

Univerzita Karlova v Praze
Filozofická fakulta

Diplomová práce

Univerzita Karlova v Praze
Filozofická fakulta
Ústav filozofie a religionistika
Studijní obor: Religionistika

Diplomová práce

Washing the mouth of a kettledrum

Bc. Evelyne Koubková

Vedoucí práce:

Prof. Dr. Gregor Ahn, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Rok odevzdání: 2016

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně, že jsem řádně citovala všechny použité prameny a literaturu a že práce nebyla využita v rámci jiného vysokoškolského studia či k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

V Praze dne

.....

Abstrakt

Cílem práce je analyzovat konkrétní rituální prvek, tzv. omývání úst, objevující se v mnoha rozmanitých rituálech starověké Mezopotámie a jeho vliv na status rituálního objektu. Namísto zobecňování funkce tohoto prvku na základě eponymního Rituálu omývání úst pro uvedení kultických soch se práce tomuto rituálnímu aktu věnuje v celé šíři jeho užití. Autorka předpokládá silně metaforický charakter omývání úst a analyzuje koncept čistoty stojící v jeho základu. Zároveň pozoruje modifikace jeho významu v závislosti na rituálním kontextu a nabízí jejich typologii.

Následná případová studie je věnována Rituálu pro potažení tympánu. Detailní analýza pramenů odkrývá možný vývoj rituální tradice i podobnosti tohoto rituálu s Rituálem omývání úst. Tento zvláštní vztah je zkoumán jako případ *interrituality*, konceptu navrženého Burkhardem Gladigowem. Božského statusu tympánu je dosaženo prostřednictvím rituálu, který záměrně využívá prvky běžné v rituálním uvádění kultických soch. Zvláštní postavení, které se tympánu dostalo v seleukovském Uruku, je uvedeno do souvislosti se širšími společensko-historickými změnami. Nabízená interpretace se tak metodologicky opírá o performativní přístup k rituálům, který akcentuje jejich dynamickou podobu a vztah ke společnosti.

Diskuse o mezopotámském konceptu božství a božských reprezentací tvoří nezbytný rámec pro analýzu vztahu mezi rituálním zacházením a statusem rituálního objektu. Sledovaná interritalita poukazuje na podobnost, ale nikoli totožnost rituálního ustavení tympánu jakožto božstva s rituálem určeným pro kultické sochy. Proto i tympán je svébytným typem božské reprezentace bez nutnosti vztahu k primárně antropomorfnímu božstvu.

Klíčová slova

performativní přístup k rituálům, teorie rituálu, omývání úst, Rituál pro potažení tympánu, starověká Mezopotámie, interritalita

Abstract

The purpose of the present thesis is to analyse a particular ritual treatment, the so-called mouth-washing, appearing in diverse rituals of ancient Mesopotamia and its implications for the status of the ritual object treated in this way. Instead of generalizing the function of this element as known from the eponymous Mouth washing ritual for induction of cult images, this thesis considers its employment in all its attested occurrences. The author assumes a strongly metaphorical character of mouth-washing and analyses the concept of purity underlying it. Its shifting significance in different rituals is observed and a typology of these is outlined.

A following case study is devoted to the Ritual for covering a kettledrum. A close examination of the sources reveals a possible development of the tradition as well as the ritual's interconnectedness with the Mouth washing ritual. This relation is treated as a case of *interrituality*, a concept introduced by Burkhard Gladigow. The divine status of the kettledrum is achieved through the ritual for its covering which intentionally employs elements used in the ritual induction of cult images. A special emphasis laid on the kettledrum's status in Seleucid Uruk corresponds with wider socio-historical changes. Methodologically, the offered interpretation rests on the performative approach to rituals which underlines their dynamic nature and their relation to society.

A discussion of Mesopotamian concepts of the divine and of divine representations forms a frame for analysing the relation between the ritual treatment and the status of the ritual object. The observed interritality points to a similarity, but not to identity of the kettledrum's induction and the ritual for divine images. Therefore, the kettledrum is a different kind of divine representation without being necessarily related to any anthropomorphic deity.

Key words

performative approach to rituals, ritual theory, mouth-washing, Ritual for covering a kettledrum, ancient Mesopotamia, interritality

Contents

Preface and acknowledgements.....	9
I. Introduction.....	10
1. The material for the study of Mesopotamian rituals and application of ritual theory.....	10
2. Use of the term ritual in ancient Mesopotamia.....	11
3. Aims of this thesis.....	12
II. Ancient Mesopotamian god conceptions.....	14
III. Mouth washing(s).....	19
1. Rituals and ritual acts.....	19
2. Looking for difference.....	20
3. Washing and opening.....	22
4. Achieving purity.....	26
5. Place of mouth-washing and mouth-opening in different rituals.....	29
IV. Case study: Ritual for covering a kettledrum.....	34
1. State of publication of the sources.....	34
2. Description of the ritual actions.....	35
3. Ritual commentary and the group of 12 gods.....	38
4. Instruments bovine and divine.....	40
5. Place of mouth-washing in the ritual context.....	43
6. Interrituality and socio-historical context.....	47
V. Conclusion.....	51
Appendix 1: Attestations of mouth-washings.....	53
Appendix 2: Comparison of the sources for the Ritual for covering a kettledrum.....	56
Text concordance.....	59
Abbreviations.....	60
Bibliography.....	62

“I tried to stress then, and I should emphasize even more now, that our scholarly duty lies in the interpretation and reinterpretation of long-known texts, in order to gain more insight into both the underlying civilization and the literary forms that exist as its vehicles.”

Erica Reiner

Preface and acknowledgements

It seems appropriate to me to mention some sources of inspiration that have led me to choose this topic. As a religious studies student in Prague, I have become much interested in rituals generally. I took a seminar on Ritual theories led by doc. Radek Chlup, PhD. (Summer term 2012/13) and another one on the Field research in ritual studies given by a guest professor Ronald Grimes (Winter term 2013/14). Since my general focus was already laid on ancient Mesopotamia, I asked my MA tutor in that field, doc. Dalibor Antalík, Dr. for a seminar of reading some ritual text. We agreed on reading the Mouth washing ritual (Winter term 2014/15). Later on I found out the existence of other mouth-washings being performed on different kinds of objects, including a drum. Since I was playing African drums at that time, it appeared to me as a fitting topic. Shortly afterwards I left for an exchange at the University of Heidelberg to get more philological background in Assyriology, without which I could not study the Mesopotamian materials properly. The originally one-term exchange has developed into a whole year and a strong attachment to the place and people at the Department of Assyriology as well as the Department of Religious Studies. Pending on the border between these two fields, I have received wonderful support from many people, fellow students as well as professor Stefan Maul from Assyriology and professor Gregor Ahn from the Religious Studies, the latter of whom has become the supervisor of this MA thesis.

That being said, it is also very important to me to acknowledge how much I have learned from my professors at the Charles University in Prague and to appreciate the freedom and support I got from everyone at home when leaving to Germany.

In particular, I would like to thank prof. Stefan Maul for providing me with photos of the Assur tablets (*KAR 50*, *KAR 60*), curators of the Louvre museum for sending me photos of the Uruk ritual tablet *TU 44* as well as Marie Young for giving me advice on the right e-mails to write to. I have benefited immensely from these materials. Further, I am deeply grateful to Tereza Štěpánová for correcting my English. Special thanks belong to Selena Wisnom and Adrian Heinrich not only for reading this thesis and commenting on it but also for enriching discussions and long-lasting support. Many other names could be added but comprehensiveness in this regard seems almost impossible.

I. Introduction

1. The material for the study of Mesopotamian rituals and application of ritual theory

Despite a wide-spread assumption, the problem of studying the religion of ancient Mesopotamia lies not so much in the lack of material as in its nature. Even though there are still new texts being published and many more are still probably awaiting their excavation, they offer only certain kinds of information. Many questions we can raise must necessarily remain open with the hope that at some point new ways to join separate pieces of information will be found in order to obtain new results.

When approaching rituals of ancient Mesopotamia, the material being analysed consists of texts, namely ritual prescriptions. They are instructions written by priests, or more precisely ritual specialists,¹ for themselves. Most of these tablets probably served archival purposes, preservation of specialised knowledge, and tuition of apprentices. Less frequently, we might assume their use in performances as well. What we have at our disposal is an ideal ritual form preserved in a more or less fix textual transmission. Thanks to colophons of some tablets we can identify whole families of priests and scribes and sometimes even determine the purpose of writing down the text in question.² These information together with the tablets' formats and their archaeological contexts, if detectable, help us find links to the writers and owners of these texts, but rarely contribute directly to our knowledge of the ritual tradition.³ In order to get access to the socio-historical context of these rituals, it is necessary to search in the contextualisable material such as royal inscriptions, letters, or economic documents which, however, do not always offer any useful connecting points.

In such a situation, it is not surprising that treating ancient Mesopotamian rituals from the perspective of the religious or ritual studies has not been a very common undertaking so far. Most literature dealing with rituals of this culture includes text editions and philological analysis with a commentary on parallels drawn from other known texts. When a more theoretical standpoint is applied, the famous scheme of rituals of passage by Arnold van Gennep can be named among the most currently used.⁴ This theory allows for an analysis of the basic structure of the ritual in question, but has its certain limits. The tripartite scheme cannot be applied universally since individual rituals are highly complex and cannot be so easily collapsed to three clear phases.⁵ Moreover, this approach has been largely problematized as it has neglected the dynamics of rituals in their socio-historical contexts.

Instead of searching for an underlying structure of rituals, implying a clear understanding of what a ritual is, an important current in the ritual studies has been concerned with the

1 For an overview of priesthood as well as the issue of using this term see Walther Sallaberger and Fabienne H. Vulliet, "Priester. A. I.," in *RIA* 10, 617–640.

2 See Laurie E. Pearce, "Statements of Purpose: Why the Scribes Wrote," in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*, ed. Mark E. Cohen, Bethesda: CDL Press, 1993, 185–193.

3 "We shall eventually be able to reconstruct most of the texts, but we will never recover the context and nature of vocal performance." Piotr Michalowski, "Sailing to Babylon, Reading the Dark Side of the Moon," in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-First Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, eds. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwartz, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996, 177–193: 182.

4 Arnold van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage*, Paris: Nourry, 1909. Nevertheless, this book has been much more influential only after its translation into English in 1960. Among Assyriological works using this scheme, let me name at least a PhD. Dissertation by Peggy Boden treating the Mouth washing ritual: Peggy J. Boden, "The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (Mīs Pî) Ritual: An Examination of Some of the Social and Communication Strategies Which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual Which Transferred the Essence of the Deity Into Its Temple Statue", PhD Diss., The John Hopkins University, 1998. For a critique on her approach see Angelika Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Leuven: Peeters, 1997, 45–72: 70–71.

5 See e.g. Burkhard Gladigow, "Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale," in *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. Michael Stausberg, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2004, 57–76: 65.

performative aspect.⁶ Naturally, that is something we are apparently missing when turning our attention to ancient Mesopotamia. Not only do we have no access to the actual performances but there is also little chance of tracing any historical development due to the fix scribal tradition. However, one still does not have to give up the performative approach to rituals completely. Laying emphasis on their dynamic nature and on the fact that rituals do not simply reflect but rather influence and recreate some basic social concepts is still possible and desirable. In words of Catherine Bell: “[P]erformance theorists have tended to depict culture not as a fully articulated formal system or a set of symbolic codes, but as a changing, processual, dramatic, and indeterminate entity.”⁷

Thus, rituals can serve as a means of coping with contradictory values and facts of social life in a flexible way. Thanks to their performative quality, such contradictory elements do not have to be harmonized in any neat system.⁸ Instead, multiple meanings of symbols come into play,⁹ allowing for different interpretations by different actors. Naturally, this does not have to apply to rituals exclusively. There are often multiple coexisting ideas in the same culture which are not necessarily brought into explicit contradiction. They are primarily a part of the lived culture and do not have to form a strictly rational system. Concepts underlying a great part of social interaction are often of a more metaphorical than logical nature.¹⁰

2. Use of the term ritual in ancient Mesopotamia

I should briefly comment on my use of the term ritual since it might imply the existence of a universal category of ritual in any culture. Indeed, “actions” might be a suitable translation of *nēpešu*,¹¹ literally “doing”, an Akkadian term used in colophons of the *Ritual for covering a kettle drum* to refer to the whole ritual to be performed by a particular kind of ritual specialists. Nevertheless, more specific Akkadian terms for rituals, *paršū u kidudū*,¹² are used in these texts as well. This designation already indicates some kind of specific action, related to the world order and infused with ancient tradition.¹³ Also the setting of this particular ritual in the temple district together with its execution by ritual specialists implies that such actions were of a specific nature, or “set apart”, to use a classical expression.

I adopt the view that ritual should be defined as a polythetic concept.¹⁴ This opinion allows me to use the term for a culturally specific class of actions without presupposing any absolute correspondence with rituals of other cultures. Further, such a class of actions does not have to be strictly demarcated. Rituals attest an interesting continuum between actions of a typical ritual nature (reciting a prayer, making an offering) and those that would not have to be considered ritual-like apart from the frame they are put in (covering a drum). What makes the difference

6 For an overview in the context of other approaches to ritual theory see Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press, 2009, 72–76.

7 C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 74.

8 Ronald L. Grimes, *Symbol and Conquest: Public Ritual and Drama in Santa Fe, New Mexico*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976, esp. 45–46.

9 Victor W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967, 19–47.

10 Here I am drawing heavily on George Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live by*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

11 TU 44, iii 29; iv 36; Linssen, 275–282: 278, iv 26. For an overview of Akkadian terms used for rituals see Nils P. Heeßel, “Akkadian,” in *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, eds. Jens Kreinath, Joannes A. M. Snoek and Michael Stausberg, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2006, 55–57.

12 TU 44, i 4; i 6; *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Obv. 4; Obv. 6.

13 CAD 12, 195–199; CAD 8, 347–348.

14 Polythetic classes “are based on characteristics that may or may not be present... A class is polythetic if and only if (A) each member of the class has a large but unspecified number of a set of characteristics occurring in the class as a whole, (B) each of those characteristics is possessed by a large number of those members, and (if fully polythetic) (C) no one of those characteristics is possessed by every member of the class.” Joannes A. M. Snoek, “Defining ‘Rituals,’” in *Theorizing Rituals*, 3–14: 4–5.

between ritual and non-ritual activity and what is mostly impossible to observe in the Mesopotamian texts, is the specific *style* of the activities performed. In this respect, the notion of *ritualization*¹⁵ seems to me extremely useful in order to conceive the ancient Mesopotamian ritual procedures as a specific style of performing activities which could otherwise take place in a non-ritual context.¹⁶ At the same time, there must have been some kind of framing which can be observed even in the ritual texts themselves. For instance, the ritual tablet *TU 44* includes a list of utensils for different craftsmen next to the ritual instructions but separates them by means of a special colophon. As Ursula Rao has put it, rituals form a separate, but not disconnected domain, distinguished from other actions through social framing.¹⁷

3. Aims of this thesis

There are, in fact, two main research topics which will pervade this thesis. Firstly, I would like to examine a specific ritual act, the so-called mouth-washing, and inquire into its possible functions. Secondly, I will analyse the status of the ritual objects treated in this way. In particular, I will focus my attention on the Ritual for covering a kettledrum¹⁸ in which a mouth-washing is performed at first on a bull before it is slaughtered and later on the kettledrum after it is covered with the bull's hide. In previous research, the Ritual for covering a kettledrum has been repeatedly compared with the *Mouth washing ritual* for cult statues¹⁹ with the claim that through this ritual procedure these objects (the cult image and the kettledrum) acquire the same status.²⁰ Therefore, I will expand on this comparison to see if it can be useful for our understanding of the ritual's function as well as of the status of the kettledrum.

Bearing in mind that any analysis of an ancient Mesopotamian ritual must necessarily remain a tentative reconstruction, I will attempt to shed some light on the Ritual for covering a kettledrum not only by using the limited data for its socio-historical context but by taking other contemporary rituals as a part of that context as well.²¹ I will focus my attention primarily on the so-called mouth-washing, inquiring into its influencing the status of the central ritual object. Again, also this ritual act will be analysed in the context of the whole ritual of which it was a part. Throughout my work, I will lay a heavy emphasis on the 1st millennium B.C.E. sources, i.e. on the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian era, to be able to draw plausible comparisons as far as possible.²²

15 Ronald L. Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982, 55–56; C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 81–82.

16 This approach has been recently applied by Kirsten Neumann in her PhD Dissertation: Kirsten Neumann, “Resurrected and Reevaluated: The Neo-Assyrian Temple as a Ritualized and Ritualizing Built Environment”, PhD Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2014.

17 Ursula Rao, “Ritual in Society,” in *Theorizing Rituals*, 143–160: 159. Framing is a concept established by Gregory Bateson and developed mainly by Ervin Goffman. See C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 74.

18 All important ritual texts and one incantation tablet have been edited in Linszen, 252–282. However, to make easily clear which text I am speaking about, I refer to them by the classical designations of primary publication (*TU 44*, *KAR 60*, *KAR 50*, *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5) and only in the case of the incantation tablet I refer to Linszen, 275–282, as to the primary publication. A commentary to the ritual from Seleucid era can be found in Alasdair Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, 187–204.

19 Also known as the *Mīs Pī* ritual, although this reading of the original term is not certain and therefore I will avoid using it. Edition: Christopher Walker and Michael Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mīs Pī Ritual*, Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001.

20 Most recently in Uri Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods: Sumerian Emesal Prayers of the First Millennium BC*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014, 124–128.

21 For the importance of understanding each ritual in its broader ritual context, observing “symbolic echoes and duplications”, see C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 174.

22 I am aware of the wide temporal scope but it is almost impossible to narrow it down due to uneasy datation of some tablets and fixity of scribal transmission (some of the tablets claim to be copies of older originals).

I will begin by introducing a recent debate among scholars about the conception of deities and their representations in ancient Mesopotamia. A redefinition of the nature of these representations will lead me to questioning the direct impact of ritual procedures on establishing the status of ritual objects. In particular, the so-called mouth-washing and mouth-opening, their close interconnection and possible symbolic value and functions will be analysed. I will consider the place taken by mouth-washing in different ritual contexts which necessarily modify its meaning. As a case study, I will describe the Ritual for covering a kettledrum in which two mouth-washings take place. I will compare it with the Mouth washing ritual for cult statues and examine if it is justified to consider them as parallel. This comparison together with the general role of mouth-washing having been examined will help me establish implications for the status of the kettledrum. These will be brought together with other available data concerning the status of this object. Without aiming at some definitive answer, I hope to elucidate both the function of mouth-washing and the status of the kettledrum, although these questions are necessarily interconnected and therefore dependent on each other.

II. Ancient Mesopotamian god conceptions

In recent years, it has become increasingly recognized how problematic it is to understand ancient Mesopotamian god conceptions, or to use the word “god” at all. Some scholars have tried to render it as a relative category, to ask “what is divine” instead of “what is a god”.²³ Others gave up using the word “god” completely and contented themselves with using the Sumerian (*diĝir*) and Akkadian (*ilu(m)*) terms instead.²⁴ A turning point in thinking about Mesopotamian gods can be seen in a conference organized by Barbara Nevling Porter in 2004, the outcomes of which have been edited in the volume *What is a God?*²⁵ This book reflects not only different aspects of Mesopotamian deities and a variety of primary material to be taken into consideration, but also divergent approaches taken by the participants of the conference as well as numerous problems of terminology they have encountered. Apart from the central term, “a god” or “a deity”, such descriptive tools such as “anthropomorphism” appeared to be highly ambiguous and possibly inadequate.²⁶

The main discussion, largely initiated by Barbara Porter and developed by others in various ways,²⁷ concerns non-anthropomorphic representations of deities, or even the possibility of non-anthropomorphic deities generally. This debate has come out of recognition of certain preconceptions in works of former scholars dealing with Mesopotamian deities. These have included evolutionary schemes (Thorkild Jacobsen) as well as a hierarchy of beliefs ascribed to different levels of society (Wilfred G. Lambert). Anthropomorphic conceptions of deities were taken as the most developed ones, fitting these scholars’ ideas of a developed ancient culture.²⁸ Barbara Porter, on the other hand, argues strongly in favour of taking evidence for non-anthropomorphic god conceptions at face value, thus opening completely new possibilities of interpreting the Mesopotamian material.²⁹

An important part of this debate concerns divine *representations*. This expression by itself already implies some abstract, non-material, or invisible deity, mostly imagined in anthropomorphic terms (i.e. in the way one mostly encounters deities acting in mythical narratives), existing separately from its manifestations (e.g. cosmic phenomena, such as a planet)

23 Beate Pongratz-Leisten, “Divine Agency and Astralization of the Gods in Ancient Mesopotamia,” in *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*, ed. id., Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011, 137–187: 140–144.

24 Barbara N. Porter in her talk “Gods That Float and Gods With Wheels: Boats and Chariots as Non-Anthropomorphic Deities” at the 61st *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* in Geneva, Switzerland. In her former work, she spoke about “gods”, but included reflection on this problematic terminology. Barbara N. Porter, “Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum: Were There Non-Anthropomorphic Deities in Ancient Mesopotamia?,” in *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. id., Winona Lake: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Eisenbrauns, 2009, 153–194: 159–160.

25 Barbara N. Porter, ed., *What Is a God?*

26 This is well reflected on in Barbara N. Porter, “Introduction,” in *What Is a God?*, 1–13.

27 Whereas Barbara Porter and other authors who have contributed to the mentioned volume focus mostly on the 1st millennium B.C.E., for a discussion on older periods the work of Gebhard Selz should be consulted. See esp. Gebhard Selz, “The Holy Drum, the Spear, and the Harp,” in *Sumerian Gods and their Representations*, ed. Irving L. Finkel, Groningen: Styx, 1997, 167–213. An overview of the whole debate can be found in Michael B. Hundley, “Here a God, There a God: An Examination of the Divine in Ancient Mesopotamia,” *AoF* 40 (2013): 68–107. Further, recent contributions and edited volumes by Beate Pongratz-Leisten to this topic should be mentioned: Beate Pongratz-Leisten and Karen Sonik, eds., *The Materiality of Divine Agency*, Boston – Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015, and B. Pongratz-Leisten, ed., *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*.

28 These views are summarised in B. N. Porter, “Introduction,” with further references. The author cites mainly three founding personalities for studying ancient Mesopotamian religion: Thorkild Jacobsen, Wilfred G. Lambert, and to a lesser degree Jean Bottéro, noting their substantial impact on later scholars.

29 Interestingly, the non-anthropomorphic representations or conceptions of divinities can be also used as an argument in favour of the highly developed culture, since the symbolic representations are not literal and show an abstract way of thinking. This argument underlies comparisons of divine non-anthropomorphism, especially in the 1st millennium B.C.E. Mesopotamia, and the image ban in biblical Israel. See e.g. Tallay Ornan, *The Triumph of the Symbol: Pictorial Representation of Deities in Mesopotamia and the Biblical Image Ban*, Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005.

and representations (cult statues and other kinds of images). However, there is no reason apart from our expectations to treat such abstract, or even anthropomorphically envisaged but invisible entities as some primary center to which all their manifestations should be related. No dual scheme, such as a body–soul dichotomy,³⁰ corresponds to the ancient Mesopotamian evidence. What seems more useful is the approach of Zainab Bahrani who has shown the multiple appearances of a person as different means of encountering the person, without supposing any core or centre:

“While the post-Greek duality of representation as real/mimetic is parallel to the conception of the individual as consisting of a bipartite entity of soul/body, the Assyro-Babylonian system of representation is better conceived as a pluridimensional chain of possible appearances. The possibility of encountering the same things through different signifiers or substances can thus be kyriologic (working by imitation) or tropic (working by transposition or metaphor)[.]”³¹

Therefore, all these signifiers, or appearances, are real to the same extent.³² If we transpose this scheme to the representations of a deity, the divine signifiers do not *contain* the deity, because they all *are* the deity in a way. The planet Venus is no less the goddess Ištar than her cult image in the temple or an anthropomorphic personality acting in mythical narratives, all being called by their divine names and approached as a deity. There is no point in searching for appearances which are more primary than the other ones, since these are all only means of approaching the deity, its “conception” being identical with its material manifestation and not hiding behind it.³³

At the same time, this may seem admittedly puzzling, since destruction of a cult image apparently did not do harm to the deity, as has been repeatedly pointed out. However, this is completely in accord with the fact that more than one statue (and other kinds of divine appearances) signified the same deity simultaneously. Therefore, the destruction of one statue did not destruct the deity itself. Nevertheless, the deity was affected, although the direction of this impact was explained as reversed. It was considered the deity’s decision and anger which caused it to leave its city. It would have been incomprehensible if something had happened to the deity without its own intention. All in all, there has always been a clear relation between the deity (as a complex of interconnected divine appearances, or, in words of Michael Hundley, as a divine constellation³⁴) and each of its representations.

If we give up the idea of the (anthropomorphic) centre of a deity, it becomes much easier to regard anthropomorphic appearances only as one among possible ways of signifying.

30 Such a misconception of a cult image serving as a body for a deity appears in Angelika Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die Alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik*, Freiburg – Göttingen: Universitätsverlag / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998, e.g. 36–37.

31 Zainab Bahrani, *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, 128.

32 “That is, rather than being a copy of something in reality, the image itself was seen as a real thing. It was not considered to resemble an original reality that was present elsewhere but to contain that reality in itself. Therefore, instead of being a means of signifying an original real thing, it was seen as ontologically equivalent to it, existing in the same register of reality.” Z. Bahrani, *The Graven Image*, 127.

33 This indistinction between abstract concepts and their material or concrete “manifestation” is still admittedly puzzling to our Cartesian minds. A typical example is the concept of me, mostly translated as divine powers. The list of me to be found in the Sumerian myth Inanna and Enki includes an all-encompassing range of abstract entities (wisdom, respect, wickedness), offices (office of the išib priest), activities (kindling of fire, plundering of cities), skills (the craft of the carpenter, of the leather-worker) as well as very concrete material objects (shepherd’s hut, scepter, musical instruments, black garment). Gertrud Farber-Flügge, *Der Mythos “Inanna und Enki” unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der ME*, Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973, 97–164.

34 Nevertheless, Michael Hundley fails to give up the notion of an “anthropomorphic core” of the deity. M. B. Hundley, “Here a God, There a God,” 82.

