Resurrected and Reevaluated:
The Neo-Assyrian Temple as a Ritualized and Ritualizing Built Environment

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Near Eastern Studies

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Spring 2014

2014

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation concerns the ways in which the ritualized materials and ritualized practice of the Neo-Assyrian temple, through their culturally valued and prioritized visual and experiential characteristics, created and marked the special status and divine aspect of the house of a god, differentiating this built environment within the Neo-Assyrian landscape and making it fit for a god.

In the study ritual is not approached as a distinct entity, but rather as a characteristic of contrasting practice, that is, as a strategic mode of acting that inflects the practice itself and the associated materials, drawing on Catherine Bell's notions of ritualization. Contributing further to the discussion are such concepts as materiality, agency, phenomenology, visuality, and performance. In order to reconstruct ritualized practice and material interaction in the temples, the physical, aesthetic, and sensory features of the architectural, non-portable, and portable works of art stand at the forefront of the discussion. This study also reinserts active agents into the discussion of material culture and practice in Neo-Assyria, and brings the temple itself, as well as the vast collection of materials housed therein, into this discussion. Complementing the material culture is a study of the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and correspondence, administrative records, ritual instructions, and omen collections. These texts were written in Akkadian, the official language of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, on an assortment of material culture, ranging from clay tablets and prisms to stone statues and wall reliefs.

This comprehensive, analytical, and interdisciplinary approach to the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment offers a means of accessing previously unrecognized and under appreciated characteristics of the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite that produced and used these spaces, reevaluating notions of culturally meaningful practice, the role of material and architecture in such acts, culturally valued sensorial experiences, social relations, and the place of ritualized performance within the larger social network. The experiential dimensions of the raw materials and crafted works of art from the temple manifest a prioritization by the Neo-Assyrian elite for what was seen: the brilliance, texture, and polychromatic qualities of this built environment acted as both sign and

substance; yet the stimulation of additional senses, such as touch and smell, was also of import. The material and textual evidence from the temple also demonstrates the ways in which this built environment controlled and isolated spheres of practice that served critical functions in the dynamics of the Neo-Assyrian royal court, in particular in the relationships between the king and the scholarly elite. The temple served as a mediating point between the king and the *ummânu*s—scholarly experts and skilled craftsmen—and both with the gods. The variability of these relationships materialized in the developments of the temple during the Neo-Assyrian period, the attitudes and preferences of particular kings toward scholarly knowledge and the gods finding expression in their temple work and practice. Moreover, the king's relationship with the temple differentiated this space from the Neo-Assyrian royal palace. Though constructed using the same raw materials and personnel as part of royal building projects, the palace's prioritization of the king—in both material culture and practice—illustrates a different inflection of ritualization for a royal dwelling place of Neo-Assyria.

The outcomes of this study of the Neo-Assyrian temple make an important contribution to the ongoing dialogues in art historical, material culture, post-colonial and globalization studies regarding the role of material worlds and ritualizing activity in social and political arenas. The textual and material evidence from the Neo-Assyrian temple makes an argument for recognizing degrees of ritualization as an element of ritual theory and practice; for acknowledging meaningful variations in the individual's experience; and for appreciating the variability that results from discrete preferences and attitudes, as characteristics of ritualized practice alongside culturally-grounded traditions and rules. The ritualizing power of the materials and practices explored in this study acted to constitute the divine nature of the temple, a sign of its status as the house of a god in Neo-Assyria. The outcomes of this study therefore also lend themselves to the larger discussion of the house-owner relationship—in Neo-Assyria and beyond—and the formative role of the latter in conferring and displaying status.

ana ummânī ša šamê u erṣeti

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AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The decision to resurrect and reevaluate the Neo-Assyrian temple ultimately began when I was studying for my PhD qualifying exams. At that time I was already profoundly interested in Neo-Assyrian visual culture, a passion that first emerged during my Master's Degree at the University of British Columbia. During a graduate seminar I took with my adviser at the time, Lisa Cooper, I read John Russell's article on the Northwest Palace of Aššurnaṣirpal II at Nimrud. This study inspired in me a curiosity for all things Neo-Assyrian, and a desire to explore the royal buildings of this period from innovative perspectives. Perhaps it was a natural progression moving from my master's research paper on mythological reliefs from Neo-Assyrian palaces to my doctoral research on Neo-Assyrian temple materials, the latter consisting of an equally impressive corpus of visually arresting works of art from a similarly dynamic built environment. To my benefit this material had yet to be critically explored from an experientially aware perspective. In working with Marian Feldman—in seminars, on scholarly presentations, and in preparation for my qualifying exams—I gained a new appreciation for art historical approaches to ancient visual culture, and an awareness of the complexity of material interactions and dimensions of visual experience. This incitement, combined with a growing interest in practice theory and the concept of "ritualization"—many thanks to Rosemary Joyce for agreeing to offer her graduate seminar on ritual theory during my second year at Berkeley—provided the motivation I needed to tackle the topic of Neo-Assyrian temples from an innovative and imaginative perspective.

A heartfelt thank you to my advisor, Marian Feldman, whose willingness to take in a student from an interdisciplinary master's program and bring her into the Near Eastern world brought me to Berkeley. Her insight, inspiration, and guidance has allowed me to achieve this academic milestone. Moreover, thanks to her strong example in the classroom and her mentorship, I now know the type of professor I will strive to become, and in so doing, hope to make her proud. I am indebted to Francesca Rochberg for generously acting as Co-Chair and for providing me with the critical skills to tackle the Akkadian texts. Thank you to Niek Veldhuis for introducing me to the cuneiform world—of both sign and scholarship—and for advising me during my time at Berkeley. Many thanks to Benjamin Porter for always lending a critical eye and helping me navigate academia. I am beholden to Rosemary Joyce for enriching my theoretical mind with studies from outside the Near Eastern world, all of which encouraged me to look at the Neo-Assyrian materials with a fresh set of eyes. I would also like to thank Eleanor Robson for her valuable feedback and willingness to share her work on the Geography of Knowledge with me, and Irene Winter for her generous input and advice. I am truly indebted to Aaron Brody, for his encouragement and academic support, and for giving me the unparalleled experience of working at the Badè Museum throughout my doctorate program; working with the Tell en-Nasbeh collection over these past years has made me appreciate the value of interacting with ancient artifacts and the inspiration for research and museum exhibitions that comes as a result.

The strong visual and experiential-orientation of this study would not have been possible without the generosity of the following people and institutions for permission to work with the objects and archival documents in their collections: Jack Green, Helen McDonald, Susan Allison, John Larson, and the Oriental Institute of the University of

Chicago; Nigel Tallis and the British Museum; Elisabeth Fontan and the Musée du Louvre; and Yelena Rakic and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Thank you to the following organizations and institutions for funding my doctoral education and dissertation: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; and at the University of California, Berkeley, Department of Near Eastern Studies; Stahl Endowment administered by the Archaeological Research Facility; and Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

Many thanks to my colleagues in Near Eastern Studies and affiliated departments at the University of California, Berkeley. I am particularly beholden to the fabulous five, Lindsey McCandless, Stephanie Brown, Lissette Jimenez, and Rebecca Hisiger, for your never ending support and inspiration, and for reminding me to that there is life beyond the office. To my Assyriological crew—Jay Crisostomo and Eduardo Escobar—I can never repay you for the hours you have spent painstakingly tracking down tablets and working through texts with me, and of course, for providing much needed comic relief throughout. To Amanda Lanham—my partner in Neo-Assyrian crime—thank you for providing a connection to the outside world during the long days spent in my office "dungeon" and for sharing an excitement of all things Neo-Assyrian. Reflecting on my academic career takes me back to my final years of high school and to the teacher who before all others saw that my true calling was academia, Willem B. deRaad—you are the reason why I question everything yet try to achieve everything, and why I will never sacrifice my passion or creativity to fit into a box.

Beyond all others I am indebted to the people in my life who have always been there to listen to my scholarly ramblings and provide the pivotal non-academic cornerstone that has kept me grounded: my mother and father Susan and Joachim Neumann, my sister Jaclyn Neumann, and the friend I had before all others, Jessica Dymond. Thank you to my California family, the Edings (Jen and Megan)—you have helped make the Bay Area a real home for me while attending Berkeley and have taught me how to live a truly compassionate life. To my dearest, April Oh, you have made what would have been a grueling final year of dissertation writing something to look back on with a smile and much laughter, I can always count on you to be there to celebrate and to console. Dante, thank you for keeping me on my toes. Last but certainly not least, I would not be the person I am today without the passion for culture and love of the world that my Oma and Opa, Lottie and Kurt Neumann, passed on to me. The strength and courage with which my Oma took on the world was beyond compare. My Opa's love of exploration and everlasting desire to learn made a strong impression on me from an early age, perhaps one I was too young to appreciate when he passed—I know he would love to read this dissertation and I would be very proud to share it with him.

Writing a dissertation is an experience unto itself, one that I will always look back on with loving memories and a true sense of achievement. Yet in those trying times where inspiration and direction were things to be desired, I did not turn a blind eye to the ominous signs, but rather heeded the wise words of the astrologer and *ummânu* Balasi:

> Concerning what the king, my lord, wrote to me—today is an 'evil day,'
> I shall write (about it) tomorrow. Thinking about these matters today is
> not good; I shall write tomorrow.

EDITORIAL CONVENTIONS

In the body of the text, Akkadian words are rendered in *italics*, and logograms in UPPERCASE, with periods separating the signs within a word. Two-column citations of passages from Neo-Assyrian texts include a normalization and English translation, both of which are rendered by the author after the publication cited in the footnote unless otherwise specified.

When discussing evidence from the Neo-Assyrian textual sources in the main body of the text and in my English translations of the Neo-Assyrian cited passages, I retain certain Akkadian terms that are cited with some frequency: architectural designations and non-portable works of art; portable works of art; raw materials; personnel and professions; and offerings to the gods. The first time that each term appears in the main body of the text, the definition from the *Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* is given in a footnote, beginning with the abbreviation "CAD" (Oppenheim 1956–2010). Subsequently I continue to use the Akkadian term in-text without a footnote definition, though when necessary I include a suggested translation in parentheses to aid the reader. When a plural form is required in-text, I use the singular form of the Akkadian noun and add an unitalicized "s" to mark its plurality. All of the Akkadian terms that are used repeatedly in-text are listed in Appendix A, along with their full CAD definition and reference, a note to which semantic group they belong, and corresponding logograms when attested with frequency in the Neo-Assyrian texts.

I have chosen to adopt this approach due to the difficult and speculative nature of drawing direct parallels with present-day materials and concepts. Chapter II includes a detailed discussion of the terminology attested in relation to the temple as a structure, while the challenge of establishing parallels between present-day raw materials and those of the ancient texts is included in Chapter III. The Akkadian terms used for various portable and non-portable works of art are brought into the discussion throughout the study, as are designations for personnel and professions, and offerings to the gods. Portable arts related to temple practice, specifically the serving of the divine meal to the gods, are discussed at greater length in Chapter V.1.a.

While perhaps a little less reader-friendly due to the additional punctuation, I believe that this approach draws attention to the challenges of working with both text and material sources. Yet more importantly I hope it stands as an example of how we might engage with both textual sources and material objects in a manner that is sensitive to the intricacies of each, aids in breaking down the boundaries between the two, and presents the material in a way that allows scholars and readers from all fields to participate in the discussion.

When referencing objects recovered during excavations and those held in museum collections, I use the following reference system in the footnotes. Numbers with an "ND" prefix are the field numbers for objects found during the British Excavations at Nimrud under the direction of Mallowan. Numbers with an "N" prefix are the field numbers for objects found during the British Excavations at Nimrud under the direction of Layard. Sometimes a provenance was assigned in place of a field number for objects belonging to the latter group, for example "Rm. 1106." Numbers with an "ME" prefix refer to objects now part of the Department of the Middle East collection at the British Museum,

formerly Western Asiatic Antiquities (WAA). When available, the registration number is also listed for objects at the British Museum, for example "1958-2-8, 6." "Met" refers to object numbers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. "IM" refers to objects that were sent to the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad. "Ash" refers to object numbers of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. "Copenhagen" refers to object numbers of the University of Copenhagen. Numbers with a "DS" prefix are field numbers for objects found during the Chicago Excavations at Khorsabad, directed by Loud. If the object is now part of the collection at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, an "A" number is also provided. Objects now part of the Département des Antiquités Orientales at the Musée du Louvre are listed with an "AO" or "N III" prefix. Field numbers and provenance are prioritized in this dissertation when available ("ND," "N," "Rm.," "DS"), with the museum and/or registration numbers listed in parentheses when available. If no field number is known or was never assigned, then the museum number will be prioritized. When objects from sites outside of Nimrud and Khorsabad are referenced, additional information is given in the footnote, for example field numbers and/or museum collection numbers when available.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CONVENTIONS

The format used in the footnotes to reference publications is "Author Year: Page Number." References to published Neo-Assyrian texts include additional information: following the author and year date of the publication in which the text appears, I provide the page number on which the text is found, followed by the column and/or line number of the text when applicable, for example "Streck 1916: 191, 12." For texts published in volumes that belong to the *State Archives of Assyria* series, I use the abbreviation SAA followed by the text number and line number when applicable, for example "SAA 10: no. 32, 3–4." For texts published as part of the *Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia* series, including the *Assyrian Periods, Babylonian Periods,* and *Early Periods*, and the *Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period* series, I use the abbreviations RIMA, RIMB, RIME, and RINAP respectively, followed by the text label and/or number, and column and line number when applicable, for example "RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vi 15." When referring to entries in *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* series, I use the abbreviation PNA followed by volume and part number. The publications from these series that are cited in this study are here itemized for reference:

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SAA 1 Parpola, S. 1987. *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. State Archives of Assyria 10. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 2 Parpola, S, and K. Watanabe. 1988. *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*. State Archives of Assyria 2. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 3 Livingstone, A. 1989. *Court Poetry and Literary Miscellanea*. State Archives of Assyria 3. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

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SAA 5 Lanfranchi, G. B., and S. Parpola. 1990. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part II: Letters from the Northern and Northeastern Provinces*. State Archives of Assyria 5. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 6 Kwasman, T., S. Parpola, and R. Mattila. 1991. *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh, Part I: Tiglath-pileser III through Esarhaddon*. State Archives of Assyria 6. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 7 Fales, F. M., J. N. Postgate, and J. E. Reade. 1992. *Imperial Administrative Records. Part I: Palace and Temple Administration*. State Archives of Assyria 7. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

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SAA 9 Parpola, S. 1997. *Assyrian Prophecies*. State Archives of Assyria 9. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 10 Parpola, S. 1993. *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. State

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SAA 12 Kataja, L., and R. M. Whiting. 1995. *Grants, Decrees and Gifts of the Neo-Assyrian Period*. State Archives of Assyria 12. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 13 Cole, S. W., P. Machinist, and S. Parpola. 1998. *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Priests to the Kings Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal*. State Archives of Assyria 13. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 14 Mattila, R. 2002. *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh, Part II: Aššurbanipal through Sin-šarru-iškun*. State Archives of Assyria 14. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 15 Fuchs, A., and S. Parpola. 2001 *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part III: Letters from Babylonia and the Eastern Provinces*. State Archives of Assyria 15. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 16 Luukko, M, G. van Buylaere, and S. Parpola. 2002. *The Political Correspondence of Esarhaddon*. State Archives of Assyria 16. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 17 Dietrich, M. 2003. *The Neo-Babylonian Correspondence of Sargon and Sennacherib*. State Archives of Assyria 17. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 18 Reynolds, F., S. Parpola, and J. Reade. 2003. *The Babylonian Correspondence of Esarhaddon and Letters to Aššurbanipal and Sin-šarru-iškun from Northern and Central Babylonia*. State Archives of Assyria 18. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

SAA 19 Luukko, M. 2012. *The Correspondence of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud*. State Archives of Assyria 19. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

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RIMA 3 Grayson, K. 1996. *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC Part II (858–745 BC)*. The Royal inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods 3. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

RIMB Frame, G. 1995. *Rulers of Babylonia: From the Second Dynasty of Isin to the End of Assyrian Domination (1157–612 BC*). The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Babylonian Periods. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

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PNA 3/II Baker, H. D. (editor). 2011. *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, Volume 3, Part I: Š-Z.* Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns.

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INTRODUCTION

The Neo-Assyrian state-sponsored temple of the first millennium BCE was a culturally rich built environment that was crafted by ambitious kings for an elevated and worthy divine resident. This overtly conspicuous and visually arresting structure was more than a passive bystander or static backdrop to social practice. Rather the wealth of materials that were brought together through the creation and successive reconstruction of this built environment was integrally connected to the activities staged within, as both a product of and a producer of ritualized practice. Of equal importance was the contribution this collection of material and practice made toward the normalization of the cultural and social conventions of the Neo-Assyrian imperial milieu.[1] Adopting such an orientation toward this material group permits access to socially informed patterns, values, and social relations of the greater Neo-Assyrian imperial society, as well as a medium with which to exhume the formative role of the temple within this cultural context. These ritualized materials and ritualized practice, through their culturally valued and prioritized visual and experiential characteristics, created and marked the special status and divine ownership of the house of a god, differentiating this built environment within the Neo-Assyrian landscape and making it fit for a god.

The term "temple" is used in this dissertation in a very general sense, one that is disassociated from the common English meaning of a place of worship and is used instead in reference to a structure that is owned and lived in by a god. The latter type of structure is labeled as "House of DN" (*bīt* DN) in the Akkadian texts and is to be understood architecturally as the type of large, all-encompassing structure affiliated with a particular god that is centered upon a dais and god's chamber (see Chapter II.3 for an explanation of the term "god's chamber"), from which extends varying subsidiary chambers, corridors, and courtyards. When the temple of a specific god is being discussed in this study, the label "House of DN" is used rather than the general "temple." Additional terms are used to refer to internal features of these buildings, as outlined in Chapter II.3. Chapter II includes a discussion of terminology and the presentation of the English terminology adhered to throughout this study.

The designation "temple built environment" denotes comprehensively the temple structure itself as well as the space and materials contained within that came about through human action and subsequently functioned as an interrelated whole as the setting for practice. The use of the term presupposes that there are strong ties between built environments and their particular cultural and social setting, an aspect that is discussed throughout this study. The concept of the interrelation between built forms, cultural and social structures, and practice, and the notion of the built environment can be traced back to such early theorists as Durkheim and Mauss,[2] whose ideas have encouraged much of the ongoing theoretical work in this area that is discussed in Chapter I.1.

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[1] There is some debate about the defining criteria for the periodization of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (or Late Assyrian Empire) in the field of Mesopotamian studies. Some scholars argue that the empire began in the late tenth century and early ninth century BCE, when the expansionist policies of a series of kings

[2] Durkheim 1912; Durkheim and Mauss 1963; Mauss and Beuchat 1979. For a review of the relevant literature and a critical evaluation of the concept at an interdisciplinary level, see Lawrence and Low 1990.

Previous studies of the Neo-Assyrian temple have tended to focus on discrete aspects of this structure. Archaeological studies, for example, offer either primary reports of excavations at the Assyrian capital cities[3] or secondary discussions of the material, the latter often organized by site or artifact type, or according to a diachronic perspective.[4] Separate studies of the textual materials from the temples—be they inscriptions recording building activities or cuneiform tablets found within the temple—focus almost exclusively on the content of the texts rather than their social or material context.[5] Both types of studies traditionally employ the terminology of "temple" in reference to these structures. This study builds upon and enriches these earlier studies: first, by emphasizing the experiential qualities of these materials and their agentive role in human interactions through a practice-oriented approach; and second, by placing this information within the larger discussion of the mutually constitutive relationship between a house and status in order to understand the role of the temple built environment within the wider social and cultural setting of Neo-Assyria.

Thinking critically about the materials and practices of the temple built environment in Neo-Assyria gives rise to an advanced level of understanding of both this structure and its makers. When we do not ask how the temple was conceived within its particular social and cultural setting, how the materials of the temple were valued, and how practices related to the temple were meaningful or fundamental to the people that established and performed them, an obvious void persists in the study of Neo-Assyrian society. This study brings together the archaeological evidence and the textual sources from a select group of Neo-Assyrian temples in order to answer these questions of value, practice, motivations, and social relations. This study also provides an opportunity to further develop theories of practice and ritual by exploring the archaeological and textual evidence of a past society that has thus far stood outside a critical discussion of ritual from a practice-oriented perspective. Such an exploration of the Neo-Assyrian material gives rise to new ways of thinking about these theoretical categories with respect to societies both past and present. Establishing a more thorough understanding of the Neo-Assyrian temple also lends itself to future considerations of such enduring yet convoluted concepts as "ritual" and "religion" in discussions of past polytheistic societies. Though we have come a long way since Oppenheim's assertion that a Mesopotamian religion should not be written, these remain complex notions for the field of ancient studies that merit ongoing discussion.[6]

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[3] Notable examples include, Campbell Thompson and Hutchinson 1929; Campbell Thompson and Hamilton 1932; Loud 1936; Loud and Altman 1938; Oates and Reid 1956; Oates 1957; Mallowan 1966.

[4] For example, Matthiae 1975; Neve 1975; Reade 2002; Reade 2005a; Miglus 2011–2013. For a diachronic overview of temples in Assyria, see Menzel 1981; Heinrich 1982.

[5] Wiseman 1968; Wiseman and Black 1996; Parker 1957; 1963. An example of a contextual approach is the project "Geography of Knowledge in Assyria and Babylonia: A Diachronic Analysis of Four Scholarly Libraries." This project was based at the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge, and the Babylonian Section, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and ran from September 2007 to December 2012 (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/cams-/gkab/>).

[6] Oppenheim1977: 183: "Western man seems to be both unable and, ultimately, unwilling to understand [polytheistic] religions except from the distorting angle of the antiquarian interest and apologetic pretenses. For nearly a century he has tried to fathom these alien dimensions with the yardsticks of animistic theories, nature worship, stellar mythologies, vegetation cycles, pre-logical thought, and kindred panaceas, to

In this study ritual is not approached as a distinct entity but rather as a strategic mode of acting that ritualizes and inflects the practice itself and the associated materials, drawing on Catherine Bell's notions of ritualization.[7] Contributing further to the discussion are such concepts as performance, behavior, phenomenology,[8] materiality, visuality, aesthetics, and agency. These concepts aid in exploring how aspects of the built environment were inflected and ritualized, and how they, in turn, ritualized the activity within the built environment. Engaging with this array of theoretical approaches and concepts offers a means of accessing previously unrecognized and under appreciated characteristics of the Neo-Assyrian elite culture that produced and used these spaces, reevaluating notions of social relations, culturally meaningful practice, the role of material and architecture in such acts, and the place of ritualized performance within the larger social network. Such arguments are founded upon the premise that the fundamental cultural concepts of distinct cultural and social groups are reflected in the patterns and meanings of their built environments.[9]

The geographical and historical focus of this study is Neo-Assyria, a wide-reaching empire of the first millennium BCE located in northern Mesopotamia, present day northern Iraq (FIGURE 1). This land of rolling plains was situated between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and was bordered by mountainous regions to the north and east.[10] The history of the Assyrian empire can be traced back to the mid-second millennium BCE, when the city of Assur, the home of the god Aššur, became a strong political power through the work of a series of determined kings (APPENDIX B).[11] This persistence gave rise to the Middle Assyrian Empire (c. 1350–1000 BCE), then following a brief hiatus in power, the Neo-Assyrian Empire (c. 900–612 BCE).[12] From the late tenth/early ninth century until the fall of the Neo-Assyrian Empire at the end of the seventh century BCE,

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conjure them by means of the abracadabra of mana, taboo, and orenda. And the results have been, at best, lifeless and bookish syntheses and smoothly written systematizations decked out in a mass of all-too-ingenious comparisons and parallels obtained by zigzagging over the globe and through the known history of man."

[7] Bell 1992.

[8] Phenomenology, as defined by Tilley (1994: 12), "involves the understanding and description of things as they are experienced by a subject. It is about the relationship between Being and Being-in-the-world. Being-in-the-world resides in a process of objectification in which people objectify the world by setting themselves as apart from it. This results in the creation of a gap, a distance in space. To be human is both to create this distance between the self and that which is beyond and to attempt to bridge this distance through a variety of means—through perception (seeing, hearing, touching), bodily actions and movements, and intentionality, emotion and awareness residing in systems of belief and decision-making, remembrance and evaluation." For post-processual archaeologists, a phenomenological approach offers a means of appreciating the subjective experience, questioning how people experience and move about the social landscape, in contrast to questions of settlement pattern, land use, environment, and subsistence characteristic of processual archaeology (Wilkinson 2003: 5–6, 225). See further, Tilley 2004; 2007. For an example of a phenomenological consideration of a Neo-Assyrian citadel and palace, see McMahon 2013.

[9] Moore 1996: 2.

[10] See further, Roaf 1990.

[11] The preceding period in northern Mesopotamia is referred to as the Old Assyrian period (c. 2000–1750 BCE), a time best known for the Assyrian trading colonies that were established in Anatolia and the emergence of the Old Assyrian dialect. During this period, the rulers of the city-state of Assur bore the title "*iššakkum* of the god Aššur" (CAD "I/J": 262 *iššakku* (ENSÍ), "1. territorial ruler (of cities, countries, etc.);" see further, Larsen 1976; Veenhof and Eidem 2008; also RIMA 1.

[12] On the shift from the Middle Assyrian to the Neo-Assyrian Empire, see Postgate 1997.

Neo-Assyrian kings arduously worked to consolidate and expand Assyria's political domain within the volatile landscape of the ancient Near East, with neighboring entities vying for their own power and supremacy.[13] At the height of the Neo-Assyrian kings' success the empire stretched from Iran to Egypt. The eventual collapse of the Neo-Assyrian Empire led to the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (626–539 BCE), which entailed a shift of power to southern Mesopotamia, and eventually the Persian Empire (559–323 BCE), whose heartland was located east of the Tigris River and north of the Persian Gulf.

The temples of the Neo-Assyrian Empire were constructed, renovated, and rebuilt as part of larger state-sponsored building programs initiated and overseen by powerful and successful rulers of the period, including Aššurnaṣirpal II (883–859 BCE), Adad-nerari III (911–912 BCE), Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE), Sargon II (721–705 BCE), Sennacherib (704–81 BCE), Esarhaddon (680–669 BCE), and Aššurbanipal (668-627 BCE) (APPENDIX B). During this period the administrative capital of the empire shifted from Assur to Nimrud, then Khorsabad, and lastly Nineveh, under the leadership of different rulers, while past capitals remained important for reasons of continuity and their resident divinities. This mix of tradition and development led to the construction of temples at a number of cities throughout northern Mesopotamia, knowledge of which varies from site to site due to preservation and nature of excavation.

The material sources that make up the body of evidence in this study constitute an array of objects from Neo-Assyria that vary in size, form, and material. In addition to the core structure of the temple itself, which consisted of mudbrick walls and pavements, and stone and wood elements, a plethora of non-portable and portable works of art also filled the space:[14] glazed brick panels, carved stone wall reliefs, wooden door poles and door leaves with metal relief bands, divine and royal statues and steles, elaborate thrones, pedestals,[15] incense burners, and foundation deposits. Light-colored building stone and

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[13] See further, Postgate 1992a, on the relationship between the political unit of Assyria and its neighboring regions.

[14] I use the terms "non-portable works of art" and "portable works of art" as defined by Thomason (2013), who argues against the use of the contrasting labels "minor / small-scale" and "major / monumental" for works of art in the ancient Near East: "I argue that art historians studying the ancient Near East should banish these and other related terms such as "decorative," "ornamental," or "applied" from their working vocabularies, as they were unknown in the ancient Near Eastern world and elided often in the canons established by art historians. I argue that the terms "portable" and "non-portable" might be more appropriate vocabulary choices, as they are less value-laden and more illustrative of the choices and behaviors humans make when producing and consuming objects." See further the discussion of the terms "minor" and "fine arts" in Winter's (1995) discussion of aesthetics in Mesopotamia.

[15] I use the term "pedestal" to refer to objects preserved in the archaeological record whose original use is not indisputably clear, being either an offering table or an altar. When speaking of references in the textual sources or temple practice not based on an archaeological find, I differentiate between an "offering table" as a portable item that was used in the presentation of food offerings to the gods, and an "altar" as a surface upon which ritualized butchering was performed (the killing of animals in order to provide offerings to the gods, conventionally referred to as "sacrifice"). I also refer to these works of art as "portable," because the textual sources speak of moving such pieces for practice, and because representations of making offerings and libations to the gods involving these portable works of art are at times staged in places where these pieces would have had to have been carried, for example the scene of Shalmaneser III making a libation at the head of the Tigris (King 1915: pl. LIX; Schachner 2007: pl. 50b). Yet as discussed in Chapter V.1.a,

clay were used most often to manufacture these objects, yet such exotic elements as lapis lazuli and gold are also well represented. In addition to being visually arresting, all of these objects and their material components had social and cultural associations dependent upon the values and traditions of the Neo-Assyrian elite milieu, which in turn played into the ritualized and ritualizing aspects of the temple built environment.

Providing unique information about these materials, while also contributing to an understanding of the practices related to the temple in the Neo-Assyrian imperial milieu, are the primary textual sources: the royal inscriptions, for example from palatial wall reliefs, and royal and divine statues and steles, foundation tablets and prisms; and cuneiform tablets, which were inscribed with royal correspondence, administrative records, ritual instructions, and omen collections. All of these texts were written in Akkadian, the administrative language of Neo-Assyrian imperial society. Yet while their materials, language, and script were the same, the role these groups of texts played in the Neo-Assyrian imperial milieu was wide-ranging. For this reason, each group makes unique contributions to particular methodological pursuits of the present study, whether in the way of material and cultural values, construction methods, or forms of practice.

Chapter I, "Laying the Foundations: Sources, Methods, and Approaches to the Neo-Assyrian Temple," first presents a new manner of approaching material culture through a multifaceted lens anchored in practice-theory, that engages with concepts of visuality, materiality, agency, phenomenology, and degrees of ritualization. Such a lens helps elucidate—physically and conceptually—the Neo-Assyrian temple as a ritualized and ritualizing built environment. Chapter I.2 introduces the Neo-Assyrian evidentiary sources for this study: first is an argument for the prioritization of a set group of temples from the sites of Khorsabad and Nimrud, which is followed by an introduction to the primary and secondary material and textual sources of this study. The latter section establishes the contribution each group makes to this new assessment of the temple in Neo-Assyria.

Chapter II, "Mining Texts and Quarrying Cuneiform: Establishing Terminology," addresses matters of terminology. The first section problematizes current terminological conventions, both ancient and modern, related to the Neo-Assyrian temple. The second section looks at the Neo-Assyrian conceptualization of space suggested by these terms with reference to the notion of the "house" within this cultural context. The final section establishes the analytical terminology adhered to throughout this study that is sensitive to the ancient system and its cultural and contextual intricacies, yet also accessible and meaningful for a modern audience.

Chapter III, "From Raw to Ritualized: Temple Building Materials," analyzes the raw materials acquired by the Neo-Assyrian kings for use in temple construction. The first section establishes the textual sources that are especially beneficial for such a discussion, elucidating their benefits as well as potential drawbacks. Chapter III.2 draws upon these texts and the archaeological evidence to analyze the origins, use, and unique cultural value of each material group, the latter based in part on its active properties, or what might otherwise be referred to as its "magical" or "supernatural" qualities.

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there is also archaeological evidence for permanent fixtures in some of the temple courtyards that may have served as altars or offerings tables.

Chapter IV, "Ritualized Creation: The Construction and Renewal of the Neo-Assyrian Temple," analyzes the creation of the temple. Again the texts that are particularly beneficial for such a discussion are established at the outset. Chapter IV.2 itemizes the different groups of building personnel involved in the act of temple construction, ranging from the king himself to elite craftsmen and scholarly experts, the officials of the royal court, and unskilled laborers. Chapter IV.3 outlines the individual stages of renewal and reconstruction that took place in the (re)construction of a temple with the culminating point being the installation of the god. The conclusion comments on the activity as a whole as a form of ritualized performance.

Chapter V, "Ritualized Space: Practice and Performance in the Neo-Assyrian Temple," focuses on the temple as a built environment—the building itself as well as the material and practice therein—and how this ensemble acted as a venue for ritualized activities of Neo-Assyrian elite society. Chapter V.1 manifests the primary function of the temple as the dwelling place of the god and an arena for caring for divinity. The discussion considers aspects of visibility, communicative potential, and interactions between the material environment and the practitioners and participants, as well as their varying degrees of ritualization. Chapter V.2 looks at the relationship between the god Nabu and the evolution of this god's house, manifest in the *akītu*-suite and the practices that were staged within this space as demonstrated by Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad. Chapter V.3 highlights the distinctive quality of the House of Nabu as a center of scholarly activity and elite wisdom during the reigns of particular kings of the Neo-Assyrian period.

Chapter VI, "The House of a God in Neo-Assyria: Conclusions and Future Considerations," presents concluding arguments regarding the concept of the Neo-Assyrian temple as an interactive, culturally valued, ritualized built environment. The distinctive qualities that establish the Neo-Assyrian temple as a house of a god, in contrast to the house of a king or that of a human, are discussed. First, attention is directed toward the building's ability to cater to the demands of the gods. Emphasis is placed on the gods as sole residents and the subsidiary relationship that is established with the king through temple materials and practice. The second section reaffirms the concept of the house of a god of Neo-Assyria by summarizing the prioritized qualities and modes of ritualization by which this built environment fit the demands of a house of a god within the cultural context of the Neo-Assyrian elite social sphere. Here the discussion centers upon the culturally-grounded aesthetic and experiential values, modes of practice and performance, and engagement with Assyrian scholarship and wisdom that worked in unison to mark this built environment as the house of a god within Neo-Assyria. The development and prioritization of the House of Nabu by particular kings and scholarly experts during the Neo-Assyrian period is also restated. A final comment is made on the methodological and theoretical approach of this study. Here I reflect on the aims set out at the beginning of the study and emphasize the potential contributions of my findings for future work on Neo-Assyrian material culture and houses of the gods, on houses of gods from other cultural contexts and time periods, as well as for any other studies that seek to develop a multifaceted theory of practice as a means of interpreting the world, both ancient and modern.

CHAPTER I. LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS: SOURCES, METHODS, AND APPROACHES

The Neo-Assyrian temple, in its many manifestations and varying designs, presented a strong statement of conspicuous consumption made possible through the strategic combination of culturally meaningful and aesthetically powerful materials. These divine houses were built atop the citadels of Assyrian capital cities of the first millennium BCE as part of royal building programs and have long been recognized for their rich and dynamic features.

At the forefront of the temple stood an imposing façade that was embellished with raised podiums, glazed brick panels, door poles overlaid with metal, great doorways fitted with colossal guardian stone animals, and thresholds articulated with carved stone wall reliefs of mythological figures. The temple's interior contained a complex array of large and small chambers and corridors arranged around a series of spacious outer and inner courtyards of varying sizes. An abundance of architectural elements defined these spaces, including raised daises, steps, paved floors, inscribed thresholds, niches, buttresses, and doors embellished with bronze relief bands. Non-portable works of art, such as wall paintings, glazed brick panels, carved stone wall reliefs, and royal and divine images,[16] further articulated this built environment. Portable works of art, including draped textiles and carpets, thrones, pedestals, and vessels, enhanced the sensual experience of the temple. Set within the foundations themselves were additional materials, including building inscriptions and foundation deposits. Material evidence for many of these elaborate portable and non-portable arts has been uncovered by archaeologists and is now on display in museum collections around the world.

In addition to the archaeological evidence, much of what is known about the Neo-Assyrian royal building programs comes from the great number of royal inscriptions that describe the activities of the Neo-Assyrian kings, whether written on foundation bricks; building deposits in the form of cones, prisms, or cylinders; or non-portable arts, such as life-size divine and royal stone statues and steles, or carved stone wall reliefs. The extensive corpus of Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence and administrative records, written in cuneiform script and preserved on clay tablets, further fleshes out what is known about the acquisition of materials, modes of construction, and personnel involved in such programs. This textual material is included in this study alongside the archaeological material, not only for what the former reveals about the latter, but also for the unique insight the texts provide into the cultural and social significance of the materials and actions involved in such colossal building endeavors.

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[16] I use the term "image" in this context to refer to figural representations of a particular identity, comparable to the Akkadian designation *ṣalmu*. These works of art vary in terms of size, scale, and dimensions, including, for example, three-dimensional over-life size anthropomorphic statues, steles carved in relief, and wall relief carving; CAD "Ṣ": 78–85 *ṣalmu* (ALAM, NU), "statue (in the round), relief, drawing, constellation, figurine (used for magic purposes), bodily shape, stature, likeness (in transferred mngs.)." On the Akkadian term *ṣalmu*, see further Appendix A and the discussion in Chapter IV, and in particular the references in note 1178. I use the terms "statue" and "stele" when speaking of specific archaeological examples of such forms.

Chapter I.1 foregrounds the methodological and theoretical orientation of this study. In addition to establishing a working definition for the expressions *ritualized* and *ritualizing*, it also addresses the contributions that specific art historical and anthropological concepts make to this study, including performance, behavior, context, space, materiality, agency, visuality, and phenomenology. First I give a brief overview of prior treatments of ritual in Neo-Assyrian studies, followed by an argument for the necessity of a new, dynamic, and multifaceted approach. I present the varied concepts with which this study engages, introducing each along with attestations of their use by previous scholars, followed by suggestions of how each concept and these related studies prove useful in thinking through the Neo-Assyrian temple as a ritualized and ritualizing built environment.

Chapter I.2 introduces the reader to the specific types of Neo-Assyrian evidence that directly inform this theoretical discussion: the group of temples that stand as the dominant material sources for this study and the textual sources of the Neo-Assyrian imperial society. Written reports and associated documentation from the modern archaeological excavations of these sites in present day northern Iraq make up an additional evidential group. Though descriptive and historical background is given for these sources, emphasis is placed on the particular value of each group to the practice-oriented perspective of this study and its argument for seeing the temple as an influential built environment, imbued with social meaning, that interacted with the immediate spatial and social environment of the Neo-Assyrian imperial milieu.

This chapter thus serves as a foundation for the work to follow. Establishing the evidentiary and methodological base of the present study prepares the reader for the multidisciplinary tone of Chapters II through VI, providing the tools with which to see the Neo-Assyrian temple as an active, influential, and socially significant built environment.

1. Toward a New Practice-Oriented Horizon: Degrees of Ritualization

The question of ritual in Neo-Assyrian imperial society has traditionally been approached from an historical perspective, with priority being given to the vast corpus of Akkadian textual sources preserved on clay tablets and other monumental material. The result of this academic orientation has been the creation of a significant number of detailed publications on ritual practice, informed by textual sources, that assiduously break down, analyze, and interpret the texts, asking questions of the grammar, sign forms, and content that are at times accompanied by discussions of belief or myth.[17] In this scenario material culture has been allocated a supporting role to the written word, or more accurately, the inscribed cuneiform sign. When objects and archaeological evidence are referenced, it is primarily to substantiate the information and practices prescribed by the texts. The texts themselves are also divorced from a consideration of their material, spatial, archaeological, or experiential qualities, whether an inscribed tablet or other material object.

[17] For example, Abusch 1991; Wiggermann 1992; Walker and Dick 2001; Schwemer 2007.

An example of such a text-based account of ritual, with a hierarchical treatment of text over object, is the academic literature on the Neo-Assyrian practice for warding off evil through figurine deposition. The best preserved versions of this practice are the Nineveh manuscript *Šēp lemutti ina bīt amēli parārsu* ("to block the entry of the enemy in someone's house") and KAR 298 from Assur.[18] Included in both manuscripts are instructions for the manufacture of particular types of figurines—for example dogs and winged bird-headed *apkallu*s[19]—and their placement at specific points in a house as a means of warding off evil. When excavations at Neo-Assyrian sites began to provide material evidence for figurines similar to those described in the manuscripts (FIGURE 2–5),[20] much ink was spilt on trying to match each type to those prescribed in the text by way of their established names and physical attributes.[21] Had this discovery preceded that of the ritual instructions, these figurines would have been viewed in a much different light. Yet with the instructions already known to certain Assyriologists in the field, perhaps it was a natural progression to try to equate the material evidence with the textual sources. Though a commendable first approach, such a hierarchical treatment that prioritized text over object imposed certain limitations on what information was prioritized with respect to the figurines themselves.

With recent advances in the field, however, new questions are now being asked of these dynamic figurines, ones that treat them as complex material objects with their own agency and possibilities for interaction. By way of illustration, Nakamura exploits the "evocative cooperation between text, iconography, material, and deposition in this apotropaic practice,"[22] by arguing for recognizing the magical aspects of both the creation, as a meaningful technique and performance, and the deposition of these figurines—the "materialized unity of the civilized human world and the chaotic untamed natural world"—as a materialization of experience, belief, and value. Through this practice, she argues, the people of Neo-Assyria were able to acquire authority in divine-human relations, and that the act of figurine production itself "constitutes the processual enactment of a memorial gesture whereby a particular Neo-Assyrian mythohistory preserves its future in the material memory of itself."[23]

Claus Ambos' work on ritual in Mesopotamia similarly exercises a critical approach to the material. In his studies of building practices, ritual efficacy, and the Babylonian *akītu*-festival, for example, Ambos asks of the ritual instructions and complimentary texts questions of social relations, kingship, cosmology, social practice,

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[18] On both the Nineveh and Assur manuscripts, see Wiggermann 1992; on the Assur manuscript in particular, see Woolley 1926: 695–701; Gurney 1935: 64; Rittig 1977: 152.

[19] *apkallu*s are antediluvian mythological sages from Mesopotamia, variations of which are attested in the textual sources and visual imagery, including fish-*apkallu*s, bird-headed *apkallu*s, and human-headed *apkallu*s (the latter two often have wings) (Black and Green 1992: 163; Wiggermann 1992: 76f).

[20] For examples of figurine deposits from excavation reports, see Mallowan 1954; for Nimrud, Reid and Oates 2001; for Nineveh, Barnett 1976: 18.

[21] On the figurines and their deposition, see Woolley 1926; Gurney 1935; Ellis 1968; Rittig 1977; Green 1993–1997; Wiggermann 1992; Nakamura 2004. Visual typologies have been proposed by Green 1993–1997; Wiggermann 1993–1997. On the origins and mythological backgrounds of the figurine entities, see in particular Kolbe 1986; Wiggermann 1992. On foundation figurines from all of Mesopotamian history, see Van Buren 1931.

[22] Nakamura 2005: 20; see also, Nakamura 2004.

[23] Nakamura 2005: 38.

performance, and transformation.[24] In his longer studies, such considerations are accompanied by extensive editions of the Akkadian ritual instructions, for example his 2004 volume on Mesopotamian building rituals and his recent volume on the fall *akītu*-festival.[25] Yet absent from such discussions is a strong engagement with the material evidence from the archaeological sites in Mesopotamia, a material corpus that makes as pivotal a contribution to the discussion of ritualized practice as do the textual sources.

Thus while scholarship on the Neo-Assyrian Empire is perhaps blessed by an unparalleled number of surviving texts, inscribed on an equally outstanding number of materials and surfaces, this textual inheritance can at times divert us from asking questions from an object-oriented perspective. This tendency resonates with what Zettler characterizes as the "division of labor" between archaeologists and philologists/historians that at one time dominated the field of ancient Mesopotamian studies.[26] This study, in contrast, takes an object-oriented and textually-driven perspective, letting the archaeological evidence and material objects play a leading role alongside the textual sources.[27]

It ought to be noted that some previous scholarship on ritual in the Neo-Assyrian Empire has gone against the traditional text-oriented grain by taking a material culture approach, yet this is often done either from a strictly typological perspective, treating the material as static features of the archaeological record, or from a concern for possible symbolic and religious associations with an emphasis on iconography. The main example of the former is reports from archaeological excavations, where such materials as foundation deposits and burial assemblages are listed among the collection of finds and labeled as ritual due to preconceived notions of ritual activity and its material traces.[28] Examples of the latter perspective include discussions of religious symbols and imagery from such materials as carved reliefs, steles, and portable arts, where connections are sought between gods, myths, and representations of ritual actions, often with reference to

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[24] Ambos 2004; 2007; 2008; 2013a; 2013b.
[25] Ambos 2004; Ambos 2013a.
[26] Zettler 2003: 5.
[27] As argued by Zettler (2003: 35), "bringing together all available strands of data can challenge long-held translations or historical scenarios and markedly enrich our picture of the ancient past. While the nature of the data and analytical methodologies, research problems, and complexities of interpretation in the two fields are perhaps too demanding for any one person to be equally an archaeologist and philologists/historian, broader academic training that makes archaeologists informed consumers of textual data and encourages philologists/historians to grapple with the "nitty-gritty" of survey data, site reports, etc., as well as collaborative efforts such… can go some distance toward promoting a dialogue that can invigorate our reconstruction of historic Mesopotamia."
[28] Such preconceived notions include, for example, the long-standing association between burials, grave goods, death, funerary practices, and a larger belief system, or the association between traditionally-ascribed religious spaces (for example a church) and the materials found therein as having a similar definitive relationship. The latter often leads to circular arguments; for example, first, that a particular space is a ritual site or structure because a specific type of material object was found therein, and second, that that object has ritual or religious associations because it was found within that space. Renfrew's universal classification system for identifying ritual in the archaeological record is similarly decontextualized and driven by preconceived notions, specifically due to its insistence on four particular indicators of ritual: focusing of attention, a boundary zone between this world and the next, the presence of a deity, and participation and offering. See further, Whitehouse 1996; Barrowclough 2007.

the textual sources.[29] While providing important analyses and insights, both of these material-culture approaches fall silent with regard to a consideration of the actions and values tied to the creation and continued use and influence of the archaeological evidence and aesthetically dynamic objects.

Limitations aside, these three prior treatments of ritual in the Neo-Assyrian imperial society—text-oriented, typological, and iconographic—have and will continue to make valuable contributions to our understanding of this empire's material and textual culture. In so doing, these studies provide the strong disciplinary foundation that permits related scholarship to move forward with a more developed theoretical and methodological scope. In such a manner this study orients itself with a growing trend—familiar to the fields of anthropology and anthropological archaeology[30] yet arguably a newcomer to the world of Near Eastern studies—of considering material culture through the lens of practice theory[31] in order to reinterpret the Neo-Assyrian temple.

The notion of practice as something that can be analyzed or as a tool with which to investigate culture and society first emerged in the theoretical discourse of such figures as Karl Marx, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, and more recently, Sherry Ortner.[32] For some scholars practice theory entails an action-oriented understanding of the past, wherein human practices are foregrounded. Such a prioritization emphasizes actions and experiences, while structural elements, symbolic meanings, and ideologies are deemphasized. With its varied adaptations and continuing popularity in a number of disciplinary fields,[33] however, the practice idiom has come to be more of an approach rather than a "coherent, unified 'practice theory.'"[34] Notwithstanding, common notions of practice persist within this vast theoretical corpus. Commonalities that have the greatest bearing on the present study are, one, that it unifies the consciousness and social being; two, it forefronts the need "to confront the act itself;" and three, that this act is generated by a "socially informed body"[35] and is thus inextricable from its immediate social and cultural context.

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[29] For example, Reiner and Güterbock 1967; Watanabe 1992; Porter 1993; Ornan 2004; 2005a; and Reade 2005b.

[30] For a review of the treatment of ritual in the field of archaeology, see Fogelin 2007.

[31] A couple of studies that ought to be mentioned, which do approach material of a ritualized nature from Mesopotamia from a practice theory orientation, are Winter's (1999b) chapter, "Reading Ritual in the Archaeological Record: Deposition Pattern and Function of Two Artifact Types from the Royal Cemetery of Ur," in which Winter uses the depositional patterns of burial assemblages in the Royal Cemetery of Ur to access ritual practice connected with the moment of burial; and Cohen's (2005) book, *Death Rituals, Ideology, and the Development of Early Mesopotamian Kingship: Toward a New Understanding of Iraq's Royal Cemetery of Ur*, in which the author argues for seeing the ritual practices and material evidence of the Royal Cemetery as materialization of the 'palace ideology' of the Early Dynastic leaders.

[32] Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1979, 1984; Jameson 1981; Ortner 1984, 1989. For a history of the term, see Petrovic 1983; Postill 2010: 6f; as well as, Bell 1992: 74–81.

[33] See Rouse (2007) for a thorough assessment of the concept of practice and its applications within social theory and philosophy of the social science. While acknowledging some scholars' critics of the practice idiom as having no "theoretical coherence" or as superficial due to "the diversity and the extent of theoretical invocations of practices" (for example, Turner 1994), Rouse (2007: 501) argues for its continued applicability and importance within social theory, philosophy, and social science.

[34] Postill 2010: 6.

[35] Bourdieu 1977: 124.

Drawing on these preceding theoretical discourses in her work *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Catherine Bell presents a concept of the ritualization of practice, where ritualization is defined as "a way of acting that is designed and orchestrated to distinguish and privilege that which is being done in comparison to other, usually more quotidian, activities." [36] This practice-based concept entails that the "main strategies of ritualization... [are] the generation of a privileged opposition between ritualized and other activities and the production of ritualized agents through the generation of a structured environment experienced as molding the bodies acting within it."[37] Bell thus argues for an understanding of ritual not as a particular event but rather as a process whereby actions and bodies are made or become ritualized.[38] Rethinking ritual from such a practice-oriented perspective takes the focus away from what ritual means, and instead prioritizes ritual change and what ritual does.[39]

This study takes this proposed framework, endorsing Bell's emphasis on practice as a means of accessing ritualized acts and ritualized agents of past societies, while going one step further by applying the concept of ritualization to the material culture of a particular social group—Neo-Assyrian imperial society. Acts of construction and performance, and the participants and practitioners within the temple, are viewed in terms of ritualized practice. The materials and architectural forms that result from such actions are similarly considered as being ritualized and as having their own ritualizing qualities, due to their creation through strategic practices of a ritualized nature, their use within such practices, and their presence in this highly ritualized environment. In turn these materials and structures serve to contribute to processes of ritualization as they are encountered and used through time.

As an aid to uncovering what and how material, space, activities, and agents were ritualized in this complex environment, elevating them above the everyday and the normative, I draw upon Bell's set of six non-definitive characteristics of ritual-like activities: formalism, defined as a restricted mode of communication, action, or behavior; traditionalism, when there is consistency with preceding cultural precedents; disciplined invariance, expressed as precise and strict patterns and repetition governed by thoroughness; rule-governance, expressed as formulated norms or rules placed on human action; sacral symbolism, a characteristic that is created through ritual-like action and points to something beyond itself, toward larger, abstract ideas; and last, performance, defined as action that communicates at multiple sensory levels and can shape people's experience and cognitive ordering of the world.[40] These categories emphasize action and see ritualized action as a process rather than an event.[41] Rappaport takes a similar stance, employing the expression "obvious aspects" to denote these same types of formal features that distinguish acting ritually from other forms of social action.[42]

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[36] Bell 1992: 74.
[37] Bell 1992: 101.
[38] See also, Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994.
[39] Fogelin 2007: 58.
[40] Bell 1997: 138–170.
[41] Fogelin 2007: 58; Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994.
[42] Rappaport 1979: 175: "I take ritual to be a form or structure, defining it as the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not encoded by the performer." For Rappaport, ritual is a particular mode of communication that is not interchangeable with other modes of communication,

Yet concurrently the possibility is left open in this study for the Neo-Assyrian material to reveal new hitherto unrealized contrastive characteristics not part of this list. Such a caveat is demanded by this type of investigation, for the simple reason that there are no universal rules that allow us to identify ritual in every society uniformly.[43] As recognized by Barth in his study of the religious practices of the Ok people of Papua New Guinea,[44] there exists great variation between cultural groups in the ways people engage with the world, giving form to distinctly localized practices and ideologies. Moreover, though participants may have belonged to a common elevated social group—Neo-Assyrian imperial society—meaningful variations would have existed in the individual's experience of this built environment, for example between the king, elite craftsman, or scholarly expert. Such variation necessitates a flexible and adaptive approach for identifying and interpreting ritualized aspects of any past cultural group.[45] Accordingly, contrastive qualities particularly sensitive to the Neo-Assyrian imperial world, that differentiate certain practices and materials from the normative or mundane, are prioritized as the dominant identifying attributes of ritualization in this study. This convention is exercised even when such attributes diverge from Bell's set of six non-definitive characteristics of ritual-like activities outlined above.

The stance taken in this study also recognizes that there are similarities between some of the practices and materials associated with the temple and those of the everyday. A few examples are the use of mudbrick for constructing a house, the recitation of laments when laying foundations, and the act of inscribing a tablet. Differentiating catalysts were in place, however, that set apart the events and material objects of the Neo-Assyrian temple from the everyday, and which generated the privileged opposition between ritualized and other activities that stands at the core of Bell's practice-oriented approach. These aspects are emphasized throughout the study. Examples include the presence of high value, prestigious materials; the involvement of specialized practitioners

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because it is connected to the relationship between humans and something larger in terms of belief or the divine, with the activities serving as vehicles for specific messages. On ritual as a social action, see further Tambiah 1985.

[43] This standpoint contradicts that of processual archaeologists, for example that of Binford and Binford (Binford and Binford 1968; Binford 1972), who would argue that cross-cultural generalizations do exist. For this reason they argue that the scientific method can be applied to material culture to access ritual. Renfrew (1994) similarly argues for such universal assumptions and cross-cultural indicators of ritual, asserting that belief systems can be accessed through material symbols when approached from a cognitive-processual standpoint. Due to the very formal and positivist quality of his cross-cultural indicators of ritual, many archaeologists have employed Renfrew's 'check-list' to identify religion and cult activity in the archaeological record, for example Barrowclough (2007) in his analysis of Neolithic Maltese temples. The downfall of such a standpoint, as noted above, is that such an essentialist approach limits the appreciation of variability in the archaeological record. Moreover, the agentive active qualities of materials, as well as participating individuals, are overlooked when objects are treated as passive reflections of social structures and ideologies, a viewpoint that this study strives to reverse.

[44] Barth 1987.

[45] See Rask's (2011) argument for flexibility in the identification of divine images in Etruria. Rask (2011: 110) endorses a practice theory approach and argues for "tilt[ing] our methodological focus to view cult statues, not as art historical objects, but as objects used in ritual processes. Anthropological statues can function in a complex ritual matrix of belief and action, physicality and memory. By refusing to categorize statues strictly, we can examine more carefully the nuanced uses to which they are put, how those uses are similar and how they are different."

and the king; and the active context of practice—the continued, unaltered site of a temple that was established in primeval times.[46] Drawing on Bell's element of stylization, for example, it might be said that the inscribed tablet itself within the temple does not evince difference from non-ritualized tablets, rather the action through which it was produced was stylized, and it is up to us to reinstate the "ethnographic" situation that demonstrates ritualization.

What the Neo-Assyrian material also indicates is that ritualization does not need to be treated in terms of a duality or an all-or-nothing characteristic, for example saying that this space to the left is ritualized while the space to the right is not, or that the act of inscribing one tablet is ritualized while another is not.[47] Rather materials and spaces, and the practices that produce them, are here discussed in terms of *degrees* of ritualization. This approach recognizes that to impose an all-or-nothing distinction of ritualized and non-ritualized (or ritualizing and non-ritualizing) upon the Neo-Assyrian temple is neither appropriate nor supported by the material and textual evidence, nor is it sensitive to the characteristics of the very complex culture of the Neo-Assyrian Empire as a whole.

In contrast to sharp distinctions of material and practice, there exists much fluidity in the Neo-Assyrian cultural landscape. Characteristics that distinguished objects, spaces, activities, and bodies as more ritualized or ritually charged when contrasted with other objects, spaces, activities, or bodies in the same space include the material with which an object was made, the manner in which an object or space was created and thereafter used, and aspects of ownership as related to objects and spaces. Similar variations in degree may also present themselves when such objects, spaces, activities, and bodies are contrasted with themselves in different spatial and temporal contexts within this environment, or in the language of Appadurai, at various points in an artifact's life history.[48] Aspects of materiality and practice, for example, were shared between houses of varying status and ownership in Neo-Assyria, including that of a human, the palace of a king, and the temple built for a god. Variations in their material and related activities, and the degrees of ritualization of these spaces, marked their particular status.

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[46] On the importance of the active context of practice, see further the archetypal theory espoused by Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994: 89), and Cohen's (2005: 8–9) theoretical approach to the burial assemblages in the Royal Cemetery of Ur. On the unaltered aspect of the Mesopotamian temple, as a defining characteristic of this type of building, see Sallaberger 2011–2013: 523.

[47] The convention of approaching this type of material in dualistic terms stretches back to early scholarship on ritual studies, such as Durkheim (1912) and Malinowski (1935), as well as that of recent archaeologists, including Renfrew et al. (1985: 12). These studies argue for a strict division between such qualities as sacred and profane, or religious and mundane. While trying to disassociate themselves from these firm dualistic terms, many scholars, for example Biehl (2011: 132), still find themselves ascribing to such a pairing, though they argue that materials or actions have the ability to move between the two extremes. The latter approach, while an improvement on the rigid structure of the former, is still too definitive for the Neo-Assyrian material. A similar position is adopted by Bradley (2005) in his analysis of metalworking and structures in Neolithic central Europe, in which he argues that there is no distinction between sacred and profane, but rather through performance and use any object or action can be ritualized.

[48] In the introduction to *The Social Life of Things* (1986: 3–63), Appadurai argues for the ability of artifacts, as active agents, to move in and out of different roles and to acquire various meanings throughout their life histories, dependent upon changing temporal and spatial contexts. Many archaeologists have engaged with this concept as a means of moving away from mere formal analysis of material objects in their attempts to infer function and meaning; see further, Kopytoff 1986; Bradley 1990; Walker 1998; Meskell 2004; Osborne 2004.

This aspect of the Neo-Assyrian material culture, which argues for seeing everything in degrees, in a fluid relationship, unencumbered by definitive boundaries, categories, or dualities, might assuage some of the frustration felt by scholars who try to identify a clear distinction between ritualized actions and everyday life.[49] The reason it is not an either/or can be (1) because, as a process, ritualization waxes and wanes; or (2) because, as a practice, some practitioners more intensely stylize and/or ritualize at some moments—both of these are consistent with ritual as practice. An argument for degrees also negates the question of whether all repetitive stereotyped practice ought to be considered ritualized; instead it insists that ritualization is a process of making whereby certain practices and materials are inflected with a greater or lesser degree of otherness or significance.

In sum, Bell's practice-oriented theory offers useful propositions for identifying aspects of these built environments as being ritualized and ritualizing, while the Neo-Assyrian material argues for seeing such qualities of ritualized and ritualizing as a matter of degrees. Moreover, particular spatial and temporal settings can impact the degrees of ritualization of material and practice—in this study it is the temple built environment of Neo-Assyrian imperial society. The staging of ritualized practice and materials within the space of the temple, in addition to the qualities of the material and actions themselves, established the greatest degree of differentiation and contrast from other stereotyped repetitive practice within the larger Neo-Assyrian cultural landscape. Yet, as demonstrated in this study, variations in degrees of ritualization are also attested within the temple built environment itself.

Complementing an overarching orientation toward practice theory are the following methodological propositions and considerations. The temple is approached in this study as an active building, a physical and material manifestation with culturally sensitive agentive qualities. This standpoint engages with concepts of materiality and agency that argue for breaking down the divide between the categories of the static material object and the active person.[50] By treating buildings and their associated materials not as "static end products" but as active participants in material interactions and practice, Biel is able to demonstrate the influential role that the Neolithic circular enclosures of Goseck Germany played in the ritualized practice that was staged within them.[51] An awareness of the agency of the enclosures and their ability to reflect and generate meaningful practice within their particular social and culture setting is crucial for his argument for a "context attribute analysis" of past structures. This study takes a similar stance for the Neo-Assyrian temple in order to recognize how objects and people

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[49] As expressed by Biehl (2011: 131), "even with analogical support, we still face the dilemma that ritual actions are not always clearly separate from the acts of everyday life.... religion and ritual can be enmeshed with everyday functional activity and thus difficult to distinguish archaeologically."

[50] For an introduction to materiality, see Miller 2005; see also, Bourdieu 1977; Appadurai 1986. For collections of case studies that engage with the concept of materiality from a variety of disciplinary viewpoints, including anthropology, archaeology, and art history, see Brodie et al. 2004; DeMarrais et al. 2004; Meskell 2005; Osborne and Tanner 2007; Maran and Stockhammer 2012. On agency in particular, see Gell 1998, 1999; Latour 1993; 1999. For discussions of agency with respect to Mesopotamian material, see Winter 2007; Herrmann 2009; and the collected works in Steadman and Ross 2010. On materiality and cuneiform culture, see Radner and Robson 2011: 1–116.

[51] Biehl 2011.

within this building exerted force, reflecting and generating ritualized practice within this particular social and cultural context.

Architecture also has the power to pervade and orchestrate social life through its control of space. This study interprets space, alongside material, as a powerful force that shapes and controls experience, as a void that has as much power and influence as do the solid walls and floors of a structure.[52] Aspects such as distance and elevation of different spaces affect one's visual perception, auditory response, and overall imageability[53] of a particular built environment. In so doing, structural features regulate the types of performance that can be undertaken and the means of communication through performance of a particular space. For example, public performance necessitates accessible and viewable space where large movements and little speech is required. In contrast, a less accessible and secluded environment is more appropriate for restricted or privatized performance. Neighboring spaces can also work together, orchestrating the movement of individuals from one place to the next, for example by leading a person down a long corridor toward an open space or in a circular path around a central structure. Furthermore, space, as a powerful and active force, can itself be ritualized. The physical movements and material objects of a practice can construct "an environment organized according to schemes of privileged opposition."[54] In this way, a kind of reciprocity of ritualization is established between agents,[55] material, and space, each one acting upon the other.

Phenomenological considerations compliment these concepts of materiality, agency, and space by helping to emphasize the experiential aspects of spaces and objects. In contrast to only considering the objective state of things, phenomenology recognizes both the objective and subjective experience of the subject—it recognizes the subject's attempts to bridge the distance between himself or herself and the world beyond. Tilley itemizes the means by which this gap is bridged: "perception (seeing, hearing, touching), bodily actions and movements, and intentionality, emotion and awareness residing in systems of belief and decision-making, remembrance and evaluation."[56] Considerations of the phenomenological experience of a structure's visual imagery are what guide Tilley's study of Maltese and Irish temples.[57]

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[52] Hillier and Hanson 1984; Parker Pearson and Richards 1994; Tilley 1994: 7–34.

[53] Lynch coined the term "imageability" in his influential work, *The Image of the City* (1960), in which he considers how people perceive and experience a city, looking at how five elements in particular (paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks) contribute to the creation of a person's mental map. He uses the term "imageability" to denote how well a landscape or place can be mapped and experienced by a person: "this study will look for physical qualities which relate to the attributes of identity and structure in the mental image. This leads to the definition of what might be called *imageability:* that quality of a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer. It is that shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured, highly useful mental images of the environment. It might also be called *legibility*, or perhaps *visibility* in a heightened sense, where objects are not only able to seen, but are presented sharply and intensely to the senses" (9–10).

[54] Bell 1992: 98. As noted by Bell, space is discussed as an important and ritualized characteristic of the environment in such influential works as Van Gennep 1909; Eliade 1959; Turner 1975: 69; Smith 1982.

[55] What Bell refers to as a "ritualized body" (1992: 94–117).

[56] Tilley 1994: 12.

[57] Tilley 2007.

Tilley concludes that both the Maltese and Irish temples made use of similar structuring principles with respect to the relationship of imagery to architecture (for example, at thresholds and doorways); however, due to the opposing cult practices of the two social groups, the two temple groups were structural inversions of each other. The Maltese temple hosted practices directed toward the living, and as such, its visual imagery was placed at the public parts of the temple and encouraged movement from outside to the inside. In contrast, the imagery of the Irish temple, a space associated with the dead, was hidden and meant to contain the deceased within the enclosure while keeping people outside. A standout aspect of Tilley's study is his awareness of the power of a profile gaze to create an intimate connection with a viewer, an example being a large anthropomorphic goddess statue in the Maltese temple.[58] He also treats the imagery on stone thresholds as visual modes of controlling movement and access within a structure. The gaze of figures and thresholds play a similar influential role in the Neo-Assyrian temple. In this study, phenomenological considerations raise such questions as how the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite experienced and moved about the temple built environment; how the structuring principles of visual imagery, ingrained in the patterns, colors, and motifs of wall decorations, dictated and reflected practice through their engagement with ritualized agents; and how perception and cultural knowledge influenced this experience.[59]

An important part of exploring the materials and practices of a built environment in these ways is an awareness of the cultural and social landscape within which it was situated.[60] Harding argues for a consideration of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age structures in Britain not as foci of activity, but rather as places of meaning, based on the understanding of landscape as an ideological concept—"a representation of societies' conceptual schemes or 'world-view'."[61] Adopting such a standpoint when studying the Neo-Assyrian temple highlights, first, the important bond between its materials and practices and the culture and social group that created it; and second, the ability of its materials and practices to reflect and perpetuate unique customs and values of this social landscape. As espoused by Hillier and Hanson in their call to awareness of this society-space relation, "by giving shape and form to our material world, architecture structures the system of space in which we live and move... it provides the material preconditions for the patterns of movement, encounter and avoidance which are the material realization—as well as sometimes the generator—of social relations."[62] Engaging with the evidence from the Neo-Assyrian temple from this standpoint argues for its materials and practices as having the ability to reveal fundamental aspects of Neo-Assyrian imperial society. In a similar vein, Biehl proposes viewing a monument as "the material reflection—or the "coming into form/being"—of a vast variety of individual and collective decisions that were both practical and symbolic."[63] This definition is useful when considering the evidence from the Neo-Assyrian temple, since its construction

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[58] Tilley 2007: fig. 17.7.
[59] For a phenomenological approach to the Khorsabad citadel and palace, see McMahon 2013.
[60] See Payne's (1981: 68-69) discussion of cultural space, in contrast with real space and scenographic space.
[61] Harding 1991: 141.
[62] Hillier and Hanson 1984: ix.
[63] Biehl 2011: 134.

involved a host of social agents—the king, scholarly experts, craftsmen, court officials, and laborers.[64] Recognizing the connection between a built environment and its social landscape reinserts the imperial elite into the discussion of the Neo-Assyrian temple.

We might also think of the relationship between social agents and the temple in the same way as that between scenographers and the theater. As articulated by Payne in his discussion of the scenographic imagination, "[t]he scenographer, the moment he begins to assume responsibility for expanding the actor's possibilities of movement (one cannot design any setting without entailing this responsibility), must also begin to consider how he is able to affect the actor's movement; he can, for instance, restrict the actor by putting obstacles in his path; or cause him to conform to an accepted convention (physically he could walk through the "walls"); or make him move in certain predetermined paths."[65] The planners and builders of the Neo-Assyrian temple were its scenographers. With their knowledge of cultural and social customs, and an attention to the power of sensory experience, these agents set in place portable and non-portable works of art that both established, accommodated, and regenerated the fundamental ritualized practices of a house of a god in Neo-Assyria.

Moore's study of Andean plazas, pyramids, and shrines stands as example of the benefits of engaging with such a host of concepts: materiality and agency, space, phenomenology, landscape, and social agents.[66] By focusing on the strategically constructed shapes, sightlines, visibility, and possibilities of movement communicated by architectural features, Moore is able to identify changes in modes of social control over time amongst the ancient Andean peoples. He argues that these aspects of the Andean structures demonstrate a division of ritualized practice between the public and private classes by the Late Period.[67] Such conclusions of social practice and control among the Andeans uphold Moore's introductory argument, that "the patterns and meanings associated with the built environment reflect fundamental cultural concepts uniquely shaped by particular societies at specific times."[68] Similar modes of social division in ritualized practice were discerned by Fogelin in his study of the spatial organization of Early Buddhist *stupas*. By focusing on questions of visuality and movement, Fogelin demonstrates how visibility and sightlines of rock-cut *stupas* catered to a corporate form of worship with monks acting as leaders, in contrast to open-air *stupas* that served as arenas for communal, egalitarian worship.[69] Inomata examined the Classic Mayan Plazas with a similar interest in performance and ritualized practice. Evidence from the ritualized theatrical performances of these structures demonstrates that for this particular social group ritual was a form of materialized ideology, by which the rulers made manifest and continually reestablished their power and political agendas within a

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[64] On the relationship between practice theory and social and cultural structure, see Rouse 2007.
[65] Payne 1981.
[66] Moore 1996; see also, Moore 2004.
[67] Focusing on artifact distribution, Hastorf (2007) makes a similar argument for Andean structures acting as arenas for the performance of community-constituting rituals, distinguishing between inclusionary rituals acted out in large plazas and exclusionary ceremonies in small chambers.
[68] Moore 1996: 2.
[69] Fogelin 2003.

bounded set of cultural values.[70] These studies exemplify how theories and concepts related to experience benefit considerations of built environments from antiquity.

While these social groups and their monuments might not be comparable to the Neo-Assyrian temple, the ways in which these scholars think about the built environment of the Andean, Buddhist, and Mayan monuments is helpful in thinking through the Neo-Assyrian temple material. The success of their studies—in reconstructing ritualized practice, and associated cultural and social customs and values—argues for an ability to access similar information through a critical examination of the Neo-Assyrian temple. The decisions that characterize the imagining, construction, and materialization of the Neo-Assyrian temple, decisions of form, size, color, and spatial organization for example, reveal customs of construction and material values. The finished structure, with its portable and non-portable works of art, then conditioned the activities carried out in the temple space, establishing and reestablishing the traditions, ideologies, and values of the imperial society that created and continually engaged with this environment.

Considerations of the influential and experiential aspects of the temple in this study also explore notions of aesthetics. The study of aesthetics in Mesopotamia was pioneered by Irene Winter.[71] Drawing upon textual and material sources from Mesopotamia at large, Winter argues that valued aesthetic qualities were both visually manifested and visually affective. This study understands a work of art in the Neo-Assyrian context, as defined by Winter, "as any work that is imaginatively conceptualized and that affords visual and emotional satisfaction, for which manufacturing skill is required and to which some established standards have been applied."[72] A close examination of Neo-Assyrian temple materials builds upon Winter's concept of aesthetics in Mesopotamia by illustrating the very strategic role aesthetic and experiential values played in contributing to the ritualization of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment. One quality that was highly valued and which is central to the subsequent discussion of the temple, was radiant light, being "one of the primary means by which the sacred was made manifest;"[73] qualities of color and size also play an important role in the present discussion. Yet in addition to corroborating an appreciation for visually-oriented experiential qualities, this study also exposes a cultural appreciation for additional sensual qualities; for example, smell and texture were an important part of practice in the context of the Neo-Assyrian temple. Not only sight and seeing, but all of the senses were central in perceiving values and relate to a discussion of aesthetics. Since the principal texts on temple construction and the temple itself were a product of the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite, the visual and sensual experience that is established in this study is that of the Neo-Assyrian elite, revealing a value system that was specific to the learned disposition and inherited privilege of this higher social class, to draw upon the words of

[70] Inomata 2006; see further, Inomata and Coben's edited volume *Archaeology of Performance: Theaters of Power, Community, and Politics* (2006).
[71] Winter 1994; 1995; 1999a; 2003; 2007.
[72] Winter 1995: 2570.
[73] Winter 1994: 129.

Bourdieu.[74] The visual and experiential values of objects here discussed are not independent from their observers, but rather they are defined by them.[75]

These considerations of material agency, space, landscape, social customs, cultural values, and aesthetics stand at the forefront of the approach and treatment of the temple in this study. For example, asking what aspects of construction were unique to this particular building activity, as revealed by the material and textual traces, aids in teasing out the intrinsic and embedded meaning-making actions and strategies through which this space was imagined, fashioned, and materialized. Considering aspects of visibility, sightlines, communicative potential, and spatial syntax, and their role in practice and performance helps to understand how the actual plan of the temple conditioned movement. These experiential aspects, for example, influenced what routes a person would take when moving through the temple. In turn the layout of the rooms would have restricted the types of activities that could be staged within the temple, and in so doing, negotiated aspects of inclusion and seclusion. The orientation of a single chamber could segregate participants into a hierarchical arrangement by offering a visually prominent setting to an expert, or inversely by catering to forms of private activities. Non-portable works of art similarly contributed to the characterization of space, with divine and royal images molding behavior in the temple through their gaze, material presence, and associated cultural values. Such materials had the potential to act as participants in ritualized practice or to be the focus of such activities themselves. A practice-oriented approach to the temple's built environment, reinforced by these varied concepts drawn from associated theoretical stances, allows for the exploration of such propositions.

In addition to this group of propositions for engaging with the temple structure, a productive manner of approaching smaller groups of portable works of art, for example foundation deposits, is by considering these material assemblages as the products of meaningful actions. As espoused by Walker in his action-oriented analysis of deposits, an object becomes ritualized through its interaction with people in specific contexts and modes of behavior, which then distinguished that object from non-ritualized material by means of its particular life history. This hypothesis draws upon Kopytoff's concept of "cultural biographies" and the "singularized object."[76] Thus rather than focusing on beliefs, Walker highlights the acquisition, use, control, and discard of artifacts in order to "explain how seemingly everyday objects (e.g., a ladle, a burnt pit house, or corrugated pot) can become the primary evidence of past ritual activities."[77] Winter engages with similar concepts in her study of burial assemblages in the Royal Cemetery at Ur.[78] By recognizing certain patterns in the archaeological evidence as the result of meaningful

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[74] Bourdieu 1984.

[75] Koerner and Rausing (2003: 419) emphasize this subjective aspect of value systems in stating that "the source of value lay not in the judged object but in the judging subject."

[76] Walker 1995; Kopytoff 1986; see also, Walker 1996; 1998. For Kopytoff (1986), the singularized object denotes an object that is restricted from exchange and which has a specific controlled life history. Walker (1996: 82) infers such singularity of the Homol'ovi kivas, the focus of his study, based on their "frequencies, physical properties, associations with other artifacts, and spatial locations which distinguish them from other types of structures-ritual and otherwise (e. g., clan rooms, grinding rooms, houses, and storage rooms)."

[77] Walker 1996: 82.

[78] Winter 1999b.

actions, she is able to argue that the lamps and libation jugs—previously categorized as gifts or personal provisions for the deceased—actually played an instrumental role in the performance of libations and/or anointments at the time of burial. Adopting a similar orientation, Bradley argues for the ritualized nature of Bronze Age metalwork hoards in Europe based on their structured nature of deposition.[79] The latter, according to Bradley, were the result of meaningful actions that imbued the hoard with an emphasis beyond the domestic and everyday. The present study posits a similar proposition for the foundation deposits in the Neo-Assyrian temple. These groups of portable objects can be appreciated for more than the sum of their artifact-parts when their archaeological context and structured deposition are recognized as the product of strategic modes of acting, their treatment demonstrating a high degree of ritualization. A similar concept might be applied to tablet assemblages recovered from Neo-Assyrian temple contexts. As discussed in this study, these tablet groupings were not static archived collections, but rather were assemblages that were made and remade through their continued circulation and engagement with ritualized agents.

Such inquiries of artifact assemblages necessitate an emphasis on context in order to ensure that as much attention is placed on the archaeological findspot and surrounding material environment as on the object itself. Accordingly, in this study spatial and temporal context are considered as contributing factors to the ritualization of a particular practice or material object, which in other contexts might not be imbued with the same meaning.[80] Moreover, context, in the archaeological sense, is treated as a powerful tool with which to identify less visible aspects of ritualized practice and performance, drawing upon materials and elements of the surrounding environment to aid in interpreting specific features and spaces.[81] For example, small scale assemblages of portable works of art, such as foundation deposits, are intricately linked to the large scale material environment, built up with non-portable works of art. Both are thus treated in tandem throughout this study due to this blended physical and spatial arrangement.

Perhaps evident from the preceding discussion, yet worth noting for purposes of transparency, is that this study concerns itself solely with how materials and practices of the temple built environment are both ritualized and ritualizing, and what this reveals about the larger Neo-Assyrian imperial culture and society. Questions of religion, belief systems, doctrines, and spirituality, which have traditionally contributed to or have been the focus of studies of ritual in Mesopotamia as noted above, are not prioritized here. The Neo-Assyrian cultural sphere was influenced by long-standing Mesopotamian beliefs of a nature that we might categorize as religious or spiritual, and these beliefs are understandably to be associated with practices and materials of the temple built environment discussed here.[82] This study, however, does not attempt to identify or articulate the precise nature of such beliefs or the meaning behind them. This stance is taken for the reason, as argued by Rappaport, that the belief an individual has in association with a particular practice is "an inward state, knowable subjectively if at

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[79] Bradley 2005.
[80] Bell 1992: 80.
[81] See Nagy's (2011) contextual approach to Etruscan votive deposits.
[82] For a overview of Mesopotamian theology and religion, see Wiggermann 1995; see further, Frankfort et al. 1946; Jacobsen 1970; 1976; Oppenheim 1977; Black and Green 1992.

all,"[83] resulting in the diversity of interpretation of ritualized practice by each ritualized agent.[84]

Rather than attempting to access belief through the temple material, it is far more beneficial to ask what ritual *does* and *how* it does what it does, than what it *is* or what it *means,* as foregrounded by Bell and upheld by Joyce in her conclusion to the Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association's special report on religion and ritual.[85] By looking at the degree of ritualization of practice and materials, we can ask, for example, how the Neo-Assyrian temple and associated materials, as a unified structure and culturally meaningful space, contrasted other forms of social practice and material; how it inflected and made meaningful this material, the social space, and the practices within; and how such ritualization contributed to the collective ideology of the Neo-Assyrian imperial society. Thus rather than asking questions of religion and belief of this material, this study proceeds on the premise that identifying certain materials and practices as meaningful for a particular cultural group is a valid and productive undertaking in itself, and does permit for an informed and important discussion of cultural significance, practice, and ideology to take place.

2. THE NEO-ASSYRIAN EVIDENCE

A vast corpus of sources from both Neo-Assyria and the present-day provide the evidential basis for the practice-oriented discussion of the temple outlined above. Ranging from tangible archaeological artifacts to cuneiform signs on clay prisms, sketches in directors' field books, and black and white ground plans in excavation reports, each group makes an idiosyncratic contribution to this reevaluation of the temple built environment. In unison they help to reconstruct and reanimate the temple's visual, experiential, and agentive qualities, and to uncover the role these features played in ritualizing practice in Neo-Assyria.

a. From Nimrud to Khorsabad: The Temple Group

The material evidence for this study is drawn primarily from four temples. Two temples from the site of Nimrud (ancient Kalaḫ) (FIGURE 1; 6–7): the House of Ninurta, located in the northwest corner of the citadel in proximity to the Northwest Palace and the Ziggurat (FIGURE 8); and Ezida, which contained the House of Nabu[86] and was

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[83] Rappaport 1979: 120.
[84] Bell 1992: 183–184.
[85] Bell 1992; Joyce 2011: 74: "Rather than impose categories of what is or is not ritual, it may be more useful to look at how human activities establish and manipulate their own differentiation and purposes - in the very doing of the act within the context of other ways of acting."
[86] The Neo-Assyrian texts refer to this building as the House of Nabu (*bīt Nabû*) and on occasion Ezida (literally, "True House"). The latter title was originally used for the House of Nabu at Borsippa, in reference to its larger complex that contained within it the House of Nabu (George 1993: 159f, no. 1236, see also no. 1237). The southern half of the building at Nimrud consisted of the House of Nabu proper, while the northern section warrants the more all-embracing title, Ezida, as discussed in greater detail in Part V.2.a.i. In this study I use "Ezida" to refer to this building as a whole, especially in material and archaeologically oriented discussions. I use "House of Nabu" when speaking of textual sources that use this

situated in the southwest corner directly opposite the Burnt Palace, south of the Governor's Palace (FIGURE 9). The remaining two temples are from the site of Khorsabad (ancient Dur-Šarrukin)(FIGURE 10–12): the House of Sin, positioned in the northeast section of the palace temple area closest to the ziggurat, an area referred to in the original nineteenth-century excavation reports as the "Harem"[87] (FIGURE 13–15); and the House of Nabu, erected to the south near Gate A of the citadel wall (FIGURE 16–17).

The choice to prioritize the material evidence from these four temples, while in part a necessity due to the length and scope of the present study, is motivated by a number of logistical factors. First, the historical and monumental prestige of Nimrud and Khorsabad that attracted the attention of ancient kings similarly drew in modern scholars, resulting in strong datasets of well-preserved archaeological and textual evidence, primary reports from modern archaeological expeditions, and secondary studies by recent scholars for both of these sites. Second, this vast body of archaeological and textual material, created and preserved by both ancient kings and modern scholars, ensures that the inaccessibility of these sites for continued archaeological work is not a hindrance to this study. Last, in comparison to other temples from these two sites, the four selected present higher levels of archaeological preservation, for which reason they were more thoroughly excavated. In combination these qualities allow for the type of well-informed and comprehensive spatial and material reconstruction of the temple built environment that is essential for a discussion of the temple from a practice-oriented perspective, which emphasizes such concepts as material agency, space, movement, visibility, and phenomenology.

In addition to these logistics of preservation and documentation, additional factors argue for this strategic sampling. This group of temples has the ability to be representative of the whole, that is of all Neo-Assyrian temple built environments, yet at the same time it presents examples of idiosyncrasy particularly beneficial to this study of ritualized practice and performance.

The tendency for Neo-Assyrian kings to engage with the building programs of their predecessors, through the repetition of construction methods and architectural forms, as well as the renovation and restoration of earlier buildings, supports the argument for a select group of Neo-Assyrian temples as having the ability to foster a universal classification for this built environment, and to make strong conclusions regarding experiential qualities and ritualized performance within this space. Acts of repetition and preservation of both building forms and practices is not only attested in the textual sources by kings' references to the work of their predecessors, but it is demonstrated in the archaeological evidence through the continuity and similarity of spatial arrangements and architectural features from one reign to the next, from site to site, and from building to building.[88] Much of the archaeological evidence of other Neo-

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title in reference to the temple in Nimrud. On the god Nabu, see Pomponio 1978; Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001.

[87] Place 1867–1870: I, 107–136.

[88] The topic of reconstruction in the Neo-Assyrian period, and the material and textual recognition of previous royal building programs by later kings, is expanded upon in Chapter III. Though not a focus of this study, the House of Ištar at Assur is a prime example of a temple that experienced many stages of reconstruction as part of various kings' building programs (Andrae 1935). On building programs and

Assyrian temples that have been excavated mirror what is presented by this group. Loud and Altman relate this high-level of repetition between the temple spaces of individual gods at Khorsabad when they remark in the final publication that what they previously stated with regard to the House of Sin—its structural features, decoration, and ritual practices—could with little chance of error be applied to the House of Šamaš.[89] The selection of temples from the sites of Nimrud and Khorsabad is further supported by the position of power and prestige that both cities held during the Neo-Assyrian period, with Nimrud acting as a capital and continued pivotal city throughout much of the first millennium and Khorsabad as the capital city during the reign of Sargon.[90] Due to these historical roles both cities were the focus of a tremendous level of building activity that, when discussed in tandem, provides a strong sampling of material and textual evidence for temple construction and ritualized practice during the imperial period.

An additional characteristic arguing for this strategic selection is that of idiosyncrasy. While both capitals were the focus of major building programs, the actual geneses of the temple built environments at these two sites was quite different. The building activity at Nimrud of the ninth and early eighth centuries was already conditioned by preexisting architectural remains. The temples that were initiated during this early period—including the House of Ninurta and Ezida—were then added to and modified by later king—no new temples were built. The temples at Nimrud thus provide material evidence of a longue durée of use and reuse, an amalgamation of material preferences and expressions of more than one king. In contrast, the temples at Khorsabad sprang from a *tabula rasa* terrain, with nominal restrictions in terms of space, size, and layout, and they were only inhabited for a short period of time.[91] The temple evidence from this site thus offers a snap shot of the preferences and attitudes of its sole ruler, Sargon. The subsequent quick yet intentional abandonment of Khorsabad at the behest of Sargon's successor Sennacherib resulted in fewer portable works of art recovered from its temples, a discrepancy that is propitiously counter balanced by the wealth of non-portable works of art of the temple structures that were preserved at the site. Evaluating aspects of diachronic change of temples from these two sites helps in evaluating the attitudes and preferences of certain kings, what each considered critical or extraneous when it came to temple creation, reconstruction, alteration, and preservation. Ezida at Nimrud and the

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reconstruction in general in Mesopotamia, see Ellis 1968: 12–17; Lackenbacher 1982; 1990; with respect to temple building in particular, Boda and Novotny 2010. Sallaberger (2011–2013: 523) identifies the continued, unaltered aspect of the Mesopotamian temple as the characteristic that differentiates it from changing palaces and their dynasties, a concept discussed throughout this study.

[89] Loud and Altman 1938: 125.

[90] Although Nimrud ceased to act as the capital city when Sargon moved the Neo-Assyrian capital to Khorsabad in 702 BCE, it continued to serve as an important center and royal residence, and saw continued building activity under the reigns of later Neo-Assyrian kings, including Esarhaddon, Aššur-etel-ilani, Sin-šarru-iškun; see further, Postgate and Reade 1976–1980: 320–322; Reid and Oates 2001; and Appendix B for their reigns. On Sargon's reign, see Van de Mieroop 2006. On his construction program at Khorsabad, see Loud 1936; Loud and Altman 1938; Albenda and Caubet 1986; Caubet 1995. For Sargon's administrative records and correspondence, see SAA 1; SAA 5; SAA 15; SAA 17; and for his royal inscriptions, Talon 2011.

[91] Frankfort (2013, 1933) mentions a preexisting settlement, Maganuba, that was located either below or near Sargon's city at Khorsabad. Though no archaeological evidence of Maganuba has been recovered, it is mentioned by name in a cylinder seal inscription of Sargon (Fuchs 1994: 293, 44).

House of Nabu at Khorsabad present an important contribution in this respect, the house of this god seeming to have played a unique role in ritualized practice during the reigns of particular Neo-Assyrian kings.

The temple selection for the present study that is especially beneficial and informative is these four temples. This strategic sampling is representative of the temple built environment for the Neo-Assyrian period as a whole while also presenting idiosyncratic characteristics indispensable to this discussion. These temples are well preserved and well documented. Strong conclusions regarding experiential qualities and ritualized performance within this space are possible with this dataset, that can be applied to other known temple spaces in Neo-Assyria.[92]

b. When Objects Speak: The Material Sources

With the core of the study being the built environment of the Neo-Assyrian temple, the best evidential source is, understandably, the archaeological evidence from these spaces. These temples were first produced through meaningful and privileged practice that brought together diverse material groups into a single built environment. Thereafter the interactive and experiential qualities of these various elements worked in unison, as a ritualized and ritualizing environment, to inform, orchestrate, and fashion the practice staged within the temple.

Given the inaccessibility of the archaeological sites themselves, the present study depends primarily upon visual analysis of the associated ancient materials that are housed in the museum collections at the British Museum, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Musée du Louvre.[93] Caveats of such a pursuit, such as the decontextualization of objects, poor preservation, or ideological and conceptual barriers, do exist. Nonetheless, adopting a self-awareness of these drawbacks and aiming to reduce them by means of a thorough attention to visual details, findspots, spatial context, and subjective reactions revealed by ancient texts, maximizes the benefits and outweighs any possible drawbacks.

For reasons of accuracy, method, and rigor, the following parameters are adopted with regard to the archaeological materials considered for this dissertation. First, this study concentrates primarily on those materials from these four temples that have a strong recorded context—for example a room, courtyard, or other space that is marked on the plan of a temple—in the excavation reports, final publications, or associated photographic documentation. Materials hypothesized as coming from within these temples but which were found in later occupation levels or dumps are treated with greater

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[92] This study draws conclusions regarding diachronic change and the attitudes of those Neo-Assyrian kings associated with this select group of temples. Future work on the temples at Nineveh and Assur, and the Neo-Assyrian kings associated with their (re)construction and use, will bring to light additional similarities and idiosyncrasies of ritualized materials and practices of the temple during this period, and in so doing, build upon the conclusions of this study. Thus while recognizing that a number of impressive temples were situated at these contemporaneous sites, this study engages with archaeological evidence from these structures only when such material makes a particularly noteworthy contribution to this study.

[93] On these collections, see Longpérier 1854; Curtis and Reade 1995; Caubet 1995; as well as the respective museum collections' websites. While a number of the objects included in this dissertation are on display in the main galleries of these museums, a considerable number are kept in private storage areas or archives and therefore not presently accessible to the public.

caution. Materials from other Neo-Assyrian temples situated at Nimrud and Khorsabad, as well as other capital cities such as Nineveh and Assur, are drawn into the present discussion when appropriate, for example to fill in material voids resulting from lack of preservation or archaeological disparities, or when something is particularly noteworthy. Second, this study concentrates on material from the Neo-Assyrian period, imposing a tight temporal dimension by limiting the use of evidence from preceding periods, as its focus is on the practices that occurred during one bounded period of time, the Neo-Assyrian Empire, and not the development of the temple in a larger Assyrian historical perspective.[94] Consequently, while reconstruction and reuse are important characteristics of royal activity in ancient Mesopotamia, in this study such acts are treated as important principles for the ritualized and ritualizing nature of this built environment within this bounded time and place.

The material sources that make up this body of evidence constitute an array of objects that vary in size, form, material, and preservation, yet most are represented by at least one artifact in one, if not more, of the museum collections noted above. In addition to the core elements of the temple itself, which consisted of monumental walls made primarily of kiln-fired mudbrick, a plethora of non-portable and portable works of art were unearthed within the temple spaces that are now found amongst these collections. Such finds include glazed brick panels, carved stone wall reliefs, fragments of bronze door pole embellishments, divine and royal statues and steles, thrones, pedestals, and incense burners, as well as a collections from foundation deposits. Stone and clay constitute two materials from which these objects were regularly made, yet such exotic elements as lapis lazuli, gold, and ivory are also well represented by these material groups.[95] In addition to being visually arresting, all of these objects and their material components had social and cultural associations that were bounded to values and traditions of the Neo-Assyrian milieu, which in turn play into the ritualized and ritualizing aspects of the temple built environment.

These materials offer a means of piecing together the visuality and imageability of the Neo-Assyrian temple, in particular aspects of visibility, sightlines, spatial syntax, communicative potential, and the interactive abilities of the various material groups, in order to evaluate the degrees of ritualization of the elements, spaces, and practices within this built environment. In order to develop a thorough and informed data for these materials, this study integrates the physical, aesthetic, and experiential material qualities of these objects, which have been deduced through first-hand observation in museum galleries and collections.

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[94] See note 1 on the temporal use of the label Neo-Assyrian Empire for this study. For a diachronic look at the ancient Mesopotamian temple building, see Menzel 1981; Heinrich 1982, which offers a lexicon-fashioned typology of temple buildings from all periods of ancient Mesopotamia; Roaf 1995. For studies of the Mesopotamian temple and related architecture during specific periods prior to the Neo-Assyrian period, see Andrae 1909; 1922; 1935; Koldeway 1911; Wetzel and Weissbach 1938; Delougaz and Jacobsen 1940; Delougaz and Lloyd 1942; Lenzen 1942; Haller and Andrae 1955; McCown and Haines 1967; Parrot 1956; 1967; Tunça 1984.

[95] For a general discussion of the materials and related industries of ancient Mesopotamia, see Moorey 1994.

c. In Stone and Clay: The Textual Sources

Providing unique information about these material groups, while also contributing to an understanding of the practices related to the temple in the Neo-Assyrian milieu, are the primary textual sources. One such corpus consists of the royal inscriptions, for example from palatial wall reliefs, foundation deposits, and royal image.[96] The second corpus consists of tablets, which were inscribed with royal correspondence, administrative records, ritual instructions, and omen collections. The vast majority of these texts are written in Akkadian, the official language of Neo-Assyrian imperial society, using the cuneiform script.[97] Their preservation up to the present day is in large part due to the durability of the clay or stone upon which they were inscribed and the conditions of their final resting place. Tablets and other portable works of art, for example, are often found underneath multiple layers of debris that were the result of destruction and subsequent occupation of a settlement. Yet while their materials, language, and script were the same, the role these groups of texts played in the Neo-Assyrian milieu was wide-ranging. For this reason, each group informs a particular methodological pursuit of the present study, whether in the way of material and cultural values, construction methods, or forms of social practice.

Assyrian kings took strongly to documenting and preserving their reign by adorning their empire with visually seductive inscriptions as a means to boast of their great feats. Such elaborate texts, collectively labeled royal inscriptions, have been found on diverse surfaces and objects, including royal statues and steles, prisms and tablets from foundation deposits, and the walls, thresholds, and paving stones of buildings, the latter reaching an innovative scope during the first millennium BCE.[98] A defining feature of royal inscriptions that has aided in the translation of this vast body of texts is their standardized format, especially apparent in the consistent repetition of particular epithets and motifs, verses, and episodes both in a single text and between multiple texts from the same king's reign.[99] The "Standard Inscription" of Aššurnaṣirpal II,[100] for example, was

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[96] On the various inscription modes and materials not including tablets, see Taylor 2011: 23–26.

[97] For an introduction to cuneiform writing, see Edzard 1980–1983; Veldhuis 2011: 68–70. See Pearce 1995, on the scribal practices, materials, and scholars in ancient Mesopotamia; see also, Walker 1987. For a recent discussion of cuneiform tablets and the writing system, with an emphasis on cultural context and a holistic aim, see the edited volume by Radner and Robson 2011.

[98] On the Assyrian palace inscriptions of the first millennium BCE, see Russell 1999b. On Assyrian royal inscriptions in general, see Borger 1961; Schramm 1973; and the edited volume by Fales 1981.

The Assyrian royal inscriptions were edited by Grayson as part of the *Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia* (RIM) Project and published in two volumes (Part I: 1114–859 BCE; Part II: 858–745 BCE). The introduction to the first volume of this project, which covers material of the second millennium BCE, also has a general description of Assyrian royal inscriptions, considering both literary forms and types of objects upon which they were inscribed (RIMA 1: 3–4). Texts composed between 744 and 669 BCE are currently being edited and prepared for publication, both in print form and online, as part of the *Royal Inscriptions of Neo-Assyrian Period Project* (RINAP) under the direction of Grant Frame. Three volumes have been published to date: RINAP 1 covers the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE) and Shalmaneser V (726–722 BCE); RINAP 3 is part one of the inscriptions of Sennacherib (704–681 BCE); and RINAP 4 covers the period of Esarhaddon's reign (680-669 BCE). On the RINAP Project, see further Frame et al. 2011. Earlier editions of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions include Streck 1916; Luckenbill 1924; Bauer 1933; Borger 1957–1958; 1967; 1996; Fuchs 1994; Tadmor 1994; Talon 2011.

[99] On the texts' composition and style, see further Grayson 1981: 4–46.

inscribed not only on the walls, but also the doorway figures, thresholds, and paving stones of his palace at Nimrud; segments of this composition are also closely mirrored in many of his other texts.[101] Holding pride of place at the beginning of lengthy inscriptions are royal titles and epithets that highlight the traditional attributes of kingship in Assyria: the king as priest and fulfiller of the divine will, hero and protector of the people, the upholder of justice, builder, and architect. The remaining sections of the texts tell of great military campaigns or royal building projects in both annalistic and summary fashion, which, as Grayson declares, are "all done ad maiorem gloriam deorum."[102] Most royal inscriptions conclude with a formalized blessing toward future rulers who show respect to the king and a curse against those who dishonor him or destroy his monuments.

Not all of the royal inscriptions, however, are of this breadth and magnitude;[103] simple one-line labels are also well attested, as are concise dedicatory inscriptions. The following proprietary inscription, for example, was found on a duck-shaped stone weight from Assur:[104]

ēkal Tukulti-apil-Ešarra šar kiššati šar Aššur emmer	Palace of Tiglath-pileser (III), king of the world, king of Assyria.

Thus while texts belonging to the royal inscription corpus are affiliated by both their overall purpose of promoting the king and their physical quality as inscribed text, there is significant variation in terms of dimensions, scope, and content, as well as the type of object upon which they were placed.

One of the fundamental and therefore well documented roles of a Neo-Assyrian king was that of builder and architect. Consequently, segments on temple construction that tell of a king building or renovating a particular temple appear prominently in the royal inscriptions, making this group of texts particularly beneficial for the present study. Also embedded within these seemingly straightforward historical segments are indications of the social and cultural incentives for creating temples. These sections also

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[100] RIMA 2: A.0.101.23.

[101] For example, the "Palace Wall Foundation Text" and the "Slab Back Text" discussed by Russell (1999b).

[102] Grayson 1991: ix (RIMA 2). While some publications refer to all of the lengthy Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions as annals, Grayson (1991: 189, 191 (RIMA 2)) argues that this is a misnomer for the reason that, while a significant portion of such inscriptions are annalistic in nature, with descriptions of campaigns arranged in chronological order, there are also sections that are display texts, including accounts of building projects or campaigns arranged in geographical order. The RINAP Project, following Tadmor and Yamada's historiographic criteria for classification of the corpus (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 4 (RINAP 3)), divides the texts into three groups: annals, texts whose historical narrative is arranged chronologically; summary inscriptions, texts whose narrative is arranged in a predominantly geographical pattern; and miscellaneous texts, texts classified as labels, dedicatory inscriptions, as well as other texts that are too fragmentarily preserved to classify them as annals or summary inscriptions. For a discussion of the literary characteristics of Assyrian royal inscriptions, see Grayson 1981. The latter offers a slightly variant classification, with the inscriptions grouped into commemorative texts, labels, dedicatory texts, and letters to the god.

[103] The inscription of Aššurnaṣirpal from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud is close to five hundred lines; RIMA 2: A.0.101.1.

[104] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 61.

suggest reasons for incorporating specific materials and for the performance of particular actions during the building process, through the choice of distinct vocabulary and linguistic expressions, as well as the basic act of highlighting a particular fact by inclusion in the text at all. Yet this latter point calls attention to a cautionary disparity in the royal inscriptions, and that is the lack of information that was common knowledge or of the norm for temple construction and use.

While seemingly factual accounts of historical events, the royal inscriptions were in fact ideologically motivated compositions, fashioned by learned, skilled, strategic minds for specific purposes in particularly sensitive and malleable political contexts;[105] as articulated by Tadmor, "their purpose was not so much to relate what the king did; they rather indicate the way he aspired his image to be portrayed, in conformity with the norms of behaviour befitting an Assyrian monarch."[106] While portraying this image in themselves, the texts also supplemented an image of kingship that was visually broadcast by the objects upon which they were inscribed. At yet another level they simultaneously declared the king's power and control over the production and distribution of the texts and the visual materials upon which they were placed.[107] With the aim of the royal inscriptions being the installation of awe and reverence for the king in the people, it was logical to document the former's noteworthy and unsurpassed achievements, often done with hyperbole and drama, in order to fashion this desired image, leaving out the everyday and the norm. When approached with this awareness and with what Beckman labels a "critical eye,"[108] royal inscriptions provide valuable insight into the political mechanics and underpinnings of a particular period or reign, and its respective cultural and social milieu: "the new reality they created is of no less significance than the often concealed historical reality which they purport to relate."[109]

Information on the everyday and norm, the common knowledge of Neo-Assyria, while absent from the royal inscriptions, is provided by texts from another corpus, that is tablets inscribed with the royal correspondence and administrative records of the Neo-Assyrian elite. Similarly, while aspects of practice, in particular those of a privileged or ritualized nature, are often only hinted at in the royal inscriptions, information from ritual instruction and omen collections help to complete this picture. For these reasons, cuneiform tablets stand as the second essential evidential group of primary textual sources.

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[105] On the ideological aspects of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, see Liverani 1979; 1995; 2010; Reade 1979b; Russell 1999b; Winter 1981; 1983.
[106] Tadmor 1981.
[107] For a discussion of the palace as a program of royal rhetoric and kingship ideology in Neo-Assyria, see Winter 1993. For similar discussions of the relationship between text and image as related to ideology and kingship in Neo-Assyrian art and architecture, see Winter 1983; 1997; 2002; Russell 1987; 1999a; 1999b; Porter 2003.
[108] In his discussion of historical inquiry and the credulity of ancient texts, Beckman (2005: 347) argues that "these genres of text call for varying interpretive strategies, but all must be approached with a critical eye." Beckman (2005: 352), as example, examines the historical composition "The Siege of Uršu" through "the lens of Hittite royal ideology," which permits him to conclude that "each of the elements we can now recognize as misrepresentation in itself tell us something significant about Hittite society and its ideals."
[109] Tadmor 1981: 33.

The vast majority of tablets from the Neo-Assyrian period consist of assemblages that were found during excavations of elite monuments at capital cities.[110] Noteworthy tablet assemblages were discovered at Nimrud, specifically in Ezida, the Governor's Palace, the Northwest Palace, and Fort Shalmaneser;[111] and at Nineveh, where excavations unearthed impressive assemblages in the Southwest Palace and the North Palace, and more modest assemblages in the House of Ištar and the House of Nabu.[112] Additional tablet assemblages were discovered within royal buildings at the religious capital Assur and at Sargon's capital Khorsabad.[113] Such assemblages from royal buildings belonged to the elite milieu of the Neo-Assyrian period, the texts circulating primarily amongst members of the royal family, high officials, and elite scholars.[114] These assemblages were also remarkably varied in terms of genre, ranging from royal correspondence, administrative records, and legal documents, to scholarly and literary texts, as well as ritual instructions and omen collections. Temple assemblages quite often housed texts of a literary and scholarly nature alongside records of economic transactions

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[110] A note on terminology; early publications on these tablet collections often use the terms "archive" and "library" interchangeably, while some more recent publications make a distinction between an archive, as a collection of administrative records and documents, and a library, as a collection of literary and scholarly documents (Veenhof 1986; Pedersén 1985: 20–21; 1998: 2–3). The designations *scriptorium* (or "tablet room") and "scribal office" are also used in Mesopotamian studies, often in reference to chambers that were thought to be actively used for scribal activities, such as inscribing tablets and laying them out to dry (Veenhof 1986: 6; Reid and Oates 2001: 115, 197, 207). The Akkadian term *gerginakku* was used in reference to the tablet collection in the House of Nabu at Nineveh (CAD "G": 86–87), and is used by Wiseman and Black (1996: 30) to refer to the collection of Ezida at Nimrud. On cuneiform archives in the ancient Near East, see Veenhof 1986; Pedersén 1985; 1986; 1998. I use the term "assemblage" to reference collections of tablets that were uncovered in a common archaeological context, whether a building or a site, to avoid notions of practice and use that are associated with such labels as "archive" and "library," since it is not altogether clear how such collections were used in these Neo-Assyrian contexts. When speaking of the physical rooms in the temples within which tablet assemblages were found, I refer to them as "scribal offices" rather than "library" or *scriptorium* to indicate that more was likely staged within such a room, at a practical level, than merely the storage of tablets. As stated by Robson (forthcoming: Conclusion), "[f]ound assemblages are merely snapshots of what happened to be in the building at the time of abandonment or collapse—and we are necessarily ignorant of ephemeral media such as animal-skin, papyrus and writing boards." See further the discussion in Chapter V.3.

[111] For the primary publications, see Wilson 1972; Postgate 1973; Dalley and Postgate 1984; Wiseman and Black 1996; Saggs 2001; superseded by Luukko 2012 (SAA 19); see also, Luukko and Buylaere 2002 (SAA 16). On the archaeological excavations, see Mallowan 1953; 1966; Oates and Oates 2001, in particular 195–225.

[112] On the excavation of tablets at Nineveh, see Parpola 1986; Fincke 2003–2004. On the Southwest Palace, see Russell 1991; and the North Palace at Nineveh, Barnett 1976. For the original excavations of Nineveh, see Layard 1849; 1853a; 1853b; 1853c.

[113] A considerable number of tablets and tablet fragments were also found outside of assemblage contexts in many of these cities, and are designated as unprovenanced or from an unspecified location in the official publications and collection catalogues. On the collections from Assur, see Pedersén 1985; 1986; and for Khorsabad, Loud 1936.

[114] Tablet assemblages have also been recovered from contexts outside of the royal sphere, for example at Assur (Pedersén 1985; 1986; 1987; Radner 1999) and Sultan-tepe (Huzirina)(Gurney and Finkelstein 1957; Gurney and Hulin 1964; Lloyd and Gökçe 1953). Our knowledge of such assemblages is growing with ongoing excavations and interests in non-elite material and social contexts. However, since this study is concerned with the role of the temple within its immediate social context—the Neo-Assyrian imperial milieu—assemblages from royal contexts contribute more to the present discussion than do texts from non-royal archives.

pertaining to that institution.[115] Yet it is not only the sheer quantity and variety of texts from this context that benefit a study of the temple built environment, their various spatial locations and movement as material objects also informs a practice-oriented discussion of the Neo-Assyrian temple.

Evidence provided by Neo-Assyrian assemblages suggests that some of the tablets later found at Nineveh once belonged to assemblages at preceding capital cities. With Sennacherib's establishment of Nineveh as the new capital, tablets were relocated from Nimrud and possibly also Khorsabad to this king's new palace, the Southwest Palace.[116] With the later accession of Aššurbanipal (668–627 BCE) and the construction of his own palace at Nineveh, the North Palace, some of the tablets were then transferred to this building. A significant number of new tablets were also added to the collection, including many texts that were acquired through Aššurbanipal's close ties with Babylon to the south.[117] The assemblage from the Southwest Palace and North Palace at Nineveh, often referred to in tandem as the "library of Aššurbanipal,"[118] constitute the greatest tablet assemblage from the Neo-Assyrian period, housing around 30,000 tablets and fragments.[119]

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[115] Veenhof 1986: 4. As an example, see the assortment of texts from the House of Nabu at Nimrud (Wiseman and Black 1996; Black 2008).

[116] Tablets written for the assemblage of Nabu-zuqup-kenu (c. 760–680) at Nimrud during Sennacherib's reign were transferred to Nineveh and later uncovered during Layard's excavations of the site (Frankfort 1934: 87; Fincke 2003–2004: 128, n. 138; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3). For Nabu-zuqup-kenu colophons, see Hunger 1968: 90–95; 1972; Lieberman 1987; Livingstone 1997: 170–172. Ivory writing boards commissioned for Sargon's palace at Khorsabad indicate Sargon's attempts to assemble tablets at Khorsabad, which may have also been transferred to Nineveh with Sennacherib's relocation of the capital city. A small number of tablets were recovered from Khorsabad (Loud 1936: 121). Of the thirty tablets discovered in the House of Nabu, Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) concludes that their findspots are indicative of the rushed emptying of the temple's library, for example twelve tablets were found in corridors and staircases, ten in gateways and doorways, five in courtyards and three inside rooms (see further, Loud and Altman 1938: 104–105). The earliest records found amongst the tablets at Nineveh date to the time of Sargon (Fincke 2003–2004: 116, 139–140; see further, Fincke 2004).

[117] Due to the preserved colophons on a number of the Nineveh tablets and the library records from 647 BCE, we can securely attach an unparalleled number of acquisitions to the collecting practices of Aššurbanipal's reign in particular (Frame and George 2005). A number of scholars have argued for particular motives behind these previously unparalleled collecting habits, varying from pedagogical and religious grounds to political motivations; see Parpola 1983a; Lieberman 1990; Fincke 2003–2004; Reade 2004; Thomason 2005: 199–205; Frame and George 2005; du Toit 2005. On the reign of Aššurbanipal, see Van de Mieroop 2006.

[118] Because Aššurbanipal's library is considered to consist of those holdings from the Southwest Palace and the North Palace, both the singular "library" and the plural "libraries" are used in discussions of the collection of Aššurbanipal. The label "Kouyunjik Collection" is also used in reference to Aššurbanipal's library and other collections found at Nineveh, Kouyunjik being the name of the citadel mound atop which the palaces of Nineveh stood. For the historical background and treatment of this collection, and the creation of the concept of "Aššurbanipal's library" in the British Museum in the 1860, see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 1; see also, Reade 1998–2001: 421–427. Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 1): "[t]he idea of 'Aššurbanipal's Library' as a single entity, created by a single royal figure, was born in the 1860s, at a time when tablets were not yet archaeological artefacts but carried a dual identity as collected specimens for display and as bearers of decipherable text."

[119] du Toit (2005: 93) refers to this assemblage as the "largest acquisition of information in a single physical locale."

Such long-standing royal collecting programs as that attested at Nineveh, in which tablets were inherited, relocated, then expanded upon by each new king, contributed to the varied nature of the Neo-Assyrian royal assemblages. Certain genres and texts would have been sent to the new capital or palace while others were left behind, depending on the priorities of the king and the influential group of scholars and officials that surrounded him. Moreover, the principal assemblages of prior reigns often continued to function in an altered capacity; for example, the assemblage of the Northwest Palace at Nimrud, the principal residence of Aššurnaṣirpal, was active through to the fall of Assyria in 612 BCE.[120]

This unmitigated variety of genres, temporal associations, and spatial contexts, as well as the fortunate state of preservation, makes the Neo-Assyrian royal assemblages an particularly valuable resource for studying this ancient imperial society. When considered in tandem, the content of the texts expose not only the history of the empire, but also defining and at times inconspicuous aspects of its social milieu. It is the latter that has the greatest bearing on a study of the temple built environment from a practice-oriented perspective. In addition, although some of the texts may be copies from Babylonian tablets or have a close relationship with scholarship from the south, the fact that they were included in assemblages within Neo-Assyrian capital cities argues that they had value within a Neo-Assyrian context, and therefore contribute to this study of the material culture of Neo-Assyrian imperial society. Brought to light by this extensive corpus of inscribed tablets are attestations of Neo-Assyrian cultural values, social relations, and meaningful practice, as well as the priorities and attitudes of particular kings. This corpus also illustrates the role of material culture, including the tablets themselves, and the temple built environment in the larger social network, with each type of text offering its own particular kind of information.

The royal correspondence, for example, includes letters written by the kings, crown princes, scholarly elite, officials of the royal court, and military personnel on matters such as war, succession, health, and foreign relations, as well as the transport of goods and the construction and renovation of buildings.[121] An example of the latter is a letter sent by an official to Sargon, in which the author updates the king on the doors of the Houses of Sin, Šamaš, and Nikkal at Khorsabad, stating that they had been coated with sheets of metal but were not yet complete.[122] A similar letter was sent to Sargon regarding metalwork being performed on the House of Sin at Assur, including an update on the condition of the pole of the divine emblem.[123]

The royal correspondence also provides insight into the decision-making processes, incentives, and modes of communication behind royal building programs. As absolute ruler, the king had a strong hand in all imperial matters, including construction

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[120] While the majority of the texts from the ZT archives of the Northwest Palace date to the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser V, and Sargon II, some have been securely dated to the seventh century (Reid and Oates 2001: 202).

[121] The Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence has been edited and published as part of the *State Archives of Assyria* (SAA) project in multiple volumes: SAA 1; SAA 5; SAA 10; SAA 13; SAA 15; SAA 16; SAA 17; SAA 18. Many of these texts were previously edited by Harper 1892–1914; Parpola 1970–1983. See also, Grayson 1981; Parpola 1981; Saggs 2001.

[122] SAA 1: no. 66, 18–r. 10.

[123] SAA 13: no. 28; see also, no. 29.

and renovation. Yet while he is presented as sole creator in royal inscriptions and visual representations, the royal correspondence reveals that a strong team of loyal officials in the royal court played an equally instrumental role, guiding and influencing the king in matters of construction. Radner traces the impact of two such groups, that of important state officials, the *rabû*s,[124] and that of the *ummânu*s,[125] in her assessment of the royal decision-making process. She concludes that while the two had contrasting relationships with the king, both exerted discernible influence over the king and the imperial apparatus.[126] The very fortunate consequence of this multi-agentive nature of decision making in what Liverani has termed "an empire of communications,"[127] is the detailed discussions of temple construction and renovation that have been preserved in writing.[128]

The wealth of information offered by the royal correspondence is mirrored and supplemented by that of the administrative records.[129] Records of the movement of goods, materials, and people both within Assyria and throughout the provinces, for example, are particularly useful for what they tell of construction at the Neo-Assyrian capital cities, thereby complementing the royal correspondence by offering additional details of the circulation networks for particular materials and the personnel involved in temple construction.[130] Other documents in this corpus contain information on the assignment of responsibilities associated with the temple to particular professionals and temple personnel.[131] Lists of temple offerings and inventories tell of the objects and valued goods that played a role in such activities and in the life of a temple overall, both as circulating goods and fixed features of this built environment in times after its initial structural genesis.[132]

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[124] CAD "R": 36f *rabû* (GAL, GU.LA), "7. important, noble person."

[125] CAD "U/W": 111f *ummânu*, (UM.MI.A, UM.ME.A), "2. craftsman, artisan, expert, scholar." This group of experts is discussed at length in Chapter IV and further in Chapter V, with respect to their role in temple construction and practice; see further, Parpola 1993: XXV–XXVII, 373 (SAA 10).

[126] Radner (2011) labels the relationship of the magnate and king as one of formal employment where both held membership amongst the group of elites, and that of the scholar and king as one of patronage where there was a notable divide in social status, the latter discernible in the pleading or coaxing tone of the scholars' letters that is altogether absent from the letters of the magnates.

[127] Liverani 1988: 91.

[128] On the communication networks of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, see Liverani 1988; Parpola 1987: XIII–XX (SAA 1).

[129] While two volumes were edited and published by the SAA project specifically under the label "Imperial Administrative Records" (SAA 7; SAA 11), administrative matters dealt with in these texts are also found in documents published under the labels "Legal Transactions" (SAA 6; SAA 16); "Treaties and Loyalty Oaths" (SAA 2); and "Grants, Decrees and Gifts" (SAA 12). This overlap between groups is not unexpected, since these labels are constructs of modern scholarship and do not reflect ancient categories; see further the discussion in Kataja and Whiting 1995: XIII–XXI (SAA 12). When discussed in this study the term "administrative record" is used for this group collectively, based on their similar administrative orientation, and does not refer solely to the two volumes published by the SAA project under the heading "Imperial Administrative Records." Earlier editions of these administrative records include Johns 1898–1923; Postgate 1969.

[130] Certain texts document the apportioning of work between provincial governors and the contribution of each in terms of materials and labor force; SAA 7; SAA 11.

[131] SAA 12: nos. 19, 24, 69.

[132] SAA 7: no. 82 speaks of eighteen amulets fixed to the couch of the king; SAA 7: no. 81 records precious items gifted to the gods Nabu and Tašmetum by the palace personnel; see further, SAA 7: nos. 79, 117, 158–206; as well as, SAA 12: no. 68.

Together the royal correspondence and administrative records provide insight into the cultural values attached to the various types of materials that were used in the construction of the temple, the processes of construction itself, and the types of practice that were staged within the temple space. Many aspects of these activities were likely considered part of the everyday and routine, and for that reason, not included in royal inscriptions. Moreover, a number of texts speak specifically of matters relating to material elements of the four temples upon which this study focuses, providing a useful supplement to the preserved archaeological evidence for reconstructing the visual and physical dimensions of these built environments. The chronological and geographical distribution of the Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence and administrative records also benefits the study as it offers insight into the preferences and attitudes of particular kings. Accordingly, a caveat that must be kept in mind, and which is addressed when relevant, is that the information gained from these sources may not be equally applied to the whole of the period under discussion. Moreover, while matters relating to materials, people, and performance in the temple environment are addressed, the exact sequence of practice and details of performance are not always fully fleshed out in these sources, given that both the royal correspondence and administrative records are often governed by precision and brevity. This void is filled by yet another type of text inscribed on tablets, Neo-Assyrian "ritual texts."

The designation "ritual text" in Assyriological studies is commonly used to refer to a body of texts that prescribe specific actions to be performed and/or words to be spoken, often by a scholarly expert or ritualized agent on behalf of a client, for example the king, with the aim of a particular outcome, either beneficial or in the interest of the client, and which are in some way associated with the realms of the mythological and divine, what is commonly referred to in modern scholarship as the religious sphere. The correlation of this classification and the associated group of texts with a preexisting native Assyrian category, however, is not definitive, though there is some support from the textual record. The grouping and labeling of certain texts as part of the *āšipu*s' Handbook and the *āšipu*s' Almanac confirms that the commonality of ritual instructions was recognized in Assyria. The former—commonly referred to as the "Exorcist Manual"—is a list of the series of *āšipūtu*, the practices and craft of the practitioner conventionally referred to as "exorcist."[133] Most often the Akkadian texts refer to this individual as an *āšipu*,[134] though the associated designations *kakugallu* and *išippu* are also attested.[135] The *āšipu*s' Almanac includes ritual instructions that designate favorable

[133] KAR 44 and duplicates. This tablet was copied in the mid-seventh century BCE by Kiṣir-Nabu at Assur (Schwemer 2011: 421); see further, Zimmern 1915–1916: 204–228; Bottéro 1975: 242–258; Geller 2000: 242–258; Jean 2006: 62–82; Bácskay and Simkó 2012; Ambos 2013b: 20–21.

[134] The *āšipu* was one of five professions that were considered among the scholarly *ummânu*s of the Neo-Assyrian intellectual milieu and royal court. These figures held an influential role in the decision making process of the king, and, as argued by Lenzi (2008), were the successors to the antediluvian mythological *apkallu*s. See further the semantic discussion and consideration of each profession in Lenzi 2008: 69f; Radner 2011; on the *āšipu*, CAD "A": 2, 431f *āšipu* ((LÚ.)MAŠ.MAŠ), "exorcist"; Jean 2006 (for the etymology, 19f); on the *ummânu*s, see note 125.

[135] CAD "I/J": 242f *išippu* (IŠIB(ME)), "purification priest."
CAD "K": 61 *kakugallu* (KA.KÙ.GÁL), "exorcist."

times for performing these types of practices.[136] The borrowing of incantations by many ritual instructions offers additional support for a shared pool of resources. The definitive, overarching designation "ritual text" that is often adopted in discussions of ritual instructions, however, is in large part bolstered by the typological and editorial approach of Assyriological studies, which reinforces similar categories such as medical texts, magical texts, prayers, hymns, incantations, myths, and poetry.

Labels of this type, while perhaps useful for organizational purposes or manageability for a modern audience, reveal much about modern classificatory systems, yet have the unfortunate tendency of creating and reinforcing arbitrary boundaries that can hinder our understanding of the nature, function, and larger meaning of the texts with respect to their original cultural context. Some texts do contain ancient scribal classificatory labels that suggest that they are of a certain type of ritual instruction; however, if one were to try to create categories based solely on these designations one is faced with challenging inconsistencies. On the one hand, texts that bear the same label, for example the superscript *šiptu* or the subscript *šuilla* or *namburbi*, can at times be quite opposite in their conceptual framework, while on the other hand, texts that do not bear the same label might have very similar formal features and conceptual frameworks.[137] In recognition of the limitations of past typological and editorial approaches, a shift is taking place in the discipline toward a more reflexive, critical approach that concurrently engages with multidisciplinary analytical and interpretive methods, and focuses on context as one means of negotiating the multifaceted and overlapping nature of the Akkadian literary tradition.[138]

The significant distinguishing feature of the texts that fall under the scholarly heading "ritual texts" for the present study is their focus on practice and their provision of precise instructions for particular performances with an equally specific aim or desired outcome.[139] In other words, it would seem that these texts offer the very blueprint for ritualized performance in Neo-Assyria, for which reason I use the label "ritual instructions" in this study to refer to texts of this type. Yet such texts were idealized representations of ritualized practice, having served primarily as paradigms that in actual practice would have been adapted to the immediate context of use.

The CAD notes that *išippu* is a Sumerian loan word (išib), which is itself borrowed from the Akkadian *āšipu*. The Akkadian term *kakugallu* means literally "the man with the pure mouth." See further the discussion of terminologie related to the *āšipu* in Jean 2006: 31f.

[136] Schwemer 2007: 160.

[137] As translation for *namburbi*, the SAA series offers "apotropaic ritual text," drawing on the scholarly understanding of a *namburbi* as an act performed for "releasing the announced evil so it would not actually harm the person affected by the appearance of the omen" (Lenzi 2011: 37); see further, Maul 1994; 1998–2001. On the classifications and labels of both *namburbi* and *šuilla*, see Lenzi 2011: 23–60.

[138] For a discussion of typological systems and literary classifications in Assyriological studies, see Johnston 2004: 352–355; Farber 1995; Lenzi 2011: 1–68. For examples of recent theoretical and contextualizing approaches to Mesopotamian ritual instructions, see Maul 1994; Pongratz-Leisten 1994; Ambos 2004; Jean 2006.

[139] The SAA Project has a volume by Parpola, entitled "Cultic and Ritual Texts," that is forthcoming. Editions of associated texts can be found in Craig 1895–1897; Menzel 1981. A number of texts from previous SAA publications that have been categorized under other genres would also fit into this designation; see further, Kataja and Whiting 1995: XIII-XXI (SAA 12).

The incongruities between the written instructions for specific actions to be taken in a particular practice and the actual realization of such practice as revealed by archaeological evidence supports this characterization of ritual instructions. Ritual instructions for warding off evil from a building through figurine deposition and the actual figurine deposits uncovered at Nimrud and Nineveh are an example of this type of incongruity. As noted in Chapter I.1, the manuscripts, specifically the Nineveh exemplar *Šēp lemutti ina bīt amēli parāsu* ("to block the entry of the enemy in someone's house") and KAR 298 from Assur, give instructions for the production of the figurines, including material and physical attributes; instructions for the prescribed placement of each within and preceding a built structure; and the incantations to be recited in connection with each step.[140] While some correlation has been found between these instructions and actual figurine deposits, the majority of deposits excavated to-date disagree with the ritual instructions in terms of the groupings of figurine types, their location, and their specific physical characteristics. Wiggermann sees this incongruity as evidence of the interpretive freedom afforded to ritual experts and their engagement with these ritual instructions not as exact prescriptions but general rules.[141]

Although the ritual instructions present idealized representations of ritualized practice, if consulted with this caveat in mind they offer important information regarding practice in the Neo-Assyrian milieu. For example, the existence of instructions for how "to block the entry of the enemy in someone's house" and the evidence for construction and use of figurine types prescribed by the ritual instructions attests to the importance in the Neo-Assyrian culture for the practice of taking prophylactic measures to protect a building, for creating objects that through their construction were imbued with the power to divert evil, and for interring such materials in the foundations of building.

The *Mīs pî* ("opening of the mouth") instructions are another example of well-known ritual instructions.[142] *Mīs pî* instructions recount the traditional and conventionalized practice of creating and caring for the images of gods; both archaeological and textual evidence confirm that such practice took place in Neo-Assyria.[143] The extension of this practice to Neo-Assyrian kings, with the creation and

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[140] See note 18.

[141] Wiggermann 1992: 89–98. This interpretation is mirrored by both Ellis (1995: 159–65) and Nakamura (2004: 20). A similar argument for the paradigmatic and idealized nature of texts is presented by Robson (2008) for Mesopotamian medical texts (see also Heeßel 2007b), and by Ambos (2004) for building rituals.

[142] *Mīs pî* ("opening of the mouth") was the means by which the Mesopotamians created and animated images of their gods, for example in the form of three-dimensional statues or two-dimensional steles. Through this practice, which included a number of steps and various treatments of the fashioned object, the material image came to be an extension of a god, the latter being invoked into this material through the performance of *mīs pî*. When practices were later directed at this material image, the recipient was not a disconnected object but rather the god himself or herself, in whose likeness the image was originally created, providing the Mesopotamians a way of interacting with their gods. On *Mīs pî* ritual instructions, see Boden 1998; Berlejung 1998; Walker and Dick 2001. For a discussion of these images as extended manifestations of the gods themselves, see further Pongratz-Leisten 2011.

[143] Archaeological evidence includes elements of the images themselves and associated architectural features, including raised daises upon which the images would have been installed; see further Chapter IV. Textual evidence includes sections of the royal correspondence, which attest to the practices of installation, cleansing, and maintenance of divine images in temples; SAA 10: no. 247.

installation of royal images in temples and their receiving of the same treatment,[144] attests to the adaptability of the ritual instructions to meet the demands of a particular space and time, in this case the socio-political context of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.[145] Ambos argues for the same type of adaptability for building ritual instructions, noting that the ritual instructions presented a paradigm that *in praxis* was manipulated to fit the varying social and financial standing of the people involved.[146] Discerning such adaptations of ritual instructions in actual practice and considering them in light of their particular socio-political and cultural context is one way of extracting from this textual corpus valuable information on practice in Neo-Assyria. This information informs considerations of practice within the temple, as well as the individuals involved in its construction and subsequent reconstructions.

Ritual instructions also contribute to the material considerations of this study, as material objects that played a physical role in temple activities and which have a material context in the archaeological record. One particular material influence the tablets had was in their consultation during actual practice.[147] The *rab āšipi* ("chief ritual expert") of the reign of Esarhaddon, Marduk-šakin-šumi,[148] writes to the king about the prescribed placement of figurines from a tablet:[149]

ina ṭuppī kî annî qabi	It is said in the tablet as follows:
mā ina bābi kamî	"You bury (figurines) at the outer
tetemmir....	gate"…
kī anni	According to this
anāku annaka	(tablet), I will
lutammer	bury (figurines) here.

[144] An over-lifesize royal statue of Aššurnaṣirpal was recovered from the House of Šarrat-niphi at Nimrud (Layard 1853b: 361; Reade 2002: 184). The royal correspondence also mentions the installation of royal images in temples and their receiving of the above stated treatment; SAA 10: nos. 13, 350; SAA 13: no. 178. For an interesting discussion of sculpture, aesthetics, and the display of Sumerian images in Early Dynastic temples (c. 2900–2350 BCE), see Evans 2012.

[145] Winter (1997: 377) argues that royal images both constructed and reflected a very specific image of the king that fit with the Mesopotamian ideology of kingship; "[t]hrough the very act of representation, they made manifest, and hence worked to construct, the *institution of kingship* itself, giving concrete form to underlying concepts of divinely sanctioned rule and the ideal qualities of the ruler." See further Winter (1992) for a discussion of Mesopotamian royal images as recipients of ritual action. See also Bahrani (2003) on the concept of representation in Assyria and Babylonia.

[146] Ambos 2004.

[147] On the consultation and interpretation of texts by scholars in ancient Mesopotamia, see Lanfranchi 1989; Frahm 2004; Jean 2006: 144–170; Lenzi 2008.

[148] See note 134 on *āšipu.* Marduk-šakin-šumi was *rab āšipi* of the royal court during the reigns of both Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal, up until 660 BCE (PNA 2/II: 722f, "Marduk-šakin-šumi 2.;" Robson forthcoming: Table A6).

[149] SAA 10: no. 263, 8–9, r. 13–15. Although this letter does not provide a noun for "figurine," based on the full text of the letter and other attestations for the use of *temēru* in association with deposition, the insertion of "figurines" is supported. Line 8, for example—"You will bury them at the outer gate"—recalls passages from ritual instructions in which similar wording is used in reference to figurine burials, as in *Šēp lemutti* and KAR 298 discussed above; see further, CAD "T": 335f *temēru*.

Similarly, Nabu-nadin-šumi, an *āšipu* and successor to Marduk-šakin-šumi,[150] writes to Esarhaddon about a specific section from a *namburbi*:[151]

ina muhhi ša šarru bēlī	Concerning what the king, my lord,
išpuranni mā mīnu	wrote to me: "Write to me
ša dullunni šupra	what the treatment is."
ina libbi namburbišu	It is said in the relevant namburbi
qabi mā...	as follows.

Appreciating these attestations of material interactions in the texts and understanding a tablet as an object with a material context marks an important step toward bridging the gap between Assyriology and archaeology in favor of a more holistic approach to source material. As Zettler explicates in his assessment of the integration of textual and archaeological data in the field of Near Eastern studies, such an approach "recogniz[es] that clay tablets and inscribed objects are excavated artifacts with a provenience or context in the archaeological record just as are sites within a settlement system, or architecture within a site, or sculpture, seals, pottery and figurines, plant and animal remains, raw materials, and waste products (for example, slag, stone, chips, bitumen fragments) within an excavated area."[152] To lose sight of this aspect of tablets and ritual instructions is to sacrifice meaningful information about ritualized practice and performance in the temple's built environment. As both idealized representations of ritualized practice and ritualized material objects, ritual instructions inscribed on tablets are thus instrumental to the present study and compliment the idiosyncratic information obtainable from each of the previously discussed textual sources.

Somewhat related to ritual instructions are the Neo-Assyrian omen collections, an additional corpus that is referenced in this study. In Neo-Assyria, omens offered a direct means of communication with the gods, a way of accessing divine wills and desires in order to ensure a prosperous and healthy life on earth, and to avert evil.[153] While texts that fall under this label can vary—some speak of celestial observations, others of natural phenomena on earth, and some expand upon actual practice, going so far as to prescribe particular actions to be taken for the benefit of the persons involved—what groups these texts together is their common concern with "averting the ill effects of a predetermined situation, as revealed to a person by means of an 'omen'... a divine sign given to a person as a warning about a specific danger foreshadowed by an observable fact or as an alert of a propitious development in the future."[154] All omen collections take the form of an

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[150] PNA 2/II: 852, "Nabû-nādin-zēri 2."
[151] SAA 10: no. 277, 6–10.
[152] Zettler 1996: 83. On the importance of the material qualities of tablets and a more holistic approach to source materials, see further the edited volume by Radner and Robson (2011) and Eidem (2002).
[153] Other forms of communication included oracles, prophecy, necromancy, and incubation.
[154] Farber 1995: 1899. Some omen collections are known from ancient Mesopotamia that were grouped together by the ancient scribes according to common themes, for example, the series *Šumma izbu* is concerned with malformed births and *Enūma Anu Enlil* with celestial phenomena. An especially complete *Šumma izbu* series is from the royal tablet assemblages at Nineveh ("library of Aššurbanipal"). Many of the texts from this series likely originated from series much earlier than the Neo-Assyrian period, with evidence of omen textual material dating back to the Old Babylonian period. See further, Leichty 1970a;

observation (protasis) followed by a prognostication ("if x occurs, then y will occur").[155] Within the very large category of omen collections one may distinguish between *bārûtu*, dealing primarily with provoked divination, *ṭupšarrūtu*, which pertains to unprovoked divination.[156]

The scholars endowed with interpreting omens and affiliated with these corpora were the *bārû* and *ṭupšarru.*[157] The ability of these scholars, by means of observation and the associated texts, to foretell future threats and to avert evil was paramount to a royal building project. When constructing a temple, for example, the king and builders had to ensure that they were in no way provoking the anger of the gods and that they were sidestepping any potential evil or danger during construction, in order to ensure the successful completion of their project. For this reason texts related to omens and divination are beneficial for the present study, as they suggest the stages of construction when the gods' approval had to be acquired, when building activities were best staged, and what aspects of construction were particularly vulnerable.

Utilized in tandem, the information obtained from these groups of primary texts from the Neo-Assyrian period helps to reinforce the visual world created by the primary material objects discussed above, thereby lending a hand in the reanimation of the temple and allowing for questions of practice and ritualization to be posed of this complex built environment. One final comment on the textual sources of this study must be made, specifically regarding the use of texts having to do with the temples in Babylon. The increasing ties that were established between Neo-Assyria and Babylon following Sennacherib's death resulted in a number of Neo-Assyrian royal building projects and a resident group of officials and members of the Neo-Assyrian royal court to the south.

Farber 1995; Rochberg 2004: 88-92; Maul 2009; Annus 2010; De Zorzi 2011. The Nineveh assemblage also had *Enuma Anu Enlil*, which comprised a total of seventy tablets (Rochberg 2004: 66–78). Additional series include, *Bārûtu, Sakikku,* and *Šumma ālu* (Maul 2003–2005). On the systematization of omen series and what they reveal with regard to Mesopotamian scribal practice and scholarship, see Rochberg 2004; "Although the motives for systematizing all the phenomena of interest had as much to do with the correlations between the phenomena and the events presaged by them as with a desire to understand the phenomena alone, the systematization and understanding of the phenomena themselves, to whatever degree was possible, were products of scholarly divination. The physical phenomena assembled in the omen collections and the principles of the organization reflect the interests and methods of Mesopotamian scribal scholarship. Characteristic of such methods are empirical study and the creation of schematic systems to interpret the meaning of the enormous variety of signs in the compilation and redaction of the omen collection" (Rochberg 2004: 3–4).

[155] Rochberg 2004: 3.

[156] "Provoked" designates an omen that was obtained as a result of a particular action taken by a specialist, for example extispicy (the examination of entrails). "Unprovoked" designates a phenomena that was observed yet unsolicited, for example celestial observation. See further, Rochberg 2004: 4–5, 47; Starr et al. 1990: XXXII (SAA 4). On *bārūtu* and *ṭupšarrūtu*, see the respective sections in Lenzi 2008.

[157] CAD "B": 121f *bārû* ((LÚ.)MAŠ.ŠU.GÍD.GÍD, LÚ.ḪAL), "diviner."

"CAD "Ṭ": 151f *ṭupšarru* ((LÚ.)DUB.ŠAR, (LÚ.)ŠID, (LÚ.)ŠIDXA, (LÚ.)A.BA), "scribe, tablet writer."

Both of these scholars were considered among the *ummânu*s along with the *āšipu* noted above; see further the discussion in Chapter IV.1.a on the Neo-Assyrian *ummânu*s and temple personnel. On the *bārû*s and *ṭupšarru*s of the royal court under Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal, see Robson forthcoming: Table A7 and A9. On the positions of *rab ṭupšarru* ("chief scribe") and *ṭupšar ēkalli* ("palace scribe"), see Luukko 2007. For a recent study of the *bārû*s and the textual corpus of Late Bronze Age Emar, see Rutz 2013.

During the reigns of Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal, this growing relationship included a great deal of reconstructive work and reestablishment of practice for the temples in Babylon. The material and archaeological evidence from these temples stand outside the geographical region prioritized by this study and are therefore not included; however, the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and correspondence, and administrative records that deal with the temples in Babylon are cited when beneficial. The common concerns of these texts and the materials that they present argue for their consideration in this study. The royal correspondence, for example, addresses the same types of matters that are reported for the temples in Neo-Assyria and involves the same group of temple personnel, professionals, scholars, and officials associated with the royal court. The similarities of the royal inscriptions are also well attested; the texts on the temples of Neo-Assyria and Babylon are inscribed on the same types of portable and non-portable works of art, are installed within Neo-Assyrian capital cities, and are generated by the same Neo-Assyrian royal objectives and ideals.

d. Dusting Off the Archives: Original Excavation Reports, Drawings, and Photographs

Supplementing these primary source materials are the original excavations reports and associated photographs, sketches, and correspondence from the nineteenth and twentieth-century archaeological expeditions at Nimrud and Khorsabad (APPENDIX C). These early publications yield a particular kind of information that has not been tapped by prior studies, including an emphasis on interactive and experiential qualities. Not only is this feature a result of the techniques that characterized these early excavations, for example tunneling as opposed to the emphasis on stratigraphy in modern excavations (FIGURE 18), it was also the intellectual milieu of these earlier periods that directed the attention of the directors and team members toward the affective qualities of these materials. An appreciation for the visually arresting, majestic, and exotic, combined with the imaginative narrative tradition of the time, made early publication reports a genre wholly their own when compared to modern reports, which are governed by precision, methodology, and neutrality.

The French expeditions to northern Iraq in the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the western world's introduction to the exotic monumentality that visually defined the Neo-Assyrian Empire, spurring the British and eventually Germans, North Americans, and Iraqis, amongst others, to follow suit with projects continuing through to the end of the twentieth century. With the first palatial discoveries in the middle of the nineteenth century, architectural features and associated finds from these Neo-Assyrian capital cities found their way into museum collections around the world, inciting varied reactions from the public.[158] Both the French and British members of these early excavations had equally strong reactions, inciting lengthy discussions and much ruminating in letters sent back to their homeland, which in turn incited the directors to document all of their work. During his first season of exploration, relying on funding

[158] On the public reception of Neo-Assyrian materials in the nineteenth century, see Bohrer 1998; Reade 2008.

from the British government Treasury, Layard was responsible for carrying out most of the on-site documentation himself alongside his many other duties:

> there was no inclination to send an artist with me... I had therefore to superintend the excavations; to draw all the bas-reliefs discovered; to copy and compare the innumerable inscriptions; to take casts of them; and to preside over the moving and packing of the sculptures.[159]

A number of images showing Layard at work, with paper, pencil, and ruler in lap, are included in a series of watercolor and pencil drawings by Reverand S. C. Malan, which the latter executed when accompanying Layard on site at Nimrud and Nineveh in 1850 (FIGURE 19–20). With the scale and richness of the finds from these early explorations, it was not long before professional artists and architects were sent into the field along with the excavation directors. These individuals produced a rich corpus of drawings, watercolors, and photographs that accompanied the directors' letters and reports.[160]

The wealth of textual and visual documentation made a significant contribution to the final archaeological reports from both Nimrud and Khorsabad.[161] Not only do these volumes note the finds from the sites, they also document the projects' excavation methods and the directors' overall impressions of the ancient materials. In his publication on the American excavations at Khorsabad, Loud wrote the following of the work conducted by the French in the previous century under the direction of Victor Place:[162]

> The difficulty and discomfort of working in such airless, dark quarters—several terra-cotta oil lamps such as are for sale in the bazaars in Mosul today showed the inadequate method of illumination—only increase one's admiration for those who worked in this manner for the excellent results obtained thereby. The tunnels offer a partial explanation of how such a stupendous task was accomplished in such a short period.

With great fortune many of these documents have been preserved and are currently housed in museum and library archives in Europe, Britain, and America along with the archaeological evidence, including the final publications and preceding reports, drawings, photographs and the like.[163]

When viewed within this dynamic historiographic context, these documents have great potential and contribute to the present study in a number of valuable ways. First, they offer important insight into original contexts and findspots, as well as methods of excavation. Second, they note unpreserved physical features and significant visual and experiential qualities of objects, due to early archaeologists' notable appreciation for

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[159] Layard 1849: I, 326–327; see further, Reade 2008.
[160] For example, the watercolor and pencil drawings of Reverend Solomon Caesar Malan, who visited Nimrud in 1850 (Gadd 1938).
[161] For a list of the final archaeological reports, see Appendix C.
[162] Loud 1936: 82.
[163] Documents for the British excavations at Nimrud are primarily held in the British Museum's Department of the Middle East and Central Archive and the British Library Department of Manuscripts. Documents from the American Khorsabad excavations are held in the Oriental Institute Archives of the University of Chicago.

sensory perception. Qualities such as color, contrast, texture, shadows, and how materials interact with changing physical surroundings and varying intensities and directions of light play an integral role in the early narratives and visual documentation (FIGURE 21). Place's impressions of the use of color and polychromy in the temples at Khorsabad, for example, are well documented in his final publication:[164]

> A ce sentiment si juste sont dues les plinthes tracées à la base des murs, l'invention des peintures à fresque, celle des décorations émaillées au-dessous des voûtes, aux couronnements, aux entrées, le coloriage même des bas-reliefs, et enfin tout emploi de la couleur lorsequ'elle devait contribuer à rompre la monotonie des surfaces et apporter une richesse de plus à la splendeur architectonique.

When excavating the anteroom in the House of Sin at Khorsabad, Loud made a point to note the dearth of light admitted to this space in contrast to the preceding courtyard:[165]

> Within, it is very dark, for in contrast to the brilliancy in the open court whatever light is admitted through the one outer doorway or from a possible clerestory or openings in the roof seems inadequate. Gradually, however, we notice that to the left the walls are unpierced, but that near the corner to the right in the opposite wall is a doorway leading into a corridor-like chamber which nearly surrounds the inner portion of the temple."

As Breasted once said while photographing inscriptions on Egyptian buildings, "a photograph... represents but one illumination of the wall; whereas it may be illuminated from many different directions successively, each different illumination bringing out lines not visible before."[166] Third, these archaeologists' first impressions of ancient materials and spaces were often from light-deprived tunnels, as noted by Loud in his comment on Place's work above (FIGURE 18–19, 22). This experience created a viewpoint much closer to the ancient Mesopotamian experience, standing in stark contrast to the well-lit, spacious museum context, and the sterile approach of modern archaeology. Though lacking the precision, rigor, and scientific methodology of present-day excavation reports, these early exploratory narratives and illustrative documents have more potential than the limited empirical facts for which they are typically cited in secondary archaeological reports—it is this potential that is here put to use in pursuit of a greater understanding of the Neo-Assyrian temple from a practice-oriented perspective.

The material culture and personnel associated with the temple were both a product of and producer of the social and cultural framework within which this built environment was situated. With a focus on the temple material from a practice-oriented perspective, fleshed out by a breadth of contributing theoretical concepts, we can achieve a more engaging and dynamic understanding of the Neo-Assyrian temple and its place within the imperial milieu of northern Mesopotamia in the first millennium BCE.

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[164] Place 1867–1870: I, 76.
[165] Loud 1936: 114.
[166] Breasted 1906: 5.

CHAPTER II. MINING TEXTS AND QUARRYING CUNEIFORM: ESTABLISHING TERMINOLOGY

A problem that stands at the forefront of many discussions of ancient Mesopotamian materials and built environments is one of terminology, the Neo-Assyrian temple being no exception. Rooted within the long-standing Mesopotamian scholarly tradition is the English terminological framework of "temple," "shrine," and "sanctuary," the former often used to designate a larger structure and the latter two in reference to specific internal and highly ritualized spaces. Additional terms, such as "chapel," "cella," "cult room," and "dais" are often used to supplement this seemingly standardized sequence.[167] To employ such terms in the following discussion without a preceding consideration of the original Akkadian terms, however, would give the impression that this English sequence is rooted in a similarly standardized, size-contingent Akkadian terminological framework. Concurrently such an unmediated practice would complicate the use of texts to identify particular features of this built environment, therein running the risk of misconstruing what the texts might reveal about the Neo-Assyrian conceptualization of these spaces.

A brief deconstruction and problematization of the Akkadian terms associated with the Neo-Assyrian temple and their implied conceptualizations, followed by a consideration of a culturally and contextually sensitive English terminological framework to be used in this study, are prerequisites to the succeeding analytical and theoretical inquiries of the Neo-Assyrian temple. As with the aforestated parameters of this dissertation, these considerations focus solely on the use of relevant terms in texts from the Neo-Assyrian period.[168] Furthermore, the aim is not to present a final stance for future proceedings, but rather to serve as a call for a greater awareness of the profound complexity of the Akkadian texts, and to inspire a longer and more thorough study than what can be accomplished here.

The following discussion is generated primarily from two groups of Akkadian texts dating to the Neo-Assyrian period, the potential and contribution of which was established in Chapter I.2.c. The first is the royal inscriptions, including texts inscribed on materials from inside the temples' themselves, as well as portable and non-portable works of art outside of the temples. The former include such texts as those inscribed on

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[167] While the following discussion will address and comment primarily upon issues of English terminology due to the language orientation of this dissertation, it ought to be noted and acknowledged that what is said with regard to the English language is equally applicable to any modern language from which a scholar is approaching this material. The prioritization of English in the following discussion is thus a heuristic approach and intended to demonstrate the benefits and challenges of working with the Akkadian texts.

[168] Not only would a diachronic linguistic study be beyond the scope of this dissertation, but such a discussion would multiply exponentially in complexity due to the fluidity of meaning and terms between periods. Studies that similarly address issues of temple terminology but that deal with material from much earlier periods in Mesopotamia include Jahn's (2005) work on private houses in the Old Babylonion period; Sollberger's (1975) paper on Old Babylonian temples; the philological discussions of Güterbock (1975) on Hittite temples and Limet's (1975) on temples of divinised Sumerian kings; and von Soden's (1975) introduction to the colloquium, "Le temple, terminologie lexicale et donées architecturales et philologiques."

the wall panels from the House of Ninurta,[169] the colossus at the doorway to the House of Šarrat-niphi,[170] and the royal stele of Aššurnaṣirpal that flanked the doorway to the god's chamber neighboring the House of Ninurta.[171] Examples of royal inscriptions found outside of the temples include the so-called "annals" of Aššurnaṣirpal II inscribed on the wall panels from his Northwest Palace at Nimrud;[172] the text from the same king's Banquet Stele,[173] which offers a lengthy description of Aššurnaṣirpal's temple construction; and last, a text commonly referred to as "Aššur A" that was inscribed on a series of clay prisms, a stone tablet, and a clay tablet from Aššur and which commemorates Esarhaddon's restoration of Ešarra, the House of Aššur in Assur.[174] The second group comprises the royal correspondence and administrative reports of the Neo-Assyrian royal court. The contrasting characteristics of these two groups, including purpose, audience, tone, and context,[175] ensures the strength, validity, and inclusivity of the following terminological discussion.

1. BREAKING DOWN THE AKKADIAN BARRIERS

The principal Akkadian term used to refer to the structure that we call "temple" is *bītu*,[176] often written logographically É. The term *bītu*, however, is anything but a unique textual signifier for this built environment due to its broad semantic field, which ranges from the general "house" or "dwelling place," to the more specific "estate," "room," "tomb," "household," and even "family." When *bītu* is used to refer to a temple, is it often qualified by a divine name (*bīt* DN), signaling its divine association. Attestations of this writing are found in "The Temple Lists of Ancient Mesopotamia" collected by George[177] and passages commemorating royal building programs in Neo-Assyrian royal

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[169] RIMA 2: A.0.101.31; ME 124571–124573.
[170] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28 (obverse); A.0.101.32 (reverse); BM 118895. Šarrat-nipḫi is an aspect of the goddess Ištar. On the reading of this name, see Grayson 1976: 168, n. 757, who notes that it was originally read Bēlat-māti.
[171] RIMA 2: A.0.101.17; BM 118805 (1851-9-2, 32; Layard's 'Great Monolith'; Layard 1853a: 351)(FIGURE 53).
[172] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1 (Layard 1853a: 352–356).
[173] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30; ND 1104 (Mosul Museum)(Wiseman 1952a).
[174] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57; for a list of the excavation and museum numbers for the prisms and tablets from Assur, see the introduction to this text in RINAP 4.
[175] Discernible differences between these types of texts might include modes of expression and vocabulary, for example between the formal standardization of display-oriented royal inscriptions and the more conversational, abbreviated tone and vocabulary of certain administrative documents and letters; see further, Chapter I.2.c.
[176] CAD "B": 282f *bītu* (É), "1. house, dwelling place, shelter (of an animal), temple, palace 2. manor, estate, encampment (of nomads), 3. room (of a house, a palace, a temple), cabin (of a boat, tomb, 4. container, repository, housing, 5. place, plot, area, region, 6. household, family, royal house, 7. estate, aggregate of property of all kinds;" see further, Sallaberger 2011–2013; von Soden 1975: 134; Heinrich 1982: 244.
[177] George 1993.

inscriptions. An example of the latter is the text of Aššurnaṣirpal that was inscribed on the obverse of the colossus from the doorway to the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud:[178]

bīt Enlil u Ninurta	The *bītu* of the gods Enlil and Ninurta,
bīt Ea u Damkina bīt Adad u Šala bīt Sîn, bīt Gula	The *bītu* of the gods Ea and Damkina, the *bītu* of the gods Adad and Šala, the *bītu* of the god Sin, the bītu of the goddess Gula,
bīt Šarrat-nipḫi ekurrāt ilāni rabûti ina qerebšu lu addi.	(and) the *bītu* of the goddess Šarrat-nipḫi, *ekurru*s of the great gods, within [Kalaḫ] I erected.

To avoid redundancy in these types of passages, succeeding *bītu* references often assume, in place of the DN qualifier, a personal possessive suffix ("his" or "her"), or a third person demonstrative pronoun ("this" or "that") that corresponds with an aforementioned *bīt* DN.[179] This practice is used in Esarhaddon's account of his rebuilding of the House of Aššur, with the sequence of *bīt Aššur* (É ^{d}*aš-šur*, "House of Aššur") followed by the nominative *bītu šû* (É *šu-ú*, "that house") and thereafter the accusative *bītu šuātu* (É *šu-a-tú*, "that house").[180]

While not as frequent as *bīt* DN, *bīt ili* (written logographically É.DINGIR) and *ekurru* (É.KUR) are also used in reference to these structures.[181] All three of these writings have as their root the logogram É, normalized as *bītu* in Akkadian, yet they vary in terms of how the divine quality of each is marked. The DN marks the divine association of the isolated *bītu* in the first scenario. The DINGIR of É.DINGIR denotes its divine quality, meaning quite literally "house of a god" (DINGIR=*ilu*, "god"). Last, the KUR of É.KUR denotes its divine quality by association; this label was first used for the renowned temple of Enlil at Nippur, meaning literally "house of the mountain," and later assumed a general use for the house of a god.[182]

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[178] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28, v 7–9. A similar passage is found in the Banquet Stele text discussed below; RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 56–59.

[179] On Akkadian grammatical suffixes, see Luukko 2004: 139–144; Hämeen-Anttila 2000: 46, 49–50; Huehnergard 2005: 41.

[180] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iii 16, iii 28, iii 42.

[181] For *bīt ili*, see CAD "B": 287f *bītu* 1. c) 2′ "temple."
CAD "E": 70f *ekurru* A (É.KUR(.RA)), "temple."

[182] The use of É.KUR in this generalized manner is attested from the time of Tiglath-pileser I onwards in both Assyrian and Babylonian documents; see further, CAD 'E': 72 *ekurru* (note at end of entry); von Soden 1975: 135; Menzel 1981: 1; Sallaberger 2011–2013: 519. On the Ekur at Nippur, see Nötscher 1938: 385; George 1993: 116, no. 677. The title Ekur was adopted for the House of Aššur at Assur starting with Shalmaneser I (George 1993: 116, no. 678). During the Neo-Assyrian period a number of temples were similarly referred to by proper names in the Akkadian texts (Sollberger 1975: 33), for example Ešarra, the House of Aššur at Assur (George 1993: 145, no. 1035), as in RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 45, iv 6′; Esarhaddon 51, iv 1. For an extensive list of proper names based on "the Temple Lists of Mesopotamia" and their literary histories, see George 1993.

In addition to these three expressions (*bīt* DN, *bīt ili*, *ekurru*), also attested with reference to divine structures is the following group of terms, what will hereinafter be referred to as the "subsidiary group:" *kisallu*,[183] *tarbāṣu*,[184] *parakku*,[185] *nēmedu*,[186] *ešertu*,[187] *atmanu,*[188] *māḫāzu*,[189] *papāḫu*,[190] *kiṣṣu,*[191] *sukku,*[192] and *ayakku*.[193] Attestations of these terms often situate them within a larger structure associated with the divine, such as a *bīt* DN, *ekurru*, or *bīt ili*. As demonstrated by their dictionary entries, however, some of these terms are also cited within contexts completely divorced from the divine. Such variant designations complicate our ability to understand the precise relationship, in both texts and the physical environment, between terms from this subsidiary group and *bīt* DN, *ekurru*, and *bīt ili*, as well as to one another. The following discussion of the textual attestations of the terms from these two groups demonstrates the extent of these complexities.

a. *bīt* DN, *bīt ili*, *ekurru*

The common element of this first group of terms is the base logogram É, normalized as *bītu* in Akkadian. Attestations of *bītu* relevant to this study are often qualified by a divine name, or a personal possessive suffix or third person demonstrative pronoun when referencing an aforementioned *bīt* DN. *ekurru* and *bīt ili* are employed when a more generalized meaning is sought after. One such instance is when a particular divine association is lacking. This use is demonstrated in a letter from the *rab bārû* ("chief diviner") Marduk-šumu-uṣur to Esarhaddon:[194]

kī abišu ša šarri bēliya ana Muṣur illikuni	When the father of the king, my lord, went to Egypt,
ina qanni Ḫarrani bīt ili ša erēni epiš	on the outskirts of the city of Ḫarran a bīt ili of *erēnu*-

[183] CAD "K": 416f *kisallu* (KISAL), "courtyard (of a private house, a palace or a temple complex)."
[184] CAD "T": 217f *tarbāṣu* (TÙR), "1. pen (for cattle, rarely for sheep and goats, horses), enclosure, courtyard."
[185] CAD "P": 145f *parakku* A (BÁRA), "dais, pedestal, socle, sanctuary, shrine, divine throne room."
[186] CAD "N": 2, 155f *nēmedu,* "2. (a piece of furniture), 3. cult platform, foundation."
[187] CAD "A": 2, 436 *aširtu* A, "1. sanctuary (as a general designation of a temple, originally, the cella), 2. a special room in a private house for cultic purposes, 3. socle (in the form of a sanctuary, for images, symbols, etc.)."
[188] CAD "A": 2f, 495 *atmanu*, "1. cella, sanctum of a temple, 2. (a poetic word for temple)."
[189] CAD "M": 1, 85 *māḫāzu* (KI.ŠU.PEŠ$_{5/6}$), "1. a small structure or enclosure (serving as a sacred place, or connected with a well or pond), 2. sanctuary, temple (containing a *m.*), 3. city in which such a temple stands, important city."
[190] CAD "P": 101f *papāḫu* ((É.)PA.PAḪ),"cella, sanctuary, chapel."
[191] CAD "K": 443f *kiṣṣu,* "cella, chapel (as a specific part of a sanctuary, also a term for temple)."
[192] CAD "S": 361f *sukku,* "(a shrine or small chapel)."
[193] CAD "A": 1, 224f *ajakku* (É.AN.NA), "(a structure in a temple)."
[194] SAA 10: no. 174, 10–11; see further the commentary in Parpola 1970–1983: I, 167f, no. 174. Marduk-šumu-uṣur was the *rab bārî* of the royal court of Nineveh during the reigns of both Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal (PNA 2/II: 733, "Marduk-šumu-uṣur 1).
CAD "E": 274f *erēnu* A ((GIŠ)ERIN), "cedar (tree, wood and resin);" see further, Postgate 1992b: 182, 187–188.

wood was built.

