ordered according to museum numbers.

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Ištar-uš, Ninni-za.za and Gištarat: Three Temples for One Goddess in the Kingdom of Early Dynastic Mari. New Insights on the Interactions between Religious and Socio-Political Systems

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Abstract: The religious topography of Early Dynastic Mari clearly shows a division within the city in terms of its consecration to divine presence. At least two main parts can be identified, with strong evidence of an existing link between the topography and the personalities of the deities being honored in one or the other. Although some uncertainties remain regarding the pantheon of Early Dynastic Mari, three goddesses are thought to be the three hypostases of Ištar, whose role in any kingdom of the third millennium BC has not been demonstrated. Located in two very distinct but major areas of the town, the three of them seem to have played an important role in the official and religious life of their city. The importance of their role is evidenced by the abundance of items that were retrieved in their respective rooms, though these temples were destroyed and obviously plundered as was Mari in its entirety at the end of this period. Still, what was left behind constitutes three of the richest temple inventories of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia. The names of the divinities — Ištar-uš, Ninni-za.za, and Gištarat — are still subject to debate, but a consensus emerges to consider them as being three avatars of the same powerful Ištar. Comparing the inventories of the goods they were offered is one way to enter into and nourish these debates with more materialistic and archaeological data than with solely philological arguments. It also helps in understanding how the kingship of Mari, and the people surrounding it, considered this very goddess and how they came to create specific organic links with her different forms.

Key words: Mari, Early Dynastic, Ištar, kingship, votive sculpture, temple inventories, inscribed votive sculpture

1. Ištar-uš, Ninni-za.za, and Gištarat in the religious topography of Early Dynastic Mari

The religious topography of Early Dynastic Mari as revealed by the excavations[1] shows a dual distribution of the temples (**Fig. 1**). Indeed, two major areas seem to have been acting as if they were two centers for what must have been Mari religious life. The first is linked to the internal and official part of the town, the so-called palatial and religious area. The second is intimately tied to the fortification wall of the city. Moreover, this spa-

1 The results of the excavations can be found in Parrot's annual reports given in *Syria* from 1935 onwards and Parrot 1956; 1967. For recent re-evaluations of these works, refer to Margueron 2004: 234–71.

tial segregation follows a scheme of drastic disparity in terms of building quantity, showing a pattern where the general complex of religious constructions forms a cluster located in the core of the city, maybe itself subdivided at least in two, while only one is located at the outskirts of the city. By chance, inscriptions engraved on several objects retrieved in these respective contexts provide us with the names of the deities once honored. Three of these deities are supposed to have been three avatars of the goddess Ištar.[2] One of them is worshiped in a divine house situated at the city's outskirts and the two others in two adjoining places in the core of the town.

The name of the goddess whose house is at the outskirts of the city reads INANNA.NITA and was interpreted either as a male god, Aštar,[3] equivalent of Aštarat, or, more likely, as "male" Ištar, Ištar-uš.[4] The names of the two other forms of Ištar are also the subject of debate. CHARPIN (2008: 221–33) suggested that Eštar-Arbat is the likely reading of Ninni-ZA.ZA, while Lecompte and Colonna d'Istria (LECOMPTE 2013: 134) propose that this name is a specific writing of Ištar Sarbat, to be translated as "Ištar of the poplar grove." According to LECOMPTE (2013: 134–35), the name of the third avatar of Ištar, Gištarat, could be related to Basurrat, namely Ištar from Bišri. Significantly enough, the temple of Ištar-uš,[5] a warlike and powerful form of the goddess, was leaning against the city wall and one of its gates,[6] while the two other deities were housed in the core of the city in adjoining buildings.[7] Thus, what is likely to have been three hypostases of the same deity have been honored in three different temples, two of them organically related to one another and the third standing at the periphery of the city. This appealing topographical repartition is likely to be meaningful: the male form of the goddess, Ištar-uš, acts as a defensive and warrior divine force in its related topography, while her two other avatars, whose personalities and roles will need further analysis, are tied to the political and religious quarter and reveal other facets of the deity in the pantheon.

According to LECOMPTE (2013), the Mari pantheon as known from the corpus of inscriptions remains unclear though its specificities appear when compared to other Early Dynastic sources.[8] Several divinities turn out to be attested only in the inscriptions, unless they appear in the other sources under a different written form. Moreover, the personalities of several deities still need to be understood, as with Ninni-ZA.ZA or Gištarat.[9] From this perspective, the analysis of their respective temples and the comprehensive study of their inventory of deposited and offered goods can bring some new insights by reflecting, on the one hand, the perception people had of their gods and, on the other hand, the function once assigned to their respective "houses." In that sense, the temples respectively dedicated to one of three specific forms of the same goddess, Ištar, are worth being considered in a comparative perspective in order to possibly clarify their relative position within the religious and political system prevailing at Mari during this period as well as within their possible intrinsic sub-system. Furthermore, these three temples constitute the richest group of Mari religious buildings as revealed by what was left of the object inventories in their rubble.

Aside from their architectural features, which have already been discussed elsewhere,[10] their material inventories, which can provide us with interesting and meaningful information related to their divine hosts as well as to the possible specificity of the deposits offered to them, are the aim and focus of this article. As a matter of fact, the Ištar-uš temple inventory was previously presented and discussed in the volume of the 10th ICAANE[11] dedicated to Early Dynastic deposits, and the issue has been observed through two complementary approaches[12] following a set of researches presented in 2014 in an exhibition and in a special edited volume.[13] These com-

2 The discussion began with the discovery of three statues naming Ištar-uš in 1934 (see THUREAU-DANGIN 1934: 137–43). On the names of these goddesses, see also PARROT 1953, DOSSIN 1967, CHARPIN 2008 and LECOMPTE 2013.

3 Aštar could have been the male consort of the goddess Ištarat, a hypothesis which has been discussed by KREBERNIK 1984: 165 and by Lecompte in CLUZAN/LECOMPTE 2011: 18; 2014: 654.

4 THUREAU-DANGIN 1934; DOSSIN 1967; LECOMPTE 2013.

5 Refer to PARROT 1956 for a detailed publication of the temple. For a re-evaluation of this temple, see MARGUERON 2014: 131–48 and MARGUERON 2017 for an entirely new vision of the temple topography and stratigraphy.

6 A statement already mentioned by PARROT (1953: 215).

7 For the final report on the work carried out in these two temples, see PARROT 1967. Their topographical features will have to come under consideration in the near future since these two buildings could in fact have been just one.

8 Refer to the table proposed by LECOMPTE 2013: 134.

9 See MARCHESI/MARCHETTI 2011: 185; LECOMPTE 2013: 134.

10 MARGUERON 2004: 241–44, 246–49.

11 CLUZAN (forthcoming).

12 The first approach considers the set of objects from a typological perspective and is carried out by different members of the Mari team. The second approach considers the whole temple inventory or specific part of it in a more contextual and historical perspective. These last works are being carried out by Butterlin, Cluzan, Couturaud and Margueron.

13 Exposition held at the Arab World Institute in Paris with a volume edited by CLUZAN/BUTTERLIN 2014.

Fig. 1: Plan of the Early Dynastic city of Mari (Ville II) indicating the locations of the Ištar-uš, Ninni-za.za, and Gištarat temples (after J.-C. Margueron).

prehensive works gave birth to a new vision of this temple within the religious and political system of Mari, enlightening the strength of the relationship established by the political and military power with its goddess, Ištaruš, who could actually be named the "goddess of power and defense" if one considers the role her temple played within the social and political system of Mari. This work was followed by a new overall evaluation of the building by Margueron (2017). Until the organization of this Munich workshop, the temples of the two other forms of Ištar — Gištarat and Ninni-za.za — received less attention despite the fact that their mother-of-pearl inlays had already been studied in a contextual and topographical approach by Couturaud (2013; 2014) in the course of her general dissertation about inlay production at Mari. The aim of this article is to present the first results of a comprehensive and comparative study of these three buildings. These results sometimes rely on more specific studies conducted by all the members of the Mari team, a fact that will, of course, be underlined in this article.

2. The available documentation and its relevance

The three temples of Ištar-uš, Ninni-za.za, and Gištarat have been excavated by Parrot, whose work on these buildings was carried out in 1934 and 1936 for the first, and 1952 and 1953 for the second and third. His research was documented according to the general framework he set up for the Mari excavations, combining field notes[14] and object inventories on individual cards with description and provenience. Several photographs were also taken, quite systematically, both in the course of the fieldwork and while proceeding with the inventories.[15] The scientific publications regularly given by Parrot, on an annual basis in *Syria* as well as with a more irregular tempo in several monographs, each being dedicated to specific buildings, constitute other important sources of information. Noteworthy for our purpose are the important parts of these monographs dedicated to inventories. Lastly, some of the books Parrot wrote for a larger audience can also be helpful, sometimes giving further clarifications about his works or even some details otherwise not recorded in his field notes and publications.[16] With all these sources, an overall reconstruction of the temple inventories is broadly possible, and a re-evaluation of the results of the excavations can be undertaken.[17]

Nevertheless, despite the fact that these documents show Parrot's real concern for a stratigraphic and contextual approach to archaeology, they cannot provide us with enough information concerning the exact provenience of the items or some of the important architectural or stratigraphic features. Thus, uncertainties remain, notably on the exact location of the goods and on their stratigraphic attribution. These uncertainties are far more important in the case of the Ištar temple, which was excavated at the very beginning of the expedition, conducted by a team with a real lack of experience at the site. Yet, the Gištarat temple, though excavated later in the history of the excavation, does not seem to have been understood properly, and a great amount of information is missing. Moreover, some discrepancies exist between what can be drawn from Parrot's own inventories (file cards and publications) and some of his brief comments concerning the function of the different rooms of the temples. One instance worth being mentioned concerns the temple of Gištarat (cf. **Figs. 4, 5**). Indeed, according to the excavator's inventories, room 8 of the Gištarat temple is far more important in terms of the quantity of objects than room 5. Nevertheless, Parrot makes a reverse statement concerning these two rooms, with a preeminent role given to room 5 in terms of the quantities and qualities of objects and interpreting it as the very holy place on this basis as well as on the presence of some cultic installations (Parrot 1967: 19).[18]

Some other inconsistencies could be reported that were sometimes considered noteworthy enough to forbid any distribution study. But even if they are worth being

14 The content of the field notes is rather poor: only a few lines per day and sometimes mainly focusing on overall considerations.

15 All these documents are kept in Maison de l'Archéologie de Nanterre and come under a program of digitalization carried out by the Service des Archives Nationales under the direction and the supervision of the Mission Archéologique de Mari, directed by Butterlin. Some of the Mari archives were not taken out of the Louvre by Parrot and are still kept there (Département des Antiquités orientales) but they overall have no relation with the scientific part of the excavation, mainly constituted of personal letters. Indeed, Parrot directed the Mission Archéologique de Mari in the name of the Louvre until he retired in 1970. A set of documents is also to be found in the Center of National Archives in Pierrefitte, again mainly administrative or personal, that had been kept previously in the National Museums Archives.

16 See, for instance, Parrot 1936; 1979.

17 This issue constitutes one of the main programs being undertaken by the Mari French Team.

18 "Holy place" and "very holy place" are designations built upon the Semitic biblical description of the Temple of Jerusalem. They are used in the Semitic context of Near Eastern archaeology to avoid using "cella", which refers to the Classical religious world, far from the Oriental religious conceptions we are dealing with. The holy place is a place of holiness where the offerings take place, while the very holy place is the last room of the temple, usually not to be entered by all, where the divine stands and appears.

mentioned — since they draw some limits to any hypothesis concerning the interpretation of room functions and their possible interactions — one can still certainly rely on Parrot's distribution to demonstrate the general trend of each of these religious buildings. One example can be cited here in order to strengthen this statement: the distribution of statues in the Ištar-uš temple (cf. **Figs. 2**, **3**). Indeed, most of them were retrieved from two rooms interpreted as very holy places. One of these rooms, room 17, contained about 80% female figures, while the other one, room 18, showed a reversed average of 80% male figures. This distribution is so clear that it cannot come from any registration mistake. As such, it can be related either to a hypothetical will of Parrot to build a peculiar scheme or to the actual use people made of these two rooms during the lifetime of the temple. Accepting the first possibility means considering that Parrot purposefully created a false distribution pattern. But Parrot never mentioned this trend of a reverse ratio of gender between the two very holy places of this important temple, and if he did pay any attention to contextualizing the objects, he hardly paid any attention beyond that to their pattern of distribution. Moreover, considering the overall inventory of the anthropomorphic statues found in this temple reveals that the general trend of this building is female in terms of gender, enhancing the meaning of the male statues concentrated in one of its two very holy places. Lastly, one can consider the inventory of items retrieved in the southern outer area of the temple,[19] where the ratio between female and male is balanced, to see that it clearly indicates that the recording of the two very holy places was accurately done. Thus, I believe that we can rely on Parrot's original documentation of provenience even if more detailed records and mappings would indeed have been welcomed for such important and numerous discoveries.

Historical facts must also be considered when looking at what was retrieved from Early Dynastic Mari since the city was destroyed and partially burned by Akkadian armies. Without entering into the question of the chronological position of these destructions, it is worth mentioning that although they allowed items to be integrated in this layer, providing us with the possibility of presenting this study, nothing can be said of the original inventory of the respective buildings. Whether what was left is relevant to have a complete and exact idea of the respective roles of these monuments within a religious system is a question which cannot be answered. In that respect, one must keep in mind that the following discussion is based on what was left and incorporated into the stratigraphic layers of this destruction. Although these data might be skewed, the results I present in this paper show how they can still reveal some meaningful features. A quick glance at the Ištar-uš inventory combined with what can be inferred from her name about her personality can confirm the relevance of this approach.

Following these remarks, the inventories of the three temples can be presented and discussed in a more comprehensive way, considering the main types of items retrieved in their rooms. In this article, I chose to ignore some categories of objects that I consider less helpful for characterizing the three divine personalities under consideration. These are ceramics, terracotta figurines, and cylinder seals, sometimes poorly represented in these buildings and whose distribution looks meaningless for our purpose.[20] The *baytilos* said to have been found in the Ninni-za.za temple is also discarded from this study since its exact stratigraphic position is all but certain.[21]

3. The inventory of the Ištar-uš temple

As presented elsewhere, the main result of a spatial analysis of the Ištar-uš temple inventory is the evidence for a strong correlation between its typological classification and the nature or function of the different temple areas and rooms. As a matter of fact, this temple can be subdivided into three main parts: service areas, holy rooms and very holy rooms; there is also an important area for finds outside the temple, located in its southern boundaries and to which I shall refer to hereafter as Southern area 20 (**Fig. 2**).[22]

19 Numbered "20" in A. Parrot's publications.

20 With the exception of the large cylinder seal M. 329 that was retrieved in the very holy room 17 with an outstanding iconography. See Parrot 1956: p. 187–188 and pl. 75, 329. For an overall inventory of the seals retrieved in the temples, see Parrot 1956: 187–199 and 1967: 275–277. For further remarks on the seals from the Ištar-uš temple, see Beyer/Lecompte 2014.

21 According to some photos taken by Parrot in the course of his work in this area of the temple, the *baytilos* clearly seems to come from upper strata. This needs further investigation; see Butterlin 2011: 90–92.

22 As mentioned above, Parrot numbered this zone "20" and considered it as courtyard, opening to the sanctuary by a northern stair (Parrot 1956: 38–39). This interpretation has further been discussed by Margueron (2004: 246–249), who demonstrated that the area had to be viewed as an external zone unrelated to the internal organization of the temple itself. My own work on the objects retrieved from this area confirm Margueron's interpretation; see Cluzan 2014: 250.

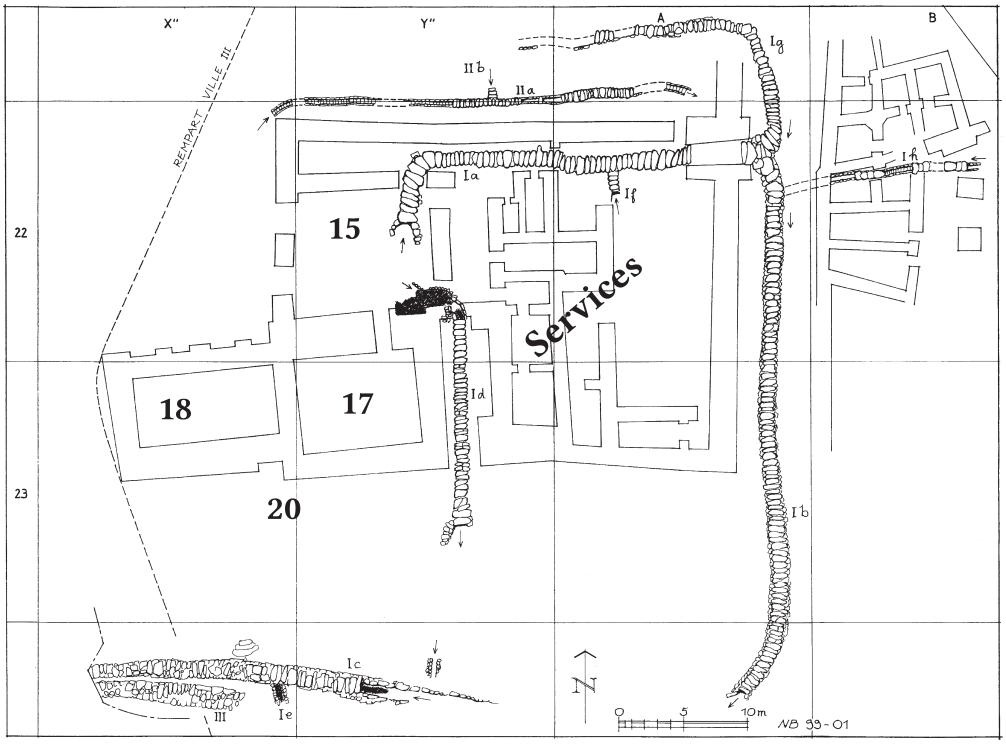

Fig. 2: Plan of the Ištar-uš-temple at Mari (Ville II) (after J.-C. Margueron).

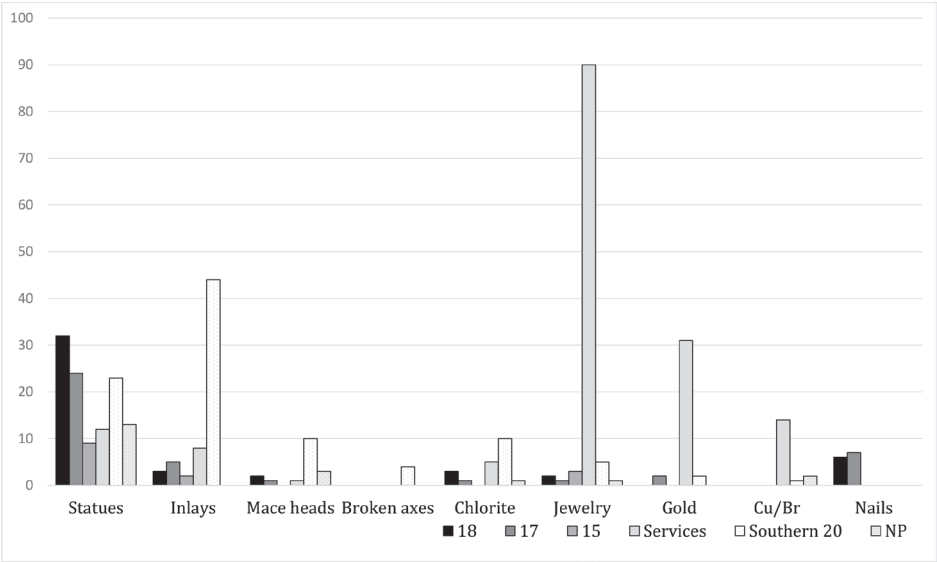

Fig. 3: The inventory of the Ištar-uš temple according to object types and findspots. Statues are mainly located in the two very holy places (**rooms 17** and **18**). The Southern external area (**Southern 20**) accounts for large amounts of precious objects with statues, mace heads, broken axes, and mother of pearl inlays. Jewelry and gold are concentrated in the so-called service areas (**Services**). **NP** stands for "no precise provenience".

Considering the degree of correlation between typology and topography, the main meaningful features appear clearly on the diagram of the temple inventory (**Fig. 3**).

Even if they are not exclusively found in this sanctuary, the big and very heavy copper foundation nails constitute a highly distinctive feature of the Ištar-uš temple because of their quantity and weight amounting to more than 100 kg of metal deposited as foundation offerings (Montero Fenollos 2014). Their main spatial characteristic is their exclusive relation to some rooms, thus displaying their link with the high degree of sanctity of the places where they were deposited. Indeed, these objects were exclusively found in rooms 17 and 18, the two holiest places of the

temple, linking the very presence of the deity to one of the most valuable goods to be found in an alluvial plain city where copper ore cannot be obtained except through an effective and controlled long distance trade. This link of the Ištar-uš temple with metallic wealth is also displayed by the large and varied set of metal artefacts, such as tools and weapons, found in its rooms.

In the same way, the Ištar-uš temple supplied the excavator with a large quantity of anthropomorphic alabaster statues as well as with elements of composite sculptures carved in different materials.[23] This part of its inventory accounts for one of its most distinctive and peculiar features. All these figures were mostly gathered in the two very holy places of the sanctuary, rooms 17 and 18, evidencing a strong correlation between human presence in the form of votive statues and divine presence in these specific areas of the temple. Nevertheless, the external Southern area 20 also provided A. Parrot with an impressive amount of important votive sculpture, though the peculiarity of this context may seem quite anachronistic for highly meaningful votive objects.

A large quantity of chlorite vessels was also found in the Ištar-uš temple,[24] constituting one of its key features in a city which appears to be the northern limit of the chlorite vessel distribution in Mesopotamia. In fact, the Ištar-uš temple inventory contained the highest amount of chlorite vessels ever found in an Early Dynastic temple. Moreover, some of its vases are unique in type and dimensions when compared to the bulk of contemporary production of chlorite vessels in the Near East.[25] Lastly, the Ištar-uš temple yielded the largest chlorite vessel ever found, carved from more than 35 kg of stone and with a capacity of 40 liters.[26] Together with these physical peculiarities, the chlorite vessel displays an iconographic program symbolically related to power, using the dominating majestic flight of a lion-headed eagle.[27] Since evidence for two vases of this type was excavated by Parrot, the Ištar-uš temple yielded one of the highest quantities of chlorite vessels ever found in an Early Dynastic religious building, in Mari as well as elsewhere.

The display of power was also the main subject of the Ištar-uš temple inventory of mother-of-pearl items, another rare and precious material for a northern Mesopotamian city. With the exception of very few small elements, the vast majority of these objects were found in the Southern area 20, outside the temple. Retrieved as single elements of inlays once forming what may have been one or more scenes, they are all related to the depiction of war and victory in the form of armed soldiers, naked enemies, and chariots. Mace heads and intentionally-broken stone axes constitute another militaristic and powerful feature of the Ištar-uš temple inventory. They were collected in the Southern area 20, reinforcing that important objects in terms of quantity and quality as well as in terms of their symbolic meaning were clustered here. Jewels and jewelry also distinguish the Ištar-uš temple inventory through their high quantity, diversity, and quality. Surprisingly, they were not found in the very holy places as one could expect but in rooms thought to belong to the service areas of the temple.

Considering the existing strong correlation between typology, iconography, and temple areas, the question arises of the possible meaning of the Ištar-uš temple as a socio-political religious marker. Another key feature of the Ištar-uš temple concerns gender as expressed by votive sculpture, which can be summarized as follows. First, as mentioned above, the Ištar-uš temple is mostly a "female" temple with an overall ratio of 75% of the statues representing female figures.[28] This female gender is unique in the whole religious system of Mari as represented by its temples where human depictions once offered in the temples are usually displaying a reversed ratio with at least 75% of the statues representing male figures. Nevertheless, within this unique trend, as already mentioned, one exception must be reported for one of its two very holy places, namely room 18, in which the female to male ratio is the opposite of what is evidenced elsewhere else in the temple. Thus, if the holy place 17 is "female" — as is the entire temple — then the holy place 18 is "male,"[29] depicting what may have been a kind of complementary gender in terms of the function of the two very holy rooms. Moreover, with a ratio of fifty female sculptures versus fifty males, the external Southern area 20 forms another exception to the otherwise dominance of female gender in the Ištar-uš temple, evidencing once again the critical role of this external area in a more comprehensive study of the temple system.

23 These elements are mostly parts of animals: lapis-lazuli curls, shell locks. Refer to Parrot 1956: 128–129. These pieces are similar to the ones that were used in the Royal Cemetery of Ur like for the bearded bull heads of the harps or the "rams in the thicket".

24 Parrot 1956: p. 113–120.

25 Butterlin 2014a.

26 According to the reconstruction given by Butterlin 2014a: 182 and Ill. 7.

27 Parrot 1956: pl. 47.150. For a more recent analysis of this vase, see Butterlin 2014a: 180–182.

28 For further details see Cluzan 2014: 248–50.

29 In total, the female ratio of sculpture from the Ištar-uš temple is 75%. In room 17, it is 80.6%, and in room 18, it is only 20.8 %.

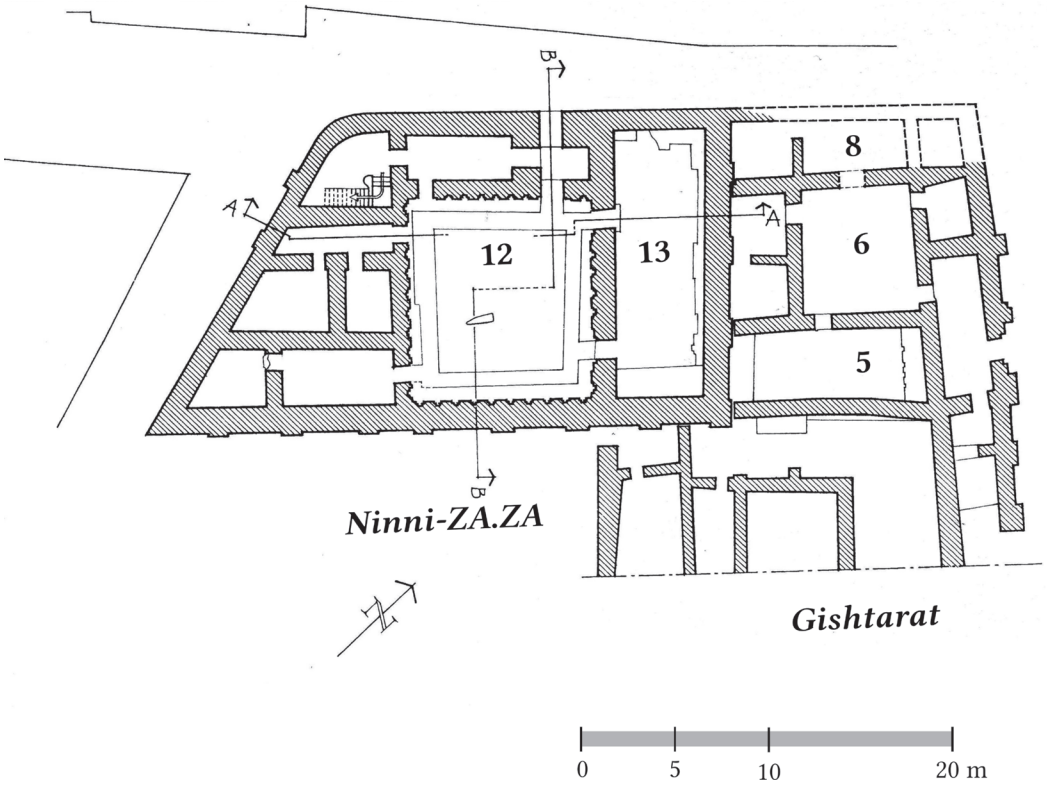

Fig. 4: Plan of the Ninni-za.za and the Gištarat-temples at Mari (Ville II) (after J.-C. Margueron).

Despite the domination of female statues, only three male statues carried inscriptions. Two of them, a king named Išqi-Mari[30] and a nu-banda$_3$ official named Ebih-Il,[31] were found in the Southern area 20 while the statue of Iddi-Nârum, an "elder,"[32] was retrieved from the very holy room 18. Together with these statues, three objects also bear an inscription with a reference to a personal name. One vase and one mace head were found in the very holy place 17, while one vase belonged to the inventory of Southern area 20. With this particular part of the inventory, the Ištar-uš temple displays images of royal or highly powerful persons ranking from king to nu-banda$_3$ and elder. Moreover, as I demonstrated elsewhere (Cluzan/Lecompte 2014b: 257–260, pl. 2–3), the statue of king Išqi-Mari did not stand in the temple praying as previously assumed by many authors but as a warrior, armed and victorious, displaying his power in all his military apparatus in front of his goddess, Ištar-uš. The same ideal of war and victory is expressed by the pearly shell inlays and through the presence of the highly symbolic mace heads and intentionally-broken axes retrieved from the same context as the king's statue.

In looking at the diversity and the quantity of rare materials that were contained in the Ištar-uš temple, it can be argued that this divine house displayed both the city's wealth and the geopolitical role of the kingdom of Mari as a strong center for controlling the traffic of goods and precious materials. In that respect, it represents the royal capacity to drain vast quantities of copper, gold, carnelian, lapis lazuli and chlorite once offered and displayed in the house of the deity of power, kingship, war, and victory. As such, the Ištar-uš temple appears as the very center for the staging of power in imagery. Hence, its topographical links to the inner defensive wall of Mari and its immediate vicinity to what may have been one of the main entrances to the city, leading to the palace area and linking the outer world to the wealth of the kingdom, are not coincidental. The Ištar-uš temple stands for a political system willing to display its power and strength through a unique and demonstrative topographical position. As a temple where kingship was displayed, one

30 Thureau-Dangin 1934: 140–41; followed by Parrot 1935: 23–4, pl. 6–7; 1956: 68–70, pl. 25–6. For more recent insights on the name, titles and attires of this king, see Cluzan/Lecompte 2014b: 256–262.

31 Thureau-Dangin 1934: 143. Followed by Parrot 1935: 25–27 and 1956, 70–1, fig. 47, pl. 27–29. For more recent insights on his name and title, see Cluzan/Lecompte 2011: 16–19; 2014a: 649–52; 2014b: 262–268.

32 Thureau-Dangin 1934: 142. Followed by Parrot 1935: 27, pl. 9; 1956: 71–74, pl. 30. For more recent insights on his name and title, see Cluzan/Lecompte 2014b: 268–269.

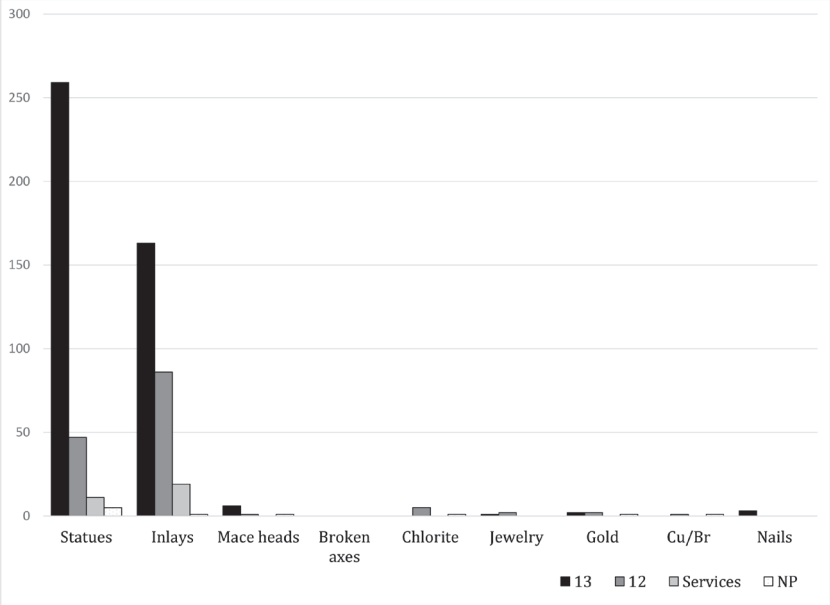

Fig. 5: The inventory of the Ninni-za.za temple showing the overall trend of this temple towards sculpture (322 statues and fragments) and mother of pearl inlays (269 elements), mostly found in the very holy place (**room 13**) as well as in the holy place (**room 12**). Jewelry, gold, copper and chlorite are poorly represented in this temple. Almost no objects come from the service areas (**Services**). **NP** stands for "no precise provenience".

can come to the hypothesis that it was a place where the rituals of kingship could have been perpetrated, if this ritual is ever demonstrated for Early Dynastic Mari. Finally, the gender differentiation and the complementarity of the two holy places, rooms 17 and 18, could reflect either the nature of the divine personality herself or a topographical distinction between two protagonists or groups of protagonists for cultic activities. In the first hypothesis, it would be tempting to draw a link between the gendered distribution of statues within the Ištar-uš temple and the name of the divinity, if one accepts its interpretation as "Ištar male", that is to say, Ištar in her male aspect. On the other hand, this topographical segregation could be the result of different cultic actors, namely and possibly the king and the queen — if their respective roles in religious practice is ever demonstrated — or two distinctive groups of priestesses and priests. This hypothesis will remain as such unanswered, as will the question of understanding why a temple whose function seems to have been clearly devoted to the display of the city's geopolitical role and consequently its kingship is mostly inhabited by female images, particularly when all the other temples, far less expressive in terms of power, have all male images as their inhabitants. Looking at the two other temples of Ištar avatars is one of the ways to collect more information on this peculiarity.

4. The Ninni-za.za temple inventory

As in the Ištar-uš temple, the objects were all retrieved from the destruction layers of the temple (**Fig. 4**). As revealed by its finds, the Ninni-za.za temple is one of the richest temples of Early Dynastic Mari, with vast quantities of statues and mother-of-pearl inlays (**Fig. 5**). Following a scheme already observed in the Ištar-uš temple, its inventory appears to be typologically linked to the different areas of the temple.

A quick look at its diagram allows us to strictly correlate the very holy place, room 13, with some of the major types of goods, such as foundation nails, anthropomorphic statues, pearly shell inlays, and stone mace heads. As for the Ištar-uš temple, it is obvious that neither jewelry nor chlorite vessels were linked to the divine room. Nevertheless, there is a major discrepancy between these two deities in terms of their relation to jewelry. In fact, with only three pieces retrieved from the Ninni-za.za temple, this category of goods is far less important than in the Ištar-uš sanctuary, a fact which reinforces the connection between Ištar-uš and rare and precious materials. Obviously, gold and stones were brought to Ištar-uš while they did not enter the inventory of offerings presented to Ninni-za.za, whose temple thus appears far less related to geopolitical and economic considerations.

In contrast, anthropomorphic images were clearly more important in the Ninni-za.za temple than in other temples of Early Dynastic Mari. In fact, with 322 statues, the Ninni-za.za temple accounts for the largest inventory of statues in Early Dynastic religious Mari.[33] According to Parrot's documentation, all the statues were retrieved from above the second floor of the holy places numbered 12 and 13.[34] An impressive amount of sculpture was notably retrieved from room 13,[35] considered to be the place for divine theophany, revealing a scheme of distribution which has already been observed for the Ištar-uš temple. If female statues were predominant in Ištar-uš, they are

33 See the inventory given by Parrot 1967: 37–178.

34 Parrot, 1967: 31.

35 259 statues were collected in room 13 and 47 in room 12. Service areas contained 11 statues while 5 of them are left with no clear indication of provenience.

hardly represented in Ninni-za.za, only accounting for 8.7% of its statues, thus giving it a clear male gender feature. Of its male statues, some 23 were inscribed, with 20 of them found in the very holy room 13 and only 3 from room 12. Most of them mention high-ranking people with honorific titles, some being members of the royal family. Although kings are sometimes mentioned in these inscriptions, none of these statues can actually be interpreted as depicting a ruler.[36] Apart from these 23 inscribed images, no other inscribed objects were found in the Ninni-za.za inventory. Significantly enough, stone mace heads are linked with statues and were mainly retrieved from the very holy place but no intentionally-broken axes were retrieved. Mother-of-pearl inlays were also mainly found in the very holy room 13, while the second room in terms of holiness, room 12, also accounts for quite a number of them. Overall, the majority of shell inlays discovered in Early Dynastic Mari were found in this temple, with 269 pieces recorded by Couturaud (2013), while the quantity falls to 61 for Ištar-uš and 16 for Gištarat.[37]

Generally, the Ninni-za.za temple inventory has the lowest degree of diversity in terms of the typology of items. It consists primarily of anthropomorphic images, without evidencing any particular preferences in terms of variety of objects or types of materials. In contrast, the adjoining temple hosting Gištarat follows a trend of higher diversity.

5. Gištarat temple inventory

Located on the eastern flank of the Ninni-za.za sanctuary and closely tied to it was the Gištarat temple, whose northern part was not preserved (**Fig. 4**). According to Parrot, the most southern room constituted its very holy place, which he numbered 5.[38] To the north, room 5 was bound by holy place 6, which was in turn bound on the north by room 8, whose northern part could not be entirely retrieved. This last room did not receive any functional interpretation and was left by the excavator, without any precise explanation; additionally, part of the inventory of the temple lacks precise provenience information. Such is the case for the totality of different kinds of objects, such as mace heads or intentionally-broken axes as well as for the majority of some other kinds of objects, such as mother-of-pearl inlays or chlorite vessels. Of course, this lack of information makes any attempt to draw a specific scheme of distribution quite uneasy or risky. Nevertheless, for some parts of the inventory, a distribution pattern can be drawn, such as for anthropomorphic statues or jewelry (**Fig. 6**).

In doing so, if we follow Parrot's functional analysis, the inventory of the different rooms of the temple produces an image of correlations slightly different from the inventories of Ištar-uš or Ninni-za.za. In fact, whereas these two temples clearly show an existing link between their very holy places and several particular kinds of objects, such as statues, mace heads and shell inlays, the Gištarat temple evidences a very holy place with statues far less numerous than in its holy place 6 or, more significantly, than in room 8, an area which, according to the excavator, had never been linked to the divine.[39] In other words, if we consider the specific link we observed in Ištar-uš and Ninni-za.za between the deities and their worshipers, room 5 cannot be considered as the very holy place of the sanctuary, which instead seems to have been located in room 8 if we consider the importance of its inventory.

Furthermore, even though jewelry is as poorly represented[40] in Gištarat as it is in Ninni-za.za, it was mostly found in its very holy place, room 5, featuring something very different from what was shown by the two other temples in which jewelry was obviously rejected from spaces with a high degree of sanctity. The strangeness of this topography of the inventory of Gištarat is also clearly shown by the distribution of inscribed objects and statues (**Fig. 7**).

In fact, one perforated plaque, one vase, and two statues, respectively, bearing an inscription were found in the holy room 6 while one inscribed statue was found in northern room 8 and none in the very holy place 5. This distribution leaves the very holy place with little evidence of important items and no evidence of inscribed objects, even though the relevance of these specific objects in the area of divine presence is highly demonstrated by the two other temples. Following these remarks, if we take for granted the functional analysis of the

36 For the different titles of the high-ranking people and for a discussion of the interpretation of some statues as images of kings with a reference to the formula used in the inscription, see Lecompte 2013. Marchesi and Marchetti (2011) gave another interpretation of some of these statues, considering, for instance, the larger size of some of them as a relevant factor to determine their royal status.

37 Couturaud 2013: 88 (volume III).

38 Parrot 1967: 17.

39 Parrot 1967: 21. Note that the excavator mentions a poor inventory for this room (a few pieces of *kaunakes*), contradicting his own inventory.

40 Gištarat temple contained four pieces of jewelry, out of which 3 were retrieved in its very holy place.

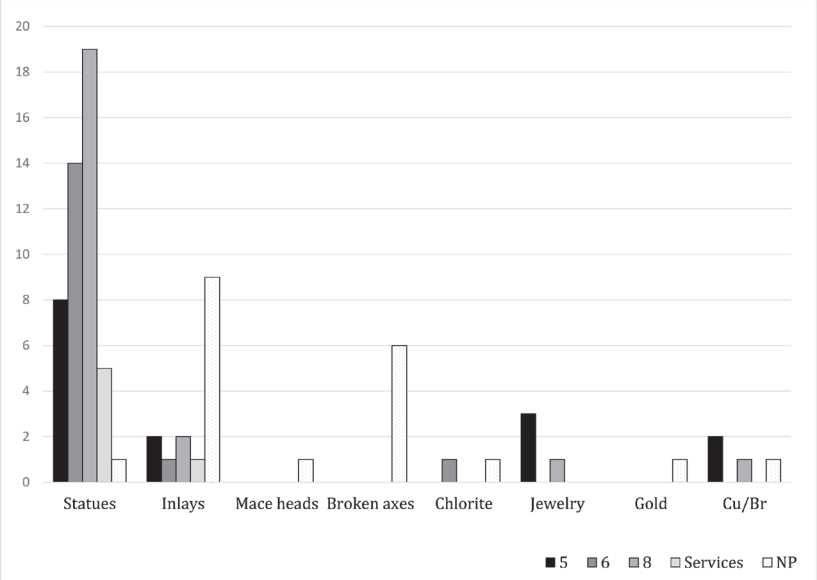

Fig. 6: The inventory of the Gištarat temple according to object types and find-spots. According to Parrot, **room 5** is the very holy place of the temple, while **room 6** is a holy place, and **room 8** has no specific function. All other rooms are considered service areas (**Services**). Statues mainly come from rooms 8 and 6, while room 5 accounts for a smaller number of them. The location of symbolic offerings like mace heads or broken axes was not registered. **NP** stands for "no precise provenience".

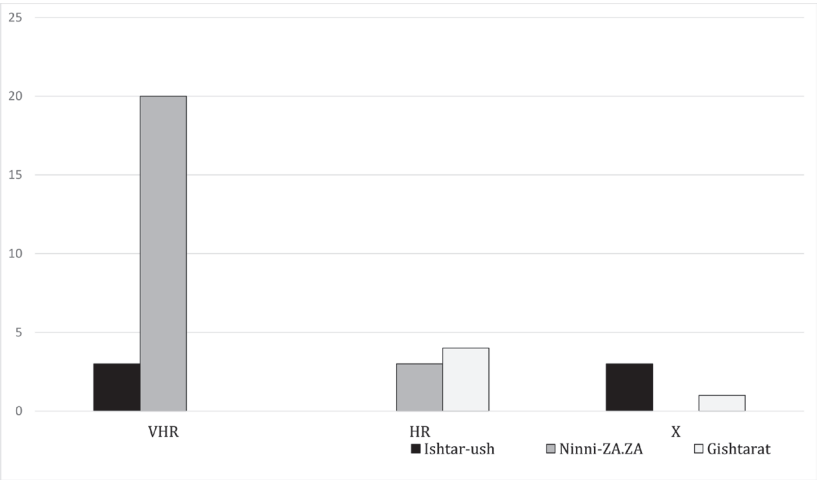

Fig. 7: Quantities of all inscribed objects according to the degree of sanctity attributed to the rooms in which they were found: very holy room (**VHR**), holy room (**HR**), no specific sanctity (X). The diagram shows how the Ninni-za.za temple delivers an "expected" distribution with a higher ratio of inscribed objects in its very holy room (= room 13), followed by its holy room (= room 12). The diagram also demonstrates the "abnormal" distribution of inscribed statues in areas without divine presence (X) in the Ištar-uš temple (Southern area 20) and in the Gištarat temple (room 8). The latter has no evidence of inscribed objects from room 5, which is supposed to be its very holy room according to the presence of cultic installations.

different rooms that was proposed by Parrot, we must conclude that this specific distribution of statues and inscribed objects follows an opposite trend than the one displayed by the two other temples. Furthermore, this distribution does not seem very coherent in terms of the very nature of these kinds of offerings, ordered and brought by donors to be installed in the vicinity of the deity, whom they usually mention in their dedication. Thus, unless Parrot's interpretation of the architectural system prevailing in the Gištarat temple has to be reviewed, especially for rooms 5 and 8, this trend would be unique in Early Dynastic Mari and as such could be a key feature of the Gištarat sanctuary. Nevertheless, the spatial linking of votive statues to the very holy places of a temple seems to be intrinsically linked to their nature, and I would personally argue for the necessity of reconsidering the whole Gištarat and Ninni-za.za architectural complex from an architectural and functional perspective before any conclusions can be drawn on the basis of the distribution of the Gištarat inventory.

Whatever the result of this study, some key features remain already clear and can help in partially qualifying the Gištarat temple from a comparative perspective. One of these important features concerns gender, revealing that the Gištarat temple follows what seems to have been the norm, with almost 73% of its statues belonging to the male sex with no reversal of this trend in any of the rooms of the temple. Along with what is known from Ninni-za.za and other religious buildings, this feature reinforces the very specificity of the Ištar-uš temple.

6. Three inventories

Before entering into a comparative study of the three temples in terms of their inventory and, consequently, in terms of their possible role within the specific religious system possibly developed between three avatars of a single goddess, the Ištar-uš temple distribution must be partially clarified on its own. As already mentioned, the temple was conceived with dual very holy places, each of them displaying some specificities noteworthy in terms of gender. Even though this trend is unique, as is the overall female nature of

the sanctuary, it clearly does not affect the scheme of distribution of the different kinds of goods. In fact, the very holy female place 17 as well as its male counterpart 18 are linked to specific kinds of goods. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, some meaningful objects were unearthed in an external area to the south of the temple, Southern area 20,[41] whereas they should have been found in one of the two very holy places. Two major statues of the Ištar-uš temple are concerned with the peculiarities of this location, as well as the mother-of-pearl inlays, the whole set of stone mace heads, and intentionally-broken stone axes. We have presented elsewhere the importance of this aggregation of major objects in terms of quality and quantity as well as in terms of their obviously highly symbolic role in the whole inventory and system of the Ištar-uš temple.[42] Nevertheless, as shown by the inscription of the two major statues, with dedications to Ištar-uš, it is obvious that they actually belonged to the temple inventory and that there is no doubt that they were once displayed in one of its very holy places.[43] Thus, this set of objects must be considered as the result of a special choice of important items once gathered and taken out, discarded or even rejected in this outer space for some reason following some special event. It is not the place here to enter into the question in more detail nor to give an account of all the hypotheses I could formulate to appreciate this set of facts. But one should remember that these items must be included in any consideration of the Ištar-uš temple inventory and that their location at the time of the excavation does not reflect any pattern of object distribution during their use in the temple but instead reflects a pattern of how these objects could have been gathered at one time and maybe discarded.

With this in mind, one can try to figure out how these three temples behave in a more comparative and comprehensive perspective, taking into consideration their architectural and topographical features as well as their inventories. As already pointed out, the first discrepancy between these religious buildings comes from their respective topographical position in the city, which follows a scheme where the Ištar-uš temple is very specific. While the defensive wall of the city and its western gate displays the military capacity of the kingdom — its strength as well as its potential openness to the outer world and consequently its control — the Ištar-uš temple inventory illustrates this power under all these aspects as well as in the kingdom's capacity to direct resources and wealth to itself. As a matter of fact, its inventory echoes the topographical position of the temple within the overall scheme of the city. It displays power symbols (**Fig. 8**) and clearly links the goddess to the kingdom's central role in Early Dynastic geopolitics, a role which extends from south to north, east, and west.

Looking at its inventory (**Fig. 9**) and considering the materials that are involved, it seems that the Ištar-uš sanctuary behaves like a treasury, promoting the king's power to drain the resources from all around the world, hence displaying the power of his city and offering its material results to the deity who allows his political and military success. Overall, this treasury acts like an image of the geographical extension of the kingdom's in-

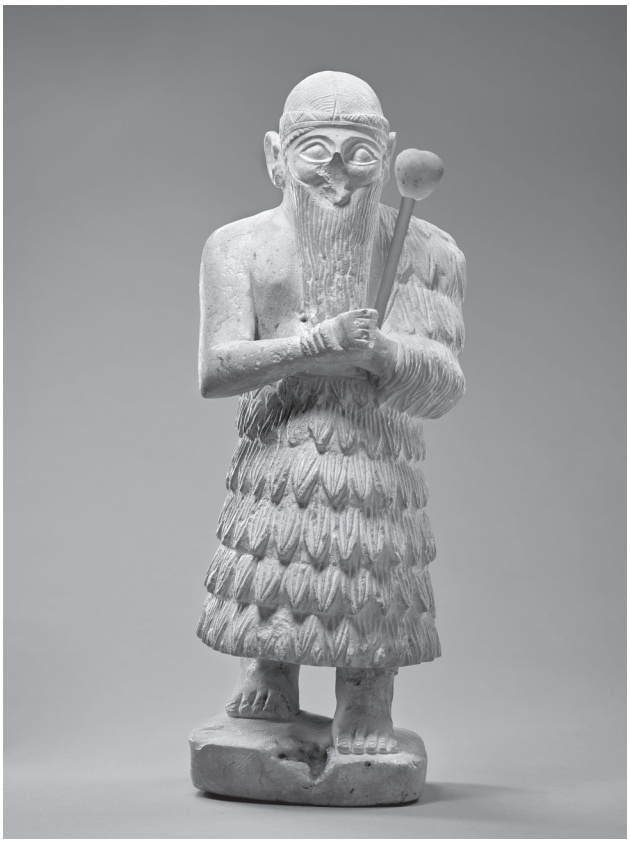

Fig. 8: Statue of Išqi-Mari, king of Mari, temple of Ištar, Southern area 20. A double special arrangement inside the left arm of the king filled with bitumen allowed to insert an arm, rendering it an image where the king's right hand seems to grasp a stick. Thus, the king appears in his royal and victory apparatus, following the standard iconography of Early Dynastic kingship as evidenced on several monuments and on the two seals of Išqi-Mari himself (© Museum of Aleppo; photo: Raphaël Chipault. Reconstitution and infography: S. Cluzan and N. Benoit).

41 Though this area was interpreted as a courtyard by A. Parrot, it actually has nothing to do with the internal architectural organization of Ištar-uš temple. It is an outer space bounding the temple to the south.

42 See Cluzan 2015 and Cluzan/Margueron forthcoming.

43 The two statues of Išqi-Mari, king of Mari and Ebih-Il, nu-banda$_3$, are dedicated to Ištar-uš.

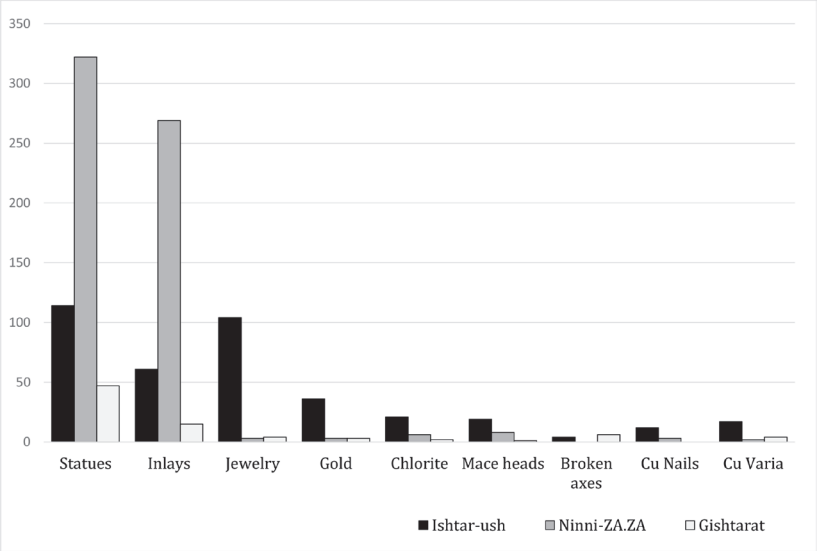

Fig. 9: Ratio of the different kinds of objects found in the three temples. The diagram shows the strong connection between the Ninni-za.za temple with sculpture and mother-of-pearl inlays. The inventory of the Ištar-uš temple is more diversified and includes a significant variety of materials: precious stones, gold, chlorite, copper, etc.

teractions with the Early Dynastic world.[44] Rare stones, such as lapis-lazuli, carnelian, and chlorite, and precious metals, such as gold and copper, were brought to the goddess by kilos when they were almost absent from the temples of Ninni-za.za and Gištarat (**Fig. 9**). In this respect, Ištar-uš acts like a temple where the goddess is honored but also where kingship is staged in its political, economic, and military role. Išqi-Mari, the king, stands in the temple in his military apparatus, victorious and powerful, dedicating to the goddess all the wealth he holds from her support in his geopolitical action. In that respect, Ištar-uš acts like a temple where the goddess is honored but also where kingship is honored, directly at the entrance of the city, bordered by the gate and the road leading to the palace.

This role does not seem to be devoted to the temple of Ninni-za.za nor does it look to be linked to the religious system hosted in the Gištarat temple. Both are embedded in the inner-city and its social life. Though Ninni-za.za is extremely rich in terms of anthropomorphic images and recalls Ištar-uš in the sense that it also depicts power, it does not show any trend towards displaying kingship or kingdom wealth and geographical power. In fact, the Ninni-za.za temple looks more like a complement to the palace, hosting images of people forming what must have been the first circle around the power but maybe not the power itself.[45] Moreover, together with its position within the core of the city, it does not show any image of Mari's geographical power or geopolitical role. Materials are far poorer than in the Ištar-uš temple and the whole effect of its inventory is mainly to be a center for images of high officials, as if nothing had been gathered here by the kings themselves. It acts like a depository for statues and images of people involved in palace life, where they are high officials[46] or members of the king's family. Essentially, its inventory is quite homogenous, and this homogeneity constitutes its key feature as compared to the generous inventory of Ištar-uš and the quite diverse inventory of Gištarat. Even though this last temple stands in a location which does not allow a clear topographical and architectural distinction with the Ninni-za.za sanctuary, it displays a more diverse inventory, gathering types of objects that were negligible in Ninni-za.za, if attested at all. Actually, one of the key features of the Gištarat temple is room 8, whose function should be considered from the point of view of its unexpected inventory, with the majority of statues as well as inlays, copper, and jewelry.

7. Social and political meanings of the temples

From an architectural point of view, the three temples are houses like temples and show no fundamental distinction with the exception of the duality of the Ištar-uš sacred rooms, according to a scheme which may have been developed to fulfill special requirements in terms of gender. As previously stated, this complementarity of two sacred rooms could be related either to the personality of the deity herself or to the personalities of the persons involved in the cultic activities developed in this temple. One being not exclusive of the other, this

44 For a presentation of the insertion of Mari in a world system prevailing during the third millennium, see Butterlin 2014b. For a comprehensive study of the role of the Ištar temple as reflecting this insertion, see Butterlin/Cluzan forthcoming.

45 Some statues from Ninni-za.za are ambiguous since they sometimes bear an inscription with a dedication to a king but one can hardly be certain that the depicted person is an actual image of the mentioned ruler.

46 For the functions and titles held by Ninni-za.za hosts, see Lecompte 2013: 135.

duality could be related to both the deity and the cultic presence. This compelling duality could also be found in the Gištarat temple between rooms 5 and 8 if one considers the richness of the latter in terms of inventory when compared to the former. Nevertheless, if this hypothesis could be demonstrated, this partition would not be linked to any gender differentiation, since this overall male temple does not display any reverse image in any room.

These three inventories have some similar features when compared to the other Early Dynastic temples of the city, notably the amount of goods, such as statues and inlays, deposited in their rooms. Moreover, the three temples are particularly rich in terms of inscriptions providing us with a set of information which makes Early Dynastic Mari a very special site, with the largest amount of inscribed votive objects. Four kinds of items bore inscriptions ranking from statues[47] to vases, mace heads, and perforated plaques.[48] As shown in Fig. 10, these objects were unevenly distributed in the three temples. Ninni-za.za had no inscribed items except for statues, while in Ištar-uš and Gistarat all kinds of inscribed objects were offered. This trend reinforces what we have observed from the respective inventories of the three temples, the first being specialized in human votive figures of the society while the two others witness a higher degree of diversity. In terms of distribution, the temple of Ninni-za.za witnesses a strong correlation between inscribed statues and the highest degree of sanctity of its rooms, while Ištar-uš shows the importance of its Southern area 20 in terms of key objects, notably the king and the nu-banda$_3$, evidencing an abnormal scheme. Of the inscribed items retrieved in the very holy female place 17 of Ištar-uš, a mace-head with an inscription bearing a personal name and the LUGAL sign is worth being mentioned and could recall what we already stated before of an actual link between kingship and this divinity, displaying power under its natural (armed king) or symbolic (mace head) aspects. Another abnormality comes from the distribution of inscribed objects in the Gištarat temple, since none of them was retrieved from room 5, supposed to be the very holy place of this sanctuary. All came from the holy place 6 and, more noteworthy as observed for the statues, from room 8.

As for the titles and functions of people named in the inscriptions, a special distribution can be observed. Ninni-za.za mainly hosts votive statues presented by high ranking people or even by members of the royal family. Some of their functions are mentioned, such as cup bearer, great singer, great scribe and other officials. The variability of the titles and functions could be of special meaning for the temple function in the religious system of Mari and more precisely around the official district whose center might have been located in the palace. Gištarat offers images of two merchants as well as a member of the royal family while Ištar-uš seems to host less images but maybe of individuals of higher hierarchical position if we take into account their title as well as the intrinsic values of the statues: king, elder and nu-banda$_3$, though this last function is also mentioned for a man named Kin-uri whose image was unearthed in the temple of Ninni-za.za.[49] As such, it could be proposed that the rank of the people concerned with the three temples is not the same, giving Ištar-uš a more predominant role in terms of power.

If this hypothesis is tempting but cannot be demonstrated, it can be stated that the three temples display political, administrative, and high social status imagery of the kingdom. Moreover, they all show a special trend to use images of war or, more precisely, of victory, and they can be classified according to the importance of this feature. As a matter of fact, the Ištar-uš temple is highly characterized by images of victory and power since all categories of its inventory are related to this staging of power, be it political, economic or militaristic. For instance, as stated by Couturaud, more than 59% of its shell inlays display military themes,[50] a trend already observed in the importance given to mace heads and intentionally-broken axes in its very holy rooms as well as in the statue of the king himself. Concerning the expression of power through the presence of arms, Gištarat ranks second, while it stands in third position as far as the presence of people belonging to the high society around the royal institutions is concerned. As observed by Couturaud, 42.4% of Ninni-za.za shell inlays belong to military iconography while in Gištarat, equivalent elements are no more than 12.5%. Lastly, as we have shown, if we consider the diversity and the quantity of rare and precious materials as one of the possible symbolic mani-

47 Inscribed statues are distributed as follows: 3 for Ištar-uš out of 114 statues; 23 for Ninni-za.za out of 322; 3 for Gištarat out of 47.

48 2 vases for Ištar-uš and 1 for Gištarat; 1 mace head for Ištar-uš; 1 plaque for Gištarat.

49 As shown by Lecompte, the meaning of this title is still unclear as it covers different functions in Early Dynastic sources, preventing us from any hierarchical classification between Ebih-Il and Kin-URI. See Cluzan/Lecompte 2014a: 651–652.

50 Couturaud 2013: 241.

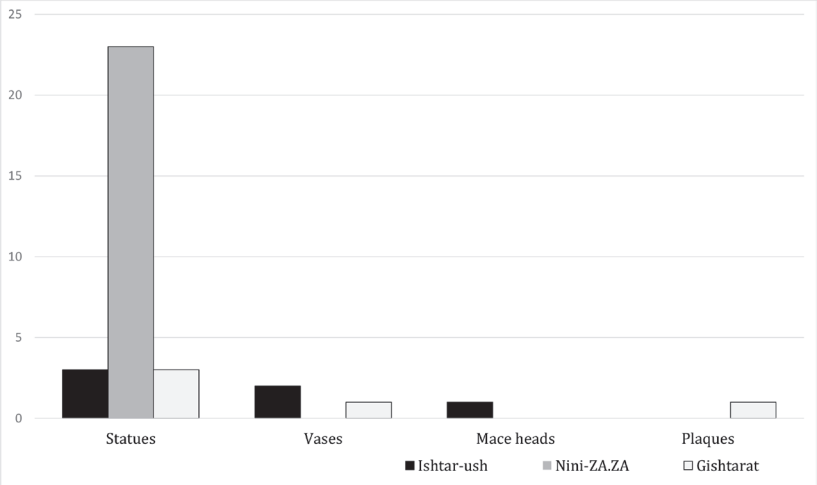

Fig. 10: Quantities of inscribed objects from the three temples according to object category.

festations of power, the Ištar-uš temple has no equivalent, neither in Ninni-za.za nor in Gištart, but also not in the palace itself (its excavated parts) or in any other Early Dynastic building in Mari.

8. Three temples and one palace

As shown by Couturaud, if one considers their respective shell inlay inventories, all together with the palace, these three temples display war and more specifically victory.[51] In fact, in this very rich and peculiar part of symbolic imagery created in Early Dynastic Mari, other buildings and other temples usually display other kinds of themes, like sacrifice, animals being carried, ceremonies of all kinds or even industrial activities. For instance, whereas military shell inlays in Ištar-uš, the palace, Ninni-za.za and Gištarat respectively represent 59.2%, 47.3%, 42.4% and 12.5% of their shell inlay inventories, similar elements don't account for more than 9.7% in the temple of Šamaš, 4% in the temple north of the Massif Rouge, and none has been retrieved in the temple of Ninhursag. This discrepancy shows how much the three temples under consideration in this article are linked to power and kingship. Thus, at least two of the three temples under consideration are related to the palace in their use of intentionally chosen military shell inlays, contributing to distinguish their iconographical program from what was chosen by other temples. Moreover, the three temples and the palace are linked by the use of pearly shell inlays, a kind of material which has been mostly dedicated to their use, pointing to the possible existence of a single exclusive workshop. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the Ištar-uš temple pearly shell inlays are stylistically very similar to the ones found in the royal palace, enlightening once again the strength of the links drawn between these two places.[52]

9. Three names for three personalities

As far as we can tell from their inventories, even though the three temples of Ištar hypostasis show some discrepancies, they are obviously related to the royal palace through their link to political and military power. Considering this aspect of kingship, these three divine houses seem to be parts of the same system. Two are directly in the vicinity of power, while the third, obviously the most powerful of all, acts like an outpost of royal power, intrinsically tied to the defense of the city and bordered by what might have been a main access to the inner palace. The symbolic aspect of this place is certainly the reason why Early Dynastic Mari chose to house the powerful Ištar-uš in this area, while the core of the city and its proximity to the palace was given to Ninni-za.za, with many officials offering their images in an overall less militaristic system and with far less emphasis on this military aspect and related wealth.

Following these considerations, two of the three divine personalities can be compared and broadly differentiated through their topographical location and their inventory. Indeed, from her inventory, Ištar-uš appears as the goddess of kingship. Her house is a female house with a high gender segregation. Together with her temple, she reflects the kingdom in all its symbolic dimensions. On the other hand, Ninni-za.za shows a personality whose link to power is more indirect. Her temple mainly hosts male figures as do all the other temples of Early Dynastic Mari, showing little role for female activity within their walls. Lastly, the personality of Gištarat is quite difficult to define, even when compared to the two other forms of the goddess. The diversity of her goods could be

51 See Couturaud 2013 for raw data and distribution as thereafter mentioned; 2014: 86–87 for further discussion of this trend. Furthermore, refer to Couturaud (forthcoming) for a contextual approach to shell inlays in Early Dynastic Mari.

52 For this stylistic approach to their respective shell inlays inventory, see Couturaud (forthcoming).

compared to what is observed in the Ištar-uš temple, yet it is far less important. Nevertheless, despite the difficulty we find in characterizing the temple of Gištarat, it is actually tied to the two other temples through several kinds of goods as well as it is obviously linked to the palace and to the military aspect of power as expressed by a shared iconographic program. As with her consort in the adjoining temple, she does not seem to open widely her doors to female hosts.

The names of the three deities need further studies but if one considers the actual state of research, Ištar-uš would be the only one to be characterized by gender, and one must admit that this consideration is also reflected in her inventory and in the distinctive topography of her very holy places. On the other hand, the names of Ninni-za.za and Gištarat are references to other topographies — a poplar grove and Jebel Bišri — linking these hypostases of Ištar to another geography, according to a trend that will characterize this goddess in more recent times. In any event, their respective inventory does not help in understanding the link between the geography to which their name refers and their personality. Looking at other Early Dynastic temple inventories in Mari would certainly reinforce the impression of the relative uniformity given by the temples of these three goddesses, but it could also help in defining more precisely their relative personalities, notably Ištar of the poplar grove and Ištar of Bišri.

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A Contextual and Sensory Studies Approach to the Object and Image Assemblages of the Kitītum-Temple at Iščali

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Abstract: The comprehensive object and image assemblages retrieved from the early Old Babylonian Kitītum-Temple at Iščali allow for a contextual and sensory studies approach to the temple's interiors. The distribution of excavated objects reveals a significant increase in material variety (color, shine, touch) in the vicinity of the cult statues. The numerous terracotta plaques include three major groups that help to better understand the visual and acoustic impressions characterizing sacred space. The first two groups replicate large-scale monuments in miniature form, and the third one visualizes musicians and performers. They reflect spatial functions of imagery, on the one hand, and the importance of sound and performative action on the other. Brought together, the evidence illuminates the multisensorial environment that facilitated a fusion of real and imagined spaces, and an encounter between human and divine actors, inside but also beyond the temple.

Key words: Sensory experience; visual culture; Old Babylonian period; Iščali; terracotta plaques; materiality; material religion.

1. Introduction

Since a large variety of colors, materials and figuratively rendered objects and pictures surround us everywhere and everyday, we tend to forget how rare such impressions were in ancient Babylonia. People inhabited an environment in which all materials beside clay in various shades of grey and brown were naturally rare and exotic and in which visual culture in public space simply did not exist. The most popular images were miniatures cut into cylinder seals and rolled onto tablets in bureaucratic and legal contexts and the roughly palm-sized terracotta figurines and plaques typical for the late third and early second millennia BCE.

Much has been written about Babylonian temples' architectural features as well as their ideological functions. This paper focuses on the material and visual peculiarities of their interiors which created "image-" and "sensescapes" that went beyond their visitors' everyday visual, acoustic, olfactory, and tactile experiences,[1] using the Kitītum-Temple at Iščali as a case study.

1 Previous studies on ancient Near Eastern monumental buildings as sensory environments focused on spatial analysis and questions of how architectural features like size, axiality, topography, and installations created ways of sight and movement within a building, and thus determined the visual and acoustic experience of its visitors (McMahon 2013, 2016; Shepperson 2016). More comprehensive in their emphasis on the materiality of temple furnishings, but chronologically and contextually restricted to the neo-Assyrian Nabû-temples, are Neumann 2014 and Neumann 2018. Drawing on the work of Knappett, Neumann (2018: 182 fn. 3) defines a "sensory artefact" as "the combination of an object's material qualities and it's sensory affordances." For a yet wider perspective on sensory experiences in the Assyrian world, see Thomason 2016.

According to descriptions of Babylonian temples in literary texts, the special sensory atmosphere of their interiors was primarily created for the well-being of the divine inhabitants: multi-material architectural furnishings and paraphernalia evoked color and shine; music, oils and incense generated pleasant sounds and smells.[2] But the temple gates—often referred to as "frontside, face" (igi) of the building—were not only perceived as *entranceways* into a sacred interior accessible to few, but also as *outlets* for splendors radiating into the urban environment.[3] The role of the temples' façades and gates as places of encounter between visualizations of deities and the city's inhabitants is manifested in their function for decision making, both in a numinous (destiny) and in a very concrete juridical sense (court).[4] In addition, the doors opened on festive occasions, when the cult statue left its seclusion and the large courtyards filled with people. Suitably, an Old Babylonian building inscription ('Takil-ilissu 2') describes the large temple courtyard as the "residence for the numerous people, a house of joy, a courtyard of her happiness, where she [Ulmašītum] and Ilabrat keep on celebrating gladly about the abundance festivals of joyful hearts".[5] The text continues with the mention of two guardian lions (i.e. lion statues), a place for the royal libation, for the flour offerings "of the numerous people", the gate, two female musicians playing the tigi drum, a curtain, and a beer barrel/basin—"all of these making her (the deity's) appearance great".[6] All this illustrates the intermingling between architectural spaces, figurative sculpture, music, sacrifice and drinking to create a sensory stimulating encounter between the deity and the people. I argue that terracotta plaques were yet another means to radiate certain aspects of the visual and sensory worlds of the temple into the city.

2. The temple and its objects

The Ištar-Kitītum temple at Išč̌ali, ancient Nērebtum, is one of the best-preserved sanctuaries excavated in Mesopotamia, and, due to its comparatively short occupation period and two major destructive events, rich in tablets and artefacts (**Fig. 1**).[7]

It was erected in the early second millennium BCE as residence for the goddess Ištar-Kitītum, the patron deity of Nērebtum, and her divine attendant Ninšubur (Akkadian: Ilabrat),[8] and became a focal place of worship in the kingdom of Ešnunna under Ipiq-Adad II (1862–1818). Both, Ipiq-Adad II and Ibal-pi-El II (1778–1765), worked extensively on the building.[9] After the invasion of the city by Babylonian troops in 1750 BCE and the temple's destruction, there was no substantial resettlement or rebuilding. The final excavation report focused mostly on stratigraphy and architectural features, with the numerous finds mentioned only in passing and in tabular form.[10] What has been excavated and registered is obviously only a tiny fraction of the thousands of objects that must have entered and left the compound during the 150 years of its existence; a significant part was also lost during the clandestine excavations in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Still, the recovered assemblage amounts to more than 400 artefacts including 72 cuneiform tablets and more than 200 figuratively decorated items,

2 For a concise compilation of temple descriptions in Sumerian temple hymns, including their radiance, see Löhnert 2013: 264, 269. References to the temple's "shine" (like the day, the sun, or the moonlight) are made in regard to the Giparu and the Ekišnuĝal of Ur in 'Temple Hymns' (ECTSL t.4.80.1), l. 109–111, and concerning the Enumah of Šulgi in Ur in l. 121–122: "Interior full with princely divine powers, a beaming light which shines, shrine with your back to the blue sky and your prominent front to all people" (quoted after ECTSL t.4.80.1).

3 See, for instance, Löhnert 2013: 271. Cf. 'Temple Hymns', l. 367–368: "E-mah (Exalted house), house of the universe, suited for its lady, your front inspires great awesomeness, your interior is filled with radiance" and l. 417–418: "…on your awesome and radiant gate a decoration displays a horned viper and the *mušḫuš* embracing." On radiance as an attribute of the divine, see Winter 1994; on the colorful and shining figurative decorations of entranceways within Neo-Assyrian temples as well as monumental statues placed at the outer doorways, see Neumann 2018: 193–194, 197.

4 Cf. Löhnert 2013: 274, 278. See for instance the 'Keš Temple Hymn' (ECTSL t.4.80.2): "at whose gate is a lion reclining on its paws, at whose gate is the ruler who decides cases" (l. 96) and "house without whom no decisions are made!" (l. 58J).

5 L. 28–35, translated into English following Wilcke 2017: 741–742, 745.

6 See l. 43–58, translated into English following Wilcke 2017: 742, 745.

7 Hill/Jacobsen 1990. The original data were collected between 1934 and 1936 by Thorkild Jacobsen acting as field director for Henri Frankfort and the Diyala Expedition of the University of Chicago.

8 Compare the temple dedicated to (Ištar-)Anunītum and rebuilt by king Takil-ilissu of Malgium, which was also inhabited by Ilabrat (^{d}nin.šubura), as well as by Ulmašītum and Anum (Wilcke 2017: 739–740).

9 Hill/Jacobsen 1990: 34 and 42, 51, 54–44, 57. The available textual evidence suggests that it was busy with religious personnel carrying out all kinds of cultic activities and a *šangû* priest heading administrative affairs. Commodities and valuable objects entered the temple household, and legal records and loan documents attest to its social and economic importance.

10 The Diyala Archaeological Database made available online in 2013 compensates for Hill/Jacobsen's (1990) deficienies regarding small finds to a certain degree (http://diyala.uchicago.edu/, last accessed 06.10.2018).