Consequently, this approach makes it possible to admit also the existence of divinities without anthropomorphic appearances. At the same time, deities which did attest anthropomorphic representations could be represented by various other means of signification as well. If we can speak of “the deity” at all, it was present in the whole complex of its appearances simultaneously. However, binary oppositions remain encoded in our language which causes difficulties when speaking about representations without expecting something which is being represented.

From this perspective, it finally becomes unnecessary to treat divine representations as “divinized” or “deified”,³⁵ since they are in and of themselves a means of presencing the deity,³⁶ or simply, in the emic view, they are the deity. A description of a deity’s actions in an imaginary, mythical realm makes the deity relatable in a narrative form whilst a cult image presents the deity as an object of cultic attention and finally, a cosmic phenomenon shows the deity influencing human lives in unexpected ways which the diviners can inquire into. These different appearances are not primary and secondary, just more or less suitable for certain contexts.³⁷

Whereas the most common divine representations in temples, as far as we know, were indeed anthropomorphic (i.e. looked like human in the shape of body³⁸), there was a whole range of non-anthropomorphic representations as well. These often suited specific contexts, such as divine standards being taken to war campaigns,³⁹ or moon-crescent standards (*uskāru*) used for taking oaths,⁴⁰ but were in no way excluded from the temple.⁴¹ Modern scholars have recognized that such non-anthropomorphic objects represented a deity, but often with the underlying assumption that they served as substitutes for the anthropomorphic images. Unless we make the step of conceiving these representations as independent in their own right, we will not be able to avoid problems concerning non-anthropomorphic representations without any “primary” anthropomorphic referent.

Nevertheless, even then it is not always that easy to decide what was considered a divine representation. To be able to say that, we would have to find certain criteria for discerning these divine signifiers, and therefore, gods. Even the most evident emic criterium, the divine determinative *diġir*⁴² written before divine names, seems to be problematic.⁴³ Its appearance

35 This terminology of Barbara Porter is criticised by Beate Pongratz-Leisten, “Entwurf zu einer Handlungstheorie des Altorientalischen Polytheismus,” in *Göttliche Körper – Göttliche Gefühle: Was Leisten Anthropomorphie und Anthropopathische Götterkonzepte im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament?*, ed. Andreas Wagner, Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg / Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014, 101–116: 108, n. 29.

36 The term “presencing” instead of “representing” has been promoted in the introduction of B. Pongratz-Leisten and K. Sonik, eds., *The Materiality of Divine Agency*, 10. Nevertheless, they do not avoid supposing some primary, immaterial conception which becomes relatable through its presencing in material artifacts or visible cosmic phenomena.

37 One may find non-anthropomorphic deities even as actors in myths, e.g. the weapons of god Ninurta Šarur and Šargaz in the myth Lugal-e.

38 E.g. Peter Machinist distinguishes three types of anthropomorphism, or three meanings of the term: physical, functional, and emotional. Peter Machinist, “Anthropomorphism in Mesopotamian Religion,” in *Göttliche Körper – Göttliche Gefühle?*, 67–99: 68.

39 Karlheinz Deller, Beate Pongratz-Leisten and Erika Bleibtreu, “Götterstreitwagen und Götterstandarten: Götter auf dem Feldzug und ihr Kult im Feldlager,” *BaM* 23 (1992): 291–356.

40 Ursula Seidl, “Babylonische und Assyrische Kultbilder in den Massenmedien des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.,” in *Images as Media: Sources for the Cultural History of the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean (1st Millenium BCE)*, ed. Christoph Uehlinger, Fribourg – Göttingen: University Press / Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000, 89–114.

41 The best known evidence is offered by a stone tablet bearing an inscription of Nabû-apla-iddina, king of Babylon in the 9th century B.C.E., accompanied by a unique representation of an anthropomorphic statue of Šamaš and a sun-disk (*nip̄hu*) which was supposed to replace a former statue destroyed by Sutiāns. Apparently, the king could boast himself of having made a new, anthropomorphic statue, but a non-anthropomorphic representation was suitable enough to represent Šamaš in the temple for some time. *BBS* 120–127, no. 36, Pl. XCVIII–CII.

42 The cuneiform sign looks like a star and can be read as the word for “sky”, as the name of the highest Mesopotamian god An(u) or as the divine determinative. In this latter function in front of divine names, it is transcribed as a “d” in superscript, such as in ^dŠamaš.

43 B. N. Porter, “Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum,” *passim*.

with divine names as well as with divine representations of different kinds has led to the notion of “deification” of cult objects, celestial phenomena etc.⁴⁴ The precise function of the determinative, especially in older periods, remains enigmatic. Not only does it appear with objects we would never think of rendering divine,⁴⁵ but it does not appear with them consequently. A common view considers deities with anthropomorphic features known from mythical narratives as primary, since they appear with the determinative quite steadily.⁴⁶ I would suggest that these differences do not reflect any preference for anthropomorphic god conceptions but that the determinative has been preferably used for specific kinds of divine signifiers (names, personalities) which often attest anthropomorphic features.⁴⁷ The inconsistent use of the divine determinative with cult objects specifically (ranging from anthropomorphic cult statues, through cult symbols, to cultic paraphernalia) hints at the ambiguous status of these objects between man-made artifacts and divine signifiers⁴⁸ but not at the status of the deities “imagined behind”. Moreover, if the conception of the divine should be regarded as a relative category, then it does not stand at all in opposition to that which is *not* divine. However, it still remains to be elucidated if there is some specific logic behind the use and absence of the determinative in different contexts.

A similar case can be made about iconographical material in which bovine horns have appeared as a marker of divinity since early times.⁴⁹ However, apart from standard anthropomorphic deities, horns or horned crowns are often worn by demons and different kinds of creatures we mostly know rather little about.⁵⁰ What it actually means for the status of all these creatures seems difficult to determine.

Thus, it may be appropriate only to cite Peter Machinist:

“Markers like the prefixed label *dingir/ilu* or the depiction of a figure wearing a horned crown or wings may suggest that a text or piece of visual art is intended to *represent* a particular deity or divinity in general, but the representation may not supply sufficient clues to the ways in which the ancients *conceived* of the deity or divinity.”⁵¹

Naturally, the problem of determining criteria for the divine status lies in our own rendering of the divine, stemming primarily from the Christian background. It is essential to recognize that we cannot rid ourselves of these preconceptions, we might only reflect on them. Even the anti-dualistic scheme by Zainab Bahrani used above can be applied to divinities only

44 See above.

45 See esp. the discussion of the Fāra lists in G. Selz, “The Holy Drum, the Spear, and the Harp.”

46 “While the anthropomorphically conceived deities are the quintessence of divinity, other (occasional) deities comprise a borderline category.” M. B. Hundley, “Here a God, There a God,” 76.

47 This is also quite logical since the notion of a (divine) person is a typical feature of anthropomorphism of all kinds. P. Machinist, “Anthropomorphism in Mesopotamian Religion,” 67.

48 This is also made clear by alternating determinatives or their cumulation in cases where more different determinatives can appear, e.g. a chariot can be divine (*diĝir*) but still is made of wood (*ĝeš*), so it can appear with either determinative or even with both. Armas Salonen, *Prozessionswagen der Babylonischen Götter*, Helsingforsiae: Societas Orientalis Fennica, 1946, 9–10. Similarly, constellations can bear not only the determinative for stars (*mul*) but sometimes another one at the same time which refers to their associated qualities, e.g. again the chariot, this time as a constellation, appears as ^{mul}*giš*GIGIR, determined by both the star determinative and the determinative for wooden objects. Adolf L. Oppenheim, “A New Prayer to the ‘Gods of the Night,’” *StBiOr* 3 (1959): 282–301: 283, l. 16. I would like to thank Ali Al-Magasees for these references. So far, the reasons according to which the scribe opted to use a particular determinative seem largely obscure.

49 Rainer M. Boehmer, “Hörnerkrone,” in *RLA* 4, 431–434.

50 Franz Wiggermann, “Mischwesen. A. Philologisch. Mesopotamien,” in *RLA* 8, 222–246. Based on iconography, Wiggermann takes the position that horned crowns mark the being as divine and that this group can be roughly divided into anthropomorphic entities (gods) and non-anthropomorphic (monsters), although “lesser gods of nature” can be represented as “hybrids”. *Ibid*, 233.

51 P. Machinist, “Anthropomorphism in Mesopotamian Religion,” 71–72 [emphasis original].

with the conjecture that deities are persons, or in some way analogous to them.⁵² There have been also other attempts to determine how we could distinguish what the ancient Mesopotamians considered to be divine. Among these, an inspiring article by Gebhard Selz takes the criteria of ritual treatment into consideration. In his addressing a wide range of possibly divine phenomena found in texts from the third millenium B.C.E., he states the following criteria:

“1. Name-giving, i.e. the creating of an independent entity. 2. ‘Mouth-opening’ and/or ‘Mouth-washing’, i.e. the animation of this creature. 3. Induction i.e. providing for an appropriate cult-place. 4. Offerings, clothing and washing, i.e. the care and feeding of these now living gods, in order to ensure their lives.”⁵³

Among these, we could separate the first three types as means for constituting the status of an object from the fourth one which includes taking care of the object once it acquires such a status. The latter type, mainly bringing offerings, is commonly considered a criterium of being divine.⁵⁴ The present thesis will primarily focus on one of the means of the status’ constitution, on the mouth-washing and mouth-opening. The idea of ritual treatment as determining, or even constituting, the status of a (cult) object shall be of high interest, although in need of further clarification and evidence. The question whether mouth-washing and mouth-opening can be held for such a criterium is highly complex, as the present paper attempts to show.

52 To compare with a stance not in favour with the idea that personality should be regarded a central feature of Mesopotamian deities see B. N. Porter, “Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum,” 158. Nevertheless, I hope that one can approach certain aspects of Mesopotamian deities by redefining the concept of person in Mesopotamian terms.

53 G. Selz, “The Holy Drum, the Spear, and the Harp,” 179.

54 B. N. Porter, “Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum,” 167.

III. Mouth washing(s)

1. Rituals and ritual acts

When a new cult statue of a god was made, an elaborate ritual had to take place before installing the statue in its temple where it became the centre of regular cultic attention.⁵⁵ The purpose of this well known Mouth washing ritual⁵⁶ was basically to deny the human origin of the statue and to claim its completely divine origin and nature instead.⁵⁷ Already in the ritual texts themselves the statue was addressed as a god.⁵⁸ Although created from material substances, these materials were declared to be of special nature⁵⁹ and to have been reworked by divine craftsmen. Thus, the ritual was a means of making the status of this cult object clear and unanimous despite its possible conflicting interpretations. It created a powerful interpretative cultural overlay so that the status of the statue could not be disputed in any way.

The title of the ritual for cult images in modern scholarly literature is derived from its incipit (*enūma pī ili temessû*; “When you want to wash the mouth of a god”) as well as from the designation of an act recurring in this ritual, the so called mouth-washing.⁶⁰ In fact, the *Mouth washing ritual* includes seven or fourteen *mouth-washings*, in the Nineveh and Babylonian version respectively.⁶¹ Even though this difference has been recognized,⁶² it is often not kept apart sufficiently. Such inconsistent separation of the whole ritual from the individual ritual act(s) inside a ritual naturally causes a lack of clarity when defining the function of it.⁶³ In other words, it is often taken for granted that the function of any mouth-washing is the same as of the mouth-washing known from the Mouth washing ritual, thereby identifying the function of the ritual act with that of the ritual as a whole.⁶⁴

55 I.e. feeding by offerings, washing, oiling, clothing, entertaining by music performances, reciting prayers etc. See Eiko Matsushima, “Divine Statues, their Fashioning and Clothing and their Interaction with the Society in Ancient Mesopotamia,” in *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East: Papers of the First Colloquium on the Ancient Near East – The City and Its Life Held at the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan (Mitaka, Tokyo), March 20–22, 1992*, ed. id., Heidelberg: Winter, 1993, 209–219.

56 Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia*.

57 In my opinion, it is much more fruitful to speak about transforming a statue into a deity, i.e. into a divine signifier, than about joining some divine substance with the statue. The latter way of putting the matter leads to a problematic division between the material object and some divine essence entering it, as in a body-soul dichotomy. Exemplary in this respect is A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, e.g. 36–37. She describes the relation between the deity and the statue as a “substantial connection” accomplished by the Mouth washing ritual. A. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 46. Such a Cartesian dichotomy is even more explicit in Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 7–8. These authors refer to an inscription of Assurbanipal about his destruction of Elamite sanctuaries in which the king states that he counted the Elamite gods and goddesses as ghosts, or phantoms (*ana zaqīqī*). Although this very probably refers to the destruction of divine statues, making thereby the Elamite gods powerless, this loss of power can be interpreted just as a destruction of a particular divine signifier rather than as disembodiment of the deity.

58 Mostly as *ilu*(DINGIR) *suātu*(BI), “that god”, which was probably replaced by a particular divine name during the ritual performance. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 54, n. 47.

59 By means of special incantations, so-called *Kultmittelbeschwörungen*.

60 “In the ritual actually designated *mīs pī*, the mouth of the divine statue was washed fourteen times, the ritual being named after a constantly recurring act, although not necessarily the most important one.” Victor A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips and their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources,” *HUCA* 60 (1989): 39–89: 55.

61 Only five mouth-washings are preserved in the Assyrian version. I follow A. Berlejung in that two further mouth-washings can be reconstructed in one fragmentary passage (l. 82–87) and at the missing end based on parallels with the Babylonian version. A. Berlejung, *Theologie der Bilder*, 234.

62 M. Dick, “Pīt Pī Und Mīs Pī,” in *RLA* 10, 580–585: 581.

63 Nevertheless, it is necessary to admit that such a separation is not always easily done when the washing of a mouth is only mentioned, e.g. in a royal inscription.

64 To make my own terminology clear, I make a basic distinction between a *ritual* as a complex procedure and *ritual acts* which are included in such procedures, sometimes repeatedly. What correlates with this difference is the distinction between the *Mouth washing ritual* and *mouth-washing*, the latter of which can appear repeatedly in the mentioned ritual as well as in other ones. This notion of ritual acts correlates with ritual elements in the terminology of B. Gladigow, “Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale,” 59–60.

This becomes all the more apparent when we consider the fact that *mouth-washings* can and do appear in a number of different rituals.⁶⁵ Not only can this act be performed by different ritual specialists (*āšīpu*, *kalû*, *bārû*), but it can also take place on a variety of objects,⁶⁶ including animals, persons, and a variety of inanimate objects. Thus, it is not any more tenable to explain this act appearing in such different contexts merely as a less elaborate version of the one performed on cult statues.⁶⁷ The function of this ritual act is necessarily heavily dependent on the whole ritual in which it is embedded – as any other ritual act is.⁶⁸

Such an assumption makes the whole enterprise of determining the function of mouth-washing much more complex since one cannot reach any proper conclusion without detailed examination of each attestation of this ritual act in its own context. Such an undertaking would be beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I will make at least some general observations based on a greater variety of attested cases than only on the Mouth washing ritual itself. This will hopefully afterwards appear useful for explaining the presence of mouth-washing in the Ritual for covering the kettledrum.

2. Looking for difference

Let us begin with some basic philological matters, namely with the different writings for washing of the mouth. The question if these have any bearing upon possible distinctions among the acts themselves has been disputed but no definitive solution has been reached.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, one might distinguish logographic writings of mouth washing (KA.LUḪ.Û.DA, LUḪ KA, and possibly KA LUḪ) appearing with the verb “to do” (*epēšu*, DÙ)⁷⁰ from those which make use of the verb “to wash” (*mesû*, LUḪ) the object of which is then the mouth (*pû*, KA). In the latter case, the logograms KA and LUḪ tend to be preserved, or KA at least, appearing with pronominal suffixes and phonetic complements.⁷¹ These indications of *performance* (the instruction “to perform mouth-washing” or “to wash the mouth”) should be held apart from assertions of a *state* of purity spoken out by a priest about himself or about an animal brought for sacrifice. The latter statements make often use of completely syllabographic writings which can be, nevertheless,

65 See Appendix 1. A list of attestations is provided in A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 182–185 and 188–190, and in Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 10–15. Further, CAD 10, 30–34 under “*mesû* A” should be consulted, as well as V. A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips.”

66 When speaking of ritual objects, I mean the object of ritual attention in the particular ritual in question, without specifying its nature. In the following text the term “object” can be a person, an animal, or an inanimate object without differentiation.

67 The following statement of A. Berlejung simplifies the matter in an unfortunate way: “The difference between the mouth-washing ritual of a divine image and the mouth-washings of other objects, or persons, lay mainly in its duration, expenditure and complexity.” A. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 45.

68 The same has been argued already by Arnold van Gennep who called it “sequential method”. According to this author, the meaning of a ritual act (called rite in the text) can be determined only from its place in the whole ritual and does not have any universal intrinsic meaning as isolated. Arnold van Gennep, “On the Method to Be Followed in the Study of Rites and Myths,” in *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion: Aims, Methods, and Theories of Research: Introduction and Anthology*, ed. Jacques Waardenburg, New York – Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999, 287–300: 297–299. More recently, a similar argument has been made e.g. in a comparison of narratives and rituals: “The relationship between story and genre is arguably similar to that between sequences of ritual action and the super-structures of larger ritual genres in which they appear. As elementary forms of ritual, typical patterns of ritual action will derive their meaning not least from the respective genre, such as different subtypes of initiation rituals, for example, in which they are employed.” Vera Nünning and Jan Rupp, “Ritual and Narrative: An Introduction,” in *Ritual and Narrative*, eds. Vera Nünning, Jan Rupp and Gregor Ahn, Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 2013.

69 “... [I]t does not appear that there is any essential difference between the expressions KA.LUḪ.Û.DA, LUḪ KA, and KA LUḪ.” M. Dick, “Pīt Pī Und Mīs Pī,” 582.

70 As far as I know, KA LUḪ without phonetic complements appears in one ritual text (*LKA* 150, Rev. 5) and on one incantation tablet (Linssen, 275–282: 277, iii 23) where in both cases the verb “to do” is just expected in a fragmentary context.

dependent on the text genre since these were apparently uttered during a ritual performance.⁷² Still another case might rest with the incantation rubrics which take on a variety of forms.

If all these attestations are considered together, other examples should be included as well, although they do not mention the washing of the mouth explicitly. Instead, the purification of the mouth is in some cases depicted as touching the lips with specific purifying substances.⁷³ Corresponding passages from two *ikribu*-prayers to the sun god Šamaš, in which the diviner describes the animal he is bringing as a sacrifice, will suffice to illustrate this point:

[e-ta]-nak-kal šammê(Ú.MEŠ) ina ba-ma-a-ti
[It eat]s plants on the high places,

[iš-ta-na-at-ti mêt(A.MEŠ) ma-ḥ]a-zi ellûti(KÛ.MEŠ) ul-lu-lu ina mêt(A.MEŠ)
mi-si pîšu(KA-šú)
[it drinks water of the pure (ponds? of) the sacred en]closure, it is purified with
water, its mouth is washed.

(*ikribu*-prayer for bringing a sacrificial wild sheep)⁷⁴

... e-kal šammê(Ú.MEŠ) ina ba-ma-a-te
... It eats plants on the high places,

iš-ta-na-at-ti mêt(A.MEŠ) ma-ḥa-zi ellûti(KÛ.MEŠ) (...)
it drinks water from the pure sacred enclosure (...)

a-kar-ra-bak-ku-nu-ši puḥātta(SAL.SILA₄) a-šak-kan ana pî(KA) puḥātti(SAL.SILA₄)
erēna(^{ges}EREN) ella(KÛ)
I dedicate the lamb to you, I place to the mouth of the lamb pure cedar,

ki-iš-ra sil-ta za-'a ṭāba(DU₁₀.GA) ...
bundle of shavings(?), sweet smelling resin ...

(*ikribu*-prayer to Šamaš for bringing a sacrificial lamb)⁷⁵

Therefore, purification of the mouth seems to be a broader metaphorical concept which might be traced even in texts where none of the expressions for the washing of the mouth is used.

Every time the instruction to wash the mouth of the god (i.e. of the statue) appears in the ritual texts of the Mouth washing ritual for cult images, it is in the same form: KA.LUḤ.Û.DA

71 These are typological examples of different writings: a) pîšu(KA-šú) temessi(LUḤ-si) (Jørgen Laessøe, *Studies on the Assyrian Ritual and Series Bīt Rimki*, København: Munksgaard, 1955, 30, l. 25); b) e-nu-ma pî(KA) tukanni(^{kus}DÛG.GAN) bārû(^{lu}ḤAL) imessû(LUḤ-ú) (BBR 114, no. 21, l. 30); e-nu-ma pî(KA) qa-áš-di temessû(LUḤ-u) (Caplice 112, Obv. 6); c) pîšu(KA-šú) te-me-es-si (KAR 60, Obv. 7).

72 ka-pirig ka šu-luḥ-ḥa eridu^{ki}-ga me-en / a-ši-pu eri-du₁₀ šá pi-i-šú me-su-ú [a-na-ku]; “I am the exorcist of Eridu whose mouth is washed.” Markham J. Geller, *Evil Demons: Canonical “Utukkū Lemnūtu” Incantations*, Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2007, 106, l. 127. The king in Bīt rimki says: mu-us-su pi-ja; “My mouth is washed.” IV R², 17, Rev. 25. The priest can also refer to the state of purity of a sacrificial animal, e.g. uš-uš-kur kù-ga ka-a-bi šu-luḥ-ḥa šu-uš-kur / ni-qu-ú el-lu šá pi-i-šú me-su-u ú-neq-qà; “I am bringing a pure offering the mouth of which is washed.” STT/2, 197, Pl. CLXXVIII, l. 46–47.

73 “In addition, certain texts tell of applying purificatory materials to the mouth, even though they do not explicitly use a term for mouth purity or purification.” V. A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips,” 51.

74 BBR 216, no. 100, l. 26–27. See also Jean-Jacques Glassner, “Le Corps de la Victime dans le Sacrifice Divinatoire,” in *Akkade Is King: A Collection of Papers by Friends and Colleagues Presented to Aage Westenholz on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday 15th of May 2009*, eds. Gojko Barjamovic et al., Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2011, 111–126: 146. A photo is accessible at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/>. Translation is mine.

75 BBR 216, no. 100, l. 37–40. A photo is accessible on <http://cdli.ucla.edu/>. Translation is mine. The correspondence of these two passages has been noted in J.-J. Glassner, “Le Corps de la Victime dans le Sacrifice Divinatoire,” 145–146.

teppuš(DÛ-uš), “you perform mouth-washing”, or more precisely the Nineveh version states KA.LUḪ.Û.DA KA.DUḪ.Û.DA *teppuš*(DÛ-uš), “you perform mouth-washing and mouth-opening”. This formulation apparently describes an individual ritual act which is repeated many times during the ritual. Only in the first line of both versions of this ritual text another formulation can be found:

e-nu-ma pi(KA) *ili*(DINGIR) *temessû*(LUḪ-ú)

When you wash the mouth of a god

This stable difference in both the Babylonian and the Nineveh version might imply a difference in using these formulations. I suggest that whereas the term KA.LUḪ.Û.DA signifies the individual ritual act of some specific form, another formulation is used in the first line to indicate the whole ritual, although the measure of specificity of this latter expression might be questioned.

If my suggestion applies, it is significant to note that most attestations of mouth-washing performed outside of the Mouth washing ritual are expressed with the logogram KA.LUḪ.Û.DA, respectively in a couple of attestations in the form KA.LUḪ.Û.DA KA.DUḪ.Û.DA, a mouth-washing followed by a mouth-opening. This preliminary remark can at least set some limits on interpretation. It implies that in most cases the mouth-washing should not be understood as a whole ritual but only as an individual ritual act, the function of which does not have to be identical with the aim of the whole, highly complex Mouth washing ritual. On purely philological basis, then, we can distinguish a) assertions about the state of purity, b) individual ritual acts of mouth-washing, and c) less specific expressions which may refer to the whole Mouth washing ritual.⁷⁶ At the same time, we should bear in mind that the purity or purification of the mouth represents a metaphorical concept which might underlie not only these specific expressions, but also a whole range of other contexts in which it is not explicitly mentioned.

3. Washing and opening

Apart from the different writings, there is also a question if the act of mouth-washing can and should be distinguished from the mouth-opening. As seen above, these two designations sometimes appear together as a fix sequence of actions, although both can appear independently as well. In the Mouth washing ritual for cult images we even find the case that in the recension from Babylon the act of mouth-washing appears each time followed by a mouth-opening,⁷⁷ whereas in the Nineveh version mentioning mouth-washing apparently suffices. Angelika Berlejung has drawn the conclusion that in Babylonia since the 9th century B.C.E. mouth-washing

76 One more interesting remark concerns the Catalogue of the *āšipu*-priest KAR 44 and its duplicates. Cynthia Jean, *La Magie Néo-Assyrienne en Contexte: Recherches sur le Métier d'Exorciste et le Concept d'āšipūtu*, Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2006, 62–82. This famous text found in Assur lists series from the lore of this kind of ritual specialists. Surprisingly, at least according to the modern translations, mouth-washing appears in the Catalogue twice: LUḪ KA on line 2 (between the laying down of the foundation of a temple and the consecration of a priest) and KA.LUḪ.Û.DA on line 11 (together with rituals Bīt Rimki and Bīt Mēseri). What is more, both lines have attested variants in which the word for god, DINGIR, is added, thereby suggesting that both actions can be applied on a divine image. This disproves the suggestion of Christopher Walker and Michael Dick that some of the incantations which include KA.LUḪ.Û.DA in their rubrics “might have circulated as a separate collection for use on those many occasions when something other than a divine image had its mouth washed.” M. Dick, “Pīt Pī Und Mīs Pī,” 584. At least, this should not be taken as the distinguishing criterion. It is not even impossible that these two entries in the Catalogue might both denote a similar ritual procedure, known under different names, as was pointed out to me by professor Stefan Maul. I would like to thank him for this remark.

77 Except for line 47.

included mouth-opening as well, KA.LUḪ.Û.DA being a Babylonian *terminus technicus* for both actions.⁷⁸

There is, indeed, some evidence for the close interconnectedness of mouth-washing and mouth-opening. In some cases, the designations can be even considered interchangeable.⁷⁹ Whereas in ancient Egypt an analogous ritual for cult images has been called by reference to opening the mouth and the eyes, in ancient Mesopotamia washing apparently took prominence.⁸⁰ It is well possible that these two ritual acts were considered complementary to such a degree that one could have become an umbrella term including the other as well, however, this conclusion must remain tentative.