Another generalized use is when multiple buildings with a number of divine associations are being referenced, as in the following passage from Shalmaneser III's royal inscription that speaks of his activites in Esagil, the House of Marduk, and Babylon:[195]

bīt ilāni šūt Esagila u Bābili ušamhira niqâšu ella	At the *bīt ili*s, of Esagil and Babylon, he presented his pure *niqû*-offering.

The standard opening address in letters to the king also makes use of these terms in a generalized manner, as in the following letter from the crown prince Sennacherib to Sargon:[196]

šulma ana Aššur šulma ana ekurrāte	Assyria is well, the *ekurru*s are well.

The textual sources also speak to the material elements and architectural dimensions of the *bīt* DN, *bīt ili*, and *ekurru.* The Banquet Stele text of Aššurnaṣirpal, for example, lists various material elements within this king's newly constructed and renovated *bīt* DNs at Nimrud, including wooden roof beams, high wooden doors with bronze bands that hung in great doorways, images of the gods, and seats of the gods.[197] An administrative letter from Ṭab-ṣil-Ešarra, governor of Assur,[198] to Sargon speaks of a

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[195] RIMA 3: A.0.102.5, 6.

CAD "N": 2, 252f *niqû* ((UDU.)SISKUR, $SISKUR_x$), "offering, sacrifice."

Another generalized example from the reign of Aššurnaṣirpal is found in RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, i 24–25, where the plural of *ekurru* (É.KUR.MEŠ) is twice employed: *rubû kēnu ša ana šutēšur parṣī ekurrāte mātišu pitqudu kayyāna ša epšēt qātišu u nadān zībišu ilāni rabûti ša šamê u erṣeti irāmūma šangâšu ina ekurri ana dāriš ukīnū* ("the legitimate prince who is regularly entrusted with ensuring the proper performance of the rites in the *ekurru*s of his country, whose deeds and *zību*-offerings the great gods of heaven and earth love, and he established his *šangûtu*-priesthood in the *ekurru*s forever").

An assortment of Akkadian terms are used in the textual sources to refer to the types of offerings given to gods. A common term is *niqû*, which generally denotes an "offering" or "ritualized butchering;" and is cognate with *naqû*, "to pour out," which is used to refer to libations. Additional cognates include *maqqītu, "*libation (or offering)," and *maqqû*, "libation bowl." Regular daily offerings are also referred to as *ginû* and *sattukku. nindabû* refers to cereal or food offerings more specifically, *sirqu* and *surqinnu* often refer to aromatic offerings, and *maqlūtu* to burnt offerings. *zību*-offerings seem to refer to both food offerings, comparable to *naptanu*s*, "*divine meals", and aromatic offerings (or incense), comparable to *qutrinnu*, "incense." For CAD definitions and references, see Appendix A and the discussion in Chapter V.1. *šangûtu* is used by the Neo-Assyrian kings to refer to their function as *šangû*-priest of Aššur; see the discussion in Chapter V.1.a.

[196] SAA 1: no. 32, 3–4. The same expression is found in the following letters in SAA 1: nos. 33–38, 99–101, 111, 115, 116, 133; SAA 5: no. 281, among others.

[197] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 53–78. The list of *bīt* DNs includes the *bītu* of Enlil and Ninurta, the *bītu* of Ea-šarru and Damkina, the *bītu* of Adad and Šala, the *bītu* of Gula, the *bītu* of Sin, the *bītu* of Nabu, the *bītu* of Šarrat-niphi, the *bītu* of the Sibitti, and the *bītu* of the Kidmuri. For variant translations of this passage, see Wiseman 1952a: 30–31; Oppenheim 1969: 559. For the dating of this text in relation to other inscriptions from the reign of Aššurnaṣirpal and his campaigns, see Reade 2002: 142–145.

[198] PNA 3/II: 1342f, "Ṭab-ṣil-Ešarra 1."

loyalty oath tablet (*ṭuppi adê*) that was brought into the *tarbāṣu* ("courtyard") of a *bīt ili* by a messenger of the palace overseer (*ša pān ēkalli*), providing evidence for the interior spaces of this structure.[199] A letter to the same king from Marduk-apla-iddina, an official active in Babylon,[200] reiterates a prior concern of the king regarding an attack on the wall of a *bīt ili*, confirming that these structures not only had chambers and courtyards, but also exterior walls:[201]

umma ṣābēka kî tašpuru nikasi	After you sent your soldiers and they
ana libbi āli kî unakkisu	made a breach to (enter) the city,
šiltāḫū igār bīt ilī undellû	they covered the wall of the *bīt ili* with arrows.

A letter to the king from Marduk-šallim-aḫḫe, a *ṭupšarru* of the House of Aššur,[202] similarly indicates that temple structures had an outer, external façade. After reporting to the king that the *parakku* of Mullissu was complete and that the goddess might take up residence on the eleventh day of the month Simanu, the sender states that the king should order only one *lilissu* to circumabulate the *ekurru*s in the months of Ayyaru and Simanu.[203] A line from a letter regarding the *bīt ili* of Der, that was sent to Esarhaddon from Mar-Issar, an official and scholar in Babylon,[204] confirms that *bīt ili*s had their own foundations:[205]

bīt ilī	the *bīt ili*
ša Dēr issu bīt uššēšu	of Der, from the time its
karrūni adunakanni	foundations were laid until now.

Last, following an earthquake at Khorsabad, Kiṣir-Aššur, *bēl pīḫati* of Khorsabad,[206] reports to Sargon that the *bīt ili*s, ziggurat, palace, city walls, and all of the buildings of the city are well.[207] This sequence communicates the rank of *bīt ili*s as being among the structures that defined a royal city—if this group of structures were well then the city was well.

These architectural and spatial references present an image of the *bīt* DNs, *bīt ili*s, and *ekurru*s, from the time of Aššurnaṣirpal onwards, as being large structures containing

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[199] SAA 1: no. 76, 6.
[200] PNA 2/II: 710, "Marduk-apla-iddina 2."
[201] SAA 17: no. 158, 3–5.
[202] Marduk-šallim-aḫḫe's title is not given anywhere, though several letters tell of his performing ritualized butchering in front of the god Aššur (PNA 2/II: 726, "Marduk-šallim-aḫḫē 3.")
[203] SAA 13: no. 12, r. 13–14.
CAD "L": 186f *lilissu* (LI.LI.ÌZ), "kettledrum."
[204] PNA 2/II: 739, "Mār-Issār 18."
[205] SAA 10: no. 349, r. 11–13.
[206] In SAA 1: no. 192, Kiṣir-Aššur refers to himself as *bēl pīḫati* ("governor") of Khorsabad; see further, PNA 2/I: 621, "Kiṣir-Aššur 7."
CAD "P": 367f *pīḫatu* in *bēl pīḫati* ((LÚ).EN.NAM), "1. governor, 2. (a minor provincial official in Babylonia)." On this official appointment and title during the Neo-Assyrian period, see Radner 2011.
[207] SAA 1: no. 125, r. 1–5.

interior courtyards and chambers, with strong external walls and foundations, that housed the gods, and were among the defining structures of a royal city.[208] In other words, the type of structure that has traditionally been identified as a temple in the archaeological evidence at various Neo-Assyrian sites. This interpretation suggests that these three terms are more or less synonymous. A look at three comparable excerpts from the royal inscriptions of Aššurnaṣirpal adds to this discussion.

Much like the text from the obverse of the House of Šarrat-nipḫi colossus, the Banquet Stele text of Aššurnaṣirpal lists the temples of various gods that the king built anew and reconstructed at Nimrud. The section begins by referring to the temples with the plural *ekurrāte* (É.KUR.MEŠ).[209] This line is followed by a list of the temples using the designation *bīt* DN, including the *bītu*s of Enlil, Ninurta, Ea-šarru and Damkina, Adad and Šala, Gula, Sin, Nabu, Šarrat-nipḫi, the Sibitti, and the Kidmuri.[210] The sequence ends in line fifty-eight with the statement *ekurrāt ilāni rabûti* ("*ekurru*s of the great gods"). The plural of *ekurru* both preceding and following the itemized list of temples is used to reference the group of temples as a whole.

In the text inscribed on the reverse of Šarrat-nipḫi colossus Aššurnaṣirpal again speaks of his temple work at Nimrud. This time the relevant section of the text begins with a single *bītu* followed by a list of four gods' names, then in the following two lines the text uses the singular *ekurru* (É.KUR) qualified by the singular demonstrative pronoun *šī* ("this"):[211]

bīt Ninurta Šarrat-nipḫi Gula Sîn	The *bītu* of Ninurta, Šarrat-nipḫi, Gula, (and) Sin
ina qerebšu lū addi ekurri šī ana nalban lū akṣur šubāt ilāni rabûti ina libbi ukīn ekurri šī ana nanmar malkī u rubê	I founded therein [Kalaḫ]. I completed the construction of this *ekurru*. The seats of the great gods I established therein. I built this *ekurru* for the eternal admiration
ša dārâte ēpuš	of rulers and princes.

The use of the sole *bītu* at the beginning of this sequence and the singular *ekurru* in the succeeding lines suggests that these four gods shared a single building. This singularity contrasts with the Banquet Stele text, as well as the text on the obverse of the colossus (cited at the beginning of Chapter II.1); the two latter texts seem to speak of multiple

[208] Sallaberger (2011–2013: 520) summarizes a temple building as follows: "Bauten, die Göttern geweiht sind, sind darüber hinaus Tore, Mauern, die „Kultsockel" (para$_{10}$/*parakku*), die teils im Tempel, teils auf den Straßen liegen, die „Standorte" (*manzāzu*) von Göttern im Tempel;" see further, Miglus 2011–2013: §1.

[209] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 53.

[210] *bīt Enlil u Ninurta… bīt Ea-šarru u Damkina bīt Adad u Šala bīt Gula bīt Sîn bīt Nabû bīt Šarrat-nipḫi bīt Sibitti bīt Kidmuri;* RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 55–58.

[211] RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 9–11.

buildings, based on the repeated use of *bītu* and the plural forms of *ekurru*.[212] The archaeological evidence at the site of Nimrud contributes to this discussion.

As presented in FIGURE 7, the House of Ninurta at Nimrud stood within a larger temple complex that also contained chambers devoted to other gods.[213] This arrangement of multiple gods housed within a single temple complex is mirrored at Khorsabad, an architectural arrangement that Reade argues was based on the complex at Nimrud (FIGURE 15).[214] Reade drew upon the better preserved arrangement at Khorsabad and the information from Aššurnaṣirpal's inscriptions to propose the layout for the Nimrud complex. The fact that the archaeological evidence permits for the inclusion of spaces for the group of gods mentioned in Aššurnaṣirpal's royal inscriptions within a single temple complex argues for interpreting the single *bītu* of the inscription on the reverse of the Šarrat-nipḫi colossi as referring to this temple complex. Such a proposition would also suggest that *ekurru* and *bītu* are used synonymously in this text to refer to the single temple complex.

Unfortunately the use of multiple *bītu* and the plural of *ekurru* in the passages from the text on the obverse of the colossi and the Banquet Stele argues against an understanding of these terms as referring to a single temple complex. Moreover, the text from the obverse of the colossi includes in its list the House of Nabu, a building that is known for certain to have been located in the southeast corner of the citadel at a notable distance from this temple complex (FIGURE 6). This variation suggests that the *bītu* of the gods listed in this text were not housed within a single temple complex, a conclusion that would also explain the use of the plural *ekurru* preceding and following this list, yet at the same time support an argument for the synonymity of *ekurru* and *bītu*.

The variant uses of this set of terms in the three texts of Aššurnaṣirpal on the temples at Nimrud give the impression that *bīt* DN and *ekurru* could be used to refer to both the type of large, bounded structure lived in by one god, and for the inner chambers reserved for secondary gods within a larger temple complex. Comparable passages from the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon suggest that *bīt* DN continued to be used to reference these two types of divine houses.

In a text recounting Esarhaddon's repairs of a *bītu* of the gods Sin, Ningal, Šamaš, and Aya at Nineveh, the section begins with a singular *bītu* followed by the gods' names, and thereafter continues to refer to this building in the singular (for example, "that temple," *bīt šuāti*) when detailing the work he performed on it.[215] In Esarhaddon's text on his restoration of the House of Aššur, the relevant section begins with the expression *bīt Aššur*, followed by *bītu* with a singular demonstrative pronoun, and then a list of *bītu*s of

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[212] This interpretation of the passage from the obverse of the Šarrat-nipḫi colossi contrasts with that of Reade (2002: 135) in his study of the temples at Nimrud, in which he states the following: "A terminology problem is that several Akkadian words describe structures in which gods resided, but they are not always used consistently: for instance, one Aššurnaṣirpal text (A.0.101.32) appears to use the logogram É to describe the houses of some individual gods, É.KUR to describe the larger building containing these houses, and then É.KUR again to describe the house of just one of them."

[213] The House of Ninurta was identified by the dedicatory text found within, and the House of Šarrat-nipḫi was confirmed by the inscription on the colossi, which were situated at the principal doorway (Mallowan 1966: I, 84–92; Reade 2002: 167f).

[214] Reade 2002: 192.

[215] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 12, 12–23.

various other gods, each written *bīt* DN; the text then continues to refer to a single *bītu* that was the focus of Esarhaddon's building project, the *bīt Aššur*.[216] The sequence in this second text seems to imply that the other *bīt* DN were situated within the *bīt Aššur*. This passage has spawned variant translations, for example, Borger uses "Tempel" solely to refer to the Aššur structure and "Haus" for the other *bīt* DN, [217] while Leichty translates all of the *bīt* DN with "temple."[218]

Passages from the royal correspondence contribute to the discussion. The lexical sequence of a letter sent to the king from Ana-Nabu-Taklak, an official in Borsippa,[219] implies that there is something inherently different between *ekurru* and *bīt ili*:[220]

šullum ana Ezida	All is well at the Ezida
u ana ekurrāte	and at the *ekurru*s
ana bīt ilāni	and *bīt ili*s.

Second is a letter from Urdu-aḫḫešu, an high official in Babylon,[221] the wording of which suggests that *ekurrus* could be subsidiary spaces within a larger *bītu*. The author reports on the restoration of Esagil in Babylon by giving a list of structural elements that had been completed, including the upper *kisallu* in the *bītu* with its *ekurru* and the lower *kisallu* with its *ekurru*:[222]

Esagila kisallu elēnû	Esagil, the upper *kisallu*
ina bīt Bēl Bēltiya uššabuni	in the *bītu* in which the gods Bel and Beltiya reside,
adi ekurrātišu papaḫḫi Tašmētu	with its *ekurru*s, (and) the *papāḫu* of the goddess Tašmetum,
kisallu šapliu adi ekurrātišu	the lower *kisallu* with its *ekurru*s,
gimru annīu gabbu epiš gamir	all of this is completely finished.

Since these two letters are about seventh century Babylonian structures, there is the possibility that the semantic range of the terms here discussed differed from their use in

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[216] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iii 16f.

[217] Borger 1967: §2, III 16–IV 6: "Als der frühere Assur-Tempel.... Nach 580 Jahren waren der innere Kultraum, die Wohnung meines Herrn Assur, das šaḫûru-Haus, das Haus des Kubu, das Haus des Dibar und das Haus des Ea baufällig, alt und schwach geworden. (Anfangs) ängstigte ich mich, scheute ich mich und zauderte ich, jenen Tempel zu erneuern.... und betreffs des Baues jenes Tempels und der Erneuerung seiner Cella liessen sie ein Leberorakel schreiben;" similarly, Luckenbill 1927: 272–273, §706.

[218] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iii 16–iv 6: "The former temple of the god Aššur.... five hundred and eighty years passed and the inner cella, the residence of the god Aššur, my lord, the *bīt-šaḫūru*, the temple of the god Kubu, the temple of the god Dibar, (and) the temple of the god Ea became dilapidated, aged, (and) antique. I was worried, afraid, (and) hesitant about renovating that temple.... they had (their response) concerning the (re)building of that temple (and) the renovation of its chapel written on a liver."

[219] PNA 1/I: 110, "Ana-Nabû-taklāk."

[220] SAA 17: no. 79, 6–8. The singling out of Ezida from the rest of the temples is likely due to the prominence of Ezida as the House of Nabu, the patron deity of Borsippa; see George 1993: 159f, no. 1236.

[221] PNA 3/II: 1395, "Urdu-aḫḫešu 7."

[222] SAA 13: no. 168, 12–15.

reference to the buildings constructed by the same kings in Assyria. The preceding examples related to structures within Assyria, however, present the same type of ambiguity.

Thus while some examples corroborate the synonymity of the *bītu*-affiliated terms (*bīt* DN, *bīt ili*, *ekurru*) and their correlation with the same type of large, bounded, divinely associated structure, some examples present contradictions that suggest a true ambiguity, one that may not simply be the result of modern interpretation but which may have existed at the time these texts were produced. Unfortunately the ways in which the terms from the subsidiary group are employed in the texts does little to clarify matters.

b. Subsidiary Group

kisallu, parakku, nēmedu, ešertu, atmanu, māḫāzu, sukku, papāḫu, kiṣṣu, and *ayakku* present a seemingly impenetrable network of architectural and spatial designations when referencing divine structures. *kisallu* is perhaps the least problematic of the group, being well attested as meaning "courtyard" with no notable contradictory attestations, as in the letter of Urdu-aḫḫeš detailing the work on Esagil. The remaining terms, however, are variously translated as "shrine," "sanctuary," "chapel," "cella," "cult chamber," "cult center," "holy of the holies," "altar," or "dais," with great fluidity and inconsistency. While caused in part by the lack of precise semantic particularity in the Akkadian texts, with many of the terms used in connection with both ritualized and non-ritualized spaces,[223] the admittedly similar ambiguity of the English language for this list of favored equivalents does nothing to improve the situation.[224] A close reading of a few relevant passages from the Akkadian corpus accompanied by my own English translations supports some degree of distinction between these closely intertwined terms, while also revealing the persistent challenges of this group of terms.

Worthy of note are those Akkadian passages that list a number of these features in sequence, therein seeming to imply that they are not equivalent designations and thus not synonymous. In his account of his reconstructive work on the House of Aššur at Assur,

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[223] In previous publications it has been the practice to use such labels as "divine" and "secular" to distinguish between these two types of spaces, the former being associated with the gods and the latter with humans. Such an analytical division, however, is anachronistic for the Assyrian material, and caters instead to a modern viewpoint that sees a strict black-and-white division between things of gods and that of humans, and which does not permit for the more fluid and overlapping nature of such spaces that is espoused by the Assyrian material. The nature of division that is relevant for this study is between space that is ritualized and that which is not, based on the characteristics of ritualized space and material as defined above. Yet even this division, as shown below, presents itself not in terms of black and white but rather in degrees.

[224] The Oxford English Dictionary offers the following as possible definitions for "shrine": 2. a) the box, casket, or other repository in which the relics of a saint are preserved, b) a receptacle containing an object of religious veneration; occas. a niche for sacred images, c) an object of veneration, d) the part of a church in which a shrine stands, 4. a) that which encloses, enshrines, or screens, or in which something dwells, 5. a place where worship is offered or devotions are paint to a saint or deity; a temple, church. For "sanctuary," the OED offers the following: 1. a) a building or place set apart for the worship of God or of one or more divinities: applied, e.g., to a Christian church, the Jewish temple and the Mosaic tabernacle, a heathen temple or site of local worship, and the like, b) the priestly office or order, c) applied to Heaven, 2. a) a specially holy place within a temple or church, b) that part of a church round the altar, the sacrarium; also used by some for the chancel, c) the most sacred part of any temple; the 'cella', 'adytum.'

Esarhaddon includes in his list of praiseworthy deeds the restoration of *sukku*s, *parakku*s, and *nēmedu*s, translated by Leichty as follows: "I restored the shrines, daises, cult platforms."[225] Similar sequencing with the addition of *ešertu*s is found in a prayer to Ištar, the Boğazköy version of which reads as follows: *sukkū ešrēti nēme[da]... kâši*; while the better preserved Neo-Babylonian text offers the following: *sukkū ešrēti nēmeda u parakkī upaqqu kâši*.[226] Reiner and Güterbock translate this line as follows: "chapels, sanctuaries, altars and daises hearken to you;" while the CAD offers the following: "chapels, sanctuaries, cult platform, throne daises hearken to you;"[227] and alternately: "chapels, shrines, sockle(?), and (divine) thrones heed (only) you."[228] The sequential arrangement of *sukku, parakku, ešertu,* and *nēmedu* in these passages implies that each term has a unique architectural correlation. Perhaps a spatial, size, or phonetic ordering is also be at play. The lexical contexts, however, do not explicitly convey what architectural features these might be. Turning to more contextually rich passages offers some hope of elucidating the unique intricacies of each term.

Support for the translation of *parakku* and *nēmedu* as "dais" or "platform" is found in the multitude of passages that designate each as the place where the god(s) sat.[229] Moreover, many lexical contexts situate the *parakku* and *nēmedu* within other architectural features, for example the *atmanu* or *ešertu*. The latter two terms are often understood as the most inner chamber of a larger divine structure.[230] The following passage from a text of Aššurnaṣirpal, which was inscribed on the reverse of the stone reliefs at a doorway to the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, corroborates this proposed architectural hierarchy, of the *parakku* situated within the *atmanu,* both of which were within the *ekurru*:[231]

ekurra šî ana nalban lū akṣur parakki Ninurta bēliya ina qerebšu lū addi	This *ekurru* I constructed in its entirety. The *parakku* of the god Ninurta, my lord, I founded therein.
enūma Ninurta bēlu ina parakkišu elli ina atmanišu ša ru'āme ina hūd libbišu ana dārâte uššabu	When the god Ninurta, the lord, joyfully sits for eternity on his pure *parakku* in his *atmanu* of affection.

[225] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vi 15–16.
[226] Reiner and Güterbock 1967: 259, NB (14), Bo (16b). The Boğazköy version is from a tablet excavated at the Hittite capital (KUB XXXVII 36 (+) 37), which was found alongside a Hittite version of the same prayer (KUB XXXI 142). The Neo-Babylonian version was first published by King in *The Seven Tablets of Creation* II (1902: pls. LXXV–LXXXIV), upon which Ebeling (1953: 130) based his edition, published in *Die Akkadische Gebetsserie "Handerhebung."* All three versions (including translation) are published in Reiner and Güterbock 1967.
[227] CAD "N": 2, 157 *nēmedu* 3 a).
[228] CAD "P": 513 *puqqu*.
[229] See the passages cited under CAD "P": 145f *parakku* A; and CAD "N": 2, 155f *nēmedu* 3).
[230] Sallaberger 2011–2013: 520.
[231] RIMA 2: A.0.101.31, 16–17.

The understanding of *atmanu* as the most inner chamber within the *bītu* is also suggested by Esarhaddon's inscription on the House of Aššur, in which *atmanu* is rendered with a possessive suffix following *bīti šâtu*:[232]

ša epēš bīti šâtu	concerning the rebuilding of that *bītu*,
udduš atmanišu	the renovation of its *atmanu*.

Another text of Esarhaddon—a record of his restoration of the divine images in Babylon that was inscribed on clay tablets from Nineveh—situates the *parakku* within the *ešertu*, which was among the *māḫāzu*s:[233]

bānû bīt Aššur ēpiš Esagila u Bābili	The one who (re)constructed the *bītu* of the god Aššur, (re)built Esagil and Babylon,
ša ilāni mātāti šallūti ana ašrišunu uterruma ušarmû parak dārâti	who returned the gods, plundered from the lands, to their place and let (them) dwell on the eternal *parakku*
ša ešrēt kullat māhāzī	of the *ešertu* of all of the *māhāzu*s.

While these passages might inspire confidence for a set architectural hierarchy between *parakku, nēmedu, atmanu, ešertu,* and *māhāzu*, other texts from this period challenge such a definitive ordering.

The following line from a literary text gives the impression of the *parakku* as being a much larger space than that implied by the preceding texts. Here Budi-il, a scribe likely from the reign of Aššurbanipal,[234] is writing to the gods Nabu and Tašmetum to ask that the *parakku* be filled with the aroma of pure *burāšu*-wood:[235]

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[232] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iv 4–5. While the masculine singular *-šu* suffix agrees in gender and number with *bītu*, it ought to be noted that the default gender of Akkadian was masculine, and thus, masculine grammatical renderings cannot always be relied upon for making definitive arguments for the agreement between suffixes and nouns. The sequence and context of this particular line, however, support the correlation between the *-šu* suffix of *atmanu* and the preceding *bītu.* On gender and case in Akkadian, see von Soden 1995.

[233] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, 36–38; K 2801 + K 3053 (DT 252); K 221 + K 2669; K 18057. On the parallel use of *parakku* and *ešertu*, see further CAD "M": 1, 86 *māḫāzu* 2. b).

[234] PNA 1/I: 350, "Būdi-il 2."

[235] SAA 3: no. 14, 8. On this literary text, see Nissinen 1998a.

CAD "B": 326f *burāšu* (GIŠ.LI, ŠIM.LI, GIŠ.ŠIM.LI, Ú.GIŠ.LI), "1. juniper tree, 2. (an aromatic substance obtained from the juniper tree)."

burāšu-wood is believed to be Juniper oxycedrus, sourced from the mountains near Iraq and used for its aromatic resin and timber, and *duprānu*-wood Juniperus drupacea, grown in Syria and also used for its oil and timber, especially for doors and door poles (Postgate 1992b: 180f). Based on the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, Sennacherib and Aššurbanipal preferred *burāšu*-wood for the doors of their palaces and temples (Moorey 1994: 358). The interpretation of *burāšu* here as an aromatic substance or scent rather than timber itself is, in addition to context, due to the *ellu* qualification, for example: *mê burāšī ellūti*

ina parakki lillikū burāšu ellūti	Let the pure *burāšu* enter into the *parakku*.

As explanation for this extended use of *parakku*, von Soden suggests that the dais with the divine image was considered the true heart of the temple, and as such, that *parakku* could also be used to reference the overall building.[236] No lexical or grammatical peculiarities within the text, however, confirm this reading, which places the onus of clarification on passages with a more explicit context. Another explanation for this varied use of *parakku* may be the nature of this text itself, since literary texts could use technical terminology in a more imaginative, figurative way than the royal correspondence and inscriptions.

The relationship between *ešertu* and *māḫāzu* presents similar challenges, for while the genitival relationship cited above in Esarhaddon's text on his restoration of the divine images denotes a hierarchy of the *ešertu* within or among the *māhāzu*, other passages present these terms as parallel. Aššurnaṣirpal's royal inscription from the reliefs from the House of Ninurta as well as the Northwest Palace, for example, tells of the king opening *māḫāzu*s and founding *ešertu*s:[237]

ša māhāzī	who founded the *māhāzu*s
upattu ukinnu ešrēti	(and) established the *ešertu*s.

A similar example is found in a prism inscription of Esarhaddon that recounts his rebuilding of Babylon and Esagil. In this line the king states that the god Marduk ordered him to do as follows:[238]

ana šuklul māhāzī udduš ešrētu	to complete the *māhāzu*s (and) renovate the *ešertu*s.

A text from the reign of Aššurbanipal presents an almost equivalent passage:[239]

ana udduši ešrēti Aššur u šuklul māhāzī Akkadî	to renovate the *ešertu*s of Assyria and to complete the *māhāzu*s of Akkad.

This type of parallel structuring found in the texts of a number of kings suggests a separate spatial correlation for the *ešertu* and *māḫāzu*. Despite the latter having a broad semantic field, ranging from a small chamber associated with the divine to an important city or divine center, in the Neo-Assyrian period *māḫāzu* seems to be used predominately

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tasallah, "you sprinkle (it) with pure juniper 'water';" Ebeling 1919: 135, nr. 73, 7, in CAD "B": 327 *burāšu* 4′.

[236] von Soden 1975: 142.

[237] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, i 30–31; A.0.101.17, i 32.

[238] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, ii 41–42.

[239] Streck 1916: 191, 12.

in the latter sense. The following examples from two literary texts and an inscription of Esarhaddon on his rebuilding of the House of Aššur uphold this proposition:[240]

Til-Barsibi māhāzu dannu	Til Barsip, the strong *māhāzu.*
Dēr māhāzu rabâ	Dēr is a great *māhāzu.*
ina Baltil māhāzu ṣīru āl šar ilāni Aššur	In Baltil [Assur], the magnificent *māhāzu*, the city of the king of the gods, the god Aššur.

This apparent focused use of *māḫāzu* in the Neo-Assyrian period resolves some ambiguity, arguing for an understanding of the *ešertu* as situated within the *māḫāzu* in the sense of a building or structure located within a city, whether expressed lexically as parallels or in a genitival relationship.

This group of citations from a broad range of tests supports the hierarchy of *parakku, nēmedu*, *ešertu, atmanu,* and *māḫāzu* that is presented in DIAGRAM 1. In this arrangement the *māḫāzu* is a larger space or structure that contains within it the *ešertu* or *atmanu*. The *bīt* DN*, ekurru,* or *bīt ili* is also a larger structure that contains within it the *ešertu* or *atmanu*. The *ešertu* or *atmanu* functions as the primary space within the larger structure, and houses the *nēmedu* or *parakku.* The relationship between the *māḫāzu* and the *bīt DN*, *ekurru*, or *bīt ili* is less clear, and as such, the separation between these two entities is represented by a dashed line.

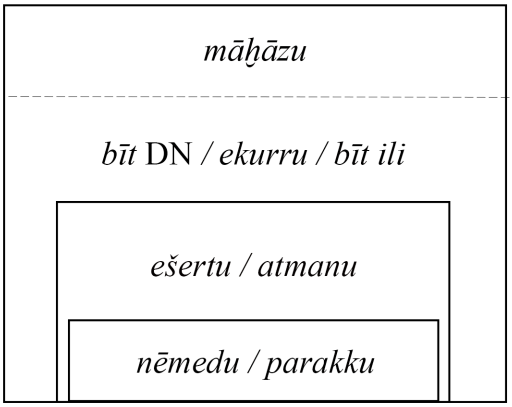

DIAGRAM 1. Possible Hierarchical Arrangement of Selected Temple Terms

Yet issues of synonymity and equivalency persist, due to both the few contradictory attestations previously discussed and passages containing the remaining terms of this subsidiary group.

[240] Cited in sequence: SAA 3: no. 17, 8; no. 41, 13′; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 76, 13. The inscription of Esarhaddon is from an unbaked clay tablet that was found at Assur (excavation number Ass 21506e).

Many attestations of *sukku, papāḫu, kiṣṣu, and ayakku* confirm the function of each as a designation for a space resided in by a god, the majority implying the type of inner chamber that has hitherto been associated with *ešertu* and *atmanu*. An unassigned letter sent to the king from Nimrud situates the *sukku* within the *bītu* of Nabu and ascribes to the former its own *abullu*[241] and *bābu* ("doorway"):[242]

ina šapla abulli ša bīt Nabû	She [Ištar] will go under the *abullu* of the *bītu* of the god Nabu,
tallak ina bāb sukki tuššab	(and) she will sit in the *bābu* of the *sukku*.

A line from the royal inscriptions of Sargon argues for the synonymity of *sukku* and *ešertu* as the place within which the gods dwelt:[243]

ešrēti namrāti sukkī naklūti ina qereb Dūr Šarrukīn ṭābiš irmû	they (the gods) joyously moved into radiant *ešertu*s, refined *sukku*s within Dur-Šarrukin.

This passage might also be read, however, as follows: "radiant *ešertu*s and refined *sukku*s." The following lines from clay cylinder inscriptions of Esarhaddon regarding Eanna at Uruk suggest that the *papāḫu*, like the *ešertu* and *atmanu*, referred to a subsidiary architectural space devoted to a single divinity that was situated within a larger temple complex (here Eanna):[244]

Enirgalanna papāḫi Ištar bēltiya ša qereb Eanna	Enirgalana ("*bītu* of the Prince of Heaven"), the *papāḫu* of the goddess Ištar, my lady, which is within Eanna;
Eḫilianna papāḫi Nanna bēltiya ša qereb Eanna	Eḫiliana ("*bītu* Luxuriance of Heaven"), the *papāḫu* of the goddess Nanaya, my lady,

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[241] CAD "A": 1, 82f *abullu* (KÁ.GAL), "2. entrance gate of a building or building complex, of a country, of cosmic regions."

[242] SAA 13: no. 135, 10′–11′. *bābu*s are similarly attributed to *sukku*s in the following administrative record: SAA 7: no. 181, 1–2.

CAD: CAD "B": 14f *bābu* A (KÁ), "1. opening, doorway, door, gate, entrance (to a house, a building or a part thereof, to a palace, a temple or part thereof, to a city, to a cosmic locality)."

The Akkadian term *bābu* is translated as "gateway" as well as "doorway;" I have chosen to maintain "doorway" when speaking of any open passageway between two spaces within a temple, because the distinction we make between what we would call a "doorway" and a "gateway" is not always apparent in the Neo-Assyrian texts. This multiplicity of interpretations is illustrated by the full entry for *bābu* in the CAD (APPENDIX A).

[243] Winckler and Abel 1889: pl. 36, 76, 157, in CAD "S": 361 *sukku* a).

[244] Cited in sequence: RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 134, 11; Esarhaddon 135, 11. On Eanna, see Ebeling 1938; George 1993: 67–68, no. 75. Cylinders with the latter inscription are part of the collections at the Musée du Louvre (AO 6772) and the British Museum (ME 113204).

which is within Eanna.

These texts employ the common orthography of É.*pa-pa-ḫi* DN.[245] The É denominator in this writing marks the function of the *papāḫu* as a dwelling place for a god. This function of the *papāḫu* is further substantiated by a succeeding line from the latter text:[246]

Nanna bēltu ṣirtum ina	O goddess Nanaya, exalted lady,
qereb papāḫi šuāti ḫadîš	when you are joyfully
ina ašābiki	dwelling within that *papāḫu*.

The former text on the *papāḫu* of Ištar also reveals that Esarhaddon fitted this space with a very fine *šigaru*.[247] In addition to attesting to the restricted nature of a *papāḫu*, the mention of a *šigaru* in connection with a *papāḫu* also confirms the spatial and architectural correlation of the latter term. It is interesting to note that *papāḫu* was used to refer to the reception room of houses dating back to the Old Babylonian period, which correlates with its use to refer to the inner chamber—the chamber of the god—in the Neo-Assyrian temple.[248] A letter to Esarhaddon from Bel-ušezib, a Babylonian scholar,[249] warning him of the danger of leaving Nippur in ruins, demonstrates that the *kiṣṣu* was also a space within which a god resided:[250]

annūtu ilānu rabûtu	These great gods will become
iggagūma ul irrubū ana	angry and not enter their
kiṣṣišunu	*kiṣṣu*s.

While these examples speak to the general synonymity of this last set of terms—*sukku*, *papāḫu*, *kiṣṣu*, and *ayakku*—as designations for the subsidiary dwelling place of a single divinity, the problem persists of not being able to disentangle these terms by making an argument for a unique or individual architectural correlation for each. Worth noting is the sequential use of terms from this subsidiary group in a hymn to the city of Arbela:[251]

ayak Arba'il aštammu ṣīru	*ayakku* of Arbela, exalted hostel,
ekurru šundulu parak	broad *ekurru*, *parakku* of

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[245] See further, CAD "P": 101–102 *papāḫu* b).
[246] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 135, 16.
[247] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 134, 15.
CAD "Š": 2, 408f *šigaru* ((GIŠ.)SI.GAR), "1. (part of a lock, probably the bolt or bar)."
[248] Sallaberger 2011–2013: 521.
[249] PNA 1/I: 338, "Bel-ušēzib 1.;" Parpola 1998: Table 1 (SAA 10); Robson forthcoming: Table A6.
[250] SAA 18: no. 124, r. 6. Challenging this understanding of *kiṣṣu* is a royal inscription of Shalmaneser III that equates the city of Kurbail with a *kiṣṣu*: *kiṣṣu āšib Kurbail kiṣṣi elli bēlu rabû bēlišu* ("the one who dwells in the city of Kurbail, the pure *kiṣṣu*, the great lord, his lord"); RIMA 3: A.0.102.12, 8. It may be that the term is here being used metaphorically. The CAD ("K": *kiṣṣu* 445) remarks that Elamite and possibly also Babylonian references suggest that *kiṣṣu* was a "high temple" of the kind built atop temple towers, while in Standard Babylonian *kiṣṣu* seems to be used as a poetic term for temple, yet its use by Assyrian kings "may designate a sacred city or a city with a prominent sanctuary."
[251] SAA 3: no. 8, 6–7, 11, 18, r. 21′.

ṣiḫāti...	delight...
Arba'il bīt ṭeme u milki...	Arbela, *bītu* of reason and counsel...
māḫāzu ṣiru parak šīmāte abul šamê...	exalted *māḫāzu*, *parakku* of the fates, *abullu* of heaven...
ekurru kuzbu za'ūn	*ekurru*, adorned with abundance.

Though the metaphoric use of these terms a literary passage limits the ability to draw firm conclusions regarding the terms' semantic ranges, this example speaks to a conceptual link between these terms and suggests some degree of synonymity or overlap for this subsidiary group.

The Akkadian terms—much like the set of English terms are often employed in translation—remain an ambiguous network of synonymity and fluidity. Moreover, the interchangeability of the terms that is suggested by the textual sources challenges definitive arguments for their relationship with unique architectural features, as well as their relationship to one another. Von Soden manages this overarching ambiguity of the Akkadian temple terminology by suggesting that it might stem from the fluctuating nature of the built environment itself, with the only true consistent feature in the Mesopotamian archaeological evidence being the central, inner chamber.[252] With that consideration in mind and despite the persisting lexical inconclusivity, the preceding considerations of terminology do permit for something more concrete to be said about the understanding and conceptualization of this particular built environment for Neo-Assyrian elite society.

2. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SPACE: THE TEMPLE AS HOUSE

The use of such a common term as *bītu* as the primary textual designation for a temple undeniably denotes the Neo-Assyrian primary conceptualization of these spaces not as a place of worship, nor as a space moderately associated with the divine, but rather as the principal structure in which a god or gods actively lived and resided. This functional association was modeled upon the relationship between humans and their private houses, an aspect that has not gone unnoticed in previous scholarship on these two structural entities in Mesopotamia.

Oppenheim, for example, characterizes both the palace and temple as "households" in his functionally-oriented discussion of these two "great organizations" in his seminal work *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization.*[253] In his paper on the role of the temple in Mesopotamia, Kraus begins with a study of the terms used to

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[252] von Soden 1975: 135: "Angesichts dieser Tatsachen wird die Zahl der Wörter für Tempelräume, die eine eindeutige Einordnung dieser Räume in einen Tempelkomplex und die Bestimmung ihrer Funktion erlauben, wohl immer betrüblich klein bleiben."
[253] Oppenheim 1977: 95.

designate the temple in Babylonian texts and concludes that there was no conceptual difference between the house of a human, of a king, and of a bourgeois (*bīt awēlim*), and that though overtime the temple distanced itself in plan and fittings from all other dwelling places, "pour l'habitant de la Mésopotamie, le temple resta toujours une maison."[254] Twenty-years later, in follow-up to Kraus' article and as a general introduction to the XX[e] Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, entitled "Le temple et le culte," over which Kraus presided, Sollberger presented a paper in which he similarly argued, also from a specifically Babylonian text-oriented perspective, that to a Babylonian the fundamental difference between the dwelling place of a god and that of a human was ownership.[255] The conditions of ownership, however, of a house for a god and human differed slightly. A human had the option to transfer his property, for example he could sell his house or leave it to another as inheritance. For the houses of gods and goddesses, not only is there is no evidence from Mesopotamia for deities disposing of their temples, archaeological evidence also shows extremely long continuity in the siting of temples, for example the House of Ištar sequence at Assur that stretches back to the late third millennium BCE.[256]

An extensive study of the corpus of texts related to a Mesopotamian temple hitherto assembled is Menzel's two-volume publication on the cult, administration, and personnel of the Assyrian temple. This study groups the texts by geographical setting in part one and by personnel designation in part two. Yet only in the introduction does the author comment upon the plurality of terms used to designate the temple itself in these texts and our inability to discern their differences, the Aššur temple presented as example.[257] Since her aim is "zu umschreiben als Aufarbeitung und Auswertung des überlieferten assyrischen Textmaterials zum offiziellen Tempelkult und zu dem für das Funktionieren eines Tempelbetriebs (in all seinen Aspekten) erforderlichen Personals,"[258] Menzel does not address the overarching conceptualization of the temple in light of these terminological designations nor consider the shared use of the term *bītu* between what she calls a "Heiligtum" and the house of a private individual in the body of her work.

More recently Jahn recognized and revived Sollberger's concept of the house and the temple in a lengthy study of private houses in the Old Babylonian. The author supplements Sollberger's work by providing examples of specific architectural terms used in reference to the homes of both humans and gods: "Da der Tempel in erster Linie das Wohnhaus des Gottes ist, ist davon auszugehen, daß die Bezeichnungen für Räume und Bereiche des Tempels deren Position oder Funktion unter dem Aspekt des Wohnens aufgreifen."[259] This interchangeability was possible, Jahn notes, because the concept of a god's house was founded upon that of a private house, and that the architectural terms used in reference to a temple would have originated not within discourse of the temple

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[254] Kraus 1954: 519–20. Kraus focused primarily on texts from the Ur III period through to the end of the First Dynasty of Babylon (c. 2150–1600 BCE). These texts were written in both Sumerian and Akkadian. See further Van de Mieroop 2006 on these historical periods. On Sumerian language and literature, see Michalowski 1995.
[255] Sollberger 1975.
[256] Andrae 1935.
[257] Menzel 1981: I, 1.
[258] Menzel 1981: I, 2.
[259] Jahn 2005: 130.

but, again, that of a private house; these terms were then used to describe the house of a god.[260]

Though drawing upon textual sources from earlier periods in Mesopotamia, this scholarship reinforces the concept of the temple as a house that persists into the first millennium BCE and continues to govern references to temples in the Neo-Assyrian sources. Moreover, while this parallel conceptualization between what we would call a temple and a house is confirmed by the shared use of the term *bītu*, it is further reinforced at a linguistic level by a number of shared verbal expressions.

The Babylonian Šarru-emuranni, governor of Mazamua,[261] writes in a letter to the king about recent deportees and the housing situation at Uruk, stating as follows:[262]

aqṭibâššunu muk yāmuttu	I said that each man
bītišu lirṣībi	ought to build his own *bītu*,
lērubu ina bītišu	enter it, (and) dwell in
lūšebi	his own *bītu.*

The same verbal expressions for entering (*erēbu*)[263] and dwelling (*ašābu*)[264] are used when speaking of the gods and their houses. For example, Nabu-pašir, an official stationed at Ḫarran,[265] writes to Sargon to report that the moon-god Sin entered (*erēbu*) his *bītu* and took a seat on his *šubtu*:[266]

Sîn issuḫur	Sin returned,
ina bītišu ētarab	entered his *bītu*,
ina šalimti	in safety
ina šubtišu	on his *šubtu*
ittušib	sat,
ana šarri bēliya	(and) the king, my lord,
iktarba	he blessed…

A line in the letter from Urdu-aḫḫešu to Aššurbanipal previous cited similarly tells of the gods Bel and Beltiya dwelling (*ašābu*) in their *bītu*:[267]

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[260] Jahn (2005: 131, n. 19) states that in later Akkadian sources the term *papāḫu* was used solely in reference to a chamber within a temple or the chamber of a god in a palace, and that it no longer had an association with a room in a private house. He therefore argues that the appropriate translation for the term in later texts would be "Cella, Kultraum, Heiligtum." For the Babylonian period, however, he concludes that *papāḫu* was used to designate the "Empfangraum" of a house.

[261] PNA 3/II: 1234f, "Šarru-ēmuranni 4."

[262] SAA 15: no. 219, r. 7–10.

[263] CAD "E": 259–273 *erēbu.* Kraus (1954: 530) makes note of this common verbal usage in earlier sources.

[264] CAD "A": 2, 396–402. *ašābu* 2.

[265] PNA 2/II: 858, "Nabû-pāšir 1."

[266] SAA 1: no. 188, r. 1–7.

CAD "Š": 3, 172f *šubtu* A (TUŠ, KI.TUŠ, DAG), "1. seat, chair, throne, 2. base, socle (for a throne or a stela), pedestal, stand."

[267] SAA 13: no. 168, 13.

bīt Bēl Bēltiya uššabūni	the *bītu* in which Bel and Beltiya dwell.

Last, the Eponym List of 788 and 787 BCE states that the god Nabu entered (*erēbu*) his *bītu* at Nineveh once the foundations were complete:[268]

uššu ša bīt Nabû ša Ninua karri ...	the foundations of the *bītu* of Nabu of Nineveh have been laid…
Nabû bīti ešši ētarab	Nabu entered the new *bītu*.

These parallel expressions of entering and dwelling in the *bītu* of both a man and a god affirm a universal understanding of the *bītu* as a term signifying a place of dwelling in the Neo-Assyrian period. This constructed space was conceived of as a place where the possessor, whether human or divine, lived, resided, and managed his or her daily activities. Sollberger extends this variation to a matter of ownership: "the essential difference between a temple and an ordinary house lies in the status of its owner—god or mortal."[269] While the preceding passages do not speak explicitly of ownership, they confirm that the inhabitant—possibly also the owner—was the principal defining characteristic of a house. Our use of such antithetical terms as "temple" and "house" as translation may, as espoused by Sollberger, be unrealistically definitive, even arbitrary: "the distinction between é 'temple' and é 'house' rests exclusively on the context, but I strongly suspect that this distinction is entirely ours. The Babylonian was no doubt perfectly happy with 'house' and would have probably been baffled by our insistence on using two different terms to express the same concept."[270] This shared understanding of space revealed by the Neo-Assyrian sources is one of the reasons why we must reevaluate our labeling and modern conceptualization of this structure in the Neo-Assyrian landscape.

Indeed it may be our removed modern perspective that prompts us to judge this corpus of Akkadian terms as one fraught with ambiguity. Perhaps the seemingly numerous and overlapping corpus of terms for this structure and its various elements may not have presented discomfort for a multicultural and dynamic Neo-Assyrian elite audience. There existed a shared conception of space in the Neo-Assyrian elite mindset between these two larger entities, what we call the "temple" and "house," both serving as dwelling places. Perhaps in previous periods each of the terms previously discussed had a unique meaning but in usage their synonymity grew, making distinctions hard to discern at a linguistic level in the Neo-Assyrian text corpus.[271] Yet the Neo-Assyrians' use of multiple terms for what may be analogous or related space at a subsidiary level within the

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[268] Ungnad 1938: 431, C^b 2, 23 and 25; in CAD "B": 287 *bītu* I c) e′. On the Eponym Lists, see Millard 1994.
[269] Sollberger 1975: 31.
[270] Sollberger 1975: 32.
[271] A comparative present day example might be the following group of terms: apartment, flat, crib, and pad. We have a general understanding of their unique origins and meaning in the English language yet we now use them in a relatively synonymous manner, so much so that when used in a written text there is more often than not no real indication of the original individualistic meaning of each.

house of a god argues that there was a distinction between this structure and other houses. This distinction is supported first, by the notable aesthetic and visual variations of these two entities, the scale of the architectural elements and the prestigious materials of the gods' houses contrasting those of humans' house; and second, by the unique types of practice staged within the house of a god. These two overarching modes of distinction are the focus of Chapters III through V.

What the linguistic evidence affirms is that we ought to avoid imposing somewhat willingly and liberally such notably ahistorical categories as "temple," "shrine," or "sanctuary" upon the Neo-Assyrian material without acknowledging the presumptions and insinuations such terms carry with them. This discussion has not definitively answered the question, how each of the Neo-Assyrian temple terms correlates to the physical structure and differentiates these spaces from other environments, nor has it answered the question, what subtle nuances exist between each for a Neo-Assyrian elite audience. Yet another question that must equally be posed, and which perhaps undermines the preceding two, is whether such nuances in fact existed or if we are at risk of manufacturing arbitrary distinctions to appease our own expectations for conceptualization of space and its correlation with terminology. The question of preservation must also be raised. Perhaps additional Akkadian terms were used in reference to the temple that have not been preserved in the textual sources, which may have strengthened or weakened our understanding of the space. Likewise, spaces and features of a house or temple may have been taken for granted as generic "things," and thus stood outside the scope of what was distinctly labeled or denoted in the textual sources. These types of discrepancies and possibilities, along with the overall preceding call to awareness of the complexity of the Akkadian terminology, both informs and argues for the following proposed terminological framework for this study.

3. ARCHITECTURALLY INSPIRED: AN ANALYTICAL TERMINOLOGY

In the ensuing discussion I retain the Neo-Assyrian terminology in the English translations of cited Neo-Assyrian passages and in discussions of the Neo-Assyrian textual sources, with suggested translations in parentheses when beneficial. The expression "House of DN" is employed when referring to an archaeologically attested house of a particular god: a structure that was defined by a external walls and a doorway, courtyards, various chambers or corridors, and an inner central chamber that functioned as the dwelling place of a principal god, and which could also contain within it similar chambers devoted to ancillary gods and/or goddesses.[272] When statements are made of a more general nature, for example to refer to a number of structures from a particular site or the period overall, I use the term "temple(s)," though in the very general sense of a structure that was built to house a god or gods, altogether disassociated from the modern concept of a temple as a place of worship. While perhaps slightly in contradiction to the Neo-Assyrian conceptualization of this space, maintaining this English term, albeit with

[272] An example of this arrangement is Ezida at Nimrud, which contained within it a principal god's chamber for the god Nabu and a neighboring god's chamber for his consort, the goddess Tašmetum (FIGURE 9). See Meinhold 2013, on the relationships between primary and ancillary deities, and their manifestation in the temple, with respect to Assur and in particular, the House of Šarrat-nipḫi.

the caveat of its disassociation from its modern designation, permits for some degree of familiarity for the modern audience in an otherwise foreign terminological terrain, while also ensuring that this study remains associated with the appropriate corpus of preceding scholarship on these monuments and related material.

A challenging terminological allocation concerns the interior elements of these larger buildings in material and archaeologically-oriented discussions. One ought to draw upon the subsidiary group of Akkadian terms as much as possible, yet concurrently take into account the translations of "shrine," "sanctuary," "cella," "chapel," "cult room," "cult center," and "dais" of previous publications. The sheer plurality, apparent lexical synonymity, and lack of architectural transparency of these terms seems to demand a greater divorce from the original Akkadian terminological framework than required by, for example, *bīt* DN. Yet rather than adopting a set of terms because of their association with divine structures either in modern contexts (for example, "sanctuary" and "shrine") or neighboring cultures in antiquity (for example, the "cella" of the ancient Greek temple), this study adopts a more generic, architecturally-oriented terminology.

In this study interior features receive English designations according to their physical context as much as possible in discussions of the archaeological evidence and material properties of the temple, that is their relationship, spatially and architecturally, to the rest of the built environment, informed primarily by the ground plans of Neo-Assyrian temples known from archaeological excavations. In discussions of the Akkadian textual sources, it is made clear which Akkadian terms are used in the original text and how I am understanding them in each context. This approach ensures that the investigation of the temple built environment, with its various internal spaces, material embellishments, and interactive qualities, is not prematurely governed by labels or lexical designations, therein allowing the Neo-Assyrian material to speak for itself, to fill in questions of meaning and function as they naturally arise.

DIAGRAM 2 illustrates the set of English terms that are employed throughout this study along with their particular architectural correlations, based on a simplified version of the ground plan of the House of Sin and Adad at Khorsabad.[273] First, being a basic outline, variations do present themselves when discussing individual temples; for example, the number of corridors can vary, adjectives are used to distinguish particular courts, such as an outer courtyard and inner courtyard, and the orientation of the different elements can shift. Second, terms have not been allocated for every space or architectural feature. The largely overt and unproblematic features, for example walls, thresholds, and niches, are not included in the diagram. Rather the focus is on those features that seem to have multiple renderings in the Akkadian, and which are the victim of the greatest lexical contradictions and ambiguity in the Akkadian and English language. It is not surprising that such features also prove to be especially significant and meaningful aspects of the built environment with regard to its interactive and ritualizing role, therein demanding this level of lexical transparency for the sake of this study.

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[273] This diagram is a visual representation of the English terms and their architectural-spatial correlations used throughout this study. It is not intended as a visualization of the ambiguity of Akkadian terms previously discussed nor a suggestion for their architectural-spatial correlations, for which reason no Akkadian terms are included in the diagram.

While some of these features are self-explanatory, a few deserve clarification. The "dais," for example, designates the type of raised platform with steps and a niche that is found in the Neo-Assyrian archaeological evidence, and which might be said to correspond to the *parakku* and *nēmedu*. This feature is situated at the narrow end of the inner chamber, here designated as the "god's chamber." The label "god's chamber" is the one exception to the strictly architecturally-oriented system of labeling that I argue for here. The "god" qualification rests on architectural elements of these chambers that confirm an association with particular gods as the space in which the gods resided and dwelt, providing objective support for what might seem like an otherwise suggestive label. The archaeological evidence includes, for example, thresholds inscribed with divinities names,[274] and statues inscribed with dedications to particular gods[275] in the principal doorways[276] leading to these spaces. The architectural supremacy of this chamber, both in terms of placement and material embellishments, alongside the plethora of terms and citations that seem to reference this space in the Akkadian texts, and the fact that this chamber is the one constant of Mesopotamian temples, similarly argues for this being the heart of the larger structure, making the designation "god's chamber" suitable for the central room of the house of a god.

The particulars of the relationships, spatially and conceptually, between all of these architectural elements and spaces, as well as their unique material features, interactive qualities, and place in ritualized practice, is explored and revealed throughout this study, as innovative questions are asked of the material and new relationships are brought to light. The predominantly architecturally oriented terminological framework established here and the preservation of Akkadian terms in text-oriented discussions, prompted by the preceding discussion related to this space, provides the perspective necessary from which to begin such an exploration of this dynamic built environment with its vast corpus of associated materials, agents, and practices.

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[274] For example, the thresholds uncovered during the twentieth-century excavations of Khorsabad (Loud 1936: 90).

[275] For example, the pair of attendants in the doorway to the god's chamber of Nabu in Ezida at Nimrud; RIMA 3: A.0.104.2002; ME 11888 (1865-9-9, 64)(Oates 1957: 28–29)(FIGURE 49).

[276] By "principal" I am referring to those doorways that pass from large exterior courtyards into a temple, as well as those within a temple that pass from inner courtyards toward the gods' chambers, the core of the temple, for which reason they are often more elaborately fitted and marked.

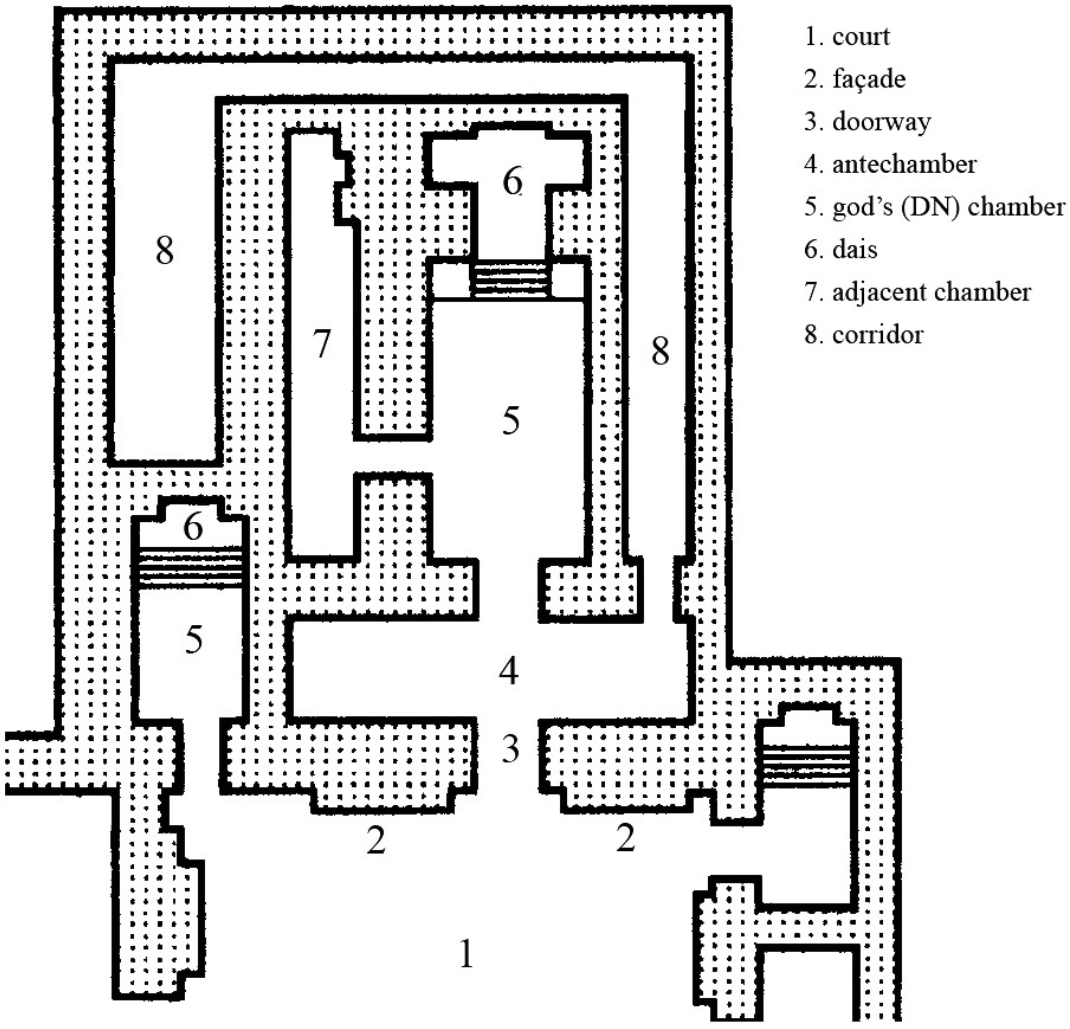

DIAGRAM 2. Neo-Assyrian Temple Plan with Architecturally-Oriented Terminology.

CHAPTER III. FROM RAW TO RITUALIZED: TEMPLE BUILDING MATERIALS

From the foundation deposits of semi-precious stones and inscribed tablets, to wooden doors, door poles overlaid with bronze, and stone divine and royal images, an agglomeration of culturally valued, prestigious materials were assembled to create the Neo-Assyrian temple. Many raw materials were sourced from northern Mesopotamia itself, the kings taking advantage of what was available in abundance within their own imperial backyard. Yet neighboring regions, both close and distant, played an equally contributive role. From these areas the kings acquired an impressive quantity of foreign and exotic goods, through trade, tribute, and as booty while on campaign, in order to construct and adorn the temples, to ritualize the houses of the gods.

Chapter III itemizes the varying types of raw materials used in Neo-Assyrian temple construction, drawing upon both the archaeological evidence and textual sources. Each material group is discussed with regard to its origins, use, and unique cultural value. The particulars of the Akkadian texts confirm that the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions treat material groups in a manner comparable to a modern audience. In addition to the use of determinatives preceding certain nouns to indicate that a particular material or object belonged to a common semantic group (NA_4 for stone (*abnu*) and GIŠ for wood (*iṣu*)),[277] itemized narratives on materials used in temple construction are also often arranged in groups; for example, a list of materials for a foundation deposit might begin with the types of metal followed by types of stone.[278] The structure of Chapter III is formatted around groupings of this type. Yet the unique cultural value associated with each that is here exposed was embedded in the immediate Neo-Assyrian cultural and social context, one that was very different from our present day context. This value was determined by a variety of factors, including the material's point of origin, mode of acquisition, and frequency; its level of difficulty for working and crafting; its visual and aesthetic qualities;[279] and perhaps hardest to access, its inherent active properties, what Winter terms "ascribed properties," as understood by Neo-Assyrian elite society, or what might otherwise be referred to as its "magical" or "supernatural" qualities.[280]

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[277] CAD "A": 1, 54f *abnu* A (NA_4), "1. stone (in natural form and location), 2. stone (prepared for specific use), 3. precious stone (shaped and polished) stone."

CAD "I/J": 214f *iṣu* (GIŠ), "1. tree, 2. timber, lumber, wood, wooden implements, aromatic wood, firewood, 3. wooded area."

On Akkadian determinatives, see Huehnergard 2005: 111–112.

[278] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8; see also, Luckenbill 1924: 138f , no. 12, 51–53.

[279] The term "aesthetic" is used here in the manner defined by Winter (1999a: 46): that which "is concerned with the range of *properties associated with* plus sensory and emotional *responses to* the specific substance and works composed of the substance under discussion."

[280] The use of semi-precious stones for amulets and cylinder seals is attributed to the believed inherent "magical" qualities of the stones themselves; lapis lazuli was used for amulets due to its protective qualities, while other stones and metals were used in foundation deposits by kings and their *ummânus* for similar reasons (Winter 1999a; Ambos 2010: 230; see further, André-Salvini 1999; on amulets, Van Buren 1945; Schuster-Brandis 2008; on seals, Collon et al. 2001). Winter (1999a: 45) contrasts "material properties—color, hardness, sheen—and ascribed properties—that is, amuletic/protective or associative dimensions." Three principal components of Neo-Assyrian *materia medica* that are suggested by a Mesopotamian text were plants, stones, and wood, materials that were associated with the craft of the *āšipu*

The Neo-Assyrian textual sources also demonstrate an awareness of unworked, raw materials versus finished works of art. References in literary and scholarly texts to the purity of certain materials substantiates a discussion of the various stages of material transformation in the Neo-Assyrian elite's conception of technology and craftsmanship. The particular treatment of metals offers further support: first, the Akkadian texts speak of metal ores derived from the mountains; second they seem to distinguish between naturally derived copper and tin, and the binary alloy bronze;[281] and last, they suggest varying levels of value for different silver alloys when used to manufacture works of art. As example is a report sent to the king on the metalwork for the House of Sin at Assur, in which the sender states that the silver had not yet been refined (*qalû*) or washed (*masû*).[282]

This differentiation between metals of varying values, alongside the emphasis on the mountainous and foreign origins of both wood and stone in the textual sources, establishes an important link between raw materials and the ideological motivations of the kings as expressed in the royal inscriptions. Through these texts and their building projects, the kings sought to demonstrate their ability to acquire exotic and prestigious raw materials and to have them worked by their skilled craftsmen into something luxurious with aesthetic and experiential value.[283] This awareness of altering the state of a raw material into a finished product is communicated in a text of Tiglath-pileser III that was inscribed on a clay tablet from Nimrud, but which was ultimately intended for his newly built palace at the same site (Central Palace).[284] In the relevant passage the king states that he worked *abnu*s ("stones") in the craft of the *purkullu*[285] in order to make the *bābu* ("doorway") fit for this royal abode.[286] References to unworked blocks of stone (*takkassu*)[287] in the royal inscriptions and lexical lists further communicate notions of raw versus worked for the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context; for example, an inscription of Esarhaddon states that Median chieftains brought to Nineveh "*takkassu*s of *uqnû*-stone, hewn from its mountain."[288]

(*āšipūtu*), discussed in greater detail below; ME 34035, ii 38–39, in Livingstone 1986: 73. This tablet was recovered from Babylon and dates to the first millennium BCE. Livingstone (1989: XXIX–XXX (SAA 3) includes this text among the "Mythological Texts and Mystical and Cultic Explanatory Works," a designation that groups together texts that offer explanation and interpretations of mythological elements and ritualized practices in Neo-Assyria.

[281] See further the discussion of bronze, copper, and iron in Chapter III.2.d.

[282] SAA 13: no. 28, 8–9; see further, CAD "Q": 68f *qalû* 2. "refined (said of silver)."

[283] Harmanşah 2013: 386.

[284] See the discussion of this text at the beginning of RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47. The tablet is now held at the British Museum under a Kouyunjik number, K 3751, though the provenance marked on the tablet reads "S. E. Palace, Nimroud."

[285] CAD "P": 519f *purkullu* ((LÚ.)BUR.GUL), "stone carver, stone cutter, lapidary."

[286] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47, r. 27′: *abnī šipir purkullūti abnima ussima bāba.*

[287] CAD "T": 75f *takkassu*, "unworked block, slab;" the final note of this entry reads as follows: "*takkassu* designates the unworked or unpolished slab or lump of stone."

[288] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, iv 38: *rabûti takkas uqnî ḫīp šaddišu*.

CAD "U/W": 195f *uqnû* (NA_4.ZA.GIN), "1) lapis lazuli, 2. lapis lazuli color, 3. (a plant);" see in particular, "1) lapis lazuli—a) unworked stone, as raw material;" on *uqnû* in general, see Schuster-Brandis 2008: 453f.

For scholarly references to *takkassu* stones, see the lexical list HAR-ra= "*ḫubullu*" Tablet XVI, available through the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts (DCCLT), text Q000091

All of the aspects of the raw materials noted above—their origin, use, and cultural value—are here explored in order to understand each group as valued material in its own right. When employed in temple construction the unique and valued aspects of each raw material group presented itself in the finished worked products. When brought together in the temple built environment, these aspects participated in the ritualization of this dynamic space, while the space itself concurrently inflected and ritualized these materials, a dynamic symbiosis.[289] The understanding of the individual raw material groups established in Chapter III facilitates the discussion of ritualized materials and practice in the construction of the temple, investigated in Chapter IV, and the subsequent use of this built environment that is presented in Chapter V.

1. SPEAKING OF MATERIALS... : CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE TEXTUAL SOURCES

While archaeological evidence stands as a definitive attestation of the raw materials used in temple construction, a thorough understanding of these materials and their particular use could not be obtained without the textual sources. Not only do Neo-Assyrian texts aid in interpreting the cultural values ascribed to the material evidence, they also preserve much of what archaeology does not.[290]

Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence and administrative records provide accounts of material and labor acquisition and resourcing for Neo-Assyrian royal building programs, in particular from the reign of Sargon II onwards.[291] By way of illustration is a letter to Sargon from his servant Aššur-bani, the *šakin* of Nimrud,[292] in which the latter

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(http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/Q000091), which utilizes the first millennium texts; see also, Landsberger et al. 1970.

[289] Guzman (2004)'s dissertation on the Templo Mayor of the Mexica (Aztec) empire (CE 1375–1521) is worth noting for its discussion of the sourcing of materials from distant parts of the empire and their use in the construction of the temple building, in particular its portable works of art, the stone "two-tufted" figures. Guzman argues that this mixture of materials was deliberately intended as a kind of mapping of incorporated differences, of the multiple ethnic identities and diverse ideologies of the various polities of the wider Aztec realm.

[290] Novotny (2010: 139) substantiates this relationship between the two sources in his study of Neo-Assyrian temples from the perspective of the royal inscriptions: "Some of the information included in texts can be confirmed by archaeological excavations, but other details provided will only ever be known from inscriptions; many, if not most, of the ornate decorations, whether purely decorative or functional, placed in the temples may never be recovered, but the stone foundations, deposited inscriptions, and brickwork of some of Assyria's principal temples can be seen today in Iraq or in museum collections around the world. Archaeological remains and passages in inscriptions provide us only with a glimpse of the grandeur of the earthly abodes of Assyria's gods and goddesses."

[291] See SAA 1; SAA 7; SAA 11. The preservation and availability of texts that discuss construction from the various textual corpora varies by reign and site, making certain information more accessible for particular periods and structures. Yet the continuity of royal tradition, practice, and materials related to the temple from the time of Aššurnaṣirpal to the end of the Neo-Assyrian period warrants the use of textual sources from kings' reigns and sites beyond the narrowed scope of this study. On this established scope and the matter of continuity, see Chapter I.2.

[292] PNA 1/I: 158, "Aššur-bani 5." Aššur-bani is listed as holding the office of *limmu* under Sargon in 713 BCE in the Assyrian Eponym List (Millard 1994: 47; Glassner and Foster 2004: 174).

CAD "Š": 1, 160f *šakin māti*, "governor."

informs the king that the men at Nimrud ought to write to Kiṣir-Aššur, the *bēl pīḫati* of Khorsabad, to ask that straw be made available from the Merchant Town and Šitabni for the repairs of the *bītu*s of the goddess Ištar, the Kidmuri, the Sibitti, and of the god Adad-of-the-Rain.[293] This short letter discloses one type of material desired for construction and its geographical range in terms of acquisition and transport. Additional letters include requests for different types of wood and stone, their transportation to the building site, and the need for specialized administrative and building personnel to complete these tasks.[294]

The royal inscriptions corroborate much of the information on building materials that is provided by the royal correspondence and administrative records. In a text describing his rebuilding of the *akītu*-house at Assur,[295] Sennacherib lists a group of metals, stones, and organic materials that he deposited in the foundations at the onset of construction:[296]

ana libbi ušši bīt akīti	Into the foundations of that *akītu*-house,
šâtu kaspu ḫurāṣu samdu uqnû ḫulalû muššaru	I scattered *kaspu*, *ḫurāṣu, samdu*-stone, *uqnû*-stone, *ḫulālu*-stone, *muššaru*-stone,
pappardilû papparminu ašpuk	*pappardilû*-stone, *papparminu*-stone.

In a similar manner, Esarhaddon itemizes the various types of raw materials from which he fashioned foundation inscriptions when rebuilding Esagil and Babylon:[297]

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[293] SAA 1: no. 114.

[294] See Parpola's (1995) discussion of the royal correspondence related to the construction of Khorsabad.

[295] The *akītu*-house was a temple constructed outside of the capital city for use in the Babylonian *akītu*-festival that was staged in Assyria by Neo-Assyrian kings. This temple and the festival is discussed in Chapter V.2.b; see in particular note 1466 on the *akītu*-houses built by Neo-Assyrian kings in Neo-Assyria.

[296] Luckenbill 1924: 138f, no. 12, 51–53; a more recent translation is found in Ambos 2010: 230.

CAD "K": 245f *kaspu* (KÙ.BABBAR), "1. silver (as metal used for objects as means of payment)."

CAD "Ḫ": 245f *ḫurāṣu* (KÙ.GI) " gold; 1. as material, 2. varieties, 3. economic use, 4. figurative use, 5. in pharmacopoeia, 6. other occ."

CAD "S": 114 *samdu*, "(coarsely) ground."

CAD "Ḫ": 226f *ḫulālu* (NA_4.NÍR), "(a precious stone);" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 436.

CAD "M": 2, 279f *muššaru* (NA_4.NÍR.MUŠ.GÍR), "(a semiprecious stone)."

CAD "P": 107f *pappardilû* ((NA_4.)BABBAR.DIL, (NA_4.)$BABBAR_x$.DIL), "(a whitish semiprecious stone);" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 403f.

CAD "P": 110f *papparminu* ((NA_4.)BABBAR.MIN_5(DIL.DIL)), "(a whitish semiprecious stone);" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 404.

[297] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8.

CAD "S": 296f *siparru* (ZABAR) "1. bronze."

CAD "G": 104f *gišnugallu* (NA_4.GIŠ.NUx.GAL) "alabaster;" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 412f.

CAD "Ṣ": 73f *ṣallamtu*, "(a black stone, probably basalt)."

CAD "P": 323f *pendû* (GUG, (NA_4.)^{d}ŠE.TIR), "2. (a semiprecious reddish stone)." The CAD entry notes that NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR used in the construction of colossi is either *ašnan, ezennû*, or *pendû*; further the CAD entry for *ašnan* (CAD "A": 2, 451f) notes that not all occurrences of NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR should be read *pendû*, continuing as follows: "[t]he latter denotes a rather precious red stone (also a red boil, a red berry)

ušēpišma narê	I had foundation inscriptions made of
kaspi ḫurāṣi siparri uqnî	*kaspu*, *ḫurāṣu*, *siparru*, *uqnû*-stone,
gišnugalli ṣallamtu	*gišnugallu*-stone, *ṣallamtu*-stone,
pindê elallu	*pendû*-stone, *elallu*-stone,
pīlu peṣû	(and) *pīlu peṣû*-stone.

In addition to listing the particular materials used in the kings' building projects, the royal inscriptions also emphasize their origins and transport back to Assyria, especially when the materials are sourced in distant regions. At times these regions coincide with areas within which the kings campaigned, therein emphasizing the breadth of Neo-Assyrian power and the prestige of the exotic materials.[298] For example, a text of Aššurnaṣirpal inscribed on stone tablets recovered from a foundation deposit box at Imgur-Enlil (modern Balawat) itemizes the materials used in this king's construction of the House of Mamu at the site, including beams of *erēnu*-wood ("cedar"),[299] *šurmēnu*-wood,[300] and *duprānu*-wood[301] from Mount Lebanon, and wooden doors with bands of *siparru* ("bronze").[302] The royal inscriptions also note the physical, visual, and experiential characteristics of many of the building resources. These "embedded descriptions,"[303] as Thomason labels them, provide insight into what qualities of the raw materials were of greatest value within a Neo-Assyrian elite context. Yet as emphasized in Chapter I, the royal inscriptions must be interpreted with an awareness of their particular social and

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while in Esarh. and Senn., the stone NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR is used for large figures (*aladlummû*, *apsasāti*, thresholds, paving slabs, etc.) some of which are extant and certainly do not show a material that could be called *pindû*. Moreover, the NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR is clearly described as *ša kīma še'i ṣaḫḫari šikinšu nussuqu* whose structure is as finel granulated as mottled(?) barley OIP 2 127 d 2, with the variant *kīma zēr qiššê* as cucumber seeds ibid. 132: 72 (Senn.). This fits rather well the actual quality of the stone of which these figures are made. The Akkadian reading of NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR in such contexts, whether *ašnan*, *ezennû*, or other, remains unknown." Schuster-Brandis (2008: 443f) makes an argument for reading NA_4.^{d}ŠE.TIR as *pendû*, noting that the colossi found by Layard at Nineveh, which are described in Sennacherib's inscriptions as being made of *pendû*-stone, agree with the descriptions of this stone from the royal inscriptions, as being "mottled barley" and the "seeds of a cucumber:" "[e]ine moderne Analyse und Beschreibung des Steins bestätigt diese Identifikation. Der Kalkstein enthält zahlreiche Mikrofossilien in einer feinkristallinen Matrix mit zahlreichen Eiseneinschlüssen, die dem Stein eine rötlich-braune Farbe verleihen. Nach *abnu šikinšu* ist der *pindû* hell (?) mit roten Topfen, was zu der Beschreibung des ŠE.TRI aus den Königsinschriften gut passen könnte."

CAD "E": 74f *elallu* A (NA_4.A.LAL/LÁL.LUM), "(a stone);" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 393.

CAD "P": 381f *pīlu* b) 2′ "*pīlu peṣû* "white limestone."

[298] Reade 1990: 46–47; Thomason 1999: 55f.

[299] See further, Postgate 1992b: 182, 187–188, who refers to *erēnu* as "the architectural timber par excellence."

[300] CAD "Š": 3, 349f *šurmēnu* ((GIŠ.)ŠUR.MÌN, (GIŠ.)ŠU.ÚR.MÌN), "cypress;" see further, Postgate 1992b: 184, 189.

[301] CAD "D": 189-190 *duprānu* (*daprānu*), "a tree-like variety of juniper (Juniperus drupacea);" see further, Postgate 1992b: 181, 187.

[302] RIMA 2: A.0.101.50, 21–34; Rm. 1082 (ME 90980); Rm. 1083 (ME 90981).

[303] Thomason 1999: 58f.

political context. In his study of timber referred to in Neo-Assyrian texts, Postgate cautions as follows:[304]

> a large group of trees is found almost exclusively in the royal inscriptions which were compiled to glorify the achievements of the king, and will only refer to timber when it contributes to this theme... (We do not have to disbelieve the statements of the kings, merely to place them in their right context, and indeed there are a few mentions of timber in the royal correspondence, especially under Sargon, which substantiate the claims of the formal inscriptions.) By contrast, certain species... never turn up in the royal inscriptions, but are known from administrative or legal texts to have been cultivated or at least exploited. We must not allow the bombast of the kings to blind us to the probability that the great majority of wood from Assyria comes from this group.

Engaging with a plurality of textual sources alongside the archaeological evidence aids in navigating through the boastful and ideological motivations of these narratives.

A third group of texts that impart information on material preferences for particular practices are the ritual instructions. For example, apotropaic ritual instructions for laying the foundations of a house, *Enūma uššē bīt amēli tanamdû* ("When you lay the foundations of the house of a man"), which were inscribed on a tablet recovered from Nineveh, prescribe the steps involved in building a house, providing a precise list of the materials to be placed in the foundations at the onset of construction.[305] The requisite stones included in this list closely parallel those placed in the foundations of the *akītu*-house at Assur by Sennacherib according to his royal inscription. This mirroring of the materials for the house of a human and that of a god is unsurprising due to the conceptual role of the temple in Neo-Assyria as a house for a god, as established in Chapter II.[306] Agreements of this nature between the varying groups of texts are particularly promising from a modern standpoint, a convergence that is all the more beneficial when the archaeological evidence provides additional confirmation for the use and appreciation of certain raw materials.

2. RAW BUILDING MATERIALS AND THEIR CULTURAL VALUES

a. Clay

The predominant building material used in Neo-Assyrian temple construction was clay, specifically in the form of unbaked mudbrick (*libittu*),[307] which was used for the building's foundations, walls, and paved floors. Fashioned from local organic renewable resources, this somewhat unassuming, primarily square, often standardized object was the

[304] Postgate 1992b: 177.
[305] Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1 (K 3364+).
[306] See further, Chapter IV.3.b on foundation deposits and temple construction.
[307] CAD "L": 176f *libittu* (SIG_4), "1. brick, mud brick, 2. brickwork."

architectural backbone of the Mesopotamian built landscape.[308] At a technical level the creation of mudbricks was a fairly simple albeit slow process, requiring little more than the proper mixture of soil, water, and organic materials for tempering, such as straw or chaff; this mixture was then either formed by hand or placed inside a mold of harder material (most often of wood) that was left out in the sun to dry.[309] To accommodate this process, brick production was primarily carried out in Assyria during the third month of the year, Simanu (May–June), following the spring rains and in time for the dry summer months.[310] Like a human's house, the core of the Neo-Assyrian temple was made up of this type of sun-dried mudbrick;[311] yet setting the temple apart was the additional use of kiln-fired bricks (*agurru*)[312] in areas that required a building material of greater resistance or which were at risk for water damage, for example as paving materials or the facing for lower courses of walls. Since kilns required fuel for the fire, kiln-fired bricks were more common in northern Mesopotamia where timber was readily available, in contrast to the south where sun-dried mudbricks were more economically advantageous.[313] The added expenditure of producing kiln-fired bricks, however, still limited their use in the north, a trend that attests to their elevated value as a building material when compared to their more easily acquired, commonplace sun-dried counterpart.

Both the Neo-Assyrian kings and their officials speak of having bricks made using these traditional ingredients and age-old processes in the context of temple construction in the royal inscriptions and correspondence.[314] Yet these texts also tell of

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[308] Ellis 1968: 17; Dalley 2010: 239f. On the standardization of mudbricks in Mesopotamia, see Moorey 1994: 306f; for Khorsabad in particular, see Loud and Altman 1938: 13–14; on brickmaking at Nimrud, see Mallowan 1966: I, 53, 82; II, 466.

[309] Delougaz (1933: 6–7) remarks in his study of plano-convex bricks as follows: "brickmaking does not require any special technical knowledge, so that practically every villager does it occasionally. Of course there are some men in every village specially skilled in the making and handling of brickmaking."

[310] Simanu is written logographically using the sign for brick, SIG_4. In an inscription from a cylinder of Sargon, Simanu is described as the "month of Kulla, because of the molding of bricks and the building of city and house (which are done then);" Lyon 1883: 9–10, translation in Luckenbill 1927: 64, §120; transliteration and translation in Ellis 1968: 18, App. A, no. 14; see further, Landsberger 1915: 20. An astronomical work dating back to the Middle Assyrian period from Assur identifies the third month Simanu as the "month of Kulla;" Ellis 1968: 185, App. A, no. 44 (Astrolabe B; KAV 218); see also, Horowitz 1998: 155–157; Ambos 2004: 22. This tablet is the earliest known example of a group of Mesopotamian texts referred to by scholars as "Astrolabes," which identify the stars that pass along the paths of the gods Anu, Enlil, and Ea during specific months of the year (Horowitz 1998: 154–166; Kolven 2013).

[311] To quote Loud and Altman (1938: 13) on the many uses of mudbricks in the royal buildings at Khorsabad, "[i]n walls they were employed from the foundation (the undisturbed ground surface except in the case of fortification walls) to and including the parapet; they fill the space between ground level and floor or terrace pavement; set with mortar they form arches over gates and wide portals; as filling for stairs or ramps they permit ascent to the roof; between layers of matting they rest on beams to form ceilings and consequently roofs; and laid as a temporary mass they may possibly have served as scaffolding, if we may give that interpretation to an otherwise inexplicable block of mud brick found in the central court of the Nabu temple."

[312] CAD "A": 1, 160f *agurru,* "1. kiln-fired brick, 2. paving stone, tile, slab;" see also Ellis 1968: 17–18.

In its earliest phases in the ancient Near East, mudbrick production was done without the use of molds, with bricks being formed simply by hand. On the widespread temporal and geographical use of mudbricks in Mesopotamia, see Moorey 1994: 302–329.

[313] Moorey 1994: 306.

[314] SAA 1: no. 236; SAA 10: no. 364, 12′–17′; SAA 13: no. 168.

kings mixing additional ingredients either into the mudbrick itself or into the mortar or revetment (*šallaru*, *taraḫḫu*),[315] which was used to secure the bricks in place, and of employing molds made of more prestigious materials. Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions offer the following account of his repair work on the House of Aššur at Assur:[316]

bītu šâtu	I raised that *bītu*
ultu naburrišu	from its battlements
adi uššīšu aqqur	to its foundations.
ina šamnī dišpi	With *šamnu*, *dišpu*,
himēti karāni	*himētu*, *karānu* (and)
dām erēni	*erēnu*-resin.
ablula taraḫḫuš	I mixed (the mud for) its *taraḫḫu*.
ina nalbanāt	In brickmolds
šinni pīri taskarinni ušî	made of *šinni pīru, taskarinnu*-wood, *ušû*-wood,
musukkanni erēni	*musukkannu*-wood, *erēnu*-wood,
šurmēni ilbinū libittu	(and) *šurmēnu*-wood, they made *libittu*s.

Aššurbanipal's description of the brickmaking process for his work on Emeslam, the House of the god Nergal in Cutha, similarly recounts the creation of this type of elite mudbrick:[317]

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[315] CAD "Š": 1, 247f *šallaru* A, "mortar, (mud) plaster."
CAD "T": 203 *taraḫḫu*, "bank, embankment, revetment."
Ellis (1968: 30, n. 131) discusses the use of these terms in expressions that reference mixing of mud plaster, for example, *šallara maḫāṣu, šallara balālu, taraḫḫa balālu*. He argues that the meaning of *taraḫḫu* comes from its parallel occurrence with *šallaru*, and that "*šallaru maḫāṣu* in such a context must imply mixing in the same way as does our expression 'to beat (eggs, etc.).'"

[316] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iv 16–26; see also, Esarhaddon 57, v 19–22, as well as, Esarhaddon 48, r. 96–97; Esarhaddon 104, iii 32–34; Esarhaddon 105, iv 26–27; Esarhaddon 106, iii 29–37; Esarhaddon 104, iv 12–15; Esarhaddon 116, r. 13.
CAD "Š": 1, 32f *šamnu* (Ì, Ì.GIŠ, Ì+GIŠ), "oil, fat, cream."
CAD "D": 161f *dišpu* (LÁL), "honey."
CAD "Ḫ": 189f *himētu* (Ì.NUN.(NA)), "ghee."
CAD "K": 202f *karānu* ((GIŠ.)GEŠTIN), "1. wine."
CAD "Š": 3, 51f *šinnu* A 2. *šinni pīri* (ZÚ AM.SI), "elephant ivory."
CAD "T": 280f *taskarinnu* (GIŠ.TÚG), "boxtree, box-wood."
CAD "U/W": 326f *ušû* ((NA$_4$/GIŠ.) ESI$_x$(KAL)), "1. diorite, 2. (a tree)."
CAD "M": 2, 237f *musukkannu* (GIŠ.MES.MÁ.KAN.NA) "(a tree imported from the East, and its wood)."

[317] Nassouhi 1924–1925: 100, I, 16–17 (AfK 2); see also, RIMA 3: A.0.102.10, iv 51–55, on Shalmaneser III's work on the walls of Assur. For similar textual references from earlier and later periods in Mesopotamia, see Ellis 1968: 30.
CAD "R": 368f *riqqu* (ŠIM.MEŠ; ŠIM.ḪI.A), "aromatic plant."

ina nalbanāt ušî musukkanni	In brickmolds made of *ušû*-wood and *musukkannu*-wood,
ḫibišti riqqē libnātišu albin	out of cuttings of *riqqu*s, I made *libittu*s for it.

The kings also state that they used kiln-fired bricks from an *utūnu ellu* ("pure kiln")[318] in the construction or rebuilding of temples, a specification that elevates the already heightened value of this particular building material.[319]

The extensive traces of mudbrick features from temples in the archaeological evidence at both Khorsabad and Nimrud confirm without a doubt the use of mudbrick—both sun-dried and kiln-fired—in temple construction that is communicated by the texts.[320] Moreover, some of the bricks recovered at these sites were either inscribed with the name of the king or stamped prior to firing and subsequent use (FIGURE 23–24).[321] These attributes would have further increased the value of the bricks due to the specialized treatment and additional skill required for their production.[322]

In addition to the economic advantages of a building material that was made from locally sourced, renewable, raw materials, the adaptability and durability of mudbrick contributed to its popularity throughout Mesopotamia. The latter quality in particular added to its value as a building material for the projects of Neo-Assyrian kings, whose ongoing concern for the longevity and memorability of their reign prompted and governed their building programs. Yet the luxurious substances that were mixed in with the clay and mortar would not have been in regular circulation throughout a Neo-Assyrian community, surely not at a level that would warrant their use in building materials where they would not have served a straightforward functional role.[323] Moreover, the species of wood and ivory used for brickmolds, as discussed in more detail below, were even more rare, being of foreign origin and necessitating the resources and elite status to be acquired that only the imperial elite harnessed.[324] Last, the explicit statement made by some kings, that they used bricks from an *utūni elletim* ("pure kiln"), suggests that this treatment of the bricks was something special, a prioritized treatment beyond conventional practice. For these reasons, the mudbricks used by the Neo-Assyrian kings in temple construction can be said to have been of greater value and have had a higher degree of ritualization, material objects that were something other than the mudbrick that was used by a common farmer or townsperson to build his private house. The unseen elements of mixing prestigious substances into bricks—a process that is ultimately invisible and concealed in the final product, for example a temple wall or its

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[318] CAD "U": 346f *utūnu*, "oven, kiln, furnace."
CAD "E": 102f *ellu*, "1.clean, pure, 2. holy, sacred."
[319] Luckenbill 1924: 150, no. VIII, 3; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 132.
[320] For Khorsabad, see Loud and Altman 1938: 13f; for Nimrud, Mallowan 1966: I, 85f.
[321] N 6216 (ME 132263; 1958-2-8, 6; Mallowan 1966: I, 643); DS 691 (A 17615; Loud and Altman 1938: 99, pl. 65, no. 270).
[322] The value placed on production and craftsmanship in Neo-Assyria is discussed in Chapter IV.
[323] Ellis 1968: 29–31; Moorey 1994: 305.
[324] On the acquisition of foreign goods by the Neo-Assyrian kings and the circulation of goods in the ancient Near East, see Rowlands et al. 1987; Moorey 1994.

foundation—shifts this process even further away from a mechanical act of building to a ritualized act; this topic explored further in Chapter IV.

The mythological associations of clay itself in Neo-Assyria further elevated the ritualized value of mudbricks used in temple construction. Mesopotamian texts, in particular creation myths such as *Atra-ḫasis*, assert that humans were originally created out of clay, that this previously chaotic material was transformed and shaped into the human body at the hands of the gods themselves.[325] Graff extends this transformative concept to the production of Babylonian terracotta plaques, proposing an ideological connection between human reproduction and the process of crafting objects from clay. Graff argues that the mold used to create terracotta plaques symbolized a mother's womb and the finished product—the terracotta plaque—symbolized a newborn infant.[326] The kiln can likewise be conceived of metaphorically as a womb, a correlation that elevates the significance of the kings' claims of using a "pure kiln" to produce bricks. Mesopotamian omens that speak of women giving birth to clay objects, examples of which are found in the omen series *Šumma izbu*, substantiate a metaphorical association between human production and the production of plaques and bricks.[327] The importance of clay to the rebirth of plants and agriculture similarly illustrates the life-giving quality of clay; this also associates it with the gods responsible for the prosperity and fertility of the land, what Dalley refers to as "a divine blessing."[328] Like Graff, Foster speaks of the ritualized creation of objects from clay in her study of ceramic metaphors in Mesopotamian literature, suggesting a likeness to Gell's concept of the "halo-effect of technical difficulty."[329] According to Foster, mudbricks made of clay would be a "display of artistry explicable only in magical terms, something which has been produced by magical means. It is the way an art object is construed as having come into the world which is the source of the power such objects have over us—their becoming rather than their being."[330]

The ritualized aspect of clay, specifically in the form of brickwork, masonry, and foundations, is supported by the existence of Kulla, the god of bricks and laying the

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[325] Lambert and Millard 1969: 59–63.
[326] Graff 2013: 382f.
[327] Leichty 1970a: Tablet I, 33, 34, 45; Tablet II, 65′; Tablet IV, 39; cited in Graff 2013: 383, n. 12. On the series *Šumma izbu*, see note 154.
[328] Dalley 2010: 240. For a discussion of the relationship between the temple and city and Mesopotamian conceptions of fertility in the late third- and early second-millennium BCE literary sources, including notions of the king as shepherd and architectural narratives of abundance, see Harmanşah 2013: 386: "it is evident in the long-term concept of the Mesopotamian king as a devoted builder, the "*roi-bâtisseur*," the king had to build cities, temples, and other monumental buildings not only for satisfying the spatial needs for the functioning of urban institutions, but also for the maintenance of a worldly order (Lackenbacher 1982). The spectacular layout of his cities, the perfection of his architectural projects and the performance of urban rituals, were intimately linked to the perfection of the bodily image of the king, which was always the focus of attention in the public sphere… This divine and politicized power of the Mesopotamian ruler became manifest in the king's own bodily image: while the urban image of his cities, both of which were endowed with divinely inspired qualities of craftsmanship. This ideological agenda of the perfection of the king's image then is used as a legitimation for the acquisition of exotic and precious raw materials and skilled craftsmanship from marginal landscapes."
[329] Foster 2010; see also, Vandiver 1991.
[330] Gell 1999: 46.

foundations and whose very name is written using the brick-logograph $^{d}SIG_4$.[331] The Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions reaffirm this relationship. Sargon speaks of rebuilding Eanna at Uruk according to the craft of Kulla, *šitimgallu* ("chief builder").[332] In describing his work on Esagil in Babylon, Esarhaddon credits Kulla, *bēl uššī libittī* ("the lord of foundations (and) bricks"), in the successful laying of its foundations.[333] The same king also states that he rebuilt temples *ina šipir Kulla* ("according to the craft of the god Kulla"), including Ebaradurgara, the House of the goddess "Queen-of-Nippu;"[334] Ekur at Nippur;[335] and Eanna at Uruk.[336] Evidence for a practice involving the *libittu maḫrītu* ("first/former brick")[337] in Neo-Assyrian texts also demonstrates the highly ritualized aspect of bricks. According to the textual sources, during temple construction the king himself laid the *libittu maḫrītu* as part of a ritualized practice, the concern of which was to establish continuity and prosperity for the king, his people, and land, as granted by the gods; this practice is discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.2.c.

In addition to the mudbrick architectural elements of the temple, clay, specifically kiln-fired clay, was also used to create the *sikkātu*s,[338] wall-plaques, and clay hands of Neo-Assyrian temples (FIGURE 25). *sikkātu*s, as referred to in Neo-Assyrian texts, were wall-pegs that were inserted into the superstructure of a temple's external walls such that the spherical knob remained visible while the shaft was hidden from view (FIGURE 26–28). This arrangement is confirmed by the discovery of *sikkātu*s *in situ* in the courtyard walls of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (FIGURE 29).[339] Wall-plaques were a combination of a central peg and plaque, either round or quadrangle with concave sides; especially well preserved examples were recovered from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud (FIGURE 30–33).[340] These objects were similarly mounted at intervals the length

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[331] Ellis 1968: 18–20. On the god Kulla, see Lambert 1980–1983.

[332] Clay 1915: 38, ii 1 (YOS 1); CAD "Š": 130.
CAD "Š": 3, 129f *šitimgallu* ((LÚ.)DÍM.GAL), "chief (house) builder."

[333] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 116, r. 21.

[334] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 128, 16.

[335] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 129, 32.

[336] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 133, 33.

[337] CAD "M" 1: 108f, *maḫru*, 1. 6′ "first (in a sequence), old, original," 3. "former, earlier, previous."

[338] CAD "S": 247f *sikkātu* A (GIŠ.KAK) "1. peg, nail (of wood or metal), 2. (part of a lock), 3. foundation cone, wall cone."

[339] Loud and Altman 1938: 42–43. For an historical overview of *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques in Mesopotamia, see Nunn 1988: 160–165; Moorey 1994: 313–314; see also, Reade 1979a: 20–21; Albenda 1991; Freestone 1991. Andrae (1925: 63f) provides a discussion of *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques in his study of Neo-Assyrian ceramics based solely on findings from Assur. The British Museum collection includes the following *sikkātu*s from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud: Rm. 1106; ME 91687 (1891-7-2, 2); ME 131661 (1953-10-10, 9). The Musée du Louvre Collection includes the following from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud: AO2667; and from the temple complex at Khorsabad: AO 29293. The Oriental Institute collection includes the following *sikkātu*s from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad: DS 670 (A 11802); DS 677 (A 11803); DS 656 (A 11804); DS 575 (A 11806); see further, Loud and Altman 1938: 42–43, pl. 15 A–C; as well as, Albenda 1991.

[340] Rassam's official letters 1878–1879, in Reade 2002: 145–146, 149. The British Museum collection includes the following wall-plaques from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud: ME 91680 (Rm. 1102) + ME 131664; ME 91681 (Rm. 1103) + ME 91683 (Rm. 1104); ME 91685 (Rm. 1105) + ME 131662 (1953-10-10, 10); ME 91684 (1891-7-2, 1); ME 91688 (1891-7-2, 4); ME 131660 (1953-10-10, 8); ME 131661 (1953-10-10, 9 + 1953-10-10, 375); ME 131663 (1953-10-10, 11); see further Albenda 1991. The Musée

of a temple wall. Last, clay hands, also referred to as "Hands of Ištar"[341] or miniature corbels, were a combination of a clenched fist with stylized fingers and a partial arm that were either life-size or slightly larger (FIGURE 34–36).[342] Many examples of all three object types were inscribed—the *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques around the base of the knob, and the clay hands either the length of the fingers, side of the hand, or the arm—with a dedicatory text that denoted to which property they belonged; a clay hand from Nineveh reads as follows (FIGURE 37):[343]

Aššur-naṣir-apli šaknu Enlil iššak Aššur	Aššurnaṣirpal, the one appointed by the god Enlil, ruler of Assur,
apil Tukultī-Ninurta šaknu Enlil iššak Aššur	son of Tukulti-Ninurta, the one appointed by the god Enlil, ruler of Assur,
apil Adad-nārārī šaknu Enlil iššak Aššurma	son of Adad-nerari, the one appointed by the god Enlil, ruler of Assur.
makkūru bīt Ištar ša Ninua	Property of the *bītu* of the goddess Ištar of Nineveh.

Whether these objects served a structural role as supports for other architectural elements, a functional role in the draping of textiles, or were symbolically charged as markers of the strength and permanence of the building itself, is an ongoing topic of discussion.[344] Yet the elaborate polychromatic glazing, artful forms, and strategically placed inscriptions in themselves attest to the experiential role the *sikkātu*s, wall-plaques,

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du Louvre Collection includes the following: AO 2669; AO 2670; AO 2671. Bronze examples of wall-plaques were also found at Nimrud and Nineveh; see Curtis 2013: 54–55, 165, nos. 399 and 400.

[341] As termed in Mallowan 1953: 11. Curtis and Reade (1995: 104) note that these objects may have acquired this name due to the modern association of hands with luck in the Middle East and the powerful and protective role of Ištar in antiquity. Frame (1991: 358) notes that only a few examples have inscriptions designating them as the property of this goddess. Moorey (1994: 314) argues that this designation is not supported by the archaeological or textual evidence and thus should be avoided.

[342] Frame 1991; see also, Andrae 1925; Guralnick 2008a. An example of a clay hand from Ezida at Nimrud that is now part of the British Museum collection is the following: ND 1408 (1994-11-5, 8). The inscription on a clay hand in the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden ascribes it to the House of Ninurta at Nimrud (VA 3128, VAM; Marzahn 2004: Kat. 14). Additional examples were found in temples at Assur, Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta, and Nineveh (Frame 1991: 343). The clay hands from Khorsabad were likely not found in the palace temples, yet they may have been associated with the House of Nabu (Place 1867–1870: I, 86; Guralnick 2008a). Clay hands from Khorsabad that are now part of the collection of the Oriental Institute include the following: A38501–A38507. It is worth noting that bronze overlay for clay hands was found at Nimrud in the Northwest Palace and at Nineveh (Curtis 2013: 451, 452).

[343] RIMA 2: A.0.101.126; ME 138720; see also, Frame 1991: 346 (Inscription C).

[344] Reade (2002: 191) notes that the clay hands were "inserted at the tops of walls as if to support the ceiling," while Andrae (1925: 67) similarly proposes that they were placed under roof-beams or under glaze-friezes yet served primarily a decorative function. Marzahn (2004: 101) makes an association between the first-millennium examples and the clay nails that were inserted into wall plaster during house ceremonies as a visual affirmation of a contract in earlier periods, suggesting that the former served a similar symbolic function. See further, Van Buren 1930: 270–272; Peltenburg 1968; Frame 1991; Moorey 1994: 315.

and clay hands would have played. Such visual qualities would have demanded attention and contrasted with neighboring surfaces in both design and elevation, as discussed further in Chapter II.2.g.

A more well-known use for clay—both kiln-fired and unfired—in the temple built environment was for tablets. Excavations of Neo-Assyrian temples have yielded a significant number of tablets in various locations, including scribal offices, throne-rooms, and building foundations.[345] The tablets also varied in genre, ranging from administrative records and royal inscriptions to ritual instructions and oath tablets. A representative example is the assortment of texts from the House Nabu at Nimrud: evidence from both the archaeological context and inscribed elements of these texts confirm the creation, use, and storage of tablets within this temple built environment, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter V.3.[346] An exceptional example of a single tablet recovered from a Neo-Assyrian temple context is the oath tablet of Esarhaddon that was found *in situ* by excavators in the god's chamber of Building XVI at Tell Tayinat, the Syro-Hittite royal city of Kunulua that was transformed into an administrative capital when the region became an Assyrian province in the eighth century (FIGURE 38–39).[347] The tablet was horizontally pierced and found in the area of the dais along with other amulet-shaped tablets.[348] The condition in which the tablet was found led excavators to propose that the tablet was originally placed in this space for exhibition and display, and that it was found in the exact spot where it fell from its mount at the time of destruction.[349] Crawford emphasizes the relationship between image and text for this informative archaeological recovery, arguing for the importance of its materiality, presence, and agency within this temple context and for seeing the tablet as a "visual instantiation of past events, in this case an oath mediating a relationship between Assyria and its vassal."[350] A fragmented handle of a tablet found in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, albeit made of brown stone, was similarly pierced horizontally, suggesting it too served as a display tablet within this temple context; the inscription on the handle states that it was dedicated to the god by Shalmaneser III.[351] While the majority of our evidence points to a predominantly inconspicuous role for tablets within a temple context, for example being held in the niches of scribal offices, baskets, or other storage containers, or placed in the foundations, this evidence for the display of tablets argues against discounting the visual, experiential, and interactive potential of this group of objects.

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[345] On the label "scribal office," see note 1570.

[346] Mallowan 1966: I, 271–278; Reid and Oates 2001: 119, 207; see also, Hussein and Black 1985–1986; Wiseman and Black 1996; Black 2008.

[347] T-1801; Harrison and Osborne 2012; Lauinger 2011; 2012.

[348] T-1923 and T-1927, both manuscripts of the series *Iqqur īpuš* ("he demolished, he built (anew)"), a collection of hemerological omens that record propitious and unpropitious times for performing various daily activities, see further note 903.

[349] Harrison and Osborne 2012: 137; see also, Lauinger 2011: figs. 7–8.

[350] Crawford 2013: 259.

[351] ME 104410 (1855-12-5, 460); RIMA 3: A.0.102.19 (Reade 2002: 178).

b. Stone

Another dominant building material used in Neo-Assyrian temple construction was stone. Not only was this material employed for the core structural features of the temple, for example doorways, paving stones, stairs, and walls, it was also used in the fabrication of a variety of portable works of art that were installed throughout the temple, including pedestals—whether acting as offering tables or altars;[352] incense burners; life-size divine and royal images; parts of composite images; and display tablets. Closely paralleling the number of ways that stone was manipulated by craftsmen under the name of the king, so to speak, is the variety of stones that was used. This plurality, however, creates a complication in engaging with the textual sources alongside the archaeological evidence. A wealth of Akkadian terms for stone are employed in the Neo-Assyrian sources in descriptions of construction and fabrication, each marked by the Akkadian determinative for stone, NA_4;[353] however, the actual geological and archaeological equivalents for these varying types are not as clear. The following discussion is divided into two parts: the first discusses the large building stones used primarily for non-portable, architectural features and some portable works of art; the second looks at semi-precious stones employed for smaller portable works of art and more intricate detailing and embellishments. The material elements that contribute to each section are established by the archaeological evidence, while the relevant textual sources are established by the textual contexts within which the terms are found.

Large Building Stone

An especially conspicuous stone used in Neo-Assyrian temple construction was large, light-colored building stone, a well-known type being "Mosul Marble," a soft grayish white gypsum ("alabaster"),[354] followed closely by limestone. Both gypsum and limestone could be locally sourced during the Neo-Assyrian period from the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris.[355] The former was used primarily for interior architectural features, including walls, doorways, and paving, due to its more porous composition, which also made it easier to work with. Being of greater durability, limestone proved ideal for foundation materials, exterior architectural features, and non-portable and portable arts, including statues, steles, and pedestals. Both gypsum and limestone were also used to make the plaster that was applied as a protective coating to exposed

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[352] On the use of the terms "offering table," "altar," and "pedestal" in this study, see note 15.

[353] The cuneiform sign NA_4 (CAD "A" 1: 54f *abnu* A, "stone") is used as a determinative preceding a noun to indicate that that material or that that object belonged to this semantic group. NA_4 is also used as a determinative for imitation stone (glass), as well as certain beads made of hard substances; see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 8–9, 391–461; Borger 2010: 327, no. 385. On Akkadian determinatives, see Huehnergard 2005: 111–112.

[354] As noted by Moorey (1994: 343–344), 'alabaster' is a "non-technical term which usefully, if strictly inaccurately, embraces both calcite and gypsum. Calcite (calcium carbonate) and magnesite belong to a range of carbonate minerals, including aragonite and dolomite, so the ambivalence of ancient scribal usage in this case is hardly surprising and reflects a dilemma still current. This case illustrates how dangerous it is to assume that terms like *pīlu*, *parūtu*, or *gišnugallu*, often used for a precious white stone (CAD 'G': 106), were consistently used to describe the same calcium-based stones in Neo-Assyrian building inscriptions."

[355] Moorey 1994: 336–337; Reade 1990: 46–47, fig. 1.

surfaces.[356] Bitumen, a natural oil or asphalt, served a similar function as a sealant in temple construction,[357] as well as acting as an adhesive for more intricate work, for example to hold in place the inlays on composite images and portable works of art.[358] While bitumen was available locally within Mesopotamia, its use in larger scale construction was more or less restricted to royal building programs because the melting process was costly.[359] This use of bitumen in temple construction therefore served a similar role as the prestigious materials included in clay bricks in ritualizing the Neo-Assyrian temple, in setting it apart from the house of an ordinary human.

The Neo-Assyrian textual sources tell of the local procurement of stone, the acquisition of foreign stone through tribute, the resourcing of large building stone from quarries further afield and its transport back to the Neo-Assyrian capital cities, and of the various architectural applications and objects for which this stone was used in temple construction.[360] In a letter to Esarhaddon, the scholar and official Mar-Issar writes that *elallu*-stone is required in order to construct the king's *manzaltu* in Esagil:[361]

elallum ana manzalti šarri bēliya	*elallu*-stone should be acquired and brought for
ša Esaggil rešu liššiu lūbilūni	the *manzaltu* of the king, my lord, in Esagil.

[356] On plaster, see Moorey 1994: 329–333.

[357] The excavators at Khorsabad found that bitumen was used primarily as a sealant within the temples, as the material within which paving stones and bricks were set in open courts and in areas in need of waterproofing, including drainage systems. For example, the pavement of Court XXVII preceding the main doorway to the House of Sin consisted of two courses of kiln-fired bricks, the bottom one being set into a bed of bitumen (Loud 1936: 88).

[358] A fitting in the form of a griffin head was found in the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud that was made from light-colored stone and has bitumen traces in the eyes where inlays were likely once set; N 1745 (ME 91665) (Layard 1853a: 362; Curtis and Reade 1995: 170; Reade 2002: 184). A unique use of bitumen was for the interior pavement in the House of Adad; Loud and Altman (1938: 17) suggest that this was "where water probably was used in the ritual of the fertility god." Similarly noteworthy is the wall of kiln-fired bricks coated with bitumen that Layard (1853a: 348) recorded finding at an the exterior doorway to the House of Ninurta at Nimrud; according to Layard's diary (Ms D, 36, in Reade 2002: 168) this wall was topped by "three rows of painted bricks (not *in situ*)," also referred to as "enameled bricks" in his later publication.

[359] Moorey 1994: 333f.

[360] Excerpts from the royal inscriptions that speak of the origins of stones, quarrying, and the transport of stone, whether by the Assyrians themselves or by peoples of foreign regions as forms of tribute, include the following: RIMA 3: A.0.102.62; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 1, 85; Sennacherib 15, vi 20–27; Sennacherib 16, vi 39–48; Sennacherib 16, v 79–vi 10; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, v 73b–vi 1. Examples from the royal correspondence and administrative records include the following: SAA 1: nos. 56, 59; SAA 5: no. 297; SAA 15, no. 123. Reliefs from Court VI of the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib offer a visually impressive portrayal of this type of activity, with the depiction of the quarrying of a bull colossus and its transport by land and water back to Nineveh, where it would have been positioned at a principal doorways of the king's palace (Russell 1987; 1991; see further, Reade 1990; Moorey 1994: 31–33).

[361] SAA 10: no. 354, 8–9.

CAD "M": 228f *manzaltu* A, "1. stand for an object or image."

Esarhaddon also claims to have used *elallu*-stone to craft a ferocious *mušhuššu*-dragon for Esagil.[362]A copy of an inscription of Sennacherib's from a clay tablet echoes his successor's preference for *elallu*-stone for crafting non-portable elements of the temple:[363]

šiknu ša muḫḫi askuppāte	The arrangement (of script) on the *askuppus*
ša alallum ša bīt Aššur	of *elallu*-stone in the *bītu* of Aššur,
ša šarru ina muḫḫi izzazzūni	on which the king stands (and)
qaqquru inaššiqūni	kisses the ground.

Though the textual sources label the particular types of stone that were used in construction, it is speculative to translate the Akkadian terms with exact modern-day equivalents.

In the Neo-Assyrian texts *pīlu*,[364] *pīlu pēṣû*, *parūtu*,[365] and *gišnugallu*[366] are all used to refer to precious light-colored stone, yet whether gypsum or limestone is not always clear.[367] The text on the obverse of the Šarrat-nipḫi colossus recounts that Aššurnaṣirpal had lions made of both *pīlu peṣû*-stone and *parūtu*-stone for the temples at Nimrud:[368]

nēšī pīli peṣê parūte	I made lions of *pīlu peṣû*-stone (and) *parūtu*-stone,
ēpuš ina bābīšunu šunu ušazziz	and stationed them at their *bābu*s.

In his account of his building work at Nineveh, Esarhaddon similarly claims to have used *pīlu pēṣû*-stone to make *aladlammû*s,[369] as well as an entire room.[370] When speaking of his temple work in particular, the same king states that he laid the foundations with *pīlu*-stone, which he describes as a "strong mountain stone" (*aban šadî danni*).[371]

A similar level of ambiguity is presented by modern excavation reports when speaking of large light-colored stones, for more often then not they are inconclusive

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[362] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 102–103.
[363] George 1986: 144, r. 1–4.
CAD "A": 2, 334f *askuppu* (KUN_4, KUN_5), "1. stone slab, 2. threshold, doorsill."
[364] CAD "P": 380f *pīlu*, "limestone."
[365] CAD "P": 211 *parūtu* A, "(a type of alabaster)."
[366] The discussion at the end of the CAD entry ("G": 104f) argues that *gišnugallu* is characterized as a precious white stone but cannot refer to "Mosul marble" as the texts speak of it being imported, for which reason it is likely "alabaster"; in addition, in later Assyrian texts *gišnugallu* and *parūtu* seem to be used synonymously; see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 412f.
[367] See note 354 above.
[368] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28, v 12–13.
[369] CAD "A": 1, 286f *aladlammû* (^{d}ALAD.^{d}LAMMA(KAL)), "bull colossus with human head."
[370] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, v 77, vi 15.
[371] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 12, 15; Esarhaddon 57, v 10–11; Esarhaddon 60, 20′.
CAD "P": 380f *pīlu*, "limestone."

about the mineral make-up of the Neo-Assyrian objects found during excavation that are made of these types of stone.[372] Although this ambiguity does not improve the odds of making lexical and material correspondences with modern stone typologies,[373] the archaeological evidence does confirm the dominant role played by large, light-colored building stones in Neo-Assyrian temple construction that is suggested by the textual sources.

Light-colored building stone was used for a number of the temple's non-portable works of art. Large inscribed thresholds and pivot stones of light-colored stone were found in the temples' principal doorways, including the House of Ninurta at Nimrud,[374] and the House of Sin and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (FIGURE 40).[375] Light-colored building stone was also used for large-scale carved wall reliefs that were placed at temple doorways; for example, a scene of the god Ninurta battling Anzu was carved on the doorjambs of the doorway to the smaller god's chamber to the northeast of the god's chamber of Ninurta at Nimrud (FIGURE 7: B; 41–43; 44: 8–9, 12–13).[376] A pair of fish-men (*kulullu*s)[377] carved from stone was found flanking the principal doorway to Ezida, commonly referred to as the "Fish-Gate" for this reason (FIGURE 9; 45).[378] Pedestals of light-colored stone are also well attested; one such pedestal was found outside the aforementioned doorway at Nimrud (FIGURE 46–47).[379] Of a slightly different form is the pedestal with rectangular base and flat top surface with raised semicircular ends that was found at the doorway to the nearby House of the Kidmuri; the inscription on this pedestal states that it was dedicated by Aššurnaṣirpal to the god Enlil, "resident of the

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[372] Often no systematic mineralogical study of the objects is carried out when they are are found on excavation. For example, in the final excavation report on his work at the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud, Rassam (1897: 225–226) mentions that "several marble platforms were found in different parts of the temple." Reade attempts to clarify this passage by stating, "the references to "marble" are certainly to the local alabaster, also known as Mosul marble." See further, Moorey 1994: 22.

[373] Most of our accepted lexical correspondences come from comparative semitics, for example Thompson 1936.

[374] Reid and Oates 2001: 109; Reade 2002: 171, 207 (M 24), fig. 47.

[375] Loud 1936: 89, figs. 100, 101, 118, 119; Loud and Altman 1938: 58–61, pl. 16 E, 17 C.

[376] ME 124571 (1851-9-2, 501); ME 124572 (1851-9-2, 502)(Meuszýnski 1972: 56; Reade 2002: 169, 206). Variant interpretations have been proposed for the figures in this scene, including the god Adad and Asakku as the bird of prey (Black and Green 1992: 142f). Layard (1853a: 304) describes finding panels sculpted with winged figures carrying maces and with priests wearing garlands at the doorway to the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud.

[377] CAD "K": 526f *kulullu* (KU_6LÚ.U_x(GIŠGAL).LU), "(a fabulous creature, part man and part fish)."

[378] Mallowan 1956b: 6; Oates 1957: 32, pl. IV; Reid and Oates 2001: 111. Oates (1957: 32f) makes note of the similarity of these figures, with their fish body and male bust, to the fish-men on a repoussé bronze band fragment recovered from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad. This fragment is now held in the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad (DS 1006; Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 49, no. 20; Curtis and Tallis 2008: pl. XXIX, no. 445; Guralnick 2008b: fig. 26). These figures have been identified with the *kulullu* from the textual sources (Wiggermann 1992: 182f) and also with the fish-*apkallu*s, antediluvian mythological sage, known from textual sources and as clay figurines (Black and Green 1992: 163; Wiggermann 1992: 76f). A text recovered from Fort Shalmaneser speaks of *kulullu*s for the *bītu* of Nabu at Nimrud (Dalley and Postgate 1984: 162f). Wiggermann (1992: 76, 182) argues for an identification of the figures of Ezida with the *kulullu*.

[379] ME 118806 (1851-9-2, 33). A group of similar stone pedestals was found at Khorsabad; see Chapter V.1.a, including Table 1.

House of the Kidmuri" (FIGURE 48).[380] Divine and royal statues of light-colored building stone were also recovered from the temples, including a pair of divine attendants that flanked the doorway to Nabu's god's chamber in Ezida at Nimrud (FIGURE 49)[381] and doorways in the Houses of Nabu, Sin, and Šamaš at Khorsabad (FIGURE 50–52).[382] Steles of Aššurnaṣirpal[383] and Šamši-Adad V[384] were also recovered at Nimrud. The former was discovered in front of the doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta (FIGURE 41; 47; 53). The latter was found atop a stone pedestal in the passage chamber between the outer and inner courtyard of Ezida (FIGURE 54).[385] Lime plaster—a mixture of burnt limestone and water—was used to coat the walls of the outer and inner courtyards in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (Court I and II).[386]

Light-colored building stone was also used for elements attached to the portable works of art of Neo-Assyrian temples, though at a much smaller scale. For example, stone knobs were recovered from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (FIGURE 55),[387] and stone capitals fashioned in the shape of female heads were found in the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud (FIGURE 56).[388] Three small stone rosettes with metal nails through the center were also found at Nimrud (FIGURE 57). These skillfully worked pieces were likely once attached to portable works of art in a similar as the stone capitals and may have also come from the same temple context.[389]

When we look to the textual sources to get a sense of the value the Neo-Assyrian elite attached to these varieties of large-light colored building stone, what is apparent is that this group did not share our modern concern with identifying the mineral composition of stone. Rather the Neo-Assyrian elite were concerned with a stone's visual and experiential qualities.[390] By way of illustration is a section from Aššurnaṣirpal's

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[380] ME 118870 (Rm II.617); RIMA 2: A.0.101.98 (Rassam 1897: 226 ("seat"); Reade 2002: figs. 8–9). Reade (2002: 145) references this pedestal as evidence for additional residents within the House of "Ištar, Mistress of the Divine Kidmuri (*Ištar Bēlet Kidmuri*)" at Nimrud.

[381] ME 118888 (1856-9-9, 64); ME 118889 (1856-9-9, 65); RIMA 3: A.0.104.2002 (Smith 1875: 74; Rassam 1897: 9-10; Reid and Oates 2001: 112).

[382] House of Nabu: A 11808; A 11809 (Loud and Altman 1938: 59, pls. 17, 45, 47; Wilson 1995: 115). House of Sin: Place 1867–1870: I, 122–126; Loud 1936: 98–99. House of Šamaš: Place 1867–1870: I, 126; Loud 1936: 107, figs. 111, 112, 107, 108.

[383] ME 118805 (1851-9-2, 32); RIMA 2: A.0.101.17 (Reade 2002: 169, App. 2).

[384] ME 118892 (1856-9-9, 63); RIMA 3: A.0.103.1 (Reid and Oates 2001: 112).

[385] Acording to the inscription on the stele of Šamši-Adad V, it was originally dedicated to the god Ninurta, suggesting that it was relocated at some point in antiquity; RIMA 3: A.0.103.1 (Rassam 1897: 11).

[386] Loud and Altman 1938: 43, 64. The references to rooms and courtyards at Khorsabad are based on those assigned by the Chicago excavations (Loud 1936; Loud and Altman 1938)(FIGURE 14; 17).

[387] Two of the original five are held at the Oriental Institute: A 12459, A 12460 (Loud and Altman 1938: 99, no. 260, pl. 64).

[388] ME 92233 (1983-1-1, 84); ME 92234 (1983-1-1, 90)(Layard 1853a: 362; Curtis and Reade 1995: 126–127; Reade 2002: 184–185).

[389] N 786; N 1630 (ME 115712); N 1637 (ME 122116) (Reade 2002: 186, fig. 45). Reade (2002: 186) notes that these objects arrived at the British Museum at the same time as the stone capitals and for this reaon may have derived from the same set of furniture from the House of Šarrat-nipḫi. He also mentions the similarity of the rosettes to those on a Carchemish throne (Woolley and Barnett 1952: Plate B, 64b).

[390] Based on his study of Mesopotamian materials, Moorey (1994: 343) concludes the following: "[b]roadly speaking, the [Akkadian] vocabulary for building stones distinguishes them by colour (white or light-coloured; red or reddish; black or dark-coloured), with special tones indicated by metaphorical or analogous descriptions of texture."

Banquet Stele text that deals with his temple work; in this excerpt the king makes a point of denoting the lustrous quality of the stones he used for fashioning the gods' images:[391]

īlūssunu	(Images of) their great divinity,
rabītu ina ḫurāṣi ḫuššê ina abni ebbi	with *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* and lustrous *abnu*s
lu ušarrih	I fashioned.

In a text inscribed on a statue of the god Adad of Kurbail, found at Fort Shalmaneser at Nimrud, Shalmaneser III places a similar emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of the *gišnugallu*-stone that he used to fashion this *ṣalmu*:[392]

ṣalam gišnugalli	*ṣalmu* of *gišnugallu*-stone,
ebbi namri šūquri ša epšētušu ana dagāli lullâ šūturū	lustrous, bright, and precious, the workmanship of which was beautiful to look at, superb
bunnanušu ušēpišma	in its appearance, I had made.

When speaking of the materials used for his building projects at Nineveh, Sennacherib highlights the light sheen of *gišnugallu*-stone:[393]

apsasāte gišnugalli	*gišnugallu*-stone *apsasûs*,
ša zīme nussuqa	whose appearance is splendid
kīma ūme napardî nummurū zumuršin	(and) whose bodies were as brilliant as the bright daylight.

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[391] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 65–67.

CAD "H": 261f *ḫuššû*, "red" (also normalized as *ruššû*)(Borger 2010: 393, no. 645). On adjectival variants with gold, see CAD "H": 246 246 *ḫurāṣu* (2); Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 506; and Chapter III.2.d.

The term *ebbu* ("lustrous") appears with frequency in Akkadian literary texts to denote surface qualities of luster, shine, and brilliance, most often for stones and metals, but also for certain types of wood (CAD "E": *ebbu* 4). Additional inscriptions of Aššurnaṣirpal note the use of these same materials for crafting divine images: RIMA 2: A.0.101.31, 14; A.0.101.32, 12; A.0.101.38, 26.

[392] RIMA 3: A.0.102.12, 36–37. On the discovery of this statue in Fort Shalmaneser, rather than Kurbail, Oates (1962: 16–17) originally suggested that it had been brought to Nimrud for repairs, while Grayson (1991: 59) posits that there may have been a House of Adad of Kurbail at Nimrud, within which the statue was intended to stand. Wilson (1962) discusses the stone of the statue—stated by previous scholars as being calcite and fine limestone—and the line in the text which states that it was made of *gišnugallu*-stone, concluding that this object-to-text correlation contradicts an understanding of *gišnugallu*-stone as strictly alabaster. Also worth noting is an inscription of Aššurnaṣirpal that includes *gišnugallu*-stone among the material goods the king had carried away as booty from the palace and temples of the city Sūru, a statement that reinforces the value of this stone in Neo-Assyria; RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, I 84.

CAD "Ṣ": 78f *ṣalmu* (ALAM; NU) "statue (in the round), relief, drawing, constellation, figurine (used for magic purposes), bodily shape, stature, likeness (in transferred mngs.)."

[393] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 69–71.

CAD "A": 2, 193f *apsasû*, ((SAL.)ÁB.ZA.ZA), "2. (a stone or copper colossus in animal shape)."

Also worth noting is a section from the text that Sennacherib had inscribed on a stone bull colossus at Nineveh, that offers a similarly aesthetically attentive, but also heavily metaphoric list of the building stones used by this king in construction, along with their particular beneficial qualities:[394]

alallum ša kīma ṣubāt gišmimmari	*elallu*-stone, the color of which is like that of the bark of a date palm,
u girimḫilibû ša kīma inib nurmî šikinšu	and of *girimḫilibû*-stone, the color of which is like that of the pomegranate,
banû lalû ana daḫāli mūtānī	beautiful and a pleasure to behold, and with the quality of preventing
ana amēli la ṭeḫê	plagues from affecting a person.

In addition to their brilliance, luster, and affective qualities, the text also note the strength and durability of light-colored building stone, for example Esarhaddon's description of the *pīlu*-stone that he used for constructing foundations as a strong mountain stone.

When accompanied by such qualifications of radiance, luster, color, and overall experiential qualities, as well as active properties, the textual sources prove particularly useful for the present study, which is similarly concerned with the visual qualities of these materials and their interaction within the temple built environment. As emphasized by Winter, it was not just that the material was valued, but *how* the stone was valued that is especially informative for understanding categories of value within Neo-Assyrian elite society.[395] Winter argues in particular that the Akkadian vocabulary used in discussions of material, for example stone, reveals a cultural appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of light, luster, sheen, and radiance, for reasons beyond simply the visual.[396] In Mesopotamia these properties were closely associated with the heavens and the divine, often expressed metaphorically as in the text of Sennacherib above, in which *gišnugallu*-stone is said to "shine like a brilliant day."[397] When speaking of his refurbishment of the gods and their houses, Esarhaddon recounts that he used *abnus nasqu*s ("choice stones")[398] and then qualifies the stones further by stating the following:[399]

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[394] Russell 1995: 300, with amendments from Russell 1999b: 276, no. 24; see also, CAD "E": 74 *elallu* b). CAD "Ḫ: 88 *girimḫilibû* ((NA$_4$.)GI.RIM.ḪI.LI.BA), "(a precious stone)."

The bull colossus stood in what was originally termed the "Eastern Building" when excavated by King, an area now understood to be the northeast end of the palace (Campbell Thompson and Hutchinson 1929: 135, pl. LII: 122, M+N (text); Russell 1991: 85–86 (location); 1995: 299–301 (edition); 1999b: 126, 276). On stones in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, see further Simkó 2013.

[395] Winter 1999a: 45.

[396] Winter 1994; 1999a.

[397] Winter (1994: 124) notes that this type of metaphor—for something emitting light—is said of kings and princes, temples, sanctuaries, processional roads, protective palace gateway figures, and various objects and materials.

[398] CAD "N": 2, 30f *nasqu*, "selected, sorted, choice, precious, costly, preeminent."

[399] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 83.

nabnīt ḫuršānī ša Ea ana *šipir bēlūti šīmat* *melamme rabîš* *išīmšunūti*	the creation of the mountains, for which the god Ea greatly decreed the character of radiance for the artwork of lordship.

As demonstrated in this passage, the notion of divine radiance is expressed in the Akkadian texts by the designation *melammu* (me.lám in Sumerian), which is often attested with reference to heavenly bodies, the latter being embodiments of the gods themselves much in the same way that divine images were manifestations of the gods on earth.[400] As testament of the synonymity between divine radiance and astral luminosity, Rochberg cites an address to the god Šamaš from a Babylonian composition—"you, Šamaš, have covered the heavens and all the countries with your radiance (*melammu*)."[401] Of the projection of this radiance to the world, Rochberg continues as follows: "[t]he brilliance and luminosity of a celestial body was seen as emblematic of its divine quality, and as a physical phenomenon such luminosity made the divine manifest in the world."[402]

The association between the light and luster of material objects and the divine thus conferred upon radiant building stones an active role—not only were they visually stunning, they contained within them an element of the divine, making them ideal material with which to create a temple. Esarhaddon himself boasts that in repairing the House of Aššur at Assur, he made the *sukku*s*, parakku*s, and *nēmedu*s shine like the sun (*unammir šaššiš*).[403] Winter terms this divine, radiant quality of material the "vital life-force controlled by the gods, transmitted to the material world and manifest there as light;" she elaborates as follows:

> When applied to things, brightness suggests purity and cleanliness as the states par excellence of that which has been touched by, or is prepared to come into contact with, the sacred; and if the sacred is manifest as luminous, then that which is sacred will shine. To the extent that the resultant luster is part of the "affect" of the work in question, it plays an important role in aesthetic response, for the informed viewer will see luster as not only a physical property, but as a sign conveying a highly positive affective charge.[404]

The final attribute that is ascribed to *girimhilibû*-stone in the text of Sennacherib inscribed on the bull colossus—"with the quality of preventing plagues from affecting a person"—similarly touches on this important point, that building stones were also used in Neo-Assyria for their active qualities. For Russell the colossus text affirms that "palace building stones were selected both for their beauty and for their apotropaic qualities—the palace occupants were encased in a big magic box that delighted the eye as it protected

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[400] CAD "M": 2, 9f *melammu* (ME.LÁM), "1. radiance, supernatural awe-inspiring sheen (inherent in things divine and royal)."
[401] Langdon 1927: 52:9, cited in Rochberg 2009: 49.
[402] Rochberg 2009: 49.
[403] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vi 15–20.
[404] Winter 1994: 124.

the body and spirit."[405] An additional text of Sennacherib, which was inscribed on a large stone tablet found at Nineveh, makes this point for the *pendû*-stone that the king used in the construction of his *ekal kutalli*:[406]

pendû ša kīma zēri qiššê	*pendû*-stone—whose appearance
šikinšu nussuqu mala	is like cucumber seeds, said
aban kišādi aqru qabê	to be as valuable as a stone for the neck,
magāri u riḫṣu šūtuqi murṣu	for finding favor and for making
ana amēli lū ṭeḫê ša ultu	bad weather (and) illness
šēp Nipur	pass by a man, which was brought from
šadî ibbabla	the foot of Mount Nippur.

Reaffirming the active quality of the stones used in temple construction is the prescription of ritual instructions to smear plaster-forms of stones around the doorways of private houses to protect the inhabitants.[407] With the Neo-Assyrian elite conceiving of the temple as the divine version of a private house that was built for a god, the use of this same practice, yet at a much greater scale, would be expected. These valued aesthetic and experiential qualities, and inherent active properties made light-colored stone an appropriate building material for a god's house, a space that the Neo-Assyrian elite would have wanted to make secure and to protect, while also differentiating it as something other and prioritized amidst the landscape.

Semi-Precious and Exotic Stones

The Neo-Assyrian elite's appreciation and use of semi-precious[408] and exotic stones was as aesthetically and experientially-oriented as their relationship with the

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[405] Russell et al. 1997: 300.

[406] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 34, 72–74.

For an earlier attestation of *aban kišādi* (NA_4*.ki-ša-di-ia*), see Civil 2008: 53, n. 91, with reference to Dossin 1967: 109, 8–9 (ARM 10).

CAD "K": 604 *kutallu*, "2. b) rear of buildings… É.GAL *ku-tal-li* the rear palace (which former kings had built to prepare the outgoing army, muster horses and assemble war material);" translated by Grayson and Novotny (2012: 219 (RINAP 3)) as "armory."

[407] The stones prescribed in these ritual instructions include the varieties of light-colored building stone often associated with gypsum, as well as bitumen. This use is attested in Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions for the purification of a house (Wiggermann 1992: Text IV (K 9873+)). Also worth noting are ancient Babylonian ritual instructions that instruct a sick man to spread gypsum and bitumen (Annus 2002: 142).

[408] I use the modern term "semi-precious" in reference to this group of stones, which includes agate, lapis lazuli, and carnelian among others. Although these types of stone were generally speaking "precious" and highly valued in antiquity—for example Esarhaddon's reference to *abnu*s *nasqu*s ("select/precious/choice stones") cited above and similarly Aššurbanipal's citation below—I want to avoid overlap with the modern usage of "precious" that refers to such gemstones as diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, types that did not exist for the ancient Near East. Though that is not to say that the terms "semi-precious" and "precious" are free of amiguity in a modern context; as stated by Wise (2003: 11), "to the astute aficionado "semi-precious" should translate as "buying opportunity. The true lover of gemstones looks at the object without regard for the verbal baggage it may carry along with it. If the foregoing discussion has demonstrated

larger, light-colored building stones. While materials of both varieties are attested in the temple built environment, stones such as lapis lazuli, carnelian, crystal, agate, and quartz stand out in a discussion of visually and experientially-oriented elements in Neo-Assyrian temple construction. A variety of semi-precious and exotic stones was used in an impressively diverse manner, in fashioning foundation materials, including inscriptions and beads used in deposits;[409] and inlays and applied elements for non-portable and portable works of art. Passages from the inscriptions of Aššurbanipal demonstrate that the Neo-Assyrian elite had an appreciation for the types of stones used for portable works of art.[410] Alongside *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver"), the king states that he completed the features of the *mugirru*[411] and *eršu*[412] of Marduk in Esagil with *abnu*s *nisqu*s. The adjective *nisqu* means "choice, best quality, first rate," derived from the verb *nasāqu*, "to choose, select,"[413] in other words, what we might refer to as "semi-precious" stones.

Unfortunately the problem of identification that plagued the discussion of large light-colored stones used for temple construction similarly affects a discussion of semi-precious and exotic stones. Moorey stresses the seemingly dire situation scholars face when studying semi-precious stones in Mesopotamia:[414]

> The problem of identity which bedevil any account of the stones used for building, for sculpture, and for vessels are relatively simple by comparison with those confronted by any serious investigator of the gemstones used in ancient Mesopotamia.... Even with such readily recognized semi-precious stones as lapis lazuli or agate, fine-grained distinctions and reliable assessments of use through time are still impossible; questions of source and availability are often equally obscure, whilst any quantitative assessments are out of the question at this stage.

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anything, it is that the whole idea of preciousness is fluid. In the world of gemstones, if it is rare and beautiful, and if demand is strong, it is precious." On semi-precious and exotic stones in Mesopotamia in general, see Moorey 1994: 79–103; Caubet 1999.

[409] See Ellis (1968: 126–144) for textual attestations of valuable materials used in temple foundation deposits in earlier periods in Assyria, for example during the reigns of Šamši-Adad I and Shalmaneser I, and for archaeological and textual evidence from areas outside of the temple. For a look at what the Bjorkman refers to as "altar deposits" at individual Mesopotamian sites during the Early Dynastic period, see Bjorkman 2008.

[410] Matsushima 1988: 99f, 1) "Inscription d'Assurbanipal;" 2) K.2411.

[411] CAD "M": 170f *mugirru* ((GIŠ.)UMBIN), "2. chariot (royal or ceremonial)."

Matsushima (1988: 99f, no. 1) normalizes GIŠ.GIGIR as *narkabtu*; however, the CAD entry for *mugirru* notes the following: "[t]he word *mugirru* is the Assyrian by-form of *magarru.* The reading of the log. GIŠ.GIGIR in NA (and possibly in MA, Nuzi) is more likely to be *mugirru* than *narkabtu*, as suggested by *mugirru* in *ša mugirri* (q.v.); for refs, however, *narkabtu*;" see further, Salonen 1951: 39f.

[412] CAD "E": 315f *eršu* (GIŠ.NÁ), "1. bed."

[413] CAD "N": 1, 272f *nisqu*, "1. choice quality, first rate, the best of."

[414] Moorey 1994: 78. Al-Rawi and Black (1983: 138) similarly state as follows: "[i]n ancient Mesopotamia many stones were named and classified from their appearance (colour, lustre, sheen) alone; and hardness could not be accurately computed. Magical, mythical and folklore associations, especially with animals; geographical origin; and use are also sources of names. Even the lexicographer's ideal, an inscribed object specifying the material of which it is made, is unlikely to yield more than partial identification here, due to the unbridgeable disparity between the classification systems."

The following discussion draws upon both archaeological and textual evidence from the temple built environment, and considers the Akkadian terminology and modern stone classifications at some length. In light of the terminological drawbacks and the focus of this study, priority is placed on the aesthetic and active qualities of the stones in order to better understand their role within this ritualized space.

Lapis lazuli (*uqnû*-stone)[415] was perhaps the most highly regarded semi-precious stone in the ancient Near East. Acclaimed for its dark electric blue hue and durability, lapis lazuli was truly a vision of perfection for the Mesopotamians; as summarized by Casanova, "the blue of lapis lazuli symbolized divinity, life, fertility, desire, sexuality, beauty, perfection."[416] The rarity and necessary long-range procurement of this stone—Afghanistan being one of the few areas were it could be mined—confirmed its place among the exotica in antiquity.[417] The Mesopotamian textual record confirms this elevated status, citing this stone in the context of gifts and tribute;[418] in terms of its equivalent in silver in economic texts;[419] and in relation to luxurious structures, objects, and spatial environments, the latter confirmed by the archaeological record.[420] Yet, as argued by Winter, it was not simply its blue but its uniquely dark, lustrous appearance for which lapis lazuli was valued.[421]

Being at times dotted or mottled or of varying shades, the radiant shine and luster of lapis lazuli catered to the Neo-Assyrian elite's appreciation for such visual qualities. By using lapis lazuli for the images of the gods, who were themselves said to be shining, the kings were able to bring "the images... to a state in which they successfully and appropriately manifested the divinities whose form they represented."[422] The entries on stone in the HAR-ra="*ḫubullu*" lexical lists associate a series of descriptive terms with *uqnû*-stone that confirm a profound appreciation for its varied alluring visual qualities, including, for example, *laptānû* ("turnip-colored"), *karānû* ("wine-colored"), *kakkabānu*

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[415] See Appendix A, and further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 453–456.
[416] Casanova 1999: 68; see further, Porada 1981: 6–8; Moorey 1994: 85–92; André-Salvini 1999: 376.
[417] Moorey 1994: 85–87. Neo-Assyrian textual sources name regions in central Western Iran from which *uqnû*-stone was procured, for example Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions list Mount Bikni (Borger 1967: 55; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, iv 46); and Tiglath-pileser III's royal inscriptions also reference this region (Luckenbill 1926: 768; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 8, 31f). As argued by Moorey (1994: 85–86), however, due to the lack of evidence for a source in Iran itself, it is likely that the Median tribes of this region acted as intermediaries along the trade route from Afghanistan to Assyria; see further, Herrmann 1968; Oppenheim et al. 1970: 9–14; Porada 1981: 6–8.
[418] CAD "U/W": 196, *uqnû* 1. a) 1′.
[419] Winter (1999: 55, n. 4) references a text in Westenholz (1975: 16, no. 17, 3–4), in which one block of *uqnû*-stone is equated with 13 shekels of silver.
[420] Temples are both likened to and said to be made of *uqnû*-stone (Winter 1999a: 46–47), and dedicatory gifts to the gods are often embellished with *uqnû*-stone. In addition to the temple built environment, objects of lapis lazuli have been found in palaces and in a number of elite burials throughout Mesopotamia (Caubet 1999). The best example of the latter is the Royal Cemetery of Ur from the third millennium BCE, where many well-preserved grave goods were embellished with this stone, including a dagger and scepter inlaid with lapis lazuli, jewelry with lapis lazuli beads, gaming boards inlaid with lapis lazuli, and the Standard of Ur, a hollow wooden box inlaid with lapis lazuli (Horne and Zettler 1998).
[421] Winter 1999a: 49.
[422] Winter 1994: 125.

("star-like"), *burūmītu* ("multicolored").[423] Winter also calls attention to the possible metaphoric use of the Akkadian term associated with *uqnû* in ancient texts, where the use of the term *uqnû* might be better understand as denoting an aesthetic quality of the stone rather than the stone itself, that is, to indicate light, luster, sheen, or a dark-hue, or in reference to other blue stones.[424] At times the texts are explicit about the use of "artificial" lapis lazuli, qualifying *uqnû* with the genitive of *kūru*, "of the kiln," in contrast to genuine *uqnû*-stone which might be qualified by *šadû*, "of the mountain."[425] The frequency of the extended metaphoric use of the Akkadian term in texts, alongside the actual creation of lapis lazuli imitations in glass,[426] reinforces the high value of the aesthetic qualities of lapis lazuli within this cultural context.

Contemporary textual sources confirm that this elevated status of lapis lazuli was maintained throughout the Neo-Assyrian period.[427] A letter to a king of the late eighth or seventh century BCE articulates the rarity of this stone, the sender asking the king the following: "[d]oes the king, my lord, not know that *uqnû*-stone is exalted and that if I carry off the *uqnû*-stone, the land would revolt against me?"[428] In his royal inscriptions Esarhaddon highlights the role of *uqnû*-stone as tribute when he tells of the quarrying of large blocks of this stone in the mountains in central Western Iran and their transport to Nineveh by the chieftains of Median cities from this region.[429] The Neo-Assyrian textual record also attests to the particular use of *uqnû*-stone in temple construction; Esarhaddon states that he deposited foundation inscriptions made of *uqnû*-stone when rebuilding Esagil,[430] and a letter from Nabu-bani-aḫḫe, an official in Babylonia,[431] reveals that this same king also requested an image to be made for which *uqnû*-stone was needed.[432]

Archaeological evidence from the group of temples under discussion affirms the prestigious role lapis lazuli played in the temple built environment for small portable works of art; the larger objects of lapis lazuli that are associated with temples by the textual sources were likely removed from these spaces in antiquity. Several inscribed objects of lapis lazuli were recovered from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, including two fragments of a delicately crafted small lapis lazuli container with a dedicatory inscription etched into its outer surface, possibly from the reign of Aššurnaṣirpal (FIGURE 58);[433] and an equally artfully carved portion of a macehead of dark-blue veined lapis lazuli with a dedicatory inscription, of either Aššurnaṣirpal or Shalmaneser

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[423] HAR-ra= "*ḫubullu*" Tablet XVI, see the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts (DCCLT), text Q000091 (http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/Q000091), which utilizes the first millennium texts; see also, Landsberger et al. 1970: 10; Landsberger 1987: 151.

[424] Winter 1999a: 48; see also Oppenheim et al. 1970: 9–14; Arkhipov 2012: 31.

[425] Oppenheim et al. 1970: 10; see further the discussion of Egyptian blue glass and faience below. On artificial and genuine labels used for stone, see Schuster-Brandis 2008: 7–8.

[426] On imitations, see note 353.

[427] On lapis lazuli in the late Bronze Age, see Shortland 2010.

[428] *šarru bēlī ul ide kî uqnû ilûni u kî uqnâ attašâ mātu iseḫḫanni*; ABL 1240, 17f (CAD ("U/W": 196 *uqnû* 1.a) 1′). This letter is discussed in Oppenheim et al. 1970: 11–12; Porada 1981: 8.

[429] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, iv 32–39; see further, Moorey 1994: 85–87.

[430] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4; Esarhaddon 105, ix 21; Esarhaddon 106, vi 1.

[431] PNA 2/II: 809, "Nabû-bāni-aḫḫe 2."

[432] SAA 13: no. 127.

[433] N 788a–b (ME 91452a)(Reade 2002: 178; Searight et al. 2008: 94–95, no. 601A–B, fig. 61).

III (FIGURE 59).[434] Mallowan's excavation records also attribute fragments of a blue-stone inscribed vessel, possibly lapis lazuli, to the House of Ninurta,[435] and a lapis lazuli vessel to Ezida at Nimrud.[436]

Worth mentioning though not belonging to the materials from this particular temple group is one of the better known lapis lazuli artifacts related to divinity from ancient Mesopotamia, the 19.3 centimeter tall ninth-century seal of the god Marduk dedicated by the Babylonian king Marduk-zakir-šumi I (c. 854–819 BCE)(FIGURE 60–61). This intricately carved object was recovered by archaeologists in the mound of Esagil at Babylon in a level dating to the late Seleucid or Parthian period.[437] The inscription on the seal states that it was to be hung around the neck of the image of the god Marduk (*simat kišādišu*)[438] in Esagil. The crafting of this god's seal of lapis lazuli bespeaks the high value of this semi-precious stone as a material with which objects belonging to the god's could be made. Also of interest is the history of a lapis lazuli seal of the Kassite king Shagarakti-Shuriash (c. 1245–1233 BCE). The seal itself is not known, but the inscription on a tablet from Nineveh states that this seal was taken from Babylonia to Assur as booty by the Middle Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I (c. 1243–1207 BCE), the seal then made its way back to Babylon, where it was later found by Sennacherib, who added his own inscription and took it back with him to Assyria as booty.[439] The seal of Marduk-zakir-šumi I and the story of this second seal stand as testament to the value of such portable works of art among the Neo-Assyrian royal court, in addition to their association with divinity.[440]

The semi-precious stones that figure most prominently in temple construction following lapis lazuli are the chalcedony types, for example microcrystalline types of quartz, including carnelian and agate, and microcrystalline types of quartz, such as rock crystal.[441] It is carnelian specifically that might be said to be second only to lapis lazuli in

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[434] N 789 (ME 91452); RIMA 2: A.0.101.100 (Searight et al. 2008: 95). The British Museum attributes the object to Shalmaneser III, while Grayson (1991: 353) and Reade (2002: 192) state that it was probably dedicated by Aššurnaṣirpal.

[435] ND 5578a–c, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1953 as follows: "three fragments of blue stone (lapis-lazuli?) bowl. (A) h. 1.5, w 4, (B) ht 2.2, w 2.9, (C) h. 1.8, w 2.7. Thickness: 0.5. Remains of a votive inscription of at least 4 lines. (A.3; B,4 lines, C: apparently uninscribed)." Reade (2002: 178) suggests that these fragments may belong to N 788a–b (ME 91452a).

[436] ND 5401, described in the Nimrud Catalogue of 1956 as follows: "fragment of lapis lazuli bowl, with rim, w 2.5; L 3 cms. Two lines of inscription round the rim."

[437] Brinkman 1968: 203; Black and Green 1992: 129; Winter 2000: 1790–1791. For the seal's find-spot, drawing, and translation of the inscription, see Koldeway 1900; 1911: 46–48, fig. 74. The seal was found inside a basket along with a variety of stones used to make beads.

[438] CAD "S": 278f *simtu*, "3. appurtenances, ornament, characteristic, insigne, proper appearance or behavior or ways, figural representation."

CAD "K": 446f *kišādu*, "1. neck, throat (of a human being, a god, or an animal, often including the head and shoulders) 2. string of beads, necklace, piece of jewelry or amulet worn around the neck, neck scarf."

[439] Grayson 1972: 127, no. 29; Brinkman 1968: 203; Moorey 1994: 90–91.

[440] Potts 2012: 43–44.

[441] According to Moorey (1994: 96f), the general term "chalcedony" encompasses all microcrystalline quartz; carnelian, agate, and onyx are part of this group. Moorey notes that classificatory systems for chalcedonies often rely on color, appearance, and texture: agate and onyx are distinguished as banded chalcedony, while carnelian is a solid yet translucent chalcedony. Moorey, however, also uses "chalcedony" to refer specifically to a translucent bluish-grey stone.

Neo-Assyria in terms of prestige.[442] Reputed for its vibrant reddish-to-brown hues, translucent qualities, and distinct sheen, this hard chalcedony stone was ideal for small scale, intricately fashioned portable works of art, including beads, pendants, amulets, and seals.[443] Yet like lapis lazuli, carnelian had to be acquired from distant regions, primarily either Iran or Egypt according to the textual sources, thus adding to its level of prestige.[444] Archaeological evidence substantiates the use of carnelian in relation to the Neo-Assyrian temple. The well deposit from the outer court of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad included a number of beads and a pendant fashioned from carnelian (FIGURE 62–63).[445] At Nimrud carnelian beads were among the hundreds of beads and seals found in a corridor deposit in the House of Ninurta (FIGURE 8: "Bead Deposit");[446] a cache in Ezida also included a number of carnelian beads of varying shapes.[447]

Standing alongside lapis lazuli and carnelian as popular semi-precious stones in Neo-Assyria was agate. This type of banded chalcedony is a hard stone that has unique aesthetic qualities, often identified by its fine-grained, band-like patterns that are both bright and colorful, ranging from white to brown and sometimes blue.[448] For these reasons, agate was also utilized for fashioning small-scale beads, amulets, and pendants; yet it too had to be acquired from distant regions, likely Iran, the Indian subcontinent, and

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[442] Moorey 1994: 97–98. The popularity of carnelian in Mesopotamia was realized quite early by excavators, including Layard (1853a: 358), who based this on his work at Nimrud, and Beck (1929: 143), as a result of his work at Nineveh.

[443] On Neo-Assyrian beads, see Collon et al. 2001; on amulets, Van Buren 1945; see also Maxwell-Hyslop 1974; André-Salvini 1999.

[444] While textual sources are fairly numerous for the procurement of carnelian for southern Mesopotamia, which date as far back as the third millennium BCE and identify primarily the Indian subcontinent and Iran (Moorey 1994: 97), they are far fewer for attestations for northern Mesopotamia.

[445] A 11648; A 11649; A 11659 (Loud and Altman 1938: 60, pl. 60, no. 159). The fact that these objects were found in a well limits the possibilities for interpreting their original function in the temple context; yet the fact that they were found within the well suggests that they initially played an active role within this spatial context—the temple—and were later discarded in the well during looting or abandonment of the site.

[446] Bead: ND 5387, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "[c]opper finial, with cylindrical stem surmounted by 6 strands of twisted wire of which one is fragmentary. L 4 cm. Carnelian ring bead adhering to it." Mallowan originally suggested that the corridor deposit was not intentional and occurred when the door to Room b was blocked off, but later argued that it was intentional and dated it to the late eighth/early seventh century (Mallowan 1956b: 65; 1966: 90–91). Reade (2002: 172–173) proposes a date no later than the mid-ninth century, attributing the deposit to the building activities of either Aššurnaṣirpal or Shalmaneser III; see further, Reid and Oates 2001: 109–110.

[447] Beads: ND 5258 (1994-11-5, 255), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register as follows: "beads, group of eight in all, carnelian, faience, glazed spherical: balls, barrel, double conoid." These objects were found in a rubbish layer in the south-east corner of room NT 13 while tablets dating to the Neo-Assyrian period where found throughout the room. There was also evidence of robbing trenches, the result of later squatter activities following the destruction of the site in 612 BCE (Reid and Oates 2001: 115). While the cache materials were not found in their original context of use, likely being moved as a result of these later squatter activities, the physical presence of these materials within the temple space suggests that they were present within the House of Nabu during the time of Neo-Assyrian use and occupation. Based on the archaeological evidence and deductive reasoning, it is possible that these materials were originally used for a foundation deposit that was later disturbed.

The room numbers referred to in this study of the House of Ninurta at Nimrud and Ezida are based on those from Mallowan's excavations (FIGURE 8–9).

[448] Moorey 1994: 96f.

perhaps Turkey.[449] The frequency with which agate was used to fashion votive beads inscribed with royal inscriptions compared to other semi-precious stones used for beads in Assyria attests to its high value among the Neo-Assyrian elite.[450] Archaeological evidence also demonstrates the use of agate in the context of the Neo-Assyrian temple: the cache from Ezida at Nimrud included a number of agate beads,[451] while a fragment of an agate cylinder with a preserved inscription was found in the same room four meters below the surface, where it may have been deposited at the outset of construction.[452]

Small objects of microcrystalline types of quartz, that is chalcedony types other than carnelian and agate, as well as macrocrystalline types of quartz, for example rock crystal, also played a role in the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment. The presence of these additional semi-precious stones reinforces the appreciation of the translucent, hard qualities of chalcedony types in general within this cultural context.[453] Moreover, while many chalcedony type stones were of foreign origin, rock crystal was one of the few semi-precious stones that could be sourced locally within Mesopotamia, in addition to Iran, Turkey, and Cyprus.[454] This nearby provenance did not, however, diminish its treatment as a material good with visual qualities appropriate for crafting luxurious portable works of art. Cylinder and stamps seals carved from pale grey chalcedony were found in Ezida at Nimrud, one of which was described by Mallowan as follows: "a very beautiful quality of stone."[455] Shalmaneser III deemed a small eye-stone of dark brown and grayish-white banded chalcedony worthy of dedication to the god Ḫallasua, as

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[449] Moorey 1994: 99.

[450] For example, thirty-five of the thirty-six votive beads of Sennacherib recorded to-date are of agate (Moorey 1994: 99; Galter 1987: Table 1).

[451] ND 5289 (1994-11-5, 256), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "beads, group of ten, various materials, glass and agate, disc and tubular;" see further, Mallowan 1957: 14.

[452] ND 5540, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "fragment of agate cylinder (black, with white veins), from upper edge... Remains of 3 lines of inscription with honorific titles, undoubtedly of a god, to whom the cylinder was presumably dedicated. Very slight grooving on inside of bore runs longitudinally." On the use of cylinders as building deposits, see Ellis 1968: 108–125.

[453] The majority of cylinder seals from the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian period were made of chalcedony; most of the cylinder seals from these periods at the British Museum are of a pale type of chalcedony, in addition to those crafted from carnelian and agate (Moorey 1994: 76). On the classifications of quartz, both macrocrystalline and microcrystalline, see Moorey 1994: 93f.

[454] Moorey 1994: 95.

[455] Mallowan 1957: 18; ND 5262 (IM 59844), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cylinder seal, pale grey chalcedony. L. 4.5 cm x 1.8 cm. Armed god or servant of the god with horned crown, bearded with long dress down to the feet, armed with bow, sword and mace salutes the symbol of Marduk and Nabu—the spade and wedge on the back of a bull: opposite a standing suppliant or priest: above is the crescent moon—the priest (?) introduces a bearded figure who appears to be the King. In the field, the seven Pleiades. Also stylised sacred tree; surmounted by the winged disc. Discs in the sky indicate the seven Pleiades. Ends of the seal originally surmounted by copper discs;" see further, Reid and Oates 2001: 222; ND 5242 (Ash 1967.7), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "pendant, stone, cream, ovate. 2.4 x 1.8 cm x 7 mm thick. The observe slightly convex, under side engraved with design of cow giving suck to a calf. In the field tree, or shock of corn (?), crescent, star, lozenge;" further Mallowan 1957: 13; ND 5256, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "seal amulet, crystal or chalcedony, circular or suboval. About 1 cm x 8 mm engraved with star;" see further, Mallowan 1957: 13.

attested by the dedicatory text inscribed on its reverse.[456] Two small u-shaped open containers were found in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, one a whitish-blue chalcedony (FIGURE 64)[457] and the other a pink quartz with a dedicatory inscription to the god Ninurta (FIGURE 65).[458] Belonging to the corridor deposit of the same temple was a rock crystal cylinder seal.[459]

While archaeological evidence confirms the important role these chalcedony type stones played as materials for the Neo-Assyrian temple, textual attestations are slightly more problematic. With some confidence scholars have equated carnelian with the Akkadian *sāmtu*.[460] Based on this association, it can be argued that the texts also confirm the elevated role that this stone played in the temple built environment; for example, Sennacherib includes *sāmtu*-stone among the list of precious stones he placed in the foundations of the *akītu*-house at Assur.[461] This same text of Sennacherib also includes *ḫulālu*-stone, *pappardilû*-stone, and *papparminu*-stone as foundation materials alongside *uqnû*-stone and *sāmtu*-stone. The visual description of *papparminu*-stone and *pappardilû*-stone in the series *Abnu šikinšu* ("the stone, its appearance"), Neo-Assyrian texts of which have been recovered from Sultantepe, Nineveh, and Assur,[462] argues for an association of these two terms with the appearance of agate: "the stone whose appearance is black and has a white strip, *pappardilû* is its name; the stone whose appearance is black and has two white stripes, *papparminu* is its name."[463] The association of the term *pappardilû*-stone with banded agate is also suggested by the inscription on a bead of Sennacherib from Nimrud with a banded agate appearance, as it refers to itself as "*pappardilû*-stone of Assyria" (FIGURE 66–67).[464] Tests of this seal, however, revealed that its banded agate-veneer was artificially created using stains and heating. This discrepancy reinforces the point discussed above in relation to lapis lazuli, that stone names in Akkadian refer primarily to appearance and not the chemical substance. The fact that the bead qualifies itself as being from Assyria suggests that the coloring was an Assyrian manufacture. The series *Abnu šikinšu* also has an entry that equates the

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[456] As noted by Grayson (1996: 173), it is possible that this stone belonged to Shalmaneser I rather than Shalmaneser III, since the inscription reads as follows: "dedication to the god Ḫallasua by Shalmaneser" (RIMA 3: A.0.102.1003) and, since its exact provenance is unknown, there is no datable archaeological context. This object was acquired by the British Museum in 1846: ME 89907 (1846-5-23, 459).