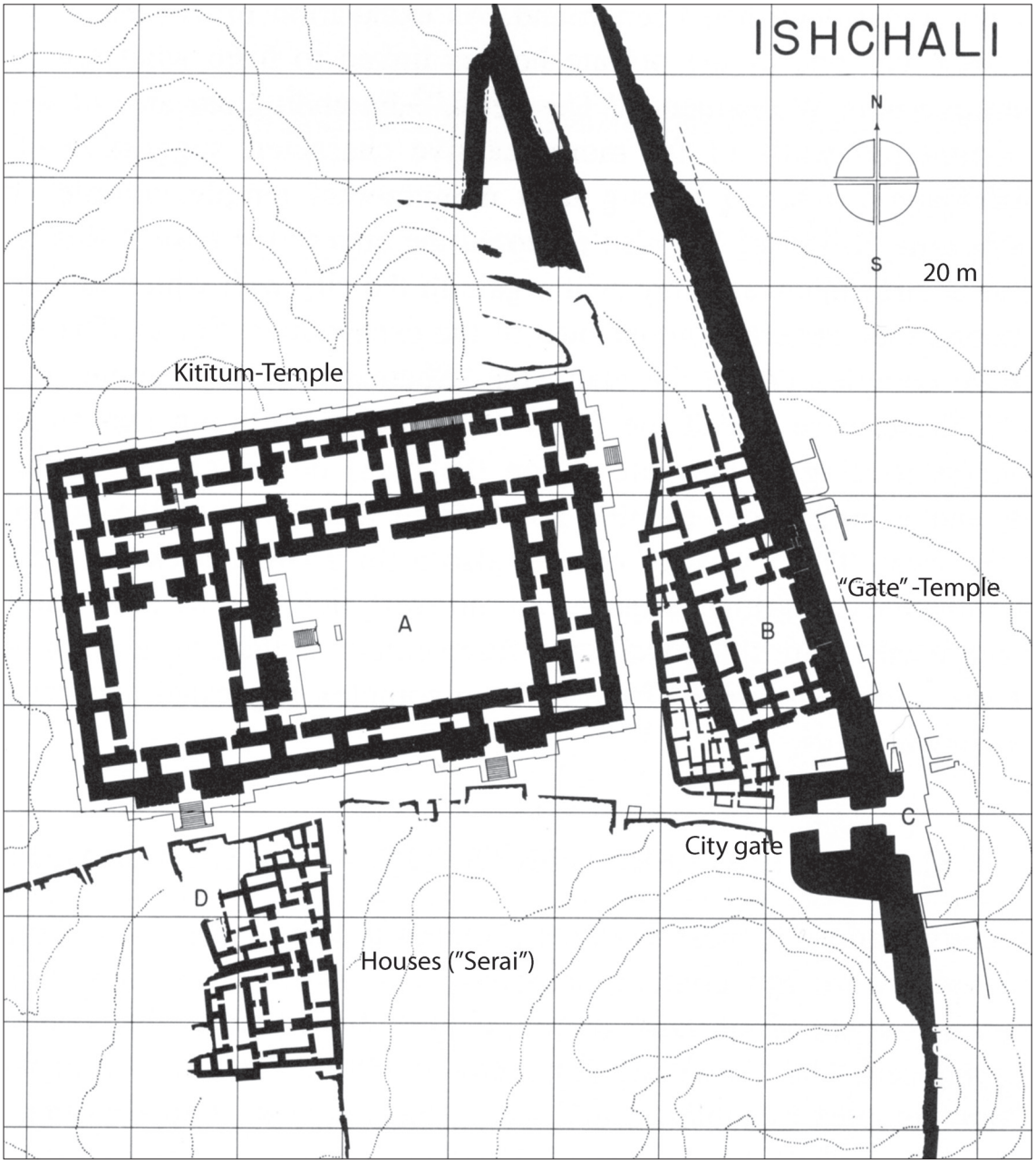

Fig. 1: Plan of the excavated buildings at Iščali (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: fig. 2, modified by author).

mostly in the form of terracotta figurines and plaques or seals. This does give us at least a tentative idea of the scope of material culture that it once held although valuable and specifically metal items are expectedly largely missing (**Fig. 2**).

The excavators were able to differentiate four main occupation levels (I–IV) with associated floors; the ends of levels II and IV were clearly marked by conflagrations. While the precise stratigraphic attribution was not documented for all objects, most of them were assigned either to the first (I–II) or to the second building phase (III–IV), the latter starting with the reign of Ipiq-Adad II in the mid-19th century. While findspots were not registered precisely, room numbers and floor attributions are available for most finds.

When mapping these data, areas of increased artefact density become clearly visible (**Fig. 3–4**): most importantly, the two cellae and ante-cellae for Kitītum and Ninšubur, and the so-called treasury rooms behind the Kitītum cella. These were richly furnished, not so much in terms of material value, but with respect to the scope of materials and forms. The assemblages include fragments of sculptured stone and metal vessels, seals, mace-heads, jewelry, weights, figurative clay objects, and cuneiform tablets.

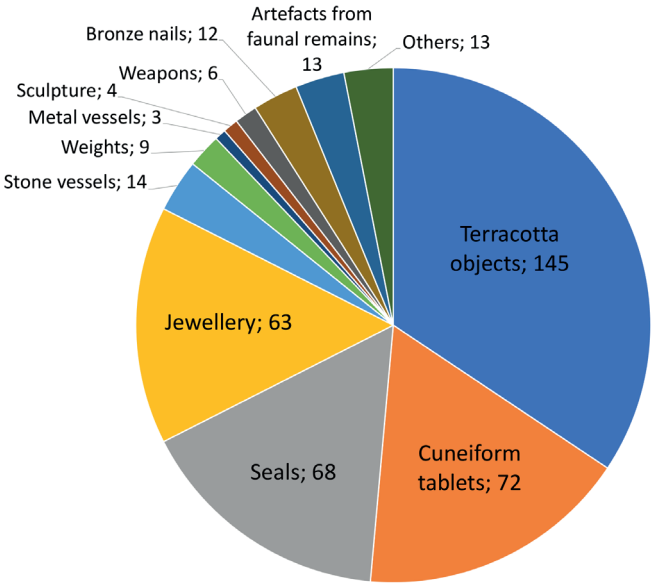

Fig. 2: Quantitative overview of the object categories retrieved from the from the Kitītum-Temple.

In addition, the courtyards, and especially the northern court of the lower building appear to have been hotspots for object accumulation (incl. the terracotta objects, cf. **Figs. 16–17**), at least during the earlier occupation phase (levels I–II). Interestingly, when flimsy walls were erected in this area during the third building period, the accumulation of objects shifted towards the south to the entrance room of the northern wing (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 4a). This might be indicative of a change in room function or in the accessibility of these quarters. Two stone horns (Ish. 34:R.185, Ish. 34:R.186) found in front of this entrance suggest that a three-dimensional figure, most likely a bull-man, once guarded this entrance.[11]

Thick layers of charred wood indicate that the Ninšubur cella and especially the cult niche were covered with a wooden ceiling and panels, and thus stood out from the surrounding mudbrick architecture in appearance, smell and feel (Rossberger 2018: 394). The appreciation for a mix of contrasting and sensorially stimulating materials, textures, and surface treatments becomes apparent when we see the objects in the original or in color photography (**Figs. 5–12**).

The preserved jewelry, some of it purchased by the Oriental Institute Museum Chicago alongside tablets and terracotta plaques whose origin from the Kitītum-Temple is certain or at least highly likely, equally features variegated stones, lapis lazuli and carnelian (**Figs. 5a–e**). Some of the delicately cut agate or carnelian miniature animals, such as lions or a snail, were drilled for stringing; others, in the shapes of ducks or frogs, might have been used as weights (**Figs. 6a–c**). Remains of objects made of conches (**Fig. 7a**), antler, ostrich-egg, and ivory also survived from the cella and surrounding rooms as well as from an undisturbed pivot box in the ante-cella. They may be the remains of inlays for containers or gameboards, but surely contribute to the overall richness in material variety characterizing these areas inside the temple building (**Fig. 7b–c**).

Of special interest are the numerous "antiques," mostly pendants, cylinder and stamp seals dating to the Jemdet Nasr, Early Dynastic, and Akkadian periods from the Kitītum cella and the adjacent treasury rooms (**Fig. 8a–f**; Rossberger 2016; Seidl 1991: 315–316). Often heavily worn, and made of conch shell, or of reddish or greenish translucent stones, their appearance is so different from that of Old Babylonian hematite seals that they must have caught the eye.

The dark greenish color and deep, geometrical engravings of a stamp seal from Dilmun (Failaka) may have been just as valued for its unusual appearance as for its distant origin of production (**Fig. 9a–b**). The large variety of jewelry and amuletic objects surviving from the cella and adjacent rooms, which included many old and broken but materially outstanding artefacts, suggests that this assemblage came into existence for reasons beyond the immediate function of adorning the cult image. The same can be said for the large amounts of beads and stamp and cylinder seals that clustered in and around the cellae of Early Dynastic sanctuaries in neighboring Tell Asmar and Khafajeh (Dittmann 2013; Rossberger 2016: 423–425, Tab. 1), or the cache of several thousand beads (including nine scarabs) discovered beneath the cella of the Ninkarrak temple at Terqa (Buccellati/Kelly-Buccellati 1980, 1983: 57, figs. III.6–7). While we cannot ascertain if these were "favissae" for cult-related materials which fell out of use or the storage of "offerings" or "substitutes" from individual worshipers (Dittmann 2015: 78), there can be no doubt about their physical attractiveness and the relevance of their presence for the constitution of sacred space. Figuratively decorated vessels in stone, metal, and clay occur regularly in Babylonian ritual contexts, and in particular in the Diyala region (Seidl 2007). Appropriately, fragments of such vessels were found in the cellae and surrounding rooms but nowhere else in the temple. They included a pair of small, spouted bronze rhyta or lamps (with a clay counterpart) in the shape of a lioness (**Fig. 10a–c**), fragments of sculptured stone vessels (**Fig. 11a–c**), and the famous mouflon bowl probably originating in the Susiana region (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pls. 31–32). Mace

11 Cf. two similar bronze horns found in the Šara-Temple of Tell Agrab (Ag. 35:84).

Fig. 3: Distribution of objects in levels Kitītum I–II (plan redrawn by M. Lerchl after Hill/Jacobsen 1990: fig. 3; modified by author).

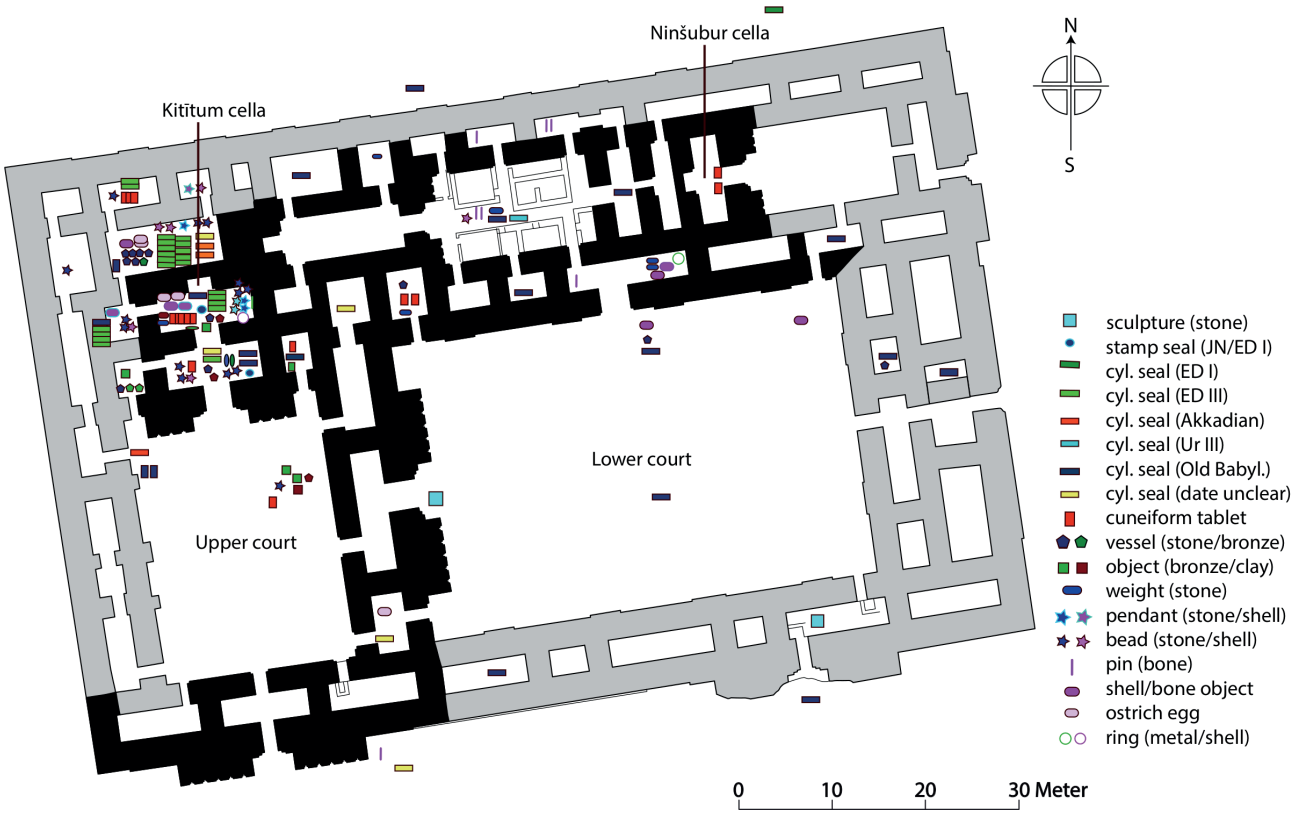

Fig. 4: Distribution of objects in levels Kitītum III–IV (based on Hill/Jacobsen 1990: fig. 13, redrawn by M. Lerchl and modified by author).

Fig. 5a–e

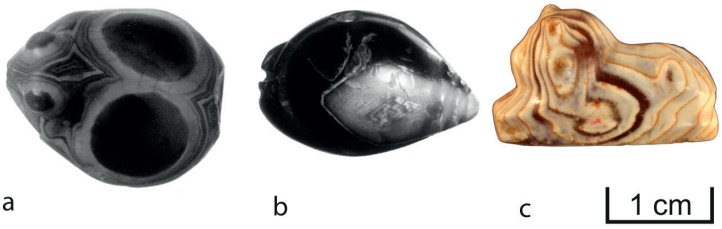

Fig. 6a–c

Fig. 7a

Fig. 7b–c

Fig. 8a–b

Fig. 8c–f

Fig. 5: Stone jewellery excavated in the Kitītum-Temple or acquired by the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago: a) Ish. 34:33 (OI A16969); b) OI A7239 (purchased); c) Ish. 37:224 (OI A21206); d) Ish. 34:131 (OI A17006); e) Ish. 34:138 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 43a). All photos except e) by author. All courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 6: Agate animal pendants: a) Ish. 35:1; b) Ish. 35:11 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 46c); c) Ish. 34:42 (photo: author). Photos a) and b) Diyala Archaeological Database, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 7: Organic material, inlaid objects and inlays: a) mollusc objects from the Kitītum-Temple (Ish 35:21; Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 46d); b) stone plate for petal-shaped inlays (Ish. 34:202; OI A21194); c) shell inlay in form of a human face (OI A7200, acquired by the OI together with objects from Iščali). Photos b) and c) by author. All courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 8: Antiques from the Kitītum cella and adjacent rooms: a) Jemdet Nasr seal (A 7248; acquired by the OI, but stone similar to Ish. 34:47 from the ante-cella); b) worn, Early Dynastic III shell cylinder seal (Ish. 34:34; OI A16970); c) Jemdet Nasr or Early Dynastic I stamp seals in animal form (acquired by the OI but similar to examples from the Kitītum-Temple; OI A7233, A7204, A7218); d) Jemdet Nasr animal pendant (Ish. 34:130; OI A17005); e) OI A7219; f) OI A7255. All photos by author and courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

heads are another category of objects found almost solely in and around temple cellae, and Iščali makes no exception. Drilled from black and white stones, they are yet another example of the high appreciation for contrasting colors and smooth surface luster (**Fig. 12**).

3. The temple and its images

Large-scale sculptures and reliefs structure and orient ritual and social practice in religious buildings in many parts of the world. In Babylonian temples, they were traditionally concentrated at the gates and entranceways (guardian figures), in the courtyards (royal statues and stelae), and in the cellae (cult images and surrounding statues of divine attendants).[12] The cultural significance of these images finds resonance in their detailed descriptions in contemporary literary texts, especially in the Sumerian 'Temple Hymns.'[13]

Except for a small figurine (Ish. 34:80; Rossberger 2016, 427, fig. 4b), only two instances of three-dimensional stone-sculpture survive from the Kitītum-Temple: the colorfully painted head of a bearded man (king?) from the lower courtyard (**Fig. 13**), and the statuette of a squatting monkey from the Ninšubur cella (**Fig. 14a–b**). Their respective findspots suit their genres: royal statues were usually erected in the courtyards, and the monkey, which also occurred in miniaturized form (**Fig. 14b**), probably would have been raised on a pole in close proximity to the cult image as depicted on cylinder seals (**Fig 14d**).[14] Empty postaments in niches on the back walls of the temple's cellae are the sole remains of the three-dimensional gold-clad wooden cult statues.[15]

3.1 Distribution and motif repertoire of terracotta figurines and plaques

Terracotta plaques can partially fill this void. Their range of motifs is rather varied (**Fig. 15**), but a significant portion of the more than 300 figurative terracotta objects excavated at Iščali, among them 145 from the Kitītum-Temple,[16] replicate cult statues and other figures that must have adorned the temple in relief and sculpture (see **sections 3.2** and **3.3**). The popularity of these clay replicas during

12 For a concise summary of the figural program typically encountered in a Babylonian temple see Seidl 2013.

13 These mention lions, eagles, bisons, nude heroes, and hybrids, but also birds, flowers, sun-discs, and kings as figural embellishment of temples; see the examples given in Löhnert 2013: 271–273.

14 We have no information about the ritual function of squatting monkeys in Old Babylonian temples but we observe their proximity to the enthroned deity on many contemporary seals. Animals on poles, including monkeys/baboons, are very common in Egyptian ritual contexts (Flossmann-Schütze 2014).

15 In the case of the Kitītum-cella, additional postaments flanked the cult niche and probably served as stands for statues of suppliant goddesses (*lamassum*) or standard-bearing figures (six-curled hero/*lahmum* or bull man/*kusarikkum*).

16 Like elsewhere, many figurative clay objects at Iščali were collected from the tell's surface. Additionally, both the Oriental Institute Museum and the Louvre purchased substantial amounts of terracotta plaques said to have come from "Ishchali" or "Eshnunna" in the early 1930s, many of them duplicates of plaques later excavated at Iščali, and thus probably from illicit excavations undertaken before the official excavations had started (Auerbach 1994: 44–45). Nevertheless, the excavators retrieved 145 pieces from the Kitītum-Temple and another 34 from the "Gate"-Temple.

Fig. 9

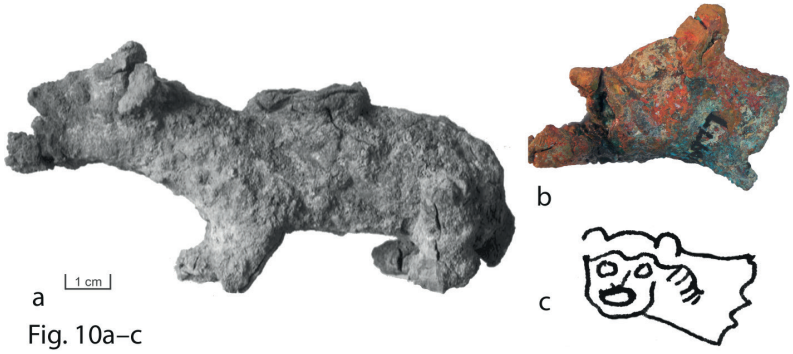

Fig. 10a–c

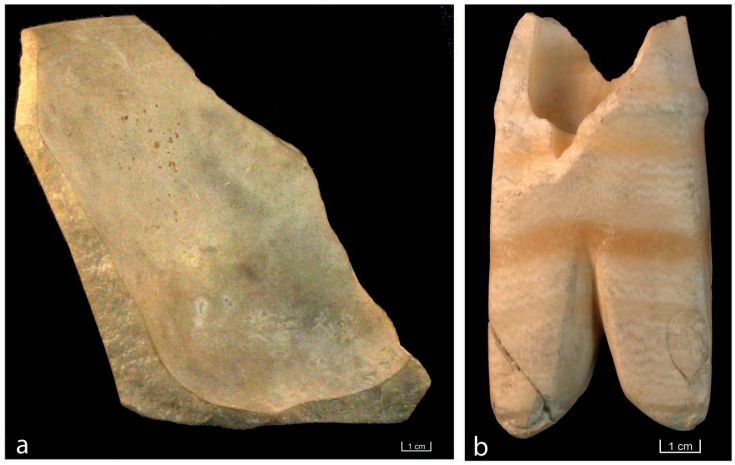

Fig. 11a–c

Fig. 12

Fig. 13

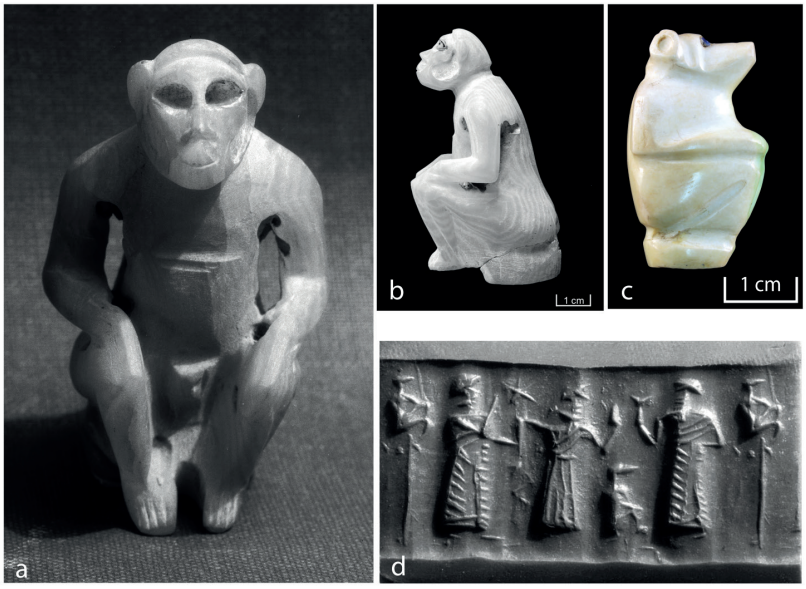

Fig. 14a–d

Fig 9a–b: Stamp seal from Failaka (Ish. 34:134; OI A17007). Photos by author and courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 10: Bronze and clay vessels with lion-headed spouts: a) bronze (Ish. 34:51, Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 30a); b) bronze (Ish. 34:52; OI A16977, photo: author); c) clay (Ish. 34:R.267), drawing from field register. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 11: Early Dynastic calcite vessels: a) bowl (Ish. 34:137; OI A17008); b) compartmented cosmetic container (Ish. 34:22; OI A21190); c) vessel with lying rams (Ish. 34:44; OI A21191). All photos by author and courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 12: Pair of stone mace heads: Ish. 35:81 (OI A 21199) and Ish. 35:82 (OI A21200). Photos by author, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 13: Head of a dark stone statuette with red paint, depicting a bearded man (Ish. 34:138; OI A17009). Photos by author, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 14: Squatting monkeys: a–b) calcite statuette, h. 8 cm (Ish. 35:48; Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 40e); c) miniature monkey with lapis lazuli eye inlay (acquired with other objects from Iščali; OI A7152, photo: author); d) cylinder seal from Iščali depicting a squatting monkey and a monkey on a pole (Ish. 34:20; Frankfort 1955: pl. 89, no. 947). All courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

		Kitītum-Temple	Streets near Kitītum-Temple	"Gate"-Temple	City gate or City wall	Houses ("Serai")	Surface collection/ unknown	Iščali total	Purchased by OIM, probably from Išč.
Cult images	"goddess-in-a-structure"	9	1	2	2	2	4	19	2
	"shrouded god"	15		5	1	3	13	37	4
	sun-disc standards	1						1	
	throne with lions	1						1	
		26	**1**	**7**	**3**	**5**	**17**	**58**	**6**
Gate keepers	lion	6		2			3	11	4
	lion dragon	1					1	2	3
	six-curled hero	1		1			1	3	
	bull man	1		2		1	4	8	3
	eagle						1	1	1
	dog, striding	1						1	1
		10		**5**		**1**	**10**	**26**	**12**
Musicians & performers	musician	4	1		1		3	9	12
	huppum -dancers	1						1	2
	huppum -dancers, flanking divine statue	1			1			2	1
	bull rider	3					1	4	2
		9	**1**		**2**		**4**	**16**	**17**
Nude women		**11**	**6**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**22**	**51**	**2**
Deities (Adad, Ištar, other)			**1**	**1**			**2**	**4**	**1**
Men (other)		**7**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**12**	**24**	**2**
Women (other)		**1**	**1**			**1**	**1**	**4**	

Fig. 15: Quantitative and spatial distribution of selected terracotta plaque motifs from Iščali.

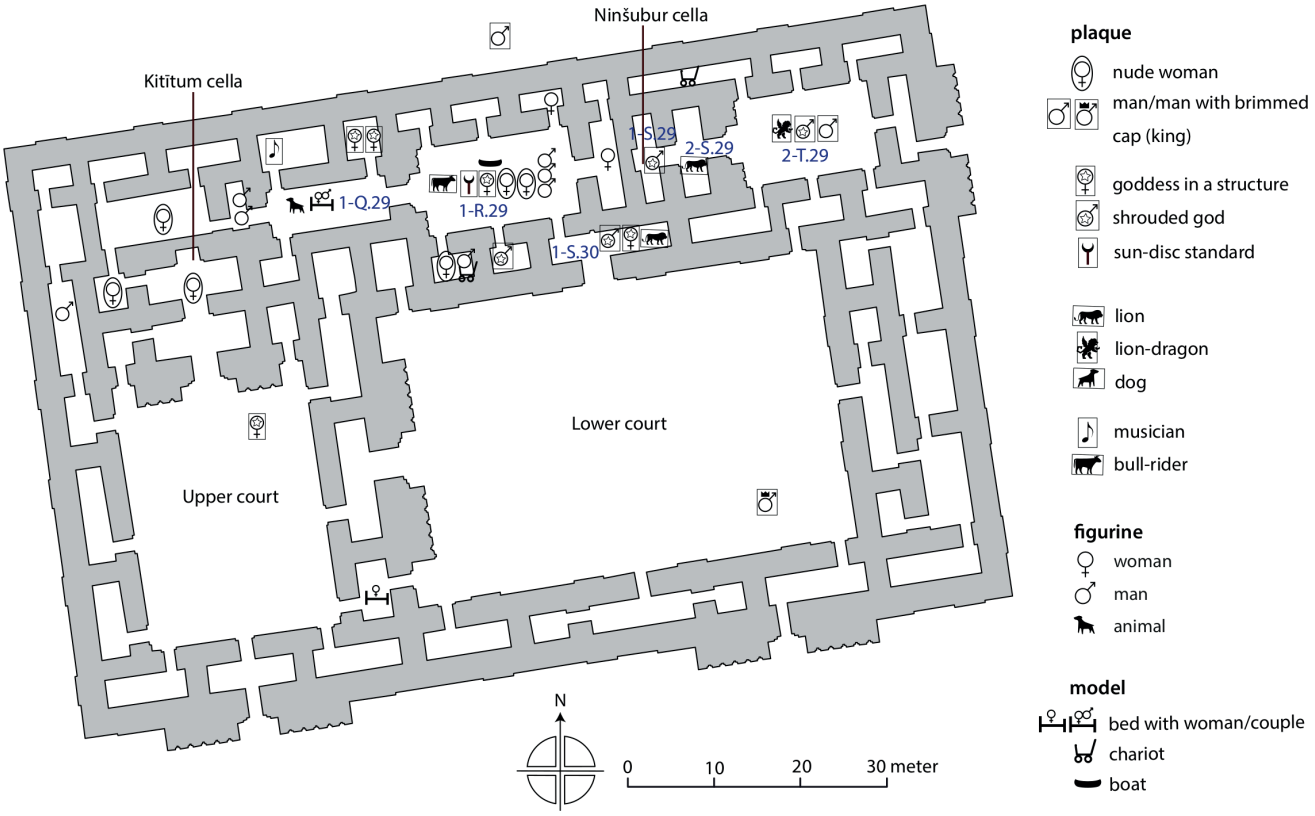

Fig. 16: Distribution of figurative terracotta objects in the Kitītum-Temple, building levels I-II (based on Hill/Jacobsen 1990: fig. 3, redrawn by M. Lerchl and modified by author).

the Old Babylonian period attests to a widespread familiarity with these images extending into the households.

Terracotta plaques dominate the record, but figurines[17] and miniature models of beds, wagons, boats, and (few) weapons (axe-heads) are equally attested (Rossberger 2017: 178–179).[18] Anthropomorphic figurines occur in two gender-stereotyped versions only: (bearded) men with conical or brimmed headgear holding curved longitudinal objects,[19] and nude women with huge hairdos, jewelry, and narrowly placed legs and feet.[20] Both figurine types became popular during the Ur III period, and both might have visually referred to sensorial stimulation: the object in the hand of the male figurines may be interpreted as either the "curved staff" (zubi/*gamlum*) and thus a device of ritual cleansing held by ritual experts and occasionally by gods and kings,[21] or as devices typically used by *ḫuppum*-dancers (also depicted on terracotta plaques; see discussion below in **section 3.4**). Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran (2010: 743) remarked on the sounds that would have been produced by the mul-

17 Altogether, Iščali yielded 25 animal figurines, among them 17 from the Kitītum-Temple and two from the "Gate"-Temple, and thus clearly prevailing in temple contexts. They were almost exclusively tetrapods, possibly sheep. Even though the number of well-stratified examples is not very high, we note an increase in clay objects in Kitītum III–IV, especially of animal figurines: only two animal figurines can be attributed to Kitītum I–II, but twelve to Kitītum III–IV (with three unstratified).

18 The co-occurrence of figurines and plaques marks the gradual shift from hand-modelled figurines to mould-made plaques during the Ur III and Isin-Larsa periods. Patterns of intentional breakage with a pointed tool can be detected on many of the fractures (Rossberger in preparation). Matching pieces are surprisingly rare, suggesting that fragmentation *and* spatial separation of parts were integral to these objects' life-cycles.

19 45 male figurines appear in the field registers from Iščali, among them 27 head and upper-body fragments as well as 18 torsos. The Kitītum-Temple yielded 19 figurines, and the "Gate"-Temple three. Interestingly, and in contrast to commonly held opinion, the number of male figurines surpasses that of females in all contexts.

20 Altogether, 28 female figurines, among them eight heads and the rest torso- und lower body-fragments. The Kitītum-Temple yielded eleven female figurines, and the "Gate"-Temple two.

21 See CAD G, 34–35 s.v. *gamlu*; cf. Braun-Holzinger 1996: 236 with fn. 746 and Ambos/Krauskopf 2010: 127–130.

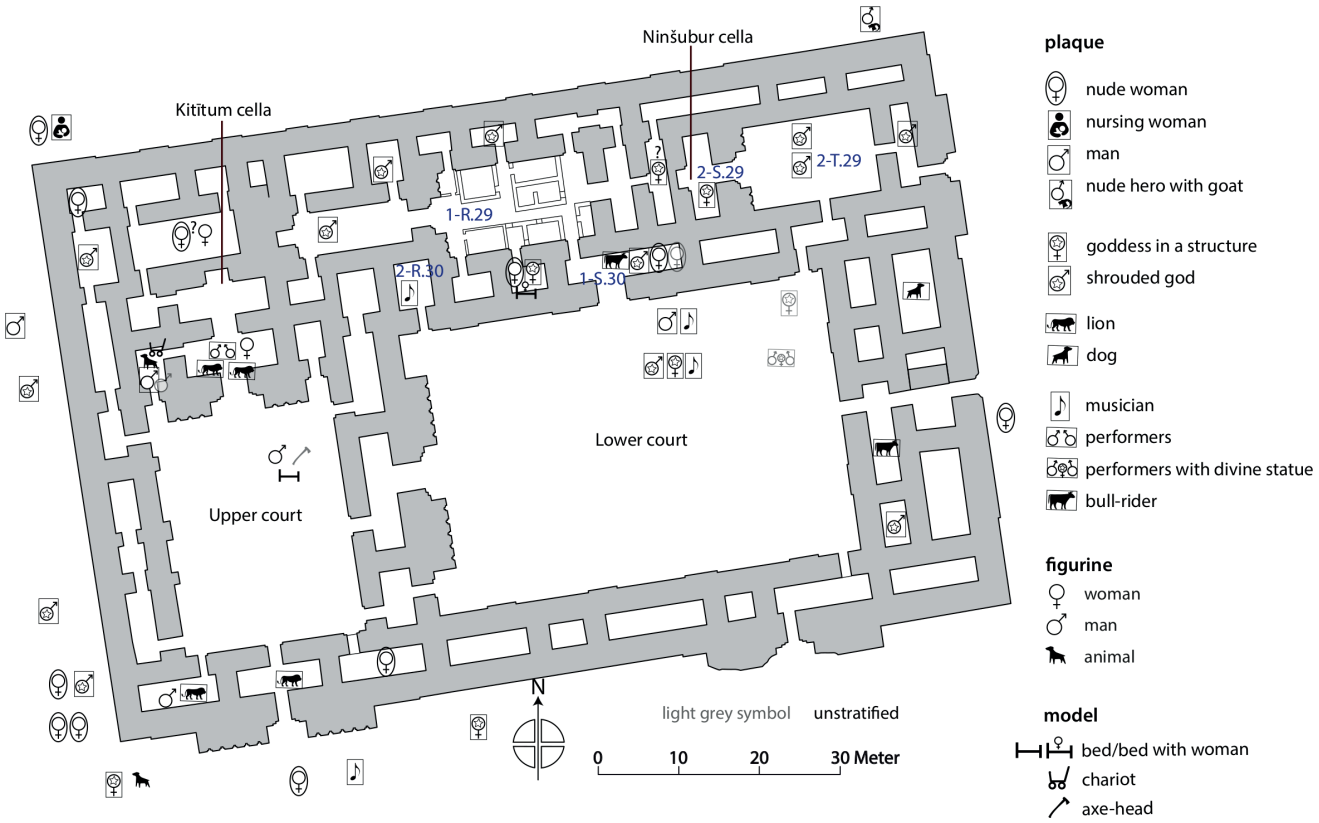

Fig. 17: Distribution of figurative terracotta objects in the Kitītum-temple, building levels III-IV (based on Hill/Jacobsen 1990: fig. 13, redrawn by M. Lerchl and modified by author).

tiple necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and hip-belts depicted on the nude bodies of female figurines upon movement.

Nevertheless, these figurines and the much-discussed nude female plaque type, which derives from figurines, will not concern us here.[22]

The distribution of terracotta objects within the Kitītum-Temple changed over time: in Kitītum I–II (**Fig. 16**), many terracottas lay in the northern part of the eastern (= lower) half of the temple complex, where the Ninšubur sanctuary and its courtyard were located (1-S.29, 2-S.29 and 2-T.29), as well as in the group of rooms accessible through 1-S.30, especially in the large rectangular court 1-R.29. This area was equipped with kitchen facilities (oven and fireplaces; Hill/Jacobsen 1990: 48–50).

In Kitītum III, the western access from 1-Q.29 towards the upper part of the temple was closed off, and in Kitītum IV, thin walls were built into 1-R.29 (**Fig. 17**; Hill/Jacobsen 1990: 48). These architectural changes influenced the distribution pattern of the terracottas, which disappeared from 1-R.29 and now clustered in the narrow access room 1-S.30 and in the lower courtyard, suggesting that changes in room use and, most probably, in accessibility, affected the deposition of these objects.[23] The distribution pattern demonstrates further that terra-

22 Altogether, 51 terracotta plaque fragments with depictions of nude women are known from Iščali. Only eleven were discovered inside, and six in close vicinity to the Kitītum-Temple. There were no nude female plaques registered for the "Gate"-Temple, and only four in the southwestern adjoining rooms of the annex building. I suggested elsewhere that its ritual function related to entering a building. Expanding Wiggermann's argument (Wiggermann 1998: 46), I have interpreted the nude female plaques as visualizations of the concept of *bāštum* "virtue, honor, attractiveness" necessary for entering a building and receiving the attention of a superior/divine person (Rossberger 2018: 235–237). The low number of plaques depicting nude females inside the Kitītum-Temple and its much higher frequency in the areas surrounding the temple supports this idea. On *bāštum*, see the comprehensive discussion in Steinert 2012: 405–509, and in particular 437–443; for another interpretation of nude females in Old Babylonian glyptic cf. Felli 2015: 218–220.

23 *Pace* Assante 2000: 167–168, who claims that most terracottas of the Kitītum-Temple belonged to local people seeking refuge in these "jerrybuilt residential units"/"shacks" after destruction of temple and town.

cottas were not used as substitutes or dedicatory objects, which would have led to their accumulation in proximity to the cult image or in subsequent storage in the adjacent rooms.[24]

a

b

c

Fig. 18: Plaques depicting lions: a) One of a pair from ante-cella Kitītum, Ish. 34:57 (OI A16978); b) Ish. 35:56 (OI A17670); c) Ish. 35:40 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 38c). Photos except c) by author, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

24 Besides, terracottas of this time period never bore inscriptions (e.g. divine or personal names) that could indicate a dedicatory act.

3.2 Miniaturized gate keepers

Most relevant to an exploration of the visual and sensory environment are plaques replicating sculptural works in miniature form. These are, foremost, lions, lion-dragons, eagles, bull-men and six-curled heroes, all functioning as gate-keeping and standard-bearing figures erected in two- and three-dimensional forms at the outer temple gates and at important interior entranceways (e.g. to the ante-cella or cella), as well as beside the cult image.[25]

Suitable to the location of these originals, pairs of lion plaques were found at the southwestern gate of the Kitītum-Temple, in the ante-cella, and in the entranceway leading from the large lower court to the northern group of rooms (Kitītum I–II). The iconic nature of the referent is particularly striking for these plaques (**Fig 18a–c**),[26] since their angular forms and the striated rendering of their manes is much closer to that of the about (half) life-sized terracotta-sculpture versions at Tell Harmal, Khafajeh, and several other early second millennium sites,[27] than to that of actual living animals. Other plaques from Iščali depict dogs, bulls, and horses in a highly naturalistic and physiognomically correct manner. Therefore, I argue that the peculiar artistic realization of the lion plaques is owed not so much to artistic incompetence but to the deliberate replication of an artefactual prototype.

The plaques depicting bull-men, six-curled heroes, or the winged lion-dragon about to devour a man (Ish. 35:86, Ish. 35:90, furthermore OIM A9338, A9363; **Fig. 19a–b**) follow more naturalistic artistic conventions than the lion plaques.[28] Their prototypes must have embellished the gates in the form of reliefs, sculptured according to a

25 For third and second millennia BCE Mesopotamian guardian figures see Braun-Holzinger 1999: 154–158, and for inscribed figurines of the first millennium, see Theiss 2014: 253–257 and Rittig 1977. On their description in Sumerian temple hymns, see again Löhnert 2013: 271–273. The mythological status of these figures as uncivilized and liminal creatures turned into temple guardians by defeat through a civilizing hero has been discussed repeatedly (Wiggermann 1981/82: 164–166 and 174–178; Wiggermann 1992: 159–161; Maul 2000).

26 Altogether, the 11 lion terracotta plaques from Iščali include six from the Kitītum-Temple and two from the "Gate"-Temple.

27 See, for instance, the discussion and catalogue of third and second millennia BCE temple gate lions in Battini 2009: 191–197.

28 Altogether two lion dragons, ten bull men, one eagle, and two six-curled heroes were excavated at Iščali, of these one lion dragon, one six-curled hero, and two bull men came from the Kitītum-Temple, and one six-curled hero and two bull men from the "Gate"-Temple. One lion dragon was found in the courtyard behind the northeastern gate of the Kitītum-Temple, and one bull man and a six-curled hero were found in the entrance area of the "Gate"-Temple as well as close to the northern gate of its annex rooms.

fixed "mental iconography" which also guided their numerous depictions on cylinder seals.[29] A large clay relief found in situ beside the entrance of the so-called Hendursag Chapel at Ur represents a medium-sized version of a bull-man (h. 0.6 m; Woolley/Mallowan 1976: 173, pl. 64.2), as does the stone-relief from the temple entrance of Tell el-Rimah as well as that of a tailed winged creature (Seidl 2013). They represent arbitrary specimens of a universal class of divine beings relevant for the establishment and protection of sacred space.

a

b

Fig. 19: Plaques depicting lion dragons about to devour a man: a) Ish. 35:90 (OI A17680); b) acquired, OI A9338. Photos by author, courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

3.3 Miniaturized cult statues

The replications of male (**Fig. 20**)[30] and female cult images (**Fig. 21**) in the form of terracotta plaques[31] share the "un-naturalistic" rendering of bodily features of the lion plaques. The lack of anatomical detail and the emphasis on accoutrements, in particular weapons and jewelry, differ markedly from contemporary visual standards. The terracotta versions of the female cult images, which are conventionally called 'goddess-in-a-structure' plaques, also depict their organically-made architectural framing. They must have evoked the characteristic feel and fragrance of reed and wicker wood, strongly diverging from the surrounding mudbrick architecture and often praised in the literary descriptions of temples (Rossberger 2018: 392–394).

The numerous weapons held by and attached to the male versions of these plaques (conventionally called 'shrouded gods') emphasize their belligerent nature. The narrowing shapes of their lower "bodies" mark them as immobile and stress the "image-like" character of the depicted, which could be driven like a dagger into the ground.

Significantly, and in contrast to the generic figures of the six-curled hero and the bull man, the cult statue plaques exhibit locally specific particularities (Rossberger 2018, 389–391). Nevertheless, several iconographically related but varying types of these replicas can occur at one site; for instance, 18 different kinds of female cult images were discovered at Iščali, of which nine were found inside the Kitītum-Temple. This suggests that not just *the* statue of Ištar-Kitītum was depicted but distinct

29 I use the term "mental iconography" following Hartenstein 2008: 39–52. According to roughly contemporary texts, a lion devouring an enemy adorned the temple gates of the Ekur at Nippur (a "lion holding a man" and a "lion coming down on a man," besides an lion-headed eagle clawing an enemy mentioned in 'Urnamma B;' see Löhnert 2013: 271–272) and of the temple at Keš ("corps-eating carnivore," ead.). The bronze lions from the Ištar-temple at Mari carry the following inscriptions: "The one that strangles the enemy of Shamshi-Adad on behalf of Ishtar, the one that drinks the blood of the enemies of Shamshi-Adad on behalf of Ishtar." (cf. Braun-Holzinger 1999: 156).

30 Altogether, there are 38 such plaques from Iščali, including 15 from the Kitītum- and five from the "Gate"-Temple.

31 There are 19 such plaques from Iščali, including nine from the Kitītum- and two from the "Gate"-Temple.

Ish. 34:5 (OI A16965) Ish. 34:100 (OI A16992) Ish. 34:208 (OI A21198)

Fig. 20: Plaques depicting male cult statues (conventionally called 'shrouded gods'). All photos by author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Ish. 34:204 (OI A21196) Ish. 34:40 (OI A9403) Ish. 34:124 (IM)

Fig. 21: Plaques depicting female cult statues (conventionally called 'goddess in a structure'). The mould fragment Ish. 34:125 was discovered in a domestic context ('Serai'). Plaque fragment Ish. 35:220 (without context) was most likely pressed from this mould. Plaque Ish. 34:204 (Kitītum-Temple) is the lower half of an identical plaque. All photos except Ish. 34:124 (= Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 34a) by author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

versions, which might have stood in smaller street chapels or even household shrines.[32] Their occurrence in both temple and residential contexts demonstrates the entanglement of imagery among different social contexts and the high cultural relevance the images possessed during this period.

3.4 Miniaturized musicians

Another significant part of the plaque repertoire depicts musicians and performers (**Figs. 22–23**). Unlike the motifs discussed above, they stand out for their naturalistic and detailed rendering of bodies, costumes, and instruments.[33] A delicate, almost three-dimensional but clearly mould-pressed figurine of a lute-player, purchased but probably from Iščali, exemplifies this point (**Fig. 22** center). The sound of musicians and singers lamenting and praising inside the temple, which flows out into the city, is also one of the most frequently evoked images in the literary texts.[34]

Besides musicians playing various kinds of stringed instruments, Ziegler identified a characteristically dressed pair of men, who confront each other with a curved stick, as *ḫuppum*-dancers (**Fig. 23a–d**).[35] We know their depictions on plaques from Iščali and several other Babylonian sites (Babylon, Isin, Ešnunna, Khafajeh, Kiš, Larsa, Tell ed-Der, Ur; also Assur). The motif gets even more interesting when they flank the statue of a goddess with raised hands (**Fig. 23c–d**).[36] There, the moving men in profile contrast sharply with the static, frontal appearance of the divine statue erected upon a small pedestal.[37] On one of the Iščali plaques, the performers wear brimmed headdresses and beards that liken their appearance to that of kings.

At least for some plaques, their findspots in the large courtyard and its adjacent rooms (e.g. 2-R.30; in particular for levels Kitītum III–IV) coincide with the location where such musical and artistic events might have taken place (cf. Hill/Jacobsen 1990: 71 with fn. 88).[38] Pursuing Collon's argument that the "dancing dwarf," a particularly frequent motif on Old Babylonian terracotta plaques and cylinder seals, was a "shorthand for the setting of scene, probably a religious festival" (Collon 2003, 98), I argue that all kinds of plaques depicting musicians and performers served as *pars pro toto* for religious festivals, evoking the sounds and visual sights that characterized these events and temple life more generally.

4. Conclusion

Phenomenologically informed perspectives have a long tradition in religious studies and can be paired with recent approaches focusing on the material and visual dimensions of religious practice. Among others, W. Keane argued that "belief ontogenically follows on practice" (Keane 2008: 117) and that religions "may not always demand beliefs, but they will always involve material forms" (Keane 2008: 124). He advocates an approach to "religion" based on its material forms and on the (diachronically changing) ways in which enduring objects were put into practice. These perspectives increasingly receive attention in ancient studies (see for instance Bourgeaud/Fabiano 2013; Grand-Clément et al. 2017; Macdonald et al. 2018).

32 Auerbach (1994: 315) generally noticed a preponderance of 'goddess-in-a-structure' plaques in temples; the evidence from the Kitītum-Temple confirms this. Their distribution within the temple does not help in understanding their concrete functions. From three plaque moulds discovered at the site, only one (Ish. 34:125, see Fig. 21) has an archaeologically secured context: the housing area called 'Serai.' Interestingly, at least one of two plaque fragments depicting the 'goddess-in-a-structure'-motif and most likely produced from this mould, was excavated inside the Kitītum-sanctuary (Kitītum IV; Ish. 34:204);), the other plaque fragment (Ish. 35:220) is without context. This, of course, suggests that the plaques were brought from the domestic unit into the temple and not the other way around.

33 Altogether, Iščali yielded nine plaques with depictions of musicians and performers, among them five inside and in the immediate vicinity of the Kitītum-Temple. We may include depictions of riders on horses and some of the dogs (on a lead or fighting) in this category, since they probably partook in festive events as well.

34 Literary texts describe a lively and joyful atmosphere created by music and singing in the courtyards and gentler sounds in the private quarters of the deity (Löhnert 2013: 274–278).

35 See Ziegler 2007: 263–264. The *ḫuppum*-dancers are textually known in high numbers from the Šamaš-Temple in Larsa and from Mari; just as depicted on the plaques, these "acrobats" (CAD H, 240) always performed in pairs.

36 Ish. 35:R.131+133, Ish. 35:R.106; similar plaques were found in Khafajeh (Kh. V 253), Kiš (AN1926.423), Larsa (Barrelet 1968: n. 590), Tell ed-Der (Gasche/Pons 2014: n. 167, pl. 44), and Tell Harmal (Opificius 1961: n. 393).

37 Medium-scale stone and terracotta relief versions of *lamassum*-goddesses with raised hands are known from Tell el-Rimah (Seidl 2013) and Umma (Al-Mutawalli 2009: fig. 28); two small bronze figurines of such goddesses survive from the Hendursag-Chapel (h. 9.8 cm) and from the Ningal-Temple (h. 7.1 cm) at Ur (BM 123040; BM 124357). Similar gold pendants are held by the British Museum (h. 3.5 cm; BM 103057) and the Metropolitan Museum New York (Fletcher Fund, 1947, 47.1a-h).

38 A *ḫuppum*-dancer plaque was found in the large courtyard, another one in the ante-cella of the Kitītum-sanctuary.

Fig. 22a: Plaques depicting musicians with lutes: OI A9357 and A9369 acquired by the OIM but probably from Iščali; Ish. 34:104 (OI A16994) from the lower courtyard of the Kitītum-Temple. All photos by author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

Fig. 22b: Plaques depicting musicians with vertical harps and lyre: OI 9364, acquired by the OIM, was probably pressed from the same mould as Ish. 35:66 (Iščali, City wall). Similarly, the lyre plaque Ish. 34:111 from Iščali has a duplicate acquired by the OIM (not depicted, OI A9361) and relates to the delicate rendering of OI A9345 (acquired, but said to be from Iščali). All photos except Ish. 35:66 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 35i) and Ish. 34:111 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 35j) by author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

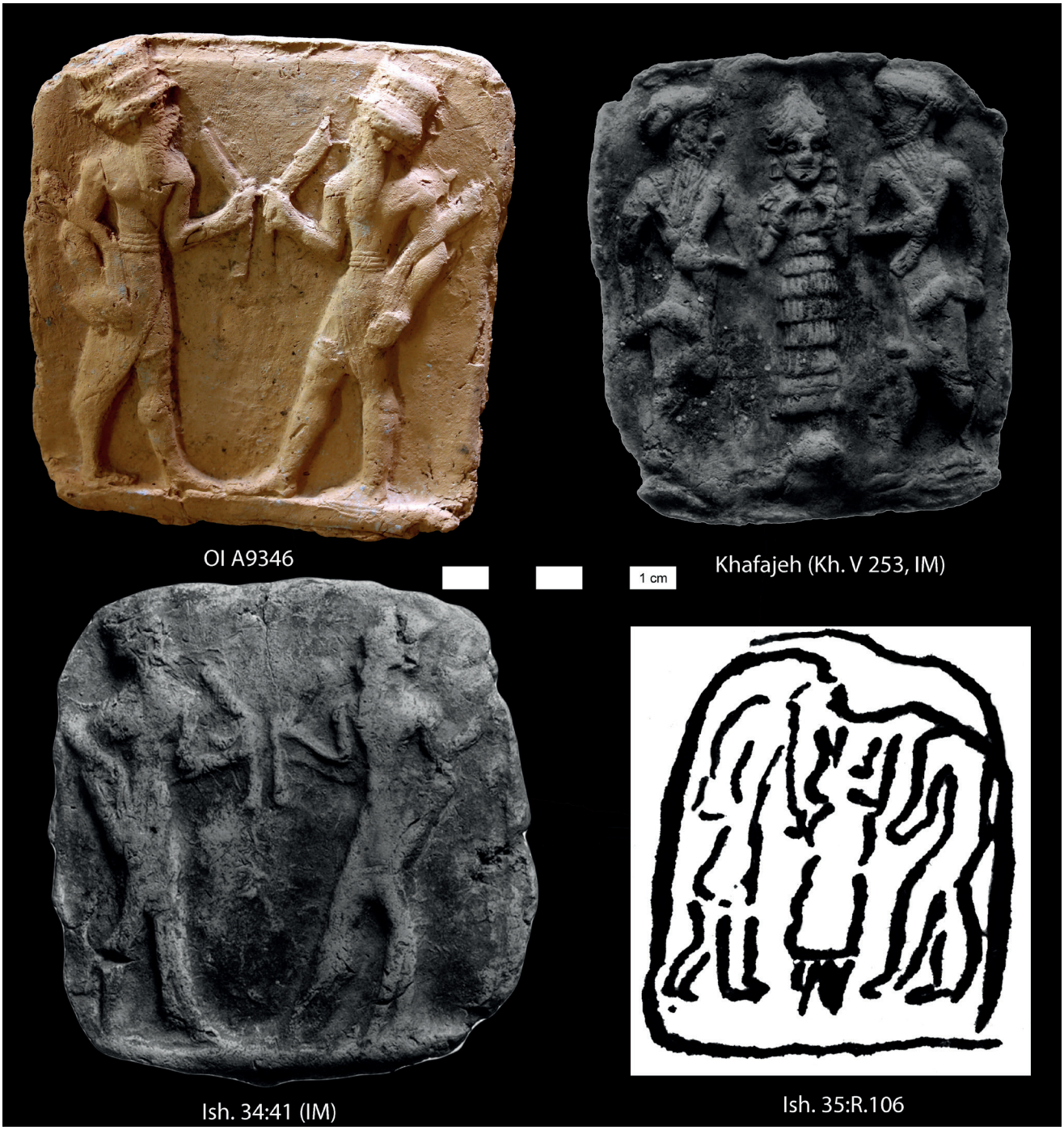

Fig. 23: Plaques depicting *ḫuppum*-dancers with curved sticks and flanking a female divine statue: OI A9346 acquired by the OIM but probably from Iščali, since it was probably pressed from the same mould as Ish. 34:41 (Hill/Jacobsen 1990: pl. 35b), which was excavated in the ante-cella of the Kitītum-sanctuary. Similarly, the plaque from Khafajeh (Kh. V 253, excavated at Mound D; Delougaz 1990: pl. 62c) seems to be a duplicate of Ish. 35:R.106 from Iščali, which was visually documented only through a sketch in the Field Register. All courtesy of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago.

They can turn our perception of the heterogeneous array of things excavated in the Kitītum-Temple into an accumulation of material residues of practices needed to create the sensory stimuli characterizing the earthly abode of a divine being. The furnishings and objects surviving from the cellae and adjacent rooms stand out for their variety of materials, colors, and shine and include many artefacts of distant temporal and geographical origin. Their appearance and feel differ markedly from that of the material culture typically present in contemporary households and must have left a lasting perceptual impact on the people involved in the cult.

The terracotta plaques, on the contrary, consist of clay and thus the most pervasive material available in southern Mesopotamia.[39] Nevertheless, they depict a large variety of motifs, among them many which reproduced sculptural works erected at the temple's gates, courtyards, or cellae. Others captured the vividness of the most evocative living agents in Babylonian temples: musicians and performers. Thus, we may read the terracotta plaques as miniature versions of the most relevant visual and acoustic perceptions gained by people inside the temple and during religious festivals. Their numerous presence inside and outside the Kitītum-Temple contrasts with a presumed "pictorial poverty" and testifies to the efficacy of images for religious and social practice, within and beyond the temple.

39 There are only a few cases in which color seems to have been applied.

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Hidden under the Floors. The Inventories and Archives of the Ganunmaḫ at Ur from the Third to the First Millennium BC

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Abstract: As part of an on-going research project, the author has reevaluated the publications and unpublished field documentation pertaining to the excavation of the Ganunmaḫ at Ur. This research not only lead to solving a series of problems inherent in Woolley's reports with which various scholars had struggled for decades (sections 2 and 3), but it also resulted in the compilation of a complete catalog of finds from the Ganunmaḫ and their correct attribution to the respective find contexts (section 4). This contribution discusses the material found under the Kassite period floors of several rooms in the Ganunmaḫ. Their analysis helps to gain insight into dedicatory practices during third and second millennium BC Ur and adds important information on temple inventories for this time period. In addition, a complete list of clay tablets and sealings found in the Ganunmaḫ is provided.

Keywords: Ur, Gannunmah, Ur III, Old Babylonian, dedicatory objects, clay tablets, sealings.

1. Localization, excavation, layout and building history of the Ganunmaḫ

The building called Ganunmaḫ is situated in the temenos area of Ur (modern Tell Muqqayar), south of the so-called Nanna Court and east of the Dublamaḫ. The layout of the area east of the Ganunmaḫ is unclear due to the lack of excavated structures. It seems likely that an entrance to the temenos area was located there.

The northwestern part of the building was destroyed in antiquity, probably during construction work for a large drain in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II (Woolley 1974: 48). Woolley's convincing reconstruction of the ground plan (57 x 57 m) was never contested (**Fig. 1**).

The building was investigated during the first excavation season at Ur (Woolley 1923: 312). Only the Late Babylonian pavements in the central group of rooms were left untouched during this season. They were removed during the 1926/27 excavation season (Woolley 1927: 408–410).

The Ganunmaḫ was built by Ur-Namma in the Ur III period (Woolley 1974: 46, 49), probably according to a new layout. Older building remains in the area were extremely scant (Woolley 1923: 321; Woolley 1955: 40; Woolley 1974: 48), but objects predating the Ur III period from within the Ganunmaḫ (see section 4) could be taken as evidence for possible forerunners occupying the same building ground.

The original building stood on an elevated terrace (Gruber 2018: Figs. 4–6), which was preserved up to a height of 2.6 m (Woolley 1923: 320). The entrance to the building most probably was situated in the northwest. The ground plan consists of a central group of five rooms. A corridor separated this central part of the building from several rooms surrounding it. Most of these are elongated in shape and have their entrance on one of the short sides. From a formal point of view, this layout speaks for their function as storerooms, an interpretation supported by the name "Ganunmaḫ" which translates into "Great Storage" as well as by the textual evi-

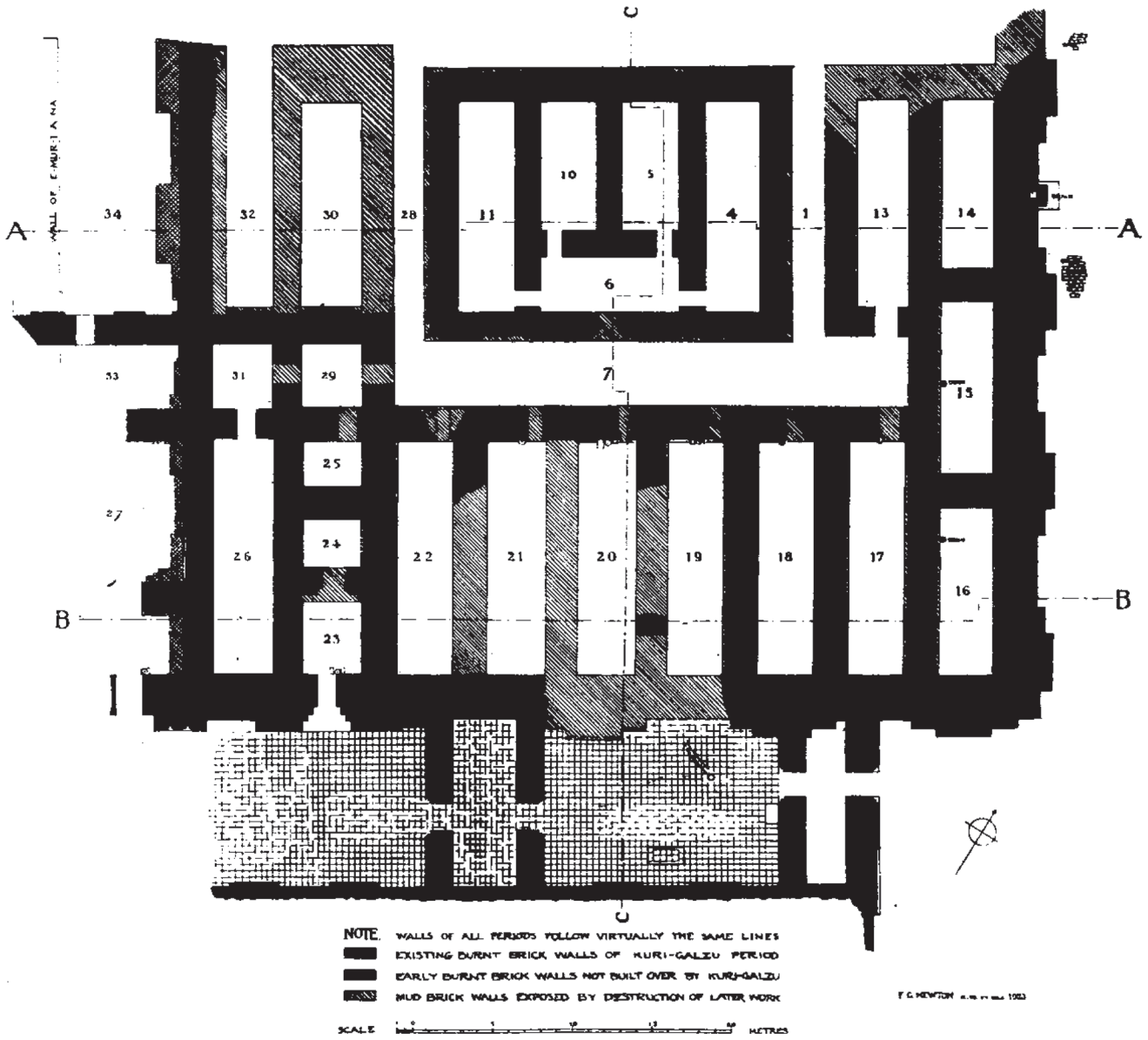

Fig 1: Ground plan of Gannunmaḫ (Woolley 1923: fig. 2).

Ruler	**Text**	**Object**
Ur-Namma	*e. g. Woolley 1974: 49*	*brick*
Amar-Su'ena	*e. g. Woolley 1923: 322*	*brick*
Nūr-Adad	E4.2.8.2	cone
Sîn-iddinam	E4.2.9.10	cone
Warad-Sîn/Kudur-mabuk	E4.2.13.9	brick
Warad-Sîn/Kudur-mabuk	E4.2.13.10	brick
Kurigalzu I.	UET 1-162/163 (cf. Brinkman 1976: 216, Q.2.31)	brick
Marduk-nādin-aḫḫē	B.2.6.1	door socket

Fig. 2: Rulers whose building inscriptions were found in the Ganunmaḫ (*in italics*) or whose inscriptions mention building the Ganunmaḫ.

Room	U-No.	Ruler	Building	GN	Text no.
TTB 17/R 11	423	Ur-Namma	Nanna temple	Nanna	E3/2.1.1.2
TTB 18/R 12	–	Ur-Namma	probably as *supra*		
TTB 19/R 13	421	Šu-ilīšu	Dublamaḫ	Nanna	E4.1.2.1
TTB 20/R 14	–	not inscribed			
TTB 23/R 17	422	Ur-Namma	Nanna temple	Nanna	E3/2.1.1.2
	–	not inscribed			
TTB 29/R 21	900	Kurigalzu	unclear	Nanna	
TTB 31/R 22	838	Šū-Sîn	Emurianabag (see footnote 4)	Nanna	E3/2.1.4.21
	950	Kurigalzu	Ekišnugal	Nanna	

Fig. 3: Door sockets found in the Ganunmaḫ (Kassite period and pre-Kassite period contexts).

dence found both in the Ganunmaḫ itself and in other areas of the temenos (van de Mieroop 1992: 78–80; van de Mieroop 2014: 361–362).

A passage way, the so-called *Via Sacra*, led along the southeast side of the Ganunmaḫ at the latest from the time of Kudur-mabuk (father of Warad-Sîn: 1834-1823) on (Woolley 1923: 323). It connected a possible entrance to the temenos area in the east with the Dublamaḫ and the buildings further to the west (Ziqqurrat terrace and Giparu).

Reconstructions of the Ganunmaḫ by Ur-Namma's successors followed the original ground plan, in some cases with minor variations. The layout of the building was profoundly altered in the late second or first half of the first millennium BC when only the central group of rooms was rebuilt according to the Ur III plan (Woolley 1962: 23–33).

Building inscriptions of various rulers on bricks, cones and door sockets were found as integral parts of the building (**Figs. 2**, **3**). Other inscriptions mention the Ganunmaḫ explicitly as the object of the ruler's building activity (**Fig. 2**).

Woolley had addressed the building as "Enunmaḫ" throughout his publications (probably based on Thureau-Dangin's (1907: 208, no. 4) readings). This reading, however, was based on a misinterpretation of the first sign of the word, which, in fact, has to be read as gá, not é. It is possible that Nabonidus' scribes had already made the same mistake in an inscription by this ruler mentioning the Enunmaḫ (Schaudig 2001: 339–340, no. 1.6). On the other hand, it is probably more likely that the Enunmaḫ of Nabonidus was a completely different building (maybe the Ningal tempel, which was called é-nun in Sîn-balassu-iqbi's inscriptions; B2.6.32.2014).

2. The Ganunmaḫ: Potentials and challenges

In his final report on the Ur III, Old Babylonian and Kassite-period Ganunmaḫ, Woolley describes one of the find contexts within the building as follows:

> "[…] below the floors of rooms 10 to 13 there lay hundreds of fragments of stone vases, a few of which were decorated with carvings in relief, and many of which bore inscriptions, the dedications of various kings, ranging from Sargon of Akkad to Rim-Sin […]. Together with the stone vases there were found examples of inlay in shell and faience which came either from the walls of the building or from its furniture […]" (Woolley 1974: 47; and similar: Woolley 1923: 323–324, 332).

Reading this passage, one can hardly ignore the potential of this find context for an investigation of temple inventories in the third and early second millennia BC. However, one is—when consulting the pertinent literature—confronted with seemingly insurmountable difficulties concerning the localization of the contexts and the number and precise nature of the finds in the Ganunmaḫ. First, because the room numbers in the text in Woolley's final publication (1974) do not match with those of the published plans and second, because a complete list of objects from the Ganunmaḫ was never published. Tunca has described the problem thus:

> "La documentation relative à ce bâtiment pose un problème insoluble. Pour enregistrer cet édifice, Woolley a employé sur le terrain une numérotation provisoire dire des loci, dans laquelle chaque numéro était précédé du sigle TTB. Ensuite, en rédigeant le rapport définitif, Woolley a introduit une

> autre numérotation. En publiant ce rapport posthume, les éditeurs du Musée de Pennsylvanie ont présenté un plan (UE 6, pl. 58) qui porte manifestement la numérotation provisoire de Woolley. Par conséquent, la description que le fouilleur donne de ce bâtiment reste en pratique inutilisable." (Tunca 1986: 286).

Independently, Clayden (1989: 62–64) came to the same conclusion as Tunca. Recently, Zettler and Hafford have summarized the situation as follows:

> "The failure to change the plan in the final publication to reflect the renumbering of rooms in Woolley's text makes his description of the earlier building(s) perplexing […]" (Zettler/Hafford 2014: 373).

In short: Woolley had used two different systems for numbering the rooms of the Ganunmaḫ. One on-site system for which he added the prefix "TTB" to each room number and one system for his final publications (Woolley 1962; Woolley 1974). TTB is an acronym for "Trial Trench B" which was used to designate one of the excavation areas at the start of the Ur excavations (cf. Woolley 1923: Taf. 24, C "site of E-nun-maḫ").

The described problems arise because Woolley never published a concordance for these numbers and never updated his excavation plan drawings. In addition, the editors of Woolley's report on "The Buildings of the Third Dynasty" (1974) who had published the work posthumously have further complicated the matter in adding to Woolley's find catalog entries with confusing or wrong information on the findspots and room numbers. Furthermore, a third numbering system had been introduced for the first millennium BC ground plans of the Ganunmaḫ (Woolley 1962: 23–33, pl. 66.67). All this, in turn, has led to further problems when objects from the Ganunmaḫ were included in subsequent material culture studies (e. g. Braun-Holzinger 1991: 210 Anm. 582).

3. Room numbers: "un problème insoluble"[1] solved

Fortunately, there is a solution to most of the problems described above. Tunca (1986: 287) had already succeeded in correlating some of the on-site and final publication room numbers. A detailed study including all available field documentation on the Ganunmaḫ conducted by the author has led to further progress in the matter. Not only could most of the room numbers be correlated and pinpointed in the ground plan (**Fig. 4**), but a complete inventory of all registered finds with correct localization was also compiled. This makes all the collected data on the Ganunmaḫ available for the first time. A detailed publication of the results is currently prepared by the author (Schmitt, in prep.). Here, we will limit ourselves to giving two examples to illustrate the correlation of the room numbers.

The most important sources of information for our purposes are the so-called *Field Notes*[2] used to describe contexts (mainly building remains) and the so-called *Catalog Cards*[3] used to register objects found in the excavated areas by Woolley and his staff.

During the excavation season at the Ganunmaḫ, only the on-site room numbering system with the prefix *TTB* was used, e. g. TTB 17, to designate distinct features in the ground plan. At a later stage (it is unclear when exactly), additional information was added to the *Field Notes* and *Catalog Cards*. This is evident because the add-

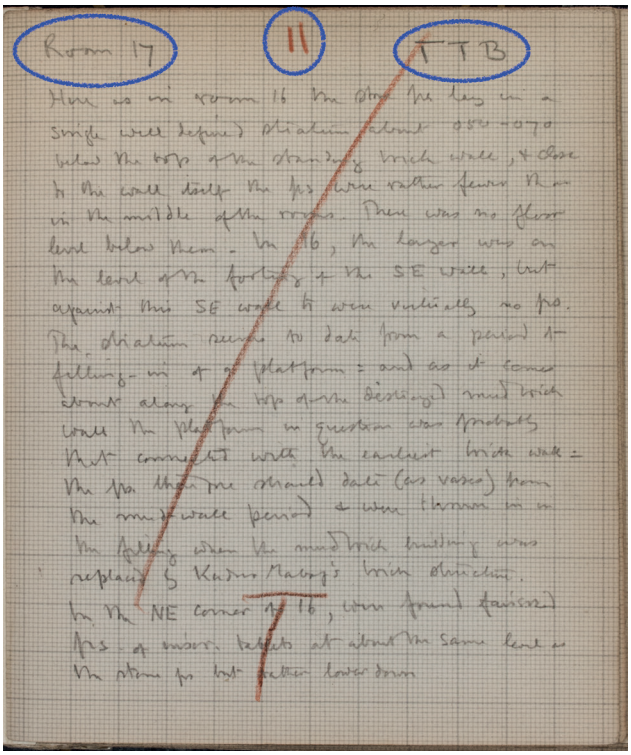

Fig. 4: Scanned page from Woolley's Field Notes. Relevant content is marked blue (© Trustees of the British Museum).

1 Tunca 1986: 286.

2 Scans of the *Field Notes* were available on UrCrowdsource.org until summer 2017 and digital transcriptions could be made there. After that, the site was integrated in ur-online.org.

3 The transcribed information recorded on the *Catalog Cards* is available and searchable at ur-online.org.

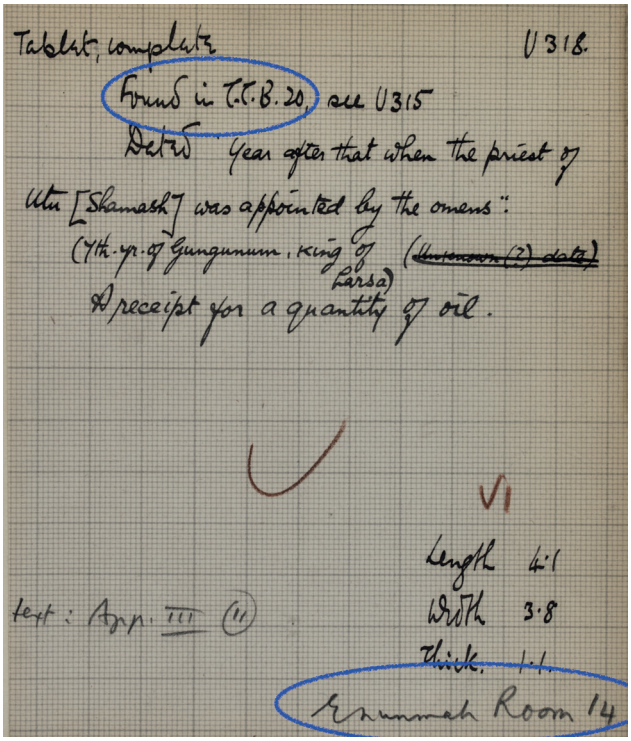

Fig. 5: Scanned Catalog Card of clay tablet U 318. Relevant content is marked blue (© Trustees of the British Museum).

ed information shows a different handwriting and use of a different pen or of a different pen color (cf. **Fig. 4** and **5**).