There is no depiction or precise explanation of what these ritual acts looked like.⁸¹ We can suppose that they included touching and applying specific substances to the mouth or some corresponding part of the ritual object.⁸² On many occasions, a particular kind of vessel called *egubbû* is mentioned in which water with a variety of substances was mixed for this purpose.⁸³ Among these, the Mouth washing ritual texts include different kinds of woods and plants (tamarisk, *maštakal*, date-palm-heart, seven palm-shoots, cedar, cypress, juniper, *šalālu*-reed, *appāru*-reed, sweet reed, “horned alkali”, *sikillu*-plant, tree resin), stones (lodestone, *zalāqu*-stone, *muššaru*-stone, carnelian, lapis lazuli, *pappardilû*-stone, *pappardildilû*-stone, *dušu*-stone), metals (silver, gold, tin, copper, iron), oils (oil, salve-oil, perfumed oil, cedar-oil, *ḫalšu*-oil), salt, sulphur, honey, and ghee.⁸⁴ The *egubbû*-vessel is sometimes mentioned also in the context of mouth-washings in other rituals as well as in the context of other purificatory acts.⁸⁵ Outside the Mouth washing ritual, sometimes only several substances are named as means for washing or opening the mouth. For mouth-washing, there is evidence for water, beer, honey, oil, and juniper,⁸⁶ whereas for mouth-opening, honey, ghee, cedar, and cypress appear most currently, although salt

78 A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 196–197. Christopher Walker and Michael Dick repeat the same meaning, although with the confusing and, in my opinion, unsubstantiated remark that the ritual has originally put emphasis on mouth-washing on the first day and on mouth-opening on the second day. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 14. This has been rightly criticized by Michael Hundley, although with the same conclusion that also A. Berlejung and Walker and Dick have made, namely that mouth-washing and mouth-opening took place together in a row. Michael B. Hundley, *Gods in Dwellings: Temples and Divine Presence in the Ancient Near East*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013, 256.

79 A nice example for the close interconnectedness of mouth-washing and mouth opening brought out by A. Berlejung is the incantation (so-called *Kultmittelbeschwörung*) for ghee used in the Mouth washing ritual. A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 197, n. 1057. While the text of the incantation mentions its use for mouth-opening, the rubric of this incantation refers to mouth-washing. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 102, l. 90–98. Other arguments in favour of such interconnectedness can be found also in M. B. Hundley, *Gods in Dwellings*, 256–257.

80 Nevertheless, even in the Egyptian ritual purification plays a substantial role. See scenes 1–7 of the “NR version” according to the synoptic edition by Eberhard Otto, *Das ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 2 vols., Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960. In scene 4 even purification of the mouth is mentioned. *Ibid*, vol. 2, 44. On the other hand, the Babylonian version of the Mesopotamian Mouth washing ritual briefly mentions opening of the eye of the god as well. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 73, l. 53.

81 As opposed to ancient Egypt where depictions of the acts are preserved. See e.g. the North Wall of the tomb-chapel of Rekhmira in Norman de Garis Davies, *Paintings from the Tomb of Rekh-Mi-Rē' at Thebes*, New York: Plantin Press, 1935, Pl 25. Nevertheless, in the *ikribu*-prayers to the sun-god cited above the purity of the mouth of an animal brought for sacrifice can be described as putting different substances to its mouth.

82 In case the object did not have any mouth. More on this topic in chapter III.4.

83 In the Babylonian version, the mixing of water with some substances takes place at first in the *egubbû*-vessel and then with other substances in a so-called *buginnu*-vessel.

84 In the Babylonian version: Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 71, l. 16–22; and in the Nineveh version: *Ibid*, 38–39, l. 24–37.

85 See CAD 4, 49–51, and further Stefan M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung: Eine Untersuchung Altorientalischen Denkens Anhand der Babylonisch-Assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*, Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1994, 41–46.

86 A fragment of a medical text mentions honey, oil, and first-class beer. AMT 28, no. 4, l. 4. In a ritual for burying figurines in the foundations of a temple juniper is attested as a means of washing the mouth of a sheep. Rykle Borger, “Tonmännchen und Puppen,” *BiOr* 30 (1973): 176–183: 178, l. 28. And in the ritual Bīt rimki the mouth of the king is washed with water and beer. J. Laessøe, *Studies on the Assyrian Ritual and Series Bīt Rimki*, 30, l. 25.

and flour are attested as well.⁸⁷ Apart from flour, all these mouth-opening substances can be found among the materials put into the *egubbû*-vessel for the mouth-washing. This is therefore another argument for a close interconnection of these acts which have probably not been always sharply distinguished.

Nevertheless, most authors try to make some distinction between these complementary actions. As the term mouth-washing itself implies, it is primarily an act of purification. After purifying the object in question, mouth-opening could take place. Fortunately, evidence for determining the purpose of the latter act is quite explicit. A verse from Incantation tablet 3 of the Mouth washing ritual is often cited:

ʾalam-ne-e ka¹-nu-ʾduḥ-ù¹-da na-izi ʾnu¹-ur₅
 ʕa¹-lam¹ an-nu-ú ina la pi-it pi-i qut-ri-in-na ul iṣ-ṣi-in
 This statue cannot smell incense without the mouth-opening,

ú nu-kú a nu-un-nag
 a-ka-la ul ik-kal me-e ul i-ṣat-ti
 it cannot eat food nor drink water.⁸⁸

A close parallel is attested also for a non-anthropomorphic cult image, namely a moon-crescent standard, which shows the easy metaphorical use of mouth-opening:

u₄-sakar-ne-e ka-nu-duḥ-u-da na-izi nu-ur₅
 an-nu-ú ina la pi-it pi-i qut-ri-in-na la ʕe-e-nu
 This moon-crescent cannot smell incense without mouth-opening,

ú nu-kú-e a nu-[un-nag]
 [a-ka-la ul ik-kal me-e ul i-ṣat-ti]
 it cannot eat food nor drink water.⁸⁹

Thus, by means of the mouth-opening the senses of the cult image got activated. The primary importance of such achievement is linked to the image's functioning as a proper medium for human communication with the divine. Thanks to the activation of its senses, the image started accepting offerings of all kinds, i.e. it became effective for the cult. In an attempt to find some suitable terminology for both anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic images, some scholars spoke about *animating* the cult image through this act.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, there are also cases of mouth-opening which do not fit the explanation of its function given above, although the ritual objects could be defined as inanimate. A puzzling example is illustrated by a late Babylonian incantation with instructions for accompanying ritual actions for a mouth-opening of a river.⁹¹ This mouth-opening does not seem to be a part of any bigger ritual, i.e. it cannot be considered an individual ritual act in a larger ritual complex, although the possibility cannot be excluded either. As far as we can judge, the mouth-opening is the primary aim of this ritual action, not just some secondary element. Its purpose, according to

87 For attestations see M. Dick, "Pīt Pī Und Mīs Pī," 580.

88 Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 140–141, l. 70-71.

89 *IV R²*, 25, iii 64-67. See also A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 279.

90 This term is used e.g. by Gebhard Selz, "The Holy Drum, the Spear, and the Harp," 179. A. Berlejung does not use the same terminology, but defines the function of mouth-opening on cult images in a similar way: "[T]he mouth-opening activates the life capability (Lebensfähigkeit) and the life functions of the cult image and 'loads' it with positive energies." A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 190 (my translation from German).

91 Text W 22642 (*SpTU II*, no. 5) from Late Babylonian Uruk. I chose this particular example, since it mentions only mouth-opening and no mouth-washing and at the same time is relatively explicit about its function. *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 48 and 62.

the text of the incantation, is to let the destiny of the river be determined,⁹² purify it⁹³ and bring it into order.⁹⁴ Gods are invoked to determine the destiny,⁹⁵ i.e. the nature of the river, which brings it into the right, orderly state. As a consequence, the river is protected and nothing harmful can affect it.⁹⁶ Although a river in ancient Mesopotamia was often envisaged as a deity and as active in executing its judicial function in ordeals, there is no evidence that this particular ritual should have in any way *animated* it.

With some ritual objects it is hard to determine if they were regarded as animate or if animation could have been among the purposes of the mouth-opening performed.⁹⁷ For sure, speaking about animation or acquisition of the capability to act (*Handlungsfähigkeit*)⁹⁸ avoids the emphasis on the object's form (highlighted by the anthropomorphic / non-anthropomorphic distinction) and stresses the object's functionality instead which stands much more in the foreground. Nevertheless, I prefer searching for the primary concern of each ritual text in itself and trying not to transfer meanings of mouth-washing and mouth-opening from the Mouth washing ritual for cult statues to other contexts before we can be sure they are identical.

The enigmatic statement of purpose "to bring the river into order" in the late Babylonian incantation described above probably signifies dealing with an ambiguous status of the river. This is supported by the appearance of similar statements in incantations for appeasing one's personal god. These incantations were recited by a person suffering from effects of his iniquities which had made his personal god or goddess angry. In order to get rid of this mostly unknown evil, a common way of disposal was by transferring it to water, i.e. a river which was at the same time identified with the *apsû*, a subterranean sweet-water ocean. The patient then asked the river to receive this evil and his fears, specifying the nature of the river as being "in order",⁹⁹ therefore probably ready to receive this burden. The text of the incantation for opening the mouth of a river makes it clear that its destiny which is to be determined, its right nature, already rests in its interiors¹⁰⁰ and must be only "opened" by the performance of this ritual.¹⁰¹ Therefore, not only does the ritual make the status of the river unequivocal, but it also claims this final status to have always been present, just in need of being activated.¹⁰²

We might also note the need to purify the river, although its mouth-washing is not mentioned. As argued above, some kind of purification, mostly a mouth-washing, was a prerequisite for mouth-opening. Most probably, it has eventually become so prominent that the term included the mouth-opening as well. Although the mouth-washing is most probably

92 *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 22–25.

93 *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 41, 46–47, 59–60, 70.

94 *mû(A) iš-ši-ru*. *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 71.

95 For the conception of destiny and fate see Kai Lämmerhirt and Annette Zgoll, "Schicksal. A. In Mesopotamien," in *RIA 12*, 145–155 and Jack N. Lawson, *The Concept of Fate in Ancient Mesopotamia of the First Millennium: Toward an Understanding of Šimtu*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994.

96 *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 54–58.

97 A. Berlejung observes that mouth-opening, in contrast to mouth-washing, is attested with inanimate objects only. A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 188. Apart from the generally problematic terminology of the (in)animate status, there is even the possibility that mouth-washing could have included mouth-opening as well, according to her own theory. The distinction made is therefore blurred.

98 B. Pongratz-Leisten, "Entwurf zu einer Handlungstheorie des Altorientalischen Polytheismus."

99 Wilfred G. Lambert, "Dingir.šà.dib.ba Incantations," *JNES* 33 (1974): 267–322: 276, l. 58–60. An even more explicit use of this phrase, as pointed out by Lambert, can be found in a *nam.búr.bi* ritual in which the patient encourages the river to dispose of his evil by saying: *eš-re-ti nāru(ÍD) šu-šu'-ru mu-ú-ki*, "You are in order, river, your waters are regulated." S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 360, l. 74. See further W. G. Lambert, "Dingir.šà.dib.ba Incantations," 297.

100 *šà-tùr-bi ina qer-bi-ti-šú hé-gál-lim du-šum^(sic)-su-ú h é - g á l - š á r - r a - k e₄*; "(River), in the insides of which there is rich abundance." *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 11.

101 *šà-tùr-bé gál-ba-ni-in-tag₄ nam-gal-mu-un-tar-re-e-ne / qer-bi-is-sa ip-tu-ma šim-tú ra-biš i-šim-mu-ši*; "They (several gods mentioned beforehand) opened its insides and determined its destiny." *SpTU II*, no. 5, l. 22–23.

102 This conclusion is similar to the interpretation given by A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 189–190.

a purificatory act,¹⁰³ the nature of such a purification as well as its application on objects without any apparent mouth seem elusive. Therefore, I will now turn my attention to the possible meaning of purification in these rituals.

4. Achieving purity

Although some notion of purity seems to be universal due to its connection to body cleansing and hygiene in general, its metaphorical applications cover a broad spectrum of activities and concepts. Some of these tend to appear more frequently and include such divergent areas as morality (being ethically pure; i.e. without sins), law (being not guilty), authenticity (being original), or ritual purity. Such concurring and overlapping systems of ideas associated with purity often coexist in the very same culture without the need to harmonize them in a unified system.¹⁰⁴

Quite surprisingly, literature on purity in ancient Mesopotamia is rather sparse,¹⁰⁵ often concentrating on lexical inquiries which certainly comprise a necessary component of such an undertaking.¹⁰⁶ Based on these, it is clear that purity has been primarily a positive quality, imagined as luminosity, a quality of the divine (characterized by their aura) as well as of different metals, oil etc. Yitzhaq Feder has recently argued that apart from cleansing and personal hygiene, metallurgy formed one of the important cognitive sources on which the idea of purity in ancient Mesopotamia was based.¹⁰⁷

If purity was primarily a positive quality, it also becomes more understandable that expressions for pollution were extremely rare. Instead, the category of “evil” which might comprise for example some sin or an illness often functions as the opposite of purity. An important task in many rituals was to identify the origin of the evil or at least to cite as

103 Apart from the use of the verb to wash (*mesû*, LUḪ) there is also an attestation of the term *tēliltu* (derived from the adjective *ellu*, pure) which is used synonymously with the mouth-washing performed on cult statues in a royal inscription of Nabû-apla-iddina. *BBS* 36, iv 22.

104 “We know from the history of concepts that metaphors not only illustrate ideas but gain orientational power, guide the perception of reality and add to the formation of world views. Metaphors make the abstract imageable, or relate it to experience. But they can also obscure differences and amalgamate disparate ideas, especially if not read against the background of a culturally learned inventory.” Udo G. Simon, “Why Purity? An Introduction,” in *How Purity Is Made*, eds. Petra H. Rösch and Udo G. Simon, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012, 1–37: 8. More on the orientational power of metaphors in G. Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live by*, esp. 14–21. I would also like to oppose any unidirectional evolutionist perspective which considers spiritual purity as developed from its more materialistic forms.

105 As a very good point of departure serves W. Sallaberger, “Reinheit. A. Mesopotamien,” in *RIA* 11, 295–299. Still useful can be Karel van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985. Less reliable and limited in scope is E. Jan Wilson, “Holiness” and “Purity” in Mesopotamia, Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker, 1994. (For critical reflection on Wilson’s approach see Beate Pongratz-Leisten, “Reflections on the Translability of the Notion of Holiness,” in *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honor of Simo Parpola*, eds. Mikko Luukko, Saana Svärd and Raija Mattila, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2009, 409–427: 412–413.) Several contributions have been included in comparative volumes: Michaël Guichard and Lionel Marti, “Purity in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Paleo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian Periods,” in *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism*, eds. Christian Frevel and Christophe Nihan, Leiden et al.: Brill, 2013, 47–113; Claus Ambos, “Purifying the King by Means of Prisoners, Fish, a Goose, and a Duck: Some Remarks on the Mesopotamian Notions of Purity,” in *How Purity Is Made*, 89–103; Fritz Stolz, “Dimensions and Transformations of Purification Ideas,” in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*, ed. Jan Assmann, Leiden et al.: Brill, 1999, 211–229; W. Sallaberger, “Körperliche Reinheit und soziale Grenzen in Mesopotamien,” in *Reinheit*, eds. Peter Burschel and Christoph Marx, Wien – Köln – Weimar: Böhlau, 2011, 17–45. Most recent is Yitzhaq Feder, “The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East: Lexical Meaning as a Projection of Embodied Experience,” *JANER* 14 (2014): 87–113.

106 For the lexical analysis, a very convenient overview is W. Sallaberger, “Reinheit. A. Mesopotamien,” 295–296. A more interpretative approach is taken by Y. Feder, “The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East.”

107 Y. Feder, “The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East,” 106.

comprehensive a list of evils as possible in order to cover all its possible origins.¹⁰⁸ This threat is conceptualized in a very material way so that it can be disposed of, often by means of purification by water or fire, and/or transferred to a substitute.¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, in many cases of mouth-washing, no identifiable pollution or evil seems to be accentuated. At best, one could consider for instance the human manufacture of cult objects as disturbing their classification as a deity and therefore in some sense “polluting” them. Nevertheless, if we do not want to press all evidence of purification into one scheme and if we allow for multiple concurring systems of ideas connected to purity instead, it might appear that not all these systems necessarily work with the classical opposition of purity and pollution, even if taken as relative categories.¹¹⁰ It rather appears that the notion of purity is mostly applied in a metaphorical way. Therefore, its opposite either takes on some context specific form or can be even completely absent.

Based on a lexical inquiry into the purity terms in ancient Mesopotamia, Yitzhaq Feder has recently suggested three basic experiential domains to which these terms can be linked:

Sociolinguistic Context	Characterization of Purity
1. Legal (ordeals)	Free of guilt (detectable by divine judgment)
2. Ritual	Free of pollution and similar metaphysical threats
3. Cult/sacrificial offerings	Free of pollution, holy, eligible for participation in the divine sphere

Yitzhaq Feder, “The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East,” 100.

His inspiring division of ritual and cultic purity separates the state of purity as being free of threatening evils on the one hand and the state of appropriateness for the cult on the other hand. However, Yitzhaq Feder describes both as absence of pollution. Although he declares his intention to move beyond structuralist definitions,¹¹¹ in the end he falls into the trap of conceiving purity only in the opposition to pollution. As a consequence, both ritual and cultic purity appear in his system as a lack of pollution.

The cultic purity, or appropriateness for the cult, is often expressed in terms of completeness (e.g. of body of a priest or of a sacrificial animal) and among the types outlined above it is the one which makes use of the imagery of light and brightness most frequently. It is a state of perfection which includes persons, animals, and objects entering a ritual, as well as deities themselves. Even though one can undergo a purification in order to attain cultic purity, the purpose of such an act seems to be the acquisition of a positive quality. No removal of pollution has to be mentioned. Therefore, in my opinion, the cultic purity should be redefined in this anti-structuralist sense.¹¹²

108 See e.g. W. G. Lambert, “Dingir.ša.dib.ba Incantations,” 281–282, l. 121–149.

109 These kinds of purification from evil are very prominent in the rituals *Šurpu* and *Maqlû*. See an analysis of purification in *Šurpu* in F. Stolz, “Dimensions and Transformations of Purification Ideas,” 216–222. For purification in both *Šurpu* and *Maqlû* see M. Guichard and L. Marti, “Purity in Ancient Mesopotamia,” 99–102.

110 Therefore, the classical theory of purity by Mary Douglas is not directly applicable. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966. To my knowledge, there is no theory of purity which would not count with the opposition of purity and pollution. For criticism on Mary Douglas’ theory and the inadequacy of this simple opposition in many cultures see U. G. Simon, “Why Purity? An Introduction,” esp. 10–13 and Christian Frevel and Christophe Nihan, “Introduction,” in *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism*, 1–46: 6–10.

111 Y. Feder, “The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East,” 88.

Such a definition of purity fits well with the acts of mouth-washing which would be otherwise hardly comprehensible in terms of purification. Whereas in the incantations for mouth-washing and mouth-opening purity is strongly accentuated and described in detail in various ways, pollution does not come to expression. Such a striking incongruity should be taken at face value and not adjusted to our expectations.

Furthermore, it must be already apparent from the list of material substances used how highly metaphorical the nature of these purifications is (see III.3). It is in no way a literal purification in the sense of cleansing. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that even the presence of a mouth is optional in the act of mouth-washing and mouth-opening. The possibility should not be ruled out that a particular part of some of these ritual objects could have been called a mouth, although with some of these this seems hardly conceivable (e.g. with a royal garment),¹¹³ but a completely metaphorical use of this expression seems more likely.

As argued in an important article by Victor Hurowitz, purity of the mouth in ancient Mesopotamia is to be taken as an expression of *pars pro toto* purity.¹¹⁴ Sometimes the purity of the mouth appears in a sequence of body parts which should be purified, always beginning with the mouth, continuing with hands, sometimes adding also feet and concluding with the whole body. This sequence can be found in its full in a bilingual incantation entitled “the incantation for self-purification”:

ka-mu : pi-ia lil-li-lu : h́e-en-kù-ga
 šu-mu : qa-ta-a-a lu el-la : h́e-en-sikil-la
 ĝir-mu : še-pa-a-a lu eb-ba : h́e-en-dadag
 su-mu : zu-mur / zu-um-ri lu na-mir : h́e-en-luh-luh

Let my mouth be pure (akk. Let them purify my mouth)

Let my hands be pure

Let my feet be pure

Let my body be pure (sum. washed / akk. bright, shining)¹¹⁵

Although this sequence could have been abbreviated, the order was fixed, always beginning with the mouth.¹¹⁶ Therefore, a reference to the purity of the mouth could apparently suffice and

112 However, as noted above, these systems of ideas can easily overlap and the differences do not always appear so clear-cut. Maybe we can rather speak of ideal types.

113 Even with objects which could theoretically have some kind of opening called a mouth, this does not seem to be the case. Although the word for mouth (KA, pû) can be used metaphorically, e.g. for the ear of a needle (see Harald Klein, “Tudittum,” ZA 73 (1983): 255–284), it can be easily shown that for instance the opening of the kettledrum which gets covered in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum is termed differently (KÁ, bābu). This might be even intentional. For more examples of figurative language see Claus Wilcke, “A Riding Tooth: Metaphor, Metonymy and Synecdoche, Quick and Frozen in Everyday Language,” in *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, eds. M. Mindlin, Markham Geller and John E. Wansbrough, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1987, 77–102.

114 V. A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips.” It is a shame that Ulrike Steinert did not include a chapter on the mouth in her PhD. Dissertation in which she has dealt with different body parts and their metaphorical uses in different contexts. Although she states that it is not her intention to be exhaustive, her focus lies on body parts which could have stand as *pars pro toto* for a person, or self. Ulrike Steinert, *Aspekte des Menschseins im Alten Mesopotamien: Eine Studie zu Person und Identität im 2. und 1. Jt. v. Chr.*, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2012, 132.

115 Rykle Borger, “Die Weihe eines Enlil-Priesters,” *BiOr* 30 (1973): 163–176: 170–171, iv 35–38. (In my translation, no difference has been made between the synonyms for “pure” intentionally, since finding precise equivalents without any distortion of meaning would be enormously difficult.) In the Mouth washing ritual the *āšipu*-priest speaks about the purity of his mouth, hands, and feet in the incantation: Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 114, Obv. 6–7. Other examples are cited in V. A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips,” 57–58.

116 As far as I know, apart from the mouth only the purification of hands is attested independently.

replace such a description of the whole body. Purification of the mouth could therefore stand for a total purification and could be metaphorically transferred to objects without an actual mouth.

5. Place of mouth-washing and mouth-opening in different rituals

We have seen that mouth-washing is a ritual act which aims at making the object *as a whole* pure and perfect and therefore suitable for participation in a ritual. It is often followed by the complementary act of mouth-opening which secures its proper functioning in the following ritual actions by activating its already present nature. As far as we can judge, none of these acts directly achieves any kind of animation of the ritual object. While mouth-washing is attested with humans and animals who need not be animated, even with the evidence for mouth-opening one could doubt if this was its real objective.¹¹⁷

The present thesis has also tried to show that the Mouth washing ritual for cult images should be taken as an exception in that it underscores mouth-washing as its central and numerous times repeated act. Therefore, its meaning and function in this particular ritual should not be extended to other rituals in which it can play a far more minor role. The basic distinction between the Mouth washing ritual and the ritual act of mouth-washing has been made.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, there is more to be said about the position this ritual act can take in different rituals.

There seems to be a continuum of importance this act could acquire in its ritual context. It is naturally very difficult to judge, since sometimes a ritual text makes just a brief mention of something which was in itself an elaborate procedure and unless we find other texts testifying to the importance of such an element, there is no way to prove this. On the other hand, there are single incantations in which the importance of the act is emphasized, although in its ritual context it did not have to be that prominent. Last but not least, a number of attestations lack proper context, either because they form just isolated entries in a kind of catalogue or a list,¹¹⁹ or because of the fragmentary state of the text.¹²⁰

Despite all these difficulties, a tentative typology of contexts in which the mouth-washing appears will be presented. This should be considered rather as ideal types than as a system of isolated categories. It is an attempt to break the former categorisations according to the kind of ritual object.¹²¹ In my view, separating occurrences of mouth-washing according to its objects applies the unfortunate division between animate and inanimate objects as well as other “natural” classifications and does not pay enough attention to the ritual context with its own purposes and to the relative importance of the ritual act in the whole.¹²²

117 See the discussion of the Late Babylonian incantation for mouth-opening of a river in chapter III.3 above.

118 See chapter III.1.

119 The Catalogue of incipits of different kinds of texts lists the mouth-washing of “the holy one” on l. 6 (*e-nu-ma pi*(KA) *qa-áš-di temessû*(LUḪ-u)), possibly referring to the Mouth washing ritual for a cult image. Interestingly, the same catalogue lists also a washing (not mouth-washing) of a leather bag of the diviner (*e-nu-ma tukanna*(^{kuš}DÜG.GAN) *mār*(DUMU) *bāri*(^{lu}HAL) [*imessû*(LUḪ-u) ...]). Caplice, 112, no. 3, l. 6 and 8. Also the lexical list 𒄩𒄩 XIII has an entry about a sheep the mouth of which is washed (u[du ka] luḫ.ḫa : [*im-m*]e-ri šá pi-i-šú me-su-ú). *MSL* 8/1, 11, l. 54.

120 Too fragmentary and therefore impenetrable are texts which mention the mouth-washing and mouth-opening of a leather bag used by the diviner. *BBR* 114, no. 11 et al., l. 30 (rubric); *BBR* 116, no. 11, iv 20; *BBR* 188, no. 74, l. 30; and probably *BBR* 188, no. 74, l. 33 and *BBR* 188, no. 74, l. 37 and 40. Also in an unclear context is a mouth-washing by means of honey, oil and first-class beer in a (probably) medical text: [*ina*] *dišpi*(LĀL) *šamni*(Ī) *u šikari*(KAŠ) *rešti*(SAG) *pīšu*(KA-šú) *temessi*(LUḪ-si). Unfortunately, it is not clear who or what is the object of this mouth-washing. *AMT* 28, no. 4, l. 4. What is completely fragmentary is the context of mouth-washing in a *māmītu*-text. *LKA* 150, Rev. 5.