[457] N 756 (ME 118765)(Layard 1853a: 358; Reade 2002: 176; Searight et al. 2008: 98, no. 609).

[458] N 760 (ME 118795)(Layard 1853a: 358; Reade 2002: 176; Searight et al. 2008: 97, no. 607).

[459] ND 5374 (Birmingham 1957 A 83), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, rock crystal. L. 2.7 cm. Scene: two standing figures with long coats. One of the figure is bearded and wears a helmet. In the field: bird, plant?, lozenge, gazelle. The two figures are probably gods; one of them carries a straight club, the other the bent club of Martu. 5 lines of inscription;" see further, Mallowan 1966: 90–91; Parker 1962: 31–33, 40. On the corridor deposit, see note 446.

[460] CAD "S": 121f *sāmtu* A (NA_4.GUG), "(a red stone, mostly designating carnelian);" see further, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 413–414.

[461] Luckenbill 1924: 138–139; Ambos 2010: 230. On the use of carnelian in foundation deposits, see Ellis 1968: 134f.

[462] Schuster-Brandis 2008: 17f (A = STT 108; B = STT 109; C = BAM IV 378; A 233* + o.A. VAT 13940*; Text D = K.4751; Text G = Rm 143).

[463] Translation after Schuster-Brandis 2008: 26f, 17–18.

[464] *pappaminu* (NA_4.BABBAR.MIN_5) *aššuri*; N 1139 (ME 89159)(Sollberger 1987: 380, 2; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 7; CAD "P": 110 *papparminu* a); see also, André-Salvini 1999: 383. Sollberger (1987) normalizes *pappardillu*).

appearance of *pappardillû*-stone with *ḫulālu*-stone, as well as *muššaru*-stone.[465] Schuster-Brandis, and Abusch and Schwemer further identify *muššaru*-stone as a red and white banded agate, with texts suggesting that it was a variety of *ḫulālu*-stone.[466] Yet other evidence suggests that *ḫulālu*-stone may refer specifically to onyx, a black and white banded chalcedony.[467] Additional terms that scholars have associated with agate in particular are *dušû*-stone and *šubû*-stone.[468] Rock crystal has also been associated with a number of Akkadian terms, including *elmēšu*-stone,[469] *ḫilibû*-stone,[470] and *dušû*-stone.

Due to the varied appearance of chalcedony type stones, it is perhaps not surprising that so many terms have been associated with this group based on descriptions of their appearance in the textual sources. Difficulties of reaching a definitive correlation between appearance, term, and stone type aside, what is important for the present study is that when these Akkadian terms appear in the textual sources, they ought to bring to mind the visual characteristics unique to this variety of semi-precious stone: translucent, banded, colorful stones. Moreover, the fact that visual forgeries of these types of stone were created, as demonstrated by the bead of Sennacherib, and the fact that these Akkadian terms are at times accompanied by aesthetic qualifications in the textual record, highlight first, the value of these qualities within Neo-Assyrian elite society; and second, the prioritization of the appearance of these materials rather than their chemical composition.

Additional semi-precious and exotic stones, of which portable works of art were crafted that were found in Neo-Assyrian temples, include steatite, chlorite, and serpentine. All three of these softer stones are characterized by a dark greenish-black, greasy surface that lends itself well to intricate carving and polishing, making these types ideal for fashioning seals, beads, and amulets. Moreover, though of a much darker tone than lapis lazuli, the greasy, polished surfaces exude the same lustrous and radiant qualities that were valued by the Neo-Assyrian society. The visual appreciation of these stones is supported by the Neo-Assyrian archaeological evidence. Mallowan's excavations of the House of Ninurta at Nimrud yielded a considerable number of beads and seals fashioned from this material group, many of which formed part of the corridor cache.[471] Similar objects were also found in Ezida at Nimrud, including cylinder seals

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[465] Schuster-Brandis 2008: 26, 14 (D 8′).

[466] Schuster-Brandis 2008: 433; Schwemer 2011: 471; see also, André-Salvini 1999: 391, n. 27.

[467] André-Salvini 1999: 379f; Winter 1999a: 298; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 436.

[468] CAD "D": 200f *dušû* A (DU_8.ŠI.A), "1. (a precious stone of characteristic color)."

CAD "Š": 3, 185f *šubû* A (NA_4.ŠUBA(ZA.SUḪ)), "(a stone, perhaps agate)." On *dušû*-stone as agate, see Steinkeller 1982: 249f. See further, Moorey 1994: 99; André-Salvini 1999: 381f; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 446f.

[469] CAD "E": 10f *elmēšu* (SUD.ÁG), "(a precious stone); see further, Oppenheim et al. 1970: 16, n. 31.

[470] CAD "Ḫ": 186 *ḫilibû*, "(a precious stone); see further, Stech-Wheeler et al. 1981: 264, n. 92.

[471] Corridor deposit cylinder seals: ND 5366 (ME 140398; 1987-1-31, 71), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cylinder seal, steatite, black. L. 1.6 cm. Subject very nearly obliterated. Winged animal standing figure dressed in long pleated skirt and second animal (?);" ND 5373 (ME 140422; 1987-1-31, 95), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, steatite, black L 2.2 cm. Scene: procession of winged Lamassu and stag. In the field: crescent and sphere;" ND 5369 (ME 140331; 1987-1-31, 4), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, steatite, black, L. 1.9 cm. Subject faint. Procession of winged Lamassu;" ND 5363, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cylinder seal, steatite, black L 2.6 cm. Scene:

and a stamp seal.[472] Because these three stones— steatite, chlorite, and serpentine—have the same basic mineral composition, however, it is often difficult to distinguish one type from the other in the archaeological record.[473] Moreover, like chalcedony type stones, steatite, serpentine, and chlorite stones have not been definitively equated with terms from the Akkadian texts, though visual qualifications of the *dušû*-stone in the textual sources suggest that this term may apply to one if not all three from this group.[474]

As demonstrated by the textual attestations and material use, the visuality and experiential qualities of semi-precious and exotic stones were highly valued in Neo-Assyria. What was seen was the valued characteristic, the discrete sheen, brilliance, and radiant colors eliciting an emotional response from the ancient viewers, an instinctive appreciation that, according to Wise, may be shared by all of humanity:[475]

> Like a moth transfixed by the flame, our interest in these curious and beautiful natural creations seems instinctive. The first gem may have been a transparent pebble plucked from a stream or a glint of crystal caught in the firelight and pried from the wall of a cave… The first gems were curiosities appreciated for their beauty and their unusual form. There were no preconceived notions of preciousness. Perhaps a handful

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bowmen in chariots, horse drawn, also standing bowmen, and in the field: quartered circle, mace, crescent and star;" ND 5364, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cylinder seal, steatite, black. L. 2.1cm. Scene: kneeling bowmen shooting at stag and another animal with wolflike head. Possibly Sargonid (Bow seems to have recurved ends);" ND 5367 (Copenhagen 13827), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register from 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, steatite, black. L. 1.8 cm. Three standing figures, god, introducer, and suppliant. In the field: star, club of Martu, monkey. One line of inscription. 1st dynasty of Babylon." ND 5368, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal. steatite, black. L. 2.4 cm. Scene: huntsman shooting down animals including a lion and a bull. In the field: an indecipherable symbol—possibly a plough(?);" ND 5371 (Met 57.27.16), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, steatite, black, L. 2.5 cm. Scene: bearded huntsman with animal form body and a shock of standing hair, shooting down with his bow a roaring lion. In the field: tree, bident, and perhaps another animal summarily treated;" ND 5372, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "cyl. seal, steatite, black, L. 3.2 cm. Scene: flowering plants, a running ostrich, and a maned animal on a mountain top; approached by a bearded figure with flipper like hand carrying a bent club—perhaps the god Martu. In the field: a star and crescent. Assyrian 8th century BC?"

Corridor deposit beads: ND 5346 (Ash. 1957.11), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "beads, group, large variety of stones, quartz, crystal, steatite, carnelian etc. Also many shell, glass, and glass paste. They include a wide variety of bead forms; cylindrical, barrel, spherical etc.;" ND 5347, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "beads, group, mixed, similar to 5346."

[472] Cylinder seals: ND 4225 (ME 141743; 1994-11-5, 213), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1955 as follows: "cylinder seal, frag. steatite, black. L. 15 mm. Prancing ibex, star and tree. Good cutting, possibly Sargonid;" ND 5254 (Met 57.27.8), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "cylinder seal, steatite, black. L 3.5 cm, with copper caps and suspension loop at top end. Design; large bird on the wing, crescent, star, ibex, impaled lozenge, and a smaller bird in the field above."

Stamp seal: ND 5245, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "amulet, half cylinder, black steatite. L. 2.2 cms. Indeterminate engraving on flat side, star on convex side, probably unfinished."

[473] Moorey 1994: 100–101. Steatite and serpentine, as well as chlorite, are varieties of hydrated magnesium silicate (Moorey 1994: 100).

[474] Schuster-Brandis 2008: 408f.

[475] Wise 2003: 1.

> of crystals was pried from the side of a cliff; some had a more pronounced color, were clearer, or possessed greater perfection of form. The standards were gut level.

Yet additional attributes further elevated the value of these stones, attributes that were significant because of the stones' circulation within the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context.

All of these semi-precious and exotic stones were attributed additional value due to the labor and economic implications associated with each. The procurement of these materials was a difficult task, requiring a high level of socio-economic organization and complexity. First the natural resources had to be found and extracted from the earth; they were then passed through the hands of various traders, officials, and members of the elite in making their way to the capital cities.[476] The awareness of the Neo-Assyrian elite of the foreign origins of semi-precious and exotic stones permeates the literature and explains the prestigious engagement with these stones in their material culture, as noted by André-Salvini in the following passage:[477]

> Les montagnes évoquaient un paysage étranger aux habitants de la plaine mésopotamienne et ces territories inconnus, bientôt devenus inaccessibles pour des raisons historiques, engendrèrent la diffusion de légendes et d'appellations littéraires liées à l'origines des pierres.

In addition to procurement, the labor and skill required to work semi-precious stones into portable works of art ascribed them value. Chalcedony type stones were much harder than the softer lapis lazuli or serpentine varieties, thereby demanding far greater economic resources to carve and form the stone into a desired shape, including trained laborers, the necessary tools, and time. As argued by Winter, the descriptive language used for finished works of art in Akkadian textual sources confirms an Assyrian appreciation for the skill and wisdom of the craftsmen who were responsible for their production.[478]

The active properties of stone afforded this material group additional value. Not only was *uqnû*-stone valued by the Neo-Assyrian elite for its protective and amuletic qualities,[479] it was also favored among the gods, as demonstrated by the lapis lazuli seal

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[476] Porada (1981: 6) writes the following of the extraction of lapis lazuli in antiquity, after the study of Kulke (1976): "The ancient method for extracting the lapis lazuli from caves in the rock required the transport of fuel and water from the river valley up to the mine. First the rock was cleared to the point at which a lapis carrying zone was reached. Branches of willow trees from the banks of the Kokcha River were then heaped up before the rock face and lighted. After the rock had attained sufficient heat, cold water was poured upon it. The sudden cooling resulted in the cracking of the rock. The marble surrounding the lapis lense had already been partially destroyed; therefore, the lense could be removed with relative ease and not too much damage to the stone, although this method occasionally caused fine cracks which only showed up when the stone was being worked by jeweler."

[477] André-Salvini 1999: 375.

[478] Winter 2003.

[479] A text found at Assur dating to the Middle Assyrian period states as follows: "(if) he is equipped with a seal of lapis lazuli, he will have the protective spirit of a god and that god will be happy with him" (Köcher 1979: Tafel 98, viii′ 10" (BAM 4, no. 194; VAT 9587). For references to the active qualities of lapis lazuli

of Marduk. A passage from the Neo-Assyrian literary text of the scribe Budi-il to the gods Nabu and Tašmetum similarly suggests a divine appreciation for this stone, the text stating that the goddess Tašmetum closed a *šigaru* ("door bolt or bar") of *uqnû*-stone to secure her bedroom.[480] In addition, incantations associated with birth demonstrate the importance of the male and female characteristics ascribed to *uqnû*-stone and *sāmtu*-stone respectively—blue as male and red as female.[481] Ritual instructions contribute further to the discussion: one passage from ritual instructions speaks of the good fortune that comes with wearing a seal of either *ḫulālu* or *muššaru*-stone,[482] while rituals instructions on tablets from Assur ascribe to both *gišnugallu*-stone and *šadânu*-stone an important role in divination,[483] and enumerate the magical-medical qualities of different stones in list format, connecting each with a particular disease or ailment.[484] A principal component of the myth *Lugale*, texts of which are attested from the Old Babylonian period (early second millennium) through to the Persian period, is its aetiological classification of stones. Each stone was allotted a positive or negative destiny by the god Ninurta dependent upon whether the stone aided or hindered the god in his defeat of Asag in the mountains. In this text, the less a stone had to be altered from its natural state, the greater its value, a condition that demonstrates a cultural understanding of the inherent power and potential of certain stones.[485]

All of the unique aesthetic qualities enumerated above, along with the foreign origins and rarity, the expenditure of energy and resources necessary for their acquisition and manufacture, and last, the inherent active properties, were what made semi-precious and exotic stones valuable in the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context, and accordingly, a desirable resource for use as both ritualized and ritualizing material in the temple built environment.

c. Wood

The use of wood as a building material in Neo-Assyrian temple construction is one of the hardest to verify archaeologically. First, wood was not used in royal building programs in the same conspicuous manner as stone and mudbrick; rather it was utilized for less obvious structural elements, including roofing, internal fittings, and door leaves and door poles; the latter were often fitted with metal bands or relief plaques.[486] Second, because of the temperate climate of northern Mesopotamia and the rainfall that came

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in texts from the Early Dynastic Period, see Biggs 1966: 175–176. On the use of cylinder seals as protective amulets, see Schuster-Brandis 2008: 59f.

[480] SAA 3: no. 14; see also, SAA 3: no. 49, 8.

[481] van Dijk 1975: 66, 7-9 (MLC 1207); see also, André-Salvini 1999: 376f.

[482] Ebeling 1919: 185, r. i 14; trans. CAD "H": 227; André-Salvini 1999: 379.

[483] Horowitz and Hurowitz 1992 (LKA 137).
CAD "Š": 1, 36 *šadânu* A (NA_4.KA.GI.NA, NA_4 KUR-*nu*), "1. hematite."

[484] Köcher 1979: 376 (VAT 8260)(André-Salvini 1999: fig. 6). Further attestation of the active qualities of stones in Mesopotamia at large is demonstrated by the excavated materials from ancient Babylonian cities; a vast number of stone objects with active protective associations were recovered during excavations of these sites, including amulets, necklaces, and cylinder seals (André-Salvini 1999: figs. 1, 7, 8, 9; see also Schuster-Brandis 2008).

[485] Foster 2014; see further, Simkó 2013.

[486] See further, Moorey 1994: 355–359; Novotny 2010: 128–130.

from the mountains to the north, most wooden architectural elements and portable objects have long since vanished from Neo-Assyrian sites. Small traces of decomposed organic matter are found only in the rarest of circumstances.[487] When wood is preserved at Neo-Assyrian capital cities, it is often the result of fire, as was the case with the traces of wood that were found in the temples at Nimrud.[488] When excavating Khorsabad, the Chicago team were fortunate to have found the fragile remains of wooden door poles at the principal doorway to the House of Sin and fragments of door panels in the House of Nabu. This unique preservation may have been facilitated by the bronze relief panels that were still attached to the wooden surfaces with metal nails at the time of excavation (FIGURE 68).[489] As noted by Loud and Altman, information can also be gained from the absence of wood, for example in the form of imprints left in the soil by the decayed organic material.[490] Imprints of what the excavators identified as roofing beams measuring 3.90 to 4.40 meters in length and 0.52 to 0.88 in width were found in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad. Additional imprints at the site also evidenced the use of wood for door leaves, lintels, and door poles, though what type of wood was used is not known.

Visual imagery from royal non-portable works of art illustrates the Neo-Assyrian kings' procurement of wood for use in their building programs. Reliefs in Sargon's palace at Khorsabad offer a clear depiction of the transport of wood from the Neo-Assyrian period. Like the quarrying and transport of the colossi in the reliefs of Sennacherib, Sargon's reliefs show wooden logs being transported by land and sea to the capital city (FIGURE 69).[491] The inclusion of a protective winged-bull (perhaps the *lamassu* referred to in textual sources)[492] in the water amidst this scene speaks to the significance of this endeavor, as one needing protection and guidance (FIGURE 70). Moreover, the very decision to show an expedition for wood de facto signals its high level of import.[493] Wooden logs are also depicted on Shalmaneser III's non-portable

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[487] On the Mesopotamian climate and environment, see Butzer 1995; Pollock 1999.
[488] Loud 1936: 97–98; Layard 1853a: 357.
[489] Loud 1936: 97, fig. 102; Loud and Altman 1938: 16, 26, pl. 21 C.
[490] Loud and Altman 1938: 26, pl. 22 B.
[491] AO 19889–19890 (Botta and Flandin 1849: I, pl. 33; Albenda 1983; Linder 1986; Fontan 2001). Albenda (1983; 1996, n. 3) identifies the seascape as the Mediterranean sea, while Linder (1986) and more recently Parpola (1995: 60, n. 78) argue that the scene depicts river transport along the Euphrates. This presentation bears similarities to the quarrying and transport of bull colossi in the Southwest Palace reliefs of Sennacherib at Nineveh; see note 360. On means of transport and routes in ancient Mesopotamia, see Moorey 1994: 5–13; for the evidence from the royal inscriptions, see Ponchia 2004; 2006. A number of letters from the royal correspondence also tell of the acquisition and transport of logs to Neo-Assyrian capital cities from distant regions, though they do not explicitly state a use in temple construction; SAA 1: nos. 4, 63, 101; SAA 5: nos. 33, 127, 129, 254, 295; SAA 15: no. 123; SAA 19: no. 33; see further, Fales 1993; 1995; Parpola 1995.
[492] CAD "L": 60f *lamassu* ((SAL)^{d}LAMMA(.LAMMA)), "1. protective spirit (representing and protecting the good fortune, spiritual health and physical appearance of human beings, temples, cities and countries);" see further, Linder 1986: 279; Black and Green 1992: 115.
[493] Of this scene, Linder (1986: 281) states as follows: "[i]n [this relief] more than one achievement of the king is commemorated: his large scale building activities which required vast shipments of wood; the construction and the use of adequately designed boats for the lumber transport; the employment from his vassal states of skilled manpower who were specialists in the nautical professions and thus introduced various innovations to suit the king's specific requirements."

works of art. The king's throne base from Nimrud shows wooden logs being presented to the king in tribute (FIGURE 71), and a scene on the bronze reliefs of Shalmaneser's Balawat Gates depicts Assyrian soldiers bringing wooden logs down from the mountains (FIGURE 72).[494] Since much of the wood used in the king's royal building projects had to be obtained from neighboring regions outside of Mesopotamia proper—for example the mountainous areas of the Levant and Anatolia to the west, and the Zagros mountains to the east—it was a source of pride for the kings to demonstrate visually their power and ability to travel to these regions and procure such high quality, exotic, natural resources.[495]

The Neo-Assyrian textual sources vastly improve upon the dearth of information provided by the archaeological record, by affirming the use of wood in royal building programs with considerable frequency. Not only do the texts tell of the various applications of wood in temple construction, they also identify the different types that were in use, often accompanied by their geographical origins and methods of procurement.[496] Aššurnaṣirpal's brick inscription from the House of Mamu at Imgur-Enlil (Balawat), for example, itemizes the species of wood he acquired from Mount Lebanon and their various applications in this temple's construction:[497]

ana Labnāna	I marched
lū allik gušūrī erēni	to Mount Lebanon. I cut down beams of *erēnu*-wood,
šurmeni daprāni akkis	*šurmēnu*-wood, *duprānu*-wood.
gušūrī erēni eli ekurri šī	I fastened *erēnu*-wood beams over this *ekurru*
uṣabbit dalāt erēni	(and) constructed *dalt*us of *erēnu*-wood.
ēpuš ina mēsir siparri urakkis	I fastened (them) with bands of *siparru* (and)
ina bābiša urette	hung (them) in its *bābu*s.

As this text demonstrates, most textual references to wood used in temple construction associate it with roofing beams and doors, at times with door poles and other non-portable works of art, and less often with brickmolds. Aššurnaṣirpal's Banquet Stele text provides a comprehensive list of the types of wood with which the Neo-Assyrian kings would have been familiar as a result of campaigns and the cultivation practices of their successors within Assyria itself.[498] While some of the wood types itemized are the same

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[494] On Shalmaneser III's throne base, see Mallowan 1966: I, 444f, pl. 448b; Marcus 1987. On the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser II, see King 1915; Schachner 2007; see further, Curtis and Tallis 2008.

[495] Albenda and Caubet 1986: 34. On the climate and flora of Mesopotamia and the ancient Near East, see Moorey 1994; Gilbert 1995.

[496] For a discussion of the types of wood and timber referred to in Assyrian texts, see Postgate 1992b; see Meiggs 1982 on wood used in the ancient Mediterranean world; see also, Campbell Thompson and Gadd 1949; Stol 1979; and Parpola 1995: 59f for a discussion of wood in the royal correspondence related to Khorsabad.

[497] RIMA 2: A.0.101.50, 25–31.
CAD "D": 1, 52f *daltu* (GIŠ.IG), "1. door."

[498] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30; see also, Wiseman 1952a.

as those said to have been used in temple construction, Aššurnaṣirpal's primary aim with this text was not to affiliate the types of wood with a particular use, but rather to emphasize the exotic origins of these natural resources so as to highlight his power and ability to procure them for his new capital city at Nimrud.[499]

With this scenario in mind and as Postgate warns, it ought to be with a degree of hesitation that we correlate the ancient terms for types of wood with modern specimens. The chance of human error in accurately identifying each specimen of wood and the ideological motivations behind the texts that tell of their use is the same as that encountered with textual attestations of stones.[500] With this caveat in mind, certain species of wood can be identified with relative confidence due to descriptive sections of the texts, the information that is known about the natural resources of northern Mesopotamia and its neighboring regions, and the archaeological evidence.

Cypress, cedar, pine, and juniper are types of constructional wood used for temples that frequently appear in the texts, and which are translated with considerable regularity from the Akkadian textual sources, cypress from *šurmēnu*-wood, cedar or pine from *erēnu*-wood, and *burāšu*-wood and *duprānu*-wood read as types of juniper.[501] According to the Neo-Assyrian textual sources, *šurmēnu*-wood was a strong, durable, reddish-brown wood with a pleasing fragrance, that was prioritized for roofing beams and doors in Neo-Assyrian temple construction; it is also mentioned once in relation to brickmolds.[502] Though originally acquired from Mount Lebanon, Mount Amanus, and Mount Sirara, it later became available within Assyria itself due to the gardening and cultivating activities of the Neo-Assyrian kings [503] Drawing upon the physical characteristics and origins denoted by the textual sources, as well as certain philological associations, scholars read *šurmēnu*-wood as cypress with considerable consistency, a tree that is known to have grown on the slopes of the Lebanese mountains and which continues to this day to be appreciated for its strength, durability, and sweet fragrance.[504]

The texts similarly emphasize the size, strength, durability, and pleasing fragrance of *erēnu*-wood, characteristics that made it a preferred material for roofing beams and doors, as well as door poles, incense, and brickmolds.[505] The texts also tell of the Neo-

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[499] See further, Thomason 2005: 173.

[500] Postgate 1992b: 177–178.

[501] In addition to the CAD definitions in Appendix A, see the discussion in Postgate 1992b: 180f.

[502] SAA 13: no. 164; RIMA 2: A.0.101.50, 26–29; RINAp 4: Esarhaddon 1, 75; Esarhaddon 67, vi 6–7; Esarhaddon 60, 22′; Esarhaddon 104, iv 5; Esarhaddon 105, iv 39; Frame 1995: 201, 58–59 (B.6.32.2); see further, Postgate 1992: 189; Moorey 1994: 355ff.

[503] References to *šurmēnu*-wood's western origins and cultivation in Assyria include the following: Cole and Machinist 1998: 136, no. 164 (SAA 13); Grayson and Novotny 2012: 76f, 4′–7′ (Sennacherib 8); 114f, viii 29, 45 (Sennacherib 16); Streck 1916: 247, 56–61; RIMB: B.6.32.2, 58–59; see further, Postgate 1992b: 184, 189; Moorey 1994: 348. On the cultivation and gardening practices of the Neo-Assyrian kings, see Stronach 1990; Foster 1999; Thomason 2005: 169–187.

[504] Moorey 1994: 348.

[505] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28, v 10; A.0.101.30, 60–61; A.0.101.50, 66–69; RIMA 3: A.0.102.39, 10; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, v 75; Esarhaddon 12, 18; Esarhaddon 54, r. 23; Esarhaddon 57, iv 16–26, vi 6–7; Esarhaddon 60, 21′; Esarhaddon 104, iv 2; Esarhaddon 105, v 10, 16; RIMB: B.6.32.2, 58–59; SAA 13: no. 162, 16–17; SAA 13: no. 163, 64; SAA 13: no. 166, 3–5. On the use of *erēnu*-wood for incense, see Lambert 1987: 46–47; on recipes for incense and aromatics, see Jursa 2003–2005; for a discussion of aromatics based on an Ur III texts from Umma, see Brunke and Sallaberger 2010; on the aromatics trade in the early Old Babylonian Kingdom of Larsa, see the recent study by Middeke-Conlin 2014.

Assyrian kings procuring *erēnu*-wood from the west—from Mount Lebanon, Mount Amanus, and Mount Sirara, a region referred to collectively in earlier textual sources as the Mountain (or Forest) of *erēnu*-wood.[506] Archaeological evidence from Neo-Assyrian sites have led scholars to associate *erēnu*-wood with both cedar and pine. Based on his excavations of the unburnt roofing beams from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, Layard reads *erēnu*-wood as cedar.[507] Laboratory tests of the wood found by the Chicago excavations at Khorsabad further confirmed the use of cedar in temple construction.[508] Mallowan's laboratory tests of the roofing beams from Ezida at Nimrud, however, identified the wood as a species of pine,[509] for which reason Moorey argues that *erēnu*-wood may in fact refer to pine rather than cedar.[510]

With such contradictory evidence it is worth considering—as with the plethora of light-colored building stones—that the term *erēnu*-wood was not used consistently in Neo-Assyrian texts and that it could refer to both cedar and pine. Yet these two types of wood are not especially similar; cedar is a strong, durable, aromatic reddish-brown wood, which correlates well with the textual attestations of *erēnu*-wood, while pine is a weaker, thinner, lighter wood that is short lived and less durable.[511] In addition, cedar grew in the mountainous areas of Lebanon, agreeing with the western origins of *erēnu*-wood that are emphasized in the texts, while pine was local to northern Mesopotamia.[512] Postgate supports the reading of *erēnu*-wood as cedar, and suggests instead that we read *ašūḫu*-wood as pine, the "tall, straight, tree which grew close to Assyria"[513] that was used for temple and palace doors according to earlier royal texts, though after Aššurnaṣirpal it is no longer mentioned. The continued uncertainty surrounding *erēnu*-wood does not, however, change the present discussion at a material level. As with light-colored building stones, what is important for the present discussion is understanding the particular experiential qualities and valued properties that were associated with *erēnu*-wood in a Neo-Assyrian elite context, in other words, the attestations of its great size, strength, durability, and distinctive fragrance.

The remaining two types of wood that are mentioned most often in relation to temple construction, *burāšu* and *duprānu*-wood, are read as juniper with notable consistency by scholars.[514] According to the textual sources, *burāšu*-wood was used

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[506] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 1, 80; Sennacherib 2, 7; Sennacherib 17, vi 23; Streck 1916: 247, 56–61; RIMB: B.6.32.2, 58–59; see further, Rowton 1967; Elayi 1988; Postgate 1992b: 182, 188; Moorey 1994: 350f. The reference to a mountain of GIŠ.eren is found, for example, in the inscription on Gudea's Statue B (RIME 3/1: Gudea E3/1.1.7.StB, v 28–36); see further, CAD "E": 275 *erēnu* A a) 2′; Horowitz 1998: 79–80.

[507] Layard 1853a: 357; Mallowan 1966: I, 377, n. 12; Moorey 1994: 355. Tests conducted by the Forest Products Research Laboratory on wood found in the Northwest Palace at Nimrud identified the wood as cedar; ME 122117 (1948-11-4, 127)(Curtis and Reade 1995: 105, n. 56; Reade 2002: 174).

[508] Loud 1936: 97.

[509] Mallowan 1966: 377–378.

[510] Moorey 1994: 355. George Smith regularly translated *erēnu* as pine in his nineteenth-century work, and more recently Hansman (1976) argues for this same association.

[511] Moorey 1994: 348.

[512] Postgate 1992b: 178; Moorey 1994: 356; Gilbert 1995: 156.

[513] Postgate 1992b: 180.

[514] Rowton 1967: 269f; Meiggs 1982: 416f; Postgate 1992b: 180; Moorey 1994: 350. Some scholars have further suggested that *burāšu*-wood is to be associated with the sub-species *Junpier excelsa* and *duprānu*-wood with the sup-species *Juniper drupacea*.

primarily for roofing beams and sometimes for doors, and was obtained from Mount Amanus. *duprānu*-wood was also acquired from Mount Amanus and was valued in particular for its height.[515] Juniper, a wood that is naturally strong and remarkably tall, would have been an ideal material for temple construction. In addition, juniper, like cedar and cypress, is known to have grown on the upper slopes of neighboring mountainous regions to the west of Neo-Assyria, thus standing in agreement with the textual attestations for the origins of *burāšu*-wood and *duprānu*-wood.

Additional types of wood mentioned in association with Neo-Assyrian temple construction are *musukkannu*-wood, read as sissoo; *buṭnu*-wood,[516] read as terebinth; *taskarinnu*-wood, read as boxwood; *ušû*-wood, which has a suggested reading of ebony;[517] and *miḫru*-wood[518] and *liāru*-wood,[519] both read as types of conifer, though the latter is sometimes read specifically as white cedar.[520]

In the royal inscriptions *musukkannu*-wood is consistently reputed for its durability, often being described as a "lasting wood" (*iṣu darû*).[521] A foreign origin for this wood is suggested by the term itself, which means "*mes*-tree of Magan;" however, the texts of Aššurnaṣirpal and Sennacherib also tell of its cultivation within Assyria itself, and those of Tiglath-pileser III within Babylonia.[522] An administrative letter from an official in Babylon to the king provides further support for the southern cultivation of *musukkannu*-wood. The official tells of the need for suitable *musukkannu*-wood to be sent to the city to complete the work, as the current supply at Babylon was too small and what was brought to the city was too moist.[523] While *musukkannu*-wood was used in similar ways as the preceding types of wood—its noteworthy size and dark color making it ideal for roofing beams and doors[524]—it was also used for portable works of art. When recounting his refurbishment of the divine images in Babylon, Esarhaddon notes that he crafted a *šubtu* ("seat") of *musukkannu*-wood for the goddess Tašmetum:[525]

šubat musukkanni dārê adi	A *šubtu* of everlasting
kilzappi hurāṣi hušše	*musukkannu*-wood with a
litbušu ana Tašmetu	*kilzappu* clothed with *ḫurāṣu*

[515] RIMA 2: A.0.101.50, 25–27; RIMA 3: A.0.102.2, ii 9; A.0.102.3, 90; A.0.102.6, 44; A.0.102.10, i 27–28, iv 17–18; A.0.102.14, 29–33; A.0.102.28, 21. In addition, Tiglath-pileser III's royal inscriptions include *duprānu*-wood (and likely also *burāšu*-wood) in a list of materials given as tribute by the kings of Ḫatti, and by Aramean and Chaldean rulers; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47, r. 23′; see further Meiggs 1982: 53–54; Moorey 1994: 348.

[516] CAD "B": 358f *buṭnu,* "terebeth."

[517] The association of *ušû* with ebony is founded primarily upon second millennium evidence (Postgate 1992b: 185; see also Moorey 1994: 352).

[518] CAD "M": 2, 60 *miḫru* B, "(a fir tree)."

[519] CAD "T": 399f *tijāru* (*lijāru, tijālu*), "(a conifer)."

[520] In addition to the CAD definitions in Appendix A, see the discussions in Postgate 1992b: 181f; Moorey 1994: 352f; Stol 1979: 1–24.

[521] See, CAD "D": 118 *darû* 2. b) "said of *musukannu*-wood."

[522] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 43; Luckenbill 1926: 285, 792; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 8, r. 4′; Sennacherib 16, viii 29; Sennacherib 17, viii 60; see further, Postgate 1992b: 183.

[523] SAA 15: no. 248.

[524] Streck 1916: 148, x 26; 247, 61; RIMB: B.632.2, 61–62.

[525] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 91–92.
CAD "K": 361f *kilzappu* (GIŠ.GÌR.GUB(.BU), GÌR.GUB), "1. footstool, 2. socle, pedestal."

bēlti rabīti āšibat	*huššû,* for the goddess
Eumuša papāḫ Marduk	Tašmetum, the great lady,
ina qereb Babili	who dwells in Eumuša, the
	papāḫu of the god Marduk,
	which is in Babylon,
eššiš ēpuš	I made new.

Aššurbanipal similarly recounts his gifting both a *mugirru* ("chariot") and an *eršu* ("bed") of *musukkannu*-wood to Marduk in Esagil for the god's divine marriage with the goddess Zarpanitu.[526] The variant use of this wood as the material with which brickmolds were made is also illustrated by the inscriptions of Esarhaddon, for his temple work in both Babylon and Assur.[527] The association of sissoo with *musukkannu*-wood rests upon much of this textual evidence. Sissoo fits well with these attestations for the use of *musukkannu*-wood, the former being a particularly dark, rich, and durable wood that grew to the south of Assyria, in the area of modern-day Oman or ancient Magan.[528] Additionally, sissoo trees now grow in present day Iraq, according to Guest, a phenomenon that may very well stretch back to the Neo-Assyrian kings' cultivation of this type of wood within the Assyrian heartland, as recounted in the texts.[529]

The textual sources similarly present *buṭnu*-wood as a wood used for both large scale building and portable works of art in the context of temple construction. Esarhaddon, for example, credits his use of *buṭnu*-wood alongside *erēnu*-wood and *musukkannu*-wood for the longevity and durability of Esagil.[530] Yet unlike many of the previously discussed woods, the texts never speak of *buṭnu*-wood in terms of import, suggesting that it was a natural resource of northern Iraq.[531] What is known of terebinth agrees with this evidence. First, during the Neo-Assyrian period terebinth would have grown on the lower slopes of northern Iraq, in the Jebel Sinjar;[532] and second, throughout history terebinth was reputed for its exceptionally dark color, making it a desirable wood for an aesthetically rich built environment.[533]

In contrast, the smaller size and limited durability of *taskarinnu*-wood and *ušû*-wood made them less ideal candidates for large-scale construction.[534] Both woods are

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[526] Matsushima 1988: 99f, 1) "Inscription d'Assurbanipal;" 2) K.2411; Streck 1916: 300f; see also, Streck 1916: 148, 35–38; Moorey 1994: 358-359. On the divine marriage between Marduk and Zarpanitu, see Pongratz-Leisten 2008.

[527] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 97; Esarhaddon 57, iv 16–26; Esarhaddon 104, iii 33; Esarhaddon 105, iv 26-27.

[528] Moorey 1994: 352.

[529] Guest 1933: 28 (*Dalbergia*).

[530] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, v 16–22.

[531] The Banquet Stele text of Aššurnaṣirpal tells of of its cultivation within the capital city; RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 43.

[532] Postgate 1992b: 181; see further, Stol 1979: 25–29.

[533] For example, the Greek philosopher Theophrastus (*Hist. Plant.* V.3.2) wrote the following: "the wood of the terebinth is also very black and close-grained; at least in Syria they say that it is blacker than ebony" (translation A.F. Hort, quoted in Stol 1979: 12).

[534] A Neo-Assyrian letter from an official at Nineveh gives the dimensions of a good *taskarinnu*-tree as being two *qû* thick and six *ammatu* long, which translates to roughly three meters long; SAA 5: no. 294, 14; see further, CAD "T": 280 *taskarinnu* b) 1′, on the dimensions of *taskarinnu*-wood timber, according to the texts; on measurements, see Powell 1987–1990.

frequently listed alongside one another in records of tribute and booty, often in relation to works of high quality craftsmanship, including portable works of art both small and large.[535] Part of the prestige of these objects would have been granted by virtue of their foreign origins. Tiglath-pileser III refers to Mount Amanus as the mountain of *taskarinnu*-wood,[536] while his predecessor Tiglath-pileser I tells of procuring this wood from Mount Lebanon.[537] In the Banquet Stele text Aššurnaṣirpal lists *ušû*-wood among the trees and seeds that he brought back to Nimrud from his travels.[538] This last statement agrees with texts that tell of it being gifted as tribute by foreign rulers, earlier texts that list it as a material that was imported, and later texts that treat it as a product of Mesopotamia.[539] The reading of *taskarinnu*-wood as boxwood agrees with the textual evidence, boxwood being a tree of light colored wood and small stature, often referred to as a shrub or hedge in modern contexts, that grew in the coastal mountains of Upper Syria and on Cyprus during the Neo-Assyrian period.[540] In turn, ebony has been proposed as a reading for *ušû*-wood due to its particularly dark and durable characteristics. Aside from a reference in Aššurbanipal's inscriptions to temple doors made of *taskarinnu*-wood and Esarhaddon's brickmolds of *taskarinnu*-wood and *ušû*-wood,[541] both woods likely fulfilled a more dominant role as prestigious material prioritized for portable works of art within the temple context.[542]

Last and perhaps least are *miḫru*-wood and *liāru*-wood. Both types are mentioned infrequently in the texts in relation to temple construction, with each attested only once by a single king. Aššurnaṣirpal states that he brought back beams of *miḫru*-wood from the land of the same name to use in the *bītu* of Ištar at Nineveh,[543] while Aššurbanipal states that he used *liāru*-wood for the doors of Emelamana, the *bītu* of Nusku in Ḫarran.[544] Attestations of *miḫru*-wood in the texts at large suggest that it was a type of conifer with a geographical origin to the east of Assyria, beyond the Tigris toward the Upper Zab and into the Zagros.[545] In contrast, the texts ascribe *liāru*-wood a western origin; Sennacherib, the first king to procure it, states that he found it on Mount Amanus.[546] *liāru*-wood was also recognized for its sweet fragrance, as attested in an

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[535] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III, 1–2: Tiglath-pileser III 27, 7; Tiglath-pileser 47, r. 23′; RIMA 3: A.0.102.61; A.0.102.91; A.0.103.2, iv 25′–28′; Thureau-Dangin 1912: 64–65, 406; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 16, iv 22; Sennacherib 22, iii 37; Luckenbill 1924: 60, 56; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon10, ii 76, vi 9; see further, Postgate 1992b: 184. On furnishings and portable objects made of these woods, see CAD "T": 281 *taskarinnu* b) 3'; CAD "U": 328-329 *ušû* c) 3′–4′.

[536] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 13, 3b; Tiglath-pileser III 30, 1.

[537] Grayson 1976: 17, no. 47, vii 17); 29, no. 104, 72.

[538] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 42.

[539] Leemans 1960: 126; Moorey 1994: 352.

[540] CAD "T": 282 *taskarinnu*; Rowton 1967: 271; Moorey 1994: 350.

[541] Streck 1916: 247, 61; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 97; Esarhaddon 57, iv 16–26; Esarhaddon 104, iii 33; Esarhaddon 105, 26–27.

[542] Moorey 1994: 358–359.

[543] King 1902: 374; CAD "M" 2: 60 *miḫru* B, a).

[544] Streck 1916: 150, x 70–71; Borger 1996: 143, T III 2–4 (Moorey 1994: 358; Novotny 2010: 130); on the Emelamana, see George 1993: 123, no. 765.

[545] Postgate 1992: 183; Moorey 1994: 351–352. An inscription of the earlier king Tukulti-Ninurta I tells of his campaigning in the land of Mekhri; King 1902: 119, 374.

[546] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 22, vi 59–60; Sennacherib 34, 70–71.

inscription of Aššurbanipal, a quality that this wood shared with both *šurmēnu*-wood and *erēnu*-wood.[547]

The information provided by the archaeological and textual sources for the wood types used in temple construction demonstrates the particular qualities of wood that were valued by the Neo-Assyrian elite for this built environment. The textual emphasis placed on the dimensions of certain types of wood announces that size was a characteristic that was of high value to the Neo-Assyrian kings. This appreciation is clearly communicated in a text of Esarhaddon, in which he repeats in succession multiple adjectives of size in relation to the types of wood he acquired from western leaders.[548] Strength of wood, which often coincides with size, was also highly valued by the Neo-Assyrian kings; as asserted by Esarhaddon, his use of *musukkannu*-wood, *erēnu*-wood, and *buṭnu*-wood in reconstructing Esagil was the reason for this structure's overall durability and permanence.[549] Foreign origin was a characteristic of wood that was also valued in temple construction, as communicated by Esarhaddon's emphasis of his procurement of *erēnu*-wood and *šurmēnu*-wood from Mount Sirara and Mount Lebanon through the kings of Ḫatti for his work at Nineveh.[550] As Postgate asserts in the following excerpt, the very inclusion of passages in the texts on the origins of these types of wood in itself affirms their foreign origin:[551]

> if [*šurmēnu*-wood and *erēnu*-wood] had grown nearer to home, the Assyrians would not have made such a fuss about felling them over in the west: the implication is that at least cypress and cedar were not normally directly accessible to them—and with one exception there are no mentions of them growing nearer to Mesopotamia.

The distant regions that produced these types of wood are themselves treated in an exceptional manner in the texts, reinforcing their prestige and exoticness, and thus their value within the Neo-Assyrian heartland and in particular among elite society.[552] For example, Thomason describes the entity of Mount Amanus that is constructed by the Neo-Assyrian texts as follows: "as a quasi-mythical site where heroes roamed and exotic sensual experiences would occur."[553]

Visual and experiential qualities of the wood used in temple construction were also of import. The color of a type of wood, for example, could affect how it was used within a particular environment; *taskarinnu*-wood's reputed light color made it an ideal

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[547] An inscription from a cylinder of the later Neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus also references *liāru*-wood's pleasing fragrance; King 1914: pl. 29, ii 12–13; pl. 33, iii 8; CAD "T": *tijāru* 2′ (normalization and translation).
[548] RINAP: Esarhaddon 1, v 73–76.
[549] RINAP: Esarhaddon 105, v 16–22.
[550] RINAP: Esarhaddon 1, v 73–76.
[551] Postgate 1992b: 178.
[552] Elayi (1988: 34–35) concludes the following with regard to the use of cedar from Mount Lebanon: "compte tenu des défauts du bois de cèdre, des difficultés d'abattage et de transport, auxquelles s'ajoutait l'insécurité des régions montagneuses, on peut dire que l'exploitation des cèdres du Mont Liban par les rois assyriens et néo-babyloniens a été strictement limitée à la valeur symbolique de leur abattage et prestigieuse de leur usage."
[553] Thomason 2005: 174.

contrasting material to use alongside darker luxury woods, such as *ušû*-wood, with which it is frequently paired.[554] Sensual qualities were also a priority, smell being one that is well attested in the texts.[555] Complimenting the passages previously cited is a text of Tiglath-pileser III, in which the king relays that his use of *erēnu*-wood and *šurmēnu*-wood for the roofing beams and *daltu*s of his palace, "whose fragrance blows into the heart" (*erēssina iziqqu libbu*), was a testament to his regard for observing proper building practices and the means by which he "bestowed pleasure on those who enter" (*munahhišā ēribišina*).[556] Sennacherib similarly states as follows with respect to his use of *šurmēnu*-wood in his palace:[557]

dalāt šurmēni ṣīrāti ša ina petê u târi ereš ṭābu	*daltu*s of *šurmēnu*-wood, whose fragrance was sweet when one opened or closed them.

Though not explicitly stated in the textual sources, touch would have also contributed to the experiential aspect of the temple built environment; the firmness and texture of the various types of wood would have likely been a deciding factor in their use within this interactive space.

Though the qualities that are emphasized for many of these woods are quite similar—their large size, strength, durability, and a sweet fragrance—the individual naming of particular types in the textual sources communicates an appreciation for each type in its own right. A passage from the literary work of the scribe Budi-il to the gods Nabu and Tašmetum seems to suggest an individual appreciation of wood; the respective section lists different types of wood to be used as shelter for different figures: *erēnu*-wood for the king, *šurmēnu*-wood for his *rabû*s ("magnates"), and *duprānu*-wood for the god Nabu:[558]

ṣil erēni ṣil erēni ṣil erēni puzar šarri	A *ṣillu* of *erēnu*-wood, a ṣillu of *erēnu*-wood, a *ṣillu* of *erēnu*-wood, the shelter of the king,
ṣil šurmēni rabûtīšu	a *ṣillu* of *šurmēnu*-wood, of his rabûs,
ṣil kanni ša duprāni puzar Nabiuma	a *ṣillu* of a sapling of *duprānu*-wood, the shelter for my the god Nabu.

All of these attributes of the varying types of wood factor into a consideration of the temple built environment as an active, influential, and ritualized space. The wooden

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[554] Moorey 1994: 359.
[555] Thomason 2010: 208.
[556] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47, r. 28′.
[557] Luckenbill 1924: 96, 81; CAD "E": 280 *erešu* A b).
CAD "Ṭ": 19f *ṭābu* (DÙG(.GA)), "good, sweet, fresh, aromatic, of good quality, benevolent, friendly, auspicious, favorable, proper, correct, pleasing, satisfactory, content, satisfied, honorable."
[558] SAA 3: no. 14, 9–11.
CAD "Ṣ" 189 *ṣillu*, "1. shadow, shade of a tree, shaded place, 2. awning, covering."

doors, door poles, roofing beams, non-portable and portable works of art of the temple were made of raw resources that were valued in their original, natural state—wood was valued not only after it had been fashioned into culturally meaningful objects, but already when imported from the foreign mountains or cultivated within the Assyrian heartland. The myriad of woods that was acquired was the quintessence of size, strength, durability, aesthetic allure, pleasing fragrance, and foreignness that was fit for the dwelling place of a god.

Though from outside the Neo-Assyrian context, making an interesting contribution to the discussion of the value and divine associations of wood and its use in temple construction in the ancient Near East is a pair of Hittite texts that detail the procurement of these materials by a king for the construction of his palace. One set of ritual instructions specifies that the wood needed to manufacture the crossbar for a palace was to be selected by the gods themselves, so that no harm would come to the king.[559] The second set states that prior to felling trees, permission had to be obtained from the gods and an incantation recited.[560] Ambos interprets this stage as follows:[561]

> [i]n einer Bauholzbeschwörung wurden die Bäume aufgefordert, ihr in einem magische Sinne gutes oder böses Inneres zu offenbaren, bevor sie gefällt wurden. Auf diese Weise konnte sichergestellt werden, daß für den Palast des Königs nur ungefährliche Baustoffe verwendet wurden.

Neo-Assyrian imagery from wall reliefs and additional non-portable works of art confirms that the felling of trees by the king was a meaningful practice, as demonstrated by the wall reliefs and other royal imagery discussed above, and that the kings participated in ritualized butchering and libations accompanied by incantations when materials were manufactured in nature, as demonstrated in the stele carving scene on the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III. Yet whether or not Neo-Assyrian kings exercised the same level of cautionary practice as specified by the Hittite ritual instructions prior to felling trees is not confirmed. Considering the number of precautionary measures that are attested for the construction of Neo-Assyrian royal buildings at the site of construction, as discussed in Chapter IV, it would not be a far stretch to envision similar measures being taken in the acquisition of the necessary raw materials at the source. Moreover, if such measures were taken in order to protect a king within his house—the palace—it would only be reasonable to assume that similar if not greater measures were taken to ensure the quality and safety of the raw wood used for the house of a god.[562]

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[559] Haas 1994: 251 (”Wenn man in den neuen Palast das Riegelhoz einsetz”), edited in Schuster 1974 64–158 (CTH 413 B).
[560] Haas 1994: 251f (CTH 414).
[561] Ambos 2004: 68.
[562] Comparable to this practice are the depictions and accompanying texts on Neo-Assyrian non-portable works of art that attest to the kings staging ritualized practices in foreign lands, for example ritualized butchering and libations, whether to mark endpoints of campaigns or at sites in the landscape that had been visited and marked by their predecessors, for example the activities at the head of the Tigris as depicted on the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III (King 1915: pl. LIX; Schachner 2007: pl. 50b); see further, Shafer 2007; 2013; Nadali 2013: 216f.

d. Metal

The visually dominant role that metals played in the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment is confirmed by an assortment of textual attestations and noteworthy archaeological evidence. The precious metals, gold and silver, as well as certain base metals, including bronze, copper, and iron, were used to fashion many of the temples' non-portable works of art and structural elements. Examples include the relief plaques that were attached to the wooden door poles and doors, as well as nails and door-sockets. The texts also speak of portable works of art made of metal—divine images, tables, and thrones—of which only a handful of material traces has survived.[563] Even smaller portable works of art are also attested by the texts and archaeological evidence, for example amulets and beads from foundation deposits. The focus here is placed on the more conspicuous uses of metal within the temple environment.

ḫurāṣu ("gold")[564] as a temple building material is well attested in the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions.[565] A passage in Aššurnaṣirpal's Banquet Stele text suggests that he used *ḫurāṣu* in a liberal fashion to adorn the very walls of the *atmanu* ("god's chamber") of the god Ninurta.[566] Esarhaddon's comparable account of his use of *ḫurāṣu* for the *atmanu* of the god Aššur confirms this use:[567]

atman Aššur bēliya ḫurāṣu uḫḫiz…	I overlaid the *atmanu* of the god Aššur, my lord, with *ḫurāṣu*...
igārāti ḫurāṣu kīma sīri asīr	I covered (its) walls with *ḫurāṣu* as though with plaster.

The use of *ḫurāṣu* to overlay walls is further corroborated by a letter to Aššurbanipal from Sin-na'di, mayor of the Inner City of Assur (*ḫazannu libbi āli*)[568] and chief goldsmith of the House of Aššur.[569] In this letter, Sin-na'di reports that a sheet of *ḫurāṣu* (*lē'u ša ḫurāṣi*)[570] was stolen rom the *bītu* of Aššur, yet it had since been recovered and remounted by the *ṣarrāpu* Basali.[571] Another letter reporting theft from a temple similarly demonstrates the use of *ḫurāṣu* for crafting non-portable works of art; Aššur-reṣuwa, *šangû* of Ninurta in Nimrud,[572] writes to inform the king that *ḫurāṣu*-parts had been

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[563] Because precious metals were a prized resource in antiquity, most of the archaeological evidence consists of small, portable objects, whereas larger objects would have likely been melted down and reused, or carried off in antiquity, leaving little to be recovered by modern archaeologists at these sites.
[564] In addition to Appendix A, see Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 504; Arkhipov 2012: 10–12.
[565] Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 510–511.
[566] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 69.
[567] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 23′–25′.
[568] CAD "H": 163 *ḫazannu*, "chief magistrate of a town, of a quarter of a larger city, a village or large estate—mayor, burgomaster, headman."
[569] PNA 3/I: 1136f, "Sīn-na'di 16."
[570] CAD "I": 159 *lē'u* c) "sheet of precious metal (used for decorative woodwork)."
[571] SAA 13: no. 26; PNA I/1: 276, "Bassālu."
Borger 2010: no. 547, DÉ: "^{LÚ}DÉ-KUG-GI (simug-kug-gi) = *ṣarrāpu, ṣarappu*, Goldschmied."
[572] PNA 1/I: 313, "Aššūr-rēṣūwa 3."

removed from *ḫurāṣu*-beams in the *bītu* of Ninurta.[573] *ḫurāṣu* was also used for the foundation inscriptions that were deposited in the ground underneath the temple, as attested by Esarhaddon's inscription on his reconstruction of Esagil.[574]

The kings also used *ḫurāṣu* to manufacture divine images for the temples. A letter from Esarhaddon's official and scholar in Babylon, Mar-Issar, details the state of repairs of the temples at Uruk and Der: many parts of the images remained to be overlaid (*uḫḫuzu*)[575] with *ḫurāṣu*—though one image sent from Assyria to Uruk had already been adorned with a *ḫurāṣu*-crown—and the *ḫurāṣu*-dragons that were to stand to the god's left and right had been completed.[576] In his Banquet Stele text Aššurnaṣirpal recounts that he made ferocious *ušumgallu*s[577] of *ḫurāṣu*, which he had placed alongside Ninurta's *šubtu* ("seat") in the goddess' house at Nimrud.[578] *ḫurāṣu* was also used to cover figures for the *bītu* of Nabu; an administrative report recovered in Fort Shalmaneser calculates the amount of *ḫurāṣu* needed to cover a series of figures for this temple—two *kululu*s ("fish-men") and one *suḫurmašû*[579] for the room with a central *ṣalmi*(?),[580] and a *kulullu* and *kuliltu*[581] for the *bīt erši* ("bedroom").[582]

Portable works of art made of *ḫurāṣu* also circulated within the temple built environment. Esarhaddon declares in an all-encompassing manner that whatever utensils were needed for Esagil he had skillfully made from *ḫurāṣu* and *kaspu* ("silver").[583] Both the *mugirru* ("chariot") and *eršu* ("bed") of *musukkannu*-wood that Aššurbanipal recounts gifting to Marduk and Zarpanitu for the divine marriage, were embellished with *ḫurāṣu* and *abnu*s *nisiqtu*s ("choice stones").[584] Aššurbanipal also speaks of *nignakku*s[585] made of *ḫurāṣu* that he gifted to Marduk in a votive inscription to the god.[586] A number of letters mention smaller portable objects made of *ḫurāṣu* that were gifted to the gods and thus in circulation within the temple space; a letter from Akkullānu, a *ṭupšarru* and *ērib bīti* of the *bītu* of Aššur, writes to the king of a *ḫurāṣu*-plate that was wrongly removed from the *bītu* of Aššur.[587]

CAD "Š": 1, 377f *šangû*, "chief administrator of a temple;" see further the discussion of temple personnel and the title *šangû* in Chapter V.a.

[573] SAA 13: no. 128.

[574] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8.

[575] CAD "U": 44 *uḫḫuzu*, "overlaid."

[576] SAA 10: no. 349.

[577] CAD "U/W": 330 *ušumgallu* ((MUŠ/Ú.)UŠUMGAL), "lion-dragon."

[578] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 70–73.

[579] CAD "S": 351 *suḫurmašû* (SUḪUR.MÁŠ(.KU_6)), "1. goat-fish (as mythological creature)."

[580] The editors suggest this reading, though the line is fragmentary (Dalley and Postgate 1984: 162f).

[581] Feminine version of a *kulullu*.

[582] Dalley and Postgate 1984: 162f, no. 95; see also, Reid and Oates 2001: 111.

[583] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, vi 3–10; similarly for a temple in Nineveh, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 12, 20.

[584] See note 526.

[585] CAD "N": 2, 216f *nignakku* (NÍG.NA) "censer, incense-burner." See further the discussion of portable works of art used in temple practice in Chapter IV.1. On Neo-Assyrian incense burners, see further Mallowan 1993: 385–386.

[586] Streck 1916: 287, 16f.

[587] SAA 10: no. 107; PNA 1/I: 95f, "Akkullānu 1;" see also, see Parpola 1993: XXVI, Table 1 (SAA 10); Robson forthcoming: Table A9.

CAD "E": 290f *ērib bīti* ((LÚ.)TU.É), "(a person admitted to all parts of the temple);" on this designation, see the discussion in Chapter V, in particular note 1291.

Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions on temple construction also include a variant of *ḫurāṣu* that is denoted by an adjectival qualification of the color red, *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* (*ruššû*).[588] Aššurnaṣirpal recounts using *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* when fashioning divine images for the temples at Nimrud, including that of the god Ninurta.[589] The same king also used *ṣāriru*[590]—another linguistic variant of gold, understood as "fine gold"—and *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* for the image of the goddess Šarrat-nipḫi, a work of art that he was able to execute with the wisdom and understanding of the great gods.[591] The listing of both *ṣāriru* and *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* successively in this text illustrates that these materials were considered unique enough to warrant distinction at a linguistic level. Esarhaddon's accounts of his temple construction and refurbishment of the gods similarly attest to his use of variants of gold, *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû*, as well as *ṣāriri huššû* ("fine red gold") and *ḫurāṣu sāmu* ("red gold").[592] For the refurbishment of the gods and their *ešertu*s, the king sent to his craftsmen *ḫurāṣu sāmu*, "an ore from its mountain which nobody had (yet) cast into a work of artful design."[593] In the same inscription the king states that first, he used *ṣāriri ruššû*, "the creation of Mount Arallu (and) an ore from its mountain,"[594] for the features of Bel, Beltiya, Belet-Babili, Ea, and Mandanu, the gods of Ešarra, the House of Enlil in Babylon;[595] and second, *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* for the *musukkannu*-wood *šuptu* he had made for for the goddess Tašmetum in Eumuša, the *papāḫu* ("god's chamber") of Marduk in Esagil.[596] Esarhaddon also had *laḫmu*s and *kurību*s, mythological entities from the *apsû,* made of *ṣāriri ḫuššû* and set up in the *atmanu* ("god's chamber") of the god Aššur in Assur.[597]

In contrast to the strong evidence for its role in temple construction, the origin of the gold used by the Neo-Assyrian kings for such architectural elements and portable works of art is fraught with ambiguity. The texts often recount the procurement of *ḫurāṣu*

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[588] On adjectival variants with gold, see Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 506; CAD "Ḫ": 246 *ḫurāṣu* (2).

[589] He used *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* and the fine mountain stone for the image of Ninurta; RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 65; A.0.101.31, 14. Moortgat-Correns (1988) identifies a cylinder seal image as the image of Ninurta mentioned in these inscriptions. Shalmaneser III similarly states that he fashioned a divine image of gold, of the god Armada for the House of Aššur; RIMA 3: A.0.102.55, 4–6. For his own royal image, which he stationed before Ninurta, Aššurnaṣirpal used *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* and sparking stones; RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 76–77.

[590] CAD "Ṣ": 111f *ṣāriru* A, "1. (a poetic term for a fine quality of gold)."

[591] RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 11–12; see also, RIMA 2: A.0.101.38, 25–27.

[592] CAD "S": 126f *sāmu*, "red, a) a′ referring to the natural color of gold (designating a special quality)."

[593] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 82f.

[594] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 88; see also RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 39′.

[595] On Ešarra in Babylon, see George 1993: 145, no. 1034.

[596] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 91–92; similarly, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 51, iv 9. On Eumuša, see George 1993: 156, no. 1176.

[597] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 23′–24′.

CAD "A": 2, 194f *apsû*, "1. deep water, sea, cosmic subterranean water, 2. (a personified mythological figure), 3. water basin in the temple."

CAD "L": 41f, *laḫmu*, "(a monster);" see further, Wiggermann 1981–82; 1992: 164–165; Lambert 1985.

CAD "K": 559 *kurību*, "(representation of an apotropaic genius with specific non-human features);" see further, Giovino 2007: 39ff.

On Mesopotamian mythological figures (*Mischwesen*), see Kolbe 1986; Wiggermann 1993–1997; Green 1993–1997; Ataç 2010: 145–202; Sonik 2013

by the Neo-Assyrian kings in the form of booty and tribute, though rarely as a raw material acquired from a specific geographical source.[598] As a result, more is known about the centers of trade, manufacture, and the treasuries that dealt with gold, with which the Neo-Assyrians were involved, than the sources of gold themselves during this period. In addition, a number of potential sources of gold surrounded Mesopotamia during this period, including areas of modern day Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, Arabia, and Iran; most were likely taken advantage of at some point in time by the Neo-Assyrian kings, depending on availability and other contributing factors.[599]

While similarly silent with regard to sources of gold, the archaeological evidence from the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad provides important material confirmation for the multifaceted role played by gold in temple construction, that is evoked by the textual sources. The fragment of concave gold relief sheathing with a scale-like design from the House of Sin at Khorsabad is a fascinating example from this group (FIGURE 73).[600] The worked surface, exceptionally thin width and curvature, and the small-scale inscription along the bottom edge of this preserved fragment speak to its skillful manufacture (FIGURE 74–75). This visually dynamic piece would have been affixed to a wooden door pole flanking the principal doorway of the temple. Also recovered at Khorsabad, in the House of Nabu, were small gold nails that may have been used to fasten the same type of gold pieces to wooden door poles, if not for smaller portable objects in circulation within the temple.[601] Excavators also uncovered a number of gold beads in a foundation deposit box at the doorway to the antechamber of the House of Sin (Room 167).[602] In excavating Ezida at Nimrud, Mallowan similarly uncovered a foundation box in the antechamber of Ninurta's god's chamber (NT 2) that was divided into four compartments and contained four button-like discs—two gold and two silver (FIGURE 76–77).[603] Mallowan also recovered ivory fragments with gold leaf overlay—a particularly refined

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[598] Textual references to booty and tribute include the following: RIMA 3: A.0.102.61; A.0.102.90; A.0.102.91; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 27, 2; Tiglath-pileser III 35, iii 20–23; Tiglath-pileser III 47, 27–28; SAA 1: no. 8, r. 2′; SAA 8: no. 418, r. 3. A text of Tiglath-pileser III refers to an Iranian area, Šikrakki, as the land of gold; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47, 32; also Luckenbill 1926: 286, 795. See further Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 505; Jankowska 1969; Moorey 1994: 219–220. On Neo-Assyrian representations of booty, see Feldman 2011.

[599] Moorey 1994: 220.

[600] N III 3147 (Place 1867–1870: I, 120–121, 135–136; Guralnick 2008b: 393). Mallowan recorded finding similar fragments from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, ND 5344, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "gold foil, small frags."

[601] DS 442 (A 11744–A 11745)(Loud and Altman 1938: 99). Traces of gold foil were recovered from the inner courtyard (Court II) of the House of Nabu that may have once belonged to similar relief sheathing for a wooden door post (Oriental Institute Archives, Letter from Gordon Loud to James Breasted dated December 13, 1932; Guralnick 2008b: 393).

[602] Oriental Institute Archives, Letter from Gordon Loud to James Breasted dated February 20, 1933; Guralnick, 2008 #25}: 393. An additional cylindrical gold bead was found in the adjacent chamber, not in a foundation deposit (Room 164); DS 676B (A 11748). A number of cylindrical beads were also recovered from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud during Mallowan's excavations, including ND 5321 (ME 140569, 1984-2-5, 325); ND 5324; ND 5325; see further, Curtis 2013: 7, 197.

[603] The gold buttons include the following: ND 5398, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "gold button, spoked design on gold leaf; diam 1.4 cm;" ND 5400a (Met 57.27.18a), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register as follows: Gold button, similar to ND 5398;" see further, Mallowan 1966: I, 265, figs. 248-249; Curtis 2013: 8.

use of this prestigious metal that is rarely preserved at an archaeological level.[604] While the pair of stone fish-men found at the principal doorway to Ezida seem to corroborate the statements made in the text from Fort Shalmaneser for the construction of *kululu*s for the *bītu* of Nabu (FIGURE 45), evidence of the gold overlay that is itemized in the text was not found.[605]

Accounts of temple construction in the royal inscriptions and correspondence mention *kaspu* ("silver") with the same frequency as *ḫurāṣu.* A letter to Sargon from Ṭab-šar-Aššur, *mašennu* of the royal court,[606] attests to the large-scale application of this material in temple construction; in this report Ṭab-šar-Aššur informs the king that the sheets of *kaspu* that were to coat the *daltu*s ("doors") of the *bītus* of Sin, Šamaš, and Nikkal had been made but some of the wooden features were not yet ready.[607] This practice continued under Esarhaddon, whose inscriptions recount the use of bands of *kaspu* alongside bands of *ḫurāṣu* for the *daltu*s if Esagil.[608] The latter king also recounts making *rīmu*s[609] of *kaspu* for Ezida, the House of Nabu in Borsippa.[610] *kaspu* was also used by the kings in association with the foundations of temples, whether scattered prior to laying the foundations, as recounted by both Sennacherib and Esarhaddon,[611] or in the form of foundation inscriptions, as espoused by the latter.[612]

Two variants of silver—*zaḫalû* and *ešmarû*[613]—are also included in discussions of Neo-Assyrian temple construction. Aššurbanipal states that he had a *parakku* ("dais") of *libbitu* ("brick") cast in *zaḫalû ebbu* ("shining silver"),[614] upon which he had the goddess Ištar of Babylon mounted.[615] In a boastful tone, Esarhaddon recounts that his ancestors had covered the god Aššur's *parakku* ("dais") in Assur with *zaḫalû*, yet he had it skillfully recast in *ešmarû* and thereupon placed an image of himself and Aššurbanipal, his crown prince.[616] *zaḫalû* was also used by Esarhaddon to plate the *bītu* of the goddess

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[604] ND 5257, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "ivory minute frag. L. abt 13 mm overlaid with gold leaf, perhaps part of an animal or plant design;" ND 5274 (Ashmolean 1957.0004), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "ivory, group, mostly burnt, of small fragments, open work with small traces of gold and glass paste incrustation, including (a) human figure striding right toward a lotus flower, apparently a male with long dress and short sleeves, fringe of the garment incrusted, L. 4.3 cms. (b) head of a hawk, frag. miniature, L. 12 mm, All in relief." Recent studies of some eighth-century ivories from the Phoenician city of Arslan Tash using X-ray fluorescence microimaging confirms that gold was in fact used in this manner during the Neo-Assyrian period (Reiche et al. 2013).

[605] Dalley and Postgate 1984: 162f; see further, note 378.

[606] PNA 3/II: 1344, "Ṭāb-šar-Aššur 1."
CAD "M": 1, 363f *mašennu* (LÚ.IGI+DUB), ("a high official, "steward"); Parpola 1987: 219 *mašennu,* "treasurer."

[607] SAA 1: no. 66.

[608] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iv 5–7 ; Esarhaddon 105, v 38.

[609] CAD "R": 359f *rīmu* A (AM, GUD.AM), "wild bull."

[610] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 10–12.

[611] Luckenbill 1924: 138–139 (also Ambos 2010: 230); RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 3–14; Esarhaddon 58, iv 5–14; Esarhaddon 59, ii 2–9; see further, Ellis 1968: 133–138.

[612] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8.

[613] CAD "Z": 12f *zaḫalû*, "(a silver alloy)."
CAD "E": 366f *ešmarû*, "(a type of silver)."

[614] CAD "E": 1–4 *ebbu*, "1. polished, shining, lustrous, clean, pure (in a cultic sense), holy."

[615] Streck 1916: 148, x 24.

[616] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 26´f.

Ištar of Arbela, making it "brilliant like the day" (*unammeru kīma ūme*)[617]—the latter statement recalls Aššurnaṣirpal and Esarhaddon's use of *ḫurāṣu* for the *atmanu*s ("god's chambers") of Ninurta and Aššur respectively.[618] These textual attestations suggest that the variants *zaḫalû* and *ešmarû* were refined silver alloys that were more valued than *kaspu*, for which reason they were prioritized by the Neo-Assyrian kings for prestigious, visually dominant applications; the coating and plating of less valuable materials, including wood and brick, and even metal, is here presented as example.[619]

Much like gold, the origin of the silver used by Neo-Assyrian kings in temple construction is not well attested. The locations given in relation to silver in the Neo-Assyrian texts refer instead to the distribution centers through which kings acquired this material, often in the form of ingots or other rudely worked forms that were then melted down for use.[620] Silver is also mentioned in lists of booty and tribute, neither of which speaks to its primary origin.[621] Attempts have been made to locate the "Silver Mountains" mentioned in earlier Mesopotamian texts. Sargon of Akkad, for example, states that he went as far as the "Cedar Forest" (*qišti erēni*)[622] and the "Silver Mountains" (*kaspi šadî*)[623] near the Upper Sea, that is, to the northwest; however, most textual evidence points to eastern origins for the silver that arrived in Mesopotamia during the third millennium BCE. Heimpel situates the mountain of silver referenced in Gudea's text in Iran east of the Tigris.[624] Geological and later textual evidence, however, confirms that the northwest and in particular Anatolia did play an important role as a source, if not the primary source, of silver for, the textual evidence including documents from the Old Assyrian trading colony at Kanesh (modern Kültepe).[625] Silver or silver ores would have been obtained from these eastern regions through various modes of extraction, including mining native silver and smelting other metallic ores such as lead.

The role that silver played in Neo-Assyrian temple construction is minimally attested at an archaeological level. In contrast to other more durable metals, silver has a high level of reaction to other materials, making its preservation in the archaeological record more unlikely. A group of nails from the inner courtyard (Court II) of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad offers the strongest archaeological confirmation that silver was a

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[617] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 77, 8–9; Esarhaddon 78, 8; Esarhaddon 79, 8; Esarhaddon 93, 4.
[618] An inscription of Tiglath-pileser III tells of his use of bands of *zaḫalû* and *ešmarû* on *daltu*s of *erēnu*-wood and *šurmēnu*-wood in his palace at Nimrud; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 47, r. 28′–29′.
[619] The metal-on-metal application is only attested for *zaḫarû*; a text of Sennacherib's recounts his use of *zaḫarû* to overlay *erû* ("copper") for *aladlammû*s ("bull colossi"); Luckenbill 1924: 109, vii 21; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 16, vi 83-84. For this reason, the CAD ("Z": 13) suggests that it was the more valued of the two silver variants; see further the discussions at the end of the CAD entries for both *zaḫalû* and *ešmarû*, as well as Thompson 1936: 196.
[620] Jankowska (1969: 261) places Damascus and Carchemish as the highest ranking centers of distribution based on the tribute lists, and Babylon, Judah, and the east Anatolian Plateau second.
[621] RIMA 3: A.0.102.20; A.0.102.60; A.0.102.61; A.0.102.90; A.0.102.91; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 15; Tiglath-pileser III 35, iii 1-30; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 1, 30, 57; Sennacherib 4, 55. A text of Shalmaneser III suggests a possible topographical origin, referring to Mount Tunni (Taurus) as *šadê kaspi* ("Mountain of Silver"), though this is a singular instance; RIMA 3: A.0.102.40, iii 2.
[622] Hirsch 1963: 38, 31–32: GIŠ.TIR GIŠ.ERIN.
[623] Hirsch 1963: 38, 34–35: KUR.KUR KÙ.
[624] Heimpel 1982: 67; see further, Potts 1993: 392f; Moorey 1994: 234f.
[625] Larsen 1982; 2008; Moorey 1994: 235f.

visually desired material within the temple built environment, for rather than leaving the visible portion of the nails as bronze like the core, the heads were capped with silver foil (FIGURE 78).[626] This type of nail was used to fasten metal bands and sheathing to wooden doors and door poles, as evidenced by the intact bronze nails in the fragments of bronze bands and sheathing discussed below. Other than this group of silver-headed nails, however, the Khorsabad excavations did not recover material evidence to substantiate the claims in the royal correspondence of temple doors overlaid with silver.[627] The only silver materials recovered from the temples at Nimrud was the pair of silver button-like discs found along with those of gold in the foundation box from Ninurta's god's chamber in Ezida (FIGURE 76–77).

The base metals bronze, copper, and iron played an equally important role in temple construction. Bronze, a binary alloy, was produced through a combination of copper and tin in varying proportions.[628] Neo-Assyrian texts seem to differentiate between native copper and tin, and bronze as an alloy of these two, at a material-linguistic level.[629] Zaccagnini concludes that when *siparru* (ZABAR) is used to describe unworked, raw materials, it refers to native copper, yet when the same term is used to qualify finished objects, it refers to bronze, the binary alloy;[630] in contrast, *erû* (URUDU)[631] seems to be used to refer to native copper regardless of the thing it is qualifying, whether a raw material or a worked object.[632] In contrast, the CAD suggests that while the scribes differentiate between specific uses for bronze and copper, in later texts *erû* is used as a descriptive for bronze objects.[633] In Neo-Assyrian texts associated with temple construction, both *siparru* and *erû* are used to described finished non-portable and portable works of art, including door pole sheathing, door bands, and divine images. In the following discussion, *siparru* references are understood as bronze, while objects described as *erû* are treated as copper, while acknowledging that this distinction is not free from a certain level of uncertainty.[634] *parzillu*[635] refers to iron, whether native iron, which was obtained from meteorites and thus extremely rare, or iron ores derived from copper smelting. Last, *annaku* refers to tin.[636] Textual evidence suggests that these base metals were obtained by the Neo-Assyrian kings in large part as tribute and booty,

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[626] DS 440 (A 11686–A 11721)(Loud and Altman 1938: 99 , no. 207, pl. 62).

[627] Other silver items that were found in the temples at either Nimrud or Khorsabad consisted of small portable works of art, for example beads and other forms of jewelry, many of which were from later stages of occupation.

[628] Moorey 1994: 242f.

[629] Of particular interest is a passage on Sennacherib's palatial work from his royal inscription, in which the king states that atop a *kigallu* ("pedestal") he placed four poles of *siparru* that were alloyed with one-sixth *annaku* ("tin"); RINAP 3: Sennacherib 34, 82–83.
use of *siparru* door poles (*timmu*s) for

[630] Zaccagnini 1971; also Moorey 1994: 251–254; for possible exceptions, see Brinkman 1988: 137–138; Moorey 1994: 254.

[631] CAD "E": 321f *erû* A (URUDU), "copper."

[632] Zaccagnini 1971; see also, Moorey 1994: 251–254.

[633] CAD "E": 323.

[634] See further note 669 and the associated in-text discussion.

[635] CAD "P": 212f *parzillu* (AN.BAR), "1. iron."

[636] Moorey 1994: 278.
CAD "A": 1, 127f *annaku* (AN.NA), "tin."

as well as through trade.[637] *parzillu, erû*, and *annaku* are cited as coming from abroad, including areas of Anatolia, Syria, Cyprus, and Iraq, in the form of ingots and as finished products,[638] while bronze was likely produced through the alloying of copper and tin at the capital cities themselves.[639]

The inscription on the obverse of the colossi from the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud associates a number of *siparru* elements and objects with Aššurnaṣirpal's temple work, including *siparru*-knobbed *sikkātu*s used on the *erēnu*-wood *daltu*s ("doors") in the temples at Nimrud—the *bītu* of Ninurta being among this list—and *urmaḫḫu*s[640] of *siparru* that were placed at their towers.[641] Aššurnaṣirpal's Banquet Stele text states that the king also used *siparru* for door bands and divine images in the temples, including the *bītu*s of Ninurta and of Nabu (Ezida).[642] Aššurnaṣirpal's text inscribed on the foundation tablets from Imgur-Enlil (Balawat) similarly notes states that he mounted *siparru* door bands on *daltu*s of *erēnu*-wood for the House of Mamu.[643] This account mirrors what was found at an archaeological level at the site; when excavating the temple, Mallowan came across a series of bronze bands preserved in the space between the court and antechamber (FIGURE 79–80).[644] Excavations at Khorsabad also uncovered bronze relief door bands in both the House of Nabu (FIGURE 81–83)[645] and the House of Adad (FIGURE 84–86).[646] The repoussé motifs of male figures, lions, bulls, seeder, and plow on the Khorsabad bands can still be discerned. Moreover, the original bronze nails with which the bands were originally mounted were found intact at the site.[647] Sargon also mounted

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[637] Curtis 2013: 138.

[638] An important source for iron was Anatolia, while Cyprus was the primary source for copper, yet no area stands out as the main source for tin (Jankowska 1969; Maxwell-Hyslop 1974; Moorey 1994: 242f; Curtis 2013: 133–141). An inscription of Sargon tells of the king extracting copper ore from the mountain of Ba'lisapuna, Muṣaṣir or modern Mujeisir in north-eastern Iraq, which implies that the smelting process took place at the mining site; CAD "E": 189 *epēru*; Jankowska 1969: 262–263.

[639] Curtis 2013: 137.

[640] CAD "U/W": 232f *urmaḫḫu* (UR.MAḪ), "lion colossus."

[641] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28, v 10–12. Bronze examples of *sikkātu*s were found at Nimrud, Khorsabad, and Nineveh, though not in contexts associated with the temples (Curtis 2013: 54–55, no. 401–404). Royal inscriptions also mention the use of gold and silver *sikkātu*s, though in reference to palace construction; RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III, r. 32′; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 16, vi 65–55; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, vi 27; Esarhaddon 2, v 47; Esarhaddon 3, v 33′. Aššurnaṣirpal also mentions the use of bronze *sikkātu*s for his palace; Grayson 1976: 173, no. 677.

[642] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 53–64.

[643] RIMA 2: A.0.101.50, 30.

[644] This set of bands was discovered during the 1956 excavation season and first mentioned in the publication *Twenty-Five Years of Mesopotamian Discovery* (Mallowan 1956b: 79) though erroneously attributed to Shalmaneser III; see further, Reid 1974; Curtis and Tallis 2008: 42f; Curtis 2013: 24–25, 168. The bronze bands were loaned to the British Museum in 1965 to be cleaned, reconstructed, and studied, along with those recovered from the palace of Aššurnaṣirpal at Balawat, and were returned to Iraq in 1974, at which time they were put on display in the Mosul Museum (MM ASH II). On the looting and loss of the gates in 2003, see Black 2008:19f.

[645] Bands: DS 1006 (IM); DS 1007 (AO 12467); DS 1008 (IM); DS 1009 (IM); DS 1011 (AO 12469); DS 1012 (AO 12470); DS 1013 (IM). Nails: A 11693–11694; A 11700 (Loud and Altman 1938: 43–44, 96, pl. 49–50; see further Curtis and Tallis 2008: 79-81; Curtis 2013: 19f; Guralnick 2008b).

[646] N III 3099 (Place 1867–1870: I, 129; III, pl. 72–73; see further Curtis and Tallis 2008: 79-81; Curtis 2013: 18, pl. XXVIII; Guralnick 2008b).

[647] Curtis and Tallis 2008: 79–81.

bronze bands and sheathing onto the wooden door poles that flanked temple doorways at Khorsabad; evidence of both uses was found at the site. First, fragments of bronze sheathing with embossed scale-like designs were found at the doorway to the House of Sin, which were still attached to the original wooden door pole with bronze nails (FIGURE 87–88).[648] Second, fragments of concave bronze relief plaques were found at the Houses of Šamaš and of Ningal, which attest to the use of bronze to form bands around wooden door poles rather than a full encasing; rather than a uniform design, the bands display figurative elements similar to the door bands discussed above (FIGURE 52; 89–91).[649]

Neo-Assyrian texts also attest to the use of *siparru* for additional non-portable and portable works of art beyond doors and door poles. A text of Esarhaddon includes *siparru* as one of the materials from which he made foundation inscriptions during his work at Babylon, in particular during his reconstruction of Esagil.[650] When speaking of his work on Ezida at Borsippa, the same king states that he installed two *rīmu*s ("wild bulls") and two *suḫurmāšû*s ("goat-fish") of *siparru*, and a *narkabtu*[651] of *siparru* for the god Nabu.[652] An interesting archaeological association with the latter is the set of four bronze wheels mounted on iron axles that Place found in the House of Sin at Khorsabad (FIGURE 92).[653] While likely not belonging to the large scale chariot of a god, the Khorsabad wheels, as Curtis proposes, "must belong to a movable offering stand or some other vehicle used in the temple ritual;"[654] Loud similarly "suggests a movable altar or a vehicle on which perhaps various pieces of furniture were transported."[655] Reaffirming the use of bronze for portable works of art are the bronze-coated wooden chair legs uncovered by Mallowan in Ezida.[656] As proposed by B. Mallowan, the lion paws on the Assyrian tables from seals and relief depictions were likely also made of bronze

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[648] N III 3100 (Place 1867–1870: I, 120–126 ; Loud 1936: 97–98). Based on the similarity of design, Place believed that this bronze sheathing was overlaid with the gold sheathing discussed above (Archives de France, F21/546. V. Place, Report No. 29, May 9, 1853, cited in Guralnick 2008b: 393, n. 18). This suggested arrangement is of particular interest considering the inscription of Sennacherib above that speaks of overlaying *erû* ("copper") figures with *zaḫalû* ("silver"); Luckenbill 1924: 109, vii 21; RINAP 3: Sennacherib, vi 83-84. Loud and Altman (1938: 96, pl. 50.27) found a similar fragment of bronze sheathing with scale-like design in the outer courtyard of the House of Nabu; see further, Guralnick 2008b: 393.

[649] DS 1010 (AO 12468)(Loud 1936: 104–106, 113). Loud and Altman (1938: 61) reconstruct similar door poles with bronze bands in the House of Nabu based on material traces of wooden door poles with bronze nails intact that were found during excavation of the inner courtyard and antechamber.

[650] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8.

[651] CAD "N": 1, 353f *narkabtu* (GIŠ.GIGIR, GIŠ.GIGÍR), "1. chariot."

[652] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, 10′–16′.

[653] Place 1867–1870: I, 132 ; III, pl. 70, nos. 1–3. Loud (1936: 122) questions Place's findspot as the adjacent chamber (Room 164), because they did not find any traces of buttresses in this area, between which Place states that he found the wheels; see further, Curtis 2013: 17, 169, no. 457, pl. XXXI.

[654] Curtis 2013: 17.

[655] Loud 1936: 122.

[656] Mallowan 1956b: 11. Curtis (2013: 8) notes that Mallowan attributed these finds to "SEB 4" while Wiseman speaks of finding ivories and bronze from Assyrian furniture in the throne-room "SEB 2;" Curtis concludes that Mallowan likely meant the throne-room, also designated as "SEB II" (South-East Building) in the early registers.

(FIGURE 93)[657]—Layard uncovered comparable bronze paws at Nimrud, though outside of a built context (FIGURE 94).[658] Additional bronze finds from the temples at Nimrud speak to a small scale use for bronze, including a miniature bronze symbol from a foundation deposit box in Ezida.[659] The well in the outer court of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad also contained a number of small bronze finds, including a group of bronze bells, some of which still had the iron clappers intact.[660]

erû ("copper") was used in a similar manner as *siparru* in temple construction, with applications ranging from non-portable to portable works of art. In Ṭab-šar-Aššur's letter to Sargon, in which the *mašennu* ("treasurer") reports on the work progress concerning the metal features for the temple doors at Khorsabad, he informs the king that in addition to completing the sheets of *kaspu*, they had also completed five *dalțu*s coated with sheets of *erû (lē'u ša erî)*.[661] Sargon's royal inscriptions also mention his use of *erû*-bands on temple *dalțu*s made of *šurmēnu*-wood and *musukkannu*-wood.[662] In his account of his recovery of metal casting technology, Sennacherib first mentions that his predecessors' used *erû* for the royal images they had installed in temples, though by doing so out of ignorance and lack of knowledge they squandered their resources; the king then emphasizes that through his skill and ingenuity, he revived the technology and used *erû* to manufacture large door poles and *urmaḫḫu*s *petân birki* (literally "striding lion colossi") for his palace.[663] Like Sennacherib's predecessors, this king's successor, Esarhaddon, states that he too used *erû*s to craft images, though of creatures rather than the gods—in Ezida in Borsippa he installed two *rīmu*s ("wild bulls") and two *suḫurmāšu*s ("goat-fish") of *erû* alongside the *rīmu*s of *kaspu*,[664] and in the *bītu* of Aššur in Assur he installed a pair of *kusarriku*s ("bison") of *erû namru* ("shining copper")[665] in order to support the crossbeams at its *bābu* ("doorway").[666] Esarhaddon further recounts that he used bands of *erû* on *dalțu*s of *šurmenû*-wood in Esagil, a similarity he shares with Sargon.[667] Although the texts suggest a widespread use of *erû* in temple construction, copper is not well represented at an archaeological level, with findings consisting

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[657] Mallowan 1993; the author also cites Urartian examples of paw shaped bronze furniture legs; see, Taşyürek 1975: pl. XXXVI. For seal and relief depictions, see Botta and Flandin 1849: I, pl. 18–19; Thomason 2005.

[658] 1848-11-4, 84–86 (Layard 1849: pl. 96, no. 203; Thomson 1963: 129, fig. 3; Curtis and Reade 1995: 88; Curtis 2013: no. 594).

[659] Curtis 2013: 8.

[660] DS 779 (A 11683); DS 782 (A 11679); DS 781 (A 11755); DS 783 (A 11757); DS 780; DS 778 (Loud and Altman 1938: 60, pl. 60). These types of bells may have been attached to horse bridles and harnesses, suspended from the nape strap as shown in the diagram in Curtis and Tallis 2012: no. 37, see further, nos. 60–66.

[661] SAA 1: no. 66.

[662] Fuchs 1994: 69, 65 (Bull Colossi); 79, 36 (Room XIV); 183, 432 (Annals); 253, 27 (Threshold S2); see also, Lyon 1883: 24, 33; Parpola 1995: 66 (Parpola translates *erû* (URUDU) as "bronze").

[663] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 80–vii 8: literally "lion colossi open at the knees."

[664] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 11, 15.

[665] CAD "N": 1, 239–243 *namru*, "1. bright, shiny, brilliant, luminous, radiant, clear, sharp, ritually pure;" see in particular, 1. a) 1′ (said of metals).

[666] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 29′–33′.

[667] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 22′; Esarhaddon 104, iv 5-7; Esarhaddon 105, v 38.

primarily of small portable works of art.[668] This discrepancy may argue for understanding some of the references to non-portable works of art of *erû*, including the doorway features and royal and divine images, as bronze (a copper alloy) rather than copper, with the *erû* qualification referring to the initial raw material—copper—that was used to create the bronze, of which these works of art were ultimately made. It is possible that *erû* is shortland for "copper (alloy)."[669]

In contrast to the preceding metals, iron played a relatively minor role as a building material in temple construction. Unlike precious metals and the preceding base metals, iron was not able to be cast, and as such, was not used in a visually dominant way. This restricted use may explain the seeming absence of *parzillu* in the Neo-Assyrian texts in discussions of temple construction—the only attestation is in a fragmentary inscription of Esarhaddon that mentions elements made of *kaspu*, *ḫuraṣu*, and *parzillu* for a temple, possibly the *bītu* of Nergal.[670] What evidence there is for the role of iron in temple construction at an archaeological level speaks primarily to a structural use. At Khorsabad the Chicago team uncovered iron caps for door pivots, elements that were more commonly of bronze at other Neo-Assyrian sites (FIGURE 95).[671] They also found three iron wheels with bronze hubs in the House of Nabu that may have been part of a wagon or other portable work of art, as suggested for the bronze wheels discussed above (FIGURE 96).[672]

The reasons for which all of these types of metals were valued within a Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context was perhaps as multifaceted as their multiplicity of uses, ranging from the unique visual qualities of metallic materials to their durability and manipulability.[673] Yet the treatment of the different precious and base metals, as evidenced by the texts and archaeological evidence, suggests that, while all were valued as useful, aesthetically and experientially appreciated building materials within the context of the temple, certain metals had particular qualities that were more valued and for this reason, they were prioritized in specific ways.

A material quality that was highly valued for metals was their brilliance and shine. This visual quality was greatly prized by the Neo-Assyrian elite in raw materials due to culturally specific divine and celestial associations. The appreciation of this

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[668] A cylinder seal with a copper cap and suspension loop was found in the House of Nabu at Nimrud; ND 5254 (Met 57.27.08)(Mallowan 1957: 13). Place (1867–1870: III, pl. 70, no. 6) records finding a copper cap for a door pivot from the temple area at Khorsabad, though the door pivot caps later found by the Chicago excavations were of iron (Loud and Altman 1938: 25).

[669] We must also keep in mind that these texts were composed by scribes, who may not have understood the intricacies of metalworking technology at the level of the skilled craftsman, and as such, may not accurately differentiate between bronze and copper—*sipparu* and *erû*—in their writing.

[670] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 43.

[671] Loud and Altman 1938: 16, 25, pl. 37 E.

[672] DS 757 (A 11811; A 11813)(Loud and Altman 1938: 62, pl. 24 E; Curtis 2013: 19, 169, no. 459, pl. XXXI).

[673] Boese (Leemans et al. 1957–1971: 516) clearly articulates this dynamism in his characterization of gold in antiquity: "Es bot sich zunächst wegen seiner Weichheit und Dehnbarkeit (Meabilität, Malleabilität) als ideales Material zur Herstellung von Schmuck, Amulette und Beschlägen an, man wußte schon früh die Schwere des Goldes und seine Nichtanfälligkeit gegen Rost zu schätzen, seine große Beliebheit aber zu allen Zeiten und bei fast allen Kulturvölkern beruhte wohl auf seiner warmen, gelben Farbe und dem matten Glanz, dem man magische Fähigkeiten zuschrieb."

quality in metal, as with precious stones, is confirmed by the textual sources. A number of the metallic nouns in the texts are qualified by an adjective or associated with a verbal statement that denotes shine or radiance, including *ebbu,*[674] *namru*, and *namāru*. Metal nouns are also often compared to something that exhibits a similar visual quality, such as the day (*ūmu*). The passage from Esarhaddon's inscription, in which the king attributes the shine of the entire *bītu* of Ištar to his use of *ḫurāṣu* and *kaspu* in its construction, is demonstrative of this practice:[675]

Egašankalama bīt Ištar ša *qereb Arbela kaspi* *ḫurāṣi uḫḫizma unammir* *kīma ūme*	Egašankalama, the *bītu* of the goddess Ištar, which is in Arbela, I overlaid (it) with *kaspu* (and) *ḫurāṣu* and made (it) shine like *ūmu*.

Color was another important characteristic of the metals used, perhaps more accurately described as a particular tone or sheen. This appreciation is communicated by the texts related to temple construction that emphasize the use of not just gold, but variants of gold, specifically ones with a reddish tone. In a similar vain, Sennacherib reports his installation of an *abullu* ("gate") of *siparru ḫuššû* ("red bronze") in the *akītu*-house[676] and *kusarikku*s of *siparru ḫuššû* in Eḫursaggalkurkura, the god's chamber of Aššur at Assur.[677] These qualifications may reveal a particular appreciation of the reddish tone of bronze when worked or polished, or perhaps they reference a visually distinct type of bronze.

Additional valued qualities of these metals that the texts might not broadcast with the same consistency, but which are confirmed by the various uses of metals at a structural level, are their strength, durability, and forgeability. The use of these metals with materials that are labeled as everlasting and strong, for example various types of wood, implies a confidence in the ability of these metals to also withstand time. An appreciation of the maniputability and forgeability of these metals is evidenced by the multiplicity of attested uses in both the texts and material evidence. Last, foreign origin is a characteristic of metals that is emphasized by the texts, in particular for the precious metals—if not explicitly the source, then the acquisition of the metal from distribution centers, or as booty or tribute is denoted. These statements not only emphasize the economic and prestigious quality of metals, they also reinforce the power and strength of the king as the elite individual who was able to procure these raw resources and employ them in his building programs.

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[674] The CAD (CAD "Z": 13) suggests that the qualification of *zaḫarû* with *ebbu* might signify that this silver variant had a unique shade or luster; because other metals are also described as *ebbu* with relative consistency, this was likely a quality that was valued for all metallic materials.

[675] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 16. Esarhaddon repeats this same statement regarding the *ešret maḫazi* in Assyria and Akkad; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 3, iv 26′–29′; and for the temples of Sumer and Akkad; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54: 29′; see further, Winter 1994: 124.

[676] Luckenbill 1924: 140, 5.

[677] Luckenbill 1924: 145, 18. On Sennacherib's work on the *akītu*-house at Assur, see Huxley 2000. Eḫursaggalkurkura, see George 1993: 100, 479.

CAD "K": 584f *kusarikku* (GUD.ALIM, GUD.A.LIM), "1. bison (as a mythological creature)."

The finished products fashioned from these metals acquired additional value as a result of the skilled labor and specialist technologies that were harnessed by the craftsmen in order to manipulate the metals—engraving and repoussé are some of the more visually dynamic examples of such specialist technologies.[678] This topic is dealt with in more detail in Chapter IV—as practices that were part of the wisdom and teachings of the gods, passed down to those kings and craftsmen who directed the construction of the temple—yet what is worth noting here is that these techniques markedly enhanced the visuality and experiential qualities that metals already possessed in their natural state.

e. Ivory

Ivory played a more limited role in Neo-Assyrian temple construction than the preceding material groups, yet the role that it did play confirms that it held some value in the context of the Neo-Assyrian temple.[679] The ivory that was in circulation during this period was either of African or Western Asiatic origins, and possibly North Syria.[680] Archaeological evidence suggests that the former was of greatest value among this group within the royal sphere, due to its superior size, strength, and more refined grain, which allowed for a glossier, polished surface.[681] Acquired by the Neo-Assyrian kings in a similar manner as other luxury goods—as booty and tribute, and from distribution centers in the form of trade—elephant ivory arrived to the capital cities either in the form of

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[678] On the technologies and skills of the metal industry in ancient Mesopotamia, see Salonen 1970: 97–148; Moorey 1994: 216–217; Curtis 2013: 133–141.

[679] Based on her studies of the Nimrud ivories, Herrmann (2009) argues that the Assyrians did not consider ivory a visually or aesthetically valued material, but rather hoarded portable works of art made of ivory that they acquired as booty or through tribute as evidence of their military successes. While the find context of a substantial number of ivory objects in the Northwest Palace and Fort Shalmaneser at Nimrud supports the author's argument, I argue that the find context and characteristics of the ivory objects from the excavations of the Neo-Assyrian temples demonstrates that they had aesthetic value within this built environment, as material embellishments for furnishings that played a role in ritualized practice, an example being the ivory plaques recovered in Ezida at Nimrud. On the role of these works of art in temple practice, see Chapter V.2.a.i. Reinforcing the argument for ivory's material value are textual attestations of ivory brickmolds used by Neo-Assyrian kings in temple construction, and a single reference from Sennacherib's inscriptions to foundation figurines of ivory placed at a temple's doorway. In the latter text, the king states that he both had made and installed these figurines, which confirms an appreciation for unworked and worked ivory; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 30–36. See further the discussion of construction practices in Chapter IV; see also, Thomason 2010: 203f, on the Neo-Assyrian use of furnishings with ivory.

On the Nimrud ivories from the Northwest Palace and Fort Shalmaneser, and on the historical contexts of ivory objects in the first millennium BCE, see the Ivories from Nimrud series: Orchard 1967; Mallowan and Davies 1970; Mallowan and Herrmann 1974; Herrmann 1986; Herrmann 1992; Herrmann et al. 2008; Herrmann and Laidlaw 2013; and further, Winter 1976; 2005; Barnett 1982; Simpson 1995; Reid and Oates 2001: 226–235; Feldman 2009b; Cecchini et al. 2009; Gunter 2013.

[680] According to Moorey (1994: 116), Phoenicia acted as an intermediary for African ivory coming into Mesopotamia. Barnett (1957: 168) identifies some of the ivories found at Nimrud as African ivory based on the larger size of the ivory. Moorey (1994: 119) further notes that evidence for Asiatic ivory is limited between the second millennium and the Achaemenid period, and that the ivory mentioned as coming from Babylonia, referred to as both ivory and tusks in the textual sources, may have come from either the Indus region or Africa, for example, Luckenbill 1926: 625; see further, Caubet 2009b: 406.

[681] Moorey 1994: 116.

elephant tusks or as finished products.[682] At times the texts articulate the specific animal origin of this material, by using the designation *šinnu pīru* ("elephant tooth") in lists of booty and tribute; however, *šinnu pīru* and more simply *šinnu* ("tooth") are both used to refer to the raw material and to qualify finished products, for example *eršu šinnu* ("ivory bed").

In the context of temple construction, the texts say little about (*šinnu*) *pīru*. Esarhaddon alone claims to have used brickmolds of *šinnu pīru* in his building projects, including his rebuilding of Eḫursaggalkurkura in Assur and Esagil in Babylon.[683] A few passages on portable works of art gifted to the gods by the kings mention *šinnu*—an *eršu* ("bed") gifted by Sargon is said to be made of *šinnu* and *kaspu* ("silver"), and was mounted with *abnu*s ("stones") and *ḫurāṣu* ("gold").[684] Ivory may have also served a role in temple construction for non-portable works of art, as indicated by a passage from Sennacherib's inscriptions on his palatial work at Nineveh, which refers to *lamassu*s[685] stationed at the *bābu*s ("doorways") to *papāḫu*s that were made of *gišnugallu*-stone and *šinnu pīru*.[686] Archaeological evidence from contemporary palaces provides additional support for a non-portable use of ivory in construction, for wooden panels and possibly for roof inlays, yet no texts speak of these elements specifically with reference to temple construction.[687]

Though of limited yield, the archaeological evidence recovered from the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad suggests that ivory played a visually prominent role on portable works of art, as incised panels and relief plaques that were attached to visible surfaces. Incised ivory panel fragments of various shapes and designs were recovered from the area of the dais in the throne-room of Ezida, their findspot suggesting that they were once attached to the throne itself in addition to other portable works of art appropriate for this space (FIGURE 97–98).[688] Also part of this group were the ivory fragments with traces of gold leaf overlay.[689] Additional carved ivory finds from Ezida include a miniature lion head[690] and female head,[691] both of which are black from burning

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[682] Moorey 1994: 117–118. Some evidence suggests that elephants were also hunted by early Neo-Assyrian kings themselves in North Syria (Thomason 2005: 122f; Winter 1973: 263–268).

[683] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 97; Esarhaddon 114, iv 12.

[684] Thureau-Dangin 1912: 60, 388.

[685] CAD "L": 60f *lamassu* ((SAL)^{d}LAMMA(.LAMMA)), "2. representation of the *lamassu*-spirit;" see further, note 492.

[686] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 30–36. Esarhaddon also recounts building palatial halls of a variety of materials, including *šinni pīri*; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, vi 9.

[687] Layard 1849: II, 263–264; Mallowan 1966: 293, pl. 269; see further, Moorey 1994: 123.

[688] Noteworthy examples in museum collections and/or included in Mallowan's publication (1966: 248f) include the following: ND 4193 (IM); ND 4194a–b (IM); ND 4195a–c (a: Birmingham 1957 A 77; c: Met 57.27.2); ND 4196a–b (b: Met 57.27.1); ND 4198 (IM); ND 4199 (Met 57.27.4; ME 132156 (1957-2-9,3); IM); ND 4202 (Met 57.27.3); ND 4204 (Birmingham 1956 A 488); ND 4215 (Birmingham 1956 A 488); ND 4240c (Ashmolean 1957.001); ND 4251b (ME 132155 (1957-2-9, 2)); ND 5340 (Met 57.27.5a-c); and possibly ND 5601 (Met 57.27.15); see further, Mallowan 1956a: 11–12; Mallowan and Davies 1970: 3–4. Burnt ivory fragments were also found in the House of Ninurta, including: ND 5609, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "Group of small ivory frags. burnt, incised, traces of design."

[689] See note 604. Loud and Altman (1938: 96) found gold leaf among the ivory debris at Khorsabad, though none was found still adhered to the ivory.

[690] ND 5268 (Met 57.27.14).

(FIGURE 99–100). The Chicago excavations uncovered a number of burnt ivory figures in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, that were once affixed to portable works of art; this group includes examples of the well-attested "woman at the window"[692] and sphinx varieties (FIGURE 101–102).[693] It is also possible that some of the ivory plaques and panels from the portable works of art of the temples were partially painted, a material enhancement that seems to have been used on ivories to emphasize specific elements of the motifs, as demonstrated by ivory fragments recovered from Residence K at Khorsabad (FIGURE 103).[694]

Ivory's attested use in the temples and the Neo-Assyrian preference for African ivory speak to the qualities of ivory that were valued by the Neo-Assyrian elite. First, the predominance of African ivory over Asiatic ivory suggests a Neo-Assyrian appreciation for the former's unique hardness and fine-grain composition, in contrast to the softer, duller qualities the latter type of ivory. These qualities of the African ivory are what give it its translucence and shine when appropriately worked, visual and experiential that were valued within Neo-Assyrian elite society. The bright sheen of the worked ivory panels would have also created an interesting contrast with the darker woods to which they were applied, emphasizing the visual impact of the composite work of art. Additionally, the potential of ivory to be worked into intricately detailed and complex small-scale objects was also of value, as illustrated by the treatment of the various panels and their individual motifs. Sennacherib's use of ivory to fashion protective mythological doorway figures further suggests that this material may have also had an inherent affective quality, similar to stones; the use of ivory for brickmolds—the objects that were responsible for creating the very backbone of the house of a god—upholds this proposition. Overall it would seem that ivory provided a valued visual resource with which the Neo-Assyrian kings could embellish, inflect, protect, and thereby ritualize the Neo-Assyrian temple. The minimal mention of ivory in relation to temple construction in the royal inscriptions may, however, indicate that while useful for certain features, ivory was not considered as prestigious as other raw resources available to the Neo-Assyrian elite.

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[691] ND 5265 (Met 57.27.6). Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 261.

[692] DS 1017.07 (A 22164); DS 1017.06 (A 22163)(Loud and Altman 1938: 61, pl. 51).

[693] DS 1017.16 (A 22169); DS 1017.23 (A 22172)(Loud and Altman 1938: 61, pl. 52, see further, 96–97).

[694] DS 1284 (A 17584)(Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 55 no. 63) has both yellow and black stains preserved on its surface. Of DS 1285 (A 17585)(Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 55 nos. 58-59), Loud and Altman (1938: 97) state the following: "two fragments of bands incised with lotus bud-and-flower motive (Nos. 58–59) have a design accentuated with yellow stain. They are similar to examples found at Arslan-Tash. The ivory is unburned."

The remaining ivory objects found in the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad consist of portable works of art, for example a pendant from the well in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (A 11661; Loud and Altman 1938: 33, 60), and a small head in three-quarter relief from Ezida at Nimrud (ND 5265 (Met 57.27.06)), described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "[i]vory head, male, burnt, black, fragment, three quarter relief, 33 x 18 mm. fully modeled, finely scored hair, with fillet and a single tress running in zig zag fashion round the forehead, ears simplified, evidence of a tiered crown on the head - possibly originally in the shape of a capital;" see further, Mallowan 1957: 7; Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 261.

f. Egyptian Blue and Faience

Like semi-precious stones and ivory, Egyptian blue and faience played a relatively minor role in temple construction. These two resources were used primarily for applied elements for composite images and other portable works of art, as well as inconspicuous materials, including beads and amulets placed in foundation deposits. During the Neo-Assyrian period faience was, as defined by Moorey, "a composite material consisting of a sintered quartz body and a glaze" that gave it a glassy appearance, often blue or green in color; in contrast, Egyptian blue was a blue frit "produced in antiquity by firing an intimate mixture of quartz, calcite, and a copper compound together with a small amount of alkali"[695] that was not glazed. The desired finished object or form was achieved by submitting these mixtures to either molds or the lost-wax technique.[696] Once the raw materials had been gathered, both faience and Egyptian blue could be produced within Neo-Assyria itself, which gave the craftsmen, and by extension the king, the ability to incorporate the highly-valued blue color of exotic lapis lazuli in their work at a much lower cost and physical expenditure.

Neo-Assyrian texts on temple construction are seemingly silent when it comes to the use of Egyptian blue and faience. As concluded by Oppenheim, no definitive Akkadian term is known that refers to either of these materials. One possible contender is *uqnû kūri* ("lapis lazuli of the kiln"). This designation is contrasted with *uqnî šarî* ("lapis lazuli of the mountain") in the textual sources, though the few attestations where this occurs do note relate to temple construction.[697] In his report to the king regarding the *uqnû*-stone needed for crafting an image, the Babylonian official Nabu-bani-aḫḫe mentions that if *uqnû*-stone is not available, *erû arḫi* ("fast copper")[698] should be sent as a substitute.[699] *erû arḫi* is also mentioned immediately following *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver") in lists of tribute in the royal inscriptions of Shalmaneser III and Sargon II.[700]

Archaeological evidence from the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad fills the textual void with respect to the role played by Egyptian blue and faience in temple construction. Among the ruins of the House of Ninurta Layard records finding fragments of composite images made of "clay, coloured in the mass with a blue derived from copper"[701] among the charred wooden remains of the images to which they were once

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[695] Moorey 1994: 167, 186. Moorey draws attention to the fact that these terms are often misused, and that a number of synonyms are employed by authors that further complicate matters; faience is also referred to as sintered quartz, glazed frit, composition, Egyptian faience, and paste, to name a few. What differentiates faience from true glass is that the composite parts are not fully fused together as a liquid that then cools, but rather are sintered through partial melting; see further, Oppenheim et al. 1970; Brill 1970: 114–115; see also, Tite and Shortland 2008.
[696] Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: 55.
[697] Oppenheim et al. 1970: 10.
[698] CAD "A": 2, 259 *arḫu,* "fast, a) referring to a copper compound used in making blue glass."
[699] SAA 13: no. 127; CAD "A": 259 *arḫu* a) (ABL 531); see further, Oppenheim et al. 1970: 76–77; Brill 1970: 121–123.
[700] Michel 1955: 142 E; Winckler and Abel 1889: pl. 28, no. 59:1; also discussed in Oppenheim et al. 1970: 76–77.
[701] Layard 1853a: 357.

attached.[702] Crafted with precision and skill, this collection of Egyptian blue inlays includes pieces of plaited beard, spiral curl hair, a winged-figure plaque, and Egyptian blue pupils that were set into eyes of ivory and stone (FIGURE 104–106).[703] Layard also found two spherical faience maceheads at Nimrud—possibly in the House of Ninurta—that may have originally belonged to a mace either held by a composite image or used in ritualized practice (FIGURE 107).[704] Barag and Tatton-Brown propose a similar use for comparable objects that were found in the House of Nabu at Nineveh.[705] Though of a much smaller scale, a number of faience objects were recovered in the temples at Khorsabad; the majority was found in the well in the House of Nabu, including spherical beads, cylinder seals, and an assortment of miniature pendants (FIGURE 108).[706]

The archaeological evidence argues that the valued quality of Egyptian blue and faience was their aesthetic appearance, in particular their blue color. This quality made these materials comparable to lapis lazuli, the prestigious and exotic stone that was used in a similar manner within the temple built environment, and which was valued for its color and radiant qualities, and by extension, associations with the heavens and divine. While Nabu-bani-aḫḫe's letter communicates the inferiority of this type of compound to *uqnû*-stone, the storing of *erû arḫi* within a royal storeroom (as indicated in the letter), in addition to its mention immediately after *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver") in lists of tribute, demonstrates that this material was appreciated as a resource used by craftsmen in the production of luxury goods for the king, and that it was valued as part of larger composite creations to which it contributed polychromatic qualities.[707] The skill necessary to produce and work both of these compound materials may have contributed further to the level of worth held by objects made of these materials, a skill that is illustrated by the intricate details and elaborate motifs on many of the surfaces of the works of art recovered from the temples.

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[702] Reade (2002: 175) notes that there is the possibility that some of the inlays found by Layard and brought to the British Museum may have come from the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud.

[703] Noteworthy examples from the British Museum collection include the following: N 761 (ME 118043); N 762 (ME 118042); N 765 (ME 118785); N 766 (ME); N 767 (ME 120465); N 769 + 778 (ME); N 771 (ME); N 774 (ME); N 775 (ME); N 782 (ME); N 783 (ME 91573); N 785 (ME 91574); see further, Layard 1853b: pl. 55; 1853a: 357–358, 362; Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: pl. 8, nos. 62–63; see also, Schuster-Brandis 2008: 58. Regarding N 1935 in FIGURE 105, Reade (2002: 176) notes that this fragment was brought to the British Museum by Layard but was inventoried separately from the group of Egyptian blue inlays from Nimrud; it was originally given a provenance of Arban that was later altered to Babylonia.

[704] N 1669 (ME 118775); N 1668 (ME 118776). Reade (2002: 179) suggests associating these maceheads with one found in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, ND 5337, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: " macehead, spherical, glazed, black with a white central band. Ht 4.8 cm."

[705] Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: 55, 74, n. 60.

[706] DS B (A 11643; A 11651; A 11652; A 11657; A 11662; A 11663; A 11664). One faience cylinder seal was recovered from the House of Sin (Room 165): DS 580 (A 11753). See further, Loud and Altman 1938: 98, pl. 60.

[707] I use the term polychromy in the manner suggested by Nagel (2010: 25), to "refer to any decorative art involving the use of several colors." For a discussion of polychromy in the ancient Near East, see Nagel 2010: 14–54.

g. Glazes and Wall Paintings

Glazed bricks and wall paintings were among the conspicuous non-portable works of art used in Neo-Assyrian temple construction, visually dynamic elements that necessitated the use of particular pigments and minerals to create their vibrant and at times reflective polychromatic surfaces. The former was created by firing a previous kiln-fired brick after a mixture of the desired pigments and minerals had been applied to its surface.[708] Nunn tabulated the color trends in glazed brickwork for the Neo-Assyrian period based on archaeological evidence, concluding that the colors used for temple glazed bricks were white, yellow, blue, green, sometimes red and brown, and black, the latter often used for outline.[709]

A brick inscription of Sennacherib mentions his use of *agurru abnu* ("glazed brick") to embellish the House of Aššur.[710] More explicit is an inscription of Esarhaddon, in which the king recounts his use of *agurru ṣurru uqnû* ("obsidian and lapis lazuli-colored baked brick")[711] in the rebuilding of Ezida in Borsippa.[712] Aššurbanipal similarly reports using *agurru ṣurru uqnû* for his reconstruction of the *akītu*-house at Nineveh, originally constructed by Sargon.[713] Royal correspondence and administrative records further corroborate the role of glazed bricks in temple construction. Mar-Issar writes to Esarhaddon to inform the king that the quay wall in Ezida ought to be built up with glazed kiln-fired bricks (*ebertu lišhuṭu*).[714] When writing about the reconstruction of Esagil, Urdu-aḫḫešu, the king's high official in Babylon, suggests that the *urāsu*s[715] should glaze the *epertu*s[716] for the temple's *tarbāṣu* ("courtyard").[717]

Archaeological evidence from the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad presents strong material attestations for the use of glazed brick-work in temple construction. Layard recorded finding glazed bricks on the southern platform flanking the principal doorway to the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, suggesting that this technique was also used by Aššurnaṣirpal during his temple work.[718] Unfortunately the bricks themselves were not

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[708] On glazes and wall paintings in the ancient Near East, see Nunn 1988; on the technique of glazing, see 142–159.

[709] Nunn 1988: 155–158; Moorey 1994: 320–321.

[710] Luckenbill 1924: 148; CAD "A" 2: 162 *agurru,* "1. e) glazed".

[711] *ṣurri* and *uqnû* in this text are to be read in a metaphorical sense, as discussed above, with the terms referring to the aesthetic qualities of these stones rather than the physical stone itself, so read "black" and "blue" rather than "obsidian" and "lapis lazuli" respectively; see further, Oppenheim et al. 1970: 17.

[712] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 22.

[713] Borger 1996: 169f, T v 46–49; see further Novotny 2010: 127, n. 120.

[714] SAA 10: no. 364.

[715] CAD "U/W": 208f *urāsu*, "corvée worker."

[716] CAD "E": 184 *epertu*, "baked brick."
CAD "Š": 1, 84f *šaḫātu* A, "4. to glaze bricks."

[717] SAA 13: no. 168, 13–15: *ebertu ša tarbāṣāti ša Esagil lišḫutū*. The following administrative records and royal correspondence also tell of workmen glazing bricks: *libittī išaḫuṭū*: SAA 11: no. 21, 2, 4, 7, r. 2, r. 6; *ebertu išaḫḫuṭū*: SAA 10: no. 368, r. 6-7.

[718] Reade 2002: 168–169. Evidence of glazed bricks was also recorded for other temples at Nimrud, on the House of the Kidmuri, see Rassam 1897: 225; on the House of Šarrat-nipḫi, see Layard 1853a: 348, 59; Reade 1983: fig. 3; Reid and Oates 2001: 109; and on the House of Ninurta, see Reade 2002: fig. 31; see further, Postgate and Reade 1976–1980: 308–309. Glazed bricks were also recovered at Nineveh that once belonged to either the House of Ištar or the House of Nabu—Nadali (2008) attributes the high-relief panels,

kept; however, a watercolor drawing of the doorway shows the position of the colored bricks (FIGURE 109). Well preserved examples from Neo-Assyrian temples for this type of non-portable work of art come from Khorsabad, where glazed bricks panels were set up flanking the principal doorways of the temple façades; many of the designs and motifs from this group are still discernible in their present state (FIGURE 110–112).[719] Additional material evidence from temple doorways at Khorsabad suggests that bands of glazed bricks were also placed above doorway arches in these structures; a well-preserved city gateway at Khorsabad presents a rare intact example of this type of arrangement (FIGURE 113–114).[720] Glazed bricks were also applied to a non-portable feature—possibly an altar or offering table—that was situated in the inner courtyard of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad; however, only four courses of glazed bricks were found *in situ* (FIGURE 115).[721] A series of motifs were created on the face of the temple brick at Khorsabad panels by means of the glazing technique, including geometric designs of fauna and flora, mythological figures, and royal figures.[722] Unfortunately, as professed by Loud upon discovery at the site, the original visual magnitude of the polychromatic sequences and their reflective qualities had not been preserved:[723]

> The glazing on several of the fragments, however, shows very clearly how the color has changed in time. The brilliant blue background first changes to a soft green which we have found so often before. This is clearly shown in these fragments where but a few odd spots of the blue remain, the rest having already turned. Then the green gradually fades into the yellow of which we find so much. The rosettes themselves appear white, but it is possible that they may have been yellow originally.

The glazing technique that was used for kiln-fired bricks was also used on the clay *sikkātu*s, wall-plaques, and clay hands of Neo-Assyrian temples. Many of the preserved clay hands were glazed, either blue or yellow, and in some instances were coated with bitumen (FIGURE 35).[724] White, yellow, and black glaze was used to create

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to which these fragments belonged, to the work of Esarhaddon at Nineveh; see further, Campbell Thompson and Hutchinson 1929; Campbell Thompson 1931; Campbell Thompson and Hamilton 1932; Reade 2005a: 352–354. Some of the glazed bricks uncovered by Layard at Nimrud have also been attributed to Esarhaddon, and were likely excavated in Fort Shalmaneser (Nadali 2006).

[719] Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 26–31; Loud 1936: 92–97, 102–104, 112; Loud and Altman 1938: 41–42; Nunn 1988: 175–182; Moorey 1994: 312–322; Reade 1995. Portions of the panel from the House of Sin have been restored and are on display at the Oriental Institute (A 11810).

[720] Place 1867–1870: I, 126; III, pls. 11, 14; Loud and Altman 1938: 42. As suggested by Reade (1995: 228), the archway form may have been an innovation of the craftsmen at Khorsabad; this material is discussed again in Chapter IV in the section on the construction of doorways.

[721] Loud and Altman 1938: 42, pl. 22 C–F.

[722] Similar motifs are found in many of the Neo-Assyrian palatial wall reliefs, wall paintings, and other non-portable and portable works of art (Reade 1963; 1970; Madhloom 1970; Albenda 1991; Winter 2002; Albenda 2005). The panels from the House of Sin are discussed further in Chapter IV.

[723] Loud, Expedition Diaries, 1932–1933: Chapter 1, December 6, Oriental Institute Archives of the University of Chicago; see also, Nunn 1988: 148–149.

[724] On the Khorsabad examples, see Place 1867–1870: 86 (no findspot is recorded for these clay hands, leaving the possibility open for either the palace or associated temples); see further, Frame 1991: 339.

the geometric designs, floral motifs, and cuneiform inscriptions on the surface of both *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques, as seen in the well-preserved examples of the latter from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud (FIGURE 30–32).[725] Andrae's watercolor renderings of both *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques from Assur helps communicate the vibrant polychromatic aspects of this group of glazed objects (FIGURE 116–117). The designs preserved on the surfaces of these objects manifests the more-than decorative role each played in the context of the temple built environment. The intricate attention to detail of the motifs on the exposed surfaces, the repetitive individual elements that measured within millimeters of one another from one example to the next,[726] and the use of forms prevalent in Neo-Assyrian visual imagery—including plant-and-bud garlands, concentric rings with attached petals, and chevroned and guilloche bands—demonstrates their elevated status as visually interactive non-portable works of art within the temple built environment.[727]

Glazing was also used on another type of clay object in Neo-Assyrian temples, two examples of which were found within the temple complex at Nimrud during excavations and are now housed in museum collections—one is held at the British Museum and the other the Metropolitan Museum of Art (FIGURE 118–119). Reade correlates the object in the British Museum collection[728] with an object excavated by Mallowan from "Room 5" (FIGURE 8; Reade's "House of Adad:" FIGURE 7: C). Mallowan describes this object as follows: "a glazed box with nail adhering to the top of it which might have served some ritual use for oil offerings."[729] The second example was recovered from the debris in the House of Ninurta according to the records of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.[730] Both examples have a similar undulating trough-like surface: the Metropolitan Museum example has six peaks spaced out around the exterior edge and a central depression containing a single rectangular ridge; and the British Museum example is slightly longer with eight peaks and two depressions with rectangular ridges. The sides of both objects have geometric designs and a pierced hole that ran straight through the center—the British Museum example still has a nail preserved within. Last, both objects were covered in a white glaze.

In his report on the excavations of the House of Aššur at Assur, Andrae records finding fragments of similar types of glazed objects; a sketch of the largest example is included in his 1925 publication (FIGURE 120).[731] The description Andrae provides for

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[725] Rassam 1897: 225–226; Albenda 1991: 46, pl. V, VI–X. While consistent in terms of color and general designs, evidence suggests that styles varied by site, indicating that work was carried out at a local level, Albenda 1991: 43; see also, Freestone 1991. The British Museum collection includes the following *sikkatu*s from Nimrud: ME 91680 (Rm. 1102) + ME 131664; 91681 (Rm. 1103) + ME 91683 (Rm. 1104); ME 91685 (Rm. 1105) + ME 131662 (1953-10-10, 10); Rm. 1106; ME 91684 (1891-7-2, 1); ME 91687 (1891-7-2, 2); ME 91688 (1891-7-2, 4); ME 131660 (1953-10-10, 8); ME 131661 (1953-10-10, 9 + 1953-10-10, 375); ME 131663 (1953-10-10, 11); see further, Albenda 1991. The Musée du Louvre Collection includes the following: AO 2667; AO 2669; AO 2670; AO 2671.

[726] Based on the author's personal analysis of the materials. Albenda 1991 includes measurements of fragments of *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques, though not of the surface designs.

[727] See note 722 on common motifs from Neo-Assyrian visual imagery. For a comprehensive study of the flora from Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs, see Bleibtreu 1980.

[728] ME 1994-11-5, 417; Reade 2002: 181.

[729] Mallowan 1957: 20.

[730] Met 57.27.32.

[731] Ashur 3450; Ashur 3329; Ashur 3420 (Andrae 1925: 68–69, fig. 43a–b).

these fragments closely associates them with the Nimrud examples: "they resemble gigantic teeth, and are glazed ivory white." The function of all of these objects is uncertain. Mallowan, for example, suggests that they served a purpose in ritualized practice, while Reade concludes that they were decorative finials. Andrae compares them to earthenware ledges with rows of small bosses that he also found at Assur; he suggests that the latter were placed in a wall as decorative ledges or framework. The artful crafting of the white glazed trough-like objects—their surface ridges and geometric designs, as well as the white glaze treatment—confirms that whatever function these objects had, they also served a visually prominent role in the temple built environment.

Complimenting the glazed brick materials in Neo-Assyrian temples were wall paintings. These non-portable works of art were created by the application of desired pigments to the plastered surfaces of interior walls, where they would be protected from the elements. Yet long term degradation and weathering has resulted in wall paintings being perhaps the least well attested feature of royal building programs in ancient Mesopotamia at an archaeological level, next to textiles. The murals from Residence K at Khorsabad and the palace at Til Barsip are among the strongest examples recovered to date (FIGURE 121–122).[732] Subjective reproductions of the archaeological evidence by various excavators and scholars overtime, especially when executed in color, has had a significant impact on our impression of these materials. As Moorey rightly cautions, restudying these works has revealed certain "large and small inaccuracies in restoration and copying; over-confident restoration of designs; inaccurate descriptions of design and technique; very partial study of the surviving pieces; unstable colours. Where field records are poor, reconstructions are enduringly controversial."[733] Based on what evidence there is, Moortgat argues that wall paintings were far more widespread than the large-scale designs more commonly studied by scholars, with purely ornamental forms serving a role in public and private spaces and structures at varying social levels.

Unfortunately Neo-Assyrian textual sources reveal little with regard to the role of wall paintings in temple construction, and the temples at neither Nimrud nor Khorsabad yielded significant material evidence that might fill this void. What evidence was recovered at the latter site includes pieces of red ochre pigment from the House of Nabu, and red paint or plaster from the House of Sin.[734] Albeit very minimal, both groups of fragments may have been from imagery on the temple walls. In addition, painted walls were reported for the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, specifically in the antechamber, and

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[732] The wall paintings from the residence at Til Barsip (Tell Ahmar) in Syria date approximately to the time of Tiglath-pileser III, though they were not all composed at the same time; this group includes both geometric designs and representational scenes of figures in procession (Thureau-Dangin et al. 1936: 42–74, pls. XLIII–LIII; Tomabechi 1983–1984; Nunn 1988: 102–122; Albenda 2005: 33–74). On the murals from Residence K at Khorsabad, see Loud and Altman 1938: 83–86; Reade 1963.

[733] Moorey 1994: 322. On the impact of restorations, documentation, and publication of ancient works of art on our understanding of the past, see the Oriental Institute Museum Publication, *Picturing the Past: Imaging and Imagining the Ancient Middle East* (Green et al. 2012), which accompanied the special exhibit of the same title (February—September 2012); on the wall painting from Residence K at Khorsabad, see 132–135.

[734] DS 953 (A 12457); DS 477 (A 11785). In his chemical microscopy study of Neo-Assyrian wall paintings, Plesters (1959) found that the red color was an iron ochre, the blue Egyptian blue, the black carbon black, and the white a mixture of calcium carbonate and sulphate; see further, Moorey 1994: 327–329.

within the House of Šarrat-nipḫi.[735] Last, though not of a polychromatic nature, the Chicago excavations found evidence of painted black dado on the interior walls and doorways of the House of Sin at Khorsabad, a material that seems to have been applied on top of the mud plaster and whitewash layers to a height of two meters in some areas (FIGURE 123).[736] Tomabechi notes the strong contrast these dark walls would have had next to the colorful glazed brick panels that flanked the temple's principal doorway.[737] With the minimal evidence of wall paintings from temples within the Assyrian heartland, we can look to the site of Tell al-Rimah (ancient Karana-Zamahe), where a large bitumen relief was found intact inside the Late Assyrian temple.[738] This non-portable work of art was preserved on the long wall of the god's chamber, and consisted of a frieze of circles and square-cushions with a large winged composite creature above (FIGURE 124).

These partial finds from temples and other royal structures suggest a Neo-Assyrian preference for a black, white, red, blue, and possibly yellow and green color scheme, and for placing paintings above other non-portable works of art lower down on the wall and on ceilings.[739] Yet as exhorted by Albenda, due to the paucity of recovered examples, "it is difficult to trace the kinds of designs that were applied to the temple walls, and to determine whether the designs parallel those found in the royal residences or follow a different format."[740] The discovery of the winged creature in the temple at Tell al-Rimah suggests that certain motifs may have been selected expressly for the temple built environment.

A similar painted color scheme—that is black, white, red, and likely blue and yellow—was also used on Neo-Assyrian stone wall reliefs, likely as an accentuating feature that highlighted specific details of the motifs rather than a complete coating of the stone.[741] The evidence for this type of embellishment is predominantly from the palaces (FIGURE 125–127), yet the preservation of carved stone wall reliefs from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud suggests that similar polychromatic reliefs may have also been a part of the temple built environment. Unfortunately the preservation to modern times of such coloring is quite rare, since the superficial materials—the paint and plaster—are the first to be impacted by the conditions of their environment.

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[735] Reade 1970: 113; Nunn 1988: 124. Evidence of wall paintings has also been uncovered from Neo-Assyrian palaces; in the of the Northwest Palace at Nimrud Mallowan (1966: I, 105–106) found paintings on plaster still intact above the stone wall reliefs of the throne-room.

[736] Loud and Altman 1938: 35, 48, 116.

[737] Tomabechi 1980: 214,

[738] Dalley 1984: 193–199, figs. 64, 66, 67; see also, Oates 1968 on the excavations, as well as Albenda 2005: 21 on the wall painting. This temple was likely built under the direction of the provincial governor of Raṣappa, Nergal-eresh (Dalley 1984: 193).

[739] Nunn 1988: 18–25.

[740] Albenda 2005: 129.

[741] The extent to which paint was used on Neo-Assyrian wall reliefs is a matter of continued dispute; Mallowan (1966: I, 105), Reade (1979b: 18), Loud and Altman (1938: 41), and Moorey (1994: 35, 326) argue for a limited use, intended to highlight specific features, yet other scholars contend that the reliefs were painted quite extensively, if not entirely covered by colorful paints (Paley 1976: 10–11; 1983: 54; Tomabechi 1980: 213; 986: 44–45). Paley (2008) discusses the question of paint in his paper on creating a virtual reality model of the Northwest Palace, he also includes some pigment samples from the reliefs themselves (Table 1). On the use of blue and yellow paint on wall reliefs, see Tomabechi 1986.

The stone and plaster that was used for the glazed bricks, *sikkātu*s, wall-plaques, clay hands, and wall paintings, was made from locally derived mud, gypsum, and lime. Some of the minerals necessary for creating the glazes and pigments, in particular colored earths, were also locally sourced. Yet other raw minerals required to create the glazes and pigments had to be acquired from abroad, including the heavy metals copper, iron, lead, and antimony.[742] The energy and resources required to obtain all of these materials, and the foreignness of some, contributed to their elevated value within the Neo-Assyrian city. Increasing this value was the potential of these materials for creating visually dynamic products that conformed with Neo-Assyrian visual preferences, including color schemes of red, black, blue, and white, and applied elements with sheen and luster. These valued qualities would have then extended to any object for which they were used, as well as the built environment within which they were placed, exerting a powerful visual and aesthetic force; as Loud remarks with regard to the Khorsabad glazed brick panels, "in their original brilliance they must have been dazzling."[743]

h. Textiles

A difficult material group to assess with regard to its role in temple construction is textiles. There exists little doubt regarding the role of textiles in the temple built environment, as wall-hangings, carpets, covers for furniture, and possibly for door awnings.[744] Textual evidence attests to a widespread weaving industry in Assyria that dates back to the Old Assyrian period,[745] while the frequent mention of the raw materials involved in textile production, in particular wool, and of finished products in Neo-

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[742] Whyte et al.'s (2004) recent analysis of the glazed bricks from the House of Sin at Khorsabad using Scanning Electron Microscopy with Energy Dispersive Spectrometry (SEM-EDS) confirmed the presence of these elements in the blue, black, yellow, and white glazes. In an analysis of Neo-Assyrian plaques from Nimrud, Ba'shiqa, and Arban, Freestone (1991: 57–58) found that for all three sites the glazes had a high-potash, high-magnesia, and soda-lime-silica type base and antimony-based opacifiers. These findings are consistent with what is known of second and first-millennia BCE glass and ceramic technologies. See further, Hedge and Moorey 1975; Tomabechi 1980; Nunn 1988: 25–29; Moorey 1994: 312–322, 327–329; Tite and Shortland 2008: 194. During the Neo-Assyrian period lead was sourced from southern Anatolia (Moorey 1994: 293) and antimony likely came from Iran (Moorey 1994: 241).

[743] Loud and Altman 1938: 59. Based on his visual analysis of the materials and structures at Khorsabad, Place (1867–1870: I, 75–76) wrote the following of the Assyrian appreciation for polychromy: "[ils] favorisés d'ailleurs part un climat sec et une atmosphère lumineuse, empruntèrent à la polychromie un puissant auxilaire pour faire valoir l'élégance de leurs conceptions architecturales… A ce sentiment si juste sont dues les plinthes tracées à la base des murs, l'invention des peintures à fresque, celle des décorations émaillées au-dessous des voûtes, aux couronnements, aux entrées, le coloriage même des bas-reliefs, et enfin tout emploi de la couleur lorsequ'elle devait contribuer à rompre la monotonie des surfaces et apporter une richesse de plus à la splendeur architectonique." The symbolic value of such raw elements as pigment within the Persian Empire is suggested by the discovery of paint pots buried in the area of the Apadana at Persepolis; for a discussion of the excavations and polychromy at Persepolis, see Nagel 2010; on the painted pots, see 136f, 202–203.

[744] Dalley 1991; Thomason 2010.

[745] Second-millennium tablets recovered from the Assyrian trading colony at Kanesh (modern Kültepe) in Anatolia recount the trade of textiles between Assyrians and merchants, providing terms for various materials, garments, and related objects, and at times provenance (Veenhof 1972; Veenhof and Eidem 2008). See further the discussion of textiles and related administrative documents in Fales et al. 1992 (SAA 7), as well as note 625 on Kanesh.

Assyrian lists of booty, tribute, and trade,[746] confirms that the Neo-Assyrian kings had access to and an appreciation for these materials, attesting to their ability and likely desire to make use of them in temple construction. The attested Neo-Assyrian elite appreciation for colorful works of art throughout the royal landscape similarly argues for textiles' very real and conspicuous presence within the Neo-Assyrian temple. Yet like wood and other organic materials, little if any evidence of textiles has been recovered at an archaeological level,[747] leaving much of the onus to the texts and indirect material evidence, for example impressions on other preserved objects and depictions in more durable material forms.

Confirmation for the use of textiles on furniture pieces is provided by Neo-Assyrian wall reliefs that depict chairs, tables, beds, and thrones with overlaying cloths and cushions (FIGURE 128–129).[748] Representations of horse trappings and garments on glazed bricks recovered from Assur illustrate the polychromatic nature of Neo-Assyrian textiles (FIGURE 130–131),[749] likewise the colorful patterned textiles of the Til Barsip wall paintings (FIGURE 122),[750] and somewhat indirectly, the black and red Assyrian style dress worn by a Cypriot male clay statue (FIGURE 132).[751] Also of note is the "Investiture Scene" from the palace at Mari; though dating to an earlier period, the attempt to represent a textile in the form of a wall painting attests to a longstanding appreciation and circulation of colorful textiles in the region, as well as their place as wall decoration in elite built environments (FIGURE 133).[752] Furthermore, scenes of foreign tributaries carrying carpets from Neo-Assyrian palatial wall reliefs and other works of art attest to the value of textiles as a form of tribute and import by the Neo-Assyrian kings.[753]

Large stone thresholds with elaborate floral and geometric designs that have been found in Neo-Assyrian royal residences from the second half of the eighth century onwards offer additional indirect evidence for textile use among the Neo-Assyrian. These non-portable works of art are often thought to mirror patterns that would have been found on carpets used in a similar context (FIGURE 134);[754] however, archaeological evidence does not attest to the use of this type of threshold for temples during this period, rather the preference for thresholds with dedicatory inscriptions to the resident divinity seems to

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[746] On the Akkadian terms related to textiles and textile production, see Veenhof 1972; Dalley 1991; see also, CAD "Š" 3: 57-64 *šipātu*, "wool, fleece;" Waetzoldt 1972; Durand 2009; Michel and Nosch 2010.

[747] A rare example includes the textile fragments recovered from the royal tombs at Nimrud, excavated in 1988–1989 by the Department of Antiquities of Iraq under the direction of Muzahim Hussein (Anonymous 1989: 259; Crowfoot 1995).

[748] Bier 1995: 1583–1586; Simpson 1995: 1657–1658; Thomason 2010. Representations of horse blankets and saddle blankets in Neo-Assyrian palatial wall reliefs speak further to the place of textiles in Neo-Assyrian elite society (Curtis and Reade 1995: 161f, nos. 5–6, 28–29; Cohen and Kangas 2010: 78–79, 132).

[749] Andrae 1925: pls. 6, 7, 9.

[750] Thureau-Dangin et al. 1936: 42–74, pls. XLIII–LIII; Tomabechi 1983–1984; Nunn 1988: 102–122; Albenda 2005: 33–74.

[751] GR 1891-8-6, 39 ("GR" refers to the Greece and Rome collection at the British Museum); Munro and Tubbs 1891: p. 147, pl. IX; see further, Törnkvist 1972: 8f.

[752] Moortgat 1964; Margueron 1982; 2008; Gates 1984.

[753] Albenda (1984: 2) cites the Black Obelisk, the bronze bands from the Balawat Gates, and the throne dais from Nimrud, all of which date to the reign of Shalmaneser III.

[754] A large doorsill with floral designs was recovered from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh (Russell 1991: fig. 13). A similar example was found in Sargon's Palace at Khorsabad (AO 19915). See further, Albenda 1984 (including a catalogue of thresholds with designs from Neo-Assyria); Dalley 1991.

have persisted. Reade suggests that the patterns painted on the wooden ceilings of royal buildings also mirrored those of carpets underfoot.[755] Turning to the features found on the walls of Neo-Assyrian buildings, Thomason proposes that the role of the *sikkātu*s and wall-plaques was to suspend rugs or tapestries.[756] In a similar vein, excavators at Khorsabad propose that pairs of stone rings, which were found in the ground at a select number of doorways and alcoves in the temple courtyards, were used to secure awnings as protection from the sun (FIGURE 135–136).[757]

The lack of references to textiles in texts on temple construction raises the question whether these materials were too common or taken for granted by the kings, and as a result, did not warrant attention in discussions of the temple built environment. Yet I would argue that a likely answer is found in the objective of this textual corpus, which was to preserve for eternity the deeds of the kings and to enforce a message of his strength and permanence in the history of Assyria. In contrast to the far more permanent stone, wood, and metal elements of the temple, textiles, as organic and degradable portable works of art, were perhaps too transient for a king to include in his narratives on temple construction—perhaps they were too fluctuating and momentary to be considered true core features of the temple, and therefore, stood outside the dialogue of temple construction.

Textual disparities aside, there is little doubt that the aesthetically alluring colors and textures of textiles would have been valued as a means of accentuating the various rooms of the temple within which they were utilized. Textiles would have also provided a means of displaying culturally significant motifs and messages within this built environment. Bier recognizes the value of textiles as a visually affective material from a cultural perspective:[758]

> Textiles communicate through color, structure, pattern, and design, and these are also the attributes of style. Style and its elements may be recognized and understood within a community that is visually responsive to the signals it carries. As visual materials, textiles in the ancient Near East were recognized and utilized as a powerful means of nonverbal communication.

In this way, textiles would have complimented the colors and motifs of other material elements within the temple and thus contributed to the building up of a space that conformed to Neo-Assyrian standards for a ritualized and ritualizing built environment. Having an equally strong experiential affect were the tactile qualities of textiles. Whether laid out horizontally under one's foot or hanging vertically on the walls, the plushness and warmth to a person's touch, as well as the muffling effect to sound, would have had a strong impact on the activities and practices staged within the temple built environment. In addition, textiles may have served a practical role as draped materials that helped to

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[755] Reade 1980a: 75.
[756] Thomason 2010: 200.
[757] Loud 1936: 89–92; Loud and Altman 1938: 13, 26, pl. 30 E.
[758] Bier 1995: 2568.

block sightlines or light from certain spaces, a possible example being the *šiddu*s[759] used during the serving of the divine meal, discussed in Chapter V.

While arguably a more consumable and flexible material that moved in and out of the temple in a manner similar to other perishable material culture, the potential scale and physical presence of textiles—in a manner comparable to non-portable works of art on the walls and floors of the temple—argues for including them in a discussion of the construction of the temple.

3. CONCLUSION

Whether acquired locally or from abroad, whether utilized for strength and durability or visual attributes, or whether in possession of qualities connected to prestige and luxury or of aesthetics associated with the divine, each of these raw material groups was selected, acquired, and utilized by the Neo-Assyrian kings in the construction of their temples for the principal reason that each was deemed appropriate and of value for the house of a god. Within the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context, the surface of these materials—what was seen—was privileged, whether created by nature or through imitation. The brilliance, shine, and luster of semi-precious stone, for example, is boldly communicated by the texts. The application of glazes, paint, and metal sheathing reinforces this prioritization of the seen—of color, texture, and brilliance, where surface appearance was itself both the sign and the substance. When this abundance of materials was brought together to create the temple—whether objects placed in the foundations, elements of its structural core, or portable works of art—the unique and inherent values of these raw materials transferred to this environment, uniting and inflecting the space, making the temple "other" as a display of both visual and experiential exuberance, and as a participant in ritualized practice. The dynamic interaction of the finished temple with people and practice is explored in Chapter V. The manner in which the raw materials were assembled within the temple, however—that is the practice and performance of temple construction—had as much to do with the ritualization of this space as did the raw materials of which the temple was built and the subsequent activities that were carried out within, the latter chosen for and the former executed in accordance with Neo-Assyrian elite cultural and social values. Chapter IV investigates this act of construction.

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[759] CAD "Š": 2, 407f *šiddu* B, "cloth, curtain;" see note 1429 on alternative interpretations of this term.
[759] Linssen 2004: 139.

CHAPTER IV. RITUALIZED CREATION: THE CONSTRUCTION AND RENEWAL OF THE NEO-ASSYRIAN TEMPLE

> The construction of the stage was the performance, or, as Hole (2005, 31) puts it, "construction itself was the ritual".... Construction was an activity that had value in itself, rather than serving the ulterior purpose of being able to carry out ritual performances on stage.[760]

Taking a practice-oriented approach to the Neo-Assyrian temple and treating this structure as an interactive entity rather than a static end-product opens up new avenues of exploration into the processes of creation and renewal for this dynamic built environment. Many of the individual steps involved in the construction sequence of a Neo-Assyrian temple were acknowledged by particular activities, including the recitation of words, the pouring of liquid, and the deposition of materials in the foundations; the participation of skilled craftsman and scholarly experts; and the incorporation of valued building materials. These practices were informed by long-established cultural customs, therein imbuing each with social meaning and significance, and making the process of construction as valued as the finished product, the temple. In addition, the Neo-Assyrian elite produced materials that in themselves documented this practice—royal building inscriptions eternalized the construction process in written form while strategically placed foundation deposits physically marked the act. Both of these material remains survive to this day as testament to the value and symbolically charged aspect of temple construction.

In her discussion of the visual arts of Mesopotamia, Winter draws attention to a cultural awareness of qualities tied to production. She explores in particular the Mesopotamian visual and emotional response to material culture and production that is expressed in the written sources;[761] terms of making, skill, embellishment, decoration, and mastery are frequently used in Akkadian texts when speaking of material culture. The consistent use of this set vocabulary reveals a strong awareness and appreciation of the process of production in the Mesopotamian world. Yet this active sequence is often overlooked in modern scholarship on Mesopotamian material culture, the focus being placed instead on the tangible finished product.

Chapter IV breaks down the long-standing barrier between creation and product with respect to the Neo-Assyrian temple, not only in order to appreciate the complexity of construction and renewal of this structure, but more importantly in an attempt to understand how this wealth of culturally determined activity was in itself ritualized practice, and how these performances in turn ritualized the temple built environment—the structure as well as the materials and activities that were subsequently housed therein.

1. (RE)BUILDING FROM WORDS: THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

The textual sources—the royal correspondence, administrative records, royal inscriptions, ritual instructions, and omen collections—provide a detailed picture of construction, renovation, and restoration of structures by Neo-Assyrian imperial society,

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[760] Bernbeck 2013: 43–44.
[761] Winter 1995; 2003.

recreating with words the built landscapes that once visually and culturally defined Neo-Assyrian capital cities.[762] Here I provide a brief reintroduction to these sources, with a particular awareness of their contribution to a discussion of temple construction, before proceeding to an exploration of the act of (re)construction of the Neo-Assyrian temple itself.

a. Ritual Instructions

The idiosyncrasy of the ritual instructions within a discussion of temple construction lies in their detailed prescription of culturally meaningful actions to be performed at different stages of the building process. Such stages include purifying the site, laying the foundations, constructing doorways, and installing the gods. *Ṭuppi ḫišiḫti ušše bīt ili epēšu enūma ušše bīt ili tanamdû* ("Tablet for the materials needed in order to lay the foundations of a house of a god: When you are laying the foundations of a house of a god")[763] gives detailed instructions for the creation of seventeen figurines to be deposited at specific locations under the foundations of a temple prior to the onset of construction. Of the seventeen figurines, only that of the god Ninšubur is referred to by name.[764] The remaining sixteen figurines are referred to according to the material with which they were to be made: two of *duprānu*-wood, six of *ḫaluppu*-wood, two of *erēnu*-wood, three of *ašūḫu*-wood, and three of *iškuru*.[765] The explicit instructions for the creation of the figurine of Ninšubur relay the level of rigor possible for ritual instructions: it was to be made of clay, fashioned with an *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") staff in hand, and inscribed, *sukkal ilāni mu'irru ḫamīm meḫê* ("messenger of the gods, commander who gathers storms"), all of which was to be carried out at precise locations in a specific order alongside the creation of the other sixteen figurines.[766]

Ambos argues in his study of building practices in the first millennium BCE that there is no explicit distinction between ritual instructions related to the construction of small-scale houses and large state-constructed houses of the gods; these two groups were not considered in opposition by the expert scholars nor were they intended to provide the

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[762] On architecture, construction, and building practices in Mesopotamia, see Ellis 1968; Salonen 1961; 1963; 1965; Menzel 1981; Margueron 1982; Heinrich 1982; 1984; Lackenbacher 1982; 1990; Tunça 1984; Damerji 1987; Hurowitz 1992; Galter 2004; Ambos 2004; Boda and Novotny 2010.

[763] Ambos 2004: II.C.2 (K 2000+ etc.)(one manuscript was found at Nineveh).

[764] On the god Ninšubur, see Wiggermann 1999.

[765] Ambos 2004: 156, 6, 11–12.

CAD "Ḫ": 55–56 *ḫaluppu*, "a tree (oak?) and the wood of the tree."

CAD "A": 2, 478–479 *ašūḫu*, "fir."

CAD "I/J": 251–252 *iškuru*, "wax."

Neither *ḫaluppu*-wood nor *ašūḫu*-wood are well-attested in the textual sources as Neo-Assyrian building materials; for this reason, they are not included in the preceding chapter or Appendix A. Aššurnaṣirpal lists the latter in a list of trees he brought back to Nimrud in his Banquet Stele text; RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 45. The CAD entry for *ḫaluppu* includes the following note: "*ḫaluppu* represents one of the "eastern" woods imported into Mesopotamia (from Gubbin, Makan, Melḫḫa, etc.) and disappears with the interruption of the eastern trade routes (cf. JAOS 74 14f.) to reappear again in the middle of the first mill. (cf. ABL 566: 10, cited sub usage c, above). Since no references to the oak appear in the texts up to the OB period, *ḫaluppu* may refer to an eastern species of oak."

[766] See further, Ambos 2004: 76–77. A clay figurine that meets this description was found in the House of Ninḫursanga in Kiš (Rittig 1977: Abb. 3), which Wiggermann (1999: fig. 8) identifies as Ninšubur.

technical blueprint for a building's execution.[767] Rather these instructions were idealized representations of ritualized practice that necessitated adaptation to each unique context of use, dependent on the social and economic status of the builder, as well as local and regional traditions. The following excerpt from ritual instructions for the *nâru*[768] demonstrates the adaptability of Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions:[769]

šumma rubû šū sukannīna	If he is a prince, he burns a dove
ana maqlūte iqalu	as a burnt offering.
šumma muškēnu šū libbi	If he is a poor man, he burns the
immeri iqalu	heart of a sheep.

Because both a small-scale house and a temple were conceived of as places of dwelling, it makes sense that the ritual instructions directed at each would be similar, or even the same; for this reason, it is necessary to include in a discussion of temple construction situationally and contextually-specific texts, such as the royal correspondence and inscriptions. From the latter groups we can extrapolate how prescribed practices from ritual instructions were adapted to fit the context of temple construction, and in so doing, approach an understanding of the activity of temple construction as a social practice in the Neo-Assyrian imperial context, rather than as the idealized practice of constructing a house that is presented by the ritual instructions.

Another caveat that ought to be noted when engaging with ritual instructions as an evidentiary group is that there does not exist an explicit body of texts from Neo-Assyria that falls under the heading "building ritual texts," though this term does appear in scholarship on the topic. Our modern categories of medical texts, hymns, prayers, myths, and the like are not based on ancient classificatory labels. Similarly, no definitive ancient scribal label is known for an all-encompassing, building-oriented subcategory of ritual instructions. Ambos identifies what is our best evidence for what may be a reference to an actual series of building ritual instructions, the "Kulla" series cited at the beginning of the *āšipu*s' Handbook.[770] The relevant line begins with the entry "Kulla," the name of the Mesopotamian brick-god and god of builders, followed by the gloss, *išid bīt ili* [*nadû*] ("to lay the foundations of the house of a god"). The next entry is *mīs pî*, the mouth-washing practice performed to consecrate the image of a god. The final entry on the line is the appointing of an *ēnu* (*nišût ēni*).[771] Because these three practices were central to the construction of a temple, Ambos argues that "we may assume that "Kulla" was the name

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[767] Ambos 2004: 65. As evidence of their common conception by scholars, Ambos (2004: 65, n. 451) references *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* ("When you lay the foundations (of a temple)")(II.A.2; K 48+), which was found along with tablets with ritual instructions for building a house in the tablet assemblages of Aššurbanipal from Nineveh. A photograph of the tablet is found in Curtis and Reade 1995: 120, no. 81. Support for this argument is also found in the common conception of Neo-Assyrian elite society of the houses of both humans and gods as places of dwelling, as argued in Chapter II.2.

[768] CAD "N": 1, 376f *nâru* ((LÚ.)NAR), "musician."

[769] Zimmern 1901: no. 60, 30–31; Menzel 1981: II, T108f, r. 6–7; CAD "Q": 71 *qalû* 3; and most recently, Ambos 2004: 38.

[770] See Chapter I.2.c and note 134.

[771] Ambos 2004: 7–8; 2010: 222–223; Jean 2006: 62–82; Ambos 2013b: 20–21.
CAD "E": 177f *ēnu*, "2. high priest, high priestess."

under which Mesopotamian scholars compiled temple building rituals."[772] Ambos then lists three groups of ritual instructions related to what he identifies as the crucial steps of the building process, and for this reason, were those that likely made up the "Kulla" series referred to in the manual: "(1) rituals for depositing figurines while laying the foundations, (2) the ritual after the doorframes (*sippu*s) are set in place, and (3) rituals concerning the induction of the divine image."[773] As Ambos discloses, however, none of the preserved tablets make explicit reference to a "Kulla" series in their colophons.

Accordingly, while the entry in the *āšipu*s' Handbook might suggest that the Neo-Assyrians did conceive of a set series of practices related to building, to which belonged designated groups of ritual instructions, we do not have definitive textual support to make use of a native Mesopotamian label in this capacity. Rather what the evidence does suggest is that the types of texts that fall under the modern scholarly heading "building ritual texts" are marked by the same fluidity and overlap as other Akkadian textual sources, with texts of various orientations referencing and offering instructions on matters of temple construction.

b. Omen Collections

In Mesopotamia a direct means of accessing the wills and desires of the gods was through omens. These phenomena were predominantly interpreted by the *bārû*, a scholarly profession that was included among the *ummânu*s of the royal court in Neo-Assyria.[774] A concern of some omen collections or sections therein was to avert evil during building projects. Some of the Neo-Assyrian omen collections related to building activities reveal information particular to the construction of a temple—certain texts tell of auspicious times for carrying out specific building sequences, others of inherently powerful aspects of certain materials, and some on how to properly address potentially harmful or damning events, for example if the foundations of an earlier king's temple are discovered during a later rebuilding project.[775] This material, like that of ritual instructions, fell under the jurisdiction of the *ummânu*s, the scholarly experts deemed responsible for interpreting signs to protect the king and people, and for ensuring the continued support of the gods through the successful completion of a temple building project.[776] Because these phenomena and their interpretation were grounded in the cultural and socio-political context of the Neo-Assyrian imperial world, and, as such, offer insight into the overall Neo-Assyrian cultural values related to construction, they stand as a good compliment to those texts that inform on the more technical aspects of royal building projects—the royal correspondence and administrative records.

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[772] Ambos 2010: 222–223.
[773] Ambos 2010: 223.
[774] On the role of *bārûs* in the Neo-Assyrian royal court, see Robson 2011; forthcoming. Royal correspondence and reports from *bārûs* include the following: SAA 4; SAA 10: nos. 173–184. See further the discussion in Chapter IV.2.
[775] Ambos 2010: 233; see also the discussion of omen collections related to building activity, 29–37.
[776] Discussed further in Chapter IV.2; see also, Farber 1995; Rochberg 2004: 93–96.

c. Royal Inscriptions

The royal inscriptions build upon information obtained from the previously discussed text groups by providing formal commentary on some of the practices performed by the king with the aid of the *ummânu*s during construction. While drawing upon the same body of cultural and social knowledge as revealed to us in the ritual instructions and omen collections, the royal inscriptions offer contextual and situationally-specific insight for the reigns of individual kings. Aššurnaṣirpal's inscription on the foundation bricks from the House of Mamu at Imgur-Enlil (Balawat), for example, tells of the king's dedication of an image of the god, as well as the deposition of his inscription, that is to say the tablet itself upon which the text was written.[777] A passage from an inscription of Sennacherib preserved on a pair of octagonal clay prisms and various prism fragments from Nineveh, Assur, and Nimrud, tells of the divine guidance behind his royal building project:[778]

aššu šipri ēkalliya šutēšuri	So that the work on my palace might be successful
u lipit qātiya šullume	and my building work carried out in full,
ina ūmešuma Aššur u Ištar	at that time, the gods Aššur and Ištar
ša pīlī peṣê	revealed to me
ina Balaṭaya	the *pīlu peṣû*-stone.
ušaptûni pānīšu	in the city of Balaṭaya.

The wording of the latter passage, that is the use of the Š-stem of the verb *peṭû*—meaning "to cause to be opened, to have something revealed," said of words and secrets[779]—illustrates the reliance Sennacherib placed on divine communication and guidance while he carried out his building project. Esarhaddon's recount of his refurbishment of the gods and their houses emphasizes this point:[780] not only does he mention his own verbal inquiries and prayers to the gods for guidance, he also tells of his installation of *bārû*s ("diviners") in front of the gods and their receiving of a unanimous confirmation for his proposed restoration of the great gods and their temples, which he then began *ina arḫi šalmi ūmē šemê* ("in a favorable month, on a propitious day").

The texts of earlier Neo-Assyrian kings are more laconic with regard to the individual stages of construction and the practices carried out by the king and other building personnel than the Sargonid texts.[781] Notwithstanding, the former group similarly illustrates the significance of the act of temple construction to the notion of

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[777] RIMA 2: A.0.101.50; Rm. 1082 (ME 90980); Rm. 1083 (ME 90981). Similarly, the inscription from the stone statue of Shalmaneser III from Fort Shalmaneser tells of this king's dedication and installation of this image before the god Adad of Kurbail; RIMA 2: A.0.102.12, see note 392 on the statue.

[778] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 16, vi 39–44; for a list of the excavation and museum numbers for the prisms fragments, see the introduction to this text in RINAP 3.

[779] CAD "P": 356 *petû* 9c, "to have something revealed."

[780] RINAP 48: Esarhaddon 4, 72–79.

[781] Lackenbacher 1990: 98–107, 195.

Neo-Assyrian kingship that continues through to the end of the empire. In addition, these earlier inscriptions provide correspondence between the construction of particular temples and individual kings, and information on the acquisition and use of certain raw materials.

At a deeper level the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions of all of the kings here discussed offer a unique view of the cultural and social values associated with temple construction and renewal in the imperial milieu, due to the commemorative and boastful tone of these narratives as ideologically motivated compositions. As discussed in Chapter I, Neo-Assyrian kings used the royal inscriptions as a means of validating their role as divinely sanctioned rulers and as verbal declarations that they were fulfilling the will of the gods. This literary goal was fulfilled by two particular types of narratives, those that tell of military achievements and those that tell of building projects. By way of illustration, Aššurnaṣirpal, in his inscription on the stone wall reliefs of the House of the Kidmuri at Nineveh, states that the wisdom and understanding necessary to construct this temple was granted to him by the gods themselves.[782] When recounting his restoration of the *bītu* of Aššur, Esarhaddon states that he did so according to the demands of the gods Šamaš and Adad, as was written on a liver in the diviner's bowl.[783] An overtly boastful passage follows in this same text, in which Esarhaddon speaks of the joy the god felt at the sight of the renovated temple; the divine blessings that were imparted on him as a result; and the god's naming of him as *bān bīti* ("builder of the temple").[784] The ideological tones of the royal inscriptions are shaped by these types of motivations. In his analysis of royal building accounts from Mesopotamia, Hurowitz extrapolates a five-to-six stage pattern that is repeated with regular consistency by the kings and scribes,[785] yet of this pattern, he cautions the following:[786]

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[782] RIMA 2: A.0.101.40, 30–37.