Figure 4 is a scanned page from the *Field Notes*. The original heading read: "Room 17 TTB". The number "11" was later added in red probably when the content was reviewed to be integrated in the final report. This gives us the correlation: Room TTB 17 = Room 11, which is confirmed by the information on several *Catalog Cards* (e. g. U 195, U 199).

Figure 5 is a scanned *Catalog Card*. It was used to register a clay tablet (U 318) "found in T.T.B 20". At a later stage, the information "Enunmah Room 14" was added resulting in the equation of Room TTB 20 = Room 14.

When all the pertinent data was collected and evaluated, correlations for almost every room number in the Ganunmaḫ could be established. The results of this work are given in **Figs. 6–7** and illustrated in **Fig. 8**.

TTB	UE 6	UE 9
4	6	4
5	5	5
6	2	3
10	4	6
11	3	7

Fig. 6: Concordance of room numbers of central group of rooms for all building phases. TTB = prefix of rooms in on-site documentation; UE 6 = Woolley 1974; UE 9 = Woolley 1962.

TTB	UE 6	UE 6	TTB
1	1	1	1/7/28
4	6	2	6
5	5	3	11
6	2	4	10
7	1	5	5
8	unclear	6	4
9	unclear	7	13
10	4	8	14
11	3	9	15
12	unclear	10	16
13	7	11	17
14	8	12	18
15	9	13	19
16	10	14	20
17	11	15	21
18	12	16	22
19	13	17	23
20	14	18	24
21	15	19	25
22	16	20	26
23	17	21	29
24	18	22	31
25	19		
26	20		
27A	1 (Emurianabag*)		
27	2 (s. o.)		
28	1		
29	21		
30	ohne		
31	22		
32	ohne		
33	4 (Emurianabag)		
34	5 (Emurianabag)		
35	3 (Emurianabag)		

Fig. 7: Concordance of room numbers for pre-Kassite and Kassite building of Ganunmaḫ according to Ur III ground plan (cf. **Fig. 8**). TTB = prefix of rooms in on-site documentation; UE 6 = Woolley 1974; UE 9 = Woolley 1962.

* The so-called Emurianabag is a building inserted in the space between the Ganunmaḫ and the Ziqqurrat terrace. It was built during the reign of Kurigalzu I. (Woolley 1965: 6). Evidence for earlier buildings in this area were not recognized or documented. The name Emurianabag is never mentioned in inscription of Kurigalzu I. but in an inscription on a door socket of Šu-Su'en (U 838; E3/2.1.4.21). This door socket, however, was found in the Ganunmaḫ (Room TTB 31/R 22). Therefore, there is no reason to identify the building remains under discussion with the Emurianabag (Clayden 1989, 61).

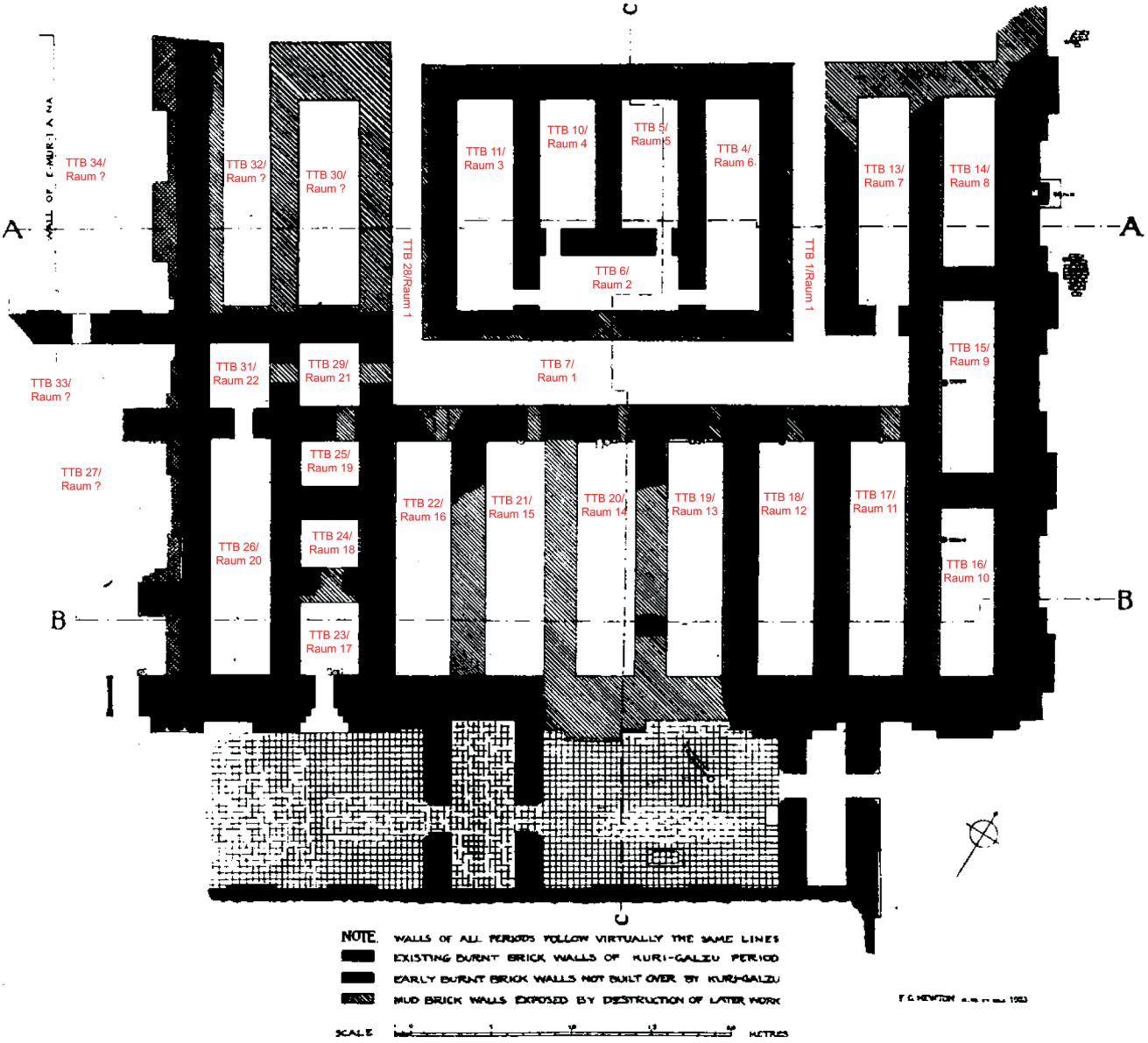

Fig. 8: Ground plan with altered room numbers (based on Woolley 1923: fig. 2 and UE 6 text descriptions for the central group of rooms).

We abstained from introducing a new numbering system, for obvious reasons. Instead, it was decided to use a combination of the numbering systems employed by Woolley to render the plans as user friendly as possible, e. g. TTB 18/R 12, meaning room TTB 18 in the on-site documentation and room 12 in the final publication. Acronyms in the tables are to be read thus: TTB = prefix of rooms in on-site documentation; UE 6 = Woolley 1974; UE 9 = Woolley 1962.

4. Objects under Kassite period floors

4.1 Context, documentation, quality and quantity of the finds

The initial quote in section 2 by Woolley referred to a large number of objects found under beaten earth floors of the Kassite period (Woolley 1974: 50) in several rooms in the Ganunmaḫ. Woolley speaks of "hundreds of fragments of stone vases" and other objects. One could imagine that the objects were encountered during the renovation of the Ganunmaḫ by Kurigalzu I. (**Figs. 1**, **2**; Bartelmus 2010) and being obviously not of immediate relevance were deposited under the floors of the building.

Through the reevaluation of the documentation for this area a clear picture concerning the exact findspots and the quantity and quality of the finds mentioned by Woolley could be gained.

Woolley gives the rooms 10–13 as findspot of the objects in his final publication (Woolley 1974: 47). These room numbers can be equated with TTB 16–19 (cf. **Figs. 8** and **7**). The total number of objects coming from these rooms amounts to 144 based on the information obtained from the *Catalog Cards*. Woolley's claim that several hundred objects were found there is therefore either wrong or only a relatively small proportion of the (more spectacular?) finds were kept and registered; the latter seems the more likely possibility. For several of the objects the findspot is indicated as "TTB 16-17", "TTB 16 and 19", "TTB 16, 17 and 19" and "TTB 17 and 19". A short discussion of the first of these findspot indicators is in order here, as in many (not all!) cases the final publication room number was added to it, e. g. U 887: "TTB 16-17, Enunmah Room 12." It is unclear when the latter information was added and by whom. The question really was how to deal with it. We decided to give precedence to the additional information and to accept it as "true" because it leads to a more precise localization of several objects and we could not find a reason how and why they would not have been based on the actual situation in the field.

Lists of objects have been compiled for each findspot (see tables in Appendix). For the following quantitative analyses, we have to bear in mind that the object collection represents only what the excavators decided to keep, not what was actually found (see *supra*). Obviously, of the "hundreds of fragments of stone vases" (Woolley 1974: 47) only the larger or complete and the inscribed pieces were kept. In addition, sometimes several distinct objects or fragments were registered under one U number (e. g. U 177 and 191 and the beads; clay tablets in many case, see section 5.3).

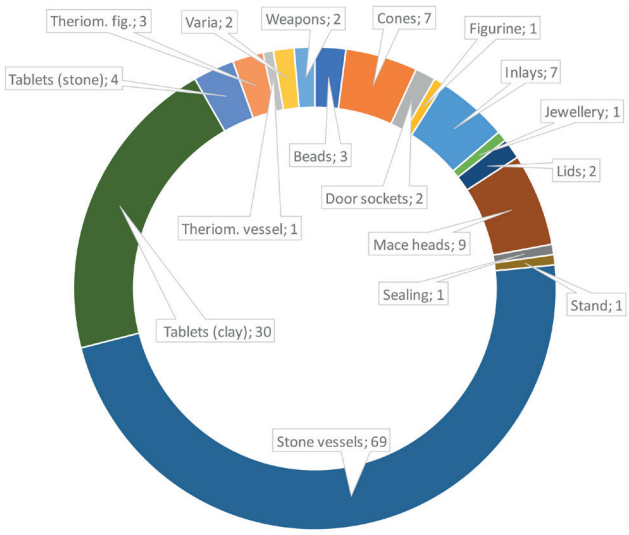

Fig. 09: Object categories, n=145.

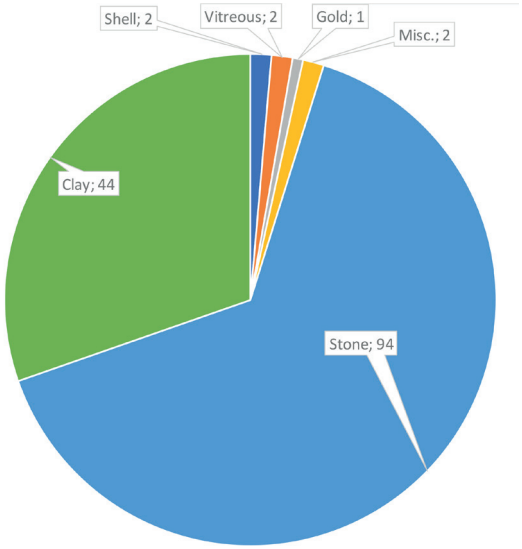

Fig. 10: Materials, n=145.

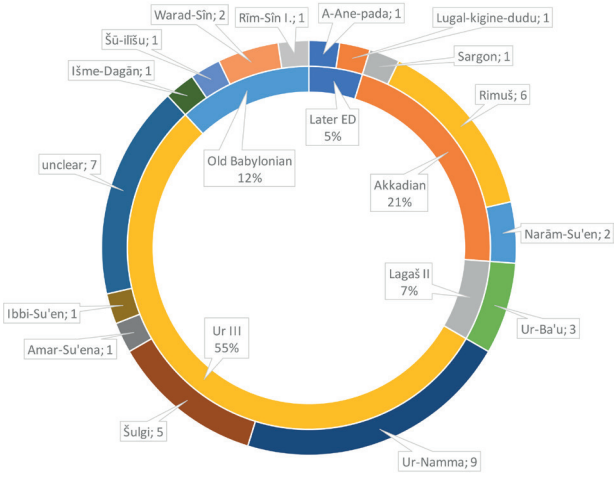

Fig. 11: Objects with royal inscriptions, n=42.

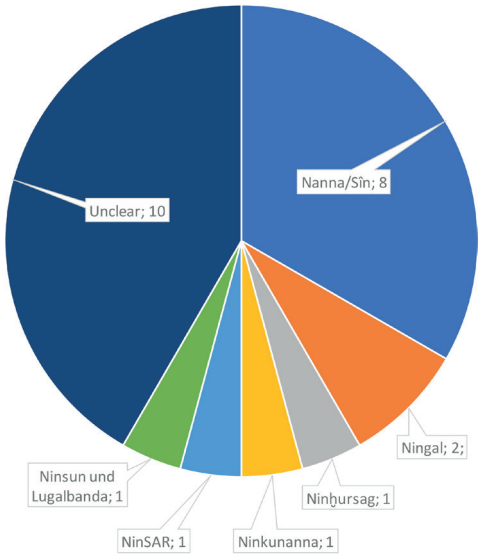

Fig. 12: Deities in dedicatory inscriptions.

4.2 Qualitative and quantitative analysis

Most of the objects found under the Kassite period floors of Room TTB 16–19/R10-13 can be interpreted as dedicatory objects mainly consisting of stone vessels (69). Some more finds, such as mace heads (9), belong to this semantic category. A few objects with building inscriptions (clay cones and door sockets) which were fixed or installed as integral parts of the building were also found. Four foundation tablets made of stone also formed part of this collection. Interestingly, they mention buildings other than the Ganunmaḫ (U 219, 220, 222, 223; all from TTB 19/R 13).

The inscribed objects range from the later Early Dynastic until the Old Babylonian period with a distinct peak in the Ur III period. These objects clearly illustrate that the Ganunmaḫ functioned as a storage for dedicatory objects over hundreds of years. The objects were kept together in the building even after it had been rebuilt several times.

The fact that except for one earring no metal finds were among the excavated material should be underlined. The assemblage therefore stands in stark contrast with what we know from the written sources in which metal objects are frequently mentioned (Figulla 1953a.b; van de Mieroop 1989; 1992). The clay tablets found in the same contexts as the objects mentioned above are discussed in section 5.3.

4.3 Spatial distribution

We are following the premise that what was found under the floors of rooms TTB 16–19/R 10–13 had once belonged to the inventory of the rooms, i. e. was stored there. We furthermore assume that these objects were originally given to one of the temples in Ur (mainly the Nanna and Ningal temples) and were at a certain point sent to the Ganunmaḫ to be stored there. It remains unclear whether these rooms had fulfilled this function throughout the history of the building. It is impossible to ascertain if room functions changed over time.

Spatial analysis of the contexts (i. e. rooms) is hampered by the fact that 29 objects lack precision in their findspot information, which is only given as "TTB 16-17" (interestingly never for clay tablets). As explained in section 4.1, the objects could have been found in rooms TTB16–18/R 10–12. From what secure information we have, we can observe that room TTB 18/R 12 only yielded uninscribed vessels. The "TTB 16-17" objects without further specification could therefore have come from either TTB 16/R 10 or TTB 17/R 11. Additionally, we should bear in mind that only a (small) proportion of the actual finds were registered (see section 4.1). These circumstances distort the data to such a degree that any further analysis, unfortunately, would not lead to any reliable results. We are, therefore, deprived of the means to make any meaningful comments on the function and use of the objects after they had arrived at the Ganunmaḫ.

Clay tablets with administrative texts have been found in all rooms with TTB 17/R 11 yielding the largest quantity (see section 5.3).

This leaves many questions unanswered, such as:

Why were some (dedicatory) objects send to the Ganunmaḫ while others stayed in the temples? The case of the Giparu is illuminating in this case. Several objects dating to the Ur III, Akkadian and Early Dynastic period were found in the Old Babylonian levels of this building (Schmitt, in prep.).

Were the objects in the Ganunmaḫ still used, i.e. integrated in certain practices at certain occasions, e.g. during feasts or offerings? This would imply that an organizational principle for storage existed, which made retrieval of the objects easier.

Conclusions

The Ganunmah at Ur played an important role for the economy of the city during the late third and earlier second millennia BC as is illustrated in numerous clay tablets from the building itself (see section 5.4) and other buildings in the temenos area (van de Mieroop 1992, 78–80; van de Mieroop 2014, 361–362). Agricultural products and silver were received and redistributed. At the same time, the Ganunmaḫ served as a storage for objects belonging to the inventories of the main temples of Nanna and Ningal at Ur as is demonstrated by the objects discussed in section 4 which were found during Woolley's excavations.

5. Excursus: Ur III and Old Babylonian tablets and sealings from the Ganunmaḫ

5.1 Contexts

In many cases information on the rooms within the Ganunmaḫ is given on the *Catalog Cards*. More precise information is often lacking and it is therefore in many cases impossible to comment on the date of the context. Room numbers without further comment can be found in **Fig. 8**.

Findspot	Comments
TTB	= Trial Trench B (cf. section 2); general area of the Ganunmaḫ
TTB ES	unclear; the acronym 'ES' was later assigned to the Dublamaḫ area
TTB NE side	Northeast side of Ganunmaḫ
TTB SS	Southeast side of Ganunmaḫ; area of so-called *Via Sacra*
TTB W	unclear; probably western area of Ganunmaḫ
TTB Z	unclear
TTB 1/R 1	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 2/R 14	Should refer to the Persian period building, as TTB 2 only appears in the plan drawing of this period
TTB 5/R 5	Cf. Fig. 8; one collection of tablets (U 8811 a–s, U 8812) found "under pavement of E-nun-mah"; the high value of the U number indicates that the tablets were found during the second phase of investigations at the Ganunmaḫ during which the pavement with stamps of Nebuchadnezzar II. were removed (see section 1)
TTB 07	Area immediately to the southeast of central block of rooms
TTB 08	Not indicated in plan drawings; TTB 8 is according to the information on the *Catalog Cards* of U 436 and U 787 located close to the Nebuchadnezzar (II) drain for which the NW part of the Ganunmaḫ was cut; the same could be true for TTB 9
TTB 09	See *supra sub* TTB 08; Woolley (1974: 50) or the editor of the volume had assigned to tablets to TTB 15/R 9 which is certainly is a misunderstanding
TTB 12	Not indicated in plan drawing; location unclear
TTB 13/ R 7	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 14/R 8	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 15/R 9	Cf. Fig. 8; one of the tablets has the findspot "TTB 13 / Enunmah room 9"; probably confused with TTB 13 of the Persian period plan; Woolley 1974: 50 assigned it to TTB 15/R 9 and other circumstances seem to support this information (Schmitt, in prep.)
TTB 16/R 10	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 17/R 11	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 18/R 12	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 19/R 13	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 20/R 14	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 21/R 15	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 22/R 16	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 23/R 17	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 25/R 19	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 26/R 20	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 29/R 21	Cf. Fig. 8
TTB 30	Not indicated in plan drawing; location unclear; Woolley 1974: 53 might refer to this room
TTB 33/R 3	Emurianabag (cf. footnote 4)
TTB 33/34	The findspot information on the *Catalog Cards* (e.g. U 924) reads as follows: "from TTB, W side, above rooms 33 and 34."
TTB 34/R 5	Emurianabag (cf. footnote 4); most of the tablets were found under the wall separating TTB 34/R 5 from the Ganunmaḫ; this wall was most probably built during the reign of Kudur-Mabug (Woolley 1974: 47)
TTB 35/R 4	Emurianabag (cf. footnote 4)

Fig. 13: Table of contexts.

Context	U no.	Coll. no.	cdli URL
TTB	573		
	591	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467915
	574		
	575		
	576	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467906
	577	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467907
	578	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467908
	579	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467909
	580	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467910
	581	BM 138343	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467852
	582	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467911
	583	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467912
	584	BM study loan	
TTB 12	733		
	734		
	735		
	736	BM study loan	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467927
TTB 15 / Raum 9	743	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467929
	U 3008 a–c		
TTB 22 / Raum 16	739		
	740	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467928
TTB 26 / Raum 20	391		
TTB SS	594	BM study loan	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467916
	595	BM study loan	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467917
	598		
	948		
TTB W	926		
	927	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467936
	928	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467937
	929		
	981	BM study loan	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467944
	987		

Fig. 14: Table of sealings.

5.2 Sealings

32 Old Babylonian sealings were registered for the Ganunmaḫ area. Judging from the back-sides most of them functioned as sealings for containers. Recently, excellent photographs of these objects have been made available online at ur-online.org and cdli.ucla.edu (follow URLs provided in **Fig. 14**).

5.3 Clay tablets

Clay tablets coming from the Ganunmaḫ area were recorded on 237 *Catalog Cards* (on these documents see section 3). However, the actual number of tablets and tablet fragments is much higher as several objects (often fragmentary) were registered under one number sometimes indicated by a letter index (e. g. U 585 a–g: "Eight fragments of account tablets."). In some cases, the specific number of fragments is indicated, but in other cases it is not. The whole collection amounts to 901+ pieces out of which 104 objects were published or mentioned in publi-

cations. Though this is not clear in all cases, most of the tablets should have been shipped to one of three museums among which the Ur finds were shared (Iraq Museum, Baghdad; British Museum, London; University Museum, Philadelphia). Some of the unpublished material at London and Philadelphia has been made available online through photographs at ur-online.org and cdli.ucla.edu (see tables below), but the larger part of the collection still awaits publication.

The aim of this section is to present the complete corpus based on the information obtained from the (largely) unpublished Ur documentation and from published works to provide a basis for further studies.

Catalog of tablets

Findspot: additional information from *Catalog Cards* (see section 3).
Coll. no. = Collection number; BM = British Museum, London; IM = Iraq Museum, Baghdad; UPM = University Museum Philadelphia.
Text no. abbreviations: UET = Ur Excavation Texts; UET 1: Gadd/Legrain 1928; UET 3: Legrain 1937; UET 4: Figulla 1949; UET 5: Figulla/Martin 1953; UET 9 = Loding 1976a; Loding (1976b; 1979) and van de Mieroop (1992) have published further relevant texts.
n = quantity; indicated if value is > 1; value 1+ means that excavators stated finding more than one tablet but did not indicate exact quantity.
Date abbreviation: OB = Old Babylonian; nB = Neo Babylonian.

TTB

U no.	Findspot	n
117		1+
571		
572		
716		
724		
755	"[...] west corner of shrine"	

TTB ES

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	n	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
708	BM study loan		6			
709	IM 67678	UET1-0249		OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467920

TTB NE side

U no.
373

TTB SS

U no.	Coll. no.	Findspot	n	Text no.	Date	cdli URL
203	UPM 52-30-271	"[...] in recess E of doorway(?)"		UET5 853	OB	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415723
593 a, c–k	BM study loan	"[...] from drain [...]"	10			
593 b	BM study loan	"[...] from drain [...]"				
727			23			
728						
729						
730						
947 a–ah		"[...] near drain [...]"	34			
949		"[...] near drain [...]"	1+			

Fig. 15: Catalog of tablets.

TTB W

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
930						
931						
932						
933			UET 1 248	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467938
934			UET 1 247	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467939
935						
936						
937						
951	IM no no.		UET 9 371	Ur III	Šu-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138502
964 a–p		16				
966						
967						
968						
979 a–bp		68				
980 a–b		1+				

TTB Z

U no.	Coll no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
336 a–w		23				
337	BM 131431	1+	UET 5 854	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415724
346			UET 1 218	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467877
347			UET 1 216	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467878
348						
349	IM 57512		UET 5 680	OB	Abī-sarē	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415552
350						
351			UET 1 216	OB	Išme-Dagān	
352	IM no no.		UET 5 278	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415162
353			UET 1 353	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467880
354						
355	IM 67670?					
356						
357						
358			UET 1 216	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467881
359						
360	IM 57311		UET 5 280	OB	Išme-Dagān	
361			UET 1 217	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467882
362			UET 1 217	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467883
363						

TTB 1/R 1

U no.	n
741 a–s	19

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 2/R 14

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
118					
534		UET 9 1208	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139337
536	BM study loan				http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467900

TTB 5/R 5 ("under pavement")

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
8811 a	BM 131370	UET 5 624	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415496
8811 b	UPM 52-30-257	UET 3 371	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P136692
8811 c	IM no no.	UET 3 1465	Ur III		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P137790
8811 d	IM no no.	UET 5 622	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415494
8811 e	IM no no.	UET 5 195	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415085
8811 f	IM no no.	UET 5 533	OB	Nūr-Adad	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415408
8811 g	BM 131347	UET 5 557	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415432
8811 h	UPM 52-30-257	UET 5 795	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415663
8811 i	BM 131415	UET 5 794	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415664
8811 j					
8811 k	BM 131415				
8811 l	IM no no.	UET 5 567	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415442
8 8 1 1 m	BM 131352	UET 5 563	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415438
8811 n	BM 131353	UET 5 564	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415439
8811 o	IM no no.				
8811 p	BM 131354	UET 5 565	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415440
8811 q					
8811 r	BM 131355	UET 5 566	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415441
8811 s	BM 131413	UET 5 789	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415659
8812	BM 131350	UET 5 561	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415436

TTB 7

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
585 a–g		8	UET 9 100	Ur III		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138231
586 a–n		1+				
587						
588	IM 67678		UET 1 220	OB	Išme-Dagān?	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467914
589						
599	UPM 52-30-38		UET 4 165	nB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P414861
600						
972	UPM no no.		Loding1976-02	OB	Išme-Dagān?	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466536

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 8

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
597					
719	IM no no.	UET 9 906	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139036

TTB 9

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
338						
339 a–af		32				
340 a–b		1+				
364						
365						
375						
396 a–ah		35				
398 a–b		2				
399						
400	IM 57224		UET 5 102	OB	Abī-sarē	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415004
425						
426	IM no no.		UET 9 367	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138498
441	UPM 52-30-199		UET 5 552	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415427
442	IM 57566		UET 5 791	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415661
443	BM study loan					http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467895
444						
446	BM study loan					
715	IM no no.		UET 9 421	Ur III		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138552

TTB 12

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
711						
731 a–u		21				
732	IM no no.		UET 9 1197	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139327

TTB 13/R 7

U no.	Coll. no.	Findspot	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
166		"[…] below any pavement, in platform filling"					
432 a–k			12				
433	IM no no.			UET 9 1146	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139276

TTB 14/R 8

U no.	n
592 a–e	5

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 15/R 9

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
186						
742 a–e		5				
3007 a.b.e.f		4				
3007 c	UPM no no.		Unpubl-U03007c	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466560
3007 d	UPM no no.		Unpubl-U03007d	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466561

TTB 16/R 10

U no.	Coll. no.	Findspot	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
170	IM no no.	"Found with stone bowls etc. [...]"		UET 9 1153	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139283
171		"Found with fragments of stone vases etc. [...]"		UET 9 364	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138495
712 a–b			2				
713	BM study loan						

TTB 17/R 11

U no.	Coll. no.	Findspot	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
189		"[...] found in stratum of broken stone vases [...]"					
205		"[...] level of broken stone vases [...]"					
376 a–s			19				
377 a–b			2				
378	BM study loan			UET 1 217	OB	Išme-Dagān	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467886
379							
380	UPM no no.						http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466535
427							
428							
429							
430	BM study loan						
451 a–ai	IM no no.		35	UET 9 369	Ur III	Šu-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138500
524	IM no no.			UET 5 532	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415407
547							
550							
590 a–j			10				
720	BM study loan						

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 18/R 12

U no.	n
537	28
538	
539	

TTB 19/R 13

U no.	Coll. no.	n	cdli URL
387 a–x		24	
397 a–b		2	
635 a–q		17	
706		1+	
707	BM study loan	1+	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467919
875	BM study loan		

TTB 20/R 14

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
315 a–bd		56				http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467872
316		1+				
317	BM study loan		UET 1 228	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467873
318	BM 131399		UET 5 743	OB	Abī-sarē	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415613
319	IM no no.		UET 5 531	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415406
320						
321						
322						
323						
324	BM study loan		UET 1 228	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467875
341						
342	IM 57438		UET 5 525	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415400
343						
344						
596	BM study loan					http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467918

TTB 21/R 15

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Date	cdli URL
290	BM no no.		OB	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P346547
388 a–u		21		
395 a–b		2		

TTB 22/R 16

U no.	n
738 a–f	6

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 23/R 17

U no.	Coll no.
710	BM study loan

TTB 25/R 19

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
431 a–h		9				
434						
435 a	UPM 52-30-277		UET 5 877	OB	Abī-sarē	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415736
435 b	UPM 52-30-277		UET 5 530	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415405

TTB 26/R 20

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
381 a–ae		31				
382 a–b		2				
383	IM 57441		UET 5 736	OB	Abī-sarē	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415606
384	IM no no.		UET 9 4	Ur III	Šu-Su'en	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138135
385						
386						
389	IM no no.		UET 9 1185	Ur III	Šulgi	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139315
390	IM no no.		UET 9 454	Ur III	Šulgi	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P138585
392	BM study loan					
393	IM no no.					
540	UPM 52-30-159		UET 5 398	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415277
541 a–f		6				
737	IM 57486		UET 5 623	OB	Sūmû-El	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P415495

TTB 29/R 21

U no.	Coll. no.	n	cdli URL
991	BM no no.	1+	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467947
992	BM study loan	1+	
993			

TTB 30

U no.	n
990	1+

TTB 33/R 3

U no.	Coll. no.	n	Text no.	Date
982 a–u		21		
983 a–b		1+	UET 8 25	
984	IM 67685		UET 1 225	OB
994 a–e		5		

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

TTB 33/34 (“above rooms 33 and 34”)

U no.	n
924	67
925 a–s	1+

TTB 34/R 5

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
2712	UPM no no.	Loding1976-04	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466557
2713		Unpubl-U02713	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466558

TTB 34/R 5 (below wall)

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
2548	UPM no no.	Loding1989-U2548	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P462157
2581	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02581	OB	Gungunum	
2582	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02582	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466538
2583	UPM no no.	Loding1976-06	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P462153
2584	UPM no no.	UET 1 230	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P467985
2586	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02586	OB	Gungunum	
2587	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02587	OB	Gungunum	
2588					http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466539
2589	UPM no no.	Loding1976-03	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466540
2593	UPM no no.				http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466541
2596	UPM no no.	UET 1 222	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P462156
2601	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02601	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466542
2602	UPM no no.				
2603	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02603	OB	Abī-sarē	
2615	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02615	OB		
2623	UPM no no.				http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466544
2625		UET 1 221	OB	Lipit-Eštar	
2626	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02626	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466545
2627	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02627	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466546
2628	DUROM 1952.8	Such-Gutiérrez2015-§2.35	Ur III		
2629	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02629	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466547
2647	UPM no no.	UET1-0224	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P462158

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	Ruler	cdli URL
2660	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02660	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466548
2680	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02680	OB	Lipit-Eštar	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466549
2681	UPM no no.	Loding1976-08	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466550
2682		UET 1 229	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P423443
2686	UPM no no.	Loding1976-05	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466551
2687	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02687	OB	Gungunum	
2688	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02688	OB	Gungunum	
2689	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02689	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466552
2690	UPM no no.	Loding1976-09	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466553
2696					
2697	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02697	OB	Gungunum	
2698	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02698	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466555
2699		UET 1 227	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P462159
2700	UPM 47-29-341	UET 3 1079	OB		http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P137404
					https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/412036
2703	UPM no no.	VanDeMieroop1992-U02703	OB	Gungunum	
2704	UPM no no.	Unpubl-U02704	OB	Gungunum	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P466556

TTB 35/R 4 (below wall)

U no.	Coll. no.	Text no.	Date	cdli URL
3051	UPM no no.	UET 9 1367	Ur III	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P139497
3052	UPM no no.			
3053	IM no no.	UET 3 1220	Ur III	http://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P137545

Fig. 15 (continued): Catalog of tablets.

Appendix

TTB 16/R 10

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	King	Text no.
169		tablet	clay	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.39
170		tablet	clay	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	UET 9 1153
171		tablet	clay	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	UET 9 364
173		lid	stone			
178	BM 116459	theriomorphic vessel	stone			

Fig. 16: Catalog of objects from TTB 16/R 10, TTB 17/R 11, TTB 18/R 12, TTB 19/R 13.

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	King	Text no.
194	CBS 14960	weapon	stone			
196	CBS 14962	weight	stone			
237	CBS 14965	theriomorphic vessel	stone			
246	CBS 14939	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.49
252	CBS 14943	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.42
263	BM 116436	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.13
269	CBS 14944	vessel	stone	Ur III	Šulgi	E3/2.1.2.41
302	CBS 14956	vessel	stone			
7 1 2 a–b		tablet	clay			
713		tablet	clay			

TTB 16/R 10 or TTB 17/R 11

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	Ruler	Text no.
197	BM 116458	mace head	stone			
244	BM 116445	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Bau	E3/1.1.6.12
245	BM 116457	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Bau	E3/1.1.6.12
247+250	BM 116429	mace head	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1017
248+257+260	BM 116430	vessel	stone	Ur III	Šulgi	E3/2.1.2.85
249+270	CBS 14940	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.54
251+U 253	BM 116435	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.20
254	BM 116442	vessel	stone	Ur III	Šulgi	E3/2.1.2.89
255	BM 116438	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1035
258 a+b	BM 116439	vessel	stone	later ED	Lugal-kigine-dudu	E1.14.14.06
259	CBS 14935	vessel	stone	Ur III	unclear	E3/2.1.6.1022
261	CBS 14970	vessel	stone	OB		UET1-99
262	CBS 14948	vessel	stone	OB	Išme-Dagān	E4.1.4.2001
264	IM 113	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.20
267	BM 116433	mace head	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.46
272+286	BM 116431	vessel	stone	later ED		UET1-004
273	BM 116446	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur-Bau	E3/1.1.6.13
284	CBS 14937	mace head	stone	Akkadian	Narām-Su'en	E2.1.4.39
449 a–f	CBS 14963	vessel	stone			
888	1952A1118[4]	vessel	stone			
889		vessel	stone			
891		vessel	stone			
896		theriomorphic fig.	stone			
897	1962A487[5]	mace head	stone			
898		theriomorphic fig.	stone			
899	1952A1119[6]	vessel	stone			
903	CBS 14973	vessel	stone			
910	BM 116468	vessel	stone			
912		vessel	stone			

4 Birmingham, City Museum
5 Birmingham, City Museum
6 Birmingham, City Museum

Fig. 16 (continued): Catalog of objects from TTB 16/R 10, TTB 17/R 11, TTB 18/R 12, TTB 19/R 13.

TTB 17/R 11

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	Ruler	Text no.
182		vessel	clay			
183		vessel	clay			
188	unclear	cone	clay	OB	Warad-Sîn/ Kudur-Mabug	E4.2.13.10
189		tablet	clay			
195	BM 116462	weapon	stone			
199	IM 94	bead	Glas			
200	IM 95	bead	misc. materials			
205		tablet	clay			
206	CBS 14933	mace head	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.13
207	CBS 14932	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.20
208	IM 97	mace head	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.45
209	CBS 14938	stand	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.54
210	BM 116456	vessel	stone			
232	BM 116432	vessel	stone	Ur III		FAOS9/2-Ur27
256	CBS 14947	vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G428
266	1952A1103[7]	vessel	stone	later ED	A-Ane-pada	E1.13.6.02
268		vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G394
271	CBS 14941	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	Braun-Holzinger 1991-G395
274	BM 116444	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1045
275		vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G396
276		vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G397
277		unclear	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G398
278	1952A1106[8]	vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G400
279	1952A1105[9]	vessel	stone	unclear		Braun-Holzinger 1991-G399
280	BM 116448	vessel	stone	Ur III	Šulgi	E3/2.1.2.43
281	BM 116447	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1029
282+283	CBS 14951+ 14952	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Narām-Su'en	E2.1.4.04
285	BM 116443	mace head	stone	later ED		FAOS 5/2-AnUr20
287	CBS 14946	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1037
288	CBS 14945	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1036
289	IM 92932	vessel	stone	unclear		FAOS 9/2-Ur15
309	IM 119	figurine	stone			
376 a–s		tablet	clay			
377 a–b		tablet	clay			
378	BM study loan	tablet	clay	OB	Išme-Dagān	UET 1 217
379		tablet	clay			
380		tablet	clay			
423	BM 115026	door socket	stone	Ur III	Ur-Namma	E3/2.1.1.02

7 Birmingham, City Museum
8 Birmingham, City Museum
9 Birmingham, City Museum

Fig. 16 (continued): Catalog of objects from TTB 16/R 10, TTB 17/R 11, TTB 18/R 12, TTB 19/R 13.

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	Ruler	Text no.
427		tablet	clay			
428		tablet	clay			
429		tablet	clay			
430	BM study loan	tablet	clay			
451 a–ai		tablet	clay	Ur III	Šu-Su'en	UET 9 369
524	IM no no.	tablet	clay	OB	Sūmû-El	UET 5 532
547		tablet	clay			
550		tablet	clay			
590 a–j		tablet	clay			
619		vessel	clay			
620		vessel	clay			
720	BM study loan	tablet	clay			
858	BM 116466	vessel	stone			
880	CBS 14942	vessel	stone	later ED		FAOS 5/2-AnUr23
881	BM 116440	vessel	stone	Ur III	Ur III-ruler	E3/2.1.6.1028
882	IM 92927	vessel	stone	unclear		UET 8 96
886		vessel	stone			
890	1952A1102	vessel	stone			
908	BM 116437	vessel	stone	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	E3/2.1.3.21
996	BM 116464	vessel	stone			

TTB 16/R10 and TTB 19/R13

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material
177 a–f	CBS 15294	inlay	shell

TTB 16/R10 and TTB17/R11 and TTB 19/R13

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material
225 a–m	BM 116534?	inlay	vitreous material

TTB 17/R11 and TTB 19/R 13

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	Ruler	Text no.
192 a–e	BM 116546–50	inlay	shell			
231	BM 116455	vessel	stone	Akkadian	Rīmuš	E2.1.2.17

TTB 18/R 12

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material
334	No. 21	cone	clay
405	CBS 14953	lid	stone
537		tablet	clay
538		tablet	clay
539		tablet	clay
859	CBS 14983	vessel	stone
860	CBS 14984	vessel	stone
883	BM 116467	vessel	stone

Fig. 16 (continued): Catalog of objects from TTB 16/R 10, TTB 17/R 11, TTB 18/R 12, TTB 19/R 13.

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material
884 a–d	CBS 14969	vessel	stone
885		vessel	stone
887	CBS 14985	vessel	stone
892	BM 116475	vessel	stone

TTB 19/R 13

U no.	Coll. no.	Obj. category	Material	Date	Ruler	Text no.
211	CBS 14967	vessel	stone			
212	McGill no. 7[10]	tablet	clay	OB	Warad-Sîn/ Kudur-Mabug	E4.2.13.10
213		tablet	clay			
214		tablet	clay	Ur III	Ur-Namma	Unpubl-U00214
215		earring	gold			
217	1935A287.1[11]	tablet	clay	OB	Warad-Sîn/ Kudur-Mabug	E4.2.13.10
218	BM 116584	beads	misc. materials			
219	IM 1	tablet	stone	Ur III	Ibbi-Su'en	E3/2.1.5.01
220	BM 116452	tablet	stone	Ur III	Amar-Su'ena	E3/2.1.3.07
221	CBS 14936	mace head	stone	Akkadian	Sargon	E2.1.1.04
222	IM 2	tablet	stone	Ur III	Šulgi	E3/2.1.2.02
223	IM 3	tablet	stone	OB	Rīm-Sîn I.	E4.2.14.01
224	IM 402	vessel	stone			
230		cylinder seal	stone			
235 a–d	IM 310	varia	stone			
236		weight	stone			
238	CBS 15227	vessel	clay			
239	CBS 14968	vessel	stone	Ur III	unklar	Braun-Holzinger 1991-G393
387 a–x		tablet	clay			
397 a–b		tablet	clay			
421	IM 373	door socket	stone	OB	Šū-ilīšu	E4.1.2.01
635 a–q		tablet	clay			
706		tablet	clay			
707	BM study loan	tablet	clay			
708	BM study loan	tablet	clay			
875	BM study loan	tablet	clay			

10 Montreal, McGill Ethnological Collections
11 Birmingham, City Museum

Fig. 16 (continued): Catalog of objects from TTB 16/R 10, TTB 17/R 11, TTB 18/R 12, TTB 19/R 13.

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A Mesopotamian Temple Inventory. The Case of the Early Old Babylonian Administrative Texts from Ur

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Key words: Old Babylonian period, Ur, textual evidence, dedications, jewellery, ornamental stones.

My documentation consists of texts dating from the beginning of the Isin-Larsa period (ca. 1970–1850 BCE) excavated by Sir L. Woolley at Ur and now preserved in the British Museum. I started to work on these texts during my doctoral dissertation and edited them in my book on the ornamentation of the gods in the Old Babylonian period (Maggio 2012). I take great interest in these documents because they are a rich source of information on worshipping practices, despite the difficulties that persist in the interpretation of certain cuneiform signs. These difficulties make us feel as though they are written at a turning point in Mesopotamian history. In this southern city, customs were changing. There was a tension between Sumerian traditions and the Akkadian traditions being introduced in the region. This tension implies some difficulties in the use of those two languages in the documentation. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the principal aim of this article is to explore documents of various sizes which contain terms that refer to the religious practice of dedication and to make an inventory of items dedicated.

How can we characterize a dedication? There are several terms and formulas. The terminology in Sumerian and Akkadian is well known.[1] Two Sumerian words are used to characterize these dedications: a-ru-a and šа_3-gi-guru_6. While a-ru-a corresponds to Akkadian *širkum* and can be translated as "offering gift,[2] ex-voto,"[3] the term šа_3-gi-gur_7 corresponds to Akkadian *šagiggurum* and is translated literally as "spontaneous dedication … made in the joy of the heart."[4] In addition, šа_3-gi-guru_6 e_2 is translated as "freewill dedication to the Temple."[5] GURU_6 is one of the readings of the sign KARA_2,[6] but GUR_7 was used in the preceding Ur III period.[7]

The formula šа_3-gi-guru_6 e_2 often appears at the end of the texts after the enumeration of the a-ru-a-dedications given by individuals. It seems to be a general formula for describing a dedication text. In any case, this terminology characterized the texts in administrative terms, surely so that the scribes would be able to classify them. In addition to intentional or volontary dedications,

1 Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016: 26.

2 Van de Mieroop 1992: 93.

3 Gelb 1972: 5, but an ex-voto is a gift given to a god in aknowledgement for a grace obtained. This aknowledgement (type ga_3-til "I will live," Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016: 27) is never attested in the texts presented here.

4 Sigrist 1992: 207.

5 šа_3-gi-guru_6 e_2 has been sometimes misunderstood in previous studies. Oppenheim transliterated it by šа_3-gi-ga_2-ga_2 and translated by «freewill offering from the heart», bibil libbi in Akkadian (Oppenheim 1954: 7; CAD B: 220b.). Leemans (1960: 32) and Black/Spada (2008: 114) followed Oppenheim. Butz transliterateed by šа_3 $^{\text{gi}}$pisan ga_2 (Butz 1979: 367 note 308). These different kinds of tranliterations derive from the problem of the identification of the signs KARA_2, GA_2 and E_2.

6 Borger 2004: 83.

7 MSL 9: 81; Sigrist 1992: 207–208.

there might have been also other kinds, maybe compulsory ones (see below).

Since the difference between the terms a-ru-a and $\check{s}a_3$-gi-guru$_6$ e$_2$ cannot be clearly determined, let us go *ad fontes*!

1. *Ad fontes*

The texts have quite a homogenous form and can be identified as an archive. This archive was called the "Archive of the Temple of Ningal" in Maggio 2012. The goddess Ningal is cited in almost every text, but in the time of the supremacy of Išme-Dagan, king of Isin (1955—1936 BCE),[8] we find also dedications offered to other deities, indicating that the temple of Nanna and Ningal might have equally contained chapels to them. These deities were:

- Annunītum, [9]
- Bawa, [10]
- Nanāja, [11]
- Ningišzida, [12] and
- NinurumuaDU.[13]

The most homogenous corpus of documents mentioning a-ru-a is that decribing ornamental stones (**Fig. 2**). They were discovered in the Ganunmaḫ,[14] the administrative building dealing with food offerings near the Giparku (home of the priestess of Nanna); the Ningal temple was located in the Giparku, too.[15] Very often, women were registered as offering those dedications.

The formula a-ru-a appears every time before a proper name ("gift of PN").[16] In contrast, the term $\check{s}a_3$-gi-guru$_6$ e$_2$ is documented in only nine texts.[17] In addition to a-ru-a as voluntary dedications, there were also taxes, due to the temple in the form of tithes. We must go back to the Ur III period to find the origin of the za$_3$-10 tax at Ur, when the temple of Nanna levied it on the trade with Dilmun.[18] Under the reigns of the first kings of Larsa (ca. 2000-1900 BCE), the Dilmun merchants brought their goods to Ur personally by boats, and Ur merchants traded in the "port" of Ur as well as paid the tax to Ningal.[19] The formula is za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal-še$_3$.[20]

Voluntary dedications as well as tithes could appear together in the delivery texts characterized by the final administrative term mu-DU e$_2$ ^{d}nin-gal-še$_3$, "entering the temple of Ningal," in its full form.[21]

In one case, the formula [m]u ^{d}nin-gal [*u*$_3$ ^{d}]dam$^{!}$-ki-na [e$_2$$^{?}$]-ne-ne-ta DU-a, "when Ningal and Damkina left their house,"[22] indicates that the goods were delivered at a ceremony involving the transportation of these goddesses.

The documents mention objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple. From the more precious materials to the lesser ones, they consist of gold and gold objects, silver and silver objects, bronze and bronze objects, copper and copper objects, ornamental stones, ivory, shells, and wooden objects (see **Figs. 1** and **2**).

A deeper look into these dedications shows that several officials could perform them.

Ur-Ninurta, king of Isin (1925-1897 BCE),[23] offered a silver ring (ḫar), two sceptres (gidri) and three rings

8 Maggio 2012: 3.

9 **Nisaba 19 98** (Maggio 2012: 136 Fn. 274).

10 **UET 5 280** (Maggio 2012: 34,63, 79); **UET 5 281** (Maggio 2012: 79).

11 **Nisaba 19 140** (Maggio 2012: 35, 80).

12 **Nisaba 19 97** (Maggio 2012: 136 Fn. 275).

13 **UET 5 279** (Maggio 2012: 57, 80, 89).

14 Except for **UET 5 292**: Van de Mieroop 1989: 397 note 5. To the function and role of the Ganunmaḫ in the Old Babylonian period in Ur see the contribution of Schmitt in this volume.

15 Charpin 1986: 211.

16 **UET 5 282**, 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 18 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 285**, 11, 22, 30 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 292**, col. i 2, 4 with in col. iv 4′ e$_2$ ^{d}nin-gal (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 293**, 4 (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 524**, 4, 9′ (Maggio 2012: 40, 69); **UET 5 548**, 2 (Maggio 2012: 87); **UET 5 557**, 9, 13 (Maggio 2012: 45); **UET 5 564**, col. iii 7 (Maggio 2012: 48); **UET 5 565**, 4, 16 (Maggio 2012: 48); with the formula e$_2$ a-ru-a-še$_3$: **Nisaba 19 269**, col. ii 4′′ (Maggio 2012: 89).

17 **Nisaba 19 96**, 3′; **Nisaba 19 140**, 8 (Maggio 2012: 80); without e$_2$: **UET 5 279**, 8 (Maggio 2012: 57); **UET 5 280**, 16 (Maggio 2012: 79); **UET 5 281**, 12 (Maggio 2012: 79); **UET 5 285**, 25 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 287**, 11 (Maggio 2012: 38); **UET 5 547**, 7 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 565**, 3 (Maggio 2012: 48).

18 According to Van de Mieroop (1989: 398-400), it should be noted that this tax was not reserved for merchants and it was not mandatory to them as Oppenheim and Leemans had suggested.

19 Leemans 1960: 31.

20 **UET 5 526**, 3′ (Maggio 2012: 13); **UET 5 529**, 16′ (Maggio 2012: 66); **UET 5 546**, 6′(Maggio 2012: 41, 84); **UET 5 548**, 5 (Maggio 2012: 134); **UET 5 549**, 6 (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 550**, 4 (Maggio 2012: 117); **UET 5 551**, col. iii 2 (Maggio 2012: 43); **UET 5 553**, col. iv 32 (Maggio 2012: 42); with ^{gada}$\check{s}a_3$-ga-du$_3^{!}$-kam instead of ^{d}nin-gal-še$_3$: **UET 5 557**, 7–8, 13 (Maggio 2012: 45); **UET 5 564**, col. iii 4 (Maggio 2012: 48); **UET 5 565**, 5 (Maggio 2012: 48); **UET 5 678**, 26 (Maggio 2012: 87).

21 **Nisaba 19 241**, 3′′–4′′ (Maggio 2012: 87); **UET 5 278**, 4–5 (Maggio 2012: 83); **UET 5 283**, 5–6 (Maggio 2012: 83); without mu-DU: **UET 5 284**, 5 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 287**, 12–13 (Maggio 2012: 85); without mu-DU: **UET 5 288**, 4 (Maggio 2012: 85); **UET 5 289**, 3–4 (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 290**, 6 (Maggio 2012: 41); **UET 5 291**, 6–7 (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 527**, 4–5 (Maggio 2012: 40); **UET 5 528**, 4–5 (Maggio 2012: 40); with ga$_2$-nun-maḫ instead of e$_2$: **UET 5 547**, 8–9 (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 549**, 10–11 (Maggio 2012: 86).

22 **UET 5 286**, 4′–6′ (Maggio 2012: 85).

23 Maggio 2012: 3.

(ḫar, perhaps hoops) in copper to Ningal in **UET 5 524**.[24] According to **UET 5 544**,[25] drinking vessels and other utensils were offered by king Warad-Sîn, by his brother Rīm-Sîn, the future king, by Enanedu, the priestess of Nanna, his sister, and by high officials. This is quite exceptional because it is the only example among our documentation indicating that high-status individuals from the kingship of Larsa dedicated objects to Ningal.

Other officials could perform dedications. In the time of the Isin Dynasty, for example, Awīl-Sîn, high priest *sangagallum*, offered a silver ring to the goddess NinuruamuDU in **UET 5 279** and Awīl-Bawa, a *pašīšum* priest, gave a bronze vessel to the goddess Ningal in **UET 5 280**.

The quantities of copper provided by individuals through tithes are very large. The amounts are included in this inventory because they are described in texts (what I called a kind of "memorandum texts") which use the administrative term for dedication practices.

Regarding ornamental stones, the vocabulary used in my book on the ornamentation of the gods must be corrected, since the term "semi-precious" is no longer in use by today's jewellery professionals.[26] Ornamental stones were first dedicated to Bawa, NinuruamuDU and Nanāja. During the reign of Išme-Dagan, king of Isin, and under the aegis of *pašīšû* priests, carnelian and agate were commonly offered (a-ru-a).[27] The ornamental stones for Ningal are listed in 28 texts dating from the reign of Išme-Dagan, king of Isin, to the reigns of Gungunum (1932–1905 BCE), Abī-sarē (1905–1894 BCE) and Sūmū-El (1894–1865 BCE), kings of Larsa. From the reign of Gungunum onward, ornamental stones were mainly offered by women.[28]

24 Maggio 2012: 38, 57.

25 Gadd 1951: 29.

26 Maggio 2012: 73–75. There is no convincing border between stones of high value and stones of low value. It is therefore more correct to refer to these stones as ornamental stones (Schumann 2009: 11).

27 **UET 5 281** (Maggio 2012: 79); **UET 5 280** (Maggio 2012: 79), 11–17; **Nisaba 19 140** (Maggio 2012: 80), 4–8; **UET 5 279** (Maggio 2012: 80), 3–4, 8–12.

28 **Nisaba 19 241** (Maggio 2012: 87); **Nisaba 19 244** (Maggio 2012: 82), col. i 7′–8′; **UET 5 295** (Maggio 2012: 82); **UET 5 557** (Maggio 2012: 82), 14–16; **UET 5 561** (Maggio 2012: 83), col. iii 19–20; **UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 87), 4–5, 8, 25–27; **Nisaba 19 141** (Maggio 2012: 83); **UET 5 278** (Maggio 2012: 83); **UET 5 283** (Maggio 2012: 83); **UET 5 282** (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 284** (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 84), 2′–3′, 5′–6′; **UET 5 547** (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 285** (Maggio 2012: 84); **UET 5 287** (Maggio 2012: 85), 2–16; **UET 5 286** (Maggio 2012: 85), 2–6, 4′–10′; **UET 5 288** (Maggio 2012: 85); **Nisaba 19 143** (Maggio 2012: 85), 3–4; **UET 5 289** (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 291** (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 293** (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 86), col. i 5–8, 13–15, col. ii 3–8; **UET 5 549** (Maggio 2012: 86); **UET 5 548** (Maggio 2012: 87), 1–3.

2. Conclusions

2.1 The fate of the dedicated objects

The use of dedicated objects has been the subject of various interpretations. For example, Koldewey suggests that votive occuliform objects ("eye-stones") found during the excavation of the Marduk temple (the Esagila, Neo-Babylonian period) at Babylon adorned sets of jewellery.[29] Lambert refuted this because these objects were dedicated by kings, and he therefore argued they could not have been reduced to ornamental use.[30]

Other sources offer instead a link between the dedications and the ornamentation of the divine statues. First, in a literary composition from the Kassite period, a king named Agum or Agum-Kakrime described the return of Marduk and Ṣarpanītum to their home in the Esagila in Babylon after they had been abducted by the Hittite king Mursili I during the conquest of Babylon in 1595.[31] In addition, Agum-Kakrime had enriched the ornamentation of the sanctuary with ornamental stones.[32] He also fashioned their tiaras with lapis lazuli and gold and their crowns with ornamental stones including symbols in the shape of dragons and eagles, jewellery, and gold necklaces, and he had reorganized their room with trimmings on the side door.[33] Finally, he had re-instituted donations.[34]

Secondly, some Neo-Assyrian letters make the link between dedications and the ornamentation of cult statues.[35] Those are letters from dignitaries to the king Assarhaddon.

In the first part of the letter ABL 340, the high official explained to the king how he had obtained the ornamental stones sent to him to ornament the tiara of the god Nabû.[36]

ABL 476 documents the repair of divine statues from Uruk and from the temple of Dēr.[37] We learn that the gold plating of the statue of Nanāja was incomplete and that the face and the feet of a second goddess (Uṣur-amatsa) were not plated; she wore the cloak *lamaḫuššû*, and

29 Koldewey 1911: 47–49.

30 Lambert 1969: 70–71.

31 Foster 1993: 273–277; Matsushima 1993: 211; Matthiae 1994: 74.

32 Foster 1993: 275.

33 Foster 1993: 275.

34 Foster 1993: 276.

35 Matsushima 1993: 213–214.

36 Parpola 1970: 220–221 (n°276); Durand 1983: 229 note 18; Parpola 1993: 283–284 (n°348).

37 Parpola 1970:. 222–223 (n°277); Parpola 1993: 284–285 (n°349); Matthiae 1994: 80.

dragons in gold adorned the left and right of her pedestal. In addition, statues of the gods (Arkajitu, Anunnītu and Palil) from the temple of Mummu, although shaped by carpenters and metalworkers, were not plated. The dignitary informed the king that he had given the silver but not the gold to the carpenters and metalworkers. They would work on the statue of Nanāja once they finished the plating work of the statue of Uṣur-amatsa and the gods of the temple of Mummu.

ABL 498 documents the fashioning of divine statues. The tiara of the god Anu was decorated with solar symbols, and gold was collected from the dedications of the god Bēl to adorn the statue of the goddess Ṣarpanītum with jewellery. Gems from the tiara of Anu and solar symbols, inaccessible without the presence of a priest, were stored in the treasury of the temple of the god Assur (l. 19: E_2 *nak-kam-du šá* E_2 AN.ŠAR$_2$).[38]

According to ABL 951, a high official complained to the king about the behavior of a priest of the temple of Nabû, named Pulu, who, among other things, hid the treasures and jewels of the gods and did not allow other people to see them (ll. 30'–st. 4).[39]

Finally, gold and silver of the god Sîn, as well as ornamental stones from votive offerings, were recycled according to two similar letters.[40] One of them (ABL 1194) reveals how two royal statues, several statuettes decorated with silver and silver utensils, which were supposed to adorn the walls of the cella of Nikkal (Ningal), were kept in her treasury.

If we return to our documentation, it is clear to me that the objects from Ur were meant to be recycled. Dedications consisted only of fragments of ornamental stones, sometimes called beads, tiny amounts of silver and almost no shaped objects. These items could be at the end of their life, and the donor was deprived of them voluntarily.

The ornamental stone fragments were probably part of a larger piece of jewellery, such as a necklace, but were torn off and dedicated to Ningal by their owners. From that moment on, they became the property of the temple and were used to adorn the goddess Ningal, and maybe other statues of lesser deities.

Moreover, we can assume that the tiny amounts of silver and gold given by individuals had been used to plate divine objects or divine statues.

38 ABL 498: Cole/Machinist 1998: 144–145 (n°174).

39 ABL 951: Cole/Machinist 1998: 102–104 (n°134).

40 ABL 997 and ABL 1194: Cole/Machinist 1998: 28–31 (n°28 et 29).

2.2 The Economic Role

Some observations must be made about Van de Mieroop's interpretation of the texts from Ur. He considered that the tiny amounts of silver, the ones from the dedications to the deities, were used as loans (cf. the texts of the Sîn Temple in Khafajah[41]).[42] Yet neither loan documents of the Ningal Temple nor dedicatory texts of the Sîn Temple at Khafajah have been found so far. In my opinion, dedication texts are different from loan texts, and Van de Mieroop therefore misinterpreted them.

In addition, the subsistence economy of Mesopotamian society must be considered. The value of objects must have been more important than today. The economy of the Ningal temple during the beginning of the second millennium BC was not only concentrated on the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth for the gods. It refers to the "reuse" of the goods: the recycling of precious objects.[43]

2.3 The Political Role

The dedications of course played also a political role. When a king or a dignitary presented a gift, he made it public by remembering this in a year name. From the Ur III period onward, many dedication texts from Drehem document how the kings Šulgi, Amar-Sîn, and Šu-Sîn performed donations (Sum. term a-ru-a) to different deities (Inanna, Ninlil, Nanna and Enki, to name only the most important). In addition to amounts of silver, they offered objects such as boats, mirrors, and dishes.[44] In the Old Babylonian period, we have seen the few texts indicating kings gave gifts at Ur.

2.4 Could the "Archive of the Temple of Ningal" be a temple inventory?

To label a specific group of texual sources, we have first to understand what we are talking about. For me, an inventory is a statement, a description or evaluation of a

41 Harris 1955: 31–58 and 59–120.

42 Van de Mieroop 1989: 401.

43 One can also refer to the appropriation of food offerings consumed by the religious personnel of the temple; see the corpus of administrative texts found in the sanctuary of Nanna and Ningal which provides daily accounting of the food delivered to them, which was subsequently eaten by religious personnel: Figulla 1953: 88–193 (archive of the Ganunmaḫ).

44 Sallaberger 1993: 3; to complete with Sallaberger 1999: 243–244.

property owned by someone, by a community or located in a specified place. My definition does not obligatorily imply that an inventory must assume a specific form of document, namely a list of objects or things belonging to someone. The texts used in this article constitute different kinds of documents that refer to an inventory. Moreover, in the documentation treated here, we mentioned also other forms of texts, called "memorandum." They look more like inventory lists.

It is well established in our documentation that the objects belonged to the goddess Ningal and occasionally also to other deities who were undoubtedly linked to her cult at Ur. Most probably, there were chapels dedicated to these deities in the temple of Ningal.

In addition, one may wonder whether a particular area of the temple of Ningal itself was used for the storage of the goods, altough the available documentation does not mention it. Instead, we know that the objects dedicated to the deities of the Ningal temple could be stored along with other materials in the nearby Ganunmaḫ (see the contribution of Schmitt in this volume).

In my book, there is a chapter with a statement of terms referring to places for the conservation of precious objects.[45] We have seen that in later times there were many terms to designate a "treasure" as an object or as a place for the conservation of precious objects that belonged to the deities. In the Old Babylonian period, it seems that they used willingly words in everyday language, such as *pisannum* ("container"), while a different specific vocabulary was in development in northern Mesopotamia.

In that way, I established that the texts of Ur referred to an inventory of precious items originating from the dedications and the tithes for the goddess Ningal.

In conclusion, we might ask what these documents reveal about the cultural environment of southern Mesopotamia. Something about its bilingualism could be interesting, of course, although not explicity relevant to the issues treated here. In addition, these documents indicate the origin of a practice well known from the Bible: the tithes and the dedications of precious objects. For example, just the formula ša$_3$-gi-gur$_7$ (*šagiggurum*), literally translated as "spontaneous dedication … made in the joy of the heart" is equal to the Hebrew *nedabah* used, for example, in Exode 35:29: "All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that Yahweh had commanded by Moses to be done brought it as a freewill offering to Yahweh."

Material	Sumerian/Akkadian	Administrative Term	Text Reference	Quantities
Gold	KU$_3$.GI ḫuš-a	a-ru-a	**UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 13), col. i 1–3	ca. 1,39 g
Gold	KU$_3$.GI	za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 526** (Maggio 2012: 13), 1–2, 3′–4′	ca. 0,805 g
TOTAL: ca. 2,195 g				
Golden drinking vessel	gal KU$_3$.GI/ *ka-súm*[46] KU$_3$.GI	mu-DU	**UET 5 544** (Maggio 2012: 29, 53), 2, 5	1 ca. 241,64 g 1 ca. 466,65 g
TOTAL: 2 ca. 708,29 g				
Golden jewellery	aš$_5$-[me KU$_3$.GI]	[a]-ru-a	**Nisaba 19 140** (Maggio 2012: 35), 1–3	4 solar disks
Golden jewellery	*an-ṣa-ab-tum* KU$_3$.GI	a-ru-a	**UET 5 280** (Maggio 2012: 34), 1–3, 8–10	2 earrings ca. 6,94 g 4 earrings ca. 4,85 g
TOTAL: 6 earrings ca. 11,79 g, 4 solar disks				
Golden rings	ḫar KU$_3$.GI	ša$_3$-guru$_6$-gi$_8$	**UET 5 287** (Maggio 2012: 38), 1–3	1
Golden rings	ḫar KU$_3$.GI	a-ru-a	**UET 5 524** (Maggio 2012: 38), 8–9, R 2′, 6′–9′	2 ca x g
TOTAL: 3				
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**Nisaba 19 143** (Maggio 2012: 40), 1	ca. 5,34 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**Nisaba 19 209** (Maggio 2012: 41), 5–9, 20	x g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**Nisaba 19 244** (Maggio 2012: 44)	ca. 213,61 g 1 ma$_2$-gur$_8$ ca. 32,63 g

Fig. 1: Metal and metal objects, ivory and ivory objects, turtle shells, shells and wood objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

45 Maggio 2012: 153–155.

46 Guichard 2005: 1–13.

Material	Sumerian/Akkadian	Administrative Term	Text Reference	Quantities
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**Nisaba 19 245** (Maggio 2012: 44)	ca. 123,45 g 3 ma$_2$-gur$_8$, two ca. 16,66 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	e$_2$ ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 290** (Maggio 2012: 41)	ca. 8,04 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a	**UET 5 524** (Maggio 2012: 40), 5–7	ca. 1,39 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	mu-DU e$_2$ ^{d}nanna	**UET 5 525** (Maggio 2012: 40)	ca. 16,66 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a/mu-DU e$_2$ ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 527** (Maggio 2012: 40)	ca. 49,98 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a/mu-DU e$_2$ ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 528** (Maggio 2012: 40)	ca. 83,3 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 531** (Maggio 2012: 41)	ca. 11,1 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 532** (Maggio 2012: 41)	ca. 70,745 g 1 ma$_2$-gur$_8$ ca. 23,6 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 533** (Maggio 2012: 43)	ca. 447,01 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 540** (Maggio 2012: 45)	ca. 225,03 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	ša$_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 41), 4′–6′	ca. 1,71 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 551** (Maggio 2012: 42)	ca. 103,44 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 552** (Maggio 2012: 42)	ca. 46,68 g 1 u$_4$-sakar ca. 100,65 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a	**UET 5 553** (Maggio 2012: 42)	ca. 586,85 g 2 ma$_2$-gur$_8$, one ca. 38,87 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a/mu-DU/za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 557** (Maggio 2012: 45)	ca. 217,47 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 561** (Maggio 2012: 46)	ca. 445,27 g 9 ma$_2$-gur$_8$ 2 u$_4$-sakar
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 563** (Maggio 2012: 47)	ca. 115,55 g 1 ma$_2$-gur$_8$
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 564**[47] (Maggio 2012: 48)	ca. 112,445 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar	a-ru-a/ša$_3$-gi-guru$_6$/ za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 565** (Maggio 2012: 48)	ca. 143,05 g 1 u$_4$-sakar ca. 8,04 g
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 566** (Maggio 2012: 49)	ca. 74,96 g 1 ma$_2$-gur$_8$
Silver	ku$_3$-babbar		**UET 5 567** (Maggio 2012: 49)	ca. 34,97 2 ma$_2$-gur$_8$
TOTAL: ca. 3360,5 g				

Fig. 1 (continued): Metal and metal objects, ivory and ivory objects, turtle shells, shells and wood objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

47 In **UET 5 564**, col. iii 1–9, a tithe of a sesame offering to the deceased priestess Enanatum (or Enannaduma) was taken off for the tithe of Ningal. Offerings to this deceased priestess are documented on the Ganunmaḫ Archive: **UET 5 758** (-/iv/Sūmū-El 11): 16, **UET 5 759** (-/v/Sūmū-El 11): 16, **UET 5 763** (-/vi/Sūmū-El 23): r 7', **UET 5 767** (-/vi/Sūmū-El 27): 21, **UET 5 768** (-/vi/Sūmū-El 29): 21. Here is an alambic system where the temple of Ningal took off a tax from the offerings delivered by the Ganunmaḫ. This shows how institutional and religious structures were strictly separated.

Material	Sumerian/Akkadian	Administrative Term	Text Reference	Quantities
Silver rings	šu-gur ku_3-babbar	a-ru-a/mu-DU	**UET 5 279** (Maggio 2012: 57), 1–2, 6–10	1 silver ring ca. 0,46 g
Silver rings	ḫar ku_3-babbar	a-ru-a	**UET 5 524** (Maggio 2012: 57), 1–2	1 silver ring
TOTAL: 2				
Bronze objects	$pisan_2$ zabar	a-ru-a	**UET 5 280** (Maggio 2012: 63), 4–6	1 vessel ca. 216,65 g
Bronze objects	ni_3-gid_2-da zabar	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 59), 3	11 long pieces ca. 91,63 g
TOTAL: 3 bronze objects ca. 308,28 g				
Copper	urudu	za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**Nisaba 19 209** (Maggio 2012: 64), 1–2	X
Copper	urudu		**Nisaba 19 244** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. i 9′–11′, col. ii 10′	ca. 10,21 kg
Copper	urudu		**Nisaba 19 245** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. ii 2′–3′	ca. 5 kg
Copper	urudu	a-ru-a	**UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. i 6–12, col. ii 2, 14	ca. 19,34 kg
Copper	urudu	za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 526** (Maggio 2012: 64), 3–9	ca. 97,1 kg
Copper	urudu	a-ru-a/za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 529** (Maggio 2012: 66), R 8′–10′, 15′–17	ca. 1,081 kg
Copper	urudu	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 64), 1	ca. 56,94 kg
Copper	urudu		**UET 5 551** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. iv 18–21	ca. 3,5 kg
Copper	urudu		**UET 5 552** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. ii 9–10	ca. 3,88 kg
Copper	urudu	a-ru-a	**UET 5 553** (Maggio 2012: 65), col. i 3–8, 11–12	ca. 9,98 kg
Copper	urudu	a-ru-a/mu-du/za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 557** (Maggio 2012: 66), 4–5	ca. 3,05 kg
Copper	urudu		**UET 5 563** (Maggio 2012: 66), col. ii 9	ca. 7,92 kg
Copper	urudu		**UET 5 564** (Maggio 2012: 66), col. i 5–6	ca. 791,65 g
Copper	^{urudu}*ku-ba-ru-um*[48]	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 66), 1–2	ca. 210 kg
TOTAL: ca. 428,8 kg				
Copper objects	gidri/ḫar urudu	a-ru-a	**UET 5 524** (Maggio 2012: 69), 8′–9′	two gidri, three har of x g
TOTAL: two gidri, three har of x g				

Fig. 1 (continued): Metal and metal objects, ivory and ivory objects, turtle shells, shells and wood objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

48 CAD K: 481–482.

Material	Sumerian/Akkadian	Administrative Term	Text Reference	Quantities
Ivory pectoral	tu-di-da zu_3-am-si		**Nisaba 19 269** (Maggio 2012: 89), col. ii 3′′–4′′	1
Ivory pectoral	tu-di-da zu_3-am-si	a-ru-a/mu-du	**UET 5 279** (Maggio 2012: 89), 5–6	1
Ivory tables	banšur dagal zu_3-am-si	a-ru-a	**UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 90), col. ii 9	2 (dagal)
Ivory	zu_3-am-si	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 89), 2	350 g
Ivory comb	ga-rig_2 zu_3-am-si	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 90), 12	1
TOTAL: 350 g, 2 pectorals, 2 big tables, 1 comb				
Turtle shell[49]	ba-$šeg_{12}$	a-ru-a	**UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 91), col. ii 16	1
Turtle shell	ba-$šeg_{12}$	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 91), 6–7	2
Turtle shell	ba-$šeg_{12}$	a-ru-a	**UET 5 548** (Maggio 2012: 91), 8–9	1
Turtle shell rings	šu-gur ba-$šeg_{12}$	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 91), 10	30
TOTAL: 4 turtle shells, 30 rings				
Shell	*ajartum*	za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**Nisaba 19 209** (Maggio 2012: 92), 13	x of *ajartû*
Shell	*ajartum, kapāṣûm, laḫijanātum*	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 546** (Maggio 2012: 92), 3–5	3,44 l of *ajartû* 2,67 l of *kapāṣû*, and of *laḫijanātû*
Shell	*ajartum*	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 678** (Maggio 2012: 92), 7	7,58 l of ajartû
TOTAL: 11,02 l of *ajartû*, 2,67 l of *kapāṣû*, and of *laḫijanātû*				
Wood objects	^{giš}ma-al-tum LAM+KUR.MA/^{giš}an-za-am mes/^{giš}tukul-za-ḫa-da/^{giš}ga-rig_2	a-ru-a	**UET 5 292** (Maggio 2012: 117), col. ii 12–13, 17, 19	1 vessel ma-al-tum LAM+KUR.MA 1 *assammûm* in *mēsum* wood 2 clubs 1 comb
Wood instrument	^{giš}al-gar	a-ru-a/ za_3-ĩo ^{d}nin-gal	**UET 5 550** (Maggio 2012: 117)	1 drum[50]
TOTAL: 1 drum, 1 vessel ma-al-tum LAM+KUR.MA, 1 *assammûm* in *mēsum* wood, 2 clubs, 1 comb				

Fig. 1 (continued): Metal and metal objects, ivory and ivory objects, turtle shells, shells and wood objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

49 ba-$šeg_{12}$: Moorey 1994: 128–129.

50 Veldhuis 1997–1998: 119–120; see also Krispijn 1990: 9–10; we find the same instrument in Mari (*alûm*) which was used in religious contexts (ARMT 21 258, ARMT 23 136, ARMT 23 482, ARMT 26/1 17–18, 20): Durand 1988: 119f.; Villard 1989; for the CAD, it could be a drumstick following Sumerian literary texts: CAD A/1: 377–378; upon the ala-instrument see Mirelman 2014.