121 A. Berlejung, *Theologie der Bilder*, 182–191.

122 In the discussion of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum, it will become apparent that the mouth-washings performed on animals can encompass quite different situations. See chapter IV.

Concerning the persons performing mouth-washings, it is certainly important to stress the range of ritual specialists involved.¹²³ However, we should not neglect their far reaching cooperations and overlapping competences¹²⁴ which could have also changed a lot in the course of time. Moreover, it is apparent that specific kinds of rituals belonged to the domains of particular specialists but this did not have to be the case with individual ritual acts at all. Therefore, finding mouth-washings and mouth-openings in rituals performed by exorcists (*āšipū*), lamentation priests (*kalû*) as well as diviners (*bārû*) should not surprise us, although the Mouth washing ritual for cult images is known to have been performed primarily by the *āšipū*. It is just a further confirmation of its various uses.

In the following, occurrences of mouth-washings will be brought into focus, bearing in mind that they might have included mouth-openings as well. Mouth-openings without mouth-washings explicitly mentioned will be left out so that focus can be laid on the purification procedures more clearly.¹²⁵ A typology of ritual contexts in which mouth-washings are attested will be outlined. Attention will be paid to the placing and relative prominence of mouth-washing among other ritual elements as well as to the purpose of each ritual as a whole. In this way, possible modifications of this act's meaning will be observed, relying on the assumption that it is a purificatory act which aims primarily at achieving cultic purity.

a) Statements of purity made by a ritual specialist about himself or about an animal brought for sacrifice

There are cases in which a ritual specialist is supposed to state his purity and/or purify himself before he can perform further ritual actions.¹²⁶ Well attested are self-purifications in the rituals of diviners, *bārû*, before performing divination and similar evidence is available for the so-called exorcists, *āšipū*, as well.¹²⁷ Necessary to say, there is often a whole range of purifications in a row that especially the diviners undergo (bathing, oiling, chewing specified plants etc.) among which the statement of purity of the mouth appears. Rather exceptionally, the specialist is explicitly supposed to wash his mouth, i.e. not only to state its purity, but to perform some action. This raises the question if one should separate these sharply. In any case, this statement or action should be apparently considered just one among other actions with similar functions.

Most closely related seem to be statements of purity or purifications of the mouth of animals brought for sacrifice.¹²⁸ Again, most examples come from the context of the rituals of the diviners who offer an animal in order to perform divination from its entrails. Similarities with the

123 It is even possible that the king could perform the mouth-washing as well, as mentioned by A. Berlejung, *Theologie der Bilder*, 182, although the evidence is in no way clear. The mouth-washing is mentioned on a line divided by rulings after a ritual description and just before the colophon. In the interpretation of A. Berlejung, the king washes the mouth of something which is not specified. It would be as well possible to take it as an instruction in 2nd prs. sg. for a ritual specialist to wash the mouth of the king: *šarri(LUGAL) ina bīt(É) lab-<bu>-ni KA.LUḪ.Û.DA teppaš(DÛ-áš)*. Brigitte Menzel, *Assyrische Tempel*, Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981, T 42-46, no. 28, Rev. 25.

124 These are well apparent in the contents of these professionals' archives as well as in their occasional boasts of their far reaching competences. See e.g. a Neo-Assyrian letter: SAA 10, 122, no. 160, l. 36-42.

125 The focus on mouth-washings in the following typology is related to my intention to interpret its occurrence in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum. I have dealt with mouth-openings to some extent only because of the close interrelatedness of these acts. Since no mouth-opening is mentioned in this particular ritual, I will not deal with it further.

126 In the ritual Bīt mēseri there is an interesting instruction for mouth-opening of apothropaic figurines: KA.DUḪ.Û.DA *tu-ṭah-ḫa-šú-nu-[ti]* KA.DUḪ.Û.DA *taqabbišunūt[i](DU₁₁-šú-nu-t[i])*, literally "bring the mouth-opening to them, say the mouth-opening to them". BBR 158, no. 48, l. 10-11. This raises the question if a loud statement of purity or purification could have been equivalent to a ritual gesture.

127 Goetze, 25, l. 5-6; BBR 190, no. 75-78, l. 17; possibly BBR 194, no. 79-82, Obv. 5 and BBR 214, no. 100, Obv. 9. See also n. 72.

128 BBR 216, no. 100, Rev. 27; STT/2 197; Pl. CLXXVIII, 46-47. In a different kind of ritual (burying a figurine in the fundament of a temple): R. Borger, "Tonmännchen und Puppen," 178, l. 28.

purity of the diviner himself are noticeable. As already shown in chapter III.2, the purity of the animal's mouth is either stated directly, or can be variously circumscribed (it has eaten plants on high places, the diviner puts different substances to its mouth etc.).

These two subtypes take a similar position in the same kind of rituals and fulfil a similar function, just on different objects. These are the clearest examples of mouth-washing as a preparatory act, one among many, or even just the state of mouth-purity being a prerequisite for participation in a ritual. It does not relate directly to the purpose of the ritual as a whole, although it might be a certain prerequisite for its performance.¹²⁹

What deserves a special treatment are two attestations of mouth-washing which are also included in a divinatory ritual. These are performed by a *bārû* in case he does not get any answer from a deity or when the ominous signs are not clear.¹³⁰ Although the general opinion seems to be that he washes the mouth of a divine image,¹³¹ another interpretation seems possible, namely that the *bārû* washes his own mouth.¹³² This would make good sense, since in both attestations either the preceding or the following instruction mentions that the *bārû* should wash himself in an *egubbû*-vessel¹³³ and in the second text the mouth-washing appears among other preparatory and purificatory procedures. Therefore, any particular relation of the mouth-washing to divination should be doubted. Although it contributes to the success of the divinatory performance, it does so only by achieving a state of appropriateness for the cult.

b) Purification in the context of disposal of evil

There is a certain number of attestations of mouth-washing in diverse rituals and incantations, such as *Bīt rimki*, *Bīt salā' mē*, *nam.búr.bi* and *Ilī ul īde*. These are performed on the king or his regalia¹³⁴ (*Bīt rimki*, *Bīt salā' mē*) or on a common man, suffering from a disease or other kind of "evil" (*nam.búr.bi*, *Ilī ul īde*). As pointed out by Wilfred Lambert, there is a group of loosely interconnected rituals and incantations with different (and even interchangeable) rubrics which apparently do not directly refer to strictly separated categories. Whether called *nam.búr.bi* (ritual for loosening (the evil)), *Ilī ul īde* (prayer title "My god, I did not know"), *ér.šà.hun.gá* (lament to appease the heart) or *dingir.šà.dib.ba* (appeasement of the god's heart), these rituals intended to cope with the origin of a man's suffering which was often considered to be connected to his

129 Against Jean-Jacques Glassner who compares the ritual of divination with the Mouth washing ritual without recognizing the distinction between the function of mouth-washing as a single ritual act and the Mouth washing ritual as a whole. This leads him to a statement of "the same logic" of endowing the ritual object with life in both rituals. J.-J. Glassner, "Le Corps de la Victime dans le Sacrifice Divinatoire," 147.

130 *šum-ma mār(DUMU) bārî(lūHAL) tērētīšu(UR₅.ÚŠ.MEŠ-šu) la š[al-ma dal]ḫa(LÜ-ḫa) la ellu(KÜ) isnīqu(DIM₄) šum-ma a-šar ili(DINGIR) iq[abb]u(DUG₄.GA)(?) la / i-ta-ṇap-pal-šú KA.LUḫ.Ü.D[A] KA.LUḫ.Ü.DA epussu(DÜ-su) / egubbâ(A.GUB.BU) bārî(lūHAL) i-ra-muk ina ašar(KI) dīni(DI) ša-qu-um-me ki šēpu(GĪR) parsat(<TAR>-at) / mākalta(DĪLIM.GAL) ú-kan-ma nīš(MU) qātīšu(ŠU-šú) iš-kun. BBR 214, no. 100, Obv. 8-11. Similar situation without the clear statement of purpose: KA.LUḫ.HU.D[A DÜ-uš]. BBR 194, no. 79-82, Stück I, l. 5.*

131 This opinion is reflected in the translation by Heinrich Zimmern in his *BBR* 215, no. 100, Stück I, l. 8-9. It has probably been overtaken by A. Berlejung, *Theologie der Bilder*, 187. The image itself is mentioned only in the second of these texts: *BBR* 196, no. 79-82, Stück II, l. 7.

132 This difference depends on the interpretation of the pronominal suffix 3. prs. sg. m. -šu which could theoretically refer to the god as well as to the ritual specialist. Most recently, Ulla Koch seems to be either avoiding the question, or supposing that the answer is apparent: "If the ritual for some reason and despite all precautions failed and the Seer did not receive an answer to his question, he should perform the rituals 'washing of the mouth' (*mīs pī*) and 'opening of the mouth', he should wash himself with water from the holy water basin, and at the quiet, secluded 'place of verdict' he should place the diviner's bowl and perform his 'hand-lifting' prayer (*BBR* 11 iv 21 and 100: 8-10)." Ulla S. Koch, *Mesopotamian Divination Texts: Conversing with the Gods: Sources from the First Millennium BCE*, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2015, 125.

133 See III.3 for the connection of this kind of vessel to performance of mouth-washing.

134 The ritual treatment of royal regalia is another means of approaching the person of the king. Therefore, any division between animate and inanimate ritual objects collapses.

personal god's anger.¹³⁵ The mouth-washing appears in the course of the man's confession of unknown sins and different purification procedures.¹³⁶

Interestingly, the royal rituals Bīt rimki and Bīt salā' mē renewed the king's legitimate power by including, among other elements, quite similar procedures. The king was supposed to express possible origins of evil (inherited guilt, his own sins, witchcraft) and purify himself in different ways.¹³⁷ The type of loosening or god appeasing ritual procedures described above can be found in both series even explicitly incorporated as a sequence known as Ilī ul īde, "My god, I did not know".¹³⁸

Also here, the mouth-washing seems to be a purification act of secondary importance for the purpose of the whole rituals. Although the aim of the rituals can be described as purificatory, according to the scheme outlined above (III.4), it is the ritual kind of purity which stands in the centre of attention. In contrast, at least hypothetically, the act of mouth-washing accomplishes cultic purity and represents again a preparatory act. This can be observed e.g. in the ritual text Ilī ul īde (KAR 90) which begins with preparations of the ritual place, an instruction for mouth-washing of the ritual client follows, the ritual specialist declares his own purity and only then he can take the man's hand and intercede on his behalf with the deities.¹³⁹ The mouth-washing is apparently not a part of the disposal of the man's sins but a preparatory action.

We could therefore maintain that even in these rituals the mouth-washing remains an act of cultic purification despite its occurrence in the context of disposal with ritual impurity. Nevertheless, the common conceptual background and similar practices involved might well have blurred this distinction. In these ritual contexts, it is impossible to rule out that the mouth-washing as a cultic purification could have got associated with the notion of ritual purity.

c) Attracting attention to the central ritual object

During a night vigil in a ritual attested from Hellenistic Uruk, a mouth-washing takes place on a torch.¹⁴⁰ This is one of the special cases which mostly resist scholars' comprehension.¹⁴¹ The occurrence of mouth-washing is the first time the torch is mentioned in the text. Since then, it plays a central role, leads a procession and kindles many fires on the way through the city. The mouth-washing is therefore not central to the whole ritual but precedes and directly relates to the central ritual activities. It prepares the torch for its function, thereby attracting attention to it. The notion of purity is clearly applied in a metaphorical way and the cultic kind of purification seems again fitting.

Another case in which the mouth-washing is applied on an object playing a central role afterwards can be possibly found in a divinatory ritual with a leather bag. It has been argued that the mouth-washing enables this object to function as an oracular medium and the case has been

135 W. G. Lambert, "Dingir.šà.dib.ba Incantations," 267–268.

136 KAR 90 = TuL 118, l. 15; Claus Ambos, *Der König im Gefängnis und das Neujahrsfest im Herbst: Mechanismen der Legitimation des Babylonischen Herrschers im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. und ihre Geschichte*, Dresden: ISLET, 2013, 196, VI.B.2.7, l. 5'; S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 294, VIII.2.5, Obv. 9'; Sally A. L. Butler, *Mesopotamian Conceptions of Dreams and Dream Rituals*, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998, 407, Obv. 10.

137 For different means of purification in the ritual Bīt rimki see Claus Ambos, "Purifying the King by Means of Prisoners, Fish, a Goose, and a Duck."

138 For this inclusion in Bīt salā'mē see Claus Ambos, *Der König im Gefängnis und das Neujahrsfest im Herbst*, 66. For the inclusion in Bīt rimki see *SpTU II*, 63, no. 12, iii 44b.

139 Note Erich Ebeling's explanation showing exactly the preconception of the primacy of mouth-washing applied on cult images and its animating function I would like to oppose: "... [A]fter fumigation, scattered offering, libation and blood offering, the mouth of the man (!) is washed, so what is otherwise performed on a divine image, is performed on him. We understand it well. The god and the patient are one unit. The repetition or rebirth of both is finished." TuL 116 (my translation from German).

140 TU 41 = Linssen, 245–251: 246, Obv. 29.

141 Note the only explanation of this evidence offered by A. Berlejung: "Difficult to understand is the mouth-washing of the torch." Id., *Theologie der Bilder*, 183.

compared to the mouth-washing of a cult image during divination treated above (type a)) as well as to the mouth-washing of a sacrificial animal which is used for divination after its slaughtering. It is impossible to rule this out since the texts mentioning the mouth-washing of the leather bag are too fragmentary. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the mouth-washing as a preparatory act achieving appropriateness of the leather bag for cultic purposes can be considered plausible and satisfactory.¹⁴²

d) The Mouth Washing Ritual for cult images

This elaborate ritual¹⁴³ lasted two days, included numerous changes of place and a range of ritual activities. A feature which makes this ritual special for the present discussion of mouth-washing is its many times repeated occurrence. Although the ritual as a whole manifests a certain logic and development, the act of mouth-washing appears simply spread throughout the whole at places which seem rather random. It appears in the middle of ritual sequences and lacks its preparatory characteristics; there is no significant act which would follow after that. The otherwise preparatory act suddenly fulfils a central function.

This fact brings the notion of cultic purity to the fore of the ritual in an extreme way. As explained above (III.4), this kind of purity does not necessarily stand in opposition to any impurity and signifies rather a positive dimension. Its characteristic features include perfect completeness and luminosity and it is primarily an intrinsic feature of deities. When the mouth-washing is given such a prominence as in the Mouth washing ritual, its object can acquire these positive characteristics in an enormous measure. Thus, it comes as no surprise that this object acquires divine features. What is more, it is the intention of this very ritual to make a deity out of that object.

e) The Ritual for covering a kettledrum

In the Ritual for covering a kettledrum there are two mouth-washings performed on different objects, a bull and a kettledrum, although one may assume a certain continuity between these since the kettledrum is covered with the bull's hide. On the one hand, the mouth-washing is clearly not repeated so many times as in the Mouth washing ritual. On the other hand, it assumes a rather central position and the ritual shares certain specific features with the Mouth washing ritual for cult images. Therefore, the next chapter will be devoted to this specific case so that the impact of this ritual treatment on the ritual object, the kettledrum, can be properly evaluated.

142 Jean-Jacques Glassner has even argued that the expression for the leather bag, *tukkannu*, is simply an equivalent of the sacrificed animal which receives "the status of a 'leather bag' in the moment of accomplishing the first ritual", i.e. the mouth-washing (my translation from French). Although I cannot rule out the interpretation that the dead animal was designated a leather bag, it seems that it is grounded on the assumption that the mouth-washing must have been performed only on a ritual object possessing a mouth. See J.-J. Glassner, "Le Corps de la Victime dans le Sacrifice Divinatoire," 146.

143 There are two preserved versions, one from Babylon and one from Nineveh, as well as numerous incantation tablets. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia*. For discussion of the ritual see A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 178–283. For an analysis of its phases see *ibid*, 212–259, and A. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth."

IV. Case study: Ritual for covering a kettledrum

1. State of publication of the sources

The Ritual for covering a kettledrum has been preserved on several ritual tablets from the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian (Seleucid) era. There are two Neo-Assyrian tablets from Assur (KAR 50, KAR 60) which describe the ritual instructions rather briefly, one of them (KAR 50) including an incantation on the obverse and the ritual text on the reverse.¹⁴⁴ Further, there is a Neo-Assyrian text including incantations with short ritual instructions in rubrics which comes from Nineveh.¹⁴⁵ Two further ritual tablets from the Seleucid era (TU 44, *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5) have been found in Uruk and offer much more extensive information.¹⁴⁶ The most important is text TU 44, since it is the only one which describes the concluding phase of the ritual. All of these texts together with smaller fragments (*BaM Beih.* 2 no. 7, 9) have been edited by Marc Linssen in 2004.¹⁴⁷ There is also one more Seleucid tablet from Uruk with a *šu'ila*-prayer for this particular ritual (*BaM Beih.* 2 no. 6) recently edited by Daisuke Shibata in his PhD. Dissertation.¹⁴⁸ Quite unique is a commentary tablet (TU 47), according to its colophon written in Hellenistic Nippur but apparently found in Uruk,¹⁴⁹ which can be found in a publication by Alasdair Livingstone.¹⁵⁰ What should also be mentioned are lists of twelve gods whose names were apparently recited during the ritual.¹⁵¹ All this material has been most recently interpreted by Uri Gabbay.¹⁵²

To sum up, the ritual is well attested from the Neo-Assyrian (Assur, Nineveh) and Hellenistic (Uruk) period. Some of the tablets seem to be, or claim to be, copies of older Babylonian originals. Although all the Hellenistic sources stem from Uruk, the commentary was apparently written in Nippur and there is also a short reference to a performance of this ritual in

144 KAR 50 (VAT 8247) = RAcc. 22–25 = Linssen, 267–269. KAR 60 (VAT 8022) = RAcc. 20–23 = Linssen, 263–266. According to Linssen, these tablets are copies of Babylonian originals made in the 7th century B.C.E. for the library of Assurbanipal. Linssen, 263 and 267. Photos of these tablets have been made available to me by Prof. Stefan Maul. KAR 50 has a partial duplicate: BBR 56 (K 6060) + Linssen, 340, Pl. II (K 10820). A photo of this tablet is accessible online (<http://cdli.ucla.edu/>).

145 IV R², 23, no. 1 = RAcc. 24–33 (K 4806) + Linssen, 341, Pl. III (K 9421). A photo of this tablet is accessible online (<http://cdli.ucla.edu/>).

146 TU 44 (AO 6479) = Linssen, 252–262.

147 Linssen, 252–282 (edition) and 92–100 (discussion). See also review of Marc J. H. Linssen. *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon*, Uri Gabbay, *OrNS* 77 (2008): 425–427.

148 *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 6 (W 20030/1) = Werner R. Mayer, “Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten,” *OrNS* 47 (1978): 431–458: 432–438 = Daisuke Shibata, *Die Šu'ila-Gebete im Emesal*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, forthcoming, II.24.1 (originally PhD. Diss. Heidelberg, 2005). I would like to thank Daisuke Shibata for giving a pre-print version of the particular chapter at my disposal. I am citing it according to paragraphs in case page numbering changes before the print.

149 It is possible that the ritual text TU 44 and the commentary tablet TU 47, both acquired from the illegal market, have originally come from the Bīt rēš temple library of the *kalûs*, although maybe not exactly from the same place as the legally excavated tablets *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, 6, 7, 9 which are concerned with the same ritual. All in all, the evidence from Hellenistic Uruk is quite abundant. Philippe Clancier, *Les Bibliothèques en Babylonie dans la Deuxième Moitié du Ier Millénaire av. J.-C.*, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009, 80 and 279, n. 1212.

150 TU 47 (O 175) = François Thureau-Dangin, “Appendice II,” *RA* (1919): 144–156, and its partial duplicate: Jean Nougayrol, “Petits Textes Religieux d'Époque Achéménide,” *RA* 41 (1947): 29–32 (AO 17626) are both published in A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 187–204. Also the fragment from Uruk *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 8 (W 20030/122) is a partial duplicate. For interpretation of the commentary and its relation to the ritual texts see U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 130–139. No photo was available to me but the tablet O 175 (currently in the Musée du Cinquantenaire at Brussel, as kindly conveyed to me by the curators of the Musée du Louvre) has been collated by U. Gabbay as mentioned in id., *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 130, n. 470.

151 The tablet BM 54119 lists names of gods with the concluding remark: [12 il]ānu(DINGIR.MEŠ) an-nu-tu [š]á libbi(ŠĀ) uppi(ÛB) siparri(ZABAR), “These are the 12 gods which are inside the bronze drum.” John MacGinnis, “2. A Cultic Handlist?,” *N.A.B.U.* 1 (1999): 2–3. A parallel passage from the ritual commentary O 175, on the other hand, includes the note: qātātu(ŠU_{II}.MEŠ) šá ina lilissi(LL.LI.IZ) siparri(ZABAR) nadû(ŠUB-ú) šum-ši-na ana zakāri(MU-ár), “the names of the hands/handles laid in the bronze kettledrum, to be invoked.” A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 191, l. 16.

152 U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 124–128.

Babylon.¹⁵³ It was an occasional ritual, taking place only when there was the need to cover a new kettledrum or to repair an old one.¹⁵⁴ As far as we know, it was not public or at least did not include any processions. The only specification of place is the workshop (*bīt mummu*) which was a part of the temple complex.

In the following subchapters, ritual phases and possible development of the tradition through time will be outlined, the place of the mouth-washings in it will be examined and, finally, an attempt will be made to determine its consequences for the status of the kettledrum.

2. Description of the ritual actions

Although the four ritual texts at our disposal include partial duplicates, they are apparently not identical. This concerns the length and measure of elaboration of the ritual actions as well as some particular elements and their sequence. It is definitely true that the ritual attests an “astonishing continuity” as remarked by Linssen¹⁵⁵ but some remarkable differences between the different versions can be pointed out as well.¹⁵⁶

The very beginning is preserved only in the two Hellenistic texts where it is described in an almost identical way.¹⁵⁷ It is introduced by an *enūma*-phrase: *e-nu-ma lilissu*(L.L.L.ÌZ) *siparru*(ZABAR) *a-na a-ra-mi*, “When you want to cover a bronze kettledrum”,¹⁵⁸ thus stating the primary intention of the ritual. After the incipit this passage describes a perfect black bull which should be chosen and carefully inspected. It must not have 7 white tufts in the form of stars and must not be struck by a stick or a whip. Another *enūma*-phrase follows: *e-nu-ma alpu*(GU₄) *a-na bīt*(É) *mu-um-mu tu-šèr-ri-bu*(var. *ba*), “When you want to let the bull enter the workshop”.¹⁵⁹ This same phrase is attested also as a catchphrase at the end of the Neo-Assyrian incantation tablet referring probably to the incipit of a following ritual tablet.¹⁶⁰ The ritual tablets further indicate the timing of the ritual: “(in an auspicious month), on a favourable day”.¹⁶¹ With the indication of time also the brief ritual description on *KAR 50* begins, mentioning “a proper month”, “a good day” and a further remark “in the morning before sunrise”.¹⁶² An instruction to prepare the workshop by sweeping, sprinkling water and conjuring ends up this section which is almost identical in both Hellenistic sources.¹⁶³

What follows is not that easily comparable since the wording is not so similar and even the sequence of actions is not always the same. Whereas *TU 44* commands placing of two bricks on each side of the door of the workshop, an offering and a libation after which the bull finally enters, *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5* inserts a longer section concerned with 12 bricks.¹⁶⁴ 12 linen cloths are

153 In the astronomical diary for day 24 of the month Araḥsamna in the year 41 S.E. (271 B.C.E.). Abraham Sachs and Hermann Hunger, eds., *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia I: Diaries from 652 B.C. to 262 B.C.*, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988, no. -270, B, Rev. 12–13. Discussion in Wayne Horowitz, “Antiochus I, Esagil, and a Celebration of the Ritual for Renovation of Temples,” *RA* 85 (1991): 75–77.

154 According to Uri Gabbay it could have taken place on the following occasions: “(1) when fashioning and dedicating a new *lilissu* drum; (2) when old and worn-out leather drumheads had to be replaced; and (3) during the dedications of temples (and perhaps also other festive occasions), as a part of the renewal of the divine abode and its inhabitants” U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 121 with further references.

155 Linssen, 99. For a description of these divergent versions and an attempt to follow their differences see *ibid.*, 94–100.

156 See Appendix 2 for a table comparing ritual actions attested in the different sources.

157 *TU 44*, i 1–8; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 1–8.

158 *TU 44*, i 1; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 1.

159 *TU 44*, i 7; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 7.

160 Linssen, 275–282: 278, iv 25.

161 *TU 44*, i 7; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 7. The first of these mentions the day only, not the month.

162 *KAR 50*, Rev. 1–2.

163 *TU 44*, i 8; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 8.