[783] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iii 42–iv 6. A number of Esarhaddon's inscription on his restoration of Babylon and Esagil contain passages with almost identical wording, including as follows: RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iii 8f; Esarhaddon 105, iii 39f; Esarhaddon 106, ii 22f; Esarhaddon 114, iii 16f. On the use of a bowl in divination, see note 807.

[784] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vii 17–34. Visual renderings of the ideological concept of the Neo-Assyrian king as builder from the reigns of Sennacherib and Aššurbanipal compliment these textual sources. The former is shown as the overseer of quarrying and construction in the wall reliefs of the Southwest Palace (Barnett et al. 1998; Russell 1991). A pair of steles of Aššurbanipal depict him holding a laborer's basket above his head in a traditional Mesopotamian fashion (ME 90864); a similar stele of Aššurbanipal's brother Šamash-šumu-ukin was erected alongside that of Aššurbanipal at Borsippa (ME 90866)(FIGURE 139–140); see further, Porter 2004; Magen 1986: 36–40.

The earliest visual evidence of a Mesopotamian king carrying a basket above his head in a ceremonial fashion dates to the reign of the Sumerian king Ur-Nanše, who ruled at Lagash in the middle of the third millennium B.C.E. Subsequent basket-bearing representations have been recovered that date to the reigns of Gudea, Ur-Nammu, and Šulgi (Porter 2004). Early textual material from southern Mesopotamia on the king as basket-bearer compliments these visual renderings, for example the building inscriptions of Gudea: "Gudea, the builder of the temple, in the temple put the basket on his head like a holy crown; he laid the foundation, erecting the walls on the ground;" Cylinder A, col. XX, lines 24–26; trans. Ellis 1968: 22. See further, Magen 1986: 38; Porter 1993: 82–94; as well as Ellis 1968 and Lackenbacher 1990 on the practice itself.

[785] Hurowitz's (1992: 311) stages include the following: "(1) a reason to build or restore a building along with the command or consent of the gods to the proposed project; (2) preparations for the project including enlisting workers, gathering and manufacturing building materials and laying the foundations of the

> It seems that the pattern used in the building accounts discussed here is not even necessarily a reflection of reality.... The fact that the ancient stories consistently mention the preparations before the description of the actual building is therefore not only unnatural but even a bit idealistic—something to be expected in a story meant to show that a certain king did everything in the best way possible.... The fact that ancient Near Eastern scribes preferred one fixed formula for writing building accounts, despite conceivable alterations and other possible, logical alternatives, indicates that the pattern uncovered above was indeed a scribal convention rehearsing a literary stereotype rather than a habitual adhering to the actual course of events.

While at times a hindrance, this deviation between idealized text and actual practice of the royal inscriptions can also be beneficial for what it reveals with regard to the values of the kings themselves: on the one hand, what they deemed worthy of prioritizing and emphasizing in their inscriptions, and on the other hand, what they judged as common place and unworthy of mention.

d. Royal Correspondence and Administrative Records

The contributions of the royal correspondence and administrative records to our understanding of temple construction are fairly straightforward. The royal correspondence contains numerous letters sent from the *ummânu*s and high officials to the Neo-Assyrian kings that address matters of temple construction. In addition to the raw materials, they also tell of individual stages of construction and the personnel involved. The administrative records provide information on the professional groups present within the Neo-Assyrian royal court; some such texts contain lists of professions, including both scholarly experts and craftsmen.[787] In addition, the intimate and technical aspects of the royal correspondence and administrative records compliment the formal, idealized accounts of the royal inscriptions.

In utilizing information from these textual groups—the ritual instructions, omen collections, royal inscriptions, royal correspondence, and administrative records—for what they reveal of the sequence of construction and renewal of Neo-Assyrian temples, we must not forget, as previously noted, that the cultural milieu that produced these texts is different to that from which we read them now, necessitating a critical approach to these sources.[788] In comparing the information on temple construction provided by royal

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building; (3) a description of the building process and of the edifice under construction; (4) dedication of the building by populating it, along with celebrations and rituals; (5) a prayer or a blessing meant to assure a good future for the building and the builder. Some of the stories included an additional element: (6) conditional blessings and curses addressed to a future king who will repair the building when it falls into ruin."

[786] Hurowitz 1992: 127–128.

[787] SAA 7: nos. 13–22.

[788] As Liverani (2010: 231) notes, "since our own standards for credibility cannot be applied to the ancient sources, we have to look for some inner criteria and clues about the reception." The author makes this statement about the reception of celebrative programs among the populace following a quotation of a text from Aššurbanipal's reign, yet it applies equally to the reception of all topics discussed by the royal inscriptions.

building inscriptions to that of ritual instructions, Ambos draws attention to the multivalency in how aspects of the construction process were freighted with meaning:[789]

> [royal building] inscriptions, which contain detailed building records, have been used intensively as sources for our knowledge of royal ideology and the self-representation of the king as builder. The ritual texts cover a totally different field, describing the ritual expert's task to mend the fragile relationship between the gods and humanity. The royal inscriptions put their emphasis on the joyful return of the deity to his/her temple, but do seldom or rarely mention the fact that the deity had left his/her house in anger and was dwelling temporarily in another place.

As example, Ambos singles out the opposing opinions of the scholarly experts and the kings as presented by their conflicting prescriptions for material that ought to be used for royal inscriptions, as denoted in ritual instructions and royal inscriptions respectively:[790]

> the king wanted to make use of precious and expensive materials exhibiting his wealth and power, but in the eyes of the ritual experts these materials also had a highly effective and ambivalent magic power.

While sounding an alarm for proceeding with interpretive caution, these passages illustrate the positive aspects of engaging with all of these groups simultaneously. Having diverse cultural or socio-political aims, each group presents uniquely informative and idiosyncratic information that, when considered alongside one another, flesh out our understanding of practice in antiquity. The exaggerations, contradictions, and ideologically motivated statements are as insightful as the seemingly straightforward statements, betraying specific cultural priorities and values.[791]

Archaeological materials are drawn into the discussion alongside the textual sources whenever possible. The frequency with which this is carried out is determined by issues of preservation and publication. The latter is improved in part by the first-hand research that I was able to conduct of many unpublished and lesser known artifacts in museum collections from the Neo-Assyrian temples. Questions of preservation are raised when relevant. At times the material traces that have been preserved substantiate information gained from the texts, providing a welcome synthesis of ancient sources; yet at other times they provide information not present in the texts, therein standing as an invaluable asset to the discussion in their own right.

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[789] Ambos 2010: 231.
[790] Ambos 2010: 232.
[791] Liverani (2010: 230) argues as follows: "[t]he recurring statements about the king's influence on the climatic phenomenon or other physical events (e.g. Ashurbanipal's pretense that during his reign "the grain grew 5 cubits tall in the stalk, the ear was 5/6 of a cubit long") [Citation Prism A: I 46–47 = B: I 29–30, in Borger BIA: 17 and 205] seem to us to belong to the realm of forgery and of popular credulity, but at that time were normally accepted by everybody, even the most cultivated part of the population, believing that the gods manifested their appreciation for the legitimate and efficient king by ensuring the country with the most favorable conditions;" see also, Beckman 2005.

2. KINGS AND CRAFTSMEN: TEMPLE BUILDING IN THE IMPERIAL MILIEU

Had the Neo-Assyrian kings not played such a pivotal role in temple construction, we would not have such a wealth of information on the meaningfully orchestrated and executed practice that led to the creation of a new or renovated dwelling place for a god. The royal inscriptions recount pivotal stages in the building process while also projecting a multifaceted image of a king as initiator, planner, and executer of construction, as a temple builder par excellence, whose wisdom and skill was granted by the gods themselves.[792] The ritual instructions substantiate the claims made by the royal inscriptions of the participatory role of the king in temple reconstruction.[793] Yet the king did not act alone in his construction of the temple, rather working below him was a large group of scholarly experts, skilled craftsmen, high officials, and laborers, all of whom fulfilled various roles in the many stages of the construction process.

Like the king, skill and wisdom was said to have been bestowed upon the *ummânu*s of Neo-Assyria, individuals who aided the king in the execution of his building projects. The *ummânu*s of the Neo-Assyrian Empire consisted of a group of "masters" gathered from various fields and disciplines, who were reputed to have the greatest skill in their professions.[794] This elevated level of skill and technical knowledge earned these individuals a coveted place within the Neo-Assyrian royal court, where they became active, influential, and highly valued participants in the administration of the empire. The exclusivity and prestige of this appointment is communicated by the royal inscriptions: Sennacherib boasts of taking as booty all of the *ummânu*s from Babylon,[795] while Esarhaddon, in speaking of the *ummânu*s involved in his temple construction, describes these men not only as *enqūtu*,[796] but as having been selected by the gods themselves.[797] The professions that made up the *ummânu*s of the Neo-Assyrian royal court evidence the integral and informative role this body of experts played in temple construction during the Neo-Assyrian period.

One contingent of the *ummânu*s that is often discussed in Neo-Assyrian studies is that of the "scholar." This group encompassed five scholarly professions: the *āšipu* ("ritual expert"), *ṭupšarru* ("astrologer/scribe"), *bārû* ("diviner"), *asû*,[798] and *kalû*.[799]

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[792] On the Neo-Assyrian king as builder, see note 784; on claims of skill and wisdom, see Winter 1995: 2571.

[793] Textual references from Neo-Assyrian tablets include, Ambos 2004: II.A.2 (K 48+); II.C.2 (K 2000+ etc.); see further the discussion in Ellis 1968: 20–26; Ambos 2004: 193.

[794] See Appendix A; see further the semantic discussion and consideration of each profession in Lenzi 2008: 69f.

[795] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 1, 30.

[796] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 70.
CAD "E": 151–152 *emqu* (*enqu*), "experienced, skilled, educated, wise, wily."

[797] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 69–72.

[798] CAD "A": 2, 344f *asû* A ((LÚ.)A.ZU), "physician."

[799] CAD "K": 91f *kalû* A (GALA(UŠ.KU)), "lamentation-priest."
On the five scholarly professions, see Parpola 1999 (SAA 10), in particular XXXIV, for a definition of their individual skill sets; Lenzi 2008; Robson 2011; forthcoming; as well as, Jean 2006, on the *āšipu*. This grouping of the five professions is attested in a letter to Esarhaddon from the scholar Marduk-šapik-zeri, in which the latter recommends scholars for royal service; SAA 10: no. 160. On this letter, see Hunger 1987; Parpola 1993: XIII–XIV (SAA 10). On Marduk-šapik-zeri, see PNA 2/II: 726, "Marduk-šāpik-zēri 2."

Scholars of these disciplines were said to have acquired their ability through the "study and mastery of an extensive technical lore.... the foundations of which were believed to have been laid by the gods themselves."[800] This technical lore was transmitted to the scholars through a corpus of texts specific to each discipline, written technical knowledge that the *ummânu*s may have later consulted during actual practice.[801] In his study of scholarly knowledge during this period, Lenzi concludes that these experts "fashioned themselves—consciously or unconsciously—into the scribal heirs of the antediluvian sages, themselves closely allied with Ea, the patron deity of the *ummânu*s."[802] As *ummânu*s associated with the royal court, the scholarly experts were collectively responsible for ensuring the king's safety and protection, a responsibility that is articulated in Neo-Assyrian letters by the phrase *maṣṣartu ša šarri naṣāru*, "to keep the king's watch."[803]

In the context of temple construction, the scholarly experts fulfilled this role by ensuring that the necessary practices were carried out in the proper sequence and fashion so as not to invoke the wrath of the gods, and by extension, the downfall of the king and his reign. Ambos acknowledges the grave importance of the personnel to the building process in the following passage:[804]

> Auch im Alten Orient war für den Bau eines Hauses, Palastes oder Tempels das korrekte Durchführen von Ritualen seiten der Ritualexperten mindestens ebenso bedeutsam wie die adäquate Organisation des Bauprozesses oder das technische Können des Baumeisters und seiner Mitarbeiter.[805]

The particular duties related to temple construction of the scholars from each of the five disciplines were consistent with their respective skill set. The *bārû*s were responsible for relaying divine approval of the project, as well as finding the original temple site, surveying foundations, and measuring ground plans[806] following the reading of omen, primarily through extispicy, the examination of the entrails of a sacrificial anima, and less

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[800] Parpola 1993: XIII–XIV (SAA 10).

[801] On the corpus of textual material for each scholarly discipline, see Lenzi 2008: 77–103. Neo-Assyrian letters confirm that at times the scholarly experts did consult tablets, attesting to an interesting material association within ritualized practice. For example, the *rab āšipu* Marduk-šakin-šumi writes to Esarhaddon as follows: "the tablets are too numerous, (god only knows) when they will be written;" SAA 10: no. 255, r. 13–17; in another letter the same scholar states as follows: "it is said in the tablet as follows: "You bury (figurines) at the outer gate"… According to this (tablet), I will bury (figurines) here;" SAA 10: no. 270, r. 8–9, 13–15; see further note 149 on this letter.

[802] Lenzi 2008: 120; see further, Ataç 2010: 150–151.

[803] SAA 8: no. 118, r. 8; no. 143, r. 4; no. 163, 5–6; no. 164, 7; no. 173, r. 1; no. 334, r. 11; see also, Parpola 1993: XXI, n. 44 (SAA 10); Lenzi 2008: 76–77. On the variations in proximity and closeness between the different professions and the royal court (king) during the Neo-Assyrian period, see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2 and 3.

[804] As example, Ambos (2013b: 19–20, 29), cites the letter written to Esarhaddon regarding the *šandabakku* ("governor") of Nippur, Šuma-iddina, who had removed and rebuilt the *parakku* of Nippur in a new location, and then performed a *namburbi* to divert evil omens from himself to the king; SAA 10: no. 112.

[805] Ambos 2013b: 20.

[806] Novotny 2010: 117, n. 48; see further, Ambos 2004: 13–14.

frequently through lecanomancy, the observation of oil in a bowl of water.[807] The *ṭupšarru*s ensured the congruity between the divine will and the actions of the king by interpreting astrological and terrestrial signs, as well as providing information on ominous days and times.[808] The *kalû*s placated the gods with prayers, entreaties, and lamentations while the old temple was demolished and a new temple erected in its place.[809] Last, the *āšipu*s protected the king from portended evil and the wrath of the gods by means of apotropaic ritualized practices that both averted evil and appeased the gods.[810] As might be expected based on his professional role, the participation of the *asû* in temple construction is not attested.

While the textual sources connect these distinguished scholars with the construction of a temple, what is included in the texts, in particular the ritual instructions, is not a thorough description of their activities. Ambos sees this ambiguity as a reflection of both the manner in which these professionals operated and the nature of the textual record:[811]

> Die Ritualansweisungen dienten als Gedächtnisstütze für die Experten, die im wesentlichen ihre Aufgaben im Kopf hatten und die Beschwörungen und Gebete, die sie zu rezitieren hatten, auswendig gelernt hatten. Viele Selbstverständlichkeiten wurden daher nicht ausdrücklich vermerkt.

What the Neo-Assyrian texts reveal is a strong involvement of these practitioners in the beginning and end phases of temple construction. Aššurbanipal asserts that he did not begin work on the *bītu* of Šarrat-nipḫi until he had received a "firm yes" (*annu kēnu*) from the gods Šamaš and Adad; this approval would have been communicated by the

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[807] For a discussion of the divination corpus associated with the practice of the *bārû*, see Lenzi 2008: 77–84. On the practice of extispicy, see Starr et al. 1990: XXXVI–LV (SAA 4). As concluded by Robson (2011: 610) in her discussion of empirical scholarship in the Neo-Assyrian court, "extispicy was the ultimate royal decision-maker," a statement that relays both the burden and power exercised by the scholarly experts. On the modes of communication between the king and gods in Mesopotamia, see Pongratz-Leisten 1999; other forms included prophecy, dreams, astronomical omens, and hepatoscopy. The observation of oil in water ("lecanomancy") is mentioned in the corpus of the *bārû* (Zimmern 1901: 85, n. 6) and in an Old Babylonian lecanomantic work (Ebeling 1919: 251, no. 151, r. 31f; Reiner 1960: 24). Though well-attested for the Old Babylonian period, it is not clear to what extent the practice of oil omens continued into the first millennium BCE. Texts from the first millennium that mention this practice include copies of the Šamaš Hymn from Nineveh (Lambert 1959: 128, 53); the inscriptions of Esarhaddon, cited below (note 783); and a letter from the *bārû* Kudurru to the king, in which the former reports performing a lecanomancy using "two skins of oil" (SAA 10: no. 179, r. 8′). It is interesting to note that Kudurru himself refers to this practice as *bārûtu* in a following line (SAA 10: no. 179, r. 19′); see further, Cryer 1994: 145f. Additional means by which provoked signs were obtained in Mesopotamia was through ornithoscopy (birds), libanomancy (smoke), and aleuromancy (flour); see, for example, Finkel 1983/1984; Maul 2003–2005: 63. The textual sources, however, do not provide evidence for these latter practices as *bārûtu* during the Neo-Assyrian period (Robson 2011: 622f).

[808] Parpola 1993: XXXIV (SAA 10).

[809] Ambos 2004: 10–13; Novotny 2010: 122; Ambos 2010: 227–229.

[810] Parpola 1993: XXII (SAA 10); see further, Ambos 2004: 7–10; Jean 2006: 139–143.

[811] Ambos 2004: 173.

*bārû*s through extispicy or lecanomancy.[812] Esarhaddon similarly states that he would only carry out work on Ešarra, the *bītu* of Aššur in Assur, and Esagil, the *bītu* of Marduk in Babylon, following Šamaš and Adad's approval, as communicated through the bowl of the *bārû*s (*mākalti bārûte*).[813] A letter from the crown prince Šamaš-šumu-ukin asserts that his father, Esarhaddon, sent the *bārû* Aplaya to Babylon in order to set up *parakku* (*ma alik parakkī ina Babili kurru*).[814] A literary text, referred to as *The Sin of Sargon*, speaks of Sennacherib's dependence on *bārû*s for learning from the gods through extispicy how he could right the wrongs committed by his father and predecessor Sargon, an undertaking that included renewing the divine images of the gods Aššur and Marduk.[815]

The *ṭupšarru*s played an equally decisive role in temple construction. In addition to the reference to *bārû*s, the *Sin of Sargon* reports that the *ṭupšarru*s prevented Sennacherib from completing the necessary work on Marduk's image.[816] Esarhaddon make explicit his dependence on the *ṭupšarru*s' ability to read the signs of heaven and earth, and to assess a propitious time for temple work in his royal inscriptions; one passage sates that the foundations of the temples in Assur and Babylon were laid "in a favorable month, on a propitious day" (*ina arhi šalmi ūme šemê*),[817] and another that good signs were given for the refurbishment of the divine images and the rebuilding of the *ešertu*s.[818] The letter from Mar-Issar to Esarhaddon, in which the former reports on the progress of temple work to the south, further attests to the *ṭupšarru*'s supervisory role; this particular speaks to the refurbishment of the divine images at Uruk and the *bītu* of Der.[819] The royal correspondence similarly attests to the supervisory role of the *rab ṭupšarri* ("chief scribe") with respect to temple work and the creation of divine images, as exemplified by the group of letters assigned to Issar-šumu-ereš, the *rab ṭupšarri* during the reigns of Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal.[820] Drawing upon his work on the corpus of Neo-Assyrian scholarly correspondence, Parpola classifies the *ṭupšarru* as "the key figure in the reorganization of the cultic services and the rebuilding of the destroyed temple areas of Babylon, Borsippa, Akkad, Uruk and other Babylonian cities under Esarhaddon."[821]

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[812] Borger 1996: 140–141, T II 9–24. See further, Nissinen 1998b: 35–42, for a discussion of temple building and prophecy, with an emphasis on Aššurbanipal's work on the House of the Kidmuri; see also, Novotny 2010: 114–115.

[813] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iii 45; Esarhaddon 104, iii 12.

[814] SAA 16: no. 21, 16–17, 22. For a discussion of this letter, including the date, see Parpola 1972; Luuko and Van Buylaere 2002: XVII–XVIII (SAA 16).

[815] SAA 3: no. 33, r. 13′–18′. On the political motivations behind this work, which was composed during the reign of Esarhaddon, and its "re-imagination" of history, see below, including note 894.

[816] SAA 3: no. 33, r. 21′–23′.

[817] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 3–4; Esarhaddon 104, iii 41–42. The same is said about the time when Esarhaddon and his workmen entered the workshops to begin refurbishing the divine image in Assur; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 79–82. Novotny (2010: 139) remarks that Esarhaddon's concern for appeasing the gods seems to have been more pronounced than his predecessors, based on the information provided by the royal inscriptions.

[818] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 53–54.

[819] SAA 10: no. 349. Mar-Issar is named in a list of scribes in an administrative record: SAA 7: no. 13.

[820] SAA 10: nos. 13, 14, 21, 27; PNA 2/I: 577f "Issār-šumu-ēreš 3;" see also, Luukko 2007: 239f; Robson forthcoming: Table 9A.

[821] Parpola 1993: XXV (SAA 10).

Sargon's inscriptions suggest the role of the *kalû*s in the transition from an old to new temple, with a passage that mentions the recitation of laments and prayers at the laying of the first brick of Eanna at Uruk.[822] An unassigned letter from an official in the city of Kilizi[823] to the king ascribes to both the *kalû* and *āšipu* the responsibility of bringing the god Adad (understood as his divine image) into his house.[824] An inscription of Esarhaddon corroborates this latter association between the craft of the *āšipu* and the installation of divine images with a reference to the *āšipu*'s role in the renewal and return of the gods of Sumer and Akkad to Ekarzagina, the House of Ea within Esagil in Babylon.[825] Both Aššurbanipal and Šin-šar-iškun mention the inclusion of the craft of the ritual expert in their royal inscriptions on building projects: the former states that he cleansed the *parakku*s ("daises") of the gods through the craft of the ritual expert (*ina šipir išippūti*) after his defeat of his brother Šamaš-šuma-ukin,[826] while Šin-šar-iškun mentions the craft of the ritual expert (*kakugallūtu*) in the context of laying foundations.[827] Last, Esarhaddon's inscription on his work in Babylon lists both *āšipu*s and *kalû*s*,* "who have mastered their craft" (*ša gimir ummânūtu*), among the materials and personnel he placed before the gods following his reconstruction of Esagil, confirming the continued involvement of both of these professions in the lifespan of the temple.[828]

Based on textual and archaeological evidence, Robson argues that *āšipu*s were closely involved with continued temple practice within Neo-Assyrian temples, while *bārû*s were not actually considered part of the temple personnel.[829] This deviation in practice presents an interesting variant to the image presented for the construction of the temple, a process in which both professions seem to have been intricately involved. The textual evidence also suggests the increasing importance of the scholarly experts during the reigns of later Neo-Assyrian kings, or at least a desire of the later kings to emphasize their involvement in temple construction. Aššurnaṣirpal, in contrast, does not seem to prioritize their involvement in his royal inscriptions. The Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence mirrors this discrepancy; however, this could also be the result of uneven preservation, the reigns of later kings being better represented by the textual record.

The involvement of scholarly experts in temple construction did leave some, albeit indirect material traces within Neo-Assyrian temples. The interred foundation

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[822] RIMB: B.6.22.3, i 37–40; see further, Ellis 1968: 13.
[823] An Assyrian provincial capital city located to the east of Nimrud; Parpola and Porter 2001: 11; Roaf 1990: 231.
[824] SAA 13: no. 189, r. 1–4; see Pongratz-Leisten (1997) on the *akītu*-house at Kilizi.
[825] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 52. On Ekarzagina, see George 1993: 108, no. 569.
[826] Streck 1916: 40, iv 86; Borger 1996: 45, iv 86.
[827] Böhl 1947: 36, no. 25, 29–30.
[828] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, vi 23–24. Robson's forthcoming) conclusions regarding the role of these figures in temple practice in her study of empirical scholarship in Neo-Assyria coincides with this textual assertion from Esarhaddon's inscriptions. The continued role of scholarly *ummânu*s in temple practice is discussed in Chapter V.
[829] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2. It is also interesting to note that the titles of court scholars were not markers of individuals, but rather were "identities that could be adopted by a person over the course of a working life, or even a working day" (Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2).

tablets of Aššurnaṣirpal in the *bītu* of Mamu at Imgur-Enlil (Balawat)[830] are the material traces of a practice that would have been overseen by the scholarly experts. These scholars would have regulated the time and location for the deposition of these tablets, in order to protect the king and ensure that the divine will was met. The scholarly *ummânus* would have similarly supervised the deposition of organic and precious materials in foundation deposits; unfortunately the prescribed organic materials from such deposits are rarely preserved, though stones and metals have been recovered.[831] These raw materials would have been used by the *ummânu*s for their reputed active qualities, for example lapis lazuli for its protective properties.[832]

The designation *ummânu*s is also used in the Neo-Assyrian texts in reference to the craftsmen that played a hands-on role in construction—the elite artisans and expert builders, of both Assyrian and foreign origin, who commanded royal building projects once the scholarly experts had given their consent.[833] A letter from the *šangû* Urdu-Nabu of Nimrud to the king, for example, explicitly mentions the allocation of *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") to the *ummânu*s for fashioning royal images.[834] Like the five scholarly professions, the craftsmen designated as *ummânu*s were the men who possessed the greatest technical skill and knowledge from within their discipline, "set apart from regular craftsmen by the fact that they have been divinely selected, royally endowed with materials for their task, and are stated as having pure hands."[835] Esarhaddon communicates this status of his craftsmen when recounting his refurbishment of the divine images:[836]

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[830] ME 135121; the tablets found within the box were the following: ME 90980; ME 90981; see further, RIMA 2: A.0.101.50.

[831] The foundation deposit boxes recovered from the House of Sin at Khorsabad and the House of Nabu at Nimrud (discussed in Chapter III) demonstrate varied preservation, with the preservation of gold beads and buttons, and stone cylinder seals yet nothing else; see further, Loud 1936: 119; Mallowan 1966: I, 265–266; Curtis 2013: 8.

[832] See note 280.

[833] I use these terms as defined by Gunter (1990: 11): "[b]y "artisan" and "craftsmen" is meant, in ancient Near Eastern sources, any practitioner of a specialized skill." As noted by Gunter (1990: 12–13), while some craftsmen were of Neo-Assyrian origin, others may have been of foreign origin and "operated individually as specialists in search of better positions abroad. Their movements from one country to another reflect not a chosen itinerant way of life, but a temporary state of unemployment; they sought permanent jobs within an established palace economy;" see further, Zaccagnini 1983: 247–249 ("redistributive" mobility pattern). Esarhaddon does specify that all of the workmen he employed for the refurbishment of the divine images at Babylon were from Babylonia; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 96; yet when speaking of his work on Esagil, he states that he gathered all of his *ummânu*s and people of Babylonia; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iii 19–20; Esarhaddon 105, iv 10. Oates and Reid (1956: 36) suggest that the use of stone for the base courses under the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, which was placed on top of the mudbrick platform rather than the more traditional mudbrick, might "be explained by the importation of foreign masons who were accustomed to build stone foundations, into the virgin soil, and continued their traditional practice even on a mud-brick platform."

[834] SAA 13: no. 61, r. 10–12. PNA 3/II: 1408, "Urdu-Nabû 5." SAA 13: no. 126 ascribes to Urdu-Nabu the title *šangû*.

[835] Lenzi 2008: 131; see also, Parpola 1970–1983: II, 270; Winter 1995: 2570–2571; Winter 2003: 410, n. 10; Ataç 2010: 150–151.

[836] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 81–82.
CAD "N": 1, 112f *naggāru* (NAGAR), "carpenter."
CAD "K": 608f *kutimmu* (LÚ.KÙ.DÍM), "gold- or silversmith."

naggārī kutimmī qurqurrī	I brought *naggāru*s, *kutimmu*s,
parkullī mārī ummânī	*qurqurru*s, *parkullu*s—
lê'ūti mūdê pirišti ina	members of the skilled
bīti ša ina bīri Šamaš u	*ummânu*s, who knew the
Adad u'addûšu	specialized knowledge, into
	the *bītu* which the gods
	Šamaš and Adad had selected
	by divination,
lū ušērib lū ušēšibunūti	(and) I installed them (there).

This passage outlines some of the skill-specific professions that were considered among the *ummânu*s, all of which were praised and admired equally for their expertise and technical wisdom: *naggāru*s ("carpenters"), *kutimmu*s ("gold or silversmiths"), *qurqurru*s ("metalworkers"), and *purkullu*s ("stone-carvers"). Esarhaddon also recounts gathering *šitimgallu*s *lê'us* ("able master builders")[837] to aid in his temple building projects,[838] and more specifically, to lay out the building plans (*mukinni gišḫurī*).[839] In a letter to Esarhaddon, Mar-Issar comments upon the work of both the *naggāru*s and *kabšarru*s ("stone-masons")[840] on the divine images for the *bītu* of Mummu, which is said to be complete.[841] In an all-inclusive fashion, Sargon attributes his rebuilding of Eanna to the craft of the god Kulla,[842] the *šitimgallu*, and the *ummânu*s *mudê šipri* ("experts who know their craft"),[843] a grouping that suggests that the latter references the contingent of craftsmen and artisans rather than the scholarly experts. Robson draws a similar conclusion with regard to a group of captured foreign *ummânu*s who are mentioned in Aššurbanipal's royal inscriptions, that this designation refers to expert craftsmen rather than scholars "given the context in which they appear in the midst of military personnel."[844]

As with the scholarly *ummânu*s, the participation of expert craftsmen in temple construction is minimally attested at an archaeological level. A strong example is the painted identifying marks and technical assembly of the glazed brick panels from the

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CAD "G": 137f *gurgurru* (URUDU.NAGAR, LÚ.GUR.GUR)(*qurqurru*), "1. (craftsman working in wood and metal);" this entry also includes the following note (138): "in later periods [after the Old Babylonian period], the *gurgurru* is attached to sanctuaries together with the goldsmith and the "seal-cutter" (see *purkullu*), and is mentioned only in official texts, cf. the inscription of Akum-kakrime, the passage cited from Esarhaddon and especially the New Year's ritual. According to the latter text, the *gurgurru* fashioned emblems, crowns, etc. of gold and precious stones for figurines made by the carpenter and plated by the goldsmith. Note that outside the temple a similar craft was pursued in the NB period by the artisan called *kabsarru*."

[837] A Neo-Assyrian letter attests to master builders having their sons as apprentices; SAA 5: no. 56; see further, Parpola 1995: 55–56.

[838] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iii 36; Esarhaddon 105, iii 30–31; Esarhaddon 116, r. 14.

[839] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, 32′.

CAD "G": 101f *gišḫuru*, "1. plan (of a building), model, archetype."

[840] CAD "K": 23f *kabšarru* ((LÚ.)KAB.SAR), "jeweler, stone-mason."

[841] SAA 10: no. 349, 19–21.

[842] On the god Kulla, see the discussion in Chapter III.2.a.

[843] Clay 1915: n. 38, ii 1 (YOS 1); RIMB: B.6.22.3; CAD "Š" 3: 130.

[844] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3, n. 46.

façades of both the House of Sin and of Nabu at Khorsabad.[845] When Loud and his team removed the bricks individually from the larger installation, they discovered a series of identifying marks on the top surfaces of some of the bricks, including plain circles, plain squares, and crosses within circles or squares, that were aligned with a counterpart on the neighboring brick (FIGURE 137).[846] Since "the baked bricks undoubtedly were set up in a workshop, painted, and then taken down to fire the glaze before being finally reassembled in the court,"[847] these types of visual cues proved essential for installation in instances where the glazed design itself could not serve as a guide. Loud drew upon the variable combinations of bricks and designs from the panels at Khorsabad to argue for this individualized method of production:[848]

> Factory methods of painting several individual bricks with the same portion of the complete design, each brick eventually to take its relative place in its own tableau, are obviously out of the question, for were such the case our hopes of substitution in the restoration of one tableau could have materialized.

This specialized mode of production for the brick panels alludes to the integral role of expert craftsmen in the construction of the various elements of the temples, as it was this contingent of workmen upon whom the responsibility fell for ensuring that such technically attentive systems were put in place and carefully observed.[849] It is possible that the *ummânu*s involved with brick making also left their mark in the form of stamps on kiln-fired bricks. Examples of such marks are the striding bull stamp—referred to by the excavators as a "maker's mark"—on a brick from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (FIGURE 24) and additional marks on kiln-fired bricks recovered from other areas at Khorsabad (FIGURE 138).[850] Gunter interprets the stone-masons' or sculptors' marks found on worked blocks and carved reliefs of Egypt and Achaemenid Iran as indicative of master stone-masons or stone-carvers that were in command of an organized group of artisans.[851] A similar scenario might be proposed for the Neo-Assyrian brick stamps, the individual stamps being material references to specific craftsmen or the work performed under their supervision during the construction of the temple.

In addition to the expert scholars and craftsmen, the royal correspondence also provides evidence for the participation of *rabû*s ("royal high officials") in temple

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[845] On the panels from the House of Sin, see Place 1867–1870: I, 125; Loud 1936: 92–97; Muros et al. 2002; Whyte et al. 2004; and the House of Nabu, Loud and Altman 1938: 59, 61.
[846] Whyte et al. 2004: fig. 17. Similar marks were also found on glazed kiln-fired bricks from Nimrud; Reade refers to them as "fitters' marks;" Reade 1963: 40; see further, Moorey 1994: 320.
[847] Loud 1936: 93.
[848] Loud 1936: 103. In addition to the House of Sin and the House of Nabu, panels were found for the House of Šamaš, Loud 1936: 82, 102; and the House of Ningal, Loud 1936: 112.
[849] As noted by Winter (2003: 410, n. 10) and Gunter (1995), to date we know very little about the organization of workshops and mechanics of design in ancient Mesopotamia, including modes of training, apprenticeship, contracts, and the specifics of production. This uncertainty is in part due to the lack of details in the textual sources; however, a more focused study on this topic may prove useful for our understanding of ancient craftsmanship and artisans.
[850] DS 691 (A 17615); Loud and Altman 1938: 99, pl. 65, no. 270; see further, ME 124598, 135465–7; Moorey 1994: 264; Curtis and Reade 1995: 108; Curtis and Tallis 2012: 115, nos. 42–46.
[851] Gunter 1995: 1543.

construction. This elite group included such high-ranking posts as *mašennu* ("steward"), *nāgir ekalli*,[852] *rab šāqe*,[853] *rab ša reši*,[854] *sartennu*,[855] and *sukkallu*,[856] all of whom aided the king in the overall administration of the empire.[857] In the context of temple construction the royal high officials could adopt a supervisory post and act as intermediary between the craftsmen and the king. A number of letters to Sargon evidence the supervisory role of the *nāgir ekalli* in the acquisition and transport of building materials for construction at Khorsabad, including wooden beams and stone slabs.[858] In a letter to this same king, the *mašennu* Ṭab-šar-Aššur emphasizes that he himself would bring in the *umāmu*s *hurāṣu*s ("golden animals")[859] and the god's *eršu* ("bed") into the *bītu* of Aššur, and then participate in the subsequent rites.[860]

Below these contingents of skilled scholars and craftsmen, and high officials, were the laborers, a vast group of unspecialized individuals of both Assyrian and foreign origins that fleshed out the royal workforce. The groups of foreigners were often captured by the kings during their military campaigns.[861] The Assyrian contingents would have been made up of those individuals fulfilling their quota of labor service, "king's work."[862] Both Assyrian and foreign laborers receive little attention in references to temple construction in the textual sources, only on occasion being referred to by virtue of their labor—for example *zābil tupšikki*[863] or *urāsu*[864]—or when mentioned in the royal correspondence;[865] yet their presence and contribution ought not to be disregarded.[866] For

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[852] CAD "N": 1, 118 *nāgiru*, "1. herald, 2. (a high official in Assyria and Elam) c) *nāgir ekalli* ((LÚ.)NIMGIR É.GAL), "*n.* of the palace."

[853] CAD "Š": 2, 30f *šāqû* A in *rab šāqî* (LÚ.GAL.ŠU.SÌLA.DU$_8$, (LÚ.)GAL.KAŠ.LUL, LÚ.GAL.ŠU.DU$_8$.A), "chief cup-bearer."

[854] CAD "R": 289f *rēšu* in *rab ša rēši* (GAL.SAG, GAL.LÚ.SAG, LÚ.GAL.SAG), "head, commander of the court attendants or offices."

[855] CAD "S": 185f *sartennu,* "chief judge."

[856] CAD "S": 354f *sukkallu* ((LÚ.)SUKKAL), "1. (a court official)."

[857] Mattila 2000.

[858] SAA 1: nos. 100, 139.

[859] CAD "U/W": 95f *umāmu*, "animal, beast."

[860] SAA 1: no. 54; see also, SAA 15: no. 151, which evidences the relationship between the *rabû*s ("high officials") and the *itinnu*s ("house builders") during construction at Der in the time of Sargon. The concluding discussion to this CAD entry for *itinnu* (CAD "I/J": 296f *itinnu* A) notes that in Old Babylonian passages *itinnu* refers to craftsman who directed the building of houses and that these individuals belonged to organized guilds that worked under an overseer (*aklu*, *šitimgallu*), and were associated with the royal court.

[861] For example, Sargon with reference to his construction of Khorsabad (Parpola 1995: 54–55); see also Lackenbacher 1990: 71–78; Gunter 1990: 12; Moorey 1994: 16.

[862] Parpola (1995: 55) notes that the only citizens exempt from this obligation were the members of the standing army.

[863] Borger 1996: 165, x 93.
CAD "Z": 9 *zābilu* b 6', "corvée worker."
CAD "T": 476f *tupšikku*, "2. hod (for carrying bricks), basket (for carrying earth), 2. corvée labor."

[864] CAD "U/W": 208-210 *urāsu,* "corvée worker.".

[865] SAA 5: no. 294, 1′; SAA 7: no. 154, r. ii 15; SAA 13: no. 168, r. 13 (*ummân urāsī*); Parker 1961: 45 (ND 2705)(*amēl urāsi*); see also the reference in a report on ceremonies performed at Assur that was found at Nimrud, van Driel 1969: 202, 26 (ND 1120 (IM 56880), "Appendix II")(*urāsi ša qatē rab urāsi ša ali libbi ali*). This last tablet was also published in Wiseman 1952b: pl. 23, with comments 65–66; select emendentations and improvements upon van Driel's edition are found in Postgate 1973: 228–229, no. 246.

his work on Eḫursaggalkurkura and Esagil in Babylon (Karduniaš), Esarhaddon makes a notes that he employed local Babylonians, perhaps as a means of emphasizing his power over the Babylonian populace:[867]

adkema gimir ummâniya *Karduniaš kalîša*	I collected all of my *ummânu*s from Karduniaš in its entirety,
allum tupšikku ušaššišunūti	and I made them to take up hoe (and) basket.

What stands out from these texts on the building personnel who participated in temple construction, and the nominal material evidence, is a Neo-Assyrian cultural appreciation for skill and wisdom, specifically the knowledge of expert scholars and the technical skill of master craftsmen, which was endowed upon them by the gods.[868] Winter draws attention to the type of vocabulary used to describe valued works in Sumerian and Akkadian texts: a collection of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that reference "the skill or wisdom employed in carrying out the endeavor or as manifest in the finished work."[869] In order to convey this manner of visual appreciation and reception of finished works of art in Sumerian and Akkadian texts, Winter proposes the following English terms as translations: "masterful(ly)," "artful(ly), skillful(ly), knowledge(ably), expert(ly-made)."[870] Neo-Assyrian texts on temple construction make use of this type of vocabulary with regularity. The skill and wisdom through which the temple structure was produced was materialized in its artful and expertly-made finished form. Similarly, the value of the temple's various portable and non-portable works of art was determined by both their context of production and their context of appreciation.[871] Shalmaneser III's description of the divine image of the god Adad of Kurbail demonstrates this correlation between masterful production and the appreciation of a finished product:[872]

ṣalam gišnugallu ebbi namri *šuquri ša epšētušu ana* *dagāli lullâ šūturu*	A holy, shining, precious image of *gišnugallu*-stone, whose workmanship gives pleasure to look at (and) whose appearance
bunnanušu ušēpišma ina	was superb, I had made and I

[866] During excavation, Oates and Reid (1956: 36–37) were keen to attribute the construction of the mud-brick foundation courses to such a group of works: "[g]reat efforts were made to maintain the level of the courses—the clay leveling-bands being freely used to correct the elevation as the work proceeded. The nature of construction suggests that large groups of unskilled labour were working under the supervision of highly skilled masons."
[867] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 96–97.
[868] Here the context of value is to be understood, as defined by Winter (2003: 403), as "properties deemed worthy of positive evaluation when assessing the overall worth of materials and individual specimens of material culture;" see also, Winter 1995.
[869] Winter 2003: 405–406.
[870] Winter 1995; 2003.
[871] Winter 2003: 403.
[872] RIMA 3: A.0.102.12, 36–37.

maḫar Adad bēliya ušziz	installed it before the god Adad, my lord.

The royal inscriptions also emphasize the types of activities performed by the various groups of craftsmen through the inclusion of terminology related to stone-cutting, brick-making, woodworking, metalworking, and glazing in temple construction narratives.

The kings also state that they themselves executed temple work in a skillful manner. Aššurnaṣirpal references "the wisdom and understanding" (*ina pit uzni ḫasīsi*)[873] of the gods, which he possessed and with which he executed the refurbishment of the divine image of Ištar,[874] an assertion that fits well with the first-person emphasis of this king's texts. Such a kingly claim to wisdom and understanding was not restricted to Aššurnaṣirpal, but rather became a common boast for Neo-Assyrian kings when speaking of temple construction, and in particular, the refurbishment of divine images. Esarhaddon, for example, attributes his metalworking skills to the gods Kusibanda and Ninagal, with which he executed *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver") images for the *bītu* of Nabu in Borsippa.[875] He further states that he "skillfully" (*nakliš*)[876] fashioned animals of various metals for Ezida,[877] and that whatever utensils were needed for Esagil, he had skillfully (*nakliš*) fashioned with artful craftsmanship (*šipir nikilti*)[878] of both *ḫurāṣu* and *kaspu*.[879]

A number of scholars have explored this connection between building personnel and the high level of skill and wisdom that is made explicit by the Neo-Assyrian texts. This link is supported by the inclusion of these professions—craftsmen and artisans—among the *ummânu*s alongside the scholarly experts in the royal inscriptions and correspondence, a "designation [that] was reserved to only those individuals who excelled in their trade to the extent that they were in command of more than one branch, if not the entire extent of the Wisdom."[880] While Parpola makes this statement with respect to the five scholarly professions, it equally applies to all of the *ummânu*s, the hands-on workers as well as the scholars.[881] Through the contribution of skilled experts, who possessed this secret knowledge and wisdom, the act of temple construction was elevated and inflected as a mode of ritualized practice, as if a facet of this wisdom was transferred from the *ummânu*s to the objects and buildings they fashioned. Lenzi

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[873] CAD "U/W": 369–271 *uznu*, 3. c. "wisdom, understanding, with *petû* to inform, reveal, to acquire wisdom."

CAD "Ḫ": 127 *ḫasīsu*, 3. "understanding (metaphoric use);" this entry provides a more literal translation for this expression, "open as to (outer) ear and (aperture) of the ear."

[874] RIMA 2: A.0.101.32; see also, A.0.101.40, 33–34.

[875] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, r. 10.

[876] CAD "N": 1, 187 *nakliš*, "artistically, skillfully."

[877] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, 10–16. For a similar example from Sargon's inscriptions, see Lyon 1883: 23, 17; translated in CAD "N" 1: 187.

[878] CAD "N": 2, 220 *nikilti*, "1. ingenuity, skillful work, ingenious or clever idea" (see in particular 1. 2' *šipir nikilti*).

[879] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, vi 3–10. See also, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, 19–21, r. 64; Esarhaddon 105, iii 29–38; and Shalmaneser III's inscription on the divine image of the god Armada of the House of Aššur: RIMA 3: A.0.102.55, 4–6. See further, Winter 1995: 2571.

[880] Parpola 1993: XIV (SAA 10).

[881] CAD "U/W": 111-115 *ummânu,* "2. a) craftsman, artisan, expert," and "2. b) "scholar, sage."

communicates this awareness in his reflection on the refurbishment of divine images in Neo-Assyria:[882]

> These craftsmen were part of an inner circle of people who were in some way aware of the gods in a different manner or on a different level than the general populace. The divine, the exorcist priest, the lamentation priest, etc. all used secret texts of divine origin in their everyday tasks to keep human affairs in line with the gods. The craftsmen described here, in contrast, used earthly materials in a not so everyday task to give the gods a material existence among humans.

While such a prevalent appreciation of technical mastery and knowledge might suggest an associated culturally established standardization of scale, design, and visual embellishment for temple construction, we ought to also be sensitive to material indications of individuality on the part of the craftsmen. With regard to the style of the sculpted works of the Achaemenid Empire at Persepolis, Root states as follows:[883]

> in the area of *style there* may be significant points at which ingrained patterns of early training in specific media and representational modes and ingrained region-specific aesthetic sensibilities of individual carvers do in fact show through the overlays of master planning.

Dietler and Herbich similarly argue for recognizing the formative role that individual craftsmen played in the perpetuation and innovation of material:[884]

> Understanding material culture as social phenomenon, including the processes of stability and innovation within their historical trajectories, then becomes a matter of understanding the factors that condition these choices, their interrelations, and the reciprocal effects stemming from new choices made at various stages of the *chaine opératoire*. This approach requires that we understand craftspeople as social actors (rather than simply as products/bearers of culture or as a cultural adaptive engineers) and that we understand the production and use of objects as social activity.

Being aware of the individuality and agency of the building personnel, and seeing their contributions to temple construction as social activity, encourages an appreciation of the process of production alongside the finished objects of value that made up the temple built environment, as Bernbeck asserts in the quote at the beginning of this chapter. The place of individuality in construction might be extended to include the king with respect to Neo-Assyrian temple construction, his personal artful preferences, motivations, and attitudes emerging in his work, as well as his documentation of it in his royal inscriptions. The textual sources, for example, suggest that later Neo-Assyrian kings prioritized and acknowledged the involvement of *ummânu*s to a greater extent, whereas Aššurnaṣirpal

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[882] Lenzi 2008: 132.
[883] Root 1986: 113–114; the author defines "master planning" as the "a canonical iconography and... the systematized formal expression of it."
[884] Dietler and Hayden 1998: 246, in Harmanşah 2013: 153.

was more inclined to credit his own skill and wisdom for his work. The significance of this aspect of the Neo-Assyrian temple is explored in greater detail in Chapter V and VI, in which the relationship of the scholarly *ummânu*s and the king with temple practice and the overarching concept of the house of a god in Neo-Assyria is explored, but first the temple must be built.

The activity of temple construction that is discussed in Chapter IV.3 was elevated beyond the everyday due to the participation of an entourage bestowed with such technical skill, knowledge, and wisdom as the *ummânu*s, and the contributions of high officials, kings, and the gods. No longer was the raising of a wall or the laying of a foundation brick comparable to what took place during the construction of the common human's family home. Rather these acts were inflected and prioritized, they were ritualized through the decisions and actions of the *ummânu*s, with the aid of the king and the gods, to the benefit of all.

3. CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

a. Motivation and Purification

The decision for a Neo-Assyrian king to build anew or renovate a temple was grounded in a set of conditions established and fostered by the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context. As expressed by the textual sources, temple work was initiated for the following reasons: if a temple could no longer serve its purpose, whether it was too small or it stood in ruins as a result of old age,[885] intentional destruction, or natural disaster; if a king wanted to build a temple for the prosperity of the land, for his own life, or for the future admiration of rulers; if the gods needed a seat, or had personally requested or previously appointed a time for temple work to be performed; or simply, if a king's heart moved him to do so.[886]

Yet regardless of how grounded in tradition or practical a reason seemed to be within the elite community, a king could not initiate his project at whim, but rather had to ensure that his decision was in harmony with the plans of the gods.[887] The scholarly experts were the primary means by which a king communicated with the gods and thus could confirm divine consent for his coveted projects. This divine consent was primarily obtained by the *bārû*s ("diviners") through divination.[888] Esarhaddon is the king that places the greatest emphasis in his royal inscriptions on the divine approval he received for his temple work.[889] Novotny itemizes the stages of this process as revealed by Esarhaddon's inscriptions:[890]

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[885] An administrative letter from Amar-ili to the king informs the latter that the wall behind the goddess Ištar had caved in on its own and the *itinnu*s ("house builders") had to repair it before the *simtu* ("insigne") could be mounted; SAA 1: no. 138.

[886] For examples from the royal inscriptions, see the references in Novotny 2010: 111-114; see further, Lackenbacher 1990: 35–67.

[887] On the importance of divine approval in Neo-Assyria, see further Ambos 2007.

[888] See the discussion above, in particular, note 807.

[889] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, i 3–ii 26; Esarhaddon 104, ii 23–iii 16.

[890] Novotny 2010: 114; see further, Ellis 1968: 6–7.

> [this king's] projects began after: (1) the temple's deity sent good omens and favourable signs; (2) auspicious planetary alignments and movements were observed; (3) Šin and Šamaš gave positive responses to haruspical queries; (4) Nudimmud (Ea) put the idea in the king's head; and (5) messages were received from ecstatics and in dreams.

The inscriptions of other Neo-Assyrian kings forefront "their superior imaginations"[891] as the primary catalyst for their temple work, yet all the while acknowledging the gods, in particular Ea, for affording them the wisdom to do so, and in so doing, giving their consent.[892] If divine disfavor or wrath was provoked by a king on account of unbidden temple construction, his life and rule were placed in jeopardy, and more importantly, the gods would abandon not only their designated houses, but also the city as a whole and quite possibly the entire land over which that king held rule.[893]

The *Sin of Sargon*, produced during the reign of Esarhaddon,[894] attributes the downfall of the king's grandfather, Sargon, to the latter's disregard of the gods and their wishes. Simultaneously, though tacitly, this work doubles as a comment upon Esarhaddon's own relationship with the gods: first, it alludes to his own father Sennacherib's divine neglect, which manifested itself in the devastation of Babylon and her temples by his hand in 689 BCE, and the subsequent divine abandonment of the city by her god Marduk;[895] and second, it highlights Esarhaddon's antithetical handling of Babylon, which included much reconstructive work and was in tune with the will of the gods.[896] Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions present his rebuilding of Babylon and Esagil, the House of Marduk, in a corresponding manner.[897] Yet Ellis is also right to note that while the textual sources stress the divine motivation behind temple building projects, we must be mindful of the economic and social influences that would have also had a formidable impact on the king and his decision-making body of advisors when it came to temple building.[898]

Motivation and divine consent in place, the king then had to find a propitious time for construction. Esarhaddon's inscriptions state that he laid the foundations for the temples in Assur and Babylon *ina arḫi šalmi ūme šemê* ("in a favorable month, on a

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[891] Ellis 1968: 7.

[892] RIMA 2: A.0.101.40, 30–34; Luckenbill 1924: 144, I, 10; 1927: 42, 57, 63; Böhl 1947: 36, no. 25, 27–28; see also, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 72–79; Esarhaddon 113, 20–24; see further, CAD "I/J": 40 *igigallūtu*, "wisdom."

[893] Ellis (1968: 7) states the following of the connection between initiating temple construction and divine consent: "[i]n many cases it was undoubtedly real piety on the part of the king, his religious counselors, and technicians, and a real fear of the consequences of neglecting the gods, that led to the building of a temple."

[894] While this work is written from the first-person perspective of Sennacherib, it was composed during the reign of Esarhaddon and, as Weaver (2004: 64) argues, is a strategic "re-imagination" of history that may have been written under the impetus of the king or independently by elite scholars and/or priests. See further, Tadmor et al. 1989.

[895] Weaver 2004: 65; see further, Brinkman 1973; Machinist 1984/85; Frame 1992 ; Porter 1993; Leichty 1995.

[896] Lackenbacher (1990: 63-67) characterizes the presentation of Esarhaddon's reconstruction of Babylon as a quasi mythical event, comparable to the Deluge.

[897] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104.

[898] Ellis 1968: 7.

propitious day").[899] Sargon states the same with regard to commencing construction of his new capital city in its entirety, which included the *bītu*s of Sin and Nabu. Sargon chose the month Simanu (May-June), the month of brick-making.[900] It was also in this month that the gods came to Esarhaddon to prompt him to rebuild their houses and restore the practices of Esagil in Babylon.[901] A letter to this same king from his *rab ṭupšarri* ("chief scribe") Issar-šumu-ereš confirms that these statements were not simply a formality of this king's royal inscriptions, but that Esarhaddon took the matter of timing quite seriously:[902]

ina eli ṣalam šarrī	Concerning the *ṣalmu*s of the kings,
ša ina Harran	which are in the city of Harran,
ša šarru bēlī išpuranni	about which the king, my lord, wrote to me:
mā arḫu šalme ūme šalme	"Write out a favorable month and favorable day
ša ina libbi errabuni	when they should enter the city
ū ayakka bīti izzazzūni	and the *ayakku* of the *bītu* where
šupra	they should stand."

The *ṭupšarru*s were the *ummânu*s entrusted with the task of determining such auspicious times for building. They completed this task by interpreting astrological and terrestrial signs, and consulting the relevant omen collections. An example of the latter is the series *Iqqur īpuš* ("he demolished, he built (anew)"), a collection of hemerological omens that record propitious and unpropitious times for performing various daily activities, including those related to building.[903] As stated in this series, if an owner of a house lays the foundations of that house in the month Šabaṭu, he will die a violent death, but if he lays the foundations in the month Simanu, the builder of that house will be honored. This statement aligns with the professed preference of both Sargon and Esarhaddon in their royal inscriptions for commencing temple construction in the month

[899] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 12, 15; Esarhaddon 57, v 3–9; Esarhaddon 113, 26; similarly Sennacherib on his construction of the *akītu*-house at Assur; Luckenbill 1924: 137, 30.
[900] Luckenbill 1927: 42, 83; see also, Lackenbacher 1990: 100–101. On Simanu and brick-making, see Chapter III.
[901] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, ii 34–35.
[902] SAA 10: no. 13, 6–12; see further, SAA 13: no. 161, 12′–16′.
[903] This series was first published by Labat (1965), and is the topic of the Habilitationsschrift of J. Fincke, which is being revised for publication; see further, Reiner 1995: 88–90; Ambos 2004: 29–36; Rutz 2013: 241–249. Neo-Assyrian versions of this series were recovered from Nineveh and are now held at the British Museum: Rm. 296; K 8737; K 2049 (Labat 1965: pl. 39, 40). The title *Iqqur īpuš* is known from the colophons (Labat 1965: 16, 172, 196), and from inventories of tablets in the Neo-Assyrian administrative records; SAA 7: nos. 50, 51, 55. See further, Rutz 2013: 242. On hemerologies of Assyrian and Babylonian scholars, see Livingstone 2013, though this publication does not include *Iqqur īpuš.*

Simanu.[904] *Iqqur īpuš* also classifies the month Nisannu as an auspicious time for temple construction:[905]

šumma ina Nisanni šar māti lu bīt ili īpuš lu ešret māti uddiš lu qīšta ana ili iddin lu akītu iškun lu urubātim (bīt ilišu) iškun suppê mātišu ana libbi ili rabî	If in the month Nisannu the king of the land builds a *bit ili*, or restores an *ešertu* of the land, or gives a gift to a god, or celebrates the *akītu*-festival, or celebrates the *urubātu*-ceremony (of his god's house), the prayers of his land will be in the heart of the god.

Also available for consultation was the omen series *Šumma ālu ina mēlê šakin* ("If a city is situated on a height"), a collection of over ten thousand terrestrial omens that could be observed in a city, including those related to buildings and construction.[906] In addition to giving information on propitious and unpropitious times for carrying out building activities, some texts in this series are accompanied by *namburbi* rituals that could dispel the evil brought about if the recommendation was not properly observed. As noted by Ambos, however, this was not a one-to-one ratio of ritual-to-omen:[907]

> Bei der großen Anzahl der Omina, die sich bei jeder Baumaßnahme ereignen konnten, wäre es freilich impraktikabel gewesen, für jedes einzelne ungünstige Vorzeichen auch ein besonders Ritual zu konzipieren. Ein Ritual wurde daher gegen die Folgen aller möglichen ungünstigen Vorzeichen, die sich aus einer bestimmten Baumaßnahme ergeben konnten, durchgeführt.

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[904] Labat 1965: §2.

[905] Labat 1965: §32, 1–3; a variant adds *bīt ilišu* after *urubātu*, "of his god's house." See also, Labat 1965: §33, and 288, 13 (VAT 10163).

CAD "U/W": 267 *urubātu* A (SIG_4.TAB.BA.TU.RA), "(a cultic ceremony)."

Labat interprets the *urubātu*-ceremony as being related to bricks specifically, translating this section as "place une couche de brique (au temple de son dieu)" (also 255: "pose rituelle d'une range de briques"). Ambos (2004: 58) argues for an understanding of *urubātu* as an entrance ceremony during which the final brick was brought into the temple (Ambos 2013c: 29: "Schlußziegel (sig_4-tab-ba). The reading of *urubātu* as a ceremony performed during the inauguration or restoration of a temple seems to differ from CAD "U/W": 267 *urubātu* B, "wailing, weeping," which occurs in astral contexts and has negative connotations (Charpin 2002; Ambos 2004: 58f); contra Ghouti 1991; Durand 1984). The latter use is attested in astrological reports to the Neo-Assyrian kings; SAA 8: nos. 51, 145. Though, as noted by Charpin, the understanding of *urubātu* as a ceremony staged during the inauguration or reconstruction of a temple is not incompatible with the notion of lamentation, as demonstrated by the involvement of the *kalû* and the performance of laments during temple construction.

[906] This series has been edited and published in Freedman 1998; 2006; and discussed more recently in Heeßel 2007a; 2012; see further, Ambos 2004: 32–35. Tablet X of *Šumma ālu* speaks of auspicious times for temple building in a similar manner as *Iqqur īpuš* §32 and §33 in Labat 1965.

[907] Ambos 2004: 35.

The likelihood of a theory-praxis gap for omen collections makes it difficult to make firm conclusions regarding the exact times when temple construction was initiated during the Neo-Assyrian period. Notwithstanding, the inclusion of statements of this type demonstrates that there was a concern and awareness among the Neo-Assyrian elite for favorable times to begin temple construction, whether or not they were always able to adhere to them. In addition to terrestrial and astrological omens, and hemerological omen collections, propitious times for building a temple could also be determined through extispicy, which fell under the purview of the *bārû*s.

Once the time had been determined, the king then had to ensure that the topographical site itself was ready to either receive a new temple or have a new building erected in the place of an earlier temple. The latter scenario—the reconstruction of a temple—was the more common of the two during the Neo-Assyrian period. Many royal inscriptions relay the arduous task faced by a king of not only having to deal with a preexisting temple or ruins thereof at a physical level—dismantling the old building materials that were preserved at the site—but also at a symbolic level. In order to ensure the safety and purity of the future temple, its builder, and its divine inhabitant(s), particular practices had to be performed at the grounds of an old temple. These practices were embedded in the immediate Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context, and manifest the inflected and ritualized qualities of temple construction in Neo-Assyria.

Evidence from greater Mesopotamia suggests that before erecting a new temple, as part of the preparation and purification of the site, the *libittu maḫrītu* ("first/former brick") of the fallen temple had to be recovered. At a practical level this act entailed the king locating and removing the *libittu maḫrītu* from amidst the ruins while the *kalû* recited laments for the destruction of the temple. At a symbolic level this practice established continuity for the king's reconstruction by creating a link with the temple of his predecessor and in particular, with the archetype temple that was created by the gods in primeval times at that very site, upon which all subsequent reconstructions were based; as Ellis asserts, "the single brick embodied the essence of the god's home and bridged the gap between the destruction of the old building and the foundation of the new."[908] Yet the Akkadian sources do not explicitly state whether the *libittu maḫrītu* to be found in a fallen temple was a special brick or simply a former brick. Considering the material context of a fallen temple, it is reasonable to assume that this practice, which would have taken place many years if not decades after the temple's initial construction, would have made use of *a* former brick, which came to symbolize *the* true first brick and thus the temple as a whole through the special treatment it received as part of a ritualized practice.[909]

Unfortunately the best evidence from Mesopotamia for the practice involving the *libittu maḫrītu* of a fallen temple comes from Seleucid tablets recovered at Uruk and Babylon, that contain the ritual instructions *Enūma igār bīt ili ipâqu* ("When the walls of a god's house collapse") and *Enūma uššē bīt ili tanamdû* ("When you lay the foundations

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[908] Ellis 1968: 29; see further, Heinrich 1982: I, 248.

[909] See further the discussion in Ellis 1968: 26–29; Ambos 2010: 41, 78. In discussing the improbability of finding the *libittu maḫrītu* of an earlier building, Ambos notes that the later inscriptions of Neo-Babylonian kings (Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus) only mention the search for the old foundations (*temennu labiru*) and never a foundation brick.

of a god's house).[910] In addition to containing the incantation *Enūma Anu ibnû šamê* ("When Anu created the heavens")— to be recited by the *kalû* and makes reference to the primeval temple—the ritual instructions prescribe the removal of the *libittu maḫrītu* by the builder of the temple, as well as ritualized butchering and the presentation of offerings to the gods by the *kalû* in order to initiate reconstruction.[911]

While not as explicit, evidence suggests that this practice involving the *libittu maḫrītu* was likely carried out in Neo-Assyria as well. Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions substantiate the importance of both the *libittu maḫrītu* and the *kalû* in relation to the initial stages of reconstruction. As discussed in more detail below, Esarhaddon states that he himself laid the *libittu maḫrītu* when reconstructing the House of Aššur in Assur.[912] Sargon's inscriptions state that he laid the foundations of Eanna for the goddess Ištar *ina temiqi ikribū u labanū appi* ("with prayers, blessings, and gestures of humility"),[913] activities that fell under the purview of the *kalû*.[914] The importance of both the *kalû* and *āšipu* in opening up old foundations is communicated by Sennacherib when he speaks of their involvement in his construction of a grand canal that was to supply Nineveh with water, a system that included the Jerwan aqueduct.[915]

The archaeological evidence from Shalmaneser III's reconstructive work on the House of Aššur at Assur confirms that the Neo-Assyrian kings did in fact find, and even hold in high esteem, particular bricks of their predecessors' work. Inscribed on the former's bricks from this temple was a text that, aside from the royal name and genealogy, matches word for word that which was inscribed by his predecessor Adad-nerari I on bricks used for the same architectural feature—the *kisal abāri*—in the latter's incarnation of the temple.[916] An excerpt from an inscription of Aššurbanipal's on his reconstruction of Eanna in Babylon provides a strong textual parallel for this practice:[917]

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[910] Ambos 2004: II.D.1.3 (0.174; W.20030/15; BE.13987; W.22705/5); also published in Thureau-Dangin 1921: 9, 40–45, 45–47 (O.174; BE.13987); Ellis 1968: App. A., No. 43 (O.174); Lackenbacher 1990: 101. See further the Hellenistic texts from Uruk and Babylon in Linssen 2004: 100–109. See Ambos 2013b, for an edition of the *kalû* ritual from a tablet in the Babylonian Collection at the British Museum; ME 40736.

[911] Ambos' (2010: 227) edited translation of one portion of these instructions reads as follows:
"The builder of that house puts on a pure garment (and) he puts a ring of tin on his hand. He takes an axe of lead and removes a "former brick" (*libittu maḫrītu*) (from the debris/the collapsed wall) and places it in a restricted room. You place an offering table in front of the brick for the god of the foundations (var.: the goddess Bēlet-ilī). You perform an offering, scatter (aromatic) seed(s) of all kind, (and) make libations of beer, wine, and milk.... They offer honey, ghee, milk, beer, wine and fine oil on (the brick) and the lamentation singer recites the incantation "When Anu created the heavens" before the brick."

[912] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 25.

[913] RIMB: B.6.22.3, 137–138.

[914] Ambos 2004: 10–13; 2010: 227–229; Novotny 2010: 122.

[915] Luckenbill 1924: 81, 27–30; Frahm 1997: 151–154 (T 122); 215–217 (T 179); see further, Jean 2006: 47–48.

[916] RIMA 3: A.0.102.53; RIMA 1: A.0.76.35.
CAD "A": 1, 37 *abāru* A, a) 2' "in *kisal abāri* the lead forecourt."

[917] Müller 1896: I, 17, 26–32 ("Inscrift Aššurbanipals"). Of interest is a similar inscription that was found on a barrel cylinder of the later Babylonian king Marduk-apla-iddina; Gadd 1953: 125: 37–40:
"The inscription of the king preceding me who (re)built that house I inspected: his inscription I did not alter but placed it with my own inscription. Whosoever it be afterwards, whether a king, or king's son, or deputy, or governor, or steward, or headman, whose name the great lord Marduk may pronounce, and he

matima	If
ina aḫrât ūmē	at any later day
rubû arkû	a future ruler,
ša ina ūmē pališu	during the days of whose reign
šipir šuāti innaḫu	this work falls into disrepair,
anḫussu	renews
luddiš	its disrepair,
šumī itti šumišu lišṭur	may he write my name with his name.
mušarâ līmurma	may he look at my inscription,
šamnu lipšuš	anoint it with *šamnu*,
niqî liqqī	make *niqû*-offerings.
ina ašrišu liškun	may he place (it) in its place.
irkribišu	Marduk will
Marduk išimmi	fulfill his prayer.

A similar text was inscribed on clay cones from the House of Anu-Adad at Assur, deposited by Shalmaneser III during his reconstruction of the temple in 839 BCE.[918]

Accordingly, while we have yet to recover Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions that are as explicit as the Seleucid tablets on the treatment of the *libittu maḫrītu* from a fallen temple, the particulars of the practice closely resonate with other evidence we do have from the Neo-Assyrian period. For this reason, the practice involving the *libittu maḫrītu* ought to be considered as a likely step in the initial stages of temple construction in Neo-Assyria.

The importance of continuity that elicited the practice surrounding the fallen temple's *libittu maḫrītu* similarly provoked the treatment prescribed for a fallen temple's foundations, the next step in preparing and purifying the site for temple construction. Neo-Assyrian kings tell of finding, verifying, and preserving the measurements, orientation, and ground plan of a preceding temple with regular consistency.[919] Aššurnaṣirpal recounts identifying the building site and reaching the foundations of the *bītu* of Ištar at Nineveh, while Sin-šarru-iškun tells of rebuilding the House of Nabu at Assur according to its old plan.[920] Esarhaddon clearly articulates this aspect of construction in his inscriptions, as illustrated by the following passage:[921]

ina ūmešuma	At that time,
Eniggidrukalamasuma	Eniggidrukalamasuma, the

set his mind upon (re)building Eanna, let him inspect this inscription, and place it with his own inscription for the future."

[918] RIMA 3: A.0.102.39, 11–14; see further, A.0.101.50, 34–40; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 36, r. 19′–21′; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 134, 20–22.

[919] See further the discussion in, Ellis 1968: 12–17; Lackenbacher 1990: 27–30; Ambos 2010: 225–226.

[920] RIMA 2: A.0.101.40, 34; Böhl 1947: 36, no. 25, 29–30. See further, RIMA 3: A.0.102.41, 3; Winckler and Abel 1889: pl. 48: 16, translated in CAD "A": 457 *ašru* A, 1. b) (Sargon); as well as additional examples referenced in Novotny 2010: 116-–117. An inscription of Aššurbanipal likely tells of the king exposing the foundations and making visible the core of Eḫulḫul; Streck 1916: 170, 37.

[921] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 113, 20–21, 24–26; see further, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 58 iv 5; Esarhaddon 59, ii 2; and in particular, Esarhaddon 104, iii 41–46; Esarhaddon 105, iv 37–v 1.

bīt Nabû ša ḫarê ša ašaršu ikkamruma	*bītu* of the god Nabu of the *ḫarû*, its site had become a heap of ruins
emû tillāniš ṣēr uššēšu lā innaṭalu lā uṣṣabbû nabnītsu….	(and) changed into tells. The top of its foundations could not be seen (and) its shape could not be determined…
eprīšu kamrūte upattima šikittašu uṣṣabbima aḫīṭ temmenšu kī pî gišhurrišu maḫrīte amšuḫma ēdu libitta lā uraddi	I opened up its dirt piles and surveyed (and) examined its layout. I measured its foundation in accordance with its earlier plan. I did not add a single *libittu* more.

According to the Seleucid ritual instructions *Enūma igār bīt ili iqâpu* ("When the walls of a god's house collapse),[922] the *bārû* was the scholarly expert that guided the king through this process. The line reads as follows: *ša bīti šuātu ašrīšu bārû uššarma* ("the *bārû* liberates the site of that temple").[923] Though not specific to the *bārû*, the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon demonstrate that *lē'û*s *šitimgallu*s ("able master builders") aided the king in this stage of construction during the Neo-Assyrian period:[924]

mārī ummânī	Members of the wise *ummânu*s
enqūte šitimgallī	(and) *šitimgallu*s
lē'ûte	*lē'û*s,
mukinni gišḫurrī	who lay out plans,
ištēniš upaḫḫirma	I gathered together.
ašar maškan Esagil	The place of
pān qaqqaru	Esagil stands,
upattima šikittašu	I opened (and) its structure
amur	I inspected.

As with the incorporation of the *libittu maḫrītu,* the observance of a fallen temple's foundations created continuity with both the preceding temple and the primeval temple. The divine characteristic of a temple's ground plan is communicated in a song to Esarhaddon as the builder of Ešarra. In this work a request is made to "make [the temple's] plan as beautiful as the stars (lit: writing of the firmament)," a simile that situates the structure's plan within the cosmological realm.[925] Songs of this kind—to the king as builder—would have been sung by the *nârus*.[926] These musicians may have also

[922] See note 910.
[923] On the translation of *uššuru*, see the discussion in Ambos 2004: 173, n. 791; see further, Ellis 1968: 14 n. 45; CAD "U/W": 310–325 *uššuru.*
[924] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, iv 29–37.
[925] Borger 1957–1958: 113, 8 (Assur 21506e): *kīma šiṭir burummē nukkila uṣurātišu*; see further the discussion in Ambos 2004: 47–48; and similar references in CAD "B": 345 *burūmû* b).
[926] CAD "N": 1, 376f *nâru* ((LÚ.)NAR),"musician."

recited *inḫu*-songs[927] alongside the laments of the *kalû* during temple demolition and reconstruction.[928] To not observe the specifications of an earlier temple could elicit the wrath of the gods, and thus ensure an unsuccessful building project and the downfall of the king. A letter to Esarhaddon from the Babylonian scholar Bel-ušezib confirms the severity of such a discrepancy. According to Bel-ušezib, the *šandabakku*[929] Šuma-iddin altered the location of the *parakku* ("dais") of Nippur and then to free himself from harm, performed a *namburbi* to redirect the evil omens to the palace of the king.[930] Passages from the omen series *Šumma ālu ina mēlê šakin* ("When a city is set on a height")[931] also attest to a cultural concern for relocating a house of a god or related feature without divine approval.

These texts communicate the importance of practices of continuity, showcasing a high degree of ritualization for both the activities and materials, and their association with cultural values of the Neo-Assyrian elite; this included the kings' concerns for longevity, durability, and permanence. Archaeological evidence from Neo-Assyrian sites reinforces the importance of the continuity of temple location, and at times the ground plan and architectural features as well. Excavations at the House of Ištar at Assur revealed a sequence of temples stretching back over close to two millennia at roughly the same building site, with only slight variations in its exact placement.[932] Though Aššurnaṣirpal emphasizes the novelty of his temple work at Nimrud in the Banquet Stele inscription,[933] in an inscription from the House of the Kidmuri the king professes that this temple was indeed a reconstruction:[934]

enūma bīt Ištar bēlat Kidmuri	At that time the *bītu* of the goddess Ištar, mistress of the Kidmuri,

[927] CAD "I": 148 *inḫu* B, "(a tune or song)."
[928] As noted by Ambos (2004: 13), the participation of the *nâru* is attested in the ritual instructions related to the *kalû*; no texts specific to this profession are known to date. It is also interesting to note the depiction of musicians alongside scenes of ritualized practice from Neo-Assyria, for example in the libation scene of Shalmaneser III at the Sea of Nairi that is depicted on the Balawat Gates. In this scene, the musicians are shown standing behind the king, who appears to be pouring a liquid into a round pot, while to his sides stand priests holding offerings. Before this group stand what appear to be a table holding the round pot, an incense burner, an offering table, two standards, and a stele of the king, preceded by Assyrian soldiers throwing parts of an animal into the lake (King 1915: pls. I–II; Schachner 2007: pl. 1). The scene of the king ritually butchering an animal at the head of the Tigris, also on the Balawat Gates, is similarly accompanied by musicians (King 1915: pls. LIX; Schachner 2007: pl. 50b).
[929] CAD "Š": 1, 371f *šandabakku* (GÁ.DUB.BA(.A)), "2. (title of the governor of Nippur)."
[930] SAA 10: no. 112.
[931] Specifically Tablet 10: 66–70; see Freedman 1998: 164–165; Ambos 2010: 226.
[932] The slight variation in the sequence of the House of Ištar at Assur dates to the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I, who built his temple to the south, situating the building in an area that was previously occupied by private houses, and he made the old temple site the forecourt for his new temple (Andrae 1935: 35–37). On the continuity of a temple site, see further the discussion in Ellis (1968: 12–14), who also references the sequence of rebuildings of the House of Abu at Tell Asmar, which stretched from the Late Protoliterate through to the Akkadian period (Delougaz and Lloyd 1942: 58, Pl. 24, B; see also Heinrich 1982: I, 248–249).
[933] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 53–55: *ekurrāte ša ina pān lā bašû* ("temples which had previously not existed").
[934] RIMA 2: A.0.101.38: 19–22.

ša ina pān bašû ina šarrāni abbēya	which had previously existed (but) in the time of the kings my fathers
e'batuma ana tilli u karme	had collapsed into a mound and turned into
itūra	a ruined heap.

The fact that this text was inscribed on the foundation tablets of that same temple creates a strong material and spatial connection between what we know of practices of continuity from the textual sources and the physical traces left behind by the practices themselves at an archaeological level. Unfortunately excavations did not reveal definitive traces of this early monument to which Aššurnaṣirpal's text refers.[935] Likewise little trace of what may have been the earliest Ezida (Phase D) at Nimrud was recovered *in situ* during excavation of the area.[936] The walls of this ninth-century building were demolished and the space filled up with mud-brick and clay bands prior to Adad-nerari III's construction of a temple at the same site in the eighth century. Oates and Reid do remark, however, that stone slabs from the former building were reused for flooring in the subsequent building, attesting to a certain degree of material continuity.[937]

The archaeological evidence from this latter scenario speaks to the next step in the preparation and purification of the site: the removal of all material traces from the building site prior to construction.[938] According to the royal inscriptions, once the foundations of the old temple had been uncovered and surveyed, the ruins were then cleared from the site. In the text from the reverse of the House of Šarrat-nipḫi colossi Aššurnaṣirpal states as follows with regard to his preparations for the *bītu*s of Ninurta, Šarrat-nipḫi, Gula, and Sin at Nimrud:[939]

tillu labēru unakkir adi muḫḫi	I cleared away the old ruin hill
mê ušappil 120 tikpi ana mušpali lu uṭabbi	(and) dug down to the water level. I sank (the foundation) 120 layers deep.

[935] Reade (2002: 145) notes that an inscribed tablet of Shalmaneser I, which was excavated by Layard from the center of the mound (Layard 1851: no. 79) and is now housed at the British Museum, may have belonged to this earlier temple building. Aššurnaṣirpal's inscriptions attribute the foundation of Nimrud to a predecessor named Shalmaneser (RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, iii 132; A.0.101.2, 52), and, as Reade (2002: 138) suggests, Aššurnaṣirpal may have derived this information from a foundation tablet of the same kind, that he uncovered at the site during his construction work.

[936] Oates and Reid (1956: 35) note that the evidence does not confirm the function of the ninth-century building, nor do we have an inscription of Adad-nerari's claiming to have rebuilt this temple, yet Oates and Oates (2010: 127) refer to this ninth-century building as "the earliest (Phase D) Nabu Temple," insinuating that it was a temple.

[937] Oates and Reid 1956: 28–32, 34–38, pl. VIII.

[938] Ellis 1968: 8–17; Lackenbacher 1990: 96–98.

[939] RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 9; see also, RIMA 2: A.0.101.31,11–12; see further, Novotny 2010: 116–117; and Ellis 1968: 13–17, for a discussion of the Neo-Babylonian evidence for this practice.

Aššurnaṣirpal states the same with regard to the *bītu* of Ištar at Nineveh:[940]

ašaršu umessi dannassu *akšud ultu ušše̮šu adi* *gabadibbšu arṣip ušeklil*	I delineated its area, I reached the bottom of its foundation pit, from its foundations to its parapets I built it, and completed (it).

In the following passage Aššurbanipal emphasizes his removal of the old sections of Eḫulḫul, the House of Sin at Ḫarran, prior to its reconstruction:[941]

ekurru šuātu ša labariš īlliku *ina amat Sîn Nusku* *anḫūssu adke*	That *ekurru*, which had become old, by the command of Sin and Nusku, I removed the dilapidated sections.

In a similar manner, Aššurbanipal states that he removed the dilapidated sections of the *akītu*-house of the goddess Ištar at Nineveh prior to relaying its foundations and building it anew.[942] This purging would have had an obvious benefit at a physical level; it would have provided the builders with a more pristine work space. Considering that Nimrud was already an established settlement at the time of Aššurnaṣirpal's building project, this task would have been an important one. Though in addition to practicality, the texts also suggest that this practice of clearing the site was motivated by deeper cultural reasoning.

The royal inscriptions emphasize the kings' use of semi-precious stones and metals for their foundation inscriptions,[943] the deposition of which was accompanied by offerings of additional exotic stones, precious metals, and other organic substances, including various liquids and fragrant plants.[944] In contrast, passages in the omen series *Šumma ālu* and *Iqqur īpuš* treat the discovery of these prestigious materials in the foundations of a fallen house as anything but auspicious, rather it could result in the owner's lack of prosperity, poverty, or even death.[945] Yet while the initial discovery of such materials may have been threatening to the life of the king and the royal building project as a whole, by removing all traces of a fallen temple the king and scholarly experts were able to eliminate all of the potentially dangerous materials from the site. According to Ambos' interpretation of the apotropaic ritual instructions for laying the foundations of a house, *Enūma ušše̮ bīt amēli tanamdû* ("When you lay the foundations

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[940] RIMA 3: A.0.101.40, 35.
[941] Streck 1916: 150, X 62–64. On Eḫulḫul, see George 1993: 99, no. 470.
[942] Campbell Thompson 1931: pl. 17, v 43, similarly pl. 15, ii 45 (*anhūssu adki*); see also, Streck 1916: 87, X 74; Borger 1996: 73, X 74, on Aššurbanipal's reconstruction of the House of Succession (*bīt ridûte*).
[943] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4-8; Fuchs 1994: 237f, 159–160.
[944] Luckenbill 1924: 138–139; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 3–28; SAA 13: no. 13.
[945] Freedman 1998: 83–85; Labat 1965: §6; Ambos 2010: 230–231. Ambos (2010: 232) associates these contradictory assertions to the respective authors of the two genres: "the king wanted to make use of precious and expensive materials exhibiting his wealth and power, but in the eyes of the ritual experts these materials also had a highly effective and ambivalent magic power."

of the house of a man"),[946] in addition to reciting prayers to the gods, the *āšipus* would scatter the potentially threatening foundation materials in a river in order to eliminate their affective quality.[947]

The act of clearing the foundations of a fallen temple and ridding the area of previous foundation materials was part of the larger practice of purifying a building site prior to construction, a process that was carried out for both a reconstruction and a brand new temple. Both Baumgartner and Ellis discuss the use of the terms *mussû* and *ullūlu* in reference to cleansing a building site in Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions.[948] Baumgartner argues that the Akkadian *ullūlu* has ritualized associations, meaning "to purify," and is prioritized by the Babylonian text,[949] whereas *mussû* connotes the technical cleaning and removal of debris and is more common in Assyrian texts; Aššurnaṣirpal's text on clearing the foundations of the *bītu* of Ištar (*ašaršu umessi*) makes use of the latter term.[950] Baumgartner suggests that while these two terms likely referenced the same activities, the varying terminological preferences reflects a difference in cultural concern, the Assyrians for the technical, the Babylonians for the ritualized aspects.[951]

Contra Baumgartner, Ellis argues that purification and the *āšipu*—the scholarly expert entrusted with this task—played an equally important role in the practices of the Assyrians when preparing to build a new temple.[952] Though the Neo-Assyrian texts might not be as explicit as the Babylonian sources about the purification of the building site prior to laying new foundations, the royal inscriptions acknowledge the importance of purification in the context of temple construction.[953] The involvement of the ritual expert, for example, is demonstrated by Sennacherib's description of his construction of the *akītu*-house at Assur:[954]

ina arḫi ṭâbi ūme šalmu ina šipir išippūti	In a favorable month, a propitious day, with the craft of *išippu*s (and)

[946] Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1 (K 3364+). Ambos (2005: 9) concludes that these ritual instructions could have been used for a temple as well as the house of a man. Another manuscript was found on a tablet from Sippar (Si. 12), which Ambos includes in his edition (II.A.3 A).

[947] Ambos 2004: 69.

[948] Ellis 1968: 16–17; see further, Baumgartner 1965: 31, 37, 39.

[949] CAD "E": 81–82 *elēlu*, "2. *ullūlu* to purify, to make pure, to keep pure, to consecrate to a deity, to make free;" for example, Langdon 1912: 62, ii 43; 146, i 49 (VAB 4).

CAD "M": 33 *mesû*, "4. *mussû* to wash;" see also CAD "D": 90 *dannatu*, "3.b) bottom of a foundation pit."

[950] Sennacherib's royal inscriptions also employ this term when speaking of the king's restoration of Babylon (Schroeder 1922: 122, 38).

[951] Baumgartner 1965: 31.

[952] Ellis 1968: 16.

[953] Lackenbacher (1990: 101) recognizes this aspect of the Neo-Assyrian sources and draws into his discussion evidence from the later Seleucid ritual instructions for the *kalû* discussed above (see note 910).

[954] Luckenbill 1924: 137, 30–32.

CAD "K": 61 *kakugallūtu* ("craft of the exorcist"). The CAD entry provides the transliteration "*ka-kù-gal-u-ti,*" though Luckenbill normalizes *āšipūtu* rather than *kakugallūti*. On the relationship of the terms *išippu* and *kakuggalu* to *āšipu*, see note 135. Sennacherib also mentions the *āšipu* in relation to his construction of the Jerwan aqueduct (see note 915).

nēmeq kakugallūti ina pīli	the wisdom of the *kakugallu*s, I
aban šadî uššīšu addima	built its foundation of *pīli*-stone, *abnu* of the mountain,
ulla rišišu ultu uššīšu adi	I raised its top, from its
gabadibbišu.	foundations to its walls.

Esarhaddon emphasizes the importance of purification by attributing the activity to a god when recounting his refurbishment of the god Amurru for this god's house in Babylon:[955]

Amurru mullil šamê u erṣetim	I renewed the god Amurru, the
mūbbibi Esagil āšib	one who cleanses heaven and
Enamtaggadua uddiš	the earth, the one who purifies Esagil, the one dwells in Enamtaggadua.

Aššurbanipal similarly draws attention to place of purification in temple construction when he states that he himself—according to the craft of the ritual expert (*ina šipir išippūti*)—cleansed the *parakku*s ("daises") of the gods.[956] Though Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions prior to the Sargonid kings do not mention the *āšipu* in the context of temple construction, Aššurnaṣirpal uses the title *išippu* in reference to himself, suggesting a similar awareness during his reign of the importance of purification and the craft of the ritual expert during construction.[957]

Based on what we know of the craft of the *āšipu* and the purification of a site in Neo-Assyria, we cannot expect this stage to have left much in the way of material traces at an archaeological level. An earlier inscription from a statue of Ur-Bau, ruler of Lagaš, that commemorates his building activities states that he purified a temple's building site with fire prior to construction, and then filled in the foundation pit with earth.[958] Ur-Bau's successor, Gudea, similarly recounts using fire to purify the building site for a temple: uš-bi mu-kù izi im-ta-lá ("he purified the foundation pit, he set it on fire").[959] Unfortunately there is no mention in the Neo-Assyrian textual sources for purification by fire, and excavations have yet to identify burnt layers under the foundations of the temples at the capital cities.[960] Excavations of the House of Nabu at Nimrud, however, did reveal that the preceding building had been filled in and a foundation level laid on top, upon which Adad-nerari constructed his temple:[961]

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[955] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 92. On Enamtaggadua, see George 1993: 130, no. 846.
[956] Streck 1916: 40, iv 86; Borger 1996: 45, iv 86.
[957] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, i, 21; A.0.101.17, i, 15; A.0.101.20, 20; A.0.101.26, 35; A.0.101.47, 11–12. Jean (2006: 47) suggests that Aššurnaṣirpal's "choix de l'épithète «išippu» est peut-être à mettre en relation avec son activité de bâtisseur à Kalḫu, où de nombreux rituels de consécration et de purification ont fort probablement été effectués lors des nouvelles constructions dans cette ville." On the term *išippu*, see note 135.
[958] kù-gim izi ì-lá… saḫar-bi šà-ba im-ši-gi$_4$; Edzard 1997: 19, ii 8–iii 2 (E3/1.1.6.5).
[959] Edzard 1997: 39, iii 6–7 (E3/1.1.7.StC); see further the discussion in Ellis 1968: 9–10, 17.
[960] A layer of ash was found under the Old Babylonian House of Ištar Kititum at Ishchali, which might be evidence of the purification of the site by fire prior to construction (Ellis 1968: 10).
[961] Oates and Reid 1956: 28–32, 34–38, pl. VIII.

> The plan of the Phase D building, on the east side of the street, has been obliterated by upfilling the rooms with mud-brick and clay bands... A clay band 12 to 16 cm. thick, was laid over the entire area to provide a level base for the Nabu Temple platform. The massive mud-brick platform, some 14 to 15 courses high, was then constructed.

The practice of upfilling and constructing a foundation level as a base for a new temple is comparable to purifying a site with fire. Another archaeological example of purification is the great terrace under the House of Nabu and the even larger terrace under the palace and the temple complex at Khorsabad; these features would have created a pure surface atop what was already a predominantly barren terrain (FIGURE 11).[962] Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions provide textual confirmation for this practice: when constructing the *bītu* of the gods Sin, Ningal, Šamaš, and Aya at Nineveh, the king states that he laid the foundations of the temple *ṣer tamlê šuātu* ("upon that terrace"),[963] *tamlû* having a meaning of both "fill" and "terrace."[964]

The emphasis on cleansing a building site presents an interesting opposition to the importance of continuity that is also attested for temple construction. While the latter was emphasized in the practice of finding both the *libittu maḫrītu* and the previous temple's groundplan, the stability and sanctity of the new construction would have been threatened had these materials and any other remains not been dealt with in the culturally prescribed fashion laid out above. This handling of the materials, however, did not always entail their physical removal from the site, rather they could also be the focus of apotropaic practices that rid them of their potential to cause harm or evil, practices that were executed by the *āšipu* on behalf of the king.[965] That some materials might have been left in place or the *libbitu maḫrītu* returned indicates that such actions could overpower the threat of the materials themselves.[966]

The heightened level of formalized actions and adherence to culturally prescribed customs set apart the preparation and purification of a building site as ritualized aspects of temple construction. Moreover, unique aspects of these activities stand out from the commonalities that they share with the preparation of a building site for human houses, in particular the personnel and materials involved, and the magnitude and scale of the activities performed.

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[962] Place 1867–1870: I, 244; Loud and Altman 1938: 56–57. On a preexisting settlement at Khorsabad, see note 91.

[963] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 12, 16.

[964] CAD "T": 143f, *tamlû,* "1. fill, filled platform, terrace."

[965] The Seleucid ritual instructions for the *kalû* do not require the *libittu maḫrītu* to be removed from the site of construction entirely, rather it was to be taken from the ruins and temporarily housed in a restricted room, where it was placed alongside an offering table upon which offerings were to be made to the goddess of foundations, Bēlet-ilī. When the temple was later rebuilt, the *libittu maḫrītu* was brought back to the site of construction and incorporated into the new building; see further, Ambos 2004: 78.

[966] Esarhaddon states that he laid the foundations of the new Esagil over the foundations of the earlier building, and then gives instructions for any future king that finds his foundation inscription, to anoint it, make offerings, and return it to its place; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iii 42–46, vii 19–29.

b. Into the Earth: Offerings and Foundations

Having cleared and purified the building site, the next step was to make offerings to the gods and to put in place foundation deposits. A Neo-Assyrian *namburbi* specific to the temple, entitled *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* ("When you lay the foundations (of a temple)"),[967] prescribes offerings to be placed on the ground, specifically toward the north, south, east, and west for specific groups of gods, prior to laying new foundations. Included in these arrangements were liquid offerings, such as *šamnu* ("oil"), *dišpu* ("honey"), *karānu* ("wine"), *šizbu*,[968] and *ḫimētu* ("ghee"); offerings of meat (*imittu*, *šumû*) and fat (*ḫimṣu*) from a ritually butchered sheep;[969] *nignakku*s ("incense-burners") that were burning *burāšu*-wood ("juniper"); *zidubdubbû*-flour; [970] and the finest *suluppū*.[971] Following an incantation to Enmešarra, god of the netherworld, instructions are then given for crafting and interring under the foundations an image of the king, made of *musukkannu*-wood with *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver") attachments. The practice of depositing figurines under the foundations of a temple is also evidenced in *Ṭuppi ḫišiḫti ušše bīt ili epēšu enūma ušše bīt ili tanamdû* ("Tablet for the materials needed in order to lay the foundations of a house of a god: When you are laying the foundations of a house of a god"), versions of which were recovered at both Nineveh and Khorsabad.[972] The latter ritual instructions prescribe the crafting of seventeen figurines of various types of wood and *iškuru* ("wax"), all of which were to be deposited at specific locations *ina šapal ušše* ("under the foundations").

Enūma ušše bīt amēli tanamdû ("When you lay the foundations of the house of a man")[973] similarly prescribes an assortment of organic offerings to be placed on the ground prior to laying the new foundations of a house of a common human. The process began at sunrise: at this time an *egubbû*-basin was arranged, into which *kaspu* ("silver"), *ḫurāṣu* ("gold"), *burāšu*-wood ("juniper"), *dišpu* ("honey"), *ḫimētu* ("ghee"), *šamnu* ("oil"), and *ḫalṣu*-oil was placed.[974] A *riksu*-arrangement[975] was then prepared for the gods Ea, Šamaš, and Asalluḫi, and the ritualized butchering of a ram took place, whose

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[967] Ambos 2004: II.A.2. For a discussion of the architectural term IM.DÙ.A, see Ambos 2004: 122–123.

[968] CAD "Š": 2, 148f *šizbu* (GA), "milk b) 2' in offerings and rituals."

[969] See Ellis 1968: 43–45, on the ritualized butchering of animals and its role in foundation deposits. A unique archaeological attestation of a deposit containing a ritually butchered animal from Neo-Assyria is the gazelle that was found *in situ* under the foundations of the Northwest Palace of Aššurnaṣirpal at Nimrud (Mallowan 1950: fig. 9; 1954: 88).

CAD "I/J": 125f *imittu* C (UZU.ZAG, UZU.ZAG.LU), "shoulder of an animal."

CAD "Š": 3, 297 *šumû* A ((UZU.)KA.NE), "roasted meat."

CAD "Ḫ": 192 *ḫimṣu* (UZU.ME. ḪÉ), "(1) fatty tissue around the intestines."

[970] CAD "Z": 107f *zidubdubbû* (ZÌ.DUB.DUB.(BA/BU)), "(a small heap of a certain type of flour, used for cultic purposes)."

[971] CAD "S": 373 *suluppū* (ZÚ.LUM(.MA)), "(ripened and plucked) dates."

[972] Ambos 2004: II.C.2; see further the discussion of the text in Chapter IV.1.a.

[973] Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1 (K 3364+). Ambos (2004: 9) notes that it is not clear whether these ritual instructions were intended for the construction of a house or a temple.

[974] CAD "Ḫ": 50f *ḫalṣu* (BÁRA.GA) "(1) obtained by *ḫalāṣu* (said of oil, etc.)."

CAD "E": 49f *egubbû* A ((DUG).A.GÚB.BA), "1. holy water, 2. basin for holy water."

[975] CAD "R": 351f *riksu* (KÉŠ, DUR), "5. ritual arrangement, preparation."

blood was poured along with *dišpu* ("honey"),[976] *šikaru*,[977] *karānu* ("wine"),[978] *šamnu* ("oil"),[979] and *šamnu rūštu* ("fine oil"),[980] into the foundations.[981] Following the subsequent recitation of an incantation to Kulla, god of the foundations and wall, additional grains and seeds, textiles of various colors, fragrant plants, semi-precious stones, and metals were to be deposited under the foundations.

The former ritual instructions for the laying of foundations for the house of a human (*Enūma uššē bīt amēli tanamdû*) prescribe some of the same materials to be deposited under the foundations as the *namburbi* specific to the temple, suggesting that similar measures were taken to avert evil from all dwelling places, whether that of a divine resident, royal resident, or common human resident.[982] In each scenario the construction of a house involved the stylization of everyday consumption practices, in which similar organic materials—many of them foodstuffs—were used as foundation deposits. The designation *zidubdubbû*-flour, for example, is only attested in texts in association with the work of the *bārû* and *kalû*, attesting to a unique conception of this type of material—small heaps of flour—that was different from that related to everyday flour used in baking.[983] Both the ritual instructions from the house of a god and the house of a human prescribe *dišpu* ("honey"),[984] *karānu* ("wine"),[985] *šamnu* ("oil"), and *ḫimētu* ("ghee"); though not in the Neo-Assyrian manuscript, additional manuscripts of *Enūma uššē bīt amēli tanamdû also* include *šizbu* ("milk").[986] The ritual instructions for the house of a human, however, do not list specific types of meat and fat from a ritually butchered animal ((*imittu*, *šumû*, *ḫimṣu*)—only a *niqû*-offering and the blood of the animal[987]—nor do they include *zidubdubbû*-flour or *suluppū*. The inclusion of the latter materials in the ritual instructions for the temple may be associated with the elevated status of its builder, the royal elite, their use setting this practice apart from the construction of the house of a human. The handling of these materials by *ummânu*s of the royal court further prioritized this practice and associated materials. Last, though Neo-

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[976] See further references in CAD "D": 162 *dišpu,* "c) 2′ (in Ass. rituals relating to the consecration of buildings)."
[977] CAD "Š": 2, 423f *šikaru* (KAŠ; KAŠ.ḪI.A; KAŠ.MEŠ), "1. beer (made from grain), e) as offering; f) in rit."
[978] See further, CAD "K": 204f *karānu,* "1. b) in sacrificial and ritual uses."
[979] See further, CAD "Š": 326 *šamnu,* "g) in ritual ceremonies, 2' in foundation rituals."
[980] CAD "R": 430f *rūštu* (Ì.SAG), "(a fine quality of oil)."
[981] The text Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1 (K 3364+) does not explicitly state that the blood from the ram (*dāmū*) was also poured into the foundations; however, the manuscript from Sippar (Si. 12) does mention the blood specifically at this stage of the practice; Ambos 2004: II.A.3 A 19′f, 15′ (*immera tanakkisma dāmišu ana libbi use tatabbak*).
[982] See further the list in Ambos (2004: 72–73) that summarizes the types of materials prescribed by various textual sources for foundation deposits and offerings.
[983] See further the discussion in CAD "Z": 108.
[984] See further references in CAD "D": 162 *dišpu,* "c) 2′ (in Ass. rituals relating to the consecration of buildings).
[985] See further, CAD "K": 204f *karānau,* "1. b) in sacrificial and ritual uses."
[986] Ambos 2004: II.A.3.A etc. Z. 6′, 8′.
[987] See Ellis 1968: 43–45, on the ritualized butchering of animals and its role in foundation deposits. A unique archaeological attestation of a deposit containing a ritually butchered animal from Neo-Assyria is the gazelle that was found *in situ* under the foundations of the Northwest Palace of Aššurnaṣirpal at Nimrud (Mallowan 1950: fig. 9; 1954: 88).

Assyrian ritual instructions of the *āšipu* confirm that these practitioners were involved in the construction of a human's house,[988] there is no evidence to indicate that these *āšipu*s and *kalû*s were the same individuals as those who ranked among the *ummânu*s and who were members of the royal court. Rather the former group were likely of a lower status and more accessible within the Neo-Assyrian community.

The royal inscriptions provide further evidence for the high ritualization of the foundation deposits used in temple construction. In addition, some of the royal inscriptions themselves—as that actual materials that were placed in the foundations—manifest a type of foundation deposit that was not used in the foundations of a human's house. The royal inscriptions of Sennacherib recount the king beginning his construction of the *akītu*-house at Assur in the manner fit for the house of a god:[989]

ina libbi ušší bīt akīti	Into the foundations of that *akītu*-house,
šâtu kapsu ḫurāṣu sandu uqnû ḫulalû muššaru	*kapsu, ḫurāṣu, sandu*-stone, *uqnû*-stone, *ḫulalû*-stone, *muššaru*-stone,
pappardilû papparminu napḫar riqqī ṭābūti	*pappardilû*-stone, *papparminu*-stone, all the aromatic *riqqu*s,
kīma… ušši šuāti igulâ šaman rūšti	like…. that foundation with *igulû*-oil and aromatic *šamnu*,
kīma mê nāri lu asluḫ	as if river water, I scattered.

The inscriptions of Esarhaddon provide an equally comprehensive list of both organic and precious materials used as offerings in temple construction. In preparing for the construction of the House of Aššur, Esarhaddon states that he carried out the following:[990]

ṣēr ḫurāṣi	On *ḫurāṣu,*
kaspi	*kaspu,*
abnē nisiqti	choice stones,
riqqī	*riqqu*s,
šaman ḫašūrri	*ḫašūrru*-resin,
ušší̄šu	I laid
addīma	its foundations.

Esarhaddon incorporated these same materials in the foundations of Esagil, along with *dišpu, ḫimētu*, *karānu*, and *kurunnu*.[991]

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[988] Ambos 2004: 87f (II.A.1); 126f (II.A.3); Wiggermann 1992.

[989] Luckenbill 1924: 138, 51–55.
CAD "I/J": 45f *igulû* (Ì.GU.LA), "perfumed oil."

[990] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 58, iv 7–14.
CAD "Ḫ": 147f *ḫašurru* (GIŠ.ḪA.ŠUR), "(a kind of cedar)."

[991] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 100.
CAD "K": 579f *kurunnu* (KAŠ.DIN.NAM/NA), "(a choice kind of beer or wine)."

Though the royal inscriptions speak of these actions in the first person as if they were performed by the king himself, and evidence suggests that he did take part in some of these activities—for example, finding the first brick and laying the new foundations—the textual sources, along with the evidence for averting evil in Neo-Assyria, suggest that the *āšipu* would have made these offerings on behalf of the king.[992] It is the *āšipu*, for example, whom the ritual instructions *Ṭuppi ḫišiḫti uššē bīt ili epēšu enūma uššē bīt ili tanamdû* ("Tablet for the materials needed in order to lay the foundations of a house of a god: When you are laying the foundations of a house of a god")[993] instruct to fashion and deposit figurines before laying new foundations. The letter to Esarhaddon from Mar-Issar on the construction of Esagil informs the king that the blood from a sacrificial ram was placed over its foundation stones, demonstrating the absence of the king during the performance of these practices. One of Urdu-aḫḫešu's letters to the king similarly suggests the latter's absence when offerings were placed in the foundations of Esagil, a list that includes the types of organic materials as those listed above in the royal inscriptions:[994]

ina muḫḫi riqqu	Concerning the *riqqu*s,
šamnu ṭābu da'mutu u abnē	aromatic *šamnu, da'mu*-earth, and the stones,
ša ina libbi uššē nikarrarūni	which we shall lay in the foundations,
šarru bēlī ṭēmu liškun	let the king, my lord, order delivery of them.

In addition to small groupings of liquid offerings and organic and precious materials, the royal inscriptions also recount the deposition of foundation inscriptions by the kings prior to laying new foundations for a temple, a topic that is not dealt with in the ritual instructions.[995] Many foundation inscriptions were made of clay, a material that held cultural value in Neo-Assyria as discussed in the Chapter III.2.a. Shalmaneser III deposited inscribed clay cones during the construction of the *bītu* of Aššur that were uncovered during excavation.[996] Excavations of the *bītu* of Šarrat-niḫi also found inscriptions belonging to this king, this time made of stone.[997] Both Sargon and Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions recount their use of high value, precious materials for their foundation inscriptions, including *ḫurāṣu* ("gold"), *kaspu* ("silver"), *erû* ("copper"), *uqnû* ("lapis lazuli"), *gišnugallu*-stone, *ṣalamdu*-stone, *pendû*-stone, *elallu*-stone, and

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[992] The letter to Esarhaddon from Mar-Issar on the construction of Esagil informs the king that the blood from a sacrificial ram was placed over its foundation stones, suggesting that the king did not have to be present for all of these practices; SAA 10: no. 354, 15–18.

[993] Ambos 2004: II.C.2 (K 2000+ etc.).

[994] SAA 13: no. 161, r. 7–10. For a suggested date for this letter, see Parpola 1970–1983: II, 283, n. 522.
CAD "Ṭ": 22f *ṭābu* (DÙG(.GA)), "aromatic b) said of oil."
CAD "D": 75f *da'mu* (IM.SIG$_7$.SIG$_7$), "dark-colored, dark red c) said of a dark red earth used as a dye."

[995] On foundation tablets in general, see Ellis 1968: 94–107; Lackenbacher 1990: 148–150. Ambos (2004: 71, n. 504; 75–76) similarly remarks that the ritual instructions make no mention of foundation inscriptions.

[996] RIMA 3: A.0.102.18.

[997] RIMA 3: A.0.102.49; Andrae 1908: 16; 1935: 113–114.

pīlu pēṣû-stone, as well as kiln-fired clay.[998] The Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence similarly speaks to the practice of laying foundation inscriptions. An unassigned administrative letter to Esarhaddon inquires of the king his preference for the type of stone to be used for his foundation inscription:[999]

pūlu pāniu ša nupaṭṭirūni	the earlier foundation stone which we loosened
gaṣṣānu šū	was *gaṣṣu*-stone.
annurig pūlu šaniu	Now, there is another foundation stone
qurub šumma šarru iqabbi	at hand. If the king so orders,
šumu ša šarri ina muḫḫi lišṭuru	let the name of the king be written on that and
nirṣip ulâ	we shall build it. Or,
šarru iqabbi mā labīru riṣpa	let the king command: "Build in the old one."

The sender then asks the king to give the command for sending the wood to be placed between the foundation stone, and to command the *rab ṭupšarri* ("chief scribe") both to write the king's name on a *narû*[1000] and to confirm an auspicious time to place materials in the *sippu*s *ša bīti* ("doorjambs of the house").[1001] This letter suggests that the texts were added *in situ* to foundation inscriptions at the site of construction. A letter from Mar-Issar to the king similarly communicates this likehood, the reporting that he has now inscribed the *kigallu* of the goddess Tašmetum with a text that was previously communicated by the king in an earlier letter.[1002]

Finding agreements between the textual sources and archaeological evidence to corroborate this stage of temple construction is challenging due to the predominantly organic nature of the offerings and foundation deposits.[1003] In addition, while a number of texts state that the offerings were to be placed under the foundations, textual and archaeological evidence demonstrates that deposits and inscriptions were also placed in

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[998] Fuchs 1994: 50, 40–44; 53, 18–21; 68, 55–57; 237f, 159f; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 4–8; Esarhaddon 105, ix 21–291; Esarhaddon 106, vi 1–22.

[999] SAA 16: no. 125, 6′–11′.

CAD "G": 54f *gaṣṣu* (IM.BABBAR), "gypsum, whitewash." Luukkoo and Van Buylaere translate this term as "too calcareous."

[1000] CAD "N": 364f *narû* A (NA_4.NA.RÚ.A, NA_4.RÚ.A), "1. stone monument inscribed with laws and regulations, 2. boundary stone, 3. memorial monument set up by the king."

[1001] CAD "S": 300f *sippu* A ($ZAG.DU_8$), "1. doorframe, doorjambs;" see further, Chapter IV.3.c.

[1002] SAA 10: no. 358.

CAD "K": 348f *kigallu* (KI.GAL), "1. raised platform for cultic purposes, 2. pedestal, base (for a statue, a cult object, an architectural feature made of stone, metal, brick, precious stones, etc. often inscribed)."

[1003] Bits of wood or twigs were recorded among the materials from the foundation deposits of Tukulti-Ninurta I recovered by excavators in the House of Ištar at Assur, which also included inscribed tablets of gold and silver, and other precious materials (Andrae 1935: 43, fig. 14); see further the discussion in Ellis 1968: 98–99, 126–131; for additional evidence from periods and sites outside of Neo-Assyria.

the foundations, for example between layers of bricks and inside boxes,[1004] or within walls or doorjambs at later stages of construction.[1005] Such variability complicates the identification of archaeological evidence as the offering materials that were deposited during the initial stages of construction.

While the gold and silver buttons recovered in the foundation deposit box in Ezida at Nimrud (FIGURE 76–77)[1006] and the gold beads of the foundation box from the antechamber to the House of Sin at Khorsabad[1007] illustrate the use of precious materials as offerings in foundation deposits, it is difficult to determine at what point in the construction process these materials were put in place. The moment of deposition of the corridor deposit with precious beads from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud is likewise unclear. Mallowan describes the deposit as "buried under the floor and... sandwiched between two layers of mudplaster about 10 centimeters thick."[1008] He also dates the deposit to repair work of the late eighth/early seventh century, though Reade attributes it to the early building activities of either Aššurnaṣirpal or Shalmaneser III.[1009] It is similarly difficult to determine the sequence of practice by which the inscribed cylinder of Aššurbanipal came to be at the bottom of the foundations of Emaḫ at Babylon.[1010] Since the cylinder was recovered alongside tablets from the later Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, it is hard to say if that context was its original place of interment or if it was reburied by this later king, considering that foundation texts themselves often prescribe their reburial if they are discovered at a later date.

Nevertheless, by reconstructing the sequence of events by which offerings were performed and foundation deposits were created in Neo-Assyrian temples, we can begin to hone in on the material traces that are evidence of ritualized practice due to contextual cues.[1011] With future archaeological work, we can continue to create stronger links between ritualized actions, these deposits, and their place in the sequence of construction.

[1004] Foundation deposit boxes were found below the surfaces (cut through the stone pavement) in the god's chambers of the House of Sin and of Nabu at Khorsabad (Loud 1936: 119 (Room 165); Loud and Altman 1938: 62), and the House of Nabu at Nimrud (Mallowan 1966: 265–266 (NT 2, NTS 1, NTS 2)).

[1005] Layard (1849: I, 116; II, 91) notes finding inscribed tablets of Aššurnaṣirpal in the walls of the Northwest Palace at Nimrud; see further, Russell 1999b: 22–23. Place (1867–1870: I, 61–62) also found inscribed clay cylinders and a stone box containing inscribed tablets of gold, silver, copper, lead, and possibly magnesite in the walls of Sargon's palace at Khorsabad; see further, Ellis 1968: 100–102.

[1006] Mallowan 1956: 65; 1966: 90–91; Reade 2002: 172–173; Oates and Oates 2001: 109–110.

[1007] Oriental Institute Archives, Letter from Gordon Loud to James Breasted dated February 20, 1933; Guralnick 2008b: 393. Though not in a foundation deposit, a cylindrical gold bead was also found in the adjacent chamber (Room 164); DS 676B (A 11748). A number of cylindrical beads were also recovered from the House of Ninurta at Nimrud during Mallowan's excavations, including ND 5321 (ME 140569, 1984-2-5, 325); ND 5324; ND 5325; see further, Curtis 2013: 7, 197.

[1008] Mallowan 1957: 20.

[1009] Mallowan 1966: I, 87–91; 265–266; Reade 2002: 174.

[1010] Koldeway 1911: 13–14, pl. III, A.2, fig. 17; see further, Ellis 1968: 111; Beaulieu 1997. On Emaḫ, see George 1993: 119, "é.maḫ 3."

[1011] On ritual behavior and archaeology, see Walker 1995. Walker et al. (1995: 72–73) lists five hypotheses for adopting such an approach: "(1) ritual behaviors exhibit consistently patterned life histories in ongoing cultural systems; (2) singularized pathways in these systemic contexts frequently lead to discrete or singularized depositional contexts in the archaeological record; (3) ritual objects and spaces serve as material resources for ritual technologies; (4) these ritual technologies, like other technological traditions, can be organized for analysis in terms of their component artifact "performance characteristics" (Schiffer

The cultural reasoning for these types of offerings and foundation deposits was grounded in the cultural concerns of honoring and pleasing the gods; ensuring a successful building for the divine owner of the temple; and the safety and eternal recognition of the king as builder. The royal inscriptions and ritual instructions name the great gods toward whom such offerings were directed, in particular Ea, Šamaš, Asalluḫi, and Kulla.[1012] Less well-known divinities are also attested for their involvement in temple construction, and thus, would likely have also been intended as recipients of the offerings and deposits made at the onset of construction. These additional divinities include Mušda(ma), "master builder of Enlil;"[1013] the vizier god Ninšubur, whose figurine was to be interred under the foundations of the god's house;[1014] and protective gods*: il bīti, ištar bīti, lamassi bīti* ("gods of houses," "goddesses of houses," "*lamassu*s of houses"). The final line of the *Enūma uššē bīt amēli tanamdû*, for example, states the following:[1015]

lumun bīti paṭir bītu šū ila u lamassa iraššī bēl bīti šuāti ultabbar	The evil of the *bītu* is removed. That *bītu* will obtain an *ilu* and a *lamassu.* The owner of that house will grow old.

By pouring libations, making sacrifices, and depositing valued offerings in the ground, the king and his scholarly experts could ensure that they were not offending those gods into whose realm the foundations would penetrate, and by extension, established the solidity and permanence of the future temple.

As illustrated by the archaeological evidence from Neo-Assyrian sites, temple foundations were made primarily of mudbricks that were arranged in rows, that went deep underground.[1016] Aššurnaṣirpal speaks to this practice by saying that he sank (*ṭubbû*)[1017] the foundation at Nimrud to a depth of 120 courses of bricks before constructing the *bītu* of Ninurta.[1018] This physical connection of temple foundations with the netherworld is also emphasized in Sargon's inscription on his reconstruction of

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and Skibo 1987); and (5) ritual resources and technologies vary in their distribution within communities, in terms of both use and control, which can lead to conflict, competition, and social change." See further, Winter (1999b), for a discussion of depositional patterns as a reflection of ritual acts at the Royal Cemetery of Ur.

[1012] Ea and his son Asalluḫi were responsible for passing along to the *āšipu*s their knowledge and wisdom, and Šamaš maintained cosmic order, both of which were integral aspects of constructing a temple; Ambos 2004: II.A.3, A 11′–13′; II.A.3 E_1 4. The importance of Kulla as the god of foundations and bricks is discussed in Chapter III.

[1013] Lyon 1883: 9–10; translation, Luckenbill 1927: 64, §120; transliteration and translation, Ellis 1968: App. A, no. 14; normalization and translation, Ambos 2004: 22. On the god, see further Krebernik 1993–1997: 453; Ellis 1968: 18–19; Ambos 2004: 23.

[1014] Ambos 2004: II.C.2; see further the discussion of this text in Chapter IV.1.a; see also, Ambos 2004: 25–26.

[1015] Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1, 21; see further Ambos 2004: 24–25.

[1016] As noted by Loud and Altman (1938: 18), foundations played a relatively minor role at Khorsabad in contrast to other Neo-Assyrian capital cities, due to the naturally superior solidity of the undisturbed soil at the site; see further, Place 1867–1870: I, 24–28. At Nimrud and Nineveh prior layers of occupation and preceding building levels would have necessitated deeper foundations, as in the House of Nabu at Nimrud.

[1017] CAD "Ṭ: 70 *ṭubbû,* "3. to sink a foundation."

[1018] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1.

Emeslam, the *bītu* of the god Nergal in Cutha; the king states that the temple foundations are said to lie on the *kigallu* like a mountain, the term *kigallu* being used symbolically to mean the netherworld as "the base of the earth."[1019] In a more simplistic fashion, Sennacherib reports that he took the foundations of the *akītu*-house at Assur down to the level of underground waters,[1020] while Esarhaddon states the following on his temple work in Assur:[1021]

Ešarra	Ešarra,
mūšab Aššur bēliya	the residence of the god Aššur, my lord,
ana šamê	to the sky.
ulli rēšešu	I raised its top.
elenu ana šamê	Above, to the heavens
ušaqqi rēssu	I made it raise its head
šaplānu ina erṣeti	below in the netherworld
ukīn išdišu…	I firmly placed its foundations…
šaqâ	Its top was
rēšašu šamāmī endu	high (and) reached the heavens;
šaplānu ina apsû	below, its foundations were
šutēlupū šurūšu	entwined with the *apsû.*

In his inscription on rebuilding Esagil, Esarhaddon acknowledges Nudimmud—an alternate name for Ea, god of the *apsû*—to whose abode the foundations of Esagil reached.[1022] The ritual instructions mirror this emphasis on the god's below in the context of temple construction; the inclusion of the incantation to the netherworld god Enmešarra, for example, in the *namburbi* ritual instructions *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* demonstrates that both offerings and foundation deposits were directed as much to the gods below as to the gods above.[1023]

Textual evidence related to the materials used as offerings and in foundation deposits also speaks to the intended protective and apotropaic aspect of these practices. The following line from a mystical explanatory work suggests that the three principal components of *materia medica* in Neo-Assyria were plant, stone, and wood:[1024]

kī šamma abna u iṣa u āšipūta ana murṣi tēpušu itti ṣitišu ēpuš	When you perform plant stone and wood and the art of the *āšipu* for a sick man—one

[1019] RIMB: B.6.22.3, i 39–40.
CAD "K": 349 *kigallu* (KI.GAL), "1. raised platform for cultic purposes, 2. pedestal, base (for a statue, a cult object, an architectural feature made of stone, metal, brick, precious stones, etc. often inscribed), 3. (a poetic term for nether world)."
[1020] SAA 12: no. 86, 16.
[1021] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 31–38, vi 20–27. On the *apsû*, see Jensen 1928.
[1022] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, v 23–28. On Nudimmud, see Cavigneaux and Krebernik 1998–2001.
[1023] Ambos 2004: II.A.2, 51f.
[1024] ME 34035, ii 38–39; see Livingstone 1986: 73; see further note 280.

performs (it) with its command.

These groups of materials from the natural world acquired their affective qualities through an association with specific deities, a tradition that stretches back to much earlier periods in Mesopotamia. Ellis concludes that priceless materials such as stone were used in foundation deposits in order to enhance the brilliance of the temple, giving the structure "a theoretical sumptuousness pleasing to the builder, and hopefully, to the gods."[1025] The author references Sennacherib account of placing an assortment of precious stones into the foundations of the *akītu*-house, that he had received as tribute from Karibi-Ilu, king of Saba'.[1026] Ambos suggests that Ellis' conclusion is too limited, given that more than precious materials were deposited into the foundations. Yet the significance that the quality of brilliance had within this cultural context, I would argue, was tied to the active potential of the stones, such that their inherent brilliance was an aspect of their greater active quality. The use of stones for amulets and cylinder seals further attests to the protective qualities of this material group in the Neo-Assyrian elite cultural context.[1027]

Both Ellis and Ambos also discuss the possibility that the foundation materials as a group were meant to represent the temple as a whole. Ellis suggests an analogy with Egyptian foundation deposits that contained model tools and mudbricks.[1028] Yet Ellis goes on to discount this argument for Mesopotamian foundation deposits, in part because the deposits are not representative of the Mesopotamian building as a whole since it was constructed primarily of mudbrick. Ambos, however, makes the argument from a slightly different perspective, suggesting that the temple that these materials were meant to embody was the primeval temple built by the gods, of which all later temples were reincarnations.[1029] Ambos' argument rests primarily on evidence from Hittite ritual instructions for placing foundation deposits prior to constructing a house; these instructinos list in detail the precious materials with which the gods constructed a temple, including gold, silver, precious stones such as lapis lazuli, and wood.[1030]

Though lacking a text of this type, evidence specific to the Neo-Assyrian period resonates with Ambos' proposition. In the literary text written by Budi-il to the gods Nabu and Tašmetum, the scribe refers to a *šigaru* ("door bolt or bar") of the goddess Tašmetum's bedroom and a bowl within that were made of *uqnû*-stone ("lapis lazuli"), and a covering (*ṣillu*)[1031] for the god Nabu that was made of *burāšu*-wood.[1032] A mystical work attributed to the *āšipu* Kiṣir-Aššur states that the upper, middle, and lower heavens were made of semi-precious stones, and more specifically, that the god Bel sits in a *bītu*

[1025] Ellis 1968: 140.
[1026] Ellis 1968: App. A, No. 18; previously published in, Schroeder 1922: 122, r. 48–60.
[1027] MacGinnis 1989: 191; Maul 1994: 107–113; Ambos 2004: 74; see also, note 280.
[1028] Ellis 1968: 139: "Presumably the purpose of such a deposit would be to establish the essential existence of a building from the very beginning of its construction, and to preserve its existence in spite of any decay or destruction suffered by the superstructure."
[1029] Ambos 2004: 50–51.
[1030] Haas 1994: 252f (Kbo 4.1 +); edited in Boysan-Dietrich 1987: 43–79.
[1031] CAD "Ṣ": 189- *ṣillu*, "1. shadow, shade of a tree, shaded place, 2. awning, covering."
[1032] SAA 3: no. 14; see also, no. 49, 8.

in the middle heaven upon a *parakku* ("dais") of *uqnû*-stone under the light of a lamp of *elmešu*-stone.[1033] Neo-Assyrian literary texts also speak of the gods and their body parts as being made of the materials used in temple foundation deposits, including various woods, precious metals and stones, and organic materials.[1034] A commentary on ritualized practice, also attributed to the *āšipu* Kiṣir-Aššur, states that the *kamānu*[1035] offered by the king to the gods is the heart of Ea, while the burning *erēnu*-wood is the decaying flesh of evil gods.[1036] Though imaginative and metaphorical, such passages support the argument that the temple offerings and foundation deposits were conceived of as material references to the primeval temple or as representative of aspects of the gods themselves by the Neo-Assyrian elite.

The significance of the liquids poured in offering under the foundations is in part suggested by the inscription of Sennacherib cited above, which tells of the king scattering *igulu*-oil and aromatic *šamnu* ("oil") on the foundations of the *akītu*-house as if river water. [1037] In Neo-Assyrian practice, river water had the ability to purify, as communicated by the practice of the *āšipu* of throwing potentially harmful foundation materials into a nearby river.[1038] Drawing upon this association, it may be that the oils, and possibly also the other liquids used as offerings, were poured on the ground in order to cleanse and purify the area. The notion of pouring liquids on the ground in order to purify the temple building site agrees with the preceding practice of removing fallen temple remains in order to cleanse the area before beginning construction. In addition to their cleansing abilities, libations were also used in Neo-Assyria as a means of nourishing the gods.[1039] Accordingly, the liquids, alongside the food offerings of grains, seeds, dates, and baked goods, were yet another means of placating the gods during the process of constructing the temple.

[1033] SAA 3, no. 39, 30–33.
[1034] SAA 3: no. 38, r. 9–17, 39.
[1035] CAD "K": 110 *kamānu*, "(a sweetened cake)."
[1036] SAA 3: no. 37, 23′, r. 24–25; CAD "Š" 2: 415: "*erēnu ša ina panīšunu iquddu šiḫḫātu šīri ilāni lemnūti* the cedar wood which they burn before them (symbolizes) the wasting away of the evil gods." Livingstone includes this work among the "Mythological Texts and Mystical and Cultic Explanatory Works," which offer explanation and interpretations of mythological elements and ritualized practices in Neo-Assyria.
[1037] Luckenbill 1924: 138f, 48–55; also cited in Ellis 1968: App. A, no. 18; previously published in Schroeder 1922: 122, r. 48–60; see also, Ambos 2004: 71–73.
[1038] Water is also used for purification purposes in later practices staged within the temple; see Chapter V.
[1039] Homès-Fredericq 1987–1990-1990: 8: "[Libations] servaient à créer un lien avec les principaux dieux ou déesses, à les apaiser ou à obtenir leurs faveurs, ainsi qu'à les nourrir, car les diviniés «buvaient» et «mangeaient» comme les humains;" see further, Chapter V.1.a. Evidence for these uses outside of temple construction is found in visual representations, archaeological evidence of actual practice, and the textual sources. Palatial wall reliefs of both Aššurnaṣirpal and Aššurbanipal depict the kings pouring libations (Layard 1853a: pl. 12; Winter 1983: fig. 5 (ME 124535); Watanabe 1992: fig. 10–11), and reliefs on the Balawat Gates show Shalmaneser III pouring a libation at the Sea of Nairi (King 1915: pls. I–II; Schachner 2007: pl. 1). When excavating the royal tombs under the Northwest Palace at Nimrud, the Iraqi excavators discovered one tomb with a terracotta pipe leading into the sarcophagus, which they interpreted as evidence of *kispu* rituals (Hussein 2002: 146, 148). On *kispu*, see Tsukimoto 1980; 1985; see further, Brian 2010. Also worth noting is an argument proposed by Winter (1999b), that the depositional patters of two vessels excavated among the grave goods from the Royal Cemetery of Ur illustrate their use in ritualized practice that involved libation and/or anointment at the time of interment. See further, Danmanville 1955; Heimpel 1987-1990; Oppenheim 1977: 183–198; and Ellis 1968: 126–131, for a discussion of food and drink offerings related to building construction.

The value of the foundation inscriptions interred in the ground likely had a more limited scope. The reason for this practice seems to be grounded in honoring and promoting the king and his deeds, in particular that of constructing the structure with which the tablet was contextually and textually bound. A text of Esarhaddon on his rebuilding at Babylon, which was inscribed on a series of clay prisms recovered from various sites, speaks from to this intent:[1040]

ṣēruššun	On [the foundation inscriptions],
danān qarrādi	the might of the great
rabê Marduk epšēt	hero, the god Marduk,(and) the deeds
ēteppušu liptāt	that I had done, my pious
qātīya qerebšun	work, I wrote.
ašṭur ina uššē aškun	I placed (them) in the foundations.
ana ṣât ūmē ēzib	I left (them) for distant time.

An inscription of Sennacherib directed to a foundation inscription gives further insight into this practice:[1041]

temmenna attā ša Sin-aḫḫe-eriba šar Aššur rā'im kināti	O foundation inscription, about Sennacherib, king of Assyria, the one who loves truth,
ēpiš ṣalam Aššur u ilāni rabûti bān bīt dameqtašu ana Aššur qibi	the one who fashioned the image of the god Aššur and the great gods, builder of this *bītu*, speak favorable things to the god Aššur.
mārišu mār mārišu itti ṣalmāt qaqqadi likunnū ana dūr dāri	May his sons and his grandsons endure forever with the black-headed people.

References to the interment of these foundation objects in the texts, which themselves were inscribed on the objects' surfaces, were often the longest of the sections on construction. Adding emphasis was the fact that this section was often placed at the end of the text and thus out of sequence, with statements of the completion of construction preceding it. Lackenbacher suggests the following with regard to this prioritization of the interment of the foundation inscription in what the author refers to as the "formule finale:"[1042]

> il est donc presenté comme la consécration par excellence et le couronnement de l'oeuvre; elles évoquent le dépôt d'objets inscrits, généralement sans préciser où, sauf à l'époque des Sargonides où

[1040] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, vii 12–18.
[1041] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 10, 20–22.
[1042] Lackenbacher 1990: 149; see further the author's longer discussion of this section of the text, 151–173.

> plusieurs récits précisent bien que c'était dans les fondations et même à une certaine profondeur.

The interment of these texts in the foundations below ground and away from the eyes of people suggests that they were for the eyes or ears of the gods alone. Yet passages in the royal inscriptions that speak to their handling by future kings, in addition to the practice of the *libittu maḫrītu*, demonstrate that they were intended to have a larger, future audience. Porter suggests a strong contemporaneous interaction for the royal messages inscribed on foundation materials, proposing that the latter were "vehicles for delivering the king's messages to his people in verbal form before the burial of the documents for audiences in the future."[1043] If the foundation documents were in fact used in this manner prior to deposition—as a formal text that was read out loud—such acts would have enhanced the efficacy of these objects in honoring and promoting the king, in memory and material form.

The use of an assortment of materials, both organic and precious, as offerings and in foundation deposits during the preparation of the building site placed them within a context of ritualized behavior, a set of activities distinguished from the everyday.[1044] Outside of this performative context these materials would not have had the same value or significance: libations—and more specifically the liquids used—were intricately bound to the set of prayers, incantations, and sacrifices alongside which they were performed for the purposes of purification and honoring the gods.[1045] Moreover, these materials, in a reciprocal fashion, also ritualized the practices associated with construction within which they were used, due to the inherent value they were attributed within the Neo-Assyrian elite culture.

With the offerings made and the foundation deposits in place, attention was turned to laying the foundations.[1046] In Neo-Assyrian royal buildings, the latter consisted primarily of mudbricks that were assembled using a mud plaster;[1047] stone, kiln-fired brick, and bitumen were also used, though with less frequency.[1048] Before foundations could be laid, however, these building materials had to be gathered and prepared. The

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[1043] Porter 1993: 113: "We would expect foundation ceremonies to have had an accompanying script, a speech or public announcement in which the king or his representative described the construction project that was being inaugurated and presented with the king as its sponsor. When we read Assyrian building inscriptions, it is hard to imagine texts better suited for such a purpose. Like the speeches made at modern ground-breaking ceremonies, Assyrian building inscriptions typically consist of pious references to divine help, glowing descriptions of the project at hand and of the king's role in making it possible, and a concluding wish that the gods might smile upon the project, upon the people who were to use it, and upon the sponsor who was having it built. Such inscriptions would have served admirably as speeches for the foundation ceremonies inaugurating building projects, a setting in which such inscriptions would have been effective vehicles for delivering the king's messages to his people in verbal form before the burial of the documents for audiences in the future."

[1044] On ritual behavior and archaeology, see note 1011.

[1045] Homès-Fredericq 1987–1990.

[1046] This construction sequence is represented in a letter informing the king on the progress of building in Akkad (it is not clear if this is in reference to a temple or another building): "in the city of Akkad, the foundation stone has been completely built in..., they are producing the brick;" SAA 10: no. 4, 5–r. 2.

[1047] According to Koldeway (1914: 55), the ritual preference for sundried mudbrick in some temple construction dates back to much earlier periods.

[1048] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 20′; Esarhaddon 105, v 30–33.

large building stones would have been acquired by the king from not too distant areas and brought to the capital cities. To mass produce the mudbricks the king would have gathered a group of unskilled laborers overseen by a select set of skilled workmen, the *ummânu*s, preferably in the month Simanu (May-June) following the spring rains and in time for the dry summer months.[1049] The inscriptions of Esarhaddon mention the gathering of this type of brickmaking workforce. For the *libittu*s ("bricks") of Eḫursaggalkurkura and Esagil in Babylon (Karduniaš), Esarhaddon states as follows:[1050]

adkema gimir ummâniya *Karduniaš kalîša*	I gathered all of my *ummânu*s from Karduniaš in its entirety.
allum tupšikku ušaššišunūti *ina nalbanāt šinni pīri* *ušî taskarrini* *musukkannu ušalbina* *libittu*	I made them take up hoe (and) basket. In brickmolds of *šinnu pīru, ušû*-wood, *taskarrinu*-wood, *musukkannu*-wood, I had *libittus* made.
ina šamnu ṭābu dišpu ḫimētu *kurunnu mutinnu šikar* *šadî ablula šallaru.*	With aromatic *šamnu, dišpu,* *ḫimētu, kurunnu*-beer, *mutinnu*, *šikaru*-beer of the mountain, I mixed *šallaru.*

For the *bītu* of Aššur the same king gathered far more than local workmen:[1051]

nišī mātāti	The people of the lands,
lābin libitti	the ones who mold the *libittu*s,
ina ulṣī ḫidâte	with delight, joy,
u rišāte	and exultation,
šanat ištât	for one year,
ilbinū libittu	they made *libittu*s.

As the preceding passage suggests, brickmaking was not represented as a grueling task but rather a festive one. The following inscription of Aššurbanipal communicates a similar mood with respect to brick-making:[1052]

lābin libittišu zābilu *tupšikkišu*	Brick-makers and basket-carriers for it (the construction of the temple)
ina elēli ningūti ubbalu *ūmšun*	pass their day in cheerful song (and) joyous celebration.
ina ḫidūti rišāte ultu uššēšu	In joy and exultation, from its

[1049] See note 310.
[1050] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 96–98; see also, Esarhaddon 57, iv 7–26.
CAD "M": 2, 298f *mutinnu*, "wine."
[1051] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, iv 40–v 2; see further, SAA 5: nos. 56, 296.
[1052] Streck 1916: 88, x 94–96; Borger 1996: 73f, x 94–96.

adi gabadibbišu arṣip	foundations to its parapets, I (re)built it.

Though the *libittu*s were brought to life at the hands of the laborers under the guidance of the *ummânu*s, the royal inscriptions and ritual instructions give the greatest praise to the brickmaking wisdom of the god Kulla, as the god of foundations and bricks.[1053] In addition, both Sin-šarru-iškun and Aššur-etel-ilani—successors to Aššurbanipal—credit the god Nunurra for the *agurru*s ("kiln-fired bricks") that they used in their temple reconstructions.[1054]

The royal inscriptions also mention the ingredients that were used to make the bricks and mortar used in temple foundations. As discussed in Chapter III, mixed in with the expected ingredients of soil, water, and organic materials used to make the mudbrick and mortar were an assortment of liquids, including oils, wines, and resins. The brick mixture was then placed in molds, some of which were made of semi-precious stone, wood, and even ivory. Aššurbanipal, for example, states that he created the bricks for Emeslam, the *bītu* of the god Nergal in Cutha, using *ušû*-wood, *musukkannu*-wood, and cuttings of *riqqu*.[1055]

Though no evidence has been preserved or recovered that confirms the use of stone or wood brickmolds, or the inclusion of valued organic materials in the bricks or mortar, the archaeological evidence at Nimrud and Khorsabad confirms the use of mudbrick for temple foundations.[1056] The meticulous manufacturing process of these mudbricks and the cultural value of the raw materials used in their assembly, established in Chapter III, contributed to the *ellu* aspect of these mudbricks, a descriptive quality noted in the textual sources that references both their material cleanliness and purity, as well as, and perhaps more so, their ritualized purity.[1057] The letter to Esarhaddon from Mar-Issar that testifies to the use of ram's blood on foundation stones suggests that the purity of the stones used for temple foundations was also a concern.[1058]

Archaeological evidence demonstrates that in certain areas of the temples, the mudbrick foundation courses were overlaid with kiln-fired brick pavement.[1059] At Khorsabad kiln-fired bricks were used primarily as paving stones in both courtyards and

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[1053] Ambos 2004: II.A.3 E_1, 9; RIMB: B.6.22.3, ii 1–16; B.6.32.12, 17; B.6.32.15, 18; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 116, r. 21–22; see also (with reference to Kulla's association with the entire rebuilding), RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 128, 16; Esarhaddon 129, 32; Esarhaddon 133, 33; see further, Ambos 2004: 21, and the discussion in Chapter III.2.a.

[1054] Schroeder 1922: 134, 12; RIMB: B.6.35.3, 3; see further Ambos 2004: 24. Aššur-etel-ilani also specifies in another inscription that he rebuilt Ekur with kiln-fired bricks; RIMB: B.6.35.4.

[1055] Nassouhi 1924–1925: 100, i 16–17.

[1056] For example, the mudbricks under Ezida at Nimrud (Oates and Reid 1956: 28–32, 34–38, pl. VIII).

[1057] CAD "E": 102f *ellu*, "1. clean, pure, 2. holy, sacred." For example, RIMB: B.6.22.3, ii 3. Esarhaddon's inscriptions also speak of the hands of the craftsmen, who refashioned the images of the gods, as being *ellu*; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 84.

[1058] SAA 10: no. 354, 15–18. The *kalû* ritual instructions from Seleucid Uruk prescribe a *takpirtu* to be performed beside the laid foundations (*idi ušši nadû takpertum ašra šuāti tuḫâb*); Ambos 2004: 188, r. 32′ (II.D.1.3). Ambos (2004: 78–79) references a *bīt rimki* that gives details related to the performance of the *takpirtu*. On *bīt rimki*, see Ambos 2008.

CAD "T": 85 *takpirtu*, "(a purification rite)."

[1059] As discussed in the preceding chapter, large stone paving slabs were also a common feature of both the Nimrud and Khorsabad temples (Oates and Reid 1956: 36–37; Mallowan 1966: I, 87).

rooms, yet they were also used in walls to mount *sikkātu*s.[1060] As with the mudbricks used in temple foundations, certain characteristic features of the kiln-fired bricks used as paving stones speak to their specialized mode of production. At Khorsabad excavators found kiln-fired bricks stamped with both "the ubiquitous inscription beginning 'Palace of Sargon...'" that is attested for every building on the citadel, including the Houses of Sin and of Nab; [1061] and brick-making marks (FIGURE 24; 137–138);[1062] as discussed above, the latter might be material traces of the *ummânu*s*,* with whom a particular "maker's mark" was assigned or associated. In addition to added surface features, the transformation of mudbricks into kiln-fired bricks in itself was a specialized practice, what Vandiver describes as a "magic process in which clay, made plastic by water, is formed into incredible shapes and then undergoes mutation by fire to rocklike hardness—a process that has been described as turning rocks into rocks."[1063] The Neo-Assyrian references to firing bricks in an *utūnu ellu* ("pure kiln")[1064] echoes the image of ceramic technology that Vandiver paints in this passage.[1065]

These material characteristics and inflected treatment of mudbricks and kiln-fired bricks removed this fundamental and common object of construction—the brick—as well as the process of making bricks and laying the foundations, out of the everyday and the norm, and into the realm of ritualized practice. Moreover, by treating the bricks—the building blocks of the temple—with such elevated care and import, it was as if the entire temple was marked with the same level of value; as Ellis states, "all the evidence available from Mesopotamia shows that the essence of a building was felt to reside in its bricks."[1066]

Further elevating the practice of brickmaking and laying the foundations was the participation of the king himself in these activities. The text inscribed on a pair colossi from Sargon's palace tells of the king's construction of the temples and palace at Khorsabad; first he had *libittu*s made in the month Kulla, then in the month Abu he laid foundations overtop of the deposition offerings:[1067]

eli ḫurāṣi kaspi erî nisiqti abnē ḫibišti	Upon *ḫuraṣu*, *kaspu, erû,* choice stones, *hibištu*s
hamāni pīlšu ušatriṣa uššēšu addīma	of the Amanus, I laid its masonry. I laid its foundation
ukîn libnassu	and made firm its *libittu*s.

Sargon also describes the month Abu as the month when the foundations of a city (*ālu*) and house (*bītu*) are laid down, when all black-headed people erect sheds for their

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[1060] Loud and Altman 1938: 14.
[1061] Loud and Altman 1938: 14.
[1062] DS 691 (A 17615); Loud and Altman 1938: 14, 99, pl. 65, no. 270.
[1063] Vandiver 1991: 362; see further, Foster 2010.
[1064] CAD "U/W": 346f *utūnu* (UDUN), "oven, kiln, furnace."
[1065] Luckenbill 1924: 150, no. VIII, 3; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 132, 6.
[1066] Ellis 1968: 139–140.
[1067] Lyon 1883: pl. 15, 55–57; Fuchs 1994: 68, 55–57 (translation 305).
CAD "Ḫ": 180f *ḫibištu* "1. cuttings (of undefined nature), 2. cuttings of resinous and aromatic substances, 3. plants yielding aromatic substance, 4. fragrance."

dwellings (*rimītu*).[1068] Passages from Aššurbanipal's inscriptions cited above similarly make note of this king's involvement, specifically in fashioning the bricks and beginning construction. Esarhaddon stresses his royal involvement to a noteworthy extent in his royal inscriptions:[1069]

aššu ilūssu	In order to show
rabītu nišī	the people his great divinity
kullumimma šupluḫu	and to inspire awe in his
bēlūtšu kudurru	lordship, I raised the *kudurru*-basket
ina qaqqadiya aššima	onto my head and
ušazbil ramāni	carried it myself.
ina nalbanāt šinni pīri	In brickmolds of *šinnu pīri*,
ušû taskarrini musukkanni	*ušû*-wood, *taskarrinu*-wood, and *musukkannu*-wood,
ušalbina libnāssu	I had its *libittu*s made

ina qātiya ellēti	With my pure hands,
albina libbitu	I made *libittu*s.
danān Aššur	The might of the god Aššur,
bēliya	my lord,
nišī mātāti ušadgil	I let the people see.
kudurru ina qaqqadi	I raised a *kudurru*-basket
aššima	on my head and
ušazbil ramānī	carried it myself.
ana šupluḫ	In order to inspire awe
mātāti	in the lands,
nišī ukallim	I showed it to the people.
nišī mātāti	The people of the lands,
lābin libittī	the ones who mold *libittu*s,
ina ulṣī ḫidâte	with delight, joy,
u rišāte	and exultation,
šanat ištât	for one year,
ilbinū libittu	made *libittu*s.

Not only did Esarhaddon help make the *libittu*s, he also claims—in a similar manner as Sargon—to have helped lay the new foundations:[1070]

ana balāṭ napištiya	For the preservation of my life,
arāk ūmēya	the lengthening of my days,
libittu maḫrītu	the *libittu maḫrītu*,

[1068] Lyon 1883: pl. 15, 52–54; Fuchs 1994: 68, 52–54 (translation 305); also, CAD "Ṣ": 242 *ṣulūlu* A 1; CAD "R": 355 *rimītu*, "residence, dwelling."
[1069] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 104, iii 26–34; Esarhaddon 57, iv 31–v 2.
[1070] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, v 23–28.

ina kišādiya aššima	I raised to my neck,
uššēšu addi	(then) I laid the foundations,
ukîn libnassu	and firmly established its *libittu*s.

In the latter passage Esarhaddon states that he himself laid the *libittu maḫrītu* of the new temple. The significance of this act would have resonated with that of unearthing the *libittu maḫrītu* of the preceding fallen temple, which the king would have recently completed. The laying of the *libittu maḫrītu* of the new temple would reinforce the continuity of the reconstruction with the earlier temple through the performance of this same act, while also setting up the opportunity for future rulers to continue this tradition. Unfortunately no other known text makes explicit reference to a Neo-Assyrian king laying the *libittu maḫrītu* of a temple,[1071] and such practices have not left any obvious trace in the archaeological record.[1072]

The participation of the king in laying foundations is also illustrated by ritual instructions. The task of reciting the incantation to the god Enmešarra, prescribed by the *namburbi Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* ("When you lay the foundations (of a temple)"), is allotted to the king:[1073]

tašakkan āšipu qāt rubê iṣabbatma kiam iqabbi	The *āšipu* takes the hand of the prince and (the prince) recites the following:
šiptu Enmešarra bēl erṣetim rubû ša Aralliû...	Incantation: Enmešarra, lord of the earth, prince of the netherworld…
anna rubû 3-šu iqabbima	This the king speaks three times.

At the end of the instructions *Ṭuppi ḫišiḫti uššē bīt ili epēšu enūma uššē bīt ili tanamdû* ("Tablet for the materials needed in order to lay the foundations of a house of a god: When you are laying the foundations of a house of a god"),[1074] the king is instructed to prostrate himself at the site. The extended concept of the "king as builder" is mirrored in a number of visual works from Neo-Assyria: the wall reliefs of Sennacherib, and two steles of Aššurbanipal and one of Šamaš-šum-ukin show these kings holding a laborer's basket above their heads in the traditional Mesopotamian fashion of a basket-carrier (FIGURE 139–140).[1075] Such royal participation set apart the act of temple construction from the construction of the house of a man. Moreover, there is no strong evidence to

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[1071] The concluding line of *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* ("When you lay the foundations (of a temple)") states as follows: *libitta tanaddī-ma* IM.DÙ.A *ta-pat-ti-iq* ("then you lay the brick and construct the foundations"); *libitta* is here in the singular accusative. Though this passage does not specifically state the *first* brick, the sequential distinction it makes between laying a brick and then constructing the foundations is worth noting.

[1072] See further the discussions in Ellis 1968: 26–29.

[1073] Ambos 2004: II.A.2, 41–42, 58.
CAD "A": 226-227 *arallû*, "(a poetic name for the nether world)."

[1074] Ambos 2004: II.C.2 (K 2000+ etc.).

[1075] See note 784. Unfortunately the inscriptions on the steles do not mention the building actions being performed by the kings depicted on the surface.

suggest that the practice of the *libittu maḫrītu* took place during the construction of a person's house, further marking the act of constructing the house of a god.[1076]

The inclusion of scholarly experts and skilled craftsmen further marked the act of laying new temple foundations. A section of the letter from the high official Urdu-aḫḫešu to the king communicates the importance of the *šeleppāyu*[1077] in laying the foundations of Esagil and the control the king had over this professional:[1078]

Didî šelappāya	Didî, the *šelappayu*
ša ina muḫḫi dulli ša Esagila	who was appointed for the work of Esagil, is here.
paqidduni annāka šū	I said to him, "Come with me
aqṭibaššu muk alka issīya	in order to lay the foundations."
ina muḫḫi karāri ša ušše	(But) he said, "Without the order
mā laššu ša lā pî ša šarri	of the king
lā allak…	there is no way I can go…
ṭēmu liškunūšu issīya lillik	They should place an order for him so that he can go with me.
ša lā šâšu lā mūqāni	Without him, we will not be able to lay the foundations.

In Sennacherib's inscription on his rebuilding of the *akītu*-house at Assur, which began with the laying of the foundations, the king lends credence to the craft of the *išippu* and *kakugallu*.[1079] Sin-šarru-iškun similarly acknowledges his avail of the craft of the *kakugallu* (*ina šipir kakugallūti*) for laying the foundations of the House of Nabu at Assur, according to its old plan and with strong mountain stone.[1080] These inscriptions correlate with the participation of ritual experts in laying temple foundations that is suggested by *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* ("When you lay the foundations (of a temple)").[1081] Though lacking from the Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions so far uncovered, Seleucid ritual instructions for the *kalû* testify to the involvement of this scholar in laying new foundation as well. The latter instructs the *kalû* to continue reciting lamentations and making offerings until the laying of the foundations was complete.[1082] The mass group of workers that would have been overseen by the *ummânu*s further marked the laying of foundations for the temple in Neo-Assyria.

[1076] Ambos (2004: 78) concludes that the few passages that mention opening the foundations and laying a brick for a human's house likely refer to the brickwork in a general sense, and not to a specific first brick involved in this type of ritualized practice.

[1077] CAD "Š": 2, 270f *šeleppāju*, "(an artisan);" additional Neo-Assyrian attestations of this title include it in lists of taxation, rations, and in relation to the palace.

[1078] SAA 13: no. 161, 17′–23′, r. 5–6.

[1079] Luckenbill 1924: 137, 30–32; see further, note 954 and the associated in-text citation.

[1080] Böhl 1947: 36, no. 25, 29–30; also transcribed and translated in CAD "K": 61 *kakugallūtu.*

[1081] Ambos 2004: II.A.2. Ambos includes *Enūma* IM.DÙ.A *tapattiqu* among the *āšipūtu* (work of the *āšipū*) as part of the "Kulla" series; see Chapter IV.1.a.

[1082] Ambos 2004: II.D.1.3; see further, Ambos 2004: 12, 193.

While this vast group of scholarly experts and craftsmen that contributed to the laying of temple foundations may not be discernable at an archaeological level, the immense size and visible durability of the foundations themselves, as preserved and recovered at both Nimrud and Khorsabad, attests to the scale of workers that would have been involved in their creation. This visual testament was not lost on early excavators at these sites: when uncovering the foundations and colossal terrace of the palace and temple complex at Khorsabad, Place could not help but express awe at the extensive labor and organization of practice that the construction of these foundations would have demanded:

> L'érection de ce monticule artificiel était pourtant une oeuvre purement préliminaire, car il devait servir seulement de base pour asseoir le Palais. Quelle quantité d'hommes employés à un simple travail préparatoire! L'extraction et le transport de l'argile, sa malaxation et son corroyage, le moulage des briques, leur séchage et leur pose, ont dû absorber un chiffre de bras incalculable, et done le réunion ne peut se comprendre qu'en songeant aux innombrables prisonniers amenés de toutes les contrées part les rois d'Assyrie.[1083]

This initial performative sequence for temple construction—from the original motivations through to the laying of foundations—exhibits an elevated degree of ritualization. The commonality between the textual sources of different kings, the parallels found in the ritual instructions and omen collections, and the sparing yet existent archaeological evidence affirms the strong cultural resonance these practices had within the Neo-Assyrian elite milieu. The emphasis on continuity and the motivations behind it, all of which had a common core objective—to maintain the favor of the gods—manifest the profoundly symbolic nature of this activity, activity that evinces many of the principal characteristics of ritualized practice as set forth by Bell: traditionalism, disciplined invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, and performance.[1084]

The materials, the personnel, and the nature of the activities that made up this sequence of events set these practices apart from those that were associated with preparing a site for building a human's house. Precious metals, exotic stones, figurines of the king, and royal foundation inscriptions were not a part of everyday practices, nor was the participation of skilled scholarly experts, craftsmen, and the king himself. Because of his elevated social status and access to valued materials and resources, the king was able, first, to claim privileged access to the gods and their wisdom; second, to prepare the building site of a previous temple in the requisite manner; and third, to make offerings, inter foundation deposits, and lay foundations that were worthy of the gods and which mirrored the primeval temples built by the gods themselves; all the while inserting himself, as a divinely sanctioned ruler, into this mix of activity.

[1083] Place 1867–1870: I, 28.
[1084] Bell 1997: 138–170.

c. Doorways to Block Evil

The creation of doorways and the installation of doors in Neo-Assyrian temples marked an important stage in the construction process. This architectural unit provided a physical mediator between rooms and courtyards, serving a pivotal role in both marking off and controlling access between areas of varying degrees of ritualization. In the Mesopotamian world doors were places of great vulnerability: the evil and threatening entities of the world could pass through such an "interruption in a wall"[1085] if the proper measures were not taken to block their entry. A passage from the Mesopotamian literary text "The Descent of Ištar" stresses this vulnerability of place while also itemizing a number of the architectural features that made up a doorway and which factor into the ensuing discussion:[1086]

amaḫḫaṣ daltum sikkūru ašabbir	I will smash the *daltu*, I will break the *sikkūru*,
amaḫḫaṣ sippuma ušabalkat daltī	I will smash the *sippu* and dislodge the *daltu*s.

The manner of manufacturing and mounting a door and its various elements was in itself a means by which the Neo-Assyrians warded off evil from their house and themselves. The textual sources speak to both the practical and ritualized aspects of this stage of construction in a temple, with notable similarities to the preparation of the temple building site. Yet a distinction is found with the materials, which achieve a greater material presence and visibility when used in the construction of doorways. As a result, the archaeological evidence from Nimrud and Khorsabad makes a strong contribution to the current discussion alongside the textual sources.

Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions and omen collections address the construction of particular architectural features related to a doorway, and prescribe steps to be taken for both repairing a previous version that had come to ruin and inserting one anew into a building. Both *Enūma sippū kunnū* ("When the doorframe is mounted")[1087] and the omen series *Šumma ālu*[1088] communicate a concern for the stability of the *sippu*s, "narrow features on either side of a gateway" that are best translated as "doorjamb."[1089] The former ritual instructions prescribe the ritual expert to properly cleanse and nourish himself in the evening, and the following morning to make offerings and libations to the gods at the door of the *papāḫu* in preparation for mounting the *sippu*. The colophon

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[1085] Damerji's (1987: 53) characterization of a door as an "interruption in a wall" communicates the vulnerable aspect of this architectural feature, as a break within an otherwise solid and secure feature of a building.

[1086] Ebeling 1919: no. 16, 17–18; CAD "D": 53.
CAD "S": 256f *sikkūru* (GIŠ.SAG.KUL), "1. bar, bolt (as locking device)."

[1087] Ambos 2004: II.C.3 (K3810). The catch-line of the Seleucid ritual instructions for the *kalû* indicates that the subsequent tablet began *Enūma sippu kunnu* ("When the *sippu* is put in place")(Ellis 1968: 33).

[1088] Freedman 1998: 92.

[1089] George's (1995: 184f, fig. 4) identification of this term is based on both archaeological and textual evidence for Esagil in Babylon; see further, CAD "S": 303 *sippu*, "1) doorframe, doorjambs, b) of temples and palaces;" Salonen 1961: 62–63, who argues that the *sippu* refers to the unit of doorjamb, threshold, and door-socket to one side of the door; Ambos 2004: 62–66.

ascribes *Enūma sippū kunnū* to the *rab ṭupšarru* Issar-šumu-ereš, the same scholar from whom we have a number of letters that deal with temple building activity in the court of Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal.[1090] Yet it was likely the *āšipu* that would have carried out these preliminary measures, based on the correlation between what is preserved of the prescribed ritualized activities and what is known of the craft of the *āšipu*. Ritual instructions inscribed on a tablet from Sultantepe for the collapse and rebuilding of a *daltu* ("door") attest to the role of the *kalû* in the construction of doors in Neo-Assyrian temples.[1091] The instructions prescribe offerings and libations to be made at the site of the *daltu* at night, the following morning before construction, and again after construction is complete. The sequence concludes with the *kalû* arranging stones on a cord of *kaspu* ("silver") to be hung at the top of the *daltu*. The final lines convey the purpose of this practice:[1092]

epšēti annāti teppušma	You will perform these deeds and
ilu itti šarri bīti māti āli	the god will bring peace to the king,
isallim lumun dalti šuāti	the *bītu* (of the god), the land (and) the city. The evil of that *daltu*
ana šarri ul iṭehhe	will not approach the king.

Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions also prescribe the deposition of figurines at doorways. *Šēp lemutti ina bīt amēli parāsu* ("to block the entry of the enemy in someone's house"),[1093] for example, prescribes specific figurines to be placed at the outer *bābu*s (*kamû*)[1094] and at certain *askuppu*s ("thresholds") of a house. Wiggermann refers to those figurines with the inscriptions *ṣi… erba* ("go out…, enter…") as the doorkeepers, their purpose being both to block evil from entering and to let good pass by.[1095] While this practice speaks to the same apotropaic purpose of warding off evil as the offerings and libations placed in the foundations of a house, what textual evidence has survived does not confirm whether this *Šēp lemutti ina bīt amēli parāsu* was a part of the initial construction of the doorway or was only carried out at later times when the building or inhabitant was threatened.

The Gate Lists of Esagil also supports the notion of doorways as powerful and significant spaces, the text's purpose being to record the location of the gates within the temple complex and their ceremonial names along with explanatory information.[1096] The strength and power that was associated with the *sippu* of doorways is communicated in an

[1090] SAA 10: nos. 14, 21; possibly, SAA 16: no. 125. On Issar-šumu-ereš, see note 820.
[1091] Ambos 2004: II.D.2.
[1092] Ambos 2004: II.D.2, 38–39a.
[1093] Wiggermann 1992: Text II (KAR 298). On foundation figurines, see the discussion in Chapter I, and Schmitt 2004.
[1094] CAD "K": 127 *kamû*, "outer, outside, a) referring to gates."
[1095] Wiggermann 1992: 86.
[1096] A Neo-Assyrian version of this text was recovered at Aššur (VAT 13817)(George 1992: 83–98).

oracle from a work referred to as "The Covenant Tablet of Aššur." In the relevant passage the goddess Ištar of Arbela reprimands Esarhaddon as follows:[1097]

mā 4 sippī ša Aššur	Did I not bend the four *sippu*s of Assyria,
lā akpupa lā addinakka	did I not give them to you?