Text reference	Adm. term	du_8-ši-a	gug	igi-ku_6	nir_2	šuba	za-gin_3
UET 5 281 (Maggio 2012: 79)	a-ru-a/mu-DU/ $ša_3$-gi-$guru_6$ e_2					2 2 (ku_3-babbar) ca. 12,5 g	
UET 5 280 (Maggio 2012: 79), 11–17	a-ru-a/mu-DU/ $ša_3$-gi-$guru_6$ e_2		40			1 ($babbar_2$-dil)	
Nisaba 19 140 (Maggio 2012: 80), 4–8	a-ru-a/mu-DU/ $ša_3$-gi-$guru_6$ e_2		X				
UET 5 279 (Maggio 2012: 80), 3–4, 8–12	mu-DU/$ša_3$-gi-$guru_6$		2 (ḫar)	2			
Nisaba 19 241 (Maggio 2012: 87)	a-ru-a/mu-DU		x (babbar)		x		
Nisaba 19 244 (Maggio 2012: 82), col. i 7'–8'			2				
UET 5 295 (Maggio 2012: 82)			59 2 (BIR) 1 1 (BIL.ZA.ZA) 1 (UGU.KU.BI)	1	1 ($babbar_2$-dil) 1 (BIR)	3 (KU_3.GI) 1	2
UET 5 557 (Maggio 2012: 87), 14–16	a-ru-a/mu-DU/ za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal		2 (BIR) 1 (*du-ḫa-ru-um*)				
UET 5 561 (Maggio 2012: 83), col. iii 19–20			2				
UET 5 678 (Maggio 2012: 87), 4–5, 8, 25–27	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal		3 (BIR)	3		3	
Nisaba 19 141 (Maggio 2012: 83)					4 ($babbar_2$-dil) 68 (BIR)		
UET 5 278 (Maggio 2012: 83)	a-ru-a/mu-DU				1		
UET 5 283 (Maggio 2012: 83)	a-ru-a/mu-DU		1 (gid_2-da)				
UET 5 282 (Maggio 2012: 84)	a-ru-a	1 (a_2-2-a KU_3.GI gar-ra)	4 (BIR) 56 (BIR) 1 (ur-maḫ) 8	4	2 ($babbar_2$-dil)	1 (KU_3.GI)	
UET 5 284 (Maggio 2012: 84)	a-ru-a					1 (KU_3.GI) ca. 16,66 g	
UET 5 546 (Maggio 2012: 83), 2'–3', 5'–6'	$ša_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za_3-10 ^{d}nin-gal		2 (BIR)				
UET 5 547 (Maggio 2012: 84)	a-ru-a/mu-DU ga_2-nun-maḫ/ $ša_3$-gi-$guru_6$ e_2		56 (BIR) 1 (sig)		2 ($babbar_2$-dil) 5 (ḫar)		1 (sig)

Fig. 2: Stone and stone objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

Text reference	Adm. term	du$_8$-ši-a	gug	igi-ku$_6$	nir$_2$	šuba	za-gin$_3$
UET 5 285 (Maggio 2012: 84)	a-ru-a		34 (gid$_2$-da)		24 13 (bir) 54 (bir) 1 (a$_2$ šuba? a$_2$-2-a-bi ku$_3$.gi gar-ra) 1	1 ca. 4,165 g	
UET 5 287 (Maggio 2012: 85), 2–16	a-ru-a/mu-du/ša$_3$-gi-guru$_6$ e$_2$	10 (bir sig)	1 (tir še-ru) 28 (bir)		1 1 (igi-muš)		
UET 5 286 (Maggio 2012: 85), 2–6, 4'-10'			1 (bir)	4	1 (babbar$_2$-dil)	1 (gid$_2$-da)	1 ca. 16,66 g
UET 5 288 (Maggio 2012: 85)	a-ru-a		1 (a$_2$-muš$_3$ a$_2$-2-a-bi ku$_3$.gi gar-ra)				
Nisaba 19 143 (Maggio 2012: 85), 3–4			32		60 (babbar$_2$-dil)		
UET 5 289 (Maggio 2012: 86)	a-ru-a/mu-du		2 (bir)				
UET 5 291 (Maggio 2012: 86)	a-ru-a/mu-du				1 (kišib)		
UET 5 293 (Maggio 2012: 86)	a-ru-a		1 (gid$_2$-da a$_2$-2-a-bi ku$_3$.gi gar-ra)				
UET 5 292 (Maggio 2012: 86), col. i 5–8, 13–15, col. ii 3–8	a-ru-a		12 (*tu-ḫa-ru-um*) 10 (*tu-ha-ru-um* sig)	9 26		x	1 ca. 100 g
UET 5 549 (Maggio 2012: 86)	ša$_3$ kaskal dilmun^{ki} za$_3$-10 ^{d}nin-gal		8 (*tu-ḫa-ru-um*)			1 (*me-luḫ-ḫa*)	
UET 5 548 (Maggio 2012: 87), 1–3	a-ru-a		2 (gid$_2$-da)				
TOTAL		11	377	49	229	17	5

Fig. 2 (continued): Stone and stone objects dedicated to Ningal and her temple.

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"Private Chapels" in Southern Mesopotamia at the Beginning of the Second Millennium BC

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Abstract: I deal with the evidence for private cults in southern Mesopotamian houses between the end of the third and the beginning of the second millennium BC. The focus will be mainly on Ur, where several features were singled out and named "private chapels." Other sites will also be taken into account for comparison. The main idea that some sort of cult ceremony was performed in private houses is not questioned. However, discrepancies in the evidence will be analysed, which might have some meaning for the interpretation of the real nature of these private cults.

Key words: Mesopotamia, private cults, beginning of second millennium BC, Ur

Dealing with private architecture has much to do with what we really know — or rather do not know — about daily life in the different societies of the ancient Near East: private houses are a very interesting and particular context, because they are the places where individuals find a kind of refuge free from social constraints. At the same time, however, other social rules apply and govern the relations within the household and among different households within a neighbourhood. Relations within the household may be complicated when dealing with an enlarged family, which also includes people not related by kin relations, like servants and slaves.[1] The first aspect — the house as the place where a person may feel free from social constraints — may lead to an interpretation of private contexts in the light of the personal experience of the researcher, based on the idea of the persistence of human psychology.[2] The second aspect — social relations within a household — is strongly related to the historical moment, namely to the culture and social rules in force when the house was used. But these factors are not always known in detail, although they are crucial for understanding the functioning of a household because they affect the way in which a house is lived and changed over time.[3] As recently maintained by Paul Collins,[4] the application of ethnographic comparisons may also be misleading, because such studies deal with village societies, which are thought to be more similar to the ancient ones, and the results are applied in an automatic and sometimes uncritical way to the latter, not taking into account the fact that we deal mainly with urban realities, albeit very remote in time.[5]

Some major problems may be encountered in the study of domestic architecture in archaeology:

1. Private houses are more difficult to excavate than public buildings: spaces are not codified in their functions and therefore, even when applied, the distribution

1 Starzmann 2008: 205–206.

2 Starzmann 2008: 207.

3 Starzmann 2008: 203–204.

4 Collins 2013: 346.

5 In this sense, I found the analyses by E. Stone (1996) more refined and productive on the Islamic kinship system as related to the Old Babylonian world.

analysis of findings can seldom provide conclusive elements.[6] Generally speaking, and taking also into account the limitations of space in a house, all rooms may be multi-functional and not necessarily hierarchical.[7]

2. Private houses as structures are internally more "mobile" than public buildings: refurbishing and changes may be frequent, in order to adapt the structure to the changing needs of the family, and changes can be difficult to detect when they are very close in time.[8] These changes may concern the individual house, but they can also extend to the urban pattern as a whole: legacies, marriages, and damage to individual parts of the buildings may lead to divisions of the house into smaller units or, on the contrary, to enlargement, which may incorporate units of other houses or even streets.[9]
3. Regarding Mesopotamia, the presence of different typologies of texts connected with houses, from the eventual owners' documents to 'House Omens,' may on the one hand throw some light on aspects of daily life — marriages and dowries, property selling and buying, etc. — but on the other hand, they might lead to an attempt to identify elements inferred from the texts but not evidenced on the ground.[10]
4. Internal circulation is not always analysed and is sometimes difficult or impossible to detect because of the state of preservation of the structures. In this sense, Paolo Brusasco's analysis,[11] mainly about Ur and Nippur, is interesting; yet these kinds of analysis started while Iraq was closed to archaeological exploration, and it is thus necessary to apply the methodology to domestic contexts brought to light in older excavations, and sometimes not adequately documented, while awaiting future excavation.

Based on these considerations, I wish to deal here with an issue that has already been addressed: private chapels in Mesopotamia. I certainly cannot propose a final explanation here, but rather I wish to fine-tune some still overlooked points.[12]

As is well known, the evidence concerns a quite limited area and a well-defined period of time: in fact, the installations I will present are thus far attested only in central-southern Mesopotamia – in particular at Ur, Ešnunna, and Nippur – and are chronologically set at the beginning of the second millennium BC, in the period of the Dynasty of Larsa.

Concerning the evidence taken into consideration here, an equation was proposed between chapels and ancestor cults, based most of all on the evidence from Ur and also supported by textual sources.[13] The tradition of burying members of the family under the floors is well known in other parts of southern and northern Mesopotamia.[14] Moreover, it has been recently analysed also

6 When dealing with contexts excavated in the past, it is more common in domestic contexts that findings were not registered with their precise location, as more frequently happened in public contexts. Anyhow, within a domestic context, objects may be very mobile, and even a very accurate registration of findspots, while giving a precise picture of the use of rooms at the time of their dismissal, may be inconclusive as to the real function of the individual rooms.

7 Also the identification of gender-characterized spaces is sometimes based on assumptions which cannot be verified, like the connection between more than one "living-room" and female segregation (Brusasco 2007: 35), when we do not really know how the largest rooms of the house were used, and the identification of uses is based on modern ethnographic comparisons or on circular reasoning, namely that the presence of more than one living area meant their use by different components of the household and therefore gender-separation.

8 In the detailed description of the houses at Ur, Woolley frequently mentions different phases of use, but he does not publish detailed plans with the indication of these phases, and his descriptions are mingled with his interpretations, making understanding of the development of the houses quite difficult.

9 The study of the cuneiform documents found in the houses may reveal unexpected elements of the urban pattern: at Nuzi, in a totally different milieu and period than the one taken into account here, also the re-use of ruins is probably documented in the economic transactions concerning real estate: Mori 2008: 113, 118.

10 Brusasco 2007: 51–52. In this way, an ideal model of a house is proposed, and the effort to identify it on the ground may lead to serious misunderstandings. Otto's proposal as to the use of an ideal model of a house, in order to verify and interpret anomalies, on the contrary, is a very interesting and productive way to deal with the problem (Otto 2015).

11 Brusasco 1999–2000; 2007. One major flaw of Brusasco's work is that he relies too much on Woolley's identification of the functions of the individual spaces.

12 My analysis is based on published material, and it therefore meets all the problems I have just outlined. Nevertheless, the interpretation I propose deals with the relationship between vaults and chapels, not with the circulation, or its relation with the use of these rooms which might be an interesting issue, too. Thus, the problems of the published documentation should not hinder my interpretation.

13 In his general interpretation of the domestic contexts, Woolley maintained that there was a constant correlation between family chapel and family vault (Woolley 1976: 30). See also Brusasco 2007: 25; McCown/Haines 1967: 146–147.

14 Collins 2013: 355; but see e.g. Mari, and Margueron's perplexities about the real extent of our knowledge about burial rites and rules: Margueron 2004: 401, 405–406. Mari cannot be used as a comparison for a number of reasons: the tombs were not registered correctly, and there is no sure connection with private houses (Margueron 2004: 403); built tombs are known only for the *šakkanakku*

in terms of "reinforcement of the household lineage in moments of dramatic socioeconomic transformation,"[15] whereas in other regions it is not attested.[16] At first, I wish to present the relevant facts.

First of all, in light of the well-known Mesopotamian custom to bury the dead — or rather a part of them — below the house floors, I would, starting with the evidence from Ur,[17] set burials in general apart from those which Woolley defined as "vault" and "corbeled" tombs, namely underground chambers of large size, built with some attention to their architecture, which I will simply call "built tombs." Woolley related these tombs to the presence of large rooms with special features, identified as cult installations, leading to the proposal that funerary cults were practiced at Ur in chapels under whose floors were the "family vaults." In Woolley's interpretation, these chapels were also closely connected with the largest covered space of the house,[18] which he identified as a reception room, thus leading to a peculiar interpretation of the social life of Ur in the Larsa period.[19] If we go into detail in the descriptions of individual houses, though, we can observe the following:[20]

1. In fifteen houses, there are chapels not connected with a built tomb, and in one of them, there are two chapels (**Fig. 1**).[21]
2. In fifteen houses, the chapel is connected with a built tomb (**Fig. 2**).[22]
3. In seventeen houses, there are built tombs but no chapels, and in one of them there are three tombs under one room (**Fig. 3**).[23]

period (Jean-Marie 1999: 75), whereas in Middle Bronze Age I and II there is evidence for burials in sarcophagi (Jean-Marie 1999: 33–4, 36); the furniture of these tombs is usually very rich and should have belonged to members of the elite (Margueron 2004: 406).

15 Laneri 2011: 121.

16 If, for instance, we compare this evidence with another one, quite close in time, of a relevant extension, and whose excavation is reliable, namely the private quarters of Ebla of the Early and Mature Old Syrian period, we face a totally different reality. At Ebla, two quarters of private houses were brought to light, a smaller one, near Damascus Gate, and a large one near Rešef's Cult Area, in Area B, besides a residence in the Lower Town West, Area Z. All the houses of the two quarters are usually smaller and simpler than those brought to light in the Mesopotamian sites mentioned before, whereas the region of Residence Z includes one or more units of large size, and with several rooms. The state of preservation is quite good everywhere, sometimes excellent, but we could never single out cult furniture or cult structures. This situation seems thus far specific to Ebla, as in the Euphrates Valley the burying of family members under the house floors is attested since the second half of the third millennium BC (see Laneri 2011: 124–125).

17 The private houses of Ur are extensively published and therefore provide a large amount of evidence. Yet they also present many problems, partly due to the bias in interpretation we have mentioned before and partly due to the difficulty of understanding the relative stratigraphy of some of the features identified. Among the biases, we may mention the fact that Woolley largely used the 'House Omens' (Woolley 1976: 23–24) to explain the features he identified on the ground, and that he had as a model of the functions of individual rooms, as he himself maintains, "the town house of a middle-class Arab of today" (Woolley 1976: 26). In his interpretation, moreover, several houses had a second floor, an idea nowadays dismissed.

18 Woolley 1976: 29–30.

19 Woolley 1976: 24–25. As Woolley considered this large room a *liwan* for guests, where they were received and slept at night, he was obliged to propose that the sleeping quarters of the family were on the second floor (Woolley 1976: 25–26).

20 In this analysis only the relation between chapels and vaulted tombs is taken into account: different kinds of graves and inhumations were present in the chapels and in other rooms of the houses.

21 Woolley 1976: 110–112 (Site EM, Quiet Street 7, Room 5); 118–120 (Site AH, Boundary Street 1, Room 11); 121 (Site AH, Niche Lane 2, Room1, in a two-rooms house); 123 (Site AH, Niche Lane 5, Room 3); 123–124 (Site AH, Old Street 1, Room 6.); 128–29 (Site AH, Church Lane 2, Room 9); 130–131 (Site AH, Church Lane 7, Room 6); 143–144 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 3, Room 6); 144–145 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 4, Rooms 4 and 5, two chapels); 149 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 8 and 10, Room 3); 153 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 12, Room 3); 153–54 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 14, Room 5); 157–58 (Site AH, Baker's Square 1B, room number not given); 165 (Site AH, Straight Street 10, Room 5); 166–67 (Houses over Mausoleums Site 30/A, Room 7).

22 Woolley 1976: 100–101 (Site EM, Gay Street 6, Room 2); 104–106 (Site EM, Quiet Street 2, Room 11); 113–114 (Site AH, New Street 1, Room 5, not sure); 114–16 (Site AH, New Street 2 and 3, Room 6); 123–124 (Site AH, Old Street 1, Room 5); 130 (Site AH, Church Lane 5, Room 10); 131–132 (Site AH, Church Lane 9, Room 8); 135–36 (Site AH, Church Lane 15, Room 6, with two tombs); 136–137 (Site AH, Broad Street 1, Room 8); 137–139 (Site AH, Store Street 1, Room 9); 150–153 (Site AH, Paternoster Row 11, 11A, 11B, Room 11); 157 (Site AH, Baker's Square 1, Room 5); 159–61 (Site AH, Straight Street 3, Room 10; 161–163 (Site AH, Straight Street 4, Room 6); 167–168 (Houses over Mausoleums Site 30/B, Room 3).

23 Woolley 1976: 95 (Site EM, Gay Street 1); 86–97 (Site EM, Gay Street 3, Room 6); 99–100 (Site EM, Gay Street 5, Room 1); 103–104 (Site EM, Quiet Street 1, Room 6); 106–8 (Site EM, Quiet Street 3, Room 4, which may be older than the house); 108–110 (Site EM, Quiet Street 5, Room 6); 110–12 (Site EM, Quiet Street 7, Room 4); 118–120 (Site AH, Boundary Street 1, Room 8); 121–1122 (Site AH, Niche Lane 3, Room 1); 122–23 (Site AH, Niche Lane 4, Room 8); 131–132 (Site AH, Church Lane 9, Room 8, with three tombs and badly preserved remains attributed to a chapel, but probably from a previous phase of use); 137–139 (Site AH, Store Street 1, Room 8); 140–141 (Site AH, Store Street 4, Room 3); 157 (Site AH, Baker's Square 1, Room 1, which Woolley identified as a courtyard); 161–163 (Site AH, Straight Street 4, Room 9); 163–164 (Site AH, Straight Street 6, Room 4); 164–165 (Site AH, Straight Street 8, Room 5).

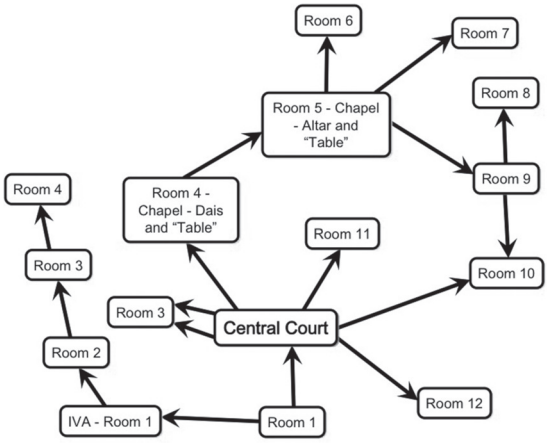

Fig. 1: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit Paternoster Row 4 at Ur. This is a house where the chapel is not related to a "vaulted tomb" (by author).

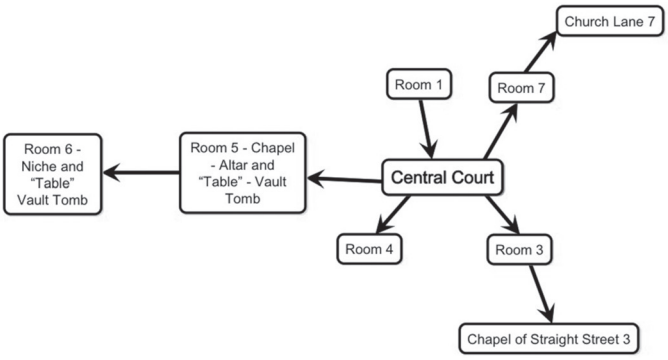

Fig. 2: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit Old Street 1 at Ur. This is a house where the chapel is related to a "vaulted tomb" (by author).

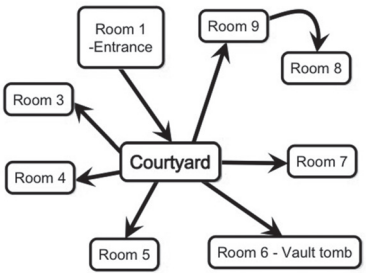

Fig. 3: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit Gay Street 3 at Ur. This is a house where the "vault tomb" is not related to a chapel (by author).

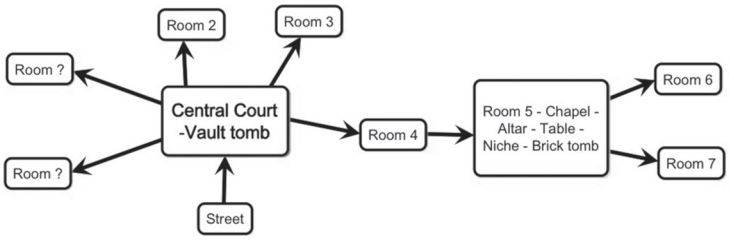

Fig. 4: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit Baker's Square 1 at Ur. This is a house where the "vaulted tomb" and the chapel are not related, and where the tomb is under the floor of the central room (by author).

Summing up, out of approximately 72 excavated architectural units, three of which were identified as public chapels, thirty feature fittings related to cult and, among them, fifteen feature a close connection between chapel and tomb. It is not easy to find a correspondence between the detailed description of the houses and Woolley's "tabular analysis of graves."[24] The few sure correspondences show that in LG/33, Straight Street 6, Room 4, there was no body, but only a few vases and objects;[25] in LG/41, Baker's Square 1, there was no body, but only a few pottery vases (**Fig. 4**);[26] in LG/58, Church Lane 9, there were three bodies, a pair of gold ear-rings, weights, and beads;[27] LG/59, Church Lane 9 yielded only some vases, beads, and a copper bowl.[28]

Based on these observations, it seems evident that, if we wish to call these tombs family vaults, this would not be in the sense of burial place for all the members of the family, because, when they contain human remains, they belong to a very limited number of individuals, and the built tomb does not exclude the presence, sometimes quite numerous, of other inhumations in the same room, or in other rooms of the same house. Lastly, the funerary furniture, also in sealed chambers, is never important and usually includes a few objects, seldom precious, like the gold earrings in the vault LG/58 of Church Lane 9. These tombs, therefore, were meant to host selected per-

24 Woolley 1976: 195–213.

25 A duck-shaped weight, a pendant, a hematite cylinder seal, a copper amulet, a bronze bowl, a shell finger-ring, beads, and a copper bracelet: Woolley 1976: 197.

26 Woolley 1976: 198; in Baker's Square 1 there were two tombs, and from the tabular analysis it is not possible to identify which one is LG/41.

27 Woolley 1976: 200; in Church Lane 9, tombs were found under two rooms: in Room 3 there were three tombs and in Room 8 there was a corbelled tomb below a chapel. In the tabular analysis LG/58 is attributed to Room 7, and a total of five vaulted tombs is attributed to this house, but no room number is given to the other four.

28 Woolley 1976: 200.

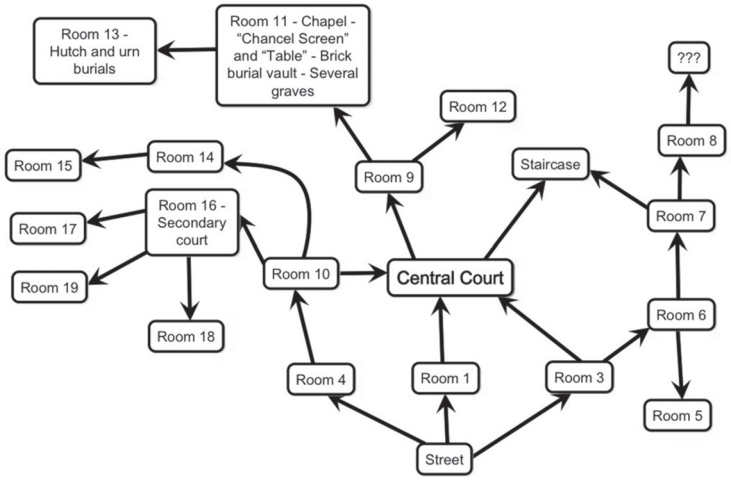

Fig. 5: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit Paternoster Row 11, 11A and 11B at Ur (the *Khan*). This is a house with a very articulated internal circulation (by author).

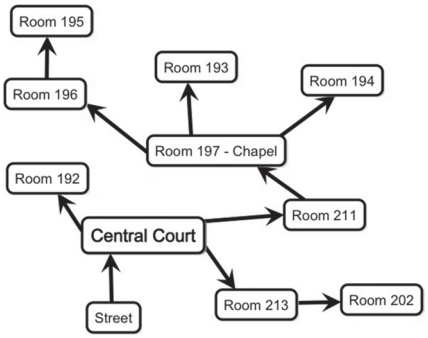

Fig. 6: Permeability scheme for the domestic unit House I, level IV, at Nippur. This is a house where the chapel functions as a second circulation node within the house (by author).

sons, and they were not meant to be representations of the family wealth by means of the funerary furniture.[29]

One last observation concerns the permeability of the rooms with cult fittings and of those with built tombs. The analysis undertaken here does not result in a clear pattern: in two instances, the tomb is below the central room of the house,[30] usually interpreted as a court and therefore the place with the highest permeability in the house. Gay Street 1 is a very small house of only two rooms, the entrance and a room, below whose floor there is the vaulted tomb. In several instances, the tomb or the chapel is in a room opening directly into the central room, and this pattern seems to apply more frequently to rooms featuring only the tomb.[31] In one of the largest houses, the so-called *Khan* (Paternoster Row 11, 11A and 11B, **Fig. 5**), there is no connection between the presumed guests' room (Room 10) and the chapel (Room 11).

On the contrary, Woolley identified a pattern where the family vault and the chapel were located in the remotest part of the house, separated from the central court by the largest room, which, in his interpretation, was the guests' room. The situation is more articulated, in reality, because, as just mentioned, more than one pattern can be singled out.

In addition to the evident differences in the plans which can be singled out, the definition of "vestries" for the rooms frequently opening onto the chapels on the opposite side of the main entrance does not seem appropriate, because in several instances they contained cuneiform tablets. In fact, only Church Lane 2 and Church Lane 15 follow Woolley's presumed rule, with the "guest room" 8 of the former opening directly into the central room and the chapel 9 behind and with Room 5 (the "guests' room") of the latter leading to the chapel 6, although Room 5 has a peculiar L-shaped plan, and the chapel opens into Room 9, which is only slightly smaller than Room 5.

Comparing the main sites where domestic cults are attested between the Ur III and the Old Babylonian periods — Tell Brak,[32] Ur, Nippur (**Fig. 6**),[33] and Tell Asmar[34] — we may note that only at Ur built tombs may be con-

29 According to N. Laneri (2011: 121), selected dead were incorporated in the family's house and were thus transformed into the family's ancestors, but this hypothesis contrasts, in my opinion, with the evidence from Ur as analysed here. In the first place, it does not explain the presence of several other burials of different kinds — inhumations, *larnax* burials, jar burials — in the same house; in the second place, it does not explain why new bodies could be added to the tomb in different periods. Brusasco (2007: 26) inferred that there was a hierarchy in inhumations, with the most powerful members of the family buried in the vault and the lesser members in the other residential units, but there is no trace of a pattern of this kind in the archaeological evidence.

30 Baker's Square 1; Straight Street 12. In Baker'Street 1 there is another tomb, below the floor of the chapel.

31 Broad Street 1 (chapel with tomb); Gay Street 3 (tomb); House 30/A (tomb); Niche Lane 5 (chapel); Old Street 1 (chapel with tomb); Paternoster Row 4 (chapel); Paternoster Row 8 and 10 (chapel); Quiet Street 5 (tomb); Quiet Street 7 (tomb); Store Street 1 (two rooms with one tomb each).

32 This is a very simple room, with only one semi-circular altar: Mallowan 1947: 196.

33 McCown/Haines 1967: 146–147.

34 Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd 1967: Pl. 72, four altars from Larsa houses, similar to those from Ur.

nected with chapels,[35] with the exceptions we mentioned, so that we cannot consider this a meaningful pattern.

On the contrary, the recurring features of the chapels follow a clear pattern, including as main elements a large dais, or altar, up to 0.40/0.50 m high, and a quadrangular structure, sometimes represented by two specimens in the same room, which looks like a miniature temple, and which Woolley described as a "table." An accurate analysis of these fittings was done only for Ur, and not for the other sites, but if we compare the published pictures (**Figs. 7–9**), it seems that they are similar in all three sites where they are attested, namely in Ur, Nippur, and Larsa: on a mud-brick core, a thick layer of plaster was placed, modelled in niches and pilasters, imitating the walls of a temple, while the top, when it is preserved, is covered by a course of baked bricks. There is a possibility that some of them were decorated with wood, as can be inferred at least for the *Khan*, where there was evidence for brick structures covered by what Woolley calls "chancels" made of wood.[36]

The size of these fittings is quite imposing, when compared with the rooms where they are placed, particularly with regard to their height. In fact, the platforms/altars reach up to 0.50 m, whereas the "tables," when they are completely preserved, may reach from 1.05 m up to 1.40 m in height. It was only on the platforms/altars that vessels, mainly bowls, were found still *in situ*, while apparently nothing was placed on the "tables." Platforms/altars and "tables" are always present in these chapels, also at Nippur (**Fig. 6**) and Ešnunna,[37] whereas a peculiarity of Ur is the frequent presence of a structure Woolley defined as an "incense hearth," usually placed on the platform/altar (**Figs. 10–12**), which is sometimes quite large, taking up nearly the entire length of the wall.

Fig. 7: Detail of the "altar" and pedestals in the chapel of Boundary Street 1 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 43b).

Fig. 8: Detail of the pedestal in the chapel of Paternoster Row 4 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 44b).

In the published photos, it is not possible to identify the very evident traces that burning incense would have left during combustion: when used frequently, substances like incense — in the form of the long sticks we are accustomed to using today —leave thick deposits of very thin ashes, which need very refined excavation techniques to be identified. It is probable that resins which might have been employed in Mesopotamia during the Larsa period were used as lumps, not as sticks, which leave a thick tar-like residue. Also, the shape of the incense hearths, judging from the photos, would need fur-

35 As stated at the beginning, we do not consider here the presence of inhumations in relation to chapels, well attested at Ur and elsewhere; at Larsa there is a situation which may be compared with Ur, with vaults and other inhumations under the same room, or under different rooms: Calvet 1996: 201 (House B 27, with a vault and another inhumation under Room 3), 203 (House B 59, with several infants' burials under Room 18, and a vault under Room 17). The evidence mentioned for Tell ed-Der/Sippar (Gasche 1978: 81–83) by Brusasco (1999–2000: 77, fn. 39) is not relevant in this discussion, because there is not a vault but only inhumations.

36 Woolley 1976: 152.

37 At Nippur, the private sanctuary is apparently located in the main room of the house: McCown/Haines 1967: 44–45, TB, lev. IX, House J, L.281, which kept its functions into lev. VII (ibidem: 47–48); 50–1, TB lev. IV, House I, L.197; 53, TB, lev. IV, House G, L.222. At Nippur, the presence of private sanctuaries is limited to the Ur III period, and they are no more attested in the Isin–Larsa period: ibidem: 146. Ešnunna: Delougaz/Hill/Lloyd (1967): pl. 72.

Fig. 9: Detail of the pedestal in the chapel of Boundary Street 1 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 45b).

Fig. 10: Detail of the "incense-hearth" in the chapel of Broad Street 1 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 41b).

ther discussion: they have a large square lower part and an elongated chimney, which seems to be very regularly cut in the front. This might be a result of the excavation, but the openings are too even, and they seem to belong to the structure, which thus does not have the typical shape of a fire-place.[38]

38 Woolley 1976: Pls 41b (Broad Street 1); 43a (Straight Street 3); 44a (Paternoster Row 4). The average measures of these "hearths" are 0.60 x 0.40 x 0.30, whereas the chimney is usually 0.30 cm wide. In fact, Woolley (1976: 29) acknowledged these regular cuts and proposed that they were used to allow incense smoke to spread into the rooms, which does not make much sense, because if this were the reason, there would have been no need at all to build the chimneys. An interesting suggestion was proposed by A. Otto during the discussion at the Conference: these features might be openings made to let air circulate. This is a traditional technique, still attested in the region, and I think it might explain the peculiarities observed, namely the cut in the front and the missing ashes.

Fig. 11: Detail of the "incense-hearth" in the chapel of Straight Street 3 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 43a).

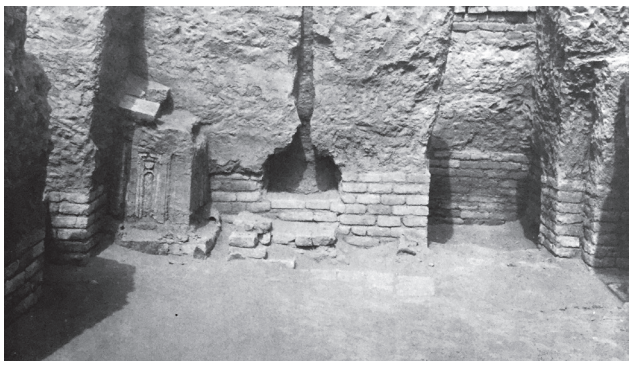

Fig. 12: Detail of the "incense-hearth" in the chapel of Paternoster Row 4 at Ur (after Woolley 1976: pl. 44a).

Apparently, offerings, quite likely of food and drink,[39] were placed on the platforms/altars; in Woolley's proposal, the hearth was used to burn a substance such as incense. It is more difficult to understand the function of

39 According to Woolley, bowls were found in the chapels, and they were sometimes placed on the platform/altars and were identified as traces of ritual feasting for the deceased, see Woolley 1976: 119 (Boundary Street 1, where on the platform three clay "saucers" were found piled up one inside the other and two other standing on an edge); 132 (Church Lane 9, a jar and two beakers). The published evidence is scanty, and it is not possible to ascertain if the situation presented by Woolley is based only on this published evidence or on his recollections.

the "tables," also interpreted as bases for unidentified objects.[40] These objects did not leave any trace on the upper face of the "tables," like hollows made by the presence of an object for some time, or traces of the materials of which they were made, like remains of decayed organic substances or marks of oxidised metals.

Woolley was firmly convinced that the "tables" were meant to support something, also based on the observation that one of them, and only one, featured at the base a regular hollow, at whose ends near the walls there were two bitumen stops, while the remains of a third one were still visible at the point of junction between the two hollows.[41] In his opinion, they were meant to block a tent at the bottom, covering the "table," and the eventual object standing on it.[42] It is not clear, anyhow, what happened at the top because, though the wall is well preserved behind the "table" and reaches to a good height, there is no trace of the upper stops of the presumed tent, which, therefore, had to be hanging from the ceiling. On several occasions, however, Woolley maintained that the chapels did not have a ceiling running over the whole room,[43] but rather light canopies, covering only the area with cult furniture.

Comparing Ur with Nippur, we may notice that, besides the absence of the built tombs, in the few chapels singled out at Nippur the incense hearths are absent, whereas platforms/altars and "tables" are always present, as well as normal hearths.[44] Moreover, one of the Nippur "tables," clearly looks like an imitation of a temple model (**Figs. 13–14**), as if it contained rather than supported something.[45]

Overall, the private chapels do not reproduce, as is quite natural, the plan of the main temples, but they are also different from the small urban sanctuaries, well-known at Ur. It seems evident that they had to appear as autonomous and clearly different from real temples, which were the houses of gods. At Ur, where the rooms in private houses are often of different sizes, the chapels are usually the largest and may be connected to the largest covered room, not to be mistaken with the main circulation junction, which was frequently an open court: as we have seen, this pattern is not the rule and we can thus also dismiss the reconstruction of southern Mesopotamian sociality proposed by Woolley and followed by others, where the largest covered room of the house was a living room, used also for guests, and whose relation to the chapels and eventually the vaulted tombs was never clearly explained.[46] The first proposal, based on the cor-

Fig. 13: Detail of the altar in TB, level IV, 2, Room 222 at Nippur (after McCown/Haines 1967: pl. 40C).

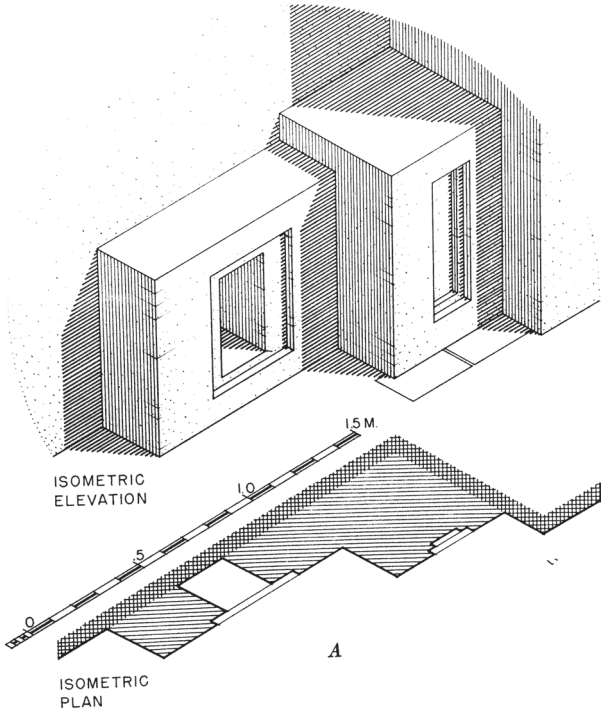

Fig. 14: Reconstruction of the altar in TB, level IV, 2, Room 222 at Nippur (after McCown/Haines 1967: pl. 69A).

40 Woolley calls them "tables" based on the textual evidence, which mentions the fact that the first-born child was in charge of the funerary cults and of the "table" to perform them (Brusasco 1999–2000: 134), but in describing the individual features he sometimes uses the term "pedestals" and seems to prefer their identification as bases or supports.

41 Woolley 1976: 146, fig. 40B, pl. 44.

42 Following his typical attitude, Woolley (1976: 145) accepted a suggestion by his workmen who referred to what happened in mosques.

43 Woolley (1976: 30) also maintains that he found the remains of light ceilings made of reeds; see also Stone 1987: 29.

44 McCown/Haines 1967: 146–147.

45 McCown/Haines 1967: Pls 40C, 69A.

46 Woolley 1976: 24–25; Brusasco 2007: 25–6; Brusasco 1999–2000: 66. At Nippur, where it was not possible to identify a "living room," it was proposed that the chapel was also used as a gathering place (McCown/Haines 1967: 146–147; Stone 1987: 86).

relation between vaulted tomb and chapel, was that in private houses some form of ancestor cult was practised: in my opinion, this is possible, because it is documented by the written evidence,[47] but not because of the flimsy correlation between tomb and chapel . A second proposal was based only on the presence of the chapels and connected it with the cult for "family gods": the presence of family gods is well attested in the Mesopotamian written evidence, though their nature is debated.[48] What seems certain, however, is that their cults were performed in temples, outside the houses.[49]

In order to propose an interpretation for the functions of these pieces of furniture, it might be necessary to really know how the people of Ur, Nippur, and Ešnunna spent their days, how they articulated spaces, and which activities really did take place within the domestic units.[50] We do not say anything new if we maintain that food processing and part of the textile production took place in the house and were mainly, but perhaps not exclusively, entrusted to the female members of the family. Archaeologically, these activities are documented by the presence of fixed and mobile hearths, by grinding stones and pestles, by loom weights and spindle whorls.[51] Male activities are related to the presence of tablets, tools, and weapons, which at Ur seem to concentrate in the main "living" areas, the courtyards, workshops, and stores.[52] Yet, in performing these activities, was the family self-referential, or was it in some measure open to contacts with the exterior? Is it possible that seasonal operations — especially the processing and storage of food — were collective, certainly involving groups connected by kin relations, but possibly also by neighbourhood relations, in an explicitly urban context? When we find in a house — often in relation with the chapels — cuneiform documents of an administrative nature, does this mean that the operations recorded were made inside that house, or were the documents only preserved in that context?

One problematic aspect was highlighted by E. Stone in her consideration of Nippur, which might, at least in part, be extended also to Ur albeit in a context which, based on textual analysis, seems quite different. In a phase of profound transformation of societies, there might have been some reshuffling of the population, which made the relations between more urbanised and less urbanised elements of the society more complicated.[53] At Ur, the context is apparently more homogeneously urban, but it is not static: families changed, and their fortunes and properties changed as well. In both towns, they might have felt the need for a strengthening of the traditional family bonds or for forging new relationships. In these instances, the house chapel might have played a role, providing a ritual space related to family traditions more than to official religion. Families had their family deity, who usually was one of the gods of the official pantheon, and thus had his/her own house, the temple, where

47 Castel/Charpin 1997: 250–51; Van der Toorn 1996. See also Charpin 1996: 224, where the youngest son becomes responsible for the safeguard of family traditions.

48 Jacobsen 1976: 160; Van der Toorn 1996: 70–2, 77; Selz 2004: 40–1; Hruša 2015: 31.

49 Van der Toorn 1996: 72–3. Ur seems to be a key-site for the study of the different typologies and functions of these three categories of cult places in an urban context. In a general way, according to the analysis I propose here, the private chapels were not real cult places, but rather places where individual households met for private ceremonies of different nature, related with the household's life. The small urban sanctuaries were probably not a deity's house – though a deity was certainly the owner of the place – but rather cult places of reference for all the households living in the region of the town where the sanctuary was: they were probably used to face the everyday needs of the peoples. The temples proper – the real houses of the gods – dominated visually the urban pattern and were the foci of the most important periodical ceremonies of the town's life. For this differentiation among the three kinds of cult places I refer to Dittmann's definition (2015: 71-2).

50 We can rule out some of the activities listed by Matthews (2003: 170) as typical of domestic contexts, like crop growing, care of domestic animals, hunt and food collection and also in part artefacts production, because they belong to country households, rather than to urban societies, as already noted by Collins 2013: 350.

51 In reality, at Ur the objects which may be considered as gender-related do not define fixed spaces in the house. For instance, benches and hearths may be found in the presumed "living" and also in "kitchens" (Brusasco 2007: 26), leading to the proposal that the kitchen could be also used as a living room; loom weights and spindle whorls are usually found with grindstones, pestles and bread ovens in spaces interpreted as courtyards (Bursasco 2007: 27), which are therefore considered female places: this is in contrast with the presumed segregation of women (*ibidem*: 35), because these open spaces are usually the main circulation nodes of the house.

52 Brusasco 2007: 28. In the light of these considerations, the identification of spaces in the textual evidence does not seem to find a perfect correlation in archaeology.

53 Stone 1987: 18. This is a peculiar moment in the history of ancient Mesopotamia: it witnessed the sedentarization of semi-nomadic tribes and the final affirmation of the Semitic part of the population (Liverani 2011: 266). It is a phase of great changes (Liverani 2011: 270 on the changes in agricultural patterns) and, as a consequence, of great uncertainty; at the same time, it is also the phase of the development of private enterprise and of the codification of the family in a definitely patrilinear way (Liverani 2011: 277–279). Economic and social factors led to profound changes in household organization between the end of the third and the beginning of the second millennium BC (Renger 2007: 191).

they received cult, and it is mentioned that members of the family went out of the house in order to honour the family god in the temple.[54] The house chapel, on the other hand, might represent family traditions and might be related to ancestor cults, hinting at the lineage of the family, whereas the built tomb should represent the same lineage in a physical sense, but not necessarily in relation to cult performance.

Somehow, the built tombs, and the eventual secondary burials, are a private matter of the family, whereas the chapel might be functional to external relations: in a restricted sense, these relations were with the enlarged family and probably even with distant segments of the same family, like the collateral members living outside the town; it might be possible that what was performed in the chapels might also help in enhancing relations with other social groups not related by kin, like neighbours, possibly as a complement to local sanctuaries, creating and reinforcing social bonds in an urban context in evolution.

54 Van der Toorn 1996: 72–73.

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Zimri-Lim Offers a Throne to Dagan of Terqa*

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Abstract: Thrones of deities were a necessary part of Mesopotamian temple inventories. Probably the best documented, yet understudied, case is the throne that Zimri-Lim, king of Mari, offered to Dagan of Terqa. A number of accounting texts and letters shed light on the design of the throne, the nomenclature of its parts and ornaments, and on the related administrative procedures such as the weighing of gold or the proclamation of a year name.

Keywords: Mari, throne, furniture, Dagan, temple.

1. Introduction

Thrones of deities, certainly modelled after those of earthly rulers, were a landmark of Mesopotamian religious imagery. In iconography, gods and goddesses seated on thrones appear on stone reliefs, terracottas, and hundreds of cylinder seals from ED IIIB until the early first millennium BC.[1] Sumerian and Akkadian mythological literature also commonly speaks of divine thrones. Moreover, thrones of deities existed in the real world as a necessary part of temple inventories.[2] Probably the earliest evidence for such thrones (referred to as TUŠ DN) comes from Ebla (Pasquali 2005: 55). In Mesopotamia proper, gods' thrones appear for the first time in a year name and a royal inscription of Gudea.[3] From then onwards, the thrones belonging to dozens of deities and worshipped in dozens of temples are abundantly attested throughout all periods of Mesopotamian history in royal inscriptions, date formulas, administrative documents, letters, and ritual texts. Probably the very latest mention of a throne offered to a Mesopotamian deity comes from the Astronomical Diary dated to 124 B.C.[4]

This extremely rich evidence is of great importance for studying cult practices and has to be examined in a larger religious context. Yet the present study is that of material culture, and in this respect, the textual evidence quickly runs short. Most texts either do not describe the thrones at all, or only enumerate the materials they

* This article has been written in the framework of the project 16-18-10343 supported by the Russian Science Foundation. By a coincidence, Michaël Guichard was preparing a study on the throne of Dagan at the same time (Guichard 2017). He kindly provided me with his manuscript when I was finishing the present article. The text of my study has remained unchanged, except that I could take into account the text collations. I express my deepest gratitude for this opportunity. The abbreviations follow the Abkürzungsverzeichnis des Reallexikons der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie (www.keilschrift.badw.de).

1 Metzger 1985; Seidl 2013. It seems that the only material remains of a god's throne in Mesopotamia proper are the imprints on asphalt from the Neo-Babylonian Esagila (WVDOG 67, pl. 36).

2 The basic words for 'throne' (i.e., a luxury seat) in Sumerian and Akkadian are gu-za/*kussûm* (CAD K 590–593, meaning 4). Corpus-specific terms are GIŠ.UŠTIN and TUŠ in Ebla (Pasquali 2005: 49–55), and *arattû* and *šubtu* in the 1st millennium BC (CAD A/2 238–239, meaning a1′; CAD Š/3 173–174, meaning 1). To my knowledge, there is no general philological study of Mesopotamian thrones of deities, except for the very incomplete Pappi 2013. On individual corpora, see Pasquali 2005: 55 (Ebla); Sallaberger 1993: 99 (Ur III); Sigrist 1984: 23 n. 32, 149–150 (early Old Babylonian Nippur); Soubeyran 1984: 331–332 (Mari).

3 Edzard 1997: 27 (the year name Gudea 12); RIME 3.1.1.7.CylB: xvi 17–18.

4 Hunger/Sachs 1996: No. 124b: r. 15′–16′ (ref. courtesy M. Jursa).

Deity	*Dates of manufacturing*	*References*
Adad of Mahanum (ZL 10)	15/v/ZL 5 – 21/viii/ZL 6	Soubeyran 1984: 331
Annunitum (of Mari)	(ZL 5 – ZL 6)	Soubeyran 1984: 331; add ARM 10 52: 5–17; ARM 10 55: 13–14
Annunitum of Šehrum	12/v/ZL 10	ARM 25 187: 1-4; S.143, 97: v 4′-7′
Dagan of Mari	25/iv/ZL 5 – 26/vii/ZL 7	Soubeyran 1984: 331; add Guichard 2017, No. 1: 6–7
Dagan of Terqa (ZL 12)	early ZL 12 – 28/vii/ZL 12	see Table 2
Ea	(ZL 5 – ZL 6)	Soubeyran 1984: 331
Šamaš (ZL 5)	12/iv – 1/ix/ZL 3	Soubeyran 1984: 331; add ARM 25 313: 4; ARM 32: 233 (M.10639): 4; FM 8 11: 39

Fig. 1: Thrones of deities mentioned in Mari texts.

were made with (gold, silver, copper, precious woods and stones), or simply attribute a throne to a particular type, namely ^{giš}gu-za zà-bi-ús 'throne with a backrest' (*passim*), *kussi karrī* 'chair with knobs' (PBS 8/2 194: iii 8), ^{giš}gu-za kaskal, literally 'travel chair,'[5] and ^{giš}gu-za sìr-da, literally 'pole chair.'[6] Among the few texts that do inform us about the design of the thrones, there are two royal inscriptions which describe them in great detail,[7] the only temple inventory (in the sense of the text genre) that includes thrones,[8] and a certain number of administrative documents which record the expenditure of materials for the manufacturing of the thrones.[9] These data can one day be compared with iconography, as well as with the textual evidence concerning similar objects, in particular thrones made for humans and palanquins made for deities.[10] Yet first the textual data on gods' thrones have to be gathered and interpreted.

As in so many cases, the Old Babylonian Mari archives are particularly prolific on the subject. All three thrones mentioned in Zimri-Lim's year names,[11] as well as four others, appear in letters and administrative documents (**Fig. 1**).[12] Among these objects, the throne dedicated to Dagan of Terqa is by far the best documented case, both in the Mari archives and in the whole of the Mesopotamian record. Except for a couple of brief and outdated summaries,[13] the story of this precious object has remained unwritten.

2. The sources

The dedication of the throne is celebrated in the name of Zimri-Lim's 12th year of rule: "The year Zimri-Lim dedicated a great throne to Dagan of Terqa."[14] The proclamation of the year name is discussed in a letter quoting the words of Zimri-Lim's secretary Šu-nuhra-Halu: "As for the year name about which you wrote me, 'The

5 In the year name Gungunum 10 (Sigrist 1990: 8). The reading 'sedan chair, palanquin' is plausible, yet, in the absence of telling contexts, is bound to remain speculative.

6 In the archives of Ešumeša (Sigrist 1984: 149–150). The widely accepted interpretation of ^{giš}gu-za sìr-da as 'sedan chair, palanquin' (most recently Verderame 2012) is based on little more than the force of tradition. The equation of ^{giš}gu-za sìr-da and *šadittu* in lexical lists, as well as the frequent combination of the Akkadian *serdûm* 'pole' (or 'yoke'?) with the verb *šadādu* in literary texts, actually tell against this identification (*contra* Verderame 2012: 156, 159), since the basic sense of *šadādu* (CAD Š/1 20–31) is 'pull, drag (on the ground or water)' rather than 'lift, carry, bear'. The term needs further study.

7 RIME 4.2.13.13: 59-82 (Kudur-mabuk); RINAP 3/2, 162: iii 17'–38' (Sennacherib).

8 A chapel inventory from Samsuiluna's Sippar (PBS 8/2, 194).

9 Ebla: Pasquali 2005: 55; Ur III: Nisaba 15, 368: 4; 518: 24; PDT 2, 1018: 5′; UET 3, 684: 2–3; 695: 4; UET 3 1504: viii 20. For Mari data, see below.

10 There are few textual data on the design of thrones made for humans or unspecified users. The exceptions include Ebla documents concerning chairs of the giš.uštin type (Pasquali 2005: 49-55), Mari evidence on the *kussûm gištalītum* '… chair' (ARM 25, 230 and 273) and *kussi nēmedim* 'armchair' (Guichard 2017, No. 2–7, add perhaps ARM 8, 89), and a text from OB Uruk (Sanati-Müller 1990, No. 89). For palanquins offered to deities in Mari, see Arkhipov 2012: 147–149, No. 3 (made for Itur-Mer) and 6 (made for an unspecified person or deity but comprising a 'chair of Dagan's statue' among other cult images).

11 Boldfaced in Table 1. For the year names, see Charpin/Ziegler 2003: 259-260. As one can see from the table, there is no direct match between the manufacturing period and the year names. The gap is especially large in the case of the throne of Addu of Mahanum. Did it wait several years to be consecrated?

12 In addition, one letter speaks of a throne that Šamaš requested Zimri-Lim to manufacture and send to his temple in Sippar (ARM 26, 194: 3–7); no continuation of this episode is known. Thrones of divinized royal ancestors were also worshiped (FM 3, 4: i 5–7); cf. Sallaberger 1993: 147–148 for this practice in the Ur III period.

13 Talon 1985: 223–224; Feliu 2003: 107–109.

14 *šānat Zimri-Lim kussêm rabītam ana Dagan ša Terqa ušēlû*. On the story of this year name, see most recently Charpin/Ziegler 2016: 21–22.

No.	*Reference*	*Contents*	*Date*
1	ARM 13, 5	Letter by Mukannišum to the king. "My lord wrote me a strict order about manufacturing the throne of Dagan. I summoned the foremen Yašub-Ašar, Ṭab-Sumu, Eressumatum and Iddin-Ištar and read to them the letter that my lord sent to me. They said: "The gold does not suit for doing the job. We shall write ourselves to our lord." Herewith I am dispatching their letter to my lord".[i]	(xii/ZL 11 – v/ ZL 12)[ii]
2	ARM 13, 110	Letter by Kibri-Dagan governor of Terqa to the king: "My lord wrote me about the 10 minas of silver that offenders settled to me: 'This silver must arrive quickly to be processed for the works on the throne of Dagan.'"[iii]	(ZL 11 or 12)
3	Guichard 2017, No. 8 (S.143, 25)	Yašub-Ašar receives silver in order to purchase 24 shekels of gold for decorating agate plates.[iv]	11/v-bis/ZL 12
4	ARM 32: 389 (M.9049)	A craftsman receives 11 shekels 105 grains of gold scraps "from the throne of Dagan" for a different task.	16/v-bis/ZL 12
5	ARM 32: 390 (M.6438=ARM 25, 755)	At least 11 minas 58 shekels of gold and 12 minas 54 shekels of silver that Yašub-Ašar, Iddin-Ištar, Erissumatum, Yantin-Addu, Ṭab-Sumu and [...] have not employed and have lost (during the operations with plating) is recorded "when the goldsmiths weighed their work tasks by themselves."	[...]/v[-bis]/ ZL 12
6	ARM 32: 399–400 (ARM 21, 241+)	16 minas of gold plating is weight-checked and delivered to Yašub-Ašar, Ṭab-Sumu, Erissumatum and Iddin-Ištar for *ḫalāṣum* and *katāmum*; 5 minas 57 shekels of silver plating is weight-checked and delivered to Erissumatum for *malāḫum*.	[late v-bis or early vi/ ZL 12]
7	Guichard 2017, No. 9 (M.9028=ARM 25, 366)	Over 8 minas 57 shekels and 45 grains of gold plating is weight-checked and delivered to Iddin-Mamma, Iddin-Ištar, Buzu and [...] for *ḫalāṣum* and *katāmum*.	2/vi/ZL 12
8	ARM 32: 400–402 (ARM 21, 238+)	Over 21 minas 15 shekels 90 grains of gold plating is weight-checked and delivered to Iddin-Ištar, Ṭab-Sumu, Yašub-Ašar, and Erissumatum for application (*rakāsum*)	9/[vi]/ZL 12
9	Guichard 2017, No. 10 (M.9024=ARM 25, 191)	58 shekels 60 grains of gold decoration of the agate plates is weight-checked and returned to Yašub-Ašar for application (*rakāsum*).	[...]/vi/ZL 12
10	Guichard 2017, No. 13 (A.3325=ARM 25, 626)	An informal account of over 20 minas of gold decorations of the throne.	(v-bis or vi/ ZL 12)
11	ARM 24, 135	An intendant receives over 1 shekel 60 grains of gold scraps and 2 minas of silver scraps "from the throne of Dagan" for a different task.[v]	12?/vii/ZL 12
12	Guichard 2017, No. 12 (S.143, 27=ARM 25, 372)	Duplicate of the previous text.	[12?/vii/ZL 12]
13	ARM 24, 145	19 shekels 150 grains of gold, plating "of the second leg".	27/vii/(ZL 12)
14	ARM 25, 686	14 shekels 30 grains of gold, plating "of the first rung".	27/vii/(ZL 12)
15	ARM 25, 550	Duplicate of the previous text.	[27/vii/ZL 12]
16	ARM 25, 543	17 shekels 45 grains of gold, plating "of the second rung".	28/vii/(ZL 12)
17	ARM 25, 540	Duplicate of the previous text.[vi]	28/vii/(ZL 12)
18	ARM 25, 537	19 shekels 105 grains of gold, plating "of the third leg".[vii]	28/vii/ZL 12

Fig. 2: The Mari texts mentioning the throne of Dagan of Terqa or its parts (in chronological order).

i [*aš-šu*]*m ši-pí-ir* ^{giš}GU.ZA *ša* ^{d}*da-g*[*an*], *b*[*e-l*]*i*$_2$ *da-an-na-tim iš-pu-ra-a*[*m*], ^{I}*ia-šu-ub-a-šar*, ^{I}*ṭà-ab-su-mu-u*$_2$, ^{I}*e-re-es*$_3$*-su-um-ma-tu*[*m*], *u*$_2$ *i-din-iš*$_8$*-tar*$_2$, *be-el pa-ha-a-tim*, *as*$_2$*-si-ma ṭup-pa-am*, *ša b*[*e-l*]*i*$_2$ *u*$_2$*-ša-bi-l*[*a*]*-am*, *u*$_3$*-ša-aš-me*$_2$*-šu-nu-ti*, *um-ma šu-nu-ma*, KU$_3$.GI *a-na e-pe*$_2$*-eš ši-ip-*[*r*]*i-*[*i*]*m*, *u*$_2$*-ul i-re-ed-d*[*u*], *ni-nu-ma a-na be-lí-ni*$_5$ *ni-*[*ša-pa-ra-a*]*m*, *a-nu-um-ma ṭup-pa-šu-n*[*u*], *a-na ṣe-er b*[*e-li*$_2$*-ia*], [*uš-ta*]*-bi-l*[*a-am*] (ll. 5–21).

ii Since the letter was sent to Zimri-Lim from Mari, it should date either to the turn of the year (see above), or to the months iii–v of ZL 12, when the king was on a journey to the North (Charpin/Ziegler 2003: 234–235).

iii *aš-šum* 10 MA.NA KU$_3$.BABBAR *ša* LU$_2$.MEŠ *be-lu ar-nim iš-*[*qu*$_2$*-lu-nim*], *be-li*$_2$ *ki-a-am iš-pu-ra-am um-ma-a-mi*, KÙ.BABBAR *šu-u*$_2$ *ar-hi-iš li-ik-šu-dam-ma*, *a-na ši-pi*$_2$*-ir* ^{giš}GU.ZA *ša* ^{d}*da-gan*, *li-in-ne-pi*$_2$*-iš* (ll. 5–9).

iv Line 1: 2 MA.NA [X SU KU$_3$.BABBA]R. Line 3: *a-na* [*ši-im*].

v Line 2: [1]+1 MA.NA (see the next text for the restoration).

vi The weight of the gold is slightly inferior, 16 shekels 120 grains. This may be explained by the use of a different weighing technique.

vii Line 5: the reading ^{giš}*kab-li-im* instead of the edition's ^{giš}*al-li-im* suggests itself in view of (**13**).

Task	*Nature of the amount*	*Text*			
		(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Yašub-Ašar, gold	Total	4,59,90	4,57,90	–	[4,5]7,90
	Remnants	0,1,150	0,2,90	–	–
	Losses	0,5,0	–	–	0,1,0
Ṭab-Sumu, gold	Total	[...]	5,28,0	–	[...]
	Remnants	[...]	0,4,90	–	–
	Losses	[...]	–	–	0,1,0
Erissumatum, gold	Total	5,31,90	5,25,0	–	5,25,0
	Remnants	–	0,5,90	–	–
	Losses	0,2,120	–	–	0,1,0
Yantin-Addu, gold	Total	1[+...],8,90	–	–	–
	Losses, remnants, scraps	[...]	–	–	–
Iddin-Mamma, gold	Total	–	–	1,33,75	–
Buzu, gold	Total	–	–	2,8,120	–
Iddin-Ištar, gold	Total	–	–	5,9,90	[5],10,0
	Losses	–	–	–	0,1,135
	Scraps	–	–	–	0,[...],15
[...], gold	Total	–	–	0,[...],0	–
Erissumatum, silver	Total	5,57,0	5,57,0	–	–
	Losses	0,3,120	–	–	–
Iddin-Ištar, silver	Total	6,57,0	–	–	–
	Losses	0,8,0	–	–	–

Fig. 3: The amounts of gold and silver used for the throne of Dagan. The weights are noted in the following format: [minas],[shekels],[grains].

year when Zimri-Lim dedicated a great throne to Dagan,' this throne has not been dedicated yet."[15] This letter was written at the turn of the year. Zimri-Lim was then on a journey to Terqa, where the year name was used from as early as 2/i.[16] In the city of Mari, its use begins on 20/i.[17]

Apart from that, the throne is mentioned in two letters and at least 16 accounting documents from Mari (see **Fig. 2**). In these texts, the object appears as *kussûm ša Dagan ša Terqa* "the throne of Dagan of Terqa", or, most frequently, as "the throne of Dagan", or simply as "the throne." The timing of the works and the parallels with more explicit texts allow the identification of the throne of Dagan of Terqa and distinguish it from other thrones and chairs of the Mari sources.

3. The manufacturing process

Both the letters and the documents speak exclusively about the manufacturing of the gold, silver and precious stone decorations of the throne. The wooden parts are only mentioned occasionally, as the supports for the ornaments. The weight of gold used for the throne totaled ca. 25 minas [(6) plus (7)].[18] The expenditures of silver are less well documented, but they amounted to no less than 13 minas [(5)]. The throne was also decorated with an unknown number of agate plates named *nišduppum* in (3) and *muššarrum* in (9).[19]

The texts (1)–(3) concern the supplying of raw gold and silver for the throne. The earliest document referring to the manufacturing process itself, (4), records the transfer of the gold scraps remaining from work on the

15 *aš-šum ni-ib* MU *ša ta-aš-pu-ra-am, um-ma at-ta-a-ma* MU *zi-im-ri-li-im,* ^{giš}GU.ZA GAL *a-na* ^{d}*da-gan* u_2*-še-lu-*u_2, ^{giš}GU.ZA *ši-i a-di-ni,* u_2*-ul šu-la-at* (ARM 13, 47: 4–8).

16 25/xii/ZL 11: ARM 23, 454; 2/i/ZL 12: M.7095 (ARM 30: 396); 11/i/ZL 12: A.3524 (ARM 32: 386).

17 ARM 25, 96; M.11938 (ARM 30: 396–397).

18 From here on, the bracketed boldfaced numbers refer to the text numbers of Table 2.

19 For these and other technical terms mentioned in this section, see Arkhipov 2012, s.v.

throne. This means that the process had started earlier than 16/v-bis, the date of the text. Why we do not have any accounting documents from the previous months is a mystery, except that this certainly has to do with the king's absence (see above n. 8).

Seven goldsmiths were engaged in the manufacturing of the throne. The letter (**1**) mentions four of them: Yašub-Ašar, Ṭab-Sumu, Erissumatum and Iddin-Ištar. All of them as well as three other craftsmen, Yantin-Addu, Iddin-Mamma and Buzu, appear in accounting texts.[20]

A series of documents indicate the amounts of metal that were entrusted to the craftsmen, as well as the remnants (*ribbatum*), the losses (*imṭi*) and the scraps (KI-IR-RI-*tum*) that resulted from operations with gold and silver plating (*iḫzū*). The earliest text in this group, (**5**), records the work assignments (*iškārum*) of five goldsmiths with the totals, the remnants and the losses, but does not specify the nature of the operations. The texts (**6**) and (**7**), which must be close in date, record the handover of gold sheets (*ruqqum*) to seven craftsmen for the still-obscure operations *ḫālāṣum*, *katāmum* and *malāḫum*, and indicate the remnants which must have remained after the manufacturing of the sheets (text (**6**) only). The seven craftsmen had eight tasks, since one of them appears twice. The text (**8**) records the handover of the plating for final application onto wood (*rakāsum*) and indicates the losses that occurred during *ḫālāṣum* and *katāmum*. This document concerns only four tasks out of the eight. Another document must have existed for the other four. Note that the weights referring to the same tasks display slight discrepancies from text to text, which may be of interest for a study of weighing and accounting procedures. The data is summed up in **Fig. 3**.

The plating of the agate ornaments, handed over for application, is accounted separately in (**9**). The latest texts which mention the throne of Dagan are the duplicates (**11**) and (**12**): gold and silver scraps are handed over for a different task on 12[?]/vii. A group of documents dated to 27–28/vii, (**13**)–(**18**), record the weights of plating of rungs and legs of an unspecified object, which may well be the throne of Dagan.[21] The throne's rungs and legs were part of the tasks of Erissumatum and Iddin-Ištar, respectively [(**6**), (**7**), (**8**)]. The accounting sense of (**13**)–(**18**) is unclear (weight control?). Note that we only have the documents for the "second leg" and "the third leg"; the other two records are missing. Nothing is known about the throne's further destiny.

4. The parts

The throne of Dagan had two side panels (*pūtum*),[22] a front panel (*amartum ša meḫretim*), a back panel (*amartum ša warkatim*),[23] and four legs (*kablum*).[24] Two "long" rungs (*gištûm arkum*) were probably parallel to the longer panels.[25] Note that the same four terms appear in the list of chair parts in ḪḪ IV, 123–126:

giš-BAD-gu-za	*kab-lum* 'leg'
giš-RI-gu-za	*gil-tu-u₂* 'rung'
giš-IZ-ZI-gu-za	*a-mar-tum* 'long side panel'
giš-sag-gu-za	*pu-u₂-tum* 'short side panel'

20 On the goldsmiths of Mari, see provisionally Verardi 2008: 191–214, and Dercksen 2013: 361–368.

21 From the chronological point of view, the palanquin-*nūbalum* manufactured during vi–viii/ZL 12 may suit better. However, the numerous Mari documents concerning palanquins never mention legs-*kablum* or rungs-*gištûm* (Arkhipov 2012: 147–149).

22 (**8**): 28 (2 ^{giš}*pu-ta-tim*); (**7**): 5 (2 *pu-ta-tim*). Other attestations of the term in Mari: Guichard 2017, No. 7: 5′ (2 ^{giš}*pu-ta-at* [...]); Guichard 2017, No. 15: 2 (1 ^{giš}*pu-tum* <*ša*> ^{giš}GU.ZA). For the term in general, see AHw. 888 *pūtu*(*m*) B "Stirn-, Frontseite" 5 "v Ggst.n", CAD P 539 *pūtu* 2a "frontpiece of an object". For *pūtum* 'front panel' of palanquins, see Arkhipov 2012: 141 (with the references). Note that a chair has the *pūtum* panels on the right and on the left, despite the etymological meaning of *pūtum*, 'forehead.' The term must have first been applied to beds, which do have the *pūtum* on the front.

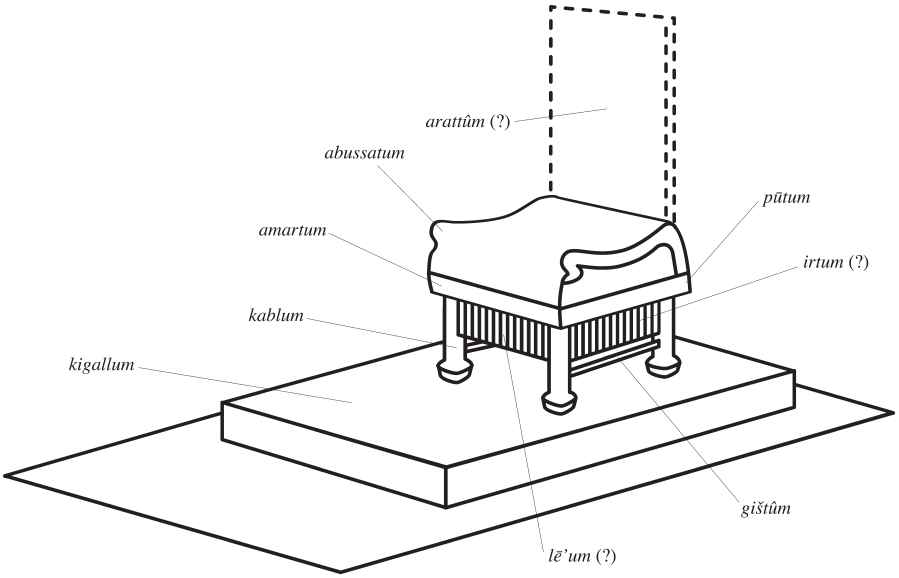
23 (**7**): 4 (*a-ma-ar-tim*); (**8**): 27–28 (^{giš}*a-ma-ar-tim ša me-eh-re-ti-im*); 32–33 (^{giš}*a-ma-ar-tim ša wa-ar-ka-tim*). Other attestations of the term in Mari: Guichard 2017, No. 14: 6 (*a-ma-ar-*[*tim*]); Guichard 2017, Nr 15: 1 ([^{giš}*a*]-*ma-ra-at* ^{giš}GU.ZA). For the term in general, see AHw. 40 *amartu*(*m*) 3 "Seitenlehne des Sessels", CAD A/2 3–4 *amartu* A 2b "sideboard (of a chair)". A number of Mari texts contain the word *amartum* with a different meaning, "(a kind of) plank", which is not listed by the dictionaries (see the discussion and the list of instances by Soubeyran 1984: 444–445; add ARM 26, 73: 4, 9; ARM 26, 105: 18; FM 7, 30: 14; ARM 31, 233: 8; ARM 32: 484–485 (M.15106: 12′).

24 (**8**): 41 (4 ^{giš}*ka-ab-la-tim*); (**7**): 13 (4 ^{giš}*kab-la-tim*); (**13**): 4–5 (*ša-ni-im* ^{giš}*kab-li-im*); (**18**): 4–5 (*ša-al-ši-im* ^{giš}*kab-li-im*). Other attestations of the term in Mari: Guichard 2017 No. 15: 3 (3 ^{giš}*ka-ab-la-tum*); ARM 25, 113: 3; ARM 31, 221: 23′; FM 8, 6: 11 (*ka-ab-la-tu-šu*); ARM 32: 472 (M.11545): 6 (*kab-li*). For the term in general, see AHw. 417 *kablum* "Möbelfuß", CAD K 21–22 "leg of a piece of furniture".

25 (**8**): 34 (1 ^{giš}*gi-iš-ti-im*), (**6**): 17 (1 *gi-iš-ti-i-im*); ARM 31 262: 12 (*gi-iš-tu-u₂*); (**15**): 3–4 = (**14**): 4–5 (1 ^{giš}*gi-iš-ti-im* [*ar-ki-im*]); (**16**): 4–5 (2 ^{giš}*gi-iš-ti-i-im ar-ki-im*); (**17**): 3–4 (2 ^{giš}*gi-iš-ti* [*ar-ki-im*]). Other attestations of the term in Mari: Guichard 2017, No. 15: 4 (3 ^{giš}*gi-iš-tu-u₂*); Guichard 2017, No. 14 (1 *gi-iš-ti-im ša a-ma-ar-*[*tim*]). For the term in general, see AHw. 293–294 *gištûm*, *giltû* "(Möbel-)Stange", CAD G 109 *gištû* "rung (of a bed, chair, table or throne)". For a Mesopotamian chair with rungs, see, e.g., Seidl 2013: 638, Abb. 4, or Woolley/Mallowan 1976, pl. 55a (reference courtesy Aaron Schmitt).

Remarkably, they also show up in a list of furniture parts from Babylonia: 6 *a-ma-ra-tum*, 6 *pu-ta-tu*, 9 *ka-ab-lu*, 2 *gi-iš-tu* (YOS 13, 157: 1–4).[26]

In addition, the throne of Dagan had a "breast of the top" (*irti elīm*) and a "breast of the bottom" (*irti šaplim*),[27] decorated each with a huge gold sheet weighing 5 minas; various figurines and images were situated *maḫar irtim* "in front of the breast." It is hard to say where exactly the two "breasts" were situated within the throne. The evidence on another chair having a "breast" is not of much help, since this time the texts speak of a single "breast of the front and the back."[28]



Drawing: I. Traykova-Kuleshova ©

Fig. 4: Hypothetical reconstruction of the throne and its parts (drawing by I. Traykova-Kuleshova).

The throne was decorated with a volute (*abussatum*, literally 'forelock').[29] Iconography shows that volutes resembling forelocks might protrude from seat boards of thrones.[30] There is no explicit mention of the seat board of the throne in the available sources, perhaps because this part was not decorated with precious materials. However, the texts speak of an enigmatic part named *lē'um ša meḫer kussîm*, literally 'board of the front of the throne.'[31] It is hard to say if this term may refer to the seat board.