164 *TU 44*, i 9–11; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Obv. 8–15.

laid on these and 12 gods are supposed to sit on them. This group of 12 gods appears in other texts dealing with this ritual as well and the sources seem to be in general accord so that we can identify them as three groups: the highest gods Anu, Enlil and Ea, a pair of Lugalĝira and Meslamtea, and seven sons of Enmešarra. The last group is here said to be represented by heaps of flour (ZÌ.DUB.DUB.BU^{meš}), but the form of representation of the other gods is apparently lost in a fragmentary line. These gods receive a variety of offerings (different kinds of bread, *mirsu*-confection, libation of beer and wine, sheep and coloured wool). The incantation tablet lists a group of three gods, 7 gods in form of flour heaps and then mentions 12 bronze gods which are put inside the kettledrum.¹⁶⁵ It seems that the fragmentary beginning of KAR 60 might have mentioned setting up water for these gods as well as their putting inside a bronze drum,¹⁶⁶ while in KAR 50 only offerings to Ea, Šamaš and Asaluĝi take place.¹⁶⁷

Then both Hellenistic texts as well as KAR 60 tell us that a reed mat should be laid down. Under it and at its sides the *kalû* should heap up sand, the bull is supposed to stand on it and his legs should be tied.¹⁶⁸ In *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5 and KAR 60 the instruction directly follows to sprinkle the bull with water and wash its mouth (*pīšu*(KA-šú) *te-me-es-si*), surround it with a circle of flour and place a brick in front of it. In KAR 60 placing juniper on a censer and a libation follows.¹⁶⁹

Before the text of TU 44 joins with these two again, it inserts a long and partially fragmentary passage which describes different kinds of offerings and setting up of *egubbû*-vessels for the 12 gods as well as fumigation and offerings to the bull.¹⁷⁰ Only after that, 12 bricks for 12 gods are set up and offerings for them take place. Then barley seeds are scattered and the kettledrum is set up (probably on top of them). A brick for Lumĝa (^dLum-ĝa), probably as a representation of this deity, is set up and offerings follow.¹⁷¹

TU 44 proceeds with drawing the curtains shut and finally with a performance of mouth-washing on the bull (*alpu*(GU₄) *šá-a-šú* LUĜ KA *tu-še-pis-su*).¹⁷² Interestingly, the strongly abbreviated description of KAR 50 mentions drawing the curtains, but omits the mouth-washing.¹⁷³ According to all ritual texts as well as the incantation tablet, two incantations are whispered by means of a tube of sweet reed into the bull's ears; "Great bull, choice bull, which treads on the pure meadow" into its right ear and "O bull, you are a descendant of Anzu" into the left one.¹⁷⁴ In TU 44 the bull is sprinkled with cedar balsam, and only now purified by fumigation and surrounded by a flour circle.¹⁷⁵ This text also mentions singing of an additional *eršem*-lamentation "Important one, who wanders about" and reciting a *šu'ila*-prayer "Great gods, who have created heaven and earth" at the head of the bull.¹⁷⁶

Then the bull is killed and according to the Hellenistic sources its heart is burned with aromatic substances in front of the kettledrum (LI.LI.ĪZ) or, interestingly, according to KAR 60 in front of Lumĝa (written ^dBALAG).¹⁷⁷ In KAR 60, and probably in *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5 as well, the *kalû* is

165 Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 1–8.

166 KAR 60, Obv. 2–3.

167 KAR 50, Rev. 2–5.

168 TU 44, i 12–15; *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Obv. 16–17; KAR 60, Obv. 4–6.

169 *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Rev. 18–19; KAR 60, Obv. 7–9. In the former case, the washing of the mouth is fragmentarily preserved and supplemented by the parallel from KAR 60 so the exact spelling is uncertain.

170 TU 44, i 16–34. See chapter III.3 for the *egubbû*-vessel.

171 TU 44, i 36 – ii 7.

172 TU 44, ii 8. Note the different way of writing: the verb *epēšu*, "to do", is used in the causative Š-stem together with a mouth-washing as an object but with a rather untypical spelling LUĜ KA.

173 KAR 50, Rev. 7.

174 TU 44, ii 9–12; *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Rev. 19–21; KAR 60, Obv. 10–13; KAR 50, Rev. 8–9; Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 9–26. The incantation tablet includes the texts of these two incantations. Only KAR 50 does not mention their titles (*gu₄.gal gu₄.maĝ ú ki.ús kù.ga; alpu*(GU₄) *ilitti Anzî attāma*).

175 TU 44, ii 12–13.

176 TU 44, ii 13–16. This *šu'ila*-prayer is preserved on the tablet *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 6 (W 20030/1) = W. R. Mayer, "Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten," 432–438 = D. Shibata, *Die Šu'ila-Gebete im Emesal*, II.24.1.

177 TU 44, ii 16–18; *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Rev. 22–23; KAR 60, Obv. 15–16.

then supposed to uncover his head, kneel down, stand at the head of the dead bull, recite three times the prayer “He, who lies asleep” and three times refuse that he did this act: “these procedures the totality of the gods has performed, I did not perform (them)”. After that, he lifts up water and draws the curtains apart.¹⁷⁸

All the ritual texts join again and describe the preparation of the bull’s hide and covering the kettledrum with the soaked hide which gets fastened by the bull’s left sinew.¹⁷⁹ Whereas *TU 44* mentions burying the bull’s carcass wrapped in a red cloth before these instructions and burying the rest of the hide after the covering is completed, *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5 mentions only one burial of both afterwards. In both texts the head of the bull should face west and after its burial, oil should be poured on the ground.¹⁸⁰ *KAR 60* does not mention any burial at all but includes a remark that the *galamāḥu* (the chief lamentation priest) shall not eat the meat of that bull.¹⁸¹

TU 44 is the only text which continues further. After the burial, it mentions some more offerings to *Lumḥa*.¹⁸² Subsequently, in the third column a list of 12 gods with epithets follows.¹⁸³ Only after that, one more ritual sequence takes place. Introduced by the indication “on the 15th day”, the kettledrum is said to be taken out to the sunlight (or to the face of the sun god). This is the first time we can observe any change of place in any of the ritual texts.¹⁸⁴ Offerings should be brought for *Ea*, *Šamaš*, *Asaluḥi*, *Lumḥa* (^d*Lum-ḥa*) and the kettledrum which appears with a divine determinative this time (^d*LILIZ*).¹⁸⁵ The kettledrum is purified with a censer and a torch and with water from an *egubbû*-vessel. Some kind of recitation follows and a mouth-washing, most probably on the kettledrum, is performed (*LUḤ KA [...] tu-še-pis-su*).¹⁸⁶ This is supported by one rubric on the Neo-Assyrian incantation tablet which mentions explicitly “the mouth-washing of the bronze kettledrum” (*KA LUḤ LILIZ ZABAR*).¹⁸⁷ The kettledrum is anointed and again purified by fumigation. The *kalû* should literally take its hands and lead it before the gods. Then the *kalû* sets the kettledrum up in barley seeds and performs a lamentation named “The king, god of heaven and earth.”¹⁸⁸

At the end of the third column there follows a secrecy colophon, so-called *Geheimniskolophon*, although the text has not come to its end yet. The last, fourth column consists of a list of utensils and materials needed for different kinds of craftsmen whose participation was needed in this ritual. Only after this list, on the tablet’s edge a normal colophon is found.¹⁸⁹ Apparently, it was not necessary to protect the list by means of secrecy.¹⁹⁰ In the shorter ritual texts, there is a secrecy colophon at the end of *KAR 60* and possibly also at the end

178 *KAR 60*, Obv. 17 – Rev. 4; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Rev. 25–26. The prayer “He, who lies asleep” is preserved on the incantation tablet: Linssen, 275–282: 275–276, i 27–32.

179 *TU 44*, ii 21–31; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Rev. 27–30; *KAR 60*, Rev. 5–11; only mentioned in *KAR 50*, Rev. 10.

180 *TU 44*, ii 18–21; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Rev. 31–33.

181 *KAR 60*, Rev. 14.

182 *TU 44*, ii 33–35.

183 *TU 44*, iii 1–14.

184 *TU 44*, iii 15–16.

185 *TU 44*, iii 16–20.

186 *TU 44*, iii 20–24.

187 Linssen, 275–282: 277, iii 23.

188 *TU 44*, iii 24–28.

189 *TU 44*, iii 29–33 (secrecy colophon) and iv 36–37 (normal colophon). Note that Linssen includes the first line of the fourth column as a part of the secrecy colophon at the end of column iii which contradicts all scribal customs and is not necessary. Linssen, 254 and 258. Alan Lenzi does not comment on this discrepancy but does not include this line in the colophon. Alan Lenzi, *Secrecy and the Gods: Secret Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia and Biblical Israel*, Helsinki, 2008, 192.

190 Protecting only a part of a text by a secrecy colophon is not very common, but occurs in more cases. See A. Lenzi, *Secrecy and the Gods*, 164, 179, 184–185. I would like to thank Aino Häntinen for these references. For the general concept of secrecy and secrecy colophons see *ibid* as well as Paul-Alain Beaulieu, “New Light on Secret Knowledge in Late Babylonian Culture,” *ZA* 82 (1992): 98–111.

of *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5.¹⁹¹ KAR 50 does not have any colophon and the incantation tablet has just a catchline and a normal colophon.¹⁹²

3. Ritual commentary and the group of 12 gods

The so-called commentary tablet from Hellenistic Nippur¹⁹³ is mainly concerned with the enigmatic group of 12 gods which appears in the ritual texts, identifying each of them with several other gods and thus developing their numerous associations with a certain kind of netherworld theology as well as with astral constellations. Based on lists of these 12 gods included in the ritual text *TU 44*, in the incantation tablet, in the ritual commentary and also attested separately,¹⁹⁴ we can identify them as three groups encompassing Anu, Enlil and Ea, the pair Lugalġira and Meslamtea and the seven sons of Enmešara. Furthermore, the commentary tells us that their names were recited during the ritual.¹⁹⁵ Especially the seven sons of Enmešara were apparently associated with the netherworld where they had been interned after their mythological upheaval against Enlil. The theology around them must have been quite elaborate, but our knowledge of it rests on fragmentary information spread over different sources.¹⁹⁶ What seems of interest is their expulsion outside this world which was apparently associated with the netherworld as well as with heaven where they dwelled in the form of constellations.

In the commentary, these gods are described as the hands or handles put into the kettledrum, but also as the eyes of another kind of drum.¹⁹⁷ What form they actually acquired in the ritual is hard to establish. The Hellenistic ritual texts at our disposal agree on the group of 12 gods being placed on 12 bricks covered with 12 linen cloths to whom offerings are brought. Moreover, it is possible that they were somehow mentioned in *KAR 60* as well, although the context is fragmentary.¹⁹⁸ Only according to the incantation tablet, these gods were of bronze and they were put inside the kettledrum before it was covered.¹⁹⁹ At the same time, this text as well as *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5 tell us that the seven sons of Enmešara are represented by flour heaps.²⁰⁰ How this should be brought into accord with their identification as hands/handles of the kettledrum and as eyes of another drum remains unclear, even if we take into account some development and dynamics of the ritual tradition.²⁰¹

Additionally, the commentary tablet encompasses a unique depiction of the ritual scene.²⁰² Objects playing some role in the ritual are provided with identifying labels so that we can observe offering arrangements of the highest Mesopotamian gods Anu, Enlil and Ea represented

191 For a discussion of all these colophons as well as the opinion that *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5 involved a secrecy colophon as well see A. Lenzi, *Secrecy and the Gods*, 191–193.

192 Linssen, 275–282: 278, iv 25–27.

193 See n. 150. The commentary tablet includes a secrecy colophon at the bottom. See A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 195; and A. Lenzi, *Secrecy and the Gods*, 194.

194 *TU 44*, iii 1–14; Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 1–8; A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 190–201; J. MacGinnis, “2. A Cultic Handlist?”.

195 See n. 151.

196 See A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 200–201; W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Creation Myths*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013, 209–217; Franz Wiggermann, “Mythological Foundations of Nature,” in *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction and Description in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Diederik J. W. Meijer, *Verhandelingen Der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeling Letterkunde*, Nieuwe Reeks, Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1992, 279–306: 287–289.

197 A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 191–192, 194–195, 198–199.

198 *TU 44*, ii 1; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Obv. 8–9. In *KAR 60*, Obv. 2 only the setting up of water “in front of them” is mentioned.

199 Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 7–8; and possibly 276, ii 8–9.

200 Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 6; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Obv. 11.

201 Uri Gabbay argues that they were some kind of fastening tools for the kettledrum. Nevertheless, this does not solve the problem of their different descriptions. U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 128–130.

by triangles,²⁰³ two rectangles standing for bricks of Lugalĝira and Meslamtea and six small circles on the sides together with a double triangle in the middle representing the seven sons of Enmešara. Although the circles could represent offering tables, it is also possible to connect them with the heaps of flour which were supposed to represent the sons of Enmešara.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the bull and the kettledrum dominate the depiction of the ritual scene. The bull is labeled as ^{mul}GÚ.AN.NA, the celestial bull, i.e. the constellation Taurus.²⁰⁵ And what is more, the kettledrum in the depiction appears with a divine determinative (^dLILIZ).²⁰⁶

As we have seen, among all the sources there are only two occurrences of the kettledrum with the divine determinative. In the longest ritual text *TU 44* it acquires the determinative in the last section which is not described elsewhere. When the kettledrum is already completed, on the 15th day from the beginning of the ritual actions (supposedly when the kettledrum “matures” due to the chemicals used for soaking the bull’s hide and its stretching), it is taken out to the sun god Šamaš, i.e. in the sun. Then the kettledrum is named in a group of gods to whom offerings are brought and appears with the divine determinative.²⁰⁷ We can already note that only after this occurrence its mouth is washed,²⁰⁸ so if the ritual description follows some kind of logical chronology, the mouth-washing is not a precondition for rendering the kettledrum divine. One could always argue that the divine nature of the kettledrum is proleptically achieved already before the performance of that act but then the kettledrum should appear as divine in other cases before and afterwards as well.²⁰⁹

Since we do not fully understand the relation of the 12 gods and their mythology to the Ritual for covering the kettledrum, it is difficult to say if their putting inside the kettledrum could have influenced the status of the instrument. Uri Gabbay has argued that the ritual represents a kind of gods’ succession mythology. In his opinion, the bull becomes divine through the ritual treatment. After it is killed, not as an offering but rather as a divine murder, a new god, the kettledrum, is made from his hide. The ritual performance is therefore analogical to the mythology of the sons of Enmešara, the ancient gods who have been defeated by Enlil, the head of the pantheon, and driven to the underworld.²¹⁰ Unfortunately, there is no analogy to the fact that the sons of Enmešara are said to have rebelled against Enlil. There seems to be no indication that the bull should be punished by being killed. Quite the opposite, it is spoken of as the “great bull, choice bull” to which the great gods have determined a special, exalted destiny of giving its hide and sinew for the creation of a kettledrum.²¹¹ Nevertheless, the bull clearly has a very special

202 A well arranged copy of the depiction with translated labels can be found in U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 134. For a copy with the cuneiform labels see F. Thureau-Dangin, “Appendice II,” *RA* 16 (1919): 144–156: 145.

203 Only two triangles are preserved and instead of the supposed third one there is a remark *mi-šil-šú hepû*(GAZ), “half of it is broken”, indicating that the tablet has been copied from an already damaged original. See U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 134.

204 For a closer discussion of these depictions see U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 133–136.

205 “The significance of the identification of the bull with the constellation Taurus (^{mul}GÚ.AN.NA or ^{mul}GU₄.AN.NA = *is lē*), although obviously connected to the image of the bull in both of them and to the underworld deity ^dgu₄-gal-an-na (or ^dgú-gal-an-na, Ereškigal’s spouse [...]) is not indicated anywhere else in the ritual or commentary. Perhaps it was explained in the unpreserved parts of the commentary.” U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 135. For the bovine symbolism of Mesopotamian deities with astral connotations see Francesca Rochberg, “Sheep and Cattle, Cows and Calves: The Sumero-Akkadian Astral Gods as Livestock,” in *Opening the Tablet Box: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster*, ed. Sarah C. Melville, Leiden et al.: Brill, 2010, 347–359.

206 A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works*, 194–195.

207 *TU 44*, iii 17.

208 *TU 44*, iii 23–24.

209 At least in the last ritual section when the kettledrum is already complete and “matured”: *TU 44*, iii 15; iii 25.

210 U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 137–139.

211 In the incantation “Great bull, choice bull”: *KAR 50*, Obv. 1–17. Note that the prayer with the same title on the incantation tablet has a different text: Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 9–16.

status which can be described as astral or divine.²¹² According to one prayer recited during the ritual, the bull is indeed a god, *dîgir*, if this term does not relate to the kettledrum instead.²¹³

4. Instruments bovine and divine

We have seen that the kettledrum, *lilissu*,²¹⁴ is twice attested with a divine determinative. It would not be the only divine musical instrument attested in ancient Mesopotamia. In fact, there is a long-standing tradition of the divine *balaĝ* instrument used also by the *kalû* specialists in their musical performances of prayers. In the Ur III period, *balaĝ* was probably a kind of stringed instrument, possibly a lyre or a harp. Since there are deities designated as GU₄.BALAG in god lists, literally a “bull-*balaĝ*”, it is not hard to make the connection with the harps decorated with bulls’ heads which are well known from the royal tombs of Ur. Bovines have always had a close relation to the Mesopotamian ideas of the divine, representing strength and vigor and appearing also as the visual mark of divine status in iconography (in the form of bovine horns or horned crowns).²¹⁵ In the case of musical instruments, the idea was probably to let the bull roar through that instrument, although this is hard to imagine with a harp. This idea does not have to be necessarily connected to the sound itself, just to the might which comes to expression through the music produced.

Especially in the early periods of Mesopotamian culture, bull-*balaĝ*s in the form of particular musical instruments were dedicated to temples, obtained individual names written with a divine determinative and were receiving offerings.²¹⁶ Eventually, *balaĝ* became a term for a whole genre of prayers sung to this instrument by the *kalû*. It is still being disputed if it therefore became a general designation for any musical instruments used in singing lamentations, or if the meaning of the term has shifted to a kind of drum at some point.²¹⁷ The bovine symbolism of both the stringed instruments (with bull-headed sound boxes) and the drums (covered with bovine leather) tally well and cannot therefore serve as a distinction point. It is possible that a certain kind of overlapping of the term *balaĝ* with the designation for the kettledrum, *lilissu*, eventually took place in the second millennium B.C.E.²¹⁸ Most probably, *balaĝ* further designated a kind of musical instrument, the identification of which is uncertain, as well as the general concept of singing lamentations. In the god lists, bull-*balaĝ*s were equated with the Akkadian term *mundalku*, “counsellor”, referring to the function of an intercessory deity, mediating between men and the great gods.²¹⁹ The *balaĝ* stood for the whole idea of appeasing divine anger, pacifying the gods’ hearts and reaching into contact with the gods by means of singing lamentations accompanied by musical instruments.

212 In the commentary it appears with the determinative for stars: MUL. Note that the sign MUL consists of three DINGIR signs, i.e. of three divine determinatives. Worshipping stars, astral constellations and planets as divine is well attested in ancient Mesopotamia. See Francesca Rochberg, “The Stars Their Likeness,” in *What Is a God?*, 41–91.

213 W. R. Mayer, “Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten,” 436, commentary on l. 35–36.

214 Written either syllabically LI.LI.IZ, LI.LI.ÌZ or with the logogram LILIZ, very often with the adjective *siparru* (ZABAR), “bronze”.

215 See above in chapter II.

216 For attestations see Dahlia Shehata, “Sounds from the Divine: Religious Musical Instruments in the Ancient Near East,” in *Music in Antiquity: The Near East and the Mediterranean*, eds. Joan Goodnick Westenholz, Yossi Maurey and Edwin Seroussi, Berlin – Boston – Jerusalem: De Gruyter Oldenbourg / Magnes, 2014, 102–128: 116–121. Other instruments were donated to temples as well, at least *lilissu* and *alû* (á-lá) drums. Uri Gabbay, “The Balaĝ Instrument and Its Role in the Cult of Ancient Mesopotamia,” in *Music in Antiquity*, 129–147: 134 and 136, n. 16.

217 For a recent discussion of this problem, arguing in favour of the shift from stringed instruments to drums later on, see U. Gabbay, “The Balaĝ Instrument and Its Role in the Cult of Ancient Mesopotamia.”

218 U. Gabbay, “The Balaĝ Instrument and Its Role in the Cult of Ancient Mesopotamia,” 134–136.

219 U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 103–109.

There was also a deity called Lumḥa, written either with the logogram ^dBALAG or syllabically ^dLum-ḥa and therefore closely connected to the *balaḡ* instrument, which was described as a deity of the *kalû*.²²⁰ In the Ritual for covering a kettledrum the deity Lumḥa appears as a patron of the bull. In one incantation on the Neo-Assyrian incantation tablet the bull is explicitly said to be entrusted to this deity:

[alp]u(GU₄) an-nu-u ana ^dBALAG lip-pa-qid-ma
May this [bul] be entrusted to Lumḥa.

Linssen, 275 i 24

The same tablet also tells us that Lumḥa (^dBALAG) and the bronze kettledrum (LILIZ ZABAR) receive offerings during that ritual.²²¹ They are therefore clearly differentiated. The same seems clear from KAR 60; after the *kalû* whispers prayers into the bull's ears, the extraordinary scene follows in which he is supposed to cut the bull open and, literally, scatter its heart with juniper. It is stressed twice in the text that both occurs in front of Lumḥa (^dBALAG).²²² Interestingly, according to both Hellenistic ritual texts the same scene is supposed to take place before the kettledrum (LI.LI.ÌZ).²²³ However, in another place one of them (TU 44) mentions offerings brought to both the kettledrum with a divine determinative (^dLILIZ) and Lumḥa (^dLum-ḥa).²²⁴ This raises the question if we are dealing with an actual development of the ritual actions or with a development of designations.

Although attested since the earliest times, the *lilissu*-kettledrum became very prominent in later periods, especially in the first millenium B.C.E., and was also used for performances of *balaḡ*-lamentations which contributes to the impression of an overlap between these two instruments.²²⁵ Thus it is possible that this overlap of the instruments' use as well as their designations is reflected in the development of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum. See the following table for all attestations of different terms for musical instruments and deities connected to musical performance according to the sources for the ritual:

	TU 44	Bam Beih. 2 no. 5	KAR 60	KAR 50	Linssen, 275–282
LI.LI.ÌZ ZABAR	i 1, ii 25, ii 29, iii 15, iii 25, iv 2	Obv. 1, Rev. 22, Rev. 28, Rev. 29	Rev. 8, Rev. 10	-	iii 21
LI.LI.ÌZ	ii 4, ii 17	Rev. 22, Rev. 23, Rev. 30	-	-	iii 22
LILIZ	iii 26	-	-	-	
LILIZ ZABAR	-	-	-	-	i 7, i 8, i 17, i 26, ii 9, iii 23, iii 24
^d LILIZ	iii 17	-	-	-	-
^d Lum-ḥa	ii 5, ii 33, iii 17	-	-	-	-
^d BALAG	-	-	Obv. 14, Obv. 15	-	i 24, iii 24
ÙB	i 15 ²²⁶	-	Obv. 3	-	i 25
ŠEM ₄ ZABAR	ii 14	-	-	-	-

220 U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 90.

221 Linssen, 275–282: 275, iii 24.

222 KAR 60, Obv. 14–16.

223 TU 44, ii 17; *BaM Beih. 2 no. 5*, Rev. 22–23.

224 TU 44, iii 17.

225 Widely attested in the first millenium sources, e.g. in Stefan M. Maul, "Gottesdienst im Sonnenheiligtum zu Sippar," in *Munuscula Mesopotamica: Festschrift für Johannes Renger*, eds. Barbara Böck, Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum and Thomas Richter, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1999, 285–316: 292.

226 Or possibly KÍR, a kind of vessel, according to the review of Marc J. H. Linssen. *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon*, U. Gabbay, 426–427.

There seems to be no difference made either between the kettledrum mentioned with and without the adjective “bronze” (ZABAR, *siparru*), or between the syllabic and logographic writing of it (L.L.LI.ÌZ versus LILIZ). On the other hand, the deity Lumḥa appears in each text exclusively either as a logogram (^dBALAG), or syllabically written (^dLum-ḥa). It never appears without the divine determinative.

What remains to be clarified is the ritual scene of killing the bull in front of the kettledrum, or in front of Lumḥa. Although necessarily tentative, it seems plausible to suggest that the bull is always killed in front of the kettledrum (as the object) but that some of the sources put more stress on another aspect of the same reality, namely on the divine concept of reaching into contact with gods by means of prayers. On the one hand, the same word can have different layers of meaning (*balaḡ* is an instrument, a genre of prayers and a general concept of performing these prayers). On the other hand, the same reality can be described from alternative perspectives (a specific material object, a deity). Exactly this variability can also play a role in the inconsequent use of divine (and other) determinatives.

Due to the textual transmission of the sources, we cannot be sure which time period is specifically reflected in them. It is a common fact that “rituals tend to present themselves as the unchanging, time-honored customs of an enduring community. Even when no such claims are explicitly made within or outside the rite, a variety of cultural dynamics tend to make us take it for granted that rituals are old in some way (...).”²²⁷ Moreover, in the Mesopotamian case, the textual transmission itself strengthens this feeling since many texts claim to be copies of older originals. In the state of preservation of the sources, it is not always possible to judge in what sense and in what way they were copied, or if they were copied from an older original at all.²²⁸

Nevertheless, the overlap of the *lilissu*-kettledrum and the *balaḡ* as outlined above seems to have played a role in the development of our sources. Multiple possibilities of reading cuneiform signs have often been utilized by learned scribes to make intentional allusions of different kinds. In specialized texts of advanced knowledge such as ritual texts, we can count with a use of signs which is not arbitrary. First in the Hellenistic sources (*TU 44*, commentary) we can find the term for the kettledrum with a divine determinative. Until then, only the deity connected primarily to another instrument, the *balaḡ*, has been the one invoked but written with the logogram BALAG which is very close to the logogram LILIZ in appearance.²²⁹ Significantly, as soon as the kettledrum itself appears with the divine determinative, the deity Lumḥa is written syllabically so that they cannot be easily interchanged. With the time, the kettledrum becomes an independent divine signifier and is clearly differentiated from Lumḥa. This line of development seems to be consistent with the kettledrum’s growing importance in cult and its overtaking the role of the *balaḡ* instrument in the accompaniment of *balaḡ* prayers. Nevertheless, it is virtually impossible to say if these changes occurred simultaneously or if one was a consequence of the other.

In any case, it is first in the Hellenistic sources that we encounter the kettledrum as an independent deity next to Lumḥa, the deity connected to the *balaḡ* instrument. Lumḥa appears as

227 C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 210.

228 Apart from the completely ideological extreme of endowing a text with higher authority through the claim of being a copy of an older original in an unchanging chain of transmission (sometimes even claimed to reach to the gods or mythological heroes; see W. G. Lambert, “A Catalogue of Texts and Authors,” *JCS* 16 (1962): 59–77), there is a whole range of possibilities how such a copy could be created (line by line after a textual *Vorlage*, combining several sources, writing from memory, through oral dictation, etc.) and how the text could change in the process (adding and leaving out information or single signs by mistake or by intention due to relevance, due to correspondence with actual practices, adding explaining remarks, changing the layout of the tablet, editing tablets into a series, etc.). See Martin Worthington, *Principles of Akkadian Textual Criticism*, Boston – Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012, 5–38.