The literary text of Budi-il to Nabu and Tašmetum similarly highlights the power of the doorway, with its reference to the *šigaru* ("door bolt or bar") of *uqnû*-stone ("lapis lazuli") that was used to secure the bedroom of the goddess Tašmetum.[1098] Last, texts in the *Maqlu* series emphasize the vulnerability of doorways and offer incantations to be recited to revoke evil and create a secure boundary at a doorway.[1099]

Though somewhat divorced from the larger sequence of construction, excerpts from the royal correspondence also hint at the various architectural elements involved in constructing temple doorways in Neo-Assyria. The letter sent from an official in Assur to the king regarding the work on the House of Sin at Assur, mentions three *sippu*s of *kaspu* ("silver") amongst the materials intended for the refurbishment of the *atmanu* ("god's chamber") of the god Nikkal.[1100] Similarly, Ṭar-šar-aššur letter to Sargon on the progress of work at Khorsabad refers to the the metal and wooden features of the *daltu*s for the *bītu*s of Sin, Šamaš, and Nikkal at Khorsabad.[1101] More generic is a letter from Urdu-aḫḫešu to the king that includes the mounting of the *daltu*s of Esagil in the context of a memorandum of affairs to be discussed.[1102] Last, the report of Nabu-šuma-lišir, an official in Babylon during the reign of Sargon, on the refurbishments of Esagil communicates the strong visual impact of the *daltu*s:[1103]

lē'āni qatû u Babilaya	The plating is ready, and all
mala ūm 4 ana Esaggil	the Babylonians who on the 4th day
īlûnimma dalta īmurū ina pān	went up to Esagil and saw the *daltu*, before
Bēl u Bēltiya šarra bēlā	Bel and Beltiya, blessed the king,
iktarabbū u ma'diš	my lord, and rejoiced
hamû šarru bēliya lū ḫamê	greatly. The king my lord can be happy.
dalat Esaggil u Babili	The *daltu* of Esagil and Babylon,
bīt ilānīka ma'diš ṭâbi	the *bītu* of your gods, is very beautiful.

[1097] SAA 9: no. 3, iii 20–21; see further, Parpola 1997: XIX–XX.
[1098] SAA 3: no. 14, r. 10 (SAA 3); see also, no. 49, 8.
[1099] Abusch 1991.
[1100] SAA 13: no. 28, 14′– r. 2.
[1101] SAA 1: no. 66.
[1102] SAA 13: no. 166, 1–2.
[1103] SAA 17: no. 34, 11–18. On Nabu-šumu-lešir, see PNA 2/II: 890, "Nabû-šumu-lēšir 3."

The manner in which doorways are dealt with in the royal inscriptions resonates with the awareness of visual impact that is present in this last letter. When mentioning the large doors that were part of their building projects, the kings often highlight he different parts of the doorway not for their assembly or use, but rather for the valued materials with which they were made, predominantly exotic woods and precious metals. The former were valued for their size, strength, durability, and pleasing fragrance, and the latter for their strength and durability, as well as their forgeability, brilliance and shine, and color. An experientially mindful passage from Esarhaddon's inscriptions communicates this level of material appreciation:[1104]

dalāt šurmēni ša irīssina	On *dalt*us of *šurmēnu*-wood whose fragrance
ṭābu meser ḫurāṣi	is sweet, I fastened bands of
urakkisma urattâ bābīšu	*ḫurāṣu*, and installed (them) in its *bābu*s.

The materially oriented references to individual features of the doorways give some insight into the assembly of the various architectural features. Aššurnaṣirpal notes the use of *sikkat karri siparri* ("bronze knobbed nails") to fasten *daltu*s in the *bītu* of Šarrat-niphi.[1105] Esarhaddon states that he positioned a pair of animals cast of *kaspu* ("silver") to support the *adappu*s that formed the *kulūlu* of a *daltu* in the *bītu* of Aššur.[1106] This king also states that he installed *sikkūru*s ("door bolts") on the *bābu*s of the *bītu* of Ištar at Arbela[1107] and on the *papaḫḫu*s of the goddess Ištar within Eanna, which he made resplendent (*ušparziḫ*).[1108] Aššurbanipal similarly emphasizes the aesthetic quality of the *šigaru*s ("door bolt or bar") that he had installed in Esagil by comparing their radiance to that of the constellations (*šiṭir burūmû*),[1109] this expression possibly being used synecdochically for the doorway as a whole.[1110] An inscription of this same king on his reconstruction of Emeslam, the *bītu* of Nergal at Cutha, gives an indication of when the installation of a doorway—symbolized by reference to the *šigaru*s—took place within the larger scheme of construction: after delineating the ground plan and laying the foundations, yet before applying various exotic woods to the temple and raising high its summits.[1111]

The kings also established an apotropaic presence at temple doorways, by positioning at these mediating spaces mythological animals, either cast of metal or carved

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[1104] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 22′–23′.
[1105] A.0.101.28, 10–11.
CAD "K": 221 *karru* (GÀR), "a) 1' knob of a peg or decorative nail (*sikkatu*)."
[1106] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 29′-33′.
CAD "D": 106 *dappu*, "(wooden) board, a) in hist.).
CAD "K": 527 *kulūlu*, "2. cornice (as an architectural term)."
[1107] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, 17.
[1108] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 134, 15.
[1109] CAD "B": 345 *burūmû*, "a) in *ṣitir burūmê* stars, constellations (lit. writing of the firmament)."
[1110] Streck 1916: 240, no. 6, 9; 244, no. 7, 15; CAD "Š": 2, 409 1. b).
[1111] Nassouhi 1924–1925: 98, i 21; CAD "Š": 2, 409 *šigaru* 1. b).

from stone.[1112] Esarhaddon's inscriptions stand out in this respect, often listing a full assortment of apotropaic figures he had positioned at a temple's *bābu*s. The following passage on his work on the *bītu* of Ištar of Arbela illustrates this point:[1113]

urmaḫḫī anzê nā'iri laḫmē kurībī	I had *urmaḫḫu*s, screaming *anzû*s, *laḫmu*s, (and) *kurību*s fashioned
ša kaspi ḫurāṣi u erî ušēpišma nēreb bābīšu ulziz.	of *kaspu, ḫurāṣu,* and *erû* and I positioned them at its entry *bābu*s.

Inscribed bricks of Tiglath-pileser III were recovered from Assur, the text from which states that they belonged to the *kigallu* under the *alpu*s ("bulls") of a *bābu* in the *bītu* of Adad; the mention of a *kigallu* ("pedestal") suggests the three-dimensionality of the figures.[1114] The apotropaic role of the large-scale mythological figures was the same as that of the foundation figurines that were interred at doorways, yet the former had a far greater visibility and stood at a much larger scale. An inscription of Esarhaddon attests to this function for the mythological figures he installed in his palace:[1115]

šēdī u lamassī ša abnī	*šēdu*s and *lamassus* of stone,
ša kī pî šiknišunu	whose appearance
irti lemni utarru	repels the breast of the evil one,
nāṣir kibsi mušallimu	protectors of the path, guardians
tallakti šarri bānîšunu	of the walkway of the king, who made them,
imna u šumēla ušaṣbita šigaršin	to the left and the right of its *šigarus*, I had installed.

Sennacherib's inscriptions similarly elucidate the apotropaic quality of his doorway figures:[1116]

ina barakki ša qereb papāḫī	In the corridors of the *papāḫu*s,
aptī birrī upattâ	I made openings for latticed windows.
lamassāti gišnugalli šinni	female *lamassu*s of *gišnugallu*-

[1112] RIMA 2: A.0.101.28, v 12–13; RINAP 1: Tilgath-pileser III 59; Luckenbill 1924: 145, 17; see further, CAD "L": *lamassu*, "2. representations of the *lamassu*-spirit, b) used at gates;" CAD "U": 232–233 *urmaḫḫu*, "lion colossus;" CAD Š 2: 259 *šēdu*, "1. (a spirit or demon representing the individual's vital force), 2. (an orthostat with representation of the *šēdu*)."

[1113] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 77, 10–11; see also, Esarhaddon 60, 24′–25′.
CAD "A": 2, 153f *anzû* (AN.IM.DUGUD.MUŠEN), "(a mythological creature resembling an eagle)."
CAD "L": 41f *laḫmu,* "(a monster)."
CAD "K": 559 *kurību,* "(a representation of a protective genius with specific non-human features)."

[1114] RINAP 1: Tiglath-pileser III 60.

[1115] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 2, v 27–32.
CAD "Š": 2, 256f *šēdu* A (^{d}ALAD), "2. (an orthostate with representation of the *šēdu*)

[1116] RINAP 3: ESennacherib 17, vi 30–36.

pīri	stone and *šinnu pīri*,
ša illūrū našâ kitmusa rittāšin	whose folded hands hold *illūru*-flowers,
bāltu kuzbu ḫītlupā lulê	who are clad in pride and allure, who are full
malâ ina bābīšin ulzizma	of splendor, I positioned at their *bābu*s.
ana tabrâte ušālik	I made them objects to be admired.

The fact that Aššurbanipal lists mythological doorway figures in an account of his destruction of the temples of Susa provides further confirmation of the power and strength they embodied in the Neo-Assyrian world:[1117]

adka šēdī lamassī maṣṣarī	I called up *šēdu*s (and) *lamassu*s, as many
šūt ekurri māla bašû	guardians of *ekurru*s as there are,
unassiḫa rīmē nadrūti simat bābī	I tore out the (images of) raging *rīmu*s, which adorned their *bābu*s,
ešrēti Elamti adi lā baše ušalpit	I destroyed the *ešertu*s of Elam until they no longer existed.

The fact that the kings fit the temple doorways with mythological figures, whose protective roles were well substantiated in the Neo-Assyrian world, exposes an awareness on the part of the king and his building personnel for the dangers and vulnerabilities of this architectural space. The deposition of ephemeral offerings and libations at doorways by the kings similarly acknowledges this threat. Moreover, the increase in scale and visibility of the mythological figures, in comparison to their foundation counterparts, contributed to the marking of the temple as a space other than that of a human's house.

Even though the royal inscriptions provide minimal information on the activities behind the creation and installation of doorways and the accompanying practices performed by the *ummânu*s, the treatment doorways receive in these text and the elements that are emphasized, including the mythological figures, confirms their importance in the larger scheme of construction and in the subsequent life of the temple. The combination of all of these active material elements would have created a strong protective shield at temple doorways and set them apart visually and materialistically as doorways fit for the house of god.

The archaeological evidence is similarly silent when it comes to corroborating the practices associated with the construction of doorways, as prescribed by the ritual instructions. Such a discrepancy is of no great surprise, since many of the materials prescribed by the text as offerings and libations for doorways were perishable. A possible exception to this material silence are the empty foundation deposit boxes that were found set into the pavement to each side of the principal doorways of the Houses of Ningal,

[1117] Streck 1916: 54, vi 58–63; Borger 1996: 55, vi 58–63.

Adad, and Ninurta at Khorsabad (FIGURE 141).[1118] Whether or not these boxes once contained figurines as those described above, and whether they were installed prior to the construction of the doorway, is not clear. The material evidence of the principal doorways and neighboring façades of the temples at both Nimrud and Khorsabad does, however, confirm the use of the precious and exotic materials of which the kings boast in their royal inscriptions, including thresholds of large building stone and bricks inscribed by the kings; colossal wooden doors and door poles adorned with bands of precious metals; door sockets made of stone inscribed by the king; carved stone wall reliefs of protective mythological figures placed on the doorjambs; polychromatic glazed brick panels that flanked doorways and were superimposed by buttresses of engaged half-columns; and glazed brick bands above temple doorways (FIGURE 40; 43; 45; 109; 112; 142).[1119]

This large corpus of material evidence demonstrates that meticulous skill and labor went into both the manufacture of the individual elements that made up the doorway and their installation at the building site as a composite architectural unit.[1120] The stone thresholds of the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad demonstrate the superior abilities of the stone-masons and carvers who participated in temple construction, their sheer size standing as testament to their technical skill. The portal of the principal doorway to the House of Sin at Khorsabad, for example, measured 3.4 meters wide and 3.6 meters deep, and its threshold was composed of a single stone.[1121] Large pivot stones were also used to support the pivots of the massive two-leaf wooden doors; a pair of such stones from the House of Sin at Khorsabad were finished with bands carved into the stone around the recess and edge (FIGURE 143).[1122] Were the top of the temple doorways also defined by stone archways with glazed bands similar to the city gateway at Khorsabad (FIGURE 113–114),[1123] this would reinforce the heightened technical understanding such a construction would have demanded of the stone-carvers and *ummânu*s in charge of their assembly.[1124] Though not found intact, similar material evidence from temple doorways supports the reconstruction of this same type of

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[1118] Loud 1936: 101, 108, 112, fig. 117.

[1119] For a discussion of these architectural features, see the relevant sections in Chapter III and associated figures.

[1120] For a full discussion of doorways from ancient Mesopotamia, see Damerji 1987.

[1121] Loud and Altman 1938; see further, for the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, Reade 2002: 171, App. 2 (M 24); House of Nabu at Khorsabad, Loud and Altman 1938: 59; as well as the House of Ninurta at Khorsbad, Loud 1936: fig. 113, which is particularly well preserved and was found *in situ*. See also, Damerji 1987: 106f.

[1122] Loud 1936: 115–116, fig. 120; Loud and Altman 1938: 25; see further, Reade 2002: 151, on the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud. Slits were also cut into thresholds for the vertical door bolts with which the doors were secured, as noted in the royal inscriptions and attested to at the doorway to the House of Nabu at Khorsabad. While the majority had two slits, one for the bolt of each door leaf, the doorway to the inner courtyard in the House of Nabu had three slits, suggesting the use of three bolts (Loud and Altman 1938: 59, pl. 20 B). See further, RIMA 3: A.0.102.93, for an inscription of Shalmaneser III on a stone door-socket, and similarly, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 68 (ME 115703).

[1123] Place 1867–1870: I, 174–175; III, pl. 11, 14–17; Pillet 1962: pl. V–VII. On well-known motifs from Neo-Assyrian royal imagery, see further the references in note 722.

[1124] Loud and Altman 1938: 25: "the vault was considered the more elegant form and was therefore generally employed in monumental portals giving entry to important rooms and in those providing major circulation. The majority would accordingly be of wooden lintel construction."

polychromatic archway arrangement.[1125] Reade suggests that this form may have been an innovation of the craftsmen at Khorsabad, due to the lack of strong evidence for this arrangement from the areas of Nimrud that have been excavated to-date.[1126]

Similarly representative of the stone-carvers skills are the three-dimensional colossi and wall reliefs of protective mythological figures that have been found at the doorways to temples. The doorways to the House of Ninurta and the neighboring god's chamber at Nimrud were flanked by wall reliefs of bird and human-headed *apkallu*s and fish-cloaked figures,[1127] while a pair of lion colossi and reliefs of Anzu and Ninurta were positioned on their doorjambs (FIGURE 41–43; 109; 144–145).[1128] In a similar fashion stone *kululu*s ("fish-men") flanked the exterior doorway—the "Fish-Gate"—to Ezida (FIGURE 45).[1129] We learn from the inscriptions of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon that the carving of large stone blocks was done at the quarries with iron axes (*qulmû*) and pickaxes (*akkullu*); the finished products were then transported to the capital city for use in the kings' royal building projects.[1130] Sennacherib's wall reliefs representing the quarrying and transport of a bull colossus from the mountains to the capital city in the Southwest Palace at Nineveh provide a visual confirmation for this practice (FIGURE 146–147).[1131] Though not discussed in detail, the excavation reports from Khorsabad note finding masons' debris at the base of reliefs from the palace, which suggests that additional carving was carried out once the reliefs had been set in place though prior to the assembly of the surrounding architectural features.[1132]

The wooden and metal features of the temple doorways similarly suggest that they were created by craftsmen highly skilled in their trade. As illustrated by the modern day reconstruction of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III at the British Museum (FIGURE 148), door leaves were composed of a number of individually hewn, large wooden planks that were aligned to form a flat panel. The textual sources and archaeological evidence also demonstrate that some such panels were held together by horizontally staggered flat metal relief bands, the surface designs of which were executed using both incised and repoussé techniques; the bands were then mounted with small metal nails (FIGURE 80–86). Additional bands were recovered that encircled wooden door poles in a similar horizontally staggered fashion (FIGURE 89–91). Other temple door leaves and door poles were entirely covered with metal foil. For example, the letter to Sargon cited above speaks of *lē'u*s ("sheets") of *kaspu* ("silver") and *siparru* ("bronze") for the *daltu*s of the

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[1125] Place 1867–1870: I, 126; III, 24; Loud and Altman 1938: 42.
[1126] Reade 1995: 228.
[1127] Reade 2002: 168, App. 2. Examples from museum collections include, for the doorway to the House of Ninurta: ME 98060 (1903-10-10, 1); ME 118922 (1999-1-22, 1); Met 32.143.10; Met 32.143.9; Berlin VA 954; and for the doorway to the neighboring god's chamber: ME 124575 (1999-1-22, 2); ME 124573 (1851-9-2, 503); ME 124570 (1851-9-2, 506).
[1128] Reade 1995: 168–169, 206, fig. 48–49, App. 2; the lion colossi are in the Iraq Museum; reliefs of Ninurta and Anzu are at the British Museum (ME 124571–124572 (1851-9-2, 501-502)).
[1129] See note 378.
[1130] Luckenbill 1924: 126, IV, a) I, 10, 5; Oppenheim 1969: 291.
CAD "Q": 299 *qulmû*, "(an ax) a) used for hewing stone."
CAD "A": 1, 276 *akkullu*, "(a hammer-like tool)."
[1131] Barnett et al. 1998; Russell 1991; Moorey 1994: 32; see also, Parpola 1995: 61f.
[1132] Loud 1936: 79.

temples,[1133] while the foil fragments recovered from the temples at Khorsabad—gold from the House of Nabu and bronze from the House of Sin (FIGURE 73–75; 87–88)—provides evidence for the covering of door poles. In contrast to the figurative motifs of the flat reliefs bands, the preserved sheathing fragments from Khorsabad display a scale-like pattern reminiscent of palm bark.[1134]

The minute details of these non-portable works of art betray their masterful execution at the hands of skilled craftsmen, no less impressive than the scale of the wooden features they were mounted upon, the latter being carved of large, durable, exotic logs. In her study of the metal relief bands, Guralnick itemizes the techniques required to create the single tree-motif (FIGURE 89–90):[1135]

> The basic forms for this and all other motifs were probably hammered repoussé into carved stone forms. The bronze exhibits exquisite surface tooling to emphasize shapes and to add texture and details. At least six specially made tools were used for this one motif. One impressed and sharpened the general outline and form of the tree and branches. A second and third impressed the special shapes of the leaves and fruit. A fourth fine-pointed tool the textured bark of the branches. There is visual evidence that the additional three surviving examples of the fig tree reflect the same sophisticated tooling.

The abundance of technical terms in Akkadian for working with metal demonstrates the value of and high regard for this technology among the Neo-Assyrian elite.[1136] The metalworking passage from Sennacherib's royal inscriptions, in which the king boasts of recovering the lost casting technology with which he then crafted colossi and large door poles for his palace, communicates the understanding of this skill as privileged knowledge.[1137] Further elevating the value of these finished products were the motifs of the figurative bands themselves, visual imagery that was grounded in the same scholarly knowledge and wisdom as the scenes on the glazed brick panels from the same temples.

Reade proposes a kind of rebus for the glazed brick panel sequence, with each of the horizontally arranged elements—of Assyrian king, bird, bull, fig tree, plow, and human figure —standing for a word: the king as "lion," bird as "great," bull as "king," tree as "land," plow as "Assur," and the human figure as determinative for land (FIGURE 112).[1138] The longest version, which includes all of these elements, would read as follows: "Sargon, great king, king of Assyria."[1139] If such interpretation stands true, it

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[1133] SAA 1: no. 66.

[1134] Loud and Altman (1938: 96) described this pattern as "mountains;" see further, Guralnick 2008b.

[1135] Guralnick 2008b: 396. On the use of one metal to cover another, see note 597.

[1136] CAD "E": 322; including, *dummuqu*, "to refine," *patāqu,* "to cast," *ṣâdu,* "to smelt," *šapāku,* "to pour into the mold," *bullulu,* "to alloy," and *sêru,* "to plate;" see further, Winter 2003.

[1137] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 80–vii 8.

[1138] Reade 1995: 235; see further, Place 1867–1870: I, 125; Loud 1936: 92–97; Muros et al. 2002; Whyte et al. 2004. The glazed brick panels from the Houses of Šamaš, Ningal, and Nabu closely parallel this figurative sequence; see further, Loud 1936: 80f; Loud and Altman 1938: 59, pl. 17; Reade 1995.

[1139] A short version that omitted one or two figures has been reconstructed for the façade of the neighboring House of Ningal at Khorsabad, based on archaeological finds (Loud 1936: 110, 112), for which Reade (1995: 235) suggests the following interpretation: "[Sargon, king] of Assyria." Glazed brick panels were found at principal doorways between the following spaces: House of Nabu: Court I and Room 13; Court II

provides material confirmation of the ongoing role of the scholarly *ummânu*s in temple construction beyond the initial preparation and purification stages. The intellect and wisdom exclusive to this group would have been necessary for producing such coded imagery, as well as for understanding the finished product: the panels would have been intelligible to a small group of learned individuals who passed through these spaces.[1140]

The figural representations on the metal relief bands that decorated the wooden doors and door poles of these temples mirror those of the glazed brick panels, with horizontal sequences of birds, bulls, horses, ploughs, and the king.[1141] The brick panels and metal bands thus reinforce through equally valued material the role of the intellectual elite in temple construction. The inclusion of imagery closely associated with the *ummânu*s in the visual program of the temple, rather than narrative scenes of kingly activities that were common to Neo-Assyrian palaces, reinforces its status as "other" and contributes to the conclusions made in Chapter V regarding the Neo-Assyrian temple, in particular the House of Nabu, as a place of scholarly and scribal practice.[1142]

The visual and experiential aspects of these glazed brick panels also betrays the heightened technical skill that went into their assembly. Each brick would have been manufactured as discussed in Chapter III, beginning with the mixing of the necessary organic materials and perhaps the addition of valued prestigious materials, all of which was placed in a mold to set. The bricks would have then assembled with a flat vertical surface so that the colorful glazed design could be applied to their surfaces, using mixtures created from the desired pigments and minerals. Each brick would have then been placed in a kiln for firing. The painted identifying marks on the top surfaces of individual bricks from the House of Sin, discussed in Chapter IV.2 (FIGURE 137), show that these bricks were first glazed in a workshop, disassembled, fired, and reassembled at the temple site. Unfortunately this individualized method of production is not attested for the bricks of the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, the preserved evidence being a watercolor drawing (FIGURE 109) and the written records of Layard himself from the excavations. The latter state that these bricks were set up to one side of the doorway and were painted or glazed, though no mention is made of possible figurative imagery on their surface.[1143]

Adding further embellishment to the façades at Khorsabad were niche-and-reed buttresses, a visually elaborate wall element that broke up the horizontal monotony of a

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and Room 19; House of Sin: Court XXVII and Room 167; House of Ninurta: Court and Room 4. On the visual and experiential characteristics of these architectural elements, see the respective sections in Chapter III.2.

[1140] Reade (1995: 235f) references additional attestations of language games of scholars and kings from Mesopotamia.

[1141] Curtis and Tallis 2008: 79-81; Guralnick 2008b.

[1142] The scenes from the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III present an exception to this division of scholarly and royal imagery between the temple and palace. Perhaps this deviation from the style of temple imagery found in the temples of Nimrud and Khorsabad is the result of this temple being situated outside of a Neo-Assyrian capital city, and as such, its most exterior imagery may have been manufactured to broadcast a different message to the local audience.

[1143] Layard 1853a: 348: "the walls on both sides were adorned with enameled bricks;" Add. Ms. 39096: 51: 16.ii.1850: "curious wall of bricks covered in bitumen and the top formed by three rows of painted bricks (not *in situ*) on the north side;" Ms D, 36: "painted bricks which appear to have been brought from some other edifice as on each were parts of designs not completed on the adjoining bricks;" see Reade 2002: 168–169, fig. 31.

wall. This type of buttress—the projecting support of brick that extended outwards from a wall—consisted of a set of vertical engaged-half columns ("reeds") that was framed on either side by a grooved niche, or at times a smaller group of engaged-half columns.[1144] The niche-and-reed buttress was placed above a glazed brick panel if present, and if not, simple brickwork served as its foundation. Buttresses of this type were positioned consistently on walls of the central courtyard (Court XXVII) of the palace temple complex and three walls of the inner courtyard of the House of Nabu (Court II), in addition to the exterior façade of the House of Nabu and the southwest façade of its outer courtyard (Court I)(FIGURE 112; 149–150). The high level of skill required of this decorative technique is evidenced by the use of three separate types at Khorsabad. A simple grooved rectangular niche with a group of three, five, or seven engaged half-columns was used for the temple façades in Court XXVII. A larger, more elaborate type was used in the House of Nabu: "a broad, deep, rabbeted niche flanked on either side by a group of three reeds and a simple grooved niche produces a well balanced and proportioned composition possessing variety of form and depth."[1145] A third repetitive type ran the entire length of the terrace faces of the House of Nabu, creating an all-encompassing statement of strength and durability through the parallel use of this feature on both the exterior and interior of the temple.[1146] McMahon similarly draws a connection between the niche-and-reed buttressed façades on the exterior of the buildings at Khorsabad and those on the interior. She argues for seeing the manipulation of light and shadow on the interior as an extension of the exterior buttresses, suggesting that the "[d]arkness and light may have become "building materials" for creating structures and contrasts serially experienced during movement through the complex."[1147] Sargon also made use of this applied feature when building the exterior western and northern façades of Ezida at Nimrud; the latter was broken up by the principal doorway to the temple (FIGURE 151). The façade of the subsidiary god's chambers was similarly accentuated with engaged columns set atop a plinth of light-colored building stone (FIGURE 152).[1148]

At Khorsabad the craftsman accentuated the visibility of these detailed buttresses by applying black dadoes across the exterior face of the buttresses above the panels. The excavators concluded that the dado was applied for the most part without much thought to their specific height, except for that of the façade in the outer courtyard of the House of Nabu (FIGURE 123):[1149]

> The higher black surface upon these buttresses cannot be accidental. In this case it seems obviously intentional as a means of furthering the emphasis already attained by tableau and shaft upon this important portal, making of it the dominant element of the entire facade and subduing but not killing the more than average splendor of the second element, the portal to Room 14.

[1144] Loud 1936: 99; Loud and Altman 1938: 39, 58, pl. 80; see further, Damerji 1987: 92f
[1145] Loud and Altman 1938: 37.
[1146] Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 13A.
[1147] McMahon 2013. 173.
[1148] Mallowan 1957: 9; 1966: I, 233–235, 286; Oates 1957: 31–32.
[1149] Loud and Altman 1938: 59, fig. 7.

This assessment speaks to the role of master craftsman in assembling the buttresses, and the impact of such aesthetically alluring and conspicuous elements on the flanking walls of the principal doorways. The combined strength of the glazed brick panels, the wooden door poles ("shafts" in the above quote) with metal bands, the elaborate buttresses, and the strategically placed black accents complimented the immaculately crafted door leaves, doorjambs, and thresholds.

The combination of door poles and door leaves with polychromatic glazed brick panels and possible archway bands, elaborate buttresses, and perhaps also painted bricks, altogether confirm a desire to emphasize these spaces by way of their material assemblage.[1150] Place's early reconstruction of the façade of the House of Sin at Khorsabad, albeit somewhat fanciful, communicates the visual magnitude of this amalgamation of material elements (FIGURE 142). This corpus of non-portable works of art was not only visually complex, it displayed imagery that attests to the participation and cooperative effort of master craftsmen, artisans, and scholarly experts in the construction of temple doorways. Worth noting is a scene on the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III that shows the carving of a royal stele, in which three figures participate: a supervisory court official, a court scribe with stylus and tablet, and a stone-mason, who is shown with tools working on the stone (FIGURE 153–154).[1151] Though their work is less well preserved, painters also played an important role in creating these non-portable works of art, being responsible for the paint that was added as a final visual element.[1152] Moorey recognizes the transformation of raw to finished products as a ritualized process when discussing the role of sculptors in Mesopotamia:[1153]

> Mesopotamian craft activity was almost certainly permeated by rituals; success in manufacture—often described in terms of gestation and birth—was a gift of the gods whose favour was invoked in the appropriate manner. Although it is only the more elaborate rites for animating and installing statuary that have generally survived in texts (cf. Winter 1992), the pattern of ethnographic comparisons indicates that craftsmen in all levels of society would have practised the rites thought to ensure success in their work, often under the aegis of a deity peculiar to that craft and by no means only for artefacts created for the service of the gods.

The transformation of the valued raw materials into masterfully crafted finished products and their agglomeration at temple doorways agrees with the importance of these transitional spaces that is communicated by the textual sources. The archaeological evidence might not speak to the protective practices performed prior to installing a

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[1150] Loud and Altman (1938: 36): "With bases adorned with reliefs or with enameled-brick tableaus, some by virtue of this special decoration give archaeological proof of emphasis on certain portals." Glazed brick panels were found at principal doorways between the following spaces; House of Nabu: Court I and Room 13, Court II and Room 19; House of Sin: Court XXVII and Room 167; House of Ninurta: Court and Room 4. On the visual and experiential characteristics of these individual architectural elements, see the respective sections in Chapter III.2.

[1151] BM 124656 (King 1915: pl. LIX; Schachner 2007: Taf. 10).

[1152] See note 741.

[1153] Moorey 1994: 36.

doorway to purify the space and to ward off evil, yet the materials placed at these spaces established a strong physical as well as experiential barrier to the outside world.[1154]

The installation and assembly of the remaining features of the temple superstructure were treated with less scrutiny and deliberation in the textual sources than the preceding stages of construction. The royal inscriptions, for example, often gloss over much of this process by way of formalized expressions, what Novotny calls "generic stock phrases:"[1155]

> [e]xamples include; (1) "I completed (it) from its foundations to its crenellations"; (2) "I constructed this temple in its entirety"; and (3) "I built (it) anew in its entirety."

Where exceptions occur, it is to emphasize the valued materials that were used for various features of the superstructure and not to recount the process with which they were assembled. The following passage of Esarhaddon on his reconstruction of Esagil stands as example, with its references to the walls and roofs made of valued building materials:[1156]

musukkani erēni	With *musukkanu*-wood, *erēnu*-wood,
buṭni iṣṣi elli	and *buṭnu*-wood, pure wood,
ana puttunni bīti	so that the *bītu* was strong,
markas igāri lā paṭāri	the bonds of the wall would not loosen,
simat Esaggil	and the appurtenances befitting Esagil
lā mašê	would not be neglected,
itti libittu arṣip	I erected (it) with *libittu*s.

Sennacherib's inscriptions on his palatial work mention *sikkātu*s of precious metals, and *sillu*s[1157] and *nebeḫu*s[1158] adorned with colored glazed bricks.[1159] Unfortunately none of the preserved inscriptions on temple construction include comparable references to *sikkātu*s, a term that has been associated with the wall-pegs recovered from the temples, as discussed in Chapter III, nor is there any discernible mention of the wall-plaques or clay hands that were similarly mounted on the temple walls.

This lack of attention to the temple's superstructure may be the result of preservation of our textual sources; yet that we do have extensive passages on temple

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[1154] Winter (2003: 413–414) and Evans (2012: 103–105, 106) draw similar conclusions with respect to the visual impact of temple doorways in the Early Dynastic period.
[1155] Novotny 2010: 126 (see n. 109 for references); see further, Winter 1995: 2576.
[1156] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, v 16–22.
[1157] CAD "S": 265f *sillu*, "arch, corbel."
[1158] CAD "N": 2, 143f *nēbeḫu* A ((TÚG.)ÍB.LÁ), "2. frieze."
[1159] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 15, vi 53–56. This passage provides an interesting parallel to the preserved city gateway with a doorway arch lined with glazed bricks that Place found at Khorsabad; as noted above, Place records finding similar archaeological evidence in the temple doorways at Khorsabad, though they were not preserved to the same degree; see notes **Error! Bookmark not defined.**–720; FIGURE 113–114.

construction that itemize other elements of the temple suggests otherwise. Rather I would argue that this level of contrasting emphasis demonstrates that what mattered to the ancient Mesopotamians were the initial stages of construction of a temple, these were the central, highly ritualized practices that established the success and future of the house of a god. The remaining stages of construction, in contrast, presented a lesser degree of ritualization. The construction of the superstructure—the walls, subsidiary doorways, roofs, and pavement—would have nevertheless been executed by the same assembly of workmen using the same corpus of valued building materials. A noteworthy emphasis on the temple building process does not return until the final sequence of construction, which culminated in the installation of the gods in their new house.

d. If You Build It, They Will Come: Installation of the Gods

When a god was joyfully sitting upon his or her throne, atop the dais, within his or her personal chamber, it can be said that the Neo-Assyrian temple was complete. Yet a few preparatory stages had to be performed before this event took place: the construction of the dais and the divine images, and the final purification of the temple. The assembly of these discrete architectural elements is considered here, while the collaborative role each played in the subsequent life of the temple is discussed in Chapter V.

Situated to the far end of the god's chamber, the dais was both a visual and conceptual focal point of this inner space and the temple as a whole, a materially embellished architectural feature and the location where the god was said to dwell.[1160] Though lacking in the ritual instructions, some passages on temple construction in the royal inscriptions reference the manufacture of the *parakku*s ("daises") that the kings' built for the gods. The majority of these sections emphasize the exalted craftsmanship and valued materials with which the *parakku*s were made. Aššurnaṣirpal, for example, states that he made glorious (*ušarriḫi*)[1161] the *parakku* of the god Ninurta within his new house.[1162] Esarhaddon foregrounds the precious metal he used for the *parakku* of the god Aššur, presenting his mode of construction as a vast improvement to that of his predecessors:[1163]

parak šimāti parakku ṣīru ša	The *parakku* of destiny, the lofty
Aššur ina qerbišu	*parakku* on which the god
erammû šimāt šamê	Aššur dwells (and) where

[1160] Loud and Altman (1938: 62) state with respect to the chamber of Nabu at Khorsabad: "Platform and niche together in all probability form the base and background of the cult figure;" see further, Oppenheim 1977: 186–187; Vivante 1994: 164.

I use the term dais to refer to that feature which Evans (2012: 96–97) labels as an "altar" in her study of Sumerian sculpture, which she defines as, "massive, elaborate, multi-level structures, with a wide array of associated objects, installations, and activities," that acted as a "multifunctional loci." Vivante (1994: 164) defines this feature as the "podium;" "quadrilateral structures, built of mud bricks with, in some cases, one or more steps facing the cella. In other instances, the main structure may have one or two side steps at either end. They generally occupy the short side of a room usually identified as the temple cella, but they may also turn up in other parts of the religious precinct."

[1161] CAD "Š": 2, 40 *šarāḫu*, "6. III to glorify."

[1162] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, 135.

[1163] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 26′–28′.

erṣetim	they (the gods) decree the destiny of heaven and
išīmū ša šarrāni abbiya agurrī šūpûšuma zaḫalû litbušū ina 3 šūš bilat pitiq	earth, which the kings, my ancestors, had made of *agurru*s and covered with *zaḫalû*, of 180 talents of cast
išmarê nakliš ušēpiš	*ešmarû*, I had it skillfully made.

In another inscription Esarhaddon attributes the pleasure felt by the god Marduk toward his new *parakku* to its elevated craftsmanship:[1164]

Marduk bēlu rabû epšēt parak ilūtišu ṣīrti mimma šumšu iḫsusma	The god Marduk, the great lord, of the work on the *parakku* of his exalted divinity, all of it, was mindful.

Aššurbanipal recounts casting bricks of *zaḫalû* for the *paramāḫu* ("dais") of Esagil, the seat of the god Marduk.[1165] This concept of the dais as something worthy of valued materials and glorification is mirrored in the mystical explanatory work attributed to the *āšipu* Kiṣir-Aššur, which mentions the *parakku* of *uqnû*-stone ("lapis lazuli") of the god Bel.[1166] A letter on the robbery of a temple in Arbela attests to the elevation of the dais in Neo-Assyrian temples, stating that the *kalû* Nabu-epuš, who committed the theft, was not to ascend the *parakku*.[1167] In a prayer to Nabu inscribed on a brick, Sargon asks that his kingship be as secure as this place (*ašru*)—the god's temple—and its *kigallu* ("dais"), communicating the strength and centrality of dais within a Neo-Assyrian temple.[1168]

The archaeological evidence from the Houses of Nabu and Sin at Khorsabad and Ezida and the House of Ninurta at Nimrud demonstrates that the dais consisted of an elevated platform, most often of solid mudbrick, that was preceded by stairs, topped with paving stones, and fronted by two projecting walls to create a T-shaped space, though the specifics of these features often varied. For the dais in the god's chamber of Nabu in that god's house at Khorsabad (Rooms 21 and 22), the builders installed a single flight of steps made of large building stone—identified by the excavators as "alabaster"—that led up to a raised platform (FIGURE 155–156). Inscribed into these steps, as well as into the front vertical faces of platforms situated to either side of the steps, was a text to the god Nabu.[1169] In addition, the builders treated the back wall of the dais with engaged half-columns and black dado.[1170] A similar architectural arrangement was found in the

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[1164] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 101.
[1165] Streck 1916: 148, x 24. On *paramāhu* (BÁRA.MAḪ) and *parakku* (BÁRA), both meaning "dais," see CAD "P": 145 *parakku* A; 160 *paramāhu.*
[1166] SAA 3: no. 39, 31.
[1167] SAA 13: no. 138, 18e (*lā elašu ina parakki*).
[1168] Meissner 1944: 36, VII, 13.
[1169] Loud and Altman 1938: 62, pl. 25D, 26E, 27A; on the inscriptions, see 101–102, No. 1.
[1170] Loud 1936: 119–120; Loud and Altman 1938: 62.

neighboring god's chamber (Rooms 23 and 24),[1171] and in the House of Sin (Rooms XXVI and 165)(FIGURE 155; 157–158).[1172] In contrast, builders installed two flights of steps leading up to daises in Ezida at Nimrud, both in the god's chambers of Nabu (NT 4) and Tašmetum (NT 5) that date to the reign of Adad-nerari III and in the smaller god's chambers in the northern section of the temple, which were constructed during the reign of Sargon (NTS 1, NTS 2).[1173] All four of the daises in Ezida were topped with large paving stones (FIGURE 159–160).[1174] In the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, Layard records excavating a dais to the narrowing western end of the god's chamber that was paved with a single monolithic flat alabaster slab, upon which was inscribed a dedicatory text to the god Ninurta.[1175]

The second feature characteristic of the dais was non-portable images, in particular the gods—the center piece of the temple. The royal inscriptions speak of kings placing animals in the god's chamber or near to the god's seat in proximity to the dais. These images, much like the dais itself, are emphasized for their material composition. Aššurnaṣirpal, for example, speaks of installing ferocious *ušumgallu*s ("lion-dragons") of *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") at the *šubtu* ("seat") of the god Ninurta,[1176] while Esarhaddon specifies that he used *ṣariri ḫuššû* ("fine red gold") for *laḫmu*s and *kurību*s that he set up side by side in the *atmanu* ("god's chamber") of the god Aššur.[1177] The construction of the *ṣalmu*—the material forms by which the gods were physically and conceptually brought into the temple[1178] —is well attested in the royal inscriptions.[1179]

The earliest Neo-Assyrian references to the renewal of the gods are found in the inscriptions of Aššurnaṣirpal. In his Banquet Stele text the king speaks to the synthesis of materials by which he crafted the *ṣalmu*s of the gods at Nimrud:[1180]

[1171] Loud and Altman 1938: 62–63 (here the inscription to Nabu was placed on the top surfaces of the platforms rather than the front faces).
[1172] Loud 1936: 119–121, fig. 123.
[1173] On the division between these complexes and the variations in terminology, see Chapter V.II.a.i.
[1174] Oates 1957: 28, 33; Mallowan 1966: I, 286–287; Reid and Oates 2001: 112–114, figs. 67, 69.
[1175] See Layard's plan in Reade 2002: fig. 20; see also, Reade 2002: 171, App. 2 (M 7). Mallowan's (1966: 84) plan shows the entire chamber to be the same width.
[1176] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 70–73.
[1177] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, 23′–24′.
[1178] Bahrani (2003: 127) argues the following for the concept of *ṣalmu* in Assyria and Babylonia: "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 thing, it was seen as ontologically equivalent to it, existing in the same register of reality... As such, *ṣalmu* is better understood as a form of image that circulates within the real." Pongratz-Leisten (2011: 4-5) also discusses this concept of the divine body, speaking of "the relationship between divinity and its agency as 'distributed' into the statue, the celestial body, and symbols and emblems," and arguing that *ṣalmu* "'image' implies representation in general terms." See further the discussion of *ṣalmu* in Dalley 1986; Winter 1992: 15; Winter 1997: 364–369; Harmanşah 2007: 190–191; Feldman 2009a: 46–48; Evans 2012: 111–116; Porter 2013. Some scholars have argued for translating *ṣalmu* as "image" (Winter 1995: 2572), which I adhere to throughout this study.
[1179] See further the discussion and references in Novotny 2010: 136–137.
[1180] RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 65–68; here referring to the *ṣalmu*s of the gods Adad, Damkina, Ea-šarru, Enlil, Gula, the Kidmuri, Nabu, Ninurta, the Sibitti, Šala, and Šarrat-niḫi; see further, RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 11–12; A.0.101.38, 25–27.

ilūssunu	Their great
rabītu ina ḫurāṣi ḫušê ina abnī ebbī	divinity, with *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû* and pure stones,
lū ušarriḫ šukuttu ḫurāṣi namkūrī	I made resplendent. *ḫurāṣu* jewellery (and) many
makkūri kišitti qātiya aqīssunūti	valuables, which I had captured, I presented to them.

The text inscribed on slabs at the principal doorway to the House of Ninurta at Nimrud similarly emphasizes the skill with which Aššurnaṣirpal crafted this god's *ṣalmu*, the likeness of which had never been seen:[1181]

enūma ṣalam Ninurta šuātu ša ina pān lā rabû	At that time this ṣalmu of the god Ninurta, which did not exist before,
ina ḫissat libbiya lamassu ilūtišu rabûti ina dumuq abni māte u ḫurāṣi ḫušê lu abni	with my intelligence, an image of his great divinity, with the best stone from the mountain and *ḫurāṣu ḫuššû*, I created.
ana ilūtiya rabûte ina Kalḫu lū amnūšu	I considered it as my great divinity in the city Kalaḫ.

Shalmaneser III's inscription on bricks from Assur mirrors his father's account:[1182]

Armada ša bīt Aššur bēliya	(a *ṣalmu* of) the god Armada of the *bītu* of Aššur, my lord,
ša ina pāna lā ēpšu	which did not exist before,
ina ḫissat libbiya ša ḫurāṣi ēpušu	with my intelligence, with *ḫurāṣu,* I made.

In another text Shalmaneser III highlights the aesthetic qualities of his *ṣalmu* of the god Adad:[1183]

ṣalam gišnugalli	a *ṣalmu* of *gišnugallu*-stone,
ebbi namri šūquri ša epšētūšu ana dagāli lulla šūturu	lustrous, bright, and precious, the workmanship of which was beautiful to look at, superb
bunnanušu ušēpišma	in its appearance, I had made.

As with many of the preceding stages of construction, the best information on the fabrication of the gods is provided by the inscriptions of Esarhaddon, specifically with respect to his work in Babylon.

[1181] RIMA 2: A.0.101.31, 13–15.
[1182] RIMA 3: A.0.102.55, 4–6.
[1183] RIMA 3: A.0.102.12, 36–38; see note 392.

When speaking of his refurbishment of the gods (*udduš ilī*), Esarhaddon emphasizes the valued materials with which he made the *ṣalmu*s, including *ṣariri huššû* ("fine red gold") and *abnus nisqus* ("choice stones"); yet this king deviates from the preceding examples by also recounting the manufacturing process.[1184] He begins by listing the *ummânu*s *lū le'ûti* ("skilled craftsmen") he brought together to the workshop—"the place of renovation" (*ina bīt ašar tēdišti*)—to fulfill this task, including *naggāru*s ("carpenters"), *kutimmu*s ("gold or silversmiths"), *qurqurru*s ("metalworkers"), and *purkullu*s ("stone carvers"), into whose *qātu*s *ellu*s ("pure hands") he had the raw materials delivered. Esarhaddon then specifies additional objects he had made for the gods, including *agû*s ("crowns"), and *tiqnu*s ("ornaments") and *šukuttu* ("jewellery") for their necks and chests.[1185] He also had a *šubtu* ("seat") of *musukkannu*-wood made for the goddess Tašmetum. The inscription proceeds to list all of the gods whose *ṣalmu*s the king renewed and returned to their rightful cities, and asserts that the craftsmen made these images more skillfully than before, providing them with awe-inspiring radiance and making them shine like the sun.[1186]

Mar-Issar's letters to Esarhaddon detailing the progress of work at Uruk and Der is comparably informative with respect to the creation of *ṣalmu*s.[1187] Mar-Issar first states that the face and hands of one god had been overlaid with *ḫuraṣu* ("gold"), and the *ṣalmu* dressed with a *lamaḫuššu* ("robe") and *ḫurāṣu agû* ("golden crown"); however, her feet and figure were not yet complete. Two *ḫurāṣu ušumgallu*s ("dragons") were also said to have been installed to the left and right of her *kigallu* ("dais"). Mar-Issar proceeds to report on three other images for the *bītu* of Mummu: the *naggāru*s and *kabšarru*s had finished their work; however, only the *kaspu* ("silver") had been overlain, the *ḫurāṣu* was waiting to be done. At the end of the letter Mar-Issar suggests that the king send an Assyrian *itinnu*[1188] to help complete the work at Der. An additional letter from Mar-Issar mentions the use of semi-precious stones for the *agû* of the god Nabu.[1189]

Neo-Assyrian visual representations of images of gods from this period parallel the concept of the divine image that is manifest by the textual sources, of a close to life-size image with a wooden core that was plated with precious metals and adorned with semi-precious stones. In a scene from the palatial wall reliefs of Tilgath-pileser III, which shows Assyrian soldiers carrying away gods captured from a defeated enemy, the gods are depicted as close to life-size figures with embellished garments and headdresses; each figure is shown either standing or seated upon a throne, with an object in his or her raised hand (FIGURE 161–162).[1190] The wall reliefs from the Southwest Palace at Nineveh offer a similar scene of standing divine figures, yet of a smaller scale (FIGURE 163).[1191] Rock reliefs of Sennacherib and a stele of Esarhaddon present comparable depictions of

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[1184] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 79–85.
[1185] See also, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 40′. For a discussion of the garments of the gods from Mesopotamia, see Oppenheim 1949.
[1186] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 90: *ṣalmē ilūtišunu rabīti eli ša ūmē pāni nakliš ubaššimū mādiš ušarriḫū bāltu ušagliū ušāňbiṭū kīma šamši.*
[1187] SAA 10: no. 349.
[1188] CAD "I/J": 296f *itinnu* A ((LÚ.)DÍM), "house builder."
[1189] SAA 10: no. 348, 5–22.
[1190] Barnett and Falkner 1962: pl. 92.
[1191] Barnett et al. 1998: pls. 451, 453.

gods, here shown atop striding animals (FIGURE 164–165).[1192] This motif of a god atop a striding animal is also found in glyptic scenes from Neo-Assyria.[1193] Whether these images from all of these mediums were intended as depictions of the images of gods or were meant to be representations of the gods themselves is open to speculation.

Material evidence from Neo-Assyrian sites does little to corroborate the particular features of divine images, nor does it attest to their installation in proximity to the dais. It is with great misfortune that no primary image of a god—that is to say the principal image that would have stood in the central chamber of a temple—has been found for either Assyria or Babylonia.[1194] Evidence of divine images that has been recovered from the temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad includes the group of Egyptian blue inlays from the Houses of Ninurta and of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud, which Layard records having found among charred wooden remains of the images to which they once belonged.[1195] This group of inlays included pieces of plaited beard, spiral curl hair, a winged-figure plaque, and pupils set into eyes of ivory and stone, the largest of which—a fragment of plaited beard—measured around fifteen centimeters long (FIGURE 104–106).[1196] Layard also uncovered two spherical faience maceheads (possibly in the House of Ninurta) that may have originally belonged to a mace either held by a composite image or used in ritualized practice; Barag and Tatton-Brown propose the latter for a similar object from the House of Nabu at Nineveh (FIGURE 107).[1197] Drawing upon what little information we do have, Oppenheim offers the following visually-aware summation of the Mesopotamian image of a god:[1198]

> We learn that most images were made of precious wood and where not covered with garments were plated with gold; that they had the characteristic staring eyes made of precious stones inset in a naturalistic way and were clad in sumptuous garments of characteristic style, crowned with tiaras and adorned with pectorals.

Evidence is also somewhat sparse at both Nimrud and Khorsabad for the non-portable works of art associated with divine images and the dais, for example the gods' throne or seat, and neighboring mythological animals and royal images. Archaeological evidence from the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah helps fill this void. Excavations

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[1192] Thureau-Dangin 1924: 196; Börker-Klähn 1982: no. 187a–188; see further, Seidel 2000; Ornan 2005b: 73–108.
[1193] Seidel 2000: 106–107; see further, Berlejung 1998.
[1194] Notwithstanding, many scholars have discussed and offered propositions based on the little visual and textual evidence we do have, including Oppenheim 1977: 183–199; Spycket 1968; Renger 1983; Seidel 1980–1983; Hallo 1983; Matsushima 1992; Seidel 2000; Ornan 2005b; Porter 2009; Hundley 2013: 213–220.
[1195] Layard 1853a: 357.
[1196] ME 91573 (N 783; Layard 1853b: pl. 55, no. 5; Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: 75, no. 62); ME 91574 (N 785; Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: 75, no. 63); ME 120465 (N 767); ME 118785 (N 765); ME 118042 (N 762); see further, Layard 1853a: 357–358; Schuster-Brandis 2008: 58; and Chapter III.2.f.
[1197] Barag and Tatton-Brown 1985: 55, 74 n. 60. ME 118775 (N 1669); ME 118776 (N 1668). Reade (2002: 179) suggests associating the maceheads with one found in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, ND 5337, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: " macehead, spherical, glazed, black with a white central band. Ht 4.8 cm."
[1198] Oppenheim 1977: 184.

of the god's chamber within this temple uncovered two sets of four shallow depressions on the surface of the dais, which Oates suggests are remnants of the throne upon which the divine image was mounted.[1199] Archaeologists also uncovered a pair of lion orthostats on the flanking projecting walls that divide the dais from the god's chamber, and a royal stele of the king Adad-nerari III, which was found *in situ* to one side of the raised platform (FIGURE 166–168).[1200] The Tell al-Rimah finds confirm the close association presented in the textual sources between animal and royal images and the dais in temples from this period. According to the inscription on the stele of Šamši-Adad V that was found within Ezida, this image was originally dedicated to the god Ninurta, suggesting that it once stood within the latter's house, possibly in proximity to the dais in a similar manner as the Adad-nerari stele at Tell al-Rimah (FIGURE 54).[1201]

While the images of mythological figures may have been installed during the main period of construction, the installation of the gods was carried out at the very end of temple construction. Before the arrival of the latter yet after the superstructure was complete, a series of practices were performed in order to prepare the new house for its divine residents. Ritual instructions for the purification of the temple, *Enūma Kulla ušteṣṣu* ("When Kulla is released"),[1202] preserved on two tablets from the assemblage at Nineveh, specifies that the first act was to expel evil and the god Kulla from the building. All of the people involved in construction were also ordered to vacate the premises likely for reasons of purity and cleansing, including the *āšipu* and the *itinnu* ("builder"); the latter could not re-enter the building for three days. Instructions are then given for a sequence of activities and ingredients for an exorcizing "small procession," as characterized by Ambos:[1203] under the purview of the *āšipu,* the image of Kulla was carried out of the house at night, starting from the roof then through the door and off to the riverbank, where it was placed in a boat and sent downstream.[1204] To drive off any remaining evil along with the god Kulla, the *āšipu* then staged various purification practices within the building that made use of an assortment of materials well-attested within this scholar's domain:[1205]

2 nignakkū ša qēm kunāši qarnū lulīmu	Two *nignakku*s with *kunāšu*-flour, antlers of a stag,
saḫlî nīnî kibrīti	*saḫlû*-plant, *nīnû*-plant, sulphur,
2 libbū gišimmari 2 erû 2 udutilû	two hearts of the *gišimmaru*-plant (date palm), two sticks of *erû*-wood, two live sheep,
2 mašḫulduppû 2 mašgizillû	two *mašḫulduppû*-goats*,* two *mašgizillû*-goats,

[1199] Oates 1968: 123.
[1200] IM 70543.
[1201] BM 118892 (1856-9-9, 63); RIMA 3: A.0.103.1 (Rassam 1897: 11, 14).
[1202] Ambos 2004: II.A.1, A_1 (K 3397+) and B (K 4592(+)Sm 706).
[1203] Ambos 2004: 81
[1204] Ambos (2004: 81) notes comparable prescriptions for sending figures downriver in *Maqlû* texts (for example, Schwemer and Abusch 2008: 151, III 125–135) and in an exorcism involving the goddess Lamaštu (Wiggermann 2000). On Lamaštu, see Farber 2014.
[1205] Ambos 2004: II.A.1, 52″–58″; also translated in English in, Ambos 2010: 234.

2 bīnū 2 qinnāzū 2 kušgugalû	two sticks of *bīnu*-wood, two whips, two *kušgugalû*-drums,
2 nigkalagû šebirbirredê	two bells, *šebirbirredû*-grain (and)
2 silagazû	two *silagazû*-pots.

The use of these materials in a series of actions that included the banging of drums, the fumigation of space, the carrying of animals through rooms, and the dispersal of grain on the floor, attests to the diverse experiential and sensory characteristics of this exorcistic performance. Moreover, for each of the fourteen repetitions of the prescribed sequence a different incantation was recited by the *āšipu*. Additional ritual instructions recovered from Nineveh prescribe the use of a similar assortment of offerings and libations to cleanse a new house, and the deposition of figurines at specific locations throughout the building.[1206] A pair of bilingual ritual instructions, also recovered at Nineveh, prescribe a less forceful exorcism of Kulla: *Alik lā kalâta* ("Go, you must not stay") appeals to Kulla to joyfully retreat to the *apsû*, and another asks the same of the god Mušda(ma), the divine architect.[1207] Aššurbanipal's statement that he cleansed the *parakku*s ("daises") of the gods through the craft of the ritual expert (*ina šipir išippūti*) following the decline of the god's *sattukku*-offerings similarly speaks to the importance of cleansing the temple before the return of the gods and the presentation of offerings.[1208]

Once the gods Kulla and Mušda(ma) had been expelled and the space was free of any evil that might threaten future inhabitants, the temple was ready to receive its permanent divine residents. Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions prescribe practices to be performed on divine images in order to animate them, to invoke the gods and goddesses into these newly fashioned material forms. The process by which this was done within the sequence of temple construction parallels elements of the ritual instructions for the more well-known *Mīs pî*.[1209]

The Nineveh version of *Mīs pî* gives instructions for *mīs pî* ("washing of the mouth") and *pīt pî* ("opening of the mouth").[1210] Such activities included the recitation of incantations, the performance of purification practices, and the participation of the *āšipu*s, *bārû*s, and *kalû*s, who had specialized roles throughout.[1211] The process began with

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[1206] Wiggermann 1992: Text IV (K 9873+).

[1207] Ambos 2004: II.B.1 (K 4147+)(K 4167).

[1208] Streck 1916: 40, IV, 86–91; Borger 1996: 45, IV 86–91.
CAD "S": 198f *sattukku* (SÁ.DUG$_4$), "food allowance, regular offering."

[1209] On *Mīs pî*, see Berlejung 1997; Boden 1998; Walker and Dick 2001. The similarities between the *Mīs pî* ritual instructions and the ritual instructions for the installation of a god's statue from tablet K 3472 (Ambos 2004: II.C.1) testify to the mirroring of activites between these two practices.

[1210] This version is derived from tablets found at Nineveh belonging to the assemblage attributed to Aššurbanipal, and provide a detailed version of this practice in Assyria (Walker and Dick 2001: 27–29, 33–67). Additional first-millennium BCE *Mīs pî* texts were found at Assur and Nimrud. The Babylonian version of *Mīs pî* is attested by texts found at Hama, Babylon, Sippar, Nippur, Uruk, and Sultantepe, the best preserved being the Neo-Babylonian tablet ME 45749 from Babylon (Walker and Dick 2001: 27–29, 69–82). See further a brief comparison of the versions in Hundley 2013: 256–257.

[1211] On the roles of the *āšipu* and *kalû*, see Ambos 2004: 59f. "Washing of the Mouth" was not restricted to *Mīs pî* but rather other practices also incorporate a similar manner of treating an image, and the "Opening of the Mouth" was not restricted to images, that is three-dimension anthropomorphic representations, but could also be directed toward symbols, emblems, figurines, and other material objects (Walker and Dick 2001: 13). For the ritual instructions, see Walker and Dick 1999: 84–96.

preparations in the city, temple, and countryside; activity then moved to the *bīt mummi* ("workshop");[1212] next was a procession to the riverbank, then the orchard, and last, the temple gate. A final procession made its way toward the *papāḫu* and *šubtu* ("seat"), where the image was to permanently reside and the final stages of the *mīs pî* were performed in order to animate the image of the god.[1213] Boden, Dick and Walker, and Berlejung see the tripartite scheme of van Gennep's "rites of passage" in the *Mīs pî*'s stages of separation, liminality, and reintegration.[1214] Possibly contemporaneous to the reintroduction of the god's image was the bringing-in of the last brick to the temple as part of the *urubātu*-ceremony.[1215] Once in place, the god was offered food and adorned in a manner befitting his or her elevated status, while ritualized butchering and related practices were carried out in the preceding space.

Ritual instructions recovered from Nineveh prescribe the installation of the image of a god within the god's chamber, the elements of which closely mirror the later stages of *Mīs pî*.[1216] After bringing the image into the temple and reciting a series of incantations, the following activities had to be performed:[1217]

> The ritual for this: You will take water out of the trough and into it you will place carnelian, lapis-lazuli, silver, gold, juniper, (and) pressed oil. You will set up an offering arrangement for Ea, Šamaš, and Asalluḫi. You will lift up cedar in your hand and you will wash its (the statue's) mouth with syrup and ghee. When you have recited it, you will sprinkle (the statue) with water from the trough and you will place the accessories of the god before it. You will sprinkle a censer before him (the god) with juniper and meal. You will offer a sacrifice, take down the offering arrangement, and then prostrate yourself.

The tablet's catch-line identifies it as follows: *Ṭuppi ḫišiḫti uššē bīt ili epēšu enūma uššē bīt ili tanamdû* ("Tablet for the materials needed in order to lay the foundations of a house of a god: When you are laying the foundations of a house of a god").[1218] This

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[1212] CAD "M": 2, 198 *mummu* A, "in *bīt mummi*; workshop (used to make and repair ritual objects." This stage is where the Babylonian version begins (Walker and Dick 2001: 29).

[1213] Walker and Dick 2001: 29–30.

[1214] Berlejung 1997; Boden 1998; Walker and Dick 1999. Van Gennep (1909) defines a "rite of passage" as a three-stage sequence that consisted of separation (preliminal), transition (liminal), and incorporation (door postliminal), with an emphasis placed on the middle "liminal" phase. A number of scholars in the field of ritual studies have adopted van Gennep's "rites of passage" perspective to make sense of cultural practices, for example pilgrimages, funerals, marriages, ritualized butchering, and communal feasting; see further, Turner 1967; Turner 1969; Pongratz-Leisten 1994; Bell 1997; Bidmead 2002; Cohen 2005; Ambos 2013b. On Mesopotamian royal images, see Winter 1992. With respect to first-millennium Mesopotamian building rituals, see Ambos 2004: 45–46.

[1215] Ambos 2004: 58; 2010: 235–236. The *urubātu*-ceremony is listed in the hemerological series *Iqqur īpuš* alongside the *akītu*-festival, to be performed for the house of a god at its inauguration or reconstruction (Labat 1965: §32). See further, note 905, on the term *urubātu* and the associated in-text citation from *Iqqur īpuš*. On the Babylonian *akītu*-festival, see Bidmead 2002; see also, Chapter V.1.b and Chapter V.2.a.

[1216] Ambos 2004: II.C.1a (K 3472), see further, 57–60.

[1217] Ambos 2004: II.C.1a, 5′–8′; English translation, Ambos 2010: 235.

[1218] Ambos 2004: II.C.2 (K 2000+ etc.).

designation places the ritual instructions firmly within the performative sequence of temple construction.

One of Esarhaddon's passages on the installation of the gods in their new houses in Babylon closely mirrors these instructions.[1219] The process included the gods' creation in Assur; their trip by road from Assur to Babylon that was accompanied by ritualized butchering and the participation of the king himself, who led the gods by hand into Babylon; and the performance of *mīs pî*, *pīt pî*, and other purification practices. A letter to Esarhaddon from the *rab* āšipu Marduk-šakin-šumi confirms this scholarly expert's performance of mīs pî at the behest of the king:[1220]

ina bīt Balṭaya ṣalmāni	In the *bītu* of Baltaya I consecrated
utaššiš mīs pî	the *ṣalmu*s (and) I performed the
uqṭarrib	*mīs pî*-ceremony.

The textual sources also mention the placement or dwelling (*wašābum*) of a god or goddess upon his or her *parakku* or *šubtu*, or within his or her chamber or house, with relative frequency. A text on the *bītu* of Aššur, for example, speaks of the god entering his house and taking a seat on the *parakku.*[1221] In his royal inscriptions, Aššurnaṣirpal says the following of the image of the goddess Ištar which he had made for the House of Šarrat-nipḫi:[1222]

lamassat Inanna bēltiya ša ina pān lā bašû ilūssa rabītum lu ušarriḫ	An image of Ištar, my mistress, which did not exist before, I created her great divinity.
ina dumuq abnī ṣariri u ḫurāṣi hušše lu abniš ina parakkiša ana dārâte ina libbi lu addi	From the best stones, *ṣariru* and *ḫurāṣu hušše.* I set her on her *parakku* for eternity.

The letter to the king from Marduk-šallim-aḫḫe, the *ṭupšarru* of House of Aššur, similarly speaks of placing the goddess Mullissu upon her *parakku*:[1223]

parakku ša Mulissu raṣip gammur…	The *parakku* of the goddess Mulissu is completely built...
Mulissu lū tatbi	let Mulissu rise
ina parakkiša lū tūšib	(and) sit on her *parakku.*

In a similar vein, Sennacherib recounts setting up the god Aššur and the great gods in their peaceful dwelling places *(šubtus niḫtus*), [1224] while Esarhaddon echoes

[1219] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60.
[1220] SAA 10: no. 247, r. 5–7.
[1221] van Driel 1969: 100, 65 (ME 121206).
[1222] RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 11–12.
[1223] SAA 13: no. 12, 13, 21–22; see also, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 54, 5.
[1224] Luckenbill 1927: 136, 23; similarly, Luckenbill 1927: 19; Frahm 2003: 141, T 66.

Aššurnaṣirpal's statement of a god dwelling for eternity in his house when speaking of the god Aššur:[1225]

Aššur šarru ilāni	The god Aššur, king of the gods,
ina atmani	in the sublime *atmanu* of his
bēlūtišu ṣīri	lordship,
ušarmâ	I had him reside,
parak dārâte	on his eternal *parakku.*

Within his account of refurbishing the divine images of Babylon and Assyria, Esarhaddon states that he himself led the goddess Ištar into her newly finished *bītu*:[1226]

qāt Ištar Uruk bēlti rabīti	The hands of the goddess Ištar of
aṣbatma ana qerebšu	Uruk, the great lady, I
ušērib šubat dārâte	grasped and I brought her
ušarmê	inside. I caused her to take up
	her eternal *šubtu.*

The kings also make a point of noting the reactions of the god's when upon their dais, the joy and pleasure they experience when stationed in their proper dwelling place. Aššurnaṣirpal states the following upon installing Ninurta in his new *bītu* at Nimrud:[1227]

enūma Ninurta bēlu ina	When the god Ninurta, the lord,
parakkišu elli ina	on his pure *parakku*, in his
atmanišu ša ru'āme ina	*atmanu* of allure, joyfully for
ḫud libbišu ana dārâte	eternity sits,
ušabu	may he be truly pleased. May he
kīniš liparda arak ūmīya	command the lengthening of
liqbi šum'ud šanātiya	my days, may he declare the
littasqar šangûtiya liram	multiplication of my years.
ēma qabli u tāḫazi ašar	May he love my priesthood.
uṣammaru ṣumrāt	Whenever in battle or war I
libbiya lu ušakšidani	strive, may he cause me to
	attain my heart's desire.

Aššurbanipal states the following of the goddess Nanaya's reaction when he returned her to her house in Uruk:[1228]

ina Kislimi ūmi 1 ina qereb	In the month Kislimu, on the first
Uruk ušēribšima	day, I brought her inside
ina Eḫilianna ša tarammu	Uruk

[1225] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vi 28–32.
[1226] RIMB: B.6.31.16, 14.
[1227] RIMA 2: A.0.101.31, 17–19; see also, A.0.101.32, 14–15.
[1228] Streck 1916: 58, vi 122–125. On Eḫiliana, the House of Nanaya in Eanna at Uruk, see George 1993: 98f.

ušarmēši parak dārâti	and in Eḫiliana, which she loves, I installed her, her eternal *parakku.*

The royal inscriptions also speak to the celebratory offerings gifted by the kings to the gods once the gods were installed within the temple, as prescribed by ritual instructions. Esarhaddon recounts at length the wealth of both offerings and organic materials that he gifted to the gods Aššur, Ninurta, and Nusku once they were installed in their new *bītu*s:[1229]

upalliq	I ritually butchered
lê marê	a fattened bull.
uṭebbiḫ aslī	I butchered a sheep.
iṣṣūrāt šamê nūnī apsî	I killed birds of the heavens, fish from the *apsû*
ana lā mīni unakkis	without number.
miširti tamtim ḫiṣib šadê	The produce of the sea, the abundance of the mountains,
ugarrin maḫaršun	I piled up before them.
ṣeli qutrinnu	The burning incense,
erēš za'î ṭābi	the fragrance of aromatic resin,
kīma imbari kabti	like a heavy fog,
pān šamê rapšūte saḫip	covered the wide heavens.

Although the placement of the god's image upon the dais that is communicated by the textual sources is not attested by the archaeological evidence, for example the discovery of a preserved image *in situ*, representative visual imagery supports this spacial arrangement. The scene from an eighth-century seal, possibly of an Assyrian official, of a bearded worshipper facing the figure of a god standing within a structure with crenelated towers, raised atop a bird-griffin stands as example.[1230]

The royal inscriptions and correspondence also attest to the kings installing images of themselves within the god's chambers during the construction of a new temple.[1231] After refashioning the *parakku* of the god Aššur, Esarhaddon states that thereupon he placed a *ṣalmu šarrūtiya* ("royal image of myself"),[1232] praying and beseeching the gods for life, as well as an image of his son, Aššurbanipal, the crown prince.[1233] When speaking of recovering the lost casting technology, Sennacherib reports that his predecessors installed *zaḫalû* images of themselves in temples, yet the former professes that he used this technology for crafting large door poles and colossi rather than

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[1229] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vi 37–vii 8.
[1230] Collon et al. 2001: no. 204, see further nos. 130–143. A scene from the late second-millennium BCE White Obelisk shows a god seated upon raised ground within a building, in front of which a king makes offerings (Pittman 1998: fig. 7; Reade 2002: fig. 12 (ME 118807)).
[1231] On royal images, see further Winter 1992; Cole and Machinist 1998: XIII–XV (SAA 13).
[1232] This wording translates literally as "image of my kingship," and is to be understood in the same extended sense as the *ṣalmu* of the gods; see further, Winter 1997.
[1233] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 60, r. 26′–29′.

a royal image.[1234] A letter from Mar-Issar references all of the images of the king Sargon that were placed in temples.[1235] The stele of Adad-nerari III that was found *in situ* to one side of the raised platform of the dais in the temple at Tell al-Rimah provides strong archaeological support for a royal image found within a god's chamber dated to the Neo-Assyrian period (FIGURE 166–168).[1236] Also worth noting for their proximity to god's chambers are the over-lifesize royal statue of Aššurnaṣirpal that Layard records finding above the inscribed slab on the floor opposite the main doorway to the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud (FIGURE 169);[1237] the stele of Aššurnaṣirpal that was found at the doorway to the god's chamber neighboring the House of Ninurta at Nimrud (FIGURE 53); and last, and the stele of Šamši-Adad that was found at the doorway of NT 1 within Ezida at Nimrud (FIGURE 54);[1238] the latter was inscribed with a dedicatory text to the god Ninurta, suggesting that it may have originally stood in this god's house in a manner comparable to the arrangement at Tell al-Rimah. The idea of the king placing an image of himself within the god's chamber has interesting implications for the use of this space, as well as the intended performative role of this interactive object, as discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

The sequence of practice for the installation of the image of a god—the fashioning by skilled craftsman, the animation at the hands of scholarly experts, the installation in the temple, and the gifting of offerings from the king himself—marked the endpoint of a successful building project, from both a material and conceptual perspective. The former was attested by the newly conspicuous, elaborately crafted structure, which the kings invite rulers, princes, and the people at large to gaze upon and admire.[1239] The latter resided in the intangible properties that were now harnessed within the temple built environment: the assembled architectural features were ritualized through an association with divinity, marking the space as something other and prioritized. Jacobsen proposed the concept of embodiment for the relationship between the god and temple, which Evans revisits in her discussion of Sumerian sculpture:[1240]

> The temple itself was a sort of cult image, a representation of the divine aura that was meant to fill it. The identity of the temple and of resident deity thus blended... when the building has been completed—when it has been ritually consecrated and the deity has been installed—then the temple actively emits its own affective properties. The aura of the deity could so permeate particular architectural elements and cultic implements of the temple that they in turn became divine.

[1234] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 80–88.
[1235] SAA 10: no 350. r. 12–13.
[1236] Oates 1968: 124f, pl. XXXIII.
[1237] ME 118871 (1851-9-2. 507)(Layard 1853b: 361; Reade 2002: 184).
[1238] See notes 381–383.
[1239] Aššurnaṣirpal on the House of Šarrat-nipḫi; RIMA 2: A.0.101.32, 10–11.
[1240] Evans 2012: 100; also, Jacobsen 1976: 16–17.

Ambos similarly remarks upon the import of this final stage of construction, framing its significance within the larger concept of a reconstructed temple as the reincarnation of the primeval temple:[1241]

> Der Einzug des Kultbildes in den Tempel stellte die Reaktualisierung des Einzugs der Götter in das von ihnen in der Urzeit erbaute Heiligtum dar, so, wie er paradigmatisch in den kosmologischen Beschwörungen geschildert wird.

Recalling this association between first-millennium temples and the primeval temple is an important point to revisit in concluding a discussion of the performative sequence of temple construction, a final reassertion of the culturally valued aspect of this marked and ritualized building process.

4. Construction and Renewal as Ritualized Performance in Neo-Assyria

Bernbeck's general declaration of the value of the process of construction stated at the beginning of this chapter was inspired by the tenth-millennium structures at Göbekli Tepe. With regard to the structures from this site in particular, Bernbeck made the following proposition:[1242]

> The published evidence suggests that the structures at Göbekli Tepe should not be understood as a stage with a *Bildprogramm,* a background for the performance of rituals and associated beliefs, but rather that they were conceptualized as a "work in progress"... Performances at Göbekli Tepe or other sites do not seem to have been staged in front of a monumental background. Rather, the construction of the stage was the performance, or, as Hole (2005, 31) puts it, "construction itself was the ritual.... Construction was an activity that had value in itself, rather than serving the ulterior purpose of being able to carry out ritual performances on stage.

In evaluating the modes of construction of the Neo-Assyrian temple—the building personnel, the preparation of the site, the construction of the foundations and doorways, and the installation of the gods—it is apparent that Bernbeck's conclusions equally resonate for this built environment.

The discrepancies of detail and attention to the various stages of construction in the textual sources suggest that the activities related to constructing the Neo-Assyrian temple had varying degrees of ritualization. The sequence of activities that went into preparing the site and the first stages of construction, as well as the erection of doorways and the installation of the gods, were marked by a higher degree of ritualization due to the participation of an entourage of significant individuals, of valued materials, and of practices that were staged at an elevated scale. In contrast, the construction of other aspects of the superstructure of a Neo-Assyrian temple was characterized by a lesser

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[1241] Ambos 2004: 58.
[1242] Bernbeck 2013: 43–44.

degree of ritualization, with the focus placed more on the practical aspects of construction and less on the performance of symbolic or culturally prescribed activities. Yet the materials employed and the personnel involved in these stages of construction still marked the process to a certain degree, continuing to establish variation from the more common, everyday manner of constructing the house of a human. Moreover, we can deduce from the finished products that the activities of the craftsmen and artisans, whose mastery and skill was passed down from the gods themselves, still inflected the activity of construction and the transformation of the raw materials for every stage of this process. As Winter argues in a discussion of aesthetics in Mesopotamia, "through a combination of workmanship and visual attributes, value is achieved; and through seeing, value is perceived."[1243] The preserved archaeological evidence from the Neo-Assyrian temples thus stands as a useful resource and compliment to the textual sources for understanding the performative transformation of these materials during the construction of the temple.

[1243] Winter 1995: 2577.

CHAPTER V: RITUALIZED SPACE: PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE IN THE NEO-ASSYRIAN TEMPLE

The ways in which the Neo-Assyrian temple was used manifest its fundamental role as the dwelling place of a god. The practices staged within this space served first and foremost its resident divinity, ensuring his or her eternal joy and support of the land of Aššur. The restricted performative aspect of the temple contributed to the ritualization of this built environment, further setting it apart from the surrounding social and cultural landscape. In contrast, although similar high value materials and activities were used to construct a Neo-Assyrian palace, the practices staged within the house of a king were concerned primarily with its royal resident, a fundamental distinction between the concept of the palace and temple in Neo-Assyria. The archaeological and textual evidence also demonstrates a growing relationship between the temple and court scholarship during the Neo-Assyrian period. These aspects of temple practice reflected and contributed to the development of the state sponsored ideology that was specific to the Neo-Assyrian Empire. This ideology first, highlighted the exclusivity of access to the gods' dwelling place; second, it situated the king and members of the royal court, as those responsible for the prosperity of the land, at a level between the gods and the people; and third, it placed increasing value on elite scholarly wisdom and skill. The prioritizing and unique use of the House of Nabu during this period further manifests the increasing tie between the temple and the royal court, and in particular, the scholarly *ummânu*s of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

The following discussion centers upon those practices that were staged exclusively within the boundaries of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment, while acknowledging that the gods, in the form of their divine images, also participated in practices that extended beyond the confines of the temple, including processions and festivals within and around the city limits.[1244] Those chambers that are not associated with the practices discussed below and for which there is little evidence to speak to their function—whether due to lack of preservation or limited excavation—are not explored in detail in the following discussion. While most chambers in the House of Sin at Khorsabad and the House of Ninurta at Nimrud are addressed, the Ezida at Nimrud and House of Nabu at Khorsabad contain a number of chambers for which no obvious function is well-attested, for example those bordering outer and inner courtyards or in back of the temple.[1245] These spaces likely had a service or administrative function related to the daily activities of the temple or needs of the temple personnel; for example, textual evidence suggests that temple personnel may have resided in the temple and that

[1244] See the list of occasions and references in Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 4–5, 69–70; see also, Cohen 1993; Nunn 2006: 185–188; Grabowski 2010: 66–67.

[1245] Examples from Ezida at Nimrud include NTS 11 and NTS 12 located off of the outer courtyard; and NT 9 and NT 17 located off of the inner courtyard. Examples from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad include Rooms 2, 4 (stair well), 6, 7, 9, and 10 off of the outer courtyard; Room 18 off of the inner courtyard; and Rooms 40–41 and 43–46 reached through a side court to the southeast (Court V).

the building acted as a treasury or storage space for economic goods and votive gifts given to the gods.[1246]

1. ACTIVITIES OF THE GOD'S CHAMBER

In the sections on temple building in the Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, certain kings emphasize their reinstitution of offerings to the gods as an element of bringing a temple to its proper functioning state, following construction and the associated interruption in temple practice. having completed the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud, Aššurnaṣirpal recounts that he established *nindabû*-offerings[1247] and *taklīmu*-offerings[1248] for the goddess Ištar.[1249] Esarhaddon's account of his reconstruction of Esagil similarly speaks of his reinstitution of offerings, and the assignment of scholarly *ummânu*s and temple personnel who participated in caring for the gods:[1250]

mimma šumšu	Whatever
unâti	utensils
ḫišiḫti Esaggil	were needed for Esagil,
nabnit ḫurāṣi kaspi	made of *ḫurāṣu* and *kaspu,*
ša 50 manê	each of whose weight
šuqultašunu	is 50 minas,
ina šipir nikilti	with artful craftsmanship,
nakliš ušēpiš	I had skillfully made.
parṣī Esaggil	The pure rites of Esagil,
qašdūtu ana ašrišunu	I restored (and)
utēr muḫhi ša ūmē pāna	I made them more splendid
maʾdiš ušarriḫ	than prior days.
guqqanīšunu ellūti	Their pure *guqqānû*-offerings,
nindabēšunu ebbūte	their pure *nindabû*-offerings,
sattukkīšunu baṭlūte	their interrupted *sattukku*-

[1246] The House of Nabu is mentioned in letters from Nimrud that address affairs of the *ekal mašarti* ("arsenal"), in particular the transfer of horses ("horse letters"); however, the temple's role in these transactions is not altogether clear (Reid and Oates 2001: 123). Legal texts also suggest that Ezida at Nimrud acted as a kind of bank in economic affairs (Reid and Oates 2001: 123). Oates (1957: 35) situates a "treasury" in Ezida at Nimrud. See further the temple offering lists in Fales et al. 1992 (SAA 7), and the discussion of temple grants, decrees, and votive dedications, as well as the related administrative documents, in Kataja and Whiting 1995 (SAA 12); Menzel 1981. See further the discussion of temple resources for temples at Assur in van Driel 1969: 74–120 (ME 121206), 185–191, Appendix III and associated chart at the end of the book, and Appendix II (ND 1120).

[1247] CAD "N": 2, 236f *nindabû* (PAD.^{d}INNIN), "cereal offering, food offering, provisions;" see further Linssen 2004: 164.

[1248] CAD "T": 81 *taklīmu*, "(a food-offering)."

[1249] RIMA 2: A.0.101.38, 27–28.

[1250] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 105, vi 3–27.
CAD "G": 135f *guqqanû*, "(an offering)."
CAD "R": 126f *ramku* (LÚ.TU$_5$), "(a cultic functionary)."
CAD "A": 2, 117f *angubbû* (AN.GUB.BA), "3. (an ecstatic)."
CAD "P": 254f *pašīšu* (GUDU$_4$), "(a priest, lit. anointed one)."

	offerings,
ukīn maḫaršun	I firmly established before them.
ramkī pašīšī	*ramku*s, *pašīšu*s,
angubbê maḫrûte	(and) the former *angubbû*s,
nāṣir pirište	who guard the secret knowledge,
maḫaršunu ušziz	I installed before them.
išippī āšipī	*išippu*-priests, *āšipu*s
kalê nârī	*kalû*s, (and) *nâru*s,
ša gimir ummânūti	who have mastered
ḫammu ušziz	(their) entire craft, I installed
maḫaršun	before them.

The itemization of the offerings and personnel in this passage, followed by repetitions of their being placed before the gods, emphasizes the notion that each aspect played a role in the successful restoration of Esagil and the return of the gods. When recounting his reconstruction of temples in both Babylon and Assyria, Esarhaddon makes a more general statement regarding offerings in the form of an epithet:[1251]

ūmešamma kaspi ḫurāṣi ušalbišu sattukku ginû ukinnu qerebšin	(who) daily in *kaspu* (and) *ḫurāṣu* clothed them (and) (re)established the *sattukku*- (and) *ginû*-offerings in [their *ešertu*s of all the *māhāzu*s];
mušaklil parṣī mukīn sattukkī šārik šekrī nindabê rabûti ana gimir ekurrī	the one who completed the rites, who (re)established *sattukku*-offerings, (and) presents gifts, great *nindabû*-offerings to all of the *ekurru*s;
[….] *ša ana epēš niqî šullum parṣī lā ipparkû inaṣṣaru ūmu ili ešše̍šu*	[...] who does not cease to make *niqû*-offerings (and) fulfill rites, (and) observes the days of the god (and) the *ešše̍šu*-ceremony.

The itemization of multiple types of offerings in this second passage similarly alludes to the importance of these features for Esarhaddon's temple work: whether reestablished or completed, all had to be restored to the level expected of the gods. These passages demonstrate the centrality of the presentation of offerings to the gods as the principal ritualized practice within the temple built environment.[1252] Additionally, they communicate the importance of caring for the gods to the role of the king in Neo-Assyria.

[1251] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, 38–40; on the *ešše̍šu*-ceremony, see the discussion below in Chapter V.1.b. CAD "G": 80f *ginû* (GI.NA), "2. regular offering, dues."

[1252] For a study of the interruption of daily offerings in temples of Sippar, Borsippa, and Uruk, based on archival srouces, see Kozuh 2013.

A variety of ceremonies were performed within the Neo-Assyrian temple for the benefit of the resident divinity.[1253] The core performative element of many such ceremonies was the presentation of offerings to the gods within the god's chamber, including food, drink, and aromatics.[1254] Some such ceremonies took place on a daily basis; some on a monthly or annual basis; some for special occasions; and others as part of larger festivals, which themselves were celebrated on a cyclical basis or for special occasions. The following section (a) examines those ceremonies that were carried out within the god's chamber with the purpose of caring for the gods, a focus being the divine meal. The following section (b) looks at additional ceremonies and festivals that were staged within the god's chamber on a monthly or annual basis, or out of necessity. The primary sources for these practices include Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions, administrative records, royal correspondence, and royal inscriptions. Architectural evidence from the temples and associated imagery provide additional insight.

a. Caring for Divinity

At the Neo-Assyrian temple, the day began with the *dīk bīti*, the "awakening of the temple" ceremony that was performed slightly before sunrise and marked the start of day for the temple personnel and resident divinity. A Neo-Assyrian tablet from the city of Assur with instructions for the care of the god Aššur attests to the formalized, repetitive nature of this early morning practice: as part of the ceremony the *kalû* is instructed to recite a number of incantations (*taqribtu* and *eršemmakku*)[1255] to the god following the ritualized butchering of sheep.[1256] The *pīt bābi*, the "opening of the gate" ceremony,

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[1253] I use the terms "ceremony," "festival," and "offering," as defined by Linssen (2004) in his study of cult practices from Uruk and Babylon. A ceremony is to be understood as "a religious custom or rite for the opening or continuation of contact between man and the divine" (2004: 23), with each ceremony consisting of a series of ritualized practices. A festival is defined as "a complex of ceremonies, each of which have their own function, combined together to serve a different purpose. In general this purpose consists in averting evil which may threaten an individual or the community, by following a fixed set of rules which describe how humans must serve the gods and in return enjoy a secure and pleasant life" (2004: 23). An offering refers to "a series of cultic acts which exist in almost all known religions. One brings something from a profane or secular place into a holy or sacred place, kills or destroys it, or eats it in the presence of others, in order to make a connection with the divine… Since the gods needed food just like humans, offerings usually consisting of food, drinks and aromatics (fumigation) were presented in front of the statues of the gods" (2004: 129).

[1254] An assortment of Akkadian terms are used in the textual sources to refer to the types of offering given to gods, including *niqû*, *ginû*, *sattukku, nindabû, sirqu, surqinnu, maqlūtu, zību,* and *qutrinnu*-offerings; see note 195, and the entries in Appendix A, as well as Linssen 2004: 154–166. See further, Sallaberger 2011–2013: §4.

[1255] CAD "T": 200–201 *taqribtu*, "(a ritual)."

eršemmakku is an Emesal prayer, the latter understood as a corpus that belonged to the wisdom of Ea. As defined by Gabbay (2007: 5) in his dissertation on the subject, the *eršemmakku* (*eršema*) "is only one of the genres belonging to the repertoire of the *kalû* written in the Emesal "dialect" of Sumerian (and usually including an Akkadian translation in the first millennium);" see further, Cohen 1981; Maul 1988.

[1256] Maul 2000: 403f (K 2724+), see also 394, n. 58; see further, Thureau-Dangin 1922b: no. 48 (AO 6467); van Driel 1969: 168; Linssen 2004: 28–29. The instructions demonstrate that the *dīk bīti* was performed for the days 22, 23, 24, and 25 of Šabaṭu in the House of Dagan for the god Aššur. Ritual instructions recovered from Sippar, likely dating to the eighth through sixth century BCE, attest to the performance of

followed the *dīk bīti*-ceremony. The former is attested from the Old Babylonian period onwards, yet its details are less well known. Linssen argues that the *pīt bābi*-ceremony was not restricted to special occasions, but rather "indicate[d] the time in the morning when all the priests and craftsmen who had to perform their usual duties in the temple (*ērib bīti*) were allowed to enter the temple."[1257] Letters from Nineveh uphold the incorporation of this ceremony in Neo-Assyrian temple practice. Raši-ili, a scholar in Babylon, informs Esarhaddon of the scheduling of ceremonies for the *bītu* of Marduk, remarking that he would perform the *pīt bābi rabû,* the "great opening of the gate" ceremony, on the fourth day of the month Ululu.[1258] According to Linssen, the combination of these two ceremonies—the *dīk bīti* and the *pīt bābi*—"formed the beginning of all cultic activities inaugurating the new day."[1259] Subsequent daily practices consisted primarily of the presentation of offerings to the gods in the form of divine meals (*naptanu*s).[1260]

The divine meal consisted of three principal elements—food, drink, and aromatics—and was presented to the gods in their god's chamber twice a day, once in the morning (*naptan ša šēri*) and once in the evening (*naptan ša līlâti/nupattu*).[1261] As it is said in an inscription of Sin-šarru-iškun from Assur:[1262]

ušēpišma itquru kaspi ebbi	He had made a bowl of shining
ana qurrubi naptan šēri	*kaspu* to serve the *naptanu* of the morning
u līlâti maḫar ilūtiša	(and) of the evening to her divinity.

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this ceremony throughout the entire year, while also confirming its execution before sunrise (Maul 1999: 285f; see also, Linssen 2004: 30).

[1257] Linssen 2004: 36. Landsberger (1915: 4, 87, 112) and Weidner (1967: 25, n. 97) previously argued that the *pīt bābi*-ceremony was performed for special occasions.

[1258] SAA 13: no. 176. SAA 10: nos. 356 and 357 sent by Mar-Issar to the king also mention the performance of the *pīt bābi*-ceremony in the month Ululu in association with the god Marduk (Bel). On ili, see PNA 2/II: 134f, "Raši-ili 2–3;" as noted on 135, there is some dispute as to whether this letter was written by Raši-ili 2. or 3. due to a lack of title or filiation. Parpola (1983b: II, 282) dates this letter to the year 670 BCE.

[1259] Linssen 2004: 36. According to Linssen (2004: 36), *pīt bābi* is attested from the Old Babylonian period onwards. A line from the royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon (Borger 1967: 17, §11, 13) suggests that the expression *pīt bābi* may have also been used as a month name. See further, CAD "P": 446 *pītu* A 2. a) 2′; Cohen 1993: 363.

[1260] CAD "N": 1, 319f *naptanu* (KIN.SIG, NÍG.DU, BUR), "1. food allotment, meal, banquet, 2. time of the evening meal, evening."

As noted by van Driel (1969: 159–160), *naptanu* was also used in reference to meals that were not divine or associated with the gods. Linssen (2004: 131, n. 20) provides a list of other Akkadian terms used for "meal" based primarily on Hellenistic sources, with some reference to Assyrian texts, for example *tākultu* and *qerītu*; see further, van Driel 1969: 159–162; Glassner 1987–1990: 261.

[1261] Glassner 1987–1990: 260; for example, RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 45, iii 14′. The use of *nubattu* is attested in the text from Assur on the activities of Sennacherib; van Driel 1969: 93, 46′ (ME 121206); 156–157. References to the *nubattu* in the hemerological series *Inbu bēl arḫim*, in contrast, suggest a type of cyclical ceremony. On the divine meal in Mesopotamia, see further Oppenheim 1977: 183f; Waerzeggers 2010: 111f.

[1262] Falkner 1952–53: 306, 19 (Assur 1328); also, CAD "N" 1: 322 *naptanu* (AfO 16 306: 19).

During Marduk's journey from Assur to Babylon, Aššurbanipal similarly boasts that whatever was needed for the god's morning and evening meals (*naptan šeri līlâti*) was provided.[1263] Textual evidence from Mesopotamia at large suggests that each meal was divided further into two servings: the main meal (*naptan rabû*) and a secondary meal (*naptan tardennu*).[1264] Neo-Assyrian textual sources also note the types of food, drink, and aromatics that were offered as part of the divine meals, including cattle, oxen, sheep, goats, grains, loaves, wine, beer, and various types of wood and aromatics.[1265] These goods had value within Neo-Assyrian elite society and were obtained by the temple through a variety of means, including grants, gifts, tribute, and taxation.[1266] The permanent dwelling of the gods within the god's chambers testifies to the performance of the divine meal within this most inner space of the temple. A letter from Urdu-Nabu at Nimrud to the king further corroborates this placement, the *šangû* stating that he will bring *niqû*-offerings before the gods Nabu and Tašmetum in their *bīt erši* ("bedchamber").[1267] Before such sustenance was placed before the gods, however, the proper participants had to be present and the various elements of the divine meal had to be adequately prepared.

Participants in Temple Practice

Being separated from the public and social sphere, the participants in the divine meal would have been those few individuals that were permitted access to the temple. This group included members of the scholarly *ummânu*s, temple personnel, and the king himself.[1268] Neo-Assyrian textual sources concerned with the presentation of offerings to the gods as part of the divine meal reference individuals from this select group.

[1263] Streck 1916: II, 264, iii 9; also, CAD "N" 1: 322 *naptanu* (Streck Asb. 2664 iii 9).

[1264] Glassner 1987–1990: 260; CAD "T": 227 *tardennu*, "1. second course of a meal."

The best evidence for the breakdown of the divine meals in Mesopotamian temple practice comes from ritual instructions dating to the Hellenistic period. For example, TU 38 (AO 6451) offers instructions for offering meals in the Houses of Anu, Ištar, Nanaya and others gods in Uruk, including the times for each of the four daily meals, as well as all of the products that were to be served for each, which included various liquids, travel provisions (*ṣidītu ilāni*), flour and breads, dates, figs, cakes, and an assortment of meats. While TU 38 does not specify the practitioner that was to perform the offerings, the tablet was written by an *āšipu*, Šamaš-eṭir; see Linssen 2004: 26, 130–138, 172–183 (Appendix a), previously edited in Thureau-Dangin 1921: 74–86; see also, Thureau-Dangin 1922a: 38.

[1265] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 33, r. iii 35′; Esarhaddon 54, r. 30–31. See also the temple offering lists in SAA 7; and the discussion of temple grants, decrees, and votive dedications, as well as the related administrative documents in SAA 12; Menzel 1981. See further the discussion of temple resources for temples at Assur in van Driel 1969: 74–120 (ME 121206), 185–191, Appendix III and associated chart at the end of the book, and Appendix II (ND 1120).

[1266] See the related sources in note 1246; see also, van Driel 1969: 185–191, and Appendix III, on the resources and commodities of the House of Aššur; see further, Menzel 1981: 59f; Radner 1999: 29–33; Sallaberger 2011–2013: §6.

[1267] SAA 13: no. 56, r. 11–13. This letter likely references the serving of the divine meal to the gods as part of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival, discussed in Chapter V.2.a. Linssen (2004: 141) suggests that a permanent table was in place in front of the image for the serving of the divine meals, since ritual instructions do not specifically mention such furnishings at the beginning of the ceremony.

[1268] On the restricted access and exclusivity of the temple in Mesopotamia, see further Oppenheim 1944: 56; Menzel 1981: 4–5; Grabowski 2010: 51–53; Sallaberger 2011–2013: 521. The gods would have had

With regard to the contingent of scholarly *ummânu*s, the *ṭupšarru* Mar-Issar writes to the king to protest the accusation that he is withholding goods from the temples, and then inquires what meal they are asking for so that he can provide it.[1269] Marduk-šallim-aḫḫe, the *ṭupšarru* of the *bītu* of Aššur, writes that he prepared the entire meal (*naptanu gabbu*) and brought it before Aššur.[1270] A report from Nimrud on ceremonies at Assur mentions a number of personnel involved, including a *ṭupšarru* of the king and of the town, as well as a *kalû.*[1271] Ritual instructions also speak of *nârus* performing songs during the presentation of offerings to the gods within the Neo-Assyrian temple.[1272]

Various members of the temple personnel who participated in the serving of the divine meal are also mentioned in the textual sources. The text on Sennacherib's temple activities at Assur mentions the *šangû*[1273] in association with the serving of the divine meal in the *akītu*-house. When the textual sources give this individual a title, it is often in association with a specific god—for example this same text from Assur speaks of the *šangû* of the god Anu at Assur[1274]—or in reference to a temple. The royal correspondence, for example, mentions a *šangû* of the *bītu* of the Sibitti at Nineveh[1275] and a *šangû* of the *bītu* of the Kidmuri.[1276] The text on Sennacherib's activities at Assur also mentions a *karkadinnu*[1277] and *nuḫatimmu*[1278] in relation to the preparation of the food and drink of the *naptanu*s,[1279] as well as an *abarakku*,[1280] who was responsible for laying out offerings before the god.[1281] The report from Nimrud on ceremonies at Assur mentions a *sirāšû* in association with the offerings placed before the god.[1282] Last, a letter from the *šangû* Urdu-Nabu of Nimrud to the king speaks of an *ērib bīti* who is asking to enter a temple and set out regular offerings for the god.[1283] While these textual references are not always explicit as to the specific tasks each post was ascribed in relation to the divine meal, they demonstrate that there was a select group of individuals that helped in providing for the gods on a daily basis.

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greater public exposure during processions that took place outside of the temples as part of various festivals, during which time individuals would have had visual contact with the gods; see note 1244.

[1269] SAA 10: no. 361, 7–12.

[1270] SAA 13: no. 10 r. 3–13; similarly SAA 13: no. 11, r. 2–9.

[1271] van Driel 1969: 1969: 200 (ND 1120); see also, van Driel 1969: 128, IV 13 (A 125). On the *kalû,* see Menzel 1981: 233–237.

[1272] Zimmern 1901: no. 60, 15; Ebeling 1919: no. 171, r. 4; no. 146, II, 6, 7; III 20′–21′; IV 4′, 23′; van Driel 1969: 88, VI 31′-–32′; see further, CAD "N" 1: 377 *nâru* a) 2′; van Driel 1969: 181.

[1273] van Driel 1969: 89f, VI 31′ (ME 121206); on the *šangû*, see further van Driel 1969: 175–179; Menzel 1981: 4, 130–194; Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: 629; and the discussion below.

[1274] van Driel 1969: 89, VI 34′–35′ (ME 121206); see also, van Driel 1969: 124f (A 125).

[1275] SAA 10: no. 95, r. 18–19.

[1276] SAA 12: no. 94, r. 13.

[1277] CAD "K": 42 *kakardinnu* (LÚ.SUM.NINDA), "(a baker or cook producing special meals);" see further, van Driel 1969: 184; Menzel 1981: 238–240.

[1278] CAD "N": 2, 313f *nuḫatimmu* ((LÚ.)MU), "cook."

[1279] van Driel 1969: 89, VIII 18′ (ME 121206).

[1280] CAD "A": 1, 32f *abarakku* ((LÚ.)AGRIG), "2. (an official of the temple or an estate), d) in NA."

[1281] van Driel 1969: 88, V 19′ (ME 121206).

[1282] van Driel 1969: 200, 14 (ND 1120).
CAD "S": 306f *sirāšû* ((LÚ.)ŠIM, ŠIMXGAR), "brewer;" see further, Wiseman 1952b: 65–66.

[1283] SAA 13: no. 60.

The organization of the temple personnel[1284] belonging to this group is not altogether clear. Within the context of the Assyrian temple, Menzel places the *šangû* at the height of the temple personnel, "als unverzichtbarer Garant für einen funktionierenden Kultbetrieb in neuassyrischer Zeit,"[1285] followed closely by the *ṭupšarru*s and the *laḫḫinu*s.[1286] She divides the remaining temple personnel between those involved in the staging of ritualized practices, including the singers, musicians, and 'Kultstatisten," and those with a more administrative function, for example the workers in the temple kitchens, gardens, and fields. Sallaberger and Löhnert similarly situate the *šangû* at the top of the temple hierarchy.[1287] While this term has been translated as "chief priest," both Sallaberger and Waerzeggers acknowledge the drawback to using the term "priest" (Sallaberger: "Priester") in reference to Mesopotamian temple personnel, due to the strong Biblical associations that the term carries with it.[1288] Waerzeggers redefines the term "priest" for the Neo-Babylonian temple to denote those persons who mediated contact with the gods as part of their positions within the temple, which they held because of their ownership of prebends and on account of their qualifications.[1289] In accordance with this understanding, Waerzeggers establishes a four-fold typology of Neo-Babylonian priests—ritualists, cateres, artisans, and bureaucrats—noting that some members of this group had direct contact with the gods while others served the gods from a distance.[1290]

Although the Neo-Assyrian sources do not indicate the same type of prebendary system for its temples, they do speak to a similar division between persons that mediated contact with the gods and those that did not. An extended group of temple personnel was involved in the preparation of the offerings, including brewers, bakers, and cooks, while a more exclusive group handled the activities staged within the god's chamber, including the presentation of offerings to the gods and the performance of purification practices, laments, and prayers. The sources refer to members of this more exclusive group as *ērib bīti*, which means quite literally, "one who enters the temple."[1291] This designation seems

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[1284] I use the term "temple personnel" as an all-encompassing label to refer to those individuals that worked within the temple built environment in Neo-Assyria, who were neither the *ummânu*s nor the king. I would include under this heading those personnel referred to as "priests" in other scholarship, as well as craftsmen and laborers, posts of a more administrative nature, and individuals involved in food preparation. See further the discussion below on the label "priests."

[1285] Menzel 1981: 4; see further, Menzel 1981: Teil II, 130–300, for a discussion of the various Akkadian terms used in reference to temple personnel in Assyria.

[1286] On the *ṭupšarrus,* see further, Menzel 1981: 209–219, as well as the discussion in Chapter IV. On *alaḫḫinu,* see Menzel 1981: 223–228.

[1287] Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: 618; Löhnert 2007: 275f; see also, Waerzeggers 2010: 34–38; Waerzeggers 2011: 63.

[1288] Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: 629; Waerzeggers 2010: 37f.

[1289] Waerzeggers 2008: 1, n. 1; 2010: 34f. Waerzeggers (2011: 62f) defines a prebend as follows: "a legal title that constituted a share (Babylonian *isqu*) of a particular area of the cult. For example, in 547 BCE a certain Nabû-eṭier, inhabitant of Borsippa, owned five days per month of the reedworker's prebend in Ezida, the temple of Nabû." On temple personnel and priests in Mesopotamia, see Heinrich 1982: 244–245; Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: §3; Löhnert 2007; 2010; Grabowski 2010: 51–54; Jursa 2013; Robson forthcoming; with respect to the House of Aššur, see van Driel 1969: 170–185.

[1290] Waerzeggers 2011; see also the discussion in Robson forthcoming: Chapter 4.

[1291] This designation is attested from the Old Babylonian period onwards, and while it is well-attested for the Neo-Babylonian period, its designation is still somewhat unclear. For example, the CAD entry (CAD "E": 292) states that the Neo-Babylonian term "refers generally to temple personnel below the higher

to be used not in reference to a particular position or profession, but more generally for those individuals of various professions who were permitted entry to the spaces of greatest ritualization within the temple. This group included the *āšipu*s, *kalû*s, and *šangû*s.[1292] There is also evidence that craftsmen and individuals from other contingents of temple personnel could be allocated this privilege. Members of this group had to be both "pure"—a quality that was determined by a person's physical and mental integrity—and appointed by the king.[1293] If deemed worthy, a person was shaved and given the *kubšu*-headgear before entering the temple, a visible marker of his privileged status.[1294] A letter from the *bārû* Tabni to the crown prince, Aššurbanipal, suggests that the color of a person's robe could also serve as a marker of status, the sender lamenting that the purple robe was given to another *bārû*.[1295] Though the evidence suggests that the *ērib bīti* label was not restricted to specific contingents of temple personnel, the existence of this designation and the requisite pure state of such individuals affirms the exclusivity of both this group and access to the god's chamber to care for the resident divinity.

The Neo-Assyrian kings imply through their royal inscriptions that they also played a role in the daily ceremonies of the temples. In addition to providing offerings for the gods through their patronage of the temples, they also claim to have personally organized and served the *naptanu*s. Shalmaneser III states that he arranged a joyous *naptanu* for the gods,[1296] while Aššur-etel-ilani asserts more generally that he established a temple "for the meal(s) of the great gods" (*ana naptanu ilāni rabbûti ukīn*).[1297] The text on Sennacherib's activities at Assur mentions this king's entry into temples, first stating that the king entered the *bītu* of Aššur and then the *bītu* of Ninlil.[1298] The text on Aššurbanipal's activities in the *bītu* of Aššur similarly speaks of the king entering the temple and presenting offerings to the god along with the *šangû.*[1299] Another text from

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ranks, and apart from the specialized craftsmen of the temple; sometimes, however, it denotes the entire priesthood of a sanctuary." Linssen (2004: 17) agrees with Bongenaar's assertion (1997: 149), that "*ērib bīti* is not a general world, class, position or honorific title, but has just one meaning: "the owner of an *ērib bīti* prebend," and therefore, states that "[a]nyone who held certain offices or had to perform certain duties in the temple owned an *ērib bīti* prebend. It is therefore no surprise to find that 'priests,' and also those experts and craftsmen who were needed inside the temple to perform their duties, such as the goldsmith (*kutimmu*), the carpenter (*naggāru*), the jeweler (*kabšarru*), the seal-cutter (*purkullu*), and the craftsman (*qurqurru*), were called *ērib bīti*." Leichty (1970b: 298) similarly argues that the term was not "in any way an 'honorific title', but rather it was simply a designation of those people whose work caused them to enter the normally forbidden areas of the temple complex." See further, Landsberger 1915: 112, n. 1; Frame 1991: 42–43; MacGinnis 1991/1992: 75, n. 4; Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: 618; Waerzeggers 2010: 46f. The few attestations from the Neo-Assyrian period are equally vague, though the term seems to be used in a general sense, as proposed by Linssen for the Neo-Babylonian period.

[1292] van Driel 2002: 89.

[1293] Löhnert 2007: 276f. On purity in ritualized practice in Mesopotamia, see Maul 1994: 39f; Berlejung 1998: 181f; Waerzeggers 2008; Löhnert 2010: 184f.

[1294] Löhnert 2007: 281f. On the *kubšu*-headgear, see Parpola 1970–1983: II, 321; Reade 2005b: 8.

[1295] SAA 10: no. 182, 12–14. On Tabni, see PNA 3/II: 1300, "Tabnî 3."

[1296] Michel 1955: 148, 70; see further, CAD "N": 322 *naptanu*, 1. b) "in royal inscrs."

[1297] Langdon 1923: pl. 29: 5; CAD "N": 322 (OECT 1).

[1298] van Driel 1969: 90, VII 25′ and 27′ (ME 121206).

[1299] van Driel 1969: 121f (A 125); Cohen 1993: 338–340.

Assur places the king alongside the *kalû* in the presentation of offerings within the temple.[1300]

The Neo-Assyrian kings also adopt the title *šangûtu* in their royal inscriptions[1301] in order to denote their close involvement in the care and honoring of the gods. Both Aššurbanipal and Sin-šarru-iškun, for example, claim that the gods desired their *šangûtu,*[1302] the latter stating so explicitly:[1303]

zāninūt napḫar māḫāzī *šangûtu gimir eš-ret…* *epēšu iqbūšu*	they ordered him to act as provider for all of the *māḫāzu*s and the *šangûtu* of all the *ešertu*s.

The *āšipu* Urad-Gula similarly references this aspect of Neo-Assyrian kingship when formally addressing the king at the outset of his letter:[1304]

ilāni rabûti ša šamê u *erṣetim liktarrabū* *šarrūtka nadin zībīka* *ellūti lirāmū liḫšuḫū* *šangûtka*	May the great gods of heaven and earth constantly bless your kingship, may they love the pure food-offerings you give, may they desire your *šangûtu.*

As indicated by Mesopotamian textual sources, the provisioning of the gods was the reason for which humans were originally created and "the very *raison d'être* of the entire [temple] institution."[1305] Thus by claiming the title *šangûtu* and participating in temple practice the Neo-Assyrian kings were able to bolster their image as a true ruler of the land of Aššur, as one who was able to ensure the continued prosperity and divine support of the land, and the eternal joy of the gods. In so doing, the kings were also able to reinforce their position of privilege between the gods and humans and promote the exclusivity of the temple.[1306]

[1300] van Driel 1969: 134f (A 126); see further, van Driel 1969: 170–175.

[1301] CAD "Š" 1: 383–384 *šangûtu*, "office of the chief administrator of a temple," see specifically b) "referring to the Assyrian kings' function as SANGA of Aššur," and c) "with ref. to the Assyrian kings' care for temples;" see further, van Driel 1969: 172–175. On the reading of the SANGA as *šangû* rather than *iššakku*, see CAD "Š" 1: 384; see further the discussion in Seux 1967; van Driel 1969: 172–173.

[1302] Campbell Thompson 1931: pl. 16, iv 6; Streck 1916: 92, i 14.

[1303] van Driel 1969: 173; also, Streck 1916: 382, 6–7; Seux 1967: 228–229.
CAD "Z": 46 *zāninūtu*, "2. office of provider for a sanctuary, a city or a people."

[1304] SAA 10: no. 294, 6–7. On Urad-Gula, see PNA 3/II: 1402, "Urdu-Gula 6."

[1305] Oppenheim 1977: 188, as expressed in the Mesopotamian creation myths, *Enūma Eliš* and *Atra-ḫasī*; see further, Ambos 2004: 50–52. As Linssen (2004: 129) notes, "[in the myths] we find that mankind was created to take over the hard work from the gods and provide the gods with food and drinks. Since the gods needed food just like humans, offerings usually consisting of food, drinks and aromatics (fumigation) were presented in front of the statues of the gods. The cultic meals provided this need." This relationship between humans and gods fits the understanding of *do ut es* of the Greek and Roman world; van Driel 1969: 150; Linssen 2004: 129; Ambos 2004: 50–52; see further, Ambos 2007.

[1306] van Driel (1969: 170) cautions that the image created by the ritual instructions of the Assyrian kings' participation in temple practice may be a biased one due to the royal orientation of such texts and the

The Neo-Assyrian kings' claim to the *šangû*-office was not a new practice for this period. Already in the Middle Assyrian period the king Aššur-uballiṭ includes the title "*šangû* of Aššur" as part of his titulary. Thereafter it becomes customary for Assyrian kings to hold the position of *šangû* of the House of Aššur at Assur.[1307] This aspect of Neo-Assyrian kingship is also expressed in royal visual imagery. A well-known example is the stone royal statue of Aššurnaṣirpal that was recovered from the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud: the priestly and pious aspect of the king is here represented by his bare-head, ceremonial sickle-sword and mace, and dress (FIGURE 169).[1308] Scenes of Neo-Assyrian kings performing libations—as on the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III and the wall reliefs of Aššurbanipal from the North Palace at Nineveh—similarly corroborate this aspect of Neo-Assyrian kingship (FIGURE 170–171).[1309]

Attaining a State of Purity

All of the individuals involved in the serving of the divine meal had to ensure that they were of a pure state in order to participate. Purity was achieved in part by washing ones hands with water from an *egubbû*.[1310] This step is referred to in Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions by a number of expressions, including *mê qātī qurrubu* ("to present the water (basin) for (the washing of the) hands").[1311] Aššur-etel-ilani's concern with having a clean water supply so that it can be brought everyday and in good time for the *naptanu*s of the great gods—as stated in his inscription to the god Uraš—similarly demonstrates the importance of washing and cleansing with water to achieve a pure state.[1312] Pure clothes were also a requisite for the participants in temple practice when in the presence

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paucity of texts on daily routine in the temple. Yet within the context of the temple, which during the Neo-Assyrian period was very much under the purview of the royal court, a royal participation in temple practices and the representation of the king as "the most important person in the Assyrian cult" (van Driel 1969: 170) in certain texts does not seem fanciful or unrealistic; see further, Ambos 2004: 51–52.

[1307] Sallaberger and Vulliet 2003–2005: §4.1, §5.1; see further, Menzel 1981: 1, 157f; Sallaberger 2002; Löhnert 2007: 275.

[1308] See further Magen's type "IV. König als Priester" (1986: 65f).

[1309] King 1915: pls. I–II, LIX; Schachner 2007: pl. 1, 50b; and ME 124887 (1856-9-9, 51)(Barnett 1976: p. 54, pl. LVII; Curtis and Reade 1995: 29).

[1310] CAD "E": 49f *egubbû* ((DUG.)A.GÚG.BA) "1. holy water, 2. basin for holy water."

The same water basin was used to cleanse the image of the god itself, for example during *mīs pî* and subsequent ceremonies, as the Nineveh version of these ritual instructions asserts;Walker and Dick 2001: 38f, 22, 152. For a description of the *egubbû*, see Maul 1994: 41f. On the importance of bathing as a means of purification and cleansing, see further Laessoe 1955; on the *bīt rimki* in Mesopotamia; see also, Ambos 2008.

[1311] Zimmern 1901: 174-187, nos. 60–70; von Soden 1955: 138: 52; von Soden 1957: 226, 11. Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions found at Nineveh for the *lilissu*-ceremony ("kettledrum") prescribe setting up a water basin for washing one's hands as part of a recitation, confirming the association between this vessel and the act of washing one's hands; Linssen 2004: 279, IV 2–4 (IV R^2, 23, no. 1+); similarly from Assur, Linssen 2004: 263, 2 (KAR 60); previously published in Thureau-Dangin 1921: 20–23. See additional references in, CAD "M" 2: 155 *mû*, "3. *mê qāti*."; CAD "Q": 238 *qerēbu* c); and the discussion in Linssen 2004: 152.

[1312] BM 119277; 1927-10-3, 272; Walker 1981: 70, no. 87, 4–5.

of the gods. This requirement is insinuated in a passage from Aššurbanipal's Hymn to Ištar of Nineveh:[1313]

šarru ebbūti labiš rabbûti ittalbiša ṣubāta	The king is clothed in pure garments, has put on a robe.
ina ikribī ellāti ebbāti Aššur-bani-apli ēruba	Amid pure, clean *ikribu*-offerings, Aššurbanipal enters.
karāna duššupa simat ilūti šikara el šarrī danna	Sweet *karānu*, worthy of divinity, *šikaru* too strong for kings.

The space within which the divine meal was served—the god's chamber—also had to be purified. A variety of terms are attested in reference to the treatment of the temple that denote acts of cleansing, washing, and purification in preparation for the presentation of offerings to the gods, including *kuppuru*,[1314] *tēliltu*,[1315] *takpirtu*,[1316] *šabāṭu*,[1317] *salāḫu*,[1318] *sarāqu,*[1319] and *ḫub bīti.*[1320] Within this context *sarāqu* is often used in association with the scattering of aromatics on a *nignakku* ("incense burner") or *šēḫtu*.[1321] This wording confirms that fumigation, in addition to being a form of offering, also served a purifying purpose, as further evidenced by the expression *ḫub bīti* ("to purify by fumigation").[1322] Purification was also achieved by means of *gizillû*s.[1323] Though from a later Mesopotamian text, the following line speaks to the use of aromatics for the purification of a temple:[1324]

mašmāšākuma bīt ili ūdaš	I (the tamarisk) am a *mašmašu*, I consecrate the *bīt ili*.

[1313] SAA 3: no. 7, 13–15.
CAD "I/J": 62f *ikribu* ($ŠUD_x$, $SISKU_x$), "1. blessing, benediction, 2. money or goods pledged by a vow to a deity, 3. prayer."
[1314] CAD "K" 179 *kapāru* A, "3. *kuppuru* to wipe off, to clean objects, to rub, to purify magically, d) 2' a temple, etc.;" see also, Clay 1923: 6, r. 33.
[1315] CAD "T": 328f *tēliltu*, "(ritual) cleansing."
[1316] CAD "T": 85 *takpirtu*, "1. (a purification rite);" see also, SAA 10: nos. 247, 279.
[1317] CAD "Š": 1, 9 *šabāṭu,* "3. b) to sweep the roof or the ground in preparation for a ritual."
[1318] CAD "S": 86 *salāḫu*, "b) to sprinkle a place, a person, etc., for purification or apotropaic purposes."
[1319] CAD "S": 172f *sarāqu* A, "1. to strew, scatter, sprinkle (offering material, in rituals)."
[1320] CAD "Ḫ": 20f *ḫâbu*, "(1) to consecrate, exorcise, purify by fumigation, (2) *ḫubbu* (same mng.);" see also, van Driel 1969: 169. For a discussion of this group of terms, see Linssen 2004: 148–151.
[1321] CAD "S": 2, 264f *šēḫtu,* "incense burner, censer."
[1322] Linssen 2004: 263, 9 (KAR 60). Both *šēḫtu*s and *nignakku*s are attested as portable works of art used for burning aromatics; see further, Unger 1928: § 4. Räucheraltäre-§ 5; Zwickel 1990. The text on the Sennacherib's temple activities at Assur speaks of *šēḫtu*s used for ritualized butchering, which van Driel (1969: 112, n. 22′) notes "cannot have been a simple censer for aromatics;" van Driel 1969: 94, 22′–23′, 30′–31′ (ME 121206). Fumigation was also a form of offering in Neo-Assyrian temples, as discussed below.
[1323] CAD "G": 113f *gizillû* (GI.IZI.LÁ), "torch of reed for cultic purposes, a);" for example, Zimmern 1901: no. 46, 2.
[1324] Ebeling 1919: 237, no. 145, 26; CAD "E" 31; see also the Neo-Assyrian version, Ebeling 1923: 271, no. 324, 36; CAD "E": 81.

The incense burners and torches used in these practices had to themselves be cleansed before they were used to purify the temple. Similarly, the portable works of art that were used to serve the food and drink offerings to the gods—offering tables, altars, and libation bowls—were also purified. Last, the food and drink offerings were purified before they were brought before the gods.[1325] This assortment of portable works of art and offerings is at times collectively referred to in-text as *riksu* ("ritual arrangement").[1326] Once purified, all of these elements were then fit to stand before the god as part of the divine meal in his or her place of private dwelling.

Feeding the Gods

The serving of the divine meal itself was carried out in stages: ritualized butchering was performed on an altar, food and drink were placed before the gods upon an offering table, lamentations recited, then the serving of the divine meal was complete.[1327] The Akkadian texts employ specific verbs when speaking of the presentation of food and drink to the gods, including *sarāqu* ("to scatter"),[1328] *šakānu* ("to place"),[1329] *rakāsu* ("to arrange"),[1330] *kunnu* ("to set up"), *ṭuḫḫu* ("to offer, present"),[1331] *qerēbu* ("to be offered"),[1332] *qurrubu* ("to present, serve"),[1333] and *kunnu* ("to set up").[1334] Terms such as *nakāsu,*[1335] *maḫāṣu*,[1336] and *palāqu*[1337] are used specifically in reference to

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[1325] Linssen 2004: 263, 6–7 (KAR 60). On cleansing the material elements and offerings, see further Linssen 2004: 150–151; van Driel 1969: 167–168. On the Akkadian terms used in reference to offering tables, altars, and water basins, including *paššūru, paṭiru, maškittu, maqqû*, and *adagurru*, see the discussion below.

[1326] Linssen 2004: 277, III 25 (IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421); see further, Linssen 2004: 144.

[1327] Linssen 2004: 139.

[1328] Linssen 2004: 267, r. 3, 6 (KAR 50); CAD "S": 172–174 *sarāqu* A., "1. to strew, scatter, sprinkle (offering material, in rituals)."

[1329] SAA 8: no. 231; SAA 13, no. 131, 7–8; Linssen 2004: 267, r. 4 (KAR 50).
CAD "Š" 1: 121 *šakānu*, "1. b) to set in place a food or incense offering."

[1330] Friedrich et al. 1940: 106, 10.
CAD "R": 99-100 *rakāsu*, "6. c) to establish 1' offerings."

[1331] Streck 1916: 264, iii 9; 268 iii 24.
CAD "Ṭ": 79-80 *ṭuḫḫu,* "3. to bring into someone's presence, to bring near, to hand over, to present, b) offerings 2' other occs."

[1332] van Driel 1969: 88, vi 27, viii 19.
CAD "Q": 234 *qerēbu*, "4. to go up as offering."

[1333] SAA 10: no. 352, r. 1; SAA 13, no. 10, r. 13; see also, Zimmern 1901: 174–187, nos. 60–70.
CAD "Q": 238 *qerēbu*, "10. *qurrubu* c) to present offerings, prayers, to serve meals to the gods, rarely to the king or governor."

[1334] Linssen 2004: 277, III 25 (IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421).
CAD "K": 162–163 *kânu* A, "3. *kunnu* a) to place an object correctly or in a specific place 1' said of ritual and votive objects." On this set of Akkadian verbs used in reference to the offering of food and drink, see further Linssen 2004: 155–156.

[1335] Linssen 2004: 267, r. 9 (KAR 50).
CAD "N": 1, 177–178 *nakāsu*, "4. to slaughter a) animals."

[1336] SAA 15: no. 61, r. 14′.
CAD 71–83 "M": *maḫāṣu* "1. to hit, to wound, to kill… 7. *muḫḫūṣu* to wound, to kill."

[1337] Linssen 2004: 263, 15 (KAR 60).
CAD "P": 51–52 *palāqu* A, "1. to slaughter, 2. *pulluqu* to slaughter."

the ritualized butchering of animals for the divine meal.[1338] The food and drink presented as offering was also collectively referred to by a variety of terms in the Neo-Assyrian texts, some particular to food offerings, some to libations, some burnt offerings, and others simply denoting regular daily offerings.[1339]

Once the gods had consumed their part of the offerings, the remainder was redistributed among the temple personnel and royal court.[1340] Some of the longer tablets from the House of Aššur offering lists, for example, are divided into sections, one of which enumerates the *rīḫus ša pān Aššur* ("leftovers that were before Aššur").[1341] The royal correspondence similarly speaks of leftovers from the divine meals. Šarru-emur-anni, the governor of Mazamua, writes to the king that the *rīḫus ša pān ilāni* ("leftovers that were before the gods") are being brought to the king by the *šangû* from the city Uṣur-Adad,[1342] while Urdu-Nabu writes that he is bringing the *rīḫus ša Nabû* to the crown prince.[1343] A letter from Ina-šar-Bel-allak, an official at Khorsabad, mentions the *ginû utru ša bīt Nabû* ("surplus of the *ginû*-offerings of the *bītu* of Nabu"), some of which was divided among the *āšipu*s and the *laḫḫinu*s.[1344] The sharing of a meal in which the gods' first partook would have established an important connection between humans and divinity, as well as a level of solidarity amongst the former, which at times may have included the king himself.[1345]

When assembled within the temple built environment as part of the divine meal, these material elements engaged with the select participants and the opulent architectural surroundings in the creation of a sensorial ritualized performance. The smells of the aromatics used for purification purposes would have added to the sensory experience of the divine meal, while the polychromatic and elaborate qualities of the portable and non-portable works of art expanded the visual dimensions of the practice.

Material Aspects of the Divine Meal

The experiential aspects of the material elements and spaces of the divine meal are communicated by a number of sources: first, by the textual sources; second, by visual representations from Neo-Assyrian material culture; and third, by the material evidence of the portable works of art and the temple built environment associated with this practice recovered from Neo-Assyrian sites. These three aspects are here dealt with in sequence.

The serving of the divine meal in the Neo-Assyrian temple necessitated a particular group of portable works of art: altars were used for ritualized butchering, food was laid out on offering tables, liquid offerings placed in libation vessels, and aromatics

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[1338] On ritualized butchering in Mesopotamia, see Sallaberger and Mayer 2003–2005; Seidel 2003.
[1339] See note 195; see further, Nunn 2006: 182–184.
[1340] Glassner 1987–1990: 261–262; see further, Sallaberger and Mayer 2003–2005: 98.
[1341] SAA 7: no. 190, r. 5; no. 191, r. 8; no. 201, 4; no. 206, 4; no. 215, 8′; see further Fales and Postgate 1992: XXXV–XXXVI (SAA 7).
CAD "R": 340 *rīḫtu*, "2. (in pl.) leftovers a) from meals served to the gods."
[1342] SAA 15: no. 218, r. 8–11.
[1343] SAA 16: no. 106, r. 1–8.
[1344] SAA 1: no. 128, r. 16–19. On Ina-šar-Bel-allak, see PNA 2/I: 541, "Ina-šār-Bēl-allak 2."
CAD "A": 1, 294f *alaḫḫinu,* " (an administrative official)."
[1345] On the socializing aspect of sharing a meal, see Glassner 1987–1990: 262–264.

placed on incense burners.[1346] A number of terms are used to refer to these portable works of art are referenced in Neo-Assyrian texts. The report on the ceremonies carried out at Assur that was recovered from Nimrud repeatedly makes reference to the use of *maškittu*s[1347] for ritualized butchering and the presentation of offerings before the gods Aššur and Šamaš.[1348] Similarly an explanatory work on the practices of Egašankalama, the House of Ištar in Arbela, specifies that a *paššūru*[1349] was set up in the *tarbaṣu* ("courtyard") before Šamaš, upon which the ritualized butchering of sheep was performed.[1350] The report on Sennacherib's temple activities at Assur also place a *maškittu* in the *tarbaṣu* of a temple.[1351] Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions likewise speak to these portable items: one manuscript gives instructions for preparing the *paššūru* before the throne of the gods;[1352] another for placing *šēḫtu*s ("incense burners") filled with wood behind the *paššūru*;[1353] a third for setting up the *paṭiru*[1354] along with the *riksu*-arrangement before the god;[1355] and a fourth for arranging a *maqqû*[1356] on the *paššūru* of the god Anu.[1357] A fifth example includes a reference to the *paššūru*s of the gods as part of a self-presentation formula, in which the king Aššurbanipal speaks of invocations and ritualized actions he performed for the god Šamaš; in the same text the king states that he sought the god in his shining *bītu* and invoked him at the *paššūru* with *mākālu*[1358] of the great gods.[1359] An administrative report concerning the additional *ginû*-offerings of bread

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[1346] As stated in note 15, I differentiate between an "offering table," as a portable item that was used in the presentation of food offerings to the gods, an "altar" as a surface used for ritualized butchering, and a "pedestal" for items preserved in the archaeological record for which the original use is not indisputably clear. Of the terminology used in reference to these portable works of art in the Akkadian texts, Vivante (1994) argues that *maškittus* were used exclusively in sacrificial practice, while *paššūrus* were used for the presentation of food. The use of *maškittu*s in the Neo-Assyrian sources seems to correlate with ritualized butchering; however, examples are also attested that use *paššūru* in a similar manner, as the following examples in-text demonstrate. It is interesting to note that the lexical list Sa Fragment M has the following entry: "[…] BUR = *ni-q[u-ú]* = MIN = *naptanu* = MIN = *pa-áš-š[u-ru]*; Landsberger and Hallock 1955: 65 (MSL 3). See further, Linssen 2004: 140–145.

[1347] CAD "M": 1, 376f *maškittu*, "offering table;" see further, Salonen 1963: 174–203; Vivante 1994.

[1348] van Driel 1969: Appendix II (ND 1120).

[1349] CAD "P": 263f *paššūru* ((GIŠ.)BANŠUR), "2. offering table;" see further, Salonen 1963: 176–192

[1350] SAA 3: no. 38, 44–52.

[1351] van Driel 1969: 94, VIII 9′ (ME 121206); see also, van Driel 1969: 128, III 4 (A 125).

[1352] Zimmern 1901: no. 60, 10; see further, CAD "P": 263 (BBR No. 60: 10); CAD "R": 98.

[1353] Zimmern 1901: no. 67, 5; see further, CAD "P": 263 (BBR No. 67: 5); see also, van Driel 1969: 94, VIII 22′–29′ (ME 121206).

[1354] CAD "P": 303f *paṭiru* (GI.DU$_8$), "(a table)."

[1355] Linssen 2004: 277, III 24–25 (IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421); see further, Linssen 2004: 141.

[1356] CAD "M": 1, 254 *maqqû* A, "1. libation bowl (made of gold or silver)."

[1357] Thureau-Dangin 1921: 62, 1. This excerpt demonstrates that the *maqqû* was considered to belong to the group of *sappu*-containers (*sappī ša maqqāni*). This type of container was used in both ritualized and non-ritualized contexts; see further, Linssen 2004: 160; also, Salonen 1963: 2, 223.

[1358] CAD "M": 1, 124f *mākālu*, "1. food, meal, food offering to the gods."

[1359] Ebeling 1919: no. 55, 14–15 (KAR 55): *ina paššūr mākāle ilī rabûti šumka azkur.* See further, Lambert 1959: 38, 13; Salonen 1963: 196. Ebeling includes KAR 55 in his series "Handerhebung," a collection of Akkadian ritual instructions labeled *šuilla* that are associated with the "raised hand" gesture. This gesture was done with the intent of invoking the gods of the heavens. Ebeling's inclusion of KAR 55 in this series rests in part upon the ancient scribal label *šuilla* found in line eight of the reverse. Its formal properties also conform to the literary structure that is generally associated with *šuilla* (Lenzi 2011: 27). Yet KAR 55 is unique in that it names the supplicant, Aššurbanipal, which argues for its restricted use, in contrast to other

and beer for the *bītu* of Nabu at Khorsabad suggests that the quantities of offerings were measured by the number of *paṭiru*s,[1360] while another report lists those provisions that were necessary for a *paššūru tallulu* ("equipped table").[1361] A few letters from the Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence also make reference to portable works of art that were set up in front of the gods for use with offerings, ritualized butchering, and purification practices. Mar-Issar, for example, mentions to the king that *ginû*-offerings should be made in front of the *parakku* ("dais") and that incense should be strewn on the *nignakku*s during temple ceremonies,[1362] while another letter speaks of the king setting up *adagurru*s[1363] for offering drink.[1364]

Neo-Assyrian texts and visual representations demonstrate what these types of portable works of art would have looked like. Scenes from the Balawat Gates (FIGURE 170)[1365] and Aššurbanipal's lion hunt reliefs in the North Palace (FIGURE 171)[1366] depict this type of ritualized practice. In both scenes the king is shown standing behind an incense burner and an offering table, and in the case of the former, a libation vessel.[1367] The offering table in these scenes is shown with two legs ending in lions paws that are raised on cones, a central support with a lotus bud at the top, and fabric draped over the top surface upon which the provisions are set out. Comparable portable works of art are represented in scenes of tribute on an obelisk of Aššurnaṣirpal[1368] and a wall relief from Sargon's palace at Khorsabad,[1369] in the banqueting scene of Aššurbanipal from the North Palace, and in an offering scene on a glazed vessel from Assur (FIGURE 172–174; 130).[1370] Textual sources denote that offering tables were made of wood,[1371] reed,[1372] or

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šuilla that include the rubric *anāku annanna apil annanna* ("I, NN, son of NN"). KAR 55 may have acted more as a memorandum or attestation to something that took place in the past and not as a prescriptive text for future use. Such a suggestion would coincide well with KAR 55's association with the royal domain, its archived context at Assur, and the larger collecting tendencies of Assyrian kings; on the latter, see Lieberman 1990; Fincke 2003–2004; Reade 2004; Thomason 2005.

[1360] SAA 1: no. 128; see further, also CAD "P": 303f *paṭiru*; Fales and Postgate 1992: XXXIV (SAA 7); Linssen 2004: 141–142.

[1361] SAA 11: no. 174; see also, CAD "P": 264f *paššūru*, "3. serving portion;" Linssen 2004: 141–142.

[1362] SAA 10: no. 352, r. 17–18. The ceremonies specified include the *eššēšu*-ceremony and the *šalām bīti*-ceremony ("good-functioning of the temple"); on the latter, see Linssen 2004: 59–61; see further below for a discussion of both with respect to cyclical performances in the temple. The following letters also make mention *paššūru*s: SAA 1: no. 55, r. 7′; SAA 10: no. 353, e. 27; SAA 14: no. 44; no. 143, 9′; no. 138, 8–9; SAA 14: no. 89, 1; and *paṭirū:* SAA 10: no. 247, r. 9.

[1363] CAD "A": 1, 93f *adagurru* (DUG.A.DA.GUR$_4$(or .GUR$_5$), "(a container with pointed bottom in ritual use for beer, wine or milk)."

[1364] Thureau-Dangin 1921: no. 7, 9.

[1365] King 1915: pls. I–II, LIX; Schachner 2007: pls. 1, 50b.

[1366] ME 124887 (1856-9-9, 51)(Barnett 1976: p. 54, pl. LVII; Curtis and Reade 1995: 29).

[1367] See further, Watanabe 1992; Mallowan 1993.

[1368] ME 118800 ("Rassam Obelisk")(Reade 1980b: pl. III–IV; also, Salonen 1963: Tafel XXXVI). See further, Oates and Oates (2001: 232–236) for a discussion of Neo-Assyrian furniture based on finds from Nimrud.

[1369] IM 18630 (Loud 1936: fig. 42; Salonen 1963: Tafel XLVII).

[1370] ME 124920 (1856-9-9, 53)(Curtis and Reade 1995: 121-123; also, Salonen 1963: Tafel XLVIII; Seidel 2003–2005: 104–105). Such examples, as proposed by Mallowan (1993: 385) with respect to Aššurbanipal's banquet scene, suggest that this table was a practical piece of furniture. The inclusions of these portable works of art in scenes of tribute raises the question of their origin, whether they were "foreign" objects being gifted to the king, and if not the latter, why they were being given as tribute.

precious metal.[1373] Comparable bronze lion paw furniture pieces from Nimrud (FIGURE 94)[1374] and textual references to the *iḫzu*s[1375] of offering tables in the royal inscriptions suggest attachments of precious metals and other valued materials were also a feature of offering tables.[1376] The neighboring incense burner in these scenes is shown as a tall slender stand with a triangular top cover.[1377] Like the pedestals, the textual sources attest to *nignakku*s as well as *maqqû*s made of precious metals.[1378]

The statement "before the god" in the textual sources suggests that when used during the presentation of the divine meals, these portable works of art were set up within the god's chamber, if not specifically upon the dais as suggested by references to the *parakku*. A few references, however, situate such features within the temple courtyard, as attested for the *paššūru* and *maškittu*. Unfortunately the Neo-Assyrian visual representations of ritualized practice contribute little to interpreting the location of these portable works of art within the temple and associated practice, the majority lacking architectural cues or being situated outside the temple context. In contrast, the archaeological evidence from Neo-Assyrian temples lends some insight into the original architectural context of these portable works of art during the presentation of the divine meal, while also expanding upon their visual and material characteristics.

A striking archaeological find associated with the divine meal that has been recovered from Neo-Assyrian temples is a group of large triangular stone pedestals,[1379] all but two of which found at Khorsabad. Those known for certain to have been

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Evidence for similar portable works of art from areas neighboring Assyria—for example bronze lion paw legs from Urartu (Taşyürek 1975: pl. XXXVI)—suggest that this type of table was not restricted to Assyria, but rather was common among the material culture of other areas of the ancient Near East, and for this reason, could be both of foreign and local manufacture. Mallowan (1993) states that tables and other furnishings were a common form of tribute from areas to the west of Assyria in scenes of tribute.

[1371] *paššūru* is written logographically ^{GIŠ}BANŠUR, the determinative "GIŠ" meaning "wood;" many texts also mention *paššūru*s made of various types of wood, see CAD "P": 259–264; Salonen 1963: 187–189.

[1372] *paṭirū* is written logographically GI.DU$_8$, the logogram "GI/*qanû*" meaning "reed." As noted by Linssen (2004: 141), a Hellenistic text includes the *paṭirū* among the utensils of the reed-worker.

[1373] SAA 13: no. 134, 9, mentions a *paššūru* of *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") of Marduk that Sargon had made; SAA 13: no. 138 refers to something made of *ḫurāṣu* that Nabû-epuš, the *šangû* of Ea, had removed from the *paššūru*; see further, Salonen 1963: 187–189.

[1374] A set of three bronze lions' paws were found by Layard (1849: pl. 96, no. 2–3) in a trench near the center of the citadel mound; 1848-11-4, 84-86 (Curtis and Reade 1995: no. 86–88).

[1375] CAD "I/J": 47f *iḫzū*, "mountings (for setting stones and decorating costly objects); see further, Salonen 1963: 203.

[1376] RIMA 2: A.0.101.1, i 84–85, ii 67; Thureau-Dangin 1912: 389f; Luckenbill 1924: 52, 31.

[1377] As noted by Mallowan (1993: 386, figs. 1–5), incense burners without a triangular top in glyptic scenes are shown with fumes rising up from the stand, suggesting that the triangular feature was simply a cover, as found in wall painitngs from Assur (Andrae 1923: Tafeln 23, 25, 26, 29). A cover of this type dating to the Parthian period was found at Assur during excavations (Andrae 1938: 261). See further the discussion in Maul 1994: 52.

[1378] *nignakku*s made of *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") are mentioned in Aššurbanirpal's royal inscriptions; Streck 1916: 286, 16; while a list from Nimrud mentions ones of *kaspu* ("silver); Parker 1961: 33, 4 (ND 2490); see further, CAD "M": 1, 254 *maqqû* A, "1. libation bowl (made of gold or silver)."

[1379] These objects have been referred to by a variety of labels by scholars, including "altar," "sacrificial altar," "pedestal," "offering table," and "tripod base." Unger (1928: 73) includes them in a section on "Dreifußaltar," along with a comparison to the objects represented in the reliefs Shalmaneser III and Aššurbanipal

excavated at Khorsabad include the following: one was found outside the palace by Botta and Flandin and is on display at the Louvre (FIGURE 175–176);[1380] two were excavated by the Chicago expedition near Citadel Gate A, one of which is at the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad and the other the Oriental Institute (FIGURE 177);[1381] and most recently, the Iraq Antiquities Department recovered sixteen during their excavations of the House of the Sibitti outside the citadel wall.[1382] A similar stone pedestal is held in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum that likely also came from Khorsabad (FIGURE 178).[1383] Of the group from the House of the Sibitti, Safar reports finding thirteen in the god's chamber preceding the dais—four were standing in their original position, the rest were overturned yet were restored for a photograph (FIGURE 179–180)—and three were found on the pavement of the courtyard, one of which was very damaged.[1384]

Provenance	Excavation	Collection
Khorsabad	French Excavations (Botta and Flandin)	Musée du Louvre (AO 19900)
Khorsabad: Citadel Gate A (2)	Chicago Excavations (Loud and Altman; DS 1194)	Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (A 17547)
	Chicago Excavations (Loud and Altman; DS 1195)	National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad
Khorsabad: House of the Sibitti (16)	Department of Antiquities of Iraq Excavations (Safar)	
Khorsabad?		Istanbul Archaeology Museum (4784)
Nimrud: Temple Complex	British Excavations (Mallowan)	British Museum (ME 118806)

TABLE 1. Stone pedestals from Khorsabad and Nimrud.

The group recovered from the House of the Sibitti is especially telling with regard to the original context and use for the pedestals found at Khorsabad: first, the rim of each

[1380] AO 19900 (Botta and Flandin 1849: II, pl. 157; Albenda and Caubet 1986: 97, 276–277).
[1381] DS 1194 (A 17547); DS 1195 (Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 48., nos. 18 and 19; 104, insc. no. 3).
[1382] Safar 1957.
[1383] Istanbul Archaeology Museum no. 4784 (Fant and Reddish 2008: 138).
[1384] Safar 1957: 220 (what I here refer to as the god's chamber is referred to by Safar as the antecella, the antecella and cella making up the shrine). There seems to be some error in calculation for the objects recovered; Safar states that thirteen altars were found in the antecella of the shrine and "two similar altars and the bottom piece of a third one" in the courtyard, yet he then concludes that "the total number of these altars is brought to fourteen." Mallowan (1993: 385) similarly states that fourteen "stone altar-tables" were recovered by the Department of Antiquites of Iraq, all but three in the "antecella" and three in the courtyard. However, if thirteen were found inside the chamber and three in the courtyard, this ought to total sixteen rather than fourteen.

was inscribed with a dedicatory text of Sargon to the Sibitti;[1385] second, they were discovered within relative proximity to the dais within this temple; and third, their material characteristics agree with the evidence from the textual and visual sources for a type of object that was associated with the divine meal. These facts argue for the use of this group of pedestals in the serving of the divine meal within the god's chamber in the House of the Sibitti at Khorsabad. Also recovered from the courtyard of the House of the Sibitti were three stone objects that are described by Safar as follows: "they are in the shape of an elongated chalice with a shallow basin on a column-like base which tapers at the top"[1386] (FIGURE 181). The description and appearance of this latter group coincides with what is known of incense burners from the textual and visual sources, thereby offering archaeological support for the role of aromatics and the performance of fumigation within the temple.

The one stone pedestal that was without a doubt not found at Khorsabad was that which was discovered at Nimrud during the British excavations of the temple complex. This pedestal stood in front of the stele of Aššurnaṣirpal II at the doorway to the god's chamber neighboring the House of Ninurta (FIGURE 43; 46–47).[1387] In contrast to those from Khorsabad, the Nimrud pedestal was uninscribed and had a deep hole in its surface with traces of black stain within, the latter possibly the result of burning incense or from bitumen used to secure a smaller incense burner in the hole.[1388] With the vast majority of these pedestals being connected with Sargon's work at Khorsabad, Mallowan suggests two possibilities. The first possibility is that the Nimrud version was a prototype that Sargon's craftsmen copied when making those for Khorsabad, at a time when the king was still residing at Nimrud. The second possibility is that Sargon is also responsible for the Nimrud offering table, which he set up "in front of Aššurnaṣirpal's stele as a homage to the founder of Nimrud."[1389] The lack of an inscription on the Nimrud pedestal is noteworthy, perhaps suggesting that it was never finished or that it was not intended for a specific divinity. The fact that so many of this type are preserved with a definitive tie to the work of Sargon is also striking. Whether this discrepancy reflects a preference of Sargon for the House of the Sibitti—the king for whatever reason commissioning a greater number of pedestals than was customary for a single temple—or is the result of preservation—the removed location of the House of the Sibitti from the main citadel protecting its contents—cannot be said for certain. The evidence from contemporary visual imagery, however, in addition to discoveries from the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud, argue that this disparity might simply be a case of preservation, a proposition that is further supported by the quick shift of activity from Khorsabad to Nineveh following Sargon's death.

[1385] The inscriptions reads as follows: "Sargon, king of the universe, king of Assyria, the high priest of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, placed and presented (this altar) to the God Sibitti, the hero who has no parallel" (Safar 1957: 220; Fuchs 1994).
[1386] Safar 1957: 221.
[1387] ME 118806 (1851-9-2, 33)(Layard 1853a: p. IV; Reade 2002: 170–171, fig. 32).
[1388] As suggested by Reade (2002: 171), who notes Matilda Rassam's original remarks on this object in a letter to Layard: "in the center of the stone there is a round hole, which I fancy was used for burning incense in."
[1389] Mallowan 1993: 385.

Excavation reports and a photograph of the god's chamber of the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud attest to a square stone pedestal with lion's feet was found set up at the top of steps in the area of the dais; the excavation reports also reference a "tripod" and "pillars" between the dais and the doorway (FIGURE 182–183).[1390] Reade suggests that the "tripod" mentioned in the reports may have been an offering table comparable to the group of triangular stone pedestals discussed above, and that the "pillars" were incense burners, that is, larger versions of the sculpted portable object that was found in the same temple (FIGURE 184).[1391] A better preserved version of the latter type was found in the House of Ištar at Nineveh, upon which traces of burning were found on the top surface (FIGURE 185–186).[1392] Taller versions of this type of object—likely bearing closer resemblance to those reported from the House of the Kidmuri—were found flanking the principal doorway to both the House of Šarrat-nipḫi at Nimrud (FIGURE 187)[1393] and the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah (FIGURE 188: 5).[1394] A group of ceramic stands was also found in close proximity to the dais at Tell al-Rimah (FIGURE 166; FIGURE 188: 1, 3–4; FIGURE 189); Oates identifies these finds as "gigantic 'potstands'" that would have likely held a bowl for offerings to be dedicated or burnt.[1395]

The discovery of these portable works of art within close proximity to the temples' daises reinforces the spatial characteristics of the divine meal suggested by the textual sources, that this presentation of offerings to the god was staged in front of the divine image within the most inner chamber of the temple. The majority of the objects from the House of the Sibitti at Khorsabad, the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud, and the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah were found within the god's chambers of these temples. For the pedestals and incense burners found in the courtyard of the House of the Sibitti, because of their portable nature it might be proposed that they were brought into the god's chamber when needed, yet stored in the courtyard when not in use; perhaps they were also used during the performance of other temple practices beyond the god's chamber.[1396] Textual references to moving and removing altars, offering tables, and incense burners, as well as clearing the temple after presenting the divine meal, support such a scenario.[1397]

Archaeological evidence at Nimrud and Khorsabad also suggests the performance of libations within the god's chamber. Permanent stone jars were found in the god's

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[1390] Reade 2002: 145f. The "pillar" label is taken from the plan and may be the "square marble columns" that are mentioned in the written reports.
[1391] ME 118372 (AOC.15)(Searight et al. 2008: 89, no. 583, fig. 56).
[1392] 1930-5-8, 218 (Reade 2002: 15–151; Searight et al. 2008: 89, no. 585, fig. 57); see further, Searight et al. 2008: 87–90.
[1393] Layard 1853a: 360. A similar object was found at a doorway in Ezida at Nimrud (Oates 1957: 27-28; Mallowan 1966: I, 234), though Searight et al. (2008: 89, n. 584, fig. 56) dates the latter to the first-second century AD. Holloway (1996) argues against the identification of these doorway objects as incense burners, and suggests instead that they were lamp stands intended to light the change in pavement at the doorway and to aid the entrance guards.
[1394] TR. 4456 (Reid 1974).
[1395] TR. 4127–4129 (Reid 1974). As noted by Oates, the closest parallels for this type of clay portable object are earlier Palestinian examples, second-millennium Mesopotamian examples, and a stand from Megiddo dating to the Middle Iron Age; see further, Oates 1982.
[1396] Mallowan 1993: 385.
[1397] van Driel 1969: 128, VI 22′ (A 125); van Driel 1969: 200, 4–5, 12, 18 (ND 1120).

chambers of Sin and Adad at Khorsabad (FIGURE 158),[1398] while Rassam's accounts of excavations in the House of the Kidmuri at Nimrud report finding a "marble bowl" set into the ground within the god's chamber, as indicated on his plan (FIGURE 182). Reade proposes that these vessels were used during libation practices comparable to the pots on a stand that are used in open air practices.[1399] Of note is the discovery of a pot stand and glazed jar that were found *in situ* in the god's chamber in the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah (FIGURE 188: 2; FIGURE 190).[1400] Oates proposes that "the glazed jar probably also contained some sort of ritual offering, possibly liquid or even flowers."[1401] Excavations of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad similarly speak to the performance of libations, here upon the dais itself: the discovery of a shallow channel that was cut into the pavement around the outside of the raised platform led Loud and Altman to state that "it gives every appearance of being a drain emptying into a square hole with cover slab" (FIGURE 156).[1402]

Archaeological evidence of square non-portable works of art from both Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad suggest that aspects of the divine meal were also staged in the temple courtyard. Standing in line with the doorway to the antechamber in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad was a non-portable square altar or offering table with a glazed brick application on its side surfaces (FIGURE 115; 191).[1403] In the House of Nabu at Nimrud a square stone base was found set into the pavement of the courtyard preceding the god's chamber of Nabu (NT 2, NT 4), that might suggest a similar arrangement as at Khorsabad. Vivante argues for a distinction at a linguistic level between the archaeological features in the courtyard and the portable works of art of the god's chamber, concluding that *maškittu*s were for ritualized butchering in the courtyard—where a blood ritual would be more appropriate—and that *paššūru*s were movable offering tables to be associated with practices staged within an enclosed space.[1404] If the former are to be associated with ritualized butchering, this would coincide well with the report from Nimrud that speaks of plastering (*sêru*)[1405] the *maškittu*s of the *bītu* of Aššur.[1406] Yet not all of the textual sources support such a strict division; for example, the cultic explanatory work cited above specifies that ritualized butchering was to be performed on a *paššūru* set up in the *tarbāṣu* ("courtyard") before Šamaš.[1407]

[1398] Loud (1936: 118) notes the following on the House of Sin: "There is no question that this jar played a part in the temple ritual. Its position in the floor suggests a receptacle for reuse, possibly from the sacrifices. The lack of any outlet points on the other hand to the impracticability of this. It might very well have served as a container of holy water or oil, which could be dipped from it by means of a long-handled spoon or ladle and poured over the suppliant or the sacrificial animal. Perhaps the altar stood near by, placed centrally before the flight of steps. In such event the priests conducting the service before the altar would have ready access to this jar imbedded in the floor."

[1399] Reade 2002: 150; as represented in the open air scene on the Balawat Gates (FIGURE 170).

[1400] TR. 4116–4117 (Reid 1974).

[1401] Reid 1974: 183.

[1402] Loud and Altman 1938: 62.

[1403] Loud and Altman 1938: 15, 42, 57, 61, pl. 22 C–F.

[1404] Vivante 1994.

[1405] CAD "S": 227f *sêru*, "1. to plaster, to cover with a clay slip."

[1406] van Driel 1969: 200, 14 (ND 1120).

[1407] SAA 3: no. 38, 44–52.

Terminology aside, the archaeological evidence corroborates the textual references to activity staged within the courtyard of the temple. Moreover, when standing over these non-portable objects in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad and Ezida at Nimrud, a viewer would have had a direct line of sight toward the dais, if the doors of the god's chamber was left open.[1408] Such courtyard features were likely used for the preparatory practices of the divine meal, including the ritualized butchering of animals, the meat from which would have then been brought into the god's chamber and placed on an offering table. According to Waerzeggers, the persons who prepared the foodstuffs for the divine meal in the Babylonian temple—the brewers, bakers, fishers, gardeners and others—handed over such goods to the *ērib bīti* during a ceremonial practice that was performed in the courtyard (*kisallu*) shortly before the serving of the divine meal to the god in the god's chamber.[1409] The courtyard, according to Waerzegger, was a mediating point between the active and inactive participants of temple practice.[1410] A similar sequence of events may have taken place in the Neo-Assyrian temple. Also worth noting is the large basalt water basin of Sennacherib that was discovered in the outer courtyard of the House of Aššur at Assur; the water from this skillfully carved stone feature may have also played a role in the preparatory purification practices of the divine meal (FIGURE 192).[1411]

In addition to corroborating the forms, use, and location that are communicated by the textual and visual sources, the material characteristics and architectural contexts of these portable and non-portable works of art aid in reconstructing the interactive and experiential aspects of the divine meal as a ritualized practice within the Neo-Assyrian temple.

Experiencing the Divine Meal

The nineteen triangular stone pedestals from Khorsabad and Nimrud each stand around 85 centimeters tall, reaching the approximate height of a person's waist and coinciding with the scale of the offering tables from Neo-Assyrian visual imagery.[1412] The incense burner from Khorsabad stands much higher, as demonstrated in the photo from the excavations (FIGURE 181), similarly mirroring the scale of incense burners from visual imagery. When placed within the god's chamber before the image of a god, the low height of the offering table and libation vessel, and the slender stand of the incense burner would not have obstructed the view of the image of the god raised upon the dais. Moreover, even though these portable works of art were crafted of similarly valued and visually appreciated materials as the divine image—exotic woods, light-

[1408] See further, Nunn 2006: 176–177.
[1409] Waerzeggers 2010: 11.
[1410] Waerzeggers 2010: 289: "The courtyard was the axis that arranged priestly *rank* in two major opposites (initiated-uninitiated), and it was the point at which priestly *activity* bifurcated into two degrees of participation (active-inactive), drawing a firm line between the fit and active on the one hand, and the unfit and inactive on the other… Rules of access to the courtyard therefore determined who could participate in temple worship, creating a distinction between the person of the prebend owner (who could be unfit) and the person of the performer (who had to be fit)."
[1411] Andrae 1938: 34, Abb. 16, 50–51; see also, Maul 1998: 62, fig. 75; Nunn 2006: 175–176.
[1412] The Nimrud altar is 84 centimeters in height, the Oriental Institute altar 89 centimeters, and the altar at the Musée du Louvre is 83 centimeters; see further, Mallowan 1993: 285.

colored stone, and precious metals—the elevation and material aspects of the god would have materially and conceptually commanded attention within this enclosed space.

Non-portable works of art and the use of contrasting materials set the dais apart visually within its immediate setting in the Neo-Assyrian temple. The dais in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, for example, was paved with a single monolithic flat alabaster slab that stood out from the preceding built environment, upon which was inscribed a dedicatory text to the god Ninurta.[1413] Applied to the rear wall of the dais in the House of Sin at Khorsabad was a niche of seven engaged half-columns, and its approach was marked by large limestone stairs that were flanked by broad platforms and faced with limestone slabs (FIGURE 158).[1414] The daises in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad presented a similar visual experience. As described by the excavators:[1415]

> In the main sanctuary of the Nabu temple a mud-brick platform upon which the figure of the god probably stood is built up nearly to the level of the niche and extends slightly beyond it on either side (see Pls. 25 D and 84). In the other sanctuaries the cult figures must have stood upon more perishable or movable bases… Without the platform the niches upon excavation stand out by themselves.

In addition to a rear niche, the dais of the neighboring god's chamber (Rooms 23–24) was also marked by inscribed stone slabs that were placed on top of the platforms flanking the preceding steps and a pair of niches on the side walls of the dais (FIGURE 193; 155). Loud and Altman note that the side niches suggest the display of images or other portable works of art due to their symmetrical placement, undecorated forms, and 1.60-meter elevation above the floor level.[1416] The visibility of the daises in all of these god's chambers was further accentuated by their elevation above the general floor level.

The influence of elevation on visibility and imageability is explored by Higuchi in his study of the natural landscapes of Japan.[1417] In this work Higuchi applies a concept of perceptual analysis to features of the landscape (for example paths, boundaries, and landmarks) rather than the more traditional object of study, the city. Based on the variations in experience and perception that he encounters, Higuchi states as follows:[1418]

> With the most stable line of vision for the average person being about 10 to 15 degrees below the horizontal, it follows that the very process of looking up involves a certain amount of stress. Presumably this is why the term "to look up" connotes the idea of paying respect or reverence. "Looking up to" someone or something requires a visual effort.

[1413] Layard's plan in Reade 2002: fig. 20; see also, Reade 2002: 171, App. 2 (M 7).
[1414] Loud 1936: 119–121.
[1415] Loud and Altman 1938: 45.
[1416] Loud and Altman 1938: 46, pl. 26 D. A similar set of three undecorated niches was found in the wall of Room 49 of Residence K at Khorsabad, which the excavators associate with the deposit of everyday objects rather than "ornamental figures" (Loud and Altman 1938: 46, pl. 34 A).
[1417] Higuchi 1983.
[1418] Higuchi 1983: 46.

As demonstrated in DIAGRAM 3, the normal line of sight is 10 degrees below the horizon, while DIAGRAM 4 shows how something like an elevated structure or object causes a person to look up, to exert visual effort, relative to his distance from its base. This impact on visibility argues for treating elevation as a characteristic of ritualization in buildings devoted to ritualized practice.

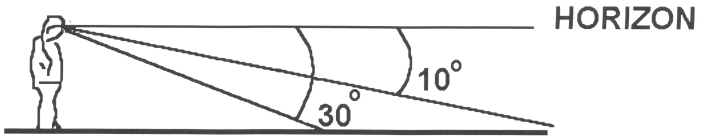

DIAGRAM 3. Normal lines of sight when standing. Moore 1996: fig. 3.3, after Higuchi 1983.

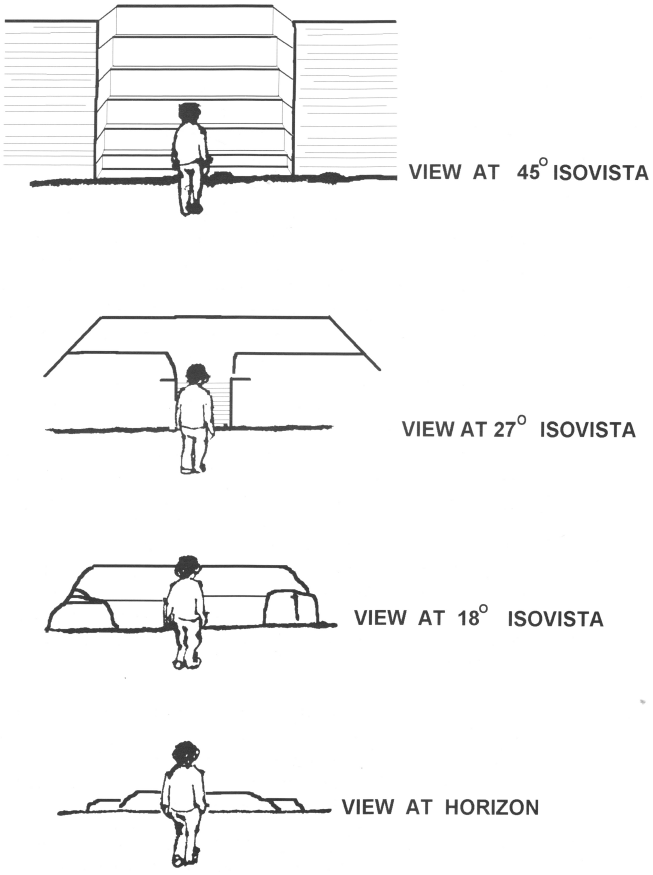

DIAGRAM 4. Changing fields of view at varying isovistas. Moore 1996: fig. 3.4, after Higuchi 1983.