It is unclear whether the throne had a backrest. The basic word for backrest, *nēmedum* (AHw. 776), is not used in the texts concerning the throne of Dagan, though it is well attested in descriptions of other chairs in Mari. However, the term *arattûm* may have been used instead.[32] Unlike in other corpora,[33] in Mari *arattûm* is clearly a part rather than a kind of chairs. If we take at face value the equation *arattû* = *kussi nēmedi* 'backrest chair' of lexical lists (CAD A/2 238), *arattûm* would be a kind of backrest.[34] Two "nails" (GAG) were used "instead of" (*pūḫat*) the *arattûm* [(**10**): 7′–8′]. The *arattûm* was decorated with a cultic image [(**8**): 42].

The throne of Dagan was placed on a pedestal (*kigallum*).[35] The documents also contain a number of references to "effigies" (*ṣalmū*) for whose manufacturing sheet gold was used. Most of them must correspond to figures on gold-sheet reliefs covering the throne's surfaces, yet we cannot exclude that some of the "effigies" were gold-plated figurines in the round. See the study by GUICHARD (forthcoming), and, provisionally, the evidence collected by GUICHARD (2017).

26 The transliteration follows www.archibab.fr (with reference to R. Pientka).

27 (**10**): 5, 10 (*i-ir-ti*); (**8**): 18 (^{giš}GABA *e-li-im*); (**6**): 1 (GABA *e-li-im*); 8 (GABA *ša-ap-li-im*). The dictionaries do not provide instances of *irtum* 'breast' as a part of furniture. Note, however, that the word has a meaning 'front panel of chariots' (AHw. 386 *irtum* 3c "Brüstung des Wagens"; see ARKHIPOV 2012: 151 for Mari instances).

28 GUICHARD 2017, No. 3: 4–5; GUICHARD 2017, No. 4: 4–5 (^{giš}*i-ir-tim ša pa-ni-im u₃ wa-ar-ka-tim*).

29 (**8**): 29; (**6**): 17 (1 *a-bu-sa₃-tim*); (**10**): 9 (*a-bu-sa₃-ti*). Other attestations of the term in Mari: ARM 32: 451 (A.4661): 3 (^{giš}*a-bu-sa₃-tim*); GUICHARD 2017, No. 6: 4 (*a-bu-us-*[*sa₃-tim*]). The spellings 1 *a-bu-sa₃-tim* and *a-bu-us-*[*sa₃-tim*] show that the correct Nom. sing. of the word is *abussatum* (first suggested in GUICHARD 2005: 327), *contra* AHw. 9 (*abūsu*(*m*), *abussu* 3 "Pl. auch eine Haartracht") and CAD A/1 92 (*abūsātu* "forelock"). The dictionaries do not provide instances of *abussatum* 'forelock' as a part of furniture.

30 See, e.g., SEIDL 2013: 636–637, Abb. 1, 2.

31 (**6**): 9 ('*le-i-im*' *ša me-ḫe-er* ^{giš}GU.ZA); (**8**): 3 [*l*]*e-i-*[*im* ...]); (**10**): 1′ ([...] *ša me-ḫe-er* ^{giš}GU.ZA'). The dictionaries do not provide instances of *lē'um* 'board' as a part of furniture. None of the meanings of *meḫrum* suits the context, unless we assume that it is a variant of *meḫretum* 'front part' (AHw. 641 *me/iḫru*(*m*) 6 "statt *meḫretu*"; cf. above s.v. *amartum*).

32 (**8**): 42 (*a-ra-at-te₂*); (**10**): 7′ (*a-ra-te-e*). Other attestations in Mari: ARM 32: 472 (M.11545): 3, 9 (*a-ra-at-te-e*); GUICHARD 2017, No. 3: 6 (^{giš}*a-ra-te₂-e*).

33 AHw. 66 *arattû* "Aratta-Sessel", CAD A/2 238–239 *arattû* a1′ "a special chair for gods."

34 Note that an *arattûm* was also part of a *kussi nēmedim* according to GUICHARD 2017, No. 3, as indicated in the parallel text ARM 25, 262.

35 (**10**): 15′; ARKHIPOV 2012: 168–169 (with further references). For an image of the pedestal of a throne, see e.g. SEIDL 2013: 637, Abb. 2.

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Votive Objects from the Temple of Aššur at Aššur[1]

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Abstract: This paper deals with votive gifts from the Aššur temple at Aššur (modern *Qalʿat Širgât*), from an archaeological point of view and from a diachronic perspective (Early Dynastic period to 614 BCE). The focus lies on portable objects, whose inscriptions or types identify them as dedications. The following aspects of dedicatory practices are discussed: object types donated, the donors, differences in comparison to other sanctuaries, and continuity and change.

Keywords: Votive gifts, Assyria, Aššur, Temple, Early Dynastic period, Akkadian period, Old Assyrian period, Middle Assyrian period, Neo-Assyrian period, regular offerings.

1. Introduction

The aim of this case study is to examine the development of specific dedicatory practices in the temple of Aššur at Aššur (modern *Qalʿat Širgât*) from the Early Dynastic period to the destruction of the sanctuary in 614 BCE. Votive objects are sacred gifts dedicated to the gods, sometimes containing the concrete wish of a supplicant. Beginning in the Early Dynastic period, some votive objects bear inscriptions. These mainly mobile objects—but sometimes also functional building elements, such as door sockets or knobs—were dedicated. Once dedicated to a god, votive objects became part of the temple inventory. They had to remain in the temple, either used in the cult, stored in the treasury, or sacredly hoarded.[2] According to a Neo-Assyrian omen text, votive gifts could also be offered to propitiate the wrath of gods (SAA 4, 196).[3]

The textual sources inform us about different kinds of gifts and offerings to the gods, but votive and regular offerings seem to have had different religious as well as social functions. Regular offerings were goods for the provisioning of the gods. They comprised mainly foodstuffs, which were used for the daily meals of the gods in the sanctuary. The provisioning of the god Aššur, and the other great gods, was the duty of the whole Assyrian Empire. In the form of regular offerings (*ginā'u*), every Assyrian had to contribute to the well-being of the main god. In the Middle Assyrian period, tributary vassals were not allowed to make this contribution and, therefore, did not belong to the *māt Aššur* (Postgate 1992: 251–252; Maul 2008: 80). This system of regular offerings continued into the Neo-Assyrian period, but then vassals had to contribute as well (Maul 2008: 81–82). Consequently, those who did not fulfill their duty not only refused their support to the god Aššur but also to the Assyrian king.[4] Unlike regular offerings, votive gifts were

1 I would like to thank Jean Evans, Paola Paoletti and Elisa Roßberger for their beneficial comments and in particular Jean Evans for correcting my English. The spelling of the Assyrian kings follows those of RIMA/RINAP.

2 They are also referred to as sacred gifts, votive gifts, dedications, or *Weihgaben*. For the definition, see Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016, and references therein. In the case of uninscribed objects, it is often difficult to distinguish them from the rest of the temple inventory.

3 I owe thanks to S. Maul (Heidelberg) for this reference.

4 For the meaning of regular offerings in Assyria, see Postgate 1992: 251; Maul 2008: 80–83; 2013.

offered on a sporadic basis, connected to special events or containing a specific wish.

The votive objects, as part of the temple inventory, raise numerous questions about their social function in the temple of Aššur. This study focused on the following questions:

- Who were the donors?
- Which objects were offered to the god Aššur?
- Are there differences in comparison to other sanctuaries?
- Did votive practices change over time?

Before discussing these questions, I have provided a summary of the building history of the temple of Aššur and a diachronic overview of the relevant objects.

2. The Temple of Aššur at Aššur: A Short Overview

Aššur was not only the name of the city, but it was also the name of the city god and the state. After Assyria became a superpower in the second half of the second millennium BCE, the god Aššur was responsible for the well-being of the whole kingdom. The god Aššur played an important role in the ideological self-understanding of the Assyrian kings and the state of Aššur. The Assyrian king was the god's earthly representative and, at the same time, the high priest of the god Aššur (Maul 1999; Pongratz-Leisten 2015: 202–205). The god Aššur and his temple did not lose their importance when Aššur was no longer the principal residence of the Assyrian king in the Neo-Assyrian period, as the large number of royal building activities centered on the temple demonstrates.[5] The cult within the Assyrian main sanctuary is well known from royal inscriptions of the Middle and Neo-Assyrian periods.[6] Especially for the older periods, material remains offer plenty of information regarding religious practices, which are not mentioned in written sources.

The temple complex of the god Aššur was the largest, most important temple of the city. The sanctuary was located on a rock overlooking the Tigris River, in the northeast of the city, next to other public buildings. Investigations at the temple were carried out by an expedition of the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*, between 1903 and 1914, under the direction of Walter Andrae (Gries 2017: 5–7). The oldest finds from the area of the temple date back to the end of the Early Dynastic period or to the beginning of the Akkadian period. They indicate that there was already a sanctuary there in the second half of the third millennium BCE (see below).

Remains of a monumental mud-brick building, dating to the end of the third or the beginning of the second millennium BCE, are present but sparse. The dating and function of the earlier levels of this building are uncertain because only the foundations are preserved. From the reign of Erišum I (ca. 1974–1935 BC) onwards, this massive construction can be identified with certainty as the temple of the god Aššur. In the late 19th or early 18th century BCE, the Old Assyrian king Šamšī-Adad I built a completely new, and much larger, temple complex, consisting of a main building and forecourt surrounded by annex buildings. The basic plan of this building remained unaltered for more than 1,000 years. Shalmaneser I completely rebuilt the temple complex after a fire in the 13th century BCE. The Neo-Assyrian king Sennacherib was the first to substantially modify the layout. He added the eastern annex (*Ostanbau*). From the time of Šamšī-Adad I onward, the whole temple complex covered an area of about 100 x 220 m (**Fig. 1**).[7]

The temple of Aššur is poorly preserved, due to the conquest of the city by the Medes in 614 BCE. Systematic looting of the temple appears to have been likely, since no valuable or reusable objects were preserved. Metal objects are especially underrepresented.[8] Other objects, impossible to remove, were intentionally destroyed: stone figures were smashed, and large stone objects were thrown into wells. In addition to well-known objects, such as the limestone relief depicting a mountain god,[9] or the water basin of Sennacherib,[10] which were both found broken in wells, there are several other fragments of stone objects, including a small Neo-Assyrian stone statue (**Fig. 2**). Only the left part of the upper body of this high-quality sculpture is preserved, broken into three

5 For the building history of the Aššur temple in the Neo-Assyrian period, see van Driel 1969: 20–31; Menzel 1981: P2–P3; Galter 2004; Gries 2017: 121–125. 137–143, tab. 20.

6 For the written sources, see van Driel 1969: 139–169; Menzel 1981: 36–63; Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 60–64. 108; 2015: 379–447; Maul 1998; 2000; 2013; Gries 2017: 121–125, tab. 20.

7 For the building history of the temple, see Haller/Andrae 1955; Miglus 2001; Gries 2017: 126–143, and references therein, especially pp. 2–3.

8 Only 10.6 % of the archaeological material comprises bronze objects (Gries 2017: 144, diagram 2).

9 For the 'Brunnenrelief' (Ass 17566 + 17581/VA Ass 1358), see Andrae 1931; Reade 2000; Gries 2017: 84–86, cat. 427, pl. 160, and references therein.

10 For the water basin of Sennacherib (Ass 16771/VA Ass 1835), see Andrae 1937; Haller/Andrae 1955: 72–73, pl. 4–5; Andrae ²1977: 34, fig. 16; Gries 2017: 86–87, cat. 440, pl. 165, and references therein.

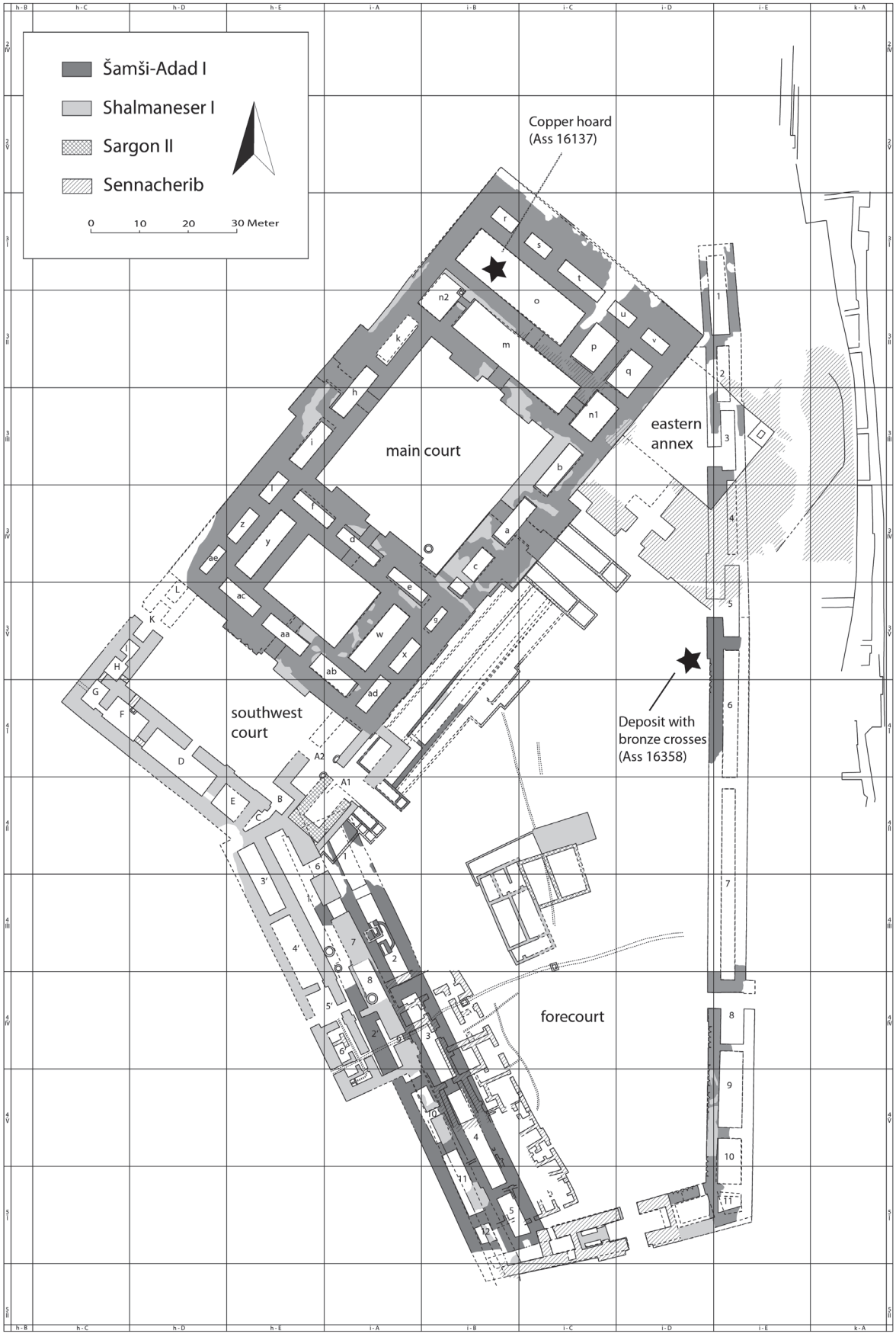

Fig. 1: Plan of the temple of Aššur (original plan by the Ashur expedition/digitalised by M. Lerchl).

pieces found at different locations.[11] Several obelisk fragments exemplify the vast destruction and dislocation of the whole inventory. The pieces belong to at least two obelisks, but even fragments that originally belonged together were not found at the same location (Orlamünde 2011: 96; Pedde in print). After its demolition, in the late seventh century BCE, the building complex suffered from erosion, especially in the eastern part, as well as from other disturbances, due to later occupation of the area. In the Parthian period, there was still a sanctuary for the god Aššur in the same place.[12] Particularly in the areas that suffered later occupation, only the foundations of the older building stages were preserved (Gries 2017: 143–145, pl. 8).

Fig. 2: Fragment of a Neo-Assyrian sculpture (Ass 16116 + 16165 + 17854) (scale 1:2).

3. Votive Gifts: A Diachronic Overview

3.1 Early Dynastic Period

The oldest findings from the area of the Aššur temple date back to the second half of the third millennium BCE (**Fig. 9**), such as a small female statue, which belongs to a well-known type of dedicatory sculpture (**Fig. 3**). The statue was found broken into at least 11 pieces and had already been repaired in antiquity. It is similar to sculptures from the older temple of Ištar at Aššur, where many such statues were found (Bär 2003: 84–125, cat. SK1–SK 87). Even though none of the objects was inscribed, it is likely that the statue from the Aššur temple was a votive gift. Comparable statues are known from Mesopotamia, almost exclusively from temple contexts; when inscribed, they bear votive inscriptions.[13]

Fig. 3: Dedicatory sculpture from the temple of Aššur (Ass 16710) (scale 1:4).

11 For the find spots of the statue (Ass 16116 + 16165 + 17854/VA 5714 + 5050 + 5051), see Gries 2017: 67, cat. 30, pl. 129.

12 For the Achaemenid and Parthian (Arsacid) sanctuary, see Andrae/Lenzen 1933: 73–88; Hauser 2011: 138–142.

13 It is generally assumed that these types of Early Dynastic sculptures are votive statues, representing the donor before the god in the temple (Braun-Holzinger 1977: 10–12; 1991: 219–222. 228; Marchesi/Marchetti 2011); Pfälzner (2001) interpreted these sculptures as ancestors. For a multifunctional definition, see Evans (2012: 112–123) and, critical to this, Braun-Holzinger (2015).

Another anthropomorphic stone figure from the Aššur temple, which dates back to the Early Dynastic or Akkadian period, is a small, violin-shaped idol (**Fig. 4**). These stylized figures are well known from the Tigris region, and often occur in temple contexts.[14]

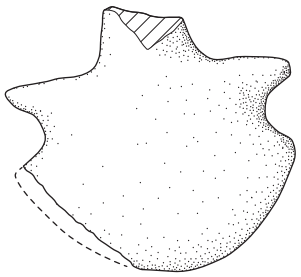

Fig. 4: Violin-shaped idol (Ass 18447) (drawing by M. Lerchl; scale 1:2).

At least two fragments of a ceramic altar were not discovered *in situ* (**Fig. 5**). About 30 ceramic altars from the older temple of Ištar at Aššur have close similarities to the fragments from the area of the temple of Aššur (Bär 2003: 239–259). This type of altar dates to the late Early Dynastic and Akkadian periods, and is mainly known from temple contexts in Aššur (Muller 2002: 210–221; Bär 2003: 248). More recent excavations provided a similar ceramic altar at Tell Marmūṣ (Mühl/Sulaiman 2011: 377–378, pl. 27b).

Two fragments of vessel stands also come from the area of the Aššur temple (**Fig. 6**). Comparable vessel stands are known from the temple of Ištar (levels G and GF) at Aššur and from the Diyala region.[15]

A nearly complete stone vessel, with a wide horizontal rim, was found in the older levels, under the later room o (**Fig. 7**). Such stone vessels are well represented in graves and sanctuaries in Mesopotamia, and especially at Mari. More than 45 vessels of this type come from a deposit in the Nin-ḫursaĝ temple at Mari. The vessels date between the Ğemdet-Naṣr period and the end of the Early Dynastic period.[16] Additionally, there is a fragment of a stone plaque, with a schematic view of a face (**Fig. 8**), which probably dates to the Early Dynastic period (Gries 2017: 87–88).

Andrae (²1977: 98. 101, fig. 71) noted three other fragments of such stone plaques at Aššur (Bär 1999: 6–7, pl. 3), and an almost identical one, but much larger in size, was found in a deposit in the Nin-ḫursaĝ temple at Mari (Margueron 2004: 112–113, pl. 36, fig. 92; Margueron

Fig. 5: Fragment of a ceramic altar (Ass 18810) (scale 1:2).

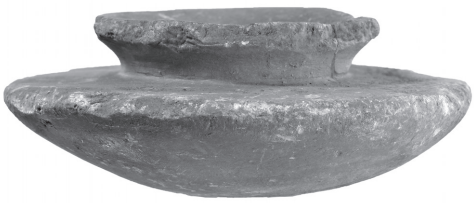

Fig. 7: Stone vessel with a wide horizontal rim (Ass 17441) (scale 1:2).

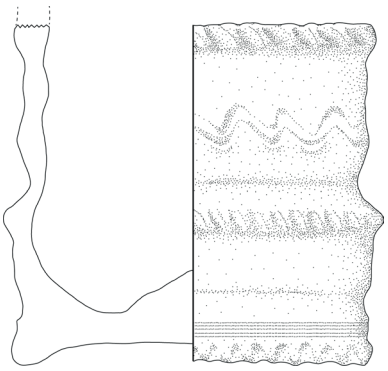

Fig. 6: Fragment of a vessel stand (Ass 18805) (drawing by S. Jungals; scale 1:2).

Fig. 8: Stone plaque with a schematic view (Ass 16750) (scale 1:1).

14 For violin-shaped idols in northern Mesopotamia, see Mühl 2013: 132–133, pl. 8, 1; Rossberger 2016: 427, fn. 11.

15 For comparable vessel stands, see Bär 2003: 198–210, GS 1–39; Delougaz 1952: 81. 85. 90–91. 142.

16 For the find context and a catalog of the vessels from the Nin-ḫursaĝ temple, see Beyer/Jean-Marie 2007: 75–122, cat. 1–46, and references therein.

Excavation/Museums No.	Object	Find square	Publication
Ass 16710/VA Ass 3573 + 4591 + 4608 + 4623 + 4624 + 4632 + 4634	Dedicatory sculpture (**Fig. 3**)	iD3II	Andrae 1922: cat. 88, pl. 40; Braun-Holzinger 1977: 61; Bär 2003: 39. 84, fn. 1026; Bär 2010; Gries 2017: cat. 32, pl. 126.
Ass 18447	Violin-shaped idol (**Fig. 4**)	iC4V	Gries 2017: 66, cat. 35, pl. 130b.
Ass 18810/VA Ass 4777	Ceramic altar (**Fig. 5**)	iA3II	Bär 2003: 250, ABS 2; Gries 2017: 97, cat. 871, pl. 190b, c.
Ass 16863	Ceramic altar (?)	iC3II	Gries 2017: 97, cat. 870, pl. 190a.
Ass 18805/VA 17194	Vessel stand (**Fig. 6**)	iA3II	Bär 2003: 217, GS 3; Gries 2017: 209, cat. 1049.
Ass 18806	Vessel stand	iA3II	Bär 2003: 217, GS 4; Gries 2017: 209, cat. 1050.
Ass 17441/VA Ass 5357	Stone vessel (**Fig. 7**)	iC3II	Onasch 2010: 101, cat. L-42, pl. 19; Gries 2017: 97. 217, cat. 1201, pl. 197a–d
Ass 16750/VA 8014	Stone plaque depicting a face (**Fig. 8**)	iE3II	Andrae ^{2}1977: fig. 71; Bär 1999: 6–7, pl. 3; Dittmann 2010; Gries 2017: 87–88, cat. 467, pl. 170a–c.

Fig. 9: Objects dating to the second half of the third millennium BCE.

2007).[17] No objects dating to the late Akkadian period have survived (Gries 2017: 128–129).

Comparable ceramic altars, vessel stands, stone vessels, and dedicatory sculptures are known from other temple contexts, especially from the older temple of Ištar in Aššur, from the Diyala region, and particularly from Mari (see above). The finds therefore indicate that there was already a sanctuary on the site of the later temple of Aššur by the end of the Early Dynastic period or the beginning of the Akkadian period. All of these finds were discovered in the northeast of the later temple complex, under the main building. But there is little information about the find contexts of these Early Dynastic objects because the oldest remains under the later temple of Aššur are divided into small sections, and the dating and function of these structures is quite unclear. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the objects were brought later to the Aššur temple, although this seems unlikely, since at least the stone vessels apparently came from a layer older than the Šamšī-Adad I level.[18] Therefore, it can be assumed that the sanctuary was already in the same location as the cella of the later temple complex (Gries 2017: 126–129, pl. 120).

Slightly younger (end of the third or the beginning of the second millennium BCE) than the finds discussed above is a metal hoard found under the later cella of the Šamšī-Adad I level (**Fig. 1**). The find spot is related to an older building level, and the archaeological remains give no hints that the hoard has any connection to the Šamšī-Adad I cella. Metal figurines, weapons, vessels, segmented tires, and a spatula––some of them damaged or repaired––were deposited in a ceramic vessel (**Fig. 10**). The general common feature among the objects is that they were all made from copper or bronze. Based on the composition and location of the deposit, they appear to comprise a hoard of ancient temple inventory.[19] The figural objects and the mace-head, particularly, indicate that the artifacts were originally part of the temple inventory. Comparable metal deposits are known from temple contexts as well as from secular buildings.[20]

17 Dittmann (2010) recognized similarities between the depictions on the stone plaques from Mari and Aššur and third millennium BCE bone and stone artifacts from the Iberian Peninsula. This reference underlines the dating of the Mesopotamian plaques to the Early Dynastic period.

18 The exact findspot of the stone vessel (Ass 17441/VA Ass 5357) is unclear. After its original documentation, the vessel was found in "iC3II. SW, i.[m] alt.[en] Füllschutt d.[er] Vorcella [Raum m], 3,20 m u.[nter] H.[ügel]o.[ber]fl.[äche]" (Fundjournal).

19 The so-called 'copper hoard' (Ass 16317) is discussed in Gries (2017, 76–78, cat. 230–253, pl. 150–156, and references therein).

20 Deposits with a comparable composition are the so-called Abu hoard, found in the Earlier Northern Palace at Tell Asmar (Müller-Karpe 1993: 240–241), deposits in the Šara temple at Tell Agrab (Delougaz/Lloyd 1942: 238. 245. 248. 250. 257, fig. 184.191; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 10, fn 42. 43. 44), and the hoard from Tell Agule (Braun-Holzinger 1984: 22–23). Under the floor of the area C building at Tell al-Hiba, vessels and weapons, rolled up in mats, were discovered (Müller-Karpe 1993: 241, pl. 146 A). In the filling of the monumental buildings in areas FS and SS at Tell Brak, several metal deposits were discovered (McDonald et al. 2001: 233–

Fig. 10: The 'copper hoard' (Ass 16137) (scale 1:2).

3.2 The Old Assyrian Period

There are two inscribed votive objects for Aššur known from the Old Assyrian period: a small statue of King Erišum I, and a rectangular stone object from his son, Ikūnum (**Fig. 11. 12. 13**).

The very poorly-preserved, seated statue of Erišum I was found next to the entrance of the temple of Aššur, in a context probably dating to the first millennium BCE. The inscription was originally 12 lines long, but only six lines are preserved. The inscription identifies the statue as a representation of Erišum I, builder of the temple of Aššur (RIMA 1, A.0.33.12). This sculpture is the only known statue of an Old Assyrian king and the only statue of a king carrying an inscription that refers directly to the temple of Aššur. Other inscriptions inform us that Erišum I had dedicated a throne, gates, and beer jars to the newly-built temple (RIMA 1, A.0.34.1, 3, 5, 11, 13). Of these dedications, only one door socket remains.[21] The inscription on the stone object from Ikūnum indicates that it was some kind of chest or box (*pitnu*) (RIMA 1, A.0.34.2). The holes on the side suggest that it was part of a larger object, which could have been a chest, although the shape makes it unlikely. The stone object was found in a probably post-Assyrian kiln in room K.

A look into contemporary written sources reveals a completely different aspect to Old Assyrian votive practice that cannot be related to any archaeological material. The votive gifts (*ikribū*)[22] to the god Aššur documented in the texts—mainly silver and gold—could be used in a commercial way, probably as a financial aid. Loan documents record the borrowing of silver or gold belonging to the *ikribū* of the god Aššur. The temple loaned silver or gold to merchants and, in return, they dedicated a part of the profit to the temple (Dercksen 1997). It is not unusual that temples acted as a 'bank.' Primarily the sun god Šamaš took the role of a lender, and his temple seems to have functioned as a credit institution (Harris 1960; Charpin 2011: 64–69). In contrast to other temple loans, Old Assyrian loans are explicitly designated as '*ikribū ša Aššur*'.[23]

3.3 Middle Assyrian Period

Only a few objects were preserved from the Middle Assyrian period (**Fig. 15**). One of the best-known finds is the deposit discovered underneath the forecourt of the temple (**Fig. 1**). The hoard contained two bronze crosses of different sizes, seals, pendants, and beads (**Fig. 14**).[24] The

235). The 'Trésor d`Ur' includes metal and ivory sculptures, jewelry and seals, but also a lapis lazuli bead bearing a votive inscription. The objects were deposited in a ceramic vessel in the palace sanctuary at Mari (Parrot 1968; Boese 1978: 24–32; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 10; Margueron 2004: 211–214. 297–299).

21 The door socket (Ass 18650/BM 115689) was discovered in the filling of a building pit in room s of the temple of Samsi-Adad I: see RIMA 1, A.0.33.12; Gries 2017: cat. 2509, pl. 59d and references therein.

22 According to CAD I/J: 62, *ikribu* means 'blessing, benediction', 'money or goods pledged by a vow to a deity,' and 'prayer.' The "plural form (*ikribū*) denotes both a prayer and (in OA and OB only) a votive offering pledged to a deity in a specific prayer. These offerings (money, cultic objects and merchandise) were sometimes of little value (especially in OB), sometimes, however, they comprised large amounts (especially in OA)" (CAD I/J: 66).

23 Besides Aššur, the gods Adad, Bēlum, Ilabrat, Išhara, Ištar, Ninkarrak, Suen, Šamaš, Sarra-maten, and Tašmētu appear as creditors of *ikribū* loans in Old Assyrian texts (Dercksen 1997: 96–97).

24 For the hoard Ass 16358, see Klengel-Brandt/Marzahn (1997) and Gries (2017: 78–81, cat. 254–269, pl. 157–159) for further discussion.

Fig. 12: Stone object from Ikūnum (Ass 4587) (scale 1:2).

Fig. 11: Statue of King Erišum I (Ass 1737).

Excavation/Museums No.	Object	Find square	Publication
Ass 1737/VA Ass 2260	Statue of Erišum I (**Fig. 11**)	iC5I	Braun-Holzinger 1991: 280, St 174; Gries 2017: 66–67, cat. 25, pl. 128; for the inscription see RIMA 1, A.0.33.12 and references therein.
Ass 4587/VA 8830	Stone object from Ikūnum (**Fig. 12**)	hD3V	Braun-Holzinger 1991: 377, Varia 8; RIMA 1, A.0.34.2; Gries 2017: 36, fn. 233, cat. 149, pl. 146c–h.

Fig. 13: Old Assyrian objects with a dedicatory inscription.

larger bronze cross is inscribed with a votive inscription from the brewer of the temple of Aššur:

> "To Kusarikku (the son of Šamaš), his lord, has Šamaš-tukultī, the son of Erība-Aššur, the brewer of the Ešarra, donated for his life and the well-being of his sphere of responsibility [these] 'garment features'" (translation after Klengel-Brandt/ Marzahn 1997: 218–220).

This is the only private votive inscription from the temple of Aššur not dedicated to Aššur himself. The bullman, Kusarikku, is also depicted on a gold pendant from the deposit (**Fig. 14**). He was well known as one of the gate-keepers of the temple (George 1992: 190–191, l. 25′), and was, in some way, connected to the brewery of the Aššur temple.[25]

Another non-royal votive inscription for Aššur is preserved on a bead, which was not found in the Aššur

25 See Maul 2013: 567, fn. 27. For the brewery of the Aššur temple, see Gries 2017: 145–146.

Fig. 14: Deposit with bronze crosses (Ass 16358) (scale 1:2).

temple itself. Dedicated for the life of the king, Tukultī-Ninurta I (?),[26] it was donated by Nabû-bēla-uṣur, commandant of the old palace. Unlike other private dedicatory objects, its inscription did not contain a personal wish for the supplicant. Dedicatory inscriptions for the life of the king (*ana balāṭišu*) were common from the Akkadian period on and have been well documented in Assyria since the Old Assyrian period (Deller 1983: 11; Braun-Holzinger 1991: 18).

Middle Assyrian votive objects dedicated to Aššur are otherwise only known from Shalmaneser I: four mace-heads devoted to Aššur by this ruler were discovered at Aššur, but only two of them were found in the Aššur temple itself. The others were discovered in a more recent stone foundation next to the Nabû temple and in a modern excavation dump. The latter bears a dedicatory inscription of Shalmaneser I and of Tiglath-pileser III. Both devoted the mace to Aššur, but only Tiglath-pileser III marked it as booty from Damascus (Pedersén 1997: 24; Muhle 2018: cat. 73). Maybe the mace was stolen, later brought back to Aššur as booty, and then re-dedicated to Aššur.[27] Altogether, fragments of at least 39 mace-heads were discovered in the Aššur temple, but only five of them were inscribed (Gries 2017: 95, cat. 691–729, pl. 181–184). Some of them could have never been used as weapons because of their size, material or shape (Muhle 2018: 6-7). This, as well as the votive inscriptions, would suggest that all mace-heads found in the Aššur temple were votive gifts.[28] Another stone object seems to be a dedication probably by Shalmaneser I for Aššur. Even if the inscription is only partially preserved, and the object is only documented as a sketch, the donor and the name of the god are quite certain.

Other finds from the period inscribed with a dedication to Aššur are the door sockets of Shalmaneser I (RIMA 1, A.0.77.20; RIMA 1, A.0.77.21).[29] There is very little information about dedications in the Middle Assyrian textual sources. A list of stones dedicated to different deities is preserved from Aššur. Three of the 16 stones listed are for the temple of Aššur, but there is no further information about the donor (Donbaz 2016: 11, no. 119).

26 The dating is controversial; Deller (1987) and Lambert (2002) argued for Tukultī-Ninurta I, whilst Galter (1987: 11) suggested Tukultī-Ninurta II.

27 That votive objects were re-dedicated is not unprecedented. For other examples of votive objects bearing two discrete inscriptions, see Braun-Holzinger 1991: 21. 102. 361, fn. 1010.

28 On mace-heads as votive gifts, see Braun-Holzinger 1991: 29–30; Muhle 2008: 150–164; Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016: 31.

29 The door sockets were part of the building activities of Shalmaneser I (Gries 2017: 134–137) and, since they are immobile objects, they will not be discussed in detail in this paper. For further information on the door sockets, see Gries 2017: cat. 2503. 2504. 2506. 2507. 2513. 2514. 2517. 2518. 2519. 2521. 2522. 2523. 2524. 2526. 2528.

Excavation/Museums No.	Object	Find square	Publication
Ass 16358b$_{2-1}$	Bronze cross donated by Šamaš-tukultī (**Fig. 14**)	iD3V	Gries 2017: cat. 256, pl. 157. 158a; Klengel-Brandt/Marzahn 1997: no. 2, fig. 4, pl. 18; Andrae ^{2}1977: fig. 38.
Ass 16247/VA 5840	Mace-head from Shalmaneser I	iD3IV ?	Gries 2017: cat. 706; Muhle 2018: cat. 35.
Ass 17638/VA Ass 6268	Mace-head from Shalmaneser I	hD4I	Gries 2017: cat. 721, pl. 183b; Muhle 2018: cat. 37.
Ass 7066/VA 5896	Mace-head from Shalmaneser I	eC6IV (*found next to Nabû temple*)	Schmitt 2012: cat. 918, pl. 244; RIMA 1, A.0.77.22; Muhle 2018: cat. 74.
Ass 17158/VA 8282	Mace-head from Shalmaneser I and Tiglath-pileser III	excavation dump	Pedersén 1997: 24; Muhle 2018: cat. 73
Ass 2818	Stone object from Shalmaneser I (?)	hD4I	Gries 2017: cat. 148, pl. 146a; Pedersén 1997, 84.
BM 89156	Bead donated by Nabû-bēla-uṣur	(*Purchased 1835*)	Galter 1987: no. 7; Deller 1987; Lambert 2002; Lambert 2003.

Fig. 15: Middle Assyrian objects with a dedicatory inscription.

3.4 Neo-Assyrian Period

The majority of finds from the temple date to the Neo-Assyrian period, but only seven inscribed votive objects were found (**Fig. 20**). A small fragment of a stone vessel, probably dedicated by Shalmaneser III or his descendants, shows a tribute scene (**Fig. 16**). The preserved part of the inscription reads as follows:

šúl-man-nu-sag gar ^{d}BAD SANGA [*aš-šur*]
"Shalmaneser, appointee of the god Enlil, priest of Aššur."

Fig. 16: Stone vessel depicting a tribute scene (Ass 16258) (scale 1:1).

Comparable vessels, with a flat base and a cylindrical body, are known from temples in Nimrud, Nineveh, and Sherif Khan (Searight/Reade/Finkel 2008: 93–97, cat. 600–606, pl. 61). Some of them bear votive inscriptions. Even though the inscription is only partially preserved, the stone vessel from the Aššur temple is probably a votive object as well. On the other hand, there are several decorated vessels, made of different materials, without any hint as to how they became part of the temple inventory (Gries 2017: 97–100). Three inscribed mace-heads probably date to the Neo-Assyrian period. Two of them bear fragmentary inscriptions of Shalmaneser III, which can be completed by a dedicatory inscription to Nergal (RIMA 3 A.O.102.94; Muhle 2018: cat. 26. 27). The name of the god is not preserved on any of the mace-heads. Because of the find spot, it seems reasonable to conclude that they are dedications to Aššur. The inscription on the third mace-head is illegible. A mace-head of Shalmaneser I was re-dedicated in the Neo-Assyrian period by Tiglath-pileser III (see above). Another stone artefact, small, rounded, and only recorded in an excavation photograph, can be identified as a dedication, probably to the god Aššur, even though only one line of inscription is preserved (**Fig. 17**).[30] The donor remains unknown, but it might date to the Middle or Neo-Assyrian period.

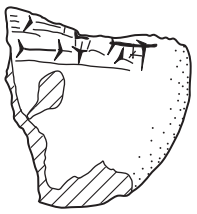

Fig. 17: Stone artefact with dedicatory inscription (Ass 16355) (drawing by H. Gries; scale 1:1).

30 The inscription is 1' [ ] x x [ ] 2' [ ] *aš-šur* BA. Because of the sign BA (*qiāšu*—to make a gift or a votive offering), it has to be a votive inscription, but it is uncertain if it is a dedication to the god Aššur, or if Aššur is part of a title or name (Gries 2017: 162, fn. 1014).

Another dedication to Aššur from Shalmaneser III is preserved on a small spherical lapis lazuli bead (**Fig. 18**). The bead is inscribed as follows:

[1]*a-na* [d]*aš-šur* UMUN-*šú* [2] [md]SILIMA.MAŠ[?] SANGA *aš-šur* BA

"[1]To Aššur, his lord, [2]Shalmaneser, priest of Aššur, dedicated [this]."[31]

A second bead, found in the temple of Aššur, is inscribed:

[1]É.GAL [2] [m]TUKUL-A-*é-šár* [3]MAN ŠÚ MAN *aš-šur*

"Palace of Tiglath-pileser, king of the world, king of Assyria" **(Fig. 19)**.

In the Neo-Assyrian period, beads from distant regions of the empire were often kept as property of the palace. They were gifts from other rulers, or part of booty, and sometimes dedicated to a god (Frahm 1999).

Fig. 18: Lapis lazuli bead from Shalmaneser III (Ass 18568) (scale 1:1).

Fig. 19: Bead from Tiglath-pileser (III) (Ass 18574g) (scale 1:1).

Apart from that, there is a large number of uninscribed beads and pendants, most of them probably from Neo-Assyrian contexts. These beads are of different shapes and materials, including various stones and sintered quartz (Gries 2017: 92–93, cat. 502–530). As stones had various magical meanings in the ancient Near East (Schuster-Brandis 2008: 56–58), it is difficult to identify their precise function within the sanctuary, in particular if information on the context is scarce. According to written and archaeological sources, jewelry played an important role in temple inventories, and especially beads, which could have been part of the personal adornment of a god, were used in rituals, stored as votive gifts, or belonged to foundation deposits.[32]

Looking at other uninscribed small finds, only a few objects can be identified as votive gifts. Most objects are building decorations or fragments of large, immobile objects. In addition to the beads and jewelry, there are some sintered quartz objects that could be dedicatory objects because second millennium BCE figurines were increasingly made of clay, sintered quartz and metal. Related to domestic cult spheres, some of them also appear to have been dedicated to temples (see below). There are four fragments, which were part of a small god or priest figurine (**Fig. 21**). The design of the robe indicates that the figurine dates to the first millennium BCE (Gries 2017: cat. 48, pl. 135).[33] The other sintered quartz objects are mainly inlays of statues, such as eyes and locks of hair.[34]

Furthermore, the fragment of a painted terracotta statuette was found in the Aššur temple (**Fig. 22**), larger than, and different in style to, the common, mass-produced terracotta figurines of the first millennium BCE (Gries 2017: 72, cat. 73, pl. 138e–h. 219a. b). Therefore, this item could have had a function different from that of the terracotta figurines, and was perhaps a votive gift.

A human nose, made of stone, has a perforation for suspension on its top (Gries 2017: cat. 619, pl. 1740). This pendant could also have served as a votive gift (**Fig. 23**).[35] Pendants in the shapes of hands, feet, or phalli are known from other Mesopotamian temples as well. Most likely, they were dedicated for the well-being of the donor or were ex-voto after healing of the depicted part of the body. The phalli might be connected to wishes concerning sexuality or fertility (see below).

A small stone object (Ass 18570/VA 5827), with the remains of four lion paws on each side and a geometric decoration in the upper part, is very unusual (**Fig. 24**). The paws are part of two standing lions, which have crossed forelegs. The heads of the lions, turned back, are not preserved. The shape of the object, and the motif of the two lions, resembles depictions of sword chapes on Neo-Assyrian wall reliefs. On such reliefs, this type of figural decoration on a chape seems to be rare and is

31 An identical inscription, except for the name of the god, is known from another bead (RIMA 3, A.0.102.1003).

32 For beads that are part of temple inventory and also votive offerings, see Braun-Holzinger 1991: 360–364; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 58; Braun-Holzinger/Sallaberger 2016: 30–31, and references therein. For beads in foundation deposits, see Ellis 1968: 131–137; Ambos 2004: 71–75; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 56–58.

33 For comparable flounced robes, see, for example, Klengel-Brandt/Cholidis 2006: cat. 525. 574. 575. 580. 582, pl. 22. 23, and references therein.

34 For composite figurines and statue inlays, see Gries 2017: cat. 138–147, pl. 144. 219.

35 At first glance, it might seem possible that the nose had been meant as a repair for a statue, but based on the position and form of the perforation, this seems highly unlikely. Nose repairs are always carried out using plugs on the back side (Frankfort 1939: nos. 23, 54; 1943: nos. 233. 291; Nunn 2012). The nose from the Aššur temple is perforated, horizontally, on both sides at the top, so that the nose can be suspended upright; it would have been oriented incorrectly if the perforation had been used for fixing it on a statue.

Excavation/Museums No.	Object	Find square	Publication
Ass 16258/VA 5830	Fragment of a stone vessel from Shalmaneser III (?) (**Fig. 16**)	iD3V	Gries 2017: 99, cat. 1173, pl. 196d.
Ass 16355	Stone object (**Fig. 17**)	iC3II	Gries 2017: cat. 150, pl. 146b.
Ass 18568/VA 5660	Bead from Shalmaneser III (?) (**Fig. 18**)	iC5I	Gries 2017: cat. 531, pl. 174a–b. 220g.
Ass 18574g/VA 5541	Bead from Tiglath-pileser III (?) (**Fig. 19**)	iC5I	Gries 2017: cat. 532, pl. 174c–d. 220h; RINAP 1, 157–158, cat. 1004.
Ass 4013	Mace-head from Shalmaneser III	hC4I	Gries 2017: 95, cat. 696; Muhle 2018: cat. 26
Ass 4015/VA Ass 6267	Mace-head from Shalmaneser III	excavation dump (*probably SW court*)	Gries 2017: 95, cat. 697. pl. 181a; Muhle 2018: cat. 27.
Ass 18590/VA Ass 6290	Inscribed mace-head (perhaps Neo-Assyrian)	iC5I	Gries 2017: cat. 725, pl. 184a. b; Muhle 2018: cat. 70.

Fig. 20: Neo-Assyrian objects with a dedicatory inscription.

Fig. 21: Fragments of a small god or priest figurine (Ass 16117a) (scale 1:1).

Fig. 22: Fragments of a clay figurine (Ass 5424 + 5449) (scale 1:1).

Fig. 23: Stone pendant in the shape of a human nose (Ass 18573) (scale 1:1).

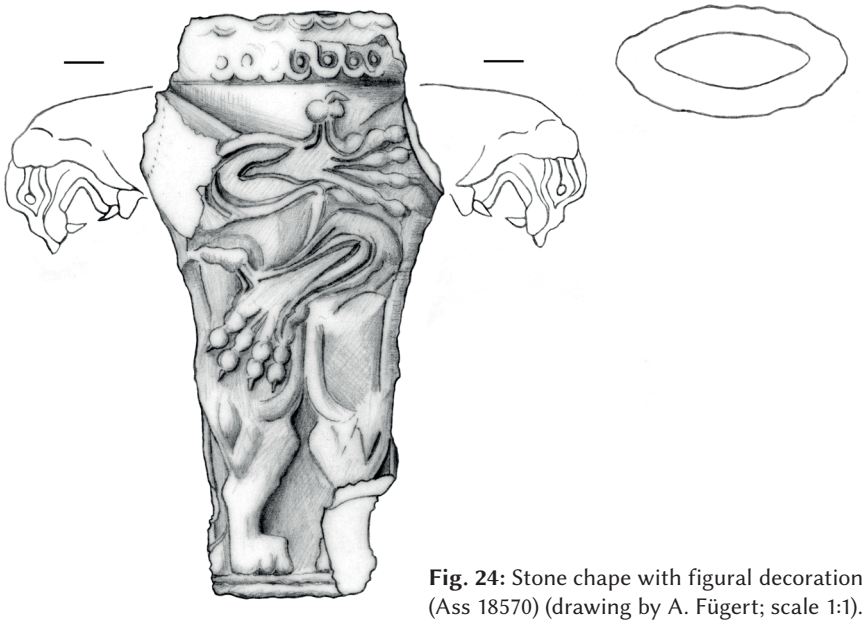

Fig. 24: Stone chape with figural decoration (Ass 18570) (drawing by A. Fügert; scale 1:1).

only worn by the king and high officials.[36] Chapes are normally made from metal, but the stone object perhaps could have been an imitation of a ceremonial weapon,[37] which could be dedicated, like a mace-head and other stone weapons (Fügert/Gries 2017; Gries 2017: 95, cat. 155, pl. 145e–h). There is another stone fragment that could have been a ceremonial weapon, probably an axe. The ornamental decoration on both sides of the blunt blade implies that it was not a common weapon (Gries 2017: no. 754, pl. 145i).

Information about votive gifts is rare in the Neo-Assyrian textual sources. The archive texts allude to royal, as well as private, donations, mostly in the form of personnel, rather than objects (Menzel 1981: 24–27), but none of them was dedicated to the god Aššur (SAA 4, 196; SAA 12, 86–98; SAA 13, 28. 29. 50; Deller 1983: 20–24, nos. 4–6). In Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, there is little evidence for (votive) gifts (*qištu*). Some of the gifts seem to be part of the booty.[38] A direct reference to votive gifts in the temple of Aššur can be found in one text, listing the duties of the priests of the Aššur temple. According to this text, it was the responsibility of the scribe of the House of Aššur to receive votive gifts (*še-lu-a-ti*) (SAA 20: 50 r i 9'), but there is no information about votive gifts themselves. The 'Götteradressbuch' gives an impression of the originally rich inventory of the temple (Meinhold 2009: text 15: 1–53). This text lists not only the main deities, but also building parts and other objects that were worshipped, including the window of Tašmētu, a weapon, an axe, an image of Tiglath-pileser, and seven ^{d}DUMU.MEŠ-ZI, made of bronze and lion (figures).

36 For such depictions, see, for example, Layard 1853: pl. 5. 10–12. 16. 17. 19. 21. 23. 24. 28. 29. 31. 32. 34. 52; Barnett/Falkner 1962: pl. CXV–CXIX. CXXII; Meuszyński 1981: pl. 8.

37 Chapes made from different materials, such as metal, bone, and ivory, are known from the Achaemenid period (see Seidl 2014–2016: 16, and references therein).

38 For inscriptions mentioning gifts to gods, see, for example: RINAP 1, Tiglath-pileser III 51: 10; RINAP 3, Sennacherib 146: o 11, Sennacherib 147: o 11, Sennacherib 155: r 9', Sennacherib 223: 29; RINAP 4, Esarhaddon 54: o38'. r 1; Esarhaddon 57: vii 12; RINAP 5, Ashurbanipal 21:16, Ashurbanipal 72: r 42.

4. Votive Practices in the Temple of Aššur – An Evaluation

Coming back to the questions raised at the beginning of this text:

4.1 Who were the donors?

Dedications to the god Aššur were solely made by the king and his family or by private donors for the life of the king. This is a pattern that can be observed in general in votive inscriptions after the Early Dynastic period, when dedications are almost exclusively royal (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 18–21). The cross bearing the votive inscription of the brewer is the only known private dedication from the temple of Aššur; however, the cross is not dedicated to the god Aššur himself but to the god Kusarikku. It is probably a private dedication because of the connection between the temple brewery and the god Kusarikku (see above). In the case of uninscribed small finds, it is difficult to determine whether they served as votive gifts and who might have dedicated them. For the beads, it cannot be excluded that they are private offerings, but, as with the inscribed beads, they could also be royal gifts.

4.2 Which objects were offered to the god Aššur?

As set out previously, inscribed mace-heads, statues, vessels, beads, and building devices were dedicated to the god Aššur. Considering the long history of the temple of Aššur and the importance of this sanctuary, it may seem strange that only a small number of such inscribed votive objects are known. The reason for this might be both the poor preservation and systematic looting of the temple complex. The archaeological material from the third and second millennia BCE demonstrates which objects were intentionally kept in the sanctuary and does not represent the original temple inventory as a whole. It is evident that mainly inscribed artifacts are preserved.

The statue of Erišum I shows that votive objects were sometimes kept in the temple for a long time. This sculpture was found in the forecourt of a Neo-Assyrian, or even later, context. The damage shows that it was exposed to the weather over a long period of time – probably the statue stood outside in the temple courtyard (Gries 2017: 66–67). The two mace-heads from Shalmaneser I were also found in more recent contexts. Some objects seem to have been visibly positioned in the temple for a prolonged period of time, while others were deposited in hoards shortly after their donation. It would there-

fore appear that a distinction was made between objects that were kept in the temple rooms and others that were hoarded. It seems remarkable that dedications from Erišum I and Shalmaneser I were preserved. Both rebuilt the Aššur temple and were memorialized as builders of this sanctuary in later building inscriptions.[39] Perhaps this explains why these objects were not hoarded but instead were kept in the temple.

Except for the bronze cross, there are no metal objects that can be identified as votive objects. Likewise, there are only a few figural ceramic or sintered quartz objects from the second and first millennia BCE (see below). Because of the accessibility of these materials, the scarcity of these finds in the Aššur temple in comparison to other temples cannot be explained only by the state of preservation and looting, particularly because other ceramic and sintered quartz objects, such as building decorations and beads, are preserved in larger quantities in the Aššur temple.

4.3 Are there differences in comparison to other sanctuaries, and did votive practices change over time?

For findings dating to the third and the beginning of the second millennia BCE (**Fig. 9**), good parallels can be found in the inventory of other sanctuaries. Comparable ceramic altars, vessel stands, and dedicatory sculptures are known from other temple contexts, especially from the older temple of Ištar at Aššur. The stone vessel, as well as a stone plaque depicting a face, have close parallels from the Nin-ḫursaĝ temple at Mari. Violin-shaped idols are known from the Diyala and Hamrin regions (for the evidence, see above). Particularly for these periods, no differences can be identified between the temple inventory of the Aššur temple and other sanctuaries. Because of the small number of archaeological remains, and a lack of written sources for this period, all conclusions must be drawn with caution.

For the second millennium BCE, the situation seems slightly different, because a general change in votive practices is evident. The number of inscribed votive objects, compared to those without inscriptions, decreased. Inscribed offerings are either exclusively royal dedications or private dedications for the life of the king (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 225–226). On the other hand, clay/ceramic, sintered quartz, and metal figurines increased, which could have replaced votive gifts made of stone in some way.[40] As mentioned above, there is only a small number of uninscribed figural small finds from the Old and Middle Assyrian temple of Aššur, but these artifacts are known from other Assyrian sanctuaries in high quantities and seem to be connected to the deity to whom they are dedicated.

The excavators of the Gula temple at Isin not only discovered small finds connected to the healing goddess Gula—among them, several dog figurines—but also dog skeletons in the area of ramp N I.[41] Kassite dog figurines—some inscribed for the healing goddess Gula—are also known from other sites.[42] These seem to be votive, or ex-voto, offerings, which were dedicated in cases of illness, or after healing had taken place. This supposition can be confirmed by Neo-Assyrian medical texts, which refer to the offering of dogs made of gold against the divine anger of Gula (BAM 315, iii, 39–40; STT 95, ii, 15–17).

Spycket (1990) also interpreted the human feet, hands, and legs from Isin as ex-voto offerings.[43] In the Middle Assyrian temple of Ištar, the goddess of sexuality and war, a number of phalli, vulvas, female figures and scorpions were found (Schmitt 2012: cat. 16–17. 19–28. 34–53. 549–556. 694–697). From the Old Assyrian period, two bronze vulvas, with dedicatory inscriptions, are known from the Ištar temple at Aššur.[44] They prove that objects in the shape of vulvas were offered to the goddess Ištar. The phalli, vulvas, and scorpions might be offerings connected to wishes concerning sexuality or fertility. On the other hand, Middle and Neo-Assyrian ritual texts inform us that 'lapis lazuli vulvas' (*ūra ša unqī*) can be offered to

39 The kings Ušpia, Erišum I, Šamšī-Adad I and Shalmaneser I are mentioned as builders of the Aššur temple in inscriptions; for the building inscriptions of Aššur temple, see Gries 2017: 121–125, tab. 20. 21. For cross-referencing of Assyrian inscriptions in general, see Radner 2005: 230; Schmitt 2012: 57.

40 In general, clay figurines are connected to domestic contexts and private cult activities, but an increase in these figurines has also been noted in temples during the second millennium BCE (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 11–12. 225–226. 233–234). For the relationship between stone and other figurines, see Postgate 1994: 176–180.

41 For the findings of the Gula temple at Isin, see Fuhr 1977; Hrouda 1977: 43, pl. 9; Edzard/Wilcke 1977: 90; Braun-Holzinger 1981.

42 For Sippar, see Braun-Holzinger 1991: 322, fn 923; for Dūr-Kurigalzu, see Mustafa 1947; Clayden 2017: 465–466, fig. 16. 23.

43 On this topic, see also Charpin 2017: 31–51.

44 Scorpions also seem to be connected to fertility aspects and the goddess Išḫara (Pientka-Hinz 2009, and references therein). For private votive offerings at the Ištar-temple in general, see Meinhold 2009: 245–262, and references therein. For the inscription on the bronze vulva Ass 19624a/VA 8365, see also Kryszat 2017. For the figural small finds, see Schmitt 2012: 110–121. 154–155. 164.

Ištar against evil spirits.[45] From the area of the temple of Aššur, the stone nose and the gold pendant in the shape of a human thorax are the only artifacts depicting body parts that could be dedications. Small figurines made of sintered quartz or metal, dating to the Middle Assyrian period, are completely missing from the inventory of the temple of Aššur.

It is difficult to compare the finds from the temple of Aššur from the first millennium BCE to the inventory of other sanctuaries because all of the important Assyrian cities were destroyed, and their temples were looted. Neumann (2014) analysed four Neo-Assyrian temples from Nimrud and Khorsabad in a comprehensive study, but there is little evidence regarding the original inventories, since mainly only building decorations and a few mobile objects were preserved. From these sanctuaries, only a small number of inscribed votive objects (mace-heads, stone vessels, beads) are known (Neuman 2014: 85. 86. 88. 89. 105, fig. 58. 59. 64); they all bear royal inscriptions. In the Nabû temple at Khorsabad, sintered quartz pendants in the shape of a phallus, an eye-idol (?), and a hand were found (Neumann 2014: 120, fig. 108). These pendants could have been votive gifts containing fertility, sexuality or healing wishes or could have been offered in rituals (see above). Comparable objects are not known from the temple of Aššur and, in the Neo-Assyrian period, only votive objects connected to the king are known for the god Aššur.

5. Conclusions

General patterns in dedicatory practices are difficult to recognize because of the different states of preservation of the sanctuaries. Particularly for the second half of the second millennium and in the first millennium BCE, a larger study would be necessary to give us a better understanding of the temple inventory. The main problems for an analysis based on the small finds from the temple of Aššur are the severe destruction and the long building history of the whole complex. Only a fraction of the original temple inventory has been preserved. Some general trends concerning offering practices are evident, however. Sacred gifting at the Aššur temple is strongly connected to the Assyrian king, at least from the Middle Assyrian period but probably also from the Old Assyrian period onwards. There are no private votive offerings for the god Aššur, and only very few figural objects and other uninscribed small finds from the temple area. Charpin (2011; 2017: 17–30) emphasized the social aspect of ancient Near Eastern temples and their function with respect to the entire society. According to Charpin, Mesopotamian temples were not only religious institutions but also had diverse duties related to the commonwealth, acting as banks, sanatoria, archives, and even as dairy farms. The function of the god Aššur and his sanctuary was to support and protect the state of Aššur and the Assyrian king. In the daily lives of the common people, the god Aššur played no important role and had no particular field of responsibility as a personal god. Ergo, the votive offerings reflect the function of the temple. Only the Assyrian king, as the earthly representative and high priest of Aššur, dedicated sacred gifts to his god; however, the entire Assyrian Empire participated in provisioning the sanctuary in the form of regular offerings (*ginā'u*).

45 *Unqû* is the common Akkadian word for lapis lazuli but can also be used for sintered quartz objects. For the ritual texts and readings, see Meinhold 2009: 255.

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The Inventory of the Temple at Tall Bazi[1]

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It was a tragedy for the inhabitants. The enemy conquered not only the lower town of this flourishing city with hundreds of houses of wealthy merchants and urban citizens, but also the steep and heavily-fortified citadel, which was dominated predominantly by the large temple (**Fig. 1**). The inhabitants were at least able to save their lives and flee, but the enemy did a complete job of destroying their buildings and belongings: they thoroughly looted house by house and room by room and then set fire to the settlement. Of course, the temple was not spared and attracted attention from the conquerors: They took most of the temple equipment away including, presumably, most of the metal objects and other valuable items. Then, they meticulously smashed the remaining objects, which were either too heavy or of too little material value (because they were made, for example, of clay or stone) into tiny little pieces. Finally, they set the temple on fire.

This is the most probable scenario that can be reconstructed from the archaeological remains at Tall Bazi. It is impossible to ascertain who this enemy was, but many indications point to the Hittites on their way to Syria around 1350–1325 BCE. They seem to have eliminated not only Tall Bazi, but also many other powerful and potentially dangerous settlements along the Euphrates that had prospered in the Late Bronze Age I period. They spared only those settlements that they deemed useful for protecting and administering their empire, such as Emar and Carchemish as the administrative centres and Tall Qitar as an important fortification stronghold at the strategically important narrowest point of the Euphrates valley.[2]

Nevertheless, the temple still contained a part of its former inventory, and that is the reason for this case study. Temples from Syria and Northern Mesopotamia that preserve at least some of their former inventory are rare, since most of them had been either slowly abandoned and emptied, thoroughly looted, or disturbed by later levels.[3]

1 We thank the organizers of the workshop, Elisa Roßberger, Jean Evans and Paola Paoletti, for the stimulating conference and their efforts with the editing of the volume. Our thanks go also to Peter Werner for his help with the editing process.

We are sincerely indebted to the General Directorate of Antiquities in Syria, especially to Sultan Muhesen, the late Adnan Bounni, Michel Maqdissi and Ahmed Taraqji who generously permitted us to work at Tall Bazi, and the Directorate at Aleppo. Warm thanks are also due to our representative Walid Abd el-Karim, who helped us in any possible way during excavations for many years. We thank also numerous students from the LMU Munich and the universities of Damaskus and Aleppo who assisted in the fieldwork. Special thanks are to those who helped excavate the temple: Christoph Fink, Martin Gruber, Anna Kurmangaliev, Oliver Mack, Hardy Maaß, Frances Sachs, Alexander Sollee and Costanza Coppini. All the work would have been impossible without the help of the villagers from Tall Banat, who were not only excellent excavators but also pottery restorers. We will never forget their hospitality, generosity and friendship. They welcomed us in their village as if we belonged to their families. They lost everything twice—first when the dam was closed in 1999 and the water of the Tishreen lake took their lands and houses and then again since 2010 in the ongoing war.

2 See Otto 2018b for the discussion of the historical background and the date of the destruction of most of the sites in the upper Syrian Euphrates valley. For Qitar, see McClellan 2018.

3 For a survey of these temples and their remaining inventories, see Werner 1994, Castel 2010, Pinnock 2013 and Otto 2013.

Fig. 1: Three-dimensional model of the Temple on top of the Citadel of Tall Bazi in the Late Bronze Age IB (1400 BCE), with the houses of the Weststadt in the foreground.

1. The Temple at Tall Bazi: its situation, ground plan and phases

Tell Bazi is situated today in northern Syria on the east side of the Euphrates River, in Upper Mesopotamia proper. Rescue excavations were permitted generously by the Syrian Antiquities Directorate and granted by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut DAI (1993–1999) and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG (2001–2008). They took place under our direction between 1993 and 2010, at which point our research at Tall Bazi came to a sudden end because of the civil war.

After the Tishreen Lake flooded the valley and the lower town of Bazi in 1999, our excavations focused on the 60 m high citadel. The top of this natural hill held a large temple in the middle and a few other smaller buildings (Einwag/Otto 2006); the focus of this paper will be the temple.

Unfortunately, the Syrian civil war has been affecting even the remote little village Banat, near Bazi, and the site of Tall Bazi itself since 2011. The Bazi citadel was transformed into a strategic outpost with tank emplacements. To transport and install the tanks, the artificial ditch which had been cut into the rock as part of the Early Bronze Age fortification system was levelled, and the plateau was bulldozed. Consequently, most of the temple, which we had carefully filled in and covered before we had left, was destroyed. The house of our guardian Ahmed, which was where we had lived during the excavation campaigns and where all the finds which were not accepted by the National Museum at Aleppo—among them, hundreds of restored vessels—were stored, was completely robbed by ISIS in 2015. Not a single sherd was left behind. Even the boxes with the animal bones from the temple were taken away. Unfortunately, the bones from the 2004–2008 seasons had not been stud-

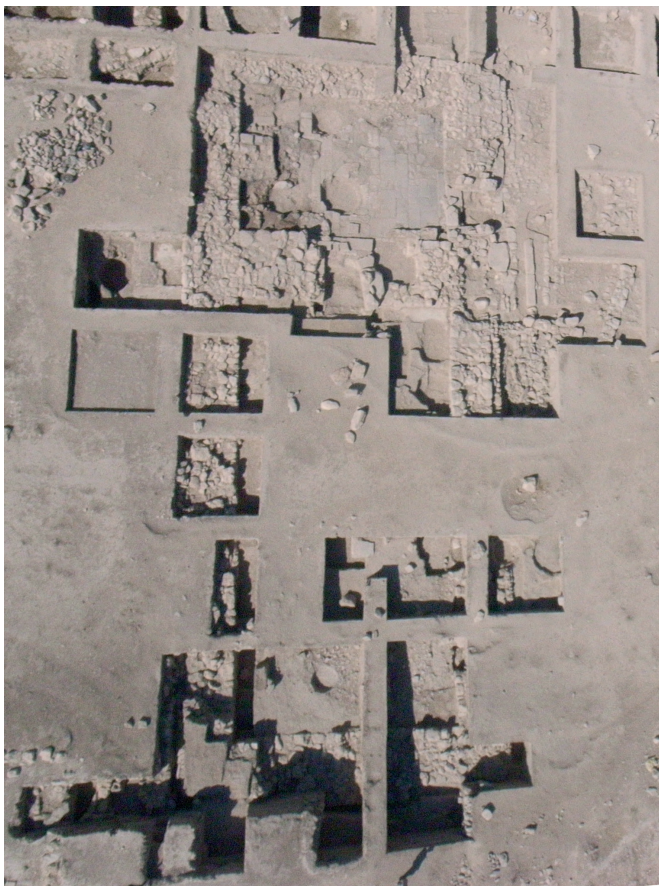

Fig. 2: Aerial photo of the Temple as excavated in 2008.

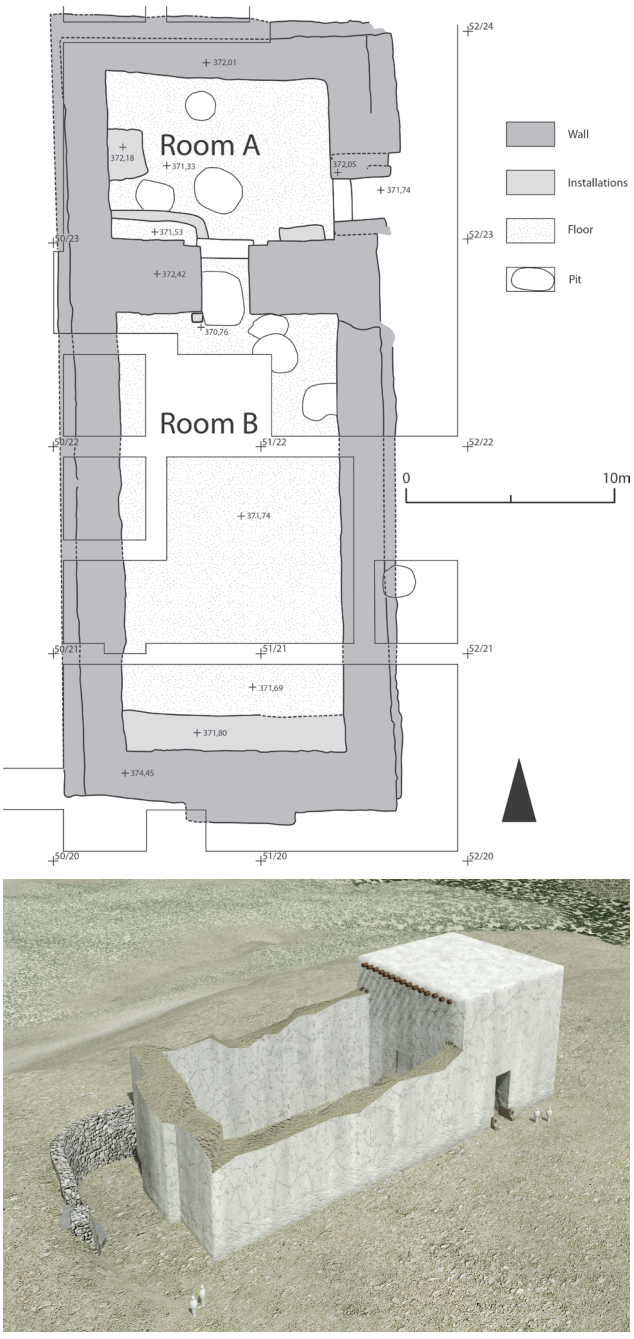

Fig. 3: The Temple on top of the Citadel, Phase 3: Groundplan and 3D reconstruction.

ied.[4] Presently, we are preparing the final publications of the excavations at Tall Bazi. Our documentation is all that remains. All the finds, except for those stored in the National Museum at Aleppo, which hopefully still exist, are lost.

The temple is 37.6 m long and 15.8 m wide. Its walls were 2-3 m wide and consisted of a 2.5 m high substructure of large ashlar blocks below the mudbrick wall (**Fig. 2**). The temple was built on top of the palace of the EBA IV period.[5] It even reused this building in places, e.g. the palace's floor of beautifully polished stone slabs served as the floor in Temple Room A in the first phase. From the second phase onwards, the stone slabs near the altar were covered with mud plaster.

The temple had been erected in the Middle Bronze Age II, around the 18th c. BCE. It was originally a templum in antis, with a single cella and a large open porch. In Phase 2, during the Late Bronze Age IA period, the porch was closed by a front wall in the north and was transformed to Room A; the main entrance was transferred to the east side. Something unexpected must have occurred during phase 2, perhaps an earthquake or another event, which caused the abandonment of the former main room or cella B. In phase 3, even the roof of Room B was removed, and the room was used only as a waste area (**Fig. 3**). Ma-

4 A. von den Driesch had planned to study them at Bazi in 2005 and again in 2010, but could not come for personal reasons.

5 See Einwag/Otto 2012 for the history and the phases of the temple. For the reuse of the EBA palace in the temple, see Otto/Biga 2010.

terial from the temple, which was no longer needed or used, was thrown into the room from outside, and the debris accumulated in sloping layers within the former cella.[6] Only room A continued to be used as the cella in the Late Bronze Age IB period, until the sudden end of the whole settlement around 1350 BC.

2. The Installations of Temple Room A

The inside of cella room A only measured 10.80 m by 7.80 m, but it was still an impressive room. Two life-sized lion sculptures carved from limestone flanked the only entrance in the southeastern corner of the room (Einwag/Otto 2012). Additionally, the room was equipped at the front with an altar, a basin-like installation flanked by podiums, each in a corner of the room, and there was also a small mud bench to the left of the entrance (**Fig. 4**).

The altar was a rectangular block, which had been built from stones and plastered with mud. Only the outer side of the altar had been relatively well built, while the interior was a mixture of various crude stones with mud. The surface must have been covered with polished stone slabs, of which only one survived. There was a concave depression in the centre of the altar, which looked as if some object had originally been placed upon it.

We had not intended to study the inside of the massive altar block, but since the majority of the covering slabs had been destroyed already in antiquity, the inside of the altar was visible. When we cleaned it, we discovered several objects inside which cannot be explained by the normal building process and accidental impurities of the mud mortar: there were the remains of bucrania, consisting of the partially-preserved skull of a bull with horns, some fragments of the antlers of a Mesopotamian fallow deer and of other animal bones, and a few grains of barley, which were also preserved in the mud between the bones (**Fig. 5**). We wonder if these were the remains of offerings which were covered with mud when the altar was refurbished, or if the objects had been placed inside the altar intentionally when it was constructed.

Two other installations had been added to the room in its last phase: An elongated basin, 4.5 m long and 1.2 m wide, had been erected in the southwestern corner of the room in a very crude manner with rough fieldstones placed carelessly one above the other and stuck together by mud mortar. The basin had a rounded edge at its eastern side near the door towards the former Room B.

Fig. 4: The western half of Room A with the altar, the basin and scattered objects around the altar, partly destroyed by two Late Roman pits.

Fig. 5: The remains of a bucranium and grain mixed with mud and stones inside the altar.

Fig. 6: The concentration of animal bones inside the basin in the southwestern corner of Room A.

6 For cultic vessels in the debris of Room B, see Otto/Einwag in press.

The base of the basin was plastered, except for an area of 1 × 1 m at the eastern edge, where the stone slabs of the floor formed the base of the basin. Interestingly, the interstices between the slabs were coated with bitumen, which points to some activities with liquids. At the lower edge of the basin, there was a little hole in the floor, as if to allow a liquid to drain off. The remaining area of the basin showed the largest concentration of animal bones in Room A. Hundreds of large and medium-sized bones were found lying there, mixed with a few goblets (**Fig. 6**). We concluded from this that the basin served for depositing meat offerings and possibly also for some libation purposes.

There were two shallow podium-like platforms on both sides of the altar. The southern one was 1.4 m wide and 1.2 m deep and covered the area between the basin and the altar. Above this platform, mixed material consisting of broken ceramics, mud, fragmentary mudbricks and some carbonized wood was especially heavily burnt. Several levels of debris containing pottery lay there one above the other, up to a height of 0.4 m. We wondered whether there had been wooden shelves, which had collapsed with the pottery arranged on them.