229 LILIZ is written ÁB x BALAG, i.e. the sign for a cow with the sign for the *balaḡ*-instrument inside it. Nevertheless, in some cases the only difference between LILIZ and BALAG seems to be one *Winckelhacken* put in front of the BALAG sign. On the incantation tablet the two signs, almost identical, appear next to each other. The difference consists of the *Winckelhacken* in front of LILIZ and of the divine determinative in front of BALAG. Linssen, 275–282: 277, iii 24 (see the photo in <http://cdli.ucla.edu/>).

a patron of the kettledrum's creation and the use of the two instruments attests certain overlaps beginning in the first millenium B.C.E. Therefore it seems plausible to suggest that the genesis of the kettledrum deity itself was modelled on the divine associations of *balaġ* with which it shared bovine associations as well. The development of description of burning the bull's heart points to the kettledrum's gradual acquisition of the independent divine status.

5. Place of mouth-washing in the ritual context

It remains to be clarified if the kettledrum becomes a deity as a direct consequence of mouth-washing. In most sources for the Ritual for covering a kettledrum only one mouth-washing is performed; not on the kettledrum but on the bull. However, there is a clear continuity of creating the kettledrum out of the bull's hide. The ritual seems to have a roughly twofold structure.²³⁰ At first, the bull stands in the center of attention, being prepared in the workshop, becoming the object of mouth-washing and finally, being killed. The transition to the second phase is apparent in the scene of burning the bull's heart with aromatics in front of the kettledrum. Continuity is reached by making the deity Lumġa the patron of the process or, in later sources, letting the kettledrum itself witness the heart's burning. Then a more technical part follows in which the hide is tanned and the kettledrum covered. Only in the Hellenistic text *TU 44* the last section, already after the bull's burial, is added in which the kettledrum clearly stands in the centre of attention, receives a mouth-washing and is set up in barley seeds. It is hard to decide if the second mouth-washing had always been a part of the ritual, since it might not be preserved in our sources.

At first, let us elaborate on the well attested mouth-washing of the bull. On the one hand, it clearly precedes the act of killing the bull and therefore serves as a preparatory purification. On the other, it is surrounded by further actions which enhance its importance. The bull sits on a reed mat, is sprinkled with water and undergoes fumigation.²³¹ Curtains are drawn shut²³² and as *KAR 50* puts it, the exalted bull should stand on a secluded place.²³³ The bull is surrounded by a flour circle and two prayers are whispered into its ears by means of a tube of sweet reed.²³⁴ These prayers are concerned with the bull's nature and lifted status and treat it as chosen for a highly specific purpose.²³⁵ All these actions move the act of mouth-washing into the centre of attention and some of them, especially the use of a reed mat and the prayers whispered into the ears, are strongly reminiscent of the Mouth washing ritual for cult images.²³⁶

Whispering prayers into the ears is one of the peculiar elements shared by the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual for cult images. In the latter one, prayers whispered into the ears of the statue appear in both versions, although in the Babylonian one, it is only briefly mentioned.²³⁷ In the version from Nineveh, a whole passage is inserted citing the

230 Uri Gabbay has recently argued similarly for a twofold structure (centered on the bull / centered on the kettledrum) but he determined a different point of transition, the whispering into the bull's ears before its slaughtering (see below). It seems more logical to set the division point in killing and transforming the bull. Uri Gabbay, "Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears," in *Marbeh Hokmah: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East in Loving Memory of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz*, eds. Shamlir Yona et al., Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015, 185–220: 192 and 195.

231 *TU 44*, i 12–13; *KAR 60*, Obv. 4–7; *KAR 50*, Rev. 6; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Obv. 16 – Rev. 18.

232 *TU 44*, ii 8; *KAR 50*, Rev. 7. The term *šiddu* is mostly translated as curtain but in some contexts it could rather be a kind of rug or even a line of flour. It has the function of separating the ritual space. S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 55–56.

233 *KAR 50*, Rev. 8: *gumahġu*(GU₄.MAH) *ana ašri*(Kl) *par-si tuš-za-az-ma*.

234 *TU 44*, ii 9–12; *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5, Rev. 19–21; *KAR 60*, Obv. 10–13; *KAR 50*, Rev. 8–9; Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 9–26.

235 *a-na par-ši ki-du-de-e na-šu-ka*. Linssen, 275–282: 275, i 20.

236 For the placement of the cult image on a reed mat in the Mouth washing ritual see Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 44, l. 96, and 71, l. 12. For whispered prayers see more below.

237 *li-iġ-šu tu-lāġ-ġaš*. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 73, l. 49.

two prayers, one whispered into each ear of the statue.²³⁸ Even here, the contents of the prayers determine the fate of the statue, i.e. describe its nature explicitly as divine and state the inclusion of the statue among its brother gods.²³⁹ Although a mouth-washing appears in the ritual many times, the whispered prayers take place only once, on the second day of the ritual.

Although the association of the mouth-washing and the whispered prayers in these two rituals seems conspicuous, Uri Gabbay has shown in a new article that whispering prayers is not that uncommon in Mesopotamian rituals.²⁴⁰ The most striking parallel is a so-called *tamītu*, an oracle question, concerning a horse.²⁴¹ The purpose of the question is to ask the gods Šamaš and Adad if a particular horse can be used to pull Marduk’s chariot.

“This text is unique among *tamītus* in that it has three parts of which only the first is a real *tamītu*. It asks the question whether this horse can be used to pull Marduk’s chariot (1–14). Next there is a short hymn addressed to the horse (15–24), and finally there is a ritual section (25–27) instructing that the ‘incantation’ be recited in a whisper three times into the horse’s left ear and that divine offerings be put before it.”²⁴²

The prayer is whispered only into the horse’s left ear but three times and even by means of a tube of sweet reed as in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum to the bull.²⁴³ The prayer, or “hymn” in Lambert’s words, defines the horse as “a creature of pure mountains” which “eats pure juniper” and “drinks spring water of the mountains and hills”.²⁴⁴ Very similar formulations have been encountered in the prayers introducing a sacrificial animal as absolutely pure (type a. of my typology in chapter III.5, parts cited in III.2)²⁴⁵ and, indeed, further parallels of cultic whispering brought out by Uri Gabbay often fit a similar context of preparing an animal for a ritual, often for a sacrifice.²⁴⁶ At the same time, the horse acquires astral features when it is said to him in the prayer: “you are magnificent among all the Pleiades, you are assigned in the sky like the rainbow”.²⁴⁷ As Lambert mentions, the Pleiades were considered the mane of the constellation Taurus which brings us back to the astral connotations of the bull in the commentary to the Ritual for covering a kettledrum.²⁴⁸

238 Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 50, l. 164–172.

239 [itti(KI) ilāni(DINGIR.MEŠ) aḥ]hēka([ŠE]Š.MEŠ-ka) ma-na-t[a]; [ul-tu u-me an-ni-i] šimātika(NAM.MEŠ-ka) ana ilūti(DINGIR-ti) lim-[ma-nu-mā] / [itti(KI) ilāni(DINGIR.MEŠ) aḥhē]ka([ŠEŠ.MEŠ]-ka) ta-at-tam-[nu]. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 50, l. 165 and 167–168.

240 U. Gabbay, “Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears.” Apart from an oracle question about a horse I am elaborating on below, this article offers new parallels from tablets which have not been published before.

241 There are three copies (one Neo-Babylonian, one Late Babylonian and one from Assur): K 3340 Obv. (Pl. 36–37), K 6136 + BM 67391 (82-9-18, 7387) (Pl. 38) and VAT 8953 (KAR 218) (Pl. 39). W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007, 80–82, no. 9. For references to earlier editions of this text see *ibid*, 80.

242 W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 81.

243 The sweet reed is not mentioned in the Mouth washing ritual.

244 W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 83, no. 9, l. 15 and 18–20.

245 Since the horse is not sacrificed, only needs to be appropriate to serve the god, these formulations clearly have the broad function of achieving cultic purity and are not specific for sacrificial or oracular purposes (in the sense of creating an oracular medium through which the gods would speak).

246 Apart from the Mouth washing ritual and another attestation of whispering a prayer into the ears of a statue of Dumuzi, this act is attested with animals: the bull in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum, the horse in the oracle question described above, a lamb and a ram before their slaughtering for extispicy, an ewe which should take on a woman’s problematic delivery and twice a goat before its slaughtering, taking on the illness of a patient. (I left out literary attestations of whispering since they do not fit the ritual context and one case of murmuring into the ears of a person with a hearing defect which is set aside by Uri Gabbay as well.) U. Gabbay, “Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears.”

247 W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 83, no. 9, l. 16–17.

248 See above in chapter IV.3.

The horse is claimed to be of utmost purity (following the terms of this thesis cultic purity), it is associated with astral constellations and is suited for Marduk's chariot,²⁴⁹ therefore becoming "the horse of a god"²⁵⁰ and offerings are set in front of it "as to gods".²⁵¹ The horse is not explicitly considered a god but acquires so many divine-like qualities that it attains a nearly divine status. If we rather asked if it is divine, counting with a continuum, the answer would have to be positive.

The case of the horse is elucidating since it makes use of different elements encountered as isolated so far, for a new, specific purpose, thereby showing these elements as less exclusive than they might otherwise seem. No mouth-washing appears but the purpose of the text seems clearly related since it aims at making the horse appropriate for the god's chariot by reciting the incantation into its ear.²⁵²

Turning back to the ritual treatment of the bull, it may seem less conspicuous now that in KAR 50 no mouth-washing is mentioned at all. Just the curtains are drawn shut, flour heaps are poured, the bull stands on a secluded place and prayers are whispered into its ears three times.²⁵³ Admittedly, this is the shortest ritual text we have but all the more so, the most important actions should be mentioned. It seems that there is never only one isolated element which would bear some particular significance, but that a specific combination of several elements in a sequence is needed. Although some basic significance of mouth-washing as a total cultic purification remains, it can have the function of ascribing a special, divine-like status to the ritual object only in a certain context with other complementary elements. On the other hand, the symbolic complex works even without mouth-washing to the same effect.

One more noticeable similarity between the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual, already pointed out by others, is a denial of participation in the ritual process.²⁵⁴ In the Mouth washing ritual immediately after the whispered prayers, a remarkable scene follows in which the craftsmen who took part in the statue's creation should stand in front of the craftsmen-gods and explicitly state that they did not create the statue, since it had been created in heaven by the craftsmen-gods themselves. The craftsmen's hands are bound by a scarf and symbolically cut off by a knife of tamarisk wood.²⁵⁵ In comparison, in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum the *kalû* himself should kneel down, uncover his head and say, quite similarly, that he did not do it, that the totality of the gods did it.²⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the situation is not identical. Even though numerous craftsmen were taking part in the kettledrum's creation,²⁵⁷ it is the *kalû* who refuses his participation in the ritual process. Moreover, he denies having killed the bull and burned its heart, not having made the kettledrum which is covered only afterwards. What may actually seem specific is not the denial itself but its setting in two rituals with a similar purpose.

249 *eli*(UGU) *bēli*(EN) *rabī*(GAL-i) *Marduk*(^dAMAR.UTU) *a-šib É-sag-il [tâb]* / *eli*(UGU) *Šamaš*(^dUTU) *u Adad*(^dIM) *ilūtikunu*(DINGIR-ti-ku-nu) *rabīti*(GAL-ti) *tâb*(DU₁₀-ab). W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 80, no. 9, l. 11–12.

250 *sīsû*(ANŠE.KUR.RA) *šá ili*(DINGIR). W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 83, no. 9, l. 14.

251 *[m]uḥ-ḥu-ru kīma*(GIM) *ilāni*(DINGIR.MEŠ) *ina pānišu*(IGI-šú) *tu-šam-ḥar*. W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 83, no. 9, l. 27.

252 Uri Gabbay has interpreted the act of whispering prayers into the ears as transforming a "natural being" into a "cultic being with a supernatural role". According to him, the whisper always takes place at a crucial point of transition concerning the state of the ritual object and has the function of activating the object's consciousness so that it can be treated in cult as a "conscious divinity" afterwards (it addresses the object mostly in the 2nd prs. sg.). U. Gabbay, "Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears," 212 and 216. Whereas Uri Gabbay shows the specificity of cultic whispering, I am rather inquiring in its connection to other elements achieving cultic purity. Most of his views are therefore complementary to mine.

253 KAR 50, Rev. 7–9.

254 U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 126.

255 Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 50, l. 173–178? (fragmentary); 73, l. 49–52.

256 KAR 60, Obv. 17 – Rev. 4 and probably *BaM Beih.* 2 no. 5, Rev. 24–25 (in a fragmentary context).

257 Note the list of utensils needed for all the different kinds of craftsmen taking part in the ritual in *TU* 44, iv 1–35.

The other mouth-washing performed on the kettledrum is attested only in the last section of TU 44 and mentioned on the incantation tablet (without proper context). We might therefore suppose that it has always been a part of the procedures, although not necessarily of central importance. Either we lack tablets from earlier periods describing this phase of the ritual, or first the Hellenistic sources emphasize the status of the kettledrum. We can remind ourselves of the use of the divine determinative with the kettledrum only in two Hellenistic sources (TU 44 and the commentary) as well as of the development of its relation with the other “musical deity” Lumḥa (see chapter IV.4). Finally, even the writing of mouth-washing is different in the peculiar text TU 44. Instead of a syllabic writing found in the other sources or the logogram KA.LUḤ.Û.DA (with the verb “to do” (*epēšu*, DÛ)) well known from other rituals, a rather uncommon form appears in both cases of mouth-washing: LUḤ KA *tu-še-pis-su*.²⁵⁸

As with the mouth-washing of the bull, it might be useful to look closer at the other elements surrounding it. The passage in question begins after a dividing line with a time specification (“on the 15th day”) and an instruction to take the kettledrum out in front of the sun god.²⁵⁹ This is a first indication of movement according to the ritual text. The verb used (*waṣû* in Š stem) sometimes appears with taking cult images out from their temples on a procession.²⁶⁰ Then offerings are brought for five deities, including the kettledrum with a divine determinative and the deity Lumḥa. Libation and fumigation take place, supposedly the kettledrum is purified with water from an *egubbû*-vessel and something which is lost in a fragmentary context is recited three times. This is certainly not a whispered prayer, since the verb is well preserved.²⁶¹ The mouth-washing is performed and the kettledrum is anointed which could have a practical purpose as well. The *galamāḥu* should put something on the kettledrum.²⁶² The offering accoutrements are cleared away and fumigation takes place again. Then the *kalû* is instructed to grab the hands of the kettledrum in front of the gods,²⁶³ set it up in barley seeds and sing one more lamentation. That is the end of the ritual description after which a secrecy colophon, a list of utensils and a normal colophon follow.

In the expression “taking the hands of the kettledrum” a typical phrase for a procession with cult images appears (“taking the hand”, *qāta ṣabātu*²⁶⁴). The whole sequence is therefore framed by two indications of movement, at the same time making allusions to the ritual treatment of divine statues. What is more, it is performed in front of other gods who can thereby accept the instrument as one of them.²⁶⁵ Naturally, the kettledrum is taken most probably out of the workshop and does not possess any temple building of its own. Whereas a logical conclusion of the Mouth washing ritual is to bring the statue into its temple,²⁶⁶ the kettledrum is set up in the middle of barley seeds.²⁶⁷ It is difficult to estimate what kind of effect such an action might have had, since the comparison makes it look at least ambivalent, if not ironical. In this context, even the allusions to a procession with a divine image could have an ambivalent effect, when we take

258 TU 44, ii 8; iii 23-24.

259 *ana pāni*(IGI) *Šamaš*(^dUTU) *tu-še-eṣ-ši*. The writing indicates the sun god *Šamaš*, but that means at the same time taking the kettledrum to the sun light. TU 44, iii 15-16.

260 AHW III, 1478.

261 *tamannu*(ŠID-*nu*), “you recite”. TU 44, iii 23. With the whispered prayers the verb *laḥāšu*, “to whisper” is used.

262 Uri Gabbay has suggested that *qātātu*(ŠU_{II}), “hands”, should be reconstructed and refers to the hands laid into the kettledrum according to the commentary. See review of Marc J. H. Linssen. *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon*, U. Gabbay, 427.

263 *qātē*(ŠU_{II}) *lilissi*(LILIZ) *ana pāni*(IGI) *ilāni*(DINGIR.ME) *taṣabbatma*(DAB-*ma*). TU 44, iii 26-27.

264 CAD 16, 30-31. I do not think that the kettledrum is considered to possess some hands, based on this expression.

265 A similar “acceptation” of the new deity takes place in the Mouth washing ritual as well when it is accepted among its “brother gods” according to the whispered incantations. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 50 l. 165 and 168.

266 This last section of the ritual is preserved only in the Babylonian version. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 73, l. 60-61.

into consideration the numerous place changes and a procession through the city performed with the statue in the Mouth washing ritual.

Many of the similarities between the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual follow from the simple fact that a newly created cult object and its introduction into its future functioning was in focus. It is only logical that a part of the ritual took place in the workshop and that various craftsmen took part. To claim a certain authority of the procedures, they were ascribed to the gods and human participation was refused, a strategy well known from ascribing important texts to divine and semi-divine authors.²⁶⁸ At the same time, substantial differences should not be ignored. Whereas the kettledrum was created only during the ritual, the statue entered it already complete. While the primary purpose of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum was the covering, i.e. not only a mechanical creation, but a substantial transformation of a bull into a kettledrum, the purpose of the Mouth washing ritual was the statue's induction. As a climax, the statue was publicly carried through the city and installed in its temple. As far as we know, the Ritual for covering a kettledrum took place inside the temple complex and possibly only in the temple workshop and its close surroundings. Most probably, the procedures were not public.

To sum up, there are attestations of mouth-washing performed on the bull as well as on the kettledrum. Whereas the first one appears in all but one of the sources, the latter is elaborated upon in the longest Hellenistic ritual text *TU 44* only and briefly mentioned on the Neo-Assyrian incantation tablet. However, in order to ascribe divine status to the ritual object the whole context of other ritual elements seems essential. Even if we assume that the kettledrum deity gained more importance in later periods (as suggested in IV.5), the ritual's development reflecting it cannot be reduced to the appearance or non-appearance of mouth-washing only.

6. Interrituality and socio-historical context

The question remains if there is more to the similarities of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual and how the ritual treatment influences the status of these cult objects. The multiple mouth-washing of a cult image is clearly brought to the fore as an essential element of the Mouth washing ritual which does not seem to be the case to the same measure in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum. Reminding ourselves of the typology outlined in chapter III.5, there seems to be a continuum of importance of this element in different rituals, from a preparatory purification of an object which does not have to be central to the ritual as a whole, across preparation of a central ritual object thereby attracting attention to it, up to the numerous mouth-washings of a cult image in the Mouth washing ritual which bring about a state of utmost purity suitable for the gods themselves. If this continuum was linear, we could simply put the Ritual for covering a kettledrum somewhere between the middle and the Mouth washing ritual. The mouth-washing of the bull and the kettledrum makes them so pure that they appear nearly divine.

Nevertheless, the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual share more than the act of mouth-washing. This has already led several authors to stating that the kettledrum receives the same ritual treatment (undergoes the same ritual) and therefore attains

267 Admittedly, this is the second time the kettledrum is set up in barley seeds: *ina zēri*(ŠE.NUMUN.MEŠ) *tukān*(GUB-an). *TU 44*, iii 27. The first time this occurs before the mouth-washing of the bull is performed: *zēra*(ŠE.NUMUN) *tusarraq*(DUB-aq) *lilissa*(LI.LI.ĪZ) *tukān*(GUB-an), "you scatter barley seeds and set up the kettledrum". *TU 44*, ii 4. Maybe these two acts form also a kind of frame, ensuring a continuity between the uncovered kettledrum "witnessing" the mouth-washing and the killing of the bull and the completed, covered kettledrum which undergoes a mouth-washing itself.

268 Most prominent is the god of wisdom Ea and the so-called sages (*apkallū*) including the famous hero Adapa. See esp. W. G. Lambert, "A Catalogue of Texts and Authors," and Alan Lenzi, "The Uruk List of Kings and Sages and Late Mesopotamian Scholarship," *JANER* 8 (2008): 137–169.

a divine status.²⁶⁹ We have seen that the mouth-washing of the bull can be absent from the ritual description (KAR 50) and that the mouth-washing of the kettledrum appears only in one ritual text (TU 44). However, the shared number of other features remains conspicuous.

The Mouth washing ritual is known to have been performed by the *āšipū*, the so-called exorcists, who were generally most concerned with different kinds of purifications. The *kalû*, the lamentation priests, on the other hand, were apparently responsible for the performance of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum since this instrument was played by them with their prayer chants. Although these two professions always remained separated, there was a certain overlap of their competences. Not only do we often find texts from one lore in archives of the other profession's members²⁷⁰ but it is quite probable that different kinds of specialists took part in certain rituals together, although the ritual primarily belonged to one particular domain of expertise.²⁷¹ As a special case, a ritual for renewing a cult image in need of reparation should be mentioned since it was performed by the *kalû*. Nevertheless, despite sharing some features with the Mouth washing ritual, only one mouth-washing is mentioned in one of the versions.²⁷²

We can conclude that the two groups of professionals had quite good knowledge of the ritual actions performed by the other group. In the case of the two rituals under examination, it is sure that the *kalû* knew the Mouth washing ritual; not only because they were storing the ritual texts in their archives but because they probably took part in the procedures themselves. There is also a piece of evidence for the opposite case; an astronomical diary from Babylon mentions not only the lamentation priests, *kalû* (^{lú}LAGAR^{meš}), but also the exorcists, *āšipū* or *mašmaššū* (^{lú}MAŠ.MAŠ^{meš}), as taking part in the Ritual for covering a kettledrum.²⁷³ Last but not least, we should not forget that craftsmen of the temple took part in both rituals as well, although they remain largely anonymous to us.

It seems likely to suggest that the similarities between these rituals were recognizable and perceived as such by the ritual actors. On the one hand, there is a culturally anchored symbolic system which comes to expression in different rituals. This makes it possible for the act of mouth-washing to appear with a similar function in divergent contexts. At the same time, the ritual actors can, intentionally or unintentionally, employ certain elements and their sequences in other rituals they take part in. Although the elements always get a slightly different meaning and function in the new context, they can remain recognizable as an allusion to the other ritual.

Such a kind of interconnectedness of rituals in the same culture has been pointed out by Burkhard Gladigow who has suggested to speak about *ritual citations* or *interrituality*.²⁷⁴ He characterizes this concept as follows:

269 “The ritual for the covering of the *lilissu*, where the *lilissu* is treated in the same manner as a cult image, demonstrates the religious significance of this instrument.” U. Gabbay, *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods*, 123–124. “In this ritual, a perfect bull that has been transformed into a divine being is slaughtered and its hide is used to cover the *lilissu*, a divinity in itself.” *Ibid*, 124. “Since the drum is deified, the structure of the ritual is similar to that of the *mīs pī* ritual.” U. Gabbay, “Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears,” 192. “Before use, the drum has to be consecrated, much in the same way as divine statues ..., to endow it with divine potencies...” Simo Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal: Commentary and Appendices*, Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchener Verlag, 1983, 259. Apart from such explicit statements, numerous authors speak about a performance of the Mouth washing ritual or ceremony in cases where a simple mouth-washing occurs without making any distinction, e.g. A. Lenzi, *Secrecy and the Gods*, 192.

270 E.g. the Neo-Assyrian tablets of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum KAR 50 and KAR 60 have been found in house N4 in Assur which belonged to a family of exorcists (MAŠ.MAŠ). Olof Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur: A Survey of the Material from the German Excavations*, 2nd vol., Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1985, 61, no. 75 and 76. For Babylonia see the detailed analysis of archives in P. Clancier, *Les Bibliothèques en Babylonie*.

271 As always stated in the colophon: *nēpešū ša ...* E.g. the ritual text from Hellenistic Uruk for repairing a damaged cult statue (see n. 272) is labeled as a ritual competence of the *kalû*, but an exorcist (^{lú}MAŠ.MAŠ) appears in the ritual text as well. W. R. Mayer, “Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten,” 444, l. 2. For the problematic identification of *mašmaššu* and *āšipū* see C. Jean, *La Magie Néo-Assyrienne en Contexte*, 22–23.

“When such ritual sequences are highly specific and, at the same time, appear in other rituals as well, one could call them ‘ritual citations’. By citations of ritual sequences I mean sequences recognizable by participants or observers which appear in distinguishable rituals, not latent or implicit microstructures.”²⁷⁵

In what follows, Gladigow emphasizes that such interconnectedness is based on the intention and expectation “that the citation is recognizable as a citation and that it will be recognized” and contrasts this approach with a “purely historical perspective” concerned with a development between earlier and later use of the ritual elements.²⁷⁶ One should be careful when speaking about an explicit intention in the sense of borrowing, unless we are clearly dealing with an invented ritual citing another one which is in comparison well established and known.²⁷⁷ However, observing the interwovenness of rituals reflecting each other’s existence seems highly fruitful. It is obvious that no ritual stands on its own but forms a part of a broader complex of ritual activities at a certain time in a certain place which should not be ignored as its context. The significance of this approach has been pointed out by Catherine Bell and again emphasized by Michael Stausberg who has called this area of study the *Ritologiques* (reflecting the famous *Mythologiques* by the structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss who had preferred the analysis of myths and largely neglected the study of rituals).²⁷⁸ In words of Catherine Bell: “How rites relate to each other within a ritual system and how such systems differ from each other may be one of the most undeveloped areas in the study of ritual.”²⁷⁹

In the case of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum and the Mouth washing ritual, it is hardly possible to estimate the meaning of these interrelations. The shared elements and their sequences can be treated simply as some kind of ritual vocabulary employed for similar purposes. However, one may also look into the changes which these rituals underwent and ask whether they became rather closer or farther from each other. It is even possible to consider the question whether the overlapping competences of different professionals could have played a role, lead to competition and power negotiation between them and caused an actual borrowing of elements and their intentional transformation. This latter case would be already near to the kind of interpretation suggested by Gladigow.