Moore engages with the work of Higuchi, among others, in his study on the power of architecture in the ancient Andes. Moore argues that the strategic combination of elevation and architectural arrangement in two types of Andean pyramid complexes had a profound impact on visibility. The first type consisted of a mound at the end of a long architectural axis of raised and sunken plazas, and the second an enclosed mound (FIGURE 194–195).[1419] These buildings demanded the greatest visual effort, their mounds only being visible either from atop the mound itself or close to its base.

Architectural arrangements in the Neo-Assyrian temple similarly increased the visual impact of the elevated dais, the latter situated at the end of the principal axis that created a spatial and visual unity with the antechamber and god's chamber. Further enhancing this unity was the lack of either a physical door or a raised threshold between these chambers, features that often marked such boundaries between other types of rooms in Neo-Assyrian royal buildings. Material also reinforced this unity, for example the continuous sequence of stone blocks used for flooring in the antechamber and god's chamber in the House of Sin at Khorsabad and Ezida in Nimrud (FIGURE 196–198).[1420] This type of unity not only enhanced the visual impact of the dais, it also communicates how movement toward the dais was privileged in the Neo-Assyrian temple, the unobstructed principal axis offering a direct path from the doorway to the antechamber through to the dais.

Light would have had a similarly strong impact on the visual experience of the divine meal staged within the god's chamber. Though the features of the superstructure of Neo-Assyrian temples have not been preserved, the god's chamber would have been a dark space even if there were small window openings in the walls or roof for sunlight.[1421] The contrast of light to dark would have been especially strong for a person moving from the preceding well-lit courtyard in the direction of the dais at the far end of the god's chamber. Such a restriction of natural light would have permitted the creation of a strong visual hierarchy through the strategic placement of lamps within the chamber.[1422] While Holloway presents an argument for the siting of lamps at the doorways to temples,[1423] archaeological evidence contributes little to our understanding of the role of lamps within temple chambers, yet textual sources do mention lamps and lighting in the context of the god's chamber; for example, a text from Assur speaks of the king lighting the face of the

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[1419] Moore 1996.
[1420] Loud 1936: 122.
[1421] Grabowski (2010: 34-39) discusses the possible evidence from both texts and archaeological evidence for windows in both Assyrian and Babylonian temples, for example the depiction of open slits on outer temple walls on seal representations, the White Obelisk, and on temple models, concluding that there is no firm archaeological evidence for windows in the walls of the god's chamber of the temple ("Kultraum"), and that all reconstructions of the superstructure and windows must remain speculative; see further the discussion in Loud and Altman (1938: 26–27) with respect to the buildings at Khorsabad. The orientation of the god's chambers in the temples at both Nimrud and Khorsabad were not uniform but varied between SW and NW orientations, suggesting that the entry of light from the principal doorway did not play an important role in illuminating the Neo-Assyrian temple; see further, Grabowski 2010: 26–31, who comes to a similar conclusion.
[1422] On Mesopotamian lamps, see Homès-Fredericq 1987–1990; see further the discussion of lamps as sources of artificial light in Grabowski 2010: 42–44, 70–71.
[1423] Holloway 1996.

god by means of a lamp when inside the temple.[1424] As Grabowski argues, lamps must have illuminated the space around the god's image so that the temple personnel were able to carry out the daily ceremonies.[1425]

Light can be used to manipulate and direct a viewer's gaze, accentuating as well as hiding aspects in a person's field of vision. Were lamps directed at the dais in the Neo-Assyrian temple, their light would have contributed to the visual dominance of this architectural space, reflecting off of the radiant materials with which it was made—reflective building stone and precious metals—and setting it apart from the preceding dim chamber. The same light would have highlighted the divine image itself that stood or sat upon the raised platform (FIGURE 199). As exemplified in Vermeer's painting *Girl with a Pearl Earring,* the way in which light falls on a figure affects a viewer's interaction with the individual, here a viewer's gaze is drawn in by the illumination of the girl's earring and the whites of her eyes (FIGURE 200). In the Neo-Assyrian god's chamber, light from nearby lamps, and possibly small amounts of sunlight from above, would have illuminated the three-dimensional anthropomorphic form of the god with its intricately crafted, polychromatic features, whose face and associated gaze would have projected outwards from the dais; it would have illuminated its inlaid eyes, danced off the concave surfaces and distinct ridges of its face, and accentuated the folds of its garments and luxurious adornments. Yet the illumination of the god's image by light would not only have dominated a person's visual experience, it would have also communicated its divinity in the same way as the inherent radiance and luster of the materials with which it was crafted, its divine *melammu*.[1426]

This evidence for the differentiation of the dais in terms of visibility and movement supports the argument for it being the space of greatest ritualization within the temple and the appropriate place for the god, and accordingly, the staging of the divine meal. The image of the god, whose flat hand was likely extended forward in gesture,[1427] would have drawn in participants. The surrounding images of other divine beings, mythological figures, and kings may have similarly directed ones gaze toward the central divine image, for example if the gaze and frontal stance of the former were oriented toward the god or goddess; this arrangement is demonstrated by the stele of Adad-nerari III in the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah (FIGURE 166–168). The anthropomorphism of the images of the gods upon the dais would have also lent to the interactive potential of this space and had an effect on a viewer's reactions and feelings of awe. Nadali treats this experiential aspect of the "presence of living bodies (the statues)" within the Mesopotamian temple as a system of reference:[1428]

[1424] Menzel 1981: II, 27, R 18 (A.499, 500); see further, Grabowski 2010: 44.
[1425] Grabowski 2010: 47.
[1426] See further, Grabowski's (2010: 48–75) discussion of the "Inszenierung des Kulbildes im Alten Orient, and concluding remarks (69–75); for example, "Licht und Glanz bilden dabei die visuelle Umsetzung des göttlichen *melammu* und zeugen gleichzeitig von der wohlwollenden Stimmung des Gottes. Die Dunkelheit im Kultraum bildet das „Setting" der Inszenierung und verstärkt deren optische Wirkung…. Es konnte somit gezeigt werden, dass neben den Elementen Glanz, Dunkelheit und Abgeschlossenheit, das Medium Licht, als zentrales Gestaltungsmittel im altorientalischen Kultraum des 1. Jts. fungierte."
[1427] Seidel 2000: 48.
[1428] Nadali 2013: 222.

> Since the gods are represented in the form of humans, they can be perceived as a replica of the human body and all gestures, positions and attitudes can thus be perfectly understood by the viewers in front of the statue, so enacting a real ritual exchange and involvement with the statue, that is, with the god. During the ritual, or simply when faced toward the statue, a real embodiment takes place; this special condition of eye-to-eye or body-to-body interaction makes the involvement more direct and the efficacy of the image concrete. The representation of kings, but more significantly of the gods, in the shape of human figures (instead of symbols), using the body (anthropomorphism of the divine) as a system of reference and co-ordination in space, on the one hand, helps in visualising the invisible, while on the other, increasing the participation in the ritual that one can empathetically share and perceive.

Yet while the familiarity of form here highlighted by Nadali may have encouraged greater interaction with the god, the high value and visually affective materials with which the divine image was crafted may have simultaneously kept a viewer at a distance. The elevation of the image atop the dais, a clear statement of its superiority, would have reinforced this response. Such considerations of affect depended upon the viewer in question: the impact of this space would have elicited a high emotional response from a first-time viewer, whereas those viewers permitted within this space on a regular basis—participants in the divine meal—would have been conditioned to the sensual experience of the god's chamber. This familiarity would have permitted them to carry out the serving of the divine meal without obstruction, taking cues from their material surroundings as to the proper means of comporting themselves while also experiencing awe and respect.

The private, secluded nature of the performance of the divine meal communicated by the textual sources is also reaffirmed by the archaeological evidence. The architectural plan of the temple itself bespeaks the restricted nature of the most inner space of the temple, the god's chamber, as well as the surrounding built environment. The serving of the divine meal may have also been secluded within the god's chamber by a line of draped wool (*šiddu*);[1429] for example, instructions for the *lilissu*–ceremony from Assur prescribe the closing and opening of *šiddu*s.[1430] The variant understanding of *šiddu* as a line of flour that is drawn on the ground presents a similar argument for the division of the space of the god's chamber and the highly ritualized nature of this area, the line of

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[1429] Thureau-Dangin (1921: 49f) understands *šiddu* to mean "curtain" («étoffe tendue», «toile de tente») and *šiddi šadādu*, "to pull the curtains" («tender les toiles»). In opposition, Farber (1987: 99f) argues that "der Begriff *šiddu* ein weiteres Feld, das von 'Vorhang,' 'Wandbehand' über 'Decke' bis zu 'Teppich' reichen kann." More recently Maul (1994: 55f) has proposed a more broad meaning for *šiddu*, that of a "drawing/line" ("Ziehung/Linie"), for example "a line of flour" (*šiddī ša qēmī*), a meaning that might be grounded in the practice of marking the (longitudinal)sides of a plot of land or building ("Längseite (von Grundstücken, Gebäuden, Flächen)") with flour, attested in the textual sources. Maul further suggests that the *šiddu šadādu* of ritual instructions could refer to two different forms of practice, to the drawing of a woolen draping or of a line of flour, for example during the ritualized butchering for the divine meal; see further, Ambos 2004: 179, n. 13. As translation for *šiddu*, Ambos (2004: 299) proposes "Längseite; Wollband;" see for example, Ambos 2004: 118, 14 (II.A.2); 178, 13 (II.D.1.3); 190f, 16, 20 (II.D.1.4); 196, 32 (II.D.2). See further, CAD "Š": 2, 407f *šiddu* B, "cloth, curtain."

[1430] Linssen 2004: 263, r. 4 (KAR 60); 267, r. 7 (KAR 60); 277–278, I, 2, 4, 24.

flour, like that of draped wool, acting as a barrier against the impurities of the surrounding space.[1431]

The great doors en route toward the god's chamber would have added a second level of control, inhibiting both movement, light, and visual access to the god's chamber and dais, and by extension, the god residing within. As shown on the plan of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, no less than three visually embellished doorways successively marked the route from exterior of the temple toward the dais of Nabu at the rear of the complex (FIGURE 201). Three secondary doorways were also stationed along this route, though of a less marked nature. Of note is the skewing of this route by the off-center placement of the middle doorways; this arrangement forces a person to deviate from walking a straight path, and more importantly, obstructs a direct line of sight toward the dais from the outer temple doorway. The same type of deviation characterizes the route toward to the smaller neighboring god's chamber and the dais at its far end (Rooms 23–24).[1432] With this arrangement, even if all of the door leaves were left open, a person entering the temple could not see through to the dais of either of the god's chambers, until he or she was standing in the inner courtyard directly preceding the respective doorway into the antechamber. Also worth noting are McMahon's conclusions for the field of vision of the Khorsabad citadel courtyard.[1433] Based on her spatial analyses and assessment of isovist areas and perimeters for this space, McMahon calculates that a person entering the citadel through Gate B would not have been able to see the House of Nabu or even its entry ramp (FIGURE 202). A viewer's line of sight was obstructed by the corner of Residence K to such an extent that he or she would have only been able to see the bridge that connected the temple to the palace. Instead, when looking from the specific vantage point at Gate B a person's field of view was dominated by the palace ramp situated directly opposite.

Ezida at Nimrud presents the same type of obstructed approach, yet here the skewing of the route from temple exterior to the god's chamber is even more accentuated (FIGURE 203). To move from the principal doorway of the temple to the god's chamber of Nabu (NT 4), a person passed through three embellished doorways and three secondary doorways arranged along a bent-axis approach, the latter unquestionably denying a viewer a direct line of sight toward the dais until he or she was about to enter the god's chamber itself. The same bent-axis approach characterizes the route toward the

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[1431] Texts on the *akītu*-festival at Uruk and Babylon refer to the *birit šiddī* ("between the *šiddu*s") to denote the space between the dais where the god sat or stood and the preceding space of the god's chamber; Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 40f; see further, CAD "B": 254 *birītu,* "3. b) 6′ *birīt šiddī*.

[1432] The resident divinity or purpose of this chamber—whether it was dedicated to another god or goddess, or was also dedicated to the god Nabu—is not attested either archaeological or textually. That it was dedicated to the goddess Tašmetum, Nabu's consort, is a strong possibility, based on the evidence from Ezida at Nimrud, where the principal pair of god's chambers are dedicated to Nabu and Tašmetum, as discussed above and in greater detail below. Other possibilities have been proposed; Pongratz-Leisten (1994: 101), for example, suggests Marduk as the resident divinity of this neighboring chamber; see further, Loud and Altman 1938: 62–63; Postgate 1974: 53; Heinrich 1982: 267; Grabowski 2010: 26; and Chapter V.2.a.

[1433] McMahon 2013: 170f.

neighboring chamber of Tašmetum (NT 5).[1434] The arrangement of the doorways and the material composition of the doorways that marked this focused trajectory, while simultaneously creating a barrier to both movement and vision, reinforced the highly ritualized nature of these most inner spaces as the dwelling place of gods.

A comparable example of architectural elements restricting access to ritualized space is the rock-cut *stupa* complex used by Buddhist monks of the first and second millennium CE. This structure consisted of a large mound that housed the relics of the Buddha, an assembly area, and a circumambulatory path. Like the Neo-Assyrian temple, access to the rock-cut *stupa* was restricted by a single doored entranceway. Visibility within was similarly limited by the one-sided arrangement of the assembly area, as well as the row of columns that interrupted sightlines from the outer circumambulatory path (FIGURE 204). Fogelin connects such manipulations of access and visibility to the type of practice prioritized by the monks, arguing that this architectural arrangement catered to corporate practice that was mediated by a ritual specialist.[1435] He contrasts this arrangement with the open-air *stupa* complex: the unrestricted visibility and access of the latter was conducive to the communal and egalitarian practice of the laity. Moore reads the variations in visibility and access in the Andean pyramid complexes as similarly indicative of different forms of social practice.[1436] The type with a highly visible mound, he argues, catered to large group practice; the type with a mound at the end of a long axis prioritized processional type ceremonies; and the enclosed mound catered to activities of a select, privileged group.

The manipulations of visibility, movement, and access to the god's chambers attested by the archaeological evidence of the Neo-Assyrian temple similarly speak to the restrictions on participation in temple practice, a privilege that was reserved for a special group from among the Neo-Assyrian elite. The physical and visual barriers, for example, suggest a high control of access and the participation of a select few, while the visual and spatial arrangements suggest that practice was focused on material or action at a single focal point, to which movement and visibility was unobstructed. As Mallowan remarked with respect to Ezida at Nimrud:[1437]

> This raised podium was paved with carefully dressed megalithic stone blocks, and one must presume that abutting on the end wall there was originally a pedestal upon which the god's statue would have stood, clearly visible to the persons congregated in the main body of the hall… we must therefore inevitably conclude that only the king, the chief dignitaries of his court, and the priests would have been admitted to the presence of the god.

[1434] Two documents were found in Ezida that mention the goddess Tašmetum, including the tablet found in the doorway to the southern god's chamber (NT 5) that recounts work done on the House of Nabu and Tašmetum (Mallowan 1956a: 10–11; Mallowan 1966: I, 265, 352, n. 52); see further, Heinrich 1982: 249f.
[1435] Fogelin 2003.
[1436] Moore 1996.
[1437] Mallowan 1956a: 5; similarly Grabowski 2010: 75: "Die Abgeschlossenheit des Kultbildes erzeugt schließlich eine „soziale Distanz" zwischen Gottheit und Adorant und trägt somit ebenfalls zur Wirksamkeit der Kultinszenierung bei."

The controlled access to the image of the god in the Neo-Assyrian temple replicates the strategically staged visual experience that is created within the god's chamber; as concluded by Grabowski, "[d]ie bewusste Inszenierung des Kultbildes in der Cella deutet auf ein ebenso starkes Dominieren der visuellen Ebene im altorientalischen Kult hin."[1438]

In addition to the dynamic visual experience, the divine meal would have also had a highly sensual aspect. The smell of both the burning aromatics from the incense burner and of the food offerings would have filled the space of the enclosed god's chamber and preceding antechamber. The appreciation of smell attested for the building materials used in temple construction—in particular with respect to wood—applies equally to the aromatics and food included in the divine meal as offerings for the gods. Esarhaddon illustrates such a valuing of smell as part of the divine meal when speaking of the offerings he presented the gods in the newly reconstructed *bītu* of Aššur:[1439]

miširti tâmtim ḫiṣib šadê	The produce of the sea, the abundance of the mountains,
ugarrin maḫaršun	I piled up before them.
ṣeli qutrinnu	The burning incense,
erēš za'î ṭābi	the fragrance of good resin,
kīma imbari kabti	like a heavy fog,
pān šamê rapšūte	covered the wide
saḫip	heavens.

The import of additional senses to the divine meal that are less well-attested by the archaeological and textual sources, for example touch, sound, and taste, ought not to be excluded. Sound was an integral element of ritualized practice in the Neo-Assyrian temple, the recitation of lamentations and prayers, and the performance of songs being a defining feature of many ritual instructions.[1440] The tangible aspects of the performance, for example the texture, weight, hardness, and warmth of the various offerings and portable works of art, would have similarly made an impression on the people interacting with these materials; these qualities were particular to this temple practice, marking the experience as something different and other for those involved. Taste would have also been associated with the divine meal, as the privileged participants consumed their portions of redistributed offerings, an act that may have taken place concurrently, following the divine meal, or at a later point in time.

Such visual and experiential characteristics of the divine meal set this practice apart within the larger Neo-Assyrian social milieu, by way of its formal and strategic staging; its restricted group of participants; its use of a select group of portable works of art and offerings that befit the god in whose honor this practice was performed; its secluded nature; its controlled visual and experiential qualities; and its prioritization of the god or goddess that was being served. Together these aspects ritualized the serving of the divine meal within the temple, both establishing and reciprocating the quality of the principal god's chamber—the dwelling place of the god—as the space of greatest

[1438] Grabowski 2010: 64.
[1439] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 57, vii 2–8.
[1440] See further, Nunn 2006: 182–183.

ritualization within the temple built environment. The principle of hiding and revealing that McMahon sees at play in the Khorsabad citadel courtyard and palace made an equally strong contribution to the experience of the temple's god's chamber:[1441] the obstructed access and low visibility made this space desirable, controlling movement and limiting the scope of interaction and activities staged within. The role of the preceding chamber—the antechamber—in this differentiation established it as the second most ritualized space in the temple, its unity with the god's chamber—both materially and in terms of practice—setting it apart from the remaining areas of the temple; yet its partial divorce from the proceedings within the god's chamber—again both materially and in practice—indicate that it was not quite en par with the god's chamber.

Clothing the Gods

As personified beings, the gods of the Neo-Assyrian temple also needed to be clothed. This task was carried out as part of the cyclical *lubuštu*-ceremony that was staged within the god's chamber.[1442] In his letter to the king regarding the scheduling of ceremonies for the *bītu* of Marduk in Babylon, for example, Raši-ili states that he would perform the *lubuštu*-ceremony on the third day of the month Ululu.[1443] The Akkadian term is also used in reference to the clothing itself, as attested in the royal inscriptions of Sargon: *9 lubārē lubulti ilūtišu* ("nine *lubāru*-garments, his divine wardrobe").[1444] Neo-Babylonian and Hellenistic sources on the *lubuštu*-ceremony speak of food offerings gifted to the gods and evidence the monthly recurrence of this ceremony, enumerating such items as linen clothing, sashes or belts, outer garments, headdresses, and the like as the material aspects of this ceremony.[1445] Unfortunately the Neo-Assyrian textual sources do not provide similar specifics for this ceremony or as extensive a list of the individual garments and regalia used to clothe the gods. Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and correspondence do, however, confirm the use of *šukuttu*s,[1446] *tiqnû*s,[1447] and *agû*s for the gods.[1448] The kings are also said to have taken hold of the garments of the gods as a form of supplication; for example, a hymn of Sargon speaks of the king holding fast the hem of

[1441] McMahon 2013: 170.
[1442] Unfortunately the Neo-Assyrian evidence for the cyclical repetition of the *lubuštu*-ceremony is not strong (van Driel 1969: 167). Linssen (2004: 51–56) includes his discussion of the *lubuštu*-ceremony at Uruk and Babylon in the section on monthly ceremonies, though the author (2004: 53) acknowledges that, "while the ceremony was celebrated in Sippar during six months of the year, in Neo-Babylonian Uruk eight months are attested; whether *lubuštu* was celebrated during every month remains unclear for now." On the *lubuštu*-ceremony in Babylon, see Waerzeggers 2010: 137f.
[1443] SAA 13: no. 176.
[1444] Thureau-Dangin 1912: 60, 386.
CAD "L": 233 *lubuštu*, 1. a).
[1445] Linssen 2004: 51–56; Matsushima 1992: 216; see further, Waetzoldt and Strommenger 1980–1983: 28–30 (10g, Götter).
[1446] CAD "Š": 3, 238 *šukuttu* A, "jewelry, c) for images of gods and goddesses."
[1447] CAD "T": 420f *tiqnu*, "1. embellishment, ornament, insignia."
[1448] CAD "A": 1, 154 *agû* A, "1. crown a) of gods, 1' as an actual headdress;" for example, RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 65–68; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 48, r. 84–89; Esarhaddon 60, r. 40′.

the goddess Nanaya's garment (*ṣābit qanniki*),[1449] while Aššurbanipal that he took hold of the hem of his great divinity, the god Marduk (*sissiktu ilūtišu rabīti*).[1450]

Visual representations of divine images and the evidence for a rich textile industry in Neo-Assyria, as discussed in Chapters III and IV, argues for an equally extensive retinue of garments for images of the gods during the Neo-Assyrian period. In his study "The Golden Garments of the Gods," Oppenheim makes note of imagery from the Neo-Assyrian period of gods wearing garments with applied rosettes and square cuts of gold.[1451] Andrae's watercolor rendering of colored glazed materials from his excavations of Assur offer vibrant attestations of such garments: one brick had preserved on its surface a scene of an Assyrian elite worshipping a god standing atop a pedestal, the latter clothed in a polychromatic garment of rosettes and geometric designs (FIGURE 131).[1452] A similar color palette might be suggested for the garments of divine images that are shown being carried away by Assyrian soldiers in the now monochromatic scene from the palatial wall relief of Tiglath-pileser III (FIGURE 161–162).

The eclectic garments and adornments for the gods established the visual and sensual experience of the *lubuštu*-ceremony. Oppenheim's description of these garments brings to life the visuality of these portable works of art:[1453]

> The embroideries show a free flow of lines, a characteristic unilinear ductus, and a complex interplay of an over-all symmetry against the symmetry in details; they make use of a rich inventory of iconographic motives, which they spread in a harmonious arrangement following the requirements of the space at the disposal of the artist. This contrasts in every respect with their very restricted number of individual motives, repeated without deviation and without linear connection all over the fabric, achieving variety solely by the sequence and the arrangement of the individual, unchanging units, each of which covers a minimum of surface.

Being fashioned from valued polychromatic and intricately woven textiles, precious metals, and semi-precious stones, the material elements of the *lubuštu*-ceremony would have mirrored the larger built environment within which this practice was staged—the god's chamber—itself fit with portable and non-portable works of art crafted from the same corpus of materials.

As concluded by Matsushima, the Neo-Assyrian textual sources emphasize the dominant role of the Neo-Assyrian kings in the creation of the divine images, their requests and preferences attesting to the influence they had over the fashioning and clothing of the god's images. This impression stands in contrast to the Babylonian

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[1449] SAA 3: no. 4, r. ii 18′; see further, CAD "Ṣ": 18 *ṣabātu, "*3. g) to put one's hand on something in a symbolic gesture, b' as a gesture of supplication to a god."

[1450] Streck 1916: 262, ii 27; Streck reads KU.SÍG = *sissiktu*; see the related discussion Streck 1916: 262, n. 3; see further, CAD "S": 254–255 *sikku* A, "hem, fringe;" Borger 2010: 426: túg-síg = *sissiktu*, Mantelsaum.

[1451] Oppenheim 1949: 186.

[1452] Andrae 1925: pl. 10, see also the description of the scene and the preserved colors on 29–30.

[1453] Oppenheim 1949: 189.

sources, which at times downplay the power of the king and give credit to the cities' inhabitants and temple personnel.[1454] The image of exclusivity projected by the Neo-Assyrian texts coincides with the restricted nature of ritualized practice within the god's chamber for the daily ceremonies, suggesting that the *lubuštu*-ceremony similarly fell under the purview of the royal court and temple personnel, and would have thus been tended to by the same select few deemed worthy to be in the presence of the gods. An elite dominion over the dressing of the divine images also upholds the argument that the god's garments and adornments were made of precious and exotic materials, due to this group's appreciation for these types of materials, as established in Chapter III.

b. Additional Ceremonies and Festivals

Additional ceremonies were performed in the god's chambers of the Neo-Assyrian temple throughout the year in which the personified gods acted as agents. Such performances often incorporated a presentation of offerings to the gods similar to that of the divine meal. Some ceremonies were based on monthly or annual cycles, some were associated with a particular god or temple, some were part of a larger festival, and some were celebrated for singular special occasions, these four scenarios not being mutually exclusive.[1455]

Sources from the Ur III period through to the Hellenistic period in Mesopotamia speak of an *eššēšu*-ceremony that was celebrated in the temples on particular days of the month. During the Ur III period the days seem to have been associated with the lunar cycle; however, by the Middle Assyrian period this was no longer the case.[1456] Unfortunately, in contrast to earlier and later textual sources that attest to the presentation of offerings to the gods as part of the *eššēšu*-ceremony, the Neo-Assyrian sources say little with regard to the specifics of this ceremony.[1457] Sargon simply refers to the day of an *eššēšu*-ceremony for Bel's son, the god Nabu, in association with his commissioning of bricks for the palace at Khorsabad,[1458] while an inscription of Esarhaddon speaks of an *eššēšu*-ceremony that was held at the time of this king's coronation on the eighth of the month Addaru.[1459] A letter from Mar-Issar to the Neo-Assyrian king is slightly more informative: the sender speaks of placing aromatics upon an incense burner before a god

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[1454] Matsushima 1992: 214–215. Matsushima refers in particular to a royal inscription of Nabonidus in which he solicits the opinion of the citizens of Babylonia for the fashioning of a new crown for the goddess Šamaš: the citizens rejected his innovative proposal and convinced him to make the new crown in the style of the old. Matsushima concludes for Neo-Babylonian society, that "a large portion of city people were proud of their own sanctuary and took pride in participating in the care of their gods. On the other hand, it seems to me that in Assyria the situation was to some extent different."

[1455] On cyclical ceremonies, see Landsberger 1915: 100–145; van Driel 1969: 154–159; Linssen 2004: 24, 40f.

[1456] CAD "E": 371f *eššēšu,* "1. (a monthly festival), 2. offerings (made at the *e.* festival);" Landsberger 1915: 111–113; Linssen 2004: 45–51.

[1457] van Driel 1969: 167.

[1458] Fuchs 1994: 41, 59.

[1459] RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1, i 87. Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) views Esarhaddon's celebration of the *eššēšu*-ceremony at this time as part of a larger attempt to find a compromise between the extremes of his predecessors—Sargon being pro-Babylonian and his father Sennacherib being pro-Assyrian—with the purpose of referencing the former's celebration of this ceremony.

for both the *eššēšu*-ceremony and the *šalam bīti*-ceremony.[1460] The latter ceremony was likely celebrated on a cyclical basis as well, its name meaning quite literally, "the well-being of the house."[1461] Yet again the Neo-Assyrian sources are somewhat lacking in details for the celebration of the *šalam bīti*-ceremony;[1462] however, texts from later periods associate offerings of food, including flour and meat, with this ceremony.[1463] The *nubattu*—noted above as a label for the evening meal as part of daily offerings—was also used in reference to a monthly ceremony that was performed the evening before the *eššēšu*-ceremony; the *nubattu*-ceremony similarly entailed the presentation of offerings before the god within his or her chamber.[1464]

Another cyclical practice celebrated by the Neo-Assyrian court that incorporated the god's chamber was the Babylonian *akītu*-festival. This festival—celebrated in the first and the seventh month of the year—drew heavily upon elements from the festival of the same name celebrated in Babylon, which included the processing of Nabu from Borsippa to Babylon and the enthronement of Marduk.[1465] Although an important part of the Babylonian *akītu*-festival was situated outside the confines of the temple walls—the divine images being carried in procession between their main house and the *akītu*-house (*bīt akīti*)[1466]—activities were also staged within these two temples and, in particular, the

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[1460] SAA 10: no. 352, r. 17–18.

[1461] van Driel 1969: 168; Linssen (2004: 59) suggests the translation "the good-function (or completion) of the temple" ceremony. Both authors argue against an understanding of this practice as the greeting of the temple or early morning ceremonies, for example CAD "Š": 1, 202f *šalām bīti,* "(a cultic ceremony, lit. greeting of the temple)."

[1462] *šalam bīti* is mentioned in Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions; Ebeling 1950: pl. 19, r. 4 (VAT 13597+); van Driel 1969: 168.

[1463] MacGinnis 1991/1992: 75 (OECT 1 pl. 20); 88, no. 7 (ME 77424); Linssen 2004: 60–61; see further, CAD "Š": 1, 203 b).

[1464] As suggested by references in the hemerological series *Inbu bēl arḫim*; see further, Landsberger 1915: 108–111; Linssen 2004: 58.

[1465] Based on evidence from the Neo-Assyrian royal correspondence, Oates and Oates (2001: 122) argue that the *akītu*-festival "was performed at various times during the year, indeed that there were possibly several types of *akītu* festivals. That is, it was not necessarily a New Year festival;" see further, Cohen 1993: 307, 425. On the *akītu*-festival in Assur, see van Driel 1969: 162–165, who also proposes the possibility that this festival was not strictly an annual or seasonal celebration; see also, Cohen 1993: 307–308; Nunn 2006: 185–188. On the Babylonian *akītu*-festivals in Uruk and Babylon, of which Linssen argues there were two per year, one in the spring and one in the autumn, see Linssen 2004: 71–86; Waerzeggers 2010: 119f; and Ambos 2013a, on the Babylonian fall *akītu*-festival. See the following studies on the *akītu*-festival in Mesopotamia, Black 1981; Cohen 1993: 403–453; Pongratz-Leisten 1994; Bidmead 2002; also, CAD "A": 1, 267–272 *akītu,* "(a festival and the temple in which the festival is celebrated)," in particular section a) with textual references to the festival in Assyria, Babylon, Uruk, and Dilbat.

I draw a distinction between two different types of *akītu*-festivals, the Babylonian *akītu*-festival, as celebrated in Babylon and Assyria and discussed here, and the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival, as celebrated within the *akītu*-suite in the House of Nabu and which included a divine marriage between Nabu and Tašmetum, discussed in Chapter V.2.a. As argued by Postgate (1974: 63), "the existence in the Nabû temple of a bīt akīti serves to remind us that the term akītu can not be uncritically equated with the New Year rituals at Assur or Babylon, and that the character of the institution in Neo-Assyrian times does not necessarily hold good for other times and place."

[1466] According to an inscription of Aššurbanipal, the earliest attested *akītu*-house in Assyria was built in Nineveh by Sargon for the gods Ištar and Aššur, and was later restored by Aššurbanipal; it is referred to in the textual sources in Campbell Thompson 1931: 38–42 (Prism V); SAA 3: no. 7, 16; Cohen 1993: 424. Sennacherib constructed an *akītu*-house outside the city of Assur; SAA 12: no. 86; Luckenbill 1924: 135–

god's chambers. Once the gods had taken up temporary residence in the *akītu*-house, a ceremony was carried out that included a presentation of offerings reminiscent of the daily divine meals. Similar offerings were also served to the gods in their main temples prior to their departure and upon their return at the end of the festival.[1467]

The *lilissu*-ceremony was another ritualized practice that was staged within the Neo-Assyrian temple. The lack of specificity in the texts for a particular cyclical recurrence, beyond an auspicious or favorable day,[1468] however, suggests that this ceremony was carried out based on necessity.[1469] The *lilissu* was a musical instrument—a kettledrum with either a metal or hide drumhead—that was played during ritualized proceedings in Neo-Assyria in order to placate the gods and to drive away evil with its thunderous sound: "(kettledrum) which eradicates everything evil by the frightful sound of its awesome terror."[1470] Neo-Assyrian ritual instructions and the report from Assur on ceremonial practices mention days for *lilisāti* ("playing of the kettledrum") and the performance of *rimku*s ("ablutions") for the gods in the temple, both of which would have been staged within the god's chamber.[1471] Yet the textual sources also evidence a ceremony of this name that centered on the *lilissu* itself, the purpose of which was to cover the drum with the hide of a recently butchered bull.

Versions recovered from both Nineveh and Assur recount the particulars of the *lilissu*-ceremony. The version from Nineveh supplies recitations that were performed by

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142; RINAP 3: Sennacherib 37; see further, Andrae 1938: 57–70, 216, Abb. 198, 219–223; van Driel 1969: 57–59, 163–164; Heinrich 1982: 275–277; George 1993; Cohen 1993: 424–425; Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 207–209; Ahmad and Grayson 1999 1999; Bidmead 2002: 179; Nunn 2006: 185–188. A fragmentary stone inscription was recovered at Nineveh, in which Sennacherib claims to have carried out work on an *akītu*-house at Nineveh (Ahmad and Grayson 1999; Frahm 2000; Frahm 2008: 17). Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions speak of his rebuilding of an *akītu*-house; RINAP 4: Esarhaddon 1013, 6′. An *akītu*-house for the goddess Ištar of Arbela was situated in the city of Milkiya; Streck 1916: 320, 7 (K 2637)(van Driel 1969: 149, 163; Cohen 1993: 323; Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 79). See further, CAD "A": 1, 270–271 b). See also, Bidmead 2002: 136–145, for a discussion of the principle temples involved in the Babylonian *akītu*-festival for all of Mesopotamia.

[1467] ME 121206 (van Driel 1969: 74f) lists offerings that were presented to the gods on *paššūrus* in the *akītu*-house at Assur (VI 1′–13′), it also speaks of incense burners (VIII 22′, *šēḫtāte*) for the *akītu*-house; see further, van Driel 1969: 164–165; Cohen 1993: 312–313; 403, on activities at the *akītu*-house. A pair of Neo-Assyrian explanatory works offer interpretations for the practices related to the *akītu*-festival at Assur and Nineveh and the activities staged within the *akītu*-house, including offerings to the gods; SAA 3: nos. 34–35; see further, Livingstone 1989: XXXIX (SAA 3); Cohen 1993: 420. On the Middle Assyrian text on the proceedings of the *akītu*-festival at Assur, see Köcher 1954; Cohen 1993: 418–420.

[1468] Linssen 2004: 263, r. 12 (KAR 60).

[1469] Linssen (2004: 100) compares the necessity for the *lilissu*-ceremony to the performance of ceremonies associated with building a new temple. The report on practices in Assur lists a number of days of the month in association with this ceremony; van Driel 1969: 90, VII 13′–19′ (ME 121206); see also, Cohen 1993: 308, 323, 328, 338, 340–341.

[1470] Thompson 1911: 16, 24, i 25f: *ša in a rigim melammīssšu galtu mimma lemnu innassaḫu*; also, CAD "R": 329. Ritual instructions associate the *lilissu* with the work of the *kalû* (Thureau-Dangin 1919: 153). Kilmer (2003: 369) suggests that the *lilissu* may have had a metal drumhead and that the bull hide placed on the drum during the *lilissu*-ceremony was a protective covering. See further, CAD "L": 186 *lilissu*; Kilmer 1993–1997: §2.3

[1471] van Driel 1969: 90, VII 1′–13′ (ME 121206); Ebeling 1950: IV 22′–27′ (VAT 13596); see further, van Driel 1969: 140f, 148f; CAD "R": 356–357 *rimku*, "2. b) washing ceremony."

the *kalû* during this practice,[1472] while those from Assur include both recitations and the sequential proceedings for the ceremony itself.[1473] From these instructions we learn that the ceremony began with the leading of a choice bull into the temple workshop in the morning (*bīt mummi*)[1474] where offerings were subsequently presented to the gods. Next *šiddu*s ("wool (or) flour lines") were laid (*šiddu tašaddad*),[1475] lamentations were recited, and the bull was slaughtered. The animal's heart was then scattered with *burāšu* ("aromatics") on a *nignakku* ("incense burner") before the *lilissu*, while the *kalû* recited a lamentation that released him from the responsibility of killing the animal. The instructions also note that the head of the *kalû*—the *galmāḫu*[1476]—was not permitted to consume the meat from the bull.[1477] The *šiddu*s were then removed (*šiddu šadādi*, *šidda tunāḫi*),[1478] and the bull's hide was removed, prepared, and placed over the *lilissu*.

While the Neo-Assyrian versions end with this final treatment of the *lilissu*, a more elaborate version from an Hellenistic tablet recovered from Uruk[1479] gives instructions for bringing the *lilissu* out, presumably from the workshop, and placing it before the god Šamaš, where offerings were presented to Ea, Šamaš, Marduk, Lumḫa, and the divine *lilissu*. The *lilissu* was then purified and led before the gods, where it was set on a bed of barley seeds. The colophon from the Hellenistic manuscript states that it is a copy of an older original, suggesting that a similar concluding stage may have been part of the *lilissu*-ceremony during the preceding Neo-Assyrian period. If so, this ceremony would stand as another ritualized practice in which offerings comparable to the divine meal of the daily ceremonies were presented to the gods within the god's chambers.[1480] Moreover, at the conclusion to the ceremony the *lilissu* was itself considered a divine object—as indicated by the accompanying divine determinative in the Hellenistic manuscript[1481]—and therefore, was suited to be consecrated, purified, and receive the opening of the mouth ceremony before the gods.[1482] Such practices may not have been suitable for the workshop, requiring that the performance be relocated to the god's chamber in order to complete the ceremony.

The experiential qualities of the *lilissu* would have complemented the surrounding built environment of the god's chamber, as well as the portable works of art used to present offerings to the gods. The bull hide was said to have been placed on a metal

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[1472] IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421, in Linssen 2004: 275–282; the colophon ascribes these ritual instructions to the corpus of the *kalû* (IV, 26).
[1473] Ebeling 1919: 80, no. 50; 106, no. 60 (KAR), in Linssen 2004: 263–266, 267–274.
[1474] Linssen 2004: 278, IV 25 (IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421).
CAD "M" 2: 198 *mummu* A, in *bīt mummi*, "workshop."
[1475] Linssen 2004: 277, IV 2 (IV R^2, 23, no.1 (K 4806) + K 9421); similarly, Ambos 2004: 196, 13, 19, 32 (II.D.2).
[1476] CAD "G": 19-20 *galmāḫu,* "chief singer of dirges (in a temple)."
[1477] Linssen 2004: 263, r. 14 (KAR 60); see further note 1429 on the term *šiddu*, as well as Oppenheim 1942: 12, n. 1; 1977: 178–179.
[1478] Linssen 2004: 263, r. 4 (KAR 60); similarly in texts from Uruk and Babylon, Ambos 2004: 178, 13 (II.D.1.3); 190f, 16, 20 (II.D.1.4).
[1479] TU 44 (AO 6479), in Linssen 2004: 252–262; see also, Mirelman 2010.
[1480] The Hellenistic version also includes a catalogue of the utensils, materials, and offerings needed for the ceremonial practice; Linssen 2004: 254–255, IV 2–35 (TU 44).
[1481] Here *lilissu* is written ^{d}LILIZ; Linssen 2004: 254, III 17 (TU 44).
[1482] Linssen 2004: 254, III 20–24 (TU 44).

drum: Sennacherib tells of crafting a *lilissu* of *siparri ruššâ* ("shining bronze") in his royal inscriptions,[1483] and a letter from Marduk-šallim-aḫḫe, the *bārû* of the House of Assur, gives instructions for only one *lilissu* of *siparru* to go around the *ekurru*s.[1484] These texts parallel the *lilissu* made of *siparru* that is spoken of in the ritual instructions from Nineveh.[1485] The Hellenistic tablet recovered from Uruk for this ceremony also gives instructions for inserting pegs of wood (*musukkannu*-wood, *taskarinnu*-wood, *erēnu*-wood, *ušû*-wood),[1486] which would have held in place the bull hide. The sensorial qualities of the *lilissu* therefore mirrored those of the space within which the final stage of the ceremony was performed, the visuality of the metal and wooden features complimenting those of the god's chamber, while the smell of the freshly hewn wooden pegs and the recently acquired bull hide mingled with the scents of the aromatics and foods presented to the gods as offerings. A rare drawing of the *lilissu* with the label "^{d}*lilissu*" confirms the form of the instrument as a large bowl with hide stretched over a horizontal top opening (FIGURE 205); this illustration was etched into the reverse of an explanatory text from Hellenistic Uruk.[1487] Were the drum played when complete, the sound would have heightened the unique sensory experience that marked the performance of this ceremony.[1488]

An additional festival that was carried out in the Neo-Assyrian temple was the *kinūnu*-festival, a practice that, like the *lilissu*-ceremony, was in all probability performed based on necessity.[1489] The focus of this festival was the lighting of the *kinūnu*, a metal brazier that was used throughout the year in ritualized practice within the temple.[1490] Most textual references to this festival do little more than note particular days and times at which this practice was performed,[1491] which Cohen argues would have been determined by the onset of the cold and dark winter months.[1492] Yet a letter to the king from Akkullānu, the *ṭupšarru* and the *ērib bīti* of the *bītu* of Aššur, is more descriptive:[1493]

ūmāte annâte ša kanūni	These are the days of the *kinūnu*-festival,
lu lā ušapḫuzū ūm 10	they must not be improper. On the tenth day,

[1483] Luckenbill 1924: 149, 9.
[1484] SAA 13: no. 12, r. 13; see further, Kilmer 2003: 370.
[1485] Linssen 2004: 2275, I 7 (IV R^2, 23, no. 1 (K 4806) + K 9421).
[1486] Linssen 2004: 254, II 27 (TU 44).
[1487] Livingstone 1986: 187–196 (TCL 6, 47); Mirelman 2010. The third-millennium BCE steles of Ur-Nammu and Gudea represent drummers playing a different type of drum—possibly the á-lá/*alû* drum—that was played from the side (Rashid 1984: 70–73, III. 51–55; Canby 2003: no. 28a, pls. 38–40; Mirelman 2014).
[1488] On musical instruments associated with ritualized practice in the ancient Near East, see Shehata 2014; see Gabbay 2014, on the balaĝ-instrument.
[1489] CAD "K": 393f *kinūnu* (*kanūnu*)(KI.NE), "1. kiln, stove, brazier, 2. (a ritual performed with the *kīnunu*, festival during which the ritual is performed, month of the festival)."
[1490] Cohen 1993: 392.
[1491] For example, SAA 10: no. 106; see further, CAD "K": 395.
[1492] Cohen 1993: 392.
[1493] SAA 10: no. 95, r. 14′–17′. On Akkūllanu, see note 587.

ina nubatti kanūnu ūm 11 ūm 12	in the evening there is a *kinūnu*-festival. On the eleventh and twelfth days
ikribī dannāte	there will be great *ikribu*-offerings.

The ritualized butchering performed as part of this festival may very well have been staged within the god's chamber in front of its resident divinity. Support for this staging is found in ritual instructions recovered from first-millennium Uruk for the *kinūnu*-festival, that were directed at the personnel of the Eanna temple complex. The preserved portion of the tablet includes references to the *kinūnu* of Belet-ša-Uruk, Uṣur-amassu, and Aška'itu; the lighting of the *kinūnu*; and the serving of a meal in the gods' presence.[1494]

As evidenced by the preceding sources and discussion, the Neo-Assyrian *eššēšu, šalam bīti, nubattu,* and *lilissu*-ceremonies, and the Babylonian *akītu*-festival and the *kinūnu*-festival, all incorporated similar types of material elements and groups of participants, and were either wholly or in part staged within the god's chamber of the Neo-Assyrian temple. These performative aspects set such practices apart from everyday activities within the domain of the Neo-Assyrian elite. Yet each ceremony or festival would have additionally been marked by elements related to its particular purpose, for example the recitation of specific incantations during the *lilissu*-ceremony. These specific performative traits would have further differentiated each practice within the domain of the temple built environment. The setting apart of these practices in relation to each other may have catered to a hierarchy of ritualized practice within the context of the temple, and in particular, the god's chamber. It might be argued, for example, that the ceremonies staged within the god's chamber as part of larger festivals or for special occasions were of greater import, for which reason there was more pressure on the temple personnel to ensure their successful execution. A similar prioritization may have been directed toward those practices in which the king participated, since they would have had a greater bearing on the relationship of the king and court to the gods.

The evidence of these various types of ceremonial performances within the god's chamber and associated antechamber reaffirm the argument for interpreting these areas as the spaces of greatest ritualization within the Neo-Assyrian temple. Evidence for the rooms immediately adjacent to the god's chambers in the Houses of Ninurta and Ezida at Nimrud and the Houses of Sin and Nabu at Khorsabad suggests a lesser degree of ritualization.

While still ritualized, because of their location inside the temple and in spatial proximity to the central prioritized god's chamber and antechamber sequence, visibility and movement from the adjacent chamber and corridors toward the dais were obstructed. In the House of Sin at Khorsabad, first, a door acted as a barrier between the god's chamber and the adjacent chamber (Room 164), evidence for which are the pivot stones that were found *in situ*; second, the stone block flooring of the central chamber stopped at this threshold and a single layer of baked mud brick began; and third, unlike the straight axis of the antechamber and god's chamber, the adjacent chamber had a bent-axis

[1494] Falkenstein 1931: 17–21, no. 51, r. 13–18 (VAT 145224); see further, Cohen 1993: 393; Linssen 2004: 6, n. 36; 11; 87f.

orientation to the dais.[1495] The surrounding corridor (Rooms 161–162) was similarly divorced from the god's chamber, its sole access point branching off from the antechamber. A similar arrangement of an adjacent chamber with bent-axis approach is found in the House of Ninurta at Nimrud, where a doorway branching off of the god's chamber connects to a series of rooms (8, 9, 11, 13) that were originally planned as a single chamber.[1496] A thin corridor stood to the west of the god's chamber, which ran north-south parallel to the god's chamber and was reached by a doorway leading off from the northwest corner of the dais.[1497] In the House of Nabu at Khorsabad a corridor (Room 20) was reached through a doorway leading off of the antechamber (Room 19). Additional corridors encircled the principal god's chamber unit, including Room 26 that was reached through a room leading off of Nabu's principal dais; Room 28 off of the inner courtyard; and Room 27 that was reached through Room 16 and which also led off of the inner courtyard. Another variation is found in Ezida at Nimrud, in which a corridor wraps around the pair of god's chambers (NT 3, NT 6, NT 8) with doorways leading off of both antechambers (NT 2 and NT 7) and the sides of both god's chambers (NT 4 and NT 5).

All of these arrangements present similar breaks in unity with the god's chamber—materially, visually, and in terms of movement—arguing for the adjacent chambers and corridors being less ritualized than the god's chambers and antechambers. In addition to their architectural layouts, there is no strong evidence that bestows upon these chambers an active role in the principal practice of the temple—caring for the gods. Were they to have acted as storage rooms or preparatory spaces for the activities staged within the god's chambers, this would speak to a ritualized nature, yet of a lesser degree. For example, Loud remarks the following of the bronze wheels with iron axles reputed to have been found by Place in the adjacent chamber in the House of Sin at Khorsabad: "[t]his find immediately suggests a movable altar or a vehicle on which perhaps various pieces of temple furniture were transported between the temple and the storage space assigned to them when not in use."[1498]

This discussion has encompassed the principal, excavated portions of the House of Ninurta at Nimrud and the House of Sin at Khorsabad, the neighboring architectural spaces of which were associated with the houses of other divinities. In opposition to these

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[1495] Loud 1936: 122.

[1496] Mallowan (1966: I, 91) notes that this room was subdivided during the last phase of the temple's use.

[1497] This is the same corridor that contained the deposit of cylinder seals and beads discussed in the preceding chapters; see notes 446, 471. Heinrich (1982: 247) proposes, and Reade (2002: 173) similarly contends, that this corridor may have contained a stairway leading to the ziggurat located to the north of the temple, although no evidence of one was in Mallowan's reports of the area.

[1498] Place 1867–1870: I, 231, III, pl. 70; Loud 1936: 122. Loud also notes that there may be some confusion in Place's original assignment of these findings to this chamber based on its lack of buttresses, which Place reported in association with the wheels, yet Loud maintains that their discovery in this context is "reasonable enough." Excavations at Nimrud uncovered terra-cotta jars and tanks in the adjacent chambers of the House of Ninurta that similarly speak to a storage function; the excavation reports refer to the sequence of rooms as "magazines" and suggest that these containers were used for olive oil (Mallowan 1966: I, 91). The need for storage or preparatory space within proximity to the god's chamber is also suggested by the very small side-rooms to the side of the dais that further led to rear corridors, that are documented by Mallowan and Layard on plans for the House of Ninurta at Nimrud (Reade 2002: 171) and for the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (Room 25).

two temples, Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad—in addition to the central group of god's chamber, antechamber, and associated corridors—included chambers and built spaces that catered to additional ritualized practices not yet discussed. These architectural additions included *akītu*-suites and scribal offices. As illustrated by the textual sources and material culture discussed in Chapter V.2, the ritualized practices associated with these spaces—the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival and scholarly activity—made an important contribution to the fundamental concept of the House of Nabu during the period under discussion. This aspect of an expanded set of practices in the House of Nabu argues for viewing this temple as something other, as a uniquely ritualized house of a god of the Neo-Assyrian period.

2. SERVING THE SCRIBAL GOD NABU: CEREMONIES OF THE *AKĪTU*-SUITE

Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad contained rooms that textual and archaeological evidence suggests played an important role in the performance of a Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival.[1499] This festival centered upon the divine marriage between Nabu and his consort Tašmetum in the month Ayyaru, to be distinguished from the Babylonian *akītu*-festival that celebrated the god Marduk and entailed the procession of gods to an *akītu*-house outside the city.[1500] During the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival, Nabu and Tašmetum were processed in chariots from their chambers in the House of Nabu to the *akītu*-suite, both of which were housed within the same temple complex.[1501] The *akītu*-suite consisted of an entrance off of an inner courtyard, a throne-room suite, and a bedchamber for the principal performative aspect of the festival—the divine marriage.[1502]

A series of letters from Nimrud attributed to a group of officials from Ezida flesh out the activities and individual ceremonies that made up the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival

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[1499] An administrative tablet from Nimrud lists various rooms and chambers within the House of Nabu, including a *bīt akīti*; Postgate 1974: 64, 6 (ND 4318 (IM 67543)). Based on this tablet, along with evidence from the royal correspondence, Postgate argues for *bīt akīti* within three Houses of Nabu in Neo-Assyria, at Assur, Nimrud, and Khorsabad; those at Nabu and Khorsabad are discussed here.

[1500] I follow Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) in differentiating between the Babylonian *akītu*-festival and the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival (what Robson refers to as the *akītu*-ceremony) that centered upon Nabu and the divine marriage, by referring to the latter as the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival and the former as the Babylonian *akītu*-festival, since the proceedings of the former do agree with my concept of "festival" as defined in note 1253. While the Neo-Assyrian textual sources do not seem to differentiate between the two and use *bīt akīti* in the context of both, the characteristics of these two festivals argue for differentiating between the two.

[1501] The architectural unit that I refer to as the *akītu*-suite is referred to in the textual sources related to the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival as the *bīt akīti* (Postgate 1974: 64, 6 (ND 4318 (IM 67543)). Although this title is the same as that used in reference to the *akītu*-house of the Babylonian *akītu*-festival, which was located outside of the city, I argue that the textual context within which these references are found—whether in relation to the Neo-Assyrian or Babylonian version of the festival—distinguish between a temple outside the city and a suite located inside a temple within the city.

[1502] Based on evidence from Nimrud, Assur, and Khorsabad, Postgate (1974: 56) concludes that the *akītu*-complex had the following constituents: "1) an entrance chamber from the outer or inner courtyard, 2) a courtyard, off of which lead 3) a Throne-Room suite (at Khorsabad, in its own court), 4) shrines of Nabû and Tašmetum (?=the alcoves at Khorsabad), 5) another room (room 35 etc.). There is also 6) a kitchen area with provision for cooking, accessible from the akītu-complex."

at Nimrud.[1503] According to this correspondence, at the beginning of the month Ayyaru the god Nabu and his consort Tašmetum left their principal dwelling places and entered the *bīt erši* ("bedchamber") in the *akītu*-suite.[1504] The next day the *quršu*-ceremony took place, and Nabu was brought first, to the *adru*[1505] of the palace; second, to the *kirû*[1506] where *niqû*-offerings were performed; and last, back to the *bīt erši* where additional offerings were presented and a communal meal was held for the life of the king and his descendants.[1507] For a number of days Nabu then resided in the *akītu*-suite along with Tašmetum, and the *hazannu*-official,[1508] who is also said to have taken up residence. Nabu then left for the *ambassu*,[1509] where he killed bulls. Next the gods returned to their principal god's chambers in the *bītu* of Nabu where additional *niqû*-offerings were served for the life of the king's son and a meal was shared by the participants. Another set of letters from officials at Nimrud to Sargon speak of gods going out and returning to their temple as part of a festival (*isinnu*),[1510] one stating explicitly that they took up residence in the *akītu*-suite (*bīt akīti*).[1511] Also contributing to the discussion is the Neo-Assyrian

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[1503] SAA 13: nos. 56, 70, 78. See the summary of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival and translations in Postgate 1974; see also the translations, commentary, and discussion in Oates 1957: 34–35; Menzel 1981: I, 98–101; Matsushima 1987; Cohen 1993: 311–313; Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 22-23; Cole and Machinist 1998: XV–XVI (SAA 13); Reid and Oates 2001: 119–121. Based on the mention of a divine marriage (*hašaddašanūni*) of Bel and Nabu in the month Šabaṭu at the end of the letter from the *āšipu* Nabu-nadin-šumi; SAA 13: no. 78, r. 17 (SAA 13), Cohen (1993: 312, 337) states that there was another wedding later in the year, "perhaps between Bel and Beltiya, and between Nabu and Tašmetum."

A similar marriage ceremony is attested for the god Nabu at Borsippa and Babylon in the second month Ayyaru in ritual instructions of Seleucid Babylon; Cohen 1993: 311; first published in Reisner 1896: 245; on this festival, see Waerzeggers 2010: 119f.

[1504] The previously noted administrative tablet (see note 1499) mentions an "eighth (or seventh)-day room" in Ezida that might be equated with the *bīt erši* referred to in the royal correspondence, as considered by Postgate (1974: 63) and Matsushima (1987: 157). Whether this line is to be read as eighth or seventh is uncertain; Matsushima (1987: 157) transcribes É.UD.8.KÁM for line 7, while Postgate (Postgate : 66–67) notes that "eighth" for line 7 seems the likeliest reading yet in line 18 the collation suggests "seventh," he then concludes that "there is no way of determing which passage should take preference."

[1505] CAD "A" 1: 129–130 *adru*, "1. threshing floor;" see also, Menzel 1981: II, 1326; Matsushima 1987134, f. 15–16.

[1506] CAD "K": 414–415 *kirû*, "garden, orchard, palm grove, c) in cultic or ritual contexts."

[1507] On the understanding of *quršu,* see the discussion in Matsushima (1987: 133–134, f. 10), who concludes the following: "[i]l semblait alors qu'il ne s'agisse pas spécifiquement du "mariage," de la "nuit de Noce," mais plutôt d'une cérémonie qui faisait partie du rituel de mariage, cérémonie où les sacrifices et le repas en commun étaient les rites essentiels." Cole and Machinist (SAA 13) translate *quršu* as "wedding night." Postgate (1974: 70, n. 8) writes, "[t]his word is usually transcribed guru (although W. von Soden leaves the first consonant in doubt, Ahw. 299b g/qursu I). The present occurrence suggests some meaning such as 'feast' or 'meal', and this can be reconciled with the other known instances. Since qarāšu is used in connection with the cutting up of food, we provisionally prefer quršu. The word is most often encountered with Ninlil (G. van Driel, op.cit. 40ff.), and it may well be that it was a characteristic part of wedding ceremonies."

[1508] CAD "H": 163f *hazannu*, "chief magistrate of a town, of a quarter of a larger city, a village or large estate—mayor, burgomaster, headman;" see also, Matsushima 1987: 140–141, r. 3.

[1509] CAD "A": 2, 44 *ambassu*, "game preserve."

[1510] CAD "I/J": 195f *isinnu*, "1. religious festival."

[1511] SAA 1: nos. 110–113. In no. 113, Parpola translates *bīt akīti* as "*akītu* chapel;" similarly, Reid and Oates 2001: 121. Another letter to the king from an official at Nimrud makes reference to the goddess Tašmetum taking up residence in the *akītu*-suite (*bīt akīti*), where *niqû*-offerings were to be performed, the

literary text of Budi-il that speaks of Nabu and Tašmetum entering their bedchamber, preceded by the burning of aromatics, and followed by the closing of a *šigaru uqnû* ("lapis lazuli door bolt") and the subsequent visit of Nabu to the *kirû*.[1512]

The inclusion of spaces to accommodate the performance of the Assyrian *akītu*-festival within the complex of Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad presents interesting propositions for understanding the relationship between ritualized space, ritualized practice and its participants, and the degrees of ritualization within the Neo-Assyrian temple.

a. The *akītu*-suite in Ezida at Nimrud

Aššurnaṣirpal's Banquet Stele inscription mentions the king's construction of a House of Nabu as part of his building program at Nimrud,[1513] yet the core of Ezida—the southern half and House of Nabu proper—was the work of Adad-nerari III, if not more specifically his governor, Bel-tarṣi-ilumma; the latter is named in the inscription on the statues of divine attendants that preceded the god's chamber of Nabu as the one who dedicated these figures (FIGURE 206).[1514] The rise in prominence of the god Nabu among the literate elite of the empire during the first millennium BCE agrees with the allocation of the construction of the House of Nabu to the king's governor, the project being "an entrepreneurial initiative by the Kalhu governor Bel-tarṣi-ilumma and his coterie of like-minded senior officials."[1515]

With the continued elevation of Nabu during the reign of Sargon, the temple at Nimrud was once again the protagonist of royal building initiatives, with additions and embellishments being made to its preexisting ninth-century form.[1516] A major focus of Sargon's work was the northern half of the complex, which was heavily reconstructed if

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following evening she was to come back and take up her seat; however, there is no mention of the god Nabu as part of this practice; SAA 13: no. 130; see also, Matsushima 1987: 155–158 (ABL 858).

[1512] SAA 3: no. 14; see also, Matsushima 1987: 143–149.

[1513] Minimal traces of this structure were found at the site (Oates 1957: 31–32; Mallowan 1966: I, 234f).

[1514] Oates 1957: 35–36; Reid and Oates 2001: 125–129, for a summary of the phases of construction. For the inscription on the divine attendants, see RIMA 2: A.0.101.30, 53–59. Bel-tarṣi-ilumma was eponym official in 797 BCE under Adad-nerari (Millard 1994: 57; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2). The last datable material from Ezida is a document dating to 614 BCE (Oates 1957: 36), while the last repairs date to the reign of Sin-šarru-iškun (622–612 BCE)(Mallowan 1966: I, 285–286). On references to the House of Nabu at Nimrud in the royal inscriptions, see Menzel 1981: 97.

[1515] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2. Robson argues against the proposal that the elevation of the god Nabu was simply a strategic tool used by the Neo-Assyrians in their political negotiations and eventual subjugation of Babylon to the south, where Nabu and Marduk were head of the pantheon, as suggested previously by Mallowan 1966: I, 261; Pomponio 1978: 69–70, 100; see further, Robson forthcoming: Table 2a.

[1516] Oates (1957: 35) suggests that this likely happened before 714 BCE, prior to the construction of Sargon's new city at Khorsabad. Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) similarly contends that Sargon's ability to elevate Nabu to such a new extreme came with his victory over the city of Muṣaṣir in 714 BCE, that it was not due to his reconquest of Babylon four years later: "the plundering of [Muṣaṣir's] ancient and wealthy temple to the god Haldi not only secured Sargon's military reputation but also brought in substantial wealth, doubly confirming his right to rule. The famous *Letter to Aššur*, a report of his eighth military campaign, opens with acknowledgment of 'the great support of Aššur, Šamaš, Nabu (and) Marduk' (line i 13) and consistently treats Nabu—always paired with his father Marduk—as a key factor in its success;" see also, Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 19–20.

not entirely remodeled, while the southern half received minor embellishments. The northern entrance, for example, saw the addition of the *kululu*s ("fish-men") at the exterior doorway; the great north courtyard was likely reconfigured; a pair of god's chambers were either renovated or created anew along the western side of the northern half (NTS 1–2); and last, the western façade of the entire complex was endowed with recesses and rows of engaged half-columns—the niche-and-reed decoration that came to typify Sargon's monumental work.[1517] The southern half of the temple complex—the principal pair of god's chambers (NT 4–5), the large courtyard and surrounding chambers, and the large passage-chamber to the north (NT 1)—consisted of the House of Nabu proper. The entire complex, including the northern and southern sections, warrants the more all-embracing title Ezida.[1518] This label was originally used for the House of Nabu in Borsippa and designates a larger complex that contained within it the House of Nabu.

Within Ezida at Nimrud was a range of chambers situated in the northwest quadrant of the complex that warrant attention. Arguably the heart of this area is the set of god's chambers (NTS 1–2),[1519] parallel albeit smaller versions of the principal pair of god's chambers to the south (NT 4–5). Like the latter set, the former were differentiated from the preceding courtyard and neighboring chambers: first, by architecturally embellished doorway façades that included engaged columns atop stone plinths;[1520] second, the use of valued building materials for the interior of the chamber, including large paving stones; and third, the characteristic raised dais to the far end that was preceded by two flights of steps, each cut from a single block of light-colored building stone (FIGURE 192).[1521] Foundation deposit boxes were also found in both of the god's chambers, though their contents were not preserved. These smaller god's chambers were accessed through a passage-chamber (NTS 18) that separated the large outer courtyard of Ezida to the east and the smaller courtyard of this northwestern section.

[1517] Oates 1957: 31, 35–36; Mallowan 1966: I, 282–284. Both scholars contend that Ezida likely extended into this northern section before Sargon began his work at the site; however, its exact layout and architectural features are not known: "[t]he limits of Ezida were already defined, probably as the *temenos* of an earlier temple. We do not know what extent the site was built over, although there is a presumption that an outer courtyard existed" (Oates 1957: 36). The niche-and-reed decoration was also used for the façades of the smaller god's chambers inside the temple (NTS 1–2), and in much of Sargon's work at Khorsabad, including the temples and palace. Loud and Altman (1938: 37) wittingly write, "[w]ere one asked the question, 'What most typifies the exterior wall-surface decoration of Dur Sharrukin?' the answer unhesitatingly would be, 'Niches and reeds;'" see further, Loud and Altman 1938: 37–40, pl. 13; Mallowan 1966: I, 284. On the niche-and-reed buttress, see further the discussion in Chapter IV.c.

[1518] The northwestern section of Ezida at Nimrud was referred to as the "South-East Building" in the earliest excavation reports, abbreviated in the records as SEB. On Ezida, the "True House," of Mesopotamia, see George 1993: 159–160; on Ezida at Nimrud, see also Menzel 1981: I, 97. Ezida at Nimrud is most often referred to in the textual sources as the House of Nabu (*bīt Nabu*). Texts that use the desigation "Ezida" (É.ZI.DA) for the temple in Nimrud include a legal document from Nimrud that refers to the place of dwelling of the god Nabu as Ezida; SAA 12: no. 96, 1; and a legal document from Nineveh that speaks of Nabu residing in Ezida, SAA 14: no. 397, r. 1′.

[1519] Mallowan 1966: 232, 347–348, n. 3.

[1520] The façades were restored as part of ongoing work at the site by the Department of Antiquites of Iraq (Hussein 1995: 31).

[1521] Oates 1957: 33; Postgate 1974: 55; Reid and Oates 2001: 118, fig. 72.

The smaller courtyard of the northwestern section also gave access to a throne-room with its own antechamber and bathroom (NTS 3–4), as well as a passageway that led to an additional courtyard and associated chambers in the very northwest corner of the complex (NTS 14–17). Early excavations only recovered part of this corner unit, yet what was excavated shows that this area could also be accessed from the main passage-chamber of Ezida (NTS 13).[1522] Recent work under the Department of Antiquities of Iraq led Oates and Oates to suggest a smaller version of a throne-room suite for rooms NTS 14–17, "clearly designed for some high official, whose business required access both from within Ezida and from the main gate by way of the passages NTS 7 and NTS 5."[1523]

Postgate and subsequent scholars have proposed that this architectural unit containing the smaller god's chambers and neighboring throne-room suite constituted the *akītu*-suite (*bīt akīti*) at Nimrud.[1524] Textual support for this association is found, first, in the previously cited administrative record that includes the *bīt akīti* in its enumeration of the rooms and courts within the House of Nabu at Nimrud, a record that was itself found inside the throne-room.[1525] Second is an unassigned letter from an official at Nimrud to the king regarding the activities of a rogue *kalû* in the House of Nabu, that references separate god's chambers of the *akītu*-suite for Nabu and Tašmetum.[1526] Last, excavations recovered a group of tablet fragments within a layer of ash debris in the throne-room that record loyalty oaths taken in 672 BCE by Median subject kings with Esarhaddon—"Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty." The purpose of the oaths was to ensure the successful succession of Esarhaddon's son, Aššurbanipal (FIGURE 207–208).[1527] Oates and Oates remark on the similar concern of the loyalty oath tablets and the *akītu*-festival with the life and legitimacy of the Neo-Assyrian king.[1528]

The architectural elements and associated materials of this group of chambers would have fulfilled the demands of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival as laid out above. The pair of god's chambers offered dwelling places for Nabu and Tašmetum when in the

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[1522] Oates 1957: 34; Mallowan 1966: I, 236.

[1523] Reid and Oates 2001: 117. On the excavations of the Department of Antiquities of Iraq, see Hussein 1995.

[1524] Postgate 1974; Matsushima 1987; Reid and Oates 2001: 119–123; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.

[1525] Postgate 1974 (ND 4318 (IM 67543)).

[1526] SAA 13: no. 134, 6′–7′ (*bīt akīti ša Nabu u bīt akīti ša Tašmetum*); see further, Reid and Oates 2001: 123.

[1527] The 1955 excavations recovered around 350 tablet fragments within later destruction debris between the throne dais and the door leading to NTS 3. The treaties are between Esarhaddon and a group of vassal states in Median and Elamite territories. One of the better known tablets from this group is the treaty tablet with the Median Ramataya, dated to 672 BCE, that is held at the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad (ND 4327 (IM 64188))(Wiseman 1968; see also, Mallowan 1956b: 73–74; Mallowan 1966: I, 241–249; Reid and Oates 2001: fig 124). This tablet is described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1955 as follows: "Large tablet, 29 x 42 cm in 2 pieces. 4 cols; obv. and rev. 3 seal impressions on obverse. Col I only complete, 78 lines, must be 614 lines when complete. Superscription giving identity of two seals. Treaty of Esarhadden with Ramatea of Urakazabarna concerning the crown princes Aššur-bani-pal and Šamaš-šum-ukin." These tablets are also referred to as "vassal treaty tablets" in associated scholarship. I have adopted the designation "loyalty oath tablets" (*ṭuppi adê*) from Lauinger's (2012) text and commentary for the recently discovered loyalty oath tablet of Esarhaddon from the site of Tell Tayinat. See further, Parpola and Watanabe 1988: XXVI–XXXI (SAA 2).

[1528] Reid and Oates 2001: 122.

akītu-suite and a location for the divine marriage ceremony.[1529] The administrative report from Fort Shalmaneser that mentions a pair of *kuluttu*s figures made of *ḫurāṣu* ("gold") and *kaspu* ("silver") for the *bīt erši* of the *bītu* of Nabu,[1530]confirms the identification of a *bīt erši* within this structure, while also attesting to its fitting with materials typical of a Neo-Assyrian god's chamber. The absence of archaeological evidence for the types of portable works of art required for the presentation of offerings to the gods in the god's chambers—an element of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival—can be simply explained by lack of preservation, but also by the evidence for the mobility of portable works of art related to the divine meal.[1531] A letter that tells of damage sustained by the rim of Aššur's *paššūru* ("offering table") and the front of his *ṣalmu* when being transported in a *mugirru* ("chariot") during the god's procession out of and back to his house, demonstrates that portable works of art were brought with the god in his chariot to the *akītu*-suite.[1532]Last, the preceding antechamber and courtyard associated with these god's chambers would have provided the level of privacy that was demanded of Neo-Assyrian ritualized practice, in particular the serving of the divine meal.

While the pair of god's chambers would have accommodated the divine participants of the festival, the throne-room suite offered a place for the king to reside when present for the ceremonial proceedings.[1533] The discovery of a mud-brick dais, stone tramlines, and carved ivory panels with wooden backing in the vicinity of the dais situates the type of luxurious portable works of art fit for the king within this chamber (FIGURE 209). As discussed in Chapter III, belonging to this group of ivories were a series of horizontal panels that were incised with detailed scenes of foreign tributaries in procession toward the king and royal officials, and others with alternating quadrupeds and palmettes. Two rounded ivory chair-arms also belonged to this group, that were incised with images of winged mythological figures and solitary figures in profile (FIGURE 97–100).[1534] Two ivory female heads that were sculpted in the round and embellished with sheet gold were also recovered amidst the throne-room debris, that may have similarly belonged to portable works of art in this area (FIGURE 210).[1535]

Alternately, Oates and Oates suggest that the throne-room may have acted as the "bedroom" of the *akītu*-suite and location of the divine marriage performance.[1536] The throne-room suite may have also been the place of residence for the *hazannu*-official, and if not there, perhaps he stayed in the slightly removed suite in the northwest corner. The large stone doorsill that marked the doorway to NTS 15 from the preceding portico and

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[1529] Similarly suggested by Oates (1957: 35).
[1530] Dalley and Postgate 1984: 159f, no. 95; Matsushima 1987: 150f.
[1531] For references to moving and removing of altars, offering tables, and incense burners, see note 1397.
[1532] SAA 13: no. 44.
[1533] As noted by Oates (1957: 35), when the gods were in their chambers, "the throne-room [might have served] for the king or a member of his family, who are specifically associated with this stage of the festival."
[1534] This collection of ivory panels includes the following: ND 4193; ND 4194 (a: Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 216); ND 4195 (c: Met 57.27.02; Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 215); ND 4196 (b: Met 57.27.01 + ND 4197); ND 4198; ND 4199 (E: ME 132156; 1957-2-9, 3); ND 4199 (Met 57.27.04); ND 4200; ND 4201; ND 4202 (Met 57.27.03)(Mallowan 1966: I, 248–255; Reid and Oates 2001: 119, fig. 74).
[1535] ND 4203 (IM 59334); ND 4215+4204 (Mallowan 1966: I, figs. 224–225; Mallowan and Davies 1970: pls. 8–9, 20–21, 44–45). On the ivories from Nimrud, see 679.
[1536] Reid and Oates 2001: 123.

courtyard, as well as the discovery of a large stone column base within the vicinity, argue that the northwest suite was designed for a high official.[1537] Based on what was known of this corner suite from the 1950s excavations, Postgate alternately proposed that it contained kitchen facilities that were used for the preparation of ceremonial offerings, support for which might be found in the administrative tablet from Fort Shalmaneser that, in addition to naming the *akītu*-suite, mentions the "regular-offerings room," "wine-room," and "large storehouse."[1538]

The restricted architectural arrangement of this group of chambers in the northwest quadrant would have also catered to the exclusivity that the ceremonies of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival would have demanded: "the very limited access from the great courtyard to the throne-room or the shrines, which are its principal features, does not suggest that large numbers of people were admitted to either the divine or the royal presence."[1539] Much like the principal god's chambers of the Neo-Assyrian temple, when one entered Ezida and stood in the large outer courtyard, he or she could not easily see the god's chambers of the *akītu*-suite. Only after a person passed through the passage-chamber (NTS 18) would he or she have gained a direct line of sight toward the two daises and thus the gods themselves when in residence. The alignment of the two doorways leading in and out of NTS 18 with the doorway to the northern god's chamber (NTS 1), suggests that there may have been times when a direct line of sight from the outer courtyard into this god's chamber was permitted;[1540] yet it is also likely that a door at one or both of the doorways of NTS 18 would have obstructed visibility, based on evidence from other passage-chambers. The lack of evidence for the visual embellishment of the doorways into NTS 18 from the outer courtyard suggests a desire to downplay access to this northwestern quadrant. Further reinforcing the high level of exclusivity of this suite is the absence of antechambers or corridors for the twin god's: "[t]he shrines opened directly on to the courtyard with no ante-chambers or insulating corridor—suggesting again that access to the whole area was restricted—and communicated with each other by a doorway at their eastern end."[1541] The chambers of the throne-room suite similarly suggest a very private audience, the succeeding bathroom, chamber, and connecting corridor (NTS 3–4) only being accessible through the throne-room itself. Last, the dual access to the chambers of the corner suite suits the duties of the *hazannu*-official and other preparatory aspects of the ceremonies: the participating temple personnel would not have had to pass through the restricted courtyard in view of the god's chambers when moving in and out the *akītu*-suite.

This discussion does not discount the possibility that chambers in the northwest quadrant were also used for other ceremonies at other times. The throne-room, for example, may have served a function in other practices involving the god Nabu in which

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[1537] This doorway was not discovered during the 1950s excavations, but more recently during the work at the site by the Department of Antiquites of Iraq (Hussein 1995; Reid and Oates 2001: 117). Mallowan (1966: I, 236) compares the column base recovered from the courtyard to examples found at Khorsabad in Residence K (DS 1224, DS 1222, DS 1223)(Loud and Altman 1938: 31, pl. 48, nos. 15–17).
[1538] Postgate 1974: 54, 62, 64, 3–4.
[1539] Oates 1957: 33; also, Reid and Oates 2001: 116–117.
[1540] This second southern doorway into NTS 18 was discovered during the work of the Department of Antiquites of Iraq (Hussein and Black 1985–1986; Reid and Oates 2001: 116).
[1541] Oates 1957: 33.

the king participated, while the god's chambers could have been used by either Tašmetum or Nabu during ceremonies in which she or he was the sole protagonist. The latter is suggested by letter from Nabu-kudurri-uṣur of Nimrud[1542] to the king, in which the former refers to Tašmetum alone going to the *akītu*-suite (*bīt akīti*), receiving *niqû*-offerings, and then returning to her *šubtu* ("seat").[1543]

b. The House of Nabu at Khorsabad

In contrast to Ezida in Nimrud, the arrangement and features of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad were not constrained by prior building phases or neighboring structures. The entire temple—from when it was first erected through to the end of its official use[1544]—is a materialization of the plans and ambitions of Sargon and his royal court. The early onset of construction,[1545] great scale, non-portable works of art, and unique relationship with the palatial terrace—the two raised features being connected by a private ramp[1546]—attest to the high level of elevation that Nabu received under Sargon, as first manifest at Nimrud and discussed further below.[1547] Like his work in Ezida, Sargon's construction of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad included an architectural unit that fulfilled the demands of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival.[1548]

Along the southeastern side of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad was a section of chambers arranged around three internal courtyards. Access to this area from within the temple complex was granted either through two small passageways leading off of the outer courtyard (Rooms 29 and 31)—one of which led to Court III and another to Court IV—or through an architecturally embellished chamber along the southeastern side of the inner courtyard (Room 17). The southeastern chambers and courts make up a secondary unit of the temple that included architectural spaces befitting the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival (the first unit of the temple can be said to consist of the principal god's chambers with preceding antechamber, courtyards, passage-chambers, and ramp that ran along a

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[1542] On Nabu-kudurri-uṣur, see PNA 2/II: 841f, "Nabû-kudurri-uṣur 3."
[1543] SAA 13: no. 130; see note 1511.
[1544] When Sennacherib took the throne following Sargon's death, he had the Neo-Assyrian capital city moved to Nineveh, at which time Khorsabad was abandoned and thus ceased to serve any kind of official administrative or royal function. Excavations discerned two later periods of occupation, a squatter phase immediately following the city's abandonment and one dating to a much later period; Loud and Altman (1938: 32) note as follows: "no occupation of a later date gives evidence of importance enough to warrant attributing to it the importation of materials or ideas. No more than a very crude use of material found on the spot has ever been indicated in the scant traces of rebuilding."
[1545] Based on the continuation of the worked face of the temple-palace ramp behind the bridge, Loud and Altman (1938: 56) argue that construction of the House of Nabu likely took place before the bridge and the palace terrace.
[1546] Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 12 A, 80–82.
[1547] See further the discussion in Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2); the author quotes by way of example Sargon's threshold inscriptions from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (after Fuchs 1994: 370, no. 3.2.5): "O Nabu, scribe of the universe, controller of harmony: (as for) Sargon, king of the world, king of Assyria, city governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, builder of your shrine—look steadily with firm heart and direct your just face toward him, provide him with many days of bodily good health and fix years of wellbeing as his fate. May his reign be as long as heaven and earth; may he perform the shepherdship of all the lands; may his foundations be as firmly established as this building (site) and platform!"
[1548] Postgate 1974; also Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.

single northeast-southwest axis). This southeastern unit consisted of an inner courtyard (Court V) that led to a pair of chambers reminiscent of the typical Neo-Assyrian throne-room suite, a long narrow room with bent-axis approach and niche along the northern wall—the "largest room in the entire temple"[1549](Room 42)—and a smaller chamber at the southeastern end (Room 39).[1550] This inner courtyard also gave access to a number of other chambers and spaces, including a series of chambers in back of the throne-room suite (Rooms 40–41, 44–46) that further led to the outer northwestern edge of the temple terrace; two side chambers (Rooms 38 and 43); the outer southeastern edge of the temple terrace; another inner court with associated chambers, including a long narrow chamber and bathroom in the far corner (Rooms 32–33); and last, a third inner court that led to a side chamber (Room 35), Room 17, and a passageway to the outer courtyard (Room 31).

Similarities can be drawn between this architectural unit and the *akītu*-suite of Ezida at Nimrud. Its throne-room suite corresponds to that of Ezida. The eastern corner unit at Khorsabad could have served the preparatory needs of the *akītu*-festival ceremonies as was suggested for the northwestern corner unit in Ezida; within this area excavations found evidence of ovens and ceramic vessels, a likely bathroom in the far corner (Room 33), and two points of access—one from inside the southeastern section and one from the outer courtyard.[1551] Unlike Ezida at Nimrud, however, the House of Nabu at Khorsabad did not contain secondary twin god's chambers for Nabu and Tašmetum. Rather Postgate proposes that the bedroom, within which the divine marriage of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival was staged, was Room 17, and therefore, that the counterpart to the "'akītu-court' and its shrines at Nimrud must at Khorsabad be Court III."[1552] Robson similarly ascribes to this section of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad the label of "*akītu* suite," yet questions whether Room 35 was the equivalent of the twin shrines at Nimrud, "their 'seven-day' room."[1553]

The architectural route that connected Room 35 to the neighboring principal god's chambers—the route by which the gods would have travelled to the bedchamber during the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival—suggests that this room was a space of greater ritualization, fit for this type of ceremonial activity. From their principal chambers Nabu and Tašmetum would have passed through the inner courtyard into Room 17. The stone flooring of this room—a feature shared with the principal god's chambers and antechamber—set Room 17 apart from the surrounding temple space (Rooms 19, 21, 23–24).[1554] The wall directly opposite the eastern doorway of Room 17 was marked with a high reed-backed niche, that was visible from Court III were the door left open (FIGURE 212).[1555] Room 17 was also set apart by its doorways, both of which contained

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[1549] Loud and Altman 1938: 64.
[1550] Similar niches were found in reception suites of Buildings J and Z at Khorsabad, as remarked by Postgate (1974: 53); Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 86.
[1551] Loud and Altman 1938: 63; Postgate 1974: 54.
[1552] Postgate 1974:54; see note 1504, on the label "seven-day" for the *bīt erši* ("bedchamber") of the *akītu*-suite.
[1553] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.
[1554] Loud and Altman 1938: 61–62. The only other chamber in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad to have this type of flooring is Room 14 off of the outer courtyard. The possibility of this chamber serving a function relating to a god's chamber is discussed below.
[1555] Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 23 A.

great wooden door leaves fitted with bronze bands, as substantiated by the traces of wood and fragments of embossed bronze found within the western doorway (FIGURE 211).[1556] Similar visually dynamic features were applied to the façades of both doorways, including portal buttresses, niches, and reeds. The façade of Room 17 within the inner courtyard might be said to have complemented the neighboring façade fronting the area of the principal god's chambers; in contrast, its façade within Court III would have stood out against the neighboring unembellished walls. The only other visually dynamic feature within the latter court was the rabbeted edges of the doorway leading into Room 35, that marked the proposed next stage in the procession of the gods to their bedchamber during the *akītu*-festival. Rabbeted edges also marked the doorway from Court V to Room 36 that led into Court III, further setting apart Court III and its associated chambers.[1557]

In addition to the preceding route, the material elements and exclusivity of Room 35 present it as the likely contender for the location of the divine marriage ceremony and the equivalent of the twin god's chambers at Khorsabad. In comparison to Room 17, which Postgate prefers for the room that was "the focus of activity in the Khorsabad *akītu*-complex,"[1558] Room 35 was more restricted. The only means of access to this space was the single doorway leading off of Court III, which was itself located deep within the temple and difficult to access.[1559] Though to a lesser degree than the façades of the god's chambers in Ezida, rabbeted edges marked the doorway to Room 35. In contrast, Room 17 had a layout that mirrors that of the passage chamber to the *akītu*-suite in Ezida at Nimrud (NTS 18): both rooms stood between two courtyards and had staggered doorways on opposing sides (though NTS 18 has an additional doorway). Slight deviations of the Khorsabad passage chamber include, one, that it was connected to an inner, more-restricted courtyard rather than a outer courtyard as in Ezida; and two, that it was marked by great doorways and non-portable works of art reminiscent of doorways leading into god's chambers. These features of Room 17 befit a chamber that played an important role in the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival as a transitional point passing into the *akītu*-suite, yet I would argue do not require it to be the focus of activity or merit the label "bedchamber."

Worth mentioning are two chambers that were situated outside of this southeastern unit, the archaeological evidence from which suggests a higher level of ritualization. Room 12, which was located along the southwestern edge of the outer courtyard, contained a raised baked-brick platform and off-center niche at its southwest end, and a doorway with steps up to a neighboring small chamber at the opposite end

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[1556] Loud and Altman 1938: 62, pl. 23 C, D.
[1557] Loud and Altman 1938: 63.
[1558] Postgate 1974: 55.
[1559] Postgate (1974: 55) argues that the privacy of Room 17 could have been preserved in a manner befitting the ceremonies of the *akītu*-court since access to the other spaces within the southeastern section—the throne-room and Court V, and the unit associated with Court IV—could be accessed via other passageways, and thus, there was no need for anyone to pass through either Room 17 or Court III. The author (1974: 63) suggests further that the alcoves in Court III may have served a role in these ceremonies, yet later contends that if the consummation of the divine marriage did take place in a single chamber, then perhaps this was done in Room 35 and its equivalent was the unnumbered room in the corner of the Ezida court at Nimrud.

(Room 11)(FIGURE 213).[1560] Room 14, located along the southeastern edge of the outer courtyard next to the passage-chamber to the inner courtyard, also contained within it a raised platform and niche (FIGURE 214). The material elements of the latter chamber, however, set it apart to a greater extent than Room 12, perhaps being only second to the principal god's chambers in this respect. The doorway to Room 14 was flanked by divine images and niche-and-reed buttresses, and once contained a wood door embellished with bronze relief plaques.[1561] These features would have agreed with the elaborate embellishments of the façade to the southeast, which marked the route toward the inner courtyard and principal god's chambers. Room 14 contained within it a floor of light-colored paving stones; a niche on the wall directly opposite the main doorway; and a kiln-fired brick platform to one end, that was reached by "ill planned steps" and had a secondary platform atop.[1562]

Based on the dais and additional elements characteristic of a god's chambers in Neo-Assyrian temples, Loud and Altman conclude that Room 14 was in fact a god's chamber, likely dedicated to Nabu as the resident divinity of the temple.[1563] No evidence found within the temple—textual or archaeological—suggests otherwise. Perhaps Nabu did reside in this outer god's chamber for a particular ceremony, for example the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival. When Nabu and Tašmetum left their principal dwelling places at the beginning of the festival, perhaps the god moved to Room 14 and the goddess to Room 12 in a manner similar to that suggested by the twin god's chambers in the *akītu*-suite in Ezida at Nimrud. Thereafter the gods may have been led through the passageway to Court III and into a common bedchamber—Room 35?—for the divine marriage ceremony. There may have also existed additional ceremonies involving Nabu in which greater accessibility to the god was desired, such that having him situated in a chamber off of the outer courtyard rather than deep inside the temple was more desirable.

From a consideration of visibility and access, it is interesting to note that both Rooms 12 and 14 had a bent-axis approach. This arrangement contrasts with the vast majority of known god's chambers from Neo-Assyrian temples, yet coincides with that of throne-rooms in Neo-Assyrian palaces. A rare temple parallel is the small chamber of Ea that was tucked away in the northern corner of the palace temple complex at Khorsabad (Room 192).[1564] This arrangement seems to downplay the importance of Room 12 and 14 within the House of Nabu: rather than being the endpoint on an architecturally prioritized axis that lined up with a preceding courtyard, these chambers were subsidiary rooms that bordered the outer courtyard. Based on the simplicity of Room 12 in comparison to known god's chambers, Loud and Altman propose a secular use for this space, that of an audience hall.[1565] Neither archaeological nor textual evidence presents a strong case for or against Loud and Altman's proposition for this room or Room 14 being an audience

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[1560] Loud and Altman 1938: 84, pl. 18 E–F, 19 A.
[1561] Loud and Altman 1938: 59, pl. 17 F.
[1562] Loud and Altman 1938: 29, pl. 18 A–C.
[1563] Loud and Altman 1938: 59; see also, Grabowski 2010: 27.
[1564] During early excavation of this area, Place uncovered the doorsill to this chamber, which attributed it to the god Ea (Luckenbill 1927: §126–127); it was reexcavated by the Chicago Expedition in the twentieth century (Loud 1936: 80, 109, 132–133, no. 6).
[1565] Loud and Altman 1938: 60. Also recovered from this room was an Assyrian King List that enumerates 107 Assyrian rulers; DS 828 (Loud and Altman 1938: 104, no. 6, pl. 57, no. 74).

hall. Yet I would argue that it is more likely that these spaces were where divine residents or divine visitors received an audience—in other words, that these were god's chambers—considering the fact that all of the previously discussed temple activity in the House of Nabu was heavily oriented toward the gods and not the king, the latter having his own home—the palace—where he could receive an audience.

While deviations are apparent in form and architectural elements between the proposed *akītu*-suites of Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, in combination the archaeological and textual evidence argue for the performance of a Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival within these temples—the focus of which was the divine marriage between Nabu and his consort Tašmetum—and for the identification of marked spaces that befit the type of ritualized practice specific to the festival's ceremonies. The fact that the Neo-Assyrian royal court celebrated a festival for the god Nabu and his consort that necessitated a differentiated space from that within which the gods principally resided, yet which was located within the same built environment, argues for an understanding of varying degrees of ritualization for different chambers within this temple, and for the importance of prioritized, customized architectural arrangements for the individual practices staged within each—the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival could not be staged anywhere other than the *akītu*-suite, for which the space was perfectly tailored.

The argument that these architectural spaces make for the need for separate spaces and access points for the preparation of the offerings, and the residing of the king and associated officials, reinforces the high level of ritualization that was conceived of for the principal point of activity of the ceremonies of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival. This high level of ritualization was further reinforced by the exclusivity—in terms of access and visibility—that characterized the primary points of ceremonial activity of the *akītu*-suites. The evidence similarly communicates a limited participant list for this festival. The connection that Oates and Oates make between the discovery of the loyalty oath tablets in the throne-room of Ezida and the proposed purpose of the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival agrees with such restricted participation. The Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival focused on the divine marriage of the gods Nabu and Tašmetum, the king's staging and celebration of which ensured ongoing divine support for himself, his family, and his successors. A limitation on participation also emphasizes the increased elevation of the god Nabu under certain kings of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, an elevation that was made manifest in the built environment—in terms of both materials and practice—of the *akītu*-suites at Nimrud and Khorsabad. This disposition toward the god Nabu was also communicated by the high level of scholarly and scribal activity that is evidenced in the remaining chambers of this god's temples at both sites, a topic that is taken up in the following section.

3. Ritualized Practice Beyond the God's Chamber: The Supremacy of Nabu at the Royal Court

> The close relationship between Neo-Assyrian kingship, deity, and scholarship is elegantly realised in the architecture of the Kalhu Ezida.[1566]

[1566] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.

The important role that tablets played in practice within the Neo-Assyrian temple is not only confirmed by the discovery of an abundance of clay tablets within these built environments, it is also communicated by the texts themselves. As example is the letter from Ṭab-ṣil-Ešarra, the governor of Assur, to Sargon that mentions on a loyalty oath tablet (*ṭuppi adê*) that was brought into the *tarbāṣu* ("courtyard") of the *bīt ili*.[1567] The incorporation of tablets and related activities within the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment is strongest in the Houses of Nabu, a logical association considering Nabu's role as the god of writing and wisdom.[1568] The discovery of tablets and associated storage mechanisms within particular chambers in Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad permits for the identification of scribal offices, as well as a critical assessment of the scribal and scholarly practices that took place within these temples, as the "centres of cuneiform scholarship"[1569] during the Neo-Assyrian period.

NT 12 in Ezida at Nimrud was the main scribal office—alternatively termed "library" or *scriptorium* ("tablet room")[1570]—of this temple, a chamber located along the eastern side of the inner courtyard and directly opposite the god's chamber of Nabu. Excavations of this room uncovered a wealth of tablets that included texts of a literary, ritual, medical, and lexical nature, as well as prayers, hymns, omens, incantations, and royal inscriptions of numerous kings.[1571] The wide-ranging dates of these tablets—from the time of Aššurnaṣirpal through to the late seventh century—attest to the long period of scribal activity staged within this complex. A hemerology for the month Tašritu provides

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[1567] SAA 1: no. 76, 13–r. 7.

[1568] Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001 21–22. On Nabu in second-millennium Babylonia, and his first appearance in Assyria, during which time the god was not closely associated with Assyrian scholarship, see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2; the first direct royal engagement with the god Nabu dates to the reign of Aššurnaṣirpal II, as evidenced by the Banquet Stele text.

[1569] The Houses of Nabu as referred to by Robson (forthcoming: Introduction).

[1570] I have chosen to use the term scribal office in reference to these chambers rather than library or *scriptorium* to avoid the preexisting ideas that are associated with the term "library" and to indicate that more was likely staged within such a room, at a practical level, than merely the storage of tablets, as alternate terms suggest. I agree with the definition of library as set forth by Robson (forthcoming: Introduction): "the simplistic Assyriological definition of a 'library' as an excavated assemblage of a particular type of cuneiform tablet (e.g. Pedersen 1998: 2-3; cf. Robson 2012; Robson and Stevens forthcoming)." Robson (forthcoming: Conclusion) further asserts as follows: "given the extraordinary mobility of tablets within networks, not only into the black hole of Nineveh but also between branches of the same temple institution such as Ezida in the Assyrian royal cities and more routinely between households and temples within a single city, we should not fall into the trap of equating archaeologically excavated assemblages of tablets, in the disposition in which they were found, with closed 'library' collections of antiquity. Found assemblages are merely snapshots of what happened to be in the building at the time of abandonment or collapse—and we are necessarily ignorant of ephemeral media such as animal-skin, papyrus and writing boards." The chambers here discussed from Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad do not fit these parameters of "library." On the conventional term "library of Aššurbanipal" in reference to the royal assemblage from Nineveh, see 118.

[1571] Mallowan 1966: I, 271–278; Reid and Oates 2001: 119, 207; see also, Hussein and Black 1985–1986; Wiseman and Black 1996; Black 2008.

the early bracket for this assemblage, the colophon of which ascribes it to the following individual:[1572]

> The hand of Issaran-mudammiq, *šangamahhu* ('senior *āšipu*') of Aššurnaṣirpal, king of Assyria, son of Tappuya, *šatammu* ('temple administrator') of Der and grandson of the *šatammu* Huzalu.

Unfortunately the interior of NT 12 was heavily disturbed during the site's destruction in 612 BCE, as well as later periods of occupation and the ninth-century excavations, which backfilled much of this area.[1573] As a result, it is not clear exactly how the tablets were stored or arranged when the temple was active; yet preserved architectural evidence gives some insight into practices that were staged within this chamber. The room was fit with a notably large doorway in comparison to others nearby; when left open, this would have allowed more light to enter the room for the benefit of the scribes working within.[1574] NT 12 also contained a well, situated in a recess along its eastern side, the water from which could have been used by the scribes to keep their tablets moist while working. While these features suggest that NT 12 was not just for the storage of tablets but was also a place of work, the light of the preceding courtyard would have also been beneficial to the scribes.[1575]

Additional documents were found in the other rooms bordering on this inner courtyard: NT 13, NT 14, and NT 16. Tablets discovered within, which included contracts and loans dating to the seventh century,[1576] and the rooms' proximity to NT 12, suggest that this range of chambers, and possibly also NT 10 and NT 11, were similarly associated with scribal activity.[1577] Also recovered from the layers of debris within these chambers was a cache of beads and seals,[1578] and a number of ivory objects, including a writing board,[1579] miniature figurines,[1580] and a panel carved with two registers of figures

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[1572] Wiseman and Black 1996: 58, r. 26–28 (CTN 4); translation by Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2; see also, Mallowan 1966: I, 273–274, fig. 254. The last dated document from this building was composed in 614 BCE, see note 1614.

[1573] Reid and Oates 2001: 115, 207; on the later periods of occupation at Nimrud, see further 257–271.

[1574] Oates (1957: 29) records finding pits left in the ground after the removal of the metal door-sockets.

[1575] Mallowan 1966: I, 277; Reid and Oates 2001: 115.

[1576] On these tablets, see Parker 1957.

[1577] As suggested by Mallowan (1966: I, 274).

[1578] From the southeast corner of NT 13 (Oates 1957: 29).

[1579] ND 5278, from NT 13, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "Ivory pad for writing on wax, burnt, fragment, with raised margin, incised scrabbling on base to enable wax to grip the ivory. Margin decorated with concentric 0's, back of pad is smooth and decorated with overall pattern of six petal rosettes and surround of concentric 0's. L. 8.2 cm width 3.3 cm margin 6 mm wide and about 1 mm deep;" see further, Mallowan, 1966 #20}: I, fig. 257. On the writing-boards from Nimrud, see Howard 1955; also, Wiseman 1955; Nemet-Nejat 2000.

[1580] ND 5261, from NT 13, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "Ivory, fragment, 3.5 x 2.2 cm, burnt black. A young male, 'the boy King', saluting—perhaps a tree—hair blocked dressed in long coast with short sleeves: wearing a necklace. High relief, flat back (found together with a fragment of a blue glass disc which was impressed with a rosette). In style of ivories of Burnt Palace, and NW Palace;" see further, Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 259; ND 5276, from NT 13, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: "Ivory head and torso, burnt, fragment, 6.2 x 3 cm. Phoenician head with little pointed beard dowelled by means of a square tenon hole on to a flat body. Figure represented as wearing long curled locks on the side, pectoral on torso skirt. One large protruberant ear remains. A few

in procession. The last object brings to mind the examples recovered from the throne-room in Ezida (FIGURE 215).[1581] Unfortunately disturbance of these spaces by squatters following the abandonment of the temple makes it difficult to say anything definitive about the relation of these objects to the original function of these rooms.[1582]

Mallowan also suggests that both NTS 9 and NTS 10 on the eastern edge of the outer courtyard of Ezida were scribal offices, on the grounds that in 1873 George Smith found a tablet of Tiglath-pileser III in the NTS 10.[1583] Postgate challenges Smith's attribution of the tablet to this chamber, noting that "this does not seem entirely certain since his description fits rather a room on the East side of the inner court (there being no sign in his text that he was aware that the Nabû Temple extended further West than the inner gateway with its colossal images)."[1584] The proposed arrangement of a scribal office to one side of the outer courtyard and another to the side of the inner courtyard parallels what was found in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad with its dual scribal offices, suggesting that Mallowan's original proposal for NTS 9 and NTS 10 as scribal offices may be correct.

The abundance of textual evidence from all areas of the temple confirms the importance of scribal activity within Ezida at Nimrud, ranging from writing tablets to the storage of texts and documents that were related to the scholarly knowledge and administrative activities of the temple, which involved both scribes and temple

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additional fragments probably belong. Seems to have been a component of some piece of furniture, box, or the like;" see further, Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 260; ND 5265, from NT 13 (Met 57.27.06), described in the Nimrud Catalogue registry of 1956 as follows: "Ivory head, male, burnt, black, fragment, three quarter relief, 33 x 18 mm. fully modelled, finely scored hair, with fillet and a single tress running in zig zag fashion round the forehead, ears simplified, remains of a tiered crown on the head—possibly originally in the shape of a capital;" see further, Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 261.

[1581] ND 5395, from NT 14, described in the Nimrud Catalogue Register of 1956 as follows: " Ivory strip depicting processional scenes in relief, part of some decorative board or the link. The scene depicts soldiers, chariots, and possibly King and Queen receiving the Crown Prince who is attended by his flywhisk man, and archers, but it is difficult to say whether the principal bearded figure is the King because he does not wear a crown. Max L. of longest strip ab. 16.3 cm. and max w. ab. 6 cm;" see further, Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 262–263.

[1582] Oates (1957: 29–30) records finding archaeological evidence of squatters in NT 13, in which the cache of beads and seals was found, in debris in the southeast corner. The excavation report also mentions a trench that ran east to west through rooms NT 14, NT 16, and NT 17, which Oates (1957: 30) ascribes to sixth-century settlers trying to rob the pavements and other contents. In defence of using a group of contract tablets recovered from NT 16, dating between 669 and 661 BCE, to argue that this room served a scribal purpose, Oates (1957: 30) notes the debris returned to these rooms by the settlers likely did not move far from its original context. On the occupation following the Neo-Assyrian period, see further Oates 1957: 36f, pls. VI and section, XII.

[1583] Mallowan 1966: I, 237 (K 3751). Smith (1875: 74) wrote of this discovery as follows: "… and in one of the eastern chambers, just beside a fallen wall of kiln-burnt bricks, I came on the upper portion of a tablet of this monarch." Mallowan (1966: I, 274) notes that the only place kiln-fired bricks were found during excavations was in NTS 10 and that two more fragments of this tablet were found out of position in thrown debris.

[1584] Postgate 1974: 69. Oates and Oates (2001: 208) similarly note the inconsistent recording of tablets originally excavated by George Smith and brought to the British Museum, for example some of the Nimrud tablets were given a Nineveh provenance. Mallowan (1966: I, 274) notes that the only place kiln-fired bricks were found during excavations was in NTS 10 and that two more fragments of this tablet were found out of position in thrown debris, in support of the association of the tablet with NTS 10.

personnel.[1585] The location of the main scribal office (NT 12) directly opposite the god's chamber of Nabu, under the gaze of the divine attendants stationed at its doorway, manifests the importance of scholarly activity within Ezida that is attested at a conceptual level in Nabu's role as the god of writing in Neo-Assyria. Additional visual markers of this temple's scholarly orientation were the *kulullu*s of stone and gold installed to either side of the exterior doorway to the temple, a mythological figure that is also found on one of the bronze relief bands from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad (FIGURE 45, 81, 83).[1586] This association is reinforced further by the inscription of Bel-tarṣi-ilumma on the statues of divine attendants, the beginning and end of which read as follows:[1587]

> To Nabu, heroic (and) exalted, son of Esagila, wise (and) splendid, mighty prince, heir of Nudimmud, whose command is supreme skilled in the arts, trustee of all heaven and underworld, expert in everything, wise, the holder of the tablet stylus, learned in the scribal art, merciful (and) judicious… Whoever you are, after (me), trust in Nabu! Do not trust in another god!

Similar evidence of scholarly activity is attested for the House of Nabu at Khorsabad. Two rooms in this complex have been closely associated with scholarly practice due to the discovery of pigeonholes that were used for storing tablets; these features are described by Loud and Altman as "tiers of small rectangular niches, surely the forerunners of modern "built-in" shelves and bookcases."[1588] Room 5, which lay to the northwestern side of the outer courtyard, had three tiers of pigeonholes preserved across its northeastern end and part way up the adjacent sides (FIGURE 216).[1589] Room 15, which was to the northwestern side of the inner court, had two-tiers pigeonholes across its southwestern end (FIGURE 217).[1590] The pigeonholes in the latter room were empty at the time of excavation; however, a few prism and tablet fragments were found in Room 5,[1591] providing support for the proposition that these vertical arrangements functioned as tablet storage systems and that these chambers were scribal offices. Additional tablets were found in other areas of the temple, including administrative and scholarly texts, that further attest to the staging of scribal activity within the temple.[1592] Last, an inscription on the cover of a writing-board of *Enūma Anu Ellil* that was recovered from the Northwest Palace at Nimrud speaks to Sargon's intention of establishing tablet collections at Khorsabad: the text from the writing-board states that it

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[1585] The largest proportion of tablets from Ezida are *āšipūtu* (the corpus of the *āšipu*), followed by *Šumma ālu* and *Šumma izbu*, lexical works, historical inscriptions, hymns and prayers, and medical recipes, and in fewer numbers, myths, epics, and astronomical texts (Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3; see also, Wiseman 1968; Wiseman and Black 1996). A group of economic texts dating to the seventh century were also recovered from the temple that name the creditors and debtors involved, suggesting that the temple played a kind of banking role in these negotiations (Reid and Oates 2001: 209; see further, Parker 1957).
[1586] See note 378.
[1587] RIMA 3: A.0.104.2002.
[1588] Loud and Altman 1938: 60, see also 46.
[1589] Loud and Altman 1938: 60, pl. 19 C.
[1590] Loud and Altman 1938: 62, pl. 24 D.
[1591] Loud and Altman 1938: 46.
[1592] Loud and Altman 1938: 104–105; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 1.

was destined for the palace at Khorsabad,[1593] yet we can imagine a similar initiative was put in place for the House of Nabu, a practice that textual evidence confirms for the House of Nabu at Nineveh during the reign of Aššurbanipal.[1594]

With regard to the architectural arrangement of these scribal offices, Mallowan contends that while Sargon modeled the Khorsabad temple on that at Nimrud, he was able to perfect his plan with the former due to the lack of earlier buildings at the site. In other words, he was able to align the outer courtyard, inner courtyard, and god's chambers, as well as the scribal offices, along a single axis, while also expanding the overall temple in accordance with the god's lofty status.[1595] As explanation of the need for two scribal offices, Postgate suggests that the "inner" and "outer" "libraries" may have had different functions, yet the archaeological evidence gives no hint as to what that difference might have been.[1596] The bent-axis approach to the proposed scribal offices off of the temples' main axes demonstrates the private and exclusive nature of scribal activity within the temple built environment in Neo-Assyria. This point is reinforced further by the visual and physical sheltering of these spaces from the exterior world. Last, the colophons from the tablets recovered from Ezida at Nimrud, or rather what is lacking from these colophons, also establishes this point. Though common elsewhere during this period, protective formulae in colophons are rare for the Ezida tablets, the only examples being the tablets of the *āšipu* Banunu, who writes the following: "Do not disperse the *gerginakku* ('library'? 'collection'?); taboo of Ea, king of the Apsu."[1597] Robson interprets this discrepancy as an indication of the confidence felt by both king and scholars toward the security of their written material, that it would not easily "fall into outsiders' hands."[1598] The built environment of the House of Nabu—within which tablets were created, stored, and consulted—would have provided some of this security.[1599]

The textual and archaeological evidence from Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad verifies the creation, storage, and consultation of tablets within the

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[1593] "Palace of Sargon, king of the world, king of Assyria. He had the series *Enūma Anu Ellil* written on a writing-board of elephant-ivory and deposited it in his palace at Dur-Šarruken" (Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3, after Wiseman 1955: 7 (ND 3557)).

[1594] The colophons from a group of texts from Nineveh state they were dedicated by Aššurbanipal for Nabu and Tašmetum, and were deposited *ina girginakki Ezida* ("among the *girginakki* of Ezida"), specifically colophon Type o, including K 2529; K 4614; K 4629 + Rm 132; ME 121103 (1929-10-12,99); ME 128071 (1929-10-12,727); ME 98514 (1905-4-9,20)(Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3, n. 41). Aššurbanipal also gave votive scholarly tablets to this same temple (Hunger 1968: no. 327). On the term *girginakku*, see note 1597. On Aššurbanipal's collecting practices, see Lieberman 1990; Reade 2004; Thomason 2005: 199–205.

[1595] Mallowan 1966: I, 237–238.

[1596] Postgate 1974: 52–53.

[1597] Wiseman and Black 1996: 116, r. 26′; 188, r. ii 7′; translation from Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3. CAD "G": 86–87 girginakku, "library."

[1598] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3: "we must conclude that they were so confident in their ability to maintain their exclusivity that there was no need to guard against the possibility of outsiders gaining access to their network, while insiders need not be admonished to return what was, in effect, their common intellectual property." On scribal secrecy in ancient Mesopotamia, see Lenzi 2008; Stevens 2013.

[1599] For a close study of the tablet collection of the House of Aššur in Assur, including both a contextual analysis and a study of the Baba-šumu-ibni family of *āšipus* that collected, copied, and stored these tablets, see Maul 2010. Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 3) remarks that this tablet collection had many structural similarities to that of Ezida at Nimrud, perhaps with an even greater emphasis on works associated with the *āšipu,* yet there were no strong links to scholars of the royal court.

Neo-Assyrian temple built environment. The tiered pigeonholes in the House of Nabu at Khorsabad and the discovery of an assortment of tablets in NT 12 at Nimrud speak to the function of this room as storage spaces. The well and wide doorway of NT 12 in Ezida at Nimrud suggests the creation of tablets. Though no well was found in either scribal office at Khorsabad, excavators did find one not too far from Room 5 in an alcove in the eastern corner of the outer courtyard, which could have been used by scribes when working in the area (FIGURE 218).[1600] The placement of all of the proposed scribal offices off of courtyards is also relevant, as it would have permitted scribes direct access to an outer, well-lit space within which to work.[1601] In support of the ongoing use of these tablets from temple scribal offices are letters from the royal correspondence in which *āšipu*s speak of consulting and transporting tablets for the performance of ceremonial activities.[1602] The wide-ranging dates and genres of the tablets from Ezida represent an assemblage that was not directed toward one particular purpose or period, but rather fits what might be expected of a stored and curated collection. Moreover, characteristics of these texts indicate that this assemblage was amassed at the hands of scholarly families over a range of generations, including the Issaran-mudammiq family of *āšip šarri*[1603] and the *rab ṭupšarri* Gabbu-ilani-ereš and his descendants.[1604] This evidence promotes an understanding of these temple assemblages not as static repositories of scholarly knowledge and intellect, but as functional spaces that contained material objects that had a very real physical, interactive role in ritualized practice.

This triad of scholarly activity that centered on the scribal offices and its contents adds an interesting dimension to the understanding of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment as a space of ritualized practice. An argument for the classification of these activities as ritualized practice—as something other than the creation or storage of a tablet within a household or palace—is made by the staging of these activities within this domain, in physical and conceptual proximity to divinity, specifically the god Nabu. Moreover, the predominant association of the ritual instructions from Ezida at Nimrud with *āšipu*s[1605]—the court scholars whom Robson concludes to have had more autonomy and less personal contact with the king than some of the other *ummânu*s—supports an

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[1600] Loud and Altman 1938: 60, pl. 17 B.

[1601] Robson (forthcoming: Conclusion) cites archaeological evidence for clay recycling facilities in domestic courtyards (Faivre 1995) in support of the presumption that scholars wrote tablets outdoors in the household or temple courtyard.

[1602] SAA 10: nos. 10, 194, 202, 238, 240, 245, 255, 263 277, 296, 321. On the variations in tablet consultation between the different court scholars, see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3.

[1603] The colophon of ND 4367 establishes four generations of royal service beginning with Issaran-mudammiq; Wiseman and Black 1996: 8, r. ii 1′–6′, *Enūma Anu Enlil*, dated to 787 BCE; transliteration and translation in Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2, n. 24, see also Table A1.

[1604] Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2, n. 17) notes that Gabbu-ilani-ereš was referred to as the *ummânu* of Aššurnaṣirpal and Tukulti-Ninurta II in the seventh-century *Synchronistic King List,* yet his descendants refer to him as *rab ṭupšarri*, the two being synonymous but the latter preferred among the scholars themselves. One of his descendants was Nabu-zuqup-kena, named in the colophons of the following texts from Ezida: Hunger 1968: nos. 293A–N, Q–S, 294A, 2–U and 297; see also, Frahm 1999; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2. The *āšipu* Banunu is also associated with this collection, though with no apparent family association (Wiseman and Black 1996: 61, 116, 188, 202; cited in Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3). On the of *rab ṭupšarri*, see further Luukko 2007.

[1605] Omens make up the largest proportion of this assemblage, with incantations and ritual instructions coming in second (Robson forthcoming: Table 3b).

argument for the scholarly and scribal activities of the temple as different and distanced from those of the palace.[1606] In contrast, texts from palace tablet assemblages, for example the "library of Aššurbanipal," focus heavily on divinatory and astrological omens, since such aspects of scholarship were more closely tied to the royal decision-making process.[1607]

Robson's study of court scholarship during this period further helps to situate the scribal activity of the Neo-Assyrian temple within the larger socio-political context, while also providing an explanation for the lack of tablets found within the pigeonholes of Room 5 and 15 at Khorsabad. With Sargon's construction of Khorsabad and in preparation for its formal inauguration in 706 BCE, both goods and people moved from the prior capital at Nimrud and other cities to the new capital city: offerings and copies of tablets were sent to the House of Nabu, and court personnel and scholars made arrangements to be near Sargon's royal court.[1608] With Sargon's death shortly thereafter in 705 BCE and Sennacherib's rise to the throne, the royal court with its personnel and goods was moved twenty kilometers south to Nineveh. The impact this had on the House of Nabu at Khorsabad is outlined by Robson as follows:[1609]

> The temple's library was hurriedly emptied, and tablets dropped at doorways and thresholds in the rush to leave. Of the thirty tablets the excavators discovered in the building, twelve were found in corridors and staircases, ten in gateways and doorways, five in courtyards and only three inside rooms (Loud and Altman 1938: 104–5)… Other tablets were presumably taken back to the palaces and temple of Kalhu and/or Nineveh (see already Loud and Altman 1938: 103), where scholarly business resumed or continued, more or less as before.

[1606] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3. Robson bases her argument for the autonomy of the *āšipu*s in part on evidence from the royal correspondence: there are many letters between *āšipu*s and the king confirming that the former was not always at the king's side, whereas the infrequency of letters from *bārû*s and *asû*s suggests that this pair had more personal contact with the king.

[1607] Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 3): "[t]he scholarly works most closely related to the activities of the *rab ṭupšarri* and his astrologer colleagues, plus those concerning the equally high-status *bārû*s, are not only best represented but are subject to by far the most critical analysis through commentary. This is exactly to be expected given the importance of both types of omens in royal decision-making. The corpora of the *āšipu*s, *kalû*s, and *asû*s are present in smaller but still significant numbers, but are rarely subject to commentary as these scholars' courtly roles were primarily performative and remedial rather than decisive."

[1608] Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) offers by way of example, SAA 1: 106, 128–9, which itemizes land, offerings, and provisions for the temple; a copy of the Assyrian King List that was copied from an original at Assur and found within the temple (Hunger 1968: no. 350); writing boards that were commissioned for Sargon's palace at Khorsabad (Wiseman 1955); and a *ṭupšar ēkalli* ("palace scribe") of Sargon, Nabu-kabti-ahhešu, who bought land near Khorsabad, and whose copies of tablets were found in Ezida (see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2, n. 51, and Table A3); see also, Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3: "'The Writing-Board is My House': Scholarly and Textual Mobility in the Seventh-Century Assyria." On the position of the *ṭupšar ēkalli*, see further Luukko 2007.

[1609] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2. Wilson (1995: 112–113) remarks on the unfinished state of Sargon's capital city, as found by the Oriental Institute Expedition team.

Historical events thus account for the discrepancy of archaeological evidence for tablets from Rooms 5 and 15 of the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, and the scribal offices in Ezida at Nimrud.

Scholarly knowledge and the *ummânu*s continued to play an important role during the subsequent reign of Sennacherib, as evidenced in the preceding chapter by this king's concern for auspicious days and the inclusion of *āšipu*s and *kalû*s in major building projects. The preeminence that Nabu saw under Sargon, however, waned and the god Aššur once again rose to the apex of the Neo-Assyrian royal court.[1610] Not until Esarhaddon, and subsequently under Aššurbanipal, "the scholar-king,"[1611] did the royal court see a resurgence of Nabu along with a strong revival in scholarly activity that lasted until around 650 BCE. The textual evidence seems to indicate the start of another decline at this time,[1612] yet evidence from Ezida at Nimrud confirms the continued albeit more minimal use of this structure for scholarly and ceremonial activity. Both Aššurbanipal and Aššur-etel-ilani, for example, performed work on Ezida at Nimrud, the latter including repairs to the *akītu*-suite.[1613] In addition, the last dated document from this building was composed in 614 BCE and scholarly tablets were stored in the scribal offices until its destruction.[1614] The final great act in the name of Nabu during the Neo-Assyrian period is credited to Sin-šarru-iškun, who claims in his royal inscriptions to have built anew a House of Nabu and Tašmetum in the city of Assur. This structure

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[1610] Tadmor et al. 1989: 26; Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 19; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2. Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 3) asserts that one of the principal impetus for the production of scholarly works under Sennacherib was the king's desire to undermine Babylonian intellectual hegemony: he took neither tablets nor writing boards from Babylon itself, rather "his aim was total annihilation of its traditions and prestige, not preservation of its culture;" see also, Frame 2008: 26–28. On the *ummânu*s of Sennacherib, see Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2, Table A4. Sennacherib's demotion of the god Nabu and neglect of this god's houses at Khorsabad and Nimrud might be associated with his sacking of Babylon in 689 BCE, the capital of Babylonia where Nabu originates (even if not directly associated with the god). Sennacherib's construction of an *akītu*-house in Assur reinforced his divorce from Nabu. Not only did this building assert Aššur's supremacy over Marduk and Sennacherib's appropriation of Babylonian kingship, it also provided a venue for the Babylonian *akītu*-festival to be celebrated in Assyria, and as such, a replacement for the *akītu*-suite in Ezida at Nimrud—as asserted by Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2), "Aššur had equally usurped Assyrian Nabu;" see also, Frame 2008.

[1611] As termed by Robson (forthcoming: Conclusion).

[1612] A text from Esarhaddon's reign enumerates forty-five court scholars; SAA 7: no. 1; see further, Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2, Tables A5–9. On Aššurbanipal's scholarly aspirations and devotion to Nabu, see also, Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 20; Livingstone 2007; Frahm 2011; and on his collecting practices, see 117. As summarized by Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2), a number of arguments have been proposed to explain this disparity in scholarship from 650 BCE onwards; for example, that it is due to a lack of preservation of libraries and texts (Parpola 1981: 123; Cole et al. 1998: 121 (SAA 13); Reade 1998–2001: 426); or that it is the result of internal collapse (Pečírková 1996; Liverani 2001). Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2) offers evidence in opposition to each, in the end asserting that, "[w]hatever the fate of royal scholarship in the last decades of Aššurbanipal's reign, we can be reasonably confident that there was very little intellectual activity at court under his successors."

[1613] Inscribed bricks of Aššur-etel-ilani were found in NTS 10 and were associated with debris from NTS 8 and NTS 1–2 (Mallowan 1966: 236–237). Prisms were also recovered in NT 12 that record this king's building projects (Knudsen 1967).

[1614] Oates 1957: 33, 36; Mallowan 1966: I, 236–237. Oates (1957: 36, n. 1) mentions a prism fragment of Aššurbanipal's that speaks of his repair work on the temple, that was unpublished at the time; see also, Borger 1996: 127, 129 (CND 12); see Knudsen 1967: 57f (4378 B col. ii), for a duplicate fragment.

contained the twin god's chambers and throne-room of the type found in Ezida at Nimrud.[1615] Drawing upon the close association between Nabu and scholarly activity in the royal court during the seventh century in Neo-Assyria, Robson concludes the following:[1616]

> The dramatic reduction in royal scholarship in the final decades of the seventh century as the whole court system collapsed—maybe in the aftermath of Aššurbanipal's Babylonian war—is mirrored in the abandonment of the image of Nabu as a learned scholar. If, as I have suggested, this image of Nabu was created by the literate court elite in the first place, then its erosion suggests that they too were disappearing and that their absence in the historical record is no mere accident of preservation and discovery.

From the time of Aššurnaṣirpal through the reign of Aššurbanipal and shortly thereafter, the worship of Nabu held a prominent place in royal worship, with a momentary waning during the reign of Sennacherib. The construction and repairs of Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad, and the staging of the Neo-Assyrian *ākitu*-festival within both temples, manifest this tie between the god Nabu and the king. Yet the textual and archaeological evidence of scribal activity in both temples also demonstrates a contemporaneous close association between the god Nabu and the literary elite of the royal court during this period. As described by Robson, Ezida at Nimrud was "a long-term, locus of Assyrian court *āšipūtu*…. [and] the intellectual home of dynasties of *āšipus*."[1617] These temple built environments were not solely spaces devoted to the dwelling and care of its principal resident divinity, as suggested by the House of Ninurta at Nimrud and the House of Sin of Khorsabad. Rather the Neo-Assyrian period saw the evolution of the House of Nabu into a space that could accommodate the practices associated with the newly elevated god of writing and an exclusive group of scholars, who brought about the high cuneiform intellectual culture that came to define the Neo-Assyrian period and culminated in the "library of Ashurbanipal" at Nineveh. This multifaceted quality of the House of Nabu set it apart not only from the house of the king and common human, but also from the houses of other gods during this period. It also brings into question the relationship between the House of Nabu and the king at this time: though the temple was a royal sponsored project, it was distinct—conceptually and in practice—from the palace institution. The evidence from Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad suggests a unique connection between this temple built environment and particular kings, while also illustrating that scholarly practice in the temple could be distanced from the king and royal court. The elevation of Nabu by both kings and scholarly experts manifests itself in the ritualized material and ritualized practices of this particular divine abode.

[1615] Falkner 1952–53; Heinrich 1982: 277–278; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.
[1616] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.
[1617] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 3, Conclusion.

4. CONCLUSION

The Neo-Assyrian temples at Nimrud and Khorsabad, with all of their commonalities and intricacies, were dynamic structures purposefully constructed for the staging of practices, the protagonists of which were the esteemed gods of the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite. Once materialized within the city landscape, the architectural and material qualities of this built environment provided cues for what types of practice were appropriate for this space and what types of privileged individuals were allowed to take part. In terms of ritualized materials and ritualized practice, the core of the temples was the god's chambers, the location for the presentation of offerings and caring for divinity on earth. Branching out from these spaces were rooms and courtyards similarly devoted to ceremonial practice, yet which were of lesser degrees of ritualization due to their increasing divorce from divinity and their minimized role in the practices that defined the temple as a performative space oriented toward the care of the divinity—the serving of the divine meal.

While Chapters III and IV communicated the defining role of material culture in ritualizing physical spaces within the Neo-Assyrian temple and the importance of strategic modes of construction for creating and marking the ritualized nature of the temple, Chapter V confirmed the ongoing use of the temple as a venue for the staging of ritualized practice. The practices that have the strongest representation in the textual sources and archaeological evidence have been the focus of this discussion: the highly ritualized practices of the god's chamber, *akītu*-suite, and scribal offices. These ceremonies and activities constituted the fundamental practices of the Neo-Assyrian temple. Undoubtedly practices of a less degree of ritualization were staged in other areas of the temple for which no substantial evidence has survived, and we can only hope that with future work at Neo-Assyrian sites more evidence will come to light regarding these additional performative aspects of the temple built environment.

Archaeological and textual evidence further suggest that ritualized practice could vary between temples—the types of performance associated with the House of Nabu demanded the creation of additional highly ritualized spaces within the temple that could cater to its unique needs. The implications of these interpretations contribute to the concluding discussion in Chapter VI, in which the results of the preceding discussions are brought together in order to understand the overarching concept and differentiating quality of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment.

CHAPTER VI. THE HOUSE OF A GOD IN NEO-ASSYRIA: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The fantastical reimaginations of Neo-Assyrian capital cities by early explorers and excavators give an impression of visually homogenous imperial landscapes, complete with highly conspicuous, skillfully constructed city walls and gates, palaces, residences, ziggurats, and temples. Contemporary curated exhibits of preserved materials from these cities in museum galleries reinforce this sense of homogeneity, the objects from various royal structures presented side by side with little emphasis of their original spatial and material context. What the materials and practices of the Neo-Assyrian temple confirm, however, is that this built environment was in no way a mirror image of its neighboring structures. The temple was the element of greatest ritualization within the Neo-Assyrian imperial landscape, an "other" that stood apart from the contemporaneous houses of the king and the common human. This study has proved the discrete quality of the temple through various modes of deconstruction and reconstruction: Chapter II analyzed Neo-Assyrian texts related to the temple and the concept of the temple as the house of a god; Chapter III reduced the temple structure to its constituent valued raw materials; Chapter IV traced the creation of this interactive, highly ritualized built environment; and Chapter V brought to life the practices staged within this arena that befit the Neo-Assyrian house of a god, drawing attention to the unique material and performative evolution of the House of Nabu during this period.

In order to bring together the preceding analyses and conclusions of the disparate aspects of the Neo-Assyrian temple, I here focus on two discussions that I see as central to our understanding of this dynamic built environment within the land of Aššur: first, what distinguished the temple as the house of a god in contrast to other houses; and second, what marked the house of a god of the Neo-Assyrian period, the conclusions from which can be used to contrast and compare with temples in other cultural and social contexts. I then make a final comment on the theoretical and methodological orientation of the present study.

1. THE NEO-ASSYRIAN TEMPLE: THE HOUSE OF A GOD

> The house of the goddess Ištar of Nineveh… had become dilapidated and fallen into ruin. With the wisdom of the god Nudimmud, the great lord, with the wide understanding which the god Ea had granted to me… I delineated its area, dug out its foundation pit, rebuilt it from top to bottom, and completed (it)… I built an excellent (throne) in a splendid fashion for the abode of the goddess Ištar, my mistress. I peacefully settled her great divinity in her shrine. (Thus) did I please her great divinity.[1618]

This Neo-Assyrian royal inscription, like many cited throughout this study, expresses the Neo-Assyrian kings' well-established, passionately driven devotion to the construction and maintenance of the houses of gods. Yet coexisting with the motivations

[1618] RIMA 2: A.0.101.40, 30–37.

and interests of the kings were those of the gods, the sole rightful residents of the houses that have been the focus of this study. The principal means by which such buildings could fulfill the role of the houses of the gods, that they could provide eternal dwelling places for divinity, was if each met the demands of the gods themselves.

Neo-Assyrian affirmations that the gods demanded of the kings that houses be constructed and preserved for their eternal dwelling—as conveyed through omens and asserted in the royal inscriptions—testify that the Neo-Assyrian gods themselves possessed strong wills, desires, and notions of the ideal house. The Neo-Assyrian temple was constructed using exotic, aesthetically arresting, culturally valued, symbolically charged materials. Yet the power and prestige these materials embodied was not just a statement about the king who gathered these resources and constructed the temple, it was also a statement about Neo-Assyrian divinity. The Neo-Assyrian gods reigned supreme over the lands that produced these natural resources—the mountains, forests, and earth; over the people that brought them to their capital cities; and last, over the skill and knowledge that permitted a select few to bring about a house they saw as befitting their status. In short, the temple was a physical materialization of the raw resources created by the gods—ritualized materials—and of the realization of the knowledge and skill passed down from the gods—ritualized construction. As noted by Winter in her discussion of the mastery of components of royal display, the "ascription of skill—and the knowledge such skill entails—serves to distinguish works associated with high status from works of domestic and ordinary production."[1619] In addition, the temple also had to cater to the subsequent practices by which the gods were cared for and their house maintained in the manner the gods themselves demanded. Such demands were fulfilled primarily through the divine meal, complete with purification practices and offerings of food and drink to the gods in their god's chambers. This tripartite sequence of ritualized materials, construction, and maintenance, oriented to the particular wills, desires, and demands of the Neo-Assyrian gods, marked the special status and divine ownership of the temple, differentiating this built environment within the Neo-Assyrian landscape.

The varying degrees of ritualization of the materials and use of this space further highlight the divine resident of the temple, confirming beyond doubt the function of this building as the house of a god. The divine image—whether standing atop a pedestal or seated on a throne—was *the* element that marked the temple as a divine dwelling place, as the presence and manifestation of the god on earth. The divine image was in all intents and purposes the strongest differentiating characteristic of the temple in comparison to all other structures of this period, including the similarly materially embellished palace. The dais and god's chamber within which the divine image resided were by association the spaces with the highest degree of ritualization in the temple built environment. Non-portable works of art fabricated by skilled craftsmen from valued, prestigious materials visually and experientially marked this space. Portable works of art both protected and prioritized the divine image; the mythological entities at doorways and near the dais kept evil at bay while royal images petrified acts of worship and supplication of the gods. The *in situ* dais assemblage of royal stele, mythological wall reliefs, and platform for the divine image uncovered in the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah presents a strong visual marker of the hierarchical mythological-royal-divine bond that was established in

[1619] Winter 2008: 333.

the Neo-Assyrian house of a god. This aspect of the temple—as the home of the dais upon which the god dwelt—set this built environment apart from all other structures that were constructed as part of royal building programs, and that were built as dwelling places, whether for humans or the king.

The variation in the king's relationship with the temple in contrast to the palace further elucidates the idiosyncrasy of the temple built environment. The Neo-Assyrian king modeled his presence within the temple to befit the house of a god in multiple respects: visual imagery, performance, and written records. Rather than asserting a strong visual and performative marker of his own personal might and power as in his own house—where narrative reliefs broadcast scenes of tribute and military campaigns—the king's visual and active presence in the temple was one of a servant to the gods. This subsidiary role was on the one hand illustrated in the royal images he had installed in proximity to the dais, and on the other hand played out in his participation in its construction and subsequent ceremonies and festivals as a devout servant. Similarly, the royal inscriptions eternalized the king's devout role in the creation and maintenance of the houses of gods, a "permanent record of achievement"[1620] that was both boastful and a testament to his piety. These visual, performative, and written messages of the king's inferiority to the gods argue for the temple being the built environment of greatest ritualization within the Neo-Assyrian capital city. The architectural arrangement of the temple broadcast the same message. The material and performative focus of the temple was the god's chamber and dais, an incontestable declaration that within this space a god—not the king nor any other earthly resident—was the sole protagonist.

2. THE NEO-ASSYRIAN TEMPLE: THE HOUSE OF A GOD OF NEO-ASSYRIA

The ability of the portable and non portable works of art and the practices of the Neo-Assyrian temple to fulfill the notions and demands of a house of a god depended on the cultural and social context within which the temple was situated: the elite sphere of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. In other words, it is the cultural, material, and practice-oriented values and expectations that established the temple as a ritualized built environment, and in so doing, differentiated it as the house of a god of *Neo-Assyria*.

In his work, *The Critique of Judgement,* Kant says the following of value and aesthetics:[1621]

> **The beautiful is that which apart from concepts is represented as the object of a universal satisfaction**
>
> This definition of the beautiful can be derived from the preceding explanation of it as the object of an entirely disinterested satisfaction. For the fact of which every one is conscious, that the satisfaction is for him quite disinterested, implies in his judgement a ground of satisfaction for every one. For since it does not rest on any inclination of the subject (nor upon any other premeditated interest), but since he who judges feels himself quite *free* as regards the satisfaction which he attaches to the

[1620] Winter 2008: 338.
[1621] Kant 2013 [1914]: Chapter I.1.1.2 §6.

> object, he cannot find the ground of this satisfaction in any private conditions connected with his own subject; and hence it must be regarded as grounded on what he can presuppose in every other man. Consequently he must believe that he has reason for attributing a similar satisfaction to every one. He will therefore speak of the beautiful, as if beauty were a characteristic of the object and the judgement logical (constituting a cognition of the Object by means of concepts of it); although it is only aesthetical and involves merely a reference of the representation of the object to the subject. For it has this similarity to a logical judgement that we can presuppose its validity for every one. But this universality cannot arise from concepts; for from concepts there is no transition to the feeling of pleasure or pain (except in pure practical laws, which bring an interest with them such as is not bound up with the pure judgement of taste). Consequently the judgement of taste, accompanied with the consciousness of separation from all interest, must claim validity for every one, without this universality depending on Objects. That is, there must be bound up with it a title to subjective universality.

Kant argues in this passage that people presume that beauty and their judgment of a material's visual and experiential qualities was universal, that the value they ascribed to a material was widespread and free of judgment. Yet the manner in which raw materials were used and portable and non-portable works of art assembled to form the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment demonstrate the particular values of the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite, as the initiators and executors of these building projects. Occasionally the sources suggest individual sets of values and a stronger subjectivity, for example Sargon's penchant for using engaged half-column buttresses to enhance temple walls, or Aššurnaṣirpal's inclination toward stone wall reliefs. Our inability to accurately extrapolate the precise individual responsible for these variations, however, makes a proposition for individual taste mere speculation; perhaps, for example, one of Sargon's elite craftsman was skilled at executing buttresses. While such small yet perceptible preferences are worth noting for their suggestion of private tastes, what is more important for the present study is that the material and textual sources for the Neo-Assyrian temple confirm a united set of aesthetic and experiential values for the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite.

The groups of raw materials discussed in Chapter III were valued in their own right and as materials for construction by the Neo-Assyrian imperial elite, that is to say, they possessed inherent ritualized qualities as well as ritualizing potential. The raw materials that held the greatest value were ones that exuded brilliance and shine, robust colors, contrasting tones, size and strength, textures, and smell, all of which were brought forth from the mountains, forests, and the earth. As discussed in Chapter IV, these materials were then worked by skilled (pure) hands and strategically assembled in a manner that emanated a message of power, prestige, technical mastery, scholarly knowledge, and divinity. The execution of visually dynamic, aesthetically pleasing, masterful arts for the temple was grounded in a Neo-Assyrian appreciation and value of the creative process, a value that contributed to the ritualization of this built environment in a manner befitting the house of a god within this particular cultural context.

The finished, assembled Neo-Assyrian temple built environment communicated the importance of orchestrated visuality, controlled movement, privacy, and seclusion for ritualized practice. The strong physicality and dynamic aesthetics of the exterior of the temple enforced a division between people inside and outside the temple. The scale of the walls and doors mediated sight and movement, while culturally derived visual imagery steered away evil and individuals unworthy of admittance. Within the temple the layout and material elements marked the divine image upon the dais as the focal point of the temple, the point of greatest ritualization; yet visibility and access to this space was also highly controlled through both portable and non-portable objects. This layout catered to and reinforced the formalized, exclusive performative aspects of caring for divinity in Neo-Assyria.

The ritualized materials and practice of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment also illustrate a strong relationship between the construction of temple and the *ummânu*s. The participation of elite craftsmen and artisans in the construction of the temple—individuals endowed with technical skill, knowledge, and wisdom handed down by the gods themselves—differentiated this manufacturing process from the normative and mundane. As cited in Chapter IV, Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions stand out for their emphasis of the skilled craftsmen and artisans with whom he worked in the construction of the temple and all of its defining parts. The divinely inspired decisions and abilities of this group of workers ritualized the raw materials as they masterfully transformed them into something truly exquisite in the hopes of meeting the demands of the king and the gods, their dual contractors of heaven and earth.

Further elevating the construction process was the involvement of the scholarly *ummânu*s, the *āšipu*s*, kalû*s*, ṭupšarru*s, and *bārû*s. The participation of these figures in the various stages of construction coincided with their particular skill set, be it the ability to avert evil and divine wrath, to placate the gods with prayers and entreaties, to interpret astrological and terrestrial signs, or to communicate with the gods in order to obtain their approval. Again Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions stand as an example due to the vehemence and repetition with which the king describes the messages of divine stimuli and approval for his temple building projects. These abilities of the scholarly *ummânu*s were decisive and essential during the beginning and concluding stages of construction, their involvement helping to ensure that the divine resident felt pleasure and joy when installed in his or her new home.

While the role of the first contingent of *ummânu*s—the craftsmen and artisans—more or less ceased when construction was complete, the scholarly *ummânu*s continued to play an integral role in regular temple practice, specifically in caring for the divinity, the principal purpose of this built environment. The ritual instructions that prescribe the participation of these figures in temple activities, and the historical evidence for the involvement of *āšipu*s and *kalû*s with close affiliations to the royal court, differentiates the practices staged within the temples in Neo-Assyria as highly ritualized, as distinct from similar ritualized activities carried out in other spatial and social contexts.

An additional discrete quality that marked the house of a god of Neo-Assyria that similarly involved the *ummânu*s, over and above their participation in construction and traditional temple practice, was the temple's growing affiliation with Assyrian scholarship and the elevation of House of Nabu, the god of wisdom. The archaeological evidence from Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad demonstrates this

aspect at a material level, for example its structural modifications, visual imagery, and material finds attest to the performance of ritualized practices particular to the god Nabu and scholarly activity. Archaeological evidence in combination with the textual sources also suggests a unique affiliation between this space and Neo-Assyrian kingship, as demonstrated by the attempts of specific kings to situate themselves within this scholarly tradition and their prioritization of this built environment.

The close bond between the king, scholarship, and the House of Nabu varied throughout the imperial period, as discussed in Chapter V. Aššurnaṣirpal's ninth-century temple activities at Nimrud do not demonstrate a strong scholarly orientation, his Banquet Stele inscription alone stating that he began work on a House of Nabu; as characterized by Robson, "Nabu, then, was but a peripheral member of Aššurnaṣirpal's personal pantheon."[1622] Under Adad-nerari III the temple began to exude stronger ties with the scholarly world, as demonstrated by this king's completion of Ezida, the stimulus for which may lie in large part with his governor Bel-tarṣi-ilumma, the king's eponym official.[1623] It was not until Sargon, however, that Nabu's popularity rose to noteworthy heights within the royal court, as illustrated by this king's embellishment of Ezida at Nimrud and the strategic planning of his new city at Khorsabad, the very physical layout of which marked and visualized Nabu's supreme reign. Though Sennacherib did not support the elevation of Nabu, the Houses of Nabu carried on as places of practice during his reign. The resurgence of a strong scholarly temple tradition and reemphasis of Nabu under Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal affirms that the prioritizing of the House of Nabu was not a fleeting phenomenon of the reign of Sargon. Non-portable works of art in Ezida and royal inscriptions confirm that both Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal carried out work on this temple, while tablets found within testify to its continued role as a center for scholarly activity. The discovery of Esarhaddon's loyalty oath in the throne-room of Ezida further demonstrates this king's devotion and confidence in Nabu, the purpose of the tablet being to secure the accession of his son Aššurbanipal. The last testament to the popularity of the god Nabu during the Neo-Assyrian period was made by the late seventh-century king Sin-šarru-iškun, who laid claim to the construction of the House of Nabu at Nineveh.[1624]

Architectural features of Ezida at Nimrud and the House of Nabu at Khorsabad manifest the strong orientation of this god's temple to scholarship and scholarly activity and its prioritization by particular kings, and by extension, the importance of its divine resident, the god Nabu during this period. Internal features that set this temple apart from other Neo-Assyrian temples included chambers to serve as the *akītu*-suite—the locus for the Neo-Assyrian *akītu*-festival held in honor of Nabu and his consort Tašmetum—and rooms devoted to scribal and scholarly activity. The structure as a whole was also set apart within the imperial landscape. Ezida, for example, was divorced from the other temples of Nimrud, a decision that seems to have had its roots in the early construction work of Aššurnaṣirpal and which was reinforced by his successors. At Khorsabad Sargon built a bridge between the House of Nabu and his palace, a physical tie linking the god of

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[1622] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2.
[1623] As noted in Chapter V, Bel-tarṣi-ilumma is named as the dedicatee in the inscription on the divine attendants that marked the doorway into the god's chamber of Nabu.
[1624] Donbaz and Grayson 1984: 55–60; Frahm 2009: 89–91.

writing and this scholarly king. Yet this temple was still set apart from the palace, an arrangement that argues for the prioritization of this temple above and beyond those of the other gods, whose houses were contained within the architectural parameters of the palace. Houses of Nabu were also present at the sites of Assur and Nineveh. Unfortunately the archaeological evidence for the temples at Nineveh are not well preserved, though excavated materials confirm that Adad-nerari III constructed a House of Nabu in this city,[1625] on which both Sargon and Aššurbanipal carried out reconstructive work.[1626] At Assur archaeological evidence confirms the claims made by Sin-šarru-iškun in his royal inscription of his construction of a temple with god's chambers for Nabu and Tašmetum above the ruins of a House of Ištar. Not only does this last building project confirm the continued emphasis of the god Nabu through to the late seventh century, the arrangement of twin god's chamber and neighboring throne-room suite of the type found in Ezida at Nimrud suggests the same type of temple practice that prioritized Nabu.[1627]

The visual imagery in the Houses of Nabu similarly demonstrates a growing affiliation with Neo-Assyrian scholarship. Sargon's glazed-brick panels and metal relief bands at temple doorways marked these spaces with a scholarly affiliation—the hands and minds that created these non-portable works of art were men privileged to an exclusive wisdom. The figure of the *kululla* that is found in one of the bronze relief bands from the House of Nabu at Khorsabad is also found at the principal doorway to Ezida at Nimrud, here presented as figures carved in stone. Last, the inscription on the divine attendants that marked the doorway to the god's chamber of Nabu in Ezida declares the supremacy of the god of wisdom: "Whoever you are, after me, trust in the god Nabu! Do not trust in another god!"[1628]

In addition to the archaeological evidence of royal building projects related to House of Nabu, textual evidence demonstrates the attempts of Neo-Assyrian kings to insert themselves into this growing scholarly temple tradition. In their royal inscriptions the Neo-Assyrian kings laid claim to the same body of exclusive knowledge held by the *ummânu*s, the "secrecy" of the intellectual elite.[1629] Similarly, while the panels and bands from Khorsabad were likely produced by the *ummânu*s, the royal correspondence attests to the active role Sargon played as consultant and decision-maker in the construction of his ideal capital city, therein suggesting a close affiliation of this king with the scholarly imagery of the city's temples. The skill and wisdom-oriented language of Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions confirm this king's appreciation of scholarly knowledge, and his desire to insert himself within this growing tradition. The royal inscriptions on temple construction of both Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal also contain references to material

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[1625] The standard Assyrian eponym list notes that the foundations were laid in 788 BCE and that the god entered the temple in 787 BCE (Millard 1994: 58; see further, Robson forthcoming: Chapter 2).

[1626] Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 20. As noted by Robson (forthcoming: Chapter 2), some of the inscribed materials from this temple attribute it to both Nabu and Marduk, though materials from a well in the courtyard and on the doorjambs mention only Nabu; see further, Campbell Thompson and Hutchinson 1929.

[1627] Andrae 1938: 159f, Abb. 69; Heinrich 1982: 277–278.

[1628] RIMA 3: A.0.104.2002.

[1629] Winter 2008, with respect to Sennacherib in particular; see further, Lenzi 2008; Robson 2011; forthcoming; and for Late Babylonian Uruk, Stevens 2013.

from scholarly works, for example the characteristics of stones as laid out in *Abnu šikinšu* ("the stone, its appearance").[1630] Aššurbanipal explicitly asserts his membership among this elite group, stating in his royal inscriptions as follows:[1631]

> [10] Marduk, the sage of the gods, gave me wide understanding and broad perceptions as a gift. Nabû, the scribe of the universe, bestowed on me the acquisition of all his wisdom as a present. [12]Ninurta and Nergal gave me physical fitness, manhood and unparalleled strength. [13]I learnt the lore of the wise sage Adapa, the hidden secret, the whole of the scribal craft. [14]I can discern celestial and terrestrial portents and deliberate in the assembly of the experts. [15]I am able to discuss the series "If the liver is a mirror image of the sky" with capable scholars. [16]I can solve convoluted reciprocals and calculations that do not come out evenly. [17]I have read cunningly written text in Sumerian, dark Akkadian, the interpretation of which is difficult. [18]I have examined stone inscriptions from before the flood, which are sealed, stopped up, mixed up.

The royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Aššurbanipal also emphasize their role in reconstructing temples and resurrecting offerings to the gods in Babylon, a land in which Nabu had a long-standing role in the local pantheon.[1632] It is possible that this increasing Neo-Assyrian royal presence in Babylon, especially one engaged with temples and ritualized practice, had an influence on the growing association between the temple, scholarly tradition, and elevation of the god Nabu in Neo-Assyria. Yet the concept of the temple remained distinct in Babylonia and in Neo-Assyria. Based on the dissimilarities in layout and specifics of the god's chambers of Nabu's house in Babylon (Eniggidrukalamasuma) and Ezida in Nimrud, Robson concludes the following: "Esarhaddon's refurbishment did not impose Assyrian concepts of Nabu onto the architecture of Eniggidrukalamasuma but almost certainly aimed to maintain continuity with established Babylonian practice."[1633] The discussion of the Neo-Assyrian temple carried out here, which establishes the defining principles of the house of a god as a ritualized built environment within the elite sphere of Neo-Assyria, could serve as a useful platform from which to approach the concept of the Babylonian temple and the role of Neo-Assyrian kings in this social milieu.

It is also worth noting that although Sennacherib did not have the same level of devotion to the god Nabu, his royal inscriptions assert that he did ascribe to the wisdom of the scholarly *ummânu*s in his royal endeavors.[1634] The strategic use of vocabulary

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[1630] Reiner 1995: 119–121; Robson 2001: 52; on the work *Abnu šikinšu*, see note 462.
[1631] Translation from Livingstone 2007: 101.
[1632] At first Nabu was recognized as the scribal god in Babylon, however by the thirteenth century onwards he is referred to as the son of the god Marduk and by the twelfth century is associated with wisdom (*nēmequ*)(Pomponio and Seidl 1998–2001: 18–19). The Neo-Babylonian god Nabu was not assimilated into the Neo-Assyrian pantheon, rather the Neo-Assyrian Nabu drew upon the Middle Babylonian Nabu; the Neo-Babylonian Nabu and Neo-Assyrian Nabu remained distinct entities (Porter 1997; Robson forthcoming: Chapter 4).
[1633] Robson forthcoming: Chapter 4.
[1634] For example, the king acknowledges the craft of the *išippu* and the wisdom of the *kakugallu* in his building of the *akītu*-house at Assur; Luckenbill 1924: 137, 30–32. He also maintained a number of scholars at the royal court (Robson forthcoming: Table A4).

related to the expertise of production in the royal inscriptions—for example, *nēmequ, naklu, lē'ū*—suggests that this king also sought to present himself as a "paradigmatic ruler claiming knowledge as an index of royal leadership."[1635] Sennacherib also claimed to have recovered and improved upon the metal casting technology of his forefathers, which he used to manufacture non-portable works of art for his royal building projects.[1636] While the limitations of the present study inhibited a critical examination of this king's temple building work at Nineveh and Assur, such a study is an essential next-step in the overarching discussion of the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment.

The practices and materials of the Neo-Assyrian temple were a product of and producer of set social customs and values that were meaningful within the context of Neo-Assyrian imperial society. The increasing elevation of the god Nabu and the role of the scholarly elite in the Neo-Assyrian temple demonstrates a particular development for this ritualized space, the characteristics of which continued to appeal to the established values of this elite society. The increasing merging of the scholarly *ummânu*s, esoteric knowledge, and the king in the context of the temple in Neo-Assyria further accentuated the ritualization of this space, a differentiation that was already achieved by means of the prestigious valued materials and prioritized traditional practice of the Neo-Assyrian temple, defining characteristics that stretched back to the time of Aššurnaṣirpal and the outset of the Neo-Assyrian period.

3. A Reflection on Methodological and Theoretical Approaches

This study has applied particular theoretical and methodological stances in order to focus carefully on the idiosyncrasies of the Neo-Assyrian temple. By working with a practice-oriented approach attentive to degrees of ritualization, the discussions of each chapter have highlighted the distinguishing qualities of this built environment and the values of the elite social group within which it was situated.

The textual and archaeological evidence from the temple demonstrates qualities of performance, traditionalism, formalism, disciplined invariance, rule-governance, and symbolism—the six characteristics Bell ascribes to ritual-like activities. The activities and raw materials of the construction of the temple adhered to well-established cultural customs and formalized practice, as made manifest by the consistency of the archaeological evidence and the repetition of prescribed practices in the textual sources. The textual sources also confirm the repetitive, formalized nature of the daily ceremonies of the temple, as well as the additional ceremonies and festivals executed on a cyclical basis. Neo-Assyrian temple practices also recall Bell's discussion of the principal features of performance as a ritual-like activity.

One feature of performance noted by Bell is the multiple sensory levels of ritualized activities.[1637] The analysis of temple construction in Chapter IV and the use of

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[1635] Winter 2008: 333.
[1636] RINAP 3: Sennacherib 17, vi 80–vii 8.
[1637] Bell (1997: 160): "performances communicate on multiple sensory levels, usually involving highly visual imagery, dramatic sounds, and sometimes even tactile, olfactory, and gustatory stimulation… the power of performance lies in great part in the effect of the heightened multisensory experience it affords: one is not being told or shown something so much as one is led to experience something."

this finished space explored in Chapter V confirm such heightened levels of sensory experience in this context. The visuality and aesthetic qualities of the portable and non–portable works of art stand out as having the strongest sensorial effect, yet qualities of smell and texture were also valued in the Neo-Assyrian temple. This multiple sensory experience of the house of a god speaks to the elevated sensorial appreciation of the Neo-Assyrian gods themselves. Winter espouses this quality of the Mesopotamian gods in her assessment of the visually and experientially oriented vocabulary used in Assyrian and Sumerian texts in reference to material objects; for example, passages in the royal inscriptions speak of the gods experiencing joy and wonder as they look upon a newly constructed temple or palace.[1638] By filling the houses of the gods with materials that offered sensorial experiences that were valued in the heavens and on earth, the kings ensured a successful building project and secured divine favor.

Framing is another quality of Bell's characterization of performance that is replicated in Neo-Assyrian temple practice. The staging of these practices within this prioritized built environment—in particular the staging of the central practice of caring for the gods within the highly ritualized god's chamber—alongside the inclusion of marked materials and select participants, set these activities apart. This ensemble made the statement, in Bell's words, "[t]his is different, deliberate, and significant—pay attention."[1639] These two performative qualities—sensory levels and framing—worked in unison in temple practice, as Bell emphasizes:[1640]

> the ritual-like nature of performative activities appears to lie in the multifaceted sensory experience, in the framing that creates a sense of condensed totality, and in the ability to shape people's experience and cognitive ordering of the world. In brief, performances seem ritual-like because they explicitly model the world.

In addition to Bell's six pillars, this study of the Neo-Assyrian sources has brought to light contrastive characteristics of ritualized activities and materials that may be of use in approaching ritualized practice for other cultural and social groups.

Within the Neo-Assyrian temple, ritualized practice and materials were distinct from aspects of the everyday and quotidian in varied degrees, determined by the materials and practitioners involved and the manner in which something was executed. The dais was marked as the space of greatest ritualization within the temple in a number of ways: its manner of construction and material characteristics, its placement in the temple layout, and its role in temple practice as the finite dwelling place of the god. The recovery of the display tablet from the temple at Tell Tayinat stands as a unique indication of the high ritualization of this space.[1641] The practice of installing this tablet upon the dais suggests a desire to add weight to the oath inscribed upon it, the oath taken between the local ruler and the Neo-Assyrian king. Were this tablet displayed in a different context, for example on the exterior of the temple or within a palace, it would have had a lesser degree of ritualization and a lower level of divine force behind the oath itself.

[1638] Winter 2003.
[1639] Bell 1997: 160.
[1640] Bell 1997: 161.
[1641] Lauinger 2011; 2012; Harrison and Osborne 2012.

The importance of degrees of ritualization is also illustrated in the comparison between the act of construction of the house of a human and that of a god. Ritual instructions demonstrate that similar activities were executed when laying the foundations of a human's house as the house of a god. The involvement of a specialized group of elite practitioners, the use of a greater number of highly valued and exotic materials, and last, the physical location of this activity—the site at which the temple had existed since time immemorial—marked the temple as more ritualized. Yet recognizing the element of *degrees* of ritualization allows for the construction of the house of a human to also be spoken of as ritualized, though to a far lesser extent, if the latter were to include practices and materials that were ritualized in their own right within a Neo-Assyrian context. A comparison of the Neo-Assyrian palace to the temple presents an argument for a different sort of ritualization. The use of similar prestigious materials and ritualized practices in the construction of a palace marked this house with a high degree of ritualization, yet its lack of spatial association with a building that existed from primeval times, the absence of a central chamber devoted to a god, and the subsequent use of the house to serve not a god or goddess but the king—a figure whose status fell between that of a human and a god—differentiates this space from a temple and illustrates a different inflection of ritualization.

Ritualized practice in the Neo-Assyrian temple also demonstrates meaningful variations in an individual's experience. Though present in the same space and engaging with similar ritualized materials in common practices, the variations in the specific duties of different practitioners and participants meant that no experience was uniform. The scholarly *ummânu*s, for example, fulfilled duties in caring for divinity that engaged with the exclusive wisdom to which they were partial. This quality of their practice likely brought them closer to the gods through a sharing of knowledge that was passed down from divinity itself. Yet even amongst the scholarly *ummânu*s experience varied, the *āšipu*s continuing to play an important role in the temple throughout its lifespan, while the *bārû*s' involvement waned considerably following temple construction. Personal circumstances and attitudes would have also elicited varying individual emotional responses to the materials and activities of the temple, yet these aspects of practice are much harder to access through our sources, if at all.

Though seemingly affixed and long-standing, the culturally-grounded traditions and rules of temple construction in Neo-Assyria were not so invariable or rule-governed that they could not be tailored to fit the preferences or attitudes of particular kings, as demonstrated by the variations in the House of Nabu. While evidence suggests that there was an established understanding of what a Neo-Assyrian temple entailed—in terms of layout, material, and practice—to deviate from this basic pattern or to prioritize certain features did not invalidate the ability of the built environment to fulfill its primary role as the house of a god in Neo-Assyria. The overtly similar yet intricately unique qualities of the four temples studied here—the House of Ninurta and Ezida at Nimrud, and the House of Sin and of Nabu at Khorsabad—illustrate how multifaceted the Neo-Assyrian temple built environment was. In a land where the kings' fluctuating political aims and boastful building projects had to respond to a complex assortment of assertive and demanding divine entities, there had to be some allowance for creative freedom and ideological growth when creating the house of a god.

The concept of the Neo-Assyrian temple as both the house of a god *and* the house of a Neo-Assyrian god can serve as a springboard for comparative studies of both Neo-Assyrian materials and materials of other societies. A focused study of the temples at Nineveh and Assur will make an important contribution to the discussion of the temple built environment in Neo-Assyria. Likewise, the relationship between the Neo-Assyrian temple and the Neo-Assyrian palace stands as an important next-step in the study of the Neo-Assyrian imperial sphere. Though similarities abound between the palace and temple (raw materials, structural elements, non-portable and portable works of art, workmen, and project overseer—the king, as well as the shared fundamental concept that both were houses), an in-depth study of the palace from a practice-oriented, ritual theory perspective would facilitate a more critical understanding of the means by which this built environment marked the royal status of its owner, how it was differentiated from the house of a god and that of an common human. A similar theoretically and methodologically-oriented study of the Babylonian temple of the first millennium BCE would contribute to our understanding of the complex relationship between Neo-Assyria and Babylon, of the contemporaneous mingling and affirmation of two disparate sets of cultural values and customs, manifest in the temple built environment. The findings from the present study can also act as a catalyst for studies of houses of gods from wider geographical and historical time spans: studies of the similarities and variations of ritualized built environments from wide-ranging contexts will further enrich our understanding of the many ways in which these discrete spaces—these divine dwelling places—were made fit for the god(s) of distinct cultural and social groups.

With its conspicuous, aesthetically powerful exterior, the Neo-Assyrian temple presented a point of mediation between the space it governed within and everything beyond its walls—it set itself apart as "other." This built environment stood in opposition to the surrounding features of the Neo-Assyrian capital city, yet it was counted among those buildings that defined this constructed imperial landscape in antiquity. Contained within the robust walls of the temple were a series of rooms and courtyards, whose portable and non-portable works of art entertained the senses, reflecting and reestablishing cultural values and priorities of the Neo-Assyrian elite. With all of its raw materials, crafted features, personnel, practices, and eternal divine residents, this strategically constructed built environment was the house of a god, the most prestigious and powerful entity of the Neo-Assyrian world.