The other platform covered the whole space between the altar and the northern wall. Unfortunately, it had been largely destroyed by the foundations of a Late Roman wall. Interestingly, the mud plaster of the wall behind this podium in the northwestern corner of the room contained a quantity of barley grain that had clearly been embedded intentionally. The grain was preserved in a carbonized state because this corner had fallen victim to an extremely heavy fire, which had turned the colour of the usually buff mud plaster reddish. Since the wall plaster had not been preserved along the other walls of Room A, we do not know if all the plaster in the room had contained barley or just this area. But we can claim with certainty that not a single house of the Weststadt showed plaster containing grain. Even though we do not know precisely why the barley had been added to the plaster of the wall and to the mortar of the altar, some sort of cultic explanation seems to impose itself.

3. The Inventory of Temple Room A

The archaeological inventory of Room A represents just a small part of the original systemic inventory.[7] The living inventory had been reduced in three major stages. The first was the enemy, presumably the Hittites, who took away all the precious material, smashed the remaining objects as careful as possible, and finally set fire to the room. Massive carbonized roof beams and large pieces of the collapsed burnt mudbrick walls were lying in many places on top of the broken pottery and other equipment. However, the debris was not similar everywhere. In some places, only tiny little pieces of charcoal and mudbricks, mixed with rather small sherds, form a more homogenous debris. This—in our opinion—derives from the looters, who dug tunnels into the debris of the collapsed temple while searching for precious objects. When they had finished, they refilled the excavated material into the holes, which resulted in a finer consistency of debris. This looting must have occurred sometime between 1350 BC and the Late Roman occupation. The last disturbance of the material in Room A was caused by the Late Roman building which was placed directly on top of the temple.[8] Several large pits, which were dug down from the Late Roman level, destroyed even the large solid stone slabs of the floor (see **Fig. 4**).

The surviving archaeological inventory consisted mainly of smashed pottery and animal bones. In addition, a few other objects such as cylinder seals, cuneiform tablets, weapons, jewellery, figurines and other items were left behind (**Fig. 21**). In the following sections, the objects will be described, and then we will attempt to interpret their use.

In places, hundreds of animal bones were concentrated and mixed with only a few potsherds. This was the case in the elongated basin with rounded edge in the SW corner, which seems to have been the main area where meat had been displayed (see above).[9] In other places, numerous beakers and pots were found mixed with only a few animal bones. The largest concentration of pottery was around the altar. Some of the plates and bowls still contained carbonized organic material, including sesame, olives, grapes and barley (**Fig. 7**). Since the plant remains are still under study by R. Neef and shall be published in the final report, it suffices to say that diverse foodstuff, mainly meat but also vegetables and fruit, had apparently been concentrated in and near the south-western basin and near the altar.

7 We follow the terminology of Schiffer 1972.

8 Einwag/Otto 2006, Otto/Einwag 2007.

9 As mentioned before (footnote 4), the animal bones from the 2004–2008 seasons have unfortunately not been studied.

Fig. 7: Plates and pots in the debris in front of the altar a few centimeters above the floor. The large plate still contained the remains of a meal with some animal bones.

3.1 Pottery vessels and stands

The largest concentration of pottery, animal bones and objects was found on the floor in front of the altar and on the platform between the altar and the basin (see **Fig. 21**). It was quite a task to restore the more than one hundred pots of Room A, the more so since the jars had clearly been destroyed deliberately and scattered all over the room. Some sherds, which joined with pots from inside the cella, were even found outside the entrance to Room A. Luckily, our superb team consisting of students from Germany and villagers from Tall Banat managed to restore and document all the pottery of Room A during the study season in summer 2010, before it was destroyed forever.

The pottery of Room A has been published recently by presenting a few examples of each pottery type, totaling 42 pieces (Einwag/Otto 2018). The pottery shows many shapes which are also attested in the houses of the Weststadt. But larger shapes such as medium-sized and large jars, large bottles, and large storage jars are definitely less frequent. The large beer brewing vat and cooking pots are completely absent. Also, many pots are of much older date than the Late Bronze IB and must have been kept for centuries.

Considerable numbers of goblets or beakers were found (**Fig. 8**). They measured only approximately 5–10 cm in height and 3–8 cm in diameter. More than half of them were clearly miniature vessels, compared to the goblets which were found in the houses. It is noteworthy that only very few goblets were similar in shape, size, fabric and colour; the majority instead were distinct from one another. Clearly, they were not part of a homogenous pottery set that had been kept in the temple

Fig. 8: 32 goblets and miniature goblets from Room A.

for repeated use. More likely, these goblets had been brought there by different individuals, who obtained their ceramics not from the same potter's workshop but instead came presumably from different sites.

Samples for residue analysis were taken from every ceramic container in the temple and were analysed by M. Zarnkow.[10] The results were stunning: Many of the goblets or beakers, even the miniature ones, were proven positive for oxalate, i.e. very probably they had once contained beer (Zarnkow/Otto/Einwag 2011). But the miniature beakers have the capacity of a schnapps glass—that is, only ca. 0.1 l. One wonders who would enjoy this tiny little amount of beer. Therefore, we suggest that they were not intended to be used as vessels for a meal which was consumed there, since much larger amounts of beer, at least one litre, were consumed during feasts. The Emar texts, which describe the feast for the installation of the high priestess (Fleming 1992), note a litre of beer and a piece of bread for every person during the festival. Instead, they seem to represent individual offerings of tiny amounts of beer, which were brought there by various worshippers.[11] A completely outstanding drinking vessel, compared to the local varieties, is the unique example of a Nuzi-beaker at Bazi—clearly an imported object (Einwag/Otto 2018: 163, fig. 9: 1,7).

The next most frequent form is the small jug with a handle and a trefoil spout (Einwag/Otto 2018: 163, fig. 9: 4). Since several examples of this shape tested positive for tartrate through residue analysis, it seems that they had been used for serving or pouring wine. A number of small bowls (dm. 10–14 cm) and small- and medium-sized plates, ranging from 10 to 33 cm in diameter, also occur (Einwag/Otto 2018: 163-164, figs. 9:7, 10:8, 10:10). Since some of them still held some barley, sesame, olives, fruit,

10 We thank Dr. Martin Zarnkow, Lehrstuhl für Brau- und Getränketechnologie der TU München, Freising-Weihenstephan, for the analyses and his continuous cooperation over the years.

11 Otto 2012a; Sallaberger 2012.

pulses or meat when they were found, it seems that these open vessels had served to present food offerings.

There were several small- and medium-sized pot stands, varying between 9 and 15 cm in height. Most were plain and simple; about half of them had round or triangular openings as the only decoration (Einwag/Otto 2018, 167, fig. 13). The stands also show a great variety of forms and shapes which might indicate that they had also been brought as individual offerings. Two very large potstands are outstanding due to their size and decoration. One is 37 cm high and decorated with a horizontal band with applications, incisions and oval openings (Einwag/Otto 2018: fig. 13: 23,4). The second one is presented here for the first time (**Fig. 9**; Bz 51/23:281). It was equally 37 cm high, but a bit broader than the other; it measured 25 cm in diameter and had thick walls varying from 1.5–3 cm. It was decorated in a slightly different way: there were no openings, but three horizontal zig-zag lines, incised with a comb, were framed by six applied and grooved bands. This kind of a large, heavily-decorated stand has not been found in any of the Bazi houses, and as far as we know, it is also unattested in domestic contexts at any other Late Bronze Age site. The only other stand, which was decorated in a similar way, was found in the Temple, Building 10, at Qitar (McClellan 2018: 124, fig.12: 6093). It seems that this kind of heavily-decorated large stand was produced uniquely for—and used in—temples.

Not only is the decoration of the Bazi stand outstanding but also the way it was destroyed. Although the wall of the stand is unusually thick, measuring 1.5–3 cm in width, and although the clay is hard and well fired, the stand was found broken into more than 80 pieces, and some pieces were missing. Some fragments were tiny, and the stand was broken not only at the thinner points, but even at the thickest points, where the outer bands should have increased its stability. Clearly, the stand was not broken by chance but had been destroyed with eagerness. The different kinds of colour, changing between buff, reddish and blackish, testify that the stand had been broken into pieces before the temple had burned. The largest concentration of sherds was near the altar (**Fig. 21: 1**), but some fragments of this vessel were found literally all over the room. Careful examination of the exterior revealed some traces of heavy tools with which the stand had been smashed into as many little pieces as possible (**Fig. 9a, b**). This is, in our opinion, clear proof that a certain value was ascribed to this stand. Since the value must have been an immaterial one, we can only assume that either the objects which had been carried by the two stands had some meaning, or that the position of the two stands near the altar added some special value to them. Apparently, their cultic function was evident, or their prominent place on the altar or nearby was sufficient to ascribe a special function to them.

The same is true for a rectangular terracotta basin with figurative decoration (**Fig. 10**). This exceptional basin, approximately 55 cm long, 28 cm wide and 20 cm high, has been described elsewhere in detail (Otto 2019). It had quite thick walls but was apparently worthy enough to be destroyed meticulously. Already, the ordinary pottery in Room A showed an unusual degree of fragmentation and scattering. But the basin as well as the decorated potstands were clearly destroyed with more effort than the other pottery. After the purposeful destruction with the help of heavy tools, traces of which were still visible on some sherds of the basin, the fragments were scattered all over the room (**Fig. 21**, red cross-

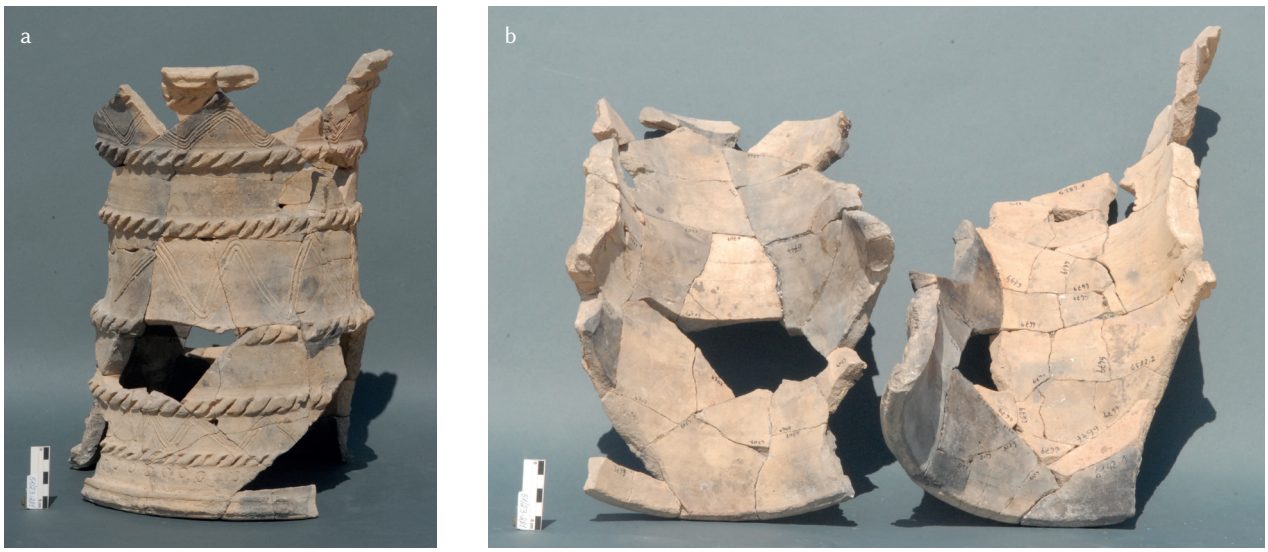

Fig. 9: The large decorated potstand Bz 51/23:281; a) as restored, front side; b) inside.

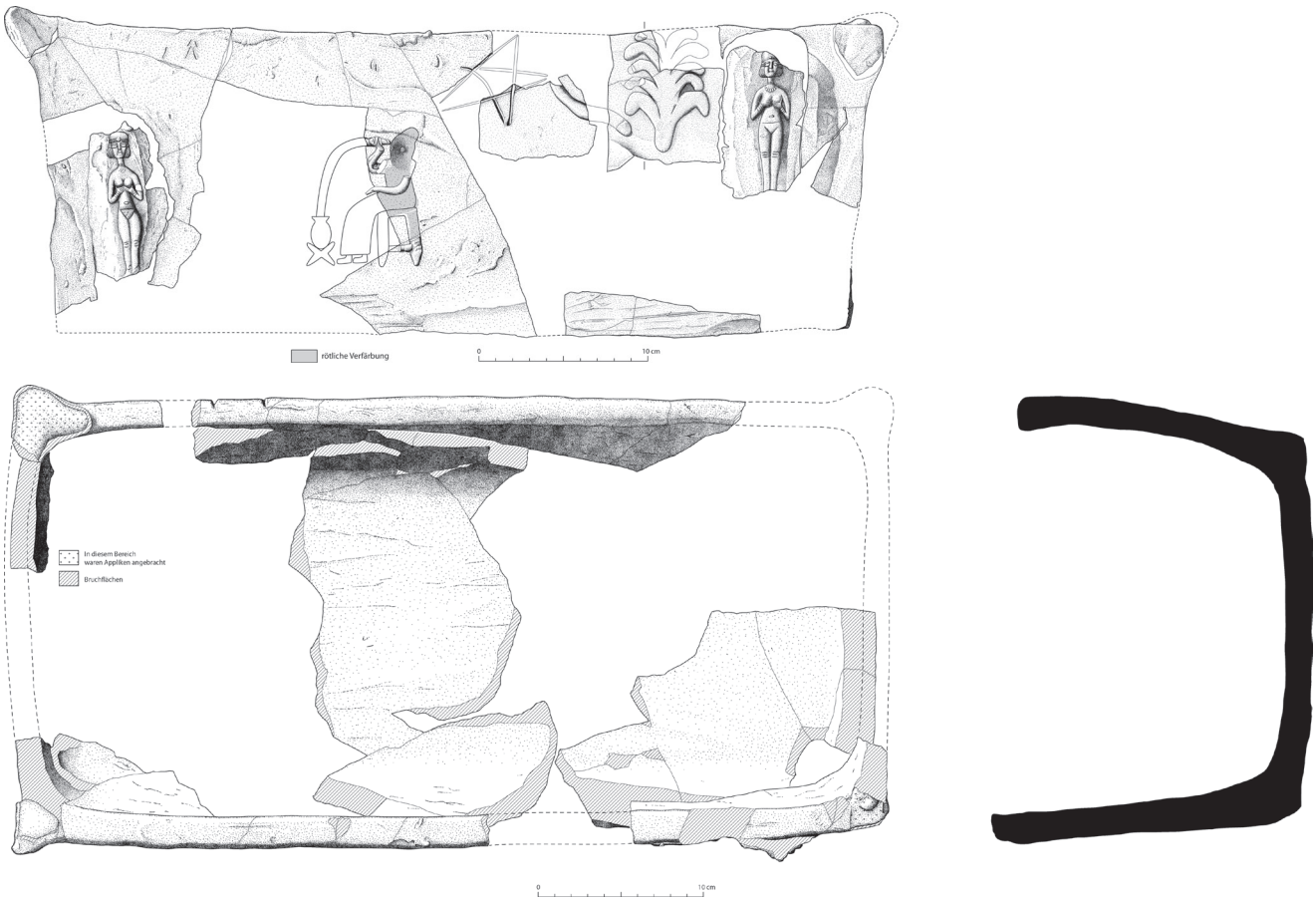

Fig. 10: Rectangular decorated terracotta basin; a) obverse; b) view from above and section.

es). According to the findspot of most fragments, it must have once stood close to the altar. We assume that some fragments are missing because many pits destroyed the debris in this area.

The front side of the basin was decorated with two naked women, a tree and a snake, and a sitting man drinking beer from a jar with the help of a drinking tube. The motif resembles the banquet scenes on stone basins in several Ebla temples and on contemporary cylinder seals.[12] Rectangular basins evidently belonged to the standard equipment of Syrian and north Mesopotamian temples in the Middle and Late Bronze Age, and are attested from temples at Ebla, Alalah, Emar, Ekalte and Tall Bazi (Otto 2018d). Since they were frequently found in the innermost room of a temple, their ritual purpose seems clear, but their precise use (for ritual ablution or offerings) has been debated. Similar rectangular, although smaller, basins with and without decoration have also been attested in houses at Tall Munbaqa/Ekalte, where their position close to the altar in the main room points to their use in the house cult (Czichon/Werner 2008: 315, Pl. 273).

The terracotta basin from Tall Bazi is the only one which has been analysed with the help of residue analysis. It tested positive for oxalate—a strong argument that the basin had once contained beer. Since also many of the small and miniature goblets in Room A—some of them lying close to the scattered sherds of the basin—tested positive for oxalate, there could have been a connection between the goblets and the basin. Either the tiny goblets could have been emptied into the basin, or the goblets could have been filled with the beer which was contained inside the basin and consumed on the spot.[13] Another possibility is that the beer was poured over the altar or over a special object which stood on the altar, and that the beer trickled down into the basin, which

12 See Otto 2019 for comparisons to this motif which remained popular in north Mesopotamia in the second millennium BCE.

13 Sallaberger 2012 and Otto 2012a both reconstructed possible rituals in the temple and the houses.

stood at the foot of the altar. Since every single goblet is different in shape, size and fabric, the most plausible explanation so far is that many individual worshippers offered tiny little bits of beer by performing a libation ritual near the altar and the basin.

In sum, the large amount of goblets and other pottery vessels and large quantities of animal bones, some of them still articulated, show that large portions of meat, liquids and other comestibles had been brought into the temple. It seems also that the more exceptional a vessel and stand, the more carefully it was smashed. Obviously, the last people entering the temple had unkind intentions and were not content with simply plundering and torching, but deliberately smashed everything in bits and pieces and scattered them all over the room, first and foremost the objects with special ideological and ritual value.

3.2 The silver vessel, the cuneiform tablets, the cylinder seal and figurines

The area along the western edge of the room between the altar and the basin was covered by extremely heavily burnt material containing masses of pottery. The degree of burning was so exceptionally high that we suppose there had been wooden shelves on which the vessels had been set along the wall. When we removed the mass of burnt material and pottery, a greyish rim became visible below the lowest layer of bones and pottery. It turned out to be the upper end of a silver vessel,[14] which was set into the floor (**Fig. 11**; **Fig. 21: 3**). It was only 12 cm high, but extremely heavy, since it was filled with scrap silver. It weighed 1050 g, which corresponds to 111 Syrian shekels of 9.4 g or 126 Babylonian shekels of 8.4 g. It is astonishing that this highly valuable amount of silver was still *in situ*, although the whole room had been thoroughly looted by an enemy. We suppose that the fairly small vessel was simply overlooked by the looters since it was partly embedded into the floor and was covered by offerings consisting of vessels and meat.

Two cuneiform tablets were also found in Room A (**Fig. 12**; **Fig. 21: 4, 5**). They were both royal documents of the Mittani Great Kings Sauštatar and Artatama, respectively, sealed with the dynastic seal of Sauštatar (Sallaberger/Einwag/Otto 2006). It seems that these documents were of prime importance for the "Sons of Baṣīru," who collectively governed the settlement. Since the texts

Fig. 11: The silver vessel filled with scrap silver.

Fig. 12: The cuneiform tablets from Sauštatar and Artatama.

from Emar and Munbaqa indicate that the elders together with the city god were the supreme institution in the cities along the Euphrates, we assume that the meetings of the elders with the city god took place here in the temple, which constitutes the only official building at Bazi. Both tablets were found lying directly on the floor, but both had been broken in antiquity. The two parts of one tablet were lying several meters apart (**Fig. 21: 4**). The second part of the other tablet (**Fig. 21: 5**) has not been found, either because the looters took or destroyed it, or because the Roman pit next to it had damaged it. In any case, both tablets must have been damaged already by the looters, since their fragments were covered by the sherds and the debris of the collapsed walls. It seems that these fragments of two tablets are but the humble

14 Bz 50/23:403 (h. 12 cm; w. 12.5 cm).

remains of the city archive which had been kept in the temple and was therefore of prime importance for the looting enemy.

One cylinder seal (**Fig. 13**) was found in Room A in the debris immediately below the Late Roman wall (**Fig. 21: 6**). It is a typical Old Babylonian seal depicting two standard scenes: The victorious king standing opposite the suppliant goddess and a contest scene between the heroes *lahmu* and *kusarikku*.[15] The seal had certainly—due to stylistic reasons—been manufactured in Babylonia. But its material was goethite, a natural source of which is attested near Bazi.[16] It was also clearly an antique piece, at least 400 years old when the temple was destroyed. Whether it was already an antiquity when it was offered there or whether instead it had been kept inside the temple for centuries has to remain an open question.

Fig. 13: The Old Babylonian cylinder seal of goethite.

Three anthropomorphic figurines were found in Room A, one in the basin (**Fig. 14b**; **Fig. 21: 7b**), one in the north-eastern corner (**Fig. 14c**; **Fig. 21: 7c**) and one near the entrance door (**Fig. 14a**; **Fig. 21: 7a**).[17] Two of them (**Fig. 14a**, **c**) were mould-made figurines of naked females supporting their breasts. They correspond to the most frequent type of figurine of that period and region.[18] The third one (**Fig. 14b**) was handmade and shows a simple

Fig. 14: Three female figurines.

15 Bz 50/23:300 (h. 2.3 cm; dm. 1.12 cm; wt. 8.2 g).

16 Interestingly, the material proved to be goethite and not haematite, which was the most frequently used material for seals in the second millennium BCE (Melein 2018). Since goethite sources are attested around Tall Bazi (Fink 2012) and seem to have been one reason for the economic wealth of the settlement, it is even possible that the raw goethite had been exported to Babylonia, and that the finished object had been re-imported there later and offered to the city's deity. Unfortunately, it is pure speculation to imagine that a merchant who was involved in the trade between Bazi and Babylonia offered it, but it could explain the rather rare material for an Old Babylonian seal.

17 Fig. 14a) h. preserved: 5.8 cm, w. 3.6 cm, t. 2.3 cm; 14b) h. preserved: 7.1 cm; w. 5.4 cm; t. 4.3 cm; 14c) h. preserved: 4.7 cm; w. 3.3 cm; t. 2.2 cm.

18 Werner in Czichon and Werner 1998, 307–332.

cylindrical body and slightly concave base; two small dots were incised above the bent arms which indicates that a women is depicted. Probably this figurine dates back to the Middle or Early Bronze Age.[19] All figurines were broken either at the neck or at the pubic triangle.

3.3 Metal tools, jewellery and other objects

Nineteen bronze objects were found. These are a lancet-shaped spearhead, which was lying close to the altar and the silver vessel (**Fig. 15**; **Fig. 21: 8a**); five conical filter tips of drinking tubes from perforated metal sheets (**Fig. 16a**, **b**), lying in the basin, near the basalt tripod north of the entrance, and elsewhere (**Fig. 21: 8b–d**); and six nails or splints with a hemispherical or flat head (**Fig. 17a**). Because some of them were found attached to wooden boards (**Fig. 21: 9a**, **b**, **d**), they may have been the remains of wooden boxes. Furthermore, a bronze needle (**Fig. 21: 9c**), a bracelet, an earring, and several wires and hooks were lying on the floor. The number of five filter tips does not seem too high at first sight but is nevertheless significant if compared to the Weststadt houses, where not more than one such filter tip was usually found in a house. It is evident that goblets or bowls were used for everyday beer drinking in the houses, while drinking beer through tubes was correlated with ritual feasting in the houses on special occasions, or in the temple (Zarnkow et al. 2006; Otto 2012).

Three astragali were found (**Fig. 18**[20]), two of them lying between a mass of sherds directly in front of the altar (**Fig. 21: 10a**, **10b**). Numerous small fragments of ostrich egg shell were found scattered in the room, with a concentration in front of the bench (**Fig. 21: 10d**).[21]

Fig. 16 a, b: Bronze filter tips of drinking tubes.

Fig. 17: Bronze nail.

Fig. 15: The bronze spearhead.

Twenty-one beads from various material—carnelian, rock crystal, faience, glass, shell—(**Fig. 19a-d**[22]) were found lying in different areas, with a slight concentration on top and in front of the bench (**Fig. 21: 11a**, **11b**) and in front of the altar (**Fig. 21: 11d** and without number). All the beads are common at Bazi; similar ones were found in the Weststadt

19 Czichon and Werner 1998: 40-47, Taf. 61-66.

20 Fig. 18: Bz 50/23:444 (l. 2.9 cm; w. 1.9 cm; t. 1.2 cm; wt. 4.8 g).

21 For other beads or fragments of ostrich eggs at Bazi, see Herles 2009.

22 Fig. 19a: Bz 51/23:114. Disc-shaped carnelian bead (dm. 1.18 cm).
Fig. 19b: Bz 51/23:114. Globular white glass bead (dm. 1.18 cm).
Fig. 19c: Bz 50/23:249. Frit bead with incised decoration, triangular in section (h. 1.5 cm, dm. 0.7 cm).
Fig. 19d: Bz 50/23:180. Shell, Glycymeris violacescens (l. 2.9 cm, w. 2.85 cm, t. 0.3 cm).

houses. Noteworthy is only the rare type of decorated faience bead with a triangular section (**Fig. 19d**), but a nearly identical bead was found in House 28 of the Weststadt.

An exceptional and certainly imported object at Tall Bazi is a small, cylindrical faience pot with turquoise glaze (**Fig. 20**[23]). Four fragments of it were found scattered on top of the altar (**Fig. 21: 12a**), and another fragment was found near the eastern edge of Room A (**Fig. 21: 12b**), which is further proof for the thorough destruction and deliberate scattering of the remains in the temple.

Fig. 18: Astragalus.

Fig. 19: Four beads from carnelian, faience and shell.

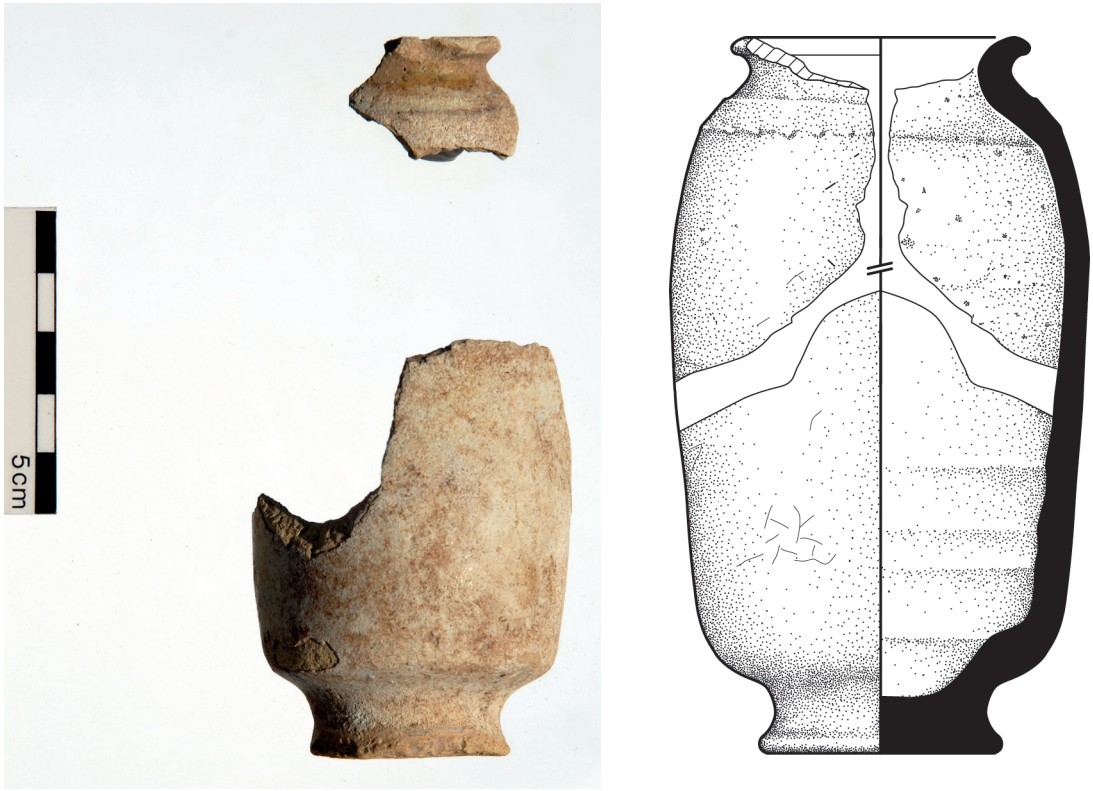

Fig. 20: Small faience pot with turquoise glaze (photo and drawing).

23 H. 7.1 cm, dm. 5.3 cm, rim dm. 3 cm.

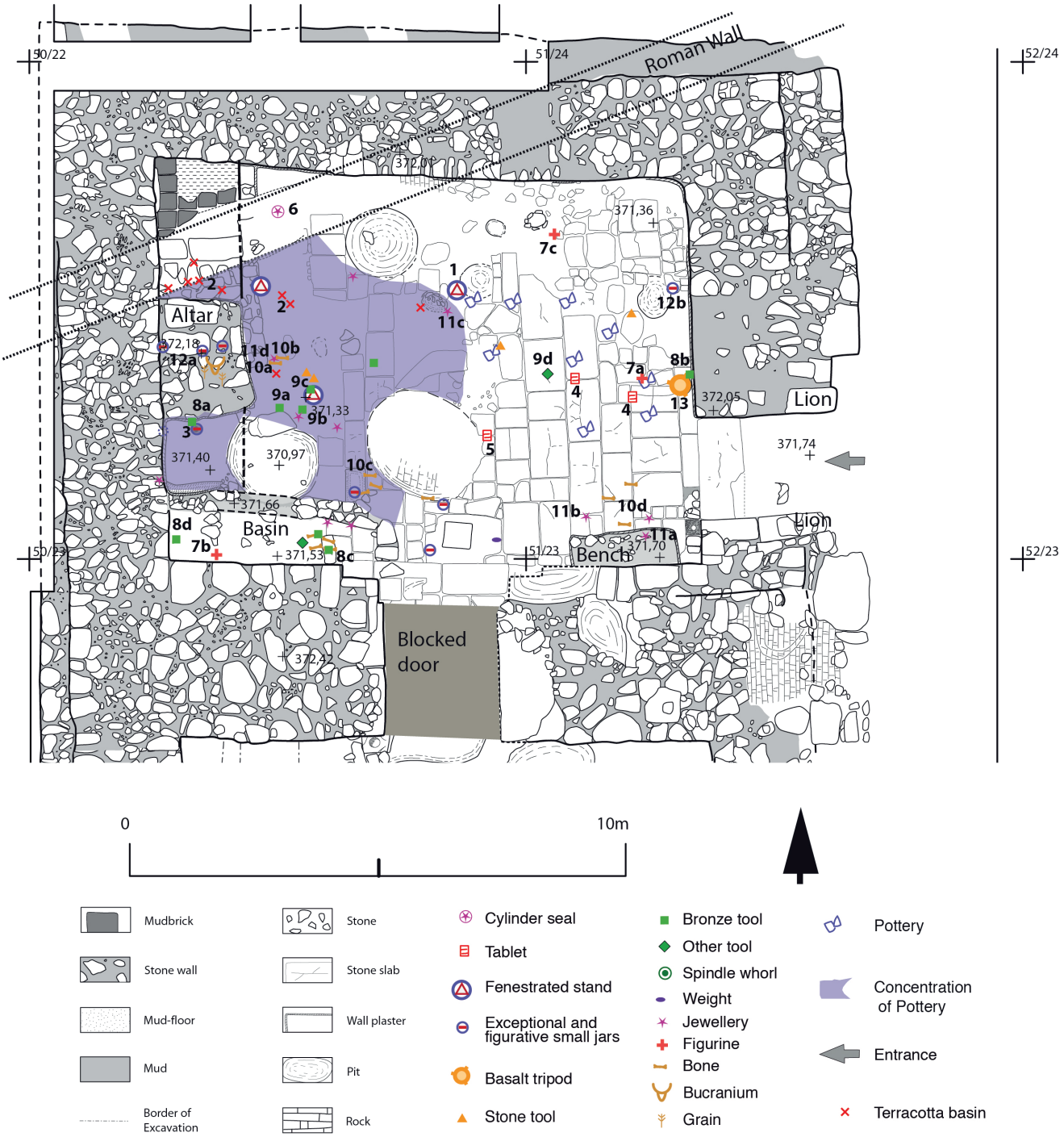

Fig. 21: Plan of Temple Room A with the remains of the inventory.

4. Summary

The Temple on top of the Citadel was heavily looted before the enemy set fire to it. Nevertheless, a few bronze objects, some scattered beads, and especially the silver vessel which had clearly been overlooked by the looters because it was covered with sherds give a faint impression of the treasures which had once been kept in Room A. The large amount of remaining objects, however, were masses of pottery, animal bones and the remains of other edibles. But why were these objects in the Temple and how did they arrive there? In the following, we attempt an interpretation of the nature and purpose of the temple material.

Some of the mentioned objects were items of a high material value, which had clearly been offered to the venerated deity. To these belong first and foremost the silver vessel with scrap silver, but also the bronze wires and rings seem to represent material value only. Some of the objects were antiquities already when they were offered, e.g. the Old Babylonian cylinder seal and the handmade female figurine. A few objects were clearly imported such as the glazed pot, the position of which on the altar underlines further the value of this exotic object. The remains of several wooden boxes indicate that these containers of no material value had been left behind after their contents were stolen. We wonder if jewellery could have been kept in some of the boxes, or how else can we explain the beads which seem to be scattered all over the room?

The interpretation of the plain pottery is more difficult. Most forms are similar to those which were used in the houses, and especially drinking vessels and bowls or plates for eating were common. They could have served for commensal purposes, e.g. during feasts or when the elders assembled with the city god in the temple, which—as the only official building at Bazi—was also used as the Senate.[24] Also, the drinking tubes could have been used in Room A during commensal drinking with a number of people.

Other vessels, especially the miniature goblets, were most probably brought there by individuals as offerings. It is certainly not by chance that the highest concentration was near the altar, that many of them contained beer, and that the terracotta basin, which was decorated with a banquet scene and had once contained beer, was nearby. Therefore, we are inclined to interpret most of the goblets as offerings which were put near or poured over the altar or the basin close to it.

Meat and other edibles can also be interpreted either as the remains of commensality which took place in the temple or as offerings which were deposited there. The fact that the largest concentration of animal bones was found in the oval basin in the southwestern corner, a bit distant from the altar, could indicate that they had been placed there as meat offerings.

In summary, most metal objects, jewellery, exceptional vessels, the decorated basin for libation purposes, the exceptionally large and decorated potstands and also the plain pottery were found near the altar. This emphasizes the ritual importance of the altar, which either supported a cult image or symbolized the divine presence. That the altar itself was considered an exceptional, ideologically important structure is underlined by the bucrania and the grain which was integrated with it.

The use of Room A was probably manifold: On the one hand, it held and stored numerous offerings of material and immaterial value, which had been brought there by countless individuals—locals as well as foreign pilgrims. On the other hand, the Temple clearly fulfilled functions which we would today label as profane, such as the archiving of the royal documents from the Mittani great kings, which were crucial for the city, and the assembly of the elders of the city. But this is certainly too modern a thinking, since this temple was literally the house of the deity, and the deity together with the elders governed the city: so why should she or he not house the assembly and receive gifts at the same time?

24 This idea has been explored further in Otto 2012b.

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Die Tempelinventare aus der Oberstadt von Boğazköy-Hattusa: hethitische Tempelanlagen als Kultstätten und Wirtschaftseinheiten

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Abstract: In the years 1978-1992 the excavation in the upper city of the Hittite capital of Hattusa, modern day Boğazköy, brought to light a large temple district of special significance. The 29 temple precincts of the upper city contained extensive inventories of the Hittite period that were found in the mudbrick collapse and debris filling the basement rooms. The material includes a wide range of objects including cultic artifacts, tools, weapons, jewelry, seals and sealed bullae, written documents, and pottery. In addition to the temple precincts the remains of 37 further buildings were excavated. The deposits found in both temples and "houses" of the upper city offer the rare opportunity to examine inventories in their archaeological context and to correlate the finds with specific temple sectors.

Keywords: Hattusa, Hittite capital, "Central Temple District", Hittite temple inventories, Hittite material culture, Hittite archaeology
Schlüsselwörter: Hattusa, hethitische Hauptstadt, "Zentrales Tempel Viertel", hethitische Tempelinventare, hethitische materielle Kultur, hethitische Archäologie

Die in den Jahren 1978–1992 von Peter Neve durchgeführten Ausgrabungen in Boğazköy (Neve 1999) brachten in der Oberstadt ein Tempelviertel mit einer Ausdehnung von 300 × 350 m auf einer Fläche von über 8 ha zutage, was ca. 10 % der Fläche der Oberstadt entspricht (**Abb. 1. 2**). Vor diesem Zeitpunkt waren nur fünf Tempelanlagen in der hethitischen Hauptstadt bekannt. Es handelt sich um den großen Tempel 1 in der Unterstadt sowie die Tempel 2–5 in der Oberstadt, die bereits seit dem Jahr 1906/1907 erforscht wurden. Während der Ausgrabungen Neves sind weitere 26 Sakralbauten – davon 24 im sogenannten zentralen Tempelviertel – in der Oberstadt hinzugekommen. Darüber hinaus wurden die Reste von 37 weiteren Gebäuden freigelegt.

In der Luftaufnahme von Neve ist ersichtlich, dass das zentrale Tempelviertel ein durch zwei Hügelzüge topographisch abgegrenzter Bereich innerhalb der Oberstadt bildet und darum ganz deutlich als eine sakrale Landschaft in Verbindung mit der darüber liegenden Bastion des Sphinxtores anzusprechen ist (**Abb. 3**).[1]

Auf dem Plan des zentralen Tempelviertels sind die einzelnen Tempelanlagen, z.T. auch mit einer Temenosmauer umgeben, sowie zahlreiche dazwischen gelegene, kleinere Bauten erkennbar (**Abb. 2**). Das reichhaltige Inventar aus hethitischer Zeit, das Gegenstände kultischer Funktion, Gebrauchsgerät, Werkzeuge, Waffen, Schmuck, Siegel und gesiegelte Tonbullen, Schriftdokumente sowie Gebrauchskeramik umfasst, befand sich großteils in den mit Schutt aus dem oberen Stockwerk gefüllten Kellerräumen der Heiligtümer. Die Fundkomplexe aus den Tempeln und Häusern der Oberstadt bieten die seltene

1 Zur Beschreibung des Geländes siehe Neve 1999: 15.

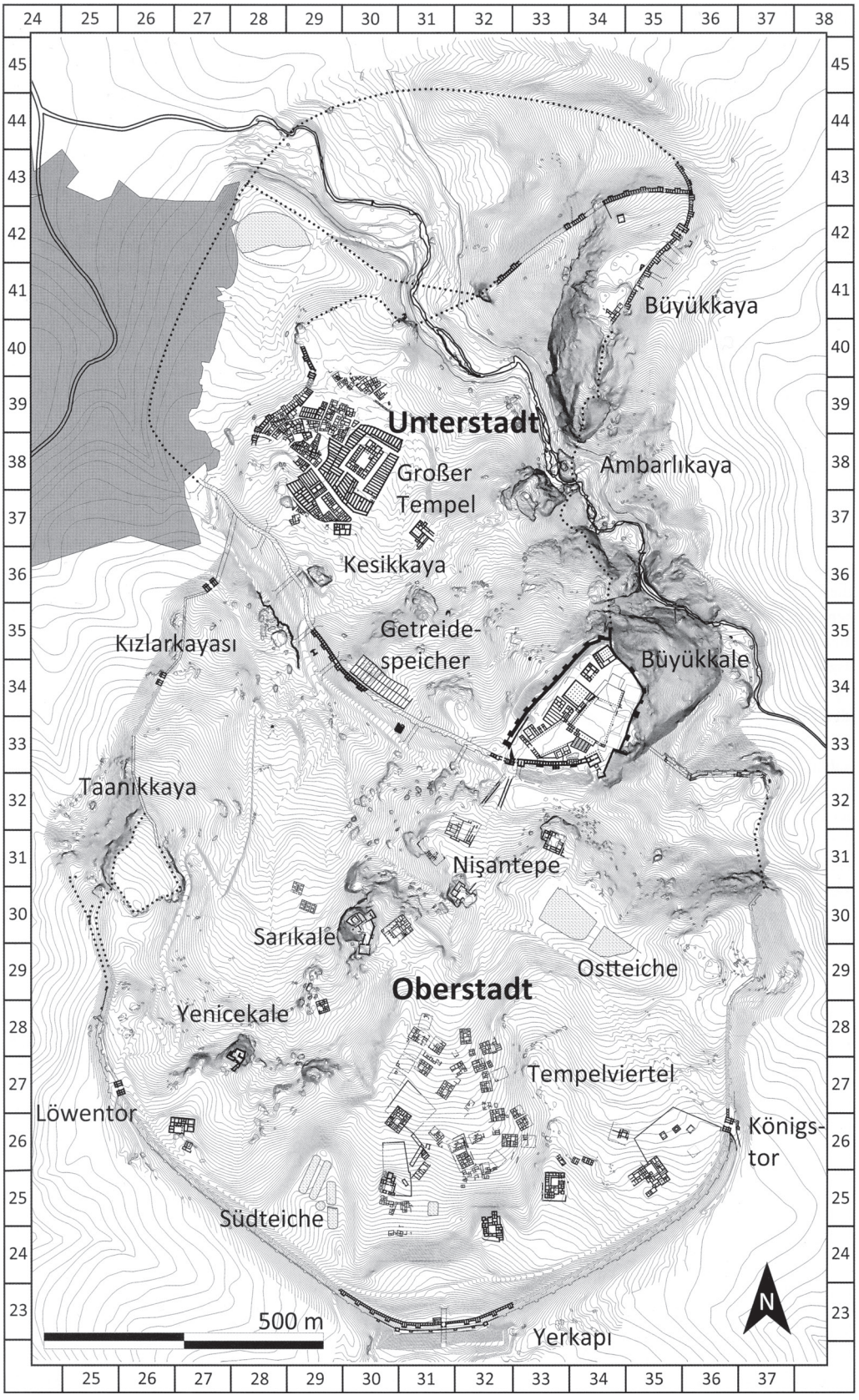

Abb. 1: Gesamtplan von Hattusa, Stand 2009 (Schachner/Hollerstein/Middea 2016: Abb. 1; © Archiv der Boğazköy-Expedition, DAI Berlin).

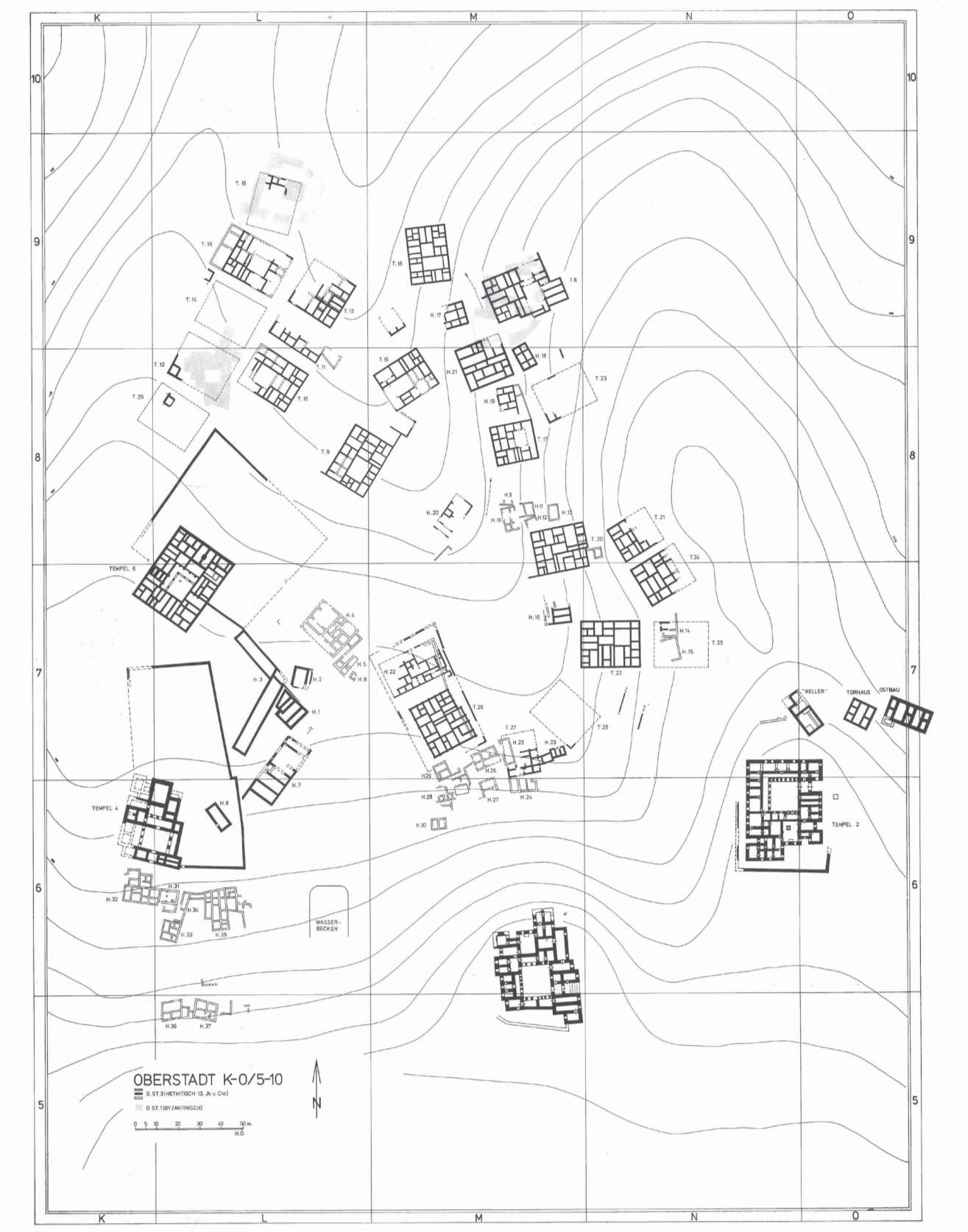

Abb. 2: Plan des zentralen Tempelviertels (gezeichnet von H. Özel, in: Neve 1992: 20 Abb. 37; © Archiv der Boğazköy-Expedition, DAI Berlin).

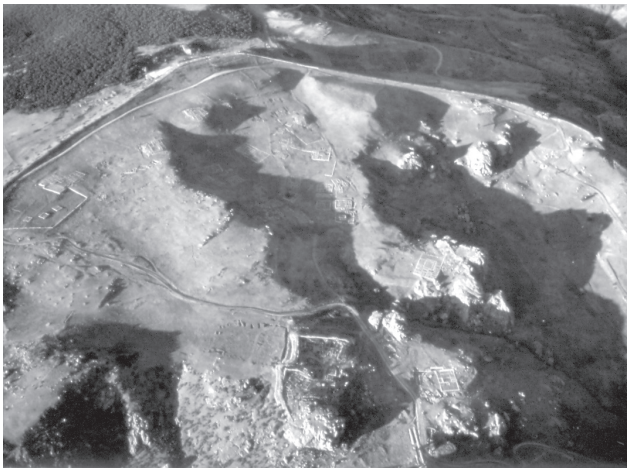

Abb. 3: Luftbild von der Oberstadt von Boğazköy (Neve 1999: Taf. 1, b; © Archiv der Boğazköy-Expedition, DAI Berlin).

Gelegenheit, Inventare im archäologischen Kontext zu untersuchen und die Fundgruppen mit den verschiedenen Tempelbereichen zu korrelieren.

An dieser Stelle möchte ich die Ergebnisse meiner bisherigen Arbeit am hethitischen Kleinfundmaterial aus den Tempelvierteln der Oberstadt von Hattusa vorstellen.[2] Dabei möchte ich erstens einen Überblick über die vorhandenen Fundgruppen und ihre Verteilung verschaffen. Zweitens erfolgt unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Fundzusammenhänge eine Auswertung der Fundverteilung innerhalb der Tempelanlagen. Und drittens wird untersucht inwiefern sich die Inventare der Tempel und der kleineren Bauten, die als Häuser gedeutet wurden, unterscheiden.

Ausklammern möchte ich in diesem Zusammenhang eine ausführliche Diskussion zur Frage der Datierung und zeitlichen Entwicklung der Oberstadt. Zusammenfassend zu diesem Thema lässt sich sagen, dass Neves postulierte Datierung aller drei Bauperioden (Bauschichten 4–2) in der Oberstadt in das 13. Jh. v. Chr. nicht aufrecht zu erhalten ist. Die Untersuchungen der letzten Jahre haben deutlich gezeigt, dass die Oberstadt mindestens seit dem ausgehenden 16. Jh. besiedelt war.[3] Sie findet ihr Ende mit der Zerstörung der hethitischen Hauptstadt um 1200 v. Chr.

1. Das Fundmaterial

Als Ausgangsbasis dienten 3140 hethitische Objekte. Im Gegensatz zu bisherigen Kleinfundpublikationen sind die Funde nicht nach Material, sondern nach Funktionsgattungen gegliedert (**Abb. 4**). Hierdurch wird die Übersichtlichkeit im Hinblick auf die Auswertung der Gebäudeinventare erhöht.

Die mit Abstand größte Fundgattung bilden Geräte und Werkzeuge (**Abb. 4**), die u. a. zur Holz-, Metall-, Stein-, Leder- und Textilverarbeitung verwandt wurden, mit 991 Stücken (ca. 32%). An zweiter Stelle stehen schriftliche Hinterlassenschaften in Gestalt von Siegeln, Siegelungen und Tontafeln mit 719 Stücken (ca. 23%).[4] An dritter Stelle rangieren Geräte und Gegenstände für den kultischen Gebrauch mit 537 Stücken (ca. 17%). An vierter Stelle sind Schmuck (z.B. Anhänger) und Gewandverschlüsse (z.B. Gewandnadeln) mit 408 Stücken vertreten (ca. 13%). Auffallend ist der zahlenmäßig geringe Umfang von militärischem Gerät mit 210 Stücken (ca. 7%). Bei den Funden von Waffen und Rüstung handelt es sich im Wesentlichen um Pfeilspitzen und Plättchen von Schuppenpanzern.[5] Verzierungen und Beschläge für Geräte, Möbel und Waffen belaufen sich auf 2,2%. Mit Anteilen unter 1% sind Gewichte, Schreib- und Toilettengeräte sowie Spielsteine (Astragale) vertreten. Die inventarisierte Keramik aus Fußbodenkontexten in den Tempeln (*in situ*-Befunde) wurde in die statistische Auswertung mit einbezogen und beträgt 2,5%.

1.1 Werkzeuge (Abb. 5)

Aufgrund der eindeutig zuordenbaren Werkzeuge wird ersichtlich, dass die Verarbeitung von Leder und Textilien (ca. 56%) sowie von Metall (ca. 21%) eine herausragende Rolle spielte (**Abb. 5**). Weniger ins Gewicht fallen Werkzeuge zur Holzbearbeitung (1,6%; z.B. Beile und Dechsel) und Werkzeuge zur Steinbearbeitung (0,4%; z.B. Steinhämmer und große Meißel). Geräte für Ackerbau und Nahrungsmittelverarbeitung fanden sich nur in

2 Die abschließende Publikation der Kleinfunde aus der Oberstadt von Boğazköy-Hattusa wird von S. Herbordt und A. von Wickede in der Reihe Boğazköy-Ḫattuša des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts veröffentlicht. Die hier vorgelegten Zahlen und Statistiken sind nicht endgültig und beruhen auf den Stand der Bearbeitung zum Zeitpunkt der Präsentation im November 2016

3 Siehe dazu z.B. Müller-Karpe 2003: 388–393; Seeher 2006a: 197–213; Seeher 2006b: 131–146; Seeher 2008: 1–13; Mielke 2006: 14–18; Schachner 2009: 11–16; Klinger 2006: 15–16; Klinger 2015: 89–96.

4 Die Siegel und Siegelungen von Prinzen und Beamten (Dinçol/Dinçol 2008) sowie die Keilschrifttexte (Otten/Rüster 1990) wurden bereits veröffentlicht und hier lediglich für chronologische, kontextbezogene und statistische Auswertungen herangezogen.

5 Siehe z.B. Neve 1992: 28 Abb. 5; Neve 1999: Taf. 32, b–d.

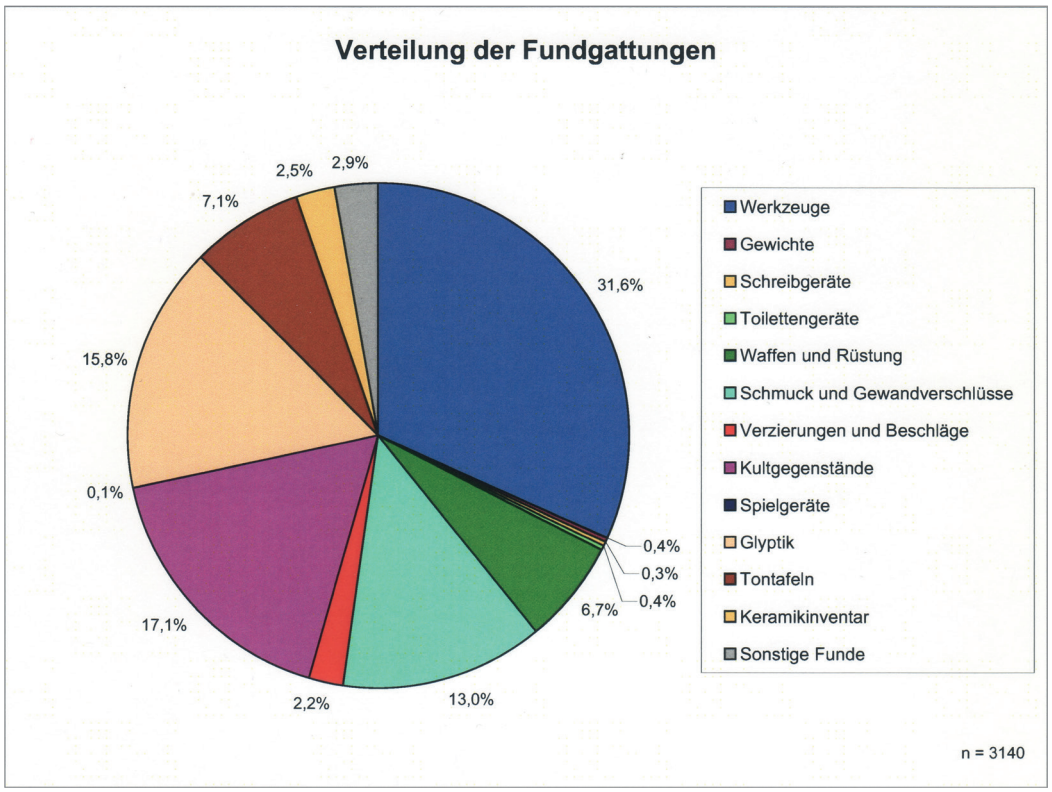

Abb. 4: Verteilung der Fundgattungen in den Tempelvierteln der Oberstadt (S. Herbordt).

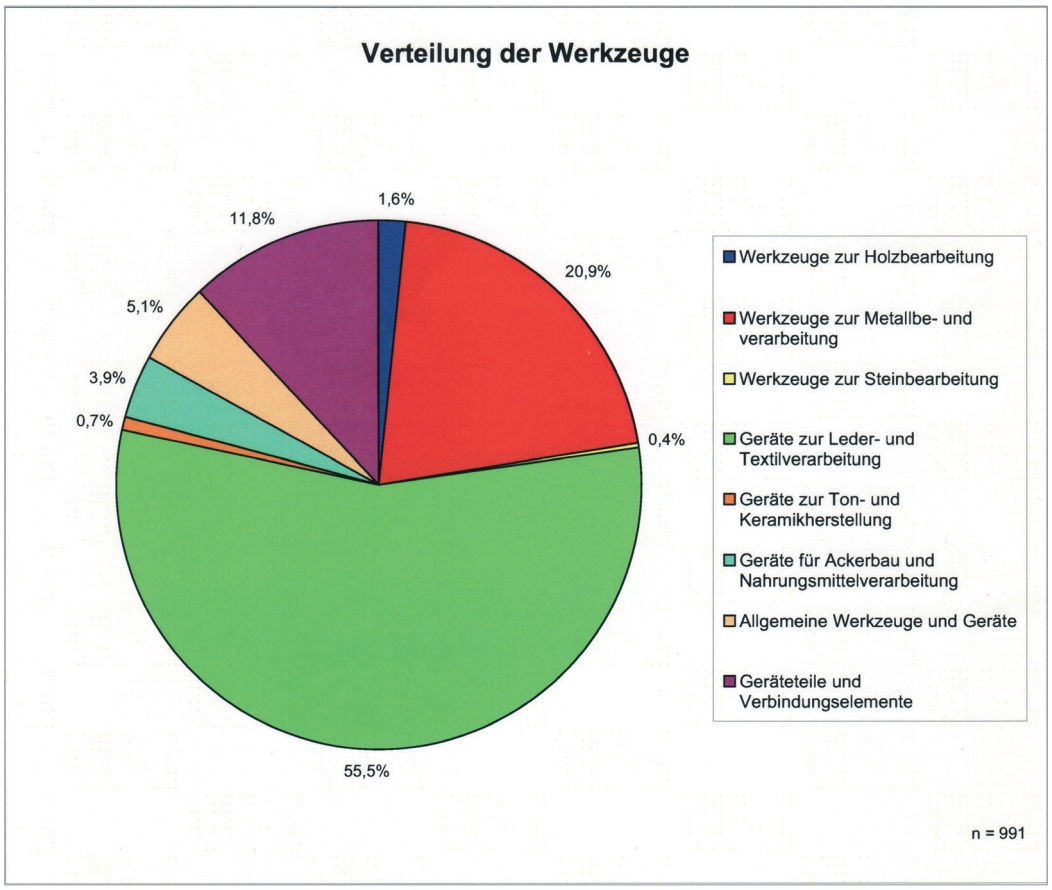

Abb. 5: Verteilung der Werkzeuge in den Tempelvierteln der Oberstadt (S. Herbordt).

kleiner Menge. Zwei Sicheln und eine Hacke zusammen genommen mit Mahl- und Reibsteinen haben ein Anteil von nur 4% (**Abb. 5**).[6]

Eindeutig der Holzbearbeitung zuzuweisen sind Spaltwerkzeuge, die sich in Ärmchenbeile, Dechsel und Flachbeile gliedern. Typische Geräte zur spanenden Holzverarbeitung beschränken sich auf wenige Beitel, die auch als Stichel zum Gravieren in der Metallbearbeitung genutzt werden konnten. Sägen, obwohl in Boğazköy mehrfach belegt, fehlen vollständig im Fundmaterial des zentralen Tempelviertels.

Die häufigsten Werkzeuge zur Metallbearbeitung umfassen meißelartige Geräte zum Punzen und Treiben von Metallen. Diese Geräte mit mittelständiger Schneide unterscheiden sich in bronzene Punziermeißel mit Schlagspuren am Kopf sowie geschäftete Meißel.

In der Oberstadt wurden auch zahlreiche Werkzeuge zum Metallguss aufgefunden, wie Formen, Tiegel, Gusslöffel, Düsenrohre sowie Schmelze, Schlacke und Werkstoffe in Gestalt von Barren. Die meisten Gussformen, dienten zur Herstellung von Kupferbarren sowie Ärmchen- und Flachbeilen (z.B. Neve 1992: 37 Abb. 92b). Darüber hinaus finden sich Formen für Lanzen, Messer, Anhänger und Figurinen.

Die mit Abstand größte Gruppe von Geräten und Werkzeugen diente der Leder- und Textilverarbeitung. Hierbei handelt es sich in erster Linie um Pfrieme (mit 279 Fundstücken) und Nähnadeln (mit 225 Stücken). Die Pfrieme wurden benutzt, um Löcher in Leder zu stechen. Sie kamen sowohl bei der Herstellung von Bekleidung als auch von Schuhen zum Einsatz. Pfrieme sind entweder aus Bronze oder Knochen gefertigt und meist geschäftet.

Abgesehen von den Pfriemen zeugen die massenhaft gefundenen Ösennadeln von einer intensiven Leder- und Textilverarbeitung. Die Nadeln wurden stets an einem Ende zur Öse umgebogen und dienten zum Nähen von Leder bei Kleidern und Schuhen sowie von Stoffen. Weitere Geräte zur Textilverarbeitung bilden die zahlreich gefundenen Wirtel aus Stein und Ton sowie die wenigen Beispiele von Webgeräten, wie Webgewicht und Webschiffchen.

1.2 Waffen und Rüstung (militärische Geräte; Abb. 4)

Bei den militärischen Geräten handelt es sich im Wesentlichen um Pfeilspitzen (107 Stücke) und Bronzeplättchen von Schuppenpanzern (96 Panzerplättchen). Darüber hinaus wurden Dolchklingen sowie Lanzen- und Speerspitzen in geringer Stückzahl geborgen. Schwerter, Streitäxte und –keulen sowie Helme oder Schildbuckel sind in den Tempelinventaren nicht vorhanden.

1.3 Schmuck und Gewandverschlußstücke (Abb. 4)

Zur Gattung Schmuck und Gewandverschlußstücke zählen neben Anhängern (33 Stücke), Armreifen, Ringen (63 Stücke), und Perlen (30 Stücke) auch Knöpfe und Gewandnadeln. Die mit Abstand größte Gruppe stellen die Gewandverschlüsse mit 272 Nadeln dar (ca. 9% des gesamten Fundmaterials).

1.4 Kultgegenstände (Abb. 4)

Gegenstände und Geräte für kultische Zwecke machen mit 537 Stücken 17 Prozent des Fundmaterials aus. Es handelt sich hierbei vorwiegend um Kultgefäße in Miniaturformat, z.B. Votivnäpfe und andere Miniaturgefäße (mit 247 Stücken; z.B. Neve 1992: 28 Abb. 66), sowie Libationsarme (62 Stücke; z.B. Neve 1992: 31 Abb. 77), „Turmvasen“ (48 Stücke; z.B. Neve 1992: 28 Abb. 68), Reliefgefäße (44 Stücke; z.B. Neve 1992: 31 Abb. 78), Rhyta, tierförmige Gefäße und Appliken (mit zusammen 56 Stücken).[7] Den kultischen Gegenständen zugerechnet werden auch die Terrakottafigurinen sowie steinerne, metallene und elfenbeinerne Flach- und Rundbilder (mit insgesamt 80 Stücken; z.B. Neve 1992: 33 Abb. 81. 82; 37 Abb. 94).

1.5 Glyptik (Abb. 4)

Die glyptischen Erzeugnisse umfassen (71) Originalsiegel, (13) Siegelrohlinge, (377) Siegelungen auf Tonbullen und –verschlüssen sowie (34) Siegelungen auf Gefäßen.

2. Auswertung und Ergebnisse

2.1 Fundverteilung und Funktionsanalyse der Tempelräume und Gebäudetrakte

Die Verteilung der 3140 Fundgegenstände auf die verschiedenen Bereiche der Oberstadt zeigt, dass der größte Anteil der Objekte aus den Tempelanlagen stammt (1858 Objekte = 58%). Auf die „Häuser“ entfiel der zweit-

6 Für die Sicheln s. Neve 1999: 25, b.

7 Siehe z.B. Neve 1992: 28 Abb. 66–68; 31 Abb. 76–78.

größte Anteil mit 19% (609 Objekte). Aus den ummauerten Temenosbereichen kamen 146 Objekte, was 5% des Materials entspricht, während die Oberflächen- und Streufunde aus den „Außenbereichen" mit 460 Objekten 15% der Funde ausmachen. Nur geringe Stückzahlen sind aus dem Töpferviertel (50 Objekte = 2%) und dem südöstlich von Tempel 4 gelegenen Teich (17 Objekte = 1%) zu verzeichnen.

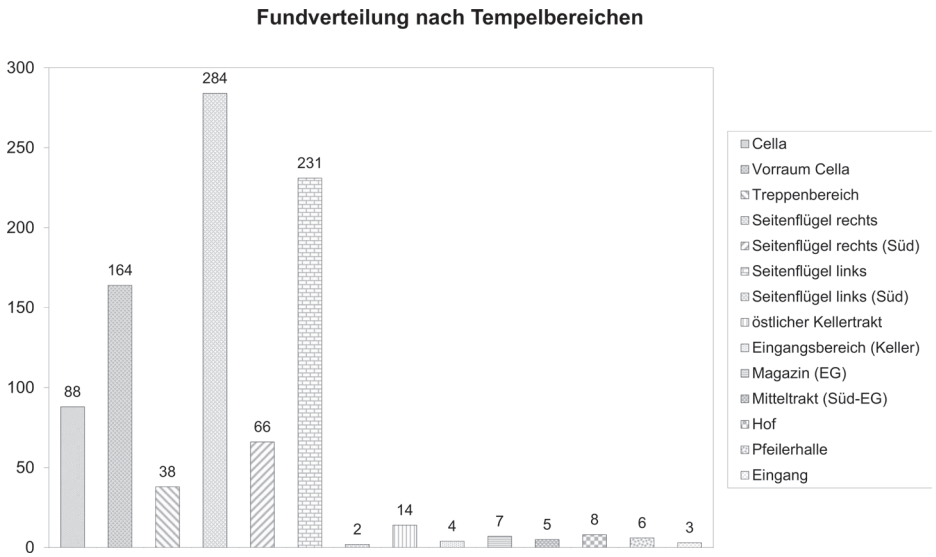

Abb. 6: Fundverteilung nach Tempelbereichen (S. Herbordt).

Das Fundmaterial aus den Tempeln wurde primär aus den Kellerräumen geborgen, in denen auch das eingestürzte Inventar aus den darüber liegenden Räumen enthalten war. Der Kultbereich mit seinen Nebenräumen befindet sich bei hethitischen Tempelanlagen stets im unterkellerten Gebäudeteil, der im Plan mit Schraffur gekennzeichnet ist (**Abb. 7**). Die vorliegende Auswertung der Verteilung der Inventare trägt diesem Umstand Rechnung und unterscheidet nicht zwischen Keller und Obergeschoß. Einen Überblick verschafft das Säulendiagramm (**Abb. 6**), das die Auswertung der Fundverteilung nach Tempelbereichen bei gesicherten Raumkontexten darstellt. Der größte Teil der Inventare fand sich in den beiden unterkellerten Seitenflügeln. Beträchtliche Mengen an Objekten kamen auch aus den Bereichen des Vorraums zur Cella sowie der Cella selbst zutage. Ein geringerer Anteil befand sich im Treppenbereich, der das Erdgeschoß mit den Kellerräumen verbindet. Aus den anderen meist nicht unterkellerten Bereichen wie z.B. Tempeleingang, Hof und Pfeilerhalle sind nur wenige Fundstücke zu verzeichnen.

Detailliertere Angaben verschafft das Säulendiagramm, das die Verteilung funktionsspezifischer Inventare auf die einzelnen Fundbereiche der Tempel zeigt (**Abb. 8**). Es ergeben sich folgende Aussagen: 1. der bei weitem größte Anteil der Kultgeräte (Ku) stammt aus dem Bereich des Vorraums zur Cella bzw. aus dem darunter befindlichen Untergeschoß. Außerdem scheint der rechte Seitenflügel zur Aufbewahrung von Kultgerät größere Bedeutung zu haben; 2. Texttafeln und Tonbullen (Dok) stammen in erster Linie aus den beiden Seitenflügeln, kleinere Mengen kommen aus dem Bereich des Vorraumes zur Cella und der Cella; 3. der größte Anteil an Waffen (Waf) wurde im rechten Seitenflügel angetroffen; 4. die Fundgruppe Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV) überwiegt dagegen im linken Seitenflügel; 5. eine verhältnismäßig gleichmäßige Verteilung der Fundkategorien der Werkzeuge und Geräte für die Textil- und Lederbearbeitung (Tx) ist für die beiden Seitenflügel festzustellen.

Konkret auf Tempel 7 bezogen ist ersichtlich, dass aus dem unterkellerten Kultraum die Funde in erster Linie aus Miniaturgefäße und Kultgeschirr bestanden haben (**Abb. 7**).[8] Ein kleines Elfenbeinplättchen mit Darstellung einer Gottheit befand sich im Vorraum der Cella (Neve 1992: 33 Abb. 82; Neve 1999: Taf. 25, c).[9] Bemerkenswert sind auch die zahlreichen Schuppenpanzerplättchen aus Bronze, ebenfalls aus dem Vorraum der Cella und Raum 25 des daneben liegenden linken Seitenflügels (Neve 1999: 44). Diese sind sicherlich als Weihgaben anzusprechen. Dokumente und gesiegelte Tonbullen waren in sämtlichen Kellerräumen verstreut. Die Landschenkungsurkunde mit Siegel des Königs Aluwamna[10] aus dem 15. Jh. sowie die Tonbulle mit Labarna-Siegel[11] aus dem 13. Jh. bezeugen den langen Zeitraum der Nutzung dieser Tempelanlage.

Als weiteres Beispiel soll wegen der interessanten Fußbodenbefunde Tempel 9 erwähnt werden (**Abb. 9**).

8 siehe dazu Parzinger/Sanz 1992: 76–81; Neve 1999: 44.

9 Für eine neue Abhandlung zur Elfenbeinfigur und seiner Deutung siehe Herbordt (im Druck).

10 Bo 82/162 (Photo Neve 1992: 33 Abb. 83) = Rüster/Wilhelm 2012: 53 (Urk.-Nr. 26).

11 Die kegelförmige Tonbulle mit Abdruck eines Labarna-Siegels auf der Unterseite trägt die Inventarnummer Bo 82/50; Fundort Tempel 7, Raum 21. Abdrücke desselben Siegels finden sich auf Tonbullen im Nisantepe-Archiv. Siehe Herbordt/Bawanypeck/Hawkins 2011: 214 Kat. 154; Taf. 56, Kat. 154.1.

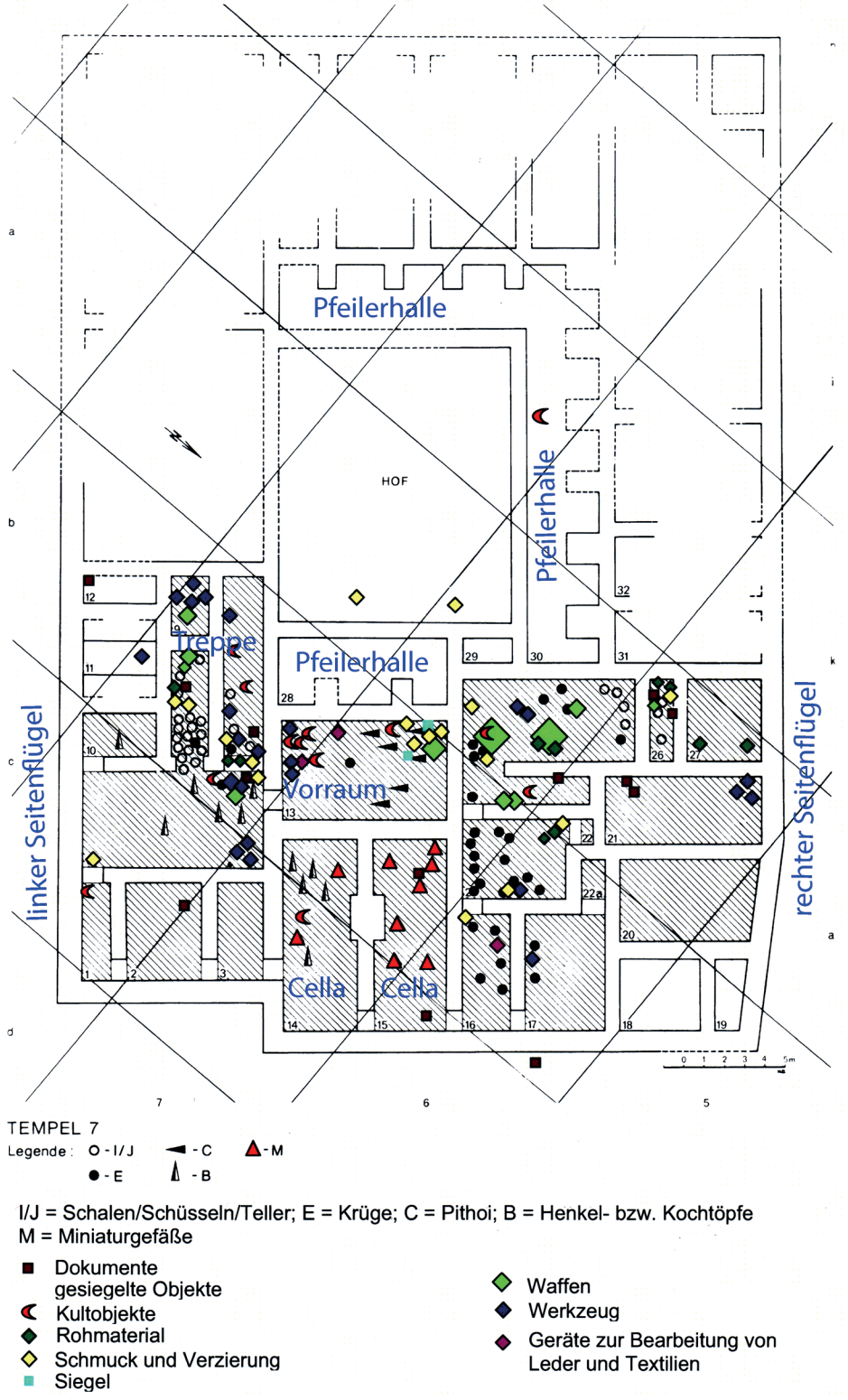

Abb. 7: Plan der Fundverteilung in Tempel 7. Die Schraffur markiert unterkellerte Bereiche (Plan Neve 1999: 35 Abb. 18, a; Zusätze S. Herbordt; © Archiv der Boğazköy-Expedition, DAI Berlin).