Although in the state of our sources any answer to such questions must remain heavily tentative, there seems to be a peculiar development of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum, especially in the Hellenistic era. We have observed that the divine status of the kettledrum as a cult object and not only by a reference to another “musical deity” had been much more accentuated at that time. This can be related to an eventual development of the ritual practice in

272 TuL 27 (A 418) with duplicates, edited in Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 228–245, and corrigenda in Walter Farber, “Singing an Eršemma for the Damaged Statue of a God,” *ZA* 93 (2003): 208–213. Further evidence from Hellenistic Uruk (W 20030/3, W 20030/5, W 20030/98) can be found in Werner R. Mayer, “Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten,” 443–458. For a discussion see A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 260–275. The mouth-washing (KA-šú LUḫ-si) appears in TuL 27 and its duplicates. Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 233, l. 22.

273 Astronomical diary for day 24 of the month Araḫsamna in the year 41 S.E. (271 B.C.E.) from Babylon. A. Sachs and H. Hunger, eds., *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia I*, no. -270, B, Rev. 12–13. Discussion in W. Horowitz, “Antiochus I, Esagil, and a Celebration of the Ritual for Renovation of Temples.”

274 According to the concept of *intertextuality* from literary studies.

275 B. Gladigow, “Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale,” 61 (my translation from German).

276 B. Gladigow, “Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale,” 61.

277 Which is indeed the case cited by Gladigow as an example. B. Gladigow, “Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale,” 63–64.

278 Michael Stausberg, “Ritual Orders and Ritologiques: A Terminological Quest for Some Neglected Fields of Study,” in *Ritualistics: Based on Papers Read at the Symposium on Ritualistics Held at Åbo, Finland, on the July 31 – August 2, 2002*, ed. Tore Ahlbäck, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell Internat., 2003, 221–242: 231.

279 C. M. Bell, *Ritual*, 173. For a related discussion of the notion of “ritual system” using the system theory by Niklas Luhmann see Michael Stausberg, “Ritual Orders and Ritologiques,” esp. 225–229.

which the kettledrum started to be used for *balaĝ*-prayers as well. What is more, also the position of the *kalû* changed. We are quite well informed about Hellenistic Uruk where the domain of the *kalû* was controlled exclusively by one particular family known by reference to its ancestor *Sîn-lēqe-unnîni*.²⁸⁰ Their apparent monopoly in this profession (as well as in astrology later on²⁸¹) in Uruk together with some contents of their archive in the *Bīt rēš* temple complex²⁸² raise the impression that these *kalû* were striving for a new source of authority.²⁸³ Under foreign rule, both the *kalû* and the *āšipû* were attached to the temple and their knowledge was becoming more and more specialized and exclusive. Let me suggest that emphasizing the status of the kettledrum, an important instrument of the *kalû*, could have been one of the means used to underpin their authority and privilege.²⁸⁴ In order to do this, elements already shared by their ritual with the well known and established Mouth washing ritual may have been intentionally elaborated on. Thus, apart from the tablet *BaM Beih. 2* no. 5 which seems to stand quite near to the Neo-Assyrian tablet *KAR 60*,²⁸⁵ an expanded version of the ritual text, *TU 44*, appears and even a ritual commentary from Nippur has been brought to be stored here. It may not be entirely accidental that only in these two texts found in Uruk (*TU 44* and the commentary) the kettledrum is written with the divine determinative. At least, an extraordinary interest in this ritual seems to have taken place in Hellenistic Uruk. Nevertheless, as always, it is necessary to admit that this interpretation is heavily dependent on the sources available to us.

Let us now come back to the question posed at the beginning of this thesis, namely, what is the relation between the ritual treatment and the status of the ritual object. It is impossible to say if the change of the ritual form or the change of the kettledrum's status came first. In my opinion, these went rather hand in hand in complex interactions with socio-historical changes and development of the cult practice. The observed similarities with the Mouth washing ritual do not yet imply that either the two ritual procedures or the ritual objects should be identical. These resemblances should be regarded as mutual allusions to their counterparts and point to dissimilarities at the same time. As has been shown, the kettledrum can be well considered divine, at least in certain contexts. However, it is a different *kind* of divine signifier than a cult image in the same sense that their ritual treatment is akin but not identical. Instead of assuming the same, direct impact of the two rituals, their evident as well as subtle differences should be taken at face value. If we do not work with a dual scheme of deities and their representations and allow for a more complex scheme, these differences in ritual treatment point to a great diversity in representing the divine.

280 Paul-Alain Beaulieu, "The Descendants of *Sîn-Lēqi-Unninni*," in *Assyriologica et Semitica: Festschrift für Joachim Oelsner anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages am 18. Februar 1997*, eds. Joachim Marzahn and Hans Neumann, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000, 1–16. Members of this family are also writers of the ritual texts from Uruk and owners of the ritual commentary.

281 Francesca Rochberg, "Scribes and Scholars: The *Tupšar Enūma Anu Enlil*," in *Assyriologica et Semitica*, 359–375.

282 P. Clancier, *Les Bibliothèques en Babylonie*, 73–80 and 406–409.

283 A. Lenzi, "The Uruk List of Kings and Sages and Late Mesopotamian Scholarship."

284 Note that "although we know that the exorcist played a major part in other temple rituals from Uruk and Babylon, in the kettledrum ritual many of the tasks, which are usually connected with the exorcist, are apparently performed by lamentation priests." Linssen, 99. Therefore, the ritual was in many respects a ritual of the *kalû* par excellence.

285 Linssen, 98.

V. Conclusion

The intention of the present thesis was to show rituals of ancient Mesopotamia as an interconnected complex in which they reflect each other's existence due to a shared symbolic system as well as shared ritual actors. In this complex, we can find more or less specific elements which can appear in different rituals. Meaning of each element is a result of interaction between its basic function (e.g. mouth-washing as a cultic purification) and the context it appears in. What we can infer from it is that each ritual is specific, although it shares certain elements with other rituals. Shared features between rituals can be a form of mutual interplay. Such allusions do not equate the two procedures but show their differences even more clearly.

After the Introduction (chapter I) treating the nature of sources and possible methodology in approaching ancient Mesopotamian rituals, a recent debate about the nature of deities in ancient Mesopotamia has been presented (chapter II). Inspired by Zainab Bahrani's analysis of referring to a person,²⁸⁶ it has been argued that deities can be described as a sum of signifiers of different kinds, too. In that case, no primary anthropomorphic core was needed for the Mesopotamian conception of divine, since an anthropomorphic appearance was just one possible way of signifying. As the category of divine seems admittedly blurred in some cases, the question has been raised if ritual treatment can be considered a criterium determining divine status of an object. In particular, the present thesis has been further concerned with one particular ritual treatment, the mouth-washing, and, as far as necessary, with a closely connected treatment of mouth-opening as well.

In chapter III, a division between mouth-washing as an element appearing in divergent rituals and the Mouth washing ritual for cult images has been drawn. The Mouth washing ritual is exceptional in that it repeats the act of mouth-washing numerous times, thereby putting the act into the centre of attention. This difference between a ritual act and a whole ritual of a similar name makes it possible to treat every ritual in its own right and not to try to adopt the purpose of the Mouth washing ritual to suit other ritual contexts. A summary has been made of the unclear distinctions between different writings of mouth-washing as well as between the complementary acts of mouth-washing and mouth-opening for both of which mouth-washing could have probably served as an umbrella term. Appearing as a metaphorical concept even in contexts where it is not explicitly mentioned, mouth-washing has neither strived for literal purity, nor has it been necessarily related to any kind of mouth.²⁸⁷ It has been suggested that its function was to achieve a specific kind of purity of the whole object which has been termed cultic purity, based on a typology by Yitzhaq Feder.²⁸⁸ In my opinion, this purity, or suitability for participation in cult, does not stand in opposition to impurity. It is a positive quality related to brightness which is in absolute measure possessed by the gods.

The meaning of mouth-washing varies with its specific placement in different ritual contexts. Beginning as a simple preparatory act making any participant in the ritual suitable for a following action, its significance can be enhanced in different ways. In section III.5, a typology of ritual contexts of this act and its relative importance has been outlined. While the Mouth washing ritual repeats the act many times and gives up its preparatory nature, there are other elements which can support and broaden the mouth-washing's function also in other rituals. In order to stress cultic purity, the ritual object is mostly said not only to be pure but also complete and intact. Its natural origin is emphasized and sometimes also its astral connotations can be mentioned. In the performance, these qualities are stated aloud or whispered into the ears of the object and mostly a certain kind of purification and touching with natural purifying substances takes place.²⁸⁹ When cultic purity becomes central to the ritual in question, the ritual object can even acquire divine status.

286 Z. Bahrani, *The Graven Image*, 127-128.

287 As shown by Victor Hurowitz, it is a synecdoche for total purification. V. A. Hurowitz, "Isaiah's Impure Lips."

288 Y. Feder, "The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East," 100.

Among the variety of rituals employing mouth-washing, the Ritual for covering a kettledrum seems to represent a special case. Although it does not repeat the act of mouth-washing as many times, it shares a number of elements with the Mouth washing ritual, as has been repeatedly pointed out by others. Therefore, chapter IV has been devoted to a case study of this particular ritual. On the one hand, the features shared by the Ritual for covering a kettledrum with the Mouth washing ritual point simply to their similar purpose. The kettledrum as well as the cultic image is newly created in a temple workshop and needs to undergo a ritual to be able to enter its cultic functioning. These rituals make their objects cultically pure, i.e. suitable for the cult, and use the mouth-washing as one of the means to achieve this objective. On the other hand, one may point to the high measure of mutual reflection between these rituals. To describe this phenomenon, the notion of *interrituality* introduced by Burkhard Gladigow has been used.²⁹⁰ Nevertheless, a whole range of possible interpretations remains, from an intentional citation to an unreflected use of similar treatment well known to the different ritual specialists.

The interpretation pursued in this thesis takes into consideration methodological impulses from the ritual studies, especially ritual dynamics and the performative approach to rituals. However, it must remain a tentative suggestion due to the state of our sources. A close examination of the available texts has revealed a possible development of the ritual and/or its description. This corresponds with a development of designations and concepts related to musical instruments used in cult as well as to a development of the role of cultic officials in the Hellenistic period. Therefore, the ritual form itself and its development can serve as a source of information. Having established the possibility of Mesopotamian deities without any anthropomorphic form, it seems that the *lilissu*-kettledrum has been considered a deity in its own right. Nonetheless, as far as we can judge, its significance and divine quality had increased with the time. Emphasizing the elements achieving cultic purity and associating the procedure with the Mouth washing ritual might have even been an intentional way of supporting the kettledrum's importance and therefore also the authority of the *kalû* specialists who were using it with their prayer chants. At the same time, though, the mutual reflection of these rituals has made it apparent, in which respects the procedures as well as the ritual objects differ. Therefore, they must not be treated as identical. Quite the opposite, it is a case of dynamic interplay between these different rituals which is only partly accessible to us through the available sources.

289 Excluding the last named actions, i.e. the washing and touching with purifying substances, most of these elements have been examined also in U. Gabbay, "Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears."

290 B. Gladigow, "Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale," 61.

Appendix 1: Attestations of mouth-washings apart from the Mouth washing ritual

The following collection of attestations of mouth-washings aims at showing the broad scope of application of this ritual act. Only attestations of mouth-washing (not mouth-opening) in which this act is explicitly mentioned are included. The list is based on A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 182–185 and 188–190, Ch. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image*, 10–15, CAD 10, 30–34 under “*mesû A*”, and V. A. Hurowitz, “Isaiah’s Impure Lips.” Only transliterations are included to avoid interpretation. In some cases it seems in no way clear whose mouth is washed, although editors of the texts often do not acknowledge the multiplicity of possibilities. The attestations have been either collated from photos (all tablets, mostly from Nineveh, available online at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/> as well as KAR 50, KAR 60 and TU 44) or based on reliable editions. An attempt has been made to group similar attestations next to each other, the order being roughly based on the typology outlined in III.5.

Ritual (or other context of appearance)	Publication	Tablet number	Citation	Object of mouth washing (and remarks)
Old Babylonian <i>bārû</i> prayer	Goetze (1968-1969): 25, 5-6	YBC 5023	<i>em-sí pi-ia ù qá-ti-ia ak-pu-ur pi-ia i-na ša-bi-im</i> ⁸¹⁵ EREN	<i>bārû</i> (his statement about himself)
Udug-ḫul	CT 16: 5; 176-177 = Geller (2007): 106, l. 127	38594	ka-pirig ka šu-luḫ-ḫa eridu ^{ki} -ga me-en / a-ši-pu eri _r -du ₁₀ šá pi-i-šú me-su-ú [a-na-ku]	<i>āšipu</i> (his statement about himself)
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 190; no. 75-78; 17	K 5408a + K 2364 + Sm 788	ina A.MEŠ KA-šú ŠU ₁₁ -šú LUḫ-si	<i>bārû</i> on himself
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 194, no. 79-82, Obv. 5	K 3750b	KA.LUḫ.ḪU.D[A DÛ-uš]	<i>bārû</i> on himself (or on a statue?)
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 214, no. 100, Obv. 9	K 2519	KA.LUḫ.Û.DA KA.LUḫ ²⁹¹ .Û.DA DÛ-su	<i>bārû</i> on himself (or on a statue?)
<i>ikribu</i> -prayer to Šamaš for bringing a sacrificial wild sheep	BBR 216, no. 100, l. 27	K 2519	ina A.MEŠ mi-si KA-šú	sheep
Bilingual prayer to Šamaš	STT/2 197; Pl. CLXXVIII, 46-47		uš.uš.kur kù.ga ka.a.bi šu.luḫ.ḫa šu.uš.kur : ni-qu-ú el-lu šá pi-i-šú me-su-u ú-neq-qà	sheep (<i>bārû</i> describes its purity before sacrificing it)
Ritual for burying figurines in the fundament of a temple	Borger (1973): 178, l.28		KA-šú ina ^{šim} LI LUḫ-si	sheep (before sacrificing it)
Ḫḫ XIII	MSL 8/1, 11, l. 54	86-11-121	u[du ka] luḫ.ḫa : [im-m]e-ri šá pi-i-šú me-su-ú	sheep (entry in a lexical list)
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 114; no. 11 et al., l. 30	K 3818	e-nu-ma KA ^{kuš} DÛG.GAN ^{lú} ḪAL LUḫ-ú	leather bag (rubric)
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 116; no. 11, iv 20	K 2350 + K 4015 + K 7830 + K 8949	[KA.LUḫ].Û.DA KA.DUḫ.Û.DA ^{lú} ḪAL D[Û-su]	leather bag
<i>bārû</i> -ritual	BBR 188; no. 74, 30	K 6442	[KA] ^{kuš} DÛG.GAN ^{lú} ḪAL LUḫ-ú	leather bag ²⁹²

291 Heinrich Zimmern replaced the second LUḫ by DUḫ to get the sequence of mouth-washing and mouth-opening. I left it intentionally in the original form.

Bīt rimki	Laessøe (1955): 30, l. 25 PBS 1/1 no. 15, Pl. 28; 25	Kh 338	ina A.<MEŠ> u KAŠ KA-šú LUḪ-si	king
Bīt rimki	IV R ² , 17, Rev. 25	K 256 + K 3206 + K 5326	mu-us-su pi-ja šu-te-šu-ra qa- ta-a	king (his statement about himself)
Bīt rimki	SpTU II, 62, ii 35	W 22730/6	LUGAL KA.LUḪ.Û.DA [DÛ-uš]	king?
Bīt salā' mē	Ambos (2013): 162, VI.B.2.2, B ₂ 36-37	K 9276 + K 9729 + K 13285 + Rm 113	lu-bu-uš-ti LUGAL ⁸¹⁸ GU.ZA LUGAL ù ⁸¹⁸ GU.ZA šá né-pe-ši KA.LUḪ.Û.DA tu-še-piš	royal garment, royal throne and ritual throne
Bīt salā' mē (?)	Ambos (2013): 194, VI.B.2.6, Rev. 9-10	K 8696	[...] KA.LUḪ.Û.DA] tu-še-piš	royal garment?
Ilī ul īde (?)	Ambos (2013): 196, VI.B.2.7, l. 5'	BM 82963	[...K]A.LUḪ.Û.DA DÛ-uš	?
nam.búr.bi	Maul (1994): 294, VIII.2.5, Obv. 9'	Sm 1513	LÚ šu-a-ti ina KA.LUḪ.Û.DA [x (x)]	man
Ilī ul īde	TuL 118, l. 15 = KAR 90	VAT 8250	[LÚ] BI KA.LUḪ.Û.DA DÛ-uš	man
Ritual for undoing an unfavourable dream	Butler (1998): 407, Obv. 10 = Oppenheim (1956): 344, Obv. 10	81-2-4, 166	LÚ.BI KA.LUḪ.Û.DA DÛ-[uš]	man
Nocturnal festival in the Rēš temple	Linssen (2004): 246, Obv. 29 = TU 41	AO 6460	GI.IZI.LÁ GAL-ú šá ŠIM ^{há} su- un-nu-uš ì.GIŠ DÛG.GA sal-ḫu ù KA.LUḪ.Û.UD.DA šu-pu-uš	torch
Catalogue of incipits	Caplice (1965): 112, Obv. 6	K 10664	e-nu-ma KA qa-áš-di LUḪ-u	“the holy one” (incipit - referring to the Mouth washing ritual?)
Renewing a damaged cult statue	TuL 27 and duplicates = Walker - Dick (2001): 233, l. 22	A 418, K 3219 (+) OIM A16941	KA-šú LUḪ-si	statue
Ritual for laying a fundament of a temple and introducing a cult statue into the temple	Ambos (2004): 152, II.C.1a, l. 9'	K 3472	ka-inim-ma alam dingir-ra ka-[luḫ / duḫ- ù-da-kam]	cult statue (incantation rubric)
Ritual for the covering a kettledrum	Linssen (2004): 263; Obv. 7 = KAR 60	VAT 8022	A.MEŠ A.GÚB.BA SÛ-šu KA-šu te-me-es-si	bull
Ritual for the covering a kettledrum	Linssen (2004): 270, Rev. 18 = BaM Beih. 2 no. 5	W 20030/4	᠖A.MEŠ ¹ dugA.GÚ[B.BA] ᠖ta- sal ¹ -lāḫ-šú KA-[šú te-me-es-si]	bull
Ritual for the covering a kettledrum	Linssen (2004): 253; II 8 = TU 44	AO 6479	GU ₄ šá-a-šú LUḪ KA tu-še-pis- su	bull

292 Compare the incipit in a catalogue K 10664 where washing, but not explicitly mouth-washing of the leather bag is mentioned: *e-nu-ma tukanna*^(kuš)DÛG.GAN) *mār*(DUMU) *bārī*^(lú)ḪAL) [*imessu*(LUḪ-u) ...]. Caplice, 112, no. 3, l. 8.

Ritual for the covering a kettledrum (incantation tablet)	Linssen (2004): 277, iii 23	K 4806 + K 9421	KI.ŠÚ.BI.IM KA.LUḪ LILIZ ZABA[R (DÙ)(?)]	kettledrum (incantation rubric)
Ritual for the covering a kettledrum	Linssen (2004): 254; III 23-24 = TU 44	AO 6479	LUḪ KA [...] <i>tu-še-pis-su</i>	kettledrum
Ritual performed by the king in the month Šabātu	Menzel (1981): T 42-46, no. 28, Rev. 25	A 485 + 3109	LUGAL <i>ina É lab-<bu>-ni</i> KA.LUḪ.Û.DA DÛ-áš	? (separated by rulings from the rest of the ritual instructions and from a colophon)
<i>māmītu</i> -text	LKA 150, Rs. 5	VAT 13685	KA LUḪ [...]	?
Fragment of a medical (?) text	AMT 28, no. 4, l. 4.	K 10733	[<i>ina</i>] LĀL ì u KAŠ SAG KA-šú LUḪ-si	?

Appendix 2: Comparison of the sources for the Ritual for covering a kettledrum

This table compares the divergent versions of the Ritual for covering a kettledrum as preserved in the main sources (two ritual texts from Hellenistic Uruk, two shorter Neo-Assyrian ritual texts and a Neo-Assyrian incantation tablet including short ritual instructions). Since the texts do not use identical wording at all times, it is not possible to make a score transliteration of the sources. Therefore I have opted for headwords and phrases representing individual ritual elements, although the measure of detail is necessarily arbitrary. For a better understanding of the headwords' meaning and references to the particular lines, the description in chapter IV.2 should be consulted.

TU 44	BaM Beih. 2 no. 5	KAR 60	KAR 50	Linssen, 275–282
When you want to cover a kettledrum	When you want to cover a kettledrum			
black bull	black bull			
When you want to let the bull enter the workshop	When you want to let the bull enter the workshop			
timing	timing		timing	
preparing the workshop	preparing the workshop			
2 bricks, offerings				
bull enters the workshop	12 bricks for 12 gods 7 gods as flour heaps offerings and water for them	water set up (for the 12 gods?) (the gods?) into a drum (ÛB)	offerings for Ea, Šamaš and Asaluḫi	3 gods 7 gods as flour heaps 12 bronze gods into the kettledrum (LILIZ)
reed mat, sand, bull on it	reed mat, sand, bull on it	reed mat, sand, bull on it		
offerings and <i>egubbû</i> -vessels for the 12 gods				
fumigation and offerings to the bull	sprinkling, fumigation, libation	sprinkling	censer, scattering flour	
12 bricks for 12 gods, offerings				
barley seeds, kettledrum				
brick for Lumḫa, offering				
curtains shut			curtains shut	

mouth-washing of the bull (LUḪ KA <i>tu-še-pis-su</i>)	mouth-washing of the bull (KA-[<i>šu te-me-es-si</i>])	mouth-washing of the bull (KA- <i>šu te-me-es-si</i>)		
	flour circle, brick in front of the bull	flour circle, brick in front of the bull, censer, libation	flour heaps	
whispering prayers into the bull's ears	whispering prayers into the bull's ears	whispering prayers into the bull's ears	whispering prayers into the bull's ears	whispering prayers into the bull's ears
sprinkling cedar balsam, fumigation, flour circle	sprinkling the kettledrum with cedar balsam			
2 prayers to the bull				
killing the bull and burning its heart with aromatics in front of the kettledrum (LI.LI.ÌZ)	killing the bull and scattering its heart with aromatics in front of the kettledrum (LI.LI.ÌZ)	killing the bull and scattering its heart with aromatics in front of Lumḫa (^d BALAG)	killing the bull	
	libation			
	<i>kalû</i> refuses	<i>kalû</i> refuses		
	lifting up water opening curtains	lifting up water opening curtains		
burying the carcass in a red cloth, to the west, oil on it				
		"He who lies asleep"		"He who lies asleep"
preparation of the hide covering the kettledrum pegs fastening with the sinew	preparation of the hide covering the kettledrum fastening with the sinew pegs	preparation of the hide covering the kettledrum fastening with the sinew pegs	taking the hide and the sinew	
	timing	timing		
		<i>galamāḫu</i> shall not eat the meat		
			incantation Pure Quay	
burying the rest of the hide	burying the carcass in a red cloth, to the west, oil on it, and the rest of the hide with it			putting 12 bronze gods in the kettledrum

<p>offering for Lumḥa</p> <p>list of 12 gods</p> <p>15th day: taking the kettledrum on the sun</p> <p>offerings for Ea, Šamaš, Asaluḥi, Lumḥa and the kettledrum (^dLILIZ)</p> <p>fumigation, purification recitation</p> <p>mouth-washing of the kettledrum (LUḤ KA [...] <i>tu-še-pis-su</i>) anointment fumigation</p> <p>leading by the hands, setting it up in barley seeds</p> <p>prayer</p> <p>Geheimniskolophon</p> <p>list of utensils</p> <p>colophon</p>		<p>Geheimniskolophon</p>		<p>mouth-washing of the kettledrum (KA LUḤ LILIZ ZABAR)</p> <p>offerings for Lumḥa (^dBALAG) and the bronze kettledrum (LILIZ ZABAR)</p> <p>setting up water, curtains shut</p> <p>lifting up water, opening curtains</p> <p>colophon</p>
---	--	--------------------------	--	---

Text concordance

This text concordance includes sources for the Ritual for covering a kettledrum ordered according to the publication used for citing it.