FIGURES

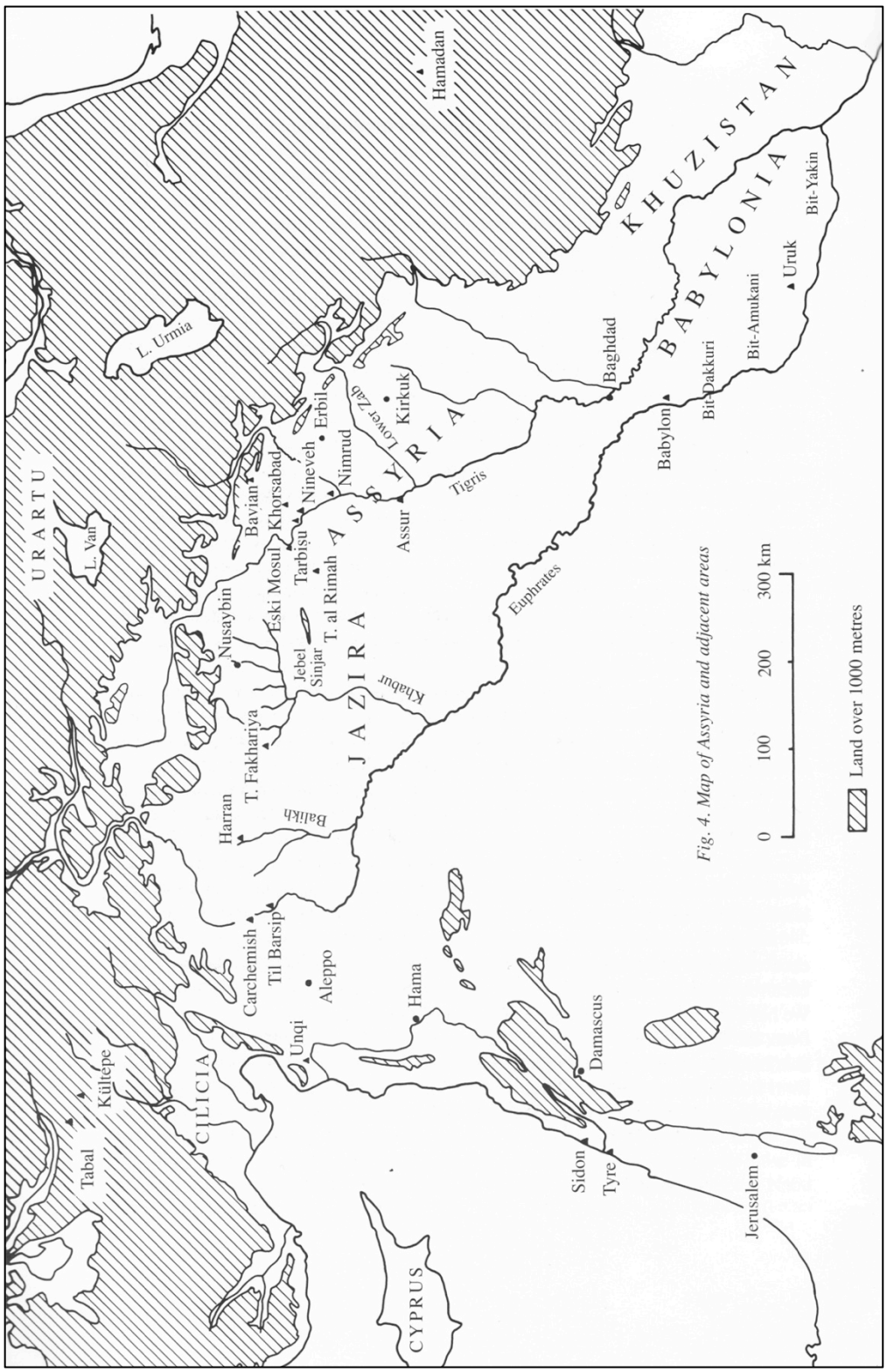

FIGURE 1. Land of Assyria and adjacent areas. Oates and Oates 2001: 12.

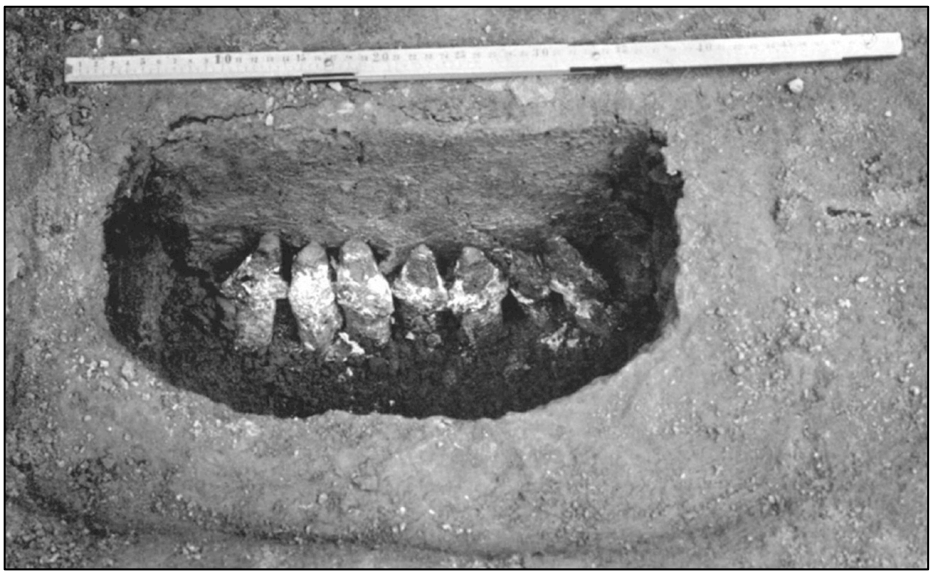

FIGURE 2. *Apkallu*s figurines in foundation box, Burnt Palace, Nimrud. Mallowan 1954: pl. XX.1.

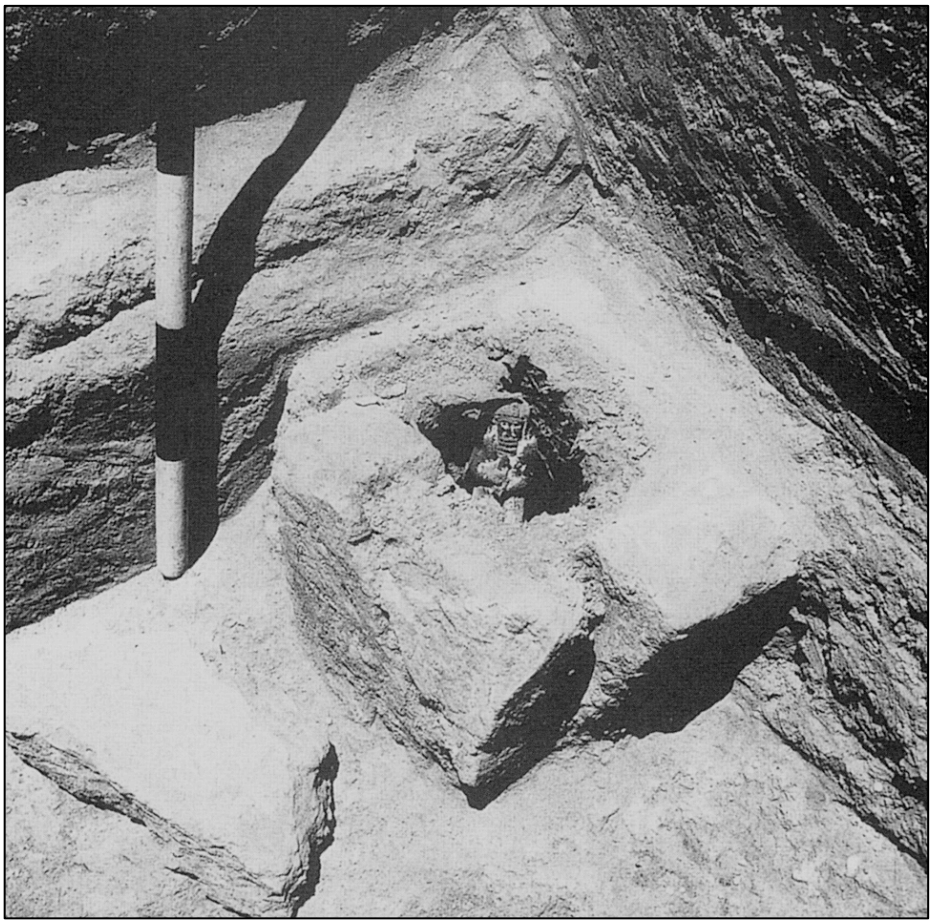

FIGURE 3. *Laḫmu* figurine in foundation box, Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud (ME 140435 (1987-1-31, 108)). Curtis and Reade 1995: 112.

FIGURE 4. Clay bird-headed *apkallu*s figurines, Nineveh (ME 90989 (DT 836); ME 90992 (DT 389); ME 91839 (DT 391)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 5. Clay fish-cloaked *apkallu*s figurines, Nimrud and Nineveh (ME 90999; ME 91836; ME 91837) . © Trustees of the British Museum.

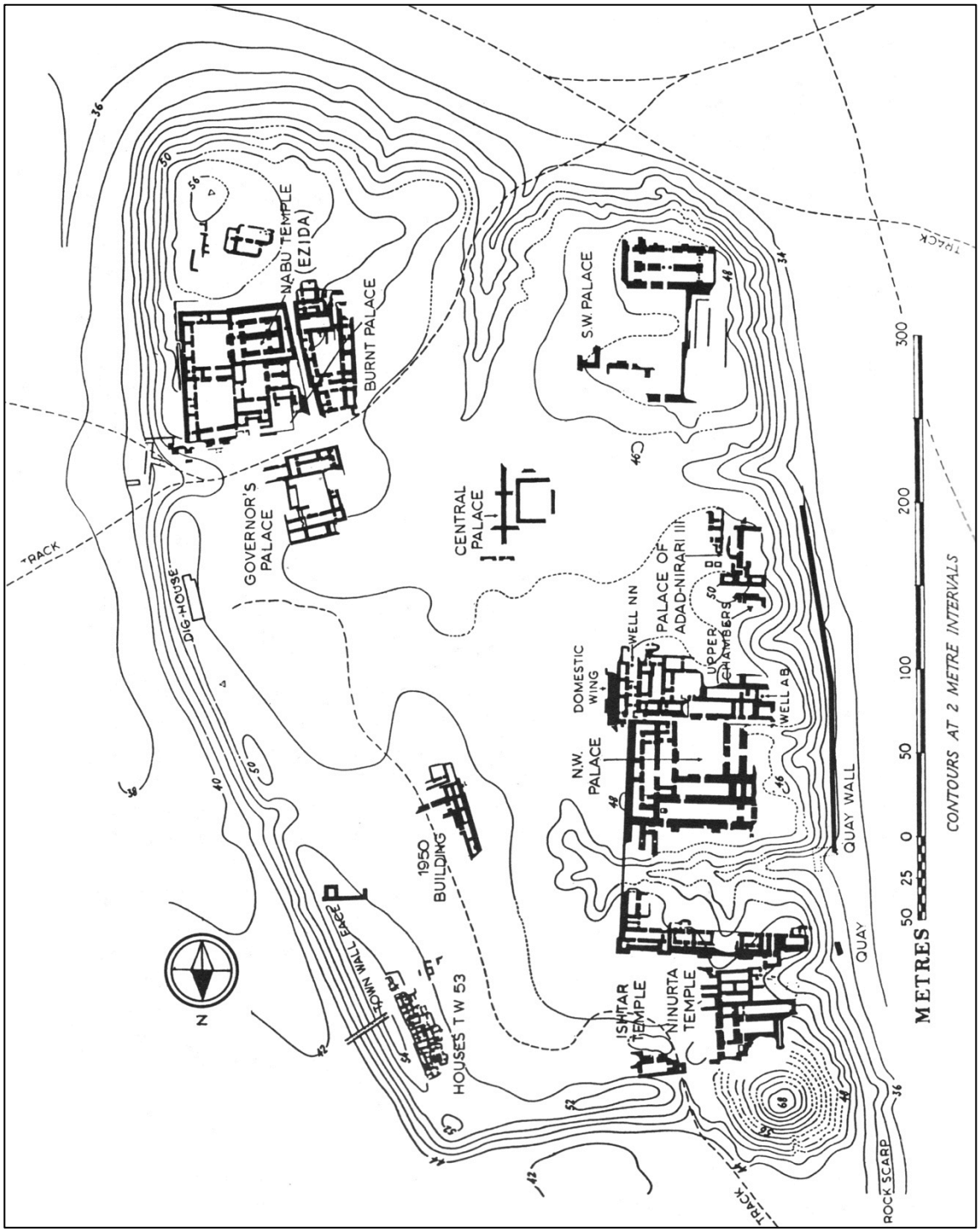

FIGURE 6. Plan of the citadel at Nimrud following excavations in the 1950s. Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 10.

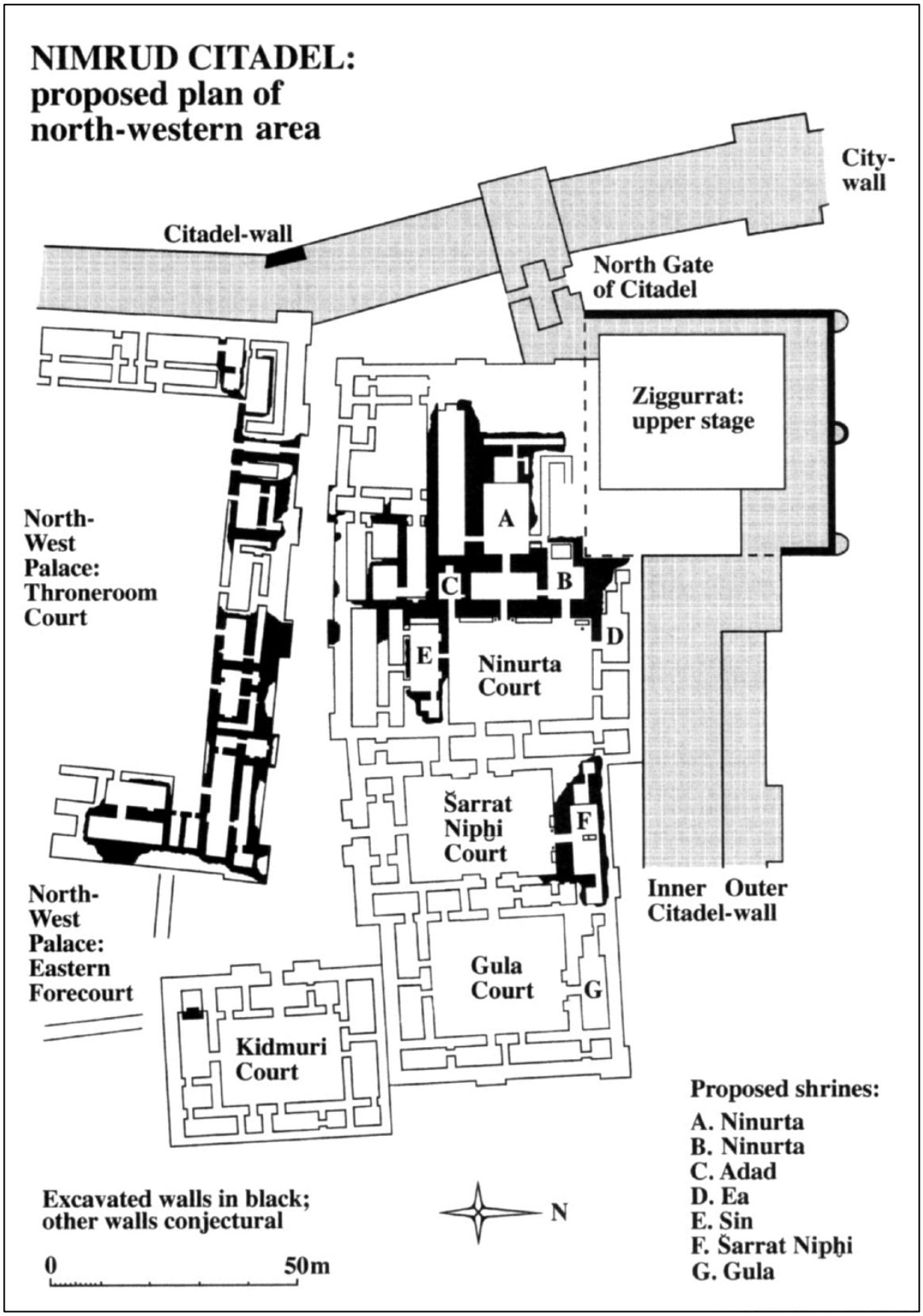

FIGURE 7. Temple Complex, Nimrud. Reade 2002: fig. 2.

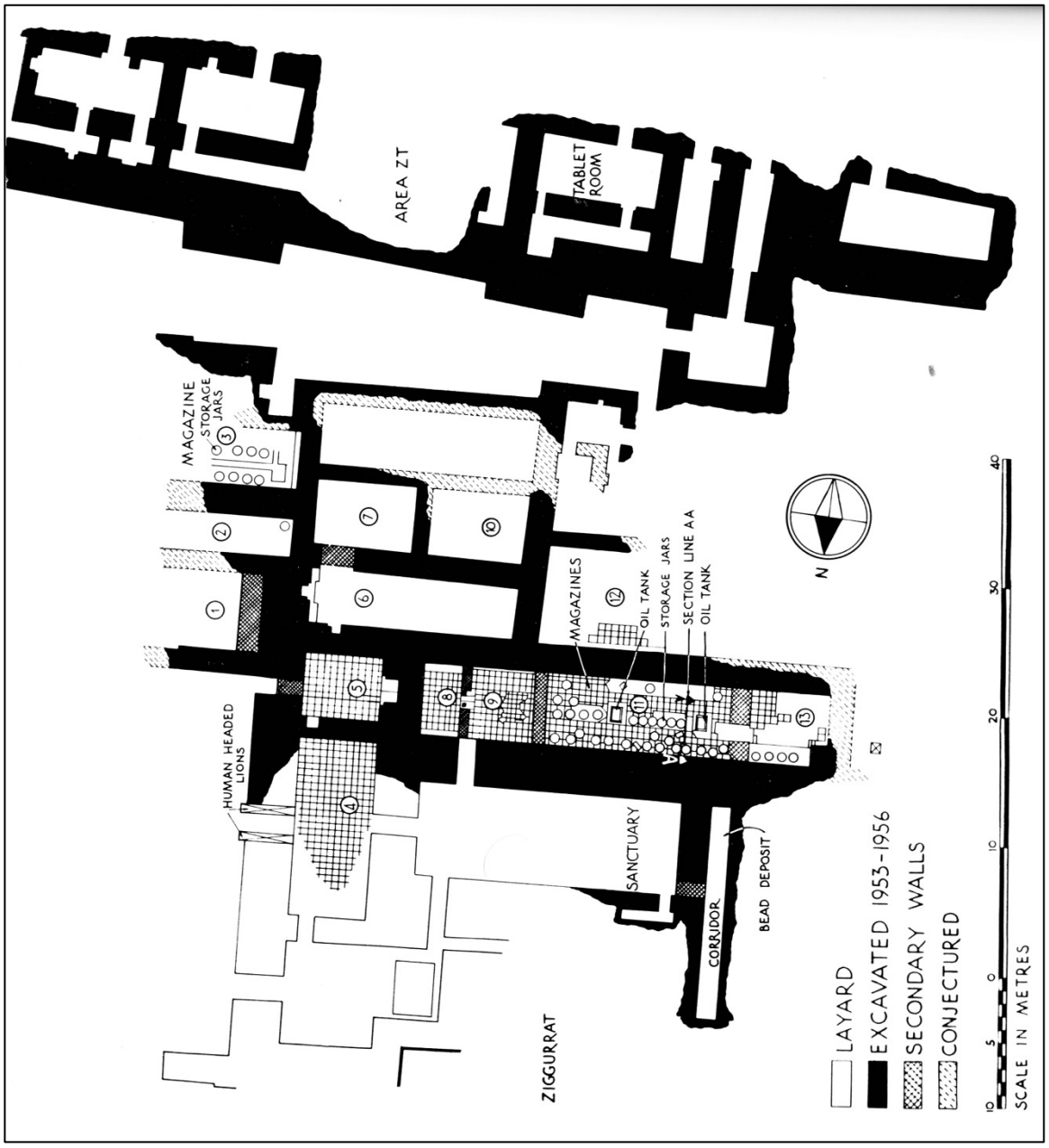

FIGURE 8. House of Ninurta, in relation to the northern wing of the Northwest Palace (ZT). Mallowan 1966: I, fig. 35.

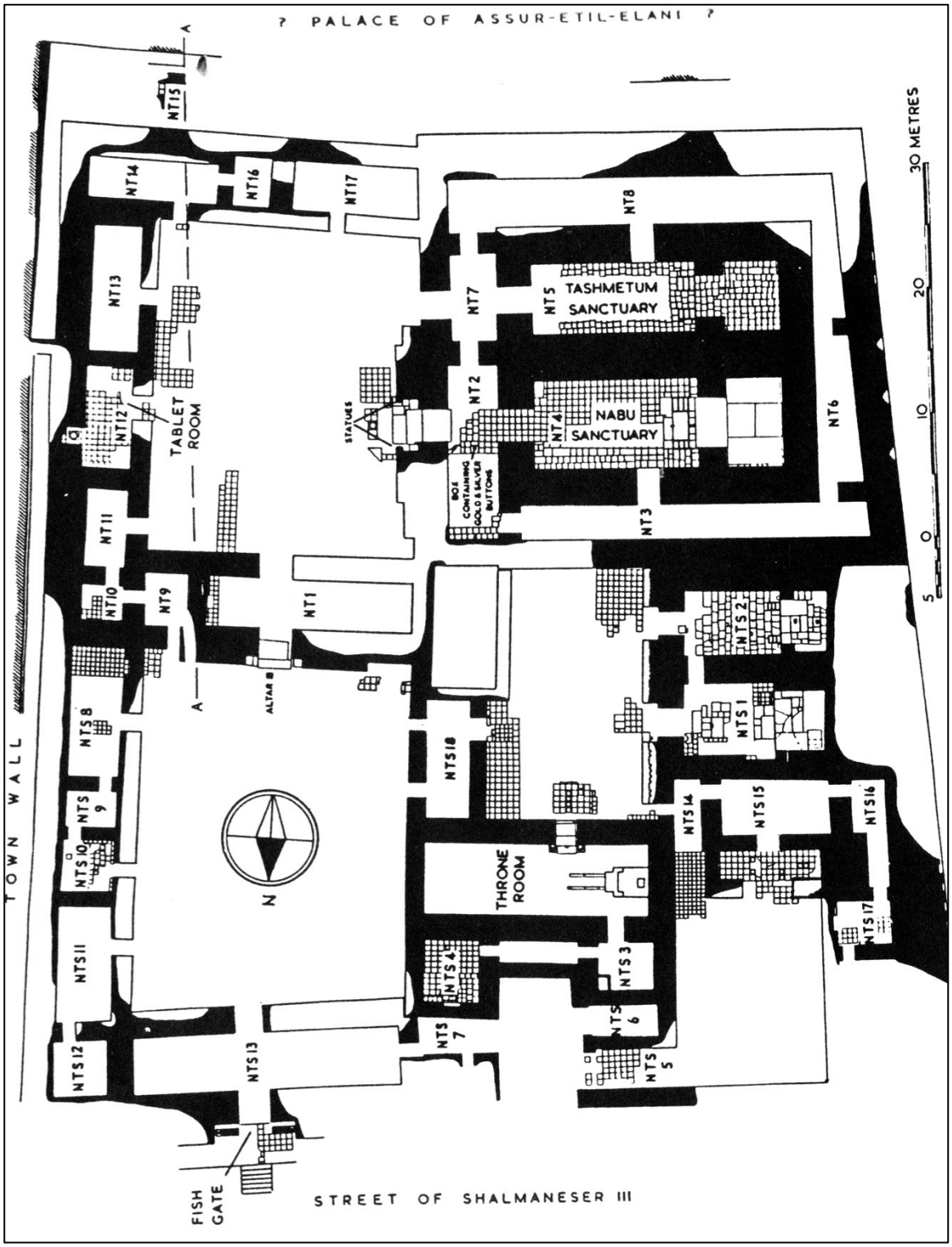

FIGURE 9. Ezida (including House of Nabu), Nimrud. Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 67.

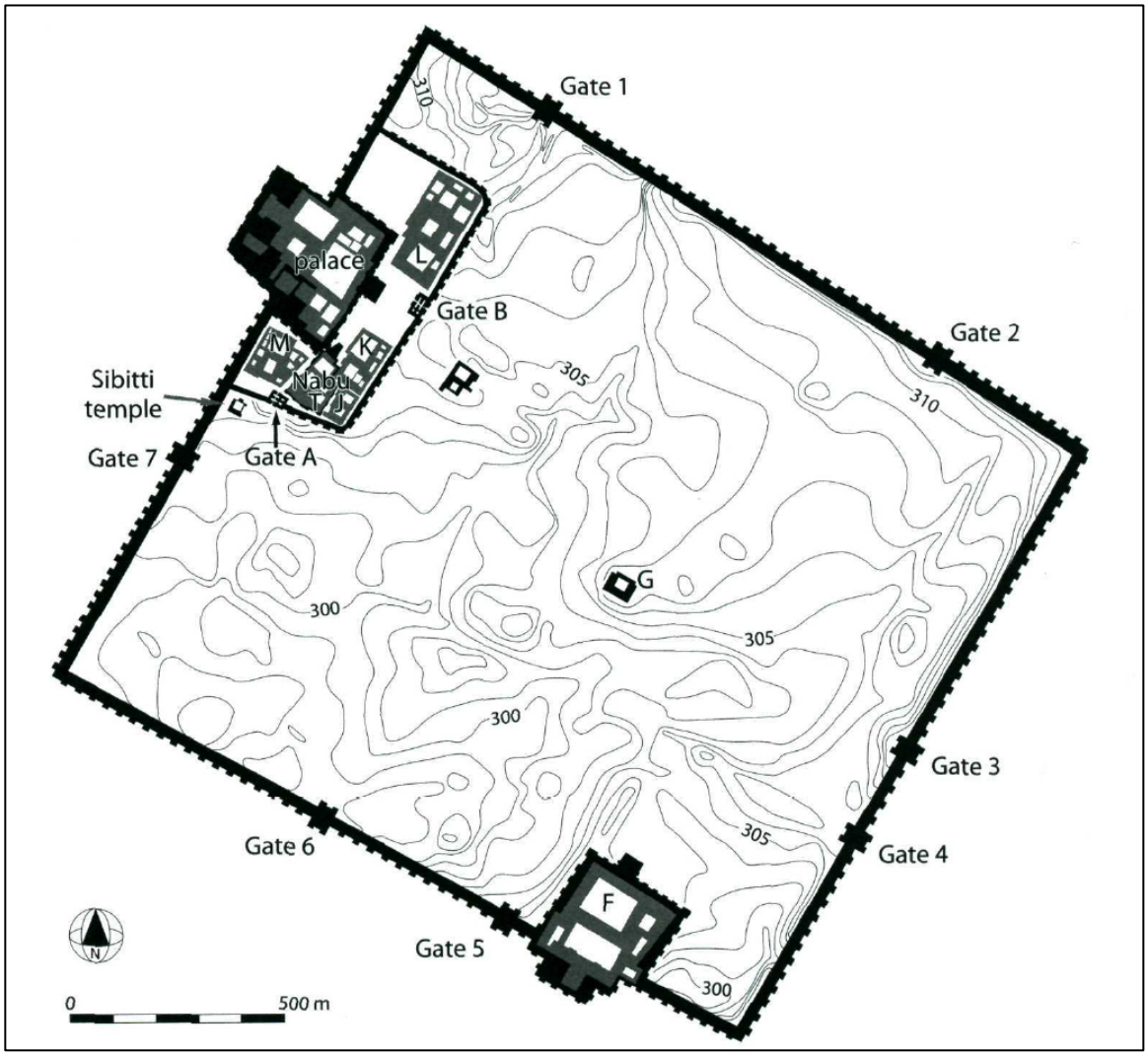

FIGURE 10. Plan of Khorsabad, including lower city. McMahon 2013: fig. 2.

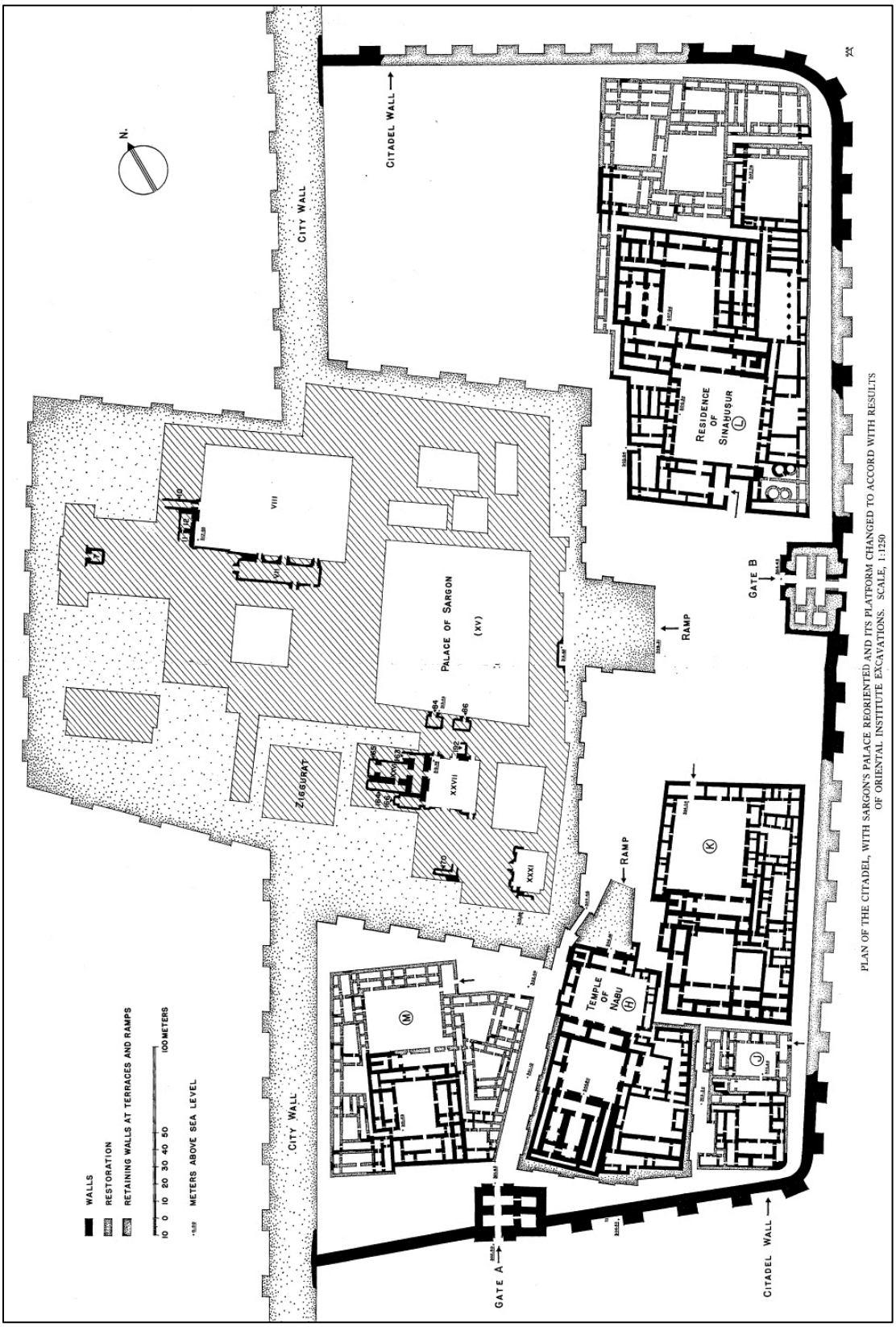

FIGURE 11. Khorsabad Citadel. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 70.

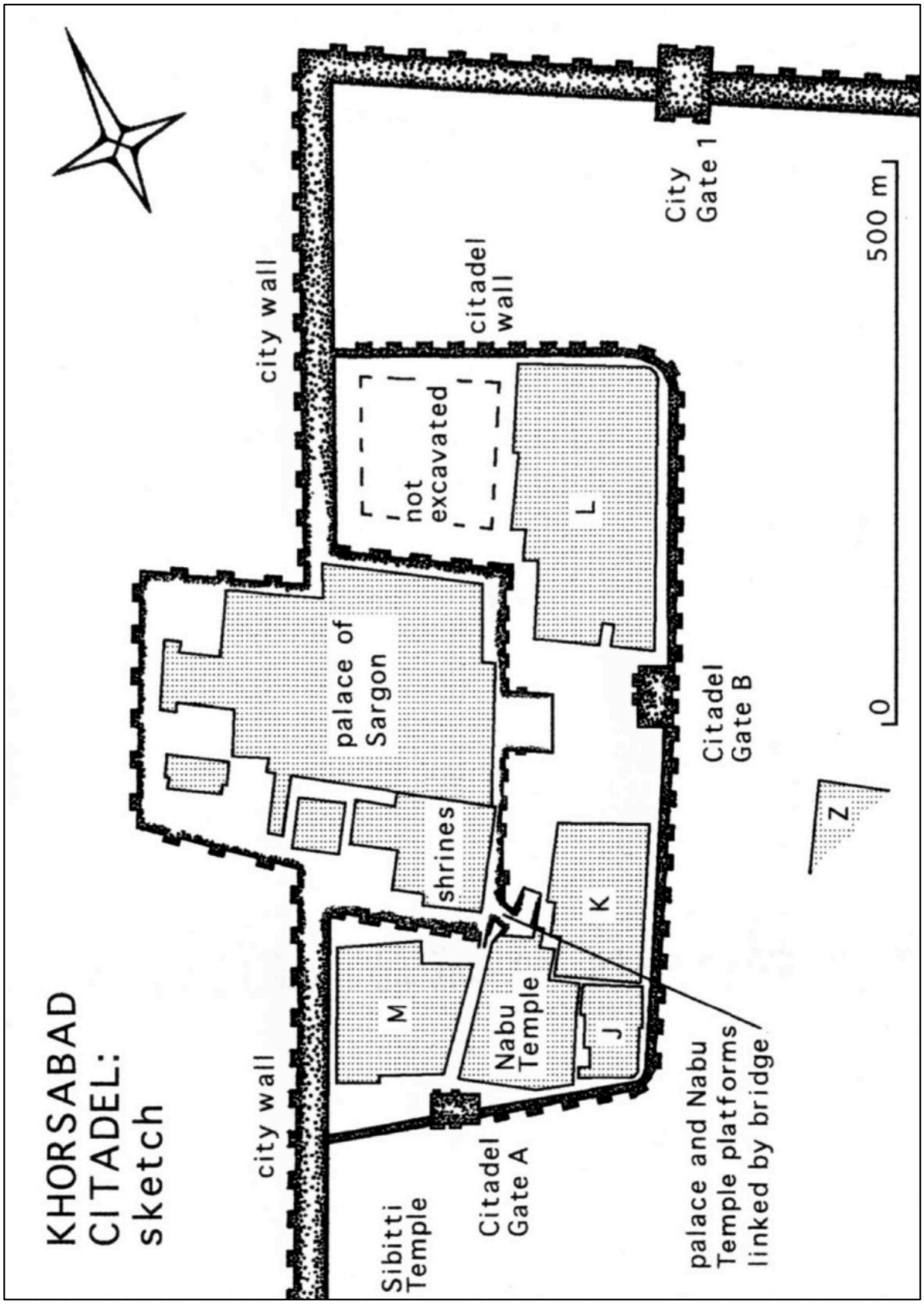

FIGURE 12. Khorsabad Citadel. Reade 2002: fig. 5.

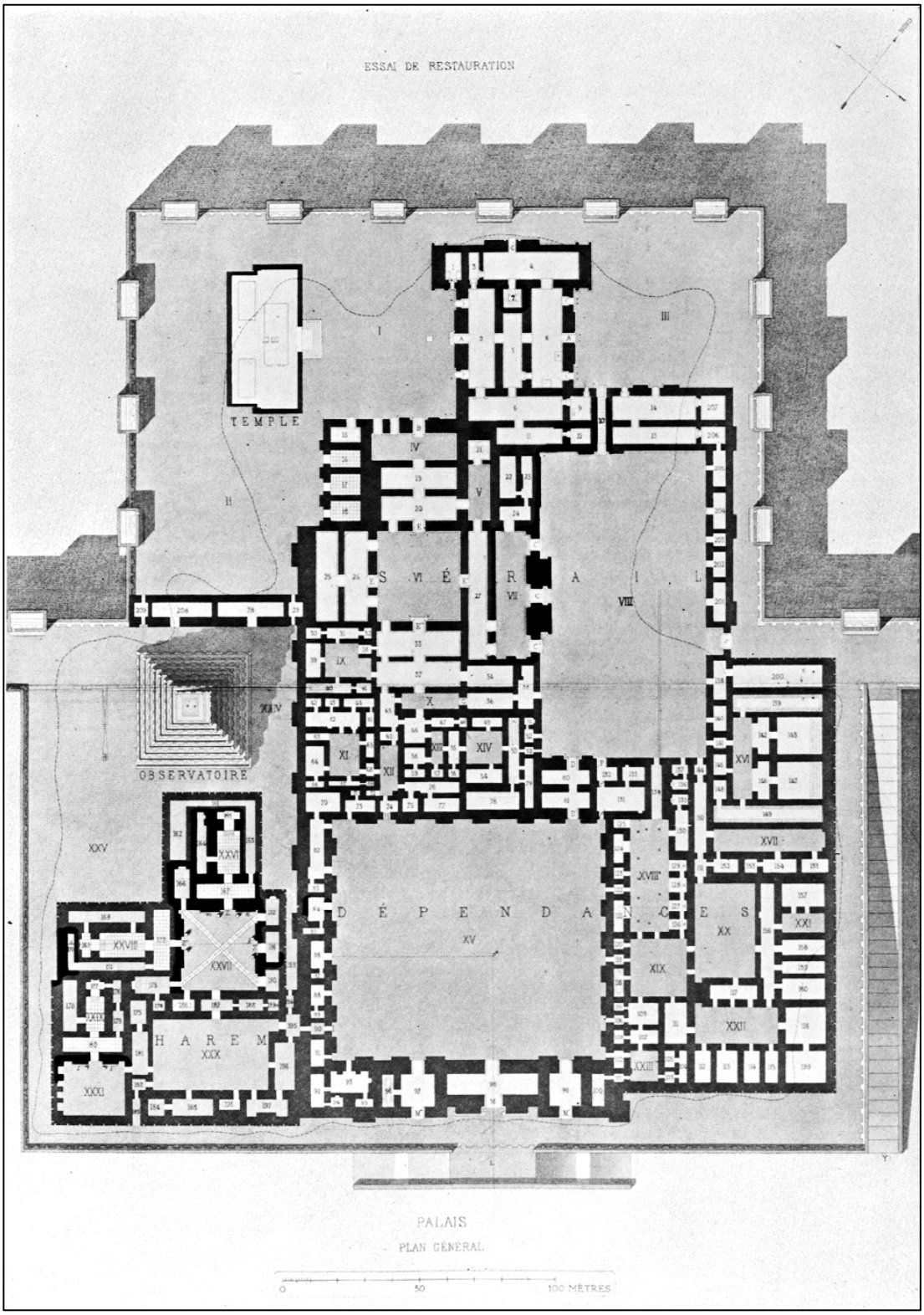

FIGURE 13. Palace of Sargon, including the temple complex ("harem") in the northeast section, Khorsabad, as excavated in the nineteenth century. Loud and Altman 1938: frontspiece, after Place.

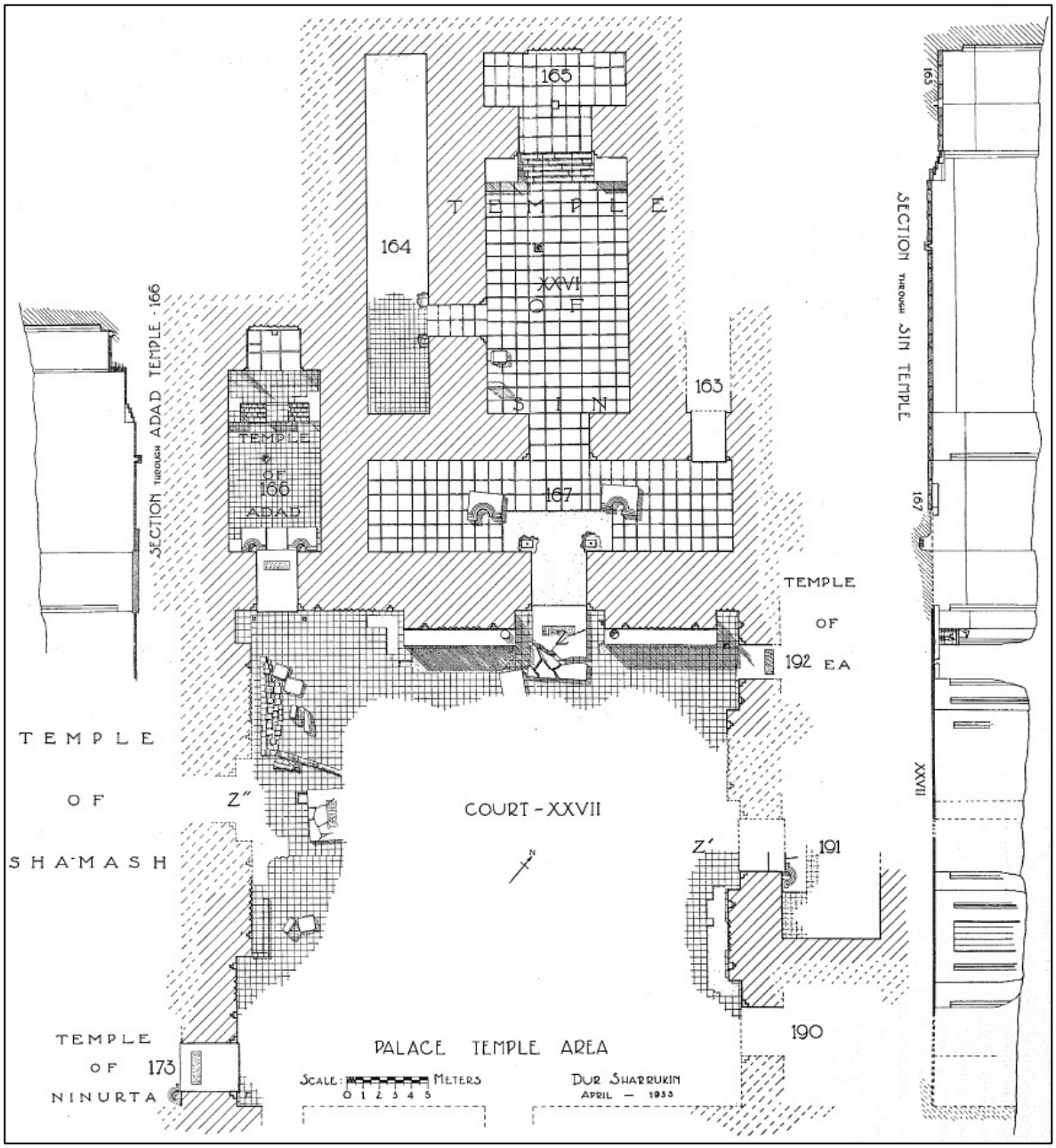

FIGURE 14. Plan and sections of Court XXVII, and those adjoining rooms which were excavated by the Iraq Expedition. Loud 1936: fig. 98.

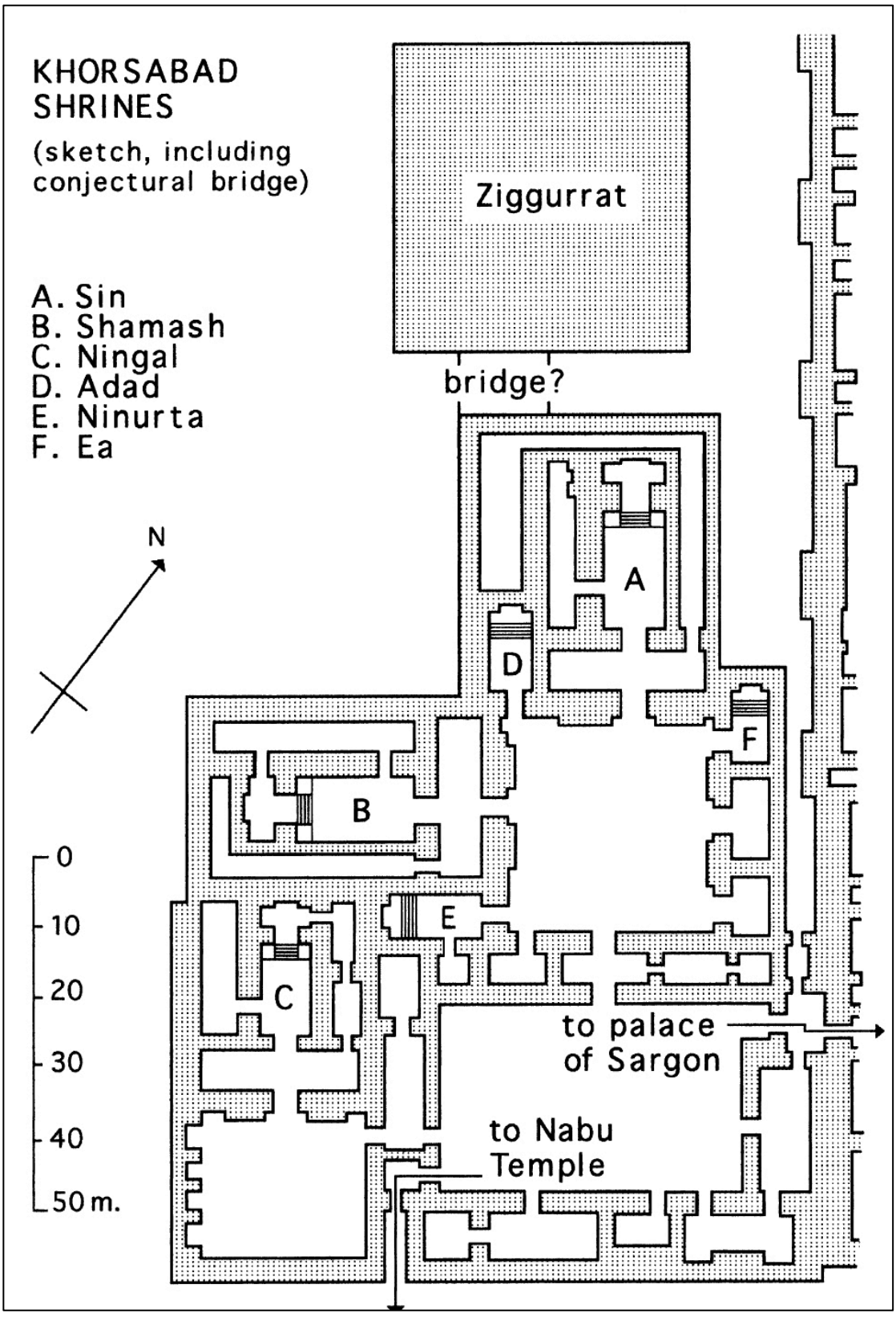

FIGURE 15. House of Sin (A). Reade 2002: fig. 39.

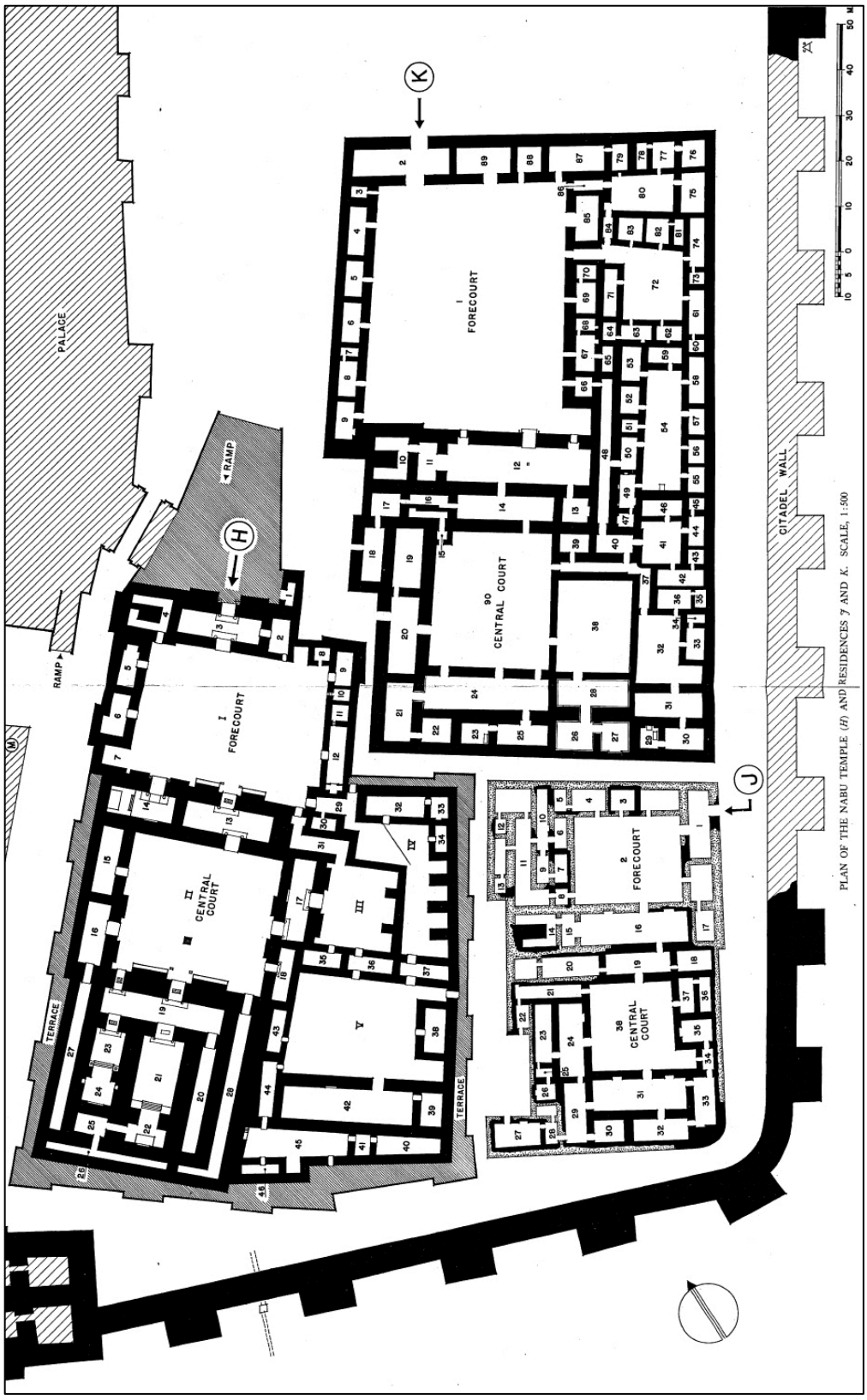

FIGURE 16. House of Nabu and residences, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 71.

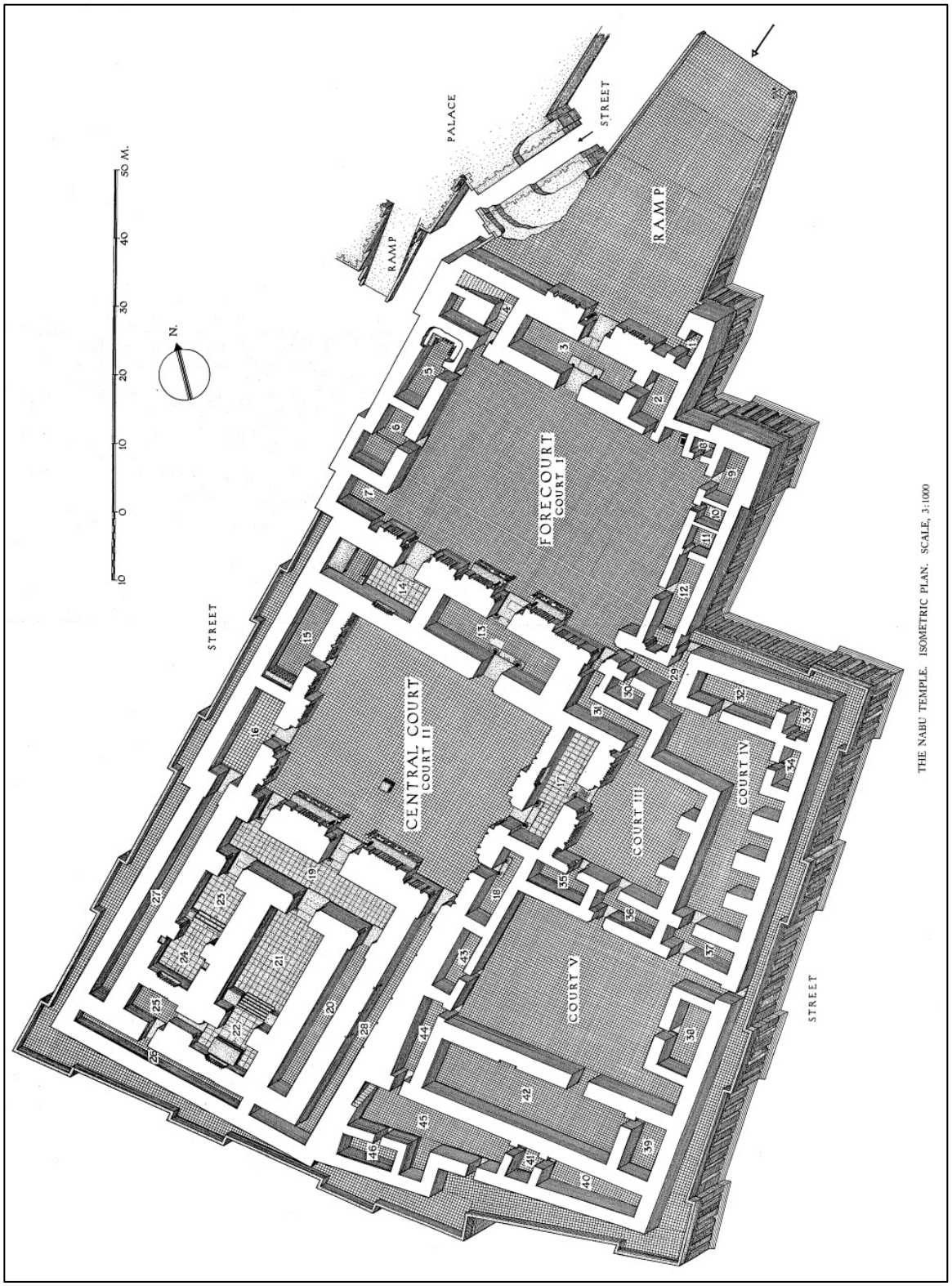

FIGURE 17. House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 79.

FIGURE 18. Watercolor and pencil drawing of the nineteenth-century excavations at Nimrud, by S. C. Malan, 1850. Layard 1853a.

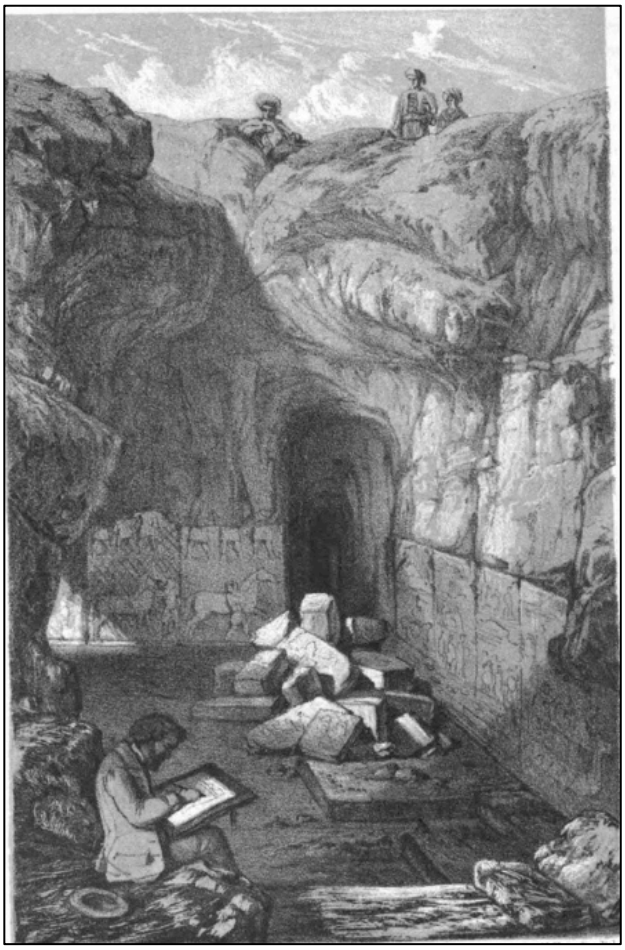

FIGURE 19. Sketch of Layard at Nineveh, by S. C. Malan, 1850. Layard 1853a.

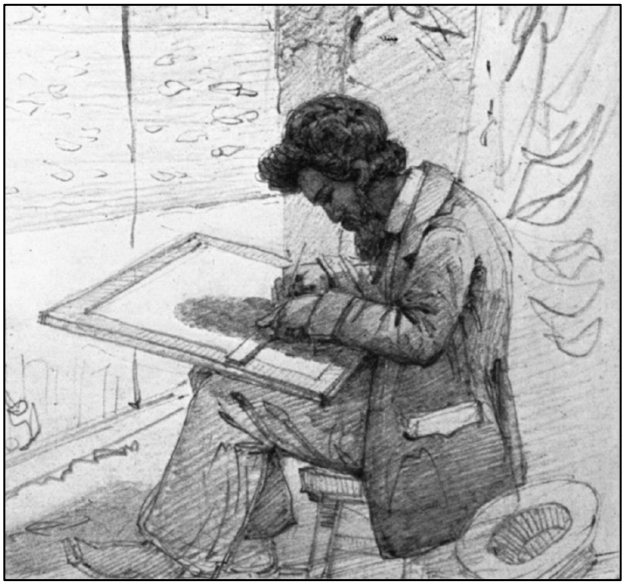

FIGURE 20. “Mr. Layard at Kooyoonjik,” Nineveh, by S. C. Malan, 1850. Gadd 1938: pl. XIX.

FIGURE 21. Watercolor sketches of painted bricks and fragments from Nimrud and Baashiekhah. Layard 1853b: pl. 55.

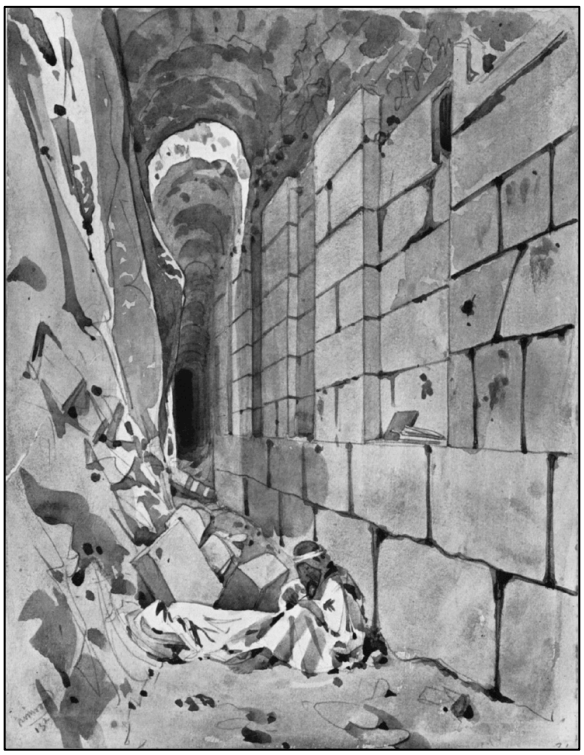

FIGURE 22. Foundation of the Ziggurat at Nimrud, by S. C. Malan, 1850. Gadd 1938: pl. XIV.

FIGURE 23. Clay stamped brick, with a stamp showing the *mušḫuššu* dragon bearing the emblems of the gods Marduk and Nabu on its back, House of Nabu, Nimrud (ND 6216 (ME 132263; 1958-2-8, 6)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 24. Clay stamped brick, with the stamp of a bull, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 691 (A 17615)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

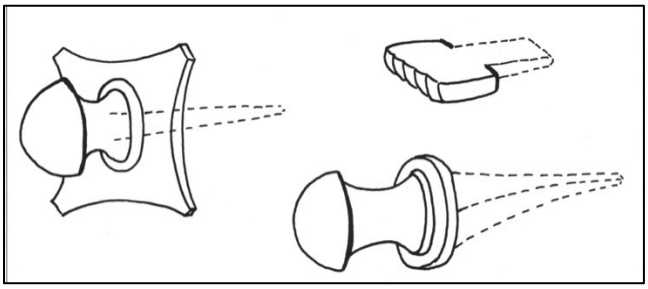

FIGURE 25. Schematic drawing of a wall-plaque, *sikkātu*, and clay hand. Marzahn 2004: Abb. 52.

FIGURE 26. Clay *sikkātu*, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (ME 91687; 1891-7-2, 2). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 27. Clay *sikkātu*, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (AO 2667). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 28. Clay *sikkātu*, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 677 (A 11803)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

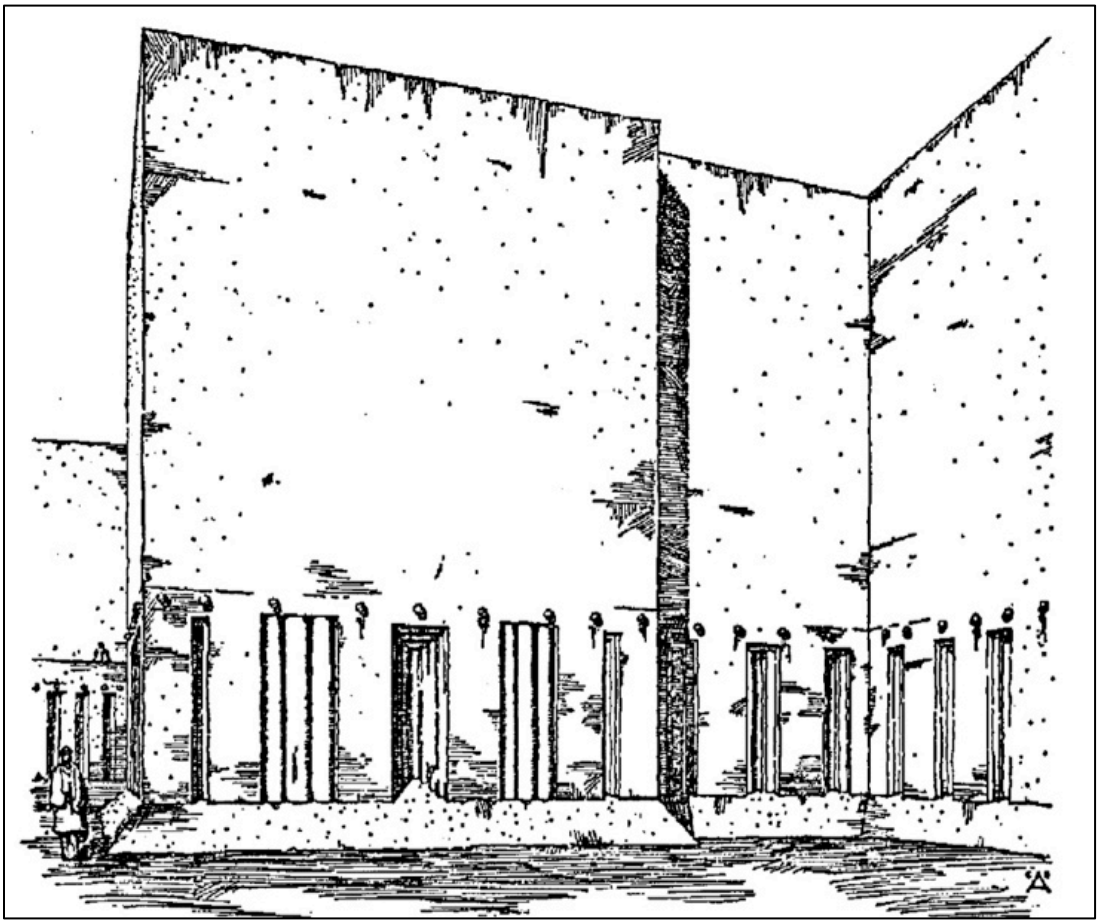

FIGURE 29. Restoration of a row of *sikkātu*s above the niche-and-reed decoration on the walls of the outer courtyard (Court I), House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: fig. 6.

FIGURE 30. Clay wall-plaque, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (ME 91680 (Rm 1102) + ME 131664 (1953-10-10, 12)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 31. Partial clay wall-plaque, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (ME 91688 (1891-7-2, 4)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 32. Fragment of a clay wall-plaque, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (AO 2669). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

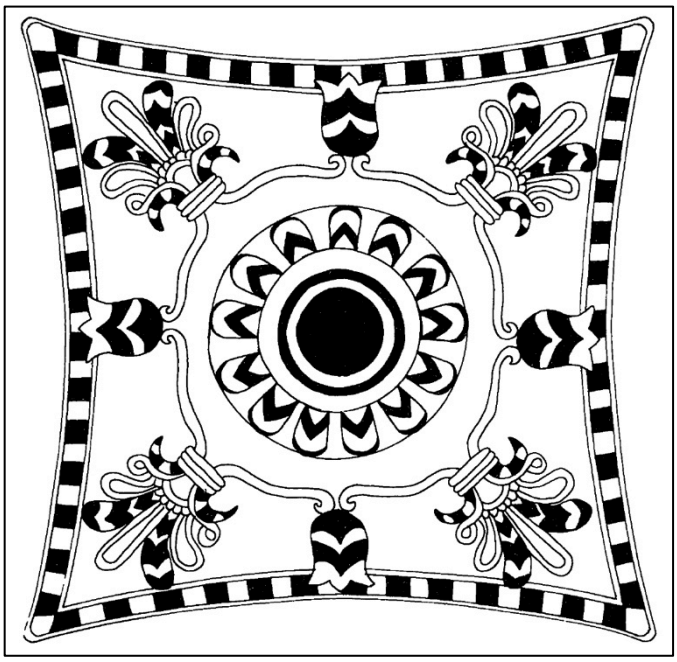

FIGURE 33. Reconstructed design of a wall-plaque by Albenda, based on fragments from the House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (ME 131663 (1953-10-10, 11) + ME 91684 (1891-7-2, 1)). Albenda 1991: fig. 6.

FIGURE 34. Clay hand, House of Nabu, Nimrud (ND 1408 (1994-11-5, 8)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 35. Clay hand with preserved blue glaze, Northwest Palace, Nimrud (ME 92095 (1848-11-4, 176)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 36. Clay hand with inscription, Nimrud (Met 57.27.30). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FIGURE 37. Clay hand with inscription, Nimrud (ME 90976). © Trustees of the British Museum.

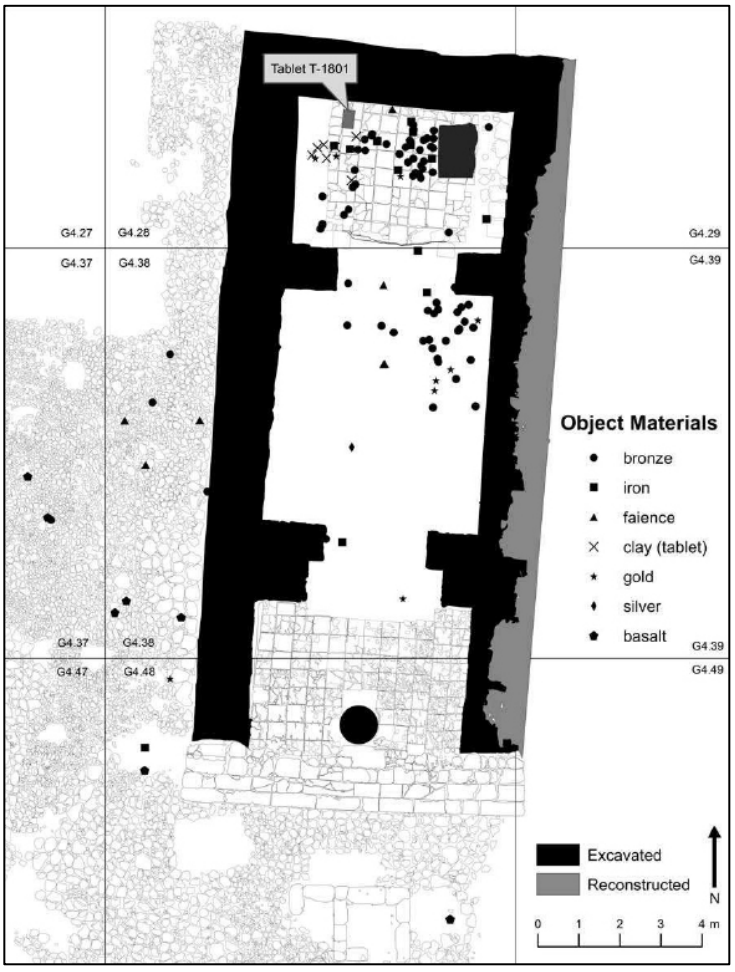

FIGURE 38. Plan showing the artifact distribution in the temple at Tell Tayinat, including the loyalty oath tablet (T-1801). Harrison and Osborne 2012: fig. 8.

FIGURE 39. Loyalty oath tablet of Esarhaddon from the temple at Tell Tayinat (T-1801), reverse. Lauinger 2012: 89.

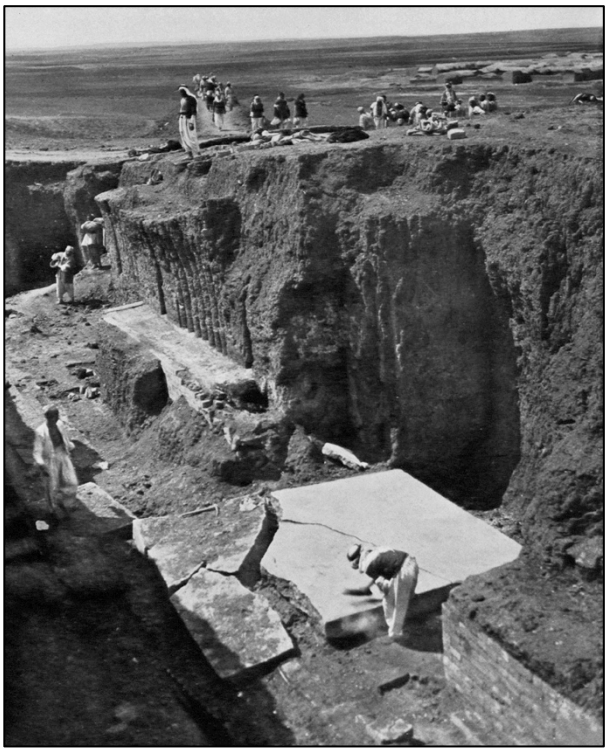

FIGURE 40. Stone threshold, House of Sin, Khorsabad (Court XXVII). Loud and Altman 1938: fig. 100.

FIGURE 41. Stone wall reliefs of Anzu and Ninurta in the doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud (ME 124571 + ME124572 (1851-9-2, 501 + 1851-9-2, 502)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 42. Drawing of the doorway reliefs to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud. Layard 1853b: pl. 5.

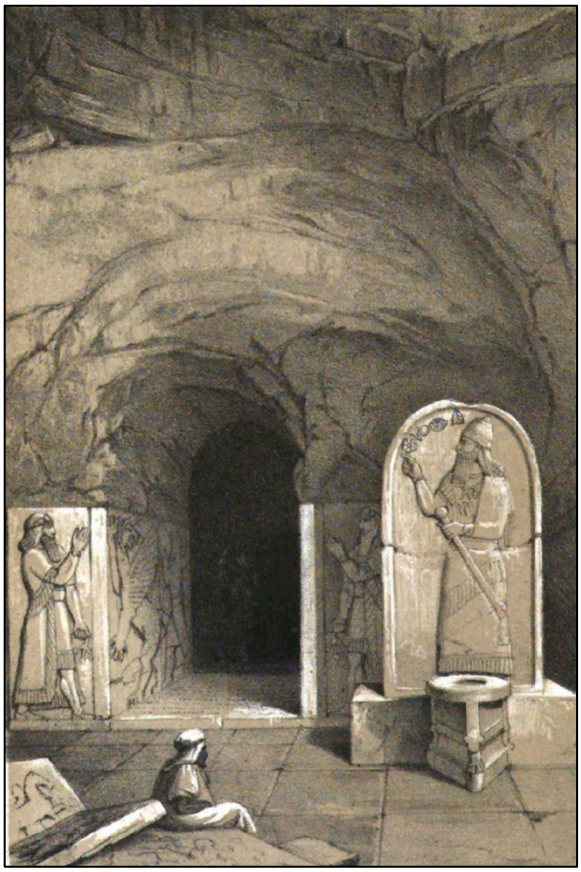

FIGURE 43. Watercolor and pencil drawing of the doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud, by J. Cooper. Layard 1853a.

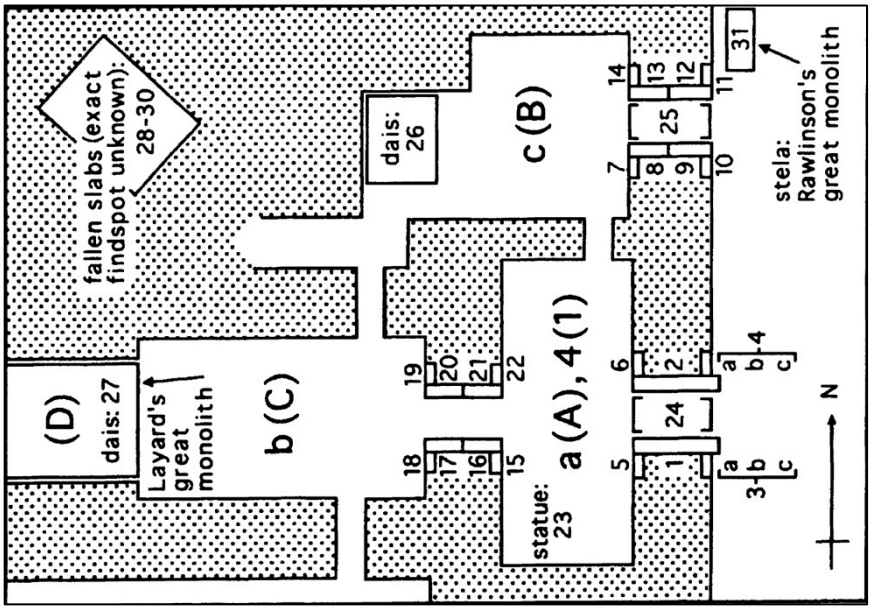

FIGURE 44. Schematic sketch of wall panels in and near the House of Ninurta, Nimrud, after Meuszyński 1972: 53, fig. III. Reade 2002: fig. 47.

FIGURE 45. Remains of the doorway to Ezida ("Fish-Gate") with *kululls* ("fish-men") *in situ*. Mallowan 1966: I, fig .198.

FIGURE 46. Stone pedestal from the doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud (ME 118806 (1851-9-2, 33)). Reade 2002: fig. 32.

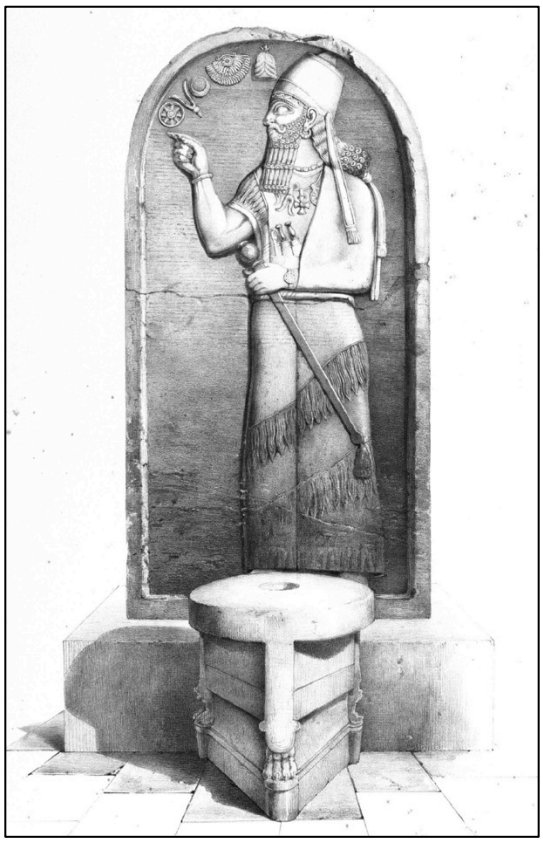

FIGURE 47. Drawing of the stone pedestal and stele at the doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud. Layard 1853b: pl. 4.

FIGURE 48. Stone pedestal from the doorway to the House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (Rm II.617 (ME 118870)). Reade 2002: fig. 8.

FIGURE 49. Stone statue of a divine attendant, doorway to Nabu's god's chamber, Ezida, Nimrud (ME 118888 (1856-9-9, 64)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 50. Drawing of a stone divine attendant, doorway to the House of Sin, Khorsabad. Place 1897: III, pl. 31.

FIGURE 51. Close-up photograph of a stone statue of a divine attendant from the doorway to the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 786 (A 11808)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 52. Stone statue of a divine attendant and bronze bands on wooden door pole, as uncovered during excavations of the doorway to the House of Šamaš, Khorsabad (DS 784)(Court XXVII). Loud 1936: fig. 112.

FIGURE 53. Stele of Aššurnaṣirpal II, doorway to the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud (ME 118805 (1851-9-2, 32)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 54. Stele of Šamši-Adad V, Ezida, Nimrud (ME 118892 (1856-9-9, 63)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 55. Stone knobs, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 957C (A 12459); DS 957C (A 12460)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 56. Stone capital or furniture-fitting in the shape of a female head, House of Šarrat-nipḫi, Nimrud (ME 92234 (1983-1-1, 90)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 57. Stone rosettes with metal nails through the center, possibly House of Šarrat-nipḫi, Nimrud (bottom left: N 786 ; top left: N 1630 (ME 115712); right: N 1637 (ME 122116)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

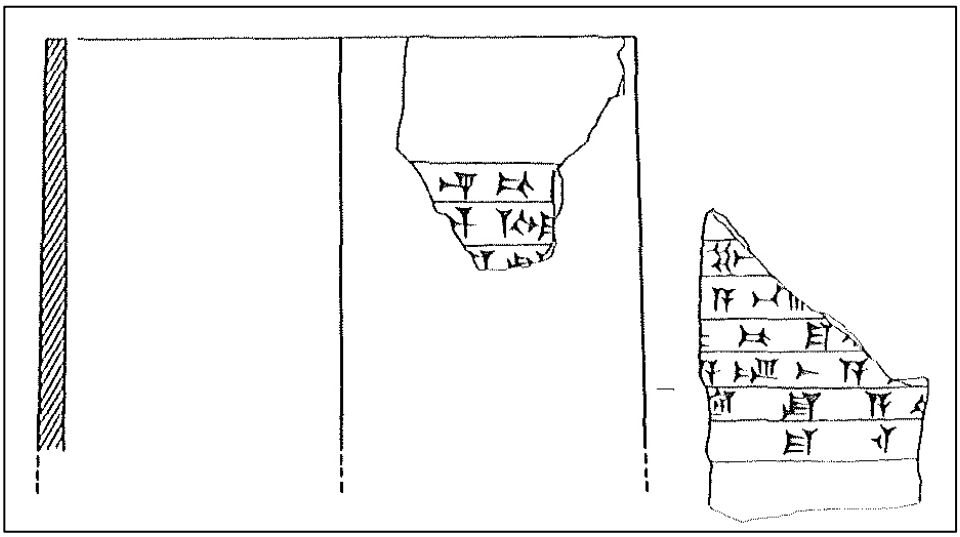

FIGURE 58. Drawing of fragments from a lapis lazuli container with inscription (N 788 (ME 91452a)). Searight et al. 2008: fig. 61, no. 601A–B.

FIGURE 59. Lapis lazuli macehead with inscription, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (N 789 (ME 91452)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 60. Lapis lazuli cylinder seal, dedicated to the god Marduk by the Babylonian king Marduk-zakir-šumi I, Babylon. Koldeway 1911: fig. 74.

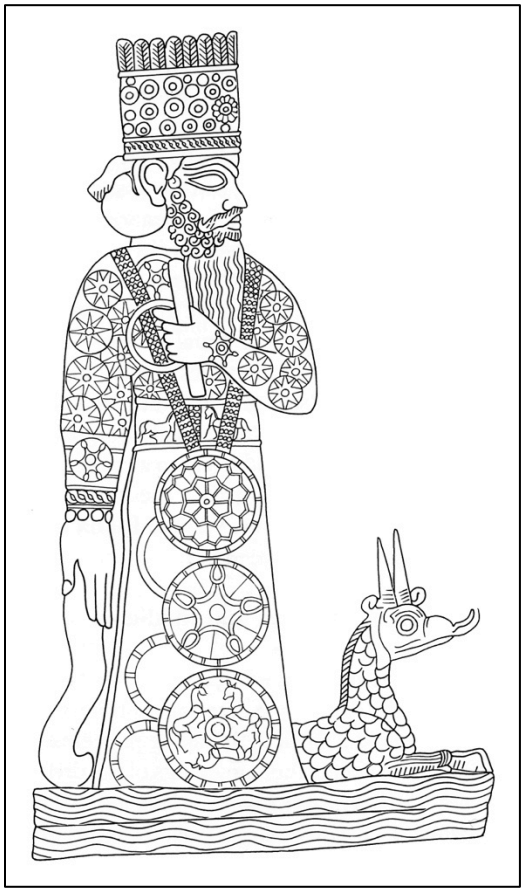

FIGURE 61. Drawing of cylinder seal, FIGURE 60. Black and Green 1992: fig. 105.

FIGURE 62. Four carnelian beads, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS B (A 11648)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 63. Carnelian drop pendant with metal fastener, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS B (A 11659)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

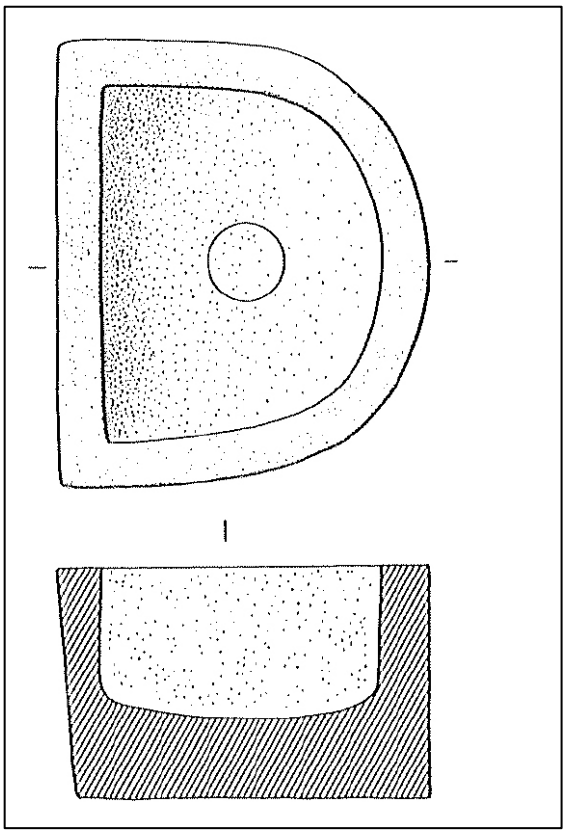

FIGURE 64. Drawing of a chalcedony u-shaped container, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (N 756 (ME 118765)). Searight et al. 2008: fig. 62, no. 609.

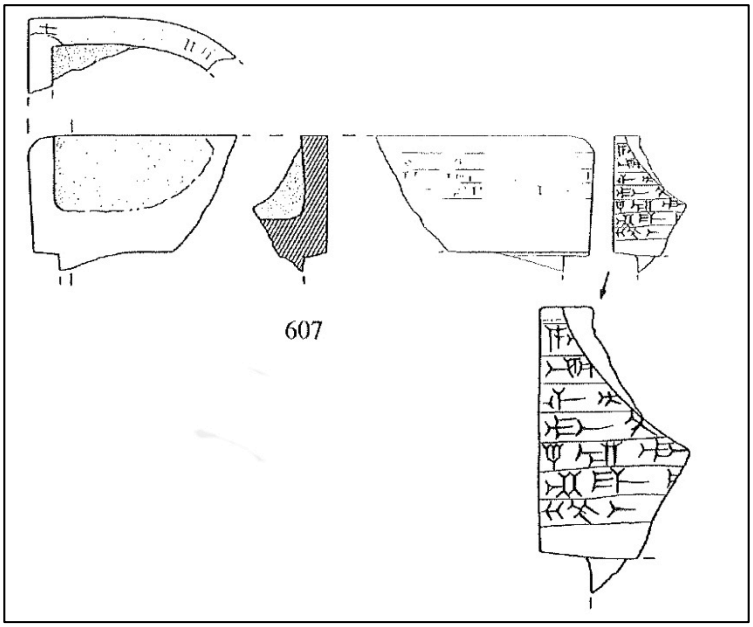

FIGURE 65. Drawing of a pink quartz u-shaped container, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (N 790 (ME 118795)). Searight et al. 2008: fig. 62, no. 607.

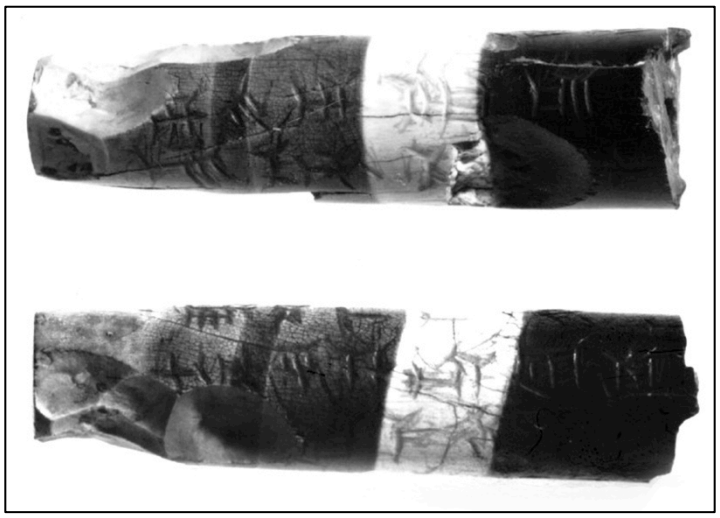

FIGURE 66. Banded agate bead of Sennacherib, Nimrud (N 1139 (ME 89159)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

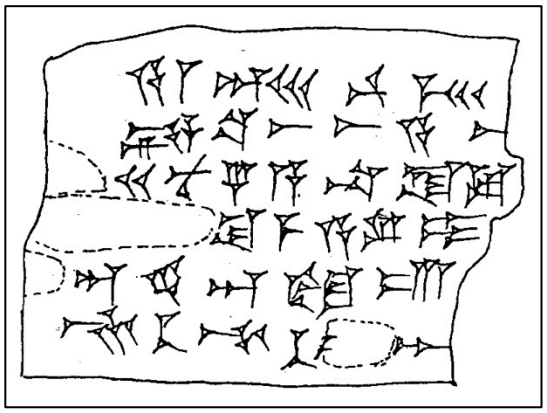

FIGURE 67. Inscription from bead, FIGURE 66. Sollberger 1987: 381.

FIGURE 68. Two bronze door plaques attached to wooden remains, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (Room 13). Loud 1936: pl. 21 B.

FIGURE 69. Transport of wooden logs, stone wall reliefs, Sargon's palace, Khorsabad (AO 19890). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 70. Representation of a *lamassu*, detail of stone wall relief, Sargon's palace, Khorsabad (AO 19889). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 71. Wooden logs being carried to the king in tribute, Shalmaneser III's throne base, Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud. Mallowan 1966: fig. 371, panel b.

FIGURE 72. Assyrian soldiers carrying wooden logs, Gates of Shalmaneser III, Balawat (Imgur-Enlil)(54.2335B). © The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

FIGURE 73. Gold relief sheathing with scale-like design, House of Sin, Khorsabad (N III 3147). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 74. Detail image of inscription along base, FIGURE 73. Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

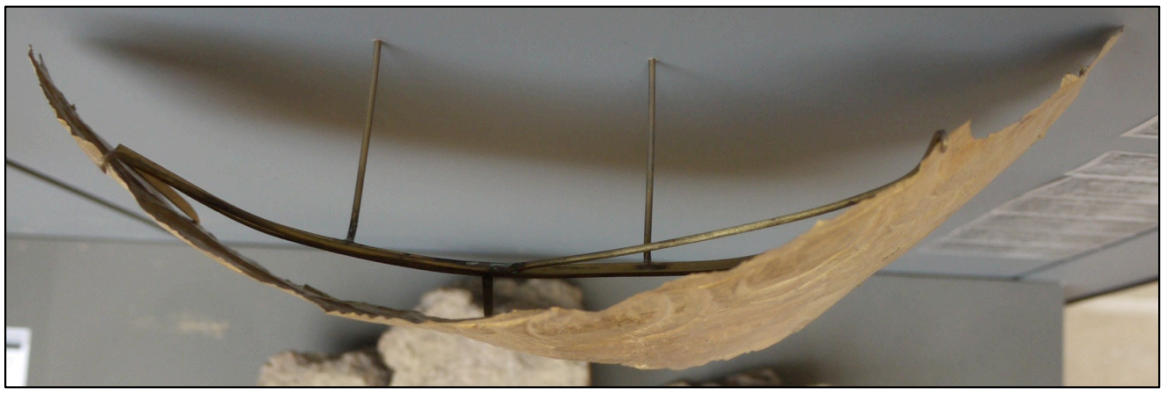

FIGURE 75. View from above showing width of gold sheathing, FIGURE 73. Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

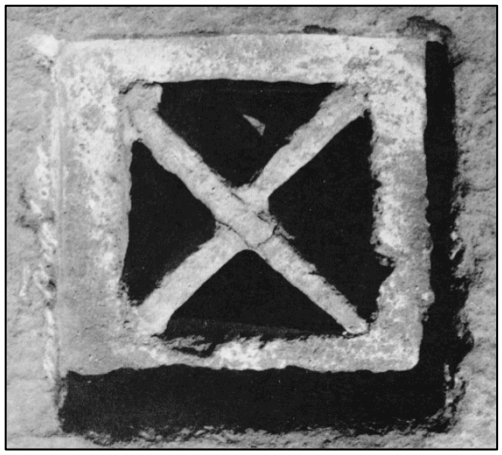

FIGURE 76. Foundation box, antechamber of Ninurta's god's chamber (NT 2), Ezida, Nimrud. Mallowan 1966: fig. 248.

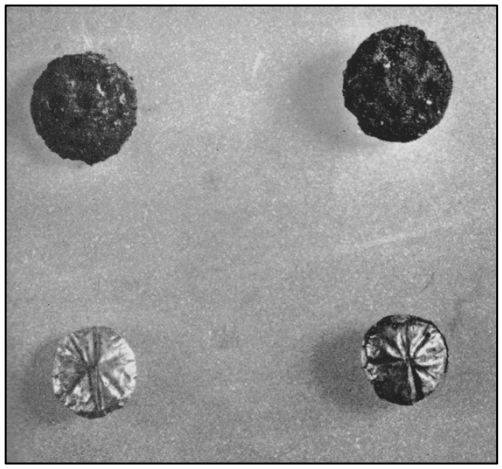

FIGURE 77. Two gold and two silver button-like discs from the foundation box in FIGURE 76 (ND 5398; ND 5399; ND 5400a–b (Met 57.27.18a–b). Mallowan 1966: fig. 249.

FIGURE 78. Silver-capped bronze nail, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 440 (A 11714)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

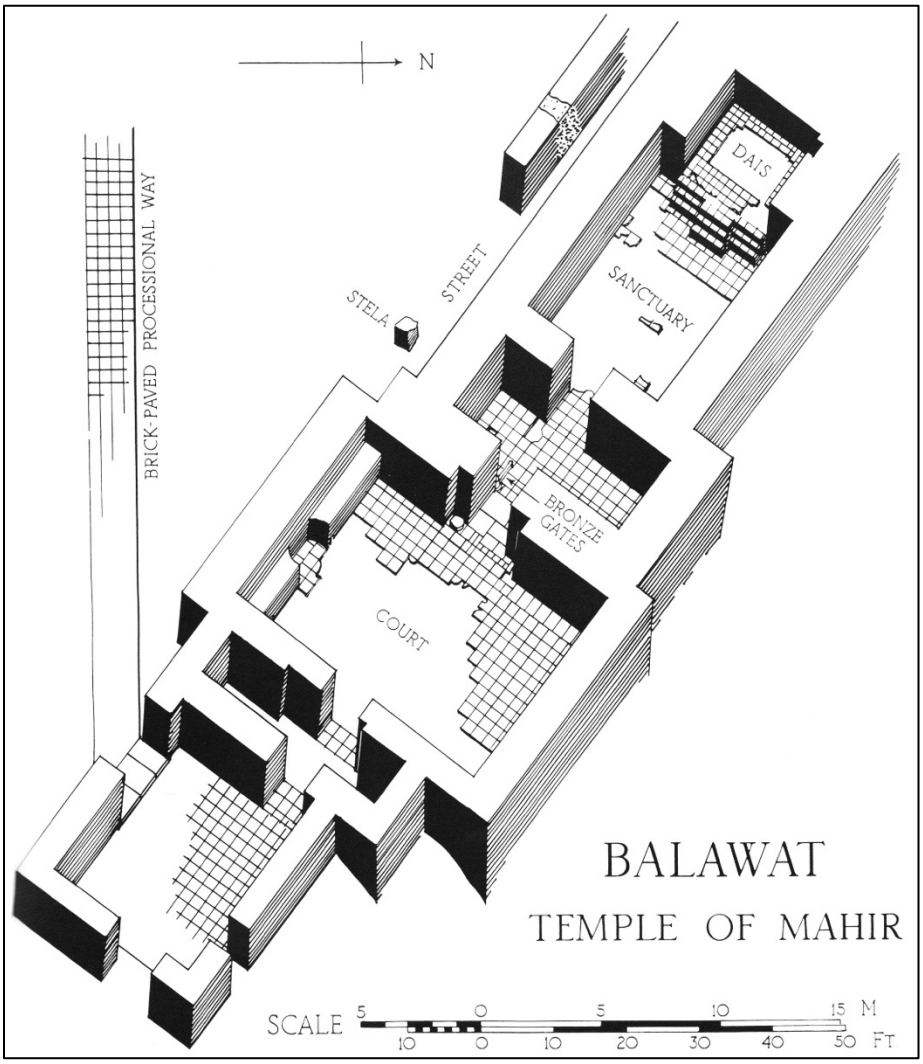

FIGURE 79. Reconstruction of the House of Mamu, Balawat, as excavated in 1956, showing the location of the bronze gates. Curtis and Tallis 2008: fig. 48.

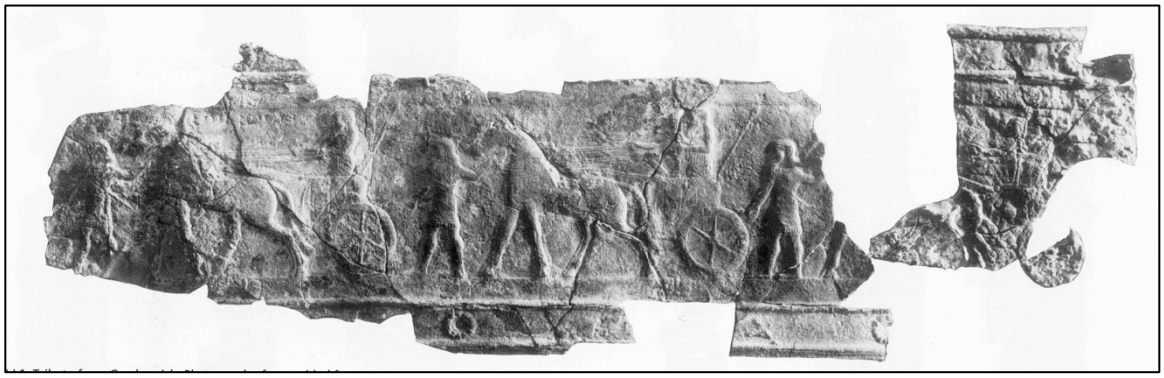

FIGURE 80. Fragments from the House of Mamu bronze gates (lower half of band MM ASH II L1). Curtis and Tallis (ed.) 2008: fig. 57.

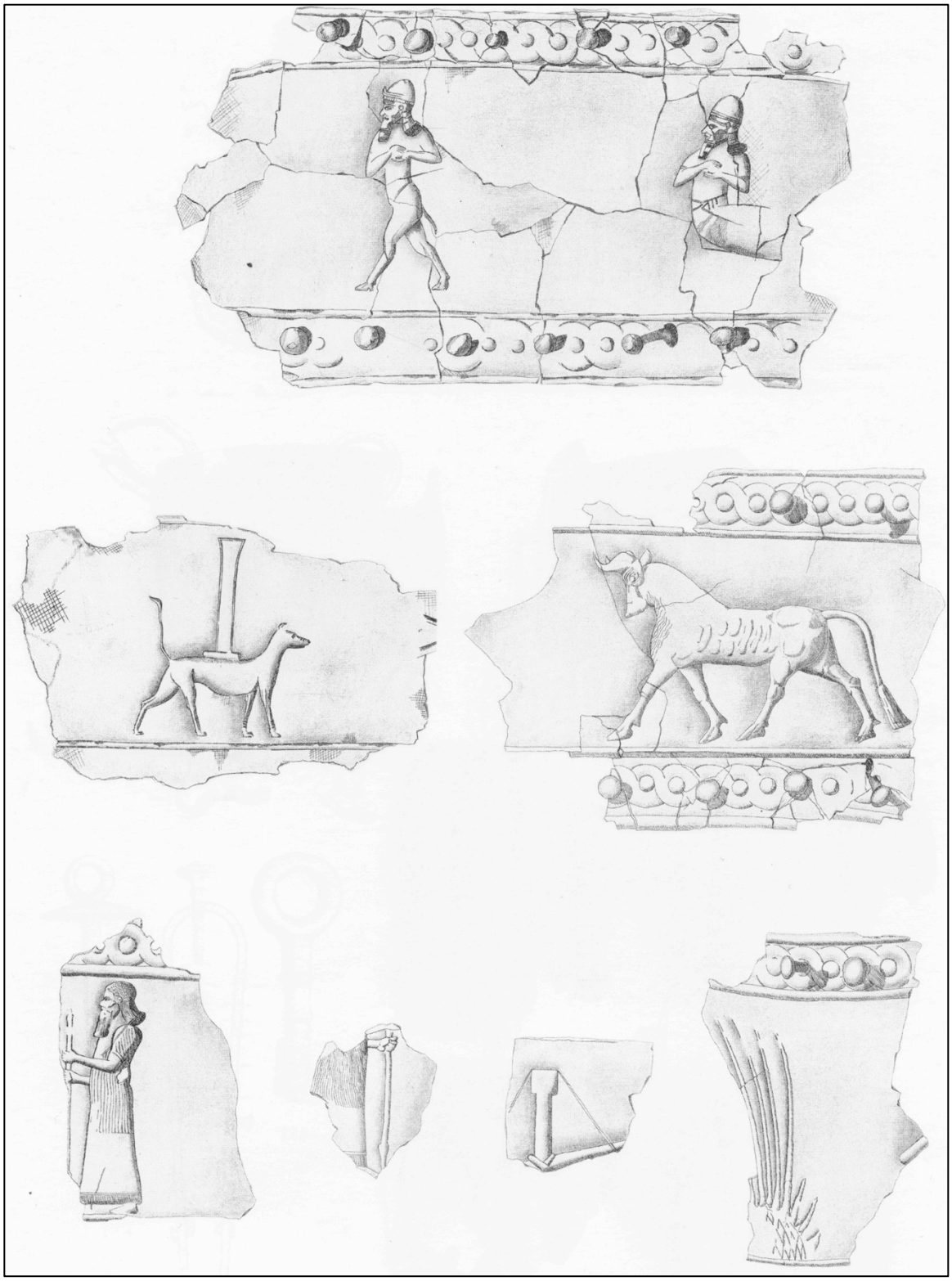

FIGURE 81. Drawings of fragments of bronze bands from the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (top down left to right: DS 1006 (IM); DS 1008 (IM); DS 1007 (A 12467); DS 1011 (A 12469); DS 1013 (IM); DS 1012 (A 12470); DS 1009 (IM)). Curtis 2013: pl. XXIX (no. 445).

FIGURE 82. Fragment of bronze door bands from the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 1007 (A 12467)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

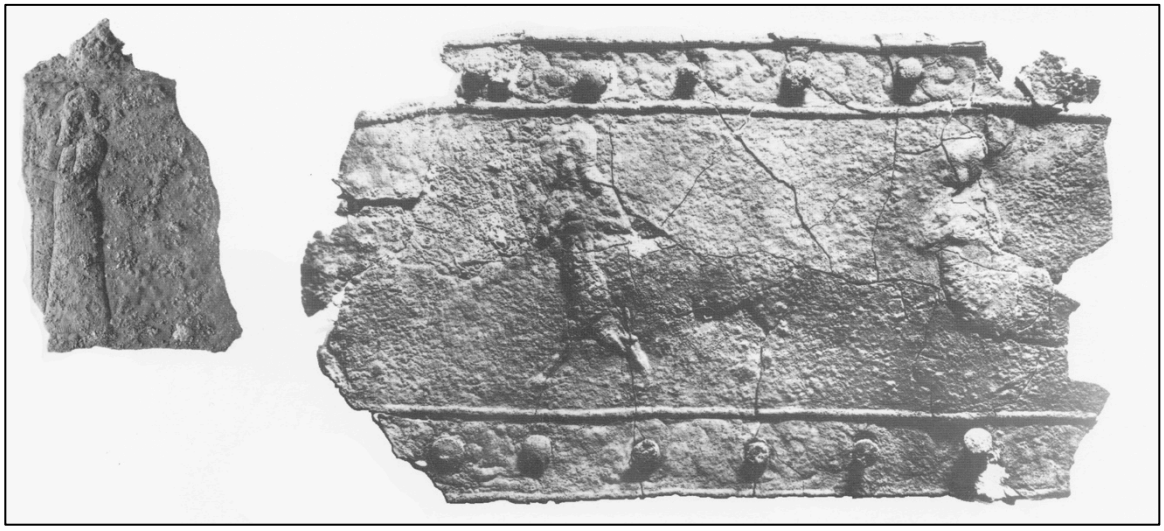

FIGURE 83. Fragments of bronze door bands from the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 1011 (A 12469); DS 1006 (IM)). Curtis and Tallis: fig. 98a–b.

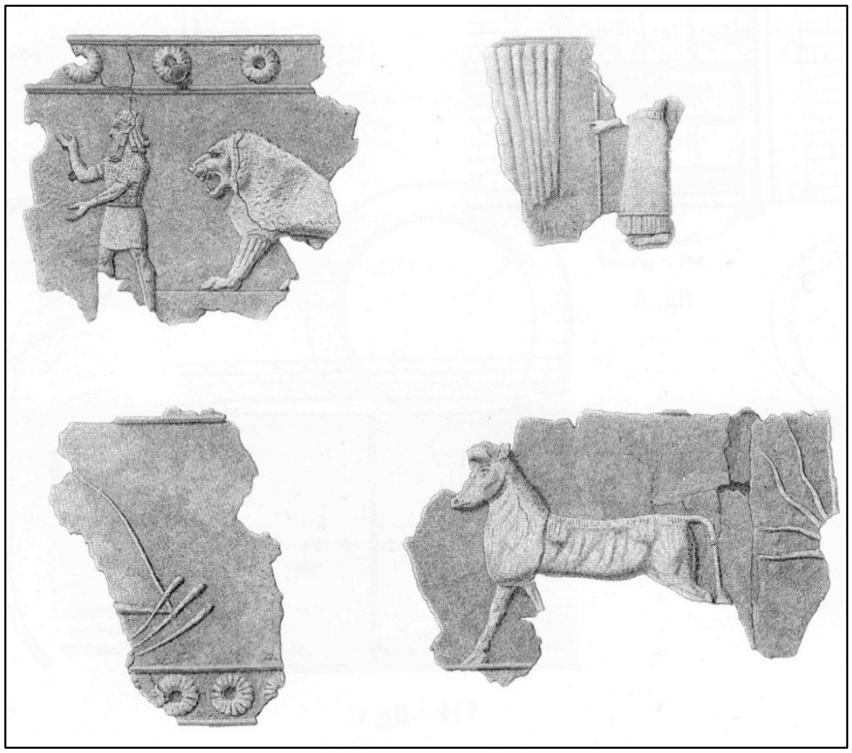

FIGURE 84. Fragments of bronze door bands, House of Adad, Khorsabad (N III 3099). Curtis 2013: pl. XXVIII (no. 444).

FIGURE 85. Fragment of bronze door bands, House of Adad, Khorsabad (N III 3009). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

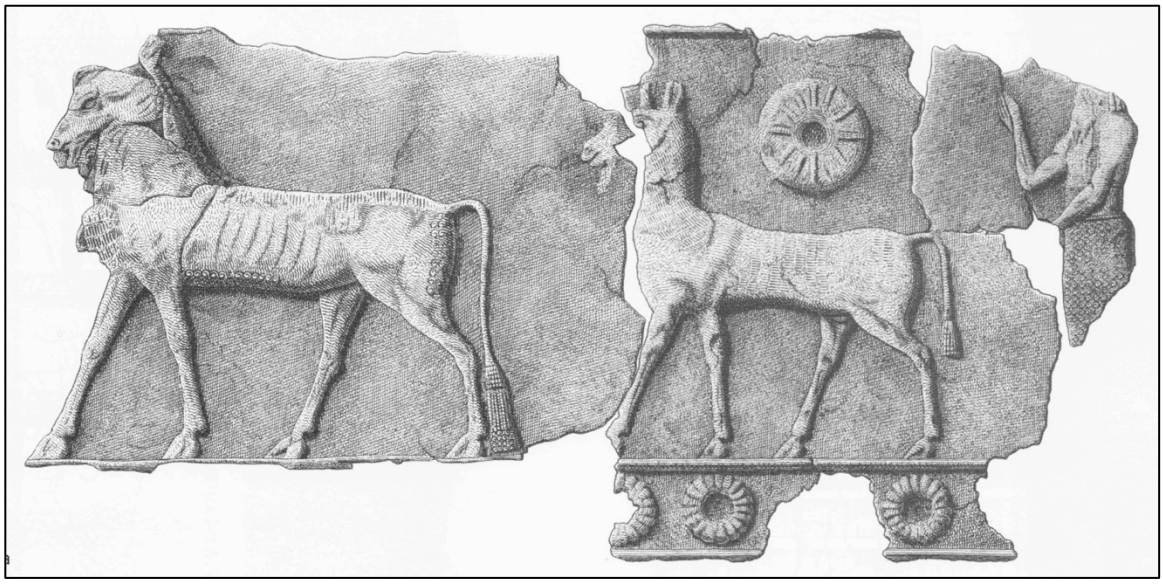

FIGURE 86. Drawing of a fragment of bronze door bands, House of Adad, Khorsabad (N III 3009). Curtis and Tallis: fig. 100a.

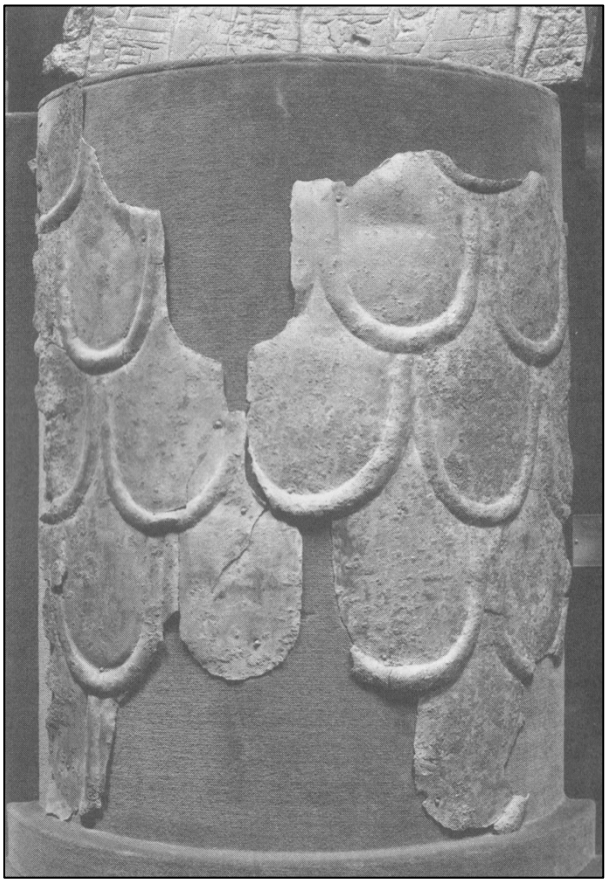

FIGURE 87. Fragments of bronze door pole sheathing mounted on a circular base, House of Sin, Khorsabad (NIII 3100). Guralnick 2008: fig. 5.

FIGURE 88. Detail of FIGURE 87. Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 89. Embossed bronze bands, House of Šamaš, Khorsabad (DS 1010 (A 12468)). Curtis and Tallis 2008: fig. 98d.

FIGURE 90. Close-up of bronze bands with side lighting of FIGURE 82. Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 91. Embossed bronze bands, House of Šamaš, Khorsabad (IM). Curtis and Tallis 2008: fig. 99.

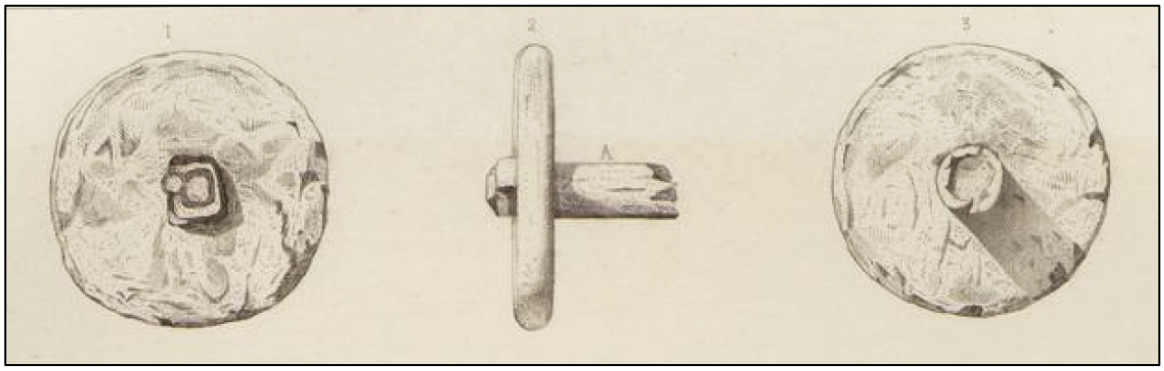

FIGURE 92. Bronze wheels mounted on iron axles, House of Sin, Khorsabad. Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 70, nos. 1–2.

FIGURE 93. Depiction of tables, stone wall relief, Sargon's Palace, Khorsabad (AO 19878). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 94. Bronze lion's paws from portable arts, Nimrud (ME 1848-11-4, 84–86). © Trustees of the British Museum.

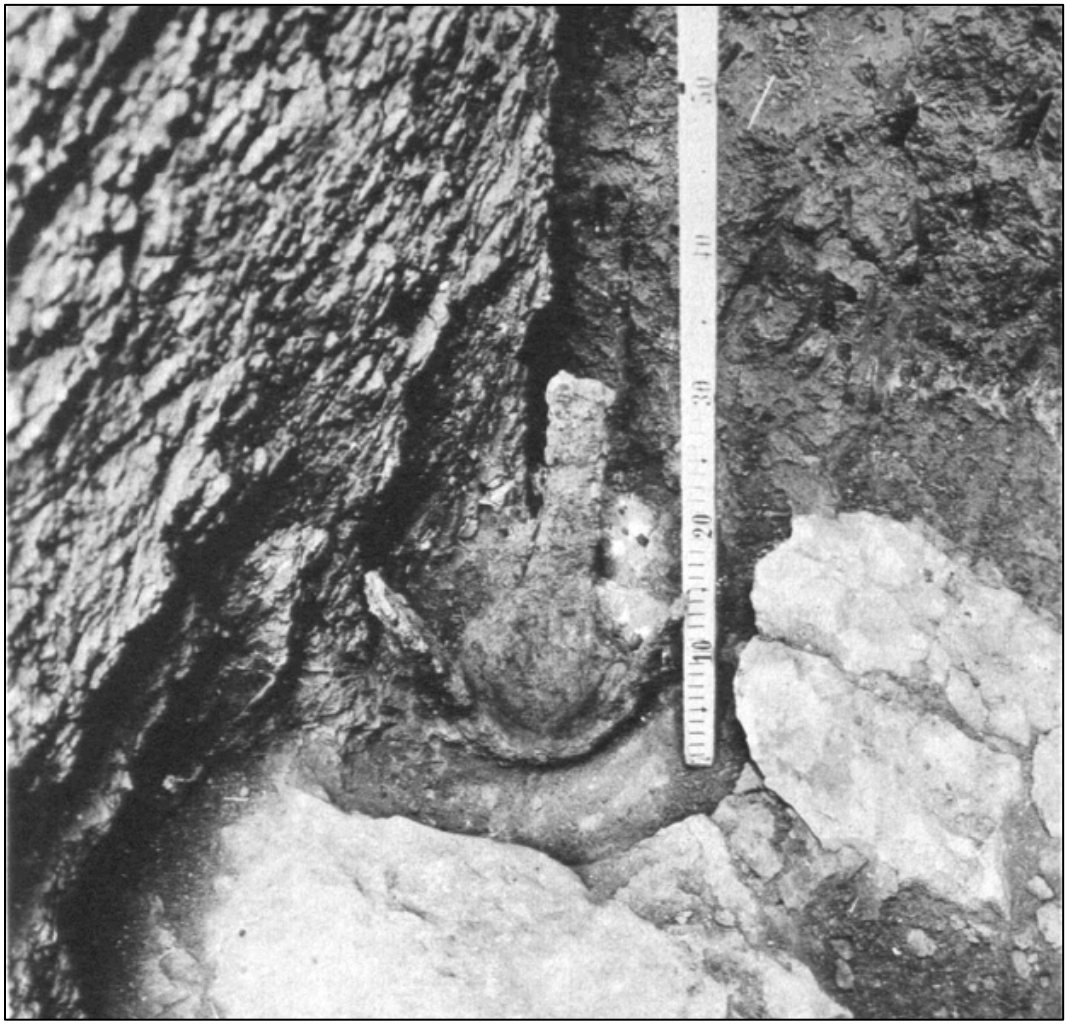

FIGURE 95. Iron door pivot, Residence M, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 37 E.

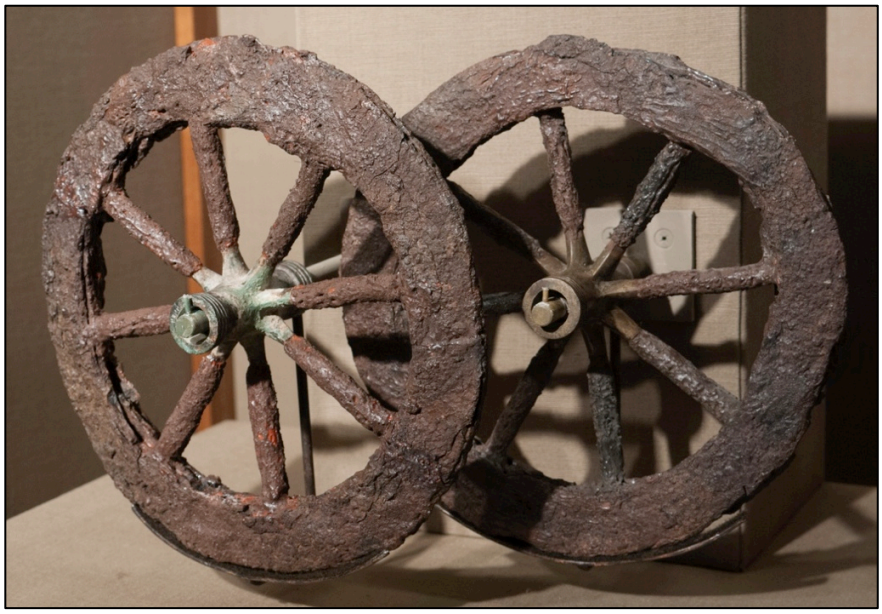

FIGURE 96. Bronze wheels with iron pivots, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 757 (A 11811; A 11813). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 97. Ivory panel with kneeling ibexes flanking a central palmette, throne-room, Ezida, Nimrud (ND 5340 (Met 57.27.5a–c)). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FIGURE 98. Ivory panel with winged bird-headed *apkallu*, throne-room, Ezida, Nimrud (ND 4199 (Met 57.27.4)). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FIGURE 99. Ivory lion head fragment, Ezida, Nimrud (ND 5268 (Met 57.27.14). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FIGURE 100. Ivory female head, Ezida, Nimrud (ND 5265 (Met 57.27.6). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FIGURE 101. Fragments of a "sphinx" ivory plaque, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 1017.16 (A 22169)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 102. Fragments of a "woman at the window" ivory plaque, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS 1017.07 (A 22164)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 103. Ivory fragment with preserved coloring, Residence K, Khorsabad (DS 1284 (A 17584)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

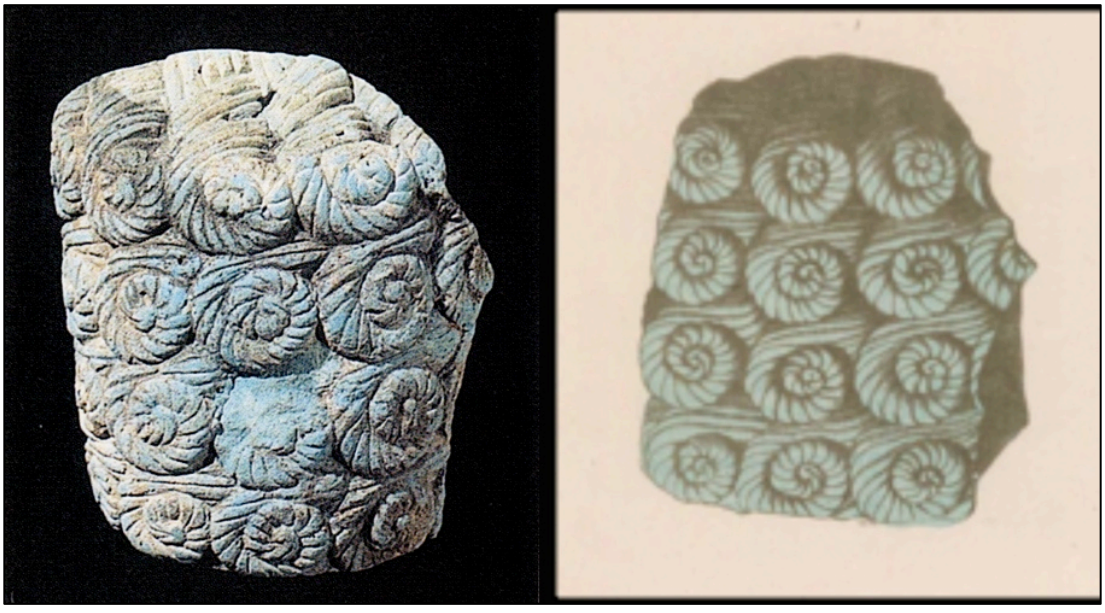

FIGURE 104. Egyptian blue inlay, plaited beard, House of Ninurta(?), Nimrud (N 767 (ME 120465)). Left: Curtis and Reade 1995: fig. 49. Right: Layard 1853b: pl. 55, no. 1.

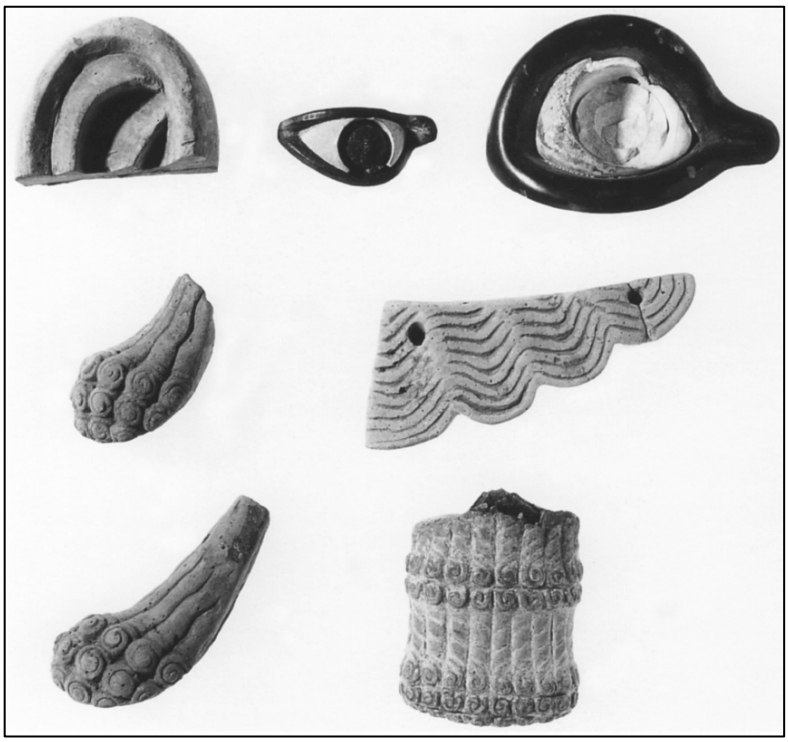

FIGURE 105. Fragments of Egyptian blue inlays, House of Ninurta(?), Nimrud (left to right top to bottom: N 1935; N 762 (ME 118042); N 761 (ME 118043); N 775 (ME); N 769+ 778 (ME); N 774 (ME); N 783 (ME 91573). Reade 2002: fig. 35.

FIGURE 106. Egyptian blue inlay, winged female figure, House of Ninurta(?), Nimrud (N 765 (ME 118785)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 107. Spherical faience maceheads, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (N 1669 (ME 118775); N 1668 (118776)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 108. Faience pendants (phallus, eye-idol(?), hand), House of Nabu, Khorsabad (DS B (A 11664; A 11663; A 11662)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 109. Watercolor drawing of the principal doorway to the House of Ninurta, Nimrud. Curtis and Reade 1995: fig. 3.

FIGURE 110. Restored portion of a bull from a glazed-brick panel, House of Sin, Khorsabad (DS (A 11810)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

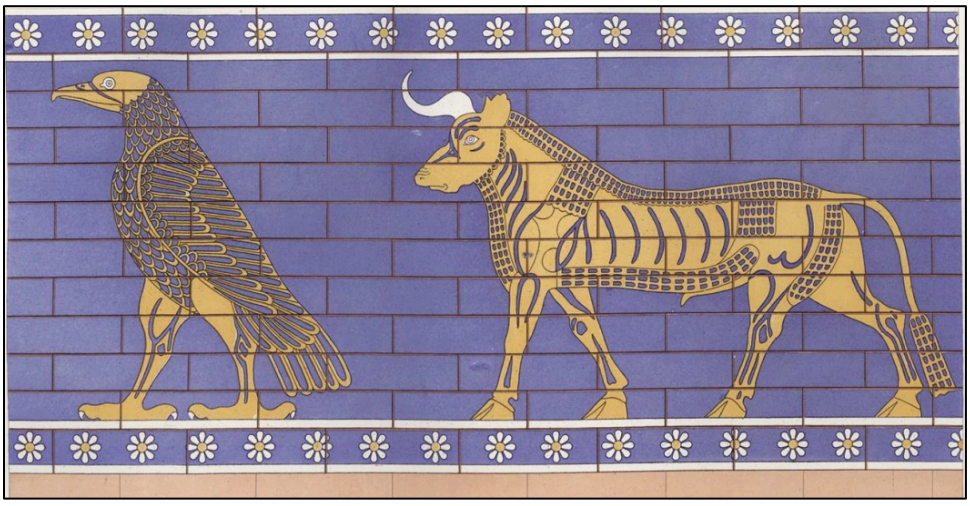

FIGURE 111. Drawing of a portion of the panel from the House of Sin, Khorsabad. Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 29.

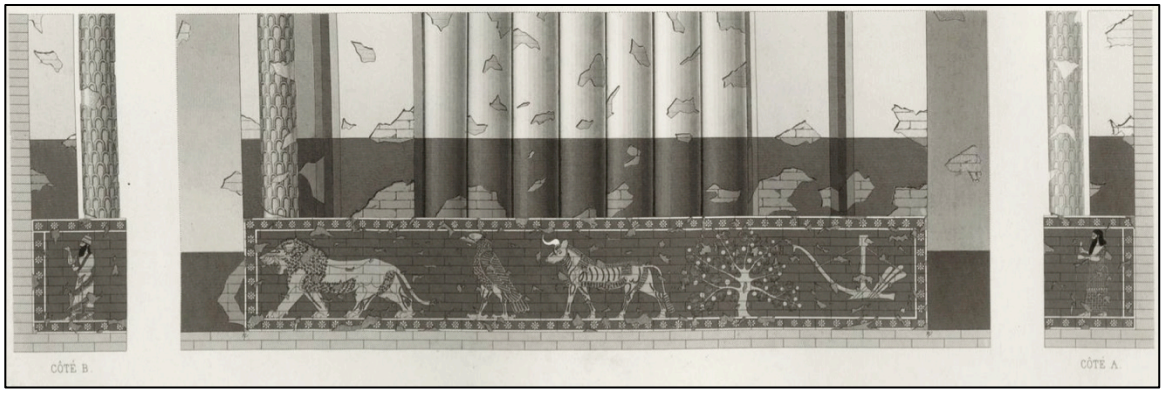

FIGURE 112. Drawing of the full panel from the House of Sin, Khorsabad. Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 26.

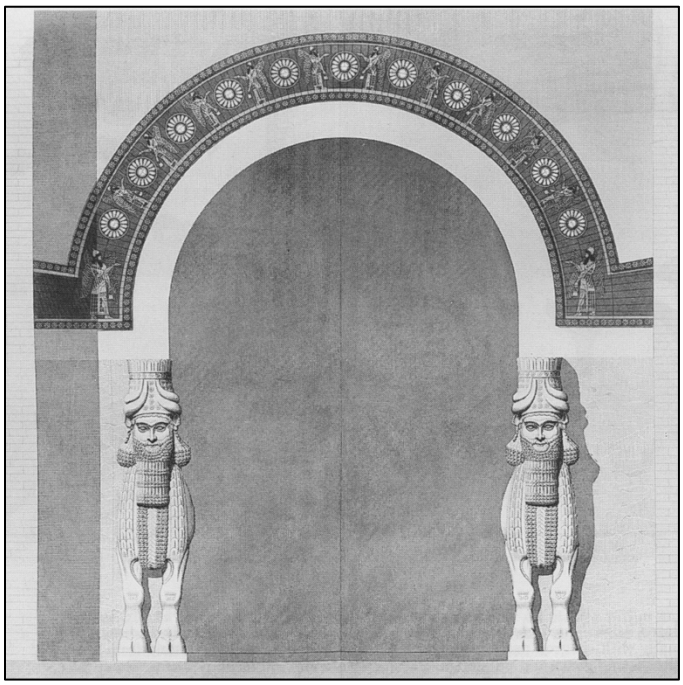

FIGURE 113. Drawing of a city gateway arch lined with glazed brick. Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 11.

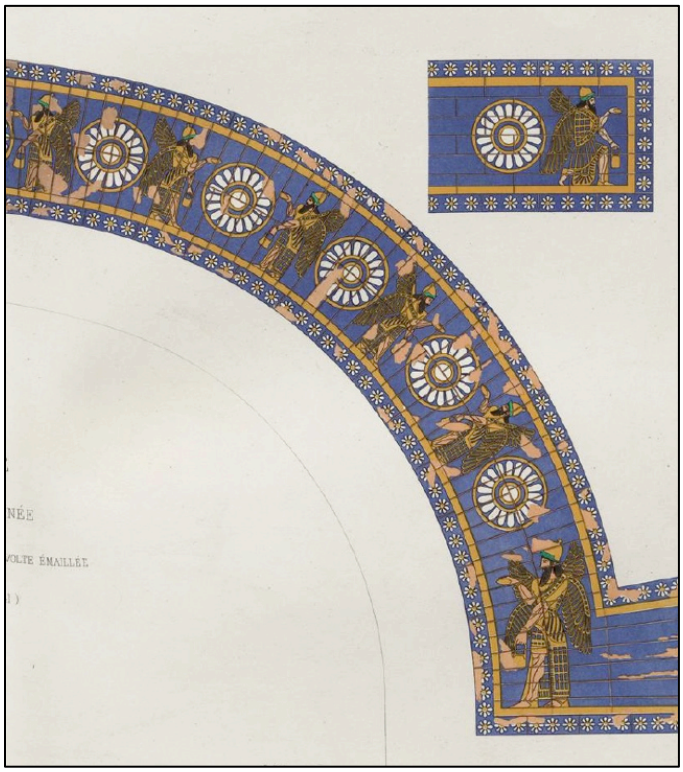

FIGURE 114. Drawing of the glazed brick-work from the city gateway, FIGURE 113. Place 1867–1870: pl. 14 (right half).

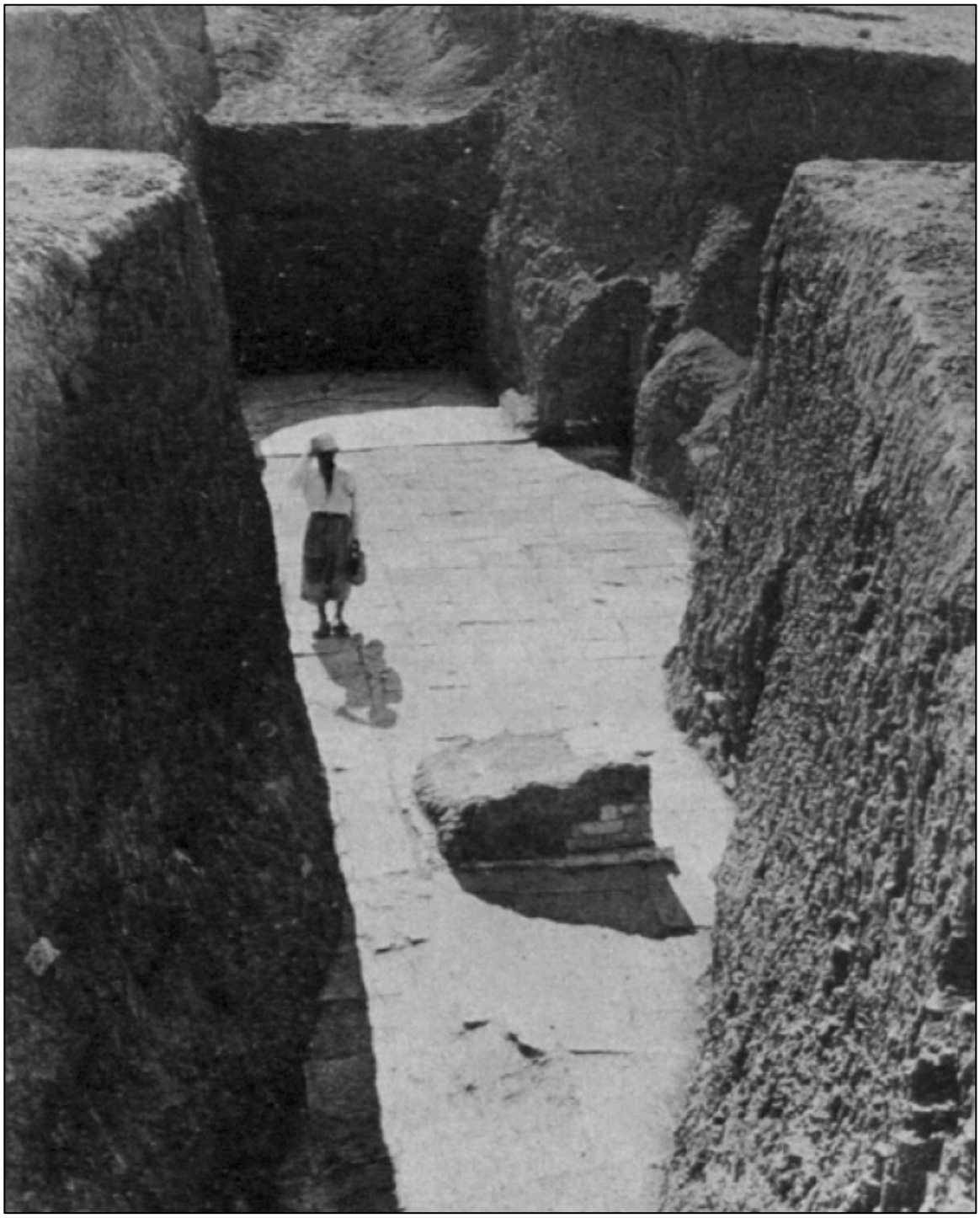

FIGURE 115. Square altar or offering table with glazed brick-work, inner courtyard of the House of Nabu, Khorsabad(Court II). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 22 C.

FIGURE 116. Watercolor reconstruction of a glazed wall-plaque from Assur (Ashur 227). Andrae 1925: pl. 31.

FIGURE 117. Watercolor reconstruction of *sikkātus* from Assur (Ashur 230 (VA 8337); Ashur 231 (VA 8338); VA 5905). Andrae 1935: pl. 36.

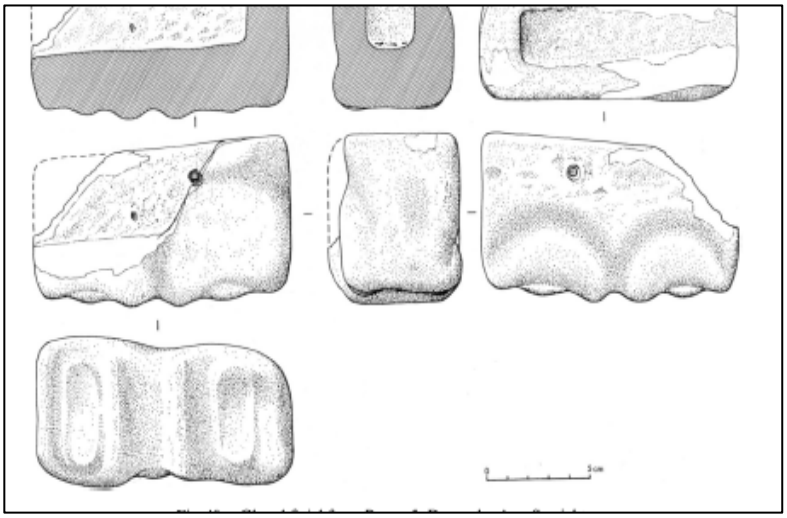

FIGURE 118. White glazed clay block, temple complex, Nimrud (ME 1994-11-5, 417). Reade 2002: fig. 40.

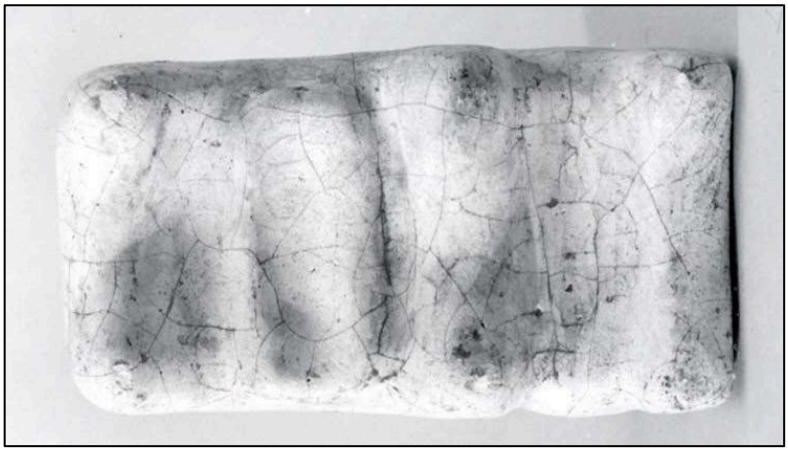

FIGURE 119. White glazed clay block, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (Met 57.27.32). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1957. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

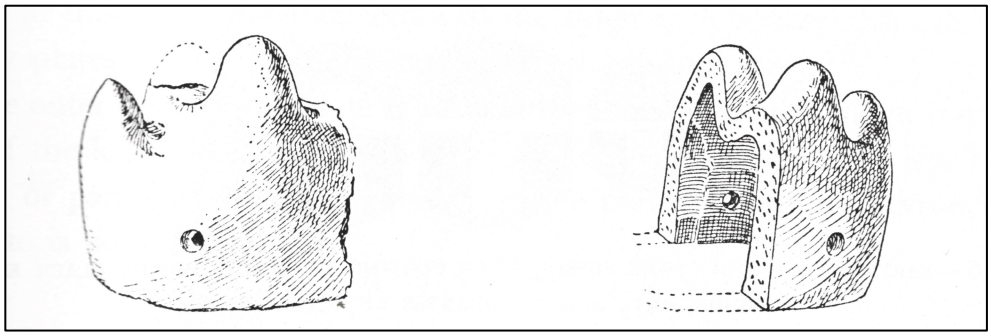

FIGURE 120. White glazed clay block, Assur. Andrae 1925: fig. 43a–b.

FIGURE 121. Reconstruction of a wall painting, Residence K, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 89.

FIGURE 122. Fragments of wall painting, Til Barsip. Parrot 1961: XV.

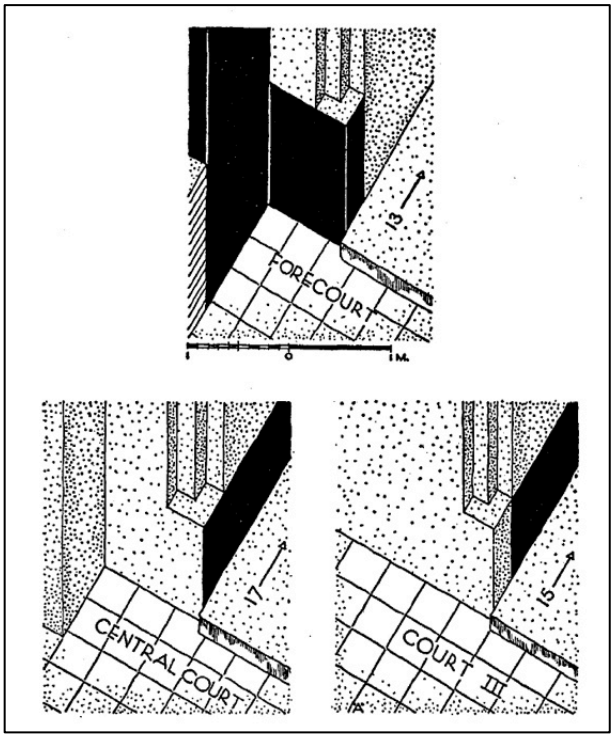

FIGURE 123. Examples of varied dado treatments from the doorways in the House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: fig. 7.

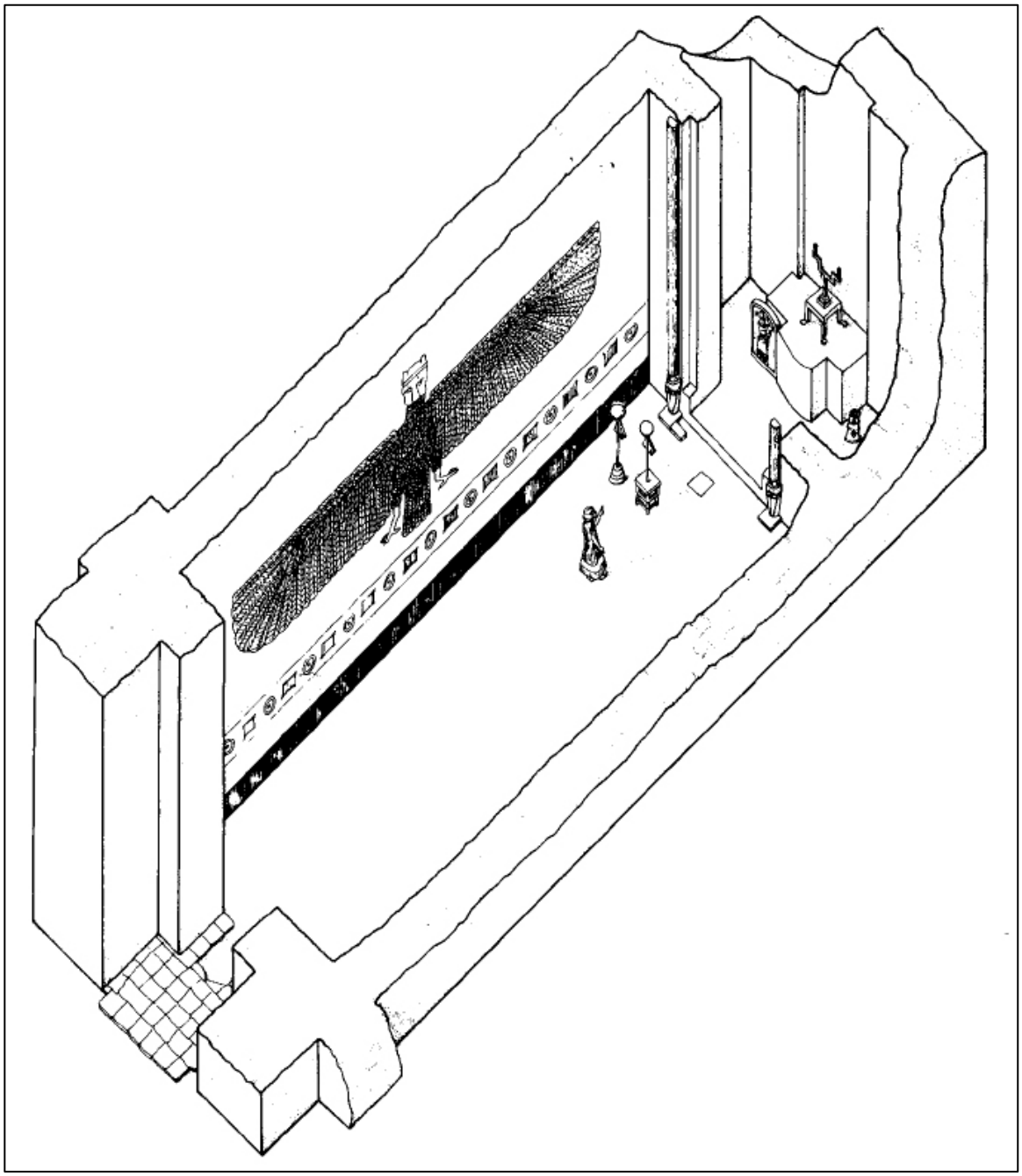

FIGURE 124. Reconstruction of the interior of the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah. Dalley 1984: fig. 64.

FIGURE 125. Stone wall relief with preserved paint, Sargon's Palace, Khorsabad (AO 19899). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

FIGURE 126. Stone wall relief with preserved paint, Northwest Palace, Nimrud. Cohen and Kangas 2010: pl. 3.12.

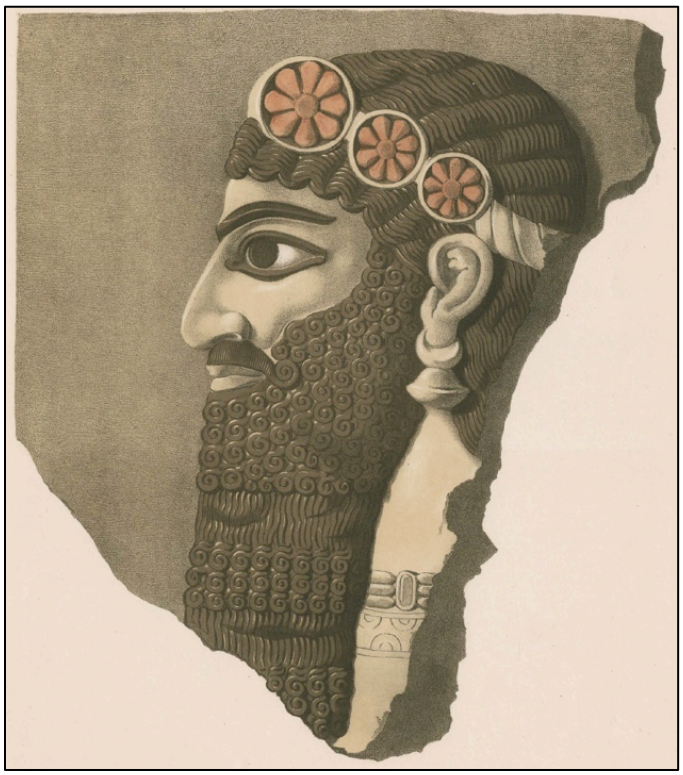

FIGURE 127. Colored reconstructions of a winged *apkallu* from a stone wall relief, Northwest Palace, Nimrud. Layard 1853c: pl. 92.

FIGURE 128. Detail of a banqueting scene from a stone wall relief, Aššurbanipal's North Palace, Nineveh (ME 124920 (1856-9-9, 53)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 129. Rendering of the throne and footstool from the Learning Sites virtual reality model of the Northwest Palace, Nimrud; copyright 2014 and permission by Learning Sites, Inc.

FIGURE 130. Representation of an Assyrian charioteer on a glazed brick from the House of Anu and Adad, Assur (Ashur 7433). Andrae 1925: pl. 7.

FIGURE 131. Representation of the god Aššur being worshipped by an Assyrian elite on a glazed brick from the House of Anu and Adad, Assur (Ashur 9987). Andrae 1925: pl. 10.

FIGURE 132. Clay figure of a Cypriot man in Assyrian style dress (GR 1891-8-6, 39). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 133. “Investiture Scene,” wall painting from the Palace of Zimri-Lim, Mari (AO 19826). Margueron 2008: fig. 13.

FIGURE 134. Stone threshold with elaborate design, Aššurbanipal’s North Palace, Nineveh. Curtis and Reade 1995: fig. 45.

FIGURE 135. Stone ring flanking doorway to House of Sin, Khorsabad (Court XXVII). Loud 1936: fig. 102.

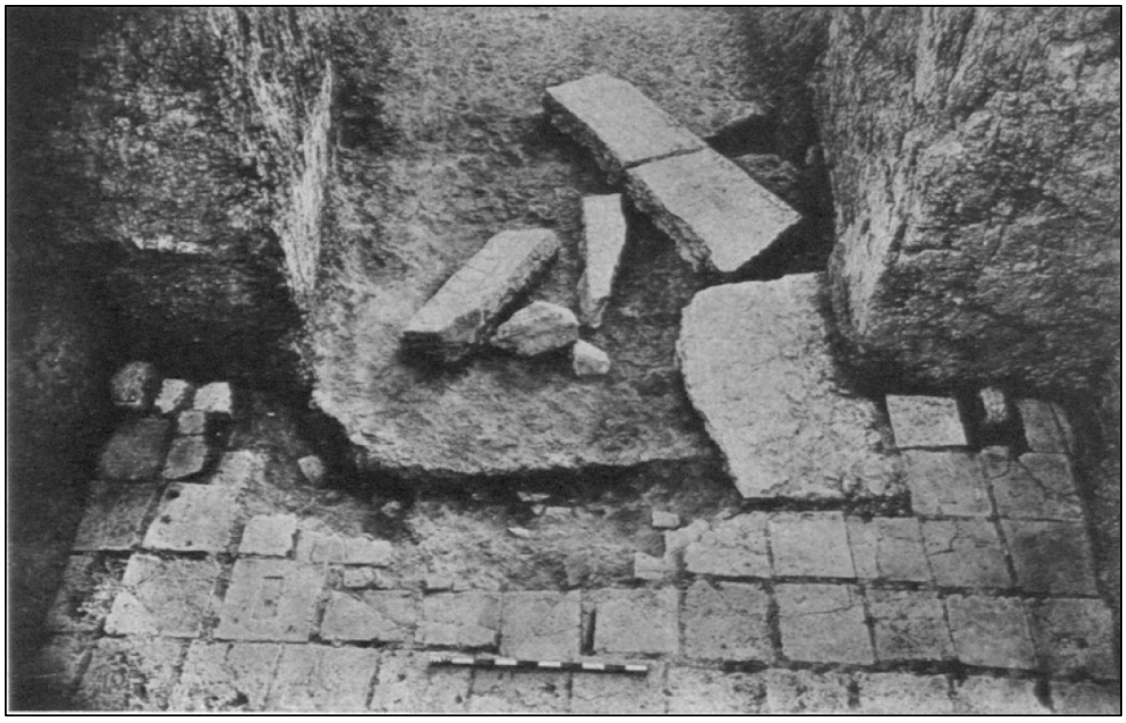

FIGURE 136. Pair of stone rings flanking doorway to Room 12 in the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (Court I). Loud and Altman: pl. 30 E.

FIGURE 137. Glazed brick panel from the House of Sin, Khorsabad, showing surface markings (A 11810.157). Whyte et al. 2004: fig. 17C.

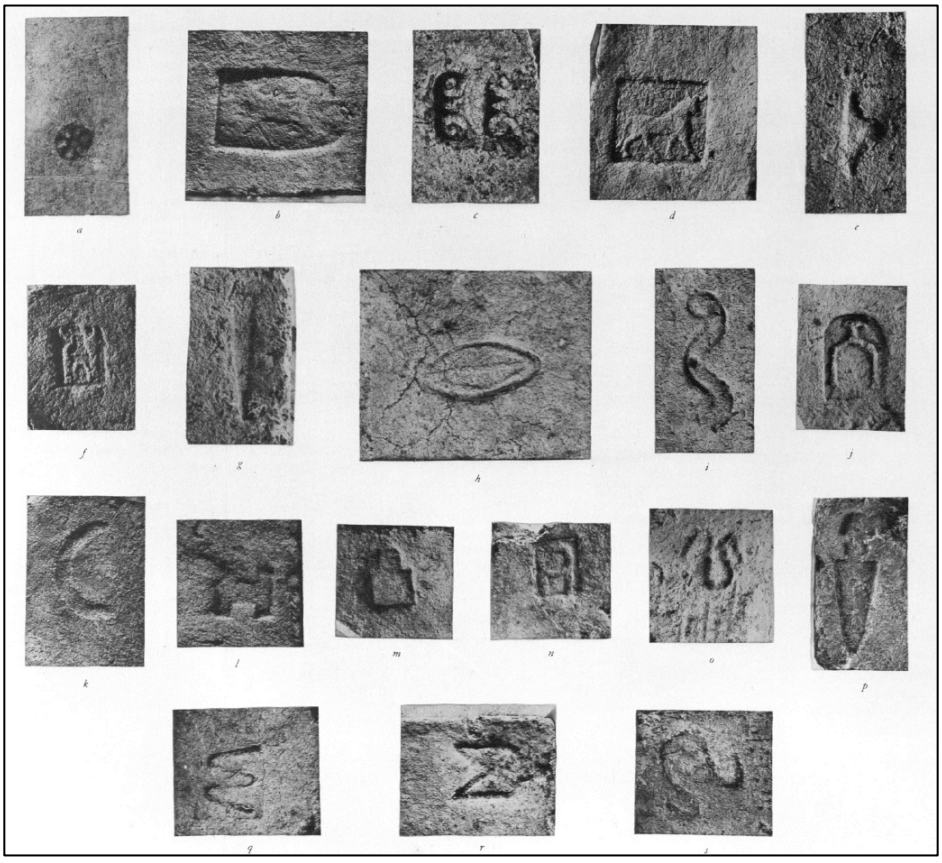

FIGURE 138. Marks on kiln-fired bricks, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 65, no. 270.