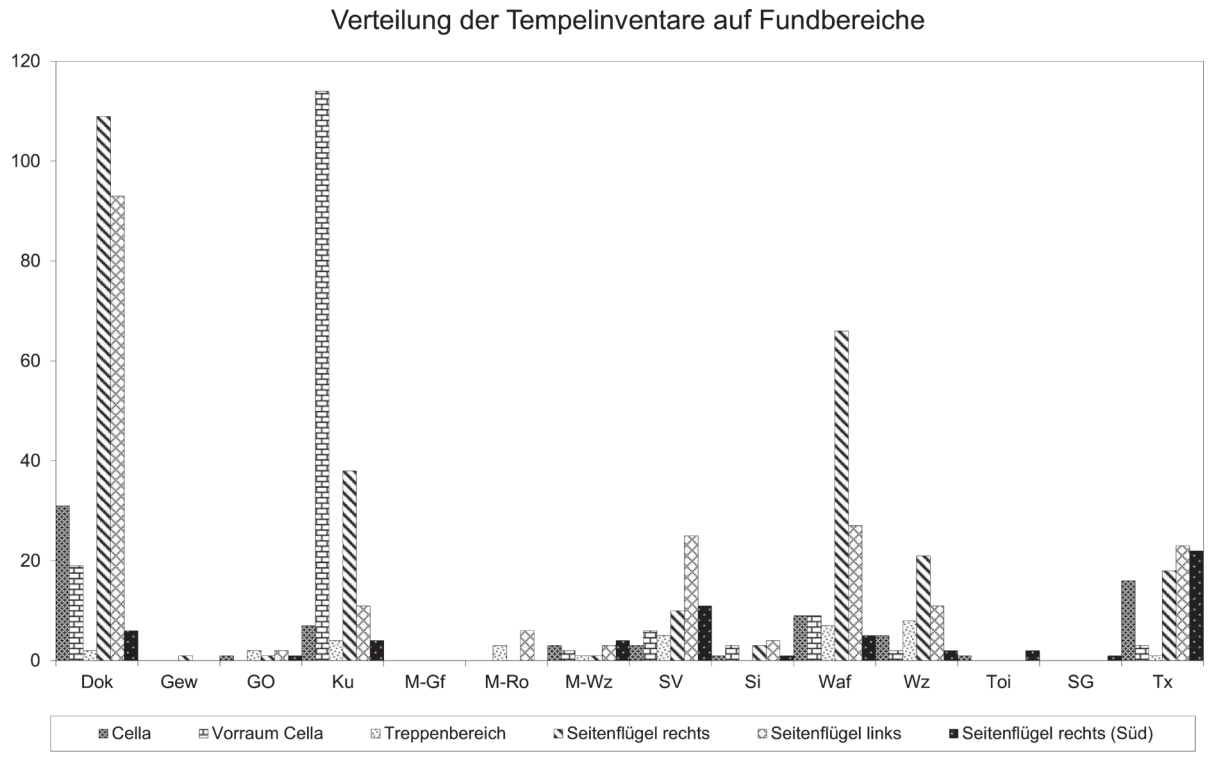

Abb. 8: Verteilung der Tempelinventare auf Fundbereiche (S. Herbordt).
Dokumente (Dok); Gewichte (Gew); Gesiegelte Objekte (GO); Kultgegenstände (Ku); Werkzeuge zur Metallverarbeitung, wie Gussformen (M-Gf); Barren (M-Ro), Meißel und Treibhämmer (M-Wz); Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV); Siegel (Si); Waffen (Waf); allgemein-Werkzeuge (Wz); Toilettenartikel (Toi); Schreibgeräte (SG); Geräte zur Textil- und Lederverarbeitung (Tx).

Dazu gehören 53 Schuppenpanzerplättchen aus Bronze, die in Raum 1 zutage kamen (Neve 1999: 52; Taf. 32, b. c). Sie lagen dicht beieinander aber ohne erkennbare Ordnung (d.h. es war nicht möglich, einen kompletten Schuppenpanzer daraus zu rekonstruieren). Desweiteren befand sich ein Hort von 10 Pfeilspitzen auf dem Fußboden des Kultraumes und des Raumes 4 (Neve 1999: 52; Taf. 32, d). Bemerkenswert ist auch eine kleine Bronzesäge aus Raum 1, die mit einem eingeritzten Keilschriftzeichen nahe der Schäftung versehen ist. Dies bedarf der Erwähnung, weil in hethitischen Tempelanlagen beschriftete Objekte generell fehlen. Möglicherweise handelt es sich hier um eine Weihgabe. Die bemalten Wandputzfragmente aus Raum 11 bezeugen das Vorhandensein von Wandmalereien im oberen Stockwerk (Neve 1992: 30 Abb. 75; Neve 1999: 50; Taf. 31, c).

Von besonderem Interesse ist eine Ansammlung von Bronzestiften, die außerhalb des Tempels im Vorhof, laut Ausgräber, im „weichen Felsgrund" steckten (Neve 1999: 52). Ein weiterer Stift fand sich unweit entfernt innerhalb von Raum 1 an der Ostecke. Ihre Fundlage in Nähe der Gebäudeecke spricht für eine Deutung als Gründungsbeigabe. Aus hethitischen Bauritualen ist überliefert, dass bei Errichtung von sakralen Bauwerken Gründungsbeigaben deponiert wurden. Zu den in Texten genannten Gründungsbeigaben gehörten u.a. Figurinen, Modelle und „Fundamentsteine" aus Edelmetall und Halbedelsteine sowie Speisen, die unter den Ecksteinen und anderen Bestandteilen des Gebäudes deponiert wurden. Relevant für unseren Fundkontext ist die Erwähnung von Bronzepflöcken oder –stiften, die in den Boden gehämmert wurden und zum „Sichern des Fundamentes" dienten.[12] In Hattusa ist archäologisch vergleichbar der Fund von Bronzestiften, die unter dem Fußboden der Felskammer D im Heiligtum von Yazilikaya um ein Tierskelett gesteckt waren und vom Ausgräber K. Bittel mit einem Tieropfer in Verbindung gebracht wurden.[13]

12 Beckman 2010: 76–77; 85; 88; Goetze 1955: 356–357.
13 Neve 1999: 52; Bittel et al. 1975: 64–70 mit Abb. 46–48.

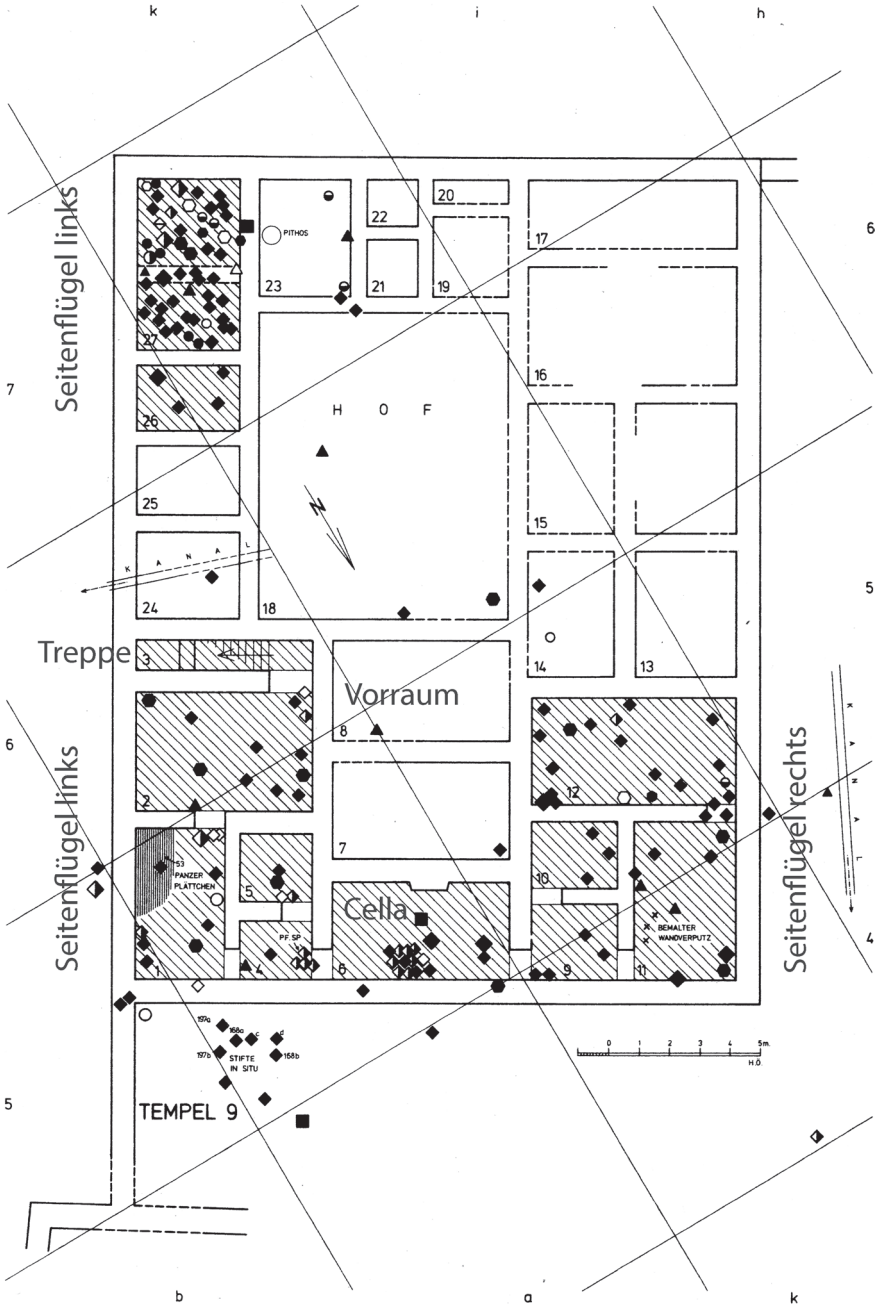

Abb. 9: Plan der Fundverteilung in Tempel 9. Die Schraffur markiert unterkellerte Bereiche (Neve 1999: 51 Abb. 27; copyright Archiv der Boğazköy-Expedition, DAI Berlin).

2.2 Tempel- und Hausinventare

Die Verteilung der Inventare auf Tempel und Häuser sind Gegenstand zweier Säulendiagramme (**Abb. 10**, **11**). Hier wurde untersucht, woraus die Inventare der einzelnen Gebäude bestehen und wie sie sich auf die Anlagen verteilen. Um aussagekräftige Ergebnisse zu erzielen, wurde das Fundmaterial nach folgenden Funktionsgattungen aufgeteilt:

1. Dokumente (Dok), wie Schrifttafeln und Tonbullen; 2. Gewichte (Gew); 3. Gesiegelte Objekte (GO), wie Ziegel und Gefäßhenkel; 4. Kultgegenstände (Ku), z.B. Libationsarme, Turmgefäße, Figurinen, Votivgefäße; 5. Werkzeuge zur Metallverarbeitung, wie Gussformen (M-Gf), Barren (M-Ro), Meißel und Treibhämmer (M-Wz); 6. Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV), z.B. Ringe, Anhänger, Gewandnadeln, Beschläge; 7. Siegel (Si); 8. Waffen (Waf), z.B. Lanzen- und Pfeilspitzen, Dolche, Panzerplättchen; 9. Allgemein-Werkzeuge (Wz), z.B. Messer, Hämmer, Beile etc.; 10. Toilettenartikel (Toi), z.B. Pinzetten; 11. Schreibgeräte (SG); 12. Geräte zur Textil- und Lederverarbeitung (Tx), z.B. Pfrieme, Ösennadeln, Spinnwirtel.

Für den Vergleich der Tempelinventare (Abb. 10), wurden nur Tempelanlagen mit mehr als 50 Objekten berücksichtigt. Die Auswertung zeigt deutliche Schwerpunkte bestimmter Funktionsgattungen. Dokumente (Dok), Kultobjekte (Ku), Schmuck und Verzierung (SV), Waffen (Waf), Werkzeuge (WZ) sowie Geräte zur Textil- und Lederbearbeitung (Tx) sind am stärksten vertreten. Auffallend ist der hohe Anteil bestimmter Fundgattungen, insbesondere von Schriftdokumenten (Tontafeln und gesiegelte Tonbullen) in den Tempeln 8, 12, 15, 16 und 26. Die enorme Anzahl von Kultgeräten in Tempel 6 ist im Wesentlichen auf eine Anhäufung von Votivschalen zurückzuführen. Schmuck und Verzierungen sowie Waffen und Werkzeuge treten häufig in den Tempeln 7 und 9 auf. Geräte für Textil- und Lederbearbeitung sind mit größeren Stückzahlen in den Tempeln 9 und 10 anzutreffen.

Vergleicht man die Tempelinventare mit den Hausinventaren (**Abb. 11**), so sind deutliche Unterschiede festzustellen. Die Schwerpunkte bei den Hausinventaren liegen bei drei Gruppen: 1. Geräte zur Bearbeitung von Textilien und Leder (Tx), 2. Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV), 3. Werkzeuge zur Metallbearbeitung (M-WZ). Mit Ausnahme von „Haus 21“ sind bei den Hausinventaren

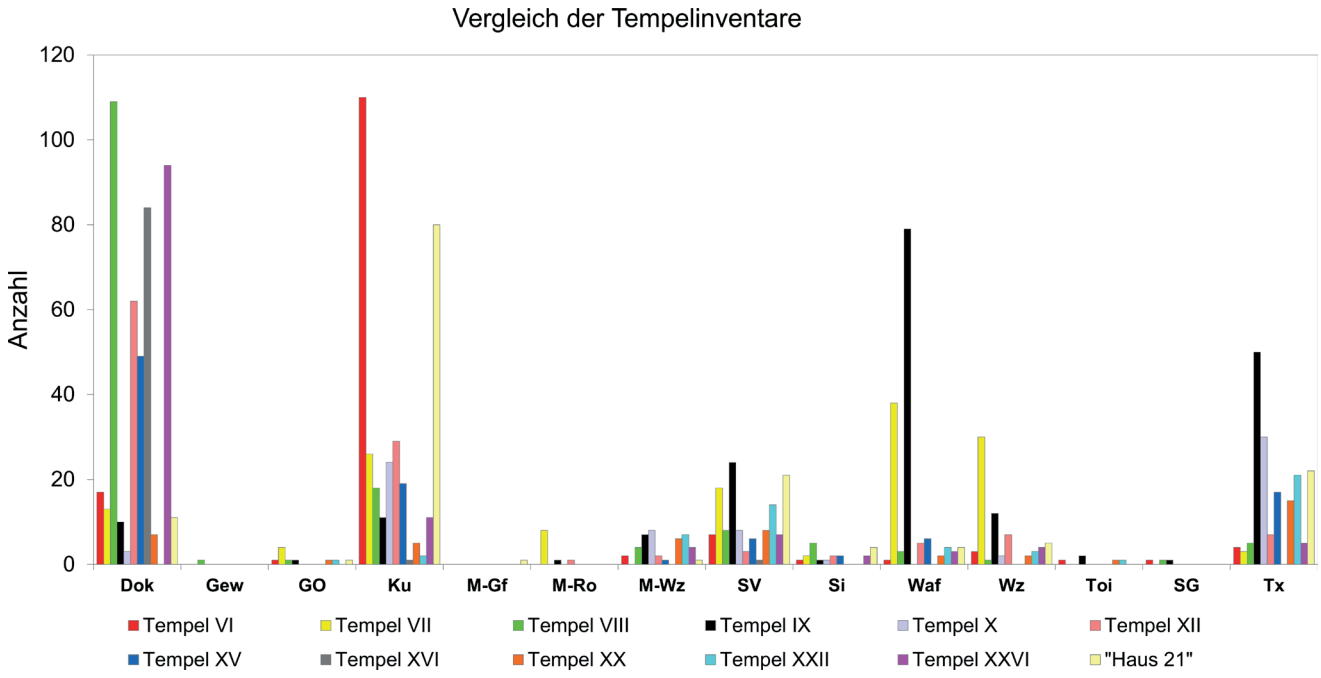

Abb. 10: Vergleich der Tempelinventare (S. Herbordt).
Dokumente (Dok); Gewichte (Gew); Gesiegelte Objekte (GO); Kultgegenstände (Ku); Werkzeuge zur Metallverarbeitung, wie Gussformen (M-Gf); Barren (M-Ro), Meißel und Treibhämmer (M-Wz); Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV); Siegel (Si); Waffen (Waf); allgemein-Werkzeuge (Wz); Toilettenartikel (Toi); Schreibgeräte (SG); Geräte zur Textil- und Lederverarbeitung (Tx).

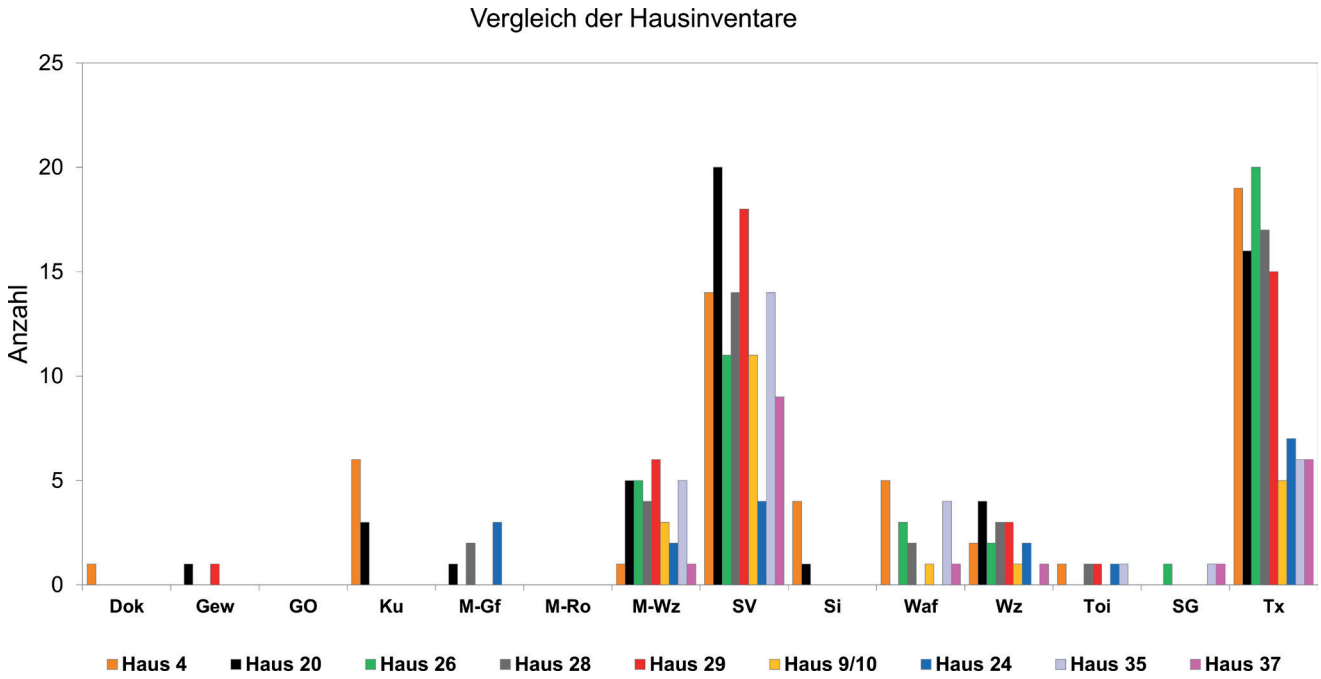

Abb. 11: Vergleich der Hausinventare (S. Herbordt).
Dokumente (Dok); Gewichte (Gew); Gesiegelte Objekte (GO); Kultgegenstände (Ku); Werkzeuge zur Metallverarbeitung, wie Gussformen (M-Gf); Barren (M-Ro), Meißel und Treibhämmer (M-Wz); Schmuck und Verzierungen (SV); Siegel (Si); Waffen (Waf); allgemein-Werkzeuge (Wz); Toilettenartikel (Toi); Schreibgeräte (SG); Geräte zur Textil- und Lederverarbeitung (Tx).

Kultgeräte und Dokumente nicht enthalten.[14] Festzustellen ist darüber hinaus, dass bestimmte Gerätetypen überwiegend in den Hausinventaren vorkommen, z.B. Gewichte, Schreibgeräte, Siegelrohlinge und vor allem Gussformen und andere Werkzeuge zur Metallbearbeitung. Die Inventare der hier untersuchten ‚Häuser' weisen mit Ausnahme von Haus 4 und Haus 21 eindeutig auf eine Funktion als Werkstätten hin.

3. Hethitische Tempelanlagen als Wirtschaftseinheiten

Aufgrund der Lagerung von Gegenständen im Unter- und Obergeschoß der Tempel (z.B. in Tempel 7, siehe **Abb. 7**) und die gewollte Gruppierung von Gebäuden (**Abb. 2**; z.B. beim Komplex des Tempels 26 mit den umliegenden Häuser) erhalten wir eine klare Vorstellung von der wirtschaftlichen Bedeutung des zentralen Tempelviertels der Oberstadt von Hattusa. Es handelt sich nicht nur um die Anlage von Gebäuden zu kultischen Zwecken, sondern auch um Wirtschaftseinheiten zur Herstellung von kultischen Gegenständen[15] sowie Gütern aus Metall, Leder und Textilien. Der archäologische Befund erhärtet diese Interpretation, da im Zusammenhang mit den Häusern Gussformen zur Herstellung von Kupferbarren, Werkzeugen, Waffen und Schmuck sowie Schlacke, Brenn- und Töpferöfen gefunden wurden. Die Häuser außerhalb der Tempelkomplexe sind deshalb auch nicht als Wohnhäuser, sondern vielmehr als Werkstätten zu betrachten.

Die Rolle der Tempel als Wirtschaftseinheiten geht auch aus den hethitischen Steuer- und Abgabetexten hervor, die ca. 40% Wolle und ca. 25% Rohmaterial mit 2/3 Rohkupferanteil ausweisen, während der Anteil der textilen und metallenen Fertigprodukte nur 10%-15% beträgt.[16] Im Gegensatz dazu nennen die hethitischen Tempelinventarlisten ca. 40% Metallfertigprodukte und ca. 20% Textilfertigprodukte. Hierdurch wird deutlich, dass die Tempel eine zentrale Funktion bei der Verarbeitung von Rohstoffen und der Herstellung hochwertiger Güter ausübten.

Abschließend lässt sich sagen, dass es sich bei den Tempeln nicht um reine Kultbauten handelt, denn sie stellen eine Kombination von Gotteshaus und Wirtschaftsbetrieb dar (Neve 1992: 31; Seeher 2002: 136; Müller-Karpe 2009: 340).

14 Neve (1999: 94) spricht Haus 21 als ein Gebäude mit kultischer Funktion an, obwohl der Grundriss von den anderen Sakralbauten abweicht.

15 Die Keramik aus dem Töpferviertel stimmt in Form, Ware und Machart vollständig mit den Funden aus Tempel 6 überein, wodurch deutlich wird, dass hier kultische Geräte und Gebrauchsgeschirr für die Tempel produziert wurden. Siehe dazu Müller-Karpe 1988: 163.

16 Zu den schriftlichen Quellen s. Košak 1982; Siegelová 1986; zu deren Auswertung siehe Müller-Karpe 1994: 74-77 mit Abb. 50–51.

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Deity or Cult Statue? The Storm-God of Aleppo in the Visual Record of the Second Millennium BCE

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Abstract: The cult statue was the most valuable part of a temple inventory and the most important representation of the resident deity. But distinguishing depictions of cult statues from depictions of deities among the visual material is a difficult task. Nevertheless, depictions of either the deity or cult statue had to be iconic in order to be recognised by a large number of people. How was the image of a deity distributed widely and which media were used? Trying to find answers to these questions by merely analysing depictions of all the great gods would be an unwieldy task. I will, therefore, focus on the Storm-God of Aleppo, a local deity that can be defined more precisely. The Storm-God of Aleppo provides an in-depth look at historical, social and religious frames that influenced the veneration and depiction of a deity. Archaeological evidence exists from the main temple at Aleppo, in addition to textual and visual sources. Furthermore, it may be possible to clarify in which context and in which manner this god was depicted outside of his temple and city. Was there a uniform convention for visualizing him? Is it possible to trace the distribution of representations of the Storm-God of Aleppo through datable objects? Can we make any assumptions about the lost cult statues?

Keywords: Cult Statue, Storm-God of Aleppo, distribution of pictures.

1. Introduction: The cult statue as the picture of a deity

Hans Belting (2011: 10) states that a "picture is the image with a medium." This means that you need a medium to give the internal image a body to become a picture. And only through these media can mental images be perceived (Meyer 2015: 345). The image that is present in the mind of the believer was formed by oral traditions, literary descriptions and religious pictures. The internal image and external picture influence each other and are also socially and culturally constructed. On the one hand, the internal image can have an effect on the fashioning of visual and textual productions, but on the other hand, the internal image can also be formed and changed through perception by external influences, ideas and meanings. The material picture and the mental image evoke something and help to distribute knowledge and memories in a social group (Pongratz-Leisten/Sonik 2015: 33–35), and only by becoming a picture can these

1 This paper is a revised version of my presentation "Iconography of Religion. God – Cult Statue – Image" held at the conference. I would like to thank the organizers for the possibility of participating and for all their advice and help. Furthermore, I would also thank Katharina Zartner (Mainz), Fabian Sarga (Frankfort), Melina Seabrook (Harvard) and Alexander Sollee (Munich) for comments and opinions on the paper and my English. Abbreviations follow the *Abkürzungsverzeichnis des Reallexikons der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*.

images and ideas be distributed (Meyer 2015: 345). This process makes pictures an interface between the mental and the material. Special ideas and views can be created and maintained by distributing authorised pictures. That these ideas and worldviews can then again be disturbed and changed by new pictures (Meyer 2015: 345) finds its manifestation in the change of iconography or motifs which are always related to social, cultural, political or religious change in a society.

Since the cult statue is the most important representation of a god and the most valuable object of a temple inventory, it is worthwhile first to reconsider what can be said about cult statues and their depictions in the ancient Near East. The cult statue is the living, earthly body of the deity. It possesses a performative character[2] and embodies the intersection of two axes: while the vertical axis connects heaven, earth and the netherworld, the horizontal axis represents the surface of the world with the temple as the 'ideological' centre of the city that is surrounded by the (open) country (Berlejung 1998: 414). The manifestation of the deity, the cult statue, is situated at the intersection where these two axes meet (Berlejung 1999: 117).

Gebhard Selz (2012) brought new aspects about cult statues and depictions of deities in general into the discussion by presenting the theory of prototypes, which is already used in cognitive studies and anthropology. First, it must be emphasised that our classification system today drastically differs from that of the ancient Near East.[3] Classification, in general, played an enormously significant role in Mesopotamian societies, best demonstrated by countless lists organized in classification patterns. One of the basic categories was the concept of the divine (Selz 2012: 15). According to Selz, deities are prototypes. They can be depicted either as a cult statue or on/in any other object. These objects, therefore, belong now to the category of the divine, "because of an existing prototypical relation to the divine sphere" (Selz 2012: 18). They do not act as a mere reference or symbol, but they inherit the qualities of the divine or the deity: a materialisation of the idea itself (Selz 2012: 18–19).[4] The treatment of cult statues as acting deities can also be recognised in literary texts such as the hymn Šulgi R (Sallaberger 1993: 141–142). The hymn describes the travel by boat of the gods Enlil and Ninlil as acting beings together with the king to Tummal,[5] but the reality would have looked different, consisting of a procession during a feast where cult statues of gods visited other cities and sanctuaries. This is what Selz described as the fuzziness of the borders of categorization when "they could be included in both groups, either that of artefacts or that of living beings" (Selz 2012: 24).

The idea of a prototype and objects[6] becoming part of the essence of this prototype through relation (Selz 2012), a so-called second epiphany[7] (Pongratz-Leisten 2014: 103; Gladigow 1979: 107), appears closer to the more open categories of the ancient Near East. While the cult statue might still be the most important representative of a deity and did receive a special treatment by vivification rites, every other medium visualising the presence of this god has a similar connection to the prototype.[8]

Unambiguous portrayals of cult statues are very rare throughout the history of the ancient Near East. The earliest depiction is probably on a sealing which dates to the Akkadian period[9] and shows a seated goddess in front of a worshipper and a minor deity (**Fig. 1**). On a high podium behind the seated goddess is another goddess similarly depicted, bearing the same floral elements on the body. However, the goddess on the podium is smaller in scale and shown in a standing posture, with only one foot visible as if to emphasize her static nature. If we

2 For omen concerning the appearance and condition of a cult statue in the temple and during processions and the effect of change (in posture, colour, …) as a sign of future disaster, see Sallaberger 2000.

3 An "Aristotelian approach toward categorization and hierarchization" versus a classification that "shows fuzzy boundaries between classes" (Selz 2012: 13–14).

4 "(…) to the Mesopotamians apparently all these functions and concepts were not only represented by, but were also inherent in, these objects" (Selz 2012: 18).

5 For a very similar text regarding the sequence of the feast and the treatment of the deities, see Šu-Sîn 9 (Frayne 1997: E3/2.1.4.9, 317–320).

6 "All kinds of statues as well as the other'cultic objects' have a messenger function, thus connecting the human and the divine world. I cannot detect any evidence for a possible distinction between adoration of gods and veneration of man-made objects, as we are accustomed to in Christian churches." (Selz 1997: 181).

7 The primary agent is the deity. By introducing the concept of secondary agent (see also Gell 1998: 121) for all kinds of visual representations of a deity, we can liberate ourselves from Christian terminology like incarnation or embodiment. In the ancient Near East, the deities were not isomorphic or identical to their secondary agents (Pongratz-Leisten 2014: 111).

8 Through the image, the object becomes an agent. It stops being pure mimesis and obtains cognition. Studies in cognitive psychology have shown that the human mind tends to give agency even to inanimate objects. The object receives a mind with its own intentions, and physical causality is equated with mental causality (Pongratz-Leisten 2014: 110).

9 From Tello, and naming the deified Naram-Sîn in the inscription (Delaporte 1920: 11). Classified by Boehmer (1965: Nr. 1267, Abb. 542) as 'Akkadisch III.'

assume that the figures are true to scale, we are dealing with a cult statue of half life-size (Seidl 1980–1983: 317). Here, in accordance with Berlejung (1998: 38, Anm. 206), we can see a reflection of 'religious' thought. A differentiation between the cult statue and the actual deity seems to have existed. As Ursula Seidl (1980–1983: 317) points out, an ambivalence of the real and the imagined world is depicted. The internal image and the external picture meet in one medium. Thus, the sealing provides visual proof that the goddess was considered to have an existence outside of the cult statue.

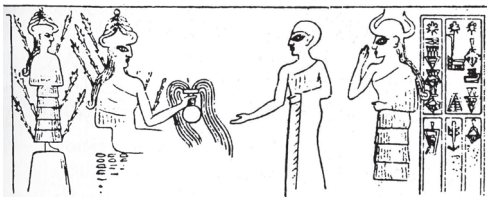

Fig. 1: Sealing (Lv. I T 103), which depicts a seated goddess and her cult statue behind her on a high podium; Akkadian Period, Musée du Louvre (after Seidl 1980–1983: Abb. 3).

However, the most famous depictions of cult statues were discovered in the Southwest Palace in Nimrud.[10] On reliefs dated to the reign of Tiglath-Pilesar III, we can see Assyrian soldiers deporting four statues of deities:[11] two are seated, one is in a shrine,[12] standing and under life-size,[13] and the last one is standing. Most of them wear attributes, like the last one, probably depicting a Storm-God (**Fig. 2**), holding three thunderbolts[14] and an axe in front of him. Due to the short skirt, two pairs of horns and the objects in his hands, it seems likely that this portrays the deportation of a Syrian cult statue (Dietz/Otto 2016: 96).[15]

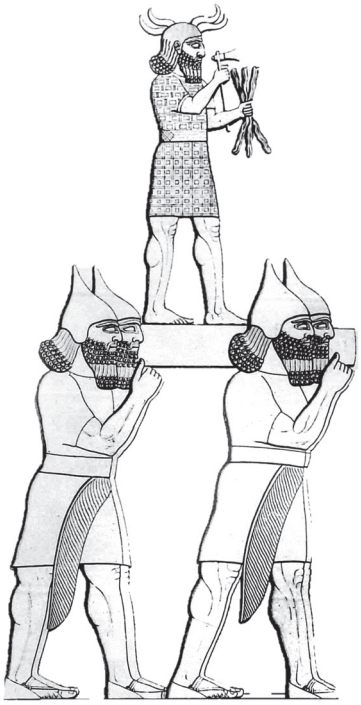

Fig. 2: Deportation of a cult statue, probably the Storm-God, on relief slab 35 from the Southwest Palace of Nimrud dating to the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III; BM 118931, British Museum (after Barnett/Falkner 1962: pl. XCII).

This short overview leaves us with no clear universal criteria for defining cult statues in depictions (Seidl 1980–1983: 317). Apart from the fact that cult statues seem to be depicted with a more static posture than depictions of actual deities, no further criteria are conspicuous.[16] This could lead us to the assumption that, in general, the

10 Relief 35 (lower part); Wall r, Slab No. 36; Western campaign Barnett – Falkner 1962: pl. XCII.

11 On 'god-napping,' see Berlejung 2012; Schaudig 2012; Gilan 2014.

12 If we see depictions of deities in niches, shrines or temple-facades, it is reasonable to assume that these are cult statues, depicted in their normal setting (Seidl 1980–1983: 316). We can see this from the Old Babylonian period on terracotta reliefs (Mayer-Opificius 1961: 116–117, Tf. 11), on the later white obelisk (Börker-Klähn 1982: Abb. 132a) and on neo-Assyrian seals (BM 126064; Collon 2001: 204, pls. XVI and XXXIX).

13 It remains unclear if the size of the cult statue has anything to do with their position in the pantheon or importance, but there seems to be a differentiation in size (Berlejung 1998: 44).

14 A 46 cm-long, golden thunderbolt, similar to the depicted ones, was found in Aššur in a neo-Assyrian private house next to the ziggurat (Andrae 1909: pl. XXXIV; Makkay 1983: pl. 11.5 for drawing; Werner 2016: 152, Taf. 87, Nr. 2236). The proximity to the Anu-Adad temple makes it tempting to assume that it was part of a cult statue of a Storm-God in Aššur. This statue would have been about life size.

15 We probably see a depiction of the capture of the capital Kunalia/Kullani or Arpad in 740 BCE on the slabs next to it and the deportation of the cult statues of the gods of Unqi (Tadmor 1994: 240, fig. 12).

16 On depicted cult statues in the first millennium BCE in Assyria and Babylonia, see Seidl 2000. Furthermore, Anatolian and Hittite representations have been left out here, see Collins 2005. In Hittite Anatolia, symbolic and theriomorphic representations of deities seem to have a higher importance than in Mesopotamia and might have a long prehistory in Anatolia. Also reliefs, vessels or *ḫuwaši*-stones could represent the deity and act as a cult image (Collins 2005: 24–29). Furthermore, fully anthropomorphic cult statues "appear to have been an innovation of the Hittite period" (Collins 2005: 38) which leads her to the assumption that the anthropomorphic cult statues, just like the cuneiform, might have been adopted into native Anatolian cults during the Hittite Old Kingdom from Mesopotamia through Hurrians in northern Syria (Collins 2005: 40).

Fig. 3: Relief depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo behind his chariot and the Storm-God of Aleppo receiving offerings from the king; Lion Gate Malatya, 11th/10th c. (Bunnens 2006: fig. 102).

representation of a cult statue did not differ very much from the representations of a deity.[17] Maybe it was just the precious materials and their colours[18] that made the difference. A similar situation can be encountered with texts: most of the time, it is not clear if cult statues or the real deities are addressed (Berlejung 1998: 61). There was no clear distinction in the adoration of deities and the veneration of the objects they are depicted on. That sets the beliefs of the ancient Near Eastern religious systems apart from the Abrahamic religions (Selz 1997: 181).

Turning to depictions of cult statues in northern Syria and Anatolia, a relief from the Lion Gate in Malatya (**Fig. 3**)[19] depicts two Storm-Gods in front of a libating king and a man leading a bull. The composition of the rare depiction of a deity and its cult statue on the Akkadian sealing discussed above (**Fig. 1**) immediately comes to mind.

The first god in front of the king is in a smiting pose, holding a lightning fork and with a weapon raised behind his head. The second god is depicted in a smiting pose while ascending his chariot drawn by two bulls. The chariot is characterized by the crossbeam-wheel and the bird-like shape. The two gods are otherwise completely the same: upturned shoes, short, belted skirt holding a sword, a shirt, a pointed horned crown with a disc on top, a long curl that falls on the back and a long beard. These two gods share an inscription that only names them as Storm-Gods: DEUS.TONITRUS.

One has the impression that this is another instance of the god and his cult statue being displayed together in one medium, which would make the god in front of the libating king the actual god and the god ascending the chariot the cult statue. If this is true, the question then arises of whether a specific (local) god and its earthly image are depicted here. For this task, it is necessary to examine other depictions of a Storm-God ascending his chariot in northern Syria and Anatolia in the second millennium BCE.

2. The Storm-God ascending his bull-drawn chariot in the visual material

The closest, nearest connection can be made with the heavily damaged relief from the Water-Gate at Karkemiš (Bunnens 2006: fig. 101) showing a person performing a libation and a man leading a bull in front of the badly preserved Storm-God[20] with his two bulls. The Storm-God's reconstruction is based on the Malatya relief (Güterbock 1993: 114; Bunnens 2006: 61–62).

One of the first depictions of a Storm-God ascending his bull-drawn chariot can be found on a unique sealing

17 In her article on cult images in Hittite Anatolia, Collins (2005: 18) comes to a similar conclusion: a clear distinction between the cult statue and a god in the visual arts remains doubtful.

18 For the meaning of the face colours of a cult statue in omen texts, see Sallaberger 2000: 248–251. The face of the statue seems to have shown its emotions concerning the current events of society and the upcoming reaction of the deity.

19 The exact findspot and place of the original installation of this relief is unclear (Orthmann 1971: 521–522).

20 Only the legs, the left arm in smiting-pose and the horned crown of the Storm-God are still visible. Also, only the legs of the second bull can be seen. The chariot is completely destroyed but seems very likely to be reconstructed here.

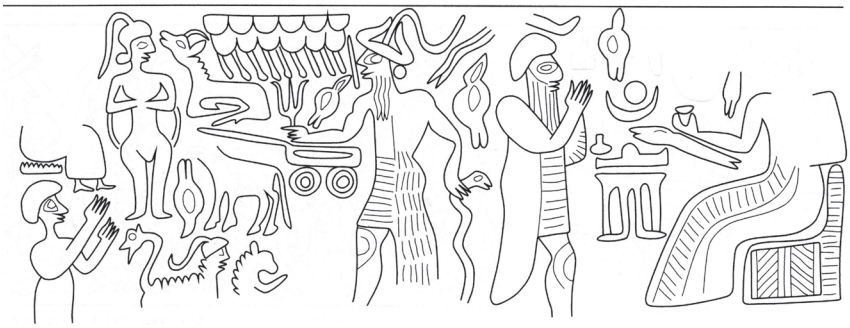

Fig. 4: Sealing depicting a Storm-God in front of his chariot under cloud and rain; Kültepe level II, Peruwa archive (Özgüç 2006: pl. 8: CS 292).

from the Peruwa archive at Kültepe level II (Özgüç 2006: CS 292, 31–32)[21] showing a Storm-God with a chariot in front of him (**Fig. 4**).

The seal, carved in the Old Syrian style, has a complex history. According to Nimet Özgüç (2006: 31), it was recut twice. Originally, there were two scenes. The first depicted a bearded figure worshipping a seated figure, possibly a deity. In the second scene, the Storm-God stands in front of the nude goddess and holds a lightning-fork in one hand and a snake in the other. The motives that were added during the second and third recuttings belong to the Anatolian style: the first re-use seems to have erased the space between the Storm-God and the nude goddess and the space behind the seated deity. Between the two deities, a cloud with rain[22] and a chariot drawn by a bull were added (Özgüç 2006: 31).[23] Even by considering the differences of time, space and style, some details still do not match the depiction at Malatya: the chariot has four wheels, and the Storm-God is holding different attributes: a lightning fork and a snake.

The first depiction showing the remarkable motif of the Storm-God ascending a bird-like chariot like on the Malatya relief (**Fig. 3**) might be found on some sherds of a relief vessel from Ḫattuša, dated to the second half of the 15th century BCE (**Fig. 5**).

Found in the 'Südteiche,' together with other probably cult-related damaged pottery, this might indicate that the vessel was originally part of a temple inventory in the 'Oberstadt' (Seeher 2007: 2). We see the remains of a slender male figure in dynamic movement and the head and part of the body of a bird/eagle with its beak. Most of the relief is broken off, but the sketch done in white paint is still visible.[24] The deity must have been quite detailed since one can still recognise the shin. More importance is given to this depiction by its size, which surpasses the register. Furthermore, depictions of gods on relief vessels are very rare. Since only a small part of the whole scene on the vessel is preserved, the exact role of the Storm-God remains unknown (Seeher 2007: 3–5). On the one hand, it could have merely been part of a cult inventory. On the other hand, it could have also been the cult object, in which the god manifested himself. Based on information provided by Hittite texts (Haas 1994: 520; Collins 2005: 24–26), the latter interpretation seems plausible. What is for certain is that it still remains the oldest depiction of a Storm-God ascending on a bird-shaped chariot, making it the earliest depiction of the type of Storm-God that comes to characterize the Aleppo temple. Furthermore, it is also the oldest depiction of a clearly identifiable god on a relief vessel in general (Seeher 2007: 8). Another relief sherd shows a crossbeam-wheel, part of a chariot, as well as a foot of an animal and of a person (Boehmer 1983: Nr. 47, Taf. XV, XVI). No clear findspot can be reconstructed since it was brought to the excavation team at Ḫattuša. Boehmer (1983: 41) assumes that it came from Büyükkale and can be dated to the Old Hittite Period. With quite some certainty, it can be reconstructed to a similar scene as on the sherd here in **Fig. 5**.

A similar bird/eagle-like chariot was also found as a mould in Ortaköy/Šapinuwa (**Fig. 6**). This small object probably belonged to a small ensemble with draught animals and a driver.[25] On the same mould, we have also a mountain god with a (double) lightning fork in each hand. To my knowledge, the latter representation is

21 There are a few more depictions of deities (?) standing or ascending a chariot that might belong to this group (Özgüç 2006: pl. 52, CS 589; Teissier 1994: No. 223) but, due to a lack of attributes, an identification as Storm-God remains tentative. Depictions of a Storm-God in an ascending posture behind a bull but without a chariot seem to be shortened versions of this type (Özgüç 2006: pl. 22, CS 367; pl. 42, CS 517; Teissier 1994: Nr. 560).

22 Such a graphic representation of clouds and rain is unique.

23 For a full description and discussion of this unique sealing together with the other possible depictions, see Dietz forthcoming.

24 A large part of this scene is reconstructed so there is still some doubt if the vessel would really show this composition. The remains of a bird-shaped chariot makes it possible though.

25 Small moulds with depictions of gods are well attested; see for example Seeher/Baykal-Seeher 2003. Furthermore, a sizeable number of small metal figurines of deities have been discovered (Bittel 1976: Abb. 167–168, 170–175).

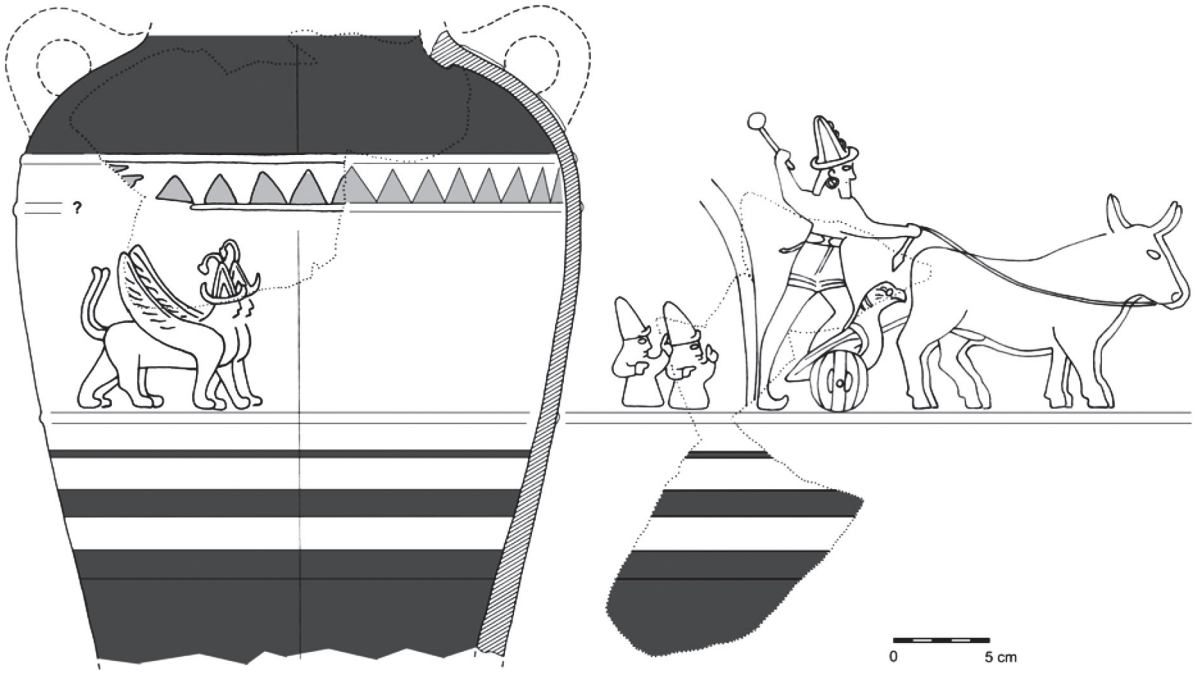

Fig. 5: Reconstruction of some sherds of a relief vessel depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo mounting his bird-shaped chariot; 'Südteiche' in Ḫattuša, second half of the 15th c. (Seeher 2007: Abb. 1,8).

Fig. 6: Mould for an eagle/bird chariot and a mountain god with lightning forks; Ortaköy/Šapinuwa, 14th c. (after Süel/Süel 2006: fig. 10).

Fig. 7: Sealing of Muršili III depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo mounting his bird-shaped chariot; Nişantepe-Archive in Ḫattuša (Herbordt/Bawanypeck/Hawkins 2011: Abb. 18).

unique. Whether this figure was also part of the ensemble is unclear.

Another depiction of the Storm-God on his chariot can be found on a Syrian/Old-Hittite seal now in the Louvre Museum (Parrot 1951; AO 20138).[26] The scene is divided into two registers. In the upper one, we have a complex, mythological (?) scene: the focus is on the Storm-God ascending his chariot in front of his consort, the nude/unveiling goddess. The latter is followed by a procession

26 According to Parrot (1951: 190), this seal dates to the Empire Period, to the middle of the second millennium BCE. Collon/Finkel 1997: 25, 1/27) date it around 1700 BCE without further explanation. Unfortunately, this cylinder-stamp seal was bought and gives no information about either its provenience or its date.

of four deities. Behind the Storm-God are mythical creatures and a mountain god. The exact meaning and importance of this scene remain unknown.

In the middle of a unique sealing from the Nişantepe-Archive (**Fig. 7**), of which several imprints have been recovered, we see the Storm-God mounting his bird-shaped chariot,[27] which is drawn by two bulls (Herbordt/Bawanypeck/Hawkins 2011: 60).

In smiting pose, he lifts a mace in his right hand behind his head. In the left hand, he holds the reins of the bulls. The hieroglyphic inscription was read by Hawkins (2003: 170–171, figs. 1–2) as (DEUS) TONITRUS GENU-FLECTERE-*MI* naming the Storm-God of Aleppo. In their study of the royal seals and sealings of the Nişantepe archive, Herbordt and Bawanypeck (2011: 60) noted that the layout of the seal is unusual: the figure of the Storm-God takes up all the space in the middle, forcing the displacement of the hieroglyphs stating the title and name of the king to the upper right. The winged sun disk, which is normally above the cartouche, is now above the chariot scene. A second cartouche with the name of Muršili can be found right under the chariot scene functioning as some kind of pedestal for the figures. This depiction seemed to have been quite important if the composition of the seal was changed. Is it because of the high status of the depicted deity and if so, could this be a depiction of a cult statue as well?

On the rockrelief of İmamkulu, dating to the 13th century BCE (Ehringhaus 2005: 70–76, Abb. 133–134), we find the Storm-God on his bull-drawn chariot supported by three mountain gods and three composite creatures in front of a goddess standing on a floral element.[28] Hawkins (2003: 171) was able to read the name of the Storm-God as Storm-God of Aleppo[29] by comparison with the well-preserved sealing of Muršili III (**Fig. 7**). Only on the sealing from Kültepe (**Fig. 4**), the seal in the Louvre (AO 20138) mentioned above, and this rock-relief is the god depicted together with his consort.[30]

The survey above indicates that the Storm-God ascending his bull-drawn chariot must be identified with the Storm-God of Aleppo.[31] The question remains, however, whether all similar depictions without an inscription can be attributed to the Storm-God of Aleppo. The only instance where this seems highly questionable to me is the sealing from Kültepe (**Fig. 4**). Some of the motif-elements are not the same, like the chariot and the attributes. Furthermore, as discussed below, it cannot be expected that the local cult had already spread so far north at this time. Either we are dealing with an Anatolian Storm-God[32] with merely a close similarity or else it is the Storm-God of Aleppo which had not found his iconic depiction yet.

Even though the Louvre seal (AO 20138), the reliefs of Malatya (**Fig. 3**) and Karkemiš with depictions of Storm-Gods ascending a chariot do not explicitly identify the Storm-God of Aleppo, it seems plausible to do so here for iconographic reasons (Hawkins 2003: 175).

But do we see a depiction of the deity himself or of the cult statue? By identifying the depicted deity, we can now turn to Aleppo with its temple of this local Storm-God to gather more evidence for an actual cult statue.

3. The Storm-God of Aleppo: the deity, his temple, and indications for a cult statue

The temple of the Storm-God of Aleppo is archaeologically attested since the middle of the third millennium BCE (**Fig. 11**;[33] Early Bronze Age IV A).[34] The oldest layer

27 According to Güterbock (1993: 116), the bird-shape of the chariot could indicate that he can be as fast as an eagle and even ride through the sky, even though the heavy vehicle and the bulls might not make it seem possible. Barnett (1964: 64–65) and Vanel (1965: 121) identified Baʿal as "cloud-rider," a term known from Ugaritic texts.

28 For a very different interpretation of this element, see Hazenbos 2002.

29 "a rough and damaged version" (Hawkins 2003: 171).

30 For information concerning the consort of the Storm-God of Aleppo, see Schwemer 2001: 220 with further references.

31 A further possible depiction can be found on a sealing found at Gözlu Kule (Tarsus). It shows the remains of a Storm-God holding the reins of a convulsing bull, turning his head back to the deity (Goldman 1956: 403, no. 42). Unfortunately, the space beneath the Storm-God is highly damaged but the remains of a wheel were reconstructed in the drawings of the impression. The elevated position of the deity in the composition does speak for some kind of support, either a chariot or some mountains/mountain gods. Regarding the disturbed space and taking the composition into account, it seems more likely to reconstruct two mountain-gods than a chariot here. See comparisons in Yazılıkaya (Seeher 2002: fig. 8, Nr. 42) and especially from Emar together with the convulsing bull turning his head (Beyer 2001: A3, C3). Therefore, this object should not be included in this collection.

32 Özgüc (2006: 32) sees in this scene the display of the Anatolian Illuyanka myth. By recutting the seal, one tried to give the Storm-god a more Anatolian appearance.

33 **Fig. 11** gives an overview of the building phases of the temple in Aleppo together with its inventory, in connection with the historical developments and an overview of the collected depictions of the deity.

34 For the latest information, 3D-documentation of the temple and the condition of the excavated areas on the citadel of Aleppo, see Kohlmeyer 2016.

is contemporaneous with the Ebla archives (Kohlmeyer 2012: 55).[35] Texts from Ebla tell us about the cult inventory of—and gifts to—the temple in Aleppo: a large quantity of precious metals for the decoration of statues, a pedestal and vessels, a two-wheeled chariot, possibly with reins and some statues, specifically a composite statue with lapis lazuli head, at least life-sized. As offerings, there is mention of silver-plated bullhorns and silver- and gold-coated maces (Archi 2010: 10–11; Kohlmeyer 2012: 70; Schwemer 2001: 109–111). Is it possible that one of these statues was a cult statue accompanied by a two-wheeled chariot, depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo? Unfortunately, no archaeological traces of such objects were found in the temple (Kohlmeyer 2012: 70–71).

During the Middle Bronze Age (MBA), with the rise of the kingdom of Jamḫad, the importance of the Storm-God of Aleppo increased as well. It was Ḫattušili I (1650–1620 BCE) who 'god-napped' the cult statue of the Storm-God of Aleppo from Ḫaššum (Ḫaššuwa) during his campaign in Syria and deported it to the temple of the sun-goddess of Arinna along with a statue of his consort Ḫebat. In the Old Hittite Puḫanu-chronicle, which is only known from later copies, the troubled relationship between the Hittite king, going to war in northern Syria, and the Storm-God of Aleppo is recounted (Schwemer 2001: 494–495). While campaigning in northern Syria, the victory of the Hittite king in the battle against Aleppo was only conceived possible with the support and agreement of the main deity of that city, requiring appropriate veneration. However, since the text is rather fragmentary, this might not have been the key event for the introduction of the cult to Ḫattuša under Ḫattusili I. (Schwemer 2001: 494–495; Gilan 2014: 196). Daniel Schwemer (2001: 490) assumes that the cult may have been known in Ḫattuša[36] since the Old Hittite Period. It was not until the Middle Hittite period, thanks to the rise of northern Syrian-Hurrian influence,[37] that the cult of the Storm-God of Aleppo gained importance, which lasted until the early Hittite Empire when he was venerated in a broader context (Schwemer 2001: 495).[38] From Šuppiluliuma I onwards, the Storm-God of Aleppo always appears in state contracts as an oath-deity. It was under Muwatalli I that the festival rituals for Teššob from Ḫalab[39] were re-organised. After that, he appears in the big prayer of Muwatalli to the assemblage of the gods (CTH 381) for the first time as 'Teššob of Ḫalab of Ḫatti' (Schwemer 2001: 495).

Beginning in the 15th century BCE, Aleppo did not have a dynasty of its own and the temple was therefore no longer the central sanctuary of a dynasty (Schwemer 2001: 489). However, this did not axiomatically mean a decline in the importance of the sanctuary. In Nuzi, the god was venerated as Teššob (Adad) of Ḫalab, while in Ugarit he was referred to as Baʿlu of Ḫalab[40] and even a month in a calendar in Emar was called month of Baʿlu of Ḫalab (Schwemer 2001: 490). These instances attest to the wide distribution and high importance of this local deity in northern Syria, northern Mesopotamia and Anatolia.

Turning now to the main temple of this deity in Aleppo (Kohlmeyer 2012: Abb. 2; **Fig. 8a**),[41] a letter from Mari probably tells us about the cult statue in the MBA period (Durand 2002: 43–46) .[42] Warad-ili-šu, servant of Zimri-Lim, sends his report about the installation of a statue of his master as an offering in the temple of the Storm-God in Aleppo.[43] Zimri-Lim wanted his statue installed

35 Archi 2010: 13–14 concludes that the Storm-God of Aleppo, according to incantations, was already venerated in Ebla before the incorporation of Aleppo into the Eblaite kingdom around 2400 BCE. A monumental temple building in Aleppo might only have been possible with the financial/economical possibilities of Ebla.

36 The cult was not only restricted to Ḫattuša. According to CTH 381 Obv. I 74–75 (Singer 1996) there was a temple of Ḫebat and Teššob of Ḫalab in Hurma. Furthermore, we know of other cult centres from the 'Kultverwaltungstexte' from Ḫattuša (CTH 698; Schwemer 2001: 490, fn 4003). Unfortunately, archaeological excavations in Anatolia have not yet produced remains of a temple dedicated to the Storm-God of Aleppo.

37 See also Hoffner 1992: esp. 102.

38 Most of the textual evidence dates to the Empire period but there are already some middle Hittite period texts accounting for the presence of the Storm-God of Ḫalab (see Schwemer 2001: 495, fn 4054), proving Haas (1994: 554) wrong, who had considered a cult before the empire period unlikely. Already in the middle Hittite Kizzuwatna treaty he is addressed as an oath-deity (Schwemer 2001: 495; KBo 28, 110, Rs 81'', Tutḫaliya I?; for a translation of the treaty see Schwemer 2005).

39 There are thirteen feasts known in Ḫattuša that were explicitly reserved for Teššob of Ḫalab (Schwemer 2001: 496). Unfortunately, no details of these events are known. However, it seems likely that these feasts, which were celebrated in Ḫattuša and other Hittite cities, often originated from northern Syria. Nevertheless, it remains questionable whether we can assume the feasts in the cult calendar from Ḫattuša also for Aleppo. There is no evidence for a coordination of cultic reforms of these two sanctuaries although it does not seem very likely since Aleppo was one of the two Hittite secundogenitures since Šuppiluliuma I (Schwemer 2001: 198).

40 For the Storm-god of Aleppo in Texts from Ugarit, see Tropper/Vita 1999.

41 For a detailed description of the architecture and different phases, see Kohlmeyer 2012.

42 FM 7 17 [M.7161], l. 8–20.

43 Zimri-Lim even named one of his regnal year (ZL 2=1') after this event: mu *zi-im-ri-lim* alam-*šu a-na* ^{d}IM *ša ha-la-ab*^{ki} *ú-še-lu-ú* "year, in which Zimri-Lim offered his statue to the god Addu of Aleppo" (after Charpin/Ziegler 2003: 258).

on the lap of Addu, but Yarim-Lim reminds them that on this place, there is already a silver statue of Šamaš. If the interpretation is correct, we might be dealing with a seated cult statue of the Storm-God, with a small statue of the sun-god on his lap. This interpretation sheds new light on some finds made in the cult niche of the MBA temple at Aleppo (**Fig. 8a**; Kohlmeyer 2012: Taf. 18b): a massive broken block of limestone and several large fragments of basalt that were at first interpreted as a stela by the excavators. However, in light of the information provided by Warad-ili-šu's letter, it now seems that we might be dealing with the remains of the seat and back of the throne of the cult statue (Kohlmeyer 2012, 71).

After the Hittite conquest of Aleppo, the temple had to be re-erected in the late fourteenth to early 13th century BCE. Due to the secundogeniture established by Šuppiluliuma I, the Hittites had direct control over and influence on the cult (Kohlmeyer 2012: 56; **Fig. 8b**).[44] Is this pre-eminence of Aleppo in the Hittite Empire a fundamental or at least useful explanation for the expansion of the cult and the depictions of the deity? It remains unknown whether there was some kind of coordination concerning cult and feasts between the two sanctuaries in Ḫattuša and Aleppo, but it seems at least possible. There might have also been some coordination of iconographical concepts and the fashioning of the cult statues. Several texts from the 13th century BCE tell us about the cult objects in the temple of the Storm-God in Ḫattuša (Popko 2002: 77–78). Mentioned in addition to the divine weapons are a chariot, the two bulls Šeri and Ḫurri and, in some texts, the mountains. These are all aspects of depictions of the Storm-God of Aleppo in all media, but

Fig. 8: Construction phases of the Storm-God temple in Aleppo: a) Middle Bronze Age; b) Hittite Empire Period; c) last renovation around 900 BCE (Kohlmeyer 2012: Abb. 2–4).

44 He even installed one of his sons as the priest of the Storm-God and ruler of the city (Kohlmeyer 2012: 56; Gilan 2014: 202).

I would be hesitant to apply this since the texts refer to the temple of Teššob in Ḫattuša.[45]

Some alterations due to the rebuilding of the temple of the Storm-God of Aleppo have to be mentioned: the size of the cella was reduced, and the cult niche was probably filled in (**Fig. 8b**). Judging by its smashed state and context of discovery, it seems that the cult statue might not have survived the fire and destruction of the temple.[46] A 1.7 m by 1.8 m wide platform was built along the newly erected northern wall, the "pedestal wall." Its facade was decorated with orthostats (Kohlmeyer 2012: Taf. 17). Ultimately, the whole conception of the room seems to have changed, and even the cult orientation appears to have been altered (Kohlmeyer 2009: 194). The introduction of the bent-axis scheme, typical for Hittite temples, indicates a profound change in cultic practice. On the eastern side, a relief depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo was erected (**Fig. 9**).[47] Thanks to the changed orientation of the cult, the relief became the "focus of the cult and locus of the divine presence" (Kohlmeyer 2009: 195). This led Kohlmeyer to the assumption that the relief might even be the cult image. The identification of the figure as the Storm-God of Aleppo was made by Hawkins (Hawkins 2011: 40, ALEPPO 5) because of the inscription above the god's raised left hand.

At the end of the second millennium BCE, the temple of the Storm-God of Aleppo was renovated under King Taita of Palistin. On the eastern wall, Taita added a relief depicting himself next to a pre-existing image of the Storm-God (**Fig. 9**).[48] Luwian hieroglyphs identify Taita as "king" and "hero" of Palistin (Hawkins 2011: fig. 7b, §1). Due to the palaeography and historical background, these renovations could be dated to the eleventh century BCE (Hawkins 2011).

Fig. 9: Central relief of the eastern wall of the Storm-God temple in Aleppo depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo (late 14th/13th c.) in front of king Taita (11th c.) (Kohlmeyer 2016: Abb. 4).

In addition, king Taita made other renovations and alterations concerning architectural décor. Whether Taita simply repaired the temple or whether he wanted to introduce his ideological program remains unknown (Kohlmeyer 2009: 199). Kohlmeyer (2009: 197) posits that the relief of the standing Storm-God of Aleppo might have lost its cult image status because of this modification and suggests a return to the old cult axis orientation on the northern side in axis with the entrance. The object of veneration remains unknown, but it seems doubtful that an actual cult image could ever lose its status. Either it was never a cult image or it would remain one until its destruction. Nevertheless, looking at the historical background and the deep political changes during this troublesome period, a change of a cult image could not be excluded but seems unlikely due to the long and undisturbed tradition and execution of the cult.

In the first millennium BCE, the Storm-God of Aleppo maintained his importance (Kohlmeyer 2009: 191). A last renovation phase of the temple can be dated ca. 900 BCE (Kohlmeyer 2012: 68; **Fig. 8c**). Almost all of the reliefs along the northern side of the cella are exchanged. One of them depicts the Storm-God ascending on his chariot with an inscription naming him 'Divine Mace' (**Fig. 10**; Hawkins 2011: 40). Bunnens (2006: 79–80) and Kohlmeyer (2000: 31–32) see this as an epithet of the Storm-God

45 For Popko, Teššob in general and the Storm-God of Aleppo seem to be interchangeable; see Popko 1998a; Popko 1998b; Popko 2002. Furthermore, a priest for the Storm-God of Aleppo is known in Ḫattuša as well (Popko 2002: 79).

46 As also indicated by the rubble of limestone and basalt in the MBA niche, which might have belonged to a throne (see above).

47 The proportions of the divine figure correspond to Hittite artistic conventions: disproportional legs, a big head, ears and eyes. Also, the installation at the eastern, not the northern wall which had been the main focus of the cult before, seems to indicate an Empire period work. The bent-axis scheme and the installation of false windows are the most conspicuous indicators for a change to a Hittite temple scheme. Normally, windows close to the floor were installed in temples, but since these alterations were not feasible in the already existing temple in Aleppo, they chose to install false windows to keep up the appearance of a typical Hittite temple (Kohlmeyer 2009: 195). Similar alterations can be found in Alalakh (level III), where the cult orientation, amongst other things, was also changed to a bent-axis scheme; Woolley interpreted this change as "nationalist revival" (Woolley 1955: 78).

48 The backside of the relief is worked differently than the one of the Storm-God and sticks out a little further. Thus, it seems likely that the relief of Taita replaced an old and now lost relief. What was depicted opposite of the Storm-God remains unknown, as archaeological excavations could not be carried out on that side of the room (Kohlmeyer 2009: 197).

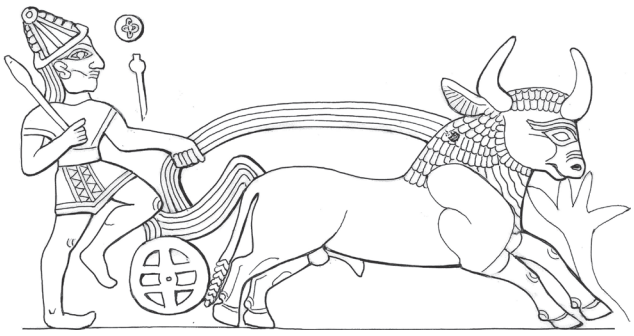

Fig. 10: Relief of the Storm-God of Aleppo (annotated as 'Divine-Mace') ascending on his chariot; northern wall of the Storm-God temple in Aleppo, 9th c. BCE (Dietz/Otto 2016: Abb. 5, drawing: C. Wolff).

of Aleppo. Hawkins (2011: 40) assumes that the epigraph might refer specifically to the weapon on his shoulder to "avoid clashing with the other epigraph" of the Hittite depiction of the Storm-God on the east wall.

If we look at the collected depictions of the Storm-God of Aleppo ascending his chariot in the second half of the second millenium BCE, we can observe that they are extremely homogenous over a long period of time and among very different media. The probably earliest appearance of this type, probably on the cult vessel from Ḫattuša, dates to the second half of the 15th century BCE. This corresponds well with the historical developments in northern Syria and Anatolia, including the contact of the Hittites with the Storm-God of Aleppo and the introduction of the cult at Ḫattuša. It must be asked, however, whether the image on the Ḫattuša cult vessel depicts the cult statue in the temple of Ḫattuša rather than the cult statue in Aleppo?

In some cases, the placement of the god within the composition emphasised his special importance (especially **Fig. 5** and **Fig. 7**). Several iconographical elements stay unchanged over the centuries (except for some differences due to media and materials). First, the chariot is almost always drawn by two bulls. Only on the İmamkulu relief does there seem to be only one bull drawing the chariot. In addition, the crossbeam-wheel[49] is recognisable even on smaller media such as the stamp-cylinder seal from the Louvre and the mould from Ortaköy (**Fig. 6**). Since the crossbeam-wheel can be seen on the relief vessel from Ḫattuša of the 15th century BCE (**Fig. 5**) as well as on the relief from the temple in Aleppo from the ninth century BCE (**Fig. 10**), it can be concluded that its depiction remains consistent. The bird-shaped chariot also appears on almost every depiction,[50] but beginning with the stamp-cylinder seal from the Louvre it grows increasingly abstract. This may be due to the size of the medium and is especially evident on the reliefs from Malatya (**Fig. 3**) and Aleppo (**Fig. 10**).[51] The chariot seems to be a characteristic and important element of the whole Storm-God iconography. Finally, except for the seal in the Louvre, the direction of the god is always from left to right.

Furthermore, the Hittite Empire Period relief of the temple in Aleppo (**Fig. 9**) is the only one preserved from the second half of the second millennium BCE that shows the Storm-God of Aleppo in a standing position with both arms raised. Do we have two traditions of depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo, or even two depictions of cult images here? Was one originally formulated in Aleppo with the other one possibly formulated in Ḫattuša, at a time when the cult of the Storm-God of Aleppo had already been fully established in the Hittite capital? Or do we have to follow a more general approach, like Klengel (1965: 89) and Bunnens (2004: 61),[52] assuming that every smiting Storm-God in northern Syria and Anatolia depicts the Storm-God of Aleppo? What arguments speak in favour of the depictions being a cult image showing the Storm-God ascending his bull-drawn chariot? One striking argument is the stereotypical depiction of a local deity over a wide area and for several hundred years from the fifteenth to the ninth century BCE. This might imply a famous, traditional-conservative cult image which was the role-model for the depictions in various media (Collon 2007: 69; see also Schützinger 1984: 66; Berlejung 1998: 61). But, on the other hand, as Ursula Seidl remarked (Seidl 1980–1983: 317), this typification

49 For crossbeam-wheel in general, see Boehmer 1983: 36–41.

50 The chariot on the small relief vessel sherd (Boehmer 1983: Nr. 47) is very fragmentary and does not show the shield of the chariot, but it seems that not even an abstract bird is depicted here.

51 Concerning the relief of the Storm-God temple in Aleppo, Seeher states, "daß der vorn aufragende und umgebogene Rand des Wagenkastens eine rudimentäre Darstellung des Adlerkopfes ist" (Seeher 2007: 7).

52 Horst Klengel (1965: 89) assumes that with the rise of the kingdom of Jamḫad, all the depictions of a Storm-God during the MBA in Northern Syria relate to the Storm-God of Aleppo. He states: "er wurde der eigentliche Wettergott im nördlichen Syrien und es bedurfte wahrscheinlich keines besonderen Ortshinweises, um im Wettergott in erster Linie seine in Ḫalab verehrte Erscheinungsform (Statue) zu sehen." Also Guy Bunnens (2004: 61) considers the relation of the smiting-gods in the first millennium BCE on stele with the Storm-God of Aleppo since "the only geographical association of the smiting god is thus Aleppo." Even though this assumption cannot be proven wrong, it seems too optimistic in my opinion.

could just presuppose an agreement (by whomever) on the characteristics of each deity. Furthermore, the one criterion we can decidedly observe from this survey of depictions of cult statues was the static posture. This would not apply here.[53] The most significant difference between the collected depictions and a three-dimensional cult statue would be the medium, allowing more options in visualisation and the different materials available that would have evoked more splendour and gaze.

The distribution of this image seems to move south from Anatolia, based on the material we have available thus far. However, the first textual attestations for the cult and its representations in Aleppo come from Ebla and Mari. Generally, one needs to keep in mind that we have very few objects depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo, and so every statement has to be treated with caution.

In addition, the depictions seem to be mostly on official and representative objects contributing to its widespread visibility.[54] Starting with smaller objects, such as the royal seal from the Nişantepe-Archive or the cult vessels that probably belonged to a temple inventory, to the larger representations on reliefs (including rock-reliefs[55]), they all had a chance to reach a bigger audience and therefore promote the visual representation of the Storm-God of Aleppo. The god may have also had a special meaning or relation to the Hittite royal court. But it must be acknowledged that it cannot be said with any certainty to what extent the sealing from the Nişantepe-Archive actually reached many people, whether the reliefs at the Watergate in Karkemiš or the Lion Gate at Malatya were really easily accessible for everyone, and how many people would have passed by the rock-relief of İmamkulu.