Publication cited	Tablet number	Period	Place of origin	Text type	Further publications
<i>BaM Beih.</i> 2, no. 5	W 20030/4	Hellenistic	Uruk	ritual	Linssen, 270-274
<i>BaM Beih.</i> 2, no. 6	W 20030/1	Hellenistic	Uruk	šū'ila-prayer	Mayer (1978): 432-438; Shibata (forthcoming): II.24.1
<i>BaM Beih.</i> 2, no. 7	W 20030/89	Hellenistic	Uruk	ritual (fragment)	Linssen, 265, 282
<i>BaM Beih.</i> 2, no. 8	W 20030/122	Hellenistic	Uruk	commentary (fragment)	
<i>BaM Beih.</i> 2, no. 9	W 20030/83	Hellenistic	Uruk	incantation (fragment)	Linssen, 280
<i>BBR</i> , no. 56	K 6060+	Neo-Assyrian	Nineveh	part. dupl. of <i>KAR</i> 50	see Linssen, 267-269
<i>KAR</i> 50	VAT 8247	Neo-Assyrian	Assur	incantation and ritual	<i>Racc.</i> 22-25; Linssen, 267-269
<i>KAR</i> 60	VAT 8022	Neo-Assyrian	Assur	ritual	<i>Racc.</i> 20-23; Linssen, 263-266
Linssen, 275-282	K 4806+	Neo-Assyrian	Nineveh	incantations with brief ritual instructions	<i>IV R²</i> , 23, no. 5; <i>Racc.</i> 24-33
Linssen, 275-282	K 9421+	Neo-Assyrian	Nineveh	incantations with brief ritual instructions	Linssen, 341, Pl. III
Linssen, 340, Pl. II	K 10820+	Neo-Assyrian	Nineveh	part. dupl. of <i>KAR</i> 50	see Linssen, 267-269
MacGinnis (1999): no. 2	BM 54119	Neo/Late-Babylonian	?	list of gods	
Nougayrol (1947): 29-32	AO 17626	Hellenistic	Nippur ?	list of gods	Livingstone (1986): 198-199
<i>TU</i> 44	AO 6479	Hellenistic	Uruk	ritual	Linssen, 252-262
<i>TU</i> 47	O 175	Hellenistic	Nippur / Uruk	commentary	Thureau-Dangin (1919): 144-156; Livingstone (1986): 190-196
unpublished	BM 33343			incantation	

Abbreviations

ADFU	Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka
AHw	MEISSNER, BRUNO and WOLFRAM VON SODEN. <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–1981.
AMT	THOMPSON, REGINALD C. <i>Assyrian Medical Texts: From the Originals in the British Museum</i> . London: Milford, 1923.
AOAT	Altes Orient Altes Testament
AoF	<i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i>
AUWE	Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka: Endberichte
BaM	<i>Baghdader Mitteilungen</i>
BaM	Beih. <i>Baghdader Mitteilungen</i> Beiheft
BaM Beih. 2	DIJK, JOHANNES J. A. and WERNER R. MAYER, eds. <i>Texte aus dem Rēš-Heiligtum in Uruk-Warka</i> . BaM Beih. 2. Berlin: Mann, 1980.
BBR	ZIMMERN, HEINRICH. <i>Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Babylonischen Religion: Die Beschwörungstafeln Šurpu, Ritualtafeln für den Wahrsager, Beschwörer und Sänger</i> . Assyriologische Bibliothek 12. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901.
BBS	KING, LEONARD W. <i>Babylonian Boundary-Stones and Memorial-Tablets in the British Museum</i> . 2 vols. London: British Museum, 1912.
BiOr	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
CAD	GELB, IGNACE J. et al. <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . 21 vols. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1956.
Caplice	CAPLICE, RICHARD I. “Namburbi Texts in the British Museum.” <i>OrNS</i> 34 (1965): 105–131.
CM	Cuneiform Monographs
DHR	Dynamics in the History of Religion
Goetze	GOETZE, ALBRECHT. “An Old Babylonian Prayer of the Divination Priest.” <i>JCS</i> 22 (1969–1968): 25–29.
HES	Heidelberger Emesal Studien
Ḫḫ	ḪAR-ra = ḫubullu (a Late Babylonian lexical list, edited in MSL 5–11)
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IV R ²	RAWLINSON, HENRY C. <i>A Selection from the Miscellaneous Inscriptions of Assyria</i> . The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia 4. London: R.E. Bowler, ² 1891.
JANER	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
KAR	EBELING, ERICH. <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur Religiösen Inhalts</i> . 2 vols. WVDOG 28; 34. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1919.
Linssen	LINSSEN, MARC J. H. <i>The Cults of Uruk and Babylon: The Temple Ritual Texts as Evidence for Hellenistic Cult Practises</i> . CM 25. Leiden – Boston: Brill / Styx, 2004.
LKA	EBELING, ERICH. <i>Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur</i> . Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1953.
MC	Mesopotamian Civilizations
MSL	Materialien zum Sumerischen Lexikon
MSL 8/1	LANDSBERGER, BENNO. <i>The Fauna of Ancient Mesopotamia: Part 1, Tab. XIII</i> . MSL 8/1. Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1960.
NBS SHR	Numen Book Series: Studies in the History of Religions
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OrNS	<i>Orientalia Nova Series</i>
RAcc.	THUREAU-DANGIN, FRANÇOIS. <i>Rituels Accadiens</i> . Paris: Leroux, 1921.
RLA	EBELING, ERICH et al., eds. <i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie</i> . Berlin – Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1932.

SAA 10	PARPOLA, SIMO. <i>Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars</i> . State Archives of Assyria 10. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993.
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
SpTU II	VON WEIHER, EGBERT. <i>Spätbabylonische Texte Aus Uruk/2</i> . ADFU 10. Berlin: Mann, 1983.
SpTU III	VON WEIHER, EGBERT. <i>Spätbabylonische Texte Aus Uruk/3</i> . ADFU 12. Berlin: Mann, 1988.
SpTU IV	VON WEIHER, EGBERT. <i>Uruk: Spätbabylonische Texte aus dem Planquadrat U 18: Teil IV</i> . AUWE 12. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1993.
StBiOr	<i>Studia Biblica et Orientalia</i>
StOr	<i>Studia Orientalia</i>
STT/2	GURNEY, OLIVER R. and PETER HULIN. <i>The Sultantepe tablets/2</i> . Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara 7. London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1964.
TCBAI	Transactions of the Casco Bay Assyriological Institute
TU	THUREAU-DANGIN, FRANÇOIS. <i>Tablettes d'Uruk: à l'Usage des Prêtres du Temple d'Anu au Temps des Séleucides</i> . Textes Cunéiformes 6. Paris: Geuthner, 1922.
TuL	EBELING, ERICH. <i>Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier</i> . Berlin – Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1931.
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
YUVAL	Studies of the Jewish Music Research Centre
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie</i>

Technical abbreviations

l.	line
n.	footnote
no.	number
Obv.	obverse
Pl.	plates
Rev.	reverse

Bibliography

- AMBOS, CLAUS. *Der König im Gefängnis und das Neujahrsfest im Herbst: Mechanismen der Legitimation des Babylonischen Herrschers im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. und ihre Geschichte*. Dresden: ISLET, 2013.
- . *Mesopotamische Baurituale aus dem 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* Dresden: ISLET, 2004.
- . “Purifying the King by Means of Prisoners, Fish, a Goose, and a Duck: Some Remarks on the Mesopotamian Notions of Purity.” In *How Purity Is Made*, eds. PETRA H. RÖSCH AND UDO G. SIMON. 89–103. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012.
- BAHRANI, ZAINAB. *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*. Archaeology, Culture and Society. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.
- BEAULIEU, PAUL-ALAIN. “New Light on Secret Knowledge in Late Babylonian Culture.” *ZA* 82 (1992): 98–111.
- . “The Descendants of Sîn-Lēqi-Unninni.” In *Assyriologica et Semitica: Festschrift für Joachim Oelsner anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages am 18. Februar 1997*, eds. JOACHIM MARZAHN and HANS NEUMANN. 1–16. AOAT 252. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000.
- BELL, CATHERINE M. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press, 2009 (Repr. of 1997).
- BERLEJUNG, ANGELIKA. *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die Alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik*. OBO 162. Freiburg – Göttingen: Universitätsverlag / Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998.
- . “Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia.” In *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. KAREL VAN DER TOORN. 45–72. Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 21. Leuven: Peeters, 1997.
- BODEN, PEGGY J. “The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (Mīs Pî) Ritual: An Examination of Some of the Social and Communication Strategies Which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual Which Transferred the Essence of the Deity into its Temple Statue.” PhD Diss. The John Hopkins University, 1998.
- BOEHMER, RAINER M. “Hörnerkrone.” In *RLA* 4. 431–434.
- BORGER, RYKLE. “Die Weihe eines Enlil-Priesters.” *BiOr* 30 (1973): 163–176.
- . “Tonmännchen und Puppen.” *BiOr* 30 (1973): 176–183.
- BUTLER, SALLY A. L. *Mesopotamian Conceptions of Dreams and Dream Rituals*. AOAT 258. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998.
- CAPLICE, RICHARD I. “Namburbi Texts in the British Museum.” *OrNS* 34 (1965): 105–131.
- CLANCIER, PHILIPPE. *Les Bibliothèques en Babylonie dans la Deuxième Moitié du Ier Millénaire av. J.-C.* AOAT 363. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009.
- DAVIES, NORMAN DE GARIS. *Paintings from the Tomb of Rekh-Mi-Rē' at Thebes*. Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition 10. New York: Plantin Press, 1935.
- DELLER, KARLHEINZ, BEATE PONGRATZ-LEISTEN and ERIKA BLEIBTREU. “Götterstreitwagen und Götterstandarten: Götter auf dem Feldzug und ihr Kult im Feldlager.” *BaM* 23 (1992): 291–356.
- DICK, MICHAEL B. “Pīt Pī Und Mīs Pī.” In *RLA* 10. 580–585.
- DIJK, JOHANNES J. A. and WERNER R. MAYER, eds. *Texte aus dem Rēš-Heiligtum in Uruk-Warka*. *BaM Beih.* 2. Berlin: Mann, 1980.
- DOUGLAS, MARY. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966.
- EBELING, ERICH. *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur Religiösen Inhalts*. 2 vols. WVDOG 28; 34. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1919.
- . *Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1953.
- . *Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier*. Berlin – Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1931.
- FARBER-FLÜGGE, GERTRUD. *Der Mythos “Inanna Und Enki” unter Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der ME*. *Studia Pohl* 10. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973.

- FARBER, WALTER. "Singing an Eršemma for the Damaged Statue of a God." *ZA* 93 (2003): 208–213.
- FEDER, YITZHAQ. "The Semantics of Purity in the Ancient Near East: Lexical Meaning as a Projection of Embodied Experience." *JANER* 14 (2014): 87–113.
- FREVEL, CHRISTIAN and CHRISTOPHE NIHAN. "Introduction." In *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism*, eds. CHRISTIAN FREVEL and CHRISTOPHE NIHAN. 1–46. DHR 3. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2013.
- GABBAY, URI. "Ancient Mesopotamian Cultic Whispering into the Ears." In *Marbeh Hokmah: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East in Loving Memory of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz*, eds. SHAMLIR YONA et al. 185–220. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015.
- . *Pacifying the Hearts of the Gods: Sumerian Emesal Prayers of the First Millenium BC*. HES 1. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014.
- . "The Balaĝ Instrument and Its Role in the Cult of Ancient Mesopotamia." In *Music in Antiquity: The Near East and the Mediterranean*, eds. JOAN GOODNICK WESTENHOLZ, YOSI MAUREY and EDWIN SEROUSSI. 129–147. YUVAL 8. Berlin - Boston - Jerusalem: De Gruyter Oldenbourg / Magnes, 2014.
- GELB, IGNACE J. et al. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. 21 vols. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1956.
- GELLER, MARKHAM J. *Evil Demons: Canonical "Utukkū Lemnūtu" Incantations: Introduction, Cuneiform Text, and Transliteration with a Translation and Glossary*. State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts 5. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2007.
- GLADIGOW, BURKHARD. "Sequenzierung von Riten und die Ordnung der Rituale." In *Zoroastrian Rituals in Context*, ed. MICHAEL STAUSBERG. 57–76. NBS SHR 102. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2004.
- GLASSNER, JEAN-JACQUES. "Le Corps de la Victime dans le Sacrifice Divinatoire." In *Akkade Is King: A Collection of Papers by Friends and Colleagues Presented to Aage Westenholz on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday 15th of May 2009*, eds. GOJKO BARJAMOVIC et al. 111–126. Uitgaven van het Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden 118. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2011.
- GOETZE, ALBRECHT. "An Old Babylonian Prayer of the Divination Priest." *JCS* 22 (1969–1968): 25–29.
- GRIMES, RONALD L. *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982.
- . *Symbol and Conquest: Public Ritual and Drama in Santa Fe, New Mexico*. Symbol, Myth and Ritual Series. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976.
- GUICHARD, MICHAËL and LIONEL MARTI. "Purity in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Paleo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian Periods." In *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism*, eds. CHRISTIAN FREVEL and CHRISTOPHE NIHAN. 47–113. DHR 3. Leiden et al.: Brill, 2013.
- GURNEY, OLIVER R. and PETER HULIN. *The Sultantepe tablets/2*. Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology in Ankara 7. London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1964.
- HEESSEL, NILS P. "Akkadian." In *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, eds. JOANNES A. M. SNOEK, MICHAEL STAUSBERG and JENS KREINATH. 55–57. NBS SHR 114,1. Leiden et al.: Brill, 2006.
- HOROWITZ, WAYNE. "Antiochus I, Esagil, and a Celebration of the Ritual for Renovation of Temples." *RA* 85 (1991): 75–77.
- HUNDLEY, MICHAEL B. *Gods in Dwellings: Temples and Divine Presence in the Ancient Near East*. Writings from the Ancient World Supplement Series 3. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013.
- . "Here a God, There a God: An Examination of the Divine in Ancient Mesopotamia." *AoF* 40 (2013): 68–107.
- HUROWITZ, VICTOR A. "Isaiah's Impure Lips and their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources." *HUCA* 60 (1989): 39–89.
- JEAN, CYNTHIA. *La Magie Néo-Assyrienne en Contexte: Recherches sur le Métier d'Exorciste et le Concept d'āšipūtu*. SAAS 17. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2006.
- KING, LEONARD W. *Babylonian Boundary-Stones and Memorial-Tablets in the British Museum*. 2 vols. London: British Museum, 1912.

- KLEIN, HARALD. "Tudittum." *ZA* 73 (1983): 255–284.
- KOCH, ULLA S. *Mesopotamian Divination Texts: Conversing with the Gods: Sources from the First Millennium BCE*. Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record 7. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2015.
- LAESSØE, JØRGEN. *Studies on the Assyrian Ritual and Series Bît Rimki*. København: Munksgaard, 1955.
- LAKOFF, GEORGE. *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- LAMBERT, WILFRED G. "A Catalogue of Texts and Authors." *JCS* 16 (1962): 59–77.
- . *Babylonian Creation Myths*. MC 16. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013.
- . *Babylonian Oracle Questions*. MC 13. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007.
- . "Dingir.ša.dib.ba Incantations." *JNES* 33 (1974): 267–322.
- LÄMMERHIRT, KAI and ANNETTE ZGOLL. "Schicksal. A. In Mesopotamien." In *RLA* 12. 145–155.
- LANDSBERGER, BENNO. *The Fauna of Ancient Mesopotamia: Part 1, Tab. XIII*. MSL 8/1. Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1960.
- LAWSON, JACK N. *The Concept of Fate in Ancient Mesopotamia of the First Millennium: Toward an Understanding of Šimtu*. *Orientalia Biblica et Christiana* 7. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994.
- LENZI, ALAN. *Secrecy and the Gods: Secret Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia and Biblical Israel*. SAAS 19. Helsinki, 2008.
- . "The Uruk List of Kings and Sages and Late Mesopotamian Scholarship." *JANER* 8 (2008): 137–169.
- LINSSEN, MARC J. H. *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon: The Temple Ritual Texts as Evidence for Hellenistic Cult Practises*. CM 25. Leiden – Boston: Brill / Styx, 2004.
- LIVINGSTONE, ALASDAIR. *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.
- MACGINNIS, JOHN. "2. A Cultic Handlist?" *N.A.B.U.* 1 (1999): 2–3.
- MACHINIST, PETER. "Anthropomorphism in Mesopotamian Religion." In *Göttliche Körper - Göttliche Gefühle: Was Leisten Anthropomorphe und Anthropopathische Götterkonzepte im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament?*, ed. ANDREAS WAGNER. 67–99. OBO 270. Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg / Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014.
- MATSUSHIMA, EIKO. "Divine Statues, their Fashioning and Clothing and their Interaction with the Society in Ancient Mesopotamia." In *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East: Papers of the First Colloquium on the Ancient Near East - The City and Its Life Held at the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan (Mitaka, Tokyo), March 20-22, 1992*, ed. ID. 209–219. Heidelberg: Winter, 1993.
- MAUL, STEFAN M. "Gottesdienst im Sonnenheiligtum zu Sippar." In *Munuscula Mesopotamica: Festschrift für Johannes Renger*, eds. BARBARA BÖCK, EVA CANCIK-KIRSCHBAUM and THOMAS RICHTER. 285–316. AOAT 267. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1999.
- . *Zukunftsbewältigung: Eine Untersuchung Altorientalischen Denkens anhand der Babylonisch-Assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*. *Baghdader Forschungen* 18. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1994.
- MAYER, WERNER R. "Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten." *OrNS* (1978): 431–458.
- MENZEL, BRIGITTE. *Assyrische Tempel: Anmerkungen, Textbuch, Tab. u. Indices*. *Studia Pohl: Series Maior* 10. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981.
- MEISSNER, BRUNO and WOLFRAM VON SODEN. *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–1981.
- MICHALOWSKI, PIOTR. "Sailing to Babylon, Reading the Dark Side of the Moon." In *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-First Century: Thw William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference*, eds. JERROLD S. COOPER and GLENN M. SCHWARTZ. 177–193. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996.
- NEUMANN, KIERSTEN. "Resurrected and Reevaluated: The Neo-Assyrian Temple as a Ritualized and Ritualizing Built Environment." PhD Diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2014.
- NOUGAYROL, JEAN. "Petits Textes Religieux d'Époque Achéménide." *RA* 41 (1947): 29–32.
- NÜNNING, VERA and JAN RUPP. "Ritual and Narrative: An Introduction." In *Ritual and Narrative*, eds. VERA NÜNNING, JAN RUPP and GREGOR AHN. Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 2013.
- OPPENHEIM, ADOLF L. "A New Prayer to the 'Gods of the Night.'" *StBiOr* 3 (1959): 282–301.

- . *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East: With a Translation of an Assyrian Dream-Book*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society N.S. 46.3. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1956.
- ORNAN, TALLAY. *The Triumph of the Symbol: Pictorial Representation of Deities in Mesopotamia and the Biblical Image Ban*. OBO 213. Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press et al. / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005.
- OTTO, EBERHARD. *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*. 2 vols. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 3. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960.
- PARPOLA, SIMO. *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal: Commentary and Appendices*. AOAT 5.2. Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchener Verlag, 1983.
- . *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. State Archives of Assyria 10. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993.
- PEARCE, LAURIE E. “Statements of Purpose: Why the Scribes Wrote.” In *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*, ed. MARK E. COHEN. 185–193. Bethesda: CDL Press, 1993.
- PEDERSÉN, OLOF. *Archives and Libraries in the City of Assur: A Survey of the Material from the German Excavations*. 2nd vol. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis: Studia Semitica Upsaliensia 8. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1985.
- PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, BEATE. “Divine Agency and Astralization of the Gods in Ancient Mesopotamia.” In *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*, ed. ID. 137–187. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
- . “Entwurf zu einer Handlungstheorie des Altorientalischen Polytheismus.” In *Göttliche Körper – Göttliche Gefühle: Was Leisten Anthropomorphe und Anthropopathische Götterkonzepte im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament?*, ed. ANDREAS WAGNER. 101–116. OBO 270. Fribourg – Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg / Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014.
- . , ed. *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
- . “Reflections on the Translability of the Notion of Holiness.” In *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honor of Simo Parpola*, eds. MIKKO LUUKKO, SAANA SVÄRD and RAIJA MATTILA. 409–427. StOr 106. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2009.
- PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, BEATE and KAREN SONIK, eds. *The Materiality of Divine Agency*. SANER 8. Boston – Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.
- PORTER, BARBARA N. “Blessings from a Crown, Offerings to a Drum: Were There Non-Anthropomorphic Deities in Ancient Mesopotamia?” In *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. ID. 153–194. TCBAI 2. Winona Lake: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- . “Introduction.” In *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. ID. 1–13. TCBAI 2. Winona Lake: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- . , ed. *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*. TCBAI 2. Winona Lake: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- RAO, URSULA. “Ritual in Society.” In *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, eds. JENS KREINATH, JOANNES A. M. SNOEK and MICHAEL STAUSBERG. 143–160. NBS SHR 114.1. Leiden et al.: Brill, 2006.
- RAWLINSON, HENRY C. *A Selection from the Miscellaneous Inscriptions of Assyria*. The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia 4. London: R.E. Bowler, 1891.
- Review of Marc J. H. Linssen. *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon*, by URI GABBAY. *OrNS* 77 (2008): 425–427.
- ROCHBERG, FRANCESCA. “Scribes and Scholars: The Tupšar Enūma Anu Enlil.” In *Assyriologica et Semitica: Festschrift für Joachim Oelsner anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstages am 18. Februar 1997*, eds. JOACHIM MARZAHN and HANS NEUMANN. 359–375. AOAT 252. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000.

- . “Sheep and Cattle, Cows and Calves: The Sumero-Akkadian Astral Gods as Livestock.” In *Opening the Tablet Box: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster*, ed. SARAH C. MELVILLE. 347–359. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 42. Leiden et al.: Brill, 2010.
- . “The Stars Their Likeness.” In *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. BARBARA N. PORTER. 41–91. TCBAI 2. Winona Lake: Casco Bay Assyriological Institute / Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- SACHS, ABRAHAM and HERMANN HUNGER, eds. *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia I: Diaries from 652 B.C. to 262 B.C.* Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988.
- SALLABERGER, WALTHER. “Körperliche Reinheit und soziale Grenzen in Mesopotamien.” In *Reinheit*, eds. PETER BURSCHEL and CHRISTOPH MARX. 17–45. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Historische Anthropologie e.V. 12. Wien – Köln – Weimar: Böhlau, 2011.
- . “Reinheit. A. Mesopotamien.” In *RIA* 11. 295–299.
- SALLABERGER, WALTHER and FABIENNE H. VULLIET. “Priester. A. I.” In *RIA* 10. 617–640.
- SALONEN, ARMAS. *Prozessionswagen der Babylonischen Götter*. StOr 13.2. Helsingforsiae: Societas Orientalis Fennica, 1946.
- SEIDL, URSULA. “Babylonische und Assyrische Kultbilder in den Massenmedien des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.” In *Images as Media: Sources for the Cultural History of the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean (1st Millennium BCE)*, ed. CHRISTOPH UEHLINGER. 89–114. OBO 175. Fribourg – Göttingen: University Press / Vadenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.
- SELZ, GEBHARD. “The Holy Drum, the Spear, and the Harp.” In *Sumerian Gods and their Representations*, ed. IRVING L. FINKEL. 167–213. CM 7. Groningen: Styx, 1997.
- SHEHATA, DAHLIA. “Sounds from the Divine: Religious Musical Instruments in the Ancient Near East.” In *Music in Antiquity: The Near East and the Mediterranean*, eds. JOAN GOODNICK WESTENHOLZ, YOSHI MAUREY and EDWIN SEROUSSI. 102–128. YUVAL 8. Berlin – Boston – Jerusalem: De Gruyter Oldenbourg / Magnes, 2014.
- SHIBATA, DAISUKE. *Die Šu’ila-Gebete im Emesal*. HES 3. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, forthcoming.
- SIMON, UDO G. “Why Purity? An Introduction.” In *How Purity Is Made*, eds. PETRA H. RÖSCH and UDO G. SIMON. 1–37. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012.
- SNOEK, JOANNES A. M. “Defining ‘Rituals’.” In *Theorizing Rituals: Issues, Topics, Approaches, Concepts*, eds. JENS KREINATH, JOANNES A. M. SNOEK and MICHAEL STAUSBERG. 3–14. NBS SHR 114.1. Leiden et al.: Brill, 2006.
- STAUSBERG, MICHAEL. “Ritual Orders and Ritologiques: A Terminological Quest for Some Neglected Fields of Study.” In *Ritualistics: Based on Papers Read at the Symposium on Ritualistics Held at Åbo, Finland, on the July 31 - August 2, 2002*, ed. TORE AHLBÄCK. 221–242. Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis 18. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003.
- STEINERT, ULRIKE. *Aspekte des Menschseins im Alten Mesopotamien: Eine Studie zu Person und Identität im 2. und 1. Jt. v. Chr.* CM 44. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2012.
- STOLZ, FRITZ. “Dimensions and Transformations of Purification Ideas.” In *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*, ed. JAN ASSMANN. 211–229. NBS SHR 83. Leiden et al.: Brill, 1999.
- THOMPSON, REGINALD C. *Assyrian Medical Texts: From the Originals in the British Museum*. London: Milford, 1923.
- THUREAU-DANGIN, FRANÇOIS. “Appendice II.” *RA* (1919): 144–156.
- . *Rituels Accadiens*. Paris: Leroux, 1921.
- . *Tablettes d’Uruk: à l’Usage des Prêtres du Temple d’Anu au Temps des Séleucides*. Textes Cunéiformes 6. Paris: Geuthner, 1922.
- TURNER, VICTOR W. *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967.
- VAN DER TOORN, KAREL. *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study*. Studia Semitica Neerlandica 22. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985.

- VAN GENNEP, ARNOLD. *Les Rites de Passage: Étude Systématique des Rites de la Porte et du Seuil, de l'Hospitalité, de l'Adoption, de la Grossesse et de l'Accouchement, de la Naissance, de l'Enfance, de la Puberté, de l'Initiation, de l'Ordination, du Couronnement, des Fiançailles et du Mariage, de Funérailles, des Saisons, etc.* Paris: Nourry, 1909.
- . “On the Method to Be Followed in the Study of Rites and Myths.” In *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion: Aims, Methods, and Theories of Research: Introduction and Anthology*, ed. JACQUES WAARDENBURG. 287–300. New York – Berlin: de Gruyter, ²1999.
- VON WEIHER, EGBERT. *Spätbabylonische Texte Aus Uruk/2*. ADFU 10. Berlin: Mann, 1983.
- . *Spätbabylonische Texte Aus Uruk/3*. ADFU 12. Berlin: Mann, 1988.
- . *Uruk: Spätbabylonische Texte aus dem Planquadrat U 18: Teil IV*. AUWE 12. Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1993.
- WALKER, CHRISTOPHER and MICHAEL DICK. *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mīs Pî Ritual*. State Archives of Assyria Literary Texts 1. Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001.
- WIGGERMANN, FRANZ. “Mischwesen. A. Philologisch. Mesopotamien.” In *RLA* 8. 222–246.
- . “Mythological Foundations of Nature.” In *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction and Description in the Ancient Near East; [proceedings of the Colloquium, Amsterdam, 6 - 8 July 1989]*, ed. DIEDERIK J. W. MEIJER. 279–306. Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks. Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1992.
- WILCKE, CLAUS. “A Riding Tooth: Metaphor, Metonymy and Synecdoche, Quick and Frozen in Everyday Language.” In *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, eds. M. MINDLIN, MARKHAM GELLER and JOHN E. WANSBROUGH. 77–102. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1987.
- WILSON, E. JAN. “Holiness” and “Purity” in Mesopotamia. AOAT 237. Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker, 1994.
- WORTHINGTON, MARTIN. *Principles of Akkadian Textual Criticism*. SANER 1. Boston – Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012.
- ZIMMERN, HEINRICH. *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Babylonischen Religion: Die Beschwörungstafeln Šurpu, Rituultafeln für den Wahrsager, Beschwörer und Sänger*. Assyriologische Bibliothek 12. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901.