FIGURE 139. Stone stele of Aššurbanipal, with the king shown as basket-carrier, Esagil, Babylon (ME 90864 (1881-3-24, 367)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 140. Stone stele of Šamaš-šumu-ukin, with king shown as basket-carrier, House of Nabu, Borsippa (ME 90866 (1880-6-17, 3)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

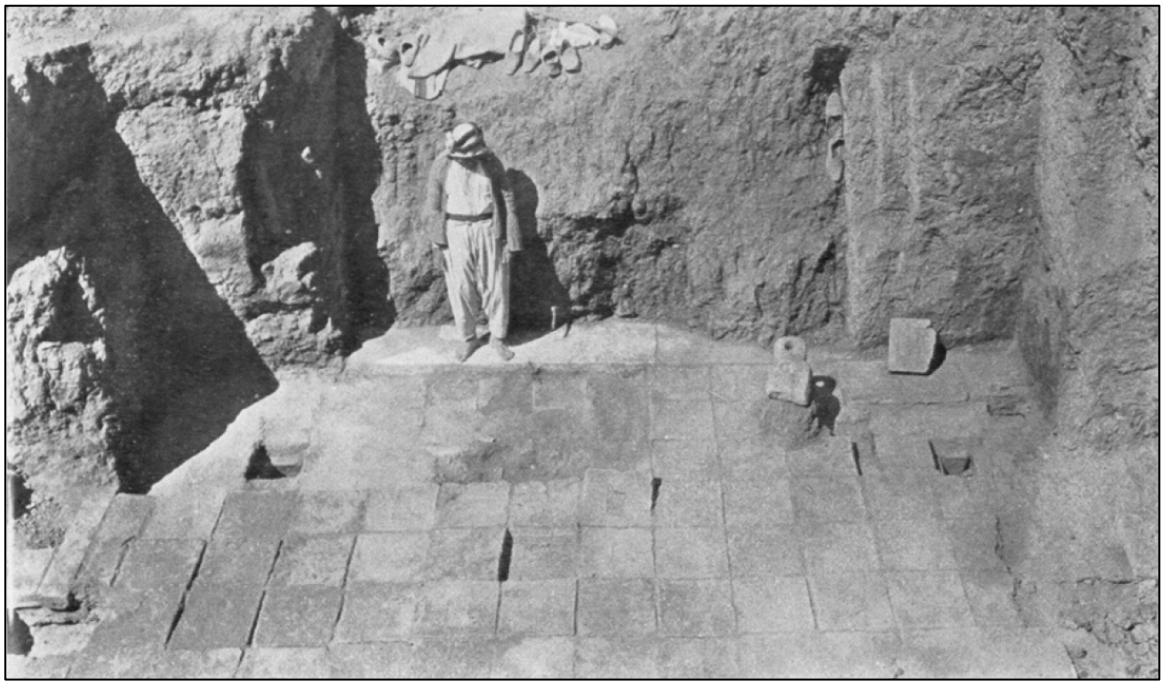

FIGURE 141. Principal doorway to the House of Ningal, Khorsabad, showing two square holes in the pavement from foundation deposit boxes (Court XXVII). Loud 1936: fig. 117.

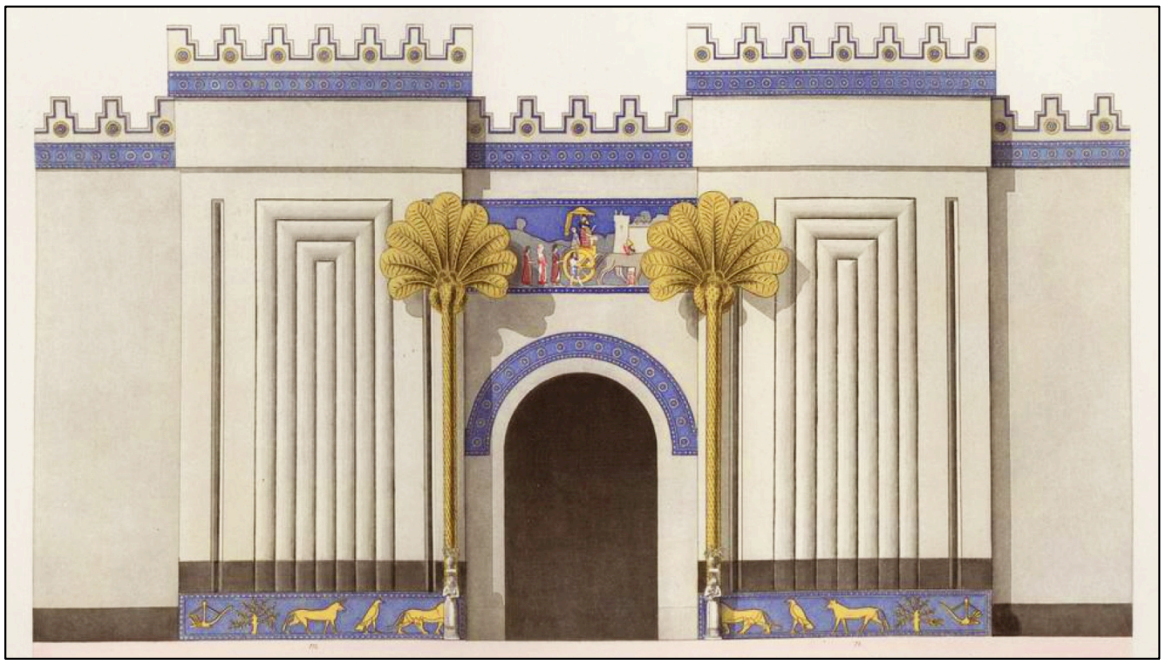

FIGURE 142. Reconstruction of the facade of the House of Sin, Khorsabad. Place 1867–1870: III, pl. 24.

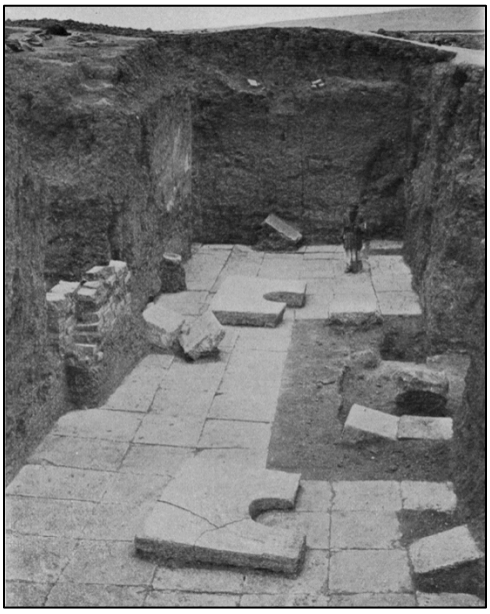

FIGURE 143. Pivot stones for the doorway to the House of Sin, Khorsabad (Room 167). Loud 1936: fig.120.

FIGURE 144. Stone wall relief of a winged bird-headed *apkallu*, House of Ninurta, Nimrud (ME 118922 (1999-1-22, 1). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 145. Stone wall relief of a fish-cloaked figure on the interior flanking wall of the doorway of the god's chamber north of the House of Ninurta, Nimrud (FIGURE 44: 14)(ME 124573 (1851-9-2), 503). © Trustees of the British Museum.

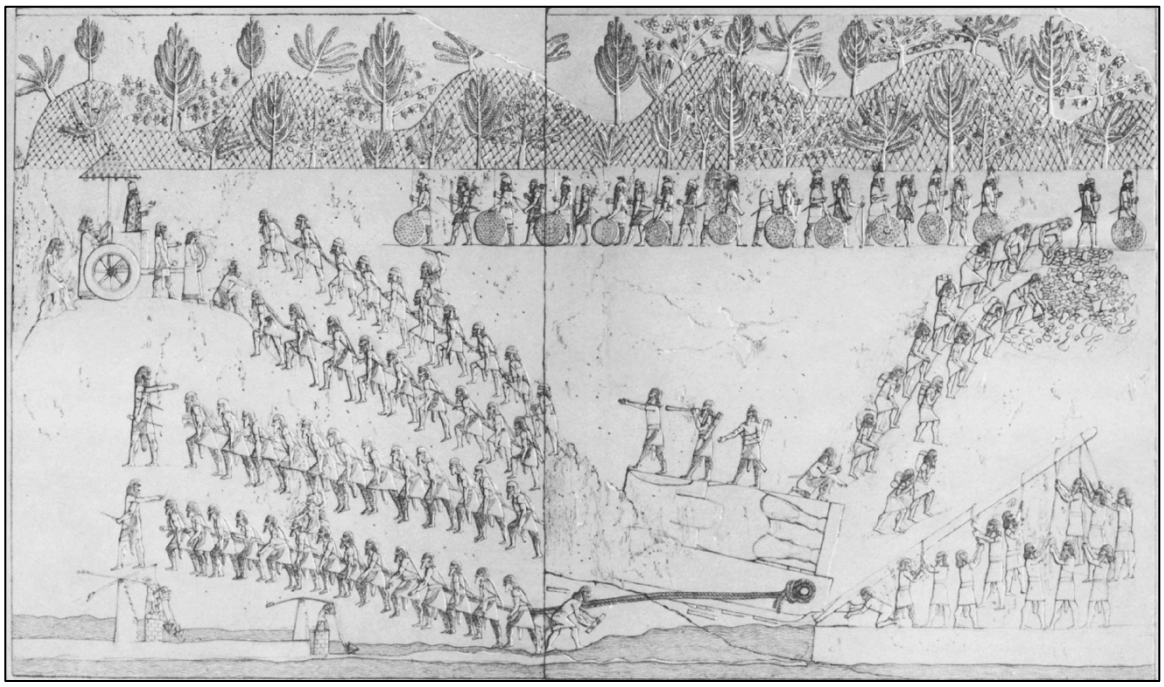

FIGURE 146. Drawing of stone wall reliefs, Sennacherib's Southwest Palace, Nineveh (Court VI, Slabs 63–64). Russell 1987: fig. 7.

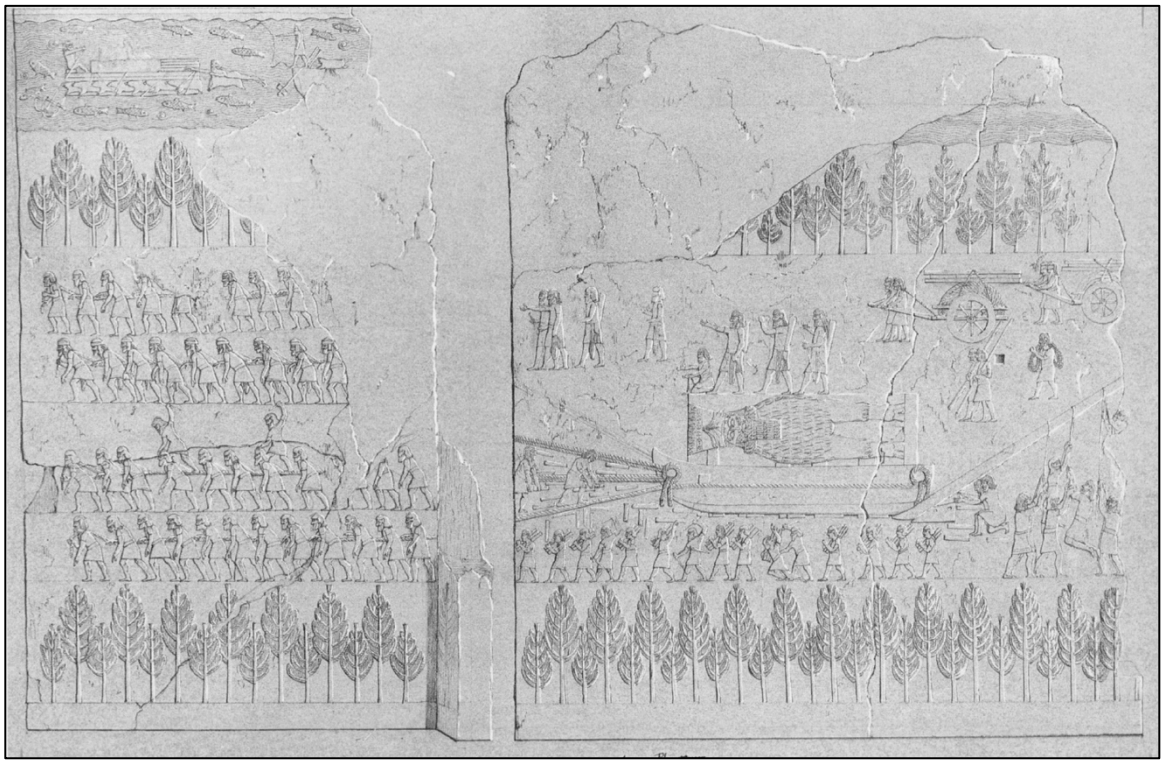

FIGURE 147. Drawing of stone wall reliefs, Sennacherib's Southwest Palace, Nineveh (Court VI, Slabs 54 and 56). Russell 1987: fig. 16.

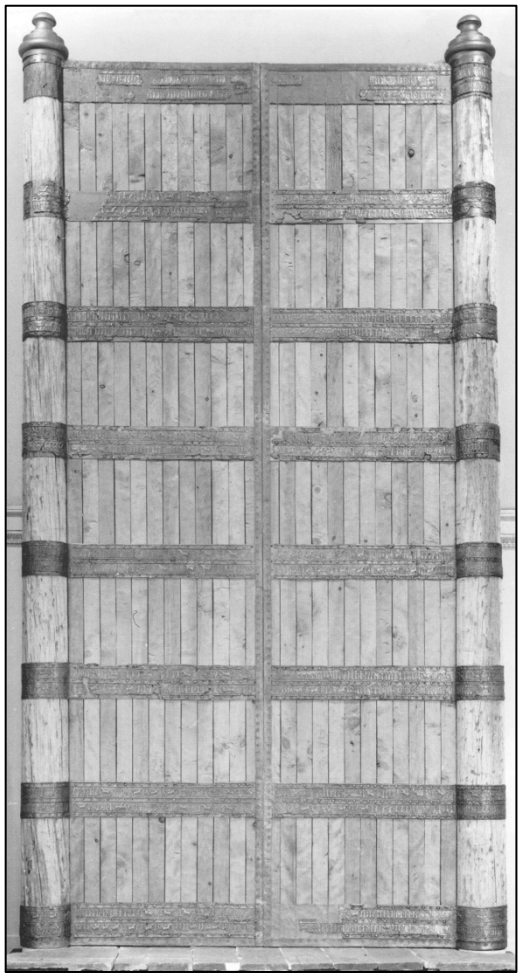

FIGURE 148. Modern reconstruction of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, British Museum. Curtis and Tallis 2008: pl. 6.

FIGURE 149. Buttress of engaged half-columns atop the glazed brick panel flanking the doorway to the House of Sin, Khorsabad (Court XXVII). Loud 1936: fig. 103.

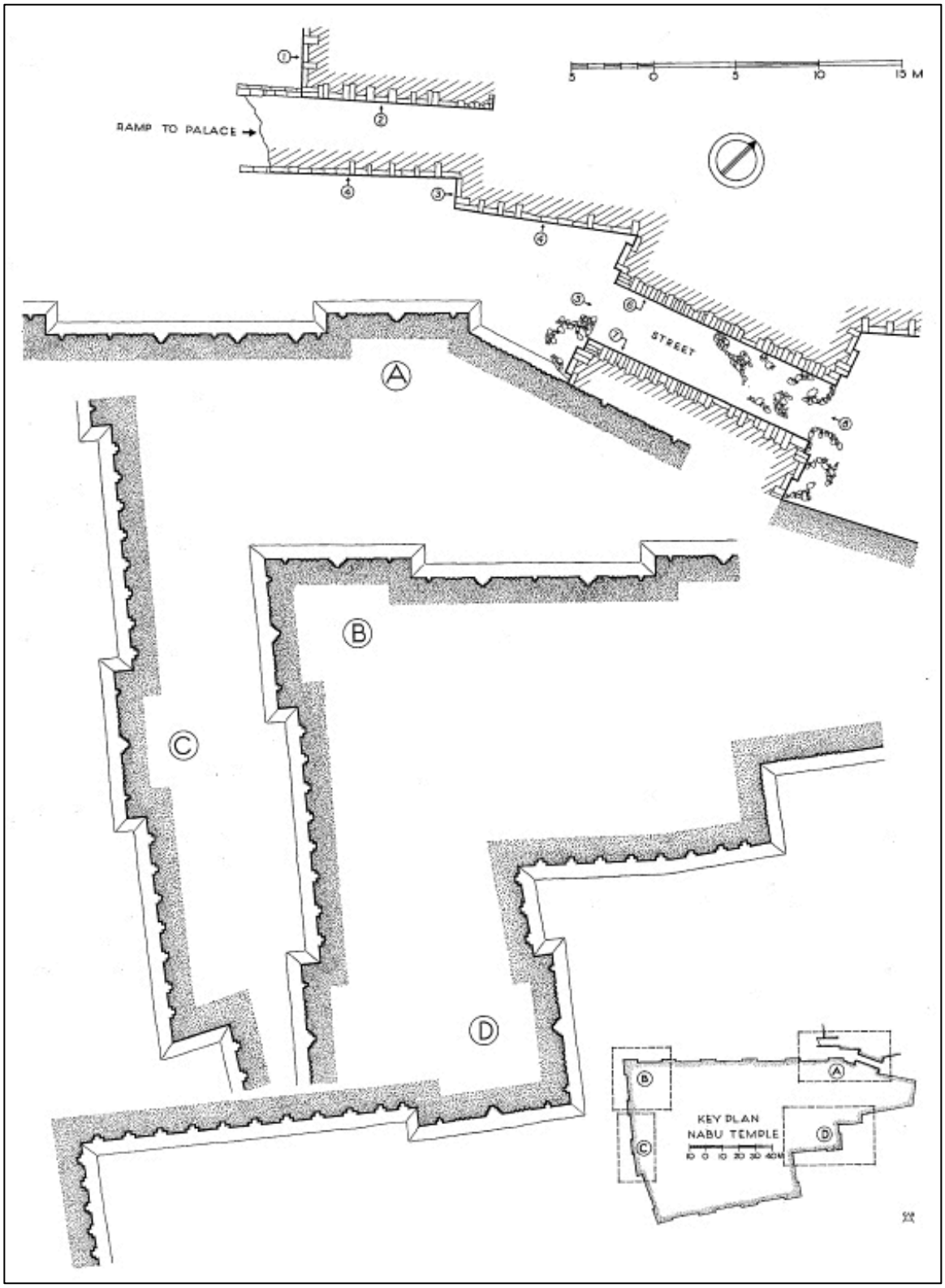

FIGURE 150. Niche-and-reed motives of the House of Nabu and adjoining bridge, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 80.

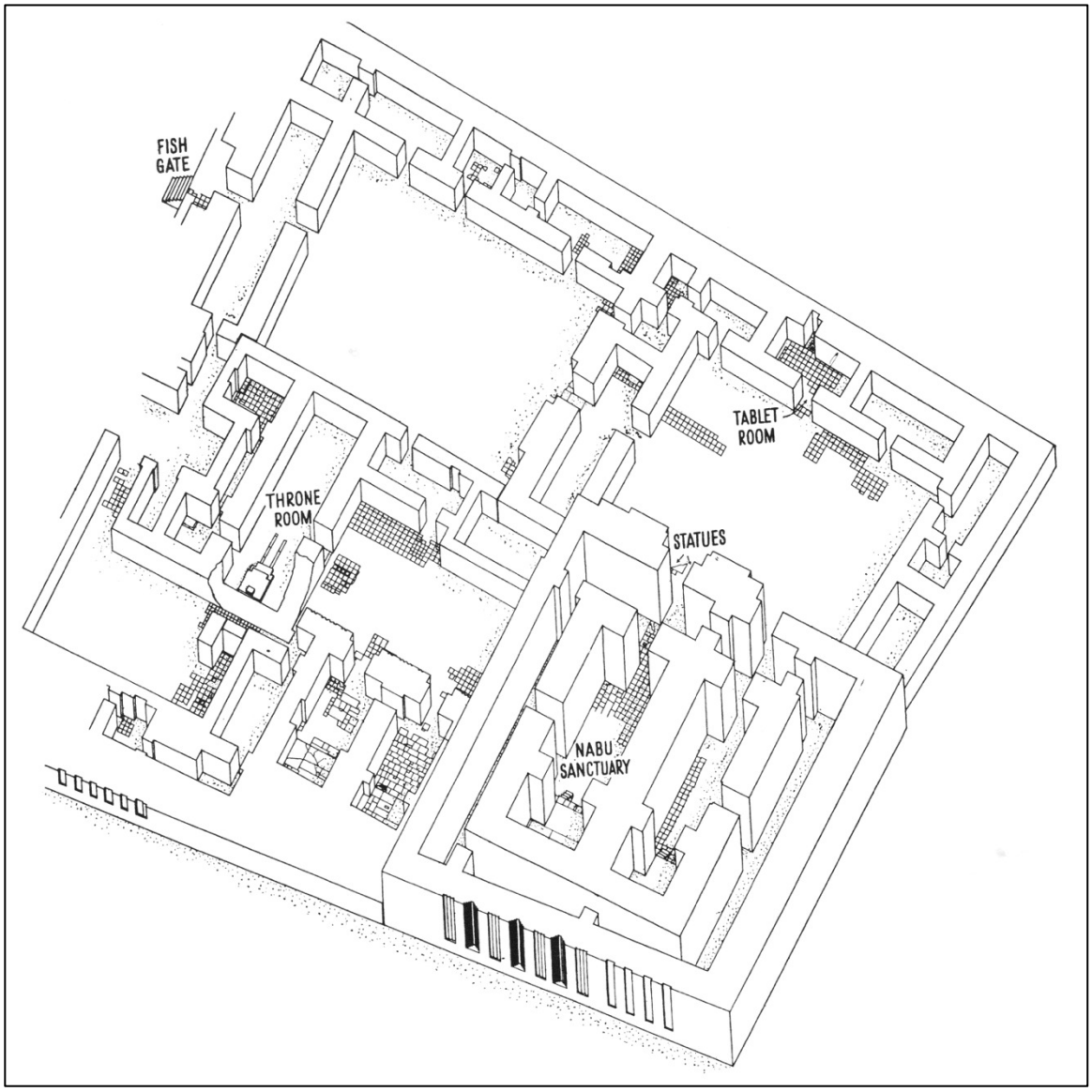

FIGURE 151. Isometric reconstruction of the Ezida, Nimrud, view from the southwest. Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 73.

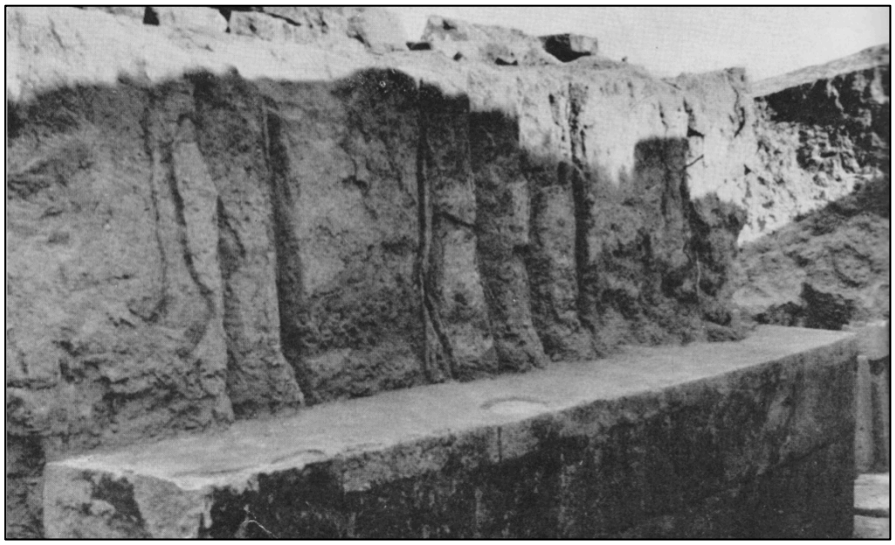

FIGURE 152. Façade with engaged half-columns preceding the subsidiary god's chambers in Ezida, Nimrud (NTS 1 and NTS 2). Mallowan 1966: fig. 197.

FIGURE 153. Scene showing the carving of a royal stele, Band X, Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III. Schachner 2007: Taf. 50b.

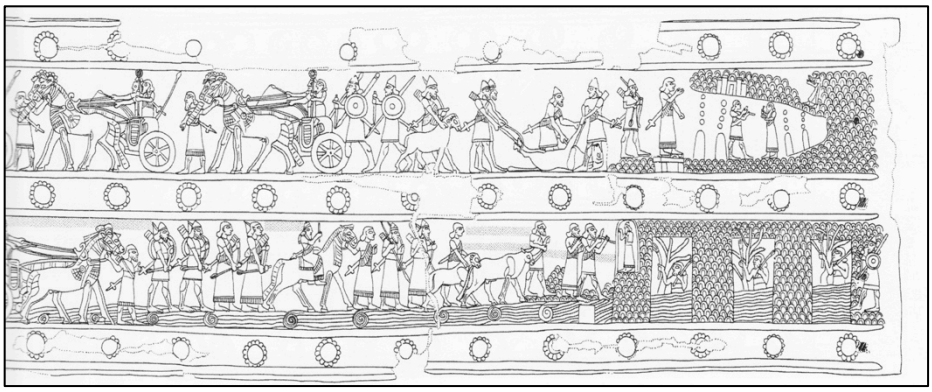

FIGURE 154. Drawing of the Band X, Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III. Schachner 2007: Taf. 10.

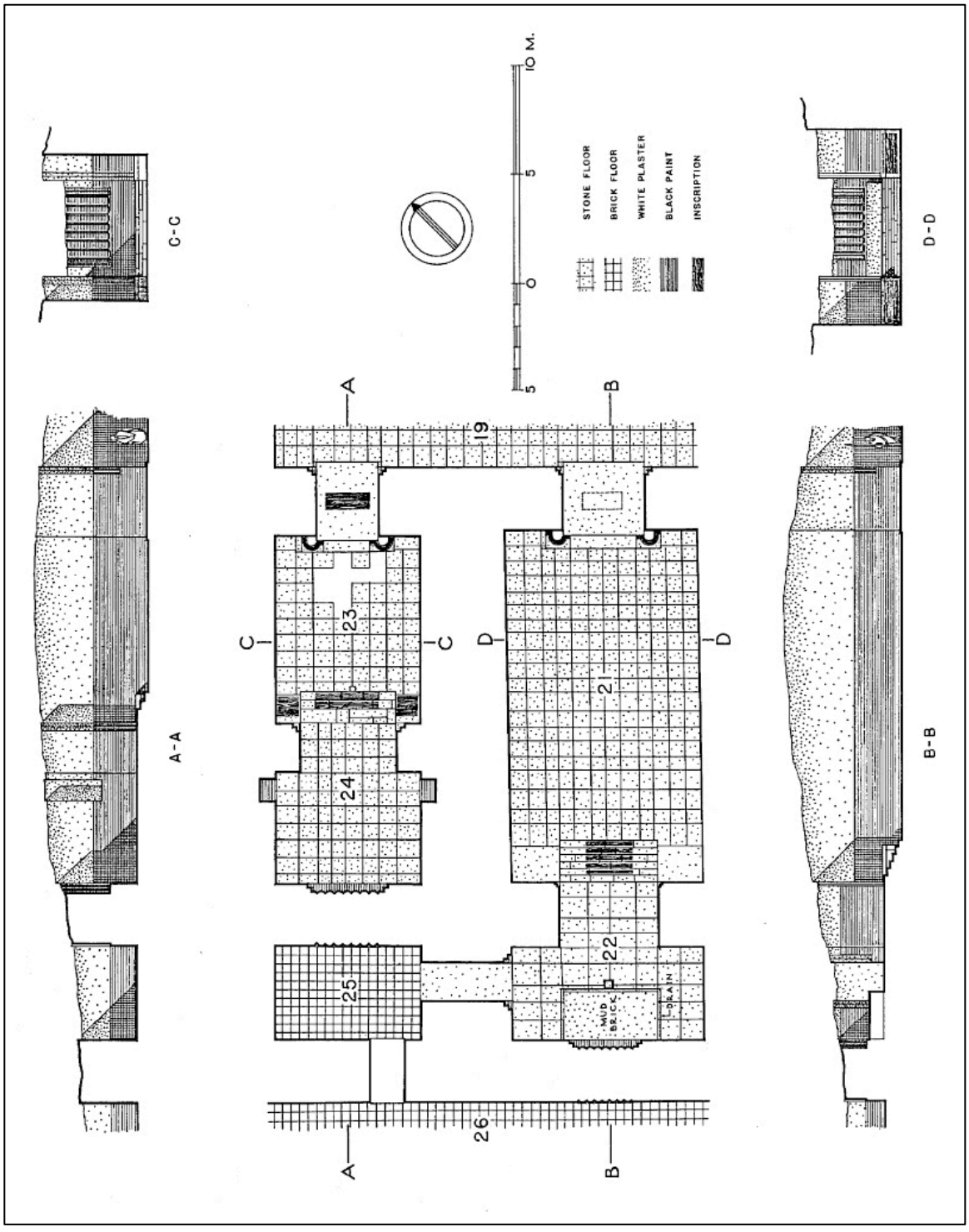

FIGURE 155. Detail of the principal two god's chambers from the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (Rooms 21–22, Rooms 23–34). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 84.

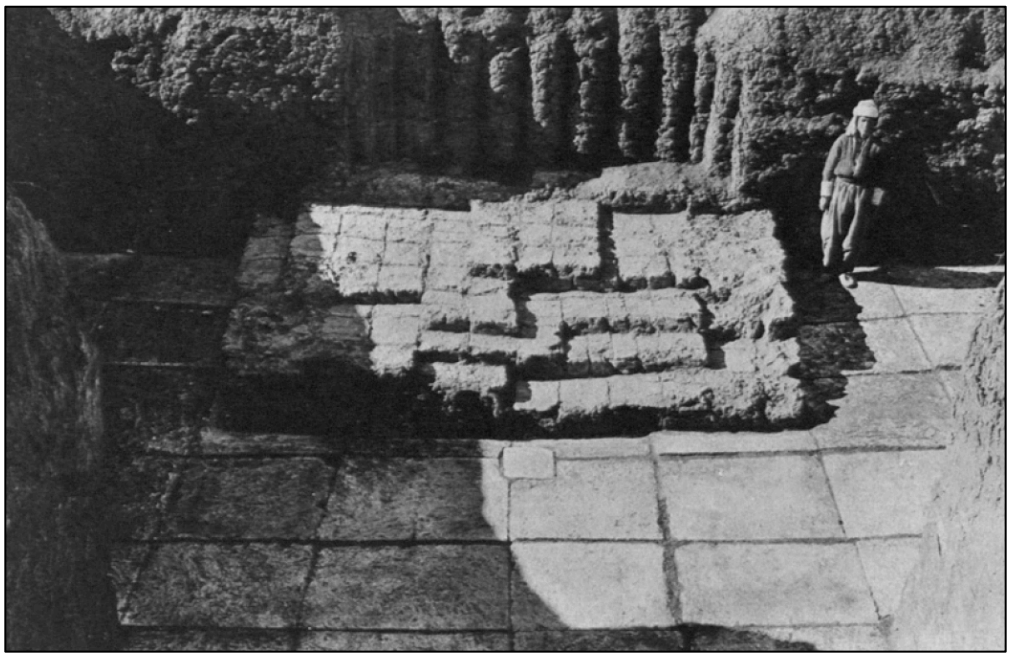

FIGURE 156. Raised platform of the dais in the god's chamber of Nabu in the House of Nabu, Khorsabad, showing a channel cut into the floor at its base and emptying into the square (Room 22). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 25 D.

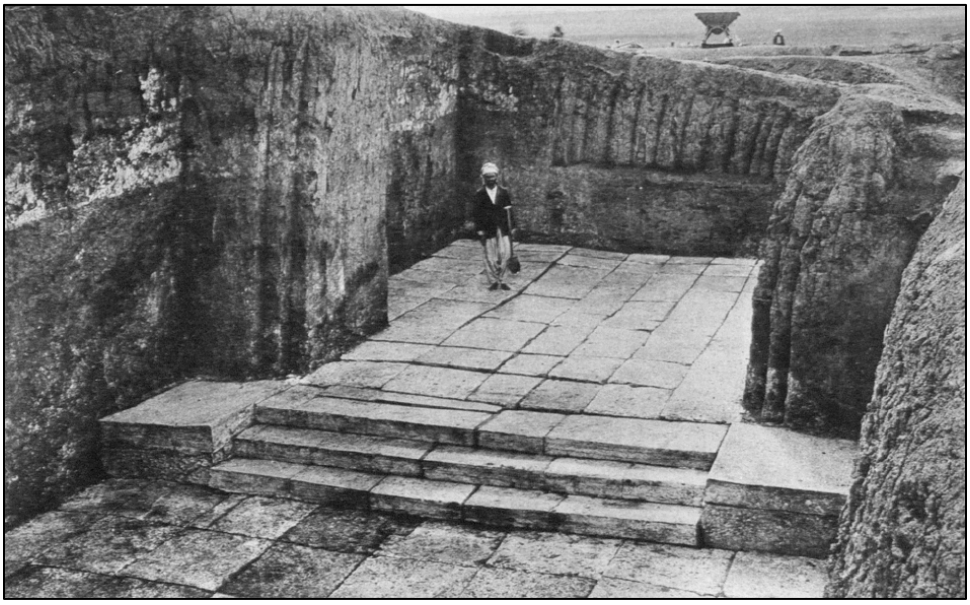

FIGURE 157. Dais in the god's chambering beside that of Nabu, Khorsabad, showing the dais (Rooms 23–24). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 26 E.

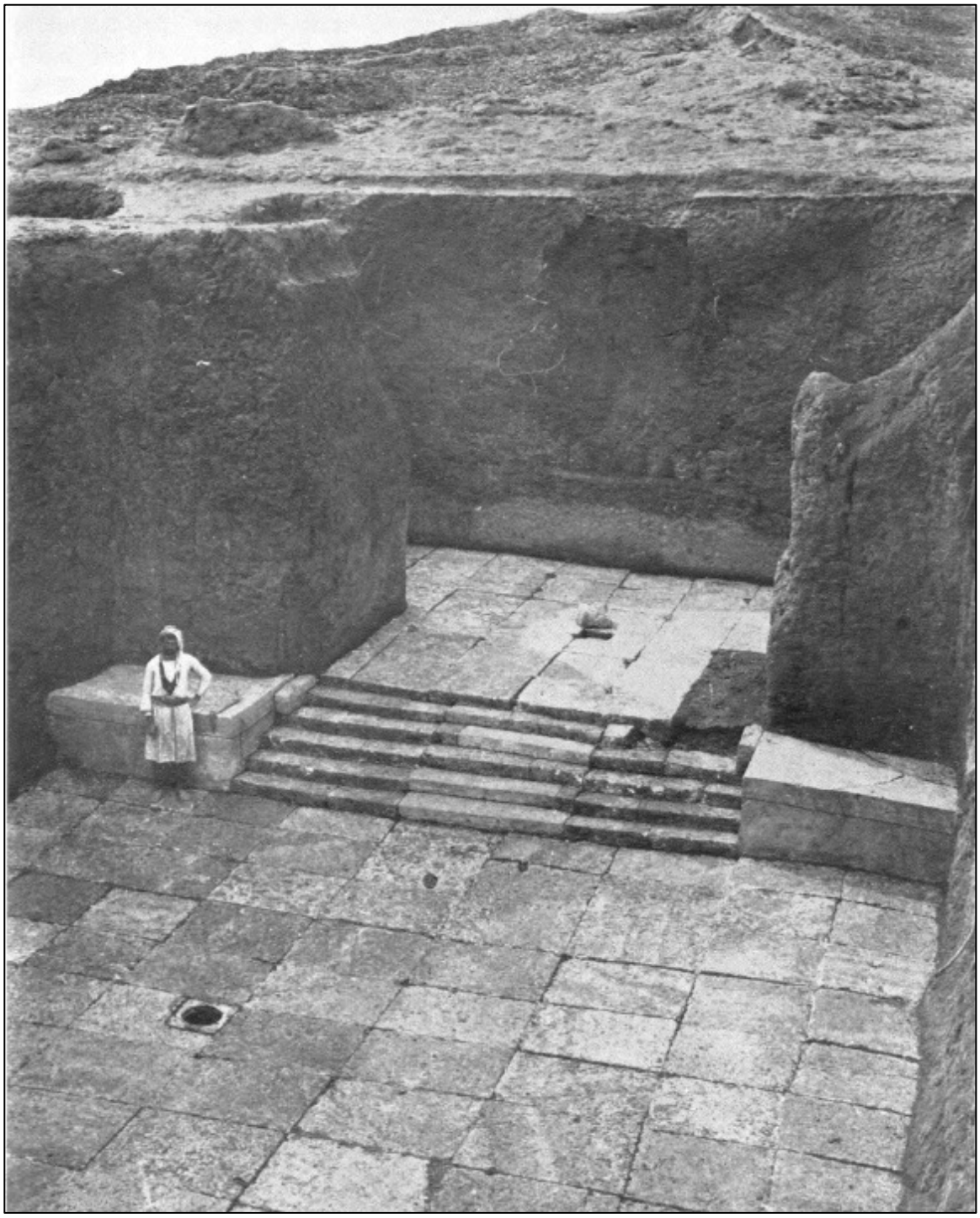

FIGURE 158. View toward the dais, with preceding stone jar embedded in the floor, House of Sin, Khorsabad (Rooms XXVI and 165). Loud 1936: fig. 123.

FIGURE 159. God's chamber of Tašmetum, Ezida, Nimrud (NT 5). Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 69.

FIGURE 160. Subsidiary god's chambers, Ezida, Nimrud ((NTS 1, NTS 2). Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 72.

FIGURE 161. Stone wall relief with a scene of Assyrian soldiers carrying divine images, Tiglath-pileser III, Southwest Palace, Nimrud (ME 118931 (1856-9-9, 212)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

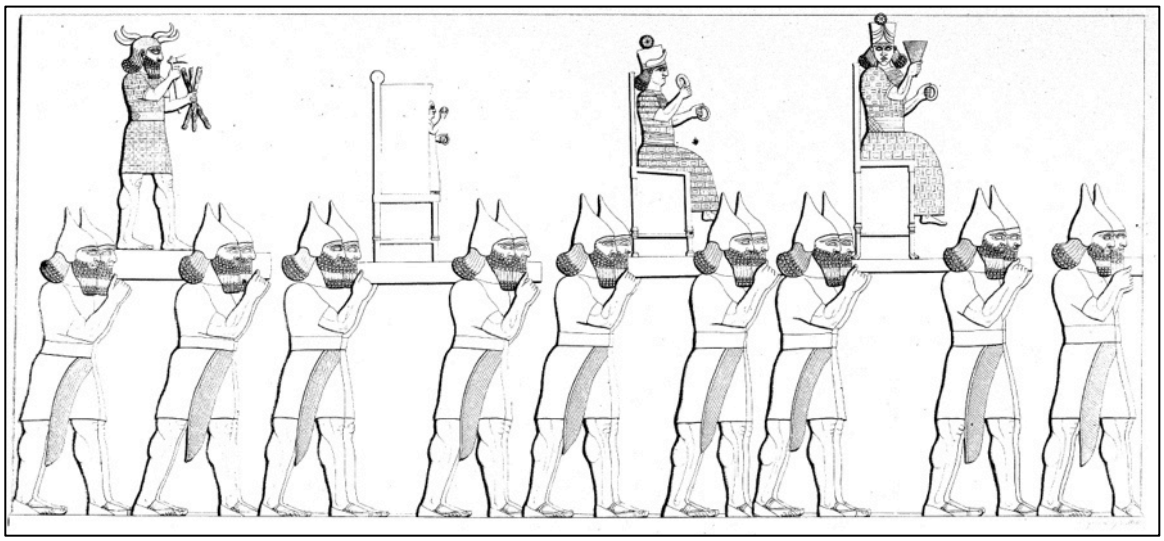

FIGURE 162. Drawing of FIGURE 164. Layard 1853c: pl. 65.

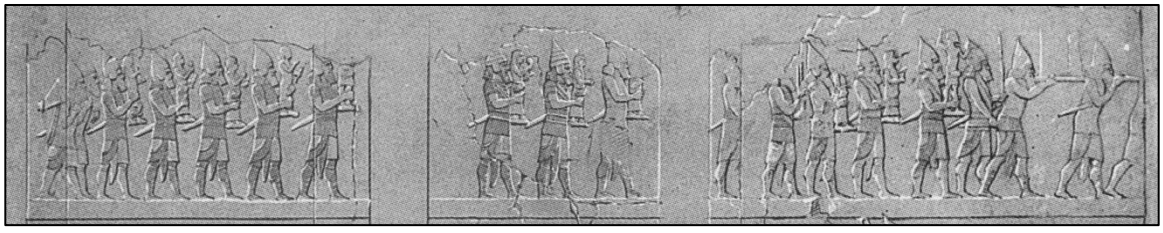

FIGURE 163. Stone wall relief with a scene of divine images. Barnett et al. 1998: pls. 450.

FIGURE 164. Drawing of the divine images from a stele of Esarhaddon, Zincirli. von Luschan 1893: fig. 4.

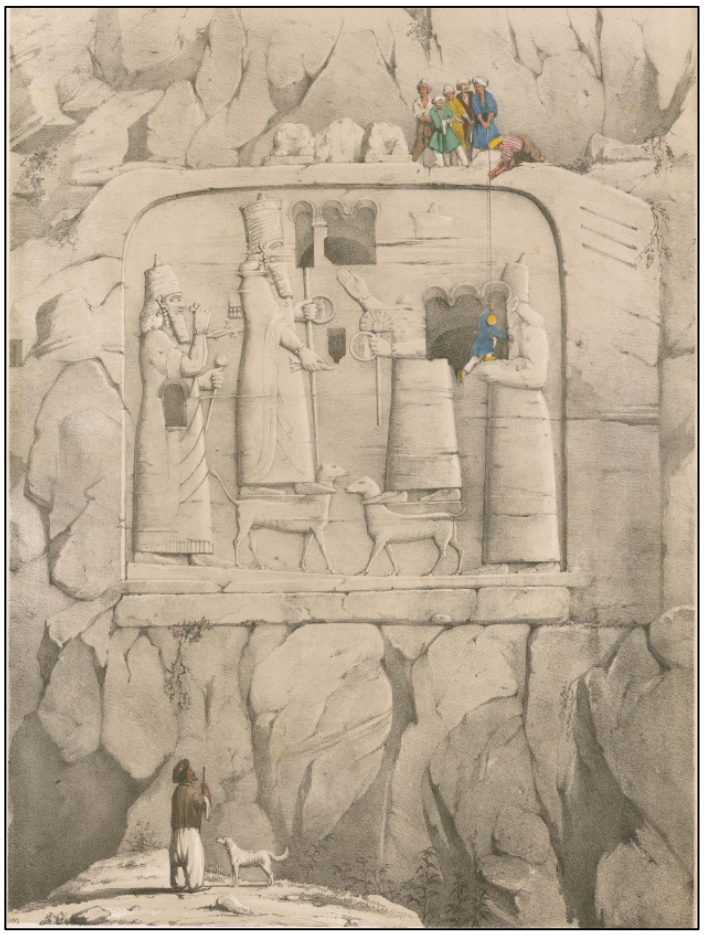

FIGURE 165. Watercolor of rock relief of Sennacherib at Bavian, showing a pair of gods, by F. C. Cooper. Layard 1853b: pl. 51.

FIGURE 166. View of the dais, and preceding non-portable works of art, Late Assyrian Temple, Tell al-Rimah. Oates 1968: pl. XXXIIa.

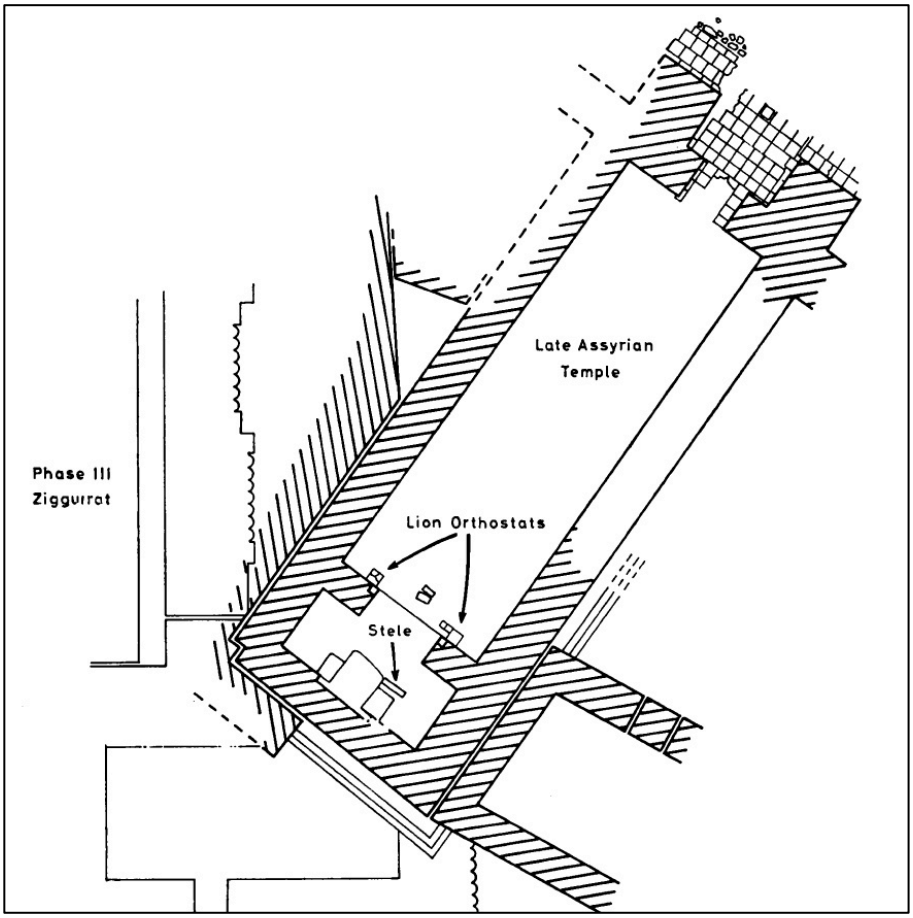

FIGURE 167. Plan of the Late Assyrian Temple, Tell al-Rimah. Oates 1968: pl. XXXIII.

FIGURE 168. Stele of Adad-nerari III, Tell al-Rimah (IM 70543). Oates 1968: pl. XXXVIII.

FIGURE 169. Stone statue of Aššurnaṣirpal II, House of Šarrat-nipḫi, Nimrud (ME 118871, (1851-9-2, 507)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

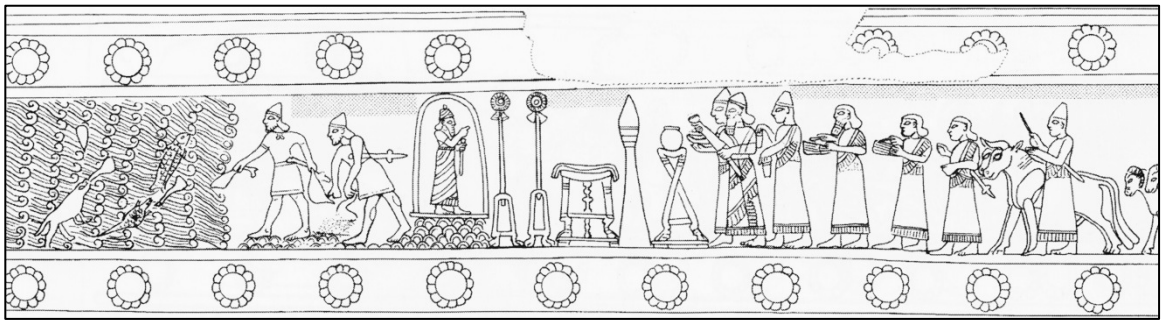

FIGURE 170. Drawing of the libation scene from the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, Band I. Schachner 2007: Taf. 1.

FIGURE 171. Libation scene from the lion hunt reliefs of Aššurbanipal, Room S[1], North Palace, Nineveh (ME 124887 (1856-9-9, 51)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 172. Depiction of an offering table(?) from the Rassam Obelisk (ME 118800 (1856-9-9, 206)). © Trustees of the British Museum.

FIGURE 173. Depiction of an offering table(?) from the reliefs in Sargon's palace, Khorsabad (IM 18630). Loud 1936: fig. 42.

FIGURE 174. Offering scene from a glazed vessel, Assur (Ass 14940 (VA 8150)). Andrae 1925: pl. 26.

FIGURE 175. Stone pedestal, Khorsabad (AO 19900). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

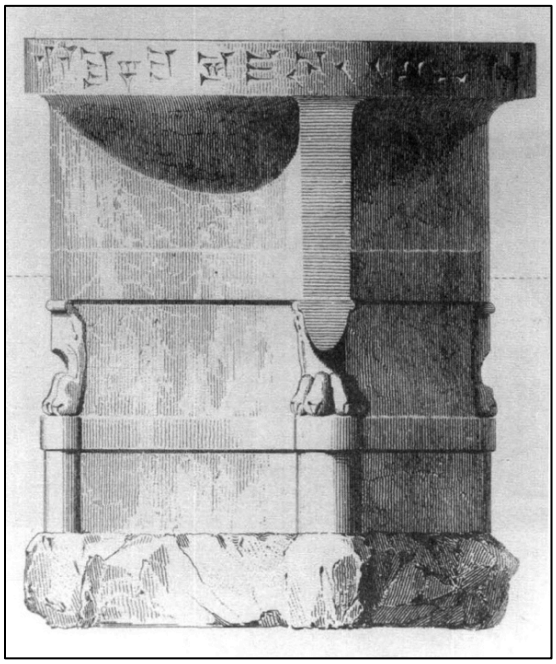

FIGURE 176. Drawing of the stone pedestal in FIGURE 175. Holloway 2001: fig. 16, after Botta and Flandin 1849: II, pl. 157.

FIGURE 177. Stone pedestal, Khorsabad (DS 1194 (A 17547)). Photo by Author. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

FIGURE 178. Stone pedestal, Khorsabad. Istanbul Archaeology Museum (no. 4785). © Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

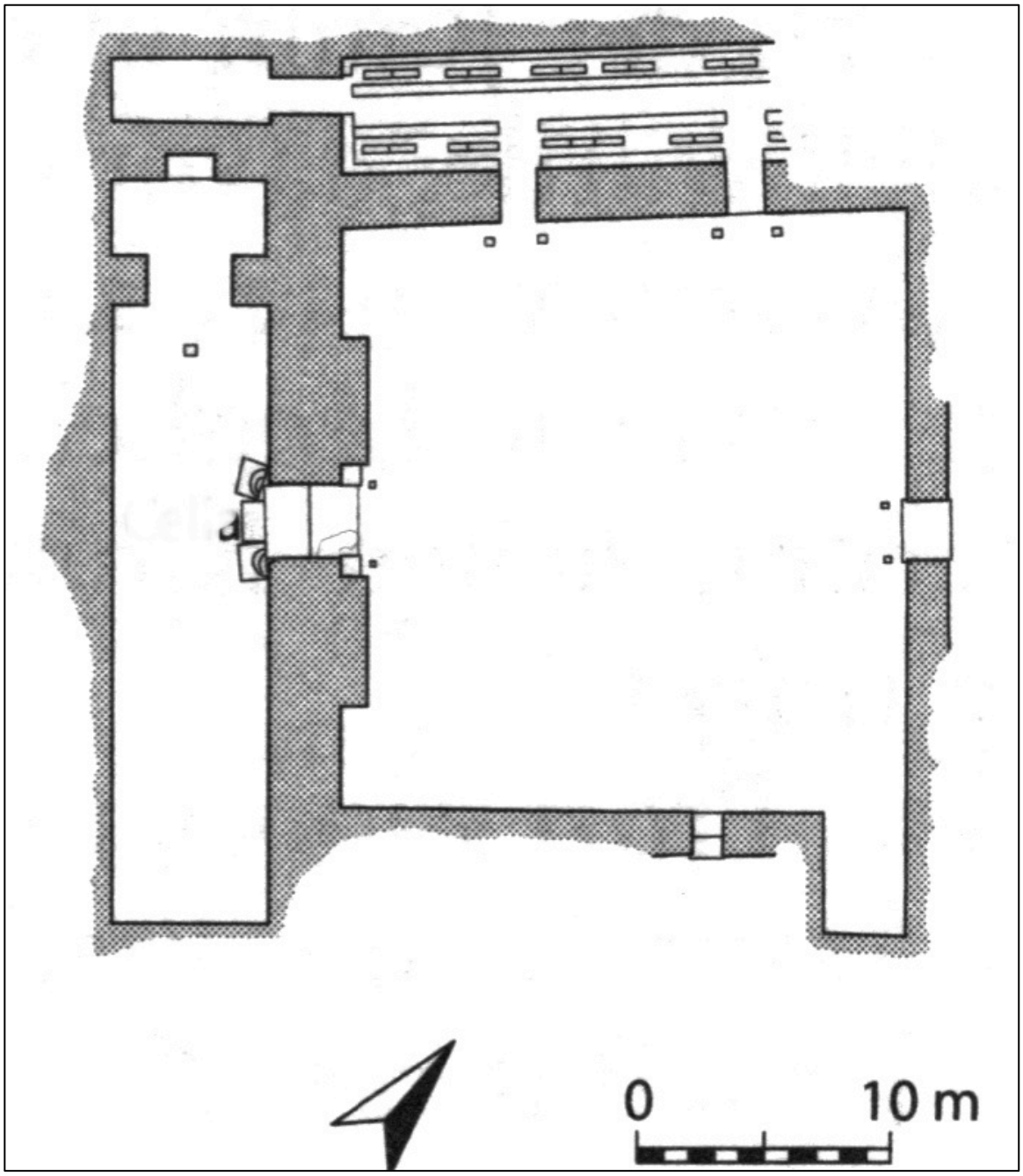

FIGURE 179. Plan of the House of the Sibitti, Khorsabad. Miglus 2011–2013: Abb. 7c, after Safar 1957: 196 (Arabic section).

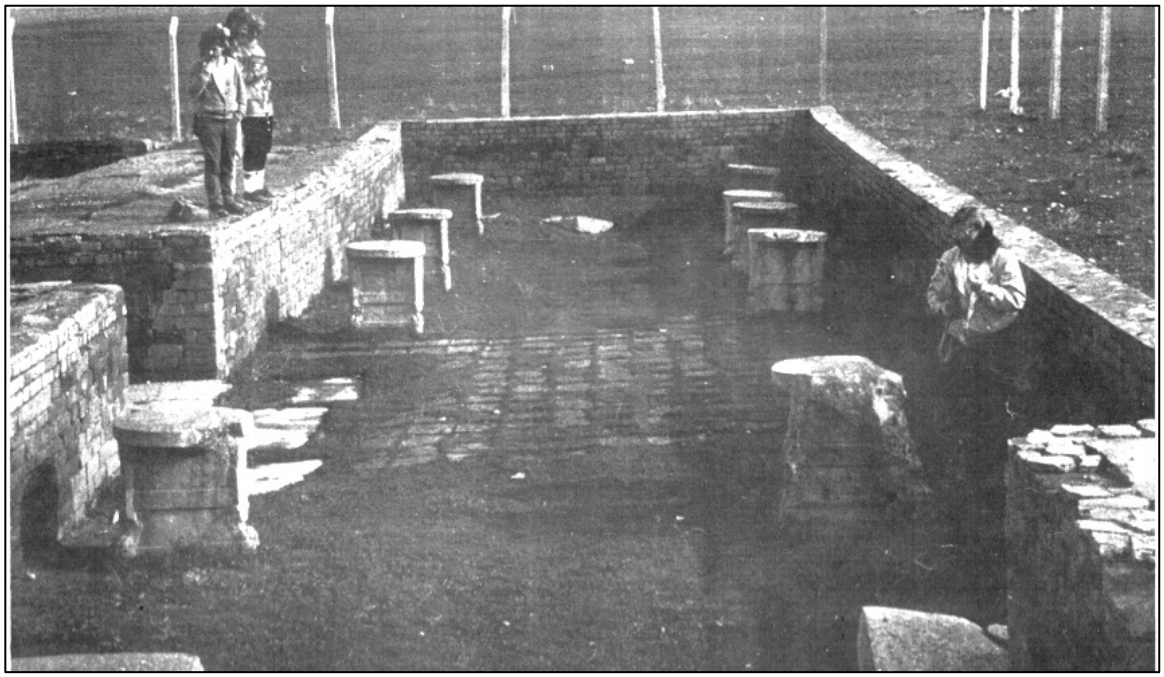

FIGURE 180. Stone pedestals, House of the Sibitti, Khorsabad. Mallowan 1993: pl. 67, 2.

FIGURE 181. Stone incense burner, House of the Sibitti, Khorsabad. Mallowan 1993: pl. 68, 1.

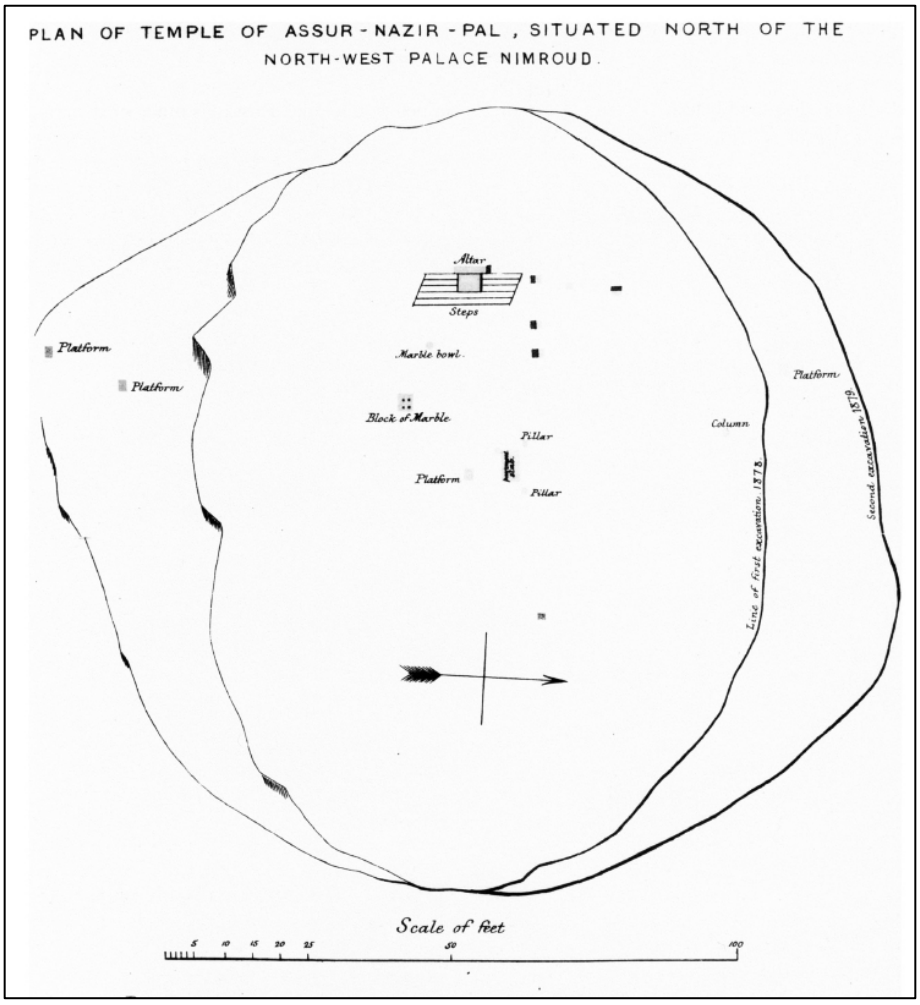

FIGURE 182. Rassam's Plan of the House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud, after the 1878 and 1879 excavations. Reade 2002: fig. 11.

FIGURE 183. Photograph of excavations of the House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud, in April 1878, showing the portable objects and dais with pedestal atop. Reade 2002: fig. 10.

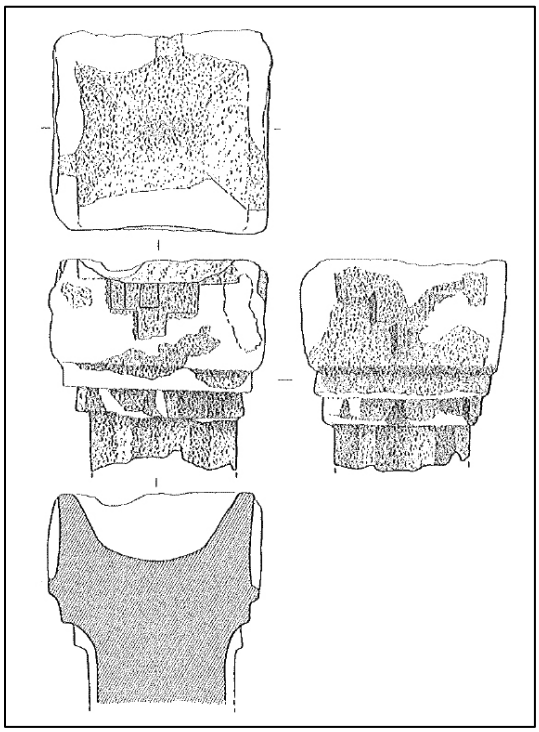

FIGURE 184. Stone incense burner, House of the Kidmuri, Nimrud (ME 118372 (AOC 15)). Searight et al. 2008: fig. 56, no. 583.

FIGURE 185. Stone incense burner, House of Ištar, Nineveh (ME 1930-5-8, 218). © Trustees of the British Museum.

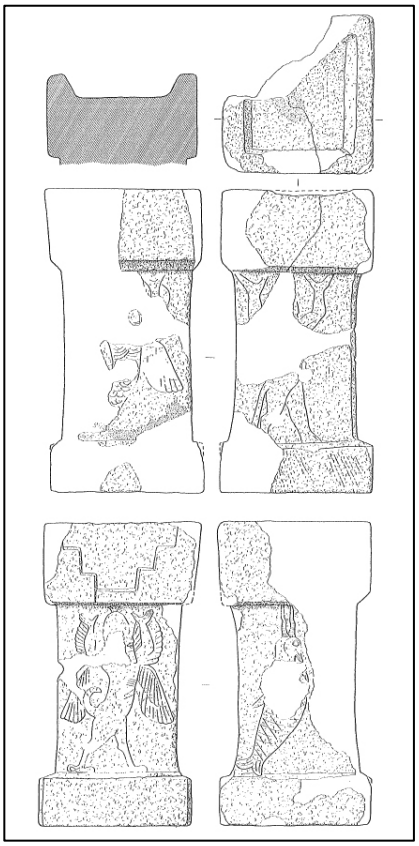

FIGURE 186. Drawing of the incense burner in FIGURE 185. Searight et al. 2008: fig. 57, no. 585.

FIGURE 187. Drawing of the doorway to the House of Šarrat-nipḫi, Nimrud. Layard 1853a: 360.

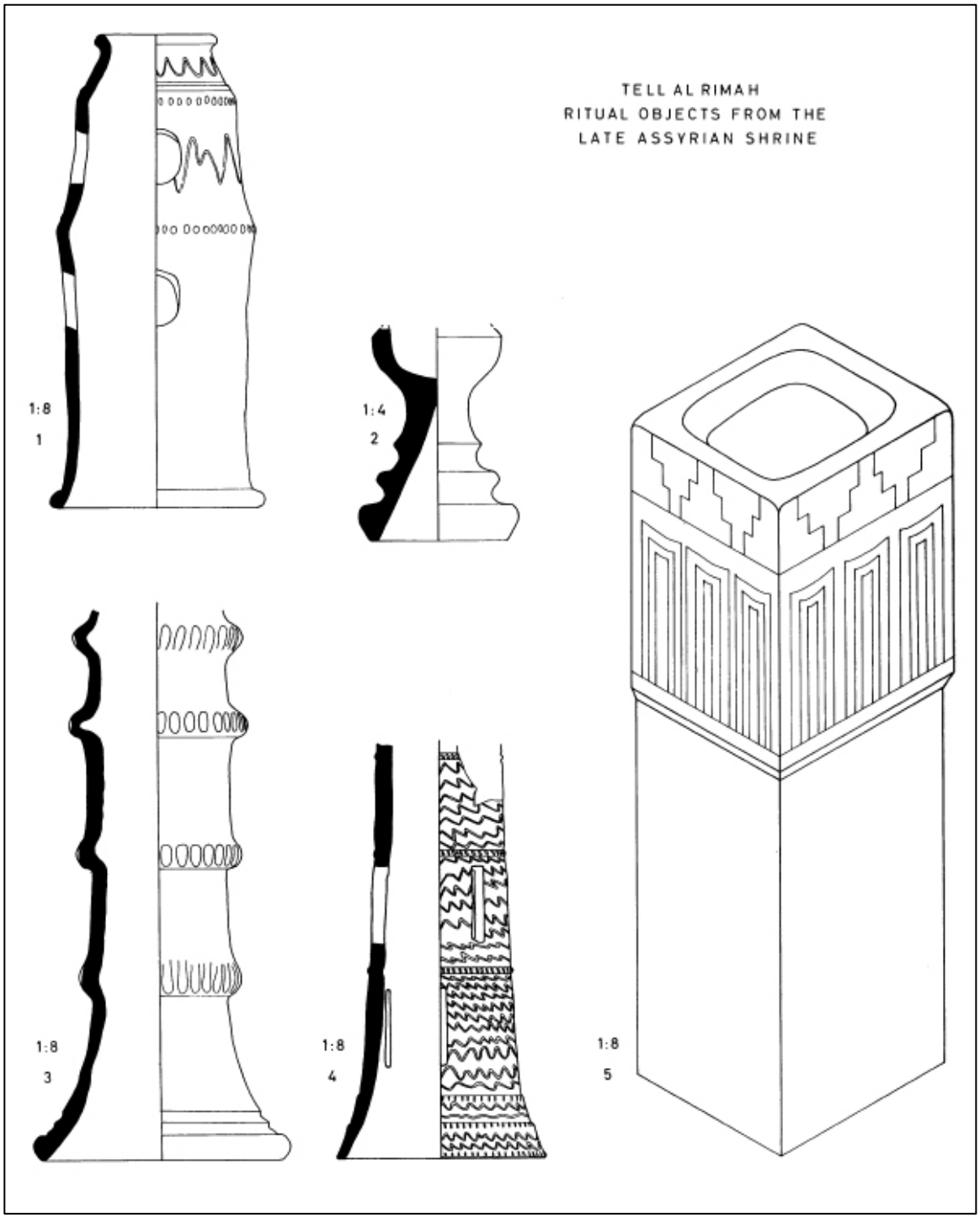

FIGURE 188. Drawing of portable works of art from the Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah. Oates 1974: pl. XXVIII.

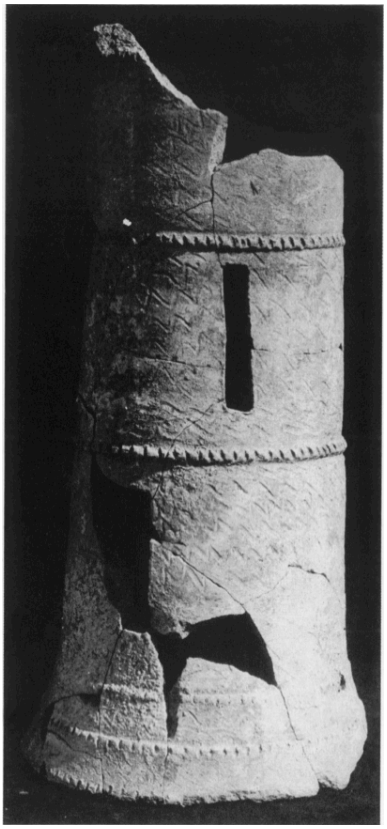

FIGURE 189. Clay portable art from FIGURE 188: 4 (TR. 4127). Oates 1974: pl. XXIXb.

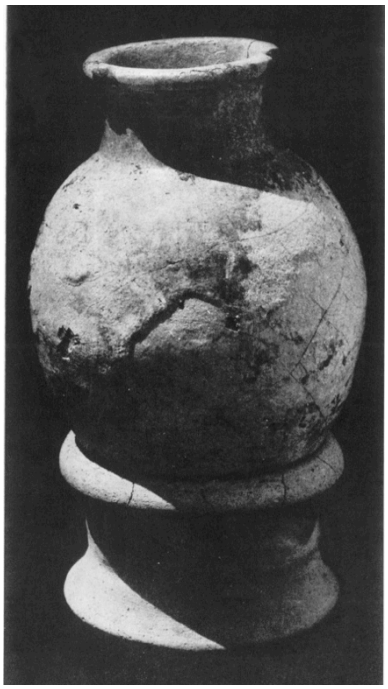

FIGURE 190. Glazed jar and stand, Late Assyrian temple at Tell al-Rimah (TR. 4116–4117). Oates 1974: pl. XXIXa.

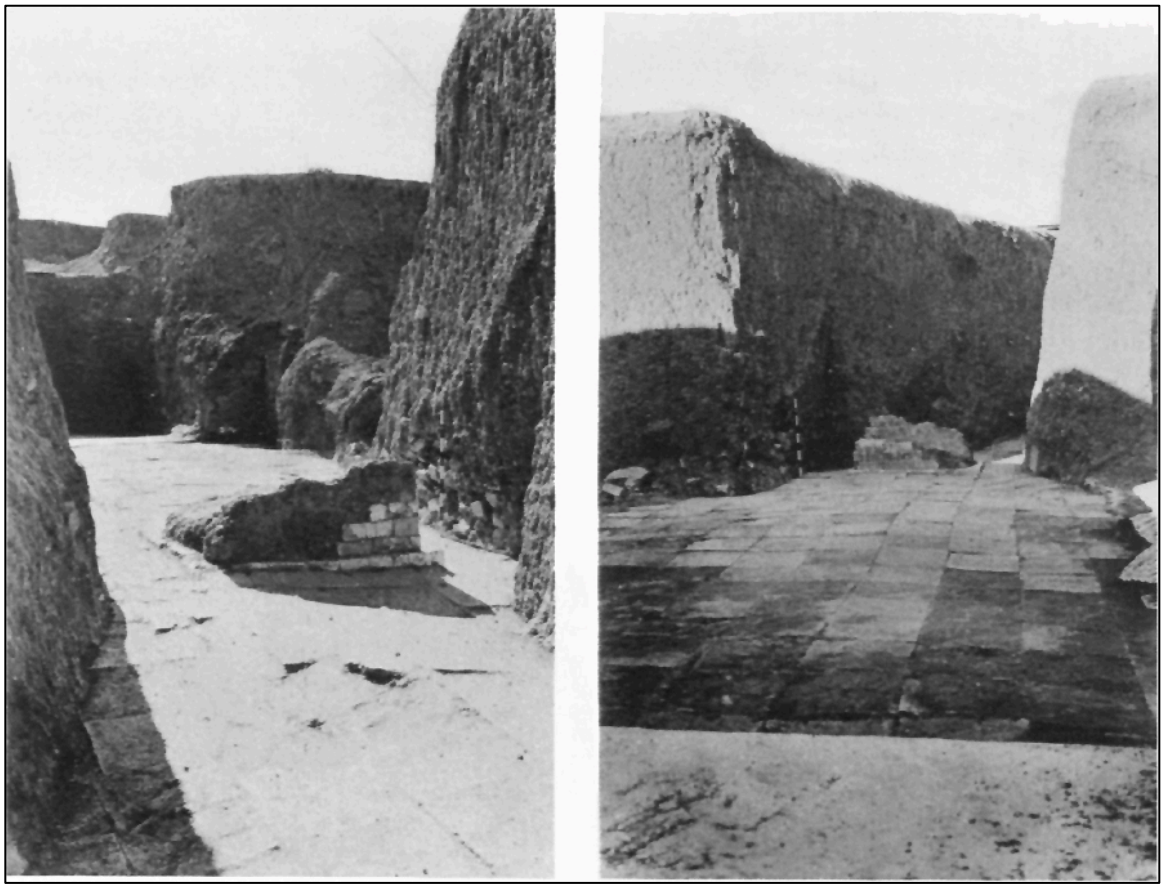

FIGURE 191. Square altar or offering table with glazed brick-work, inner courtyard of the House of Nabu, Khorsabad (Court II). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 22 E–F.

FIGURE 192. Stone water basin of Sennacherib, House of Aššur, Assur. Maul 1998: Abb. 75.

FIGURE 193. Dedicatory inscription to the god Nabu on the top of the right-hand platform flanking the steps to the dais in the side god's chamber, House of Nabu, Khorsabad (Rooms 23–24). Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 27 A.

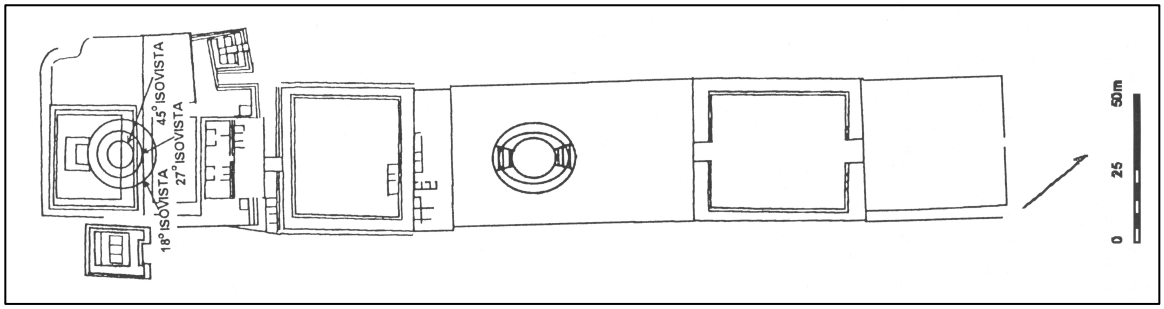

FIGURE 194. Plan of Las Aldas. Moore 1996: fig. 3.11.

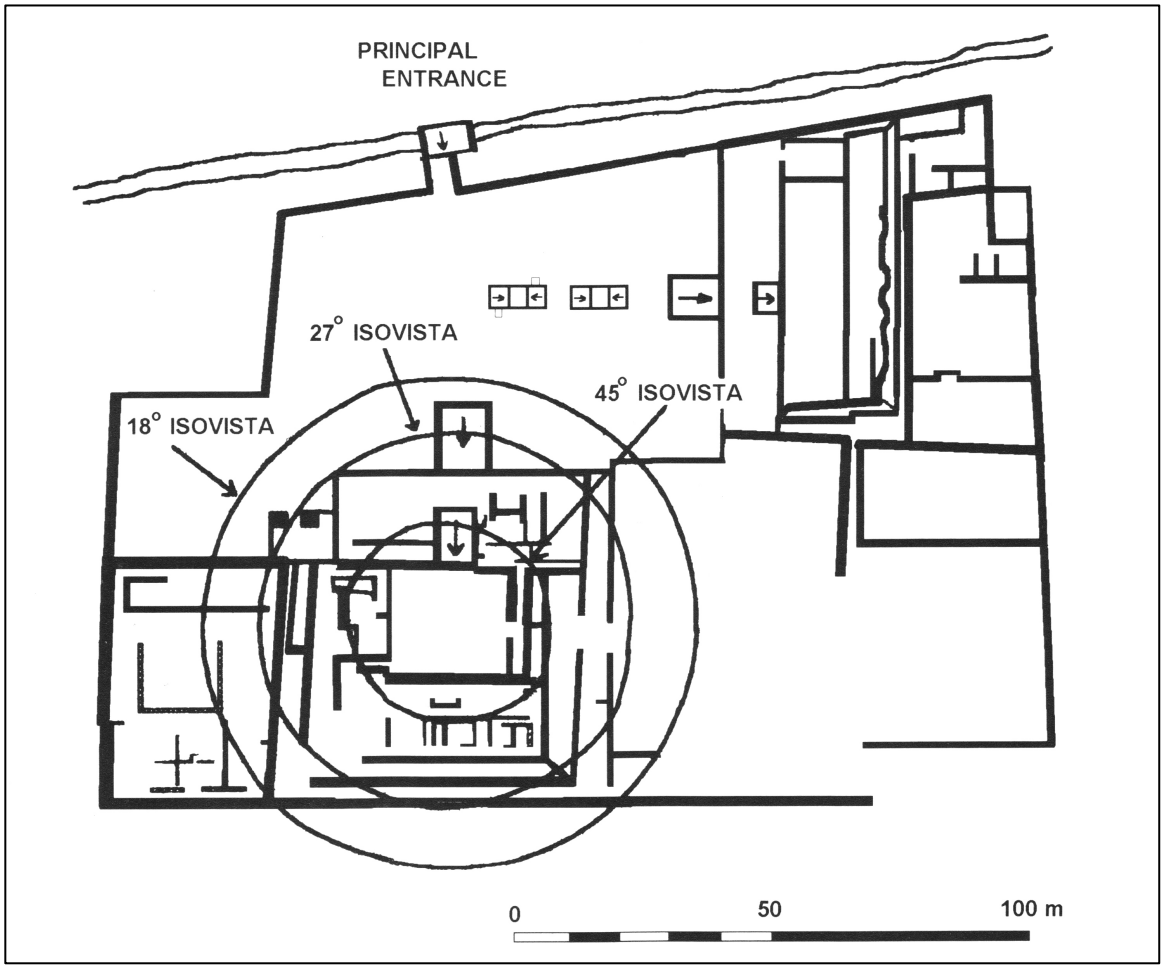

FIGURE 195. Plan of Huaca 1, Pacatnamú. Moore 1996: fig. 3.19.

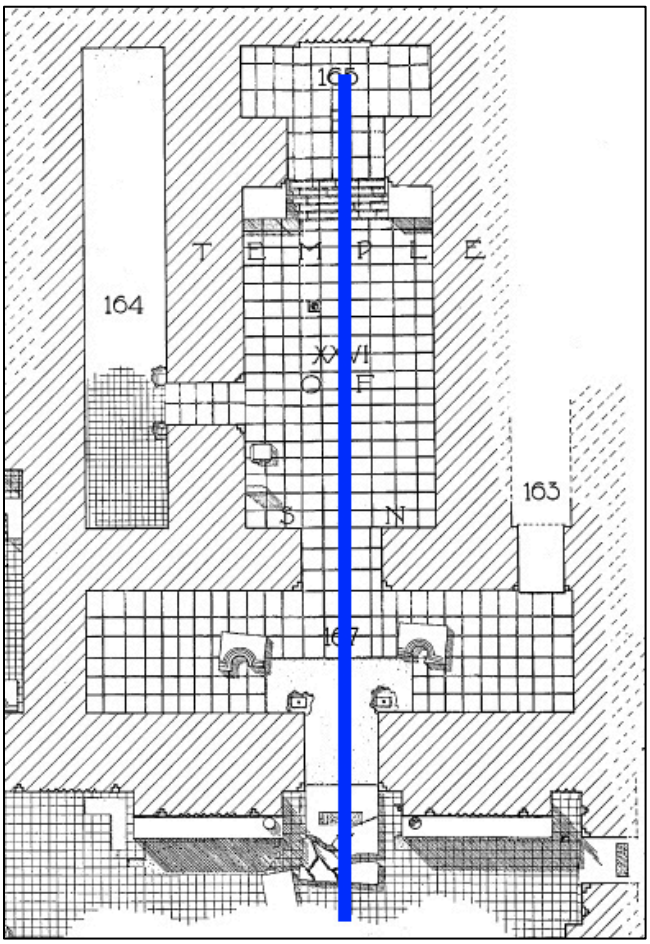

FIGURE 196. Sightline and movement in the House of Sin, Khorsabad. After Loud 1936: fig. 98.

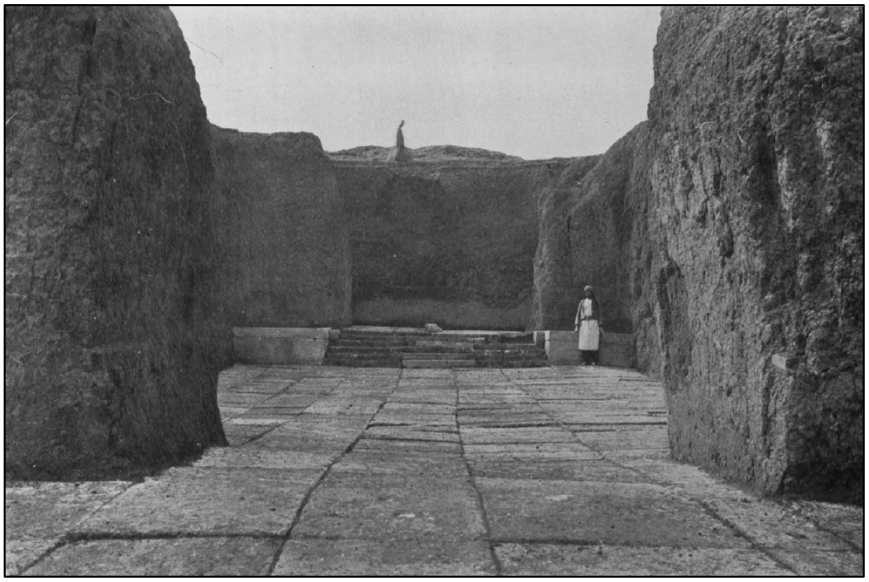

FIGURE 197. View through the House of Sin, Khorsabad, from the antechamber to the dais (Rooms 167, XXVI, 165). Loud 1936: fig. 121.

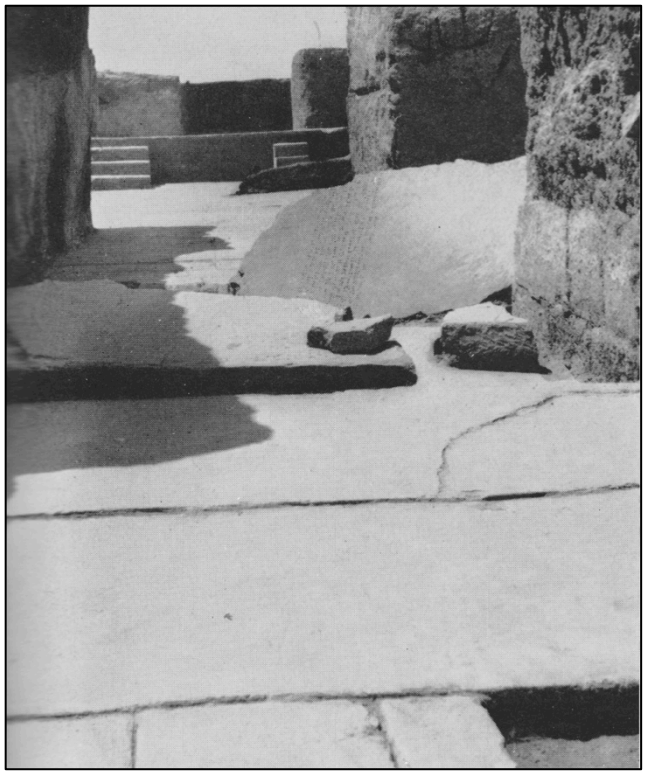

FIGURE 198. View from the antechamber to the dais in Nabu's god's chamber, Ezida, Nimrud (NT 2 and NT 4). Mallowan 1966: fig. 247.

FIGURE 199. Digital reconstruction of a god's chamber in an Assyrian temple, showing a proposed lighting scheme. © artefacts-berlin.de.

FIGURE 200. Vermeer, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. © Mauritshuis, The Hague.

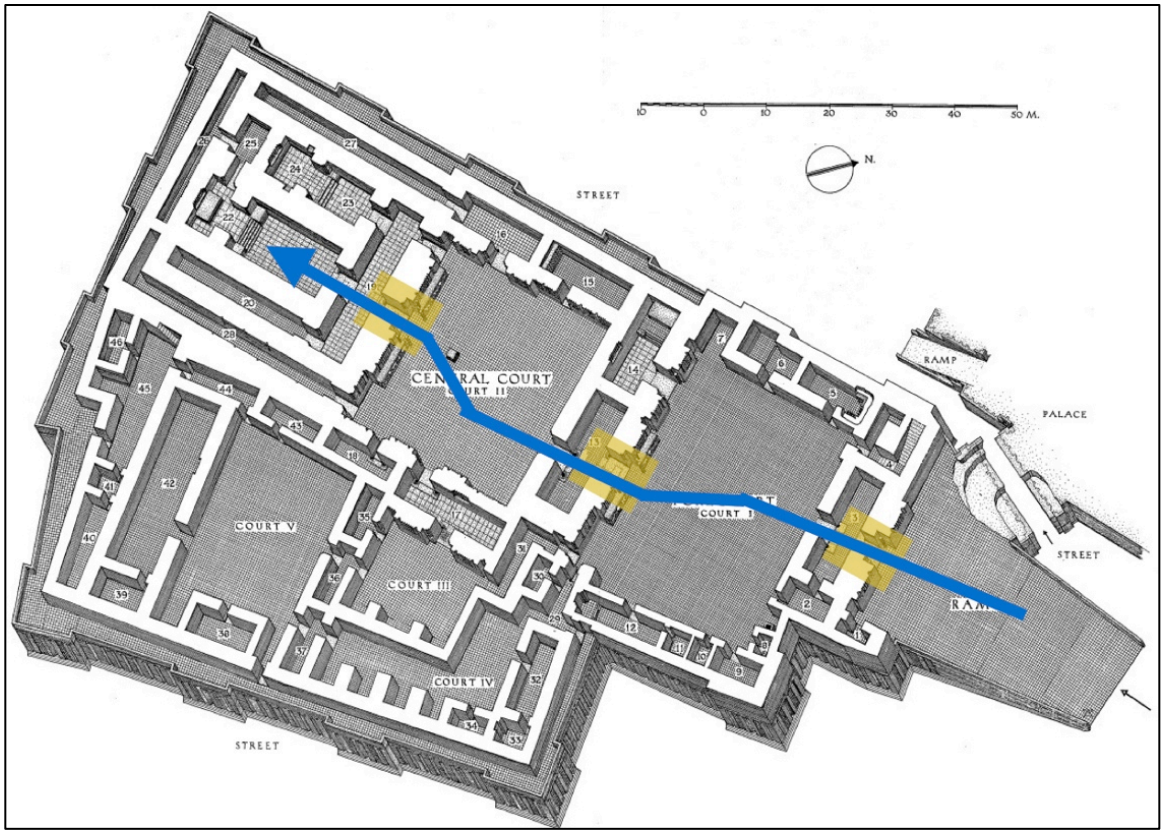

FIGURE 201. Route toward the dais in the House of Nabu, Khorsabad, with doorways marked. After Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 79.

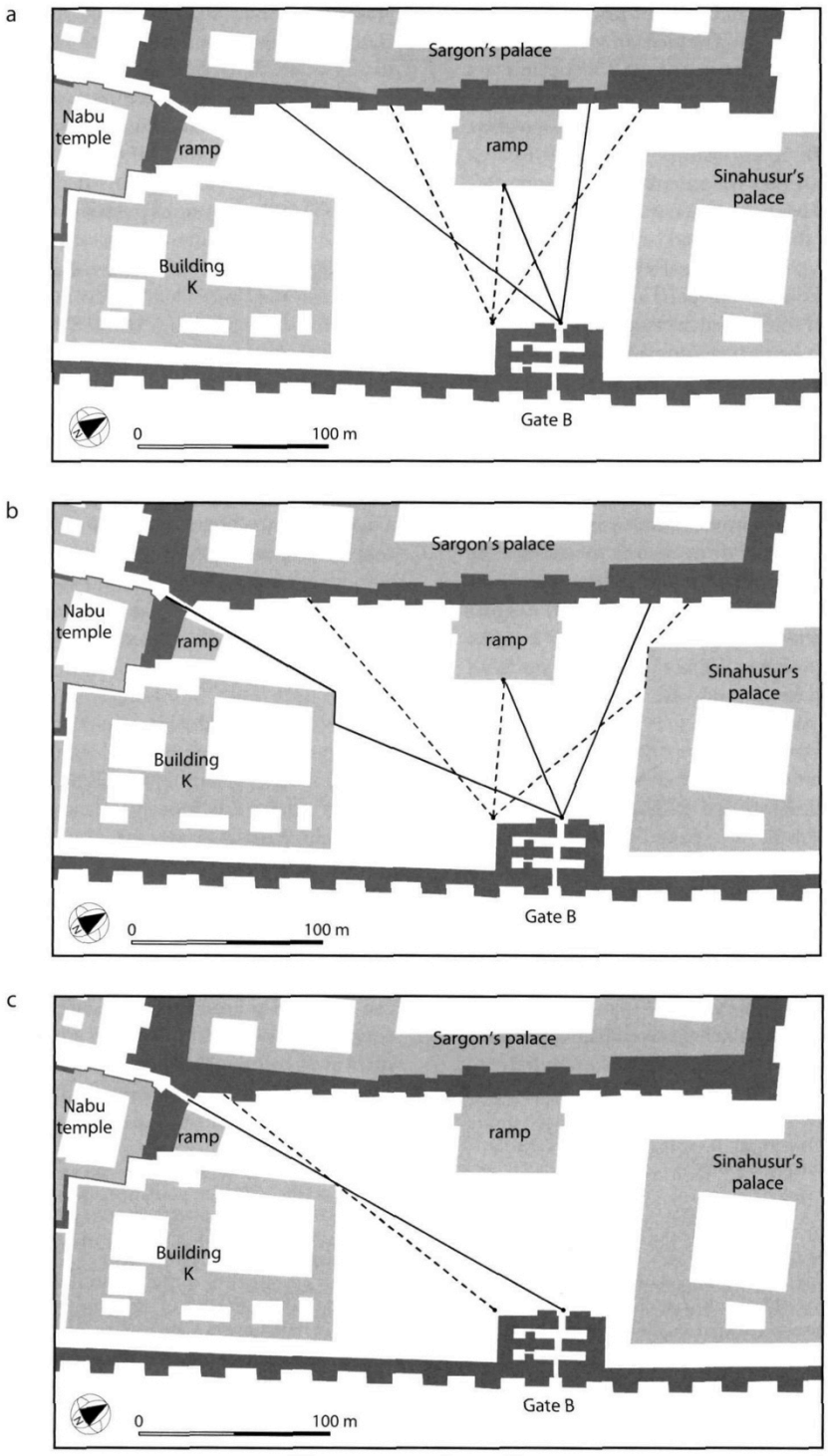

FIGURE 202. Detail of Khorsabad citadel courtyard with various spatial analyses (light gray and white areas = buildings and courtyard; dark grey areas = city wall and platforms under buildings): *a*, 60º isovist (solid black line = actual isovist dashed line = hypothetical symmetrical-entry isovist); *b*, 90º isovist (solid black line = actual isovist; dashed line = hypothetical symmetrical-entry isovist); *c*, longest axial lines (solid line = actual entry; dashed line = hypothetical symmetrical entry). McMahon 2013: fig. 4.

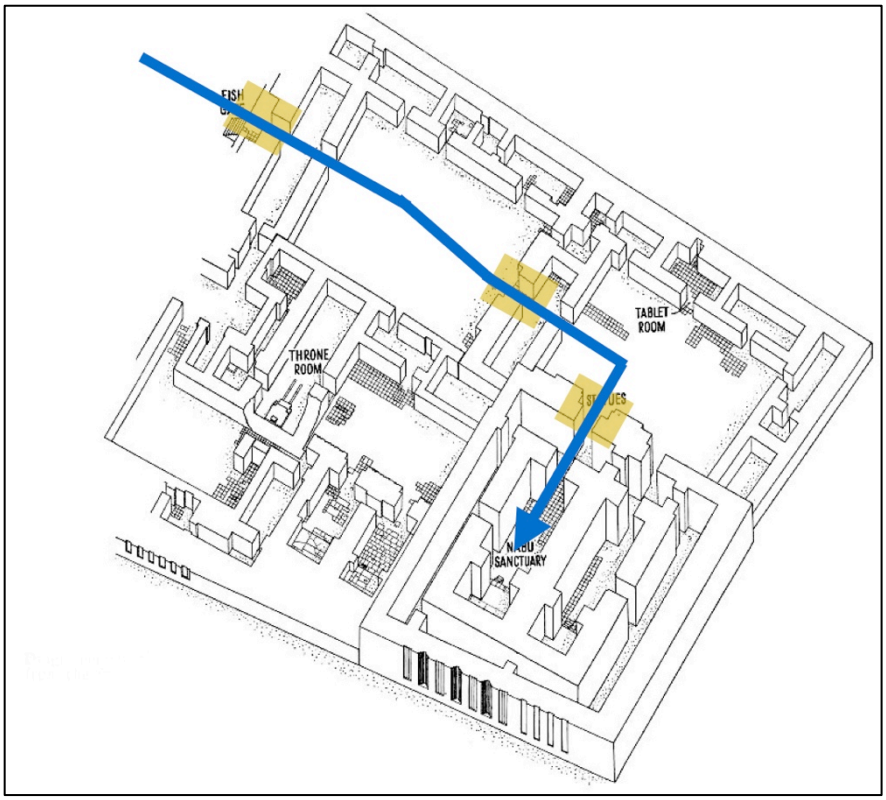

FIGURE 203. Route toward the dais in the god's chamber of Nabu in Ezida, Nimrud, with doorways marked. After Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 73.

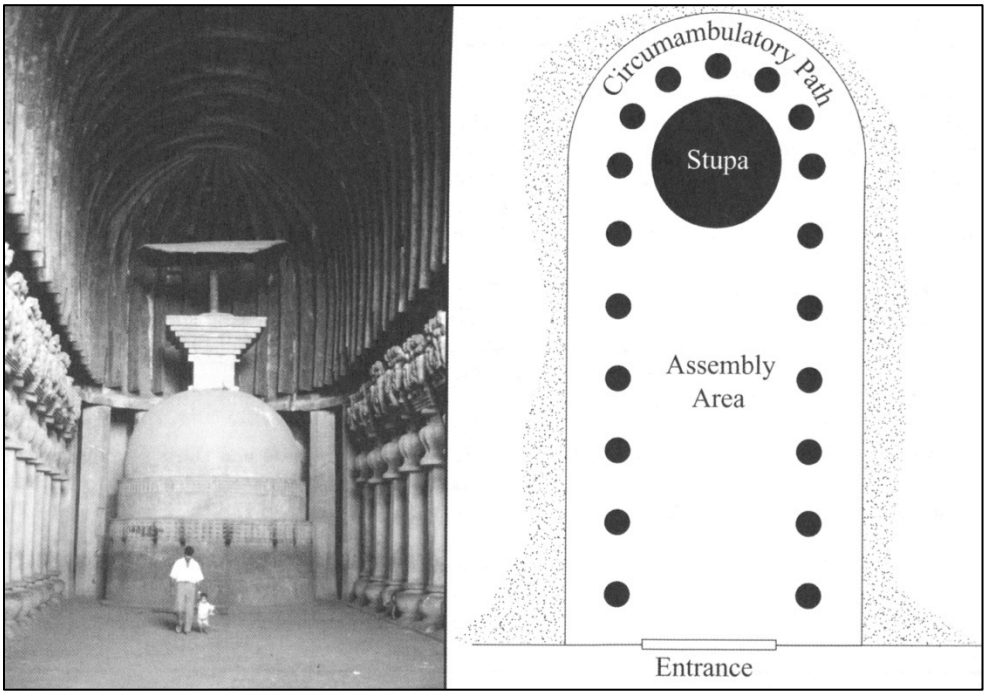

FIGURE 204. Photograph of Karla VIII *Chaitya* hall and schematic diagram of a rock-cut *stupa* complex. Fogelin 2003: Fig. 4.

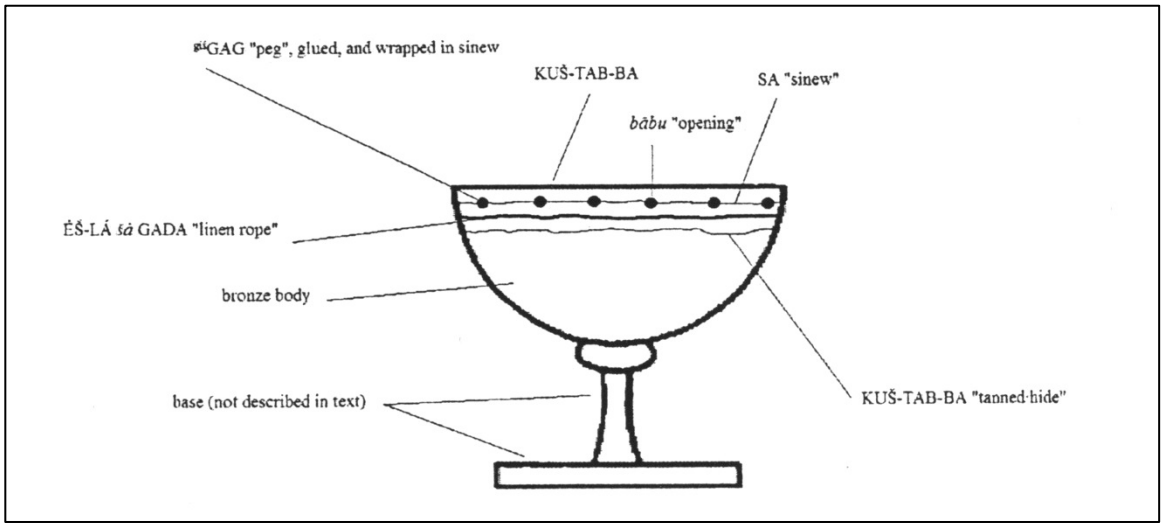

FIGURE 205. Drawing of the *lilissu* after an image inscribed into the reverse of a tablet from Hellenistic Uruk (TLC 6, 47). Mirelman 2010.

FIGURE 206. Stone divine attendant at the doorway to the god's chamber of Nabu, Ezida, Nimrud (outside NT 2). Mallowan 1966: I, 243.

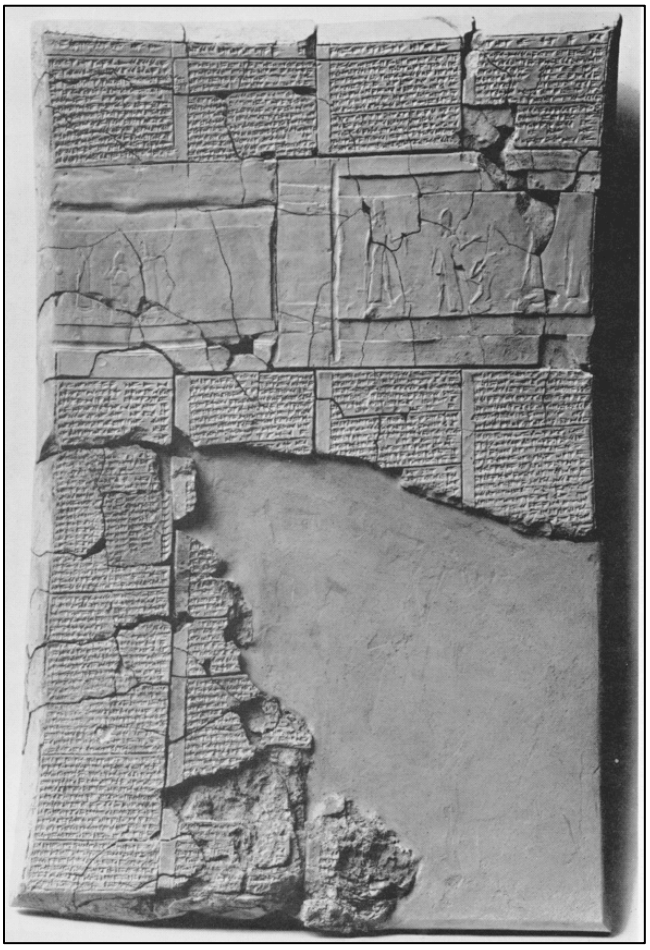

FIGURE 207. Loyalty oath tablet of Esarhaddon with the Median Ramataya, throne-room of Ezida, Nimrud (ND 4327 (IM 64188)). Mallowan 1966: fig. 205.

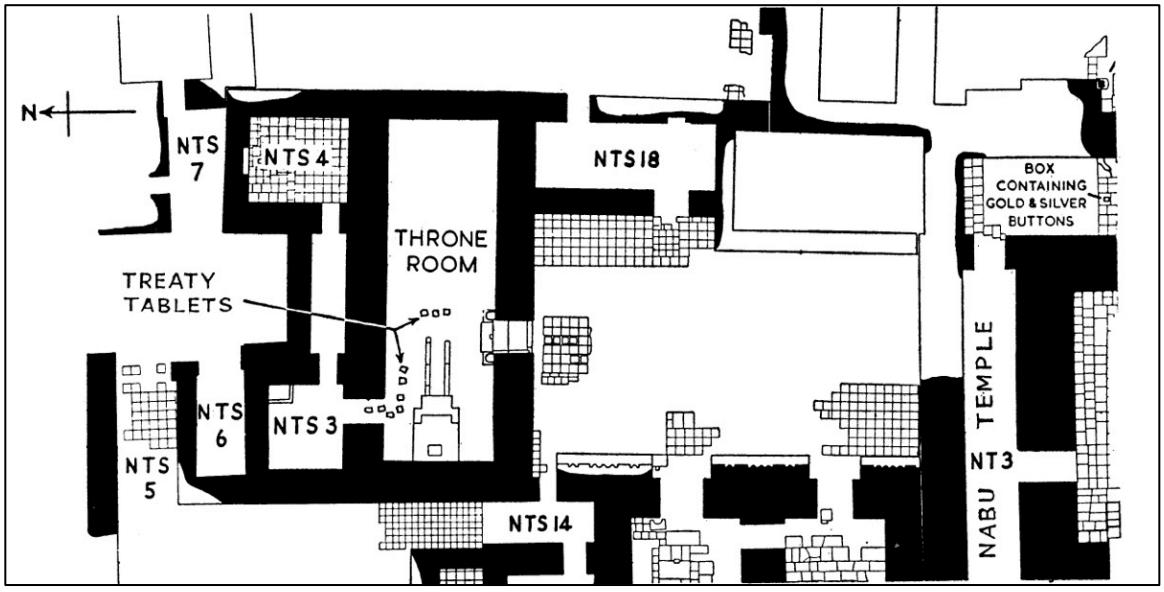

FIGURE 208. Provenance of the treaty tablets, Ezida, Nimrud. Wiseman 1958: fig. 1.

FIGURE 209. Excavations of the throne-room in Ezida, Nimrud, showing the dais and tramlines. Oates and Oates 2001: fig. 71.

FIGURE 210. Female ivory head overlaid with hammered sheet gold, throne-room of Ezida, Nimrud (ND 4203 (IM 59334)). Mallowan 1966: fig. 224.

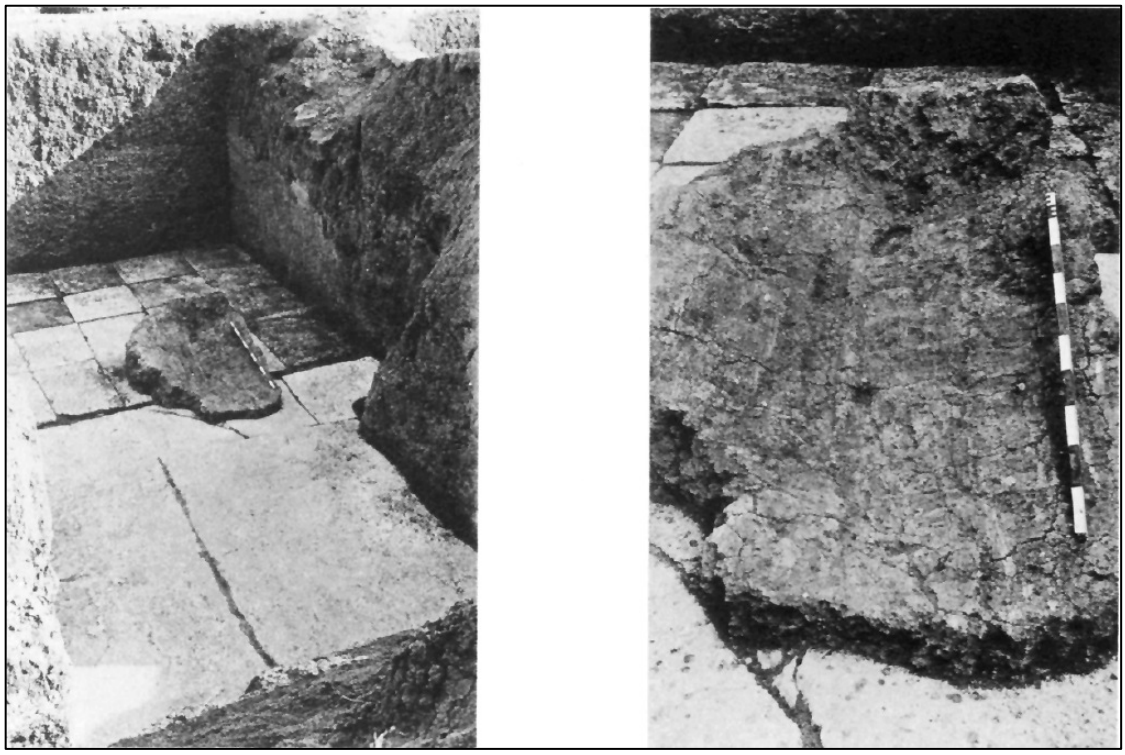

FIGURE 211. Remains of the door between the inner courtyard and Room 17, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 23 C–D.

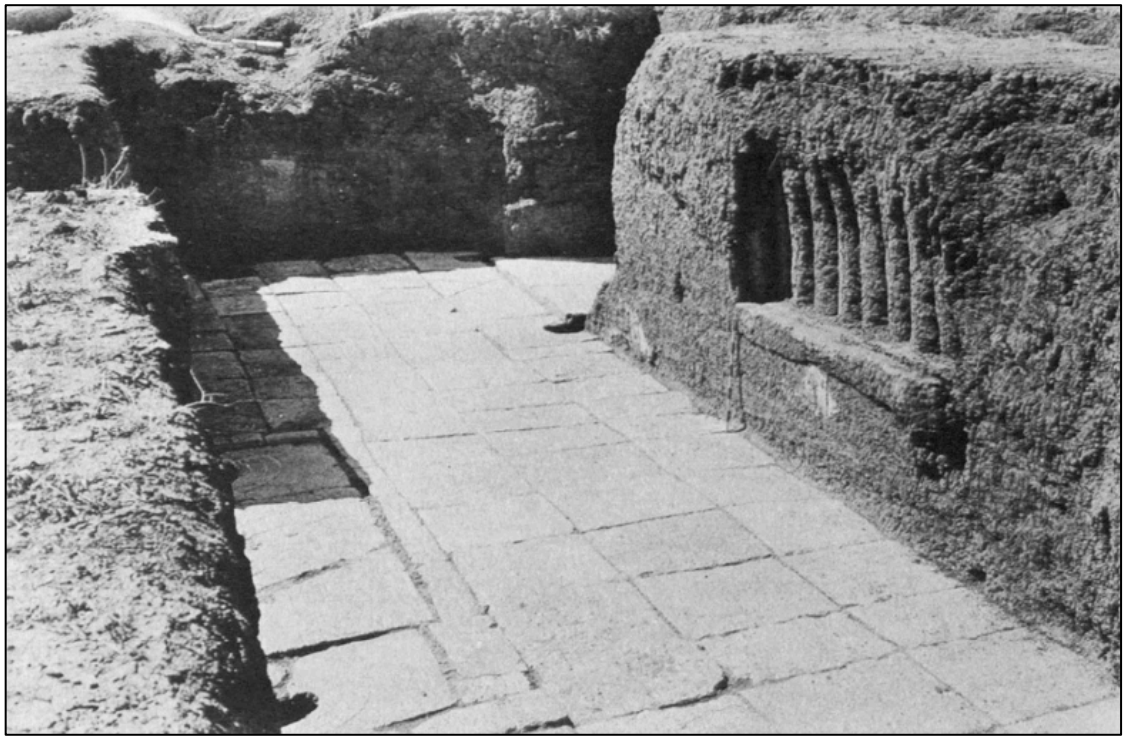

FIGURE 212. Niche of engaged half-columns, Room 17, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 23 A.

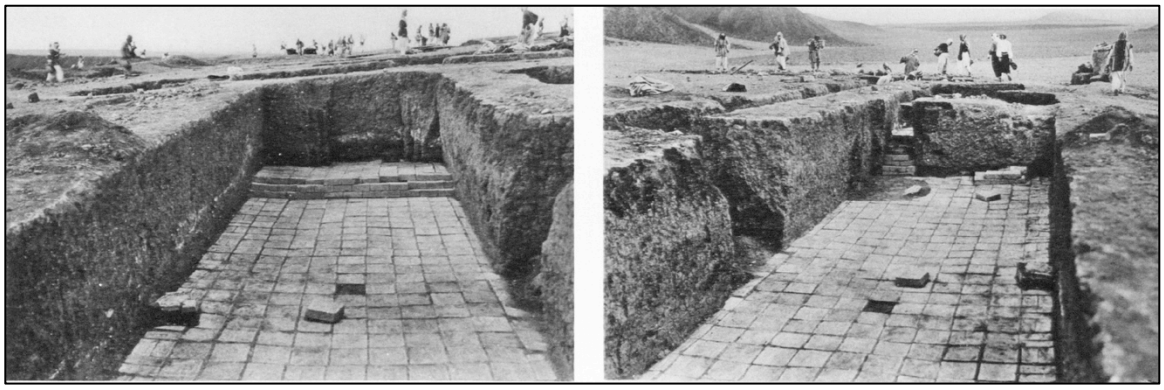

FIGURE 213. Room 12, with platform and niche at its southwest end, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 18 E–F.

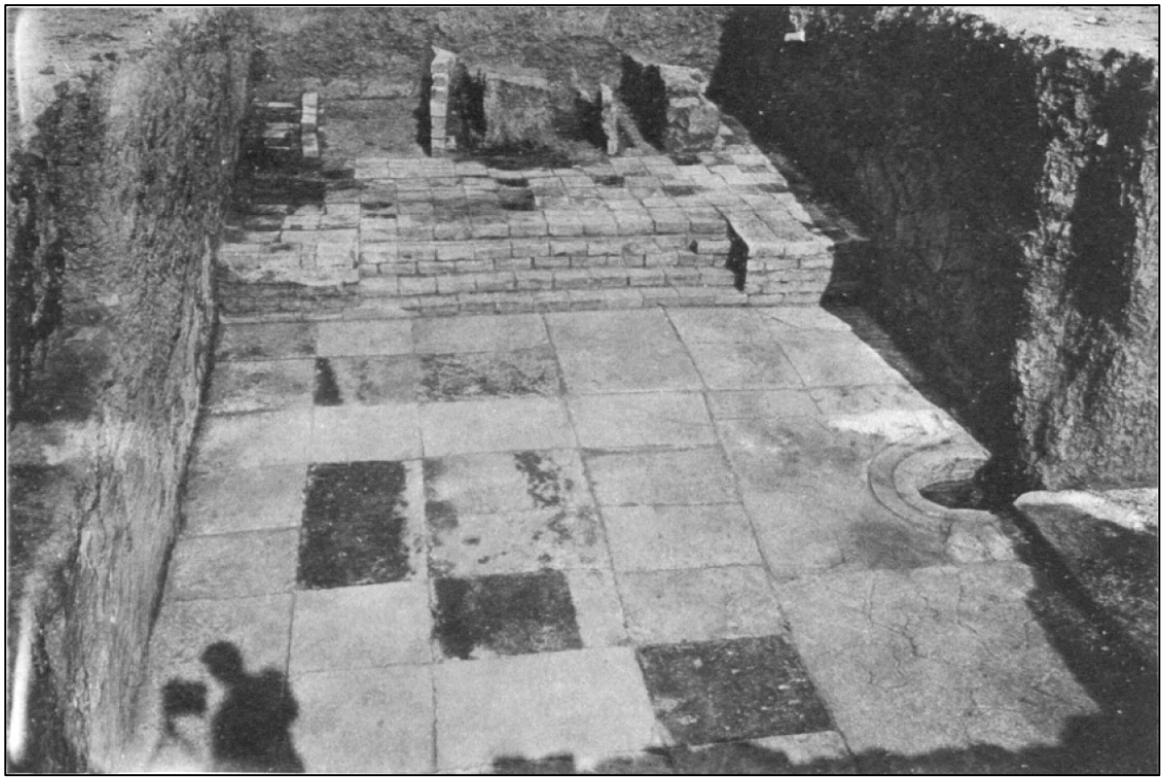

FIGURE 214. Room 14, showing raised brick platform and paving stones, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 18 C.

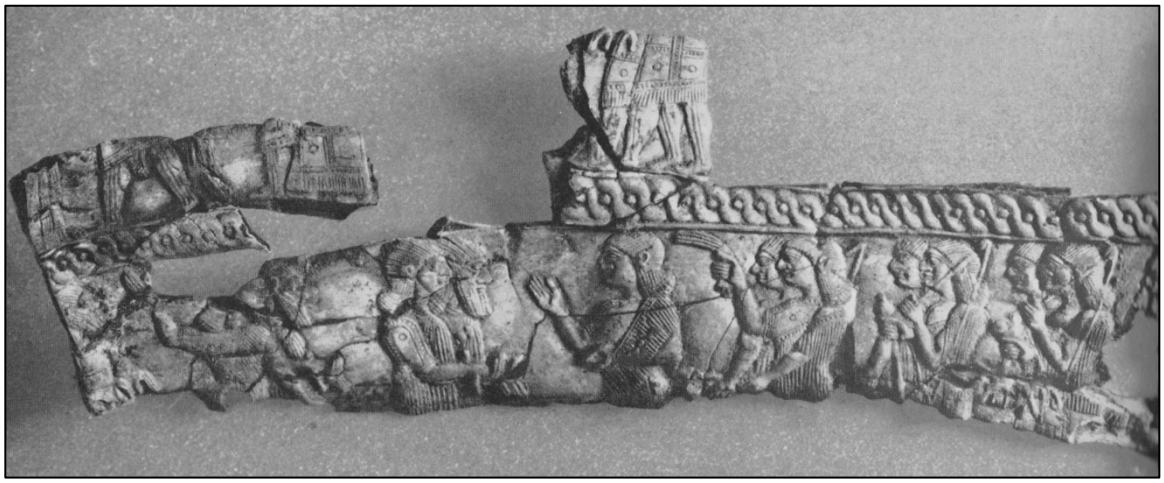

FIGURE 215. Ivory panel depicting a processional scene in relief, Ezida, Nimrud (NT14). Mallowan 1966: I, 262.

FIGURE 216. Room 5, with three tiers of pigeonholes across its northeast end and down adjacent sides, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 19 C.

FIGURE 217. Room 15, with two tiers of pigeonholes across its southwestern end, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 24 D.

FIGURE 218. Well in eastern corner of the outer courtyard, House of Nabu, Khorsabad. Loud and Altman 1938: pl. 17 B.

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APPENDIX A. SELECTED AKKADIAN TERMINOLOGY

C = Classification:

R = raw material
A = architectural designation / non-portable works of art
PA = portable works of art
P = personnel/profession
O = offerings to the gods (food, drink, aromatics)

Term	C	Translation (after CAD)	Logogram	Reference
abarakku	P	1. steward of the temple, 2. (an official of the temple or an estate), 3. chief steward of a private or royal household	(LÚ.)AGRIG	CAD "A": 1, 32f *abarakku*
abnu	R	1. stone (in natural form and location), 2. stone (prepared for specific use), 3. precious stone (shaped and polished) stone, 4. stone weight, weighing stone, 5. pebble, counter (for accounting), 6. hailstone, 7. stone (as med. term referring to bladder stone), 8. stone or seed of a plant, 9. glass, 10. in synecdochic uses	NA_4	CAD "A": 1, 54f *abnu* A
abullu	A	1. city gate, 2. entrance gate of a building or building complex, of a country, of cosmic regions, 3. district, 4. (a tax collected at the gate), 5 (a fissure in the ominous parts of the sacrificial animal)	KÁ.GAL	CAD "A": 1, 82f *abullu*
adagarru	PA	(a container with pointed bottom in ritual use for beer, wine or milk)	DUG.A.DA.GUR_4(or .GUR_5)	CAD "A": 1, 93f *adagurru*
adappu	A	(wooden) board, (metal) plate		CAD "D": 106f *dappu*
agurru	R	1. kiln-fired brick, 2. paving stone, tile, slab, 3. (an impost), 4. (a metal object)	SIG_4.AL.ÙR.(RA), SIG_4.ÙR.RA	CAD "A": 1, 160f *agurru*

aladlammû	A	bull colossus with human head	^{d}ALAD.^{d}LAMMA(KAL)	CAD “A”: 1, 286 *aladlammû*
angubbû	P	1. tutleray deity, 2 (group of stars), 3. (an ecstatic)	AN.GUB.BA	CAD “A”: 2, 117f *angubbû*
annaku	R	tin	AN.NA	CAD “A”: 2, 127f *annaku*
anzû	A	(a mythological creature resembling an eagle)	AN.IM.DUGUD.MUŠEN	CAD “A”: 2, 153f *anzû*
apsasû	A	1. (an exotic bovine), (2. (a stone or copper colossus in animal shape)	(SAL.)ÁB.ZA.ZA	CAD “A”: 2, 193f *apsasû*
āšipu	P	exorcist	(LÚ.)MAŠ.MAŠ	CAD “A”: 2, 431f *āšipu*
askuppu	A	1. stone slab, 2. threshold, doorsill, 3. lower edge, step (of a wagon, of a contrivance for drawing water)	KUN_4, KUN_5	CAD “A”: 2, 334f *askuppu*
asû	P	physician	(LÚ.)A.ZU	CAD “A”: 2, 344f *asû* A
atmanu	A	1. cella, sanctum of a temple, 2. (a poetic word for temple).		CAD “A”: 2, 495f *atmanu*
ayakku	A	(a structure in a temple)	É.AN.NA	CAD “A”: 1, 224f *ajakku*
bābu	A	1. opening, doorway, door, gate, entrance (to a house, a building or a part thereof, to a palace, a temple or part thereof, to a city, to a cosmic locality), 2. city quarter, 3. opening of a canal, of an object, of a part of the body, 4. in *bāb ekalli* umbilical fissure of the liver, 5. opening, beginning (in transferred mngs.), 6. item, section	KÁ	CAD “B”: 14f *bābu* A

bārû	P	diviner	(LÚ.)MAŠ.ŠU.GÍD.GÍD, LÚ.ḪAL	CAD "B": 121f *bārû*
bēl pīḫat	P	1. governor, 2. (a minor provincial official in Babylonia)	(LÚ).EN.NAM	CAD "P": 367f *pīḫatu* in *bēl pīḫati*
bīt ili	A	temple	É.DINGIR	CAD "B": 287f *bītu* 1 c)
bītu	A	1. house, dwelling place, shelter (of an animal), temple, palace 2. manor, estate, encampment (of nomads), 3. room (of a house, a palace, a temple), cabin (of a boat, tomb, 4. container, repository, housing, 5. place, plot, area, region, 6. household, family, royal house, 7. estate, aggregate of property of all kinds	É	CAD "B": 282f *bītu*
burāšu	R	1. juniper tree, 2. (an aromatic substance obtained from the juniper tree)	GIŠ.LI, ŠIM.LI, GIŠ.ŠIM.LI, Ú.GIŠ.LI	CAD "B": 326f *burāšu*
buṭnu	R	terebinth		CAD "B": 358f *buṭnu*
da'mu	R	dark-colored, dark red c) said of a dark red earth used as a dye	IM.SIG$_7$.SIG$_7$	CAD "D": 75f *da'mu* c)
daltu	A	1. door, 2. the sluice-gate of a canal, 3. (a type of revenue)	GIŠ.IG	CAD "D": 1, 52f *daltu*
dišpu	R	honey	LÀL	CAD "D": 161f *dišpu*
duprānu	R	a tree-like variety of juniper (Juniperus drupacea)		CAD "D": 189f *duprānu*
dušû	R	1. (a precious stone of characteristic color), 2. leather dyed and tanned the color of *d*.-stone, 3. (inflated) goat (or sheep) skin, 4. (a color)	DU$_8$.ŠI.A	CAD "D": 200f *dušû* A

egubbû	PA	1. holy water, 2. basin for holy water	(DUG).A.GÚG.BA	CAD “E”: 49f *egubbû* A
ekurru	A	temple	É.KUR(.RA)	CAD “E”: 70f *ekurru* A
elallu		(a stone)	NA_4.A.LAL/LÁL.LUM	CAD “E”: 74f *elallu* A
elmēšu	R	(a precious stone)	SUD.ÁG	CAD “E”: 107f
erēnu	R	cedar (tree, wood and resin)	(GIŠ)ERIN	CAD “E”: 274F *erēnu* A
ērib bīti	P	(a person admitted to all parts of the temple)	(LÚ.)TU.É	CAD “E”: 290f *ērib bīti*
eršu	P	1. bed, 2. (a tray)	GIŠ.NÁ	CAD “E”: 315f *eršu*
erû	R	copper	URUDU	CAD “E”: 321f *erû* A
ešertu	A	1. sanctuary (as a general designation of a temple, originally, the cella), 2. a special room in a private house for cultic purposes, 3. socle (in the form of a sanctuary, for images, symbols, etc.)		CAD “A”: 2, 436 *aširtu* A
ešmarû		(a type of silver)		CAD “E”: 366f *ešmarû*
gaṣṣu	R	gypsum, whitewash	IM.BABBAR	CAD “G”: 51f *gaṣṣu*
ginû	O	1. normality, correctness, 2. regular offerings, dues	GI.NA	CAD “G”: 80f *ginû* A
girimḫilibû	R	(a precious stone)	(NA_4.)GI.RIM. ḪI.LI.BA	CAD “G”: 88 *girimḫilibû*
gišnugallu	R	alabaster	NA_4.GIŠ.NU_x.GAL	CAD “G”: 104f *gišnugallu*
gizillû	PA	torch of reed for cultic purposes	GI.IZI.LÁ	CAD “G”: 113f *gizillû*

guqqanû	O	(an offering)		CAD “G”: 135f *guqqanû*
ḫalṣu	R	1. obtained by *ḫalāṣu* (said of oil, etc.), 2. pressed out (said of sesame seeds), 3. combed (said of flax)	BÁRA.GA	CAD “Ḫ”: 50f *ḫalṣu*
ḫašurru	R	(a kind of cedar)	GIŠ.ḪA.ŠUR	CAD “Ḫ”: 147f *ḫašūrru*
ḫibištu	R	1. cuttings (of undefined nature, 2. cuttings of resinous and aromatic substances, 3. plants yielding aromatic substance, 4. fragrance		CAD “Ḫ”: 180f *ḫibištu*
ḫilibû	R	(a precious stone)		CAD “Ḫ”: 186 *ḫilibû*
himētu	R	ghee	Ì.NUN.(NA)	CAD “Ḫ”: 189f *himētu*
ḫulālu	R	(a precious stone)	NA_4.NÍR	CAD “Ḫ”: 226f *ḫulālu*
ḫurāṣu	R	gold; 1. as material, 2. varieties, 3. economic use, 4. figurative use, 5. in pharmacopoeia, 6. other occ.	KÙ.GI	CAD “Ḫ”: 245f *ḫurāṣu*
ḫurāṣu ḫuššû	R	red gold		CAD “Ḫ”: 261f *ḫuššû*; 246 *ḫurāṣu* (2)
ḫurāṣu sāmu	R	red; referring to the natural color - of gold (designating a special quality)		CAD “S”: 126f *sāmu* a)
igulû	R	perfumed oil	Ì.GU.LA	CAD “I/J”: 45f *igulû*
ikribu	O	1. blessing, benediction, 2. money or goods pledged by a vow to a deity, 3. prayer	$ŠUD_x$, $SISKU_x$	CAD “I/J”: 62f *ikribu*
iṣu	R	1. tree, 2. timber, lumber, wood, wooden implements, aromatic wood, firewood, 3. wooded area	GIŠ	CAD “I/J”: 214f *iṣu*

išippu	P	purification priest	IŠIB(ME)	CAD "I/J": 242f *išippu*
itinnu	P	house builder	(LÚ.)DÍM	CAD "I": 296f *itinnu* A
kabšarru	P	jeweler, stone-mason	(LÚ.)KAB.SAR	CAD "K": 23f *kabšarru*
kakugallu	P	exorcist	KA.KÙ.GAL	CAD "K": 61 *kakugallu*
kalû	P	lamentation-priest	GALA(UŠ.KU)	CAD "K": 91f *kalû* A
kaspu	R	1. silver (as metal used for objects as means of payment), 2. money (as medium of exchange), price, value, payment (usually pl.)	KÙ.BABBAR	CAD "K": 245f *kaspu*
karānu	R	1. wine, 2. grapevine, 3. grapes	(GIŠ.)GEŠTIN	CAD "K": 202f *karānu*
karkadinnu	P	(a baker or cook producing special meals)	LÚ.SUM.NINDA	CAD "K": 42 *kakardinnu*
karru	A	knob, pommel	GÀR	CAD "K: 221f *karru*
kigallu	A	1. raised platform for cultic purposes, 2. pedestal, base (for a statue, a cult object, an architectural feature made of stone, metal, brick, precious stones, etc. often inscribed), 3. (a poetic term for nether world)	KI.GAL	CAD "K": 348f *kigallu*
kilzappu	A	1. footstool, 2. socle, pedestal, 3. threshing board, 4. (a part of a liver)	GIŠ.GÌR.GUB(.BU), GÌR.GUB	CAD "K": 361f *kilzappu*
kinūnu	PA	1. kiln, stove, brazier, 2. (a ritual performed with the *kīnunu*, festival during which the ritual is performed, month of the festival), 3. (name of a demon)	KI.NE	CAD "K": 393f *kinūnu*
kisallu	A	courtyard (of a private house, a palace or a temple complex)	KISAL	CAD "K": 416f *kisallu*

kiṣṣu	A	cella, chapel (as a specific part of a sanctuary, also a term for temple)		CAD" K": 443f *kiṣṣu*
kulullu	A	(a fabulous creature, part man and part fish)	KU_6LÚ.U_x(GIŠGAL).LU)	CAD "K": 526f *kulullu*
kulūlu	A	1. part of a headdress (a kind of turban, worn mainly by deities or kings and queens), headband, 2. cornice (as an architectural element)		CAD "K": 527f *kulūlu*
kurību	A	(a representation of a protective genius with specific non-human features)		CAD "K": 559 *kurību*
kurunnu	R	(a choice kind of beer or wine)	KAŠ.DIN.NAM/NA	CAD "K": 579f *kurunnu*
kusarikku	A	1. bison (as a mythological creature), 2. (a constellation)	GUD.ALIM, GUD.A.LIM	CAD "K": 584f *kusarikku*
kutimmu	P	gold- or silversmith	LÚ.KÙ.DÍM	CAD "K": 608f *kutimmu*
laḫḫinus	P	(an administrative official)		CAD "A": 1, 294f *alaḫḫinū* (*laḫḫinū*)
laḫmu	A	(a monster)		CAD "L": 41f *laḫmu*
lamassu	A	1. protective spirit (representing and protecting the good fortune, spiritual health and physical appearance of human beings, temples, cities and countries), 2. representation of the *lamassu*-spirit, 3. representation in human shape, 4. (a precious stone), 5. (a star)	(SAL)^{d}LAMMA(.LAMMA)	CAD "L": 60f *lamassu*
liāru	R	(a conifer)	GIŠ.EREN.BABBAR	CAD "T": 399f *tijāru* (*lijāru, tijālu*)

libittu	R	1. brick, mud brick, 2. brickwork, 3. slab, block, cake (of material other than mud)	SIG_4	CAD "L": 176f *libittu*
lilissu	PA	kettledrum	LI.LI.ÌZ	CAD "L": 186f *lilissu*
māḫāzu	A	1. a small structure or enclosure (serving as a sacred place, or connected with a well or pond), 2. sanctuary, temple (containing a *m.*), 3. city in which such a temple stands, important city, 4. town, settlement, 5. quay, harbor	$KI.ŠU.PEŠ_{5/6}$	CAD "M": 1, 85f *māḫāzu*
mākālu	O	1. food, meal, food offering to the gods, 2. hurt(?)		CAD "M": 123f *mākālu*
manzaltu	A	1. stand for an object or image, 2. position, rank (at court), array (of battle), location (of a star), 3. office, officeholder, 4. service obligation		CAD "M": 1, 228f *manzaltu* A
maqqû	PA	1. libation bowl (made of gold or silver), 2. pouring		CAD "M": 1, 254 *maqqû* A
mašennu	P	(a high official, "steward")	LÚ.IGI+DUB	CAD "M": 1, 363f *mašennu*
maškittu	PA	offering tablet		CAD "M": 1, 376f *maškittu*
miḫru	R	(a fir tree)		CAD "M": 2, 60 *miḫru* B
mugirru	PA	1. wheel (of a chariot or wagon), 2. chariot (royal or ceremonial)	(GIŠ.)UMBIN	CAD "M": 2, 170 *mugirru*
musukkannu	R	(a tree imported from the East, and its wood)	(GIŠ.)MES.MÁ.KAN.NA	CAD "M": 2, 237f *musukkannu*

muššaru	R	(a semiprecious stone)	NA_4.NÍR.MUŠ.GÍR	CAD "M": 2, 279f *muššaru*
mutinnu		wine		CAD "M": 2, 298f *mutinnu*
naggāru	P	carpenter	NAGAR	CAD "N": 1, 112f *naggāru*
nāgir ekalli	P	1. herald, 2. (a high official in Assyria and Elam) c) *nāgir ekalli*, *n.* of the palace	(LÚ.)NIMGIR É.GAL	CAD "N": 1, 118 *nāgiru*
naptanu	O	1. food allotment, meal, banquet, 2. time of the evening meal, evening	KIN.SIG, NÍG.DU, BUR	CAD "N": 1, 319f *naptanu*
narkabtu	PA	1. chariot, 2. the constellation Auriga	GIŠ.GIGIR, GIŠ.GIGÍR	CAD "N": 1, 353f *narkabtu*
nâru	P	musician	(LÚ.)NAR	CAD "N": 1, 376f *nâru*
narû	A	1. stone monument inscribed with laws and regulations, 2. boundary stone, 3. memorial monument set up by the king	NA_4.NA.RÚ.A, NA_4.RÚ.A	CAD "N": 1, 364f *narû* A
nēbeḫu	A	1. (a belt or sash), 2. frieze	(TÚG.)ÍB.LÁ	CAD "N": 2, 143f *nēbeḫu* A
nēmedu	A	1. support, 2. (a piece of furniture), 3. cult platform, foundation, 4. (an astronomical term), 5. (unkn. mng., in the name of a calamity		CAD "N": 2, 155f *nēmedu*
nignakku	PA	censer, incense burner	NÍG.NA	CAD "N": 2, 216f *nignakku*
nindabû	O	cereal offering, food offering, provisions	PAD.^{d}INNIN	CAD "N": 2, 236f *nindabû*
niqû	O	offering, sacrifice	(UDU.)SISKUR, $SISKUR_x$	CAD "N": 2, 252f *niqû*

nuḫatimmu	P	cook	(LÚ.)MU	CAD "N": 2, 313f *nuḫatimmu*
papāḫu	A	cella, sanctuary, chapel	(É.)PA.PAḪ	CAD "P": 101f *papāḫu*
pappardilû	R	(a whitish semiprecious stone)	(NA_4.)BABBAR.DIL, (NA_4.)$BABBAR_x$.DIL	CAD "P": 107f *pappardilû*
papparminu	R	(a whitish semiprecious stone)	(NA_4.)$BABBAR.MIN_5$ (DIL.DIL)	CAD "P": 110f *papparminu*
parakku	A	dais, pedestal, socle, sanctuary, shrine, divine throne room	BÁRA	CAD "P": 145f *parakku* A
parūtu	R	(a type of alabaster)		CAD "P": 211 *parūtu* A
parzillu	R	1. iron, 2. NA_4.AN.BAR (a stone or bead, "iron stone")	AN.BAR	CAD "P": 212f *parzillu*
paššīšu	P	(a priest, lit. anointed one)	$GUDU_4$	CAD "P": 253f *pašīšu*
paššūru	PA	1. dining tray, table, 2. offering table, 3. serving portion	(GIŠ.)BANŠUR	CAD "P": 259f *paššūru*
paṭiru	PA	(a table)	$GI.DU_8$	CAD "P": 303f *paṭiru*
pendû	R	1. (a red mole, blemish), 2. (a semiprecious reddish stone), 3. (a red berry or the shrub producing it), 4. (uncert. mng.)	GUG, (NA_4.)^{d}ŠE.TIR	CAD "P": 323f *pendû*
pīlu	R	limestone		CAD "P": 380f *pīlu*
pīlu peṣû	R	white limestone		CAD "P": 381f *pīlu* b) 2′
purkullu	P	stone carver, stone cutter, lapidary	(LÚ.)BUR.GUL	CAD "P": 519f *purkullu*

qurqurru	P	1. (craftsmen working in wood and metal), 2. (an insect)	URUDU.NAGAR, LÚ.GUR.GUR	CAD "G": 137f *gurgurru* (*qurqurru*)
rab ša rēši	P	head, commander of the court attendants or offices	GAL.SAG, GAL.LÚ.SAG, LÚ.GAL.SAG	CAD "R": 289f *rēšu* in *rab ša rēši*
rab šāqê	P	chief cup-bearer	LÚ.GAL.ŠU.SÌLA.DU_8, (LÚ.)GAL.KAŠ.LUL, LÚ.GAL.ŠU. DU_8.A	CAD "Š": 2, 30f *šāqû* A in *rab šāqî*
rabû	P	important, noble person	GAL, GU.LA	CAD "R": 36f *rabû* 7. (pl. *rabûtu*)
ramku	P	(a cultic functionary)	LÚ.TU_5	CAD "R": 126f *ramku*
rīmu	A	wild bull	AM, GUD.AM	CAD "R": 359f *rīmu* A
riksu	O	1. band, tie, sash, strap, 3. structure, bond, 3. join, ligament, sinew, 4. package, bundle contingent (of persons), collection (of tablets), 5. ritual arrangement, preparation, 6. structure, organization, 7. contract, agreement, treaty, amount specific by contract, 8. rule, regulation, edict, decree	KÉŠ, DUR	CAD "R": 351f *riksu*
riqqu	R	aromatic plant	ŠIM.MEŠ, ŠIM.ḪI.A	CAD "R": 368f *riqqu*
samdu	R	(coarsely) ground		CAD "S": 114 *samdu*
sāmtu	R	(a red stone, mostly designating carnelian)	NA_4.GIG	CAD "S": 121f *sāmtu* A
sartennu	P	chief judge		CAD "S": 185f *sartennu*
sattukku	O	food allowance, regular offering	SÁ.DUG_4	CAD "S": 198f *sattukku*

sikkātu	P	1. peg, nail (of wood or metal), 2. (part of a lock), 3. foundation cone, wall cone, 4. pyramid, pinnacle, 5. plowshare, 6. (a pock or pimple, also a disease)	GIŠ.KAK	CAD "S": 247f *sikkātu* A
sikkūru	A	1. bar, bolt (as locking device), 2. (part of a plow)	GIŠ.SAG.KUL	CAD "S": 256f *sikkūru*
sillu	A	arch, corbel		CAD "S": 265 *sillu* A
simtu	P	1. person or think that is fitting, suitable, seemly, appropriate, necessary, 2. person or thing, that befits, does honor to, is the pride of, 3. appurtenances, ornament, characteristic, insigne, proper appearance or behavior or ways, figural representation, 4. face, features, 5. (in plant names)		CAD "S": 278f *simtu*
siparru	R	1. bronze, 2. fetter	ZABAR	CAD "S": 296f *siparru*
sippu	A	1. doorframe, doorjambs, 2. (a part of a the sheep's liver, lit. door-frame), 3. entrance(way) to a city, edge(?) of a city wall, 4. rim(?), facing(?)	ZAG.DU_8	CAD "S": 300f *sippu* A
sirāšû	P	brewer	(LÚ.)ŠIM, ŠIMXGAR	CAD "S": 306f *sirāšû*
suḫurmašû	A	1. goat-fish (as mythological creature), 2. the constellation Capricorn	SUḪUR.MÁŠ(.KU_6)	CAD "S": 351f *suḫurmašû*
sukkallu	P	1. (a court official), 2. (the title of the ruler of Elam)	(LÚ.)SUKKAL	CAD "S": 354f *sukkallu*
sukku	A	(a shrine or small chapel)		CAD "S": 361f *sukku*
suluppū	R	(ripened and plucked) dates	ZÚ.LUM(.MA)	CAD "S": 373 *suluppū*
ṣallamtu	R	(a black stone, probably basalt)		CAD "Ṣ": 73 *ṣallamtu*

ṣalmu	A	statue (in the round), relief, drawing, constellation, figurine (used for magic purposes), bodily shape, stature, likeness (in transferred mngs.)	ALAM, NU	CAD "Ṣ": 78f *ṣalmu*
ṣāriru	R	1. (a poetic term for a fine quality of gold), 2. (a star, constellation)	AN.TA.SUR.RA (mng. 2)	CAD "Ṣ": 111f *ṣāriru* A
šadânu	R	1. hematite, 2. *šadânu ṣābitu* magnetite, lodestone	NA_4.KA.GI.NA, NA_4 KUR-*nu*	CAD "Š": 1, 36 *šadânu* A
šallaru	R	mortar, (mud) plaster		CAD "Š": 1, 247f *šallaru* A
šamnu	R	oil, fat, cream	Ì, Ì.GIŠ, Ì+GIŠ	CAD "Š": 1, 321f *šamnu*
šandabakku	P	1. (a high-ranking official in civil and temple administrations), 2. (title of the governor of Nippur), 3. tablet container.	GÁ.DUB.BA(.A)	CAD "Š": 1, 371f *šandabakku*
šangû	P	chief administrator of a temple	(LÚ.)SANGA	CAD "Š" 1: 377f *šangû*
šēdu	A	1. (a spirit or demon representing the individual's vital force), 2. (an orthostate with representation of the *šēdu*)	^{d}ALAD	CAD "Š": 2, 256f *šēdu* A
šēḫtu	PA	incense burner, censer		CAD "Š": 2, 264f *šēḫtu*
šeleppāyu	P	(an artisan)		CAD "Š": 2, 270f *šeleppāju*
šiddu	PA	cloth, curtain		CAD "Š": 2, 407f *šiddu* B
šigaru	A	1. (part of a lock, probably the bolt or bar), 2. neck stocks	(GIŠ.)SI.GAR	CAD "Š": 2, 408f *šigaru*
šikaru	R	1. beer (made from grain), 2. fermented alcoholic beverage	KAŠ, KAŠ.ḪI.A, KAŠ.MEŠ	CAD "Š": 2, 420f *šikaru*

šinnu	R	1. tooth, 2. elephant tusk, ivory, 3. tooth, tine (of a comb, a saw, a harrow), blade (of a plow, a threshing board, a hoe)	ZÚ	CAD "Š": 3, 48f *šinnu* A
šinni pīru	R	elephant ivory	ZÚ AM.SI	CAD "Š": 3, 51f *šinnu* A 2.
šitimgallu	P	chief (house) builder	(LÚ.)DÍM.GAL	CAD "Š": 3, 129f *šitimgallu*
šizbu	R	1. milk, 2. (*ša*) *šizbi* suckling	GA	CAD "Š": 3, 148f *šizbu*
šubtu	PA	1. seat, chair, throne, 2. base, socle (for a throne or a stela), pedestal, stand, 3. residence, dwelling, abode, home, 4. emplacement, location, site, foundation of a building, built-over area of a building plot, site, settled area of a town, territory of a people, country, or town, 5. encampment, military camp, military position, outpost, ambush, 6. (a feature of the exta)	TUŠ, KI.TUŠ, DAG	CAD "Š": 3, 172f A *šubtu*
šubû	R	(a stone, perhaps agate)	NA_4.ŠUBA(ZA.SUḪ)	CAD "Š": 3, 185 *šubû* A
šurmēnu	R	cypress	(GIŠ.)ŠUR.MÌN, (GIŠ.)ŠU.ÚR.MÌN	CAD "Š": 3, 349f *šurmēnu*
taklīmu	O	(a food-offering)		CAD "T": 81 *taklīmu*
taraḫḫu	R	bank, embankment, revetment		CAD "T": 203 *taraḫḫu*
tarbāṣu	A	1. pen (for cattle, rarely for sheep and goats, horses), enclosure, courtyard, 2. halo, 3. (a part of a liver), 4. (an ornament?)	TÙR	CAD "T": 217f *tarbāṣu*

taskarinnu	R	boxtree, box-wood	GIŠ.TÚG	CAD “T”: 28f *taskarinnu*
ṭābu	R	good, sweet, fresh, aromatic, of good quality, benevolent, friendly, auspicious, favorable, proper, correct, pleasing, satisfactory, content, satisfied, honorable	DÙG(.GA)	CAD “Ṭ”: 19f *ṭābu*
ṭupšarru	P	scribe, tablet writer	(LÚ.)DUB.ŠAR, (LÚ.)ŠID, (LÚ.)ŠIDXA, (LÚ.)A.BA	CAD “Ṭ”: 151f *ṭupšarru*
ummânu	P	1. investor, financier, 2. craftsman, artisan, expert, scholar	UM.MI.A, UM.ME.A	CAD “U/W”: 111f *ummânu*
uqnû	R	1. lapis lazuli, 2. lapis lazuli color, 3. (a plant)	NA_4.ZA.GÌN	CAD “U/W”: 195f *uqnû*
urāsu	P	corvée worker		CAD “U/W”: 208f *urāsu*
urmaḫḫu	A	lion colossus	UR.MAḪ	CAD “U/W”: 232f *urmaḫḫu*
ušû	R	1. diorite, 2. (a tree)	(NA_4/GIŠ.)ESI_x(KAL)	CAD “U/W”: 326f *ušû*
ušumgallu	A	lion-dragon	(MUŠ/Ú.)UŠUMGAL	CAD “U/W”: 330f *ušumgallu*
zaḫalû	R	(a silver alloy)		CAD “Z”: 12f *zaḫalû*
zidubdubbû	R	(a small heap of a certain type of flour, used for cultic purposes)	ZÌ.DUB.DUB.(BA/BU)	CAD “Z”: 107f *zidubdubbû*

APPENDIX B. ASSYRIAN KING LIST

(after Van de Mieroop 2006)

Aminu
|
Sulili

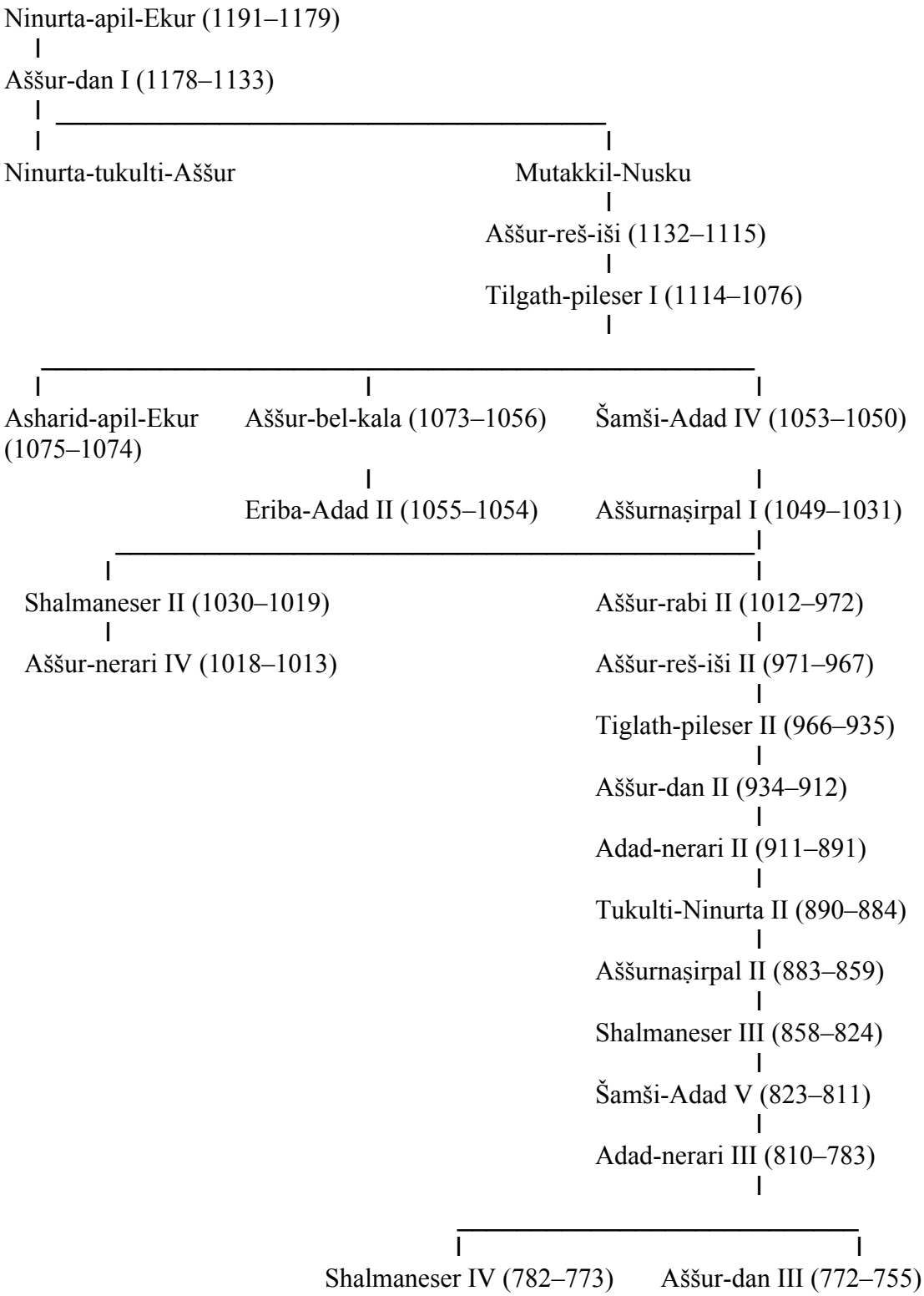
Kikkija

Puzur-Aššur I

Shalim-aḫum

Ilushuma
|
Erishum I
|
Ikunum
|
Sargon I
|
Puzur-Aššur II
|
Naram-Sin
|
Erishum II
|
Šamši-Adad (ca. 1808–1776)
|
Ishme-Dagan (1775–?)

Aššur-uballiṭ I (1363–1328)
|
Enlil-nerari (1327–1318)
|
Arik-den-ili (1317–1306)
|
Adad-nerari I (1305–1274)
|
Shalmaneser I (1273–1244)
|
Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207)
| _____
| |
Aššur-nadin-apli (1206–1203) Enlil-kudurri-uṣur (1196–1992)
|
Aššur-nerari III (1202–1197)


Ninurta-apil-Ekur (1191–1179)
Aššur-dan I (1178–1133)
Ninurta-tukulti-Aššur
Mutakkil-Nusku
Aššur-reš-iši (1132–1115)
Tilgath-pileser I (1114–1076)
Asharid-apil-Ekur (1075–1074)
Aššur-bel-kala (1073–1056)
Šamši-Adad IV (1053–1050)
Eriba-Adad II (1055–1054)
Aššurnaṣirpal I (1049–1031)
Shalmaneser II (1030–1019)
Aššur-nerari IV (1018–1013)
Aššur-rabi II (1012–972)
Aššur-reš-iši II (971–967)
Tiglath-pileser II (966–935)
Aššur-dan II (934–912)
Adad-nerari II (911–891)
Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884)
Aššurnaṣirpal II (883–859)
Shalmaneser III (858–824)
Šamši-Adad V (823–811)
Adad-nerari III (810–783)
Shalmaneser IV (782–773)
Aššur-dan III (772–755)


Aššur-nerari V (754–745)
?
Tiglath-pileser III (744–727)
Shalmaneser V (726–722)
Sargon II (721–705)
Sennacherib (704–681)
Esarhaddon (680–669)
Aššurbanipal (668–627)
Aššur-etel-ilani (627–623)
Sin-šarru-iškun (622–612)
?
Aššur-uballit II (611–?)

APPENDIX C. A BRIEF HISTORY OF EXCAVATIONS AT NIMRUD AND KHORSABAD

In 1843, after a year of less noteworthy digging at Kouyunjik in northern Iraq, Paul-Émile Botta, then the Consul of Mosul appointed by the French Government, turned his attention to the site of Khorsabad. After only a matter of days he and his men uncovered the archaeological evidence of the palace of Sargon. In hearing of his great success, the French Government continued to fund his work for another year, while also sending him an artist to document the finds, Eugène Flandin. In thinking they had finished their research, Botta and his men returned to Paris in 1845, along with an unimaginable number of portable and non-portable works of art of the Neo-Assyrian period. Most of these materials quickly found their way into the public galleries of the Musée du Louvre. Botta's successor, Victor Place, followed suit in 1852 and continued work at the site, until 1855. In addition to focusing on the palace of Sargon, Place also directed his attention toward the palace temple complex (Place's "harem"). While at the site, Botta document both his own work and that of his predecessor Botta. He also sent objects back to France, adding further to the Neo-Assyrian collection at the Louvre. Working alongside Place for some of his greatest discoveries was Félix Thomas, a French architect who meticulously sketched and documented what he saw of the palace at Khorsabad in a series of drawings and watercolors.[1642]

Aroused by the success of the French at Khorsabad and the popularity of the Louvre's oriental galleries, the British made their way into northern Iraq in 1849. For two years a team working under the leadership of Sir Austin Henry Layard unearthed the ancient capital of Nimrud, bringing to light equally impactful finds as those of the French. Of special note were the remains of the Northwest Palace of Aššurnaṣirpal, which Layard sent back to England for display in the British Museum. When Layard concluded his work at Nimrud, a stream of equally pivotal historical figures followed suit, including Hormuzd Rassam (1853–1854, 1877–1879), William Kennett Loftus (1854–1855), and George Smith (1873–1874).[1643]

With the turn of the century and the impending World War, work in the Middle East dwindled, then in 1929 the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago sent a team of archaeologists to Khorsabad, where excavations were carried out until 1934 under the direction of Chiera, then Henri Frankfort, and last Gordon Loud.[1644] Loud was assisted at the site by two architects, first Hamilton Darby and then Charles B. Altman. In addition to documenting and expanding upon Botta and Place's excavation of the primary palace and the palace temple complex, the Chicago team excavated the elite residences (H, J, K, L, M), the House of Nabu, and the city gate and wall atop the citadel. They also

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[1642] On the French excavations at Khorsabad, see Pillet 1918, 1962; Albenda and Caubet 1986; and Fontan and Chevalier 1994. For the associated original excavation reports and publication, see see Botta and Flandin 1849–1850; and Place and Thomas 1867.

[1643] On the nineteenth and twentieth-century excavations at Nimrud, see Lloyd 1980; Gadd 1936, 1938; Oates and Oates 2001; and the edited volume by Curtis et al. 2008. For the associated original excavation reports and publications, see Layard 1849a, 1849b, 1853a, 1853b; Rassam 1897; Smith 1875; and Rassam 1897.

[1644] On the Oriental Institute's work at the site of Khorsabad, see Frankfort 1933; 1934; Loud 1936; Loud and Altman 1938; and the edited volume by Green et al. 2012..

moved into areas of the lower town, for the first time bringing to light another residence and a palace outside the citadel.

In turn, the British returned to the site of Nimrud, where Sir Max Mallowan and his men worked painstakingly from 1949 to 1957 to further the nineteenth-century excavations of the Northwest Palace. They also uncovered a number of previously unexpected monuments on the citadel, including the House of Ninurta and the House of Ištar, the Governor's Palace, the Burnt Palace, the House of Nabu, the Southwest Palace, the Central Palace, and the Palace of Adad-nerari III. Professor David Oates succeeded Mallowan as director of excavations at the site. He continued to work into the early 1960s before returning to Britain with additional material to expand the British Museum's Neo-Assyrian collection.[1645]

In 1957 the Iraqi State Organization of Antiquities excavated the House of the Sibitti at Khorsabad, which was located outside of the citadel walls.[1646] The Iraqi State Organization of Antiquities also sent archaeologists to Nimrud in 1970 in order to continue excavations, as well as to work on conservation and reconstruction of the site's principal structures. Soon a team of Polish archaeologists joined the project, led by Janusz Meuszynski and accompanied by the architect Richard P. Sobolewski. In collaboration with the Iraqi team, the Polish project filmed, surveyed, and recorded the entire site.[1647] With the death of Meuszynski in 1976, the Polish concluded their work at Khorsabad. The Iraqi archaeologists continued their excavations and restoration work.[1648] Under the direction of John Curtis, the British returned briefly to the site in 1989 to continue work begun by Oates and continued by the Polish team in the area of Fort Shalmaneser, the palace, storehouse, and arsenal that stood along the walls of the lower city.[1649]

[1645] For the associated original excavation reports and publications, see Mallowan 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1961, 1966; Oates 1957, 1961, 1962, 1963; and Oates and Reid 1956.

[1646] Safar 1957.

[1647] The primary publications associated with the Polish project at Nimrud include Meuszynski 1981; and Paley and Sobolewksi 1987, 1992.

[1648] The most recent work carried out by the Iraqi excavation team focused on the House of Nabu and the tombs from the Northwest Palace; see Hussein 1985-1986a, 1985-1986b, 1995, 2000; and the related papers in the edited volume by Curtis et al. 2008, in particular Hussein: 83–98.

[1649] Fort Shalmaneser, or *ekal maršarti* ('palace of musterin') was constructed during the reign of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE); see further, Oates and Oates 2001. On the 1989 British Excavations, see Curtis et al. 1993.