Taking a quick look at the first millennium BCE depictions of the Storm-God of Aleppo, we can observe that he is no longer shown with his chariot, except for one instance in Aleppo (**Fig. 10**). On two stelae,[56] one from Babylon and one from Körkün (Bunnens 2006: fig. 63–64), he stands with both arms raised, holding a three-pronged thunderbolt and an axe, the typical depiction for Storm-Gods in Syria and southern Anatolia during the first half of the first millennium BCE (Dietz/Otto 2016: 96). These representations seem now to resemble more the Hittite relief from the temple in Aleppo (**Fig. 9**). However, a composite statue in Çineköy, 30 km south of Adana, is the first evidence that this Storm-God iconography in the chariot can also be produced three-dimensionally (Tekoğlu et al. 2000). The statue was not found *in situ* and had probably been taken away from its original location and was destroyed in antiquity (Tekoğlu et al. 2000: 967). In addition, the Storm-God of Aleppo is not mentioned. The person mentioned in the bilingual Luwian and Phoenician inscription is Warika, King of Hiyawa/Danunim, the beloved of Tarhunza, blessed by Baʿal (Tekoğlu et al. 2000: 968–972, 990–995). Bunnens (2006: 62) considers this to be a depiction of a deified king who adapted this motive. Although it seems unlikely to find a representation of the Storm-God of Aleppo in this context, it is still proof for the ongoing use of this motif, which may no longer be restricted to the Storm-God of Aleppo. The change in the manner of depicting the Storm-God of Aleppo in the first millennium BCE seems to reflect some social, cultural, political or religious change in society.

4. Conclusion

Iconographical representations reveal important characteristics of deities and help to identify them. But it remains difficult to separate depictions of deities from depictions of cult statues. There are still a lot of questions unanswered and unclear. Did the deity, when depicted on different media, resemble in every detail the cult statue? More generally, is it correct to assume that there should be just one immutable representation of a deity? Does the cult statue have to match depictions of the deity on different media, or can there be a difference without creating inconsistency in the perception of a deity?

It may never be something we can separate successfully since the ancient craftsmen do not seem to have made a distinction between deity and cult statue. According to Selz (2012), what they wanted to depict was the presence of the god which was achieved through the visual relation to the prototype. By constructing this relation, the depictions became divine; the inanimate objects became agents and acted in the same realms as the deities themselves and the cult statues.

Turning to the Storm-God of Aleppo, the reason why this specific local Storm-God received such widespread textual and cultural distribution and was depicted in such an iconic way may be explained by the historic developments and his high status in the MBA, when he was the head of the Pantheon of Ḫalab, the capital of the powerful kingdom of Jamḫad at this time. His place

53 The statue of Çineköy perfectly shows how a more static version of this type would look like (Tekoğlu et al. 2000).

54 Except for the small mould from Ortaköy and the Louvre-seal.

55 For the importance of rockreliefs as a monumental medium for representation, see Emre 2002; Ehringhaus 2005; Simon 2012.

56 There is a third one from Tell Aḫmar that names the Storm-God of Aleppo, but unfortunately the relief was destroyed completely, so no statement about the way the god was depicted is possible (Çambel/Hawkins 2000: 231–234, III.3, pl. 95–96, TELL AHMAR 5).

	History of Aleppo	Archaeological Evidence	Temple Inventory* and Cult Statue	Depictions of the Storm-god of Aleppo in the ANE
EBA	Restorations and offerings in the temple by the kings of Ebla	First temple (roughly hewn blocks with mud-bricks); foundation deposit of late Early Dynastic – early Akkadian periods	Texts from Ebla: precious metals for the decoration of statues, pedestal and vessels, a two-wheeled carriage (for a cult statue?), a composite statue with a head of lapis lazuli, at least life-sized (cult statue?), silver-plated bull horns and silver- and gold-plated maces	–
MBA	Kingdom of Yamḫad	Renovation of temple with limestone orthostats and floor of lime and mortar; second floor with large limestone and basalt slabs	Description of the cult statue in cuneiform texts from Mari Broken block of limestone, big fragments of basalt: seat and back of a throne for a cult statue? Fragment of a cubic seat with a relief of men in combat and two men with long bandages	**On his chariot:** – Sealing from Kültepe (?)
LBA	Aleppo under the rule of Hurri-Mittani	Renovation with basalt orthostats	Upper part of an offering table (basalt) Fragments of offerings: small bronze armour plate, horn of a bull figurine (gold-silver-alloy)	**On his chariot:** – 2 Relief-vessels, Ḫattuša – Louvre Seal AO 20138 – (Mould from Šapinuwa/Ortaköy) – Bulla from Nişantepe-Archive – Rock relief İmamkulu **Standing:** – Relief from Aleppo-temple
	Aleppo conquered by Suppiluliuma I and afterwards under Hittite rule	Temple destroyed by fire		
		Temple rebuilt with change of cult direction to a bent-axis scheme; relief decoration with 'false windows,' bull-men, and depiction of the Storm God		
IA	In northern Syria: Luwian-Aramean minor states after the decline of the Hittite Empire	Temple destroyed by fire	Cubic statue, over life-sized (limestone) in the debris above the eastern wall	**On his chariot:** – Orthostat from Karkemiš – Orthostat from Arslantepe – Relief from Aleppo-temple **Standing:** – Stela from Babylon – Stela from Körkün
	11th c. BCE: Aleppo belonging to the kingdom of Taita ruling Padasatini/Palistin	Reconstruction of the temple, exchange of sculptures; re-establishing of the old cult direction (in axis)		
	9th c. BCE: Aleppo belonging to Bit (A)gusi	900 BCE: exchange of reliefs of the pedestal wall; temple destroyed by fire		

* Almost none of the original inventory was found because the temple was heavily disturbed by Hellenistic building activities as far down as the EBA floors (Kohlmeyer 2012: 70).

Fig. 11: Chronology of Aleppo and the temple of the Storm-God (adapted from Kohlmeyer 2009: 197; information concerning the inventory from Kohlmeyer 2012).

in the cult was also secured and developed by attributing myths to him, emphasizing his domination, parallel with the power of the king (Durand 1993: esp. 54–56; Popko 1998b). Provided with a rich textual and visual characterisation, the external picture and internal image of the Storm-God of Aleppo was clearly defined and integrated into the traditions of several social groups. Even after the fall of this dynasty, his importance did not decline, and he had already been adopted into the Hittite pantheon and venerated, which is textually and visually attested. This prompted the growing prominence of the Storm-God of Aleppo and the spread of his cult and its iconography.

Nevertheless, the second millennium BCE material is so homogenous that one might consider a cult image as a prototype for these depictions. Even if no definite statements can be made about the appearance of the cult statue of the Storm-God of Aleppo, important insights into how an image of a deity was distributed and displayed were gained. The homogeneous depiction of the Storm-God of Aleppo for several centuries over a large area demonstrates the importance and impact of this deity. It is possible to identify this deity even without an inscription. It needs to be remembered that this is a special case where visual, textual and archaeological data clearly differentiated from other deities is available. By displaying the image on different media that might have been available to a larger audience, the characteristic iconography of the Storm-God of Aleppo was established over a wide area and probably throughout most parts of society. Such a significant way of depicting a deity is exceptional for a local god and makes it possible to separate him from the numerous other Storm-Gods (Dietz/Otto 2016). This also shows his significance and role in the panthea of this time. So not only the texts but also the visual material of this god might have contributed to his wide distribution and importance throughout Anatolia, northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia.

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Weihgaben als Spiegel der Rolle von Gottheiten im mesopotamischen Pantheon*

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Die Religion Mesopotamiens war eine polytheistische, in der das Pantheon nach dem Vorbild einer Großfamilie organisiert wurde. Dank der Listen, die uns erhalten geblieben sind, können wir Götterfamilien und Genealogien rekonstituieren. Jede Gottheit besaß ein besonderes Aktionsfeld, das sich aus ihrer Persönlichkeit herausgebildet hatte: Šamaš, der Sonnengott, war für die Justiz verantwortlich; Adad, der Gott der Unwetter und Niederschläge, garantierte eine florierende Landwirtschaft etc. Diese Kompetenzbereiche wurden als „Anteil/zugeteiltes Los" (*isqum*) bezeichnet. Dasselbe Wort finden wir auch in den Erbteilungstexten und dort bezeichnet es jenen Teil, der den Erben eines väterlichen Vermögens per Los zugewiesen wurde. Die göttlichen Kompetenzbereiche waren allerdings nicht exklusiv gehalten, so waren Šamaš und Adad beide Schutzgottheiten der Orakelschau.

Um die Spezialisierungen zu ermitteln, die man einer Gottheit zuschrieb, können mehrere Quellen herangezogen werden.

Zuallererst die Epitheta: So wurde Nergal als „heldenhaftester der Götter" bezeichnet, womit der besondere Akzent auf sein Wirken als Kriegsgott gelegt wurde. Die Göttin Gula wurde als „die große Ärztin, die große Herrin" bezeichnet, was zeigt, dass ihr Kompetenzbereich im Gesundheitswesen lag.

Auch können die Gebete analysiert werden, die an eine Gottheit gerichtet wurden. Die darin ausgesprochene Bitte zeigt, worin die besondere Stärke der Gottheit lag. So wünschte man sich von der Muttergottheit eine zahllose Nachkommenschaft:

> „O Ninmah, barmherzige Mutter, schaue freundlich drein! Auf deinen Lippen mögen mir günstige Worte liegen! Breite meinen Samen aus, mache meinen Nachwuchs zahlreich, inmitten meiner Nachkommenschaft lass den Kindersegen wohlgedeihen!"[1]

Auch kann sich das Studium der Verfluchungen als instruktiv erweisen. Die Flüche zeigen im negativen Sinne worin die Prärogative der Gottheit lagen. So forderte Hammurabi in seinem Gesetzeskodex die Heilgöttin Ninkarrak dazu auf, einen zukünftigen König, der sein Werk nicht respektieren sollte, mit Krankheit zu behaften:

> „Möge Ninkarrak (…) aus seinen Gliedern eine schwere Krankheit, einen bösen *asakkum*, eine schlimme *simmum*-Hautkrankheit hervorkommen lassen."[2]

Letztendlich geben auch Votivgaben Auskunft über die speziellen Kompetenzbereiche einer Gottheit. Diese können anhand der materiellen Hinterlassenschaften in den Tempeln studiert werden, was meines Wissens bisher noch nicht systematisch unternommen worden ist.[3] Ich will im folgenden, ohne Vollständigkeit anzustreben,[4] die Votivgaben, die in archäologischen Ausgrabungen

* Ich danke den Organisatoren dieses sehr interessanten Symposiums für ihre Einladung und Nele Ziegler für die Übersetzung meines Beitrags.

1 Für das Gebet an Ninkarrak s. Seux 1976: 514. Eine deutschsprachige Übersetzung findet sich in SAHG: 287 Nr. 32.

2 Kodex Hammurabi, Epilog Rs. xxviii 50–69; s. Roth 1995: 139.

3 Siehe jetzt die Beiträge von Evans, Cluzan, Roßberger, Schmitt, Gries, Otto, Herbordt im vorliegenden Band.

4 Mehr Belege finden sich in meinem Buch, Charpin 2017a; die HTML-Version ist frei zugänglich (DOI: 10.4000/books.lesbelleslettres.106).

gefunden worden sind oder die in Texten erwähnt wurden, untersuchen, mich aber auf drei Fälle beschränken, die mir charakteristisch erscheinen – nämlich auf Weihgaben für Nergal, für Nabu und für die Göttin Gula.

1. Opfergaben für Nergal

Nergal war eine komplexe Göttergestalt mit zwei Facetten: er war einerseits Kriegsgott und andererseits Herrscher der Totenwelt. Die Opfergaben, die ihm gemacht wurden, spiegeln diesen doppelten Aspekt seiner Persönlichkeit wider.

Opfergaben für den Gott des Kriegswesens …

Ein Fluch in den ‚Vassal Treaties' Asarhaddons beschreibt Nergal als todbringenden Gott:

> „Möge Nergal, der heldenhafte unter den Göttern, eurem Leben durch sein gnadenloses Schwert ein Ende setzen und euch Gemetzel und Pest bringen!"[5]

Um dem Schwert des Nergal zu entgehen, schenkte man ihm daher mit Vorliebe Schwerter. Davon zeugen Weihinschriften. Aus Mari stammt dieses Modell einer Inschrift, mit der man eine dem Gott geweihte Waffe versehen wollte:[6]

> „Mögen Anu und Enlil den Thron desjenigen umstürzen, der diese Waffe aus der Hand des Nergal entfernt, (um) eine andere hineinzulegen, der sie in sein Schatzhaus bringt, der meinen geschriebenen Namen entfernt, um seinen eigenen hineinzuschreiben! Möge Nergal, der Herr der Waffe, seine Waffe zerbrechen!"[7]

Der Text präzisiert nicht, auf welche Art Waffe die Inschrift angebracht werden sollte. Das zweite Beispiel stammt aus einem wohlbekannten Brief, den ein *āpilum*-Prophet des Sonnengottes Šamaš dem König Zimri-Lim aus Andarig schickte.[8] Der Prophet begann seine Botschaft mit einer Auflistung der Wünsche des Sonnengottes: Zimri-Lim sollte ihm einen Thron schicken und seine Tochter nach Sippar senden, wahrscheinlich damit sie dort zur *nadîtum*-Klosterfrau geweiht werde. Dann erinnerte er Zimri-Lim daran, dass er die Versprechen einhalten müsse, die er dem Wettergott Addu von Aleppo für den Fall eines Sieges gemacht hatte. Nach der Diskussion um ein Geschenk für den Gott Dagan finden wir schlussendlich folgende Passage:

> „Nergal, der Herr von Hubšalum, stand dir und deiner Armee beim Sieg zur Seite. Lasse alles, was du ihm versprochen hast, sowie das große bronzene Schwert (*nam-ṣa-ra-am* ZABAR GAL) herstellen und bringe es dem Nergal, dem König von Hubšalum."[9]

Errungene Siege wurden dem Einfluss des Gottes Nergal zugeschrieben. In Obermesopotamien handelte es sich hierbei um jenen Nergal, der als „Herr von Hubšalum"[10] bekannt war. Nergal von Hubšalum war auch einer der dreizehn Götter, bei denen ein nicht identifizierter Herrscher mit Qarni-Lim von Andarig und Haya-abum von Apum einen Eid leistete. Der Schwurtext ist in Tell Leilan (LT 1) gefunden worden und zeugt von der großen regionalen Bedeutung des Gottes:[11]

> „Schwöre bei Enlil! Schwöre beim Sin des Himmels! Schwöre beim Šamaš des Himmels! Schwöre beim Addu des Himmels! Schwöre bei Nergal, dem Herrn von Hubšalum! Schwöre bei Nergal, dem Herrn von Zirrami! Schwöre bei …! Schwöre bei […]raya! Schwöre bei […]ar! Schwöre bei […]na[…]! Schwöre bei Ištar von Ninet! Schwöre bei Ištar, der Herrin des Kampfes! [Schwöre bei …]!"[12]

Ein Bronzeschwert von etwas mehr als 1 m Länge, das heute mehr als 5 kg wiegt, war jenem ähnlich, das im Brief des *āpilum*-Propheten beschrieben wurde (Fig. 1). Leider stammt es aus dem Antikenhandel, so dass seine genauere Herkunft und Datierung unbekannt sind. Die Inschrift auf der Schneide lautet folgendermaßen:

> „Dem Herrn von Hubšalum, seinem Herrn, hat Lu-lu'anum der Sohn des Azizum dieses Schwert von 12 Minen für sein Leben und das seiner Söhne/seines Sohnes geweiht."[13]

5 Parpola/Watanabe 1988: 455–456, Nr. 6.

6 Für die Idee, dass es sich nicht um Kopien, sondern um Modelle von Königsinschriften handelt, cf. Charpin 1997 und ders. 2006: 153–154.

7 Charpin 1984: 62–63, n. 10. Da dieser Text keinen Königsnamen enthält, wurde er nicht in RIMA 1, bzw. in RIME 4 aufgenommen.

8 Charpin 1987.

9 ARM 26/1 194: 24–31.

10 Ein Brief Yasim-Els, des Vorstehers der mariotischen Garnison in Andarig (ARM 26/2 419) erwähnt den Kultort Hubšalum und beschreibt ihn als Oase in der Steppe im Süden des Djebel Sindjar. Zum Toponym s. Ziegler/Langlois 2016: 146.

11 Ein anderer Brief erwähnt die *muhhûm*-Extatiker des Gottes Amu von Hubšalum (ARM 27 32), was zeigt, dass der Gott Amu mit Nergal assimiliert wurde. Der Gott Nergal von Hubšalum wird in einem Brief des Buriya erwähnt, der in Tell Leilan gefunden worden ist (PIHANS 117 43: 9' ^{d}NE$_3$.ERI$_{11}$.GAL / LUGAL *hu-ub-ša-lim*^{ki}). Ein anderer Brief des Aštamar-Addu aus demselben Archiv erwähnt den Ort (PIHANS 117 8: 27 [Hubšil]). Cf. Charpin 2018.

12 Edition des Textes LT 1 in Eidem 2011: 346–367. Neubearbeitung von Charpin 2016a: 150.

13 Güterbock 1965: 197–198 + pls. XIII–XV.

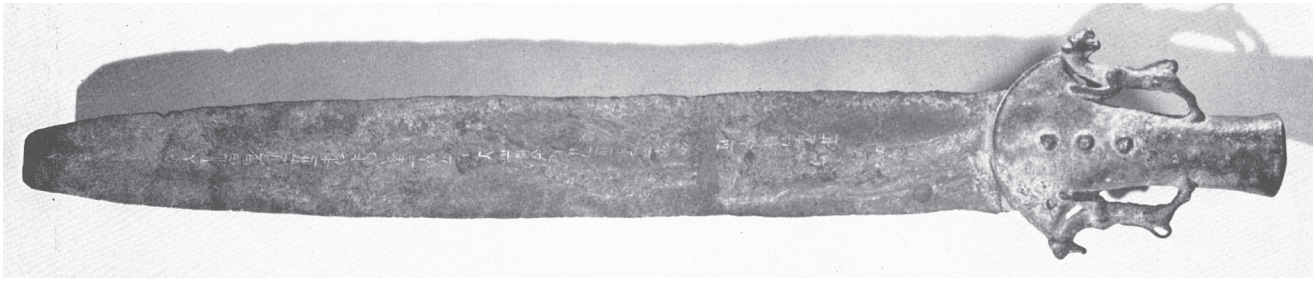

Fig. 1: Ein dem Gott Nergal geweihtes Schwert (Güterbock 1965: pl. XIII).

Weil die Schwertspitze nicht erhalten ist, ist die Übereinstimmung der 5 kg mit den 12 Minen nicht gegeben. In Mari liegt das Gewicht eines *namṣarum*-Schwerts bei nur 1½ Minen d.h. weniger als 1 kg. I. Arkhipov hatte angemerkt, dass es sich dabei eher um das Gewicht eines Dolches handelt,[14] aber der Brief des Propheten präzisierte, dass der Gott ein *nam-ṣa-ra-am* ZABAR GAL erwartete: es gab dementsprechend kleine und große Schwerter.

… aber auch für den Unterweltsgott

Nergal war nicht nur Kriegsgott. Seine Rolle als Herr der Totenwelt wird bisweilen sehr genau beschrieben, wie im folgenden Übungstext aus Nippur, in dem die Schüler die Votivinschrift einer dem Nergal geweihten Bronzeaxt kopiert hatten. Der Text endete mit folgendem Gebet:[15]

> „Solange ich lebe, möge er nach mir schauen. Wenn ich tot bin, in der Unterwelt, möge er mich klares Wasser trinken lassen."

Welche Funktion hatten die Nergaltempel in diesem Kontext? Die Antwort könnte ein Text aus der zweiten Hälfte des 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr. liefern, der in Emar, dem heutigen Meskene (Syrien), am Euphrat gefunden wurde. Das Dokument bestätigt die Belohnung, die man einem Mann zukommen ließ, der beim hurritischen Herrscher als erfolgreicher Gesandter gewirkt hatte:

> „Als Entschädigung für die Mühe, die er sich gemacht hat, bezüglich der Geiseln der Stadt und seines Herrn, haben der König und die Stadt von Emar ihn mit dem Amt eines Tempelverwalters (*šangûm*) des Nergaltempels am Markt betraut, sowie mit dem Amt eines Intendanten (GAL), – (ihn), seinen Sohn, seine Enkel, seine Nachkommen. Für alle Zeiten soll er der Verwalter und Intendant (*ra-be bi-ti*) des Nergal sein. Niemals soll ihn ein anderer (seines Amtes) im Nergaltempel entheben und auch nicht aus dem Amt eines Bestatters (*qabbārūtum*)."[16]

Das Dokument beginnt mit der Erwähnung zweier Ämter, jenem eines *šangûm* und jenem eines "Großen (des Tempels)", wobei letzteres Amt zuerst mit einem Sumerogramm, dann syllabisch notiert wurde. Gegen Ende des Texts wird hingegen das Amt eines "Totengräbers" (*qabbārūtum*) genannt. Das zuvor noch nicht belegte Abstraktum ist vom Verb *qabārum/qebērum*, "begraben, Tote bestatten" abgeleitet. Der Verwalter des Nergaltempels hatte dementsprechend das Amt eines "Bestatters" inne.[17]

Musikinstrumente und Musiker als Weihgaben für Nergal

Dem Totengott konnten Musiker oder Musikinstrumente geweiht werden. Davon zeugt ein Brief des Gesandten am Hof Aplahandas von Karkemiš, Ištaran-naṣir, an Zimri-Lim von Mari:

> „Ich habe dem Aplahanda von den *gerseqqûm*-Musikern gesprochen, deretwegen mein Herr mich geschickt hat. Wie ich meinem Herrn bereits zuvor geschrieben habe, weiht er dem Nergal unablässig [Musiker]. Er hat geantwortet: ‚Falls ein *gerseqqûm*-Musiker, wegen dem Zimri-Lim mir geschrieben hat, zur Verfügung steht, ich ihn ihm aber vorenthalte, dann möge dieser Gott (mich), Aplahanda, strafen!' Dies war seine Antwort."[18]

Der Brief wurde gegen Ende der Lebenszeit des Königs von Karkemiš verfasst. Dieser hatte dem Totengott Nergal so viele Musiker geweiht, dass ihm keine mehr übrig blieben, die er dem Herrscher von Mari hätte schicken können. Es darf angenommen werden, dass Aplahandas

14 Arkhipov 2012: 117.

15 Behrens 1988: 27–32; s. nun Kleinerman 2011: 144–145.

16 Sigrist 1993: 165–188, Nr. 6; s. seither Durand/Marti 2003: 141–180.

17 Es kann hier unterstrichen werden, dass sich ein großer Friedhof inmitten Maškan-šapirs befand. Der Hauptgott dieser Stadt war Nergal. Der Friedhof lag im Südteil von „Sektor IV" (Stone/Zimansky 2004: 375–377).

18 Ziegler 2007: 68–70 Nr. 10: 1–17.

fromme Stiftungen das Ziel hatten, die Gunst des Herrschers der Unterwelt zu erlangen. Aplahanda stand mit diesem Wunsch nicht alleine da. Drei Jahre vor seinem Tod ließ auch Hammurabi von Babylon das Emeslam, den Tempel des Nergal restaurieren, wie der Name seines vierzigsten Regierungsjahrs festhielt. Eine längere Königsinschrift, in der an die Stiftung von Musikinstrumenten für den Kult des Lugal-Gudua, eine Variante des Nergal, im Emeslam erinnert wurde, dürfte im selben historischen Kontext verfasst worden sein:[19]

> „Dem Lugal-Gudua, (…) dem schreckenserregenden Herrscher, wenn er an der Spitze der Truppen marschiert um das Feindesland zu zerstören (…), hat Hammu-rabi (…) ein balag-Instrument und eine Bronzepauke (lilis) geschenkt für die reinen, herzberuhigenden Gesänge, [ein Geschenk], das des Emeslams würdig ist (…)."[20]

Wir können aus dem Dossier der Weihgaben für Nergal eine interessante Bilanz ziehen. Wenig erstaunlich stiftete man dem kriegerischen Nergal Waffen – aber um ihn als Herrscher der Totenwelt geneigt zu stimmen, weihte man ihm Musiker oder Instrumente.

2. Der Schreibergott

Folgt man der Logik, gemäß der man einem Kriegsgott Waffen weihte, so ist es nicht schwer sich vorzustellen, was man einem Gott des Schriftwesens schenkte – nämlich Tontafeln. Wenden wir uns nun dem Gott Nabu zu, der im Lauf des 2. Jahrtausends die Göttin Nisaba und ihren Gemahl Haya als Schutzpatrone der Schreiber ablöste.

Der Tempel des Nabu *ša harê*

In einem Gebäude westlich der Prozessionsstraße von Babylon, das dank einer Gründungsinschrift Asarhaddons (680–669) als Nabutempel identifiziert werden konnte,[21] wurden 1979 zahlreiche Tontafeln gefunden. Auf dem Boden mehrerer Räume und im darunterliegenden Füllschutt wurden mehr als 2000 Übungstexte entdeckt, die offensichtlich als Baumaterial bei Renovierungsarbeiten der Zeit Nabukadnezar II gedient hatten; einige der Tafeln waren in die Stufen einer Treppe eingemauert worden. Die solcherart entsorgten Tafeln hatten eine enge Verbindung zum Gebäude, in dem sie gefunden worden. Einige von ihnen enthielten einen Kolophon mit einem Gebet an Nabu, so z.B.:

> „Für Nabu, den hervorragenden Erbsohn, erhabenen Herrn, Größten an Weisheit, erfindungsreichen Meister, der im E-gidri-kalama-suma weilt, dem wohlbenannten Wohnsitz, der das Szepter und den Thron für das Königtum verwahrt, hat Nabu-zer-iddina eine Tafel verfasst und sie für sein Wohlergehen und die Erweiterung seines Wissens gestiftet. O Nabu, erhabener Herr, vermehre seine Kenntnisse!"[22]

Der Nabu-Tempel in Babylon hieß auf Sumerisch E-gidri-kalama-suma, was der Kolophon auf Akkadisch mit der Glosse belegte: „das wohlbenannte Haus, das den Szepter und den Thron verwahrt". Der Schreiberlehrling fasste seinen Text als eine Weihgabe an seinen Schutzgott ab. Manchmal wird präzisiert, dass die Tafeln dem Türsteher des Tempels überreicht worden waren, damit er sie in einem Gefäß ablege, das gunnu genannt wurde. Diese Votivgaben wurden während einer Zeremonie anlässlich einer Feier für Nabu gestiftet.

Ein weiteres Beispiel wird durch einen Text im Metropolitan Museum geliefert:[23]

> „[Für Nabu, (…) den die Igigi-Götter] im gesamten [Universum am meisten] verehren, hat [PN] Sohn des Ahu-banu … für die Verlängerung seines Lebens, für das Erlangen von Weisheit, für sein Wohlergehen und seine Gesundheit, für die Erfüllung seiner Vorhaben, für den Genuss eines langen Lebens und für das Beruhigen des <Zorns> seines Gottes und seiner Göttin, im offenen Land Ton geholt, von einem reinen Ort, hat diese Tafel geschrieben und sie im Nabutempel *ša nikkassi*, dem Tempel seiner großen Herrschaft, in einem *gunnu*-Behälter des Portiers des Esagil deponiert. O Tafel, sobald du eintrittst, interveniere für den PN, den Sohn des Bel-balassu-iqbi der Familie des […] und sprich zu seinen Gunsten (…)."

Dieser in jüngerer Zeit veröffentlichte Kolophon zeugt davon, dass die Tafel als Votivgabe genau dieselbe Rolle spielen sollte, wie eine Statue in anderen Weihungen: sie sollte für den Schenker intervenieren. Man bemerke die Art und Weise wie die Tafel personifiziert wurde:[24] man sprach zu ihr, forderte sie auf, in den Tempel einzutreten und für den Schreiber vor dem Gott Nabu zu interve-

19 Dieser Vorschlag stammt von Pientka-Hinz 2007: 1–25. Zum Vergleich der beiden Verhaltensweisen des Aplahanda und des Hammurabi, cf. Charpin 2010.

20 Frayne 1990: 345 Nr. 11: 1, 7–9, 14, 31–33.

21 Leichty 2011: 229 Nr. 113.

22 Cavigneaux 1981: 49.

23 Gesche 2005: 257–265. S. nun Veldhuis 2013: 169–180.

24 S. diesbezüglich Charpin 2013: 53.

nieren. Andere Beispiele aus irakischen Grabungen der 1980er Jahre sind jüngst veröffentlicht worden.[25]

Der Nabu-Tempel von Ninive

Werfen wir nun einen Blick nach Ninive wo zwei Realitäten unterschieden werden können. Einerseits befand sich dort die Privatbibliothek des Königs Assurbanipal in seinem Palast und andererseits die Bibliothek des Nabu-Tempels (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: Bibliothek des Nabutempels in Khorsabad (Loud/Altman 1938: pl. 19c).

Mehrere Kolophone von Texten der Privatbibliothek Assurbanipals verwiesen auf ihren Besitzer:

„Assurbanipal, der große König, der starke König, der König des Alls, der König des Landes Assur, der Sohn des Asarhaddon, des Königs des Landes Assur, des Sohnes des Sanherib, des Königs des Landes Assur. Nach dem Wortlaut von Ton- und Holztafeln, Exemplaren des Landes Assur, des Landes Sumer und Akkad, habe ich diese Tafel in der Versammlung der Gelehrten geschrieben, geprüft und kollationiert und zum Lesen für meine Majestät innerhalb meines Palastes aufgestellt. Wer meine Inschrift auslöscht und seinen Namen hineinschreibt, dessen Namen möge Nabu, der Schreiber des Alls, auslöschen!“[26]

Oder aber:

„Palast des Assurbanipal, des Königs des Landes Assur, des Sohnes des Asarhaddon, des Königs des Alls, des Königs des Landes Assur, des Statthalters von Babylon, des Königs des Landes Sumer und Akkad, des Königs der Könige des Landes Kusu und des Landes Muṣur, des Königs der vier Weltgegenden, des Sohnes des Sanherib, des Königs des Alls, des Königs des Landes Assur, der auf Assur und Ninlil, Nabu und Tašmetu vertraut. Wer auf dich vertraut, wird nicht zuschanden werden, Nabu!“[27]

Kolophone dieser Art begannen mit der Aussage, dass die Tafeln dem “Palast Assurbanipals” gehörten und präzisierten eventuell, dass sie vom König innerhalb seines Palastes für den eigenen Gebrauch untergebracht worden waren. Assurbanipal schrieb „für meine königliche Lektüre“ (*ana tāmarti šarrūtija*), „für die Lektüre meines Vorlesens“ (ana tāmarti šitassija), „für meine Übung“ (*ana tamrirtija*), oder aber in der dritten Person „als Merkhilfe für sein Vorlesen“ (*ana tahsisti šitassišu*). Daraus kann geschlossen werden, dass wir es mit der Privatbibliothek Assurbanipals zu tun haben, der zwar nicht vergaß, dass er Herrscher von Assyrien war, sich aber wie die Gelehrten seiner Zeit vorstellte.[28] Nirgends wird festgehalten, dass wir es mit einer „Bibliothek“ (*girginakku*[29]) des Königspalastes zu tun haben: dieser Ausdruck wird nur in Zusammenhang mit den Tafeln verwendet, die im Nabutempel untergebracht waren.

Diese zweite Gruppe von Tafeln kann als Weihgaben für den Nabu-Tempel identifiziert werden. Darauf verweist folgender Kolophon:

„Ich habe die Weisheit des Ea, die Klageprieserkunst, das Geheimnis des Weisen, was zur Beruhigung des Herzens der großen Götter geeignet ist, nach dem Wortlaut von Tafeln, Exemplaren des Landes Assur und des Landes Akkad, auf Tafeln geschrieben, geprüft, kollationiert und in der Bibliothek (girginakku) des Ezida, des Tempels des Nabu, meines Herrn, im Innern von Ninive aufgestellt. Daraufhin schau du, Nabu, König der Gesamtheit von Himmel und Erde, diese Bibliothek freudig an, und für Assurbanipal, den Diener, der deine Gottheit verehrt, schenke täglich einen Fürbittkultus … […] Stets will ich deine große Gottheit preisen!“[30]

Man kann sehen, wie diese Bibliotheken auf zwei verschiedenen Niveaus funktionierten. Konkret dienten die darin gesammelten Tafeln den Gelehrten des königlichen Umfelds als Referenzwerke, dank derer sie ihre Aufgaben mit der größtmöglichen Effizienz verrichten konnten. Aber symbolisch enthielten sie Votivgaben für Nabu, der dem König im Gegenzug für seine fromme Tat seinen göttlichen Schutz angedeihen ließ.

25 Cavigneaux 2013: 65–76.

26 Hunger 1968: 97 Nr. 318.

27 Hunger 1968: 100 Nr. 322.

28 S. Lieberman 1990: 305–336.

29 Charpin 2007.

30 Hunger 1968: 102 Nr. 328.

3. Die Heilgöttin

Einer Gottheit für die erlangte Heilung zu danken ist eine der gängigsten religiösen Praktiken – in der christlichen Tradition findet sie in der Heiligenverehrung ihren Ausdruck. Im mesopotamischen Pantheon existierten mehrere Heilgöttinnen, die schließlich miteinander assimiliert wurden: Ninkarrak, Nin-tinuga, Bawa, Nin-Isina, Meme und die berühmteste, Göttin Gula. Den Bewohnern Mesopotamiens stellte sich das Problem, für ein abstraktes Ereignis – die Heilung – eine konkrete Form des Danks zu finden. Zwei Arten von Objekten sind gefunden worden: Grabungen legten einerseits Exvotos in Form von Körperteilen oder menschlichen Statuetten frei und anderseits fand man Hundefiguren.

Exvotos in der Form von Körperteilen oder Statuetten

Wenn wir uns auf die Votivgaben, die 1973 nahe der Zugangsrampe zur Esplanade des Gula-Tempels in Isin während der Grabungen der LMU München freigelegt wurden, beschränkten, müssten wir annehmen, dass die Göttin Gula vorrangig Wunden an den Extremitäten der Kranken heilte. Gefunden wurden 17 Objekte aus Terrakotta, die nahezu in Lebensgröße menschliche Füße, Beine, Arme und Hände darstellten, von denen einige noch Spuren roter Bemalung trugen.[31] Es handelte sich nicht um Bestandteile von Statuen, da sie Löcher hatten, mittels derer sie an der Wand befestigt werden konnten. Zahlreiche Parallelen können für diese Praxis herangezogen werden, ein besonders frappantes Beispiel kommt aus den Grabungen von Korinth.

Die Exvotos aus Isin können mit einem Gebetsbrief an die Göttin Nintinuga in Zusammenhang gebracht werden, deren Absenderin mit einer Form von Lähmung behaftet war und bat:

„Möge ich (erneut) meinen Fuß auf den Weg des Lebens setzen, dann will ich deine Dienerin sein."[32]

In Isin sind neben den menschlichen Körperteilen auch Hundepfoten gefunden worden, die ebenfalls aus Ton gefertigt waren. Im selben archäologischen Kontext wurde eine 4 cm hohe Bronzestatuette gefunden, die einen knieenden Beter darstellt, dessen Rechte einen sitzenden Hund umfasst, während der linke Arm erhoben ist. Der erhobene Arm stellt wahrscheinlich keine Grußgeste dar, wie ursprünglich angenommen wurde, sondern sollte verdeutlichen, dass dieser kranke Körperteil geheilt worden war.

Das Nebeneinander von Abbildungen von Menschen und Hunden war bereits 1946 anlässlich der Zufallsentdeckung von Tonstatuetten durch einen Hirten bei Aqar Qūf, 30 km westlich von Baghdad, festgestellt worden. Irakische Archäologen nahmen daraufhin sofort eine Grabung auf und legten einen 8 × 2 m großen Raum frei, dessen Bodenfliesen Inschriften mit dem Namen des Kassitenkönigs Nazi-Maruttaš (14. Jh. v.Chr.) trugen. Auf dem Boden wurden hunderte Terrakotten gefunden, oft in sehr schlechtem Zustand. Mehrere Figurinen stellten knieende Menschen dar, die ihre Hand auf bestimmte Stellen ihres Körpers legten, wie Augen, Mund oder Brust: auch hier handelte es sich offenbar um Gesten, mit denen die erkrankten Körperteile gezeigt werden sollten. Vier der Figurinen waren an der Basis oder auf dem Rücken beschriftet. Die Inschriften sind unveröffentlicht geblieben, es ist aber bekannt, dass es sich um Weihinschriften für Gula handelte. Die Objekte waren also Votivgaben von Menschen, die an den Augen oder am Mund erkrankt waren, da man den isolierten Körperteil nicht so leicht darstellen konnte, wie es bei Arm oder Bein möglich war. In derselben Fundgruppe sind zahlreiche Hundefigurinen freigelegt worden. Der bestvertretene Typus ist jener der liegenden Hündin, die sechs bis elf Welpen säugt. Manche Hunde tragen auf ihrer Flanke Inschriften wie diese:

„Der Diener, der [sie] verehrt, […]-Šamaš, [hat ihn] für den Schutz [seines Lebens] der Gula [geweiht]."[33]

Unglücklicherweise ist der archäologische Kontext dieser Entdeckung nicht genauer festgehalten worden – man kann aber die Hypothese aufstellen, dass der Raum Teil eines Gula-Tempels war.

Analoge Entdeckungen sind im Winter 1990 auch um den Sektor WA in Nippur gemacht worden.[34] Mehrere Bauschichten von Tempeln sind dort freigelegt worden. Auf dem Boden des kassitenzeitlichen Gebäudes wurden mehrere Hundefigurinen, sowie Fragmente von menschlichen Statuetten aus Ton gefunden: ihre Hand berührt den Hals oder den Bauch und zeigt damit die Stelle an,

31 Spycket 1990: 79–86 und Taf. I–III. Rossberger 2017: 178 n. 8 hat jüngst die Interpretation dieser Figurinen als Exvotos in Frage gestellt: "there is little evidence for such a votive practice in ancient Mesopotamia". Der Vergleich mit den Praktiken in der griechischen Welt ist zwar in der Studie von A. Spycket nicht unternommen worden, scheint mir aber ihre Analyse zu erhärten (Charpin 2017a: 35–36).

32 Edition des Gebets von Nin-tinuga: Römer 2003: 237–249, v.a. 243–244, Z. 21–22; zur Übersetzung von Böck 2013: 35 s. auch Steinert 2014: 359, Anm. 2.

33 Mustafa 1947: 19–22 und pls. 1–5. Eine Übersetzung der Inschrift Nr. 19 (IM 51920) findet sich in Sumer 3, 1947, S. 22 und fig. 2; die hier vorgeschlagene Lesung beruht auf dem Photo und ist nicht gesichert.

34 Gibson 1989-90: 17–26.

an der die Stifter erkrankt waren.[35] Eine kleine Lapislazuli-Scheibe mit einer Inschrift zu Ehren der Gula erlaubte es McG. Gibson, den Tempel als Heiligtum dieser Göttin zu identifizieren und nicht als Ninurtatempel.[36] Diese Identifikation wäre allerdings bereits seit der 12. Kampagne 1973 möglich gewesen. Damals hatte man im selben Sektor das Fragment eines Votivhundes gefunden, das eine doppelte Beschriftung trug. Auf dem Rücken besagte die Inschrift, dass der Hund im e_2-uru_2-sag-ga_2 abgelegt worden war, womit der Name des Gula-Tempels von Nippur genannt wurde, während eine Weihung an Ninkarrak an der Seite angebracht war.[37]

Wir sehen also, dass an drei verschiedenen Orten, von denen zwei sicher Tempel der Gula in Isin und Nippur waren, Votivgegenstände gefunden wurden, die von der Heilung der Patienten Zeugnis ablegten. Die Kranken ließen sich als Ganzes darstellen, oder weihten eine Darstellung des betroffenen Körperteils; einige Individuen ließen sich mit Hunden gemeinschaftlich abbilden, andere weihten Hundestatuetten.

Die Entdeckung der Votivhunde

Der König Nabukadnezar II berichtete, dass er anlässlich der Renovierungsarbeiten im Tempel der Ninkarrak von Sippar in den Fundamenten des Gebäudes "einen Hund aus Ton mit dem Namen der Ninkarrak darauf" gefunden hatte.[38] Wie wir soeben gesehen haben, können moderne Archäologen die Existenz solcher Figürchen bestätigen. Eine der ältesten Entdeckungen dieser Art ist von V. Scheil in Sippar gemacht worden, der 1894 Abu Habbah ausgrub. Er legte mehrere Votivhunde aus Ton frei, von denen einer folgende Inschrift trug:

„Ich habe für die Göttin Meme, meine Herrin, einen Hund aus Ton gefertigt und ihn ihr geschenkt."[39]

Eine Steinstatuette unbekannter Herkunft wurde für den König Bur-Sin (1897–1876) von Isin geweiht:

„Der Nin-Isina, seiner Herrin, der Erschafferin von [...], hat Enlil-ennam, der Sohn des Zibuni, (diese Statuette) für das Leben des Bur-Sin, des starken Königs von Isin geweiht."[40]

Eine andere tönerne Hundestatuette im British Museum, die schlecht erhalten ist, trägt eine längere Inschrift: sie bezeugt, dass das Tier der Gula von einem hohen Tempelbeamten des Enlil von Nippur „für das Leben des Nazi-Maruttaš, des Königs des Universums, seines Herren", sowie „für sein Leben und das Leben seines Landes" geweiht wurde.[41]

Die beiden erwähnten Inschriften auf den Hunden sind „für das Leben von ..." verfasst – es handelte sich um Weihgaben, die Bitten begleiteten. Es gibt aber Beispiele für Exvotos, die gemacht wurden, um der Gottheit explizit Dank auszudrücken. So die Tonstatuette eines Hundes, die während der Ausgrabungen von Isin 1973–74 gefunden wurde:

„Der Gula, der Herrin des Egal-mah, der Herrscherin über das Leben, der großen azugallatu, die den Lebensodem verleiht, seiner Herrin, hat Ili-[...]daya, ein Gelöbnis gemacht. Sie hat seinen Wunsch erfüllt [und seinen] jungen Diener Atanah-ili [geheilt]. Er hat ihr (diesen) Hund geweiht."[42]

Der Stifter „hatte ein Gelöbnis gemacht", das nach der Heilung des Kranken erfüllt werden musste und zum Zeichen seiner Dankbarkeit stiftete er den Hund.

Die meisten Votivhunde, die gefunden worden sind, sind aus Ton – metallene Exemplare waren weitaus seltener. Ein Bronzehündchen wurde bei den Ausgrabungen in Terqa nahe des Altars eines Tempels gefunden, der der Ninkarrak geweiht war und aus spätaltbabylonischer Zeit stammt.[43] Die Metallexemplare waren wertvoll und

35 Gibson 1989-90: 18; https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/nippur-sacred-city-enlil-0 (figs. 11 und 12).

36 Die Lapislazuli-Scheibe mit Weihinschrift für Gula ist publiziert in Gibson 1989-90: 22.

37 Civil 1978: 112–125, v.a. 122, "12 N 656"; Die Inschrift soll aus der Zeit der Dynastie von Isin stammen aber altertümlich beschrieben worden sein; sie ist noch unveröffentlicht. Für den Tempel e_2-uru_2-sag-ga_2, s. George 1993: 158, Nr. 1208 (man trage dort den Verweis auf 12 N 656 nach).

38 S. Langdon, VAB 4, S. 110 Nr. 13 iii: 40 // S. 144 Nr. +16 ii: 19.

39 Scheil 1902: 91–92 Nr. 13 (Photo S. 90).

40 Braun-Holzinger 1991: t. 17 = RIME 4, S. 71, 2001; es handelt sich hierbei um die Hundefigurine aus Stein die E. Sollberger gesehen hat, und die von Sotheby's verkauft worden ist.

41 Sollberger 1968: 191–192.

42 Publikation der Statuette aus Isin, IB 18: Edzard/Wilcke 1977: 83–91 (S. 90; Photo Taf. 9). Man könnte Z. 3 ʳra-biʾ-ti lesen. Man beachte das Wortpaar karābum, „beten" (l. 7) und elûm Š, „heraufbringen lassen > weihen" (Z. 9), das man auch in der Inschrift des Samsi-Addu findet (MARI 3, Nr. 1: s. Charpin 2006: 152 und n. 78). Meine Interpretation unterscheidet sich von jener D. O. Edzards & C. Wilckes, sowie von Livingstone 1988: 59.

43 Für den Tempel der Ninkarrak in Terqa, cf. Buccellati 1988: 43–61, v.a. S. 48 Fig. 3 und S. 53 Fig. 5 (Bibliographie S. 59, Anm. 9); ich konnte keine Abb. der bronzenen Hundestatuette finden. Publikation der im Tempel gefundenen Texte („Chantier C"): Rouault 2011; man beachte besonders S. 13, Nr. 5–6 eine Liste, die mit dem Namen der Göttin Ninkarrak beginnt und die das Hauptargument für die Identifikation des Tempels war, neben dem Umstand dass zwei Kultdiener theophore Namen mit dieser Göttin trugen (AAS 33, 1983, S. 54b).

konnten unlautere Begehren erwecken. Ein Rechtstext stellte das „Verschwinden" solcher Figürchen fest:

„Wegen des Mobiliars des Tempels der Ninkarrak, hat Nabiyatum den Ṭab-gamalša vor Gericht angeklagt. Im Hof (?) der Ninkarrak hat Ṭab-gamalša fünf Statuen aus Bronze zurückgebracht;
– zwei Bronzetrommeln,
– ein bronzener Räucherständer,
– ein bronzenes Schmuckstück in Form eines Tannenzapfen,
– ein bronzener Teller,
– drei Bronzereifen,
– eine Bronzeschlüssel,
– 1 … aus Bronze,
– eine Kette (?) aus Edelsteinen,
– eine Bronzehündin (mit dem Namen) des Id-din-Sin,
– eine Kupfervase der Šimat-Ištar,
– eine Brönzehündin (mit dem Namen) des Ninurta-nišu
waren die restliche bewegliche Habe: Nabiyatum wird einen Eid leisten und Ṭab-gamalša sie ersetzen. (fünf Zeugen und Datum: 6/xii/Samsu-iluna 12)."[44]

Nabiyatum hatte Ṭab-gamalša angeklagt, woraufhin dieser fünf bronzene Bildwerke in den Tempel zurückbringen musste; der Text präzisiert das zwar nicht, aber es dürfte sich um Beterstatuetten handeln. Der Text setzt danach mit einem Inventar des Fehlbestands fort. Nabiyatum musste das Verschwinden all dieser Gegenstände eidesstattlich bezeugen und Ṭab-gamalša sie ersetzen. Der Herkunftsort des Textes ist zwar nicht gesichert, aber Isin erscheint sehr wahrscheinlich. Das Inventar der gestohlenen Gegenstände weist darauf hin, dass sich unter den Habseligkeiten des Tempels der Ninkarrak Hundefigürchen befanden, die durch Personennamen genauer identifiziert wurden – wahrscheinlich die Namen der Stifter, die eine Inschrift anbringen ließen und infolgedessen bekannt waren.

Die Funktion der Votivhunde

Eine unserer Schwierigkeiten, die mesopotamische Zivilisation zu verstehen, beruht auf dem Umstand, dass sie keine reflexiven Diskurse schriftlich niederzulegen pflegte: kein einziger Text erklärt uns, aus welchem Grund man Gula Hundestatuetten weihte. Es ist klar, dass sie nichts mit jenen Hundefigurinen zu tun hatten, die man unter den Häusern vergrub, um dessen Bewohner vor Dämonen zu schützen. Solche Statuetten sind vielfach in Grabungen gefunden worden und magische Texte geben Anweisung, wie sie herzustellen seien.[45] Für die der Gula geweihten Hunde haben wir wenigstens einen wirklich aussagekräftigen Text.[46] Diese Schreiberübung ließ einen Hund sprechen:

„1-3 Lugal-nesag, der Sohn des Zuzu, des Gelehrten (ummia) aus Nippur, hat Tuni-lusag, seinen Hunde-Botschafter für Nintinuga gefertigt. Deshalb wedelt der Hund mit dem Schwanz für seine Herrin und spricht zu ihr bellend die folgenden Worte:
4-16 Herrin, die dem Himmel und der Erde Nahrung verschafft, Intendantin des Enlil, weiche Brust, die dem ganzen Land Zufriedenheit verschafft (und) Überfluss bringt, die die Pläne des krankheitsbringenden asag-Dämonen durchschaut, die Knochen untersucht, sa-Muskeln des Lebens von den sa-Muskeln des Todes scheidet, die Gelenke verbessert, durch Wundbrand verschlimmerte Krankheiten und schwere Leiden kennt, heilende Ärztin, Kräuterärztin ($šim\text{-}mu_2$) des Kranken, die das Innere des Menschen inspiziert, o Herrin! Derjenige, der mich schuf, nannte mich Tuni-lusag. Diesen Namen gab er mir nach erfolgter Heilung. Als […] Hals, der asag-Dämon […] Leben. Mein Name wurde gleichzeitig mit deinem Namen ausgesprochen. Ich verlange nach Kraft (?). Ich heiße Tuni-lusag!'
17-18 Solange ich lebe, möge ich (gnädig) angesehen werden. Wenn ich sterbe, möge ich in der Unterwelt klares Wasser trinken!"

Dieser Text darf als humoristisch eingestuft werden. Wichtig ist aber v.a., dass der Votivhund als ein Bote angesehen wurde, der vor der Göttin Gula für die ihn weihende Person intervenieren sollte. Die Funktion des Hundes wird mit dem Wort $kin\text{-}gi_4\text{-}a$ (Z. 2) „Bote" wiedergegeben. Um seinen Auftrag zu erfüllen, begann der Hund mit dem Schwanz zu wedeln, um die Aufmerksamkeit der Göttin auf sich zu ziehen; danach lieferte er ihr seine Botschaft bellend ab. Darin wird Gula als eine nahrungsspendende Göttin beschrieben, deren Milch das ganze Land tränke. Diese Aussage kann mit den zahlreichen Abbildungen von Hunden in Einklang gebracht werden, die ihre Welpen säugend darstellen. Der Text erwähnt danach die gnadenlosen Angriffe der asag-Dämonen und die Fähigkeit der Göttin, alle Arten von Krankheiten zu diagnostizieren und zu heilen.

44 Charpin/Durand 1981: Nr. 115. Edition in Ries 1989: 56–80.

45 Wiggermann 1992 sowie Postgate 1994: 176b.

46 Die jüngste Edition dieses sumerischen Übungstextes ist in Kleinerman 2011; s. auch meine kommentierte Übersetzung: Charpin 2017b: 168–169.

Man bemerke das Beharren des Textes auf dem Eigennamen des Hundes: Tuni-lusag. Es ist gut bekannt, dass Rinder und Pferde eigene Namen trugen, für Hunde kennen wir bisher nur Benennungen ihrer Darstellungen. Der Name des Hundes, Tuni-lusag, bedeutet: „seine Beschwörung (tu$_6$-ni) heilt (sag) den Menschen (lu$_2$)", und das besitzanzeigende Fürwort -ni verweist implizit auf die Göttin. Der sumerische Name des Hundes, Tuni-lusag, kann mit einem akkadischen Namen ähnlicher Bedeutung verglichen werden: Šipassa-balāṭu „ihre Beschwörung ist Leben". Wir kennen diesen Personennamen aus mittelbabylonischen Texten.[47]

Der Hund sagte von sich, dass er nach erfolgter Heilung hergestellt worden war: es handelt sich also um ein Exvoto. Dennoch war es seine Aufgabe, die Göttin zu preisen, damit sie dem Stifter weiterhin Gesundheit gewährte. Dies zeigt, dass die Unterscheidung zwischen echten Exvotos, die nach erfolgter Heilung gestiftet wurden, und Opfergaben, die mit der Bitte um Genesung gemacht wurden, nicht allzu streng gehandhabt werden sollte. In den letzten beiden Zeilen des Textes sprach wahrscheinlich nicht mehr der Hund – es dürfte sich hier um ein Gebet des Geheilten handeln.

N. Postgate hat den Akzent auf die unterschiedlichen Eigenschaften gelegt, die die anthropomorphen Darstellungen einerseits, und die Tierdarstellungen andererseits innehatten: seiner Meinung nach sollten die „Abbildungen" (*ṣalmum*), die Individuen (gleich ob es sich dabei um Menschen, Götter oder Dämonen handelte) von Figurinen, die ein Substitut des dargestellten Tieres waren, unterschieden werden.[48] In dieser Perspektive ist der transgressive Charakter des oben zitierten Textes bemerkenswert, denn hier handelte es sich um eine Abbildung und nicht ein Substitut. Das Beharren des Hundes auf seinem Eigennamen zeigt deutlich, dass er als eine Persönlichkeit, als ein regelrechter Bote und nicht als ein undifferenziertes Tier angesehen werden wollte.

Warum Hunde?

Warum weihte man Gula Hunde? Die Antwort ist einfach: aus demselben Grund, aus dem man dem Gott Nergal Waffen weihte. Nergal konnte den Tod durch das Schwert bringen, ebenso konnte Gula durch den Hund Heilung bringen. In ihrem jüngsten Buch[49] zur Heilgöttin behandelte B. Böck nahezu ausschließlich Pflanzen: diese spielten in der Tat eine bedeutende Rolle in der Krankenbehandlung. Aber auch Hunden kam dabei Bedeutung zu.

Der Bau eines Hundezwingers durch Enlil-bani

In einer Inschrift des Herrschers Enlil-bani von Isin (1862–1839) wurde der Bau eines Gebäudes mit dem Namen e$_2$-ur-gi$_7$-ra kommemoriert:[50]

„Der Nin-Isina, seiner Herrin, hat Enlil-bani, (…) das E-urgira errichtet."

Der Erstherausgeber A. Schaffer übersetzte E-urgira mit „Tempel des Hundes" (Temple of the Dog) und kommentierte:

"The first mention of this temple, and the first actual location for the practice of the dog cult in Isin. Nininsina is linked to this cult whose fetish is the canine symbol of Gula with whom she is identified."[51]

Einige Jahre später publizierte A. Livingstone ein etwas besser erhaltenes Duplikat der Inschrift.[52] Auch er sprach vom „Hundekult" („dog cult"). Die Realität dürfte aber prosaischer sein und das e$_2$-ur-gi$_7$-ra (wörtlich „Haus des Hundes") war wohl ein Hundezwinger. Die beiden beschrifteten Gründungsnägel stammen leider aus Raubgrabungen, es ist aber sehr wahrscheinlich, dass sie aus Isin stammen. Die Inschrift kann auch mit älteren Verwaltungstexten aus Ur aus der Zeit der Dritten Dynastie in Verbindung gebracht werden. Nach der Auflistung verschiedener Opfer für die Göttin Gula wurde dort auch eine Ladung von Schlachtabfällen genannt, mit denen eine kleine Meute von Hunden gefüttert werden sollte.[53] Solcherlei Verwaltungstexte geben zwar keine Auskunft darüber, warum diese Hunde aufgezogen wurden, aber sie bestätigen die Existenz von Hundezwingern in engem Zusammenhang mit dem Kult der Göttin Gula.

Ein Hundefriedhof

Die offiziellen Ausgrabungen von Isin haben auch eine Art Hundefriedhof zu Tage gebracht. 1973 wurde auf der Nordseite des Tells eine Backsteinrampe ergraben, die zum Gulatempel führte. Dabei wurden oberhalb und rund um die Rampe 33 Hundegräber freigelegt, die genau analysiert worden sind; die Stratigraphie erlaubt

47 Der Name Šipassa-balāṭu ist in PB 2/2 53: 26 bezeugt (füge dies hinzu in Kleinerman 2011); das akkadische weibliche Pronomen (-*ša*) verweist explizit auf die Göttin Gula.

48 Postgate 1994: 178.

49 Böck 2013.

50 Frayne 1990: 80–81 Enlil-bāni Nr. 4.

51 Die Erstveröffentlichung ist von Shaffer 1974: 251–255, Zitat S. 253.

52 Livingstone 1988: 54–60.

53 Für die Schlachtabfälle als Hundenahrung s. Charpin/Durand 1980: 131–153, v.a. S. 143–145. Für die Hunde der Ur III-Zeit in anderem Kontext cf. Tsouparopoulou 2012: 1–16 (ergänze dazu Owen 2013); in ihrem Beitrag kündigt die Autorin eine Studie zu Gula und den Hunden an (S. 1, n. 2).

eine Datierung von der Hälfte des 11. bis gegen Ende des 10. Jh. v.Chr. Unter den bestatteten Tieren waren eine Todgeburt, 15 Welpen, 8 junge und 9 erwachsene Hunde.[54] Verschiedene Forscher versuchten, diese Tierbestattungen zu erklären.

Ganz allgemein sind die Spezialisten der Medizingeschichte geteilter Meinung darüber, ob Hunden eine heilbringende Rolle zugewiesen werden kann. 1882 wurde in Epidaurus eine Stele gefunden, die aus der zweiten Hälfte des 4. Jh. v.Chr. stammte und zahlreiche Fälle von Heilungen schriftlich festhielt. Eine Eintragung ist für unsere Untersuchung besonders interessant:

> „Ein Hund heilte einen Knaben aus Aegina. Er hatte ein Gewächs [Wucherung] im Nacken. Als er zum Gott gekommen war, heilte ihn einer der heiligen Hunde, während er wach war, mit seiner Zunge und machte ihn gesund."[55]

I. Fuhr, der die Entdeckungen aus Isin bearbeitet hat, erklärte, warum Hunde in der Antike mit Heilgottheiten in Verbindung gebracht wurden: der Speichel des Hundes produziert ein Enzym, das bei der Vernarbung besonders wirksam ist. Jüngstens konnten amerikanische Biologen im Hundespeichel dieses natürliche Protein ausmachen, das sie SLPI nannten („secretory leukocyte protease inhibitor").[56]

Vor den Entdeckungen in Isin hatte Th. Jacobsen bereits einen Zusammenhang zwischen der Heilgöttin Bawa/Nin-Isina und dem Hund hergestellt und geschrieben:

> „She became—probably because the licking of sores by dogs was supposed to have curative value—a goddess of healing."[57]

Seit den archäologischen Entdeckungen in Isin 1973 haben Assyriologen aber eher Skepsis an den Tag gelegt, was die Verwendung von Hunden bei der Heilung von Wunden anbelangt — meiner Meinung nach zu Unrecht. So unterstrich B. Groneberg das negative Bild der Hunde in der mesopotamischen Gesellschaft und merkte an, dass die meisten der in Isin begrabenen Hunde schwere Verletzungen trugen.[58] Sie vermutete, dass diese bei einem Substitutionsritual zum Einsatz gekommen waren: man hätte die Hunde absichtlich an jenen Stellen geschlagen, an denen der Patient litt, und auf diese Weise die Krankheit des Patienten auf den Hund transferiert. Diese Vision beruht allein auf der Analogie mit hethitischen Ritualen, bei denen Welpen zu Tode gebracht wurden, um Übel fernzuhalten oder rituelle Unreinheiten zu beseitigen.[59] Auch N. Postgate vertrat die Meinung, die Hunde seien Exvotos gewesen gleich den Tonfigurinen. Für ihn war genauer gesagt das Gegenteil der Fall: die Tonhunde waren Substitute der realen Tiere.

Diese verschiedenen Hypothesen haben den Nachteil, dass sie die Inschrift Enlil-banis nicht berücksichtigen, mit der er die Errichtung eines Hundezwingers kommemorierte. Jüngst hat U. Steinert sich skeptisch über die Verwendung von Hundespeichel bei der Behandlung von Wunden geäußert:

> „To our knowledge there is nowhere in the texts any hint to such a practice, and the fragmentary nature of our sources notwithstanding, we should expect to find some textual traces if the therapeutic use of dogs licking human wounds were a regular practice."[60]

Ebenso B. Böck:

> „Indeed, clinical studies corroborate the—limited—effect of dog saliva in promoting healing and reducing bacterial contamination of wounds through licking. It remains, however, open whether Ancient Mesopotamians recognized these properties and did not interpret the licking as a magical transference of disease from man to dog."[61]

So viel Skepsis überrascht: waren unsere guten alten Mesopotamier wirklich um so vieles dümmer als die alten Griechen? Oder besser gesagt: warum hätten sie die therapeutische Wirkung mancher Pflanzen erkannt, nicht aber die wundheilende Eigenschaft des Hundespeichels? Beim derzeitigen Stand der Forschung erlaubt es nur der vergleichende Ansatz, die mesopotamischen Gegebenheiten zu erklären. Dennoch drängt sich folgende Schlussfolgerung auf: Der Tempel der Gula in Isin hatte einen Hundezwinger; die Tiere, die dort lebten, wurden dazu angehalten, die Wunden von Kranken zu

54 Zum Hundefriedhof in Isin cf. Hrouda et al. 1977, v.a. die Beiträge von Boessneck 1977: 97–109 und Taf. 14–17 sowie Fuhr 1977: 135–145. Die mit dem Namen des Adad-apla-iddina I beschrifteten Ziegel der Rampe finden sich in Frame 1995: 57–58, Nr. 7; Ziegel mit derselben Inschrift sind später im Heiligtum selbst gefunden worden.

55 Zur Epidaurus Stele, s. Fuhr 1977: 141 (Nr. 26), mit Bibliographie.

56 Ashcroft et al. 2000: 1147–1153. Hier haben wir ein Beispiel für die Bestätigung traditioneller medizinischer Ansichten durch moderne wissenschaftliche Forschungen.

57 Jacobsen 1970: 33 (Wiederauflage eines Artikels der Encyclopedia Britannica, erschienen 1963).

58 Groneberg 2000: 283–320, v.a. S. 302–304.

59 Collins 1990: 211–226, der auf S. 225 bezüglich der Hundebestattungen aus Isin nur kurz anmerkte: „The burials suggest the possibility that these animals were used in rituals dedicated to the cult of this goddess [i.e. Gula]".

60 Steinert 2014: 359b–360a.

61 Böck 2013: 38.

lecken, die die Göttin in Hoffnung auf Heilung aufgesucht hatten. Somit kann auch die Existenz zahlreicher Votivgaben in Form von Hunden erklärt werden, die ich vorhin vorgestellt habe. P. Wapnish und B. Hesse hatten daran gezweifelt, dass die in Isin bestatteten Hunde zu Lebzeiten gut behandelt worden waren, denn dann wären sie in besserer Verfassung gewesen und der Anteil an Jungtieren wäre geringer gewesen. Hier muss aber an das Datum der Gräber erinnert werden, die aus der Zeit zwischen dem 11. und dem 10. Jh. v. Chr. stammen – eine der dunkelsten Phasen der Geschichte Babyloniens. Es erstaunt daher nicht, dass die Hunde des Friedhofs Zeugnis von den Schwierigkeiten ablegen. Die Menschen jener Epoche besaßen selbst kaum genug, um ihnen eine bessere Verpflegung zukommen zu lassen. Wenn jene Hunde aber nicht einen besonderen Status eingenommen hätten, warum hätte man sich dann die Mühe gemacht, sie sorgfältig zu bestatten?

Hunde und Pflanzen

In der berühmten Hymne, die Bullussa-rabi zu Ehren der Heilgöttin verfasst hatte, ließ er diese sagen:

> „Ich bringe alle Kräuter, ich nehme alle Krankheiten hinweg.“[62]

Mehrere Tempel der Nin-Isina heißen e_2-gal–mah, wörtlich „erhabener Palast“ in Isin, aber auch in Babylon, Ur und Uruk. In Larsa aber hieß der Tempel der Gula/Nin-Isina E'unamtila „Tempel des Lebenskrauts“ (e_2-u_2-nam-ti-la).[63] Auch wurde die Göttin Nin-Isina in mehreren Texten mit dem Epitheton šim-mu_2 versehen. Das Verständnis dieses Titels wurde lange Zeit durch die akkadischen Gleichungen behindert, die ihm in verschiedenen Kontexten gegeben wurden. A. George hat aber gezeigt, dass šim-mu_2 ursprünglich nicht einen „Beschwörungspriester“, sondern einen „Kräuterarzt“ bezeichnete.[64] Die aromatischen Pflanzen konnten zu medizinischem Einsatz kommen und das Auftragen von parfümierten Ölen und Salben wurde von Beschwörungen begleitet.

Es ist auch signifikant, dass das Epitheton „Kräuterarzt“ (šim-mu_2) nicht isoliert auftrat. Eine Inschrift des Sin-kašid von Uruk ist diesbezüglich sehr interessant: sie beginnt mit den Worten:

> „Der Nin-Isina, der Kräuterärztin (šim-mu_2), der Zahllosen, der großen Ärztin (a-zu-gal) der Menschheit, seiner Herrin, …“[65]

Die Komplementarität der Titel „Kräuterärztin“ (šim-mu_2) und „große Ärztin“ (a-zu-gal) haben wir bereits im oben zitierten Text des Votiv-Hundes Tuni-lusag gesehen: die Göttin Nintinugga, alias Gula, wurde dort als „heilbringende Ärztin (a-zu), Kräuterärztin (šim-mu_2) des Kranken” (l. 9) bezeichnet. Die Tempel der Gula funktionierten also offensichtlich auch wie Kräuterapotheken, in denen Pflanzen und Aromata zu Medikamenten verarbeitet wurden, deren Zusammensetzung wir in den pharmazeutischen Texten nachlesen können.

Es bleibt noch zu entdecken, wer innerhalb dieser Heiligtümer für diesen Zweig der Aktivitäten verantwortlich war. Die berühmte Figurine eines Hundes, die der Kommandant Cros in Tello entdeckte, liefert uns eine Spur (**Fig. 3**):

> „Für Nin-Isina, die Herrin, die gute …, die weise Ärztin, seine Herrin hat Abba-duga, der lu_2-mah, Sohn des URU-KA-gina, der Obermusiker von Girsu für das Leben des Sumu-El, des Königs von Ur, mit Lobesgesang (diese Statuette) geweiht, die den Namen trägt: ‚Treuer Hund, Träger eines Topfes mit Lebenskraut (u_2-nam-ti-la)‘.“[66]

Fig. 3: Statuette eines Hundes. Weihegabe für Nin-Isina gewidmet von Abbaduga für das Leben des Königs Sumu-El von Larsa (Tello; Louvre, AO 4349).

62 Das Zitat aus der Hymne des Bullusa-rabi ist: *našāku šammī kullassunu unessi murṣu*; Lambert 1967: 105–132, v.a. S. 120 Z. 80. In diesem Teil der Hymne bezeichnet sich die Göttin als Ninigizibara (Z. 91).

63 Die Tempel namens e_2-gal-mah werden von George 1993: 88, Nr. 318–321 zusammengestellt; zu e_2-u_2-nam-ti-la, s. ibid. 152, Nr. 1123.

64 Die Übersetzung von šim-mu_2 mit „Kräuterärztin“ wurde zuerst von Geller 1985: 92–93, ad Z. 93 und 129–130, Anm. 765 („pharmacist or herbalist“) gemacht; s. jüngstens Ceccarelli 2009: 31–54, der zeigt, dass das Epithet šim-mu_2 sich auf Bawa bezog, aber auch für andere Heilgötter wie Damu oder Asalluhi verwendet wurde (S. 36–37).

65 Frayne 1990: 457 Nr. 11: 1–4.

66 Frayne 1990: 134 Sūmû-El 2001.

Der Stifter, Abba-duga, trägt den Titel lu_2-mah. Priester dieses hohen Ranges sind selten in den altbabylonischen Texten bezeugt, dann aber erscheinen sie am häufigsten in Zusammenhang mit dem Kult der Gula.[67] Waren sie es, die die Apotheken der Tempel betreuten? Auf dem Rücken des von Abba-duga geweihten Hundes befand sich ein Behältnis, in dem sich wohl eine medikamentöse Mischung auf Pflanzenbasis befunden haben muss. Der Umstand, dass der Träger des Behältnisses eine Hundestatuette ist, ist kein Zufall und unterstreicht die Komplementarität zwischen den zwei Behandlungsmethoden, die im Rahmen der Gulatempel angewandt wurden.

Dass zwischen den Aspekten der Göttin Gula als Kräuterärztin und der Hundehalterin kein Widerspruch bestand, kann auch durch eine Textstelle belegt werden, in der die Heilpflanze *bu'šānu* folgendermaßen beschrieben wurde:

„die *bu'šānu*-Pflanze deren Name ‚Hund der Göttin Ningizibara (= Gula)' ist."[68]

Die *bu'šānu*-Pflanze wurde auch „Hundezunge" (*lišān kalbi*) genannt; ich nehme an, dass dies mit der vernarbenden Wirkkraft dieser Pflanze zusammenhing. U. Steinert zitierte eine andere Heilpflanze, *arariānu*, die auch als „Hundespeichel" bezeichnet wurde und wohl eine ähnliche Wirkung besaß.[69]

Abschluss

Wir haben gesehen, dass bei der Verehrung mesopotamischer Götter das Gegenteil des Sprichworts Geltung hatte, das besagt „man solle keine Eulen nach Athen tragen". Jeder Gottheit wurden Gegenstände geweiht, die mit ihrer Funktion im Pantheon in Zusammenhang standen. Die Liste könnte ergänzt werden. Dem Sonnengott Šamaš schenkte man Sonnenscheiben (*šamšum*), dem Mondgott Sin Mondsicheln aus Silber (*uskarum*);[70] im Tempel der Ištar wurden sexuelle Symbole gefunden, etc.[71] Die Gewohnheit, einer Gottheit Gegenstände zu weihen, die symbolisch an ihr Tätigkeitsfeld erinnerten, war natürlich nicht auf Mesopotamien beschränkt. So wurden nahe des Tempels des Asklepios in Epidaurus chirurgische Instrumente gefunden, die nicht als reale Werkzeuge sondern als Votivgaben interpretiert worden sind. Die mesopotamischen Gebräuche sind daher nur die ältesten Zeugen von Praktiken, die in den mittelmeerischen Kulturen und vielleicht darüber hinaus existierten und diese überdauerten. Die Heiligenverehrung des mittelalterlichen und modernen Europa kann vielleicht in diesem Kontext erwähnt werden. Sie ließ einige Aspekte des älteren Polytheismus überdauern.

67 Für den Titel lu_2-mah, cf. den Jahresnamen mu ^{d}*i-din-*^{d}*da-gan* lugal-e lu2-mah ^{d}nin-in^{si}-na mu-un-il_2 (IdDa „d") und die Namen des 4. und 7. Regierungsjahrs des Damiq-ilišu (Richter 1999: 164). J. Renger bemerkte dazu: „Für die altbabylonische Zeit lassen sich nur der lu_2-maḫ der Nininsina in Isin und je ein lu_2-maḫ in Girsu und Uruk nachweisen" (Renger 1969: 128 § 154). Wir haben bereits gesehen, dass der lu_2-mah von Girsu der Nin-Isina eine Hundestatuette weihte. Für Uruk, s. das Siegel des „Lu-kalla Sohn von ka-Inanna und Nur-Ištar, lu_2-mah, Diener von Iggalla" (Rollsiegel 323 = AUWE 23, S. 12 Nr. 4, s. dazu meine Notiz in Charpin 2016b).

68 Die Passage wurde von B. Böck im Vorwort von CHANE 67 (S. ix) zitiert und S. 140–141 kommentiert (Böck 2013). U. Steinert zweifelt daran, dass es sich bei *buš'ânu* und *lišân kalbi* um dieselbe Pflanze handelt (Steinert 2014: 362a); sie vermutet, dass es sich um zwei ähnliche Pflanzen handelt, denn die Namen beider finden sich gemeinsam in einem Text.

69 Für die Pflanze *arariānu*, die auch als „Hundespeichel", bezeichnet wird, s. Steinert 2014: 360 Anm. 6, mit Verweis auf Uruanna III 128; die Passage wird im CAD A/2 S. 237b (s.v. *arariānu*) zitiert, nicht aber in CAD R, S. 435 (s. v. *ru'tu* „salive").

70 Siehe beziehungsweise die Referenzen der CAD Š/1 S. 338 und U/W S. 279a.

71 Meinhold 2009.

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